

Northern Mine Research Society

Newsletter February 1988

So far, at any rate, there doesn't seem to be any upsets to apologise for, and even if there had been an elastic conscience would alleviate the necessity to dwell further on the subject.

I suppose this is as good a way as any to say that we're not sorry for including a reminder slip for those members (soon to become ex members) who for one reason or another, no monies have been received for their 1988 subs. Don't forget; you no pay! you no get any more from us!

If, perchance, we have made a boob? then let us know and Geoff, or someone, will do the sackcloth and ashes bit accordingly.

Future Meets.

17 April: Alderley Edge Mines. Leader L.O.Tyson.

Meet at the Wizard Car Park. N.G.R. SJ 857772 at 10.30am.

14 May: General Meeting, Hotel Italia, 53 King's Road, Harrogate at 2.00pm., to be (Sat) followed by lectures and slides.

Annual Dinner to be held here in the evening. (Details & Booking form elsewhere).

5 June: Sir Francis Mine, Swaledale. Leader L.O.Tyson.

Meet in Gunnerside Village. N.G.R. SD 951982 at 10.30am.

28 Aug: Hurst Area. Leader L.O.Tyson.

Meet at telephone box Hurst, N.G.R. NZ 052026 at 10.30am.

11 Sept: General Meeting, Sicklinghall Village Hall at 2.00pm.

12 Nov: General Meeting followed by President's Talk-in and Pie & Pea Supper, (Sat) Sicklinghall Village Hall at 2.00pm.

Woodhead Mine

As I understand things, the Factor for the Cathcart Estate is still vetting our credentials, and, as a result, we haven't been given the go-ahead to do 'owt yet. Easter is definitely out, so the earliest we can go will be Spring Bank Hol.

Anyone wanting a Scottish experience, let me know and I'll contact you if/when I hear anything, which, all being well, will be anytime soon. HH (address at end)

News from the Edge. Alderley that is!!

On last years trip to West Mine I met some of the D.C. members who were starting to dig out the Hough Level. It being on my doorstep, as it were, I began visiting regularly and became very involved in the work being done there. The level, driven in sandstone, was silted up to a depth of 5ft high by 5ft width. We have dug this out for a distance of approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, laying rails as we go and tramping out 2 ton loads in side tipping tubs. We have been pushing the tubs out by hand, but recently we were given a diesel loco by the Water Board and this has been stripped down, over hauled and got down to the Hough Level and is now being re-assembled on the tracks.

Work has stopped at the Level for the present as our new task is to excavate Bear Pit Shaft at the side of Engine Vein. This is approx. 180ft and is infilled its full depth and runs into the Hough Level causing a blockage which prevents a through trip from Hough Level to Wood Mine. Once this shaft is cleared we will restart work on digging the Hough Level through to Wood Mine, only $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to go!! At present we're down 90ft after erecting scaffold head frame and using a winch to hoist the two kibbles in work. Members attending this years meet (17 April) will get a better picture of what we are doing. (For the Meet please bring lunch, underground gear - no wet suits required as level should be drained by then.) (!!!!! Ed.)

He may sulk 'cos I don't reply by return in his non-enclosed s.a.e., but he can't say I don't luv 'im all the same, and I do use everything he sends me, and I would pay him for them if I had any money, honest!! I'd better stop else you'll never read the rest for tear stains.

Crushing Circle on Shetland.

Should anyone find themselves visiting the island of Unst, the most northerly of the far flung Shetland Islands, they may be surprised to stumble across a magnificent example of a crushing-circle, which is perhaps the best surviving example in the British Isles including the several still existing in the Derbyshire ore-field.

The Unst crushing-circle has been restored recently by the Amenity Trust on Shetland with money provided by the oil industry. The circle is enclosed by a fine stone wall, presumably to protect the ubiquitous Shetland pony from exposure to the sweeping gales prevalent in that part of the world but a feature not seen anywhere else? The stone appears to be imported gritstone and is complete with an iron tyre. The slabs making up the floor of the circle are of local stone, (serpentine). The centre bearing post consists of a large circular iron plate, again not seen on other crushing circles? And there appears to be a quite complex integrated buddling system incorporated.

Although the Amenity Trust is reported as having little idea of the function and purpose of the circle it is associated with the Hagdale chromite quarrying industry. Since 1820 c50000 tons of chromite have been produced from the numerous outcrops on Unst, reaching peak production in the middle of the century. There were three main periods of working and from documentary evidence the circle dates from the first period, 1820-1876. The Hagdale Quarry was discovered c1840 and closed in 1860 and therefore the circle was most likely built 1840-1850, the remains of a large steam pumping plant remained until the end of the century.

A milling plant was installed in 1918 in a vain attempt to produce 45-50% Cr₂O₃ from waste and low grade ore. The plant included a Marsden fine crusher, a pair of Broadbent rolls, 4-compartment Hartz type jig and Record vaning tables. Apart from the slump in chrome ore prices the 45% chrome level was unattainable. The shipping slump of 1921 and the high rate of wear of the machinery, thought to be due to the presence of corundum, quickly brought operations to a close.

Until the First World War the chemical industry took the combined output of the several scattered quarries. Then, especially between 1936-1944, the chromite was used as a refractory, replacing expensive foreign ores in the manufacture of chrome-manganese bricks. The industry petered out c1945 due primarily to the exhaustion of the surface deposits and the increasingly unsafe nature of the deeper quarry workings.

P.J.Challis.

We may not be exactly the "Times" classifieds, but it's quality not quantity in this rag.

1. Folding Card Trays - White card trays for your mineral specimens:-

20 2"x2"x1"	£1.40
20 3"x2"x1"	£1.50
20 3"x4"x1"	£1.85

2. Transparent Plastic Boxes with white base

1½"x1¼"x1" approx 12p. each.

The above are obtainable from Barbara Sutcliffe (one of our members) 93 Halifax Rd., Nelson, Lancs BB9 0EQ. Tel (0282)64615.

(Orders up to £5 please add 75p; up to £10 please add £1.25 and over £10 please add £1.75).

3. Books Wanted Good prices paid for mining and mineralogy books.

Please write to Simon Taylor (another member) Greyfriars Books, 92B East Hill, Colchester, Essex CO1 2QN.

4. Record Agency Services Should anyone require research carried out on their behalf at reasonable rates, please contact me at the address below. I'd rather be researching mining history than the run-of-the-mill genealogy. Available for work in any of the Record Offices in South and West Wales, including the National Library of Wales and Companies House, Cardiff (for mining companies registered in Truro in connection with the Stannary Courts).

Peter F.Claughton (also member) Blaenpant Norfil, Rosebush, Clynderwen, Dyfedd.

5. Mining Share Certificates - British, Commonwealth and U.S.A. mining share certs., bought and sold, please write or phone for details.

M.Veissid & Co. (Member) Hobsley House, Frodesley, Shrewsbury SY5 7HD. Tel 06744 268.

From time to time we get asked words to the effect of "How much for an ad. in your marvellous Newsletter?". Again we differ slightly from those in the "Times" League, 'cos we charge nowt to members, though a donation is always appreciated. Non-members are charged nowt also, but the size of their expected donation is specified.

The Basset Mines, Cornwall.

The recent NMRS publication British Mining 32 The Basset Mines, was a long overdue in-depth description of a small but intensely mined area. One of the most significant things about these mines was the installation and use of a double-cylinder inverted Cornish engine about the turn of the century, a remarkable variation instead of the use of the normal Cornish beam engine in its tall enginehouse. This unique engine is described in D.B.Barton's "The Cornish Beam Engine" and again in BM32. Both publications state that the maker of the engine was Hathorn Davey & Co of Leeds.

Industrial archaeology is a continuing saga of great losses, but one of the few successes must be the fact that in the West Yorkshire Archives in Leeds is the full set of order books of Messrs.Hathorn Davey, stretching from 1852 until well into the present century, meticulously detailing a vast amount of machinery and equipment supplied to Home, Empire, Foreign countries and Cornwall. Unfortunately the only mention of Basset Mines Ltd. is under order no. 5667 for the supply of Davey's Patent Differential Gear for an 80" Compound Cornish engine, ordered 19 September 1896, delivered to Redruth Station.

The main parts of the engine in question comprised two cylinders and a beam, the 80" cylinder being a re-use of a previous engine situated on the same shaft. Was the other cylinder, the 40", a similar re-use of a cylinder from another engine, a whim perhaps, and in fact was the beam made locally? After all many more bobs had been made in Cornwall than in Leeds.

Standing beside the engine was the Davey Differential Gear (order no. 5667) complete with brass nameplate; was it from this that the story developed that the whole engine was made by Hathorn Davey?

S.A.Chapman.

It may look as though members are doing all their mining from the comfort of their armchairs, but the main reason we have so many Book Reviews is because some of them came too late for inclusion in the last Newsletter.

Guess who got what from Santa!

1. Rockbottom - Issue 3. U.K. Journal of Mines & Minerals. 40pp, numerous plates & half tones. £3.00 from Mrs.J.C.Spence, 3 Oak Tree Road, Bawtry, Nr.Doncaster S.Yorks.

The first and second editions of this new magazine have already been reviewed in the Newsletter. The third issue which, as was surmised last time, comes with a splendid four-colour cover whilst the internal presentation is about as professionally produced as can be, and is a credit to the publishers.

Apart from the editorial, there are 16 articles included and whilst most of these have a mineral 'bent', there are a few which will be of interest to the mining historian whose enthusiasm is strictly divorced from mineral collecting. Of these articles, "The World's Deepest Shaft" is a fascinating look at the problems encountered at Western Deep Levels mine, South Africa, where sinking is taking place to an ultimate depth of 4000 metres.

Another article, titled "Agricola Country" is about the Harz Mines, and modesty on the part of this reviewer precludes further expansion on this item!

An article on South Crofty mine is well researched and illustrated - although adding little to the already available historical material from other sources, whilst "The Minerals of Llechwedd Helyg" will interest those members who have a soft spot for Cardiganshire - sorry, Dyfed - mines.

NMRS get a plug for British Mining 31 in the book review section.

For those who have not seen the earlier issues of Rockbottom - and, indeed, for those who have and are not subscribers to this journal - I would suggest you get hold of a copy, one way or t'other. There is, I would think, something here to interest everyone.

Dick Bird.

2. Wythburn Mine & the Lead Miners of Helvellyn by Alen McFadzean

For over forty years the miners of the Thirlmere valley tunnelled their way into the heart of Helvellyn - England's third highest mountain - in search of galena, the glittering, silver-rich lead ore of Cumberland's deep and elusive mineral lodes. Wythburn Mine was their place of work, a remote 19th century industrial settlement steeped in Cornish mining tradition though embracing the techniques and expertise of the north Pennine ore fields.

In this, his first publication, Alen McFadzean recounts the fascinating story of Wythburn Mine, the men who laboured in it, and the managers who fought nature and financial hardship only to see their achievements torn down by Manchester Corporation and the execution of the Thirlmere Scheme, the controversial reservoir project of the 1870's and 1880s.

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With twelve black and white photos, and drawings besides, this is a highly original monograph containing a wealth of previously unpublished material. Alen McFadzean's straightforward literary style conveys a true, colourful, and sometimes tragic account of the history of a vanished history, the growth and decline of a mining community, and the flooding of the Lakeland valley.

Available from Red Earth Publications, 7 Silver Street, Marton, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 0NQ at special 12% discount price for NMRS members! £3.40 + 50p p&p.

3. Collieries on the Manchester Coalfields by Geoffrey Hayes. A5 Hardbound £11.50; paperback £9 plus £2.50 p&p from De Archeologishe Pers, Zeelsterstraat 147, NL5652 EE Eindhoven, Netherlands. About 230pp inc. 50 illustrations, plans etc. Published 1986.

It would be grand if such a book was published for each mining field, the range of detail given is outstanding. An outline of the Manchester coalfield is followed by a general survey of its development. The three main sections of the book describe the old collieries (from about 17th centuries), the modern collieries (from about 1830) and the transport systems. The index lists over 50 collieries which are referred to in the text while the appendices give details of steam winding engines and of the locomotives used at Manchester collieries. The work is a fitting tribute to a coalfield which now has only one mine operating.

I.J.Brown.

4. The Salt Industry of the River Tees by David M. Tomlin. A4 hardbound £7.50; paperback £7 plus £2.50 p & p from De Archeologishe Pers (as above) About 100pp. inc. 58 illustrations, plans etc. First published 1982.

An unusual book covering an unusual subject, this publication has particularly clear maps and illustrations. It deals comprehensively with the discovery of the salt-field, its development and its decline. The salt was produced in the form of brine and there is a wealth of detail on the drilling and pump systems used. The salt pans are described and the present use of some of the underground cavities remaining, as storage for fluids and gases, is indicated.

I.J.B.

Note. The publisher of the above works has also produced a portfolio of A4 size prints entitled "scenes from the silver mine 'Saint Nicolaes' in Lorraine" by Heinrich Gross-Moller. The eight 16th century engravings show in great detail the methods of metal mining used at that time, the lamps, the wooden rail tracks, shaft furniture and the techniques used in the dressing of the ore are particularly clear. The portfolio is available in hardback folder price £6 or as an economy version at £4. plus £2.50 p & p.

I.J.B.

5. Copper & Copper mining by R.L. Atkinson, published by Shire Publications Ltd. as Shire Album No. 201. Price £1.25. 1987.

This small book, typical of the series, which also covers tin, lead and quarrying, is very well produced. It has 32 pages with about 40 illustrations of old mines, equipment and personnel in Britain and abroad. There are four major sections on copper and its uses, history of copper mining (principally in Spain, USA & Australia) copper mining in Britain and mining, processing and smelting. For its size the book covers a fair range of sites and subjects and the author has obviously gone to some pains to be up-to-date. There is mention of recent closures in Ireland, exploration work in Wales, and of the development of the major new discovery at Olympic Dam, Australia. Following a recent visit the present writer can endorse the authors view that Olympic Dam could well be the largest metal ore deposit in the world, it is said to contain 30 mill. tonnes of copper as well as 1 mill. tonnes uranium, 1000 tonnes gold & 7000 tonnes silver.

The book concludes with a list of books for further reading, a list of mining societies with contact addresses and telephone numbers and a list of places to visit. These are all most useful; but here lies, perhaps, the only criticism the writer can find in this otherwise excellent little book. - In introducing the places to visit the writer names 3 Clubs which are usually willing to show visitors around mining areas. Why, however, are two of the three Clubs given not shown in the list of Societies? Consequently no contacts for these "willing" Clubs are available to the reader.

A little book, but well worth having at the price.

I.J.B.

6. The Great Strike: the history of the Penrhyn Quarry dispute of 1900-03, Jean Lindsay 264pp; 16 bw Photos. David & Charles. £9.95 HB.

Several accounts have been written about the events surrounding the Penrhyn slate quarry dispute of 1900-03, one of the most notorious episodes in the history of labour relations in the British Isles. And, given the relative wealth of documentary material relating to the north Wales slate quarrying industry, no doubt this one will not be the last.

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The bitter events of 1900-03 developed slowly out of a brooding conflict of cultures and class relationships between the wealthy landlord and the industrialist George Sholto Gordan Douglas Pennant, otherwise Lord Penrhyn, and the quarrymen employed in his vast quarry near the town of Bethesda in Caernarfonshire.

Lord Penrhyn was one of this country's most wealthy men, his net profits from the quarry amounted to a colossal £133,000 in 1898, and in addition he would also have received some £70,000 from his rental of land. On the other hand, the quarrymen counted their income in sums of shillings for a day's work. The Penrhyn financial empire was conducted on an almost feudal basis and there was a ruthless deployment of economic and political power by Lord Penrhyn and his managers'. He was a strident and autocratic believer in 'free labour', that is he was totally opposed to the idea of trades unions. And, given the support he had from like minded capitalists and industrialists it is probably not surprising that events took the course they did.

This latest book is said to present 'for the first time the full story behind the dispute', because, 'up to now the available accounts have been one-sided but Dr Lindsay gives an objective (whatever that may be) history...'. It is interesting to note that the author describes the dispute as a 'strike' whilst other writer's have preferred the term 'lockout' to describe the event.

Previously denied access to the Penrhyn family's private papers for her first book, 'A History of the North Wales Slate Industry' the author presents what is presumably hoped to be a more 'balanced' account than that published by Jones (The North Wales Quarrymen 1874-1922), published in 1981, who, as a matter of interest, claims to have had access to the family's papers and who wrote a powerful history of the dispute primarily from the quarrymen's point of view.

The immediate impression on reading the present book is that of an author intent upon ameliorating the image of Lord Penrhyn as the villain of the piece. For example, we are frequently exposed to snippets from the letters of his children and grandchildren, usually written from their very major public schools, begging favours or thanking him for gifts received, one wonders how many quarrymen's sons and daughters attended such establishments or received such presents as a gold compass. And, one is left wondering just what this has to do with the dispute, other than, of course, to present the 'villain' with a human face! Indeed the last sentence of the book is left to Lord Penrhyn, "I wasn't as black as I was painted, and.... my line was the right one". Well, you certainly pay your money and you take your choice.

For anyone interested in the social history of the Welsh slate quarrying industry the book is well worth reading and would make a less academic introduction to the series of events surrounding the whole sorry episode than that of The North Wales Quarrymen 1874-1922, but whether it is the objective account it is purported to be depends almost entirely on one's own political perspective. P.J.Challis.

7. Classic Minerals of Cornwall & Devon. P.G.Embrey & R.F.Symes.
154pp, 80 colour plates approx, 30 figures approx. £8.95 PB, £19.95 HB.
Published by British Museum (NH).

Although a number of 'pretty minerals' books have been published over the years the absence of any (an exception being the rather unimaginative NMW booklet on Welsh minerals?) to concentrate specifically on the wealth of fine British material is brought home by the long awaited publication of this book.

The book opens with an eminently readable chapter on the geology of SW England and is followed by a potted history of the mines and mining, mainly as they figure in the real meat of the book, the mineral photographs. The introductory chapters are themselves lavishly illustrated, many in colour, for example - the use of old engravings to depict the mines referred to.

Of great interest is the chapter on the mineral collectors and dealers upon whose labours we are treated to feast our eyes later in the book. One dealer-collector enticed miners to provide him with specimens in exchange for boots and shoes! and another hired two men to carry single specimens of acicular cerussite 'finer than the hair of the head and silvery white and as much as nine inches long' in a basket slung on a pole resting on their shoulders to prevent damage, a distance of some 30 miles!

The colour plates of the minerals follow, obviously chosen for their aesthetic and mineralogical interest. Primarily the specimens emanate from the BM's own collection and it would have been interesting to have some comparisons with specimens in other renowned collections. It was surprising to note the absence here of any varieties of native copper, for which the region is surely famed. And also, for this reviewer at least, one of the most beautiful of minerals, chalcotrichite, is represented by just one rather indifferent specimen - perhaps it doesn't photograph easily. The book concludes

with a very full and excellent list of references.

It is difficult to know the audience to which the book is primarily aimed. If it is the mineral collecting fraternity then the chapters on the geology and history of the ore-field seem overdone. Indeed one wonders, despite the cogent treatment and colourful illustrations just who the history of the mines and mining is directed. Surely ground which has been well and truly farrowed elsewhere, perhaps more minerals would have been in order!

However, the book represents almost unbelievable value, probably reflected by the involvement of the USA Mineralogical Record? Finally would it be too much to see the mineral wealth of the northern Pennine orefield given similar treatment?

P.H.Challis.

8. South Australia's Mining Heritage by J. Selby. Special Publication NO7, distributed by the Dept of Mines & Energy, South Australia.

Further to the mention of 'Cornish Mining Heritage' in the September Newsletter comes another booklet from the same source.

It is described as a "Book for anyone who revels in the dispersal of miners from Europe to the new territories, and their transfer to new surroundings of all the features of their old environment. It is a book for Cornish engine buffs, their appetites fed by evocative old photographs of localities such as Talisker Mine, south of Adelaide. Restored and brought to almost its original working order in what must be a popular movement in South Australia for Industrial Archaeology and conservation".

It also appears that a set of pamphlets dealing with famous mines is also available. Apparently the book and pamphlets may be seen in the library of the Geologists' Association in London.

P.J.Challis.

Preservation of Engine houses at Ledston.

The two winding engine houses at the now closed Ledston Colliery near Leeds, have been 'listed' by the Dept of Environment. Here is their description:- I.J.B.

"Barnsdale Road, (East side) Kippax. No. 1 Winder at Ledston Luck Colliery, with garden wall and gate.

Winding house, the western of a pair. Dated 1911 on the parapet. Red brick with sandstone dressings, roof concealed by a parapet. Square plan. Single vessel with appearance of 2 storeys, in Free Classical style. Symmetrical. Sandstone ashlar plinth; slightly-recessed centre between corner pylons; in the centre a wide semicircular archway with banded convex moulding framing a segmental-headed doorway with double doors, above this a 6-light mullioned window divided into three pairs by triangular king mullions rising from corbels below the sill and terminating in block corbels to a moulded cornice, a high parapet above this displaying in the centre a shouldered panel inscribed " A D

1911"

The corner pylons each have a recessed centre with a 3-stage, 6-light window with an apron below, and in the parapet above a raised panel with swags at the head, the parapet stepped up behind this. The left (north) side has openings for the drive cables to the winding gear; the south side has inter alia a 3-stage, 15-light window, and the rear a 6-light window. In front, to the road, a rectangular garden is enclosed by a brick wall with stone coping; with 2 steps down, linked to a similar front wall stepped up to frame a gate with wrought-iron gates in Art Nouveau style."

"Barnsdale Road (East side) Kippax. No. 2 Winder at Ledston Luck Colliery.

Winding house, the eastern of a pair. 1911 (date on Winder No. 1). Red brick with sandstone dressings, corrugated asbestos roof. Rectangular plan. Single vessel with storeyed appearance, raised over a basement. Free Classical style. South front with recessed centre between corner pylons; a flight of steps to an off-centre doorway in Tudor style, to the right of this a large 3-stage 12-light mullion and transom window; moulded cornice to stone parapet between the pylons. Pylons have short angle-buttresses with stone weathering, a 3-light mullioned window in each side, a high embattled parapet with a small raised panel. Left (west) side wall has a pseudo-pylon to the rear corner, a round-headed window in the centre; rear has 3 very large segmental-headed windows with small panes; (various additions here and to the east side not included in the item). Item included for group value with No. 1 Winder (q.v).

The following may be of interest to members :- Send me enough material and we can make a regular feature of such items.

Bad Air Warnings

1. Leigh Level, Shropshire. This level has been gated since the photo in 'Yesterdays Golcondas', but the gate is now falling off. About 150 yards in a candle goes out, a few yards further and a match will not even strike properly. This is especially dangerous as the level is easy walking with only an inch or two of water and situated within a few yards of a road.

2. Cwm Rheidol Mine. Rheidol Valley, Nr. Devils Bridge. The portal to this mine is waist deep in ochre silt, but further in conditions improve to about a foot or so of contaminated water. However, about 70 yards in a candle goes out.

Also

3. Erwtomau Upper Adit, Rheidol Valley (See BM 27)

Last summer I tried descending the Stope in this level to try to gain access to the lower workings. The timber floor over the first stope has a hole in it which, when cleared of debris, took on a perfect square appearance. Obviously a miners climbing route. I bridged it with a scaffold pole and belayed 100ft of rope. I abseiled 30ft to a working platform of timber and deads through which the climbing shaft continued. After clearing away as much of the loose stuff as I could I continued down, and reached the true bottom of the stope at 60ft. To the east a short level of a few feet took me to a further pitch of about 25ft with wooden stemples across it. (At this point I should have belayed but there was nothing to belay to so I carried on.) The upper part of my rope was at a cant and must have caught something, because as I stood at the bottom unfastening my descender a rock, about the size of a football, came hurling out of nowhere and missed my head by about 2". Anyway, I found myself now in a passage about 10 yards long heading east, at the end of which, on the left, was another climbing route of about 60 ft with wooden ladders in position. As there was no suitable belay I was unable to continue. However this route seems a definite access to the lower workings..

4. Bwlch Glas Lead Mine - These workings are no longer accessible, as they are now full of water right up to the head of the climbing shaft in the upper adit.

5. Ystrad Einion Mine - (see last Newsletter). The gateing of this mine has been done by the Forestry Commission, however the land upon which the adit with the Waterwheel is situated belongs to Mr Robert Plant (of popular music fame). Mr Plant has an 'easy' attitude to access, and when I last spoke to him he informed me that plans were afoot to dismantle the Waterwheel and ship it out to put in a museum.

6. Haggs Mine, Near Nenthead, Cumbria. It is still possible to enter these workings by way of the air line route from Brownley Hill mine. From B.H. portal turn left at the first junction and follow the level through the stopes. Look for a climb up on the left towards the end, with a crawl at the top. The way into Haggs is via a shaft about 25ft, possibly free-climbable, but recommend a ladder/SRT. You will also need a suitable belay, scaffold pole or w.h.y.

Roy A.Fellows.

Items from a Notebook.

During the course of research I come up with numerous notes on mining not strictly connected with an area under study. Rather than just committing these to the card index, as has happened in the past, it would answer the editor's cries if some were published in the newsletter, and perhaps supply someone with a hitherto un-noticed source of material.

1. Silver in Mid-Devon. In February 1312 a group of "the king's miners in Devon" claimed to have discovered silver mines at two locations in the South-West and were granted the right to search for one year from that Easter. One, in the parishes of Dulverton and Brushford, West Somerset, was still the subject of trial workings two years later after an extension of time had been granted, and is the site of occasional silver-lead working up to mid 19th C.

The other location is given as being on the land of Walter Tauntefer at Suthtauton and Stiklepath, in Co.Somerset, but no doubt this refers to South Tawton and Sticklepath in Mid-Devon. There are extensive workings for copper and associated minerals at Ramsley and Belstone, but this the only reference to silver I have come across in that area. While the Dulverton site was the subject of an extension, that at South Tawton was not referred to again and one must suppose that the king's miners found nothing worth working. (Cal. Fine Rolls, Vol.II, p.126)

2. Lobbecombe (Devon) A little over twenty years later, in 1333, there is reference to "the mine of Lobbecombe (Devon)". At that time the silver-lead mines in South Devon at Birland were in work and in the keeping of Matthew de Crauthorn, as was that at Lobbecombe. But I have no location for the latter. (PRO E101/262/24 -List Exch.Accts p.168)

3. Sir John Erskine's silver mine at Alya. Still on the subject of silver, but this time in Scotland; there are in Isaac Newton's Mint Papers a number of documents relating to a silver mine on Sir John Erskine's estates in 1716-17.

The mine, 5 miles east by north from Stirling, was surveyed by one Dr Justus Brandshagen and his report is accompanied by a plan of the site. Apparently two veins, containing silver bearing ores, were found at a depth of two fathoms from surface. From these veins Erskine had raised ore out of which he received 134ozs of fine silver. This was prior to the 1715 Jacobite rebellion in which he was involved, and during which his wife had 40 tons of ore buried in casks near their home.

An instruction was given that the ore from the casks be smelted; and the silver refined from this was apparently assayed by Newton, having given 15 pennyweights to the pound of ore, at 17 dwts above standard.

There was some dispute over payments for work at the mine up until 1724, but no details of active working. (Hist MSS Com. Report 8, Pt.1, App.1, pp63-6)

Peter F. Claughton.

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Wanlockhead.

Forget ferrets and midget cameras. Jeremy broke through the stope before Xmas, into a short crosscut with a shaft up and down. The pipe goes down, but the shaft blocked at about 28ft - probably where the pipe goes on a dogleg through another stope or crosscut. This they expect to pursue, after a large helping of Xmas pud, so there may be more mileage yet!

Geoff Downs-Rose.

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Storehouse of mining history.

Visitors will step back in time through the ages of coal mining when Yorkshire's first-ever mining museum, at Caphouse Colliery, near Huddersfield, opens its doors to the public next June.

A lift made up to look like a cage will ride visitors down the 140-metre deep shaft into a 550-metre-long circular roadway where they will see, and hear, the sights and sounds of underground mining history.

A lot of the underground section has been equipped and they are now setting up roadway displays. There are plans to build an extension to house an exhibition centre, with audio/visual aids, a restaurant and a school room. There are also plans to set up an extensive reference library for students.

- - - - -

A query re Opencast Mines. Can anyone help?

We have all seen the subsidence that can result from conventional coal mining, but does anyone know of reports of subsidence resulting from opencast operations? This might be caused by a lowering of the water table, and/or from ground movement towards the hole. Even reports of the completion of an opencast mine which did not have any ill effect on adjacent buildings would be very relevant.

Another query. Only different.

During the autumn I ran a history workshop at Leadhills on the theme "Holidays and Holydays, 1740 - 1850". It might be argued that, over the period, the lead miners got neither. In fact we found they took occasional days off, and were allowed the holyday of the Fast Day, on the Thursday prior to the annual Communion Sunday of the Scottish Church, and, over some years, they were given another Thursday as a "Thanksgiving Day". The Fast Day is well documented, but the Thanksgiving is a bit of a puzzle and I wonder if members can comment. It might be supposed the day was connected with a conventional Harvest Thanksgiving, but in 1789 it was held in April and in 1814 in January. It has been suggested to me that the occasion could be connected with lead in some way. This seems reasonable. In Leadhills and Wanlockhead the mining ground was "the farm", and the annual output "the crop". It then follows that companies might celebrate "a lead harvest". But nowhere in mining literature have I found any reference to a mining company having such a Day of Thanksgiving to mark a good year and rich profits.

I should be most grateful for any comments re either of the above.

Bill Harvey, 86 Beechwood Drive, Glasgow G11 7HQ.

General Meeting & Annual Dinner - Sat 14th May, 1988 at Hotel Italia, 53 Kings Road, Harrogate.

The General Meeting will commence at 2.00pm prompt.
followed by various lectures by invited Guests.
Break to allow room to be transformed for Dinner.

Dinner 7.30pm for 8pm. Price £8.00 per person (Cheques made payable to NMRS).

A 3 course meal :- Soup

Main course of Roast Chicken with Stuffing OR
Roast Lamb
with Vegetables of the Season
Trifle OR Fruit Salad
Coffee

The enclosed booking form should be completed and returned, with full remittance, as soon as possible, but BEFORE 1st May, 1988 to Mrs. L. Dollery, 19 Osborne Gardens, Harrogate HG1 2EE.

All members are welcome to attend the General Meeting and afternoon lectures whether or not they join us for the Dinner.

The Hotel Italia offers luxurious accommodation starting at approx. £20 per person for Bed & Breakfast. Alternative accommodation at cheaper rates can be found at St. Mary's Lodge Guest House, Tel. 0423 67104; Rheda Guest House, Tel. 0423 68114 and camping/caravan site at Highmoor Farm, Tel 0423 63637.

To make a full weekend of it, a Meet has been arranged for the Sunday i.e.
Sun 15th May, 1988 - Walkabout on Greenhow. Leader M. Street.

Meet at Duke Street Quarry, Greenhow N.G.R. SE113639 at 10.30am.

Whilst on the subject of Meets, since I typed the first half of this Newsletter we have had late volunteers for a couple of Meets:-

Easter 1988 - Arran. Leader M. Street.

Anyone interested in a Meet on the Isle of Arran this Easter?

On the island there are coal, limestone and barytes Mines. The island is situated in the Firth of Clyde between the Mainland and the Kintyre Peninsula. Other features include some of the finest mountain walking in Britain, climbing, geology, drinking, pony trekking, golf etc.

I do not propose to have a fixed itinerary but to decide "day to day" depending upon response. I shall be up there for the Easter weekend and the rest of the following week.

If anyone is interested, please ring me on Leeds (0532) 401542 (evening except Tuesdays & Thursdays).

Malcolm Street.

6 Oakwood Park, Leeds LS8 2PJ.

Sun 15th May, 1988 (see under Annual Dinner heading - above).

Feb. 26th 1989 - Please note alteration of next years AGM on your Meets card.

The Committee as elected at the February A.G.M. are:-

President	R.E. Burns, 22 West Hall Garth, South Cave, Brough, N. Humberside. Tel. 04302 2767
Vice President	M. Whitaker, 15 Kent Close, Lowtown, Pudsey, Yorks. LS28 9EY. Tel 0532 575455
Jnr. Vice President	L.O. Tyson, 13 Birch Avenue, Cadishead, Nr. Manchester. M30 5AU. Tel. 061 776 1791
Secretary	J.H. McNeil, 166 Irlam Road, Flixton, Urmston, Manchester M31 3NB. Tel. 061 747 8652
Treasurer	G.B. Greenough, 22 Elmhurst Road, St. Annes-on-Sea, Lancs FY8 3JH. Tel. 0253 723987
Recorder	M.C. Gill, 38 Main Street, Sutton in Craven, Keighley, BD20 7HD. Tel. 0535 35588
P.R.O.	H. Houghton, 29 Parkside Road, Meanwood, Leeds LS6 4LY. Tel 0532 758505
Librarian	D.J. McCurdy, 111 Barn Lane, Golbourne, Warrington WA3 3PR. Tel. 0942 718192
Editor	R.H. Bird, 41 Windsor Walk, South Anston, Sheffield S31 7EL. Tel. 0909563229.

International Mining Law History Conference - Spring Bank Holiday w/e 28/29 May, 1988.
700th Anniversary Celebration to commemorate the 1288 Inquisition of Ashbourne and the confirmation of the Derbyshire Lead Mining Customs.

A weekend of Lectures and excursions.

For further information, and to book your place, send your name and address and a cheque for £8 per person made out to Peak District Mines Historical Society Ltd to Mining Law Conference, Peak District Mining Museum, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire DE4 3PS.

Errata

This piece appears to that already printed when this correction came in:-

"The piece on Record Agency Services" (No. 4 of Page 2) "could you please delete 'in connection with the Stannary Courts.' and insert 'under the Companies Act 1862.' The former being a rather mis-leading statement. P.F.C."

Cononley Lead Mine - Grade II Listed Structure

Following its unsuccessful planning application, and appeals, for permission to treat the mine dumps, Minworth Ltd has relinquished its interest in the site. The company had reopened the Incline in 1982 and, in consequence of an agreement to restore the site, the Chatsworth Estate applied to the Craven District Council for Listed Building Consent to allow it to backfill the portal immediately.

The Recorder made representations to the council, which is responsible for giving consent, and to the estate, as mineral owner, that a more appropriate method would be to gate the Incline with a grille. The estate's agent agreed to meet members of the Earby Mines Research Group, which has spent many years consolidating the site, and the Recorder in early December and was embarrassed to find the work already done. Despite the estate having taken the correct course of making a formal application and posting the statutory notices etc, the company chose to do the work almost at once! The outcome of our meeting was a proposal that the long term future of the site be discussed and this Newsletter will be updated on the progress made.

At its January meeting, the Craven District Council's Planning Committee rejected the application in favour of "fitting a grille across the entrance which would allow supervised access but exclude public access.". Moreover, the committee authorised the clerk to take Listed Building Enforcement Action, under Section 96 of the Town and Country Planning Act, to have the Incline reopened. This work was scheduled to be done in early February, but the wet weather made this impracticable.

Mike Gill.

Advert

I have built up a computer database of items from the PDMHS Bulletin. This is a complete index of all the Bulletins and contains amongst other items mines, miners, minerals, authors, geology and place names. The database should be complete well before next Easter and will contain around 75,000 items.

Obviously it mainly relates to Derbyshire but over 25 years of Bulletins contain a great deal of other information. I can see it being of use especially to help your authors trace engineers, shareholders or managers. It may help also should you get any Genealogical enquiries as I can check surnames easily.

There will be an article in the Bulletin when the database is complete which will contain more information. I intend thereafter to increase the database using articles from the Derbyshire Archaeological Journal, Derbyshire Miscellany, various articles on Mining in various caving journals and NMRS Journals and various books.

I am prepared to answer queries from any person regarding information for articles and research but reserve the right to levy a charge to cover paper, ribbon, disks etc. Dave Williams, Clovelly Cottage, Lower Terrace Road, Tideswell, Buxton. SK17 8LX.

That's it readers, this time around.

Next Newsletter due out at the Annual Dinner, so send me your articles in good time please. I am (if you don't already know) Harry Houghton of 29 Parkside Road, Meanwood, Leeds LS6 4LY. Tel (0532) 758505.

Cheers.

Northern Mine Research Society
General Account

Statement of Income and Expenditure for period 1/1/87 to 31/12/87.

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Subscriptions 1987	£3088.85	Publications	£3417.85
1988	1236.25	Stationery	323.66
Insce. premiums	22.40	Officers' Expenses: PRO	67.63
Income Tax refund	874.47	Secretary	28.77
Donations	35.05	Treasurer	16.27
Interest	272.97	Records & Library	78.07
Misc.	5.50	Subs. to other Soc.	62.50
Dinner	344.00	Hall Hire	60.25
Talk-in	41.42	Dinner	323.90
		Talk-in	41.50
		Embsay Exhibition	30.21
		Misc	23.21
			<u>4478.92</u>
		Surplus(Inc/Exp)	<u>1441.99</u>
	<u>5920.91</u>		<u>5920.91</u>

CASH STATEMENT

	<u>Current A/c</u>	<u>N.S.B. Investment A/c</u>	<u>Total</u>
Opening balance	£131.57	£2652.14	£2783.71
Movement	69.02	1372.97	1441.99
	<u>200.59</u>	<u>4025.11</u>	<u>4225.70</u>

Bank Balance as per Statement
at 31/12/87 1350.59
Less cheques not
presented 1150.00
200.59

I certify that this statement is a true and fair record of the accounts of the Society for 1987.

J. Pulford ACMA 7/2/88.

Treasurer's Remarks

Unlike the previous two years we have no "capital gains" to include, yet the figures show a surplus of £1442 for the year. Correction for subscriptions paid in advance and interest earned in 1987 but not yet credited, show a truer figure of £1042 surplus on the year and a cash balance at the year end of £3347.05.

This excellent result has major contributions from the dedication of Committee Members who only record a fraction of their expenses, the interest on our Investment account and the success of the Covenant scheme.

Public Liability Insurance.

Those members who have paid the 70p insurance premium should be aware of the extent of their cover. Broadly speaking, it covers you for any legal liabilities arising from your activities in the areas of:-

- (a) Sporting caving, cave exploration and scientific research (in the widest sense)
- (b) The entry, exploration of and scientific endeavour in disused but not working mines and quarries.
- (c) Crossing land to gain entry or access to such caves, mines and quarries.

Northern Mine Research Society
Publications Account

Statement of Income and Expenditure for period 1/1/87 to 31/12/87

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Income from General A/c	£3417.85	Artwork	£ 9.77
Aftersales	4051.04	Printing	7136.37
Donation	500.00	Min.Stats & Misc.	702.20
Reproduction fee	150.00	Stationery	134.66
Bank interest	118.43	Postage	958.08
		Editor's expenses	12.00
		Aftersales "	5.25
			<u>8958.33</u>
		Expenditure over Income	<u>721.01</u> =
	<u>8237.32</u>		<u>8237.32</u>

CASH STATEMENT

	<u>Current A/c</u>	<u>Deposit A/c</u>	<u>Total</u>
Opening Balance	£ 34.23	£2084.55	£2118.78
Movement	497.56+	1218.57-	721.01-
Closing balance	531.79	865.98	1397.77
as per statement			

I certify that this statement is a true and fair record of the Publications account for 1987.

J.Pulford ACMA 7/2/88

Notes on the Accounts

The Publications Account shows a deficit of £720 on the year's working, despite a generous donation of £500 from Carnon Consolidated Ltd. to help with the publication of BM32. This follows an exceptional loss of £1206.36 on operations in 1986.

It is clear that the present financial arrangements will not permit the publication of 3 "British Mining" each year and some changes are essential.