

Summarized for
the Bulletin

TOLLSLEY FURNACE

B. Herbert 1475

WEALD IRON RESEARCH GROUP

Winter 1973/4 scheme for revising information on water-powered sites included by E. Straker in Wealden Iron (1931).

The following points are designed to produce a rapid survey of these sites, many of which have not been visited in recent years. You will be aware that Straker's site-comments were unsystematic, and, beyond this, modern developments such as tree clearance or planting, bulldozing, or building, have made major changes.

Please ensure an adequate National Grid Reference.

1. Name of site. State if that used by Straker is in any way misleading.

TOLLSLEY FURNACE

Straker 268

2. National Grid Reference (2 letters, 6 figures).

TQ 62³² 371

3. Access. State problems of terrain or land-use. (If the name of owner and tenant is easily available, this could be useful.)

NOT ENCOURAGED - TENANT UNHELPFUL - OWNER LORD CAMDEN

4. Features on the ground.

Main Dam

Length c. 133 yards measured from 1:5" Map.

SITABLE - UNABLE TO MEASURE

Height (estimate from both upstream and downstream sides if possible.)

AT STREAM END - ABOUT 15 FT.

Condition (i.e. gaps, erosion etc; are there any good cross-sections in bulldozed gaps? If so, do these show the construction materials used at different stages?)

SEEMED GOOD APART FROM BANK AT STREAM

Pen-ponds - is there any evidence for dams upstream from the main supply pond?

No

Mine pits - are there any close by?

NOT SEEN.

The area below the dam

Clear indications of buildings, wheel-pits, sluices, etc.

WE WERE UNABLE TO ASCERTAIN. PRESENT HOUSE (WHICH IS NOT NEW.) APPEARS TO BE BUILT ON ONE END OF BAY.

Surface irregularities

HIGH REEDS AND GRASS IN POND AREA

5. Slags and cinders. (Keep samples.)

- Blast furnace slags (glassy). How much?

What is the general colour range? (In particular are there significant quantities light in colour?)

PRESENT TRACKWAY TO HOUSE THICK SLAG AND BLACK EARTH

- Forge cinders (generally rusty, bubbly, but varying widely in form.)
How much?

9. Is the site apparently threatened in any way?

ONLY BY FARM USAGE

10. Do you know of any documentation missed by Straker? State details and whereabouts, if known.

No.

11. Other comments.

By REFERENCE TO ATTACHED COOY MAP WE APPROACHED BY THE TRACK ON LEFT OF STREAM. FOUND THE BAY WHERE STREAM RUNS THROUGH - STREAM TOO DEEP TO CROSS. AREA THICKLY OVERGROWN WITH AZELIAS. WE CROSSED RIVER BRIDGE AT FOOT OF FIELDS AND UP THE TRACK TO THE FARM.

THE TENANT MOST UNHELPFUL TO THE POINT OF DENYING ANY KNOWLEDGE OF A PAST FURNACE ON SITE.

LATER ADMITTED HAVING FOUND CINDER BUT WOULD NOT AGREE TO US LOOKING AROUND WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM LORD CAMDEN.

THUS WE WERE UNABLE TO MAKE OUT MEASUREMENTS TO TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THE SITE.

[Signature]
19/4/75

Are there many large cakes ("furnace bottoms") over, say, 18"x 18"?

- Ore - any scatter?

- Purple shelly limestone - any?

Other surface finds (pottery, clay pipes, timbers, etc.) Note these

6. Are there any buildings, industrial, domestic or agricultural, apparently dating from the likely period of the site? Note briefly.

*As. BEFORE PRESENT HOUSE ON END OF BAY - By style
fairly old - perhaps built on older foundations.*

7. Has the site been re-used (e.g. corn or fulling mill)?

8. Do you know of any published or unpublished excavation which may have taken place? Note details, in particular of the excavator and location of finds in the case of unpublished work.

No.

