

Wealden Iron



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WEALDEN IRON RESEARCH GROUP

Bulletin No 8 Second Series

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Field Notes

compiled by J. S. Hodgkinson

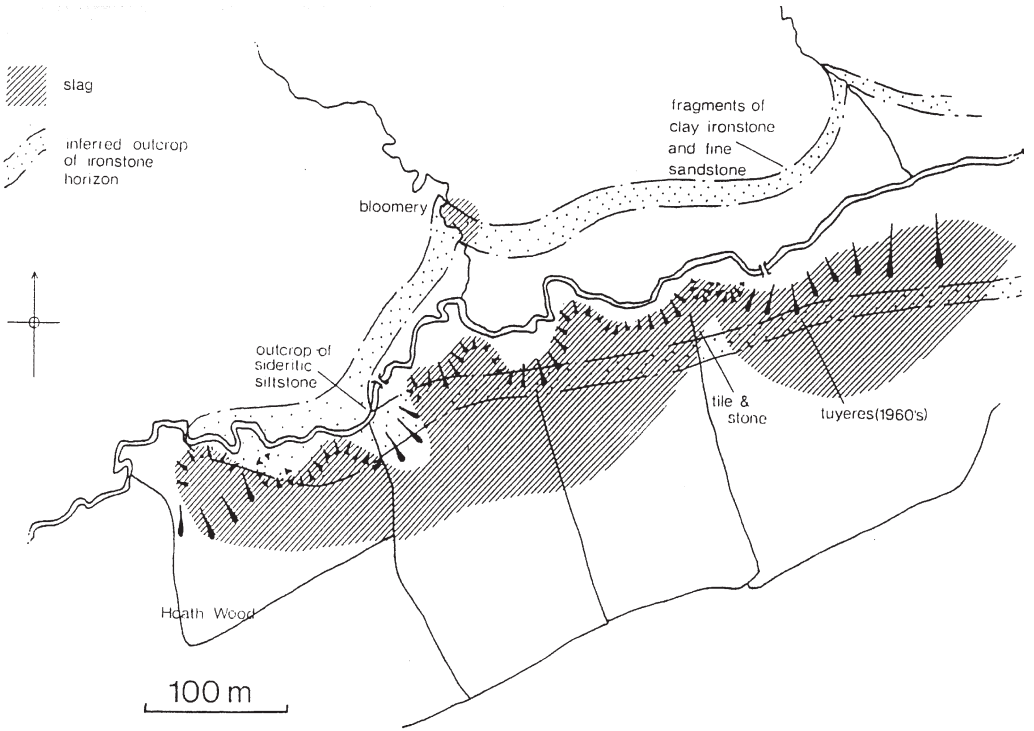
Except where otherwise stated, finds will be deposited at Barbican House, Lewes.

Chitcombe Romano-British Ironworks, Brede, Sussex

January & February 1987

This site has been described by Rock¹ and the main features can be identified from his description. The purpose of the two visits made by the Field Group in January and February 1987 was to examine the site in the light of present-day knowledge.

Slag extends for some 600m along the south bank of the River Tillingham between TQ 808210 and TQ 814212. The stream valley is steep along its southern side where it borders the fields referred to by Rock as 'Cindrills'. Along this slope, which gets higher towards the east, are six distinct tips of slag, up to 10m high and approximately 100m apart, formed, it is presumed, by the debris from workings, in the 'Cindrills' and in Hoath Wood, being tipped over the edge of the bank above the stream. The debris varied between large flat cakes of tap slag, furnace bottoms, cinder from within furnaces, burnt clay and furnace lining. On two of the tips, badgers had burrowed deep, ejecting considerable quantities of hard furnace debris. Using a metal detector and an experimental, home-made magnetometer, slag was detected in a wide area to the south of the tips. The hedgerow referred to by Rock is also still in evidence and stone blocks and large fragments of striated tile were found (TQ 8119 2113). A few pieces of tile were also found in the stream nearby.



Chitcombe Romano-British Ironworks, Brede

The tile fragments were examined by Mr David Rudling who confirmed that they were typical of the Roman period.

There were seven fragments of box flue, varying in thickness between 10mm and 20mm, with comb markings. One of these had criss-cross combing and another had distinct six-tooth comb marks. In addition there was one fragment of flue tile, of an average thickness of 24mm, with parallel combing and evidence of some sort of aperture. Also examined were one fragment of *tegula* and one fragment of *imbrex*. The existence of tile of the type described above suggests a building, possibly with a heating system, or a bath house, as at Beauport Park or Garden Hill. The fragments will be deposited in Hastings Museum.

On the first of the two visits the Field Group were shown the site of agricultural digging which had taken place in the mid 1960s. On that occasion, a hard stone base had been uncovered and several tuyères found. One complete double tuyère, and part of a second in which the two air ducts are shown to join, were presented to Hastings Museum in 1967.²

A further heap of slag indicating a bloomery was noted at TQ 8103 2118 in a tributary gill to the north. The separation of this site from the main one suggests that working there may not have been contemporary with it. No datable material was found.

B.C. Worssam writes:

The site is on Ashdown Beds, with a gentle northerly dip. To judge from exposures along the River Tillingham, and up the gill northwards from the small isolated bloomery, the Ashdown Beds hereabouts consist largely of pale grey to yellow silt and silty clay. However, near the north-east corner of Hoath Wood (TQ 8096 2105) a very hard, massive bed of pale brown sideritic siltstone, up to 0.6m thick, crosses the bed of the river; close above it, in one of

the river banks, nodules of fine-grained clay ironstone were seen *in situ*. The siltstone is very like that in the Ashdown Beds at Snape Wood, near Wadhurst,³ mining of which was attempted in the 19th century.⁴ Perhaps too hard and intractable for a bloomery furnace ore it seems to have found other uses, for blocks of it occur at the site of the stone wall mentioned by Rock (above). The clay ironstone associated with it looks a good quality ore. A thin bed of silty clay ironstone is exposed in a low river cliff adjoining a shallow quarry at TQ 8090 2102, and fragments of ironstone and of fine sandstone are ploughed up on the valley side north of the river, along a break of slope corresponding to but much less pronounced than that through the bloomery site.

In the river bed near the siltstone outcrop, as well as on the lower slopes of the valley through the western part of the site, occurs a pale grey to white, soft plastic Ashdown Beds clay; the ironworkers would have needed to look no further for clay to make furnaces.

All this evidence points to the existence in the Ashdown Beds of a clay band perhaps 3m to 4m in total thickness, in which sideritic siltstone, ironstone and a little thin sandstone are developed, probably at no more than one level. This unit, cropping out near the valley bottom at about 30m OD, is some 30m below the top of the Ashdown Beds, for the basal Wadhurst Clay comes on at about 60m OD on the higher slopes.

Iron working may possibly have started on a small scale where the ore was first seen in stream sections, and then developed progressively along the ore outcrop. The large quantities of slag may imply that some ore was brought from elsewhere once the site was well established.

Owlsbury Farm, Rotherfield

March & November 1987

Following the successful trenching of the four sites at this location in 1986 (WIRG, *Wealden Iron*, 2nd series 7 (1987)), a further visit was made to seek dating evidence. In two cases trenching was made difficult by the degree which the slag has spread down the hillside, and by the thick covering of downwashed soil. In one case (TQ 527272), where the furnace debris has been eroded by the stream, it was possible to trowel in to the slag and a substantial sample of charcoal from the base of the heap was removed should radiocarbon dating be required.

A further bloomery (TQ 5270 2727) was examined but no means of dating were found.

Ridge Hill Romano-British Bloomery, East Grinstead

April 1987

The Field Group visited this site, excavated by Straker in 1927,⁵ and observed a possible ore source in a small quarry at TQ 3687 3550. That the quarry had long been a feature of the landscape was supported by the presence of Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) around the rim and on the floor of the feature. These woodland trees take a long time to establish as has been shown in studies of hedgerow species and their presence suggests that the quarry had hitherto been in woodland for a long period. Five sherds of Romano-British pottery were recovered from the stream bank at TQ 3695 3556. They have been examined by Mr David Rudling who has described them as a body sherd of East Sussex ware, a body and lid rim sherd of sandy grey ware, a body sherd of sandy buff ware, and a body sherd of dark surfaced, fine grey ware with grooved decoration.

A Bloomery at Danehill, Sussex

A concentration of bloomery slag in a hedgebank and at an approximate depth of 30mm in the adjacent area of a field (TQ 405259) has been discovered on land which is part of Sliders Farm at Furners Green in Danehill. No dating evidence has been found. We are grateful to Mr J. Butler of Haven Farm, Danehill, for making known the site.

Leather Shoes from Footland Farm

The fragments of leather found during the Field Group's visit to Footland Farm, Sedlescombe, in 1985,⁶ have been examined by Ms Quita Mould. The fragments probably constitute parts of the uppers of two shoes. The smaller fragment is from the left side of a one piece/moccasin shoe of a type frequently found in the northern Roman provinces in the first and second centuries AD, and possibly into the third century.

The larger fragment appears to combine features found on shoes of differing constructions. The stitching suggests that it is part of the left side of a one-piece moccasin type, but its latchet fastening is a feature more common with shoes of nailed construction. It may therefore be of mid second century, nailed construction or it may be an early third century example of a one-piece shoe with features copied from nailed varieties. A full report will be published in *Sussex Archaeological Collections*. The fragments and other finds from the site will be deposited at Hastings Museum.

Further Notes on Footlands

It is worth noting that more details have come to light of the excavation which took place at Footlands in 1925. Herbert Blackman, a noted early fieldworker, left some volumes of notes on his visits to iron sites⁷ and amongst these are details of May 2nd, 1925, spent in the company of John Ray and Ernest Straker, and a hired labourer, trenching a slag heap at Footlands. Straker later referred to a trench although he set the excavation in September of that year.⁸ However, Straker's description of the trench so closely follows that of Blackman that it is reasonable to infer that Straker may have got his dates muddled. The involvement of the Sussex Archaeological Society came about because Mr Ray had brought the proposed excavation to the attention of the Society's Council who duly appointed the participants as a sub-committee. They never reported back and as Herbert Blackman died in the following year, it seems likely the excavation in May 1925 was all that was accomplished at that time.

A Bloomery at Crawley, Sussex

A result of the Great Storm of October 16th, 1987, was the uprooting of a mature Field Maple tree on the north side of the Driftway, about 100m west of Crawley High Street (TQ 2675 3700). Embedded in the earth surrounding its roots were a number of pieces of bloomery slag, including an almost complete furnace bottom, and several fragments of medieval pottery. Probing suggested that the slag covered an area some two or three metres around the base of the tree. Most of the pottery consisted of sherds probably from the same vessel; a green glazed jug with graffito decoration of at least three

faces set in triangular fields delineated by double lines. The vessel had an approximate diameter of 22cm and dates from between the late thirteenth and the early fifteenth centuries.

On the tithe map for Ifield parish, a pond is recorded in the approximate location of the above site. It is possible that the pond owed its origin to surface iron ore working.

We are grateful to Mr D. Edwards and Mrs P. Bracher for information about this site.

Pen Ponds at Cuckfield

T. E. Evans

Above Mackrell's Farm, the site of Cuckfield Forge (TQ 302236), is a small tributary of the River Adur and, at TQ 305243, a public footpath crosses what is evidently a bay with a small pond above it, now a Sussex Nature Conservation Site. On the crest of the bay are a few substantial oak trees, probably more than two centuries old. Through the bay is a stone lined, circular culvert approximately 0.5m-1m in diameter with more recent brickwork, as the stone blocks appear to be of ancient origin. Repairs in brick and concrete appear to have been abandoned at some time following a collapse of the downstream side of the bay. A few metres to the east, a shallow quarry, with outcropping sandstone, may have been the source of the blocks.

Viewed from the bay, towards Mackrell's, the remains of two further bays (both breached) are clearly defined so that at least three pen ponds are identifiable. In the adjacent field (TQ 306242) are a number of grassy mounds which may be building platforms although they may owe their origin to a golf course which occupied the area earlier this century.

A Bloomery Furnace at Fairlight, Sussex

Barry Funnell

Ernest Straker refers, albeit briefly, to the existence of a bloomery furnace at Fairlight, three quarters of a mile north of Fairlight Church, near Hastings.⁹

The site is actually in Peter James's Lane and the bloomery to which Straker refers was, according to an elderly local resident, discovered when Birchen Knoll Cottage was built over it in the late 1920s.

Just recently, the occupants of the cottage decided to add a garage. This involved excavating about 1.75m of earth to create a suitable level. A bulldozer was brought in and, as the work proceeded, an area of bright clay was exposed, together with bloomery cinder. Then the bulldozer pierced through what seemed to be a hollow clay structure. At the top was a vent tube, square in shape and of hard compacted clay. Unfortunately this was lost as work proceeded. However, an almost perfect double tuyère was found and this is now in Hastings Museum's Wealden iron collection, together with samples of the cinder.

In the very short time available, I was able to record the bloomery with my camera before the entire site was covered in thick concrete. Adjacent to the site is an open area of pasture known as Cinderbank Field. The farmer told me it was quite useless trying to plough it because of the immense amount of hard cinder in the soil. It points to a very productive bloomery.

Incidentally, some of the cinder I found was black and glassy, almost like blast furnace slag. The rich colour of the burnt clay and the black, glassy cinder suggest to me that a considerable temperature was achieved.

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6. Hodgkinson, J.S., 'Footlands Ironworking Site, Sedlescombe', WIRG, *Wealden Iron*, 2nd series 7 (1987), 25, 32.
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8. Straker, E. (1931), op.cit. 327.
9. *ibid.*, 339.



Addendum

With reference to the article, 'Rowfant Supra Forge', by J. S. Hodgkinson in WIRG, *Wealden Iron*, 2nd series **6** (1986) 49-51, a copy of the map referred to can now be seen at West Sussex Record Office, Chichester, ref. MP 2746.

Pre-industrial Revolution Cast Iron Graveslabs

Rosalind M. Willatts

(The catalogue of iron graveslabs, which follows this introduction, has been published in microfiche as part of a paper by Miss Willatts in Sussex Archaeological Collections 125, (1987), 99-113. A much fuller introduction is printed in the Collections and we are grateful to the Editor of the Collections for permission to print the catalogue here. J.S.H.)

The cast iron graveslab is a rarity among sepulchral monuments. Unlike the metalwork of many earlier monumental brasses it is seldom a work of great artistic merit. It belongs firmly to the vernacular, it spans two centuries, with one exception is confined to two geographical regions, and was used by one social class. In form it is a substitute in iron for the ubiquitous ledger stone. Some 106 slabs have been located; they date from c.1537 to 1799. The majority (86) are in the Weald; 18 are in the Welsh Marchlands, a dozen of them emanating from Bringewood Forge (SO 4579) on the Herefordshire/Shropshire border. There are also two fine 18th century slabs in Yorkshire to an industrialist's children and an isolated example at Bermondsey in London, but this is to a native of the Kentish iron working village of Horsmonden.

The technique of casting iron was introduced into the Weald in 1497. The first (undated) iron slab is at Burwash to Jhone Coline (John Collins, died 1537); this slab confusingly uses anachronistic Lombardic letters but has a Latin exhortation (*orate pro anima*) frequently found in the half century before the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539. The first dated slab, of 1570, is at East

Grinstead. Other Tudor slabs are at Rotherfield, Withyham and Crowhurst, Surrey. This last, of 1591 to Anne Forster is unusual: firstly for the size of its inscription, the pattern for which was carved on a single block 64 x 41.5cm, rather than using moveable letters. Secondly for its design, so reminiscent of monumental brasses of the early 16th century by having effigial portrayals of Anne in her winding sheet together with kneeling figures of her two sons and five daughters; there are also heraldic shields. Thirdly, the inscription was used several times as decoration on firebacks. One such fireback was found in Norwich in 1788; others with the same trailing vine motif are in churches at East Grinstead and Ardingly, in the Anne of Cleves Museum at Lewes, in a public house at Billingshurst and a private house at Cranleigh, Surrey.

The more commonly known fireback is similar to the graveslab in size, form and date. It appeared in the 1540s, was made throughout the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth. The basic difference is that only three sides of the fireback have moulded edges in contrast to the four of a graveslab. Just as firebacks purported to be graveslabs have found their way into churches as at East Grinstead and Ardingly, so graveslabs have been used as firebacks and hearthstones, as at East Grinstead and the Withyham slab in the Anne of Cleves Museum at Lewes.

The majority of slabs in both the Weald and Welsh Marchlands date from the 17th century, becoming fewer, finer and larger in the early 18th century.

In both areas moveable letter patterns and heraldic pattern blocks were used; in both areas the people commemorated are ironmasters and their families or professional people such as lawyers, as at East Grinstead and Mayfield, or parsons, as at Withyham and Hopton Castle (Salop). At West Hoathly where there was a marriage alliance between the Infeld ironmasters and the ancient armigerous Culpepper family, the Infelds were buried under iron, although Katherine Culpepper, an Infeld wife, was buried under stone. As

the ironmasters prospered so did their social aspirations: arms were acquired (the Barhams at Wadhurst), assumed (the Legas at Wadhurst), or borrowed (Thomas Sands 1708 at Mayfield) and appeared on the slabs. Later marble mural monuments were used instead, sometimes referring to interment beneath existing iron plates, as at Wadhurst 1747 and 1771, Chiddingstone (Kent) 1709, and Burrington (Herefordshire) 1803.

Some slabs have wandered in, out and around their churches; others have remained *in situ* despite the vicissitudes of time and the fortunes of church building and restoration. All three slabs at East Grinstead were moved out, perhaps after the destruction of the church in 1785 by the fall of the tower, but subsequently returned into the church; three at West Hoathly have roamed about the church interior; that at Penhurst (Sussex) was returned to the chancel after a century's banishment under the tower. Some have been repositioned on the walls as at Uckfield, West Hoathly and Bridgnorth. Others have resiliently remained *in situ* whilst their churches were re-ordered around them as at Crowhurst (Surrey) and Cowfold (Kent), or furniture was built over them as at Withyham, Mayfield and Crowhurst (Sussex). The extreme example is at Burrington (Herefordshire) where the slabs remain where first placed, although the chancel was rebuilt and diminished, so leaving them unmoved but stranded in the churchyard! Others are in totally rebuilt churches as at Uckfield and Leighton (Salop).

The slabs become fewer in the 18th century, perhaps because the ironmasters then aspired to marble monuments. Those that occur are often finer in casting, lettering and design (as to the Beaumonts at Sandal Magna, Yorkshire, and to William Mercer at Bermondsey), and larger – the largest (108cm x 212cm) being to the Gotts at Streat 1748, and to Richard and Ralph Knight (both 102cm x 211cm) at Burrington, 1745 and 1754.

Some later slabs are found in churchyards, as at Brightling where they are upright, or on altar tombs as at Cowden and Wadhurst

1799. But by 1813 when ironworking had ceased in the Weald, iron monuments in churchyards were appearing. Large architectural upright monuments, some with urns, are found in Shropshire as at Madeley (to the Baldwin family) and at St. Mary's Bridgnorth. There is one at Laughton in Sussex. These are all of coke smelted cast iron rather than the charcoal iron as were the slabs from the Weald and Bringewood Forge. The move to churchyards was early in the Black Country and Shropshire where coke was used early for smelting in the 18th century. By the early 19th century the use of iron was occasional; it occurs as early as 1809 at Itteringham in Norfolk. By the end of the century upright iron slabs and crosses were found widespread in England, used for humble people. Of these, few remain. In the churchyards of St. Annes at Lewes and at West Hoathly are cast iron leaping-board grave boards, imitating in iron the stone and wooden Wealden vernacular churchyard memorials. These are late 19th century, commemorating deaths from 1838 to 1887.

The accompanying catalogue of the pre-Industrial Revolution slabs gives full details of those in the Weald, but only the location and dates are given for those in other areas.

Catalogue of Early Iron Graveslabs in the Weald

1. The date of the slab is given as the date of death of the person or last person commemorated.
2. Dimensions are given width first, length second; where it is possible to measure, the thickness is given last.
3. Grid references are given for all churches.
4. All letters and decoration are embossed unless stated: 'flush' and 'recessed' relate to the general surface of the slab; 'planklines' indicates the vertical lines formed by planks used to create a flat casting bed.

Kent

Chiddingstone TQ 5045

1. 1601 **Richard Streatfeilde**, middle aisle against south pews
53cm x 153cm

LOE • HERE • THE • COPES • OF • RICHARD / STREATFEILDE
• GREENE • IN • YERES / BVT • RIPE • IN • FAITH • 5 • FRVTE •
YET / SEENE • GOD • HATH • HIS • SOVLE – / THIS • TOWNE •
HIS • FAME • THE • POOR^e / A • PORTION • LARGE • OF • ALL •
HIS – / WORDLY • STOORE • VIVIT • POST – / VNERA • VIRTVS •
OBIIT • 15 • DIE • SE / PTEMBERIS • ANNO • 1601 • aeTATIS • SVE
/ 40

Inscription in recessed panel 49cm x 22cm with 1.9cm flush letters; an extension has been made for the final '40' below the panel. High beaded rim 2cm wide round slab.

This is the first of many memorials to the Streatfeilde family which continue until 1966. On the south wall is a monument to Henry Streatfeild who died 2 March 1709, aged 71 'and is buried under the Iron plate in the Middle Ile of this church'.

2. 1714 **Thomas Baset**, south aisle

88cm x 183cm

HERE • LYETH • BVREIED / THE BODY • OF THOM/AS • BASET
• OF • COWDEN / THE • SON • OF • MICHAEL / BASET • OF •
CHIDDING / STOEN • WHO • DEPERTED / THIS • LIFE • ON •
THE • 13 / DAY OF • IANVARY ANO / DOMINI • 1714¹⁵ • IN •
THE / 71 • YEAR • OF • HIS • AGE

5cm incised letters of 1cm wide lines. L of Michael reversed; each A has top bar; each I has cross bar. Mud crazing and planklines.

3. 1714 **Ann Basset**, south aisle

88cm x 183cm.

HERE • LIEH • BVRIED • THE / BODY • OF • ANN • THE / WIFE
• OF • JOHN • BASSET / OF EATONBRIDG • AND / DAEFTER •
OF • RICHARD / CRONK • OF • TVNBRIDG / WHO • DEPRTE
• THIS / LIFE • ON • THE • 19 • DAY / OF • IANVARY • ANNO
/ DOMNI • 1714 • AND IN / THE • 55 • YEAR • OF • HER / AGE
• LEAVING • FIVE • CH / ILDREN • VIZ • 3 DAUGHT / ERS •
AND • 2 SONS • ACCO / RDING • TO • TERE • AGES / AS •
FOLLOWETH • SARAH / ANN • AND KATHERIN / MICHAEL •
AND • IOHN

Slab similar to No.2 to THOMAS BASET. 5cm incised letters with lines 1cm wide. One C reversed; N reversed; each I with cross bar; each A with top bar; one A with cross bar omitted. Mud crazing and planklines.

Cowden TQ 4640

1. 1622 **John Bottinge**, nave, partly under front north pew
60.5cm wide, lower 80cm exposed.

... / IOHN • BOT • TI / NGE • OF • THE / BOWERWH / O • DIED •
THE / SECONDDA / Y • OF • IVNE • AN / ODO1622

Inscription in recessed panel 38cm wide with rounded corners; 5cm

flush letters; central crossbar to each I. Blister holes to lower slab. There was a 'clearing of the church throughout' in 1884 followed by the provision of new pews which left the slab partially covered.

2 & 3 1726 **Richard Still**, 1730 **Mary Still** churchyard north east of chancel
79cm x 183cm.

A pair of low brick altar tombs covered by thick cast iron slabs having overhanging ovolo moulded edges.

HERE • LYETH • THE / BODY • OF • RICHARD • STILL (MARY • STILL) / WHO • DEPARTED • THIS / LIFE • NOVEMBER (JUNE) / THE • 19th 1726 (THE • 6th 1730) / AGED 66 (AGED 72)

Finely formed and cast letters 0.7cm proud; large capitals 4.7cm, small capitals 3.3cm, centred lines.

Horsmonden TQ 7038

1. 1644 **Martha Browne**, base of chancel step, head to south
59cm x 159cm. Incised inscription on brass plate 38 x 17cm.

VNDER THIS PLATE LIE BVRIED / Y^E BODY OF MARTHA
BROWNE / THE BELOVED WIFE OF JOHN / BROWNE ESQ SHE
DECEASED / IULY^E 28 • 1644 •

1.6cm engraved Roman capitals. Plain edged slab. John Browne (died 1651) held the furnace at Brenchley, 3km north of the church. He made guns for Charles I, the Commonwealth, and the United Provinces (Netherlands).

Surrey

Bermondsey, (London) St. Mary Magdalen, TQ 3379

1. 1718 **William Mercer**, north aisle, head to north
89cm x 177cm.

HERE • LYETH • INTERR'D / THE • BODY • OF • WILLIAM /
MERCER • TANNER • OF / THIS • PARISH • AND / ELIZABETH •
HIS • WIFE / HE • DIED • IVNE • THE • 30TH / 1718 • AGED • 28
• YEARS / AND • WAS • SON • OF / WILLIAM • MERCER / OF •
HORSMANDEN • IN / KENT

Fine thin 5cm letters with serifs; well spaced words filling each line. Raised beaded rim. The slab is the furthest of any from an ironworking area, being 55km as the crow flies from Horsmonden.

Crowhurst TQ 3947

1. 1591 **Anne Forster**, under altar
54cm x 136cm.

HERE : LIETH : ANE : FORST / R : DAVGHTER : AND : / HEYR :
T0 : THOMAS / GAYNSFORD : ESQVIER / DECEASED : XVIII : OF
/ IANVARI : 1591 : LEAVING / BEHIND : HERII : SONES : / AND : V :
DAVGHTERS

Inscription on a block 64 x 41.5cm placed sideways at top. Inscription cast from single carved wooden pattern: each letter is different. S and Y reversed, F inverted. Below on the slab to right of inscription is a 36cm relief figure in a closed knotted shroud representing Anne. On either side are shields on oblong blocks (12.5cm x 17cm) showing her children: on her right two sons semi kneeling with the letters W and F; on her left the daughters kneeling (only the front two are clear, the other three are faintly shown behind). In the lower corners are heraldic shields, one showing a chevron between three running hounds for Gainsford. There are rope edges on all four sides around a border of large bunches of

grapes. The only slab with effigial representation. The inscription block was subsequently used to decorate firebacks. Examples can be seen in the churches at Ardingly and East Grinstead, in Anne of Cleves Museum at Lewes and in Ye Olde Six Bells public house at Billingshurst. The chancel was restored in 1886.

Sussex

Brightling TQ 6820

Six similar upright headslabs cast from same mould; 57.5cm x 73cm, plus 17cm above for pediment, plus 36cm below to be sunk into ground, x 3cm thick.

1. 1744 **Nicholas Russel**, churchyard northeast of chancel.

HERE lyeth / the Body of / NICHOLAS RUSSEL /who ... / ... / 1744
Aged 57

Incised inscription, lines curved upwards.

2. 1752 or 1757, **Elizabeth Piper**, churchyard northwest of tower.

In Memory (of) / (E)L(I)z(ABETH) PIPER / Wife of JESSE PIPER / of
this parish who / departed this life / ... 175

Incised inscription.

- 3 & 4 Two headslabs adjacent to that of Elizabeth Piper (No.2);
indecipherable inscriptions.

- 5 & 6 Two slabs in south porch upright against west wall; no
inscription apparent.

All six slabs with main face having a border of festoons tumbling from eye sockets of skulls at top corners; cornice with egg and dart

moulding; shaped pediment with foliage, patera, and scrolls bearing embossed letters **NOVOMIS MORTAR**. The inscriptions were incised parts of only two inscriptions remain but are rapidly becoming indecipherable.

The furnace at Socknersh was in the parish and the church contains many marble memorials to the Collins family who owned it. There are no iron slabs inside.

Burwash TQ 6724

1. c. 1537 **John Collins**, mural, south aisle chapel; 47.5cm and 46.5cm x 168cm and 167.5cm.

ORATE PANNEMA / JHONE COLINE

(orate pro anima – pray for the soul of) 2.5cm Lombardic letters.

The use of Lombardics is an anachronism, they were in use in the 13th and 14th centuries; iron casting was not introduced into England until 1496.

A very narrow slab with plain borderless edges. Above inscription is a floriated cross 30cm x 7.5cm on a tall oblong base 5.7cm x 11cm. The earliest cast iron graveslab.

John Collins, who worked the Socknersh Furnace in the next parish, died in 1537.

Crowhurst near Hastings, TQ 7512

1. No date, chancel under boards of organ platform; 80cm x 204cm x 2.5cm. Plain slab, only about 15cm protrudes from under the organ platform installed 1930. When the boards were lifted in May 1983, the slab was found to be totally plain. The church was restored in 1856 by S. Teulon.

East Grinstead TQ 3938

1. 1570 **Anne Barclay**, nave, in front of rood screen
149cm x 59.5cm.

HERE • LYETH • ANNE. BARCLEY • SOMTYME / WIFE • VNTO •
HENRY • BARCLEY • DOCTOR • OF / LAWE • DECEASED • THE
• 12 • OF • MAY • 1570

5cm letters; each letter pressed individually into the sand casting bed; some letters joined, as H and E, T and H, and N and E.

The earliest dated slab. The inscription is on the long axis in three lines separated by thin diagonal lines. Plain borderless edges.

Anne was the first wife of Henry Barclay who was later M.P. for East Grinstead.

In 1875 the slab was found upside down in use as the scullery step in the adjacent Vicarage. It was returned to the church in 1881. The church had been destroyed by the collapse of the tower in 1785 and later rebuilt.

2. 1616 **Francis Haselden**, nave south, in front of lectern
134.5cm x 46cm.

HERE • LYETH • BURYED • FRANCIS • HASELDEN • LATE • WIFE
/ VNTO • IOHN • HASELDEN • OF • HALY • DAFTER • VNTO •
HVMPFRY / (CO)VERT • ESQVYRE • WHO • DYED • AVGVST • 26
• ANNO • 16(16)

4cm letters. Many linked letters as A and V, H and A.

A plain borderless slab with inscription along the main axis.

The slab was returned to the church after the adjacent Vicarage was burnt down in 1908. Having been used as a hearthstone there it shows severe heat damage. The lower corners have been cut off to make the slab fit a fireplace. The missing inscription and date have been cut into the surrounding pavement, ascertained from parish records. Haly is Hurley, 3.5km southwest of the church (TQ 3636).

3. 1714 **Thomas Wickersham**, mural, west wall of north aisle
53.5cm x 15.5cm, 1.8cm thick at top and 2.2cm at base.

HERE LYETH THE BODY / OF THOMAS WICKERSHAM / WHO
DIED MAY THE 15 / 15 AGED 75 YEARS / A DOMINE 1713

Thin incised letters with serif's, 3 3.5cm high. Plain borderless slab.
The slab was unearthed from the churchyard in November 1931, and
brought inside. Thomas was churchwarden 1683-86 and was buried
15 May, 1714, according to parish records.

Frant TQ 5939

1. 1631 **S F (Fowles)**, central aisle west
74cm x 188cm x 2cm.

No inscription; five shields 18 x 14cm each with square showing
Fowles crest (an arm holding battleaxe), dated 1631 below on shield.

2. Undated, c.1630 **E F (Fowles)**, centre aisle west
c.60cm x 190cm.

Several shields with the Fowles arms (a leopard passant between
three roses). This shield is from the same block as used at Wadhurst
and on a fireback at Hastings Museum.

3. Undated, c.1630 **H F (Fowles)**, centre aisle west
c.60cm x 190cm.

A large shield to top left shows the Fowles arms impaling a quartered arms.

All three Frant slabs lie hidden under carpets beneath the west gallery. The church was rebuilt from 1819 to 1822: the piers supporting the west gallery are of cast iron. The Fowles family held the Riverhall Furnace on the boundary of Frant with Wadhurst.

Hartfield TQ 4735

1. 1702 **John Mills**, south arcade in front of easternmost pier
53.5cm x 150.5cm.

Heare lyethe body of / Muster John Mills / of Cotchford in Hartfield
/ Suxix ... / october ... on ... dom ... 1702

Incised letters; plain borderless slab.

Poorly formed uneven lower case letters. Parts of the inscription are now difficult to decipher, but in 1902 C.N. Sutton in his *History of Withyham, Hartfield* stated the last two lines to read: ‘...in Sussex, he dyed 26th of October on Adomany 1702’ (Adomany = Anno Domini). The church was restored in 1867.

Maresfield TQ 4724

1. 1667 **Robert Brooks**, loose under tower
55.5cm x 170.5cm x 12.7cm.

HERE LYETH THE / BODY OF M ROBE / RT BROOKS WHO /
DEPARTED THIS / LIFE THE 12 / DAY OF IVNE / AEATIS SVIE 1667

4cm letters in recessed bands across the middle of the slab; each A with top bar and v cross bar. A recessed 2.5cm line down each side of slab.

One of the AEATIS SVIE series; the date of death has been given instead of the age. The T has been omitted from 'aetatis'. Planklines. In 1852 A. Hussey in his *Notes on the Churches of Kent, Sussex and Surrey* records three iron slabs in the chancel, for only one of which he gives a date. The other two presumably disappeared when the church was restored in 1879, being unattributed. They are said to be buried in the churchyard (information from Miss L. Funnell of Maresfield). Rough lumps of cast iron occur in the gravel paths of the churchyard.

Mayfield TQ 5827

1. 1668 **Thomas Sands**, centre aisle against south pews
59-60cm x 169-171.5cm.

HEAR • LYETH / THE • BODY • OF / THOMAS • SANDS /// WHO
• WAS / BVRYED • IVLY / THE • 20 • 1668 /// AGED • 72 / YEARS

Letters from 3.8cm-10cm; N, S and 7 reversed, planklines. Uneven cast surface.

A crude, poorly executed slab with neither lines nor letters straight.

2. 1669 **John Baker** aged 3 months, chancel under south stalls
59cm wide.
3. 1671 **John Baker** aged 15 months, chancel under south stalls
59cm wide.

The two slabs are head to foot and together measure 244cm.

In 1979 an end of each was visible, but now only the lower end of the 1671 slab is exposed.

... DOROTHEAE / BAKER • HIC • IACET / INQVINDECIMENSE /
AETATIS • OBIVIT • AN / NO QVE • DOMINI 1671

Incised Roman capitals. Below is incised a straight sided shield of arms (a castle between three keys palewise) and VITA BREVIS.

A mural monument in the chancel to John Baker (died 1688) records that he had 13 children of whom five are buried near their father, including John 2 and 3. These two are under iron slabs beneath the choir stalls.

4. 1669 **T H (Thomas Houghton)** chancel north, part under stalls
60cm wide.
5. 1670 **W H (Walsingham Houghton)** chancel north, part under stalls
60cm wide.
6. 1666 **I H (John Houghton)** chancel north, part under stalls
59cm wide.

The three slabs protrude 63cm, plain borderless edge, no visible inscription. On the north chancel wall is a slate monument inscribed:

Nere this place under three iron plates / marked TH WH IH / ly
the Bodies of THOMAS HOUGHTON late of this parish ESQ / And
principall of Cliffords INN / LONDON / Who deceased on the 30
day of July 1669 / Aged 75 yeares / And of / Walsingham his wife who
departed / this life the 30 day of January following / Aged 65 / And of
/ IOHN their youngest son who / dyed on the / 8 day of December
1666 / Aged 39

7. More iron plate can be felt under the stalls; in 1979 a small part of yet another could be seen.

8. 1708 **Thomas Sands**, centre aisle against south pews partly under heating pipe
74-75cm x 180cm.

Thomas Sands / Citizen And Wine / Cooper Of London / Who Died
Dec^{br} y^e 11th / Ano Dotnini 1708 / in y^e 33 year of his / A8e

Incised shallow lines 1cm wide.

Well formed letters using lower case and well spaced words. The 8 of the date has a flat top. The 'g' of age looks like '8'. Below is some floral decoration and around the whole edge is a simple geometric border both in the same incised lines. Above the inscription, cast in high relief from an impressed large block (63cm wide and 58cm high, with curved top and lower corners cut off) is the full achievement of the Coopers' Company to which Thomas Sands was admitted in 1698; gyrony of eight, on a chevron between two annulets a royn (a cooper's groove cutter) between two broad axes: on a chief three lilies. Crest: a demi heathcock seme of annulets holding in its beak a lily. The supporters are two camels seme of annulets. All these, plus the helm, mantling and motto 'LOVE AS BRETHREN' are clearly shown.

Penhurst near Battle TQ 6916

1. 1703 **Peter Gower**, centre chancel
43cm x 152cm.

(Here) lies the body / (of P)ETER GOWER / (who) died August / (...) 1703 / (A)ged 73 years

Incised well formed letters. Plain borderless edges.

Some of the left hand side is illegible. Planklines. Peter Gower was tenant of Great Sprays Farm in the parish. The church lies 1km from the site of Ashburnham Forge and 1km from the site of Ashburnham Furnace.

The slab was restored to the chancel in 1960 when the church was de-Victorianised. It had been taken up and left loose under the tower after the restoration of 1878-81. When in 1960 the Victorian tiles were removed, 18cm 17th century floor tiles were found (now repositioned in the south porch), and beneath them the remains of a coffin whose handles were dated to the time of Queen Anne by the British Museum. The slab is now hidden under a carpet.

Rotherfield TQ 5529

1. Pre 1547, an ecclesiastic, north aisle west of north door
70-73cm x 188.5cm.

A large slab with neither border nor inscription. Decoration is in the form of a double cross (45cm x 92cm) in relief having simple decorated arms and an incised six pointed star at each crossing. The cross was impressed twice into the sand casting bed, first at the top slightly askew, secondly superimposed lower down, but straight.

Salehurst TQ 7424

1. 1661 **Mary Peckham**, vestry to south of tower
55-56cm x 168cm.

HERE LYETH THE BODY OF MARY W / IFE • OF • WILLIAM /
PECKHAM WHO DY / ED • MARCH • 12 / 1661 / AE^TATIS SVIE /
34

One of AEATIS SVIE series; 4cm letters within recessed bands; inscription starts part way down slab. 2cm wide recessed lines down sides.

The omitted T of aetatis is inserted. The C is reversd, M and A of Mary are linked. Each A has a top bar and 'v' cross bar.

2. 1662 **Thomas Peckham**, vestry to south of tower
55-56cm x 168cm.

HERE LYETH THE / BODY OF THOMAS PECKH / AM WHO DYED
/ MAY THE 31 / 1662 / AE^TATIS SVIE 54 / T C

Slab in the AEATIS SVIE series.

The slab is as that of Mary Peckham, 1661, but for the words of the inscription. The C is reversed, the 'omitted T of aetatis has been inserted. Below are the letters T C (with C reversed) which also appear on the slab to the Holland children, 1664, at Wadhurst, No.17.

3. 1679 **William Peckham**, under tower
62cm x 173.5cm.

HERE • LYETH • THE / BODY • OF WILLIAM / M • PECKHAM •
WH / O • DIED • APRIL • THE / 5 • 1679 • aged • 75 YE / ARS •
AND • 11 MONT

Fine 5.5cm letters in recessed bands. A with 'v' cross bar but no top bar; H and E linked; round stops. Inscription starts 42cm down the slab. Planklines.

4. 1689 **Mary Peckham**, under tower
63cm x 169cm.

(HERE) • LIETH • THE • B / ODY • OF • MARY • PEC / KHAM •
DAVGHTR / R • OF • WILL • BY • MA / RTHA • PECKHAM / WHO
• DIED • APRI / LL • 21 • 1689 • AGED / 1 • YEARE • & • 5 • MONT^S

The top right corner has been covered by masonry. The S of MONT^S extends further to the right than any of the bands above. Fine 6cm letters in recessed bands 7cm wide and 0.8cm apart. Each A with top bay and 'v' cross bar. Flat top to figure 8. Plain edges. 'Mud crazing'.

5. 1712 **Lucy Stevens**, under tower to south of west door
35.5cm x 75.5cm.

HERE • LYETH • BV / RIED • THE • BODY • OF / LUCY • THE
• DAVGH / TER • OF • JONATHAN / STEVENS • AND • A: /
BIGARLL • HIS • WIFE • /WHO • DECEASED / NOVEMBER • THE
/ 16 • 1711 • AGED • / 27 WEEKS

A very small slab. Very neat 3.2cm letters in recessed 4.1cm bands. Diamond stops. Well shaped numerals. Each A with top bay and 'v' cross bar. N reversed, T and H linked. Planklines.

Lucy's sister Ann died 14 months later (aged 3 years 10 months) and is buried nearby under stone.

6. 1712 **Silvester Peckham**, under tower
55cm x 170cm x 2cm.

HERE • LYETH • / BVRIED • THE • BO / DY • OF • SILVESTE /
PECKHAM • WHO / DEPARTED • THIS / LIFE • THE • 17 DAY / OF
• MARCH • IN • Y / YEARE • OF • OVR / LORD • 1712 • AG / ED •
65 • YEARS / AND 6 MONTH / S AND 3 WEEKS

Fine well formed letters in 5.9cm recessed bands 1.3cm apart. Each A with top bar and 'v' cross bar; each N reversed; a small capital E within the cup of Y for YE; diamond stops. Recessed 1.3cm side

lines. A very fine slab.

7. 1713 **Eleaner Peckham**, under tower
60cm x 169cm.

HERE / LIETH • THE BODY • OF ELE / ANER • PECKHAM • WH
/ O • DIED • IANVARY • THE / 24 • IN • THE • YEAR • 1713 • /
AGED • 72 • YEARS • AND / 10 • MONTHS

Fine well formed 5.5cm letters in recessed bands of 7cm, 1.2cm apart. Each with top bar and 'v' cross bar. R with curved tail. Linked letters H and E. The T in 'LIETH' is omitted and inserted above. There is no room for the final upright of H in 'WHO'. First and last lines centred.

The Peckham family commemorated in six of the seven slabs at Salehurst held the Iridge Furnace from the late 17th century. They were related by marriage to the Braban family of Wadhurst.

All the Salehurst slabs were formerly in the nave but were removed at the 1861 restoration and placed at the west door under the tower.

Sedlescombe TQ 7718

1. 1669 **William Bisshop, Elizabeth** (wife) and **Sarah** (great grandchild), north aisle against north pews
c.59cm x 158cm.

HERE LYETH THE BO / DY OF WILLIAM SONN / OF IOHN
BISSHOPP G / ENT BVRYED NOVEM / THE 14 ANNO / DON
1664
ALSO ELIZABETH HIS / WIFE DAUGHTER OF / EDWARD HAVESE
GEN / T BVRYED MAY THE 21: 39
AND SARAH THE / DAUGHTER OF WIL / LIAM THEIR GRA /
NDSONN BVRYED / DECEM THE 20 : 69

Inscription in 3 parts. 4cm letters; each N reversed; dates of burial, not death, given. Planklines; raised moulded edge.

The slab lies to one side of the aisle with one edge under the present

pews; it would appear to be close to where the Bisshops had a family pew (a copy of the 17th century pew allocations is kept in the church). The church was restored and rebuilt between 1866 and 1874, repewed and the floor retiled. The slab would seem to have remained *in situ* despite the Victorian rebuilding.

Streat near Ditchling, TQ 3515

1. 1731 **Sarah Saunders**, nave
53cm x 148cm

HERE / LYETHEBO / DYOF SARAH / SAUNDERS / DAUGHTER OF
/ THO • SAUND / ERSOF WAD / HURSTGEN / WHODEPART = /
EDTHISLIFE / THE8DAYOF / FEBRUARY / 1731 / AGED 56

Unevenly arranged 5.5cm letters; no spaces or stops between words. 3 reversed; the 'v' cross bar of the A is asymmetrical. Raised beaded edge. The clean cast letters have been individually impressed into the sand casting mould.

2. 1754 **Martha Gott, Thomas, Robert and Elizabeth Gott**, east nave
108cm x 212cm.

SACRED / TO THE MEMORY OF MARTHA / RELICT OF PETER
GOTT / ESQ. AND ELDEST DAUGHTER / OF THO: WESTERN
ESQ. SHE DIED FEB THE 11th 1732 / AGED 78 YEARS / AND
OF / THO: GOTT ESQ • 3^d SON / OF THE SAID PETER AND /
MARTHA GOTT WHO / DIED MARCH THE 19th 1733 / AGED 49
YEARS / AND / ALSO OF ROB: THEIR 6th SON / WHO DIED JAN:
THE 14th 1714 / AGED 21 YEARS / THEIR SURVIVING ISSUE ARE
/ MAXIMILIAN • W^m • MARTHA / WIFE OF W^M • HUGESSEN ESQ.
/ ELIZABETH, MARY AND SARAH / UNMARRIED / ELIZABETH
DIED AUG: THE / 27th 1754, AGED 75 YEARS

The largest slab in the country, virtually the same size as the contemporary slabs of 1745 and 1754 at Burrington, Herefordshire, (102cm x 211cm). Well executed in good Roman capitals of two

sizes, 6.5cm and 4.8cm Each line centred.

Peter Gott held the Gloucester Furnace at Lamberhurst. All the sons died without issue. The Gotts were inter-related with other ironmaster families in Sussex such as the Fowles of Frant, the Bakers of Hayfield and the Collins of Brightling.

Ticehurst TQ 6830

1. Undated, member of the **May** family, southeast corner of Pashley chapel to south of chancel; 63.5cm x 186cm.

A plain slab with neither border nor inscription. A round-headed block (23cm x 42cm high) showing the May achievement: shield, a fess between eight billets; crest, a griffin's head from a coronet; two tassels for mantling. The May family lived at Pashley, a manor they took over in 1543 from the Boleyns.

Uckfield TQ 4721

1. 1707 **Gabriel Egles**, mural, south wall
75cm x 176 x 4cm.

HERE LYETH THE / BODY OF GABRIEL / EGLES ES9R WHO /
DEPARTED THIS / LIFE THE 7 DAY OF / AVGVST 1707 AND / IN
THE 65 YEAR / OF HIS AGE

5.5cm letters in recessed bands of 6.5cm, 2cm apart. A with 'v' cross bar; the Q of ESQR is reversed to look like a 9. Below is a large shield (35.5cm x 47.5cm) with a scalloped top having a depressed orle 2.5cm wide, a field bearing six charges looking like estoiles but representing lions rampant.

One of the two Wealden slabs with a rope edge, (the other is at Crowhurst, Surrey, 1591). The Egles were related to the Barhams of Wadhurst.

The church was rebuilt in 1839, monuments from the previous building being retained. Prior to 1846 the church was a chapel of ease for Buxted.

Wadhurst TQ 6431

There were many ironworks in this extensive parish. Nearly a third of the country's iron slabs of the pre-Industrial Revolution are at Wadhurst, 30 in the church, one in the porch and two in the churchyard.

1. 1617 **W.B.**, south aisle, 57cm x 183.5cm.
No inscription. Six shields 12 x 17.5cm, each with 1617 / WB /*** ; 3.5cm letters and numerals.
2. 1625 **I.D.**, chancel, north side, 63.5cm x 199cm.
No inscription. Six shields 16cm x 20cm, each with raised rim and 1625 / ID. One shield askew. 6.5cm letters. At the base is a large (9cm) N.
3. c.1634 **N F (Nicholas Fowles)** died 1634), under screen between lectern and south chapel, 66cm x 188.5cm.
No inscription. Four corner shields with Fowles arms: a lion passant between three roses; in the centre two small shields each with square containing Fowles crest.
4. 1634 **A.B.**, south aisle by font; 65cm x 187cm.
No inscription. Six blocks 13.5cm x 19cm, one askew, each bearing in 1.9cm high relief a shield having a scalloped base on which is 1634/ A B
Incised on the slab: **AB 1716; JB 1764; LB 1789**; incised sideways **RWB 1771**; incised sideways in an incised oblong **ML 1735**.
5. 1633, **Alice Bucher**, chancel, north side; 63cm x 1813.5cm.
• HEERE • / LYETH • INT / ERDE • ALICE / • THE • WYFE • / OF •
THO • BVC / HER • WHOE • D / EPARTED • TH / E • 23 • OF •
OC / TOBER • ANNO / DOMINI • 1638

4cm letters. Inscription panel under an arch having decorated spandrels and castellated flat top. A well proportioned slab with even lettering.

6. c.1638 **Joan Bucher**, nave, under lectern
63cm wide.

HEERE • / LIETH BVRYED / =IOAN • BVCHER / THE • WIFE • OF /
ALEXANDER / BVCHER / DECEASED / WHO • DEPARTED/ ...

Remainder of inscription hidden under the lectern stand. 4cm letters. A slab of the same design, same lettering, and same decoration as No.5 Alice Bucher (1638).

7. 1640 **John Bucher**, south aisle chapel, head to south
63cm x 182cm.

HEERE / LIETH / BVRYED / JOHN • BVCHER / GEN • WHO /
DEPARTED / THIS • LIFE • ON / WEDNESDAY • THE / 19TH • OF
AVGVST • 1640

4cm letters. The day of death in the week is given. Planklines. Inscription on a depressed panel leaving a 10cm border; there is a decorated semi-circular arch within the panel; the arch is unlike that on the other Bucher slabs of 1638.

Incised below are: EB / 1750; AB / 1752.

8. 1643 **David Barham**, south aisle
61cm x 182cm.

HEARE / LYETH THE BODY OF DAVID / BARHAM GENT /
WHICH DESESED / THIS LIFE / THE 18 DAY / OF FEBRVARY /
ANNO DOM 1643

Letters in relief in recessed bands, having upright relief bars between each word. Each A with top bar and 'v' cross bar; I with serif to the left at the top, to the right at the bottom; 8 with straight sided triangle for upper part.

The inscription lies within a recessed panel with the same decorated

arch head as on the Bucher slabs of 1638.

Below the inscription within the recessed panel are two lozenges on which are *incised* in incised rectangles **A B** and **1688**; between the lozenges at the top is a shield with the Courthope arms (a fess between three stars), between them below is a raised large inverted heart.

9. 1647 **T.B.**, north aisle, part under pier
63cm x 183cm.

TB / 1647 / TB

8.5cm letters; 8-12cm numerals in high relief.

10. 1648 **John Barham**, chancel, south side
57.5cm x 185.5cm.

HEER • LYETH • THE / BODY • OF IOHN / BARHAM • OF • SH=
/ OOSMITHS • GE= / NT • WHO • DIED / THE FIFT DAY • OF /
DECEMBAR • 1648 / TC

Poorly shaped 4.5cm letters; I with a dot. Below is an irregular block (38cm and 39.5cm x 49cm with a curved side) bearing an achievement: shield, on a fess between three bears a fleur de lys between two martlets; crest, a stork in reeds; mantling and helm in high relief.

11. 1651 **Hellen Dunmoll**, south aisle
57.5cm x 170.5cm.

HEER • LYETH • THE / BODY • OF HELL= / EN • THE WIFE • OF
/ JOSEPH • DVNMOLL / GENT • WHO • WAS • DAFTAR • OF •
DAV= / ID • BARHAM • GENT / WHICH • DIED / THE • SIXTH •
DAY / OF • FEBRUARY / 1651

The same poorly designed and crudely placed letters as on the slab to John Barham (No.10, 1648) as V for Y, I with a dot. Mud crazing. Plain borderless slab. Hellen lies close to her father (No.8, 1643).

12. 1653 **Ann Benge**, cross aisle, south
55cm x 139.5cm x 3cm.

HERE LVETH THE / BODY OF AN WIFE OF WILLIAM / BENGE
WHO DYED WED OCTOBER 12 / 1653 / AE^TATIS SVIE I7

Flush letters in recessed bands; omitted I of aetatis inserted; A with top bar and 'v' cross bar. Inscription starts 53cm down. The earliest of the slabs in the AEATIS SVIE series, all of which have letters in recessed bands (the first and last lines being from a pattern block), recessed lines down the sides, and the inscription starting part way down the slab.

13. 1657 **I.B.**, south aisle
60cm x 177cm.

No inscription; a borderless slab with 5 shields 15cm x 22cm, each having inward curving sides with raised rim within which are three 8 pointed stars. IB and 1657 in 4cm letters on relief fillet 6cm x 31.5cm.

14. 1658 **MB**, chancel, north side
60cm x 177cm.

A slab identical to No.13, IB (1657), but for the initials and date, MB 1658.

15. 1660 **Nicholas Saunders**, cross aisle, south
55cm x >130cm.

HERE LYETH THE / BODY OF NICHOLAS / SAVNDERS / OF
PELL WHO DYED IANVARY 30 / 166 / AE^TATIS SVIE

Flush letters in recessed bands; omitted T of aetatis inserted; inscription starts 68cm down. End of slab broken. One of the AEATIS SVIE series. 2cm recessed side lines.

16. 1664 **Ann Holland**, cross aisle by south doorway
55cm x 170cm.

HERE LYETH THE / BODY OF AN W / IFE OF DAVID / HOLLAN / WHO DY / ED NOVEMBER I / 1664 / AE^TATIS SVIE 48

Flush letters in recessed bands. Inscription starts 68cm down. Omitted T of aetatis inserted. One of the AEATIS SVIE series. 2cm recessed side lines.

17. 1664 **Ann** and **David Holland** (children of Ann Holland No.16, 1664) cross aisle by south doorway
55cm x 170cm.

HERE LYETH THE / BODY OF AN AND / DAVID HOLLAN CH
ILDREN OF DAVID / HOLLAND WHO DY / ED NOVEMBER 19 / AEATIS SVIE 1664 / T C

Letters in recessed bands. I of aetatis omitted; C reversed; date instead of age. Planklines. 2cm recessed side lines. One of the AEATIS SVIE series.

18. 1666 **Mary Smith**, chancel, south side
58cm x 182cm.

HERE • LYETH / THE • BODY • OF / MARY • DAVGH / TER • OF
• ROGER / GOSTWYKE • OF / SAMFORD COVR / (TENAY) IN
DEVON / WI(FE) • OF ZACHA / (S)MITH • OF / GLYNDE • IN •
SVS / SEX • & • MOTHER / OF IOHN • SMITH / OF • WADHVRST
/ MINSTERS* / SHE • DEPART / ED • THIS • LIFE / SEPTEMBER XI /
1666

5cm letters in recessed bands; 2cm recessed side lines 5cm from edges. Each A with top bar and 'v' cross bar; a circular motif 4.5cm in diameter with relief petals occurs after MINSTERS. The A of ZACHA extends into the border. Diamond stops.

Roger Costwyke was Rector of Sampford Courtenay (Devon SS/6201) from 1609 to 1643 and is buried in the chancel there.

19. 1673 **Nicholas Donmolle**, cross aisle, south
55.5cm x 154.5-152.5cm, the top is slanted.

HERE LYETH THE / BODY OF M^r NI / CHOLAS DON / MOLLE
WHO / DEPARTED TH / IS LIFE THEV / DAY OF MARCH / IN THE

YEAR / OF OVR LORD / MDCLXXIII / AGED LII

4.5cm flush letters in recessed bands, recessed side lines; each A with top bar and 'v' cross bar. Planklines.

20. 1673 **E.C.**, cross aisle, north
42.5cm x 93cm.

EC EC / 1673 / EC EC

Large letters in 1cm high relief. Mud crazing. Plain slab with faint block marks for initials and date.

21. 1675 **John Saunders**, cross aisle, north
36.5cm x 69cm.

HERE • LY / ETH • THE • BODY / OF IOHN • SON • OF / M^r
NICHOLAS / AND • PHILADEL / PHIA • SAVNDERS / OF •
LONDON • WHO / WAS • BVRYED / MAY • V • 1675 / M^{rs} ANN •
SAVN / DERS • OF • PEL / GRANDMO / THER / POSVIT

Recessed bands of uneven length, roughly centred. Poorly cast crowded letters; each A with top bar and 'v' cross bar; diamond stops. The smallest slab in the country.

22. 1675 **Ann Barham**, south aisle, north of font
57cm x 182cm.

HERE • LYETH / THE • BODY • OF / ANN • BARHA / M • THE •
DAVGH / TER • OF DAVID / BARHAM • OF* / SNAPE • GENT /
WHO / DEPART / ED • THIS • LIFE / THE 18 • DAY / OF • MAY •
AN / NO • DOMINI / 1675

5cm flush letters in recessed bands; each A with top bar; inscription starts part way down the slab. At the end of the sixth line a square with an *incised* estoile; after the AN of ANNO a plain relief square. Below are two shields, both with stylized mantling, showing on the left the arms of Barham complete with crest, but not from the same blocks as on the Barham slabs in the chancel (Nos. 10 and 27, 1648 and 1701); on the right a shield bearing a chevron between three swans' heads erased.

23. 1677 **John Braban**, centre aisle by tower
63cm x 174cm.

HERE LYETH • THE / BODY • OF • JOHN • BR / ABAN • THE
• SECO / ND • SON • OF • EDWA / RD • BRABAN • OF • S /
ALEHVRST • WHO / DIED • MARCH .THE / 8 • 1677 • AGED • 18
YE / ERS • AND • 3 • MONT

5.2cm letters in recessed bands; A with 'v' cross bar. Inscription starts part way down slab. Below in *incised* letters within incised rectangles: E L and 1713. No edging.

24. 1677 **Ann Saunders**, south aisle, south of font
55cm x 172cm.

HERE LYETH THE / BODY OF ANNY^E / WIDOW OF M^R /
NICHOLAS SAVN / DERS OF PELL SHE / DEPARTED AV / GVST
THE VIII / MDCLXXVII / AGED LXXIII*

4.5cm flush letters in recessed bands; A with top bar and 'v' cross bar. Recessed side lines. An *incised* estoile is in a 5cm square after the age.

25. 1678 **James Atwells** cross aisle, south
55cm x 155cm.

HERE • LYETH / THE • BODY • OF / JAMES • AT / WELLS • THE /
SONNE • OF / JOHN • AT / WELLS • WHO / DYED • OCTO / BER
• THE • II / ANNO • DOMI / NI 1678

Flush letters in uneven recessed bands. Each A with top bar and 'v' cross bar. Diamond stops. At end of the sixth line in a 5cm square an *incised* estoile. Borderless slab.

26. 1688 **D.A.**, cross aisle, north
45.5cm x 98cm.

D.A / 1688 / D.A

7.5cm letters in 1cm high relief; 2.2cm diamond stops; each A with top bar and 'v' cross bar.

27. 1701 **William Barham**, chancel, north side
83.5cm x 204cm.

HEARE / LYETH • THE • BODY / OF • M^R WILLIAM • BA / RHAM
• OF • SCRAGE / OAKE • WHO • DYED / NOVEMBER • Y^E • 6 /
1701 / AGED 80

5.5cm letters in roughly centred lines. Reversed N; A with top bar and 'v' cross bar; flat topped 8.

Above and below the inscription a shield (43cm x 48cm high) with three bears in very high relief; stylistic mantling in high relief giving the appearance of crockets at the sides, and of, foliage on a chief at the top.

A large, ostentatious slab with a raised 5cm border.

28. 1709 **Mary and Elizabeth Luck**, cross aisle, south
65cm x 148cm.

HERE • LYE • INTERED / • THE • BODY • OF MA= / RY • & ELIZ :
DAVGH : / TERS • OF • EDW : & • EL= / IZ : LVCK • MARY • AG= /
ED • 23 YEARS • DEPA= / RTED • IAN : v°9 : 1707 / ELIZ : AGED •
21 • YEA= / RS • DEPARTED • IAN : / THE • 13 • 1709

Individual style of letters, each letter impressed individually; I with curved top bar, 7 an inverted L. Round stops; '&' placed sideways. Inscription on lower half of slab; narrow raised edge to whole slab and across the middle above the inscription.

29. 1717 **Frances Porter née Colpepyr**, chancel south side
58cm x 180.5cm.

Here lyeth the Body / of FRANCES Wife of / THOMAS PORTER
/ Gent.and Daughter of S^r WILLIAM / COLEPEPYR BAR^{NT} • of
Aylsford in / KENT / Who Died October / the • 18 • 1717 / Aged •
79 / And / MARY ALCRON / Her Daughter / By a Former Husband

5cm upper case and 3cm lower case letters. No edge or border.
At the top is a rondel, 48cm across, with a wide strapwork border containing the Colpepyr (Culpepper) arms: an engrailed bend, baronet's badge of a hand.

A well proportioned slab with fine casting of letters and arms.
Centred lines with well placed words. Use of lower case.

30. 1747 **I. L. (Judith Legas)**, nave, west crossing
91.3cm x 197.5cm.

17 47/ I L

11cm inlaid brass numerals, 17 to top left, 47 to top right; 15.5cm inlaid brass letters; I with central knob. Large plain borderless slab. Judith Legas was the wife of John Legas who worked the Gloucester Furnace. A marble monument on the west wall gives a detailed location of the slab and records that John "... by his Industry and Diligence in the Iron Works of this County Acquired a Handsome Fortune ..."; John assumed arms and the title Gentleman.

31. 1771 **John Wells Luck and Ann Luck**, south porch
91.5cm x 185cm.

LW LUCK / 1771 / A LUCK / 1768

6.5cm letters on a plain borderless slab. A stone memorial tablet on the west wall of the porch gives further details and states that the bodies lie "under the iron plate".

A tablet on the east wall records their grandson John, 1793, and his sons John, 1805, and George, 1807, all "Interr'd beneath the Iron plate"; the adjacent marble tablet incorporating two Harmer terracottas is to George's daughter, 1817, and wife, 1836.

32. Date obscured, **John Kemp**, churchyard north west of tower
41cm wide, 2.5cm thick. Upright headslab with semi circular head having a 0.5cm rim.

X X / HEARE • LY / Y • BODy • Of IO / KEMP • SO n • of HEnRY • X
• Eli / DEPARTed A / ...

Lower part of slab buried. *Incised* thin uneven letters up to 3cm. I with cross bar.

33. 1799 **Elizabeth Playstead**, churchyard c.4 metres south of chancel
64cm x 151cm x 2.3cm. Altar tomb, sandstone with iron slab.
Under this Plate / lie the Remains / of ELIZABETH PLAYSTED
Spinster of thes Parish / She died the 16th April 1799 / Aged 62
Very even Roman letters in centred lines; large caps 5cm, small caps 3.5cm, lower case 2.5cm.

Withyham TQ 4935

Withyham church was destroyed by fire in 1663 when many monuments were lost; presumably it was at this time that two slabs, (Nos. 2 and 3), found their way out of the church.

1. 1582 **Richard Graye**, chancel, under south stalls
54cm wide.

Only the lower 17cm of the slab is exposed which has a 1.6cm high rim. The choir stalls are shaped to fit over it.

The inscription is hidden but is recorded by C.N. Sutton, 1902, in his *Historical Notes of Withyham, Hartfield and Ashdown Forest* to be: "The 27 day of Februarye dyed Richard Graye Parson of Withiham". Richard Graye was parson from 1576 to 1582.

Sutton also states that replicas of the tomb existed at Wolvesey Palace, Winchester, and '80 years ago' at Sompting. Neither slab can now be traced. The same width, depth and form of rim are also found on a slab of 1585 now in the Anne of Cleves Museum at Lewes to Robert Bakar of Wythiham, (No.2).

2. 1585 **Robert Bakar**, Anne of Cleves Museum, Lewes; broken slab, 54cm wide, lower part broken (70cm remains).

ROBART • BAKAR • / OF • WYTHIHAM • / (YEO)MAN • WHOSE
• / (BODY) • LYETH ... / (HEA)RE • BVRIED / (DEPAR)TED • THIS
• / (LI)FE • 6 • OF • / IVNE • AN • DO • 1585

3.5cm letters; three stops after 'lyeth'; stops at the end of lines.

This slab was found in use as an ash plate at a bakery in Sevenoaks High Street and taken to the Anne of Cleves Museum at Lewes. Its left hand side is distorted by heat damage leaving the inscription indistinct. The Baker family were landholders in Withyham in the reign of Henry VII. Robert held Hamsell Furnace (TQ 5334). In the next century the Bakers were prosperous ironmasters at Mayfield.

3. 1610 **William Alfrey**, inside loose against west wall
39cm x 121cm, uneven thickness of 1.6-3.2cm.

HEARE • LIET / H • WIIIIYAM • A / LFREY • LATE / • OF • WYTHIH
/ AM • YEOMAN • / WHICH • ENDE / D • HIS • LIFE / THE • 15 •
DAY / OF • IVNE • AN / NO • DO 1610

3cm letters; very large diamond stops, they are also used at the beginning of lines before new words. A with 'v' cross bar; 1 with prominent central knob. Inscription on a raised block 34cm x 34cm.

This slab was for long resting against the outside east wall of the church. It was there in 1902 and has subsequently been brought inside.

Outside in the churchyard are a number of stone tombs with raised letters in recessed bands – as on the Wadhurst slabs – e.g. to Richard Maynard of Cozleigh (1612) east of the chancel on a low altar tomb.

West Hoathly TQ 3632

There are four slabs in the church. In 1852, A. Hussey in his *Notes on the Churches in the Counties of Kent, Sussex and Surrey* states that there are two iron slabs used as stepping stones to the tower; in 1940, *Victoria County History Sussex* 9 mentions three slabs affixed to the wall in the vestry.

1. 1619 **Richard Infeld**, mural south wall
153.5cm wide x 57cm, uneven thickness with corner measurements of 3.2cm and 3.0cm top, 4.1cm and 2.7cm bottom.

HERE • LYETH • BVRED / THE • BODIE • OF • RICHARD •
INFELD / GENTLEMAN • WHO • DEPAR / TED • THIS • LIFE • THE
• / • II • DAY • OF • SEPTEMBER • ANO • DOM • 1619 • AGED •
51 • YEEERES

3.8cm letters; I and H linked; diamond stops. The inscription is on a raised 5.8cm fillet around the edge; the only slab in the country with a marginal inscription. The sand bed on which it was cast was not level, hence the differing thickness.

2. 1624 **Richard Infeld**, mural south wall
151cm x 56.5cm, uneven thickness with corner measurements of 3.0cm and 2.5cm top, 3.0cm and 3.7cm bottom.

HERE • LYETH • THE • BODY • OF • RICHARD • INFELD • GENT
/ WHO • DEPARTED • HIS • LIFE • THE • II • OF • MARCH / ANO
• DO • 1624

4cm letters; A with top bar; diamond stops. The slab has some blister holes, one 12cm across. There is a trefoil decoration at the end of the first line and some scrollwork at the end of the second. The inscription is along the long axis on three raised fillets having moulded sides. There is a raised border with ovolo moulding. Richard was the son of Richard (d.1619, No.1) and died aged

25. He held the furnace at Gravetye as had his father. He married Katherine, one of the 12 children of Sir Edward Culpepper of Wakehurst in Ardingly, the next parish. She died in 1623 and was buried under stone at West Hoathly.

3. 1635 **Agnes Faulconer**, chancel, loose against north wall
75cm x 143cm x 2.8cm.

AGNES ELDEST DAUGHTER / TO RICHARD INFELD OF /
GRAVE=TYE GENT BY KATHARIN / COMPTON & WIFE TO
HENRY / FAVLCONER ESQ^R AGED 39 / YEARES AND 6 MONTHS
/ BVRYED SEPTEMB^R: 22TH 1635

Plain borderless slab with inscription plate 42 x 29cm.

1.8cm Roman capitals with upward curving serifs. The lettering is the same on the inscription plates below the effigial monumental brasses at Ardingly to Elizabeth Culpepper (1633), and her seven-year-old grand daughter Elizabeth (1634). Agnes was the sister of Richard Infeld (d.1624, No.2) who married Katherine Culpepper the daughter of Elizabeth (d.1633) who is buried at Ardingly.

4. c.1714, date and name indecipherable, chancel, north of altar
53cm x 151cm.

A plain borderless slab. Indecipherable *incised* inscription. It is comparable with the incised slab at Hartfield (1702) and East Grinstead, (1714, No.3).

Early Slabs Outside The Weald

Herefordshire

Brilley SO 2059: 1669

Burrington SO 4472: 1619, 1658, 1674, 1676, 1678, 1705, 1745, 1754.

Slabs laid down inside church but now in churchyard; the chancel was rebuilt and diminished in the 19th century leaving the slabs unmoved outside.

Shropshire

Bridgenorth St. Leonard's SO 7193: 1692, 1701, 1701, 1707.

Two slabs, 1701 and 1707, with rope-like edging.

Hopton Castle SO 3678: 1686.

Now in churchyard by chancel wall; church totally rebuilt late 19th century.

Leighton SJ 6105: 1677, 1696.

Onibury SO 4579: 1666, 1673.

The Herefordshire slabs and those from Hopton Castle and Onibury all emanate from Bringewood Forge on the River Terne 7km west of Ludlow; they are linked stylistically and by family connection.

Yorkshire

Sandal Magna (near Wakefield) SE 3418: 1695, 1710.

Both slabs cast after 1712.

Langles Furnace and Forge Site Survey

1986/87

Maresfield TQ 451239; Cleere and Crossley (1985) 341

D.M. Meades

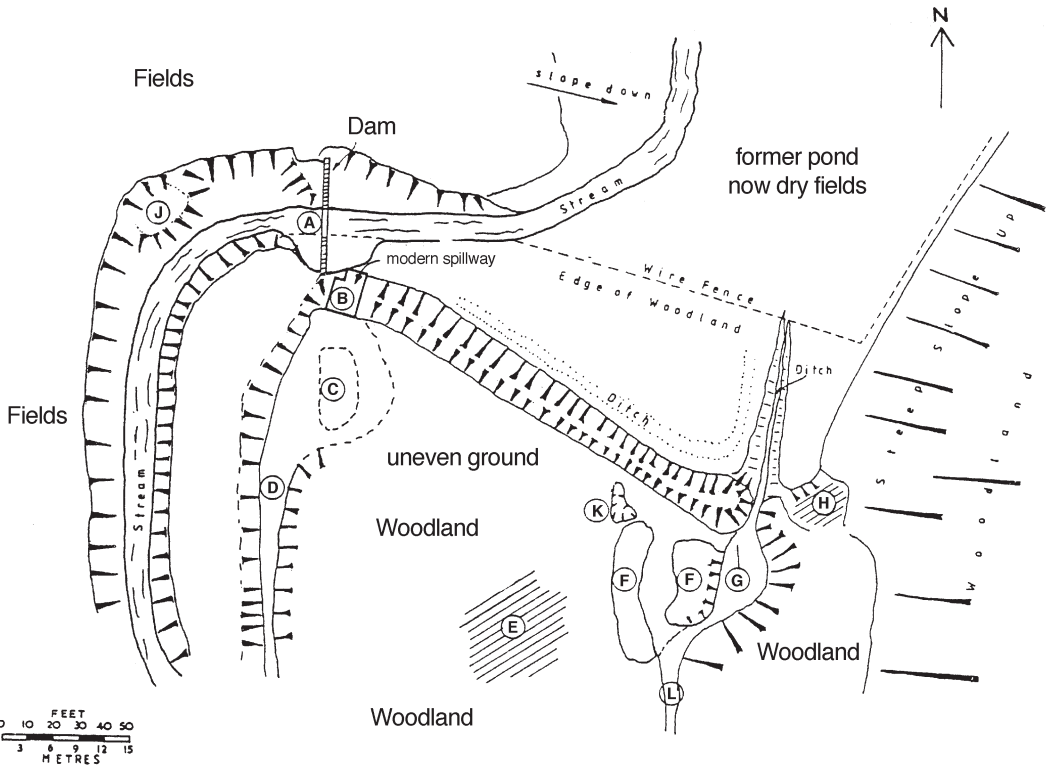
The WIRG Field Group surveyed this site as part of its 1986/7 winter programme. This account supplements and revises the information given in the gazetteer of *The Iron Industry of the Weald*, 341, which notes that the furnace was worked by Ralph Hogge in the late 16th century (Crossley (1974), 48-79) and that map of 1653 indicates a forge with two wheels at the west end of the bay (ESRO SAS E/9).

The Bay

In general, the survey confirmed the field notes given in the gazetteer. However, re-measurement showed that the bay was at most 84m long and not 100m as stated. It was noted that where the ditch from the now dry pond site cuts through the bay on its eastern side, extra soil and other debris have been used to reinforce and perhaps to heighten it. There was no indication on site as to when this work took place but a closer look at the map of 1653, using a magnifying glass, revealed a weir at this point (ESRO SAS E/9). Probably this was filled in after the demise of the ironworks, when the modern concrete spillway was built.

The Furnace

Burnt stone, clay and blast furnace slag at F suggest the position of the furnace immediately south of, and near to the eastern end of, the bay. If the layout of the furnace site follows the plan of other excavated furnaces, water would have been brought through or over the bay near its eastern end where there is now a modern ditch, to drive a waterwheel at G.



Langles Furnace and Forge site

1986

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>A Modern reinforced concrete dam with missing centre section.</p> <p>B Broken concrete spillway of fairly modern appearance.</p> <p>C Possible site of forge building with wheel pits either side.</p> <p>D Tailrace from forge which re-enters stream in SW direction just off plan.</p> <p>E Heavy concentration of charcoal. Possible site of store.</p> | <p>F Rubble mounds with blast furnace slag, possibly from furnace.</p> <p>G Probable position of furnace wheelpit.</p> <p>H Possible charcoal or charging store area near loading platform of furnace.</p> <p>J Western end of bay.</p> <p>K Hollow; possible gun pit associated with furnace.</p> <p>L Site of tailrace from furnace water wheel, which later became the spillway from the forge weir.</p> |
|--|---|

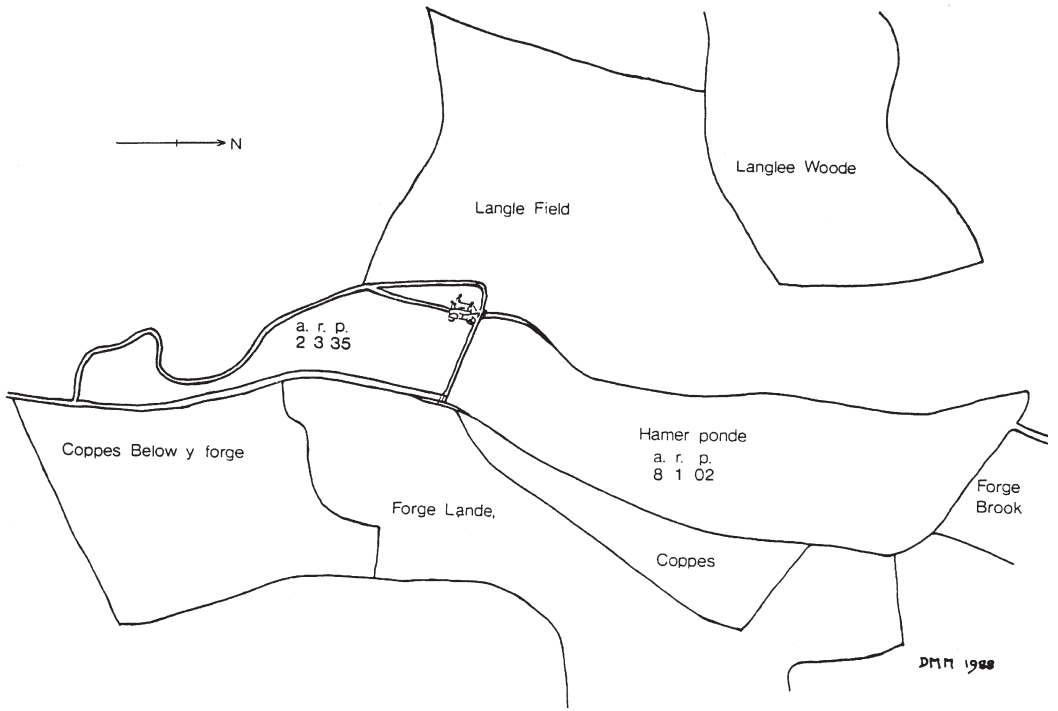
Bellows working off the spindle of the waterwheel would have operated through a bellows arch in the north wall of the furnace.

The safest place for a gun pit would have been on the west side of the furnace, away from the tailrace, as at Pippingford I (Crossley, *Post Medieval Archaeology*, (1975), Vol.9. A comparison of the surface remains with plans of excavated blast furnaces (Cleere and Crossley, 245) suggests that F (east side) may be in situ but that F (west side) may be tumble; if there was a casting arch in the western wall of the furnace, the hollow at K may indicate the site of the gun pit. The general configuration of the remains does not suggest a casting arch and pit on the east side as at Batsford and Maynards Gate furnaces. However, this cannot be ruled out without excavation, as the water course here was apparently altered to accommodate a weir for the later forge.

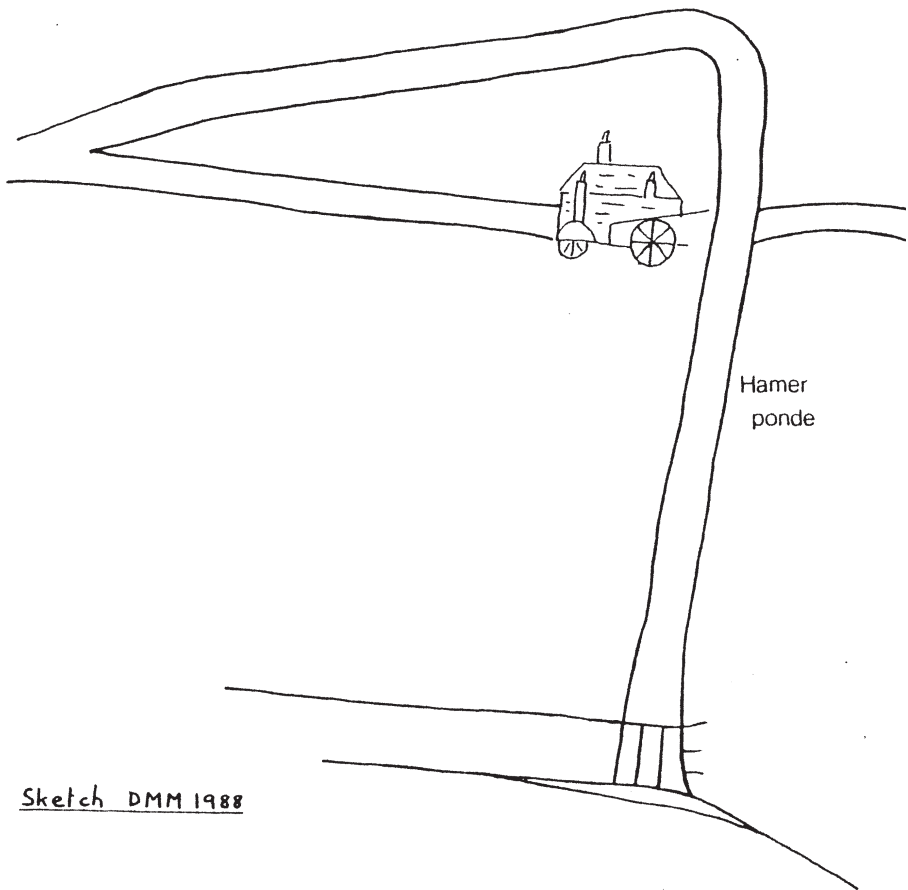
The weir and spillway which controlled the water level of the pond when the furnace was in operation would probably have been below J, the water escaping along the same channel as the present stream. The substantial embankment noted on our survey would have kept water out of the working site then and later.

The Forge

It is possible that there was a forge contemporary with the furnace but we have no evidence of this. The map of 1653 is very finely drawn and includes an illustration of the forge building. This shows three chimneys, with a red flame topping each one. Water appears to be taken via a flash from the side of the pond, serving first an overshot and then an undershot wheel. Three hearths and a hammer would have required four water wheels, so presumably there were two more on the far side of the building, one for the hearth below the chimney which is shown there and one for the hammer. Our survey shows depressions on each side of C consistent with such an arrangement, which would have involved two races. In his account of seventeenth century Chingley Forge, Crossley describes this system



Langles Forge from a map of 1653



Sketch DMM 1988

Detail of 1653 map depicting the forge building

as ‘potentially unsatisfactory, for water driving the undershot finery wheel could well be slowed to the extent of backing up under the overshot or pitch-back hammer wheel. Furthermore, independent control of the finery wheel would be impossible’. (Cleere and Crossley, (1985), 267).

Acknowledgements

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