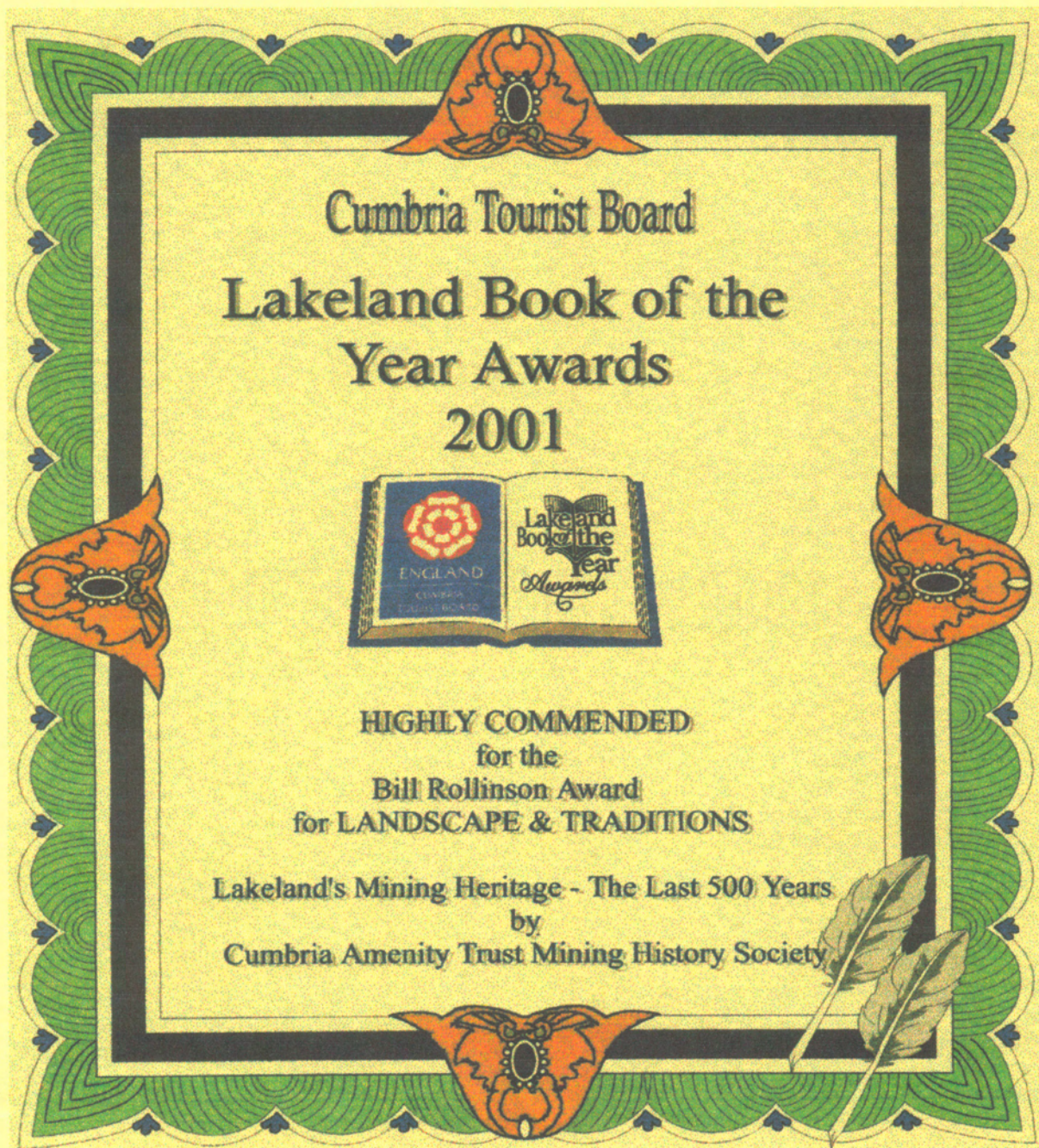


CAT

The Newsletter of the Cumbria Amenity Trust
Mining History Society



**Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society
Newsletter No 64, July 2001.**

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Society Officers and Committee members. Back cover.

Cover picture.

The new CATMHS book, 'Lakeland's Mining Heritage, The Last 500 Years', was submitted for the Cumbria Tourist Board Lakeland Book of the Year Awards. It was Highly Commended for the Bill Rollinson Award for Landscape and Traditions, and the certificate, which is reproduced on the front cover, was presented at a luncheon at the Miller Howe Hotel, attended with their wives by Peter Fleming and Mike Mitchell. I understand that they all had to pay for their lunch!

Editorial

Foot and mouth disease precautions have prevented access to the countryside for four months, and the public has been kept away by the closure of footpaths, most car parks and many tourist attractions. There seems to have been many instances where foot and mouth has spread from farm to farm, but none that I know of where it has been spread by the general public. It has not so far spread to the fell sheep, so the restrictions therefore would seem to have been either a complete success or a complete waste. The disease continues to spread, but some of the restrictions have now been lifted. There is limited access to the Coniston Fells, so we should soon be able to recover our ropes from Paddy End.

The NAMHO Field Meet in Ireland due to take place in September has been cancelled, and instead there is to be a conference in a hotel in Bradford. Details are on page 37. Several CAT Meets had to be cancelled or changed. Access to Smallcleugh Mine at Nenthead was not affected however, and three meets took place there. Unfortunately I have not yet received any meet reports!

Five members went on a mountaineering trip to Patagonia. They came across gold mines in Tierra del Fuego, and what is possibly the most southerly copper mine in the world. Another group sailed around the island of Mull, in the Hebrides, visiting a number of quarries, some of which were used for the building of the major lighthouses in the area. Both these events are reported in this issue.

For the sake of completeness I have printed the whole of Dave MacAnelly's article 'A Winter of Discontent', part of which was serialised in earlier issues.

Our new book, 'Lakeland's Mining Heritage' was launched at the Ruskin Museum. The book was Highly Commended by the Lakeland Tourist board, and a Westmorland Gazette press report is reproduced on page 12. Initial

sales have been good, but unfortunately there has been a problem with the quality of some of the books, which have wrinkly pages. The cause is currently being investigated.

If sales of publications and the CD progress as expected we will be able to publish Journal No 5 next year. I would be pleased to receive articles or promises of articles from prospective contributors.

Jon Knowles would like it to be known that the photos which accompanied his report of the Welsh Meet in the last Newsletter were not his, but were taken by Tristan Goldsack.

Membership

New Treasurer

Mark Simpson took over the job of CATMHS Treasurer at very short notice immediately after the 1999 AGM, on the understanding that it was to be a caretaker post. He has carried out the job ever since, but gave notice at the last AGM that he wanted to relinquish it as soon as possible. Our thanks to Mark for taking this on. John Aird has now taken over the post. His address appears on the back cover of this Newsletter. Thanks John.

Gift Aid

A new Gift Aid replaces the system of covenanting of subscriptions. The scheme enables the Trust to reclaim tax on subscriptions and donations, increasing the value of contributions at no cost to the individual. A new form will be included with the October Newsletter, when subscriptions will be due for renewal.

Change of email address:

John Aird
LANDJAIRD@aol.com

CAT MEMBERS GO DOWN-UNDER

No, not to Australia, we went even further down-under than that! to Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego in South America.

After a period of forward planning, a group of five travellers, consisting of Pete Blezard, Anne Danson, Pete Fleming, Mark Scott and Dave Bridge, set off on the 3rd March.

A journey to Santiago in Chile, via Madrid, was followed by an internal flight down the Pacific coast of Chile to Punta Arenas, the most southerly town on mainland South America. There we collected a hire car which was to provide us with reliable service for our three week adventure. The vehicle was a Camionetta, a four wheeled pickup with a double cab. It was just big enough to accommodate the five of us with all our baggage and was to carry us some two and a half thousand miles overland.

We drove north to Puerto Natales on the shores of the Seno Ultima Esperanza (Last Hope Sound). Here we bought in provisions and stayed overnight. Next day we continued north on dirt roads to the Torres del Paine National Park stopping on the way to visit the Cave of the Milodon, an impressive cave where dinosaur remains were found some years ago.

The next four days were spent exploring the side valleys of the spectacular granite peaks and the turquoise lakes of the Torres del Paine. There was plenty of wildlife. We saw many lamas, condor, rhea and foxes, and watched avalanches pouring down the west face of Cerro Torre Grande.

At first the weather was overcast with rain showers and snow low down on the mountains, but the fourth day was brilliant with blue skies giving clear views of the famous trio of sharp peaks which we climbed up to a high lake to see. The previous night the temperature had dropped to minus 5°C at our campsite.

Next day we journeyed north again on endless dirt roads, across the pampas and into Argentina. We reached the small tourist town of El Calafate on Lago Argentina where we stayed the night. From here we drove west with splendid views ahead of the snowy Andes disgorging vast glaciers into the many large lakes of the area.

We had been advised by several people not to miss seeing the Perito Moreno Glacier, a world heritage site. We had a wonderful day for our visit. Clear blue skies and sunshine all day.

This vast glacier encroaches across an arm of Lake Argentina almost blocking it off, and presents a face of tottering ice seracs, 60 metres high and 2 kilometres long. Every so often huge towers of ice collapse into the lake with a great roar, sending up massive sprays of water. A spectacular sight, with the Andes in the background.

That same evening we continued our journey north to El Chalten over 130 miles of dirt road with barely any sign of habitation and very few other vehicles. It was a long day.

El Chalten is a small town at the end of the road, which is being developed for tourism because of the spectacular scenery formed by Cerro Fitzroy and Cerro Torre, etc. We stayed here for five days, exploring around the bases of the soaring granite peaks. Two nights were spent camping wild in the forest at the foot of Fitzroy but we were driven back by typical Patagonian winds roaring like express trains through the valley.

The highlight of our stay here was a long trek to reach the mirador (viewpoint) beneath Cerro Torre (11,000ft), a fantastic spire of granite with its highest parts encased in ice. This was also a day of blue skies and clear views and we spotted parrots and woodpeckers.

Leaving El Chalten we then embarked on our last planned objective of spending several days on Tierra del Fuego. We stayed overnight in El Calafate again before driving 400 miles south via Rio Gallegos and crossing the Straits of Magellan by ferry, not knowing where we would spend the night.

Like the Argentine plains the northern part of Tierra del Fuego is barren, flat, and treeless, with little habitation. After driving in the dark for some time we at last saw lights ahead and arrived at a hotel/restaurant in a place called San Sebastian close to the Chile/Argentina border.

Next day our southward journey resumed. Stopping for lunch in Rio Grande, we spotted several monuments on the promenade overlooking the Atlantic commemorating the "heroes of the Malvinas" and the 'Belgrano', and decided to keep a low profile.

Later that day we reached our destination, Ushuaia, the most southerly city in the world. Ushuaia stands on the Beagle Channel and is well known for its historic connection with Charles Darwin. It is now a starting point for Antarctic cruises and survey expeditions. To the north rise the impressive Martial Mountains and to the west are the Darwin Mountains in the Chilean sector. We stayed in Ushuaia for three days. Day one was spent visiting an estancia or large farming estate founded by a British settler in the early 19th century called Thomas Bridges. We hired a launch here which took us into the Beagle Channel to an island where there is a penguin rookery, albatross and cormorants.

Next day we went to the Tierra del Fuego National Park and found an old copper mine, possibly the most southerly mine in the world. We also came across several beaver dams in the streams of the beech forests.

On the third day we climbed on to the ridge of the Martial Mountains and reached the summit of a 4000 ft peak. It was a good clear day and there were splendid views in all directions with the occasional condor watching over us.

On the fourth day we began our homeward journey, driving north once again to Punta Arenas but taking a different route across northern Tierra del Fuego. On the way we came across an extensive area where gold dredging and panning had taken place on the Rio del Oro from the 1880's. Pieces of heavy machinery still lie about and there are still one or two prospectors living nearby in squalid tin shacks in this inhospitable and remote area.

Our flight along the Andean Mountain chain from Punta Arenas to Santiago gave us excellent views of the areas we had visited, and we also had good views of the Patagonian Ice Cap and several volcanoes. It was a fitting finale to an excellent holiday which we had all greatly enjoyed.

We hope to provide a slide show about it next winter - watch this space!

Peter Fleming.

Doctor Descender

Dear Doctor

I have been criticised recently for leaving a pub without paying for my meal, and paying poor South American peasants a meagre pittance to carry my bags. I realise that with these qualifications and my advancing years career opportunities may be limited but is there a job, even part time, that I might be suitable for ?

Anon, London.

'Whilst careers advice is usually outwith my remit I do know of a keen (?) exploration group that is in need of a treasurer to replace the current incumbent - for which your qualifications sound ideal'.

Las Torres del Paine. Cerro Torre and Fitzroy, Tierra del Fuego



CAT Cruise in the Hebrides.

Two years ago I led a meet to the slate Islands in the Firth of Lorne. Over a long weekend we examined the slate quarries on Seil Island, visited the Museum on Easdale Island, and sailed out to Belhahua to see the remains of the slate industry on this remarkable island. We finished with a cruise through the Gulf of Corryvreckan and a visit to the monastic remains on the Garvellachs.

The purpose of this years cruise, which would take a week, was to circumnavigate the Isle of Mull, anchoring wherever possible to explore some of the numerous disused granite quarries, as well as visiting Staffa and the Treshnish Isles. In the Sound of Mull we hoped to look at the Loch Aline Silica Sand Mine, and in Loch Linne to visit Glensanda Super Quarry and some lime kilns on a small island north of Lismore. The excellent and willing crew consisted of myself, Peter Fleming, Mark Simpson and Phil Meredith. After driving to Oban and buying a week's supplies at Tesco we set sail for a nearby anchorage.

Skerryvore lighthouse, built in 1833, stands on a rock 12 miles west of Tiree. Most of the granite for this and for Dubh Artach and Ardnamurchan lighthouses came from small quarries on the Ross of Mull, established by the Northern Lighthouse Board for the purpose. We sailed south of Mull in calm sunny weather, passing close to the Carsaig Arches and the Nun's Cave, and anchored in Tinkers Hole, off the Island of Earraid. That evening we visited the Earraid Quarry, which was worked from 1868 to 1871 to provide stone for the construction of Dubh Artach lighthouse. A quay and work site to dress, fit, and load the stones was built at the waters edge and linked to the quarry by an incline. Later a shore station was established here to provide accommodation for off duty lighthouse keepers and their families. All this was built to the same quality as the

lighthouses, and we marvelled at the stonework, being particularly intrigued by some granite gateposts which had been dressed to an oblique angle to fit the entry of the track through a wall. It was in use until 1967 when the lights were automated and de-manned, and is still in excellent condition. On the hillside above is a white painted observatory, built to check that the lights were working properly, and at times to signal to the lighthouses.

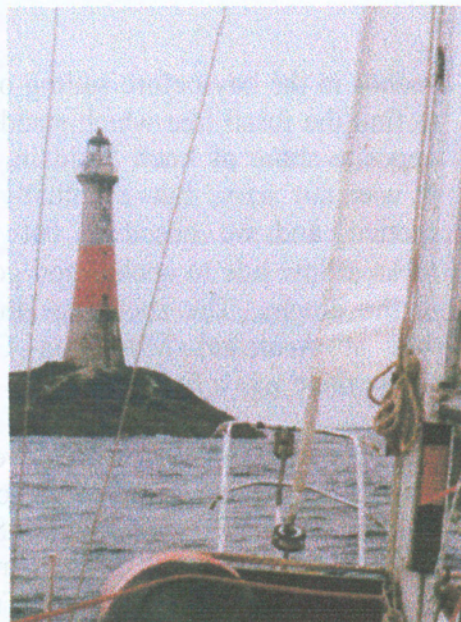
The next day a good easterly breeze enabled us to sail to Dubh Artach light, 12 miles out beyond the dangerous Torran Reefs, stopping en route to anchor and inspect the tiny marble quarry on Iona. Marble was quarried here from an outcrop by the rocky shore to make splashbacks for washstands and wall cladding. The quarry seems to have been abandoned circa 1914, and a cutting frame and a 15hp producer gas engine still remain. Bolts in the reef show where a loading derrick was sited.

Returning from Dubh Artach we had a pint in the pub at Fionport, and then anchored in Bull Hole. After a meal we went ashore to examine Tormore Granite Quarry, which was opened in 1857 and operated sporadically until quite recently. At one time it belonged to the Shap Granite Co. There is an inclined tramway to a pier, and in the quarry there is a large mobile crane and an early JCB. The contrast between old style hand working and modern machinery is apparent when one looks at the worked rock faces.

Day three involved a short sail to Camus Tuath, near Buessan, to view the 1839 Northern Lighthouse Board quarry. This is similar in layout to Earraid and Tormore, consisting of a quarry linked by an inclined tramway to a shipment wharf and adjacent dressing floor. Stone from here was used to build Skerryvore and Ardnamurchan lighthouses. A row of solidly built workers cottages, now used by an outdoor centre, stands across the bay in a delightful setting. We had lunch at



The observatory on Earraid and Dubh Artach lighthouse.



Lime kilns on Lismore Island, Tormore Quarry, Ross of Mull



Loch Aline Silica Sand Mine, Iona Marble Quarry.



anchor in the bay before sailing off to try to find the fossil tree which stands on the opposite shore of Loch Scridain. Finding it was not easy, but eventually it was spotted, and we nosed in between the rocks at low tide to anchor and go ashore in the dinghy. The anchorage that night was at Acairsaid Mhor, on Gometra, where there was a fine sunset.

Next morning most of the crew went for a walk on Gometra whilst I stayed on board to do maintenance. We sailed to Staffa to see Fingal's Cave, and from there sailed on to Lunga, the largest of the Treshnish Isles, and went ashore to see the nesting Puffins and Guillemots at very close quarters.

The final stop of the day was at the most northerly islands of the group, for the unusually calm conditions made anchoring amongst the rocks a possibility. Two tiny islands are both shown on the O.S. map to have a castle, and from a distance walls can be seen on the flat top of the larger island. The cliffs rise straight up from the shore, and at every point where they might be climbable was the ruins of a curtain wall with defensive windows. A castle toilet chute was identified, and the walls of two buildings still stand on the top. Research at the Isle of Mull Museum the next day revealed that the ruins probably date from the 16th and 17thC, when the islands had been garrisoned. I can't think of a more lonely and isolated spot to spend a tour of duty!

From the Treshnish Isles we went on to Tobermory, motoring in flat calm seas and a sunny evening, for the wind had died completely. A few pints in the Mishnish that night resulted in some thick heads next day. We bought fresh supplies in Tobermory, visited the museum, and had a lunch of smoked salmon and chilled Chardonnay at anchor in the harbour.

The Loch Aline Silica Sand Mine, halfway down the Sound of Mull was established in 1942 in order to provide

optical quality sand for lenses for the war effort, and it has been in production ever since. There are reputed to be 25 miles of tunnels, all about 25 feet square in section, and it takes more than half an hour underground to walk to the workface, where sandstone is blasted out and trucked to the processing plant at the waters edge in huge dumper trucks. The end product is the colour and consistency of salt, and is loaded directly into ships by a belt transporter.

Next morning we sailed past Glensanda Quarry. Here granite is quarried on a huge scale and exported worldwide. It is quarried up on the mountain, dropped down a shaft and transported along an adit to the grading plant. Again the product is loaded directly onto ships, some of which are extremely large.

The fine sunny weather had given way to thunder and heavy rain with mist and fog patches, and so we had to set a compass course for Danna Island. Here we took to the dinghy and went to visit Castle Stalker, which stands on a rock in a shallow bay. In the variable visibility we also spotted what looked like a submarine, but it turned out to be a fish farm!

Our final objective was a small island just opposite Port Appin, where there is a quarry, three large lime kilns, a pier and two cottages. All is abandoned, but in good condition. The kilns seem to be of consecutive dates, and Mark, who knows a thing or two about lime kilns, reckoned that the largest and most recent dates from about 1890.

We spent the last evening at the Tigh na Truich Inn on Seil Island before returning the yacht to it's mooring the next day and driving home. It might be possible to repeat this cruise next year, although nothing can be guaranteed, as landings are always weather dependent. If you are interested please let me know.

Ian Matheson.

Iron and Copper manufacture in Furness from earliest times till the 19th Century.

By Mr Hubert John Allen.

Read on February 8th 1886.

This article was supplied by Peter Fleming, and is taken from a report of the Barrow Natural Field Club and literary and Scientific Association, 1886.

As the word Bloomery would be frequently used in his paper, Mr. Allen began by explaining that a bloomery consisted of a low cupola of stone pierced with holes for admitting the wind; these holes could be opened or closed when the furnace was in operation so as to regulate the force of the draught. The bloomeries were frequently built in narrow valleys, through which the wind would blow in steady currents.

In later times the bloomeries or bloomsmithies were termed forges, and have given names to many places where they have long fallen into disuse. Remains of a Roman bloomery have been discovered near Wastwater Lake, in an narrow gorge through which the wind rushes with great force. The scoriæ found on the site contains not less than 56 per cent. of metallic iron. With such a waste it may easily be imagined how little was understood at that date of iron smelting, in fact the Roman scoriæ in the Forest of Dean furnished the chief supply of metal to twenty furnaces for 200 to 300 years. In Roman bloomeries the furnace was made of clay.

Bloomeries of Roman or Early English origin are numerous in High Furness. No less than four have been found on the shores of Conniston Lake, two or three in Blawith, three in Woodland, and one on the ridge of Dunnerdale. A bloomery at Moor Ghyll near Conniston adjoins a good landing place, and the metal from it was probably carried down the lake. The water is very deep at that place, and it is also on the track or waterway of boats laden with copper, which ran from Conniston Old Hall to Nibthwaite. Other

bloomeries are found higher up the lake at Knapping Tree, where there is a large percentage of iron in the scoriæ, and others near Coniston Old Hall. One of the latter can be seen in a field near the Spring, where there is a mound of an elliptical shape composed of scoriæ, 39 yards long and 23 yards broad. The rest of the field is level. Another mound of scoriæ near the lake is quite overgrown with forest trees and had evidently fallen into disuse before the foundation of the Deer Park by Le Flemings of Coniston, and the mounds are therefore evidently of very early origin.

Bloomeries existed near Hawkshead from a very early date. The Abbots of Furness had the sole management and profit of making iron within the Manor of Hawkshead for the use of the tenants and for exportation. After the dissolution of the Monastery, these rights of iron making were leased by various people from the Crown, but so much wood was used for the bloomeries, that complaint was made to Queen Elizabeth by the tenants of the Manor that the destruction of the timber deprived them of their "proper fewell (and wood) for the maintenance of their hedges." A decree was accordingly issued in 1560 abolishing the bloomsmithies in Furness Fells, the tenants of Hawkshead and Colton paying 20 pounds annually to the Crown to make good the loss caused by the abolition of the bloomeries. These payments were known as "Bloomery Rents." The remains of one of these bloomeries have been found at Cunsey, near the foot of Esthwaite Lake. In later years some of the tenants purchased the woods from the lessee of the Crown, and in some measure restored the bloomeries. A few years ago the "Bloomery Rents" were bought in by the tenants by permission of the Duke of Buccleuch, the Lord of the Manor.

The iron manufacture in High Furness having been abolished, it was taken up in Low Furness. The red haematite ore of the district was conveyed from Ulverston to Preston by water and thence by pack-horse to Rossendale, where we read of a bloomery being founded in 1565, which continued in use till the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The scoriæ at Rossendale closely resembles that found at Coniston.

Mr. Allen then gave a brief account of John Wilkinson, the "great iron master," who, with his father, Isaac Wilkinson, carried on the trade of flat smoothing-iron making at Backbarrow, and about the year 1748 built or purchased a forge at Wilson House, near Lindal-in-Cartmel, intending to smelt there the rich Furness haematite ore with peat moss. Tradition relates that an iron boat (the first iron vessel ever constructed) was used to convey the peat moss to the furnace. The experiment with peat moss for fuel did not succeed, and resource was had to ordinary wood charcoal till about the year 1756. About this time the Wilkinsons invented box smoothing-irons such as are now in common use. John Wilkinson then removed to Bilston, near Wolverhampton, where he built the first blast furnace, and used common coal for smelting. At first many difficulties had to be over-come; but, finally, in 1772, he achieved a great triumph.

The re-introduction of furnaces and forges caused the value of the woods in High Furness and the neighbourhood to increase considerably in value. In 1688, we read of oak timber to the value of 4,000 pounds being cut down in Millom to serve as fuel for the iron forges, and in 1710 as many as 943 timber trees were bought in High Furness for 1,700 pounds for the same purpose.

The charcoal furnace at Newland had been in use from the year 1745 up to a recent date, whilst the one at Backbarrow founded in 1710 is still in blast, and a forge at Duddon Bridge, known to be in existence in 1745, continued to be worked till the year 1866, or perhaps a little later. A pig of iron, branded D 1781, which was found by T. Barlow-Massicks serving for a lintel of a cottage at Borwick Rails in 1866, is supposed to have come from Duddon Bridge forge to Borwick Rails for shipment.*

* These *Transactions*, Vol. I., pp.34 and 35.
 Richardson's *Furness: Past and Present*. Vol. II., pp. 181-185. *Transactions* of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society, Vol. VIII., pp. 85-92: Vol. XIV., p. 449.

With regard to the copper manufacture, its introduction into Britain took place long before iron came into use. The advantage of mixing tin with copper was then found out and an age of bronze inaugurated, which endured for several centuries.

Copper was supposed to have been smelted at Ambleside in Roman times, and it has been suggested that the Roman fort at the head of Windermere was founded mainly for the protection of the copper trade. Leaving a gap for the antiquarian to fill up, the author next turned to the time of Queen Elizabeth, when the Coniston copper mines were being worked by the German miners, as were also the mines at Keswick, where extensive copper smelting works were erected in 1566; but the Queen having been informed that more gold and silver than copper and lead was obtained from the Keswick mines, they were confiscated to the Crown. Skilled workmen were sent from Keswick to South Wales in 1584 to teach the art of roasting and smelting copper ore.

The Coniston mines during the Commonwealth were worked by only one or two miners, each working on his own account. After the Restoration, the Coniston workings were in Sir D. Fleming's inquest called respectively White or New Work, Tongue Brow, Thurlehead, Hen Cragg, Semy Work (Seven Seams), Brumsell, Grey Crag, Wyde Work, and the Three Kings, in Tilberthwaite; there was also one with no name. About 140 men were then employed, and the seams varied from fourteen inches to a yard in thickness. The ore was raised at different prices according to its goodness, from 2s. 6d. to 8s. a kibble - a small horse load, and after being beaten small, crushed, and sifted, and then weighed or measured, was then carried by pack horses to the smelting house at Keswick.

The most ancient method of blasting was by kindling fires on the veins, and then by pouring water on the heated rock it was caused to crack or burst. The chief tool used was a small quadrangular iron wedge, with a hole in the thick end for the handle. Several specimens of these tools have been found in the old parts of the workings.

The workmen gave a certain proportion of the copper ore to the owner of the mine, and kept the remainder as their own. Some of them are said to have thus realised large sums of money. Mr. Allen then remarked that the present position of the iron and copper industries in the district would be well known to most of the members, and he hoped that the few facts that he had brought together would prove to be interesting, dependent as they all were, more or less, on the mineral wealth of the district.

NOTE: In the *Autobiography of William Stout*, of Lancaster, (1665-1752) it is stated that "in 1689 he obtained iron from the bloomeries of Cartmel and Furness, there being then no furnaces erected for refining it. (pp. 25-26.) In 1709 the furnace for bar iron being not then erected, much pig iron was sent into Bristol and Wales to be drawn into bars and rods. (pp. 80-81.) In 1717, war with Sweden caused the Swedish iron to advance in England from 16 pounds to 24 pounds a ton, which led to the erection of furnaces in North Lancashire and the making of rod and bar iron." (pp. 94, 149.) The above dates furnish conclusive evidence that iron was not refined in Furness until after the year 1709.

In 1899, Mr. John Pernie, dock pilot of Barrow, stated that in 1827, when a boy of 12, he first sailed from near Cowp Scar in the galiot "Ann" (Captain Wilson) with a cargo of iron ore carted from the mines at Lindal down the Red Lane to Conishead Bank. The iron ore was shipped to Bonawe on Loch Etive in Argyleshire, where in 1753 a charcoal furnace was erected like the one at Newland. After being smelted at Bonawe the iron was brought back to Ulverston in the form of small pigs of $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. and 1 cwt each, in 5 or 10 ton lots, whence they were shipped to Liverpool, and from there sent by the traders to Brest and Honfleur in France for manufacture into cutlery. Cargoes of charcoal were also brought from Bonawe to Newland, which points to the lack of it in

Low Furness since 1827. Blasting powder was also brought from Melfort in Argyleshire for use in the local mines, and was stored in the magazine at Headin Haw until about 1884. He remembers Captain John Brewer, of Ulverston, being engaged in the same trade by Messrs. Harrison, Ainslie & Co., the owners or lessees of the charcoal furnaces at Backbarrow, Newland, and at Warsash, and Bonawe in Hampshire. The pigs of iron were branded "Lorn." The same brand has been used at Backbarrow and Newland for very many years, and was also used at Warsash.

Captain John Swainson, of Barrow, aged 81, also stated in 1899 that he had been acquainted with the shipping trade of Furness since 1831, and recollects iron ore being loaded at Conishead bank from 1835 down to the time when it ceased to be carted there from Lindal about 1861-2, after the formation of the Ulverston and Lancaster Railway in 1857. The iron ore, after being carted from the mines, was wheeled down to the heap on the bank to the schooner on the shore, and loaded therein through a port-hole in her side. The vessels he remembers were the "Nymph," the old "Lorn" (Captain J. Brewer), the new "Lorn" Captain J. Swainson, master for 33 years), the "Laurel," the "Backbarrow" (Captain W. Holmes), and the "Warsash." The iron ore was exported in bulk from Conishead bank and Ulverston Canal to Lorn and Bonawe in Argyleshire, and was also ground fine and sent in barrels to Havre, to which place the first Lindal iron ore was taken by him. The pigs of iron were sent chiefly to Honfleur for a gentleman named Ellis, who had the manufactory of cutlery at Pont Audemer. Chain cables were made of iron, $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter, and were also forged at the charcoal furnace and foundry at Spark Bridge for Messrs. Harrison, Ainslie & Co.'s own vessels. The schooners were about 110 tons burthen, and cargoes varied from 60 to 100 tons. The first ore sent from Ulverston Canal and Barrow to Warsash was that he took in the "Mary Atkinson" about the year 1866; the charcoal furnace there was only in blast about three or four years, as a sufficient supply of charcoal could not be obtained.'

About 50 years ago iron ore was carted from Messrs. Fell Bros.' mines at Stainton to Baycliff,

and thence shipped in dolly-flats, sloops, or schooners. An enormous amount of labour was expended in transit from the mines to the ships, the iron ore having to be lifted four or five times before it reached the hold of the vessel;-(1) After being placed in the kibble or bucket at the bottom of the mine it was drawn up to the surface, and the (2) lifted into carts and conveyed to the bank, then (3) put into barrows and wheeled down to the vessel, and afterwards (4) lifted into the flat or into the port hole in the side of the schooner, or (5) lowered from the deck of the flat into the hold.

In 1897, excavations were made at Springs Bloomery near Coniston Hall. The results are fully set forth in a valuable article in the *Transactions* of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society, (Vol., pp. 211-228), and show that "before 1250 the descendants of Norse settlers may have smelted iron by Coniston waterside; but we cannot look earlier than the 10th or later than the 15th century for the date of the older Coniston Bloomeries."

The furnace at Newland has not been worked since February, 1891. Some iron still remains there, but all the ore, charcoal, &c., has been carted away. A short time ago several pigs of iron branded "DB, 1772," were found in a mangle at Kirkby. The initials, cast somewhat roughly, are most probably intended for Duddon Bridge. Two of these pigs were bought by Mr. W. G. Ashburner, of Elliscales; one of them, now in the possession of Dr. Cross, of Dalton, was examined by the Editor in January, 1899. Its length is 3ft. 8½in., width across the bottom 4in., thickness from top to bottom 3ins. Through the kindness of Mr. D. T. Winder, of Kirkby-in-Furness, another pig of charcoal iron, 3ft. 7in. long, branded "B, 1772," was traced, which most probably came originally from Backbarrow. Like the one referred to above, it is what is called a "sow" -that is, one from which the pigs have been broken. It is now in the possession of Mr. Henry Dobson Deason, of Beckside, Kirkby-in-Furness.

A mine of information

A HIDDEN world of winding passages and plunging shafts once energised a bustling industry within the Lake District, but now lies almost undisturbed beneath the ground.

But the history surrounding local mines, quarries, ironworks and mills has been woven together in *Lakeland's Mining Heritage - The Last 500 Years*, offering readers an opportunity to explore the old workings from the comfort of home.

The 'coffee table book', which focuses largely on Coniston, is the handiwork of Cumbria Amenity Trust (CAT) members, whose interest in mining spills into readable and illustrated chapters ranging from iron, slate, coal, and copper to wad, lead and zinc.

Lake District National Park archaeologist John Hodgson contributed to the book, which was edited by Alastair Cameron, author and publisher of several publications on Lake District history.

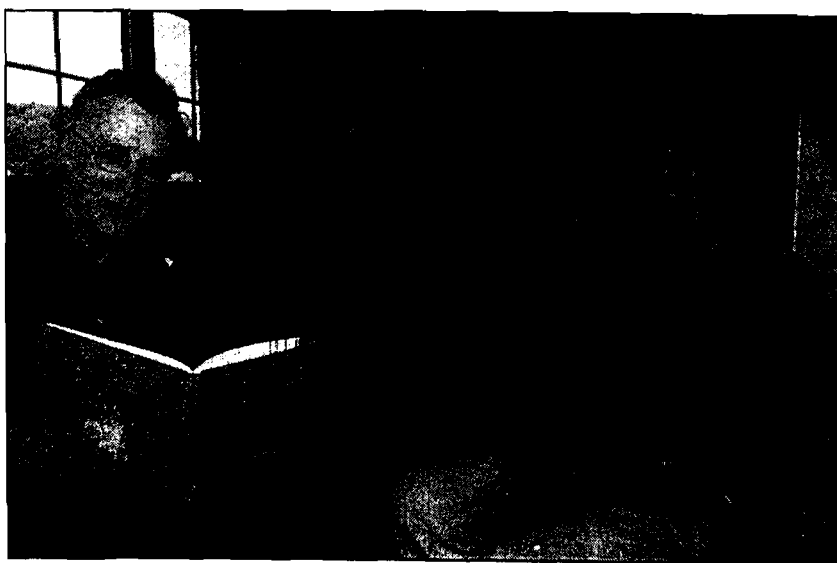
CAT chairman and co-author Dave Bridge told the Gazette: "We hope there's a general interest in the book, which is very readable, and that people visiting the Lake District will be tempted by it as well as other mining societies."

Barbara Mitchell, whose husband Mike edited the photographs, added: "I am amazed at what goes on under the fells - I had no idea, and I don't think others generally do either. This book will certainly open a few eyes for the local people."

Founder CAT member Peter Fleming, who has written about Coniston's copper mines, explained the publication had been backed by a £5,000 Millennium Festival Awards for All grant, personally presented to CAT by Culture Secretary Chris Smith during a visit to the Lakes.

The charitable trust CAT, which dates from 1979 and has more than 100 members, provided another £3,000 - raised by previous publications.

Ruskin Museum, at Coniston, also offered its support in acquiring funds, and has hosted the



book's official launch.

Proceeds from the book, which has been submitted to the Cumbria Tourist Board for the Book of the Year, will go towards further CAT projects and conservation work in the area.

● CAT member David Bridge has also launched a CD ROM, which is akin to a virtual tour of the underground world as it features hundreds of photographs of Coniston's mines.

At the click of a mouse, the viewer is taken from the mouth of the mineshaft and along the passages, revealing the old workings and plunging 500 feet drops.

Six months in the making, *A Pictorial Tour of Coniston Copper Mines* starts from the mouth of

a mineshaft and takes the viewer along the passages, revealing the old workings and plunging 500 feet drops.

"It is a tremendous opportunity for us to display these photographs," said Mr Bridge, who explained the CD ROM was a good educational tool to showcase Coniston's mining heritage.

The CD ROM is available from a number of outlets, including The Ruskin Museum, Coniston.

ABOVE: With the *Lakeland Mining Heritage* book is editor Alastair Cameron and contributors, from left: Dave Bridge, Sheila Barker, Ian Matheson, Peter Fleming, Angela Wilson, and Mike Mitchell.

The Ulverston of Ulverston

The last vessel to be named for the town was built at James Schollick's yard at Canal Foot in 1862. She was a schooner of 61 tons and largely owned by local businessmen. She would carry 100 tons of cargo, with a maximum draft of 8ft 6in.

William Ripley, a grocer of Upper Brook Street was managing owner with twelve shares. Her captain, John Clarke, of Sunderland Terrace held six shares and John Woodbourne, flour dealer, held eight. The other shareholders were John Case, coppersmith, Richard Hodgson, chandler, James Harrison Benson, corn merchant, Robert Benson, flour dealer and grocer, James Dickenson, flour dealer, Edward Hodgson, Henry Whitacre Mackereth, chemist and druggist, William and Thomas Robinson, brewers, John Hall, miller, of Cark, Thomas Samuel Carter, a wood hoop manufacturer of Colton, Thomas Grice, a merchant of Bootle, and Mr. Stephenson, a Lowick farmer. The Liverpool corn merchants, Peter Brown, George Brown, Thomas Huntingdon and Joseph Fletcher held shares, as did the commercial travelers John Frederick Behn of Liverpool, William James of Carlisle, and Thomas Bate of Staffordshire.

The Ulverston left the canal on 26th August 1862 for Liverpool with 86 ton of iron ore and general cargo. If she was intended as a grain carrier, as her ownership would suggest, then this is concealed in the word "general". Over the next 30 years the Ulverston made nearly 300 voyages to her home port, nearly always with general cargo from

Liverpool. One such cargo is detailed by the lock keeper: 500 carboys of vitriol, 25 ton of iron and 35 tons of coal. Other imports were timber from Glenarm and Glasson Dock, bones, manure and sulphur from Liverpool, sand from Fleetwood and coal from Glasgow. She rarely arrived light.

General cargo to Liverpool was often the return load, and Harrison Ainslie's ore and iron made a large part of it. Other shipments were basket rods to Whitehaven, ore and powder to Cardiff and Newport, ore and general cargo to Glasgow, hoops and powder to Liverpool. One shipment of general cargo to Glasgow consisted of 80 ton of ore, 11.5 ton of powder and 50 dozen brooms. Brooms were a useful cargo, as they would serve as dunnage for gunpowder shipments.

Even when the Ulverston was new, the ore trade was a fraction of what it had been. Any ore not consumed by the Barrow Haematite Steel Company was sent direct by rail or shipped from Barrow. By 1868 this traffic had ceased. The Ulverston then sailed light to the Duddon, unless she could pick up a cargo of powder or pitch. The pitch came from Alexander Saddler's tar distillery at Sandside.

The North Lonsdale Ironworks began production of pig iron in 1877, transforming the fortunes of the port. The Ulverston arrived more frequently in the canal with general cargo from Liverpool, but then moved to Ainslie Pier to load iron for Liverpool. Besides the usual shipments of iron, there were many of gunpowder, sometimes loaded at Connishead Priory. She also carried

turnips, flour and beer to Liverpool, stones to Lytham, powder to Carnarvon and paper to London.

In his book *Furness Folk and Facts*, William White describes the occasion when the *Ulverston*, the *Annie McLester* and another schooner were loading gunpowder for Liverpool. With most of the cargo on board, a fire broke out in the cabin of the *Ulverston*. It was quickly extinguished with buckets of water.

In February 1894 the *Ulverston* sailed from Whitehaven. She met with storms in the Mull of Galloway and had to be towed into Ramsay Bay by the *Rostrevor* of Newry. When she returned to the canal she was registered as 45 tons and had new owners.

The ship broker, Anthony Dilworth of 11 Newton Street, bought up 62 shares in June 1894 and sold them to John Postlethwaite, manager of a Liverpool firm of master porters. The vessel made a few more voyages to *Ulverston* until she was sold to William Nelson, a master mariner of Annan, in February 1896. He sold the *Ulverston* to Alexander Wilson, a Dalbeattie shipowner, in 1917. A year later, she was sold to William Ewart Gladstone Gibson, a merchant of Ballywalter, Co Down. The register was finally closed in August 1926 when the registrar of shipping learned that the *Ulverston* was used as a breakwater to the house of Mr McCracken in Shore St, Dremore. By coincidence, Dremore harbour, near Stranraer, also contains the remains of another *Ulverston* vessel, the *Harvest*, which had belonged to George Edmund

Tosh and Myles Kennedy. But that is another story.

References:

Ulverston Harbour records, 1864 - 87, RAIL 880/7 and 8 at PRO, Kew.

Ulverston Harbour records, 1887 - 1946 at *Ulverston Heritage Centre*.

Lancaster Shipping Register, and transactions on microfilm at CRO, Barrow.

Lloyds List, Feb 8th 1894 from Liverpool Maritime Museum.

Peter Sandbach.

Windfall will bring a mine of information

PLANS to dig deep into the Lake District's heritage and produce a mine of information for visitors have struck gold.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has granted £31,650 to The National Trust for educational material and work on the water-powered Greenburn Copper Mine, in Little Langdale.

National Trust assistant marketing manager Shona Owen said the mine was an important site, with much of it in good quality. Many features, such as mining levels and shafts, were still visible.

The site also boasts evidence of medieval workings and 19th and 20th century copper-mining features above ground, while much of the mine's dam and copper-processing structures are still intact.

The funds will be used for archaeological surveying and the strengthening of structures, with work planned to start this year.

"The award is very good news - we would have struggled to do the work without it," Ms Owen told the *Gazette*.

On the educational side, she explained, the trust planned to compile informative leaflets about the mine to help visitors understand its workings and its links with the area's history.

"This sort of project tends to fall by the wayside if you don't have much money," she said, adding: "An awful lot of things used to go on in Little Langdale, including farming and mining, in the 19th and 20th century. There must have been an amazing variety of work going on there, resulting in many different jobs, and we want to bring these early days to life."

The Westmorland Gazette,

January 26, 2001

A Year of Discontent

Dave McAnelly

The first of three installments of this article appeared in the September 99 issue of the Newsletter, the second in Jan 2000, and the third in June 2000. I feel that this treatment does not do it justice, so this is the complete article. If you do not want to re-read the early installments then start reading from 8th June 1872, Conference between the Governor and the men.

Editor

I would like to thank the Editor of The Hexham Courant for permission to use the articles printed, and the staff of Northumberland Record Office for all their help and patience. The information is presented as printed in the Hexham Courant, any additional information is shown in italics.

The period of 1867 - 1868 had been one of relative depression and falling prices, whereas after this there was an economic boom, and full employment. (In 1869 - 1873 there was a credit boom partly due to the increase in availability of gold from Australia and America.) Due to this prices rose quickly and it was mainly this rise in prices which provoked the demands for increased wages. In the lead mining districts of the North Pennines there was a general feeling of discontent, resulting in strikes by the Beaumont miners in Weardale, the London Lead Company miners in Teesdale and the Rodderup Fell miners. These disputes were recorded in the Hexham Courant.

30 March 1872

The W B Lead Miners Weardale Agitation for increased wages

For some time past considerable dissatisfaction has prevailed among the miners of Weardale in consequence of the low rate of remuneration they received for their services, and they have determined at this period, having regard to the cost of living, now greatly upon the increase, to follow the example of other classes of workmen throughout the country and adopt a movement having for its object the advance of what is termed 'lent money' a stated amount of cash guaranteed to his men by the employer monthly in order to meet the exigencies caused by the peculiar and uncertain nature of the work; and when, but for this 'lent money' they would have frequently little or no earnings to draw. During the past summer an attempt was made to procure an advance from the £2 a month they are now receiving to £2 10s, and some negotiations were commenced which resulted in the formation of a committee of the men, and that committee

appointed a deputation to wait upon the masters agent at the New House, and there lay before him what the men wanted. A short time elapsed, when the refusal from the masters was announced, the latter stating that the request could not be complied with, and a rumour got abroad that soon there would be a change in the system of working the mines, and a ready money method of payment to be introduced at some not far distant day. Matters quietly settled down from that time, and things have gone on as usual to the present without any alteration being made. But the miners, latterly, seeing no prospect of their condition being improved, have again resolved to inaugurate an agitation for the increase of the lent money from 40s to 50s per month, and, on Saturday, a crowded and enthusiastic meeting of the W B lead miners was held in the Town Hall, St John's Chapel, Weardale, for the purpose of adopting resolutions in furtherance of the movement for increased pay. A thousand miners were computed to be present in the hall. ...

THE CHAIRMAN (whose appointment was carried by acclamation) commenced the proceedings; and said: Nearly a quarter of a century had elapsed since a meeting similar to the present had been held at St John's Chapel. The object then was the same as at present - namely, a struggle for the increase in lent money. (Cheers) Many connected with that movement had passed away; and not one now upon the platform beside him occupied the platform of the past. Since then things had gone on pretty smoothly, and no outward demonstration of lead miners had occurred in Weardale since that day. Every innovation in the shape of change had been received with good grace up to the present. It was during the last summer in June or July, that an attempt was made to procure a further advance of lent money. The request was very moderate, and nothing was said about the rise of wages. (Applause) All they asked for was an increase from 40s to 50s per month. The committee that was formed, appointed a deputation to wait upon the master's agent, with a view to the miners request. The reply shortly afterwards was that it could not be complied with, and matters in consequence were allowed to drop. But as no change had taken place since then, and great struggle between capital and labour had been going on throughout the country it was time he thought, they should do something for themselves. (Cheers) Many of the masters seemed to have anticipated the wants of their men, and did not wait till requested to shorten their hours of labour or advance their wages, and give them then what they thought they should have. (Cheers) But the lead miners of Weardale had had nothing advanced to them except provisions, coals &c., which latter had considerably advanced, and many a poor man with only £2 a month could not see his way clear to secure a load of coals, and other things were rising

in proportion, so that the men were compelled to make another effort. Six or seven weeks ago that effort was commenced, and it was arranged that the deputation of the men should see the masters, but before that it was announced to have also a mass meeting of the men. The masters then sent word for the deputation to appear at Newhouse, and the men were told that a scheme was in progress which was not complete, but when it was they would again send for the men and lay it before them. In consequence of that the mass meeting was put aside for the time being, and the men waited patiently for a new scheme. Resolutions were proposed and presented to the master's agent, but there was an answer from Mr Beaumont that he was determined to stand to the new system (to which as a whole, the men could not see their way clear), and rather than shrink from it would lay the mines in for two or three years. This seemed a very cold answer to moderate requests, especially as Mr Beaumont's workmen stood in a very different relation to that gentleman in the valley than many other classes of workmen did to their masters. (Applause) The miners of Weardale were a class of men that had not been gathered from the four quarters of the globe, as their very fathers were cradled in that valley, and for some time they could trace back their ancestors. Their grandfathers had wrought in the same mines and many a grandson was now working in the place of his forefathers at the present time - (Cheers) - so that the announcement to close the mines was very cold. The resolutions to be submitted for their approval or disapproval were founded on the petition sent to Mr Beaumont after the scheme was laid before the men, and he hoped the appointed speakers would have a fair hearing, and show to the outside public that the miners of Weardale knew how to conduct a mass meeting (Cheers). He then called upon the mover of the first resolution.

A MINER stepped forward and moved, 'That we receive the new system, with the exception of an advance to the unfortunate miner to 50s per month.' After referring to the high price of food and other necessities he said the men could not do with their small earnings, and they wished to show the reasonableness of their request. ...

THE MOVER of the second resolution advanced to the front of the platform and said he was called upon to move. 'That the miners cannot see their way clear to work without some degree of certainty, monthly, as there is so much irregularity in mining, unforeseen circumstances are such that they might have to work for two or three months without making anything, and this they cannot afford, and therefore they have again decided to appeal to the managers of the W B lead mines, Weardale. The object of their meeting together he said was to give public expression to their opinions on the new system.

Examples were then given of the unpredictability of lead mining, and how it was that a lead miner may work for long periods without raising very much ore, but with the hope that they would strike a rich load of ore, so that they would be able to redeem the subsistence they had received.

The speaker then said he failed to see how the workmen were to get fair play with the ready money system, except they had so much per fathom or ton for their work, and it to be weighed at the level mouth, so that a man could get what he made, and have the liberty also to remove elsewhere if not satisfied. But through sheer necessity, perhaps, he happened to be unfortunate two or three months, and could not meet the demands of his creditors, and they would refuse to speculate longer with him and his uncertainties and in all probability he would have to leave his country without a shilling in his pocket to get work elsewhere, where he would be more fairly remunerated for his toil, (Applause.) The proposed ready money system was wrong for both men and master. ...

THE SECONDER of the resolution stood up to address the meeting ... with respect to the ready money system, it favoured the masters too much at the men's expense. It obliged the men to give their labour, and left him open to advance the unfortunate miner what he pleased. It chilled the spirit of enterprise in searching for lead ore, and placed a man too much at the mercy of one individual. ...

The resolution was carried amid great applause, and the large meeting separated with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

20 April 1872

The strike of lead mines in Weardale Great mass meeting of the men

On Saturday afternoon a mass meeting of the Lead Miners of Weardale now on strike, was held at St John's Chapel. The meeting had been announced to commence at twelve o'clock, but in consequence of the long distances many of the miners had to travel before reaching St John's Chapel; the chair was not taken till one o'clock. ... although many of the miners had walked their six, eight or a dozen miles, to the place of meeting - upwards of 1,500 persons had congregated by one o'clock in the afternoon ...

MR NATHAN RACE occupied the chair, and in opening the proceedings said he could not help but on that occasion returning the meeting thanks for their kindness in again choosing him to preside over the present one. .

They had at last secured an interview with Mr Beaumont, and that interview was satisfactory so far. They could not accomplish all that was desired but ultimately the dispute would be settled. At the mass meeting held on the 23rd of March he (the

speaker) made a statement to the effect that Mr Beaumont had said he was prepared to stand by the new system, and that rather than shrink from it he would throw the mines in. Now he was happy to tell the meeting that day that that statement made on the 23rd of March was not true. When he (the chairman) uttered those words he firmly believed they were true; the committee believed they were true; and there was no doubt but that every workman in the WB lead mines believed those words were true. But he heard the other night from Mr Beaumont's own lips that that gentleman had never said he would fling the mines in, nor ever dreamt of flinging them in for two or three years. But he wished it to be thoroughly understood by the meeting that he had every confidence in Mr Featherstone Philipson, who had communicated the intelligence to the committee. (Hear Hear) ... There would he believed, soon be a settlement brought about, but in the meantime they were struggling for the 50s a month lent money, and they would have it. (Great applause)

MR JOSEPH WATSON, Hasswicks, Westgate. Up to that time they had been battling with the new system, which seemed to have been a bubble blown by one man, and which burst in his own hand on that memorable night. (Laughter and cheers) Mr. Beaumont said he never wished to push any new system upon them, and to use his own words, they had been fighting with the wind.' But the new system was held up to them as an absolute reality by Mr Cain, and as one which would come into operation at the beginning of the present quarter. They therefore, never went to Newhouse to take their bargains on Monday last. He heard Mr Cain say that Mr Beaumont was willing to let the men have the benefit of the mines for two or three years in the hope of something better turning up in the future, but that he was not prepared to suffer any loss by the mines. Since this, however, he had heard Mr Beaumont declare that he never said anything of the kind, and never thought so. (Loud cheers) Mr Featherstone Philipson said that Mr Cain told him that Mr Beaumont would close the mines for two or three years rather than grant 50s lent money, or shrink from the 'new system.' But he himself heard Mr Beaumont say that he never said so, and never even dreamt of such a thing - (cheers) - and he wrote out a declaration to that effect, and declared that it might be published to the world. As regard to the promised interview he believed Mr Beaumont knew nothing about it till the Monday, when he found the letter sent by the committee, and that he then went to Newhouse on Wednesday; but he heard Mr Cain tell the deputation twice in one interview that if the men had not confidence in their master the sooner they parted the better. (Laughter) Another contradiction he might refer to was an equally glaring one. When the deputation were up some time ago hearing the

document read, Mr Cain told them that lead had fallen £2 per ton during the last two or three years, and was still tending downwards in price. Well they introduced the subject on Wednesday evening to Mr Beaumont, and told him that they knew from good authority - from a person of their acquaintance, who did business in lead that the value had risen £2 per ton during the past twelve months. In reply to that Mr Beaumont said he must admit that lead had an upward tendency. ...

Mr WILLIAM GIBSON, of Hasswicks, Westgate. At the interview on Wednesday with Mr Beaumont he was exceedingly happy to ascertain that the gentleman was not, in point of fact their enemy. They found that their true and real enemy was Mr Cain. He had the impression that Mr Beaumont was a gentleman; he received the deputation very courteously, and listened to all they had to say with great patience, and answered nearly all that came before him in a straightforward and honourable way indeed. Mr Beaumont told them that he had long been of opinion that a little ready money in Weardale would be a very acceptable thing. No miner objected to getting plenty of ready money. Mr Beaumont told them that he had never thought of pushing the new system against the wishes of the men. ...

MR WILLIAM EMMERSON, of Westgate ... There was a sort of agreement or understanding, existing between the agents of Mr Beaumont and certain neighbouring employers say, for instance, the iron stone mines. So that it was necessary for a man to have his clearance, which is often refused by Mr Cain on the plea that a working man had no right to one. (Mr Cain is not a man.) So for Mr Beaumont to be their last employer was sufficient with but few exceptions to debar men from getting work until they had been elsewhere working, either east, west, north, or south, within seven miles of where that meeting was being held. That was tyranny. (Hear Hear)

MR JOHN FEATHERSTONE, Middle Rigg. ... The price of living had so much increased since those days (when Mr Sopwith was agent) that it had become necessary that there should be a general advance of wages, and he was glad that their master, Mr Beaumont, was willing to grant it. They would observe that he (the speaker) was in favour of the system of ten percent, as introduced by Mr Sopwith, only he would have it to take place after the miner had earned £1 per week instead of 15s. That was like each man helping his brother. ... Mr Beaumont had not thought of the system of paying the miners monthly. He never approved of it; first, because there was a deal of ground that was not payable in three months. Plenty of lengths in the Burtree Pasture Mine were not payable in three months; and not only there but in all other mines, there was unproductive ground that had to be cut through.

Secondly, in the high part of Weardale there were seasons when it would be impossible to get it washed up for months, and it would cause endless difference when the work was to be valued. Thirdly, there would be far more wood used, making a greater cost, as well as rendering the mines more unsafe; and in fact, the mines would be ruined, because it would destroy all enterprise on the part of the miners, which enterprise was of more value to Mr Beaumont and the landed proprietors and tradesmen of the dale, and to all who were interested in it, than all the agents, that ever were at Newhouse since the days of old Maughan. (Loud cheers)...

The following resolutions were then put to the meeting, and carried by unanimous vote, amid great enthusiasm.

First, 'That no 'bargain' be taken at Newhouse until the 50s lent money be granted.'

Second, 'That £1 be the standard to base the 'bargain' upon, and no man to be percented till he makes that sum.'

Third, 'That the thanks of this meeting be given to Mr Beaumont for the gentlemanly manner in which he received the deputation.'

The 'Percent System'

In 1845 when Thomas Sopwith took over as agent of the Beaumont Company mines he increased the bargain rate so as to give an average wage of 15s a week, and raised the monthly subsistence to 40s. It was also decided that miners who were in debt at the end of the year would in future only be responsible for half their arrears. The other half was to be met by those miners who earned more than the 15s per week. These miners were to have 10 percent of their excess earnings deducted from their end of year settlement of pay. So a miner earning for example 30s per week on average would contribute 78s in that year (10 per cent of 15s x 52 weeks) to help pay off half the debt of the less fortunate miners. If these 10 percent payments did not meet the amount owed the Beaumont Company would cover the remaining amount.

The 'New System'

The system suggested was that the miners were to work for £3 per bing of ore raised, and that money which they earned was to be paid at the end of the month (ready money). The miners were to be paid a month in arrears, that is they would have to work two months before they received their first payment for one month. The miners found this system to be unacceptable and at the mass meeting examples were given why this was so. 'The ready money system with £3 per bing seemed all very well; but there were many mines where if they had £6 a bing they could not make way, and no man could work for a whole quarter of a year and make no money - merely depending on future success. A partnership

might set to work in any mine and work very well; and yet they might work a month or eight weeks without making what would pay for a 'charge' What would the ready money system do for men in such a case.'

27th April 1872

The Weardale miners strike

Another mass meeting of the miners now on strike in Weardale, in connection with the W B lead mines took place on Saturday, for the purpose of receiving from the delegates a report of what had taken place since the last meeting, and of determining upon the steps to be taken in the altered circumstances of the case.

... the fifty shillings lent money was granted - (cheers) - that £1 a week to be the basis of the bargains was granted - (cheers) - and that the percentage system was to be entirely swept away - (cheers) - ...

This could well have been the end of the strike, but, in a letter from Mr Beaumont to Mr Cain published in the Durham Chronicle, Mr Beaumont had stated to Mr Cain that he was thoroughly satisfied of his single-mindedness of purpose, and of the truth of all his statements both to him and the men. This to the miners implied that Mr Beaumont was saying that the miners delegates, had in fact misled the men. The letter referred to was as follows:-

144, Piccadilly, London, 16th April, 1872.

'Dear Sir, From what took place at the Weardale mass meeting, I infer that the lead miners think that you proposed the new system without my cognizance. Now, it must be clearly understood that the whole scheme had my entire approval, and that it was put before the deputation of miners with my sanction. It was originally intended, as a ready money system, in the interests of the men; but as it meets with little favour, and will be much more difficult to work out than was first anticipated, I have had little hesitation in authorising its withdrawal.

'It is hardly necessary for me to add that there never was nor, is there, the slightest difference of opinion between us; and that I am thoroughly satisfied of your single mindedness of purpose, and of the truth of all your statements, both to me and to the men. Those who think I can accept compliments at your expense are quite mistaken, and little know me. Believe me, as always, yours very truly.

'Wentworth B Beaumont'

On the 17th April Mr Beaumont sent another letter to Mr Cain in which he concedes to the wishes of the men.

'144, Piccadilly, London, 17th April, 1872

Dear Sir, I am very glad to observe from the resolutions passed at the meeting of miners last Saturday that the good feeling which has so long subsisted in Weardale is still unimpaired, and I have therefore felt the greatest pleasure in approaching the present unhappy differences, with a full desire to meet fairly the difficulties as change of time and circumstances may require some modification of arrangements which have existed for about a quarter of a century.

Having come to a conclusion clear and definite in my own mind, I will not delay informing you that there is no longer any objection on my part to give the men fifty shillings a month lent money; the standard basis of all bargains being one pound per week, instead of fifteen shillings as at present. There is so much complication and difficulty about the percentage system that it will be better to abolish it altogether after next June; it is questionable in principle, and does not exist (so far as I know) in any other mines.

'As I am detained here on a Parliamentary committee, I cannot explain my views personally to the men; but I think it right to state that the decision at which I have arrived has been mainly influenced by advice and assistance derived from yourself. You have always acted with loyalty and kindly feeling towards the men; and I am perfectly confident that what has been recently said against you at the miners meeting is the result of unfortunate misunderstanding, and that good will and peace will be speedily restored in our mining districts among all parties. Believe me, very truly yours.

'W B Beaumont'

MR NATHAN RACE, chairman. ... He must say that in the Durham letter Mr Beaumont wanted to clear Mr Cain, and expressed to him his entire concurrence in that new system which was laid before the men. (Hisses) Now, he must say that staggered him (the chairman) more than everything else he had heard, because he happened to be one of the deputation who waited upon Mr Beaumont at Newhouse, and distinctly heard him say that there was no new system; he never intended that any new system should be brought before the men, and they had been battling with the wind, and so on. (Laughter) And he (the chairman) was struck when he read in the Durham letter that that the new system had his entire approval. (Hisses) If they would read the fore end of Mr Beaumont's letter to the committee, and the back end of his Durham letter, they would observe that there was such a contradiction as he never saw in his life. (Applause) At the fore end of the miners committee letter he praised their loyalty, and said he was pleased that the good feeling which had existed for such a long time in Weardale was still unimpaired - (loud ironical laughter and cheers) - but at the back of the

Durham letter he said he could not think of receiving compliments at the expense of Mr Cain. (Loud laughter and hisses) Now he (the chairman) thought there was a flat contradiction there. ... The deputation had told the men the truth and nothing but the truth; and on that they took their stand. (Applause) The struggle had assumed a form which they never expected (hear, hear). He would far rather have been battling that day for the wage question than on that personal question. It was a question of character - (loud cheer) - although they were working men. ... The meeting would be aware that the committee were gathered together at once, after they got the document first read, and drew up three resolutions which they forwarded to Mr Cain, and a copy of which was also telegraphed to London to Mr Beaumont, as follows:-

1st. That the acceptance of Mr W B Beaumont's proposal, received to-day, be held in abeyance until a proper understanding be arrived at between Mr Cain and the miners delegates.

2nd. That our character and that of our delegates has been falsified to such an extent that we cannot as honourable men submit to take any more bargains of Mr Cain until Mr Cain has fully cleared Mr Philipson and his co-delegates from all falsehood.

3rd. That if Mr Cain does not at once come forward and clear our delegates we must take legal proceedings, and let the law do that for us. (Loud cheers) He had received from Mr Cain the following reply:-

'Dear Sir, (laughter) I have received your letter of the 18th inst., with the resolutions passed at the miners committee meeting last evening, and which I will forward to Mr Beaumont by to-day's post. On receiving a reply from that gentleman I will again communicate with you. Meantime I remain dear sir, yours truly J C Cain.' (Laughter)

By to-day's post the committee had received the following letter from Mr Beaumont:-

'144, Piccadilly, 19 April 1872

'Sir, - In reply to your telegram, I can only express a hope that calm consideration will lead you to receive the letter I sent on Wednesday in the kindly spirit in which it was written.

'I remain yours faithfully

'W B Beaumont

'Mr Featherstone Philipson'

There then followed a discussion as to what should be done next and the following resolutions were passed.

1. That this meeting is perfectly satisfied with the past conduct of the committee and the select deputation, and hereby express its unbounded

confidence in their honour and truthfulness, and consider them perfectly blameless in the complications which have taken place between the owner and the manager of the W B lead mines.

2. That we request the owner of these mines to withdraw from the union which exists amongst the employers of labour in the neighbourhood for the purpose of preventing any miner obtaining employment who is necessitated or chooses to change his employment, as we consider the object of such union unfair and despotic to the workmen, and dishonourable to the employer.

3. That we should appoint a miners standing committee, to consist of forty members, including chairman, treasurer, and secretary, whose duties shall be to watch over the interests of the workmen; and represent any grievances that may exist, between masters and men, to the owner of the mines; and that we the lead miners of the W B Mines do hereby promise, and sign our names to support to our utmost ability the aforesaid committee.

4. That fifty shillings a month be granted to men who work one month whether fortunate or unfortunate, without exception.

5. That as a bargain is an engagement entered into between two parties, that it in future be conducted on the principle of contracting, pure and simple; and not by dictation as has been in the past.

6. That advertisements be inserted in all the local papers, asking that subscriptions in aid of our movement be sent to their respective offices.

27th April 1872

The Teesdale miners

The case of the Teesdale miners is not yet satisfactorily settled. They have had an interview with Mr Bainbridge, the resident agent, and have been advised not to press for an advance of 'lent money,' and have been told that the average wages last year had been 17s 6d per week, and that the whole of their earnings can be drawn every month if they choose, and that they (the masters) placed no bar upon any man who wished to leave the Company from procuring employment elsewhere. The impression existing in Teesdale, that miners leaving the Company's works lost all interest in the Miner's Fund which is said to have a capital of several thousand pounds, appears to be unfounded. Workmen who leave, in a proper manner, can retain their membership if they choose, and still be entitled to the benefits accruing from the fund.

27th April 1872

Mass meeting in Allendale

A mass meeting of the workmen in the Allendale section of the W B Lead Mining Districts was held

in the Miner's Room, Allenheads, on Wednesday evening last, the object of which was to take into consideration the generous offer of their employer W B Beaumont, Esq., MP., to augment the standard wages of his miners and workmen generally. The meeting was of a very enthusiastic character, and many points in the past history of the mining enterprises of this district were very ably adverted to men with locks white with age were moved with animation as they contrasted the present with the past, and scarcely could find the language to express their grateful feelings for the almost unprecedented advance of wages now so kindly granted them. Many whose long lives have been spent amongst the surrounding heath clad hills alluded to the strong attachment they felt to their native place, and referred in glowing terms to the Beaumont family, in whose service they, and their grand-sires had been exclusively engaged. Though for some time past the earnings of lead miners have not been subject to those fluctuations and migrations which are so common in other fields of industry, and their constant employment seemed to them as an equivalent to wage in the long run. A fixity of residence amongst the scenes and associations of their earliest days materially enhances and greatly contributes to their general contentment in their secluded sphere of labour, and strangers from the din and bustle of town life cannot but admire their neat and comfortable-looking homesteads, and be led to eulogise their immunities. The advance of wages now offered on the standard basis for bargains is over 33 per cent, and taking the abolition of the percentage system into consideration may be deemed in the aggregate an augmentation seldom surpassed in the history of trade. The meeting not only gave their expressions of good feeling towards Mr Beaumont, but also to the resident agent Mr Curry, whose uniform kindness and attention to their wishes has been unremitting, and who without any ostentation has taken every opportunity to secure to them any real benefit. This good feeling and understanding that exists between him and the workmen will ever tend to inspire confidence and united effort to promote the interest of their employer, Mr Beaumont. The following resolutions were unanimously passed and ordered to be sent to Mr Beaumont:-

W B Beaumont Esq., MP.,

Sir, It is with the greatest of pleasure and satisfaction that we, the undersigned on behalf of the whole of your employees in the Allenheads mining district take this mode of conveying to you the following resolutions unanimously passed at a public meeting of miners, &c., held at Allenheads, 24th April 1872.

1st. That the intimation (communicated through our respected resident agent, John Curry, Esq.) of the definite and substantial manner in which you have so generously proposed to improve our position

merits the deepest gratitude and heartfelt thanks of all your employees in this section of your mining district.

2nd. That the increase of monthly subsistence money to 50s to contract men, together with the £1 per week as the standard basis of all bargains, and the liberal remuneration of every other class of labourers, accompanied with the great benefit of payment in full each month are boons which cannot be too highly appreciated, and for which we wish to tender to you our most sincere thanks.

3rd. That the kindly sentiments - or what may be more properly termed loyalty - which have ever been cherished towards yourself and family by the inhabitants of this district will, if possible, be more strong and binding after the generous expression of your liberality and considerate efforts to promote the welfare of your workmen.

Signed, on

behalf of the meeting

John Stobbs, chairman

Thomas Prest, secretary

4 May 1872

Final settlement of the Weardale miners strike

On Monday last, the deputation of Weardale miners had an interview with Mr Beaumont's lead agent Mr Cain, in order to arrange the details, as Mr Beaumont wished in connection with the resolution passed at the mass meeting on the 20th ult., and so bring the three week's strike to a satisfactory settlement. In the evening, the whole of the 34 delegates who represent the workmen of the mines known as Pasture Grove, Kilhope, Grove Rake, Boltsburn, Stanhope Burn, Green Laws, Slitt &c. met at the committee room, St John's Chapel, to consider the arrangements made by the head agent and the deputation of eight of their number. On these arrangements being laid before them, they were heartily approved of, and all was consequently settled up in a satisfactory manner. The strike of Weardale miners is thus now finally closed. Before the committee rose, a hearty vote of thanks was given to the press for the full and impartial manner which the proprietors have reported the proceedings in which the miners have been engaged. The miners took their bargains at the W B office, at Newhouses, on Thursday and yesterday, and work will be resumed on Monday. Hitherto the wage men, or those who work for wages at the W B Lead mines have been receiving subsistence money monthly like the pickmen, and lifting the balance at the half yearly pays. In future these workmen will be paid off once a month.

The attempt by the management to get rid of the 'lent' money system at this time did not succeed, but, the Weardale bargain books (NRO 672:E/5A/23) show a change to the method of paying subsistence to the miners beginning with the bargains let on the 1st April 1875. In these it was said that the 'money to be advanced according to quantity of ore raised'. This new wording did not apply to all bargains, but only those that were to work 'old ground,' or poor ground.

'1st April 1875 Slitt'

'Thomas Furnail 2prs agree to raise ore in old ground east of Slitt shaft @ 50/- per bing - Money to be advanced according to quantity of ore raised - till 30th June 1875.'

'1st April 1875 Greenlaws'

'Mark Natras 4prs agree to raise ore in their old ground at 50/- per bing - Money to be advanced according to quantity of ore raised.'

'1st April Boltsburn'

'Tho. Middleton 4prs agree to rise 1 fathom in Pattinson sill at £6 contract and raise ore at 50/- per bing - money to be advanced according to the quantity of ore raised.'

This system continued through 1876 becoming more common by 1877, and in 1878 out of 107 bargains 69 were of this type.

In 1879 the bargains let on the 27th August show yet a further change, and all bargains were let according to ore raised, but also on a percent basis; the miners were 'to be paid 80 percent monthly on this contract and the balances at the half yearly pay in July 1880.'

'27 August 1879 Burtree pasture'

'Jos. Thompson 4 partners agree to raise ore in 6 fathoms of ground in Nich James length at 75s per ton of ore till the 31 December 1879 to be paid 80 per cent monthly on this contract and the balance at the half yearly pay in July 1880.'

This method continued up to the closure of the mines by the Beaumont Company.

06 January 1883 Grove Rake

'Thompson Robinson 4 prs agree to raise ore in their old ground @ 90/- per ton of ore as directed or till 31st March 1883 to be paid 80 per cent monthly on this contract and the balance at the half yearly pay in December 1883.'

This would mean that a miner who did not raise any ore would have received no subsistence, it is little wonder that the miners were so opposed to it.

11 May 1872

The Teesdale Lead Mines

Another interview has taken place between the delegates of the lead miners and Mr R W

Bainbridge, the superintendent of the Lead Company's Works, which occupied four hours. a fortnight ago a petition was presented asking for an advance in the subsistence money from 44s to 54s per month, which the men considered very reasonable. The request not being granted, a discussion followed, in which the superintendent reminded the men of other privileges they enjoy - namely, a doctor free, and schooling at a nominal charge. The men contended that these were no greater than those of coal miners who pay a doctor 6d per fortnight, house rent and coals free, 6d per fortnight cartage of coals, 2¹/₂d per week average for two children at school, amounting to £2 7s 8d per annum. Compare these charges with the lead Company, namely, doctor free; school (2) 8s; house rent £3 10s; coals £3 5s; total £7 3s; a comparison putting, the men think, their privileges into the shade. Another cause of complaint was the way in which bargains are let. Suppose a partnership, by extra hours and hard labour, earn a few shillings more per week, the men complain that at the end of the quarter their prices may be lowered, and this encouragement is given to what the Company mean to destroy idleness. What the men want seems to be to have a fair remunerative price per bing, and then for the masters to allow the men to earn as much as will support their families. They think that if the ordinary work of the miners bring profit to the Company, the extraordinary work must do much more so. Notwithstanding the powerful reasoning of the delegates on these and other points Mr Bainbridge still stood strongly opposed to the petition. Urging another weeks' consideration, the delegates kindly requested the Lead Company, through Mr Bainbridge, to give the petition their most earnest consideration, and to sympathise with the men in their difficulty, stating that if the men did not get their request granted they intended to get up another petition which would contain a rate of wages, the basis of which would range higher than at present; that other classes would be in all probability embraced; and that if the men were obliged to leave the Company's works, the latter would be unlikely to get another lot of men to do the work at similar rates.

25 May 1872

Threatened renewal of the strike in Weardale

Not withstanding the settlement that was recently come to between Mr Beaumont and his workmen, when all grievances were supposed to have been removed we are informed that there are still about 100 men off work in Weardale. During the first two days when the bargains were taken, all went on smoothly the prices being considered by the men generally fair, and those who had taken these bargains resumed work at once. Unfortunately,

during the two last bargain days, the prices offered to the miners were not nearly so good, and they were consequently refused. There is a great deal of dissatisfaction amongst the men on this account, as they fancy that it has been a scheme on the part of the agent to get part to commence work, and so dissolve the unity which has hitherto existed. There is another point which has also been freely commented upon, viz, that those set to work at first are composed entirely of men who have votes, whilst those who are likely to be debarred from another month's subsistence money, are nearly all non-electors, and belong as a rule, to the poorer class of miners, who can worst afford to do without subsistence money. There more fortunate brethren, however are likely to resist this sort of treatment very bitterly. Already, meetings have been held in different mines, and a mass meeting is intended to be held shortly, and unless some satisfactory arrangement come to, another strike is likely to occur. The men who have not yet resumed work say that according to the scale of prices offered, they could not earn 10s per week; numbers are still continuing to leave the district.

1 June 1872

Nenthead miners meeting

A meeting of the lead miners of the district was held in the Band room, at Nenthead on Thursday week, for the purpose of deliberating upon the action to be taken in order to secure better remuneration for their labour. The meeting resulted in the formation of a committee of twenty and out of that number a select committee of eight were delegated to confer with the resident agent J D Millican Esq of Nenthead house. The first conference took place on Friday night at the offices, the delegates being very courteously received by Mr Millican, who expressed himself warmly attached to the workmen, and nothing would be lacking on his part to advance their welfare. The result of this interview were communicated to the miners at another meeting held on Tuesday night last. Six delegates from Garrigill attended this meeting and informed them that the Garrigill miners had resolved to stand by the conclusions arrived at by their Nenthead brethren. The meeting however could arrive at no resolution, and it was left to the committee assisted by the Garrigill committee to arrange matters as they deemed best. Our correspondent suggests that the committee should seek an interview with R W Bainbridge Esq the superintendent of the works as that gentleman controls the rate at which the bargains are let. The attitude of the Nenthead and Garrigill men does not foreshadow a strike to which they are greatly opposed.

The markets have gone up and other companies are advancing 50s and 72s under the

same royalty, which has lowered the duty on the ore but the men do not participate in the boon. The men adds our correspondent must be united in their efforts to secure a greater amount of lent money and £1 per week on which to base their bargains. At present the standing wage is 15s 9d; surely they should have advanced the odd 3d. The miners should have the same privileges as those obtained by their brethren in Teesdale.

1 June 1872

Lock out of the Teesdale Lead Miners

Great mass meeting of the men at Middleton

Middleton in Teesdale was the scene of much excitement on Saturday, on the occasion of a great mass meeting of the men in the employ of the London Lead Company. The men as most of our readers will be aware, have recently been agitating for an increase of 'lent' money, and like their brethren in Weardale they succeeded after some difficulty, in obtaining it, but they had only been at work a short time on the new arrangement when the washer-boys sent in a petition for an advance in wages, and as the masters refused to make any concession, the lads turned out on strike on Wednesday last. At the quarterly bargains on Friday, it was intimated that those miners having either sons or brothers employed as lead washers, and out on strike, would not be allowed to take their usual places until the boys resumed work. This, as a matter of course, created immense excitement, and it was decided by the men to hold a mass meeting with reference to this and a few other matters on the following day. The town during the night was placarded with numerous squibs, and on Saturday morning, long before the time arranged for holding the meeting at Middleton, the village was thronged with miners from the outlying districts. The meeting was held in the open air, and on the temporary platform the two delegates took their places shortly after twelve o'clock. Mr Wm Parkin occupied the chair and in opening the proceedings narrated the result of the interview the miners had had with the superintendent, Mr Bainbridge, which ended in a letter being read at an interview on the 15th May, to the effect that their request of 54s was granted by the Company, and for which a vote of thanks forwarded. They likewise returned a vote of thanks to the superintendent for consenting to advance them money earned over and above the 54s when earned. There was now a new feature in the movement. After the struggle had partly subsided and the men were going to try on awhile with the advance of subsistence money, although not satisfied with the basis for bargains, the washer boys came out on strike for an advance of wages, and Mr Bainbridge had locked the men out, as there was no one to wash the produce of the mines. The following is a copy of

the notice which had been posted in the office:- 'Agreeing with a remark made by one of the company's miners, that the washer boys have at present as much ready money as is practical hereafter, a very well conducted and industrious party will have his monthly subsistence money advanced 1s per week beyond his present year's wage, leaving his present year's wage ready to be fixed in the autumn as usual; the 'back' 1s per week from the beginning of this year's ore dressing will be paid on the 29th of June.-signed, R W Bainbridge, Middleton House.' They would all understand the purport of that notice, and as there were several speakers to follow, and several resolutions to submit to the meeting, he would not detain them farther.

The meeting was then addressed by Messrs R Hutchinson, Isaac Parkin, Jacob Nixon, Ezra Lowes, William Dawson, Joseph Richardson, John Watson, George Armstrong, and John Scott, the tone of their remarks being to the effect that notwithstanding they were locked out in consequence of the strike of the washer boys, they should support the boys, their demand being reasonable.

The following resolutions were then passed:-

1. That the London lead Company's miners in Middleton in Teesdale, being locked out in consequence of the washers strike for advance of wages, and not being permitted to work unless the boys resume their employment, we consider ourselves disconnected with the Company's works, and that if we go to work again it must be on new conditions.
2. That if we go to work again we have 54s lent money per month, and £1 per week as the basis.
3. That a protection committee be formed to look after the interests of the workmen.
4. That the starting of the boys wages be 10d instead of 8d at 12 years of age, and to be raised at not less than 3d per day per year, and to be paid off as Mr Bainbridge had suggested.

In the course of some conversation which followed, it was decided that Mr Birch, the head governor, should be requested to come down from London, and that the delegates have an interview with him in reference to the present state of affairs.

The meeting then separated.

8 June 1872

The lock out of the lead miners in Teesdale

Conference between the Governor and the men.

On Saturday morning, a conference took place between Mr Birch, the governor of the London Lead Company's court of directors, and the general body of the locked out miners at Middleton in Teesdale. Before the holding of the conference which was fixed to take place at eleven o'clock the men assembled in large numbers on 'The Hill,' and

decided after some conversation to leave their case in the hands of the delegates. The men then proceeded to the Lead Company's School room, when they were met by Mr Birch, who was accompanied by Mr Wigram (barrister), Mr R W Bainbridge (local superintendent), Mr C Bainbridge, and a few other gentlemen.

The Governor, after referring to the last time he had the pleasure of meeting a large body of Teesdale miners, which was under much happier auspices, said it had always been the principle of the court to act fairly towards the men. It was never intended by the court that any one of them should get himself irrecoverably into debt. It should not be forgotten, however, on the part of the men, that the company had of late not been successful. During the past two years they had been obliged to take a paltry 10s a share out of a little reserve fund they had to distribute, and he was not aware that they had discharged a single workman during their period of depression. He related to them the history of what he knew of the present movement, and read extracts from a lengthened correspondence between himself and Mr Bainbridge, to show that it had been the desire of the court to do their utmost for the welfare of the men, and that no time had been lost in considering the position for an advance of 'lent' money. A few days afterwards, on the 23rd of May, he received a letter from the men thanking the court for the increase of subsistence money which had been granted. He confessed he was considerably surprised on reading a newspaper with an account of a mass meeting of the men on the previous Saturday, the 27th of May. He never thought there could have been so much injustice shown towards the company, and he pointed out fallacies which he could not believe the majority of the men could agree with. The governor referred to other suggestions made at the mass meeting and denied nearly the whole of them, adding that the company's wish was to deal fairly with their men in every way. With respect to the education of the miner's children, he said the school in which they were assembled cost the company £2,000. As to the washer boys strike, it appeared to him exceedingly hard that their fathers and others connected with them should be locked out in consequence of the step they had taken. But it was one of those things that could not be avoided, and until the ore in the team was washed up, they could not get any more out of the mines. There was one point on which he differed from Mr Bainbridge, when he said that there was work for the single men, but none for the parents of the boys on strike. That was very unjust. The company had contributed about £10,000 towards the Miner's Fund, and as treasurers to the fund they had always allowed interest at the rate of 4 per cent per annum, whilst from their money in the Consols they were only receiving 3 per cent.

A petition from the men was handed to Mr Birch, in which they asked - '1. That £1 per week be the basis of our bargains. - 2. That we have, as you have already kindly granted, 54s per month subsistence money. - 3. That the money be advanced monthly over and above the 54s when earned, which Mr Bainbridge, our superintendent, has always consented to advance if required. - 4. That the working hours be reduced from eight to seven per day. - 5. That the starting point of the washer boys wages be 10d instead of 8d per day at twelve years of age, and to be raised at the rate of no less than an average of 3d per day per year. The boys at present employed being advanced accordingly. - 6. That the hours of labour be reduced six per week.'

The Governor said he was quite surprised at such a petition after the one they had so recently presented requesting an advance of 'lent' money, and one or two other matters which the court at a considerable sacrifice had granted. They had written a letter thanking the company for the concessions made and yet within a week they were presenting again another petition. If they thought the court was going to be influenced in that way they were mistaken. It was unfair to think that because they had granted one thing they were going to grant another. He considered that when they gave 10s advance, they made a considerable concession. To the request that £1 per week would be the basis of their bargains, he emphatically said it would not be given. Of course, if they did not like a bargain they were not obliged to take it. The company were not task masters. They were not slave drivers. The men could take a bargain or leave it alone. With regard to the worth of the washer boys, it had been suggested that the company should revert to the old method of letting the washing by public competition, which would not be done; and as to the request for reducing the number of working hours he did not think it was fair, as it was an equivalent to an increase of wages. After a few words from Mr Parkin, the chairman, in which he said the boys going on strike had thrown them into confusion again, but however much some might at first attribute blame to the parents in not controlling their children and sending them back to work, he thought that idea would have subsided, seeing that it was the duty of every father and son to try and earn as much as would keep them out of debt, for the good old book said 'owe no man any thing.'

Mr Birch said he had already stated the course the company intended to pursue; and with a few speeches from some of the delegates the conference terminated.

A meeting of the men was afterwards held and it was arranged to hold another mass meeting.

On Thursday a mass meeting of the miners now locked out in Teesdale was held in the long room of the Rose and Crown Inn, Middleton in Teesdale.

There was a large attendance, the room being crowded to excess. Mr Wm Parkin, presided, and spoke at some length on the necessity of looking emigration in the face unless their demands were conceded. He was followed by several other miners, and at the close of the proceedings a series of resolutions were adopted, pledging the men and washer boys to remain out until the Lead Company agreed to make £1 a week instead of 17s 6d the amount paid at present the basis of the 'bargains.' It was also resolved that a deputation of three miners should proceed to London, to lay their grievances before the Governor, in consequence of the men having been refused a private interview by Mr Birch, when he was down at Middleton last week. On the meeting breaking up a collection was made to defray the expenses of the deputation.

8 June 1872

Weardale lead miners meeting at St John's Chapel

The representatives of the lead miners in Weardale have just held their first meeting at St John's Chapel, for the purpose of establishing a standing committee 'whose duty shall be to watch over the interests of the workmen, and represent any grievances that may exist between the master and the men to the owner of the mines,' and to appoint chairman, select committee, district secretaries, and general secretary and treasurer. The standing committee is formed by the men chosen by the miners of the different mines to represent them, and the miners of the W B lead mines, on the 20th April, in this year, signed their names to support to the utmost of their ability the said committee. After the selection of officers, it was resolved that the W B lead miners in Weardale subscribe at once 6d each towards the funds and it was resolved to open correspondence with the manager of the W B mines, and to point out to him 'with feelings of deep regret, that such a number of men have been necessitated to leave their country, when a number of places are standing, and that the £3 per bing has not been generally given. We (the committee) think all men who are at work ought to have their 'lent money'. Their lateness of commencement of work was the managers blame and not theirs.' Several other resolutions were passed, amongst which was that the next meeting be held on Saturday after next 'bargain.'

15 June 1872

Lead Company's Alston Moor Miners

Upon Mr Bainbridge the Company's superintendent arriving at Nenthead on Thursday for the purpose of arranging the bargains, opinions for the rates given by the viewers were awaiting him. Delegates from

the body of miners called upon him, and presented a petition praying for the same privileges which had been or might in the future be granted to the Teesdale miners be extended to them. They stated that on the Company's workmen finding the 'strike' among the Teesdale washer boys was in danger of imitation by their boys, a general meeting was held whereat they agreed that their boys should not 'strike', but continue under a confidence that the masters would give them as high an increase of wages at their Autumn fixing as circumstances allowed. Mr Bainbridge at once frankly told them that the Company's Court intended that the increased monthly subsistence advances granted on the Teesdale application should apply to their other districts, and that the right minded action of the men of Alston Moor in respect of their boys tended to confirm him in the disposition to give the boys the contemplated double rise in the years wages intimated at the Middleton meeting on the 1st inst.; and that the protective new condition against 'strikes' which had been inserted into the bargains for Teesdale and Weardale (and accepted by the latter) would also cover the Alston Moor district.

The result of this conference appeared on the ensuing day when every person came forward and took the bargains offered.

15 June 1872

Alston

Lent money and clippings

It would appear that the disaffection is to pervade nearly the whole of the extensive mining field comprised in the hilly regions of South Northumberland, North Durham and East Cumberland, for as one dispute or grievance is disposed of, another appears on the surface, so that few mines of any importance seem destined to escape the general discontent with things past and present. Things which up to the present have been submitted to as a matter of course, and with scarcely a murmur, are now found to be insupportable, and redress is eagerly sought. This change is doubtless partly attributable to the additional pressure put upon the labouring classes by the great advances made in the prices of every-day necessities, such as house rent, firing, wearing apparel, and food, all having participated in the almost general advance. Thus our mining population aver that, under present circumstances, their condition requires some amelioration, as what would do a few years since will not do now. A short time ago we mentioned the fact that Rodderup Fell Company had, unsolicited increased their workmen's lent or subsistence money from £2 to £2 10s per month, but it appears that this concession had been made on the understanding that the inside workmen were to stand five eight hour shifts per week, which some of the men say it is

impossible to do in some of the lower workings. Since the advance in the amount of lent money things have apparently gone on smoothly, and the Rodderup Fell workmen have been looked upon as a docile and contented race of beings, but we are sorry to say a change has come over the face of things. On the last 'len'ing day' it was found that the 'len'ings' had undergone a process known as 'clipping,' or in other words, the amount advanced to each man had been reduced, not according to one uniform scale, but sums varying from 7d to 2s 6d per week, and it is said that only two men's 'len'ings' had escaped the 'clipping' process. A feeling of dissatisfaction having consequently sprung up amongst the men, a meeting was lately convened in a spacious chamber in the mine, when it was resolved to memorialise the masters with a view to having the system of 'clipping len'ings' altogether abolished, it being a thing of which they as a body of workmen have the most unqualified abhorrence. A memorial has been drawn up and signed by most, if not all, of the inside workmen. They also request that the present system of long payments may have the careful consideration of their employers, and they likewise suggest the advantages, as well as the practicability, of half yearly instead of yearly pays. We are glad to know that the men, feeling aggrieved, have adopted the sensible course they have, as by a little negotiation there will be more likelihood of having the matter properly adjusted than if other means had been resorted to.

22 June 1872

The lock out of the Teesdale lead miners

Another mass meeting was held. Mr Scarth agent for the Duke of Cleveland and Mr Monkhouse agent for T Hutchinson Esq should visit upon Mr Bainbridge as mediators. A interview with Mr Bainbridge took place but no concession given. Arrangements were made for some men to start work in the coal mines.

22 June 1872

Stonecroft mine

Serious accident

An accident of an alarming character occurred in the Greyside shaft at the above named mine on Wednesday. It would appear that three workmen were ascending the shaft and it was necessary that one of them, named Atcheson, should go into a higher level. in attempting to signal the engineman, he was caught and forced from the cage, and there being suspended by one foot for some time. his fellow workmen by great exertion managed to release him from his dangerous position. When examined by Dr stainthorpe, of Hexham, several of

his ribs were found broken. His escape from falling to the bottom of the shaft is miraculous.

22 June 1872

Weardale miners pay

The Weardale miners half yearly pay took place on Saturday last. The miners as usual lifted their balance due to them at the W B offices Newhouse, after which they repaired to St John's Chapel, where tradespeople were looking out for the settlement of their bills, and toy dealers, and vendors of nuts and spice for loose coppers. The pays passed off quietly.

6 July 1872

Teesdale

The London Lead Company miners

On Saturday 26 Teesdale miners who lately declined the renewal of their bargains - all let with the like intention in the Company's Weardale Bollihope Mines - were paid the balance of their earnings since October last. Which amounted on the average to 20s 6d per week per man. Upon analysing the account it was found that the individual weekly earnings were as follows:-

Two above 29s per week
Two above 28s per week
One above 24s per week
Five above 22s per week
Four above 21s per week
Two above 19s per week
One above 18s per week
Two above 17s per week
One above 16s per week
Four above 14s per week
Two above 13s per week

20 July 1872

Alston

The Miners dispute

A few weeks since we intimated that the Rodderup Fell miners were aggrieved on account of their subsistence money being reduced when they had not the prescribed number of shifts per month, and that a memorial had been drawn up for the purpose of being signed by the men and presented to the masters. At the same time we expressed hope that an amicable settlement might be come to, but such has not been the case. The memorial was duly signed and presented; meetings of the men have been held with the local representatives of the company, without any settlement being come to. A deputation from the men had an interview with Mr Crawhall on the evening of Friday week, at the close of which the points of difference, so far as we have been able to ascertain were that the masters required the men to work 20 shifts per month, while the men would only guarantee to work 18. The men also

wanted two weeks during hay time, without any reduction from the subsistence money, while they were offered one week, and if they stopped off longer, a portion of the subsistence money to be withheld. The men also objected to being required to acquaint the resident manager when they wanted a day from work. On Monday there was a meeting of the men, from which meeting we have no report, but it must have been unfavourable as there has since been a lockout, a door having been placed on the mouth of the level, and the men are for the most part engaged at hay making.

20 July 1872

Teesdale

Settlement of the miners strike

Through the mediation of Mr W T Scarth chief agent to His Grace the Duke of Cleveland an amicable settlement was come to on Saturday between Mr Bainbridge the Lead Company superintendent, and the miners delegates. The men are to resume work on 20s per week average, instead of 20s per week basis, as asked for and the miners bargains are in future to be by the fathom instead of per bing of lead (8cwt) as hitherto. On Sunday evening a band of music paraded the streets of Middleton in Teesdale, and very general satisfaction was expressed amongst all classes at the termination of the prolonged struggle.

24 August 1872

Termination of the miners strike

On Friday last, the letting of the bargains usually held at the Rodderup Fell mines took place, when the men who had been out on strike for some time past accepted their bargains on the old, or as they term it, masters terms. The affair at the commencement created a great deal of excitement, and many were the conjectures that they would not be able to hold out, the masters barring the entrance to the mine, but we are informed that on the above named day the men took their bargains as usual without saying a word as to clipped lengths or other grievances, so that the strike may be now considered ended.

The following information is included as it gives a further insight as to circumstances at the time, as well as giving a useful summary of the problem as seen by the Weardale miners.

15 February 1873

Weardale

Miners Average Wages. On Saturday evening last the Weardale mines committee held a meeting at the Kings Head Inn St John's Chapel; Mr Nathan Race

in the chair. According to the sheets prepared by the said committee, the following are the average wages at the different WB lead mines for the half year ending June 30 last

	£	d	
Bolts Burn mine	29	1	per
week per man			
Burtree Pasture	22	3	per
week per man			
West Pasture Stanhope	21	2B	per
week per man			
Craigs Pasture Stanhope	21	0	per
week per man			
Kilhope	19	1	per
week per man			
Stanhope Burn	18	7	per
week per man			
Grove Rake	17	5B	per
week per man			
Green Laws	16	3	per
week per man			
Slitt	12	1	per
week per man			
Total averages	20	2	per
week per man			

29 March 1873

The Weardale Lead mines

Annual meeting at St John's Chapel

The first annual meeting of the Weardale lead miners was held on Saturday, in the Town Hall St John's Chapel, and was attended by an exceedingly large and enthusiastic assemblage. With regard to the present position of the lead miners in relation to their employers, it might not be considered out of place to recapitulate shortly the events which have transpired within the last twelve or eighteen months in the lead measures in Weardale. It was during the preceding summer of 1871 that the miners first made a move towards obtaining an advance of their subsistence money, or as it is more popularly called 'lent Money.' Some negotiations at that time were commenced, and a committee of the men to manage their proceedings was formed; but the agitation was destined to last only a short time, as the demands which they sought when they waited upon the master's agents with their case were refused. The cost of living continued still to increase without any proportionate advance of pay, it was determined, as soon after winter as possible, to set on foot another and firmer agitation for the 50s subsistence money instead of 40s which they were then receiving, and the first great mass meeting was held under most encouraging auspices, in the month of March last year, at the Town Hall, St John's Chapel. It was the first meeting of the kind which had been held in the locality for nearly a quarter of a century. In conjunction with their application last year they

were informed of some new scheme that was being propounded and shortly to be introduced in connection with the working of the mines upon a different system to what had been pursued in the past. The scheme, however, was never actually initiated, although the men were led to understand that Mr Beaumont was determined to stand to it even if it involved the grave consequence of laying in the mines. This the men considered would be very harsh, seeing that they stood in a somewhat different position in relation to their employer from that existing between capital and labour in most other branches of industry. The 50s would meet their requirements and as it was only a matter of 2s 6d a week increase of subsistence money, they deemed they were not making an unreasonable request. Altogether, three large mass meetings were held upon the subject, and among the numerous resolutions adopted at these gatherings was one to the effect that the miners should accept no more bargains at New House until their just demands had been conceded. In the course of the strike, which lasted a month, various correspondence based between the miners, their employer, and his agent, resulting finally in the men obtaining all they wanted - 50s lent money and bargains based upon £1. There still existed, however considerable dissatisfaction with Mr Cain, the head agent, the miners asserting that whilst he managed everything exclusively in the interests of Mr Beaumont he pressed too severely upon them. The nature of the bargains offered would not suffice, it was said, to maintain them and their families, and the only alternative in case of refusing to accept these bargains was leaving Weardale altogether, in order to obtain a livelihood elsewhere. In a great number of instances this already has taken place several of the lead miners having betaken themselves to the pit and iron districts, where they have found employment. To the great majority of the dalesmen however, it is exceedingly difficult for them to have to leave their beautiful and native place, where for generations before them their forefathers were wont to spend their happiest days. A great many of them possess a little land, and keep a cow or two, and rather than forego these and the accompanying enjoyments which they afford, they prefer taking these bargains in the hope that the little farming and mining combined may be sufficient to maintain them in something like a position of respectability. A short time ago it was determined to hold annual meetings for the purpose of discussing questions relating to capital and labour, and matters generally affecting their own condition and the first of these was held on Saturday. Mr Nathan Race presided and he was accompanied upon the platform by several members of the standing committee, including the secretary Mr F Philipson, Mr Walton, Mr John Emerson, Mr Whitfield, Mr Jos Kellett, Mr

Thos Peadon, and Messrs Crawford and Wilkinson from Durham, who together with some of the members of the Weardale Miners Committee, were announced to deliver addresses bearing upon 'The present position of the Weardale miners, the advantage of working men's unions, capital and labour,' &c.

The CHAIRMAN, in commencing the proceedings thanked them for the great compliment they had paid him in electing him to preside over their meeting that day. After the present committee was elected, it was resolved to hold the annual meeting of the whole of the miners when a statement would be made with respect to the monies which had been collected, and how they had been expended. It was further resolved that the standing committee, should be elected for one year, at the end of each year, after the annual meeting had been held at the different mines, to elect members to serve on the committee. Masters had rights and so did working men, and it was their duty as working men to protect their rights. But he had to tell them they could not do this single handed. What chance had any of them against Mr Beaumont's capital? None whatever; but if they combine themselves and formed a union the grievances of any of them would be quickly redressed, because the matter would be taken up by the whole body of the miners at once. His own opinion was, if there had been a standing committee twenty years ago many a change for the better would have been effected, and many of their men who had left the dale would never have required to have done so. He counselled them all to be united. The old motto was 'united we stand, divided we fall.' (Applause)

He advised them to elect a standing committee, and to form a union of all the lead miners in Weardale, Teesdale, and surrounding dales, to take in also the ironstone miners. Their interests were pretty identical with the lead miner's interests. Whatever they did let them be united and he, for one would give his last sixpence to support it. When they resumed work after the late strike, one condition was that £1 a week ought to be the basis to let bargains upon so far as that was concerned, it had been fulfilled. He had no fault to find with that except as to the modes of distribution. In instancing the averages he showed that one man averaged 29s 1d, another only 12s 1d and another 16s 1d, working in different mines. They were Mr Beaumont's workmen, and they were all inspected by one set of inspectors, and taking their bargains all at one office. How did it happen, therefore, that there was this difference? He was not speaking of single partnerships, but of one mine against another. How was it that there should be so great a disparity in the wages? He did not say that the 29s a week man got too much. He thought they could all take that at

least, when the present price of coal was taken into consideration. (Applause) It had been a cold winter, and coal had been very scarce, with them. He did not even find fault with the 20s men, but the 16s and 12s 1d men were decidedly receiving too little. All he asked for was fairplay, but he did not think the 12s 1d man had had fairplay during the past year. There had been a system going on of closing the old mines altogether. They seem to have been trying to wreck all the old mines, and so effectually as to the baffle future speculators, and they had succeeded in stamping out all the old mines. If the ancestors of Mr Beaumont had adopted the same sort of system lead mining in Weardale would long have been a thing of the past. He believed that the advisors of Mr Beaumont thought it would be the means of bringing Mr Beaumont most profit. he would say that it was a mistaken policy, ruinous both to the proprietor and to the inhabitants of the valley. What was the use of having £3 per bing for old mines if they wrecked and closed them? He believed if they would keep a few old men on the superannuation list the lead miner in Weardale would still speculate as his forefathers of old did. (Applause) He believed there was many a mine closed that would and could have been a regular-going mine. (Applause) Looking at the present position in Weardale the prospect was very dark, and he had heard the remark made that there was a bitterer feeling existing in Weardale that day than ever existed during the strike. (Applause) The way that many of the men had been dismissed and required to leave the place was most unfortunate. They had literally been hungered off. (Applause) If a master had any charge against him, and wanted him dismissed, he would much prefer that it were brought before him when he would have the opportunity of defending himself. What the Future of Weardale would be he could not tell. Perhaps things would brighten. They had heard it said that when things were at their darkest signs of brightness began to set in. He hoped such were in store for Weardale. All they wanted was fair play. They might probably be called agitators, and be charged with keeping the people in a state of agitation. He was not an agitator, he liked peace and harmony between masters and men, and he wished harmony were again restored between the proprietor and his work people. (Applause) Let their requests be in harmony with reason, and do the thing that was right, and God would defend the right. (Applause)

Mr T PEADON (one of the secretaries) read the report of the committee, which stated that the committee was formed in March of last year, at which time it was decided that their financial and other affairs should for the future be conducted with official order. It was thought requisite at first to

levy the sum of sixpence per quarter on each man, the surplus of which was to go towards the formation of a union. The subject of the formation of a union not, however, meeting the views of the men in general, it had been allowed to remain stationary. At the commencement there were 23 members of the committee; four have since left, and one successor has been appointed. The receipts have been £39 2s; the expenditure, £20 5s 4d; and there was with the balance of £21 8s 4d at the beginning, a balance of £21 5s. If the men were desirous that the committee should be continued, it would be necessary for the general election to take place- the members to be taken from the different mines. It seemed (the report concluded) a great pity that so many were necessitated to leave their dale-a dale with such resources, where nature with her bountiful hand had provided enough for all, could it have been reasonably divided, and when men were willing to put forth their labour for a moderate competency.

The report was adopted.

Mr FEATHERSTONE PHILIPSON, one of the secretaries in the course of his remarks, and after having referred to the necessity of an improvement in their condition, asked: What are the best measures we can adopt to secure a fair remuneration for our labour? I would propose no scheme that would be unfair to an employer. Our interests are identical; but we should form a union. (Applause) Now, in order to have a union we must have a test, and that test must be a monthly subscription, which will both prove our sincerity and also put us in a true position for action. (Hear, hear) What are you going to do? I trust you will give permanently to the union, and be prepared to stand to each other. I have heard it said but I can scarcely give it credence that the young men stand in the way of a union, affirming that they may have to leave the dale. What a poor reason is this for any one to urge. I would be ashamed of myself to put forward such a plea. I cannot think it of you; you will not discredit your blood, your training, the traditions of our dear native dale. I do trust you will take up time question heartily and fearlessly, and I have no fear of success. Difficulties no doubt stand in the way, but let them be bravely faced and they will disappear, and better days will dawn. Remember the words so many of you have learned concerning another matter- 'stand like the brave with your face to the foe.' (Loud Applause) I must express to you the deep sorrow and grief with which I have observed cart after cart, day after day, bearing away furniture and families of my old fellow workmen and companions. I have watched them with a sad heart and, as I thought of the future, a dark shadow has come over my mind. Do not think that it was a light matter that has led these men to leave the valley. Here are the houses

and hearths of their childhood, where they learned at their mothers knees their prayers. Here are the graves of their kindred and friends for generations. Here are all the associations of childhood and youth. Here are all the ties that bind the heart to home and friends. These are ties that only men who live in secluded dales like this ever know. I have asked why such an exodus? Is the valley exhausted? Is there no more bright ore hid in its heart? Can it no longer provide labour for its sons? I believe hid in the hard rocks there is treasure enough to repay the capitalists who will speculate and yield a comfortable living to all its inhabitants; and I tell you this, the day comes when its riches must be developed and there is no class of men that can be found who are more capable of this than the miners of the W B lead mines. And if we be but united and firm, no more need go forth to wander, but living at home, all may be comfortable and happy. (Loud Applause)

Mr WILKINSON (the secretary of the Durham Miners Association) said he had, like Mr Crawford, to express his astonishment at the condition of things in Weardale. As to the lending system no man ought to be compelled to borrow money. In their case, however, it was not borrowed money. They ought not to be compelled to subsist on 12s a week. They ought not to be speculators. The capitalist ought to be the speculator. He believed it would be rather premature to ask for stated wages; but he held that the speculative system was the worst system that ever existed, and ought to be abolished. If it was much against the interest of the master as it was against the interests of the men, it would be abolished without twenty four hours notice. They must be combined. They might attempt everything; but until they spoke as one man they spoke in vain. (Applause)

Mr JOHN EMMERSON, Lowburn, said that the lead mines in Weardale had given to the capitalist great interest or gain. Thousands upon thousands had been realised both by Mr Beaumont and his ancestors. They stood second to none as lead miners. Go to the coal mines and other places where the Weardale miners had gone, and you would find they were getting as much money as any other man employed at the same work. Look at their position as regards income and outlay. They knew that their agreement with Mr Beaumont last summer was a pound per week as a basis for letting or grounding their bargains. When the average was taken it was found that they had averaged one pound and two pence per man per week for the half year ending June 30th, 1872. Now, compare this income with the outlay on food, clothing, house rent and coals. They were aware that food, clothing, and coals, and every other thing they had to buy had risen greatly in

prices, and they would find one pound per week very poor living for a man, his wife, and family. Whilst they were running the risk of not taking one pound per week, their near neighbours were making 25s per week and upwards, and had their coals driven to Westgate at half price.

Mr JOSEPH KELLETT said that they were now, in a certain sense, an organised body of workmen. The masters had fulfilled the condition under which they had returned to work last year, but they could not but remember, with their gain what they had lost, and they asked where were many friends and neighbours who were with them last year. Some scores had by necessity been driven to seek employment in other places, and were now scattered all over the country. Yet they were glad to hear they had not sought in vain, but had found better remuneration. Some had doubled the average they had here, besides having coals and house found.

Mr WHITFIELD said they must put forth united effort. Not to have a union would be to stand alone. Nearly every class of men around them were in unions, and he held to be their duty to make as much of their occupation as they could. He did not say it was wrong to go to other fields of labour, but, on many grounds, the justness of it might be questioned. He admitted that they had been treated with coldness; they heard again and again that Mr Beaumont had too many men. Was not the dale still rich in mineral? They hesitated not to say that it was. Now rather than the dale should become a wilderness, it would be more honourable on Mr Beaumont's part to let the mines fall into other hands, as no doubt many would be ready to speculate in them. They must have a large income, or must be provided with coals at a lower rate which would be of great advantage to them. (Applause)

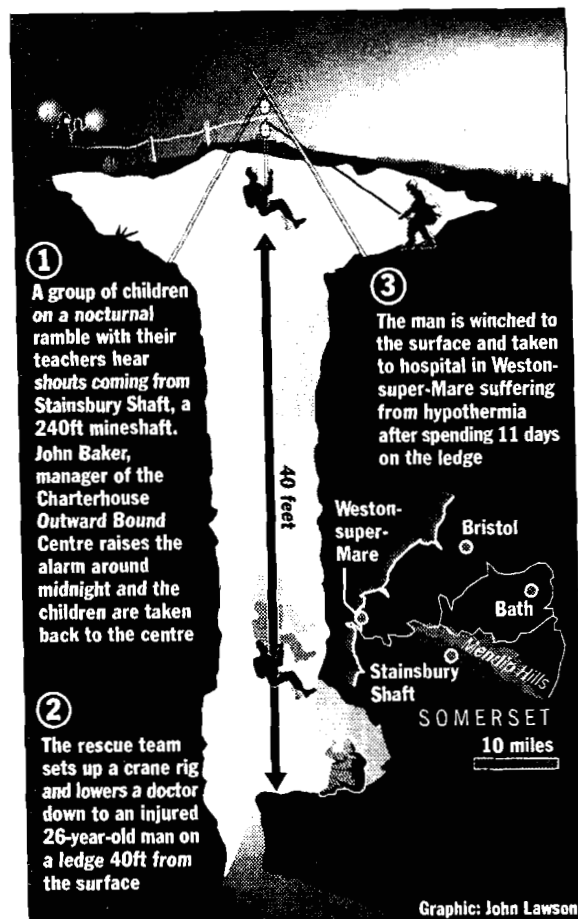
It was then resolved to continue the standing committee, the election to take place in the manner proposed in the report.

The CHAIRMAN: The next thing is a Union. What do you say about this? Are you all for a Union? Let those for a Union hold up their hands. [All hands were instantly raised]

Mr JOSEPH WATSON (Haswick) said he thought unionism was absolutely necessary for all classes of workmen at the present time, and especially working men in Weardale. If all the lead miners in these neighbouring dales would unite and stand true to each other, they would protect their labour and keep pace with the onward march of civilisation and commerce. (Applause)

The usual votes of thanks were passed, and the meeting separated.

Mineshaft student is rescued after being trapped for 11 days



A STUDENT missing for 11 days was rescued from a disused mineshaft yesterday after his cries for help were heard by a party of children on a nature walk.

Matthew Head was plucked from a ledge 40ft down after descending the old lead mine and apparently pulling his rope down after him. He was in danger of falling another 200ft.

Last night it was unclear exactly how long he had been in the mine but experts believe he survived by drinking rainwater.

He was discovered when the party of 32 youngsters on a night walk heard murmurings from Stainsbury's Shaft – a 200-year-old disused mine in The Mendips, Somerset.

PC Peter Ford, who was with the party, stayed talking to the injured man while others went for help. Mr Head was pulled from the shaft in a three-hour operation by a cave rescue team.

Last night Mr Head's family, from Midsomer Norton, Somerset, were by his bedside in Frenchay Hospital, Bristol.

He was reported missing on May 3. At the time police said the 26-year-old geology student was depressed and liked walking in The Mendips. They stressed their search would be hampered by foot-and-mouth restrictions.

The children, from Walwayne

BY JOHN CHAPMAN

Court School in Trowbridge, Wilts, found Mr Head on Monday night. The mine is near where they were staying, at the Charterhouse activity centre at Cheddar.

Pupil Kezia Gorman, 10, said: "We were being quite quiet listening for owls and we were looking at Stainsbury's Shaft and we heard a voice coming out of it."

"It said, 'Can you get some help down here?' It was all very scary but also very exciting."

Classmate Anna Bennett, also 10, said: "At first we thought it was an electronic voice set up for us and someone was trying to trick us."

PC Ford said he talked to the injured man for about 30 minutes before the rescuers arrived. The PC's son Daniel, 10, who was on the walk, said he was mostly scared for his father being left alone in the dark.

Charterhouse centre manager John Baker praised the children. He said: "They were a credit to themselves and the school."

He said of Mr Head: "He was very lucky."

Cave rescuer Brian Prewer said: "We think he probably absided down and pulled the rope down after him. Why he did that I don't know. Perhaps we will never know."

CHILDREN ON NIGHT

TIME NATURE RAMBLE

HEAR DESPERATE

CRIES FROM SHAFT

DAILY EXPRESS WEDNESDAY MAY 16 2001

Quarry go-ahead

A LAKE District slate firm is poised to get the go-ahead for a controversial quarry extension, nearly four years after first submitting plans for the scheme, **reports Jim Smith.**

Planning and legal wrangles have dogged Burlington Slate Ltd's application to extend Bursting Stones, a quarry high on the flank of the Old Man of Conistone.

Burlington wants the quarry, one of the few left which produces Lakeland green slate, which is prized for its hard-wearing qualities and in high demand for prestige buildings all over the world.

But conservationists claimed plans to enlarge the quarry would severely damage

the landscape and went against the Lake District Local Plan.

The scheme was further delayed when the Friends of the Lake District mounted a legal challenge after Secretary of State for Environment John Prescott withdrew an order to 'call-in' the application, which would have prompted a public inquiry.

The pressure group claimed Mr Prescott had acted unlawfully and applied for a judicial review to get his decision overturned, but a High Court judge rejected the call, saying the Secretary of State had acted within his powers.

Now the Lake District National Park Authority is set to confirm its decision to

allow the quarry extension, in return for Burlington agreeing to give up two quarry planning consents dating as far back as 1959.

South Lakes planning team leader Norman Atkins confirmed the authority would issue an approval notice to Burlington once a 21-day period for lodging an appeal had lapsed.

The Friends of the Lake District, who took legal advice before going to court, are unlikely to appeal.

Planning officer Graham Hale said the group was very disappointed with the decision but respected the judge's ruling. It was the first time the Friends have taken such court action.

"It was a major issue that we felt was important to try to test because Conistone is a well-known, major location and Bursting Stone Quarry can be seen from significant distances around," said Mr Hale.

Burlington's quarries and environment director Mike Dickinson said the company was very pleased the matter had finally been resolved.

He agreed the four-year delay had been frustrating for the firm, which had lost at least one large contract as a result.

"We have done everything we can to lessen the impact of the application and the scheme as a whole includes a lot of restoration work," he added.

Westmorland Gazette
4th April 2001

Quarry honours

QUARRIES at Sandside, Stainton and Roose Sand in Cumbria were among the Tarmac-owned operations which gained recognition for environmental excellence in this year's Quarry Products Association's environmental awards. Executive director John Bowater said: "These awards are the industry's highest accolade and are a fitting tribute to Tarmac staff, who work hard at achieving and are committed to maintaining the highest environmental standards."

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Committee Meeting held on the Monday 2nd April 2001 at 1 Rothay Holme Cottages, Ambleside.

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 | Hudgillburn Mine |
| 9 | Coniston Coppermines Site | 10 | Lakelands Mining Heritage |
| 11 | Publications | 12 | Date and venue of next committee meeting |
| 13 | Any other business | | |

Present D. Bridge (DB), S. Barker (SB), I. Matheson (IM),
P. Fleming (PF), M. Mitchell (MM) M. Scott (MSc) & A. Wilson (AW).
7 members in total. The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from M. Simpson (MS).

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 15th January had been previously circulated to members. It was PROPOSED by IM and SECONDED by MM 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 4.5a PF and IM had visited the CAT library and had drawn up a list of books required, the cost of these to be estimated and a decision made. SB to ask Jean Tyler for an estimate of the cost Ian's Tyler's books and a copy of Daniel Hechstetter, The Younger. IM reported that there were 8 CAT newsletters and a lot of meets lists missing from the library. DB would photocopy these and give them to Anton Thomas. IM will ensure that copies of both go to the library in future. MM PROPOSED that we allocate £250 from the funds to buy the most urgent books, SECONDED by IM, all were in favour.

Item 4.5 b (Updating the library list) DB could not use the 'card index' soft ware, MS was to investigate.

3.2 Item 4.7 PF had responded to the LDNPA regarding their draft Corporate plan.

3.3 Item 14.1 PF reported that due to the foot and mouth disease restrictions (FMDR) the removal of CAT ropes from Paddy End Mine had not been possible.

4 Secretary's Report

The secretary had received:

4.1 The LDNPA had replied regarding their 50th birthday celebration request, saying they were holding the event at Brockhole and would like us to do a display about mining in the Lake District. DB to contact ADC about a display.

4.2 The NAMHO AGM and council meeting had been arranged to take place in Keswick on 10th March but had been cancelled due to FMDR.

4.3 A Heritage Lottery Grant for £31,650 has been given to the National Trust for survey and conservation work at Greenburn Mine, Coniston.

4.4 Newland Furnace

John Helme had sent the Secretary a report on progress of work at Newland Furnace. The Trustees had recently signed the lease for the furnace, charging barn and blowing chamber at Newland. The owners had signed the lease about a year ago but the Trustees had been reluctant to sign until several problems were resolved. The main problem was insurance, this had proved difficult to obtain and when available very expensive. Eventually we agreed to accept a quote via brokers at Carlisle with AXA Insurers.

The insurance covers both public liability and employees liability and therefore ensures that the volunteer work force (CATMHS members) are covered for the voluntary work.

The solicitors have now exchanged copies of the lease and therefore the over 999 year lease (legally equivalent to a freehold) commenced on 21st March 2001.

Our next important job is to obtain extra funding, a number of Trust's etc. had promised support but only when the lease was in place. Hopefully this will increase our funds (now standing at about £7000) and enable us to obtain estimates from contractors for the jobs the volunteers cannot tackle. The first of these jobs will be the roof and the corner wall of the charging barn, this work must be started at the earliest opportunity before it collapses.

A recent application by the Secretary of the 1 A committee of the C.W.A.A.S to "list" the Blacking Mill remains at Newland has failed. The reasons given were:

a) The remains were too ruinous.

b) The main part of the mill had for many years been used for other purposes and its style had been much altered by change of use.

It has however, now been passed on for possible Scheduling as an Ancient Monument. It is unfortunate that when the Local Authority agreed to most of the site being listed in 1998 the Blacking Mill remains were excluded.

Thank you for your continued interest and support for our work at Newland, none of us could have foreseen, in 1988, that a simple job covering a few weekends and involving rubble clearance and some timber support work, would result nearly 12 years later in this!!

5 Treasurer's Report

The secretary had been contacted by the treasurer, he had made the following comments:

A) The bank balance at present stands at £1223.56.

B) The building society a/c stands at £9000 + interest.

C) He had not yet received the printer's bill.

D) M. Simpson wished to give up the post of treasurer by June of this year.

After discussion it was decided to put a slip in with the next newsletter asking if any member would like to take over the post.

6 Membership Secretary's Report

IM reported that the paid up membership now stood at 97, + 6 honorary members and 6 libraries. There were 10 members who had not renewed (they had received reminders).

7 Meets Secretary's Report

J. Knowles had cancelled the last two meets due to the FMDR. The Smallcleugh meet could go ahead as the Nenthead Mine site was to be open as usual. It was hoped that all members would contact the meet leaders before meets. The next meets list should go out with the July NL.

8 Hudgillburn Mine

SB could not remove the third set of radon detectors from the mine due to FMDR. Results received from Dr. Denman regarding the second set showed a drop of 1,295 Bq.-3 from the dig site. There is some doubt that the dig will be resumed after the FMDR are lifted due to the high level of radon present. Members are warned not to work at the dig till a decision is made.

9 Coniston Coppermines

9.1 There had been 4 work meets in Grey Crag Level and the dig was progressing well, till all work stopped at the end of February, due to the FMDR. DB had been unable to collect the Radon detectors placed in the Grey Crag and Puddingstone Levels. A higher than expected level of Radon had been recorded in Top Level Extension, more tests would be done after FMDR were lifted. A newly discovered stope had been surveyed using the new LD range finder. (See full report in the newsletter).

9.2 PF asked DB about the long term object of the Paddy End Survey. It was hoped to make a 3-D visual computer plan of the mine, adding the geology and eventually to publish the results.

10 Lakeland's Mining Heritage, the last 500 years.

10.1 About 1000 copies of the book had been delivered to S. Barker at Alston, who had distributed copies to several members to sell. Sales were going well, flyers had been sent out and several reviews had appeared in various publications. The official book launch had taken place on 30th March at the John Ruskin Museum, Coniston, very kindly organised by Vicki Slowe and the museum staff. The secretary was asked to write and

offer our thanks to the museum staff. PF had entered the book into the 'Lakeland Book of the Year' contest, results out at the end of May. He had contacted Guy Weller regarding selling the book in the National Park Centre's.

11 Publications

- 11.1 IM reported that the newsletter (35 pages) was ready to go out, he gave a breakdown of the cost. For the first time it contained colour photographs.
- 11.2 It was decided that the 5th issue of the CAT Journal should be produced by about this time in 2002. IM would collect articles. Members selling publications were reminded to also push sales of 'Slate from Honister', the Coniston CD-ROM and Journal No 4.

12 Date and venue of next Committee Meeting

The next committee meeting will be held on the **14th May 2001** at 1 Rothay Holme Cottages, Ambleside.

13 Any other business

- 13.1 SB reported on the new CIHS publication 'The Cumbrian Industrialist' Vol. 3, it contained several articles in which CAT would be interested. It was suggested we should join the CIHS, to be decided at the next meeting.
- 13.2 PF had been contacted by Guy Huckstable (property manager for the LDNPA) regarding Mandall's Slate Office. Our 10 year lease is up this year, he asked if we would consider sharing the building with the Nat. Park voluntary wardens who had lost their Coniston Base. They would pay half the rent and also put in electric and water. After discussion it was decided we would be agreeable to them having the outer room and us the inner room, as all we need is a storage space for ropes and equipment. **MM PROPOSED** "That we share the Building", **SECONDED** by DB, all were in favour. PF to discuss details with the LDNPA.
- 13.3 The 2001 AGM and Annual Dinner would be held on the 8th December, venue to be decided.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

SB 11/04/01

Chairman

NORTHERN MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY

proudly presents

MINING HISTORY AND BEYOND NAMHO's 2001 Conference

When? 15th and 16th September

Where? The Novotel, off the M606 on Bradford's southern outskirts.

Why? The cancellation of the Irish Field meet, plus restrictions on the British countryside, because of Foot & Mouth have made a self-contained conference a necessity.

The theme of the conference – “*Mining History and Beyond*” – will concentrate on aspects of mining history which have so far received little attention, and look to the future.

Because of the urgency of the situation, and contrary to the normal practice of inviting speakers from other organisations, we have established a core of speakers who are recognised as leaders of their various fields, but anyone offering to give a lecture on our theme will, of course, be given serious consideration. The following speakers have offered to talk to the theme of the conference, but, owing to the short notice given to them, precise titles are not yet available. The list gives an impression of the topics being covered, however, and it will be updated (see website address below) as information comes to hand.

Roger Burt	Masonic networking in international mining in the C19th.
Robert White	The role of professional archaeologists in mining – demistification of conservation and public access issues, the SMR and the pros/cons of Scheduling and Listing Sites.
Rob Vernon	Geophysical prospection of metal mining and smelting sites
Martin Roe	The Landscape archaeology of lead mining.
Ivor Brown	The demise of modern mining.
Peter Claughton	Britain's mediaeval silver mining and smelting industry.
Mike Gill	Mining population studies
Sarah Costley	Marrick Priory Estate in Swaledale – a case study of the relationship between mining and farming in a late 16th and early 17th century estate.
Gerry McDonnell	Monastic iron working
Sallie Bassham	Condensers and the ecology of smelt mill flues.
Sam Murphy	Caldbeck – an Elizabethan mining field.

I'm interested – what do I do now? Contact Mike Gill at: 38 Main Street, Sutton in Craven, KEIGHLEY, Yorkshire, BD20 7HD – Tel. (01535) 635388 or email martgill@legend.co.uk

We also have a dedicated **website**, which will be updated regularly, so please visit it often:

www.mroe.freemove.co.uk/nmrs/namho.htm

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

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Peter Fleming	Ian Matheson	Mike Mitchell
Mark Scott	Mark Simpson	Angela Wilson

Honorary Members: Sheila Barker, Peter Fleming,
John Marshall, Mike Mitchell.