

Wealden Iron

First Series No 3
Spring 1972

Bulletin of the
Wealden Iron
Research Group

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Wealden Iron Research Group

BULLETIN

No. 3

Spring 1972

Published by the WEALDEN IRON RESEARCH GROUP

Secretary

J. Pettitt Esq.
42 Silverdale Road
Earley,
Reading, Berks

Editorial

This is the first issue of the Bulletin that we have issued since the new Constitution came into effect. It has been very much of a joint effort between Joe Pettitt and myself. We hope that you will find something of interest inside.

But we do not intend that future issues shall be one- or two-man affairs; this is your Bulletin, and we want to hear about what you have been doing. We shall be very happy to receive notes on interesting finds that you have made, or equally about matters that puzzle you. There is enough going on among our membership, which is increasing at a very satisfactory rate, to keep at least two issues of this size filled each year.

The record of work done by the Buxted Group in the past few years will, we hope, act as a spur to other groups to start an intensive study of their own areas. There are a number of areas where as yet we have no local groups; look through the list of members and see if there is anyone else in your area who might be available for some fieldwork. If you want to know about how to set about this work, the chairman, the secretary, and the treasurer are all Buxted veterans and would be very glad to give advice and guidance.

HENRY CLEERE

Vice-Chairman and
Acting Editor

Some memories of Ernest Straker

By I. D. Margary

My first contact with Ernest Straker was an exploratory letter dated 13 May 1928 regarding the site at Walesbeech, and I still have it. At that time I was exploring the wealden Roman roads on which iron cinder was much used, and thus our work had points of contact which brought us frequently together until his death in 1941.

Straker was a delightful person despite his considerable physical disabilities due to deafness and asthma, with a delicious sense of humour which made him a most agreeable companion on a day's fieldwork. He was head of the large bookbinding firm Leighton Straker and Co. of Acton, and my wife and I were invited on one occasion to visit him there, being taken by him all round the big works when it was quite evident that his relation with the workers was excellent. For some years he could only afford occasional days off for fieldwork.

When I first knew him he lived in Purley, but he soon moved to a nice house, Friars Mead, in the upper part of Reigate, and it was from here that his fieldwork was done. For years he had no car, and his expeditions were made entirely by train and local bus to the remotest parts of the Weald. After a long day investigating some gill he would creep back to the nearest road with a bus route (there were many more in those days) and sit down to await the next bus, so getting home eventually! Despite his small and frail appearance, and sometimes difficult breathing, he must have been as tough as old oak. Later on, he employed a part-time driver, and sometimes we would have joint expeditions in my car, though these were rather rare. On fieldwork he always wore rough tweeds, a soft felt hat, and country-style heavy boots. He carried a small light haversack with his lunch and a light geologist's hammer for cracking open the specimen stones he picked up, so as to test if they were really cinder.

He also did an immense amount of research on the old documents of big estates and on the Tithe Apportionment Lists for field names, all of which might lead to the discovery of iron sites. His notes on these became quite a voluminous collection, and,

when nearing the end of his life and entirely confined to the house, he spent hours in indexing them. They are still in the drawers of the cabinet in which he kept them, but now in Barbican House, for they were bequeathed to the Sussex Archaeological Society along with his big collection of cinder specimens. Further reference to these will be found in the obituary which the Society published in Sussex Notes and Queries Vol. 8. p.227 (1941)

Straker was a meticulous worker in all he did and most careful in the checking of details, but I am not aware that he had any special knowledge of metallurgy. His interest in the iron industry here sprang, I think, from its relation to the wealden district in which he was living.

The O.S. 6 in. map of c.1870

This is the earliest O.S. map to show fields, and often gives a field-structure which existed in wealden iron days but not now. One can use it to enter W.I. field names, W.I. sites, etc,. Up till a few years ago one could obtain photocopies of parts of the enormous Tithe Maps, but, alas, no longer.

A new reproduction copy of the 6", map is also very expensive; some years ago I paid £1.00 for a quarter-size map. However, a cheap reproduction can be obtained if a group orders a fair number. The Surveyor's Office at East Sussex County Council Offices, using a Dyeline process, can produce a negative of a whole map 36" x 24" for £1.70. Positive copies cost about 25p each. Thus a group order means that a map for each person costs below 50p.

Record offices produce Xerox copies of parts of maps (and of suitable documents) for 5p, with a reduction for a number of copies of any one part.

J. Pettitt

A note on the Beauport Park Roman ironworks

by Gerald Brodribb

In September 1966 I first began my search for the remains of the Roman ironworks at Beauport Park. After some five years of persistent and intensive jungle warfare, I at last found what some readers will have now seen, and it may be of interest to give here some history of the references to the site before I began to tackle it.

The first mention of the ironworks comes in an article about the nearby parish of Hollington by the Rector, Rev. S. Arnott, who said that there were no remains in his parish, but "there is a large cinderbank in Beauport Park on which grow firs with ash and oak, all planted by Sir Charles Lamb" (the owner). This cinderbank had escaped the notice of M.A. Lower who, twenty years earlier, had made a survey of East Sussex ironworks (see S.A.C., vol. 2 (1849), p.169).

Not long after the Arnott reference (and perhaps because of it) the Highway Surveyor, Mr Byner, of Sedlescombe, began to remove the cinder for roadmaking at a rate of over 2000 cubic yards per annum. This went on for ten years. and we are lucky that James Rock, a Hastings antiquarian, was able to witness this destruction and record it fully in S.A.C., vol. 29 (1879) p.167 et seq. He writes :

The large mound in Beauport Park was, until opened as a quarry, a wooded knoll, with heavy timber upon it, presenting but little to indicate that it was the handiwork of man. It then covered a space of two acres or more, and at the highest part had an elevation of about 50 feet above the surrounding land. At the present time only one end of the knoll, which was originally of an oblong form, remains. It forms on one side a cliff about 30 feet high and on the other a grassy slope with a few trees upon it. Seen from below, the mound rises higher than the cliff by about 10 feet. The whole mass now remaining covers a third of an acre, but as it rests on the slope of the hill which rises behind it, the quantity of cinders contained in it is probably not so great as it appears. At the time of my visits, men were working very carefully on the face of the 'cliff', which crumbled so readily at every stroke of the pick that they had some difficulty in keeping their footing. Occasionally a piece of pottery is found, but rolling down with the cinders it is usually broken very small ere it reaches the bottom of the bank.

The sketch dated 1878 appearing in Straker's "Wealden Iron"

gives some view of the gully, looking south, with possibly what we know as the "Great Oak" appearing at the top right-hand corner. The clearance of the cinder brought to light several Roman items which have fortunately been preserved, namely several coins, Samian and other pottery, and the controversial statuette which Charles Dawson said he acquired from one of the workmen in 1877 (see S.A.C., vol. 46 (1902) p.2).

After Mr Byner ceased work the area no doubt reverted to its former woody state and the site might have been forgotten for ever had not Herbert Blackman, a local antiquarian, taken an interest in it. In February 1917 he made a tour of the Park with Mr Grinstead, the bailiff, who himself was present at the clearance of the slag by Mr Byner's men, and explained the method of the clearance. Though Blackman had no doubt, that "a great deal of slag still remains under, the present site", he was not immediately inclined to excavate, even though he was shown several beautiful specimens of pottery by Sir Archibald Lamb, the owner. But Blackman did not forget the site and its possibilities, and a further mention in his notebook, dated October 1924, tells of an attempt to make some actual digging of the site, and a photograph in Straker (p.337) shows him at work with the aforesaid Mr Grinstead.

Blackman gives a detailed account of the layering they discovered when they dug at the upper (south ?) end of the gully:

The first two feet were of dark mould with scoria intermixed with it; here we found several small pieces of pottery and red tile, two pieces forming part of a small bowl: next below this, about two feet of fine reddish coloured ashes and a considerable amount of rather small scoria mixed with it: under this a layer of about five inches thick of very brittle deep blue scoria, very heavy and beautifully clean, with the underside thickly studded with small pieces of red material about the size of peas; then another layer of red ashes, charcoal, and burnt clay 10 inches thick, and beneath this another layer of perfectly clean scoria similar to the other but not quite such a deep colour.

They also made some digging at the other end of the gully, and there is reason to suppose that he also visited the Park in the following year, though we have no notes about it.

During the next forty years the site returned once again to its natural state with dense undergrowth covering the scars inflicted by Mr Byner. The general opinion was that Beauport as an archaeological site was now valueless. And that brings us back to my opening paragraph. After a frustrating start and bewilderment at the sheer size of the site, there was always just enough encouragement to keep going. So I kept going... and my fondest hopes have been realized, But that is another story...

Beauport Park 1971

by Henry Cleere

Part of Gerald Brodribb's "other story" can in fact now be told. I joined him in 1971 as joint director of the excavation, and we carried out an intensive dig on the bath-house that had come to light at the end of the previous year for three weeks in August/September. A number of members of the Group took part in the dig, notably Dennis Hemsley and Alan Scott.

The structure so far excavated consists of six rooms plus a hot and a cold plunge bath. It was originally built in the last quarter of the 2nd century AD in its original form, with three or four rooms. It appears to have fallen into disrepair some time in the first half of the 3rd century, and to have been rebuilt and extended; a fragmentary inscription was found earlier in the year which referred to some kind of rebuilding.

The building appears to have abandoned around AD 250. There was, however, squatter occupation in the late 3rd or early 4th century AD.

The building is in a remarkably good state of preservation, with walls standing to nearly 2 metres high in some places. Painted plaster is still intact in situ in some places, on the lower portions of walls. In one of the warm rooms, box flues are still in position on the walls, fixed with iron clamps, to a height of nearly two metres.

Of the rooms that have been excavated, two have pillar hypocausts and three have channel hypocausts. An internally splayed window has been discovered in one of the warm rooms.

A furnace stokehole leading into one of the hot rooms seems to have been blocked up after the collapse of the arch, a drain of imbrex tiles being inserted at floor level. It is possible that there may be a later stokehole communicating with the other hot room, which has not yet been fully excavated.

Two of the warm rooms were roofed with barrel vaults of stone and concrete, large sections of which were found lying on the floors. The remaining rooms appear to have had pitched tile roofs.

The association of the Beauport Park iron-working site, for which this building seems to have been the "pit-head baths", with the British Fleet (Classis Britannica) has now been established beyond all doubt with the finding of over 600 tile fragments bearing the CL BR stamp.

Excavation of the site will continue during 1972. It is hoped that the building will be taken into guardianship by the Ancient Monuments Inspectorate of the Department of the Environment in due course.

Materials found on Wealden Iron sites

Dennis Hemsley has formed a collection of representative examples of the type of material likely to be found on Roman sites in the Weald. This was on show at the meetings in July 1971 and January 1972. Those wishing to examine this material more closely should contact him at Plangeross, Stonegate, Wadhurst (telephone Ticehurst 420). The material is as follows :

ORES	Siderite – Nodular form Tabular form Limonite Carstone
ASSOCIATED ROCKS IN THE WEALD	Sandstone – brown, orange, white-yellow Limestone – shelly, chalk Flint Shale Gypsum waste
EVIDENCE OF IRONWORKING AND ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES	Slag – bloomery, blast furnace Furnace lining – Roman, 16th cent. brick Roasted ore Iron lumps Pottery Building materials – tegulae, imbrices, pilae. tesserae. opus signinum, etc.

A source of Field Names

Tithe Apportionment Schedules

These schedules, accompanied by a map, often 25" scale, were drawn up c. 1840, when tithes were commuted into annual money payments. A survey of the land of each parish in England and Wales was conducted and almost every field name was recorded. The fields were numbered and the map repeats these numbers. So one can transfer W.I. field names to more modern maps and investigate.

One may view Tithe Apportionment documents in Record Offices:

East Sussex R.O.	Pelham House, Lewes	Mon.-Fri. 9 am to 5 pm
West Sussex R.O.	County Hall, Chichester	Do.
Surrey R.O.	County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames	Do
Kent R.O.	County Hall, Maidstone	Do.
Public R.O.	Chancery Lane, London WC2	Mon.-Fri. 9 am to 5 pm Sat 9 am to 1 pm

Four days' notice is required by the Public Record Office, and it is best to examine the Catalogue for reference numbers (in the North Room) beforehand, or at least before your second order.

The Buxted team has W.I. field names extracts for the following parishes:

East Sussex	Worth, East Grinstead (including Forest Row), Hartfield, Withyham, Frant, Lamberhurst, West Hoathly, Horstead Keynes, Fletching (including Danehill), Maresfield, Buxted, Mayfield (including Hadlow Down), Rotherfield, (including Crowborough), Wadhurst, Ticehurst, Chailey, Newick, Uckfield, Framfield, Waldron (including Horam), Heathfield, Burwash, Isfield, Little Horsted, East Hoathly, Chiddingly, Warbleton, Brightling, Dallington, Herstmonceux, Wartling, and Ringmer.
Kent	Cowden, Hever, Edenbridge, Chiddingstone, Speldhurst, Tonbridge (including Tunbridge Wells), Capel, Pembury and Lamberhurst.
Surrey	Godstone and Lingfield.

Mr M.J. Leppard of the East Grinstead Society kindly placed his analysis at the Secretary's disposal.

Only a few W.I. sites have W.I. names. Joseph Pettitt hopes to have a revised interim glossary available at the meeting on 29 Jan.

Many other documents, especially legal documents, may contain field names, and all the Calendars (Catalogues) of Document Collections at the various Record Offices ought to be searched. The East Sussex Record Office handles the Sussex Archaeological Society's documents. A general guide to documents has been compiled by Mrs Judith Brent, Assistant Archivist at the East Sussex Record Office. It is entitled "The History of a Parish or Locality", price 10p.

Questions and Answers

Q. What is a bear?

A. One supposes that the vast lump of ore and charcoal which had "tumbled together" in the furnace (see Straker, pp.xii, 91, 414) was absolutely resistant to heat or hammering and that in the act of its removal from the furnace the latter would be damaged. Thus it might well be metaphorically called a "bear", the symbol of obstinacy. Bears are found at Mayfield, Heathfield, Riverhall, and Pounsley furnace in addition to those mentioned by Straker. A bloomery bear lies in Newick Wood, Heathfield. A more detailed technical description is given in the Bulletin of the Historical Metallurgy Group, Vol. 3, (2) – see "Wealden Iron Bibliographies".

Q. People appear to use "cinder" and "slag" interchangeably. I am muddled.

A. Aren't we all? "Cinder" is Anglo-Saxon for the dross of smelting, and was apparently the only word used in the Weald. "Slag" appears to be ousting the word now. Straker uses "slag" only for blast-furnace dross; Tylecote reserves "cinder" for the partly fused waste left above the bloom in a bloomery; slag he uses for the bloomery dross which dripped to the bottom of the furnace. If it was allowed to run out, it was "tap-slag". "Furnace bottom" he applies to a dish-shaped mass of slag which accumulated in the base of the furnace and has survived whole, thus giving a clue to the shape of the furnace base. I now hear of forge slag instead of forge cinder – the waste from a finery or hammer forge.

Q. Why is some bloomery slag glassy and thus barely distinguishable from blast furnace slag?

A. In most early bloomery practice, much of the iron present in the ore had to be sacrificed in order to combine with the gangue (or stony part of the ore) to make its melting low enough for it to run out at the base of the bloomery. In the blast furnace, limestone was used for this purpose, as a flux. Occasionally, limy material, such as shelly limestone got into the bloomery, and produced such a slag.

Investigations by the Buxted team

The following should be assumed to be bloomery sites unless otherwise stated.

KENT

Southborough

591 426 Brokes Wood Pond ?Blast fu. Probably related to Old Fo. nearby – Straker (222)

SUSSEX

East Grinstead

392 349 }
397 351 } Vicinity of Weir Wood Reservoir
401 354 }

Forest Row

448 383 Blacklands, Gt. Cansiron Roman industrial site (Bull. No. 2)

Hartfield

445 313 Pippingford, Ashdown For. Roman or pre-Roman (Bull. No. 2)
451 363 Wick Wood
451 367 Paupersdale Wood I
453 373 Paupersdale Wood II
456 317 Strickedridge Gill, Ashdown For.
471 387 Combe Head, Chandlers 12th cent. pottery (SNQ, 17, pp.167-168)

Withyham

497 344 Mill Wood, Buckhurst Park
4985 3255 Grubs Farm I Probably a hammer forge
4985 3285 Grubs Farm II Probably Straker's (253)
4998 3530 Pond Plat, Buckhurst Park Probably Withyham Forge Straker misplaced (253)

Maresfield

463 233 Furnace Bank Wood I Bloomery slag
463 234 Furnace Bank Wood II Probably Maresfield Furnace – not as Straker (400)
4475 3010 East Wood, Pippingford Park
451 363 Marshall's Furnace and forge Straker (400) says Forge only and missed bay

Buxted

4718 2593 Hendall Farm Straker (397) + tailrace from hollowed tree + furnace bottoms = bloomery
475 252 Stew Ponds, Hendall Bloomery and Blast furnace slag
486 292 Head of Buckhurst Stream

4905 2655 Shadwell Farm
 498 225 Tankard's Croft, Home Farm Several beds; 13th cent. pottery
 - 500 226 at 498 225
 498 229 Lower Totease Gill
 499 243 Pond Field, Great Totease 200 yds, above Iron Plat Farm
 501 267 Pickreed Field
 506 236 The Glen Massive pieces of slag
 506 273 Oxby Wood See SNQ, 14, 278, but probably
 - 509 271 more than one bloomery
 509 267 Ford Brook
 510 273 Mabbs Gill
 5115 2730 Kidderts Ash Road paved with slag 511271-
 511527
 516 265 Upper Pond to Little Forge Massive bay for Little Forge
 pen-pond?

Crowborough

512 228 Blackbrook, Perryman's

Rotherfield

5400 2715 Limney Farm I Straker (387) found 1 site
 5401 2720 Limney Farm II
 581 325 Cinder Pitt, Towser's Lodge Slag minimal

Mayfield

557 250 Smith Mead Shaw
 593 281 Brickhurst Wood Subsidiary blast furnace to
 Mayfield (Straker, 292). Pen-
 ponds to Mayfield Furnace - 3.
 Pen-pond to Brickhurst - 1.
 586 308 Sandyden Straker (288) and interesting
 small stone spillway.
 596 278 Little Forge Field, Pennybridge
 603 294 Wet Wood, Mousehall

Hadlow Down

518 248 Grove Cottage, Howbourne Possibly bloomery destroyed when
 septic tank was made
 532 265 Shorewell, Huggett's Farm Reputed Roman bloomery; no
 pottery found

Framfield

491 215 Hempstead I
 487 215 Hempstead II Field scatter, possibly from I
 496 213 Coneyburrow Wood
 502 213 Cinderfield Shaw, Straker (392); subsidiary
 Little Streele bloomery
 520 201 Brownings
 529 219 Pounsley Furnace Straker (391) + highly metallic
 bear; furnace plat & tailrace in
 culvert

Waldron

563 175 Cinderfield, Tanner's Manor
 566 213 Pit Wood

Heathfield

593 197 Pond Tail, Walnutts Tail of Twissell's Mill Pond
 595 226 Burnt Wood, Newick Massive piece of slag
 (= bloomery bear ?)
 599 187 Heathfield Furnace Straker (374) + massive bear;
 also Roman pottery and nail;
 also roasting site
 576 218 Tilsmore Wood,
 601 249 Furnace Field, Scotsford Possibly a Mayfield Baker
 furnace; two bays upstream

Hellingly

576 148 Old (Roman) road Highly metallic slag
 Isfield
 455/6 205 Beach Wood, Beeches Farm
 4035 2045 Old Ford, Beeches Farm 4 furnace bottoms; "Ford"
 corruption of "Forge" (no ford
 nearby)

In addition, many minepit areas have been found: bell pits are easy to identify but opencast pits are difficult. The known ones will be plotted on a geological map,

STOP PRESS!

Just before I sent this issue to the printer, I had a telephone call from Brian Kirsop of The Rookery, King's Cross Lane, South Nutfield, Redhill, Surrey. His group are doing a rescue survey in advance of the M23 Motorway.

They have found a green lane which proved on trenching to be metallised with bloomery slag. It runs roughly north-south, between TQ 312 460 and TQ 309 443. What is very significant, however, is that it forms the parish boundary between Nutfield and Burstow; the implication is therefore that this may be an early feature (and of course, I naturally want it to be Roman).

Straker shows no sites at all in this area, which lies to the west of the Roman London-Brighton road. The nearest Roman site is John Gibson-Hill's complex at Crawley. However, that is a bit remote. By analogy with the relationship between the Great Cansiron site and the Holtye stretch of slag-metallised road, one might expect a bloomery near at hand.

Brian Kirsop's people are concerned with the rescue aspects of this area and have no time to look for bloomeries. Has anyone got time to do some fieldwork around this area?

Henry Cleere

Bloomeries in the upper (east) Rother basin

by C. S. Cattell

(Mayfield, Heathfield, Rotherfield, and Wadhurst)

5835	2797	Clay's Wood	
5874	2925	Long Gill, Great Trodgers	
5887	2949	Long Gill	AD 550 ± 235
5857	2978	Little Trodgers	
5822	2929	Brick Kiln Wood	
5623	2790	No Man's Hole	
5597	2803	Castle Hill, Home Farm	60-90 AD
5698	2776	Angle Wood	
5673	2501	Almond's Wood	
5620	2397	Little Inwoods	130 BC — 70 AD
5824	2343	Quarry Wood	
5822	2303	Orchard Farm	
5907	2306	Coneyburrow Wood	
6005	2292	Magreed Farm	Romano-British
6234	2414	Knowle Farm	Romano-British (2/3rd
6130	2365	Baltham Wood	century AD)
6193	2120	Bingletts Wood	
6296	2186	Greenwood Farm	
5900	2776	Brickhurst Wood	
5974	2854	Pitwood	
5977	2872	Watling's Wood	
5968	2904	Lakestreet Manor	
5960	2901	Sprattsreed Farm	
6107	2883	Cinderhill Wood I	
6052	2859	Cinderhill Wood II	
5850	3030	Stilehouse Wood	
5862	3090	Sandyden I	220BC ± 120
5846	3092	Sandyden II	
5933	2999	Harling's Farm (Black Meadow)	
5991	3022	Devil's Gill	
6060	3042	Bassett's Farm	
5607	2393	Little Inwoods II	

Homan, My Homan

by Joseph Pettitt

"Homan Bank perhaps personal, but it is just
above a large Roman ironworks site."

(I.D. Margary, S.N.Q. 9 XIII p.100)

Upward long sweep from the stream to the bank that calls itself Homan;
Downward long slope from Homan, long-furrowed fall to the Blacklands,
Clean and clear without hedges, with barely a speckle of greenery,
Land fresh-ploughed grey-brown, spattered with cream-grey subsoil,
Wet and slabby and slummocky, claggy, tacky and soft.

Lifting a foot from the sucking, the puggy, the sticking, the slurry,
You press the other foot deep in, deeper, striving and stivering
Now follow uphill the split where the share flings both furrows
outwards.

But the rain has made it a channel for drainage from hilltop to stream
bank,

With water bubbling and sliding, singing by gravity downwards,
Wet and slabby and slummocky, claggy, tacky and soft.

Get to the underhedge grass-verge. But feel the jealous brambles
Pluck at your waterproofed jacket – you wince at the seven pounds ten
torn.

Get in the small, clean furrow that runs by the side of the hedge-verge,
The last run round of the headland before the plough makes its exit.
Your foot hits on clods that have tumbled, you fumble and stagger again
On clay that's slabby and slummocky, claggy, tacky and soft.

Eyes down for a full bay of specimens, clinching your long-held theory.
What's that white on the grey-brown? A small flint-flake from the
chalklands.

What's that white on the cream-grey? A chalk chunk hauled from the
flintlands,

Brought to break up the clay, to sweeten its acid and onstynacy.
Step after step to the ridge, over cold wet clods of the hillside
Wet and slabby and slummocky, claggy, tacky and soft.

What's that black patch on the clay? A patch of black like charcoal?
Roman? Saxon? Or later? A pit of a charcoal burner?

Or longed-for sign of a furnace – the iron-smelters autograph?
No. It's a waste-straw bonfire, winter's last vestige of harvest
Press on up the clay to the Homan, with groin muscles weaker and
weaker,

On clay that's slabby and slummocky, claggy and tacky and soft.

What's that pale-grey potsherd? Left by the bloomery blowers?
A clue to the date of the smelting. No, it's only some sandstone,
Shaly and split by the frost, shattered along its bedplane.
What's that dark-looking stuff there? Surely it's slag from the ironstone?
No, it's but lightly ferruginous, sandstone stained with an oxide,
Washed by the latest of rainstorms, lying on top of the furrows
Of clay that's slabby and slummocky, claggy, tacky and soft.

What's that wet-bright brickbat, red-raw in the winter sunlight?
If it's thin, then it's Roman. No, it's share-shattered lengthwise,
Modern, with weals of the wirecut. Who flung it out in the midfield?
What's that black stuff with the wrinkles? Is it a sliver of tapslag?
Give it a hit with a hammer. It's clean blue-black at the fracture
This is the longed-for Homan. Homan signifies ironworks.
Climb-weak knees now strengthen; you find the clay more friendly,
Not wet, not slabby, not slummocky, not claggy, not tacky, not soft.

No, it's scarcely a scatter – faint as the flints from the chalkland,
Faint as the chalk from the flintland, faint as the green on the hillside.
Now look up at the ridge-road. Look at the dip in the skyline
Rounded, u-shaped, and gentle, not v-shaped like deep-cut clay.
Homan means only hollow, two banks descending and meeting
In mud that's slabby and slummocky, claggy and tacky and soft.

Homan, Holman, Hollowman: merely a natural feature.
But rational is hard for a minute : there once was a gill with a furnace,
With alder trees lining the gillside; a spring pealed bells for the
smelters.

Then someone hacked out the trees and land-drained the spring and its
music,

Smoothed out the valley and buried my bloomery furnace forever
In clods now slabby and slummocky, claggy and tacky and soft.

Under the mud is my longed-for, walked for, staggered for, waited for,
Ached for, boots dragged for, knees cracked for, groins groaned for
Bloomery buried from daylight, sight-proof, dig-proof, and proof-proof
With radio-active charcoal, ready for carbon-14 tests,
And pottery giving its time range, Celtic or Roman or Saxon,
Domesday or just medieval, covered, concealed in this mud
That's wet and slabby and slummocky, claggy, tacky and soft.

No! You can't ever prove that. Feet upon feet of soil
Cover the site of your dreams. Dig in your dreams for a while,
Now take the slope from the Homan down to the path by the stream,
Down land fresh-ploughed into lines, with the weed and the stubble
Down furrows, down clods to the low land, to the riverbank hazelled and
catkinned,
With water-rats plopping, and crayfish, and lithe trout trysting at egg-
time,
Sliding, slipping, glissading, down the long mud of the hillside,
Wet and slabby and slummocky.

HOMAN'S A FLOPPEROO.

Secretary's Report (to 31 December 1971)

I. Membership

Our memberships stands at 80: 73 individual or family, 1 associate, and 6 institutional.

II. Affiliations, etc.

W I R G has affiliated to

- a. The Council for British Archaeology;
 - b. The Sussex Archaeological Society,
- and has become a member of :
- c. The Council for Kentish Archaeology.

III. Meetings

- a. The A.G.M. on 31 July 1971. A report has been circulated together with the Constitution, as agreed.
- b. The General Meeting of 29 January 1972. A notice has been circulated to Members.
- c. Executive Committee. The Committee has met twice, on 28 August and on 4 December. The next meeting is fixed for Sunday, 9 April 1972, at 2.30 pm at the Pheasantry, Wych Cross, Forest Row (TQ 440 316).

IV. Bulletin No. 3

The Editors have found themselves writing most of it. They are very anxious to make the succeeding issues the expression of the activities and opinions of Members.

V. Questionnaires

The Secretary holds questionnaires, more or less completed, by

- a. Miss Peggy Bunt: Water-powered sites in Mayfield.
- b. Mr Richard Barnes: Iridge blast furnace, Hurst Green.
- c. Mrs Jeanne Hayes: Bloomery slag in Framfield near Hempstead Mill.
- d. Mr C.F. Tebbutt: Bloomeries in Hartfield and Maresfield Possible hammer forge in Withyham.

Blast furnaces – Straker's Crowborough Warren
and Chittingly in West Hoathly.

The Supplementary List of Discoveries appears on other pages. This indicates considerable activity not reflected in the questionnaires.

I described the questionnaires that I hold as "more or less completed". It is extraordinarily difficult to complete one. Would Members like a simpler form for interim reports? Would this encourage you to send in more information more regularly?

VI. Other Activities

a. TEAMS

The Convener's' names are marked TC in the Members' List. In addition to the teams already reported in former Bulletins – Buxted, Crawley, Dallington, Fernhurst, and Ticehurst – two new teams have been formed at Slaugham and East Grinstead, and there are hopes of one at Crowborough. An extra-Wealden enquiry has been received from Mr R. Lawton of Dartford.

b. EXCAVATIONS, RECENT OR CONTINUING

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Mr Gerald Brodribb and
Mr Henry Cleere | Beauport Park |
| 2. | Mr Henry Cleere | Bardown complex |
| 3. | Mr David Crossley and
Mr Fred Tebbutt | Pippingford Furnace,
Hartfield |
| 4. | Mr David Crossley | Chingley Furnace and Forge |
| 5. | Mr John Gibson-Hill | Broadfields, Crawley |
| 6. | Mr Fred Tebbutt | Pippingford Bloomery |

c. HOLDERS OF SLAG, ORE, POTTERY, ETC.

G. Brodribb, H. Cleere, D. Crossley, J. Gibson-Hill, D. Hemsley, Mr and Mrs A. Meades, J. Pettitt, P. Ovenden, C.F. Tebbutt.

d. LECTURES

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Mrs D. Meades and Mr
D. Butler | Sussex Naturalist
Trust, 13 November |
| 2. | Mrs D. Meades
Crowborough | Evening Institute, |
| 3. | Mr J. Pettitt and
Mr C.F. Tebbutt | East Grinstead Society,
1 December |

e. INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATORS

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|---|
| 1. | Mr Charles Cattell | Bloomeries in the Upper
Rother Basin.
The Lists of 1574 |
| 2. | Mr W.R. Beswick | Bloomery in Warbleton |
| 3. | Mr B.A. French | Bloomeries in Brightling |
| 4. | Mr A. Miles | Bloomery in Lenham |
| 5. | Mr V.J. Newbury | Bloomery slag in
Hollingbourne and Egerton |
| 6. | Mrs D. Standing | Bloomery slag at Owlsbury,
between Ruser and Horsham |

VII. Prospect

- a. Team at Crowborough.
- b. Travelling Exhibition : The Secretary has booked two libraries and Mr M.J. Leppard of East Grinstead has asked for our help with an exhibition in 1972. Who will/can make some models, working models?
- c. Syllabus for Schools: A tentative one has been compiled and the Secretary is in communication with the General Schools Adviser (Mr G.W. Bravery), Education Department, P.O. Box 4. County Hall, Lewes.
- d. Collection of Slides: It is hoped to make a select collection of slides suitable for a general/standard lecture on Wealden Iron. The Secretary has a list of those used at East Grinstead. Duplicates of suitable ones are welcomed.
- e. Posters: We need some to accompany the Exhibition and some to advertise the Group.

The Secretary thanks, in particular:

- a. Henry Cleere, for unstinting help before and since the A.G.M.
- b. Mr Leppard, of the East Grinstead Society for his open-hearted gift of information about East Grinstead placenames.
- c. Mr J.C. Powicke and his son for printing, at the mere cost of the card, 500 membership cards.

Sites for Scheduling

The Committee of the Group has selecting the following sites for scheduling. The list will eventually be submitted to the Department of the Environment for consideration.

A. Roman (6 sites)

Large sites	Bardown, Ticehurst Footlands, Sedlescombe Crowhurst Park, Hastings Blacklands, Forest Row
Small sites	Pippingford, Hartfield East Wood, Maresfield

B. Medieval (2 sites)

Not yet decided.

C. Modern

Blast furnaces (9 sites)

Early	Newbridge, Hartfield Oldlands, Buxted
Later	Iron Plat, Buxted Mayfield Pounsley, Framfield Riverhall, Wadhurst Crowborough Warren
Late	Heathfield Ashburnham

Forges (2 sites)

Not yet decided.

(In addition, two modern sites in West Sussex have been reserved, awaiting the advice of Peter Ovenden)

D. Minepits (1 site)

North Clays, Hartfield

Wealden Iron Bibliographies

We hope to build up a series of exhaustive bibliographies. Henry Cleere is engaged in drawing one up for the pre-Roman and Roman bloomery period. Here, meanwhile, are some notes on information to be found in easily accessible sources. They have been compiled largely by David Butler, with a few additions by Joseph Pettitt.

I. Books

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|----------------|---|------|
| M.C. Delany | Historical Geography of the Wealden Iron Industry
1921 | |
| Donald Maxwell | Unknown Kent | 1921 |
| | Unknown Sussex | 1923 |
| Ernest Straker | Wealden Iron | 1931 |
| H.R. Schubert | History of the British Iron and Steel Industry,
c.450 BC to AD 1775 | 1957 |
| | (Note: Copies may still be obtained from The Iron
and Steel Institute, 1 Carlton House Terrace,
London SW1, price 75p plus postage) | |
| R.F. Tylecote | Metallurgy in Archaeology | 1962 |

II. Geology

- | | | |
|--|--|------|
| William Topley | Geology of the Weald (esp. Ch. XIX, Ironworks,
pp.329-346) | 1875 |
| R.W. Gallois | The Wealden District, 4th Edition (in the British
Regional Geology Series, HMSO or the Bookstall,
The Geological Museum, Exhibition Road, London
SW7. There is a detailed bibliography on pp.88-93) | 1967 |
| Geological Maps,
New Series, Colour
Printed,
1 inch to 1 mile | Available for most parts of the Weald. There is
generally a Memoir for each map. The description
of a bloomery on p.107 of "Geology of the Country
around Tenterden" should be disregarded. | |
| Geological Maps,
6 miles to 1 inch,
not coloured | Apply to the Institute of Geological Sciences,
Princes Gate, London SW7 | |
| G.S. Sweeting | Proceedings of the Geologists' Association, Vol.
LV, Part 1 (1964) pp.1-20. This is very
interesting but somewhat out of date. | |

III. Sussex Archaeological Society

a. Sussex Archaeological Collections

(Note: A study of the four indexes, each covering a period of twenty-five years, may suggest a few other items of information.)

Vol	Year	Pages	Author(s)	Title
2	1849		M.A. Lower	Iron Works of the County of Sussex
3	1850	240-248	M.A. Lower	Supplementary Notices
14			M.A. Lower	
18		10-16	M.A. Lower	Sussex Iron Works and Iron Masters
32	1882	19-32	J.L. Parsons	The Sussex Iron Works
46	1903	63-68	W.P. Breach	Extracts relating to Sussex Ordnance from a Carrier's Account Book, 1761
55	1912	278-283	W.V. Crake	A Notice of Maresfield Forge in 1608
55	1912		Chas. Dawson	Copy of a Map showing the Maresfield Ouse navigable up to the Forge (reproduced in Straker)
67	1927	26-54	H. Blackman	Gun Founding at Heathfield in the XVIIIth century
72	1931	253-260	E. Straker	Westall's Book of Panningridge
73	1932	33-82	I.D. Margary	A New Roman Road to the Coast (Edenbridge to Maresfield)
74	1933	17-44	I.D. Margary	A New Roman Road to the Coast (Maresfield to Lewes)
77	1936	27-59	I.D. Margary	The London-Croydon-Portslade Roman Road East Sussex Ironworks
104	1966	63-87	Mary C.L. Salt	The Fullers of Brightling, Part I
106	1968	73-88	Mary C.L. Salt	The Fullers of Brightling, Part II
107	1969	14-24	Mary C.L. Salt	The Fullers of Brightling, Part III

105	1967	37-48	Louisa Cochrane	Linch and its Iron Resources
107	1969	102-125	G. Brodribb	Stamped Tiles of the Classis Britannica

b. Occasional Papers

No 1	1970	H.F. Cleere		The Romano-British Industrial Site at Bardown, Wadhurst. An interim report on excavations 1960-1968
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c. Sussex Notes and Queries

6	1937	217-218	E. Straker	A Lost Tudor Furnace Found
7	1938	97-103	E. Straker	Wealden Ironworks in 1574
7	1939	153-154	E. Straker & R.T. Mason	Notes on a Roman Bloomery Site
7	1939	186		Further Notes
7	1939	206-208	E.W. Hulme	Merstham Firestone and Iron Mining at Charlwood, Surrey
7	1939	250	E.W. Hulme	Further Notes
13	1950	16-19	B.H. Lucas	The Bynes Farm Romano-British Bloomery
13	1952	234-241	G.H. Kenyon	Wealden Iron - Iron-Making Sites
13	1953	321-322	G.H. Kenyon	Impressed Branded Iron Bars
14	1954	78-80	E.R. Burder	Some Mayfield Roads and Bridges (Mayfield Furnace)
14	1954	82-85	E.M. Yates	The Iron Furnace and Forge in Rogate
14	1954	85-91	J. Cornwall	Forestry and the Timber Trade in Sussex 1546-1640
14	1955	133	J. Cornwall	(Short additional note)
14	1956	173	A.W. Fletcher	Primitive Bloomeries in Mayfield (actually one, and wrongly orientated)
14	1957	278	R.T.M.	Romano-British Bloomery in Rotherfield (actually Buxted)
17	1968	22-23	C.F. Tebbutt	Roman Roads at Upper Hartfield
17	1969	101-103	C.S. Cattell	Romano-British Bloomery at Heathfield

17	1970	167-168	P. Archibald, J. Pettitt, and C.F. Tebbutt	Two Dated Bloomery Sites in the Weald
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IV. Bulletin of the Historical Metallurgy Group

3	(2)	1969	55-61	G.R. Morton and J. Wingrove	Slag, Cinder, and Bear
5	(1)	1971	9-11	D.W. Crossley	Some Aspects of Field Work in 16th Century Industrial History
5	(1)	1971	24-28	G.R. Morton and J. Wingrove	The Charcoal Finery and Chafery Forge

V. Journal of the Iron and Steel Institute

169	1951	242-243	H.R. Schubert	A Tudor Furnace in Waterdown Forest (Cowford)
170	1952	108-110	H.R. Schubert	The First English Blast Furnace (Newbridge)
	1961	13	H.R. Schubert	Pensions for Disabled Workers around 1600

List of Members

(AT 31 DECEMBER 1971)

TC	Miss D. Abbott	South Lodge, Slaugham, Haywards Heath, Sx.	
	Mrs J.P.S. Archibald	Home Farm, Etchingwood, Buxted, Uckfield, Sx.	Bd 2227
	Mr J. Manwaring Baines	Public Museum, John Place, Hastings, Sx.	H 1952
	Mr D.H. Bennett	28 Vale Road, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kt	TW 29857
	Mr W.J. Botting	139 Pottingfield Road, Rye, Sx	
	Mr G.B. Boulton	Newlands, New Pond Hill, Cross in Hand, Heathfield, Sx	H 2784
	Mr P.L. Bowler	Fyning Combe, Wadhurst, Sx	
	Mr G. Brodribb	Hydneye House, Baldslow, St Leonards-on-Sea, Sx	H 51100
	Dr P.P. Brodribb	8 Brittany Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, Sx	
	Miss P. Bunt	51 St Peter's Road, Seaford	
Cm	Mr D.S. Butler	63 Mackie Avenue, Hassocks, Sx	H 3896
V-Ch	Mr H.F. Cleere	Little Bardown, Stonegate, Ticehurst, Wadhurst, Sx	420
	Mr R. Cooper	The Dormers, Cousleywood, Wadhurst, Sx	
Cm	Mr D.W. Crossley	Dept. of Economic History, The University of Sheffield	
	Mrs M.E. Davies	14 Victoria Road, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kt	
	Dr P.M.G. Draper	71 Brent Lane, Dartford, Kt	
	Mr H.P. Durant	Abbey Lea, Stonegate, Wadhurst	
	Mr John Edmunds	374 London Road, Earley, Reading, Berks	R 66698
	Mrs A. Fairclough	Hendall Manor, Uckfield, Sx	Buxted 3354
	Mr A. Fayle	The Flat, Nettlesworth Place, Vines Cross, Heathfield, Sx	
	Mr R.P.H. Fleming	23 Birch Crescent, Holt Wood, Aylesford, Kt	
	Miss L.W. Funnell	The Shieling, The Straight Half Mile, Maresfield, Uckfield, Sx	U 3637
	Mrs E. Gibb	Mousehole, Tidebrook, Wadhurst	W 2367
	Mr O.A. Goulden	Woodend, Woodlands Drive, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middx	S 82587
	Mr R.J. Goulden	Horam Manor Farm, Horam, Sx	
	Mr D.M. Hare	Three Borders, 7 The Meades, Dormansland, Lingfield, Sy	
	Mr R. Hartridge	32 Franklin Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, Sx	
	Mrs J. Hayes	Hollymount, High Hurstwood, Uckfield, Sx	Buxted 3126
	Mr D.T. Hemsley	Plangeross, Lynden Lane, Ticehurst, Stonegate, Wadhurst, Sx	402
TC	Mrs V. and Mr B. Herbert	1 Mill Close, East Grinstead, Sx	
	Mr E.W. Holden	5 Tudor Close, Hove, BN3 7NR	

	Mr W.A. Jackson	16 Bentley Close, New Barn, Longfield, Kent	
	Mr G.K. Jones	High Pastures, Grey Wood, East Hoathly, Lewes, Sx	
	Mr P. Jump	Chiltington Ferrings, Plumpton, Sx	P 212
	Mr J.A. Kemp	Nashes Cottage, Catsfield Road, Crowhurst, Battle, Sx	
	Mr G.H. Kenyon	Iron Pear Tree Farm, Kirdford, Billingshurst, Sx	K 248
	Mrs D. Kerr	111 Masons Avenue, Harrow, Middx	
	Mr S.F. Knowles	Birch Croft, Ship Street, East Grinstead, Sx	
	Mr J.P. Lancaster	Cherry Cottage, Marden's Hill, Crowborough, Sx	
	Miss C.C. Lane	Old School House, Muddles Green, Chiddingly, Lewes, Sx	
	Mr R. Lane	Lower Parrock, Hartfield, Sx	
	Mrs M. Lenartowicz	127 Bulstrode Avenue, Hounslow, Middx	
	Mrs D.I. Martin	Hon. Sec, Robertsbridge & District Arch. Soc., 16 Langham Road, Robertsbridge, Sx	R 578
	Mr D.L. Maskell	Ivander, Stonegate, Wadhurst, Ticehurst, Sx	595
	Mr I.B. Mason	44 High Street, Drayton, Abingdon, Berks	
Tr	Mrs D. and Mr A. Meades	Huggett's Farm, High Hurstwood, Buxted, Uckfield, Sx	3131
	Mr A. Miles	66 Headcorn Road, Biddenden, Ashford, Kt	
	Mrs E. and Mrs C. Merrett	Corner Bungalow, Osborne Hill, Crowborough, Sx	
	Mr J.H. Money	25 Philbeach Gardens, London SW5	
	Mr V.J. Newbury	Old Forge House, Hollingbourne, Kt	H 360
Cm	Dr P.J. Ovenden	Dept. of Chemistry, University of Southampton, and 56 Station Road, Sholing, Hants	S 56331
	Mr W. Partridge	3 Beech Cottages, Netherfield Place, Battle, Sx	
S/TC	Mrs P.H. and Mr J. Pettitt	42 Silverdale Road, Earley, Reading, Berks	R 63878
	Mr C.F.R. Potter	Mertens House, Ardingly College, Haywards8 Heath, Sx	
	Mr W.F. Randall	Round Plat, Hooe, Battle, Sx	
Cm/TC	Mr A.G. Scott	36 Clinton Crescent, St Leonards on Sea, Sx	Hastings 31491
	Mr J. Setford	49 Ravenswood Road, Burgess Hill, Sx	
	Mr D.K. Simms	8 Glen Rise, Brighton 5, Sx	
	Mr K. Sharp	18 Boulthurst Way, Limpsfield, Oxted, Sy	
	Mr J.G. Stainbridge	Rangers Bars, Beckley, Rye, Sx	
TC	Mrs J. Stiles	Herrings, Dallington, Heathfield, Sx	Rushlake Green 220
	Mr B. Stoneham	5 Lime Close, Frant, Sx	
	Mr M. Tate	The Oast House, Little Trodgers Farm, Mark Cross, Sx	

	Mrs F.E. Taylor	Gooselease, 26 College Lane, Hassocks, Sx
Ch	Mr C.F. Tebbutt	The Pheantry, Wych Cross, Forest Row, Sussex FR 2321
	Mr E.B. Teesdale	The Hogge House, Buxted, Sx B 2293
	Mr D. Thorpe	Chauntlers, Chiddingly, Lewes, Sx Ch 401
Aud	Mr D. Tullett	41 Farncombe Road, Tunbridge Wells, KentTW 30981
	Mr R.D. Twigg	19 Boulthurst Way, Limpsfield, Oxted, Sy L Chart 2286
	Mr P. Vince	Church Cottage, Wych Cross, Forest Row, Sx,
	Mr H. Walden	3 Copse Avenue, West Wickham, Kt 777 5582
	Miss P. White	Flat 1, 109 Marina, St Leonards-on-Sea, Sx
	Miss B. Willard	Forest Edge, Nutley, Uckfield, Sx N 2535
	Mr P. Willmott	Ivy Hole Cottage, High Hurstwood, Uckfield, Sx Buxted 3246
	Mr E.S. Wood	Far End, 21 Ganghill, Guildford, Sy
	Mr B.C. Worssam	Institute of Geological Sciences, Prince Consort Road, London, S.W.5 and 3 Corunna Drive, Horsham, Sx

INSTITUTIONS

TC	Mr J. Gibson-Hill	Crawley Archaeological Group, 124 Rother Crescent, Gossops Green, Crawley, Sx
	Mr D.P. Jones	Hailsham Secondary School, 52 London Road, Hailsham, Sx
	Mr Felix Holling	Guildford Museum, Castle Arch, Guildford, Sy
	Mr G. Knowles	Scunthorpe Museum and Art Gallery, Oswald Road, Scunthorpe, Lincs
	The Librarian	Department of the Environment, Lambeth Bridge House, London S.E.1

Abbreviations

Ch = Chairman. V-Ch = Vice-Chairman. Tr = Treasurer.
S = Secretary. TC = Team Convener. Cm = Committee Member