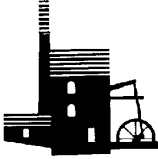


THE TREVITHICK SOCIETY



HRH The Princess Royal sees the replica during her visit to the CompAir UK Holman factory



CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The debut of the Camborne Road Locomotive on Trevithick Day 2001 was one of the most remarkable successes ever witnessed in Cornwall. When she left Holman's gates at eleven o'clock and steamed down Centenary Street, blasting steam with her crew waving their hats, your Chairman and every spectator suddenly felt as though they had stepped back 200 years. Her non-appearance in the afternoon's parade is to be regretted, even deplored, but the run up Tehidy Road and Fore Street on Sunday more than compensated for that absence. Amid the overwhelming enthusiasm which greeted the 'Puffing Devil', I was still very conscious of what has been accomplished by the dedicated team who brought the 2001 Project to fruition. It was therefore very fitting that they were presented to HRH the Princess Royal, when she visited CompAir on the 10th May, and she graced the driving platform of the locomotive. Your Chairman was also introduced, and accompanied the royal walkabout of the works, when she was also presented with a signed copy of *Cornish Engineering 1801-2001* - a bi-centenary history of Holman's written by your Chairman last winter. Altogether it was a splendid occasion for both CompAir and the Trevithick Society, though your Chairman was left pondering the fact that back in 1967, during the Queen Mother's visit to Holman's, he was just another boiler-suited spectator. This time as he processed with the royal party, he could definitely hear faint ghostly laughter echoing around what used to be 'PT'.

Your Chairman has been especially remiss in not welcoming our new President, Eric Edmonds, who was elected at the last AGM. Eric, who was a member of the old CEPS, has had a long and distinguished membership of the Society and the Council, and his election, by unanimous agreement, is perhaps a fitting tribute to a gentleman who has given such sterling service.

Clive Carter

EDITORIAL

So much happened over the Trevithick weekend when the replica Camborne Road Locomotive went on its first public run, it was decided that a commemorative booklet should be issued with this Newsletter.

Trevithick Day (28:04:2001) was special for one additional reason. It was the Golden Wedding Anniversary of the President, Eric Edmonds, who was evidently let out for good behaviour, as he was there to see the replica on the streets of Camborne. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Society, to congratulate Mr and Mrs Edmonds on reaching this milestone.

It should also be noted that Clive Carter deserted the Society on Trevithick Day. He had written the history of Holmans (Council wonders how he managed to keep that quiet), and so spent the day at the CompAir UK exhibition signing copies. Having read the book I can honestly say that it is a lovely account and well worth reading.

Increasingly I am receiving Newsletter items via email and as a result do not have a postal address for members to respond to. If anyone would like to reply to any of these requests and do not have access to email, please send the reply to me and I will forward it.

With the last Newsletter there was an article about the Penydarren model made in Australia. Subsequently, it was realised that the engine configuration was that of the Coalbrookdale Engine instead.

It is with deep regret that news has just been received of the death of Dicon Nance. He was a valued member who contributed greatly to the work of the Society over many years.

Copy date for next issue is July 12th, 2001

Colin French

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

On behalf of all our Members I would like to thank all those who have contributed in any way to the completion of the 1801 replica.

The Sub-committee appointed by Council in 1996—Ken Brown, Clive Carter, Colin French, Phil Hosken, Courtney Rowe and Charles Thurlow were soon joined by John Sawle and later by Kingsley Rickard. They formed a Project Team, in sections for planning the design and construction, administration and fund-raising.

They soon realised, from a model based on an early sketch, that the steering would not work. This and other design matters were thrashed out and agreed, and working drawings prepared, and then sent to the various suppliers. Funds were beginning to come in.

The final product may differ a lot from the original engine, but it is similar to Francis Trevithick's sketches. However, it certainly works!

The simple clutch, whereby each floating crank is coupled by a removable pin in one of four holes on the driving wheel, is a brilliant innovation. Bottom-dead-centre can quickly be corrected, and the engine can tick over when the vehicle is stationary.

Thirty-seven individuals and companies, twenty-four of them based in Cornwall, provided all or part of their services and/or supplies free of charge. At the top of this list is CompAir UK, who took over the Holman Camborne works in 1980. The Society is deeply indebted to them for their enormous contribution.

This year is also the bicentenary of the founding of Holman Brothers by Nicholas Holman, who was a friend from boyhood of Richard Trevithick.

CompAir UK offered their services to mark this occasion. Not only have they provided and machined many items, but also made available workshop space for over a year for the reception of items from other suppliers, and for assembly and testing of the engine. Arthur Young, David Bray and John Sawle did most of the assembly and had ready access to machine tools.

Although deprived by the Trevithick Day Committee at the last moment of a lap of honour around the town, the engine went up Camborne Hill on the following morning without any trouble, driven by John Sawle. That is what people wanted to see and it gave us some ideas as to what improvements should be considered.

Our grateful thanks to CompAir UK for their tremendous support and to the other suppliers for their contributions. Also to a number of individuals, especially Phil Hosken who guided the whole project from start to finish, John Sawle, Courtney Rowe and Kingsley Rickard, as well as Colin French for his contribution to the Project booklet.

As to funding, we are also grateful to all who contributed, including Mr Frank Trevithick Okuno, Kerrier District Council, Camborne Town Council, the West of England Steam Engine Society and the Tanner Trust.

Thank you one and all for your support.

Eric Edmonds.

Dear Editor

The Society is to be congratulated on its remarkable achievement in replicating Trevithick's Camborne road locomotive. Special thanks must go to the enthusiastic and dedicated team who raised the funds, co-ordinated the work and produced a successful outcome. The road loco's debut at the Camborne Trevithick day will surely receive world-wide acclaim, justly

deserved.

May I add my note of appreciation and congratulations.

Bill Newby.

President of the Trevithick Trust

Dear Editor,

I am looking for information about my g.g.g. father Duncan Shaw who was a Civil and Mining Engineer and the first to bring Cornish mining machines into Spain. I am trying to find out where he could have obtained his engineering qualifications between 1832 and 1845. Do you or anybody else in your association have any idea where engineers were educated in those times? I would appreciate any help on that point.

Arturo Shaw

ashaw@pt.lu

Dear Editor,

My name is William Bowers and Mr Jebus Bickle was my Grandfather who was from Hayle. Do you have any information on Jebus Bickle or his father also named Jebus Bickle? I would also appreciate anything you might know where I could go to find information about my grandfathers. I wish I would have conversed more with my Grandfather about his roots, but I was young and never thought of it. Now that I am the last of the Bickle family here in the States, my son and I are very interested in knowing. Thanks very much,

William P. Bowers,

169 W. Brannan Isle Rd. #37
Isleton, Calif 95641
willysue2@earthlink.net

Dear Editor,

I am researching the name on a grave that I noticed in a remote part of South Africa in the North West Cape. The name on the grave is "William Trevithick" aged 16 years—killed November 1st 1877 at the O'Okiep Mine. I wonder if this man was related to Richard Trevithick.

I am the author of *The Siege of O'Okiep—Guerrilla Campaign in the Anglo-Boer War* (ISBN 1-874979-01-4) that covers the last eighteen months of the Guerrilla Campaign which ended with General Jan Smuts siege of the O'Okiep copper mines. Cornish miners and their families settled in O'Okiep in the 1860s and 70s and O'Okiep was producing a high percentage of the world's copper at that time.

During the siege Cornish miners took part in the defence of the town which was under attack for a month. They fought alongside the few regular British soldiers and did well. The Cornish miners have left their mark in O'Okiep with a super engine house and stack which is in nearly as good condition as the day it was built in the 1870s.

I would be very pleased to hear from anyone regarding William Trevithick.

Peter E. Burke,

1 Elstow Close,
Eastcote, Ruislip,
Middlesex.
HA4 9RA

Dear Editor,

The following section of family tree is believed to refer to our own Trevithick family:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Henry Trevithick | Wheelwright and carpenter. Died age 29 yrs. From Coverack Bridges. |
|------------------|---|



Evelyn m Richard John Magor Trevithick
b. 1905 died Bodmin 1943



Present family called Matthews

Can any reader help with any of the gaps?

Janet 'Cherry' Cambridge,
20 Devon Tce.,
Plymouth.
PL3 4JD.

Book sales through Willow Books are building well. (Willow Books, Unit 2A, United Downs Industrial Estate, Saint Day, Redruth, Cornwall, TR16 5HY. Tel: 01209 822011. Fax: 01209 822321: E-mail anna@willowbooks.co.uk Web: <http://www.willowbooks.co.uk>. Personal contact: Anna). Members are ordering publications other than in the field of industrial archaeology - embroidery, natural history, vegetarian cookery - to name but a few, and these purchases

PUBLICATIONS

all earn the Society money. The following e-mail was received from a member and emphasises what Willow do for us.

"Pleased to report that I used Willow Books last week and had prompt and efficient service Order faxed on 19th March received on March 26th. Not a bad service to we "upcountry" members. Its speedier than my local bookshop".

Whatever the title, Willow can get it for you and, from the above message, and my personal experience, they work hard to get your order through to you. Thank you to those who are using the service and, to those of you who have yet to do so, give them a try, the Society benefits from **every** purchase. All publications reviewed in this and

previous Newsletters are available.

Vernon Baldry.

MEMBERS EVENING FRIDAY 27 JULY

The members evening is coming upon us once again. Contributions of 20-30 minutes will be welcome on a subject of your choice. The venue will be the Audio Visual Theatre at Cornish Engines at Pool. Park in Safeway car park. Come along and show your mettle. Something on "mettleiferous" mines would obviously be fine! If you wish to discuss a contribution ring the Society chat line 01209 716811

Kingsley Rickard.

ENTRY TO TREVITHICK TRUST SITES

Members are reminded that they can gain free entry to the Cornish Engines site at East Pool and the whole Geevor Tin Mine site on the production of an up to date programme card.

HRH The Princess Royal 200 years of Holman-CompAir

The past few weeks have seen a great deal of excitement in Camborne. Not only has the town celebrated the climb up its famous hill by a replica of Richard Trevithick's first road carriage but the stalwart factory in its midst has also celebrated its 200th anniversary.

It was two centuries ago that Nicholas Holman started building high-pressure boilers to Trevithick's designs at Camborne. So started one of the great partnerships which were to establish Camborne as the industrial heartland of Cornwall and, in turn, contribute to Cornwall's position as a great exporter of heavy mining machinery.

The friendship between Holman and Trevithick has been faithfully re-established during this past year as CompAir UK, the name by which the Holman company is now known, paid host to the Trevithick Society as it built the replica of Trevithick's 1801 road locomotive.

To celebrate these great events in Cornwall's history HRH The Princess Royal was invited to visit CompAir UK on the 10 May. She toured the works and saw the precision with which air compressors are now made for sale throughout the world.

The Royal guest's visit would not be complete without what has become compulsory viewing for anyone visiting CompAir during the past year. Princess Anne was shown the Trevithick 2001 replica. She was introduced by Mr Clive Tayton, Operations Director of CompAir UK to John Sawle, Arthur Young, Phil Hosken, David Bray, John Woodward and Pam Young. After chatting with several she graciously, and fearlessly, accepted an invitation to board the Puffin' Devil.

Once on board Her

Royal Highness continued to ask questions of John Sawle and took a considerable interest in the project and its background. She wisely declined to travel around the factory roads on the engine but followed by foot in the sunshine. Chairman Clive Carter, who had been commissioned to write a book commemorating 200 years of the company's history, accompanied Her Royal Highness in the entourage.

There was a great cheer from the assembled workers and spectators as the replica led Princess Anne to appear at the front of the factory. A wave from Her Royal Highness and a whistle from the replica acknowledged the shared welcome.

Clive Tayton gave a short address in which he referred to the connection between Holman and Trevithick. HRH then unveiled a plaque of Cornish granite commemorating the 200 years of achievement by the engineering company in Camborne.

Colin French and Phil Hosken had the honour of meeting HRH Prince Charles, The Duke of Cornwall in 1998 and introduced him to the model of the 2001 replica. The Society is proud of the Royal interest the project has engendered.

P.M.Hosken.



Photograph: CompAir UK

PENLEE 100

This year marks the 100th birthday of the Penlee Quarry (Newlyn) locomotive, and to celebrate this, the current owners, The Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway Society are repainting the locomotive in its original colours of lined out dark green and black and placing it on display at their Stonehenge works.

The locomotive was originally ordered by the quarry company from Arthur Koppel (joint founder of Orenstein & Koppel [O&K]) who also carried on a separate business of supplying industrial railways. Koppel's agreement with O&K required him to place all locomotive orders with them, however the locomotive designs used by Koppel were different to O&K's standard designs although both were produced by him!. In the event O&K were very busy and subcontracted this small order to a company they later took over: Stalbahnerwerke Freudenstein & Co. Aktiengesellschaft. "Penlee" being their works order number 73. In an early attempt at "badge engineering" O&K delivered the locomotive with O&K makers plates. This has caused chaos over the years with

the O&K plates with the number 73/1901 stamped on the frames. It was only in recent years when O&K invited railway experts to assist in publishing a works list of locomotives including all constituent companies did the situation become clear. It also implied that "Penlee" is a rare survivor, as only one other Freudenstein locomotive still exists.

Today of course O&K are more well known for escalators and heavy civil engineering earth moving machinery, perhaps a better fate than one of their major steam locomotive builder competitors: Schwartzkopff who are today known for hair shampoos!

For those that don't know, the Leighton Buzzard Railway, is a 2' 0" gauge industrial railway that served the many sandpits in the area. Its route has been protected by the planners and trains run through housing estates and across fields between Pages Park and Stonehenge Works.

See www.btinternet.com/~buzzrail/
or www.buzzrail.co.uk

Geoff Smith-Grogan.



Photograph: CompAir UK

YAM CREEK, NORTHERN TERRITORY, AUSTRALIA

Can any member please help with information regarding the plant used on this working, some 190 km from Darwin. Nothing seems to have been recorded out there of this effort to find gold. The story goes that the gold interest started when gold "shows" were found in some of the post holes for the Overland Telegraph.

As on some other derelict Australian mines the scrapman has taken the brass and just about all the cast-iron and left the steel and wrought iron.

The shaft, Fig. 1, has a concrete collar and the bent-over bolts on either side of the slot could have secured the gudgeon-pin bearing blocks, with the Balance Box in the hole.

Nearby lies the T-Bob, in excellent condition and clearly made in a good workshop. The plate on the arm at the back of the picture presumably carried the Balance Box, Fig. 2.



Fig. 1. The Shaft

Between the shaft and the engine plinth, to the left in Fig. 1, is an inverted pendulum, Fig. 3, from which the yoke for the rod to the engine is missing.

The engine plinth, Fig. 4, is close to the shaft and evidently off-set from the centre line of the T-Bob to get the flat-rods on that line. This plinth has a pit and also a tank, evidently once lined. There are no signs of large bolt-holes,



Fig. 2. The T-Bob

only grout marks around the edges of the pit, suggesting that a cast-iron base rested there.

Parallel to the engine plinth and about 1.5 metres above it, in Fig. 5, is a tank, perhaps a cooling tank. Nearby are the remains of a building and stack, possibly a Boiler House, and near the shaft the remains of an oil engine.

Also nearby lies a large cast-iron second motion gearwheel, on which each of the six spokes has a hole at



Fig. 3. Inverted Pendulum



Fig. 5. The tank

different radius for the Flat-rod Crank-pin, Fig. 6.

The first question is—What sort and make of engine drove the pitwork?

Was it a rotative beam engine on a cast-iron base and similar frame supporting the beam, with built-in reduction gear?

Was it a horizontal steam engine with built-in reduction gear?

Was it a horizontal oil engine driving a separate reduction gear, similar to that in the Holman

a Catalogue?

Secondly, who were the makers of the T-Bob etc.? A leading authority on Cornish engines and pitwork considers the whole installation redolent of U.S. origin.

The Mining Journal reports on Yam Creek and Brock's, started in 1888, and in 1908 reported that the only large lodes were at Iron Blow and Yam Creek and those were abandoned "with nothing but wrecked machinery strewn over the country". There was never any mention of

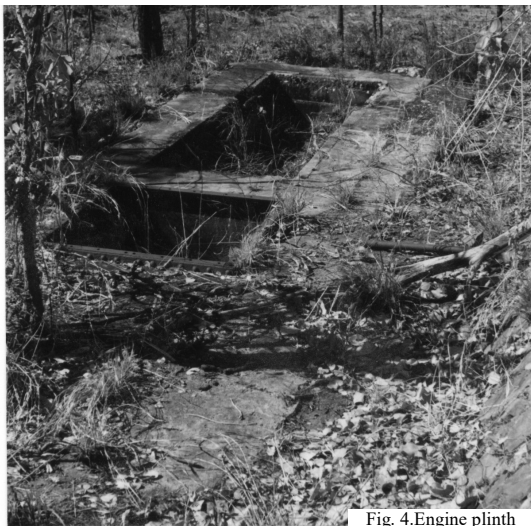


Fig. 4. Engine plinth

engines.

The companies reported were Northern Territories Goldfields of Aus. Ltd, N.-T. Mining & Smelting Ltd and N.-T. Mining of Aus. Ltd.

The Harvey records (CRO, Truro) record that in 1900 sundry items were despatched to Brocks Goldfield, including a Lancashire Boiler.

Technology has marched on and miners are back in the area. At Brocks Creek, standing beside a Cornish Boiler installed a century ago, one can hear the rumble of an 8000 HP Ball Mill, fed by huge earth-moving equipment and massive dumper trucks.

Cousin Jack would dearly loved to have had such equipment.

Eric Edmonds.



Fig. 6. Second-motion gear

Trevithick in 1808 called Catch Me Who Can”.....“The plaque was given to the town in 1949 by Stuart Morley Tomkin a well known personality at the time and proprietor of the Shrewsbury Chronicle in the 1940s”.

LITTLE KNOWN MEMORIAL

David Adams kindly sent a copy of a newspaper cutting from the Shropshire Star concerning a commemorative plaque to RT and John Urpeth Rastrick which was mounted on a clock tower near the river bridge in the town of Bridgnorth in 1949.

The plaque reads “To the memory of two great engineers, Richard Trevithick, born 1771, died 1833 and John Urpeth Rastrick, born 1780, died 1856, a great railway engineer”.

The newspaper cutting goes on to say “It was at the Hazeldine Foundry in Low Town where Rastrick later became a partner, that the world’s first passenger locomotive was built for

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that their subscriptions are now overdue. If not paid by Bankers Order I will be very happy to send any members the necessary form. This saves members and the Secretary much time, effort and the postage, all of which are becoming more important to everyone.

Paul Smith.

71 St. Norbert Drive,
Kirk Hallam,
Ilkeston,
Derbyshire.
DE7 4EF

TO ALL MODEL MAKERS....

The Society has been presented with a partly completed model of an 80" Cornish Beam Engine by a member who joined CEPS in the early days.

The scale is 1" to 1' and it is based on a set of drawings in the Society's collection, together with a number of sketches.

The house, beam, bearings, cylinder & valve gear are complete, but not the parallel motion, valve actuating rods and levers, and the two cataracts.

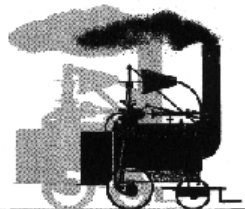
Would any member experienced in such work who would like further details and would be prepared to complete this model for the Society please let me know. Applications will be considered by Council at the June meeting.

Eric Edmonds.



PRESS CALL AT TEHIDY

We were repeatedly asked by the media for details and pictures of the 2001 Project and so a



couple of days after the hydraulic boiler tests we staged a demonstration for their benefit. This was held on 28 March at Tehidy, a most appropriate venue, as it was the destination of Richard Trevithick on 28 December 1801, when the fateful accident occurred. Tehidy House, former home of the Basset family, provided a beautiful backdrop for the event, although only parts of the current building are original, the main part having been destroyed by fire on 25 February 1919.

The day at Tehidy was a success in all respects and thanks are due to all who assisted, especially Truro Tractors who delivered the engine at short notice and to our member George Wilson, who, in his capacity as the Residents Association Chairman ensured the operation went smoothly. Thanks are also due to the Tehidy residents who fed and watered us all.

Kingsley Rickard.

MAURICE COOKE

It was with sadness that I learnt of the death of our member Maurice Cooke, which occurred late last year at the age of 93. Though he was not well known amongst the membership, he devoted some 15 years towards the end of his life to researching the activities of William West of St. Blazey, his great-grandfather on his mother's side, which is how I got to know him.

In the course of frequent dialogue—me supplying details of engines and he uncovering facts on the family and their business affairs—a firm friendship developed. Despite his age he travelled widely in his pursuit of documentary sources and physical remains and paid several visits to Cornwall. As information came to hand it was recorded in a huge dossier which finally ran to more than 800 pages. He called it his 'magnum opus' and donated a copy to the Cornish Studies Library at Redruth, for eventual storage by electronic means.

If he had one regret, it was that he did not live to see the conservation of Austen's engine house at Fowey Consols. It was here that in 1835 an 80-inch engine of West's design produced test results that astonished the world. It is a matter that the Society is still pursuing. My article *A new light on Austen's 80"* published in the Society's Journal No. 18:1991 was, in reality, a joint effort with Maurice and

remains the 'bible' on the subject. He loved Kew and the Cornish engines there, descendents of West's masterpiece.

My first meeting with him was 20 years ago at his flat in Edinburgh to which he had retired after 38 years teaching at the Edinburgh Academy. We made a short excursion together to the site of the Dolphingstone Colliery, east of the city, where the shaft collar of a Perran Foundry engine of 1847 was still visible. His enthusiasm was evident. I thought he must have been born a Scot due to his soft lowland accent. Not so. He had been born in Cornwall, on the Menabilly Estate, where his father was a Factor. He soon left Cornwall, however, first to go to Lancing College and then to Keble College, Oxford, where he gained honours in modern history.

His long association with the Academy began in 1931 where he was a demanding but popular history teacher. During the war he served with the Royal Scots in France and Belgium. He attained the rank of major and was awarded the Military Cross for distinguished service before being wounded and returning to his teaching post in 1945. He then ran the Academy's Combined Cadet Force and later introduced the Duke of Edinburgh's Award to the school. Other interests included mountaineering and he ran expeditions to many parts of Scotland.

Much of this I was quite unaware of due to Maurice's natural modesty. He moved to Norwich to be nearer his family which meant our meetings became infrequent.

But his old-world courtesy and charm, which seemed to rub off on the people he met, shine through his writings and so are not entirely lost. I regard it a great privilege to have known him. He leaves two nephews and two nieces.

Kenneth Brown.



Maurice Cooke (with stick) with his family in front of the West-designed hollowwork 72-inch engine bob preserved at Kempton Park in West London.

LEVANT REPORT

The National Trust closed the site to the public because of the Foot & Mouth outbreak. They agreed that there should be a special re-opening day to mark the end of the Millennium refurbishment of the engine. The engine was steamed publicly for the first time this year on Friday 6th April, marked with some media attention. The steam boiler has passed the annual inspection, and much of the engine, the engine house and the woodwork have been repainted.

The stabilisation work on the Compressor House and Higher Bal engine house have been completed, but the grilles to prevent access to the shaft have not been fitted. Work on the Electric Winder House has been completed with the exception of grilles to protect the windows. A new corrugated roof, doors, windows, gutters and down pipes have been fitted.

The work programme for the Man Engine Shaft is well under way. The original plans have had to be changed.

When further excavation was carried out, to enable concrete pads to be laid to support the large steel beams that cross the shaft and safely support the new top of the shaft, an old narrow stope was exposed and also two pockets, which had been used to support the original shaft timbers. A temporary staging was built to allow the building of the new shaft collar, using these pockets. The excavation also exposed two substantial brick arches, found on each side of the stone upper balance bob pit, re-discovered earlier. It is thought that these were for the safe lubrication of the bearings of the balance bob.

Four RSJs, fixed to these pockets and encased in concrete, form the new collar. Above this the shaft has been gunnited to stabilise the loose surface. It is understood that the shaft will then be re-timbered above the new collar and it is hoped that some of the stope will be visible from the access tunnel. All of the work should be completed by about the end of May.

W E H King



Photograph: Geoff Purcell

BOOK REVIEWS

Life in Cornwall 1939-1942 by Catherine Ince. Published by Truran, 96 pp @ £8.99. Card cover.

This book is not within the usual sphere of study of the Society, however, members old enough to remember WWII will find many items of interest. It consists of a series of West Briton news extracts, in chronological order, from January 1939 to December 1942 with a number of well produced photographs of wartime scenes, the first being a most evocative picture of a sergeant and his apprehensive son having just tested a gas mask. Many aspects of life at the time are covered by the extracts such as the blackout, rationing, Dig for Victory, politics, shopping, fishing, mining, traffic and the removal of road signs to “confuse the enemy”. Nothing changes, just watch a H.G.V. driver, having made a delivery in Redruth, try to find the route to Falmouth!

Conclusion—an interesting little book to dip into.

KJTR.

Cornish Inventors by Carolyn Martin, published by Tor Mark Press @ £2.99. 32 pp with card covers.

A book with a content of this type will invariably cause controversy over inclusions or omissions, and this offering is no exception, so the author is “on a hiding to nothing” from the outset. Even the title is open to question given that the book includes worthies as Murdoch and Macadam, so why not Marconi? Perhaps mention should have been made of others such as the Hornblowers or Donald Healey. In spite of this, the book covers the well known and some lesser known personalities, from the early times to the modern day, from Humphrey Davy and Trevithick to such people as the Teagles and Chris Woolf, the inventor of the modern microphone suspension system.

History is frequently distorted and it is

unfortunate that the Murdoch Flyer is pictured full size when no conclusive evidence exists that it was ever built. Perhaps that is why it has earned the sobriquet “Murdoch Miscarriage”! Nevertheless, Murdoch was a competent engineer and built a successful working model some years before Trevithick.

Summarising lives and achievements, such as this book does, tends to encourage the brain to dredge up obscure facts and I note in the paragraph on William Oliver of Trevarno, the inventor of the Bath Oliver Biscuit, it could have been stated that an Oliver memorial is to be found in Sithney Churchyard.

As one would expect, one of the longest descriptions in the book covers Trevithick’s achievements finally stating, erroneously, that he died at age sixty-six.

The book is of general interest rather than for the serious industrial historian, but summarises the lives and projects of the many characters in an easy style and contains much of interest which may possibly galvanise the reader into further research.

KJTR.

Cornwall from the Newspapers 1781-93 by Dr James Whetter. This book is available from bookshops or direct from The Roseland Institute, Gorran, St. Austell @ £7.50, postage 50p if ordered by mail. ISBN 0 9514510 8 1

In the eighteenth century no newspapers were printed in Cornwall. The first newspapers were, the Cornwall Gazette and, the Falmouth Packet which appeared in 1801. The only newspaper with local information before this was the Sherborne Mercury which covered the south western counties.

Over the past twelve years James Whetter has reprinted items from the Sherborne Mercury in the quarterly, Cornish Banner. A selection of these have now been republished, with comments, in a 72 page paperback. They are set out under 36 headings such as, inland transport, mills,

mines, servants, schools, etc.

The book is valuable in telling of the background to this period at the beginning of the industrial revolution. It gives a good picture of conditions in Cornwall in the early days of Richard Trevithick who was born in 1771.

CT.

Castle-an-Dinas (1916-1957) Cornwall's Premier Tungsten Mine by Tony Brooks. Cornish Hillside Publications 2001. 146 pp with many illustrations. ISBN 1 900147 16 5 hardback £15.99. ISBN 1 900147 15 7 paperback £11.99. Available through bookshops or from Tor Mark Press, Tel: 01209 822101.

This latest volume from Cornish Hillside Publications has appeared at an apposite time, coinciding with discussion in the media as to the relative merits of the use of depleted uranium or tungsten for armour piercing shells. In the light of this it is not surprising to learn that the Cornish Wolfram industry prospered during times of war.

The author, Tony Brooks, has brought together much diverse information on the history of the Castle-an-Dinas wolfram mine in a readily accessible form. The book starts with a brief introduction outlining the uses to which the metal has been put, with brief details of the history of production in the UK (which largely means Cornwall) and in the rest of the world. Five chapters describing the history and development of the mine itself follow this. Of considerable importance in these chapters are quotes from contemporary documents and anecdotes of miners and others who knew the mine intimately. This inclusion of social history is further boosted by a chapter devoted to the men who worked on the mine during its life. Further background details are added in the appendices where there are lists of the men and their job, covering the period from 1942 onwards.

A chapter on exploration during the period 1958—1986 details the available

information on the prospects for further developments at Castle-an-Dinas. While the chapter on the site today covers the industrial archaeology of what can now be seen of the surface buildings. The last chapter outlines the history of other wolfram mines in Cornwall and West Devon.

The author's obvious enthusiasm for his subject shines through in his writing, making the book that much more enjoyable. Congratulations must also go to all at Cornish Hillside Publications, who have produced a well-illustrated book to their usual high standards which should satisfy the professional and amateur alike. I fully endorse Allen Buckley's comments in his forward: "This book has been well worth waiting for and I am sure that those of us who are interested in the wonderful story of Cornish mining will read it with pleasure".

JF.

*Overheard on a bus in Camborne
08:05:2001.*

A girl about six years old was sitting on the bus with her mother and was heard to exclaim "Mummy, there's that man!". The worried-looking mother looked up and down the street to see what her daughter was pointing at, and said "What man?". "Richard Trevithick" said the girl pointing at the statue.

TREVITHICK SOCIETY EVENTS AND CONTACTS

JUNE 22nd—CSM

St. Ives Consolidated Mines.
by Kenneth Brown.

JUNE 23rd—Field Trip

Rosewall Hill & Ransom United. Meet at car park, Franks Shaft, Giew Mine, 2pm
Led by Kenneth Brown.

JULY 27th—Members Evening

Meet at Cornish Engines, East Pool, Audio Visual Hall at 7pm. Parking in Safeway car park.

*Meetings are held in the Lecture Theatre,
Camborne School of Mines at 7pm.*

*East Cornwall Branch meetings will be held
at the Public Hall Complex, Liskeard at 7.30pm.*

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The Trevithick Society, a registered charity, is a recognised body of the study of industrial archaeology in Cornwall. Membership is open to all who are interested in the region's great industrial past, whether or not they live in Cornwall. The Society takes its name from one of Britain's foremost inventors and pioneers of the Industrial Revolution, Richard Trevithick, a Cornishman whose name is inseparable from the development of steam power.

This Newsletter is published quarterly and, together with the annual Journal, is distributed free to members. Letters and contributions are always welcome and should be sent direct to the editor. The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Trevithick Society.

Subscriptions 2001:-

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