

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery (Vulcan Brewery) Brecon Road, Merthyr Tydfil

Historic Building Record

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A report for Cadw
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Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Contents

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record	3
Summary	3
Introduction.....	3
Acknowledgments.....	4
Copyright notice.....	4
The Record	4
Brewing Process.....	6
Cartographic Evidence.....	10
Aerial Photographs.....	14
Description of Standing Buildings.....	17
Development of the Brewery	42
Bibliography	45
Appendix A: Trade Directory References to Brewery	46
Appendix B: Trade Directory References to Harrap Family Residencies	49
Appendix C: Index of Photographs.....	51
Appendix D: Photographic Contact Sheets.....	55
Appendix E: Advertisements	61

Maps

Map 1 Location.....	5
Map 2 John Woods Map of Merthyr Tydfil 1836.....	10
Map 3 Board of Health 1851	11
Map 4 Ordnance Survey 1881	12
Map 5 Ordnance Survey 1899	13
Map 6 Ordnance Survey 1917	13
Map 7 Block Map Identifying Recorded Buildings.....	16

Figures

Figure 1 Brecon Road Façade: Buildings A, B C and J.....	64
Figure 2 Southern Façade: Buildings A, B and C; Buildings D,E and K	65
Figure 3 Buildings E, J, K, L and M South Face	66
Figure 4 Buildings J, L, M and N West Face.....	67
Figure 5 Buildings G, H and I West Face.....	68

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Photographs

Photograph 1 View of Site from the Cyfarthfa Retail Park	7
Photograph 2 Brecon Road Frontage 1910 (courtesy of Alan George).....	9
Photograph 3 Aerial View 1950	14
Photograph 4 Aerial Photograph 1989 (Courtesy Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council).....	15
Photograph 5 Brewery site from west in 1971 (Courtesy of Alan George).....	16
Photograph 1 Brecon Road Façade from East	17
Photograph 2 Brecon Road Facade: Buildings B and C	18
Photograph 3 Brecon Road Facade: Gable of Building A.....	18
Photograph 4 Brecon Road Facade: Building A, Window and Door Detail	19
Photograph 5 Brecon Road Facade: Building A, Western Entrance	20
Photograph 6 Brecon Road Facade: Building B, Main Entrance	20
Photograph 7 South Facade	21
Photograph 8 Building A, Ashlar Facing on West Gable Corner.....	22
Photograph 9 Building C, East Facade	23
Photograph 10 Building D	24
Photograph 11 Building E from East	25
Photograph 12 Building E: East Side of South Gable	26
Photograph 13 Building E South Gable with Building K (chimney) and Building M in Foreground.....	27
Photograph 14 Building E West Wall from South.....	28
Photograph 15 Building G, Brecon Road Frontage	29
Photograph 16 Building G, West Side	30
Photograph 17 Building H from west	31
Photograph 18 Building I From West.....	32
Photograph 19 Building J from West.....	32
Photograph 20 Building A During Demolition (Note West Gable constructed from buff bricks).....	33
Photograph 21 Building J South Gable.....	34
Photograph 22 Brecon Road Facade Building J	35
Photograph 23 Building K From West in 1971 (courtesy of Alan George)	36
Photograph 24 Building K Detail of surviving decoration	36
Photograph 25 Building L from South.....	37
Photograph 26 Building M from South	38
Photograph 27 Building N from South	39
Photograph 28 Building O from North	40
Photograph 29 Building P from North.....	41

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Summary

In January 2009 the Wales and West Housing Association informed Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council that they were going to demolish the former Merthyr Tydfil Brewery as it was unsafe and a potential health and safety risk. Cadw provided a grant to enable the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust to carry out emergency recording of the brewery buildings prior to their demolition.

The Merthyr Tydfil Brewery was reputed to be the oldest Brewery in Merthyr Tydfil with the earliest record being from 1830. The earliest surviving building may have been constructed before 1842 but the majority of buildings were constructed during the period that the brewery was under the control of the Giles family (later Giles and Harrap) from 1850 until it was sold to William Hancocks and Co in 1936

The original brewery buildings consisted of a range of store houses and spirit vaults with a decorated façade alongside Brecon Road with the brew house, malt house and other brewing buildings located at the rear. A house for the owner was also part of the complex. By 1881 a new malt house and stable complex had been constructed. Substantial investment before 1899 saw a new range constructed and by 1917 a new brew house complex along with a boiler and engine house completed the brewery buildings.

The brewery ceased production in 1936 when it was bought by Hancocks and the buildings converted into a distribution depot. Later the site was purchased by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council for use as their estates yard.

Introduction

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council sold their former estates yard, known as the Vulcan Yard, to the Wales and West Housing Association for redevelopment in 2007, site is located at NGR SO 0480 0660. The Housing Association subsequently submitted a planning application to the Merthyr Tydfil Local Planning Authority for the clearance of all of the buildings from the site and the construction of twenty dwellings on the site (planning application P/07/00667). The Archaeological Planning Service of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, the Council's archaeological advisors, identified that the buildings on the site were those of the Merthyr Tydfil Brewery, reputed to be the oldest brewery in Merthyr Tydfil and recommended that a condition requiring the buildings to be recorded by a building historian should be attached to any consent that was granted. Unfortunately a number of issues were raised in response to the planning application that led to the determination of the planning application being delayed. In the meantime the condition of the buildings deteriorated to a point where they were determined to be dangerous and potentially a health and safety risk. Therefore, in January 2009 the Housing Association notified

the Local Planning Authority that they were going to demolish the buildings. The demolition of these historic buildings without a record would clearly have been a significant loss to the historic record of Merthyr Tydfil and Cadw funded the Archaeological Planning Service of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust to carry out emergency recording of the buildings.

Wales and West Housing Association allowed access to the site but due to the condition of the buildings it was not possible to enter them. The recording work was carried out on site on the 10th February 2009 after a night of snow by Neil Maylan and Rachel Bowden of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust and this report has been prepared by Neil Maylan.

Acknowledgments

The research for this report has been assisted by a number of people in particular Carolyn Jacobs of Merthyr Tydfil Library whose knowledge of Merthyr Tydfil and census records aided research into the ownership of the brewery; Alan George of www.oldmerthtydfil.com for supplying maps and photographs; and Duncan Taylor and Lesley Morgan of Stogumber who assisted in providing details of the Giles family. Johann Horton and Lee Pickett of the Wales and West Housing Association arranged access to the site. The illustrations were digitised by Paul Jones and the report was read and commented on by Dr Edith Evans, Claudine Gerrard and Judith Doyle all of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.

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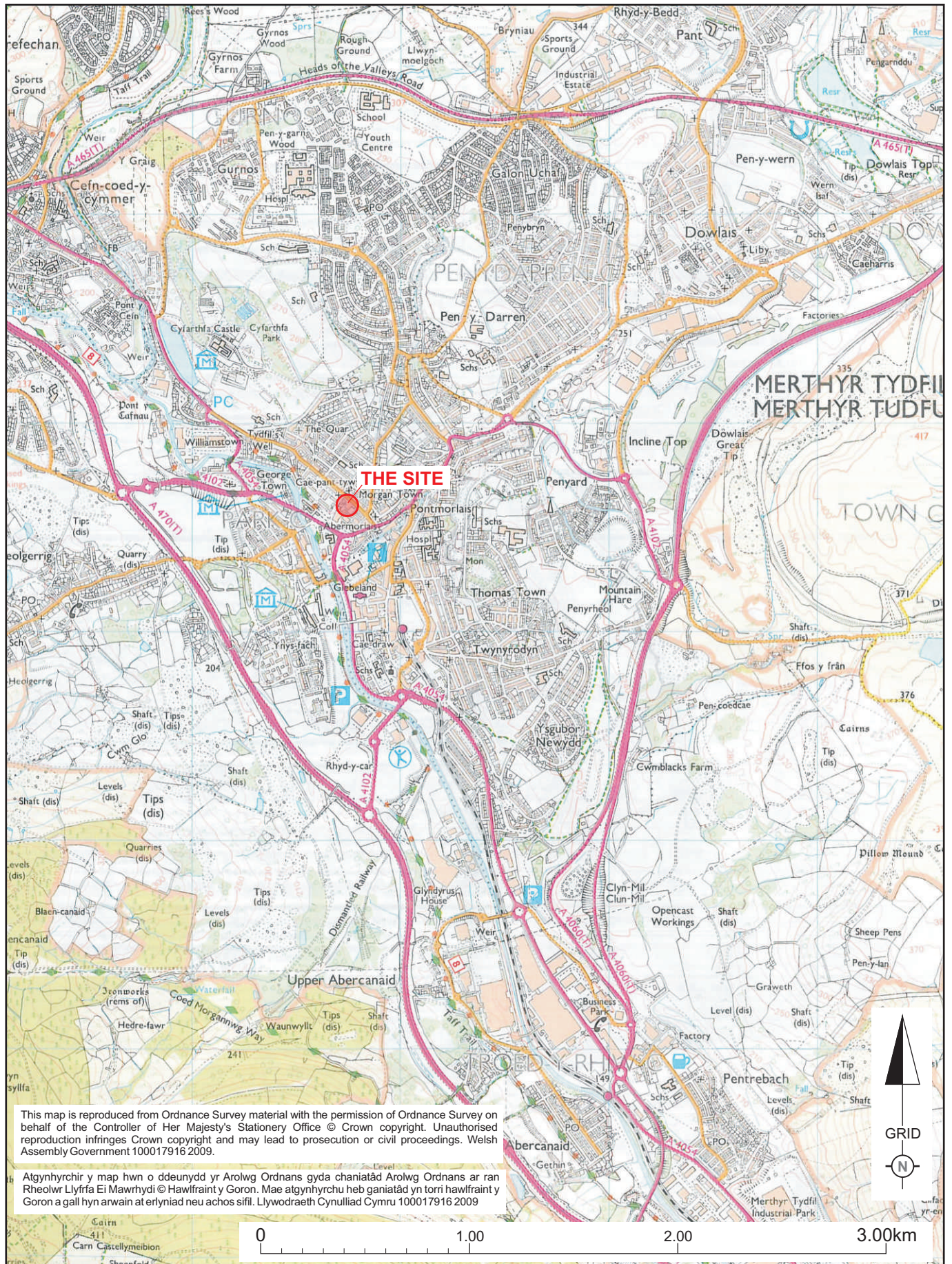
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The Record

The building recording was undertaken on the 10th February 2009 following a night of snow. On site recording was carried out using sketch drawings measured by tape and written notes whilst a photographic record was also taken. These sketches, notes and photographs were later worked up into site drawings. Unfortunately, the poor state of the buildings prevented access to the building, information about the interior of the buildings has been obtained from a report produced by Bowen and Partners entitled "Pre-construction information: Tender Stage for Vulcan Brewery Site". The site was visited on a number of occasions during February and March 2009 during the demolition and the buildings photographed from public right of ways.

For ease of recording Brecon Road has been taken as running east to west and therefore 'site north' follows the main line of the buildings that are aligned upon it.

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record



Topography

The brewery site is located on Brecon Road at National Grid Reference SO 0480 0660. Brecon Road, or Tydfil's Well Road as it was originally called, was one of the major routes in the town leading from the town centre towards the next major settlement, Brecon, some 20km away. After leaving the town centre the road climbed slightly and then followed the east side of the Taff valley until it reached a small valley cut by a stream that flowed from a spring higher up the side of the Taff Valley in the park surrounding Penydarren House. The Brecon Road crossed this valley by a causeway which had also been utilised as a dam penning in water to the north of the road to form an irregular shaped lake noted on John Wood's plan 1836 of Merthyr Tydfil as "Fish Pond". Two culverts passed underneath the road and linked the Fish Pond with a roughly square pond formed by the construction of an earthen dam across the valley also marked on Wood's Plan as "Fish Pond" but which later became known as "Old Brewery Pond".

The original brewery was mainly established on the edge of a flat plateau above and to the east of the Old Brewery Pond. Advantage was taken of the break in the slope to the rear of the original buildings allowing sub-basements to be constructed. When the ponds was drained the builders of the new brewery buildings took advantage of the lower topography to allow the construction of additional floors without raising the overall height of the buildings. In all there is a fall of some 4.4m east to west across the site that clearly had advantages for the brewery operation which was able to use gravity to move liquids between many of its processes.

It is assumed that the brewery was located in this position to take advantage of the topography and of the water supply from the penned up water of the stream, which as it had risen only some 1km to the north in the grounds of Penydarren Park would still have been fresh.

Brewing Process

Beer in Merthyr Tydfil was made from barley, initially this was soaked in water (steeped) for up to seventy hours to allow germination to commence. The barley was then spread over a malting floor being occasionally turned as the germination took place for between eight and fifteen days before the part-germinated grains were dried in a kiln for between three and five days. This process known as malting (as it produces malt) requires significant space and buildings with strong floors able to take the weight of the steeping vats. The malt is then milled and ground into a powder known as grist.

The main brewing process commenced with the mixing of the grist with water, which at this brewery would have been pumped from the Old Brewery Pond, and then heated (fluid in the brewing process is always referred to a "liquor"). The mixing was carried out in a "mash tun", a covered large cylindrical wooden vessel. The mixture (now known as "wort") was then allowed to stand for two to three hours before being drained through the slotted base of the mash tun into a large copper vessel (known as a "Copper" and boiled with hops for between one and two hours. The boiled wort is then sieved and cooled in large open shallow tanks before being run into fermenting

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

tanks (fermenting tanks can be made on many different materials and we do not know what was used in this brewery). Yeast was then added to the wort and the mixture left for one day after which the yeasty foam that had formed on the top of the liquor was removed and the remaining liquor was run off into conditioning tanks and the remaining yeast removed using finings. Finally, the resulting beer was transferred to wooden casks or bottles.



Photograph 1 View of Site from the Cyfarthfa Retail Park

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

History

The Methyr Tydfil Brewery located on Brecon Road was reputedly the oldest brewery in Merthyr Tydfil (Robinson, Son & Pike 1893, 22). It does not appear to be included in Pigot' London Provincial Directory of 1822-3 but is included in Pigot's Directory of South Wales 1830 when it is referred to as Tydfils Well Brewery, run by Davies Watkin. The identification of this brewery as the Tydfils Well Brewery is confirmed by the 1835 edition of Pigot's Directory of South Wales when it is noted that the brewery is being run by Rowland Hopkins and Co and John Wood's plan of Merthyr Tydfil published in 1836 which labels the buildings as "Hopkins and Co. Brewery".

Rowland Hopkins, who had come from Sully in the Vale of Glamorgan, ran the company (noted as "brewers and maltsters" in Robson's Directory of 1840) until his death after a long illness in 1842 (Births Deaths and Marriages The Cambrian 2nd April 1842). In 1844 the brewery was being run by the Merthyr Tydfil Brewery Company (Pigot 1844) and in 1848 by James Penny (Hunt & Co 1848); however by 1850 the brewery was being run by John Giles (Slater 1850). John Giles was a native of Stogumber in Somerset born in 1829. He ran the brewery and also sold wines and spirits until his death in 1870 when the brewery was inherited by his youngest sister Mary Jane Harrap (nee Giles) born 1837. Mary Jane had married Richard Harrap in Wiliton, Somerset in 1867 and he took control of the brewery with the firm now becoming Giles & Harrap. Richard Harrap does not appear to have any previous experience of running a brewery, he was born in Stillingfleet in Yorkshire in 1833 and in 1861 (census) he is recorded as being a commercial traveller residing in Saffron Walden, his marriage to Mary Jane therefore clearly altered his life. Evidently, John Giles had left the brewery doing well, although he appears to have lived modestly at 14 Brecon Road (in 1861 (census), he employed one servant and his residence is not listed in any of the trade directories) by 1871 (census) Richard and Mary were living at 14 Brecon Road and employed a cook, a housemaid and a nurse and in 1875 their residence is included in Worrall's Directory. Richard Harrap appears to have been a successful brewer and wine merchant in 1893 the firm was described in A Descriptive Account of Merthyr Tydfil (Illustrated) as:-

"The Merthyr Brewery is the oldest established brewery of its kind in the district and is carried on under the style of Giles and Harrap, the present sole proprietor being R.Harrap who is both well-known and highly respected throughout South Wales. We have recently had the pleasure of going through the whole of the brewery premises and the appointments in every department are, it is only fair to say, first-class throughout. The manufactured articles too, reach the highest standards in every quality and are fully equal to the production of any brewery in this part of the County.

In addition to the brewing business a very large trade in wines and spirits is carried by the firm. A department for bottling the noted Red Dragon brands of wines and spirits for the trade and also the special "F.O.H." Fine Highland Blend Scotch Whiskey is the most important feature in their business".

The wine and spirit part of the business was clearly very important as the company had bonded warehouses in Bristol. London, Cork, Belfast and Greenock although interestingly none in Wales! (Glover 1993, 49).



Photograph 2 Brecon Road Frontage 1910 (courtesy of Alan George)

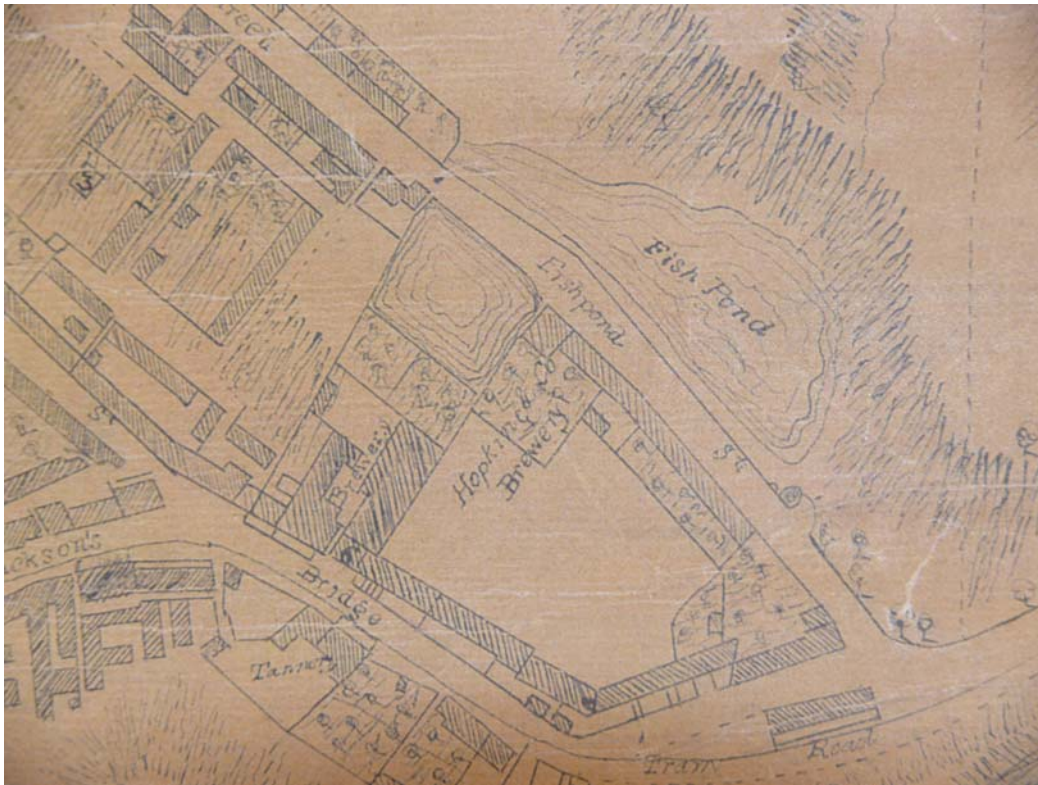
It is likely by this date that Richard and Mary's son James Thresher Harrap (born 1874) was working in the business and he took over when Richard died circa 1894, shortly to be joined by his brother Gilbert Ward Harrap (born 1877). (Richard and Mary also had three daughters, Margaret Eleanor Harrap (born 1868) Mary Giles Harrap (born 1871) and Alice Gertrude Harrap (born 1872). The firm was obviously prospering as before Richard's death the family had moved to Gwaunfarren a substantial house set in its own grounds some 1km from the brewery (Kelly's Directory 1895). In 1901 Mary Harrap, her three daughter and two sons were all living at Gwaunfarren along with four live-in servants including a cook, a parlourmaid and a housemaid (census). By 1906 both sons had set up there own households closer to the brewery, James at Glenthorne and Gilbert at Treganne (now the Treganne Hotel) (Kelly's Directory 1906). However, Gilbert left the firm and Merthyr Tydfil before 1910 (Kelly's Directory 1910) and by 1911 was living in Bentley near Alton in Hampshire (Page 1911, 28).

So far little information on the later years of the brewery has been found, it was one of the many firms to have suffered badly as a result of the severe impact of the depression on Merthyr Tydfil and in 1936 was sold along with its estate of 62 public houses to Hancock and Co. the Cardiff brewers (Glover 2005, 47). They did not continue to brew beer at the brewery using it only as a depot and distribution centre. Later the site was sold to Merthyr Tydfil Council as a depot for the estates department.

Cartographic Evidence

(Buildings referred to in the text are identified on Map 7, page 16)

The earliest plan showing the brewery is John Wood's plan of Merthyr Tydfil published in 1836, which has the clear label "Hopkins and Co. Brewery". However, which actual buildings this refers to is not so certain. The label is located above a square enclosure, which contains symbols depicting trees. Along the Brecon Road frontage of this enclosure is a square building and a long terrace of buildings that extend a considerable distance to the east. The square building is most likely to be part of the brewery, most probably being the brew house but how much of the terrace of building was included in the brewery is not known. This plan also shows a large irregular shaped fishpond to the north of Brecon Road (at that time known as Tydfil's Well Road) and a square fishpond to the south of Brecon Road immediately to the west of the brewery. Another much larger brewery is shown to the southwest of the square fishpond. Which appears to have been using the buildings that later became Vulcan House and Forge.

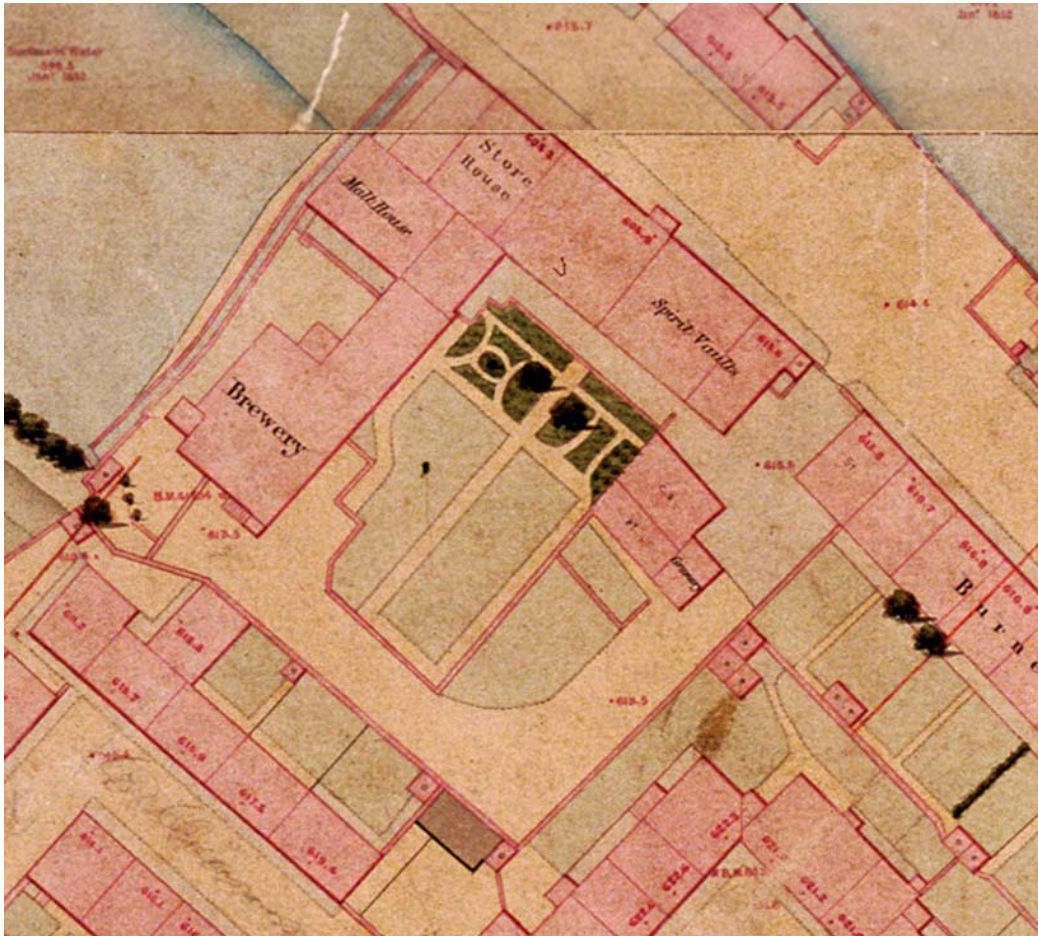


Map 2 John Woods Map of Merthyr Tydfil 1836

Comparison with later plans shows that Wood's plan gives a good representation of the layout of the town, but is not of the accuracy of the later Ordnance Survey maps.

The 1851 Board of Health maps of Merthyr Tydfil were drawn by the Ordnance Survey are of great accuracy and contain much detail not included in later plans, including labelling of individual parts of works.

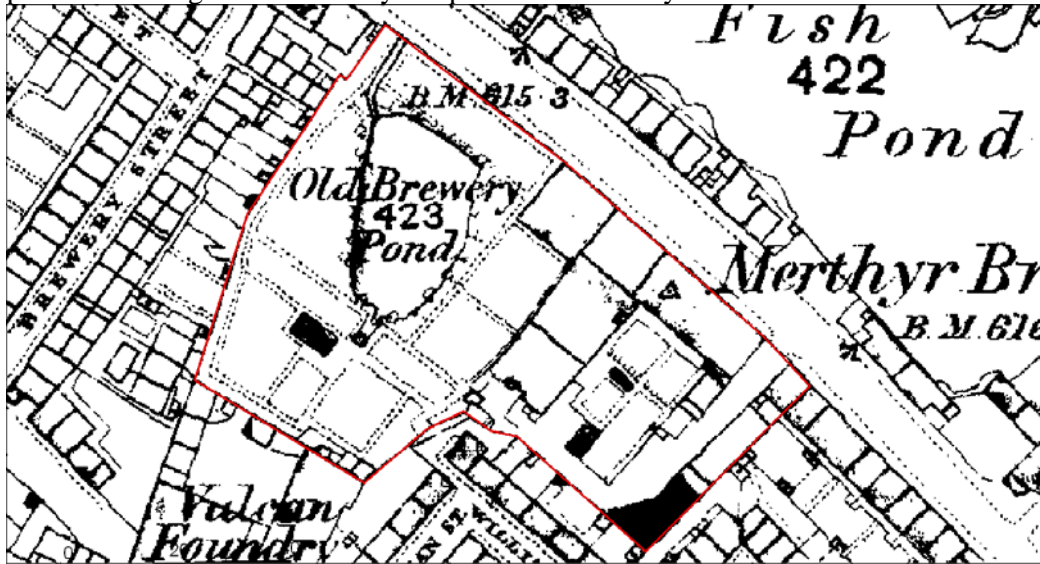
Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record



Map 3 Board of Health 1851

The brewery depicted on the 1851 plan is a much larger concern than that drawn in 1836. As in Wood's plan the irregular shaped fishpond is shown to the north of Brecon Road and a square fishpond to the south of it. From the eastern edge of the square fishpond a range of buildings runs along the Brecon Road frontage to an entrance into a yard west of 13 Brecon Road (which at that time is noted as being part of Burrell's Terrace. Although these buildings are located in the same general area as the terrace depicted on Wood's map they are much deeper than the terraced houses of Burrell's Terrace and this probably indicates that they are new structures. The plan clearly labels one of the buildings (or more likely a room in a larger building) at the western end of the range as "Store House" (Building A) and the eastern end of the range is labelled. "Spirit Vaults" (Building B). Behind the western part of the Brecon Road range of buildings are an "L" shaped range of buildings. The southernmost part of this range is labelled brewery and is probably Building E. At the southeast corner of this building a square structure is depicted and probably represents a chimney. The extension of these buildings to the north where they connect to the Brecon Road range is probably building D and in the corner between these two buildings another square structure is depicted, which probably represents a second chimney. In the angle between the Brecon Road range and the southern range of buildings is another structure labelled as "Malt House". The entrance between the Brecon Road range and 13 Brecon Road leads to an "L" shaped building which appears to have an extensive range of gardens and lawns surrounded by walls attached to it. This appears to be a

domestic building and is likely to be 14 Brecon Road, the residence of the Brewery Owner. All of the brewery buildings and the owner's house are enclosed by walls giving a precinct of some 0.2Ha. Outside the precinct a building a rectangular building is shown to the rear of 9 William Street. This structure has the same ground plan as Building O but is clearly not part of the brewery at this time.



Map 4 Ordnance Survey 1881

The 1881 Ordnance Survey plan shows that the fishpond to the north of Brecon Road still has the same irregular shape but the preciously square pond to the west of the brewery has been significantly reduced in size and is now labelled “Old Brewery Pond”. This has allowed a square building to be constructed to the west of the Brecon Road range. The depiction of the Southern Range on this plan is confusing. As shown it consists of a rectangular block divided into two parts; this does not accord with the 1899 plan where the outline of the building shown in 1861 (Building E) is clearly shown. It would appear that a building has been added to the rear of the western part of the Brecon Road range (Building A) and was attached to the northern part of the Southern range (Building D). This structure filled in an angular space in the brewery, which has been interpreted by the Ordnance Survey draughtsmen as completing a rectangular structure (as will be noted later this building (Building F) is in fact an irregular shape). The eastern end of the Brecon Road range has been extended slightly (Building C) narrowing the entrance into the Owners House, which has been extended to the south. The private walled garden however remains. Behind 13 Brecon Road a long rectangular building has been constructed against the eastern precinct wall, (Building H) opposite the Owners House, and a second building (possibly Building I) may have been attached to the south of it to extend this range to the southern precinct boundary however damage to the map makes this an interpretation.

Whilst the map evidence is not certain there are no indications that the land drained from the Old Brewery Pond was divided from the Brewery suggesting that it was now all part of the Brewery giving a total area of 0.46Ha. Building O is again depicted on this plan but remains outside the precinct wall.

The 1899 Ordnance Survey map shows a number of significant topographic changes, the Old Brewery Pond has been completely filled in and a terrace of houses facing

onto Brecon Road have been constructed on part of its site. Vulcan Road has also been constructed to the west and two enclosures laid alongside it however a western entrance to the brewery onto Vulcan Road appears to have been formed south of the new terrace of houses. The major change to the brewery itself is the addition of another southern range (Building J) attached to the rear of the square building at the western end of the Brecon Road range depicted on the 1881 plan. This range is a similar length to the original southern range (buildings D and E) and was connected to it at the southern end by another building. A square block at the end of the original southern range probably represents a chimney (Building K). A rectangular building has been built against the eastern side of the original southern range into the area previously used as a garden for the Owners House. The Owners House itself had been attached by a small extension to the Brecon Road range and its previous extension had been demolished. The range of buildings at the rear of 13 Brecon Road definitely now extends the full distance along the eastern precinct wall.



Map 5 Ordnance Survey 1899

In total the grounds of the brewery would appear to have been reduced by the changes at the west side of the site that now comprised some 0.325Ha. Building O is again depicted on this plan but remains outside the precinct wall, although it is possible that it was owned by the brewery with access being gained through a door on the northern gable.



Map 6 Ordnance Survey 1917

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

By the time the 1917 Ordnance Survey map was drawn the site was close to its zenith as a brewery. The most significant alteration to the main brewery complex was the addition of a long thin building (Building L) on the western side of the new range built at the end of the last century (Building J) and the demolition of the building that linked the two southern ranges and its replacement with a new linking building (Building M). An additional rectangular building had also been added to the end of the western range and the eastern extension to the original southern range has been extended further to link with a large rectangular building built in the centre of the Brewery yard. The yard has been expanded by the construction of an open fronted building on the former rear gardens of 10, 11 and 12 William Street (Building P) and there appears to have been a western extension to Building I. Building O is clearly now part of the brewery.

Aerial Photographs

Two aerial photographs of the brewery have been viewed as part of this project. The earliest is a RAF photograph taken on the 31st May 1950 and the second a photograph supplied by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council taken in 1989.



Photograph 3 Aerial View 1950

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

The 1950 photograph is a vertical one and shows the site when it was in use by Hancocks as a distribution depot. However, there does not appear to have been any demolition of the brewery building and apart from Building F none of the buildings have had their roofs replaced, thus the ventilation ducts and openings on the roofs can be seen, which assists in the interpretation of their original use.

Building D is shown to have a central chimney and two dormer windows on the eastern side of the roof. On the western side of the roof appear to be three ventilation ducts. A difference in the ridgeline between the northern and southern parts of the roof of Building J is clearly visible as are two large ventilation ducts located on the southern roof. Both Buildings H and I are shown to have roof gables over their central openings and the extension to Building I can be seen to be a canopy located in the southeast corner of the yard.

The most important information that this photograph provides is in regard to the buildings constructed in the Brewery Yard before 1917. The building attached to Building E and the one adjacent to it are shown to have hipped roofs crowned by ventilation lanterns. The larger building on the site of the “owners house” has a double pitched roof capped by a ventilation lantern and with a chimney at its southern end. These buildings clearly represent a brew house complex considerably enlarging the capacity of Building E.



Photograph 4 Aerial Photograph 1989 (Courtesy Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council)

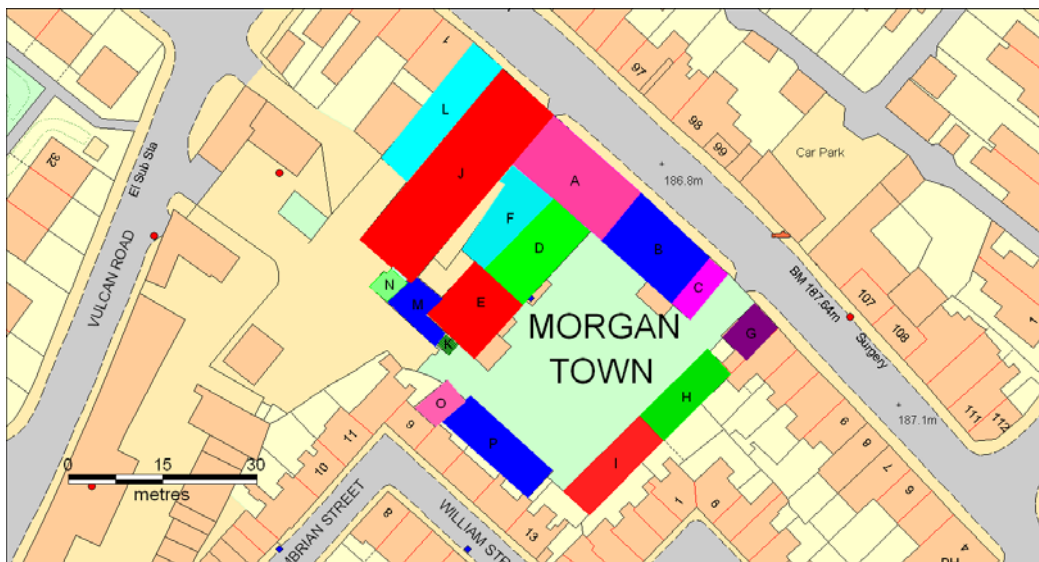
Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

The 1989 aerial photograph is oblique taken from the northwest. It shows site in use as the works depot for Merthyr Tydfil District Council. By this time the late brew house complex in the centre of the yard has been demolished as has the canopy attached to building I in the southeastern corner. Buildings D, F, H, I and P have all had replacement roofs and the ventilation ducts have been removed from building J.

The oblique angle of the photograph allows the western walls of Buildings E and F and the western gable of building A to be seen and the odd shape of the original roof of building L is also clearly visible.



Photograph 5 Brewery site from west in 1971 (Courtesy of Alan George)



Map 7 Block Map Identifying Recorded Buildings

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Description of Standing Buildings.

As stated earlier it was not possible to enter the buildings, and therefore it was only possible to analyse the buildings from their exterior. It was also not possible to gain access to the central courtyard, meaning that the walls facing on to this area could not be viewed.

Brecon Road Façade (Buildings A, B, C and J)

Initial perception is that the frontage alongside Brecon Road is a two storey six bayed building with slightly projecting gables over the penultimate bay on either side and a slate roof. However, there is clear evidence that this structure was originally built in three stages and then visually integrated by the treatment of the façade.



Photograph 6 Brecon Road Façade from East

The separation of Buildings A and B is marked by a small change in the height of the basal plinth and by a vertical crack (unfortunately hidden behind a modern rainwater down pipe) caused by the render splitting along the line of the joint between the two buildings. This separation is also shown on the cartographic evidence of 1851 and 1881. Less conclusively (although adding to the evidence) is the fact that the two inner bays, whilst appearing to be mirrored, have slight variations in the spacing between elements especially at the rear. The evidence for building C is more conclusive; not only is it shown to have been added on the 1881 Ordnance Survey plan, but the line of its front wall is slightly to the south of the line of buildings B and

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Cs frontages and the join between it and building B is emphasised by a vertical stone pilaster.



Photograph 7 Brecon Road Facade: Buildings B and C

Overall the façade is rendered with exposed ashlar dressings on most of the openings and projecting gables. The two gables project 0.1m in front of the line of the main walls. They are 4.2m wide with their apex at the same height as the ridge of the main building. The corners are quoined by ashlar blocks and large square windows (1.8m square) with stone sills are centrally positioned on both the ground and first floor. Under the apex of each gable is a oeil-de-boeuf window and barge boards are located beneath the roof line. The barge boards of the western gable are ornate whilst those on the eastern one are plain (probably replacements).



Photograph 8 Brecon Road Facade: Gable of Building A

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

The ground floor windows are rectangular with stone sills. The sides have moulded ashlar dressings and the heads are flat arches, with the key-stones being slightly larger than the other voussoirs. Each window is 0.9m wide and 1.7m high and they are paired together either side of the join between buildings A and B. At first floor level above each pair of ground floor windows, and also above all of the doors (except the door into building A), are single windows 1.1m wide and 1.7m high, with stone sills. They have plain moulded surrounds with a mock keystone and splayed upper corners.



Photograph 9 Brecon Road Facade: Building A, Window and Door Detail

The four plain bays each contain a door. The most westerly is dominated by a centrally placed three-centred arched entrance 2.2m wide and 2.6m high. Above the impost the arch is rendered with the word BREWERY in relief between the two mouldings demarking the head.



Photograph 10 Brecon Road Facade: Building A, Western Entrance

The next doorway is rectangular, 1.1m wide and 3m high with ashlar dressings and stone voussoirs like the adjacent windows (see photograph 4). The third doorway is in a more imposing classical style, with a rectangular door opening 1m wide and 2.3m high, with square pilasters on both sides and a flat canopy supported by two carved corbels. Whilst the final rectangular doorway contains a double door 1.3m wide and 2.4m high



Photograph 11 Brecon Road Facade: Building B, Main Entrance

The Southern Façade

The southern façade consists of five bays with the eastern one being a gable. In contrast to the northern façade the southern wall of Buildings A, B and C is plain rendered with no ornamentation around the doors and windows apart from the central entrance of Building B.



Photograph 12 South Facade

On the ground floor of the four standard bays all of the windows are rectangular 1.1m wide and 1.8m high with a stone sill apart from the one to the west of the main entrance, which is double width measuring 1.5m wide and 1.8m high. The main entrance is centrally located and consists of a wide three-centred arch of similar size (2.2m wide by 2.6m high) and shape to the entrance on the north façade of building A; however, in this instance it is only framed with a plain moulding. Above all of the ground floor windows and the door are rectangular windows 1.1m wide and 1.8m high with stone sills.

On the western side of the gable at ground floor level there is a rectangular window with a stone sill 1.1m wide and originally 1.8m high but this has recently been reduced in height to 1.4m by blocking at the base of the window. To the east of the window is a door 1m wide and 2.3m high and at first floor level, above the ground floor window is another rectangular window with a stone sill, 1.1m wide and 1.8m high. Beneath the apex of the gable is a small rectangular window with a stone sill 0.4 m wide and 0.5m high.

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

The roof

The roof was originally double pitched, with end gables and a chimney at each end, covered with slate. The later addition of building C added a hipped section to the east end. One dormer window, 1m square capped by a pitched roof survives on the southern elevation but an aerial photograph shows that in 1989 there were two more on the southern side and two, along with a chimney, on the northern side.

Building A

This building is attached to building B at its eastern end, to building D at the rear and building J to the west. It is a stone building of two storeys plus attics, with a double pitched slate roof, measuring 16.8m long, 9.6m wide, with the main walls being 5.9m high and the apex of the gable 9m. The west gable is constructed from brick, similar to building F, and a single arched widow with rounded head is located directly under the apex of the gable. The northwestern corner is formed by ashlar blocks, but these are set westward suggesting that they relate to building J rather than building A. This probably indicates that the western gable was rebuilt when building J and building F were added to the brewery.



Photograph 13 Building A, Ashlar Facing on West Gable Corner

Building B

This building is attached to building A to the west and to building C at its eastern end. It is a stone building of two storeys plus attics with a double pitched slate roof,

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

measuring 13.6m long, 9.6m wide, with the main walls being 5.9m high and the roof ridge at 9m.

Its northern entrance is the imposing classical one, with square pilasters and a flat canopy supported by two carved corbels. This is in a direct line with its southern entrance, which has a wide arch and it is presumed that straight corridor joins the two. It is possible that when originally constructed the front entrance was that same size as the rear creating a wide passage into the brewery yard behind.

Building C

The frontage of this building is some 4.1m, although it continues the Brecon Road façade its alignment is slightly south of the line of the front of the rest of the facade. The rear of this building takes the form of a gable end 5.7m wide and 8.1m high to the apex of the gable. This makes the building wider at the rear than the front and places the east wall at a different alignment to all of the other walls in the brewery complex. This alignment clearly narrowed the width of the gap between buildings C and G which formed the main entrance into the Brewery Yard. In order to allow vehicles to turn more easily the southeastern corner of the building was chamfered from the base of the wall to 3m high.



Photograph 14 Building C, East Facade

In a similar manner to the south façade of buildings A, B and C the east wall of the latter building was plain rendered. On its ground floor there are three windows all of different sizes but all with stone sills 1.4m above ground level. The southern most window was 0.5m wide and 1.1m high, the middle window 1.2m wide and 1.1m high and the northern window 1.2m wide and 1.1m high. On the second storey above the northern and southern windows are two rectangular windows both being 1.2m wide and 1.8m high. None of these has any decorative surround.

Interpretation of Buildings A, B and C

Buildings A and B were built sometime between 1835 and 1851. As noted above, there are structural indications that they were built as adjoining structures and not as a terrace. The western part of building A obviously formed one of the main entrances into the brewery, with the 1851 plan showing that it lead directly to the Malt House. That plan also shows that the part of the remaining area was a store house and it is likely that the rest was offices at that time. In 1851 Building B is clearly marked as "Spirit Vaults". Building C was added to the range by 1881 and the large door on its northern façade indicates that its use was for goods rather than office space. It is possible that building C was added to provide access into the Spirit Vaults and to allow Building B to become the main entrance with presumably the principal offices being located there.

Building D

Building D is 8.8m wide and 9m high. It is connected to the rear of Building A, the northern end of Building E and abuts Building F. It has a pitched roof currently covered in asbestos sheeting. The topography of the site means that this building contained a sub basement open on its western side. Only the eastern wall of this building was available for recording. This wall has two sections the northern section being 6.4m long and the southern section 9.6m in length both being 5.9m high. The division between the two sections is marked by a pilaster 0.5m thick. All of the wall is rendered and there is no decoration.



Photograph 15 Building D

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

On the ground floor of the northern section a doorway 1.2m wide and 2.5m high is located close to the junction of the building with the rear of building A. To the south of that door are a pair of rectangular windows with stone sills 1.1m above ground level each being 0.5m wide and 1.4m high and beside them another door 0.9m wide and 2.5m high. This door and the windows now give access and light to toilets. South of this door is a small door 0.9m wide and 1.7m high. The first storey level has a central window with stone sill 1.5m wide and 2m high.

The northern part of the southern section has been pierced (apart from a loading stage 0.8m high) to full height by an opening, now bridged by a steel lintel. 5.5m wide. The area beneath the lintel (2.4m high) is filled with two wooden cantilever doors. Above the lintel a corrugated iron canopy projects into the yard and above the canopy the opening in the wall is filled in with corrugated iron sheeting.

Interpretation

The plan of 1851 suggests that the two parts of this building may originally have been two separate buildings. The location of these building beside the brew house (Building F) means that they are most likely to have been originally constructed to house part of the brewing process. The modern asbestos roof is likely to have replaced one that was capped by a number of ventilators and if this was the case the upper floor probably originally housed large open tanks where the hot wort was cooled before being run into the fermenting vessels that were probably located on the lower floor. The loading bay is likely to have been a late alteration possibly being carried out by Hancocks when the brewery was converted into a distribution yard.

Building E



Photograph 16 Building E from East

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

At first inspection this structure appears to be rectangular building of two storeys with a gambrel roof. However, the topography of the site means that it has three stories with the lowest floor being below the brewery yard level but on the same level as the main courtyard. Its fabric shows that it has seen significant changes to meet different uses and the topography of the site. The current structure has a rectangular floor plan of 11.5m long (north-south) and 10.3m wide, with a slight rectangular shaped protrusion on the southern end of the western wall.

The eastern wall is 11.5m long and circa 6.6m high and has been poorly rendered; however, it was originally constructed in stone. No indication of the original fenestration can be determined, as the northern end of the wall has been pierced (apart from a loading stage 1.2m high) to full height by an opening, now bridged by a steel lintel. 5.6m wide. The area beneath the lintel is filled with a wooden cantilever door 2m high and the opening above is filled in with corrugated iron sheeting. At the southern end another full height opening (apart from a loading stage) 2.4 m wide has been in-filled by brick. It is thought that both of these openings were made to allow access to a range of additional brewing buildings built in the brewery yard between 1899 and 1917.



Photograph 17 Building E: East Side of South Gable

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

The southern wall is a gable end and is currently 10.3m wide. The original stone is some 6.1m wide where it abuts yellow brick masonry. Cartographic evidence shows that brick represents a later rebuild of the southwestern corner of this building. The surviving stone section is some 10.2m high and has been pierced by an opening (now bricked up) bridged by a concrete lintel (opening would have been 2.7m wide and 2m high) and this now leads onto a stone built loading stage (1.1m north-south by 3.5m east west and 1.4m high). It is assumed that this opening was for a loading door, possibly when the brewery was still in use. Above the lintel is a rectangular opening with a segmental brick arch. The openings above and below the lintel have been blocked by the same red brick laid in stretcher bond. The opening above the lintel was 1.2m wide however the later blocking has obscured the base 1.1m below the arch. This opening may represent a window, however above and supported by the arch is a vertical opening reaching to the roof. This opening has been blocked by brick, but may represent the line of a chimney or a flue.

As suggested above the yellow brick sections of the south wall and the west wall probably represent a rebuilding of this part of the building prior to 1899. This rebuilding in-filled an area where previously a chimney had stood. The brick built section of the south wall is 4.2m wide, constructed in yellow bricks laid in a Flemish bond and a change of ground level means that it is 12.8m high. It is pierced by two windows, one with a semicircular brick arch, not quite at the same level as the blocked one in the stone section of the gable, and a square one with a flat arch of brick close to the roof. Both windows have stone sills and appear to have been original features of the rebuilt wall. The rebuilt west wall protrudes slightly from the original line of the west wall and a slight alteration has been made to the pitch of the gambrel roof at the west end of the southern gable to incorporate this alteration.



Photograph 18 Building E South Gable with Building K (chimney) and Building M in Foreground

Access was not possible to the west wall of this building; however, photographic interpretation suggests that the rebuilt brick section extended some 3m from the southwestern corner. The brick section was pierced by a window with a semicircular arch and stone sill located at a slightly lower level to the one the southern gable. As noted above the brick built section protrudes circa 0.5m in front of the line of the original stone built west wall. The surviving section of this wall is some 8.3m long. It appears that this side of the building was three storeys high, taking advantage of the natural topography of the site. The upper storey is lit by a row of four rectangular windows with brick dressings and flat arches and it appears that the two lower stories were lit by similar windows.



Photograph 19 Building E West Wall from South

The northern wall is attached to building D and only the stone built gable end of the mansard roof is visible protruding some 1.3m higher than the adjacent pitched roof.

The roof is a gable ended mansard with an odd change in pitch at the southeastern corner, presumably constructed to protect the brick built addition at that point. The roof was supported by trusses comprising a tie beam with a pair of vertical queen posts and a pair of raking queen posts and was covered by slate (interpretation of photographs contained in Bowen and Partners 2008)

Interpretation

The style of the building with the attached chimney (building K) clearly indicates that this was the brew house. As a brew house it can be expected that it housed the hot liquor tank on the top floor with mash tun and copper on the lower floors.

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

The building is not depicted on John Wood's plan of Merthyr Tydfil published in 1836 but is clearly shown on the Board of Health plan of 1851. At that time a chimney is shown attached to the southwest corner of the building where the yellow brick rebuild is now located. The infilling of this area and the addition of the southern chimney (building K) may have occurred by 1881 but was definitely in place by 1899. The rebuilding may well indicate the presence of new larger engine installed in building M to power the expanding brewery.

Building F

No access to this building was possible and this information has been gathered from an interpretation of the 1989 aerial photograph. It is located at the rear of building A and butted against the western side of building D and the northern side of building E. It is an irregular shaped three storey structure constructed from buff coloured bricks, 16m north south, 8.3m wide at its northern end and 4.7m wide at the south. It currently has a single pitched asbestos roof, which is a modern replacement, probably replacing a slate one. On all of its floors on the western side it appears to have 4 rectangular windows but no details could be interpreted from the photograph.

Interpretation

This building was constructed on the site of the "Malt House" in the 1851 Board of Health map and is first shown on the 1881 plan. The modern roof may have removed the evidence for flues, which would indicate that this was a replacement but this is the most likely original use of the building.

Building G (13 Brecon Road)

This is the end house in a terrace and is constructed in roughly coursed rubble utilising irregular stone cobbles. Its current footprint is 4.9m east west by 7.2m north-south; however it has seen considerable rebuilding.



Photograph 20 Building G, Brecon Road Frontage

The north wall faces onto Brecon Road, is 4.9m wide and 4.8m high. The front door is located on the eastern side to allow a large rectangular window to be positioned in the centre of the lower wall. The door is spanned by a low segmented arch whilst the window is now spanned by flat brick arches; however, the arch above the window appears to have been a replacement for a stone lintel the remains of which are visible either side of the arch. Directly above the ground floor window is a similar window to the upper floor. Alterations in the masonry surrounding the upper window and above the arch of the lower lintel suggest that this part of the wall have been rebuilt, possibly after the stone lintel above the lower window failed.



Photograph 21 Building G, West Side

The west wall currently measures some 7.2m and is 6.7m high; however, the line of the original position of the rear of the building is clearly visible indicating that the building has been extended. These marks indicate that the original building was 5.1m deep with a rear wall 3.9 m high making it lower than the front. The apex of the roof would have been 6.8m. The rebuilding widened the building but retained the same height for the rear wall.

The roof is double pitched covered with slate and the western gable is surmounted by a chimney stack with three pots.

Interpretation

A typical two-storey terraced house in Merthyr; it was built as the end house in a row of eleven identical buildings recorded on the Board of Health map of 1851 as Burnell's Row. The rebuilding of the rear of the house is not shown on any of the maps possibly due to the relative small extension to the footprint of the building. It would appear that the house has been part of the brewery since at least 1851 as no

separate yard or garden is shown on the 1851 map. It now has a small rear garden 3.7m long separated from the Brewery yard by a wall 2.3m high topped by a stone coping. Half of the garden area is filled with an outhouse.

Building H



Photograph 22 Building H from west

Built at the rear of the garden to building G, this is a rectangular stone built building with double pitched roof, 15.1m north south by 4.9m east west with walls 4.1m high. The main access is through a central door, 3.9m wide and the full height of the wall: however, the central door was originally flanked by doors on either side (now blocked) with flat brick arches. Above both of these doors were square doors giving access into a loft. The roof is currently covered by asbestos sheeting. Internally no fittings survive.

Interpretation

This would appear to have been a barn or stable with storage facility for hay or animal feed in the first floor loft. It was constructed sometime between 1851 and 1881.

Building I

This structure was added to the southern end of Building H, using its heightened gable as its northern one. The new building was constructed in red brick laid in Flemish bond and is of two storeys. It measures 17.6m north-south by 4.9m east west with side walls 4.9m high and the gables being 7.1m in height. The building may have been originally built with symmetrical openings; however, a large opening was inserted at the south end with the storey above it supported by a large metal lintel. The resulting

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

gap was 10.3m wide but this area has been reduced by the construction of a new room in its northern part. The remaining ground floor area comprises one room with a central door flanked by two rectangular windows with flat brick arches. The upper storey had a wide central door (now blocked) presumably giving access to a hay loft. In either side of the door are two square windows with flat brick arches. The double pitched roof is currently covered by asbestos sheets.



Photograph 23 Building I From West

Interpretation

This building has had considerable alteration from its original construction, but probably was originally designed as stables with a hay loft above. It appears to be depicted on the 1881 Ordnance Survey map but its construction incorporating the south gable of building H into it clearly shows that it is later than that structure.

Building J



Photograph 24 Building J from West

Initial inspection suggests that this is a large rectangular two-storey building constructed from red bricks laid in Flemish bond measuring 35.6m north-south by 12.6m east-west. Only the north wall and the higher parts of the western wall were available for inspection and close examination of this wall found no evidence for any butt joints or other indication of separate phases to the building. However, the northern section of the building has the same dimensions 00.0m by 13.1m as the footprint of a building constructed by 1881. The aerial photograph of 1989 shows that the ridgeline of the northern part of the building is slightly to the east of the ridge of the southern part. It has also been noted above that the ashlar faced corner of the western gable of building A indicates that it was probably rebuilt when the northern part of building J was constructed. This gable is constructed from the same buff-coloured brick as building F, which was probably built at the same time as the building constructed on the Brecon Road frontage. Therefore there is a strong possibility that the northern part of Building J was built before 1881 and that its western wall was rebuilt when the rest of the building was constructed.



Photograph 25 Building A During Demolition (Note West Gable constructed from buff bricks)

If the above interpretation is correct the northern part of building J is 11.8m by 13.1m; whilst the southern part is 23.8m by 12.6m.

As noted above the ridgeline of the double pitched slate roof above the northern part of building J is located slightly to the east of the ridgeline of the southern part. The northern roof is also slightly higher than the southern one also has a step in it.

Access could not be gained to the eastern wall of this building. The southern gable end is 12.6m wide and 11.9m high. At ground floor level access was gained to the building by a large central doorway 2.9m wide by 2.4m high spanned by a steel lintel. However, this opening had been reduced by the construction of a new wall 1.1m wide

on the eastern side and the insertion of a row of four windows beneath the lintel making the new doorway 1.8m wide by 2m high. At first floor level a single square window with stone sill and segmental brick arch was located centrally and above it under the apex of the gable a small square window again with a stone sill and segmental brick arch provided light to an attic.



Photograph 26 Building J South Gable

Marks on the gable wall indicate that a building with a gambrel roof was built against it. The marks suggest that the building was 8.6m wide and 5.1m high. The Ordnance Survey map of 1917 shows a rectangular building, some 9.2m, long at this location

The western wall is 35.6m long and 8m high at its northern (Brecon Road) end. 18.3m from the Brecon Road the height reduces to 7.2m. The first storey level of the southern section was lit by a row of five equally spaced square windows with segmental brick arches and stone sills. The ground floor probably also has five similar windows although the most northern one has been blocked by the construction of Building L. Since 1989 the southern most windows on both floors have been enlarged to form emergency doors opening onto a metal fire escape. The northern end contains no openings apart from a group of three rectangular windows with segmental brick arches and stone sills at first storey level located close to the change in height of the wall. During demolition it was observed that the ground floor had windows but these were obscured by building L. However, a row of skylights on the original eastern side of the roof of building L would have allowed light into the ground floor of building J.

The northern gable of building J forms the western part of the Brecon Road façade of the brewery. It is 13.1m wide and 13.4m high although only 10.4m is visible from Brecon Road, 3m being below the ground surface at this point. This basement area

was lit by four regularly spaced windows at the base of the Brecon Road façade (now blocked and rendered over)..



Photograph 27 Brecon Road Facade Building J

The wall is rendered and has plain barge boards below the roof line the western corner is quoined by ashlar blocks, but the eastern corner is plain. A loading door, 0.9m above ground level, 1.9 m wide and 2.1 m high with an three centred arched head, is centrally located. The shape of the door is mirrored in a design of ashlar blocks around it and 0.9m away from it. It is assumed that this is purely decorative but it could indicate that this doorway was once much larger but the presence of intact render makes this impossible to determine. Above the ashlar decoration is a curved plain moulding following the shape of the door and above that an oeil-de-boeuf window is located below the apex of the gable. Either side of the door two square windows with rounded heads and stone sills are located some 1.8m above ground level.

Interpretation

Construction of the northern part of this building appears to have been undertaken before 1881 and it was then rebuilt with the additional southern part by 1899. The absence of any indication of significant ventilation (the ventilation ducts shown on the 1950 aerial photograph only being sufficient to keep the building cool) makes it unlikely that it was used for any of the brewing processes requiring significant heat or rapid cooling. Therefore, it is most likely that this building was built to house the fermentation vessels and conditioning tanks on the upper floor and the casking and bottling processes on the ground floor. Other parts of the building were probably used as cellars and storage rooms for the finished products.

Building K (Chimney)



Photograph 28 Building K From West in 1971 (courtesy of Alan George)

This is the base of a square chimney each side being some 2.6m long, attached to the centre of south wall building E. The bottom section is constructed from well-cut stone blocks and is some 5.6m high. At this point it is capped by two layers of yellow brick laid in stretcher bond. Two courses of red bricks again in stretcher bond overlay these and extend slightly outside them and these in turn are capped by two more courses of yellow brick laid in stretcher bond. The remnant of another course of red brick survives above this layer, but the higher levels have been demolished (sometime after 1989). Photographic evidence suggests that the chimney was originally twice the height of the adjacent brew house (building E) circa 20.5m. Above the roof line of building E it tapered slightly in two sections.



Photograph 29 Building K Detail of surviving decoration

Interpretation

This chimney was added before 1899 presumably as part of the installation of a major refurbishment of the brewery, possibly including the introduction of a new engine and the construction of building M the engine/boiler house

Building L

A narrow single storey building constructed in the gap between Building J and the neighbouring property. Its floor is at the same level as the ground floor in building J and is below the level of Brecon Road, where it is concealed from view by a stone wall, 1.9m high, capped with stone coping.



Photograph 30 Building L from South

It is 21m north-south and 7.2m wide and built in red brick in a Flemish bond. It now has a metal single pitched roof but an aerial photograph of 1989 shows that it originally had a “W” shaped pitched roof. The majority of the building was covered by a standard pitched slate roof but the gap between this and the wall of building J is protected by a sub roof, now covered by asbestos sheets tilted towards the west. It is likely that the asbestos sheets replaced skylights that provided light not only to building L but also through existing windows to building J. The only visible opening in the structure is a large double door 2.7m wide and 1.9m high.

Interpretation

This building is not shown on any plan before 1917. In later years it appears to have been used for storage but its original purpose remains unknown.

Building M.



Photograph 31 Building M from South

A red brick building with a double pitched roof linking buildings E and J, measuring at its largest extent 9.m east west and 4.2m north south. The eastern 4.1m of the northern wall is butted onto the south wall of building E with the eastern wall against the chimney (building K). Building M is at a lower level than the chimney and therefore the eastern wall may form a buttress for the chimney. The southern wall is of red brick laid in a Flemish bond. In total it is 9.8m long and 3.9m high and originally was pierced by a row of four high-level windows. The eastern three are of similar size and are set at regular intervals. They all have stone sills and brick segmental arch heads. The fourth window located at the west end of the wall is larger but of the same style. All of the windows have been blocked using “common” bricks. A double door surmounted by a steel lintel is located some 2.2m from the western end of the wall. The western gable wall is again of red brick laid in a Flemish Bond. A tall window with stone sill and brick segmental arch is located in the centre of the wall (now blocked), with the top of its segmental arch being at a similar height to the segmental arches of the windows on the south wall. The gable is topped by a parapet capped by rounded stone coping. The pitched roof is currently covered by corrugated iron but was probably originally covered by slate.

Interpretation

The building is clearly later than buildings E and J and is probably contemporary with building K. In its present form it may not have been built until the beginning of the 20th century. It clearly formed a link between building E and J enclosing the central courtyard of the brewery and its location beside the chimney suggests that it may have been an engine and boiler house providing heat to the brew house and power to all of

the brewery's equipment. If this interpretation is correct it is presumed that it housed a steam engine that would have powered the works. At the Hook Norton Brewery a relatively small 25hp steam engine was installed in 1899 to pump water, drive the grist mill and power the various winches and hoists, steam from the boilers was used for cask washing (<http://www.hook-norton-brewery.co.uk>).

Building N

A lean-to red brick building attached to the west wall of building M and butted to building J. It measures 4.2m north south and 2.7m east-west. Its floor level is some 1.6m lower than building M and is on the same level as the ground floor of building J



Photograph 32 Building N from South

The southern wall comprises red brick laid in English bond. At its highest point, where it is bonded to building M, it is 3.4m high and at its lowest at the western end it is 2.2m high. The wall is pierced by three plain rectangular windows with a steel lintel running the length of the wall above them. The single pitched roof is covered by corrugated iron.

A large doorway spanned by a steel lintel takes up the majority of the western wall. At present the doorway is enclosed by a metal bar door.

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Interpretation

This is one of the latest structures built on the site, clearly being later than buildings J and M. It is not shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1917 and its construction in English bond rather than Flemish bond like the rest of the brick built brewery buildings suggests that it may have been built by either Hancocks or the Council when the site was used as a distribution depot and then a works yard. It appears to be a simple lean-to building for storage.

Building O

A rectangular single storey building attached to the rear of 9 William Street, measuring 6.54m by 4.6m and 7.1m high. It was built at a slight angle to the house and the rest of the brewery buildings. It is constructed of stone with a gable end facing the yard containing large double doors.



Photograph 33 Building O from North

Interpretation.

The building may have been used as a garage for lorries like the steam-powered one depicted in the Giles and Harrap advertisement of 1893. The building is shown on the Board of Health map of 1851 so it may have originally have been built to store large wagons.

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Building P

An open-fronted building with stone walls and a pitched roof running east-west. The west end of the structure is at a slight angle as it utilises part of the side wall of building O. Therefore the rear of the building is 18.4m long whilst the front is only 17.8m. The width however remains constant at 5.9m. The rear wall is some 4m high as is the open front, with the apex of the gables being 6.9m. The open front is currently supported by four brick columns holding up a steel lintel. These appear to be a modern replacement, possibly for an earlier timber structure. The roof is currently covered by corrugated iron.

Interpretation

This building appears to have been an open cart or wagon shed. It appears to have been built over the back yards of numbers 10 to 12 William Street before 1917.



Photograph 34 Building P from North

Development of the Brewery

The Merthyr Tydfil Brewery claimed to be the oldest established brewery in Merthyr Tydfil. It is not mentioned in the earliest trade directory for the town (Pigot's London Provincial Directory of 1822–23) however work only lists one brewer in the town, which given its size and the nature of the industrial works must have had numerous breweries, although many of these may have been worked as subsidiary activities to the main business, such as public houses. The first documentary reference is in 1830 (Pigot's Directory of South Wales 1830) when the brewery was in the ownership of Davies Watkin. The first cartographic information is provided by John Wood's plan of Merthyr Tydfil published in 1836 by which time the enterprise was being run by Rowland Hopkins and Company. Woods plan shows a square building located immediately to the east of the square fish pond south of the Brecon Road. The building adjoins a long terrace of buildings, which show no difference in shape to suggest that they are not all the same, presumably houses. Thus whilst the brewery may have extended into adjacent (converted) buildings the main building would have been the square structure. Its location would have allowed water to have been easily extracted from the pond (although how a pump was powered is not known) and its location close to the break of slope may have allowed the building to have had a sub-basement as well as two or more floors. Clearly, the brewery at this stage was a relatively small concern although the enterprise had its own malting floor and must have supplied other breweries in the area with malt as the enterprise is described as "brewers and maltsters" in Robson's Directory of 1840.

Rowland Hopkins died in 1842 after a lengthy illness (The Cambrian 2nd April 1842). He is the most likely person to have funded the substantial financial investment required to construct the new brewery buildings shown on the Board of Health map of 1851. His obituary refers to him having come from an established family in Sully (Vale of Glamorgan) and that the business was "extensive and lucrative" a description that does not appear to concur with the size of the enterprise shown on Wood's map. However, it is possible that the investment could have been made by either the Merthyr Tydfil Brewery Company or James Penny who controlled the business for the next eight years. It is unlikely that the new buildings were constructed by John Giles who took over the business in 1850 as they are clearly completed by the time the map was drawn.

Giles was the third son of a farmer from Stogumber in Somerset. It is interesting to note that in 1840 a Mr Elers set up a brewery in Stogumber (Gathercole 2003), whilst it cannot be proved that Giles worked at that brewery, he obviously had considerable knowledge of brewing (and confidence) to acquire the Merthyr Tydfil Brewery when he was only 21 years old. The brewery that John Giles acquired is shown in great detail on the Board of Health map drawn by the Ordnance Survey in 1851.

It is possible that the buildings along the Brecon Road frontage are those shown on Wood's map but the two main buildings are clearly wider than the terraced houses of Burrell's Road and it is therefore most likely that they are new buildings. The site record notes that they are two separate buildings and it is probable that the western one (Building A) was built first. Part of Building A is labelled "Store House" and the eastern building (Building B) is labelled Spirit Vaults. At the rear of the western part

of building A is a rectangular building labelled “Malt House” and behind the rest of building A is a “L” shaped building labelled as “Brewery”. The wider southern part of this building is clearly Building E, which had three storeys and two chimneys one at the southwest corner and one on the northern side. Architecturally this must be the brew house and would have held the mash tuns and coppers. It is not certain how water was pumped to the top floor but it is likely that one of the chimneys was for the boilers for a steam engine. The rest of the structure is building D and presumably housed the cooling tanks and fermenting vessels. Thus we have a compact works with the malt being produced in the malt house before being moved across to the brew house (Building E) and then through the finishing process in Building D before being stored in Building A. The Spirit Vaults housed in Building B show that even at this early stage the spirit and wine trade was important to the business.

Behind Building B was a separate building with gardens attached. This must have been a private residence and is presumably 14 Brecon Road the residence of John Giles. Although the house is of a modest size the gardens clearly indicate that it was considerably more imposing than the average house in Merthyr Tydfil at the time.

By the time the Ordnance Survey plan of 1881 was drawn the brewery was owned by Richard Harrap and the firm was trading under the name Giles and Harrap. As noted previously this map does not appear to be an accurate representation of the main brewery buildings. However it does show that Old Brewery Pond has been reduced in size and that this has allowed a new building to be constructed to the west of building A. This building (northern part of Building J) may have been of two storeys and probably was a new malt house, The old malthouse at the rear of building A may have been demolished or incorporated into a new building that linked the brew house directly to the stores. The purpose of this new building (Building F) is uncertain but may well have contained larger maltings as well the expansion of cooling and fermentation processes already carried out in Building D.

A small extension to the east end of Building B (Building C) would appear to have been built to give a separate access to the spirit vaults and allow Building B to house the main offices. It may be at this time that the Brecon Road façade received its overall decoration.

The owners house appears to have also been altered at this time with an extension being added to its southern end and opposite it two barns or stables were constructed along the eastern wall if the yard presumably to house horses and wagons for the company and also for the family.

The 1899 Ordnance Survey plan presents much more detail on changes to the main brewery. A new building (Building J) has been constructed to the west of Building A. This is a two storey red brick building with slate roof and its northern end may have incorporated an earlier structure into it. It can only be speculated as to the purpose of this new large building but the aerial photographic evidence showing only two ventilation ducts makes unlikely to have housed an enlarged brewing process and therefore its use must be connected with bottling and storage. Significant alterations had been made to the brew house (Building E) with the chimney at the southwestern corner having been demolished and a new chimney (Building K) being constructed against its southern gable. The brew house had been extended slightly to fill the space

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

left by the removal of the chimney and a new building had been constructed linking the brew house to the southern end of Building J. This new building closed the gap between Buildings E and J to leave a courtyard at the centre of the brewery complex.

The Harrap family were no longer living on site having moved to Gwaunfarren a large house standing in its own grounds some 1km to the north of the brewery. The absence of the family allowed the business to expand with the house being linked to offices on Brecon Road by a small extension (although the extension built shown on the 1881 had been demolished) and an eastern extension being added to the brew house.

The Ordnance Survey Plan of 1917 shows the brewery at its zenith. An additional long single storey building (Building L) had been built to the west of Building J and the building enclosing the south end of the courtyard had been demolished and replaced with a new building that probably housed an new engine and boilers (Building M) with an additional building added to the southern gable of Building J. The Owners House had been demolished and a new brew house complex built in the centre of the brewery yard linked to the original brew house. The rear gardens of 10 to 12 William Street had been purchased and an open cart shed erected on the site.

The depression of the 1930s had a significant impact on Merthyr Tydfil with unemployment hitting 84%. The restricted income clearly reduced the sales of beer in the town and by 1936 all of the breweries in the town had either been closed or bought by larger companies. Giles and Harrap were purchased by William Hancock and Co a company originating in the West of England but who had expanded into the Cardiff area. Hancocks shut the brewery but kept the site as a distribution centre. They do not appear to have carried out much work at the site with the 1951 Ordnance Survey plan showing only the demolition of the southern extension to Building J. However, it can be assumed that all of the brewing machinery had been removed by this time and the large loading bays added to the eastern walls of Building D and E may have been inserted at this time. The brewery site was acquired by Merthyr Tydfil Council in the 1960s and they appear to have demolished the buildings in the brewery yard and blocked up many of the windows to convert the site into an estates yard.

Bibliography

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Trade Directories

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Pigot 1822-3 London Provincial Directory

Pigot 1830 Directory of South Wales

Slater 1850 National & Commercial Directory.

Slater 1859 Directory of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, Shropshire, and Wales,

Slater 1868 Directory of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, Shropshire and Wales.

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<http://www.hook-norton-brewery.co.uk>

www.oldmerthytydfil.com

Appendix A: Trade Directory References to Brewery

Pigot's 1830

Watkin Davies Tydfils Well

Pigot's 1835

Rowland Hopkins & Co Tydfil Well

Robson's 1840

Rowland Hopkins & Co Brewers and Maltsters Brecon Road

Pigot's 1844

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery Co, Tydfil Well

Hunt and Co. 1848

James Penny – Brewer, Tydfil Well

Slater's 1850

John Giles Merthyr Tydfil Brewery, Tydfil Well

Slater's 1852

John Giles Merthyr Tydfil Brewery, Tydfil Well

Scammel & Co 1852

John Giles Merthyr Tydfil Brewery, Tydfil Well

Slater's 1858-9

John Giles Merthyr Tydfil Brewery, Tydfil Well

Webster's 1865

John Giles Brewer and Hop Merchant, Wholesale and Retail Wines and Spirit
Merchant Merthyr Brewery + 13 + 14 Brecon Road

Slater's 1868

John Giles Merthyr Brewery + 13 + 14 Brecon Road

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Postal Guide and Directory to Merthyr Tydfil by Charles Watkins (Post Master) 1873

Giles and Harrap Brewery, Brecon Road

Worrall's 1875

Giles and Harrap Merthyr Brewery

Kelly's 1877

Giles and Harrap Brewers and Wine and Spirit Merchants. Merthyr Brewery

Owen's 1878

Giles and Harrap Brecon Road

Slater's 1880

Giles and Harrap Merthyr Brewery + 13 + 14 Brecon Road

Kelly's 1884

Giles and Harrap Brewers and Wine and Spirit Merchants. Merthyr Brewery, Brecon Road

Bennett's 1895

Giles and Harrap Brewers, Brecon Road

Kelly's 1896

Giles and Harrap Brewers and Wine and Spirit Merchants. Established over 50 years. Merthyr Brewery, Brecon Road, T.A.Harrap Merthyr

Kelly's 1901

Giles and Harrap Brewers and Wine and Spirit Merchants. Merthyr Brewery, Brecon Road

Kelly's 1906

Giles and Harrap Brewers and Wine and Spirit Merchants. Established over 50 years. Merthyr Brewery, Brecon Road, T.A.Harrap Merthyr T.N. 15 NAT

Kelly's 1910

Giles and Harrap Brewers and Wine and Spirit Merchants. Established over 50 years. Merthyr Brewery, Brecon Road, T.A.Harrap Merthyr T.N. 15 NAT

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Kelly's 1914

Giles and Harrap Brewers and Wine and Spirit Merchants. Established over 50 years.
Merthyr Brewery, Brecon Road, T.A.Harrap Merthyr T.N. 15 NAT

Kelly's 1920

Giles and Harrap Brewers and Wine and Spirit Merchants. Established over 50 years.
Merthyr Brewery, Brecon Road, T.A.Harrap Merthyr T.N. 15 NAT

Wales (North and South) Trades Directory 1931

Giles and Harrap Merthyr Brewery, Brecon Road also Wine and Spirit Merchants.
Phone No. 15.

Aubery & Co 1930

Giles and Harrap Merthyr Brewery

Cope's 1932

Giles and Harrap Merthyr Brewery

Appendix B: Trade Directory References to Harrap Family Residencies

Worrall's 1875

Richard Harrap - Brecon Road

Kelly's 1877

Richard Harrap - Brecon Road

Slater's 1880

Richard Harrap – 14 Brecon Road

Kelly's 1884

Richard Harrap - Brecon Road

Kelly's 1895

Gilbert Ward Harrap – Gwaunfarren

James Thresher Harrap – Gwaunfarren

Mrs Harrap – Gwaunfarren

Kelly's 1901

Mrs Richard Harrap - Gwaunfarren

Kelly's 1906

Gilbert Ward Harrap - Treganne The Park

James Thresher Harrap – Glenthorne

Mrs Harrap – Gwaunfarren

Kelly's 1910

James Thresher Harrap – Glenthorne

Mrs Harrap – Gwaunfarren

Kelly's 1914

James Thresher Harrap – Glenthorne

Mrs Harrap – Gwaunfarren

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Kelly's 1920

James Thresher Harrap - Gwaunfarren

Miss Harrap - Glenthorne

Appendix C: Index of Photographs

- 1 Brecon Road Frontage From West
- 2 Brecon Road Frontage From West
- 3 Brecon Road Frontage From West
- 4 Building J Brecon Road Frontage
- 5 Building J Brecon Road Frontage
- 6 Building A Brewery Entrance Brecon Road
- 7 Building A Brewery Entrance Brecon Road
- 8 Building A Brewery Entrance & Building B Brecon Road
- 9 Building A West Gable Brecon Road Frontage
- 10 Building A West Gable Brecon Road Frontage
- 11 Building A West Door Brecon Road Frontage
- 12 Building A West Door Brecon Road Frontage
- 13 Building A West Door Brecon Road Frontage
- 14 Building A West Gable & West Door Brecon Road Frontage
- 15 Building B Main Entrance Brecon Road Frontage
- 16 Building B Main Entrance Brecon Road Frontage
- 17 Building B Main Entrance Brecon Road Frontage
- 18 Building B East Gable Brecon Road Frontage
- 19 Building C East Door Brecon Road Frontage
- 20 Building C East Door Brecon Road Frontage
- 21 Building C East Door & West Gable Brecon Road Frontage
- 22 Brecon Road Frontage From East
- 23 Brecon Road Frontage From East
- 24 Brecon Road Frontage From East
- 25 Building B Main Entrance Brecon Road Detail
- 26 Building B Main Entrance Brecon Road Detail
- 27 Building B Main Entrance Brecon Road Detail
- 28 Brecon Road Frontage Window Detail
- 29 Building B East Gable Brecon Road Frontage Barge Boards
- 30 Building A West Gable Brecon Road Frontage Barge Boards
- 31 Building A Brewery Entrance Brecon Road Detail
- 32 Building A Brewery Entrance Brecon Road
- 33 Building J West Wing Brecon Road Frontage Door Detail
- 34 Building J West Wing Brecon Road Frontage Round Window
- 35 Building C South Facade East Gable
- 36 Building C South Facade East Gable
- 37 Building B South Facade Main Entrance
- 38 Building B South Facade Main Entrance
- 39 Building A South Facade West End
- 40 Building A South Facade West End
- 41 South Façade
- 41 South Façade
- 42 Building C South Facade East Gable And East Facade
- 43 Building C South Facade East Gable And East Façade
- 44 Building C East Facade Southern Side
- 45 Building C East Facade Southern Side
- 46 Building C East Facade Southern Side

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

- 47 Building C East Facade Northern Side
- 48 Building C East Facade
- 49 Brecon Road Frontage From East
- 50 Brecon Road Frontage From East
- 51 Building G 13 Brecon Road From North
- 52 Building G 13 Brecon Road From North
- 53 Building G 13 Brecon Road Lower Floor
- 54 Building G 13 Brecon Road Upper Window
- 55 Building G 13 Brecon Road Upper Window
- 56 Building G 13 Brecon Road Upper Window
- 57 Building D North End
- 58 Building D North End
- 59 Building D Centre
- 60 Building E South End
- 61 Building E South End
- 62 Building D & Building E from South
- 63 Building D & Building E
- 64 Building D & Building E
- 65 Building D & Building E
- 66 Building K Chimney From East
- 67 Building K Chimney From East
- 68 Building K Chimney From East Detail of Surviving Brickwork
- 69 Building K Chimney From South
- 70 Building K Chimney From South
- 71 Building E & Building K Chimney From South
- 72 Building E South Gable, East Side
- 73 Building E South Gable, East Side
- 74 Building E South Gable, East Side
- 75 Building E South Gable, East Side
- 76 Building E South Gable, East Side
- 77 Building E & Building K South Gable,
- 78 Building E & Building K South Gable,
- 79 Building E, Building K & Building M, West Side
- 80 Building E, Building K & Building M, West Side
- 81 Building E, Building K & Building M,
- 82 Building E, Building K & Building M
- 83 Building M
- 84 Building M
- 85 Building M
- 86 Building J From South
- 87 Building E & Building J
- 88 Building J South Gable
- 89 Building J South Gable
- 90 Building J South Gable
- 91 Building J West Side, From South
- 92 Building J, West Side
- 93 Building J West Side
- 94 Building J, West Side
- 95 Building E, West Side
- 96 Building E West Side

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

- 97 Building L
- 98 Building G 13 Brecon Road West Side
- 99 Building G 13 Brecon Road Garden Wall
- 100 East side of Courtyard, Building H
- 101 East side of Courtyard, Building I
- 102 East side of Courtyard, Building I
- 103 East side of Courtyard, Building I
- 104 East side of Courtyard, Building I
- 105 South side of Courtyard, Building P
- 106 South side of Courtyard, Building O
- 107 East side of Court yard, From South
- 108 East side of Courtyard, From West
- 109 East side of Courtyard, from West
- 110 East side of Courtyard, From West
- 111 East side of Courtyard, From West
- 112 South side of Courtyard, From North
- 113 South side of Courtyard, Building P
- 114 South side of Courtyard, Building P
- 115 Building E South Gable, & Building J South Gable,
- 116 South side of Courtyard, Building P
- 117 South side of Courtyard, Building P
- 118 Building L
- 119 Building E, West side
- 120 Building E West side
- 121 Site from South
- 122 Site from South
- 123 Site from South
- 124 Site from South
- 125 Site from South
- 126 Site from South
- 127 Site from South
- 128 Building G 13 Brecon Road West side
- 129 Building G 13 Brecon Road West side
- 130 Building B Corbel on Main Entrance
- 131 Building B Main Entrance Detail
- 132 Building B Main Entrance Detail
- 133 Building C Brecon Road Frontage Showing Change in Line of Frontage
- 134 Building C East Door Brecon Road Frontage
- 135 Buildings A & B Change in Watertable From East
- 136 Buildings A & B Change in Watertable From West
- 137 Building A Detail of Aslar Facing West Gable
- 138 Window Mouldings Brecon Road Frontage
- 139 Building A Gable Detail Brecon Road Frontage
- 140 Building A Gable Detail Brecon Road Frontage
- 141 John Woods Plan 1836
- 142 John Woods Plan 1836
- 143 John Woods Plan 1836
- 144 Ordnance Survey Board of Health Plan 1851
- 145 Ordnance Survey Board of Health Plan 1851
- 146 John Woods Plan 1836

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

- 147 Giles & Harrap Advert
- 148 Giles & Harrap Advert
- 149 Giles & Harrap Advert
- 150 Giles & Harrap Advert
- 151 Giles & Harrap Advert Red Dragon Whiskey
- 152 John Giles Advert
- 153 John Giles Advert
- 154 John Giles Advert
- 155 John Giles Advert
- 156 John Giles Advert
- 157 John Giles Advert
- 158 John Giles Advert
- 159 John Giles Advert
- 160 Building B Corbel on Main Entrance
- 161 Building B Corbel on Main Entrance
- 162 Building B Corbel on Main Entrance
- 163 Building B Main Entrance Detail
- 164 Building B Main Entrance Detail
- 165 Building B Main Entrance Detail
- 166 Brewery in 1971 (Alan George)
- 167 Brewery in 1971 (Alan George) Cropped
- 168 Building K Chimney Detail (Alan George)
- 169 Building N
- 170 Building P from North
- 171 Aerial view Brecon Road Brewery 1989
- 172 Vulcan Brewery 1950 Aerial Photograph
- 173 Brecon Road 1910
- 174 Aerial View 1989 cropped
- 175 Board of Health 1881 Sheet-27
- 176 Board of Health Composite Plan
- 177 General Site View From West 28th March 2009
- 177 Giles and Harrap Steam Lorry
- 178 Building A West Gable During Demolition
- 179 Building A During Demolition
- 180 Building O from West
- 181 Building A West Gable During Demolition
- 182 Building A West Gable
- 183 Building J During Demolition
- 184 Rear of Building A During Demolition
- 185 General Site View from West 28th March 2009
- 186 Building J South End
- 187 Building J Detail of Upper Storey Centre
- 188 Building J West wall from North
- 189 Building G Demolished
- 190 North Gable of Building H After Demolition of Building G
- 191 Building C East Wall During Demolition
- 192 Building C Upper Storey East Wall During Demolition

Appendix D: Photographic Contact Sheets

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

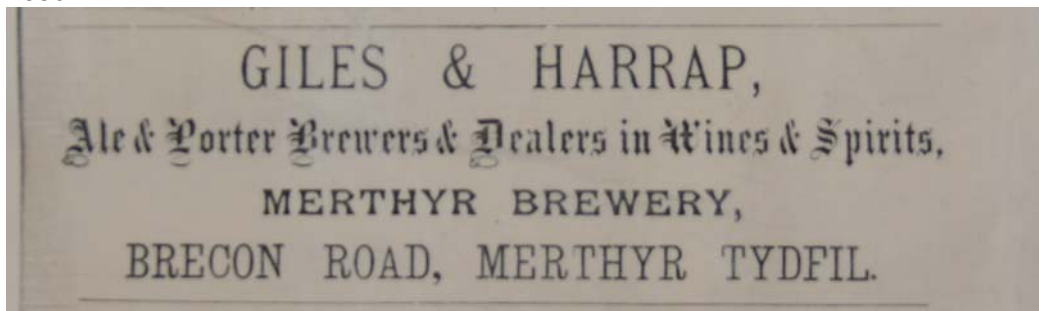
Appendix E: Advertisements

Advertising was important to any business and John Giles and Giles and Harrap advertised extensively. A range of adverts have been found during the research for the project ranging from the early plain written ones to the later more decorative ones showing the pride that Giles and Harrap had in their new fleet of steam wagons.

1868



1880



Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

1893



1900



1910



"At your service."

—READY TO DESPATCH YOUR KIND FAVOURS FOR—

GILES & HARRAP'S

Merthyr Ales

Post to—

Merthyr Brewery, Merthyr Tydfil.

Wire—"Harrap, Merthyr,"
or 'phone—No. 15, National.

42

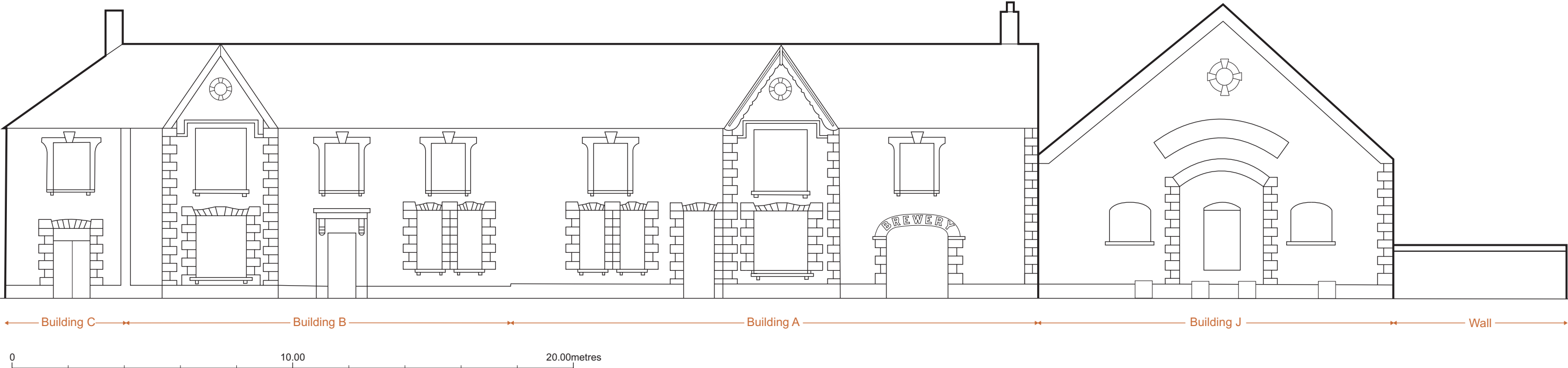


Figure 1. Brecon Road Façade: Buildings A, B, C and J

Merthyr Tydfil Brewery: Building Record

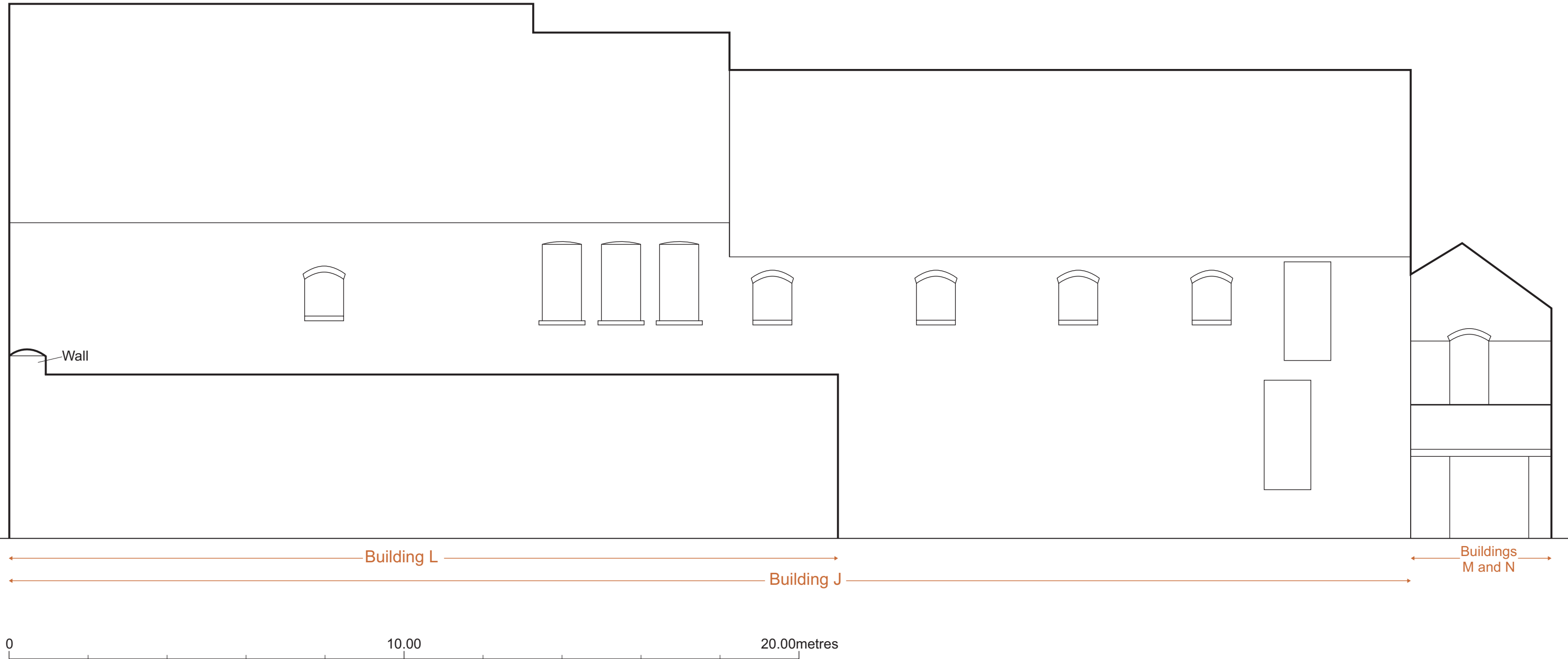


Figure 4. Buildings J, L, M and N West Face



Figure 3. South facing elevation of buildings E, J, K, L, M and N

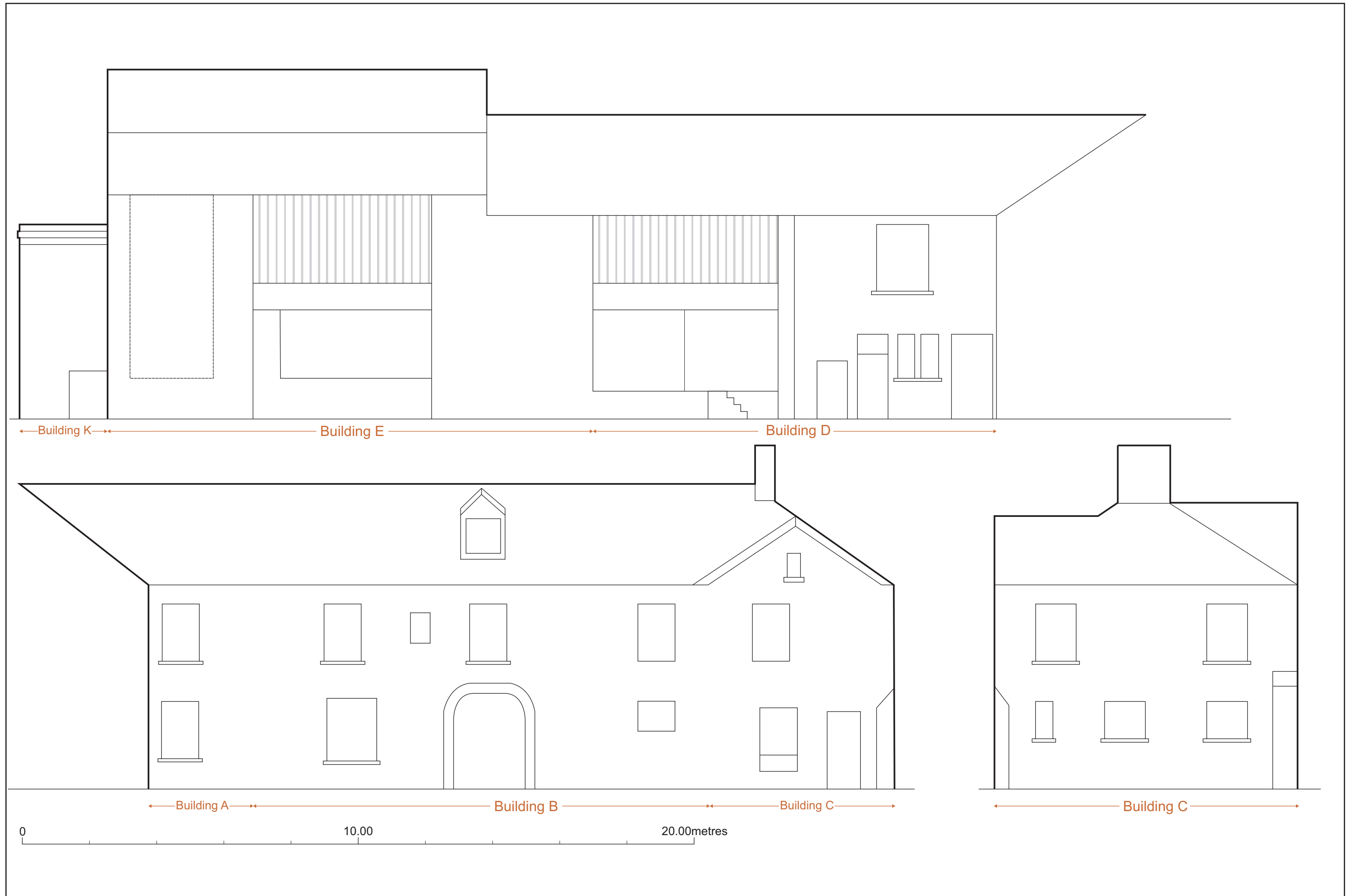


Figure 2. Southern Façade: Buildings A, B and C; Buildings D, E and K East Face and Building C East Face

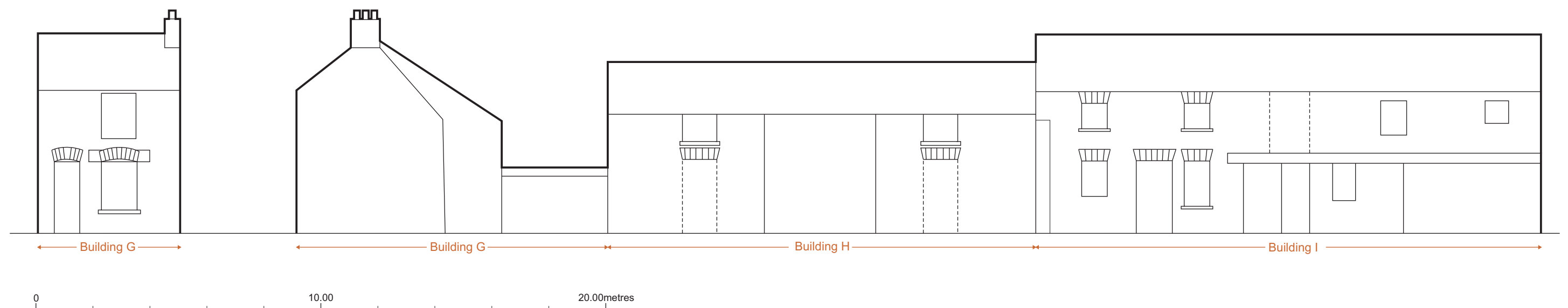


Figure 5. Buildings G, H and I West Face and Building G North Face