



BRITISH
BRICK
SOCIETY

INFORMATION

No 30

May '83

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OFFICERS OF THE BRICK SECTION OF THE BRITISH
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* Members of the Brick Section of the B.A.A. are affiliated to the
British Brick Society.

THE SIZE OF A BRICK PART II (Part I see 'Information' 29)

Clay contains a considerably quantity of water about 50% by weight of our fine ground clay. This water is divided into three types, water of plasticity, pore water and bound water. Water of plasticity is required to lubricate the particles and make the clay workable and accounts for about 25-30% of the weight of the clay. This quantity of water is required in any type of clay when it is to be worked by hand, even with the addition of sand. When this water has dried out the clay is called leather hard, the particles are touching each other. It can be handled without damage but still has some resilience. Pore water is that which is trapped within the clay when the particles touch. About 10% of the weight of the clay, this water is very difficult to remove. Clay can only dry by evaporation from the surface and needs a constantly moving air flow, very obvious statements, but often forgotten by those who assume those bricks were stacked to dry. I have not noticed stacking marks on this type of brick, but it is obvious many of these bricks were turned on their side, on a straw bed just before they were leather hard. This exposes the maximum surface area, and done at the right moment prevents warping. Even so drying to the moisture content of the atmosphere, which is the most one can hope for, would take many weeks (one month¹⁶ is a quoted time related to 1644 when techniques had been refined). A large space is required, and constant supervision, with some sort of portable covering. Here again size is critical, the thinner the brick the faster and more even is the drying. In the 17th century, when it became general to add sand to open up the clay, drying and shrinkage becomes less of a problem. Sand stiffens the clay, while still retaining a high percentage of water. This enables the bricks to be handled directly from the mould, allows them to be stacked, and drying can be faster because the sand keeps passages clear for the water to reach the outer surface. By keeping the clay particles apart, shrinkage is less and more consistent.

Now we come to firing and troubles multiply. If we had some of these bricks to fire today, we would almost certainly use a pottery kiln, with slow energy input and precise control, placing the bricks on shelves, not stacking them. Heat would be applied very slowly with plenty of ventilation, up to about 120°C when all pore water will have evaporated. We have arrived at bound water; this is chemically combined water and could account for up to 15% of the original weight of our bricks. To drive out this water requires at least red heat. About 450°C is required to begin the process, reaching a peak up to 600°C and finishing about 700°C. At this point the clay has changed its chemical composition and cannot revert back to clay simply by the addition of water. We still need to continue heating up 900-1000°C to obtain a useable brick. All this heat must be applied very slowly and evenly, a top temperature must be held long enough for the whole brick to reach this temperature, cooling must be equally slow and controlled. Even with this treatment many bricks would fail, mainly due to the uncertain nature of the clay. Shrinkage of this type¹⁷ of clay is large, and some is erratic due to its lime rich nature¹⁸. Even small stones cannot be tolerated and will cause the brick to split. Any air trapped during making of the brick may well cause a dramatic explosion in the kiln. This danger was not overcome until powered pug mills were used, probably in the 17th century¹⁸.

When we now contemplate stacking our unfired bricks in a long heap, with layers of faggots, bundles of brushwood, tree toppings, hedge slashings and undergrowth generally, ¹⁹ covering it with clay and earth, and setting fire to it - firing was very slow and uneven, a matter of weeks ²⁰ (a month or more for 1644 ²¹). I wonder how many useable bricks we would expect to result? Some idea, though from a later period, may be deduced from a load of bricks delivered in 1530 to the King's new Whitehall Palace. It comprised 65,000 "sand" soft under fired bricks; 24,000 hard bricks; 32,000 broken bricks. ²² If these are the proportions achieved in a clamp firing of that period, only one good brick out of five, and that for a prestige customer, then in our beginnings 300 years earlier, one in ten might be a good ratio. Here a brief return to size, because the heat would be insufficient to penetrate bricks of today's thickness ²³. This seemingly archaic method of firing in a clamp, but using coal, was still in use in Kent in the 1930's.

Now we come to the point where the size of a brick has always been determined by the size of a man's hand, ²⁵ building the wall. Lime mortar was the bonding agent. Nowadays we would consider this to be composed of finely ground lime and well washed and graded sand. hundred years ago the lime would be very coarse, and the sand would vary from loamy subsoil to road dust ²⁶; the mixture would have a long setting time. Mortar joints were very thick occupying about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the wall surface ²⁷. With this large quantity of mortar required for each brick, continued one hand laying would be very difficult. also it is almost impossible to keep a thick mortar wedge on the end of thin bricks while laying. ²⁸ Also let us not forget that the medieval hand was smaller than ours. It would seem logical to have one man shovelling on a layer of mortar, and filling the vertical joints of the course below, with another man placing the bricks two handed. There would be very little incentive to work too fast because with the very slow set of the mortar the height of the wall could only rise slowly. Our medieval wall is now built with bricks whose size has been determined by several constraints, but little influenced by the size of a hand. Although early bricks varied considerably in size from site to site, our "chosen" size is typical and I happen to have several in my collection and I can assure you that anyone with a "small medieval hand" would not be able to continually handle these bricks one handed. These bricks were no fleeting freaks, the methods outlined above continued almost unchanged through to the 17th century, some 500 years! The bricks from this period which survive today are the successes! Then more suitable clays began to be used, no doubt great pressure was building up for a higher quality product. Permanent brickyards grew up close to the material, and finished bricks had to be transported. The size varied very little from previous centuries although the techniques of manufacture change. Better clay blended with sand allowed bricks to be moulded and stacked straight out of the mould, less shrinkage and distortion. Permanent kilns fueled by coal with better control all led to a more consistent product.

The brick tax imposed in 1784, then increased in 1794, led to one of the biggest changes in size, the thickness being increased to 3" to $3\frac{1}{4}$ ". In the 1803 increase in tax, the tax on bricks over 150 cubic inch (10" X 5" X 3") was doubled. This effectively sealed the size of our bricks; the weight was reduced by the introduction of the frog. Slightly smaller, more consistent bricks allowed thinner mortar joints, and with quicker setting cement, larger hands, and the demand for a faster building following the industrial revolution, one hand brick laying.

It would seem that the size of bricks we use today originated because of the limitations of materials and methods during the period from approximately 1100 to 1600 to be slightly modified by the brick tax and standardisation. The brick reduced to meet the hand, and the hand increased to meet the brick. Too often the result is deemed to be the cause.

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18. "Bricks to Build a House" by John Woodforde P.61
19. "English Brickwork" by R. Brunskill & A. Clifton-
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20. "Brick Building in England" by Jane A. Wight P.42
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26. "Brick to Build a House" by John Woodforde P.96
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by the County Technical College - King's Lynn

November 1982

M.G. Reeder

NEW USES FOR OLD BRICKWORKS

In the past brickwork sites have usually been completely cleared for redevelopment but lately several schemes have been proposed which involves retaining the kilns and buildings as featured on the landscape. Until now it has been small kilns in rural locations that have been preserved, but at Burledon Brickworks, 4 miles east of Southampton, the original 12 chamber transverse arch Hoffman Kiln and adjacent drying sheds of 1897 are to become a Museum of Brickmaking and a craft centre. The steam powered brickmaking machinery is to be kept. The possibility of using the chambers of the two Hoffman Kilns on the site as security vaults has been considered, and the buildings converted for light industrial use. I surveyed the 1897 kiln for a measured drawing competition earlier this year and one day a rock band were rehearsing in the engineer's workshop!

At Prospect Park Brickworks, Reading, a proposal to build offices on top of the Hoffman kiln built 1905 has been considered. Surrey Council took over the derelict Smith Brook Brickworks near Cranleigh and converted the buildings to craft and workshop known as "Smith Brook Kilns". One of the two rectangular down draught kilns is to be preserved ----- the other has partly collapsed.

January 1983

M.D.P. Hammond

BBS BIBLIOGRAPHY

My thanks go to BBS member, Mr. L.F. Cave, who has recently sent the following additional references for the Bibliography:

HOPLEY, W A history in brick: the story of the Coventry brick industry:- Coventry and District Archaeological Society, 1980.

(A study of the brick making industry in Coventry, including a list of named bricks found in Coventry and of known brickworks in Coventry; photocopy available for reference.)

NEAL, K. L. Brickmaking in Burton upon Trent and District:-
(Unpublished; 198?).

(An intentionally brief survey of brickfields and brickworks of the Burton area, including a list of local brickyards with locations shown on OS map; photocopy available for reference.)

Bulletin of Industrial Archaeology (CBA Area/Group 9), No 15, January 1971. 'Twyford brickworks, Oxfordshire'/by Susanna Everett.

Bulletin of Industrial Archaeology (CBA Area/Group 9), No 16, April 1970 (produced March 1973). 'A survey of brickwork sites in West Berkshire'/by Fred Roberts.

Articles by Kenneth Major (Colliers' brickworks, Reading) and Richard O'Rourke (Northampton Brickworks) in Bulletins 11 and 13 respectively, are already recorded in the Bibliography.

Alison Roper - Bibliographer

March 1983

Members are requested to send all items for the Bibliography to Mrs. A. Roper, address inside front cover.

MIDDLETON HALL EXHIBITION

Middleton Hall is in the beautiful Warwickshire countryside between Sutton Coldfield and Tamworth. A trust was set up in 1980 to restore the building and make the grounds into a nature conservancy area. The Hall was the home of the natural historian Francis Willughby and also of John Ray said to be the 'Father of Botany'. The interest to BBS members is that the Hall has been added to as it grew, not demolished and rebuilt. It has an early medieval section on the Eastern Wing, a coach house, interesting outbuildings, a timbered entrance, a Jacobean building, and an II bay Georgian West Wing - its most obvious attraction. Details of membership of the trust may be obtained from Mrs. B.M. Ellerslie, 14, Newton Road, Knowle, Solihull, B93 9HL.

It is hoped to stage an exhibition of brick making in Warwickshire in Middleton Hall to coincide with the opening of the restored rooms of the West wing built 1693. If any members have any items to loan to such an exhibition or can offer help in any way will they please contact Mr. L.F. Cave, 24, Portland Place, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5EY.

FIREBRICK THESIS

Mr. Karl Gurcke has finished his thesis on British Firebricks in the Pacific Northwest and has read a paper on this subject to the Society for Historical Archaeology in Denver, Colorado. A copy of this paper has been deposited with the BBS bibliographer. Mr. Gurcke sends his thanks to members who helped his work.

OXFAM BARGAIN

The grand sum of 30 pence will purchase a Brick Kiln in the Third World cut out series. The kiln is drawn out on card in black and white and is designed to be made up and fit into a shoe box. One silhouette group of three figures shows the bricks being made in simple hand moulds; another silhouette group of two figures shows the bricks being loaded into the kiln, and a clay carrier and two more kiln loaders are included. The artistic model maker may have the skill to colour the model first! It is based on brick making in Bangladesh where there is good earth and plenty of water for the bricks and where they are made near the place where they are needed. The brick makers arrive on site with their chimneys and moulds and make the kiln in the pit from which they have dug their clay. After being left to dry in the sun the bricks are loaded into the kiln with charcoal with the chimney at one end and burnt for about two days. When local needs have been supplied the brick makers move on.

The cover has a photograph of an actual brick makers gang at work in Bangladesh and the bricks are a creamy yellow colour. It is not the quality of the bottle kiln model but at 30 pence a bargain.

W.A. Los

BRICK KILNS AT ELVEDON

During the weekend of the 1982 AGM I surveyed the remains of the estate brick yard kilns on the Suffolk-Norfolk border near Brandon, ably assisted by Messrs. G.C. Hines and C.H. Blowers. There are two pairs of Suffolk kilns 35,000 to 40,000 bricks capacity, one pair built in 1895 and the other pair on 1897 - the later pair have vaulted firing chambers. Each kiln was heated by 5 fire tunnels 18 inches wide, extending under the width of the kiln chamber from the outer long side wall, with brick lined stoking pits adjacent. The chamber floors were at ground level. The fire tunnels, of arched special-shaped bricks by Timmis of Stourbridge, were in good condition. At the turn of the century these kilns produced 6 million bricks in 4 years for a major programme on the estate, but little used afterwards. A tramway was laid to transport the bricks from the yard during this period. During World War II the kilns were largely demolished above ground to provide hard core.

January 1983

M.D.P. Hammond

CHANGE OF ADDRESSES

The following members have advised us of change of address:-

- . Mr. & Mrs. J.R.C. Howell: Marstons, Mendham, Harleston, Norfolk,
IP20 0NJ.
- . The Upminster Tithe Barn Museum: c/o Mr. J.W. Drain,
2, Knighton Close, Romford, Essex, RM7 9BT.

BRICKS ON VIDEO

A new firm producing video cassettes on a unique range of subjects are advertising one on "Hand Made Bricks". The tape produced at one of the few brickyards that still employs women hand moulders and follows the raw clay through to the finished product. It is 12½ minutes long and costs £28.75 for VHS & Betamax formats, £24.55 for U-matic, according to the advert. For further details contact I.A. Recordings, Unit 3, Maws Tile Works, Jackfield, Shropshire.

INTERNATIONAL BRICK COLLECTOR'S ASSOCIATION

A BBS member in the U.S.A. Jim Graves informs us of the newly formed International Brick Collector's Association has already issued its first newsletter and we wish it every success in the future.

Details of membership may be had from Mr. J. Graves, 1468 Coolidge, Wichita, Kansas 67203, U.S.A.

BRICKS AND CANALS

The greatest period of canal-building was 1760-1840; at its end the British Isles had some 5,000 miles of canals and navigable rivers. Canals required many structures - tunnels, locks, aqueducts, reservoirs, bridges, offices, wharves, warehouses, and houses for lock-keepers and other staff. If available locally, the obvious material to use for construction was stone, but most canals are in lowland Britain so, in the absence of suitable stone, bricks had to be used.

Usually the bricks would have been made on site, often using material produced in the process of canal excavation or tunnel driving. Bricks could seldom be purchased in the quantities required and, until the canal was built, there was no suitable means of transporting them. In "The Stroudwater Canal" Micheal Handord refers to the engagement, in May 1776, of Samuel Smith at a wage of 10s a week to supervise digging and wheeling clay out of the river and make bricks.

The numbers of bricks needed were considerable. Thus in "The Nutbrook Canal, Derbyshire" Peter Stevenson reports that, despite the considerable use of ashlar, upwards of 2 million bricks must have been used in the initial works on this canal. Yet it was only $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, with 13 locks.

The canals passed through 100 tunnels between 50 and 5,210 yards in length. Except where they were driven through stable rock, they needed to be lined, usually (or mainly) in brick, perhaps 3 feet thick, to withstand pressures which would deform them. (Lining would be thinner if it was only to prevent loose material falling). Portals were often massive; and ventilation shafts needed to be lined. Lined soughs might be provided to drain away surplus water and reduce hydrostatic pressure on the tunnel. (Blisworth Tunnel is 3,056 yards long but has 2,218 yards of such channels). It is not surprising therefore to learn that the second Harecastle Tunnel, on the Trent and Mersey Canal, needed 7 million bricks for its length of 2,926 yards.

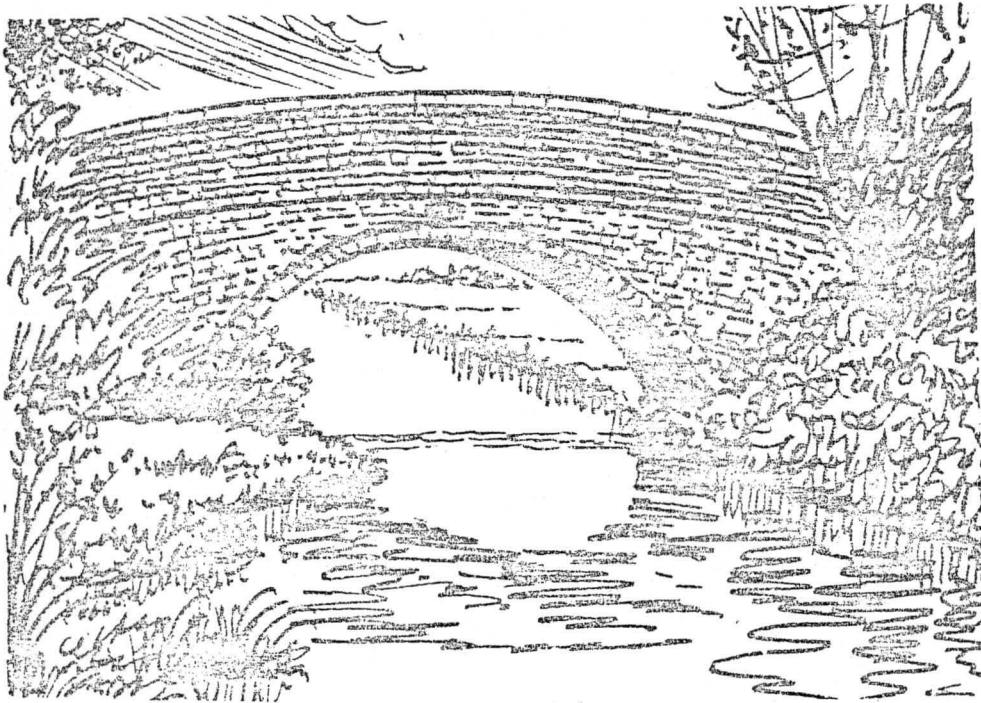
Locks were numerous. Despite the closure of many canals over the past 140 years, there are still some 1,300 locks in England and Wales, occurring on average every $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles. That a lock chamber requires bricks is apparent to the casual observer. What is not apparent are the butteresses which strengthen walls, and the inverters which may be bricked and puddled (i.e. clay-lined) if the lock is in porous land.

I have not attempted to count all the bridges which cross the canals; I make their number 76 and 25 mile length of the Oxford Canal between Banbury and Oxford. Other bridges carry the towing paths over side arms.

One suspects those "home-made" bricks were often of poor quality and that the blue bricks which we sometimes see today were subsequent replacements. The canals are beginning to show their age and need much maintenance. Thus a major problem for the British Waterways Board is repairing tunnels, several of which have had to be closed to traffic for a period.

BRICKS AND CANALS (Continued)

In their heyday, there would have been many more buildings along the canals than survive today. There are no longer toll-keepers to be accommodated; lock-keepers and bridge-keepers are few. Stables are no longer needed. The wharves which served farms and villages have vanished into the undergrowth since produce no longer travels to market by boat, and passenger services did not long survive the coming of railways.



Once the canals were built, bricks were among the commodities carried on them. Charles Hadfield has described how, after the opening of the Paddington Branch of the Grand Junction Canal in 1801, "many brickfields sprang up along the line, especially near West Drayton and Hayes, some served by private branch canals. Other examples are the short arm from the brickworks at Gledrid to the Ellesmere (now Llangollen) Canal; and Hazelstrine Arm of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, south-east of Stafford.

It is perhaps odd that more locks are not named by association with brickworks. I can find only two mentions of "bricks" in a lock name i.e. Brick Lock on the River Stort near its junction with the Lee Navigation, and Brick Kiln Lock on the Hatherton Arm of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal which served Hawkins's Longhouse Brick and Tile Works.

Perhaps with the revival of traffic on some of the wide waterways cargoes of bricks will reappear. Since they now come neatly packaged, we shall not, however, see crews laboriously man-handling bricks out of the hold. Nor are collieries again likely to become major producers of bricks as once they were, dispatching them, like the coal, by canal.

THE COUNTRY BRICKMAKERS OF THE WEALD

The cold clays and infertile sands which form the sub-soil of the Weald in Sussex are the reason why it was, and still is in places, so thickly wooded. Increasingly areas were cleared for farming but, although the big landowners and the graziers found stock-rearing profitable, arable farming was generally a struggle and so it is not surprising to find that a number of farmers turned to exploiting the sub-soil in a different way: by making bricks, tiles and agricultural drainpipes.

The abundant supply of wood is the reason why the timber-framed house persisted for so long in this part of the country. In the 16th Century some of the gentry houses were built of brick and the Tudor ironworks employed brickmakers to make bricks for lining the furnace blocks of the blast furnaces and tiles for the roofs of the workmen's lodges. However, it seemed that these brickmakers were largely itinerant and it is not until the 17th Century the brick built house had become the norm and practically every village in the Weald had a brickyard in the neighbourhood.

In studying these developments and discovering who the brickmakers were, I have begun to realise that a high proportion were Artisan/farmers with a small flock of sheep and a few acres under cultivation, generally including a hop-garden. They must have fitted their brickmaking activities into the months of the year when farming made the fewest demands. Clay was dug in the autumn after hop-picking had ended; wood faggots for the kiln were cut in the winter; bricks and tiles were made in the spring, when lambing and sowing had taken place, and left to dry until the opportunity arose to burn them during the summer. The intermittent open-topped up-draught kilns used for burning both bricks and tiles in Sussex (1) were perfectly suited to this type of operation.

The probate inventory of William Sargent, brickmaker of Hellingly taken in April 1720 (2) is fairly typical. His "corn on the ground" consisted of 2½ acres and 2 acres of oats and his stock included 5 cows, 5 horses, 34 sheep, some with lambs, as well as 5,000 bricks, 12,000 plain tiles, 300 well bricks and a few paving bricks and hollow tiles. I take the latter to be drain tiles, a product increasingly in demand in the Weald as the practices of field drainage became more widespread.

This would have been a family concern, with only one skilled brickmaker, the rest of the labour being used about the farm or in the brickyard as required. Little business of this kind continued to operate throughout the 18th and 19th Centuries and in some cases well into the present century. Overheads were so low that there was little incentive to modernise or expand and so, when this kind of brickmaking proved no longer profitable, the yards were gradually abandoned. In some cases the land was returned to agricultural use, in others the site of the kiln can still be located in a bank at the edge of a "shaw" (3), with a pond not far away.

(1) Sussex Industrial History Vol. 1 (1970) and Vol. 11 (1981) contain articles on brickmaking and tilemaking at Ashburnham, including a detailed description of the kiln and its use. Although this was an estate brickyard, it used the traditional methods alluded to here. (Vol. 1 by K.C. Leslie Vol. 11 by J. Harmer).

THE COUNTRY BRICKMAKERS OF THE WEALD (Continued)

- (2) East Sussex County Records Office W/I/1202.
- (3) The term "shaw" is used in Sussex to denote a wooded gully left when land was cleared for agriculture.

January 1983

Molly Beswick

ANGLESEY AND CLAY -PART I.

In the course of my work on the wind mills and water mills of this lovely island I have come across clay produced and the works where they were made. I hope the following details may be of interest and assistance to other members in their work.

DRAIN TILES AND PIPES

All drawings are to half scale and all map references to OS sheet 114 new edition or 106 old edition.

IA This was found in the moat of Beaumaris Castle, at the end of one of several streams that appear to have been piped into the moat. It was not resting on a flat clay tile, but a Welsh slate tile. Although of primitive manufacture, the material was very hard and showed no signs of weathering or deterioration. It was a yellowish pink in colour with iron stains and contained a considerable number of pebbles. I have never found anything like this in shape or texture on Anglesey.

IB & C & D These were all impressed with "BODJOR". It is now spelt Bodior, and is an estate at Rhoscolyn, Holyhead Island, which had its own brick and tile works. Bricks were similarly impressed "BODJOR". The samples were found in a field near the present Henlly's Hall Hotel (GR 600776). Up to 1935 the property was owned by the Hampton-Lewis family of Bodior. It is reasonable to suppose that the drain tiles were brought to Henllys from Bodior by a member of the family. Bodior is now owned by Mr. B. Bulmer of Hereford.

IE This was found in a brook at approximately. GR596789. This is near a small farm called Tan-y-Coed. Its provenance is quite unknown. The clay is a soft, pretty pink colour and the material itself is soft and noticeably free from foreign bodies - like IA above, unusual for this area. The method of manufacture appears to be extrusion and wire cutting. The 'ribs' on the the base are pronounced.

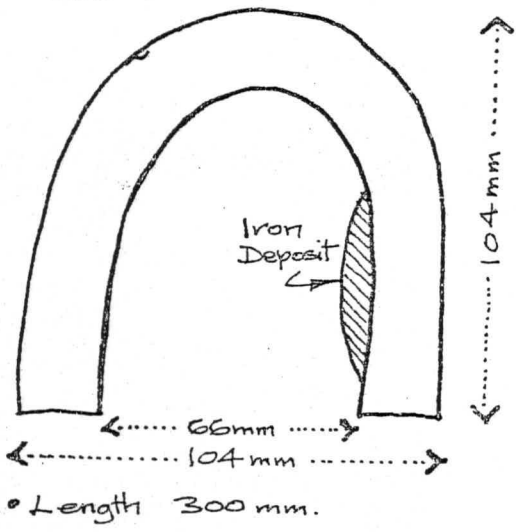
IF This recovered from the garden of the old Plas Gwyn estate brickworks, Pentraeth. (GR approximately 526785). It is assumed that this brick and tileworks was the source of the bricks for the building of the present Plas Gwyn (house) and its associated ice-house: they date from c, 1750.

While the manufacture is very like IE above, the clay is very hard, with an almost glazed surface. It contains a few small pebbles.

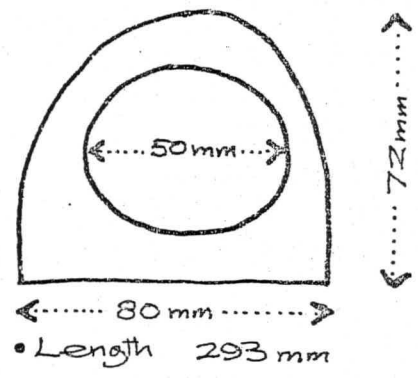
January 1983

Brigadier Arthur P. Trevor

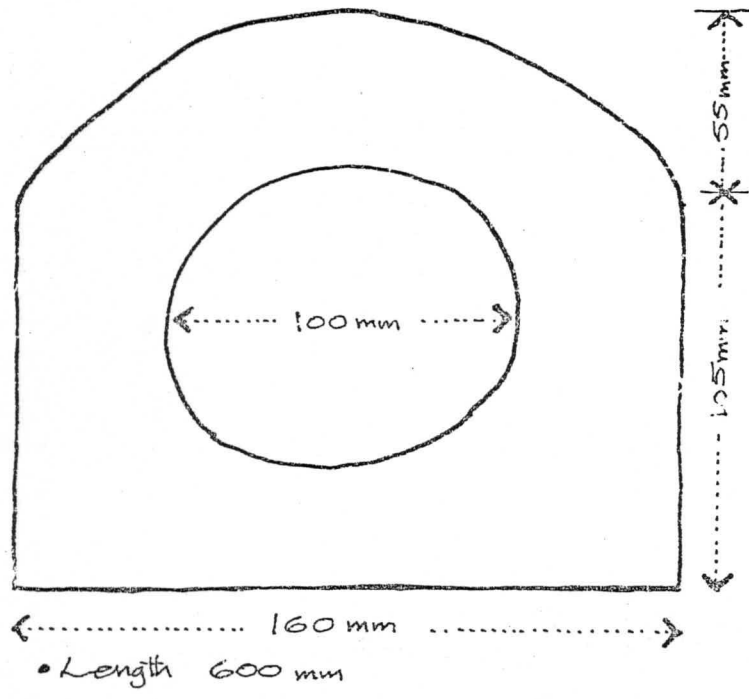
IA :



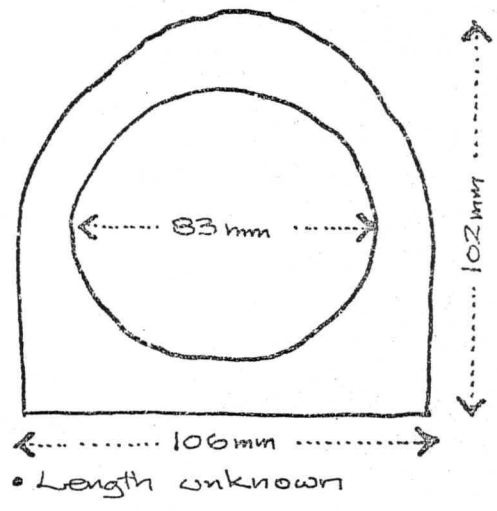
IB: "BODJOR"



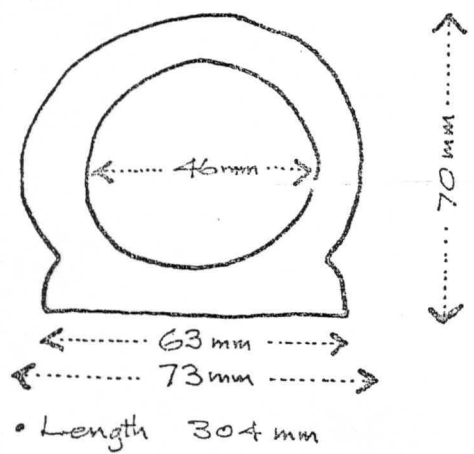
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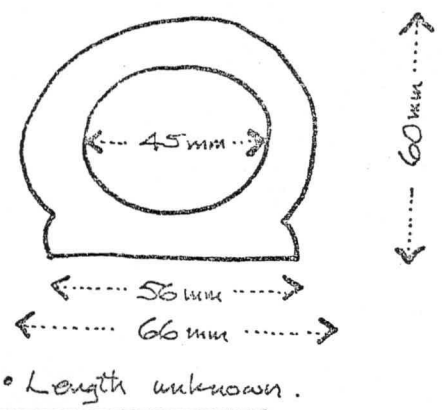
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IE:



IF:



• scale : approx half full size •

ENQUIRIES1. PHILLIPS TOYNTON

If any members have any details of this firm which impressed their name on the face of their bricks, David Bick, Pound House, Newent, Gloucestershire, GP18 IPS, would be pleased to hear from them.

2. BRICKMAKING MACHINE

If any members have a picture or know where to obtain a picture of a brickmaking machine of the 1900's with rollers by Page & Bedford the gentleman in number one above would like to hear from you.

3. CHESHIRE YARDS

Mr. A. Hulme, 20, Swan Close, Poynton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK12 1HX would be pleased to hear of any details of the following yards. Middlewood Brick Company Limited, Vernon Brick Company, Wallgrange Brick Company, and Poynton Brick Company.

4. PETERBOROUGH

We welcome new member Mr. E. Marsh who is willing to share information on works on the Peterborough area and is particularly interested in wages, accidents, outings and other items of the domestic history of brickyards. Replies please to 14, Eastern Close, Dogsthorpe, Peterborough, PE1 4PP.

5. WARWICKSHIRE

If any member have any details of old brickworks in Warwickshire Mr. L.F. Cave, 24, Portland Place, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5EY, would be pleased to hear from them.

6. BACK COPIES

Karl Gurcke from the U.S.A. and myself are interested in back copies of Information, number I to II. If any one has any of these will they please forward them to the old editor Ann Los, address as front cover of Information 29.

WRITING ON THE WALL

Reading Alan Hulme's note on relief panels in Stratford (Information 29) reminded me of a photograph that I was sent several years ago. It illustrated a quotation, set in tiles, into a house at Outwell near Cambridge. The lettering reads:

"THEN MAN IN MIRTH
HAVE MERSEY IN MIND
FOR MESVRE IS TRESVR
WHEN MIRTH IS AT END"

The letters appear to have been made individually, perhaps in Terra Cotta, and are set into a wall of hand made bricks. I have not been able to find out any further details but perhaps members can throw some more light on this feature.

EDITORIAL

It is with a touch of nostalgia that I submit my last editorial and hand over office to Mr. Terry Smith. I offered to resign to enable the Society to have the benefits of a fresh approach and original ideas of a new editor and thus keep the Society alive. I began as editor in 1978 with Information 15 and as this is Information 30 I must have edited more than half the issues. The first pictures appeared in Information 19 to mark the International Year of the Child: the first maps and diagrams in Information 20 and the first cover with Information 28. I offer my sincere thanks to all members who have submitted items, to Geoffrey Hines who advised me in the early days and Michael Hammett who has helped in the latter days, and to the BDA for all their hard work on behalf of the BBS.

I shall continue to be a member of the BBS and I am willing to help members or the Society in any way. I am sure members will support the new editor and should submit all items for Information 31 to him by 26th September 1983.
Mr. T. Smith, School Flat, Grammar School for Boys, West Hill, Dartford, Kent.

May 1983

W.A. Los

NEWS IN BRIEF

- (a) LONDON BRICK COMPANY have started Clay extraction east of the Midland Main Line at Stewartby. A conveyor now passes under the Midland Line.
- (b) Yorkshire Brick Company The 'Coalfield' Brickworks at Mexborough ceased firing towards the end of 1982. It was the last Pressed Brick Kiln in South Yorkshire to operate.
- (c) Thomas Marshall and Company, Loxley, Sheffield The narrow gauge (16") underground railway at the works ceased to operate in July 1982. This was the last mine to use rail transport in North West Sheffield. Very little fireclay is now extracted locally though some open cast is obtained at Wetshaw and (occasionally) Loftshaw (upper - Loxley Valley).

April 1983

G. Hagues

LOCAL COLOUR

Mr. Michael Lancaster, an architect, is writing a book on the development of characteristic regional building colours and how they are derived from the particular colours of local building materials. Before the comparatively modern availability of economic, nationwide transport bricks tended to be used within easy reach of their manufacturing sites and as such they are a good example of particular materials imparting local colour characteristics.

LOCAL COLOUR (Continued)

Mr. Lancaster would appreciate receiving information to substantiate this phenomenon. Members are invited to write with information on brickworks, the colours and textures of their bricks and the local use. Some indication of the extent of influence of the products would be very valuable.

Mr. Lancaster's address is 297/9 Lonsdale Road, Barnes, LONDON, SW13 9QB.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1983 AGM held at Wye College, Nr. Canterbury was held in conjunction with a weekend study course on "Bricks and Brickwork in Kent" which proved to be very enjoyable. Stimulating and well illustrated lectures were part of the course and the visit to the brickworks at the "self Sufficient" farm at Chiddingstone was very interesting.

The formal "Minutes" of the AGM's of the BBS and the BAA (Brick Section) will accompany "Information 31".

It was disappointing to see that the AGM was not as well attended as in previous years and from enquiries it seemed to be due to the rather long and difficult journey necessary for most members.

The officers of the Society would welcome suggestions for venues and events for the next A.G.M. A Saturday at the end of March seems to be a popular time for most members.

Please let the Secretary, Michael Hammett (address inside cover), have your views and suggestions. If there are some practical proposals perhaps we can have a 'short list' in the next "Information"

Michael Hammett - Hon. Secretary



The Scotch Kiln at Chiddingstone