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THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE
WATERWORKS COMPANY

NEWS REVIEW



HEAD OFFICES,
SHEEPCOTE STREET.

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No. 1



THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE WATERWORKS COMPANY

Incorporated by Special Act of Parliament, 1853

The Company was granted a Coat of Arms in 1964 which is reproduced above.

The actual Grant of the Coat of Arms is an impressive document and will eventually hang in the Board Room.

The Blazon of the Coat of Arms extracted from the Grant is as follows :-

Sable on a Pile Barry Wavy Argent and Azure Fimbriated Vert a Stafford Knot Or all between three Fountains and for the Crest on a Wreath Argent and Vert Issuant from Water a Mount of Sand thereon a Knot (Calidris Canutus) in Winter Plumage All Proper.

If a story can be attributed to the Coat of Arms it is water coming out of the ground and feeding the Black Country - the Fountains represent the Company's Works. The Staffordshire Knot as the name implies is the symbol for Staffordshire and the Bird at the top is a pun as this Bird is also called a Knot.

Around and about

THE VOICE OF CANNOCK

The Depot is in the process of a minor face-lift. The old concrete steps that once led to the office have been removed and a new wing added containing a lobby entrance with enclosed wooden staircase and landing. Slight adjustments to the office include a new small office for the Deputy Superintendent. The removal of the old concrete steps will be welcomed by the elderly and breathless who brought their troubles to us, and by the angry and irate customers who, after slamming the door and charging down the steps, particularly in wet or frosty weather, reached the bottom with a terrific bump, bringing forth a flow of invective adding new words to our already extensive vocabulary.

A second social evening was held at the Railway Hotel on Friday, 27th November 1964, which proved an even greater success than the previous one. About thirty members attended and joined in the organised games, and the winner was rewarded with a small prize. Refreshments were provided by the landlady, to whom a bouquet of flowers was sent the following day. Music and singing ended the evening, which came to an end all too quickly.

The Football Team has joined a League and are affiliated to the Walsall Football Association. They are playing in the Cannock Chase League (Sunday Section). We have been fortunate in hiring from the National Coal Board a pleasant ground with well appointed dressing rooms and showers. I suppose we have made history by the fact that the name S.S.W.W.Co. appears in the Saturday Sporting Star as well as the local Advertiser and Courier. We have played several works teams as well as Public Organisations and are holding a position in the League Table rather above average. Our chaps have made many new friends with handshakes all round at the end of the matches, with the result being least important; it is always nice to win but it is just as nice to be called good losers.

Below is a list of matches played and their results -

S.S.W.W. v Hednesford Brickworks		3 - 3
S.S.W.W. v Norton Social		1 - 5
S.S.W.W. v Littleton Colliery		2 - 4
West Cannock Workshops v S.S.W.W.		1 - 1
S.S.W.W. v National Coal Board		1 - 5
National Coal Board v S.S.W.W.		0 - 3
S.S.W.W. v Albion Pressed Metal		8 - 2
M.E.B. v S.S.W.W.		6 - 4
Norton Social v S.S.W.W.		4 - 1
S.S.W.W. v Lea Hall Colliery		5 - 3
West Cannock Colliery v S.S.W.W.		0 - 4
S.S.W.W. v West Cannock Colliery		3 - 3
Matches played	12	Matches Won 3
Matches drawn	3	Matches Lost 6

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It is with sorrow we record the sudden and tragic death of our plumber, Mr. J. Manning, at an early age. He was a quiet, likeable chap and a very capable workman. To his wife and two young boys we express our deepest sympathy in their great loss. His workmates acted as bearers at his funeral and the sum of sixteen pounds was handed over to his widow from the Depot staff as a small token to help in a difficult time.

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In view of the tragic loss of two of the Depots' family men during the year we decided to give an Xmas gift to the children of the deceased men. There was an immediate response from the men at the Depot and the splendid sum of £12. was raised, thus making it possible for us to allocate each child £2. The money was handed over to the respective mothers to purchase what they wished for their children. It is needless to add that the mothers were deeply touched by this action.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' SERVICE
GOLD WATCH AWARDS.

G.H.Webster	Waterman	Burton
Tunncliffe,A.	Engine Tenter	Chilcote
W.H.Fellows	Superintendent	Wood Green
H.S.Allen	Engine Cleaner	Maple Brook
F.G.Church	Engine Tenter	Hinksford
A.L.Matthews	Engine Tenter	Seedy Mill
L.Stone	Clerk	Revenue Dept.
		Head Office

TIPTON DEPOT.

When excavations were being carried out on the 29th October in Parkes Hall Road, Coseley, a short length of the Company's 9" diameter water main had to be exposed to carry out some work thereon. It is interesting to note that a pipe bore the date 1835. Commonly believed to be the oldest main on the Tipton Depot area, a fact worth recalling is that this main was used by the now defunct Dudley Waterworks Company to pump water collected at Parkes Hall pool to Shavers End Reservoir No. 1.

Considering its age of 129 years, the main is in remarkably good condition and there are many waterworks personnel who wish that mains laid in this modern age gave no more trouble than this one. Needless to say, the pipes are of cold-blast cast iron - a product for which the Black Country was almost world famous a few decades ago. This metal is flint-hard and so the old main becomes the jointer's headache (or arm-ache?) when it is found necessary to cut or drill one of these ancient pipes.

Even water mains, as well as so many other things in those days, were evidently made to last a long time!!!

MR. R.E.BROOKES - WATERMAN

Mr. R.E. Brookes, Waterman, Cradley Heath, retired on the 28th March 1965 at the age of 65 years. He joined the Company 42 years ago and for 40 of those years he had been Waterman for the area including Old Hill, Cradley Heath, Cradley, and Quarry Bank. He had acquired great experience and his knowledge of the district was quite unique. He was very popular with the consumers and seemed to know many of them personally.

During his long service with the Company he had walked or cycled up to 30 miles a day and he became very well known on his bicycle which did such good service and very rarely needed a repair. In fact, the bicycle was in good condition when returned to the Depot a few years ago when he was given the use of a van.

Always an extremely conscientious worker with his finger on the pulse he will be greatly missed by his colleagues, who wish him many happy years of retirement. We understand Mr. Brookes' main hobby is gardening and no doubt he will be able to spend a little more time tending his plants, although we hear that he is still to be seen walking round the same old district but this time "walking his dog's legs off!".

Mr. Brookes says he has always enjoyed his work but is looking forward to his retirement. Mrs. Brookes has various relatives employed by the Company and no doubt will be kept informed of the Company's activities. Mr. Brookes received a gift from his colleagues at Tipton and in recognition of his long and valued service with the Company the Board of Directors made a presentation at Head Office.



Mr. Arthur Thrupp.
Cannock Depot.

Mr. Arthur Thrupp retired on the 31st October 1964 at the age of 64 years. He joined the Company in 1924 as a casual labourer but quickly settled down and readily adapted himself to the various and diverse duties associated with the Water Undertaking. First as a Plumber's Labourer and then as a Mains Jointer he assisted the Watermen on their districts and took over their areas when they were away ill or on holiday. He had acquired considerable experience when he went to live in Norton Canes to become District Waterman. At this period Norton Canes and Heath Hayes were being badly hit by mining subsidence but Mr. Thrupp's loyalty and devotion to duty was of infinite value to the Company and the Depot Staff during this difficult period.

Mr. Thrupp received a Westminster chimes clock from his colleagues at Cannock Depot and in making the presentation Mr. Langston spoke of Mr. Thrupp's many years of helpful service and wished him many years of good health and happiness. In reply, Mr. Thrupp thanked everyone for their very generous gift and said he would miss his many friends.

In recognition of his long service, the Board of Directors presented Mr. Thrupp with a record player.



Mr. Wm. Smith -
Walsall Depot.

Leading Trenchman W. Smith retired on 1st November 1964, at the age of 64. He would have reached retiring age this year but, as a result of an unfortunate accident last March, he has had to finish work a few months earlier.

The accident occurred while he was in charge of the Company's thrust boring machine (an apparatus used for laying pipes underground in cases where it is desirable to avoid breaking up the surface). He was knocked down by a motor car and his injuries were quite serious. Although he was in hospital for some months he has made splendid progress and we are pleased to report that he is now able to get about fairly well with the aid of a walking stick.

He will be well known to most of the Head Office Staff where he often did turns of duty during the absence of the Caretaker.

Mr. Smith was presented to the Queen Mother when she opened Blithfield Reservoir in 1953 and he was very proud of being selected for this presentation.

Bill Smith, always jovial and even-tempered, will be missed very much by a wide circle of friends and they all wish for his continued progress to normal health once more and that he will enjoy many happy years of retirement.

In recognition of his long service, the Board of Directors presented Mr. Smith with a Hoover Vacuum Cleaner.

STAFF ASSOCIATION EVENTS

ANNUAL OUTING/VISIT TO WORKS.

The Annual Outing/Visit to Works took place on Tuesday, 29th September 1964, when the highlight of the day was the visit to Hampton Loade and Chelmarsh, comprising part of the River Severn Scheme. Three Midland Red Coaches left Head Office shortly after 9 o'clock and the sun was shining brightly indicating another fine day.

Whilst we were travelling, we were given a typed report of the progress of the River Severn Scheme and as no mention has been made of this project since the May 1962 issue of the News Review, I am including most of the information given as I feel that readers who were not able to be with us might find it very interesting.

The first stop was at Hampton Loade where construction of the Accelerators and the Filters are in progress. This work is being undertaken by Peter Lind and Company of London and Cannock. Drawings of the works were available at the Resident Engineer's Offices, together with a photograph of the model of the completed works.

The Accelerators are similar in design to those at Seedy Mill but are much bigger. They are 90 ft. in diameter and have a normal output of $7\frac{1}{2}$ m.g.d. There will be two Accelerators in the first instalment and the base slab of the first was almost completed. Erection of the shuttering for the conical wall is at present in progress. Between the two Accelerators is the base slab for a Sludge Control Chamber, housing valves and pipework necessary for removal of the sludge from the Accelerators.

The construction of the Contact Tank underneath the filters was well advanced and we could see the central division wall which divides the Contact Tank into two halves. The columns to support the filter tanks above were in an advanced stage of construction as were the various chambers at the far end for controlling the outflow and to provide storage for wash water.

The Chemical House, Pump House and Administration Block, construction of which should commence very shortly, will be built in front of the Filters and Accelerators. A rough idea of the extent of these could be obtained, as the corners of the three buildings had been pegged out with white pegs.

The access road from the public road to the Treatment Works continues down the hill through Long Covert to the river where the Intake Works will be sited. On the left hand side of this road a spur has been constructed to provide access to the M.E.B.'s Substation and the Company's Switchgear House.

The 60" diameter mains from the Intake to Chelmarsh Reservoir will cross the river in the form of an arch and the road will be suspended from this pipe arch. By this means Chelmarsh will be linked to the Intake and Treatment Works.

After leaving Hampton Loade we stopped at the Severn Valley Cafe, Bridgnorth, for coffee, and enjoyed the wonderful autumn scenery. It seemed to be the unanimous opinion that if we could guarantee a summer as perfect as the 1964 one, overseas visitors could do far worse than visit that corner of England, and I heard a number of the staff expressing the wish that they could work in the district. It must be very pleasant to look out of one's office window and see green fields, leafy trees, and the winding River Severn, rather than brick buildings with a glimmer of sky.

The visit to Chelmarsh was equally interesting and on arrival we were shown a model of the reservoir which has been constructed in order to find out the best means of ensuring an even circulation of the water throughout the reservoir.

The reservoir is a conventional earth embankment type, having a rolled clay core and concrete cut-off. The extent of the reservoir could be seen from the white sight rails which had been erected to mark top water level.

We were able to see that part of the cut off trench on the south side which had been carried out in open cut owing to the presence of boulders at the excavation. It was therefore necessary to shutter this section of the concrete cut off wall. We could also see the rolled clay core in the centre of the embankment on each side of which selected filled material was being placed. The outside of the embankment will be faced on the water side with stone pitching and the downstream face will be soiled and seeded. In the centre of the valley the embankment had been completed to about half its height.

The Contractors for the reservoir are Lehane, Mackenzie and Shand Limited of Matlock, who are also the Contractors for the laying of the 45" diameter main from the Treatment Works to Sedgley Reservoir, and whilst travelling in the coaches we were able to take a quick view of the pipeline.

The 45" diameter mains, which are twelve miles in length, will convey the water from Hampton Loade Treatment Works to service reservoirs at Sedgley Beacon. The ultimate capacity of these reservoirs will be 45 million gallons.

I should like to mention here how much we all appreciated the help given by the guides. The Engineers were so patient when inundated with questions and were always prepared to give explanations on any point which to them might seem obvious but to the general members of the staff, quite incomprehensible at first sight.

The two main visits completed, we were quite ready for our visit to the Falcon Hotel where an excellent lunch was served.

Mr. J.W. Whitworth, Chairman of the Staff Association, said he did not propose to mar an excellent day by any prolonged speeches but wished to apologise for the absence of Mr. & Mrs. A.W. Tibbenham, Mr. & Mrs. J. Lamont and Mr. & Mrs. I.E. Wallis, and said he was sure it would be our wish that he should express our appreciation for the day's outing to the Board of Directors and Senior Officers of the Company.

Mr. Whitworth also said that it was his intention, upon becoming Chairman of the Staff Association, to arrange an earlier date for the Annual Outing/Visit to Works but as so many members had expressed a wish to visit the new Severn works, at that time there would have been very little to see. He was sure the delay had been justified in view of the excellent weather we enjoyed and the opportunity of seeing what must be the Company's biggest capital project in its constructional stages. "It is evident" continued Mr. Whitworth, "that this is an instance of the work of not one man or one department, but the work of a whole team".

Finally he thanked the Hotel Management for the excellent meal and service.

We have not always been lucky as far as the weather is concerned on the date chosen for our Annual Outings but we could not have wished for a better day. Summer dresses, coats left in the coaches, in late September. I am sure we should have been quite happy to stroll down the country lanes with perhaps a trip on the river, but arrangements had been made for a visit to Chester Zoo and the coaches once more were on their way.

The Chester Zoo covers over one hundred and fifty acres and wherever possible animals and birds are exhibited in large open-air paddocks without confining bars. The sea lions, bears, zebras, elephants etc. were visited and the aquarium and birdhouses too, and tea was taken at the Restaurant. The flower gardens were particularly attractive in their late summer glory. Judging from the plan of the

Zoo with the list of exhibits, it was obviously not possible to cover the whole area and more than one visitor decided that he would like to spend a little more time there some day.

I am sure that the things we shall remember most of all are the perfect weather, with never a cloud in the sky, and - perhaps a rather strange thing to remember - the dust at Chelmarsh whenever a vehicle passed.

We were all very glad to have had the opportunity of seeing the work in progress and hope it will be possible to make a visit later on so that we can see it in its various stages.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

The Annual General Meeting of the Staff Association Club was held in the Canteen, Sheepcote Street, on Friday, 26th February 1965, under the Chairmanship of Mr. J.W. Whitworth. There were 18 members present.

Dealing with the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting, it was reported that the question of the size of the Committee had been considered by the members of the Executive and that no action should be taken.

Following an appeal for further assistance to be given to the Editor in her efforts to produce the News Review, it was proposed that consideration should be given to having this magazine printed.

In presenting his annual report, the Chairman reviewed the year's working and mentioned in particular the meeting of the Executive, Canteen and Entertainments Sub-Committees and spoke of the annual social occasions held during the year. He said he felt that members would wish to express their appreciation to the Board of Directors and Senior Officers for the help, both financial and otherwise, which had been given to the Association during the year.

Mr. Whitworth referred to the Association and Canteen balance sheets and said that the adverse figures on the Canteen balance sheet did not in any way cast any reflection on the work of Miss Brummitt. Indeed, had it not been for her close watch on purchases and sales the figures would have been much worse. Tribute was paid to the many members of the staff who had been ready to help when called upon.

The Chairman concluded by giving details of the meeting which had taken place between Messrs. Tibbenham and Taylor and the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Honorary Secretary regarding A National Joint Committee for the Water Industry (Non-Manual Staffs).

The following Officers and Executive Committee were appointed :-

Chairman	Mr. J.W. Whitworth
Vice-Chairman	Mr. A. Simkins
Honorary Secretary	Mr. C.H.F. Gilbert
Honorary Treasurer	Mr. R.G. Clarke
Hon. Auditors	Messrs. K. Hand and P. Burton
Tobacco Club	
Secretary	Miss C.S. Parry

Executive Committee

<u>Engineer's Dept. Inside Staff</u>	<u>Secretary's Dept.</u>
Mr. J. Lamont (Preceding Chairman)	Miss B.R. Greenhall
Miss A. Cartwright	Mrs. E.M. Jackson
Mr. C.E. Packwood	Mr. J.H. Dixon
Mr. B. Webster	Mr. J.E.S. Stock
Mr. R.J. Wright	

Outside Staff

Burton, Cannock, Sutton Depots	Mr. S.A.G. Wimbush
Tipton Depot	Mr. C.B. Brennan
Lichfield Area and Outside Staff on Construction Work	Mr. G.W. Anderson

As nominations had not been received in respect of a representative from Walsall Depot the matter was left in the hands of the Executive.

ANNUAL DINNER AND DANCE.

The Thirtyfifth Annual Dinner and Dance of the Staff Association was held in the Pavilion Suite, the County Ground, on Friday, 19th March, and we were very pleased that our President, Sir Charles Burman, honoured us by presiding.

Sir Charles and Lady Burman, accompanied by Mr. & Mrs. J.W. Whitworth, received the Guests, and Miss Pat Cull presented a bouquet of spring flowers to Lady Burman.

Once again greetings were exchanged between old friends and drinks were enjoyed at the Bar, and it was obvious that the Ladies too had looked forward to a little gossip. Having memorised our table numbers etc. we soon found our way to the dining tables where a very satisfactory meal was enjoyed. Once again the Ladies were able to pin posies to their dresses, and I noticed particularly that the various flowers, roses, carnations and freesias did, by some lucky chance, tone with the dresses.

The President said that he was very happy to propose the Toast to the Staff Association, coupled with the name of our Chairman who was in his second year, although he had hoped that one of his colleagues on the Board would deputise for him this year. Unfortunately one had fallen off his horse and the others were not able to be present.

Sir Charles said he was quite sure the Association was thriving under Mr. Whitworth's excellent leadership and felt that we could congratulate ourselves as we remember that last year we wondered if we should be able to get together again.

Continuing, he said that as far as the Company was concerned he thought we had progressed and said our water was certainly thought very well of. The President related that he was asked by someone if he was "mixed up" with South Staffs and the questioner said that he enjoyed our water, and although living in Birmingham, he always drank South Staffs water - brought each day to his works in our area of supply, in bottles. "I don't know whether we should all go as far as that" said Sir Charles - "and I can see no sign of you drinking Birmingham water this evening".

The President spoke of the shortage of water, particularly after the two recent very dry years and the exceptionally dry winter, but we were assured that as far as the Company's area of supply is concerned all precautions necessary would be taken in ample time and that once over this year the first part of the Severn Scheme should come into operation which would see us out of our difficulties. "It is due to the foresight of our Engineers - both past and present - who have always looked earnestly into the growth of population - and the popularity of washing - and on their advice the Board make proper provision for ample supplies of water in the area we serve" continued Sir Charles.

We were advised that the Company had had a better year than we thought at one time, but with the coming of April 6th, Budget Day, the new Corporation tax comes into action and this could mean another £200,000 from this Company. This has got to come from somewhere and may ultimately mean increased charges, but the more efficient we can be and the more economies we can make, the longer we can postpone the time for that increase.

Sir Charles Burman then gave a brief resume of the Coat of Arms granted to the Company and more details are given earlier in this News Review.

Mr. J.W. Whitworth, Chairman of the Staff Association, then responded to the Toast, thanking the President most warmly for his remarks. He also extended a very warm welcome to Lady Burman, Mr. & Mrs. R.H. Taylor and Mr. & Mrs. A.W. Tibbenham, and said how sorry we all were that Mr. & Mrs. Gell were not able to join us. Mr. Gell has always shown a very deep interest in Staff Association affairs and Mr. Whitworth said he was sure we should all like to wish Mr. Gell a speedy recovery in order that he may resume the many activities in which he is so keenly interested.

The Chairman said that as the President had made reference to what had taken place over the past year it was logical for him to speak of the future. He spoke of the objects of the Staff Association and the obstacle of distance which made it difficult to make personal contact with our colleagues from the various districts except on the occasions of our major social functions, and said it was therefore vital that their representatives should take an active part in the Committee of Management in order that the welfare of the staff is maintained.

The second point he mentioned was the establishment of a National Joint Committee for the Water Industry (Non-Manual Staffs) and told us that this may have far reaching effects and whilst the present position is somewhat obscure, much more information was being sought. He assured us that this matter would be dealt with very fully by the Committee and that members would be kept informed of the situation from time to time.

Mr. Whitworth then spoke of the social activities amongst members but said he regretted that very little had been done in educational advancement. We all appreciated the Annual Outing incorporating a visit to the Company's Works, but apart from members of the Technical Staff there must be many who know very little of the River Severn Scheme at present being undertaken by the Company. This is the largest Capital project upon which the Company has ever embarked and he wondered if it would be possible for the Senior Officers to give a talk on the Scheme, upon which the expansion of the Undertaking depends. Mr. Whitworth said he was sure this would lead to a better understanding and appreciation when next we were privileged to visit the new Works.

The Chairman then spoke of the younger members of the staff and assured them that however menial their work may appear to be, they were nevertheless making a particular and personal contribution towards providing a public supply of water.

He advised us that £5.5.0d had been donated - anonymously - towards a Prize Fund for an Essay competition. He thought this was a challenge and was sure the Committee would not only wish to accept the generous offer made but also to augment it with a similar contribution.

Mr. Whitworth spoke of the Association generally and its achievements, which had only been possible through the generosity of the Board of Directors and the active interest and assistance of the Executive Officers of the Company, and he assured Sir Charles that these many privileges were fully appreciated.

The Chairman then referred to the means of communication which he had mentioned earlier, particularly the News Review which is distributed to all sections of the Company's employees, as well as those who have retired. It was suggested that every avenue should be explored into the possibility of having this publication printed, which would ease the work of the Editor, and he hoped the suggestion would meet with approval.

Mr. Whitworth then thanked the President for the manner in which he had proposed the Toast.

The Dining Room was then cleared for Dancing to Allan Ayres and his Band. We found we had not quite forgotten how to dance, although some of us were perhaps a bit shy of the twist and the Cha-Cha-Cha. However, professional steps were not really necessary. We all enjoyed ourselves, had a chat with colleagues, had a drink at the bar - or in the coffee room, the lucky ones won prizes, and I am sure everyone regretted that the evening seemed too short. I heard quite a few members of the staff say that it was the first time they had attended one of our Dinner Dances and that they had enjoyed the evening enormously. And I also heard a few thankful remarks that we all enjoyed a Five Day Week and could thus have those few extra precious minutes in bed.

PERSONALIA (contin)

Congratulations.

To Mr. M.J.Field (Meter Dept.) and Miss J.Carr on the occasion of their engagement on the 5th December 1964.

Also to Miss J. Lappage and Mr. D.Cooper who became engaged on the 24th December, 1964.

MARRIAGE

Miss C. Williams to Mr. M. Faulds on 28th December, 1964.

A letter has been received from Christine thanking everyone for the cheque received and it is her intention to buy a nest of tables.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' SERVICE
GOLD WATCH AWARDS.

F.G.Williams	Engine Tenter	Ashwood
E.C.Baker	Motor Mechanic	Wood Green
S.G.Smith	Water Treatment	
	Attendant	Lichfield
H. Irvine	Labourer	Lichfield
R.Bayley	Foreman	Hinksford

RETIREMENT

Mr. J.W.Mellor, Estate Labourer, Blithfield retired on 30th April, aged 65 years.



Mr. William Breakwell

When we received information about our oldest retired colleague it was decided to give him what we hoped would be a pleasant surprise and extend our best wishes. Unfortunately, all our plans are too late as it is with very deep regret we have to report his death on the 31st December 1964.

Mr. Breakwell was 90 years old last September and retired in September 1934, before most of us joined the Company. He must have had some wonderful tales to tell of the old South Staffs and we are exceedingly sorry he will not be able to add this appreciation to his memories.

Mr. Breakwell's maternal Grandfather, William Pill, was the first man to be employed by the Company. His work for James Watt & Company involved travelling by stage coach from Chipping Camden to superintend the erection of the first pumping engine at Lichfield and he stayed on with the Company. This pumping equipment was in fact a converted colliery engine.

His Grandmother was present at the initiation, and a bottle of champagne "christened" the first revolution. His father, also James Breakwell, worked for the Company until his early death in 1887, and that same year, at the age of 13 years, the son started work with the Company.

We know that Mr. Breakwell was very proud of the fact that his Grandfather was the first employee of the Company and that the family have had such long associations with the South Staffs. This surely is a wonderful record going back many years.

It is rather interesting to record that Mr. Breakwell was first employed by the Engineer of the Company but he was later transferred to the Secretary's Department, at his own request, as a Collector, as due to ill health he wished to have an outside job.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his family.

Acknowledging that in the first 25 years of the 19th Century the Country was witnessing the advent of the great Railway, Waterworks and Gas Undertakings, there was a tremendous demand for a commodity that by the very nature of its protracted manufacturing technique was holding up the march of the industrial revolution, but, as has happened so often, the hour produced the men.

To make good the deficiency in the quantity of wrought iron tubes available, gun barrels were often used in their place and to some extent they were regarded as superior, because the taper overcame the then difficult jointing problem by allowing them to be inserted one inside the other. As a substitute, however, they were expensive.

At that time the gun barrel industry was centred around Birmingham and South Staffordshire, with the Black Country town of Wednesbury rivalling its giant neighbour - Birmingham - for the distinction of being the largest producer. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the landlord of the Turks Head Inn in Wednesbury, who was also a gun barrel maker, turning his attention to the manufacture of tubes. Assisted by his brother James, John Russell started making tubes in 1811. At first they were tapered like gun barrels but the disadvantage of the taper was quickly realised and James invented a hand forged socket for parallel tubes. At this stage, however, the making of the parallel tube was still a slow process. Nevertheless, the increased demand had enabled James Russell to establish himself and the Crown Tube Works at High Bullen in Wednesbury.

James Russell and Cornelius Whitehouse are the two most important men in this story.

Cornelius Whitehouse had a chequered career but to him must be credited the invention that revolutionised the tube industry of the early eighteen hundreds. He had first been acquainted with tubes when working for a Birmingham gunsmith but had moved from Birmingham to Cannock, where, with his father, he had taken to doing outside work for a Wednesbury edge tool maker (i.e. spades, shovels, forks, etc.). Later, having in the meantime acquired knowledge of edge tool work, he came to Wednesbury and obtained employment with Elwells, the biggest edge tool works of its kind in the district.

There now occurred one of those odd coincidences that happen from time to time in all our lives. Firstly, Whitehouse had a knowledge of tube manufacture, having made gun barrels in Birmingham. Secondly, he was residing in Wednesbury, which, although it had not yet the benefit of his invention, had established itself as the centre of the country's tube industry. Thirdly, he had realised the tremendous potential for tube making offered by the hollow forge used in the edge tool industry which would heat several feet of fabricated - but unwelded - tube at a time, as opposed to the restrictive smithy forge which could only heat a few inches.

1825 was the significant year for both James Russell and Cornelius Whitehouse, the former taking out a patent for "butt-welding" iron tube - hitherto the tubes had always been lap welded - and although it improved the appearance and finish of the tubes it did nothing to speed up the protracted manufacturing process already described. To Cornelius Whitehouse must go the credit of revolutionising the tube trade - he patented the process of heating the "skelp" or strip from which the tube was to be made in the hollow forge, imparting uniform heat to several feet of tube at one time and then - and this was the all important improvement contained in the patent - he welded the tube seams by drawing it through a pair of semi-circular dies or through pincers, each jaw of which had a semi-circular groove. The principle of "butt-welding" already patented by the other protagonist Russell was retained. Whitehouse's inventions rank in importance with those of the better known Watt, Maundsley, Newcomen, etc.

At the time the patent was granted the tube was jointed with heavy cumbersome castings into which the tube was caulked. It is not surprising that Whitehouse should now turn his attention to a superior method. In the first instance Whitehouse invented the familiar wrought iron socket which was really just another tube with its inside diameter made to correspond with the outside diameter of the tube. From here it was a short step to put two or three threads on the tube ends and a corresponding thread in the socket. The testimony to the brilliance or genius of Whitehouse's invention is that the method of jointing has remained unaltered to this day. It is little wonder that the machinery used for drawing the tubes and cutting the screw threads was a closely guarded secret kept under lock and key.

During the period between the time the idea was conceived and the patent taken out, Whitehouse was employed at Elwells Wednesbury Forge. Edward Elwell, the owner of the works, had no use for the idea but introduced Whitehouse to James Russell, who at once agreed to assist Whitehouse to patent the invention. In addition, he agreed to purchase the patent from Whitehouse - for an unspecified amount - and pay him an annuity of £50 for its duration. Whitehouse accepted. The nett result of this transaction was a fortune for Russell and world wide recognition for Wednesbury which was for the next fifty years accorded the appellation "Tube Town" and the enviable position of Russells Crown Tube Works as the biggest producer of wrought iron tubes in the world. An example of the almost immediate effect of the new process was to halve the price of the tubes and to increase productivity to such an extent that the same men who made 25 lengths of 4 ft. tube under the old system were now capable of making 200 lengths of 8 ft. tube in the same time using the new method.

The story was not, however, all glory and acclaim. Both Russell and Whitehouse were, for a time, the objects of enmity and hostility, the latter man being fired upon by out-of-work operatives in the tube industry who had been made jobless by the new process, thus

compelling him to suffer the discomfort of having to sleep with a loaded gun under his pillow. Such was the price of this simple man's newly won fame.

Russell was no less besieged with trouble - he repeatedly found it necessary to take out law suits against rival tube manufacturers who were constantly infringing the Whitehouse patent. On numerous occasions his workmen had to down tools and take up weapons to repel hostile crowds at the factory gates, who were bent upon doing the Crown Tube Works a mischief. There is, in the heart of Wednesbury, a derelict site which once had the distinction of being the greatest tube works in the world. It is hard to realise that a little over one hundred years ago the wall of the Crown Works, which still stands in Wednesbury, was surmounted by iron spikes put there for the purpose of repelling rivals, and the row of cottages opposite hired by Russell's rivals for the express purpose of observing the works in the hope of learning the new processes of tube drawing and screw cutting application.

This story may seem a little difficult to believe but there is a certain confirmation in the successful law suit Russell brought against the rival firm of Cowley & Dixon, Walsall, in 1836, an establishment only two or three miles away, in which he was awarded £6,000 damages.

By 1836, which was a matter of 11 years after the revolutionary patent, the £50 annuity originally paid to Whitehouse was, in the light of subsequent events, a mere pittance. The iniquity and injustice of the situation was, however, rectified to some extent, for at this time, Russell applied for a renewal of the patent which was granted for a further six years, subject to the condition that Whitehouse's annuity of £50 be raised to £500 for the 6 year extension. Lord Broughman's judgment in extending the patent was a matter of rejoicing not only for Russell and Whitehouse but for the whole town of Wednesbury. This may seem a little incredulous now but at that time there was no such thing as diversity of industry, Wednesbury was then essentially a coal and iron town, which, with tube making, made up the greater part of its industry. It is not therefore so difficult to imagine the extent of the repercussions had Wednesbury lost the ascendancy it had attained in the iron tube industry. At that time there was no provision for unemployment. Little wonder then that the judgment in favour of the patent's extension should have been a matter for rejoicing in the town, with processions parading the streets, brass bands playing and banners borne aloft bearing the name CORNELIUS WHITEHOUSE. Heaven knows in those times there was little enough for the working class to rejoice about.

Before giving judgment in favour of the patent Lord Brougham had consulted such eminent inventors and engineers of the day as I.K.Brummel, Samuel Clegg, Francis Bramah and D.Perkins. Bramah was the inventor of the extrusion press for lead pipes. He also invented a water closet among many other sanitary appliances and valves. Perkins was, of course, the inventor of the Perkins high pressure heating system. The latter, in his evidence, testified on Whitehouse's behalf that no other tube would have enabled him to carry out his invention, that he had used nearly half a million feet during the previous 7 years and the usual working pressure was 5000 lbs. per square inch.

In 1841, three years after the patent extension, Russell found it necessary to take legal action against Daniel Ledson of Birmingham which lasted seven years and cost the parties concerned half a million pounds. After finally being referred to the House of Lords, judgment was given in Russell's favour. But by the time it was resolved, Russell had lost his health and died a year later at the age of 75.

Upon Russell's death, Whitehouse left the employ of James Russell & Sons and started a joint stock limited company, known as The Globe Tube Works, now owned by Stewarts & Lloyds. He had no aptitude for business, however, and his personal venture soon failed. The last 30 years of his life were all but easy and he died in 1883 at the venerable age of 88, a poor man.

By 1858 James Russell & Son were producing nearly 5 million feet of wrought iron tube a year. But this was the end of an era for in 1859 Samuel and Edward Lloyd opened the Nile Street Tube Works in Birmingham, which are 200 yards from Head Office on the other side of Sheepcote Street, and a year later, Andrew Stewart started making tubes in Glasgow. By 1871 Lloyd & Lloyd had challenged James Russell & Son for the title of the country's largest tube producers, and in 1903 the combine of Stewarts & Lloyds was formed which has since dominated the tube industry in this country.

In 1919 the Crown Tube Works of James Russell were acquired by John Russell and upon their first visit the newcomers found the old works so inefficient, badly laid out, and badly organised, that they abandoned any hope of restarting production. It was decided there and then to dismantle the works and the derelict site behind the wall at High Bullen, Wednesbury, exists to this day.

The final twist in this rather sad tale is that in 1929 Stewarts & Lloyds acquired the controlling interest in both James Russell & Son and John Russell & Company, although they still continue to trade in the original name because of their high commercial reputation.

HOLIDAYS ABROAD.

Do you know the delights of a Continental Holiday? The glorious freedom of motoring on the other side of the Channel, with all Europe before you? In two or three days you can reach the snow capped Alps towering above valleys full of flowers and the off-beat jangle of cowbells.

Then there is the fun of fresh scenery, different languages, strange customs, dreamy food and wine, shops, cafes, and casinos that never seem to close, and the feeling of complete freedom that you get the moment you reach the other side of the Channel.

Only with a car can you see and do so much so easily. Just pack yourselves and luggage into it and make sure you have valid passports, car documents, and insurance cover. At ports and frontiers you may need to produce them and car and luggage may be inspected too, although at some frontier posts a mere showing of passport and insurance card is enough. Then, Channel passages booked, you are off - free as air! But do travel wisely. Remember you are on holiday and though 300 miles a day is tempting, except on mountain roads, it isn't much fun. So allow time to enjoy the passing scenery, to linger over a drink (at any hour!), to explore away from main roads and see something of the real countryside and people. For that is the joy of going by car.

Lucerne, the fabulous lagoon city in Switzerland, is where we chose for our first motoring holiday abroad.

Abroad at last. Easy, thanks to the R.A.C. and British Railway **Car** Ferry Services. Dover at 11 a.m., and we were leaving Ostend by 2.30 p.m. along the motorway towards Brussels, covering sixtyfive miles in the first hour. We rushed through Brussels and made our first stop for tea at Namur, in a hurry to reach Luxembourg before darkness, a total distance of 210 miles from Ostend. This was bad planning on my part, although we made Luxembourg on time.

In Luxembourg we soon found our hotel, booked in advance by the R.A.C. and the arrangements made were first class. Before leaving the next morning we had our first continental breakfast, coffee, bread rolls and butter and this suited us fine, but would-be tourists who enjoy their English breakfast of bacon and eggs will find them rather expensive.

On the road again we soon crossed into Northern France and at the frontier we had only to stop a moment and show papers. Our journey was via Metz, Nancy and Mullhouse, and although this is the industrial area of France it was very peaceful, with little traffic. Then through the Swiss Customs at Basle who were extremely polite and wished us a happy stay in Switzerland, and by 8 p.m. that evening we were installed in our Hotel at Lucerne.

A landscape of unsurpassed beauty surrounds the delightful resort of Lucerne. Lofty peaks, the blue water of the lake, woods and hills conspire to make a holiday never to be forgotten. A short journey by comfortable cable railway takes one to various viewpoints, from where you can gaze down upon Lucerne. There is a thousand and one places of beauty and interest in Lucerne well worth a visit.

The Swiss are masterly hosts, mad on hygiene, efficient, shrewd and excellent caterers. Swiss cooking offers considerable variety in its cuisine, for there is a medley of French, German and Italian dishes. Most Swiss specialities are linked with cheese. No fear of tummy upsets.

When shopping, watches and clocks are amongst the best purchases to be made in Switzerland and they are certainly to be found in a most pleasing range of design. From the ladies point of view there is a wonderful array of embroidery, including blouses and gorgeous laces. And one must not forget the intriguing musical boxes.

The Swiss monetary unit is the Franc, equal to 100 cents. 12 Francs equal £1. sterling approximately.

Finally, the cost of such a holiday for two adults and one child aged 7. Booking made through the R.A.C., full travel and 1st Class Tourist Grade Hotel accommodation was less than £90. for twelve days.

This figure does not include custom duty and price of a new watch for my wife.

I am sure all readers will wish to join me in expressing thanks to Mr. D. Parsons, Distribution Department, for his help in taking the photographs in this and recent issues of the News Review. I know he has given up a lot of his spare time to develop these photographs and I should like him to know how much we appreciate his co-operation.

(Editor)

MR. W.J.SALE, FOREMAN,
CHILCOTE PUMPING STATION.

On Friday, 11th December, a number of Mr. Sale's colleagues met at Chilcote Pumping Station to be with him when he was presented with a Barometer and Transistor radio on the occasion of his retirement. The presentation was made by Mr. G.V.Hall (and I am told he braved some very dense fog) who wished Mr. Sale a long and happy retirement.

Before joining the South Staffs, "Bill" as he was usually called, worked along with his father overhauling ordinary village hand-pumps, and on one occasion, at the age of 14 years, he cleaned out a 60 ft. well.

Later he joined Messrs. A.C.Potters of Grantham at the commencement of boring the main boreholes at Prestwood and when this was completed he was transferred to Dummingsdale for the Wolverhampton Water Board.

One day Mr. Fred J. Dixon, accompanied by Mr. G. Povey, visited the site and offered Mr. Sale a job at Prestwood Pumping Station, and after ten years, under the strict supervision of the late Mr.W. Fellows, he was promoted to Foreman and moved to Chilcote to work on the erection of the plant, where he remained up to his retirement approximately 28 years later.

We have received a letter from Mr. Sale thanking everyone concerned for the generous gifts which, he says, will be a constant reminder of all his friends, without whose help his job would not have been so easy.

Mr. Sale is living at Brookside, Weston Lane, Bishopswood, Brewood, Stafford, and says he and Mrs. Sale will always be pleased to see old colleagues.

Mr. J. Harris, Engine Tenter.
Pipe Hill Pumping Station.

When Mr. J.Harris, Engine Tenter, retired on the 31st January a number of his colleagues gathered at Pipe Hill Pumping Station to present him with a pocket wallet and to wish him many happy years of retirement. Mrs. Harris was given a handbag to mark the occasion and in a short speech Mr. Harris thanked everyone for the gifts and said he was particularly pleased to receive the wallet because it was the first one he had ever possessed.

Personalia

NEW EMPLOYEES

Mr. D.S.Danks	Arch. Dept.	Mr.W.Collins	Wood Green
Miss J.G.Hextell	Secretary's	Mrs. A.M.Waring	Walsall
Mr. R.A.Fuller	Do. Dept.	Mr. C.W.Jones	Sandfields
Mr.T.E.Hickman	Do.	Mr. A.R.Tranter	Service Dept.
Mr.W.A.Alderman	Do.	Mrs.L.S.M.Rudge	Comptometer
Miss C.Edwards	Powers Samas	Mrs. B.M.Woodall	Do. Dept.
Mr. P.L.Worthington	Order Dept.	Miss M.R.Horton	Elec.Dept.
Mr. D.H.L.Mills	Distribution	Mr. A.J.Leach	C.E.D.
Mr. P.R.Priest	Do. Dept.	Mr. R.G.Sewell	Do.
Mrs. D.P.Tromans	Do.	Mr. C.P.Strangwood	Mech.Dept.
Mr. K.J.Shaw	Wood Green	Mr. N.B.Harvey	Cannock
		Mr. A.F.Jones	Do.

RESIGNATIONS

Miss P. Lavell	C.E.D.	Mr. N.S.Brook	Arch.Dept.
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RETIREMENTS

Mr. A. Thrupp, Waterman, Cannock Depot, retired 31st October 1964, aged 64 years.

Mr. J.Harris, Engine Tenter, Pipe Hill Pumping Station, retired 30th January, 1965, aged 65 years.

Mr.W.J.Sale, Foreman, Chilcote Pumping Station, retired 10th Jan. 1965, aged 65 years.

Mr. W.E.Smith, Leading Trenchman, Walsall Depot, retired 1st November, 1964, due to ill health following motor accident, aged 64 years.

Mr. P.J.Neale, Bricklayers' Labourer, retired 1st November 1964, aged 60 years.

Mr. A.Wright, Pumping Station Attendant, Trent Valley Pumping Station retired 27th January aged 65 years.

Mr. T.Fletcher, Waterman, Wednesbury District, retired 8th January 1965, aged 65 years.

Mr. R.E.Brookes, Waterman, Cradley Heath, retired 28th March 1965, aged 65 years.

DEATHS

We regret to report the following deaths :-

- Mr. H. Smith, Driver, Wood Green Repair Shop, died 21st September 1964, after a short illness, aged 57 years.
- Mr. J. Manning, Plumber, Cannock Depot, died suddenly on the 23rd September aged 46 years.
- Mr. J.W.Taylor, Formerly Waste Inspector, Tipton Depot, died 13th October, aged 72 years. Mr. Taylor retired in October, 1958.
- Mrs. S. Clarke, Cleaner, Walsall Depot, died 10th October 1964, aged 53 years.
- Mr. J. Gilbert, Engine Tenter, Little Hay, died on the 13th October, aged 55 years.
- Mr. E.B.Slinn, Stoker, Slade Heath, died on 16th October, aged 56 years.
- Mr. W.J. Young, Formerly Collector, West Bromwich, died on the 22nd October, aged 66 years.
- Mr. J.A. Lowndes, Formerly Stoker at Brindley Bank, died on the 23rd November 1964, aged 82 years. Mr. Lowndes retired in 1948.
- Mr. A.L. Matthews, Leading Engine Tenter, Seedy Mill, died on the 16th November 1964, aged 54 years.
- Mr. C. Bedworth, Formerly Waterman, Walsall Depot, died on 4th December, aged 65 years. Mr. Bedworth retired in February 1964.
- Mr. Wm. Breakwell, Formerly Collector, died on 31st December 1964, aged 90 years. Mr. Breakwell retired in September 1934.
- Mr. Z. Hopwood, Formerly Reservoir Attendant, died on 31st January 1965, aged 76 years. Mr. Hopwood retired in October 1954.
- Mr. A.S. Parlett, Formerly Chief Inspector, Tipton Depot, died on 7th April, 1965, aged 84 years. Mr. Parlett retired 31st May, 1945.
- Mr. J. Stevens, Waterman, Tipton Depot, died 7th April 1965, aged 63 years.
- Mr. E.J. Davies, Formerly Turncock, Tipton Depot, died on 5th February 1965, aged 69 years.
- Mr. W.I. Forks, Mains Ganger, Walsall Depot, died suddenly on 17th January, aged 62 years.
- Mr. W. Didlock, Motor Driver, Tipton Depot, died on 26th February, aged 55 years.
- Mr. H. Shelton, Formerly Head of Meter Dept. died on 21st March, aged 84 years.

BIRTHS.

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. A.B. Bromley on the birth of a Daughter on the 23rd October. Also to Mr. & Mrs. F. Houghton (Miss A. Wall) on the birth of a Son on the 26th February.