

THE JOURNAL

of the

WILKINSON SOCIETY

No. 4

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Editor :::

N. J. Clarke

THE WILKINSON SOCIETY

The Society was formed in 1972 to meet the need for an organisation to preserve the material and documentary evidence of Broseley's industrial past. Since an important part in this industrial past was played by John Wilkinson, who lived for a time at the Lawns, it was decided that the organisation should be known as the Wilkinson Society.

The aims of the Society are:-

- (i) to act as custodian of any relevant material and information and to make such material and information available to interested individuals and organisations;
- (ii) to promote any relevant preservation activity and to assist individuals or organisations in such activity where deemed appropriate;
- (iii) to provide a link with the community of Broseley for individuals or organisations undertaking local historical research.

Any available material will be added to the existing collection of Broseley and Wilkinson relics at the Lawns, Broseley. This collection is open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays (2 to 4 pm) and by appointment.

Administration of the Society is by an annually elected committee. Membership is open to anyone interested in the Society's aims and activities. These activities include illustrated lectures, social evenings, researching and exhibiting the Collection, field trips and coach tours. Members are kept informed by a Newsletter, and an annual Journal presents articles on the history of the Broseley area, John Wilkinson and industrial archaeology in general.

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NOTES AND NEWS

The Year's activities

The third Annual General Meeting was held at "The Lawns" on Friday 24th October 1975. The serving committee was unanimously re-elected for a further year.

It was agreed after a good deal of discussion that most subscriptions should be raised for 1975-6 and that at the same time a new rate for married couples should be introduced. The subscriptions agreed were:-

Adult	-	£1.00
Husband and Wife		£1.50
Senior Citizens		£0.50
Junior		£0.25

It was also agreed that the price of the Journal to non-members would have to be raised to 20p (plus postage)

A Museum Committee was set up to look at the problems involved in running the museum.

After the formal meeting, our Secretary, Mr. Maurice Hawes, gave an illustrated talk which he called "One Man's View of the Severn Gorge"

On Friday 21st November Mr. Barrie Trinder paid his second visit as a guest speaker, his subject being "L'Ecomusee at Le Creusot in Burgundy". His informative and scholarly talk was greatly appreciated.

A "Members' Evening" was held on Friday 6th February, following the pattern of the previous year. By an odd coincidence, three different members between them brought along a considerable number of items relating to the Benthall Potteries, and this made the evening most successful. Sherry was provided, and two 1917 Coalport floral-decorated saucers were won, in a raffle, by Mrs. Morris of Tollgate Cottage, Coneybury.

On Friday 12th March Mr. Stuart Smith was our visiting speaker and his subject "Art in the Severn Gorge" proved highly entertaining and enlightening.

During the months of March, April, May and June a small party of members, led by Chris Pointon, set about the task of redecorating and reorganising the Museum. This tremendous effort is described in more detail elsewhere in this Journal.

The Annual Outing planned for Saturday 5th June 1976 to the Gladstone Pottery Museum had to be cancelled because of lack of support. This was the first time a Society function had suffered such a fate.

However, the Weekend Trip to the Backbarrow and Lindale areas of Cumberland was esteemed a great success by the 12 members who took part, on Saturday/Sunday 26th/27th June 1976.

The Second Annual Celebrity Lecture, in association with the Broseley Gala Committee, was held in the Church Hall on Friday 2nd July. Mr. Neil Cossons, Director of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, spoke on "Preserving our Industrial Heritage" to a large and enthusiastic audience, who were stimulated into a lengthy question and answer session after the lecture proper. This was a most successful event on a very pleasant summer evening, and refreshments, provided as usual by Mrs. Pee and Mrs. Hawes, were enjoyed outside the Hall in the sunshine, after the talk.

During July and August a Brochure was produced to publicise the newly-decorated and reorganised Museum. The credit for this really belongs to Mr. Ralph Pee, whose brain-child it was. Your secretary, with the expert help of Mrs. M. Rees-Boughton, acted as Midwife when it came to the typing and printing.

The last event of the year was the Official Opening of the New Museum on Saturday 4th September 1976. The ceremony was most capably and elegantly performed by County Councillor Mrs. Natalie Hodgson, who had clearly done her homework on John Wilkinson. Her address was warmly received by a gathering which comfortably filled the Museum

and included most of the members who had helped with the work, and a number of distinguished guests.

In addition to the foregoing, Committee Meetings were held on 7th January, 20th February and 22nd July, 1976.

Programme of Events for 1976-7

<u>22nd October</u>	Fourth Annual General Meeting followed by a 'blow-by-blow' account of the Weekend in Cumbria, given by Messrs. Chris Pointon, Howard Griffiths, and Maurice Hawes.
<u>12th November</u>	Dr. Ivor Brown - "Old Mines, Miners and Mining Machinery on the Banks of the Severn Gorge".
<u>February</u>	Members' evening (details to be announced)
<u>March</u>	Talk (to be arranged)
<u>Spring/Summer</u>	Coach Trip (to be arranged)

The Journal

Despite increased costs of stencils and duplicating papers, we are able to maintain the price of the Journal to non-members at 20p. We are grateful to Mrs. Rees-Boughton for the typing of this issue.

Copies of this issue of the Journal and back numbers can be obtained from the Secretary, Maurice Hawes, Salop Street, Bridgnorth (25p including postage).

Contributions to further issues of the Journal would be welcome and should be sent to the Editor, N. J. Clarke, Cranleigh, Little Wenlock, Telford.

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GLASSMAKING IN BROSELEY

PART 2 : The Glassmakers and the Glassworks

The Bettons

A Shropshire family connected with glassmaking was that of the Bettons. One has but to search the Shrewsbury Burgess Rolls for evidence of a good cross-section of a family which had roots not only in Broseley but also in Shrewsbury, and other places. A Betton was knighted for his work in the manufacture and installation of cathedral glass, and in the year 1721 no less than four members of the family were made burgesses of Shrewsbury : John of Broseley was one, (1) and his son Michael of Wellington was another.

Further evidence of the family can be found in the Broseley Registers. Michael Betton is shown as baptised on 11th October 1692, the son of John and Parnell, who continued to have children up to 1702. However, a difficulty with tracing this family is the repetition of Christian names through its various branches. A Benjamin Betton married to a Sarah was raising a family between 1731 and 1736, but he himself is not shown as born in the parish, nor are the antecedents of a Benjamin who was buried on 11th July 1727.

In another source (1745), one Betton is described as 'Gent' and related to a Thomas Betton of Shrewsbury. (2) This pair were mining pitchrock, among other things, and manufacturing a medicine sold far and wide as 'Betton's British Oil' and a 'Bishop of Cloyn's elixir', both of which were concoctions of pitch and water which might at best have served as blood purifiers. A horse-mill, similar to that used by a glazier to grind his flints, was used to grind the pitchrock. In 1747 Michael Betton of Wellington is described in a deed as glazier and plumber, a combination which might be required to enable 'diamonds' of glass to be set in lead strips. Having members of the family in the glass trade came in very useful to all for the reason that the 'Oil' would use up a considerable number of glass bottles, none of which were returnable in their whole state but possibly acceptable in the form of cullet for remelting and re-use.

Benjamin Batchelour

Somewhere around the year 1730 a Benjamin Batchelour came to Broseley. Particulars of his family and trade can be found in a number of records. Firstly, in the Broseley Registers baptisms are recorded in 1731, 1734 and 1736, the last being of his only son, also named Benjamin.

Benjamin Batchelour appears to have moved to Broseley from Amblecote, near Stourbridge. (3) In 1691 one Benjamin Bradley of Oldswinford, glassmaker, demised a glasshouse and lands situate in Dennis, Amblecote, to a Benjamin Batchelour, glassmaker, for 999 years. Benjamin was probably the son of that Elisha Batchelour who, with Ananias Menzie, in February 1697 presented an appeal for the repeal of the excise on glass which had been introduced by the Glass Act of 1695. (4)

Thirty years later Benjamin was in financial difficulties. On 24th August 1723 the London Gazette reported that one Benjamin Bache,

a glassmaker of Amblecote, was insolvent. From a later Stourbridge newspaper report it appears that when Batchelour became insolvent the lease to the property reverted to the Bradleys. There seems to have been no particular disgrace in Batchelour's insolvency of 1723, as several Stourbridge glassmakers suffered the same fate. A general view seems to be that there had been over-production against a falling market. This state of affairs was later remedied when the Society of Glassmakers purchased certain glasshouses in order to close them.

To return to Benjamin Batchelour: according to Dr. Pococke, (5) "there was a glasshouse in Broseley in 1732 where they made both flint glass and bottles . . . The glassmakers, Benjamin Batchelour and Co., probably came from Stourbridge way". The source of this information was probably the notice in the London Gazette of 30th May, 1732: "Whereas John Barnett, alias Jackus, a pale, thin faced slender youth, a white glass servitor and bottle blower, eloped from his master, Benjamin Batchelour and Company, at Broseley glasshouse in Shropshire, the 8th May last, where he is a hired servant; this is to require all masters of that business and others not to employ him, upon their peril".

Possibly from these sources, many authorities on the subject have mistakenly assumed that the Broseley glasshouse was founded in 1732⁽⁶⁾; but quite obviously there was a glasshouse in being in Broseley before that date and, as subsequent events prove, Benjamin Batchelour leased from George Weld, the landowner.

Batchelour eventually absconded because of his debts. In the process of time Weld, who was losing money due to his inability to 'set' the glasshouse anew because he had no deeds to prove ownership, caused an inquiry to be made as to his whereabouts. Batchelour was in hiding in the London Docks, but could not be prevailed upon to return to Broseley with a copy of his glasshouse deed. He stated that he had lost this and, since Weld could not produce his deed, it was agreed to raise an entirely new lease in duplicate so that these might be endorsed in cancellation, and a person appointed to watch Batchelour's interest, if he had any. In the Forester Papers there is a surrender dated 19th February 1742/3 of a previous lease of 21 years to Benjamin Batchelour of Broseley, glassmaker, of a messuage in Broseley called a glasshouse.⁽⁷⁾ Batchelour had absconded for debt and the premises were stated to be in a ruinous state for want of repairs when he surrendered to George Weld.

One can surmise as to the cause of Batchelour's second business failure. Presumably if the concern had paid or the buildings had been in good repair he could have sold the remaining years of the lease. Possibly, in addition to the main premises being out of repair, the annealing oven was defective. Failure to anneal glass properly resulted in breakages of glass in the oven, through cooling too quickly, or in handling. However, when so many objects had been allowed for by the Excise man, as time would come when he would allow no more refund, placing the blame squarely on bad workmanship.

The Glass and the Glassworks

In the 1732 advertisement above, mention was made of "white glass". This was probably 'flint glass', which had a greater clarity than bottle glass.⁽⁸⁾ The latter was usually made from a more inferior sand, and according to the degree to which it was impregnated with iron, and the redder the sand, the deeper the hue of the blue-green appearance of the glass. The writer was shown a glass bottle purporting to have been made in Broseley. In shape it resembled a present day Johnnie Walker whisky bottle, which would savour more of a moulded rather than a blown bottle: it was 8-9 inches high, dimpled at the base, slightly square for some 6 inches of rise, and decreasing round to its termination in a short collar for cork; in capacity it would hold something like 3 pints. An attempt had been made at some stage to put a light gild on part of the bottle.

In inquiring of some of the oldest inhabitants of Broseley whether they could remember their grandparents mentioning a glasshouse, nothing came to light; and it seems fair to assume that after the failure of Batchelour the glasshouse fell into ruin and the workpeople found employment in local mines, potteries and clay pipe manufactories.

A few years ago a mound stood forlornly in Broseley, and one might have been forgiven for thinking that it was a coal-pit tip, for dust had settled on it for a century and a half and more, and vegetation grew from this. It was only when workmen came to remove it that it was found to be made up of broken glass, or cullet, which might in other circumstances have been melted down and made into glass objects of utility though not of great worth. The glass was taken down the Coalport Road and tipped into an old pond (where sometime it may be discovered to form a local mystery!) Turning from Duke Street down Cockshutt Lane to near a Georgian House named 'The Mount', one is near to where Broseley glasshouse once stood. Council houses now stand on the site.

References

- (1) According to the Rev. W. A. Anden, Shrewsbury Chronicle, 3rd September 1957, this John Betton was a glazier at Broseley in the early 18th century.
- (2) Pitchford Hall Deed No. 908, 7th September 1745.
- (3) For glassmaking at Amblecote, see Part 1 of this account.
- (4) See W. A. Thorpe 'A History of English and Irish Glass', p.156 and F. Buckley 'The Glass Trade', p.53.
- (5) 'Travels through England' (1851). Pococke referred to the closure of Oswestry glasshouse - "A man from Stourbridge bought this glasshouse in order to close it."
- (6) Thorpe and Buckley, amongst others.
- (7) Shropshire Record Office: 1224 (Willey Estate)
- (8) See F. Buckley 'A History of Old English Glass', p.9

BOAT-BUILDING IN THE IRONBRIDGE GORGE

Apart from the accounts of John Wilkinson's iron boat of 1787⁽¹⁾, mention of the Bower Yard⁽²⁾ and a few isolated references⁽³⁾, little appears to be known about the boat-building yards or the vessels built in the Ironbridge Gorge in the 18th and 19th centuries. However, from the acknowledged importance of river transport to the expanding coal, iron and clay industries of the area, and the subsequent large number of locally-owned vessels,⁽⁴⁾ we can assume that a fair number of boats was built in the Ironbridge Gorge.

One interesting source for such boat-building activities in the late 18th and early 19th centuries are the Chepstow Ship Registers.⁽⁵⁾ These registers were started in 1786, when universal ship registration began, and ended in 1882, when the port of Chepstow was merged with Gloucester. The information they contain about each registered ship includes its name, place and date of construction, registration number and date, type and dimensions, owner(s), master(s) and subsequent history.

The following chart summarises the construction details of Chepstow-registered boats which were built in the Ironbridge Gorge:-⁽⁶⁾

"BROTHERS"⁽⁷⁾

Built at Benthall, near the Ironbridge,⁽⁸⁾ 1789. Trow: 1 mast;
76 tons; length 69'6"; breadth 15'7"; depth 5'⁽⁹⁾

"JOSEPH"

Built at Broseley, 1790, by John Jones. Trow: 1 mast;
60 tons; length 65'2"; breadth 14'5"; depth 4'7"; a tuck stern⁽¹⁰⁾

"WILLIAM"

Built at Benthall, 1794. Trow: 1 mast; 70 tons; length 66';
breadth 15'6"; depth 5'7"; a tuck stern.

"JOHN AND MARY"

Built at Broseley, 1795. Trow: 1 mast; 63 tons; length 65'4";
breadth 14'9"; depth 4'8"; a tuck stern.

"ABBEY"

Built at Benthall, 1810, by Francis Stoot. Barge: 1 mast;
36 tons; length 54'8"; breadth 12'1"; depth 2'4"; tuck stern.

"SISTERS"

Built at Bower Yard, 1819, by F. G. Gother. Trow: 2 masts;
33 tons; length 63.5'; breadth 13.7'; depth 4.2'; clench built⁽¹¹⁾

"FANNY"

Built at Coalbrookdale, 1824. Trow: 2 masts; 103 tons; length
73'4"; breadth 18'2"; depth 4'9"; clench built.

"MONMOUTH"

Built at Ironbridge, 1839, by James Williams. Trow: 1 mast;
23 tons; length 67.8' breadth 12.8'; depth 2.3'; clench built⁽¹²⁾

No doubt examination of other Bristol Channel port registers⁽¹³⁾ where they exist, would provide similar information.

References

- (1) For accounts of the building, launching and importance of the 'Trial', see J. Randall, 'Broseley and its surroundings' (1879), pp 107-10; R. Pee, 'The First Iron Boat' in Shropshire Magazine (1972); B. Trinder, 'The Industrial Revolution in Shropshire' (1973), p.120.
- (2) There is a reference to Bower Yard in 'A description of Coalbrookdale in 1801', edited by B. Trinder, in Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society, vol.58 (1967-68), p.250: "Here is a yard for building and repairing vessels"; with editor's note - "It was at the Bower Yard that the famous Severn trow 'William' was built in 1809".
- (3) For example, experiments with the application of steam power to propel boats, c.1800-04 (J. Randall, History of Madeley, 1880, pp 179-80; A. Raistrick, Dynasty of Ironfounders, 1953, pp 165-7; Trinder, op.cit. p.167); proposed iron boats in 1843 (Trinder, op.cit; p.120).
- (4) For a discussion of the evidence and an account of the growth of traffic in the Severn, see Trinder, op.cit. pp 104-20 and C.Hadfield, The Canals of the West Midlands (1966), pp 17-18, 53-5, 115;27, 282-90.
- (5) The Chepstow Ship Registers, in the custody of the Commissioners of Customs and Excise, are used in G. E. Farr, Chepstow Ships (1954).
- (6) The Registers also list 13 vessels (sloops and trows) which were built at Bridgnorth and one built at Dowles Load (near Bewdley)
- (7) It is not known whether these names were given to the vessels when they were built or subsequently.
- (8) The precise location of the boat-building yards is not given, but we may assume that they were all riverside installations.
- (9) The writer in the Gentlemen's Magazine for 1756 who took a census of the craft on the river explained that "the lesser kind are called barges and frigates, being from 40 to 60 feet in length, have a single mast, square sail and carry from 20 to 40 tons; the trows or larger vessels are from 40 to 80 tons burthen: these have a main and top mast, about 80 feet high, with square sails, and some have mizzen masts; they are generally from 16 to 20 feet wide, and 60 feet in length, being, when new and completely rigged, worth about £300." For a detailed description of types of vessels and their dimensions, see Farr, op. cit. pp 1-28.
- (10) Tuck stern: "a small curved fold across the stern at deck level where the bulwarks were set to flare slightly aft, giving more room for the helmsman." (Farr, op.cit. p.28)
- (11) Clench-built: made with planks overlapping downwards and fastened with clenched copper nails (as opposed to carvel-built, with planks flush). However, "trows often had rubbing bands and sheathing planks fitted to the outside of their hulls, and these give something of the appearance of clench building" (Farr, op.cit. p.28)
- (12) These 8 Ironbridge Gorge-built boats appear to have been employed mostly for Lower Wye and Bristol Channel traffic.
- (13) E.g. Bristol, Cardiff and Gloucester

COAL, IRON AND CLAY . . . AND THE LAW!

The following list is the entry for Broseley and its neighbourhood in William Bailey's "Western and Midland Directory" of 1783 (pp. 365-6). The original spelling has been retained.

"Broseley, Shropshire, and Neighbourhood.
Market Day, Wednesday.

Banck, Wm. and Co., Iron-masters, Benthall.
Bill and Thirsfield, Potters, Brosley.
Blakeway, Edward, Esq., ditto.
Bradley, George, Pipe-makers, Benthall.
Ferriday, Wm., Iron-master, Medley.
Firmstone, Joseph, Potter, Brosley.
Goodwin, Wm. Esq., Coal-owner, Coalbrookdale.
Legg, Richard, Pipemaker, Brosley.
Legg, Richard, ditto, ditto.
Legg, Benj., ditto, ditto.
Matthews, George, Iron-founder, ditto.
Parry, John, Attorney, ditto.
Rathbone, Joseph, + Co., Iron-masters, Coalbrookdale.
Reynolds, Richard, + Co., ditto, Ketly
Roden, Samuel, Pipe-maker, Brosley Wood
Simpson, Aaron, Potter, Brosley.
Simpson, Richard, ditto, ditto.
Stanley, John, Attorney, Coalbrookdale.
Turner and Gallimore, Porcelain Manufactory, Brosley.
Wright and Jepson, Iron-founders, ditto

An interesting omission is John Wilkinson and the New Willey Company.

N, J, C

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THE JOHN WILKINSON SCHOOL

Local readers will be aware that the name selected for the new primary school in Coalport Road, Broseley, is that of John Wilkinson. In view of the fact that his name was also selected a few years ago for one of the "houses" in the Secondary school at Much Wenlock, it must be concluded that some sort of breakthrough has at last been achieved to balance the Victorian prejudices against J.W. Whether this is a result of the Society's activities or not, we can only be pleased at this turn of events, which is bound to make local children curious about our hero, and may well lead some of them to take an interest in our activities.

M.A.H.

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OUR NEW MUSEUM

"Strike while the iron is hot" could well be considered an appropriate motto for the Society, and it can most certainly be applied to those members who, under the dynamic direction of Chris Pointon, took up where last year's Annual General Meeting left off on the question of reorganising the Museum.

After two lively committee meetings examining the highly professional plans prepared by Mrs. Claire Morley, it was decided to go ahead along the lines suggested by her. Messrs. Pointon, Cragg, Whall, Burns, Silvester and Hawes put on their overalls and started stripping and making good the walls and ceiling of the main room. Meanwhile, Mr. Pee had organised the provision of new electrical wiring. At this time the weather was exceedingly cold and the party were extremely grateful for the copious hot coffee supplied by Mrs. Pee. After several Sunday mornings, the preparation was complete and the painting commenced. "Sandtex everywhere", and the transformation was well under way.

The next stage was to erect the frameworks for the new stands, using "Handy Angle" material most generously donated by the manufacturers through the good offices of Mr. G. Whittaker. To do this the volunteers were given a crash course by Chris Pointon, covering the intricacies involved! Thanks to this instruction, none of the party lost any fingers, though once or twice it was a near thing.

The stands were then clothed and fitted with fluorescent lamps. Meanwhile, the woodwork was painted and the huge kitchen range was re-blacked. The floor presented quite a problem, but in the end, thanks to the prodigious efforts of Ralph Pee, all was well.

Whilst the main party concentrated on the large room, Ralph, when not otherwise engaged, performed small miracles on the two smaller rooms and the cellar to complete the scene. Last but not least, Neil Clarke organised most effectively the labelling of the newly arranged exhibits.

Thus, after six months' hard work, the Museum was ready for the official re-opening early September.

I know that all members of the Society will agree that this effort, for which thanks are due to all concerned, must now be backed up by a readiness on the part of every member to help as much as possible with the day-to-day manning of the Museum. Help is needed not only to staff the museum on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, but also to assist in the general tidying and cleaning and in looking after the exhibits. I am sure that this will be seen as an opportunity for everyone to take an active part in our effort to stimulate interest in Broseley, in its place in the industrial history of the Severn Gorge, and in the special contributions of John Wilkinson to the iron industry.

JOSIAH JOHN GUEST, 1785-1852

The following article by Mrs. Lillian Hayward, originally published in the Shrewsbury Chronicle of 29th October 1954, was brought to our attention by the late Howard Williams. It is here reproduced as written; addenda and corrigenda are listed at the end, with reference to 'Iron in the making: Dowlais Iron Company Letters, 1782-1860', edited by Madeline Elsas (1960).

"Famous Ironmaster was of Broseley descent."

One of the greatest ironmasters hailed from Broseley. There is quite a lot about him in "The Diaries of Lady Charlotte Guest" published by Murray four years ago."

I had known of Lady Charlotte as the translator of the Mabinogion from the ancient Welsh language, but it was news to me that her husband (John Josiah Guest, 1785-1852)⁽¹⁾ came of a Shropshire family, from Broseley and its neighbourhood.

The Guests had been yeoman farmers there for 200 years. One John Guest (b.1772)⁽²⁾ was, according to the diaries, seventh in descent from a John Guest of the 16th century. The Guests had a furnace at Broseley which stood where Broseley Tileries were built later, and their name appears in the Broseley registers.

This John Guest was interested in coal mining and iron smelting, and in 1763 he joined Isaac Wilkinson in taking a lease from the Earl of Plymouth of property on the Taff in Glamorganshire.

Guest dropped this venture, and became manager⁽³⁾ and later part owner of the Merthyr furnace, which was the nucleus of what became the famous Dowlais Iron Works.

Change of Rent

These were on property held in a 99 year lease from the Windsor family of Shropshire, at a rent of £31 per year, free of royalties. Many efforts were made by the descendant of Lord Windsor to break the lease, but in spite of lawsuits the lease was not renewed until 1848, at a figure of about £25,000 a year - a very different figure from that of the past.

On John Guest's death in 1787 his share in the furnace went to his son, Thomas, and later to a relative, John Josiah Guest (1785-1852)⁽⁴⁾, who however was sent as a boy to live with an uncle in Broseley and who attended Bridgnorth Grammar School.

It was not long before he returned to Dowlais to make the works there the greatest in the world, and he himself the greatest ironmaster of his time. There were times when the Guest profit amounted to as much as £300,000 a year.

Guest's first wife was an Irish girl called Molly Rantin⁽⁵⁾, whom he married in 1817. She died 10 months afterwards. It was through Guest's partner, Wyndham Lewis (whose widow later married Disraeli) that he met his second wife, Lady Charlotte Lindsey, daughter of the 9th Earl of Lindsey.⁽⁶⁾

"Into Trade"

It was then a serious step for a lady of rank to "marry into trade", and it took time and perseverance to obtain re-entry for herself and also for her husband into her own circle. Her marriage was very happy and she bore ten children. Up to at least 1882, the Guests still owned a meadow in Broseley, at the back of King Street, which they declined to part with, as it was the only bit of Broseley property which still belonged to them. It would be interesting to learn whether this meadow(?) still belongs to a descendant of John Josiah Guest. (7)

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Addenda and Corrigenda

- (1) Sir Josiah John Guest (1785-1852): manager and eventually proprietor of the Dowlais Iron Company; M.P. for Merthyr, 1832-52; baronet, 1838. (For some reason Mrs. Hayward transposed his Christian names in her article)
- (2) It is thought that this John Guest was born in 1721.
- (3) John Guest became manager of the Company in 1767.
- (4) Josiah John Guest was, in fact, the grandson of John Guest.
- (5) Maria Elizabeth Ranken (1794-1818)
- (6) Guest married Elizabeth Charlotte Bertie (1812-95) in 1833.
- (7) Can anyone throw any light on this?

N.J.C.

BROSELEY MORRIS DANCERS 300 YEARS AGO

The adventures of a party of Broseley morris dancers in the time of the Commonwealth are thus detailed in the sessions records of Wenlock:

'August 9th 1652. To the Wor^tfull the Baylife and Justices of the Towns and lybertyes of Much Wenlock certifying

That all wee whose names are subscribed Inhabitants of the Parishe of Astley Abbots doe certifye that upon Munday in Whitsunday week being the 7th of June last past there came a Morrice daunce forth of the Parish of Broseley with six sword bearers and a rude companye of followers throwe ye whole bodie of this our said Parish being uninvited or desired by any one within the said Parish that wee doe know of. And coming to Nordley unto the house of Richard Pensham a lycensed ale seller calling for what drinke they pleased left most parte thereof unpaid and nott onely inseulted the people of the house butt also al the rest of the neighbors and people there present with som that were absent that have bine aproved frendes and servants to ye Parliament of England as likewise Mr. Crowther who desireing them to pay ye poore woman for their drinke they there upon presentley called her bad names many tymes and in this way misbehaveing themselves in letting theire tongues run at large that yf there had bine a considerable partye to have mashed them yt is beleevd there would have bine a greate fray and blood shed yf nott murder comitted many of those rude persons haveing borne armes against ye Parliament as will be mad to appeare to your worships.

Subscribed with our hands ye day and yeare above written

Signed

AMS X CROWTHER
GEO X FELTON
KATHEREIN X POWELL

Many other witnesses might be presented butt conceive these to be sufficient.

The leader of them or lord of misrule was William Homes junior; the vice called the lord's son was John Johnson junior.

The most abusive were Thomas Lee sword bearer who formerly and also in ye last service att Worcester bore armes against ye Parliament: John Eavens badger of flanen a revolted Parliament souldier as hee confesseth and sayes hee will now continue a cavelleire as long as he lives, and William Neve a trayned souldier being upon the states service upon the 7th of October last past was forelaid upon the high way by the said John Eavens being armed with a very large pike.'

E. H. PEE

CURATOR'S REPORT

The re-opening of the re-decorated and re-designed Museum was unfortunately too late in the year to assess the effect of the new layout on the visiting public.

The few late season visitors we did have after the re-opening were very enthusiastic and we can, I believe, look forward to a successful season in 1977.

The job is now to keep it bright and attractive, improve the exhibits, sell it to the public as something worth seeing, and lastly to keep it manned during opening hours.

We now have a very welcome and enthusiastic assistant curator, Mr. Peter Mugridge, but it seems likely that more help will be required when the season opens.

Mr. Mugridge has brought some welcome additions to our collection of tiles and pipes. Some five specimens of tiles have also been obtained from among the effects of Mr Jim Roberts of Delphside, an enthusiastic and knowledgeable member who died recently.

Also from these effects we have obtained a fine specimen of a disappearing tool, a tinman's blow pipe; a few augers, important tools not represented until now in our collection. These items have come to us by courtesy of Mr F. Ball who has also renewed the loan of the models made, and previously owned, by Mr Roberts.

Two outstanding items have been given by Mr J. Horley, a brass tilemaker's stamp from the Tileries and a unique little photographic tile from Craven Dunhill depicting one of the Chamberlain brothers.

Mr E. H. Pee has started a scrap book to be kept in the Museum for the collection of newspaper cuttings, etc. dealing with events and places in Broseley and district. It is already very interesting, but as the maintenance of a scrap book is a continuous process it is hoped that members will contribute items of interest.

R. PEE

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