

# Wealden Iron



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# WEALDEN IRON RESEARCH GROUP

## Bulletin No 12, Second Series

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# Field Notes

*compiled by J.S. Hodgkinson*

## **Cowden Lower Furnace – February 1991**

The Field Group was invited by Dr J. Williams, the Kent County Archaeologist, to examine this site following a planning application for a golf course. Documentary evidence is slender and somewhat ambiguous.<sup>1</sup> The site was a corn mill until about the 1840s, served by a leat which is still a distinct surface feature. Over part of its length, it follows the bottom of a steep bank, presumably the edge of the flood plain in earlier times when the water level was higher than at present. Sandstone blocks and at least one length of timber at a sharp bend in the Kent Water mark the site of a former weir and penstock, and the point where the leat began. No slag was observed although a small quantity was noted on a visit made by the group in 1980. Fist-sized lumps, apparently of slag but not of the characteristic colour found in the Weald, were noted in the grounds of a small water treatment works just downstream of the mill site. Subsequent enquiries have revealed them to be lumps of basic iron slag from Llanwern steel works, in South Wales, used as the filter element.

## **London-Lewes Roman road – April 1991**

One of the afternoon visits for the 1990 WIRG AGM was to have been the London-Lewes Roman Road at Cowden, north of the Sussex-Kent border. Unfortunately, after a preliminary, three-hour visit, very little of interest could be found, although it is described in “Roman Ways in the Weald” by I.D. Margary. It was this absence of evidence which prompted the writer to organise the WIRG field-workers into using their expertise to retrace this partially iron-slagger road and record it in more detail.

It should be noted that the road follows the route shown in Margary’s book; no spades were used during this investigation,

as is WIRG's rule for forays, only probes, trowels, and a metal/slag detector. The points of interest along the road are shown in parentheses, and are indicated on the map, whilst a corresponding list of references is given at the end of the article. It will be noted that the maps used are from Margary's book.

During the earlier visit, it was established that the road passes across Kitford Mead, Sussex, south of the Kent Water. The road skirts the corner of the kitchen garden (A), crosses the paddock and follows the course of the cesspit overflow to Kent Water (B). The road may be seen in the Kent Water, where at this point it provides the Sussex-Kent border. The road crossing would seem to have been a ford here, considering the hard base of bloomery slag at river level. The road also crosses another stream, coming from the north, again at river level (C), i.e. another ford. There is slight evidence in the field that this stream once flowed straight into the Kent Water, perhaps eliminating a river crossing. Up the incline into the field there is a pit across the road (D), 25m E/W, 20m N/S and 9m deep; this pit is not shown on any map. The south side of the pit would be a suitable place to section the road as several pieces of slag were found here. At the brow of the hill there is a wooded gill to the west, along which Margary found slag (E). Although no slag could be seen, the slag detector did indicate its presence. It is possible that the road may have slipped into the gill.

Down the slope, through the field boundary hedge, the 4m wide slagged road again became apparent in the shallow ditch (F). The slag could be probed for at least 4m north of the ditch. Some 100m to the east a seam of iron ore outcrops at the junction of the Wadhurst Clay and the Ashdown Sand.<sup>2</sup> Pits, both large and small, may be seen at TQ 4636 4036, TQ 4600 4135, and in many other places. Across the slightly-rising next field (towards the left oak tree) and into the undergrowth an E/W hollow-way was encountered, 3m deep and 5m wide (G); it is assumed to have existed during the Roman period. The edges of the hollow-way are too steep to walk down/up, and so a bridge would have been necessary. Some pieces of bloomery slag were seen on the north bank of the hollow-way.

Beyond the hollow-way and in rough woodland, a spring issues forth, some 5m to the east and flows across the road. At this point the road has a slag base, (H), and it is close to here that a bloomery furnace site called Waystrode is situated.<sup>3</sup> On coming out of the rough woodland, the road becomes apparent again. Here it is on level ground from (I) to (J) and terraced into the hillside which slopes down to the stream. The terracing is very distinct, with a near vertical edge, on the east side of the road. Pieces of slag were found at one point, whilst at another water damage has probably washed small sandstones from the road's surface down towards the stream.

It is the start of the terraced part of the road (I) that causes a slight problem, in that the terracing also follows the modern footpath eastwards towards Waystrode Manor. This would imply that there is a turning off the road, for which there are two possible destinations:

1. To gain access to the medium-sized mine pits outside Waystrode Manor, and others in the locality.

2. Gaining access to the hollow-way, which now becomes an underpass, leading towards Dry Hill Camp<sup>4</sup> at TQ 432417, and also to the large bloomery site (not dated but most probably Roman) at Upper Stonehurst Farm,<sup>5</sup> TQ 4230 4105, both of which are about two miles away. The former references only consider Iron Age trackways running N/S of Dry Hill.

It was Hugh Sawyer who wondered on the origins of the name Waystrode. He has since discovered that there is a Sussex dialect word "strod" meaning a "forked branch", (like a catapult); it is also the past tense for "stride". From this evidence it may be concluded that Waystrode is on the junction of the three roads, or perhaps "astride" or "straddling" a road, in fact, an old road, Spode Lane (Spode: derived from the Latin *spodium* meaning "slag"; + "lane"), bypasses Cowden village and passes beside Waystrode Manor.

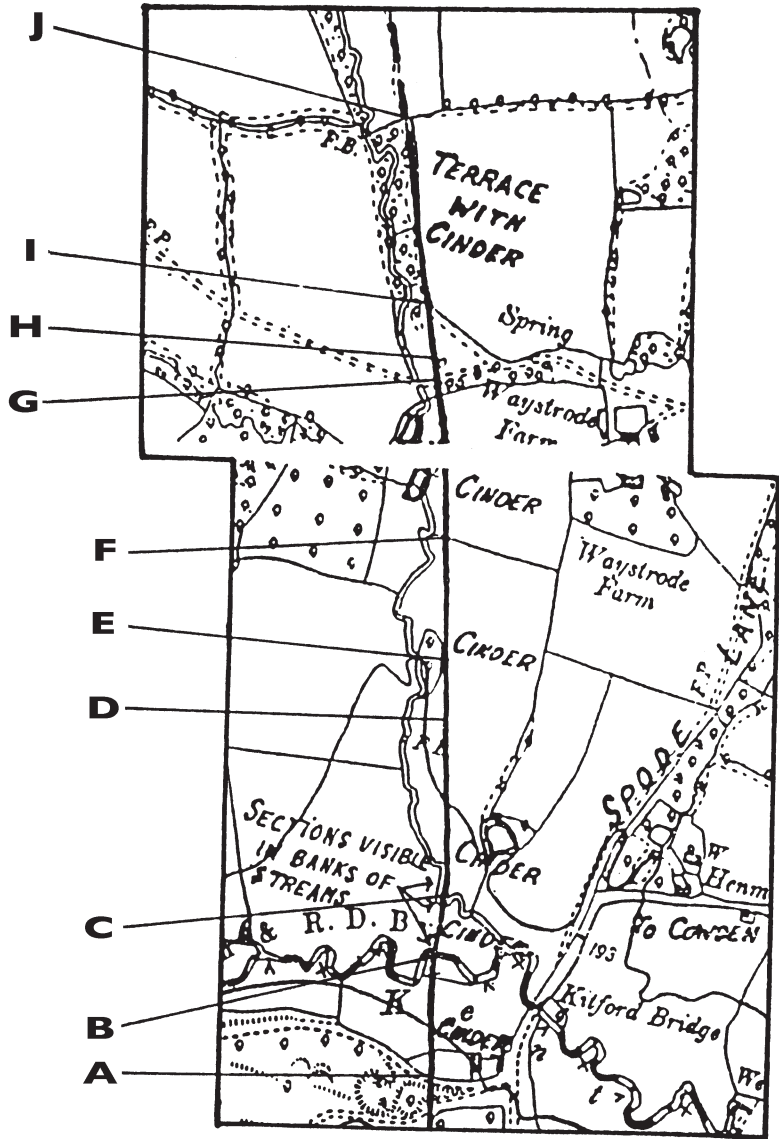
From (J) to (K), again on level ground, the terrace is less distinct, although the road has probably been levelled, however there is no

detectable base along this stretch of road. The road crosses a stream with a ford, at (K), where a hard base may be seen. The landscape at this ford does not seem to be natural, as the water cascades down into the main stream beyond the ford. It is possible that this stream originally ran in a gill, and that the Romans ‘filled it in’ with sandstone to make a level crossing; it has withstood 2000 years of erosion.

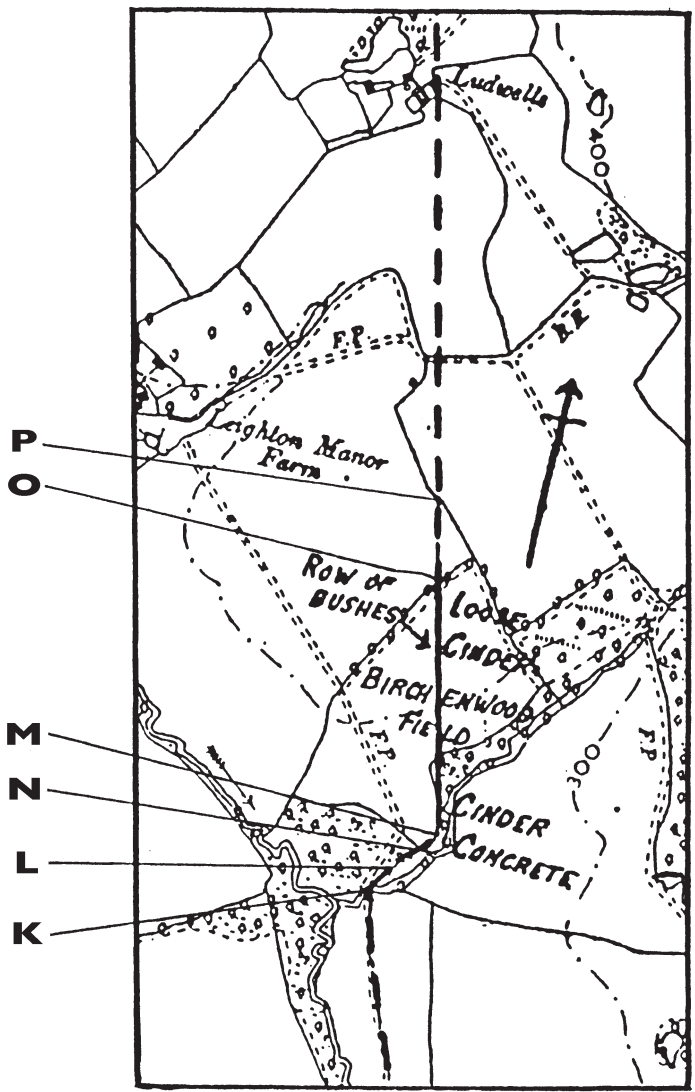
According to Margary, the road, in the form of a hollow-way, now takes a half-right turn to the north-east. No more clues to the road surface could be found between the end of the hollow-way (L) and the wood/field boundary (O), probably because the owner has recently replanted this piece of woodland, and disturbed the land surface. The “cinder concrete” that Margary discovered could not be found, (M), but the “row of bushes” may still be there. After studying the terrain between (K) and (O), the road seems to have taken the route with the least gradient, detouring a deep gill at (N) but crossing this same stream at (K) with a ford.

The 25 inch OS map shows a depression in the field at (O), where the road exits from the wood, but which is now all but ploughed out. The metal detector located slag for the length of the road within this field up to the field boundary at (P), at which point time ran out.

- A TQ 4596 4000 South edge of Kitford Mead.  
Across Paddock and garden of Kitford Mead to:
- B TQ 4593 4013 Ford across Kent Water
- C TQ 4593 4018 Ford crossing stream from the north
- D TQ 4589 4034 Pit
- E TQ 4587 4049 Cinder beside gill
- F TQ 4585 4049 Hedgerow ditch
- G TQ 4581 4062 E/W Hollow-way
- H TQ 4580 4064 Waystrode bloomery?
- I TQ 4578 4068 Start of terrace  
to:
- J TQ 4572 4083 Finish of terrace







Level ground to:

- K TQ 4563 4102 Ford, also start of hollow-way
- L TQ 4565 4106 End of hollow-way
- M TQ 4568 4109 Cinder concrete, NOT FOUND
- N TQ 4568 4108 Gill, NOT CROSSED BY ROAD
- O TQ 4562 4131 Wood/field boundary
- P TQ 4560 4138 Field/field boundary

WIRG would like to thank Mr & Mrs S. Pope of Kitford Mead and Mr Cartier of Leighton Manor for permission to pass across their land.

Two books of photographs showing the London-Lewes Roman road, taken by Mr Margary, are available for inspection at the Sussex Archaeological Society's library at Barbican House, Lewes, Sussex.

Further follow-up work

1. Section the S or N edge of the pit at (D).
2. Determine if the hollow-way (G) continues to Dry Hill or the bloomery site.

### **Fore Wood Bloomery, Battle, East Sussex – October 1991**

Fore Wood is owned by the RSPB and is on the western edge of the many Roman bloomery sites at the eastern end of the iron-ore bearing strata of the Wadhurst Clay. Although this site (TQ 7520 1305) has been described as Roman, no excavation evidence can be found to confirm its dating. However, the first impressions of the site, with its great concentration of slag, the length of the slagged area, and the situation on the edge of a gill, all gave the indication of a typical Roman bloomery site.

The site is situated exactly on an east-west junction of the Wadhurst Clay and Ashdown Sand, and on the western edge of a very deep north-south gill some 9m deep and having very steep

sides. Such a situation would have shown, in Roman times, a very good section through the stratum of ore for at least 100m on both sides of the gill. The length of the slagged area is about 75m whilst the width is about 30m, ignoring the slag resting on the side of the gill. The slagged area is very undulating, having depressions some 4m deep. These may be where the ore was dug from, but more likely due to slag being removed to make up the timber tracks within the woodland, as determined by the metal detector. Further evidence of recent slag robbing may be seen where the existing trees are growing on mounds of slag.

Two excavations were undertaken, one at each end of the site, where it seemed that the slag was least disturbed. The south excavation was dug to a depth of 1.3m over an area of 2m by 1m, with no datable evidence coming to light. Although the metal detector indicated plenty of slag, not a great deal was found, this being due to roasted iron-ore sievings along with the occasional piece of ore. The excavation to the north of the site was dug through solid slag limiting the depth to about 0.7m, due to the work involved. Once again no datable evidence was found.

B.K. Herbert.

### **A Romano-British bloomery at Danehill, East Sussex**

A concentration of bloomery slag has been found in The Toll, a stretch of woodland on the east side of the stream south west of Heaven Farm, Danehill (TQ 4044 2616). We are grateful to the farmer Mr J. Butler, for drawing attention to this site.

The site was trenched in January 1992 and one sherd of pottery was recovered from the slag heap. This was shown to Sue Hamilton who described it as probably East Sussex-type fabric, that is to say grog-tempered, handmade ware, burnished, and reduced throughout. The sherd is undecorated, and somewhat harder fired than the wares from the late-Iron Age site at Freshfield Brickworks nearby, suggesting a late-Iron Age or Romano-British date; more probably the latter.<sup>6</sup>

## **A bloomery near Battle, East Sussex**

A concentration of bloomery slag has been found on the north bank of the stream in Bushy Wood (TQ 760143). There is a bed of ore, both nodular and tabular, near to the site which lies close to the base of the Wadhurst Clay formation, and a small number of minepits are to be found up the slope to the north. We are grateful to WIRG member, Lindsay Akerman, for drawing our attention to this site.

## **Sturt Hammer, Haslemere, Surrey (SU 886326: new site)**

This recently identified site<sup>7</sup> is occupied by the buildings of a former paper mill, which was subsequently a braid mill. It also appears that gas was made at the site. It lies on the east side of the A287 in the Camelsdale area of Haslemere. The buildings are in process of restoration by the owners, Waverley District Council, and sufficient access can be gained to assess the layout of the site.

The bay is about 100m long and about 4m high on the downstream side. On the upstream side the pond has been filled in to the top of the bay. Two spillways survive; one, in the middle of the bay, continues to carry the culverted mill stream, Britton's Water, under the buildings and thence under the road; the other, at the north end of the bay, is disused. Forge slag is apparent in the garden of the mill house which is situated at the north end of the site, below the bay. It is also to be found in substantial quantities under the A287 and in the garden of Sturt Meadow House which was built in the 1950s on the west side of the road, opposite the mill. Here, in addition to a number of forge bottoms, the owner has recovered several iron artefacts, which have been deposited in Haslemere Museum.

The mill house appears to be the oldest surviving element of the site. It is referred to as "Hoad's mansion" in the local manor court records, connecting it with the Hoade family who were the last known occupiers of the forge.<sup>8</sup> The rear portion is timber-framed

beneath hung tiles, and the style of the framing suggests a sixteenth century date at least. The other buildings appear to date from the 19th or early-20th century.

### **Milland Furnace, Milland, West Sussex (SU 832281: new site)**

This site has been identified by Carla Barnes and was visited by the Field Group in November, 1991. It occupies a narrow valley in Basin Copse below a small pond in what were formerly the grounds of Milland Place. The site is atypical in that there is little, if any, identifiable working area, with almost all the ground sloping from one side or other towards the stream, which flows across the site from west to east before flowing south away from the pond. There is an abundance of blast furnace slag including several large pieces exceeding 20cm by 20cm. A concentration of these large lumps, together with the presence of brick, suggests the possible location of the furnace close to the point where the stream begins to flow to the south. However the site is very overgrown and such identifications must remain no more than tentative.

Because of the steepness of the terrain, the northern scarp of the Vale of Fernhurst, there is no room for pen ponds, and the smallness of the pond is compensated for by the vigour of the stream flow. The bay is about 85m long and between 3m and 4m high on the downstream side. On the upstream side it is only about 1m higher than the water level. The bay, which was revetted in the early years of this century, also carries a bridleway which fords the stream flowing from the pond into the site. About 200m below the site lies a pond bay which was presumably a pen pond for the corn mill at Mill Farm, Milland.

Although no contemporary documentary evidence has been found for this site, a reference from the Court of Requests,<sup>9</sup> undated but certainly after June 1594, refers to the supply by Thomas Bettsworth of Trawton<sup>10</sup> of 200 tons of sows to Henry Campion (or Champion) of Bramshott Hammer<sup>11</sup> in about November 1590. By 1583 Thomas

Bettesworth had acquired the manors of Iping, Deane, Rogate and Rogate Bohunt which included Milland Place, where Bettesworth lived.<sup>12</sup> He died in 1594 and the property passed to his son, Sir Peter Bettesworth, who died still possessed of it in 1635.<sup>13</sup> However, in 1623 the manor of Iping was mortgaged to Robert Seymour and Henry Ades, and by 1635 it was in the hands of Henry Hooke, who had probably acquired Bramshott Hammer in 1609.<sup>14</sup> The “old furnace pond head” is referred to in a conveyance of 1713.

### **A bloomery in Fletching, East Sussex**

A concentration of bloomery slag, with some pieces of vitrified furnace lining, has been noted in a badger set in Pound Wood (TQ 403253). Because the badgers have made their set in the slag heap the earth ejected from the set has covered much of the slag, and the site was only recognised by substantial slag lumps, some of which bear the impressions of charcoal or wood, which the badgers had excavated. We are grateful to Mrs Paula Walkinshaw for informing of this site.

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  6. Hardy, H.R. & Curwen, E.C., 'An Iron Age Pottery Site near Horsted Keynes', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, **78**, (1937), 253-265.
  7. WIRG, *Wealden Iron*, 2nd Series **11**, (1991), 19-29.
  8. *Haslemere Archaeology & Local History Society News Bulletin*, (November 1991), 1-2.
  9. Public Record Office REQ2/165/34.
  10. Presumably Trotton; Milland was in Trotton before becoming a parish in its own right.
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  12. *Victoria County History of Sussex*, **4**, (1953), 23-24, 36 and 63.
  13. *Sussex Record Society* **19**, (1914), 243.
  14. *Victoria County History of Sussex*, **4**, (1953), 64.  
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 West Sussex Record Office Add.Mss 1676-7.



## Wealden Cannon on a Dutch East Indiaman<sup>1</sup>

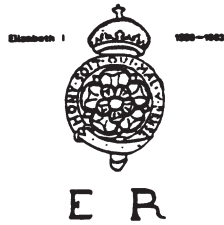
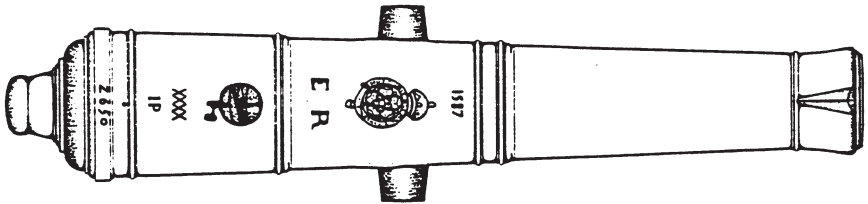
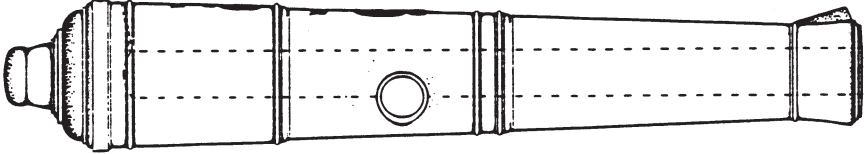
*J.S. Hodgkinson*

Seven iron guns of English manufacture have been recovered from the wreck of the *Mauritius*, a Dutch East Indiaman, off Gabon in West Africa. They were excavated by a team led by M.L Hour and L. Long, sponsored by the Elf-Gabon Petroleum Company.

The *Mauritius* was built in Amsterdam in 1601/2 and saw service on the East Indies run until her loss on the 19th March 1609, presumably on the return journey from Java via Madagascar. The presence of English guns on a Dutch ship would be unusual were

IRON CULVERIN ORDINARY, 7 R. 2650 lbs

Dutch Ship "MAURITUS", lost 1609



© 1991. Roth



it not for the particular period of the wreck, for it is likely that the guns on the ship were sold to the Dutch soon after the accession of James I, following the peace with Spain made in 1604. It is also probable that at least two of the guns had originally been in service in the English Navy as they bear the royal badge of Elizabeth I and the date 1587. This trade with the Netherlands was relatively short-lived, being curtailed in 1618, but it saw a considerable demand from the Dutch for Wealden guns which had a good reputation, and a heavy price advantage over bronze guns.<sup>2</sup> The subsequent prohibition of export licences was to give the Swedish their foothold in the continental ordnance markets, and the consequent disadvantage to the Weald was to have a lasting effect.

The guns were two culverin ordinaries of 7ft, four small demi-culverins, one of 10ft, and the others of 9ft, and a saker ordinary of approximately 7ft. 6in. Both the culverins which bear the royal badge have the initials "IP" which stand for John Phillips who, with his brother Richard, operated in the last quarter of the 16th century. They also cast in bronze and examples of their work have been recovered from the wreck of the *Sacramento* off Brazil.<sup>3</sup> John Phillips was exporting iron guns from Rochester in 1580, 1585 and in 1587, the last date being that of the two guns from the *Mauritius* which bear his initials. In 1588 he was founder for Edmund and Abraham Willard at Barden Furnace, near Speldhurst, and in the same year he served a term, for debt, in the Marshalsea Prison. He also occupied Ashurst Furnace until 1599 when he was succeeded by Thomas Browne.<sup>4</sup>

John Phillips's landlord at Ashurst Furnace was Sir Walter Waller, who may have been related to Sir Thomas Waller whose initials "TW" may be those on one of the demi-culverins from the wreck. In 1596 Thomas Waller owned Horsmonden Furnace and in 1604 he is noted as supplying guns to the Office of Ordnance.<sup>5</sup>

## Notes and References

1. I am most grateful to Mr. R.Roth for the information contained in this article and also for permission to reproduce his drawing of one of the guns. A full account of the excavation of the wreck of the *Mauritius* is in the *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology and Underwater Exploration* (IJNA), 19, 1 (1990).
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5. Cleere & Crossley (1985), 337.  
Public Record Office WO49 30, p258. I am grateful to Mr.Charles Trollope for pointing out this reference.



## Warren Furnace, Worth, Sussex

(TQ 348393)

*J.S. Hodgkinson & R.C. Houghton*

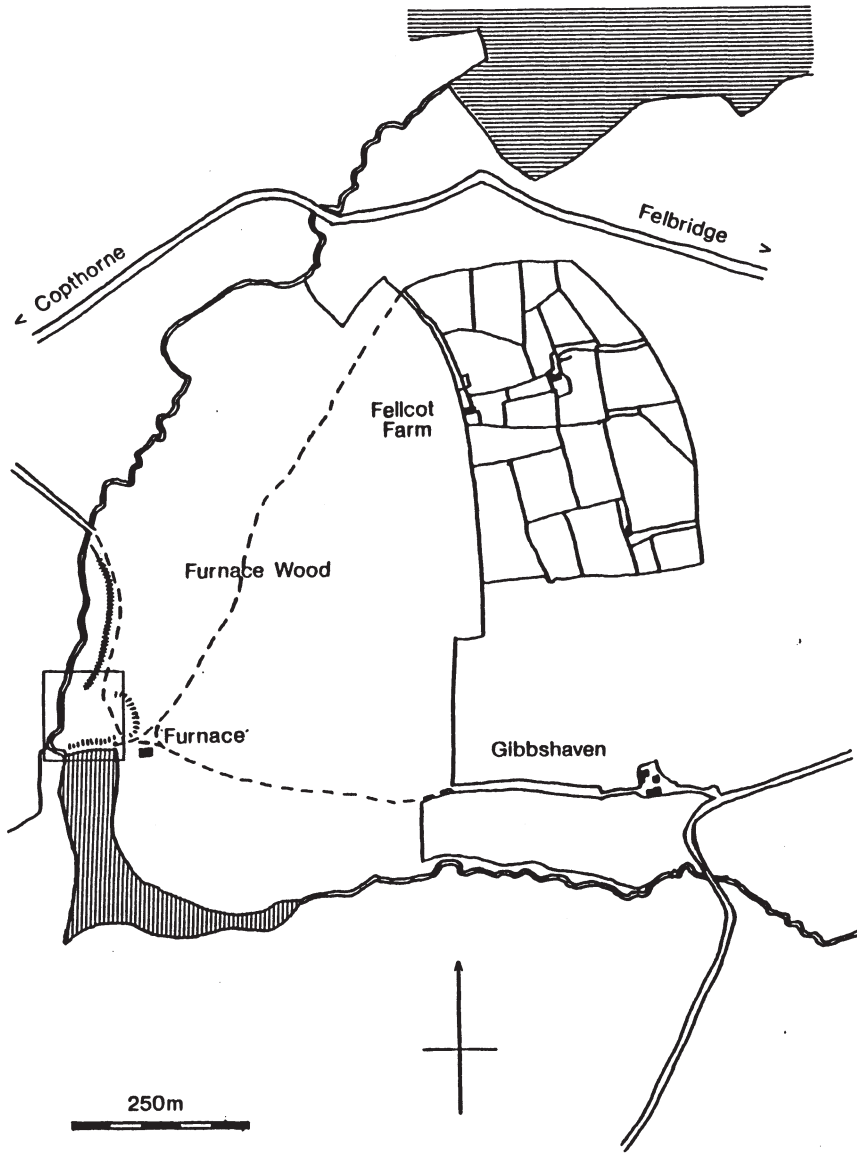
This survey was carried out in 1979 and particular thanks are owed to Tony Weaver and Ken Housman for their advice and assistance, and to Mr. Peter Curties, the owner, for permission to examine the site over a long period.<sup>1</sup> When the survey was undertaken the site lay in woodland consisting of a few mature oaks and wild cherries amid a low undergrowth of ash saplings. Since the storm of 1987 the site has become virtually impenetrable.

Warren Furnace was in operation during two distinct periods – from 1567, when a twenty-one-year lease was granted by Sir Edward Gage to John Fawkner of Waldron and John French of Chiddingly<sup>2</sup> and again from about 1758 until about 1774 when the furnace was in the hands of Edward Raby, and later his son Alexander.<sup>3</sup> Myllwood,

the name by which The Warren, now called Furnace Wood, was known in 1567 was so named in a lease of 1485, suggesting a former use of the Felbridge Water, though whether this was connected with the iron industry is unknown.<sup>4</sup> What remains on the site must be assumed to largely reflect its later use when ordnance, both in iron and bronze, was cast for the government at the site during and after the Seven Years' War. Bronze casting would have required a reverberatory furnace but no structures have been identified which could be interpreted as such, although the chance find of a small 'splash' of bronze alloyed in gun metal proportions, adds credence to the use of the site for both metals. A mill is recorded on the site, occupying the presumed position of the furnace tower, on the tithe map for Worth of 1842, and the bay was extensively restored and the lake refilled in 1919. Straker notes the discovery of two oak sluices in the lake opposite the presumed site of the furnaces, and photographs of the site, taken in 1887, appear in *Wealden Iron*.<sup>5</sup>

The site is arranged in a pattern common on post-medieval water-powered furnace sites; a valley embayed at its narrowest point with watercourses on both sides of the site. There is the expected dense scatter of blast furnace slag on the downstream side of the bay, and brickwork at various locations. The present stream flows over a coffer dam constructed in 1919 and immediately below this point (A) there are substantial timbers in the stream bed and a course of ashlar blocks, perhaps a former revetment to the bay on the downstream side.

The probable site of the furnace is at the east end of the bay where there is a prominent depression (B), which may be the remains of the wheelpit, close to a brick-arched culvert at the base of the bay (C). It is hard to conceive of a furnace wheel fed from a source so low in relation to the pond, for conservation of the water in the pond would have been paramount during campaigns which would have lasted several months. It is possible that the culvert relates to the brief, subsequent use of the site as a mill. Surviving ashlar blocks,



*Warren Furnace location plan*

eroded by water action, adjacent to the wheelpit area, appear to be *in situ*. Close by (D) is a disturbed area of large pieces of brickwork, evidently laid as flooring, up to eight courses thick, which may be the remains of the furnace tower or of the later mill. Similar brickwork was noticed at Northpark Furnace during exploratory excavation work.<sup>6</sup> The substantial depression (E) to the immediate west of this area is difficult to interpret but may be related to a ditch (F) which runs from there across the site to the present stream. There is a concentration of brickwork (G) beside the ditch where it debouches into a low-lying area beside the stream. The roots of a large oak tree, close by, which was uprooted by the 1987 storm, also contain an amount of brick, all of which probably relates to a building which was indicated on the 1842 tithe map. The purpose of this building is not revealed in the tithe apportionment but it may have dated back to the ironworks, for it lies close to an area of concreted, rusted metal (H), possibly boring swarf, suggesting the location of the boring mill. In the accounts of Robert Knight, the local carrier, guns were brought to The Warren, from Gravetye Furnace, “with their heads on”.<sup>7</sup> To facilitate the removal of the core, the large feeding head, which was formed above the muzzle of a cannon during casting, was not sawn off until immediately prior to boring (or reaming, to be exact).

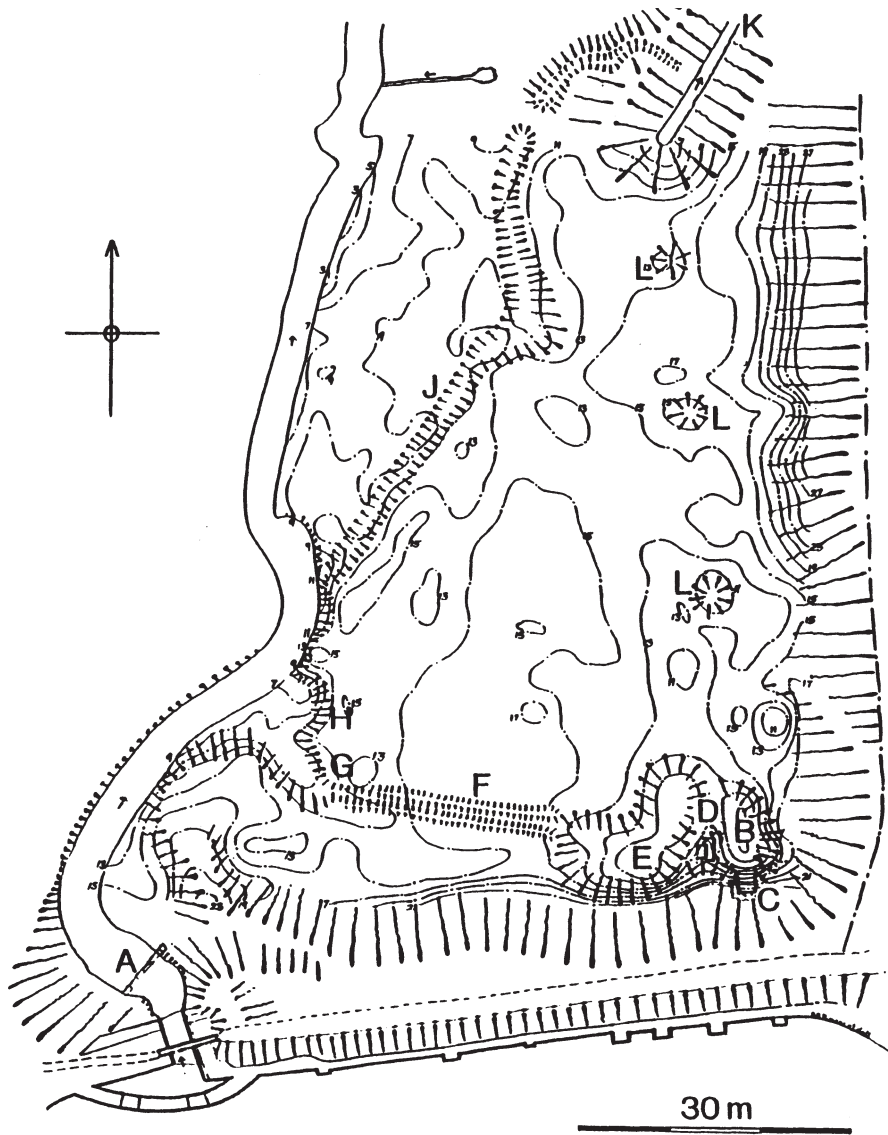
Removal of water from the working area seems to have been effected in two ways. Running diagonally across the site from the present stream, in a north-westerly direction, is a straight ditch (J) which is aligned with a deeper watercourse (K) at the north end of the site, which eventually rejoins the stream. The ditch coincides with a watercourse in the same position shown on a map of the Felbridge Estate, dated 1748, before the second period of ironworking began.<sup>8</sup> This suggests that it formed part of the water management system of the 16th century ironworks. The surviving watercourse (K) also appears to have been used in the second period, for older local residents recall a series of stone- or brick-lined shafts which

coincide with the depressions (L) which form a line between it and the supposed wheelpit (B). The depressions appear to have been inspection or maintenance access points along a conduit taking water away from the wheelpit, which would have freed more of the site for workshops and storage, and allowed turning and parking space for wagons.

The furnace pond was formerly more extensive than at present and owes its present area to the construction of the coffer dam in 1919. At the time, the then owner, Mr Lionel Robinson, corresponded with Rhys Jenkins, one of the pioneers of Wealden iron research, expressing the opinion that the operators of the site had experienced many problems with leakage through the bay. However, Robinson suggested that the later facing of the bay with stone, constructed on piles, was carried out to raise the water level, rather than to strengthen the bay, as it did not reach down to the original foundations. He records the finding of the date, 1799, on one of the stones; presumably relating to the use of the site as a mill.<sup>9</sup> The stonework only survives to its original height in a small area beyond the west end of the bay, and it is buttressed both in stone and in brick at various places along its length.

The source of iron ore for this furnace was probably, and rather unusually, a quarry which lay adjacent to the site, to the east, close to the charging bridge which would have joined the high bank at the east end of the bay. This quarry has since been filled in and landscaped.

Associated with this site are a number of cottages and, as domestic buildings are rarely mentioned when ironworking sites are described, attention is drawn to them as similar buildings may exist, unrecognised, at other sites (see map; adapted from the OS 6" map of 1913). About 50m east of the bay is a large house called Furnace. This was formerly a pair of cottages and they are delineated on the Worth tithe map, although not on the estate map of 1748. Although they have since been considerably altered, they were originally of



*Warren Furnace, Worth, Sussex*

oak construction, which suggests an earlier rather than a later date within the 1748-1842 period, and that therefore they were more probably built to house workers at the furnace than at the subsequent mill.

To the north east of the furnace site, just outside Furnace Wood, lies Fellcot and Forge Farm. This is a late-16th century cottage which occupies a site formerly on the edge of Hedgecourt Common. It is likely that this smallholding was directly connected with the operation of the furnace, as a substantial amount of furnace debris has been found on the property, including slag, clay mould fragments, and a piece of a cast iron “bomb-shell” (Knight’s accounts also refer to “bum shells” being taken from The Warren to Woolwich). The ‘forge’ element in the property’s name suggests possible use as a smithy for the furnace site; the hammer forge associated with the Warren Furnace being Woodcock Hammer, 4.5km to the ENE.

Another building associated with the furnace is Gibbshaven, which lies about 1km to the east. Parts of this house date from the 15th century, although the west range dates from the last quarter of the 16th century and may be associated with the occupation of the house by the Thorpe family.<sup>10</sup> John Thorpe had occupied the furnace from its construction in 1567 but his son, Thomas, is the first of the family who can be connected with Gibbshaven, and the family appear to have remained at the property until the second half of the 17th century.<sup>11</sup>

Lastly, a small group of enclosures east of Fellcot Farm can be identified as being the same that were let to Mr Masters by Sir Kenrick Clayton in 1761.<sup>12</sup> Alexander Masters was Edward Raby’s partner until 1764, and the enclosures were very likely a “shanty town” of small cottages intended to house ironworkers, such as appears to have existed at Northpark and Cowden furnaces which, together with Warren Furnace, were working in the mid-18th century. There are three surviving cottages which would have been contemporary with the furnace in the mid-18th century. Close examination of the 1761 map suggests a fourth may have existed.



## References and Notes

1. The accompanying plan shows levels surveyed on a 10 foot grid and contoured by computer at 6 inch intervals. The contours are drawn relative to each other.
2. East Sussex Record Office (ESRO) SAS/Gage 13/97.
3. WIRG, *Wealden Iron*, 1st series **XIII** (1978), 24-5; 14 (1978) 11-24.
4. ESRO SAS/Gage 13/95.
5. Straker, E., *Wealden Iron*, (1931), 215-6, 72 & Frontispiece.
6. *The Archaeology of Chichester & District 1989* (Chichester 1990), 30-5.
7. WIRG *Wealden Iron*, 1st series **XIV** (1979), 22.
8. Mercer's Company Library, Ironmonger Lane, London.
9. Letter from Lionel Robinson to Rhys Jenkins 4.2.1921; ex. inf. Mr. R.Robinson.
10. ex. inf. Mr & Mrs S.R.J.Ainger, from a survey by the late Mr R.H.Wood.
11. *Sussex Record Society* Vol. 14 (1912) No. 1024; Vol.29 (1923) No.210.
12. Surrey Record Office 61/3/2.

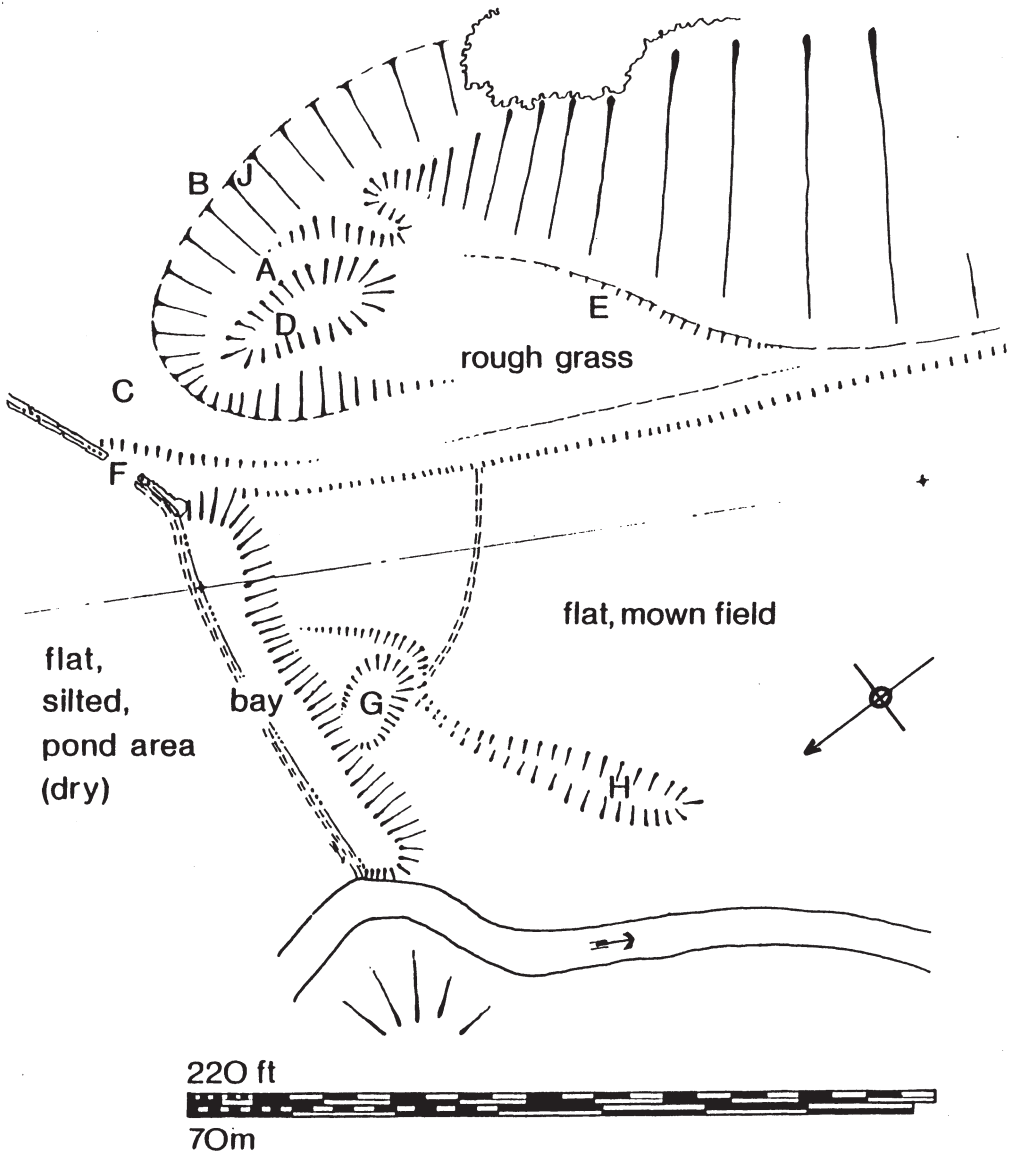


# Iron Plat, Buxted, Sussex – Furnace and Forge Site Survey 1990/1

(TQ 497240, Cleere & Crossley (1985) 339)

D.M. Meades & R.G. Houghton

The WIRG Field Group surveyed this site as part of its 1990/1 winter programme. This account supplements the information given in the gazetteer of *The Iron Industry of the Weald*, 148, 339, which suggests that the furnace at Iron Plat may have been one of four furnaces which are mentioned in the Hogge papers (Crossley 1974:52). No other documentary references to Iron Plat are known. Remains on the ground indicate that, in addition to a furnace, there was a conversion forge at this site. Whether the two were contemporary, or one succeeded the other and if so in what order is unknown.



*Iron Platt Furnace and Forge, Buxted, Sussex*

## Key to Site Plan

- A Blast furnace debris
  - B Natural bank, cut away at side of valley
  - C Present entrance from fields above, sloping towards bay; heavily slagged.
  - D Hollow, possible wheel pit.
  - E Possible tailrace.
  - F Modern field gateway.
  - G Grassy hollow, shallow with short grass.
  - H Hollow surrounded by rough grass with bushes.
  - J Charcoal, dense charcoal staining and blast furnace slag.
- 

The site largely consists of flat grassy fields on both sides of the bay, since the pond is now dry. There is little difference between the levels of the pond and the working area. The ground rises fairly steeply on the eastern side of the site where there is an entrance at (C). The main part of the field consists of short mown grass; the eastern part, which is much cut about by banks and channels, is covered in rough tufts of long grass. Except for the slight hollow at (G), which is part of the mown area, all the hollows are surrounded by similar rough grass, with trees or large bushes in their midst.

### The Bay

This is long and low with an unusually wide, flat top; it crosses a flat, silted valley whose sides rise steeply and is interrupted in one place at its extreme western end where the river flows through and in two places nearer to its eastern end. The most easterly of these gaps is now used as a farm gate and the other is blocked by a ditch. When the site was in use, it is suggested that the bay would have been connected to the higher ground (C) at its eastern end.

## **The Furnace**

The presence of blast furnace slag, fragments of burnt stone and much charcoal staining in the area A-J suggest that the furnace was at the extreme eastern end of the site, tucked beneath the steep natural bank (B) which could have served as a support for a loading platform.

The water wheel which would have driven the furnace bellows could have occupied a depression (D). This is now overgrown with small trees and bushes and so is difficult to examine. Channels in the rough ground on the eastern side of the site suggest a possible tailrace but these are lost at the edge of the cultivated area. When the site was visited about 20 years ago there was a line of reeds on this field but it is now flat grass with no trace of a channel except where shown on the plan. There is no indication of the type of water wheel which may have been used.

## **The Forge**

Finds of forge cinder and forge bottom(s) indicate that there was once a forge on the site, although there is no documentary evidence of this. These finds seem mainly to occur towards the middle and in the western part of the site. Hollow (G) could possibly be associated with the site of a forge building and water wheels. Hollow (H) would then indicate a former tailrace. The fact that it clearly ends before reaching the river is understandable since the river bank has been made up.

The above interpretation is, of course, supposition based on surface finds, never a secure method. It is hoped that a resistivity survey of the site, which will be made in the near future, will provide additional information to clarify the layout of the site. The results of this will be published in due course.

The authors are grateful to the members of the Field Group who carried out this survey.

## **Reference**

Crossley, D.W., "Ralph Hogge's Ironworks Accounts, 1576-81", *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, **112**, (1974), 48-79.

# Mount Noddy: Wealden Iron or Wealden Irony?

*M.J. Leppard*

“A name for slag”, wrote Ernest Straker<sup>1</sup> explaining the word Noddy in four field names at Mount Noddy, Cowden, which he used as supporting evidence for a bloomery obliterated by the nearby railway but testified to by vermiform cinder around it and by traces of ore and very large minepits in the fields themselves.

This explanation has been accepted unquestioningly by subsequent writers, though reversing his procedure: looking for evidence of iron working to explain the place-name Mount Noddy elsewhere. Thus three large minepits are noted as adjoining the example at Danehill<sup>2</sup> and the one at Bosham is near a former Hammer Field and a pond.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, however, Bosham is well away from the iron working areas of the Weald and so are other Sussex examples at Slindon and East Ashling. Those at Anstye, Fletching, Turners Hill and East Grinstead are within it but the last two at least are not near iron working sites and have yielded no traces of slag. Mount Nod at Broadwater Down near Tunbridge Wells may be a related name.

Straker’s explanation therefore bears investigation, particularly because it occurs in a parenthesis with no supporting evidence and with no mention elsewhere in the book.

In an article in the *Bulletin* of the East Grinstead Society,<sup>4</sup> I have attempted such an investigation, the main points of which may be summarised as follows.

W.H. Hills, author of *The History of East Grinstead* (1906) and editor of the *East Grinstead Observer*, discussing the name in his paper in 1917, wrote “The scoria of the iron ore was variously known as slag, slug, shag, noddy or cinders”.<sup>5</sup> This could be the source of Straker’s assertion; Hills (died 1932) and Straker (died 1941), living

nearby at Reigate, could well have met or corresponded.

Hills, however, cites no source and I have come across no examples of ‘noddy’ as a word for slag in its own right in any other published work on either the Sussex dialect (including copies annotated by former owners) or the Wealden iron industry.

The place-name does not seem to have been recorded before the 18th century, that at Danehill in the 1740s<sup>6</sup> and that at East Grinstead in 1776.<sup>7</sup>

My suggestion, with all due diffidence, is that the name is one of those ironic ones (like Slab Castle) that seem to have become popular in the 18th century and that it follows a trend started by the names of the original ‘villages’ of 17th century Tunbridge Wells: Mount Sion, Mount Pleasant and Mount Ephraim. Noddy as a word for a fool; simpleton or noodle is traced back to 1530 by the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary. All the Mount Noddys seem to be somewhat isolated places, away from centres of habitation.

## References

1. Straker, E., *Wealden Iron*, (1931), 231.
2. *Danehill Parish Historical Society Magazine* (Aug. 1983), Vol.2, No.5, 3f.
3. *Sussex Archaeological Society Newsletter* 29 (Dec. 1979), 194
4. Leppard, M.J., “Mount Noddy”, *The Bulletin of the East Grinstead Society*, (Autumn 1989) No.46, 9-11.
5. *East Grinstead Observer*, 21 July 1917.
6. As note 2 above.
7. Book of maps in the Saint Hill estate, 1776, recently transferred from Worthing public library to West Sussex County Record Office, Chichester.

# Wealden Iron in California

A recent foray at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

C. Whittick

By the standards of his fellow millionaires, the ambitions of Henry Edwards Huntington, a railway magnate from the east coast, were quite modest – to amass the largest collection of British historical documents west of the Atlantic, and to acquire more incunabula than the British Museum. He pursued this quest with a single-minded enthusiasm which his family and friends were happy to indulge, and while the growing hoard was accommodated in his New York mansion few saw reason to remark. But the worlds of wealth and scholarship were equally astounded in 1920 when Huntington, who had invested heavily in the development of tramcars in mushrooming Los Angeles, transferred his entire collection to his ranch in San Marino, then an isolated settlement surrounded by orange groves, sitting directly above the San Andreas fault.

The equally erratic behaviour of Sir Godfrey Webster, however, was probably more the result of his desperate financial plight. By the early 1830s his extravagant lifestyle and repeatedly unsuccessful electoral outings had rendered him practically insolvent. In 1835, the year before his death, he sold the non-current muniments of the Battle Abbey Estate to the London bookseller, Thomas Thorpe, for less than £300; the level of his desperation can be gauged from the fact that manorial records and estate accounts less than a century old were included in the sale. Thorpe sold quickly to the self-confessed ‘vellomaniac’ Sir Thomas Phillipps, whose collection of parchment is still not exhausted, despite regular sales by trustees since his death in 1872. It was at one of these sales, in 1923, that almost everything which Webster had sold was bought by agents acting for Huntington.

In the year of his purchase, Thorpe had published a *Descriptive*

*Catalogue* of the entire archive in 221 pages; he boasted ‘it is presumed that no collection of manuscripts of equal importance, in a national point of view, has ever been offered for sale’. Henry Huntington was driven by an obsessive desire to acquire and to possess, not a will to study; although his manuscript collection was housed in conditions unmatched on the American continent and certainly equal to those of the British Museum, no funds were made available to employ staff to study and list the documents. As a result, the staff of the library have had to rely on Thorpe’s 1835 catalogue for the production of the Battle documents and searchers, either at the library or in England, have had no other list available to assist them.

The records of the estate which were not sold in 1835 were deposited at East Sussex Record Office in the early 1960s, and during the last 30 years we have bought hundreds of feet of microfilm of the records at the Huntington, in an attempt to reproduce the other half of the archive in celluloid at Lewes. But the lack of an adequate list has greatly hampered our efforts, making orders virtually shots in the dark.

The library’s generous endowment does, however, provide funds for visiting scholars to travel to California and work on Huntington’s collection in conditions which can fairly be described as enviable. When I came to East Sussex in 1977, I was struck by the effective unavailability of this vast corpus of information, but it was not until last year I summoned up the courage and the funding to do something about it. With generous help from the Huntington, the British Academy, the Sussex Archaeological Society, Romney Marsh Research Trust and WIRG itself, I visited San Marino for three and a half months to begin the preparation of a detailed list of the entire archive. In that period, I completed a detailed calendar of the medieval deeds – over 900 of them – and a list of documents relating to the Wealden iron industry; I will return in a year’s time to embark on the post-dissolution material.

The scholarly attention which the archive has received up to now has been restricted almost exclusively to the records of the medieval



religious house. Indeed most people, including the library's staff, generally regard the archive as that of the great Benedictine Abbey founded by William as a thank-offering for his victory over the English in 1066. My first realisation was that the accumulation is in fact the archive of the Webster family, and is chiefly derived from purchases made in Sussex by Thomas Webster bt, the son of a London merchant with a large estate in Essex. Sir Thomas bought the Battle estate from Lord Montague in 1721, the Bodiam and Ewhurst estate from Sir Christopher Powell in 1723, and the Robertsbridge Abbey estate from Lord de Lisle and Dudley in 1725. An estate at Fairlight near Hastings was purchased from William Acton in 1733 and land at East Grinstead was acquired in exchange for the manor of Copthall in Essex in 1739. Also included among the papers at the Huntington is material derived from the families of Jorden of London and Staffordshire (Sir Thomas's mother), Cheeke of London and Somerset (Lady Webster's father) and Whistler of London, Surrey, Hertfordshire, York and Ireland (Lady Webster's maternal grandfather), as well as a few early Webster family documents, which are almost certainly the result of antiquarian purchases.

The distinction is not just an archivist's pedantry; it is almost as important to realise what is not at the Huntington, as to know in detail what the archive does contain. The abbey held manors, churches and endowments all over England and Wales, but one will search almost in vain in San Marino for records relating to the Kentish manors of Wye and Dengemarsh, to the cell at Brecon Priory, to the abbot's inn at Southwark or to the manor of Alciston – after the Dissolution, one of the tasks of the Court of Augmentations was to distribute the archive to the purchasers of the different parts of the abbey's estates, and to provide transcripts of those parts of documents relating to the whole which could not be divided. With very few exceptions, only the records relating to those estates which the Crown granted to Sir Anthony Browne in 1536, and which were not later sold by that family before Thomas Webster's acquisition in

1721, are now at San Marino.

But the archive does contain documents relating to the iron industry, and they can be most usefully be discussed under the headings of the three families involved – the Brownes, the Sidneys and the Websters.

### **The Browne family, Lords Viscount Montague**

The site of Battle Abbey, the manor and a great many of its estates were granted to Sir Anthony Browne, the Master of the Horse, in 1538; four years later he inherited the vast Cowdray estate and his son Anthony, who was created Viscount Montague in 1554, established his seat there. As a result, Battle became an outlier of their estate, and peripheral to their interests. Record-keeping at Battle related to that estate only, and the archive at the Huntington contains nothing about the family's involvement in the iron industry at Chiddingfold, Bayham or Lurgashall. Inspired by the 1574 list's reference to *divers works* at Battle, Straker sought to identify one of them at Park Mill on the strength of a 1652 lease by Lord Montague, which includes *the ironworks and all implements*. But alas, the reference was taken directly from Thorpe's *Catalogue*, and is a ghost – the original (HEH BA Vol.67, f13), which includes stones, wheel, ironworks, groundworks, going-gears, utensils, engines and implements – is clearly the lease of a watermill, and Thorpe's quotation selective.

Straker, again relying on Thorpe, identified 'Farrett Holloway', a gunfounder of Salehurst and the purchaser of wood from Lord Montague in 1711, as a probable tenant of Robertsbridge Furnace and Forge. Although the gunfounder was called Jarrett Holloway, the commodity underwood rather than timber, and the works in question more likely to have been Beech Furnace in Battle (since the sale referred to Great and Little Beech Woods) than Robertsbridge, the entry does serve to underline the significance of fuel to the industry, and the amount which can be missed by ignoring the documentation of underwood sales. Most Wealden estates were heavily wooded but few more so than Battle, and similar sales

should be recorded in the series of steward's accounts for the estate which runs from 1674-1734 at the Huntington (BA Vols 6-10, ESRO microfilm XA 3/12,13 and 16), and from 1757-1800 at Lewes (ESRO BAT 2751-2756).

### **The Sidney family, Lords De Lisle and Dudley**

The site of Robertsbridge Abbey was granted in 1540 to Sir William Sidney, who almost immediately began the construction of a furnace and forge. Sidney also obtained the assignment of the lease of an intended furnace site at Panningridge, and until 1546 the three sites ran as a single unit. The present whereabouts of the accounts of this operation show how documents get dispersed by the random partition of archives which lawyers undertake when parts of estates are sold. At the Huntington is the Panningridge account book for 1546 kept by Henry Westall, the clerk of the whole operation, which clearly passed to Sir Thomas Webster when he purchased the Robertsbridge estate in 1725. Westall's book of Robertsbridge accounts for the same year, which must have been handed over at the same time, passed to the Allfrey family when they purchased the manor of Robertsbridge from the Websters in 1818, and is now among the deposit at East Sussex Record Office made by that family's solicitors. But the bulk of the accounts, which the Sidney lawyers evidently failed to hand over in 1725, are still with the De Lisle and Dudley archive at Maidstone.

It is fortunate that the Panningridge accounts were retained at all after the lease expired in 1563. Straker obtained a photostat of them from San Marino and published a summary in *SAC 72* in 1931. The accounts are Huntington BA volume 27, and there is a microfilm here at Lewes, reference ESRO XA 3/12.

Also preserved is an agreement of 1623 by which the Earl of Leicester granted timber, underwood, an iron-house, the right to dig mine and several rights of way to Henry English of Salehurst, to whom Thomas Culpeper's 21-year lease of Robertsbridge Furnace and Forge had been assigned (BA vol 71). English released the

option of a further 21 years which the original lease of 1609 had contained.

When Webster purchased the estate, the counterpart of a 1707 lease of the furnace to Thomas Snapp of Battle and his son Thomas Snapp was passed to him, and is now at San Marino, BA vol 71, f15; my calendar entry appears as Appendix 1. The term of the lease was eleven years, and the document's transfer may indicate that the Snapps were still holding over, seven years after it had expired, when the estate was sold in 1725. The history of the Robertsbridge sites after Webster's purchase will be discussed in the next section.

### **The Webster family of Battle Abbey**

Sir Thomas Webster was the grandson of Godfrey Webster of Chesterfield, and inherited far-flung business interests from his father-in-law in 1719 and father in 1720. Between 1721 and 1725 he spent £95,000 on the purchase of estates in Sussex, as well as bestowing a dowry of £20,000 on his daughter's marriage. It is clear from account books surviving at the Huntington that his trading interests included the supply of iron, and perhaps he decided to invest liquid capital in the Weald in the hope of developing the industry there.

In 1724, Webster went into partnership with Lord Ashburnham and obtained a nine-year lease of Beech Furnace in Battle from Richard Hay, a descendent of some of the great entrepreneurs of the 16th-century Sussex industry. The newly-repaired site is shown in a marginal illustration to a survey of the tenements of Battle manor drawn by Richard Budgen in 1724 (ESRO BAT 4421, map 11), which is illustrated on page 39. The lease is at the Huntington, together with a deed of sale listing the equipment at the furnace (BA vol 70 0, 11). The rent was £20, and Hay was to put the furnace in tenantable repair in the seven weeks between the date of the lease and the beginning of the term. The ironworks cannot have been wholly derelict – it had been occupied by Maximilian Western in

1708 (ASH L 1126-1140) and we have seen that Jarrett Holloway was buying underwood there in 1711.

At the Huntington are accounts for repairs to the farmhouse and expenditure accounts for the furnace, mixed in with those for Robertsbridge, from 1726 to 1735 (BA vol 5, ESRO microfilm XA3/13). When the 1724 lease expired, Webster alone took a lease of Beech for the life of Richard Hay at £20 a year, although all that survives at San Marino is an unexecuted lease of 1 February 1732 (BA vol 70, f18). We know that an agreement with those terms was reached because, when Webster let Robertsbridge in 1737, his tenants undertook to pay an annual fee of £12 on condition that Beech, which Webster held for Hay's life, was not used as a furnace (BA vol 72).

In 1756, Hay's three daughters granted a lease of the founder's house and the site of the furnace to Edward Hilder, who undertook to build a watermill on the site within two years (ESRO ASH A 197). In 1758, presumably once the work was completed, they sold the whole Beech estate, which consisted of two farms and over 700 acres of mostly wooded land to Lord Ashburnham. Indeed, the ease with which Ashburnham was able to expand his estate towards Battle is indicative of the Webster family's indifference to the development of their own landowning interest.

Thomas Webster bought the Robertsbridge estate in 1725 and for 12 years the furnace and forge at the abbey were kept in hand and run by the estate. There are accounts for this period (BA vols 4, 8, 10 and 11), accounts for repairs to the furnace (vol 4), details of production for 1734 to 1736 (vol 11), and in Volume 13 orders, accounts for repairs to lighters and a boat, orders for iron and a plan for a double crane. The enterprise was flourishing sufficiently in 1733 to persuade Webster to take a seven-year lease of Etchingham Forge at £30 a year, which included rights in the extensive demesne woodlands there, which the lessors had in hand (BA vol 61).

We cannot tell what became of the Etchingham lease; within a year, Webster's policy seems to have changed, and Robertsbridge Furnace was put out on a five-and-a-half-year lease to William Harrison, William Jewkes and George Jewkes, London founders and ironmongers. Webster had sold them the gun tackle and wrought iron tools at £20 a ton, and cast plates and other ironwork at £6, and agreed to take them back at the end of the term at the same rates. The lease also contains interesting covenants about supplies of underwood and mine (BA vol 72). The forge at Robertsbridge was let to William and George Jewkes in 1737, and it is clear from the terms of the lease that Webster had kept it, and Beech Furnace, in hand until then. The documents mention two sheds used as boring houses on either side of the forge, and contain provision for the division of the warehouse and the use by the tenants of the Rother Navigation and Webster's craft (BA vol 72). In 1737, the furnace was again let to Harrison and the Jewkes brothers from 1740, when the existing lease was set to expire, at the same rent of £50; perhaps the tenants required security, or perhaps a new contract provided a means of formalising the agreement to close Beech Furnace, which has been mentioned above (BA vol 72); we know Webster's work there had proved unreliable in the past (Cleere & Crossley, p.204).

The leases of both furnace and forge expired on 25 March 1747, and on 10 December the previous year a further seven-year term was granted to the Jewkes brothers at a rent of £100 on essentially the same terms, except that the tenants undertook to spend a further £100 on repairs to the furnace, which was 'much out of repair and in a decayed and ruinous condition', in the course of the first year (BA vol 71 f24).

Among the most interesting material relating to the iron industry at San Marino is the correspondence produced when the estate re-let the Robertsbridge works in 1754; the Battle attorney George Worge acted on behalf of Sir Whistler Webster (BA vol 24). John Churchill of Hints in Staffordshire wrote to Sir Whistler on 14 November

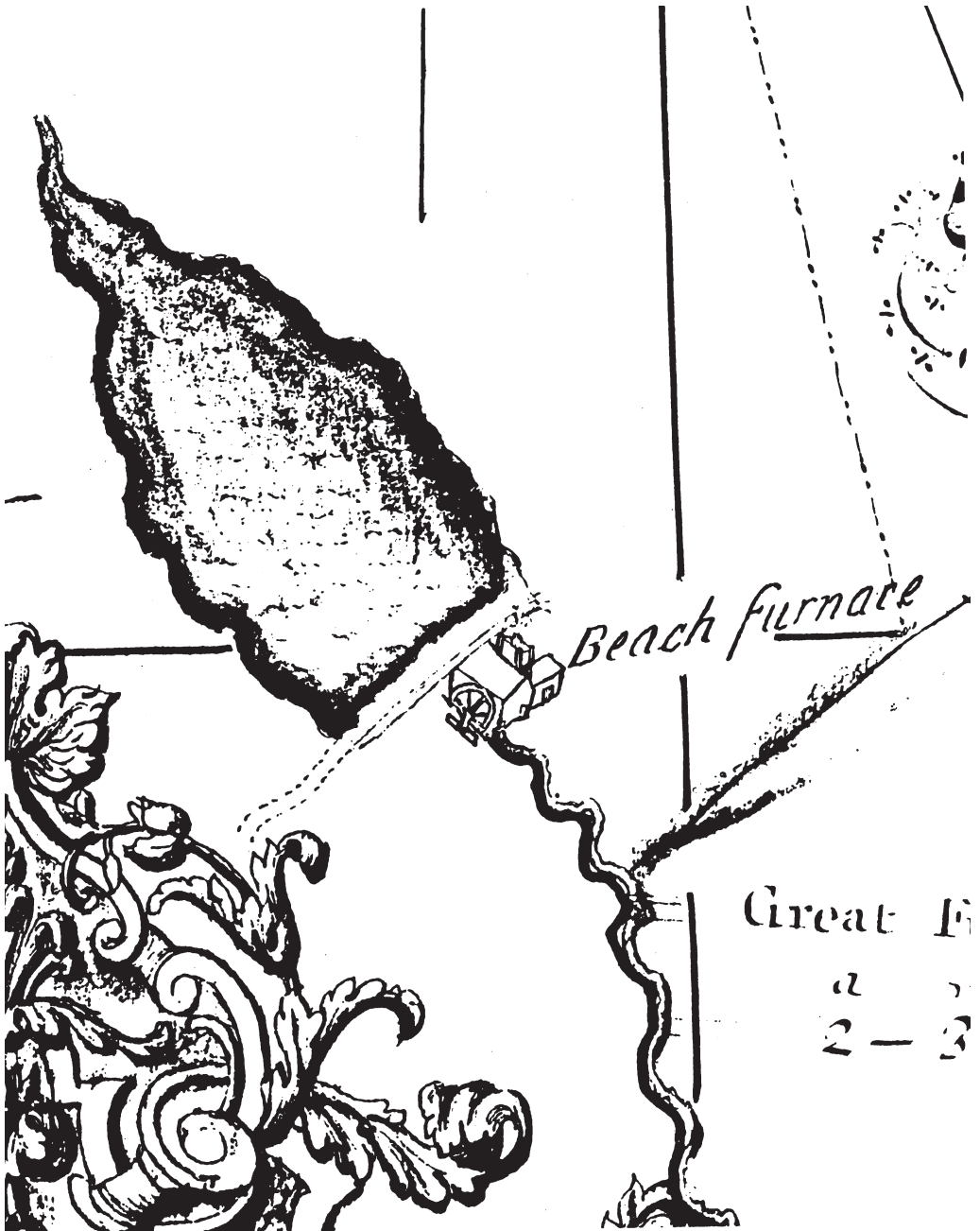
1753, having heard from John Botton of Duffield in Derbyshire that he had a furnace and forge to let. Churchill gave the London addresses of the landlords of two of his Staffordshire forges, in case a reference was required, and asked for details of the rent, the capacity of the furnace and forge, the availability and price of wood and mine and the size of the local cord. Webster had already heard from a Mr. Cotton, and declined to treat with Churchill. An un-named author, perhaps the steward, drafted a letter for Worge to write to Cotton, which provides an excellent summary of the workings of the Wealden industry in the middle of the eighteenth century; it is printed as Appendix 1. On 20 November details were also sent to Thomas Braxton at Titchfield in Hampshire, but by January Sir Whistler was forced to address Churchill again, negotiations with the other interested parties having fallen through. Although a seven-year lease to Churchill bears the date 16 March 1754, Webster and his tenant were still in correspondence over two months later, trying to establish the ownership of the equipment, what repairs should be undertaken by the outgoing tenant, and whether the coal-house was necessary at all. Churchill could not be persuaded to visit Sussex until June, but insisted that the works be let with bellows, hammer and anvil, and that the second finery, demolished by Mr Jewkes in order to build an air-furnace, should be re-instated.

In 1760, Churchill and Webster agreed to share the cost of adding a parlour, chamber and lean-to to the forgerman's house at Robertsbridge. (BA vol 71, f29). The work was to be executed under the direction of Churchill and, although no lease survives, seems to suggest that the parties intended to renew their agreement when it expired the following year. A new partnership entered the Robertsbridge works at Lady Day 1768; William Polhill of Hastings, David Guy of Rye and James Bourne of Salehurst, all described as ironmongers, took a lease for eighteen months, still at the same annual rent of £100, on 21 March (BA vol 71, f30). Henry Bourne of Robertsbridge, the son of the last tenant, gave evidence in a highway

case at Lewes assizes in 1821 in which he described his father's business and Stephen Goodsall, a former team labourer, told the jury how he had often taken loads of guns to Maidstone over the disputed road (ESRO ALF 9/9). But apart from the stewards' accounts of the Battle Abbey estate, from which it would be possible both to fill the gaps of this narrative of the Robertsbridge works and to continue it, no further documents relating directly to the estate's involvement in the Wealden industry have been found at the Huntington.

I have attempted to describe those documents at the Huntington which shed light on the activities of three families – Browne, Sidney and Webster – as entrepreneurs of the Wealden iron industry. As is always the case, documents from a single source never tell the whole story, and I have several times been driven to refer to material in other repositories to construct a narrative, which I hope has made what I have written a little more interesting than a mere list. As an archivist, my interest is more in how and why documents have been kept, and in the reasons for the administrative divisions and dispersals to which they were subjected, than in one of the many subjects of enquiry for which they can be of assistance. Historians of any aspect of the past will always gain a deeper understanding of their subject and, at a more practical level, always be led more directly to further caches of documents, if the concerns which beset the lawyers and stewards who created and controlled the documents they study are constantly kept in mind.





# Appendix I

## Selected Material from the Huntington Collection

**BA Vol 67** (Phillipps 9935/1) f13

Counterpart lease for 21 years from 25 March 1652 at £36, 10 Aug 1652. Francis [Browne], lord Montague, to Robert Jarvis of Battle, miller

The mill called The Parke Mill in Battle, with the stones, wheel, ironworks, groundworks, going geers, utensils, engines and implements belonging to it, and the mill-houses, buildings, gardens, waters, banks, bays, ponds, floodgates, sluices, easements and profits, and 38a of land, meadow and pasture usually occupied with it, now or late in the occupation of RJ

timber and trees, and the right to enter, cut and coal them, reserved, with the right to take sufficient cover and quench of earth and fern, and to make sawpits and coalpits and places to work in on the premises; hawking, hunting, fishing and fowling, and the fish in the pond reserved, with the right to lower the water to take the fish at a time convenient to RJ

The rent payable at Battle House; RJ to maintain the mill, its equipment and the enclosures on the land, to pay church and poor rates; RJ may take rough timber for repairs, and earth and clay to repair the bays and dams; no assignment (except to wife, children or executors) without licence

W: Jo Tourner, Francis Complen

Endorsed: an allowance of 4 cords of wood on the stub to be burnt on the premises, and an agreement that RJ shall not put cattle in the copse by the mill within four years after every felling of it

**BA Vol 61** (Phillipps 9932)

Lease for 7 years from 25 Dec 1733 at £30, 3 Dec 1733

Elizabeth Robinson Lytton of Knebworth, Herts, widow (mother and guardian of John Robinson Lytton esq an infant aged 9) to Thomas Webster of Battle, bt

Message, iron-forge and mill at Etchingham, and the outhouses, storehouses, warehouses and buildings belonging to it, and 38a 3r 33p of land, meadow, pasture, land covered with water and ponds, in Etchingham, used with it, and all waters, watercourses, sluices and easements, all lately occupied by John Busbridge gent

timber, wood, underwood and spray, hawking, hunting, coursing, setting and shooting reserved; right of entry twice a year to inspect the state of repair

The rent payable in the dining-hall of Grays Inn; penalty of £5 an acre for ploughing old meadow, or for planting hemp, flax or other seed beside corn or grass; TW to effect repairs within 3 months of their notification in writing, the landlords finding sufficient rough timber on the lordship of Etchingham; TW may take the tops and lops of pollard trees for firewood for the message; any hay, straw and dung to be used on the premises; to lay three 32-bushel loads of lime on every arable acre after 3 years' cropping; TW to pay rates and taxes, the landlords allowing what is normal out of the rent

TW may enter the landlords' woodland called The Bury Wood (the underwood of 15 years' growth), The Forge Wood (14 years), Flitt Wood (12 years) and Little Park Wood (8 years), all in Etchingham, and take all underwood of 16 years' growth (all tillows left at the last felling and 40 standards or tillows of oak and ash to be left standing on every acre if such are to be found), all brush and spray and 2,400 hop-poles every year, to be cut into cords of 14' x 3' x 3' (one carfe to

be allowed according to the custom of the country), to be measured by the landlords' woodward and delivered at TW's expense before 1 May every year; TW may make coalpits and colliers' lodges and coal the wood by 10 Oct, and remove it from the wood by 10 Nov; TW to pay the landlords 6s a cord in moieties on 2 May and 2 Nov in the dining-hall of Grays Inn; TW to give strict orders that his cattle employed in the woods for haulage shall be muzzled with muzzles provided by the landlords while they are in the woods; TW not to be entitled to the feeding of the woods

W: George Draper, James Dogwood his clerk

**BA Vol 69** (Phillipps 9935/3)

Counterpart sale of wood at 5s a cord, 6 Oct 1711

Henry [Browne] lord Montague to Jarrett Halloway of Salehurst, gunfounder

All the underwood on the stub in Great Beach Wood  
and Little Beach Wood (50a), in Battle

JH to cut into cords 3 feet and one carfe long, not above 3 feet and one small draw batt in hight at the delivery, and 14 feet in length, according to the custom of the country, to be cut, set and delivered by 31 May 1712, after which date he may enter the woods from the High Street with teams, wains and carriages, make coalpits and colliers' lodges in the woods and coal the wood until 29 Sep 1712; JH to pay 5s a cord in moieties on the day of delivery and on 11 Nov, the second payment to be secured by bond; HB may cut 5000 hop-poles free of charge, and he and his tenants may have the carriage of the wood and coal at the same rate as other persons; JH to leave standing and marked any tellows they may find

W: James Ashenden, Samuel Brewer

**BA Vol 70** (Phillipps 9935/4)

f9

Deed of sale for £24 5s, 1 Oct 1724

Richard Hay of Battle esq to John [Ashburnham], Lord Ashburnham, and Thomas Webster of Battle Place, bt

A pair of furnace bellows with the pipes, leathers, nails and all wood and iron tackle belonging to them, a pair of smith's bellows, a vice, a bickiron, an anvil, a roule, a spilling chiswell, three ships, two stopping hooks, a cinder hook, a harger, a moulding ship, a turn sow, a tuire hook [?tuyere], two plucketts, a shetter, a small moulding ship and two ringers

all of which is at Beech Furnace, Battle

W: James Ashenden, Samuel Brewer

f11

Lease for 9 years from 29 Sep 1724 at £20, 10 Aug 1724

Richard Hay of Battle esq, with William Hills of Steyning gent and his wife Mary, David Stone of Framfield gent and his wife Martha, and Elizabeth Hay of Battle, spinster (three of the daughters and heirs of RH and his wife Mary deceased) to John [Ashburnham], Lord Ashburnham, and Thomas Webster of Battle Abbey, bt

Furnace or ironworks called Beach Furnace in Battle, with the messuage, outhouses, workhouses, ponds, bays, floodgates, wheels, banks, streams, waters, boringhouse, buildings, yards, gardens and wastegrounds

the rent to be paid to RH for life, and thereafter to his daughters named above and to his other daughter, Katherine Hay; tenants to pay rates and taxes, except those to be paid by landlords by act of parliament, and quitrents; RH to put the ironworks in tenantable

repair by 29 Sep; lessors may have the fish in the ponds, and sew them three times during the term at times convenient to JA and TW; JA and TW may dig loam, sand and clay for repairs on RH's neighbouring land, the tenants of which may use all the usual ways across the furnace land

W: John Collier, John Eaton; William Dennett, Elizabeth Robinson; Sarah Kenward, Richard Banister

f18

Unexecuted lease from 29 Sep 1733 for the life of the grantor at £20, 1 Feb 1732

Richard Hay of Battle esq to Thomas Webster of  
Battle bt Beach Furnace Battle, description and terms  
as above

W: [blank]

### **BA Vol 71** (Phillipps 9936)

f15

Counterpart lease for 11 years from 29 Sep 1707 at £10 for 6 years and £20 for 5 years; 1 July 1707

Elizabeth [Sidney], widow of Robert [Sidney] earl of Leicester, and John [Sidney] earl of Leicester, to Thomas Snepp the elder of Battle, yeoman, and his eldest son and heir Thomas Snepp

Furnace or ironworks called Robertsbridge Furnace in Salehurst, and the furnace house, smith's forge and buildings usually held with it

The furnace pond and bays, with liberty of penning up the water and letting it down, to operate the furnace or to repair the bays, dams and floodgates

The brick-kiln near the furnace, with liberty of digging clay in the usual places to make brick and tile

reserving the fish in the pond and liberty of fishing, and to draw out the water to take the fish, except when the furnace is working, or within two months before; right of entry to survey for repairs

The rent to be paid to Elizabeth for life, thereafter to John; TS and TS to maintain, the landlords allowing rough timber; TS and TS may use all the usual ways across the landlords' estate; TS and TS may bring all such stock to the furnace necessary for its blowing and working before the beginning of the term; they may take the rise and spray of all the timber to be cut by the landlords, for use at the furnace

W: Charles Olmieres, George I-looper

f24

Counterpart lease for 7 years from 25 Mar 1747 at £100, 10 Dec 1746  
Thomas Webster of Battle Abbey bt to William Jukes and George Jukes of London, founders and ironmongers

The furnace for working and making iron called  
Robertsbridge Furnace in Salehurst, with the founder's  
house, bildings and workhouses belonging to it, and the  
great pond called The Furnace Pond

The forge for making and working iron called  
Robertsbridge Forge in Salehurst, with the house called  
The Forgerman's House, its orchard, two sheds on either  
side of the forge now used as boring-houses, a house  
called The Ironhouse and a moiety of a building now  
used as a storehouse for coals, together with the use of  
the water in the cut out of the River Rother to the forge

All coalplaces, places to lay cinders, floodgates, bays,  
banks, sluices and waterlays

all now occupied by WJ and GJ

reserving the fish in the cut and ponds, with the right to fish them,

and to draw the water from the cut to take the fish and fill TW's stews; the cinders to be made at the furnace and forge; WJ and GJ to repair, TW providing sufficient rough timber within 40 days of notice in writing, which is not to extend to repairing or renewing the water-wheels, bellows or utensils used at the ironworks; if TW fail to provide the timber, WJ and GJ may purchase it and deduct the sum from the rent; WJ and GJ may take loam, sand and clay for moulding and casting from the places which it has been taken in the past; WJ and GJ to have three months beyond the term to remove their stock; TW will take from WJ and GJ at the end of the term all the gun tackle, tools of wrought iron, cast plates and other iron things, and pay for them at £10 a ton for gun tackle and wrought iron tools, and £6 a ton for the rest

If TW cut any underwood of 16 years' growth on his estates within 14 miles of the ironworks, he shall give notice to WJ and GJ by 24 Aug, and sell it to them at 7s the cord plus cutting costs; if TW decides not to cut in any year, he is to give WJ and GJ notice by 24 June to enable them to make alternative provision; by prior arrangement, WJ and GJ may agree with any of the copyhold tenants of any of TW's manors to draw mine on their land for use at the furnace or forge, to be accounted for at the rate of one load of mine for two cords of wood

WJ and GJ to take all the wood which TW cuts, and pay for it half in May and half in November annually; all the goods and merchandise made at the ironworks shall be carried by the navigation of the River Rother which belongs to TW, WJ and GJ paying the usual freight for its carriage by TW's barges and small craft, he reserving the entire property and management of the river

If, by the dryness of the season, WJ and GJ require water for the furnace pond, TW will, on application, draw up to 5 feet from his pond called The New Pond, according to the marks on the shaft which draws up the gate of the sluice

Whereas the furnace is much out of repair and in a decayed and



ruinous condition, WJ and GJ agree to expend £100 on repairs before 25 Mar 1748, TW providing rough timber only

W: William Cranston, Henry Penfold

f28

Surrendered lease for 7 years from 25 Mar 1754 at £100, 16 Mar 1754

Whistler Webster of Battle Abbey bt to John Churchill of Hints, Staffordshire, ironmaster

Robertsbridge Furnace and forge as above (except that the forge pond is described as in Salehurst and Ewhurst, and two houses called the forgerman's houses are mentioned), all late in the occupation of George Jukes

terms and conditions as above, except that the payments for timber to be in July and January; JC may sink minepits in the demenes of Robertsbridge manor, but in woods only in the years in which they have been cut, paying WW 1s a load; WW covenants not to sell hop-poles during the term to other than his tenants

W: John Churchill the younger, George Worge

Endorsed: covenant by JC to surrender two pairs of furnace-bellows, a pair of smith's bellows, four pairs of forge bellows, a pair of smith's bellows and a forge-hammer at the end of the term, being the property of WW, who paid and allowed the late tenant for them

f29

Agreement, 5 Jan 1760

John Churchill has represented to Whistler Webster bt that it would be greatly to the advantage of Robertsbridge Furnace to have an addition to the forgerman's house and has proposed to build a

parlour 18 or 20 feet square, a chamber over it and a chimney and leanto to the parlour; they agree that if JC undertakes the building, WW shall pay half the costs when the work is complete, which is to be executed under the direction of JC

W: George Worge, Joseph Acton

f30

Counterpart lease for one and a half years from 25 Mar 1768 at £100; 21 Mar 1768

Whistler Webster of Battle Abbey bt to William Polhill of Hastings, ironmonger, David Guy of Rye, ironmonger, and James Bourne of Salehurst, ironmaster

The furnace for working and making iron called Robertsbridge Furnace in Salehurst, with the founder's house, buildings and workhouses belonging to it, and the great pond called The Furnace Pond

The forge for making and working iron called Robertsbridge Forge in Salehurst and Ewhurst, with two houses called The Forgerman's Houses, the orchard, two sheds on either side of the forge now used as boring-houses, a house called The Ironhouse and a building now or lately used as a storehouse for coals, together with the use of the water in the cut out of the River Rother to the forge

All coalplaces, places to lay cinders, floodgates, bays, banks, sluices and waterlays

WW covenants to repair the hammer wheel, the fall belonging to the forge, and the furnace wheel gut as soon as possible, and to provide an anvil block; lessees may take loam, sand and clay for moulding and casting from the places from which it has been taken in the past; lessees may have 3 months after the expiration of the term to remove

their stock; WW to sell lessees 800 cords of wood in specified woods in Ewhurst, Salehurst and Battle at 7s a cord, 16d a cord for cutting and 20s per 100 cords for setting; WW to sell all the wood cut in 1767 in Well Head and Chance Stream Woods at 7s a cord, and the coal now being made in the woods, allowing 2 cords of wood for every load of coal, the lessees meeting the cost of coaling; lessees may sink minepits in the demesnes of Robertsbridge manor, but in woods only in the years in which they have been cut, paying WW 1s a load; at the end of the term, the lessees will leave two pairs of furnace bellows, two pairs of smiths' bellows, 4 pairs of forge bellows and a forge hammer, the property of WW, in good condition; all the merchandise made at the furnace to be carried by the Rother Navigation to Scotts Float or Rye Harbour by WW's craft, the lessees paying the usual rates

If, by the dryness of the season, the lessees require water for the furnace pond, TW will, on application, draw up so much water from his pond called The New Pond as can be reasonably used without injuring the fish in it

Executed by WP only

W: John Furner, Charles Nairn

### **Vol 71** (now boxed)

Counterpart lease for 7 years from 1 May 1623 for £700, 27-9-1623 Robert [Sidney] earl of Leicester, John Locherson of London esq, Kenrick Parrey and Thomas Beare of London gents, to John Culpeper of Astwood, Worcestershire, esq, and Henry English of Salehurst, yeoman

Recites: sale of wood and underwood and lease of an iron forge for 21 years from 1 May 1609 at £240, Roger earl of Rutland and his wife Elizabeth, both deceased, to Thomas Culpeper of Wigsell [in Salehurst] esq, deceased, 30 May 1609, the interest in which is now

vested in HE [followed by an erasure], and the reversion in RS as cousin and heir of ES; since the decease of the earl and countess, Richard earl of Clanricard and Lady Frances countess of C, in her right, have evicted RS from Udiam Farm and its lands, since when it has been conveyed by them, the earl of Essex and RS to JL, KP and TB in trust for RS; now RS and his trustees have sold HE for £700:

All the timber and dottard trees of oak, elm, ash and beech on the woods belonging to Udiam Farm called Cotterells, Calcottes, Wimbletottes, Hallowe Whale, Lampfeild, The Upper and Lower Parts of Welland Wood, Holland Wood, The Boviers Shawes, Stocke Wood, Great Morgey Wood with the shaws in the fields adjoining it, and Little Morgey Wood, to be felled within 7 years from 1 May 1623 [details follow of the number of trees and how they are to be chosen]

The underwood following: that part of Welland Wood left unfelled last year, Little Morgey Wood and the shaws adjoining, the little wood of 6a which is part of the farm occupied by Alexander Randall, The High Lid Wood or shaw which is of the oldest growth, the lower part of The Frenchmans Wood otherwise the Forgemans Wood, to be cut within a year

The underwood in The Deadmans Wood, The Park Wood, that part of Clynes which is occupied by George Petitt of John Petitt, to be cut whithin two years

The underwood in the woods part of a manor of Robertsbridge copyhold tenement late Nicholas Tufton kt in Northiam, leaving the copyhold tenants sufficient for their botes, The Wellhead Wood and the Curtens Wood, to be cut within 3 years

The underwood in Great Morgey Wood, Lower Timber Wood, Stocke Wood and Badlands Wood, to be felled within 4 years

The underwood in Wimbletotts, Colecottes, Coterelles, The

Winders otherwise Winditch Wood, the residue of Clynes and Fowle Brook Wood, to be cut within 5 years

The underwood in Andrewes Wood and The Maynardes Wood, to be cut within 6 years

The iron House at Udiam, and, if it is not demised, a small piece of land near it of quarter acre, surrounded with water

The right to dig 800 loads of iron mine on Udiam Farm and on all the land of RS and his trustees in Salehurst, Ewhurst, Warding and Whatlington, as granted to TC by the lease of 1609

The right to carry iron, coal, timber and other necessaries to the forge by a watercourse from the forge to Udiam Oak or Udiam Pell in Ewhurst, and by another watercourse from Redland in Salehurst to the forge, and to the iron house over any of the demesne of Robertsbridge manor and of Udiam Farm

RS and trustees release JC and HE from all covenants in the lease of 1609 except those concerning the payment of rent; RS to save JC and HE harmless from tithes on the woods; HE may take wood from Robertsbridge demesne necessary for repairs to the forge, furnace, ironworks, houses, wheels, floodgates, bellows, bays, sluices, bridges and watercourses; HE to be responsible for assigning wood to the leaseholders of Robertsbridge demesnes for their firebote etc, first within their own shaws and then, if necessary, within the woods sold to him; RS provisionally assigns such part of HE's rent to JC as shall compensate him for any damages he may sustain by virtue of the sum of £2000 in which he is bound, on RS's behalf, to Lettice [Sidney], countess of Leicester; HE covenants to leave at least 4000 standells growing for timber at the end of the term; HE and JC release the option for a further 21-year lease at £240 granted to TC by the lease of 1609

Endorsed: declaration by HE that he takes no benefit against JL, KB and TP from the covenants in the lease except as regards Udiam Farm

W: Ralph Whitfeld, Wiliam Mott, Richard Mascall, Thomas Russell  
Endorsed: the ironworks at Robertsbridge

**Vol 72** (now boxed)

Counterpart lease for nine and a half years from 29 Sep 1737 at £20,  
5 Sep 1737

Thomas Webster of Battle Abbey bt to William Jukes and George  
Jukes of London, founders and ironmongers

The forge for making and working iron called  
Robertsbridge Forge in Salehurst, two sheds on either  
side of the forge now used as boring-houses, a house  
called The Ironhouse and a moiety of a building now  
used as a storehouse for coals, to be divided from the  
other moiety at TW's expense and reserved for his  
own use, together with the use of the water in the cut  
out of the River Rother to the forge, coal-places and  
places now used to lay mine and cinder, all late in TW's  
occupation, with the use of the Rother navigation for  
their own merchandise only

reserving the fish in the cut and ponds, with the right to fish them,  
and to draw the water from the cut to take the fish and fill TW's  
stews; the cinders to be made at the furnace and forge; WJ and GJ  
agree to pay TW a sum amounting to half of whatever they pay the  
boatman, and one-sixth of any sum they spend on the provision  
of their own craft by reason of the lack of TW's craft; WJ and GJ  
to repair, TW providing sufficient rough timber within 40 days of  
notice in writing; if TW fail to provide the timber, WJ and GJ may  
purchase it and deduct the sum from the rent; WJ and GJ to have  
three months beyond the term to remove their stock

W: John Johnson, John Vaughan, scrivener in Lombard Street

## Vol 72

Counterpart lease for 7 years from 25 Mar 1740 at £50, 5 Sep 1737

Thomas Webster of Battle Abbey bt to William Harrison, William Jukes and George Jukes of London, founders and ironmongers

The furnace for working and making iron called  
Robertsbridge Furnace in Salehurst, with the  
ironhouses, workhouses, workmen's houses, coalplaces  
and places to lay mine and cinder, with the use of the  
Rother navigation for their own merchandise only

all occupied by William Harrison of London, founder, WJ and GJ  
by lease from TW

reserving the fish in the ponds and rivers, with the right to fish them, and all cinders to be made at the furnace; lessees to repair, TW providing sufficient rough timber within 40 days of notice in writing, which is not to extend to repairing or renewing the waterwheels, bellows or utensils used at the ironworks; if TW fail to provide the timber, WJ and GJ may purchase it and deduct the sum from the rent; WJ and GJ agree to pay TW a sum amounting to half of whatever they pay the boatman, and one-sixth of any sum they spend on the provision of their own craft by reason of the lack of TW's craft; WJ and GJ to repair, TW providing sufficient rough timber within 40 days of notice in writing; if TW fail to provide the timber, WJ and GJ may purchase it and deduct the sum from the rent; WJ and GJ may take loam, sand and clay for moulding and casting from the places from which it has been taken in the past; WJ and GJ to have three months beyond the term to remove their stock; TW will take back from the lessees at the end of the term all the gun tackle, tools of wrought iron, cast plates and other iron things, at £20 a ton for gun tackle and wrought iron tools, and £6 a ton for the rest;

If TW cut any underwood of 16 years' growth on his estates in Sussex, he shall give notice to the lessees by 24 Jun, and sell it to them at 6s

the cord plus an allowance in lieu of cutting costs, together with the topwood of the timber felled in the same places; WJ and GJ agree to take all the wood which TW cuts on his estates in Sussex, and pay for it half in May and half in November annually; by prior arrangement, WJ and GJ may agree with any of the copyhold tenants of any of TW's manors to draw mine on their land for use at the furnace, to be accounted for at the rate of one load of mine for two cords of wood TW covenants not to allow Beech Furnace [in Battle], which he holds by lease for the life of Richard Hay esq, to be used as a furnace, WJ and GJ paying an annual fee of £12 as consideration; he may lease it for any other purpose

W: John Johnson, John Vaughan, scrivener in Lombard Street

**Vol 72** (now boxed)

Counterpart lease for five and a half years from 29 Sep 1734 at £50, 29 Aug 1734

Thomas Webster of Battle Abbey bt to William Harrison, William Jukes and George Jukes of London, founders and ironmongers

The furnace for working and making iron called Robertsbridge Furnace in Salehurst, with the ironhouses, workhouses, workmen's houses, coalplaces and places to lay mine and cinder

lately occupied by TW

reserving the fish in the ponds and rivers, with the right to fish them, and all cinders to be made at the furnace; lessees to repair, TW providing sufficient rough timber within 40 days of notice in writing, which is not to extend to repairing or renewing the water-wheels, bellows or utensils used at the ironworks; if TW fail to provide the timber, WJ and GJ may purchase it and deduct the sum for the rent; WJ and GJ may take loam, sand and clay for moulding and casting



from the places from which it has been taken in the past; WJ and GJ to have three months beyond the term to remove their stock; TW will take back from the lessees at the end of the term all the gun tackle, tools of wrought iron, cast plates and other iron things, which he has sold them at £20 a ton for gun tackle and wrought iron tools, and £6 a ton for the rest, at the same rates

If TW cut any underwood of 16 years' growth on his estates in Sussex, he shall give notice to the lessees by 24 Jan, and sell it to them at 6s the cord plus an allowance in lieu of cutting costs; WJ and GJ agree to take all the wood which TW cuts on his estates in Sussex, and pay for it half in May and half in November annually; by prior arrangement, WJ and GJ may agree with any of the copyhold tenants of any of TW's manors to draw mine on their land for use at the furnace, to be accounted for at the rate of one load of mine for two cords of wood

Endorsed: agreement that the topwood from the timber felled in the woods from which the underwood is to be taken by the lessees shall be taken by them on the same terms

W: H Moore, Benjamin Manning, scrivener in Cornhill

## **Vol 64**

Unexecuted certificate concerning the bankruptcy of John Fowler and Thomas Burel of St Mary Overies Southwark, founders, 1737  
{1744}

## Vol 21

1. From John Churchill at Hints (postmarked Tamworth)  
To Sir Whistler Webster bt. M.P. at Battle, Sussex, by London 14th  
November 1753

I am informed by Mr John Botton of Duffield in Derbyshire that you have a furnace and forge to set with woods and mine convenient to work them: as I am pretty much concerned in that way, having several furnaces, forges and other ironworks in this county, shall be willing to take yours, if upon a view, and the terms are agreeable: and as I am an entire stranger to you, make bold to add, that I rent a forge in Hints in Staffordshire of Sir Robert Lawley bt. who lives in Cavendish Square – another at West Bromwich in Staffordshire of Samuel Clark esq. who lives in Great Ormond Street: either of which gentlemen, upon inquiry, will satisfy you with my character and abilities: and if this meets with your approbation, desire you'll please to send me the rent of the forge and furnace, the quantity each will make yearly, the price of your wood per cord, whether cut or uncut, and what one of your cords contain, the price of your mine per dozen or per ton, the mine rent, and charge of getting: the distance of the mine and cordwood lie from the works, with what else you think may be sufficient for me to frame a just idea of the whole and if it appears likely to answer, will take a journey in order to come to an agreement  
who am, Sir, your most humble servant

John Churchill

please to direct to me viz. Ironmaster at Hints near Tamworth,  
Staffordshire.

2. [Memorandum]

To inquire the usual price of iron mine load in the ground and how much a load the drawing: how much the carriage from one mile to four miles if not carried in double corts [?carts] and how

many bushels they contain. Take down the price of the different sorts of mine: be particular and write it

[reverse]

The best iron mine 1 shilling and 6 pence but take top and bottom as they call it, 1 shilling. If they draw all, 3 shillings per load drawing, but if only the best, 3 shillings and 6 pence and 4 shillings. The price of carriage for one mile, 1/6d and for two miles, 2/6d, for three miles, 3/-, for four miles, 3/6d, double or single the price is much the same. Twelve bushels is one load.

3. (draft)

To GW (probably George Worge, attorney in Battle, who acted for the estate).

(undated)

Sir, I have received yours with one enclosed from Mr Cotton which I now return you and an answer to the several articles mentioned in it.

The present tenant Mr Jukes pays for the furnace and forge which lie near each other and are let under the same lease £100 per annum and by the same lease the tenant agreed to pay for the term seven shillings a cord (on the stub) for all such woods as the landlord should cut. The price of cutting per cord is 1/4d which makes 8/4d a cord in the wood to the tenant. The lease expires Lady Day next and was for seven years. The present tenant and his brother have been tenants for a great many years. A cord of wood is fourteen foot long, three foot high and three in width. Mine is drawn or dug out of the pits by the load, each load containing twelve bushels, and will cost an average delivered into the furnace, seven shillings a load. A sufficient quantity can be got to supply the work within four miles of it. Sir Whistler has about 1500 of coppice wood that lie near the furnace and about the like quantity five or six miles distant that has been always coaled and sent to the furnace. Woods in this county are cut about sixteen years growth. The

coal expended at a blast is from 1000 loads to 2000. Each load of coal contains twenty four sacks. The quantity of iron cast at the furnace is from seven to eleven ton a week according to the different sorts of iron that shall happen to be cast, and about seventeen hundredweight a week at the forge. There is wood sufficient to be got at all times to supply the work at a proper distance. I need not tell you that this is a very deep country in the winter and that this furnace has the advantage of all others in this neighbourhood by having the convenience of water carriage to Rye harbour by which means the guns etc. made there can be got to market sooner and cheaper than from the others. I have sent you the rest and I can get relating to this affair if any other particulars are wanted for information you shall immediately have them but I should think if any person is willing to hire a work of this kind that it would be proper for him either to completely inform himself or send some intelligent person that is used to working of ironworks.

4. To Mr Thomas Braxtone at Titchfield near Fareham, Hampshire  
From (blank) Battle Abbey

November 20th 1753

Sir, agreeable to your desire I send you the principal terms of the subsisting lease of the furnace and forge which expires Lady Day next. The lease is for seven years at the yearly rent of £100 The tenant agreed to pay for the term seven shillings a cord on the stub [etc. see information in memorandum 3]  
I think what I have wrote may be sufficient for the present consideration If you have any thoughts of hiring the furnace you will let me hear from you soon as I have had since I saw you an application from another person desirous of treating for the works

[notes covering matters mentioned in the letter but also:]  
boats carry six or seven cords

5. (draft)

To Mr John Churchill

27 January 1754

Sir, in answer to yours of the 14th of Novmeber last relating to my furnace and forge I informed you that I was then in treaty with a person for letting these works, but being now at liberty as we did not agree, I give you the best answer I am able to the [sentiments] of your letter. The present tenant pays for the furnace and forge which lie near each other and let tinder the same lease [added above the line “which expires at Lady Day next”] £100 per annum, and by the same lease the tenants agreed to pay for the term seven shillings a cord on the stub for all such wood as the landlord should cut, the price of cutting per cord is  $\frac{1}{4}$  which makes it  $\frac{8}{4}$  a cord in the wood to the tenant (a cord of wood in this country is fourteen feet in length, three feet high and three feet in width). Mine is drawn by the load each load containing twelve bushels and will cost an average delivered into the furnace seven shillings a load, a sufficient quantity can be got to supply the work within a proper distance. I have about 3000 acres of coppice wood which has been coaled for the use of these works. The quantity of iron last at the furnace is from seven to eleven tons a week according to the different sorts of goods to be made, and about seventeen hundredweights of bar iron a week at the forge. You must be sensible how difficult it is to give a full description of things of this sort in writing, but I hope what I have said may be of sufficient encouragement to you to view the works and I shall be very glad to treat with you here. I shall be in London in about a fortnight. Direction there is in St. James’s Street

and I am, Sir, your most humble servant

(unsigned]

6. From John Churchill, Hints

To Sir Whistler Webster, Member of Parliament, at Battle Abbey in  
Sussex

8th April 1754

Sir, I have received a letter from Mr George Jukes dated the 4th instant wherein he informs me that he hath lately seen you that you think it absolutely necessary for us all to meet at Robertsbridge to settle the affairs of those works; I should be extremely glad to wait upon you both, but as I am at such a distance I don't apprehend that my meeting you there can be of any advantage; hope you will please to excuse me; the furnace and forge are to be left in good repair, the latter with two fineries and the respective bellows, with such other tools and utensils as were in the inventory, upon Mr Jukes's entering, are to go to the succeeding tenant to be delivered up by him with the works at the expiration of his lease; the other part of the stock is to be taken from the premises or disposed of by Mr Jukes and this I presume is the chief thing to be settled between you and I hope to both your satisfaction and that I may have everything fixed to begin about midsummer next as it is hard for me to pay a dead rent

who am, Sir, your most humble servant

John Churchill

7 [draft]

Battle Abbey

To Mr John Churchill

8th May 1754

I met Mr Jukes two days ago at Robertsbridge Furnace relating to the necessary repairs which he is obliged by his lease to do and could have wished that the great distance

had not made it inconvenient for you to have met us there for upon just taking a view of Mr Jukes's working tools and other implements which I am obliged to take off him at a price certain they don't appear to be of the least use to me but possibly they may be so to you if you like to purchase them for Mr Jukes very handsomely offers to quit me of any obligation of taking them In your letter of the 8th April last you take notice that the tenant Mr Juke must leave the bellows etc. as were in an inventory. I was a little surprised at this as I never saw or heard of any such inventory and Mr Jukes does insist upon it that all these sort of things are his and what I don't like to purchase he will take away. As Mr Jukes has but a short time to carry off what belongs to him if it was convenient for you to meet us on the spot and fix a time for this purpose as soon as possible I think much trouble might be saved as there are many things you must certainly want that are already there but if you think differently please to let me know and I shall directly acquaint Mr Jukes to remove everything that is his from the premises The repairs of the furnace and forge will in a few days be adjusted between Mr Jukes and I according to the covenant of his lease and be set about accordingly but there is one thing occurs to me. Would you have the coal house repaired or not because when you was here you seemed to think it not at all necessary

8. From John Churchill, Hints

To Sir Whistler Webster, MP, at Battle Abbey

20th May 1754

I received your favour of the 8th instant and as I per a purpose being in Sussex in June next shall be glad to wait upon you and Mr Jukes at Robertsbridge on Monday the 17th of that instant to see if we can agree for the tools etc. As to the bellows I never

yet knew a work set without them together with a hammer and an anvil fixed which presume can be of no great inconveniency to you, if you was to buy them, as the tenant must leave them in good repair at the end of his term, but I am inclined to believe that if you search carefully you will find an inventory of some part of the tackling and tools as Mr Jukes told me in London that he hoped you had yours safe for his was destroyed by fire and that was what I meant in my letter of the 8th April. I hope there will be no dispute about putting up another finery as John Lavender tells me there was always two till one was pulled down by Mr Jukes's order and an air furnace built in the place which is since taken away.

As to the charcoal shed at the furnace I had much rather have it down as it stands very dangerous for fire but then would have the materials fixed at a larger distance in manner of paling as we shall fix when I have the pleasure of seeing you and if the day I have fixed upon be not agreeable please to let me know in time that it may be changed to your liking.

I am, Sir, your most humble servant

John Churchill