

# North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society



**NEDIAS Newsletter No. 78 – May 2020**

**Price: £2.00 (Free to Members)**



## **Coronavirus, Dr James Goodfellow and the Oldfield Pottery** *Cliff Lea*

**W**e have heard much news over the last few months about the coronavirus Covid-19 - and equally so much disinformation and “fake news”. In the early days when the new illness surfaced, there were many on-line references to quack remedies.

Brings to mind that interesting remedy of Dr James Goodfellow of the Oldfield Pottery. The Oldfield Pottery was originally situated on the Chatsworth Road, Chesterfield, a site now occupied by Morrison’s. It had been founded and run by successive generations of the Oldfield family since 1810, and was acquired by James Pearson in 1884. There had been a split sparking a bitter dispute within the Pearson family, and a subsequent Chancery court case in 1883. As a result, James Pearson then set up in competition with Theophilus Pearson carrying on the Oldfield Business as James Pearson & Co. In the 1930s Robinsons bought the site and many members will recall their subsidiary J J Blow who occupied the site from the 1940s until the 1980s when the site was closed down and demolished, first Safeway and then Morrison’s rising in its place.

The Chesterfield Museum web site (see <https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/explore-chesterfield/museum/our-collection/highlights-of-the-collection/xodo-iodine-lockets.aspx>) tells us that Dr Goodfellow had been appointed as Works Manager of the Oldfield Pottery by James Pearson’s widow in the early 1900s and he became Medical Officer for health for Walton and Brampton. He later carried out much research work into goitre, a disorder of the thyroid gland. Known locally as Derbyshire neck, it was prevalent in this area because of a deficiency of iodine in the soil at a time when most food was produced locally. This led to local chemists selling iodised salt to add iodine to the diet.

The element iodine is a very dark purple coloured crystalline solid which gives off fascinating violet coloured vapours at normal room temperatures. Dr Goodfellow was convinced of the possible benefits of iodine as an aerial disinfectant to combat infections such as influenza. Through his connections with the Oldfield Pottery in Brampton, he was able to launch the Xodo locket in 1932 into which had been



Iodine diffusers and emitters: The element iodine is a blue-black toxic solid which is a noted skin and respiratory irritant. It is however also well known as an emitter of violet-purple vapour, a property used widely by early quacks who promised a variety of curative qualities for the vapours.



**In this issue:** ■ Coronavirus, Dr James Goodfellow and the Oldfield Pottery ■ What’s On? ■ NEDIAS Visits ■ When Marcophily meets Industry (and Countryside) ■ Heage Windmill ■ George Stephenson’s Last Home at Risk ■ Nottingham’s Highway to the Sea ■ I A News & Notes ■ Chairman’s Chat ■ And Finally .... *the enormous flat roof at Temple Mill* ■

<https://www.facebook.com/nediaschesterfield/?fref=ts>

placed crystals of iodine.

The locket was glazed, but through perforations it allowing a small dose of the violet iodine vapour to be released slowly through porous openings. For a few years in the 1930s these, along with mushroom-shaped iodine diffusers, enjoyed popularity. The lockets were designed to be worn under the clothes, and were also hung in public buildings such as banks and cinemas, on buses and even from trees.

You can read more of the Oldfield Pottery (and of much else about Chesterfield industry too) in the really great – *and much recommended* – local history web site <http://www.achesterfieldblogger.co.uk/oldfield-pottery>



Dr Goodfellow marks with the claim  
“The Concentrated Essence of Sea Breezes”

Perhaps what’s less known about Dr Goodfellow are his other research projects and his contributions to the *British Medical Journal*. He would certainly have been deeply concerned about miners’ lung disease. When there had been an article about silicosis in the *BMJ* in December 1936, Goodfellow followed up with a letter about the possible benefits of inhalation of iodine – the active component of his curative lockets. At the time researchers into silicosis thought that breathing stone dust damaged the bronchi by abrasion during inhalation, allowing sites for secondary microbial infection and pneumonia. Goodfellow postulated that the action of iodine could at least reduce this further infection and he wrote at least one letter to the *BMJ* on the subject.

He was prolific in his research, described his early experiments with iodine to overcome sterility of heifers (the problem was that they would be no longer bearing calves) at a local milk farm of the Clay Cross Company. He claimed that they were totally cured by his stoneware containers of iodine. He moved on to carry out similar experiments to cure horses, and he showed quite decisively the curative qualities on a flock of infected hens in “*my experimental poultry pens*”. He was clearly deeply involved with practical tests on animals, and was moving on to carry out trials to attempt a cure for tuberculosis in calves

It was in his communication published in the *British Medical Journal* of 6 February 1937 that he made the link to silicosis, writing:

*“If that (damage to bronchi caused by abrasion on inhaling stone dust) is correct, it is my view that if we could prevent the silica wound from becoming infected life would at least be prolonged. Hence my suggestion that breathing iodine vapour in an attenuated form should be tried.*

*“If these and other experiments come up to expectations it is obvious that ... in an Iodized atmosphere we have a new weapon with which to fight germ invasion. It was the success that has already been attained by the use of this method that led me to suggest that it might be tried in silicosis.”*

I have so far found no reference to the results of any tests carried out to assess whether Iodine did have any benefits for silicosis or “miners’ lung”, but I do wonder ... if Dr Goodfellow were alive today might he have suggested that iodine lockets could be used for controlling the coronavirus outbreak?

**Reference:** *British Medical Journal*, 6 February 1937, page 298



ABOVE:  
Staff filling iodine lockets at Oldfield Pottery. Ref. *Derbyshire Times* 18 Feb 1933.



RIGHT:  
The Oldfield Pottery when later occupied by J J Blow



# WHAT'S ON?

## NEDIAS Lecture Programme

Meetings are held at: St Thomas' Centre, Chatsworth Road, Brampton (opposite Vauxhall/Bristol St Motors) S40 3AW. There's plenty of parking in their own car park, including disabled spaces, as well as on-road parking in front of the Church. All meetings commence at 7:30pm.

Monday, 14 September 2020	Rachel Walker - "The Don Valley Catchment Trust project and NEDIAS involvement"
Monday, 11 October 2020	Ted Hancock: "The Winter of 1947 on the Railways". Brrrr!

## NEDIAS VISITS

### Portland Works, Monday 18 May 2020, 2:00pm on site.

We have managed to re-arrange our visit, talk and guided tour of the Portland Works for Monday 18 May 2020. Meet on site for start time 2:00pm. Address is Portland Works, Randall Street, Sheffield S2 4SJ, and it's at the junction of Hill Street and Randall Street. On-street parking on Hill Street (but watch out for the "residents only" bays).



## When Marcophily meets Industry (and Countryside)

*by Philip Cousins*

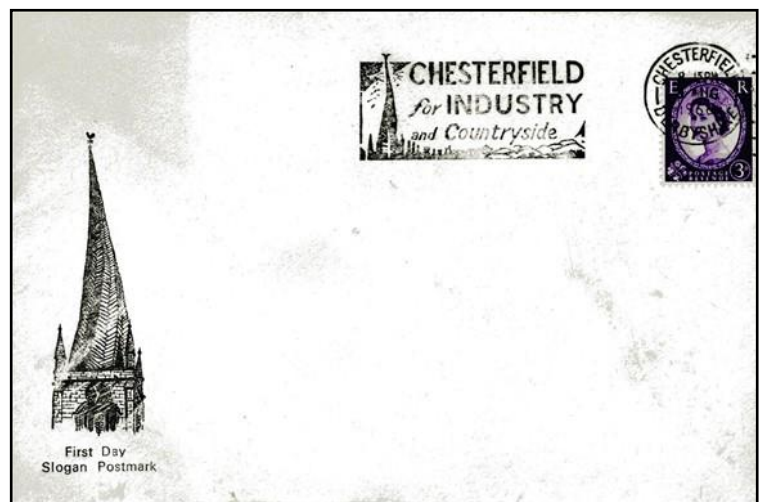
Marcophily (sometimes called Marcophilately) is the study of postmarks. I didn't actually know that until I looked it up for this short article on a postmark I remember from my youth. This was the Chesterfield postmark used from the late 1960s.

A recent scan of and subsequent purchase from EBay renewed my acquaintance with this mark, which had only been a distant memory. There must, however, have been thousands of letters delivered bearing it, in the days when Chesterfield had its own postal sorting office, which cancelled stamps.

The envelope, complete with its postmark is illustrated in this view. The date stamp reads 'Chesterfield, Derbyshire 8.15 pm, 3 August 1966'. The mark reads simply 'Chesterfield for Industry and Countryside', with a representation of the 'crooked spire', followed by some (unclear) representations of industry, flowing through to hills. In the design the word 'industry' is the more prominent, no-doubt reflecting the economic circumstances of the time.

An insert in the envelope informs the collector that this is the '*Chesterfield Corporation Publicity Slogan Postmark*' the slogan and design was by JR Walker of 18 Orchard View Road, Ashgate. The text under the envelope's left-hand crooked spire line drawing informs us that this is a '*First Day Slogan Postmark*'.

This new postmark appears to have been part of a move away from the old '*Centre of Industrial England*' slogan. The *Derbyshire Times* of 5 August 1966 tells us that the old road-signs, with this slogan, were being replaced with ones of a simpler design. The new signs simply had Chesterfield on them with a line drawing of the crooked spire peeping through trees.



The ever-helpful *Derbyshire Times* tells us, on 22 July 1966, that the new pictorial postmark would, indeed, come into use on 3 August. The design had been arrived at as a result of a public competition organised by the Borough Council earlier in 1966. The Chesterfield Philatelic Society had arranged for the preparation and issue of a souvenir cover to mark the event. This could be obtained ‘fully serviced’ at a cost of 1 shilling.

I do not know when use of the mark ceased, but thousands of people must have received the message that ‘*Chesterfield was for Industry and Countryside*’, at the top of their letters over a fair number of years.

Today the Chesterfield and district of the 1960s is a very different place. The large industrial concerns have largely disappeared. Some have been replaced by housing, others by smaller scale industries. Others, particularly collieries, have actually been transformed into countryside.

## Heage Windmill

*by Alan Gifford*

*The NEDIAS March meeting was to have been a talk about the history of the Grade II\* listed Heage windmill. We have rolled this talk over to 2021, but the Heage Windmill Trust has sent the following short article for our Newsletter.*

**H**eage Windmill is run by a charitable Trust who delegates operations on a day to day basis to a great team of volunteers. The mill opens to the public every Saturday and Sunday from 11:00am until 4:00pm (Easter – end of October, including bank holidays). We provide guided tours and the guides explain the mill’s history and how she works.

The Grade 2\* listed tower mill stands in a beautiful location, overlooking Nether Heage, and is unusual in that it has six sails. It was built in 1797 and worked, with various changes, until 1919 when it was abandoned. It was partially restored by Derbyshire CC in about 1970 but was restored to full working order by Heage Windmill Society in 2002. She has since become a major Tourist attraction in the area and has been awarded Trip Advisor ‘Hall of Fame’ Certificate of Excellence over a five year period. The Historic England listing description advises:



*“Tower windmill. Early C19, restored 1971-3. Coursed squared sandstone with ashlar dressings. Circular in plan, tapering to top. 3 storeys. Plain flush doorcases to east and west with plank doors and 2-light glazing bar casements in flush surrounds to north and south. Similar windows over the 2 doors and to south. Similar window above again to south. Ogee domed metal cap with 6 sails and tail gearing opposite, containing dome to curb, wind shaft with brakewheel and wall over to main shaft which drives 2 sets of grinding stones. Floors and hoists also intact. Source: F Nixon, ‘Industrial Archaeology of Derbyshire’.”*

Guided tours are something special because they bring the ‘Old Lady’, as we call her, to life as the guides explain some of the myriad of details developed over the years which make this windmill such a clever machine – because that is what she is really is! The last tour starts at 3:30pm and each tour last about 45 minutes. On site are also various features that offer “hands on” experience to even quite young visitors. Our visitor centre normally has bags of our stone ground flour on sale, milled on the machinery you have seen on your tour! Light refreshments and souvenirs are also available.

The role volunteers can play in keeping this Grade 2\* listed building in operation was recently demonstrated when they learnt that two sails need to be replaced due to rot and that new ones would be on a two-year delivery programme. ‘*We surely can make them ourselves quicker*’ they said. And they did! Six months after taking delivery of the timber, and some 750 man/women hours, the new sails were fitted to the mill. Great satisfaction, pride and team work was enjoyed by all involved.



Alan Eccleston, chairman of Heage Windmill Society, said we are so proud, and grateful for the commitment shown by our maintenance volunteers. He invited anyone else who was seeking a new interest to come and join the group.

If you are interested do please contact Lynn Allen on 01773 715 177 ([lynnallen13@hotmail.com](mailto:lynnallen13@hotmail.com)) or visit our web site [www.heagewindmill.com](http://www.heagewindmill.com) for more details on visiting (or perhaps even volunteering! ) the windmill.



ABOVE: Guiding at the Mill  
LEFT: The Mill in February



## George Stephenson's Last Home at Risk *by Philip Riden*

**T**apton House, the Georgian mansion on the outskirts of Chesterfield in which George Stephenson spent his final years, is at risk following the closure of a college campus there. The house was built by Isaac Wilkinson (1749–1831), a Chesterfield lead merchant and banker, in about 1790 and enlarged in 1811. He continued to extend the surrounding estate until his death. Wilkinson and his wife had no children but in 1817 became the guardians of a distant relative, George Yeldham Ricketts (1810–88). When Isaac died in 1831 he left Tapton to George when he reached the age of 24, on condition that he take the name Wilkinson.

In 1837, soon after coming into his inheritance, George Wilkinson offered Tapton House and up to 100 acres of parkland to let. The following year the house and grounds were leased for ten years to George Stephenson (1781–1848), who was then living near Ashby de la Zouch in Leicestershire. When he moved to Chesterfield Stephenson was engaged in building the North Midland Railway, which skirted the western edge of the Tapton estate, and had recently established a coal and iron company at Clay Cross, on the North Midland line a few miles south of the town.

Stephenson died at Tapton in 1848 and was buried at Holy Trinity church in Chesterfield. In 1850 Mary Pocock and Grace Walker, formerly of Frome in Somerset, opened a girls' boarding



ABOVE: Tapton House School in the 1930s  
*by F Walker, Photographer, Brimington*





Lead plaque designed and made by Mr Macara  
*F Walker, Brimington*

school at Tapton and the following year Robert Stephenson (1803–59) let the mansion and grounds to them. This was done without Wilkinson's consent and a dispute ensued. In 1865 Miss Pocock and Miss Walker closed the school and surrendered their lease.

Tapton House stood empty for a few years until in 1872 the estate was purchased by Charles Markham (1823–88), the chairman of the Staveley Coal & Iron Company. The house remained the family's home until 1925, when Markham's eldest son, Charles Paxton Markham (1866–1926), offered the mansion and about 200 acres of land to Chesterfield Corporation for 'a Museum or Institute or in other ways for the benefit of the inhabitants of Chesterfield'.

The corporation initially planned to create a museum at Tapton but in 1931 adapted and extended the buildings for use as a senior school. The grounds were laid out as a public park and golf course. Tapton House, which became a small grammar school under the 1944 Education Act, closed in 1991 and three

years later the premises were reopened as a satellite campus of Chesterfield College. The college left a few years ago and since then the property has remained empty. Chesterfield Borough Council have recently sought listed building consent to board up the mansion to keep it secure.

Tapton House is a grade II\* listed building, protected for both its historical significance and its architectural quality. It stands in a prominent position, overlooking the Rother valley north of Chesterfield. The mansion is of three storeys, built in brick with a hipped slate roof. There is some fine moulded stonework around the doors and windows.

Inside, the main rooms are decorated in a late eighteenth-century style, which dates partly from when the house was built and partly from the Markhams' time. The grounds are planted with some fine trees and shrubs and walks laid out through them. There are remains of an early medieval moated homestead in the front garden. A park was created on all sides of the house, which has particularly fine views to the west.

All these features were retained after Tapton became a school. In 1997 an innovation centre was erected on the site of the kitchen gardens and a year earlier a labyrinth designed by Jim Buchanan and reputed to be the largest of its type in the world, measuring 50 yards in diameter with earth banks 4 ft. high, was laid out in the park immediately to the north-west of the house.

Chesterfield Borough Council is urgently seeking a new use for this historically important and very attractive property. Because of later building on the site, it is difficult to envisage a return to residential use, but Tapton House could become a prestigious headquarters for a medium-sized service-sector company or a large professional practice. It could also house an independent secondary school, which Chesterfield currently lacks. Given its association with George Stephenson, Tapton House is an important part of Britain's railway heritage and must not be allowed to fall into decay, much less be threatened with demolition.

TEXT: Philip Riden, Department of History, University of Nottingham – Previously published in *Back Track* magazine, February 2020.

PHOTOGRAPHS: All by *F Walker, Photographer, Brimington* – Courtesy of Brimington & Tapton Local History Group



# NOTTINGHAM'S HIGHWAY TO THE SEA – PART 1

*Drawing on the account of the early work of the Trent  
Navigation Committee by W. A. Appleton*

**by Derek Grindell**

Few are the accounts of controversial local history topics that can claim provenance from the pen of William Shakespeare but his awareness of one issue was used to good effect in the First part of King Henry IV in a Foreword by A. R. Atkey, Chairman of the Trent Navigation Committee ... ..

Hotspur: *I'll have the current in this place damm'd up;  
And here the smug and silver Trent shall run in a  
new channel, fair and evenly... .. I'll have it so; a little charge will do it.*

Glendower: *I will not have it altered.*

Hotspur: *Will not you?*

Glendower: *No, nor shall you.*

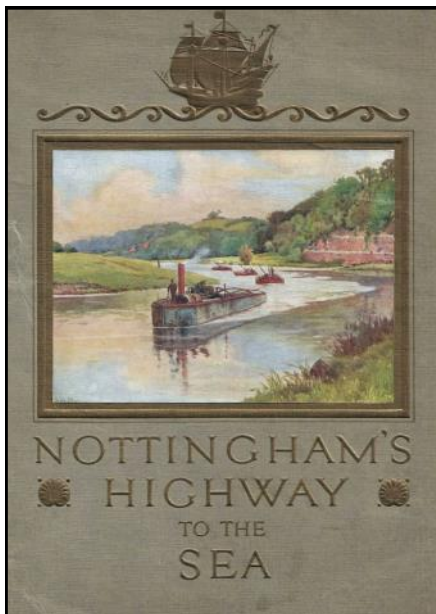
Hotspur: *Who shall say me nay?*

Glendower: *Why, that will I.*

Hotspur: *Let me not understand you, then: Speak it in Welsh.*

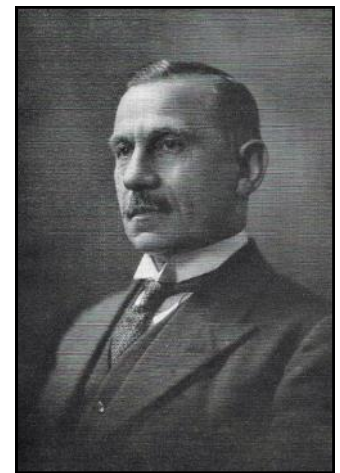
*First part of King Henry IV: Act 3, Scene 1*

Councillor A. R. Atkey, wryly observed that the quotation from a work by Shakespeare could be termed the Minutes of the First Trent Navigation Committee Meeting, from which it will be observed with that even in the earliest, as in the latest, times there was considerable opposition to be faced.



'Nottingham's Highway to the sea. A Souvenir of the Visit to Nottingham of the Rt. Hon. Neville Chamberlain, P.C., M.P.,... upon the completion of the New Locks and Weirs for the improvement of the Navigation of the River Trent from Nottingham to the Sea.'

In the final paragraph of his encomium Councillor A. R. Atkey made special mention of Alderman Bowles, the City's first Labour Mayor, who worked so hard to secure work for the City's unemployed and the 500 gallant Ex-Service men, who worked so splendidly to make "the silver Trent run in a new channel, air and evenly." It should be noted that the full committee, in addition to a Vice-Chairman, comprised four Aldermen and six Councillors. The task of relating the full story of *Nottingham's Highway to the Sea* was ably undertaken by W. A. Appleton, C.B.E. and an abbreviated version is related below.



Councillor A R Atkey

Appleton aptly described the Trent as a gift of Nature but in common with other endowments of Nature it required the skill, the capital and the labour of man to harness its possibilities and to ensure its greatest usefulness. The river was always beautiful and always free to the adventurous boatmen who sought to navigate its varying depths and rapid courses. But navigation was never easy, nor was it possible at all seasons, nor in what today would be called craft of very moderate carrying capacity.

Next to the river Thames and the river Severn, the respective watersheds



of which are about 5,356 and 4,360 sq. miles, the river Trent is the longest and the largest river in the country. It has a drainage area in excess of 4050 sq. miles, of which 2,900 sq. miles are above Nottingham, and its total length is about 150 miles. The river rises on the hill borders of Staffordshire and Cheshire, near Mow Cop and it then flows into the heart of the Midland Counties at its most southerly point, a few miles to the north-east of Nottingham from which it travels to Newark and then follows a northerly path, meeting the river Humber at Trent Falls.

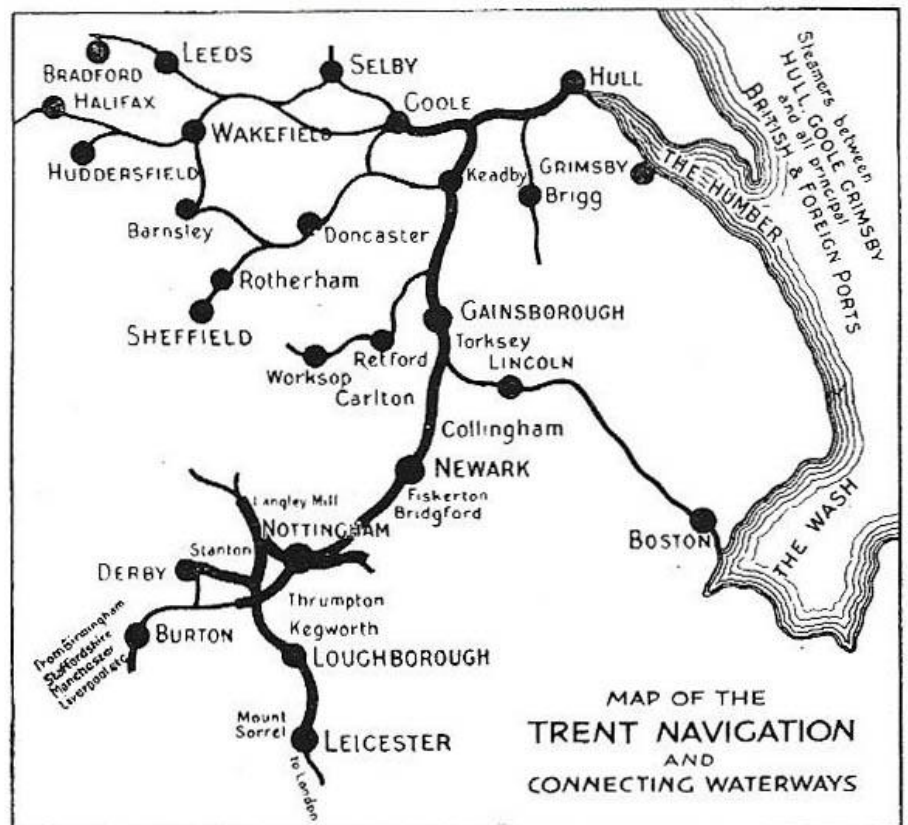
The potential for the river to carry merchandise had long been under consideration. As early as 1699 Parliament had recognised the route's potential as a commercial highway and took measures to safeguard the "Fairway" from encroachment by riparian owners or any other threat by long established local authorities. The river's potential for transporting merchandise had been considered on numerous occasions over many years. It is a matter of public record that Nottingham Corporation defended its rights on the river and was very critical in its appraisal of any scheme that had the potential to place constraints on the common use of the waterway or increase the inconvenience and loss arising from serious floods. On past occasions extensive areas over which the Corporation exercised lordship had been inundated and yet it was the Local Authority's responsibility to develop trading opportunities.

The desire to improve facilities for the transport of freight by building canals and canalising rivers found expression in 1760, when the construction of the network of British canals was begun and continued until 1820. The first canal to be built was the Bridgewater, designed and built by James Brindley (1716 - 72). Born at Thornsett, near Chapel-en-le-Frith, Brindley was apprenticed to a Millwright, became an Engineer and in 1752 devised a water engine for draining a coal mine. A Silk Mill on a new plan and several other works caught the attention of the Duke of Bridgewater (1759) who employed him to create a canal between Worsley, where the Dukes collieries were located, and Manchester. One result of the Duke's investment was a 50% fall in the cost of coal in Manchester.

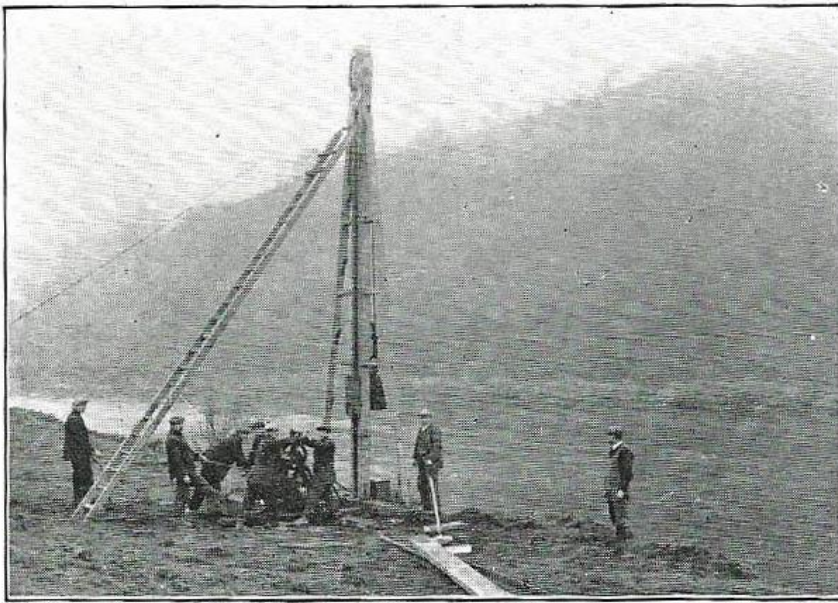
The success of the Bridgewater scheme prompted others to follow in the footsteps of the Duke. One such group were the gentlemen who, in 1783, formed the original Trent Navigation Company which, with the backing of Parliament, was entrusted with powers to construct hauling paths and carry out other improvements. In order to cover the expenditure involved the company was authorised to charge modest tolls.

The work completed under the original authority only served to make the case for further improvements and in 1794 the powers of the Company were extended and permission granted for Cuts to be made and other aids to navigation to be commissioned. Obstacles, other than natural ones, lay ahead of the old Company. The railways opened up competitive routes with the promise of reduced journey times, growth of passenger and goods traffic and overall increased efficiency. Despite the attempts of some of those connected with water-borne traffic to consider enlargements and improvements their approach was thwarted by the railways, sometimes under compulsion, buying up canals or sections thereof. This policy was misguided since it encouraged the perpetuation of irregularities in the size and draught of river craft and proved to be an ill-conceived policy since it gave the railways power to prevent through carriage arrangements and tolls. In effect it did more to hasten the downfall of waterways than to encourage the development of water-borne traffic.

A century was to pass from the formation of the original Trent Navigation Company in 1783 before







COMMENCING A JETTY FOR RECEPTION OF MATERIALS

the Government acted to prevent the railways from taking complete control over the canal companies and, by so doing, discourage their development of transport by water. The Navigation Act of 1858, which proclaimed and interpreted the Company's authority and duties relating to raising capital, the maintenance of navigation and the conservation of hauling paths and flood banks combined to strengthen the Company's interests. Around 1880 the Company encouraged by the enthusiasm, advice and financial support of enterprising business men initiated a carrying trade and opened small depots at Nottingham and Newark. In so doing they kept alive the commercial interest in an enterprise that had briefly fallen out of

fashion. Section 38 of the 1888 Railway and Canal Traffic Act empowered the Railway Commissioners to order tolls, rates or charges on a canal to be reduced, if it was proved to their satisfaction that the charges were such as are calculated to divert traffic from a canal to a railway. It was generally acknowledged that the railway companies by imposing maximum tolls on the canals they controlled, and by refusing to negotiate terms for through tolls on long distance traffic, hindered the development of waterways generally and diverted business to their own lines. 1894 saw further legislation enshrined in law when another Railway and Canal Traffic Act became operative. Section 1 made provision for when a complaint is made that a rate or charge of a railway company is unreasonable, it shall lie with the railway company to prove that the increase is reasonable. Where railways reduce their rates in competition with waterways this provision made it more difficult for them to raise rates again in the event of water competition being eliminated. These legislative enactments, by offering some safeguards against interested competition and obstruction, were an incentive to those interested in the transport potential of the river. There were men, who taking time from other possibly remunerative pursuits, gratuitously gave to the Trent – and via the river to the community their thought, their effort and, in some cases, their money.

The history of the river up to 1926 can be viewed as comprising four distinguishable phases. The first and earliest can be termed the natural period when little of artificial improvement was projected; another when the Trent Navigation Companies were concerned with developing facilities for transport; a third when the Corporation sensing the threat of losing control to the prejudice of the community sought to restrain the issue of powers to the Companies, even opposing their applications to Parliament; and the later phase, when both parties, realising the nature of the hygienic, economic, industrial and political problems then maturing and the futility of conflict, joined forces in an effort to achieve success.

The Corporation had always noted the attempts of the later Trent Navigation Companies to extend their control over the river. There was particular concern over the Memorandum of Association of the Trent Navigation Company as registered on the 12th November 1883. A Committee of the City Council, the "Trent Navigation and Protection Committee," reported on the 4th February 1884 that they had seen this Memorandum together with a copy of the Company's Bill. It appeared to the members of this Committee that it would be prudent to seek clarification as to the intentions of the Company, and if possible to come to such an understanding as would obviate the need for Parliamentary opposition to the Bill. The Company responded to the Corporation by giving short shrift to this suggestion and confirmed that they did not feel disposed to discuss the matter. The Committee led by the Mayor, John Manning, then informed the company that consideration was being given, in the public interest, to the Corporation acquiring the property and taking over the rights, duties and liabilities of the Trent Navigation Co. The Company's response was unequivocally unfavourable as may be construed by the further communication of Sir, formerly Mr., Samuel George Johnson, who on 28th December 1883, "regrets that the Company's reply forecloses all negotiations and that this committee now feels it to be their duty to take all necessary steps for the protection of the rights of the public."

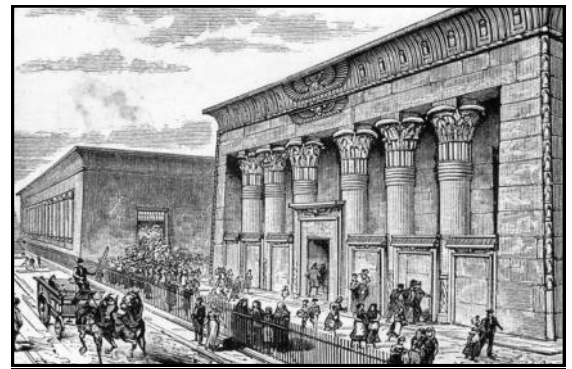
On the 12th February 1884, Mr. John Froggatt, Deputy Chairman of the River Trent Navigation Protection Committee submitted to the then Town Council for adoption or otherwise the Committee's case against the Company. In its presentation the Committee recites rights and privileges over, and in respect of, the river which had been conferred by ancient charters or which were the Corporation's by ownership of lands on either of the river's banks. The Committee alleged that the inhabitants of the Town of Nottingham would be injuriously affected by the Bill, and called attention to the powers the Corporation already possessed for preventing pollution of the river and mentions the large sums the Town Council had already spent for this purpose. The Committee also emphasised the tendency for the lower part of the Borough to be flooded due to overflows from the River Trent resulting in the loss of production, unemployment, damage to property, extensive flooding and the creation of health hazards.

*To be continued*

## IA News and Notes

### Temple Mill, Leeds, and the prospect of a "British Library of the North"

John Marshall's "Temple Mill" was originally constructed for spinning and weaving flax. It's a really impressive Grade I listed single story building with an incredible classical facade. The facade's 18 pillars with overhanging cornice are in an Egyptian style based on the Temple of Horus at Edfu, and the factory chimney (now long gone) had been designed to resemble Cleopatra's Needle. The workshop was boasted when first constructed to be "the biggest single room in the world". Quite amazingly, to maintain humidity on the shop floor, to aid best conditions for flax spinning, the roof had been grassed over, and sheep were raised up by an early hydraulic lift to graze there.



A busy Victorian view of Temple Mill, ref Yorkshire Post

The site has been through many changes of use since flax spinning days ended in the 1880s. It became the HQ of the Kays Catalogue home shopping business, as an Arts Centre, and was recently considered as a home for Burberry. It's been on the Historic England "Heritage at Risk Register" for many years but has finally been selected to be the site for the spread of the British Library out of London, and was selected only a month ago to be the new "British Library of the North".

### Restoration at Stockport Hatworks

Many NEDIAS members will have been to see the Stockport Hatworks which houses much equipment and information on that areas felt hat-making history. Their restoration is renovating some 30 hatting machines. The Museum is currently closed, and set to reopen again during 2021.

Producing felt hats was a back-breaking occupation. Whereas Luton became famous for its straw hats and "boaters", hat making in the larger Stockport area used wool felt, with felt hats becoming extremely popular



particularly for men until the 1970s. Until centralised in large factories around the end of the 1800s in and around Stockport, the business started from garrets in the town. It was in the finishing of felt hats since the 1700s that toxic mercury had been used, and hence the description of "mad hatters".

This Museum is always worth a visit, so check their web site (<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/hat-works>) for details of re-opening date next year.

Planking Kettle where 6 or 8 men work over a steaming cauldron of boiling water, acidified with Sulphuric Acid, to shape and soften the hoods. The cauldron is heated by coal beneath  
(Cliff Lea)



## County Heritage Maps on Line

Historic Derbyshire maps are now available to view on line. Featuring selected maps from the collections at the record office, the portal enables free access to digital copies of the maps and an “overlay” feature so you can see the present and the past at the same time. Currently those along the line of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site are available through the new web portal, but the Record Office advise that although there only a handful of maps are available at the moment (out of the thousands in the collections), they hope that they will be able to add many more to eventually cover the whole county. See more details at [derbyshire.gov.uk/heritage\\_maps](http://derbyshire.gov.uk/heritage_maps)

## Chairman's Chat

*Cliff Lea*

**T**his wretched virus is causing us all so many problems and discomfort and with it comes special vocabulary. Some members have been “furloughed”, some are “isolating” or even “shielding”. Some of our members, either themselves or their friends and relatives, are health workers, care workers or other key workers, and these are the ones whom we wholeheartedly applaud on Thursday evenings. Some have their incomes affected and have particular worries over financial issues. Those isolating will be worrying about potential development of symptoms, and some of those shielding will be seeing little beyond their four walls and have particular concerns about avoiding this virus totally in view of their extremely vulnerable health conditions

My thoughts go out to all.

If NEDIAS can't continue our meetings and other activities for the foreseeable future, we can at least lighten the mood a little by continuing to bring you interesting heritage news in our Facebook page and in this Newsletter.

Les Mather continues every few days to add an interesting feature on our Facebook. Find it at <https://www.facebook.com/nediaschesterfield/>. If you're looking for stimulating reading, in one post Les has revealed that the British Council for Archaeology has temporarily made almost ALL of their publications free to download. This is the time to grab a whole host of fascinating reports for which you would normally have to pay.

Check out <https://new.archaeologyuk.org/books-and-publications> for the full list. This is a massive number of publications available only for a limited time. It covers all their Research Reports, books and bulletins, Archaeology-for-All series, Practical Handbooks and so much more. I've downloaded a few items, and was interested to find that the book on Hearth Tax had a Foreword by the late David Hey of Dronfield and Sheffield University. So have a look - these publications are quite pricey if you have to buy them, and here they are free of charge for a limited time only! Thanks Les for alerting us to this and I look forward to your future regular posts.

Since we all have time for wider reading during the Lockdown here are a few other sites you might like to look at:

Association for Industrial Archaeology – Check out the News Bulletins at <https://industrial-archaeology.org/>

British Association for Local History – if you wonder how many local history societies there are JUST IN DERBYSHIRE, you might like to have a look at the full list at <https://www.balh.org.uk/societies-az?county=DERBY>. There are over 60 mentioned in Derbyshire, and links are given here to many of their websites - some of which have tremendous information.

Nottinghamshire Local History Association - and there are even more local history societies in Nottinghamshire. Indeed, they all contribute to a collective monthly Newsletter. See more and download the latest copy at <https://nlha.org.uk/>

So, enjoy this latest NEDIAS Newsletter. It is being e-mailed only, and I would ask you, if you have any friends who are members, please check that they have received a copy – and if not mail yours on.

I don't know whether we'll be able to re-start our meetings in the Autumn, but I'll send you regular mailings to keep you in the picture.

Best wishes to all.

## And finally ....

### .... the enormous flat roof at Temple Mill

Earlier in this Newsletter you can read of the secure future for Marshall's 1840's Temple Mill, Leeds. The enormous flat roof of this building was certainly unique. It was 396ft by 216ft, with light allowed through to the workshop floor via no less than 67 large conical skylights which protruded through the 8 inch thick earth covered flat roof. A small flock of sheep was introduced to crop the grass. You can just spot the sheep to the right of this Victorian etching showing sheep grazing and tourists viewing. No doubt with some incredulity.

Probably rather like my incredulity when I came across a restaurant in Canada which also had a flat earth roof – **but** this one had **goats** grazing, and there was quite a cheesy pong!



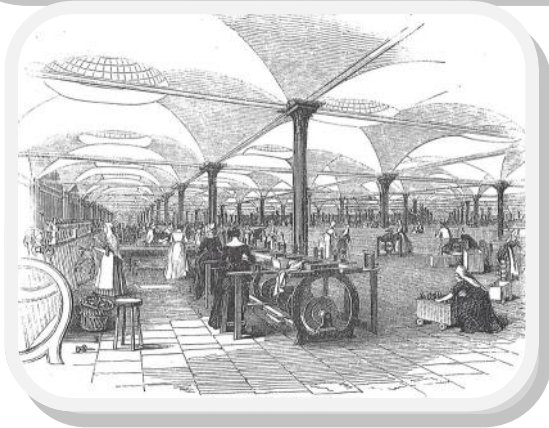
LEFT: The mill roof was indeed covered with grass. Naturally, this grew so they got sheep onto the roof to graze there. To get the sheep up there, they had to construct some sort of mechanical hoist/elevator as sheep cannot climb steps and certainly not ladders.

This layer on the roof served the purpose of retaining humidity in the flax mill in order to prevent the linen thread from becoming dried out and unmanageable.

(<https://templeworks.weebly.com/>)

BELOW RIGHT: Restaurant roof at Coombs on Vancouver Island with grazing goats to keep the grass cropped and tidy (Cliff Lea).

BELOW LEFT: Work in Marshall's Mill. Taken from *A Day at a Leeds Flax Mill*, in *The Penny Magazine*, December 1843 (Ref: William Boyne and the Voices of History – <https://secretlibraryleeds.net/2018/05/11/william-boyne-and-the-voices-of-history/>)



Contributions, no matter how short (maybe about a visit you have made), and preferably by email to [cliff@nedias.co.uk](mailto:cliff@nedias.co.uk), for inclusion in future editions of this newsletter are most welcome.

**COPY DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION: 4th July 2020**

### NEDIAS Committee:

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