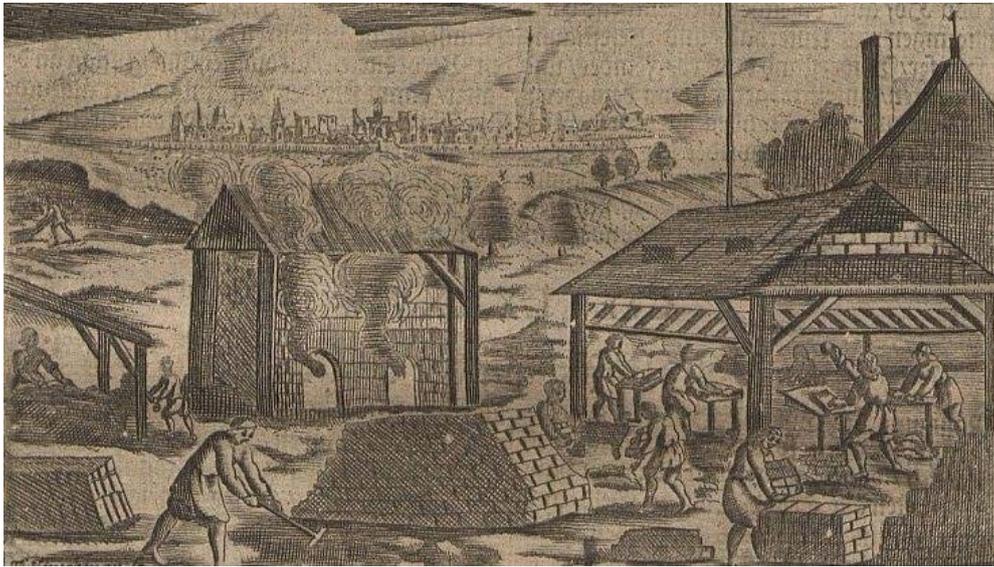# Redlynch & District Local History Society

The Fisherton and Bemerton Brickyards

By Jamie Wright

At our November meeting members enjoyed an interesting and well - illustrated talk by Jamie Wright on 'The Fisherton and Bemerton Brickyards', which operated in Salisbury for over 200 years.

The small yards were owned by different people, and were situated in the areas surrounding Devizes Road and Wilton Road. A local source of alluvial chalk clay, made it possible to produce creamy white or grey bricks.

A kiln was known to exist in 1706 and by 1791 Joseph Sandall was operating the Fisherton Red and White Brick Kilns. He and his brother were builders and it is likely that they produced the "Fisherton Grey" bricks used to build the Council House (Guildhall) in 1795.

The number of brickmakers increased and the yards attracted workers from outside the area, including Downton and Redlynch. Jamie explained the various processes involved in making bricks, including the use of the mechanical pug mill to make the clay pliable. Some of the yards produced vast numbers of hand-made bricks per week

By 1830 William Harding was a brickmaker in Fisherton. Between 1849 and 1852 he ran three yards in Fisherton and one in Bemerton. William was succeeded by his three sons, who continued to run the yard until it closed in 1907, marking the end of brickmaking in Bemerton. The empty brickyards provided valuable building land for housing.

There is some visual evidence of 'Salisbury's Forgotten Industry'. Many buildings in Salisbury were built from local bricks, including houses in the Greencroft and The Friary, an early 18th century building in the High Street and The White Hart Hotel.

Street names, such as Brick Lane, Ashfield Road and The Hardings also provide evidence of the brickyards, as do bricks bearing the owners' names. Futcher and R.G.Harding 1907 'are two such examples.

Next meeting: - Tuesday 4th December, Morgan's Vale & Woodfalls Village Hall. Ian Newman will give a talk on 'Old Fordingbridge'.