

BULLETIN OF INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

CBA, GROUP NINE

Number 1

April 1967

The aim of this Bulletin is to give some idea of what is going on in the way of industrial archaeology in the area covered by the Council for British Archaeology's Group Nine (Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire). It is hoped that future issues of the Bulletin will include for each of the counties, details of all finds and studies being undertaken, forthcoming lectures and courses on Industrial Archaeology and recent publications, articles etc. relevant to the industrial archaeology of each county. The contents of this first Bulletin are an indication of the sort of items it is hoped to include in subsequent issues. Comments on the style and presentation of the Bulletin will be welcomed by the Editor, Geoffrey H. Starmer, 17 Mayfield Road, Northampton.

All industrial archaeology workers in CBA Group 9 are asked to send brief details of their current activities for inclusion in the Bulletin. These should be forwarded to the respective County representatives.

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 :-

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| Bedfordshire | : | Mr. P.G. Laws, County Planning Officer,
Bedfordshire County Council,
3 High Street,
Bedford. |
| Berkshire | : | Mr. J. Kenneth Major, 2, Eldon Road,
Reading. |
| Buckinghamshire | : | Dr. P.N. Jarvis, 1, Wordsworth Drive,
Bletchley. |
| Oxfordshire | : | Mr. J.F. Carter, Travers,
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.

BEDFORDSHIRE1. Studies

- (a) The Great Ouse Restoration Society is recording the Great Ouse Navigation.
- (b) Mr. J. Kenneth Major has undertaken to begin detailed survey of watermills in Bedfordshire in May this year.
- (c) Members of a W.E.A. class on Industrial Archaeology in Dunstable are engaged in survey work in the south of the County.
- (d) As a complement to the written report "Industrial Archaeology in Bedfordshire" (see below) the County Photographic Unit has compiled an extensive photographic record of industrial monuments in Bedfordshire and this will be added to from time to time.

2. Lectures and Courses

Cambridge University Extra-Mural Department and the W.E.A. are running a course on Industrial Archaeology in Dunstable, under Dr. M.J.T. Lewis.

3. Publications

"Industrial Archaeology in Bedfordshire", by Mr. P.G. Laws, Bedfordshire County Planning Officer. 500 copies were printed and already all 500 have been sold or otherwise distributed. This is encouraging evidence of growing public interest in Industrial Archaeology.

BERKSHIRE1. Studies

- (a) Bucklebury Foundry. Owing to changes in ownership and use, this foundry is threatened with re-organization if not demolition. A team led by Mr. McCombe and Mr. Major is at work recording the buildings, the waterwheel, furnaces, patterns, tools and plant. The foundry has been working as a foundry since c.1800 and as a smithy for at least 100 years before that.
- (b) Berks & Wilts Canal. Mr. Banfield is at work on a survey of the remains of this canal. Even though this canal ceased to be used in 1900 it contains quite a large amount of material in its length. This is an urgent case in that the route is being lost by ploughing over large stretches where it passes through the Vale of the White Horse.
- (c) Milestones. Mr. Hart and Mr. Copesey are at work recording milestones in West and East Berkshire respectively.
- (d) Pumps. Helen Major is recording the roadside pumps which line A4, the Bath Road.
- (e) Roads and Bridges. Mr. and Mrs. Green are at work on the bridges and associated roads in the Kennet and Thames Valleys.
- (f) Dovecotes. This is the most complete piece of work at present under way in Berkshire. Esme Few has completed more than half of the photographic and historical survey of dovecotes in the County.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE1. Studies

- (a) Brickworks. Brickmaking on the Oxford Clay is the main extractive industry near Bletchley. A few scraps of past ages survive: one brickpit of 1698 but not machinery of that date. The following is a report by Dr. P.N. Jarvis on one of the brick works.

Great Linford Brick Works
Near Wolverton, Buckinghamshire.
Nat. Grid Ref. SP 860416

Brickworks owned by G.O. Price & Sons.
Worked ?c.1880 - 1914

Clay Pit lay to the west of the kilns and is now filled by Newport Pagnell refuse tip. A small stream flows from here behind the kilns and is impounded into a pond.

Kilns are three in number, two being more or less intact and one having collapsed :-

1) being the westernmost of the three: circular, brick built, wall 26 - 27" thick, internal diameter 14 ft. The entrance is (or was) 2 ft wide and about 10 ft high, having a semicircular head. There are eight fireholes, placed symmetrically round the kiln, about 16" wide and about 2ft high, but these dimensions vary as the holes have been burned away in places and at least one has been reset. The brickwork adjacent to the fireholes is vitrified. The springer of the dome is at about 12 ft high; the dome is shallow having a rise of about 3ft. The vent in the roof is circular and is about 4 ft diameter. There are also four holes 9" square at right angles round the roof vent and about 4ft from it. The entire kiln is bound round with iron straps fastened to two vertical lengths of bullhead rail placed on either side of the entrance. The bricks of which it is made are wirecut and vary from 8" x 4" x 2½" to 9½" x 4" x 3"; the commonest size is 8½" x 4½" x 2¾"

2) Similar to 1), but the dome springer is about 7ft above the floor, and the dome rises about 5ft. The vent is only 2'6" or so in diameter. The internal diameter is about 15ft; there are eight fireholes most of which retain their brick infilling. The fireholes are 9" x 36"

3) This has collapsed, but shows signs of being of similar construction to the others. The iron straps running upwards towards the apex of the dome are visible in this case: in the others, the domes are covered by vegetation.

Wharf on the Grand Junction (now Grand Union) Canal is adjacent to the works on the east side. The canal bridge some 80 yds north of the wharf does not seem to have been built of bricks from this works, the bricks on the arch being 9" x 4½" x 2¾" and of a different appearance.

Cottage on the road, about 80yds north of the kilns, is probably the fireman's cottage. It may well have been built from bricks made at the works and the path around the cottage certainly was.

There are remains of other brick buildings on the site under various tumps but none are recognisable. The setting-down floor appears to have been in front of the kilns.

References

Bucks Standard, June 1957 "When Great Linford had a Flourishing Brickyard"

Wolverton Express, 17 September, 1965 shows picture of chimney c. 30ft high. Says bricks from this works used to build Anson Road and Jersey Road, Wolverton.

(b) Wolverton Railway Works. Work is proceeding on the recording of the works.

(c) Photographic Survey. The Wolverton Archaeological Society are carrying out a photographic survey of the area. The society started their survey three years ago and now have over 2000 black and white slides of postcards and photographs recorded. The survey is to cover the towns and villages within six miles of Stony Stratford and Newport Pagnell. When it is completed, the collection will show the area as it is today and as it was at various times during the past 60 years. Although this is not limited to industrial archaeology, the collection already contains some wonderful illustrations of past industrial activities e.g. the use of steam traction engines to transport boats from the boatyard at Stony Stratford.

2. Lectures and Courses

(a) There has been a lecture on the Great Ouse Navigation to the Bletchley Society

(b) On Wednesday 10th May, the Wolverton Archaeological Society is showing the film "Industrial Archaeology - an Introduction" made by the Northamptonshire Industrial Archaeology Group (see under NORTHAMPTONSHIRE)

OXFORDSHIRE

1. Studies

(a) Hunt Edmunds Brewery, Banbury. An early steam table engine made by Lampitts Foundry, Banbury, is in full working order and used as a standby, to drive a roller mill (contemporary with the engine) in the floor above. Owing to the decision to cease brewing here in April, arrangements have been made for the Banbury Steam Club to acquire this engine for preservation in working order. Arrangements have been made to prepare a detailed drawing of this rather unusual engine. Another small horizontal engine from the Brewery has also been preserved.

(b) Watermills. J.F.Carter's survey of north Oxfordshire watermills has resulted in approximately 50 sites being identified and most of these have been visited.

Of these, it has been discovered that there are 3 watermills in full working order, and in use for private grist requirements. These are :-

Little Barford Mill
Adderbury Mill
North Newington Mill.

The last two are conversions from earlier paper mills. Heyford Mill, now in private hands is also in full working order and used occasionally for grinding.

The Oxford University group have recorded most of the mills and sites in and around Oxford City.

(c) Estate Yard Sawmill, Blenheim Park The Oxford University Group have noted this sawmill where a beam engine survives although not in working order. This mill was also driven by waterpower. It is hoped to fully record this site.

2. Lectures and Courses

It is hoped that Industrial Archaeology courses will be run next winter in Banbury and in Oxford.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

1. Studies

(a) Early Railways at Blisworth. Mr. George Freeston is investigating the early railways in his area. Last summer another piece of the plate rail used on the Blisworth Hill Railway, was discovered on the site of the tramway serving the old Blisworth stone works. This, together with documentary evidence showing that there was a railway here in the very early part of the nineteenth century has led to renewed activity in excavation along the track of the stoneworks tramway before this is levelled for farming.

(b) Watermill Survey. The preliminary survey is now almost complete. It is intended to start more detailed recording of some of those mills and to collect old photographs or other pictures and records of all the mills.

(c) Museum of Milling. Mrs. Mahon has been gathering material for the Museum of Milling which should be opened this year at Billing Mill, on the River Nene, near Northampton. The exterior of the building has already been restored and work is now proceeding on the interior. Mrs. Mahon would be pleased to learn of the whereabouts of any remaining mill equipment (from wind, water or early steam mills). Anyone having such information is requested to contact Mrs. Mahon at Chequer House, Stocks Hill, Moulton.

(d) Northampton Foundries. Mr. Eric Instone has been investigating the Northampton foundries - their history, work and products. The study includes the location of where these products were used and it is of interest that whilst recording mileposts in Buckinghamshire, Dr. Jarvis found some cast iron examples from Grundy and Ogg's foundry in Northampton.

(e) Northampton - Peterborough Railway. Mr. John Ginns made a cine-recording of this line whilst it was still in operation. Now that it has closed he is recording stations and bridges etc. before all are swept away.

(f) Boot and Shoe Industry. In the course of his overall recording of the town, Mr. Victor Hatley has been photographing and noting the exteriors of all premises associated with boots and shoes. In cooperation with Mr. John Thornton (who will deal with the interiors and machinery), the trends in boot and shoe factory layout are to be investigated.

(g) Thomas Butlins Blast Furnaces. Mr. K. Gennis is investigating the site of Thomas Butlin's second blast furnace site at Wellingborough.

2. Lectures and Courses

(a) Leicester University's Department of Adult Education has organised a 24 week course in Industrial Archaeology in Northampton. This is being followed by an 8 week practical course from April until June. Next winter, they propose to run a follow-on series of 24 lectures. Further details may be obtained from R. Greenall, Esq., Warden, The University Centre, Leicester Parade, Barrack Road, Northampton.

(b) In conjunction with the W.E.A., Leicester University proposes a 24 week course at Wellingborough. For further details, contact A.E. Brown, Esq., Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester.

(c) The film "Industrial Archaeology - an Introduction" has been shown at the Northampton Natural History Society and at Wellingborough and District Archaeological Society.