DON'T DROP A (HERITAGE) BRICK!

Peter Trout

We are used to seeing mills, factories and industrial sites that have heritage value being knocked down and erased. Likewise, precious artefacts and archives are binned. The AIA, English Heritage and conservation groups campaign to save our great British industrial heritage – but does that include the humble brick?

On the day following Paul Lacey’s talk to BIAG on the Warfield Brickworks, the following article appeared in the Daily Mail (22 March):

![Image of Daily Mail article]

Paul did touch upon the fate of bricks, tiles and terracotta ware - but hardly anticipated such organised crime!

READING SILVER LINING SAVINGS WEEK (Jan 31 to Feb 7 1948)

PART 1

Peter Pribik

Editor’s Note: Peter found a copy of the Programme booklet for this Savings Week which contains advertisements for various Reading companies who were participating together with write-ups on their activities and gives a fascinating glimpse of industrial activities in Reading in 1948. It is quite a thick booklet so I am planning to include excerpts from it covering various Reading companies over the next few issues of BIAG News.
STAND 29
HUNTYLE, BOORNE & STEVENS, LTD.

PRIDE IN PRODUCTION is symbolised in the exhibit of this old-established firm of Tin Box Makers and Sheet Metal Workers, generally conceded pioneers of the Decorated Tin Box Industry in this country.

The factory, a three-storied building covering several acres, has been developed round the site upon which the founder, Joseph Huntley, had his original business in 1830, the ancient church of St. Giles lending an added dignity to its now imposing structure.

The passing of the years has naturally brought modifications and improvements, but the conception of the perfect commercial container has never been lost sight of and to-day, with a labour capacity running into four figures, the firm maintains its acknowledged reputation for quality throughout the trade.

The manufacture of tin boxes and, indeed, of all high-class sheet metal work, calls for the most meticulous care in the initial stages and the maintenance of a highly skilled staff of technicians—draughtsmen, tool makers, tinplate printers and engineers—is imperative. Boys of the right type find this a very interesting side of the business.

Anything new which has been proved to be helpful, either in working conditions or in assisting production, is always sure of the most careful consideration.

The standard square biscuit tin, tins for foodstuffs in great variety and similar tins in larger and smaller sizes—clean work on automatic or semi-automatic machinery—offer scope for girls with an eye to earning something above the basic rate of pay for the job.

Containers for Oil, Polish, Confectionery, and a variety of other commodities, in addition to students’ and artists’ colour boxes, also provide congenial and remunerative employment, while such articles as condenser cases, filter cases, relay and selector covers are especially suitable for those with past experience of work in light sheet metal, including spot welding.

The exhibits shown may be considered representative of the general class of output, bearing in mind present-day restrictions; there are also shown rather more intriguing examples of the art of the craftsmen of yesterday.
**WARRICK CYCLES**

**for Business and Pleasure are REAL National Savers**

**CARRIER TRICYCLES & BICYCLES**

to suit All Trades

**PLEASURE CYCLES FOR ALL**

Roadster, Sports, and Juvenile Models

Repairs, Renovations
Tyres and Accessories

**B.S.A. AGENTS**

Electro Plating  Enamelling

JOHN WARRICK & Co., Ltd.

‘Monarch’ Works, Caversham Road
and 34, St. Mary’s Butts, READING

*Phone : Reading 2428  Established 1877*

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**STAND 22**

**WARRICKS OF READING**

Warricks of Reading were the pioneers of the Carrier Cycle Industry. They were established in 1877 and built the first trade cycle in the early 80’s.

The earliest “Warrick” Carrier Tricycle was really an adaptation of the pleasure type, then so popular with the “not-so-young” who feared to venture on the “ordinary” or “penny farthing” bicycle of those days, and had a roomy basket fitted over the backbone of the frame for the conveyance of goods. The first two such machines built by the late Mr. John Warrick were sold to two firms of butchers who still use “Warrick” machines to-day for their deliveries, surely a tribute to the quality the firm have always achieved.

The demand grew rapidly and to meet it larger Works were built in Caversham Road in 1890. These were unfortunately destroyed by fire in 1895, when the firm moved to the site they now occupy.

Naturally in the course of years many changes took place in design, both tricycles and bicycles being built to suit the needs of almost every type of business. The firm’s one aim has always been to build only the best, quality being their constant aim, with price a secondary consideration. In other words they have always built up to a standard and never down to a price. By this policy they have achieved a reputation for a first-class article which gives the best possible results under the most exacting conditions of use and abuse.

Between the wars the firm became famous as the builders of the ice cream or “Stop me and buy one” carriers, both tricycles and bicycles, which were such a familiar feature of our roads all over the country. Here again the absolute reliability enabled the users to maintain their service to the public with outstanding regularity.

During the war years, Warricks, like all other engineering firms, were engaged on government work, comprising aircraft, marine and fuse parts, but they have again turned their attention to the Carrier Cycle Trade and are building as many of these machines as shortages of materials permit, many of them for export.

Their latest production is a Tea Tricycle with a body specially designed, in conjunction with the Empire Tea Bureau, to carry an insulated tea urn with cake cupboards, and provision for spare urns and supplies. These machines, one of which is on show on their Stand in this Exhibition, have quickly established their value wherever a cup of hot tea served hygienically is required. The London Zoo had a number of them in service last summer. Others have already been sent to Egypt, Canada, South Africa, India, Ceylon, Australia and Holland.

In spite of Warricks’ special concentration on the Carrier Cycle, they have not neglected the other side of the business and their “Monarch” Bicycles have been well known in the area for over half a century for their high quality and dependability. They specialize also in a repair service second to none, maintained by a highly skilled staff.
This year’s conference, the 47th, was held in the attractive Cotswold town of Dursley. The town grew during the 20th century along with the engineering firm of Listers. They produced small petrol engines which could power a variety of industrial and farm equipment. Following a series of takeovers, the records of the firm are now held by Gloucestershire Record Office. Volunteers from the Gloucestershire Society for I.A. are helping to sort and catalogue the documents and photographs.

Internal combustion also featured in a talk on Scout Motors of Salisbury. They produced motor cars until the onset of mass production cars. A story repeated in many towns.

Field archaeology was represented in a talk by Oxford House I H Soc. Their discovery in South Wales of abutments with curious recesses, led them to research the work of Watkin George, Chief Works Engineer for the Cyfarthfa Ironworks. They were able to prove that the recesses had supported an A-Frame cast iron bridge structure.

Clifton was, and is, an upper class suburb of Bristol. The residents wanted their streets to be well lit, and a speaker from Bristol I A Soc. described the various types of gas lamps standards she had found in her comprehensive survey. Her main concern was getting them repaired after damage by council lorries.
In 1893, George Harris, an amateur geologist, visited several West Country stone quarries, and filled notebooks with drawings and observations about the types of stone and the extraction methods used. His notebooks survive and a century later a contributor visited the quarries and described the current methods of extraction with power saws and JCB's. His message was direct, record current practices – they will soon be obsolete.

A speaker from Cotswold Canal Trust described how eye-watering sums have been raised to restore this lost route. It is not just a case of removing accumulated sludge from the canal. Places it has been built over or lies under ring roads. The work is of necessity being carried out by professional contractors working through an agreed series of projects. I visited the site and Canal Centre at Stroud where they are currently working and was fascinated by their achievements. What they are having to do is not conservation but restoration, to catch up on what would probably have been done over the years had the canal remained in use.

**SERIAC 2016**

The conference was held just outside Kingston upon Thames, a town I knew 50 years ago but not now! It opened with a scholarly review of the industrial history of South-East Britain. The speaker, a geographer, brought his subject right up to the present day, mentioning the aircraft industry, film making, piers and shopping centres.

Most of us are familiar with the Wealden iron industry and its “hammer ponds”. The President of the Research Group gave a new perspective when he reported that the ironmasters were so good at casting cannon that the navy continued to use them, even though the iron was now imported from Sweden. The industry only declined with the development of the iron industry in Wales and the West Midlands.

Another historical overview was that of the paper industry. The speaker commented on the large amount of energy needed for the preparation of the pulp and the drying of the wet product. This was the reason for the closure of Taplow paper mills, even though the raw material – waste paper – was virtually free.

Merstham is situated between the M25 and A23. It is also situated on top of a chalk deposit much in demand for building and has been extensively mined and quarried. The speaker, from Subterranea Britannica is an adviser to those who want to build but wonder what might lie below.

Gas holders were once a familiar sight with their lattice girder framework. The speaker had surveyed all those in the London area for English Heritage. He showed and described the various styles in cast iron and steel structures. He also discussed how they were recorded using electronic distance metering and laser scanning. Several have now been listed or “conserved” as architectural features in new developments. When the No.1 gas holder at Kennington Lane was built in 1877 it held 3m cubic feet, a world record. Then in 1899 its capacity was doubled again using a flying lift system. But it was probably its association with cricket at the Oval which ensured that it was given Grade 2 Listing.

The day was brought to a splendid conclusion by our own Sheila Viner. She gave an illustrated account of some of the Berkshire watermills she has researched and the industries carried out. Sheila had been awarded a bursary by SERIAC to assist with this work and it had clearly been well used.

**POST-INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY?**

I feel that Robert Carr had his tongue firmly in his cheek when he suggested that Industrial Archaeology has passed, and that what we are studying now is Post-Industrial Archaeology. It is over 60 years since Michael Rix first coined the phrase to describe the ruins of old mines and mills which he argued were as much a part of our history as the ruins of old abbeys and castles. However his own studies were expanding away from this initial concept to include wide range of structures.

At SERIAC, Geoffrey Mead mentioned a concept which is probably familiar to economic historians, but was new to me. Industry has three aspects – primary industries create raw materials, secondary industries process and convert them into products, tertiary industries distribute and sell the products. Add to this the concept of the much maligned Service Industries and it seems that everybody works in an industry. So the places where we work and the tools we use will become industrial archaeology. What is perhaps different is the availability of more documentary, photographic and other evidence. Some societies use the terms Industrial History or Heritage in their names to reflect this.

For myself, I shall continue to enjoy recording and researching any structure I like!
Brian Boulter

I had always associated Nissen Huts with WW2 and National Service, so I was surprised to see that they were a product of WW1. They were devised by Major Peter Nissen of the Royal Engineers and the first batch was produced in August 1916.

ON TRACK
(Madejski Gallery, Reading Museum)

Brian Boulter

This exhibition commemorates “Firefly” pulling the first train into Reading Station 175 years ago. It also describes the effect the railway has had on the development of the town. Using prints, photographs and posters, it illustrates both these themes in an engaging way. Several of the items on display had been lent following a press appeal for memorabilia. There also artefacts, including some of the “Trainspotters” tickets once issued. This is an exhibition with a wide appeal, especially to BIAG. It will continue until January 2017.

GOOSEYGOO & GRACE’S GUIDE

Brian Boulter

The June Newsletter of AIM (Association of Independent Museums) reports the establishment of the website GooseyGoo.co.uk as an exploration guide to industrial heritage. I had a look but found it difficult to use. Perhaps a more skilled member would take a look and report on what is and is not featured for Berkshire. The designer Maryann Soper intends to contact Industrial Archaeology groups to ask for recommendations. If she contacts BIAG, I suggest we recommend Blakes Lock. When I visited there recently I appeared to be the only visitor that day.

Maryann had previously been Project Manager for the Grace’s Guide to British Industrial History website. I had a look at this and wish I had come across it earlier. It has historical information on railways, canals, places and persons. I could not find information listed for Reading but plenty for Slough. It also offers several engineering publications on line. I looked at The Engineer for June 1912 and found several pages concerning the rebuilding of Boulters Lock, with plans and photographs. It was significant in being the first time the Thames Conservancy had used sheet steel piling. Previously they had used wooden piles connected by fishplates. Tantalisingly for me it ended “the Mechanical Boat Conveyor will not be ready for a short time yet.” I shall have to search more for the elusive Chain Belt Engineering Co. Who built it?

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY AT RISK

John Coulson

There were copies of articles in the last BIAG News (No 37) about various sites being at risk as a result of central government funding cuts to local authorities including the Queen Street, Burnley and Helmshore Mill Museums and the Hovercraft Museum at Lee on Solent being in danger of losing one or both of the SRN4 cross channel Hovercraft.

The most recent issue of the AIA Industrial Archaeology News (No 177 – Summer 2016) reports that Lancashire County Council was delaying the Mill Museum closures until 18 September which gives only 6 months to develop an alternative way to operate these museums. Apparently discussions with various organisations interested in running the Museums are in progress.

The petition to save the Princess Anne hovercraft is still ongoing with no outcome yet
26/9/16 AIRSHIPS Peter Trout

17/10/16 AGM & MEMBERS’ EVENING

21/11/16 AIRFIELD ARCHAEOLOGY

12/12/16 FILM EVENING & SOCIAL (Please note change of date)

All meetings are held on Monday evenings at the Church Hall of St Mary’s Church, Castle St, Reading RG1 7RD and will start at 7.30pm. Access to the church hall is through the right hand side passage.

**Travel Guidance:** By bus, St Mary’s Church Hall is within a two minute walk from St Mary’s Butts and a five minute walk from Oxford Road where many Reading Corporation buses stop.

By car, the Church does not have a car park but vehicles may be parked off-road on the market stall hardstanding area in Hosier Street. Alternatively, there is a public car park in the Civic Centre adjacent to the Church. St Mary’s Church has a web site with a map: [http://www.cofec.org/stmarys.html](http://www.cofec.org/stmarys.html)

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**EDITOR’S NOTE:**

As you all know I’m always looking for additional content and new fresh ideas for the newsletter and will of course welcome any feedback. So please keep these articles and comments coming in so that we can enjoy another issue later in 2016.

Particular thanks to Brian Boulter for his reports on the IA Conferences and other contributions – there would not have been enough material for this issue without these. Also, Peter Pribik’s contribution of the Souvenir Programme for the Silver Lining Savings Week in 1948 will provide some interesting articles for the next few issues. Does anyone else have something like this somewhere in their files?

**John Coulson** ([jcoulson@theiet.org](mailto:jcoulson@theiet.org))

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**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

AIA CONFERENCE – (9-14 Sept 2016)
To be held in Telford

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**SUMMER VISITS**

Bob Haskins is arranging the following summer visits:

**Sun 26 June** – Circular Walk from Bedwyn Station to Crofton Beam Engines (in steam).

A 48 min train journey from Reading to Bedwyn with a leisurely 2¼ mile walk along the towpath of the Kennet & Avon Canal to view Crofton Beam Engines (in steam!) with a return walk of 2 miles to Bedwyn Station to catch our train home.

0945 Assemble Reading Station (platform 13) to catch the 0949 train to Bedwyn (£10.00 return). Alternatively, join train at Newbury (10.19), Hungerford (1030) or travel by car and meet at Bedwyn station (or Crofton).

1037 Arrive Bedwyn

1045 Guided walk via Great Bedwyn and Canal to Crofton Beam engines

1230 View Crofton beam Engines (in steam) with opportunity for a light lunch/snack. Entrance fee £8.00 (£7.00 concessions)

1545 Leisurely return walk to Bedwyn Station.
Sat 6 August – Day Excursion to Sharpness Docks, Gloucester & Sharpness Canal and Saul Junction

A day excursion with an evening meal at The Fleece in Cirencester before returning home. The plan is to drive either individually or in shared cars to Sharpness (SO667020) to take a guided walk around the docks followed by an optional afternoon visit and walk around Saul Junction on the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal with a leisurely drive through the Stroud Valley to The Fleece in Cirencester for an evening meal. Provisional details & times are as follows:

0830  Depart Reading
1015  Arrive Sharpness
1030  Guided tour of the Vale of Berkeley railway facilities and learn about their plans followed by a CRT guided walk of the dock area (including the dry dock) with the possibility of access to the secure dock area.
1330  Lunch break (bring packed lunch)
1430  Walk down to the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal along to the site of the Severn Railway bridge.
1600  Drive to Saul Junction (SO754091) for a walk around the junction with an opportunity for a tea/coffee break.
1800  Depart for Cirencester via the Stroud Valley.
1900  Social & evening meal in The Fleece, Cirencester.
2100  Return home

For more information, see Websites for the Vale of Berkeley Railway (www.valeofberkeleyrailway.co.uk) and The Fleece (www.thefleececircenester.co.uk).

Confirmed itineraries for both visits will follow. For further information or to book, please contact Bob (e-mail: bob.haskins@trellisworks.co.uk, mobile: 07812 045163)

For general BIAG business, please contact the Secretary: PETER TROUT (Tel: 01491 682002)
7 WEST CHILTERN, WOODCOTE, READING, RG8 0SG

Submissions to BIAG News are welcome in any format. Please send your contributions with an IA theme such as articles, letters, pictures, jokes, cartoons, cuttings from journals etc. to:

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