

BULLETIN OF INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN CBA GROUP 9

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The first issue of this Bulletin appeared in April of this year and was received so well that it seems that the circulation will more than double for this second issue. It is felt that our new readers should know something of the background of Industrial Archaeology in CBA Group 9 and we hope that no one minds the following item being repeated from Issue number 1.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN CBA GROUP 9

As a result of the one-day conference on "Industrial Archaeology" held at Oxford in May 1966, there are now representatives, specifically for industrial archaeology, from each of the five counties, on the Buildings, Records and Industrial Archaeology Panel of CBA Group 9. In addition to attending the B.R. & I.A. Panel meetings, the industrial archaeology representatives also meet separately to consider the most effective ways of furthering industrial archaeology in Group 9. This Bulletin has been produced at the request of the sub-panel in the hope that through a greater awareness of what is already going on, more people will take an active part in industrial archaeology.

The County Industrial Archaeology Representatives are as follows:-

Bedfordshire : Mr. P.G. Laws, County Planning Officer,
Bedfordshire County Council,
3 High Street, Bedford.

Unfortunately, Mr. Laws will be resigning as the Bedfordshire representative in the near future.

Berkshire : Mr. J. Kenneth Major, 2 Eldon Road, Reading.

Buckinghamshire : Dr. P.N. Jarvis, 1 Wordsworth Drive, Bletchley.

Oxfordshire : Mr. J.F. Carter, Tarvers, Adderbury East, Banbury.

Northamptonshire : Mr. Geoffrey H. Starmer, 17 Mayfield Road, Northampton.

If there are workers pursuing industrial archaeological studies in any of the five counties who are not yet in touch with that County's representative, it is hoped that contact will be established as soon as possible so that each representative will have a complete record of the industrial archaeology being undertaken in his County. This will help coordination of the work so that :-

- (a) Anyone will be able to see if a particular topic is being studied and if so, by whom.
- (b) Anyone coming across information or material remains which are relevant to another worker's studies will know to whom to pass the information.

MEETING OF COUNTY PLANNING OFFICERS

Report from Mr. P.G. Laws.

A meeting was held on May 5th at the County Offices in Aylesbury when the County Planning Officers for Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire, the Deputy County Planning Officer for Buckinghamshire, the Curators of the Aylesbury and Oxford Museums and representatives of the

County Planning Officers from Berkshire and Northamptonshire, discussed the role of Planning Departments in the listing and preservation of industrial monuments.

Mr. Laws (County Planning Officer, Bedfordshire) described briefly the purpose of the National Industrial Monuments Survey and the appeal by Mr. Rex Wailles, Consultant to the Survey, for local planning departments to undertake location surveys of industrial monuments. Mr. Laws outlined how this linked in with the recommendations of the Countryside in 1970 Conference for the listing of "Countryside Treasures".

The meeting was agreed on the significance of industrial archaeology, and that Planning Departments should adopt a positive policy towards these monuments in their counties. Much could be done by alerting officers to the significance of industrial relics. The aim should be the compilation of a comprehensive Register and Map of industrial monuments in each county which would then be available for the National Survey. In the end, it would facilitate the making of a policy for industrial monuments as part of the planning process.

REPORTS OF INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE INDIVIDUAL COUNTIES

BEDFORDSHIRE

1. Studies

Mills. The detailed survey of mills undertaken by Mr. Kenneth Major is well under way and this has produced some remarkable finds associated with the construction of corn mills in this county. There was a period when highly industrialized millwrights work was introduced into the area and much of this equipment is still in place though not in use.

2. Lectures and Courses.

(a) Dr. Lewis has kindly supplied the following extra notes on the course reported briefly in the last Bulletin:-

A course of 24 lectures on Industrial Archaeology has been held at Dunstable during the past winter for the Cambridge Board of Extra-Mural Studies and the W.E.A. by Dr. M.J.T. Lewis. It comprised a general introduction to the subject, with contributions from local experts; a film show; and several outings to industrial monuments in the area. Members of the class have recorded, and researched into the history of, the Dunstable brewery, whitening works and railway stations; a pumping engine house on the Grand Union canal; and local watermills and brickworks.

(b) It is hoped to continue the class for the next two years, concentrating on the Industrial Archaeology of Bedfordshire and adjoining districts. Anyone interested in joining should contact the Dunstable W.E.A. secretary, Mr. V.A. Basham, 186 Luton Road, Dunstable.

3. Publications

The whole of the first edition of "Industrial Archaeology in Bedfordshire" was sold out, and a second edition has now been published. This contains two extra paragraphs: one on the Grand Union Canal of which a short section came into Bedfordshire when the former Urban District of Linslade in Buckinghamshire was added to Bedfordshire in 1965; the second is a more lengthy reference to the importance of the silica sands at Leighton Buzzard, which have been regarded of international importance for a considerable time.

4. Items to See

Platway at Arlesey (Grid ref. TL 188327 to TL 189327)

Noticed by Mr. Kenneth Major, the platway is approximately 120 yards long and consists of plates "L" sectioned, 7" x 1" upstand, 4' 7" long of 4' 1" gauge. This may well have been associated with the chalk quarries and the early cement works at Arlesey and Mr. Major hopes that more work will be done concerning the purpose of this platway.

BERKSHIRE

1. Studies

(a) Bucklebury Foundry. A great deal of recording has been completed and several exceptional finds have been made. The original form of the foundry has been recorded and much of the machinery photographed in place before its destruction. The search for this foundry's work is proceeding in villages around. Several examples of railings, grave slabs and tombs have been found which were the products of the foundry.

(b) Radley and Abingdon Branch Line. Mr. Gray, of Abingdon, is making a photographic survey of this line following its recent closure.

(c) Buscot Park Light Railway. Mr. Gray has also found some records of the 2'6" gauge light railway in Buscot Park and is now engaged on field work to find out more about this.

2. Lectures and Courses

Mr. Major has spoken to the Goring Local History Society and to some senior students of Reading Technical College.

4. Items to See

Frilsham Kilns.

Behind the public house "The Pot Kiln" there is a collection of huts, sheds and buildings belonging to a small brickworks, pottery and tile works. This was run by a family called Barr. The publican's brother was the last to work the kiln. As this was an open or 'Scotch' kiln, this failed to work during the war and when the war was over the last stocks of green bricks were burnt and the kilns closed down. In the sheds are several brickmakers barrows and tools and quite a few unsold stocks of tiles and agricultural drains lie buried in the brambles and nettles. The kiln is being damaged by frost and weather.

5. Preservation

Horse-driven pump, Swallowfield Park

Swallowfield Park, 6 miles south of Reading, has been converted into flats by the Mutual Householders Association. Whilst work was in progress it was discovered that a horse driven pump existed in the grounds and was threatened with demolition. This pump, which dates from about 1820, is made of cast iron with a three cylinder pump of brass. The horse travelled in a circle of 18' diameter, turning the pump by means of a bevel gear and a flexible joint. The daily stint for the horse was two hours and in this time he raised 2000 gallons of water to supply the enormous mansion and home farm. The water was raised from a sump at the end of a line of filter beds which took the water from the river Loddon. The pump and the horsewheel which powered it have now been rescued and await re-erection in Reading Museum.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

1. Studies

(a) Wolverton Works. Work is proceeding steadily on recording and photographing material in the recesses of this splendid place. The works were originally built for the London and Birmingham Railway about 1838 and has spread to a considerable extent under subsequent railway ownership.

In the Road Vehicles Shop there remains a set of machine tools for making horse-drawn wagon wheels. Dr. Jarvis says "We know of no other example of so fully mechanised a wheelwrights shop." Mr. D.G.S. Johnson has started to make a cine film of some of the machinery. That in the Road Vehicles Shop has been photographed in action, as have an ancient (and large) bandsaw of about 1860 and a Greenlees mortising machine which came from Chicago in 1888. Work is now being done in the brass foundry and some splendid film has been made of the art of making sand moulds from patterns. Dr. Jarvis' Group are very grateful for the help given by the works staff.

Mr. Rex Wallis visited the works last autumn and made a report to the C.B.A.

(b) Cast Iron Bridge at Newport Pagnell. This bridge, dated 1810, was the subject of a letter from Michael Rix to Country Life, 23rd February, 1967, accompanied by a very fine photograph of the bridge taken by Mr. R. Bailey of Newport Pagnell. The future of the bridge is uncertain: Newport Pagnell Urban Council, at their meeting on 4 July, voted to tell Buckinghamshire County Council to replace the iron bridge in a road widening scheme (Reported in 'Chronicle

and Echo' dated July 5, 1967). Subsequent issues of that paper have reported various protests against these proposals.

Mr. P. Harris, of Newport Pagnell, is trying to obtain more information on the bridge so as to be able to make out the best possible case for its retention. He writes :-

'The County Records Office held the Minute Books of the Bridges Trustees, therefore I made this my first port of call. The points I was interested in were :- who cast it, various costs, the designer and local names connected with the erection. Despite the utmost co-operation of the office staff, I left with very few answers to my questions. Even so, I had gathered clues on which I could work. I have since worked on this information for the past two months, corresponding with eight different County authorities. The facts of the bridge are now beginning to show a logical chain of events. There is still much to learn, perhaps some points must remain conjecture, for it is my experience that records of the period are scarce, and when existing they are brief.'

(c) Milton Keynes. The North Bucks Historical Joint Committee has been set up to record the antiquities of the designated area for the new city of Milton Keynes. A provisional list of industrial monuments in the area has been compiled, and although this is very incomplete and will be subject to considerable additions later, at least it makes a start.

Monuments so far thought worthy of special mention, with a view to assessment for preservation are :-

1. Bradwell cap windmill (SP 831411)
2. Oil engine, Post Office Repeater Station, Fenny Stratford (SP 884339)
3. Tickford Bridge, Newport Pagnell (SP 878438) i.e. the subject of study (b) above.
4. Denbigh Hall Bridge, London & Birmingham Railway (north portal) (SP 864354)
5. "The Iron Trunk" Aquaduct, Grand Junction Canal (SP 800417)

(d) Corn mill, near High Wycombe. Mr. L.J. Mayes reports that there is a local corn mill on the verge of disappearing. Although it had been disastrously repaired from time to time, it was the last true working wheel on the Wye and when it became vacant the wheel was still driving some quite good grinding gear. Unfortunately two local societies are trying to influence its fate: one to demolish it and use the site for a theatre (while still retaining the wheel as a "feature") and the other society intent on a simple restoration using most of the mill house and premises as a museum.

2. Lectures and Courses

At the Wolverton and District Archaeological Society's meeting on Wednesday, 10th May, Mr. Geoffrey H. Starmer showed the film "Industrial Archaeology - An Introduction" made by the Northamptonshire Industrial Archaeology Group.

3. Publications

Wolverton and District Archaeological Society. News Letter. No. 11, 1967. (In any other Society this very fine publication would be known as 'Journal' or similar instead of merely 'Newsletter' - Ed.) This contains several articles relating to the industrial archaeology of the district, including :-

"A Vanished Canal" by Warren R. Dawson (Deals with the Newport Pagnell Canal, a considerable part of the bed of which became the track of the Newport Railway Company)

"North Buckinghamshire Farming in 1810" by Margaret Baker (Includes references to the use of animal power and also to the growing of woad for which "a millhouse was built in the corner of the field")

"The Economy of Stony Stratford 1900 - 1914" by Carolyn Adams (Over twelve pages packed with information invaluable as background to many industrial archaeology studies)

Copies of this publication, costing 15/-, may be obtained from Mr. R.J. Ayers, 13, Vicarage Walk, Stony Stratford.

OXFORDSHIRE

1. Studies

Watermills. Mr. J. Carter's Mill Survey, originally of those in North Oxfordshire is to be extended to cover the whole County.

2. Lectures and Courses.

A short course of lectures on Industrial Archaeology is to be held at the North Oxfordshire Technical College, Banbury, starting next September. The Banbury Historical Society is supporting this and further details may be obtained from Mr. J.F. Carter, Tarvers, Adderbury East, Banbury.

3. Publications

"Banbury's Poor in 1850", published by the Banbury Historical Society, has several references to industrial items, especially the plush weaving industry, the engineer Lampitt and the Britannia.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

1. Studies

(a) Northampton Arm of the Grand Union Canal (Gayton Junction to junction with River Nene at Northampton) Mr. David Martin, of Northampton, is surveying this 5 mile length of canal. A summary of the work so far is as follows :-

Bridges: Road and occupation 6, Rail 3, Lifting 5, Sites of former lift bridges 4.

Locks : All narrow, 72' x 7' approximately. All double bottom gates, all single top gates. Gates of various ages of both wood and steel.

17 locks in all. Rothersthorpe flight has 13. Remaining four are singles.

Aqueduct: One, carrying canal over Nene headwater, between locks 13 and 14.

Cottages: Formerly two, only one remains (near Milton - Rothersthorpe road)

Warehouses: One at Cotton End, Northampton, intact but in poor condition. Let to Mettoy Ltd.; all goods arrive by road.

Pickfords warehouse at Gayton junction has been demolished.

(b) Blisworth Hill Railway. Mr. George Freeston, of Blisworth, has been keeping his eyes open for physical remains of this railway and is able to report the following :-

' Much of the track of this early railway (1800 - 1805) had slept undisturbed beneath grass land for at least the period of living memory. In 1964, Blisworth Hill farm was sold by Hesketh estates to A.F. Taylor & Sons who almost immediately set about ploughing up all of the fields, plus two of the old spoil heaps from the tunnel construction. They also carried out extensive drainage and part removal of some of the hedge lengths.

' I for one, did not appreciate this change of field pattern. I was soon to change my views when the plough started to turn up new evidences of the track. Excitement reached fever pitch when broken sections of the tramplate rail appeared. I did a shuttle service from that time, to the fields fearful that one of these sections would become buried again. In one section where the old hedge was taken out and a new ditch dug, the cross section of the old track was fully exposed. In another instance, two soil filled holes were sliced through, which could well have been the old sockets for sleeper stones.

' At that time no complete rail had been found. The following year, during the removal of two old fireplaces in two different buildings in the village, two complete rails were found. One of these, believe it or not, turned up in my own cottage in Stoke Road. The other was discovered in what could have been the old "saddle room" at Blisworth Hill. In December 1966, Home Farm in Stoke Road, Blisworth was completely demolished, and yet again two small sections of tramplate appeared from out of the rubble, each piece obviously having been used in chimney construction.

' In the spring of this year two new sleeper stones were ploughed up by Mr. Kaloher in a field close by the north end of the canal tunnel. '

Mr. Freeston hopes to publish something on all this new evidence later this year. This will be a sequel to the excellent booklet "The Blisworth Hill Railway 1800 - 1805" by Victor Hatley.

2. Lectures and Courses

(a) Mr. Geoffrey H. Starmer talked on "An Introduction to Industrial Archaeology" to the Thrapston Historical Society on 1st June.

(b) An eight week Summer Term course on Industrial Archaeology was run by the Leicester University Department of Adult Education at Northampton. This included a survey of some of the industrial buildings in Northampton, investigation of a watermill and of the route of an ironstone tramway abandoned over 40 years ago, exploration of the Blisworth Hill Railway and the inside of the canal tunnel. Visits were also made to the Coalbrookdale area, to steam pumping engines in Nottinghamshire and the Robinson mill complex.

(c) Starting in September there will be courses on Industrial Archaeology on Thursday evenings at Wallingborough Technical College and on Friday evenings at the University Centre, Barrack Road, Northampton.

