

BRITISH MINING No.50

MEMOIRS 1994



Harvey, W.S. 1994

“The Restless Years: The Leadhills Company Ltd
and the labour disputes at its mines 1903-1929”
British Mining No.50, NMRS, pp.41-66

Published by the

THE NORTHERN MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY
SHEFFIELD U.K.

© N.M.R.S. & The Author(s) 1994.

ISSN 0309-2199

**THE RESTLESS YEARS: The Leadhills Company Ltd
and the labour disputes at its mines 1903 - 1929.**

by William S.Harvey.

SYNOPSIS

The Company was formed in 1903, and got off to an auspicious start by opening a new, and technically advanced, mine at Lead hills, but its years there were then marked by a series of strikes, and by the development of a militant trade unionism among its workers. These events are perceived as being of particular importance for they seem to contradict the accepted concepts of the British lead miners, who are generally not portrayed as other than amenable, "well conducted" towards their employers and, in particular, untouched by politics.

The early development of trade unionism at Leadhills has been described in a previous Memoirs.¹ The following draws on further research to present the story of the Leadhills Company, and its miners, until it was wound up in 1929. A strike in 1909 is taken as the crucial marker in the miners' development from an individual independence to a collective militancy, a progression which can perhaps be compared with labour developments in the Scottish coal fields.

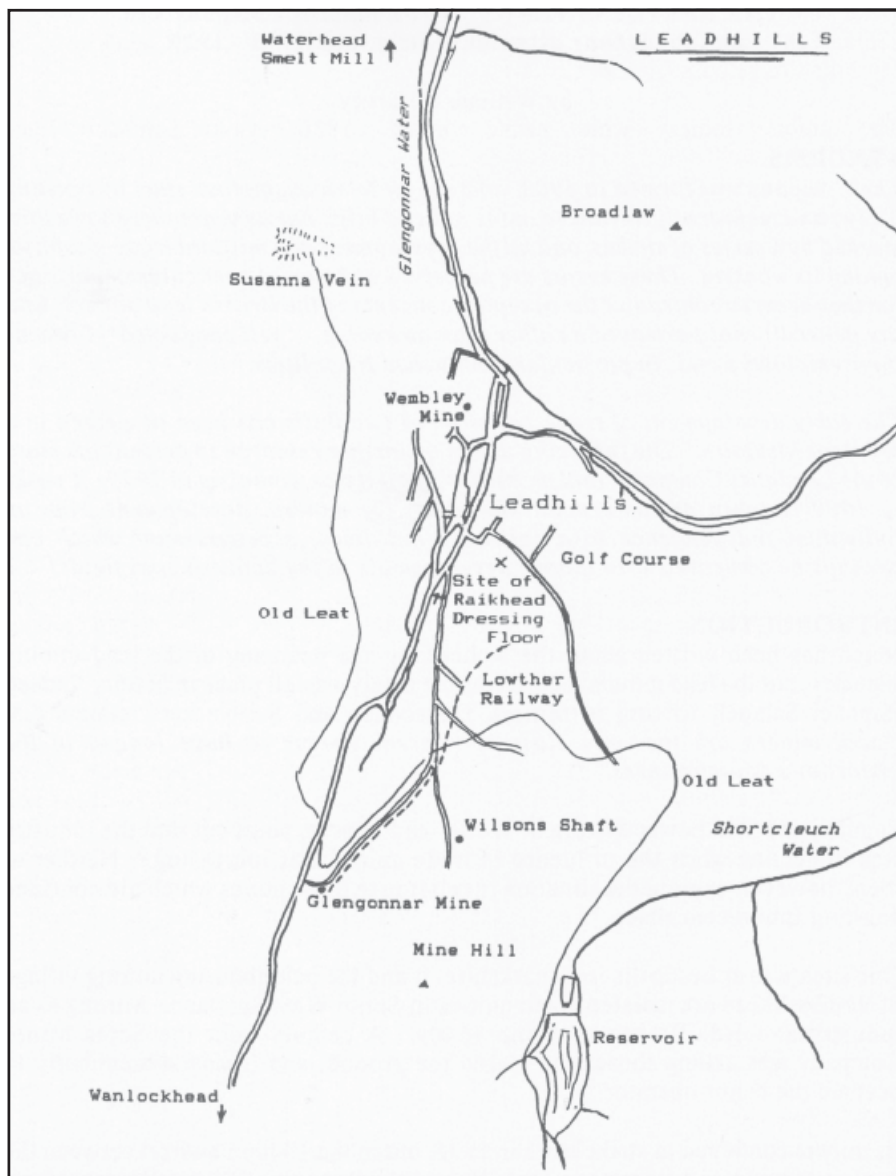
INTRODUCTION

Much has been written about the technology and economy of the lead mining industry, but the lead miners themselves have only a small place in history. Indeed Raphael Samuel, writing in *Miners, Quarrymen and Saltworkers*, claims that "*coal miners are the only class of mineral worker to have lodged in the historian's consciousness*".²

Samuel, and W.J.Lewis writing of Welsh lead miners, point out that the industry was in decline when the influence of trade unions was increasing.³ Neither of them, however, explore the situation in relation to those mines which did continue working into recent times.

One such was at Leadhills in Lanarkshire. It and the neighbouring mining village of Wanlockhead are isolated communities in South West Scotland. Mining as an industry at Leadhills began in the 1640s. A century later the Scots Mines Company was among those who leased the ground, and it was subsequently to become the major operator.⁴

Its miners combined to strike work in 1836, but in the 1840s a quarrel between the mining companies over water rights allowed the manager, William Borron, to get rid of all but the most obedient of his workforce.⁵ The dispute eventually led to the demise of the Scots Mines Company, and in 1860 the Leadhills Mining Company, a partnership of Scottish merchants, secured all the ground. It sold out in 1877 to the Leadhills Silver-Lead Mining and Smelting Company Ltd of London, the first public company to mine in the area.



After 1896 its fortunes declined and the resulting cuts in wage levels encouraged some of the men to join the Lanarkshire Union of Mineworkers (sometimes the Lanarkshire Miners County Union).⁶

The “union or society” which the men formed in 1836 was a local and short lived affair, but now they moved forward to join an established union. In terms of the history of lead mining in Britain, it seems an unusual step. Roger Burt draws attention to organised, if sporadic, strikes into the 19th century, but writes that the structure of the lead mining industry inhibited the development of trade unions, while C.J.Hunt points to the way the isolated, and socially stable, character of the mining communities mitigated against any sort of militancy.⁷ This is very relevant to Leadhills. Both authors draw attention to the Webbs’ findings on the absence of trade union development in the lead and tin mines in the 19th century, and to claims that combinations and strikes in metalliferous mines were “*unknown*”.⁸

The situation in the 19th century is undoubtedly influenced by a lack of evidence, but by examining local records R.P.Hastings shed light on disputes in Teesdale, where he found that some miners joined the Cleveland Miners’ Association in 1892.⁹ Organised combinations of lead miners were, however, undoubtedly the exception. There seems to have been a short lived attempt to combine at the Lisburne mine in Wales, a country noted for an active labour-force, in the 1870s, but J.A.Thorburn finds no reference to the militant miners at Talargoch joining any recognised union.¹⁰ In Derbyshire, strikes in 1770 and 1860 seem the only stoppages which have been chronicled, and what seems the only record of a strike at the Snailbeach mine in Shropshire is of one in the 1860s.¹¹

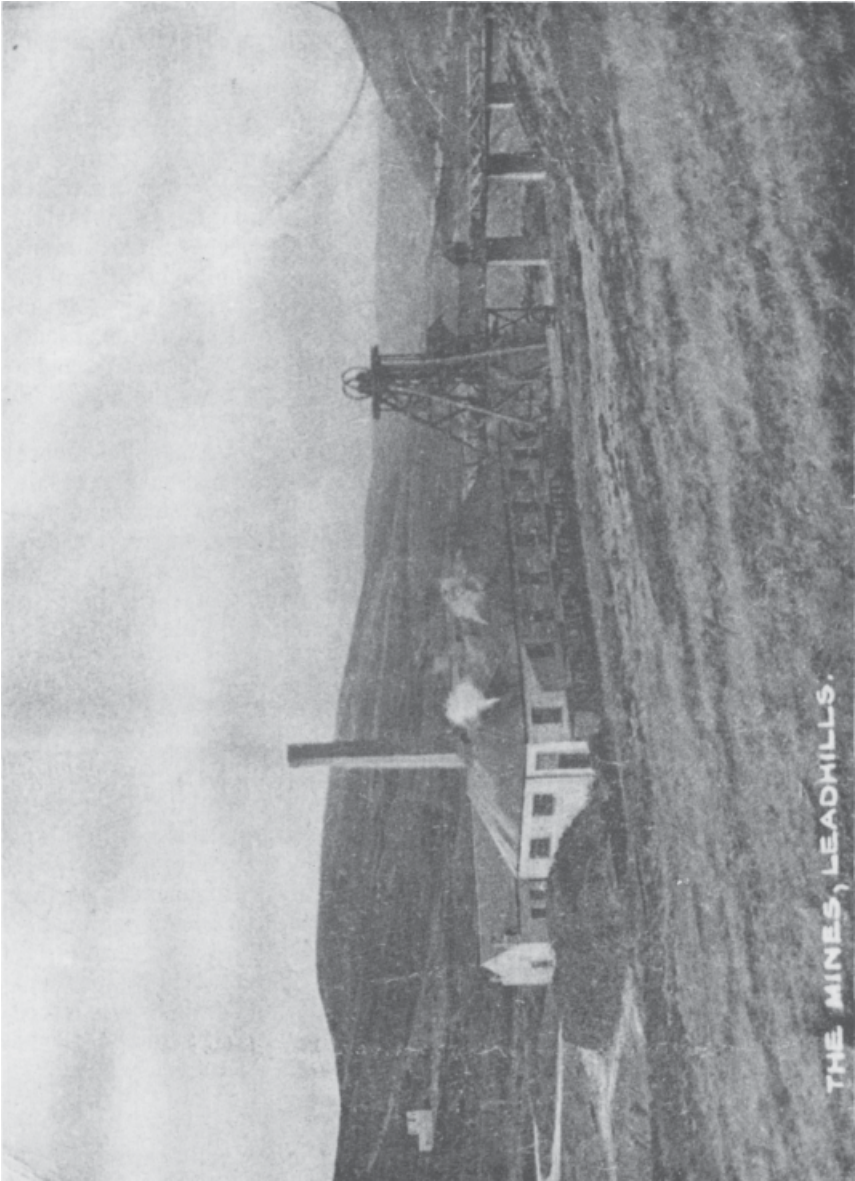
At Leadhills, the Lanarkshire Union of Mine Workers took its members out on strike in 1898, but by then the mining company was in financial difficulties and in 1902 the annual meeting faced a proposal to wind up its affairs. It was eventually agreed to have the mines inspected by W.H. Borlase of Greenside in Cumbria. He reported the mines were still viable and recommended further development of the Brow vein and this to be from a new mine at Glengonnarhead.¹²

An attempt to raise the necessary capital by the issue of Preference shares was a failure, and the Leadhills Silver-Lead Mining and Smelting Company was forced into voluntary liquidation, being wound up in August 1903. In its place came the Leadhills Company Ltd, which was registered on the 25th September, 1903.¹³

THE NEW MINE

There was fresh activity at Leadhills and the number of pickmen there rose to 130. A century before, there were over 200, but now fewer men produced as much ore.

James White, the manager, and George Green, the Company’s engineer, set about building the new mine and by 1908 the shaft at Glengonnarhead was down to 85 fathoms, and the power station at the mine had steam engines driving AC generators, which supplied power to the dressing floor as well as to the mine. Another steam engine drove the pit-head winder, and below ground an electric hoist wound to the 85



The Glengonnar Mine.



The Wilson Mine in the 1920s. The winder was electric powered, but the original plant had a 30 HP Fowler steam winder. The air compressor installed in 1909, was at the back of the windowless building on the right.

fathom level and an electric-powered pump “*requiring no attendance*”, as well as one worked by a waterwheel, lifted water to adit.¹⁴

On the surface, the ore was taken to the old Wilson mine where there was a Blake-Marsden rock breaker and picking tables. The best galena was packed into kegs and sold as “potters ore”. The rest was run to bins, from which there was another tramway to a dressing floor at Raikhead.

The smelt mill, at Waterhead in Glengonnar, had been in use since 1806, but by 1901, in spite of numerous modifications, its hearths were seen as being “*of an extinct design*”.¹⁵ In 1905 pollution from it was said to have killed a number of sheep. The Leadhills Company faced a claim for damages, and the smelter was subsequently closed down.¹⁶

Air drills were not included in the new plant. The existence of “*excellent single-hand drillers*” was acknowledged as making this investment unnecessary.¹⁷ Output reached 3199 tons of ore in 1908, equivalent to around 15 tons per man, about 1½ times what had been achieved before.¹⁸ The mines were profitable again and the Company paid its first dividend. In November of that year W. Bawden Skewis took over as manager. He had begun his career in Cornwall, and had worked at the Nundydroog gold mine in India. In July 1908, an article in the Mining Journal claimed that good management, the use of the latest technology, and the efforts of a “*fine body of willing men*”, had put the Leadhills mines back “*among the best in the country*”.¹⁹

But in the middle of the euphoria the price of lead collapsed from £19 to £13 per ton. Skewis looked for economies and bargain rates were cut. There had already been a dispute over a bargain for work to install the electric pump. Now there was a disagreement over the rate for sinking the shaft.²⁰

Mechanisation can be the cause of labour disputes, but the miners at Leadhills were still breaking rock as their forefathers had done, and the new plant can hardly have seemed a threat to their jobs. On the other hand, electricity was a wholly novel source of power at that time. Its introduction into the lead mine at Greenside in the 1890s, however, does not appear to have had any disruptive effects.²¹

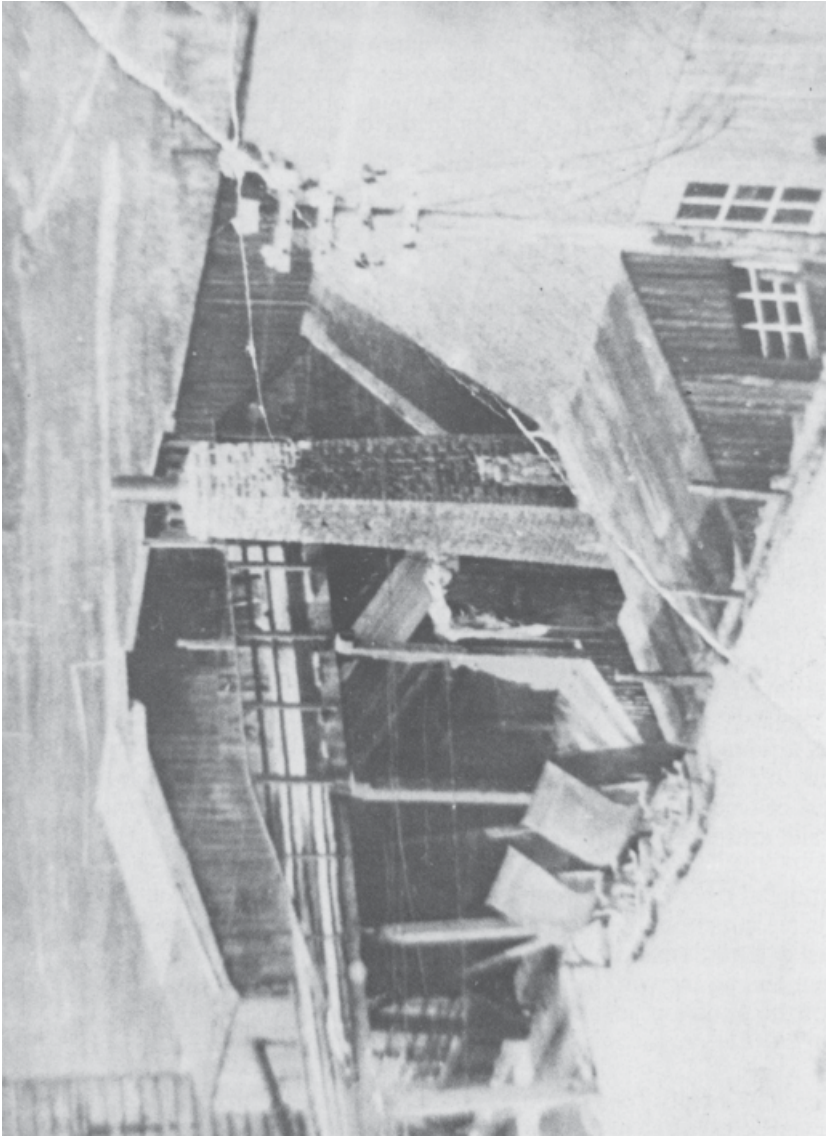
Nevertheless the Leadhills men asserted there was an atmosphere of “*discontent*”, and addressed a petition to landowner, pointing out the community was wholly dependent on the lead mines and the whims of one employer.²²

Hereditary landowners might oppress with high rents, but were often seen as providing that maintenance and protection which had been the basic feature of a feudal society. C.J. Williams points to the “*subtle and complex*” relationship between landowners and Welsh lead miners, and “*strings of patronage and diffidence*”.²³ This sort of relationship is also to be found at Leadhills and Wanlockhead, and down the years the Leadhills miners had sought to advance the interest of the Earls of Hopetoun with gifts of gold panned from the burns.²⁴

Times were changing, however, and the 7th Earl, now Marquis of Linlithgow, did not respond. For more than a century a paternal management, with a policy of social control, had discouraged the miners from taking responsibility for their own actions. Now this climate too had changed, and in February 1909 a meeting of the men resolved that they combine to join a Union.²⁵

THE UNION OF GAS WORKERS AND GENERAL LABOURERS

In 1898, the Lanarkshire Union of Mineworkers (LUM) had taken its members at Leadhills, about one half of the workforce, out in what proved to be a disastrous strike. Now the Leadhills men had heard how lead miners in Stanhope, County Durham, had bettered their conditions via a Conciliatory Committee set up by the Union of Gas Workers and General Labourers (GW&GL).²⁶



Part of the Raikhead Dressing Plant.

This union had been formed by a young socialist, Will Thorne, in 1889, and was one of the so called New Unions which sought to unite those workers outside the traditional base of specific crafts and industries, and to promote socialist politics. It was agreed that a letter be sent to the union's northern delegate, Hugh Lynas, seeking support, and in March he and William Sherwood, the north east general secretary, came up from Sunderland, and a branch of the union was set up in Leadhills.²⁷ In spite of an approach by Thorne himself, Skewis refused to acknowledge the union or to meet its representatives, and stated that grievances would only be dealt with on an individual basis.²⁸

In the traditional bargain system the partnership negotiated directly with the company, giving their relationship a particular status. But by the early 19th century mining companies sought greater control of production, and the tenor of the bargains moved towards something like a weekly wage. Skewis now tried to use the traditional concepts of independence as a weapon against attempts by the men to progress towards a combined interest. He further claimed that there was not enough work and 26 men were laid off, among them the officials of the new Branch. Those who wished to stay in employment were now required to sign conditions which stated they would "not belong to any union".²⁹ By November 40 men had signed but the rest, 160 in all, refused and were locked out.³⁰

THE STRIKE

A lock-out is perceived as a strike, and that at Leadhills in 1909/10 can be seen as a milestone in the progress towards an active militancy at the mines. While the dispute may have been belligerent in tone, however, it was not marked by any real violence, although pickets, including a number of women, were arrested on two occasions. It did generate a great deal of interest and support, and it also generated great deal of record. A full account is beyond the scope of this paper, but some aspects and attitudes must be reviewed.

It was a time of labour unrest in the west of Scotland, but the influential *Glasgow Herald* came out strongly in favour of the Leadhills men. In October 1909 it had published a letter, signed "A Leadhills' Miner", which drew attention to the discontent among the workforce. In an article in November it offered a careful review of the situation at the mines, and the editor later asserted that this was "neither fair nor reasonable".³¹

The paper, now simply *The Herald*, is noted for its independence, but at that time it was nevertheless alive to its readers' dread of any disorder. Its attitude towards the Leadhills miners perhaps smacked of condescension, as its attitude towards the disputes is perhaps best reflected in a leader about a strike of the Glasgow tramway workers, in which the editor condemned the "indiscipline of forces which agitators have set in motion".³²

The lead miners were invariably seen as "sober minded" and "well-conducted", and there was no evidence of "agitators" among those at Leadhills. Although some were arrested during the strike, there was no sign of the sort of aggressive tactics found in

other disputes at that time, and the reports in the press noted the “*absence of bitter feelings*”.³³

The local MP, Sir Walter Menzies the Liberal member for South Lanarkshire, also gave support, asserting that the miners had been “*treated unfairly*”.³⁴ No record has come to light of the attitude of the Marquis. As was the case with his forebears, he seems to have distanced himself from labour problems at the mines.

In January, 1910, the members of the strike committee addressed a letter to the *Glasgow Herald*, particularly criticising the way the Company’s finances were being managed. They claimed that the directors had sold shares when at a premium, and that dividends were being paid “*to the sound of trumpets and the beating of drums*”.³⁵

The Leadhills miners had founded a library in 1741, and by 1901 it took periodicals, including occasional copies of *The Mining World* and the *Mining Journal*, so the miners were aware of what was happening in the industry and the committee would have seen reports of the Company’s meetings.³⁶ The nine signatories to the letter included Samuel Jennings, the secretary. He was not a local man. Nothing is known about his background and it is possible that he had been engaged in some trade union activity before coming to Leadhills.

By then the new machinery in Glengonnar mine was working and, if the results of this investment were to be realised, output had to be maintained. In India Skewis would have seen how power drills could turn any able person into a miner. Drills had been proposed for Leadhills, and Skewis had found a second-hand compressor and a Crossley oil engine. Now was the time to put this into effect and in December contractors were engaged to install the equipment.³⁷ The compressor was set up at the Wilson mine, away from Glengonnarhead and the pickets.

Efforts to hire miners from Tavistock came to nought, but men were recruited from the Glasgow Labour Exchange. They were described as of the “*lodging house type*”, so were presumably unskilled.³⁸ The Labour Exchanges had only recently been created and Thorne, now an MP, raised the matter in Parliament, asking if the Government was aware that they were being used as a source of strike-breakers.³⁹

The *Glasgow Herald* had reported on the strike in November 1909, and in March the following year *Forward*, the paper of the Independent Labour Party, the ILP, became interested and then took the strike to its own. Every issue carried a report and through its pages the ILP sought to advance the strikers’ cause.⁴⁰ Although the dispute had begun with a disagreement over earnings, it had escalated into a perceived attack on combination and trade unionism.

There was a large congregation of the Free Church of Scotland in Leadhills and, in March, Colin Gibb, a Free Church minister in Glasgow and a correspondent to *Forward*, made an unsuccessful attempt to mediate.⁴¹ In April members of the Scottish Trade Union Congress visited the village and pledged support.⁴² By May the publicity, and the undiminished sympathy for the strikers, encouraged hopes of a



The 1909 Strike. From the Glasgow Evening Times, December 6th 1909.

compromise, and by June Skewis had offered to withdraw the demand that the men left the union, although he insisted that the rest of the conditions stood.⁴³

THE RALLY

A settlement was probably in sight, but the strike was destined to end in a rally of solidarity which can have few equals in mining history. In May, George Dallas, one of the leaders of the ILP, had begun arrangements for a demonstration in Leadhills on Saturday, the 6th June. On the day an estimated 5000 people turned up to march around the village, led by two bands.⁴⁴

The rally was addressed by a galaxy of speakers including Robert Smillie, president of the LUM; Tom Johnston, the editor of *Forward*; George Kerr, an ILP organiser; Esther Dick of the Federation of Women Workers; H.Pritchard for the GW&GL; David Gilmour, Secretary of the LUM; and Neil McLean of the Scottish Labour Party; as well as representatives from other trade unions and the Glasgow Trades Council. Smillie asserted that the support for the rally meant it would be impossible for "*Watson and his company to enforce their terms of slavery*". Gilmour spoke of the previous strike at Leadhills and reminded the gathering that the LUM had continued to pay the strikers during the long dispute, and Pritchard commented on the lack of trade union organisation in Scotland. Johnston and McLean referred to the "*pit prop argument*" employed by strikers at a colliery at Bo'ness, McLean remarked "*let's get some of that spirit here*", and Kerr used the occasion to criticise "*the capitalist system*".⁴⁵

Robert Smillie was greeted with "*Three cheers for old Bob*", an appellation which could have acknowledged that he came from an older generation of trade unionists. In his paper, "*Independent Miner to Militant Collier*", Alan Campbell sets out three stages of development: the independent collier, the reformist, and the militant. Campbell sees Smillie as typical of the second stage, and aligns militancy with the political activists who later took control of the National Union of Scottish Mine Workers.⁴⁶ A pointer to these attitudes can be seen in the remarks of Kerr and MacLean.

Reaction in the village was probably mixed. Many no doubt listened to the speeches with excitement. Others may have realised that the dispute had conjured up unexpected forces. Relations between the miners and their employers might no longer be a local matter, and the independence enjoyed by their forefathers could be slipping away.

THE AFTERMATH

Two days later Skewis put forward new terms which were accepted and the strike was over. There was great rejoicing, bells were pealed in Leadhills and, in a leading article, the *Glasgow Herald* proclaimed the outcome was a "*triumph for the principals of combination*".⁴⁷

In reality the terms proved far from clear. The Company apparently agreed to acknowledge the presence of a Union, but Skewis did not regard the settlement as carrying any obligation either to employ its members, or to allow union officials to

negotiate for the men. The Company's chairman, Peter Watson, later sought to reassure shareholders by asserting that "*Peace and harmony are now the order of the day*".⁴⁸ But there was to be little evidence of either in the years to come.

Skewis set about breaking down any base for future combinations by refusing work to the more militant miners and dispersing their supporters. Men who had been labouring found themselves working with air drills in the stopes, and pickmen were put to tramming ore.⁴⁹ The Company was to claim that a man could now "*break 24 tons (of ore) per week*", and four men could do the work of eight. A later report suggests this was with "Holman" drills.⁵⁰ The use of air drills must have further eroded traditional skills, and perhaps marked another step on road from the independent pickman towards a collective consciousness.

The end of the strike meant men were now free to look for work at the lead mines in Wanlockhead, and by July 30 were going "*over the hill*" to work for John Mitchell, the manager there. Unlike Skewis, Mitchell was a local man, and although he was accused by the Leadhills committee of exercising a "*vulgar tyranny*", his management succeeded where Skewis failed.⁵¹ However, it was remarked that 40 Leadhills men were still without work.⁵²

CHANGING ATTITUDES

In April 1911 Peter Watson died at the age of 81. Felix Wilson was appointed managing director, and James Alexander, who had been born in Leadhills but was in his 70s and in poor health, became chairman.⁵³ Watson was described as being "*autocratic and dictatorial*" and he had dominated the Company's meetings, but the reports of their proceedings after his death show no obvious change in attitudes.

After the rally, evidence of increasing political interest can be discerned among the miners. Their forefathers had inherited the radicalism of those Covenantors whose Declarations were once perceived as rallying forces for political as well as religious reform, but there is no reference to any support for Chartism, another marker in labour development. Hunt finds no hint of Chartism amongst the miners in the Northern Pennines, and refers to an absence of revolutionary, or political, concerns in the later 19th century.⁵⁴ The lack of reference to Chartism at Leadhills, however, need not mean that no interest existed, and signs of an awakening social consciousness, which included a political dimension, can be discerned among miners in the 1880s. In June 1888, a meeting in the village was encouraged to petition the Scottish Liberals to "*form a party to promote the interests of the crofters, miners, and the working classes*"; and in August the editor of the *Mining Journal* was alarmed to learn that "*the workmen at Leadhills are taking an initiative in a movement*" to secure shares, and a voice in the running of the industry.⁵⁵

The Leadhills library was a focus of radical interests, and by 1896 the periodicals included the magazine, *Labour Leader*.⁵⁶ A variety of social developments can be discerned at both villages at this time, but the rally in 1910 can be seen as a milestone in the transition to militancy at Leadhills, and a branch of the ILP was formed in the village in 1911.⁵⁷

The number who joined it is not known, and this raises the question of the degree of support for left wing politics. References to religious dispute among the villagers, and quarrels over the management of the library, point to differing attitudes in spite of what were common interests. So it is likely that the ILP membership was a small one

TRAMMING

Output from the mines rose from 559 tons in 1910 to 1749 tons in 1912, but in that year the top of the Wilson shaft collapsed, taking the air pipes with it. The whole was in such a poor state that the collar had to be re-built in concrete.⁵⁸ This interfered with production, and, at the same time, the upset occasioned by the unsatisfactory outcome of the strike continued. Early in 1912 the unrest came to a head with a dispute over moving spoil.⁵⁹ Ore was a source of profit, moving spoil from the working faces was an oncost and a source of delay. In the 1750s it had been a specific bargain task, and a century later William Borron had tried to include the work in the miners' bargains.

In 1907 Mitchell had been faced with a threatened dispute over tramping spoil in the Glencrieff mine at Wanlockhead. This seems to have been handled fairly, as well as firmly, and further trouble there was avoided.⁶⁰ Skewis, however, now tried to introduce a piece rate of one shilling (5p) per four bogies instead of day wages, and in February the trammers stopped work. Whether some of them had been among the miners taken out of the stopes is not known, but on this occasion the dispute was short lived! Day work was re-instated and the Company gave all the men a bonus of 5 per cent, claiming it was continuing that "*policy of cultivating friendly relations .. it had done all along*".⁶¹

OUTPUT

The price of pig lead had been around £13 per ton in 1910, but in 1912 it rose above £18. However, the *Mining Journal* commented that the value of this improvement had been reduced by fluctuation in the price of what had been the "*most sober of metals*".⁶² This instability in the metal market became a feature of the industry. Output from Leadhills was also hesitant and, in 1913, no more than 1331 tons was raised by 104 miners. Clearly production was now coming from leaner veins.

At the annual meeting in August that year, Wilson's resumé of output from the major veins since 1878, when the old company took over, was as follows:-⁶³

Raik Vein	5,515 tons
Brown Vein	35,827 tons
Brow Vein	21,441 tons

The total, 62,783 tons, represents about 1800 tons per year, a figure which reflects the effects of the 1898 and 1909 strikes, as much as difficulties in the mine.

Down the years the mining companies at Leadhills had looked for new ore bodies in old works, and shareholders were now told that long abandoned levels in the Hopetoun Vein were being re-opened.

Such extensions meant that more electric power was needed and a turbine of 125 HP was installed to utilise the water flowing from the surface wheel by the Wilson mine to the one on Jeffrey's shaft, about 75 metres below. The mine was now back on full production and the outlook must have seemed bright.

THE GREAT WAR

In a review in 1913, the editor of the *Mining World* took an optimistic view of the future of the metal market. He did express concern at the “*continuing Balkan war*”, but asserted that the “*possibility of a European conflict was now happily remote*”.⁶⁴ It was not, and the First World War broke out on August 4th, 1914.

To begin with, mining companies were allowed to meet the problems and demands of the war as best they could, and miners were excluded from call-up. This immunity was ended by the Military Service Acts of 1916, and the categories of exemption were reduced in 1917. In that year the Ministry of Munitions set up a Department for Mineral Resources Development to ensure the availability of strategic metals. The price of lead was fixed at £29 per ton and zinc at around £4.65. These prices ignored the fact that American lead was cheaper and that a large quantity of zinc had been captured.

The exigencies of the war demanded an unprecedented degree of Government control. The mining industry was to be affected by unfamiliar forces and, looking to the future, an editorial in the *Mining Journal* of 1917 asked “*Is it to be nationalisation*”?⁶⁶ A Non Ferrous Industry Bill was introduced in 1918. This was aimed at regulating the expected peacetime metal market, but a correspondent to the *MJ* complained the Bill could “*break the principals of free trade and destroy initiative*”.⁶⁷

THE STRIKE OF 1916.

A record of expenditure at the Wanlockhead mines shows the way this was pushed up by the war. In 1914 it had cost £7 9s 8d (£7.48) to produce a ton of lead, by 1918 this had risen to £22 11s 1d (£22.55), yet the price of the metal had only risen from £20 to £29.⁶⁸ The cost of living also increased, the index in August 1917 being 80% above that at the outbreak of war.⁶⁹

In 1915 the labourers at Leadhills still got no more than four shillings (20p) a day, and the Leadhills branch of the GW&GL decided to seek a minimum of six shillings (30p). Skewis had refused to negotiate and at the end of September the Committee had advised the men come out on strike.⁷⁰

The dispute in 1912 had been quickly settled, but this time the Company was prepared to stick it out. In November an article in the *Hamilton Advertiser* claimed the dispute could have been resolved had the management met the men in “*a fair and open manner*”. Instead most were now on strike, and some of “*the best men*” had left the village.⁷¹

Although the union had advised all its members at Leadhills to strike, four miners continued working, together with the oncost men and the ore washers. In January 1916, the Union’s newly appointed District Secretary, J.McKenzie, tried to bring the remainder out, but the move did not have the support of the local committee.⁷² Memories of 1910 were strong and it had been agreed that some men would keep working in what was in effect a selective strike. But, by the end of January, support was dwindling, and the Union recommended the men went back. The Leadhills committee was unwilling to give up, however, and the dispute persisted.

THE GW&GL AND THE LUM

Addressing a meeting organised by the ILP in Glasgow in February, 1916, Robert Smillie devoted much time to the situation at Leadhills. Although the lead miners had left the LUM after the disastrous strike of 1898, Smillie entertained a sympathetic attitude to the community. He now asserted that he “*was not blaming the (Gasworkers) Union*” for the failure of the strike, but at the same time, “*it would be a disgrace to Scotland and Scottish trade unionism if the men had to submit*”.⁷³

McKenzie later claimed Smillie’s remarks were “*half truths*”, and unjustly reflected on the GW&GL’s executive.⁷⁴ The remarks suggest not just a criticism of the GW&GL, but perhaps also of distant “English” trade unions. They could also have reflected the “traditionalist’s” distaste for those “new unions” which were aimed at the un-skilled.⁷⁵

By then relations between the strike committee and McKenzie seem to have become less than cordial and, in a letter to *Forward*, the committee complained he had only twice visited Leadhills during the dispute, had a “*want of understanding of metalliferous mining*”, and it was “*hopeless to try and explain things to him*”.⁷⁶

These complaints point to what must have been a problem for all officials of general unions in trying to deal with the peculiar crafts of a variety of industries. This involvement with different groups of workers also meant that the general unions had to support a range of disputes and Hobsbaum notes the way their funds became disastrously over-stretched.⁷⁷

Perhaps encouraged by Smillie’s remarks, the Leadhills committee applied to the LUM for support, but were told little could be done while the dispute continued.⁷⁸ By March 4th the strike at Leadhills was over. It was agreed that the men would get a rise of five shillings a week, and Skewis claimed he would take back all those who had not left the village.⁷⁹

LEADHILLS AND WANLOCKHEAD

The end of the strike allowed the Leadhills miners to join the LUM as Branch no.121, and the Wanlockhead miners were accepted into the Union in February, 1918.⁸⁰ The Union executive had wanted the men in the two villages in a single branch, but although there were joint meetings, the men at Wanlockhead were adamant they wished to stand on their own.⁸¹

The branch at Wanlockhead had 161 members, including five women, out of a workforce of 191, which was 84 per cent. This can be compared with the membership of the GW&GL at Leadhills in 1909, which was 160 out of 200, or 80 per cent, and that of the LUM in 1898 which was 71 out of 160, or 44 per cent.

It is the first record of a union at Wanlockhead, and the miners there might seem to have been less militant than their neighbours, but this is not entirely the case. Indeed it could be said they led the field, because in 1756 a “lawless mob” opposed a new lessee, and in 1833 the miners believed they were being denied a “pay” at the end of a bargain period and combined to take the funds from their Friendly Society.⁸² The arrangements for credit (subsist) for the bargain partnerships was an on-going source of discontent, and in the 1860s Alexander Macdonald, then the leader of the Scottish colliers, prevailed upon the Truck Commissioners to make a special visit to Wanlockhead to examine the situation.⁸³ One result was that the management of the mine store was given to the men to run as a co-operative.⁸⁴

THE TWO MINES ON STRIKE

The ending of wartime restrictions allowed the price of bar lead briefly to soar to £40, and Leadhills produced 1896 tons of ore. But the post war depression meant it later plummeted to around £10. To add to the industry’s problems, the smelters were charging an extra 25 shillings (£1.25) per ton.⁸⁵ In January 1921 the companies at both mines cut wages, and their men combined to strike.⁸⁶

John Mitchell had died the previous year. He must have condoned a branch of the LUM at Wanlockhead, but one can only speculate on what his handling of the strike might have been. The *Glasgow Herald*, in another lengthy and sympathetic article reported it was the first strike at Wanlockhead but the fourth at Leadhills.⁸⁷ It was in fact the fifth, but that in 1836 was long forgotten.

Output collapsed and closure was talked of. In April the men met at Leadhills and heard a proposal that the mines could be run as a workers’ co-operative.⁸⁸

Campbell sees the war as having a formative influence on the politics of the Scottish trade unions in the 1920s. It seems unlikely that men were drafted into the lead mines from other, and more radical, industries, and it has not been possible to establish how many, if any, ex-soldiers were on the local union committees in the villages.

The way forward was not, however, seen as through a nationalised mining industry, as in the case of the colliers, but rather through workers’ co-operatives. It may be remarked that this lack of identification with a nationalised industry was also the case

at Millclose, Derbyshire, where the men joined the Derbyshire Miners Association in 1917, and where, in 1919, strikers started a co-operative mining venture.⁸⁹

By May the strike at Leadhills and Wanlockhead had lasted for 14 weeks and the villagers turned to other sources of income to get by. The advent of a branch railway had given a boost to the business of “*summer lodgings*”, and it was remarked how the Leadhills was proving “*popular as a summer resort*”. Some miners also turned to gold prospecting, and were reported to be “*looking for the reef*”.⁹⁰

By September it was said the “*outlook for resuming work was remote*”, but some agreement was eventually reached and the dispute was settled in November.⁹¹ As seems often the case, settlements get little publicity.

THE COLLINS REPORT

Production in 1922 was 1403 tons of ore, but the Leadhills Company again made a loss. In that year a consultant, Henry Collins, provided the Marquis with a very hard hitting report on the state of affairs at the mines. He wrote that no new development had been carried out in the “*extensive property*”, and “*hand to mouth policies*” had resulted in what Collins saw as an “*unsatisfactory condition as regard to reserves*”. He wrote that the management was “*inclined to leave well alone*” so long as the concern was paying its way, and remarked how the miners themselves were content with a “*snail’s pace*”. He believed output could be greatly increased, but this could only be achieved “*through the incentive of higher earnings*”.⁹² Some years previously there had been criticism of the industry of Cornish miners and, in a leader entitled “*Do miners give of their best?*”, the *Mining World* made a number of points “*for the defence*”, asking in particular “*Are the men really being encouraged*”.⁹³

Collins went on to comment on what he referred to as the “*labour question*”, and wrote that he considered past difficulties had been chiefly caused by the “*lack of sympathy and tact of the former management*” (Skewis had gone to Spain). He had inquired among some of the men, and was “*inclined to think things [were now] moving in the right direction*”. He wrote that in time this might develop into that “*mutual confidence, trust, and cordial co-operation which is the ideal relationship between employer and employed*”.⁹⁴

THE WEMBLEY MINE

In 1923, and perhaps spurred by Collins’ remarks, the company looked for new sources of ore and began sinking the Borlase shaft. W.H.Borlase had been a consultant to the company and was appointed to the board in 1924.⁹⁵ The shaft was to work the Mill and Glasgow veins, and was usually known as Wembley for it was begun on the day that Exhibition opened.⁹⁶ The ground had been tried with little success by William Borron in the 1850s, but a survey in 1911 suggested ore would be found deeper in the vein. As always, water was the problem and Skewis, who had returned to Leadhills, claimed much was coming through the sole of the Gripps drainage level and was being pumped “*over and over again*”.⁹⁷

Shareholders at the 1924 annual meeting were told that 1518 tons of ore had been dressed, and the announcement of a two shillings' dividend gave an “*agreeable surprise*”. They were also told that a new lease had been negotiated. The idea of a lead tack was now set aside, and the terms were £500 per annum, plus 10 per cent of profits.⁹⁸ In spite of optimism, a critical attitude continued among the shareholders, for at the close of the meeting there was no vote of thanks from the floor.

The 1925 meeting was held in Leadhills, perhaps to discourage the presence of dissenting London voices. Those who did make the journey were encouraged by a dividend, but were told it had been a disappointing year. The construction of the surface works at the Wembley mine were taking longer than expected, and the expected riches below ground had failed to materialise. Now crosscuts were being driven to the Meadowhead, Brown and Carse veins, in the anticipation of finding ore under old works.⁹⁹

A suction-gas engine had been purchased for the power house at the new mine, and money spent on urgent repairs to the Shortcleuch dam. The gas engine gave so much trouble, however, that it had to be taken out. Instead water power was again seen as the best option and a turbine generator was later installed.¹⁰⁰

Skewis went to Spain in 1921, but returned to Leadhills the following year. In 1926 he retired. The news was greeted with great emotion at the annual meeting. Speakers pointed out that he had “*revolutionised methods of work*”; and his “*painstaking*” attention to the Company’s affairs was commended. It was also claimed that he had had a “*happy and cordial relationship*” with the miners.¹⁰¹

DECLINING FORTUNES

The miners at Leadhills and Wanlockhead may have come out for the General Strike of 1926, but they did not join in the coal miners’ lengthy stoppage.¹⁰² However, it was reported that work at the mines was being put in jeopardy for lack of fuel, and the Leadhills Company’s shareholders were told that it was the trade union “*friends*” of their own men who now threatened the mine.¹⁰³

The 1927 meeting welcomed F.J.Tregay as the new manager, and he was instrumental in closing the Glengonnar mine, once seen as being at the forefront of mining technology. But there was a loss of £6000 and it was stated that over the previous seven years the dividends had been paid out of reserves. A proposal by a Mr Pawle, a vociferous shareholder, to wind up the Company, however, was firmly rejected.¹⁰⁴

Work was now concentrated at Wembley with 88 men underground and 56 on the surface, but in December 1928 it was rumoured that 100 of them would be paid off. In fact less were made redundant but “*arctic weather*” in the first months of 1929 added to a bleak situation at Leadhills.¹⁰⁵

The Wanlockhead mines made a gross profit of £15,110 in 1926. But in 1927 there was a loss of £597.¹⁰⁶ Prospects remained high, however, and in 1929 twenty of the men made redundant at Leadhills found work at the neighbouring mine.¹⁰⁷

THE LAST DAYS

There had been criticism of the decision to close the Glengonnar mine and in January 1929 another report for the Marquis was prepared by Ernest Woakes of Taylor & Company. Woakes considered the decision had been “*a proper one*”, although results from the Borlase mine had proved “*disappointing*”. Nevertheless, developments there were deemed the “*best course in the present circumstances*”, and a cross-cut was being driven at 650 ft (200 metres). There seems to have been a suggestion to extend the lease to take in ground at Lambe Knowes. This was discussed, but Woakes made no comment in the report.¹⁰⁸ He also visited Wanlockhead and remarked on “*the thorough and miner-like way*” the management there set about its business.¹⁰⁹

Woakes perhaps tried to be optimistic about Leadhills, but the end was in sight and in June the *Mining World* announced “*with regret*” that operations would cease. On the 27th an extraordinary general meeting resolved that the Company’s assets be sold.¹¹⁰ No purchaser came forward, and on October 12th 1929 the Leadhills Company Ltd was wound up.¹¹¹

The following year the Wanlockhead mines produced over 4000 tons of ore and 819 tons of zinc blende. It was no more than a flash in the pan and, on July 16th 1931, the mines there also shut down.¹¹²

All was not yet over with an industry which had survived for so long, however. On January 1st 1931 some businessmen in Edinburgh got together to re-start operations at Leadhills. They included two accountants, J.R.King and J.A.Walker, and a mining engineer, A.E.Kitto, and they were joined by Tregay. They took an old name, The Leadhills Mining Company, for the partnership, but this was now a Limited company.¹¹³ The flotation was based on the sale of “*chips*” (crushed rock), for road-stone, but lead ore would be mined as well.

Wanlockhead saw a brief resurgence in 1933, but operations there were suspended in August, 1934.¹¹⁴ Before long the new company at Leadhills was also in difficulties and was declared insolvent in 1938.¹¹⁵

There seems no reference to union activity at the mines after the 1926 strike. It is likely that interest was affected by the worsening depression and trade union membership greatly declined in the country as a whole.

When the Wanlockhead mines were briefly re-opened in 1950, the men there joined the Union of Transport Workers and General Labourers.¹¹⁶

SUMMARY

Drawing any conclusion from the history of the Leadhills disputes is inhibited by the lack of records relating to the development of trade unions at other metalliferous mines, but it may be of value to comment of the course of events.

The strike in 1836 can be compared with the sort of disputes which occurred elsewhere at the time, and in particular those triggered by changes in the traditional bargain

system.¹¹⁷ The apparent threat from changes in working practice is also seen in trade union developments in other industries in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.¹¹⁸

The decision to combine in 1898 was probably influenced by a wider social awareness at Leadhills, as evinced by the range of books and periodicals in the library and by the political interests engendered by the small holdings.¹¹⁹ There was also the realisation that any expected dispute would need funds to support a stoppage. A union was a way forward, but was the LUM, a colliers' union, an automatic choice? The interest of Robert Smillie could have been the deciding factor. Smillie was one of those who had formed the LUM in 1896, and in his autobiography he writes of his interest in the Leadhills miners and his visits to the village. That this was more than a passing concern is shown by the fact that the villagers acknowledged his friendship with enough gold for a ring for his wife.¹²⁰

As remarked, there are few comparable records of events elsewhere in the 19th century. Writing of the disputes in Teesdale and Weardale in the period 1872-96, Hunt observes there was no connection there with political issues, and no hint of demands for reform.¹²¹ In his lengthy paper on the Teesdale strikes, Hastings offers nothing to contradict this. Instead he points out that a suggestion by some of the Teesdale miners that they joined a colliers' union got no support, and an attempt to establish a single union for the men in both dales fell through.¹²²

The decision at Leadhills to join the GW&GL followed a meeting of all the miners. To appeal to the landowner had been an option, and what evidence there is suggests that the move to the GW&GL was initiated by events in Weardale, rather than by the all embracing nature of the interests of the Union. Whatever the motivation to begin with, however, the subsequent militancy at Leadhills, as demonstrated by the unrest which continued after 1910, points to local initiatives.

At the same time, the articles in the *Glasgow Herald*, and the remarks in Collins' report suggest Bawden Skewis's management must have had a major influence. Were there then two strands in the later development? An inevitable progress towards the establishment of a trade union at the mines, and a provoked defiance. If so, it is the former which is important.

This progress may not have been unique. In the scant record which remains of events elsewhere after 1914, there is reference to the Halkyn miners joining "*the Dockers' Union*" in 1916, and to those at Cwmystwyth forming a local union in 1917.¹²³ In the same year, what was described as the "*utter helplessness*" of the men at the Millclose mine in Derbyshire led to them joining the Derbyshire Miners' Association, and to a series of strikes and lock-outs.¹²⁴ These were events which emphasise the labour unrest during the 1914-1918 war, and which have some similarities with the situation at Leadhills. Had the lead industry not declined, there must surely have been similar developments elsewhere.

Williams' remarks on the way the Victorian commissions invariably saw the lead miner as “*sober minded and well conducted*”, particularly when compared with colliers.¹²⁵ Such attitudes remain. In his study of the Lanarkshire miners, Campbell makes a passing reference to the Leadhills' men as being “*traditionally docile*”.¹²⁶ This description seems to echo the accepted view, that the lead miner was in some way different from other workers. It is time to look beyond the generalisations and to give the lead miner a place in history.

NOTES

The Union of Gas Workers and General Labourers in Scotland.¹²⁷

Ian MacDougal refers to records of union activity in Scotland in the 1890s, but there are no Scottish Branches among those listed in 1905.¹²⁸ It seems likely that events at Leadhills encouraged a fresh effort, and there are occasional reports in *Forward* to the Union holding recruiting meetings. Branches were set up at the Kinlochleven aluminium works in May 1910, and at the Ballachulish slate quarries in June. The men at the former comprised a variety of process workers, uncomfortably housed in a settlement which was then only accessible by steamer. The slate quarries had been worked since the 17th century, and the men there had first combined in the 1890s. Encouraged by the Union, the aluminium workers went on strike in August 1910, and the quarry men the following year. The former stoppage proved an especially disastrous affair, and led to much criticism of the Union in the pages of *Forward*.

In the end, the Union of Gas Workers and General Labourers failed to make any real impact in Scotland, but that it was made welcome in remote places suggest a failure of Scottish trade unions to meet needs outside the industrial heartlands.

In 1924 the GW&GL amalgamated with others to form the National Union of General and Municipal Workers.

IMPORTANT SALE OF LEAD MINING, ORE DRESSING, STONE CRUSHING AND SCREENING PLANT, ELECTRIC WINDERS, AIR COMPRESSORS, ALTERNATING CURRENT GENERATOR, A.C. MOTORS, PUMPS, BUILDINGS, &c.,

— INCLUDING —

- 76 H.P. VICKERS-PETTERS VERTICAL TWIN-CYLINDER SEMI-DIESEL ENGINE, with Connections;
2 INGERSOLL-RAND HORZ. AIR COMPRESSORS, Capacity 450 and 350 Cub. Ft. Free Air per Minute, with Receivers;
2 ELECTRICALLY-DRIVEN DOUBLE-DRUM WINDERS, 20 and 15 H.P., by Holman and Clarke, Chapman & Co. Ltd.;
48 H.P. ELECTRICALLY-DRIVEN SINGLE-DRUM WINDER;
2 ELECTRICALLY-DRIVEN DIRECT ROPE HAULAGES, 15 and 5 H.P.;
2 PEARN ELECTRICALLY-DRIVEN VERTICAL TREBLE-RAM PUMPS, 4½in. by 6in. and 4in. by 6in.;
STONE CRUSHING and SCREENING PLANT, by Broadbent, consisting of 13in. by 8in. STONE BREAKER;
Pair 20in. by 16in. STONE CRUSHING ROLLS; Set CONTINUOUS BUCKET ELEVATORS, 45ft. 6in. between Centres;
ROTARY SCREEN, 18ft. by 2ft. 6in.;
5 JAMES PATENT ORE CONCENTRATING TABLES, with Simplex Vibrators; 5 WILLIAMS JIGGER TUBS;
Range of 8 TROMMELS; 2 Sets BUCKET ELEVATORS, 30ft. and 19ft. between Centres;
100 K.V.A. THREE-PHASE ALTERNATING CURRENT GENERATOR, Periods 50, Volts 600;
16 A.C. THREE-PHASE 50-PERIOD 600/550-Volt MOTORS, from 75 to 5 H.P., with Controllers and Starters;
MOTOR CHARGING GENERATOR, Input Volts 600 A.C., Output Volts 50/70 D.C.;
A.C. THREE-PHASE 50-PERIOD 600-Volt OIL-IMMERSED and AIR-BREAK SWITCHGEAR;
300 Yards 19/14 and 7/14 S.W.G. ARMOURD CABLE;
8400 Yards ELECTRIC POWER LINE, —3/276 HARD COPPER WIRE, with Larch Carrying Poles and Connections;
HOLMAN NEWGRIP and INGERSOLL-RAND DRILL SHARPENERS, with Tools; HOLMAN DRILL FURNACE;
CLIMAX 3½in. DISC VALVE DRIFTER ROCK DRILL, Type D.V.2, (New 1939);
3 HOLMAN DRIFTER ROCK DRILLS; 2 HOLMAN PAVING BREAKERS;
CLIMAX HAND ROCK DRILL, Type F.2, (New 1939); 6 Sets HOLLOW STEEL DRILLS;
2 EVANS SINKING PUMPS, for Air, 5in. by 2½in. by 12in. and 4in. by 2½in. by 9in.; 2 SMALL AIR HOISTS;
Four ½-Yard STEEL SIDE-TIPPING WAGGONS, 24in. Gauge; 12 Tons LIGHT F.B. RAILS;
30in. SIROCCO HIGH-PRESSURE FAN; LORRY, CART and PLATFORM WEIGHING MACHINES;
3 P.P. PITHEAD FRAMES, 42ft., 35ft. and 18ft. high;
SECTIONAL WOODEN HUT, 30ft. by 12ft. by 7ft. to Eaves;
70 POWER CARRYING POLES; 250 PERMANENT SLEEPERS; W.P. PLANKS, BATTENS and BOARDS;
CORRUGATED IRON and WOODEN ERECTIONS; WOODEN STORAGE HOPPERS; WOODEN GANGWAYS;
9½in. Centre SELF-ACTING SLIDING, SURFACING and SCREW-CUTTING HOLLOW-SPINDLE GAP BED LATHE, 14ft. Bed;
PILLAR VERTICAL DRILLING MACHINE; D.H. EMERY BUFF;
C.I. CIRCULAR SAW BENCH, Table 6ft. by 2ft. 6in.; HAND MORTISING MACHINE;
SHAFTING and BELTING; SMITHY and ENGINEERING TOOLS;
Large Quantity C.I., M.I. and STEEL SCRAP; SCRAP COPPER, BRASS, ALUMINIUM and LEAD;
SURVEYING INSTRUMENTS, &c.

— AT —

**LEADHILLS MINE,
LEADHILLS, BY ABINGTON,
LANARKSHIRE,
On TUESDAY, 18th JUNE, 1940,
at ELEVEN o'clock prompt.**

SHIRLAW, ALLAN & CO.,
AUCTIONEERS, HAMILTON,

have received instructions from F. J. TREGAY, Esq., M.Inst.M.M., owing to abandonment of Mine, to Sell, by Auction, as above.

ON VIEW SATURDAY AND MONDAY PRIOR TO SALE.

NOTE.—Leadhills is situated about 6 Miles West of Abington on the Abington-Sanquhar Road. Intending Purchasers travelling by road should make enquiry at Abington before proceeding further. The Leadhills 'Bus awaits all trains arriving at Abington Station.

Hamilton, June 1940.

John M. Rodger, Printer, 13 Dundas Street, Glasgow, C.1.

REFERENCES

ABBREVIATIONS

ARL	Allan Ramsay Library
SRO	Scottish Record Office
WMA	Wanlockhead Museum Archive

The paper is based on my research into the social history of the Leadhills miners. Specific references are as follows:-

1. Samuel, R. ed. *Miners Quarrymen and Saltworkers* (1977) p.3
2. Samuel, p.4; and Lewis, J.W. *Lead Mining in Wales* (Cardiff, 1967), p.280
3. Harvey, W.S. "The Progress of Trade Unionism at the Leadhills Mines" NMRS, *British Mining* No.39, (1989), pp.
4. Smout, T. "Leadmining in Scotland" in Payne, P. ed. *Studies in Scottish Business History* (1967), pp.119,120.
5. Harvey, W.S. "Controversy and Contraction" NMRS, *British Mining* No.48, (1993), p.15
6. Harvey, W.S. "The Progress of Trade Unionism at the Leadhills Mines". p.49
7. Burt, R. *British Lead Mining Industry* (Redruth, 1984), p.144
 Hunt, C.J. *The Lead Miners of the Northern Pennines* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1970), p.136.
8. Webb, S & B. *A History of Trade Unionism* (1894). p.421. And L.L.Price. West Barbary, 1891. in Burt, R. ed. *Essays in Cornish Mining* (Redruth, 1969), p.10 and passim.
9. Hastings, R.P. "Strikes without a Union" *Durham County Local History Society*, Bulletin 27, December 1981, p.54.
10. I am indebted to Simon Hughes for details of Lisburne. And Thorburn, J.A. *Talargoch Mine* (Sheffield: NMRS, *British Mining* No.31, 1986) pp. 45-49.
11. Willies, L. Gregory, K. & Parker, H. *Millclose, The Mine that Drowned*. (Cromford, 1989), p.29. I am indebted to Geoff Downs-Rose for drawing my attention to this reference. And also to Mike Gill for the reference to the strike at Snailbeach, Kinnaird Commission, British Parliamentary Papers - Mining Accidents, Session 1864. Vol.7 p.519.
12. *Mining Journal*. Vol.74, 1903, p.739.
13. *ibid*.
14. *Ibid*. Vol.82 1907, p.157
15. McLean, A. ed. Local Industries in Glasgow and the West of Scotland, *The British Association for the Advancement of Science* (Glasgow, 1901) p.29.
16. SRO Unextracted Processes. CS243/4025. Leadhills Company V James Paton and Others, 1905.
17. *Mining Journal*. Vol.84, 1908, p.156
18. Burt, R., Waite P., & Atkinson, M., "Scottish Metalliferous Mining 1845-1913: Detailed Returns from the Mineral Statistics" *Industrial Archaeology*, Vol.16No.1 (1981), pp.4-10; Vol.16 No.2 (1981), pp.140-157.
19. *Mining Journal*. op cit.
20. *Glasgow Herald*. 25th November, 1909.
21. Tyler, I. *Greenside* (1992). Chpr 6 passim.
22. *Glasgow Herald*. 19th October, 1909.
23. Williams, C.J. "The Lead Miners of Flintshire and Denbighshire" *Journal of the Welsh Labour History Society*, Vol.3, 1980, pp.93-94.
24. *Hamilton Advertiser*. 23rd October, 1887. See also J. Moir Porteous, *God's Treasure House* (1876), pp.50-51.
25. *Glasgow Herald*. 25th November, 1909.
26. For events surrounding the strike, see my "The Progress of Trade Unionism at the Leadhills Mine", pp.49-50, but original references are now given as below.
27. *Glasgow Herald*. 25th November, 1909
28. *Ibid*.

THE RESTLESS YEARS: THE LEADHILLS COMPANY LTD: 1903 - 1929

30. Ibid
31. Ibid. and 12th April, 1910.
32. *Glasgow Herald*. 15th August, 1911.
33. *Glasgow Weekly News*. 25th December, 1909.
34. *Glasgow Herald*. 2nd December, 1909.
35. Ibid. 27th January, 1910.
36. ARL MSS. Minutes of the Reading Society, 17th October, 1885, and 21st January, 1901.
37. *Mining World*. Vol.77. 1909. p.171. *Glasgow Herald*. 2nd December, 1909.
38. Ibid. 15th March, and *Forward* 12th March, 1910.
39. *Forward*. 16th and 19th March, 1910.
40. *Forward*. 10th March, 1910 et seq., The paper was founded in 1906 and quickly built up a large circulation in Scotland.
41. *Forward*. 26th March, and *Glasgow Herald*. 11th April, 1910
42. *Glasgow Herald*, 11th April, 1910.
43. Ibid. 3rd June, 1910
44. *Forward*. 28th May, and 11th June. *Glasgow Herald*. 6th June. *Hamilton Advertiser*. 11th June, 1910.
45. *The Lanarkshire*. June 8th, 1910.
46. Campbell, A. "From Independent Collier to Militant Miner" *Scottish Labour History Society*, Journal No.24, 1989. page 8 passim.
47. *Glasgow Herald*. 8th June and 9th June, 1910.
48. *Mining World*. Vol.79. 1910. p.284.
49. *Forward*. 15th and 23rd July, 1910.
50. *Mining World*. Vol.89, 1915, p.170 and Vol.107, 1924, p167.
51. *Glasgow Herald*. 19th October, 1909, and *Forward*. 23rd July 1910.
52. *Forward*. 15th July, 1911.
53. *Mining World*. Vol.81, 1911, p.160.
54. Hunt op cit. p.135.
55. *Hamilton Advertiser*. 30th June, 1888. *Mining Journal*. Vol.58, 1888, p.878.
56. ARL. Minutes of Reading Society, 10th September, 1898.
57. *Forward*. 8th September, 1911.
58. *Mining World*. Vol.83, 1912, p.150.
59. *Glasgow Herald*. 10th February, 1912.
60. WMA Wanlockhead Lead Mining Company MSS. Letter J.Mitchell to A.Fraser, January/June, 1907. I am indebted to Geoff Downs-Rose for this reference.
61. *Mining World*. Vol.83, 1912, p.149.
62. *Mining Journal*. Vol.100. 1913, p.84
63. *Mining World*. Vol.84, 1913, p.77.
64. Ibid. Vol.84, 1913, p.13
65. *Mining Journal*. Vol.116. 1917. p.80
66. Ibid. Vol.118. 1917. p.519
67. Ibid. Vol.120. 1918. p.40.
68. *Mining Magazine*. Vol.21. 1919. p.19
69. The figure is quoted in Alan Campbell, op cit p.13
70. *Hamilton Advertiser*. 30th October, 1915
71. Ibid. 30th November, 1915.
72. *Forward*. 12th February, 1916 Note. H.A.Clegg, in his *General Union* (1954) sees MacKenzie's appointment as part of an effort to increase support for the Union in Scotland. (page 11).
73. *Forward*. 5th February, 1916.
74. *ibid*. 12th February, 1916.
75. For further reference see Lovell, J. *British Trade Unions*, Studies in Economic and Social History, (1977). Chapter 2.

BRITISH MINING No.50

76. *Forward*. 19th February, 1916.
77. Hobsbaum, E.J. "General Labour Unions", *Economic History Review*, Vol.1, 1949, p.123.
78. *Forward*. 26th February, 1916.
79. *Glasgow Herald*. 4th. March, 1916. *Hamilton Advertiser*. 4th March, 1916.
80. WMA. Gracie MSS. Union Minute Books. Meetings 19th and 23rd March, 1918. Also see National Library of Scotland (NLS) MSS Acc. DFP.227/37a. Lanarkshire Union of Mineworkers. Minute Books. Report, 20th January, 1921.
81. *Ibid*. Minute of meeting on 23rd March..
82. *All about Wanlockhead*. Wanlockhead Museum Trust publication, p.8. And WMA Bute Papers. Letter from John Muir. April, 3rd, 1833.
83. Truck Commission Report, British Parliamentary Papers. 1871, c.327, p.39.
84. Harkness, J.M. *Amongst Scotland's Lead Miners* (Dumfries 1925) pp.67,68.
85. *Mining World*, Vol.98, 1920. p.190.
86. *Glasgow Herald*, 1st February, 1921.
87. *Ibid*. 26th March, 1921.
88. *Hamilton Advertiser*, 30th April, 1921
89. Willies et al. op cit pp.31-32.
90. *Mining World*, 1921, p.285. A light gauge branch line was laid from Elvanfoot to Wanlockhead in 1901. It was closed in December, 1938.
91. Brown, R. "More about the Mines and Minerals of Wanlockhead and Leadhills" *Trans. Dumfries & Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, Vol.13, 1925/6, p.77.
92. Hopetoun MSS. NRA(S) Ref.888, Bundle No 1725. Report on the Mines, 23rd December, 1922.
93. *Mining World*, Vol.107, 1924, p.161.
94. Hopetoun MSS. op cit.
95. *Mining World*, Vol.107, 1924, p.162.
96. Brown op cit. p.61
97. *Mining World*, Vol.107, 1924, p.161.
98. *Ibid*.
99. *Ibid*. Vol.109, 1925, p.144.
100. *Ibid*.
101. *Ibid*. Vol.111, 1926, p.181.
102. The LUM Minutes for 1926 and 1927 confirm that both Leadhills and Wanlockhead were still in the Union at that time but provide no reference to their actions re the Strike. (NLS) MSS. Acc. DFP.227/42-43.
103. *Mining World*, Vol.111, 1926, p.144.
104. *Ibid*. Vol.113, 1927, p.170.
105. *Hamilton Advertiser*. 1st December, 1928 and 2nd March, 1929
106. WMA Wanlockhead Mining Co. MSS. Letter to Shareholders, November, 1928.
107. *Hamilton Advertiser*. 23rd March, 1929
108. Lambe Knowes was south-west of Leadhills at Snarhead, and there were mines there in the 1830s. A geological survey in 1921 drew attention to the presence of zinc and this may have been a factor. Wilson, G.V. *Lead Ore etc of Scotland*, Memoirs of the Geological Survey, Vol.XVII, 1921, p.34.
109. Hopetoun MSS. Bundle No 1725. Report of January, 1929.
110. *Mining World*. Vol.116. 1929. p.643
111. *Ibid*. Vol.117 p.337.
112. *Glasgow Herald*. 17th July, 1931.
113. SRO. BT2/16546. Leadhills Mining Company Limited. Kitto had an address in Douglas, IOM, as well as Edinburgh and could have been related to the mining engineer, John Kitto of Llandloes. I am indebted to Simon Hughes for this information.
114. *Hamilton Advertiser*. 29th September, 1934.
115. *Ibid*. 19th March 1938.
116. I am indebted to Geoff Downs-Rose for this information.

THE RESTLESS YEARS: THE LEADHILLS COMPANY LTD: 1903 - 1929

117. For example see Burt. op cit. p.150.
118. For example see Henry Pelling. A
History of British Trade Unionism (1981). p.24
119. Harvey, W.S. "History from A Library Shelves" *The Local Historian*. Vol.19 No.2 (1989). passim. And "Miners or Crofters?" NMRS, *British Mining*, No.43 (1991). pp.91,92.
120. Smillie, Robert. *My Life for Labour*. (1924). p.125
121. Hunt. p.135.
122. Hastings. pp.47, 53.
123. Williams. p.93. Also Hughes, S.J.S *The Cwmystwyth Mines* (Sheffield: NMRS, British Mining No.17) p.53.
124. Willies et al. p.29
125. Williams. p.91.
126. Campbell, A. *The Lanarkshire Miners*. (1979). p.80. Note. The perception of some Scotsmen as "couthie", affable, ranged beyond Leadhills and this has recently been addressed by C.Whatley: "An Uninflammable People?" In Donnachie, I. & Whatley, C. eds. *The Manufacture of Scottish History* (Edinburgh, 1992).
127. I had the opportunity to research the GW&GL in Scotland at a Labour History Workshop, University of Strathclyde, in 1989. I am indebted to Dr Arthur McIver for his encouragement.
128. MacDougall, Ian. *Labour Records in Scotland*. (Edinburgh, 1978). pp 218, 242, 373. And Hobsbaum, "General Labour Unions", p.123.

I am indebted to Mike Gill for his helpful comments on the first draft.

Paper submitted - May 19th 1994: W.S. Harvey,
86 Beechwood Drive,
Glasgow,
G11 7HQ.