

The Nailsea Glassworks,

Nailsea, North Somerset

Introduction

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April, 2004

The cover photograph, © Cloud 9 High Level Photography, dates from 1987/1988, and is an overhead view, looking approximately north-east, over the New House Cone base as excavated. Directly beyond the Cone are the local Council's temporary offices, and beyond these, with the slate roof, stands one of the then extant buildings on the site, the offices for the glassworks in 1870. To the left of this is one of the terraces of workers' housing on the north side of the High Street, while to the right may be seen the buildings of the former Avon Motor Company. These are in approximately the same position as the Tesco supermarket now occupies. It is reproduced by courtesy of Mr M Thurstan, "Denmans", 5, West Street, South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5DQ, the owner of Cloud 9 High Level Photography.

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Abbreviations

AAU	Avon Archaeological Unit
AIBT	Avon Industrial Buildings Trust
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum (also sometimes quoted as OD)
BCL	Bristol Central Reference Library
BCM	Bristol City Museum
BIAS	Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society
BRO	Bristol Record Office
GPS	Global Positioning System
NDLHS	Nailsea and District Local History Society
NGR	National Grid Reference
NMR	National Monuments Record Office, Swindon
NSM	North Somerset Museum, Weston-super-Mare
NS SMR	North Somerset Sites and Monuments Record
OS	Ordnance Survey
SRO	Somerset Record Office

Acknowledgements:

The author and Avon Archaeological Unit wish to acknowledge the assistance given by the following in the preparation and production of this study: Mr Vince Russett, North Somerset County Archaeologist, the staff at both the Bristol and Somerset Record Offices (including Mr T Mayberry, the Somerset County Archivist and Irene Andrews) and the National Monuments Record, in Swindon. David Evans, SMR Officer for South Gloucestershire, kindly gave me help with a query on a possible glassworks at Wick, and Bath & North East Somerset Council staff provided the SMR information on Stanton Wick Glassworks (BN 2247). The staff of the Bristol Central Reference Library, and of Nailsea Library, Mrs B Knutson in particular, also helped greatly in obtaining relevant details. Jane Hill, at the North Somerset Museum, Weston-super-Mare, was generous with her limited time, and Nick Goff, the manager there was most helpful in facilitating examination of the artefactual evidence and permitting the analysis of samples by English Heritage. Due acknowledgement must also be given to H. E. Dommett and Cyril Weeden whose comprehensive papers appeared in BIAS journals. Similarly to Margaret Thomas who has published a great deal of work as histories of Nailsea and district and the

glassworks in particular, as well as to all the unsung archaeologists, both amateur and professional, who have spent so much time on the site over the years.

Dr David Crossley, who is well known as a specialist in the subject, has been most helpful in considering such artefactual and other evidence as exists, and his contribution in this and other ways, and that of Michael Cable, via Dr Crossley, has been very valuable, as has that of Dr Justine Bailey and Gareth Hatton of the English Heritage Centre for Archaeology at Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth. Nina Walburg, also of English Heritage, was very helpful with information on the progress of scheduling the site.

Mr Ian Stuart, of Stuart Crystal, was most helpful and instructive when the writer visited the Red House Cone Museum near Stourbridge, and thanks are due to the staff there for their assistance and for permission to photograph. Similarly to Mr & Mrs Beadman and their staff at the Dial House Cone, presently operating as Tudor Crystal and Plowden & Thompson Ltd. Also to staff at the Broadfield Glass Museum at Kingswinford, and in particular to Roger Dodsworth, Keeper of Glass there, who not only was very helpful directly but recommended contacting Dr David Watts, editor of *The Glass Circle*, and also Dr Patricia Baker, editor of *The Glass Cone*. Both were extremely helpful, in offering to publish some of my queries, which was much appreciated. Helpful information was received from three readers of *The Glass Cone*, namely Mr John Westmoreland, Dr Michael K Baldwin, and Mr Ian Burgoyne, a former Curator of the Pilkington Glass Museum, who kindly included a copy of *Two Thousand Years of Flat Glass Making*.

Phil Brown of the Technical Advisory Service at Pilkington UK Ltd sent useful information. David Moore of the Society of Glass Technology gave similar assistance, as did Dr Hugh Willmott of Sheffield University. Similarly, Dr David Martlew, of Pilkington's research department, and Mike Tuffey of English Antique Glass, Bordesley Hall, near Birmingham; both gave valuable advice on furnace construction and the latter was most helpful with allowing a first-hand view of crown glass and broad glass manufacturing, and allowing photographs to be taken of the processes. Thanks are also due to his blowing team, Harry Prior and Andrew Hay, for their patience and help.

Mr M J Tozer allowed use of copyright images from his collection of local photographs and postcards, as did Mr M Thurstan of Cloud 9 High Level Photography. Mr T Bowen, Chairman of the Nailsea and District Local History Society was very helpful (as was Peter Wright of the same Society) and allowed the use of his reconstruction drawings, as well as giving invaluable help with updating the transcription of Coathupe's 1836/7 notebook. Thanks are also due to the Society for permission to reproduce some of their photographs. This also extends to Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery and staff there, in particular Karin Walton, for facilitating photography in the 'Glass' gallery, and helping with the issue of copyright. The same thanks are due to the National Trust and Mr. D Fogden, their Administrator at Clevedon Court, for facilitating photography of their collection of 'Nailsea Glass'. [There is also a collection at Taunton Museum, but this was not visited.] Acknowledgements are due to Mr and Mrs Woods of the Clevedon Archaeological Society for telling me of the display on the Glassworks and Nailsea Glass at the Scotch Horn Centre, Nailsea, to the staff there for permission to view and photograph, and to North Somerset Museum (Nick Goff) for permission to reproduce, the display being mounted by that museum.

Mr J Cornwell of Bristol Coal Mining Archive offered a useful commentary on the presence of coal mines and mining practices. Mr Keith Gardner had some very useful observations on local archaeological matters, having been involved in archaeology locally for many years.

Mr J Underwood, Information Librarian at the Science Museum, London, was also very helpful, and thanks are due to both him and his staff for providing the details of the Frisbie furnace feeder patent. The Arts and Social Sciences Library at the University of Bristol provided some useful references, in particular the book by J F Chance on the history of Chance Brothers, and Bevan's book containing statistics about workers in the glassmaking industry [among others] from 1871. Thanks are due to Kimberley Nusco, Reference Librarian at the Massachusetts Historical Society, for help with the 1804 price list (and for facilitating gaining the permission to reproduce it, received from Peter Drummey, Librarian, with thanks), to Miles Clark of Hillcrest Books, Crossville, Tennessee for assistance with the *Scientific American* article on the Frisbie feeder and to Rod Dowling of the Bristol and Avon Archaeological Society for drawing my attention to some relevant extracts from *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*.

Laura Stange and her colleagues kindly delved back in to the somewhat musty archives at The Office for National Statistics for data from 1871, which was forwarded for use in part 4 and due acknowledgement must be given to the Office for permission to use and reproduce that information. The information on crown glass windows at Longleat was kindly supplied by Dr Kate Harris, Curator, Longleat Historic Collections.

Mr M Chapman (AIBT), Mrs J Dagnall (Clevedon Archaeological Society) and Mrs J E Blackwell all helped with contact addresses/telephone numbers. Jane Shillaker of the Public Record Office provided the full reference for the thirteenth Report of the Commissioners of Excise, and information on copyright issues.

Numerous websites were searched for information, extensive use being made of the "Google" search engine, but very little technical information resulted, so it is not considered worthwhile listing these in the references. There are, however several *Glass* bibliographies and glossaries, but it was not considered necessary or particularly helpful to include them here, as there did not seem to be any one found that was truly comprehensive. It is regretted that some well-known establishments did not reply to repeated enquiries.

Late in the process, it became apparent that there is a 'Chance Collection' in the Special Collections section of the Library at the University of Birmingham. Christine Penny, responded to my enquiry to determine if there are any details of the Nailsea Glassworks in the Chance Brothers Archive, held in the Special Collections of the University of Birmingham Library. Phillipa Bassett, the Archivist there, was kind enough to detail their holding¹, and to tell me that they did not hold any records relating to the glassworks at Nailsea. She suggested contacting the Sandwell Community History and Archives Service, as holding additional records of Chance Brothers and Co. I am grateful to them and to S A Goode at Sandwell (who in turn told me that the Chance archive is held by Pilkington), and also to Mr Philip Webb, Corporate Affairs Manager at Pilkington who told me on 20th August 2004 that their Chance Archive is about to be transferred from Pilkington to the Sandwell Archives Service for permanent safe-keeping, so an enquiry to them would be appropriate in the near future (archives.service@sandwell.gov.uk).

¹ "Our Chance Collection comprises the records of three companies associated with the Chance family of Birmingham: Chance and Homer, William Chance and Son, and Chance Brothers and Co. Records comprise stock books of Chance and Homer, hardware factors, 1771-1880; ledger of William and George Chance, partners in the exporting firm later known as William Chance and Son, 1816-1824; private ledger of Sir James Timmins Chance, partner and manager of Chance Brothers and Co, glass manufacturers, 1838-1875; manuscript accounts of Robert Lucas Chance, partner and manager of Chance and Brothers, later known as Chance Brothers and Co, for 1831."

I am very grateful to Mr Mike Noble, Factory Manager at United Glass Limited, Alloa, for his interest and for being very generous with his time when I turned up without warning, hoping to photograph the cone there, in very inclement weather.

Thanks are due to Catherine Hardman and her staff at the Archaeological Data Service at York for advice and help towards getting the project made available on the world-wide web.

Finally, very warm thanks are also due to colleagues Andrew Young, Jonathan Erskine and Lynn Hume for help and encouragement with the preparation and production of this study, and to long-suffering friends and family, who lost me to glassmaking in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for nearly two years. It is hoped that the result justifies all the help so generously given, and that there are no omissions in the above acknowledgements. If there are, my most sincere apologies are proffered.

Note

Whereas Avon Archaeological Unit have taken all care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

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