

Newsletter 68 Autumn 2018

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A research programme for WIRG forays?

Every few years there is a discussion of why & where the next forays should be. WIRG fieldwork has often been organised quite informally, and there is no obvious reason to change that. Indeed, some of the most productive work has been started off by one or two (or more) members going off to survey an area "on a hunch".

From time to time it is useful to ask where the gaps in our knowledge are, and to ask how they might be filled. A real problem with forays into the Wealden landscape is organisation: who is going to get the groups together and, especially who is going to seek the permission of the relevant land-owners. Having the idea is not enough!

In this issue of the Newsletter there are two notes with strands that feed into the fieldwork problem. The first is by Tim Smith who describes some of the archive-related work that he is doing at The Keep. It is interesting and pertinent to ask what we would find if we went back and looked for some of the sites that are in the record but have never been visited by WIRG members. The second is Gerry Crawshaw's piece on a specific landscape, that relating to the important Mediaeval site belonging to Tudeley. In addition there is an on going interest in the Rother Valley, especially its north bank around Salehurst.

So:

Discussion Meeting: Fieldwork & Forays

Venue:

The Woolpack (a pub in Herstmonceux with a suitable meetings room)

When:

Sat. November 3rd. 11 am. to 1 pm.

Directions: Herstmonceux lies on the A271 which connects the new stretch of Hastings bypass at Bexhill to the large "Boship Roundabout" on the A22 just north of Hailsham. From West to East along this road the main settlements are Hailsham, Hellingly, Herstmonceux, Boreham Street and Ninfield. The Woolpack is situated on the main street of Herstmonceux facing a mini-roundabout.

Winter Meeting

Sat 2 February 2019

2:30 Nutley Memorial Hall

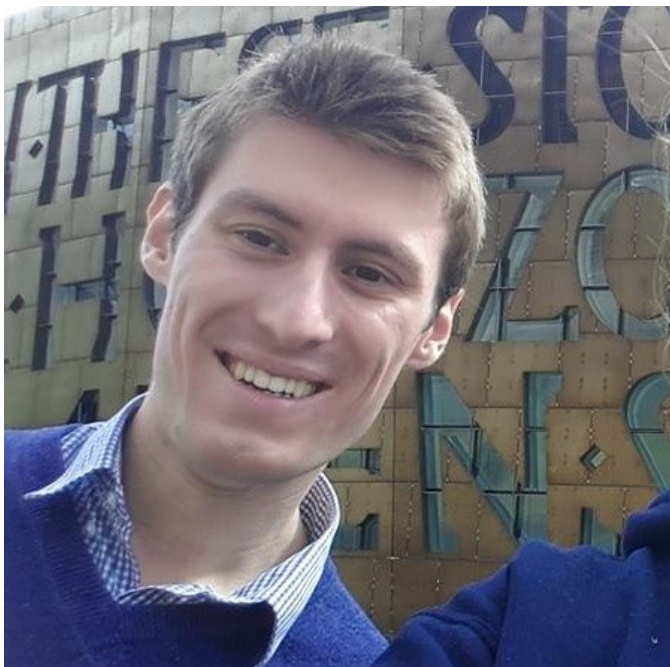
Two presentations on local Romano-British excavations. Greg Chuter, East Sussex County Archaeologist, and David Millum, of the Culver Archaeological Project, on the excavations at Arlington and Wellingham, both Roman roadside settlements with an iron-making component.

Meet Jack Cranfield

WIRG-sponsored Ph.D. student

I have lived in Sussex all my life, originally in Barcombe and then Chailey just outside Lewes. Archaeology interested me from an early age. When I was growing up, I enjoyed 'excavating' my Dad's allotment plot, discovering the remains of Victorian crockery and clay tobacco pipe. I was also the generation that grew up with Time Team, something I watched religiously every Sunday evening. When I was nine, I joined the Sussex Weald Young Archaeologists Club and through that was able to excavate on a number of sites throughout Sussex including Barcombe Roman Villa and Rocky Clump, near Brighton. I think at one point we visited one of the WIRG digs - I remember there being a lot of iron slag anyway! I am now one of the co-leaders of the Sussex Weald YAC branch and enjoy teaching the new generation of YACs about our local archaeology.

At the University of Cambridge I studied Archaeology and Anthropology and specialised in Archaeology in the second year. During my MA at Reading University, I further specialised in the Archaeology of Medieval Europe and completed a dissertation looking at the relationship between Medieval Churches and their landscape in East Sussex.



For the last couple of years I have been completing a part time teacher training course, while teaching at Plumpton College on their Landscape Archaeology module and working alongside this in their Admissions Department.

I have worked on a number of local excavations in Sussex, including the villa, bath house and industrial settlement at

Barcombe and most recently on the villa excavation at Plumpton run through the Sussex School of Archaeology. I have really enjoyed this summer getting involved in the WIRG excavation at Great Park Wood – it's great to work with such a friendly group of people and I look forward to coming along to further WIRG events in the future.

Thank you again for the opportunity of this studentship. I am really looking forward to beginning the research and discovering more about the Medieval Iron Industry of the Weald and working with all of you over the coming few years.

Jack Cranfield



WIRG 50th Anniversary Luncheon

The picture above shows some of the participants in this celebratory event: 50 years since the foundation of the Wealden Iron Research Group.

Members were addressed by Major General John Moore-Bick CBE DL, the High Sheriff of East Sussex. He amused his audience with childhood reminiscences of life near Stonegate and of his accidental involvement with the excavation of the nearby Bardown Romano-British bloomery site.

The lunch took place at the Middle House in Mayfield on the 29th September.

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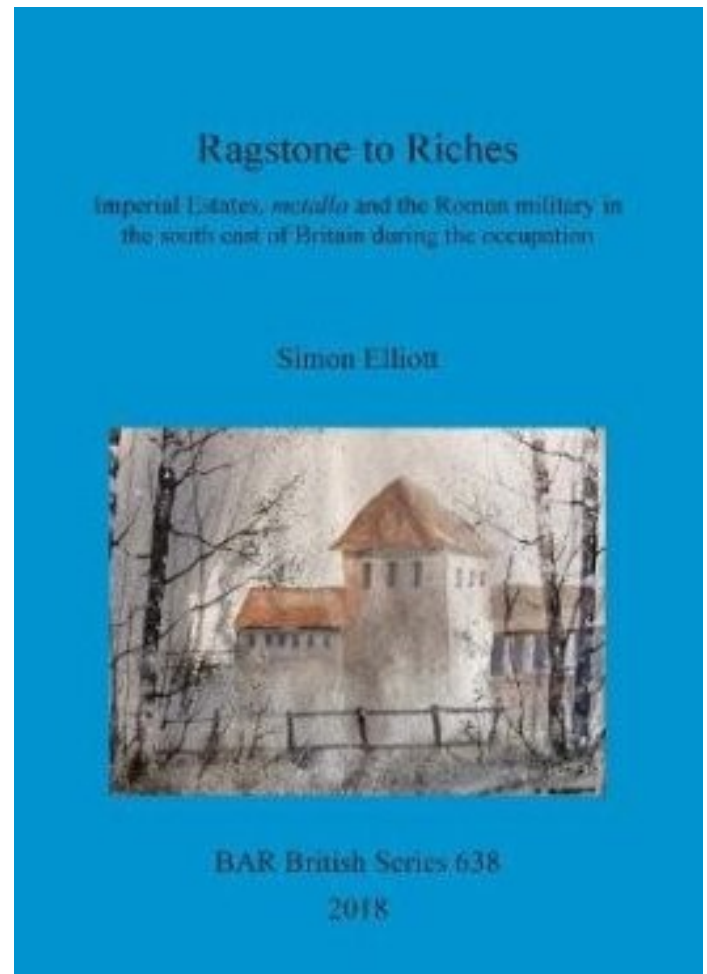
BOOK REVIEW

Simon Elliott, *Ragstone to Riches: Imperial estates, and the Roman military in the south east of Britain during the occupation*, Oxford, British Archaeological Reports, British Series, 638, 2018; 142pp; paperback; £36.80.

Ragstone was widely used as building stone in the south-east of England during the Roman occupation, with some of the most important buildings in London, including the wall and the *forum*, constructed of it. Use elsewhere included major structures in Kent, such as Canterbury's walls, the *colonia* at Colchester and the shore fort at Bradwell, both in Essex. The quantity of stone that estimates suggest was needed to furnish this use would have required extensive quarrying, and the main source were the Hythe Beds along the six-mile stretch between where the Medway flowed out of the Low Weald, near Teston, and the beginning of the tidal reach of the river at Allington. Between these points Simon Elliott has identified five major quarries which he suggests could have been worked since Roman times. With nothing artefactual to link any of the quarries directly with use in the Roman period, however, his evidence is circumstantial, but convincingly so: there are seven Roman villas along the same stretch of the Medway, some located close to quarries; the remains of a mid-2nd century boat were discovered in 1962 at Blackfriars, on the Thames, which had a cargo of ragstone indicating sea-going transport from the Medway and a possible link with the *Classis Britannica*; and the Roman road which diverges from Watling Street at Rochester towards Beauport Park and the coastal ironworking area, and its association with the *Classis Britannica*, passes close to part of the same section of the Medway through modern Maidstone.

Elliott's aim in this book, which has been adapted, somewhat awkwardly, from his 2017 doctoral thesis for the University of Kent, is to prove that the Roman state played a significant role in ragstone extraction, and that its involvement was comparable with, even similar to, that of the *Classis Britannica* in the eastern/coastal part of the Wealden iron industry. After a first chapter, in which the author sets out, rather unnecessarily, the research questions to be answered, the second is entitled, a little misleadingly it turns out, 'Background - Kent during the Roman occupation'. Starting with the geology of south-east England, he then looks at the economy of the Roman empire as a whole, including imperial estates, before concentrating on Kent. Straying from Kent again, the chapter concludes with industry, transport and the military presence in Roman Britain.

Essential to his theory of state involvement in ragstone quarrying is comparison with iron extraction. Thus Chapter Three is devoted to the Weald. There is little essentially new in the material that Elliott has assembled, the regional industry having been extensively written about for more than a century, although it is useful to see it brought together and reinterpreted. The gazetteer of Roman sites is what is available on the WIRG online database, and could have been organised less verbosely. More useful is what follows in a review of settlement and the transport infrastructure of the region, the processes involved, the organisation of labour, and the brick and tile



industry, although the recent discovery of the probable *Classis Britannica* tile kiln at Northiam came too late to be included. There are a few errors: Pig iron was not produced in Roman times, Hastings is in the High Weald not on its periphery, and there were no siderite mines that we know of.

Chapter Four does the same for the Medway valley, this time describing and interpreting what is the author's core research focus. The gazetteer this time is detailed and there is a decent map of the Medway valley, although a larger scale view showing the form of the quarries and

Continued on next page.....

their juxtaposition with the settlement sites would have been useful. The ragstone industry is then described and the quarries examined, the workforce and transport options considered in detail. This is an important chapter, as is the next in which Elliott begins by examining the state's role in the Weald, the case for the *Classis Britannica* and an imperial estate, before pointing to the analogous situation of ragstone extraction: the potential role of the *CLBR* in transporting the stone and the similar decline in activity during the 3rd century, the latter a major theme. The final short chapter, labelled 'Conclusion' is largely superfluous, the author's arguments needing no further elucidation. Sadly, there is no index.

A specific criticism is of the author's tendency to ascribe points in his argument to the most recent sources rather than to the original ones. For example, he cites Harrington and Welch's 2014 book on the early Saxons as the source for the division of the Roman iron industry into coastal and central Wealden areas, rather than attributing that theory to Cleere in the 1970s.

Jeremy Hodgkinson

Volunteering at the Keep, Brighton

(Readers' attention is drawn to the fact that this item bears on the WIRG Autumn discussion meeting. See Page 1 of this Newsletter.)

Past and current member of WIRG use field walking and documented records to record the locations of iron sites which date from the Iron Age to the 19th century. Jeremy Hodgkinson has created an on-line database of some 1000 sites across the Weald of Sussex, Surrey and Kent. East Sussex has the greater number with some 680 recorded to date and we are still finding more.

Comparing our records with that of the Historic Environment Record (HER) we found a significant shortfall in the number of iron related sites on the HER database. I am therefore examining all of the HER iron entries for East Sussex, adding missing ones, correcting misplaced ones and expanding information to the site description where we have it. Searching relies on the digitisation of all of WIRG's past Bulletins, Newsletters and Field Notes as well as entries in Straker's 1931 publication '*Wealden Iron*' and Cleere & Crossley's updated 1995 edition '*The Iron Industry of the Weald*'. All these publications are freely available to download from our website www.wealdeniron.org.uk

At The Keep, I also have access to the Sussex Archaeological Collections, Sussex Notes & Queries, historic maps and tithe apportionments which together enable me to check and add information.

I started volunteering in 2016 and am now about half way through the list. It sometimes requires the relocation of a site if subsequent information has provided a more accurate location – for example errors in converting latitude and longitude used in older publications to national grid coordinates, and, with the advent of GPS used in the field, a move from six-figure coordinates to eight or even ten figure values improving the accuracy from 100m² to 10m² or better.

If anyone feels able to assist with this work either by coming to the Keep on a regular basis or searching the WIRG digitised records at home, please contact secretary@wealdeniron.org.uk

Tim Smith



Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group makes further progress with CLBR discoveries.

We are delighted to include this note and the associated photos from HAARG:

We have attached some photos you may find interesting. Today (day 3 excavating) we have recovered a Classis Britannica (CLBR) tile stamp which matches with tiles from at the Kitchenham Farm, Ashburnham site. This site is approx. 1km up river from Castle Croft. This tile gives a direct connection between the Castle Croft tile production site and the Kitchenham Farm port and roadside settlement.

The dig continues.

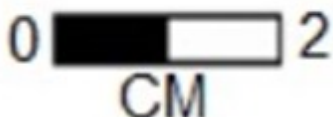
Kevin and Lynn Cornwell
Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group

Castle Croft 'CLBR' Stamped Tile found 25 Sep 18



The incision (the line) has been done prior to the tile being fired.

Kitchenham Farm 'CLBR' Stamped Tile No. 26 (KF Design No. 1)



Published in Britannia 2017

Protestantism amongst Iron masters in the mid Sixteenth Century

Mr. M J Leppard has written to the editor of this newsletter revisiting issues raised in his Bulletin article *Wealden Iron, Heretics and Martyrs* (2015).

Many readers will remember that M A Lower's 1849 article mentions iron masters being martyred at Lewes. In effect the question that Mr. Leppard raises is that of the difference between *some* people with connections to the iron industry embracing religious change and some connection between the iron industry and Protestantism *per se*. Further, given that at least one writer (Ursula King Ridley) assumes such a connection, was the same

assumption made by any earlier writer? Any views on this issue gratefully received.

If there is a statistically significant connection between the new blast furnace industry and (say) victims of the Marian persecution what is its basis? Few people would now fully accept Weber's views on the "protestant ethic" as a factor in industrial change, but this instance would fit that model well.

We understand that the next edition of the bulletin will contain an article that examines some of the connections between iron-making and belief systems. There is probably scope for increasing our understanding of iron workers in the past by asking what went on in their heads.

Searching for the site of the Tudeley mediaeval bloomery: making a start.

(Readers' attention is drawn to the fact that this item bears on the WIRG Autumn discussion meeting. See Page 1 of this Newsletter.)

The accounts for the medieval bloomery at Tudeley in Kent are the only known documents of this kind in the Weald for this period, covering 1329 - 1334 and 1350 - 1354 in detail. However, the site has never been successfully located. With the current resources available and further fieldwork, might the medieval ironworks be found?

Prior to fieldwork a number of possible sources of evidence might be sought. This note is presented as a start to this process.

Firstly, by reading the original article bringing the discovery of the accounts of the ironworks at Tudeley to the notice of archeologists. This is by M.S. Giuseppe in *Archaeologia* vol. 64, 1912-13.

These accounts are given in the original Latin, but have been translated by Drewery, Hodgkinson and Whittick in WIRG bulletin *Wealden Iron* Vol. 18, second series, 1998, along with details of the ironworking to be gleaned from them.

The four usual 'bibles' of an ironworks researcher;

Straker *Wealden Iron*

Schubert *History of the British Iron and Steel Industry*

Cleere and Crossley *The Iron Industry Of The Weald*

and... Hodgkinson *The Wealden Iron Industry*

all have references and information about the important ironworks at Tudeley. Straker goes so far as to identify the location on the bank of a gill on the Somerhill estate (TQ 6205 4474) which he found after 'several years' search'.

WIRG fieldworkers investigated this site but dismissed it for not exhibiting sufficient bloomery slag. Two other sites in the Tudeley area were considered by WIRG members; Devils Gill Bloomery at TQ6161 4404 and Rats Castle Forge TQ 6123 4669. The findings are described by Herbert in WIRG bulletin 6 second series. The sites and people database on our website (www.wirgdata.org) convincingly locate these ironworks in the Tudeley region.

The Lord of the manor (actually a Lady) of Southfrith who owned the ironworks was Elizabeth de Burgh, Lady of Clare (1295 - 1360). Her father was the wealthy nobleman, Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Hertford and her mother, Joan of Acre, a daughter of King Edward I.

She had an elder brother, Gilbert, who died at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314 and two sisters, Margaret and Eleanor, who shared the Clare inheritance with Elizabeth.

The Lowy of Tonbridge, part of the Clare estates since the Conquest was divided between Margaret (taking the town and castle of Tonbridge with North frith park) and Elizabeth who was given the park of Southfrith.



© National Portrait Gallery, London

The first accounts of the ironworks we have are those of 'Richard de Grosherst, Keeper of Lady Elizabeth de Burgh's Chase of Southfrith.' November 1329 - September 1330

By 1318, Elizabeth had been married three times and had three children. After being widowed a third time in 1322 at the age of 26, she decided to take a vow of chastity, probably to avoid becoming a pawn in the Kings' marriage market. She took her name de Burgh from her first marriage and became one of the richest and most influential women of the fourteenth century.

Perhaps there are some clues to her Tudeley ironworks in the history of the Clare estates. There is a biography... 'For her Good Estate; The Life of Elizabeth de Burgh' by Frances Underhill, written in 1999, and a book containing a selection of her accounts edited by J. Ward for the Suffolk Record Society, 'Elizabeth de Burgh, Lady of Clare; Household and Other Records. (2014).

The boundary (quite elastic it would seem) of the Lowy of Tonbridge, including Southfrith, is discussed in *Archaeologica Cantiana*. vols. 72 (1958) and 96 (1980).

So far, we know the site must be near to the village of Tudeley and within the bounds of Southfrith. The northernmost part of this became known as Somerhill from Tudor times. An early 19th Century guide book describes Somerhill as 'anciently the residence of the Earl of Clare's bailiffs in the chace of Soutfrith'. Hasted's map of the Lowy of Tonbridge 1790, is available online. It clearly shows the Southfrith boundary, but the village of Tudeley is outside it. The map produced by Dunbrick (Vol 72, Arch. Cant) also shows Tudeley just outside the eastern boundary of Southfrith.

In the hope that this is narrowing the search area, an historical geographer would next turn to possible routeways approaching the bloomery.

As a (mostly) profitable enterprise. the bloomery produced on average a bloom of iron each day (weight unknown?), and certainly carriage of ore stone, charcoal and wood for roasting ore and building to the site from the Southfrith estate happened on a regular basis. There must have been a network of tracks funnelling into the bloomery area.

The old map of Kent map by Blatt , 1769, shows a track leading east to west across the northern part of the Somerhill estate. The Historic England entry for Somerhill describes a deep sunken lane to the north of the gardens. Further research looking at the Ordnance Survey Draft map in the British Library (Late 18th Century) may add to the previous roadway network .

Tithe maps (mid 19th Century) and their apportionments give the names of fields, often extremely good clues to former land use. Matching field names to numbers on a map is still a job to be done, but with at least 16 field names having 'pit' in them in the Tudeley area, and a field called 'coalhearth' and another 'Buddle mead ' (buddle or budlett means an area where ore was washed) clues may be found.

Staker associated the place names ' smithy wood', ' blacksmiths fields', 'upper and lower ashpit fields', and 'ashpond field with his identification of the site. Personally, I think he was quite close.

Other evidence is the geology map from the British Geological Survey online, showing the areas of Wadhurst clay and its boundary with the Ashdown beds in the Southfrith area. Previous research has shown that the junction between these rock groups is the most likely to produce iron ore. The bloomery itself would be better built on the sandstone as this is a good rock from which to construct the furnace. The eastern side of Southfrith has an inlier of Ashdown sand surrounded by Wadhurst clay.

The LiDAR map of this area, surveyed by the Environment Agency is both rewarding and disappointing. A large block of Southfrith park with the Somerhill residences has not been covered, but the area either side shows what appears to be a sunken lane heading in the Tudeley direction.

Just to the south west of Tudeley church, two streams converge and the triangle of land above the confluence shows a rough piece of ground with a large circular shape like a mound, which may prove relevant. It is just within the old bounds of Southfrith and to the west is Park Farm, which may be the farm referred to in the ironwork accounts and would have provided employment when the ironworks were not in production. This is of course speculation and only looking at the ground will give us answers.

These are just a few of the methods which may be employed in seeking out this enigmatic location.

Gerry Crawshaw

A conjecture about “treading the wheel” in times of water shortage.

There are references in the literature of Wealden blast furnaces to the water wheels being moved by human foot-power when the pond and streams ran short of water. This seems to have been called “treading the wheel”.

This has struck me as a bit of a mystery because the archaeological remains of Wealden iron industry water wheels seem unsuited for being walked on. They are, in essence, unimproved (pre-Smeaton) overshot wheels which means that the unfortunate wheel-treader would have had to stand on the thin, edge-on, face of each bucket. Moreover, the extant wheel parts are very narrow and could only possibly have taken one man, and he in a very precarious position. I have argued elsewhere* that the power generated by one man is decidedly low for running a charcoal blast furnace of the size we believe to have been usual in the Weald.

I have recently seen an apparatus (in Kerala, S. India) that may offer a practical explanation of “treading the wheel”. This is, effectively, a reverse-breastshot water wheel whose function was to lift water about 600 mm. out of paddy fields and into drainage canals at a higher level. (The actual apparatus shown was in use until about 1960 when electric pumps were introduced.) The operator was seated above the paddles and on the paddy-field side and trod the paddles, driving the water up a curved wooden channel to the higher level.

Whilst the water-pumping aspect of this arrangement is irrelevant to the Wealden blast furnace problem, the seated paddle-treading may be important. The few images we have, and the scant contemporary descriptions tell us that the waterwheels drove the bellows *via* an ungeared axle. Fixing a tread-able mechanism to this axle would have been

a straightforward and cheap precaution against drought. The amount of work required of the treader(s) would have been the same whatever the diameter of the tread-wheel but the effective work rate could have been increased as the diameter increased.

There is, as yet, no evidence to support this conjecture, but “treading-the-wheel” is an unresolved problem. A re-examination of the record of Wealden blast furnace excavation reports, of those finds still in museums and of odd features in paintings of furnaces from elsewhere may be useful.

Jonathan Prus

*see *Wealden Iron 2010*



The problems involved in making a correct identification of an iron-working site. A case study

Stoney Hazel Forge, located 0.25 miles WNW of Rusland church, in the southern Lake District of Cumbria (NGR SD 336 897) has long held a mystery as to the purpose of a square hole in the back wall of the hearth.

In April, members of the Wealden Iron Research Group visited various ironmaking sites in the southern lakes including ‘New Forge’ at Stoney Hazel.

Documentation indicates the site to be a short lived bloom forge operating from 1718 to 1725 when the lease was purchased jointly by the Backbarrow Co and Cunsey Co who introduced the blast furnaces to the region in 1711 and therefore required fining forges rather than bloom forges. Some bloom forges were converted to finery forges but, according to the documentation, not at Stoney Hazel where the forge was taken out of commission and dismantled over the next 11 years.



‘New Forge’ at Stoney Hazel showing hole in rear wall of the hearth. (Bellows to left)

The site consists of two separate ranges of buildings in a line about 18m apart. The northern building contains a single hearth and was excavated by the late Michael Davies-Shiel in 1968-69. A well-constructed hole in the back wall of the hearth – approximately 300mm square - led him to interpret the site as a Walloon forge which led him to conclude that the forge had been converted to refine blast furnace pig iron and he extended the life of activity from 1718 to about 1825. However, this, and subsequent excavation of the southern buildings, did not locate a chafery reheating hearth as expected in a Walloon forge. The original excavation did, however, find an ore bin and ore staining in the single hearth conducive with its use as a bloomery forge.

Blast furnaces in the region cast pigs of iron – some 1m long, unlike the Walloon furnace which cast much heavier sows some 3m long and weighing up to 500kg which necessitated the use of a hole in the back wall of the forge through which the heavy sow was slowly inserted, the tip being ‘burnt’ off to produce refined, low carbon, iron. Smaller pigs could more effectively be treated by breaking them into short pieces, piling them before the hearth to preheat them and then bringing pieces into the forge for refining. In such a case, not only was there no need for a hole in the back wall, but it would be a disadvantage due to loss of heat through it.

Davies-Shiel explained the occurrence of the ore bin as a revival of a lost technology in which rich ore (as in the Cumbria region) or hammer scale was added to the refining hearth to aid decarburization of the iron. Indeed, this process was common some 100 years later when the wet puddling process was introduced by Henry Cort in 1816.

A suggestion following a later excavation in the 1980s that the hole was used for the passage of levers to control the flow of water onto the wheel seems unlikely as these levers would have to pass through the heat of the hearth. Another suggestion is that the site was a ‘German hearth’ which

uses only one hearth, initially for refining and later for reheating. But in this case, no back wall hole is required.

During WIRG's visit, quantities of refining slag were found as 'mossers' taking on the shape of the hearth base. These had been interpreted by Davies-Shiel as indicating the presence of a chafery hearth but it is almost impossible to distinguish between fining slags arising from refining pig iron or those arising from consolidating bloomery iron. Indeed, a comparison of the analysis of refining slag collected from Cunsey forge which had been converted to a pig iron finery showed no statistical difference.

Thus the site remains a mystery, but one where local interpretation boards may well be in error.

Tim Smith

Acknowledgements

Newland Furnace Trust, David Cranstone, Alan Davies (for analysis)

Investigations at Great Park Wood, Brede

A WIRG foray to the Great Park Wood area, close to the boundary between Brede and Udimore parishes in East Sussex revealed remains of a landscape rich in features related to ironworking (Turgoose 2017). Subsequent visits by our chairman and by Jonathan Prus identified a discrete area of slag within the wood, (located at NGR 585252 119038), the steeply-sloping heap restricted to one side of a stream leading from a natural spring, which has partially eroded the pile. At the kind invitation of the landowner, a team from WIRG began the archaeological excavation of the site in January 2018.

The wood lies in an area of the Weald with relatively complex geology, but in essence it sits on the lower south-facing slope of the Udimore Ridge, an area of ore-rich Ashdown Beds capped with Wadhurst Clay, overlooking the River Brede. This geology lends itself to ironworking, and the works at Great Park Wood were placed adjacent



to the natural spring providing the necessary water source for the process, and reinforcing the initial conclusion that the slag heap (measuring an impressive c.150m²) formed evidence of a local bloomery.



The manual excavation of initial test-pits aimed to establish the extent of the slag heap, but this was hamstrung by the presence of a thick layer of hillwash (colluvium) in the north-western corner of the woods. This material, in places more than 1m in thickness, has proved problematic during the subsequent excavation too, as it entirely seals much of the site, may have disguised topographical features, and has proved time-consuming (and back-breaking!) to remove by hand. However, on a positive note it has helped to preserve the underlying archaeological deposits from damage from tree roots and burrowing animals.



Although excavation is at an early stage, the monthly 'digs' at the site have revealed some of its secrets. The initial test-pits (themselves of limited value given the depth of hillwash) have been expanded to form larger trenches allowing the removal of the hillwash and the examination of the underlying archaeological deposits. Trenches have been targeted on the relatively flat area in the north-western corner of the wood, and on the steeper slopes of the heap leading down towards the stream bed. The results so far have been encouraging.

Firstly, the deposits of slag revealed in the stream bank and further up the slope have been confirmed as parts of an extensive slag heap, clear evidence of the presence of a local bloomery given the abundance of bloomery slag, charcoal and substantial pieces of clay furnace lining spread through the previously-buried archaeological deposits. Secondly, and undoubtedly the most significant discovery so far, has been

the



recovery of an expanding assemblage of Late Iron Age/Early Romano-British pottery deposited within the sealed contexts of the slag heap, providing a firm, secure date range for the site, placing it a little later in date than the Mid-Late Iron Age site at Whitepost Wood near Hartfield recently excavated by WIRG (Stevens 2013). It is anticipated that C14 dates will also be sought for the site, which has abundant suitable charcoal for the dating process.

To date the excavation has not identified the location of any of the actual bloomery furnaces at the site, but it is hoped that the remains of such structures may be encountered, especially given the protection offered to them by the overlying hillwash. Clearly this will be a priority for the ongoing excavation campaign at the site, but this will continue arm-in-arm with the excavation and recording of transects across the spoilheap(s) and investigation of water management at the site. It is hoped that recording of this work will be dovetailed with an accurate topographical survey of the impressive mine pits to the north-east of the excavation site (Turgoose *op. cit.*).

Thanks are due to the landowners for their kind invitation to investigate the site, and to all the WIRG volunteers who have battled the hillwash to reveal the buried archaeological deposits over the months! New volunteers (who must be members of WIRG) are always welcome. Please email Bob Turgoose, our chairman for details: bobturgoose@yahoo.co.uk

Simon Stevens BA MCIfA

References

- Stevens, S. 2013. Archaeological Investigations on a Pre-Roman Iron Age site at Whitepost Wood, nr. Holtye, Hartfield, East Sussex, *Wealden Iron* No. **33** Second Series, 8-19
- Turgoose, B. 2017. Mine pits in Brede, *Wealden Iron* No. **37** Second Series, 3

Exploring the published literature of the iron industry

Most readers of this newsletter will be familiar with the seminal works on Wealden iron, Straker's *Wealden Iron* and Cleere and Crossley's *Iron industry of the Weald*. Both of these are now available free to download from the WIRG website www.wealdeniron.org.uk. More recently Jeremy Hodgkinson has published *The Wealden Iron Industry*.

In addition to these books the WIRG bulletin has appeared regularly since 1969. A glance the sources cited by Cleere, Crossley and Hodgkinson (and any other writer on Wealden iron) will show that the work done by WIRG members has fed into the wider literature. With the exception of a few recent editions, the WIRG bulletin is also free to download from the website. For those who prefer paper, Brian Herbert will send out back numbers for a modest price (brianherbert@btinternet.com).

What may be less well known is that the formation of WIRG was part of a wider process that saw the formation of the Historical Metallurgy Society ("HMS") and the emergence of international co-operation that continues today. This year, alas, saw the death of both Henry Cleere and David Crossley who were key to the establishment of WIRG in 1968 and who both played important rôles in the body that became HMS in 1974 (The Historical Metallurgy Group, "HMG"). When HMG formalised its existence in 1964 the aim was "To encourage the study of the pre-history and history of metallurgy in all its aspects and to co-operate in practical work with other organisations working in the

same field.” Subscription: ten shillings. The aims remain much the same to this day. The subscription is no longer ten shillings (but calculated in terms of pints of beer at the pub is just about unchanged!). The HMS now attracts more international contributions to its Journal and has a more international membership reflecting the increasing dominance of research done outside the UK. There has always been a number of WIRG members who belong to HMS and/or *vice versa*. Currently three WIRG members serve on the governing body of HMS.

HMS publications cover a wide range of metal-related technologies, metallurgical history and research guides. The details of these may be found at www.hist-met.org. Some are free to download, some not.

The interpretation of sites in the Weald often depends on understanding and comparing similar processes elsewhere. To some extent the reverse has been true: some of Henry Cleere’s insights in the Weald (for example) have had extensive influence. Continuing to correlate and cross-check with other places and other periods is part of deepening the understanding of our local patch.

There is, of course, a wider literature of the historic and pre-historic iron industries and it is not possible to cover this in a brief note. I would be willing to try and answer any readers’ queries about this literature.

Jonathan Prus

Handling personal data

A review of the WIRG constitution during our preparation for the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations in May 2018 identified one provision which requires attention.

Part 2, Para 7(4) reads “The trustees (that is the committee) must keep a register of names and addresses of members which must be made available to any member on request”.

In the past this provision has been standard for many charities. It may facilitate communications between like minded members on matters of common interest.

However, these days personal data (names and addresses) has to be kept secure and can only be made available with the explicit consent of each member. If any member of WIRG withheld consent their details could not be sent to other members and the Trustees could not comply with the requirements of Para 7(4).

The committee is therefore considering proposing changes to the Constitution. Changes to Part 2 require a simple majority at an AGM.

In advance of next year’s AGM the committee is seeking views of members. Options include:

- deleting the requirement that names and addresses must be made available to any member
- amending the constitution to the effect that the contact details only of those members who had given explicit consent would be made available
- with either of the above amendments add a provision that any personal data made available should be subject to an undertaking that it would be used solely by the member making the request and only to communicate with other WIRG members.

Other options are welcomed. Please make your views known by emailing Tim Smith our secretary.

Bob Turgoose

Henry Cleere (1926-2018). Some personal memories

By the time I joined WIRG in 1977 Henry Cleere was no longer active in the group. His excavation at Beauport Park bath-house was over and he was heavily engaged as Director of the Council for British Archaeology (CBA). But he was living in the Weald so he was not ‘out of the picture’, and in fact was in the process of writing his doctorate on the Roman iron industry in Britain. In 1980 a small group of WIRG members began excavating a bloomery site at Crawley Down that had been discovered on a foray. As complete amateurs, we sought advice where we could get it. and Henry came over from Ticehurst on two occasions to help us interpret the hearths and their uses. His advice was generous and pertinent. He addressed a couple of winter meetings in the 80s, both times widening WIRG’s horizons by showing members bloomery iron-making in other cultures: slides Henry had taken in India, and film made by Nicole Echard of the Hausa people in Nigeria. WIRG’s own experimental bloomery had got under way by then and the techniques of primitive iron-makers were remarkably instructive. 1985 saw the publication of *The Iron Industry of the Weald*, and at the summer meeting that year, held at Lamberhurst, Henry and David Crossley presented a specially bound copy to Fred Tebbutt, to whom it had been dedicated. I spent my summer holiday in North Wales reading it. Sadly Fred Tebbutt, WIRG’s first President, died that December, and Henry was elected to succeed him the next year. In 1987, as a follow-up to the book’s publication, a conference on iron was organised in collaboration with the Sussex Archaeological Society at Haywards Heath; Henry gave the first paper.

In the early 1990s the CBA was divided into a number of regional groups, most of which were locally elected. However, the south east region, unprepossessingly known as Group 11, was in the hands of the three county societies. Henry, as national director, was keen to do away with this

anomaly, and approached me to convene a more broadly based steering committee to include representatives from both amateur and professional archaeological bodies. I think his motive in choosing me was that I was chair of a group that had an interest across much of south-east England, and that had, under Fred Tebbutt, a solid archaeological reputation. Alas, I was not an archaeologist of that calibre but, supported by a team who were, we brought CBA South East into being in 1991 at an inaugural meeting at Tonbridge addressed by Barry Cunliffe. CBA SE continues to thrive.

In 1991 WIRG had a foray to Beauport Park, where the late Gerald Brodribb had continued to explore where the ironworkers might have lived. Henry joined us and brought with him his predecessor at the CBA, Beatrice de Cardi. It transpired that one of the Field Group stalwarts with us that day, Elizabeth Gibb, had, like Beatrice, dug with Sir Mortimer Wheeler at Maiden Castle in the 1930s. Sir Mortimer had a reputation for a fondness for young female archaeologists and it was amusing to hear Elizabeth and Beatrice reminiscing about their experiences. Henry retired from the CBA that year, receiving the OBE for his services. He then embarked on a new career as World Heritage Co-ordinator for the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). This took him all over the world and WIRG saw little of him for the next 11 years.

From 2002, and by then an Honorary Professor at the Institute of Archaeology, Henry began to get along to winter meetings from time to time. He came to see the excavation at Little Furnace Wood in 2004 and, in a quiet moment, sowed the seed in my mind that the time had probably come, after 23 years, for me to find someone else to lead WIRG. He contributed a short article for the Newsletter in 2009 on the role Donald Margary had played in the foundation of WIRG, and in 2012 was co-speaker at the winter meeting when new research was aired on the site at Bardown, which Henry had excavated in the 1960s. I last saw him in 2014 when he, aged 87, and I visited the excavation of the Roman ironworks at Upper Wilting Farm, Crowhurst (photo above). As ever, he challenged my and the excavators' interpretations of what was being discovered there. It was a privilege to have known him.

Jeremy Hodgkinson

