

**FREE**

# Historical Happenings

**IN THE HIGH WEALD**

**OVER  
10,000  
YEARS OF  
HISTORY  
INSIDE!**



**STONE AGE**



**BRONZE AGE**



**IRON AGE**



**ROMAN**



**ANGLO SAXON**



**FROM STONE AGE TO SPACE AGE!**



TIG AND GORT'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE!

Map of the High Weald with numbered spaces (1-27) and various events. Includes a 'CAMP' area and a 'START HERE' area. The map shows a river, trees, and a path leading to the camp. Various events are placed along the path, such as 'Spot a wild boar from the top of a tree', 'Chop through undergrowth with your flint axe', and 'You find a bone and make a musical instrument'.

**START HERE**

**Tig's trail** (Starts at space 1)

**Gort's trail** (Starts at space 1)

**CAMP**

**Events:**

- Space 1: You wander close to the river and get stuck in the mud. Miss your next go.
- Space 2: Stub your toe on an old bone, miss a go.
- Space 3: You find a bone and make a musical instrument. Have an extra throw.
- Space 4: You spear a fish, have an extra throw.
- Space 5: Move back 4 spaces to safety.
- Space 6: Move forward 4 spaces to safety.
- Space 7: Follow a deer trail. Take short cut to 15.
- Space 8: Bear emerging from woods!
- Space 9: Move back 4 spaces to safety.
- Space 10: Move forward 4 spaces to safety.
- Space 11: Wolves!
- Space 12: Chop through undergrowth with your flint axe. Take short cut to 15.
- Space 13: Dry weather. Move forward 3 places.
- Space 14: Hear an auroch stamping past your shelter. Throw a 6 to hit him with your slingshot and win the game!
- Space 15: Spot a wild boar from the top of a tree. Throw a 6 to spear him and win the game!
- Space 16: Make some excellent microliths. Move on 2 places.
- Space 17: Gather firewood. Move straight to the camp.
- Space 18: Unripe berries give you a tummy ache. Miss a turn.
- Space 19: Stop to gather hazelnuts and lose sight of the party. Miss a turn.
- Space 20: Hear an auroch stamping past your shelter. Throw a 6 to hit him with your slingshot and win the game!
- Space 21: Hear an auroch stamping past your shelter. Throw a 6 to hit him with your slingshot and win the game!
- Space 22: Hear an auroch stamping past your shelter. Throw a 6 to hit him with your slingshot and win the game!
- Space 23: Hear an auroch stamping past your shelter. Throw a 6 to hit him with your slingshot and win the game!
- Space 24: Hear an auroch stamping past your shelter. Throw a 6 to hit him with your slingshot and win the game!
- Space 25: Hear an auroch stamping past your shelter. Throw a 6 to hit him with your slingshot and win the game!
- Space 26: Hear an auroch stamping past your shelter. Throw a 6 to hit him with your slingshot and win the game!
- Space 27: Hear an auroch stamping past your shelter. Throw a 6 to hit him with your slingshot and win the game!

**You need a dice and two counters. Choose who is Tig and who is Gort. Throw a 6 to start.**

Tig and Gort are going hunting with their tribe. Each will take a different path following streams and animal trails to get to the hunting camp. Who can reach the camp first?

Early Stone Age

# THE FAMILY STONE

Gort Stone Tig Stone

**Gort and Tig Stone are a brother and sister who hunt with their family in the High Weald during the Stone Age.**

They do not live in a house, or even a cave, though they sometimes use rocks and caves to shelter for a while. They move around and set up camps in good places where food can be found nearby.

In summer they camp near rivers and catch and eat fish and wading birds. Following a river or stream helps them find their way around, but they also follow animal trails through the woods. High rocks are markers to help them know where they are too.

The High Weald is a very wooded place at this time, but there are lots of glades and clearings amongst the trees, which include oak, lime, elder, alder and hazel. On the higher ridges trees do not grow so well as it can be windy, and the soil is poor. Ridges are good places for hunting, as animals can be seen easily from these higher, open areas. It is also a good idea to watch out in the glades where animals graze, and close to water where they go to drink. Birds, wild boar, deer and aurochs (a type of wild cow) all make good, protein-rich meals for Stone Age people. The woodland is an excellent place to find nuts, berries and honey too.

It is important to have the right tools and weapons. Blades and cutters are shaped from small flint flakes, and are known as microliths. They might be attached to wood or bone. Very sharp arrows, spears and harpoons are made for hunting. Knives, saws and scrapers are used to cut and skin the animal ready for eating, and to clean and prepare the hide for other uses. Axes are useful for chopping wood, or through bone. Members of the hunting parties are expert microlith makers, and make them when needed during the hunt.

Stone Age people make good use of the animals they have killed for food. Tig and Gort and everyone else wear clothes made from animal skins and fur, stitched with bone needles or held together with bone pins.

Shelters are made from animal hides spread over poles, a bit like a tent. Sometimes these are set up against large rocks to give extra protection from the weather, and from wild animals.

## HIGH ROCKS CAFÉ

Deer burger (without bun)  
Fish kebab (catch of the day)  
Barbecued rib of auroch

**veggie option:**  
Nut burger (without bun)

All served with a salad of mixed leaves, freshly gathered

**Dessert**  
Fruits of the forest with honey

**Why do you think the burgers don't have buns?**

## MAKING TRACKS

Tig and Gort and their family follow animal tracks to hunt for food. When you are in the countryside see if you can spot any animal footprints in mud.

**Make your own trail**  
You could create a trail for a friend to follow by drawing arrows in the mud or, if it is dry, arranging small sticks in arrow shapes.

**Animal Tracks:** Fox, Badger, Grey Squirrel, Fallow Deer

**You could cut out these pictures of Tig and Gort and stick them onto card to make counters for the adventure game.**

High Weald

EVENTS

World

8000BCE

First evidence of farming in the world

6000BCE

Stone Age hunting parties camped under rock-shelters in the High Weald

4500BCE



# OG KNAPPER meets the Farmers

Og Knapper lives in the High Weald in the late Stone Age. By this time people in other parts of the country have started to settle and farm the land, but in the High Weald life is still as it was in the early Stone Age.

One day, while gathering flint in the South Downs, Og meets Roo and Dag Farmer. They have come from mainland Europe to settle in the South Downs...

...we moved from France to live in the South Downs and I must say the weather's just as warm. We run our farm just like we did when we lived on the continent.

trying to look interested

You lot in the High Weald seem a bit behind the times, Og! We don't go trudging about all over the place looking for aurochs for our dinner NOWADAYS, you know. After all, it IS the NEW Stone Age!

In the High Weald we're not so lucky as you. We can't grow crops easily on our poor soil and there are so many trees to clear. We have to hunt for most of our food, like it or not. But we gather our five-a-day from the woodland. How cool is that?

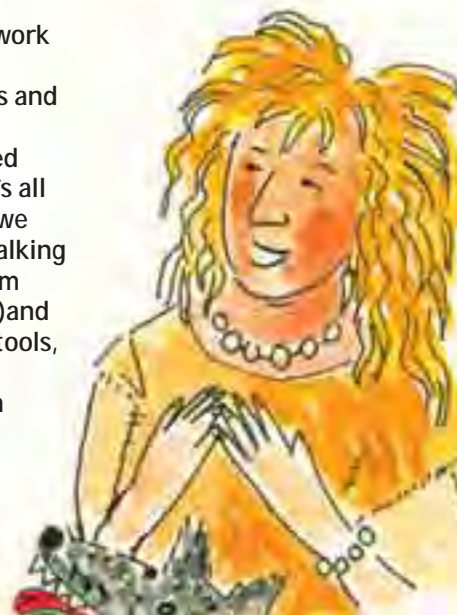


Well we use wild plants for food too, and we hunt a bit and catch fish. But now we keep our own animals for meat and clothing, so we don't always have to spend days and nights away from home being chased by wolves. It must take ages to cook an auroch. And I bet they're tough! I prefer our ready meals of pig!



We're in touch with our inner selves in the High Weald. We live like our ancestors in the earlier Stone Age, but we've cleared some of the woodland so it's easier to see the animals we are hunting. We use nets for fishing as well as harpoons. And we've STARTED to build houses, but we still like the travelling life.

In the South Downs we have lovely large farmhouses. We work hard as farmers tending our crops and making sure our animals are looked after. Then there's all the other things we have to do like walking the dog (bred from wolves you know) and making our own tools, not to mention stitching our own clothes...



That's not so VERY different from us in the High Weald. We have always made our own clothes from fur and skins. And, without wishing to blow my own bone flute, we are EXPERT tool makers. We use a technique called "knapping" to break off and shape pieces of flint and polish them. I guarantee I can show you a tool for every occasion. You name it, I've made it ...

Maybe some other time

Er thanks, but we'd best be off, things to do, busy, busy...



## OG'S CATALOGUE

Here is a list of tools and useful items all made by Og. Or ARE they?

Saw  
Scraper  
Knife  
Fork  
Tin opener  
Axe  
Chopper  
Harpoon

Spear  
Arrow-head  
Corkscrew  
Needle  
Hammer  
Club  
Spanner  
Mallet



## WHERE IN THE WEALD?



Flint tools (microliths) have been found all over the High Weald, particularly around the area's sandstone outcrops.

You can explore sandstone outcrops at:

**High Rocks, Eridge Rocks and Birchden Woods, which includes Harrisons Rocks.** All are close to Tunbridge Wells.

[www.highweald.org/eridgerocks](http://www.highweald.org/eridgerocks)  
[www.highweald.org/birchdenwoods](http://www.highweald.org/birchdenwoods)  
[www.highrocks.co.uk](http://www.highrocks.co.uk)

Replica Stone Age shelters can be seen at the **Ashdown Forest Centre, Buchan Country Park and Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum**

View Stone Age artefacts at:

**Battle Museum; Bexhill Museum; Cranbrook Museum; East Grinstead Museum; Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Horsham Museum; Tunbridge Wells Museum**

More online at:

[www.highweald.org/Tarneg](http://www.highweald.org/Tarneg) – video of a hunter gatherer telling his story  
[www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/archaeology.php](http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/archaeology.php)  
[www.penshurst-online.co.uk/Things\\_to\\_know\\_high%20rocks.htm](http://www.penshurst-online.co.uk/Things_to_know_high%20rocks.htm)

## High Weald

High Rocks used by hunting parties making microliths

Agriculture introduced to Britain from mainland Europe. However, in the more inhospitable High Weald, early Stone Age hunting practices continued

## EVENTS

4500BCE

The wheel was being used in parts of the world around this time

4000BCE

First evidence of farming in Britain

3500BCE

First form of writing in world

3000BCE

3000 Bronze is produced in Egypt

Stonehenge begun

2300BCE

2700-2500 Pyramids built in Egypt



# BRONZE, BRACELETS & BURIED TREASURE

My name is Lula. I live with my family in a comfortable round house near Mountfield. We have a neat and tidy little farm, all the fields are divided into squares, with hedges or ditches between. We grow wheat and barley and we keep sheep on the farm, they are lovely brown ones with short tails. We use their wool to make warm clothes. We do eat their meat sometimes, but often my father and brothers will hunt or fish. The whole family works on the farm, my parents and my two brothers and sister. Other families live in similar houses nearby and most of them keep sheep and grow cereal like us. Some of the woodlands around here have been cleared so that there is plenty of land to farm.



We often have people passing by our village as we live close to a routeway. Sometimes they are people we know quite well, like those from a settlement not too far from here. But sometimes there are visitors from a very long way away.

Travelling bronzesmiths stop here on their long journeys to sell their wares, such as tools for building and cooking and weapons for hunting.

My father says that a long time ago, when his great-great-grandfather was young, everyone made tools from flint, but now most are made from copper or bronze. People here do make their own, but bronzesmiths often have new types of chisels or knives to try.

The thing I like best is that the bronzesmiths make beautiful jewellery – bracelets, hairpins, rings and torques – as well as tools. I have a bracelet which my mother and father bought for me. It is very special and I never take it off.

I often wonder where the bronzesmiths have come from and where they are going to. People say they come from the coast and that they travel across the marshes along watery channels in their flat-bottomed boats. Or some wait for summer and walk across when the tide is very low. It must be a long and tiring walk with all their goods to carry.



## Bronze Age

In 1863 a Bronze Age hoard was found in Mountfield. A hoard is a collection of objects buried together. Usually these are valuable because the finds are very rare and can give us new information about life hundreds, or thousands, of years ago.

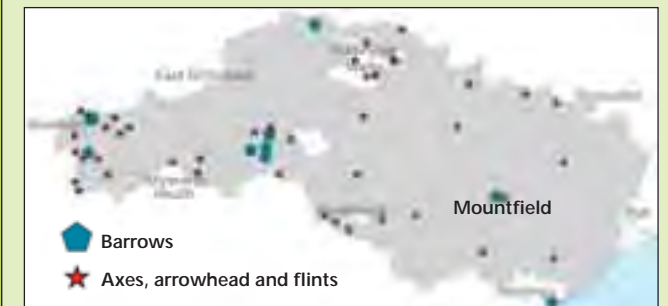
Sadly, the importance of the Mountfield hoard wasn't realised at the time. The objects were thought to be brass and melted down. It is now believed that they were solid gold! Part of a gold bracelet from the hoard can be seen in the British Museum. Perhaps it belonged to Lula.



What things would you like to find in a hoard?



## WHERE IN THE WEALD?



Barrows (burial mounds) and other artefacts have been found scattered across the High Weald. There is little evidence of Bronze Age use of the area compared to areas such as the Downs which were heavily populated in the Bronze Age. You can see the bracelet from the Mountfield Hoard at the **British Museum**.

View Bronze Age artefacts at:  
**Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Tunbridge Wells Museum**

More online:  
[www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/archaeology.php](http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/archaeology.php)

## MAKE A BRONZE AGE BRACELET/WRIST GUARD (OR TWO)

### You need:

- A cardboard tube from a toilet roll
- PVA glue
- Water
- Newspaper torn into strips about 2cm wide
- String, any thickness
- Metallic-looking acrylic paint, copper, bronze or gold coloured
- Scissors
- Brushes for glue and paint
- An adult!



Ask your adult to cut the toilet roll in half (so you have two wide rings) then to cut all the way along the diagonal join on each.

Tear your strips of newspaper into short lengths. Mix the PVA and water (3 parts PVA to 1 part water).

Start by glueing strips on the inside and folding them over to the front at the top and bottom (see picture, left). They don't need to meet on the outside.

Cover the front using smaller pieces overlapping each other slightly. Try to keep the edges neat. Tuck over to the inside where you need to. Leave to dry, slightly bending the bracelet back into shape if it has opened too much.

Cover the outside with another two layers, reshape and leave to dry again.

Glue your string in patterns on the bracelets. Leave to dry, then paint all over. If you would like an even shinier finish you could paint a top coat of PVA which will dry clear.



## High Weald

### EVENTS 2300BCE

Silbury Hill, a great man-made hill in Wiltshire, constructed in phases

### 2000BCE

Stonehenge completed

### 1500BCE

1450 Glass used in Egypt for ornament but not for windows

Bronze Age round barrows and settlements built on the Downs and in the High Weald

1332-1323 Tutankhamun ruled in Egypt

First evidence of horses being used

### 1000BCE

David fought Goliath and became king of Israel

### 700BCE

776 First Olympic Games (in Athens)



# ROCK PARTY

The Iron Age was the period when people first began to make tools and weapons from iron. The High Weald was rich in iron and there was rivalry between neighbouring tribes – each wanting to protect their resources. Here's what the leaders of two rival tribes had to say...



## West enders

“Our tribe is from the **WEST END** of the High Weald. We stick together and don't let anyone tell us what to do. We make sure no-one gets their hands on the iron. It's OURS!

We use iron to make swords and knives and useful tools. They are the best you've ever seen. (But I wish someone would invent an umbrella that we could make, it's rotten weather, always dark and rainy lately!)

We have small farms here and we keep cows and pigs. We grow cereal too, barley and wheat.

Another thing we make better than anyone else is the plough. Ploughs were made from wood in the old days, but ours are much better. Ploughs are pulled along by oxen and have iron teeth like a comb which loosen the soil and make a nice bed of ridges to sow our seeds.

We don't have anything to do with the east end tribes. They think they're better than us, but they're NOT.

We are going to have a midsummer celebration soon. It will be on the High Rocks. We are going to gather wild berries to stain our faces. If any of those east enders dare to turn up they're going to get a nasty fright! ”

## East enders

“Our tribe is from the **EAST END** of the High Weald. We look out for one another. No-one tells US what to do. We won't let any other tribe sneak up and try to get our iron. WE want it all!

We make swords and knives and useful things out of iron, like cooking pots. AND we make a brilliant farming implement, the plough. I'm sure no other tribe has thought of THAT yet.

We don't have anything to do with the west end tribes. They think they're better than us, but they're NOT.

It is damp and cold here and everyone is grumpy. But it will be midsummer soon and we are going to celebrate. We will go to High Rocks to dance and sing. It might cheer us all up.

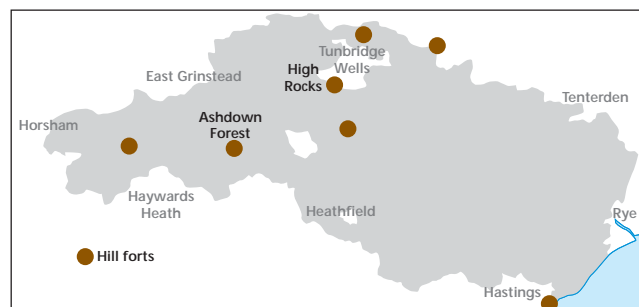
We are going to gather leaves and twigs to make wild head-dresses and masks for the celebration. It will frighten the wits out of any west ender who dares show his or her face! ”

## Here's what they said after the party...

**W**hat a great night! I take back what I said about the east enders, they know how to have a good time. We've agreed to call a truce and defend our iron supplies together. After all, there could be an invasion. The High Rocks is a good place to keep watch from. But call themselves tool makers? Don't make me laugh. And their swords wouldn't cut butter. Ours are better by a mile.

**W**hat a laugh! Those west enders are quite good fun once you get to know them. We've made it up with them and we're all going to get together and keep an eye out from the High Rocks for any invaders after our iron. The west enders' tools aren't up to much though. And their swords? I've seen a sharper blade of grass! Ours are far superior.

## WHERE IN THE WEALD?



The area's iron-age forts were mainly built on the area's highest ridge, the Weald Forest Ridge. Replica Iron Age houses can be seen at **Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum** and **Michelham Priory** where an Iron Age Festival is held every May Day. View Iron age artefacts at:

**Battle Museum; Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Tunbridge Wells Museum**

More online at:

[www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/archaeology.php](http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/archaeology.php)  
[www.penshurst-online.co.uk/Things\\_to\\_know\\_high%20rocks.htm](http://www.penshurst-online.co.uk/Things_to_know_high%20rocks.htm)

## Make a wild mask like the east enders...

### You need:

- A paper plate
- Elastic
- Acrylic paint (green or any colour you choose)
- Dry leaves, feathers, dried bracken, wool, small light twigs etc (nothing too heavy)
- PVA glue
- Soft felt pen to mark eye-holes etc
- Scissors
- An adult helper

Put the paper plate in front of your face. Ask an adult to mark and cut out where the holes for your eyes, nose and mouth will go. It doesn't matter if they are a bit lop-sided, it will add to the wild look! Paint the plate all over if you like, but don't have the paint too wet. When dry, glue your bits and pieces on. If you don't have enough leaves you could always make paper ones. Ask the adult to make holes for the elastic and help you thread it through.

## ...or paint your face like a wild west ender

### You need:

- A basic cold cream (Nivea works well)
- Cornflour
- Edible berries of your choice (blueberries, strawberries, raspberries etc.)

Make a facepaint base by mixing 1 tablespoon of cold cream with 2 tablespoons of cornflour. Add 1 tablespoon of water and mix. Rub a few berries through a sieve to get the juice and add it to the base mixture. Mind your clothes, juice can stain.

## High Weald

## EVENTS

## World

700BCE

Around 700 Great Wall of China started

600BCE

500BCE

480 Buddha died

400BCE

300BCE

280 Camel introduced into Egypt

200BCE

About 193 Venus de Milo made

100BCE

First form of writing in Britain

AD42

55 Julius Caesar first came to England

500 Large Iron Age fort built at Dry Hill Camp, Lingfield



It is the year CCXII. My name is Sparkatus. I am XV years old and I work at the Beauport Park bloomery site near the coast. I bet you think we grow flowers don't you?

The bloomery here at Beauport Park is part of an enormous and extremely important iron works. It is run by the government, the Roman Imperial State, to supply iron for the Roman navy, the Classis Britannica. I have heard it said that this ironworks is the third biggest in the whole of the Roman Empire!

There is another huge ironworks in the west of the High Weald, but that one is privately owned.

There are lots of iron pits and mines around here first made by people working hundreds of years ago. Now we are opening them up, and are digging new ones too. The Romans have modern ways to extract the iron ore (pieces of rock which contain the iron).

My job is to make charcoal. Tree branches are cut into lengths and stacked carefully to form a dome, then covered with mud, sand and leaves from the woodland floor. The stack is burned very, very slowly, sometimes over a few days. You never quite lose the smell of smoke in your nostrils, or the taste of it in the back of your throat. But at least I am out in the woods and can enjoy the sight and sounds of the birds and animals (along with the sounds of hammering from the works!).

**Oak** has grown in High Weald woodlands for thousands of years. **Beech** has been here nearly as long but recently it has spread a lot. Wise people say this is because the climate has become mild and moist.



## LOGIUS'S WORDS FROM THE WOODS

**Sweet Chestnut** was brought here by the Romans for food. The roasted nuts are good to eat and can be ground into flour for cooking and baking. The wood makes excellent charcoal too.



# HIGH WEALD • CCXII

SPARKATUS TELLS HIS STORY ABOUT THE ROMAN IRON INDUSTRY

There are worse jobs on the ironworks estate, like mining the stone, or working at the bloomery hearths where the iron is smelted (which means heating the ore to separate the iron from the rock).



When the iron is heated to the right temperature it turns quite squishy. Once it has cooled a little, the iron forms a lump. This has to be beaten and hammered, then heated and beaten all over again several times, until it is just right. The lump of iron is called the bloom. (So nothing to do with flowers you see!)

These jobs are very hot and dirty work. There is a bath house with six rooms and hot water on the estate, but that is only for the use of the foremen and officers. We ordinary workers have to make do with washing ourselves off in the streams and gills, so we

have a reddish tinge to our skins from the iron in the water! We use these streams for cooling the iron too.

My father, Dadalus, is a charcoal burner like me. We have always lived here in the woods during the charcoal-making season, as you have be on hand to

keep the fire going day and night. Charcoal gives off twice as much heat as ordinary wood, so it is just right for smelting iron.

My older brother, Logius, is a woodland manager. He has taught me about how the woodland is coppiced. Young trees are cut down to near ground level. When they regrow they produce several thin trunks rather than one thick one. Trees cut periodically will keep on growing in this way and produce ideal wood for making charcoal.

As you can tell, the High Weald is the best place for producing iron. As well as the iron-rich stone and wood for fuel, our rivers make it easy to transport iron by boat to the ports, then by sea to other parts of Europe. Talking of rivers, when the Romans came here, they built wooden bridges across them. It seems funny that no-one had thought of it before!

Many new roads have been made by the Romans, including two important ones which lead to Londinium. Our roads are broad and straight and are built using stone. Main roads are made stronger with left-over iron called slag, which can't be made into anything else. This makes them good for carrying heavy loads. The roads have a slight curve so water runs off them, much better than the soggy old muddy tracks and routeways we have around here.

## WHERE IN THE WEALD?

There are numerous ancient minepits and Roman ironworking sites scattered over the High Weald. Major sites were at Beauport Park, Bardown near Wadhurst and Ashdown Forest.

View Roman Ironworks artefacts at **Battle Museum** and exhibitions at: **Cranbrook Museum; Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Horsham Museum; Rye Castle Museum; Tenterden Museum; Tunbridge Wells Museum.**

More online at:  
[www.highweald.org/Maximillius](http://www.highweald.org/Maximillius) – video of a Roman soldier telling his story

[www.romansinsussex.co.uk](http://www.romansinsussex.co.uk)  
[www.wealdeniron.org.uk](http://www.wealdeniron.org.uk)

## SPARKATUS'S GUIDE TO ROMAN NUMERALS

I = 1  
V = 5  
X = 10  
L = 50  
C = 100  
D = 500  
M = 1000

How old is Sparkatus and what is the year?  
X + V = ?  
C + C + X + I + I = ?

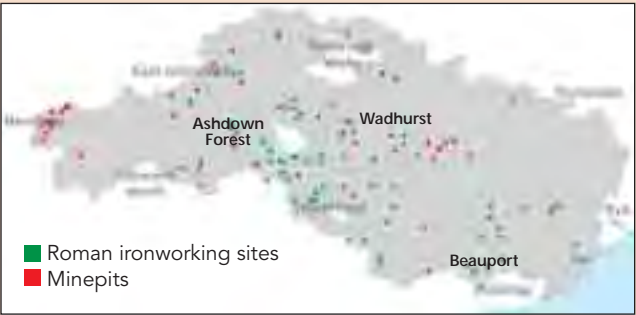


## WORSE JOBS THAN IRON-MINING?

Cloth-making was another High Weald industry in the Romano British period. Cloth made from sheep's wool was treated in a special way to remove the oils and dirt. It had to be kneaded with a special type of clay, called fuller's earth, found in the area. The clay was mixed with water and urine then poured into tubs to cover the woollen cloth. Slaves had to get into the tubs and trample the cloth in the mixture! Urine was also used as a bleach, to whiten and brighten cloth. Wealthy and powerful Romans wore bright white togas made from one piece of material draped over a tunic and held in place with ornate pins and brooches. Ordinary people wore simple tunics.



CLASSIS BRITANNICA STAMPED BRICKS AND TILES HAVE BEEN FOUND AT BEAUPORT AND CRANBROOK.



[www.highweald.org/learn/local-products/how-products-are-made/612-wood-to-charcoal.html](http://www.highweald.org/learn/local-products/how-products-are-made/612-wood-to-charcoal.html)

[www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/IronWorking.php](http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/IronWorking.php)

[www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/archaeology.php](http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/archaeology.php)

## High Weald

## EVENTS

## World

AD43

43 Romans invaded. Britain became part of the Roman Empire

60 Revolt by the British queen, Boudicca. London, Colchester and St Albans destroyed

100

100 Iron working sites like that at Beauport Park entered a boom period.

80 Fishbourne Roman Palace was built

122 Emperor Hadrian built a wall on the Scottish border

200

250 Iron working sites like that at Beauport Park fell into decline, possibly because of over-exploitation or deforestation

300

Saxon Shore Fort at Pevensey built

324 Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity

410

Romans withdrew from Britain



# PIGS AND DRAGONS

**M**any of the roads, lanes, footpaths and tracks we use today in the High Weald were created over a thousand years ago.

These routeways were established by people bringing herds of pigs from the downs to the woodlands. This activity would take place in the late summer and autumn. People and pigs would return year after year to the same places, following the same routes.

The tracks, known as droves, were trodden by so many feet and trotters over such a long period of time that they became permanent. They run north and south because the animals were being driven from the North Downs and the South Downs into the High Weald, which lies between both.

Pigs were brought to the woods to feed on acorns. This grazing of woodland is called pannage.

Same old place year after year.

Can't complain, at least the grub's good here.

**Den** is an old English word meaning woodland pasture. There are old fields, woodlands and isolated farms with **den** in their names in the High Weald. Some of our villages also have names which contain the word, and give a clue to their past. Can you think of any?

The swineherds would knock the acorns off the oak trees with sticks. Where woodlands were managed, some oaks were cut and kept low especially for pannage. Acorns grew earlier on these and were easier to reach.

The pigs would make pigs of themselves on the acorns, (and on other woodland fruits, insects and worms) so would get very fat, which was the idea. They would provide good meat for the swineherd and his family during the winter months.

After the pigs had been slaughtered the meat was salted. This was a way of preserving it so that it didn't go off and could be eaten over a long period.

People probably moved animals around in this way in even earlier times, but in the Saxon period woodland pasture was especially valued as pig rearing was a way of life for many people.

Swineherds would set up temporary shelters and live in the woodland for about two months. Eventually, after the Norman Conquest, these temporary dwelling-places would become the site of permanent settlements.

Don't make a pig of yourself if you want to come back next year.

## WHERE IN THE WEALD?

Drove routes

St Leonard's Forest

Many of the High Weald's lanes, footpaths and bridleways are ancient routeways. As you travel around the area you will often be treading in the footsteps of drovers and their pigs.

Routeways you can explore at:

[www.highweald.org/explore/walking-and-cycling.html](http://www.highweald.org/explore/walking-and-cycling.html)

Exhibits at:

**East Grinstead Museum; Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Tenterden Museum**

More online at:

[www.highweald.org/Edmund](http://www.highweald.org/Edmund) – video of a drover telling his story  
[www.highweald.org/learn/about-the-high-weald/the-routeways-story.html](http://www.highweald.org/learn/about-the-high-weald/the-routeways-story.html)

NOTICE

## ST LEONARD'S FOREST

**NO** SNAKES (TOO SLIMY)

**NO** NIGHTINGALES (TOO NOISY)

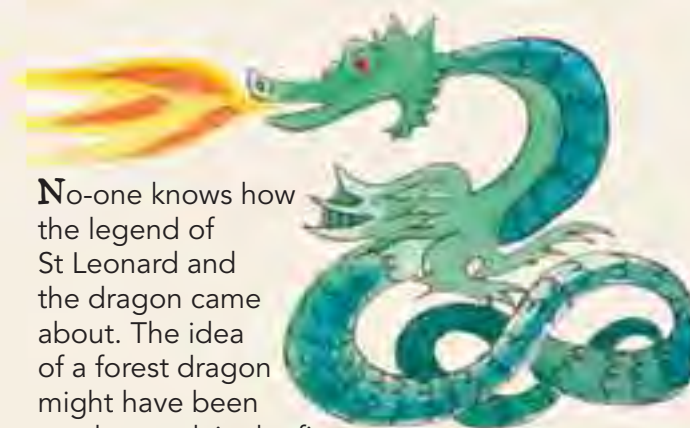
ABOVE ALL, **NO DRAGONS**  
(TOO DANGEROUS)

BY ORDER OF ST LEONARD HIMSELF.

## NEWSFLASH • NEWSFLASH • NEWSFLASH

Popular local saint, Leonard, is recovering in hospital tonight after what is thought to have been a ferocious attack by the last dragon in England.

The saint, known locally as Len, fought bravely to overcome the serpent-like monster, which subsequently died of its injuries. Unconfirmed reports say Lily of the Valley is already springing up from the spot where drops of Leonard's blood fell. We will bring you more on that story as it comes in. St Leonard's condition is said to be stable. He has requested that no nightingales disturb his prayers.



No-one knows how the legend of St Leonard and the dragon came about. The idea of a forest dragon might have been used to explain the fires and roaring sounds when ironworking was taking place. Or later still, the story could have been spread by smugglers who hid their contraband goods in the forest and wanted to scare people away. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle records serpent-like creatures here in the 8th century.

## High Weald

465 Battle between Saxons and British  
 471 Pevensey taken by the Saxons

## EVENTS

## World

600s Early dens developed in the High Weald – the Jutish Forest was captured by the West Saxons

765 Earliest droving evidence in the High Weald, from the Stanmer Estate

830 Alfred the Great built fort at Newenden

960 Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, founded Mayfield village

Saltworking became common in and around Rye

500 The legendary King Arthur was supposed to have fought against the Saxons at this time

570 Mohammed born

597 Augustine founded Christianity in England

787 First Viking attack on Britain

868 A Chinese printed roll, the earliest surviving work in print, dates from this time

1014 Canute became king



# WINE • WEATHER • WATER • WOOL

Medieval Times

Tuesday 28th February 1337

## Special feature – Wine in Winchelsea



Our wine expert **Ozymandias Cluck** visits the Winchelsea home of Geoffrey de Boudreau – one of England's leading wine importers – and samples some of the latest French wines from Gascony

Before I get carried away tasting the wine, I'd better tell you about Winchelsea – England's most important port for importing wine. Oh dear, I sound a bit tipsy already!

Winchelsea harbour sits below the town at the mouth of the river Brede, which flows into the English Channel.

Many importers and wine merchants live in the town, as can be seen by the number of stone cellars here – cool places to store the wine beneath their houses.

But things looked rather worrying for the wine trade during the second half of the last century, from around

1250, when freak weather conditions devastated the area.

The old town of Winchelsea was built close to the sea, on a bank of shingle. At this time there were many storms. Some of these happened at the same time as very high tides, creating huge waves. The wind, rain and rough sea together caused the shingle to move and change position along the shore, until eventually the old town was lost to the sea. The harbour also became blocked.

Luckily, help was at hand from King Edward I. He needed the harbour for his navy, so in the 1280s he had a new harbour AND a new town built for Winchelsea. The streets are broad and laid out in a grid, just like some of the newest towns in France. And most importantly, the new Winchelsea is on a hill out of the reach of the sea.

Winchelsea's new port is better than ever and many ships can land their goods at once instead of having to wait their turn in the harbour. In 1307, when records began, 737,000 gallons of wine (3,350,468 litres) had been landed in just eight months!

And now I am going to try a few of them. *Santé!* (That's CHEERS in French).

### The coast before the 1287 storm



Smallhythe and Reading (near Tenterden) on the river Rother were important centres for ship building in the Middle Ages. Henry V's warship, *The Jesus*, Henry VII's warship, *The Regent*, and later, Henry VIII's warship, *The Grand Masters*, were all built here.

In the Middle Ages, wool was one of England's most important products. English wool was of good quality, with tough, long hairs which made it easy to spin. It was in demand on the continent, where it would be woven into cloth.

The best cloth was made by expert weavers in Flanders (part of today's Belgium). Woollen cloth made in England wasn't so good as the weaving process was less advanced, so anyone who could afford to bought their cloth abroad.

To keep money in this country Edward III made it illegal to wear clothes made from foreign cloth. He banned the export of wool and encouraged Flemish weavers to come to work in England so the best woollen cloth could be made here.

Some of the Flemish weavers settled in the High Weald, particularly in Cranbrook and Tenterden. This area became an important and wealthy centre for cloth production. The natural features of the High Weald made it an ideal place for the industry, with woodland supplying timber to build mills and weaving looms, and streams to power the mills. Fuller's earth, a type of clay used in the cloth-making process, was found here. And of course, the High Weald had plenty of sheep!

### Medieval Hoodies

Woollen hoods were fashionable at this time. A type of hood especially popular with young people was called the liripipe. This could be more than 180cm long! Do you think they were easy to wear?



The nursery rhyme "Ba-Ba Black Sheep" is thought to be about a tax on wool in the Middle Ages.

**One for the master** who was the king, **one for the dame** who was meant to be the church.

Who do you think the **little boy** was?



In the Middle Ages, wool would have been coloured using natural dyes made from leaves, flowers, berries, bark and roots of plants.

## Make your own natural dyes

**Please ask an adult to help – you need to use very hot water!**

### What you need

You can find dyestuff in the kitchen – try a handful of vegetable peelings, onion skins, carrot leaves; a tablespoon of coffee or one or two teabags. If you have a garden, experiment with leaves, flowers or grass (marigolds are good). Faded flowers work better than fresh ones.

Small pieces of fabric. Natural fibres like wool or cotton work best.

**What you do:** Damp your fabric first.

Put dyestuff into a saucepan and cover with water. Simmer for 10 minutes, turn off heat and leave to cool. Strain the cool liquid into a larger saucepan. Add your damp fabric and just enough extra water for the fabric to move around (not too full). Bring to a low simmer again. Stir from time to time very carefully to make sure the fabric is evenly dyed. Leave the fabric dyeing for up to 15 minutes. Turn off the heat and let the dye cool before straining off. Squeeze the fabric scraps and hang them up to dry where they won't drip colour on anything else.

## Rivers and ships

In the 14th century, High Weald firewood would be loaded at a dock at Float Farm, Udimore. It was then carried down the river Brede to the harbour at Winchelsea, then shipped to London or the continent.

### High Weald

1086 The Domesday Book recorded 150,000 pigs being driven into the woods of the High and Low Weald

### EVENTS

### World

1066

1066 Norman invasion

1100

1086 Domesday Book

1200

1170 Thomas Becket murdered

1234 Timber from Ashdown used to build Chichester Cathedral

1225 English take control of Gascony

1300

1287 Great storm diverted course of River Rother

1286 Spectacles invented in Italy

1360 Winchelsea raided by French

1348 Black Death, 30-40% of population of England died

1385 Castle built at Bodiam

1381 Peasants Revolt against poll tax

1400

1414 New wall built at Winchelsea

1415 Battle of Agincourt

1450 Kentish rebellion against taxes. Leader Jack Cade killed at Heathfield

1455 Wars of the Roses

1485

1485 Henry Tudor defeated Richard III at Bosworth



## DOWN ON THE BUNNY FARM



No rabbits were harmed in the making of this picture.

Rabbits were introduced into England by the Normans in the 12th century. They were an excellent source of both meat for food and fur for clothing, so people decided to breed them and started rabbit farms.

At that time rabbits were delicate creatures and not used to the English weather. The rabbit farmers had to dig large warrens for the rabbits to live in, to protect them from the cold and wet. This was easier to do in the sandy soil of heathland in areas like Ashdown Forest.



James Cope

## WHERE IN THE WEALD?



You can explore remnants of the High Weald's great Medieval Forests at:

[www.highweald.org/stleonardsforest](http://www.highweald.org/stleonardsforest)

[www.highweald.org/broadwater](http://www.highweald.org/broadwater)

[www.highweald.org/ashdownforest](http://www.highweald.org/ashdownforest)

[www.highweald.org/bedgeburyforest](http://www.highweald.org/bedgeburyforest)

Exploring around Winchelsea:

[www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/conservation/ryebay/download.htm](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/conservation/ryebay/download.htm)

View medieval buildings at:

**Weald and Downland Open Air Museum**

Exhibits at:

**Battle Museum; Cranbrook Museum; Eden Valley Museum; Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Horsham Museum; Rye Castle Museum; Tenterden Museum; Winchelsea Museum**

More online at:

[www.highweald.org/Hugh](http://www.highweald.org/Hugh) – a commoner of Ashdown Forest telling his story

[www.highweald.org/Edith](http://www.highweald.org/Edith) – a medieval farmer telling her story

[www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/monuments.php](http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/monuments.php)

The farmers made fences around the warrens to keep foxes and other predators away and to keep the rabbits in. You can see lots of these warrens, known as pillow mounds, marked on modern maps.



## Deer parks – the latest must-have!

- Impress your friends, annoy your enemies, be the envy of everyone!
- Now you too can have your own hunting ground by royal licence.

**New catalogue out NOW**

We are expert deer park fitters, established in 1250. We can get your park up and running in no time. Or we can supply the kit for you to fit your own. Comes complete with spades for digging the ditch and mounding up the earthworks. But it needn't cost the earth! Our customised circular layout gives you maximum space for minimum outlay. Keeps fencing costs down.



Deer not included. Payment on easy terms. Insure your fencing against rabbits. Your home will be at risk if you do not keep up the payments.

How the High Weald iron industry became even more important in Tudor times.



Iron had been produced in the High Weald for centuries, but from the first use of the blast furnace in Coleman's Hatch in 1496 the industry expanded rapidly.

The blast furnace had been used in French ironworks for many years and now began to be used in England. This provided a way of smelting iron at very high temperatures. It meant the iron became liquid and could be poured into moulds, or cast, rather than beaten into shape.

By the 1540s Henry VIII had closed England's monasteries and abbeys. Rich people were able to buy up the lands. In the High Weald, some of these new landowners set up ironworks and were wealthy enough to employ expert French workers to run them.

As the iron could now be cast, it was easier to make certain things. The first cannon was cast in Buxted in 1543 by a French ironmaster. Cannon balls could be made from iron instead of stone.

At this time the town of Calais, although in France, belonged to England. Weapons for the English royal armoury were made there. The French wanted Calais to belong to France, so Henry VIII declared war on them. High Weald foundries were kept busy supplying cannon and shot.

French High Weald iron workers had to swear allegiance to the King and pay a fee, or they would be made to leave the country. By this time these men and their families were quite settled here, so they would not want to lose their jobs and be sent away.

England lost the fight for Calais in 1558, but the iron industry in the High Weald was even busier. Weapons could no longer be made in Calais, and now there were wars to be fought against Spain. The High Weald iron industry was more important than ever.

## Fire AND Water

Blast furnaces were powered by a continuous flow of water from fast-flowing gill streams.

Forges needed large supplies of water, but not all the time. Hammerponds were created to store water for when it was needed. Ironworks were sited in valleys where water was easily available.

## Ironmasters – the new (old) footballers!

The success of the iron industry led to new wealth for the ironmasters (or to even greater wealth for the ones who were rich already). To show off their wealth and status, some ironmasters built large and rather grand manor houses. These were generally built of stone or, later, of brick.





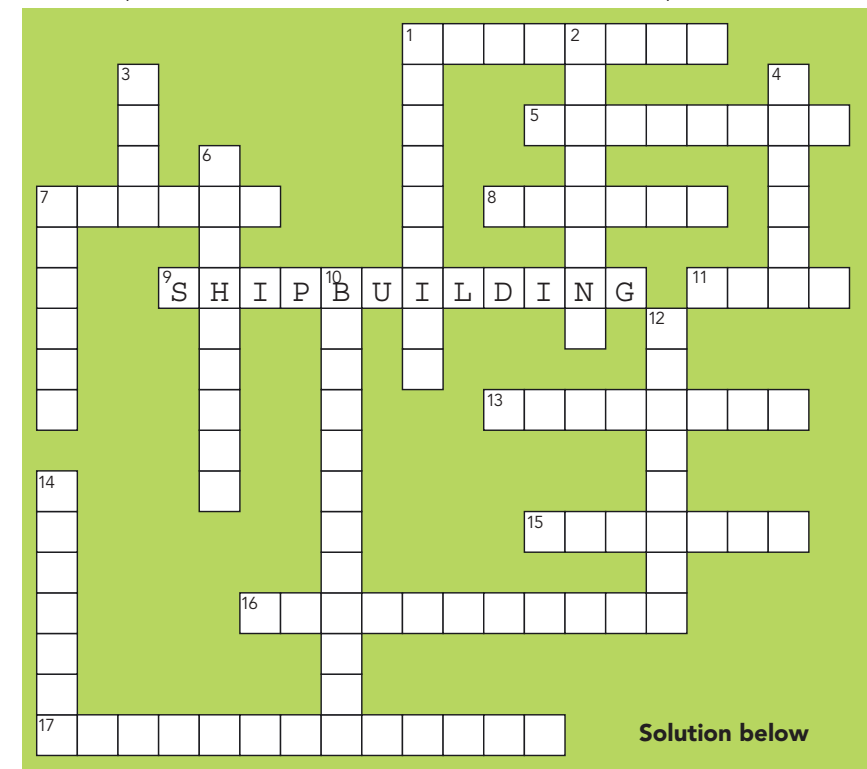
# Woodland Worries in the Weald – The Great Debate

The expansion of the iron industry meant a large amount of High Weald woodland was being used to fire the furnaces. But there were other demands on the woodland too ...



## Iron and Wood Crossword

Read this page, "It's a Blast" and the Roman iron story to help find the answers.



Solution below

### Across

- 1. Slow-burning fuel made from wood.
- 5. Flowery-sounding place where Romans made iron.
- 7. French town where weapons were made for England.
- 8. Wooden houses were - - - - - framed.
- 9. Thick boughs and trunks were needed for this.
- 11. People gathered this for heating and cooking.
- 13. The word for heating iron.
- 15. Woodland was - - - - - to make space for agriculture.
- 16. Religious houses closed by Henry VIII.
- 17. Tree introduced by the Romans.

### Down

- 1. Cutting trees close to ground level so they produce several thin trunks is called - - - - -.
- 2. - - - - - Hatch, where the first blast furnace was used.
- 3. A fast-flowing stream in the High Weald.
- 4. Where expert iron workers came from.
- 6. Area where all of these stories happened.
- 7. First cast in Buxted.
- 10. Continental invention that changed the iron industry.
- 12. Ironmaster's house with six brick chimneys.
- 14. Workers who made wool into cloth.

## ON THE THRONE

From our royal correspondent

The word in the woods is that High Weald timber could be used to create the highest seat in the land, by Royal Command!

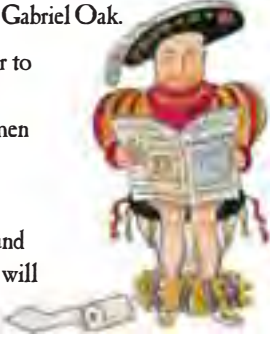
His Royal Highness King Henry VIII has ordered a 'close stool' for his exclusive use. It is to be made by William Grene, coffer-maker, and, being a water closet, will be the first of its kind in the world.

The seat, back and elbows will be made of stout wood (which it is hoped will be sourced from High Weald woodlands). It will be padded with 3lbs (1.36kg) of down covered in black velvet and will be decorated with silk fringes and ribbons, all tacked down with gilt nails. It is believed the final cost will be around £6.41.\*

"We are all hoping that the King will bestow this honour on the High Weald," said woodland manager Gabriel Oak.

"As major suppliers of the finest timber to His Majesty's Navy Royal, we feel it would be a fitting tribute. The woodsmen are giving it their best shot and their efforts are not to be pooh-poohed."

\* The court astrologer says that in around 465 years time, this amount of money will be worth £1,285.00



## WHERE IN THE WEALD?



The High Weald has many 'ancient' woodlands because the timber they produce has been valued by people for centuries. There were over 80 ironworks sites across the area; their remnants hidden in the woodlands. Find out about places where you can explore woods at: [www.visitwoods.org.uk](http://www.visitwoods.org.uk)

Exhibits at:  
**Anne of Cleves House, Lewes; Battle Museum; East Grinstead Museum; Eden Valley Museum; Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Priest House, West Hoathly; Rye Castle Museum, Tenterden Museum; Tunbridge Wells Museum; Weald and Downland Open Air Museum**  
More online at:  
[www.highweald.org/Jane](http://www.highweald.org/Jane) – video of an ironmaster's wife  
[www.highweald.org/Jacob](http://www.highweald.org/Jacob) – video of a woodland worker  
[www.highweald.org/learn/about-the-high-weald/](http://www.highweald.org/learn/about-the-high-weald/)  
[www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/IronWorking.php](http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/IronWorking.php)  
[www.wealdeniron.org.uk](http://www.wealdeniron.org.uk)  
[www.hammerpond.org.uk](http://www.hammerpond.org.uk)

**High Weald** 1496 First blast furnace used at Coleman's Hatch Anne Boleyn spent childhood at Hever Castle

1543 First cast iron cannon made in Buxted

1573 Elizabeth I visited Rye

1634 Iron master, John Brittan built Batemans

1710 First turnpike road in Kent, Tunbridge Wells to Sevenoaks

**EVENTS** 1485 1500

World

1485 Henry VII became first Tudor king

1509 Henry VIII became king

1538 Henry VIII abolished monasteries

1558 Elizabeth I became queen

1564 Shakespeare born

16001603

1603 Elizabeth I died, last Tudor monarch. James I became first Stuart king

1642 English Civil War

1650

1649 Charles I beheaded 1660 Monarchy restored

1665 The Plague 1666 Fire of London

1700

1714

1685 Composers Bach and Handel born



# Hopping Down to the High Weald

From the late 17th century road networks improved. Stagecoaches ran between London and the south coast passing through the High Weald...

## People from London came to the High Weald for pleasure...

Tunbridge Wells was a very fashionable place to visit. Daniel Defoe, who wrote *Robinson Crusoe*, said it was a place where "rich clothes, jewels and beauty" dazzled the eye and that "without money a man is no-body at Tunbridge Wells".

Although the road network had improved, the road surfaces of High Weald clay were as bad as ever. They were sometimes too muddy for a vehicle to use, and were generally full of ruts and holes. There were often accidents. Visitors to Tunbridge Wells took their personal bonesetters with them just in case! These were specially trained people who could put dislocated bones back in place.



## People from London came to the High Weald to live...

Rich people from London moved to the High Weald and bought land and built large country mansions. Others bought old manor houses and modernised them to their own tastes. Some new landowners started farms.

## Iron Brew

– it's what the TOP BRASS is drinking!

Members of the aristocracy have been *beating a path* to our *CHALYBEATE SPRINGS* since their chance discovery by Lord North in 1606. Here's what those top-notch tourists are saying:

"Forget the expense and inconvenience of travelling to the Belgian spa, or to Bath. This is just 35 miles from London."

"I just know it must be doing me *GOOD* because it tastes so *AWFUL*!"

"Great place to relax, catch up with friends and get healthy at the same time!"

"My doctor recommended spa water for my palsy, and now I feel a million ducats!"

Just some of the many *CAST IRON* reasons to visit **Tunbridge Wells**.

Dear Susannah,

I love our new home in Newenden but I miss all my old friends, especially you.

Daddy is growing hops on our farm as he says the brewing industry is on the rise. Here, close to the river Rother, we have the right type of soil for hops to grow well. The fields they grow in are called hop gardens. That sounds lovely doesn't it? The gardens are full of rows of poles made from sweet chestnut. Daddy says this makes the best poles, good and straight and it doesn't rot.

Farmers need a lot of people to help with the growing and picking of hops. Whole families from nearby work on the hop farms and in the picking season people come from London too. We had very special helpers this year. A travelling circus was passing through and the circus folk helped us to wrap the hop vines around the poles. The clowns are all stilt walkers so they could reach to the very top, but kept pretending to fall off! They have given lessons to some of Daddy's workers so now we'll have our own stilt-walkers (unless they run away and join the circus!)

Love Anabelle XXX

## Round or square, which is best?

In the early days of growing, hops were dried in converted barns. Later, specially designed oast houses were built.

The first oast houses had square towers. But then people started to think that round oast houses were better as the heat could rise more evenly, so circular buildings with conical roofs were built. The white "cow" on top would turn as the wind changed and open and close to let the air in.

Later still, it was decided that square oasts were best after all, and were also easier and cheaper to build! You can see both types around the High Weald.

Oast houses were built using brick, tile or weatherboard, all local materials.

## Hop-picker's cake

This old Kentish recipe tells you to bake the cake for one and a half hours. Ovens cook more quickly now, so your cake might be ready in an hour or so.

275g self-raising flour  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
1 teaspoon mixed spice  
175g margarine cut into pieces  
100g soft brown sugar  
100g sultanas  
100g currants  
50g mixed peel  
425ml milk  
1 tablespoon black treacle  
1 level teaspoon cream of tartar  
½ level teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

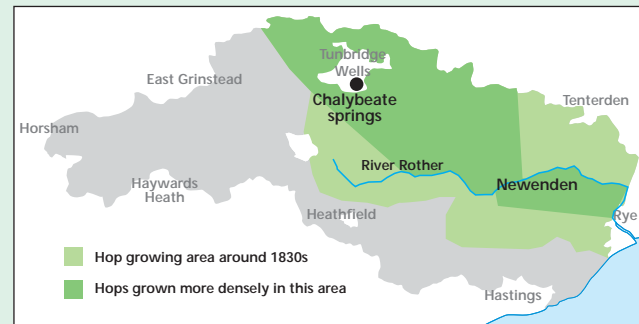
2lb (900gm) tin greased and lined with baking paper

Please be sure to ask an adult to help with warming the milk and using the oven.

Wash your hands. Set the oven at 160°C gas mark 3 with the shelf in the centre.

Sift the flour, ginger and mixed spice into a bowl. Lightly rub the margarine into the flour using your fingertips. Add the sugar and fruit. Dip a tablespoon into very hot water and spoon your treacle into a saucepan with the milk. Have another spoon handy to help get the treacle off. Warm the milk gently, stirring in the cream of tartar and bicarbonate of soda. Pour into the dry mixture and stir with a wooden spoon. Pour into tin and bake for 1 to 1½ hours. When it is ready, it will feel firm on top.

## WHERE IN THE WEALD?



Visit the **Weald and Downland Open Air Museum** [www.wealddown.co.uk](http://www.wealddown.co.uk) to find out more about historic rural life.

Exhibits at:

**Bexhill Museum; Cranbrook Museum; East Grinstead Museum; Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Horsham Museum; Rye Castle Museum; Tenterden Museum; Tunbridge Wells Museum; Yesterday's World, Battle**

More online at:

[www.highweald.org/Ruby](http://www.highweald.org/Ruby) – video of a hop picker  
[www.highweald.org/learn/local-products/how-products-are-made/611-from-hops-to-beer.html](http://www.highweald.org/learn/local-products/how-products-are-made/611-from-hops-to-beer.html)  
[www.hoppingdowninkent.org.uk](http://www.hoppingdowninkent.org.uk)  
[www.kentlife.org.uk](http://www.kentlife.org.uk)

## High Weald

1724/25 Daniel Defoe travelled through the High Weald

1756-63 Iron industry supplied equipment for the Seven Years War

1787 New Rye Harbour built but abandoned soon after

1805-1809 Royal Military Canal and Martello Towers built to defend the coast

1822 World's first dinosaur remains found at Cuckfield

1828 JMW Turner painted in the area  
1830 Riots against poverty of farm workers

## EVENTS

1714

World

1714 Queen Anne, the last Stuart, died. George I became king

1721 Sir Robert Walpole became first prime minister

1750

1756 Mozart born

1768 Captain Cook sailed on his first voyage of discovery

1789 French Revolution

1799 Napoleonic Wars

1800

1812 Charles Dickens born

1835 Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales published

1837





# Improvement and Inspiration

## Victorian good ideas?

What seemed like improvements to the Victorians have sometimes become problems for us today. Plants such as *Rhododendron ponticum*, Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam have escaped from gardens into the wild. They are able to spread rapidly and smother native vegetation and wildlife.

THE LAURELS, CROWBOROUGH, SUSSEX  
4th May 1885

Dear Henrietta,  
We are all nicely settled in our new villa in the High Weald. We have had the house completely redecorated, so now for the garden!

Nature is all well and good, but it is rather untidy, don't you think? Nothing grows in the right place. I'm sure we can improve on it. I think we could do woodland. I've heard rhododendrons are all the rage, especially the type called ponticum. I think if I plant those, I can't go wrong. The flowers will look splendid in my new Japanese vases in the drawing room.

Apparently there are other new plants too, like Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed. They are supposed to rival the exotic plants they have at Kew, but don't need to be grown in a hothouse. You get a lot of plants from a packet of seeds and they spread, so they'll make a good display.

Now you can get the train from London it will be easy for you to visit us often. We can go on walking tours all over the High Weald. The rocks and gills here are rather like the highland glens so beloved of our dear queen and her prince consort. The heathy commons with their clumps of pine remind one of Scotland too. And of course, the pine-scented air is so healthy and will cure your consumption. Look forward to seeing you soon.

Your loving sister,  
Agatha

Victorians and Edwardians enjoyed the English countryside and nature, but new things were happening. Plant explorers were bringing back exciting new specimens from other continents. Landscape artists were painting romantic far off lands. Gardeners were inspired by this new mood. Many gardens in the High Weald today were begun in Victorian or Edwardian times and reflect these ideas. Some of these can be visited.

Leonardslee was planted with shrubs like camellias, rhododendrons and magnolias and set out in the style of a landscape painting. The Victorian owner imagined it to be like the Himalayas. High Beeches was planted with new specimens from around the world. Marle Place

has a scented garden in the Italian style, a Victorian kitchen garden and restored Victorian glasshouse.

Great Dixter, a garden created in Edwardian times



Great Dixter Archive

William Morris was a Victorian artist, designer and thinker. He believed that people should live simply, and work at making the things they needed for their own every day lives. In this way their work would be enjoyable and fulfilling and their lives more meaningful.

He was inspired by medieval craftsmanship – he admired how buildings, furniture and decorative items like tapestries were made in the Middle Ages. He was also inspired by nature. You can imagine him wandering around the High Weald appreciating its timber-framed houses and stone churches, or getting ideas from the variety of wildlife and the colours and textures of the area's natural features.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a Victorian group of artists, were friends with William Morris. Some of their members spent time in the High Weald making paintings. They wanted to show the beauty of nature in great detail and used intense, glowing colour. One of the group, William Holman Hunt, made a painting of sheep on a cliff in Hastings Country Park. It is called "Our English Coasts" and now hangs in Tate Britain, London.

Another group of High Weald artists was the Cranbrook Colony. They painted scenes of rural everyday life, but made things look rosier and more romantic than they really were. Their paintings were popular with wealthy factory owners in the Midlands.

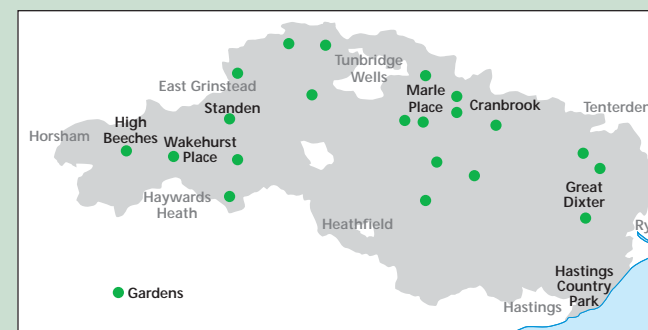
His wallpaper and textile designs usually featured birds, plants and animals painted in a medieval style. These are still popular, almost 180 years after his birth. He designed the furniture, carpets, fabrics and wallpaper for Standen, a Victorian house and garden in the High Weald that you can visit today.

## Broadening the mind

The new railway system made travel easier for the Victorians. The beauty of the High Weald attracted all types of visitor and many writers and artists found inspiration here.



## WHERE IN THE WEALD?



You can visit many grand gardens begun by Victorians. Find out where at: [www.highweald.org/explore/attractions](http://www.highweald.org/explore/attractions)  
Cycle, walk or ride along disused railway lines built by the Victorians at: [www.eastsussex.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/countryside/walks/cuckootrail/default.htm](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/countryside/walks/cuckootrail/default.htm)  
[www.eastsussex.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/countryside/walks/forestway/default.htm](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/countryside/walks/forestway/default.htm)  
Exhibits at: Cranbrook Museum; Eden Valley Museum; Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Tenterden Museum; Tunbridge Wells Museum; Rye Castle Museum; Yesterday's World, Battle  
More online at: [www.highweald.org/Edward](http://www.highweald.org/Edward) – video of a Victorian garden owner  
[www.wolverhamptonart.org.uk/collections/browse\\_collections/art/cranbrook](http://www.wolverhamptonart.org.uk/collections/browse_collections/art/cranbrook)

## High Weald

## EVENTS

## World

1837 Queen Victoria came to the throne	1840 1841 Balcombe Viaduct built over the River Ouse on the London-Brighton Railway Line using 11 million bricks	1850 1850 First garden gnome brought to England	1851 1851 Sussex trugs became popular after being shown at the Great Exhibition 1851 Great Exhibition Crystal Palace, Hyde Park	1860 1859 On the Origin of Species by Charles Darwin published	1866 1866 Railway line opened between East Grinstead and Tunbridge Wells 1866 Dr Barnardo opened home for orphans in London	1870 1870s William Robinson of Gravetye introduced idea of wild gardening 1876 telephone invented by Alexander Bell	1880 1878 Hop production reached a peak in the area	1885 1885 Board of Conservators set up to manage Ashdown Forest	1890 Bicycles became popular for everyday transport	1900 1910 1901 Queen Victoria died, Edward VII became king 1902 Batemans bought by Rudyard Kipling
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# THE WARTIME DIARY OF MARTIN PARKER, EVACUEE



Mr T gave me some cards of the wildlife of Ashdown Forest.

## Monday 3rd June 1940

I've been living in Nutley nearly six months now, getting used to things around here. School's all right, not as big as St Mary's, our old school in Lewisham. Well I s'pose anywhere would be a squash: there's us lot from St Mary's as well as some older kids from a school in Southwark. AND all the local children. They're not half bad. Things looked a bit dodgy at first, a few fights between the boys, and some of the girls acted a bit soppy, but now most of us get on.

When we first arrived everyone got taken to this posh woman's house. Well, it wasn't actually her house (I bet they thought we'd scuff the floor with our boots or pinch the silver or something) it was a socking great barn. Blimey it was about the size of St Paul's cathedral! So there was us lot from both schools, AND our teachers, all being sized up by the ladies from the village. Thought they were going to be snooty, but they were quite kind really. Bit bossy though. We all had to have baths.

Me and my sister Eileen got taken to Mr and Mrs Thompson's house. We were lucky, they don't mind what we do (as long as it's safe) and the grub's good. Could do with a bit more, but who couldn't? They are quite old (Mrs T is 40 and Mr T 42). Mr T is in a reserved occupation, so he doesn't have to go and fight in the war. He does important work on a farm near here, growing food for the country.

## Friday 7 June 1940

Mrs T is joining a cookery school to learn how to make the most of what food we've got. Meat, butter, bacon and sugar are rationed already, but everyone says lots more food is going to be in short supply soon. Mrs T goes to lectures about wartime stuff and is in the WI. They've got a jam centre at Forest Row. Everybody round here has to grow loads of fruit and the jam ladies are going to make jam for everyone. They are even making it from carrots, not sure how that will taste. Me and my mates are planning to go fruit picking in the hedgerows in September too. Yummy, can't wait!



## Saturday 8 June 1940

My pal Jimmy (one of the Nutley mob) came round with Billy and John from St Mary's (known them since we were nippers). Went for a kickabout in the forest, but on the way met a bunch of kids we know so ended up playing battles till it was almost dark. You have to get indoors before the black-out or you'll most likely get run over or fall down a hole or something. We're not allowed to show a light because enemy planes will see it and bomb us.

## Mon 10 June 1940

After school we all met up on the battlefield of Ashdown Forest for another glorious victory. Jimmy and I were moving along behind gorse bushes trying to get close enough to take a pot shot at Cliff (one of the enemy) with Jim's catapult. Cliff was skulking about in a clump of pine trees thinking he was camouflaged, but his red jumper (knitted by his gran) made him an easy target. Just as we started to run for the next base, Jim let out a yell. I turned round to tell him to shut his cakehole, but he'd vanished! Then I saw him down a sort of gulley in a pile of old dead leaves. Before I could call him a twit and help him up, the ground started to move. Mounds of leaves and twigs seemed to rise up

before my eyes, then muddied faces appeared beneath them. I thought Hitler had sent his paratroopers for us! Then I heard a familiar voice: "Might have known YOU'D get in on the act Martin Parker".

Peering out from between bits of moss and bracken I recognized the face of Mr Thompson who was dressed up like a bush. The other blokes with him (all disguised as bushes) had a good laugh. One of them was Jimmy's Uncle Bert, another was our next door neighbour. Turns out they've all joined the Local Defence Volunteers and were on "manoeuvres".



Mr T explained that the forest is a good place to practise special exercises in case Hitler really does turn up. Jim had fallen into a slit trench, which is a narrow pit dug in the ground where a soldier can hide to protect himself and fire at the enemy. There are the remains of bigger trenches in the forest too. They were dug by soldiers in the First World War to practise for when they would have to fight in France and Belgium.

Near here there's a real army camp with lots of Canadian soldiers. But Mr T's lot are really important as well, because they have to keep watch all the time, especially during the night. They look out for aliens hiding in places like sheds or barns or hedgerows, and report anything unusual. He told us they have to have pretend battles and learn

strategies to outmanoeuvre invading troops. They are going to have a practice next Saturday where they will ambush another platoon who will pretend to be Nazis.



A pillbox

## Friday 14 June 1940

Mr T is going to take us to see some dragon's teeth. They are concrete things that have just been put up near here to stop enemy tanks in their tracks. Mr T knows the places where they are building pillboxes, overlooking river valleys and on the coast. They are half-buried, concrete or brick rooms with slits for a soldier to look out of for anything suspicious.

Funny, I used to think the countryside would be boring, but it's jolly interesting really.

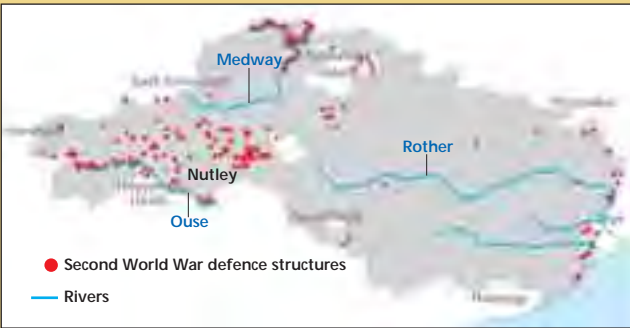
Me, Martin Parker



## OPERATION DANDELION

Me and Jimmy and the gang are helping the war effort. We're always on the look-out for anything suspicious and we've got a jolly good way of sending secret messages to one another. You get a dandelion and use the gooey juice to make marks on paper. Then you make it into a paper aeroplane and fly it to another gang member. The marks are a secret code. A triangle means "Meet me at three o'clock", a square is "See you after dinner"... Well I won't tell you everything or it won't be a secret. But the best bit is that it just looks like plain paper, because the dandelion juice is invisible until it dries. Why don't you try it?

## WHERE IN THE WEALD?



The area's rivers, the Medway, Ouse and Rother, formed natural defence lines; its open heaths were valued training grounds. Explore heaths at:

[www.highweald.org/leechpoolandowlbeechwoods](http://www.highweald.org/leechpoolandowlbeechwoods)  
[www.highweald.org/buchancountrypark](http://www.highweald.org/buchancountrypark)  
[www.highweald.org/broadwaterwarren](http://www.highweald.org/broadwaterwarren)  
[www.highweald.org/ashdownforest](http://www.highweald.org/ashdownforest)  
[www.highweald.org/hastingscountypark](http://www.highweald.org/hastingscountypark)  
[www.highweald.org/cinderhillwood](http://www.highweald.org/cinderhillwood)

Exhibits at:

Battle Museum; East Grinstead Museum; Eden Valley Museum; Hastings Old Town Hall Museum; Yesterday's World, Battle

More online at:

[www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/monuments.php](http://www.ashdownforest.org/enjoy/history/monuments.php)  
[www.ashdownforest.org/wild/birds-n-beasts.php](http://www.ashdownforest.org/wild/birds-n-beasts.php)

## High Weald

## EVENTS

## World

1910 George V became king	1914 Start of First World War	1918 End of First World War	1922 Tomb of Tutankhamun discovered at Luxor	1928 Women over 21 allowed to vote in UK	1928 Mickey Mouse created by Walt Disney	1930 First football World Cup held in Uruguay	1932 Empire State Building, New York, opened	1939 Start of Second World War	1945 End of Second World War
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1907-1930 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of Sherlock Holmes, lived in Crowborough

1919 Forestry Commission established and large scale conifer planting began to appear across the area

1926 Winnie the Pooh published

By 1935 almost all hop farms around Bodiam were owned by the Guinness Brewery





**Tig** Look! Those are the rocks where we sheltered on Stone Age hunting expeditions. Still standing after all those thousands of years and still being used. But what are they doing with those ropes?

**Iron Man** That's one of the high places from where we would look out for invaders and hold our special celebrations.

**Agatha** We Victorians had rather elegant tea-parties on the top of some of those rocks. Such fun!

**Anna** Today people enjoy climbing, or just visiting rocks. The High Weald's sandstone outcrops are really special and they're covered with many mosses, lichens and ferns. Some of them are rare.



**Drover** In Saxon times I would take my pigs to feed in the woodlands along some of these deep sunken lanes and footpaths. Lots of them look almost the same today as they did back then – if I look hard enough I feel I might see my own footprints. Some of the bigger roads are rather scary though!

Today's farmers are doing what they can to conserve the landscape and manage their land for wildlife as well as for agriculture. Other people who work or live in the countryside, or use it for pleasure, can all help to conserve it too. The High Weald Joint Advisory Committee can give helpful advice on how to care for this unique and distinctive landscape.

**High Weald AONB Unit**  
Woodland Enterprise Centre  
Hastings Road, Flimwell  
East Sussex TN5 7PR  
01580 879500  
[www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)



**Edwin** All this was fields when I was a boy in the Middle Ages. And do you know, it still IS! I cut some of those very fields from the woodland myself, I recognise their shapes. It was really hard work chopping down all those trees!

**Grandad** I'm afraid that when I was farming in the mid 20th century we filled in ponds and cut down hedgerows and shaws to make more room to grow crops. We thought it was the way to go. We had all this new technology like combine harvesters to help us produce food more efficiently. We stopped using horses so we didn't make hay anymore. Scientists invented pesticides and fertilisers and everyone

believed that was a good thing because all our crops would grow perfectly.

**Martin P.** Mr T said that in the Second World War everyone had to produce as much food as they could. Marshy areas were drained so crops could be grown. No-one realised it would be at the expense of wildlife.

**Grandad** Now I know that woodlands, hayfields, grassy places and hedgerows are important habitats for wild plants, birds and animals. And most insects aren't harmful to crops, in fact some, like bumble bees, are actually beneficial.



**Ned** In my time – the 16th century – there was worry over the woodland, people thought it would all be used up for fuel and building. I've heard that the High Weald is the most wooded place in England and that more than half is ancient woodland. I am so glad you haven't lost it.

**Anna** It is a brilliant habitat for a variety of insects, plants, birds and animals, especially if it has deep, dark, damp places and open sunlit rides too.

**Sparkatus** The sight of those wooded gills takes me back to when I was making charcoal for the Roman ironworks. Brings me out in a sweat just to think of it! I've just had a look at Beauport Park where the bloomery was. It's covered with funny little houses on wheels. Must be some kind of glorified chariots I suppose.



**Anna** They're caravans where people stay to have a holiday and enjoy the countryside.

**Sparkatus** Well I'm glad they enjoy it. And I've noticed they use charcoal to cook with outdoors.

**Anna** Yes, they are called barbecues. Charcoal is still made in High Weald woodlands. And timber is still a local product.

**Oz** In the Middle Ages I drank wine imported from Gascony. Now I hear wine is produced in the High Weald. Must try some before I go back. Lucky your Grandad's driving!

It's like I said years ago: we have everything we need here in the High Weald. We must make sure we look after it, then it will look after US!



## High Weald

1946 Herstmonceux became the home of the Royal Observatory

1958 The new Gatwick Airport officially opened

1966 Beeching axed many local railway lines

1970s Major reservoirs at Bewl and Ardingly built

1983 High Weald recognised as nationally important landscape

1987 Great Storm – 50 million trees blown down in the South East

2000 Millennium Seedbank opened at Wakehurst Place

## EVENTS

### World

1945

1950

1960

1970

1980

1990

2000

2012

1948 Gandhi assassinated

1952 Elizabeth II became queen

1955 The first Disneyland in California

1961 Yuri Gagarin first man in space

1969 First humans on moon in Apollo 11

1973 Britain joined the European Community

1977 First video game console

1985 First CD Rom

1990 World wide web invented

1995 First DVD

2012 Olympic Games held in London



# Historical Happenings

## IN THE HIGH WEALD



MIDDLE AGES • TUDORS • STUARTS • GEORGIANS



VICTORIANS



EARLY 20TH CENTURY



LATE 20TH CENTURY

The cover of this book shows a changing view of the High Weald as it might have appeared through time.

In what ways do you think the landscape has changed over the last 10,000 years?

Historical content from a variety of sources, in particular from information collated by the Weald Forest Ridge Historic Environment Awareness Project and *The Kent and Sussex Weald* by Peter Brandon. Front and back cover illustrations by Alan Marshall. Written, designed and illustrated by Angel Design [www.angeldesign.org.uk](http://www.angeldesign.org.uk)

Every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in this publication is accurate. However, the publishers can accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions.



*Working together to care for one of England's finest landscapes*