

PERIODICAL ARTICLES

Welcome to the third issue of *BHE News Update* which describes the evolving project of Business History Explorer, the online bibliography of publications relating to the history of businesses and industries in the UK.

Our big achievement over the last six months has been the completion of the first phase of adding periodical articles to the database. Details of some 10,000 articles have been added to BHE, filling a very obvious gap and making the product vastly more useful for users. Up until now it has included just monographs, chapters within monographs especially where these are multi-authored, dissertations, unpublished manuscripts and – on a highly selective basis – product literature.

Clearly we have been highly selective in our choice of periodical articles. We have endeavoured to give fairly comprehensive coverage of mainstream periodicals such as *Business History*, *Business Archives*, *Industrial Archaeology Review* and *Textile History*. Otherwise we have included articles dealing specifically with businesses or industries appearing in local history journals, local industrial archaeology society journals and other enthusiast publications when these articles are lengthy and informative. A particular focus has been on articles published in unlikely periodicals, thereby meeting one of the chief objectives of BHE by focusing in particular on hard-to-find materials that have often escaped the attention of bibliographers.

Very many gaps will obviously remain which we will fill as part of our ongoing researches – BHE is still very much a work in progress.

Our selection of periodical articles highlights the multi-disciplinary nature that BHE is assuming, notably but certainly not exclusively, at the academic level. Much academic output – greatly evident from the periodical *Business History* – illustrates how business history to a significant extent sits at the meeting place of history, management studies and industrial economics. But that is only part of the story. Many disciplines often look at their subject through the prism of the history of businesses and industries including historians of agriculture, accounting, design, labour, law, management, planning and urban development. Other allied disciplines include historical geography and archaeology.

It is not surprising, therefore, that BHE draws on articles from periodicals as diverse as *Post-Medieval Archaeology* and *Newcomen Society Transactions*; *Furniture History* and *Costume – Journal of the Costume Society*; and *Journal of the London Society* and *Mariner's Mirror*.

CHANGES TO CHARGES

BHE is available only by subscription. On the third anniversary of its publication we have revised our rates. The annual rate from November 2015 is £35 *but* Business Archives Council members continue to be offered subscriptions at a significant discount, reflecting the Council's support for the project. Annual subscriptions for individual members are now £15 and £25 for corporate and institutional members. For details about how to subscribe go to:

www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/publications/business_history_explorer/subscribe

BREWING INDUSTRY

An important feature of BHE is its inclusion of articles within monographs; they comprise well over 10 per cent of the content. This type of publication falls into two very distinct sub-groups. The first is collected essays by a group of contributors, published under the name of an editor(s). The other comprises chapters in a monograph by a single author where these chapters are distinctly focused on well defined topics – especially the history of a particular business or industry.

A monograph from the latter group is Alfred Barnard, *Noted Breweries of Great Britain and Ireland*, 4 vols, 1889-9. This directory of breweries at work in the 1890s is a well-known bible for historians of the brewing industry, industrial archaeologists and the like. A typical entry provides historical details of a brewery but is at its strongest in describing the brewery's plant; not much history here but a superb snapshot of a business at a point in time. Several entries – especially those covering big city breweries – are of considerable size and extend to a series of sub-chapters.

So in a labour of love, you may say a foolhardy one as we did from time to time, details of some 250 entries in Barnard have

been incorporated into BHE; only very short entries have been excluded. This greatly enhances BHE's coverage of the brewing industry.

Barnard went on to publish a similar, though shorter, work on distilleries – *The Whisky Distilleries of the United Kingdom*, 1903, reprinted 2008. It covers c150 distilling sites and we intend in the near future to include within BHE the longer entries from this.

IRONBRIDGE GORGE MUSEUM LIBRARY

Ironbridge at Telford, in Shropshire, is well-known as a birthplace of industrial revolution in Britain, a heritage reflected by the range of superb museums to be found there. Less known is the outstanding library of business and industrial history publications to be found in their midst. It must constitute the finest library of its type in Britain.

It therefore has great interest to BHE and in the past year, as opportunity has allowed, we have reviewed its holdings in order

to fill gaps in BHE. The result is the addition of several hundred entries. These stretch across the whole spectrum of publications but in particular cover booklets published to mark the opening of new plant; marketing and publicity documents; and product literature. Power stations, gasworks and waterworks make up much of the first group.

Needless to say we are grateful for the good offices of Ironbridge, Museum Library & Archives [www.ironbridge.org.uk], especially to Dr Matt Thompson, Tamsin Bapty and Joanne Smith.

OTHER PLACES

Meanwhile we have been hard at work elsewhere, in particular visiting two local history centres with very different collections. One is Coventry History Centre with its extensive holdings relating to the mechanical and electrical engineering industry – Jaguar, Rover, Rolls-Royce, GEC Telecommunications, Massey-Ferguson. The other is Barking & Dagenham Archives & Local Studies in East London whose holdings on Thames-side industries and outer-London manufacturing are particularly full.

INFORMATION ABOUT BUSINESS HISTORY EXPLORER

What is BHE?

- It is an online bibliography of the history of UK businesses and industries, including ones based outside the UK
- It is a work in progress currently containing c40,000 entries
- It contains publications relating to 15,000 businesses and industries
- Its content comprises monographs, periodical articles, chapters within monographs, dissertations, unpublished manuscripts and some product literature.
- Its search functionality enables searching for publications by industrial sector (to two levels) and by geographical area (to four levels)

Why subscribe to BHE?

- It is the only bibliography of its kind
- It is increasingly comprehensive and includes all categories of publication, not just monographs
- It focuses on the very large volume of privately printed and otherwise hard-to-find publications which have escaped notice in mainstream library catalogues and other bibliographies
- It is relevant to a wide range of historical studies in which business has a role to play – design and decorative arts; architecture and

construction; genealogy and the family; urban development and the environment; science and technology; historical geography and local studies; transport and agriculture; economic and business history

- Its search capabilities facilitate studies of specific towns or counties and of specific economic activities

Who is behind BHE?

- John Orbell and Richard Storey, retired archivists with strong interests in business archives and history have compiled the content
- The project has been financially supported by the Business Archives Council (BAC), a membership organisation which encourages the preservation of business archives and the study of business history (www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk)
- The publisher is Taylor's End Press, an imprint of John Orbell
- BHE is the successor to Francis Goodall, *A Bibliography of British Business Histories*, 1987

How to subscribe to BHE?

- By cheque
- By BACS payment
- By credit card
- For further details go to businesshistoryexplorer.co.uk

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