

## THE SCRAP YARD

Scrap steel came in from B.R. main lines, onto sidings on the opposite side of Albert Road in railway rolling stock and having crossed the main road into the works yard was delivered via works shunter on the Forge internal rail network. The scrap was lifted from the wagons by a large electro-magnet slung beneath the scrap yard overhead crane and was stored in separate bins depending on type i.e. Pig Iron, large lumps/billets, light scrap (tubes, plates, strips etc), baled and crushed car bodies, turnings. The separate bins consisted of steel girders concreted into the ground with white painted railway sleepers slotted into them to form solid partitions about 3 feet in height. Scrap tubs (the size and shape of a bath tub) were lined up on the floor and the magnet dropped the scrap into them whilst on the move, spreading it along the line of tubs. The two scrap men on each shift would then pull it into the tubs and arrange it so that it laid neat and level. The noise of the scrap dropping into the steel tubs was deafening and the rusty dust which rose from the scrap was stifling. Each tub was accurately weighed so that the total weight of each melt was accurately calculated. The sketch shows the scrap yard below the raised staging which housed the 3 furnaces. Beneath the staging was the cellar which housed the slag traps and checkers (heat exchangers for warming incoming air) and like the furnaces, were all built in refractory bricks. The exhaust tunnels for the 3 furnaces ran beneath the scrap yard floor to exit into one of the three large chimneys outside. Much like a glacier,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the furnace was below surface level and hidden from view unless one descended into the cellar where everything was always covered in a layer of sand which was widely used on the furnaces and which continuously seeped through the gaps in the floor. One man was fully employed on nothing more than keeping the cellar clear of the sand build-up.

Malcolm Mowbray 2015