THE JOURNAL OF THE

WILKINSON SOCIETY.

No. 3 1975

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No. 3 : 1975

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Editor :
N.J. Clarke

THE WILKINSON SOCIETY

The Society was formed in 1972 to meet the need for an organisation to preserve the material and documentary evidence of Broseley's industrial past. Since an important part in this industrial past was played by John Wilkinson, who lived for a time at the Lawns, it was decided that the organisation should be known as the Wilkinson Society.

The aims of the Society are :

(i) to act as custodian of any relevant material and information and to make such material and information available to interested individuals and organisations;

(ii) to promote any relevant preservation activity and to assist individuals or organisations in such activity where deemed appropriate;

(iii) to provide a link with the community of Broseley for individuals or organisations undertaking local historical research.

Any available material will be added to the existing collection pf Broseley and Wilkinson relics at the Lawns, Broseley. This collection is open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays (2-4p.m.) and by appointment.

Administration of the Society is by an annually elected committee. Membership is open to anyone interested in the Society's aims and activities. These activities include illustrated lectures, social evenings, researching and exhibiting the Collection, field-trips and coach-tours. Members are kept informed by a Newsletter, and an annual Journal presents articles on the history of the Broseley area, John Wilkinson and industrial archaeology in general.

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NOTES AND NEWS

The Year's Activities

The second A.G.M. was held at "The Lawns" on Friday, 4th October 1974. The serving committee was re-elected en bloc; it was agreed that meetings should continue along present lines, and that notices should continue to be sent out for each meeting sep rately. Mr. David Holgate then spoke on "The Importance of the Excavations at Caughley" with slides and specimens to illustrate his theme.

On Friday, 1st November a meeting was held in the Church Hall, Broseley, at which Mr. Ronald James, Curator of Clive House Museum, Shrewsbury, spoke on Broseley Clay Pipes, with slides and film

A "Members' Evening" was held at "The Lawns" on Friday, 31st January 1975. Sherry was provided, and many members brought along objects of interest relating to Broseley and the surrounding area.

On Friday, 28th February Dr. W.H. Chaloner of Manchester University spoke to the Society on "The Travels and Exploits of John and William Wilkinson in France The Netherlands, Scandinavia and Silesia", illustrated with Glass Slides.

Mr. E.H. Pee spoke on "The Old Industries of Bridgnorth", illustrated with slides and a map on Friday, 11th April.

On Saturday, 7th June a party of 23 members and friends visited the Arkwright Society's headquarters at Cromford in Derbyshire, and were guided round sites of interest in the area and entertained to an excellent tea, before returning to Broseley at 7.30 p.m.

The Society held its first "Celebrity Lecture" in association with the Broseley and District Arts Union on Friday, 29th August. County Councillor Eric Robinson spoke on "Broseley's Past and Broseley's Future" and illustrated his subject with slides, many of them depicting unexpected corners of the Broseley Townscape. On Saturday, 30th August the Society held an "Open Day", with special exhibits, slides, film, and mini-coach trips to sites of local historical interest.

In addition, there were committee meetings on 17th December 1974, 13th May and 5th August 1975; and Mr. Ralph Pee spread the gospel by giving talks to Willey W.I. on 9th January, and Worfield W.I. on 17th July. During the year the membership rose from 91 to 133; and the avarage attendance at meetings was between 50 and 60.

Programme of Events for 1975-76

October 24th:	third A.G.M. followed by a talk "One Man's View of the Severn Gorge" by Mr. Maurice Hawes.
November 21st:	illustrated talk - "The Ecomusee at Le Creusot in Burgundy", by Mr. Barrie Trinder (joint meeting with the Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum).
January:	members' evening (details to be announced)
March:	talk (to be arranged)
Spring/Summer:	coach-trip (to be arranged)

The Journal

Because of the increased cost of stencils and duplicating paper, we are obliged to increase the price to non-members from 15p. to 20p. We are grateful to Mrs. Susan Beale for the typing of Journal No. 2 and this issue.

In this issue we give our usual coverage of East Shropshire (Mr. Hancox's article on glassmaking is of particular interest); but we also move further afield, to an area not unknown to John Wilkinson - the North Wales Coalfield

Copies of this issue of the Journal and back-numbers can be obtained from the Secretary, Maurice Hawes, Salop Street, Bridgnorth (25p. including postage).

Contributions to future issues of the Journal would be welcome and should be sent to the Editor, N.J. Clarke, Cranleigh, Little Wenlock, Telford.

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GLASSMAKING IN BROSELEY

Part 1 : Origins

It is not generally known that glass was made in Broseley, and the evidence for it is slender. The earliest mention of the possibility of such an undertaking is in the memorandum that John Weld of Willey compiled in 1631 (1) describing the potentialities of his estates. Here he indicated that he was undecided whether to invest in "a soneworks or in a Glasshouse" in Broseley or Willey. but it is not known what came of this (2)

We do know from John Houghtons "Periodic Letters on Husbandry and Trade" that in 1696 there was only one glasshouse in the whole of Shropshire, situated at an inconsiderable hamlet called Oakengates (3). The fact that this hamlet was claimed by Wellington, Wombridge and Shifnal parishes might indicate that the glassworks was situated on a common strip of land where the three parishes adjoined. In fact, between the years 1673 and 1676 one Abraham Bigod a glass-maker from Amblecote near Stourbridge, had built a glasshouse at Snedshill, and presumably used coal from the adjacent mines (4). (A little earlier, ironworkers throughout the land had petitioned the Crown to forbid glass-makers to use timber for their furnace fires.) It is possible that the glass-maker Bigod had been brought to this area by one of the Foleys (Lords of Amblecote) who at that time operated an iron furnace at Wombridge; for they had certainly taken glass-makers from their Amblecote manor to work in conjunction with a furnace at Stanton Drew in the Forest of Dean.

The majority of the early glass-makers were refugee Huguenot Lorrainers who had fled to England to escape religious persecution. These craftsmen were officially admitted into England under licence granted by Queen Elizabeth I, though others made illegal entry by 'working their passage' from the continent. Most of them had to pay for 'protection' in one way or another. It was an understanding that the Lorrainers should each take an Englishman as an apprentice and teach him their trade. Such English volunteers were few and far between, for they, like their masters, feared the wrath of the English Trade Guilds who feared foreign competition in any form whatever. This fear was not so much that the foreigners would use up all the available timber for their fuel needs as the foreigners' ability to operate an iron furnace equally as well as a glass furnace. The foreigners were chiefly accepted into England via the Weald of Sussex and Kent, and their product was what came to be called "Waldglass". This was much inferior to the glass of the few Venetians or Italians who practised their arts chiefly in the cities.

Meanwhile, the Lorrainers and their assistants were 'encouraged' by one means or another to move on elsewhere. They gradually moved to the west and north-west of the land. Their early requirements were simple, being heat-resisting clay for their melting pots lime sand and potash. The potash was obtained by burning of brakefern of which there was plenty growing wild in the woodlands, though later certain kinds of seaweed came to be used as a substitute. Choice of the best kind of sand was not always their lot, for the more iron contained in the sand, the more blue-tinged was their glass

By around the 1680s a number of Lorrainers had moved to the woodlands not too far removed from Market Drayton. They settled on the Shrops-Staffs. border for a few years in what was then called the Bishop's Wood, which lay beside the Burnt Wood (an indication perhaps that not all of these people were as careful in making charcoal as they might have been.) When, as a result of the fuel embargo, the foreign workmen had to fall back on the use of coal, this fuel had to have the same slow-burning and calorific values as had been provided by wood fuel, and with a minimum of ash. Such coal came to be found at a mine near Amblecote (Stourbridge); and, what to them was more important, it was discovered that the clay thereabouts was eminently suitable for the making of their 'pots' or crucibles. So something of a mass exodus took place in that direction.

However, at a place then called 'The Songles' to the east of Bishop's Wood, near Market Drayton, there dwelt in 1602 a Lorrainer glass-maker, given the name of Leggeye, who took as his wife the daughter of another glass maker. Either he or members of his family seem to have taken up residence in or near Broseley though by now they had abbreviated the family name to 'Legg'. The Legg family first appear in the Broseley parish registers around the year 1586. The Leggs appear to have earned their reputation in making clay pipes but that would not exclude their making some glass if need be.

Broseley was already noted for its manufacture of clay pipes. The early small pipes were used in the smoking of leaves and herbs, perhaps under the impression that this practice had some medicinal value; and this bears out the fact of their use before tobacco was imported into the land. They were called 'Farishes' or fairy pipes, and are to be distinguished from the later and larger clay pipes. The manufacture of clay pipes was a simple operation; a straw was incorporated at the onset to make a hole through the stem, and this straw would be consumed in the process of final baking. A glass-maker, whilst his 'metal' was becoming molten, could have used a small amount of the clay with which he lined his kilns or vessels, and surplus heat from the kiln to bake the pipe or pipes. An outlet for the sale of these pipes might well have presented itself when the glass-maker went to market.

Somewhere around the year 1700 it has been claimed that a man by the name of Benbow was making glass in Broseley; and this might explain why the aforementioned Leggs specially concentrated on clay pipes. The Benbows were an old Broseley family (and are also found in Shrewsbury), and they appear to have made their mark in a number of directions.

References:

1. Memorandum of John Weld, Salop Record Office, 1224/163
2. M.D.G. Wanklyn, 'John Weld of Willey', in W. Midlands Studies, vol.3 (1969), p.97
3. John Houghton, 'Periodic Letters on Husbandry & Trade', No.198, 15 May 1696, Staffs. Record Office, D641/2.
4. Barrie Trinder, 'The Industraal Revolution in Shropshire' (1973) p.14 and 22.

T.C. Hancox

Part 2 of this account of Glass-making in Broseley will appear in our next issue of the Journal.

WORKING AT THE BLISTS HILL

MINE FORTY YEARS AGO

So much has been said and written recently about the history of the Blists Hill Mine that I feel urged to set down my own recollections. I was winding-engineman there from 3rd January, 1935 until 26th February, 1940. It closed soon afterwards.

For the first fifteen months of working there I lived in Much Wenlock. I used to cycle to work, leaving Much Wenlock at 5.40 a.m. I travelled along the Barrow Road, passing the Round House, and arrived at Broseley Church about 6.00 a.m. Continuing down the Broseley Road I went around the S-bend, over the Free Bridge and along the Lloyds, coming out into the Coalport Road. My favourite journey was to turn right below Broseley Cemetary, go down through the Dingle, and arrive at Coalport Memorial bridge; crossing over the bridge, I usually travelled up the Coalport Road. Occasionally I walked up the Incline; at this particular time you could cycle along the path at the side of the canal.

I arrived at the Mine about 6.20 a.m. My stoker started work at 6.00a.m. to get the boiler in working order, so that I could have a supply of steam by 6.25 a.m., which was my time for starting work.

Every morning, by law, the winding engine was run, the empty cage travelling to the bottom of the shaft and then brought back to the surface again. While the cage was travelling in the shaft the banksman inspected the winding rope, etc. During this time I checked the machinery for any faults, and, everything being in safe working order, the daily report book was signed.

We then proceeded to lower the miners down the shaft: the colliery manager and the onsetter went down first, then the miners. Six miners at a time got in the cage, which was fastened by a gate on each side. The miners were all down by 6.55 a.m., which was their time for starting work. We started to wind clay immediately the miners were down.

For lighting during the winter and on dark mornings, I had a small paraffin lamp, which shone on the winding indicator. At the top of the pit the banksman hung a large paraffin lamp on the pit frame to light the miners. This, however was not much use to the engineman when it was foggy, and at times I have been days without seeing the top of the pit, due to the fog. To give you an idea how much clay was wound up the pit: in 1935 I wound 13,185 tubs, each tub of clay averaging 12 to 15 cwt.

There was not only the winding of clay to be considered; there was also the water pit. This pit was deeper than the clay pit in order to drain the water from the workings into the water pit sump. There was a considerable amount of water raised, particularly during the winter. During the week I regularly worked over until 6.00 p.m. to get the water down to a level of safety; and until 4.30 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

I did my own maintenance work, which included packing the cylinder glands, fitting new joints in the main delivery steam pipe and adjusting the two winding ropes to

suit the stroke of the winding engine. The big jobs, such as capping the winding ropes and putting new rope on, were done on a week end.

Each day after the days work was done, the banksman prepared for the next day. He went along to a building which was sutuated at the side of the canal and used as a stores for powder, detonators, candles, etc. He would then put ready for the next morning everything that the miners would need. Incidentally, the main powder magazine was situated on the side of the bank, on the other side of the canal.

The last thing I did before leaving for home was to lift into the engine house the framed plan of the mine, which I hung outside the engine house each morning. I then put shutters up to the winding house window, and locked up for the night.

Frank Turner

W. Howard Williams : an appreciation

It is with regret that we record the death in January this year of Mr. W. Howard Williams of Trench, who was known to many members of our Society.

Born at Upton-on-Severn, Worcestershire, in 1912, he later moved to East Shropshire and eventually became manager of the Co-operative Wholesale Society's Donnington branch. Ill health forced an early retirement, but Howard continued to pursue his keen interest in local history.

From the 1950s he did much of the groundwork in local industrial history, when very little was known on the subject. He contributed authoritative articles to the Shropshire Magazine on the Canals of East Shropshire (1954) and the Botfields of Old Park (1965-66); and was credited with much valuable information supplied to various authors of books on industrial and transport history. In the early 1960s he completed a list of important industrial sites within the Telford New Town area, and more recently researched the brick and tile industries of East Shropshire.

It was on the latter topic that he lectured to our Society in January 1974, and to which he was going to add a sequel in March this year (see letter on page 13). His last work, a short history of the parish of Wrockwardine Wood, was published posthumously in the summer.

Howard contributed much to our knowledge of the industrial history of East Shropshire and was always prepared to help fellow-researchers. Those of us who knew him well have lost a good friend. We extend our deepest sympathy to his widow and family.

N.J.C.

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RICHARD TREVITHICK AND THE HAZLEDINE FOUNDRY AT BRIDGNORTH

A paper on "Trevithick, Rastrick and the Haseldine Foundry, Bridgnorth" was presented at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers on January 12th 1949, by S. Morley Tonkin Esq. From a copy of the paper and other documents belonging to Mr. E.H. Pee, it appears that the foundry started up some time between 1794 and 1800. and was sold in 1830.

In 1802 or 1803 the Foundry cast the Engine for Trevithick's first dredger, and in 1804 was building 7 engines for Trevithick. Possibly it is one of these engines that is preserved in the Science Museum, London, numbered by its makers as "no. 14". In 1808 Hazeldines' built the locomotive for Trevithick's circular railway near the present Euston station. Further engines were built for Trevithick in 1812, and in 1813 (for export to South America), and in 1814-16; at which point Trevithick left for South America. He does not seem to have done business with Hazeldines after 1816. John Urpeth Rastrick seems to have been the chief engineer at Hazeldines foundry during the whole of their association with Trevithick. Most of the engines were for threshing, ploughing, grinding or pumping.

A bronze commemorative plaque was presented to Bridgnorth Corporation in 1949, by members of the Thompson family. This plaque was originally fixed to the wall of a cottage in Mill Street, very near the site of the foundry; but it is now fixed on the west side of the Clock Tower by Bridgnorth Bridge. The plaque reads:-

"TO THE MEMORY

OF TWO GREAT ENGINEERS

RICHARD TREVITHICK

B.1771 - D.1833

INVENTOR OF THE

HIGH PRESSURE STEAM ENGINE

AND

JOHN URPETH RASTRICK

B.1780 D.1856

GREAT R LWAY ENGINEER

NEAR THIS SPOT IN HAZELDINE'S FOUNDRY

RASTRICK BUILT IN 1808

TO TREVITHICK'S DESIGH

THE WORLD'S FIRST

PASSENGER LOCOMOTIVE ENGINE

ERECTED NOV. 1949."

(Incidentally, the Bridgnorth Clock Tower is built in first class Broseley Bricks !)

An unrelated, but interesting incident revealed in Mr. Morley Tonkin's paper is that Hazeldine's were given the jo of repairing Stoneway Steps Bridgnorth, in 1819. This would account for the unusual design of the top section of these steps, which incorporates a considerable amount of cast iron!

Maurice Hawes

Water pipes or cannon?

In answer to the query raised in the last issue of the Journal (p.12) concerning John Wilkinson's exports to France in 1780-81, Dr. Chaloner confirmed in his lecture to us in February this year what he wrote in 'History Today' in May 1951:

"Throughout the French participation in the War of American Independence, William (Wilkinson, who was helping to set up a state ironworks in France) kept in touch with his brother (John) in England; and these continued contacts, together with the fact that John had undertaken to supply the Paris Waterworks Company with forty miles of iron piping just before the outbreak of hostilities, helped to give rise to the myth that Jahn Wilkinson supplied the French with cannon during the war. As far as can be ascertained, the only guns manufactured by John which may have reached the French were those in a shipload captured at sea by the privateer "Black Princess" on their way from Chester to the port of London".....

"Cooperation between the three men (John Wilkinson, Matthew Boulton and James Watt) was particularly strong during the American War, when they spent much effort in successful attempts to ship two cargoes of steam-engine parts and water pipes to French customers through the war-time controls on trade with the help of passports granted by the belligerent British and French Courts. These cargoes sailed from Chepstow to France in 1780 and 1781 in the sloop "Mary", the successor to Wilkinson's brig "Bersham", lost at sea in 1778. Such transactions, although quite legal, did nothing to diminish both contemporary suspicions and later legends that the ironmaster sold munitions of war to the enemy".

N.J.C.

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THE HAWARDEN BRIDGE IRON AND STEEL WORKS, SHOTTON, NEAR CHESTER: A STUDY IN ENTREPRENEURIAL HISTORY

This firm, perhaps more then many others, owes its foundation and subsequent prosperity to a few little known, but great men. In the early 1840's John Summers, the founder of this firm and the son of a Bolton weaver, was making clogs at Dukinfield, and, like many other small manufacturers in an era of self-help, he visited the Great Exhibition of 1851 and, for £40, bought a nail-making machine.

Shortly afterwards he gave up making clogs and concentrated on the manufacture of iron nails, for which he had to buy the iron sheets. Before long his workshops proved too small so in 1856 he moved to an old engineering works at Stalybridge. By 1860 he was rolling the iron used for the nails. This was the start of an enterprise which eventually ended, by a process of "backward integration", in the manufacture on the same site of steel sheets, sometimes coated with plastic or zinc, from imported iron ore. Summers installed a mill for the hand rolling of crude steel sheets from puddled iron. By 1873 he had installed six puddling furnaces at Stalybridge and two years later there were eleven furnaces and two mills.

John Summers died in 1876 and his sons managed the firm. At this time steel was replacing iron in the boiler plate business. Competition was so keen that the firm nearly succumbed. A new mill to increase the output of nail sheet was never even fully employed; its operating costs were too high.

In the 1880's this plant was replaced by standard sheet mills whose product was largely sold to the galvanisers of the Liverpool area. Over the whole fourteen years after the death of John Summers the firm was losing well over £1,000 per year. In 1889 the youngest son of the founder, Henry Hall Summers, joined his brothers in the business.

He expanded the activities of the firm: galvanizing pots were installed to coat the black sheet produced on the site with zinc. By 1896 Stalybridge was capable of producing 400 tons of iron sheets and 150 tons of iron bar and strip a week. This expansion had been rapid and by 1895 all the available land at Stalybridge was covered with buildings, thirteen mills and a number of galvanizing pots and finishing equipment. Between 1890 and 1899 the weekly sheet capacity of John Summers went up from 300 to 1,200 tons. There were still ten puddling furnaces and the increase in sheet capacity was maintained by purchasing steel from overseas and from Workington and Barrow, which had large billet and bar capacity.

This site at Stalybridge, however, was too congested to allow for the intended expansion to supply the growing home and overseas markets; and the costs of assembling raw materials and exporting finished goods were high. H.H. Summers, the manager, decided on a new site with good access to Liverpool: 50 acres of land were acquired with an option on a further 50 acres of the reclaimed marshland across the Dee estuary from Queensferry, Flintshire. Besides, plenty more land could be reclaimed from the River Dee if it was ever required.

The site had numerous advantages. It was cheap, at 1s. per acre. There was ample room for any foreseable expansion. The river provided abundant supplies of water for the manufacturing processes and allowed effluent to be disposed of without offending neighbours. The river, too, was navigable; even as recently as 1922 coasting vessels of 150 - 200 tons were making two or three voyages a week from Connah's Quay to Liverpool or Birkenhead with steel sheets. Some vessels brought in iron from Barrow-in-Furness and scrap from Northern Ireland.

The new Hawarden Bridge Steelworks was indeed the first sheet steelworks in Britain on a site which subsequently proved able to accommodate all the changes in scale of production and technique of the next 70 years, with reasonable hope of water access to the site. Ships drawing 12' and carrying at the outside 900 tons, brought pig iron and bars early in the twentieth century into Connah's Quay where Summers had wharves.

In addition to local coal, from the mines at Buckley, bricks were made from Buckley fire clays by the Castle Fire Brick Company now owned by John Summers. These basic raw materials were brought in by rail. The proximity to Liverpool, however, was the real advantage of the site; Liverpool had admirably frequent sailings to all ports, vital in a trade where time for delivery was often short and business was almost wholly for export.

Unfortunately suitable labour was not available at Shotton and 250 employees had to be brought to the area and the mills they worked were known as the Staffordshire Mills. Accommodation was a problem and in 1910 the firm built the Garden City - a housing estate for 283 employees; thus the migrant labour was given great inducement to settle here permanently.

Until 1928 the main activity of the firm was the hand rolling of sheets by traditional methods. In addition to the mills there was galvanizing and finishing equipment. The sheets were rolled from steel bars made in America, Europe and elsewhere in this country. H.H. Summers, following the policy of his father, felt it unwise to rely on the supply of the essential steel bars from outside sources so he decided to build a bar mill and an open hearth steel plant at Hawarden Bridge. So in 1902 No.1 steelworks, consisting of ten open hearth furnaces of 50 tons' capacity and a bar mill, came into production to supply bars for the sheet mills, which by this time had risen to 30 in number.

The melting shop was largely supplied with pig iron from the Etruria Works of the Shelton Iron, Steel and Coal Company of North Staffordshire; in 1920 Summers purchased this firm to avoid entire dependence on outside sources for pig iron and coal. The Shelton firm had hitherto not been very successful: it had never paid more than 7½% dividend on its ordinary shares and Summers bought them for one 7½% newly created preference share and 5s. in cash in exchange for each ordinary share.

In the 1920s Summers were the chief steel sheet makers in Britain, but even so were not working to capacity. The energetic H.H. Summers put forward in 1936 a plan for a continuous strip mill at Hawarden Bridge to be done with the minimum disturbance to employment. After complicated financial negotiations a Sendzimir mill was installed - the first strip mill in Britain for cold rolling strip up to 40" wide.

The rapid progress made in America in both hot and cold continuous rolling had been carefully studied by the Company for many years, and in 1937 Mr. Richard Summers and Mr. Neville Rollason, Managing Director, crossed the Atlantic to consult Mr. Lorenz Iverson, President of the Nesta Machine Company of Pittsburg, and inspect the strip mill installations. They recommended that tha firm must have new and up-to-date hot and cold continuous strip mills if they were to maintain their position as leaders of the industry in Great Britain, and that negotiations should be opened with the Nesta Company for the supply and installation of the plant. The Board unanimously accepted this advice. The final items of equipment were received on September 19th, 1939. The mill started pro uction on November 9th, 1939 after a minimum of teething troubles. The introduction of this new mill was so successful that by 1947 the firm was producing about 8,000 tons of sheet steel a week and was employing 5,850 men.

The success of this family concern was due to the enterprise of a number of people, not so well known, but in their own way surely worthy of comparison with the Darbys, Wilkinsons and Bessemer, to name but a few.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper is adapted from the author's thesis "The Deeside of North Wales - A Study in Industrial Location" (M. Phil. London 1973), from a paper in Flintshire Historical Publications Volume 25 1971 - 1972 pp. 103 - 123 "The Hawarden Bridge, Shotton, Chester, Iron and Steel Works of Messrs. John Summers & Co.". (These contain full references to sources).

P.S. Richards

The Jackfield Decorative Tile Industry

This is the title of the first of a series of information sheets published by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, price 5p. The text is by Tony Herbert, who gave a talk on this subject to our Society last year.

In the introduction Tony writes: "The basic raw material for a tile is clay. This is abundant in the Ironbridge Gorge and of excellent quality. Although used for centuries previously it was not until the mid-nineteenth century that decorative tile-making grew rapidly to become an important industry whose products were exported to many parts of the world. The two best known companies concerned were Maws and Craven Dunnills". And he then goes on to give a brief history of these two firms and their products.

The pamphlet also includes three interesting photographs: Maws' original Benthall Works in 1859; Women making mosaics at Craven Dunnills; and Maws' "Benthall" works in Jackfield.

N.J.C.

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THE SOCIETY'S COLLECTION

While the number of items collected during the past year has not been great, some items of outstanding interest have been acquired, together with some very useful equipment.

As a direct result of the lecture by Dr. W.H. Chaloner, a feature of which was the necessity for the projection of 3¼" slides, we have been given a very fine specimen of a universal slide projector and screen. Made in 1950 by Johnsons of Hendon and rejoicing in the name of Johnsons model 12 optiscope, it was given by Mr. J. D'Arcy of Quatford Wood. Also as a result of the same lecture, Mr. W.E. Ruby of Highley has presented us with not only a small collection of old hand painted "magic lantern" slides but a 16 m.m. Bell and Howell cine camera and projector complete. While this equipment is hardly "Wilkinsonia" and may not be quite so convenient to use as its modern counterparts, we do now have a comprehensive projection system obviating the usual problems of borrowing and transportation.

Some very fine specimens of Maws tiles, which by association were certainly made at Benthall, have been given by Miss A. Lloyd, together with a quite unique cast-iron mole trap. Mr. E.A. Powell of Linley Green has contributed a cast-iron pestle and a fine specimen of an old type of surveyor's chain. A specialised type of hand saw, which it is believed was used for cutting down pit props when the gallery was moved forward, forms a welcome addition to our small collection of mining equipment, as does a decorated cast-iron door scraper to our collection of cast iron. These were given by Mr. F. Gallagher of Broseley. An iron tramway sleeper from the Coneybury Ironworks has been given by Mr. R. Roberts of Coneybury.

The major item acquired this year was of course the iron roof obtained from the demolition of No. 9 Bridgnorth Road and very carefully salvaged, at some expense, by the technical staff of the Bridgnorth District Council. Almost certainly made by Onions Foundry, Foundry Lane, it is an outstanding example of the extension of the use of cast-iron in the early 19th century. It is a completely prefabricated roof structure for a cottage 20ft. x 12ft. and, although obviously designed for quantity production, the whereabouts of any others of the same pattern is not known. Pending a permanent public home for this monument to the skill of early 19th century foundry workers, it is at present in the course of repair and erection at the Lawns. We have been fortunate in obtaining the services of a highly skilled blacksm th, Mr. South of Brockton, who has made a superb job of such repairs as have been carried out to date. More repairs are in progress and some replacements will be necessary. The work is likely to be costly but it is felt that a real effort must be made to preserve such a unique exhibit. It is probably the only structure of its kind on display in the country.

As an attraction for the Open Day in connection with Brosely Gala week, a model was made of the New Willey Ironworks. This model is not intended as an authentic permanent record and is in fact largely conjectural. It does however help to clarify the general lay-out and will, it is hoped, form a starting point for future field-work.

To house this rather large exhibit the collection has been drastically re-arranged and, by using extra accommodation, now consists of three sections showing various industrial activities.

Ralph Pee

CORRESPONDENCE

The Journal

Whilst searching through my scrap-books of newspaper cuttings, I came across the enclosed (a cutting from the Shrewsbury Chronicle, dated 29.10.54, entitled "Famous Ironmaster was of Broseley Descent", and dealing with the career of Josiah John Guest of Dowlais, 1785-1852) which I think may prove of interest to you. With a little research and checking on various points it could provide you with a leading article for the Journal.

I read my copy of the Journal with great interest. The articles do read as authoritative - which is a great asset. No doubt you have some good people in the Society.

I have made good progress turning my notes into the talk for March. I have some way to go yet .....

W. Howard Williams,
21 Priestland Terrace,
Furnace Lane,
Trench, Telford.

October 1974.

(Howard's death in January deprived us of the opportunity of hearing his second talk on the Brick and Tile Works of the Broseley area. I hope to work on the newspaper cutting he provided, and put together some notes for the next Journal. - Ed.)

Pottery Workers

I was most interested to read the article in Journal No. 2 of the Wilkinson Society regarding the migration of pottery workers to Broseley from Stoke-on-Trent, and would be very pleased to hear of any future developments on this subject.

Also of interest is the reference on page 14 to moulds used for the manufacture of slipware, in the possession of the Society. I wonder if it would be possible to obtain photographs of the moulds, or perhaps it could be arranged for a member of my staff to photograph the items.

Any help in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

A.R. Mountford,
Director,
City Museum & Art Gallery,
Hanley,
Stoke-on-Trent.

June 1975

(I have passed Mr. Mountford's comments about pottery workers to Mr. Hawes, and - with Mr. Pee's permission - invited him to visit the Lawns and photograph the slipware moulds. - Ed.)