

OA Research Seminar VIII: The development of the factory

Summaries

Richard Gregory and Helen Evans: *Tales from Cottonopolis: the development of Lancashire's Early Cotton Mills*

Oxford Archaeology's Lancaster office has spent the last few decades, and many thousands of hours, recording and researching one of north-west England's most iconic industrial buildings – the Lancashire textile mill – which forms an integral element of the Industrial Revolution in this region, and beyond. This presentation reflects on some of this research by focusing on the development of the region's early cotton mills, dating to the late 18th and earlier half of the 19th century. The presentation asks, 'What is an early cotton mill?', and then considers their function through the lens of both 'production' and as 'economic entities'. The presentation ends with a case study, outlining the results of OA's research into a highly important early cotton mill in Manchester, which kick-started the town's transformation into 'Cottonopolis', the pre-eminent centre of cotton spinning in 19th century England, and one of countries first truly industrialised cities.

Deirdre Forde: *From Hense the Current Flows: The beginnings of Oxford's public electricity supply at Osney*

Dating to 1892, the site of Osney Power Station is a relatively early example of electricity production for public consumption. As demand for supply increased exponentially over the following decades, so did the power station, in both size and productivity. This presentation explores its construction history and how the fast evolution of its phasing coincided with wider advances in both energy technology and industrial architecture.

Jon Gill: *The development of the Daylight factory in Britain in the early 20th century with particular reference to the Honey Monster Factory in Southall*

In the early years of the 20th century a new type of multi-storey factory emerged with a reinforced concrete frame and a largely glazed, non-loadbearing external skin. This new type of factory was pioneered in the United States, particularly in the car plants of Detroit and it became known as the Daylight factory. Daylight factories began to be constructed in Britain, immediately before the First World War and after it, often for American companies. Oxford Archaeology has recorded one such example in Southall, West London, which is known as the Honey Monster Factory. Although it was relatively late example, dating from the 1930s, it provides a good illustration of this industrial archetype.