

**THE BRENTFORD GAS COMPANY & BRENTFORD GAS WORKS**

**1820 to 1988**

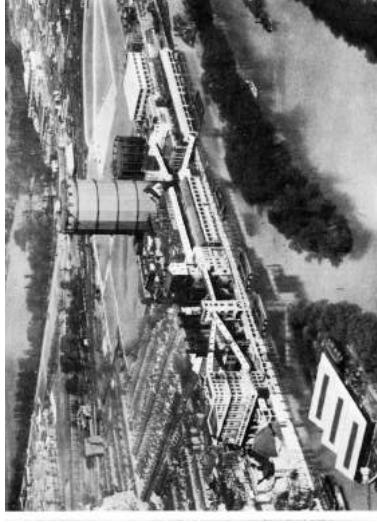
A talk by David Shailes



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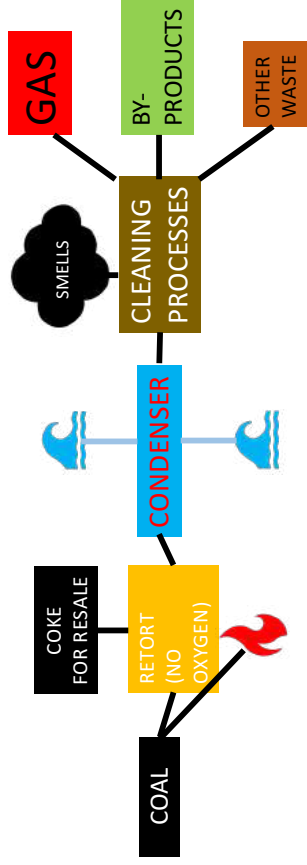
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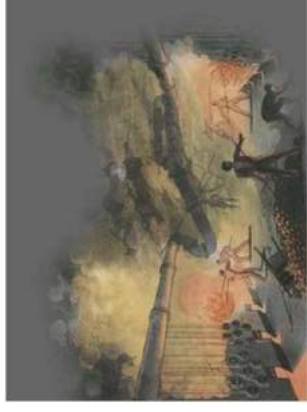
2

### The process involved in making Town Gas



3

### RETORTS



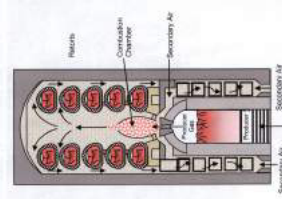
Brick Lane Gasworks East London



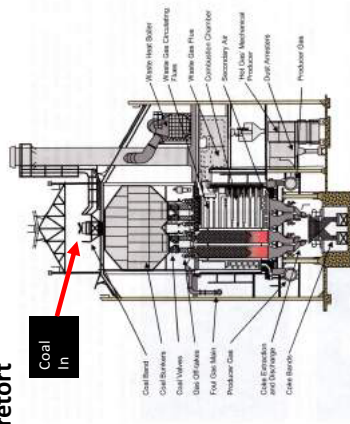
Emptying a single ended retort

4

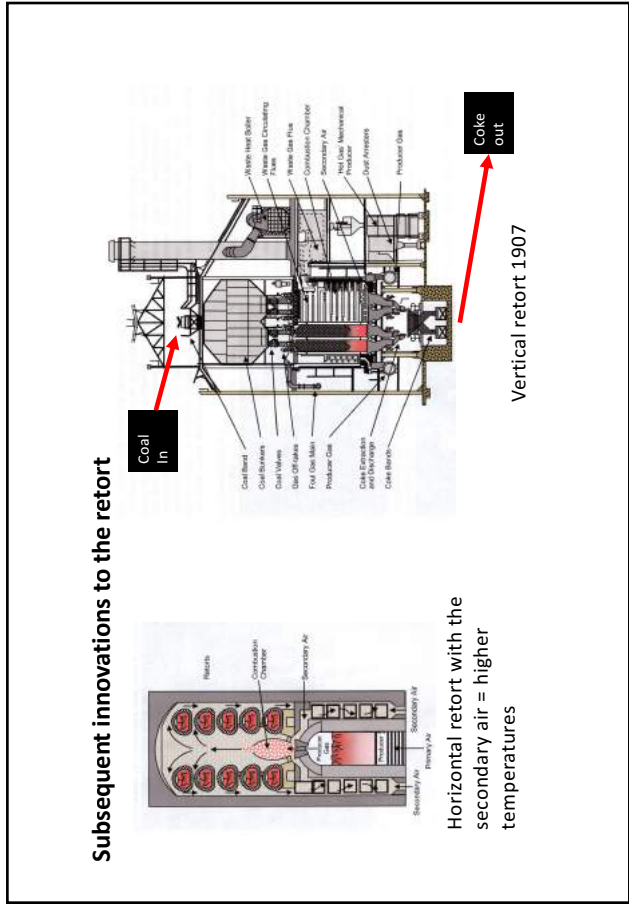
**Subsequent innovations to the retort**



Horizontal retort with the secondary air = higher temperatures



Vertical retort 1907

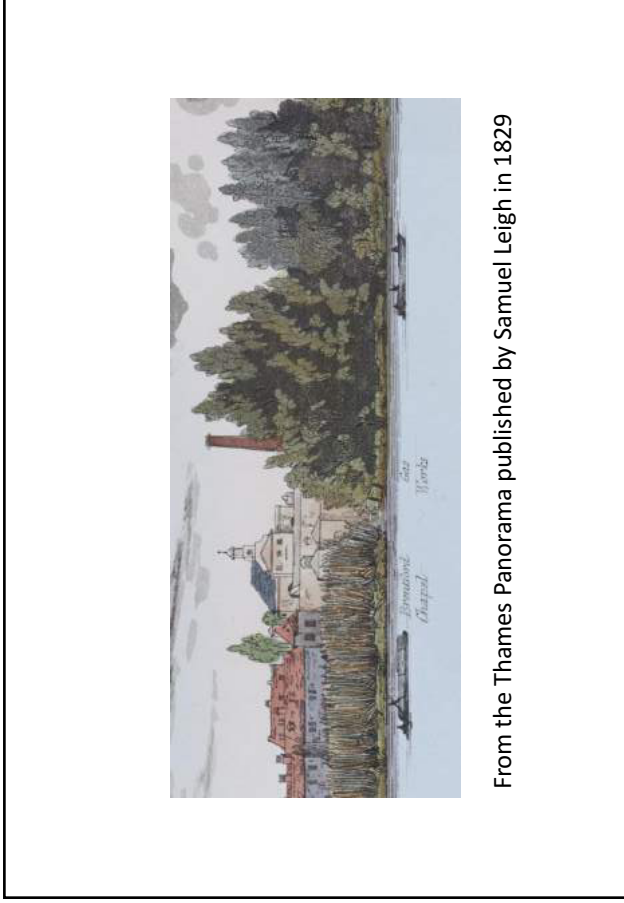


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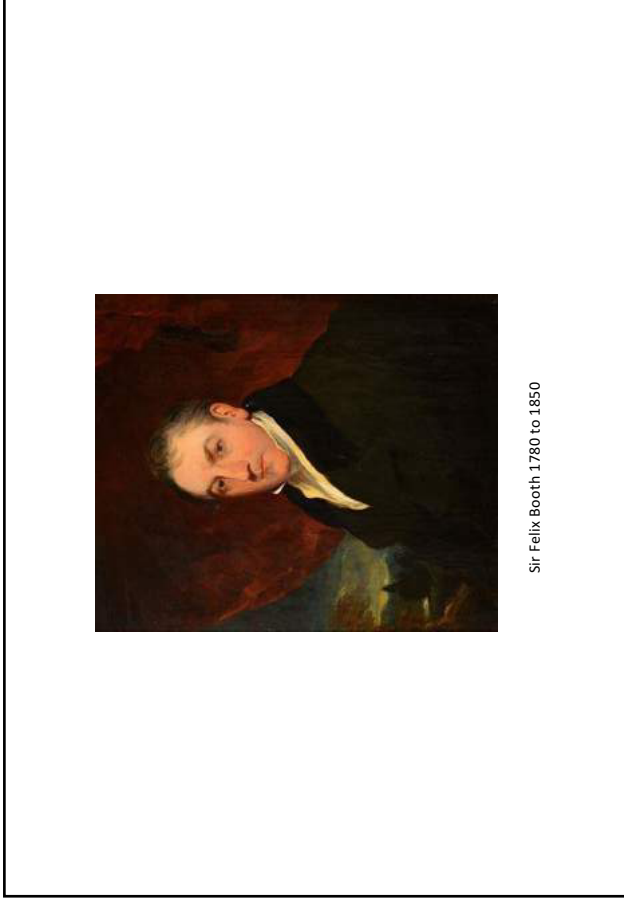
**BRENTFORD GAS COMPANY 1820 to 1927**



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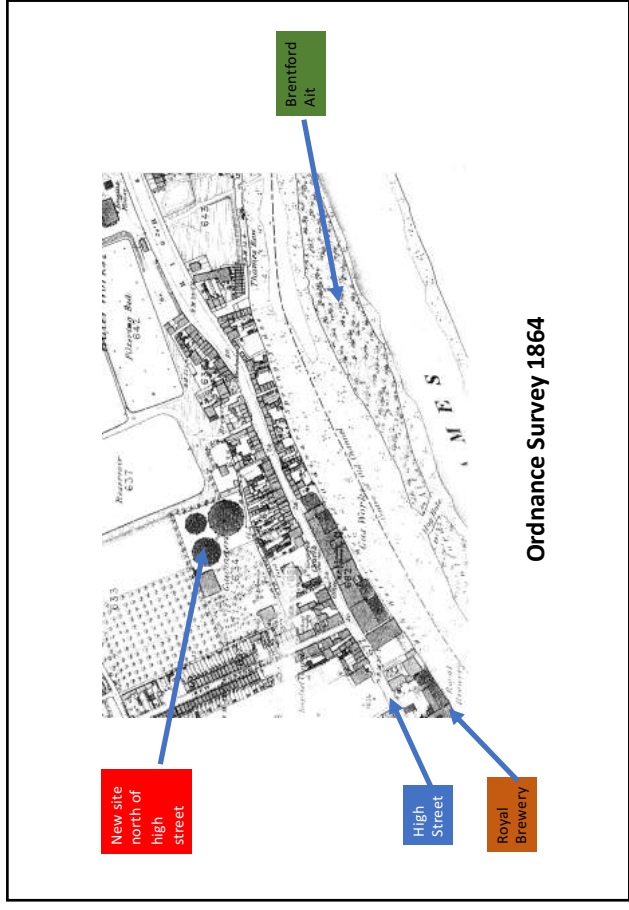
Early trouble

**PUBLIC CAUTION.**  
**Brentford Gas Company.**  
**WHEREAS**  
**JOHN LEEDON and GEORGE CHAMBERS**  
have been convicted of Breaking One of the  
Company's LAMPS, placed by the Side of  
the Road at **HAMMERSMITH**, and not  
having paid the Penalty awarded against  
them, were committed to the **HOUSE of**  
**CORRECTION for the Space of**  
**ONE MONTH!**  
The Company give this Notice, that **Offenders**  
may know the Punishment they are liable to.  
By Order of the Board,  
**THO. JULLIEN, Clerk.**

BRENTFORD.  
By Order of the Board, THO. JULLIEN, Clerk.

**BRENTFORD**  
**Gas Light**  
**Company.**  
**Five Pounds**  
**REWARD.**  
WHEREAS some delinquents Persons or  
Persons did in the Night of this last, **INJURE AND DISPLACE**  
**SOME OF THE**  
**POSTS**  
*Directed by the Company for Lighting the*  
**Hammersmith.**  
Center to berry gurn,  
That the Board will give Information of the Offender  
to the proper Authorities, and will prosecute  
him or her to the full Extent of the Law.  
**THOMAS JULLIEN,**  
Clerk.

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Ordnance Survey 1864

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## LIGHTING

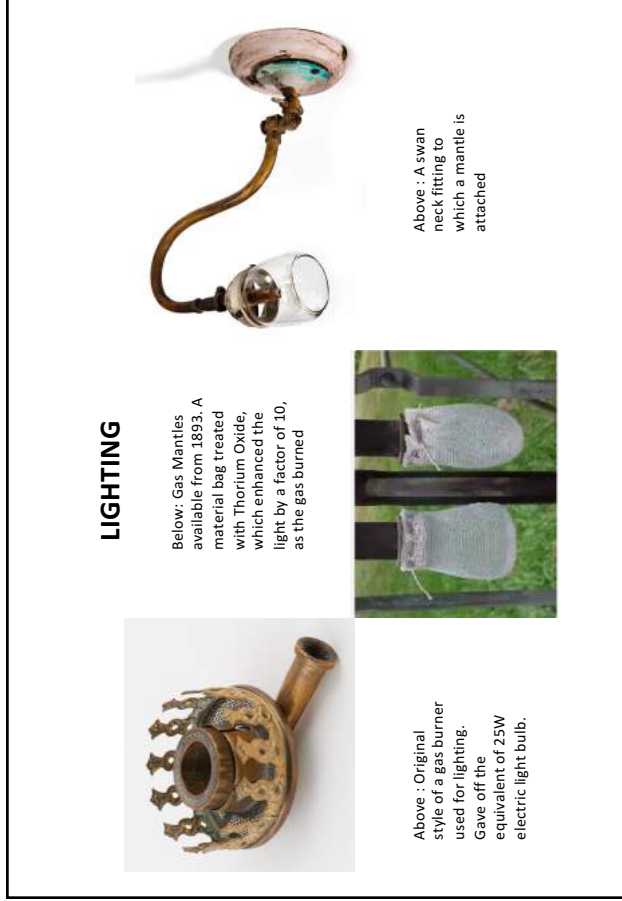
Below: Gas Mantles available from 1893. A material bag treated with Thorium Oxide, which enhanced the light by a factor of 10, as the gas burned



Above : Original style of a gas burner used for lighting. Gave off the equivalent of 25W electric light bulb.



Above : A swan neck fitting to which a mantle is attached



Ordnance Survey Map 1897

New St Georges Church built 1887

High Street

Royal Brewery

1876/9 Extension along the High street

## Gas Meters



The gas meter was invented back in 1817 by Samuel Clegg.

Was not how domestic customers were charged initially.

Slot Meter invented in the 1870's. As result between 1897/9 numbers of Brentford customers doubled.



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## COOKING



In the Georgian/Victorian period, the coal or wood fired range was what people cooked with.

The first gas cooker was for commercial use and installed at the London Reform club in 1841.

A gas cooker was a major purchase, so the gas companies allowed them to be rented or purchased via a form of hire purchase. It was not until 1914 that cooking with gas was taking over from the range.



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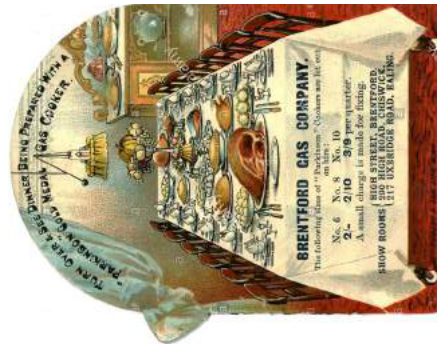
**THE BRENTFORD GAS COMPANY,**  
*Economy & Comfort!!*  
**Cooking & Heating by Gas!!**

**T**HE BRENTFORD GAS COMPANY, with a view of carrying the greatest relief to the public, of the late Smoke Abatement Exhibition, and economy of the gas, has the pleasure to announce that the gas is now delivered from utility East for the purpose of Cooking and Heating is prepared to

**SELL OR LET ON HIRE**  
ALL KINDS OF  
**GAS Cooking & Heating STOVES**  
A Stock of which is kept at the Company's Shop—  
**HIGH STREET, BRENTFORD.**

**Inspection Invited.**  
The Company, on application, will give Estimates for Filling up Stoves, at COST PRICE.

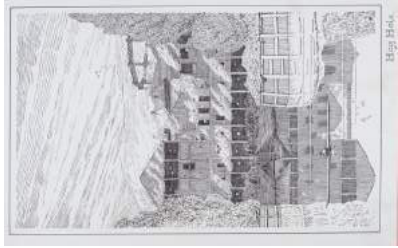
188  
8



c1900

15

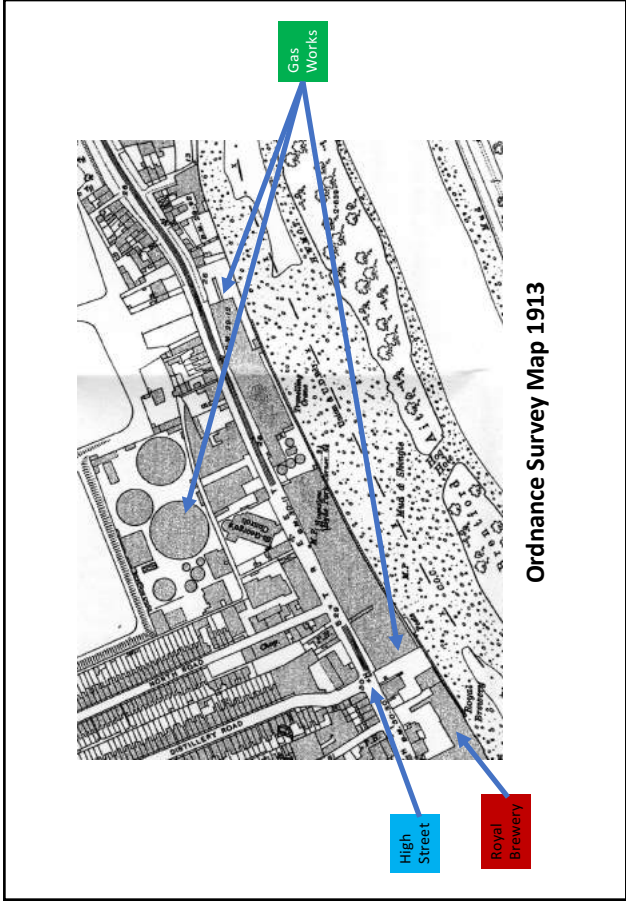
The Gasworks from the Thames at Low tide -1910



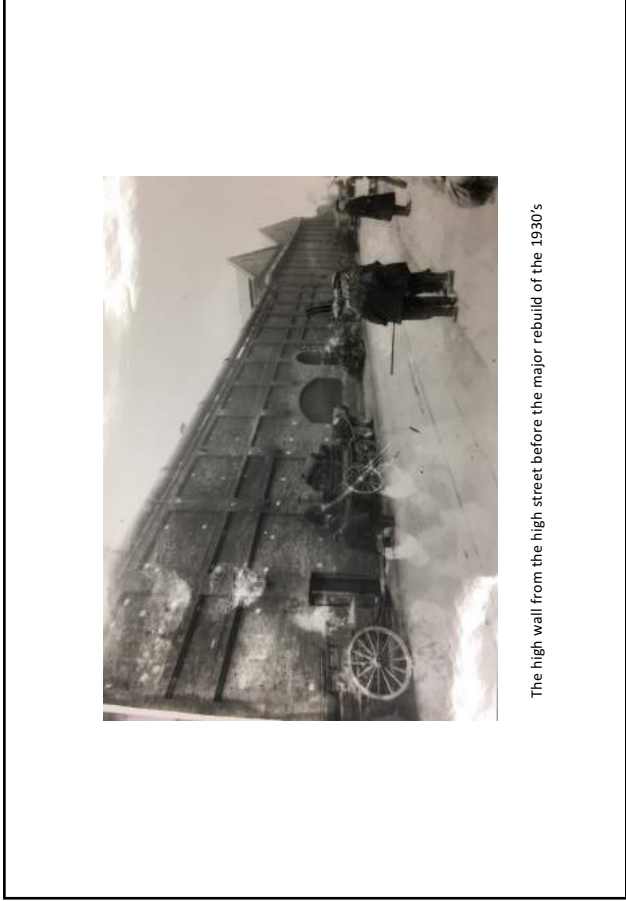
A view through the Hog Hole c 1900.  
 By J T Perry (L B Hounslow)

16

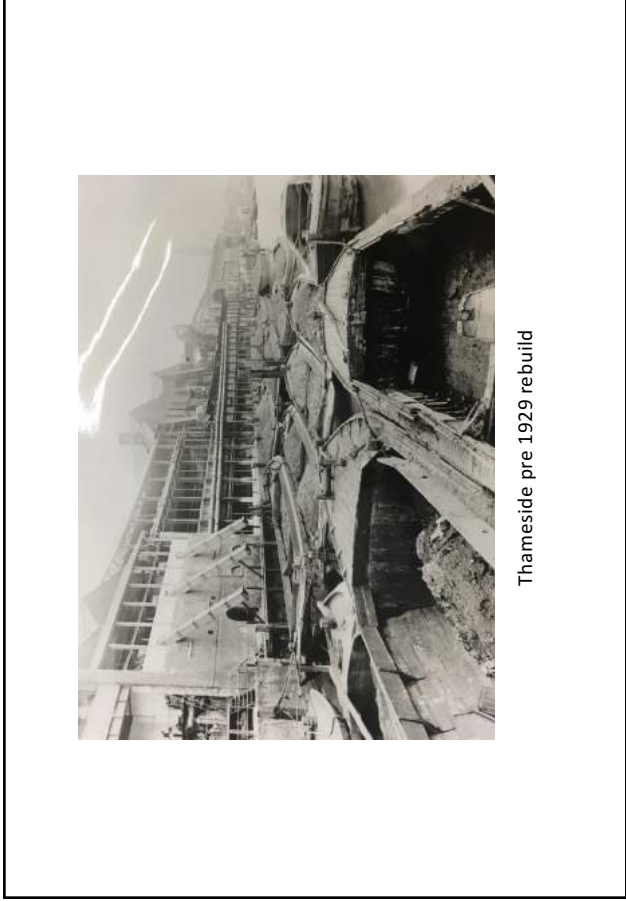




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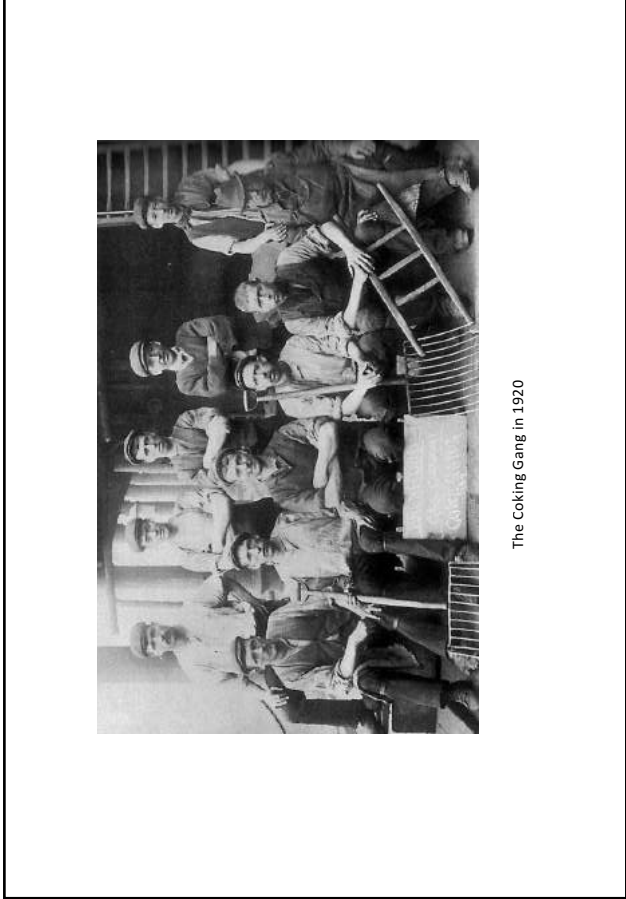


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Thameside pre 1929 rebuild

19



The Coking Gang in 1920

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### Bill and receipts for payment

**NOTICE—This Bill is NOT to be Received.**  
**WILLIAM HULL, SONNET, 44, OMA, BRISTOL.**

**BRENTFORD GAS COMPANY.**  
 (Incorporated by Act of Parliament.)

Application for Supply of Gas, Name of Business, or Residence to be supplied to, WILLIAM HULL, SONNET, 44, OMA, BRISTOL.

Business and Location of the Consumers, addressed to the Works, WILLIAM HULL, SONNET, 44, OMA, BRISTOL.

OFFICE HOURS FROM NINE TO FOUR O'CLOCK. SATURDAY'S FROM NINE TO ONE O'CLOCK.

To, Mr. G. J. Smith at 44, OMA, BRISTOL.

One Halfpenny Consumption at this Address, 44, OMA, BRISTOL.

One Ounce, 44, OMA, BRISTOL.

Rate—This Meter will bill for the amount on an Ounce at 11s. per 1000 Ounces per Quarter.

Read of Meter per Quarter .. .. .

Read of Meter per Quarter .. .. .

Price per Ounce .. .. .

Amount due .. .. .

THIS BILL IS NOT TO BE RECEIVED FOR PAYMENT.

Orders and Payments should be made to the Cashier by Deposited Cheque or by Cash to the Cashier.

Bs 84 21 JAN 1901

**Brentford Gas Company.**

Receipt of Mr. G. J. Smith

the sum of 7.72 Pounds

for One Quarter's Gas supplied to Christmas last,

for per account.

G. J. Smith

FOR THE COMPANY.

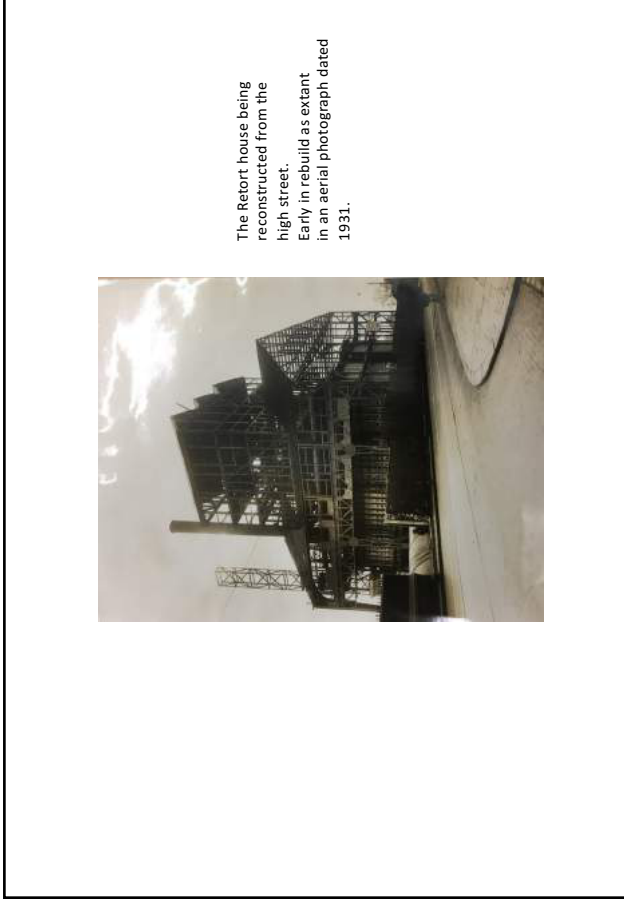
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### THE GAS LIGHT and COKE COMPANY



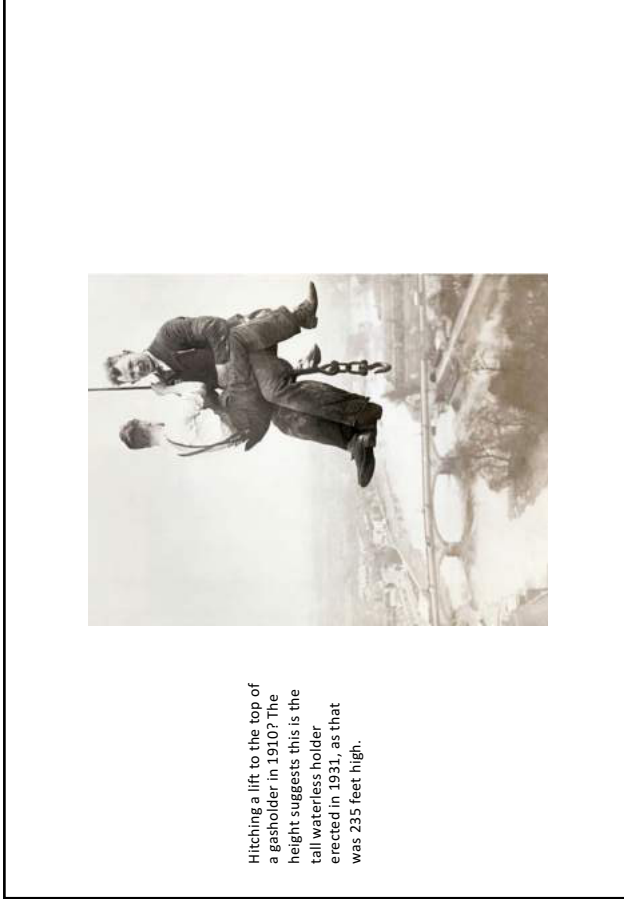
Frederick Albert Winsor 1763 to 1830

22



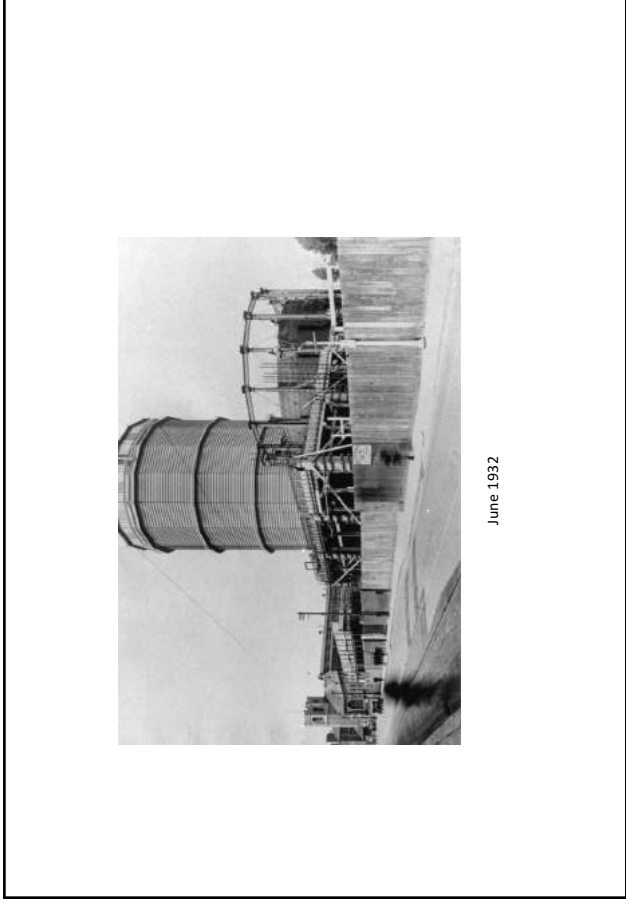
The Retort house being reconstructed from the high street. Early in rebuild as extant in an aerial photograph dated 1931.

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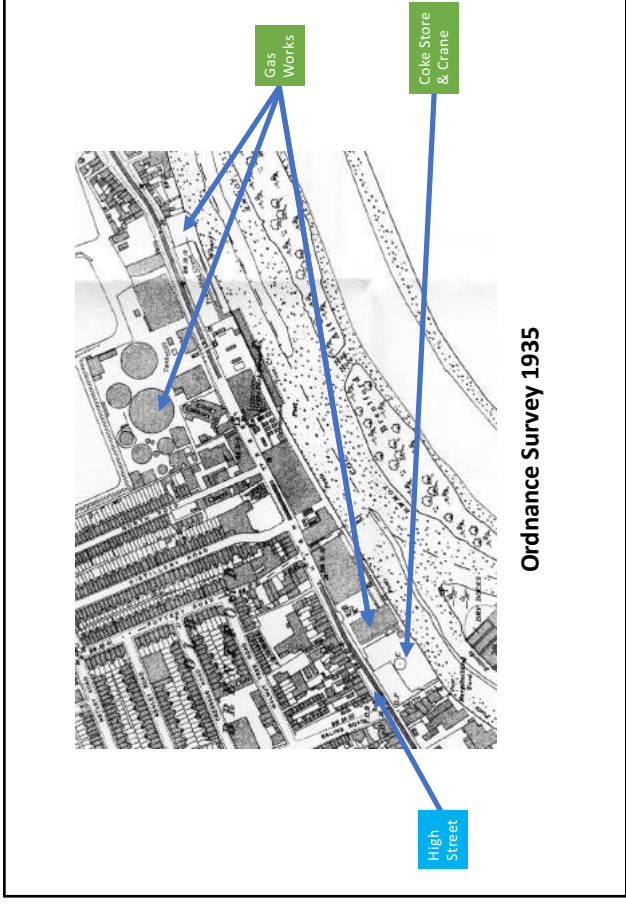


Hitching a lift to the top of a gasholder in 1910? The height suggests this is the tall waterless holder erected in 1931, as that was 235 feet high.

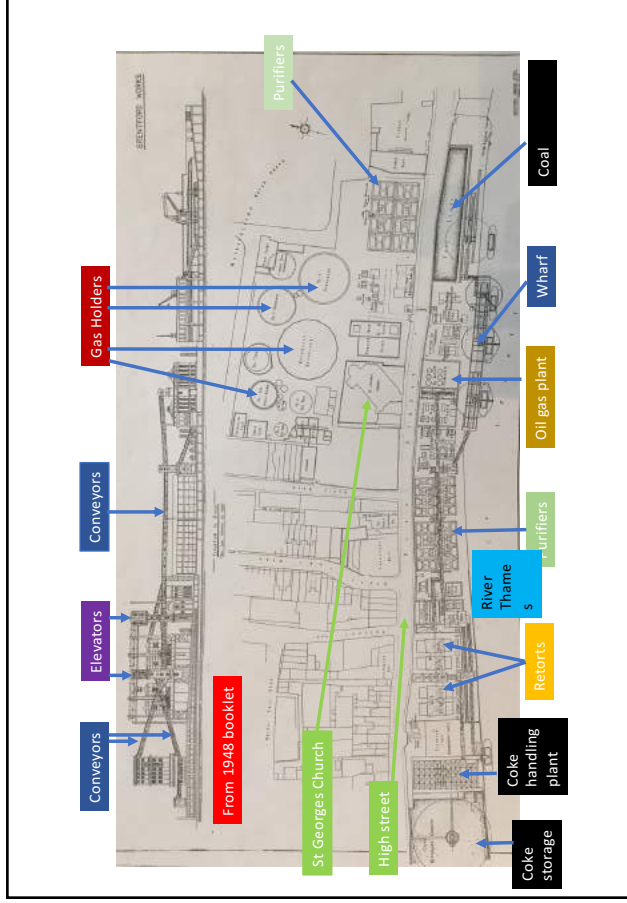
24



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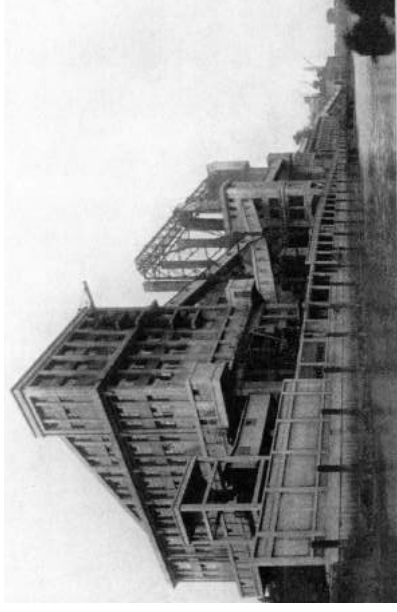


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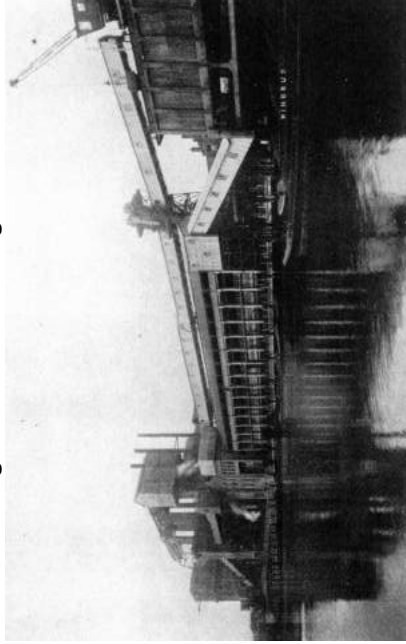
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Looking toward Kew Bridge from the river. In foreground is the coke handling plant 1948



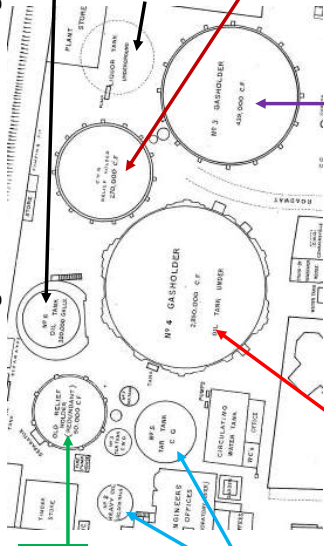
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Looking West, in the middle are the purifiers and to the right is the coal handling wharf 1948



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Gasholders and other storage tanks on North side of High street 1957



A single lift column  
Guided of 50,000  
cub ft built 1897.

Oil for CWG  
Production and  
by product liquor tank

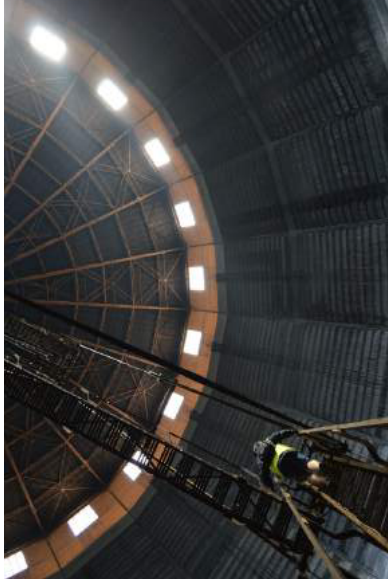
By products  
heavy oil & tar  
tank

A three lift lattice column  
guided holder of 270,000  
cub ft built 1897.

A two cast iron column  
guided holder of 482,000  
cub ft built 1864.

A MAN waterless holder of 2,850,000 cub ft capacity. This  
was built over the base of an earlier holder. Built in 1931.  
235 feet high

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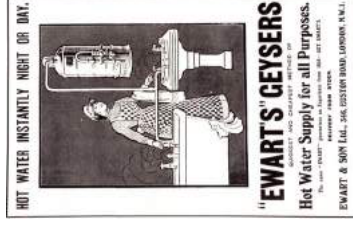


The inside of Southall Gas works MAN Gas holder. The stairs that person is climbing fold up as the piston at it base rises, as the gas stored reduces.

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## Water Heating



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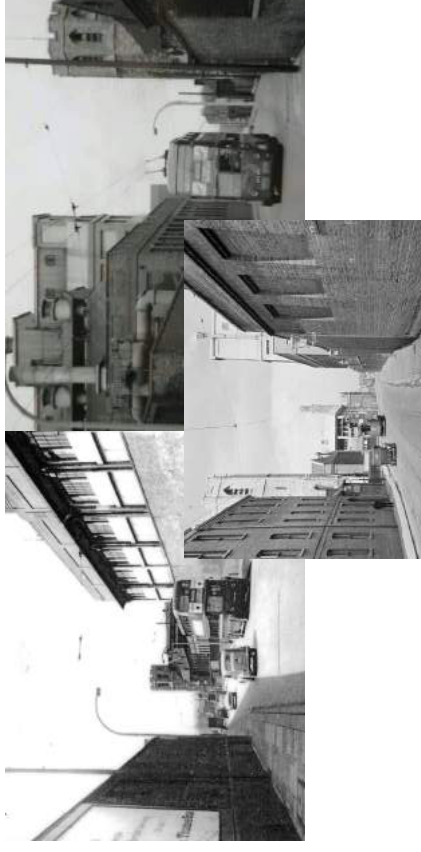


## **GAS PRODUCTION AT BRENTFORD**

|      |                           |
|------|---------------------------|
| 1841 | 16 Million Cubic Feet     |
| 1861 | 135 Million Cubic Feet    |
| 1900 | 1,807 Million Cubic Feet  |
| 1910 | 2,898 Million Cubic Feet  |
| 1948 | 15,500 Million Cubic Feet |

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The view from the High street



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### River Transport



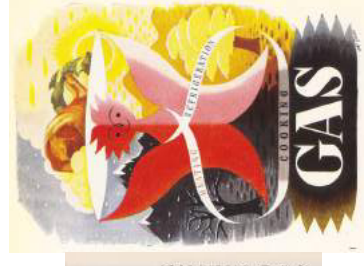
GLCC SS Suntrap on the Thames at Woolwich in 1931



Mooring post

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### Mr Therm – A creation by Eric Fraser for the GLCC in 1933



Eventually adopted by the whole gas industry

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### The End for Coal carbonisation at Brentford

Table 4.1 Gas capacity at North Thames 1952-69, capacity (m. cu ft gas/day) at 31 March

|  | 1952   | 1961   | 1969  |
|--|--------|--------|-------|
| Coal carbonising plant                       | 237.76 | 219.75 | 35.6  |
| CWG  | 137.84 | 162.50 | 86.0  |
| Reforming plant (including oil gasification) | 3.00   | 55.20  | 816.4 |
| Totals                                       | 378.60 | 427.45 | 938.0 |

Source: North Thames Gas.

Gas production at Brentford finished in September 1963, because it was uneconomic and not because of North Sea Gas. The works were demolished in 1965, just leaving the gasholders on the northside



Demolition in progress the bank of purifiers are in the foreground – 1965 Finished in October 1966



In 1987/8 the 160 years connection of Brentford to gas industry was removed with the demolition of the MAN waterless Gasholder.