

### Arthur Raistrick, our honoured Vice President

In addition to the 'working Council' of the Association: officials, editors and those people who look after conservation matters and the like, the AIA has sought to honour, with non-elective Vice-Presidencies those who have supported for many years the cause of industrial and technological history.

In 1984 George Watkins . . . 'Mr Stationary Steam' became the Association's first Honorary Vice-President and this autumn Dr Arthur Raistrick accepted the Council's invitation to join him.

Like George Watkins, Arthur Raistrick has campaigned for the recognition of 'industrial archaeology' for many, many years. Only of course it wasn't called that until comparatively recently.

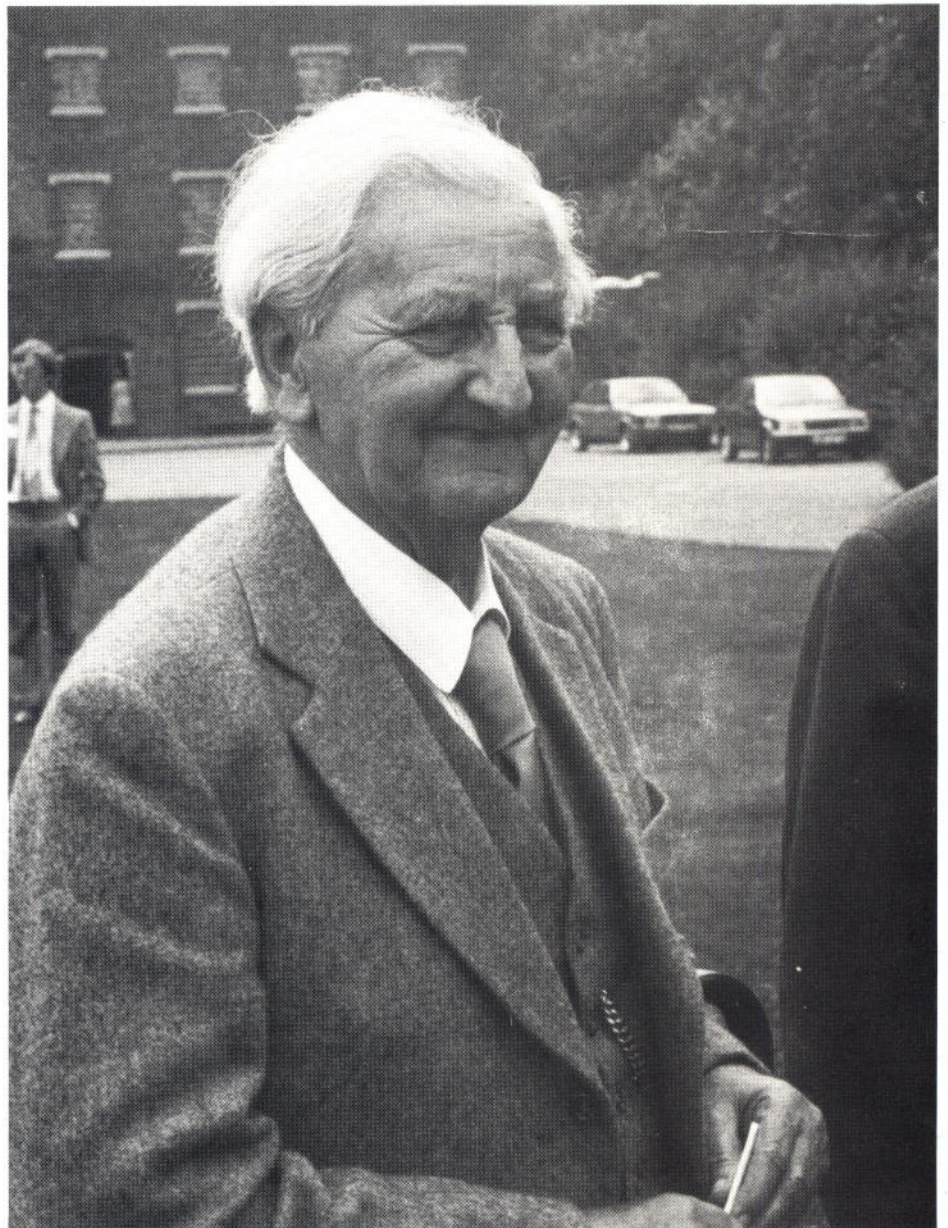
After his early years at Bradford Grammar School he gained an Honours degree in Civil Engineering at Leeds University, taking MSc and PhD degrees in geology, also at Leeds. He undertook research into mining geology from 1924 and in 1929 was appointed lecturer, later reader, in Geology applied to mining and civil engineering, at King's College, the University of Durham. A position he held until 1956. From 1945 until 1970 he was an Extra-Mural Tutor at the Universities of Leeds, Durham and Newcastle-upon-Tyne and has honorary degrees from Leeds and Bradford Universities. He has been a WEA lecturer since 1922. His books include: *Two centuries of industrial welfare* (The London Lead Company), *Dynasty of Ironfounders*, *The Darbys of Coalbrookdale*, *Quakers in Science and Industry*, *History of Lead Mining in the Pennines*, *Industrial Archaeology: an historical survey*, *Lead Mining in the Mid-Pennines*, *the Lead Industry of Wensleydale and Swaledale* and many books on Yorkshire life and work in the county he loves so dearly. He has been awarded the Clough Medal of the Scottish Geological Society, the Sorby Medal of the Yorkshire Geological Society and the Lyell Award of the Geological Society.

Those who were privileged to hear Arthur Raistrick give the Rolt Memorial Lecture at the

AIA Ironbridge Conference in 1979 will know that he has been deeply involved with Coalbrookdale for many years and with the Ironbridge Gorge Museum project since its inception.

*Arthur Raistrick at Coalbrookdale. A photograph taken at the opening of the Old Furnace building in July 1982.*

But after all these years and with all the many aspects of Industrial History/Archaeology he has been involved in Arthur Raistrick has never lost his basic enthusiasm. His meticulous research conclusions, his insatiable curiosity for facts and his simple philosophy for life, all combine to make him the most approachable of men.



In 1986 he will be 90 years of age. We look forward confidently to his being our honoured Honorary Vice-President for many years.

In AIA Bulletin 12/4 (the last one) we featured an article by Derek Brumhead on the remarkable series of Fire Insurance Plans produced by Charles E Goad Limited between 1886 and 1970. Unfortunately we quoted incorrect prices and would like to thank those people who pointed this out. For the record the **full catalogue** is **£25**, a **catalogue of the UK** section only is **£15**, individual sheets cost from **£2** (poor condition) to **£5** (good condition) and the A4 booklet *British Fire Insurance Plans* cost **£2.00** including postage.

Industrial archaeology is all things to all people and one of the most rewarding aspects of our study takes place when several people, each with a different talent and united by enthusiasm get together.

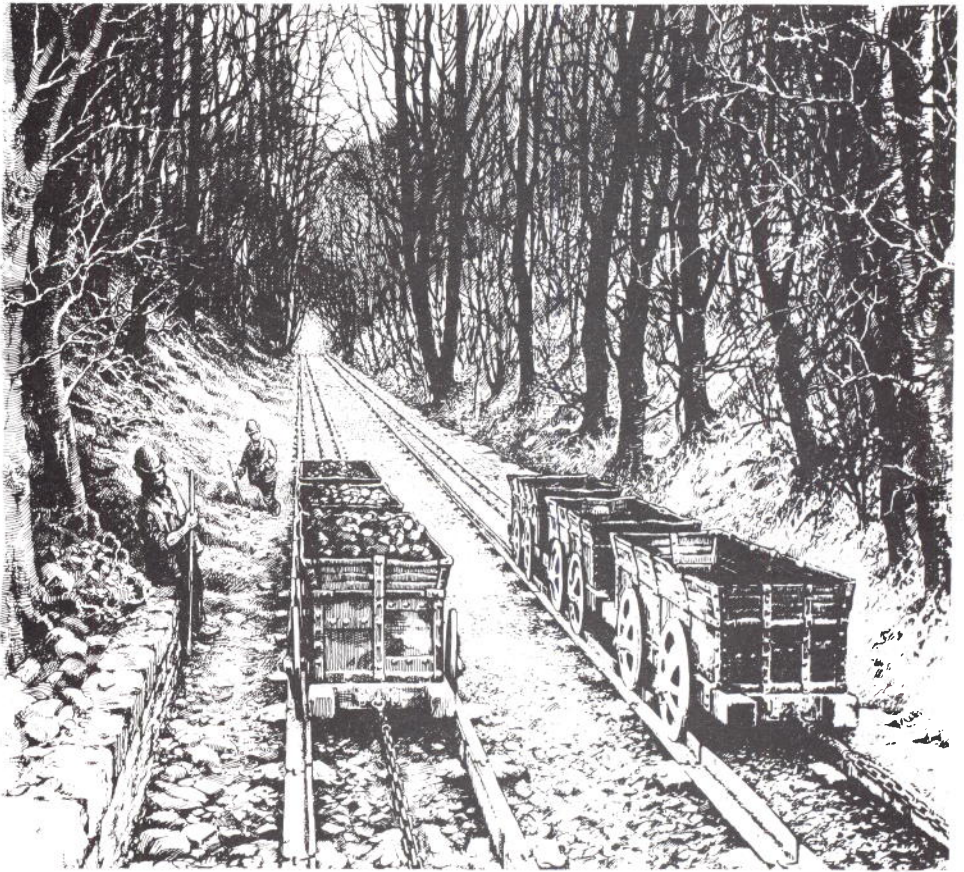
Such an enterprise is the splendid little book entitled *Cordell Country*, written by Chris Barber (a journalist and outdoor enthusiast) illustrated by Michael Blackmore (an artist and admirer of industrial landscapes) and supported by industrial archaeologists Adrian Babbidge and John van Laun, who have spent many hours exploring the area around Garnddyrys near Blaenavon in South Wales.

Garnddyrys was, but no longer is, a thriving industrial community at the head of the eastern valley above Blaenavon in Gwent (then Monmouthshire) where in 1789, an iron puddling furnace began operations. It was quickly followed by four others and within a relatively short time these hillside forges were turning out 300 tons/week of finished product. Iron bars and rails which were sent to many parts of Britain and overseas. In the 1850s it produced the iron for the famous Crumlin viaduct.

The success of the iron producing district around Blaenavon brought about the downfall of Garnddyrys which was thought to be in a most inconvenient place in relation to Blaenavon and more importantly with regard to Newport and potential customers. In 1853 a shareholders meeting decided to recommend the dismantling of the ironworks and its re-erection at the Forge works at Blaenavon and this was carried out in 1860.

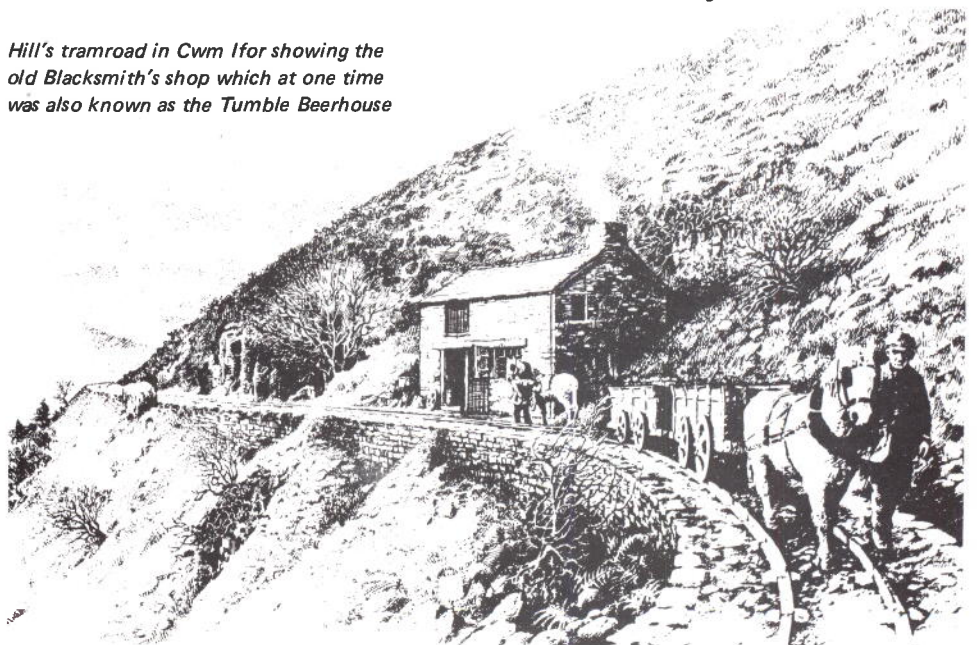
From then on Garnddyrys quickly fell into disrepair, perhaps ruins would be a better word, and was all but forgotten until 1959 when a one-time civil servant from Llanellen launched what was to become a best selling novel: *Rape of the Fair Country*. Alexander Cordell's story of the 19th century iron industry in the Blaenavon area in general and Garnddyrys in particular (he spells it Garndyrus) has sold several million copies and has been translated into seventeen languages, and the story is based on careful research into the happenings before, during and after the Chartist Rebellion in and around this one time busy industrial community which is no more.

This book certainly inspired Chris Barber to find out more about Garnddyrys and the events which resulted in Alexander Cordell producing such evocative passages as *'The mountain was shuddering to the forge hammers of Garndyrus, and faintly on the wind came the plaintive singing of the Irish haulers. Llanfoist farms were sleeping in the pit-blackness below, their blind windows winking at the stars, and Abergavenny*



Looking down the Llanfoist incline

Hill's tramroad in Cwm Ifor showing the old Blacksmith's shop which at one time was also known as the Tumble Beerhouse



was a town of dead, strangled by the ribbon of the Usk that gleamed and flashed in to scudding moonlight.'

The result, after many years of meticulous preparation, is *Cordell Country*. It is basically an 80 page guide to the area bounded by Brynmawr, Abergavenny and Blaenavon with detailed route instructions for six separate walks which take in all the major industrial sites mentioned in *Rape of the Fair Country*. There are twenty-three photographs, all of historic places and people and including such gems as *Blaenavon Bessemer Converters in 1896* and *Pwll-du limestone quarry workers in 1890*. And there are twenty-seven drawings and maps, some very old such as *Natyglo ironworks in 1820* but many modern reconstructions by Michael

Blackmore such as those illustrated here, which show the few present day remnants on the mountain road from Abergavenny to Clydach in a new and revealing way.

Would that all industrial archaeological investigations ended in such a commendable way but few can be inspired by such rhetoric and blessed with such dedicated persistence and sympathetic professionalism.

*Cordell Country* can be obtained from Blorenge Books, 3 Holywell Road, Abergavenny, Gwent NP7 5LP at £4.20 plus postage and packing.

**Smethwick New Pumping Station.** The Pumping Station is a Grade II Listed Building which occupies a prominent position between the Old

and New Main Line Canals, constructed by Smeaton and Telford respectively, at Brasshouse Lane, Smethwick. Completed in 1892, it was the last of its kind on the Birmingham Canal Navigation and remained working until the early 1920s. Unfortunately the machinery was scrapped and the building was part filled with dredgings. In addition, the freestanding chimney was demolished.

From about 1930 to 1982 the Pumping Station stood unused and became derelict. The building is now being restored for use as a canal interpretation centre under the Manpower Services Commission Agency and will form the focus of a large Conservation Area.

As part of the project an appropriate Tangeye pumping engine has been obtained and will be restored. Two Lancashire boilers have also been located and will be installed. One of the boilers is an 8 ft diameter Thomson and has a cast front, the other is a 7ft 6in diameter Danks with a rivetted plate front.

Mr M W Harris would be pleased if AIA members knew of this project. The two boilers are to be returned to their original coal fired state and he would be grateful for any help in providing or locating suitable coal doors, grates and other associated equipment. A Mr McIlroy is responsible for the project and can be contacted at P O Box 42, Wigmore, Pennyhill Lane, West Bromwich, Sandwell, West Midlands B71 3RZ or by telephoning 021-569-4619.

## BIRMINGHAM RAILWAY MUSEUM



**Two of a Kind.** Grant aid from the West Midlands County Council will enable Birmingham Railway Museum to return a second GWR 'Castle' class locomotive to working order. Subject to a final inspection once the component parts are dismantled, it is expected that the chosen locomotive will be No 5080 'Defiant'. This will enable a true GWR 'Castle' to be seen in action at Tyseley and further afield. (7029 'Clun Castle' was BR- built in 1950).

It is likely, however, that the boiler from No 7027 'Thornbury Castle' will be used in the rebuild as this has a 3-row superheater and the firebox contains some monel stays.

Warley College of Technology will be assisting with the machining work required, especially on the motion and the provision of skilled labour will be funded by the Manpower Services Commission. Work is expected to take some eighteen months. 'Defiant' will be the first ex-Barry locomotive to be returned to working order by the Museum.

### First Phase of Reconstruction of the GWR

**Stores Building to Begin.** Birmingham Railway Museum has received confirmation of a £10,000 grant to be made by the Museums and Galleries Commission to enable the first phase of reconstruction of the old GWR stores building at Tyseley. The grant will enable part of the ground floor to be rebuilt (allowing for further expansion at a later date). Currently the building is used to accommodate the two Leamington and Warwick horse trams, but when these are removed for restoration the building will be

available for exhibitions and small relics display.

The horse trams themselves have also become the subjects of a Science Museum grant in respect of their purchase and restoration costs. The first to be tackled will be No 8, built by the Midland Railway Carriage and Wagon Co in 1899, this being in the more complete condition of the two. No 8 was the last horse tram to enter service in Leamington and Warwick and only ran for six years until the electrification of the tramway in 1905. It was then sold off for £5 for use as living accommodation and miraculously survived in this guise for 79 years before being rescued by the Museum last year.

**The Gunpowder Mills Study Group** held its second meeting on 12th October at the North Woolwich Station Museum in east London, a recently opened museum of the Great Eastern Railway.

Talks were given by Wesley Harry on the history of **Woolwich Arsenal**, by Malcolm McLaren on the **Royal Gunpowder Mills at Waltham Abbey** and by Bryan Earl on the technology of the transition from black powder to modern explosives. Short contributions from members included a talk on early powder making in the fortifications of Southampton, slides of the remains of gunpowder mills in Scotland and an account of the archaeological and conservation work being undertaken by Cork County Council at the site of the former government factory at Ballinacollig in the Republic of Ireland.

Progress is being made in preparing a gazetteer of gunpowder sites in Britain. The Group plans to hold its next London meeting in autumn 1986 and to arrange a provincial visit in the spring. Several articles and books by members have been published recently: Glenyn Crocker '*A guide to the Chilworth gunpowder mills*' Surrey Industrial History Group, 1985. 16pp, £0.60.

Keith Fairclough '*Early gunpowder production at Waltham*', Essex Journal, Vol 20, No 1, Spring 1985, 11-16.

P Philo and J Mills '*The Bedfont gunpowder mills*' London Archaeologist, Vol 5, No 4, Autumn 1985, 94-102 (copies available from P Philo at the address below @ £1.00 inc p&sp). Tom Pritchard, Jack Evans and Sydney Johnson '*The old gunpowder factory at Glynneath*'. Merthyr Tydfil & District Naturalists' Society, 1985. 46pp, £2.50.

The Group now has an informal membership of about 50 people who are all actively engaged in research projects. Further information from Phil Philo, Gunnersbury Park Museum, London W3 8LQ.

**Historic Farm Buildings Group Conference.** In rural counties such as Hampshire, and Norfolk, farming is a very important industry, and historic farm buildings and machinery are thus of considerable interest to local industrial archaeologists. Relatively recently a national group has been formed, concerned with historic farm buildings, and this body held a weekend Conference from 11 - 13 October, at West Dean College, near Chichester.

Friday evening and Saturday were devoted to lectures, the subjects of which were wide ranging. **Peter White**, of HBMC spoke about the Commission's role in the protection of outstanding examples of farm buildings, and **Frances Campbell** talked on the part which the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food could play in conser-

vation. The SPAB were represented, and participants were provided with a good deal of background information about the Society's very important Domesday Barns Survey. Two speakers gave details of survey work being undertaken — **Jane Wade** talking about the survey which she and her students from Canterbury College of art are doing in Kent, and **Edwin Course** describing the Farm Survey, which the Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group are undertaking in Hampshire.

The final day of the conference was devoted to Field Visits. **Richard Harris** of the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum had already introduced the farms to be visited in a lecture the previous day, and participants were issued with a quantity of very useful written material to assist their study. In the morning, we visited three linked farms at Upwaltham, and this provided the opportunity to see a working Downland farmstead. After lunch, we went to Stag Park Farm, a fascinating 'Model' farm on the Petworth Estate — an unexpected bonus was the inclusion of a drive through Petworth Park with its magnificent herds of deer, and glimpses of the mansion across the lake.

About fifty people attended the Historic Farm Buildings Group's Conference, which also included the Group's first Annual General Meeting. It is hoped to hold a similar event next Autumn, in East Anglia, and this should be of interest to many AIA members. Anyone who would like to join the group, should write to its Secretary, Roy Brigden, at the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading, PO Box 229, Reading RG6 2AG. Tel: (0734) 875123.

**Officers and Committee of the Group.** Chairman: Mr Nigel Harvey, Vice-Chairman: Mr Andrew Patterson (Science Museum), Secretary: Mr Roy Brigden (Museum of English Rural Life), Treasurer: Mr Nicholas Molyneux. Committee: Miss Frances Campbell (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food), Mr Stephen Croad (Royal Commission on Historical Monuments), Mrs Susan Denyer (National Trust), Miss Carole Ryan (Shropshire County Council), Mr John Severn, Miss Jane Wade (Canterbury College of Art), Dr Susanna Wade-Martins (University of East Anglia), Dr Eurwyn William (Welsh Folk Museum), Mr Christopher Zeuner (Weald and Downland Open Air Museum).

**Objects of the Group.** The objects of the Group are the advancement of the study of the history of farm buildings in the British Isles, including their related equipment and the agrarian and economic systems of which they formed part, and the promotion, where appropriate, of their conservation.

**Membership.** Membership is open to all interested in the past, present and future of old farm buildings.

**Subscription** is £5 per annum, payable on January 1st.

*Pam Moore*

**National Stone Centre.** A somewhat overlooked industry, the quarrying of stone has not generally been a topic to stir the imagination. Yet, Peter Stanier has shown in his interesting article in the *Industrial Archaeology Review* (Spring 1985) on '*The granite quarrying industry in Devon and Cornwall: Part 1 1800-1910*', a study of