

SHORTER NOTICES

This section of the *Collections* is devoted to short notes on recent archaeological discoveries, reports on small finds, definitive reports on small-scale excavations, etc. Material for inclusion should be sent to Mr. H. F. Cleere, F.S.A., Little Bardown, Stonegate, Wadhurst, Sussex. Those without previous experience in writing up such material for publication should not be deterred from contributing; Mr. Cleere will be happy to assist in the preparation of reports and illustrations.

PALAEOLITHIC FLINTS FROM HENFIELD—Two artefacts of Lower Palaeolithic age were found in 1972 by Mr. P. Spear at Catsfold Farm, Henfield, about half a mile east of the River Adur at TQ 197156. They were probably brought to the surface by ploughing, from no very great depth: the soil overlies Weald Clay, and the findspot is at about 60 ft. O.D. The two pieces may be described as follows:

1. A sub-rectangular heavy worked fragment, maximum dimensions 115mm. long, 102mm. broad and 54mm. thick, deeply ochre-stained and heavily abraded. It could possibly represent the end-product of an unsuccessful and quickly abandoned attempt to make a handaxe, or it might be classed as a crude chopper; however, it is not particularly convincing as either and is perhaps better regarded merely as a somewhat amorphous item of flint-working debris. The rather cherty flint bears traces of cortex on each face, so the object originated as a pebble rather than a flake from a larger block. Each face shows a few large scars and a fair number of smaller ones: among the latter are some which are not necessarily the work of man (especially in view of the object's battered and abraded condition), and the question of formal 'retouch' does not arise. Nevertheless, the number of scars and the several directions from which they have been struck certainly suggest that the object is an artefact rather than a product of natural forces.

2. A small, thick, irregular waste-flake, maximum dimensions 46mm. long by 35mm. wide by 18mm. thick, deeply ochre-stained, cracked and somewhat abraded. The thick striking-platform is unprepared and bears some small recent scars. The flake's dorsal surface has two primary scars, which between them take up over half of it, the remainder being cortex. The bulbar face is plain, with the bulb fairly pronounced. Both faces show a number of small edge scars, but these clearly constitute damage rather than retouch or utilisation and most are less heavily stained. The flake was struck across a natural cortex-covered cavity on the parent block, and one edge incorporates part of it.

It is regrettable that the two artefacts are such uninformative pieces in themselves, as well as being in a derived state, but one need only reflect for a moment on the quantity of waste flakes and other debris produced during the manufacture of any Lower Palaeolithic implement to realise that the majority of artefacts found would be like those described here if collectors had bothered with them. At rich and undisturbed sites, large quantities of such material can yield important technological information. But Mr. Spear's two flints seem worth recording, as additions to the still surprisingly small quantity of Sussex Palaeolithic finds, on which the writer and Mr. E. W. Holden published a note recently (see *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, vol. 106 (1968), pp. 206-212).

From Henfield itself, only one other extant Palaeolithic artefact is known to the present writer: an ochreous, abraded, small pointed ovoid handaxe, flat and well made, anciently damaged. This is now in the British Museum. The accession number is 1932: 10-12, 1 and the register records it as 'found on the surface at 100' O.D. at Furner's Farm, Henfield, Sussex.' It was given to the British Museum by Major A. G. Wade, of Bentley, Hants. Mr. Holden has kindly checked the Society's 6in. O.S. map of the Henfield area at Barbican House, and reports that a single unsigned note records 'a palaeolith of the river drift type,' found east of the High Street at about TQ 221162. No further details are available, but since this area is part of Furner's Farm at about 100' O.D. it seems highly likely that the British Museum's handaxe is the artefact referred to.

The two artefacts described in this note remain in Mr. Spear's collection, but two transparencies of No. 1 have been deposited in the Society's library at Barbican House, Lewes, by Mr Holden.

DEREK ROE

THE POSSIBLE REMAINS OF A NEOLITHIC CAUSEWAYED CAMP ON OFFHAM HILL, HAMSEY, NEAR LEWES, TQ 3988175—This earthwork, which is partly destroyed by an old chalkpit and is subject to cultivation, is Scheduled Ancient Monument, Sussex, No. 170, quoted in the *List of Ancient Monuments in England and Wales* (H.M.S.O., 1965), p. 99, under *Camps and Settlements: Hamsey, earthwork on Offham Hill*. During the course of archaeological fieldwork in 1964 our member, Mr. David Thomson, inspected the remains of the earthwork and he considered that despite scrub clearance and degradation over the years by ploughing the configuration of the ground resembled that which might be expected at a Neolithic causewayed camp. Mr. Thomson invited the writer to inspect the site in 1965 and he agreed with Mr. Thomson's diagnosis. At that visit a few undatable struck flint flakes, patinated white, and some burnt flints were found. Ordnance Survey (Archaeology Division) were invited to survey the site when it fitted into their programme of work for Sussex and this was done in 1972 by Mr. Peter Stevens of that Division. Mr. Stevens has kindly supplied the following report:—

'There is a sub-circular earthwork situated on a N. facing slope about 120m. NE. of the hill summit. Quarrying has encroached upon the E. side of the work. There are two concentric ditches about 10m. apart and not more than 0.5m. deep, in places reduced to a vegetation mark only. On the SE. side at the quarry edge, a section of the ditch can be seen 0.6m. below the turf line and 2.6m. wide. There is slight evidence of an inner bank, and elsewhere a low swelling, apparently containing a heavier content of chalk rubble, suggests a continuation of the bank. Interruptions of the vegetation mark in the ditch possibly indicate at least four causeways across the outer ditch and two across the inner. The whole work has been reduced by ploughing and scrub clearance; the northern part is within a wood and here shows an outward facing scarp 0.5m. high. The work shows many features of a Neolithic causewayed camp, but without excavation positive identification is uncertain.'

Since writing the above a further note of caution has been found in a letter written by the late Dr. E. Cecil Curwen to the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments in 1935. The former had been consulted as to the advisability of Scheduling the site as an Ancient Monument and his reply is reproduced here by courtesy of the Inspectorate:—

'Re the half-circle on Offham Hill—I have had a look at this, and it is certainly part of an ancient concentric-ringed enclosure with at least two ditches. But it is so overgrown that it is difficult to make much out of it. The outer ditch fades out on the north before reaching the quarry, and the terminal part of it is interrupted by several causeways. But it does not look to me convincingly Neolithic! It should be preserved—obviously! One day I'll try and get someone to dig it.'

It is a sad reflection on the efficacy of Scheduling that this procedure failed to prevent subsequent scrub clearance and ploughing. Acknowledgment Payments to farmers, introduced in 1972 by the Directorate of the Environment, it is hoped may help to reduce such damage to Scheduled earthworks in the future.

At present, known Neolithic causewayed camps in Sussex are (from E. to W.): Combe Hill (nr. Eastbourne), Whitehawk (Brighton), Barkhale (Bignor Hill) and The Trundle (Goodwood).

E. W. HOLDEN

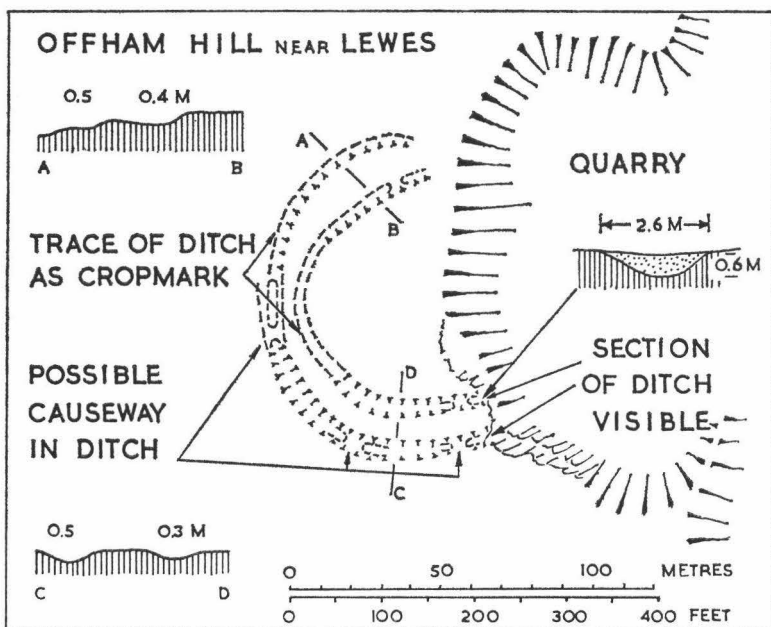


FIG. 1. OFFHAM HILL EARTHWORK. The sections are not to scale.

A LATE BRONZE AGE SPEARHEAD FROM PETT (TQ 888128)—A Late Bronze Age spearhead was found by a Mr. O'Dowd on the shore at Pett among stones about 50ft. below high-water mark, and has been purchased for the Hastings Museum (Ref. 971.4). The total length of the spearhead is 204mm. The leaf-shaped blade is tapered, with a slightly concave edge, and has a maximum width of 30mm. There are rivet holes in the socket, which is 23mm. in diameter.

In 1937 parts of a Middle or Late Bronze Age dagger were found on the shore at Pett by Mr. F. J. Britt-Compton, and are now in the same museum. The maximum width of the dagger fragments is 18mm. and the three pieces total 178mm. in length. The finder could not be more precise about the position than to state that it was "resting on clay amongst the rocks at low tide".

A flat bronze celt "dug up at Silverhill" completes this meagre list of single finds from the area. The nearest Bronze Age hoard is that comprising palstaves and a standard holder (?) found at Marina, St. Leonards-on-Sea (*Ant. J.*, xv, 466-7).

J. MANWARING BAINES

SURFACE FINDS ON HOUNDEAN/ASHCOMBE FIELD (TQ 389099)—In the course of a systematic surface investigation of the above field between 23 January and 31 July, 1972, I collected over 1,130 sherds of pottery, nine flint artefacts, pot boilers, struck flints and skeletal remains, representing a man, woman and baby.

The field lies on the spur that slopes down from the Lewes Race Course to the Brighton-Lewes road between Houndean Bottom and Ashcombe Farm. It is marked 'Field System' on the 1in. O.S. map and includes a cluster of tumuli marked '30' on the Society's 6in. map (Sheet LIV, SW.) at Barbican House. The examination was undertaken in two phases: first, when the field lay fallow under partial weed cover early in the year, and secondly during a series of ploughing and raking operations from mid-April through to July. On the evidence of the pottery, the area seems to have been the site of a series of settlements beginning in the LBA/EIA and culminating in the Roman period, with which the bulk of the finds have been identified. Occupation appears to have ceased at the opening of the IVth century A.D. The bones could be Roman or Saxon. Permission has been obtained to put down a trial trench.

Mr. E. W. Holden, F.S.A., Mr. N. E. S. Norris, F.S.A., and Mr. A. B. Page very kindly identified the finds for me, and Mr. H. C. F. Brazenor helped by giving me his opinion on the skeletal remains. All the finds have been deposited at the Society's Museum at Barbican House; they are accompanied by a short explanatory note and sketch plan of the area.

J. T. M. BIGGAR (Lewes Archaeological Group)

ROMANO-BRITISH IRONWORKING SITE AT LUDLEY FARM, BECKLEY (TQ 848208)—The site is located in Burnthouse (or 'Burntis') Wood, on a steep slope running E-W and ending in a tiny ditch that remained dry throughout the summer of 1972. It is at present secondary woodland (mostly hornbeam and ash), with a thick cover of brambles and thistles over the apparent ironworking area.

The deposit of slag, cinder and other refuse varies in thickness from about 1m. at the S. end to 10cm. at the N. end. There is no covering of topsoil at the S. end, which suggests that this end of the deposit has been removed for road-making. At the N. end there is a covering of yellow sandy soil, containing pieces of slag and cinder, which is some 75cm. thick at its greatest depth. Surface examination suggests that the refuse area measures about 50m. N.-S. and possibly 200m. E.-W.

A good deal of pottery has been recovered. This is mostly coarse ware, but some small sherds of Samian have been found. A number of these have been discoloured by heat, which means that they were probably deposited at the same time as the slag and cinder. Mr. H. F. Cleere, F.S.A., has examined the pottery and has identified it as being IInd century A.D. material, with parallels at Bardown and Beauport Park, both ironmaking settlements.

Excavations have been carried out over an area 10m. square; the amount of pottery present suggests that there was a permanent settlement nearby. One coin has been found, just above the natural soil (i.e. in an early deposition layer); this has provisionally been identified as a *sestertius* of Hadrian. Further field exploration in the area has revealed a series of small depressions in Oak Wood (TQ 852209), which may be filled-in ore pits.

W. J. BOTTING

BUGSELL ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENT, SALEHURST (TQ 738233)—This site, which was discovered in 1969, is situated on the W. bank of the River Rother above Robertsbridge. Here the river has cut away the bank, exposing a layer of dark soil, charcoal and occupation debris about 6ft. below present ground level. The layer is steeply inclined towards the river, and may be a rubbish dump from a nearby settlement. There is a large platform in the fields above the tip, which may be the site of the settlement.

Finds from the tip layer include coarse wares and decorated Samian dating from the IInd century A.D.

DAVID MARTIN

A MEDIEVAL JUG DREDGED FROM THE RIVER OUSE NEAR LEWES—The jug was not complete, and its surface was covered by an iron deposit acquired in the river. The fabric is coarse, grey and sandy, and a green glaze can be seen at various points on the body. Of the neck, only the area around the handle was recovered, but three horizontal grooves are visible on the section revealed by the handle scar. The handle consists of a solid rod with fine piercing. There is light thumbing around the base.

The jug, which appears to be late 14th century in date, has been presented to the Society's Museum at Barbican House.

TONY BRIAN PAGE

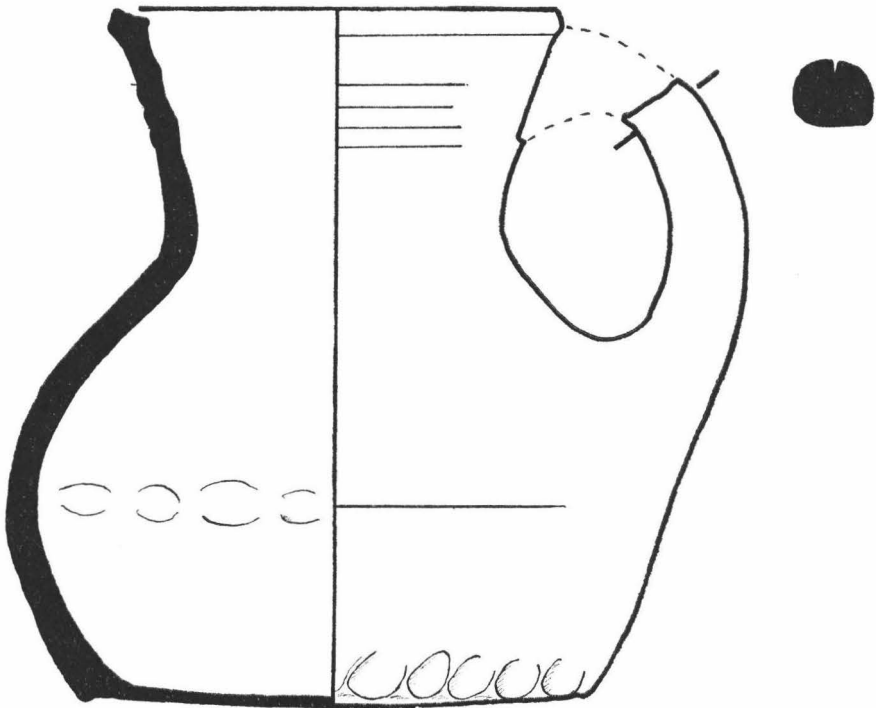


FIG. 1. MEDIEVAL JUG FROM RIVER OUSE, LEWES

EXCAVATIONS AT EDWARD STREET, LEWES, 1971—The excavation took place on the site of the Co-operative Society Dairy, the building of which (and of earlier structures on the site) had removed much of the archaeological evidence. Natural sandy clay was visible all over the site, but at one point two pits (Fig. 1) had been dug into it, presumably from a higher level, and it is these pits and their contents that are the subject of this report.

Pit I was shallow and contained a brown clay fill with several sherds of pottery dating to the late 13th and early 14th centuries, although the latter predominated.

Pit II was much deeper, 4ft. at the point where it ran into the section, and its fill was much darker. This was due to the presence of a large quantity of oak charcoal. It also contained a similar assemblage of pottery to that in Pit I and also many small pieces of copper slag. When the pit had been filled to a depth of 2ft., filling was temporarily halted and a small smithing furnace with an integral tuyere was constructed (Figs. 2 and 3). There were several large pieces of impure copper and melting slag. Analysis showed no trace of bronze or brass, and it is considered that this material represents spillage from the melting of copper,

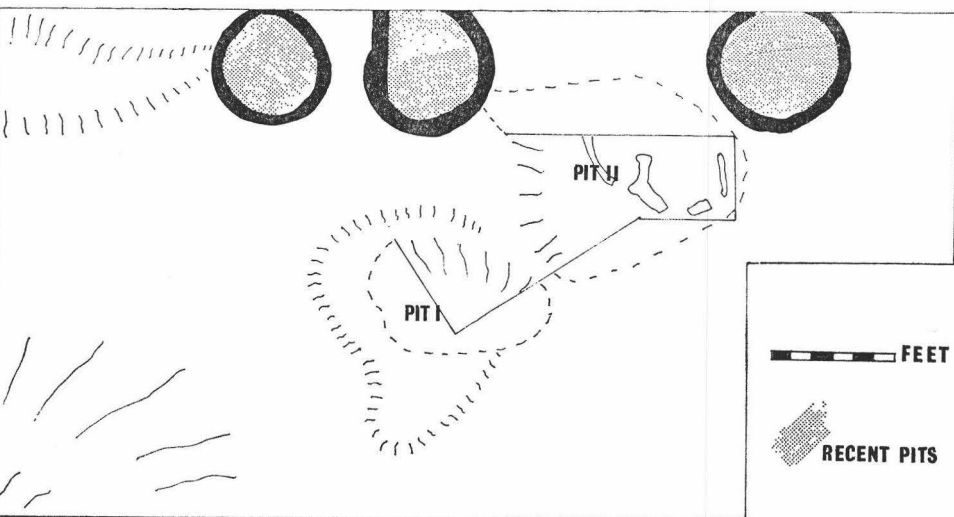


FIG. 1. EDWARD STREET, LEWES, 1971. Site plan

After the furnace had gone out of use, the filling up of the pit continued, the filling material being identical to that which went before. There is enough evidence to suggest that there were at least three successive furnaces on the site. The first antedated the example that was excavated, refuse from it forming the lower part of the filling of Pit II. The second in sequence was that which was excavated, and the third is represented by the filling in the upper part of Pit II.

This is in agreement with the little that is known about the early history of Lewes, for if, as is thought, the area of domestic occupation had migrated to the top of the hill around the Castle by the late 13th century, this part of the town would be free for the type of industrial operation shown to have been in progress on this site.

It was not possible to excavate the whole of Pit II owing to the proximity of late 19th-century cess-pits and the retaining wall at the back.

I am indebted to Mr. J. Tilbury for permission to excavate on the site, to Dr. R. F. Tylecote, of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, for identification of the slag and for his comments on the structure, and to Mr. D. F. Cutler, of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for identification of the charcoal.

TONY BRIAN PAGE

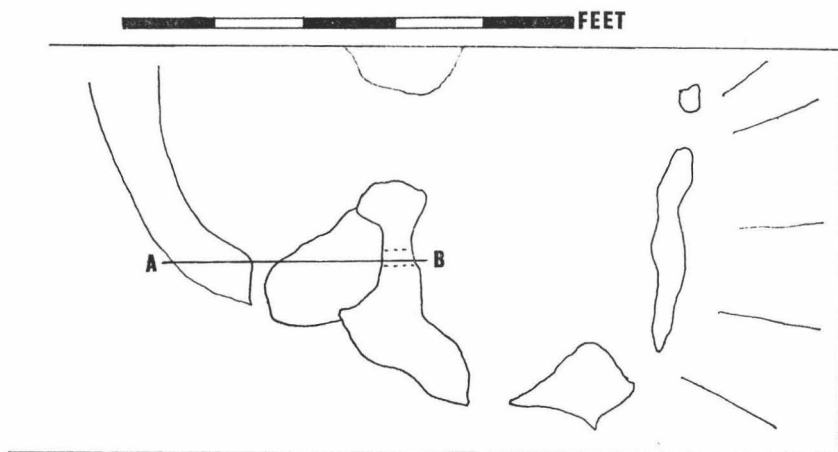


FIG. 2. EDWARD STREET, LEWES, 1971. Plan of furnace

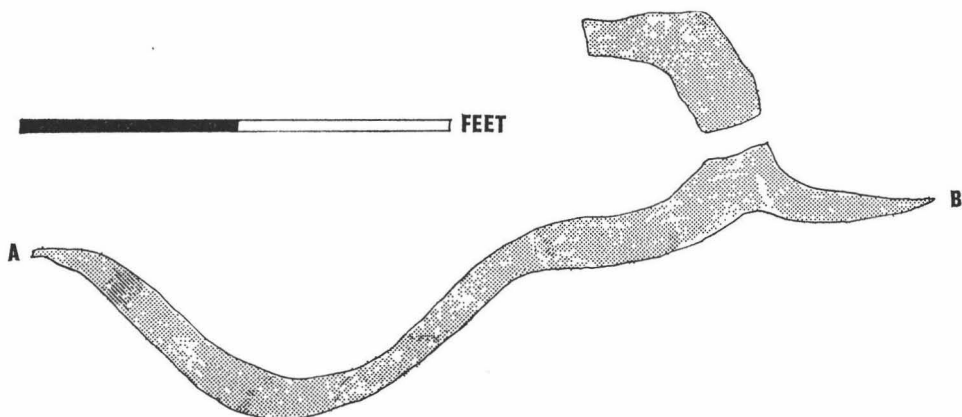


FIG. 3. EDWARD STREET, LEWES, 1971. Section of furnace

ROBERTSBRIDGE VILLAGE (TQ 738233)—In the fields on the E. side of George Hill, Robertsbridge, can be seen the platforms to four houses. The buildings are described in the 1567 survey of Robertsbridge Manor, at which time one is said to have been in a state of decay. The buildings appear to have been destroyed in the 17th century, when John Levett acquired the area.

DAVID MARTIN

DAMAGE TO KING'S STANDING EARTHWORK, ASHDOWN FOREST (TQ 474301)—The site known as King's Standing, on Ashdown Forest, was traditionally a rendezvous for Royal hunting parties and is now marked, as are other high viewpoints on the Forest, by an enclosed group of pines. However, unlike other such plantations on the Forest, which are round, this enclosure is square (approximately 40 yards by 40 yards), with a bank and ditch surrounding a raised central area. The site was discussed by Mr. I. D. Margary in *Sussex Notes and Queries*, vol. 3 (1930), pp. 72-76, where he describes his excavations within the enclosure. He found flints, Iron Age, Roman and Medieval pottery, iron slag and broken bricks and tiles.

In 1972 the Ashdown Forest Conservators bulldozed away almost all the bank surrounding the site and filled in the ditch, leaving only a small section of bank on the W. side on which a holly tree stands. This was done in ignorance of the antiquity and historical importance of the earthwork and was intended only to increase tidiness. They have expressed great regret at what has been done. When I discovered the destruction I found that a great deal of ancient scattered building material had been exposed or removed at the S.W. corner of the earthwork and along its S. side; there appeared to be none elsewhere. This consisted of broken bricks, about 2½ in. thick, and nibbed and holed clay roof tiles. There were also some small pottery sherds, probably post-Medieval in date. My impression was that they had all been associated with a building of the Tudor period. The Department of the Environment have been requested to schedule the site.

C. F. TEBBUTT

A ROMAN SITE AT HOWBOURNE FARM, HADLOW DOWN.—Roman sites on the Weald are not common and, in view of the increasing interest in the Wealden iron industry, new Roman period sites, associated with that industry, are especially worth recording. I therefore wish to express my gratitude to Mr. N. E. S. Norris, who has brought the following facts to my notice and given me permission to publish them.

Sometime between 1952 and 1954, the then occupier of Howbourne Farm, Hadlow Down, showed him some Roman pottery, and other objects, that he had found in digging or enlarging a ditch separating the two fields immediately S. of his farmhouse. He visited the site, where he saw the ditching operation, and a further hole dug by the farmer just outside the bank of the ditch on its E. side, at TQ 51632488. In both the ditch and the hole pottery was found, and he also saw, in the ditch section, remains of a mortared stone wall, associated with the pottery, together with much bloomery iron slag. The concentration of pottery suggested a rubbish pit.

In November, 1972, Mr. Norris took me to the place, which was still identifiable. We found that the fence separating the two fields had no ditch except N. of a slight corner angle, and it was a few yards N. of this that the finds were made. The hollow in the field, made by the farmer's excavation, could still be seen. We also found some bloomery slag there, and more in the shaw bordering the stream about 100 yards away on the E. side of the E. field.

The finds, Mr. Norris tells me, consisted of many sherds of Samian, Nene Valley and coarse pottery, and fragments of both window and vessel glass, all probably of the 2nd century A.D. It therefore seems reasonably certain that at Howbourne there had been a Roman house, with an owner of some wealth, concerned with the iron industry in either a private or official capacity.

C. F. TEBBUTT,

(There would appear to be parallels between this site and that at Garden Hill, Hartfield, at present being excavated by Mr. Tebbutt and Mr. J. H. Money, F.S.A., where a substantial Roman building has been found in close association with a bloomery site.—ED.)