

# Letters to the Editor

## Hatcham Ironworks

The article on George England and the Hatcham Ironworks New Cross in London's Industrial Archaeology, no 3 provoked a number of letters carrying additional information and corrections particularly to the list of locomotives built at the works.

From GLIAS member Michael J. O'Connor came the following:

1. "The Scandal" . *A Mid-Victorian Pepys* ed. S.M. Ellis 1923 contains a letter from William Hardman, June 1862 referring to England as the largest shareholder in the Crystal Palace Co (*I don't know if this was correct*), *being forced* to resign from the board after a scandal in which he indicted his son-in-law Fairlie for perjury. England's reply was that he made himself unpopular by trying to make his company more efficient. Ellis's note was that Fairlie married England's illegitimate daughter (whose mother was by then England's second wife), swearing falsely that he had England's consent. Fairlie was acquitted because in law England was not the father.

England advertised in the *Daily Telegraph* 18th April 1862 to the shareholders of the Crystal Palace Co. that, despite rumours, he had then resigned from the Board.

2. **Locomotives.** England's first locomotive was apparently built in 1848 and tried on the Newhaven Branch. It (or a second?) ran on the Horsham branch in December 1848 (*Railway Gazette* 89 10/12/1948 p660). Both are described as light engines.

London and Blackwall had 2 2-2-2WT, Dwarf (1849) and Pigmy Giant (1850) as well as 8 & 9. I think that footnote (a) should refer to the Exhibition Loco.

Add to list of engines built the following

1851 2-2-2WT Namuir & Leige Railway

1851 2-2-2WT Koping Hult Railway, Sweden, LITTLE ENGLAND, Brought 1854

1853 2-4-0 Caledonian Railway 151

N.B. CR 144-151 were not ordered by Dunlop but 182-3 were both ordered by Dunlop and delivered to him, sold to CR in 1857.

1870 Inspection Car, Oudh & Rohilund Railway

Corrections to the printed list include:

a. I've never come across L&B locos of 1852

b. Victorian Railway 12,13,15,17 were re-numbered 1,3,4,5 (2 became 11).

c. The West Flanders Railway (not Flandres Orientale) apparently had 6 2-4-0s (60-5) not 8. Etat Belge 433-40 are given as taken over from Soc. Gen. d'Exploitation, 2-4-0 built 1868 and seem to be distinct but the history is obscured by the SGE operating the FO in 1868-1871.

d. 2 of the 1865 2-4-0s (built for the SER) are said to have gone to Genoa

e. Fairlie's Steamcar was tried on the LC&DR but not sold to them.



**Plate 1.** George England's works: building B (1853) occupied by the General Engine & Boiler Co. Ltd. June 1963.



**Plate 2.** George England's works: building C (1862) occupied by Robert Blackie, June 1963.

f. The BP&VR only had one Fairlie. Note (j) therefore applies to one loco only.

### 3. Miscellaneous References from Engineering

Vol.8 1869 p125 refers to test track as 1/9th mile not exactly circular 3 quadrants of 50ft radius, 'villainous permanent way.

Vol.10 1870 p43 Obituary to George England Jnr.

Vol.28 1879 p3 First reference I know to the General Engine and Boiler Co.

**Michael Seymour, Hon Curator of Archives & Relics to the Festiniog Railway Co., wrote**

It is a brave man who compiles a list of G. England locomotives, especially where the "Little England" 2-2-2WTs are concerned; I have tried to make sense of the various references on these locomotives, without much success, and I suspect that the list is not quite right. I would have some reservations about allocating works numbers 199-200 to "Princess" and "Prince"; the only certain fact is that these two numbers were found on the motion fitted at present to "Princess" when work was done to prepare her for entry into the Museum. The most likely order of delivery and construction of the four locomotives is "Mountaineer", "The Princess" in July 1863, followed by "The Prince" in early 1864 and "Palmerston" later in 1864 - this being based on the few scraps of certain fact available. Accordingly, works number 199 may belong to "Mountaineer", but this no more than a attribution. "Palmerston" so far as I am aware still belongs to the Group Five Engine Association, who bought the remains from the F.R.

**Mr M.P. Baker of Finchingfield, Braintree writes**

I refer to the locomotives listed as having gone to the London & Blackwall Railway in particular those named "Samson" and "Hercules" (No.8 & 9 respectively). I believe they were built in 1852 and had 15in x18in outside cylinders with 5ft 6in driving wheels and not in 1850 with 9in x12in inside cylinders with 4ft 6in drivers as stated and that only one locomotive was built in 1850. This view is supported by J.E. Connors book on the London & Blackwall entitled *Stepney's Own Railway* and also the journal of the G.E.R. Society No 19 where an article by R. Blick quotes *The Locomotive Magazine* (15 May 1909) and *Journal of Stephenson Locomotive Society* (Sept. 1955).

I think I might however be able to explain this discrepancy. In the article the names appear next to the two locomotives above the two to which they should refer. I also think that where the two names to refer to the two separate locomotives there should be only one listed. In short, I think the whole is a typographical error.

**David Thomas** has provided the following update on the two food processing sites described in London's Industrial Archaeology No.3.

### Edge Runners in Walworth.

After falling into disuse in 1978 this works remained virtually intact for several years. The former owner, Mr Schimmer, readily agreed that GLIAS could contact museums to see if they would be interested in acquiring any of the sets of edge runners. When this correspondence took place, early in 1985, site ownership had passed to ILEA who wished to use it to enlarge the playground of their adjacent St. John's school. ILEA were most helpful, and arrangements were made for 2 sets of edge runners to be taken, one by the Museum of London, one by the Wandle Industrial Museum, which is based at a former snuff mill in Morden.

ILEA also agreed in principle to retain a few stones with a view to using them, if possible as a feature in their development. Unfortunately for them when the the buildings were demolished no less than 12 individual stones were left, each weighing considerably more than a ton (Plate 3). As yet (May 1988), work on creating the playground has yet to start, and GLIAS is still trying to find suitable homes for those stones not required by ILEA.

### Southwark Bacon Drying Co.

In June 1982, after 2 years standing empty this oddly shaped building was acquired by a rapidly expanding new company, Metrovideo, which makes films, designs video systems and hires equipment. They moved in during 1984. They kindly allowed me look round in April 1988.

The main facade has been left unaltered, even to leaving a sign, "Bacon smoking in progress" (Plate 4). There has been new work to the roof over the former open space between the top levels of the stoves. Immediately inside the former boardroom, with panelled walls, is again the main office.

Overall, this is an excellent and successful conversion.



Plate 4. Sign outside Southwark Bacon Drying Co. (Photo D Thomas April 1988)

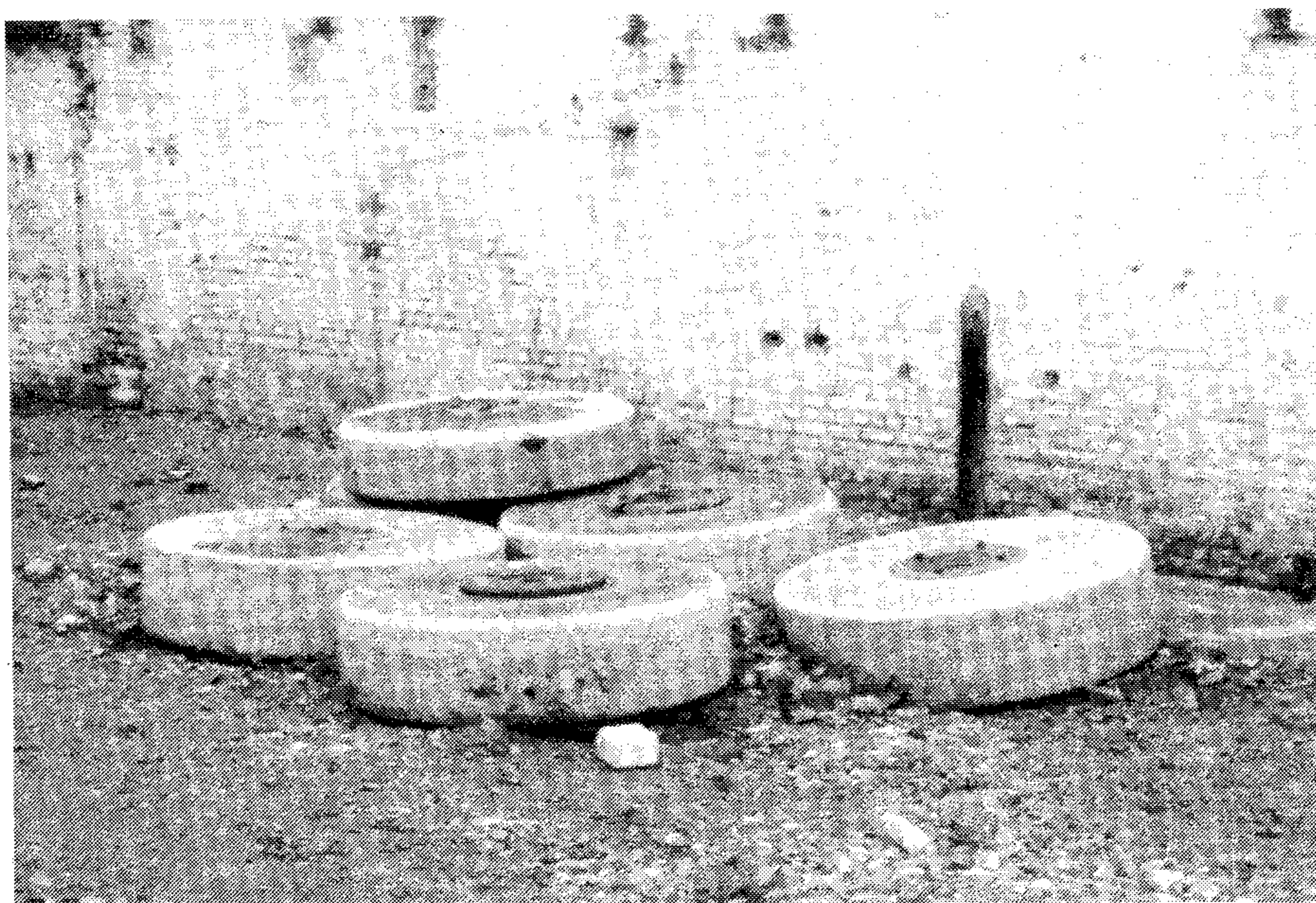


Plate 3. Edge runners awaiting re-use after demolition of the works (Photo D Thomas May 1988)