

BRITISH MINING No.8

MEMOIRS 1978



Thackray, J.G. 1978 "Source Materials for the History of British Mining in the Archives of the Institute of Geological Sciences"
British Mining No.8, NMRS, pp.10-13

Published by the

THE NORTHERN MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY
SHEFFIELD U.K.

© N.M.R.S. & The Author(s) 1978.

NB

This publication was originally issued in the A4 format then used by the society. It has now been digitised and reformatted at A5. This has changed the original pagination of articles, which is given in square brackets.

ISSN 0309-2199

SOURCE MATERIALS FOR THE HISTORY OF BRITISH MINING IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE INSTITUTE OF GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES

J.C. Thackray

The archives of the Institute of Geological Sciences contain manuscript, graphic, photographic and ephemeral printed material relating largely to the history of the Institute and its forerunners, the Geological Survey, the Museum of Practical Geology, and Overseas Geological Surveys. There is also material relating to the early days of the Royal School of Mines, now part of Imperial College, and the Mining Record Office, whose collections were passed to the Home Office. As well as these 'official' materials, the collection contains many items, presented or purchased, which have no connection with the history of the Institute, but relate to the early days of British geology in general. Details are given below of all those items which deal primarily with mining in Britain.

The collection is housed in the Library of the Institute of Geological Sciences which is located in the Geological Museum, Exhibition Road, London SW7 2DE. Material is available on demand in the public reading room, but it is preferred if an appointment is made through the Chief Librarian. In addition, typescript registers of the whole collection are available at the Institute's regional libraries in Ring Road, Halton, Leeds LS158TQ; Murchison House, West Mains Road, Edinburgh EH9 3LA: and at the search room of the Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey. A typescript 'Guide' is available on request.

1. Atkinson, Stephen (fl.1586-1620)

The Discovery and History of the Mines of Scotland. 73 leaves, folio.

A mid 18th century manuscript copy of a work written about 1619 and printed for the Bannatyne Club in 1825. The National Library of Scotland holds a copy dating from 1637 (Adv MS 33.2.6) The IGS manuscript only differs from the printed version in spelling and occasional minor wording.

bound with

Sibbald, Robert (1641-1722) Collections for a Natural History of Scotland. 123 pages, folio.

A mid 18th century manuscript copy of a work written about 1700 and apparently never published in full. The National Library of Scotland holds a fuller version of this work entitled Collections for the Description of Scotland (Adv MS 33.5.15) which is partly in Sibbald's own hand.

Pages 1-16 deal with metals, minerals and stones and include items such as 'An account of the gold found in Crawfurd Moor from an MS', and 'An account of the silver mines at Hilderstonhills'. Pages 95-123 are entitled 'An account of mines and minerals in Scotland out of a manuscript belonging to Collonell Barthwick', and are

largely concerned with gold and silver mining. Much of this work was also printed by the Bannatyne Club in 1825 as an appendix to the book by Atkinson.

[10]

2. Daybook of the Wanlockhead Mining Company, July 1778 – September 1781. c.200 leaves folio.

As well as the regular weekly journal of events and financial transactions there is included a 2 page 'Abstract of the lead smelted in 1778' and a 4 page 'Report to Gilbert Meason Esq of the state of that part of the mines here known by the name of West Grove'

3. The Bell Papers, 1675 - 1847.

Collections relative to the collieries and coal trade of the counties of Durham and Northumberland, as also to other mines and collieries. 24 volumes, folio. A collection of about 5000 items, including printed ephemera, newspapers, pamphlets, books, and newspaper cuttings, and a great variety of manuscripts including financial and legal documents, letters and mine plans. Items are arranged chronologically, the earliest being late 17th century and the latest dating from 1847. Registers listing the contents of each volume have been prepared, and a card index of names and subjects is well under way. Important manuscripts include the Washington Colliery archive of correspondence, financial records and pitmen's bonds, 1764-1822, a smaller archive of papers connected with Bedlington Colliery, and correspondence of N. Punshon, a lawyer. At the end of the long series of volumes containing material on the Northern Coalfield are two volumes relating to metalliferous mines and collieries in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Wales etc, 1771-1847, and coal-mining in Scotland and overseas, 1763-1847.

John Bell, (1783-1864) a bookseller and land surveyor of Gateshead, was an indefatigable collector of printed and manuscript materials. This collection was bought by the Geological Survey between 1847 and 1850 for the sum of £65. There is a rather similar collection gathered by John Bell in the library of the Northern Institute of Mining and Engineering in Newcastle.

4. Lead Mines at Bewerley, 1818.

Report to the trustees of the will of Sir Thomas W. White on the state of the lead mines in Bewerley, Yorkshire, by Richard Smith. 11 leaves, large folio.

5. Mine Explosions, 1845-1847.

Letters and manuscript reports relating to the enquiry into gases and explosions in mines carried out on the instructions of the Government by H.T. De la Beche, L. Playfair, and W.W. Smyth, and published in 1847. Writers include T. Hinchcliffe, J. Read, J. Phillips, R. Hunt, and W. P. Roberts. The items are not gathered together but are distributed through the early volumes of the Geological Survey letterbooks.

6. Mining Schools, 1853-1861

A collection of printed pamphlet, reports and newspaper cuttings relating to the establishment of mining schools in Truro, Bristol and Gnoll, Glamorgan. c100 items.

7. Coal and Iron Mining, 1865-1872

Eight volumes of newscuttings dealing with coal and collieries, iron mining and manufacture, trade in metals and ores, foreign mining. Cuttings are arranged chronologically within those four subject headings; there are no indexes.

8. Coal Mining, Forest of Dean, 1872

Long letter from H.D. Hostrold, engineer and surveyor, to H.W. Bristow on the virtues of Woorgreens coal from the Forest of Dean, with an account of the history of Woorgreens Colliery, 1872. 7 leaves, quarto.

9. Coal Mining, Yorkshire, Late 19th Century.

An account of the Wharfedale Coal Mining Company and the borings made at Addingham, Yorkshire, in 1845. 4 leaves folio.

10. The Kendal Papers, 1866-1916

A large collection of papers relating largely to the iron mines of Cumberland and Lancashire, 1866-1896. A collection of many hundreds of items in 4 boxes connected with Kendal's work as a civil engineer. Manuscript deeds, leases, agreements, specifications, reports, plans, and correspondence make up the bulk, though there are a few printed items. There are papers dealing with the following mines and mining companies

Askam and Mouzell	Maryport Iron
Birks Hematite	Mowbray Iron
Cleator Glebe	Parkside
Cleator Iron	Postlethwaite's Eskett
Coltness Iron	Salter and Eskett
Ehen	Salter Hall
Furness Iron and Steel	Scalelands Iron
Gilfoot Park	Southam Hematite
Hodbarrow	Threapthwaite Iron
Holebeck	Ulverston
Windergill	

In addition there are documents concerned with the Mid Lincolnshire Ironstone Company, 1880-1890, and with lead mines in Cardiganshire, 1872-1916. There are papers dealing with the following mines in Cardiganshire:

Abernant	Goginan
Bronfloyd	Bwlchglas
Rheidol	Bwlch-y-plum
Tynant	Court Grange

John D. Kendal (fl. 1850-1930) worked for many years as a civil engineer in Whitehaven. He wrote many papers on the mining geology of Cumberland and Lancashire as well as the book The Iron Ores of Great Britain and Ireland (1893)

[12]

11. Kent Coalfield, 1871-1946

Printed and manuscript materials relating to the discovery, geology, and exploitation of the coalfield, including newspaper cuttings, printed company prospectuses and reports, unpublished typescripts on the palaeobotany of the coalfield, and manuscripts of the following: H. Bolton, M. Burr, W. Boyc;1 Dawkins, H.G. Dines, P. Krusch, G.W. Lamplugh, F. Ni.chols, A. Strahan, W. Topley, and W. Whitaker.

12. Coal Mining and Analysis, Scotland, 1875-1900

A collection of newscuttings and other ephemeral printed material relating to the coal industry of Scotland and elsewhere, including a number of printed analysis of various Scottish coals, compiled by J.B. Dalzell of Machanhill, Lanarkshire. 1 thick folio volume.

J.C. Thackray
Geological Museum
Exhibition Road

[13]