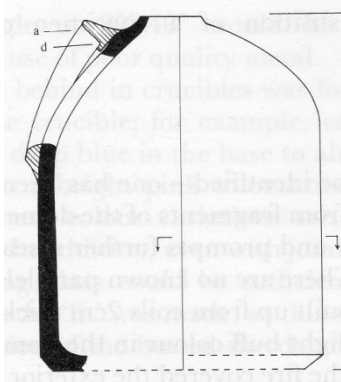


The assimilation of lead crystal

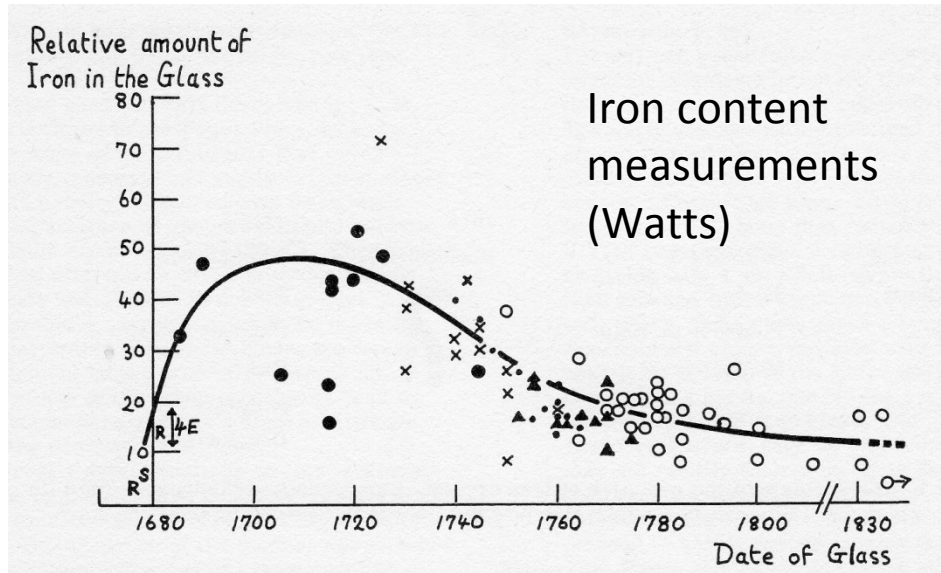
Colin Brain, cbrain@interalpha.co.uk

- By 1680 England had a viable lead-crystal glass industry, but it appears to have been:
 - wood fired
 - expensive (used expensive ingredients)
 - confined to London
- Fifteen years later the industry appears to have been:
 - coal fired
 - less expensive (used cheaper ingredients)
 - spread across the country
- How, when and where did this happen and who did it?

Some past work



Closed pot excavated
at Bolsterstone
(Ashurst)



State Paper Domestic
April 16, 1681

Warrant for a patent for 14 years to
Henry Holden for his invention of
making and fining all sorts of glass and
fret under covered globe-like pots of
one entire piece, so that no sulphur

Document
search
(Noble)

Context

- Topic is key to our understanding of how the English 'flint glass' industry developed
- Relevant to researchers in many historical 'export' markets
- Little past work in this field apart from the contributions highlighted
- Little relevant archaeology, but current Stourbridge glasshouse excavations may provide important finds
- Many relevant complete glasses in collections
- More local and national archive research would be beneficial
- Needs more and better glass analysis facilities

Possible approaches



Technical

17th C experimental glass crucibles at the Museum of the History of Science, Oxford

Skill-based

Quality issues with some late 17th C glass forming (note uneven foot fold below)



Way forward?

- Topic probably too large for one or two individuals
- Potential for network approach involving individuals, groups, museums and academia
- Analysis & experimental work likely to be important for both technical and skill-based perspectives

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