Northern Mine Research Society

Newsletter

Society established 1960

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In this Issue.

Please note that the deadline for inclusion in the, May 2021 Newsletter is the 26th of April 2021.

Important updates on the NMRS program of events for 2021 in light of the current Covid restrictions:

Our retiring president opening comments in the November 2020 Newsletter was, "what a strange year we have had". Unfortunately the situation hasn't improved with regards to the 2021 program of events. So in light of this please take note of the following announcements?

AGM 2021

Due to the current coronavirus situation we will not be able to hold the AGM as we would normally do. This year the committee has decided to hold the AGM on Zoom. In order to take part you must register via the form on the website at **https://www.nmrs.org.uk/agm.** We will then inform you of the Meeting ID and password closer to the date as well as instructions as how the meeting will be run.

You will need to have Zoom installed on you computer/tablet/phone in order to take part - in you are unsure how to do it, please contact me at **Malcolm@nmrs.org.uk.** You will also be able to attend the meeting by telephone and contact numbers will be supplied.

Please note that your name, address and other contact details will be retained by NMRS, for the purpose of running the 2021 AGM, and will not be divulged to third parties without your permission. Please see our Privacy Policy on the website for further details. The form data will be deleted after the meeting.

I will be the host for the meeting, if you have any questions please contact me as above.

Malcolm Street.

Membership Secretary's Announcement

The committee has recently took the decision to discontinue issuing the society membership card.

Unfortunately available space in this Newsletter and time constraints re publication, are currently an hindrance to myself presenting a more comprehensive explanation in this edition.

Briefly, the process leading up to the decision, started with the sad loss, last October, of our meets organiser Mick Cooke, the position being still vacant at time of writing. The committee had hoped to reschedule some of the meets that were cancelled last year.

The ongoing situation with the pandemic has meant we are unable to do that, and thus also not produce a programme of meets. Other factors arose and were considered in the search for solution's, out of which came the question of the need for a Programme/Membership Card. The general consensus of the committee being, that now was probably the right time to discontinue its use.

Going forward, as mentioned earlier, time constraints mean that it is now my intention, to submit an article giving a general clarification of the process, for publication in the next issue of the Newsletter. For now, take care and stay safe.

Gary Topping.

General Announcements

The Autumn Meeting has been booked for the 23rd October and will be held at Slaidburn Village Hall. More details will be on the website and in future Newsletters. This is of course subject to a significant improvement in the current situation. For up to date information regarding all the society's business please visit our website.

The Editor.

Society President

At the end of 2020 Barbara Sutcliffe stepped down as our President. This wasn't a sudden move; Barbara had first discussed the idea in 2019. She has been President since 2011 and has guided the Society well over the years. She will continue in her publications after sales role and we will be nominating her for another post on the committee; it would be a shame to lose all that expertise.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank Barbara for all her hard work over the past 9 years. As Vice-President, I will be taking on her role until the next AGM.

Malcolm Street, acting President.

News from our Publications Officer

Due to our present lockdown restrictions we are continuing the offer from the November newsletter until Easter. The offer is for secondhand BMs (all in very good condition) for £4 each (no further discount) plus if you pay for two you get one free with postage on 3 books being capped at £3.85. If interested please email me with your requirements also informing me if you wish to pay by PayPal or cheque. In the former instance I will need your address so Malcolm can produce a PayPal invoice. This offer is available to members only.

Please also check on our website for special offers. The February offer is for BM 66 Adventures in Coal reduced to £6

Planned for March - BM 87 Coal mining in Morley reduced to £10

Planned for April - BM 82 Mashamshire Collieries reduced to £10

Planned for May - BM 72 The Mines of Yorkshire reduced to £13

Each offer is for that month only and the promotion code **discountbm** must be entered. To also receive your member's discount you need to order using **2021-members25** discount code as well.

Some of our members have commented on the lack of book reviews in our Newsletter so to help this I have been putting details on our Facebook page of books I hear about that may be of interest to our members and followers. If you have any that could be added please send details to me. We now have over 2000 Facebook followers which is fantastic news.

It is good to see that Lee Palmer, the author of " Gold Occurrences in the UK " has joined our Society. He donated a copy of his excellent book to our library and there was a review of it in our February 2019 Newsletter. Talking about our library the Russell Society kindly donated a copy of their annual journal to it. Rex has just borrowed the latest issue and it is pleasing to note Dr David Green, their editor, is another of our long time members.

Barbara Sutcliffe

Library News

Thank you to Frank Ince of the Russell Society for the donation of the latest issue of the Russell Society Journal. As always, the photographs of crystals are impressive. There are papers on areas of interest to many NMRS members, such as Castleton, Dolyhir, Dolgellau, Stublick and Cononley. Mike Gill's publications are cited in this last article. NMRS member Ray Fairbairn has co-authored a paper on native silver at Clargillhead.

Sallie Bassham.

Welcome to Our 44 New Members

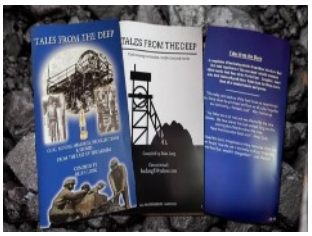
1) Mr Michael Cameron Boyd --- Tonbridge
2) Mr John Martin --- Patterdale
3) Mr Daniel James Armitt --- Oldham
4) Mr Steve Woodbridge –– Marlow
5) Mr Andy Uttley -- Wakefield
6) Mr Colin Howe --- Crewe
7) Mr Richard Whittle –– Peebleshire
8) Mr Jack Tavenor --- Powis
9) Mr John Kennedy --- Birmingham
10) Mr Ryan Champion –– Liskeard
11) Mrs Jennifer Pearce –– Honing
12) Mr Philip Davies --- Swansea
13) Mr Heikki Jutila --- Aberdeen
14) Mr Darren McGrath –– Durham
15) Mr Paul James Pearson --- Darwen
16) Miss Jody Davies --- Barnsley
17) Mr Brian Poole --- Redruth
18) Mr Roy Laurente Taylor --- Hounslow
19) Mr Darren Bailey –– North Duffield
20) Mr Malcolm G Charlton --- Newcastle upon Tyne
21) Mr James Mitchell --- Maryport
22) Mr Colin Woodley –– Aberdare
23) Mr Andrew Garford --- Sutton in Crave
24) Dr Michael Denison --- Ilkley
25) Mrs Joanne Fitton --- Llandarcy
26) Ms Kristine Chapman --- Cardiff
27) Mr Rob Atkinson --- Penzance
28) Mr Richard Belson --- Norwich
29) Mr Timothy Senften --- Lerwick
30) Mr Lee Palmer –– Irvine
31) Mr Ronnie Calvin --- Whitehave
32) Mr Nick Swatton –– Bromley
33) Mr Allan Ryan --- Queensland, Australia
34) Miss Sarah Westmacott --- Leamington Spa
35) Mr Keith Rimmer –– Stockport
36) Mrs Linden Tetlow --- Oldham
37) Dr Allan Thomson --- Dundee
38) Mr Paul Gidley --- Princess Risborough
39) Dr Mike Rhead --- Cromer
40) Ms Susan Mcall --- Hartfiel
41) Mr David Seabourne --- Gwynedd
42) Mr Lee Tait --- Falkirk
43) Mr Peter Rollinson --- Almera, Spain
44) Dr. Martin Critchley --- Co Donegal, Ireland

Two Books from Brian Long

Introducing our two publication. Tales from the Deep and Presence in the Pit. They Vividly recapture the lives, blood, sweat, tears and humour of ex miners.

They includes the following stories:

The corpse on the pit bus.
The ghost of Bobby Baxter delinquent pit pony.
A village consumed by disaster.
The grim, dark, gruesome discovery.
Pit canteen capers.
Practical jokers.



And many more. Only £9.99 each.

Contact:bwlong53@yahoo.com.

From Our Readers.

Cementation and Wrought Iron

An interesting query on page 3 of the November 2020 news letter.

Wrought iron was always made from pig iron. Briefly, the only product from a blast furnace of any vintage is pig iron. Pig iron, while ideal for castings, was in the olden days unworkable due to impurities (silicon, sulphur and phosphorus) and high carbon levels. Not so now, since there are different cast irons some of which are workable; e.g. most of the 'steel' water pipes in major buildings are in fact heat-treated cast iron.

The coming of the Industrial Revolution, with its demand for some kind of iron more useful than cast iron, prompted many experiments. The key was the discovery of puddling which converted pig iron into wrought iron, which is an almost carbon free iron that is very workable and, oddly enough, has very good corrosion resistance. The railways and collieries were big users of wrought irons for buffers and chains since wrought iron had very good resistance to impact.

The demand for steel was also increasing at this time and the only way known was to put the carbon back into the wrought iron by cementation; an expensive process being time consuming with a limited output.

The big change came about the middle of the 19th century with the Bessemer process. This involved blowing air through molten pig iron in a converter to produce good quality steel, in a very short time and in industrial quantities. By monitoring the air blast, all grades of carbon steel, from very low carbon to high carbon, as we know them now, could be produced. The Bessemer process also struck hard at the traditional basic iron ore fields, since by the use of basic refractory linings (magnetite or dolomite) in the converter, good steel could be made from pig iron produced using acid iron ore. This allowed the huge acid iron ore Minette deposits of Alsace-Lorraine in France, which were hitherto useless, to be exploited. This spelt the death knell for many of the traditional basic iron ore fields all over Europe.

The Bessemer process also spelt the death knell of puddling iron. Although sources of information vary a bit, wrought iron production started to drop off steeply in the 1870's. As far as I can ascertain, there is nowadays no production of virgin wrought iron in the UK but there is a niche for wrought iron re-melts.

Dr. James Cleland. {Member}

Thanks, excellent NMRS Newsletter as ever.

In response to Steve Bedford's article on Babbington Colliery, he finds himself in the same boat as I. Namely getting older and questioning what to do with reports on mines that no longer exist written as part of our mining degrees.

There must be many mining graduates of the 1960s, 70's and 80s who are of, or are approaching retirement age and many have important historical documents on mines that no longer exist, in the form of reports and dissertations that formed part of our degree courses.

For example I have a report SAM UK's Fluorspar Mining Activities in Weardale, County Durham in the Summer of 1981, which I am currently transcribing from the handwritten original. I also have a sequel. The Boulby Potash Mine in the Summer of 1982 and a hand drawn map of Tywarnhayle Copper Mine as of April 1982. Unfortunately the RSM kept the accompanying book that contained all the surveying calculations.

There must be technical reports out there that not only cover SAM UK's more extensive operations in prior years. Mining students must have vacationed at Geevor, Wheal Jane, Mt. Wellington, South Crofty etc. Yate, Greenside, Foss and a whole host of other metalliferous mines in the UK as well as all the NCB collieries.

If I remember SAM UK was an alternative to Geevor who pulled the plug at the same time. I am not sure what I would have preferred, but my vacation time with SAM UK has started a long term association with the NPO. Hey if I had gone to Geevor instead I would have focused on Cornwall!

When I have finished SAM UK Summer, 1981, I shall offer it to the Editor of British Mining. If he doesn't think there's enough history in there, (it's really a snapshot of mining and processing activities rather than a full history) it'll be used by the Friends of Killhope.

I think these things should be published so I would encourage Steve to do so, as they will only get lost when the family of the deceased clears out the accumulated trash of ages.

The next mission is get IOM 3 to publish all those Transactions of the Institute of Mining & Metallurgy that cover mines in the UK from the early 1900's through to around 2000. I know of at least 15 TIMM articles/papers on the NPO that I would dearly like to get hold of.

Roger Bade. {Member}

Paul Smyth and his Cementation Query.

I am long retired but I hope I remember my ferrous metallurgy correctly:

From antiquity to relatively recently, iron ore was converted to iron by heating the ore in air. The amounts were relatively small and the iron did not get hot enough to melt. Instead, the iron formed in a spongy mass with lumps of "slag". It was therefore necessary to reheat the iron and hammer it consolidate the spongy iron and break up the "slag". Because the temperature was relatively low, the iron absorbed little carbon from the fuel. The volumes were small, but the iron was relatively ductile. This is known as wrought iron.

For industrial quantities, iron ore is now smelted in a blast furnace where the temperatures are high enough to melt the iron (and slag). Because the temperatures are higher the iron can absorb the carbon from the fuel (a few percent). Because the iron is liquid it can be cast and can be called cast iron. When cold, the carbon can form flakes in the iron which makes the cast iron brittle (older members may remember cast iron school desk frames which easily broke). While techniques exist for making cast iron less brittle, it is usually refined to make steel. Originally the refining

was carried out in Open Hearth or Bessemer furnaces. Although removing impurities, the main purpose of the refining was to oxidise the carbon down to about 1/4 percent. The nomenclature is confusing: wrought iron with a low carbon content and cast iron with a high carbon content are both termed iron but iron with intermediate carbon levels is termed steel.

For steels the carbon levels are too low to form brittle carbon flakes, but carbides (eg iron carbide) form and can make the steel harder. The distribution and type of carbides can be changed by processing and by the addition of small amounts of other elements (eg niobium) and hence the range of properties of steels can be obtained.

Wrought iron is ductile but not very hard. However sometimes, eg for a good cutting edge, better hardness is required and this can achieved by increasing the carbon content, by cementation.

The Banks Family {Members}

England's Treacle Mines.

To the Editor.

I am a Blackburnian and one time resident of Sabden Fold (often confused with Sabden but a mere hamlet compared with the nearby village of Sabden) and am well aware of the claimed, and to me mythical, treacle mines.

In Blackburn it was well known that the best treacle mine was at Tockholes, a small village on the moors between Blackburn and Darwen.

That said, despite numerous visits to Tockholes over the years on both business and pleasure(?) I was unable to actually locate this gem which must surely be worth investigation by one of our members.

My grandmother made delicious treacle tarts but alas the principal ingredient came from a tin bought at great expense from the local Co-op; we spent many happy hours when I was a boy foraging on the moors for blackberries and wimberries but of treacle we found no sign.

One remembers the words of Eric Mason in his book about the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway in which he describes Rose-grove, the name of which "was evidently the product of some fertile humorist's fertile brain, for there is little trace of roses or groves".

Perhaps the treacle mines of Sabden and Tockholes are similarly named.

Alan Hargreaves. {Member}

How the British Army's involvement in the Crimean War unearthed Surrey's treacle miners

Did soldiers burying barrels full of treacle on Chobham Common lead to the sticky substance oozing out of the hillside?

An interesting spin on the article in the November 2020 news letter on "England's Treacle Mines".

The Crimean War in the mid-19th century was one of the major European conflicts of the time with the bloodshed costing the lives of 200,000 soldiers.

But before our brave Brit's travelled across the plains as part of an alliance to take on the Russian Empire. Little did some know when they set up camp in Chobham Common they would also be etched into folklore for another reason - treacle.

A myth that has been passed down from generation to generation in Surrey households tells of how, in 1853, 8,000 soldiers buried molasses in the ground to keep them safe for their return. Only for villagers to discover the black sticky sweet treat and in turn becoming known as "treacle miners".

Another far-reaching tale says there were storehouses at the camp with barrels containing molasses that were buried so they didn't have to be moved when the site was dismantled. Those that discovered them were called "treacle miners" for a laugh.

Others say the barrels were covered in soil to keep cool and were left untouched when the soldiers departed. Only for the forgotten treasure to burst some 50 years later with the treacle oozing out of the ground and down the hillside.

Yet whichever unbelievable story may be recounted, it is a myth still held dear to those that live in and around the area. Indeed, other places across the UK have tried to muscle in on the attraction of having their very own secret treacle mine - such as Sabden in Lancashire and Maidstone in Kent. Some pubs, restaurants and hotels have even been named in honour of "The Treacle Mine" from which its town or village supposedly claims to originate.

As for here in Surrey, it's a tall-tale that has been at the brunt of many a joke to those unsuspecting and intrigued enough to believe it. Students at the now closed Ottershaw School were teased with the tale. It is said that every year the new cohort at the state boys' boarding school would be told on their first Sunday to wait outside for a coach to take them on an outing to the Chobham Treacle Mines.

Today, ramblers embark on a route named, The Treacle Mines of Chobham Common. The six-mile trek starts at Staple Hill Road in Chobham Common, and takes in the sights of Chobham Place Woods, the Queen Victoria Memorial, and the lawns of Longcross House.

The myth has not escaped the eyes of Woking-based Thurstons Brewery either, which has dedicated one of its ales to the tale, named 'Chobham Treacle'. The self-styled "winter warmer" is described on the company's website as an "old English style ale with a twist, an addition of black treacle in the boil"

Forwarded by a member from Surrey England.
Original article, Surrey Live Sept. 2019.

Memoirs 2019.

To the Editor.

As a member of the WMS living in Dolgellau. I was interested to recently read an article by Ron Callender in British Mining Memoirs 2019 about the Cwmheisian Gold Mines, near Dolgellau. I am keen to discuss this article with him and I wonder if you can provide some contact details for him or alternatively send him my details so he can get in touch with me, if he wishes. I also provide my mobile No. 0000……2

David Seabourne {Member}

View of new learning centre.

Lancashire Mining Museum at Astley Green opens new Library.

Our new research centre and library is taking shape upstairs. This will be open in the New Year by appointment for anyone doing serious research. The books have been sorted into categories and photographs and documents will be next.

Much of the wonderful work by the volunteers may not be seen by the casual visitor but this type of work hopefully develops the site, allowing it to become a proper centre for anyone interested in mining heritage and wishing to do some serious research. Keep watching our Facebook page for more details about this research centre opening in the New Year.

Press release from
Lancashire Mining Museum.
{Nov. 2020.}

Cornish Lithium teams up with with Exeter University to train next generation of mining students


Drilling rig on a site in Cornwall. Image Cornish Lithium.

Cornish Lithium is working with Exeter University to provide mining students with the skills in geoscience they will need in the future.

Cornish Lithium has partnered with the University of Exeter, which runs th Camborne School of Mines and trains staff and students in Practical Geo-communication.

The mineral exploration company, based at the Tremough Innovation Centre in Penryn, wants to help equip students with the geocommunication skills they will need for their future careers.

Geoscience is the study of the earth and its dynamic processes, from geology and energy resources, to palaeontology and climate change.

Cornish Lithium founder and CEO Jeremy Wrathall said minerals such as lithium are essential “facilitators” of the transition to a zero-carbon economy as the world moves to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy. It is therefore vital that the key role played by geoscience in this transition is communicated effectively. He said: “Geo-communication is a new narrative that explains the key role played by environmentally-responsible mineral extraction. It is important that students, academics and industry professionals are equipped with the skills to interpret Geo-science content and to engage with and inspire the general public. This course will enable staff and students from the world-renowned Camborne School of Mines to become powerful advocates for geoscience and help to change perceptions as we transition towards a net zero carbon future; hence we are very proud to partner with them on this key initiative”.

Cornish Lithium’s sponsorship will enable the delivery of the flagship Geologise course in Practical Geo-communication to all students and staff members at the Camborne School of Mines over the next year. The course, developed by acclaimed science communicator, Haydon Mort, is accredited by the Geological Society of London and the European Federation of Geologists. Upon completion of the course, each learner will receive a Continuing Professional Development certificate.

Press release from, Cornish Lithium. {Nov 2020. Edited.}

Anglopterum Magnificum. 1a.

Euproops. 3a

Neuropteris. 23

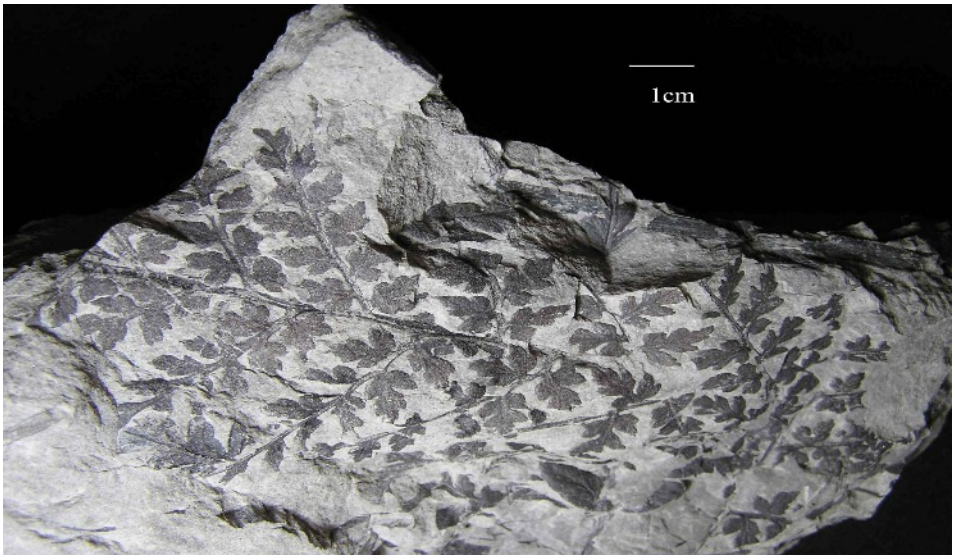
Crockhey Opencast near Garswood St. Helens

This was one of the last opencast coal mines in Lancashire and operated from through the 1990s until the early 2000. I gained access to the site as a field trip location for the Oldham Geological Society and our first visit showed that it had great potential as a palaeontological site. After a few visits the owners were good enough to give us access whenever they weren't working and many an evening and weekend was spent scouring the new faces and tips for fossils.

Crockhey opencast exploited 4 coal seams. The Wigan 9 ft which formed the floor of the quarry. A thick shale parting developed in this eventually splitting it into the 9 ft and the next seam, the Wigan 2ft. A sequence of light grey shales and harder beds then gave way to the Wigan 4 ft and above that the Wigan 5ft with the sandstones of the Ravenhead Rock lying above this, These seams had been mined by underground workings form local pits and excavations at Crockhey revealed several tunnels in the Wigan 4 ft in particular complete with in situ pit props. We didn't find any mining artefacts in the unroofed sections though,

The seams worked at Crockhey date from the Westphalian A stage of the Upper Carboniferous dating from 313 to 304 million years ago. At this time Britain lay south of the equator and experienced a tropical climate. The North of England comprised mainly low lying river deltas and peat forming swamp forests which gave rise to the extensive coal deposits of the Lancashire and Yorkshire coal fields. A large and varied fauna and flora was found primarily above the Wigan 2ft seam and the preservation was excellent, both as carbonised impressions in the mudstones and in siderite (iron carbonate) nodules which formed rapidly around the animal or plant protecting them from subsequent crushing as sediment built up around them resulting in 3d preservation. A hard tap with a hammer would cause the nodule to break along a line of weakness, usually the plane of the fossil to reveal a perfect specimen within.

The list of species found there is long. The lycopod trees of the forests were found as upright 3d casts often with their stigmarian roots branching from them while impressions of the leaf cushions lepidodendron and sigillaria were common finds. Long oval nodules enclosed twigs and branches and many examples of their spore cones Lepidostrobus. 3d casts of the giant horsetail Calamites could often be found in life position. Above the 2ft seam fronds of various ferns and Pteridosperms could be found - Eusphenopteris, Mariopteris, Neuropteris, Sphenopteris, Lobatopteris and others and thousands of small oval nodules were split to yield perfect fronds and pinnules of Neuropteris and the seed Trigonocarpus. Although plants were by far the most common find, one of the features that made Crockhey exceptional was its fauna. Overwhelmingly found in nodules but occasionally as compressions in the mudstones, horseshoe crabs Euproops and Belinurus were fairly frequent finds. The spider like trigonotarbid arachnids Maiocercus and Anthracosiro were found and more rarely Phlangiotarbids. Other finds were scorpions and several types of millipedes including fragments of the giant Arthropleura which could grow to 2m long. Flying insects were represented by nymphs such as Rochdalia and isolated wings, some of large size. Two new species of insect were found at Crockhey - the giant Palaeodictyopteran Anglopterum magnificum and the Ephemeropteran Anglolithoneura magnifica. Much less common were crustaceans and arthropod Camptophyllia. Vertebrates were represented by lungfish scales, 3 different types of shark egg case and 2-3 finds of complete small fish. In addition, many nodules



Sphenopteris. 5.

were found to contain droppings - coprolites ranging from small pellets of plant material to large amorphous splats in which could be seen bones, scales and fragments of horse-hoe crabs, millipedes and even scorpions.

Unfortunately in the early 2000's, the license to quarry at the site had expired. Applications to continue mining met with local resistance and were refused. The last trips found few more finds as the site was in filled and landscaped and now all that can be seen are fields.

News Letter Reader.
A.Tenny.

Westwood Quarry

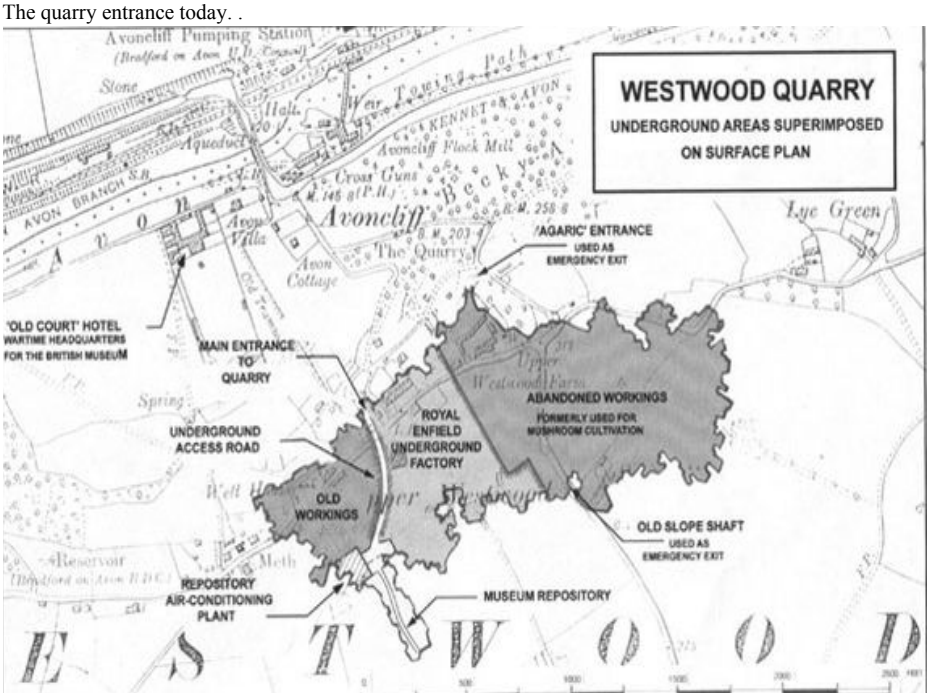

The quarry entrance today. .

Is about 80-feet beneath the hillside above Avoncliff, a mile or so downstream from Bradford-on-Avon, has a fascinating history. It started out at the very beginning of the nineteenth century as a Bath Stone quarry, providing stone for buildings in Bradford-on-Avon and the surrounding area, but this more or less came to an end around 1906. Later, parts of the quarry were used to grow mushrooms but this came to an end in 1936 after a minor earthquake shook the quarry up and made parts of the roof unsafe, and also the mushroom beds became infected with disease.

Early in the Second World War the centre part of the quarry was converted into an underground factory for the Royal Enfield Company, making gunsights, aircraft bomb-sights, anti-aircraft gun predictors and other military instruments. After the war the factory was involved in development of missile control technology and, up until the 1960s, it was also used to manufacture Royal Enfield motorcycles.

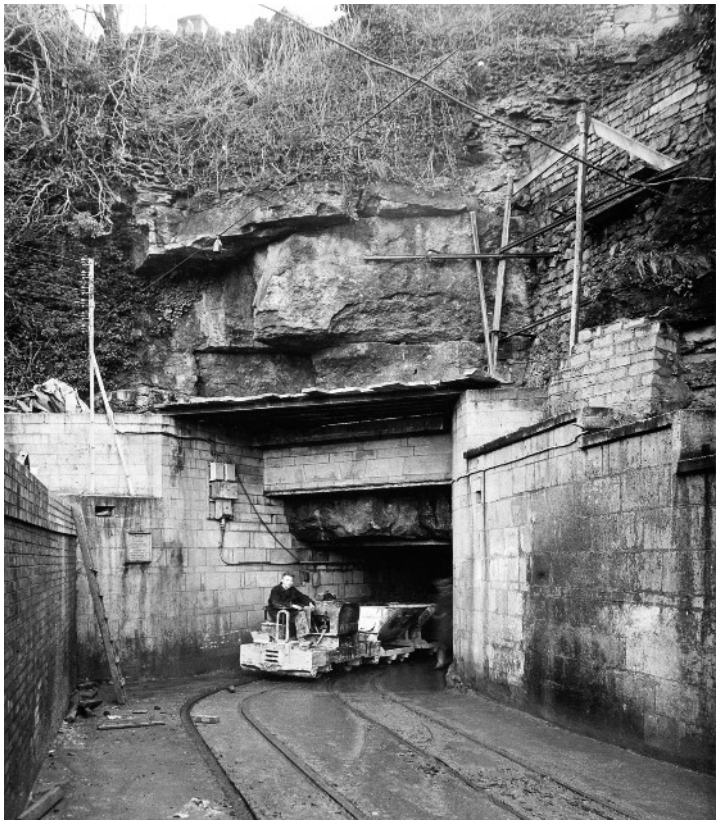
During the war another section of the quarry was used to house all the treasures from the London Museums and galleries, including the British Museum and the V&A. Altogether, the contents of some 40 major museums and private collections were housed at Westwood, virtually everything, in fact, of cultural significance, except the pictures from the National Gallery, which went to a slate mine at Manod in North Wales.

During the 1950s the by now disused museum repository was used for some rather sinister experiments to test how biological warfare agents might spread within the various new Cold War nuclear bunkers being built around Britain.



Plan of the entire quarry showing war time occupation.

Cont.



The quarry entrance during conversion in 1941.

The entrance to the museum and Enfield works just after completion.

Pictures from the Portrait Gallery stacked in the quarry.

When the surface was re developed, the developers discovered that the ventilation shaft still in use. So they incorporated it in to a gazebo type structure attached to one of the property's.

In these photographs is an aspect of the quarry's life including the art treasures in the repository. The captions to the photo's help because they expand on the story. I'd recommend, however, that you get hold of a copy of 'Avoncliff: The Secret History of An Industrial Hamlet in War & Peace' which explains the whole story in detail, along with much more of the history of Avoncliff and Bradford-on-Avon. You can find the book on our website here: https://www.bradford-on-avon.org.uk/avoncliff.html

By kind permission of
Nick. McCamly
Folly Books.

1912 map. Showing the Hall Fold Drift. At the bottom can be seen the older drift above Hose O' th Hill.

HALL FOLD COLLIERY. WHITWORTH. LANCASHIRE.

Hall Fold was a small colliery which operated in Whitworth in the first two decades of the 20th century by which time the larger pits working the Mountain Mines and fireclay that had brought employment to a significant number of families had mostly been worked out. Many men who wished to stay with the trade that had been their lifeblood for several generations found work in smaller, more family based concerns, that were now being run by mining families who had worked and saved hard or had a small injection of capitol and now ran a number of small collieries either mopping up where the larger concerns had left small pockets or working the thinner seams that had been left undeveloped. This became a bit of a tradition in The Rossendale Valley for the next century, till the end of coal mining it's self in Lancashire; miners who had lost their jobs and now opened up small operations which may keep between 15 to 30 miners working in decent payed employment for a number of years. Hall Fold would, in theory at least, be in a good position to succeed for many years since there was a massive void in the local market with mills, gasworks, mainline railway, households railway and quarries all on the look out for good coal at a good price and there would also be no shortage of local skilled men to carry out the task and there was also, rather intriguingly, a Tyneside connection.


Bridge abutments for tramway over the road at Hall Fold.

The name Watson had been connected with the Whitworth collieries for the previous 70 years at least and Thomas had worked Top O' th Meadow (or Bank Top) and Knowsley collieries, along with other concerns since the 1830's. Thomas and Ann had moved from Burnley along with their son Thomas sometime after 1820 and his Grandson, Thomas, was also still a coal dealer in Whitworth during 1911. However it is a different Branch of the Watson family that is associated with Hall Fold colliery and they too came from Burnley at a similar time.

Mathew Watson was born in Burnley at the end of 1823 and was baptised on the 4th of December 1823 and was the son of Mathew and Alice Watson who farmed at Stoops in Habergham Eves, Burnley. Stoopes is now a big housing estate off Rossendale road but back then it was mostly farm land but had also been close to the Cradle of the Burnley mining industry where the valuable Arley seam had already been worked for hundreds of years.

It is possible that the two branches of the Watson family who moved from Burnley to the Whitworth Valley were related, but as yet I have found no connection and looking at various other attempts to trace the genealogy of Mathew's family, it is a mine field but of course back in those days the names within a family were all very similar. A note of aside for anybody involved in researching the Mathew and Alice Watson who in 1861 reside at Ta Top farm, Goodshaw Chapel. Mathew, there is a retired coal miner who hails from the lead mining district within Craven near Skipton and married Alice Shackleton. He died in 1861 and his widow and two daughters end up in Rishton, It doesn't look as though it is an immediate branch of the family that we are interested in , if at all. The trouble with the genealogy sites is that it can be a trap to hastily attach a family member from the distant past or add a mistake somebody had made in their tree to yours. In short conclusion it is safer to say that two families called Watson relocated from Burnley to the Whitworth valley between 1820 and 1840 and both families became involved in the local coal industry which was possibly the reason for the move in the first place.

Cont.

Site of Colliery and stone sett at Hall Fold today.

Mathew And Alice Watson went on to have Alice in 1826 then Edward in 1828 and on his Baptism we learn that Mathew was now no longer farming at Stoopes but was a collier living at "Park" Burnley;. The couple went on to have at least another daughter, Jane, in 1831. Mathew Sr. died young and in 1841 we find Alice now 45 living in Shawforth. 15 year old Mathew is a coal miner and you wonder about the other 3 children, all of working age back then as to weather or not they weren't also working in the pit, the census leaves that area blank.

Three years later young Mathew married the girl up the street, Margaret Heyworth, the daughter of a quarryman and together they lived in Shawforth and raised 6 children; Alice, Margaret, Francis, Jane, James and Ann. From available records Mathew was for a while a colliery Manager and young Francis, for a time, worked at the pit aged 10. Sadly though, like his father before him, Mathew died young, aged just 39, and was buried on the 5th of November 1864 and the son he never knew was born early in 1865 and carried on the tradition of the family name; Mathew Watson.

Edward Watson continued to live at home and following his mothers death, Alice took over headship of the family, now living in Millgate were she worked in the cotton trade as a weaver but Edward was following in the family tradition of coal mining. Between 1851 and 1856 Edward moved away from the district and headed North for the river Tyne and settled in Prudhoe (pronounced Pruda) in Northumberland on the banks of the river and married Margaret Cowans who was originally from Heaton in Newcastle. Margaret had already buried two coal mining husbands and Edward took on her family when he married her. They settled for many years at Beaumont cottages (the Beaumont's were a big land owning family who had massive interests also in lead mines in the North Pennines and became forged with the Blackett family through marriage. The Allenheads mine reputedly made them the richest commoners in England at one time.). Just across the road and through the woods from Edwards's home was Eltringham colliery and brickworks. We have nothing to tie him to that particular pit except it is the closest. There were others nearby; Prudhoe colliery and by the mid 60's West Wylam was sinking on the other side of town but the family stayed put at Beaumont cottages for at least the next 20 years. Together they had seven children, one of whom was named Mathew, born in 1860 on the banks of the Tyne.

Meanwhile back in Shawforth Margaret Watson was learning to come to terms with life as a widow and still having to work full time in the cotton trade along her children of working age and they were living at Spring Side Millgate. Ten years later young Mathew was in the cotton trade but his sister Margaret had become a milliner and that change of direction looked to be a beginning of a change of fortune for the family but in the meantime young Margaret was to have another change in direction of her own in that she too now changed the streets of Whitworth for the banks of the Tyne. On January the 17th in 1886, Margaret Watson marries her cousin, Mathew Watson, ten years her junior at St Nicolas Church, Newcastle Upon Tyne. They moved back to Shawforth and in 1889 their daughter Alice was born there. They lived at 213 Market street and Mathew was now working in the pits of Whitworth which would have undoubtedly have been a bit different to the larger Tyneside collieries.

Two doors up at 209 Market St. lives Margaret, now 65 and herself now a draper along with her daughter Alice. Young Mathew was himself a travelling Draper, or a hawker. On his travels he perhaps met Helen Isabella Morrison born in Edinburgh though now of Liverpool, herself a Draper and they married Oct. 3rd 1894 in Wavertree and moved to Shawforth to help run the drapers shop. Margaret died on 26th of November 1899 after 35 years of widowhood and left to her daughter Alice and her son Mathew the effects of the Drapery business which amounted to £495 which today would be worth over £64,000. It was at this period that the Watson interests moved deeper into coal mining but, unfortunately we don't know the chain of events or exact date.

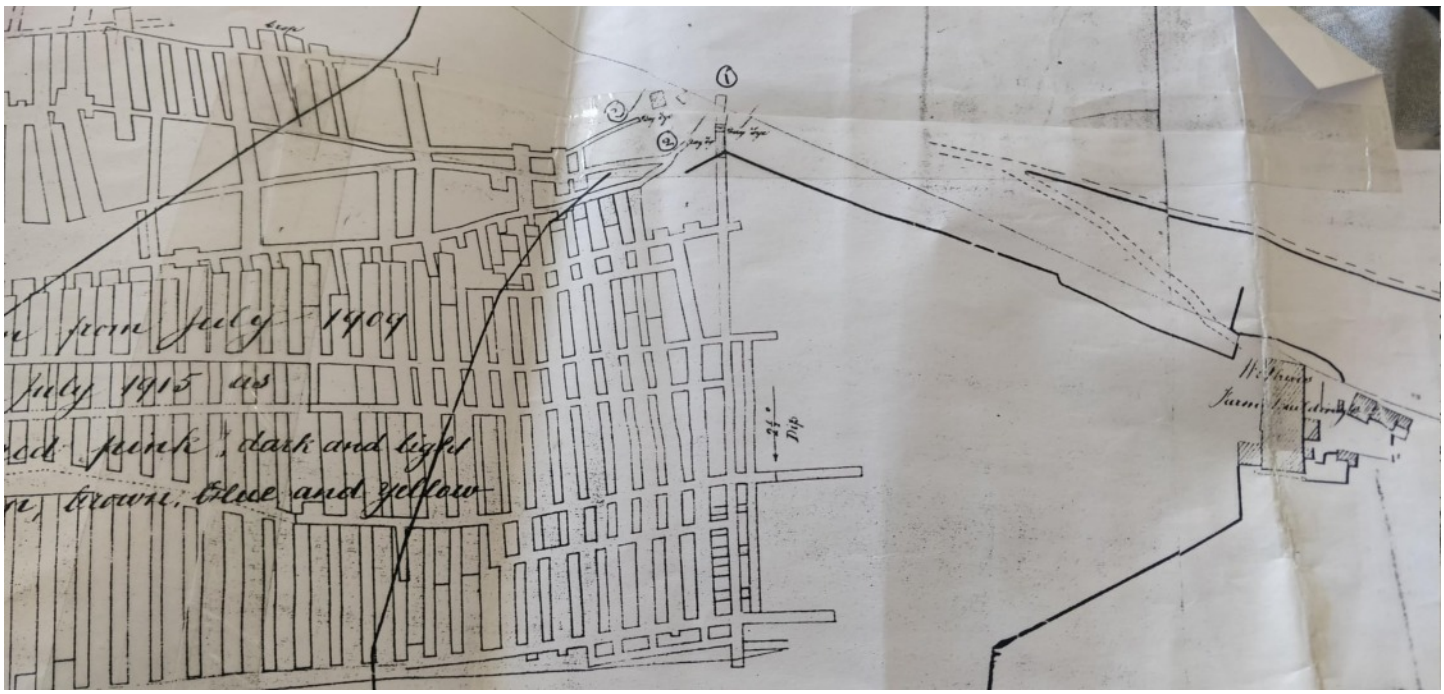
The Sandrock mine crops out above Hall Fold and loops around the hill at House on the Hill. The map of 1912 shows an old coal drift on House O' th Hill Rough that doesn't appear on the 1895 map and nothing is as yet known about it, was this perhaps the first venture of the Watson's? Or maybe an older venture by another party that inspired the Watson's to put a drift into the coal behind Hall Fold. This patch of Sandrock coal, though a thin seam, extended right across the moor to the Cowm quarries where it was being worked at Abb Top, Robin Hoods Well Clough and right over to Brandwood Moor. It also extended up under Bartle Cowm where at least 8 acres had been previously worked, though as yet I know little of whom worked it, the coal is mentioned in the following advert of 1874; To be sold by auction all that farm called Withens Meadow and Deans, situated at Hallfold and occupied by John Holt. It is believed that there are valuable mines of coal under the estate. The coals under the Close called Rough Pasture were sold some years ago and are reserved out of this sale. The outcrop also ran right up Jennies Rough and crossed the Valley under the Withens estate ran by the Houlton Trustees. In 1901 Mathew Watson (born in Prudhoe) is listed as a coal mine steward on the census, though as a worker and not an employer living

Hall Fold Colliery. Original drift mouth and remains of a cabin.

at 213 Market St. whilst his cousin, Mathew is listed still as a draper and shopkeeper living at 209. That was the company address for M&M Watson owners of Hall Fold Colliery, the rest of the family kept the drapery and milliners shop.

Hall Fold Colliery was driven into the Sandrock coal above Fold Head and a tramway was put down to the old stone setts at Fold Head where the new houses now are, it crossed the lane on a bridge then ran though the field, under the new road in a tunnel to the drift. The remains of the drift can be clearly seen and the outline of some buildings just slightly to the South West. It looks also like there could have been a travelling drift into the pit between the pithead and Millers Gutter. There are no further records or information that has as yet come to light pertaining to the working of this drift but it must have involved a substantial outlay for two normal men. In 1906 there were 4 men underground and 2 on the surface, presumably a Banksman and one on the sett.

There are no remaining plans of the workings above Hall Fold so we have no idea of their extent or why they were abandoned but in 1909 a new pit was driven up near Withens farm on the steep valley side of Prickshaw brook. This coal was Part of the Withens estate and held by the Hulton Trustees. There is evidence of previous workings along the crop edge and possibly drifts in under Jennies Rough. The tramway was extended from the old pit up to the top of Jenny Brow an incline then ran down the brow almost to the river. Here are the remains on the hillside of a levelled off area that possibly housed the steam engine for the haulage. There are what looks like the remains of a small lodge down by the river. From here the haulage crossed the river on a wooden trestle bridge, the stone foundations of which can still be seen. The tubs between the drift on the other side of the river and the bridge were according to ‘A Rochdale Roundabout’ (which quoted local information passed down) was a self, acting incline. The remains of the drifts can still be seen on the steep embankment but erosion and several landslips have obliterated much of the site. Three drifts were put down into the coal. What looks to be the main haulage drift was driven down the full dip and presumably the coal was then worked back on the rise. The other two drifts look as though they have worked the coal nearer the crop and up the Clough over the estate boundary into the coal belonging to Messrs' Holt and Cecil.



Hall Fold Colliery drifts at Withens.

The seam section with a small dirt band looks to average around 17” with a further 16” of fireclay beneath. This fireclay would certainly have been removed along the haulage roads and in the working bord's to allow room for the tubs. The coal for between 3-5 yards would be removed within seam either side of the working bord's and packs built to support the roof. The roof was hard sandstone but some

may have been ripped down along the main drift or in the shunts to provide a bit more headroom but on the whole, the main roads would only be a yard or so high.

In 1910, 16 men worked underground but the complicated haulage arrangements to the sett meant that 4 men were working on the surface. There appears to have been a large turnover of labour at the pit as advertisements for colliers often appeared in the local papers especially during the years 1911-14. By 1913, the peak year of coal production in Britain, the underground workforce had fallen to 12 men with 4 on the surface. The Rochdale Roundabout mentions that the pit had a bad name for its coal quality and one source said that a cat swiped some bacon out of a pan cooking on a fire range, then fell asleep in the pan. However, if the coal was that bad all the time then it would never have operated for as long as it did. The Abandonment plan is dated July 1915 but by then the company had reopened the old Buckley Mills pit running it as Spring Bank colliery for about 12 months. They then reopened Long Acres colliery and worked that until around 1919.

Between 1911 and 1914 regular adverts appeared in the Bacup Times stating the following. Wanted a few good colliers for the Sandrock Mine. Full work and good wages. Apply Hallfold Colliery, Manager Mr. Watson.

1906. Underground, 4 Surface, 2
1910. " " " 16, 4
1913. " " " 12, 4

So What became of the Watson Family? Well the last Census we find is 1911 and Mathew is Draper and colliery proprietor, living at Moor View near Bacup with their five children; Robin, George L.G. Phyllis Margaret, Helen and Douglas. His mother-in-law lives with them and they can also afford a private servant at this time. Mathew and Isabella emigrated to the USA in 1920 and settled in Quincy, Norfolk,Massachusetts. Isabella died in 1939 but was survived by Mathew. As to the other Mathew Watson, born in Northumberland, sadly I have no further records after the closure of Long Acres in 1919.

For a while we had the original colliery at Fold Head confused with Birds Nest colliery, as is evident on one of the videos. However we now have come to the conclusion that Birds Nest was a by name for Naden Head colliery, unless anybody knows any different. When I carried out the field work, I was unfamiliar with the area and this comes across as blatantly obvious. However, due to the present circumstances I have been unable to return to rectify the matter. I explain the updated info in the comments.

Sources for the material

John Davies. Coal mining in Rossendale.
A Rochdale Roundabout
Geological Survey
UK Census Reports
Prudhoe History society
Alan Davies.

C.S. Rossendale Collierys. {Member}

Ariel view of the Elsecar Heritage site.

Elsecar Heritage Centre.

We are extremely proud to reveal that following our partnership with Historic England over the last three years, many buildings and historic sites in and around the village have now been listed, upgraded to Grade II* listing, or designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments by the government. This is hugely important for Elsecar and Hemingfield, really underlines how extraordinarily special and significant the village and this area are, and creates exciting opportunities for the future.

The sites include the New Yard workshops becoming Grade II* listed (the heritage centre's independent shops, studios and cafes), as do Earl Fitzwilliam's private railway station (now the nursery), the Furnace Yard, the Carpenter's Workshop (now Play mania), the Loco Shed at the heritage railway, and The Ironworks event space. Elsecar Holy Trinity C.E Primary and more cottages around the village have now been listed, joining Elsecar Holy Trinity Church, the Milton Hall, Elsecar Flour Mill and other rows which were all listed some years ago.

The whole of the Elsecar Ironworks, including the Elsecar Heritage Railway site, our events space and more, is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument, as is Hemingfield Colliery, with pit top buildings there Grade II* listed as well. The whole of the Elsecar New Colliery is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument too.

Please click here to find out more, we'll be sharing more news stories during the day, and will tell you much more about all these remarkable sites, buildings and the stories behind them over coming weeks! https://amp.theguardian.com/.../South-Yorkshire-village...

Historic England
Barnsley Museums

Press release. Elsecar Heritage Centre. {Nov 2020}

Some Tweet's and Twittering's the editor has been following.

1 Landscape legacies of coal@coal_legacies·Nov 19. After work on Royston's Way nipped up to see the Comrie opencast site where the much reduced bings were laced with cyanide and asbestos. Sorting for recycling is taking place but sadly the footpath is closed. Some of the original pit buildings survive #coal #miningheritage

2 MiningHeritage@miningheritge Replying to @miningheritage The incorrect information relates initially to the dates Arthur Lawrence worked at Brinsley pit. The board states 1853-1867 but Ron Storer's book, 'Brinsley Colliery & Lawrence Connection' (1985) suggests 1875-1912. Also the image is not Brinsley pit, the headstocks don't match! 2/5

3 Dr.StevenDaniels@stevandan· Nov 5 I'm #PhDone! Thrilled to say I to passed my viva with no corrections: huge thanks to Dr @StuartWilksHeeg and Dr @AndrewCrines for their excellent supervision; to Prof @JonTonge and Prof Peter Dorey for examining; & everyone at @LivUniPol for their support. Time to celebrate!

Well done to Steven who is a NMRS member.

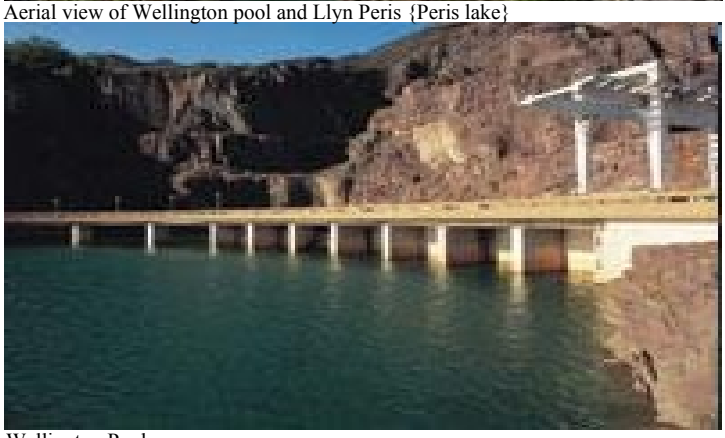
4 Landscape legacies of coal@coal_legacies Three structures have remarkably survived the opencast clay workings and remediation at Aldridge. The canal wharf, a building and railway bridge abutments.

Did you know the NMRS has a twitter page?
Why not look it up?
Northern Mines Research Society@MinesSociety

One of our members working Life.


Llyn Peris the lower lake.


Aerial view of Wellington pool and Llyn Peris {Peris lake}


Wellington Pool.


The Spiral casing.

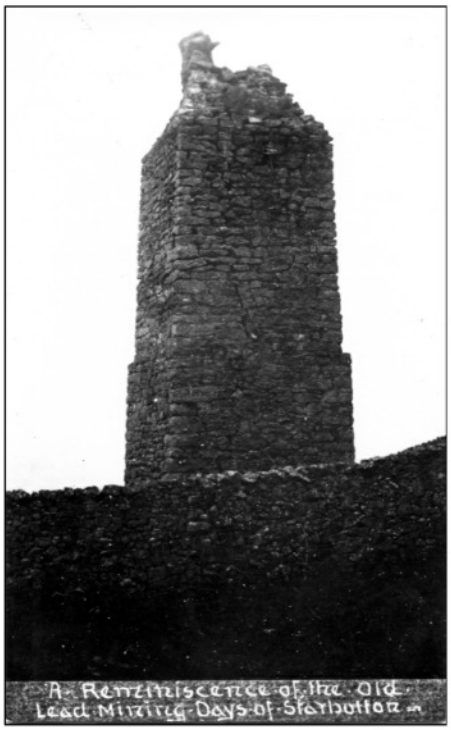
I was sent to Traws power station to work, but not for long. My Group Engineer, Mr George Lovatt asked if I would join his commissioning team for Dinorwig 400 kV substation. He didn't have to ask twice. At the end of 1979, I joined the Dinorwig commissioning squad and was given the responsibility for commissioning all the primary plant. It was all gas (sulphur hexafluoride, SF6) insulated. I knew absolutely nothing about SF6, so again I had to reach out for CEGB information, IEE papers and various other documents. Mr Emyr Pritchard (training engineer) tried to help but to no avail. It was a long hard slog but very rewarding and worthwhile. I became a 2nd Engineer and my experience led me to carrying out SF6 gas handling and gas testing training for the company.

The substation commissioning team consisted primarily of Mr Gwilym Griffiths (1st Eng}, Mr Selwyn Hughes, Maldwyn Hughes (2nd Eng's), Mr. Dave Tyrer, Mr. Cecil Condron and myself (3rd Eng's). We were assisted by staff from Pentir, as and when required, and also at times from Connah's Quay. During the course of commissioning, some of us had been given nicknames by the contractors, according to our roles and responsibilities e.g. Selwyn Hughes 1st Tester (SH1T) and I was John "hiss and piss" referring to the oil and gas within the circuit breakers. Maldwyn was responsible for the commissioning of all the transformers on the Generator circuits, but he retired before the end of the commissioning so I took on his role in commissioning the remainder; generator 5 and 6 transformers. The contractors which we worked with were a good bunch, a little difficult at first to understand the Geordie's but we soon got over that hurdle. We were involved with GEC, NEI Reyrolle, TW Broadbent and Parsons. There were too many people whom we admired and were on top of their game to mention here but suffice it to say that they are still alive and I am still in touch with them.

The mid 1980's saw another re-shuffle and Western Transmission District was formed, the headquarters of which was at Connah's Quay Flintshire. The teams developed were Pentir North and Pentir South, Capenhurst, Deeside, Telecomms, Measurements, Lines and Cables, Projects and finally the strong Admin team led by Geoff Lloyd. There were two other staff based at Pentir and they were Mr. A. A. Barnett, the group nurse, and Mr. E. D. Thomas from the Nuclear Installation Inspectorate. Initially, I remained working at Dinorwig substation developing maintenance documents and record systems for each and every new item of plant and protection system. I also produced a T manual for the SF6 Y G switchgear – a document with breakdown sketches of every item big or small, with all the manufacturers reference numbers and cross referenced with our National Stores commodity codes.

During commissioning, I had realised that there was an issue with the TFC6 circuit breakers hydraulic systems. The issue was that the oil pumps were running far more frequently than they should have been. Initially we were fobbed off by the manufacturer but eventually I had taken the reins and carried out a few tests of my own (pressure, temperature and pump monitoring as well as working out how to see if the main valve was passing – in a safe way) and realised that the main valve was passing. More importantly I had proof. GEC / Alsthom were brought to site and completely dismantled the hydraulic system on X105 (Pentir 1 circuit breaker). My work was vindicated. I was correct, however we did not know the cause. We had found some very fine, black particles in the oil but could not identify where it came from, until a few years later when the particles were identified as silicates. The problem was still not rectified. Where did they come from? Again careful investigation and a knowledge of manufacture (Mechanical HNC) identified the issue as silicates used during casting of "elbows". During the whole of this photographs were taken and a little book produced to assist our own staff to dismantle and re-assemble the parts as well as re-commissioning techniques.

An extract from, 40 + Years in the Electrical Supply Industry. John Shorney. {Member}



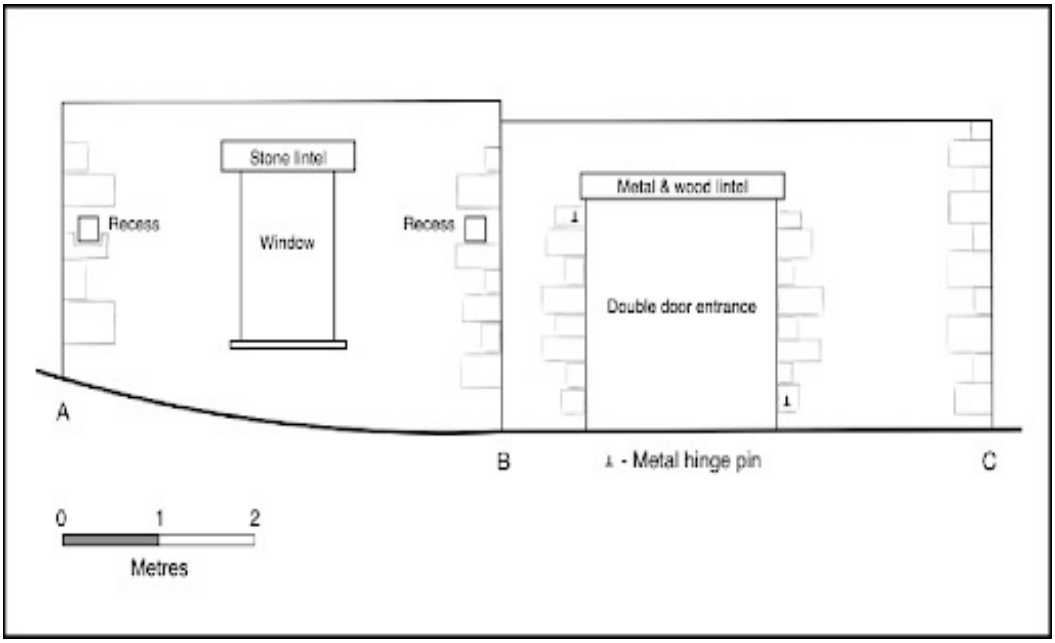
Two photographs showing how the chimney has collapsed over the past 100 years. The left hand one was taken early in the twentieth century. The right hand one from the same view point in 2018.

Lead and Coal Mining in Upper Wharfedale

For several hundred years the exploitation of natural resources, lead and coal, played an important part in the life of upper Wharfedale. Today semi-grassed spoil heaps, a line of filled shafts, or a ruined stone structure may provide the only indication of former mining activity and these historic sites are at risk as the features gradually fade back into the landscape.

In 2018 the Upper Wharfedale Heritage Group began a survey of selected lead and coal mining sites. The history of these sites is well documented and the aim of the survey is to record the surface features of each site in their landscape setting. The survey is only concerned with surface features with no underground work.

The work has involved a great deal of photography together with more detailed surveys of some of the structures. Sketch maps have been drawn using images from Google Earth or Bing together with field observations. The Grid Reference Finder website has been invaluable for pinpointing and labelling features. A number of NMRS publications and Ordnance Survey Maps from the National Library of Scotland have provided background information and have aided the sites interpretation. Although all the sites are on open access land, permission of the landowners has been obtained before undertaking any survey work.



The lower story of the washery is built of sandstone. Contemporary photographs shows the upper storeys were clad in wood. The left hand portion housed the vertical steam engine for the washing and screening plant above. The right hand portion housed the haulage engine for the tramway.

Surveys of five sites have now been completed. Coldstreak Lead Mine, Hawkswick, is an extensive mining site with remains including open works, collapsed and open shafts, adits and ruined stone structures. It was an area of small-scale mining operations undertaken over a long period of time.

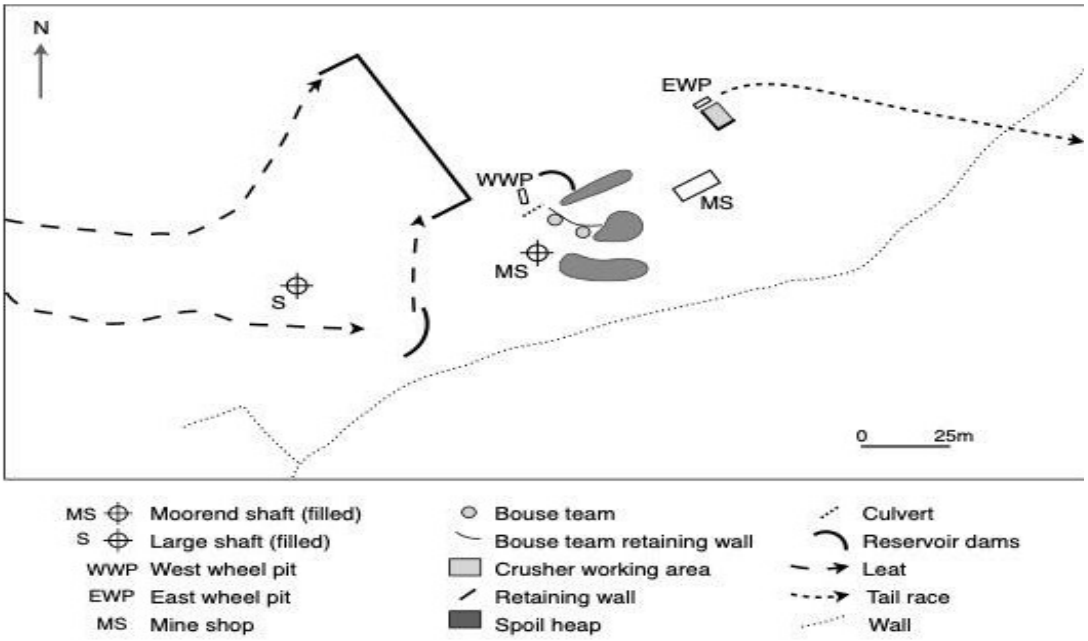
Starbotton Lead Smelt Mill, a small mill which operated in the mid-nineteenth century. The site consists of the remains of the smelt mill, a waterwheel pit, a flue and two chimneys.

Threshfield Moor and Boss Moor north of Backstone Edge is an extensive multi-period site where coal was mined for about 400 years. From 1902 to 1905 John Delaney operated a colliery and tramway to serve his lime kilns at Threshfield. The coal was of poor quality and a washery was built adjacent to the shaft.

Black Rock Lead Mine, Hawkswick, a small mine that worked one of the many small veins on Hawkswick Moor in the 18th and early 19th century. It was a small-scale operation consisting of number of shallow shafts along the vein together with a small reservoir to provide water for dressing the ore.

Cont.

New Providence Lead Mine, Starbotton, is a scheduled ancient monument and the best preserved site in upper Wharfedale. Here there are the remains of early mining and substantial structures dating from the mid-nineteenth century including waterwheel pits, Bouse teams, a mine shop and reservoir dams.



Providence Lead Mine - main site.

We are grateful to Mike Gill who has given advice and provided additional information and to Richard Smith for advice on smelting. We have also received support from the Yorkshire Dales National Park, Olicana Historical Society and the National Coal Mining Museum.

When circumstances permit we plan to continue work we have begun at Conistone Moor and Mossdale.

The reports are available on the Upper Wharfedale Heritage Group website at - https://www.uwhg.org.uk/lead coal-mining.

The principal features of the New Providence lead mine date from the mid 19th century when the Wharfedale Mining Company was formed and mining on a more commercial basis began.

William Varley. {Member.}

The Harrington site Aug. 2020.

Journey's end: last of England's open-cast mines begins final push

Few in the small town of Staveley, near Chesterfield, could have predicted that an overlooked industrial site on its outskirts would play host to the end of thousands of years of coal mining in England.

The Hartington site stands unassumingly within the green hills of Derbyshire where it produces a small handful of coal, in industry terms, alongside gravel and construction grit. It is also, by chance, England's last open-cast coal mine in a history that dates back to Roman times.

The Hartington site can trace its roots in the mining industry back more than 140 years to when it first began producing coal for the Staveley Coal and Iron Company in 1875. Then, the company's 3,000 workers produced 1m tonnes of coal a year. Today, Hartington is a minnow within the fast-draining coal industry and aims to produce a total of 87,000 tonnes.

Government officials had expected Hartington to reach its modest target by the start of August, but delays caused by the coronavirus has meant the mine will be allowed to continue to eke out the last of its coal for the rest of the year. By sheer chance Hartington will outlive England's far larger surface mines, including Bradley in County Durham which shut on Monday after extracting 340,000 of 500,000 tonnes of coal earmarked when it opened in 2018.

John Wilson, a local businessman, owns Hartington alongside interests in local hotels and a recycling company. The last open-cast mine in England will continue to produce coal alongside a handful of mines still operating in Wales and Scotland, and a few small underground mines in Cumbria and the Forest of Dean. These mines may tap the same rich coal seams that helped power the Industrial Revolution, but they are a dusty shadow of one of the country's most enduring industry. At its peak in 1913, Britain produced 292m tonnes of coal a year. Last year, a record low of 2. 2m tonnes was produced after 35 years of accelerating mine closures.

Sent in by a member. The Guardian Aug. 2020. {Edited}

Two Old Mine Tubs Found by The Northern Monkey's.

Who are the Northern monkey's you might enquire?

They are a Facebook group with over 4000 followers. Made up of young men and women who are all based in and around Burnley. They employ a hands on approach to all types of local industrial heritage and history. You can see them in action on You Tube.

At one of there recent digs they found an old coal tub that most likely belonged to either the, Great Townley Colliery or the Boggert Bridge Colliery, both were situated on the west side of Burnley very close together. The old coal tub was buried on the railway embankment of the Burnley to Todmorden line. Both Townley Colliery and Boggert Bridge closed in 1947 prior to nationalization. So this would make the tub at least 70 years old. The metal framed tub was of riveted construction with steel sides and bottom. The wheels are the type that would run on angle section rails. It looks about 4 cwts in capacity and is in good condition.

A Northern Monkey digging out the buried tub

The tub just prior to being winched out.

The tub being removed from site to be stored safely.

A member of the NMRS recently electronically interviewed one of the admin team of the Northern Monkey's and asked about their finds? He said that," they were out scouting arround some old colliery sites and spotted one of the wheels of the tub sticking out of the ground on the railway embankment. They tried to pull it out but were unable to so they started to dig arround it. After a couple of hours they managed to expose enough of the tub so it could be winched out. They were amazed at its size and condition he said. Once it was liberated they decided to take it to their storage unit for safe keeping and to decide what to do with this rare piece of local mining history". While reflecting on this problem they remembered that they had seen another tub frame behind a wall at another old colliery site in Burnley. This was very close to the old Hapton Valley Colliery site which was also connected by a ginny track to the old Barclay Hills Colliery close by. They thus decided to rescue this one also. All that was left of this tub was the wheel carriage with all four wheels still in place. The size of this tub is arround 2 to 3 cwts and is a different shape being longer than its width.

Upon inspection it was uncertain that this was indeed a coal tub due to its shape. The wheels are definitely the same profile and size as the Townley tub and so it could have been a tackle running sledge or something similar. However It was agreed that it did have mining connections.

After consulting with local mining historian Jack Nadin, it was decided that the two mining relics should be placed at the local Woodend Mining Museam at Smithson Farm Burnley. These will subsequently be available for viewing in the future.

Picture far left tub frame in its original location. Picture left showing wheel carriage and wheel profile.

Information given by interview to NMRS by Northern Monkey's. **{Dec 2020}**

New Feature. Some places our members have enjoyed visiting.

Leigh Spinners Mill, Leigh

Leigh Spinners is a double cotton spinning mill, consisting of No.1 and No.2 mill. The mill still has the original family owned company on site now producing artificial grass and carpet based in the ground and 1st floors of both mills. The rest of Mill No.2 and eventually mill No.1 is being converted in to community units and is bringing a very welcome and much used Community and heritage area to Leigh. No.1 engine had the High pressure cylinder suffer a blow out around the inlet steam chest around the late 1950's and was scrapped as a result. No.2 engine survived and was used during the miners strikes to power the mills via a rope driven Westinghouse generator.

Visited Summer of 2019.

No.1 engine house and mill in the back ground. The central boiler house that contained 7 Lancashire boilers and chimney. No.2 engine house and mill on the left with the lodge in the foreground.

Cheddleton Flint Mill Staffordshire

Down stream of the two mills.

Cheddleton Flint Mill consists of a complex of buildings including two separate water mills, a miller's cottage, two flint kilns, a drying kiln and outbuildings. The Caldon Canal, which would have supplied the mill by narrow boat, passes by. The whole complex is considered of great historical importance and has been given Grade II* listed building status by English Heritage.

The earliest reference to milling at Cheddleton dates back to 1253. It is possible that the foundations of the South Mill date back to this period. Another document, dating to 1694, refers to corn milling at the site. In the late 18th century the complex was converted to grind flint. The North Mill was built specifically for that purpose and the South Mill was converted to grind flint instead of corn. About the same time, the Caldon Canal was built making transport of heavy goods to and from the mill easier. The ground, calcined flint produced by the mill was becoming a very important ingredient in earthenware's being produced in the nearby Potteries. Josiah Wedgwood had successfully marketed a new product called "cream ware" which was becoming very popular. Calcined flint is white and thermally stable, making it an excellent ingredient in the new light-coloured wares that had become fashionable.

By visiting the mill one is able to gain an understanding of the whole process from the arrival by narrow-boat, through the calcining, grinding, settling and drying processes. The museum building provides the historical and technical background. The above history of the mill is very simplified. One can spend hours trying to figure out all the stages in the mill's development over its circa 800 years lifetime.

Visited August 2017. .

Wigan Pier.

This Indestructible Ventilation Fan from Sutton Manor Colliery is now located at Wigan Pier. This fan was made by Walker Bro's {Wigan} Ltd in 1910. It was commissioned into service by Richard Evans & Co Ltd of St. Helens to ventilate their coal mines located at Sutton Manor St. Helens Lancashire. It had a duty capacity of 900.000 cubic ft / min at 7 inch water gauge. The fan was donated to the people of Wigan by British Coal when the colliery closed. There are many other industrial features and artifacts at Wigan Pier some of which are in there original setting.

Visited July 2020.

Note from the editor. All of these places will be featured in future news letters. If you have enjoyed visiting similar places in your area or else were why not let the members know about them?

The Cononish Diary
29th October 2020

A memorandum from Scotgold Resources reported that the coronavirus plague had interrupted operations at the Cononish gold mine and, noted, wistfully, "… at least the gold stays in the ground". Wind forward six months and I am able to take advantage of an opportunity to view recent progress at the mine; the invitation had been made in the autumn of 2019. I was warned that Covid precautions were strictly enforced and that photography was out of the question. I agreed; the chance to see the changes that were taking place was a big temptation, and explains why my wife and I were driving cautiously along the West Highland Way near Tyndrum in Perthshire one bright morning in September

We were keeping an appointment to meet the Plant Manager at 9 am and in spite of stops to photograph the River Cononish and the nearby mountain ranges en route, everything fell into place. NMRS member Nigel Smalley signed me in, equipped me with protective clothing and, fully masked, we drove through the gates and up to the mine. Nigel parked at the adit entrance that I had first photographed in 1988.

The entrance to the adit, which is now strongly reinforced for safety reasons in an illustration provided by Scotgold Resources.

Nowadays the portal is reinforced to deter rock falls because of the work being carried out in the level with acquired machinery, and which includes a single boom drill rig, a load haul dump machine (sometimes known as a "scooptram") and a roof bolter. Illustrations of four such specialised machines can be seen on the Scotgold website

Nigel displays a sample of the rock that features the black line which suggests that gold is present.

As we turned to gaze down onto the beautiful Strath in a pleasant sunshine, the new processing plant took centre stage and with a wave of his hand, Nigel was able to explain how ore would eventually be transferred from the mine to the processing plant.

To explain the geology, we walked to a nearby spoil heap and Nigel picked up a gleaming lump of quartz to show a black inclusion that usually indicated gold.

Arriving at the processing plant, it was obvious construction was partially complete but as Nigel began to rattle off the forthcoming plans, I jotted items into my notebook. But it was no use trying to write and better to listen to the statistics. The monthly target was to process 3,000 tons of ore and produce just over 830 ounces of gold. The next phase was to boost the rate so as to double the amounts in 2022.

Cononish mine in a view from the West Highland Way In a view that locates the process plant.

We drove a short distance to the process plant. Of course it looked good in the morning sunshine. All the new colourful equipment, the smooth, clean floor, the ladders & steps, and aloft, paraphernalia for crushing, screening and wet grinding drums proved difficult to take in. An informative flow diagram illustrates the website, "Cononish processing plant". Workmen carried on with their tasks this Saturday morning but my head was spinning. I had dispensed with notes much earlier in preference to exposing, with permission, a few 'pictorial' pictures. We returned to my parked car and Margaret captured the farewell before we drove back to Tyndrum and the continuation of our journey.

Pausing on the West Highland Way, I took one last look at Scotland's commercially active gold mine and, with a long focus lens, I was able to capture a view that proved it was not a dream.

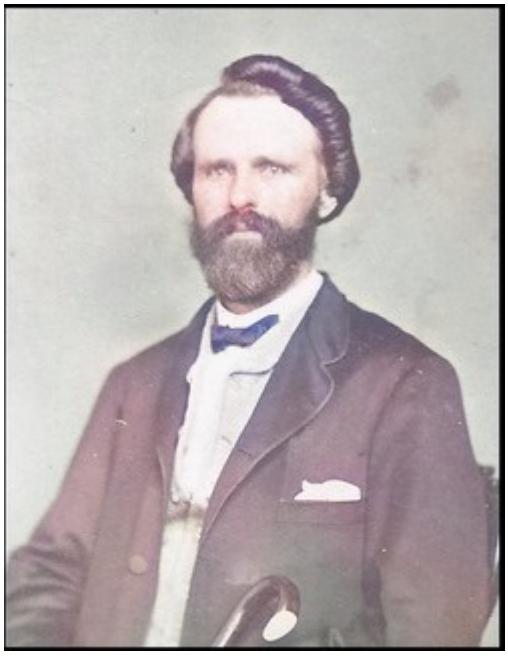
Author's note : *I realise I was privileged to have been treated so kindly and thanks go to my host & society member, Nigel Smalley. Scotgold received agreement from the commissioners of the Crown Estate for ten years of mining and gave serious ecological undertakings to the Loch Lomond National Park. As far as I could tell, they are being observed to the letter. With patience, my wife had enjoyed the encounter, but on our farewell she insisted on opportunities to photograph aspects of the River Cononish and the surrounding mountains. I agreed and merged with the landscape.*

STOP PRESS !

Glasgow's newspaper, The Herald, carried good news on 2nd December 2020 when it announced – "First gold poured at Scotgold's Cononish mine in 'landmark for the company and Scotland'.

Dr R M Callender. {Member}

Samuel Harries Daddow, Founder of A.I.M.E.

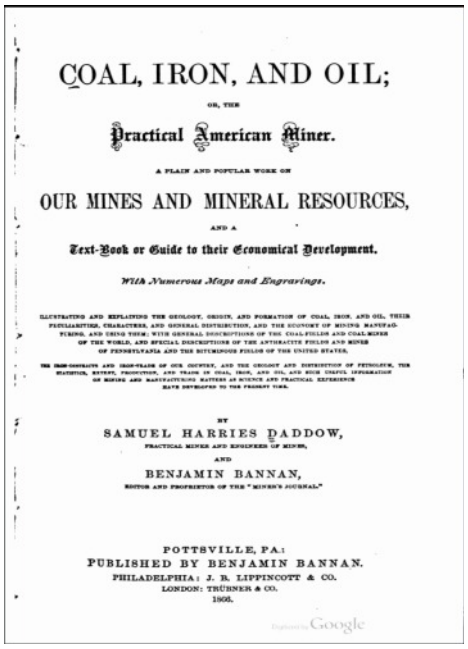


2021 IS THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE FOUNDING OF THE **A.I.M.E.**

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MINING ENGINEERS. NOW THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF MINING, METALLURGICAL & PETROLEUM ENGINEERS.

A.I.M.E. was founded at Wilkes-Barre May 16, 17, 18, 1871. The 68 individuals who were elected members during the first meeting are considered the founders.

Left is Samuel Harries Daddow (1827 1875). Samuel was born in Cornwall, and his parents, Jonathan and Christine Harries Daddow brought their family to America in about 1830. He married Esther Anne Beadle in 1856. Esther was the sister of Jesse Beadle, another founder member of A.I.M.E.



COAL, IRON, AND OIL;

OR, THE

Practical American Miner.

A PLAIN AND POPULAR WORK ON

OUR MINES AND MINERAL RESOURCES,

AND A

Text-Book or Guide to their Economical Development.

With Numerous Maps and Engravings.

BY

SAMUEL HARRIES DADDOW,

PRACTICAL MINER AND ENGINEER OF MINES,

AND

BENJAMIN BANNAN,

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR OF THE "MINER'S JOURNAL."

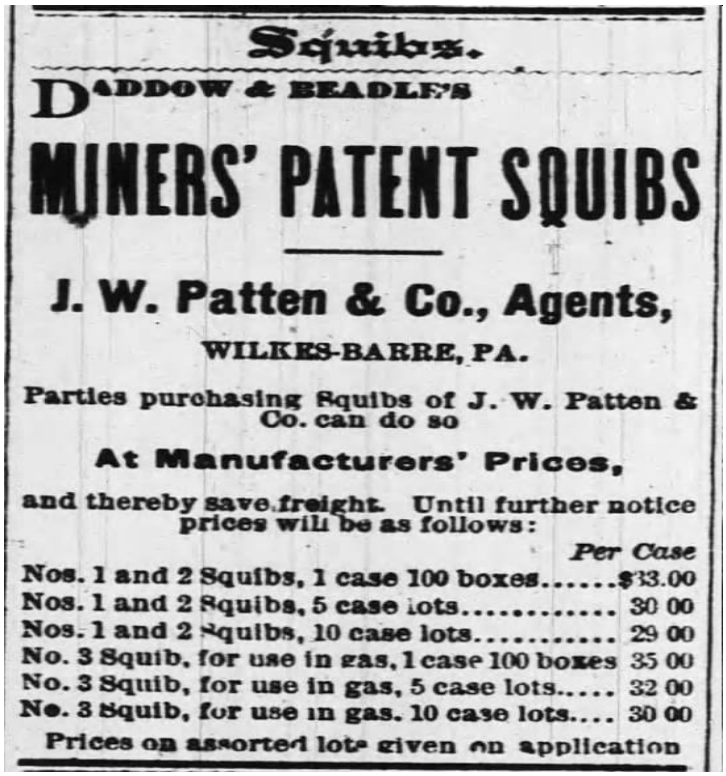
POTTSVILLE, PA.:
PUBLISHED BY BENJAMIN BANNAN.
PHILADELPHIA: J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.
LONDON: TRÜBNER & CO.
1866.

He began his working life at the coal mines as a labourer around the year 1840, quickly advancing to be in charge of the colliery store at Oak Hill Colliery, Duncott. Although Daddow's education was limited to public school, he became a recognized authority in geology and mine engineering and became connected with the "Miner's Journal" gathering statistics on coal and mining.

In 1855 he moved to Richmond Virginia and was involved in starting and managing both coal and iron mines, salt works and furnaces, and wrote several articles on "Mineral Resources of Virginia and the South"

In 1864 he returned to Pennsylvania, and again worked for the "Miner's Journal" gathering statistics on coal and mining which became parts of the literary works, "Coal, Iron and Oil, or the Practical Miner" {above}. "A plain and popular work on our mines and mineral resources, and a text-book or guide to their economical development" was co-authored with Benjamin Bannan, editor of the Journal, published in 1866. The original book is available from time to time on eBay, or as a reproduction from several sources, such as Walmart. You can also download a copy at: https://books.google.co.vi.

The Miner's Supply Company in St. Clair, PA was founded by Samuel H. Daddow and Jesse Beadle in 1866. The Miners Supply Store was located on South 2nd Street and provided a variety of mining equipment including their main product, the "Miner's Safety Squibs".



Squibs.

DADDOW & BEADLE'S

MINERS' PATENT SQUIBS

J. W. Patten & Co., Agents,

WILKES-BARRE, PA.

Parties purchasing Squibs of J. W. Patten & Co. can do so

At Manufacturers' Prices,

and thereby save freight. Until further notice prices will be as follows:

	Per Case
Nos. 1 and 2 Squibs, 1 case 100 boxes	$13.00
Nos. 1 and 2 Squibs, 5 case lots	30 00
Nos. 1 and 2 Squibs, 10 case lots	29 00
No. 3 Squib, for use in gas, 1 case 100 boxes	35 00
No. 3 Squib, for use in gas, 5 case lots	32 00
No. 3 Squib, for use in gas. 10 case lots	30 00

Prices on assorted lots given on application

Daddow and Beadle invented and perfected the squib, a device used to ignite blasting powder. Their squib was patented on Sept. 6, 1870. Their squibs became more economical for the miners to purchase than to make their own and consisted of a paper cylinder filled with black powder, about 5 inches long and as thick as a lollipop stick. It had a two-inch slow-burning match at one end. When the match was lighted, about one minute elapsed before the fire reached the powder portion, acting as a sort of fuse to allow the miners to safely clear the area. The blasting squib shot to the back end of the inserted paper cartridge to explode the charge. Daddow and Beadle were the largest suppliers of squibs in the area.

The squibs were made and packed by hand at the Daddow and Beadle factory on Franklin St. in St. Clair. All the squib manufacturing was done exclusively by 50-60 women workers producing 30,000 to 40,000 squibs daily that were then sent to nearly every mining district in the U.S.A. During the 1880s, 90% of the squibs used in the U.S.A. were manufactured in St. Clair. The Miners Supply Company store operated until 1928 and the squib factory closed in Febuary 1929.

Daddow and Beadle also opened the Lattimer Cap Factory, on Nichols & Patterson Streets, St. Clair, where they produced miners caps which held a patented attachment for the miner's light.

By kind permission. Penn-Anthracite SME.

THE BOTALLACK MINE CORNWALL – Part Two

THE BOSCAWEN SHAFT SINKING AND HISTORY

Following on from the publication in the last newsletter of an article issued in newspapers of the time describing the disaster in the Boscawen shaft at Botallack in 1863, I thought it may be of interest to describe the sinking of the shaft itself, the reason for its sinking and the history of its short life in use.

The Crowns section of Botallack mine is situated on the coast near to Botallack village and had for many years been an important part of this large amalgamation of mining setts, it had by the 1850s been developed to a considerable depth and driven quite a distance under the bed of the Atlantic Ocean. This led to major difficulties in working this section efficiently, due to large tramming distances from the main working areas to the landward shafts, ventilation out under the sea, and time taken for men to reach the rich areas of ore, added to this is the fatigue brought on by climbing ladder ways for over 1000 feet, reducing the amount of work that the miners could do in their working day.

The Crowns was the main copper producing section of the mine, the copper being found in lodes in the killas rock overlying the granite (killas being a clay slate rock) the granite coming to the surface inland provided the tin producing lodes at Botallack.

WHY A DIAGONAL SHAFT?

The copper mineralisation hereabouts, that is the ore shoots, are found ever deeper the further out from the coast they are worked.
The reason for this is that the junction between the killas and granite is not vertical, but has an average angle of about 60 degrees to the vertical with the junction of the killas and granite being thrown ever deeper out to seawards. The ore-shoots tend follow junction (all be it a shallower angle than the junction itself) being thrown further and further out to sea with depth. By the later 1850s the mine was already 180 fathoms below adit, the end at this level being already 325 fathoms North of Wheal Button Shaft (the main winding shaft of the Crowns section at the time). This end had yet to reach paying ground, although a winze below this level was in copper ore. Now to develop the mine further Button Shaft would need to be sunk to the 195-fathom level and the level driven to meet the ore shoot all in non-paying ground and at great expense both in time and cost.

The suggestion therefore in 1858 was to sink an incline shaft to reach the present 180-fathom level end at a distance of about 360 fathoms from the shore, this was to be known as the Boscawen Diagonal Shaft. The angle chosen at which to sink the shaft was 32.5 degrees to the horizontal, this angle being chosen because of the ore shoots being thrown further away from the granite killas junction as the depth increased. It was reckoned that an incline could be sunk at less expense than sinking the sump, and certainly a lot less than driving another long level, all to be repeated as the mine went ever deeper, whereas the diagonal shaft could just be extended at the same angle to follow the ore shoots and would be of considerable value to the mine in future. It would also help to ventilate the mine in depth out under the ocean, and could carry men close to their place of work, meaning the men arrived fresh and ready for work In April 1858 , the appearance of the rich copper ore in the winzes below the 180 was making the sinking of the shaft with all speed imperative and work had already started from the surface, Wheal Button shaft was reached by June of that year (this shaft being on the line of the new incline). The shaft was at this time sinking and rising at the 20-fathom level rising over the 33, driving the 50 and rising over the back of the 65-fathom level. By August the shaft was being worked on by 16 men and 6 boys at various points to speed the progress.

The October report shows even more men working in the shaft with 20 men and 13 boys employed in sinking Boscawen Shaft alone, this showing the importance placed on this project by the management of the mine. In December 1858, 160 fathoms had been opened up in the shaft and all was progressing well, this was increased to 225 fathoms by the next April. The only place where work was being delayed at this time was about mid depth, where heavy timbers were needed for support. October 1859 saw Boscawen Shaft communicated from the surface to 8 fathoms below the 150-fathom level and railroad being laid in the completed section of the shaft. Men were now employed in squaring and securing sections of the shaft, with the shaft reaching the then depth of the mine (180 fathoms) by February 1860, by April 300 fathoms of the shaft was open and railroad laid to the 50-fathom level. Warrington-Smyth (Duchy of Cornwall inspector of mines) stated that the incline shaft was almost complete, and that the section which looked dangerous (mentioned above) had been secured with expensive American and Baltic timber balks 16 inches square. The shaft continued to be sunk below the then bottom of the mine and had reached 8 fathoms below the 180 fathom level with the Crowns lode still not cut through. At this point there is a gap in reports on the mine, which restart in October 1861, by this time the engine house for the draught engine and boiler house was complete, the engine erected and boiler fitted.

There is a comment that difficulties of position retarded progress, anyone who has visited the Crowns will not be surprised by this comment. This engine was reputed to have come from Wheal Button (where it stood near the bottom of the cliff to draw from that shaft) I can now confirm that as true, having found a newspaper report from this time describing the hauling of the boiler halfway up the cliff and then lowering back down to its new position at Pearce's Whim (the name given to the engine in its new position). The engine was moved in a similar fashion.

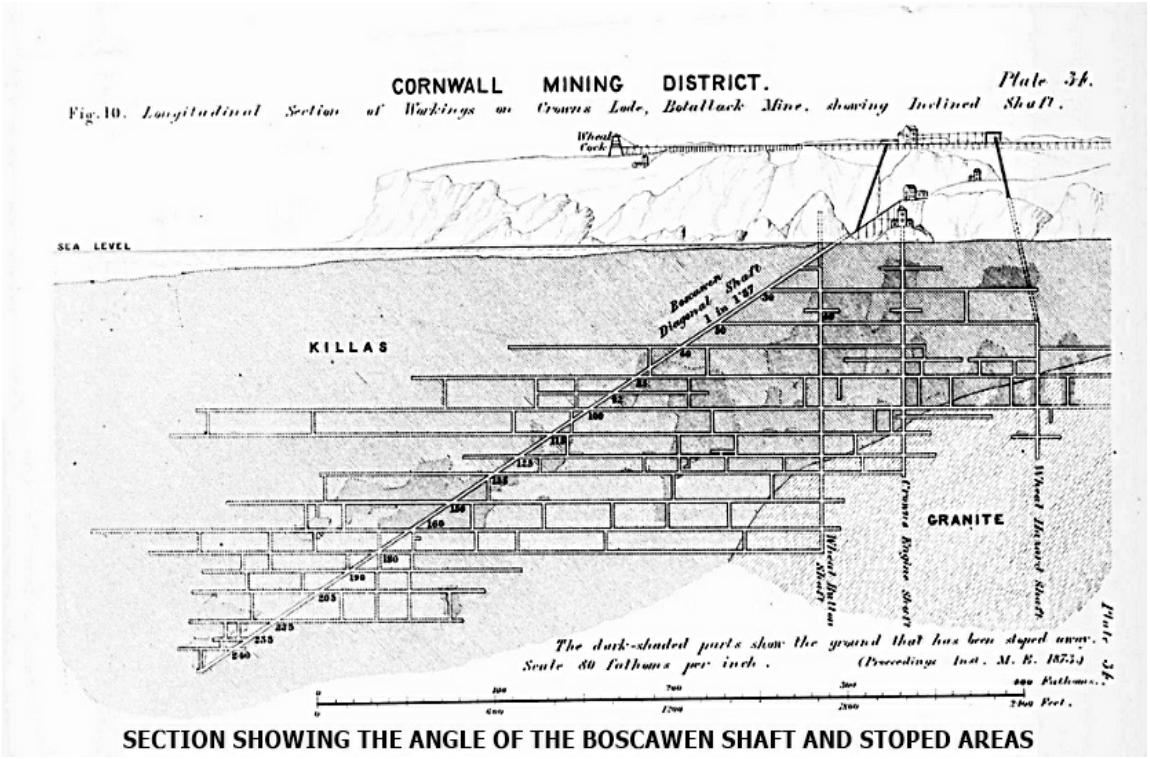
The report of January to March quarter of 1862 is a little special, and states that the Boscawen Diagonal Shaft is working to the bottom of the mine to our entire satisfaction. The shaft had cut the Crowns lode at the 190-fathom level, it being 2 feet wide here and worth £20 per fathom for copper. This completion of Boscawen Shaft ended a number of years investment at Botallack with £10,000 being spent on this shaft, a new steam stamping engine and new tin dressing floors near this stamps engine.

The Boscawen Diagonal Shaft was driven Northwards at an angle of 32.5 degrees from the horizontal, it started a little above sea level on the cliff and reached an eventual depth of 250 fathoms below adit and about two thirds of a mile out under the sea. At the time of opening, it had reached the 190-fathom level, but only worked to the 180 level. Between the engine house and the mouth of the shaft

the rails ran on a huge wooden trestle across the cliff face. Ore was raised in a skip which ran on rails the entire length of the shaft, there was a landing place just below the engine house, from here the ore was transshipped to another skip, which was drawn up the cliff face on a further trestle by an engine on the cliff top to the copper dressing floors which stood atop the cliffs above Pearce's Whim. The diagonal shaft was also used for lowering materials needed in the mine and for man riding in and out of the mine, this facility caused problems for the mine as it made it possible for tourists to easily visit the mine, over the next few years, with this taking up valuable winding time.

There was also a terrible accident when winding men, just over a year after the shaft was opened, when a winding chain broke, plummeting 8 men and a boy to their deaths, that will be dealt with elsewhere in this account. It seems that the shaft was not the great success hoped for, the ores thinning out with greater depth and not being worth continuing to work below the 250-fathom level. This section of the mine was abandoned in early 1874, along with it the use of this incredible shaft and the fantastic engineering feat to wind from it. So was it worth it then, probably not, it only worked for 10 years, perhaps being another of those white elephants that seem to happen quite regularly in mining.

It did however leave us with one of the most spectacular pieces of mining scenery in the world, for us all to visit and see. The engine house is perched spectacularly on a cliff edge, the shaft mouth with a huge boulder in its entrance is still visible across a chasm that once had the wooden trestle built across it to carry the carriage as it emerged from the shaft. It is so impressive what miners of this era managed to construct, drive and sink, with all of the underground work done by candlelight, hand drilling, gun powder blasting etc.



SECTION SHOWING THE ANGLE OF THE BOSCAWEN SHAFT AND STOPED AREAS

BOSCAWEN SHAFT IN OPERATION

The shaft itself had only one set of rails running in it, laid at a gauge of two feet seven and a half inch, due to its small size, this ran from the engine house over a trestle to the mouth of the shaft (itself about 30 ft above sea level) and from there to the bottom of the shaft at a 32.5-degree incline. The shaft was relatively small in dimension varying between 5 and 12 feet in width with a height of about 6 feet.

Two carriages were built to work on this incline, a skip for the carriage of ore and materials, and a separate gig designed for man riding, both were designed by a Captain Rowe the mines engineer. Holman and Sons of St. Just manufacturing them both. Haulage in the shaft at the beginning of use was by chain, this being graduated in size over its length to allow for the greater strain on the upper portion as the weight increased with paying out of the chain, the first 100 fathoms being 5/8-inch best charcoal iron, the second 100 fathoms being 9/16-inch, the remaining 200 fathoms being ½-inch iron. The mineral carrying gig weighed about 8 cwt and carried a load of 16 cwt.

The man carrying gig weighed about 14 cwt empty and was designed to carry 8 men (often one extra boy was carried, making a total load of nine persons), seats were arranged in tiers to allow for the low roof in the shaft, 2 men riding side by side in each tier. The chain was attached to the underside of this carriage by an ingenious system of levers and spring, which if the chain should break would apply claws to either side of the narrow part of the rails which the carriage ran on, to arrest any runaway which might occur (unfortunately this failed to prevent the disaster in 1863). The operation of this man carrying gig along with a description of accident will be described in the next newsletter. This will also include a description of the shaft as a tourist attraction and some of the famous persons who visited the mine via this amazing shaft.

Paul Smith. {Member}

Page 6 of the November Newsletter Correction

The Editor.

Finally got round to properly reading the November Newsletter. There is an error in Colin's offering but I'm not sure where it originated since it could an error in Niel Cossons book. The material imported from Sweden for conversion to steel was high quality iron not high quality steel.

Dr. James Cleland. {Member}.

The artist inspired by South Yorkshire's coal mines, cooling towers and steelworks

Back in the 1970s South Yorkshire was a powerhouse of heavy industry and while it helped keep the country moving, the coal mines, coking plants and steelworks were hardly its most attractive features. But one man saw a beauty through the grime and set about chronicling what was before him in the only way he knew how, with paint and brushes.

Peter with some of his work exhibited in Rotherham.

Artist Peter Watson became familiar with the county after meeting his wife and recognised the potential not of its impressive moorlands or rolling fields, but of the industrial landscape most would have discarded as a blight on the area. His eye for that detail won him a small exhibition in Rotherham and among his new and growing band of admirers was a National Coal Board executive.

That contact ended up with him being commissioned to paint many of the county's collieries as, although it was unknown at the time, the clock was ticking towards their closure as the year long miners' strike, followed by wholesale closures, loomed in the following decades.

In the confusion of the colliery closure programme, Peter's work appeared to vanish and he assumed they must have been taken as individual mementos or maybe even thrown away as the NCB changed to British Coal or the collieries closed. The South Yorkshire ' twin villages that share DNA' but are anything but identical. Miners' strikes to shopping haven: How Dearne Valley has been reborn after surviving its 'Alamo' experience

Years later, he was contacted by the National Coal Mining Museum in Wakefield to be asked if he was the Peter Watson who had painted the collieries. It turned out his work had been kept together and is now seen as being of such significance it forms part of a national collection. So much so that when he learned one painting needed a repair he offered to retouch the work but was politely refused, with the explanation such tasks were entrusted only to official conservators.

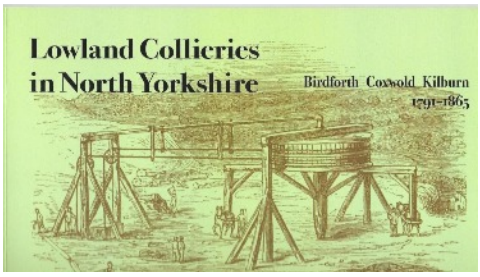
Beyond mining he also recorded now-gone landmarks such as Tinsley's 'twin towers' alongside the M1. and others which could have been overlooked as mundane. Today Peter, who lives near the coast in North Yorkshire, is still painting but his subject matter is more likely to be the natural environment of the Yorkshire Wolds. However, his brushes still veer towards the man-made and features like crumbling sea defences appear alongside some of the finest nature has to offer.

Sourced by our field representative in South Yorkshire.

Article source. Yorkshire Live. Jan. 2021. {Edited}

New Book Released.

Lowland Collieries in North Yorkshire.
By Stuart Marriott



Published during the middle of 2020, the book covers an area lying about 15 miles or 24 km. North of York. Between Easingwold, Ampleforth and Thirsk.

Also the book covers the limestone quarry and newly discovered remains of a lime kiln in Boars Gill near to the Kilburn coal workings. This area which is South East of Sutton Bank will come as a surprise to mining enthusiasts as it is not a well-known or obvious coal mining area.

The author was inspired to write this book by the late John Owen, who wrote a three part study entitled, The Moor Coal of North Yorkshire. Published in the Bulletin of the Cleveland and Teesside Local History Society during 1969-70. One of the essays was devoted to the Thirsk area.

The geology of the area is explained also the collieries are put into context and the extractive industry sites are studied as is some of the local social history.

The sixty page paperback book costs £10.00 plus postage and can be obtained from the author Stuart Marriott, Carlton Letterworks, Rose Cottage, Carlton Husthwaite, Thirsk, YO7 2BJ. Email: **letterworks@btinternet.com**

Colin M Keighley. {Member}

The tragedy at Gleision Colliery retold as the 10-year anniversary approaches

This year will mark 10 years since the Gleision mining disaster which claimed the lives of four men On one fateful day in autumn four men went to work and didn't come back following Wales' biggest modern mining disaster.

Garry Jenkins, 39, David Powell, 50, Phillip Hill, 45, and Charles Breslin, 62, were killed at the Gleision Colliery following an incident on September 15, 2011.

They were working on a routine blasting operation at the pit in Cilybebyll, near Pontardawe, but disaster struck when the tunnel they were working in began filling with water. The miners and pit manager Malcolm Fyfield blasted through to flooded old workings, causing 650,000 gallons of water to gush into the mine.

Three men were able to escape with their lives but the four men who remained behind were found dead the following day. This year will mark the 10th anniversary of the disaster and we look back at those who were involved with the tragedy and the relatives of those who lost their lives.

Sourced by our field representative in South Wales.

Article source. Wales Live. Jan 2021. {Edited}

Editors Notes.

1. As this Newsletter is representative of its members interests, hobbies and working lives. Why don't you tell the membership what your interest is or what your hobbies are and what you have done throughout your working life? As long as its connected in some way to mining all articles will be published. If you need help or guidance in doing so please contact me.

2. Have you noticed that a few members have made appeals for information in the last few issues? These have meet with a very good response. So if you have something puzzling you that's mining related why not ask the membership for information?

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily agreed with or shared by the Northern Mine Research Society, its Officers or the Newsletter Editor. The accuracy of statements made in articles submitted for publication will not normally be checked for validity by the Newsletter Editor. The responsibility for the content of articles submitted by individual members or groups remains with the authors and cannot be accepted by the Society, its Officers or the Newsletter Editor.

Data Protection Act

Members are reminded that the NMRS maintains a list of their names and addresses solely for the purposes of printing labels for Membership Cards and posting newsletters and publications. Such details are deleted from the database for any member who leaves the Society, either after the committee have been notified or after it has been determined that an overdue subscription has not been paid for several months.

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Visit our Website

www.nmrs.org.uk

Pithead baths at Betteshanger Colliery Kent. {1930s}

Miners ' welfare and pithead baths buildings at Manvers Main Colliery, South Yorkshire. {1940s}

Thorney Bank Colliery Burnley Lancashire Pithead baths.{1950s}

Modernists design clearly visible at Betteshanger Colliery Pithead baths entrance Kent. {1930s}

Pithead Baths in the Modernists Design.

Before pithead baths became widely available, most coal miner's would have to travel home at the end of their shift in the filthy pit rags. They would have to bath in a tin bath often in front of the fire.

Considerable lobbying from social reformers under the banner of the "Pithead Baths Movement" had to convince the government, miner's and miner's wife's that pithead baths were needed. Finally in 1926 a special fund was established for the purpose of pithead baths construction this was called "The Miner's Welfare Committee"{M.W.C.}. Pithead baths had been in use in Europe since the 1880s. In 1913 a delegation was sent by, David Davies, the proprietor of the Welsh Ocean Coal Company and an advocate for social reform to see these European baths. This led to the construction of the first Welsh baths at Deep Navigation Colliery in 1916. The success of these baths led to a national campaign for baths to be constructed at every colliery nation wide.

In 1919 the British Government established a Royal Commission and as a result a levy of one penny on every ton of coal raised was adopted for the funding of miners welfare facility's. In 1926 an additional levy was raised for the sole purpose of pithead baths construction.

During the period 1921 to 1952 the Miners' Welfare Fund was responsible for building over 400 pithead baths. The M.W.C. used its in house architects like William Albert Woodland. Who's brief was to design cost effective buildings which were airy and bright in which every space had to have a use. By the 1930s a 'type approved design' was developed with its roots in the Modernists Design Movement of the day.

Pithead baths buildings stood out from other colliery buildings. They were some of the best examples of modernists architecture, technology and functionality of the day. They were proud symbols of miners welfare for all other heavy industries to admire and imitate.

Sharp lines, flat roofs, water towers, two entrances, large high level widows, lantern roofs, bright interiors fully tiled white internal walls, brutal modernism at its height. Each miner having two secure lockers dirty and clean. Ducted heated into lockers for drying wet cloths. All managed by the revered baths superintendent responsible for keeping order and cleanliness.

The miners payed for many of these facility's themselves by a Government imposed levy's on their wages. After nationalization the NCB was responsible for providing them. Many today would say it was money well spent.

Graham Topping. {Member}