

BRUNEL FAMILY LEGACY – EXTRACT

Isambard Kingdom Brunel FRS MICE was a civil and mechanical engineer who is considered "one of the most ingenious and prolific figures in engineering history". "One of the 19th-century engineering giants", and of the Industrial Revolution, who changed the face of the English landscape with his groundbreaking designs.

Box Tunnel on God's Wonderful Railway! - Box Tunnel is a railway tunnel between Bath and Chippenham in Wiltshire dug through Box Hill and is one of the most significant structures on the Great Western Railway Main Line. **Brunel's birthday** - There is a story which states that Brunel deliberately aligned the tunnel such that the rising sun is visible through it on 9th April each year, his birthday.

Defence in the Second World War – In the run-up towards World War II, there was a recognition of a need to provide secure storage for munitions across the UK. The proposal was to create three Central Ammunition Depots (CAD): one in the north (Longtown Cumbria); one in the Midlands (Nesscliffe, Shropshire); and one in the South of England. The East portal now has the quarry entrance to the former CAD Monkton Farleigh.

Sir Marc Isambard Brunel FRS FRSE (1769 – 1849) was a French-born engineer who settled in England. During Brunel's service abroad, the French Revolution began, in 1789. He is generally known to history as Marc to avoid confusion with his more famous son. In January 1792, he returned to live with his relatives in Rouen. He was a Royalist sympathiser. In January 1793, whilst visiting Paris during the trial of Louis XVI, Brunel unwisely publicly predicted the demise of Robespierre, the leader of the Revolution.

Sophia Kingdom (Lady Brunel) - Sophia Kingdom had remained in Rouen and during the Reign of Terror, she was arrested as an English spy and daily expected to be executed. She was only saved by the fall of Robespierre in June 1794. In April 1795 Sophia was able to leave France and travel to London, where later she again met up with Marc Brunel and they married at St. Andrews Church Holborn on 1st November 1799.

Pulley Blocks - In 1798, during a dinner conversation, Marc Brunel learnt of the difficulties that the Royal Navy had in obtaining the 100,000 pulley blocks that it required each year to fit out its ships. Each of these was being made by hand. Brunel quickly produced an outline design of a machine that would automate the production of pulley blocks.

Debtors Prison - By the beginning of 1821 Marc Brunel was in debt, and in May of that year he was committed to the King's Bench Prison. Prisoners in a debtor's prison were allowed to have their family with them, and Sophia accompanied him. With no prospect of release, he corresponded with Alexander I of Russia about the possibility of moving to St. Petersburg to work for the Tsar. As soon as it was learnt that Britain was likely to lose such an eminent engineer, influential figures, such as the Duke of Wellington pressed for intervention.

The Thames Tunnel - In England, his most famous achievement was the design and construction of the Thames Tunnel, eventually finished by Isambard.

The Clifton Suspension Bridge - The Clifton Suspension Bridge is a suspension bridge spanning the Avon Gorge and the River Avon, linking Clifton in Bristol to Leigh Woods in North Somerset. Isambard Brunel died in 1859, without seeing the completion of the bridge. His colleagues in the Institution of Civil Engineers felt that completion of the Bridge would be a fitting memorial and started to raise new funds.

The SS Great Britain - SS Great Britain is passenger steamship that was advanced for her time. She was the largest passenger ship in the world from 1845 to 1853.

The SS Great Western - SS Great Western was a wooden-hulled paddle-wheel steamship with four masts, the first steamship purpose-built for crossing the Atlantic.

The SS Great Eastern. - SS Great Eastern was an iron-hulled steamship designed by Brunel and built by John Scott Russell & Co. at Millwall Iron Works on the River Thames. **Cable laying** - In May 1865, Great Eastern steamed to Sheerness to take on wire for the laying of the Transatlantic telegraph cable.

Renkoi Hospital - During 1854 Britain entered into the Crimean War and an old Turkish barracks became the British Army Hospital in Scutari. Brunel accepted the task in February 1855 of designing and building the War Office requirement of a temporary, pre-fabricated hospital that could be shipped to Crimea and erected there.

End.