

# MEMOIRS 1965



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## JANEY PEDLEY'S STORIES

by

R.G. Guthrie

It is with regret that we note the death in February, 1965, of Miss Jane (Janey) Pedley aged 85 of Crow Tree House, Healaugh in Swaledale as we have lost another source of information of Swaledale life and events in lead mining times. Her father and brothers George and Thomas were carters for the lead-mining owners. She herself knew her lead mines and the daily life of the miners and other dales folk, and loved to tell of various incidents of bygone years in dialect. As no records of her stories exist I will repeat some of the things which formed part of her stories.

The carting mentioned earlier was mainly that of loading timber at the Reeth woodyard, carting it to Sir Francis Level and bringing an odd load of lead back for a total of 3/6d. per day. This was normal routine but 10 or 12 cwt. of lead had to be taken at intervals to Darlington lead Yard (Leadgate still exists in Darlington).

The White brothers originally of Kearton and later dispersed to Riddings of Healaugh and Belle Isle, Low Row were jaggng ore over Reath High Moor when their Dales Galloway slipped on the loose sods revealing a lead vein. Being so accessible and easily worked the brothers had to arrange things so that one of them was always working the vein so as to guard it constantly until it was worked out.

Owing to disputes locally the miners went to work at Hurst which was a walk of 10 miles approximately night and morning. On the way they would sing songs and hymns. Janey Pedley said that to hear their excellent choir trained (Wesleyan Chapel mainly) voices as they approached and passed through Healaugh was really worth-while. One of these miners was the Reynoldson who wrote the hymn tunes Gunnerside, Muker and others.

Another story of Reynoldson is that when the mines closed owing to the fall in the price of lead he started to sell pots and pans at the local markets and fairs. One day at Barnard Castle he had hardly sold anything. Getting exasperated with the poor trade he exclaimed in a loud voice, "Well if I can't sell you anything at least I'll sing you a tune!" and forthwith opened up with his powerful and beautiful voice. Naturally he soon gathered a terrific crowd and needless to say he sold out of goods before he returned to Swaledale.

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