

The Tuckies Brickworks (SJ 693 026)

The Tuckies Estate was put up for sale in 1835 when it was said to contain mines of coal and ironstone and it was purchased by William Taylor for £5000 and a term of 500 years.¹

The first reference to the availability of clay at the Tuckies was in 1837 when the mines at the Tuckies were advertised to let. The coal mines, which had been working since the 18th century, included a pumping engine and two winding engines.² By the time of the Broseley Tithe valuation in 1838 Taylor had constructed and was operating a beehive brick kiln with associated sheds and a steam engine all adjacent to the river. Clay would have been sourced from his mines.

By 1845 the Tuckies Clay Works was being managed by Thomas Weston who also rented land from Taylor.

NOBLEMEN, Gentlemen, Landowners, and Occupiers desirous of improving their estates, are respectfully informed that PIPE TILES, of the very best quality, are now manufactured at the TUCKIES CLAY WORKS, near BROSELEY, and delivered in any part of the River Severn, from 15s. Per Thousand. Also, Fire Bricks, Blue Bricks, Burrs, Squares, Roofing Tiles, Crest, &c. and every other description of goods, of superior quality, and on the most moderate terms.

Communications addressed to Mr. Thos. Weston, the Tuckies Clay Works, near Ironbridge, Shropshire, will receive the promptest attention, and orders executed with the greatest dispatch.³

By 1846 the works had been considerably enlarged with five kilns and was connected to Taylor's miens by tramways.⁴ In that year Enock Nickless left the partnership leaving Taylor in sole ownership.⁵ Nickless (1810-1881) was a builder and contractor from Ironbridge who perhaps saw this as an opportunity to diversify. He emigrated to Australia in 1853.⁶

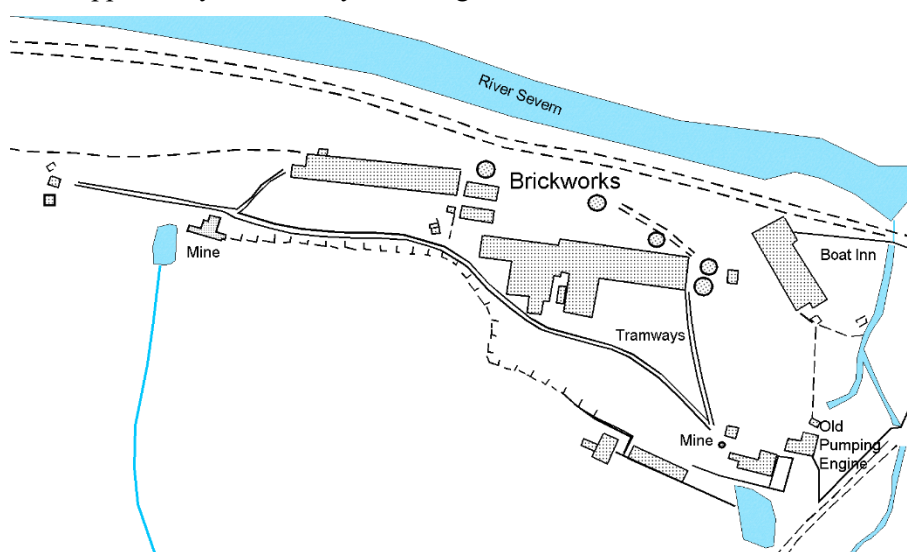


Figure 1. Tuckies brickworks and mines in 1846. This shows tramways from the mine adjacent to the old pumping engine. There are five circular beehive kilns and appear to be two rectangular tile kilns. From Shropshire Archives DP338.

Thoams Weston was still managing the works in 1848 and 1849 when the colliery and clay works were advertised to let. He was born on 11th April 1804 at Cotton Farm near Wem which his father ran and was christened in the local nonconformist chapel. In 1827 he married Susanna Wilson at Wem

¹ Shrewsbury Chronicle 8th May 1835, Shropshire Archives extract of title, Cooper & C

² Staffordshire Advertiser 15th April 1837

³ Gloucester Journal 24th May 1845

⁴ Shropshire Archives DP341.

⁵ London Gazette 21st April 1840

⁶ Ancestry, Nickless tree. https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/117351875/person/350174158494/facts?_phsrc=qSO7755&_phstart=successSource

and in 1841 he was farming what had been his father's farm.⁷ Soon after he must have moved to the Tuckies to manage the brickworks which seems odd given he does not seem to have had any experience at this. By 1851 Weston had moved to Witton-le-Wear, Co. Durham where he was managing Victora brick and tile works although his wife was visiting Beriah Allen a brick maker at Salthouses, Jackfield.⁸ Perhaps Allen was managing the brickwork after Weston had left. Weston took over the Victora brick and tile works in 1856 but by 1861 he listed himself as an Agent for a Coal mine living at North Beechburn (Bitchburn), Co Durham.⁹ His wife died in September 1861 and he died in December 1868.¹⁰

In the 1851 census William Taylor, the owner of the estate, was living at the Tuckies House and described himself as a 'coal and brick master employing 5 men.' The whole estates including the brickworks were again for sale in 1852 this time by auction, on the instructions of William Taylor who was giving up the brick and coal trades.¹¹ In 1854 just the brickworks were put up for auction and the whole estate was for sale in 1860 when they were said to be close to the Severn Valley Railway.¹²

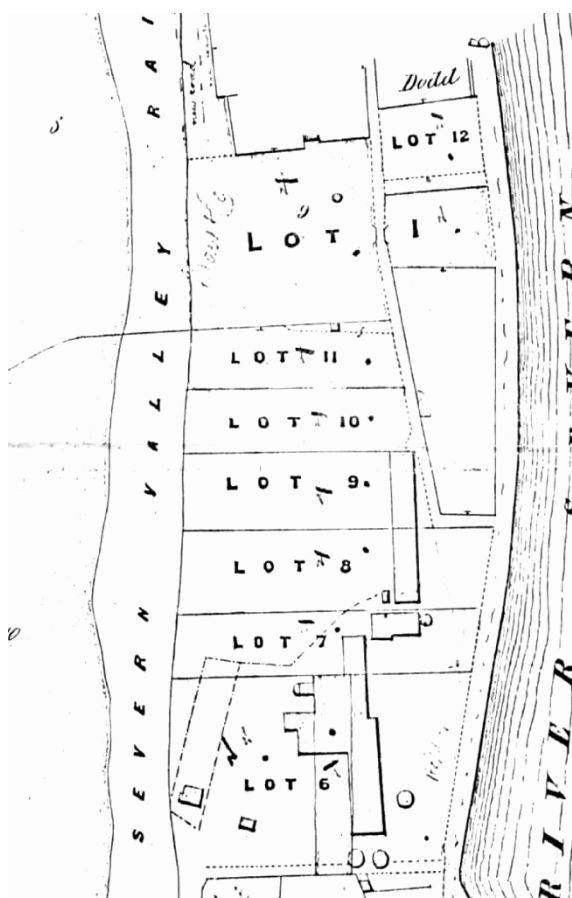


Figure 2. Sale map 1860

Valuable mines of Sulphur and other cool,
Fire Brick, tile and other clays

Lot 6: Building land .. Office, brick and tile
sheds, ovens, engine and engine house puh
mills rollers &c and all other buildings; and
also, the stock of clay thereon.

Lot 7: Building land with Brick and tile shed,
chimney and oven.

Lots 8 and 9: Boat Leasow -Turf and Building
land with brick and tile shedding thereon. Lot
9 also had a coal pit and spoil bank

⁷ Ancestry.

⁸ By 1861 Beriah had moved to Wednesfield Heath where he was a brickmaker emploting 12 men 8 women and 4 boys. He died at Rhyll in 1895.

⁹ 1851 Census The Durham Chronicle 20th May 1853, 18th April 1856,

¹⁰ Durham Chronicle 27th September 1861, His death is reported as being at North Cap, Bishop Auckland the Durham Chronicle 25th December 1868 and Wellington Journal 26th December 1868 where he is said to be former of Cotton near Wem. Eddowes Salopian Journal 23 December 1868 states he was of North Beechburn and formerly of Broseley.

¹¹ Shrewsbury Chronicle 17th December 1852.

¹² Shrewsbury Chronicle 28th April 1854, Wellington Journal 2nd June 1860, 17th November 1860

Enoch Hopley is said to have taken over the works however no documentary has been found to corroborate this.¹³ In 1861 Enoch (32) described himself as a mining agent and was living with his father who farmed at Sutton Road, Madeley. From around 1862 he ran the Coalford Brick and Tile Works which had previously been carried on by his father-in-law Thomas Davies.¹⁴ Hopley did own property at the Tuckies as in 1886 he was offering a house and shop for let.¹⁵

Some of the land was bought by Jesse Fisher (1801-1869) a manufacturing chemist who lived on Madeley Hill Ironbridge. An artificial manure works was erected by him on or near the site of the brickworks and by June 1862 and was ordering cast iron basins, bars and boilers from Samuel and Joseph Edge as well as supplying them with old cast iron from the works.¹⁶ The chemical works was put up for sale in 1871.¹⁷

Maw intended to move their Benthall Works to the site and may have purchased part of the site in 1860 for £400.¹⁸ In 1876 their architect, Charles Lynam was advertising for builders and contractors to tender for the new works.¹⁹ By 1882 they had established their brickworks nearby for the construction of their new factory.²⁰ Construction of the works had not been started as in the same year Lynam was again advertising for tenders for erecting the work with the contractors Gallimore of Newcastle, Staffs. starting work in March.²¹ Maw's brickworks continued in use well into the 20th century.

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¹³ Dawes N.M, A History of Brick and Tile Production on the Coalbrookdale Coalfield. (1979), Mugridge A. J., the Broseley Heavy Clay Industry, (2001).

¹⁴ Randal, John, *Broseley and its Surroundings*. 1879.

¹⁵ Wellington Journal 1dn October 1886

¹⁶ Shrewsbury Chronicle 20th June 1862. Claim by a carpenter called Halford for work done. Wellington Journal 16th May 1863

¹⁷ Birmingham Daily Gazette 2nd March 1871. Clarke & Alfrey Fourth Interim Report of the Nuffield Archaeological Survey of the Ironbridge Gorge.

¹⁸ Mugridge, A. J., *Maw & Co* (1979). Birmingham Daily Gazette 2nd March 1871.

¹⁹ Wellington Journal 19th October 1876.

²⁰ 25'' OS map

²¹ Supplement to the Architect 7th February 1882, Eddowes Salopian Journal 15th March 1882.