

# CAT

The Newsletter of the Cumbria Amenity Trust  
Mining History Society

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### **Cover picture**

#### **High Wire Act!**

Workers entering a South African diamond mine travelled by a system of cables stretched from rim to pit floor. The tramway also served to bring diamonds up from below. "So thickly together were these lines set," wrote Gardner F Williams in his 1905 book, *The Diamond Mines of South Africa*, "that the whole face of the vast pit seemed to be covered by a monstrous cobweb, shining in the moonlight as if every filament was a silver strand."

This photograph was first published in the magazine in June 1906.

From the National Geographic Magazine, contributed by Peter Fleming.

**Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society**  
**Newsletter No 70, January 2003**

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**CAT web site: [www.catmhs.co.uk](http://www.catmhs.co.uk)**

## **Editorial**

### **Errors in Newsletter 69!**

I must apologise for the errors in Newsletter 69. The heading on the contents page should of course have read Newsletter No 69, October 2002. Not so obvious was the picture of Brathay Quarry on page 7, which was printed back to front. How many of you spotted them both?

### **Changed publication dates**

In order to save postage it has been decided to change the publication dates of the Newsletter to suit distribution of information regarding the AGM and Dinner, the distribution of Meet Lists etc. Publication dates in future will be the first week in February, May, August and November.

2 meets to be publicised in next Newsletter:

April 27<sup>th</sup> Golscope Appraisal

ML Gerry Goldsbourough and Roger Ramsden.

May 18<sup>th</sup> Caudale Slate

Meet Leader Mark Simpson

### **AGM & Dinner, 14<sup>th</sup> Dec 2002**

The AGM was preceded by a walk around the Old Man Slate caverns, led by Alistair Cameron. Part of the walk was just above the snow line of what must have been the first snow fall of the winter.

The AGM was held in the dining room of the Yewdale Hotel, and was concluded promptly. The serving committee were all re-elected, and Dave Bridge was made an Honorary Member in recognition of his service to the Society as Chairman from 1992 to 2001. A good buffet style dinner was followed by some very interesting slides presented by Jon Knowles which

were taken from an old quarrying magazine. Notable was the high quality of the photos and the excellent lighting of large underground areas, presumably using magnesium flash powder. The Chairman's Award was presented to the digging team: John Brown, Peter Blezzard, Colin & Andrew Woolard, Peter Sedgewicke, William Snaith. Very well deserved!

There was a bar extension until 1.00 am, but I don't think that anyone used it! Many people had quite long journeys home, and no one wants to drink and drive. For next year we have booked the BMSC hut in Coppermines Valley for the whole weekend, so that people can stay overnight very cheaply and in convivial surroundings, perhaps finishing the weekend with an informal meet on the Sunday.

### **Chairman's Report:**

First of all my thanks to all the members of the committee for their efforts during the past year, and their offers to be available for re-election at this AGM, although Jon Knowles will be standing down from being Meets Secretary. To date no replacement has been found.

A year has gone by and I have been left wondering how it will compare with my thoughts for the coming year expressed in Newsletter 66. The Coniston Survey is still to be published – hopefully this will happen next year. The fact of my moving house has not helped in this respect and working up the enthusiasm for this task is difficult. New ground has been explored and surveyed (South Vein on Middle Level) which will appear in the next Newsletter, and some old ground under Grey Crag Level (horrible) was re-visited.

**CATMHS Annual Dinner at the Yewdale Hotel.  
Photos by Mark Simpson. All complaints should be addressed to the  
photographer.**

**The Treasurers Table. This  
was by far the most unruly  
table, mostly due to the  
antics of messrs Aird and  
Cameron. See below.**



**John Brown, with the Chairman's  
Award, which he received on behalf  
of the digging team**

**I cannot think of a suitable  
caption for this picture, can you?  
Printable suggestions should be  
sent to the editor by post or  
email, and will be included in the  
next Newsletter.**



The Grey Crag Level dig was completed with much credit to John Brown and his team. This has allowed detailed exploration in the stoping over this area. Journal 5 has been published by the sterling efforts of Ian Matheson and Dave Sewart, not to mention the contributors. Printing was by Lamberts in Settle.

Meets have been many and various, with an understandable emphasis on Welsh Slate. The Meet Secretary's job is a very necessary one as these outings are the occasions which help to bind the Society together. Yes, there are several times during the year when one has to rush around and organise the next half years events, but the value to the society is very great. I am biased as it was the first post I had in the Society. I remember the occasion of my proposal well.

After initial hopes of projects with the National Park nothing much has happened. This is probably due to the Society needing to identify projects which it can carry out to a successful *conclusion and approaching the NDLP* Archaeologist for his observations. Finance, fortunately, is not a problem; personnel is. However one thing that I did suggest would be useful has been pushed by Alastair Cameron and a group of local (Coniston) enthusiasts, ie the Coniston Old Man Slate Survey.

The Furness Survey still continues, but apparently in a low key state. The problem, as you know, with all long term projects is maintaining momentum and motivation. In this last respect the ongoing Newlands furnace restoration scheme must rank as one of the longest projects around, and all credit to those who have stuck at it month after month for many years.

Hudgill works now consist of consolidation. It is not expected that any further work will happen inside unless it is to improve access to the caverns. The main place of operation is at the entrance, where there was a collapse over a year ago. The aim is to restore the stone arching using *traditional methods*.

Archive research is the less glamorous side of mining history, but one that is very essential. One can explore and survey sites but you need the archival research to put the flesh on the bones. Ian Matheson has spent many hours transcribing letters to do with the Coniston Mining Company. Anyone who has published material has done the archive bash, the list of source material being an important part of ones presentation.

Other project ideas are needed, whether they be digs, surveys, consolidation, or publication. The society has always had a policy of helping groups and individuals whose activities are in line with its aims and objectives. *To facilitate this a working relationship is needed with landowners and the LDNP.* Endeavours such as digs in sensitive areas just make other people's jobs a lot harder, and it does not improve what standing the Society has in the eyes of people who may matter.

The fact that we can provide support is due to our publications and to the watchful eye of our treasurer. Lakeland's mining Heritage is a good steady seller, and it is hoped that journal 5 will be too, although over a longer term, not forgetting all our other books and leaflets.

Finally, the NAMHO conference, Cumbrian Mining 2004, which CATMHS is hosting at Coniston, is

starting to loom on the horizon, and organisation meetings will commence in January 2003.

Mark Simpson, December 2002.

### **CATSICK?**

During a recent Committee Meeting Peter Fleming was asked to explain how CATMHS got its name. Eric Holland, Alan Westall and Peter were trying to raise funds to buy some land in the Henning Valley area of Furness in order to protect the remains of the old iron mines there. They were asked by the auctioneer for the name of their organisation, and on the spur of the moment replied 'Cumbria Amenity Trust'. The bid failed, but the organisation did not and became widely known as CAT. Much later Peter Blezard proposed that we change the name to something which better describes our activities. It was going to be Cumbria Amenity Trust Mines Exploration Society, until Peter pointed out that this was liable to be shortened to cat mess. Dave Bridge said that it was just as well it was not Cumbria Amenity Trust Society for Industrial Knowledge! Any other suggestions?

### **CAT 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday Publication**

We hope to publish a book to celebrate 25 years of CAT in 2005. It is to be a guide to selected Lake District mining related sites which can be visited either on foot or by car.

The provisional framework is that it non technical and aimed at the general public, soft back, a bit bigger than The Mine Explorer. There would be two sections, one of walks to and around places of interest such as Coniston Coppermines, Glenridding etc, the other of drives and places to visit, such

as Haig Colliery, Honister Slate, Florence Mine etc

For each location there might be a Wainwright style map, a surface photograph and some historic and underground photographs if possible, with a description of the walk and sites of interest, together with a potted history, links to other sites, references for further study, and admission times and prices if appropriate. Ideas are needed for appropriate sites. I will edit it, Dave Sewart will produce it, but we need people to provide the material. We need help with working out and writing the routes, providing photos, drawing the maps etc etc,. Let me know ASAP if you are willing to contribute in any way.

### **Book sales**

As you will know the CATMHS subscription is mainly used to pay for the Newsletter and other communications with the membership. Not much is left to pay for ropes, surveying equipment etc. Our major projects, the digs at Greenside, Hudgillburn and Coniston, which have cost several thousands of pounds for materials, have been financed by sales of our publications. It should be noted here that all the authors have donated their copyright to the Society and have received no remuneration for their work.

By selling our publications through a wholesaler we receive less than one third of the retail price, but if we can sell direct to the bookseller then we do much better. Lots of small bookshops are pleased to deal in this way, the difficulty is in finding them. Local museums, heritage sites and industrial conservation sites often have a shop where our publications could be sold. For example we have sold books at

Kew Bridge Pumping Station in London, and at the Dock Museum in Barrow.

This then is an appeal to you, the members, to go to your local bookshop museum or heritage site and persuade them to stock our publications. Many would take 2 or 3 of each of our products on a sale or return basis if asked. Of course if they would pay cash up front that would be even better.

A copy of our current book list is enclosed with this Newsletter. There are a number of ways in which sales could be arranged, using the book list as a basis. Probably the easiest would be for the Society to fill the order by sending books direct to the shop requesting them, either on sale or return or pay on receipt, but they could equally be sent to the member arranging the order to deliver. We could also supply individuals with specimen copies as samples, or with quantities of publications for direct sale. If you can, please help.

### **Membership**

#### **Subscriptions are now overdue.**

If you have not yet renewed then you will find a reminder form with this issue. Please complete and post the renewal form without delay.

#### **New Members:**

We would like to welcome the following new members

Noel Wood  
Abbot's Croft  
Abbey Road  
St Bees, CA27 0EG

W.D. Bareham  
563 Davidson Road  
Croydon

Surrey CR0 6DU,  
W.D. Bareham's particular interest is in slate quarries, especially in North Wales.

Mick Waplington  
31 Springfield Road  
Ulverston  
Cumbria LA17 0EQ

Mick is a teacher. He worked at Thurston Outdoor Education Centre at Coniston for many years. He is a keen canoeist, and caver.

Anne Strange  
Sea View Cottages  
Baycliff, Nr Ulverston  
LA12 9GRL

Anne has been on a couple of our meets recently. She earns her living as a trail guide and is a member of the Furness Rescue Team

Maureen Fleming  
Yewdale Bridge  
Coniston  
Cumbria LA21 8EF

Maureen is a retired teacher with interests in local history and preservation. Her family go way back and she has lived in Coniston all her life. She is a mine of information on local history and farming matters.

#### **Change of address:**

##### **Mark Waite**

Pen Pentre, Aberangel  
Machynlleth  
Powys, SY20 9ND  
Phone 01650 511720

#### **Donations**

Thanks to the following members who included a donation to the society:

John Knight  
Stephen Moreton  
W J D Parkhouse  
Richard Shaw  
John Brown



## **News**

### **Another collapse at Coniston**

Early in October Roy Garner, with some members of the Coniston Rescue Team, discovered a recent collapse in Taylors Level at Coniston. Roy had visited the area two weeks earlier and found it to be intact, so the fall had occurred very recently, perhaps as a consequence of the recent very dry weather, perhaps not.

They had gone into Taylors Level with the intention of making a through trip, abseiling down from the hole in the floor of Taylors which is pictured on the front cover of Mine Explorer 2 and exiting via Deep Level. In 1983 CAT dug into Taylors Level and secured two internal blockages with oil drums. In between them Roy Garner's party found that a large area of floor, which had been banked up with spoil, had dropped away into the depths, leaving an impassable gap.

They made their way back out and walked round to Deep Level. Years ago LMQT, led by Roy Garner, carried out a long term dig which eventually gave access to the flooded stopes beneath the Red Dell workings. Making their way through this dig, an unpleasant and awkward crawl quite unlike our recent spacious structure in Grey Crag Level, they found that the collapse material had completely blocked the way on at a point where the rock cut tunnel enters the open stopes. Roy estimates there to be some hundreds of tons of material, making what he described as an airtight seal.

### **NAMHO Conference 2004**

CATMHS has been asked to host this conference which takes place in less than two years time, on the weekend

23rd to the 25th July 2004. It has been decided to base it at Coniston, because there is a wealth of local mining interest, and also the John Ruskin Museum is in the village. There is plenty of catering and accommodation, four good pubs close by and plenty more round about, easy transport and plenty of parking. The conference base will be John Ruskin School

There will be a series of organisational meetings to plan and organise the event. The first is at the BMSC hut at Coniston on Friday March 17<sup>th</sup>, but the time and venue of future meetings will be arranged in consultation with those wishing to attend

We need people to come forward to help both with planning and during the event. There will be opportunities to assist in all sorts of ways, so please do not hesitate to come forward. Contact either Sheila Barker or Mark Simpson. Their contact details are on the back cover of this newsletter.

### **Greenside Mine Tip**

From the Lake District National Park Authority National Park Newsletter, Autumn 2003:

'Stabilisation of one of two tailing dams at Greenside Mine, Glenridding is nearing completion, having made excellent progress this summer. The mine closed in 1958. Rainwater caused the spoil heaps, which are scheduled ancient monuments, to become waterlogged and unstable. A £825,000 contract to cap them and introduce a new drainage system also included revetment work along Swart Beck. A consistently high quality of work was necessary to avoid the risk of environmental pollution. Protecting the historic importance of the site was also

key for this project. Work to stabilise the second tailings dam should take place next year after funding negotiations are completed.'

#### **M.O.L.E.S. Newsletters**

Following our recent correspondence regarding the Greenside Dig Ian Tyler has donated a collection of 16 MOLES Newsletters for our library. The set is not quite complete, but runs from MOLES Newsletter No 2 of December 1991 to that of Spring 2001.

#### **Nenthead Admission Charges**

Further to the report in the last Newsletter that the North Pennines Heritage Trust are to impose a small charge for visiting their site, Ian Forbes has written to enquire whether they automatically become liable for the safety of the person taking the fee. The answer is that the charge is for permission to walk over the ground, and not for admission to the mines.

#### **(Greenburn) Project hits pinnacle of success.**

From the Westmorland Gazette, Dec 20<sup>th</sup> 2002:

Extensive work to save an historic Lakeland copper mine from deterioration has won acclaim for the National Trust.

The dry stone walling association of Great Britain has presented a Pinnacle Award to master craftsman Andrew Loudon, of Coniston, for his restoration work at Greenburn Copper mine under the direction of the Trust's archaeologist Robert Maxwell.

He was commissioned by the Trust to make safe large sections of dry stone wall on buildings and other structures – including the 32 feet diameter waterwheel pit at the Little Langdale site, which English Heritage is considering for possible Scheduled Ancient Monument status.

'Although the Lake District has many mining sites this one is particularly important because of the range of structures which have survived' said the Trust's regional committee chairman, Andrew Leeming 'However the site was deteriorating rapidly and it was important to get this work done – and to a high standard – to ensure that what remains can be preserved for the future.'

Dry Stone Walling Association chairman Paul Webley said 'All the work has been completed to a very

high standard and we had no hesitation in recommending the award.' The Trust's Coniston and Little Langdale



property manager Jim Loxham explained that the mine's remains were historically important because they showed a good range of buildings and other components which revealed how copper was mined and processed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. In particular, they also show how water power was used in the processing of the copper ore. Mr Loxham said that archaeologists visited the site back in 1998 and recognised its value in clearly showing how the work of extracting copper ore was done.

The Trust funded a £6,000 archaeological survey before securing more than £20,000 Heritage lottery funds for the consolidation work. However, although the finances were in place for 2001, the work had to be shelved because of the foot and mouth crisis.

'I am delighted about the award' he said 'It raises awareness of the importance of industrial archaeology. The Lake District is a beautiful place but we need to remember that it was a major hive of industrial activity' he added 'We chose a contractor known for his very high standards who worked under the supervision of our own archaeologist, and the net result has been recognised by the Dry Stone Wall Association as an outstanding piece of work.'

National Trust staff, assisted by volunteers, made safe the ruins of the few remaining buildings whilst also improving access around the site. An information leaflet explaining the history of the mine is expected to be available next year.

For a report of the CAT Boxing Day Meet, which visited the Greenburn Mine site see page 16.

## **The Development of the Mid-Cumberland Mine**

CATS has been gifted documents covering the development of this mine, better known as the Haygill Mine, from January 1870 to late 1872. These are: the monthly Reports to the Shareholders from the mine manager, initially John and then his son William Vercoe; the monthly claims for money expended and the Bills supporting these financial claims; and other intermediate letters to the agent. Additionally there are two outlying documents: one from 1868 stating the firm decision of the North British Colour Works to rely on the view of its own expert on the quality of barytes supplied; and the other from 1875 covering the suspension of dealing in shares.

Work began in November 2002 on the transcription of the letters (1870 is nearly complete) into electronic documents, and this will be followed by the transcription of the bills. The correspondence is one-sided and must be incomplete, for example the death of John Vercoe is only mentioned in a letter some months after the event, but provides a detailed history of the day-to-day ups and downs of work – the cutting of new shafts and levels, decisions on the directions of ends, the assignment of men to the different areas and so on. 1870 includes the cutting of Deep Level and the Deer Hill Shaft.

Life was definitely lived at a different pace then, as in the following extract from a letter dated 11 June 1870 (the second letter to be sent that day):

*"You will observe a Bill from Joseph Hall of Wigton which came in since my Father died and on referring to the Cost Book I find no Coals charged*

*from March 1867 to May 1869 over two years. I have the Way Bills and find it correct except the alteration I have made. I do not know why he kept the Bill so long from us."*

But putative mine managers clearly underwent a previous version of the training provided to government spin-doctors now. The quality of the ore being worked is always excellent or about to be excellent - until the end of the month, when the ground was harder than expected or the weather worse.

Lesley Aird  
31 Dec 2002

### **The Evaluation and Selection of Industrial Monuments for Statutory Protection. Or "Déjà vu" all over again!**

Whilst looking through the Minutes of past AGM's on Boxing Day (distant cries of "you want to get out more" "doesn't he know Peter always has a meet on Boxing Day"), I came across the first reference to the above subject when Sheila Barker reported much correspondence with English Heritage to the AGM in 1993.

Just to remind those members in the know and bring to the attention of new members, under the above title English Heritage is carrying out an investigation, evaluation, selection, consultation and will finally make recommendations to the Secretary of State for the protection of industrial sites and equipment. Much of the work has been completed for instance lead, coal, tin, copper, iron and steel and stone quarrying. The next category to be covered is entitled "**Underground Extractive Features**", which will be

of interest to many members. Step 1 of the process is comprised of "**A description of the industry or industries**" to include the main stages of development, the chronology, regional diversity, components and existing records. At this stage individuals known to have information and expertise are also identified and then included in the consultation on the Step 1 report.

There may be considerable differences of view among Members about the desirability of English Heritage being involved in underground areas but since they *are* going to be, the more input we have collectively and individually the better.

Sheila Barker, Secretary (address details on the back of the Newsletter), co-ordinates contact with English Heritage, members wishing to detail particular features they believe worthy of investigation or who claim particular expertise should advise her so she can pass on the information.

Having to hand the latest Step 1 on the Chemical Industry (on CD) I must say that I'm very impressed with the detailed summary of all the chemical processes and buildings and plant that go with them, if anyone is interested in any of the other Step 1 reports contact Sheila for details of how to get them from English Heritage.

John Aird.

## **CATMHS Insurance, What it Covers and Why it's Important**

### **Synopsis of Cover**

Limit of Liability    £2 million per incident.

The policy indemnifies you, your club, its officers and members, against costs arising from *injury or damage to other persons and/or their property caused through your negligence whilst undertaking sport caving, exploration, scientific research and related activities*. The cover is wide-ranging and includes libel and slander actions and professional indemnity. Cover applies both to **members as individuals and when taking part in meets**. The policy does not cover the geographical areas of the USA or Canada

**Why does this matter** you may well ask, surely no member of CATMHS (or a member of the public) is going to sue, because of an accident at a meet (and anyway there's never been one). Accidents can always happen and attitudes to injury and damage have changed *considerably in recent years*, there is much greater tendency to look for someone to blame which has been reinforced by changes to the regulation of the legal profession so that very large financial rewards can result from the successful pursuit of claims. Taking a grim and unpleasant view (I'm the Treasurer, I'm supposed to) it won't even be the CATMHS member suing, it will their heirs or executors and whether they do or not will be decided by your wealth. If you are penniless or better still deep in debt none of this is of any interest, no one will bother suing you (the lawyers will simply move on to the Committee) but if you own your home the situation could be very different.

### **Why the Sudden Interest**

ITCS (It's The Cost Stupid)

Following the terrorist attacks in the USA last year insurance cover has become both much more expensive and more difficult to obtain. You may feel that, since no significant claims have arisen, this is unreasonable but *insurance companies have been losing money on public liability insurance of this type over a number of years*. In the new harsher climate, they are either simply abandoning this part of the market or raising premiums to a level that guarantees a profit. The result of these changes is that the premium we pay per member has risen from £1.91 last year to £5 this year and may well rise significantly next year.

We are looking into the question of members who pay the premium through each of their club or society memberships but it is **essential for our individual and collective security we retain cover against the unexpected**

**John Aird**

CATMHS Treasurer

### **The CATMHS Library and Archive**

The CATMHS Library and Archive consists of a collection of old books, maps and mine plans augmented by more recent publications which has been built up throughout the existence of the Society. For the last 12 years or so it has been kept by Anton C P Thomas at his house in Barrow in Furness. Anton set aside a room there for the library, with a desk etc., and he provided the CATMHS Library index which is available electronically in a Windows 3.1 programme known as *CARDFILE.EXE*.

Unfortunately Anton is no longer able to provide this facility, and the archive

has had to be moved. This was carried out with, Anton's help, on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January by Peter Fleming, Mike Mitchell and Ian Matheson, using a hired Transit van. It comprises about fifteen boxes of books and papers together with a map chest, a glass fronted bookcase and a metal filing cabinet. It is too big to be housed at the Ruskin Museum in Coniston, but the curator has very kindly allowed us temporary storage in an adjacent building, where it is safe for the time being.

Our priorities are: First, to provide suitable and safe storage, secondly, to keep the collection intact, and thirdly, to keep it accessible for reference by members and perhaps by the general public. To this end we are having discussions with another local specialist library.

Ian Matheson.

#### **The Mine Explorer Volume Five, Revue by the CIHS:**

This publication has been a long time in coming, volume four was published in 1994, but the wait has been worthwhile. The publication consists of 18 papers. These are all well illustrated with black and white photographs, line drawings and maps. The articles are split between those that are pure research, for example the first article The German Copper Mines at Coniston by Peter Fleming, which looks at the documentary sources for the German miners involvement at Coniston and tries to link this to what can be seen today in the area. Other subjects covered are the Letters of John Barratt, Haweswater aqueduct and the Mardale tunnel and Furness mine and furnace proprietors. This last article is a most useful list of people

who were associated with mining and processing in the Furness area with a list of references for each person.

The Other articles deal with what CAT (Cumbria Amenity Trust) is best known for and that is mine exploration and the conservation of industrial remains. The mines covered include Coniston copper mines, Greenside mine, Coesor slate mine in north Wales Hudgillburn mine, Frog shaft at Nenthead and the Kennecott copper mines in Alaska. All of these articles whilst basically covering what the Trust has physically done on the ground also contain a large amount of information on the history and development of the mines involved.

CAT has been heavily involved with the restoration of the Newlands Furnace for many years and an article by John Helme brings the history of the restoration of the site up to date.

This Journal was a pleasure to read and was very enlightening from both a factual point of view and also as an insight into the activities of CAT members and what they get up to on a weekend. For anyone interested in the industrial history of Cumbria or mining in general the book is a very worthwhile purchase.

Graham Brooks.

#### **Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum Open Day.**

From Ian & Jean Tyler:

Over the last six years we have held an Annual Open Day at the museum and the coming year is no exception. We will be opening our doors for the new season on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2003. Once again the museum will have been improved and our new acquisitions will

surely make us the finest Mining & Quarrying Museum in the north of England.

The underground experience has now been extended and completed – bring your lamp if you wish to explore! Our book range, both new and second hand, is now in excess of 800 titles. Ian Tylers latest book, “Carrock and the mines of the Blencathra massif”, may also be available on the day.

Note – We will be selling all our remaining stock of underground gear for half price. This includes boots, krabs, fur suits, tackle bags, wet suit gear!!!!

We are proud to be able to open our doors to like minded people who really appreciate our mining heritage, and the day is FREE, apart from the raffle. In the past we have attracted around 200 mine mad people, so come along and have a great day. We look forward to seeing you

Ian & Jean Tyler

*This is always a good event, well worth going along if you can. Ed.*

**Another new Book from Ian Tyler!  
The Gunpowder Mills of Cumbria.**

The following is taken from his advertising flyer:

‘This is the fascinating history of the gunpowder mills which operated from 1797 to 1937 in Cumbria, an industry which flourished and prospered in the hidden backwaters and valleys for nearly 150 years.

Embracing the illicit slave trade, infamously referred to as the Trade Triangle until an Act of Parliament

sought to prevent this, the trade ties with Africa and America had become well established and continued to flourish. The western ports of Sunderland Point, Lancaster, Glasson Dock, Milnthorpe, Arnside and Greenodd, along with the great port of Liverpool, all played their part, and it was from these places that the powder was shipped all over the country and to distant shores. Later on the canal and railway systems became the major transport routes and the shipping trade gradually diminished.

But it was the brave men women and children who are the heroes of our story, arriving at work and not knowing whether they would survive the day! People were killed, mutilated and burnt, but many worked all their lives at this dangerous craft. As they toiled the long hours away they learned to live with the attendant dangers and the dread of the first crack of a thunderstorm or the first flash of lit powder. The industry employed many hundreds of people, both directly and indirectly, but the death toll of 102 men and boys, plus the dozens of mutilated and disfigured, was a high proportion of these very small communities. This is the story of a little known industry, which thrived in the Cumbrian villages of Elterwater, Sedgewick, Gatebeck, Lowwood, and Blackbeck.’

The book is soft backed, 296pp with over 200 photographs, plans and illustrations, and costs £17.99 from Blue rock Publications, Threlkeld Quarry & Mining Museum, Keswick, CA12 4TT. (Post & packing £2.01, cheques to Threlkeld Museum Shop)

## Meets

Your activities are news. Please send in information about your doings in Wales, Cornwall, Mexico or wherever!

### *Forthcoming Meets*

A new Meets List will be included with the May Newsletter. To bridge the gap between the final meet on the last list, the mines of Sleil Gill, in Arken-garthdale please note the following two meets:

***27<sup>th</sup> April – an appraisal of Goldscope mine in the Newlands Valley. Meet leader Gerry Goldsborough etc (IM Phoned & asked him 24.11.02)***

It has been suggested that CAT's next big project should be to explore, survey and document the mines at Goldscope, which are possibly the oldest and certainly the most historic mines still in existence in the Lake District. This meet is to examine the mine and it's associated structures, both above and below ground, in order to review what is known and to determine how to proceed. Something for everyone! Grade Easy/diff.

***18<sup>th</sup> May – A visit to the Caudal Slate mines above Brotherswater. Meet Leader Mark Simpson*** Following his article about this mine in Journal 5. Mark Simpson has offered to share his knowledge by leading a meet to explore the site.

### **Torver Copper Mine!**

There are documentary references to a copper mine at Torver. John Barratt, in a letter to John Taylor, dated 17<sup>th</sup> February 1825, writes "The level at Torver is driven about 8 fathoms, about 3 fathoms more to drive to cut the lode." There is a reference to three nines at 'Torverwei' in David Davies letters of 1684, see Peter Fleming's article in Journal 5, The German Copper Miners at Coniston.

Peter, with others, has spent a considerable amount of time systematically combing the area to try to locate these workings.

It is unlikely that they are as high up as Dow Crag, where traces of copper ore can sometimes be seen in the bed of Easy and Great Gulley.

There are numerous slate workings on Broughton Moor, and an iron mine worked away by subsequent quarry workings. There are some surface workings on the Coniston Limestone, but none show signs of copper. Mike Davies Sheil mentions copper mines on Broughton Moor, but again a visit to the sites proved fruitless. A final attempt to locate these enigmatic mines was to search the bed of Torver Beck just above the main road, where it runs through dense woodland. This too proved fruitless, but Peter twisted his knee on the slippery rocks, which limited his activities for some considerable time.

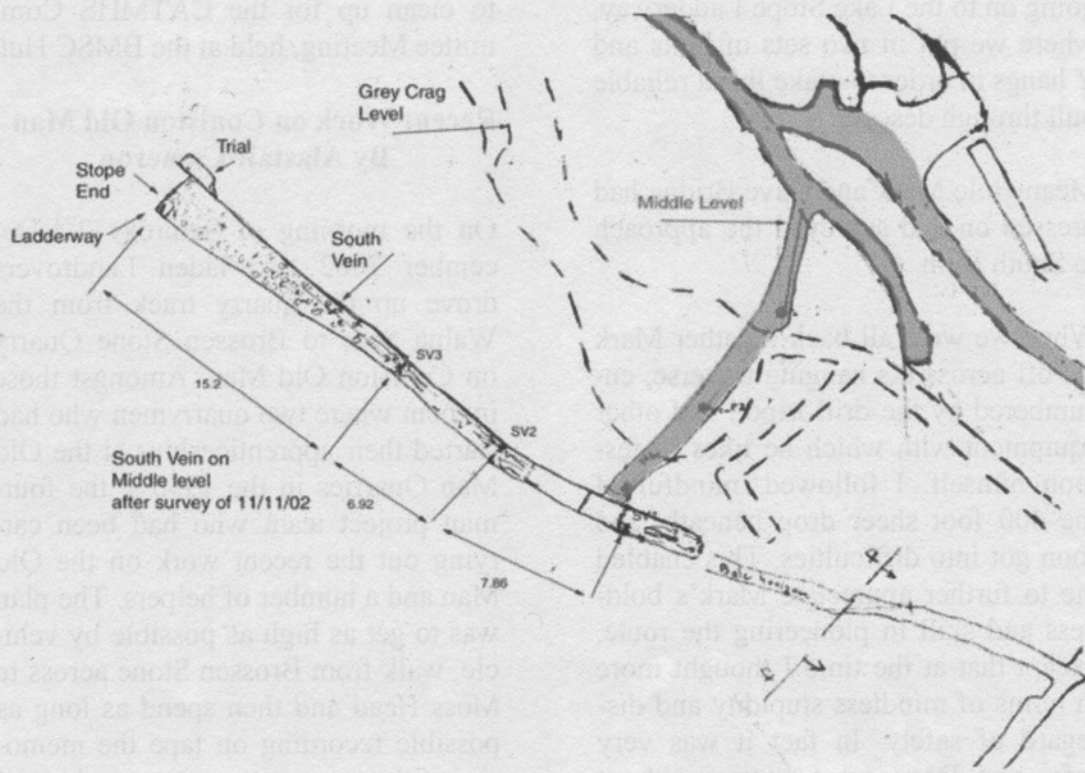
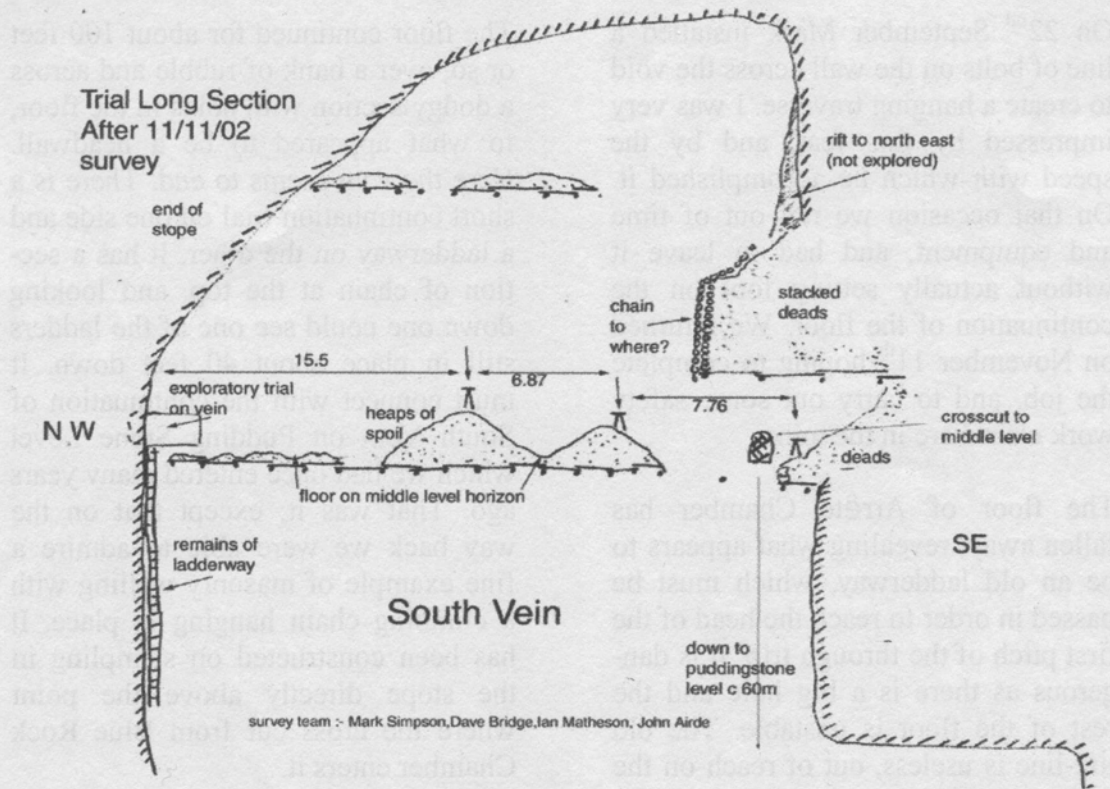
It seems strange that with such strong documentary evidence nothing can be found of these small copper mines. One can only assume that they have either become completely buried or have been worked away by subsequent slate quarrying. Still – if anyone has any ideas .....

### **Exploration in Middle Level at Coniston**

As reported by Mark Simpson in the last Newsletter, work was started by Mark, John Aird and myself to investigate the South Vein on the Middle Level horizon. A short cross cut intersects the vein not far from Blue Rock Chamber. At this point the vein is completely stoped out, right down to Deep Level some 400 feet below and upwards as far as one can see. There is



**Section and plan of new ground in South Vein, Middle Level horizon.  
Drawn by Mark Simpson.**



a false floor leading northwards, but a twenty foot section has fallen out, leaving a void.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September Mark installed a line of bolts on the wall across the void to create a hanging traverse. I was very impressed by this feat, and by the speed with which he accomplished it. On that occasion we ran out of time and equipment, and had to leave it without actually setting foot on the continuation of the floor. We returned on November 11<sup>th</sup> hoping to complete the job, and to carry out some safety work elsewhere in the mine.

The floor of Arrête Chamber has fallen away, revealing what appears to be an old ladderway, which must be passed in order to reach the head of the first pitch of the through trip. It is dangerous as there is a big hole and the rest of the floor is unstable. The old life-line is useless, out of reach on the wall above. John Aird and I installed a new lifeline across this area before going on to the Lake Stope Ladderway, where we put in two sets of bolts and Y hangs in order to make this a reliable pull through descent.

Meanwhile Mark and Dave Bridge had pressed on and surveyed the approach to South Vein.

When we were all back together Mark set off across his hanging traverse, encumbered by the drill tripod and other equipment with which he likes to festoon himself. I followed, mindful of the 400 foot sheer drop beneath, and soon got into difficulties. This enabled me to further appreciate Mark's boldness and skill in pioneering the route, except that at the time I thought more in terms of mindless stupidity and disregard of safety. In fact it was very safe, and Dave went across without making it look too difficult, so after

readjusting the length of my cows tail I had another go and eventually succeeded.

The floor continued for about 100 feet or so, over a bank of rubble and across a dodgy section with holes in the floor, to what appeared to be a headwall. Here the vein seems to end. There is a short continuation trail on one side and a ladderway on the other. It has a section of chain at the top, and looking down one could see one of the ladders still in place about 40 feet down. It must connect with the continuation of South Vein on Pudding Stone Level which we had once entered many years ago. That was it, except that on the way back we were able to admire a fine example of masonry walling with a climbing chain hanging in place. It has been constructed on stempling in the stope directly above the point where the cross cut from Blue Rock Chamber enters it.

We got out just after dark, but in time to clean up for the CATMHS Committee Meeting, held at the BMSC Hut.

### **Recent Work on Coniston Old Man By Alastair Cameron**

On the morning of Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2002 two laden Landrovers drove up the quarry track from the Walna Scar to Brossen Stone Quarry on Coniston Old Man. Amongst those in them were two quarrymen who had started their apprenticeships at the Old Man Quarries in the 1950's, the four-man project team who had been carrying out the recent work on the Old Man and a number of helpers. The plan was to get as high as possible by vehicle, walk from Brossen Stone across to Moss Head and then spend as long as possible recording on tape the memories of the two more senior members of the group.

Having parked the vehicles at Brossen we spent four intensely interesting hours on the mountain after which we returned to the village and started to transcribe the contents of the tapes. Recording the memories of the past are just one of several different aspects of work going on in the village at the moment to get a better understanding of the history of Coniston's traditional industries such as slate working and farming. Fortunately much of this information is still available in the backs of the minds of more senior Coniston people and, on the ground, on the mountain itself. But it is a huge task to record it and it is so important not to delay at all. Remains have a habit of disappearing and in a few years many of those who we need to interview will sadly no longer be around.

Work on the Old Man has been going on for most of the year. The project team currently consists of Angus Bailie from Coniston, Jane Moreland of CAT, Maureen Fleming, one of Coniston's leading historians and myself. The main reason for the heightened activity has been the interest shown by English Heritage and also by the fact that we continue to acquire extensive archive material. Agreement has now been reached with the Ruskin Museum to incorporate the material into the Village Archives as the 'Brownlee Collection'. A lot of new data has been obtained and some historic dates have had to be re-set. We now believe that some of the old slate working remains on the north-east shoulder of the Old Man are pre-sixteenth century and, remarkably, have survived more or less intact until today. There are some people, though, who would much rather have them obliterated altogether and this was brought home to us very clearly on the night of Saturday November 2nd.

The Friends of the Lake District is an organisation I know very little about. I was aware they had been active in the 1960's but I had assumed they had 'died out'. So I was quite surprised when my co-author and I were invited to give them a talk on the Coniston Slate Industry at their annual conference weekend at Monk Coniston Hall.

They seemed a decent enough bunch but, as far as we could make out, none of them had been born and bred in the Lakes although they certainly knew the history of the area well. We gave them the usual slide presentation and finished by explaining the plans of English Heritage to schedule some of the old workings as ancient monuments. This was clearly too much for one elderly member of the audience who couldn't contain himself. He exploded with rage at how ridiculous it was to consider them ancient monuments when all they were in fact were eyesores which should be removed and used to fill the deep pit at Tranearth Quarry above Torver. I suggested as tactfully as possible that this was a decision for the community of Coniston to make rather than a group of visitors. Unfortunately this didn't seem to go down well or help the situation.

There is still a lot to do on the Old Man and also within the village to build up a picture of the history of the industry. On 14<sup>th</sup> December the project team was joined by a CAT meet for a morning's walk. As it turned out, the higher parts of the Old Man had become quite wintry that morning and so the plan to go up to Spion Kop and Scald Cop were abandoned for Low Moss Head. On the way we paused on Fisher Bank to look at the small tunnel portal beside the track. This has been a puzzle to us for many years but we had never really checked the tunnel out

carefully. So the tunnel structure was checked and we counted at least 7 extensions made to it over the years. A significant find which the project team has been brain-storming since.

Until the Victorians started to 'mine' slate on the mountain the main way of extraction was from cave workings. By 1780 much of the slate taken from the North East shoulder was from two enormous cave workings, one at Light Hole and one much higher up at Scald Cop. Sometime in the 1790's the roof of the Scald Cop cave working collapsed. This must have been a colossal incident, even by today's standards, and resulted in the working floor being completely covered. It would have been immediately very evident from the village that there had been an accident; the resulting pit can be clearly seen from the village, even today.

Until recently we have had little information of the demise of the Light Hole cave working. I had always assumed it had suffered from the same fate as Scald Cop. But it now seems this is not the case. It was allowed to collapse intentionally after a set of pillars was robbed in the 1950's. The resulting pit, with the cables of the Moss Head flight hanging across is all that now remains.

As well as the work of the project team on the mountain and in the village another small group has been making a significant contribution to the knowledge of slate working. During the 1990's Roger Ramsden and Martin Carter had built up quite a reputation in their ability to dig open old slate working tunnel entrances. Their exploits at Honister and Yew Crag are now legendary. It was during that decade that they turned their attention to opening the blocked level entrances on the Old Man. The three entrances of

real interest were Low Bank, Saddlestone and the high Low Water levels and Roger and Martin wasted no time getting stuck in.

It's great to see that Roger's enthusiasm still hasn't waned. On 23<sup>rd</sup> August last year Jane Moreland and I took Ken Robinson of *English Heritage* and also John Hodgson from the National Park onto the Old Man. By the end of the day it was very clear that English Heritage were very keen to schedule part of the mountain as an ancient monument. Ken warned us that we had no more than a year to complete all digging operations and so, the same evening, I contacted Roger. Amazingly, he and his friend Adrian went straight back to the Old Man the following morning, to re-start work at the Low Water site.

We can't leave the subject of the Old Man without mentioning the quarry's engineer, Bert Smith. We have recently taped the life story of his widow who, at the age of 90, still lives in Coniston. Bert started work at the quarries soon after completing his apprenticeship in 1938. Eventually he became responsible for the operation of the Coppermines compressor and the equipment in 'The Smithy' below Smithy Bank on the Old Man. He also had to attend to all the machinery on the quarry banks and within the closeheads when they broke down (which happened frequently). Despite a demanding workload he was well thought after by the quarrymen and managed to keep the site running, often against all odds.

Bert's other skill was as a craftsman builder of violins. The instruments he produced were of such high quality that, eventually, he decided to quit his job on the Old Man and concentrate on making violins. Clearly this was his forte and he converted the loft in his

house to a workshop, travelled to the Alps to purchase specialist wood and produced instruments which were much in demand. He never made more than four instruments a year although he could have sold many more. Sadly none of Bert's violins are now in Coniston although there are moves to return two from their current location at The Abbott Hall, Kendal.

Bert died in 1973 and, while we were interviewing his widow, a scrap of a letter came to light. It read as follows:

*Dear Mrs Smith*

*I was heartbroken to learn of your dear husband's death. I shall never forget the wonderful visit I had with him in his workshop in Coniston. Though it was in the glare of television lights I was so absorbed and fascinated in his work that I believe we were both oblivious of the BBC.*

*Please accept my deepest sympathy.*

*Yehudi Menuin.*

Alastair Cameron.

### **Boxing Day Meet, December 2002.**

There was a good turn out for this meet despite a forecast of very wet and windy weather:

ML Peter Fleming

Ian & Meg Matheson

Mike & Barbara Mitchell

Max Dobie & Joanne Casson

Mark Simpson & Healenor

Don Borthwick & Sheila Barker

Mark Scott & Anne Strange

Dave Robson, Clive Barrow, Alan Westall, Jane Moreland and friend, Maureen Fleming.

We were lucky, the early morning rain soon cleared to give a very mild and fairly dry day. Despite the lack of rain Barbara Mitchell insisted on keeping her pink umbrella up throughout! We started off through the tunnel leading into Black Hole Quarry and out via the

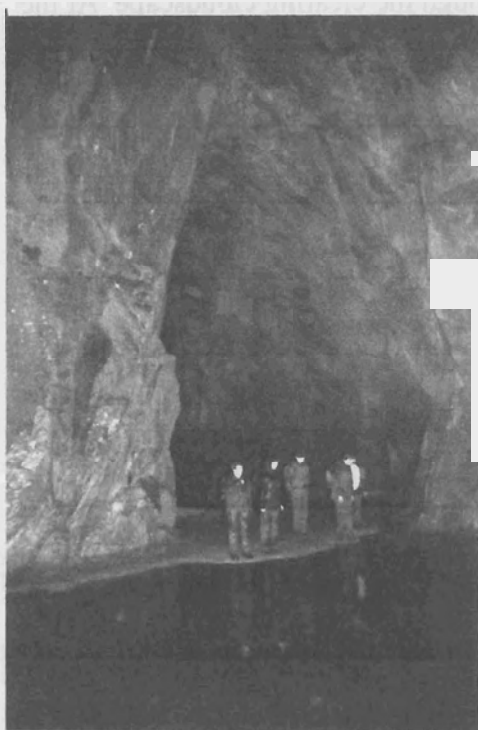
Cathedral. We were pleased to see three goldfish in the pool inside the Cathedral, before enjoying a pleasant walk up Greenburn, with superb views through the clearing cloudscape. At the mine site we studied extracts from the excellent the English Heritage survey, brought by PF. and admired the conservation/restoration work of the mine structures, which won a heritage award. In general it has been very well done, many of the ruins have had their wall tops repaired and stabilised with nicely built stone walling. We were a little disappointed by the bright cement capping to office building. It could have been darkened, or better still capped with stone work. We were impressed by the repair of the big water-wheel pit. The Old Engine Shaft Wheel Pit at Coniston would benefit by similar treatment. We were surprised that the magnificent stone precipitation tanks, which have partially collapsed, had not been included in the conservation work

Lunch at the site was considerably enhanced by Mark Scott's bottle of Glen Ord malt whisky, which he generously shared with everyone.

On the way back Alan Westall suggested we looked for the horse gin in the slate quarries and set off in search of it. The rest of the team decided to stay put until he returned. The first attempt was unsuccessful, but a further search located it, and also some quite spectacular slate workings. There is a fine horse gin built into a slope, with the lower part of the circle supported by a masonry wall. This needs minor repairs, which will be the focus of an evening meet next May or June. Most people then made the now traditional Boxing Day visit to the Three Shires Inn, which we were fortunate to reach just before 3.00pm closing time.

Ian Matheson.

**The Boxing Day Meet at Greenburn.  
Photos by Mark Simpson**



Cathedral Cavern, Little Langdale.



Wheelpit, Greenburn Mine.



Lunchbreak at the mine buildings.



Enjoying a little of Mark's whisky!



## **Inside the Hanging Gardens of Arcata**

From an interview with Steve Sillett, published in the New Scientist, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2002. Extracts re-produced by permission of the New Scientist.

**[www.NewScientist.com](http://www.NewScientist.com)**

Contributed by John Aird.

Steve Sillett is no extreme sportsman. He's a passionate biologist who climbs and studies the world's tallest, oldest and largest living organisms – 2000 year old giant redwoods in California. Sillett holds the world record for the highest bow and arrow shot into a tree and has starred in an IMAX movie about California's wild adventurers.

"I'm totally in love with the redwoods. A part of it is very spiritual. It's one of the things I cherish most about my job. You have these epiphanies when you completely lose sight of yourself and become part of something that is much greater.

It mostly happens when I'm out on traverses between trees. I'm out in the middle, hanging on a little rope, and I'm pulling myself across, and all of a sudden there's this complete silence of the mind. There's this awareness of where you are, 90 meters up, in this breathing living forest of ancient beings.

*(I have had a similar silence of the mind when doing a traverse with Mark Simpson 90 meters down, wondering if the hidden floor above is going to fall on my head! Ed)*

To climb these 110 meter tall trees you fire a rubber tipped arrow from a powerful hunting bow. The arrow is connected to a fishing reel, and must land way up in the crown, over something sturdy, usually a big old branch. A lot

of the time you cannot find anything safe below 75 meters, so you really have to launch these arrows. And then, using the fishing line, you pull up ropes and climb up to the branch you shot over.

*(I seem to recall hearing of a similar technique being used by certain CAT members, trying to reach a rusty cable hanging in one of the closeheads on Coniston Old Man. On that occasion I understand that the bow and arrow worked, but the joining knots did not! Ed.)*

As far as I know I hold the record for a tree entry bow and arrow shot. It was this big old redwood named Prometheus. The only thing I trusted was a branch nearly 90 meters up, near the top. I had to get to that branch before I could climb the tree, and eventually I did.

Once I was up a tree in January. I got up about 109 meters and all of a sudden there were gale force winds with horizontal sleet, freezing rain and lightening. The whole tree, which has 148 trunks, started bucking wildly in the wind, and all the trunks were moving independently!

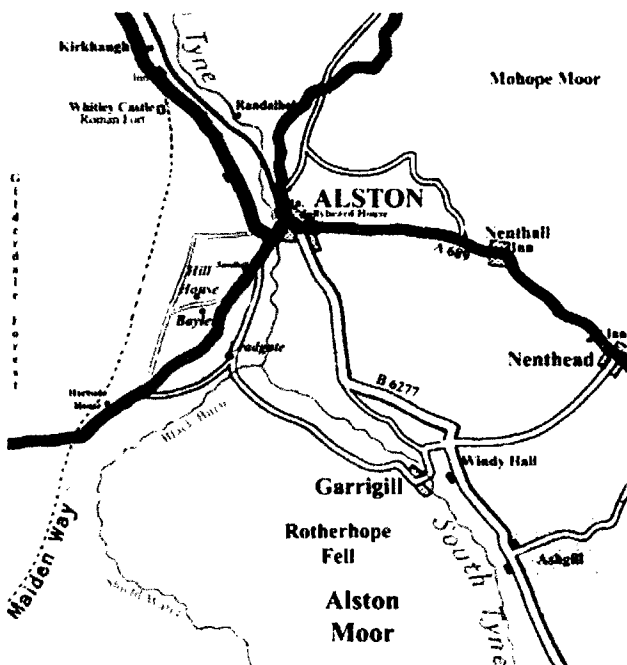
I was filmed by an IMAX crew climbing the world's second largest tree, a giant sequoia, and then descending into a cave in the heart of the tree. It was incredible! You go into the darkness and the temperature starts dropping. The deeper you go the cooler and darker it is. You get about 25 meters down and turn on your headlamp, and you look around at the walls of this chamber, and all the wood is rotten and covered with fungal mycelia. It's cool and dank and scary. You never know what could break off and fall from above.

*(Sounds familiar! Ed)*

## THE STAGG FAMILY

### Introduction

The following is a brief account of the Stagg family who worked for the Governor and Company for Smelting down Lead with Pit Coal and Sea Coal. This company has become more commonly known as the 'London Lead Company' (although not by the Company itself), and in the following text will be referred to by this name or merely as the 'company'. A 'Court of Assistants' ran the company that was elected each year by the shareholders. The Court Minutes are referred to frequently in the text and can be seen at Northumberland County Record office (reference NRO 3410). They were deposited by the Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers, to whom I must express my thanks for giving me permission to quote from these minute books. Similarly my thanks must go to the family of Arthur Raistrick for allowing me to use references from his publications.



## The Stagg Family

The influence of the Stagg family on the London Lead Company can not be underestimated, members of the family worked for the company from approximately 1775 until 1891. The first of the Stagg family to have worked for the company (as far as is known) was Joshua Stagg Senior. He worked as a miner in Teesdale in 1775 and was later promoted to mine agent in Upper Teesdale. The minutes of the Lead Company of 29th April 1797 show that his salary was raised £5 to £40 per year. In 1810 his role was expanded and he was instructed to "give the whole of his attention to the mining in Teesdale." For this he was to receive a salary of £100. In March 1812 this was confirmed and his salary was increased to £120 per year. Joshua died at Romaldkirk aged 67 years on 26th January 1817. Joshua was the son of Joshua Stagg of Garrigill, on 10th April 1779 he married Susannah Currah, at Alston.

Their children were:

Jane Stagg baptised 20th March 1774.

John Stagg baptised 21st March 1782 he died at Darlington on 29th April 1844, he had been a Timber and Lead merchant at Stockton on Tees.

Joshua Stagg junior born 16th May 1783, baptised 16th May 1784 at Garrigill.

Robert Stagg baptised 6th August 1786 at Middleton in Teesdale, who was buried at Egglestone 11th July 1813 aged 27 years.

Ruth Stagg baptised 2nd May 1790 at Egglestone, and buried 13th July 1790 at Middleton in Teesdale.

Susannah was buried at Middleton on 11th December 1790, Joshua remarried on 4th August 1793 at Middleton, to Dorothy Firbank, she died in 1808 being buried at Egglestone on 17th October 1808.



Joshua Stagg Junior also worked for the Lead Company, he worked at Egglestone Mill the minutes of 29th April 1801 show he was earning £20 per annum, increased in 1804 to £30. In 1810 the company awarded him an extra £25 for accompanying Robert Stagg to Newcastle, this was to collect the money needed to pay the miners subsistence and wages, which were collected from Ridley & Co. bankers (Robert had taken over the duties of his brother Joseph following his death in 1809). He was also appointed the mill agent at Egglestone; and his salary increased to £80, in 1812 this was further increased to £120 per annum. Joshua Stagg junior died 12th April 1824 at Egglestone aged 40 years. He and his wife Bridget had a son Joshua Currah Stagg, who had been baptised at Egglestone on 10th September 1809.

Joshua Currah Stagg was appointed as Clerk for the Company at Long Marton in Westmorland, on a salary of £502, the company owned Marton House at this time. The minutes of the company recorded on 17th March 1831, "To advance the salaries of John Bell and Joshua Stagg ten pounds each for the past year with an additional increase of ten pounds per annum till the same amounts to £100 a year." This is the last entry that refers to Joshua Currah Stagg, in 1832 he resigned his position with the company<sup>3</sup>. The 1847 "Whites Directory" tells us that he was a Timber Merchant at Stockton on Tees.

Joshua Stagg senior's brother Robert (senior) also worked for the company. He began working for them in 1754; the first reference to Robert in the Court minutes was on Tuesday 29th September 1778. "Resolved that Robert Stagg be appointed agent to the Company's several mines in Yorkshire and Teesdale at the salary of £40 per annum." When the company appointed an agent to any of its works it was customary for the agent to

supply a bond to the company. The bond submitted by Robert Stagg is given below<sup>5</sup>.

**Bond between Robert Stagg, Joshua Stagg the Elder and Joshua Stagg the younger and the Company dated the 1st December 1778**

Know all Men by these present that we Robert Stagg of Garrigillgate, Joshua Stagg the Elder and Joshua Stagg the younger of Howgillsike all in the parish of Garrigill in the County of Cumberland Gentlemen are held and firmly bound to the Governor and Company for the Smelting down of lead with pit coal and sea coal in the sum of Three Hundred Pounds of Good and Lawful Money of Great Britain to be paid to the said Governor and Company or their certain Attorney Successors or Assigns for the true payment where of we bind our selves and each of us our respective heirs executors and administrators and each of them firmly by these presents sealed with our seals dated this first day of December in the Nineteenth year of the reign of our sovereign Lord George the third by the Grace of God of Great Britain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith and so forth and in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy eight.

Whereas the above bounder Robert Stagg is chosen and admitted a Mineral Agent to the said Governor and Company in the North of England The condition of this obligation is such that if the said Robert Stagg do and shall from time to time and at all times hereafter during his continuance in the service of the said governor and Company faithfully and honestly execute and discharge the said service and every other service of the said Governor and Company wherein he is shall or may be employed and faithfully account for all such sums of money as he shall receive or may be intrusted with on behalf of the said

Governor and Company. Then this obligation to be void and of none effect else to be and remain in full force and virtue.

Signed Sealed and Delivered  
(being first duly stamped)

Robert Stagg

in the presence of

Joshua Stagg Elder

Thomas Hall

Joshua Stagg younger

Thomas Friend

His responsibilities were increased in 1781 to include assisting with the care of Egglestone mill, and to assist with the inspections of the companies Derwent mines, but without an increase in salary. The records of the family show that after this appointment he and his family moved to Middleton in Teesdale. His work impressed the Court and in 1782 his salary was increased. "The Court taking into consideration the faithful and diligent service of Robert Stagg their agent at their mines and mills in Yorkshire."

"Resolved that his salary be advanced from £40 to £50 per annum to commence from Midsummer last."

In 1786 his salary was further increased to £100 per annum. The Court, "Having taken into consideration the diligence and assiduity manifested by Robert Stagg in the Company's concerns." He not only carried out work for the company in the North of England but also in other areas that the company had interests, in 1787 he inspected the companies concerns in the Isle of Man, and in 1788 he viewed the mines in Glamorganshire. Robert was also keen to improve the companies' productivity at the smelt mills and to this end he experimented with the use of Air Furnaces, this is recorded in a minute of Thursday 11th December 1788. "The Court having taken into consideration the Experimental operations by Robert Stagg of the Air

Furnace in competition with the Blast Hearth are of opinion that it will be for the interest of this Company to make use of Air Furnaces."

"Resolved that Air Furnaces be erected throughout the Company's works as soon as conveniently may be."

In 1793 in order that Thomas Dodd the companies Chief Mining Agent could employ more time in dealing with mines on Alston Moor, Robert Stagg was given the responsibility of looking after the Weardale mines, as well as his other duties.

In 1795 Robert was promoted to being the, "Superintendent over all the Company's Smelting works and the ore and lead carriers and forwarding the lead from the several mills to Blaydon and Stockton, and also to attend Thomas Hall when he makes the advance pays to the miners, smelters and carriers and to assist him therein." on taking up this post he was to move from Middleton in Teesdale to Alston. Thomas Hall the company cashier resigned his post in 1796 and the minutes of 2nd June 1795 record that, "Robert Stagg be appointed from Ladyday next Cashier and Superintendent over all the Company Smelting works and washing the ore and of the ore and lead carriers and of forwarding the lead from the several mills to Blaydon and Stockton in the room of Thomas Hall."

Robert was to receive £130 per annum, and the company was to provide a house in the neighbourhood of Alston, for the use of the company and for Robert to live in. In 1808 he was suffering from great ill health, in a letter to the company dated 11th May 1808 he refers to this: " ... for I am so weak I am unable to write myself, all I can do is to dictate to my son."<sup>6</sup>

Robert died on 7th June 1808 and was buried at Alston. He had married Rachael Gaskin of

Kirbythore on 29th May 1770 at Milburn Westmorland; his wife died 26th March 1804 aged 54 years. Their children were:

Rachael baptised 17th March 1771 at Garrigill.

Joshua born 21st March 1773, buried 10th November 1773 at Garrigill.

Joseph baptised 2nd October 1774 at Garrigill.

Jane born 15th December 1776, baptised at Garrigill, she married John Elliott of Allendale, at Alston on 17th January 1811, they had a daughter Mary.

Mary born 29th November 1778, baptised at Alston, she died 28th June 1808 at Alston.

Robert born 30th September 1781 at Middleton in Teesdale.

Ruth baptised 11th July 1784 at Middleton in Teesdale.

John baptised 19th November 1786 at Middleton in Teesdale, John was "dumb" and in his will Robert appointed his son Robert and his daughters Jane, Mary, and Ruth as John's guardians.

Joseph Stagg, Robert's son also worked for the Lead Company. The minutes of Thursday the 18th October 1798 tell us that Joseph Stagg was to be appointed to supply in part the place of the late Joseph Watson to take charge of the silver forwarded to Newcastle and to make up the operations monthly, at a salary of £15 per annum. In 1801 his salary was increased to £30. At the age of 28 years he was appointed as acting agent at Acton smelt mill (September 1803), replacing Joshua Watson who had died, up to that time he had been assisting his father. He must have impressed the company as, in August 1804 his post was made permanent, he was to be paid a salary of £60 for taking care of the smelting works, and assisting his father as usual. In October of that year following a letter sent to the Court by his father, it was decided that he was to be paid £75 for the time he had managed Acton mill following

the death of Joshua Watson. His position as Agent at Acton Mill was confirmed, at a salary of £60 per annum, independent of the £30 per annum that he was paid to assist his father, this to commence from Michaelmas 1804

Following the death of his father in 1808 Joseph was appointed to succeed his father on a salary of £200 per year, and a house, as Cashier and Superintendent of all the Company's Smelting works of washing the ore and of the ore and lead carriers and forwarding the lead from the smelting mills to Blaydon.

Joseph unfortunately suffered from ill health and asked the Court for his brother Robert to assist him, in a letter dated 19th October 1887 to Mr Masterman he refers to a request he had made to the company, to employ his brother Robert, the minutes of the company record that on the 13th April 1809 Robert was appointed as agent at Stanhope mill, at a salary of £150. Joseph died 19th November 1809 aged 35 years, he left his wife Ruth (daughter of Joseph Dickinson) whom he had married on 8th May 1806 at Dufton. They had lived at Jollybeard House in Alston, and as well as working for the Lead Company he had a share in a candle making business in Alston. They had two children:

Joseph Dickinson Stagg born 4th March 1807.

Robert Walter Stagg born 23rd January 1809. His wife Ruth was remarried on 23rd April 1811, to Joseph Little of Alston.

The high regard that the company had for him is reflected in the minutes:

"Ordered that the salary of the Company's late cashier Joseph Stagg be paid to his executors to year end 31 December next."

"Resolved that the sum of £100 be presented to Mrs. Stagg widow of Joseph

Stagg the Company's late cashier and mill agent."

Following the death of Joseph his brother Robert was appointed in his place by a resolution of the Court dated 24th May 1810, at the same salary £200, (this was increased to £300, and then in 1812 to £500 per annum.) as his brother Joseph. Joseph Little was appointed to take over Roberts agency at Stanhope Mill. In 1811 Robert was also given the Superintendency of Coanwood colliery. Robert like his father was keen to employ more efficient methods of smelting, and wrote to the Court in a letter dated 26th August 1811, recommending the introduction of Roasting Furnaces, in September the decision was taken to build a Roasting Furnace at Nenthead; this was just the start of many advances in smelting methods that were implemented under his supervision. As well as making great improvements at the smelt mills he also implemented a number of changes at the mines, modernising the dressing floors and changing the methods of working the mines so as to more efficiently use the labour force. Perhaps one of his most important changes was to renegotiate the leases. The original mine leases usually stipulated the number of pickmen that were to work the ground, and in order to retain the lease the company had to employ this number, in large mines such as Rampgill and Smallcleugh mines, which were covered by a number of leases this resulted in a great waste of labour. He managed to have the leases combined, which gave him greater flexibility in the use of his work force. The company regularly showed their appreciation of his work for them, on the 11th November 1813 they awarded him £500, "as a mark of the Courts high approbation of his services in conducting the affairs of the Company."

In 1812 the company decided that he should move from Alston to the company's house at

Stanhope, and that he should set up an office there. In February 1814 Robert Stagg was given responsibility for the Teesdale mines, for which he was to receive an additional £100 per year. He was given this additional responsibility because Thomas Dodd the company's chief agent had asked the Court to relieve him of this post due to his increased age and ill health. At this time the Court also asked Robert to arrange for a house to be built at Nenthead for an agent. In February 1816 Robert was appointed superintendent of the Weardale mines as well as his other responsibilities, due to the worsening health of Thomas Dodd.

Following the death of Thomas Dodd he was appointed General Superintendent of the Company's mines and concerns in the North with the addition to his salary of £100 per annum. Like his brother Joseph, Robert suffered poor health and he was considering resigning his position, the Court sent him an engraved watch, which the minutes of Thursday the 24th October 1816 record, "£17 12s 6d was paid to N. Springal for a Compass watch sent to Mr. Stagg", his health improved and in the winter of 1816 he went to the South of England for the sake of his health, his mining reports during this period being written by Joseph Little and John Millican. Poor health concerned him throughout his life in a letter to the Court in April 1832 he said "I have lately been so tormented with a pain in my back that I am wholly unable, at present to undertake a journey to town although otherwise my health is fully good as usual. The pain I suffered in travelling from Hilton to this place last week demanded all the enduring fortitude I could command although in a chaise and the distance only 25 miles. But as the next bargains will not be let until the month of June, I hope the setting in of warmer weather may sufficiently relieve the rheumatic

affliction, to enable me to meet the Court in the interim should they still desire it."

Despite his own ill health he did not neglect his workmen, in his Michaelmas report of 1816 he expressed his concerns.

"The earnings of the workmen as far as we can yet judge have been exceedingly small the last year in all districts, not I believe exceeding £30 each upon an average of the whole concern and the annexed Bargains are expected to average very little higher but unless an unlooked-for reduction take place in the price of provisions it will not be possible for the men to exist on these wages as a continuing average, indeed the whole of these counties exhibit at present a scene of poverty and want which is most distressing."

The result of this was that the company authorised the supply of corn to the men at cost price, the company paying the cost of transport. In November of 1838 he received a petition from the miners in the Teesdale district requesting that the company supply them with rye, because of the high price of corn; he passed the request on to the Court who agreed to do so. The minutes of 6th December 1838 record:

"Mr. Harris reported that he had purchased at Newcastle through Messrs. Pollard and Co. 250 quarters of foreign Rye at 48/- per quarter and that he had communicated such purchase to Mr. Stagg and given directions to Messrs. Pollard to follow the instructions of the Superintendent as to forwarding it to the interior."

During his period in charge Robert Stagg did a great deal to improve the quality of life for the workmen, houses were built at Nenthead and Middleton in Teesdale, reading rooms were established, and the education of the children was put on a sound footing, the company building and financing schools. On the 19th February 1818 the Court resolved,

"that two schools as recommended by Mr. Stagg in his letter of the 7th January be established. They gave directions to Robert Stagg to prepare a building at Middleton in Teesdale and another in Nenthead in Alston Moor, each capable of accommodating 200 children to be opened as schools on the 1st day of next May, and by a resolution of this Court held on the 19th February 1818 it was ordered That the masters of the said schools should be members of the Church of England and that the children be required to attend public worship twice every Sunday leaving the option of the place to the parents."

Robert was also concerned with the Working Men's Fund. In a resolution of 1810, the company had established a fund for the 'Relief of maimed and decayed Workmen' employed by the Company. The men ran it as a traditional friendly society, with a subsidy from the Company. The problem that such societies had was to maintain a balance between income and the money paid in benefits; many societies collapsed due to such an imbalance. In 1827, the fund became insolvent, the payments made being too large for the fund. The fund was taken over by the Company and membership was made compulsory for all employees. On Thursday the 25th October 1827, "The Court agreed with the recently returned deputation to the North that great advantage would arise to the concern at large if the Workmen's Fund be placed upon a proper foundation for the future provision not only of the men in the Company's employ who may be disabled from labour by sickness but also for the benefits of widows and children after their deceased.

On 1st November 1827 they "Resolved that the Superintendent be directed to transfer to the general accounts of mines whatever balance may remain against the workmen's fund on the 31st October and that any

arrangements which may be hereafter adopted upon that subject be made to take effect from this day."

Before the Company took over the Wokmen's fund the fund committee paid for a medical officer; but the Lead Company decided that they would take over complete responsibility for supplying medical help. The first appointments were made at Nenthead and Middleton in Teesdale, the doctors were to be given houses rent free and the doctor at Teesdale was to be paid £300 per year and the doctor at Alston Moor £150.

The company were very pleased with his work as the minutes of Thursday the 25th October 1827 show. "The Court deemed it proper on the present occasion to record their highest approval of the general conduct of their valuable Superintendent Mr Stagg in the general management and economy of the Company's concerns in the North and most particularly as regards the workings of Alston Moor which have been so pointedly brought to their notice by the reports of the Deputation whereby it is clearly shown that notwithstanding the very unfavourable circumstances under which Mr Stagg commenced the operation in that quarter the most beneficial results have accrued to the Company."

"Resolved that a piece of plate of the value £150 with a suitable inscription be presented to Mr Stagg as a mark of approbation from this Court of the indefatigable, zeal and ability continued to be evinced by that gentleman in promoting the interests of the Lead Company."

In 1821 his salary had been increased from £1000 to £1,200, in 1824 they had commissioned a portrait of Robert Stagg which was hung in the company's house in London. And in November of 1824 the Court decided to award him £1000 as a token of

their appreciation. In response he wrote a letter of thanks to the Court:

"Sirs.

"I know not how to acknowledge in adequate terms the obligation conferred upon me by the resolution of the Court of the 11th Inst. conveyed to me in so flattering a manner, through the medium of the Governor.

"The very great liberality of the Court excites my warmest feelings of gratitude, yet I am still more sensibly affected and gratified by the decided expression of their continued approbation, contained in that resolution.

"Conscious of insufficiency of my utmost efforts to make a suitable return for these repeated instances of liberality and kindness I can only renew to the Court the assurance, that whatever degree of ability and health I may possess, shall continue to be faithfully and exclusively employed in endeavours to promote the prospect of the concern."

"I am very respectfully, Gentlemen  
your humble servant  
Robert Stagg"

He and his family were also to be the beneficiaries of a trust fund set up on the 12th December 1817, which the Court minutes of 13th October 1831, show to be valued at £6,702 10s 3d. His portrait had also been commissioned to be painted by Mr Ramsey. This was presented to the Court on the 26th February, and it was hung in the Company's house in London. Robert Stagg was not a well man, suffering a chest complaint as well as a back problem. The Court were concerned for his health as the minute of Thursday the 5th September 1839 shows.

"Following the Courts deputation to the North giving their report.

"The Court feel deeply the state of health of their Superintendent Mr Robert Stagg and having taken into their consideration the amount of salary to be paid to him under the new arrangements as detailed in the social

report. Resolved that the sum be fixed at one thousand pounds per annum from Michaelmas next." On 1st September 1842, the Court heard from the Report of the deputation to the North that he had decided to retire. "The Court have heard with deep feelings of regret that part of the report of the Deputation who recently visited the Company's works in the North relating to the impaired state of health of Mr Robert Stagg which renders him unable any longer to hold the situation of Superintendent of their affairs, a trust to which he was appointed upwards of 25 years since and the duties of which he discharged with such credit to himself and advantage to the company, as to make the Company desirous of recording the deep sense they entertain of his conduct.

#### Appointments.

13 April 1809 Agent at Stanhope Mill.

24 May 1810 Cashier and Superintendent of all the Smelting works etc.

24 February 1814 Superintendent of the Teesdale mines.

25 April 1816 General Superintendent of the Company's mines and concerns in the North.

"It appears to the Court to be superfluous to enter into any minute particulars of the service of Mr Stagg for whether they look to the reports of former deputation's which allude to various abuses and irregularities that had crept into the management of the concern at the period that he first took office, and to the correction of which his attention was immediately directed or to the indefatigable zeal and ability he has directed in making improvements in every branch of the concern (particularly in the washing of ore) as also by enforcing a rigid principle of economy in the working of the mines by the introduction of a general system of order and regularity among them, which has worked so successfully to

the interest of the Company and to the welfare of the number of Human Beings placed under his influence. The Court can only come to the same conclusion, that he has most ably performed his duties and reiterate their sincere regards at the loss of his valuable services, as their General Superintendent, and the more particular so as to the cause which has led to his resignation of that situation.

"Resolved that a copy of the foregoing minute signed by the secretary be transmitted to Mr Robert Stagg with the fervent desire of this Court that in the office of cashier which he has consented to retain they may yet have the benefit for many years of his counsel and advice in the general condition of the concern."

The Court asked Robert Stagg to enter into a negotiation with Robert Walton Bainbridge with a view to the appointing him General Mine Agent (Thursday the 3rd September 1840). The minutes of 17th September 1840 show that Robert Walton Bainbridge had accepted the post and was to be the General Mine Agent, as well as his current position as Law Agent at a salary of £400 per annum, for both posts.

Robert did agree to retain his post of cashier, and in January 1850, the Court awarded him a salary of £500, which in the event of him retiring from this appointment, an allowance for the same amount would continued to him for life. On the 10th July 1851, the Court notes that he has tendered his resignation; as a result of this Robert Bainbridge who had been appointed as General Superintendent, was also to take the job of cashier.

On the 29th March 1864 the Court heard of the death of Robert Stagg, he had died at Dishforth on Sunday 27th March 1864

## Memorial Stone

IN MEMORY OF  
ROBERT STAGG  
FORMERLY OF MIDDLETON IN  
TEESDALE  
WHO DIED AT DISHFORTH  
DEEPLY REGRETTED  
MARCH 27TH 1864  
AGED 82 YEARS

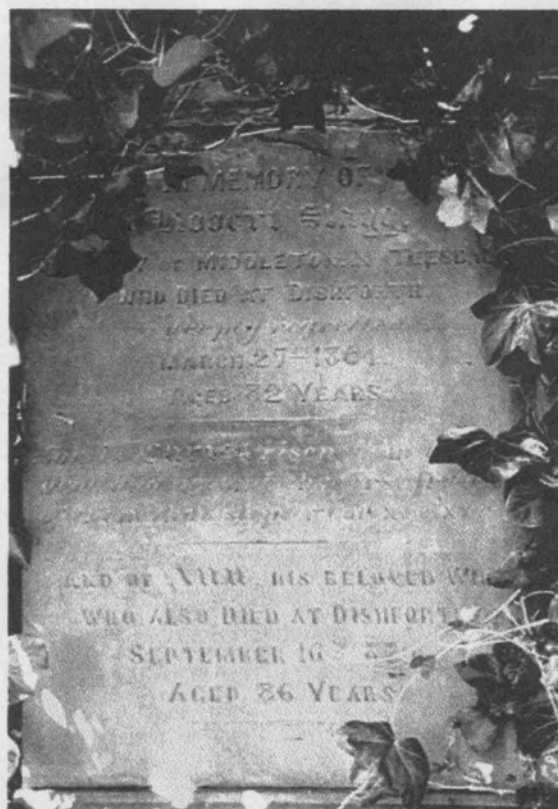
Now is Christ risen from the  
dead and become the first fruits  
of them that slept. 1st Cor. XVc XXv

AND ANN, HIS BELOVED WIFE  
WHO ALSO DIED AT DISHFORTH  
SEPTEMBER 16TH 1879  
AGED 86 YEARS

## St Columba Topcliffe

In the Court minutes of 8th November 1860  
the following resolution was passed:

"That the plans submitted to the Court  
prepared by Mr. Habershow architect for the  
building of new school houses at Middleton



and Nenthead (for containing about 300  
children each) be approved and signed.

"Resolved that in each of the said school  
houses a marble tablet be fixed with the  
following inscription thereon.

"Testimonial to Robert Stagg esquire.

"For upwards of 25 years Superintendent  
of the Lead Company's works. In  
recognition of his indefatigable  
labours to promote the general  
interests of the Company and the  
welfare of the numerous body of  
workmen committed to his care,  
more especially for the  
invaluable service rendered by  
him in originating in the year  
1818 the formation of the  
schools, to the use of which this  
building is dedicated."

Robert Stagg married Ann  
Roddam on 11th March 1807 at  
Gateshead, their children were:



John Roddam Stagg, he had three children, William Augustus, Clara Louise, and Caroline, they are mentioned in the will of Robert Stagg dated 22nd January 1856, John Roddam Stagg had died before this date.

Ann Gascoigne Stagg born 1808 and baptised 4th April 1809 at Gateshead, the 1851 census showed she was unmarried and living with her sister Jane at Middleton House, she married in 1868.

Jane Stagg born 12th June 1810, she married Robert Walton Bainbridge on the 4th July 1837 at Alston, they had seven children, she died 19th November 1880.

Robert Stagg born 7th November 1811, he died at Hill House, Alston 11th June 1878; he had been a yeoman farmer. He had married Charlotte (born in 1818 at Cullompton, Devon), and had a son Robert Stagg who had been born in 1849 at Ottery St Mary, Devon, he like his father farmed at Hill House, he died at Dumfries on 21st April 1891. Robert and Charlotte also had a son William born in 1851 at Bristol, who the 1881 census shows had become a Civil Engineer, and was living with his mother at Stapleton in Gloucester.

Joseph Dickinson Stagg born 18158, he married Elizabeth Bainbridge (daughter of Robert Bainbridge and Elizabeth (Walton)) on 6th September 1836, at Alston. He died in Scotland in as a result of inflammation of the lungs 18519. Their daughter Louisa Jane married John George Millican on 21st July 1868, a Solicitor in Alston, they had two children Lillian and Alice.

Joseph Dickinson Stagg worked for the Lead Company, initially helping his father at Egglestone Mill, and in 1836 he was being paid £300 per annum to assist his father in any of the departments, in which his father needed help<sup>10</sup>. On hearing that Joseph was to be married the Court presented him with £100, "for such articles as he may approve for the furnishing of his house." He carried out many improvements his best known being his design of a Flume Condenser. In 1844 he left

the company's service and the minutes of 5th September 1844 record:

"The Superintendent be allowed to present Mr. J D Stagg (after he has left his situation under the Company) with a gratuity of Two hundred pounds in consideration of his past services; also to acquaint him that the Court cancel their claim upon him for reimbursement of his expenses that have been incurred in taking out his patents for his Flume Condenser.

"The Superintendent be instructed to proceed immediately with the maturing plans and estimates for the construction of a water dam in Priorsdale and for the erection of a Flume Condenser at Nenthead and to submit the same to the Court."

The fumes were forced through water using powerful pumps powered by a water wheel, the wheel pit can be seen today.

The Stagg family connection continued via Robert Walton Bainbridge and his sons, Robert, Henry George, and Charles Edward. Robert Walton Bainbridge having taken over as Superintendent after Robert Stagg retired, worked for the company until 1884. The Court appreciated his work and he frequently received gifts from them. The minutes of 26th February 1884 show this high regard:

"Resolved that the members of this Court previously to separating desire unanimously to put upon record their sense of faithful service of their Superintendent R W Bainbridge Esq. during the long period through which he has been in the employment of the Company, and of their warm and sincere personal regard for him.

"Ordered that the secretary be instructed to send a copy of the above resolution to Mr Bainbridge."

The minutes of 10th April 1884 record his retirement and the appointment of his son Charles in his place.

"The Deputation recommend the Court pension Mr. Bainbridge senior and to appoint Mr. C Bainbridge Superintendent and General

Manager at a salary not exceeding £500 per annum with a house rent free with powers and duties to be hereafter defined.

"Resolved that a payment be made to Mr. Bainbridge of £2000 equivalent of a life annuity of £410. And that he leave the residence and give up vacant possession at Midsummer. Also that his present salary be paid up to that date.

"Resolved that Mr. Charles Bainbridge be appointed General Manager with powers and duties to be hereafter prescribed at a salary of £500 and that he be granted a fortnights leave of absence. Also that he be desired to come up to attend the Court on Tuesday the 29th instant."

Robert Walton Bainbridge had moved to the County of Exeter following his retirement from the company (2 Stoke Villas, St James), he died at Middleton in Teesdale on 7th September 1888.

His children were:

Emily Ann born 1845 Teesdale, she married Thomas Pattison in 1868.

Lucy Elizabeth born 1851.

Laura Matilda Jane born 1854 Teesdale, married Rev Walter Metcalfe Holmes Milner. Living at West Ashton vicarage near Trowbridge in Wiltshire in 1889.

Robert Stagg born 1838 Teesdale, he became a farmer and land agent at Keverstone near Staindrop, County Durham, he had married Mary of Berwick, they had 5 children.

Henry George born 1841-42 died 1870.

Charles Edward Bainbridge born 1849 Teesdale.

William John Bainbridge born 1846 Teesdale.

R. W. Bainbridge's son Robert worked for the company<sup>11</sup> only for a very short time preferring to become a farmer. Henry George showed greater promise and was appointed Manager of Mills, Washing Rakes and Counting Houses. In 1868 his father was

given the permission of the Court to send his son "Mr. Henry G Bainbridge to visit from time to time the principle establishments in the trade, as he may deem desirable." He remained working for the company until his death. The minutes of 29th November 1870 show:

"Mr. Charles Edward Bainbridge is appointed as Manager of Mills, Washing Rakes and Counting houses his salary to be increased £50 a year from the date of his appointment making it £150 to fill the place of his brother deceased."

Charles progressed rapidly, his salary was increased in 1875 from £250 to £300, and in 1882 further increased to £500. The 1881 census shows that Charles at that time was living at Masterman place, Middleton, and was a manager at the lead works. He had married Elanor Wood in 1873, they had five children, Henry, Mable, Annie, Robert and Emely.

He continued to work for the company until 1891 after taking over as superintendent from his father, he resigned his post, this resignation taking effect on the 2nd February 1891.

John Joseph Millican the former mine superintendent of the Alston Moor District was appointed in his place at a salary of £200 a year.

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Raistrick. Two Centuries of Industrial Welfare. The London (Quaker) Lead Company 1692 - 1905. Published 1988.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. <sup>3</sup> Ibid. <sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Durham County Record Office Ref. D/BO/B 229

<sup>6</sup> Durham County Record Office Ref. D/BO/B 320

<sup>7</sup> Durham County Record Office Ref. D/BO/B 324

<sup>8</sup> Arthur Raistrick. Two Centuries of Industrial Welfare. The London (Quaker) Lead Company 1692 - 1905. Published 1988.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. <sup>10</sup> Ibid. <sup>11</sup> Ibid.

**CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**Committee Meeting held on the Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2002 at the BMSC Hut, Coniston.**

**Agenda.**

- |    |                          |    |  |
|----|--------------------------|----|--|
| 1  | Apologies for absence    | 2  | Minutes of the last meeting              |
| 3  | Matters arising          | 4  | Secretary's Report inc. NAMHO 04         |
| 5  | Treasurer's Report       | 6  | Membership Secretary's Report            |
| 7  | Meets Secretary's Report | 8  | Newsletter & Journal No. 5               |
| 9  | Other publications       | 10 | Coniston Coppermines                     |
| 11 | Hudgillburn              | 12 | Date and venue of next committee meeting |
| 13 | Any other business       |    |  |

Present: M. Simpson (MS), S. Barker (SB), J. Aird (JA), I. Matheson (IM),  
D Bridge, P. Fleming (PF), M. Scott (MSc) & A. Wilson (AW)

Member D Borthwick attended as an observer.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm. 9 members in total attended.

**1 Apologies for absence** from: None

**2 Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the committee meeting held on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September had been previously circulated to members. It was PROPOSED by IM and SECONDED by PF that the minutes be signed by the chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings. This was carried unanimously.

**3 Matters arising**

- 3.1 Item 4.1 JA had studied the details of the JH Chemicals report, which was excellent. He had no comments to make. In the general information accompanying the report underground scheduling was mentioned. He would give the details to IM for publication in the next Newsletter.
- 3.2 Item 3.3 Pump pipe. MSc was getting a price for the suction pipe, needs to check sizes.
- 3.3 Item 4.2 – 3 MS had attended the workshop. When the LNDPA reviewed their next management plan.
- 3.4 Item 4.6 JA The Hay Gill papers were being transcribed.
- 3.5 Item 13.7 SB had read the local Heritage Initiative Papers, a suitable project was discussed. JA would enquire into the Coniston Survey or a survey at Goldscope being suitable projects for funding. A meeting to be arranged with interested parties to assess Goldscope Mine.
- 3.6 Item 10 JA had bought the drill bits.
- 3.7 Item 13.4 PF had booked the BMSC hut for the 2003 AGM.
- 3.8 Item 8 It was thought that to produce Journals 1,2 & 3 as a book would be expensive and that it would not sell in large numbers.
- 3.9 MS Proposed That John Brown, Roger Ramsden and John Knowles be co-opted onto the Committee. Seconded by JA. All were in favour.
- 3.10 Item 3.4 JA had checked the details of the insurance. Each individual member had third party cover for injury to persons or property, whether on a CAT meet or on a private meet.

#### 4 **Secretary's Report.**

- 4.1 The secretary had attended the last NAMHO Council meeting which had been held at Threlkeld. Details of the 2003 conference in Ireland were given.
- 4.2 NAMHO 04 to be held on 23 – 25 July 2004 at the John Ruskin School at Coniston. The first planning meeting to be held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2003.

#### 5 **Treasurer's Report**

JA presented a balance sheet for the period 17<sup>th</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> September which included:

- The current account now stood at £1402.38 and the building society a/c (Scottish Widows) at £7000
- Newsletter cost £216.95
- Total donations for Journal no 5 had amounted to £388.00
- £113.38 had been spent on SRT equipment & drill bits
- Income from publications had been £1187.79.

- 5.1 The BCRS insurance had been paid (£580, a big increase on last year) , it was expected to rise sharply again next year. A decision would have to be made at the July meeting on the way ahead. Various suggestions were made, maybe members would make their own arrangements, or have two categories of membership. PF **proposed** 'That Life members be invited to pay for their insurance'. **Seconded** by JA All were in favour.
- 5.3 IM asked (as postage was a big item) could postage for the Newsletter and Membership items be stated separately.
- 5.4 PF had drawn JA attention to a scheme used by some organisations to increase their revenue. As a charity we are entitled to pay the expenses of members travelling on CAT business, which includes committee meetings. Those members eligible for Gift Aid donations would claim their travelling expenses and then make a donation of exactly the same amount, allowing us to claim from the Inland revenue 22/27 of that sum. It was **proposed** by PF and **seconded** by JA 'That members should claim for travel expenses when on CAT business'. All were in favour.

#### 6 **Membership Secretary's Report**

IM reported that 65 members had paid their subscription. The usual reminders would go out. There had been two new members recently.

#### 7 **Meets Secretary's Report**

The next Meet List had gone out to members. Two additional meets to go on the end of this list:

- 1) 27<sup>th</sup> April to Goldscope
- 2) 18<sup>th</sup> May to Caudale Quarries

There had been no nominations for a new meets secretary. The next Meets List should go out with the February Newsletter (NLs next year to go out Feb, May, Aug, Nov.)

#### 8 **Newsletter & Journal No. 5**

IM reported that NL costs this year had been £545. He needed to replace his printer as it was much cheaper to print the NL himself rather than to have it photocopied. He had listed various production costs which made it obvious that to buy a CAT printer would be by far the most economical route to follow. Therefore JA **proposed** 'that CATMHS should buy a printer to print the Newsletter'. **Seconded** by MS. All agreed.

IM had sent out review copies of Journal No 5., replies were received from Paul Sowan and Mike Gill. The American Mining History Association's annual journal contains a number of articles published on American mining history for the preceding year. D Borthwick would like to inform them about the Kennecott article in Journal 5. R Hewer had received help in Alaska during his research for the article and would like to send copies of the published work. It was decided that he could have up to six free copies for this purpose.

## **9 Other Publications**

JA would contact ADC regarding reprinting 'Slate from Coniston.'

IM suggested that we should think about producing a new field guide of all the mining areas in Cumbria, for the general public. He would make a list and think up ideas for the next meeting.

The Paddy End underground survey would be a more serious and academic publication.

Progress was being made with the publicity leaflet, the committee's thanks go to Karen for her work on the design.

## **10 Coniston Coppermines**

A group of committee members had been exploring South Vein today and made new discoveries. PF reported that the LDPNA had stated to repair Miners Bridge, he had sent them old photographs for reference. Some doubt was expressed about the height of the uprights. PF had reported the collapse of the Deep level Portal to John Hodgson, who suggested that we contact English Heritage as it is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Action PF.

## **11 Hudgillburn Mine**

There had been one meet at Hudgillburn since the last committee meeting. A start was made clearing the collapse in the level. The method of repair was discussed but no decision made. The most pressing job was to stabilise the bank at the side of the level, this will be started on the next meet. It was decided that money would be made available to put a metal ladder in the rise up to the Cavern. DB had some radon detectors which could be used at the dig.

## **11 Date and venue of next Committee Meeting:**

To be held on 6<sup>th</sup> January 03 at the BMSC Hut, Coniston.

## **13 Any other business**

- 13.1 Details of the AGM and Annual Dinner were discussed, SB had put two Notices of Motion on the agenda which were:
  - 1) To increase the membership subscriptions
  - 2) To add an equal opportunities statement to the CATMHS Constitution.
- 13.2 Peter Jackson (Chairman NPHT) had given SB several plans of the Threlkeld mine for the CAT library

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

SB 18.11.02

Chairman

## CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

Honorary President:

Lord Egremont

Vice President:

Major J.W.B. Hext

Chairman:

Mark Simpson, 3 South View, Leeming Lane,  
Burton in Lonsdale, Lancs, LA6 3LE.  
Phone 01524 262824

Secretary:

Sheila Barker, The Rise, Alston  
Cumbria, CA9 3DB.  
Phone 01434 381903.

Treasurer:

John Aird, 1 Hillcroft Crescent,  
Ealing, London W5 2SG  
Phone 0208 997 5985.

Membership Secretary  
& Newsletter Editor

Ian Matheson, 1 Rothay Holme Cottages,  
Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 0EE.  
Phone 015394 32957.  
Email [ian@rothayholme.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:ian@rothayholme.freeserve.co.uk)

Meets Secretary:

Vacant!

Publicity Officer:

Alistair Cameron, Linden Lea,  
Pass Street, Eckington, Worcs, R10 3AX.  
Phone 01386 750494.

Librarian / Archivist:

Anton C P Thomas, 145 Abbey Road,  
Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 5EZ.  
Phone 01229 823776.

Committee members:

John Aird	Sheila Barker	Dave Bridge
Peter Fleming	Ian Matheson	Mike Mitchell
Mark Scott	Mark Simpson	Angela Wilson

Honorary Members:

Sheila Barker, Peter Fleming,  
John Marshall, Mike Mitchell, Dave Bridge.