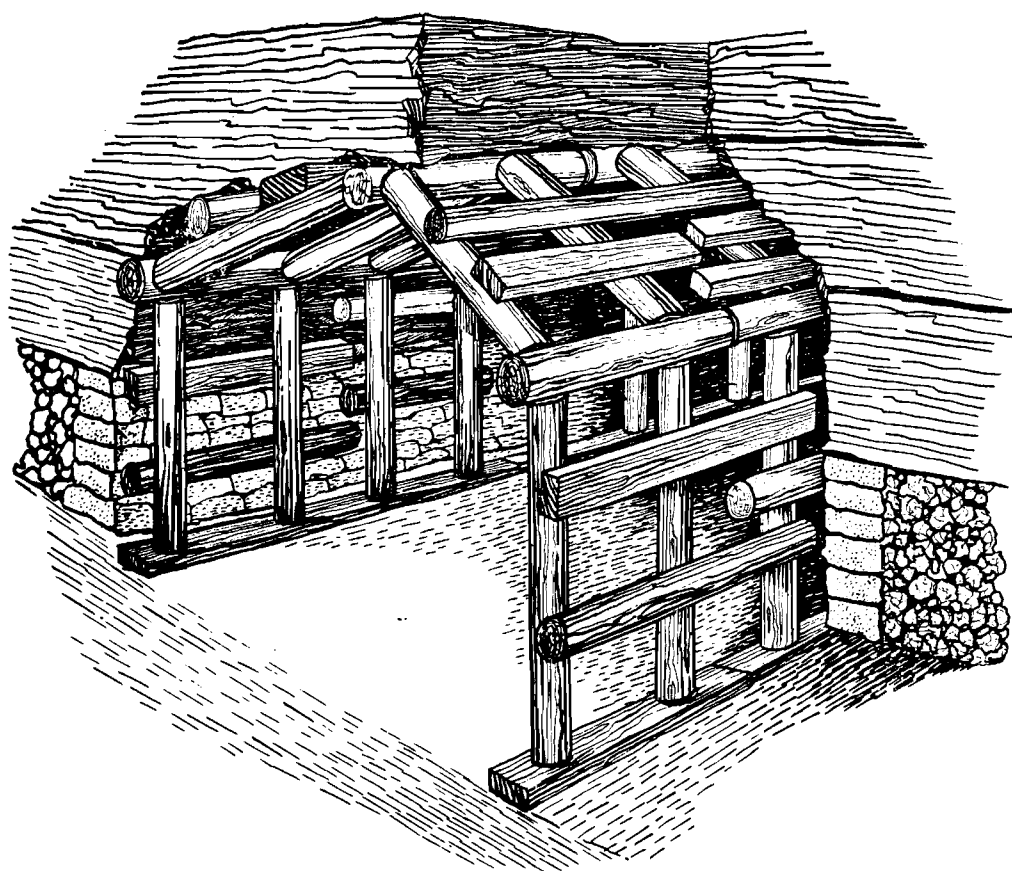


The Newsletter

No.54

August 1998



COMPILATION

Special thanks to those members who are now submitting material on disc, this is a great help. To assist me in inputting your contribution please could you submit it in one of the following formats :-

Microsoft Word for Windows 97

TXT

RTF

If you are not a computer Wizard and you don't think you have any of the above, you can save as TXT simply by scrolling down the list of options available when you get the "save as" menu come up on the screen. If in doubt give me a ring. If you are not using Microsoft Word 6.0 or an earlier version of Word please do not include tables and other "fancy bits" such as odd fonts sub or superscripts etc.

PUBLICATION

The newsletter is issued four times a year. Material for inclusion should be with to the editor by the 15th of March, June, September or December for inclusion in the next issue which will appear approximately four weeks later. Information should be sent to :-

Jon Knowles
46 Dukewood Road
Clayton West
Huddersfield
HD8 9HF

 01484 860662

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EDITORIAL

Having just returned from an enjoyable holiday to the Maritime provinces of Canada, comprising Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, I have seen an idea which might provide a useful addition to club funds or even, if fully exploited, revive the flagging fortunes in Barrow in Furness. In Charlottetown the Capital of Iron rich Prince Edward Island (PEI) they were selling the "P.E.I. Dirt Shirt" which, if you believe the label, had been hand coloured with the local soil - but was in fact a dead ringer for all my clothes the last time I went into any Furness Iron Mine. These T-shirts were being sold for the equivalent of £10. They were being snapped up by broad (and were not talking accent here) American women.

On a more serious note many thanks to all those who have contributed to the newsletter particularly the Clan Cameron and Dave Stewart for his continuing assistance with scanning.

Ed.

MEETS NEWS

By the time you read this the latest meets list covering the remainder of 1998 will have been distributed.

DOCTOR DESCENDER

Doctor Descender is currently sunning himself on the Costa Brava.

Doctor Descender – Those who like it, like it a lot.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Clive Barrow has moved and his new details are :-

67 Station Road
Banks
Southport
PR9 8BB

01704 225197

DISCS

I get a lot of contributions for the newsletter on disc for which I am eternally grateful. Rather ungratefully I don't return these and now have a large stack and a guilty conscience. So if anybody needs some please let me know and I will send five to any body who asks until the pile has gone.

Ed.

FFESTINIOG NEWS

A recent visit to Rhosydd by the editor and Tristan revealed major problems in the vicinity of floor 6 on the 9 to 5 incline. Large lumps have already come down and there are cracks in the roof, walls and floor. I think that the pillar between the incline and chamber A West is likely to collapse on floor 6 and above. The result of this is likely to be the collapse of this chamber on floor 6 and above. This is an unstable area and should be avoided. There is also some evidence of ground movement in the eastern workings.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED

Ed.

OVERHEARD

The following was recently overheard in a Blaenau Ffestiniog public house.

"Muddy, tight and loose"

"Sounds like a good CAT trip"

"No ! that wasn't the trip it was the people"

COMMENT

At times most of us explore mines where we know that the landowner is not keen on our being there. Usually when we do this we make every effort to be discrete and to remain undetected. Common tips being to follow the old adage of "take only photographs and leave only footprints" and using common sense by not putting on your underground gear until you are out of site.

Recently Tristan Goldsack and I made a photographic visit to one mine with the intention of passing through that mine into another. Both workings being now owned by a large Company which operates one of them. I was amazed to find inside, in a prominent position, a jam jar with a long list of members of the local scout group who had visited the mine in recent months ! A flag with "THIS WAY TO THE MINE TRESPASS" could not have been less subtle. It will be a terrible shame if a few mavericks cause this interesting site to be lost to everybody else.

Ed.

NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome the following people and look forward to seeing them soon.

Mr.K.Kendall from Glasgow
Robert Lawson from Castle Douglas
Stuart Watson from Consett
Mark & David Weston from Stoke-on-Trent
Tony Simpson from Northumberland
Chris Cowdery from Reading
Julian Davey from Wigton
P.Storey from Tyne & Wear
S.Brown from Hemel Hempstead
Mark Waite from Kings Langley

Its good so see a strong contingent of Welsh Slate Mine adventurers who should contact

the editor for information on interesting Autumn trips.

Don't be afraid come on a meet we don't bite much

**BOOK REVIEWS**

Walking Around the Ffestiniog Railway by Celia Hancock, published by ADIT publications £4.25. I make no apology for starting this review with a book which has no direct reference to Cumbria but has the distinction of being written by a CAT member and published by a partnership 80% of whom are CAT members. I must confess that I have a very vested interest in its success. This 64 page card covered book is sub-titled "With notes about many points of interest to be encountered along the way and some of the personalities who created them" The book consists of details of 21 walks ranging from level strolls to mountain routes climbing over two thousand feet and distances over 12 miles. Those walks we have used are clear and easy to follow, but what really makes this book is the large amount of background information on the places you see and the people who created them. A few of the topics covered include "The Murder at Penrhyn Isa", "The Ddwryd Slate Quays", "The Oakeley Family and their Quarries" and "Diffwys Quarry". The latter being started by the Lakelanders Turner & Casson.

This is book aimed at people who want a good walk but want to learn about the country they are seeing. Available from the editor or post free from :-

ADIT Publications
Towerside
Pant-y-Buarth
Gwernaffield
Mold
CH7 5ER

The Pump by S.C.Walker published by Magnus Publications price £10.00. I bought this book at the NAMHO field meet since it covers a field I am particularly interested in. Whilst the book does cover the basic history of the pump and does contain many references to useful sources and papers it could only be recommended for purchase on

this latter point. My main criticism of the book is that it has clearly not been proof read since whole paragraphs are frequently repeated – some are repeated three times ! The text of the book is not cohesive and it appears more as a collection of snippets of information which are poorly or not all woven into an overall text. Not recommended.

Ed.

NAMHO 99

The 1999 NAMHO Conference is being held in the Forest of Dean and is being hosted jointly by a number of clubs. Full details are available by sending an A4 SAE to :-

John Hine
The Grottage
2 Cullis Lane
Coleford
Glos.

These will be available from 1st December 1998.

I understand that the wearing of shorts is not obligatory.

NAMHO FIELD MEET 1998 - A PERSONAL VIEW.

Possibly the best NAMHO event ever staged was enjoyed by the many CAT members who turned up at Nenthead on the weekend of 15th to 18th May. The organisation was a triumph, the weather was hot and sunny and the company excellent.

We arrived at lunch time on Friday, having decided to take the day off work. After egg and chips at the Hartside Cafe the first task was to collect the CAT display stand from Sheila's house and set it up at the venue for the weekend, which was the Nenthead Village Hall. We then registered, received our conference packs and, after all these exertions, decided that it was far too hot to do anything else energetic so we sat outside the hall in the sun and watched the delegates come and go.

Eventually it got too hot even in the shade so we retired to our base for the weekend which, in our case, was Crossgill Farm at Garrigill.

As a special treat to our wives, who insisted on coming with us for the weekend, we dined at Island Cottage where Mike and Judy Lees had prepared a magnificent spread for us.

Then, as an extra special treat, we took them to the George and Dragon at Garrigill for a beer or three. Clearly the long journey, the heat and excitement had been too much for us. By 9:30 none of us could keep our eyes open so we departed for our beds.

We had received strict orders from Sheila to be ready to descend the Brewery Shaft at 9:30 am sharp next morning. Dutifully we arrived on time to find little happening. We didn't have to wait long however and were soon heading for the shaft top where Norpex had set up their winch. It was already getting hot and there was not a cloud in the sky. We struggled into our underground gear and watched the preparations for winching, which seemed very efficient. The first to descend the shaft was Paul Thorne who was to act as our guide once we got to the bottom of the shaft. We all followed one at a time. The descent is quite mind-blowing, especially when the chair one is sitting on catches on the protruding sections of timber and the wire rope goes slack!

We explored the engine room, the area around the wooden water wheel and then waded a short way down the Nent Force Level, just to say we had done it. Then it was time to be hoisted back up so that the afternoon shift could take our place. The searing heat hit us as we arrived at the shaft-top. The temperature must have been in the 80's. All the spectators were clad in shorts and shades. The sweat dripping from our foreheads stained the parched earth and the flies buzzed all around us.

We had made tentative plans to join a trip led by Dave McAnelly to the Scaleburn Horse Gin. But the heat had sapped our enthusiasm. We even thought of having a poke into Rampgill or Smallcleugh ourselves. It seemed a shame to miss the opportunity, now that we were there. But the thought of struggling into underground gear again was not pleasant. In the end we repaired to the Rampgill cafe where we lay on the grass and watched the world go by.

Eventually we returned to Garrigill where we joined our wives sunbathing in a pleasant spot beside the River Tyne.

Unknown to us, at about the same time, an epic was developing at the bottom of the Brewery Shaft. Paul had taken the afternoon visitors round the area. He then started to hoist them back up to the surface. Eventually, after the last delegate had been safely brought out, he was the only one left at

the bottom. At this point a major failure developed in the winch drive mechanism. The main cable could not be used. Effectively Paul was stranded at the shaft bottom with no other means of getting out.

The Norpex winch is fitted with a secondary winding mechanism with its own length of cable. The cables were swapped, but the new one wouldn't reach the shaft bottom. In the end improvisation won the day. A prussic rope was fitted to the end of the cable onto which Paul attached himself. He was then hoisted up the shaft as far as Rampgill Level which he used to make his exit. Undoubtedly he was very pleased to get back to the surface.

We had decided not to join our colleagues for the evening meal at the Village Hall but eat at the George instead. Then we would go over to Nenthead to watch the slides. The slide show depicted exploration at Nenthead over a 30 year period. It was extremely well presented. In fact the whole evening had been very well organised. (They even kept Paul's dinner hot in the oven for when he finally got out of Brewery Shaft.)

With the Norpex winch out of action, the organisers faced a dilemma. There were likely to be quite a few very disappointed delegates who had been booked to descend the shaft on the Sunday. What the organisers needed now was an alternative venue which would be just as exciting and novel as Brewery Shaft. There was only one place that qualified.

During the last hour of the evening plans were made for the next day. Those who had booked to go down Brewery Shaft would, instead, meet in the centre of Nenthead at 9am. Meanwhile Nils, Gerald and I would take Sheila's key and unlock Hudgill Burn Mine. We would then go and fix a rope as a hand line up the shaft into the cavern.

When the group arrived we split into two parties. A lot of explanation was required. Very few of the group knew of the existence of Hudgill Burn, let alone the CAT project to re-open it. They hardly believed us when we told them of the extent of the mine and the presence of the natural cavern. We took time to explain the history of the mine and how CAT's project had progressed. Fortunately there were a number of experienced cavers in the group so getting everyone up into the cavern was no problem at all.

By 2pm everyone had left the mine so we locked up and headed back to Nenthead where we met up with the ladies at the Rampgill Cafe. They were relaxing after being taken on a tour of the Nenthead Smeltmill by Mick Krupa and others. They had been particularly impressed with the enthusiasm of Mick, who is resident archaeologist at Nenthead.

By 4pm we had dismantled the stand, returned it to Sheila's house and were heading back over Hartside to the real world. It had been a great weekend. Next year's NAMHO event is to be staged in the Forest of Dean. A number of members of the Forest society attended the Nenthead Field Meet and could be seen writing furiously in small notebooks, obviously making sure that they didn't miss a single trick.

Alastair Cameron

MEETS REPORTS EXPLORATION ON THE CONISTON FELS

This is a composite report covering a number of CAT trips onto the fells above Coniston. The purpose of the trips was to view remains of Coniston's slate heritage and to try and piece together some of the origins of the industry. The trips proved extremely popular and were well attended.

Today there is rising interest into the history of the Lakeland communities and of the many rural industries that were centered on the communities. Coniston, because of its location and the natural resources close to the village, was in a better position than most villages to take advantage of these opportunities. The slate industry came to the area, we believe, with the Norman conquerors and started to develop from then.

The first actual record we have of slate being obtained in the Lake District is from 1283 AD at Sadgill. Other than this we have virtually no records of any other early slate working. Careful examination of scraps of slate from the remains of Norman buildings and even from Roman ones show that silver-grey slate was being used to roof them. The main source of silver-grey slate in Lakeland is from the slopes of Coniston Old Man. It is purely conjecture but probably safe to say that the fells above Coniston, especially those areas where the slate bands outcrop, were some of the very earliest areas to be worked.

Both the silver-grey and light green slate bands pass over Broughton Moor and right through the heart of the Old Man. They then cut through the Coppermines valley and on through Tilberthwaite where the light green band becomes very strong giving extremely large deposits at Hodge Close and Elterwater. Beyond Little Langdale both bands pass through the mountain of Lingmoor where the silver-grey has been worked at Lingmoor Quarries and the light green at Banks. Further to the east the bands become less distinct, the difference in colour becomes less apparent and the deposits less predictable.

Within the silver-grey band skilled quarrymen can recognise particular 'veins'. Those now retired who used to work at the Old Man can still remember the 'Girt Grey' and 'Lile Grey' bands and the elusive White Slate which is now confined to distant memory.

During the past year a number of CAT trips have been held to investigate the old workings and more are planned for the future. The popularity of these trips confirms the interest that this area holds for people. Other trips have been held by the writer involving local geologists and archaeologists and more are planned for the future. Details of the recent CAT trips are given below. As well as these trips, a number of small projects have been carried out to gain access into underground areas on the silver-grey slate band which have been blocked for many years. Some projects have been successful and others are still in progress.

Betsy Crag & Moss Rigg

The large area of fell land on the lower slopes of Wetherlam has always attracted interest because of both slate and copper remains. However little documentation had been made of the many old slate workings on Blake Rigg and Betsy Crag until the writer embarked on Slate From Coniston in 1995. On the morning of the CAT AGM on 9th December 1995 a small group which included Peter Fleming walked over the area and noted the potential for further exploration. Subsequently, at the CAT meet on 20th October 1996, a total of fifteen members and guests were taken over Betsy Crag and shown the workings which many had no idea existed.

The meet started off at the car park at Tilberthwaite Gill. The weather was not too good but improved later. Initially the route

followed the quarry road from behind Tilberthwaite Cottages towards High Fellside Quarry. Eventually the group left the road to climb up the fell on the left following an old sledge track towards the Sandbeds workings high above. A photograph of the large riving shed on the quarry bank at Sandbeds feature in both Beneath the Lakeland Fells and Slate From Coniston. Unfortunately, since the photograph was taken by Peter Fleming, the shed has collapsed revealing, amongst other things, some old silver cutlery which must have been secreted by someone in the walls for safe keeping.

Behind the shed the level to the old Sandbeds mine is open but is ankle deep in water. At the end is a sizeable closehead. It was in this closehead that Claude Cann worked slate during the first years of the present century. Claude had moved up from Delabole in Cornwall with his parents in 1890 and, for the next 70 years, was to have a greater effect on the fortunes of Coniston than any other person. Claude moved from Sandbeds to the adjacent High Fell Quarry in 1909. Later, in the 1920's, he was responsible for developing the Broughton Moor complex at Torver.

Above the Sandbeds workings is a small bate cabin which is still intact. During a subsequent CAT meet on 24th June 1997 led by Mike Mitchell, the roof of this building was strengthened to prevent imminent collapse.

The party continued to cross Betsy Crag towards High Fell Quarry. At the time of the trip the silver-grey slate band at High Fell was being worked by the father and son team of Jim and Neville Walker. As it was a Sunday neither was on site and therefore it was not possible to view the inside of the small workshop on the quarry bank. However some time was spent exploring the closehead behind the sheds which is now not used but still contains interesting artifacts. Recently Jim Walker has retired and Neville has teamed up with Coniston quarryman George Tarr, whose ugly features can be seen on the front cover of Slate From Coniston. Slate is now being extracted from an open quarry higher and to the left of the main bank. The slate is of excellent quality, as can be seen by anyone visiting the Black Bull in Coniston. The floor of the bar extension is laid with slate from High Fell.

The group moved on across the fell towards the next working on the silver-grey band which is Tunnel Quarry. Tunnel is an open

working which had been developed from an underground closehead when the roof was taken off in the 1880's. The old level, which once served the closehead, still runs in from the fellside and was obviously the main route of extraction from the pit right up to the end of working. The level opens out onto the steep hillside above the Tilberthwaite Valley where there are dressing sheds and other buildings and it is not easy to see how 'made slates' were carried from there down to the valley road. A number of suggestions were discussed by the CAT party, the most likely of which is that sledges were used. It is possible to make out a track that runs down the hillside which might have been a sledging route, and at the bottom are the remains of a small loading dock where carts could have been loaded.

Lunch was taken on the Tunnel Quarry bank, the level providing shelter during the odd rain shower. From the bank a spectacular path traverses the near-vertical hillside towards the next workings which is Betsy Crag Quarry. The path has obviously been constructed by quarrymen to give access to Tunnel Quarry from Betsy Crag. Quite a bit of it has fallen away now but, with care, it is still possible to use the route.

Betsy Crag workings are very ancient. It is most likely that both the higher and lower quarry was started in the middle ages or even before, at points where the slate band outcropped on the surface. They would then be worked by the simple technique of following the slate band downwards, creating the pits that remain today. There are a number of interesting buildings on the east side of the quarry and these were inspected by the party. There was a lot of discussion as to how slate was lifted from the base of the lowest pit. Was there a powered winder on the quarry bank? Or did an old level, which runs into the hillside just above the valley road, rise up into the base of the pit? Since the trip old records have been found in the Barrow archives which confirm that the second was the method of removal of made slates.

By now the weather had improved and the meet leader decided to take the group across to the Moss Rigg area. As the party descended the fellside towards the Tilberthwaite Valley, they effectively passed from workings on the silver-grey band to those on the light green.. After descending into Atkinson Coppice, and having a quick look into Cathedral Cavern the group were taken through the woods and shown a small

slate working tucked away in the trees which, it is hoped, may one day be restored to the state it was in when it was working. This would involve repairing and re-roofing the riving shed and clearing brambles from the surface of the tip.

The next venue was the Moss Rigg area where the remains of the exploits of the Lakeland Green Slate and Stone Company during the 1960's were viewed. The Moss Rigg pit is now very deep. The underground areas are not now (officially at least) accessible.

Slate extraction here was almost certainly well established in the late 1600's. During the latter part of the 1800's Moss Rigg was operated by the Tilberthwaite Green Slate Company. All the workings were underground and a major 'open-topping' operation took place during the 1880's. In 1919 the Buttermere Green Slate Company took the workings over and operated them in a half-hearted way until about 1928 when they abandoned them. In 1948 three quarrymen from Coniston decided to open them up again, and the multi-million pound company that they eventually created as a result is now part of Coniston folk-law.

After exploring the area the group headed back to the cars at Tilberthwaite Gill and then on to the Yewdale Hotel for a late afternoon pint.

Exploration on Coniston Old Man, 3rd August 1997

The plan for this days' meet was to concentrate on the slate workings on the silver-grey band that are to be found on the north-east shoulder of the Old Man. They are generally known as the Old Man Quarries. For several years the meet leader had been involved in a lot of discussion with local archaeologists and historians about the origins of slate working on the mountain and he was hoping, during the meet, that he would be able to discuss some of his theories with those present.

The starting point for the day was the BMSC cottage at the Coppermines. The weather was fine and the meet leader was running late. As he drove up the track he hoped that he might find about half a dozen keen members waiting for him. Imagine his surprise when he saw the huge group outside the cottage and realised that nearly 40 members and guests had turned up for the trip!

The group set off up the Paddy End track and crossed Levers Water Beck via the quarry road bridge. A few brief words of explanation were made concerning Low Brandy Crag workings, the lowest on the silver-grey band and the only one still being operated today.

During the day the meet leader intended to show examples of all types of slate working that has taken place on the Old Man spanning the 7-800 years of operation. The earliest workings were by the simple technique of picking naturally riven slate from the outcrops on the surface of the mountain. As extraction progressed depressions were created which eventually became sizeable cuttings. Ultimately, as the 'old men' followed the slate into the hillside, caverns were formed which opened out directly to daylight. They were referred to by Coniston quarrymen as 'light-holes'. There are still remains of all these types of workings on the mountain.

Most of the remains on the Old Man are from relatively modern operation, i.e. post 1790 when the technique of driving levels into the mountain to intersect the slate band underground was developed. The last level driven in this way was at Dixon's Workings above Low Water in the 1920's.

The party continued up the quarry access road past Low Bank where a project to open out the level entrance is in progress, Saddlestone where the main processing plant was situated and on past Fisher Bank to Smithy Bank. Close to Smithy Bank was the site of two of the three mediaeval workings on this side of the mountain, the third was at Scald Cop about 400ft higher up. The meet leader showed the group the remains of these workings and explained how more recent operations has partially obliterated them. On arriving at Moss Head the party paid a brief visit into Middle Moss Head to view the largest slate cavern in England, created when the separate workings of Low Moss Head, Middle Moss Head and Spion Kop broke into each other.

The group continued the climb towards the ancient workings of Scald Cop viewing the remains of the sledge track en route. Close to Scald Cop a number of areas were inspected where surface deposits had clearly been quarried in earliest times. Above Scald Cop a brief stop was made at Dixon's Workings where the meet leader told the story of how the quarrymen, who were driving the level in the 1920's, had

complained to their gaffers that they were doing it in the wrong place. They were, of course, right. The company didn't listen and the venture proved a failure.

From here it is only a short climb to the summit of the mountain. It was a pleasant day and most of the party continued on up to the top, along the summit ridge and descended down Brim Fell End to Levers Water Dam. The BMSC cottage was reached at about 4:30pm.

There is so much still to do on the mountain that it is probably better to concentrate on one working at a time. The area around Scald Cop is to receive attention during 1998 when the development of this site from its ancient beginnings till the Victorian times will be studied during a CAT trip in May.

Goldscope and Cove workings. 1st March 1998

The plan for the day was to walk from the Walna Scar Fell Gate over the Walna Scar Pass and down to the Walna Scar Quarries where all the surface and underground workings would be studied. This plan didn't take account of the weather. During the previous night it snowed heavily and although most of the snow had gone from the village by the Sunday morning the road up to the Fell Gate proved too much for some members.

Eventually everyone arrived and a total of twelve members and guests stood around drinking coffee and chatting in the freezing wind. The group included John Aird, a long-time CAT member and native of the Coniston area. Both John and the writer have been exploring old slate workings for longer than they care to remember, possibly even before the Newsletter Editor was out of his pram. John is a long-haul pilot for British Airways and, consequently, finds it difficult to attend many CAT meets.

The joint meet leaders of Mike Mitchell and Alastair Cameron had a quick discussion and felt that an arctic trek over the Walna Scar was not a good idea especially bearing in mind that, when we finally got to the old workings, much of the surface detail would be obliterated anyway. It was decided to implement Plan B, which was hastily put together while we got our boots on.

It was decided to visit the Goldscope workings on the side of Brown Pike. These ancient workings have a long and interesting

history. The old cart track to Goldscope leaves the Walna Scar Pass about half way up and traverses the side of the mountain to the quarry which is not far from the summit of the mountain. Below the workings is Blind Tarn nestling in its glaciated hollow. On a summer's day the location is idyllic but on the day of the meet it was anything but idyllic. On the quarry bank is a mountain 'houf' into which we all squeezed to eat our sandwiches and keep out of the wind.

After lunch the underground chamber was investigated. Many people consider that Goldscope worked the silver-grey slate band. This is not strictly true. To the north west of the silver-grey band is a further slate bed consisting of a darker grey volcanic material. It is very apparent in a number of locations such as at the back of Low Water Tarn, but it has only been worked in two places, one of which is Goldscope. On Brown Pike the slate outcrops to the surface and the quarry workings have been developed by tunneling directly into the band - a classic 'light hole'. It is difficult to date the origins of Goldscope but my guess from old maps and documents is that it must have been in operation prior to the year 1700, and possibly for a long time before that.

Just inside the entrance to the underground area are the remains of a support for a grinding wheel. The quarry chamber is quite large and, in the far right hand corner, a level leads off, ending in a blockage. It is quite evident that the level must have continued to an entrance portal. Later the group found the probable location outside on the mountainside.

Apart for the supports for the grinding wheel there is little left from the last years of working. The quarry closed in the 1930's. The lease was held by the Kendal family of Torver for many years. Tom Kendal was a man of great determination and drive. He was quite a difficult person to get on with. With the exception of his son, Gordon, no one was prepared to work with him. Because few people visit Goldscope little can have changed since the Kendal's abandoned the workings. Today one feels like an intruder in a world of long-departed souls.

As it was still early it was decided to return to Coniston via Cove Quarries on the south east shoulder of Coniston Old Man. We ascended the rough cart road through the quarries inspecting a few workings and reaching Middle Cove before it was generally agreed that we should call it a day. It was

getting dark and there was a suggestion that more snow could be on its way. We returned to the cars and made a careful descent down the hill to Coniston. The day was rounded off with yet another pint in the Yewdale.

Alastair Cameron

(Thanks Alastair. This is proof, if any were needed, that the sinners list does work - Ed.)

NAMHO FIELD MEET 1998 - ALTERNATIVE ITINERARY

So, while Tony Blair, Bill Clinton, Boris Yeltsin and other assorted heads of government were discussing world issues and exchanging points of view, their wives were visiting the delights of Birmingham and Stratford Upon Avon and generally being entertained to an alternative programme.

Similarly, while the intricacies of Brewery Shaft, Rampgill Level and Capelcleugh Mine were being investigated by our better (?) halves, the ladies (or some of them) decided to find out more about the Nenthead Smeltmill.

Sunday 17th May was a pleasantly warm and sunny day - far too nice to grovel through the mud of Hudgill Burn Mine. We gathered at the entrance to the Nenthead Heritage Centre, a mixed group of male/female, all ages, plus the odd dog. The aroma of sun cream was much in evidence. We were honoured with a triumvirate of leaders: Mick Krupa, Brian Young and Peter Wilkinson - when one stopped talking another took over. We learnt much in the three hour trip, visited the restored Stamps building, Barracks and workshop and were given a lot of information to digest. Actually seeing the work in progress and hearing the explanation of how, why and what next was very interesting. The importance of conserving not only the industrial remains but also the plant communities and geological resources was stressed.

Mick Krupa, resident archaeologist, explained how the progress of work is determined by the constraints imposed by English Heritage, both financial and technical. With limited budgets and time, difficult decisions have to be made about where to concentrate efforts, for example, one of the furnaces against the spine wall had just been uncovered but may not be excavated further as other work has a higher priority.

To the lay person the Smeltmill site may appear a complete mess at present. However, work is still at the evaluation and assessment stage: Mick Krupa will investigate the survival, extent and quality of the archaeological remains and then make recommendations for their conservation.

A more detailed description of the work in progress at Nenthead can be found in the North Pennine Heritage Trust Newsletter, issue number 33, Spring 1998, page 3-5.

One or more follow-up visits would definitely be worthwhile, if only to experience again the enthusiasm and commitment of Mick Krupa. We should add that the trip ended at the Heritage Centre Cafe where we waited in the sun for three cold, damp and muddy husbands.

One question, is the weather always so marvellous in Nenthead?

Cilla Cameron
Liz Wilkes
Veronica Colling

FURNESS RELIC SURVEY

Last Friday, the FMA were out as usual, clearing hawthorn bushes and brambles, this time at S5 Pit, Roanhead. We have been clearing brambles at Roanhead for some time now, so it may be worth considering why we are doing it and whether it will ever be finished.

It began with a COMRU meet, organised by Chris Jones in November 1992, which took the form of a paper chase around several underground sites in Furness. Several local members of CAT were present, and I went along as a guest. One of the sites visited was Crossgates railway tunnel, where an imposing limestone portal leads to a short tunnel to nowhere. It was less imposing than when I had last seen it. Limestone blocks had been hacked out from the tunnel and it's approaches and taken away to build a garden wall. A nearby engine bed had been virtually destroyed by the removal of it's limestone cladding.

There was a general feeling that the remains of the Furness mining industry were being lost to time and weather, as well as to landfill and agricultural development. With Dalton bypass threatening more destruction, this unnecessary act of vandalism fired Anton into action. The next day he wrote to Barrow town hall, and then to the CAT committee

and to CIHS. From some fairly heated discussions arising, there emerged a plan. We would compile a record of all the mining remains in Furness. The purpose of the record would be twofold: It could be used to convince the authorities that mine buildings were of interest, and worth listing, or failing that, it would create a permanent record of what had been lost.

The area was to be divided into ten manageable patches, and ten volunteers would walk their patch to see what they could find. Then they would go to the archives and read all they could find about their patch. Having read the history of his patch, the patchholder would walk the ground again and find more relics in the light of new knowledge. When we had a list of structures to work from, we would go out into the field with tape measures and sketchpads to produce detailed drawings of what we had found. Easy. We should have it done within the year....

Well, it did not work as planned. Some patches had no remains, others had no records. Most had no tenants. The process of making detailed sketches proved slow and laborious. With two official meets on the meets list for 1993, some progress was made. By now we were taking photographs of each relic, and Anton was working up sketches from those. We would then go back and add dimensions to Anton's sketches, which he would draw out again to make a final copy. It all took several visits to each site, and if there was any delay, then the brambles which we had cut down on the first visit would have grown back.

There were other distractions. At Woodbine Pit, Newton, Anton found a chimney in need of repair, and volunteered the services of his skilled team of steeplejacks. At Roanhead, I found a mine store on the verge of destruction. Open to the wind, the next easterly gale would remove more of the roof, then wet rot could assist the woodworm in finishing off the timbers. This was not allowed to happen, but we were taking on more brickwork jobs whilst the surveying remained bogged down at two sites, Violet pit and Sandscale No1. Surveying became a seasonal activity, February to May, when the brickwork season began.

Early in 1996, we thrashed out a policy for the new season. We would clear one site and photograph it until there was no more to record. Then we would move on. About this time, Sheila Thomas bought her husband a

brush cutter. This tool has proved it's worth many times over in the relic survey, but never more so than in the dense bramble thickets around Violet Pit. The season closed when a duck's nest was exposed, the duck sitting tight on her eggs while the jungle was demolished around her. The engine bed that drove the ore washing machine was photographed at the cost of a clutch of eggs. Then, having apologised to the farmer for scrattin, we begged permission to return to Sandscale No1 to finish what we had started there.

Another relic that had been previously sketched but not photographed was the miners privy at Rita. We had previously drawn and measured it in the belief that it was some kind of pump house. There is hardly a brick missing from the outside walls, which demonstrates the truth of the old saying.

The 1998 season saw us finally clear of Rita sop. Peggy, Ethel and Nigel pits all needed serious scrub clearance, but by now we were becoming good at it.

This year we started at Burton pit. What looked like a simple photographing job turned into a weight lifting exercise. The single engine bed had been covered in a patent glue composed of 92% manure, 8% baler twine. This was not easy to remove. Woodhead No1 engine bed was harder still. The covering of ivy could not be removed without destroying the brickwork, so the photographs after clearance resemble a neatly trimmed hedge.

If this record sounds like a catalogue of Roanhead mines, there is a reason. Roanhead contains more engine beds than you can shake a stick at, but we hope to have it finished by this time next year. The rest of Furness has not been entirely neglected, so another three years might see the project complete. Then we might go back to digging.

Captions for photographs - See Back Cover

1. Privy near Rita Pit. Photo D Robson
2. Mine workshop at Lowfield, Anton CPT holding stick. The nearby engine house has been sympathetically developed, but they used the slates from the workshop to do it. Photo S C P Thomas
3. Elliscales No 4 winding engine house, by the bypass, Anton holding stick. The building is in good condition and makes a

fine stable, but how long will it last without the slates? Photo SCP Thomas

4. Woodbine chimney before repairs. The top four courses were held on by gravity, and an ominous crack ran down to the collar on two sides. Photo SCP Thomas.

5. Interior of mine store at Roanhead, PS holding stick. Photo SCP Thomas

6. Mine store, Roanhead. Photo SCP Thomas

7. D Robson photographing engine bed at Burton Pit, Roanhead, PS holding stick. Photo P Timewell

8. Woodbine chimney repaired, Joe Quinn at top. Photo P Timewell.

The Writing On The Wall

You are probably familiar with the names of these ironmasters, but what were they up to on these dates?

Answers on page 12

1. Alexander Brogden on August 10th 1868.

2. Mr. J W Lawn on July 29th 1896.

3. H W Schneider Esq., Mayor of Barrow on 19th July 1877

4. Wor Bro. Myles Kennedy, PM, PPCV, on 31st Oct. 1905.

5. Myles Kennedy JP on June 3rd 1904.

6. Harry Arnold Esq., Chairman of Hodbarrow Mining Co., on 13th April 1905.

Peter Sandbach

ENQUIRY INTO THE CONDITION OF MINES IN GREAT BRITAIN BY CAPTAIN W. H. ROWE (KINNAIRD REPORT 1864)

HUDGILL BURN LEAD MINE, mouth of the adit level about 3/4 of a mile NW of Galligill Syke Mine. This level is driven in a south and south-easterly direction intersecting several veins, on which are old drivings and workings of great extent; on the east this level is holed (or said to be), to the Galligill Syke mine; there is a perceptible draught going in that direction, and from the great extent of old workings and number of branch drifts the present workings are well ventilated. A line drawn from the mouth of the level in a south-west direction 300 fathoms would represent the adit cross-cut to the veins, from this another in a south-east direction 360 fathoms, turning obliquely through the several veins (four in number), would reach the innermost workings now in operation. This is a sump about 5 fathoms in depth, not far from the regular draught at the bottom of which is a cross cut north 4 fathoms, then a drift east and west 8 fathoms in each direction; here the temperature of the air was 35.5°, that of the rock 52°; 4 men are driving and stoping the sole of the drift;

there are no ladders in the sump, the men go down an up by means of a windlass; going back again north-west, and scattered over a distance of 175 fathoms in the old workings on the different veins are 4 more companies of men, making the total number working above, below, and in this level 16 men, the depth from surface about 30 fathoms. An average of these places was a drift 5 1/2 feet by 3 feet, about 8 fathoms from draught; temperature of air 53° and 52°". The main level will average about 6 feet high by 4 feet wide, ground firm or where necessary, supported. West of the mouth of this level about 220 fathoms is a shaft sunk from the surface about 38 fathoms deep, at the bottom of which 9 men are engaged boring towards the forehead of a deep level, which has been driven south from a Whimsey shaft, on the line of what is called the "Teesdale cross vein" a distance of 190 fathoms; this level is drained by and is a continuation of what is known as the "deep level from Lovelady shield shaft". The object of "boring" I believe is to drain the shaft as well as endeavour to discover its position in regard to a rise made from the forehead of the "deep" level. No men were working during my visit to the mine in this level, in the expectation that the boring would soon inform them the relative position, when a communication could afterwards be more readily effected. About 40 fathoms north of the Whimsey shaft is a ladder-road though a rise 5 feet in diameter; the ladders and stages are at short distances. The washing department is of no importance, a man and 2 boys dressing ore in the summer season. There are no "shops" connected with either of these mines.

These mines were examined by me on 23rd September 1862.

Submitted by Dave McAnelly

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

The answer in each case is a spot of bricklaying.

1. Alexander Brogden laid the foundation stone at Dalton Methodist Sunday School.
2. Mr. J W Lawn, mines manager to Barrow Haematite Steel, laid the date stone at the adjacent Wesleyan Sunday School.
3. The mayor laid the datestone at Roose Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, where work to convert the building to a house seems to have stopped halfway.
4. Myles Kennedy laid the foundation stone of Ulverston Masonic Lodge, and
5. also the Coronation Hall.

6. Harry Arnold celebrated the completion of Hodbarrow outer barrier with a memorial stone.

DANGER FROM FIGURE-8/KARABINER COMBINATION

Passed on to NCA Equipment Officer is a British Mountaineering Council Technical Committee paper containing the following information which concerns danger from a combination of equipment which, while not widely used, is not uncommon in the caving world.

Danger from Figure-8/Karabiner Combination

"The BMC technical Committee were recently asked to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of a student at an adventure activities centre. The student was involved in a 40m fall from a bridge while; attempting a high-speed abseiling exercise.

"Following a detailed investigation, backed up by laboratory and other tests, the conclusion reached by the BMC's expert is that the equipment failure was caused when the figure-8 loaded the gate- of the karabiner with the full weight of the abseiler in a configuration which applied the load in a torsional manner. This caused the gate to break in a fashion which allowed the karabiner to open and release the figure-8.

"Tests indicated that the karabiner/figure-8 configuration which causes the incorrect loading of the gate is a common occurrence but usually resolves itself when the figure-8 is loaded. However, under some circumstances the configuration can be stable to a point where breakage of the karabiner gate and release of the figure-8 occurs. Matters are made considerably worse if the abseiler is above average weight since with normal weight people (circa 70kg) the force applied on the gate is marginally below the breaking strain of the gate, but with people of higher weight the breaking strain can easily be exceeded. The dynamic conditions of abseiling make the situation worse."

[Further details of the BMC's report can be provided to people who contact the NCA Equipment Officer with a postal address.]
Weakness of a Karabiner Gate

The BMC investigation reinforces something which is already common knowledge for cavers – that the gate of a karabiner cannot be considered to be a load bearing component and in situations where the loading of a link system is likely to be other than a simple straight pull, a maillon rapide provides a much safer means of attachment. The new information which comes from the investigation is just how low the breaking strain of the karabiner gate is, and how close this is to the forces which can easily be applied in normal abseiling.

The Maillon + 'Stop' Problem

Chris Ware, Lyon Equipment's Development Engineer, gives the following advice on the use of maillons with a Petzl 'Stop':

"Stop descenders are the problem as discussed before. The problem with the maillon opening the latch is a very small probability, but even so must be addressed. I have done tests with various shapes of maillon rapide to see if one is suitable, the semicircular model gives the best results and I can't get it to open the latch as the narrower shapes do. This doesn't mean that can't be done!!! But I am happy to recommend its use."

[See SpSc.24, July/Aug. '96 & Training. Bull. 96/4, July/Aug. '96 for reasons for NOT using even a 10mm long oval maillon with a Petzl Stop.]

HUDGILLBURN MINE UPDATE - JUNE

Work continues to go well at HGB. The new dig to gain access to the main veins was started in June. The collapsed material is much easier to remove than on previous digs and we are hopeful of success on our next meet.

The British Geological Survey have expressed an interest in doing a survey of the minerals to be found in the mine. The committee have agreed to the survey being done and have decided that no other persons should remove mineral samples till the BGS's work is completed.

Alastair Cameron and Nils Wilks put a line the length of the Cavern which was marked every 25m. This is to help with the plotting of the Graffiti and marks the route through the Cavern

Thanks go to CAT members Mark Weston and Stephen Moreton for donations to the HGB fund.

Sheila Barker

MAILLON RAPIDES

Maillon Rapides which are potentially unsafe for use in rigging have been seen for sale at a cheap price on market stalls in the Chesterfield and Sheffield area. They were offered with the comment that "they're only a third the price you'll pay in the outdoor shops". The 7mm ones seen were very shiny steel and with a rather loose screwgate and will not be certificated for use as "Personal Protective Equipment". Anyone selling these maillons as suitable for caving or climbing is doing so illegally and is liable for prosecution.

Maillon Rapides were invented by a firm called Peguet in Switzerland and are made by them to very strict quality standards. Maillons are made, and used, for a wide variety of applications. Not all the nearly 200 models have been submitted to the full certification process that is required for them to be sold as Personal Protective Equipment. (Listed below are the maillons available as ppe.)

Cavers with a proper concern for their safety should ensure that any maillons for use in SRT or rigging systems are bought from a reputable source, such as a specialist climbing or caving shop. Ask for maillons which are "ppe certified", sold together with user information. (It is not enough just to look for a "CE" mark, many maillons carry this mark because they conform to an entirely different European directive on automotive parts.)

Much cheaper maillons now come in from the Far East. They are widely sold in DIY stores and hardware shops. If you are safeguarding your safety with a maillon, don't touch them with a bargepole – it's not worth risking your life for a couple of £'s!

Thanks to Frank Beasley of Chesterfield C C for the tip-off and to Ben Lyon for additional information on maillons.

CE Marked Maillon Rapides

For safety equipment for personal protection in climbing or mountaineering.

MR 7 mm standard stainless steel
MR 7 mm large opening galvanised
MR 7 mm large opening stainless steel MR 8
mm standard galvanised
MR 8 mm standard stainless steel
MR 8 mm large opening galvanised MR 9 mm
standard galvanised
MR 10 mm standard galvanised
MR 10 mm standard stainless steel MR 10
mm standard zicral
MR 10 mm large opening galvanised MR 10
mm delta galvanised
MR 10 mm halfmoon galvanised MR 10 mm
halfmoon zicral
MR 10 mm halfmoon stainless steel MR 10
mm pear-shaped galvanised MR 12 mm delta
galvanised
MR 12 mm pear-shaped galvanised

THE WHITRIGGS DIRT SHIRT

**YES FOR THE PRINCELY SUM OF £15 YOU CAN BE THE PROUD OWNER OF
A SHIRT HAND WASHED IN THE IRON RICH SOIL OF FURNESS FOR WHICH
THE AREA IS FAMOUS.**

PLEASE PAY IN CASH AT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING STOCKISTS :-

TIMEWELLS – GENTLEMEN'S OUTFITTERS

SANDBACH SUPPLY CO.

C.P. THOMAS – CONSTRUCTION

JONES (PART TIME)

**DUE TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS PRODUCT THE FOLLOWING ARE
ALSO BEING DEVELOPED, BELL HILL BOOTS, PARK PANTS,
HENNING HARD HATS & BARROW BOILERSUITS. PLEASE SEE YOU
STOCKIST FOR DETAILS**

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on the Monday 16th March 1998 at the BMSC Hut, Coniston.

Agenda.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1 Apologies for absence | 2 Minutes of the last meeting |
| 3 Matters arising | 4 Secretary's Report |
| 5 Treasurer's Report | 6 Membership Secretary's Report |
| 7 Meets Secretary's Report | 8 Furness Projects |
| 9 Hudgillburn Mine | 10 Newlands Furnace |
| 11 Coniston Coppermines Site | 12 Video Film Project |
| 13 Publications | 14 Date and venue of next committee meeting |
| 15 Any other business | |

Present

D. Bridge(DB), S. Barker(SB), P. Timewell(PT),
 I. Matheson(IM), P. Fleming(PF), M. Mitchell(MM),
 M Scott(MSc), and A. Wilson(AW).

8 Members in total.

The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from J Davies and M Simpson(MS).

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 19th January 1998 had been previously circulated to members. It was PROPOSED by PF and SECONDED by PT that the minutes be signed by the chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings. This was carried unanimously.

3 Matters arising

- 3.1 Item 3.1 (AGM) Member T Oulton had suggested that a log of qualified first aiders should be kept with the first aid kits. It was decided there were a few pit falls to this idea i.e. which qualifications would be valid, length of time to be allowed to lapse between refresher courses and the risk of liability. It was decided it would be too complicated a matter to pursue.
- 3.2 Item 13 (AGM) ADC had raised the question of insuring the societies assets such as library, archives and equipment. It was decided probably the best way of insuring the library was for the Librarian to pay extra on his contents insurance. DB to assess the value of the books.

4 Secretary's Report

The secretary had received :

- A) Details of the NCA and NAMHO AGM's.
- B) The CLHF Bulletin.
- C) Speleo Scene.

4.1 In the NAMHO minutes chairman Ivor Brown reported on a meeting he had attended with HM Principle Inspector of Mines, the following were some of the points made:

- a) What club members do together is their business but if they include members of the public, it becomes a Health and Safety matter.
- b) Day membership of clubs does not exist as far as the Inspectorate is concerned.
- c) H.S. matters are independent of insurance issues.

After discussing the above points it was decided that:

- 1) The Treasurer should increase the number of BCRA insurance's as necessary throughout the year to cover new members.
- 2) That the Membership Secretary should contact Meet Leaders asking them to get any visitors (unless they have BCRA insurance cover with another club) to sign a membership application form before attending the meet.
- 3) Meet Leaders are also responsible for ensuring that adequate First Aid equipment is available if required. CATMHS F.A.kits are located at Mandall's in Coniston and at Hudgillburn Mine.
- 4) Meet Leaders should have the right to exclude any member from certain activities, if they believe them to be outside that persons capability. Training is available on request.

The above statement to be printed on the next Meets List.

The NAMHO AGM will be held on 29th March at Matlock.

5 Treasurer's Report

The treasurer presented a balance sheet covering the period since the last committee meeting. The following points arose:

- 5.1 Annual Dinner-final profit was £26.05.
- 5.2 The cost of the Hudgillburn Mine project to date was £922.
- 5.3 The Treasurer PROPOSED that the society should have three signatures on the cheques in future, it was decided that D. Bridge would be the third signatory. SECONDED by M. Mitchell, all were in favour.

6 Membership Secretary's Report

IM reported there were 91 paid up members to date.

7 Meets Secretary's Report

No report.

8 Furness Projects

PT reported good progress was being made, Nigel Pit was now completed and the survey of Burton pit was underway. A good photo of the capstan at 'S' Pits had been obtained.

9 Hudgillburn Mine

SB reported on the progress at the mine, members had been at the mine nearly every Sunday since the breakthrough. Photography and surveying had been carried out. On 8th March access to the Cavern had been gained by a convoluted route, work on the preferred route would continue over the next few Sundays. It was decided to buy 3 five foot Acro-props. Action MM.

10 Newlands Furnace

PT reported work towards obtaining lottery funding was continuing, LECK had tendered a quote for the complete project. Members had been to Burlington Slate Quarry for another free load of waste slate, to continue the work on the walls of the furnace.

11 Coniston Coppermines site

PF had nothing to report, SB had still not received a copy of the English Nature report on the proposal to designate the area of the Coniston Copper Mines, as an SSSI site on the strength of its geology and minerals.

12 Video film project

MM suggested it was time to arrange a meeting as good weather would hopefully be approaching. He suggested we should start checking the barometric pressure to ensure good quality filming.

13 Publications

It had been suggested at the AGM that the society should reprint Slate from Coniston and/or BLF.

A. Cameron is keen to pursue the reprinting of BLF for the Millennium and will make enquiries regarding prices and conditions. He would be willing to approach the individual authors. All agreed that ADC should go ahead with the enquires. A soft, coloured cover, with some coloured pictures inside were amongst the suggestions

14 Date and venue of next Committee Meeting

This was arranged for 7.30 p.m. on Monday 11th May 1998 at the BMSC Hut at Coniston.

15 Any other business

15.1 PF asked if the committee thought we were missing out on any grants.

After discussion it was decided that with the exception of Newlands Furnace, none of our other projects would be eligible for grant aid.

15.2 Next weeks Meets Meeting was discussed and suggestions made:

a) MM suggested an evening visit to the stone hut (off the Walna Scar Road) which needs new timbers in the roof. This was arranged for the 20th May.

b) M Sc suggested a museum meet, as we had not done this for a while.

c) A Newlands Valley, Furness meet was also suggested.

d) PF thought we should invite the MOLES to a Coniston surface meet.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10-00 p.m.

SB 3/4/98

Chairman

Balance January 1998			3491.44
Income			
Subs 6@ £12	72.00		
Subs 29@ £10	290.00		
Donations			
M Mitchell-I Matheson	20.00		
Membership appeal	60.00		
Literature sales			
SFC	26.50		
Leaflets LDNP	80.00		
Bank interest	0.76		
	Total	<u>549.26</u>	<u>549.26</u>
			<u>4040.70</u>
Expenses			
HSP-Milner	88.03		
Membership Sec expenses	65.87		
Dinner-hats etc.	10.00		
Equipment			
100m rope	150.00		
Project-HGB J.Brown	80.43		
Subs CLHF	6.00		
NAMHO	15.00		
	TOTAL	<u>415.33</u>	<u>-415.33</u>
Balance			<u>3625.37</u>
Balance held as:			
Building Society	3203.29		
Bank	422.08		
	TOTAL	<u>3625.37</u>	

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on the Monday 11th May 1998 at the BMSC Hut, Coniston.

Agenda.

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|----|--|
| 1 | Apologies for absence | 2 | Minutes of the last meeting |
| 3 | Matters arising | 4 | Secretary's Report |
| 5 | Treasurer's Report | 6 | Membership Secretary's Report |
| 7 | Meets Secretary's Report | 8 | Furness Projects |
| 9 | Hudgillburn Mine | 10 | Newlands Furnace |
| 11 | Coniston Coppermines Site | 12 | Video Film Project |
| 13 | Publications | 14 | Date and venue of next committee meeting |
| 15 | Any other business | | |

Present D. Bridge(DB), S. Barker(SB), P. Timewell(PT), I. Matheson(IM),
P. Fleming(PF), M. Mitchell(MM), M Scott(MSc), and A. Wilson(AW).

8 Members in total.

The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from J Davies (JD) and M Simpson (MS).

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 16th March 1998 had been previously circulated to members. It was PROPOSED by PT and SECONDED by DB that the minutes be signed by the chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings. This was carried unanimously.

3 Matters arising

- 3.1 Item 4.1 (3) SB reported that the HGB first aid kit was now kept in P. Blezard's caravan.
- 3.2 Item 4.1 (2 3 4) IM had contacted the meet leaders as agreed at the last meeting, he had also published the details in the Newsletter.
- 3.3 Item 4.1 (1) PT had contacted the insurers regarding temporary insurance, new or prospective members to fill in a membership form before going underground.
- 3.4 Item 15.2 DB reported on the recent Meets Meeting, all the suggestions made at the previous committee meeting had been accepted.

4 Secretary's Report

The secretary had received :

- 4.1 A questionnaire from Barrow in Furness Record Office asking for preferred opening times. These had been distributed amongst the Furness members.
- 4.2 The MPP Step 2 report on The Bloomery Iron Industry from the LUAU asking for information on local bloomery sites. It was decided we could not add any more sites to the list. The secretary to reply before 25th May.
- 4.3 Notification of the publication in November of 'The Moorfield Pit (Dickie Brig) Disaster' by Harry Tootle, price £6. In the publicity material it stated that this story was being told for the first time. This is not quite true, as it was told in the Mine Explorer No 4 by Jack Nadin.
- 4.4 PF reported a crisis within the CIHS who were having difficulty recruiting committee members and were in danger of folding. SB had received information stating that they had now recruited new committee members, so the crisis was averted.

5 Treasurer's Report

The treasurer presented a balance sheet covering the period since the last committee meeting.

The following points arose:

- 5.1 The income from books is £20 up due to over payment.
- 5.2 The amount of tax rebate was down due to less tax being paid by the taxpayers (23%).
- 5.3 A large number of members had now re-covenanted.

6 Membership Secretary's Report

IM reported there were now 101 paid up members, this figure included 15 new members since the AGM. 116 copies of the April newsletters had been distributed. It was decided to increase the print run to 130, so new members could receive back copies.

7 Meets Secretary's Report

Future meets were discussed, a trip to Birkhill Fireclay Quarry was suggested, combined with a visit to a Scottish visitor mine and the Alva Silver Mine. It was noted that W. Allison would be unable to lead the Helvellyn Mine meet. Action DB.

8 Furness Heritage Survey

PT reported good progress was being made, Woodhead Pit, Roan Head was now completed and the survey of 'S' 3 Pit was underway. There was plenty to photograph on this site, including four engine beds. P Sandbach intends to write an article about it.

PF expressed concern about the construction of a garden centre on land at Melton Brow, Dalton in Furness. PT replied that it was the tunnel construction rather than mining remains, that were at risk and he would be watching progress on the site.

9 Hudgillburn Mine

SB reported on the progress at the mine, on the 11th April Thomas Shields Rise to the Cavern was completely cleared. The following Sunday the digging team started work on the collapse on the first right hand branch of the East Waggon Level. This collapse is at a rise which goes up to workings on the HCB Old Vein. On the 3rd May 12 members attended and work started on stemming the Cavern rise. Photography and drawing of the graffiti in the Cavern had also been carried out.

10 Newlands Furnace

PT reported the work was continuing, in May they would be cutting two girders which would then be built in, to support the firebrick lining.

PF described an iron furnace he had seen on his recent holiday in a remote area of the Czech Republic. It was very similar to the Duddon Furnace, dated 1734/1886 and had been renovated.

11 Coniston Coppermines site

PF had nothing to report, DB reported on the last survey meet, when a sheep fell into the Crater. DB and MS had carried out a survey in Chain Stope, near Earthquake Passage.

MSc reported seeing a tractor removing spoil from within the sheduled area to repair the track. SB to write to John Hodgeson regarding the matter.

12 Video film project

MM will contact Jim Roskill to arrange a meeting.

13 Publications

A. Cameron to be asked how long it would take him get 'Slate from Coniston' ready for re-printing, as there were only about 100 copies left. He was also to be asked to carry on with his enquiries into prices and conditions for the re-printing of 'Beneath the Lakeland Fells'. Further discussions followed on whether to start on Journal No 5 or change to producing memoirs and monographs.

14 Date and venue of next Committee Meeting

This was arranged for 7.30 p.m. on Monday 6th July 1998 at the BMSC Hut at Coniston.

15 Any other business

15.1 The NAMHO Field Meet. PF would be unable to lead the Caplecleugh to Rampgill trip, his place would be filled by DB. SB reported that it now would not be possible to do the through trip on the Field Meet. There had been a collapse on Middlecleugh 2nd Sun, just after the Baron's Sump Junction. The field meet arrangements were going well, about 160 people had booked to date.

15.2 DB had been contacted by A. Thomas, who wanted permission to give information from the CATMH's archive to Mr McWilliam (farmer Logan Beck Mine). All agreed to this request.

15.3 ADC had reported a shortage of our trail leaflets in Coniston. Action PF.

15.4 Msc reported that work was being carried out by the LDNPA on the Greenside Mine road.

15.5 DB had been contacted by Warren Allison who informed him that the LDNPA had now decided that MOLES and CATMHS should sign an indemnity form and make a fresh application every year for access rights to the Greenside Mine. DB had completed the required paper work.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10-00 p.m.

SB 24/5/98

Chairman

Balance March 1998			3625.37
Income			
Subs 2@ £12		24.00	
Subs 12@ £10		120.00	
Donations			
P. Fleming (talk)		20.00	
Membership appeal		10.00	
Literature sales			
No 4		20.00	
SFC		171.60	
Leaflets LDNP		40.00	
Building Soc Interest (annual)		96.61	
Tax rebate		90.99	
Bank interest		0.97	
	Total	<u>594.17</u>	<u>594.17</u>
			<u>4219.54</u>
Expenses			
CCC Printing		5.04	
HSP-Milner		88.56	
Rent of room		3.00	
Subs-Spelioscene		3.50	
Library	Grey Gold	26.00	
Projects			
HGB locks		42.75	
Furness Survey		20.56	
Coniston Slate		14.81	
	TOTAL	<u>204.22</u>	<u>-204.22</u>
	Balance		<u>4015.32</u>
Balance held as:			
Building Society		3299.90	
Bank		715.42	
	TOTAL	<u>4015.32</u>	

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on the Monday 6th July 1998 at the BMSC Hut, Coniston.

Agenda.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1 Apologies for absence | 2 Minutes of the last meeting |
| 3 Matters arising | 4 Secretary's Report |
| 5 Treasurer's Report | 6 Membership Secretary's Report |
| 7 Meets Secretary's Report | 8 Furness Projects |
| 9 Hudgillburn Mine | 10 Newlands Furnace |
| 11 Coniston Coppermines Site | 12 Video Film Project |
| 13 Publications | 14 Date and venue of next committee meeting |
| 15 Any other business | |

Present D. Bridge(DB), S. Barker(SB), P. Timewell(PT), J Davies (JD),
I. Matheson(IM), P. Fleming(PF), M. Mitchell(MM), M Simpson (MS),
A. Wilson(AW) and A. D. Cameron(ADC) also attended.

10 Members in total.

The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from M Scott(MSc).

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 11th May 1998 had been previously circulated to members. It was PROPOSED by PF and SECONDED by AW that the minutes be signed by the chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings. This was carried unanimously.

3 Matters arising

- 3.1 Item 11-SB had written to J. Hodgson who had replied, there appeared to be some confusion regarding the date of the removal of spoil from the heaps. SB to write again.
- 3.2 Item 15.5-DB had received a key to Greenside Mine from W. Allison.
- 3.3 Item 15.1-DB reported the NAMHO field meet to Barons Sump had gone well. All who attended had enjoyed it, they included R.P. Shaw and M. Critchley for whom it was new ground. SB thanked all CAT members who had attended or helped, by leading meets, or setting up the society's stand etc.

4 Secretary's Report

The secretary had received :

- 4.1 The MPP Step 1 Report on The Salt Industry from the LUAU asking for information on local sites. PF said that Fred Barnes's book 'The History of Barrow and District' contained information on the Walney Salt Works. SB to follow up.
- 4.2 A draft document from NAMHO which is the basis of the new 'Guide to Access and use of Disused Mines and the Application of Health and Safety Legislation'. This had originally been written by J. Wright (Clearwell Caves) and amended by G. Gilmour H M Inspector of Mines.
- 4.4 The Charity Commission News, this was passed to PT.

5 Treasurer's Report

The treasurer presented a balance sheet covering the period since the last committee meeting. The following points arose:

- 5.1 The receipt of donations for HGB, thanks for these to go in the next NL.
- 5.2 ADC asked if we should ring around an amount to be spent on publications? PT thought this would not be necessary, as we were all aware that the biggest proportion of the societies funds would be spent on publications.

6 Membership Secretary's Report

IM reported that four new members had enrolled since the last meeting.

7 Meets Secretary's Report

JD reported the summer meets list was completed but needed to be typed. IM would type the list, then pass it to PF for it to be photocopied and sent out. It was decided to send the meets list out as a separate mailing, as it had to be out before the 19th July.

8 Furness Heritage Survey

The Survey is suspended till the foliage retreats.

9 Hudgillburn Mine

SB reported that work on the dig on the HGB Old vein continued. The British Geological Survey had made an offer (via B. Young) to carry out a survey of minerals, as the work at the mine hopefully exposes further veins. It was decided to except their offer and MM PROPOSED "That it should be CATMHS's policy that mineral collecting should be limited to scientific research and that no other persons are to remove minerals till the BGS survey is completed". SECONDED by DB, all were in favour.

PF had read in a catalogue in the Barrow Record Office of the existence of several HGB mine plans, now kept at BGS, Edinburgh. Action DB. At the last HGB meet a line was laid in the Cavern, which was marked every 25m, to help with the plotting of features and to mark the route.

10 Newlands Furnace

PT reported the work was continuing, they had almost reached the point where originally the work was intended to finish. The Furnace stack above this point now looks very unstable and may have to be removed and re-built.

A Newlands Furnace Trust is being formed with Dr J. Marshall as Chairman and J. Helme as Treasurer, the aim is to apply for funding to conserve several buildings in the complex. Hopefully a long lease will be obtained from the landowner. In the mean-time the CCC will continue to provide funds for building materials as before. A meet in the Newlands Valley is planned for 6th September.

11 Coniston Coppermines site

DB reported there had been three meets since the last Committee meeting, the crag face had been surveyed using the theodolite. Lake Stope had been completed and Brow Stope and Earthquake Passage started. The main aim by the end of the year is to trace the faults underground from surface (Simons Nick). MS is creating a three dimensional wire-frame model on his computer and the surveying team feel they will soon be reaching the stage when feedback will be required from BGS.

12 Video film project Nothing to report.**13 Publications**

A. Cameron suggested 'Slate from Coniston' should not be re-printed this year, but when it is it should have more pictures. 'Slate from Honister' was however nearly ready for re-printing and he thought it would sell well. All agreed to this suggestion. When SFH is ready, 200 copies to be photocopied at a High Street Printers (quarto). ADC to price.

He had been discussing the re-printing of 'Beneath the Lakeland Fells' with the authors and had contacted most of them, including A. McFadzean, all were agreeable. Other suggestions were: DB to write an introduction to the 2nd addition. Different colour cover. Soft back and similar to size to SFC. ADC will look into prices.

14 Date and venue of next Committee Meeting

This was arranged for 7.30 p.m. on Monday 14th September 1998 at the BMSC Hut at Coniston.

15 Any other business

15.1 DB had been contacted by J. Wilkinson regarding progress at the John Ruskin Museum, Coniston. The building of the new extension was going well and he expected the designers would be contacting us soon.

15.2 DB reported on progress of the Haig Pit Project, Whitehaven. They had received a Lottery grant of £158,000 and were expecting to receive £107,000 from Brussels (underwritten by Copeland Council). Besides restoring the engine house they intend to build a railway from the pit to the incline top overlooking the Harbour.

- 15.3 The Annual Dinner was discussed, it was decided to keep the same format as last year. PF was asked to organise the members slides and price the buffet.
- 15.4 ADC had met with J. Hodgson who has completed the LDNPA's archaeological survey of Honister Slate Quarry and produced a leaflet, which can be obtained at Seatoller Barn, Borrowdale.
- There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10-00 p.m.

SB 11/7/98

Chairman

Balance May 1998		4015.32	
Income			
Subs 1@ £12	12.00		
Subs 5@ £10	50.00		
Donations-HGB			
M. Weston	100.00		
S. Moreton	50.00		
Literature sales			
No 4	12.00		
SFC	227.90		
Leaflets LDNP	120.00		
Bank interest	0.94		
	Total	<u>572.84</u>	<u>572.84</u>
			<u>4588.16</u>
Expenses			
Membr Sec. expenses	39.95		
Rent of room	3.00		
Rent of Mandalls (annual)	50.00		
 Projects			
HGB scaffolding	59.92		
FMA tyre repair	05.88		
Coniston Slate hut	25.00		
	TOTAL	<u>183.75</u>	<u>-183.75</u>
Balance			<u>4404.41</u>
Balance held as:			
Building Society	3999.90		
Bank	404.51		
	TOTAL	<u>4404.41</u>	

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

HONORARY PRESIDENT Lord Egremont

VICE PRESIDENT Major Hext

Officers for 1998

CHAIRMAN Dave Bridge, 28 Abbey Vale, St. Bees, Cumbria
01946 822484

SECRETARY Sheila Barker, The Rise, Alston, Cumbria, 01434
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Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, 01229 835951

PUBLICITY OFFICER Alistair Cameron, Linden Lea, Pass Street,
Eckington, Nr Pershore, Worcestershire,
WR10 3AX, 01386 750494

Committee Members

Peter Fleming
Ian Matheson
Angela Wilson
Mark Scott

Mark Simpson
Dave Bridge
Sheila Barker

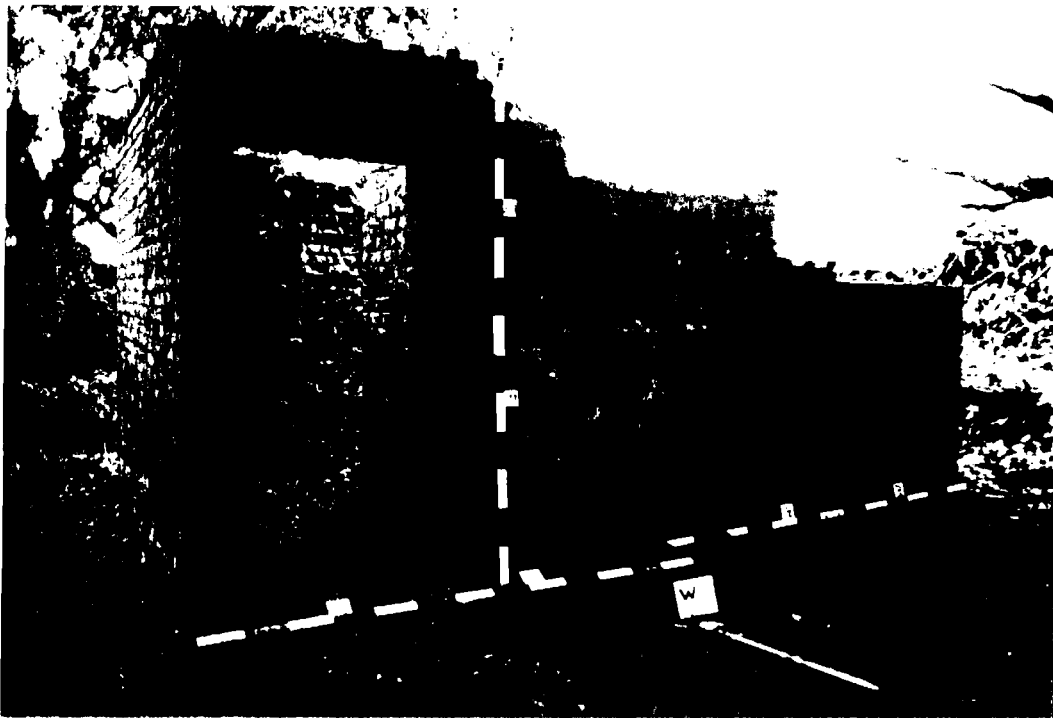
Paul Timewell
Mike Mitchell
John Davies

Honorary Members

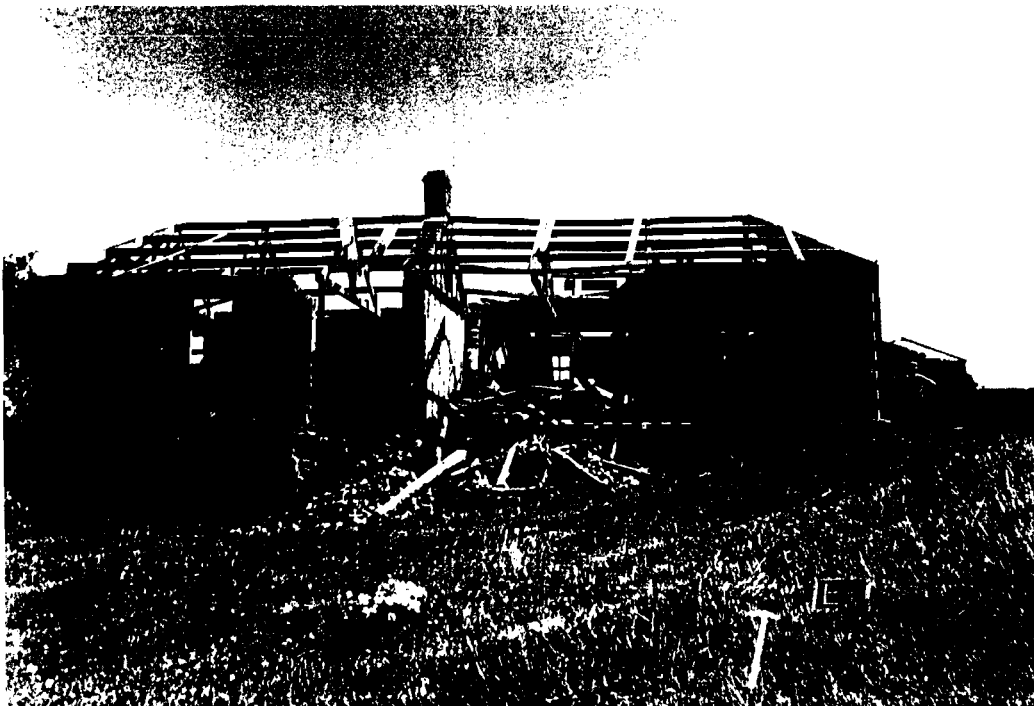
John Marshall

Mike Mitchell

Peter Fleming



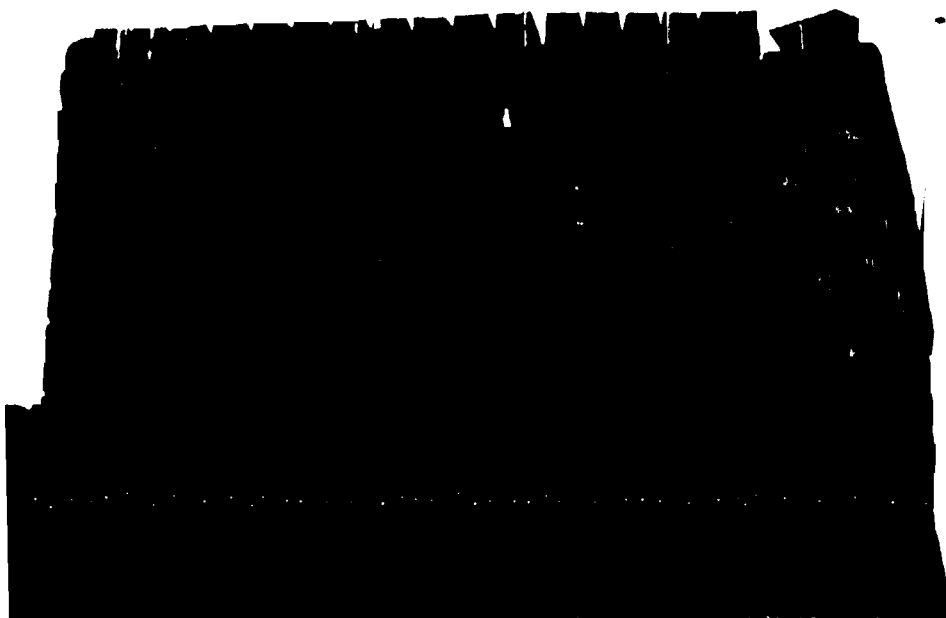
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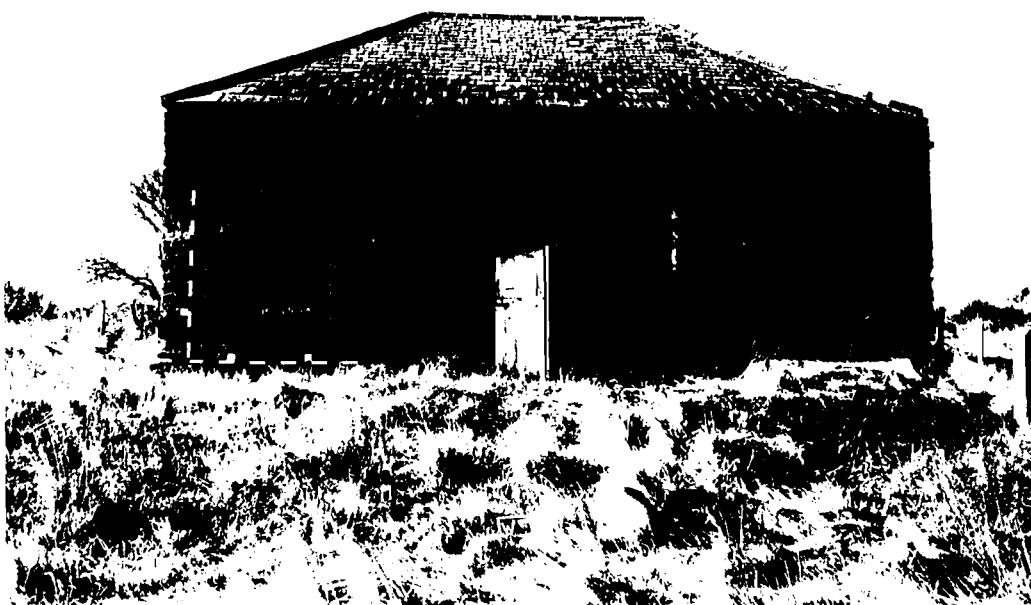
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