

Britain is pushing ahead rapidly with the building of its Atomic Power Station in Cumberland - the first of its kind in the world. Construction started last year on a site next to the Windscale plutonium factory, and these newly released pictures give an idea of the progress being made.

Atomic energy - so long considered only as a destructive force - will here be harnessed to peaceful uses.

The main units of this station are two atomic piles consisting of uranium embedded in graphite. Their radioactivity is safely screened by thousands of tons of concrete and steel. When they are working these reactors will generate heat from which will be made steam to drive the turbo-alternators which will supply electricity to the national grid.

So large were the boilers for these reactors that they had to be sent to the site in sections - and transporting these by road over the 150 miles from Glasgow presented some tricky problems - particularly through the narrow streets of small towns and villages, where the clearance between the houses was sometimes only a matter of inches. Careful driving and direction was needed here.

Pre-fabricated sections for this enormous engineering project are being assembled on the site - where fully equipped assembly shops have been built.

A vast camp to house the thousands of workmen, with canteens and other amenities sprang up in a matter of weeks.

To assemble the reactor, hoisting equipment was needed. A crane, known to workers as a "big stick", towering 200 feet above the ground and capable of lifting 150 tons, was erected. The top of the "stick" was held by wire ropes - thick cables - stretching out in all directions. A tricky job this - raising the mast to its platform in high winds and Cumberland gales.

Sir Christopher Hinton, the Atomic Energy Authority's Production Chief - with his engineers - pays a visit to the site - where only eighteen months ago cattle were grazing on this quiet and remote farmland - and where very soon all this labour and skilled engineering effort will result in electricity being generated by Britain's first Atomic Energy Power Station.

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THE FIRST ATOMIC POWER STATION

Work is going ahead rapidly at Calder Hall in Cumberland on Britain's first atomic power station. This station, started in the middle of 1955, is expected to be the first in the world to provide electricity in quantity to a national system, and although there is no official forecast, estimates have been made that it will be working within about 18 months.

The main feature of this atomic power station is two large atomic piles which will act as furnaces to provide the heat to run turbines which will create the electricity.

These piles consist of rods of uranium embedded in graphite blocks and surrounded by protective concrete many feet thick.

Calder Hall is expected to be the forerunner of a number of power stations of the same type which will be built by the British Electricity Authority. At the same time the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority are devoting energetic research to the development of even more advanced types of power stations, and the next one to be built in the north of Scotland will be so designed that it will create more fuel than it actually burns.