

A DECADE OF THE IRONBRIDGE INSTITUTE

This autumn the Ironbridge Institute reaches its tenth birthday. Born on the top floor of the Wharfage Offices of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum it has grown to fill half the Long Warehouse at Coalbrookdale and to have over fifty students a year engaged in post-graduate courses. Back in the 1970s there was much optimism for the growth of industrial archaeology as a recognised discipline in higher education. There was already a long, if restricted, tradition of industrial archaeology lecture series and options within courses at universities, polytechnics and institutes of higher education. However the cuts of the 1980s brought a general gloom to ideas of expansion in the subject. The Ironbridge Institute's was the one course to expand and flourish during this period and is now clearly the leading provider in the country of training in industrial archaeology. It is to be hoped it will be joined by other successful programmes in the 1990s, both for postgraduates and perhaps most necessarily for the subject's development, as integral parts of undergraduate courses in mainstream archaeology. The success-story of the Institute provides some valuable lessons.

Editor

The Ironbridge Institute was established in 1980 under the title 'The Institute of Industrial Archaeology', and its prime aim was to give students a training in the history of industry over the last two or three hundred years, in practical techniques of recording and preserving monuments, and in developing industrial and social history museums. The Institute was established as a joint venture by the Economic and Social History Department of the University of Birmingham and the Ironbridge Gorge Museum.

It was never considered that the role of the Institute should be to project industrial archaeology as an academic discipline in its own right, rather more that the Masters' and Diploma Courses should draw upon the best practice in economic history, archaeology and more selectively such subjects as geography and architectural history, to train students in the more appropriate techniques of studying the industrial past. The dramatic transformations wrought by the industrial revolution and the need to understand and conserve surviving structures and machines are regarded as justification enough for the post-graduate course. Students develop their own viewpoint on the subject through the year rather than having a stock definition applied through a 'Why are we here?'

seminar on the first day.

Initially the course concentrated on the period of the high industrial revolution from the early eighteenth century to the late nineteenth, and such key technologies as mining, the iron and steel industries, textiles and ceramics. The Nuffield Archaeological Inventory, a research project involving a plot-by-plot analysis of the Ironbridge Gorge, enabled the Institute to make far better use of the local landscape for fieldwork. Meanwhile the challenges of protecting twentieth-century industrial structures and the growing number of jobs that require skills in this area have encouraged the staff to give greater attention to the aircraft industry, the motor industry and plastics. Rather than be put off by the more complex and less visible technologies of the twentieth century, the students have shown tremendous enthusiasm for studying such themes as concrete fabrication and food processing.

The Institute tries to relate closely to the background of its students, their interests and their need to develop a career in fields where there is tight competition for most jobs. Of the 112 students who registered on the course for the period 1982-88, 63 were recent graduates, 8 were mature graduates, whilst 16 were studying while still in employment. The propor-



Students superabundant: the tenth intake to the Ironbridge Institute, who completed their course this summer, visit Coalport

Photo: Mick Worthington

tion of mature students has increased in recent years bringing a greater expertise in engineering and commerce to bear on some of the seminars and formal discussions.

When the Industrial Archaeology Course was first conceived it was aimed at students who saw themselves eventually working in field archaeology or building recording. In practice it is the need for managers to work in independent museums or heritage projects in urban areas that has provided the best source of employment. Of those who completed the course during 1982-88, 35 gained their first post working with museums, 16 in some aspect of conservation and 13 in an area of archaeology. The Institute's students have been remarkably successful in gaining posts within museums despite the fact that the course has no formal recognition by the Museums Association, a situation that may well change once the structure for training curators has been changed in the light of findings by the Museums Training Institute.

The need to make the course applicable to career requirements and open to those unable to leave their employment for more than short periods resulted in the course being restructured onto a modular basis for the academic year 1989/90. Teaching is arranged into four modules. The first covers the 'Analysis of Historic Buildings and Landscapes' and aims to provide students with a solid grounding of excavation and recording techniques. The middle two are based within a historic context of studying the 'Archaeology of the Industrial Revolution' and the 'Evolution of Modern Industrial Society'. The final module explores 'Principles and Practice in Museums' to provide an introduction to curatorship, management and aspects of interpretation.

The Industrial Archaeology course has been complemented by an annual programme of short courses, which students are welcome to attend without charge, and a range of consultancy work undertaken by the Institute staff. Lacking the underwriting available to extramural departments the Institute has not been able to offer weekend industrial archaeology courses at a competitive price to amateurs, but the short course programme has enabled the Institute to experiment with innovative and occasionally off-beat themes, whilst enabling the students to be introduced to the most recent work of both academics and museum professionals. Consultancy work has helped to keep the Institute at the forefront of current thinking and practice in the areas of site evaluation and such specific themes as textile mills, potteries, steel works, car factories and the English Heritage's Monuments Protection Programme.

The Ironbridge Institute broadened its activities by launching the country's first post-graduate course in Heritage Management in October 1987. The Institute now has two full-time lecturing staff, three part-timers, a contract team and administrative staff. The course will need to adapt in future years with changes in the system of museum training, and the necessity to chase sources of finance will also dictate other alterations. From the outset the prime aim of the Institute has been to provide the best possible post-graduate training in Industrial Archaeology; the subject is proving sufficiently broad and challenging to ensure that there is little danger of the Institute running out of steam.

Michael Stratton

A DICTIONARY OF SURVEYORS 1550-1850

Land surveyors were amongst the people closest to the heartbeat of the industrial revolution in England. They surveyed the land where new developments were planned, and they were often also the engineers and designers of developments, be they mill complexes, canals or railways, new farms, or mines. Any industrial archaeologist undertaking documentary research in the period 1550-1850 will have come across the names of surveyors and the plans which they produced. They have left a wealth of information about the past, and tracing their careers as engineers or engineers' assistants can be a key to understanding the archaeological remains of the things they built.

A project being conducted from Emmanuel College in Cambridge will provide invaluable new information about such people. It is concerned with producing a new and thoroughly revised edition of the *Dictionary of Land Surveyors and Local Cartographers of Great Britain and Ireland 1550-1850*, edited by Peter Eden and published by Dawson in 1979. The Dictionary is based upon an index of land surveyors which was begun by Francis Steer in 1958, initially by a questionnaire survey of County Record Offices and other repositories known to have collections of local maps. Since then, work has continued on the careers of land surveyors, and material has been contributed by a number of researchers. The material was transferred to the Department of English Local History at Leicester University in 1966 and the Dictionary was published in three parts from 1975-6. Two supplements were added and a volume containing all five parts was published in 1979.

Peter Eden has continued to collect material about land surveyors, but he has retired and now wishes to transfer the archive to the British Library. Under the guidance of the British Library, the Dictionary is being put onto a computer. A second edition is being prepared for publication, it is hoped in 1991, by Dr Sarah Bendall of Emmanuel College.

The Dictionary aims to include all persons likely to have measured land or made maps of land (including plans of communications) in areas of less than a complete county in Great

Britain or Ireland between 1550 and 1850. It thus includes many people who we might see today as primarily civil engineers rather than surveyors or maps makers: for example the canal engineer Thomas Dadford, the great civil engineer William Jessop, and many much less well-known individuals. The first edition contained entries for 9,705 surveyors and it is estimated the second will include some 11-12,000.

The new edition will consist of entries in one alphabetical sequence from the first edition, its two supplements, and from material which has been collected over the past ten years. The same basic format is being kept. A typical entry contains the name of the surveyor, the dates of earliest and latest documentation and dates of birth or death if known, the counties in which the surveyor practised, the classes of maps he drew (for example canal, estate, enclosure, railway etc), and additional details about addresses, patrons, alternative occupations, collaborations and partnerships, family history and training. A number of minor changes in style are introduced, and cross-references from alternative spellings of surnames are added. A symbol is used to indicate that there is further information available on the compilation slips, which will be available on request at the British Library Map Library. The most significant change is the addition of fuller bibliographical references: of published works and of repositories which contain relevant information. The Dictionary is indexed by earliest known date for a surveyor, area, address and additional information (mainly alternative occupations, patrons and religious affiliation).

If you have information about individual surveyors as a result of your own previous research which might be included in the Dictionary, please contact Dr Sarah Bendall, Emmanuel College, Cambridge, CB2 3AP. All information for the Dictionary which has been provided by individuals is notified on the index slips which will be deposited in the British Library, and a list will appear in the published volume of all people who have made contributions. The new volume will be of immense value to industrial archaeologists and historians, and the more so if further information can be supplied before publication.

SANDERSON, Edmund; 1850-55;
NTP; drainage, estate, railway.
northampton 28

°SANDERSON, George; 1828-, d.
16.viii.1851; DRB, NTT; county,
district, estate, inclosure (and cr),
railway, tithe; of Bridge St., Mansfield
NTT 1828-48, of Ratcliffe Gate,
Nottingham NTT 1850; engineering
surveyor, insurance and land agent,
valuer.
74, 75, *Pigot* (1835), *P.O. Dir.* (1848), *Tate*
(1935)/shetro 29

SANDERSON, H.; 1822; DRB; road
diversion; ?draughtsman only; ?= Henry
Sanderson [S31].
derbro 30

SANDERSON, Henry; 1820-48;
BUC, HNT, NTP, OXF, YOW;
drainage, estate, inclosure cr, railway,
road, tithe; of Sheffield YOW 1822-37 (2

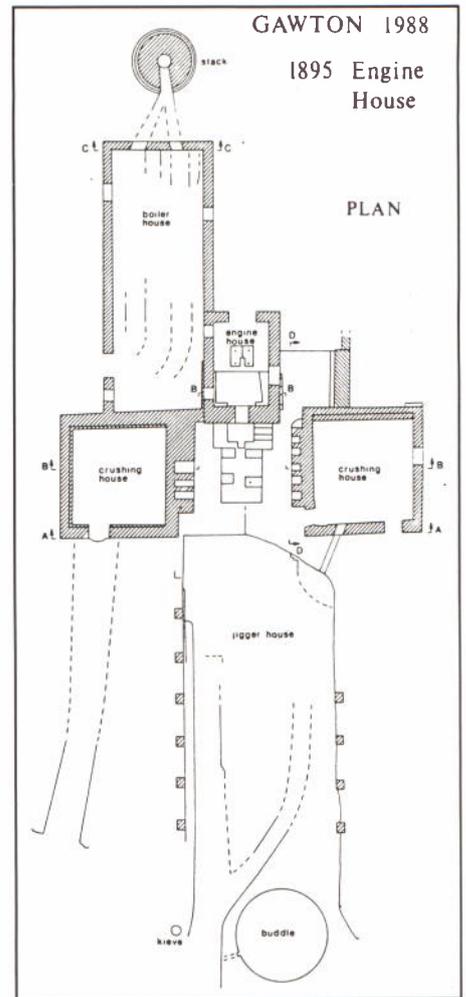
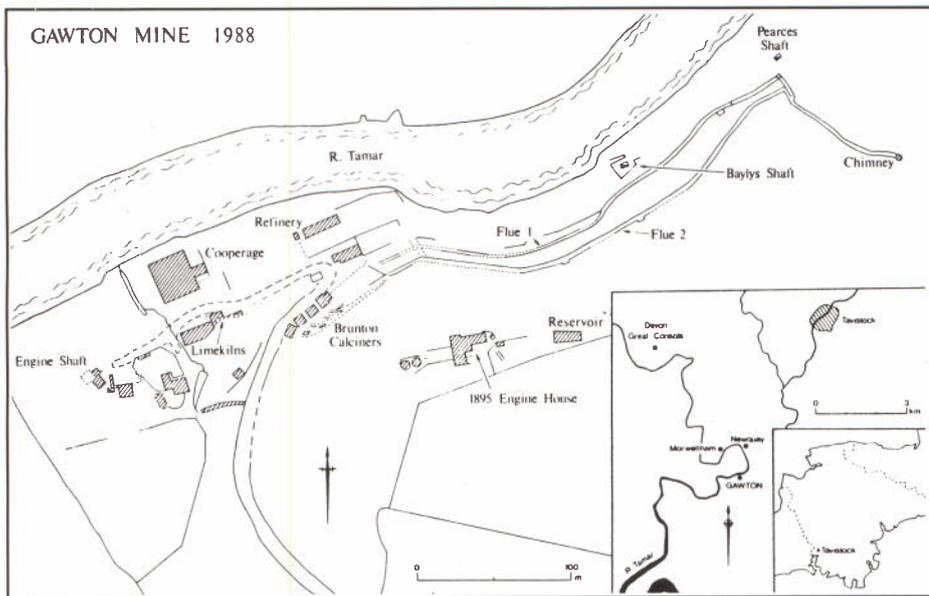
SANDERSON, Thomas
SEE SAUNDERSON, Thomas S61

SANDS, Alexander; 1827-46; NFK;
exchange, tithe; of Reepham 1830-46
(Norwich Road 1830); assistant overseer,
draper and tailor 1836, postmaster,
registrar and relieving officer 1845.
Pigot (1830), *White* (Norfolk 1836,
1845)/norfro? 35

SANDS, F.; 1774; YON; estate; a
William Sands was inclosure cr YOW
1757/58.
English/noryro 35.3

SANDS, William; 1600; ESX; estate.
esro 36

†SANDYS, Charles; 1794-1825;
ESX, London; garden project; of
Lambeth, London 1794-1808 (5 Buxton
Place 1794, 24 East Place 1798, 8
Pownall Terrace 1808); landscape



AIA NEWS

ARSENIC AND IA

This year has seen an unprecedented submission of no less than 12 entries for the AIA Fieldwork Awards, reflecting both the increased acceptance of industrial archaeology in the world of field archaeology in general and the increasing popularity of the award itself. The main award for this year goes to the Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit for its excellent field and interpretation work on the Gawton Mine and Arsenic Works in Devon. The professional archaeological units generally have been somewhat hesitant about entering the new field of industrial archaeology, but this work shows how an expert team of archaeologists has developed a rational approach to recording of the monuments of industry. Extensive background documentary research into the processes which took place has been used comprehensively to interpret the remains on site, represented by beautifully-produced drawings. The arsenic was produced as a by-product from copper smelting on the banks of the Tamar, the waste gasses being diverted through a series of flues and chimneys. The process not only reduced local air pollution, but

provided an important raw material for commercial uses such as making glass, poisons, textile pigments and medicines. Gawton produced over 17,000 tons of arsenic between 1881 and 1905. The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, but is necessarily closed to public access.

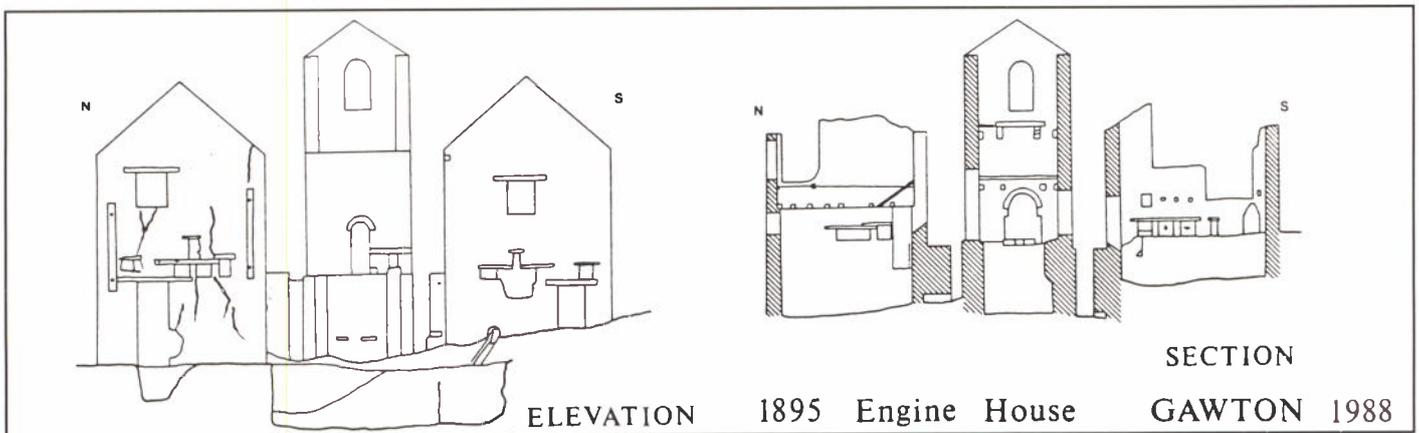
The award for initiative this year goes to the Research and Recording Group of the Leicestershire Industrial History Society for work on the scheduled mid-nineteenth-century colliery site at Glyn Pits, Pontypool, Gwent, carried out with the aid of a Lloyd's Bank Award for Independent Archaeology. This is a model to other societies of what can be achieved by an amateur group, producing an excellent interpretation of documentary sources and very expert survey of what was a daunting but historically important site. With the drastic rationalisation of the coal industry, such sites are disappearing at an alarming rate.

Other impressive pieces of work were submitted for the awards by Jill Guthrie, Clare Pudney and Nicola Smith, all students at the Ironbridge Institute, by the Greater London IA Society, and by the Lancaster University Archaeological Unit. A fuller account of the

entries will be included in *Industrial Archaeology Review*.

The extent and quality of the entries reflects both the continuing erosion of our industrial heritage, and the growing commitment to make a record of sites before they disappear. Entries for next year's awards are now being received. For details, please contact Stephen Hughes, Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales, Crown Buildings, Plas Crug, Aberystwyth, Dyfed ☎ 0970 624381.

Stephen Hughes



SOJOURNING IN SURREY

The AIA conference for 1990 came to an end in Guildford shortly before this *Bulletin* went to press. An illustrated report on the event will appear in the next issue. The lectures ranged from the sublime, with a superb introduction to the evolution of the Surrey landscape by Peter Brandon, to the exceedingly funny, represented by a video by Neil Wright of a sugar mill in the West Indies. (The latter was an excellent and highly informative record of a nineteenth-

century mill which was destroyed by hurricane soon after filming, but also provided much light relief owing to interruptions from cloud-bursts and stray goats). The excursions during the weekend of the conference itself offered participants the opportunities to climb down a manhole under a dual carriageway, race round Brooklands, and tread carefully the sites of gunpowder manufacture. A full programme of lectures and excursions continued for the rest of the week, and was extremely well attended.

All involved in the planning and execution of the conference are to be congratulated for their successful efforts. David Alderton, Janet Graham and John Fletcher of the AIA 'High Command' end of the operation did an excellent job. The detailed action in the field, and the brunt of the assault, was ably led by Alan and Glenys Crocker, Peter Tarplee and other members of the Surrey Industrial History Group.