

Easthope Coppice Brickworks.

When the Easthope Coppice Estate of William Taylor was valued in 1794 it was said to abound with 'Black Slip Clay for the Potteries, and an immense quantity of Clay for Bricks and Tiles, a good Bed of Sand and Quarry Stone.'¹ In 1798 the land was let to F Whalley and was assessed at £1 9s 9d for Land tax.²

By 1803 when the estate was valued again and a brickworks was listed:

Brick kiln of excellent white and red clay in large quantities with sheds and every necessary Appurtenances for company on the Trade. 1 Acre, Annual Value £21, Total value £525 This clay is of an excellent quality both white and red and every preparation made for carrying on the work on an extensive manner. Apart of the clay is suitable for potters and is considered that the Purchaser pays for all movable Materials (except the sheds) and for the Stack of Clay etc in hand.³

It was recorded as on-hand, so it was either operated by Taylor himself or more likely not in use.

Taylor's estate was presumably the 16 acres Easthope Coppice Estate which was put up for sale in 1804

The Clay Works consist of several Strata, of the belt white, red, and blue. Clays, suitable for Fire Bricks, other Bricks, Tiles, Potteries, and various other Purposes and large Buildings, Stoves, Mill House, Kilns, and other Conveniences, are newly erected for carrying on the same, which Works are capable of being increased to any Extent, and it is believed that the Fire Brick Clays are equal to any in the Kingdom.⁴

The estate was for sale again in 1810 and 1811 but this time the advertisement only mentions the clays and not the brickworks.⁵ It is not known when the estate was sold but when the Tithe Survey was taken in 1840 the 15 acres estate was owned by jointly by Valentine Vickers with George and John Pritchard and was let to Walter Foulk (1782-1849) of Coalford who in his Will describes himself as a collector of poor rates. Most of the land was under pasture there being no mention of a brickworks.

There were no more details of the brickworks until 1883 25" OS map was published which shows a kiln (SJ 6745 0310) as well as a nearby flooded clay pit (SJ 6748 0307). It is possible that these works were operated by John Burroughs the rope maker of Ladywood. The only mention of him in connection with bricks is in Slaters 1880 directory which lists him as supplying 'fire bricks and burrs of every description' in addition to his rope products. When the 1903 map was published the kiln had been demolished.

Mugridge postulates that this 'may have been the location of William Davis's brick kiln until he died in 1844 and then Francis but that it had probably closed by 1850' but the above suggest that this was not the case.⁶

¹ Valentine Vickers Ledger volume 2 Shropshire Archives 515/2

² Land Tax redemption

³ Valentine Vickers Ledger volume 5 Shropshire Archives 515/5

⁴ Aris's Birmingham Gazette 30th April 1804,

⁵ Aris's Birmingham Gazette 5th November 1810, 18th November 1811.

⁶ Mugridge A.J. *the Broseley Heavy Clay Industry*, Privately Published (1984)

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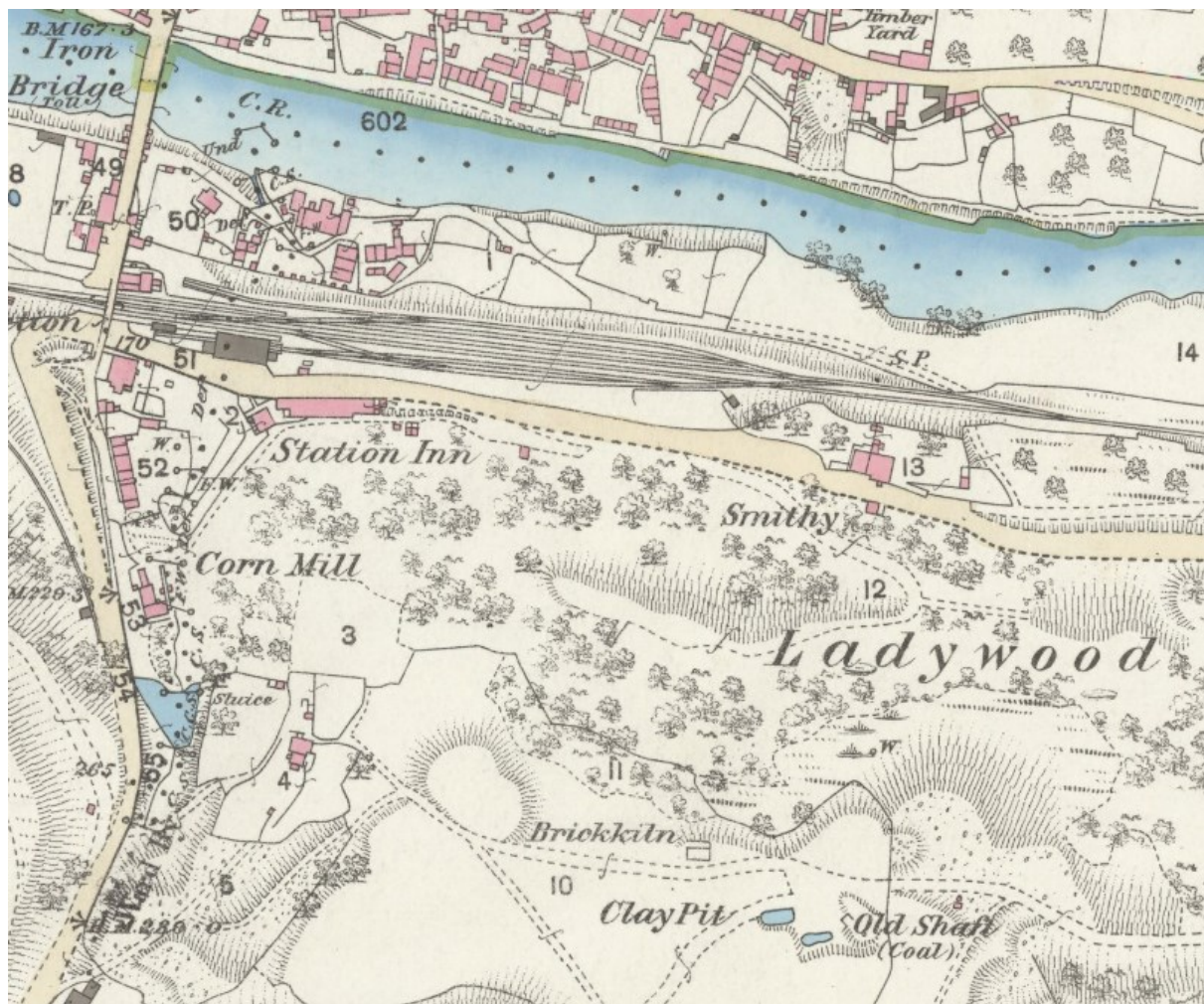


Figure 1. 1883 25" OS map Shropshire XLIII.14 showing the brickkiln and clay pit but no ancillary buildings. The track eastward leads to Ironbridge Road next to the Ladywood Brick & Tile works close to Burroughs Ropeworks.