

BULLETIN 1.5

1975

MUSEUM DEVELOPMENTS

Herefordshire Waterworks Museum, 'the first waterworks museum in Europe' was opened at Broomy Hill Pumping Station, Hereford on 6 April by Lord Brecon. Not only the two vertical pumping engines installed by Worth Mackenzie of Stockton on Tees at the turn of the century have been preserved, but also the majority of the original 1856 waterworks — filter beds, reservoir, and an Italianate water tower of 1883. The original beam pumping engines were removed some years ago, but the space will be filled with other water works equipment mainly from Herefordshire, including gas, oil, petrol and electric-powered pumps, and a Cornish pumping engine. It is proposed to construct a 2ft gauge railway, of the type used in waterworks to supply the filter beds with fresh sand and removal of the dirty medium, which will convey visitors around the site and down to an inlet point on the River Wye. It is hoped to have the Worth Mackenzie engines (a vertical type of 1895 and a two-cylindrical engine of 1906) in steam before long, with the help of a flat-fronted hand-fired Lancashire boiler which survives on the site. But only part of the total complex is presently open to the public and much remains to be done. Offers of help or working parties will be welcomed by J. L. Townsend of Didley Cottage, New Mills, Clehonger, Hereford, telephone Madley 644.

The Kew Bridge Engine Trust launched a public appeal recently to raise £64,000 to develop the Kew Bridge Station to be held on lease from the Thames Water Authority as a working museum of London's water supply. The jewels in Kew's crown are surely the magnificent 100" Cornish engine by Harveys of Hayle (the biggest in Britain) and the Maudslay engine of 1838, converted to the Cornish principle in 1848 and now the only Maudslay engine known to survive anywhere. Most of the original boilers were scrapped soon after pumping ceased in 1944, but with remarkable foresight the Metropolitan Water Board resisted the threatened metamorphosis of their engines into Spitfires, and designated Kew Bridge a museum station. The success and popularity of the steam weekends at Crofton Pumping Station on the Kennet and Avon Canal have encouraged the committee planning the developments at Kew Bridge to get at least some of the monster engines back in steam; when running 'light' even the 100" engine's appetite for steam will be moderate, and a boiler has recently been acquired from a hospital in Berkshire to

provide part of the required steam facility. It is hoped to have the smallest and earliest of the four beam engines (Boulton and Watt, 1820) in steam by October. Further details from the Trust Secretary, Nick Reynolds, 11 The Vinyard, Richmond, Surrey. Telephone 01-948-1577.

The first phase of a new industrial museum at Park Bridge, Ashton under Lyne, Manchester, was opened early in April. In the valley of the River Medlock which flows through Park Bridge are a number of important sites including an engine house thought to have housed a Newcomen engine which drained a coal mine from 1705, and Samuel Lees' ironworks of 1786, which made rollers for textile machinery but itself became a cotton mill in 1886. The new museum which is sponsored by the Medlock and Tame Valley Conservation Association, is in a stable block with a display of old photographs of Park Bridge, an aquarium containing freshwater fish from the Medlock and Tame Valleys and other natural history material. The Society plans to obtain larger premises to display some of the larger industrial items presently in store. It is hoped that the 500 h.p. cross-compound vertical steam engine from Hardman and Ingham's Diamond Ropeworks at Royton near Oldham may eventually be displayed there for it was built at nearby Guide Bridge by Scott and Hodgson in 1912. Just as most of the larger holes in the English countryside are supposed to have been dug by French prisoners of war (perhaps we are ashamed of having worked so hard) so most of the steam engines in mills and factories seem to have been intended for ships of some sort: in this particular case the Scott and Hodgson two-crank engine, with a 12ft diameter flywheel and 14 rope grooves, is locally described as having been built for a tugboat.

Further details of the Park Bridge museum project from Mrs Caroline Blane, Westerhill House, Park Bridge, Ashton under Lyne, Manchester. Tel 061-330-1017.

ETRURIA, STOKE ON TRENT

Good news from the Potteries. The City of Stoke on Trent has decided to bring back life to this derelict part of the city. The scheme, which will be done in conjunction with British Waterways and private developers involves land reclamation the establishment of a canal museum where the Caldron Canal meets the Trent and Mersey Canal, and the preservation and restoration to working order of Shirley's Etruscan Bone Mill. The location was visited by delegates to last year's AIA Conference at Keele, and is well known to people interested in Industrial Archaeology. The local

authority is to be praised for bringing interested bodies into their discussions of the scheme, including canal societies and Staffordshire I.A.S. Though funds are very short at the moment, the scheme is to go ahead, the first phase involving land reclamation. Subsequently a small canal side village will be built, and finally the Etruscan Bone Mill with its 1850s beam engine restored to working order and, if the recommendations of Staffordshire I.A.S. are followed, run in steam.

The exact location is some quarter mile south of Wedgwood's Village of Etruria, on the Trent-Mersey Canal.

TIPTON, WEST MIDLANDS. LLOYDS PROVING HOUSE

Not such good news here. The Victorian Proving House, built by Lloyds for the testing of chains made in the area, is now almost past the point of no return. A listed building, category one, it stood empty and inviting vandalism. The inevitable has happened, and on a large scale so that much of the roof has caved in. (The vandals must have made a very determined effort to pull down cast iron pillars which held up the roof in order to do this). Perhaps this kind of 'demolition by default' is taking place elsewhere, and if so it should be resisted.

EVENTS

June 10 – July 1. Exhibition at Institution of Civil Engineers, London to mark 150th anniversary of Brunel's Thames Tunnel. Arranged by the British Tunnelling Society.

June 28 – 29. Harbour Regatta and Rally of Boats, Bristol City Docks. Details from P. Scully, 32 Sutton Avenue, Brislington, Bristol 4.

June 26 – 29. Steaming of Crofton Pumps, Great Bedwyn, Wilts. A 'long weekend' mainly for the benefit of school parties, giving these remarkable Boulton and Watt engines a rare opportunity to settle down to 4 days continuous steaming.

Saturday July 19. Re-opening of Pocklington Canal, York. Enquiries to Mrs S. M. Nix, 74 Westminster Road, York.

August 23 – 25. I.W.A. Festival, York. Accent on the prospects for a further revival of commercial carrying on the Yorkshire waterways.

Summer Sundays. Middleton Top Engine House (Cromford and High Peak Railway) is open on Sundays from 10.30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

The 1849 Watt single acting beam pumping engine, presently being restored by the Cromford Canal Society, may be steamed again this autumn.

and as if you might have forgotten:-

Stockton and Darlington Railway 150th anniversary celebrations get under way early in June. The 'Locomotion' replica will appear in steam at various venues. Excitement mounts during August, with the British Rail Staff Association Leek Club Show at

Shildon on 30 August, followed the next day by a Brass Band and Choir Concert and the Grand Cavalcade of Steam Locomotives. (will we be able to hear the locos for the chatter of Instamatics?) Details of events and booking forms from "Visit Northumbria", 7 North Road, Durham City. Telephone 0385 65042/3.

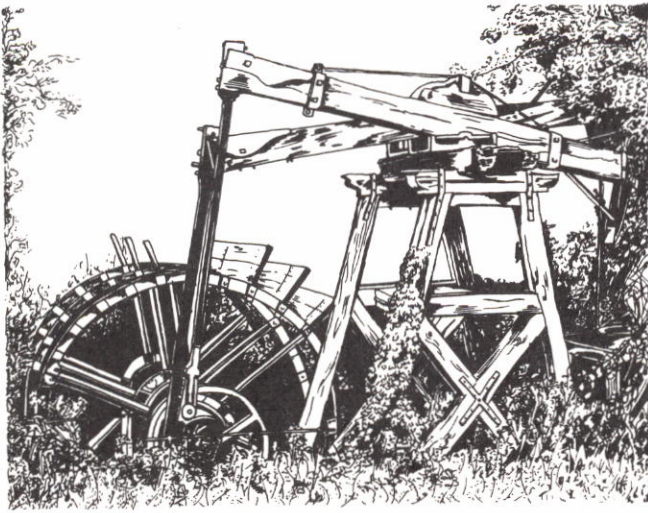
MELINGRIFFITH WATER PUMP TO BE RESTORED

From the new County of South Glamorgan comes news that the dilapidated but still complete water pump at Melingriffith (Griffiths Mill) tinplate works at Whitchurch near Cardiff is to be restored, largely by voluntary effort, spearheaded by the Oxford House IA Society of Risca and the Inland Waterways Association, South Wales Section. Volunteers from these organisations have been progressively clearing the site since October 1974 and are now soliciting support from local firms in the form of materials and equipment to restore the pump.

Puddled iron from the nearby Pentyrch Ironworks was rolled at Melingriffith at the end of the 18th century with power from an overshot waterwheel on the River Taff. But a dispute arose when the Glamorganshire Canal Company abstracted more than its agreed share of water from the Taff, resulting in a stoppage of the rolling mills during dry summers. A settlement was reached in 1806 and the Canal Company provided a capital sum of £700 to build a pump which would supply water from the Taff to the Canal below the Melingriffith works, thus reducing the need to take water from the higher reaches of the river and maintaining the flow over the Melingriffith Company's wheel.

Construction of the pump was a joint effort between Rennie & Jessop, and it was put to work in 1807. It still stands on the original site beside the Taff Feeder where it emerges below the site of the tinplate works, but the Canal nearby is now covered in and the lock demolished. A broad cast iron undershot wheel, some of whose wooden floats still survive, operated 2 lift pumps alternately through cranks, two wooden beams with wrought iron trusses and wrought iron chains to provide the sort of 'parallel motion' employed in Newcomen engines. The pumps discharged into a wooden launder which connected with the canal. The settlement made by the Canal Company allowed for £90 p.a. to be provided for maintenance of the machinery.

Two students of the Welsh School of Architecture prepared measured drawings of the pump in 1963 and their survey records are preserved there. Now that restoration is likely through local initiatives, the ivy and other vegetation that has threatened to hide the structure for ever is being brought under control. So the luxuriant and Disneyesque embellishments shown in the drawing (copied by Helen Farey from a recent photograph) will disappear for the benefit of visitors to the site.



MELLINGRIFFITH WATER PUMP.

PUBLICATIONS

A Guide to the Industrial Heritage of Merseyside, published by the North Western Society for Industrial Archaeology and History, rapidly sold out its first print order and had to be reprinted within weeks of publication. It gives the first comprehensive list of sites of interest to the social and industrial historian and includes photographs of the Society's selection of 'Top Ten' local sites. It attracted a favourable review in *The Times* when it was published in January and there are plans to use the gazetteer as the basis for a 20 or 25 minute film commissioned by Liverpool Heritage Bureau as part of its contribution to European Architectural Heritage Year. Copies of the Guide are available by post from the Society's Hon. Treasurer, Paul Rees, c/o Merseyside County Museums, William Brown Street, Liverpool, L3 8EN, or in person from the museum shop and in selected bookshops in and around Liverpool. The price is 45p.

The Heavens Reflect our Labours, an evocative and fascinating study of Scunthorpe's early iron and steel industry, copiously illustrated with contemporary photographs from the collection of Scunthorpe Museum and Art Gallery. Of particular interest to the industrial psychologist is a photograph of the hand-charged No 2 furnace on its last day of operation on January 6 1950. Chalked on the side is the valediction:-

"Now is the hour
for me to say goodbye.
They'll be pulling me down now
And there'll be many a sigh
When I am gone, oh please remember me
Please write my name and life in History.
Farewell Old Pal."

Dark Satanic mills?

The booklet is obtainable from the Museum and Art Gallery, Oswald Road, Scunthorpe. Price 30p including postage.

English Cottages and Small Farmhouses, available from the Arts Council Shop, 28 Sackville Street, London W1 at 55p including postage is a closely

written and stimulating catalogue to the Arts Council exhibition of the same name, on tour for the rest of the year. The exhibition grew out of a survey by staff and students of Dartington College of Arts, documenting and recording vernacular housing in the South Hams area of Devon. Starting from the premise that "there are probably more cottages displayed on calendars in the homes of England than there are standing on the ground", the text gives a lively and perceptive account of how and why typical rural buildings evolved as they did, with photographs and line drawings illustrating characteristic regional variations drawn from extensive local fieldwork. This is a rare example of the exhibition catalogue that will be consulted long after the exhibition has been forgotten. The final section "Help with Conservation Problems" provides a useful list of specialist bodies able to offer further advice (including the AIA) and lists museums of buildings and suggestions for further reading. Blessedly free from architects' and planners' jargon; we could do with more field guides as concise as this one. The touring dates for the exhibition are as follows:-

LONDON, Royal Institute of British Architects –
3 July – 25 July 1975
RUTLAND, County Museum –
9 August – 31 August 1975
WARMINSTER, Athenaeum Arts Centre –
15 September – 4 October 1975
MAIDENHEAD, Public Library –
20 October – 8 November 1975
BIRMINGHAM, City Polytechnic –
24 November – 15 December 1975

West Midlands Studies, published by The Polytechnic, Wolverhampton, contains a number of useful articles for those interested in the development of the industrial Midlands, and in particular one by Richard Traves on the Black Country Museum. Copies can be obtained from The Polytechnic, Wolverhampton.

Derbyshire Archaeological Society. Newsletter No 7 for November 1974 contains a number of interesting items, in particular, relating to the excavation of Joseph Butler's ironworks at Wingerworth and the restoration of a water-driven pump at Elvaston Castle.

Norfolk IA Society. The latest issue of their Journal, No 7, for July 1974, has come to hand. It contains a substantial contribution relating to the history of the shoe industry.

The Trevithick Society has published a commemorative biography of Sir Goldsworthy Gurney 1793–1875, written by T. R. Harris. This is a most interesting addition to the literature on steam carriages.

The Society's Newsletter No 8 for February 1975 includes articles on the Neath Abbey Ironworks, Reflections on the Gas Industry in Cornwall, and an excerpt from the Royal Cornwall Gazette – October 1874 to March 1875 – relating to Cornish mining.

Enquiries about the booklet and membership of the Society to R. Thomas, Holman's Museum, Camborne, Cornwall.

City Museum Bristol. A number of information sheets have been issued by the Museum. Those of most particular interest to industrial archaeologists include 'An Introduction to the Technology Collections', 'Models of the Steamships Great Western and Great Britain' and 'Great Western Railway Locomotive No. 2818'. Copies are obtainable from the City Museum, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1RL.

Sussex IA Society. Newsletter No 6, April 1975, contains details of the activities of the Society, and in particular it announces that the restoration of Batemans Mill is now complete and the mill has actually ground flour again after more than 70 years of idleness.

Work at Ifield Mill is going ahead rapidly. Roof repair has been completed, floors renewed and main timbers replaced where necessary. Most of the items for the repair of the waterwheel are to hand and the clearance of the mill stream will start as soon as the weather permits.

Purbeck IA Group. Newsletter No 5 for Spring 1975 expresses concern about the future of the Swanage Railway. The line was for many years the most important communications link for most of the district's industry and was also very important for local agriculture.

Journal of the Irish Railway Record Society No 66, February 1975, apart from general news, has among its articles the reminiscences of an engineman's son. A continuing article, part 2 is mainly concerned with the era of amalgamations in the 1920s.

GLIAS Newsletter 36 for March 1975. As usual this highly informative and well-produced publication has much of general interest for the industrial archaeologist. Comprehensive recording of transport sites in the borough of Camden is proceeding in association with Camden History Society.

American Society for IA. Newsletter Volume 4 No 1, January 1975, contains a number of interesting items, in particular a look at some of the railroad station hotels of the mid and late nineteenth century.

The Society held its 4th Annual Conference between 25 and 27 April, at Baltimore.

South West Wales IA Society. Newsletter No 9, March 1975, gives an account of the Society's activities and programme, as well as a number of short articles. The redevelopment of the lower Swansea valley has been proceeding and the Society has been asked to comment on industrial relics or historic buildings in this area which are worthy of preservation.

Neath General Station has been demolished and the Society are endeavouring to ensure that it is adequately recorded.

Cleveland IA Society held a successful half-day meeting on 23 March on 'The History of the Early Chemical Industry of the North East'. They hope to publish the proceedings of this meeting in No 4 of The Cleveland Industrial Archaeologist in 6-9 month's time.

The Industrial Archaeology of Preston has recently been published by Mr. A.D. George, who is Joint Field Secretary of the Manchester Region I.A. Society. Copies are available from Mr. George at "Sulwath", 30 Kingsway, Worsley, Manchester, price 20p plus postage.

CONFERENCES

The Institution of Electrical Engineers is holding its third weekend meeting on the History of Electrical Engineering at the University of Manchester from the 11-13 July (for a report of last year's meeting, see Bulletin 1 : 4). Particular attention will be paid to Manchester's contribution to the growth of electrical power, a biographical contribution on Robert Davidson, father of the electric locomotive, and a paper on Ferranti's proposed hydro-electric scheme at Laufenberg. Visits will include Ferranti Ltd at Hollinwood, where a half day will be spent examining Ferranti archives and early machines, and an evening reception at the North Western Museum of Science and Industry.

Accommodation will be in a Hall of Residence at Owen's Park. Further details and application forms are obtainable from: The Divisional Secretary LS (S), The Institution of Electrical Engineers, Savoy Place, London W.C.2R OBL.

The Railway and Canal Historical Society has arranged a weekend seminar at Bristol University from the 18-20 July devoted to 'Railways and Stations'. Residential and day attenders can be accommodated, and particulars can be obtained from Michael P.N. Reading, 40 Reddings Road, Birmingham B13 8LN.

The Historical Metallurgy Society holds its 11th Annual Conference at Dumfries from 19-21 September. Visits will include the Leadhills and Wanlockhead lead mines, with their water-bucket pumping engine. Details from the Hon. Treasurer, Charles Blick, 147 Whirlowdale Road, Sheffield S7 2NG.

The Continuing Heritage, London 28-30 July. Organised jointly by European Architectural Heritage Year 1975, the RIBA and Civic Trust. Further details from 'The Continuing Heritage', RIBA Conference Office, 66 Portland Place, London W1N 4AD.

AIA Bulletin is published six times a year by the Association for Industrial Archaeology. The Association was established in September 1973 to promote the study of Industrial Archaeology and encourage improved standard of recording research and specialist survey and research groups and bodies involved in the preservation of industrial monuments, to represent the interests of Industrial Archaeology at a national level, to hold conferences and seminars, and to publish the results of research. Further details of the Association and its activities may be obtained from the Secretary, Association for Industrial Archaeology, Church Hill, Ironbridge, Telford, Salop TF8 7RE, England (095-245-3522).