

Brokes Wood Southborough Nr Tunbridge Wells Kent

Archaeological Assessment



Submitted by
Dr Nicola R. Bannister AlfA
Ashenden Farm
Bell Lane, Biddenden
Ashford, Kent
TN27 8LD
01580 292662
ashendenfarm@btinternet.com
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**BROKES WOOD, SOUTHBOROUGH,
NR TUNBRIDGE WELLS, KENT
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

**Brokes Wood, Southborough,
near Tunbridge Wells, Kent
[Centred TQ5894042300]**

Core Monument Record

ID/REF NO: Survey No
Site: Brokes Wood
Name: Southborough, Nr Tunbridge Wells, Kent
Grid Reference: TQ 5894042300
Status Heritage: None
Status other: Part PAWS, part Secondary woodland
County: Kent
District/s: Tunbridge Wells Borough
Parish/es: Southborough
Owner: Peter Marshall
EH Site Type: Woodland
Description: A mixed broad-leaved woodland of overstood ash and sweet chestnut coppice, secondary oak plantations, secondary regenerated woodland, with some relict Scots pine
Date: Medieval to Early C20
Surveyor/Recorder: Dr Nicola R. Bannister AIFA [Ashenden Farm, Bell Lane, Biddenden, Kent]
Event: Archaeological Assessment 2014
Ground Cover: Bluebells, Bracken, Brambles, Holly, mixed scrub
Geology: Cretaceous - Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation
Condition: The site with its heritage features is overall in good condition, though due to the wood's proximity to estate housing, there is a fly-tipping issue and the dumping of garden rubbish over back fences.

Front Illustration: The view south over the pond from the pond embankment

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Peter Marshall for the opportunity to undertake the archaeological assessment of Brokes Wood. Acknowledgement is also given to the High Weald AONB for assistance with the funding of the survey. Appreciation is also extended to Nigel Stapple, Brokes Wood (Site Manager) and Angus Foad for their assistance with the field work.

ABBREVIATIONS

A2A	Access to Archives
FC	Forestry Commission
HER	Historic Environment Record
KCC	Kent County Council
KHLC	Kent History and Library Centre
OSDs	Ordnance Surveyor's Draft Drawings
PAWS	Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites

PERIOD TABLE

Description	Archaeological Period	From	To
Hunting societies	Upper Palaeolithic	30,000	10,000 BC
Hunter-gather societies	Mesolithic	10,000-8,000	4,000-3,500 BC
The first agriculturalists	Neolithic	3,500	2,100 BC
Beginning of metal working in bronze	Bronze Age	2,100	600 BC
Beginning of metal working in iron	Iron Age	600 BC	AD 43
	Romano-British	AD 43	AD 410
	Anglo-Saxons [or Early Medieval]	AD 410	1066
	Medieval	1066	1540
	Post-medieval	1540	1800
	Modern	1800	Present

1. Introduction

This summary assessment has been compiled from the results of an Archaeological Assessment of Brokes Wood, Southborough in Kent, undertaken in January 2014. A total of 41 individual features were recorded, ranging from hollow ways, water management features, wood banks, to field banks and quarries.

The aim of an archaeological assessment is to provide a baseline record of the archaeological features preserved within woodland. This assessment will help in understanding how the woodland has been managed in the past and inform future forestry management policies for the woodland. Brokes Wood [28 ha approx] comprises areas of replanted ancient woodland [PAWS] and ancient woodland with formal tree planting and secondary regeneration on former fields.

Brokes Wood lies on the north side of Tunbridge Wells within Southborough and forms part of several areas of woodland in Tunbridge Wells, once part of the large medieval hunting forest of South Frith (alias Southfrith) within the Lowy of Tonbridge.

The eastern edge of Brokes Wood is bounded by Powdermill Lane to Old Forge Farm. The southern and western boundaries are formed by the large housing estates of Southborough, whilst to the north are the remains of small fields associated with Old Forge Farm, White House Farm and Ivy House Farm.

1.1. Designations and their implications

Brokes Wood lies within the High Weald AONB, the boundary of which follows the southern and western edge of the wood. The wood is partly designated as a replanted ancient wood site [PAWS]. Within the wood former small assart fields (as seen on the Ordnance Surveyor's Draft Drawings for the 1" 1st Edition) have either been planted to woodland or have been allowed to regenerate into woodland. There are no scheduled sites within the wood.

Brokes Wood is not within the Forestry Commission – Woodland Grant Scheme (England) nor is the site covered by Natural England Entry Level or Higher Level Stewardship. There are no public footpaths through the site. However the site is bounded to the north, west and south by public footpaths and to the east by Powdermill Lane.

1.2. Physical description

Brokes Wood is located in head of a valley orientated south to north, which is cut into a ridge of high ground formed of Tunbridge Wells Sandstone. This ridge extends south-east towards the town of Tunbridge Wells. Two main streams flow through the wood, fed by springs rising in the head of the valley together with surface run-off discharge into part of the catchment of the River Medway. In parts the valley sides to the gill streams are steep, with some natural terracing on the east facing slopes of the western stream. This stream was an

important source of water for powering the iron furnace and subsequently gunpowder mills and corn mills.

The underlying geology is Cretaceous Tunbridge Wells Sand. It is described in the Soil Survey of England and Wales (1983) as siltstone and sandstone. The soils derived (Curtisden 572i) are formed of silty soils over siltstone with slowly permeable sub soils. Some are well drained coarse loamy soils over sandstone, with local slumping.

There are several large quarries in Brokes wood, where the sandstone has been exploited, leaving some areas of exposed rock faces.

1.3. Other issues

The site is managed for coppice logs for selling as firewood. See www.brokeswood.org.uk as part of “a sustainable woodland management scheme”. A management plan has been prepared for the site by John Howard at Hadlow College, which provided compartment descriptions but no map. No map was forthcoming for this assessment, therefore unfortunately the features recorded could not be cross-reference with the compartments.

The site manager has in the past and continues to undertake small-scale archaeological excavations of features, within the wood and in adjacent land. The results have yet to be published. Professional guidance is given by an independent historical research group based in Sussex. However there is no overall archaeological project design prepared for the site, setting out the aims, objectives, methods and timetable for post-excavation processing and publication.

The overall aim for the owner for this site is to set up and provide an educational resource in Brokes Wood.

2. The objectives

The key to conserving the cultural and heritage assets within woodland is to minimize disturbance to the feature and its immediate environment. Thus the objectives of this English Heritage Level 1 Archaeological Assessment were to:-

- Identify the cultural and heritage assets features within the site;
- Assess their significance and condition;
- Assess the implications of any proposed woodland management on the preservation of the feature, both beneficial and detrimental effects;
- Consider the likelihood of physical disturbance or damage;
- Assess the potential risk to feature from retaining trees adjacent to feature;
- For each detrimental effect a detailed statement of mitigating actions or working practice to avoid or reduce damage, disturbance or impacts.

The field survey was undertaken in January 2014, on a dry but over-cast day. There had been significant rainfall in the weeks before, so the wood was very wet in places.

3. Summary history

From an initial trawl through A2A (Access to Archives) and the records at the Kent Library and History Centre at Maidstone, it has been surprisingly difficult to trace the post-medieval history of Brokes Wood. The early history of the wood is probably linked to that of the Manor of Southfrith and the estate of Somerhill. In the late post-medieval period, this large estate of over 5000 acres was broken up to pay for debts incurred by the Buckingham Family. Parcels of Southfrith and Somerhill land passed from the aristocracy to gentleman landowners, such as William Woodgate who purchased Somerhill. The following table is a possible summary history of the wood, but further more detailed archive research is needed, to expand and clarify the statements.

Table 1. Brokes Wood

Source **See references at the end of this report**

Date **Event**

Pre AD 760	Brokes Wood probably lay within the Wealden Common of Aylesford
Post AD 800	Brokes Wood probably lay within one of the dens of the Manor of Wrotham within the Lathe of Aylesford (Witney 1976)
1086	Probably lay within the manor of Wrotham
Post 1100	Brokes Wood lay within the area of South Frith Wood within the Lowy of Tonbridge created for the de Clares (formerly Fitz-Gilbert of Tonbridge) as part of the territory around Tonbridge Castle. A chase, hunting grounds and demesne lands of the manor of Tonbridge called South Frith. (Hasted 1797)
1314-15	Gilbert de Clare only son & heir of Gilbert Earl of Gloucester and Hertford died, without issue. Co-heirs were his three sisters. Elizabeth the youngest and wife of John de Burgh was possessed of the district of South Frith and the honour of Clare in Suffolk. Her son William became Earl of Ulster and on her death inherited the estate. William died, and his heir an only daughter Elizabeth who married Lionel the Duke of Clarence and 3 rd son of Ed III.
1356-7	Henry Malelot and John Parker, his receiver – South Frith (TNA C4/49/38)
1369-70	The Duke of Clarence dies possessed of this estate South Frith and leaving an only daughter Phillipa, who by the King's command married Edmund Mortimer, the 3 rd Earl of March.
1381-82	Edmund Mortimer dies possessed of this estate of South Frith . It passed to his grandson Edmund, Earl of March

- 1424-25 Edmund, Earl of March dies without issue; his nephew Richard Duke of York, only son of Richard, Earl of Cambridge by Anne Mortimer his eldest sister became heir to the estates and to the Chase of **South Frith**, which he did not gain possession until c. 1431. Richard Duke of York, descended from Edward III on both sides aspired to the Crown.
- 1458-59 Richard flees to Ireland, is attainted for treason and his estate forfeited to the Crown.
- 1463-64 Richard Duke of York dies having regained possession of his estates including South Frith, the chase and its appendages.
- 1476-77 **South Frith** part of the lands of Cicely, mother of the King (TNA SC6/1114/14)
- 1493-94 **South Frith** part of the possessions of Duck of York (TNA SC6 Subseries)
- 1518-19 Cecile, Duchess of York and mother of Edward IV dies possessed of **South Frith**, and it reverts to the Crown [TNA SC 6/1114/14], after which Henry VIII grants to George, Lord Cobham as manager and supervisor of his park of **South Frith**, but the See remained with the Crown until Edward VI [See A2A TNA C 4/49/38]
- 1550-51 Edward VI grants manor of **South Frith** to John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, together with the manor and castle of Tonbridge.
- 1554-5 Grant of the manor, park, chase or forest of **South Frith** [now called **Somerhill**], Kent, to the king and queen by Edward Nevill, esq [TNA E/E/E345 Records of the Pipe Office]
- 1553-4 John Dudley, now Duke of Northumberland re-conveys them back to the Crown.
- 1553 David Willard built the forge at **Old Forge Farm** [PRO C66/874 m.27]
- 1558 Reginald Pole Archbishop of Canterbury dies having formerly been granted Manor of **South Frith** by Queen Mary.
- 1563 Copyholders of **Southfrith** challenge David Willard for use of timber and for building one more iron mill than allowed for [PRO REWQ2/285/39]
- 1571-2 Elizabeth I grants, forest, chase, manor and park to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester for a term of years which on expiration then grants to Frances, widow of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex and only daughter of Sir Francis Walsingham. She had married Sir Philip Sydney and then Richard Burgh, Earl of Clanrickard.
- 1574 **Old Forge** one of two worked by David Willard and Sir Thomas Fane was the owner.
- 1623-1679 **Old Forge** worked with Vauxhall Furnace [KHLC U38/T1/1-15]
- 1624-25 Richard Burgh became Baron Somervill after his estate (which he had renamed when he built the large mansion in the northern part of it - **Somerhill**) and Viscount Tonbridge
- 1636 Richard Burgh dies and his heir is Ulick who fought for Charles I in Ireland
- c.1640 Southborough as a small hamlet begins to develop
-

- 1645 Charles I creates Ulick as Marquis of Clanrickard. Attainted and his estates were sequestrated by Parliament and passed to Robert, Earl of Essex.
- 1646 Robert, earl of Essex dies under suspicious circumstances and estates pass back to Parliament
- 1659 John Bradshaw (President of the High Court of Justice) dies possessed of the estate having been formerly granted it by Parliament. It passed to his natural son. On the restoration of Charles II it was returned to its lawful owner, Margaret daughter of Ulick, Marquis of Clanrickard (who had also died in 1659). Margaret married for the second time John Villiers, Viscount Purbeck, who claimed the title 'Earl of Buckingham'.
- 1698 Margaret married for the 3rd time Mr Beau Fielding and wasted away the estate. She sold off in piece-meal much of the southern portion of **South Frith** to several persons and died in great distress in 1698. Her son John Villiers, self-styled Earl of Buckingham became possessed of **Somerhill** house and Park and those demesnes of **South Frith** which had not been sold by his mother.
- Post 1698 **Somerhill** manor and park was alienated to Dekins, whilst the rest of the demesnes lands (1200 acres) of land and woods between **Somerhill** and Pembury to Abraham Hill of Sutton at Hone until 1768. Somerhill house and Park passed from Dekins who died without issue to Mr Cave [Hasted].
- 1712 Mr Cave passes **Somerhill** to John Woodgate of Chepsted in Penshurst and originally of Chiddingstone.
- 1800-1838 **Southfield Park** is created on edge of Nonsuch Green. Owned by Reverence William Wilkin Stephens
- 1840 **Brokes Wood** owned and held in hand by Reverend William Wilkin Stephens, landowner in Southborough, who possibly lived at Southfield Park to the south west of Broke Wood.
- 1881 Southfield Park Lodge, home to James Weston gardener (1881 Census
- 1891 **Brokes Wood** with Southfield Park, Brokes Farm and Yew Tree Farm owned by The Trustees of Canon W.W. Hopwood.
- 1922 The Estate of Canon Hopwood put up for sale in 80 lots including over 103 acres for building. The grounds of Southfield Park become the playing fields for The Skinners School. Included 46 acres of grass and woodland.

3.1. Prehistoric evidence [8,000 BC – AD 450]

There has been no recorded evidence of prehistoric or Roman occupation or activity within Brokes Wood and in its immediate locality. A small Neolithic flint arrow head is recorded from the Sherwood Park Estate to the east which indicates some prehistoric presence in the locality.¹ The absence of any recorded finds does not mean that there is an

¹ HER Record TQ 54 SE 21 - MKE15971

absence of human occupation during this time, rather that there has been no systematic recording of finds. Within the wider setting of Tunbridge Wells there are the nationally important Mesolithic settlement sites at High Rocks thus the probability that groups of hunter-gatherers roamed the area of Broke Wood is very probable; springs and streams often being focal areas for temporary camps. These are identified by surface scatters of flints.

3.2. Early Medieval history [AD 450-1066]

The area of Tunbridge Wells in which Brokes Wood lies was formerly part of the large Wealden common which became the Lathe of Aylesford. Within this was a sub-common belonging to the manor of Wrotham, a large Jutish agrarian estate which had territory extending southwards to the county boundary with Sussex. In time this large common became sub-divided into smaller swine pastures or dens, belonging to the Manor of Wrotham. This manor together with that of the Manor of Otford belonged to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Unfortunately, there are no surviving Anglo-Saxon Charters which list these dens.

Swine pastures were where each autumn, pigs and sometimes cattle were driven from the manor farms to graze on the oak and to a lesser extent beech ‘mast’ in the Wealden Forests. Many of these temporary seasonal camps became settlements and then many evolved into permanent all year round farmsteads carved out of the woodland and grazing pastures.

3.3. The Conquest and Domesday [AD 1066-1086]

After the Conquest, the road from Hastings to London became a vital link for the Normans in their settlement and control of the country. The river crossing of the Medway at Tonbridge became an important strategic link along this route. In order to control the crossing, William I established a trusted chief follower, Gilbert Clare and subsequently his son Richard at Tonbridge. Richard was known “of Tonbridge” firmly establishing him within Kent. William granted the Clares jurisdiction over a large portion of the surrounding country, which at the time was sparsely settled, and probably well wooded.² It is likely that Richard took over numerous dens belonging to a number of Kentish upland manors and which were held of the Archbishop of Canterbury (whilst the Honour of Clare i.e. lands in Surrey, Essex etc. were held directly from the king in chief by military service).³ A fortified settlement was established at the crossing which was to develop into Tonbridge Castle.

A custom brought with the Normans from France was the establishment of territory around an abbey, castle or chief mansion as known as a *leuca* or *leucata* which translates into ‘lowy’ in English. The possessor of such a settlement together with its ‘lowy’ held a number of special liberties, privileges and exemptions.⁴ Gilbert Clare and his son Richard established a ‘Lowy’ around Tonbridge Castle and the name has remained down to the 19th century as a territorial and administrative district. The Lowy covered an area around Tonbridge; it was not

² Witney 1976 p102

³ Ward, J.C. 1980 The Lowy of Tonbridge. Arch Cant 96 p119-131

⁴ Hasted, 1979 vol. V p174

a compact block but intermixed with the holdings of others and had no clear defined boundary. Dumbreck (1958) identifies the Lowy as lands held by the de Clares of the Archbishop of Canterbury and other tenants in chief together with other dens of upland manors.⁵

Tonbridge, as a manor in its own right, is not recorded in the Domesday Survey showing that it still was under the jurisdiction of the parent or upland manors of Wrotham and Otford belonging to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Much of the land in Tonbridge Manor within the Lowy came from the manorial dens of Wrotham⁶ and included the North Frith Woods north of the River Medway, the South Frith Woods extending as far south as what is now Tunbridge Wells. This was the former sub-common with over 500 pannage dues serving Wrotham that lay within the old Wealden common of Aylesford.⁷ Most of this area within the Lowy of Tonbridge Manor comprised chase, park and unenclosed wood pasture with the enclosed cultivated land confined to Tonbridge itself and Southborough.⁸

Thus the area of Broke Wood was probably to all intents and purposes a mosaic of woodland or wood pasture with grassy glades through which flowed the streams in their gills fed by iron-rich springs.

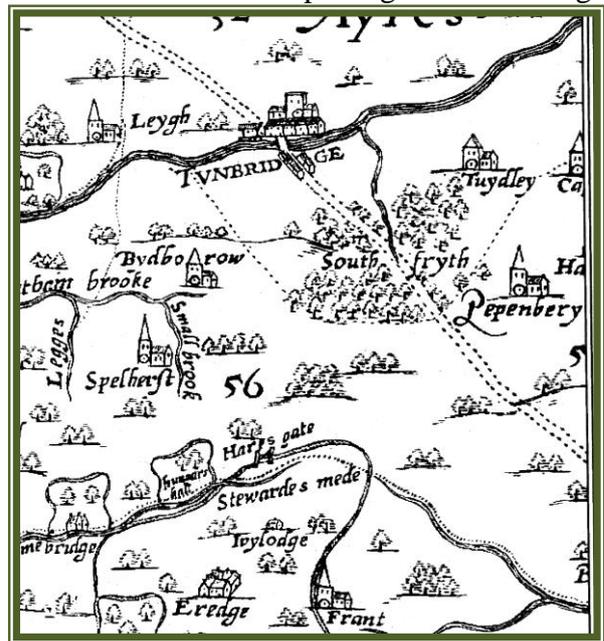


Figure 1. Symonson's Map 1596 [Source: KHLIC]

3.4. Medieval [AD 1086-1540]

Probably early in the 12th century, the Clares established a great tract of forest or chase in Tonbridge, by throwing together numerous dens of the manor of Wrotham. The forest comprised two large tracts of woodland or wood pasture - the North and South Friths, divided by the river Medway and served by two enclosed deer parks at Cage and Postern. The whole enclosed 40 square miles and stretched from the foot of the Chart hills at Shipbourne to the Sussex boundary near Tunbridge Wells.⁹ It is probable that the presence of these chases actually preserved the pannage system in an area where the soils were very poor, either heavy intractable clay or porous, infertile sands. Evidently, according to Brandon, the Crown regarded Ashdown Forest to the west and South Frith at Tonbridge as a great storehouse of

⁵ Dumbreck, W.V. 1958 *The Lowy of Tonbridge Arch Cant.* LXXII p 138-147

⁶ Witney 1976 p122

⁷ Ibid

⁸ ibid

⁹ Witney 1976 p166-167

pig-meat for the king's military campaigns, when animals were driven along droveways to the port of New Shoreham, a provisioning centre for archers.¹⁰

The establishment of such a powerful magnate family over such a large part of the western Weald had the special licence of the King and approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The latter could divest some of the heavy feudal burden of provision of 60 knights for royal service on to the Clares in the form of knight's fees. The Clares held the land from the Archbishop (or See of Canterbury) in the Lowy for four knights fees, which they in turn devolved or sub-enefeudated to sub-tenants¹¹. In the reign of Henry II the Clares held Tonbridge as tenants-in- chief direct from the king. Archbishop Thomas á Becket did attempt to wrest it back from the crown, but Roger de Clare supported the King against Becket's claim.

There were two perambulations of the Lowy in the 13th century arising from disputes as to the land and the jurisdiction of its 'rights'. One perambulation was undertaken in the reign of Henry III and the other in the reign of Edward I, each of which describes in detail the boundary and extent of the Lowy. The perambulations were describing the outer limits of the Lowy and generally followed parish boundaries. The primary purpose of the Lowy was for the maintenance and defence of the castle and the sub-manors into which it was divided were held by castle-guard and rents in kind.¹²

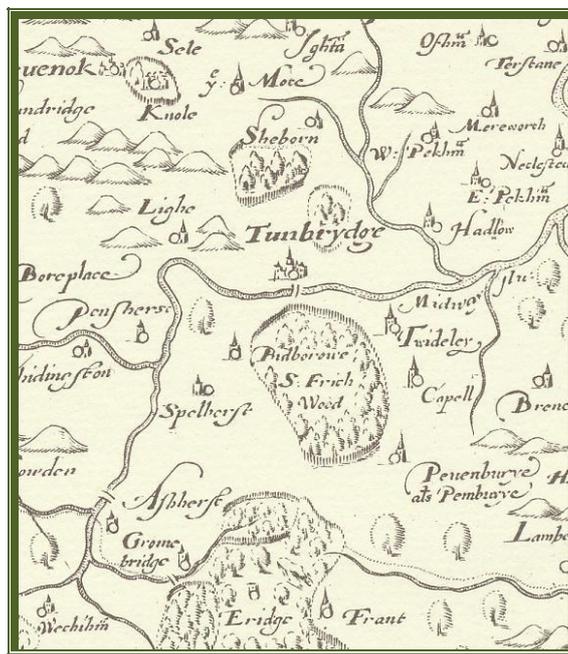


Figure 2. South Frith Wood in 1575 from Christopher Saxton's Map of Kent

[Source: Margery & Phillimore 1997]

¹⁰ Brandon, P. 2003 .The Kent and Sussex Weald. Phillimore p 75

¹¹ Witney 1976 p168

¹² Dumbreck 1958 The Lowy of Tonbridge Arch. Cant. LXXII p138-147

Evidence suggests that the custom of pannage survived within the Lowy well into the medieval period, where it had ceased elsewhere in the Weald. For Roger, Earl of Clare in the reign of Henry II granted to the Canons of the Priory of Bayham the right to graze 25 hogs in the southern part of the forest of Tonbridge free of any pannage dues.¹³

Hasted's Map of 1797 shows the extent of the Lowy in the 18th century. It comprised lands to the north, east and west of Tonbridge together with an extension to the south to the county boundary with Sussex. The area that was to become Broke Wood lay in this latter part fairly close to the western edge of the extensively wooded area between Nonsuch Green and Pembury.

In 1317 the Lowy and Manor of Tonbridge were divided into two, with the Castle and North Frith passing to the Earls of Stafford. The manor and forest or chase of South Frith passed to Elizabeth, the youngest sister of the last Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester and the wife of John de Burgh. South Frith then passed to her son William Earl of Ulster, thence to the Earls of March and from them to Richard Duke of York (father of Edward IV and the Cecilia Duchess of Burgundy). The Duchess possessed the Manor of South Frith at her death in 1495 when it reverted to the Crown.

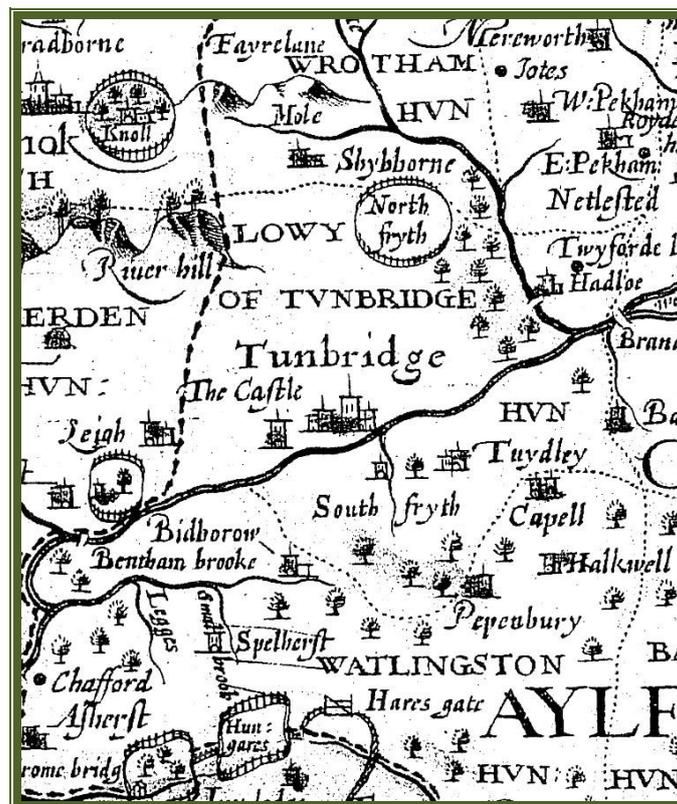


Figure 3 John Speed's Map of Kent 1616

¹³ Furley 1874 The History of the Weald of Kent Vol. II pat 1 p6

**BROKES WOOD, SOUTHBOROUGH,
NR TUNBRIDGE WELLS, KENT
ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

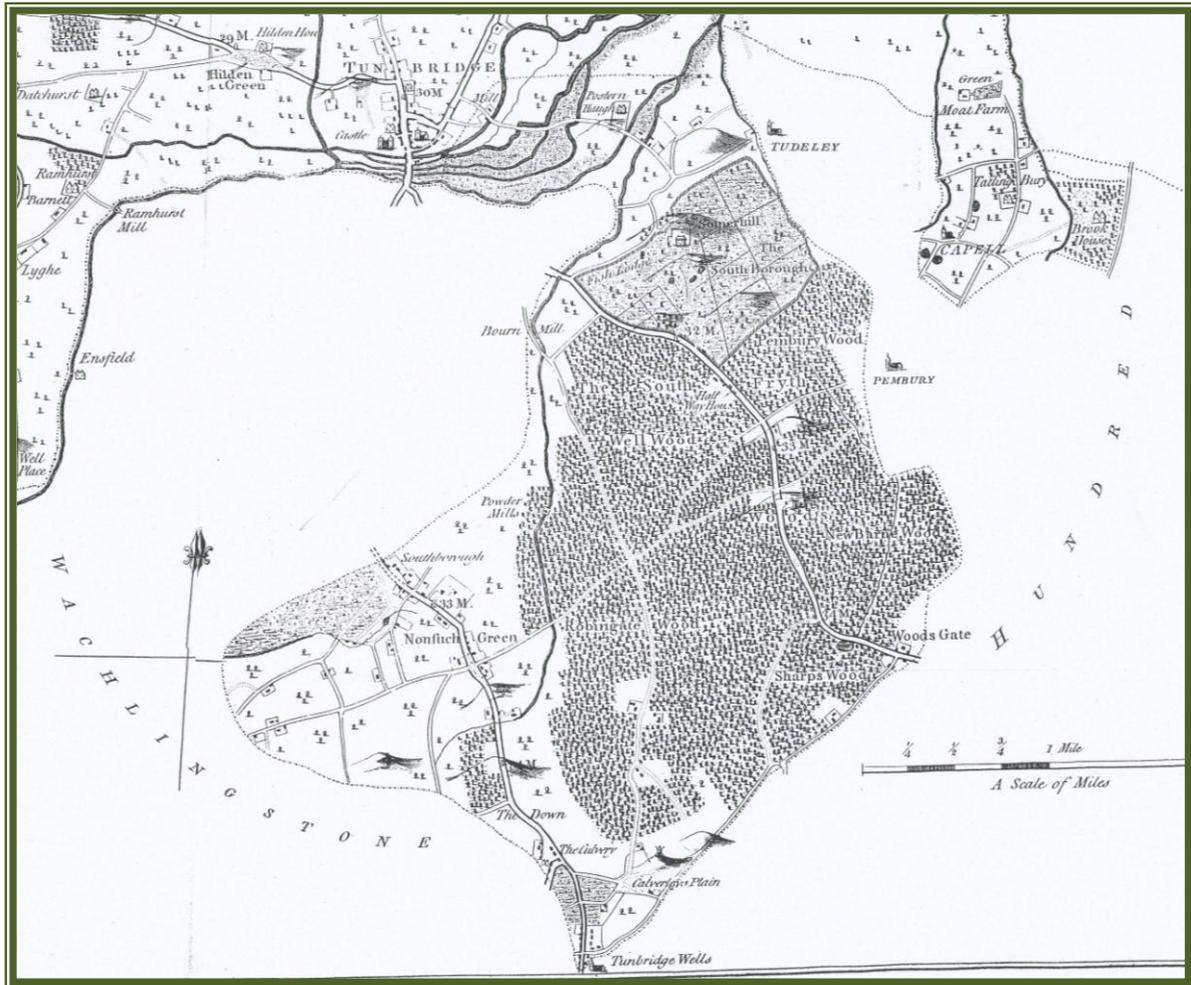


Figure 4. The Lowy of Tonbridge from Hasted 1797

A survey of the Duke of Buckingham's lands, the Honour of Gloucester in May 1521 describes the lordship of Tunbridge, including *Northfrith; then the lordship of Southborowe*.¹⁴

Henry VIII appointed Sir George Brooke, Lord Cobham as the ranger of Southfrith with the custody of the pannage and herbage, and an allowance of sufficient wood and fuel for the lodges in it. He was also appointed steward of the adjacent Hundreds of Wachlingstone, Littlefield and Barnfield.¹⁵ In 1551 Edward VI granted Tonbridge manor and castle with both its 'friths' to John Dudley, Earl of Warwick who within the year re-conveyed them back to the Crown. Queen Mary granted them to Cardinal Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury for his life but he died the day after the Queen in 1558 and the lands were returned to the Crown. Elizabeth I then split the estate, by giving Tonbridge castle, manor and North Frith to her cousin Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon and South Frith to Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester for a

¹⁴ Furley 1874 *The History of the Weald of Kent* vol. II pt 1 p108 [State Papers 13 Hen VIII]

¹⁵ Furley *ibid* vol II pt 2 p431

term of years, after which it was granted to Frances Countess of Essex (whose husband the Earl of Essex was beheaded for treason).¹⁶

Thus as Furley points out Tonbridge Castle with all its lands and manors was held for over five centuries by the Crown or the cream of the nobility, but often subject to claims and contests with the Archbishops of Canterbury for the homages due to the See of Canterbury.¹⁷

3.5. Post-Medieval [AD 1540 – 1900]

The Countess of Essex conveyed the chase and manor of South Frith to her third husband Richard de Burgh, Earl of Clanricarde. He built the large mansion at Somerhill, which was completed circa 1620s. The Earl was created Baron Somerhill and Viscount Tonbridge by James I and Earl of St Albans by Charles I. The family supported the King and thus Somerhill with its lands was sequestered by Parliament in 1645. For a short while it was granted to General Essex but for most of the Civil War it remained with Parliament. On the restoration of Charles II, Somerhill and manor of South Frith was handed back to the only daughter of the Earl of St Albans.¹⁸

It is in the latter part of the 17th century that the Manor of Somerhill and the chase of South Frith (probably long since dis-emparked before or at the time of the Civil War), was gradually broken up and sold away in a piece-meal fashion by Margaret and her son John who styled himself the 'Earl of Buckingham'. A study of the parish registers for the Weald in the 1560s reveals that in the Tonbridge Lowy thousands of acres were still enclosed within the parks of Postern, North Frith and South Frith, and therefore unavailable for general settlement.¹⁹ When South Frith became disemparked opportunities arose for small farms to become established – farms such as that which became known as 'Charity Farm' and 'Barnetts Farm' alias Hooks. Great Lodge Farm was formerly one of the lodges on the Chase and became what is now Home Farm [TQ60404195], as was Fish Lodge (on the edge of Somerhill Park). The Somerhill estate in the late 18th century comprised numerous small farms, such as Forest, Horseshoe, Walters, Brook, Birlings (Now Forge Farm on the OS Explorer Map) etc.²⁰

The Old Forge built in 1553 by David Willard, ironmaster, - the site owned by Sir Thomas Fane, was in use until around 1679. It was worked with Vauxhall Furnace.²¹ The forge and furnace caused severe depredations on the timber and wood within Southfrith, to the detriment of the copyholders.

It is not clear whether Brokes Wood formed part of the Somerhill Estate in the 18th century or had already been sold away. By 1840 Brokes Wood is recorded as being owned and held in

¹⁶ Furley *ibid*

¹⁷ Furley *ibid*

¹⁸ Furley *vol. Pt 2 p520*

¹⁹ Zell, M 1984 *Population and Family structure in the Sixteenth century. Arch. Cant. C p234*

²⁰ KHLC U1109 T4 1769 *Title Deed Somerhill Estate*

²¹ Cleere and Crossley 1995 *The Iron Industry of the Weald p347, 362*

hand by the Reverend William Wilkin Stephens.²² The small assart fields carved out within it were farmed by White House Farm owned by Stephens (now High Wood ?), not by the adjacent Ivy House Farm owned by Thomas Hobbs and occupied by Samuel Wickens who also occupied White House Farm.

Reverend Stephens appears from the Tithe Map to have been living at Southfield Park in Southborough. This park dating from between 1800 and 1838 appears on the OS 6" First Edition map and is an example of the 19th century gentrification of the landscape, influenced by the development and expansion of Tunbridge Wells to the south east. This assessment has not been able to find out much detail either about Reverend Stephens nor the history of Brokes Wood at this time, despite a detail search of the 'U' catalogues at KHLC – Maidstone. However in 1891 it was owned by the Trustees of Canon W.W.Hopwood and was put up for sale in 1922 in 80 lots including over 103 acres of building land, with 46 acres of pasture and woodland. The grounds of Southfield Park became the playing fields for The Skinners School. This suggests that Brokes Wood formed part of a gentleman's country estate in the latter part of the 19th century. It is probably then that the pen ponds were used as duck decoy ponds and the wood as a sporting wood.²³ Southfield Park is annotated on a map of Tunbridge Wells of 1838.²⁴

The farms around Brokes Wood included Barnetts Farm alias Hooks which belonged to the Dorking Charity. A Protestant minister called John Beane, originally a clerk in Godstone, Surrey established a charity to support Protestant dissenting ministers. He endowed it with lands in Tonbridge which included a messuage called Packs, Shutters Coppice, Hooks Farm and Birchen Coppice.²⁵ In his will proved 6 Aug 1718 all John Beane's estates were transferred to a charitable trust, which was formally created in 1722, to benefit Protestant Dissenting Ministers in Dorking and Guildford, and elsewhere in Surrey, and a third of the income to go to the poor of the two towns. Although establishing a nonconformist charity, John Beane is thought to have been a Church of England minister originally at the chapels of Tandridge and Crowhurst (recorded in 1674 Visitations of the Archdeacon of Winchester).²⁶

Hooks Farm was purchased in 1702 by John Beane a clerk of Godstone in Surrey with 90 acres of land 20 acres of coppice called "Birchen" all in South Frith from the Right Honorable John Villiers Earl of Buckingham.²⁷ Hooks became Barnetts Farm and lies to the north of High Brooms at TQ59604250. No record has yet been found in the archives for the conveyance of Packs Farm, which was to become known as Lipscombs Farm [alias Charity Farm] in the 19th century. The archives at the Surrey History Centre in Woking need to be systematically researched. The charity was run by a small group of Trustees and the estates leased out. The incomes derived were then used according to the provisions of Beane's will.

²² Tithe Map for Tonbridge – Southborough 1840 KHLC

²³ Cunningham, J. An Historic Atlas of Tunbridge Wells

²⁴ Stidolph, T. 1838 A Map of Tunbridge Wells and the Local Act District.

²⁵ SHC 7144/1/1 6th Aug 1718

²⁶ SHC Catalogue Notes for ref 7144

²⁷ SHC 7144/4/1 1702

Old Forge Farm was the site of the former powder mills and prior to that an iron forge. Present day Forge Farm was called Birds on the Tithe Map, but called Birlings Farm in the accompanying award. It was however occupied by George Bird (and owned by James Alexander of Somerhill).

4. Archaeological significance of the heritage features

The archaeology recorded in Brokes Wood is very typical of wood in this part of the High Weald. The remaining wood banks are likely to be late medieval or early post-medieval in date, whilst the field boundaries to the small assart fields are probably early to mid post-medieval. Quarrying is extensive and the large pits show evidence that sand stone was being extracted. Smaller pits also occur where clay may have been dug for localized use. The steep nature of the topography means that hollow ways or sunken tracks develop easily on the soft substrate. Powdermill lane is one example still in use. Within Brokes Wood are several other hollow ways, some of which appear to have been used by wheeled vehicles, possibly to extract timber.

It is rumoured that Brokes Wood was used as a sporting wood by the Fremlin Family and that the former penstocks were converted to use as duck decoys. However this may be a confusion with the ownership of South Park. Only one pond survives, having been de-silted and the embankment reinforced in recent years. It had a boat house at the south end. Possibly associated with the pond are located in the wood on the higher ground possible 'stands' for guns. These are leveled circular areas located close to tracks, which appear like charcoal hearths but without the dark soil from burning surviving beneath the leaf litter.

4.1. The name

Little has been found about the antiquity of the name - Brokes and where it derived from. It does not appear on Wallenberg.²⁸ The spelling is recorded on the OS 25" 1st Edition as *Broakes Wood*, (c.1860) but in 1840 it is called *Brokes Wood*.²⁹ It could be that Brokes is a 19th century appellation and that it had a different name in earlier centuries, thus careful study of the remaining manuscripts for Somerhill Estate should reveal a clue.

4.2. Brokes Wood in its landscape context

Today Brokes Wood lies rather isolated from the rest of its historic landscape context surrounded to the south and west by modern housing. It once formed part of a much larger expanse of woodland which stretched to the eastern side of what is now Tunbridge Wells, only the edge of a ridge of high ground. These woods remain as piecemeal evidence of the frith. The wood has survived due to the need for underwood for fuel to power the local industries but also due to the topography of steep-sided valleys, preventing development.

²⁸ Wallenberg 1931; Wallenberg 1934

²⁹ Tithe Map for Tonbridge-Southborough

4.3. Types of archaeological features

The following section looks at each feature and/or groups of features and assesses their significance. It sets out the management recommendations, for their preservation within the actively managed woodland. Although the site has been extensively managed since the end of the 18th century from fields divided by ancient woodland to a mixed broad-leaved wood, there are areas which are of high ecological value, such as the veteran broadleaved trees, the ponds, the spring and other water courses and also the few areas of rock outcrop in the quarries. At the same time the historic features which are evidence of how it was managed in the past also should be preserved for the future.



Figure 5. A veteran beech on the edge of one of the hollow ways or possible woodbank ? by Powdermill Lane

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Table 2. Summary table of heritage features in Brokes Wood

The grid reference in brackets is the one from the GPS. (Error \pm 3.0 – 4.0m).

Linear Features

Number	Compartment	Grid Reference	Date of Origin	Description	Archive Source	Condition at time of site visit 16-01-2014
L01		TQ5919242258	Unknown	Hollow way orientated N-S on E edge of wood	Fieldwork	Good
L02		TQ5914742214	Unknown	Hollow way orientated N-S on E side of wood. Runs into L01	Fieldwork	Good
L03		TQ5915842179	Medieval	Small lynchet marks eastern boundary of wood by quarry P01	Fieldwork	Good
L04		TQ5911042141	Unknown	Hollow way runs N from quarry P01	Fieldwork	Good
L05		TQ5885642178	Unknown	Ditch and bank runs parallel to hollow way P04	Fieldwork	Good
L06		TQ5884942062	Post-medieval	Hollow way curves NE to one of the gill streams	Fieldwork	Good
L07		TQ5908642287	Unknown	Spring and stream	OS Epoch 1	Good
L08		TQ5921642358	Medieval ?	Low wide bank	Fieldwork	Good
L09		TQ5905542454	Medieval ?	Low wide bank	Fieldwork	Good
L10		TQ5904042465	Early post-medieval	Field boundary	Tithe Map	Good
L11		TQ5898242513	Early post-medieval	Field boundary	Tithe Map	Good
L12		TQ5891642434	Early post-medieval	Field boundary	Tithe map	Good
L13		TQ5886342313	Early post-medieval	Field Boundary	Tithe Map	Good
L14		TQ5886742448	Early post-medieval	Hollow way linking two assart fields	Tithe Map	Good
L15		TQ5879342401	Early post-medieval	Field boundary	Tithe map	Good
L16		TQ5885342542	Early post-medieval	Field Boundary	Tithe Map	Good
L17		TQ5893942626	Medieval	Wood bank	Tithe Map	Good
L18		TQ5897342609	Medieval ?	Bank	Field work	Good
L19		TQ5923442499	Medieval	Wood bank	OSDs	Good
L20		TQ5893242479	Early post-medieval	Field bank	OSDs	Good

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Table 2 continued
Point Features

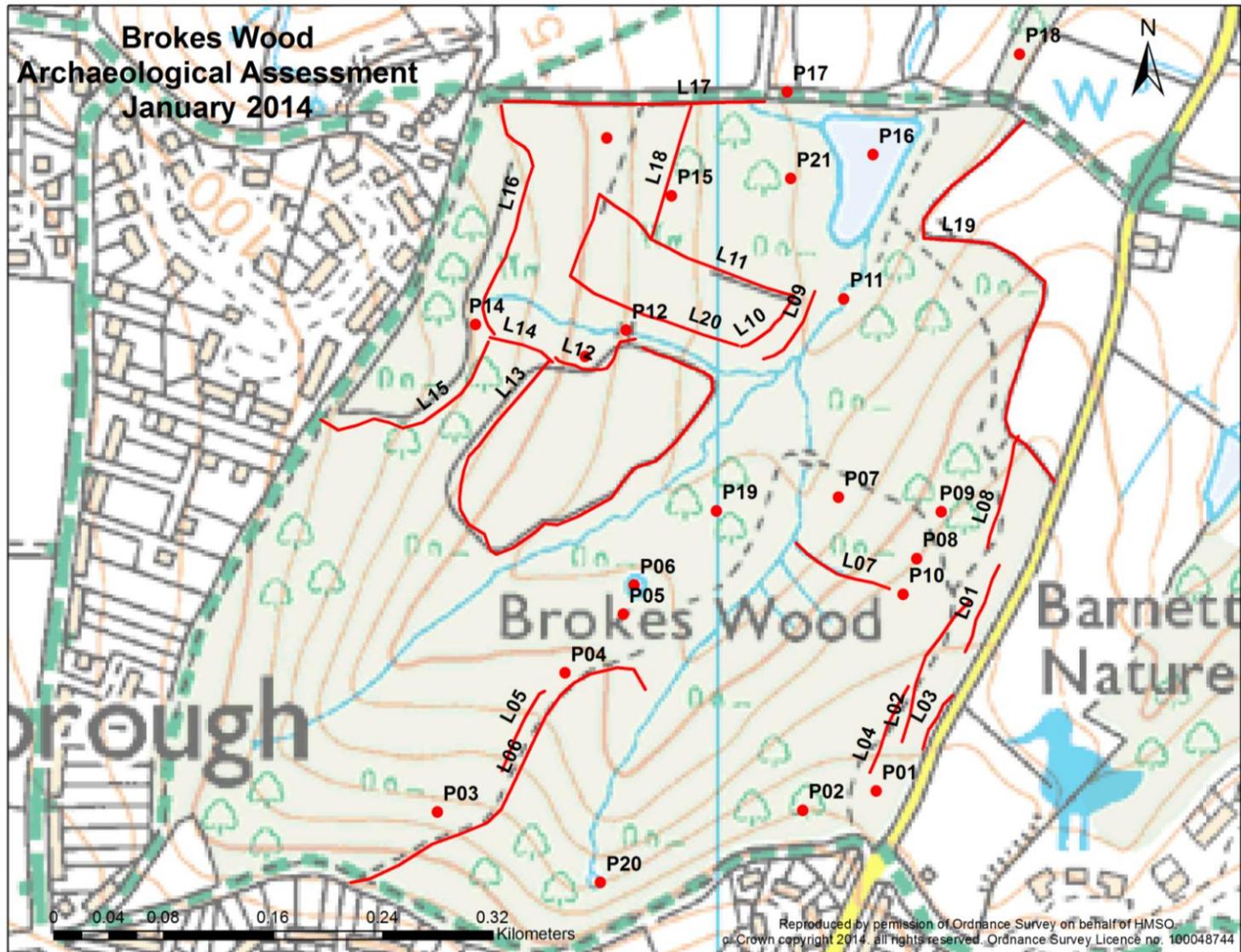
Number	Compartment	Grid Reference	Date of Origin	Description	Source	Condition at time of site visit 16-01-2014
P01		TQ5911542128	Late post-medieval	Quarry – stone	Field work	Poor –used for mountain bikes
P02		TQ5906242114	Unknown	Small Bank by path	Fieldwork	Good
P03		TQ5879642114	Early modern	Shooting stand	Fieldwork	Good
P04		TQ5889042215	Late post-medieval	Saw pit ?	Fieldwork	Good
P05		TQ5893042258	Late post-medieval	Quarry – stone	Fieldwork	Good
P06		TQ5893742279	Late post-medieval	Pond	Fieldwork	Good
P07		TQ5908842342	Unknown	Levelled area – possible shooting stand, but with spring	Fieldwork	Good
P08		TQ5914642297	Early modern	Spring in brick and concrete surround	Fieldwork	Good
P09		TQ5916242332	Early modern	Spring in brick and concrete surround	Fieldwork	Good
P10		TQ5913542273	Late C20	Spring	Fieldwork	Good
P11		TQ5909142485	Early post-medieval	Pond	Fieldwork	Good
P12		TQ5893342462	Early modern	Bridge across small stream	OS Epoch 1	Good
P13		TQ5890342443	Early post-medieval	Stone quarry	Fieldwork	Good
P14		TQ5882442467	Unknown	Pit	Fieldwork	Good
P15		TQ5896742561	Unknown	Pond	Fieldwork	Good
P16		TQ5911342590	Early post-medieval	Pond	Tithe Map	Good
P17		TQ5905042635	Unknown	Pond	OS Epoch 1	Good
P18		TQ5923042644	Unknown	Banks and Track	Fieldwork	Moderate
P19		TQ5899942331	Early post-medieval	Site of field	OSDs	Unknown
P20		TQ5891442063	Unknown	Spring	OS Epoch 1	Unknown
P21		TQ5905042517	Early C21	Spoil	Fieldwork	Good

Key to Sources:

- OSD = Ordnance Surveyor's Draft Drawings for the 1" First Edition 1797-1801. [British Library]
 Tithe = Tithe Map for Tonbridge Southborough 1840 [KHLCT 17/371]
 OS Epoch 1 = Ordnance Survey 25" First Edition surveyed in 1860
 OS Epoch 2 = Ordnance Survey 25" Second Edition 1898
 OS Epoch 3 = Ordnance Survey 25" Third Edition 1908-1910

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Map 1.



4.3.1 Hollow ways on east side of Brokes Wood [L01-03]

i. Assessment

A hollow way is a routeway which has become sunken through use and natural erosion, below the natural level of the adjacent ground surface. Where more than one occurs parallel to each other, this is termed 'braiding' and occurs where heavy use of the route causes some alignments to become too difficult to traverse so a new route is made parallel to the old one. Braiding occurs where there is no side-ways restriction to movement across the landscape as in woodland, commons etc. These three hollow ways run from the large stone quarry P01 northwards. The hollow ways are about 4.0m - 5.0m wide and reach 0.75m deep. They may appear to be contemporary with the quarry. But the disturbance due to the mountain bikes makes it difficult to assess. At their northern end the alignments fade out into the wood. They are also parallel to Powdermill Lane. It is possible that they are related to the use of the lane before it became a metalled highway. There is another possibility that the adjacent banks to the hollow way may have originated as wood banks but the ditch may then have been used as a routeway.

Due to the steep nature of the topography and the soft nature of the underlying geology, hollow ways readily form in this landscape. Thus depth is not just an indication of antiquity but also of intensity of use and the softness of the sub-strate.

ii. Significance

These hollow ways are highly significant due to their relationship with the quarry and Powdermill Lane.

iii. Condition

At the south end of the hollow ways, they have been damaged by the use of the quarry by mountain bikers. Where they are covered by holly undergrowth the earthworks are protected and preserved in a better condition.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

As with all archaeological features the best form of management is to leave the hollow ways undisturbed. Avoid planting new trees on or adjacent to the earthworks.

Damage to the feature is likely to occur during thinning, coppicing and extraction of the wood products, with the use of any vehicles, the siting of brash bonfires, and any movement (dragging) of timber over the earthworks.

Coppicing / thinning work close to veteran or ancient trees may have a detrimental effect due to the sudden physical change to their immediate environment, the increase in sunlight by removal of canopy, compaction of the ground surface on the root protection area (RPA). There are several veteran beech trees which occur close to the features.

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

Prevent any coppice or stubs from becoming over-stood. With any changes in the adjacent tree structure, these could become liable to wind throw. Consider managing these as part of the thinning coppicing programme.

vi. Mitigating actions

Avoid taking any wheeled or tracked vehicles over the earthworks and plan extraction routes with care in order to avoid going over any part of the earthworks. If possible work in the areas where disturbance has already taken place. If an extraction route has to cross the earthworks, cover the area with brash and avoid working when the ground conditions are soft. Remove the brash when finished. Any work to trees close to the veterans should be undertaken gradually over a number of seasons so that the change to the environment is gradual allowing the veteran tree to adjust.



4.3.2 Hollow way [L04]

i. Assessment

A hollow way is a routeway which has become sunken through use and natural erosion, below the natural level of the adjacent ground surface. This is a sinuous and curving route which runs from the southern boundary of the wood north and eastwards to the bottom of the easterly gill valley. The hollow way is about 4.0m wide and reaches 1.0m in depth.

Due to the steep nature of the topography and the soft nature of the underlying geology, hollow ways readily form in this landscape. Thus depth is not just an indication of antiquity but also of intensity of use and the softness of the sub-strate.

The route is first recorded on the OS 25" 1st Edition map, but does not appear on any of the earlier maps.

ii. Significance

This hollow way is significant due to the association with adjacent features, such as a bank and a possible shooting stand. It provided ready access into the wood from the south-west corner. Tracing the route south-west it went to Yew Tree Farm and Southfield Place (owned by the Reverend Stephens who also owned Brokes Wood in 1838).

iii. Condition

This hollow way is in good condition. The vertical sides of the track suggest that it has been used in the past by wheeled vehicles.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

As with all archaeological features the best form of management is to leave the hollow ways undisturbed. Avoid planting new trees on or adjacent to the earthworks.

Damage to the feature is likely to occur during thinning, coppicing and extraction of the wood products, with the use of any vehicles, the siting of brash bonfires, and any movement (dragging) of timber over the earthworks.

Coppicing / thinning work close to veteran or ancient trees may have a detrimental effect due to the sudden physical change to their immediate environment, the increase in sunlight by removal of canopy, compaction of the ground surface on the root protection area (RPA). There are several veteran beech trees which occur close to the features.

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

Prevent any coppice or stubs from becoming over-stood. With any changes in the adjacent tree structure, these could become liable to wind throw. Consider managing these as part of the thinning coppicing programme.

vi. Mitigating actions

Avoid taking any wheeled or tracked vehicles over the earthworks and plan extraction routes with care in order to avoid going over any part of the earthworks. If possible work in the areas where disturbance has already taken place. If an extraction route has to cross the earthworks, cover the area with brash and avoid working when the ground conditions are soft. Remove the brash when finished. Any work to trees close to the veterans should be undertaken gradually over a number of seasons so that the change to the environment is gradual allowing the veteran tree to adjust.



4.3.3 Hollow way [L14]

i. Assessment

A hollow way is a routeway which has become sunken through use and natural erosion, below the natural level of the adjacent ground surface. This is a short route linking two fields cleared from the wood, probably in the early post-medieval period. The track is about 4.0m wide with a slight bank on either side.

Due to the steep nature of the topography and the soft nature of the underlying geology, hollow ways readily form in this landscape. Thus depth is not just an indication of antiquity but also of intensity of use and the softness of the sub-strate.

The route is first recorded on the OS 1st Edition 25" map but probably was in use when the fields were carved from the woodland.

ii. Significance

This hollow way is significant due to the association with the adjacent fields. It shows who the fields were linked together. The small bridge (P12) forms part of this access network.

iii. Condition

This hollow way is in good condition, and is still in use as a path.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

As with all archaeological features the best form of management is to leave the hollow ways undisturbed. Avoid planting new trees on or adjacent to the earthworks.

Damage to the feature is likely to occur during thinning, coppicing and extraction of the wood products, with the use of any vehicles, the siting of brash bonfires, and any movement (dragging) of timber over the earthworks.

Coppicing / thinning work close to veteran or ancient trees may have a detrimental effect due to the sudden physical change to their immediate environment, the increase in sunlight by removal of canopy, compaction of the ground surface on the root protection area (RPA).

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

Prevent any coppice or stubs from becoming over-stood. With any changes in the adjacent tree structure, these could become liable to wind throw. Consider managing these as part of the thinning coppicing programme.

vi. Mitigating actions

Avoid taking any wheeled or tracked vehicles over the earthworks and plan extraction routes with care in order to avoid going over any part of the earthworks. If possible work in the areas where disturbance has already taken place. If an extraction route has to cross the

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earthworks, cover the area with brash and avoid working when the ground conditions are soft. Remove the brash when finished. Any work to trees close to the veterans should be undertaken gradually over a number of seasons so that the change to the environment is gradual allowing the veteran tree to adjust.



Track between two fields 19444

4.3.4. Wood banks [L17, L19]

i. Assessment

Wood banks, including their associated ditches are a feature of ancient woodland. They were dug in order to mark ownership boundaries but also to provide a suitable earthwork on which to plant and maintain a stock-proof hedge when the coppice had been cut. The enclosing of woodland probably began when trees were being managed in a regular cycle for underwood. This process of enclosure reached its height in the early medieval period, when woods were either used primarily for grazing or for timber and underwood production. Stock control became important. Wood banks tend to have an asymmetrical profile with the ditch on the non-woodland side. Spoil dug from the ditch was heaped on the side of the woodland and then trees and shrubs encouraged to grow along the top. After coppicing these trees were probably then laid to form a stock-proof hedge, which would grow well as the coppiced wood was not then high enough to shade the hedge. With the cessation in coppice management in the early part of the 20th century and the development of over-stood coppice these woodland hedges became shaded out, leaving only the stubs and marker trees.

Wood banks are therefore of considerable antiquity, dating from when the woodland was enclosed from the open wood pasture commons. In some cases they can pre-date the medieval parish church. Depending on the soil types and geology, the old ground surface of the wood may survive as a layer in the soil beneath the bank.

Brokes Wood would have wood banks around its whole outer boundary. Today, however only good examples survive on the north and north east edges of Brokes Wood. To the south and west the wood banks have been destroyed by the modern housing developments. The wood boundary now marked by the edge of the public foot paths running around the edge of the wood. The northern wood bank (L17) is asymmetrical in profile about 3.0m wide and up to 0.75m high. The silted ditch lies on the non-woodland side (altered by the path which runs parallel). The NE boundary (L19) is a dog-legged one, shaped by the assart fields carved from the wood. This wood bank is also about 3.0m wide and up to 0.4m high, with a silted ditch on the NE side. These boundaries appear on the OSDs c. 1797-1810. It is possible that the banks adjacent to the hollow ways by Powdermill Lane may have originated from wood banks.

ii. Significance

The wood banks are highly significant as they mark the historic enclosure of the Brokes Wood from the forest of South Frith and probably date from the late medieval period. Apart from the wood itself they are the oldest extant features recorded during this survey.

iii. Condition

Both wood banks are in good condition.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

As with all archaeological features the best form of management is to leave the Wood banks undisturbed. Avoid planting new trees on or adjacent to the earthworks.

Damage to the feature is likely to occur during thinning, coppicing and extraction of the wood products, with the use of any vehicles, the siting of brash bonfires, and any movement (dragging) of timber over the earthworks.

Coppicing / thinning work close to any veteran or ancient trees may have a detrimental effect due to the sudden physical change to their immediate environment, the increase in sunlight by removal of canopy, compaction of the ground surface on the root protection area (RPA).

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

Prevent any coppice or stubs from becoming over-stood. With any changes in the adjacent tree structure, these could become liable to wind throw. Consider managing these as part of the thinning coppicing programme.

vi. Mitigating actions

Avoid taking any wheeled or tracked vehicles over the earthworks and plan extraction routes with care in order to avoid going over any part of the earthworks. If possible work in the areas where disturbance has already taken place. If an extraction route has to cross the earthworks, cover the area with brash and avoid working when the ground conditions are soft. Remove the brash when finished. Any work to trees close to the veterans should be undertaken gradually over a number of seasons so that the change to the environment is gradual allowing the veteran tree to adjust.



L19 Woodbank 19487



L17 Wood bank at north end of wood 19466

4.3.5. Field Boundaries [L10, L11, L12, L13, L15, L16, L20]

i. Assessment

Distinct from the historic wood banks are the field boundaries enclosing the small assart fields within Brokes Wood. These boundaries comprise a small rounded bank, with a corresponding ditch which is located on the field side of the boundary. The banks are between 1.5m and 2.0m wide by up to 0.3m high. Some veteran stubbed trees do occur on the banks. The ditch is silted but is about 1.0m wide. Three fields were identified on the ground and correspond to those recorded on the Tithe Map of 1838. However the OSDs show a fourth field which appears to be located in the valley between the two gill streams. Alternatively the larger of fields may have been divided into two in the 1800.

The Tithe map records these as Great Wood Field (arable), Little Wood Field (arable), and Long Field (fruit and arable). To the north east is Denshire Field (arable) which was divided into two in 1800. The name denshire indicates clearance of rough ground by paring back the turf and scrub and burning it in situ to release the potash for spreading on the new field. As one would expect these fields lie on the most level areas of the wood. Interestingly the fields were farmed as part of White House Farm and not the closer Ivy House Farm.

ii. Significance

These fields with their respective earthwork boundaries are significant as evidence of expansion of farming and cultivation into every available area. When the fields were cleared or 'assarted' from the wood is not known, possibly in the latter part of the medieval period, or the early post-medieval.

iii. Condition

All these field banks are in a good condition.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects.

There are examples of veteran stubbed and old coppice surviving on the banks, probably the remains of the old hedges that enclosed the fields. Any adjacent management of woodland adjacent to the veterans, needs to ensure that any over-stood coppice or stubs do not become exposed to wind blow and as a consequence damage to the earthworks. Any management to the veterans should follow the guidance in the Veteran tree manuals.³⁰ Proposed management of the secondary woodland that has developed/planted on the former fields should ensure that no damage occurs to the boundaries during any felling or extraction.

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

There is little risk from the retention of trees on the boundaries, but care should be taken to avoid wind blow of veterans.

³⁰ Lonsdale, D. 2013. Ancient and veteran trees: further guidance on management. Ancient Tree Forum and Woodland Trust.

vi. Mitigating actions

Be aware of the field boundaries and look out for any earthworks as the thinning and coppicing proceeds. If any extraction tracks are likely to cross this alignment, then put down brash and remove when the work is completed.



L10 Field Bank 19440



L13 Field Bank 19454

4.3.6. Quarries [P01, P05, P13]

i. Assessment

There are three large quarries in Brokes Wood. One close to the edge by Powdermill Lane [P01]; a large quarry in the middle of the Wood [P05] and a smaller one at the north west corner [P143]. The size of them together with areas of vertical sandstone outcrops suggest that these quarries were dug for the sandstone. Tunbridge Wells Sandstone has been used extensively in the area, and gives the buildings their local distinctive honey-colour. None of the quarries appear on any of the historic maps. However the smaller quarry lies on the edge of a small gill and the boundary of the assart field (Great Wood Field), actually curves around the quarry. This suggests that this quarry predates the fields and could be medieval in date.

ii. Significance

Although man-made these sandstone quarries can be important ecological sites, for local bryophytes and their associated flora and fauna. The damp conditions and the exposed rock provide micro-habitats for mosses, ferns, algae and liverworts. [See the High Weald AONB 'Sandrock in the Weald' Leaflet].

iii. Condition

The quarry by the lane [P01] has been damaged by use of mountain bikes, wearing away the edges, creating new mounds and diggings, with areas of worn trackways. This has led to the erosion of the ground cover. There is also some fly-tipping. The other two quarries which lie in more inaccessible areas are in better condition, retaining good vegetation cover, and significant wet and damp ecological conditions.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

It is best to leave these sites undisturbed. Where trees are becoming over tall, then management should be undertaken as part of an integrated management plan for the wood. To clear the all the sites of tree cover would significantly alter the micro-climate.

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

Providing trees do not become over tall, there is no risk of damage to the features.

vi. Mitigating actions

Access to the quarry [P01] is an issue due to its close proximity to the road. Fencing the whole site is prohibitively expensive. Monitoring its illegal use is probably the best in the short-term. If the wood is actively managed then this may discourage illegal and non-permitted activities here in the quarry and elsewhere in the woodland.

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P01 Quarry at edge of wood 19398



P05 Quarry in middle of wood 19421



P13 Small quarry by fields



P20 Springhead 19139

4.3.7. Springs [P08, P09, P10, P20]

i. Assessment

A feature of this wood, are the numerous springs and wet flushes. One spring [P10] is constantly flowing and has never been known to dry up. This together with the others and the surface water run-off into the gill streams were used to power the mills further downstream. A regular and reliable source of water was essential for powering the iron forge [See section 4.3.8.]. There are two possible ‘tapped’ springs [P08, P09] encased in brick and concrete tanks. It is possible that these were built to supply water to nearby farms. In 1924 Brokes Farm may have had a new farmhouse built which required a new supply of water.³¹ During this survey, the owner has excavated out another concrete structure by the main spring [P01]. None of the springs are chalybeate – iron rich, instead they flow very clear.

ii. Significance

Springs in areas of woodland can be highly significant archaeologically. Woodland being relatively undisturbed by recent land use activities as found on farmed land can preserve stratified deposits around springs sealing in remains of past human occupation and use. This can be especially important for prehistoric activity, where springs may have been focal points for hunter-gatherers to make temporary camps. Such evidence may lie not just at the spring itself but also further downstream as a result of the up slope erosion of the spring into the substrate over time.

iii. Condition

At the time of the field survey all the springs and the structures were in good condition and lay undisturbed. However there have now been significant excavations and diggings around the main spring.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

Management of the adjacent coppice should be under taken as part of an integrated management plan and if undertaken with care to minimize disturbance to wet areas, then there should be no damage to potential stratified deposits. Other digging will of course disturb potential deposits both at the spring head and also further downstream.

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

There is little risk of damage from the retention of trees.

vi. Mitigating actions

Further diggings should be avoided to prevent damage to potential stratified deposits. If this is unavoidable then an archaeological watching brief should be implemented following the guidance set down by the Institute of Archaeologists. Guidance on undertaking excavations is also available from the Kent Historic Environment Records at Kent County Council

³¹ KHLC U1094 P133 Proposed new farmhouse- Brokes Farm

4.3.8. Pond [P16]

i. Assessment

At the north end of Brokes wood and fed by the numerous springs is a large embanked pond or small lake of about 0.4ha in size. Originally, there were two embanked ponds here as shown on the Tithe Map, but upper one has silted and disappeared [P11]. These were pen ponds or water storage ponds which provided additional water to the furnace further downstream, north of Moat Farm by Minepit Wood. The forge had its own hammer pond which lay to the east of Old Forge Farm (now fields). This forge was built in 1553 and in operation in the mid-17th century. The furnace, known as Vauxhall Furnace alias Bourne Mill Furnace was in operation between 1552 and 1679.³² These ponds would then have provided additional water to power Broke corn mill in the 19th century. The old forge was then used to produce gun powder.³³

It is locally thought that the lower surviving pond was then used for sport shooting of duck. In the 19th century Brokes Wood formed part of the Southfield Park property of Reverend Stephens and a small country estate would have been enhanced by an area of sporting woodland. At least two (and there are probably more) shooting stands have been identified during this survey [P03, P07]. They survive as roughly circular leveled areas cut into the ground surface close to access tracks. In character they appear like charcoal hearths but the soil does not have the distinctive black colouring from charcoal dust.

ii. Significance

This pond is of local significance and is evidence of the way water was stored and managed as part of the iron industry, which formed an important part of the development of the landscape in Southfrith in the 16th and 17th centuries. It is possible that Roman bloomery sites also survive in the locality.

iii. Condition

The pond has been restored by the owner within the last 5 years by dredging and rebuilding of the embankment. The silts have been deposited in the wood to the west of the pond and are now becoming well covered in vegetation, leaving their own characteristic feature of uneven ground

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

The site has been managed creating areas of cleared water's edge, which allows some sunlight in. Maintaining a diversity of vegetation structure will only benefit the wildlife of the pond.

³² Cleere and Crossley 1995 The iron industry of the Weald p365

³³ KHLQ Q/SB 1772 Request for gun powder mill licence; Q/SBW31 1807 Petition for additional gun powder mills

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

Some of the mature and veteran trees close to the water's edge risk wind throw into the water, with subsequent damage by the root plate to the bankside.

vi. Mitigating actions

Monitor the taller and veteran trees and managed according to guidance in The Veteran Tree Handbook.³⁴



P16 Duck Pond 19145



P16 Duck Pond 19472



P03 Possible shooting stand 19412

³⁴ Lonsdale ibid

4.3.9. Pits [P14, P15]

i. Assessment

There are several small circular pits and water-filled depressions within Brokes Wood. One is a pond associated with a quarry [P05, P06]. However there are two small round depressions [P14, P15] which may be the remains of small bomb craters. They are about 4.0m in diameter, depth unknown, but with no associated spoil. While undertaking this survey, the owner and the site's manager unearthed an unexploded mortar. This was safely removed by a Bomb Disposal Team. Tunbridge Wells came under fire from aerial bombardment during the Second World War, thus finding such evidence is not surprising.

ii. Significance

It is a feature of local importance as evidence for the impact of the Second World War on this area. The pits are now water-filled and contribute to the local habitat for wildlife.

iii. Condition

All in good condition and are undisturbed. There is also every possibility that more mortars survive buried in the ground.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

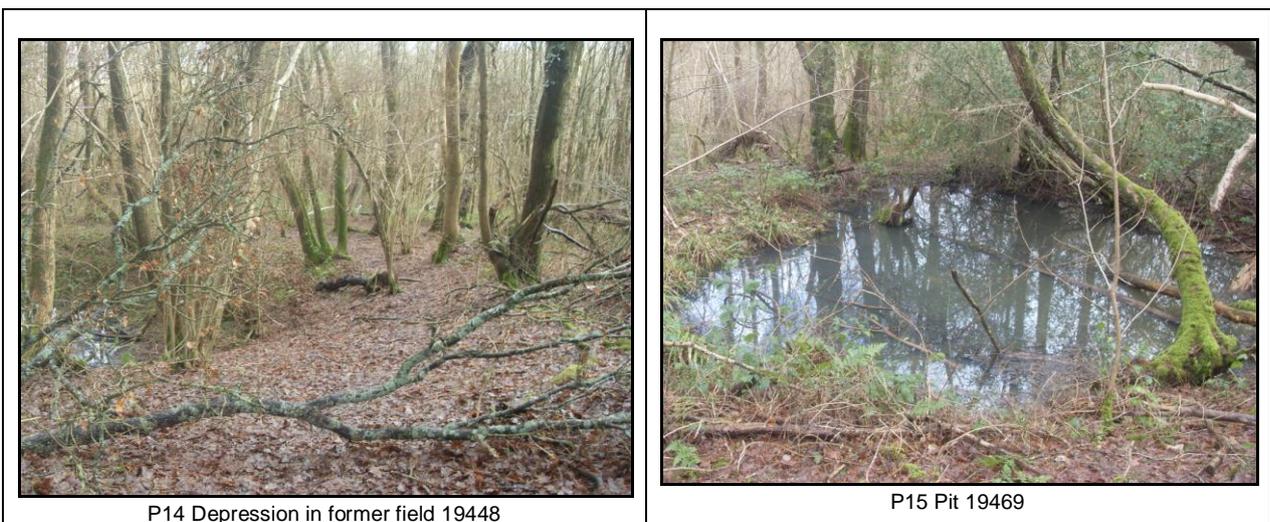
Thinning and coppicing in the area of the pits will keep them clear of secondary growth. Best to leave undisturbed.

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

Little risk of damage.

vi. Mitigating actions

None



4.3.10. Saw pit ? [P04]

i. Assessment

Only one possible saw pit was identified during the survey located close to the main hollow way through the wood [L06]. Orientated approximately north-south, it is about 5.0m long and 4.0m wide with evidence of a possible drainage ditch at its north end heading down slope. No other saw pits were identified nor charcoal hearths, however this is not to say that there are some surviving in the more dense undergrowth or on the steeper slopes.

Saw pits were dug in order to process timber from standard trees on site, rather than extract whole trunks for processing elsewhere. The sawn planks could then be taken out of the wood more easily.

ii. Significance

This pit is significant as it is an indication of how the wood was managed in the past. Generally such saw pits date from the latter part of the 18th and the early part of the 19th centuries.

iii. Condition

The feature is in good condition. It remains undisturbed despite being close to the hollow way.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

Any active management should be undertaken with care around this site to avoid disturbance.

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

There is a low risk of damage to the feature by the retention of adjacent trees.

vi. Mitigating actions

No disturbance to this feature.



4.3.11. Low Banks [L08, L09, L18]

i. Assessment

This field assessment identified three low wide banks within Brokes Wood. The banks are up to 5.0m wide and less than 0.4m high. They appear wide and shallow. As features they were identified in the more open areas of the wood but were not followed to their ends. Where such banks occur in woodland elsewhere it has been conjectured by this author that they are medieval or earlier in origin as they do not relate to datable features within woodland.³⁵ It is possible that such banks are evidence of how the woodland or former grazing wood pasture of South Frith was managed. The banks occur in the areas of ancient woodland and run parallel to the natural slope. They could be banks to former fields. L18 is truncated by the later assart field boundary.

ii. Significance

These features are of high local significance. Despite an absence of dating these together with the wood banks are possibly the oldest features identified in Brokes Wood.

iii. Condition

The banks are in good condition, lying relatively undisturbed within the coppice.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

Due to their slight structure these banks are not easy to see and thus are vulnerable to damage during periods of active management. As with all archaeological features the best form of management is to leave the banks and ditches undisturbed. Whilst some may advocate replanting the banks with woodland shrubs and creating a new stock-proof hedges, this will only work where the site is being actively coppiced. Also it is not advised to dig into earthworks as this will disturb stratified layers. Therefore it is best just to manage the current tree and shrub layer on the earthwork, avoiding individuals getting over-stood and cutting back any stubs.

Damage to the feature is likely to occur during thinning, coppicing and extraction of the wood products, with the use of any vehicles, the siting of brash bonfires, and any movement (dragging) of timber over the earthworks. Coppicing / thinning work close to veteran or ancient trees may have a detrimental effect due to the sudden physical change to their immediate environment, the increase in sunlight by removal of canopy, compaction of the ground surface on the root protection area (RPA).

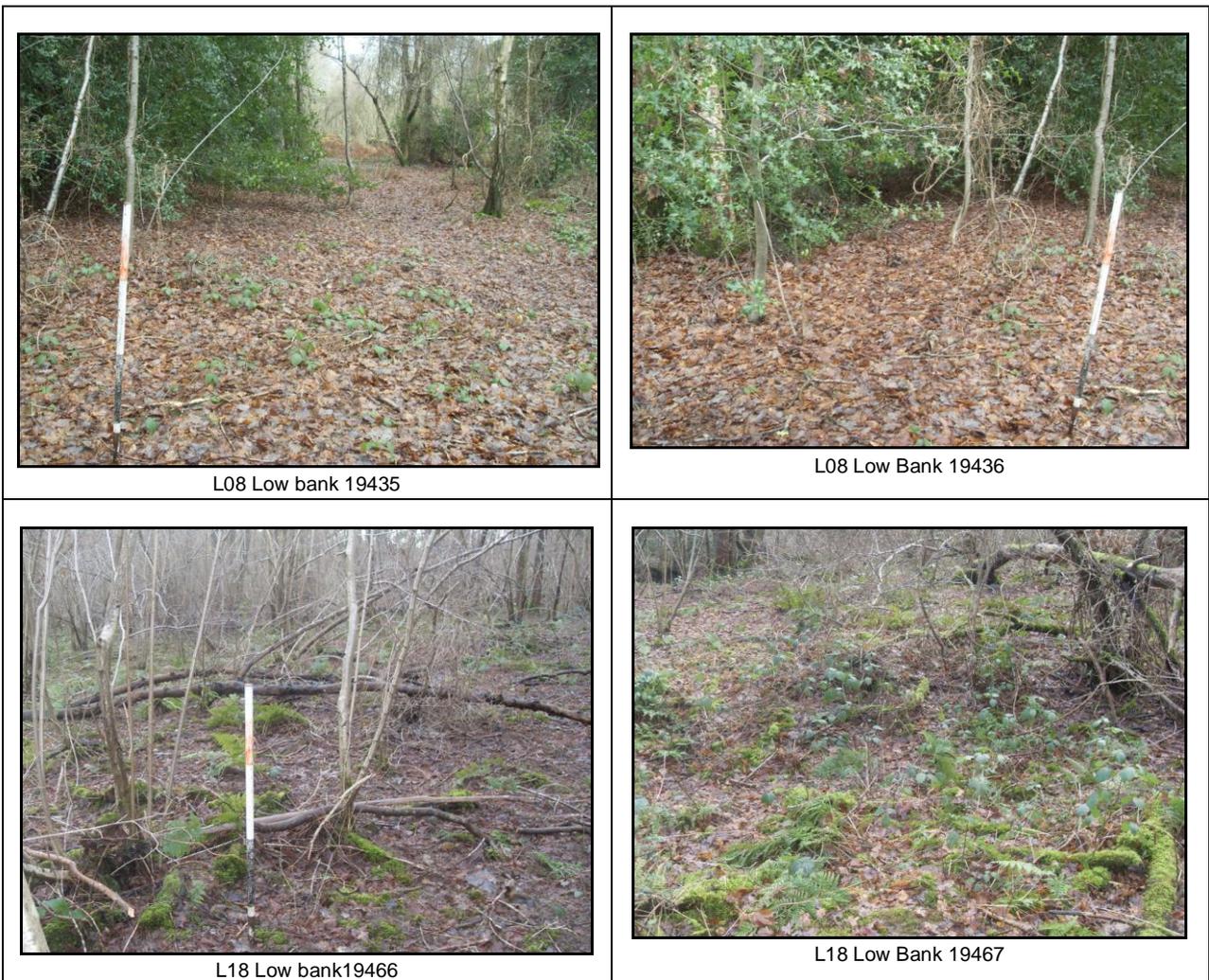
³⁵ Bannister, N.R. 2002 The management of Dering Wood, Smarden, since the Medieval period; archaeological and documentary evidence. Arch. Cant. CXXII p221-235

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

There is a low risk of damage from wind throw of trees growing on the banks for example L08, which has several large veteran beeches either on it or adjacent. These veteran trees should be managed according to guidance in the Veteran Tree Handbook.³⁶

vi. Mitigating actions

Anybody working in the wood should be made aware of their existence and care should be taken to avoid taking any wheeled or tracked vehicles over them. Avoid taking any wheeled or tracked vehicles over the earthwork and plan extraction routes with care in order to avoid going over any part of the earthwork. If possible work in the areas where disturbance has already taken place. If an extraction route has to cross the earthwork, cover the area with brash and avoid working when the ground conditions are soft. Remove the brash when finished. Any work to trees close to the veterans should be undertaken gradually over a number of seasons so that the change to the environment is gradual allowing the veteran tree to adjust. Replant any new planting away from the earthwork.



³⁶ Lonsdale ibid

4.3.12. Track ? [P18]

i. Assessment

At the north end of Brokes in a small shaw are a series of parallel banks and ditches. These are orientated north-south. Two banks are 0.5m high and between 2.0 – 2.5m wide with silted ditches. The width between them is about 5.0m. The feature may be a small trackway running from Brokes Wood north to the farm. Or it may be the remains of the boundaries of the shaws, where the edge of the field has migrated over the centuries.

ii. Significance

The site is of local significance, indicating how possibly Brokes wood was accessed for exploiting its resources. It may also show how field boundaries have ‘migrated’ and now lie preserved in woodland.

iii. Condition

The banks are in good condition, lying relatively undisturbed within the unmanaged coppice. Fly-tipping is present and much building debris lying around. Cattle are allowed to graze in the wood.

iv. Management Beneficial / Detrimental Effects

The best management for these earthworks is to minimize disturbance. Fencing the wood to prevent the stock grazing would be very beneficial. Managing the coppice to prevent it becoming overstood would be another positive management action, providing the wood is extracted in a careful and sympathetic manner to avoid damage to the earthworks.

Damage to the feature is likely to occur during thinning, coppicing and extraction of the wood products, with the use of any vehicles, the siting of brash bonfires, and any movement (dragging) of timber over the earthworks. Coppicing / thinning work close to veteran or ancient trees may have a detrimental effect due to the sudden physical change to their immediate environment, the increase in sunlight by removal of canopy, compaction of the ground surface on the root protection area (RPA).

v. Risk of damage by tree retention

There is a low risk of damage from wind throw of trees growing on the banks, providing the coppice does not become over-stood. Any veteran trees should be managed according to guidance in the Veteran Tree Handbook.³⁷

vi. Mitigating actions

Anybody working in the wood should be made aware of their existence and care should be taken to avoid taking any wheeled or tracked vehicles over them. Avoid taking any wheeled or tracked vehicles over the earthwork and plan extraction routes with care in order to avoid going over any part of the earthwork. If possible work in the areas where disturbance

³⁷ Lonsdale ibid

has already taken place. If an extraction route has to cross the earthwork, cover the area with brash and avoid working when the ground conditions are soft. Remove the brash when finished. Any work to trees close to the veterans should be undertaken gradually over a number of seasons so that the change to the environment is gradual allowing the veteran tree to adjust. Replant any new planting away from the earthworks.

Re-fencing of the shaw to stop the cattle grazing in it. This will minimize any poaching. Removal of the rubbish would be a positive action.



5. Overall management recommendations

The silty and sandy nature of the soils, derived from the Tunbridge Wells Sandstone and Ashdown beds, means that earthworks within Brokes Wood are very fragile, easily eroded and damaged.

The key management recommendation is to minimise disturbance to any known or potential archaeological feature or site [Darvill 1987; Forestry Authority 1995).

Avoid taking any wheeled or tracked vehicles over the earthworks. If it is unavoidable, select one area, cover with plenty of brash and confine access to this one point. Afterwards carefully remove the brash. Consider any necessary work to be done in the summer when the ground conditions are dry but avoid the bird-nesting season.

If extraction of timber is considered using a horse/s and sledge/and or skid etc. undertake extraction works during conditions when the ground is dry, as hooves can easily poach the soft sandy soils.

Avoid siting any foot paths over or adjacent to known earthworks, where erosion of such features can take place. When planning any future change of management in the wood ensure that the changes do not impact on the woodland heritage.

Any activities proposed within Brokes Wood, should take account of the heritage resource of the archaeology, and steps taken to ensure that disturbance to the features is kept to a minimum. This includes exploratory archaeological excavations.

It is strongly advised that an archaeological brief and project design for archaeological investigations is drawn-up. This should set out the aims, objectives and business case for the investigations and how they are to be undertaken. It should also detail where finds are to be deposited, together with the excavation archive, where the results are to be published, and for future reference any finds should be recorded on the Kent HER. Staff at the HER can provide guidance on excavations.

6. Conclusions

Brokes Wood is a remnant piece of woodland of the once extensive medieval hunting forest of South Frith. It has been intensively managed for its woodland and mineral resources in subsequent centuries, but the site still remains relatively undisturbed. Within its boundaries it is possible to find evidence of the past activities, a record of human exploitation.

Brokes Wood, together with Barnettts Wood, Greggs and Robinsgate Woods all lie along the edge of the ridge of sandstone on which Tunbridge Wells is located.

Water collected from its springs and gills, helped to power a furnace and subsequently water mills. Springs provided water for the adjacent farms. Stone from the quarries was probably used to in local buildings. The timber and underwood are likely to have been used in the forge, furnace and powdered mills.

The wood together with its heritage assets is archaeologically highly significant as a record for how this part of the historic landscape at Tunbridge Wells was exploited by humans. Together with the other remaining woods, Brokes contributes a distinctive woodland character to this part of the landscape so close to dense settlement.

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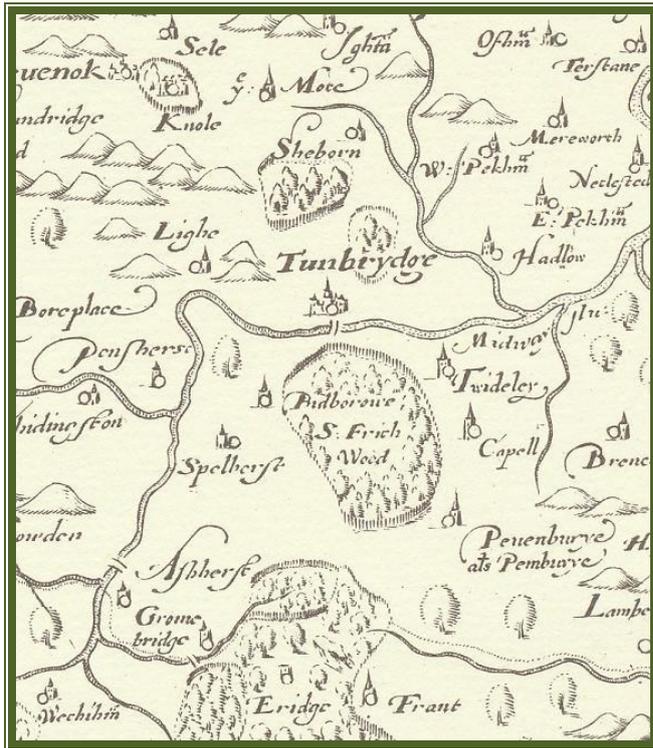
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For further details on woodland archaeology and its management. See the South East Woodland Archaeology Forum - SEWAF and the High Weald AONB web sites.

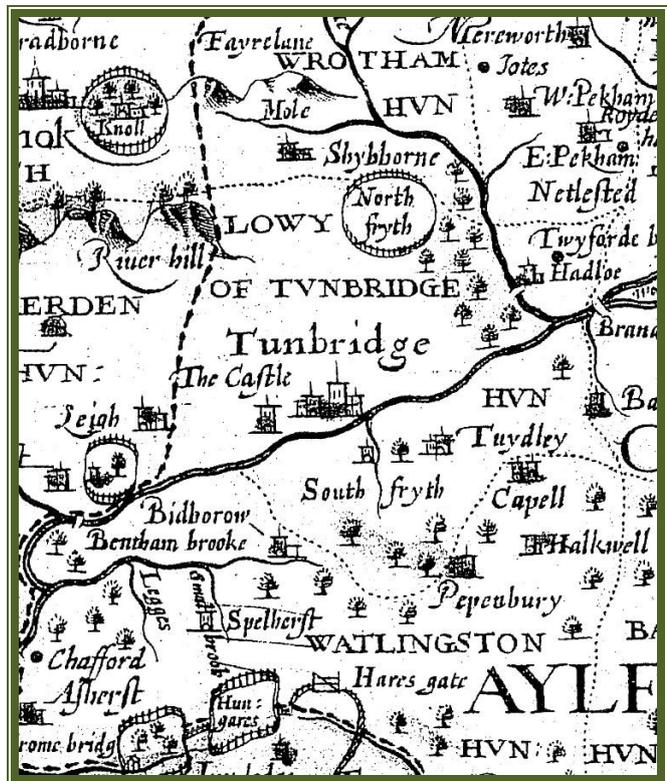
8. Maps relating to the area Brokes Wood, formerly Forest of South Frith

	1596	Symonson's Map of Kent
	1616	John Speed's Map of Kent
	1646	Joannes Jannssonius Map of Kent
KHLC	1767	Andrews and Drury Map of the County of Kent
Hasted, Edward	1797	Map of the Lowy of Tonbridge
British Library	1797	Ordnance Surveyors Draft Drawings for 1" First Edition
KHLC	1801	OS 1" 1 st Edition by Co. William Mudge
KHLC	1810	OS 1" 1 st Edition First series
KHLC U1109 P6	1809	Forest Farm belonging to W.F. Woodgate surveyed by Wm Budgen.
KHLC U1109 P7	1820	Bourne Mill Tythe Ward in Tonbridge
	1838	T. Stidolph A map of Tunbridge Wells
KHLC CTR 17/371	1838	Tithe map of Tonbridge – Southborough
	1849	E.S. Gisbourne A plan of Tunbridge Wells
	1860	Ordnance Survey OS 25" First Edition
	1891	the Tithe Lands of Conon WW Hopwood
	1898	Ordnance Survey OS 25" Second Edition
	1910	Ordnance Survey OS 25" Third Edition

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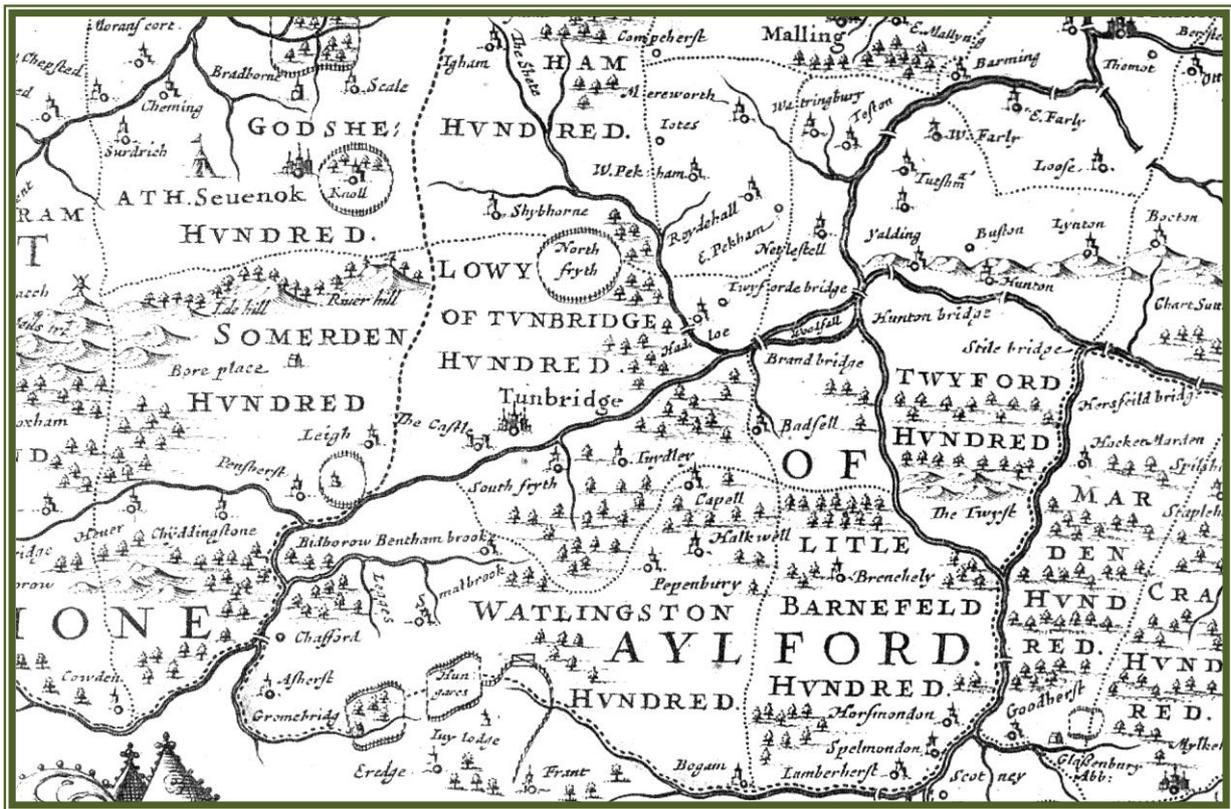


Extract from Christopher Saxton Map of Kent 1575

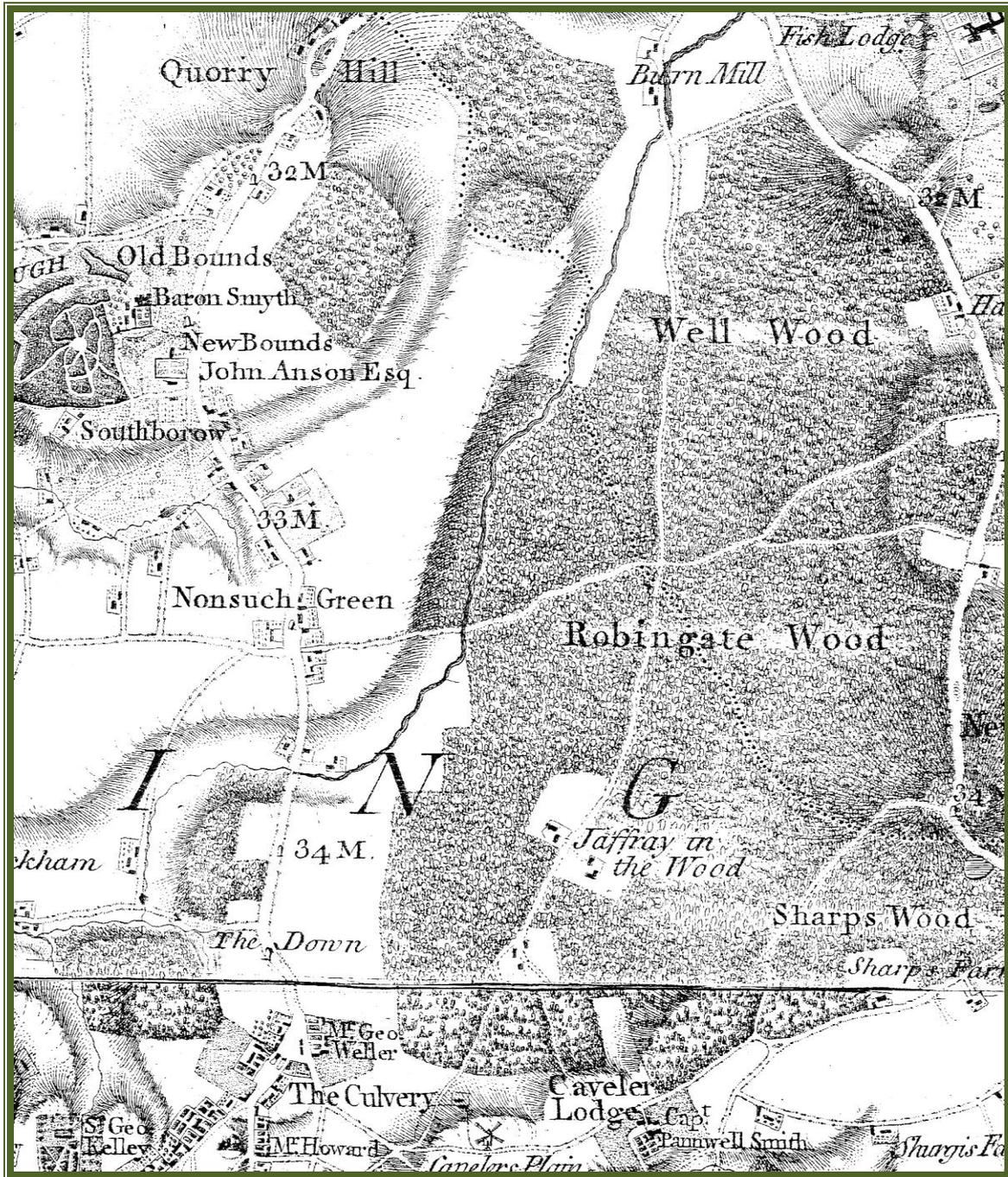


Extract from John Speed 1616 Map of the County of Kent

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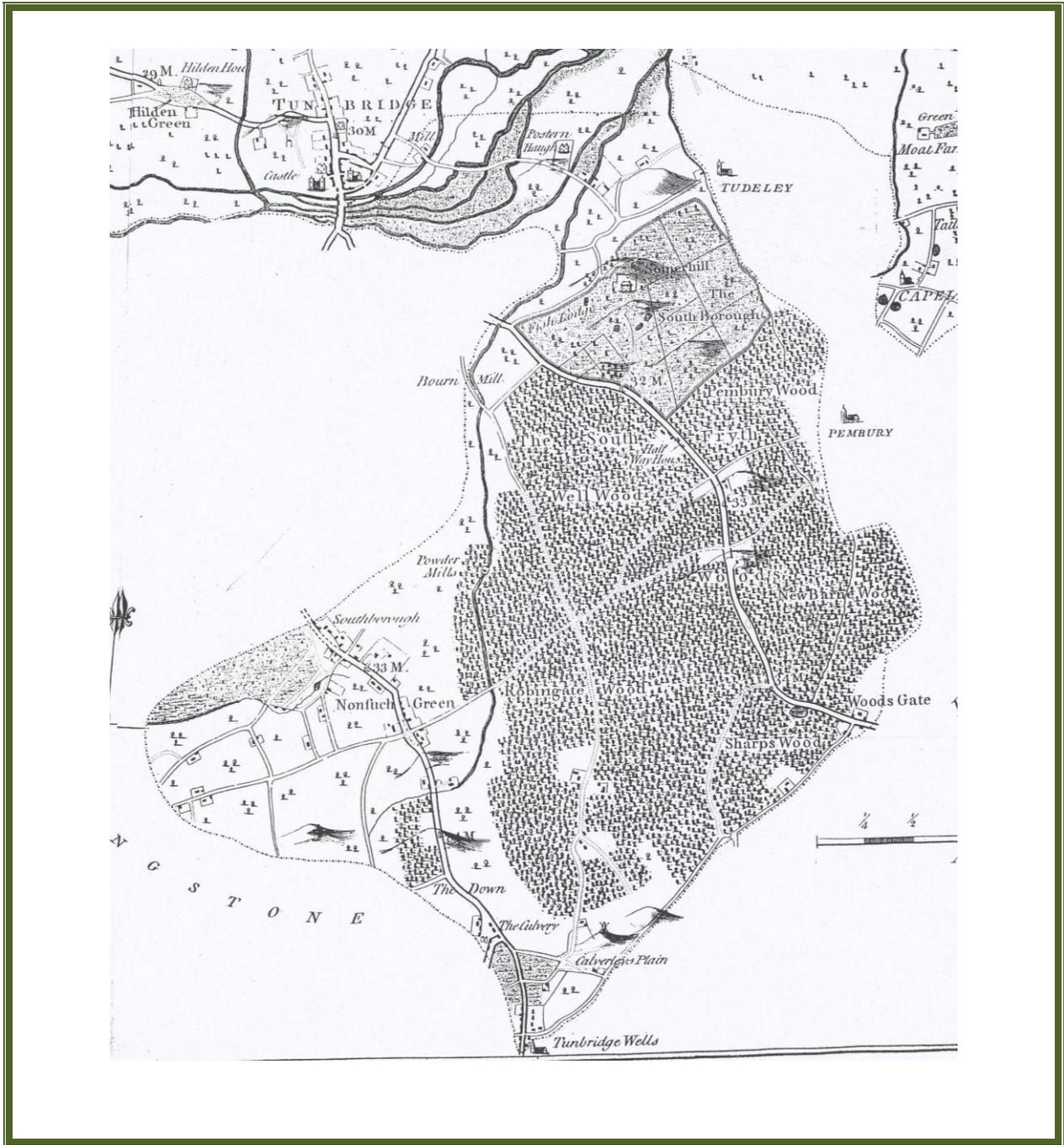


Extract from 1646 Joannes Janssonius' Map of Kent



Extract from Andrews and Drury Map of the County of Kent 1767 [Source: KHLIC]

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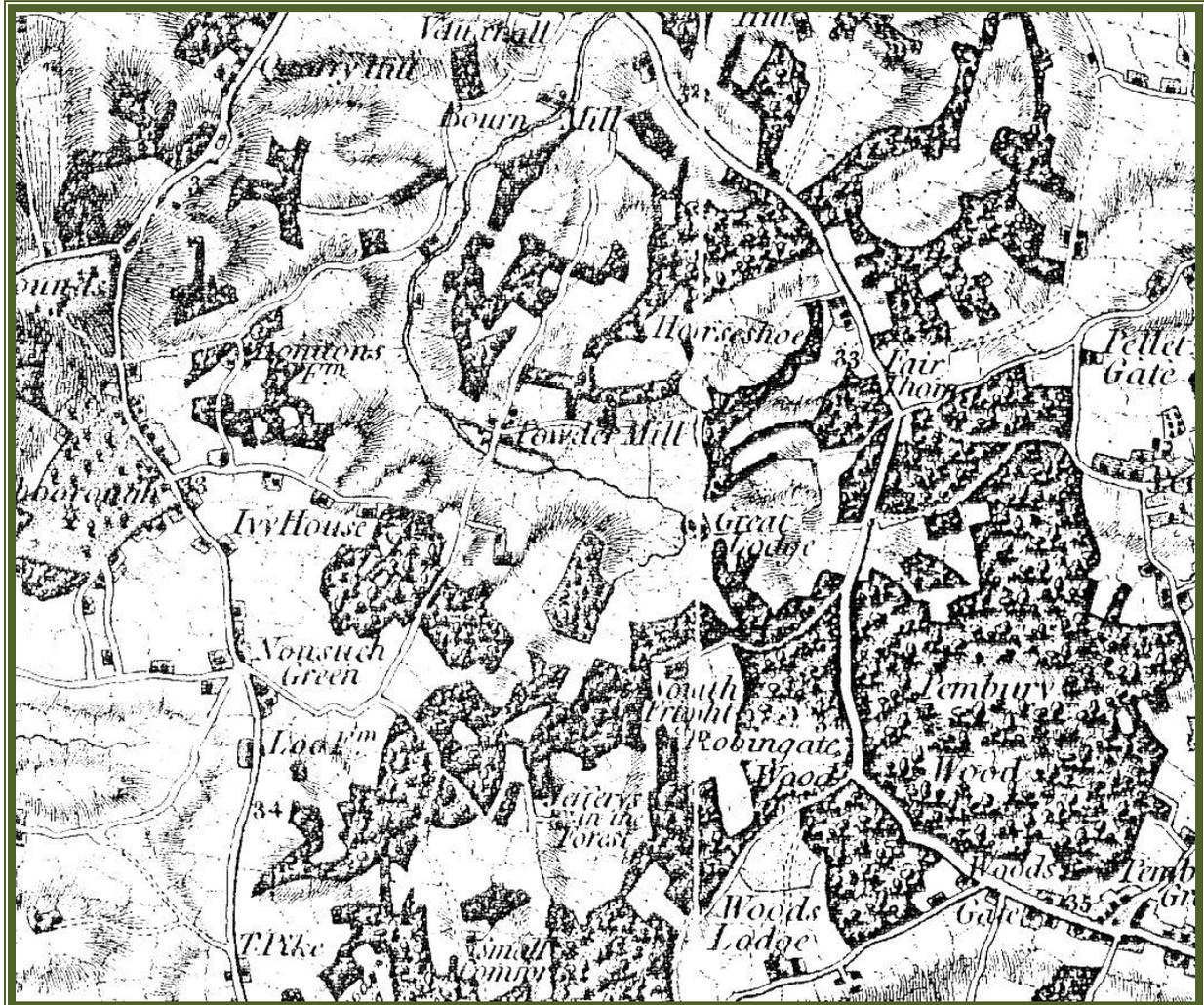


Edward Hasted 1797 Map of the Lowy of Tonbridge



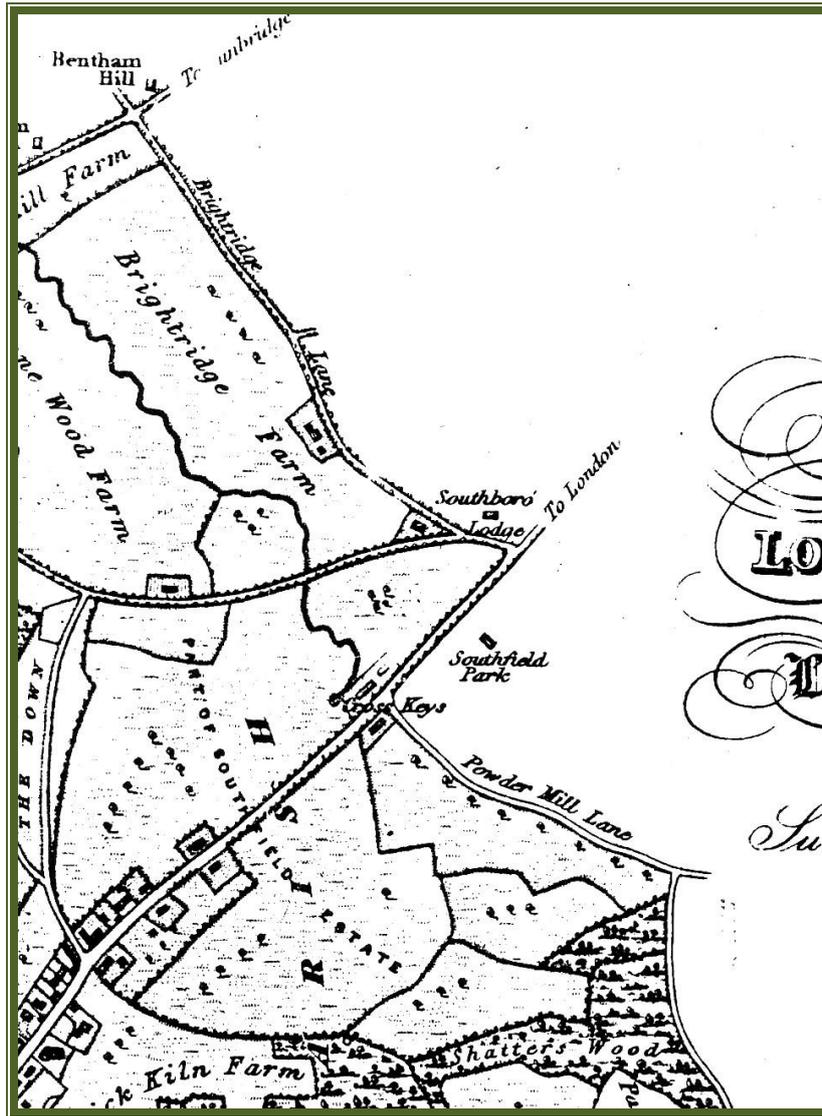
Ordnance Surveyor's Draft Drawings for 1" 1st Edition
[Source: British Library web site 7811 Sevenoaks – Tunbridge Wells]

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OS 1" First Edition by Col. Mudge 1801 [Source: KHLC]

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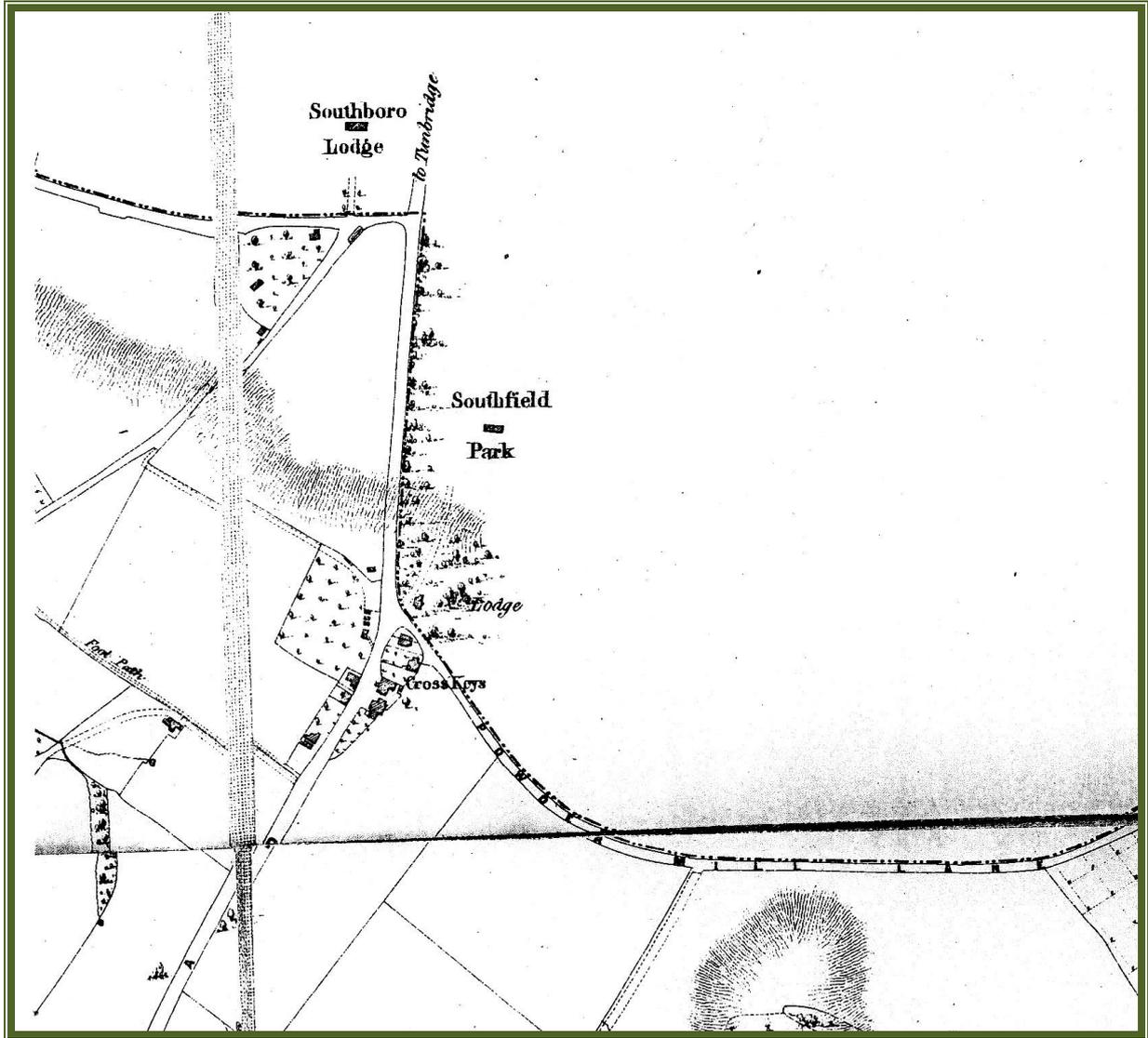
1838 T. Stidolph Map of Tunbridge Wells [Source: Tunbridge Wells Library]

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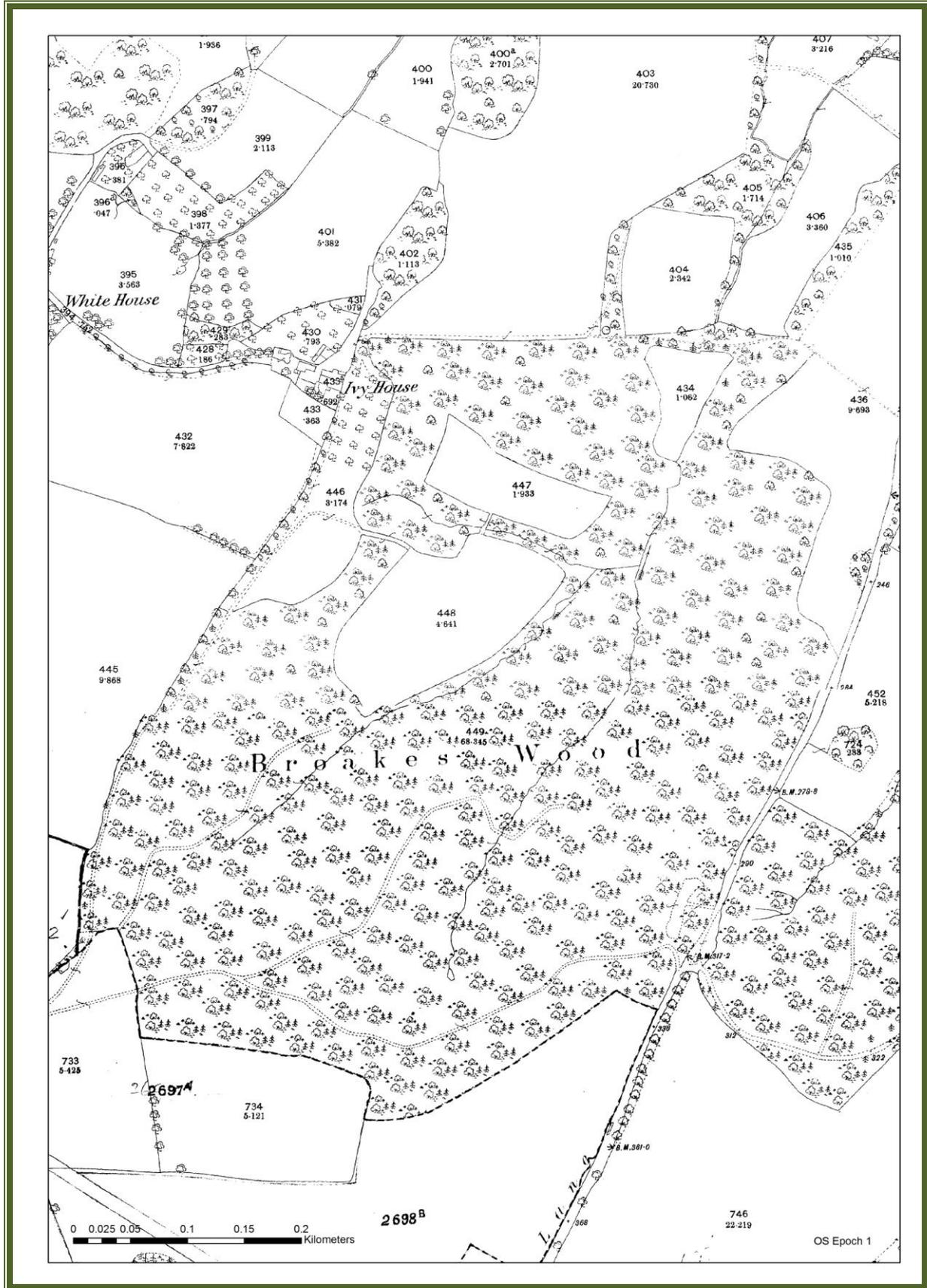
Extract from Tithe Map of Tonbridge – Southborough 1838 [Source KHLCT 17/371]

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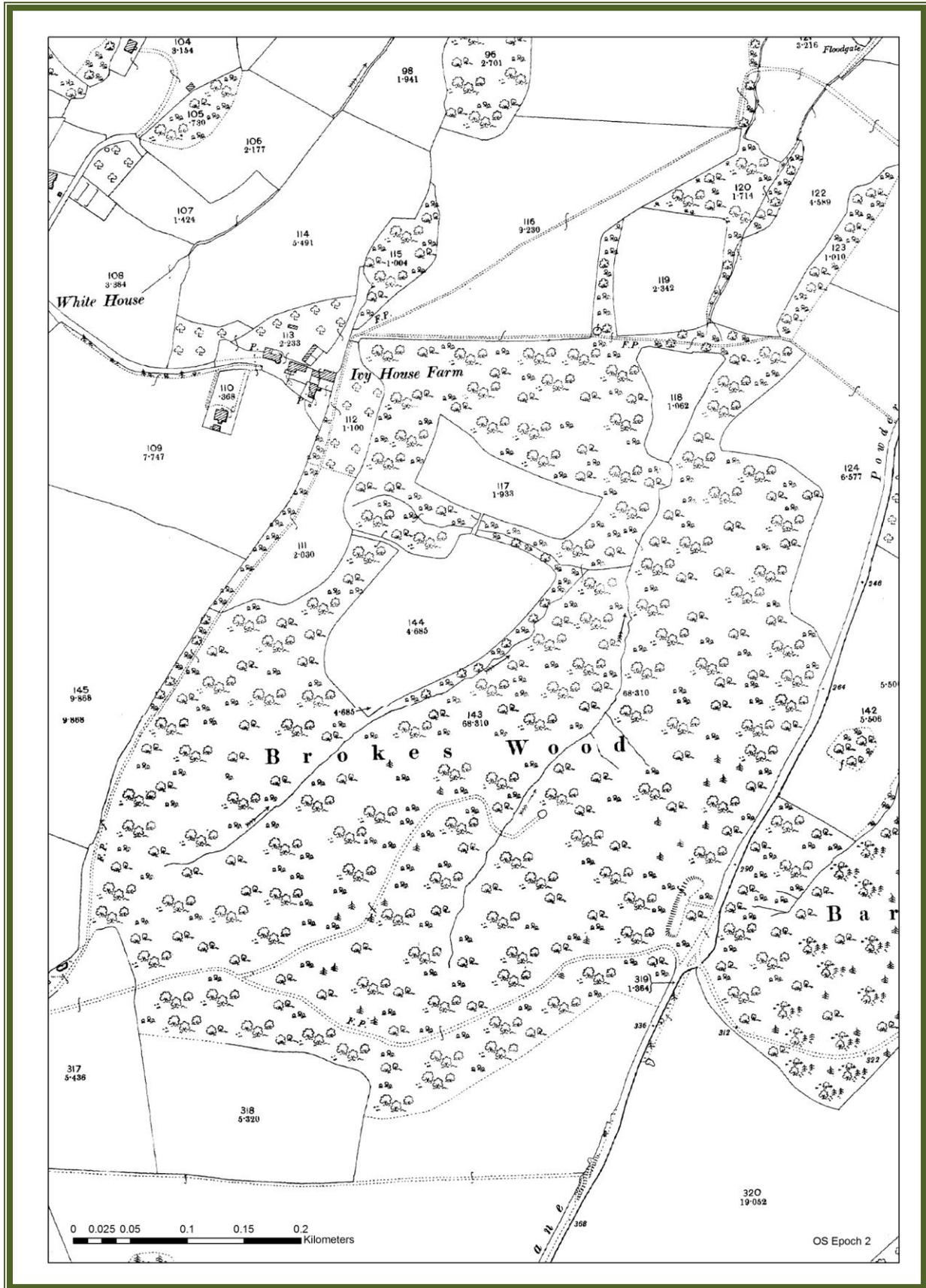
Extract from 1849 E.S. Gisbourne A plan of Tunbridge Wells [Source: Tunbridge Wells Library]

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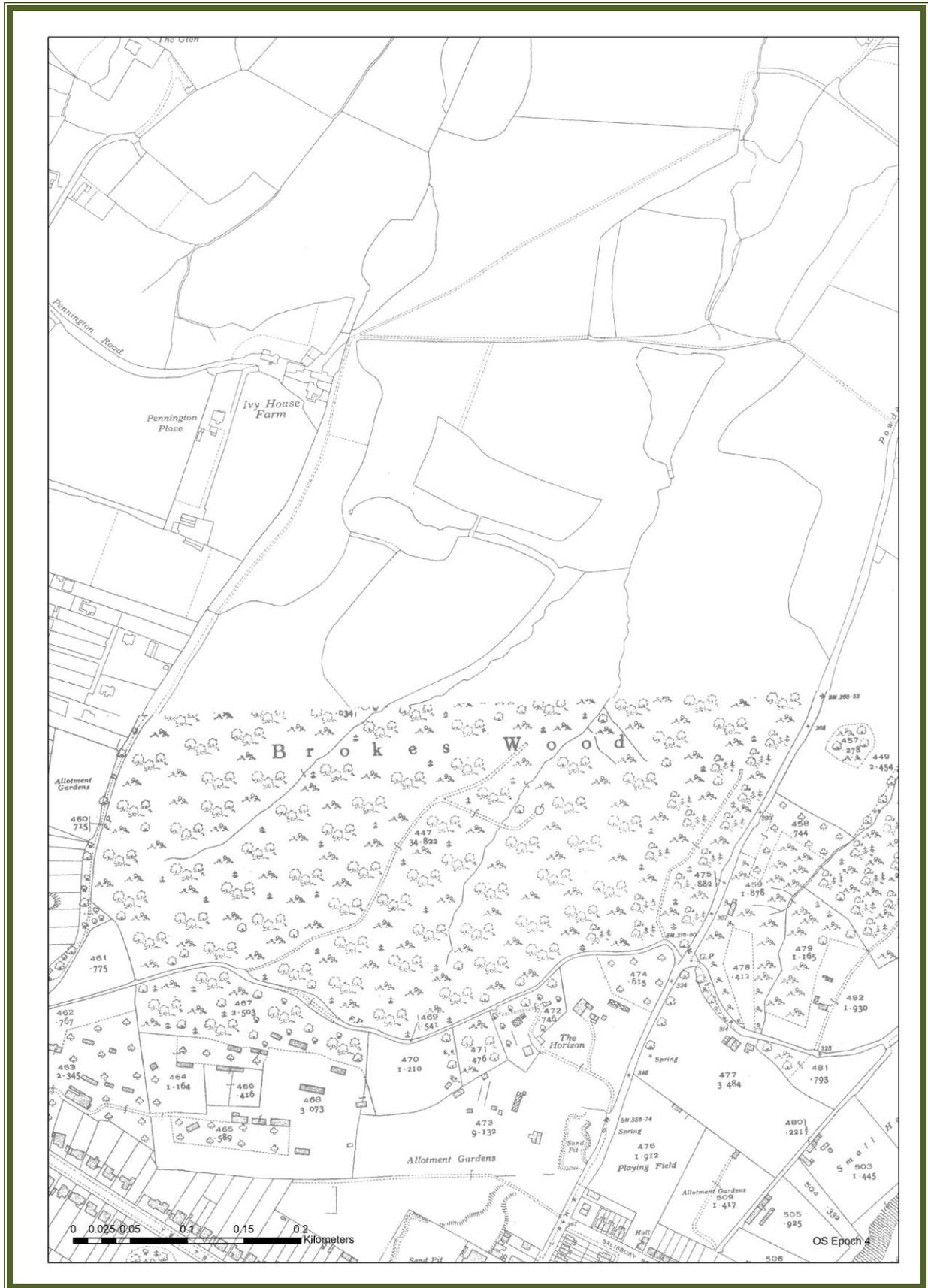
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