



PRESIDENTS JOTTINGS

Writing this in January I would like to wish you all a "Happy New Year" with lots of mining related activities to look forward to. Thank you to those of you who renewed their membership promptly as this really helps the smooth running of our Society. **Membership cards** will be enclosed for those of you who have paid up. If yours is missing please take it as a gentle reminder and a need to pay up as soon as possible. You must agree that our Membership is excellent value with usually two high quality publications, four newsletters, the opportunity to take part in our meets and meetings, plus the discount available on our Memoirs and Monographs. We are helped by the generous donations of money and books. A big thank you to those of you who help in this way. Other initiatives such as our book sales also help to keep our overheads low. Occasionally we receive duplicate books donated to our library which can be sold. I have compiled a list of these so if you are interested in receiving a copy please contact me. Also if you have some mining books you are reluctant to donate but would like to sell and can't come to a meeting you can advertise them in our Newsletter (space permitting). For this facility we would appreciate a 10% donation of sales.

Our **meet list** provides a wide variety of events for 2014. Thank you to everyone who has offered their services and to Sallie for compiling it. There is something for everyone. Don't leave it to the last minute to book your place on the events that interest you.

By the time we have our AGM two meets will already have taken place, to Boulby (already filled due to limited numbers, and to Dunkirk Colliery. Details are on our website as usual. **The AGM on Saturday 26th April** is returning to Ingleton Scout Hut at Meal Bank, Yorkshire (SD 6949 7394) No booking form is enclosed (to save paper and money) but **bookings** should be made to me on 01282 614615 or by e-mail mansemins@bopenworld.com by 12th April. Books sales will start at 11.30 with lunch at 12.00 followed by the AGM. After that Bernard Bond has organized a short walk which will start at the Memorial to Ingleton's Coal Mining Industry. The still standing Weigh Bridge Office, the First Aid and Cart shed will be visited thanks to Brian Huck of the Ingleton Scrap Yard. Also a further visit to Wilson Wood Colliery to view how our winter weather has uncovered further artefacts.

Editor

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Would you please note that the deadline for inclusion with the May 2014 Newsletter is the 25th April 2014.

Submissions are welcome that would be of interest to members of the NMRS. These can be forwarded to me as text/disc by post or you can email or telephone. If you require anything returning please ask. Photographs, plans and drawings are acceptable as long as they can be reproduced in black and white.

Contents

Presidents jottings	1
Library news	2
Society news	3
2014 Programme of events	4
Cloughton Brickworks	5
Cononish Diary	6
Nenthead in the news	7
A surprise at the end of the road	8
Rough & Ready	9
New publications	9
The saga of the Hudson V-tipper wagon in Lower Balls Green	10

An interesting day and I hope you can make it. The book sales were an interesting feature of our Autumn meeting so will be continued. If you wish to bring some books please let me know so that we will have space available for you and remember NMRS would appreciate a 10% donation of sales. Please price any books you might bring. I will be bringing along a selection of our publications. If you require any of our BMs I am happy to bring them along for you so save on postage. Before commencement of the AGM copies of the Treasurer's Report and Minutes of our Autumn meeting will be available so please make sure you look at these prior to the start. On the **publication** front please keep checking our website for special offers. More and more is appearing on our website so please don't miss out on all the information out there. Also let me know if you are after any of our out of print publications and want to be placed on my "waiting list"

We extend a warm welcome to the following **new members**

John & Pippa Baker	–	Acharacle
Andrew Binns	-	Bradford
Anthony Darby	-	London
Jonathan Fryer	-	Congleton
J.U. Shepherd	-	Richmond
Andrew Turner, Jack Turner and Trevor Hartley	-	Burnley
Martin Vincent	-	St Austell
Prof. Paul Younger	–	Glasgow
Lee Hall	-	Truro

We were sorry to hear of the death last October 17th of one of our members Iain J Wright after a long illness.

LIBRARY NEWS

The most recent copy (Issue 80) of "Archive: the Quarterly Journal for British Industrial and Transport History" has 16 pages on the Hodbarrow and Roanhead (Dalton-in-Furness) mines. There are superb aerial photographs, extracts from the 1924 OS map of the area and plenty of informative explanatory text. Article author, Steve Grudgings, bought several 1930s glass plate negatives in 2009 and Ian Pope (Archive editor) has digitised them. Luckily for mining history enthusiasts, there may be more of these photographs in future issues. In this issue, there is also a short article on Plenmeller colliery (near Haltwhistle), including excellent photographs taken before closure in 1932.

I came away from the Autumn Meeting with many donations to the library. Thank you to all generous donors; but particularly to Barry Hunt for three

Many thanks to John Heaviside from West Sussex who has recently donated some books to us for resale (the library already has copies). His generosity is much appreciated.

Barbara Sutcliffe

In December 2013 we were also sorry to hear of the death of David Thornton (husband of Sallie Bassham) aged 76 after several years of poor health. When younger, and living in Sheffield and Althrincham, David was an enthusiastic underground explorer in the Peak District. In later years he was more interested in Yorkshire mining sites. As well as his personal investigations, he introduced many of his University students to mines and mining sites. As a professional ecologist, he took a particular interest in metal-tolerant plants, ensured that these featured on University field trips and inspired many students to continue with mines explorations and with mining-ecology studies. The recent introductions of NMRS subscription payment by Pay pal reminds us of the difficulty David had in persuading the Society to take payment by Standing Order: this was an unwelcome innovation at the time!

Finally a reminder about the need for a volunteer **Secretary**! Ron has done an excellent job and should be congratulated. He very kindly continued for an extra year due to the lack of anyone coming forward but from the AGM he is giving his fingers and pen a rest! Thank you Ron. Societies only flourish when new blood can be introduced to help continuation. You all enjoy your NMRS Membership – surely someone can come forward to take over as Secretary. If interested please contact myself or Ron I for further details. It would be lovely if we could say at the AGM that we had filled the post.

Barbara Sutcliffe

boxes of books including some standard industrial archaeology texts such as Atkinson's "Industrial Archaeology of North-East England" and the book on the Isle of Man from the same series – I have found their gazetteers comprehensive and very useful. There are books on geology and coal mining, and some beautiful leather-bound copies of "Science and Art of Mining" and of "Practical Coal Mining". Miles Russell's "Flint Mines in Neolithic Britain", Stephen Howarth's "A Century in Oil" and a three volume history of Rolls Royce by Peter Pugh are beautifully illustrated, but there are also small booklets on places like Carn Brea, Carn Galver and Carn Marth which would be useful to any visitor to that area. If you want an updated library list, please contact the librarian on sbassham@chipmail.co.uk

Sallie Bassham

Out of Print Memoirs Articles

We have made a number, well over 170 to date, of out of print Memoirs articles available to all online, free of charge. We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the authors, or their heirs, who

have kindly allowed us to do this - if you have an article(s) that was published by us, and you would be prepared for us to make it available once more, in a digital format then please contact us. More will be added as time permits.

Old Society Newsletters

Past editions of the newsletter dating back to the early 1960s are available to members only in the Members Area of the website.

Additional meet

For those not so hard men who like to take a bath in hot water in the light, as opposed to cold water in the dark, we have organised an alternative to Mike Richard's Hard Level to Brandy Bottle meet. Same day, same place, except that we will walk to Brandy Bottle over the surface and descend the incline and maybe meet up with them on the way out. Further details from Malcolm Street, Tel 07923 441523, email: malcolm@nmrs.org.uk

Online Mapping

We are pleased to announce that mapping of sites overlaid onto Google maps has been extended to cover Non Ferrous, Iron and Salt & Anhydrite Mines, Quarries and on shore Oil & Gas. This joins the mapping of the NMRS database of over 23,000 on the British Isles.

Help Wanted

We commenced the mining project to provide general information about mining and other extractive industries in the British Isles about a year ago now.

Help is sought from members for this – you don't need to be technically minded or even a great historian; there are many jobs that can be done in a spare few minutes, or longer. Here are just a few examples:

Checking what has already been written for spelling and grammar mistakes.

Checking the operation of active links.

Suggesting links for a page to NMRS publications, other articles and external websites.

Writing the text for a page giving the bare facts, for instance the page on Goginan Mine

<http://nmrs.org.uk/mines/m/goginan.html> contains just a snapshot of information as opposed to Simon Hughes book of 88 pages.

Locating and obtaining permission to use a photo to illustrate a page.

This is all aimed mainly at the general public, but may be of interest to other interested parties and mining historians.

One member offered to help at the October meeting, but I didn't make a note of his name or contact information.

The portal for the project is the page accessed by www.mining-history.co.uk or by www.nmrs.org.uk/mines which will present the visitor with a page to make some simple choices first. After this the visitor is taken to a page with an interactive map which will enable them to "drill down" to find the information that they are looking for. On all pages there may be links to similar topics on the website or to external websites where more information can be found, to suggestions for further reading from both the Society's vast number of articles or from books etc published by others.

Membership Matters

Thank you to all of those who have paid their 2014 subscription - you should find enclosed your Membership Card. Please keep this safe and carry it with you whenever on NMRS business. If you have chosen to pay by Standing Order you will find your Membership Card enclosed, even though your payment may not have gone through yet (we do hope it does).

Some of you have yet to pay (you know who you are) and your cheque would be most welcomed. We are planning on sending out the next BM with the May newsletter, but if we don't get your renewal by the end of April, you'll miss out! If you have mislaid the paper work, then please send your details and a cheque for £17 to me at the address below
Malcolm Street, 7 Salisbury Street, Sowerby Bridge, HX6 1EE

or renew online with a credit/debit card at www.nmrs.org.uk/renew

Malcolm Street

allowed on some sites: please check with the meet leader before bringing a dog.

NMRS recognises that exploring old mines and mine sites are potentially hazardous activities.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR 2014

All meets subject to weather, and permission being granted.

ALWAYS contact the appropriate meet leader if you intend going on a meet, please. Dogs are not

Participants in these activities should be aware of, and accept, these risks and be responsible for their own actions.

Saturday 5 April

Dunkirk Colliery surface walk, followed by visit to Woodend Coal Mining Museum.

10.30am at Farm at SD 759 341, off A671 (post-code is BB12 7PG). Lunch available from the menu at Woodend Museum (there will be a charge, pre-booking essential); or bring sandwiches.

Leader Bernard Bond (01524 241 857 with answer-phone)

Saturday 26 April

Spring Meeting (AGM)

Ingleton Scout Hut, Meal Bank, Yorkshire, SD 6949 7394

Book sales from 11.30am. Buffet lunch (pre-booking essential) at 12 noon, followed by AGM and an afternoon surface walk.

Bookings to Barbara Sutcliffe (01282 614 615 or mansemins@btopenworld.com)

Saturday 3 May

Coate Moor ironstone mine. 11am at NZ 603 100. Moderate underground.

The landowner hopes to be at the meet and requires all visitors to sign a disclaimer that he is not liable in the event of any possible incident.

Leader Chris Twigg (0797 4596985 or chris.twigg@ntlworld.com)

Saturday 17 May

Hard level to Brandy Bottle thro' trip. Hard and quite prolonged trip. Very deep water. Wet suits required under caving suits.

10am at Surrender Bridge. For more details, and to book please contact Mike Richards.

Leader Mike Richards (01904 413 845)

Saturday 17 May

Surface Walk to Brandy Bottle and easy underground for those not quite so brave.

10am at Surrender Bridge.

Leader Malcolm Street (07923 441523)

Saturday 21 June

Carrock Fell Mine

10.30am at the end of the Swineside road.

Leader David Young (01833 631 609 or dave.young@homecall.co.uk)

25 to 27 July

NAMHO Conference, Bangor.
www.namhoconference.org.uk

July or August (see Newsletter for date, when known)

Rogerly Mine, Weardale.

Leader: Barbara Sutcliffe (01282 614 615 or mansemins@btopenworld.com)

Easy underground: Maximum 12 people.

Saturday 9 August

Rampgill Mine. Moderate underground.

11am at Nenthead Heritage Centre car park NY 781 435

Leader: Paul Dollery (01937 580 579 or paul.dollery56@ntlworld.com)

Saturday 13 September

Brownley Hill Mine. Moderate underground.

11am at Nenthead Heritage Centre car park NY 781 435

Leader David Young (01833 631 609 or dave.young@homecall.co.uk)

Saturday 25 October

Autumn Meeting at Gisburn Festival Hall SD 82 48.

Book sales from 11.30am. Buffet lunch (pre-booking essential) at 12 noon, followed by meeting and presentations.

Bookings and presentation details to Barbara Sutcliffe (01282 614 615 or mansemins@btopenworld.com)

Dunkirk Coal Pit 'Constant Mary'

Travelling on the A671 Whalley to Padiham road, at the first road junction when entering Read, take the road signposted Bridge Hey Caravan Park. The farm area is at NGR SD759 341.

'Constant Mary' was a drift coal mine worked by a 12 ft diameter waterwheel with a 6 ft diameter cog wheel turning a 12 ft drum.

Richard Matthews and Brian Jeffrey, both of nearby Read, have transformed the site, having dedicated years of their time to totally clearing the area.

Woodend Coal Mining Museum

After lunch participants can view, and perhaps identify, further reminders of the local coal industry. The museum owners, Harry and Carole Johnson, will be grateful for any information to add to their excellent display.

Showing the intense local interest in the Burnley Coalfield, visiting mining family members have taken the opportunity to leave many family artifacts for the museum. A third display area has been added since the last NMRS visit in October 2013.

On the next page are two photographs of the display areas (before the addition of the third display area).



Cloughton Brickworks

A copy of the November 2013 newsletter has been passed on to the works management. Production of bricks began in the first week of December 2013.



Photo:- View of the bridge taking the ropeway over the road, taken March 2010 during the last week of operation before closure.



Photo:- Display showing a bucket saved from the next door West End section of the works.

Bernie Bond

Cononish Diary

No news is good news, they say, but a dearth of news from Cononish, Tyndrum and Scotgold forces the thought that Scotgold's valiant effort to recover gold has hit bad luck. I consulted my very informed "snout" in Scotland (a qualified free-lance gold geologist) and she said, "The world economy is poor and no one invests in high-risk, low-benefit projects. The history tells its own story; people will invest only when they see a bit of a gamble that might pay off. The risk-averse money has dried up ... Some commodities are in high demand but at present, not gold."



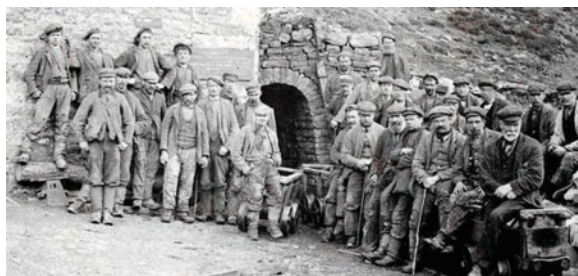
This then is my last post ... unless a miracle occurs in the Loch Lomond National Park in the weeks to come. I have chosen a symbolic illustration to conclude the series – the locking of the gates that protect the gold at Cononish.

Ron Callender

Nenthead in the news - twice!

From The Independent 13 January 2014

Village digs deep into its mining past: Zinc deposits could return a once-thriving Pennine community to its glory days



A Canadian company has discovered that Nenthead may be sitting on one of Europe's biggest deposits

[Mike Glover](#) Sunday 12 January 2014

People have been digging beneath the ground in Nenthead for centuries. Archaeologists believe it

has been a site of silver, lead and zinc mining from the Roman times, if not before. But when the last mine closed more than 50 years ago, Britain's highest village went into steep decline. The only food shop is community run, the primary school is down to 30 pupils, the village pub is closed for most of winter and a third of the unemployed are aged 18 to 24.

The outlook was as bleak as the weather frequently is, 1,500ft up in the Pennines at the point where Cumbria, Durham and Northumberland clasp shoulders. So bleak that even a publicly funded mining museum set up in a bid to attract tourists closed two years ago.

Now Nenthead could be poised to revisit its glory days, after a Canadian mining company discovered that it may be sitting on one of Europe's biggest zinc deposits. The Canadian mining company Minco believes there may be huge deposits 150 metres below the surface, too deep to reach before modern mining methods.

So far, five 500m-deep bore-holes have been sunk. The total area they are exploring is roughly 20 square miles. Initial results are "very promising", the company says.

Minco's executive director Rowan Maule said: "We believe that this could be a world-class deposit. There is still a lot of work to do, which would involve a lot more drilling over several years, but the potential here is massive.

"A project of that size would mean a mine producing a million tons a year and employing between 200 and 500 people."

Zinc, once seen as a poor relation of the metal mining world and at times ignored as not being worth processing, is now much sought after for galvanising steel as well as its use in batteries and computers.

Unlike copper or lead, it is difficult to recycle as it is used in smaller amounts. As a result, it has now become worth digging deep for it. The company said its initial £500,000 exploration programme which is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, would last 12 months. If enough zinc is found to justify full-scale mining, a planning application would be submitted; defenders of the landscape are likely to object.

The revival of the mines would be a life-saver for the Nenthead community as well as a boost for the UK economy. There is evidence of lead being mined since pre-Roman times but its heyday came during the Victorian era when it became a major centre for lead and silver workings. In 1861 it was a bustling village of 2,000 people, mostly employed by the Quaker-owned London Lead Company. Nenthead was the first village in the UK to have electric street lighting from excess power generated by the mines.

But, after changing owners many times, the lead mines closed in 1961. Locals, aware of the potential for jobs, have so far reacted positively.

The postmistress, Angela Green, said: "If the mines come back it will bring jobs and an influx of new people which has to be good for the community." Olive Bulman, aged 86, and one of the few villagers alive who remember the old days, said it was "a great idea" for the school, the pub and youngsters. Joe Murray, has already benefited, as the sole drill-er making exploratory bore-holes.

Minco has assured local people that the drills and mineshafts will be discreet and any disturbance to the landscape would be restored. The company may even bring history to life, by using some of the old mine entrances still visible from Nenthead main street.

Sent in by Mike Gill

**And
from The Northern Echo 15 January 2014**

Firm hoping to bring mining back to region

By Steven Hugill (Deputy Business Editor)



A development aiming to extract millions of tonnes of zinc from former Roman lead mines is set to gain further impetus, the Northern Echo can reveal. Minco says tests across the County Durham and Northumberland border, between Allenheads, near Stanhope, and Nenthead, in Cumbria, have been extremely encouraging.

The firm is now undertaking further work in Northumberland, which it believes harbours deeper zinc deposits left behind by generations of lead miners. The company began testing last year, and said the project, known as the North Pennine Orefield Development, could hold some of the largest amounts of zinc in Europe.

Bosses added it could eventually create up to 500 jobs, with workers mining a million tonnes of zinc every year.

The North Pennine lead field was the UK's most important lead producer between 1750 and 1850, employing thousands of men across Teesdale, Weardale, South Tynedale and the Derwent valley. Rowan Maule, Minco non-executive director, said it will continue carrying out test drilling for up to two years to gain further results, but said it was buoyed by its early findings.

He said: 'Our tests are giving us a picture of what is there and that picture will only get even clearer over time.'

'However, what is encouraging is that we know that there is a lot of zinc in this area.'

'They were mining lead in the region right from Roman times but not as much zinc, so the potential is very high.'

'We have a halo of zinc around previous workings and are now identifying zones where more drilling may be needed to establish estimates of potential resources.'

'It is very encouraging and also exciting to move into the next phase in Northumberland, which is a move into the heart of zinc country.'

'Northumberland is a zinc-rich area, we have already had success in our previous drillings, but this should be better.'

Mr. Maule said he hoped Minco, which has also searched for zinc in Ireland, could help return mining to a region renowned for the industry.

He said; 'This could be a world-class area, and is an important mining area because of its history.'

'If our initial work proves sufficiently that a mine could operate there, it would be very good for the economy and create good and well-paid jobs.'

Sent in by Mason Scarr

A surprise at the end of the road

Once I had scoured and combed the Strontian lead mines in a journey that had started at sea level and taken me to the highest point of a very secondary road, I had to make a decision. Did I make the winding descent to Loch and the miniature hamlet of Polloch? Anxious to see if anything had altered since my visit some years ago, I pressed on downwards and was enthralled by the view ahead of me. I knew the road ended at Polloch but enjoyed skirting Loch Doilet before running out of road.



Figure 1 Descent to Loch Doilet.

At Polloch, a substantial hut represented the facilities offered by the hamlet, but a welcome sign from "Clarissa" coaxed me to look at her knitted goods inside. I used the toilet and joined my wife in a second room; on display were texts and maps intended

to give the casual visitor a generous briefing on the ancient Lead Mines of Strontian (BM 96 refers). I skimmed the contents until I noticed a leaflet within the display – it was a promotional poster recently produced by Northern Mines Research Society. I was astonished and puzzled.



Figure 2 Clarissa's crafts

Where had it come from? Who had provided the display? I consulted Strontian expert, Jerry Landless, but he denied all knowledge ... and so the mystery remains. If the person who set up the display, and included the A5 size NMRS poster contacts me, he can claim a copy of the book, "Gold in Britain".



Figure 3 Fragment of display at Polloch.

Ron Callender

Rough & Ready

The last newsletter published an account of a visit I had made to the gold-mining Republic of Rough & Ready in north California. At the time I was negotiating a fee and the permission to publish a photograph that I had traced to a historical library in Nevada City. Approval came through too late, but I now have the picture.

The first settlers came from Wisconsin and established a camp close to the Yuba River in 1849. At first the miners would rely on tents and crude huts for accommodation, but because the gold reserves proved to be abundant, they developed more permanent living quarters. It would not take long for commercial interests to move in to establish stores, saloons, stables, hotels and a toll house. In addition, the illustration shows a church on the right hand side of the road that bisects the township, and in the distance (centre), a washing line suggests a

laundry, which was a popular enterprise among the Chinese.

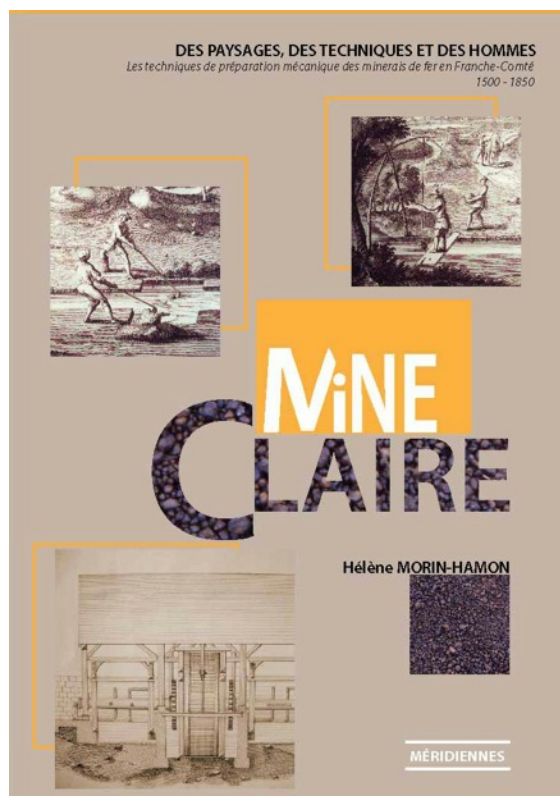


The photograph claims a date of 1857 and was probably taken by an itinerant photographer using the wet plate process and a camera negative measuring at least 8" x 10". By doing so, he would be able to produce multiple prints, which would be appreciated by the miners writing home.

Ron Callender

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Received from Roger Burt via Mike Gill is this notification of a new book on French iron mining. It's by Denis Morin's wife and talks about a method of iron mining totally unknown in this country as far as Roger knows. The material was shallow mined and separated by washing, much like tin!



Mine Claire, by Helene Morin-Hamon, 269 pages, published 2013, ISBN 978 2 912025 92 0

Helene Morin-Hamon invites us to discover the complexity of these original workshops where workers used hydraulic engines as 'patouillet' whose function was to transform iron ore into 'Mine Claire' ('clear ore').

Profusely illustrated and well documented, this book presents an unpublished research programme in Archaeology and History of Technology. It demonstrates that far from being a sideline, this iron ore process was a fully-fledged industry, heavy consumer of water and a real source of innovation.

Throughout the pages, this book reveals amazing and multi-faceted landscapes, evidence of these ancient activities and invites us to understand how ore-dressing activities expanded in space and in time as well, both in Europe and in other French regions.

The author, who defended her PhD in 2003 on this subject at the University of Franche-Comte, offers at the end of the book a full glossary of terms gleaned during her many years of research.

Contact to order

<http://w3.framespa.univ-tlse2.fr/boutique/spip/spip.php?rubrique32>

Universite de Toulouse II-Le Mirail

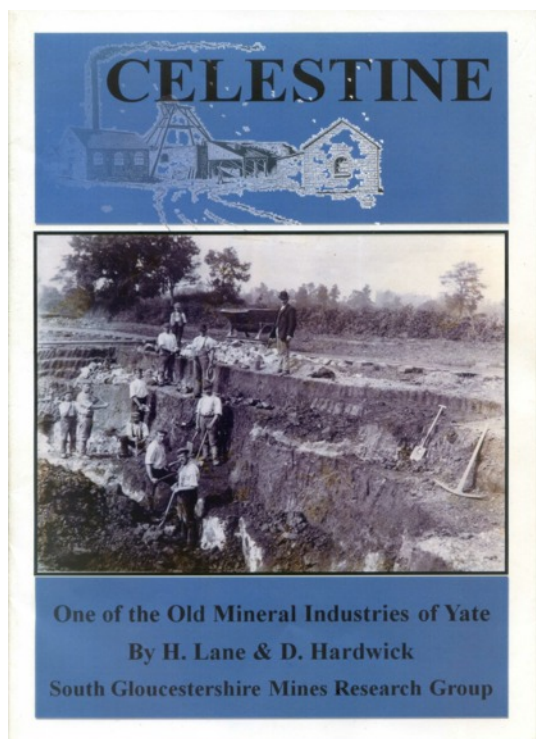
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Email: meridiennes@univ-tlse2.fr

Celestine, one of the old mineral industries of Yate, by H. Lane and D. Hardwick

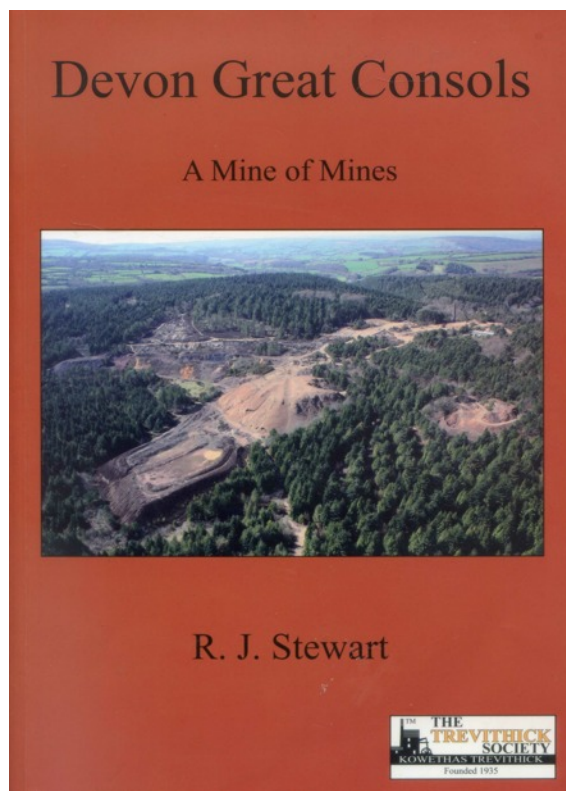


Published by South Gloucestershire Mines Research Group, 26 pages, January 2013, ISBN 978-0-9572331-2-6. £5.00

An interesting booklet on an industry that I knew nothing about, despite living in the area for the last 12 years of its existence. Apparently celestine is a crystalline material of a strontium sulphate base. Its main uses seems to have been in flares and pyrotechnic products where its property, when powdered and mixed with other chemicals, of burning with a bright red flame was very useful. After the Second World War the Yate deposits were accounting for over 75% of the world's production. However, it seems to have remained a small-scale industry, with the mineral being dug from small shallow (typically 10 to 20 feet depth) open cast workings. Working finally ceased in 1995. This booklet is a worthwhile memorial to a small but vital extractive industry.

Rob Needham

Devon Great Consols, a mine of mines, by R.J. Stewart, published by the Trevithick Society, October 2013, 436 pages, ISBN 9780904040982. Softback £24.99



I can't review this as I'm still reading it, but it's a good solid read and looks to be a thorough well-researched history of the mine. I'd recommend it as definitely good value for money.

Rob Needham

Hargreaves Week in Mining, published by J.D. Hargreaves, weekly, 10 pages sent out by email, subscription £75 p.a. , to subscribe contact Mine2mkt@aol.com

Hargreaves
Week in Mining
8013/44 84 November 2013

Week in Mining Table of Contents

Leader	Not the yellow metal, the black one
Major Shares	The dust in the desert
Small & Medium Caps	When the going gets tough, the tough get going
Precious Metals	RUSA platinum miners: a light to the finish?
Minor Metals	The major changes in five years
Bulk Minerals	SPHS and potash: worth, but dead?
Exchange Traded Metals	Each to its own and the long haul through 2014
Exchange Rates	Still hanging on the USA and QE
Energy	Natural gas and other: oil, oil, oil and coal
Commodities	The sleeping giant will roar: good for diamonds
Countries	Nationalism is becoming an infection
Sharewatch	The target watch
And Now Some Things...	How to kill your husband quietly
Watchtower	Beware the auto industry: it is changing and it matters

Not the Yellow Metal, the Black One.

Regular readers of the Week in Mining will know that we champion a number of causes, run competitions and offer substantial prizes to the winners. Trillions of dollars actually. The fact that they are Zimbabwean is of no consequence. We have SOTBO (Statement of the Blinding Obvious), which draws regular contenders. Then ROOTS (the Roots of Things Society) and also SAC (the Society for the Abolition of Clichés). This latter has outlasted 'the yellow metal' (gold), the 'red metal' (copper) and now has its teeth into 'black gold' or oil, as it is also known. There is no basis of comparison between the two, since oil is industrially useful and gold is not. It simply represents the lead factor.

Presently, a tonne of oil is worth less than an ounce of gold and this could – unfathomably – become less. This is not because of a pending crash in the gold price but potentially in that of our favourite lubricant. It is much about the arrival of shale oil, particularly in the USA. That country, the single greatest world economic power house and energy user, was largely responsible for the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, OPEC, establishing a position of dominance in supply, ensuring that for 40 years the world price was at least quadruple its cost of production. That could abruptly end. America is about to become the largest producer once more, possibly an exporter. At least it will switch the focus onto growing importers China and India and could significantly alter the US perception of its role as the Middle East policeman. Our next step for oil is for market Brent Crude, currently at \$110 per barrel, to register \$80, then welcome to no-man's land. The trend is undeniable.

	Oil				Natural Gas				Coal			
	Production	Imports	Consumption	Exports	Production	Imports	Consumption	Exports	Production	Imports	Consumption	Exports
2002	342	0.5%	481	14.2%	480	22.2%	584	12.1%	530	13.7%	502	12.9%
2012	395	9.4%	430	10.9%	419	30.4%	654	21.9%	556	13.4%	438	11.7%
Change	15.5	0.5%	-7.1	-4.4%	39.1	-0.9%	170.1	4.2%	26.6	0.3%	164	-11.2%

The trend is unmistakable: The USA is producing more oil and using less. This was a deliberate policy before shale gas came along. Thus its import dependency fell in the decade by 118Mt and is expected to zero in the next 2 to 3 years. Natural gas presents an even more startling picture. Production in the period has bounced over 20% and is gaining momentum. Consumption rose only 10% but in doing so local prices have fallen sharply, from a peak of \$8.85 per million BTU in 2008 to \$2.76 by 2012. This has been at the expense of coal, where, as shown, production has fallen 9.5% and consumption 22.6%, leaving the country a growing net exporter. For the foreseeable future, this puts serious pressure on OPEC and particularly the Middle East. It could alter America's defence attitude to the region, leading continuing

Hargreaves: The Week in Mining is produced weekly, 48 times per year. For further information, contact David Hargreaves on +44 (0)1984 437 468 or via email: mine2mkt@aol.com

Produced by NMRS member David Hargreaves this looks a very useful publication if you want to keep up to date with the current mining situation. It has information on share prices, metal and minerals prices, exchange rates, energy, relevant news on countries, forthcoming events - in fact, all you need on a regular basis to be well informed.

And now, as I've used all of the articles that have been sent in and I've still got 2 pages to fill....

The saga of the Hudson V-tipper wagon in Lower Balls Green

Lower Balls Green is a mine (underground quarry) for inferior oolite Cotswold stone in Gloucestershire, just outside Nailsworth. It is still accessible, although ownership seems to be unknown and access is through a farmers yard, tolerated if done quietly. There is a grille over the entrance with a small access hole cut in it. When the mine was active, stone was transported out in carts, which appear from the few remaining traces of ruts visible in the mine beyond the furthest rockfalls to have been of just over 4 feet gauge, and thus quite large compared with mines such as Windrush where the gauge was only 3 feet. There is no evidence of any use of rails in the mine until after mining ended. Mining in Lower Balls Green seems to have ended around the time of the First World

War, whereas Upper Balls Green continued to be worked until shortly before the Second World War (and did utilise rail transport within the mine). In 1937 work started on construction of an airfield under the RAF Expansion Plan at Aston Down, approximately 3km from Lower Balls Green. Several companies were involved in the construction, which resulted in a base for an Aircraft Storage Unit, comprising a technical and administration site plus 8 hangars connected by a concrete taxiway. At this stage the runways were grass. During the war the airfield was extensively used for flying by various units, and thus three concrete runways were laid. At some stage during the construction of the airfield the need for a large quantity of hard core arose. To supply this temporary 2 foot gauge track was laid in Lower Balls Green mine and the rubble floor of large areas of the mine was removed. It is still possible to see where the track was laid, and occasionally items such as fishplates can be found.



Photo: trackbed of 2 ft gauge railway in LBG with fishplate in foreground

The depth of rubble removed appears to have been approximately 6 feet in the main passage, although it was probably less in side workings. Beyond a major rockfall in the main passage is a wagon with a section of track. And flattened under one of the fallen rocks is another wagon and section of track. All other rail and rolling stock was apparently removed when rubble removal ceased. The intact wagon is heavily corroded but appears to be a V-tipper built by the well-known firm of Robert Hudson Ltd.



Photo: V-tipper wagon and track section in LBG

The original ancestor of the well-known Hudson 'Rugga' V-tipper wagon was produced either during or immediately after WW1, when small internal combustion- engine locos were readily available as military surplus. The first known V-tipper design was of 18 cubic feet capacity. It was thought that an incomplete wagon (the tipper body and supports were missing) preserved by the Moseley Railway Trust (a well known organisation devoted to the study of industrial and mining railways) at Apedale was the only survivor of this type.

On the cover of the recent publication 'Celestine', published by SGMRG, is a photograph of an early Hudson V-tipper wagon in use in the early 20th century. An enlargement of the wagon from the photo is shown below.



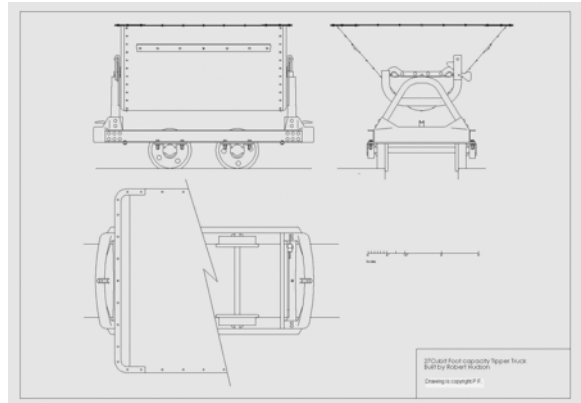
Photo: Early V-tipper wagon in use at celestine workings, near Yate

From this sprang the whole family of 'Rugga' wagons, which were mass-produced in large numbers, Hudson advertising boasting of 2000-3000 being in stock at any one time. They were sold around the world for industrial, agricultural, construction and quarry use. Many other companies produced similar V-tipper wagons.

For use in mines Hudson (full title Robert Hudson Ltd, Gildersome Foundry, Leeds) developed a series of U-tipper wagons, where the sides of the tipper body were vertical or nearly so. Thus these wagons were little if any wider than the track gauge,

which made them better suited to use in narrow mine passages than the V-tipper design. Many examples of U-tippers remain, including in active mines.

On 18 November 2012, as a result of an article I had written for the journal of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society, at their request I accompanied two members of the Moseley Railway Trust on a visit to the mine to see the wagon. When they saw it they became quite excited as it was apparently the only known intact survivor of the earliest model of Hudson V-tipper wagon. The MRT had the frame of one and they were looking for information to enable them to restore their wagon to its original complete state. They photographed and measured the LBG wagon, and as a result the drawing shown below was produced.



Drawing of early V-tipper wagon of 27ft³ capacity

The supports were of complex curved form and thus hard to measure and draw accurately. I was unhappy at the process but they cut part of the supports off the wagon to take away and copy so that the MRT frame could be restored to a complete wagon.

The first known V-tipper design for which there is some documentary evidence was of 18 cubic feet capacity. It was thought that the incomplete wagon at Apedale was of this type and that the wagon in Lower Balls Green stone mine was also of this type. However, measurements of the LBG wagon revealed it to be of a previously-unknown variant which had a capacity of 27 ft³. No documentation on this variant has yet been discovered. Comparison with measurements of the incomplete wagon at Apedale indicates that that also was of the 27 ft³ variant. Thus there are no known survivors of the earliest (18 ft³) type, and that in LBG is the earliest known complete survivor of any type.

In December 2013, one of the MRT members returned and replaced the 'borrowed' supports. A few days later, along with several other cavers, I visited the mine and we put the tipper body back in place on its supports without the large quantity of water that had previously filled the body (and thereby putting an extra stress on a structure already weakened by corrosion).



Photo: wagon in LBG with supports replaced (note indication of previous water level in tipper body)

However, while the supports were away with the MRT being copied, one of the MRT members posted a photo from the 2012 visit on flickr, which generated a lot of comments on mining forums!

There are at least 3 reasons why the wagon will never be removed from the mine –

- it is trapped beyond a rockfall, with rocks as much as 8 feet high,
- it would not fit through the entrance hole in the grille
- ownership is unknown so there is no one to give permission for its removal.

There is no sign that anyone has done anything to prolong its life* so it will just rust away until it collapses, probably brought on by the weight of water that will collect in the tipper body. I'm not sure of the morality of the MRT actions, but the end results are that the wagon has been restored to its complete state in the mine and a complete restored

example is being produced by MRT at their Apedale base.

So, whether it is an example of mining heritage or not (never having been used in the mine when active), it is also an important example of industrial railway heritage. And when the wagon in the mine does collapse, at least there will be a surviving identical wagon at Apedale.

*

1. Drill 2 drain holes in the tipper body to prevent water accumulating in it (the mine is wet)
2. Each week for 4-5 weeks spray the whole wagon with WD-40 or similar (at Lea Bailey we use DWARF - De-Watering and Anti-Rust Fluid, 5 litres for £17)
3. Every 6 months or so spray the whole wagon with diesel (red diesel = £1/litre)

This procedure would halt corrosion and thus extend the life of the wagon for as long as the treatment continued. For an item said to be of great heritage value, this seems little cost or effort.

Rob Needham

And if you've got bored or fed up with reading what I've written, all I can say is please send me your articles, visit reports, letters, or anything worth publishing. After all, it's your newsletter.

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