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RETORT!

THE BULLETIN
OF THE
WARWICKSHIRE
INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY
SOCIETY



SPRING 1993

ISSUE ONE

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The Quarterly Bulletin of
Warwickshire Industrial Archaeology Society

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EDITORIAL

It seems to have taken a remarkably long time to come to fruition, but this is the first issue of what I hope will be a long series of Quarterly Bulletins from the Warwickshire Industrial Archaeology Society.

The Bulletin seeks to draw together items of local and general interest, to publicise forthcoming events, and to record the work of the Society. It will be published in Spring, - a little late this year, perhaps! - Summer, Autumn and Winter of each year. Needless to say, its success will depend on the contributions of others, and anyone who would like to write articles, to provide news items, or simply to suggest improvements to the Bulletin should immediately abandon all feelings of reticence, modesty or embarrassment and put pen to paper - or finger to keyboard!

I expect most of you will already have passed judgement on the title of the Bulletin. It is intended to provide a (tenuous) link with the Logo of the Society - the Gasworks at Warwick. Please suggest an alternative if it upsets you too much!

Just for the sake of comparison, we include the first editorial of the *Journal of Industrial Archaeology* of June 1964. Many of the sentiments expressed there seem to apply to the efforts of W.I.A.S. nearly 30 years later.

This first issue makes no apology for dwelling briefly on the meaning of Industrial Archaeology, and the Society's approach to the subject. I hope subsequent issues will build on these modest beginnings. I look forward to hearing from you.

Martin Green

The Journal of Industrial Archaeology

DURING THE PAST TWO OR THREE YEARS, the new subject, or, as some people might say, the newly christened subject, of Industrial Archaeology has aroused a degree of interest which has surprised even its own partisans.

The study of the physical remains of an enormously rich and varied industrial past has proved an attraction to engineers, historians, economists, photographers, railway devotees, geographers, antique-dealers, schoolboys, professors, industrialists—a most encouraging and useful mixture of experts and amateurs, all anxious to take part in the urgent process of locating, recording and, where possible, preserving the buildings and equipment which keep the story of technological development alive, properly documented, and meaningful.

This *Journal* has been established in order to make it easier for those engaged in Industrial Archaeology to publish the results of their work and to keep in touch with the activities of other individuals and groups who are active in the same field.

It does not seem very profitable, in such a periodical as this, to argue where Industrial Archaeology rightfully begins and economic history ends. We ourselves shall be interested in such theological argument only in passing. In considering an article, review or item of news for publication we shall follow two fairly simple, and, we hope, intelligible criteria.

- (1) Is it concerned with evidence which has actually survived, and which can be seen, touched and photographed?
- (2) Does it report original field-work of some kind, however modest, or, alternatively, does it seem likely to lead to such field-work?

Within this framework, we shall be pleased to receive any material for possible inclusion in the *Journal*. It is hoped that the present issue may provide a number of helpful clues as to the range of our interests, but, in any case of doubt, a letter to the publisher will produce a rapid answer as to whether this piece of work or that event comes within the scope of Industrial Archaeology.

We shall be particularly happy to print information about the beginnings of the newer or, from an archaeological point of view, more frequently neglected industries. Gas, plastics, aircraft-manufacture and electronics are examples which come easily to mind. Food-processing is another.

We have noted a recent expert judgment on the attitude of businessmen towards history. 'Robustly concerned with forecasting the technical and social change of the immediate future, busy with the immediate situation revealed by their order books and cost-sheets, they may ask of what use to them is even the most cursory glance backwards at grandfather's way of doing things. To the practical man, Henry Ford was right; history is irrelevant'.¹ Without disagreeing with the general truth of this, we ourselves have come across a sufficiently large number of businessmen with strongly marked historical interests to encourage us to believe that the present *Journal* should be found interesting and helpful among the people who are the most important of all from the point of view of the Industrial Archaeologist, the people who earn their living where most of his material is, in industry and commerce.

We see Industrial Archaeology as a living, humane subject which provides a multitude of thought-provoking links between past and present. We agree entirely with two industrial journalists, when they tell us that 'every firm has its roots in the past, every factory, every industrial town is somehow invisibly but potentially scarred by that revolution; its ghosts can take up residence in the most modern glass-and-aluminium welfare and works-council ridden plant'.²

The *Journal of Industrial Archaeology* may, we hope, make it a little easier for modern people to come to terms with these ghosts and even to make friends with them.

VOLUME 1

NUMBER 1

What exactly is this subject that takes up so much of our time?

As some readers may be new to industrial archaeology, I thought it might be worthwhile to try and give some idea of the nature of the subject, and to set out the role that the Warwickshire Industrial Archaeology Society (WIAS) seeks to perform.

The subject of industrial archaeology is a relatively new discipline, with the term probably invented by a Professor of Latin at Birmingham University, Dr. Donald Dudley, who was also Director of its Extra-Mural Department. The term was first used in print by a member of that Department, Mr. Michael Rix, in an article for the *Amateur Historian* in 1955. Needless to say, ever since the term was introduced, debate has raged about its precise meaning, and it is difficult to find a universally accepted definition of industrial archaeology. I feel sure that a quick survey of opinion amongst members of the Society would produce just as much debate! A subsequent article by Michael Rix for the *Historical Association* in 1967 gave the following definition.

"Industrial archaeology may be defined as recording, preserving in selected cases and interpreting the sites and structures of early industrial activity, particularly the monuments of the Industrial Revolution."

This is very close to the definition used by the Society in all its printed material:

"Industrial archaeology is the study, recording and preservation of the remains of our industrial past."

(Anon 1990)

Most recently, the Association for Industrial Archaeology has committed itself to the following, and perhaps this will become the accepted definition:

"Industrial archaeology is a period study embracing the tangible evidence of social, economic and technological development in the period since industrialisation."

(*Industrial Archaeology: Working for the Future* (1991) p 1)

However, none of these definitions quite seems to capture the real attraction of the subject, and I am often drawn to a paragraph written by Dr. Neil Cossons in his opening chapter of the *BP Book of Industrial Archaeology*:

"The physical remains of industrialisation far transcend in importance their role as historical evidence, and this has provided the primary motivating spirit behind the widespread interest in industrial archaeology as a study. To an increasing number of people the engines and machines, factories, mills and warehouses, canals and railways which came to dominate the landscape in the last two centuries have become profoundly significant as part of our cultural heritage; they are implanted in the subconscious of innumerable ordinary people who, with no background of scholarship or training in artistic or architectural appreciation, find themselves responding aesthetically to the sweep of a railway curve through a wooded valley, to the triumphant striding of a viaduct, to the sound and smells of a perfectly running mill engine or the rhythm and symmetry of an eighteenth-century textile mill..... They represent the skill and inventiveness and suffering of the first Industrial Revolution. Their study and preservation is the justification for industrial archaeology."

N.Cossons: *BP Book of Industrial Archaeology* (2nd edition) pp 13-14

(Incidentally, Neil Cossons is about to produce a third edition of this book, with the usual additions, deletions and corrections. I hope he does not decide to alter the above!)

The sentiments expressed very much reflect the approach of the Warwickshire Industrial Archaeology Society. Very few members have any professional qualifications in disciplines related to industrial archaeology, but they all share a committed enthusiasm for the subject. This is based, in some cases, on personal experience of the industries concerned, whilst, for others it is simply a leisure interest, brinking occasionally on an all-consuming passion. The Society was formed in 1989, with three specific aims:

1. To stimulate interest in the subject of industrial archaeology.
2. To initiate a survey of sites of interest within Warwickshire.
3. To establish a regular pattern of meetings to develop members' knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the subject.

The Society is affiliated to the Association for Industrial Archaeology, and enjoys the benefits of the Conferences and Publications of that Association.

RECORDING

Of all the Society's activities, the one that causes the most heartache is the extent to which we can achieve accurate and worthwhile recording of sites prior to their demolition or change of use. Many members of the Society have good photographic records of sites, together with a considerable amount of knowledge about these sites, but the extent of detailed surveying and recording remains small. The Society's work has been characterised by the dedicated efforts of individuals rather than a co-ordinated push by the Society as a whole. Perhaps the time has come to remedy this, and it just so happens that the Association for Industrial Archaeology is about to launch a new form for the recording of sites.

This is part of what may seem a rather bewildering series of initiatives to improve the quantity and quality of the recording of industrial sites. What is important from our point of view is that it gives us a genuine opportunity to become involved in the process.

English Heritage, through the Monuments Protection Programme, has launched an initiative to increase the number of industrial sites on record. "The programme will run systematically through various industries and groups of industries in England, seeking to document sites for which statutory protection should be provided." As a starting point, a classification has been produced, listing the range of activities within each industrial group. This has been prepared by David Stocker and a copy is included in this Bulletin. As with any list, many of us would have devoted more or less attention to particular industries, but it does represent a starting point - and, on the author's admission - it is likely to be subject to periodic revision.

There are several stages through which the process of recording will pass, and this is briefly summarised as a sequence of:

- Step 1 - Description of industry
- Step 2 - Data collection
- Step 3 - Reporting
- Step 4 - Evaluation and selection
- Step 5 - Consultation with appropriate bodies
- Step 6 - Protective action

Initial efforts have been concentrated on the Coal and Iron and Steel Industries, and copies of these reports are in the hands of the Society. The Coal Industry report is written by Shane Gould

and David Cranstone. Mention is made of the coal industry within Warwickshire, but the report comments:

"There appears to be little current work on this industry within Warwickshire, although Nigel Chapman has extensive knowledge of the surviving surface remains."

The only book mentioned in the bibliography is:

"Men and Mining in Warwickshire." A.W.A.White - Coventry branch of the Historical Association.

I feel sure we can do better than this!

The Iron and Steel Industry report is by David Crossley. There are no sites in Warwickshire included in the draft short-list of sites. The report covers extraction (ore mining), ore processing, smelting, conversion processes, production of cast-iron artifacts, boring mills, secondary trades, and steel-making.

Has anything from our county been missed?

A complementary effort is also about to be launched by the Association for Industrial Archaeology in liaison with the County Sites and Monuments Record Officers. Central to this process will be a new recording form - the Index Record of Industrial Sites (or IRIS). Copies of this form, plus a very detailed handbook of how the form should be used and completed, will soon be sent to all local Industrial Archaeology societies. It will then be the responsibility of the society to record the sites in their county and pass on that information to the county SMR officer. This represents a marvellous chance to become involved in the recording process and further details will be provided at the first indoor meeting of the Society in September.

On the following pages, David Stocker's classification is reproduced in full. This has been done to both reveal the range of activities involved and to show some of the problems of classification. Be warned....the IRIS classification is *more* detailed than this, but it will give us the essential structure for our recording efforts.

A CLASSIFICATION OF INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES

PREPARED BY
DAVID STOCKER
FOR THE
MONUMENTS PROTECTION PROGRAMME

1. THE METAL BASED INDUSTRIES

1Aa. Extraction and production - ferrous

1. *iron mines - including manganese*

2. *iron smelting sites*

- bloomeries
- blast furnaces
- bulk steel making plants
- "pre-bulk"* steel making

1Ab. Extraction and production - non-ferrous

1. *mines*

- lead mines
- copper mines
- tin mines
- zinc mines
- gold mines
- silver mines
- other metals mines

2. *ore dressing and preparation sites (by metal)*

3. *smelting and furnace sites (by metal)*

1Ba. Metal-based manufactures - ferrous

1. *iron works*

- wrought iron works
- wire works
- foundries and factories
- steel mills

1Bb. Metal-based manufactures - non-ferrous

1. *lead works*

- red and white lead works
- pipe works
- shot works

- sheet works
- 2. *copper works*
 - battery works
 - wire works
 - bronze works
- 3. *tin works*
 - pewterers
 - tin plate works
- 4. *zinc works*
 - brass works
 - Muntz's metal works *
 - bell metal works
 - galvanising works
- 5. *rare metals*

-rare metal works (eg mints)

* A type of brass consisting of 3 parts copper and 2 parts zinc, used in casting and extrusion. Named after G.F.Muntz (1794-1857), English metallurgist.

2. THE NON-METALLIC INDUSTRIES

2A. Inorganic raw materials - extraction

1. *coal mines*

2. *clay pits and mines*

- china clay
- fireclay
- brick clay

3. *stone quarries and mines*

4. *chemical pits and mines*

5. *turbaries (yes....organic!) - peat and turf*

2B . Inorganic raw materials - manufactures

1. *coal*

- coke works
- coal gas works
- coal tar and shale oil works

2. *stone quarry products*

- building stone manufacture
- lime producing works
- cement works
- plaster works
- flint mills

3. clay products

- brick works
- tile works
- fireclay works
- potteries
- glass works

4. chemical products

- salt works
- arsenic works
- alum works
- phosphorus works
- sulphur works
- gunpowder works
- other/general chemical works
- ice making/storage

3. ORGANIC RAW MATERIALS

3A. Organic materials -production sites

1. timber production sites and structures
2. agricultural sites and structures
3. animal husbandry sites and structures

3B. Sites making organic products

1. timber working sites

- charcoal sites
- sawmills
- wheelwrights works
- shipyards
- paper mills
- other timber working sites.

2. agricultural product works

- corn drying
- flour milling
- bakery
- maltings
- oasting
- breweries
- cider making
- distilleries
- ropery
- flax works

- dye mills and houses
- tobacco works (including snuff)
- soap works

3. animal product works

- silk works
- fulling mills
- textile mills
- dairies
- slaughterhouses
- tanneries
- bone mills
- horn works
- oil, fat and wax works

4. MACHINES AND ENGINES (WHERE NOT ALREADY ALLOCATED TO AN INDUSTRY)

1. muscle power

- horsemills
- treadmills
- capstans and winches

2. wind power

- windmills
- sails

3. water power

- watermills
- turbines
- hydraulic engines and systems
- steam engines

4. other power sources

- atmospheric engines
- gas engines
- petrol and oil engines
- electric engines
- atomic engines

5. TRANSPORT

1. overland routeways

- trackways
- roads
- sledgeways
- tunnels
- staircases
- fords
- bridges
- railways and tramways
- mechanical inclines

2. water routeways

- river works
- canals
- locks
- tunnels
- boat lifts
- port and harbour installations

3. air routeways

6. ACCOMMODATION AND OTHERS

1. general warehousing

2. workers' housing (where associated with the workplace)

3. buildings and structures connected with industrial training

4. structures associated with public services

- water supply facilities
- drainage and sea-defence works
- waste disposal structures
- gas and electricity supply (see above also)

5. structures associated with leisure industries

6. print works

SEEN AND HEARD.....

* The Cold Storage Depot which used to link with the railway at Warwick may soon be demolished. This was included in one of the summer walks of 1992, but some black and white photographs - or even a more elaborate survey - would be a useful asset to the Society's records. Any information on the Depot gratefully received for inclusion in the next edition.

* The aroma of steak and kidney no longer emerges from the Fleur de Lys factory on the Emscote Road, and permission has been granted for the demolition of this historic mill. Many members will have photographs of the outside of the buildings, but can anybody contribute detail of the mill's history - including the current era?

* Following the talks by Peter Lee to WIAS and to the Warwickshire Steam Engine Society on the industrial history of Nuneaton, Brian Hopkinson persuaded Peter to show a small group around the remaining visible sites of Nuneaton's industrial past. This trip took place recently, and a fascinating tour of Nuneaton and the surrounding area revealed a number of interesting locations, but also confirmation of the extent to which the evidence of past activity had disappeared. In return, the three members of the Society present agreed to provide a similar service for Peter in the Warwick and Leamington area. Could this become the basis of an official WIAS tour?

* A recently published book - "Paddington to the Mersey" by Dr. R. Preston Hendry & R. Powell Hendry (Oxford Publishing Co. 1992) - contains a very interesting final section entitled "Rebirth of a Station". This describes - and illustrates via a number of photographs - the re-building of Leamington Spa station. Yet *another* railway book for the collection, perhaps? (At least it's the Great Western! - editor)

* At the AGM of the Society, there was some feeling that the Society should mark in some appropriate way the fact that 1993 is Industrial Heritage Year. One idea was to publish a (small) set of postcards or greetings cards depicting important industrial heritage sites within Warwickshire. This will enable the Treasurer

to fulfil a burning ambition to see one - or more - of his photographs in print. Roger Butler has a lot to answer for! There was general agreement at the meeting for the idea, although the Chairman had his reservations. Peter Chater has subsequently suggested the Warwick Gasworks, Chesterton or Tysoe Windmill, Bearley/Edstone aqueduct, and the bridge at Stareton, near Stoneleigh as possible candidates. Comments welcome.

* At the same meeting, John Willock wondered whether the English Tourist Board had produced any literature concerning special events during Industrial Heritage Year. I am pleased to report that an Events List is now available (issued February 1993) and is included in the Library suitcase. You may be able to get your own copy by writing to "Experience the Making of Britain", PO Box 151, London E15 2HF.

* "These tow-paths were made for walking....." A considerable effort has been made to improve the tow-path of the Grand Union Canal from Birmingham to London, and on July 9 there will be an official "opening" of the full 145 mile stretch. The Grand Union, of course, passes through Warwickshire - from (approximately) the Black Boy public house in Knowle through Warwick and Leamington to cross the county border at Braunston. Perhaps we could walk the length of the canal within Warwickshire during the course of a week-end, with Leamington as an approximate mid-point. Any volunteers?

* One of our members is keen to carry out a survey of water towers in the county and beyond. He has asked how he might set about discovering a list of locations. Does anybody have access to such a list or knowledge of where one might be found?

* Observers of local newspapers and TV programmes cannot fail to have noticed the coverage given to the new Motor Heritage Museum at Gaydon, opened on May 1st. Our Chairman was a guest visitor on one of the preview days. We look forward to hearing his report.

* "NO photographs, NO drawings, NO maps, NO book reviews, NO museum reviews, and NO evidence of the actual work of the Society in this issue, but just you wait.....!" (The editor)

Future Meetings

Thursday May 13th John Haslam will lead a walk around the Chapelfields area of Coventry. Please meet at the junction of Craven Street and Allesley Old Road at 7.00 p.m. This walk will be in conjunction with the Coventry Watchmakers' Project.

Saturday May 15th at 10.00 a.m. A visit to Hemmings Brickworks, 274, Stoney Stanton Road, Coventry (with the entrance at the side of Uni-Rents).

Thursday June 10th. A joint meeting with Atherstone Civic Society taking the form of a walk around Atherstone. Meet at 7.00 p.m. in the car park at Atherstone Station. (Judy Vero suggests M69-A5; Martin Green prefers M42 - A5; Toby Cave would use "the attractive route" via Meriden, Fillongley and beyond. Your choice.....!)

Sunday June 27th. Visit to the cement works at Long Itchington at 10.30 a.m. This is by ticket only, and the Society has applied for 25.

Thursday July 8th. Peter Chater will lead a walk from Newbold on Avon to Long and Little Lawford, with a return along the Oxford Canal. Please meet at 7.00 p.m. by the two pubs - the Boat and the Barley Mow - close to the canal and the church in Newbold.

Saturday July 10th Open Day at GEC Alsthom, Rugby. Details to be published.

Any requests for further details of these walks should be addressed to Martin Green 0926 313782.

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