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**MINING AND SMELTING IN THE MARSKE AREA, SWALEDALE.**

By Leslie Owen Tyson

**SYNOPSIS.**

*This paper presents a re-assessment of smelting at one of the earliest and busiest smelt mill sites on the fringe of the Swaledale mineral belt. The few surviving documents which deal with the area's lead mines are used to date mining activity.*

**INTRODUCTION.**

The Clints Smelt Mills were first described by Dr Arthur Raistrick in his book on the mines and smelt mills of Wensleydale & Swaledale in 1975. Since then, however, it has become necessary to re-evaluate some of his work in the light of new material being uncovered.<sup>1</sup> A recent paper by Michael Gill on the smelt mills in the area demonstrated that Raistrick's model for the Old Gang smelt mills was seriously flawed.<sup>2</sup> It became clear that a re-examination of the Clints site might also show that his interpretation here is open to question. Whilst this paper does not provide a complete sequence of events regarding the succession of the mills, it does seek to interpret the very scant documentation and present the evidence in a more logical and reasoned progression.

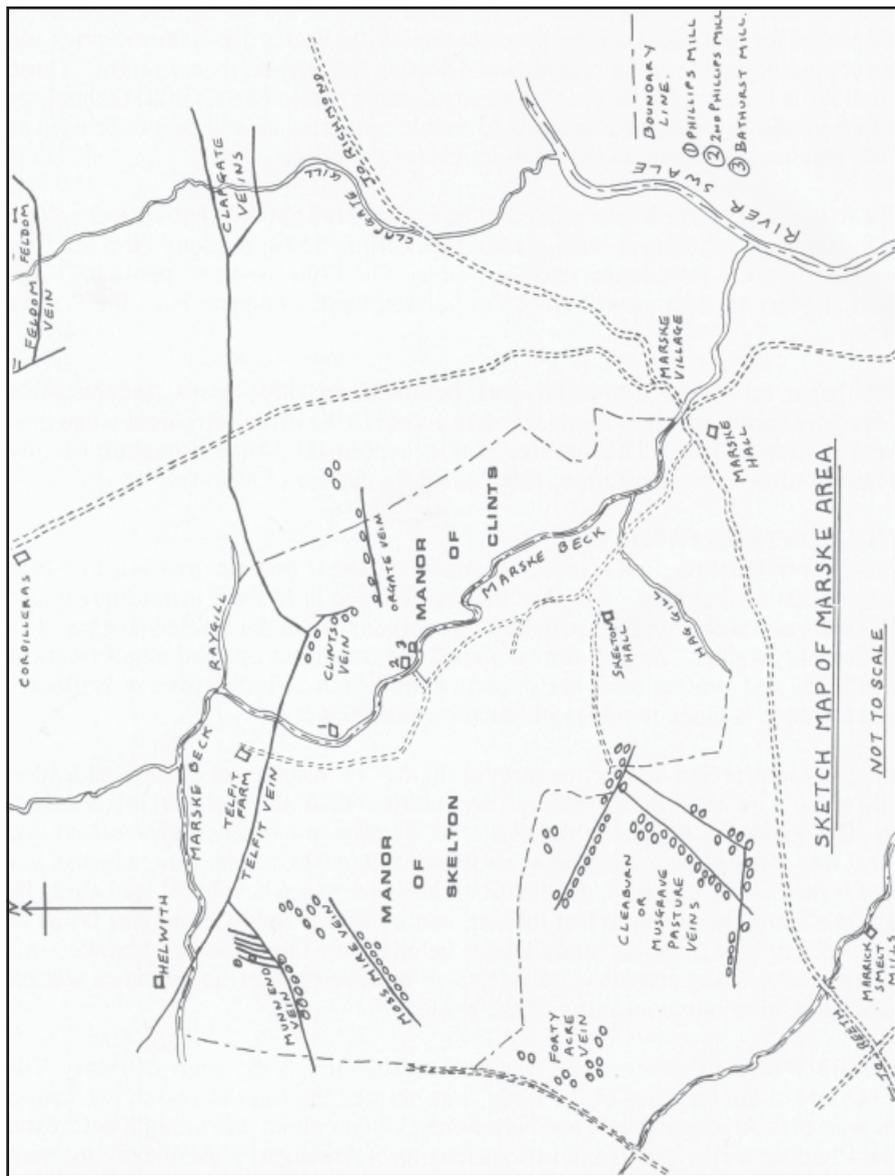
In all fairness, it should be pointed out that the books were written at a time when Dr Raistrick was ill in hospital and much of the research at Northallerton was done by friends who were not necessarily conversant with mining or its background.

**LOCATION.**

The parish of Marske is situated north of the river Swale and stretches from Marrick in the west as far as the bounds of Richmond in the east. The northern boundary of the parish runs from the headwaters of Marske Beck eastwards as far as Ravensworth parish. Much of the northern reaches of Marske now belong to the Ministry of Defence for use as firing ranges. The village of Marske, which gives its name to the parish, is situated roughly midway between Reeth and Richmond. To the south of the village the ground slopes gently down to the river Swale which is the southern boundary. To the north, however, the prospect is one of rugged beauty dominated by the Main Limestone cliffs of Clints Scar. The valley of the Marske Beck is a classic example of a glacial meltwater channel resulting from the Stainmore Glacier.

By the 12th century the parish had been divided into five separate and distinct lesser manors. These were Marske in the south, Skelton on the western bank of the Marske Beck, Clints to the east of Marske Beck, Feldom, and Applegarth. This separation into different lordships makes the narrative somewhat difficult to follow but it is hoped that the reader will be able to follow, the story as it unfolds.

Whilst the area is not heavily mineralised, what veins do occur are closely associated with several worked in the Hurst Mines complex to the west.



That lead smelting should be practised at Marske, which is well removed from the main Swaledale mines, can be explained by its two main assets: a large timber reserve and a constant water supply. Following the pattern with most of the early mills in the area, i.e. Gilling, Whashton and Waitwith, these were the most important factors when building a mill, the distance from the source of the ore being of secondary importance.

Early smelt mills relied on regular supplies of chopwood for fuel. This was prepared in small kilns dotted about the hillsides and the coppicing and burning of chopwood was an industry in its own right. These small mills were able to survive for a considerable period of time until technology improved the ore hearth sufficiently to enable coal, cinders and peat to be used as fuel, making it possible to locate mills nearer the mine.

The Clints and Marrick area tended to be in the forefront of smelting technology in Swaledale. John Sayer built his Marrick Mill in 1574, not long after the first ore hearths were introduced into Derbyshire. In 1700 the first cupola mill was built at Marrick, two years before the London Lead Company built the Gadlys Mill.

This paper relies heavily on the work published in 1888 by that indefatigable Yorkshire historian James Raine who had access to the Hutton Archives when they were at Marske Hall. This archive is now kept at the North Yorkshire County Record Office at Northallerton, reference ZAZ Hutton of Marske.

### **THE CONYERS FAMILY.**

The Conyers were the first manorial Lords of Marske to become involved with lead mining that we know of. Whether they mined lead at Marske is not known, but they were certainly involved with mining at other sites in the Swaledale area. The will of Christopher Conyers, drawn up in 1504, mentions one and a half meers at Whitaside and another meer at Copperthwaite which he left to his son William.<sup>3</sup> No reference is made to mines in Marske itself, however.

Raistrick interpreted another bequest in the will to mean burnt or smelted lead at bale sites. The will, transcribed by Canon Rain, one of the foremost historians of his day, gives the following bequest "*To William my son and eyre all my led chest'nes of burnledes, wortled, at my maner at Marske, to remayne to hym & hys heyres for ever as yrlome*". It is difficult however to see how burnt lead could be left as a family heirloom to last forever, and extensive fieldwalking has failed to turn up any bale sites on lands which belonged to the manor of Marske. An interpretation using archaic word forms will be developed in the reference section to offer an alternative meaning of the bequest.<sup>4</sup>

In 1509 William Conyers, who was well established at the court of Henry VIII being one of the Esquires of the Body, was granted the right to search for lead in the wastes in Arkengarthdale and New Forest. A complaint was brought before the Star Chamber by the bailiff and various tenants of Arkengarthdale of denying them their ancient right to search for lead in the wastes on which they paid the King a 9th part of the profits.<sup>5</sup> It was also alleged that Conyers was keeping the King's royalties for himself. The account of the complaint is unfortunately undated, but in October 1531 the King, probably prompted by the case, granted Conyers a 40 year lease for mines he had discovered at Punchard. They were at the low annual rent of £3 3s 4d in order to compensate him for the expense incurred during this search.<sup>6</sup>

## MINING AND SMELTING IN THE MARSKE AREA, SWALEDALE

The will of William Conyers made in 1532 mentions the Arkengarthdale mines but not those at Whitaside and Copperthwaite and no mention is made of bales in Marske.<sup>7</sup> William made a second will in 1553 which again only mentions the Arkengarthdale mines, and his son William in his will made in 1556 again mentions only the Arkengarthdale mines.<sup>8,9</sup>

None of these wills mentions the “*burning place at Clints*” which Raistrick stated in his book referred to a bale site or bloomery. Despite the primitive nature of bale smelting, it would require highly trained men and the necessary infrastructure to support the operation, all of which required money and as such would be a valuable asset. This would surely merit their inclusion in such an important document as a will. Also, all the mines that Christopher and William Conyers were involved with have known bale sites connected with them and it would, therefore, have been unnecessary for them to transport their ore to Marske.

The only evidence we have of bale sites in the area is found in the account books for Marrick smelt mill. The Marrick Low Mill had a slag hearth and 158 horse loads of slag were sent there in 1663.<sup>10</sup> However as the slags came from Skelton Moor which did not belong to the Conyers it does provide evidence that they smelted their ore near the mines they were working at the time.

### **THE PHILLIP FAMILY.**

After the death of the second William Conyers in 1558, Marske passed to Joan his only daughter and heiress who, being under age, became a ward of Queen Elizabeth. A new family now enters the scene when James Phillip, an influential member of the Royal Court, persuaded the Queen to allow his son, Arthur, to marry the Conyers' heiress against the wishes of her family.<sup>11</sup> As a result of the marriage, Arthur Phillip gained possession of the large land holdings belonging to the Conyers' heiress, including the manor of Marske, several parcels of land in the Orgate area of the manor of Clints and several estates in the Richmond and Cleveland areas.

Arthur Phillip leased the Grinton and Fremington mines from the Crown in 1583 with Henry, Lord Scrope, as a partner.<sup>12</sup> Bale smelting by this time had practically denuded the Swaledale and Arkengarthdale area of usable wood and there is evidence that fuel was being brought in from the surrounding area. Even as early as the late 1530s when Leland visited Swaledale he described it as having “*litle corn and much gresse, but no wodd but ling and some nutte trees. The woode that they brenne their lead is brought owte of the Parte of the shire and owt of Dirhamshire*”. Arkengarthdale he describes as having “*litle or no woodde*”.<sup>13</sup>

More proof that wood for bales had to be brought from a distance is found in evidence taken by a Commission to enquire into the despoilation of the woods on land owned by the late Marquis of Northampton at Ravensworth in 1575.<sup>14</sup> The bailiffs who were supposed to look after the land had cut down and sold to James Phillip timber to the value of £54, a not inconsiderable sum of money at the time and representing a large amount of wood. Several others were accused of taking away 600 horse loads of underwood and small trees, much favoured by bale smelters, without permission. This

situation would have provided the stimulus for an alternative to bale smelting to be found for the Grinton ore.

One of the first smelt mills in the area was built in Marrick in 1574 and Arthur Phillip probably used this as a model for his own mill sometime after taking the Grinton lease.<sup>15</sup> The most logical choice for a mill was the Clints area where, unlike the rest of Marske, the land was of little or no agricultural value. He had a regular water supply and the woods of Clints Scar could provide a steady supply of chopwood. Situated on the east bank of Marske Beck above Orgate Force in Smelt Mill Close (see fig. 2) at NGR NZ089021 it will for convenience be named Phillip's Mill.

When James Phillip died in 1583, Arthur was left to cope with huge debts and entails which encumbered the estate. To raise the money to settle these debts, he granted a 21 year lease of the smelt mill, the lead mines and large tracts of land in Marske for 1,000 marks to Alderman Cuthbert Buckle of London in April 1589.<sup>16</sup> The smelt mill is described as "*All that Milne in Marske as aforesaid with two furnaces now in the tenure or occupation of Richard Willance*". This started off a very convoluted series of events which has understandably given rise to some confusion in Raistrick's work.

On June 18th 1589 Buckle made two separate leases. In the first he granted Phillip's mill and certain closes of land in Marske to three Richmond merchants, Richard Willance, Arthur Hutchinson and Marmaduke Pearson, for £100 annual rent.<sup>17</sup> Richard Willance was also the lessee of corn mills in the area, including the Whitcliffe, Castle and Church Mills at Richmond.<sup>18</sup> He also leased a great part of the manor of Clints from the Beckwith family, who were owners of Clints, and finally purchased it from them in 1590.<sup>19</sup> The second lease which was granted to the same three people was for all the mines in Marske.<sup>20</sup> To further confuse the issue the three partners on August 18th 1589 granted the mines back to Arthur Phillip and his son Francis for a term of 20 years 9 months at an annual rent of £100.<sup>21</sup>

In May 1590 further evidence of Phillip's financial straits occurs. His first wife was by this time dead and he had married Bridget Leyborne. The land he held at Clints was sold to John Bradley, of Beetham in Westmorland, a relative by his second marriage. The sale also included "*uno molendino plumbareo*".<sup>22</sup>

Unfortunately Raistrick has misinterpreted or was unaware of the progression of the above events. In his work he omits all mention of Buckle, and wrongly states that Conyers sold the mill to John Bradley when in fact Conyers had been dead for over thirty years.

John Bradley died shortly after the sale and the land at Clints was fragmented between his daughters and co'heirs.<sup>23</sup> In March 1597 Timothy Hutton, who owned the site of the late Priory of Marrick and its land, purchased the demesne of Marske for £3,000 from Arthur Phillip and his son Francis.<sup>24</sup> Arthur Phillip died in October of the same year bringing to an end the Phillip family's involvement in the Swaledale area and they drifted into obscurity.<sup>25</sup>

In 1608 Sir Timothy Hutton granted a lease to William Corbett, Katherine his wife (granddaughter of Arthur Phillip), and Hutton Corbett, for faithful service for “*the seatte and soyle of the laite decayed lead mylne or smelting houses in the territories of Marske laite in the tenure of Richard Willance of Richmond, deceased*”.<sup>26</sup> Hutton had purchased this piece of land in 1605 from Sir Francis Duckett of Grayrigg in Westmorland, who had come into possession of it when he married one of Bradley’s daughters.<sup>27</sup> The use of the word decayed shows that Phillip’s mill was no longer working.

The origins of the second mill to be built at Clints are obscure but evidence that one had been built comes from a sale made in 1614.<sup>28</sup> John Layburne, one of the legatees under the will of John Bradley, sold his land at Orgate to Robert Willance, who had taken over the lease after his father’s death in 1602. Included in the sale was “*one smelt mill*” which for convenience will be called Willance’s mill.

Alderman Robert Willance was a succesful Richmond merchant and mining adventurer, but is more famed in local legend for an accident which befell him in 1606. Whilst he was hunting near Whitcliffe Scar, a fog came down and his horse careered over the cliff. Willance lost his leg as a result of the fall and the site became known as Willance Leap.<sup>29</sup>

Robert Willance died in 1616 and the manor of Clints and Willance’s mill passed to his nephew, Brian Willance, who suffered a Fine and Recovery to be made against him in 1618 in order to confirm his title.<sup>30</sup> This was a legal process often used at this time to convey land and property. A fictitious suite was brought against the tenant of the freehold and a judgement was given by the Court in favour of the defendant after the complainant admitted he had no case. The purchaser thus had his ownership confirmed and, as an extra measure, a duplicate copy was enrolled in the records of the court which were known as the Feet of Fines.<sup>31</sup>

### **THE BATHURST FAMILY AT CLINTS.**

A new owner for the manor of Clints came on the scene in 1635 when Elizabeth Willance, the daughter and heiress of Brian Willance, married Dr John Bathurst. By this marriage Bathurst acquired Clints, Willance’s mill and considerable property in Richmond.<sup>32</sup> The burgage rights he became entitled to with ownership of this property in Richmond entitled him to represent the town in Parliament, which he did in 1656 and 1658.<sup>33</sup>

Bathurst leased the Arkengarthdale mines in 1654 from the Citizens of London, who had obtained them from Charles I in 1628 as payment for his debts to them.<sup>34</sup> He had worked them during the Commonwealth period when all Crown lands and assets were seized by Parliament.<sup>35</sup> An account book for the Arkengarthdale mines, covering the period 1657 to 1658, gives the first insight into Willance’s mill.<sup>36</sup>

Ore from shafts mainly in the Windegge area was carried from the mines to a half way house called Gun Nest on Fell End Moor (NZ031041). From there it was carried over Hurst and Skelton Moors to the mill at Clints, where two smelters (Ralph Warde and

John Taylor) were employed. They were paid 10s 6d for smelting each fother of lead, plus 2d for weighing it, and a total of 70 fother and 17 pieces were smelted during the year. The main fuel used for smelting was chopwood, although they also used a hundred loads of coal, but no mention is made of peat. A total of 679 sacks of chopwood were cut from woods in the Clints area during the year at a cost of 4d per sack. The smelters had to repair the waterwheel, the wheelcase and the mill roof, which suggests the mill may have been in a state of disrepair.

A particular of all the work tools that is at the mill September the last 1658.

one pair of bellows well furnished.	
one iron weigh backe with the weight which weys 100 and 24 pounds.	
seven old chop sacks, four new ones.	
about 25 old ore poackes, 35 new oare pockes.	
5 gavlocks.	8 old shovels.
two buckars.	two picks.
a new iron mell.	3 marking hamars.
one old lead pan.	two ladles.
one old axe.	four new fiar shovels.
two ore trows.	

John Bathurst died in 1659 and the mines and smelt mill were bequeathed to his son Charles, but, as he was under age at the time, they were managed by the appointed Trustees.<sup>37</sup> When the lease of 1654 expired in 1672, a new one was negotiated and Charles's brother, John, took over management of the mines. After the death of Charles Bathurst in 1680, however, his other brother Theodore attempted to establish that his son, also called Charles, was entitled to ownership of the lease. This was disputed by John Bathurst and resulted in a law suit which was heard in the Court of Chancery in 1682.<sup>38</sup>

Depositions of witnesses who were familiar with the mines testified that, under John's management, they had been very productive. Although their testimonies differ as to the exact amount of profit John Bathurst made over the eight years he managed the mines, the sums stated run into several thousand pounds.

It becomes necessary to break the narrative at this point in order to establish a sequence of events at Clints. One of the most important sources for understanding the development of the smelt mills here is a map drawn in 1759. This map of the manor of Clints by Richard Richardson of Darlington shows the two sites at Clints where the mills were built (see fig. 2).

In Smelt Mill Close it shows a building named as the Old Mill. From its roofless state it can be deduced the mill was derelict and this is clearly Phillip's mill described as "*the laite decayed lead mylne or smelting house*" leased in January 1607/8.



To the right of this site is Mill Spring in which two mills are shown with smoke coming from them (NZ092175). The central mill is shown with a water leat powering an overshot wheel and a subsidiary leat running to another mill further downstream which we can return to later. As the leat was clearly designed to run to this central mill, it was obviously the first to be built. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that it is Willance's mill. In his testimony, Simon Warde, a smelter, stated that he had been a smelter at the Clints Mill for the past twenty years and that the mill was capable of smelting slag lead. The use of the word mill in the singular suggests that the second mill had not yet been built.

In 1663, 158 horse loads of slag were sent from bale sites on Skelton Moor to the Marrick Low Mill, which had a slag hearth, suggesting that Willance's mill did not possess one at this time.<sup>39</sup> The smaller building at the side of Willance's mill was an extension built to house a slag hearth sometime after this date. This was a necessary addition to the smelting operation, possibly after the lease of 1674 was obtained. Raistrick shows this central mill as two separate mills, but it is clearly two attached buildings, the smaller building housing the slag hearth and being powered by an undershot wheel at the front.

The mill which is situated further down stream was built at a later date, probably by Charles Bathurst, to supplement the main mill, but it had no slag hearth as only one chimney is shown on the map. Testimony in the case stated that John Bathurst also sent ore to Humphrey Wharton's Gilling mill, so clearly a second mill was needed to supplement the Willance mill.

The Court accepted the evidence of two of the witnesses that before his death Charles had stated that, as he had no children of his own, it was his wish that the mines should go to his godson, Charles, Theodore's eldest son. They decided in Theodore's favour and he managed the mines till his son, Charles, came of age.

The cost of taking ore from Arkengarthdale to Clints must have been a drain on profits and it seems odd that Bathurst should build a third mill at Clints when it would be more logical to site one in Arkengarthdale itself. When the situation in Arkengarthdale is examined, however, it becomes clear that he had little choice in the matter.

The main factors determining the siting of a mill were regular water and fuel supplies, but the geography of Arkengarthdale, together with local politics, dictated that there was no alternative to building at Clints. It was not possible to site a mill near the main water source, Arkle Beck, as this was where most of the scarce cultivatable land was. Sleil Gill was another water source, but this was regularly subject to severe flooding and course changes, making building on its banks very hazardous. Also, hushing operations were going on at this time, and this also ruled out Sleil Gill. The only other regular water source available was Bleaberry Gill which was in the area where the most expansion was concentrated, at Mouldside. Unfortunately, this area was subject to a lengthy boundary dispute with Lord Wharton, which was not finally settled till the early 1700s.

Apart from smelting Arkengarthdale ore, the mill was able to handle ore from other mines. In the period from 1671 to 1674 for example, Phillip Swale and Robert Barker, who leased the Old Gang mines belonging to Lord Wharton, sent their ore for smelting to four mills, including Clints.<sup>40</sup>

Raistrick states that, in 1758, 44 horse loads of ore were sent from Stainton Moor to be smelted at Clints. Once again, this is erroneous as all ore from Stainton was sent to Preston mill, owned by the Duke of Bolton.<sup>41</sup>

In 1729 Charles Bathurst purchased the Farndale smelt mill in which he had been a shareholder.<sup>42</sup> This was nearer to the mines than the mills at Clints and it is possible that production was affected.

The second Charles Bathurst died in 1740, leaving his wife with an estate heavily encumbered with debts, legacies and annuities. In order to clear them, she transferred all her estate in trust to her brothers-in-law. Large sums had to be raised to pay the marriage portions of Charles's sisters, and Clints was mortgaged to its full value to Thomas Duncombe. The situation was finally resolved in 1761 when Clints was purchased by Charles Turner of Kirkleatham, who had been residing at Clints Hall for some time prior to the purchase.<sup>43</sup> The father of Charles was one of the trustees who took over the management of the Bathurst assets in 1747. He and the other trustees had kept the Arkengarthdale mines going through this period, so it is probable that the mills were, as the caption written at the side of the mills states, still smelting Arkengarthdale ore when Richardson drew his map in 1759.

In March 1767 Charles Turner sold Clints for £7000 to Viscount Downe who, in August of the same year, sold it for the same sum to Miles Stapleton. Stapleton purchased the manor of Skelton from John Bower in 1788 for £10,250, reserving a modus of £1 1s 1d payable annually to the Rector of Marske in lieu of tythe of hay and an 8th of the minerals. In July 1800 he sold both Clints and Skelton to Thomas Errington for £21,000 and they were subsequently sold by the latter's son Michael in 1842 to Timothy Hutton for £29,500. None of the owners after Charles Turner were involved with mining, so a likely date for the mills' closure would be 1767 by which time a smelt mill had been built in Arkengarthdale.<sup>44</sup>

### **THE SKELTON MOOR MINES.**

The manor of Skelton was purchased in 1653 by William Bower of Bridlington Key from Sir Francis Boynton of Sedbury and his wife Katherine, the last of the Place family who had held the manor since the late 14th century.<sup>45</sup> His son, John Bower, was working the Moss Mire Mine at the northern end of Skelton Moor, which had been described as disused in 1653, when his miners became involved in a dispute with Thomas Hutton the Rector of Marske.<sup>46</sup>

A tythe of 1/8th was due to the Rector of Marske from all the mines in the parish, but a dispute arose in 1676 when Hutton attempted to introduce a new type of riddle for measuring the tythe ore at the shaft head. This move was resisted by the five miners who were working at Moss Mire. Bower also used the occasion to attempt to

appropriate the miners' customary 1/4th share of the tythe ore, saying it should be payable to the owner of the mines, rather than to the miners. To settle the case, a hearing was ordered by the church authorities in the Ecclesiastical Court at York.

All the miners interviewed stated that the "*Great Ore*" as the tythe ore was called was measured at the shaft head, using by ancient custom a riddle with one inch square holes. The riddle which Hutton was attempting to introduce had round holes which they claimed would let less ore through. A similar riddle with square holes was used to estimate the tythe ore in neighbouring Arkengarthdale.<sup>47</sup>

In answer to John Bower's claim, they testified that the value of each bing load of "*Great Ore*" was £1 15s. Out of this, the miners and not the lord of the manor or his lessees were by ancient custom to receive 8d. The Court upheld the miners' claim and ordered that ancient custom prevail on all the questions raised. By 1744 the payment of tythe lead had changed to an agreed annual payment, or *modus*, rather than being rendered in lead ore.

John Bower appointed Peter Hammond of Richmond to manage his manor of Skelton in 1686 at an annual salary of £10.<sup>48</sup> Hammond was to collect the annual rents for Skelton, which amounted to approximately £200 19s 4d, and to use the money to finance the development of the lead mines on Skelton Moor. In 1697, however, a quarrel developed when Bower alleged that he had not received the annual accounts for the past 4 years.

Hammond appears to have died soon after the disagreement, but Bower promised his widow that her eldest son could carry on his father's position. This was dependant on her signing a set of accounts drawn up by Bower, which showed there was £50 owing to him. On receiving a copy of these accounts she found several mistakes and refused to sign. Bower then began legal proceedings to have her arrested. They agreed to a reference which proved that Bower's set of accounts was indeed incorrect. She was able to prove by her husband's accounts that in 1694 a total of £101 19s had been spent getting ore at the mines. June Hammond heard no more on the matter till June 1702 when Bower had her goods siezed which left the family impoverished. The outcome of the case is unknown but, it helps to date mining on Skelton Moor.

### **THE MARSKE MINES.**

John Hutton, Timothy Hutton's grandson, was apparently the first member of the family to take any interest in developing mines in Marske. In 1662 he made a bargain with George Milnar and Timothy Corbett to sink a 12 fms trial shaft in Hilley Pasture on Cleburne Pasture Vein.<sup>49</sup> The Wallnook Vein, which proved so strong a feature at Hurst, terminated against the E/W trending Cleburn Pasture Vein to the north of the Reeth to Richmond road (NGR NZ084004).

The rate for sinking was to be nine shillings per fathom, but to ensure they completed the bargain they were to be paid five shillings for the first 4 fathoms and six shillings for the rest, the difference to be paid when the bargain was complete. When below the Old Man workings, they would get 2s 6d per fathom and be paid 20s per fodder

on any ore raised. They had to find their own tools, timber and rope. An interesting clause in the agreement mentions that “*in their so sinking meet with such hard woorke as can not be wrought without fire or if water shall rise in any such maner that good woorkmen cannot privail against and maister that then & in eyther of these cases they are not bound to the performance of the sinking of the twelve fathoms*”. This is a one of the few references to fire setting in the area.

Trouble between John Hutton and John Swynburne, who was working the neighbouring Hurst mines flared up in 1663. The mine agent paid out 18s for drink at several times to the miners “*to incurridge them when Mr Hutton came and distrained their ore and grove ropes*”. A further four shillings was spent on drink to “*incurridge*” the smelters when Hutton distrained the lead at the smelt mill and threatened them for working for Swinburne.<sup>50</sup> It is not known where the disputed works were, but it is likely that they were in Forty Acre which is adjacent to the boundary between the two manors. The exact course of this boundary had been the subject of two disputes a hundred years earlier.

A nine year lease for the Marske Moor Mines was granted to William Peake of Waitgate, Kirkby Hill, miner, and James Hutchinson, blacksmith of Reeth by John Hutton in 1683.<sup>51</sup> They were to pay a duty of 1/7th and Hutton was to supply 50 dozen of groove timber and any stoprice required.

In 1702 John Hutton sent 40 horse loads of ore from his mines at Kell Pasture to be smelted at the Cupola mill at Marrick. He also sent the same amounts to be smelted at the Ellerton and Whashton mills and the mill which produced the most lead from the ore was to get all the ore from his mines.<sup>52</sup> No reason is known why he did not use the Clints mill.

The manors of Marske and Marrick are divided by the course of Bradhow Beck near the Marrick smelt mill. Several disputes arose between the owners of the two manors over workmen retrieving ore from the Beck which had been washed down from the mill. In 1705 an agreement was drawn up between John Hutton and Lord Powlett whereby Hutton’s workmen could reclaim all the ore they could find until August 1st the following year. After that date Powlett’s workmen would be allowed to cross over to the Marske side of the Beck and reclaim any ore they could find between November 11th and May 1st every year. They were then to pay Hutton or his heirs 20 shillings for every fother of lead smelted from the reclaimed ore, or a proportional amount if it was less than a fother.<sup>53</sup>

In 1719 slag lead worth £200 was reclaimed from the Beck and sold to Roger Harrison at Clints mill by Robert Cotesworth, the agent at the Hurst mines. John Hutton was paid £10 as his portion under the agreement of 1705 and over the next eight years he received regular payments ranging from £2 8s to £9 4s.<sup>54</sup>

In 1729 the son of the above John Hutton also named John signed an agreement with Richard Sunter, Richard Wensley, Anthony Pratt and Henry Glenton, all from Grinton, to work all the mines in Cleburn Pasture and the West Pasture below it near

the Reeth to Richmond road.<sup>55</sup> The agreed period was for seven years, paying a duty of 1/7th to Hutton on all smelted lead sold, plus every seventh penny for any lead sold unsmelted. This vein, and the one in Forty Acre adjoining it, must have at least paid working costs because they were still working in 1744 when Hutton paid the Rector of Marske ten shillings a year as an acknowledgement that tythe ore was due.<sup>56</sup> John Hutton was also a major shareholder in the D'arcy Partnership at the Middleton Tyas copper mines from 1742 till his death in 1767. The Marske blacksmith, Edward Whitehouse, was responsible for making many of the specialist mining tools used at Middleton.<sup>57</sup>

It was not until the latter part of the 19th century that we have evidence of an attempted revival of mining activity in the Marske area. Judging by the lack of lead ore at the mouths of these various trial levels, however, it would appear that the ground had been worked out by the Old Man.

In February 1865 John Timothy Darcy Hutton granted to Thomas Smurthwaite and Ralph and John Milner a 14 year lease of lands at Clints, Feldom and Applegarth. They were to pay a duty of 1/10th on all lead raised and every three months 1/9th on all copper raised.<sup>58</sup> This group of partners were principal shareholders in several mines in the Swaledale area, including the Grinton mines, and were able to bring their expertise into fully exploring the leased area.

In a stretch of ground running from opposite Telfit Farm to Orgate Bridge occur the Telfit, Clints and Orgate Veins. The most northerly, Telfit Vein, is a continuation of the Helwith Fault which trends ENE/E-W. This vein was tested by High Telfit Level at 780 ft O.D., but with little success, although two strings were found. The Telfit Low Level was driven SSE in the 27 fms Grit to find the vein at depth. Dressing floors were laid out at the adit entrance and a well built bridge constructed across the Beck to connect the mine site with the Telfit road. All evidence shows that this was a scheme begun with much optimism, but the absence of mineral in the dumps suggests that the venture was unsuccessful. The Clints Vein is closely associated with Telfit and can be described as a flyer from the latter. This vein was tested by a series of hand levels high on Clints Scar with little success.

The course of Orgate Vein can be seen from the prominent nick in Clints Scar which brings the Main Limestone down against the Red Beds Limestone on the south side of the feature. A level at 880 ft O.D. was driven on the vein, but judging from evidence from the tips, only calcite and barytes were found. To test the vein at a lower horizon, the Orgate Level was driven for a distance of 80 fms northwards and a 20 fms rise put up. The tips contain a small amount of galena, but no dressing was carried out.<sup>59</sup>

The third trial by the partners was in the Low Feldom area in Clapgate Gill. Here the Clapgate Veins (NZ109037) cross Clapgate Gill below Low Feldom farm and are a continuation of the Telfit Vein. They were first worked from a series of shafts stretching eastwards from above East Feldom Farm across land now used by the M.O.D. The Low Feldom Level was driven to test the ground below that worked by the Old Man, but, as at the other two sites, the ground proved barren and work ceased

at Marske.

Hutton granted a lease of the mines at Thorpe under Stone and Thorpe Moor on the south side of the river Swale in July 1865 to a group of Grinton miners for a term of 14 years, paying a duty of 1/7th. This was revoked in 1869 when the lessees were served with formal notice to quit for not complying with the terms of the lease. They had not worked the mines for the previous six months and, under the terms of the lease, they were bound to keep four miners constantly employed.<sup>60</sup>

In October 1874 J.T.D. Hutton leased the Skelton Moor lead and copper calamine mines to Robert and Samuel Henry Hirst of Harrogate, Henry Curren Briggs, colliery proprietor, and John Tattersall, a mining agent from West Burton.<sup>61</sup> The lease was for 25 years, paying 1/7th duty, and they were obliged to employ not less than eight miners. The Cleburn Pasture Level was driven to test the ground not reached by the Old Man. This level was explored by members of the NMRS in February 1982, when an oil drum had to be put in place in order to get through a fall. Soon after this an air shaft was found, but after a short distance the level turned a right angle to the north and stopped at a forehead in plate.

These leases bring to an end the story of mining in the Marske area. Whilst it is not one of fabulous mineral wealth, it does present a microcosm of the vicissitudes of life with disputes, successes and failures experienced by the larger mines to the west, although the impact of mining in this sleepy backwater would not present the trauma so very often present at the larger mines. Most of the miners came from outside Marske, whose population remained mainly agricultural, and only the smelt mills would have provided employment on a regular basis.

### **CONCLUSION.**

This paper has demonstrated that there is evidence for only three mills at Clints, not four as previously thought. It has also clarified the ownership and structure of part of the lead industry in Swaledale during the 16th and 17th century when, owing to fuel shortages, smelting was often done away from the mines. Moreover, these owners were clearly aware of technological developments in other parts of Britain and, for example, adopted ore hearths every bit as quickly as smelters elsewhere.

Apart from the foregoing, perhaps the most obvious conclusion which can be drawn from this paper is that the importance of early smelting sites should not be overlooked or allowed to be overshadowed by the larger mills situated at the main Swaledale mines. Their importance lies in the fact that they were in the forefront of smelting technology and, as such, rightly deserve to be recognised. Where a site contained more than one mill, and documentary evidence is so scarce, it becomes increasingly important that this evidence is examined with great care. A fresh approach to an earlier work and the documents used as its basis can often demonstrate that earlier ideas are open to re-interpretation. This is a sure indicator that history is not in a fixed state, but is subject to constant change as each generation of researchers uncovers new information.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CLRO.	Corporation of London Records Office, Guildhall.
GL.	Gateshead Public Library. Cotesworth Mss.
MPPBL.	Brotherton Library. Leeds. Marrick Priory Mss.
NMRS.	Northern Mine Research Society.
NYCRO.	North Yorkshire County Record Office.
PRO.	Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London.
VCH.	Victoria County History of the North Riding of Yorkshire, Volume (London: Constable, 1914) pp.100-104, Gilling West Wapentake.
YAS.	Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Society.
YML.	York Minster Library. Hailstone Mss.

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4 Possible alternative interpretations of Christopher Conyers' will are as follows:-

Millward, R. *A Glossary of Household, Farming and Trade terms from Probate Inventories* (Derbyshire Record Society, 2nd ed. 1982). pp.12, 35 & 61. **Burne** - Iron brand for marking animals. **Lede** - A lead lined vat for brewing. A Cauldron. **Worttrough** - Trough for the infusion of Malt.

Raine, *Marske*, p.249 and Surtees Society, *The Correspondance of Dr Mathew Hutton, 1843*, p.254. In the Inventory of household goods of Sir Timothy Hutton made in 1629 a "Lede" is mentioned as being in the brew house.

Donald, M.B. *Elizabethan Copper* (London: Pergamon, 1955), p.159. *Brewhouse on Derwent Isle* - "The copper brewing **lead** or **kettle**, where this infusion or **wort** was sterilized, was set in stone with a roaster or iron grate under it."

It is possible, therefore, to relate many of the items in the bequest to the above terms and they would be more likely articles to leave as heirlooms than lead slags from a bale site.

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- 24 Raine, *Marske*, p.237. YAS, Record Series, Yorkshire Fines, Vol.8 Part 4, p.74.
- 25 Raine, *Marske*, p.236.
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