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A
HISTORY OF THE MANOR
AND
LEAD MINES OF MARRICK,
SWALEDALE

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DEDICATED TO THE LATE ROBERT HILARY OF HURST

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INTRODUCTION

THE MANOR OF MARRICK LIES AT THE MOUTH OF Swaledale in the old North Riding of Yorkshire. Situated on the north bank of the River Swale, the western boundary climbs up Reels Head to the distinct boundary wall which parallels Fremington Edge as far as Awkmay Cragg above Sleil Gill, then bears east to St. Andrews Cross along Moresdale Ridge and down to Holgate Beck. Here, the boundary turns south to the hamlet of Helwith then across Skelton Moor to the Green Lane which it follows as far as Bradhow or Dales Beck below Cock How. This beck then forms the eastern boundary till it joins the Swale near Oxque, the river then forming the southern boundary.

Although Marrick village is the main settlement, it has remained throughout its history as a mainly agricultural centre, but owing to its proximity to the smelt mills, the smelters have tended to reside here. The 1871 census shows four smelters still living, two of whom, the Longstaffs, were both aged 60 which demonstrates that their's was not always a deadly trade.

The area where the present hamlet of Hurst and the Hurst Veins are situated was, from early times, known as Readhurst, while Shaw was an early vaccary of the Priory. These two hamlets, along with Washfold, were creations of the mining industry and grew in size as the mines expanded.

The population of Marrick manor slowly increased in size from 474 in 1801 to a peak of 415 just for the three hamlets of Hurst, Washfold and Shaw in 1841. This figure steadily declined to 152 in 1881 when whole families began to move away in search of work. The population in 1971 for the whole of Marrick was 86. The census also indicates that the miners were by 1871 trying to cushion themselves against this decline and many are shown as miner/farmers. Shaw and Washfold are now marked by heaps of rubble while the houses of Hurst have become the inevitable holiday home.

The Priory of Black Nuns, with its lands and mines, plays an important role in this history, mainly because of the complications which arose after its Dissolution in 1541 when the priory lands and those of the manor descended through different families.

The story is made even more intricate owing to the fact that Marrick was a strong Catholic area and the people adopted many devious methods in order to hide ownership and avoid fines or confiscation during the persecutions of the 17th century. Readers will have to approach this period with patience but the twists and turns of history will reveal a very strange story indeed for this apparently reserved manor.

There is now an air of quiet solitude lying over the upland reaches of Marrick which belies the fact that this is an area which has been governed by a thriving lead industry stretching back to the time of the first settlement in the Dales.

Opposite Hurst the two engine chimneys and the vast spoil heaps sweeping up to Fremington Edge stand as a mute reminder to man's effort in this upland fastness.

MANOR & LEAD MINES OF MARRICK

CHAPTER 1

GEOLOGY AND THE MINES

A brief description

THE IMPORTANCE OF MARRICK LIES IN THE FACT THAT IT is in this area that the major veins which form the backbone of the North Swaledale mining field die out. The Wellington/Racca Vein, a continuation of the Friarfold/Great Blackside Veins, passes through the Fell End Mines above Sleil Gill in Arkengarthdale, and, upon reaching the Hind Rake Vein turns south east and breaks up into a half mile wide belt of very rich veins and strings. These are mainly concentrated opposite the hamlet of Hurst but, upon reaching the strong cross fault known as Wallnook Vein near the Hurst/Marrick road, they are cut off with no veins appearing on the other side of this fault. It is this concentration of veins, plus the Copperthwaite Vein to the south, which forms the basis for this historical study of Marrick.

The strata at Hurst belongs to the standard Yoredale series and dips gently westwards from the high point of Fremington Edge. It is evident from the section of the mines that only the upper beds were fully worked, the 12 Fms or Main Lime and the Undersett Lime and Chert, which have proved so productive at Pries and in other parts of the Swaledale field were never fully exploited. Therefore it is likely that there is a great deal of ore-bearing ground at Hurst still workable.

South east of the Wallnook Vein there are only two strong veins worked, Shaw and Pries. Shaw Level, driven sometime before 1782⁽¹⁾ starts opposite the old hamlet of Shaw and tried the area towards Wallnook Vein. It was driven back from two shafts (see plan) which connected up with a drive in from the bank of Shaw Beck. Two sharp bends in the level indicate bad dialling. The level is driven in limestone for its full length and is now much reduced in size due to deads being stacked on the floor and against the walls.

Pries Mine is the largest working to the south of Wallnook Vein. Deep whim shafts originally worked the Pries North and Shaw Veins but problems with water caused a level to be started in 1859. This level lies at the lowest horizon on the field, but due to the strata being thrown down by Wallnook Vein, the Main Lime was not worked, (see section) but it is evident from the number of rises that the lower beds were extremely mineralised. The main workings were below the entrance adit to a depth of 45 Fms and were drained by a hydraulic engine. This raised the water to a drainage level, 6 fms below the adit, which ran off into a natural swallow in the broken ground on Shaw Vein and the draught created by the swallow played a major part in ventilating the mine.

South of Pries, the ground was tried by several shafts and a short level below Greenas Farm. North west of the Marrick Smelt Mills a short trial was made on the Musgrave Pasture Vein, but stopped soon after running into shale, there being no lead ore present only a strong calcite vein in the roof.

Short trial adits in Wild Sike on Smeltings Vein, and in Marrick Barf on the Marrick Great Vein are the most southerly trials, apart from one or two isolated

CHAPTER 2

THE EARLY PERIOD AT MARRICK

RESearch by DR. ARTHUR RAISTRICK IN THE 1930s AND more recent work by Laurie and Fleming has shown that first settlement of the upland areas around Marrick began during the Second Millenium B.C.⁽⁴⁾ Evidence for this consists of concentrations of parallel reave systems and house foundations on Copperthwaite Allotments, Fremington Haggs and Cock How. There are barrows and cup and ring stones further north on Holgate Moor and How Tallon.

A tradition has grown that Hurst was used as a Roman Penal Colony, using slave labour to work for lead. The basis for this speculation, first reported by H. Speight in his book *Romantic Richmondshire* printed in 1897, is the reputed finding of a pig of lead stamped with the name of the Roman Emperor Adrian⁽⁵⁾. This pig, supposed to be in the British Museum, cannot now be located despite efforts to trace it by Miss Hartley and Miss Pontefract in the late 1940s. There is no archaeological evidence at present to show that the Romans made any attempt to occupy the area between their fort at Bainbridge in Wensleydale and the fort at Bowes, although it is likely they had a road connecting these two forts. If this pig of lead ever did exist it could, like the hoard of Roman Horse equipment found hidden on Fremington Edge, have been left by Brigantian raiders based at Maiden Castle on Harkerside. Until more definate archaeological work proves a Roman presence in the Swaledale area it is perhaps better that this tradition be laid to rest.

The major settlement came during the Anglo Saxon period when the proximity of the village to the massive Brigantian Dyke, which crosses the mouth of Swaledale, could have given rise to the name of the village which in Anglo Saxon means boundary village, "Maer" "Wicka"⁽⁶⁾. Given the expertise in metal working of these peoples it is highly likely that they found surface deposits of galena and exploited them.

At the time of Domesday, Marrick or Mange as it was recorded, contained 5 carrucates for geld, had two ploughs and was worth 5s although it was described as waste, as were most of the villages in the area. Previous to the Conquest the manor was held by Archil under Earl Edwin as part of the kingdom of Mercia. When Duke William found himself unable to govern the Dales in the period following the Harrying of the North he leased the manor to Gospatric, one of the few surviving English Earls who were tolerated by the Normans.

Soon after 1100 the Normans began to attempt an effective government of the Dales and the Manor of Marrick was granted to Roger Aske in return for Knight Service to Earl Conan at his castle in Richmond, and it was to remain in the hands of this family for the next 400 years.

Roger Aske, grandson of the above Roger, founded a priory for Benedictine Nuns about 1165 on a shoulder of land above the River Swale formed by an old river terrace and gave them a third of the vill of Marrick for the upkeep of

CHAPTER 3

THE MARRICK MINES AND SMELT MILLS. 1660 to 1663.

IT IS EXTREMELY FORTUNATE THAT AN ACCOUNT/DAY book has survived for the period November 1660 to June 1663 which allows us to gain a great deal of information on this early period.⁽¹⁸⁾

The mines and the bulk of the Marrick estate were owned by Thomas Swinburne and managed for him by his agent John Fawcett, who was paid £51 : 13s : 4d annually with a Mr. Myles as his assistant. There were 23 miners employed at shafts on Red Hurst and Copperthwaite, many of whom were forebears of families that were still working in the mines 200 years later : Hillary, Waggett, Haykin, Hall, Elliott and March.

The mines were worked by shafts and sinking was paid for at daytale rates between 3 : 6d to 4s : 6d per fathom. Crosscuts were driven from the shafts at an average payment of 2s per fathom. For "beating" a shaft or level, which probably refers to dressing the rough sides and making them safe from loose stone, a rate of 18d per fathom was paid. Candles were sold to the miners at 6½d per pound, and "three bords for casting water of when they work in the groves" cost two shillings.

The accounts give a rare reference to the use of fire setting for breaking ground : "for carrying 3 quarts of coles to hurst to firewith in the levill at 4s per quarter = 12s". This firesetting was probably being used in the driving of the Water Level, which must have been started around this time.

Unfortunately no reference is made to the method of raising ore from the shafts but "Harden" at 10d per yard was used for making chopsacks, ore pokes and water bags for "drawing water with in the groves".

Miners were paid 17/- to 18/- per bing of ore and they did their own dressing. Rinyell March had the highest payment for the amount of ore raised, receiving £60-2-9d for 70 bings from November 1660 to April 1661, and £66-6s for 77 bings from Nov 1661 to Nov 1662.

As with other mines, vast amounts of timber were required and frequent payments were paid to the miners for drawing out timber from old or abandoned workings. Wood was also purchased from surrounding landowners, Tristan Elliott being paid to travel round viewing prospective timber purchases. Stoprice was paid for by the horse load and chopwood for smelting cost an average of 5d per sack.

Both the High and Low Mills were working between 1660-63 and power for the bellows came from waterwheels. Several payments were made for repairs about the mills; "Thomas Hudson for mending y^e hye mill bellows and for mending y^e kilnhole doors", "Thos Hudson for sawing thornwood for tridles and tappes", "Thos Hudson for mending low mill bellows, for mending the chimney and for putting in tridles and tappes", "p^d for dressing the goat betwixt the hye mill & low mill and y^e low mill goat", "p^d for 3 quarts of oyl for lickering the bellows at 15d pe quart", "Thos Hudson, his son, for mending the kilhole walls, for lyeing in 7 new Kilbawks".

MANOR & LEAD MINES OF MARRICK

CHAPTER 4

THE MORLEY FAMILY. 1817 - 1895.

WILLIAM POWLETT-POWLETT SOLD THE MANOR, MINES and demesnes of Marrick, plus the Rectory and Advowson of the Church of St. Andrew, in August 1817 to Josias Readshaw Morley of Beamsley Hall near Skipton. It was under this family that the mines were to reach their peak of production and eventual decline in 1890. When Josias purchased Marrick he was so encumbered with debts as to be nearly insolvent and a third estate at Addingham had to be sold off to keep himself afloat. He was pinning all his hopes of financial recovery on the mines at Hurst but the story of this family is one of continuous debt and effort to escape from its clutches.

Josias Morley was a partner in other Swaledale mines but his main holding was a three fourths share in the Ellerton Moor Mines, with Mathew Whitelock of Cogden Hall holding the other share. Here again he was in debt to the miners and tradesmen even though he had sold lead to the value of £16,000 and borrowed from Whitelock 1,600 pieces of lead at a value of £2,500⁽³²⁾.

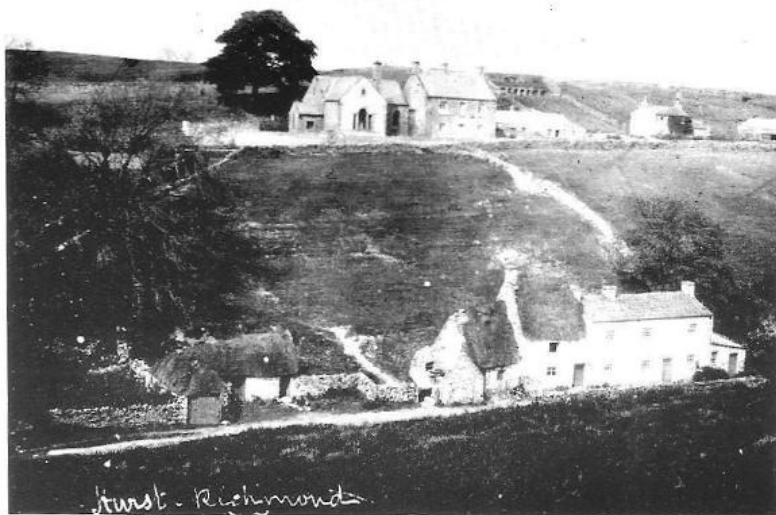


Plate III. An old picture of Washfold Hamlet and Hurst Board School. At top right are shown examples of very rare Bee Boles which served as a kind of beehive. Note also the steeply pitched thatched roof of the two storey house in the foreground.

(A. E. Bray O.B.E.).

CHAPTER 5

THE HURST MINING COMPANY. 1861 - 1880.

THE FIRST PRIORITY OF THE NEW COMPANY WAS TO refurbish the mills to cope with the expected rise in production. They found that the High Mill was beyond use so all their efforts were concentrated on the Low Mill, and by building a flue up to the chimney at the High Mill would be able to reclaim some of the fume, or lead soot.

In November 1862, John Hillary began cutting a new wheel-case and in December Robert Thompson of Fremington with 4 horses, two wagons and two men began hauling a 20ft diameter, 39 inch breast water wheel, plus machinery which cost £55, from the Lane End Mines at the head of Swaledale for use at the Low Mill.

James Flint, Ironmaster, of the Royal Foundry in Richmond supplied, in March 1863, two metal coupling boxes, one cast iron shaft weighing 2 cwt at a cost of £2-3-1½d. At each end of the shaft journals were cut, one 7" x 4½" and one 6 x 4½", and one brass bush weighing 3lbs 1oz was also supplied.

William Allinson of Reeth had to reinforce the mill wall to take the weight of the wheel and Thomas Coates cut and walled the gutter, put in a sluice and built posts to carry the launder for the wheel in April. He also took slates from

Plate X. Pries Mine shop or office and portal of Pries Level.



CHAPTER 6

THE YORKSHIRE LEAD MINING COMPANY. 1881 - 1890.

THE HURST MINING COMPANY WERE, BY 1880, PAYING THE dead rent of £500 and Waggett was working the mines on a small scale. This situation continued till April 26th 1881 when Faithfull Cookson, who was involved with the Lane End/Keldside Mines at the head of Swaledale, took a six month exploratory lease of the mines.

In May 1881, George Robinson of Kettleness, Cleveland, made an inspection of the mines on behalf of Cookson. He advised sinking a trial shaft near the High Public House and strongly recommended that a full lease be taken for the Hurst Mines.

The Reeth Poor Law Union Assessment Committee put the Hurst mines on the Parish valuation list at £200 and the grouse shooting at £400 which says a great deal for the value of the mines at this time.

Waggett sent 11½ tons of ore and 2 tons of waste ore, which the miners had dressed on their own account, to be smelted at Middleton in Teesdale in June, and Bainbridge, the agent for the Middleton Mining Company, sent a cheque for this ore paying £8-2-6d per ton.

The mines at Hurst were visited in July by Cookson and Sir Francis Knowles and Waggett informed Morley that they seemed pleased with the undertaking. It was proposed to put an engine down at Cat Shaft and clear the Old Water Level, which during Josias Morley's time, had been extended as far as Cat Shaft and when reopened would drain all the top ground.

When Metcalfe went to see his old employers in York about the mine plant, he was told not to make any arrangements regarding the plant but returned with a cheque for £578-3-7d to pay off some of the company's arrears.

Waggett noted in a letter to Morley in July 1881, that there could be problems in getting the plant removed peaceably for some time and it may be necessary to get an eviction notice against them. This letter also contains an interesting paragraph on the new company, "As the new lessees of the mines have neither plant nor tools of their own they have to borrow from the old company and as some of the men they are employing do not seem to be Mr. Metcalfe's sort, and as these men have been in the habit of taking things without asking the Agent's consent they appear not to get on amicably together".

Cookson signed the new lease on October 6th 1881. It was to run for 21 years with the Royalty payments divided into three seven year parts. For the first seven years a Royalty of one twentieth, for the second seven years one sixteenth and the final seven years one fourteenth, plus a dead rent of £100 per annum and a yearly payment of £5 for the coal.

Faithfull Cookson transferred his right to this lease on February 4th 1882 when a new company, the Yorkshire Lead Mines Ltd., was set up to work the Hurst Mines. The company had a share capital of £65,000 and the following each held one share; T. M. Roby, Wimbledon, retired captain; A. North, Kingsbury, accountant; E. G. Fellowe, 3-4 Great Winchester Street Buildings,