

Marjorie Hepburn and Albert Farrington

AF The Cerebos Factory produced that much salt we had two railway engines there. I had nothing to do with canals because the firm finished with canals long ago and were sending it by rail. A line linked up with our railway line and we had two steam engines there, moving salt from the two factories out to where it was needed.

MH Jock (Hepburn) started working there as a driver, well we married in 1951, that would be the time that he got a van. They had two up until then and he was the third, that was all that was going by road and the other was going by train. By the time he left I don't know how many Lorries they had by then.

AF Twenty or thirty by then.

MH The reason they didn't do more by road was when they first did it, Jock was going to Wales to deliver to some shops. It took days because they could only do 20 mph to start with, so he was all day getting there then they had to deliver a bit, then more next day and then get back, it was late at night when he got back, all the time was spent at 20 mph. Sometimes had to go across fields.



AF We had a sister factory called Greetham in the North East that made exactly the same stuff as we made. They decided to stop producing salt there because it was too expensive, so I went up there by road to have a look at their equipment and see if there's anything useful to us. It took me 8 hours to get there, you can do it in 2 ½ now!

AF We loaded one boat and butty every couple of months that went to London that went on until 1960 or 61, but that was just one firm. That was the only one in my time but Seddon had a fleet of boats they were still going certainly into the fifties.

MH Seddon's, before we started work, were using boats mostly pulled by horses weren't they? The pub at the bottom of Queen Street was where they stabled a lot of them at the top of the yard, now they have the buildings for cars/garages but then they had horses. I've walked down to there and watched the horses coming in with their coloured bobbins on.



It was quite a sight and thrilled you as a kid, you'd get to know the horses and see the bobbins but they finally went to motors boats.

AF Seddon's main works were built on the canal weren't they? Pepper St was their main factory, nearly all the stuff from there went by boat, Wych house was built on the canal-side, nearly all that went by boat into the late fifties early 60's; I can't remember the exact dates, then Cerebos bought out Seddon's which incorporated Simpson's. They bought the lot out.

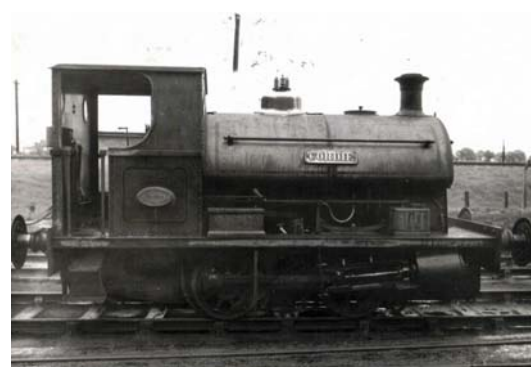
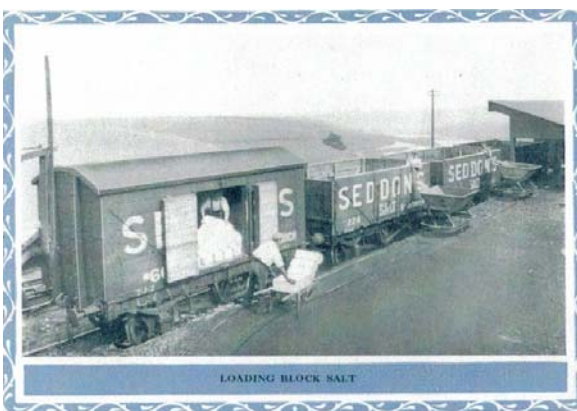
MH The most skilled job when I first started working at Cerebos was loading the railway vans because they had to fit in everything, it was like a jigsaw puzzle, and everything fit in.

AF End to end, very tight, they were allowed a bit of movement sideways but nothing end to end on a railway wagon.

MH They got the most money at that time though didn't they? You called them loaders, if you were a loader you were on top wages but it was such a skilled job, some boxes would be big and some small but in their head they knew what to fit where.

AF More on transport. Once upon a time we used to deliver on road to all the small shops as there was no big supermarket. George, my brother was one of them that organised delivery vans probably with around 20 shops at a time going to Liverpool, Manchester, Stoke we did all this area.

AF The army wants feeding so all the stuff Cerebos was producing eventually got to the army. I did national service and ended up in Greece as an army driver. My first job in Greece on a lorry was to go to docks and pick up whenever was there, there was me and about 20 others and the first lot that came off for my truck was Saxa salt! That ship had all kind of stuff on it but what I'd been sent to pick up was salt, Saxa salt.



Seddon's wagons being loaded at their Brooks Lane site.
Murgatroyds: All salt was loaded onto wagons; the works ran parallel with the main railway line. 1890.
 Cordie, after Cordelia Levinstein, 1939 export to India.