

ISSUE 29 2004Why Stockton-on-Tees did not become a Newcastle, nor Lemington-on-Tyne a Middlesbrough.

pages 3-16

Stafford M Linsley

The paper considers the differing histories of the Tyne and the Tees. It highlights the importance of readily available raw materials: coal in Tyneside and ironstone, discovered somewhat late, near the Tees. It also shows the importance of overland mass transport systems for handling heavy and high bulk commodities; in particular it emphasises the part played by the railways in the growth of the iron industry along the banks of the Tees from the mid-nineteenth century.

*Illustration - none*The Middleton Ironworks: Survey of the blowing engine house. pp 17-30

J S Wheeler

The Middleton Ironworks (or Dinsdale Ironworks) was located at Middleton St. George, near Darlington. The works was largely demolished in 1947, but the engine house, actually the second of two engine houses on the site, survived until 2004. This building contained the last fragment of a Victorian blowing engine house in the Tees Valley. The paper contains measured drawings, photographs and description of the surviving structure. It also contains the results of the author's investigations into the history of the building and of the blowing engines used by this works.

Illustration - Fig 4 North elevation, April 2004, after demolition of modern buildings.

ISSUE 30 2005Sir George Colebrooke's attempted alum monopoly and the Great Ayton Alum Works. pp 3-14

Ian Pearce

The article outlines the chief features of the British alum market in the 1770s and in particular the business environment in North East Yorkshire. Two earlier attempts to control the supply are described.

Colebrooke's attempts in 1771-1773 are described in detail using several documentary sources, one of which was written by Colebrooke himself. Some events in Colebrooke's subsequent life are noted briefly. A short section discusses what can be learnt concerning the Cockshaw alum works at Great Ayton from the surviving correspondence of John Ridley who managed the works in 1772-1773.

Illustration - none.

Ayton banks Alum Works pp 15-27

Robert H de Wardt & David W Taylor:

This works, also known as Cockshaw works, at Great Ayton in North Yorkshire, opened in 1766; from 1772 it was in the hands of Sir George Colebrooke and other London speculators. It seems to have closed in 1775. The geological setting and the contemporary alum process are described. The site, with a plan prepared by English Heritage, is described and discussed. The site of the boil house has not been established and several possible locations are considered. The authors suggest that the remains of activity are distinctive because of the short period of working and the apparent abandonment of some partly processed material in a roasting clamp.

Illustration - Fig. 4 Block diagram of Ayton Banks alum works.

Boulby alum works' tunnel revisited pp29-45

Charles H Morris & Simon Whitlock

The Boulby alum works were sited at the top of a high, steep, sea cliff 2km west of Staithes in North Yorkshire. To provide access between the works and the foreshore with its coastal shipping, a combination of vertical shaft and horizontal tunnel was excavated through the cliff. This report records structures and artefacts observed in 2004-5 at the foot of the cliff in connection with the tunnel, and then goes on to suggest a sequence of construction phases based on field observation supplemented by documentary evidence. The Boulby alum works opened in 1672 and finally closed in 1871; some significant dates in relation to the works' activity are given. In the 1850s the shaft-tunnel system was proposed as a means of moving ironstone from workings near the cliff top to the beach for shipment.

Illustration - Photo 2 Tunnel entrance and associated structures on shale platform at base of cliffs.

A jet mine in Chapel Wood, Ingleby Arncliffe. pp 47-50

Peter F Ryder & Ernie Shield

The article describes a surviving set of jet workings under the Cleveland escarpment and provides a map of them. It is believed that this is the first accurate modern survey of such a jet mine to have been undertaken.

Illustration - none.

A 1900 steam-driven overhead travelling crane and a circa 1900 12 feet diameter faceplate lathe.

pp 51-70

D Whitfield

These items were used at Brown's Foundry (Portrack Ironworks), Stockton-on-Tees, which closed down in 1978. They are now in storage at Preston Park Museum. The paper provides photographs and brief descriptions. The crane appears to be a standard product, made by Booth of Leeds. It is steam-powered, with its own boiler travelling overhead with the winding machinery. The lathe appears to be specially made by its users for their heavy engineering products.

Illustration - Plate 1, if practical. Otherwise photo 1 (Crane boiler & end of crab) or photo 8 (lathe)

ISSUE 31 2006Seaton Carew Ironworks: John Henry Proud's reminiscences in the early 20th Century with commentaries and notes.

pp 3 – 47

John Henderson Proud & J K Almond

John Henry Proud retired in 1958 as assistant blast furnace manager at the Hartlepool works of South Durham Steel & Iron Co Ltd. In 1962 he submitted his 'Observations and reminiscences...' to the company, following his long experience of the Seaton Carew Ironworks Site. The major proportion of his account concerns the blast-furnace iron making plant which operated until 1925, with shorter sections on briquetting, pan sintering, and making coke in closed ovens which were charged from one end. Among other topics and activities noted are the production of 'refined malleable iron' for the foundry industry, the screening of ore for sale to annealers, and slag granulation.

Comments on some of the statements have been added by the present authors, together with two supplementary sections and selected illustrations. The added introduction outlines the history of the Seaton Carew Iron Company up to its absorption in 1928 into the South Durham Company, notes the close links between the Seaton Company and the Carlton Iron Company, and offers biographical details of the company's leading personalities, Walter Morrison and William Thomlinson, as well as of John Henry Proud. A postscript sketches the later history of the iron-making site.

Walkers Detaching Hook.

pp 49 – 56

Tony & Cath Lynn

The following is as much a detective story as it is an investigation into the use of a piece of mining equipment. The story of the discovery and identification of a model of Walker's Detaching Hook is followed by an outline of William Walker's working life together with a short technical description of the hook which was intended to prevent accidents caused by overwinding.