

BRITISH  
BRICK  
SOCIETY

# INFORMATION

No 36

May '85

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# INFORMATION

BRITISH BRICK SOCIETY

## INFORMATION 36 MAY 1985

EDITORIAL:

THE PLEASURE OF RUINS?

winde biwāune · weallas stondap,  
hrīme bihrorene, · hryðge þā  
ederas.  
Wōriað þā winsalo....

Thus the anonymous Anglo-Saxon author of a fragmentary elegy in The Exeter Book (known to us as The Seafarer) speaks of the wind-blown and frost-covered walls of decayed buildings, of crumbled wine-halls, and, brooding upon them, contemplates the lot of man in a world of impermanence, a world where - in the words of a poet of our own century - 'Nothing lasts, but the wheel turns, / The nest is rifled and the bird mourns...'. The theme is a common one in Anglo-Saxon literature, both in Latin and in the vernacular, whilst another fragment in The Exeter Book is wholly devoted to the topic. Here is no Romantic attraction of ruined buildings and the Anglo-Saxon poet was no Wordsworth beholding Tintern Abbey. Perhaps men have always

felt a pull towards ruins and to what they represent, whether of hope or fear, whether with intimations of immortality or dark foreboding. And he must have a heart of stone who would not be stirred in some way by the wind-swept ruggedness of a Tintagel Castle or the gentler resonances of, say, a Fountains Abbey.

But feelings are often more prosaic, and during the last year I have visited the ruins of two early brick buildings and the experience was - well, not wholly pleasant. Scadbury Park, Chislehurst, in metropolitan Kent is one of the sites, a moated enclosure some way from a public path; it is 'strictly private'. In a recent book Richard Muir has rightly complained of this attitude which attempts to bar us from a heritage which, after all, belongs to all of us. Worse even than this is the state in which the owners, Bromley Borough Council, have allowed the building to remain. The remnant of a re-erected crown-post roof stands lop-sided and open to the weather whilst the brick footings are severely overgrown with shrubbery and in extremely poor condition. They define a rectangular moated area, revetted both on the inner and outer sides of the moat, and within this are the footings of various brick buildings of which it is difficult to make much sense now. Along the inner edge of the moat are oblong brick bays jutting into the water and reminiscent of those at Eltham Palace, also in metropolitan Kent. At least one of these has a rounded internal corner. Within the enclosure are a number of brick-lined wells, in Header Bond. Otherwise, and expectedly, the brickwork is in English Bond (though with a few portions of Stretcher Bond). The bricks are red and measure 9 by 4 by 2 inches. The two spiral stairs of brick reported by Webb, Miller, and Beckwith in The History of Chislehurst (1899) are now no longer evident. The brickwork is perhaps of the late fifteenth century, contemporary with the moat at Eltham Palace. The whole site deserves better treatment than it is receiving: it would take some money to make it presentable but would offer few technical problems.

Alas, this is not true of the other building - at Nether Hall, Roydon, Essex. Here a magnificently tall gatehouse with two octagonal turrets rises through three storeys on the edge of a rectangular moated enclosure, brick-revetted as at Scadbury Park. Behind the east turret are further blocks containing various rooms - one of them perhaps the porter's lodge - and also a brick-built newel staircase, the steps supported on a spiralling barrel-vault; there is also a hand-hold of brick of a pattern familiar from some of the related buildings. Dressings seem to be mostly of stone, though the loops in the turrets are of brick. Moulded and cut brick is also used for the plinths to the turrets and for the corbel-table (little of which remains) above the main entrance. This consists of cinquefoils with trefoil-pierced spandrels - that is, of the same pattern exhibited, in related contexts, at Faulkbourne Hall, Essex, Rye House, Hertfordshire, and Someries Castle, Bedfordshire. It is in the connexion with these buildings that the particular significance of Nether Hall lies. Elsewhere it has been argued that they are the work of a single atelier of craftsmen, skilled in the manipulation of fine brickwork ornamentation. They were almost certainly built in the sequence given above, and Nether Hall is probably the latest of the group. A date in the late 1460s or in the 1470s is most likely. The bricks are red in colour, laid in English Bond - with some use of black glazed headers for diaper work - and measure  $8\frac{1}{2}$  by  $4\frac{1}{4}$  by  $2-2\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

In his county guide to Essex Norman Scarfe was touched by the Romantic aspect of the ruin, and Jane Wight - the poet in her perhaps coming to the fore - speaks of the 'picturesque decay'. Looked at differently, a major brick building is falling to bits before our eyes. Sadly, there seems little that can be done to save this building - particularly the dangerously unstable west turret of the gatehouse.

It may be possible, however, to consolidate parts at least of the east turret and the adjoining work, after the manner of the excellent treatment at the nearby Rye House (by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority) or at Someries Castle (by the Bedfordshire County Council). Certainly this would be a worthwhile project.

Terence Paul Smith  
Editor

## ALEC CLIFTON-TAYLOR, 1907-1985

Many members of the British Brick Society will have been saddened to learn of the death, on 1 April 1985, of Alec Clifton-Taylor, at the age of 77.

I first came across Alec Clifton-Taylor's name whilst a school-boy in the early 1960s, when I borrowed from the public library at Luton the first edition of The Pattern of English Building (1962). This book, more than any other, helped to foster my interest in vernacular building, and in brickwork and brick-tiles (mathematical tiles) in particular. It remains the standard work on its subject and its chapter on brickwork has not been superseded as a history of the material in this country. A number of other books - as well as articles - were to follow, on various aspects of English building, always with an emphasis on his beloved building materials. Cathedrals, parish churches, stone buildings, and townscapes were all admirably covered. In 1977 he collaborated with Ronald Brunskill on a study of English Brickwork, in which the story was continued beyond the age of traditional building and into the modern period. In this, Alec Clifton-Taylor, known for his love of the traditional and historic, showed a real appreciation of some more modern works of architecture. Lutyens was a particular favourite, but there are appreciations too of architects such as W.M.Dudok in the Netherlands and Welch, Cachmaille-Day, and Lander in this country. It is not surprising that he liked the classical approach of Raymond Erith and Quinlan Terry at Kings Walden Bury in Hertfordshire, nor that he showed a keenness for the variety of colours and textures which modern methods of brick manufacture are able to achieve.

My first meeting with Alec Clifton-Taylor was not until 1981, and it is characteristic of the man that he instantly recalled some earlier correspondence in which we had engaged - and remembered it better than I! The occasion of our meeting was the Symposium on Mathematical Tiles held at Ewell in Surrey, which he chaired with his normal warmth and geniality. He had brought along a little bell, which he threatened to ring if those of us who were speaking went over our allotted time. There was much to fit into this day, and it was a beautifully tactful way of reminding speakers that they should not go on too long!

Alec Clifton-Taylor was born on 2 August 1907 and educated at Bishop's Stortford College, Queen's College, Oxford, and the Courtauld Institute of Art, where he obtained first class honours. Later he studied at the Sorbonne. From 1934 to 1939 he lectured on architectural history at the Institute of Education of London University and at the Royal College of Art. War service was with the Admiralty, and in 1946 he returned to the University of London as an extra-mural lecturer. He was a Trustee of the Historic Churches Preservation Trust. In 1979 he was made an Hon.F.R.I.B.A. and in 1982 was appointed O.B.E. He was

unmarried.

In recent years he became known as an admirable television presenter, with a programme on the Middle Ages in the BBC's Spirit of the Age series, and with three series of six programmes each (again for the BBC) on English towns. To them all he again brought his warmth of personality, geniality, and generosity of knowledge. Always ready to appreciate what was good in modern building, he warmly welcomed Hinton's new supermarket at Whitby as 'a considerable visual asset to the town'. But he could be scathing on insensitive concrete intrusions into out historic towns, or on misplaced lampposts or poor replacement windows in older houses. Quite rightly, he wanted us to look at, and to see, our surroundings, and to protest at what was unworthy. This attitude sprang from a real understanding of the visual scene and was not just a sentimental hankering after the past. As noted above, he could appreciate what was good in recent building. He could also be critical of older materials - the nasty brick-tiles which formerly covered Chevening in Kent, for example, or the use of pebbledash - his distaste for which he showed by pronouncing it 'pebble-dash' and which he disliked just about as much as he did clay chimney-pots!

In his essay in English Brickwork Alec Clifton-Taylor wrote: "He (or more often she) was a perfect brick." No hint of indiscretion here: the picture is one of strength, reliability, kindness, warmth.' How well those latter words apply to Alec Clifton-Taylor himself. He will be much missed by all of us who care for brickwork, tiles, and other building materials.

Terence Paul Smith

## BELMONT, THROWLEY, NEAR FAVERSHAM, KENT: THE MATHEMATICAL TILES

Maurice Exwood

Belmont has been the ancestral home of Lord Harris and his descendants since it was built in 1792. It is situated in the parish of Throwley, to the south of Faversham in Kent (NGR: TL986565), an area quite rich in mathematical tiles. Although the architect is not recorded, Christopher Hussey (Country Life, 3 February 1955) has attributed it to Samuel Wyatt. A very fine mansion in magnificent park setting, it is listed Grade I in recognition of its architectural importance.

The house is clad in mathematical tiles, one of only about seven such houses in the 'stately home' class surviving. (Althorp, Northants. and Helmingham Hall, Suffolk are two others.) Without doubt, it is the finest.

Belmont has been well maintained by the late Lord Harris and the trustees of the estate, but after nearly two hundred years large areas of tiles are in need of replacement, and work was started last summer but is now held up for lack of supplies of replacement tiles. There are only a few manufacturers of mathematical tiles now in the country and none of those known to me seem to be able to produce a tile to match the existing ones, in the main a biscuit colour, which add so much to the attraction of this lovely house in its fine setting.

Unless a suitable source of clay tiles can be found, a compromise of some form of concrete tiles may have to be accepted, which to my mind would be very undesirable.

If any reader can suggest a supplier who may be able to help I would be most grateful for any information.

About 30,000 tiles will be needed over a period of years.

Please contact: Maurice Exwood, telephone: 01 393 7957.

cont./

Note

1. (Cf. M.Exwood, 'Mathematical Tiles, Great Houses and Great Architects', in M.Exwood, ed., Mathematical Tiles: Notes of Ewell Symposium, 14 November 1981, Ewell, 1981, pp.26-30; there is a useful description of the house in J.Newman, The Buildings of England: North East and East Kent, Harmondsworth, 1969, pp.134-5; TPS)

## BRICKS: A SUFFOLK MISCELLANY

David H. Kennett

Introduction

During the summer of 1984 the present author was preparing A Guide to the Suffolk Heritage Coast. In the course of this work a number of matters have been considered which may be of interest to readers of Information. The material has been gathered together here, without precluding possible fuller consideration of some items, which are part of continuing research. Suffolk as treated herein is regarded as the historic county. Thus those parishes transferred to Norfolk in 1974 - Fritton and St Olaves, Hopton, Belton, Burgh Castle, and Bradwell - are regarded as still within Suffolk; so too is Gorleston-on-Sea, which became part of the borough (later the county borough) of Great Yarmouth in 1881.

'Lumps'

In 1823 Edward Moor published Suffolk Words and Phrases, a dialect dictionary reprinted in 1970. Among the words of interest therein is 'lumps', defined as 'White bricks burnt hard for flooring'. Within a quantity of rubble acquired by the author were two whole lumps together with some broken fragments. The complete examples measure 9 by 4½ by 2 inches. Similar lumps have been seen in a number of church floors in Suffolk. These include St Michael's, Tunstall, and the church of the Holy Trinity, Blythburgh. These have very different dates for their floors. There are box pews of a late eighteenth-century date at Tunstall. The floor here is most evenly laid and is part of a major refurbishment of the church in the second half of the eighteenth century. There is a very uneven floor to Blythburgh church. The furnishings, particularly the benches, look contemporary with the font, dated 1449; the roof has tie-beams but these are undated. There seems no reason to suppose that the floor is not contemporary with the rest of the church. Blythburgh is one of the finest Suffolk churches of the middle and late fifteenth century. Lumps therefore have a long history as a flooring material. It may be no coincidence that the size recorded by Moor in the early nineteenth century matches so closely that of the 'typical' medieval brick.

Falkenham Church

The church of St Ethelbert at Falkenham retains many of its original features, particularly in the interior: a single hammer-beam roof with angels holding shields, the font with the symbols of the evangelists alternating with angels, and indeed the inside of the walls.

cont./

Externally, however, it has usually been dismissed - apart from the tower - because it is encased in brick. The nave was refaced in white Woolpit bricks in 1806, during the incumbency of the Rev. John Edgar. Between 1842 and 1878 Canon William Jackaman was vicar. His work at the church included refenestrating the nave with windows in the Decorated style and the addition of an apse. Externally this is in white brick at the corners and in red brick in the panels. There was no attempt to produce vertical edges to the panels. In the churchyard, to the south of the fifteenth-century west tower, are seven graves in two rows. These have bricks on the top of the grave, arranged over a roughly coffin-shaped area and ridged. The head and foot of each grave is marked by an upright stone slab.

### Wantisden Church

St John's church, Wantisden is on the southern edge of the Bentwaters Airfield. It is used only for one mid-afternoon Evensong each month. It has been noted chiefly for the Norman windows, chancel arch, and south doorway. One major piece of refenestration did take place in the late Middle Ages. In the sixteenth century a three-light window with the top enclosed within a straight heading was inserted in the north wall of the nave. This window is of brick.

### Church Towers

In Information 35, February 1985, 4-8, the author listed 'Church Towers of Brick'. Two of those in Suffolk are at All Saints' church, Waldringfield and All Saints' church, Hemley. These are adjacent parishes on the south bank of the River Deben. Both towers are buttressed. Both are of red brick with a prominent blue diaper. Both have stair turrets on the south side giving access to the first floor only. Within each of the turrets is a newel stair of brick.

### Rat-Trap Bond

Rat-Trap Bond involves laying bricks on edge with the base and the header face alternately visible in the wall-face. In certain parishes in eastern Suffolk groups of cottages built in this way have been observed. Particular concentrations are at Wrentham, Yoxford, and Tunstall, the last-named having a single outlier at Blaxhall.

### English Bond

The author has been collecting examples of the use of English Bond in two parishes: Bradwell and Gorleston. Here the bond has been found on a cinema, a church, farm barns, and railway bridges. Arising from this a list is being prepared of barns in English Bond. English Bond has also been seen in large, flat-roofed buildings elsewhere: a grocery shop in Southwold and a department store in Lowestoft.

Change of Address: Will members please note that Mr N.J.Moore (formerly of Court House, Downton, Wilts.) has moved to The Callow, Walford, Herefordshire, HR9 5QN. The list of members should be altered accordingly.

There is a little space still available in Information 37, November 1985; further material should reach me as soon as possible and in any case not later than 1 October 1985. The deadline for material for inclusion in Information 38, February 1986 is 20 December 1985.



## BLOTTING PAPER SOURCES

W. Ann Los

I was delighted to find on a market stall at York a new source of material (in my experience) for brickworks history. Among a bundle of old blotting papers, some dated 1929 and 1932, were two advertising brickworks. One advertised 'FOSALSIL' partition and floor blocks, the only moler products of British manufacture, complete with a sketch of the product (fig. 1, below).

The second, larger blotter had a fantastic aerial photograph (fig. 2, overleaf) of the Metallic Tile Company's tileries at Chester-ton. The photograph shows thirty-one circular kilns adjacent to a railway siding off the main line, ten buildings, a large quarry with two inclines to the works, and other features. The Metallic Tile Company (Rowley Brothers) Ltd branded their products 'B.C.M./"METAL"'. I do have a Staffordshire blue brick in my collection stamped 'Metal'.

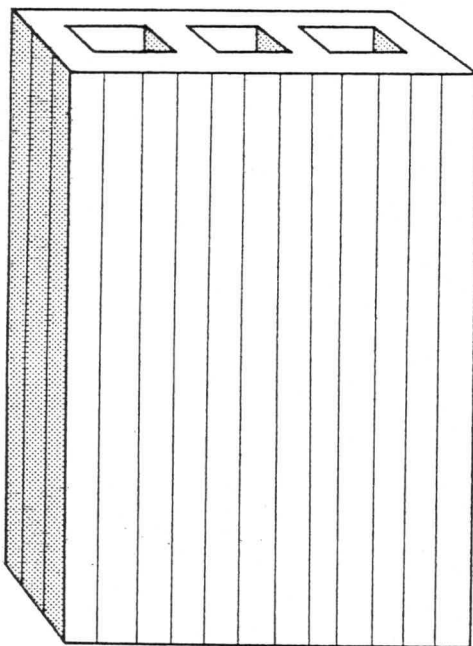


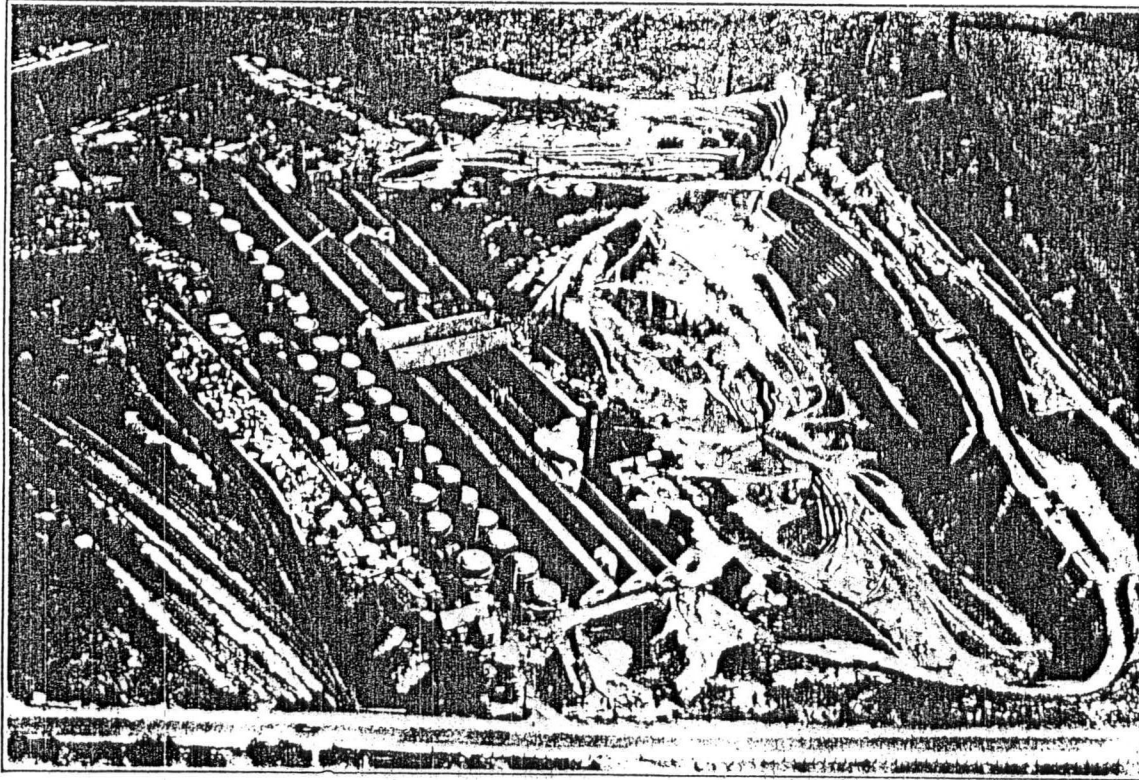
Fig. 1

### A Red Brick Gets Dropped!

A lowly Communist Party Official has been fined for flattening a section of the legendary Great Wall of China to enlarge a brick factory. Report in the Hull Daily Mail, 8 February 1985.

W. Ann Los

## BLOTTER



AERIAL VIEW OF THE METALLIC TILERIES, CHESTERTON

Fig. 2

Why jeopardise your houses by using  
Inferior Roofing, when these should  
be your Living Monument!

STAFFORDSHIRE'S FINEST

## ROOFING TILES

ARE BRANDED "B.C.M. METAL"

And have stood the test for Half-a-Century.

QUALITY IS ECONOMY

SOLELY MANUFACTURED BY

## The Metallic Tile Co.

(ROWLEY BROS.) LTD.

### CHESTERTON,

NORTH STAFFS.

PHONE: Chesterton 68051

WIRE: Rowley Bros., Chesterton, Staffs.

ASK FOR QUOTATIONS.

## ANOTHER FAREWELL: WARBOYS BRICKYARD, CAMBS.

E. Marsh

The month of August 1984 saw the closure of one of the most interesting of the brickyards under the control of the London Brick Company: The Warboys Brickyard, Cambridgeshire (near Ramsey), NGR: TL308817. On learning that this yard was to close I obtained permission to visit it. As I was a stranger to the area I was looking for the familiar tall chimneys, but none could be seen. When I found the works I could see only a very short stack from the oil-fired kiln.

A brief survey may begin at the boiler house, where three oil-fired boilers generate steam for the works; next door is the engine-house, which contains an engine and generator. The engine was built in 1917 by Belliss and Morcom of Birmingham. In its early days it was in constant use, but for a number of years now it has been run only once a month - to keep it in working order. The generator could produce 250 kilowatts, enough to supply 80% of the works' requirements. It was supplied by Warren Beattie and Company Ltd, Power Engineers of Middlesex. Details around the casing read: 'Compangie International d'Electricité Liege Belgique'. We come now to the working part of the yard. Here the blocks and pipes are made on two de-aired, steam-injected continuous extrusion machines. The blocks and pipes then pass through a tunnel-drier which is 90 ft in length and which takes about twenty-four hours to complete its task. The kiln was manufactured by Gibbons Bros. Ltd of Dudley. It is 341 ft long, holding forty cars. The burning takes about 38 hours to complete. Oil consumption is 3,500 gallons per week. At the clay pit the raw material is dug by a 30 RB Electric Dragline and transported to the works by a narrow-gauge railway hauled by a 30 h.p. diesel locomotive. In 1983 the yard returned to making bricks by extrusion, using a machine installed in a separate building. The material from the upper beds of the Oxford Clay is very low in fuel content and so coke breeze or sawdust is added to help firing.

Warboys is built on the high ground of the Corallian Rocks. The brickyard skirts these rocks and the clay is extracted from the upper beds of the Oxford Clay, which are more plastic than the lower beds of Oxford clay found at Fletton. The section at the clay pits is as follows:

	<u>metres</u>	<u>ft.in.</u>
Amphill Clay	1.52	5 0
Elsworth Rock Series	1.45	4 9
Upper Oxford Clay	23.14	75 11

### Chronological Summary

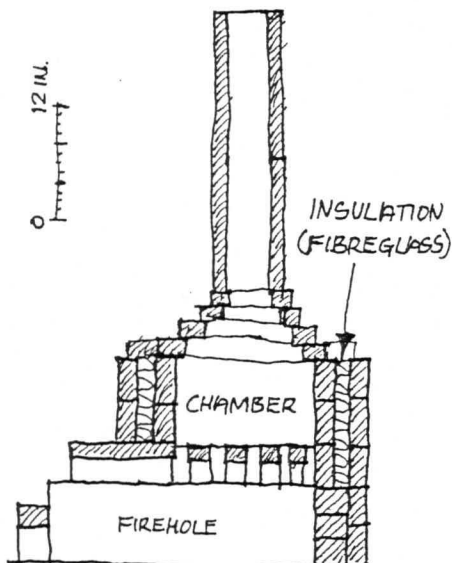
1891	Site bought by Mr Alfred Fuller
1893	Brick production started
1894-96	Site extended
1896	Pressed bricks first made
1898-99	Further extensions bought
1906	Three Hoffmann kilns built
1917	Engine installed
1920	Warboys Brickworks Company formed
1923	Taken over by B.J.Forder and Sons
1924-25	London Brick Company and Forders
1942	Closed down due to Second World War

cont./

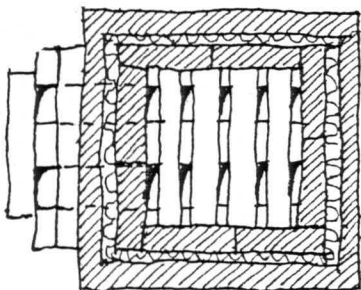
1946 Works re-opened  
 1948 Started to produce hollow clay blocks  
 1955 Tunnel-kiln built  
 1966 Hoffmann kilns demolished  
 1966 30 RB Electric Dragline bought (price: £13,179)  
 1983 Started to produce extruded bricks once again  
 1984 Taken over by the Hanson Trust  
 1984 August: Works closed

Note: The fate of this works had been in the balance for some time as manufacturing costs were higher than at any of the company's other works. It seems a pity that these old yards must go, but this is the price of progress.

### A Miniature Suffolk Kiln.



SECTION



PLAN

On 9 March 1985 I successfully fired the kiln shown in the accompanying sketch. It was built of firebricks salvaged from the Dunnachie kiln at Branskome (see Information, 31, November 1983, 18) with mud mortar, insulated with fibreglass and a further layer of bricks on edge without mortar. The firehole arches were of miniature bricks in fire cement built over a length of guttering as a centering.

The kiln was filled with tiles, test pieces, and miniature bricks, and took four hours to reach 1000°C. Firing started with logs up to 1½ inches diameter. For the last two hours pine laths from old woven fence panels were used, and flames were shooting out of the top of the chimney.

The idea was to develop a semi-portable kiln which could be exhibited at fêtes, craft fairs, and the like. Future development now lies in cutting down the total weight.

Included in the setting was a sample of Cala Nova red marl from Es Cana, Ibiza. It fired buff with a slight green tinge. Shrinkage and loss-on-ignition were very low. After two weeks out in the rain, frost, and snow it was showing slight signs of lime-blowing.

The kiln took three hours to construct and also three hours to demolish.

Martin D.P.Hammond

## BRICKMAKING IN IBIZA

Martin D. P. Hammond

Most readers will know of Ibiza as a Spanish holiday island in the sun in the western Mediterranean. There is no tradition of structural ceramics on the island. Older houses in the country are built of rubble stone, rendered and whitewashed, and have flat roofs. The traditional Spanish tiles are not used much except for buildings in towns.

The clay of the island was renowned in ancient times: the Phoenicians believed that it repelled all evil. They brought their dead from far and wide to the island for burial. For at least three thousand years the island has supported no harmful animal, plant, or insect. The clay subsoil helps to keep the island green, and the hills are well-wooded, providing fuel. Coal and oil are now imported for industrial use.

I found the geology difficult to understand. The rocks of the island were caught up in the Alpine earth movements. Cabo Falco, the southernmost point of the island, consists of over 100 m. (33 ft) of uniform hard grey shale, but at Es Cana, on the east coast, where I stayed, there was a complete jumble of buff, red, and purple marls, grey shale, and a soft reddish coral limestone.

The language barrier prevented me from making further enquiries, so the following notes are based on observations from outside the factory gate. No ordinary phrase-book has a section on 'at the brickworks'! but I have since learned the Spanish for such items as 'box-feeder', 'de-airing pugmill', and 'continuous kiln'. There are two large brickworks on the island, at Ca'n Clavos and Ca'n Creu, on the main road between the town of Ibiza and Santa Eulalia. Both appear to be under the same Belgian or Dutch management, and flourishing. They produce hollow longitudinally-perforated bricks in nominal sizes 250 by 125 by 50, 75 and 100 mm. and 250 by 140 by 200 mm.; floor-tiles 250 by 125 by 10 mm.; and infill units, 600 by 200 by 50 mm., for pre-cast beam floors. Some 5-hole solid perforated facings with a roller-applied dimpled texture similar to some Dutch bricks, are made at the Ca'n Creu works. They are 250 by 125 by 50 mm. format. Facing brickwork is something quite new to Ibiza. No roofing tiles were made at either works, though it would be possible to make them using the same clay and machinery. The Spanish tiles (known in Spain as 'Arab tiles') are extruded and cut to shape. I did see some pressed interlocking tiles from Alicante, Spain.

The clays used are buff and orange-red marls: Ca'n Clavos is supplied by lorry from pits a mile or so eastwards, and the material is dug on site at Ca'n Creu. The clays are mixed in proportions of about 1:3, ground very fine, pugged, and extruded. Drying is done in closed sheds. Both works have Hoffmann kilns, at Ca'n Clavos a barrel-arched type about 2.5 by 2.5 m. (8 by 8 ft) in cross-section, with a tall elegant octagonal chimney of white brick. The other works has a much newer kiln, apparently a coal-fired transverse-arch type of sixteen chambers each 3.5 m. wide and 2.5 m. high (11½ by 8 ft), with a short steel chimney and forced draught. The whole is enclosed in a large shed with a domed roof. Setting and drawing is done by fork-lift. Each pitch in the transverse-arch kiln, between consecutive rows of feed-holes, is filled with four packs, two on top arranged to fit the segmental chamber arch, and two below, and three-bricks deep. This puts the feed holes at about 0.8 m. (1 ft) centres. Only two packs fill

each pitch of the Ca'n Clavos kiln. After firing, the packs are taken out into the yard and sorted and made up into banded packs on wooden pallets for despatch. Packs of floor-tiles are shrink-wrapped in polythene. The name IBIDECOSA was seen on some pallets; otherwise no manufacturer's name was seen.

Both works are powered by electricity.

The old lead mine at San Carlos has a boiler chimney built almost entirely of pinkish handmade bricks 247 by 123 by 38 mm, three courses rising 132 mm., so that there are quite fine joints. It was about 50 ft (15 m.) high, with half-brick-wide offsets at intervals, finished with bullnose bricks.

The best bricks are flesh pink-pale yellow. Underfired bricks are a medium red. The clay turns greenish-buff on vitrifying, and finally turns into a khaki-coloured slag.

A fragment of firebrick found in the boiler-house looked similar to some Scottish firebricks that I have seen - yellow speckled with brown.

There is a distinction in Spanish between solid, perforated (con perforaciones) and hollow bricks (con canales) similar to our B.S. 3921 section 3.4. This last is the archetypal Mediterranean common brick. The sample in my collection is 240 by 118 by 62 mm., weighing 1.55 kg. It has six horizontal perforations each 30 by 20 mm., and ribbed faces as a key. It was extruded on edge, as there are marks of a pallet on one stretcher face.

Industrial Museum in Westphalia Rebuilds a Hoffmann Kiln. The following information is taken from an article by Eckhard Schinkel, source not known.

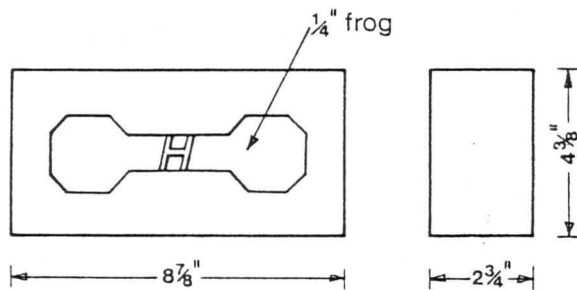
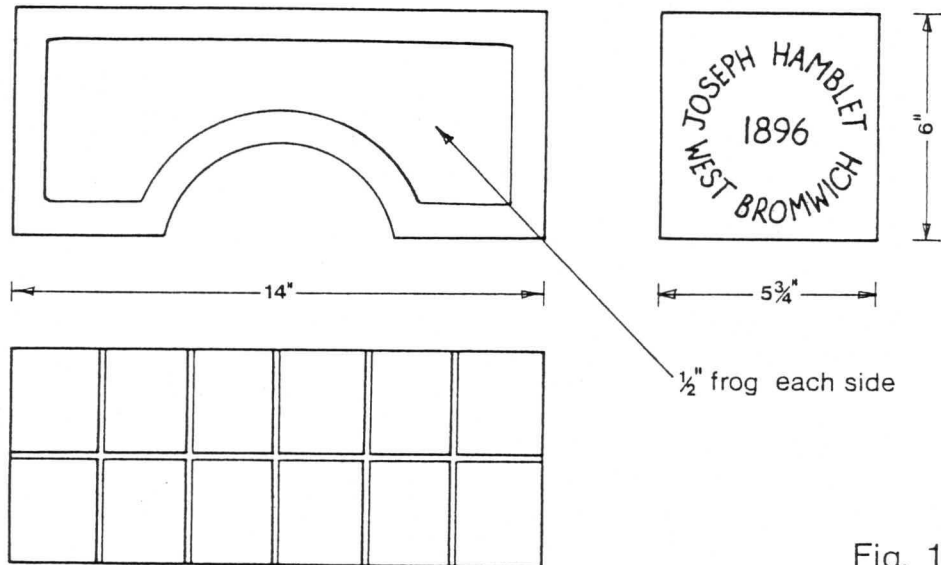
In 1979, in its seventieth year, the Sylbacher Dampfziegelei (steam brickworks) Gustav Beermann, near Lagem closed down. Complete buildings and plant were left - a Hoffmann kiln, engine-house, workshops, drying shed, and brickmakers' flats over the stables. Thus the Industrial Museum of Westphalia, in association with the town of Lage, had the unique opportunity to have a working museum showing the living and working conditions of brickmakers in the early twentieth century. Last summer (1984) a 24 m. (80 ft) length of the kiln was rebuilt. The kiln-builders brought in to do this had not worked on a Hoffmann kiln for over twenty years. Other parts of the works will be restored in the coming years. Visitors will be able to see brick production from the claypit to the finished brick, and will be able to mould their own bricks by hand. A documentary archive on the history of brickmaking will be collected at the same time.

M.D.P.Hammond

Bricks and Brickmaking. Whilst on Ibiza, readers will be pleased to hear, Martin Hammond drafted the revisions for the second edition of his Shire Album on Brick and Brickmaking. The first edition was well received, and gave a concise outline of both traditional and modern methods of manufacture, well illustrated with line drawings and photographs. We look forward to the appearance of the new edition.

TPS

Hamblet Bricks. Illustrated here are two bricks in response to the request in Information 35, February 1985, 20. The dots at the end of the name in the brick there illustrated could be the press number made by drilling an indent into the die. The bricks that I have do not have any mark of this type. Both of the bricks illustrated here are blue engineering bricks and both came from a railway loading dock.



E.F.Marsh

And Some More of the Same! The copings for some of the railway bridges here in Parkstone, Poole, Dorset dating from 1884 have an oval hand-stamp 'Joseph Hamblet West Bromwich'. On the current letterhead of Messrs Barnett & Beddows Ltd, Atlas Brickworks, Aldridge, Walsall it says 'incorporating Hamblet's Blue Brick Co and The Manners Brick Co' (of Eastwood, Nottingham), so the name lives on. As for the bosses, these are probably some works coding, e.g. a press number, whose meaning is now lost. I have known similar bosses, plus a year number, to be used for the date of manufacture on wall and floor tiles. The number of bosses represented the number of the month - 3 for March, etc. Hamblet's speciality seems to have been large bricks for copings and station platform edgings. The Parkstone examples are about 13½ by 6 by 6 inches (343 by 152 by 152 mm.), with a semi-elliptical top. I have seen the name on other large bricks elsewhere.

Barnett & Beddows were established in 1890, and now produce five million bricks per annum. Exports are world-wide.

M.D.P.Hammond

## HEADERS AS A DECORATIVE FEATURE

David H. Kennett

A previous short survey of the external brickwork of housing in High Street, Winslow, Bucks. noted several terraces with different coloured headers used as a decorative feature with Flemish bond brickwork.<sup>1</sup> The same use of headers has been observed on Victorian buildings in a number of small towns in central Northamptonshire, where it is rarely earlier than the nineteenth century. The towns include Rushden, Higham Ferrers, Irthlingborough, and Finedon. It is hoped to give fuller details in a future issue of Information, on completion of the survey work. All these places are to the north-east of Winslow. South-west of Buckinghamshire is Oxford. Working-class housing in the city is a major topic for a dedicated researcher; it has attracted some attention, not specifically directed at the brickwork per se.<sup>2</sup> A number of houses have been illustrated, and these show the use of distinctive headers. They include houses in Blackfriars Road in the St Ebbe's area,<sup>3</sup> and, more recently, 25 Worcester Place, much nearer to the city centre.<sup>4</sup> This may be familiar to readers as the home of the History Workshop Centre.

Distinctive headers, however, may be localised. In Cambridge, certainly on the east bank of the River Cam, the predominant brick used in working-class housing in the nineteenth century was white. Both here and at St Neots the author is unaware of houses with distinctive headers as a decorative feature in the brickwork. Similarly, none are known to me in Bedford. However, the artisan housing of the 1830s and '40s was demolished for a shopping centre and 'bus station in the early 1960s and earlier. North-east of the Northamptonshire towns referred to the decorative feature is unknown in King's Lynn, Norfolk and in Wisbech, Cambs.

This interim note is mainly intended to draw attention to the amount of work that needs to be done in this field. It would be good to know, for example, precisely where and when this decorative feature was used. It might then be possible to tie-in the collected data with known brick manufacturers. How far, too, might it be connected with local building firms?<sup>5</sup>

### Notes and References

1. D.H.Kennett, 'Decorative Brickwork in High Street, Winslow, Buckinghamshire: a Preliminary Survey', BBS Information, 33, May 1984, 15-17.
2. C.Paine et al., 'Working-Class Housing in Oxfordshire', Oxeniensia, 43, 1978, 188-215; R.J.Morris, 'The Friars and Paradise: an Essay in the Building History of Oxford, 1801-1861', Oxeniensia, 36, 1971, 72-98. (See also photograph in J.Bond et al., Oxfordshire Brick-makers, Oxfordshire Museums Service Publication no.14, Woodstock, 1980, p.15, showing a terrace in the 'Jericho' area of the city; TPS.)
3. Morris, op.cit., pl.17b.
4. History Today, 34, May 1984, 57 with plate.
5. (For an introductory survey of decorative brickwork in the period: S.Muthesius, The English Terraced House, New Haven, USA, and London, 1982, pp.204-15; TPS.)



## THE HEDINGHAM BRICK INDUSTRY AND THE COLNE VALLEY AND HALSTEAD RAILWAY

Adrian Corder-Birch, F. Inst. L. Ex.

The arrival of the Colne Valley and Halstead Railway in the early 1860s made a great impact on the area through which it ran. It created employment not only in its own construction and later maintenance but also in the various industries along its route. These industries, such as engineering works, iron foundries, and brickworks, were quite small until the completion of the railway, when the transportation of goods was facilitated and these industries expanded in consequence.

It was, however, the brickworks in the Colne Valley, particularly those at Heddingham, which provided the railway with the largest quantity of goods traffic throughout its history. For many years special brick trains were provided. It was not only the red bricks, tiles, pipes, and other products that the railway carried, but also sand and the coal required to fire the kilns.

A number of brickworks had their own private sidings from the railway. As early as 1864, when one Sible Heddingham brickworks was advertised for sale, the particulars contained reference to a siding to the brickworks from the C.V. & H.R. As new brickworks opened, those close enough to the railway had sidings constructed. In Sible Heddingham the brickworks at Highfields and later at Purls Hill (NGR: TL789340) had sidings, as did the brickworks at Maiden Ley, Castle Heddingham, and a brickworks in Haverhill. The Purls Hill siding was so busy that it was even controlled by its own signal.

A tramway was also built from the sand pits in Purls Hill Plantation to the railway in order to facilitate the transportation of sand, some of which was used at the brickworks. The sand in the small trucks on the tramway was tipped over into the larger railway trucks below.

The main brickmakers in the area were Mark Gentry and the Corder, Rayner, and Cornish families. Mark Gentry was proprietor of the Heddingham Brick and Tile Works, which made bricks at Langthorne Brickworks, Wethersfield Road and Highfields (adjacent to Purls Hill), Sible Heddingham. William Corder had brickworks at Southey Green, Sible Heddingham, Potters Hall, Great Yeldham, and Gosfield. The Rayner family owned the Maiden Ley Brickworks at Castle Heddingham. At Purls Hill was the Heddingham Brick Company which later became the Sible Heddingham Red Brick Company Limited (fig.1). Successive members of another Rayner family owned brickworks at Gestingthorpe, as did John Downs, who was also the Postmaster, Iron Founder, and a farmer in Gestingthorpe. The Rayners at Gestingthorpe transported many of their products to the railway at Heddingham. Eli Cornish owned the Tortoise Brickworks at Wethersfield Road, Sible Heddingham, and also managed the Heddingham Brick Company and later the Sible Heddingham Red Brick Company Limited, of which he was a director for a few years. He also owned a brickworks suitable named the 'Sidings Works' at Sible Heddingham, adjacent to Purls Hill. Another brickworks in Castle Heddingham was latterly owned by Thomas Moy Limited but managed by the Corder family. Thomas Moy Limited were also coal merchants with a depot at

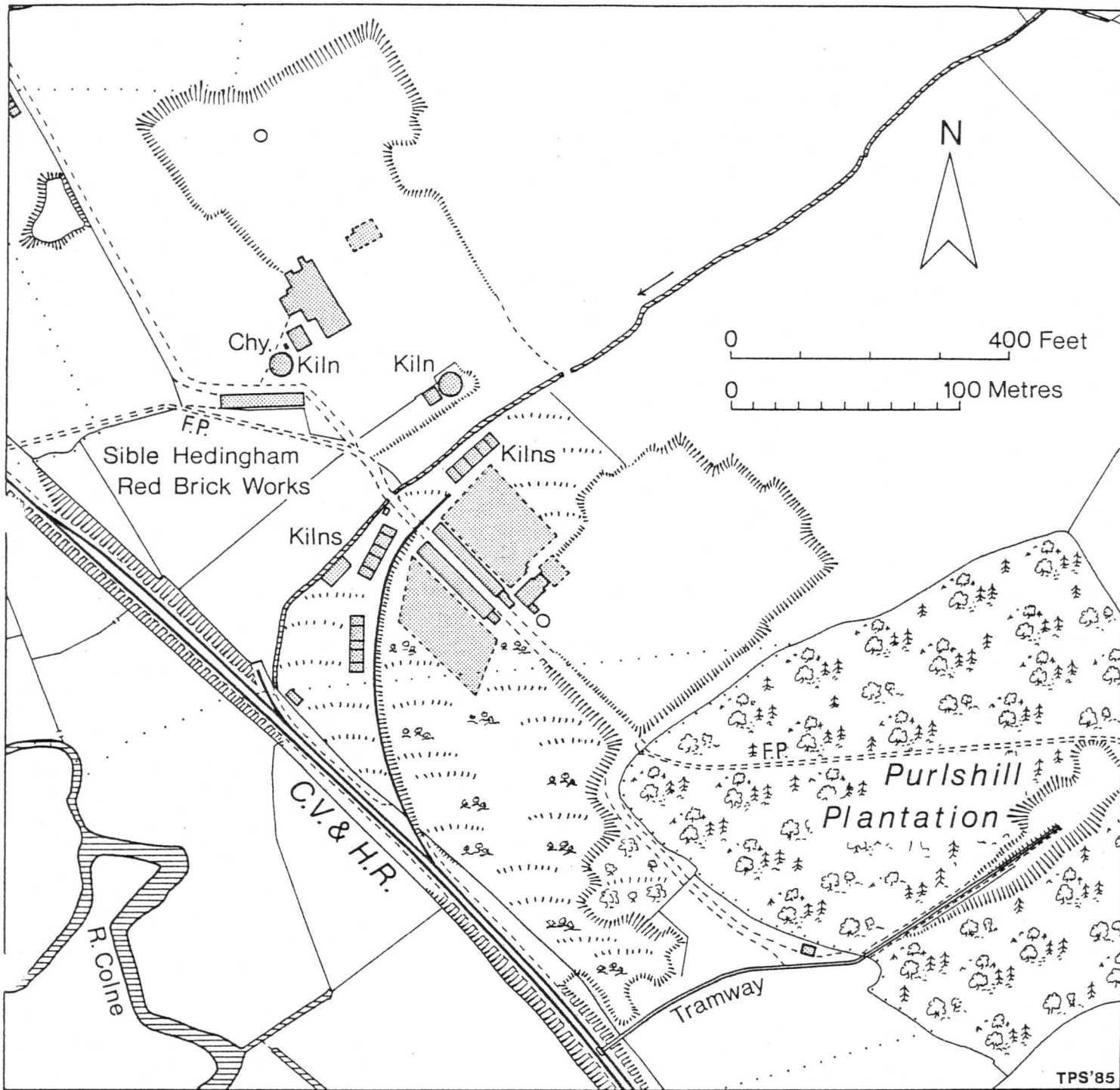


Fig.1

Redrawn from the 1923 Ordnance Survey Map

Hedingham; they used the railway considerably. Brickworks in Halstead were owned by the Blomfield family and the Rev. B.J.H. Berridge, whilst at Colne Engaine Pudney & Son made bricks. Many of the bricks, tiles, and other products made at these brickworks, particularly the Hedingham works, were transported by rail to London and other towns to meet the building expansion of the time.

One Hedingham brickmaker alone provided the bricks for building sixteen churches in North London. Another brickmaker even exported bricks to Ireland, Egypt, and Africa. All used the C.V. & H.R., but at times it was unable to cope with the extent of the brick business.

In 1887 the brick traffic by rail from Hedingham was 5,000 tons

per year, which increased to over 20,000 tons per year by 1898. At the second half-yearly meeting of the C.V. & H.R. Company that year the Chairman, W. Bailey Hawkins, reported that the brick traffic at Heddingham was going up by leaps and bounds and was expected to double within a year or two. With increased traffic the railway required more means of carrying it. The Great Eastern Railway had helped the C.V. & H.R. as far as they could, but they too were short of rolling stock. The C.V. & H.R. ordered twenty more waggons, but they were not sufficient and the directors had to consider whether they could obtain more.

At a public inquiry held at Heddingham in 1898 into Light Railways for North Essex, Mark Gentry (Master Brickmaker) stated that the C.V. & H.R. did not have the resources to meet his requirements. He could have loaded twenty and sometimes thirty more trucks a week than the railway could give him. It is clear that, through the lack of rolling stock, the railway lost much revenue throughout the time when the brick industry was at its peak.

By 1901 between thirty and forty truck-loads of bricks were despatched from Heddingham daily and the industry was employing about five hundred men. With the general increase in goods traffic, particularly of bricks, it was necessary for the railway to purchase a larger and more powerful engine, which was delivered in 1908. However, by this time the general depression of the building trade, and consequently of the brickmaking industry, was being felt by the C.V. & H.R., whose receipts for goods traffic showed a decrease. Sadly, this trend continued, and later reports revealed that a smaller tonnage of bricks and coal was being carried.

The sidings to the various brickworks became disused many years before the railway closed, and as far back as 1951 the siding to Rayner's brickworks at Maiden Ley was described as 'derelict and the river bridge which is partly of wood and partly of cast iron girders is in a precarious state'.

It was, however, the transportation of goods by lorry which most seriously reduced the work of the railway. Lorries had the advantage of being able to deliver direct to the recipient and involved less handling time and therefore expense.

It is sad to recall that not only have all the brickworks in Heddingham closed but the railway which once played such an important part in the development of this large local industry has also ceased to exist.

Late Seventeenth-Century Special Bricks at Ash, near Canterbury. The Church

of St Nicholas at Ash, near Canterbury in Kent is a large cruciform building, largely of Early English date, though with a Perpendicular central tower. The south transept was largely rebuilt, or refaced, in 1675, a date well recorded on several stone plaques inserted into the wall here. These record too the names of contributors to the work, for

±OHN

example: F±DGE. The plaques are surrounded by remarkably large,

±675

chamfered bricks in a red-yellow fabric. They measure  $12\frac{1}{2}$  by  $5\frac{1}{2}$ -6 by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches (317.5 by 140-152 by 86 mm.). They are also used in the buttress offsets. Presumably they are the work of a local brickmaker, perhaps specially commissioned in connexion with the late seventeenth-century work on the south transept of the church.

Terence Paul Smith

## GEORGE SMITH, 1831-1895

E.F.Marsh and T.P.Smith

### I

The brick illustrated here was given to me by a member of staff of Butterley's Bricks. It is a 'special' with one angle chamfered, as shown. The frog, which is  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch deep, is stamped with the wording shown in the illustration.

This led me to do some further research and I find that G.Smith

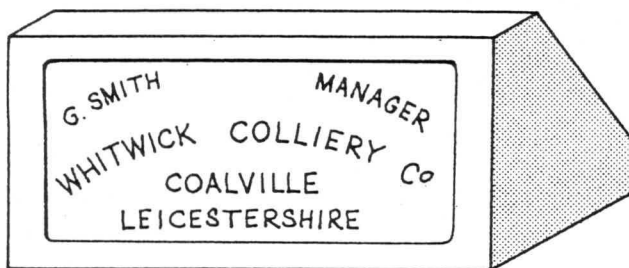


Fig.1

- his first name, in fact, was George - was, together with two other men, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Shaftesbury, and the M.P. Mr A.J.Mundella, involved in fighting for an Act to be passed to prevent young children from working in the brickyards. Since this was outside work, for the most part, such children were not covered by the earlier Factory Act.

August 1871 saw the Act passed, requiring that no boy under the age of ten years and no girl under the age of eleven

years be employed in a brickworks.

Also I found a most interesting story of the life of George Smith from his childhood to his becoming a manager. This is recorded in a book entitled Tales of the Midlands by the late Kathleen Fidler.<sup>1</sup> I should have liked to record all of this but of course the book is still covered by copyright.

But what stories bricks can tell!

EFM

### II

In addition to Kathleen Fidler's book, mentioned by Mr Marsh, there is an account of George Smith's life by E.I.Carlyle in the Dictionary of National Biography, vol.18, pp.449-50; bibliographical details are therein given, although I have not yet been able to follow them up. The following notes are based principally on the DNB entry.

Born at Clayhills, Tunstall, Staffs. on 16 February 1831, George Smith was the son of William Smith (1807-72) and his wife Hannah (née Hollins). He was born into the industry, for his father was a brickmaker at the significantly named Clayhills. Like many brickyard children in Staffordshire<sup>2</sup> - though practices varied from one part of the country to another - young George started work at the tender age of only nine years. The work was hard, and he had to carry some forty pounds weight of bricks or clay on his head, like the kiddies in a well known illustration of 1871.<sup>3</sup> The hours were long too: thirteen hours a day was normal, with some night-work in addition when the kilns were firing. It was against this sort of wicked exploitation that Marx spoke out in Das Kapital;<sup>4</sup> and he was joined by others who did not share his political solution. Smith himself was to join the protest; despite the hard work he had managed to buy some books and to acquire some education. This, together with his personal experience from childhood onwards, well

suited him for his subsequent work of reform.

In 1855 he was managing a large brick and tile works at Humberstone, Staffs., and it was from there that he visited Coalville, Leics. in 1857. Although his 'imprudence in revealing his discovery' of good brickmaking clays 'prematurely prevented his reaping the full benefit of it' (Carlyle) he became manager there, and the brick brought to our attention by Mr Marsh must date from between this time and 1872, when Smith was sacked as manager. This was a direct result of his protesting and philanthropic work on behalf of the brickmakers - especially the children - for he had thereby incurred the enmity of the brickyard owners. In this work he was, however, supported by Robert Baker, a factory inspector, and later, as Mr Marsh mentions, by Lord Shaftesbury and Anthony John Mundella. The Act of 1871 (34 & 35 Vict. cap.104) passed successfully through Parliament and in the same year Smith published his The Cry of the Children from the Brick-yards of England. As a result of the Act 'on the first day of 1872, 10,000 young children were sent from the brickshed to their homes and to school.'<sup>5</sup> George Smith's employers took vengeance in a direct and characteristic way.

From 1873 Smith turned his attention to the conditions of the canal workers and of gipsy children. Much of this time was spent in great poverty, until in 1883 he received a grant from the royal bounty fund. He used this to buy a house at Crick, near Rugby, where he died on 21 June 1895. He had been married twice: first to Mary Mayfield, by whom he had three children, and then to Mary Ann Lehman.

It is as well always to remember the darker side of nineteenth-century brickmaking. It is one aspect of a society in which some people were only too eager to treat many others as means and not as ends. Women and children in particular were the sufferers. There were, of course, voices raised in protest - voices as politically various as those of Karl Marx and John Stuart Mill, or as religiously different as those of Charles Kingsley and William Booth. Amongst these George Smith deserves to be remembered particularly for his concern for brickmakers - and for brickmaking children especially - for canal workers, and for gipsies.

TPS

#### Notes and References

1. K.Fidler, Tales of the Midlands, London, 1954.
2. Cf. R.N.Price, 'The Other Face of Respectability: Violence in the Manchester Brickmaking Trade 1859-1870', Past and Present, 66, February 1975, 111: 'In south Staffordshire, for example, ... 75 per cent of the labour force were women and children...'
3. Reproduced in J.Woodforde, Bricks to Build a House, London, 1976, p.102; cf. also illustration at p.104, taken from The Boy's Book of Trades, 1871.
4. K.Marx, Capital, vol.1, trans. B.Fowkes, Harmondsworth, 1976, pp.593-4.
5. Press report, quoted in Woodforde, op.cit., p.103.

## QUERIES

From: D.H.Gantzel. Details would be appreciated of author, etc. of Bricks Chronicle; also any other help on brickworks at Hazlemere. Replies to: D.H.Gantzel, 1 Roberts Ride, Hazlemere, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP15 7AD.

From: D.J.Tilbury. Details would be appreciated of brick in Huntingdonshire, especially on R.Beart of Godmanchester and his perforated brick, patented in 1852, and his tile machine, patented in 1835. Replies to: Mr D.J.Tilbury, 14 Mayfield Crescent, Hartford, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE18 7UH.

From: W.A.Los: Mrs Los would like to borrow copies of British Brick Society North Midlands Bulletin. She will photocopy the issues and return to the lenders. There are several references in the Society's Bibliography to these bulletins but the Society does not hold copies. Replies to: Mrs W.A.Los, 'Peran', 30 Plaxton Bridge, Woodmansey, Beverley, East Yorks.

From: L.H.Curzon: Mr Curzon, with the Barham Society, is researching the brickfield at Barham, Kent and would be grateful for any information that members may be able to supply. He is particularly interested in the output of the brickyard and the area over which the products were traded. Replies to: Mr L.H.Curzon, Southease, Derringstone Hill, Barham, Kent CT4 6QD.

From: K.Gurcke: Information is sought on firms involved in producing firebricks for the west coast American market in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Specifically, information would be appreciated on the following manufacturerts of firebricks: CASTLEGARY; SADLER BROTHERS / STOURBRIDGE / WORKS / OLDBURY; M. T. & CO.; HEATHERYKNOWE / PATENT / GLASGOW; RAVENS / W. B. I. & CO.; and on the following manufacturer of paving bricks: STENSWIK. (A slash (/) here indicates that the next word is below the first, except in the case of the SADLER BROTHERS brand, which is in the form of an oval with STOURBRIDGE WORKS inside the rest of the brand.)

Mr Gurcke would also like a copy of back issue of Information No.3 (\* so would the Hon. Secretary). He would be willing to pay the costs of photocopying these. Can anyone help here? Replies to: Mr Karl Gurcke, University of Idaho Laboratory of Anthropology, Moscow, Idaho 83843, U.S.A.

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Sutton Place, Surrey. Built by Sir Richard Weston in 1521-42 and known in our century as the home of J.Paul Getty, this house is now administered by the Sutton Place Heritage Trust. Those wishing to see the house, set in fine gardens above the River Wey, near Guildford, can do so in late September, when flowers will be the main attraction: Saturday 28 September (admission £4), Sunday 29 September (£3), and Monday 30 September (£2) 1985. It may be necessary to book in advance by telephone (0483-504455).

DHK