

BRONZE, BRACELETS & BURIED TREASURE

My name is Lula. I live with my family in a comfortable round house near Mountfield. We have a neat and tidy little farm, all the fields are divided into squares, with hedges or ditches between. We grow wheat and barley and we keep sheep on the farm, they are lovely brown ones with short tails. We use their wool to make warm clothes. We do eat their meat sometimes, but often my father and brothers will hunt or fish. The whole family works on the farm, my parents and my two brothers and sister. Other families live in similar houses nearby and most of them keep sheep and grow cereal like us. Some of the woodlands around here have been cleared so that there is plenty of land to farm.



We often have people passing by our village as we live close to a routeway. Sometimes they are people we know quite well, like those from a settlement not too far from here. But sometimes there are visitors from a very long way away. Travelling bronzesmiths stop here on their long journeys to sell their wares, such as tools for building and cooking and weapons for hunting.

My father says that a long time ago, when his great-great-grandfather was young, everyone made tools from flint, but now most are made from copper or bronze. People here do make their own, but bronzesmiths often have new types of chisels or knives to try.

The thing I like best is that the bronzesmiths make beautiful jewellery – bracelets, hairpins, rings and torques – as well as tools. I have a bracelet which my mother and father bought for me. It is very special and I never take it off.

I often wonder where the bronzesmiths have come from and where they are going to. People say they come from the coast and that they travel across the marshes along watery channels in their flat-bottomed boats. Or some wait for summer and walk across when the tide is very low. It must be a long and tiring walk with all their goods to carry.



Bronze Age

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In 1863 a Bronze Age hoard was found in Mountfield. A hoard is a collection of objects buried together. Usually these are valuable because the finds are very rare and can give us new information about life hundreds, or thousands, of years ago.

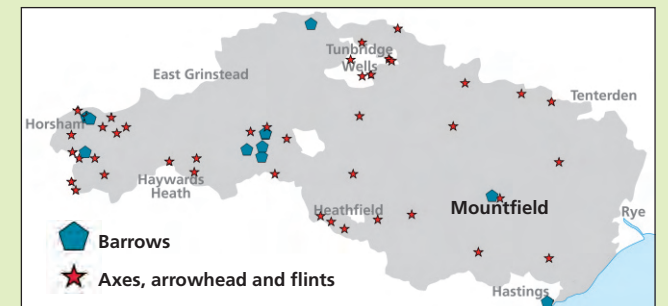
Sadly, the importance of the Mountfield hoard wasn't realised at the time. The objects were thought to be brass and melted down. It is now believed that they were solid gold! Part of a gold bracelet from the hoard can be seen in the British Museum. Perhaps it belonged to Lula.



What things would you like to find in a hoard?



WHERE IN THE WEALD?



Barrows (burial mounds) and other artefacts have been found scattered across the High Weald. There is little evidence of Bronze Age use of the area compared to areas such as the Downs which were heavily populated in the Bronze Age. You can see the bracelet from the Mountfield Hoard at the **British Museum**.

View Bronze Age artefacts at:
Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Tunbridge Wells Museum

More online:
www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/archaeology.php

MAKE A BRONZE AGE BRACELET/WRIST GUARD (OR TWO)

You need:

- A cardboard tube from a toilet roll
- PVA glue
- Water
- Newspaper torn into strips about 2cm wide
- String, any thickness
- Metallic-looking acrylic paint, copper, bronze or gold coloured
- Scissors
- Brushes for glue and paint
- An adult!



Ask your adult to cut the toilet roll in half (so you have two wide rings) then to cut all the way along the diagonal join on each.

Tear your strips of newspaper into short lengths. Mix the PVA and water (3 parts PVA to 1 part water).

Start by glueing strips on the inside and folding them over to the front at the top and bottom (see picture, left). They don't need to meet on the outside.

Cover the front using smaller pieces overlapping each other slightly. Try to keep the edges neat. Tuck over to the inside where you need to. Leave to dry, slightly bending the bracelet back into shape if it has opened too much.

Cover the outside with another two layers, reshape and leave to dry again.

Glue your string in patterns on the bracelets. Leave to dry, then paint all over. If you would like an even shinier finish you could paint a top coat of PVA which will dry clear.



High Weald

EVENTS 2300BCE

Silbury Hill, a great man-made hill in Wiltshire, constructed in phases

2000BCE

Stonehenge completed

1500BCE

1450 Glass used in Egypt for ornament but not for windows

Bronze Age round barrows and settlements built on the Downs and in the High Weald

1332-1323 Tutankhamun ruled in Egypt

First evidence of horses being used

1000BCE

David fought Goliath and became king of Israel

700BCE

776 First Olympic Games (in Athens)