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# Cakemore Blue Bricks, Trademarks and Advertisements, and the Building of St Pancras (Somers Town) Goods Station

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In his splendid and highly informative article on the St Pancras (Somers Town) Goods Station, in the London Borough of Camden, and its bricks,<sup>1</sup> Terence Smith illustrates a blue engineering brick with a monogram stamped in the frog (fig. 1). He suggests that the monogram is 'BBC' with the second 'B' reversed and therefore conjectures that the brick may have been made by the Butterley Brick Company in Derbyshire, who had earlier supplied the ironwork for the passenger station at St Pancras.

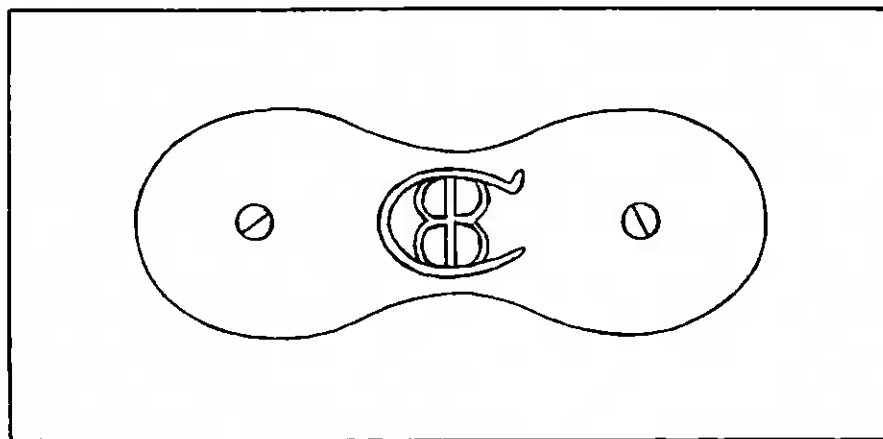


Fig. 1 Blue engineering brick with monogram 'CBB' with the second 'B' reversed.: measured sketch (scale  $\frac{1}{2}$ ), reproduced from *BBS Information*, 96, page 24. Drawn by T.P. Smith.

However, the monogram represents the trademark of the Cakemore brickworks at Rowley Regis, Worcestershire, near Dudley. The monogram 'CBB' with the second 'B' reversed appears in their advertisements of 1892 both in *The Builder* for 26 March 1892 (fig. 2) and in the London Advertisements of Kelly's *Post Office Directory* for the same year (fig. 3). The firm's trademark is shown and is identical to that given in the sketch of the blue brick from the St Pancras (Somers Town) Goods Station.

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the blue brick is a product of the Cakemore Blue Brick Company, later the South Staffordshire Blue Brick Company. It would have been the former at the time of the building of the St Pancras (Somers Town) Goods Station, which was built between 1883 and 1887.

The firm that operated the works went through a variety of names. In 1880, it was the Cakemore Brickworks and Colliery Company.<sup>2</sup> Seven years later, in 1887, the firm had become the Cakemore Blue-Brick Company (fig. 4),<sup>3</sup> but in 1892, the firm is called the South Staffordshire Blue Brick Company Ltd., which described itself as 'Manufacturers of the Celebrated "Cakemore" Brand of Blue Bricks' (fig. 2).<sup>4</sup> Apart from its works in the west Midlands, the firm maintained an office in London at Royal Bank Buildings, 123 Bishopsgate Street Within, in the City of London (fig. 2; fig. 3; fig. 4). It had two telegraphic addresses, the first, appropriately, "Blue-Bricks London" and for the works, initially "Cakemore, Rowley Regis"

but later "Cakemore, Blackheath, Staffordshire".

The advertisement in Kelly's *Post Office Directory for London for 1892* (fig. 4) also goes on at some length about this mark:

Buyers should be careful — when ordering SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE "BLUE BRICKS" — to see that they get the "CAKEMORE" brand, as that brand of Blue goods is UNDOUBTEDLY THE BEST: in fact, finding that other Bricks - not blued right through, like those made at the Cakemore works, and inferior in other respects - have been put on the market with a "frog" in them similar to that so long used by the Company, the South Staffordshire Company have now registered as its "trade-mark" the above device, which "trade-mark" will be found in the centre of the "frog" on all their pressed bricks, paving etc.

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**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE BLUE BRICK CO., LIMITED.**  
MANUFACTURERS OF THE  
Celebrated **"CAKEMORE"**  Brand of **BLUE BRICKS.**  
REGISTERED TRADE MARK.  
**LONDON OFFICE: 123, BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHIN, E.C.**  
**Manufactory: Cakemore Works, Rowley-Regis, near Dudley, South Staffordshire.**

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Best Quality Blue Bricks, Plinths, Tiles, and Quarries; Pavings and Copings; also Channels, Kerbs, Gutterings, Street and Stable Pavings; Steps, Mangers for Stables, Garden Tiles, Ridges, and Copings; Window-Sills, String-Courses and Cornices; Fenders, Kitchen Sinks and Gratings; Air Bricks, Pillar Caps, &c. &c.

**THE "CAKEMORE" BLUE WARES,**  
Being TOTALLY IMPERVIOUS TO DAMP OR ACIDS, and of ENORMOUS RESISTING STRENGTH (in fact, double that of granite), are literally IMPERISHABLE and INDESTRUCTIBLE, and can be made any desired Size, Pattern, or Description, and thoroughly Vitrified throughout.

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BRINDLED BRICKS AND RED BRICKS, QUARRIES, TILES, AND OTHER SORTS OF RED STUFF OF ALL SIZES AND PATTERNS.

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Fig. 2 Advertisement for the South Staffordshire Blue Brick Co Limited from *The Builder* for 26 March 1892, clearly showing the monogram 'CBB' with the second 'B' reversed.

Both in *Kelly's Directory* in 1887 (fig. 3) and in the advertisement in *The Builder* on 26 March 1892 (fig. 2), the company also claimed that

The "CAKEMORE BLUE WARES" being *TOTALLY IMPERVIOUS TO DAMP OR ACIDS* and of *ENORMOUS RESISTING STRENGTH* (in fact, double that of granite) are literally *IMPERISHABLE* and *INDESTRUCTIBLE*, and can be made of any desired size, pattern or description, and *THOROUGHLY VITRIFIED* throughout.

That Cakemore blue bricks were undoubtedly very strong is proved by gradually increasing thrusting stress tests carried out on them in 1880. These tests showed that the bricks only started to crack slightly at a stress of 385.6 tons per square foot, that they cracked generally at 589.1 tons per square foot, and were finally crushed at 722.7 tons per square foot.<sup>6</sup>

The company made, in fact, a very wide range of products. Their advertisement for 1887 (fig. 3) records:

This Company manufactures - *of the best quality ever produced in the trade* - Blue

Bricks, Tiles, Quarries:- Pavings and Copings for Railway Platforms, Bridges and Tunnels, and for Canal and Dock Wharves and Sea Walls &c.; also Tramway-Blocks, Channels, Gutterings, Street and Stable Pavings, Mangers for Stables, Garden-edging tiles, Kerbs, Steps, Copings, Window-sills, String-courses, Cornices, Fenders, Kitchen-sinks, and Gratings, Air-bricks, Pillar-caps, &c., &c.

## The "CAKEMORE BLUE-BRICK Compy. Limtd."

Registered Offices:—

ROYAL BANK BUILDINGS,  
123, Bishopsgate Street Within, London.

Works:—

ROWLEY REGIS, near DUDLEY,  
South Staffordshire.

This Company manufactures—*of the best quality ever produced in the trade*—Blue Bricks, Tiles, Quarries:—Pavings and Copings for Railway Platforms, Bridges and Tunnels, and for Canal and Dock Wharves and Sea-Walls, &c.; also Tramway-Blocks, Channels, Gutterings, Street and Stable Pavings, Mangers for Stables, Garden-edging tiles, Kerbs, Steps, Copings, Window-sills, String-courses, Cornices, Fenders, Kitchen-sinks, and Gratings, Air-bricks, Pillar-caps, &c., &c.

The "CAKEMORE" BLUE WARES being *TOTALLY IMPERVIOUS TO DAMP OR ACIDS*, and of *ENORMOUS RESISTING STRENGTH* (in fact, double that of granite), are literally *IMPERISHABLE* and *INDESTRUCTIBLE*, and can be made of any desired size, pattern or description, and *THOROUGHLY VITRIFIED* throughout.

All orders executed promptly, even to the extent of millions; the works being now in the course of extension to an out-turn capacity of 400,000 a week *all the year through*, not merely in summer.

Buyers should be careful, when ordering South Staffordshire "Blue Bricks," to see that they get the "CAKEMORE" Brand, as their BLUE goods are undoubtedly the best.

Telegraphic Addresses:

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"Blue-Bricks, London."

Works:—"Cakemore, Rowley-Regis."

Fig. 3 Advertisement for the Cakemore Blue-Brick Company in the London Advertisements of Kelly's *Post Office Directory for London for 1887*.

A similar list appears in the advertisement in Kelly's *Post Office Directory for London for 1892* (fig. 4). The same advertisement also states:

Altho' the SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE BLUE BRICK CO'S great speciality is the manufacture of BLUE WARES, they also make Brindle Bricks, Red Bricks, Quarries, Tiles, and other sorts of Red stuff of all sizes and patterns, and of unexceptional quality.

This is repeated in the advertisement in *The Builder* for 26 March 1892 (fig. 2).

Fig. 4 (opposite) Advertisement for the South Staffordshire Blue Brick Co. Ltd., from the London Advertisements in Kelly's *Post Office Directory for London for 1892*.

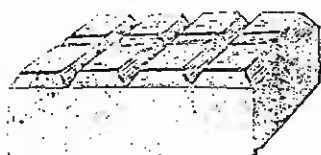
# THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE BLUE BRICK CO. LD.

LONDON REGISTERED OFFICES:

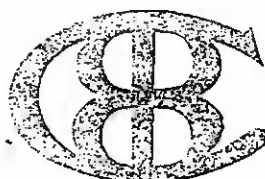
ROYAL BANK BUILDINGS, 123, Bishopsgate Street Within, E.C.

MANUFACTORY:

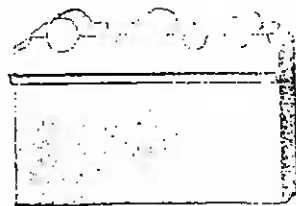
CAKEMORE BRICK WORKS, ROWLEY-REGIS, near DUDLEY.



STABLE-BRICK.



REGISTERED TRADE-MARK.



GARDEN-TILE.

This Company manufactures—OF THE BEST QUALITY EVER PRODUCED IN THE TRADE—BLUE Bricks, Plinths, Tiles, and Quarries: Pavings and Copings for Railway Platforms, for Bridges and Tunnels, for Canal and Dock Wharves, and for Sea Walls, etc.; also Channels, Kerbs, Gutterings, and Street and Stable Pavings; Steps, Manxems for Stables, Garden-edging Tiles, Ridges, and Copings; Window-Sills, String Courses and Cornices; Fenders, Kitchen-Sinks and Gratings; Air Bricks, Pillar-Caps, &c., &c.

## THE "CAKEMORE" BLUE WARES,

Being TOTALLY IMPERMEABLE TO DAMP OR ACIDS, and of ENDORMOUS RESISTING STRENGTH (in fact, double that of Portland Cement), are literally IMPERISHABLE, and INDESTRUCTIBLE, and can be made of ANY DESIRED SIZE, PATTERN, OR DESCRIPTION, and THOROUGHLY VITRIFIED THROUGHOUT.

THIS MATERIAL IS ALSO ADAPTABLE FOR BUILDING

## STRONG ROOMS AND SAFES,

Being far more impregnable to burglars' tools than either STEEL or IRON PLATES.

All orders executed promptly, even to the extent of millions.

ALTHOUGH THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE BLUE BRICK CO.'S great speciality is the manufacture of BLUE WARES, they also make Brindle Bricks, and Red Bricks, Quarries, Tiles, and other sorts of Red stuff of all sizes and patterns, and of unexceptional quality.

Buyers should be careful—when ordering South Staffordshire "BLUE BRICKS"—to see that they get the "CAKEMORE" brand, as that brand of Blue goods is UNDOUBTEDLY THE BEST; in fact, finding that other Bricks—not blued right through, like those made at the Cakemore Works, and inferior in other respects—have been put into the market with a "frog" in them similar to that so long used by the Company, the South Staffordshire Company has now registered as its "trade-mark" the above device, which "trade-mark" will be found in the centre of the "frog" on all their pressed bricks, pavings, &c.

Telegraphic } London Registered Offices  
Addresses } Manufacturing Works

"BLUE BRICKS, LONDON."  
"CAKEMORE, BLACKHEATH, STAFFORDSHIRE."

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