

WHO ARE WE?

A POTTED HISTORY OF BRIMS

In 1872, David Nicholas Brims came from Edinburgh to Newcastle upon Tyne to manage the contractor's office of W. E. Jackson, a well known dock and railway contractor.

In 1882, he started his own business and was joined in 1907 by his elder son, Charles William Brims, and in 1919 by his younger son, Robert Wilson Brims.

From its earliest days, the Company concentrated on Civil Engineering rather than Building with part-

icular emphasis on marine structures in the rivers Tyne, Wear and Tees.

They were pioneer contractors in reinforced concrete and held the first licence for the Hennebique system in Northumberland.

Brims became a limited company in 1912 and between the first and second world wars carried out successfully many Civil Engineering contracts in the North-East including dry docks, quays, bridges, reservoirs and reinforced concrete structures.

They were founder members of the Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors and C. W. Brims was elected Chairman of the Council in

1930. His elder son David Vaughan Brims joined the family business in 1932, became Managing Director from 1946 to 1966 and has remained a director of the Company since then.

In 1961 Brims became a member of the Swan Hunter Group of Companies and since that time a period of rapid expansion has occurred and apart from the regional office at Middlesbrough, new offices were opened in Southampton.

We now handle both Civil Engineering and Building contracts and each accounts for approximately 50% of the Company turnover.

A. Wigham



BLYTH DOCK No.3 WITH SITE PERSONNEL 1896



HENNEBIQUE FERRO-CONCRETE BUILDING
"ABSOLUTELY INCOMBUSTIBLE" 1900-1902



DOXFORDS RETAINING WALL WITH PERSONNEL 1912



GATESHEAD REFUSE SHOOT 1921

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor

I have felt for some time that one of the reasons that the magazine adopts a middle of the road line, let me hastily add, from the contributors only, is the fear of recriminations from management. Some of the day-to-day news is provocative and, while not wishing the "news" to become a slanderous rag, perhaps more viewpoints of the Company may come out if the donors knew for sure that their names would not be forwarded.

Perhaps *Brimnews* should be a "write-in" of people's ideas, compliments and grouses, giving a realistic feeling of Company morale.

You don't think so!! Okay, send your thoughts in, I've only written this for fun.

Good on you "News", keep sending them out.

Clement Freud

Good on you, Clement, keep sending them in!

Ed.

Dear Ed,

In reply to A.P.'s article in your last issue in which he suggested we should breed our own Turks, I should like to ask why are the Ottoman Turks no longer around? The answer can easily be seen by re-arranging the titles to the Appraisal Sheet:

Adaptability :	Being able to modify
Adventuresomeness :	In love with adventure
Cruelty :	Ghastly deeds
Energy :	Harnessed power
Flexibility :	Easily modified
Intelligence :	Acquired knowledge
Justice :	Dealing honestly

Get along well with others :

Sociable

BIG HEAD equals VANITY, VANITY equals PRIDE and PRIDE comes before a fall. So watch that wall you Turks!

Ben Johnson

I always thought an ottoman was something you kept blankets in!

Ed.

Previews of the latest in swimwear indicate that on the beaches next summer there is going to be more girl per girl.

Dear Ed,

Last issue's article by "E.B." on controversial subjects cannot go unanswered.

Who is this "E.B." anyway? He is obviously only a beginner and hasn't a clue when it comes to stirring it up. If he really intended to work up a few souls he should have said something like:-

"Ken Hill is a drag artist.

Jock Bradley does wear knickers under his kilt.

Jeff Duggans left.

Sid Welford is alright.

Fred Werndly is not quite right.

The Plant Yard should be renamed the Scrap Yard.

The Head Office Secretaries have a nibble every day.

Middlesbrough Office has no sense of humour.

The Plant Manager's wife beats him regularly.

Eric Arcol does.

David Weatherley wishes he could, more often.

David Gibson is really a Pakistani.

Colin Hullock is clapped out.

Are Q.Ss really necessary?

Charlie Bell loves joiners.

Bricklayers should be 6 ft. down.

The air fan installed in H.O. Buying Dept. is to combat Jimmy Renton's feet."

Unless I receive a few replies to the above comments I will naturally presume the majority of readers, are, as expected, Zombies.

BIG MOOTH.

P.S. If you can't guess my real name here's the vital clues:- Almost 6'2", nearly 8 stone 3 lbs., wears a false beard and crimplene plus-fours.

B.M.

Danny La Rue?

Ed.



Dear Editor,

So this is what they mean by "PLANT SERVICING!"

R.G.

Or TREETment perhaps?

Ed.

Dear Ed,

I would like to issue a warning to all personnel; be careful not to move suddenly when near any of the following, Stan Tomlinson, Dave Southern-Design, Dave Coulson-Buying. These men could be dangerous if they manage to survive the KARATE course which they started recently. Their physical and mental capabilities will increase by leaps and bounds with training until they can use their bare hands and feet to smash quarter inch balsa wood and perform flying kicks high enough to crush a midgets kneecap. In only two years they could be doing as many as five press-ups without a rest.

You have been warned.

R.T.

K.S. Karate Club, N.Shields, Y.M.C.A.

James Bond beware

Ed.

SOME NEW CONTRACTS

CIVIL ENGINEERING DIVISION

Major Contracts — Contracts Manager — D. W. Weatherly

Whitby New Quay; a six month contract worth approx. £92,000+ commencing December 1971.

Tyneside Region — Contracts Manager — L. M. Pascoe

E.I.E.C. Houghton; a six month contract worth approx. £67,000 which commenced in October 1971.

Washington Drainage; a four month contract worth approx. £11,000 which commenced in October 1971.

BUILDING DIVISION

Tyneside Housing — Contracts Manager — S. Heward

Dudley — Fordley Housing Estate; a nine month contract worth approx. £240,000+ commencing December 1971.

Teesside Region — Regional Manager — J. R. Whitfield

Cleveland 54" sewer for B.S.C.; a four month contract worth approx. £45,000 which commenced in mid November 1971.

The pilot of a jet plane felt cold steel pressing against his neck, and squinted up to see the now-familiar figure of a hijacker, who said, "Take me to New York". "All right", said the pilot resignedly, and they flew on in silence for a few minutes. Finally the pilot, who had been pondering the situation, said, "I say, old man, we're going to New York anyway". "I know", said the hijacker, "but the last three times I've tried to fly to New York I've finished up in Cuba, and I'm going to make sure this time".

PEOPLE & PLACES

PLANT DEPOT NEWS

Good Morning Dear Readers! (And to those of you who are inclined the other way) Good Morning Dear!

At last the Non-Mechanical Section of our Department is installed at Point Pleasant under the control of Alan (Blue Eyes) Hutchinson. We were going to have a traditional "Topping Out" ceremony but unfortunately we couldn't lay our hands on a second-hand bottle of champagne, never mind a ladder to get onto the roof.

I'm delighted to announce the forthcoming marriage on 18th December of my only daughter Janice to Keith Park, who at present is up at our Gretna Contract. The bairns met at our second last Company Barbecue and have been going steady ever since. I've no idea where the honeymoon will be, but I do know they will be residing in the Longtown area afterwards.

There's not long to go now until we're right into the Festive Season and I for one am certainly looking forward to it. Christmas cards, booze, Jingle Bells, booze, Christmas pud, presents, booze, turkey, roast "tatties", booze and more turkey. Upset stomachs, ring-a-ding hangovers and frequent visits to the loo are but a few of the many delights which are now approaching rapidly. Being a true Geordie (and bloody proud of it too) I also have the New Year to celebrate in a similar manner to the Christmas, with the proceedings being only slightly altered. Christmas cards are out, and more booze substituted. Writing this reminds me of the nastiest thing someone has ever said to me, which was "Will you work New Year's Day?" The gentleman who asked the question was, needless to say, from foreign parts, and simply didn't understand the ritual of a North-East New Year. He did, however, understand my blistering reply, such language I am pleased to say I no longer use. I suppose I'll do my usual stint at "First Footing" again this year. Tradition has it that the First Foot should be tall, dark and handsome for him to be effective, bringing prosperity to the household for the forthcoming year. The dark I can cope with, the handsome I can cope with (no nasty comments please), but the tall bit has me completely snookered. I've tried

built-up shoes, standing on my tippy toes, even lying about my height to try and be first over the threshold at one of the neighbour's houses in the New Year, but invariably I'm pushed to one side while some lanky so and so is ushered into the house first, ahead of me. A friend of mine heard of my problem last year and suggested that by presenting myself at the front door with a large piece of coal, which is supposed to be lucky for the householder, would distract them from my lack of inches and would gain me immediate admission. I tried it. It didn't work! I knocked at the door. The door opened and a voice said "Sorry, son, we don't buy coal on New Year's Eve". The door slammed shut. In surprise I dropped the coal, almost breaking my big toe in the process and hobbled off home. Later in the day, or was it the next day I called once more at the house where I had failed to gain admission. One slight tap on the knocker and I was whipped inside and promptly fed with a piece of Christmas cake and a pint. "Where were ee last neet?" my friend asked. "You missed the funniest thing in years. Some silly bugger knocked at the door at 3 o'clock and tried to sell us some coal!" I hadn't the heart (or stamina) to tell him. This year I'm changing tactics altogether. I'm going First Footing in "Drag Gear", so if you're accosted by a bristle chinned bird on New Year's Eve, for heavens sake don't take advantage of her, it might be me. Whoops Duckie! Compliments of the Season folks from all at Department 8.

J. S. Fairbairn

FIESTA DEL DURHAM?

John Dunn & "Crusher" (Ted Curry) went to Spain last year for their holidays. The sun was belting down on them as they stretched out on the beach.

Crusher nudges Dunny and says "By, isn't grand, d.y. knaa what day iriz?"

Dunny says "Aye, its Satterda".

"Aye, a-knaa" says Crusher, but d.y. knaa what day iriz?"

"A divint" says Dunny in his gentlemanly manner.

"Its the Durrum Minas Gala" shouts Crusher.

"Am pleased for the lads" Dunny says, "the v gorra nice day for'd".

WELCOME TO THE COMPANY....

John Stockill, John Dent, Ray Jackson, Laurie McDonald, Tony Smith, David Humphrey, Andrew McGhie, John Allsop (of Southampton Region), Ian Booth, Keith Shannon, David Brodrick, Dillon Wood (both of Middlesbrough Region). Kevin Gibson, Brian Pearce, Richard Carter (both of Southampton Region), Alan Connor, David Rose, Jim Denley, Ken Farrier, Ian Rush, Arthur Sim, Pete Hedworth and Joseph Ingrams, all of whom are new trainees in the Company and who, we hope, will benefit from that training which they will receive with us. Welcome also to Bill Morgan (Marketing Executive), David Taylor (Q.S., Middlesbrough), Peter White (Site Engineer, Gretna), Sydney Gregg (Site Clerk), Joseph Taylor (Q.S., Gretna), Brad Bradshaw (Enquiry Clerk, Southampton), Andrew Cottam (Site Engineer), Trevor Collin (S.O. Engineer) Charles Scott (Foreman Fitter, Gretna) and Frank Wilson (Section Foreman, Gretna).

We trust all will find their work with Brims rewarding and enjoyable.

WHICH Q.S.?

In an attempt to elucidate the above, the following is the first instalment of a who's who in Department 6:

Peter Scott — joined the Company in September 1969 and has worked on a number of building contracts including Pendower School and, currently, the three jobs in Blyth. Peter lives at Newburn in Newcastle and reckons that he has to set off for Blyth so early that it is scarcely worth going home. **Allan Rae** — recently joined us from W. & J.R. Watsons and is working at Gretna. Allan has worked on motorways for all of his nine years in the business. In addition to his skills as a Quantity Surveyor, he does a good line in butcher meat.

Fred Slipper — has been with the Company for eight years starting on the Darlington Bridges, moving onto the Tyne Tunnel contract and currently working at the South Shields Incinerator site. Fred's main interests are football and leek growing, his current pinnacle of success with the latter being 35th prize in a local club show.

B. E. Youngs

PEOPLE & PLACES cont'd

BELATED BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO BRIMSNEWS FROM THE SUNNY SOUTH

We must first apologise for lack of contribution in the last *Brimsnews*, but with everyone away on holiday it seemed that no-one had time to send any information up.

Anyway the latest crack is that we have moved office from our old headquarters at Millbrook Road into a plush new office block in the centre of Southampton. At the moment it is still a bit disjointed with carpenters sawing, nailing and hammering all over the place, but within the next week or so that efficient Ireland/Oswell machine will be permanently installed and ready to beat the world again.

Since our last bulletin we have had a few additions to the staff in the South and we take this opportunity of welcoming to Brims Peter Everson who is our Agent on the Overbridge Contract in Southampton Docks. Peter was originally working for Laings on the Piling Contract, but thought that he would be better working for a major civil engineering contractor so he joined Brims at the beginning of July. He lives in Basingstoke.

Our new Quantity Surveyor for Stelcon and the Overbridge Contract is John Stevens, who is back in England after an eight year stint in Canada, and is now living in Salisbury. He is a great lad, but we wish he would stop wearing his Mountie Uniform for work.

John Allsop a graduate engineer is working for us on our Stelcon Project. John was married just before he joined the Company and is now living in Southampton.

Two young trainee engineers have just commenced working for us in the Southampton Region they are, Richard Carter and Brian Pearce. We wish them the best of luck for the future.

Ian Lawson has joined us on the Stelcon Contract and only ever looks worried if the beer tanker of Scottish and Newcastle Breweries is a day or so overdue, but he has taken the pledge now as he has just bought himself a brand new M.G. Midget so beware all Southampton birds. (By the way the pledge has got nothing to do with giving up drink).

Congratulations to Gordon Bacon, general foreman at Stelcon, who is expecting a midget of another kind

early next year. Gordon was off ill with thrombosis a while back, but now is fully recovered.

Both the Bridge Contract and Stelcon are going quite well and the bridge will be completed in January 1972. Stelcon, of course, has a long while to go.

We have been enjoying an Indian Summer up until the back end of last week, and only two weeks ago Colin Hullock and his family were spotted sunbathing on the beach at Sandbanks and the temperature was in the low 70's. Can't be bad for this time of the year.

The New Forest is particularly beautiful at this time of the year with the tremendous variation of colour in the trees, it has to be seen to be believed. Alas, winter is approaching and I am afraid it is on with the woolly knickers and donkey jackets.

We wish to take this opportunity of wishing all our friends in the North a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

C. A. Hullock



Richard Allen is alive and well and living in a world of his own.

Rumour has it that our new fourth week's holiday must be taken during our third week's holiday.

Most of our Can Lads are better looking than our Project Managers.

You couldn't sell our Junior Engineers even if you put them on the "cheap" counter at Woolworths.

John Mahoney has a special relationship with his office chair — he never gets off it.

Sid Heward received valuable training from the Diplomatic Corps.

... Even Santa Claus is off during our fourth week's holiday!

Seen at the Transport Depot "Tossy" Foster displaying *Horse & Hounds* magazine, with his horse and cart collecting bags of cement.

"Is it true that George Wightman is taking a coastal navigation course so that he will qualify for a firm's boat?"

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Keith Park — Planning Engineer, Gretna — on his forthcoming marriage to Janice Fairbairn, only daughter of Jack Fairbairn, on Saturday, 18th December at St. Peters, Balkwell, North Shields.

Jack, of the short fat hairy legs, was heard to comment "that's that I've no more daughters left although I am open to offers for my ten year old son!"

Eddie Bradley (Building Planning) on his forthcoming marriage to Margaret Storey on Saturday, 18th December at St. Cuthberts, Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham.

Terry Grant (Seaton Valley Drainage) on his marriage to Pauline Palmer on 2nd October, 1971.

Trevor Phillipson (Seaton Valley Drainage) on his marriage to Patricia Thomas on 30th September, 1971.

Sid Harrison (Building Planning) and his wife Edna on the birth of their daughter Christine Dawn who weighed 7lb.12ozs. and was born on 16th October, 1971.

Sid and Edna would like to thank everyone for sending a beautiful bouquet.

Dorothy Dalton (Personnel Dept.) on her engagement to Robin Black on Friday, 29th October, 1971.

It is with deep regret that we have to announce the deaths of two of the Company's employees.

Marion Buxton, aged 17, of the wages department who died on Tuesday, 19th October as a result of injuries received in a motor accident.

Peter Hogan, aged 28 of the Swan Hunter site who died on 4th November 1971 from injuries received in an accident.

The deepest respects and sincerest condolences of friends and colleagues are offered to their parents and relatives.

BRIMS OVERSEAS — GIBRALTAR



GENERAL VIEW FROM CAROLINES BATTERY

Hola, y buenos dias ambres! ta bien? Bueno! greetings in Spanish, the native tongue of the locals here in Gibraltar and hope you all pretend to understand it.

I am the third "Brim" to spend some time out here working as an engineer, so as an article has already appeared telling of the actual site and its workings I shall not go into that in any depth.

However, the above, below or wherever they've put it is a photograph of the site as it is today. The contract includes the Octagonal School in the bottom right hand corner and the eight blocks of flats in the centre of the picture, one of which has yet to be structurally completed. The blocks are made interaccessible by a series of bridges, playdecks and ramps which also have yet to be completed. These are all at first floor level and because of the local ground conditions, have to be put onto pile foundations. The piling for which has been carried out during three weeks of my stay, including fifty-five piles driven by two rigs. This was well

within the target eight weeks programmed probably due to the fact it was done by two "Paddies" — in every sense of the word.

During my stay things have been running quite well on programme and one of the blocks of flats complete with roadway, car park and bridge is due for handing over on the 5th December which is right on programme and quite remarkable when everything is considered.

Gibraltar is a queer place, and to run anything smoothly requires as much luck as good management. The main problem to the running of the site is the supply of materials. Cement, sand, aggregate, tiles, mosaics, bricks and pots all have to come from Portugal and Morocco and indeed not one major material required can be purchased locally. Consequently an efficient delivery service is required which I am afraid Gibraltar cannot provide, so we have had hold ups on the site due to running out of cement, bricks and also breakdown to the mobile Tower Crane while parts were awaited to be Air Freight from Holland. The problem has been alleviated somewhat by the mass storage of

materials on site but this lends itself to excessive waste and also congestion on the site as well as an open invitation for pilfering.

The second problem which indeed in my books contends for the main problem and indeed the problem with which I have had most trouble out here is, the people. Both of the town and of the site. It is beyond my intelligence to offer acutal answers to the problems of the Gibraltarian people but to say that one excuse for their attitude is, that they are Spanish by blood, but British financial aid is very lucrative, consequently they really are torn between the two nations and only frustration results. Red, white and blue is everywhere but how deep it runs is a debatable point.

On the site we have Moroccans, and Portuguese as majorities and English, Spanish, Gibraltarians, Italian and French as minorities, so an immediate problem with communication arises and believe me it can lead to some pretty nasty situations. When a Moroccan only understands a few English words and in desperation you utter one from the four letter vocabulary you've got to be pretty nimble on

BRIMS OVERSEAS GIBRALTAR cont'd

your feet. The main language spoken is Spanish, but some Morroccans can only utter their native tongue and I do not intend to try and record the ones that I know, firstly because I could not spell them and secondly . . . well.

The Morroccans are mainly used as labourers although some of them are skilled at tile laying. Consequently production is Arab speed which I am afraid varies from dead slow to stop, an added problem at the moment is that they are celebrating Ramadan in which they cannot partake in eating, drinking and any other pleasure, during the hours of six in the morning until six at night, so they think that this also applies to work.

The Portuguese provide the majority of the skilled labour in the way of, carpenters, tilers, renderers and are the "Kings" of the site as far as money is concerned and consequently creates a bit of ill feeling between the rest of the men now and then, as the Portuguese and Morroccans are not noted for their mature and understanding outlook on life.

The supervisory staff on the site are English, Gibraltarian, Italian, Spanish and a Lithuanian, but to say they are top of their field is a gross overstatement, but I am afraid inefficiency has to be tolerated to a great extent out here as workers are hard to come by

and so it is difficult to suppress any arguments in a satisfactory manner, and perhaps the unsatisfied party usually gets his way, just for peace and quiet. The other problem here is in fact "inefficiency" if you are a Gibraltarian in Gibraltar then nothing can go wrong but as the Gibraltarians have everything under control anyone who tries to go it alone is hurriedly shot down and so everything goes as fast as the Gibraltarians will allow, no quicker. Perhaps a Mini-Mafia but honestly it works over here. As long as you toe the line even though you know you are right in your complaint then you will have no worries but try going by the book and see how long you last. Consequently this leads to a lot of frustration on the behalf of those involved.

That states quite briefly, but I hope clearly, some of the problems of work on the site but what of the social life. I am afraid entertainment is mainly your own, and as this is mainly a military town civilian entertainment is none too special. The opposite sex while seen in abundance during the day do a vanishing trick at night. This in itself deserves some kind of explanation. Again the complete answer escapes me but one explanation is that in the past the military visitors have proved a bit too amorous and so the result is a famine of available "chat" once darkness falls. As Gibraltar has

the highest number of licensed premises per square mile, in the world, I decided to opt for a sporting existence and so I play football and go to keep-fit, which in this climate proves no hardship and have had a shot at sailing and went to Spanish evening classes until the football took over, I play for none other than Barclays Bank — an added interest for my money, — in a Sunday League.

I share a flat with another English lad and we get by alright without the luxury of fresh milk and fresh vegetables, tea and coffee has to be condensed milk style but like everything else in Gibraltar once you have got used to it, it isn't too bad it's the getting used to it that causes ALL the problems.

To conclude I can say that I have enjoyed my stay in Gibraltar but that it has not been all plain sailing, but I have come out of it all, a lot more experienced and mature, perhaps that's not for me to say, but thank you Brims for the opportunity and Crown Agents, especially Grant Purvis, for the actual experience.

I hope to return to the clan for the Christmas "do" when I will be back for the "crack" so hope it's good, and please remember "Broon" is a bit on the rare side over here!

D. Offord

SURVEYING THE GREтна CONTRACT

The initial setting out of the Gretna Diversion was not a straightforward task, given solely to us (the three new surveyors who joined the firm recently).

In this wonderfully modern and progressive country motorways are designed by computers, which have received information from a sophisticated aerial survey, which is complete with co-ordinated monuments. (Those who do not know what co-ordinates are see Mr. J. Dean about application to the next Brims Course at Otterburn). Gretna Diversion was not co-ordinated; instead, Dumfries County Council gave us the Intersection points in the form of wooden pegs in concrete. The plans had chainages along the design line—the centre line in most cases—but the tangent points did not have given chainages.

To achieve this the County Council asked Brims to tape between the I.P.s and measure the intersection angles

from start to finish—a total of 140,000 feet along the A74 and 83,000 feet along the A75. As we all know too well at the start of a roads contract its the muck that makes money so move it, never mind from where to where, "near-enough will do", so time was not on our side. Brims being a "go-ahead" firm were gently persuaded to beg, steal or borrow an E.D.M. (Electronic Distance Measurement) machine. This E.D.M. machine came as a Wild Distomat which was appropriated by our own Mr. Marr from Sunderland Polytechnic. This machine looks complicated, and is, but the operation of it is very simple and very accurate. The measuring of the distances between the intersection points and the measuring of the I.P angles was achieved in two days to the complete amazement of the senior site staff. Dumfries C.C. to our knowledge had taken some considerable time taping these distances between the I.P.s.

By co-ordinating our information and Dumfries C.C. taped distances agreed chainages of the tangent points were determined.

The calculations of the curves were then carried out and the angles for every 100 feet of arc tabulated. The next few weeks saw hedges breached, trees felled, rivers crossed, hills circum-navigated and a neat line of white pegs left behind marking the route of the A.74.

Twenty-four hours later we saw Peter Martindale leading his "pride" of TS 24.

The most formidable obstacle was Gretna Hill with only short sights which meant moving the theodolite on numerous occasions and taking extra care in measuring. The slope was so great in places 2'6" was added on to the slope length to give a true horizontal distance of 100 feet.

There was a slight error of 1/16" on closing.

A. Dobbie

BRIMS — HOUSEBUILDERS



HOUSES AND GARAGES ON THE PERCY MAIN REDEVELOPMENT SITE BUILT FOR TYNEMOUTH C.B.C.

Some five years ago, discussion began at top level about the Company embarking on housebuilding activities. A decision was reached that no entry into the competitive world of traditional housebuilding for Local Authorities would be attempted at that time. Nevertheless it was agreed to examine the various "systems" of house construction and if a type was found which the Company could feel offered a viable market in this field of housebuilding then attempts would be made to sell these dwellings as "package" contracts on a negotiated basis.

Coincidentally whilst investigations were going on the Company was approached by the sponsors of a system of housebuilding using a timber frame, with a view to Brims becoming licensed contractors for this system. So began our association with the "FrameForm" system of housing.

A "FrameForm" house has a timber frame which is the core of the system. To this frame are applied lining materials externally and internally which result in a weathertight structure built very quickly, completely dry and offering a highly insulated interior which results in better living conditions at lower than average cost. This structure is then "wrapped" externally, as it were, in claddings from a very wide choice (brick, tile, boarding, stucco etc.) to achieve an acceptable aesthetic standard and which offers architects the same choice as any traditional dwelling.

The houses can be built quickly at very competitive prices. Being built "dry" there are none of the attendant

problems of "drying-out". Contrary to general opinion the fire risk is no more or even less than that in traditional housing.

An intensive marketing campaign resulted in the first contract for FrameForm houses in 1968. This was for sixty-one houses and bungalows for the North Eastern Housing Association at Tow Law on one of the most exposed sites imaginable. Tenant reaction to these houses has been good.

This contract was followed in 1969 by others for Longbenton U.D.C. and Seaton Valley U.D.C. These were for 151 dwellings for the former authority and 154 dwellings on three sites for the latter.

Both these authorities have negotiated further contracts with us. We are already building eighty-three dwellings at Shiremoor for Seaton Valley U.D.C. and work will commence shortly on fifty-three dwellings at Fordley Estate, Dudley, for Longbenton U.D.C.

In 1970 it was clear that an increasing part of the building market would consist of housing and it was decided to extend our activities to "traditional" house building. The first contract was obtained late in 1970 for ninety-three houses for Tynemouth C.B.C. at Percy Main and this development is now approaching completion.

Only in the last week have we been advised by the Teesside C.B.C. that we have won a contract for 270 dwellings for that authority. In addition we confidently expect to be awarded contracts for 106 dwellings at Sacriston for Chester-le-Street R.D.C. and 253 dwellings at Thornaby for a Hous-

ing Association. Together these three projects amount to almost £3m.

Brims — Housebuilders, have arrived!

A. Hodgson

FOOTNOTE:

Housebuilding Standards in the 70's

Many people these days who are living in houses they are buying, have bought or which otherwise are not Local Authority rented dwellings, may well be surprised at the high standards required by Government in houses built to let by Local Authorities.

The name "Parker-Morris" may be known to some. He was in fact Lord Parker-Morris who was chairman of a committee which met some years ago to formulate minimum standards necessary for houses to let.

These recommendations are the criteria for all Local Authority house building today. They give minimum standards of size according to family sizes, heating requirements, power points, storage etc. which result in dwellings which are probably only matched in the private building sector by the so-called "Executive" types and only then the best of these.

Coupled with the vast improvements in the whole environmental design of Local Authority estates, especially outside cities, Britain probably is at the top of the tree in the all-round standard of housing provided for its people.

Brims can probably take some pride in saying we are making a positive contribution.

A. Hodgson

STEAM POWER



RUSTON NAVVY

In this day and age of high-powered mechanised plant which one sees on contracts up and down the country and where site personnel and operators have only to push a button to release POWER to do the multi-duties required on sites it makes old codgers sit back and reflect on "what used to be", so why not take a short trip with me down "Memory Lane".

Imagine for example requesting a "pneumatic compressor" for use on your site and next morning a flat-bed turns up, piled high with timber sections of a shed and on enquiry you are told it is the "compressor-house" with instructions to leave out one side and the roof when erected. It soon becomes obvious the reason for this because the next flat-bed has a No.18 Spencer Hopwood Boiler, metal pipes and an odd length of copper-flexible hose as well as air-hose. This is closely followed by the steam-operated compressor unit with all its brass work including the "three brass balls governor" shining like the proverbial barn-door. The boiler and compressor-unit are then lifted into the "house" and the side and roof put into place remembering the hole in the roof is where the boiler chimney stack protrudes.

However, the "Black-gang" General Foreman has seen all this before and immediately instructs to have five tons of screened-washed coal delivered post-haste so that he can get the damned thing working within TWO DAYS of it arriving on site. Sure enough two days later the boiler has a sufficient "head of steam" to go to work, the breakers are attached at the end of all the pipes and the big moment has arrived — "open the valves" is the operative signal and the poor operative then depresses the pistol grip on the tool and all hell appears to be let loose BUT the power engendered to the tool is truly amazing and broken concrete and brickwork begins to fly all

around. This continues as long as the Boilerman maintains the necessary head of steam required for the compressor to make "AIR".

If proof of the above was necessary the same compressor is I believe still proudly sitting on the deck of the Port of Tyne Authorities Piling Craft.

Speaking of piling, any site driving piles used to be over-run with pipe-work from boilers used to power pile-frame winches and the piling hammers and when pumps were required they too were steam driven but were also capable of pumping twenty-four hours per day if necessary.

Derrick cranes were all steam driven as were the Travelling Cranes, these being the only method of craneage available.

Sites had to be levelled-off before track laying could begin and then delivery of the Travelling Crane could be accepted, enticed on the rails and then "dressed" before coal was put aboard ready to get steam up. We even had an RB steam-driven Excavator on rails with a 1½ cu.yd. Face/Shovel. The first mechanical "barrow" now commonly known as a dumper was a three-wheeled effort with a hydraulically operated skip which was forever breaking down due to the unreliability of the hydraulic system and so the story could go on but suffice it to say that all the plant mentioned was actually in operation ONLY twenty-five years ago. Year of manufacture of the steam plant was generally between 1911 and 1913. On large contracts fifteen to twenty tons of coal were used each week.

If there is a lesson to be derived from any of the above it must surely be "You Lucky People" and the realisation of the magnificent progress the Plant Manufacturers have made in what is comparatively a short period of time.

S. Sutton

GRETNA CHAT

With the long winter nights coming in very quickly the Gretna social scene is in full swing at the moment. Darts matches have been held with a very strong ladies darts team from the Gretna Hall Hotel. The results of which have been once close defeat and an admirable draw. The team is expecting to win against much weaker opposition when they play against the Irvine contract on 18th November at Douglas some sixty miles up the A74 (we were supposed to meet them halfway between Irvine and Gretna but Alan Porter did the organising and cheated us a bit), and with food and booze laid on it should be quite a good night. Andrew Marr is coming from Head Office to act as scorer.

Les Brown is now known around the contract as the "galloping gormet" judging by the cooking smells coming from the kitchen in the evening.

At their country residence at Rockcliffe Messrs. Dodd, Dryden, Emmerson and May are settling down very well and will next week be watching Casanova on coloured television.

Malcolm Donnelly has commenced judo lessons at Carlisle. This is in preparation for his forthcoming match with the waitress from the Rosebank Transport Cafe (nudge nudge say no more).

We wish Keith Park and his bride all the very best for their wedding in the near future. We understand that the only furniture they have at the moment is a double bed (Keith has been reported saying "we are starting our married life with only the basic needs").

Our local D.J. Keith Blacklock opened up Radio Gretna last week with a message to the engineers (i.e. the errand boys!), "Three cheese and tomato sandwiches, two pasties...".

It has been reported that Keefs mobile disco will broadcast each lunchtime on Radio Gretna.

Our cheerful teamaker George "help yourselves lads" is off ill at the moment and we wish him a speedy recovery.

Alf Marron has got the Q.S. Department organised with Ian Taylor acting as a representative for Wills Whiffs and Alan Rae a representative for Lockerbie slaughter house.

Rita has offered to perform a "striptease act" at our next booze up provided the music is right. An old Ella Fitzgerald 78 "The best is yet to come" has been obtained and the next social evening is being organised as quickly as possible.

The cabins are now erected for the South section, the electricity will be installed as soon as possible after the other priorities i.e. deep freezes etc. .

GRETNA CHAT cont'd

Aberfan 1971 occurred a few weeks ago when the ceiling in David Watt's house caved in.

A highly intellectual conversation was held between Keith Brown and Ross Emmerson recently:—

Keith — "Eh?"

Ross — "Errrr".....

Keith — "Ohh...aye"

John McGowan has temporarily given up drinking. He is saving up to buy W. Archer a new tablecloth and napkins lost recently on a No.36 'bus.

Sandy has offered to give us a tune on his bagpipes at the Christmas Party.

The Gretna five-a-side football team is in full training at the moment, ready for the season to start. A spectator at one of the training sessions was reported to have said "have you been feeding them on raw meat then".

T. J. Dodd

Unhappy chainlads the other week took Mr. T. J. Dodd's office by storm having just heard that their weekly income was somewhat being reduced from a normal hourly wage to a staff salary. Head back, with a smile on his face and a MRS. MILLS stature, as the door of his office fell in, he greeted them with the all too familiar "All right lads?" and "Well, when I was at the Car Park..." he soon had the situation calmly under control although faint cries of "ya patta stinks" could be heard coming from the engineers next door. P. K. Dryden

MANAGEMENT STUDY GROUP

The Group is now well into its 1971/72 programme and has had external speakers for the last two meetings. All the meetings have been well attended and the "crack" has been good both in the bar after the meetings and in the car park after the bar has shut.

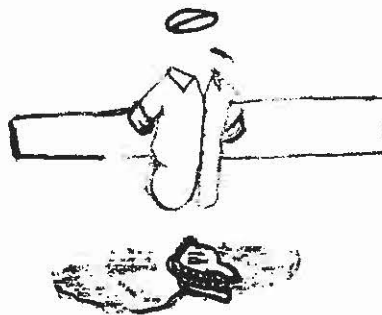
Is the M.S.G. a Crack Inducer?? — If you would like to find out prospective members are welcomed as guests and should note that B.I.M. membership has been waived for this year as a condition of Group membership.

The next meetings will be "A Case Study in Building Management" on 1st December, 1971 and a talk by Mr. J. Ryder, general manager and director, Smiths Dock Limited, on the "Management Problems of Profitability within the Shipbuilding Industry" on 5th January, 1972. These will be held, as usual, at the Post House Hotel, Washington.

E. A. Blyth.

SAFETY CHATTER

The case history of many accidents is quite revealing. Take the case of the small labourer who stepped into a pool of water to clean the mud off his rubber boots, only to find to his horror that the assumed puddle was in fact an excavation for a drain manhole 6 ft. deep which had been allowed to fill with water and had not been indicated with either a sign or a barrier. Could this have happened on a Brims Site? It did! Fortunately with no adverse effects to poor little Jackie, apart from shock and a good soaking. Should it have happened? Definitely not!



When we consider that falls into excavations, men being struck by materials falling into excavations, machinery falling into excavations, and collapse of excavations account for a large percentage of all accidents reported. Then where do we lay blame? First and foremost it is usually a case of bad planning, lack of forethought and irresponsible supervision.

If these trench workings were carefully planned and supervised, most of the accidents described would never be caused.



Careful planning for trenches would ensure that adequate timbering or sheeting, together with adequate supports, were available on site before any work commenced. Men erecting

supports would be in a protected position at all times. Men would only be allowed to work within supported sections and would be prohibited from entering unsupported sections. Notices would be displayed to this effect. Men would never be allowed to clamber about on the timbering or supports to weaken them. Safe means of access and egress would be provided at all times. Excavated spoil or other materials would never be placed close to the edges of any excavations. Large open excavations would be battered for support where ground conditions required it and where men would have to work in close proximity to the face.

Adequate and guardrailed walkways would be provided over trenches. Machinery or other plant would never be allowed close to the edges of excavations.

Barriers would be erected around excavations, even excavated spoil properly placed would in some cases be used.

We would surely have located the whereabouts of any live underground electric cables, together with other underground services, marked the areas and displayed danger and warning notices. Where any fumes were possible we would have taken proper precautions. We would have available for unattended excavations for darkness hours adequate numbers of danger lamps, signal lamps or illuminated warning notices. The construction regulation's registers would always be kept up-to-date after a *thorough weekly inspection* of all excavations had been made. We would never allow costs to outweigh the necessity of adequate precautions being taken.

Accidents in excavations are usually serious and often fatal, particularly when collapse occurs. The regulations for safe working are quite simple but specific in their demands. The regulations were drafted and designed to save life and limb. They should be complied with in as correct a manner as is possible at all times.

Simple but effective reasoning, we must agree.

Surely we can demonstrate our concern for human values, which does much to create employee satisfaction and loyalty, which will inevitably improve on our production, quality and cost performance.

QUI COLLABORANT

M. Curran,

CYGNET CLUB

GOLF SOCIETY

Another season has come to an end, a season which saw the introduction of a very successful match play competition. Following a remarkably well-balanced draw this competition proved exciting and enjoyable and complemented the three outings held at Bamburgh, Hexham and Brancepeth.

Each of these courses has its own particular charm and challenge presenting different problems for the unwary which make for exhilaration, relaxation, a healthy thirst and appetite and for some members severe punishment and fatigue which is compensated for by a feeling of fortitude and achievement coupled with some good fellowship. The golf correspondent of the *Glasgow Herald* recently referred to a definition of golf which may give solace to the latter groups. The definition was given by a logic tutor at Oxford about 1880 and no doubt there is still an element of truth in it today. The game consists of "putting little balls into little holes with instruments very ill adapted to the purpose."

For the first time since the inception of the society we were forced to postpone an outing due to weather conditions. However, due to the courtesy of the Bamburgh Golf Club we were able to arrange an alternative date.

As anticipated, we saw new winners of our competitions and following a revision of handicaps it is pleasant to see some of the outsiders winning some of the lesser prizes. Encouraged by this they may well lift one of the winners prizes in the coming year(s).

Bamburgh

1. J. W. Hedley
2. J. Prest
3. R. Tateson

Hexham

1. D. Gibson
2. J. M. Whitaker
3. B. E. Youngs

Brancepeth

1. R. Tateson
2. P. J. Leach
3. A. Porter

R. Tateson was the winner of the Autumn Tankard presented by Mr. Whitaker.

B. E. Youngs won the match play competition defeating D. Gibson in the final.

D. Gibson.

BOAT FISHING TRIPS

"By Lad, it's enough to freeze the off a brass monkey", comes the cry, as the good ship *Shark* steams its merry way out into the icy wastes of the North Sea. All the unfortunate souls on board, armed to the teeth with flasks, hot water bottles and Long Johns.

Even the Arctic conditions of the North-East Coast cannot prevent these hardy bods from pursuing their favourite sport and pleasure.

The fishing spot is selected by the keen and weathered eye of Jim Renton (he looks for the gulls), down goes the anchor, off goes the engine and in go the lines baited with those delicious juicy delicacies - worms.

Morale is high, spirits are good (thanks to the brandy in Sid Welford's coffee), everyone dreaming of those monster cod - then disaster - from the depths of the boat comes a cry, (Jim Renton again), dreaded by all of the boat fishing fraternity, "HOWAY LADS, THARRS NOWT HEER, LET'S GAN SUMWHAIR ELSE".

So if you fancy coming out fishing, you've been warned.

D. Croucher.

FOOTBALL

Five-a-Side League to 23rd November 1971

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
<i>Evening Chronicle</i>	6	6	0	0	67	40	12
Head Office	7	4	1	2	83	84	9
Tarmac	7	4	0	3	63	57	8
Drawing Office	7	2	2	3	57	64	6
Swans	6	2	0	4	49	54	4
Seaton Burn	7	0	1	6	35	53	1

The league welcomes two new teams, one from Gretna and one from South Shields Incinerator, as from the beginning of December.

VENTURE CLUB

A social evening was held at the Northumbria Hotel on Thursday, 7th October and twenty members attended, half of them new-comers to the Company.

The object of this evening was to introduce new Company employees to the activities of the Venture Club and to stimulate thought on future activities. To this end, four films were shown on water-skiing, sailing, gliding and canoeing.

A buffet meal was provided and beer was consumed in surprising quantities considering the large numbers of new recruits present.

Summer Expedition 1971

A small party hired a motor launch on the Norfolk Broads in September and managed to stay afloat for the full week—not however without due cause for much concern on occasion.

Next Meet

The next meet will be held in mid/late January depending on the availability of the Y.R.C. Cottage.

The annual dinner meet is likely to be held in late March.

Summer Expedition 1972

A number of members have expressed interest in a one week expedition next year, the most popular proposal so far would appear to be canoeing in Northern Scotland. Any further suggestions would be welcome. A circular will, in due course, be sent to all members.

STOP PRESS

As usual, we are first with the news!

We have heard from a reputable source that Saturday, December 25th is definitely Christmas Day.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers!

After a keen and hard fought "battle" Gretna finally defeated Irvine at darts, amidst cries of "fiddle", "illegal substitutes", "crafty" and "what about the rules". Celtic v Rangers is garden party stuff compared to this combat for the Scottish Championship. A grand night (and journey back) was had by all and credit must go to Allan Porter Incorporated for the organisation involved.