

# THREE REGIONAL STYLES OF LIMEKILN

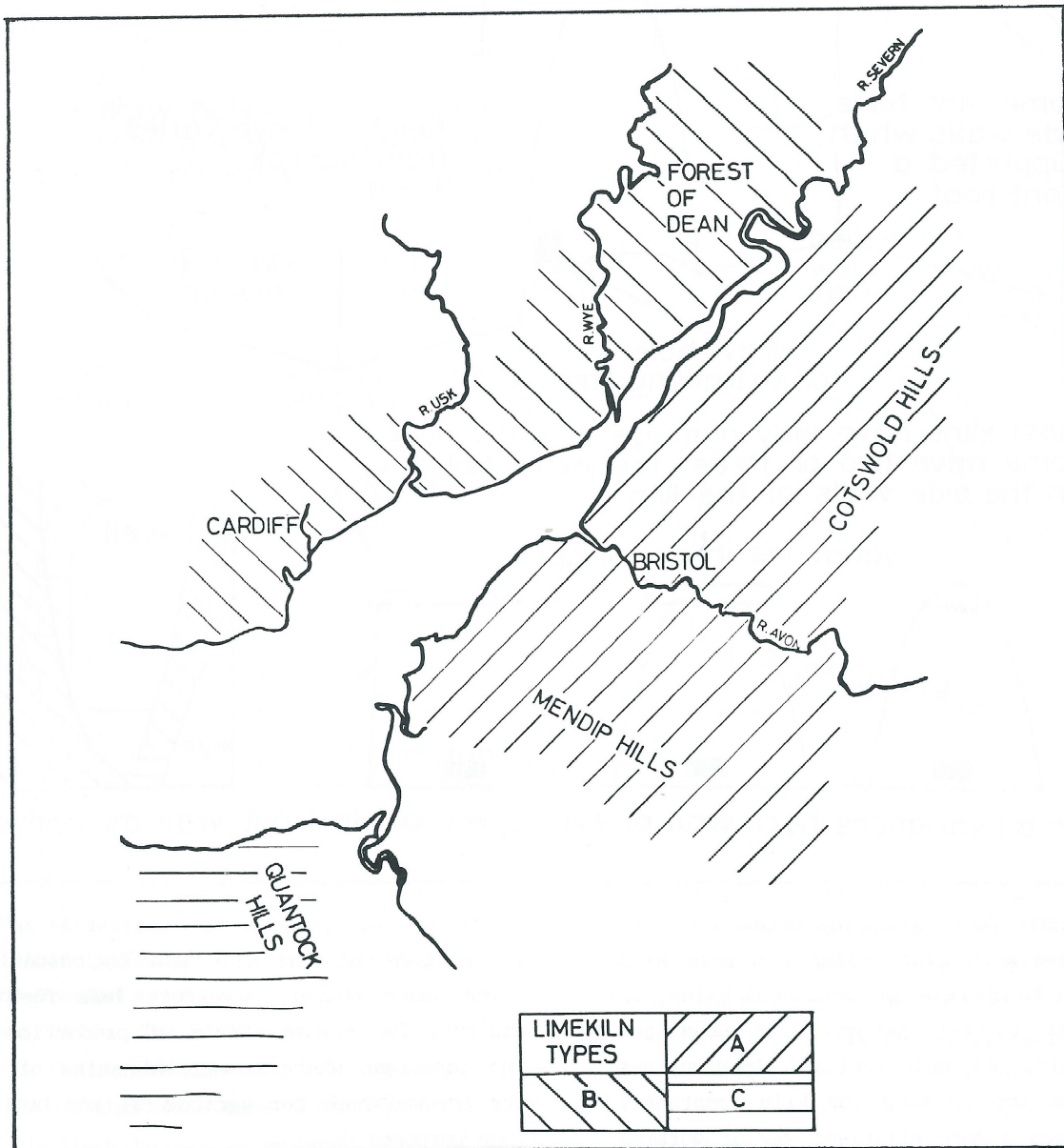
Eric Taylor

'Any study of the limekiln remains of South Wales and the West Country will reveal that no two are ever exactly the same. However in the area bordering the Upper Bristol Channel, as shown on the map, there is a group that can be identified as falling into three basic styles each within its own definable boundaries.

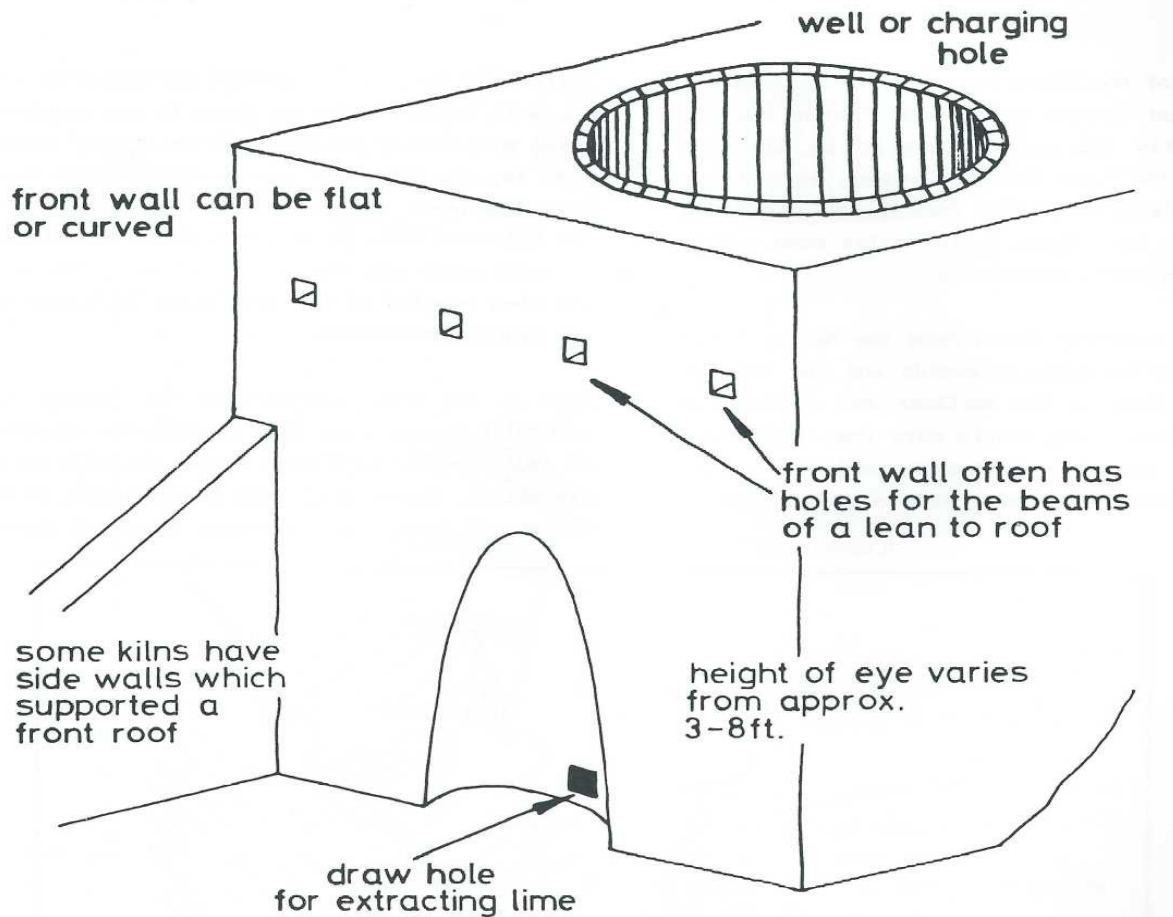
Type A is commonly found from the Mendip Hills through the Southern Cotswolds and the Vale of Berkeley. This is the smallest and simplest in pattern often being little more than eight feet in height and with a charging well only five feet in diameter, although others much larger do occur.

Their main use was to provide agricultural Lime in small batches close to where it was required. These were mainly intermittent or 'flare' kilns, that is, the kiln was partly filled with fuel, then limestone and fuel added in layers until the kiln was full. It was then fired and allowed to burn until all the fuel was burnt. The kiln was then emptied of the resulting Quicklime and the process restarted.

Type B is more complicated in design and generally larger than Type A, with the diameter of the charging well much larger in relation to its height. Examples of Type B are common in the Forest of Dean, the limestone areas of Gwent,

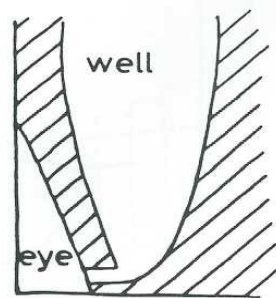
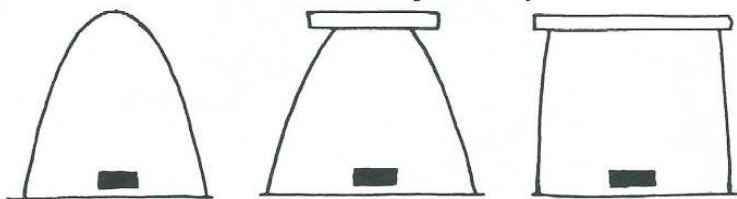


# LIMEKILN TYPE A



most kilns have only one eye or draw hole some have two or three. the extra holes on the side walls of the kiln

variations in eye shape

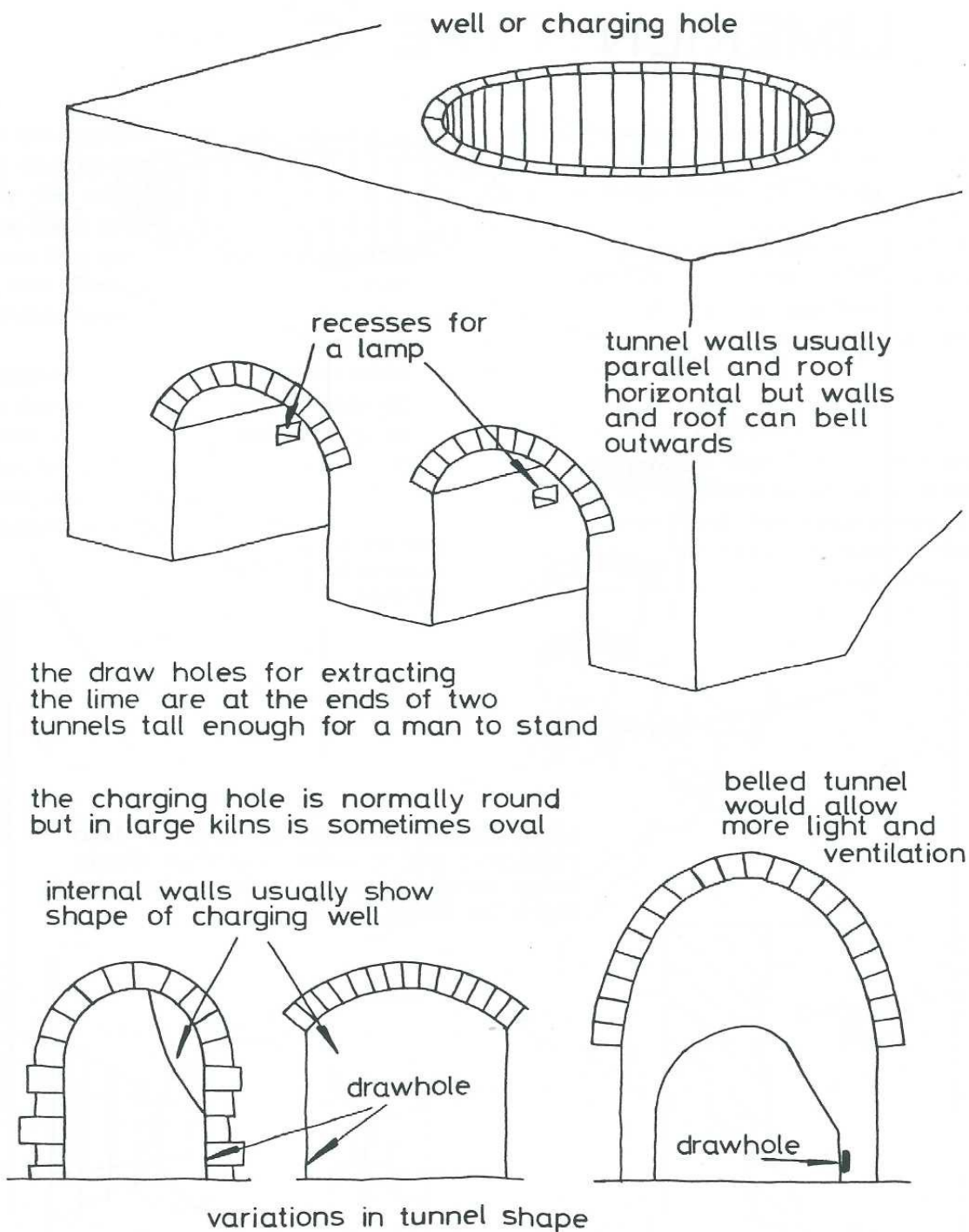


in all variations back wall of eye tapers out to front wall as above

and the Eastern end of South Glamorgan. Many of these were flare kilns but were also large enough to operate as continuous kilns, in that as the initial charge burnt down and Quicklime extracted, more fuel and limestone was added to the top to keep the kiln constantly full. This was a more efficient way of working

as the body of the kiln did not cool down between each charge, therefore less fuel was required. The greater scale of production was also important where commercial sales of lime were involved both for agricultural and building trade purposes

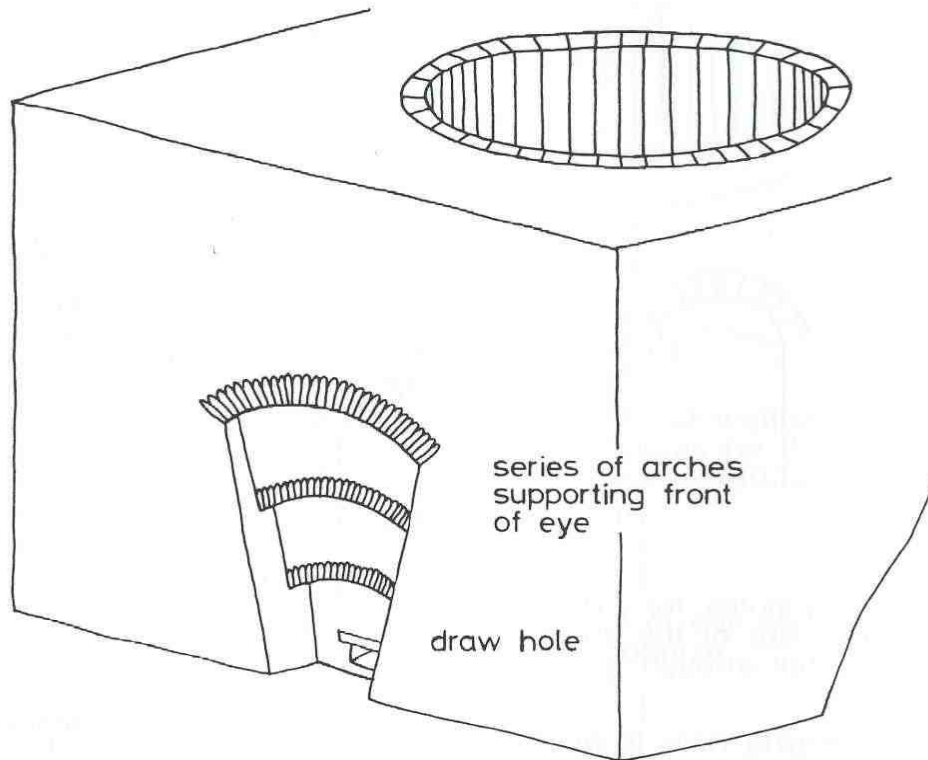
# LIMEKILN TYPE 'B'



Type C is the largest of the limekiln patterns and least plentiful. Examples can be found in an area from the Brendon and Quantock Hills through to North East Devon. The size of the charging well indicates that these kilns were continuously run. Limekilns of this size were often run for several years without being extinguished.

Although limekiln Types A, B and C are predominant in their respective areas they are not the only styles to be found, and single arched and other designs can be found in all areas. As there is a limit to the variations in construction style that can occur for such a simple process, similar styles to these are no doubt to be found in other parts of the country.

# LIMEKILN TYPE 'C'



kilns usually consist of one or two charging wells with one eye each large single kilns can have two eyes back to back as in plan

