

Alan Endacott

The construction of the railway viaduct.

What can you tell me about this extraordinary viaduct we can see here?

Well it is quite an amazing structure isn't it? It was first built in 1874 by the London South Western Railway Company, they were driving their line down through to Plymouth and on to Cornwall and he came up with this structure which initially used wrought iron girders riveted together; it was quite an unusual construction, I think there are only two surviving examples in the country that I'm aware of now, but by the end of the decade they'd already found it necessary to extend the line, or to widen it, put another track in, so in 1879 they built alongside it, and that was a steel structure welded together, a good indication of how fast things were progressing in the late 19th century.