

## BRICKYARDS AND CLAYPITS, A DORSET INDUSTRY



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The brick making industry in Dorset reached its peak during the 1800s although bricks were made in the County as early as Tudor times and are still being produced today in one location. Details on any activity before 1800 are fragmentary as most yards, apart from those developed following town fire disasters as at Blandford, were small enterprises on individual farms or estates. Even when very active and amalgamated the brickyards seem to have left little record of their existence but certainly brick making went hand-in-hand with agriculture. The aim is to record as much evidence as possible to present a pictorial record of an important part not only of Dorset's social history but a direct link with the geology which made it all possible.

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### INTRODUCTION

A list of over 200 Dorset brickyards from the 17th Century to the middle of the 20th Century (Young, 1972) led the author of this paper to attempt to photographically record any physical evidence of their existence. A search for further information in other published papers revealed little on what must have been an important industry in Dorset despite the many building stones available. Information was available from Dorset sources including the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society, the Dorset History Centre, the Lyme Regis and Bridport Museums, Dorset local history books and societies and palaeontological publications. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey and Google Satellite Maps provided clues. The chief source of information, apart from the Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society, which not only give brickyard locations but also much detail of brick making practices in Dorset, was local knowledge acquired by adding brick matters to displays and talks to Dorset societies and organisations, and from personal observation. Figure 1 indicates areas of clay strata, together with the main towns and locations of brick making sites which have been investigated up to August 2012.

Two thousand years ago the invading Romans recognized the worth of the building stones of Dorset but also manufactured the local clays into bricks and tiles for roofs and holocausts for their villas and temples. Roman bricks were different from those made later as they looked more like a tile, being often only an inch or so thick but twice the length. They were well made as examples of Roman bricks can still be found not only reused in subsequent building projects, mostly churches, but also in excavated remains of Roman buildings such as the Dewlish Roman Villa in Dorset [SY 769 937] (Figures 1 and 2a), excavated in the 1970s (B. Putnam pers. comm.). Dewlish, not far from Dorchester, is on a small tributary of the River Piddle and the clay for the fine, smooth 'tiles' is possibly alluvium as the underlying geology in this area is Chalk (British Geological Survey, 2001a).

After the Romans left in the 5th Century brick production seems to have ceased. The incoming Saxons do not appear to have made use of brick techniques at all (Lloyd, 1983). Timber was plentiful throughout Britain and stone was available in many areas (Brunskill and Clifton-Taylor, 1977). Eventually, an increasing shortage of timber and a lack of stone in eastern England turned minds to brick making, a popular choice in Europe. It was an expensive process but once bricks became available and were used by architects and masons to build for the leading people of the day then those who could followed suit and brickyards sprang up everywhere even where stone was available.

Bricks are made from brick earth which is a mix of clay and other substances. Once moulded to the required shape, they are burned in kilns or clamps (Richards, 1901). The basic principles remain the same but with demand growing, bricks became more versatile in strength, shape and colour. They were made entirely out of local clay until powered transport and particularly the railways arrived, and by hand until engineering ingenuity provided mechanization, particularly in mixing the basic material and regulating the firing (Reeves *et al.*, 2006). Local products meant that individual areas, standing on particular bands of clay, tended to have a particular character as do those built of stone. In Britain, as well as anywhere with as such a variable climate, the chief improvement would have been the ability to heat the clay materials to a hardness which would withstand rain and frost. Final appearance depended not only on the clay used but also on which additional materials were added to the mix. Brickyards in Broadmayne [SY 733 570] near Dorchester, for instance, made a very recognisable speckled brick as well as plain red ones, and certain pits, in Verwood [SU 108 077] and other areas of east Dorset, particularly Poole, produced a whitish brick. Older houses throughout Verwood display yellow brick as ornamentation on the main red brick construction. An early 20th Century addition to Canford School,

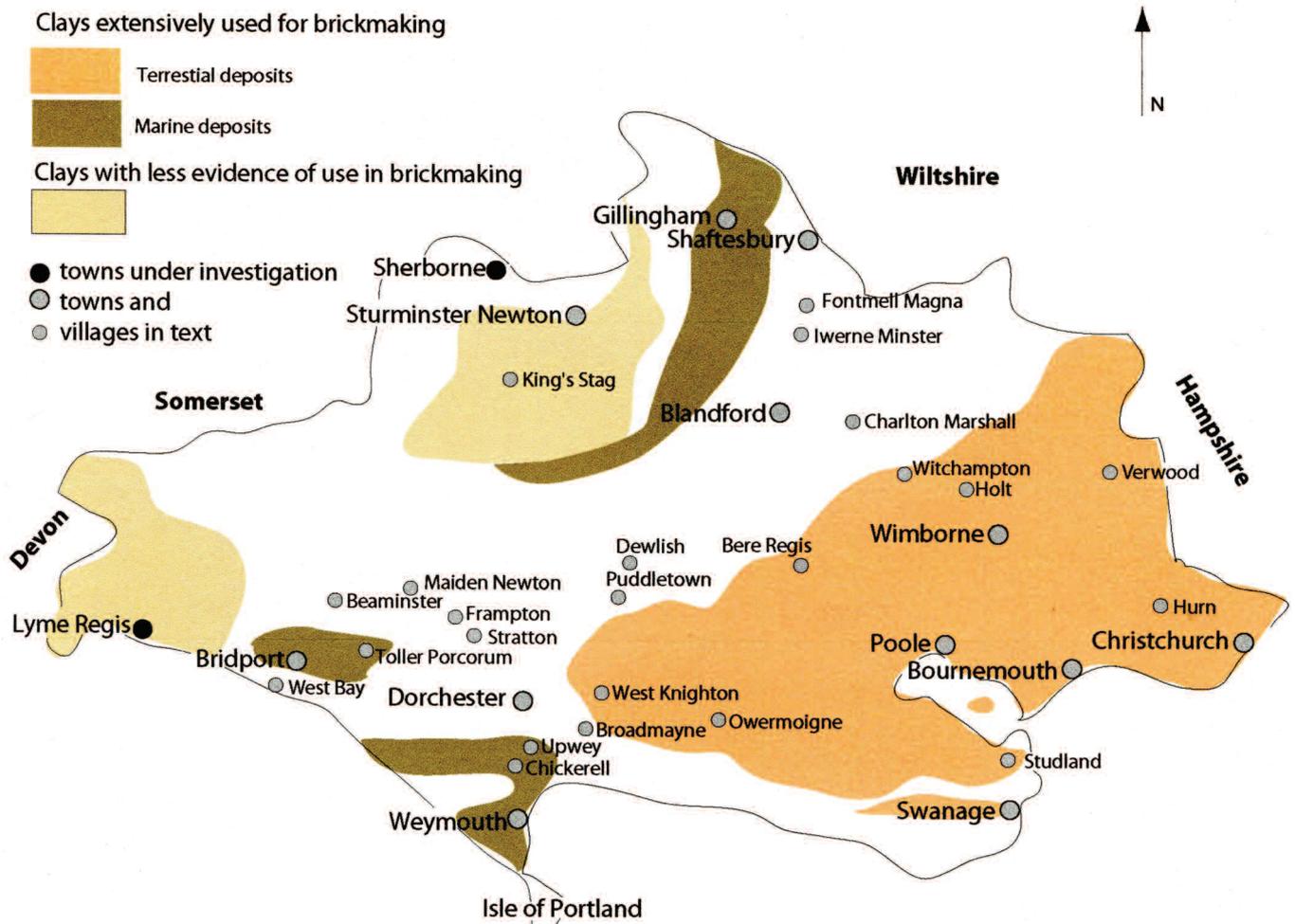


Figure 1. Approximate locations of towns, brick making clays and some brickyard sites in Dorset.

near Wimborne, is constructed entirely of white brick probably from Poole.

Many types of clay contain a certain amount of iron minerals and the process of firing, reflecting the percentage of iron, turns most bricks to some shade of red. White bricks are only produced naturally when the clay contains a relatively high content of lime (Richards, 1901) although nowadays lime is sometimes added to the mix. Sand, an essential material in the industry, adds silica and provides for partial vitrification. Too much, however, makes the finished product brittle and unfit for use. It is also used for coating the inside surfaces of the shaping moulds to prevent the clay sticking, and is frequently a colouring agent both by addition to the mix and as a coating. The process of firing, including position and length of time in the kiln as well as the degree of heat applied, also affects the final appearance (Richards, 1901).

Improvements in all processes meant that brick making became highly mechanised with precise production of whatever colour and stability was required. Previously, appearance and use of the final product also depended on local brick makers and builders. Large-scale mechanisation and transport improvements meant that many of those local distinctions disappeared. Increasingly through the 1900s, so did the small brickyards which were unable to bear the cost of modernisation even after amalgamation. By the late 1960s all but two of the Dorset brickyards had closed and only one of those is still in production at Godlingston [SZ 020 804], Swanage in Purbeck.

Evidence of some of the long closed yards still exists in houses, barns, walls, otherwise unworkable leisure areas and even some dilapidated kilns. Bennetts Water Gardens [SY 650

798] in Chickerell, Weymouth is a prime example of what can be done with abandoned sites. However, many have completely disappeared under business parks, housing development, supermarkets, etc.

Salvaged Tudor bricks were incorporated in lesser buildings, such as Place Mill [SZ 160 925] in Christchurch (Figure 2b), or used in grander structures, such as Abbey House in Witchampton [ST 989 064] near Wimborne (Figure 2c), which dates from the 1500s. Blandford [ST 889 065], rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 1731, is a prime example of Dorset Georgian brick (Draper, 1998).

Investigation into brickworks in West Dorset was already ongoing by the author as part of a village history website and subsequently, aided by Donald Young's excellent work (Young, 1968, 1972), has been expanded into a search for any physical remnants of the industry throughout the rest of Dorset.

## THE INVESTIGATED SITES

### West of Dorchester

**Stratton:** A brickwork 'floor' revealed in an excavation at Ash Hill [SY 657 935], located two miles west of Dorchester, was shown to be a site for brick making on the Bristol-Weymouth Brunel railway in the 1850s (B. Putnam pers. comm.). Clay used at Stratton was probably alluvium deposits from the River Wrackle which runs close by (British Geological Survey, 2001a). The bridge across the A37 bears little resemblance to the original structure although it is possible to discern worn hand-made brick within the structure. An extra carriageway was introduced in the 1960s, made in what was the original bed of



**Figure 2.** (a) Roman bricks, Dewlish Villa (photograph courtesy of B. Putnam). (b) Place Mill, Christchurch. (c) Abbey House, Witchampton.



**Figure 3.** (a) Throop clamps. (b) Peacock Bridge. (c) Detail of Broadmayne brick arches in Peacock Bridge.

the Wrackle. Frequently, in wet winters and unusually on 7th July 2012, despite concrete walls and pumps, the Wrackle persists in returning to its previous course.

**Frampton:** There are at least three different types of brick three miles further west from Stratton. The oldest of these is from Throop [SY 613 954] where two small clamps are built into the chalk hillside. The clay used was probably alluvium (British Geological Survey, 2007) from the River Frome which regularly still fills the fields below the site. The clay here would have had sand added to it as the Frome cuts down into the Greensand less than a mile upstream and, when in flood, deposits sand along the banks and across the floodplain. The clamps (Figure 3a) are early as they are not mentioned in descriptions of the property from the 1800s onwards although, when sold in 1931 as part of the estate of the Sheridan family of Frampton, it was known as brickyard plot (J. Draper pers. comm.). Bricks found on the site are dark red, but it has not been possible to date any constructions with certainty. Bricks used to construct 'Peacock' bridge [SY 632 946] at the eastern end of the estate are of the speckled Broadmayne variety (Figures 3b and c). Dating from the late 1700s, when the estate was undergoing much upgrading, the bridge appears an imposing structure in Portland Stone but it is supported on Broadmayne Brick.

**Bridport:** Descriptions of the seven brickyards in and around the Bridport area [SY 463 929] (British Geological Survey, 2007) were produced in a Bridport Museum leaflet (Sims and Sims, 1998), which is illustrated in Figure 4a. The town was mainly built of Forest Marble from Bothenhampton until the early 18th Century. Within about 30 years, seven brickyards, working three different clays, all Jurassic, were in full production. The brick workers' cottages in South Street [SY 466 926] (Figure 4b) were built in 1830 of Oxford Clay brick from the Bothenhampton yard, according to the householder. The back street wall (Figure 4c) will also be local but could be

from the brickyard directly across the road in South Street. The Allington and Bradpole yards worked the Down Cliff Clay; the Wanderwell, Loders and Powerstock yards made use of the Fuller's Earth, and Bothenhampton yard, now a waste disposal site, exploited the Oxford Clay close to the Forest Marble quarry. There is an illustration of a Hoffman continuously-fired kiln used at the Bothenhampton yard on the front of the Bridport Museum leaflet (Figure 4a).

The remnants of a different type of kiln, a Suffolk-type updraught, are found at Powerstock Common (Figure 5a), where they have been partly restored by the Dorset Wildlife Trust. An example of a property built of Powerstock brick (Figure 5b), from this kiln, can be seen in Toller Porcorum, close by the Common. The original building in the 1850s had been single story when the then owner worked at the brickyard. The upper story was added from the remaining stock once the railway was successfully completed and the kiln abandoned. Brick making at Powerstock Common was linked to the long-closed railway line from Maiden Newton [SY 598 977] to Bridport and West Bay [SY 462 903]. The kiln was built as the Bridport Railway Company had to dig a cutting through the Fuller's Earth Clay at Witherstone Ridge [SY 541 974] on Powerstock Common. The excavated clay persisted in sliding onto the line, increasing the cost of the whole enterprise well beyond the original estimate. Brick making solved the problem of what to do with the clay and helped defray the costs incurred by the slippage. The bricks were transported back to the Weymouth-Bristol line via the junction at Maiden Newton, as well as by horse and cart, to villages close by. Until the railway reached Powerstock Common, the Railway Company had used other bricks to build road bridges across the many lanes they encountered. Those bridges seem to utilise either local patches of clay as at Stratton and Frampton or possibly the plain, rather than the speckled and more valued, bricks from Broadmayne. A high embankment was built where the line crossed the River Frome, close to Maiden Newton, and its floodplain. The structure is pierced by dated sluice gates surrounded by the



Figure 4. (a) Museum leaflet. (b) South Street terrace, 1830. (c) South Street garden wall.



Figure 5. (a) Powerstock kiln. (b) Toller Porcorum bricks. (c) River Frome sluice, Maiden Newton.

speckled Broadmayne bricks (Figure 5c).

**Beaminster:** There is little information on the Beaminster town brickworks, discovered by chance in the publication 'Life in Beaminster 1864-1910' (Codd, 1922), as the listed site is situated a considerable distance from the town in the surrounding countryside. The brickyard was sold in the 1890s and the first Grammar School was built on the site [ST 478 019]. According to Codd (1922) "... the yard was an old established business but was never very successful as the clay was too poor a quality for first class products." An 1890 photograph of the kiln exists (J. Chaplin pers. comm.). The town site appears to be just on the edge of the Fuller's Earth strata (British Geological Survey, 2007) which, at Powerstock Common, made good bricks.

### East of Dorchester

**Broadmayne:** Bricks produced by three neighbouring villages reveal similarities in their original clay content but

differences in appearance after firing. They all utilised the Reading Beds (British Geological Survey, 2001a) which are a very variable series of clay, gravel and sand. Broadmayne, at one time, had nine brickyards although they were all working a small outlier of the Reading Beds. A Scotch kiln at Conygar [SY 737 858] (Figure 6a), on the outskirts of Broadmayne, was constructed to provide bricks for Conygar House (Figure 6b), built in 1911 (A. Williams pers. comm.).

The kiln, although overgrown, remains in recognisable condition as it has been adapted for different purposes since brick making ceased, including a roof being added. Scotch kilns are updraught, open topped, and turf is added as a topping during firing. Watergates Lane [SY 734 080] in the centre of Broadmayne had five kilns (Figure 6c) (J. Salt pers. comm.; Young, 1968). Meanwhile a chance encounter, while photographing Broadmayne bricks in Dorchester, identified an elderly gentleman who, as a young boy, had assisted his uncle in the brick making at Broadmayne. A common practice in brickyards was the employment of sons of the family. The 1871 Broadmayne census lists brick makers



Figure 6. (a) Conygar Kiln. (b) Conygar House, 1911. (c) Watergates Lane kiln (photograph courtesy of K. Blandamer).

and also “*Frederick Paul; Son; 11; Brick makers attendant; Broadmayne Dorset*”.

**West Knighton:** Here there was only one brickyard which was older than most of the yards at Broadmayne. West Knighton is on the edge of the main exposure of the Reading Beds but the clay is buried beneath a considerable depth of sands and gravels. West Knighton possibly closed as the Broadmayne works prospered but has several fine early brick buildings in the village (Figure 7a). A broken brick from a farmyard demolition revealed that the mixing process used was unlikely to have been modern (Figure 7b).

**Owermoigne:** The kiln at Owermoigne Court appears to have only made bricks for reconstruction of the north end of the 13th Century Owermoigne Court [SY 770 857] after a fire partly destroyed it late in the 19th Century. While the interior of the kiln is constructed entirely of brick, the outer skin (Figure 7c) is of Purbeck Stone which looks remarkably similar to that of which the Court is built. Presumably damaged stone from the fire was used to construct the outer skin of the kiln and the inner face lined with green bricks made from the Reading Beds on which it all stands. The bricks produced were then used to complete the reconstruction of the north end of the building, which has brick walls to the rear.

**Puddletown:** The brickyard is situated approximately halfway between the village of Puddletown and the hamlet of Ilsington and originally produced bricks for the farmhouse and cottages there. A pond still marks the spot (Figure 8a). A map of the brickyard (Figure 8b) was found in the accounts of the Ilsington Estate archived at the Dorset History Centre. At the time, clues were being sought as to why a trackway, apparently for horse-drawn vehicles, was used for transporting sand from what was then part of the Ilsington Estate (now Puddletown Forest) to the Broadmayne and West Knighton brickyards. The distance covered was some 5 miles over difficult terrain including the Frome floodplain and what was to become the Warmwell Sand and Gravel Quarries (Putnam, 2004). The map provided an explanation for houses bearing the initials W. E. B. and 19th Century dates in Puddletown (Figure 8c), as the brickyard was sold to William Brymer in 1882.

**Swanage:** The Swanage Brick Company (Figure 9a) is still in production at Godlingston in Purbeck [SZ 019 804]. The Company has been using the local Wealden Clay (British Geological Survey, 2001b) for well over 100 years. The Wealden consists of a series of reddish-yellow clays interspersed with sandy and gritty beds (Percival, 1931) which at Godlingston are steeply dipping (Figure 9b). The Swanage Brick Company specialises in hand-made production of bricks



Figure 7. (a) Sunnyside Cottage, 1719, West Knighton. (b) Farmyard brick. (c) Owermoigne Court kiln.

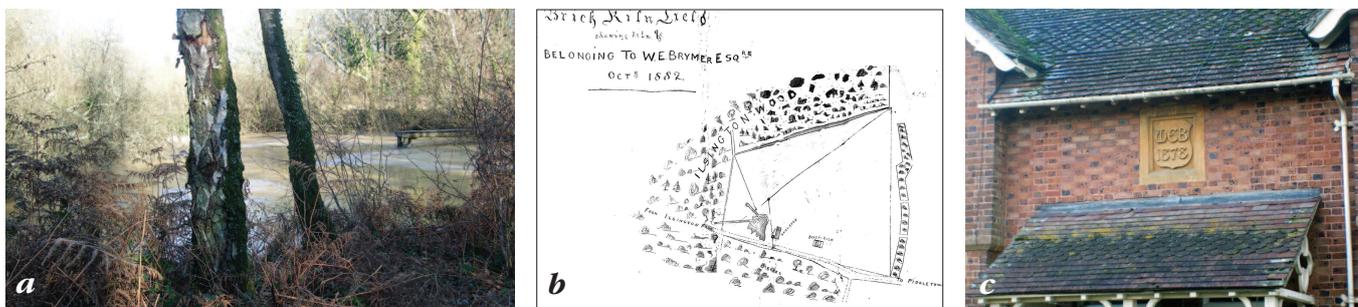


Figure 8. (a) Puddletown Brickyard pond. (b) Ilsington estate map. (c) 18-20 Mill Street, Puddletown.



Figure 9. (a) Cover of Swanage Brick Company leaflet. (b) Wealden clay pit. (c) Herston brick.

suitable for conservation purposes. Swanage brick was used for Metlands in Frampton Park [SY 623 940], and for a bungalow in Dorchester Road, Frampton [SY 631 948], both built in the 1930s (H. Grenville pers. comm.). Metlands, now in a conservation area, required Swanage Brick Company brick for an extension in the 1980s (G. Winsey pers. comm.). Colour ranges are obtained from varying the kiln settings and firing processes. There are no additives to the mix. Dorset Blues come from the top and hottest part of the kiln, and Light Red from the bottom. Although they use modern machinery for most of the process, the bricks are still formed individually by hand.

Just south west of Godlingston is a holiday park [SZ 015 797] on what was the Herston brickyard. Walls round the site, together with nearby buildings, provide evidence of past brick-making activity. Photographs of the kilns that once existed are available in the leisure room of the holiday park. During the visit to this site, a specimen of a named brick (Figure 9c) from this brickyard and further details of its operation were obtained from two local men.

**Bournemouth:** A geology display at Kinson Common Open Day in Bournemouth [SZ 070 955] provided information on several local brickyards all working the Bracklesham Beds, (British Geological Survey, 1991), the last of which closed in the 1960s. Kinson Local History Society kindly provided a CD of relevant photographs which included aerial views of the yards (Figure 10a). The present main Bournemouth railway station was also the site of a brickyard revealed by a postcard photo taken from the then St Paul's Church tower. Even the church has gone with redevelopment of the town centre, so there is little likelihood of finding present day evidence of the yard. However, some former brickyards have survived elsewhere in the highly urbanized eastern end of Dorset in areas that have proven too difficult or expensive to develop. For example, Boscombe Chine [SZ 119 914], which was a very early brickyard and was later developed into gardens, is now a Local Nature Reserve as well as a popular leisure area.

**Poole:** There were over 50 brickyards in the Poole District but most have been obliterated by subsequent building of housing estates, supermarkets and roads, although here there are also undeveloped areas where some remains survive. Some

300 yards east of Bloxworth Road, Parkstone [SZ 059 937] is a supermarket built on what was probably a former brickyard (G. Raggett pers. comm.). Fine buildings, such as St. Osmonds Church (Figure 10b) built in the early 1900s in Parkstone [SZ 044 916], still stand as monuments to the industry. A request for information from a housing estate in Parkstone [SZ 031 924], built on a brickyard site in 1974 and now with planning problems, provided the growing archive with maps, boreholes and information (E. Hunt pers. comm.).

**Christchurch:** The town was part of Hampshire until government reorganization in 1974 and therefore was not included in the survey of Dorset brick making conducted by Young (1972). However, the streets of beautiful brick houses are plainly of handmade local origin (Figure 10c). Bournemouth Airport at Hurn is underlain by the Bracklesham Beds (British Geological Survey, 1991). As there are Brickfields Cottages close by [SZ 133 969] it would seem that a source of clay and brick making was located in the vicinity.

**Holt:** The village of Holt, north of Wimborne, had four 19th Century brickyards, one of which continued in operation until 1952. All four worked the London Clay (British Geological Survey, 1991). The last firings at Hart's Lane [SU 029 034] were to supply bricks to build a bungalow on the grounds. The present owner kindly pointed out the clay pit and the water supply as well as the kiln. The wall circling the bungalow (Figure 10d) was built from bricks found in and around the kiln and the topping is of bricks from the floor of the kiln, some 18 inches thick. The owner has calculated that there are some 10,000 bricks still in the structure (C. Clifford pers. comm.).

**Studland:** The kiln at Wadmore Farm [SZ 030 829] (Figure 11a) has been recovered from the undergrowth possibly to be partially restored (M. Tiller pers. comm.). Bricks were made from the clay of the Bracklesham Beds (British Geological Survey, 2001b) in the mid-late 1800s to early 1900s.

**Bere Regis:** Doddings Farm kiln [SY 854 936] (Figure 11b) at Bere Regis (M. Tiller pers. comm.) was one of three around the town but it has not been possible so far to ascertain which houses came from the kiln but all three brickyards utilised the Reading Beds (British Geological Survey, 2001a) in making bricks (Figure 11c).



Figure 10. (a) West Howe brickyard, Kinson. (b) St. Osmonds Church, Parkstone. (c) Church Lane, Christchurch. (d) Holt wall.



Figure 11. (a) Wadham Farm kiln, Studland. (b) Doddings Farm kiln. (c) Bere Regis brick.

### South of Dorchester

**Chickerell:** Crookhill brickpit [SY 644 797] near Weymouth (British Geological Survey, 2001c) closed in the late 1960s. It is still well remembered locally. The economics of converting from hand to mechanised brick making to compete with modern plants elsewhere made closure inevitable. It is now a SSSI with a Cement Works in the entrance. A photograph of the brickyard (Figure 12a) was found in a collection in the Dorset County Museum.

A building site report on the Oxford Clay at Putton Lane brickworks [SY 650 798] (Chapman, 2000) provided some information. The brickyard used the Kellaways Beds, the lowest strata of the Oxford Clay, for some 60 years, before closing in the 1860s some 100 years before the Crookhill site closed. The most striking thing about the area, when visiting before development in the 1980s, was the number of large septarian nodules lying on the surface. While there are now hundreds of houses built around it, the central area of the brickyard is partly a Dorset Wildlife Trust site with reed filled pits. It is also the site of Bennetts Water Gardens with a National Collection of Waterlilies. Close by there is still a row of brick cottages with walled gardens on Putton Lane (Figure 12b).

**Upwey:** Towards Dorchester a house (Figure 12c), dated 1901, stands approximately 200 hundred yards from the Prospect Place brickyard [SY 669 846] which worked the Kimmeridge Clay (British Geological Survey, 2001c). As the nearby brickyard, Putton Lane and the four yards in central Weymouth were all closed before that date, it seems likely that the brick for this 1901 house may well have come from Crookhill. A garden wall of a similar date, at the rear of the house, is reputed to be built of Blandford brick (R. Bryant pers. comm.). The bricks are much darker in general than the Weymouth brickyard products, have a rougher surface and are much favoured by lichens.

### North of Dorchester

**Blandford:** A disastrous fire in 1731 led to the town [ST 886 068] being rebuilt with brick buildings and tiled roofs (Figure 13a).

A Blandford historian researching the past of the handsome Georgian town found information on the source of the clay required (J. Ford pers. comm.). The Bastard brothers, William and John, were chief architects and builders of the restored town. They had leased clay ground (British Geological Survey, 1994) alongside the River Stour. According to their accounts, they were given exact dimensions as to what they could use. When finished they also had to fill the subsequent hole back to ground level. One site is now on the edge of the town and occupied by a trading estate. The other site in Lower Blandford St Mary [ST 891 054] was in use prior to the fire. Two important buildings stand close to the site, the 17th Century Manor House (Figure 13b) and the Rectory, with a date of 1732 above the main entrance (Figure 13c).

**Charlton Marshall:** The village is two miles south-east of Blandford on the River Stour. Littleton Brick Ground [SY 897 048] is on the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society list. H. Grenville (pers. comm.) has noted that “a search of OS maps in Dorset County Museum yielded Sheet 84 (Dorset County Museum numbering) of the 1887 edition of 6" O.S. maps and the field name (added by someone at a later date in Indian ink) is ‘Brick Ground’ - just north of Charlton Marshall on the Blandford road, now A350”.

**Shaftesbury:** Long Cross Bricks [ST 852 232] is located at the bottom of the steep incline immediately east of Shaftesbury on one of the small outliers of Gault within the Kimmeridge Clay of the Blackmore Vale. It is now a camping and caravan site on the A30 Sherborne Causeway. Details of the former works were published in the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Proceedings (Ross, 1990). The cottages in West Street, Shaftesbury, (Figure 14a) were built in 1780, according to the householder. The bricks may have come from Long Cross. Another Shaftesbury yard, listed only as Brickyard [ST 850 220] is on the A350 towards Blandford. The Shaftesbury geology map (British Geological Survey, 1994) shows a line of Gault Clay, often directly in contact with Kimmeridge Clay, running beneath the steep Chalk and Greensand strata. Brick buildings are numerous in the villages along the A350 and the



Figure 12. (a) Crookhill brickyard (photograph courtesy of M. Keats). (b) Putton Lane wall. (c) The Gables, 1901, Dorchester Road, Upwey.



Figure 13. (a) West Street, Blandford Forum. (b) Manor House. (c) Rectory, 1732, Blandford St Mary.



**Figure 14.** (a) Shaftesbury terrace, 1780. (b) A350 cottage. (c) Gillingham Police Station, 1890.

brick in the cottages (Figure 14b) is likely to have come from the brickworks close by.

**Iwerne Minster:** This brickyard [ST 848 150] is approximately half way between Shaftesbury and Blandford and also worked the Gault Clay. The 1861 census lists 13 brick workers living in the village (Ian Lawrence, Fontmell Archives pers. comm.).

**King Stag:** The Green Man in King Stag [ST 723 104] on the minor road from Sturminster Newton southward toward Dorchester is a fine example of the use of the Oxford Clay (British Geological Survey, 1994) and even has named bricks used to construct the bar. The original brickworks' cottages across the road were also constructed of Oxford Clay in a manner usually associated with chalk cob instead of brick. They have just been demolished. The lowest layer of the walls was a 'foundation' of brick so those are therefore likely to have been the first ones to be fired in 1885 when the brickyard was opened. The beautiful lake in front of the new house being constructed beside the old was described by the owner as formerly being a series of shallow pits with 'walls' in between each (P. Bath and D. Adami pers. comm.).

**Gillingham:** To the west of Shaftesbury, the town was a major producer of bricks from the Kimmeridge Clay that it stands on. There are many fine public (Figure 14c), and private buildings throughout the town which prove the worth of some 200 years of production at the Brick and Tile Works site, now a Business Park [SU 808 259].

## CONCLUSION

'*Brickmaking in Dorset*' (Young, 1972) is an excellent guide to finding physical remnants of Dorset's brickyards but many other people have been helpful in this ongoing pursuit. Donald Young seems to have been the first to attempt any record of the subject in general as far as Dorset is concerned although he found minor details of particular sites in historic and geologic academic papers. His references list Trade Directories, John Hutchins' History of Dorset, Royal Commission for Historical Monuments, the then Dorset Records Office (now Dorset History Centre) as well as Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Proceedings. He also lists innumerable people who provided him with information, in particular those who had been employed in the trade.

The present author used many of the same sources though apart from the Swanage Brick Company employees, who were very helpful, there were few left who had been actively employed within the industry. The brickyards which continued after the Second World War are still remembered through family connections and by those with knowledge of the history of their dwellings. David Young's comprehensive recording includes details of the workings of the brickworks and the clays as well as the locations but the recognisable signs of the industry are

fading fast. David Young, of course, did not have the advantage of computers, digital cameras or websites such as '<http://wtp2.appspot.com/>' through which places may be located by grid reference, place name or postcode using O.S. and Google satellite mapping, (R.W. Gallois pers. comm.).

A few sites and some details have been added to the original list and even a few kilns which Donald Young thought no longer existed. Having modern means to work with has made it possible to add illustrations to his excellent work and to present his factual information to interested parties in a number of different ways.

Many of Dorset's towns, villages and important buildings had a source of building stone available which has probably minimised the use of brick in Dorset. Brick making was a very important industry in the county for over two hundred years. Bricks were not only used for dwellings, great and small, from fine houses to farmyards, they also provided an additional source of employment for thousands of agricultural labourers whose tribulations are well recorded.

It is intended to produce a website and a digital record of all information gathered together. The Dorset History Centre is keen to add to what little information they already hold, as are some other institutions and local societies.

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