

SOUTH WEST WALES INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

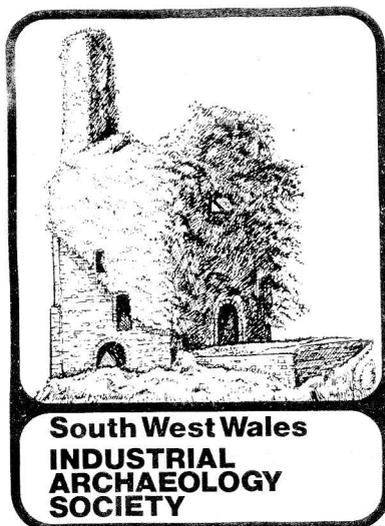
CYLCHLYTHYR

CYMDEITHAS ARCHAEOLEG DIWYDIANNOL DE ORLLEWIN CYMRU

Newsletter 24, March 1980

Editorial Committee: F.G. Cowley, P.R.Reynolds, W.I.Roberts

Proce to non-members: 15p



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

13 MARCH

Annual General Meeting followed by a short talk on Port Talbot by Mr Arthur Rees. Starting at 7 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE: Because of staffing problems at the Royal Institution, this meeting will be held in Lecture Room L, Applied Sciences Building, University College of Swansea.

18 MARCH

Professor J.H. Beynon and Dr D. Betteridge "Chemistry and Chemists in the Lives of the People of the Swansea Area"

To be held in conjunction with the Guild of Graduates of the University of Wales in the Small Lecture Theatre, Department of Chemistry, University College of Swansea at 7. 30 p.m.

17 APRIL

Mr Stuart Owen Jones (of the Welsh Industrial & Maritime Museum) 'Recent developments at the Industrial & Maritime Museum'

All being well, this will be back in the Royal Institution at 7 p.m. If it is necessary to alter the arrangements, we will inform you.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thankyou to all those of you who have already paid your annual subscription for 1980. To those of you who have still to do so, may I ask for your remittances as soon as is convenient. The rates are £1-50 p.a. (standard rate) or 75p (full-time students and old age pensioners.)

HELP, PLEASE

Later this year the Royal National Eisteddfod is to be held at Gowerton with Lliw Valley Borough Council as hosts. The Swansea Valley Historical Society has been invited to mount an exhibition on past industries in the area. If anyone can suggest sources of suitable photographs, maps, drawings, cine-films etc., Steve Williams, the Hon. Secretary of the SVHS would like to know. His address is 11 Thomas Street, Pontardawe.

W. ELIS JENKINS, M.A., F.S.A.

Many members will already know of the death of the late Mr Elis Jenkins of Neath which took place last November. Mr Jenkins was a local historian and antiquary of note. It is hoped to include a longer note in the next issue than space allows in the present number.

THE EVOLUTION OF AN INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE, c.1770-1897

A story told in maps

By S. R. Hughes

Part II

Captions to Map 4, c. 1820-c.1845

Transport development

- A. Cwm Pit or Level Tramroad. This largely used the disused alignment of the Pentre-geghyn Coal Pits (Landore) Waggonway on the north bank of the Nant Rhyd-y-Filias (28) to take coal to the Landore River Wharves (A2) from what may have been a level sited downhill (A1) from Cwm Pit rather than from the coal pit itself which was by 1826 (28) also served by another line (G below). The alignment of the tramroad inclined plane under the canal is difficult to determine with exactitude, but by 1838 it had probably been re-aligned around the expanding Millbrook Ironworks. A branch tramroad left before the head of the incline down to the river wharves and bridged the Trewyddfa Canal to supply coal to the Landore Copper Works, and to the old Landore Forge via a second canal bridge with a branch to the Landore Coal-pit shaft. This latter probably supplied coal to Millbrook Ironworks. The whole of this line and its branches seems to have been disused by 1838 with only the southern canal underbridge surviving as a material reminder of its passing.
- B. Trewyddfa Canal Inclined Plane. This was certainly still in use c. 1844 (37).
- C. Landore Copperworks Inclined Plane. In use throughout this period.
- D. "Cwm Pit (D1), Nant Cwm-Gelli (D2) and Penfilia Coal Levels (D3) Tramroad". The lines serving the two former collieries were probably built in or soon after 1806 (21) and certainly by 1826 (28). They took coal north-east to the Rose, Birmingham and, by c.1844 (36) to the Fforest Copperworks along the alignment of what later became Dinas Street. By 1838 Nant Cwm-Gelli Level was probably disused and only a spur remained above Cwm Pit (D4) (31). By c.1844 the line north of Pont-y-Shoot had apparently been relaid to a probable disposal point and possible "shute" to the immediate north-west of the bridge (D5) (36). Between 1826 (28) and 1838 (31) the lower branch to Penfilia Coal Level (D6) had been constructed, presumably after the Cwm Pit or Level and Pen-y-fillia Coal Pits tramroads had become defunct as it probably crossed these lines on the level.
- E. Pen-y-fillia or "Pentre II" Coal Pits and Cwm Level "II" Tramroad. This was a secondary northerly branch of the Pentre-geghyn Coal Pits (Swansea) Waggonway. The construction of this line meant that coal went by rail directly from the Landore area to be shipped from Swansea wharves for the first time. Pen-y-fillia Coal Pits or "Pentre II" was probably sunk in 1807 (22) and the line to the colliery from Swansea along what later became Eaton Road had certainly been built by 1813 (23). It thus avoided trans-shipment costs of transference to canal at Landore proper and removed restrictions on the tonnage of sailing vessel loaded into. By 1838 (31) a new line had been built down to both Landore River Wharf and the Canal, possibly in 1830 (29). The tramroad was certainly disused by 1838 (31). Possibly the disuse of Pentre-geghyn Coal Pit had meant that it was no longer economical to maintain a long line down to Swansea when a shorter line to Landore could largely be worked by gravity.
- F. Tir Glandwr or Drew (44) Pit tramroad. This colliery seems to have had a tramroad down to a river quay by 1826 (28). By 1838 this line may have been defunct (31) although the colliery was certainly in use in 1876 (42) when it had a small tramroad leading onto its spoil tip (41).
- G. Pen-y-fillia or Pentre Coal Pit (1830) tramroad. This line replaced the Pen-y-fillia Coal Pits and Cwm Level II Tramroad (E) and its half-mile length as shown on an 1838 map (31) coincides with a description in The Cambrian of the opening

of this line in 1830. It seems to have had an almost continuous inclined plane down to the canal on a shallow gradient of two inches in a yard according to the contemporary newspaper account. At the lower end of this there seems to have been a southerly branch to the canal while a shorter incline led a second line down through the Millbrook Ironworks to the Landore River Wharves passing through the canal aqueduct previously utilised by the Cwm Pit or Level Tramroad. This was possibly the first in the area to use edge rails and may well have been of standard gauge as it was later linked to the South Wales Railway (by 1897) (45).

- H. "Landore River Dock". In use throughout this period.
- I. Trewyddfa Canal.
- J. Swansea Canal southern section.

Water economy

1. Landore Corn Mill / Melin fach. Burnt down between 1851 and 1878.
2. Penyfilia "Chaff Mill". Still working in 1802 (19) but definitely demolished by 1838 (31) with nothing surprisingly taking its place in utilising the Llangyfelach Copperworks pond.
3. Calland's Coal Pit Engine Condensing-water leat.
4. Plas-y-Marl Coal Pits Engine Condensing-water leat.
5. Landore Colliery Engine Condensing-water leat. Probably disused at some date between 1844 (35) and 1876 (42).
6. Dock scouring leat.
7. Diverted outlets of the Nant Rhyd-y-Filias.
8. Landore Forge. Probably still in use when served by a tramroad branch in 1826 (28) but disused by 1838 (31). It seems likely that the trade of this business had outstripped the production possible utilising the potential power of its adjacent small stream and that the major part of the business was transferred to the new available site.
9. The Glamorgan Pottery Company's Landore Flint Mill. This was using Trewyddfa Canal water before 1817 (25) and was ordered to desist from using this for a second time in 1818 (26). It probably had secondary and tertiary feeds from the mill-pond of Landore Corn Mill and from the stream that had probably driven the old Landore Forge (42). It may have been a contemporary building with the Glamorgan Pottery of 1814 (24) and was disused by 1851 (38) and in ruins in 1878 (43).
10. Landore Forge (new site) / Millbrook Ironworks / Landore Ironworks. By 1822 (27) the site if not the structure of the Landore Copperworks Stamping and Rolling Mill had been converted into what was probably an implements forge (10i). By 1839 there must also have been a foundry on the site whose location (10ii) can be guessed by references to the position of the pattern stores on a plan of post-1881 (44). The blast for the cupola furnaces was probably driven by water.
11. Landore Forge / Millbrook Ironworks / Landore Ironworks Turning and Boring Mill (44). This was in use by 1826 (28) and utilised the only available section of the Nant Rhyd-y-Filias between the Penyfilia Chaff Mill and the headrace for the Landore Forge (new site) proper. Presumably then there was an overlap in the period of usage between the two former installations. Ruins only remained of the building by 1876 (42, 44).
12. Pen-y-filias or "Pentre II" Coal Pits Engines Condensing-water leat of probably 1807 (22). The pumping and winding engines had two ponds or reservoirs fed by what appears to have been an interception of the water supply of the first part of the old Calland's Coal Pit Engine leat (42).

13. Tir Glandwr or Drew Pit Engine Condensing-water Leat. No firm evidence is available on the existence of such a water-course. From the topography of the siting of the shaft it is likely that water was extracted from the Swansea Canal and released into the ravine of the Nant Rhyd-y-Filias. As under similar arrangements at other sites on the Swansea Canal, water pumped up the shaft may have had to be fed into the canal in return for condensing-water extracted. In addition payment of a rent to the Canal Company was required.
14. Landore Copperworks. Presumably the copperworks had a new steam-powered stamping and rolling mill to replace its defunct water-powered installation. It was probably housed in one of the new additions to the structure of its works. Morris's Canal had supplied water at least to the Birmingham Copperworks (10b) and by 1817 the Trewyddfa Canal may have been piping condensing-water to a steam engine or engines in the Landore works warranting the Swansea Canal Committee's general complaint on water supply to copperworks on the Trewyddfa Canal (25).

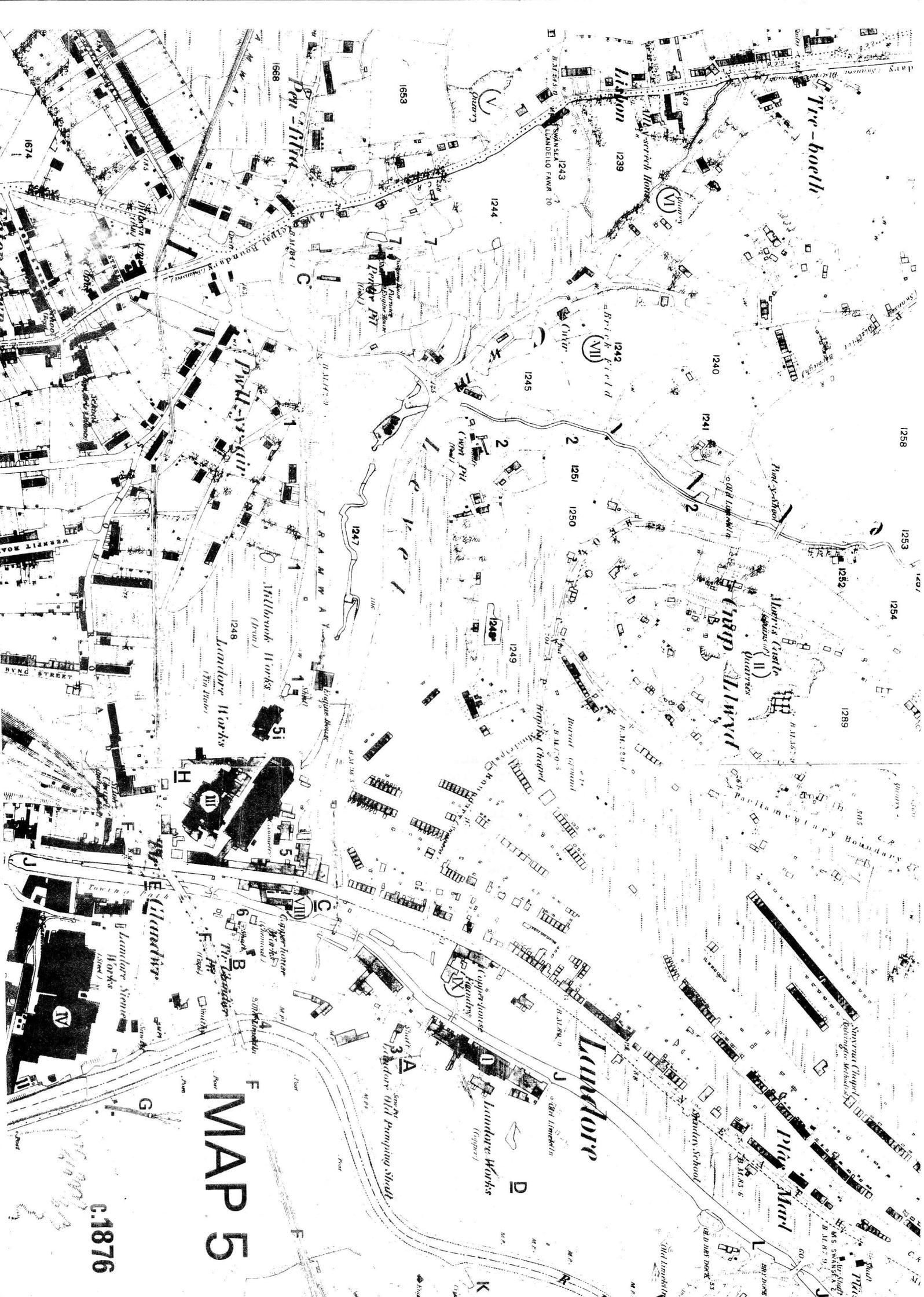
Other industrial installations (probably not using water)

- I. "Plas-y-Marl Lime-Kilns". Still probably in operation in c. 1844 (35).
- II. Landore Copperworks were in operation throughout this period.
- III. "Landore Lime-Kiln" may still have been in operation in this period.
- IV. "Cnap Llwyd Sandstone Quarries". These are shown on the map in the form attained by 1826 (28). Access to them was gained by inclined access roads.
- V. "Landore Quay Lime-Kiln" was in operation by 1844 (35).
- VI. "Cwm Gelli Lime-Kiln" was also in operation by 1844 (35).

Captions to Map 5, c. 1876

Transport development

- A. Landore Copperworks Inclined Plane.
- B. Tir Glandwr or Drew (44) Coal Pit Tramroad. In 1875 this only consisted of a small tips tramroad.
- C. Pen-y-fillia or Pentre Coal Pit Tramroad. By c. 1855 (40) the line down to the Swansea Canal had been rebuilt and the long incline from Pentre Pit truncated near Calland's Pit. From here a line curved north-east to run parallel with Cwm Level Road on its south side and down an incline to the Swansea Canal via a crossing of Neath Road on the level. The old line to the river wharves was probably made in-operational by this move and had entirely disappeared by 1876 (42). The realignment was probably necessitated by the inconvenience of expanding the Millbrook Ironworks around two busy and intrusive tramroads. Callands Pit now also had a spur from the line: presumably it had previously only been served by road transport.
- D. Landore Copperworks "Tips Tramroad". This may well have been in operation since the building of the copperworks in c. 1790 as there were early tips on this site and some of the tip-lines marked in 1876 (42) are suggestive of earlier periods of tramroad tipping.
- E. Mynydd Newydd Coal Pit Tramroad. The pit was probably sunk in 1843 (34) and the tramroad down to the canal was probably built at this date. Two inclines are visible on map 5, the one from Brynhyfyrd Square to the canal being a very gentle slope. Both self-acting inclines had a shared middle rail for raising and descending traffic with a passing loop in the centre.
- F. South Wales Railway: Landore Viaduct. The opening of this line in 1850 marked the advent of a new arterial transport connection to the area.
- G. By 1876 an isolated self-acting incline and tipping sidings remained to the south of Landore viaduct near the east bank of the river. This seems to have been part of a later 19th century tips tramroad from Landore Alkali Works which had had a bridge over the River Tawe to the south. The works were already operative by 1838.



MAP 5

C.1876

Fire-boath

Lithon

1688
1674

1653

1243
1239

1244

1242
1240

1241

1258

1253

1254

1289

Lundore Works
The Works

51

5

5

5

5

5

5

5

5

5

5

5

5

5

5

Lundore

Lundore Works
(Copper)

Lundore Old Pumping Shaft

Play Mall

Parliamentary Boundary

Shrewsbury Chapel

St. Andrew's School

Old Lundore

Upper house

Lower house

Parliamentary Boundary

- H. Landore Tinplate Works Tramway. Making the new transport facilities provided by the South Wales Railway very apparent is the fact that this works, dating from 1851, had a railway siding as its only transport connection on what was essentially a canal-side site.
- I. "Landore River Dock".
- J. Swansea Canal. The Trewyddfa and Swansea Canals were both bought by the Great Western Railway in 1873 and the stop-lock between the two canals was presumably removed at (42) or before this time as the Swansea Canal Company had maintained the Trewyddfa Canal for much of the nineteenth century.
- K. Landore Siemens Steelworks (Llansamlet) River Dock. By 1876 a dock with crane and accompanying railway sidings had been built in what had probably originally been the mouth of the Ffendrod Brook. This probably dated from the building of the new Landore Siemens Steelworks in 1871.
- L. "Plas-y-Marl Dry Dock no.2". By 1876 this had replaced the dry-dock to its immediate south.

Water economy

1. Calland's Coal Pit Engine Condensing-water leat.
2. Plas-y-Marl Coal Pits Engine Condensing-water leat.
3. Landore River-dock scouring leat.
4. Diverted outlets of the Nant Rhyd-y-Filias (probably long since culverted over).
5. Millbrook Ironworks. The new cast house (51) (44) for the foundry/forge complex was well away from the previously utilised water-power sources and suggests that any cupola-furnace blast was steam driven. The prime mover for this works was hence becoming steam rather than water used directly.
6. Tir Glandwr or Drew Pit Engine Condensing-water leat.
7. Pen-y-fillia or "Pentre II" Coal Pits Engines Condensing-water leat.

There were no new users of water power in this period and the exclusive use of steam as a prime mover for all new installations was the order of the day after 1851. No new engine-water ponds or leats are immediately visible and it may well be that the more sophisticated steam-engines of the later 19th century required very little water for condensing purposes.

Other industrial installations (probably not using water)

- I. Landore Copperworks
- II. "Cnap Llwyd Sandstone quarries" had grown considerably since 1826 (28) and had partly destroyed the early industrial workers' flats, Morris Castle. A raised embankment marked in 1876 (42) running obliquely east down Craig Trewyddfa suggests that the most northerly quarry may have had a self-acting incline down the hill slope.
- III. Landore Tin Plate Works. Started in 1851 and the first in the trade to be driven by steam-power (39). Ironically, it was sited over a stream which had given rise to a whole complex of water-powered industry prior to this date.
- IV. Landore Siemens Steel Works. Started in 1869 on the site of Billwyn's Landore silver works (46).
- V. "Lisbon Llangyfelach Road Sandstone" quarry. This was quite a large quarry by 1876 (42), presumably to supply sandstone to build the workers' housing which was so obviously filling the landscape around Landore in 1876 (42).
- VI. Cwm "Sandstone" quarry. Probably similar to V but slightly smaller in 1876 (42).
- VII. "Chwâr Brick Field". In operation by 1876 (42), presumably to provide bricks for the chimney flues and dressings of the Landore workers' housing constructed with rubble-stone walls from the above-mentioned quarries. The quarries all seem to have relied on road transport.
- VIII. Copper House Chemical Works. In operation in 1876 (42) and possibly using both the adjacent Neath Road and Swansea Canal for transport.

IX. Copperhouse Foundry. In operation in 1876 (42) and probably using only the adjacent Neath Road for transport. It had tips to the rear of the property backing on to the Swansea Canal as if to illustrate the transport revolution that had taken place in the area.

Captions to map 6, c. 1897

Transport development

- A. Pen-y-fillia or Pentre Coal Pit Tramroad. By 1897 the Mynydd Newydd Coal Pit tramroad had abandoned its lower incline and had been joined to the head of the upper Pentre Coal Pit's incline. Between the two inclines the tramroad now had a spur to Landore station and hence the Pentre and Mynydd Newydd Tramroads must have been standard gauge lines by this date and possibly since inception; although a disparity in this could explain why they were not joined together as soon as they came under one ownership in c. 1863 (34). With the construction of the railway spur the total dependence of any one colliery line on the canal was ended.
- B. Great Western Railway (South Wales section).
- C. Swansea to Morryston Railway. Built alongside the Swansea Canal in 1881 by the G.W.R. who had owned the Swansea and Trewyddfa Canals since 1874.
- D. Landore Tinplate "Internal Works Tramway". By 1897 (45) the siding from Landore station had developed into a complete internal works system.
- E. Millbrook Iron "Internal Works Tramway". By 1897 (45) the Millbrook Ironworks also had a connection to Landore station yard with a similar internal works system.
- F. Copperhouse Foundry "Internal Works Tramway". The foundry had now been physically separated from the canal that it had never used by the Morryston railway which it may have used. It certainly had a small internal tramway (45).
- G. Swansea to Morryston street tramway (45).
- H. Swansea Canal.
- I. "Plas-y-Marl Dry Dock no. 2." Note that by 1897 there were only two water transport installations remaining in use.

Water economy

1. Calland's Coal Pit Engine Condensing-water leat.
2. Diverted outlets of the Nant Rhyd-y-Filias (culverted).
3. Millbrook Ironworks. The feeder for the forges was re-aligned due to tipping around and diversion of the Nant Rhyd-y-Filias before 1897 (45).
4. Pen-y-fillia or "Pentre II" Coal Pits Engines Condensing-water leats.

Other industrial installations (probably not using water)

- I. "Cnap Llwyd Sandstone Quarries". The most northerly quarry seems still to have been in production in 1897 (45).
- II. Landore Tin Plate Works.
- III. "Lisbon Llangyfelach Road Sandstone" quarry may still have been in use in 1897 (45).
- IV. Cwm "Sandstone" Quarry was much enlarged since 1876 (42,45).
- V. Copperhouse Foundry.
- VI. Mannesman Steel Tube Works. A re-use of the original Landore Siemens Steel Works buildings (45).

Sources

16. 1796 N.L.W. Badminton collection, group II, 1500. Account of Trewyddfa Canal expenses ... July 12, "Paid for Mason Work to the Aqueducts &c. over the Waggonway £55.3.6d."
17. 1796 Wernher Collection, Luton Hoo, Beds. J.C. Ibbetson, "Coal Staith at Landore with ox and waggons, 1796", watercolour. Viewpoint from the site marked X on the 1793 map.

18. 1799 N.L.W. "A map of the County of Glamorgan From An Actual Survey Made By George Yates of Liverpool on which Are Delineated the Course of Rivers and Navigable Canals, with The Roads, Parks, Gentlemen's Seats, Castles, Woods."
19. 1802 J.M.Davies, 'The growth of settlement in the Swansea Valley' (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University College of Wales, 1942). Map 6, copy of an original map in the Borough Estates Office records, Swansea entitled 'A copy of a Plan of Part of the Copper House Lands situated near Landwr in the Parish of Llangevelach in the County of Glamorgan with the Croft and Coalbank belonging thereto'.
20. 1804 N.L.W. Badminton collection, group II, 1276 and 1288. 'Plan of Ground at Landore granted in fee to the Swansea Canal Co., at 5/- per annum'.
21. 1806 P.R. Reynolds, 'Clyndu and Pentremalwod Tramroads, Morryston', S.W.W.I.A.S. Newsletter, 13, July 1976, pp. 6-7.
22. 1807 F.G. Cowley, 'Pentre Colliery: a short history', ibid., 21, March 1979, pp.3-7.
23. 1813 B.L.O.S.D. 179, Serial no. 135, Index 1" no. 37, 1813, 2" to the mile first preliminary survey for the first edition 1" to the mile O.S. map.
24. 1814 D. Jenkins, Llanelly Pottery, Swansea DEB Books, 1968, pp.13-14.
25. 1817 P.R.O. Swansea Canal Committee Minutes, 2 September 1817.
26. 1818 P.R.O. Swansea Canal Committee Minutes, 4 August 1818. The use of canal water was impeding the traffic of the canal and the Committee ordered the cessation of this use by the Glamorgan Pottery Company for a second time.
27. 1822 Landore (Yorkshire Imperial Metals) Copperworks Office, 'A plan of the Copper Works and Sundry Tenements and Lands situate on the Banks of the River Tawe near Swansea'.
28. 1826 B.L. Ordnance Surveyors' Drawings, Hill sketches and Revisions for 1" sheet 37, serial no. 460, Swansea Plan 'H'.
29. 1830 P.R. Reynolds, 'The Pentre Pit Tramroad', S.W.W.I.A.S. Newsletter, 6, February 1974, p.3
30. 1832 British Waterways Estates Office, Gloucester, G.W.R. 20046. A large-scale (approx. 17" to the mile) map of the Swansea Canal made by William Bevan & Son.
31. 1838 N.L.W. Llangyfelach Tithe Map.
32. 1839 Castings were supplied to Llanelly Pottery in 1839 (D. Jenkins, Llanelly Pottery, Swansea, DEB Books, 1968, p. 66.)
33. 1842 N.L.W. Badminton collection, group II, 1290. Untitled plan of Landore in 1770 by John Williams with additions in red by Edward Thomas, 1842. /p.5.
34. 1843 P.R. Reynolds, 'Mynydd Newydd Colliery', SWWIAS Newsletter, 22, July 1979,
35. 1844 N.L.W. Badminton collection, group II, 1286, "Messrs. Calland's Map of Trewyddfa Canal prepared by them to elucidate their claims against the Duke of Beaufort."
36. 1844 N.L.W. Badminton, group II, 1293, no date but to do with Calland's law suit against the Duke of Beaufort.
37. 1844 N.L.W. Badminton collection, group II, 1280-1281, "Plan of Morfa Slebech, Morfa Arglwydd, etc. showing the Landore Copper Works & Trewyddfa Canal etc."
38. 1851 N.L.W. Badminton collection, group II, 63. Plans attached to a lease of the area around Landore Flint Mill.
39. 1851 E.H.Brooke, Chronology of the tinsplate works of Great Britain (Cardiff, E.H.Brooke, 1944, p. 149).
40. 1855 (probably) R.I.S.W. Untitled maps in the lecture room. Probably the intended Deposited Plans of the Swansea Docks and Mineral Valleys Railway.
41. 1875 British Waterways Estates Office, Gloucester, G.W.R. 28081. Large-scale map of the Swansea Canal.
42. 1876 1:2500 O.S. map, Glamorgan sheet XV.13, 1876.
43. 1878 N.L.W. Badminton collection, group II, 7-8. Plans attached to a second lease of the area around Landore Flint Mill.
44. 1881 (or later) R.I.S.W. Small maps & prints 369, plan of "The Millbrook Iron & Steel Works, Landore", originally in the library of the University College of Swansea.
45. 1897 1:2500 O.S. map, Glamorgan sheet XV.13, 1888.
46. 1871 S.W.W.I.A.S. and Swansea City Planning Department, Industrial archaeology trail: Lower Swansea Valley (1975), sect. 16.

Abbreviations: NLW= National Library of Wales. GRO = Glamorgan Record Office
 B.L.O.S.D. = British Library Ordnance Survey Drawings
 P.R.O. = Public Record Office R.I.S.W. = Royal Institution
 of South Wales (Swansea Museum).

KIDWELLY TINPLATE WORKS

After several years of trying to save these works, the Kidwelly Society has been granted the possibility of a lease of the property. The intention is to make the site the centre of an environmental and industrial park from which it will be possible to direct visitors to other industrial sites in the vicinity. The tin works itself, with its extant machinery and the remains of 18th and early 19th century working, will be developed as an interpretative centre to make intelligible the various processes used in tinplate manufacture over two centuries.

The 13-acre site is of unique historical interest. There was continuous industrial activity from 1737, when Charles Gwyn of Kidwelly built the first works, to the end of tinplate making by the pack mill process in 1940. Indeed the evidence is strong for regarding Gwyn's works as the oldest in the U.K. Evidence still exists of the use of water and steam power in tinplate manufacture in the form of:-

- the remains of a large pond dammed by a retaining wall which incorporates three sluices. The weir on which it stands dates from 1737.
- two water-wheel pits with their accompanying watercourses and a large floor area where early 19th century rolling mills and reheating furnaces stood.
- an extensive watercourse system starting upstream from a weir and probably dating from the establishment of the original works.
- two massive Foden vertical steam engines, set up in 1876, and a Cole & Marchant horizontal engine.

The tinworks would lend themselves to becoming a tourist centre. The site is in a pleasant setting with adequate space for the facilities which visitors will need. It could serve as the base for short walks to the site of a 17th century forge and along old tracks known as Tinworks Lane and The Summer Way. It is also hoped to establish a trail from the town centre to the basin of Kymer's Canal (1766) and the Quay on the Gwendraeth Fach river.

Llanelli Borough Council owns the entire property. At the suggestion of the Kidwelly Society a trust consisting of representatives of various interested bodies (including SWWIAS) is to be formed to lease the site at what will literally be a peppercorn rent. A number of possible sources of finance have been identified, but the first task is to make the site secure until the plans have been finalised and approved by the Council.

THE RAILWAY ARCH

The thick man said "knock it flat".
He had some papers in his big fat
Hand, like someone from the Town Hall.
"It's in the way", he cried, "and it's far too tall."

The thin man said it looked like a festering sore
With all those four letter words sprayed on its naked core.
He said, "aerosols should be banned -
They increased the sins of the damned."

They went away in a cloud of exhaust gas.
They did not understand the crass
Nonsense of instant decision
In a fleeting moment of blurred vision...
I knew the arch when wagons thundered over the house tops
And its abutments shook with the shock
Of continuou movement.

But they did not understand my task,
And I knew they would never ask.

Ken Brooks

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

NEATH ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY. Transactions, 1979

Since its revival in 1977 the Neath Transactions has made a regular and welcome appearance towards the end of each year. As usual, the current issue includes a number of items particularly concerned with industrial history. Professor Gordon Tucker provides an authoritative account of 'Neath Corporation tramways' with a number of illustrations and as a sequel Harry Green has transcribed a taped conversation with Mrs Dorothy Harris, the last surviving tram conductress. Also by Harry Green is 'The Eaglesbush Colliery explosion 1848' and 'The hidden Gnoll House', a fascinating piece of detective work: using photographs and plans, HG shows that a 17th century gentry house survived as the laundry of the 18th century mansion.

P.H. STANIER. 'The copper ore trade of south west England in the nineteenth century', Journal of Transport History, N.S. 5, 1, 1979, 18-35

For readers in the Swansea area this article provides an interesting approach to the copper trade. In the former centre of the copper-smelting industry we tend to concentrate on what happened to the ores after they arrived in Swansea. Stanier's article examines the process by which they reached south Wales. He describes the steps by which the smelters' agents in Cornwall arranged for the ore to be shipped across the Bristol Channel and looks at the vessels engaged in the trade and the ports from which they sailed. The trade rose steadily from about 1800 to a peak in 1856 and then fell away rapidly. At its height it required about 150 vessels (17,250 tons of shipping p.a.) and employed up to 800 seamen, and this was for Swansea alone. The ships sailed from ports on the south coast of Cornwall which entailed the rounding of the inhospitable Lizard and Land's End points. Although fairly short, the voyage could, therefore, be dangerous and required real skill of the masters of the vessels.

Joanna MARTIN. 'Private enterprise versus manorial rights: mineral property disputes in eighteenth-century Glamorgan', Welsh Historical Review, 9, 2, 1978, 155-175.

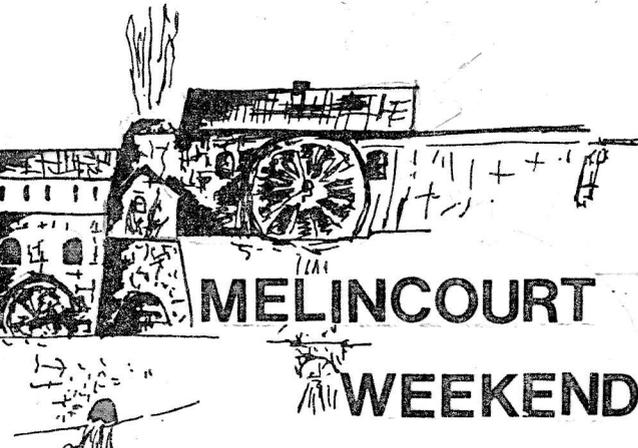
Early in the 18th century disputes between the Duke of Beaufort and the inhabitants of the Swansea region intensified. The two main reasons for this were the over-zealous manner of the Duke's Steward, Gabriel Powell, and the growth of industry which led to disputes over mineral rights. The opposition to the Duke was led by the Popkins of Fforest and the Prices of Penllergaer, and centred on the operations of Robert Morris who came to be regarded as a Duke's man. From the 1720s to the 1750s a succession of incidents took place. Powell's Survey of the Seignory of Gower of 1764 is thus put in its context as an attempt at a legal assertion and formal statement of the rights claimed by the Dukes of Beaufort. This is clearly an important article for the study of 18th century Swansea and its industrial growth.

G.METCALFE. 'From spade to mantelpiece', Country Quest, 20, 4, 1979, 25-28.

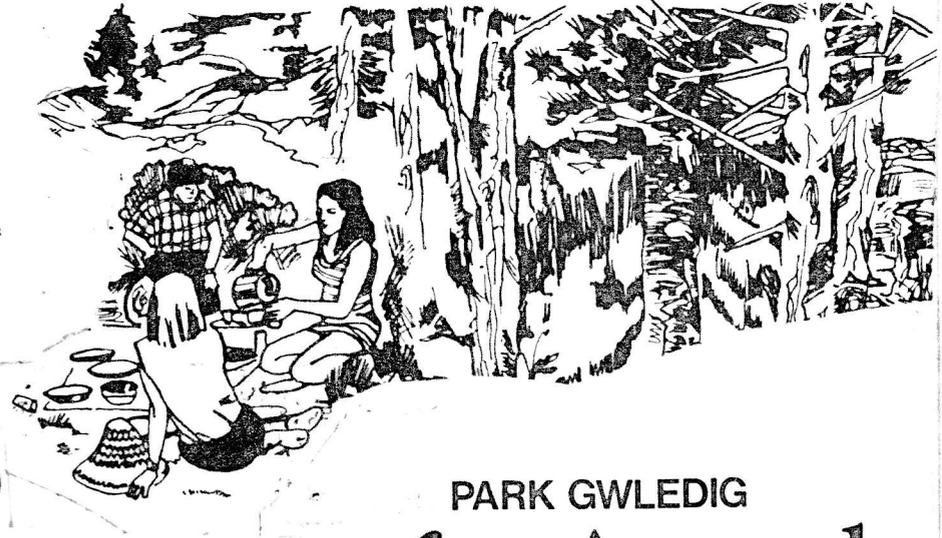
A largely anecdotal account of the author's interest in the Ynysmeudwy pottery. It also includes a potted history based on the work of Mr Derek Harper of Gowerton and - perhaps the best part of the article - a number of photographs of Ynysmeudwy ware.

G. WATKINS. The steam engine in industry. Vol. 2: Mining and the metal trades (Ashbourne, Moorland Publ. Co. £5-95.)

A pictorial study of stationary steam engines in use in mines and iron and steel works. The photographs were taken between about 1930 and 1960. Extended captions give full details of the engines which include winding and pumping engines from mines, ventilation engines (Waddell Fan etc.), blast furnace blowing engines and hot and cold rolling engines from tinplate works. Altogether there are 31 engines from south Wales among those illustrated. The book has been produced to a good standard: the photographs are clear, the text comprehensible and the binding serviceable.



MELINCOURT WEEKEND



An industrial activity weekend will take place at Melincourt Iron Furnace on 12th - 15th April 1980.

The Site

Melincourt Iron Furnace is the only remaining charcoal iron furnace in West Glamorgan. It was established in 1703 by John Hanbury, a family whose ironfounding connections date back to the Company of Mines Battery and Works at Tintern in the Sixteenth Century. The works operated until 1808 and is believed to have operated on coke in its latter years. Thus it spans the period of the industrial revolution in iron-making in the eighteenth century.

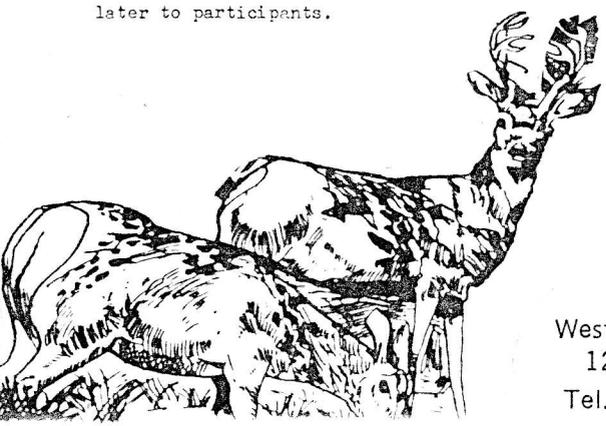
The remains of the furnace are quite considerable, and include a complete half section of the furnace and one complete side-wall of the barn-like furnace building. The outbuildings can be traced, and include a secondary puddling or air furnace for making wrought iron. Waterfall Terrace, a nearby row of houses was converted from the former offices of the furnace. The furnace was powered by a giant 38' diameter water wheel.

The Project

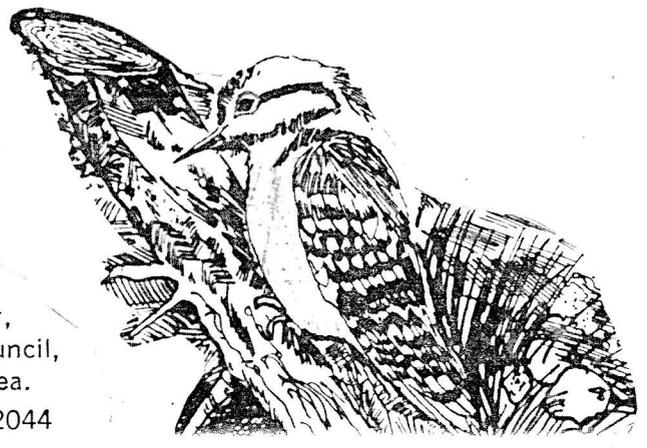
The furnace remains have never been surveyed and the intention of the project is to clear surface vegetation and survey above ground remains. Help has been promised from the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust. The scheme will provide an opportunity for people to participate in discovering an unrecorded site in a spectacular location - the site adjoins the gorge of Melincourt Brook which plunges 80' over a waterfall close to the furnace.

Participants should meet at 10.30 a.m. at Melincourt Car Park, about 1/4 mile from the site. Late arrivals can approach the site by walking up Waterfall Road. The furnace is on the right about 200 yards beyond Waterfall Terrace.

Tools will be provided, but you should bring strong clothes and footwear and a packed lunch. Completed copies of the plans will be distributed later to participants.



G.A.D. King,
County Planning Officer,
West Glamorgan County Council,
12, Orchard Street, Swansea.
Tel. Swansea (STD 0792) 42044



PARK GWLEDIG Afan Argoed COUNTRY PARK

park gwledig margam country park

For further details
please contact
Martin Cahn,

Tel. Swansea 42044, Ext. 286.