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**The Newsletter of the Cumbria Amenity Trust
Mining History Society**



**Barrow Iron works before demolition, circa 1960
Taken from the recently published CATMHS book Red Earth Revisited**

Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society

Newsletter No 143, May 2021.

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Society Officers and Committee Members

Back cover

Chris Buckingham

It is sad to hear that Chris Buckingham has passed away. He had been a member of several mining societies, played a large part in Swaledale Mountain Rescue Team and there have been many tributes on social media from people who knew him. Chris was someone who always had a big smile on his face, was just one of the nicest people you could ever meet and will be sorely missed by those who knew him.

CATMHS Committee

Due to Covid the CATMHS committee has been unable to hold meetings as usual, but essential business has been conducted by email. A virtual meeting was held by Zoom on 9th February. Concern was expressed that the committee were now all male it was agreed that an approach be made to interested female members who may be willing to join up as trustees. Currently there is a three person capacity within the committee.

The requirements for holding an AGM under the current conditions and Charity Commission relaxations on face to face meetings were discussed. It was felt that the AGM should not be abandoned but a Zoom version in the immediate future was not welcomed. It was proposed that a date be set for September to attempt to hold a face to face meeting around a weekend of some sort of activity (surface/underground), and that a venue like Rydal Hall should be provisionally booked before relaxation of measures leads to limited vacancies. The fallback would be a Zoom meeting if continued restrictions make a face to face meeting untenable.

A book “The Red Earth Revisited” has been produced by B Cubbon, P Sandbach and C Woollard. The authors asked CATMHS to publish the book, which it was planned would be by a “print on demand” printing company and CATMHS agreed to publish this edition.

New members:

Neil Culross, from Cwm Camlais, Brecon. Neil is a member of the Welsh Mines Society.
Robin Griffiths, from Caernafon.
Alistair Shawcross, from Silverdale, near Carnforth.
Robert Entwistle, from Kendal.
Richard Veitch, from Redcar, Cleveland.
Brian Sutton, from Lincoln.

Meet Secretary’s Report April 2021

Well, as the lockdown starts to ease we hope to be moving forward and confirming more “face to face” meets. These below are confirmed:

1. Kirkby Moor, 6th June, 10.00am. Carl Barrow.
2. Wales weekend, Dorothea and Pen-yr-Orsedd, 26th-27th June. Michael Oddie + Special Guest.
3. Wales Weekend, Dinorwic and ‘nameless quarry’, 31st July-1st August. Michael Oddie and Jon Knowles.
4. Nenthead Traverse, 13th November, 9.00am. Leif Andrews.

We are currently in talks with Ayle Working Colliery and hope to confirm a meet in due course. I have some club members planning a meet near Murton and again hope to confirm dates in the near future.

ZOOM meets are continuing and we have the following confirmed:

1. Friday 30th April 7.30pm. A history of Coniston Copper Mines - Ian Matheson
2. Friday 7th May 7.30pm. Quiz Night - Graham Derbyshire
3. Friday 21st May 7.30pm. Minas de Riotinto - Colin Keighley
4. Friday 11th June 7.30pm. Mining in the mountains - Peter Claughton.

If anyone wants to lead a meet, have a meet in mind that they would like to do, or even a particular mine they would like to visit, just let me know and we can sort something out. Also anyone wanting to give a Zoom talk or do a quiz just let me know. Michael Oddie.

The Mine Explorer, CATMHS Journal Vol.7

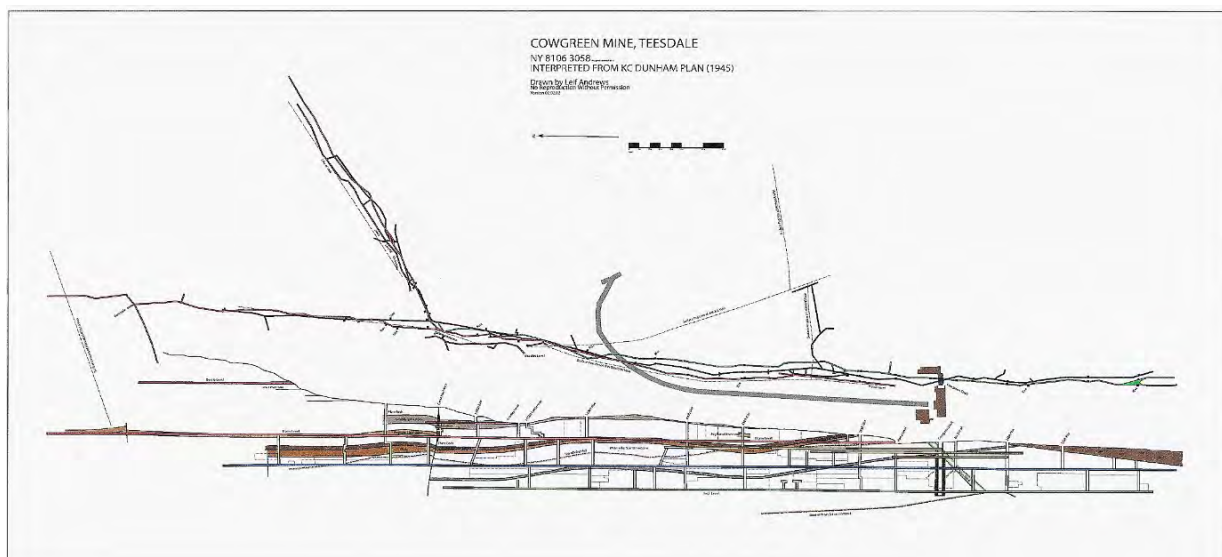
The last CAT journal was published in 2008, and the Committee has decided that it is time for us to produce another one, which will be The Mine Explorer No 7. The first six were published in A5 format with black & white pictures and rather small print. To celebrate CATMHS 40th anniversary we produced a special edition of The Mine Explorer, Forty Years of Exploration Research and Conservation, which took advantage of current digital technology and was presented in A4 format with lots of colour photographs. J7 and subsequent journals will continue in this format. Ian Matheson has agreed to edit and produce it, and intends to have it available for autumn 2022, with a copy deadline of May 2022.

This is an appeal for material. To make it work we will need a number of articles on matters pertaining to the interests of our Society. Past journals have contained reports on projects, accounts of exploration, records of discoveries, details of conservation, descriptions of infrastructure and articles on history, so if you have ever thought that you might put pen to paper then now is the time to do so. Contributions can be of any length, with or without pictures or diagrams.

You have twelve months to complete it, but I would like to know what to expect well in advance, so if you are thinking you might contribute please let me know as soon as possible, even if it is only just an idea in your head. I need to confirm by August this year whether there will be sufficient material for it to be viable. Please respond to imatheson007@btinternet.com

Mine plan, Cowgreen Mine, Teesdale

Leif Andrews has made available another of his carefully drawn mine plans interpreted from Dunham. If you would like a pdf copy then email membership@catmhs.org.uk



For two weeks each year between 1990 and 2003 a friend and I put on exhibitions at Glenridding Village Hall on Greenside Mine and life in the Parish while it was working, with approximately a thousand people visiting each year. We met so many people who had memories of that time and also those who had worked at the mine, of which there were still a fair number. People very kindly donated photographs or allowed their photographs to be copied, and I spent hundreds of hours going through about a hundred years of the Cumberland & Westmorland Herald on microfiche, page by page, looking for information on the parish, so there is now a huge archive of material.



Joseph Hardman photograph 1933

I offered to do a Zoom presentation on the history of the mine mainly using some of the photographs from the exhibition. However, it was also intended to be from a personal point of view, having had relations working at the mine, including my Mum who was the wages clerk and who was responsible for getting me interested in mining at the age of about eight.

In the talk I tried to tell some of the memories of the people, such as:

“There were three photographs, two showing hand drilling and one with a Schram rock drill. I was given these by the people who bought Harold Olgethorpe’s house when he died. Harold had written on the back who three of the four men were- Jack Nicholson, Mr Issacs and Coward. The photographs were taken as a set by Alex Anderson in 1902, and one was presented to the Glenridding Village Hall in memory of the people who worked at the mine”.

“My Grandmother said that the photo of my Great Grandfather Joseph Jenkinson on the original electric locomotive was taken by a group of American visitors just before the mine was put onto care and maintenance in 1935. This was because he had driven the loco from January 1898 and had got rheumatism, so when he went back to work he went onto the dressing plant until he retired”.

“Alfred Pitchford remembers starting at the mine and going underground to work, but even though the drills used water to dampen the dust down, the men were still covered head to toe in dust and because of this he found a job on surface”.

A photo of miners getting out of the tubs after finishing a shift, which was illegal, and named them all including two uncles. But this reminded me of a story that my Mum told me about the day Henry Richards, who I remember as he lived next door to Grandmother, had forgotten his hardboiled egg, so Sally his wife took it up to the mine and asked them to send it to him. The egg was put into an empty tub and sent underground and written on the side was *Egg for Henry*. Henry got his egg.

“Fred Dawes and Freddie Wynn, who was known as “Fearless Freddie”, always worked together on the drilling and blasting, but Freddie had died in his mid-forties from the dust”.

“My Mum’s boss was Herbert Evans who had come up in the 1930’s from Halkyn Mine in North Wales, and she said he was a lovely boss. She remembered one day when he picked her up asking if she could bring her sowing machine. “*Aye lass, just put it in the boot*”.

“Mum remembers there was always a roaring coal fire on in winter when she got to the office”.

“Mum remembers going with her boss to pick up the wages from Martin’s Bank, which came to the village every two weeks and used the Post Office in Glenridding”.

“The photo of the winding engine at Murray’s Shaft showed John Brown, known as Father Brown, who lived next door on the other side of my Grandmother’s to Henry Richards. Mum said Mary, his wife, always had a mass of chips ready for when the children came home from school and they were the best she has ever tasted”.

“A photo of Bill Murray at Murray’s shaft, who lived two doors down from my Grandmother, was quite poignant as a relation of his took the contract to sink the shaft. The family came from Wanlockhead in the 1850’s and worked at a lead mine at Keswick before coming to Greenside.

“There were a series of colour photographs of Tommy Hind beside the Joy Sullivan air compressor near Smith’s Shaft. When the mine closed Joy Sullivan came to remove the compressor and said Tommy had looked after it so well that after nearly thirty years it was still in as good a condition as it was when first installed”.

“I told the story of the 1952 accident, which was in a previous newsletter article, but it is quite emotional telling it as I have met Johnny Miller’s wife and daughters as well as Richard (Dick)” Mallinson’s daughter Elaine, whose fathers were killed in the accident. My Grandmother was going out with George Gibson who was also killed, and family rumours were that they were engaged; at the time he was lodging with my Aunty and Uncle”.

“When AWRE were conducting non-nuclear tests, Alex Santamara and William Sinkinson were killed in the 1960 accident after the first explosion had been set off when they were looking for crystals in a stope. I recalled my uncle Hugh Taylor’s account of recovering the bodies, as he worked at the mine and was in its mines rescue team. In full breathing apparatus he went up the ladderway and carried the first man down, went back for the second one, but was so tired he dropped him down the stope. But they were both already dead when he got to the bodies. Alex’s daughter Marie is still one of my Mum’s best friends”.

It has been possible to identify who the photographers were, and the talk has, after twenty years, given me the impetus to start to put a book together of the photographs, probably along the same format as “Life and work of a Northern Lead Miner by Rastrick and Roberts”.

Warren Allison

Zoom talk, Wad Mine 26th February

Mark Hatton delivered a Talk about the History of The Wad Mine to forty members, which was followed by an in-depth Q&A.

The variously named Wad, Plumbago, Black Lead, Black Cawke or Graphite Mine at Seathwaite in Borrowdale has a rather special place in Cumbrian History. Here Fortunes were made, stolen and lost over the centuries. The output from the mine found many uses and its value per pound soared to extraordinary heights because of the quality and rarity of the graphite found here. The mine can claim some rather unusual boasts amongst Lakeland mines, including

The most profitable mine
The most stolen from mine
The most legally disputed mine
The most frustrating mine to work out
The most easy mineral to work
The most security measures used
The most centuries in its working life
The most active museum to its history & related industry
The most downstream industry created locally
The most use of stages, pipes and sops
The most number of grades of output
The most continuous period of family control
The most continuous period of family management
The most famous worldwide in its day
The most valuable to the Nation’s strategic interests at one time
The most pure source of graphite in the world
The most devious and violent attempts to steal from it
The most rainfall
The most spectacular views
The most exhaustingly steep path up to the mine
The most 3D maze like mine
The most illicitly traded material (on the Black Market)
The most number of uses found for its output

The most miles travelled by the output to be sold
The most monopolistic market conditions
The most inflation in the price of the output over the years
The most erratic output figures
The most valuable material by weight commercially mined
The most R&D being applied to find new uses for its output today
The most argued over geology and origin story
The most use of body searches
The most jail time arising
The most severe legal punishments for theft
And, to me at least, the most enjoyable mine to visit, explore and study.

Please note, The Wad Mine has some hidden dangers with unfenced shafts just inside some of the entrances.

Zoom talk, 6th March 2021 Hodbarrow Mines

The wonders of Zoom allowed a virtual trip to Millom with a history of the Hodbarrow Iron Ore Mines and a gallery of images both overground and underground. There is little evidence on the ground with the exception of the two great sea walls that allowed access to the ore beds that were running out under the Duddon estuary.



Hodbarrow in the 1960's

The costs of building were enormous but the increase in production was such that the Inner Barrier costs of £106,000 plus £4,000 legal expenses, the equivalent of £14 million today was paid for out of profits in less than two years. The Outer Barrier was a major world civil engineering project when it started in 1900 with the contractors coming to Cumberland having finished the Aswan Dam in Egypt. It took five years, cost £588,430, £72 million today, and was paid for out of profits in a single year.



Hodbarrow in the 1990's

The mines closed in 1967 when the ore beds were pinching out and production was constrained. Coupled with imports of cheap ore from across the world and processing able to cope with poor quality materials, Hodbarrow was no longer viable.

A plan from Rio Tinto to put two barrages across the Duddon and create an open cast mine linking Hodbarrow to the Furness ore fields at Askam, came to nothing. It seems the exploration results were not sufficient to convince the company to go ahead. Thank goodness. So now there is a caravan site, the RSBP bird reserve, fantastic views to the high fells and a wonderful level circular walk that is as good as any in the Lakes. Don't take my word for it, ask Warren who is coming to holiday on the South Cumberland Riviera for a second time!

A video of the talk is available in the members' section of the CATMHS website. Please don't copy it and distribute it beyond the membership as it does contain a lot of material collected over many years.

Stephe Cove.

Zoom talk, Whitby Jet Mines, 16th April

Chris Twigg and his colleagues over on the North York Moors have spent years piecing together the very incomplete jigsaw that is the Jet Mines and associated industry. This has involved extensive discovery and exploration of old Jet Mine workings and research to find out who worked these mines, when and how. Chris very generously and ably shared this knowledge with thirty four CATMHS members and guests via Zoom. He started by dispelling a few myths - apparently Jet is not fossilised Monkey Puzzle Trees (it is made of 175 million year old remains of many tree types, some of which resemble modern Monkey Puzzles) - and Queen Victoria was not single handedly responsible for popularising Jet jewellery following the death of Prince Albert (other European Monarchs some decades earlier had established a fashion for wearing Jet).

Chris told us that Jet is found in shale strata under the North York Moors but originated as tree trunks washed into muds in shallow seas or river deltas, at a time when this land was

somewhere around where India is today. The precise combination of conditions that allowed Jet to form are however very few and far between, such that large Jet deposits like those under the North York Moors are very rare.



The ancient Jet workings involved digging parallel lines of pits along the edge of the shale strata. Early 19thC historians thought these were lines of ancient British Hut Settlements. This picture of Roseberry Topping shows these ancient workings between the yellow lines, although we don't know how old they are. They could be Medieval, Viking, Roman, Bronze Age or Neolithic.

Jet from the North York moors and sea cliffs was used to make decorative pieces, then traded far and wide, as far back as the Neolithic and Bronze ages. The Romans coveted the material too, making exquisite jewellery out of it. And we have many medieval examples of Jet artefacts. But it was the 19th century that saw Jet Mining and Jewellery manufacturing really start to take off at Whitby. By 1873 there were two hundred shops employing 1,500 men in Whitby, manufacturing and selling Jet jewellery and ornaments. The material was mainly mined some twenty miles inland from Whitby where small scale Jet workings were going on in multiple places. But we actually know very little about this mining industry as the individually small scale of the workings and a culture of secrecy throughout the industry meant there were remarkably few records made.

Chris told us about how in recent decades there have been some sporadic interest in finding out more about where the Jet was mined, but only in very recent years has this been done at scale and using modern surveying techniques. So far Chris and his team have found and surveyed one working that extends to seven kilometres of tunnels through the shale, and another nearby that so far extends to four kilometres. There are hopes of finding much more. These workings are room and pillar in nature, with tunnels being hacked through the shale then the ceilings of these tunnels pulled down in the hope of revealing lumps of Jet within the shale.

Today the Whitby Jet industry remains very secretive and shrouded in mystery. We don't even know where their current supplies of Jet are coming from. But Jet continues to be used as a decorative material to this day due to its rather unique appearance and texture.

The audience all agreed that this was a fascinating subject, expertly explained, and we look forward to being able to visit the old mine sites when conditions allow.

The Red Earth Revisited

By Brian Cubbon, Peter Sandbach and Colin Woollard.

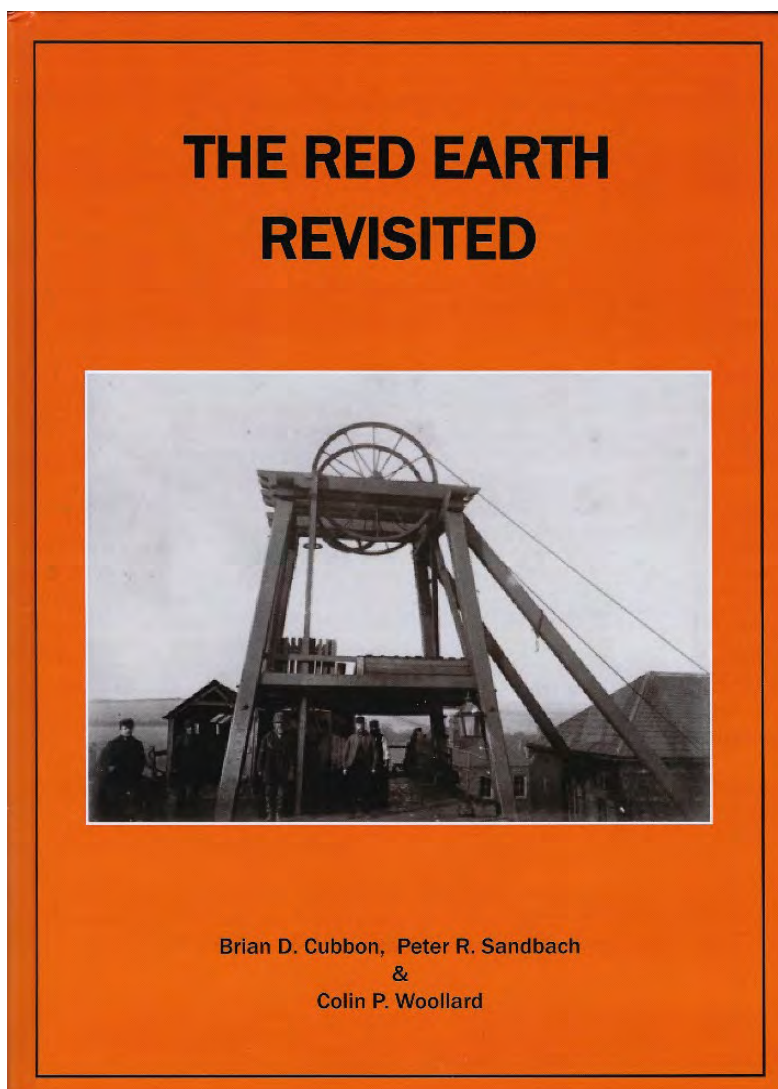
This book complements 'The Red Earth', by David Kelly, which has been an invaluable record of the haematite mining industry of Furness, but was written nearly thirty years ago and is now out of print. The current authors, who are all members of CATMHS, have extended Kelly's research to provide an in-depth review of nearly three hundred pages which brings to life the ways in which iron was mined and produced.

The book considers the iron mining industry of Furness and it describes the mines, owners, management, employment and production of iron ore in this area. Illustrated with many contemporaneous photographs and updated maps it provides an insight into the iron industry of a bygone era. There are few traces left of this once thriving industry which gave employment to many of our forefathers, who mined haematite, a particularly rich form of iron ore found in this part of what was once North Lancashire.

Like Kelly's original, the bulk of the book concentrates on the mines, augmented with information from the Official Mineral Statistics, but there are also chapters entitled Geological Background, The Iron Works, Mines and Mining in Furness, Mines in the Millom Area, History of Ore Transportation, and The People Who Made the Industry.

The quality of the numerous maps and diagrams is excellent, the result of a lot of work by Colin Woollard. At the end of the book there are five appendices covering technical aspects, and there is a comprehensive bibliography and an index.

The size of the book has been increased to A4, hardback, and it is published by CATMHS, with an initial print run of 100 copies. It is an essential reference book for anyone interested in history of the Furness iron industry. Order yours now whilst stocks last! It is available from www.catmhs.org at a price of £21, postage included.



Greenside Mine conservation management plan

Eleanor Kingston has managed to secure funding to produce a management plan for Greenside Mine, which would predominately be within the scheduled monument. It will be along similar lines to those done for Force Crag Mine, Carrock Mine and the Coniston Copper Project.

The plan will identify which structures are at risk and cost-up remediation work, indicate how the re-instatement of some structures could reduce potential pollution, such as the beck walls at the High Horse dressing floor, help reduce the possibility of further erosion around the site from water, carry out community archaeological surveys, especially around the High Horse area where we have little understanding of what was going on, carry out ecological surveys, interpretation, and natural flood measures which may help reduce the damage to the structures. At the same time hopefully the mine will be taken off the “At Risk Register”.

On a fantastic sunny day, up at the mine I met with Eleanor, Suzie Hankin (LDNPA area Ranger), Martin Lord (LDNPA Property Department), Charles Blackett-Ord (Structural engineer) and Niall Hammond (Archaeo Environment Ltd) who produced the reports previously mentioned. Conditions could not have been better.

After a brief history lesson behind the smelt mill we made our way to the Lucy Tongue entrance and discussed several issues concerning water management. Then the potential to open the old incline which took the tubs of ore from the Lucy entrance up to the pre 1936 crusher, which is now buried under Tailings Dam No.2. The incline would be gated but would allow people to view the magnificent arching. Every few months I clean the drainage pipes at Lucy Tongue to ensure they do not get blocked, but in wet weather the level still sumps up. As a long-term solution the entrance could be completely opened up to restore the water coming out of the mine to how it was when it was working.

We made our way onto the top of Tailings Dam No.2 and then started to walk up the incline towards the area around Low Horse level. It is surprising just how much damage the water is doing to various parts of the surface remains; a weir and parts of a leat have gone, and there is damage to a wall which keeps the beck from undercutting the Low Horse spoil heap, etc.

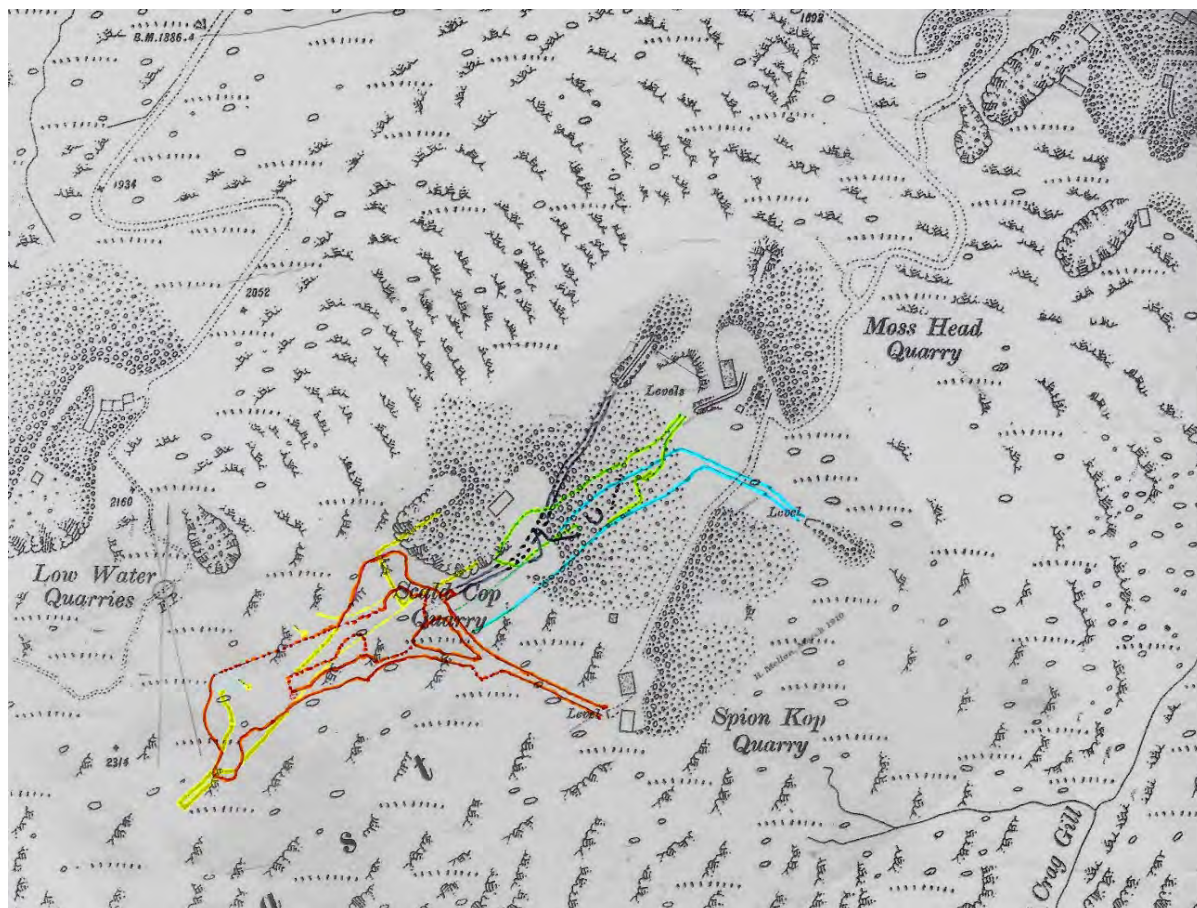
Arriving at the Low Horse dressing plant there were discussions around what conservation was needed, before we walked up the path to the High Horse area where we had lunch. After that we walked round to the High Horse level, where I explained about the siphoning of water out of Top Dam back into the underground workings where it was dammed up on the High Horse and Glencoyne levels to supply water to the winding engine at the top of the Willie shaft. I had heard this story from a fitter at the mine whose boss, Harold Oglethorpe’s father, had told Harold about it. I thought this was a bit far-fetched until, one day many years ago, I found a pipe going into the reservoir from the level, with a filter on the end, so it is probably true. Mentioning that I could remember the level being open, I suggested it would be good to expose the arching again, photograph and record the short section before it reaches the bed rock where it is collapsed, which would include the wooden rail still in-situ, and survey the ancient workings above.

We made our way back down the track to the cars, stopping several times to discuss aspects of this fascinating place. There is much to do to put the plan together and I will let people know when there are other site visits arranged, dependent on Government Covid guidelines.

Warren Allison

Update report – Old Man Quarries project

Work on establishing an interpretation facility at the Old Man Quarries site on Coniston Old Man continues to progress well. The project team, consisting of Eleanor Kingston, Robert Gurr, Peter Archer and myself have all been working on our specific aspects of the project and we are now in the process of finishing off the design of interpretation panels for the Saddlestone Bank. This has been a good project, partly because we selected a small but competent team to work on it from the start and because of the enthusiasm of, and help from, local Coniston families, many of whom had forbears that used to work for Coniston Old Man Quarries Ltd., the amalgamated company that originally operated the site.

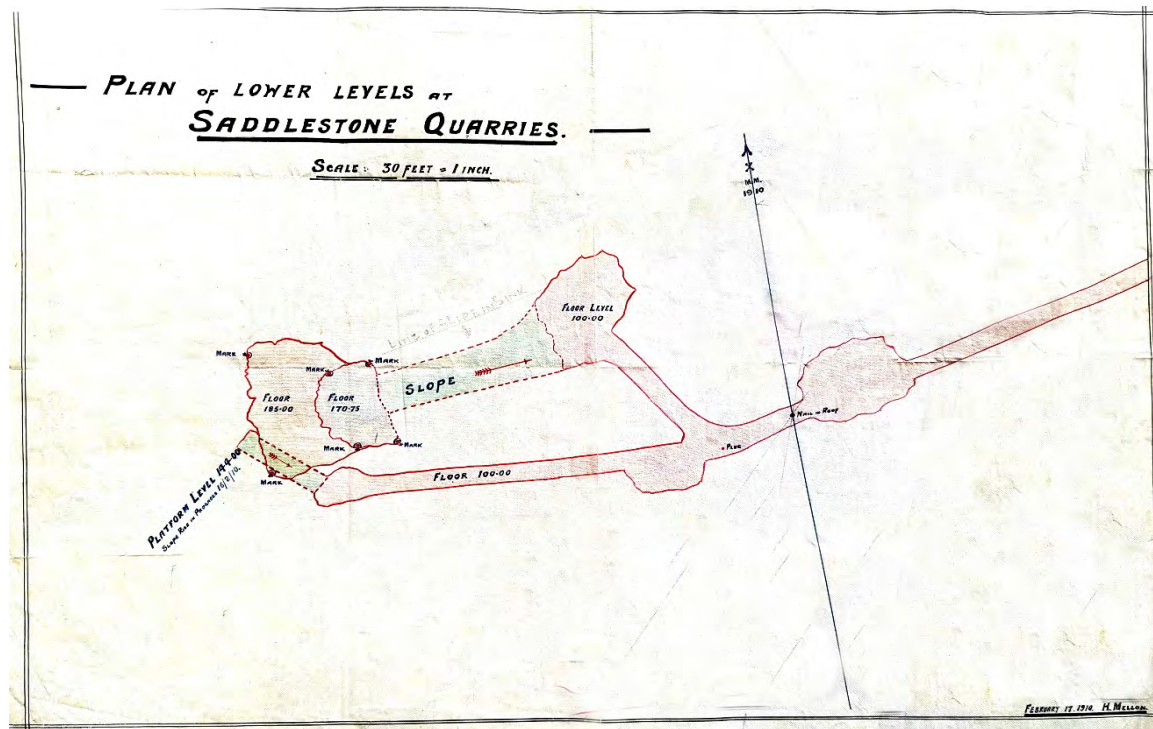


Overlay of the higher workings onto the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map.

Now that Covid restrictions have been lifted (for the time being, at least!), Peter and David can continue with the drone imaging work and three-dimensional surveying and Robert can continue reviewing historic aspects and also plan the work required on the Smithy at the foot of Smithy Bank. This should mean that we can ‘put to bed’ a number of aspects of the site that haven’t been fully resolved up to now.

During the past six months attention has turned to interpreting the selection of Henry Mellon charts covering slate working in the Coniston area that were passed to me when the offices and customer facilities at the Elterwater site of Burlington State were closed down. Those members of CATMHS, who are keen mining historians, will be very aware of the work carried out by Mr Mellon between 1880 and 1915. His surveying was extremely accurate which has meant that we have been able to incorporate some of his Coniston surveys onto 25” OS maps obtained

from the National Library of Scotland. A set of transcripts of oral history recordings were also included with the charts themselves and these, along with the charts, have started to give us a huge amount of new information into the development of the 'Upper Workings' on Coniston Old Man. Interpretation of all this is likely to go on for at least another year.



One of the Mellon surveys was of an underground working lower down the mountain known as the Saddlestone Quarry. This site has caused a lot of interest amongst mining historians in the past. The workings were briefly opened, without permission, by persons unknown about twenty years ago and then re-closed. The Mellon survey was carried out on February 16th 1910 and clearly shows the site as being developed. At that time a chamber floor at the further extent of the workings was already nearly 90ft higher than the portal, and a separate rise was being put in beneath this chamber, suggesting that the roof might be very close to the surface. Discussions with Donald Kelly of Coniston, now in his late 80's, gives us more information. His father, Charlie, worked in the Saddlestone Quarry and frequently warned his son that, when he grew up, he should steer clear of working there. In fact Donald did work there, but only for a short time.

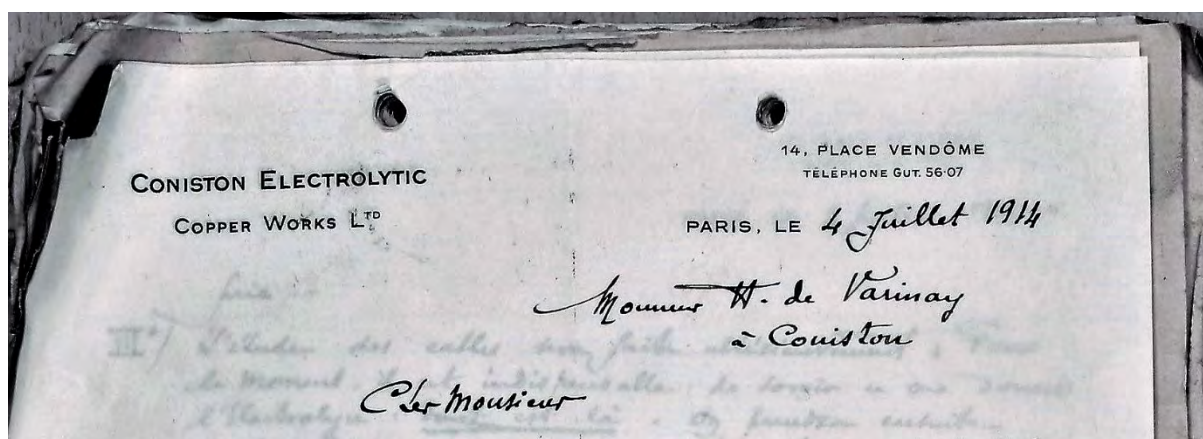
After quite a bit of exploration recently the site of the entrance has been re-located. However, any further work to re-open it in the future must NOT be carried out without full agreement of the land-owner (through their agent, Carter Jonas) and also the planning authorities. There are definitely some good reasons for a small competent team to want to re-gain access, especially as those who gained access previously were clearly not mine historians, because no details of their visit were recorded, no surveying was carried out, no identification of slate veins was recorded and no information on the methods used to drive the tunnels was obtained. A proposal is being drawn up which will be presented to Julian Lampton, at Carter Jones. A concern will be to overcome the fact that the site is very close to the main footpath up the mountain, said to be the third most popular ascent route in the Lake District.

Alastair Cameron.

Coniston Electrolytic Company letters

In the last newsletter I appealed for help to translate correspondence sent in 1913/14 from the Paris based Coniston Electrolytic Company to their manager at Coniston, Compté Henri de Bonifonte de Varinay, Three people responded:

David Hughes sent a copy of the newsletter to two friends who live in Paris. James Churton is a Brit and his partner is Belgian, They both teach English in France. The letterhead of the Coniston Electrolytic Company gives 14 Place Vendôme as its address, a very posh part of Paris, so James walked over to have a look. 'As you can see it is very grand. On the other side of the square is the Ritz Hôtel from where Diana made her last journey. I don't suppose the French company occupied the whole of the building.'



14 Place Vendôme, Paris. Photo James Churton, February 2021.

Peter Sandbach showed a copy of the newsletter to a friend, Betty King, whose sister Joyce, who has a sheep farm near Duddon Furnace, used to be a French teacher, and Rudy Devriese, our CATMHS Belgian member in Antwerp and one time member of MoLES emailed 'I had my complete school, primary/college education in French. The only problem is to give the "exact sophisticated" English translation.'

All three have been working to translate the documents, with Rudy in particular using it as a 'lockdown' project and spending time on it nearly every day. All the more remarkable when one considers that Rudy is translating between two languages, neither of which is his own!

One might think that it would be quite easy to translate information written in French into English, but that is very much not the case here. The letters we have are just one side of the correspondence, so their content and meaning isn't always clear, the handwriting is difficult, sometimes illegible, the language and phraseology of more than 100 years ago is archaic, and technical terms and relationships are sometimes obscure. Nevertheless good progress has been made and from 220 images nearly all have now been translated.

A French company, Société des Mines, set up the Coniston Electrolytic Company to process the waste dumps in Coppermines Valley in order to extract copper metal by electrolysis, a process being developed by a French company called Perreux Lloyd. Work seems to have been started on the plant at Coniston in 1912, but didn't go well, so Henri de Varinay, a mining engineer with a special interest in mineral dressing was brought in to put matters right. He didn't have an easy time!

The collection of letters and telegrams were sent from Paris to Monsieur de Varinay. The earliest is dated 29th March 1913, requesting M. de Varinay to attend an interview, and a letter of 30th April sets out his terms of employment. The last letters are dated July 1914, when the plant seems to be up and running, so the correspondence covers a period during which the works were being established and put into operation.

The translations have yet to be properly studied, but when put into chronological order they paint a picture of heavy handed remote management from Paris, a sometimes strained relationship between M. Goyard in Paris and Henri de Varinay in Coniston. Henri had to contend with considerable difficulties. The process was experimental, there seems to have been a constant shortage of money and there were a number of firms involved as subcontractors. In France there was Perreux-Lloyd and a firm called Minerals Separation, concerned with the process, and for the infrastructure in England, Wilfley installed the plant and Gilkes provided the Pelton wheel water turbines. Both these companies still exist as international suppliers.

Eric Holland, in his book 'Coniston Copper, a History', tells the story in the chapter entitled 'The Last Sad Dreams.'

The letters in French can be seen on the CATMHS website, and in due course the translations will be added. A bound paper copy will be put in the CATMHS archive at the Armitage Museum & Library in Ambleside, and the translations will be offered to the Ruskin Museum, who hold the original documents.

Ian Matheson

Cockermouth Heritage Group

In the Cumbria Local History Federation Bulletin No 85 for Spring 2021 the Cockermouth Heritage Group had an article on unwanted legal documents relating to the Cockermouth area. Some of these documents appeared to relate to mining activities and the names of Hechstetter appeared within one of the documents. The documents came from the Waugh & Musgrave Solicitors.

I followed up on this article and spoke to Gloria Edwards. She provided me with a list of the documents they had, and I asked to see five of them with a view to scanning them and trying to transcribe the earlier Hechstetter document. For want of a better reference I have called them MRO1 to MRO5. No other formal references exist for them at this time but in time when the documents are deposited at Carlisle Record Office a full reference will become available. I have placed the scanned images on the CATMHS website as pdf files.

MRO1 – A very old document on vellum with seals, August 26th 10th year of reign of Charles Ist (1634). The document comprises an Indenture with a Schedule annexed together with a Declaration sheet. Signatures with seals of tenants are included. The Indenture appears to be a rental agreement between the landowner John Maxfield and a number of farming tenants located in the Newlands Valley. The exact location of Rogerside appears to have now merged with Newlands, and the Snab is thought to be part of the Scope End or Goldscope area. Mining does not appear to be mentioned in these documents and the document relates to various tenancies in the Newlands Valley.

John Maxfield is believed to be an armourer from London who had a share of the Hechstetter lease of the Wad Mine in 1607. Clearly a long standing involvement in this area of Cumberland.

The Declaration is signed by several, amongst whom are Joseph Hechstetter and Francis Hechstetter. The Hechstetters in this context are likely to have been key businessmen in the Keswick area – probably performing the role of a solicitor and accountant; clearly they were an educated family with the legal skills necessary to draw up and authorise such documents. Joseph Hechstetter was married to John Banks's sister Joyce so the linkage to the legal system would not be unexpected.

The original document has been folded for many years and is difficult to unfold without damage. Photographs have been taken to enable a transcription but the folds confuse the work and contain words that are faded. Many words have not been transcribed and may relate to unfamiliar historic terminology or the author's handwriting which is difficult to decipher by an untrained eye.

MRO2 – An Agreement for the Lease of Mines of Barytes: James Gurney Esq (of Ireby Grange) to Concrete Materials Limited (Liverpool), ~~1917~~ 1918, includes a plan of area.

MRO3 – A Lease of Minerals under Lands at High Ireby, Dame Margaret Maxwell Vane (Hutton in the Forest) to Messrs Keeble & Jellett, August 1911. Term 50 years, Rent £50.

MRO4 – An Abstract of Title of the Thornthwaite Mines Ltd., Thornthwaite, near Keswick, to Freehold hereditaments known as Beckstones Farm situate in the Parishes of Above Derwent & Lorton, 1923, plus plan; Draft Conveyance of a Messuage or Dwellinghouse with farm buildings and several closes of land situate at and being Beckstones, Thornthwaite, 1923, plus plan; letter to Waugh & Musgrave re Thornthwaite Mines Ltd. in Liquidation, 1923.

MRO5 - Particulars and Conditions of Sale of an Estate at Murton, Lamplugh, Four lots 19th September 1887, Joseph Dickinson deceased – includes Royal Oak and land, tenant Thomas Thwaites Daniel Rogers and William Jackson; Agreement or Take Note of Lead and Iron Mines at Murton Hole, Lamplugh, Joseph Dickinson and Thomas Massicks, 1879.

Colin Woollard.

The Friends of the Ullswater Way

This is a local group whose aim is to celebrate all that makes the Ullswater Valley special – the grandeur and beauty of its landscape, its history and traditions, the people who live and work here and those who are and have been inspired by the area. CATMHS support this project in principle. FOUW is building an online knowledge bank about the history of the Ullswater Valley and mining and quarrying is an important part of that history. Greenside Lead Mine was the largest mine in the valley and had a big impact on the social, economic and environmental development of the area. There are many other smaller and less well known mines and quarries and the valley is peppered with trials (such as Swarthbeck, Blowick, Dubhow and Deedale).

Can you write a piece about an aspect of the Mining history of the Ullswater Valley? This is an appeal for people who are able and willing to contribute an article and images about an aspect of the mining history of the Ullswater Valley. If you think you may be able to help here, please contact Tim Clarke, the Chair of FOUW on timclarke01@gmail.com

Topics required include:

General introductory article about Mining in the Ullswater Valley.

History of Mining in the Ullswater Valley: Roman, Elizabethan, Victorian, Today.

Types of Mining in Ullswater: Slate, Lead, Silver, Copper, etc.

Notable mines in the Ullswater Valley: Greenside, Hartsop, Hartsop Hall, Eagle Crag, Caudale and Place Fell (slate), Swarthbeck and Deepdale (iron), Blowick and Dubhow (Baryte), Ruthwaite, Myers Head, Pasture beck, Dodd End, Hagg End, Hoggett Gill, Caisten Glen, Kirkstone pass, Watermillock.

Greenside: history, production, markets, ownership, closure.

Greenside: Galena and other minerals.

Greenside: Processing lead ore, transportation of ore, smelting, processing, marketing, what to do with the waste/tailings).

Greenside – Innovations: electric power of pumps.

Greenside- Project Orpheus.

Greenside: The Keppel dam disaster.

Greenside: Mining communities, labour from Cornwall, Italy, Germany, Austria, etc.

Greenside: Mining songs, culture, traditions, education, income, health, housing. A day in the life of a miner.

Greenside – Mining and Methodism.

Greenside and developments in Glenridding.

The murder of Thomas Grisedale.

Cornish miners in the North Pennines

For centuries the Moors and Valleys of the North Pennines were very sparsely populated as few people could make a living in these wild and remote places. This was certainly true of the Upper Derwent Valley that forms the border between Northumberland and County Durham. But as more and more lead veins were discovered in this area and demand for this metal increased along with its value, people began to move here to take up jobs in the mines. As the technology and capital employed in the mines grew, so did their scale. In the first few decades of the 1800's the population of the small Parishes of Hunstanworth and Blanchland increased many fold and carried on growing until a thousand people lived in the valley where less than a hundred had done so before. These people came from Scotland, Yorkshire, Flintshire and Devon. But the largest group of incomers were "The Cornies". Cornwall is as far away from Hunstanworth as you can get without boarding a ship. But the men of Cornwall had mining in their blood and to feed their families they had to travel to find paying work.

As the tin and copper mines in Cornwall began to decline, there was lead aplenty in the North Pennines so the Cornish trekked the five hundred miles north. They would have felt in a very foreign land in these cold, wet hills, many miles from the coast. They brought a different way of life, a different vocabulary and a huge wealth of knowledge about mining techniques and machinery. The small scale lead mining that had taken place in the area in the 18th century now saw the development of a complex system of water management, huge waterwheels, deep shafts, crushing mills and smelters. It was the Cornish who designed, built and managed the complex infrastructure that developed to operate these mines at scale. But whilst the chief protagonist had learnt his trade in Cornwall, he was actually a native of Norwich. This was John Taylor, the pre-eminent Mining Engineer of his day. It was his vision, boldness and mastery of the science of mining that created the master plan for these mines for most of the 19th Century.

The arrival of such a large number of migrant workers and their families was bound to create tensions, especially when the lead mines began their gradual decline in the second half of the 19th century. On several occasions this tension was to turn into violence. ne example was in November 1866, when a disagreement with landlord George Mawson in the Miner's Arms Pub at Baybridge on the Derwent degenerated into a full-scale riot. A group of "Cornies" felt that the Landlord was more hospitable to the "locals" than them, and they kicked off, causing a huge amount of damage to the Pub and injuries to the local drinkers. Lead smelter George Wilkinson of Ramshaw and miner Joseph Murray of Jeffrey's Rake had gone into the pub for a quiet pint, when the mob burst in and started wrecking the place. They both suffered head injuries in the riot, but managed to make a run for it to the nearby police station at Blanchland to get PC Beattie. Amateur poet George Carr takes up the tale in his poem "Bonnie Blanchland":

When Beattie came upon the scene,
They threw him on the fire:
The blue-coat servant of the Queen
No reverence could inspire.

He reasoned thus: If numbers great
Gives them the upper hand,
I'll go to Blanchland, and checkmate
Them with a bigger band.

Then soon the scene was chang'd, and those
Who valiant were before,
Fell down before their victors' blows,
Besmeared with streaming gore.

Now, why the Cornies acted so
I may not tell you now,
But ever after this, you know,
'Twas called the "Cornie Row."

Eight Cornish miners, including Joseph Trethewey, William Trewartha and Bennett Toy, appeared at Hexham Court charged with... "having riotously assembled... so as to disturb the peace and with injuring and damaging the Miners' Arms Public House at Baybridge."



Shildon Engine House

One surviving example of the technology brought from Cornwall is the Shildon Engine House near Blanchland. The Engine House, completed around 1806, was built in the Cornish style. It used a huge Boulton and Watt steam engine to pump water up from the deep levels in the mines. The Engine House still stands as a testament to an industrial boom period when technological developments, working practices and many people moved from the tin and copper mines of Cornwall to the Lead Mines of the North Pennines, where the Cornish term 'Captain' for mining agent would become familiar for generations.

Mark Hatton

Hardendale Quarry

As lockdown measures started to relax and Liz was itching to use her drone, I suggested that we should have a look at Hardendale Limestone Quarry near Shap. Many times as I travelled up and down the M6 I remembered seeing the large dump trucks coming from the quarry along the road to the works across the motorway, and had often wondered about the quarry.

So, in late March, we set off up the M6 from Carnforth, came off at the Shap junction and headed for the village where we turned off and followed the road towards the quarry. I had not realised that this would take us round to the quarry. Parking up, Liz's drone was soon up in the air while I had a look down at the quarry, which was just mind blowing in size. It was partially flooded and you could see the ramp going down into the flooded depths that the trucks would have used. The site is so large it is difficult to get an aerial shot of the complete site.



We have extracted the following from the internet:

Brief History of Shapfell Quarry and Works

Shapfell Quarry (previously known as Hardendale Quarry)

Colvilles of Glasgow opened the quarry in 1962, the limestone being used to supply the Scottish steel industry. In 1967 Colvilles was taken over by British Steel. In 1972 three Maerz kilns were installed at Shapfell Works for the production of calcinated soft burnt lime. This product was required for the new Basic Oxygen Steel-making process. In 1990 various improvements were made to the limestone and lime handling system and a fourth kiln was built. British Steel merged with Koninklijke Hoogovens to form Corus Group in October 1999. In January 2007, Tata Steel, part of India's Tata group, purchased a 100% stake in the Corus Group.

Shapfell Quarry comprises approximately 120 hectares of land made up as follows: the proposed extension area, the existing haul roads and lagoons, restored areas and areas in aftercare, areas that have been quarried in the past and out of aftercare, and areas not proposed for development.

Planning permissions to quarry expired in 2009. Some quarrying had already taken place below the water table without permission, and during this time water was pumped out of the quarry via settling ponds into Force Beck. In 2009 due to planning permissions expiring, extraction operations were mothballed at Shapfell Quarry. Since then the kilns at Shapfell Works have been fed by limestone imported from Hanson's Shap Beck Quarry, located to the north of Shap.

Although the quarry stated in 2008 that they would be unable to run the kilns for more than two years without the input of limestone from the Shapfell quarry site, they have been able to continue production to the present day (2014) through sourcing other limestone. It is not possible for the quarry to be extended laterally and the proposed development is for a vertical extension, thus deepening part of the existing quarry.

<https://shapfellquarryconcerns.wordpress.com/concerns>

Around 2014, the company submitted a planning application to extract the Limestone below the water table, which met with much local opposition on environmental grounds and extraction was finished. In 2018 an application was submitted to vary the restoration of the quarry, seemingly mainly due to the large "lake" which has now formed in the quarry.



Warren Allison and Liz Withey.

Brae Fell Mine

The mine is located on the eastern side of Brae Fell near Fellside, Caldbeck. It has two large hushes (but not on the scale of those in the Pennines) and two smaller diagonal ones which are the finest examples in the Lake District. This method of prospecting was apparently outlawed in 1800 due to the pollution it was causing to rivers.



View of the mine from near Birk Gill

The large hushes have substantial dams at the top, but no obvious supply of water. However, one day in the early 1990's a group of us were having a wander around above the dams and found leats running towards Dry Smale Gill to the south. Walking these leats we found others diverting off into the peat bog and this suggested that the old men were using the peat as a reservoir, a bit like a sponge. Returning back to the northern dam we wondered if the same had happened going north and we soon stumbled upon a leat coursing round the fellside. Again, every so often there would be branches into the peat, but the main leat continued round the front of the fell and ended up on the western side of the fell in Charlton Gill, ending in the beck just below a small mine where there were remains of a weir.

The mine also has small shafts and pits on the side of the southern leat, two levels with fair sized tips between the two large hushes, a suspected shaft from the top level coming out into the northern hush, a substantial stone ore chute below the lower level to the remains of a large building for dressing the ore,((and lower down the fell the remains of a "mine shop(?)". I also suspect that there could be the remains of another dressing floor by the side of the Dale Beck coming down from Roughtongill, as there appears to be walling in that area and crushed mineral.

Little is known about the history of the mine. W.T. Shaw in "Mining in the Lake Counties" says that the Red Gill Mining Company had two men clear the levels out in 1866. Ian Tyler in "Roughtongill and the Mines of the Caldbeck Fells" states that in June 1841 John Taylor confirmed that two-day levels had already been driven. In April 1865 a 21-year lease was granted to Mr William Smith, but by 1866 it was under the ownership of the Red Gill Mining Company who worked the mine until at least 1869. In 1878 Joseph Blackburn, John Fawcett

and Joseph Whitefield took over the mine, but by 1882 Messers Armstrong had taken on the lease. During March 1888, Mr F Nevill requested a three year Take Note, but it is unknown if this was successful. The last company to show any interest was in 1902 by a Birmingham based syndicate who were also looking at working Red Gill Mine.

In October 1993 permission was granted by the LDNPA (as land owner) to Mines of Lakeland Exploration Society (MOLES) to dig out the upper level, where it was hoped that if there was a shaft between the two levels it would be possible to drop down it onto the lower level.



An average of ten members turned up on a weekly basis and by early December the entrance was open; the dig by this time was some thirty feet deep at the front, fifteen feet wide and twenty yards long.

Old Pete Blezard, Martin Carter, Roger Ramsden, Norman Thompson.



Colin Woolard, Norman Thompson, Old Pete Blezard, Ian Millar, Pete Sedgewick.



Norman Thompson and Old Pete Blezard moving a large boulder with Colin Woolard looking on.



Level finally open.

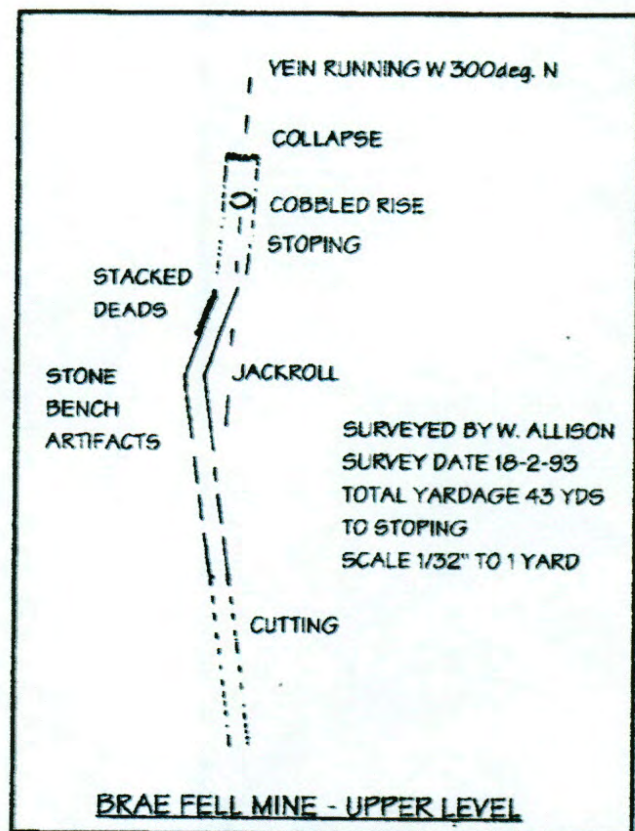
Pete Sedgewick, Andrew Woolard (in his younger days), Old Pete Blezard, Ian Millar, Colin Woolard, Ted Finnegan, Warren Allison, Norman Thompson.



The level was dry and had not been railed, but wheelbarrows had been used. After about 36 yards, the level turned slightly to the right, and here was a stone bench with a clay pipe, chisel hammer heads and felt hat on it. Carrying on for a further 12 yards the ground ahead was totally collapsed. I climbed the rubble slope which appeared to have been a stope, as there was evidence of timbering which had been backfilled, and after 10 feet could see a cobbled rise.



Climbing up a further 6 feet a short sub-level ran back towards the entrance for six yards. Another 12 feet higher, I got to the top of the rise and entered the upper reaches of the stope where the vein was about ten feet wide running west 300 degrees north, composed of quartz with traces of pyromorphite. The stope carried on for another twelve yards until a run from surface (the shaft in the northern hush) halted further progress. The level entrance was then backfilled, and permission was obtained to dig out the lower entrance.



On Boxing day 1994, a small team consisting of Ian Tyler, Old Pete Blezard, Martin Carter and myself started the dig and soon water was coming out from the front, which disappeared. My theory was that the water had been stored in the dam of the northern hush fed into the shaft in it, through the workings to the lower level and then down the fell to wash the ore at the dressing floor.



Day one.



Day 2 with water starting to flow copiously.

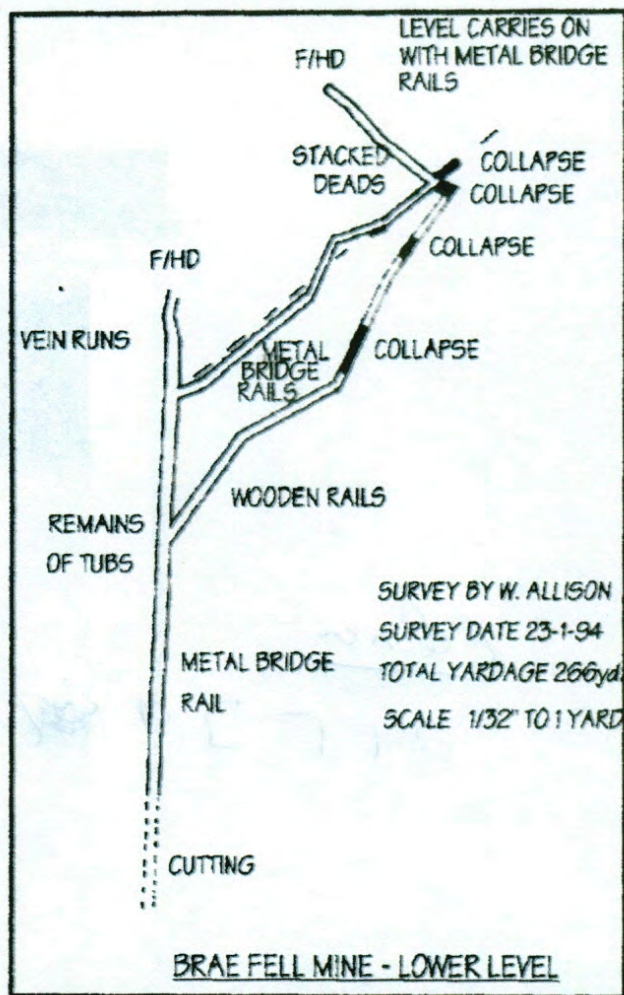
After several visits, a large hole was opened up and the original stone walls on either side of the level were exposed. When we got the entrance open it was into four feet of water. Martin Carter, Roger Ramsden, Myke Pocock and myself eased our bodies flinchingly into the icy cold water (this was winter). The level followed a westerly course until it split after 44 yards, where there was the remains of an old tub.



Draining the level



Level open with four feet of water in it.



Main drive



Junction to the right-hand side with tub standing on the left hand wall

Following the right-hand branch which followed a weak vein mainly composed of Quartz we went over one collapse and on the other side wooden rails were still down at 22-inch gauge. After a further 15 yards was a major collapse, which after an hour and a half we had dug through. I climbed up over it and walked down the level until it split again with the right-

hand branch going 27 yards to a forehead. The left-hand branch had water running on the floor and metal bridge type rail was in place, again of 22" gauge, after a further 60 yards the level split again with the right-hand branch coming to a forehead after 18 yards. Walking down the left-hand branch, I found myself back at the junction with the tub and re-joined the others.



Remains of a tub



Metal rail still in-situ

We decided to drop the water level by a foot and a half for the older members and after a couple of weeks, returned back underground. I asked Pete Blezard (younger) if he would come and have a look at the last collapse and we managed to get on to the top of it and could see the level going on below. We decided that it would be possible to make it safe to get down the other side, unfortunately MOLES decided that it was time to close the entrance up and so we were unable to put our plan to work.



Warren Allison, Martin Carter, Norman Thompson, Roger Ramsden, Pete Sedgewick, Old Pete Blezard digging to lower the water level



Norman Thompson and Pete Sedgewick clearing boulders



If we had not had to close up the entrance, Pete and I know we could have got over the last collapse and possibly uncovered the last secrets of this interesting mine. It appears that the bottom level was certainly worked at two different periods with the main drive and first right-hand branch (with the wooden rail) being the older section. It is possible the level with the metal rail was driven by the Red Gill Mining Company to bypass the collapses on the right-hand branch and in better ground.

Back-filling started over the drain to lower the water.



Back-filling well underway.

Much of the above is from my article in the MOLES newsletter Number 7, June 1994.

Warren Allison.

Articles in the Cumbria magazine from 1958

The Cumbria magazine (separate to the larger Cumbria Life magazine) has been published monthly for over seventy years and has included many articles on mining and quarrying over the years. I recently purchased one from March 1958 which had the following articles on “There’s industry in Lakeland”, “Cumbria Iron from Norman to Victorian Times”, “Photographs from Honister quarry and “Quarrying in Little Langdale”. I have reproduced them apart from the article about Iron as it was too long for this newsletter. Warren Allison.

There’s industry in Lakeland.

It is a matter of surprise to many visitors to Lakeland to discover from time to time an industry in full swing within the sight of the mountains which provide a playground for holiday makers. Sometimes the discovery is disconcerting, as can be the Greenside mines at Glenridding to the fell-walker, in search of peace and mountain beauty. Sometimes, the discovery adds an interest to the countryside when it reveals an age-old craft like the working of slate or the cultivation and use of coppice wood. Many of these industries are as much a part of this area as the lakes and mountains themselves; the Cumbrian iron industry, like mining, has a long and stimulating history behind it, quarrying is almost literally “as old as the hills”, the use of live wood in a hundred ways and of burnt wood, too, in charcoal manufacture are traditional here.

For a full appreciation of the Lake District, we must recognise that there is a unity between the traditional industries and its dales. As Norman Nicholson has pointed out, these traditional industries “have always had a clear relation to the land”; slate, lead, coal, iron from the rock; milk, mutton, wool, timber, from the soil; fish from the seas and the lakes”. In addition, of course, very many incoming craftsmen have found the Lakeland setting an ideal one for the practise of their skill with the holiday visitors providing a ready market.

Many varieties.

We have occasionally recorded details about this other aspect of Lakeland and have noted here many forgotten - and often previously unrecorded - stories of industries and crafts and trades, some of which have vanished, others have developed more recently. There are many Lakeland residents who are unaware of the number and variety of trades and industries carried on in and around the larger centres like Carlisle and Kendal and along the western coastline of Lakeland.

In this issue, which appears just before the start of the holiday season which brings so many thousands of visitors to these parts, we devote a large proportion of our space to typical examples of the Lake District - the iron industry, Honister slate, quarrying in Little Langdale and the work of a Penrith craftsman.

If Lakeland was just a playground, without the background of a vigorous and independent people, it would lose a great deal of its interest. It would just become a show piece, lacking life and rapidly losing that link with human growth and history which, as Ruskin pointed out many years ago, transforms even natural beauty into a living reality.

So long as these hills and dales are not submerged in unplanned sprawl and the wanton spoliation of the scene, industry and beauty can well go hand in hand.

Quarrying days in Little Langdale. By Peter Cragg.

The quarrymen were a sturdy, independent breed and their large families seemed to thrive even though only 30/- was coming into the house each week.

About five o'clock one grey evening many years ago, two horse-drawn carts rumbled into Little Langdale laden with furniture. The Bownass family - parents and eight children was returning to its native district after a spell in Borrowdale, during which Mr. Bownass had been blacksmith at the green slate quarries on the heights of Honister. The carts were dusty, and the horses walked wearily. The journey had begun at Keswick 13 hours before, and in those days the roads were unmetalled. Meanwhile, a young member of the family, John Bownass, had walked over Stake Pass with a man who lodged with them. John Bownass, now 74 years old, lived at No.4, Fitzstep Cottage, Little Langdale, the house in which his family settled after their long journey around the mountains. Both his grandfather (John) and father (George Kirby) were born at Elterwater and wore the blacksmiths apron.

John himself became a quarryman, and he was only twelve years old when he started his career at Honister. For two years he was an office boy at a shilling a day, and then he began to serve his apprenticeship as a slate river. An accident at the quarry kept him in hospital for 12 months. He was 16 ½ when he resumed work again. Those were the days of no work, no pay. When John Bownass was "out of his time" he received 5s. for a full working day, and he was thankful to have it, for the average wage in those days was 4/6. The quarries lay over two miles from home and he began his slate riving at 7 a.m. Work ended at 5-30 p.m., and it was followed by a long walk home again. There were holidays, but without pay. The men had a few days off at Easter and Christmas, and usually they were thankful to be back at work again, earning the money they so badly needed.

Between two and three hundred men were employed at Honister in those days, and the slate was carted to Keswick station by horse and cart. The company owned 17 horses and 17 carts, and the carts were braked on the steep hill down to Borrowdale by the tightening of a screw on the axle tree. The carters could only manage one journey a day.

John Bownass and his fellow rivers produced four slates from every inch of good rock, and the job was done entirely by hand. "Rock was bad to handle in winter when the frost was on", John recalls. "It used to nip your finger ends and make them sore".

In Little Langdale, after six years at Honister, he kept up his intimate association with quarrying. The green slate was being quarried at many places on the fells, and there was a quarry population of about two hundred. Most of them arranged bargains with the quarry owners and were paid so much a ton, with allowances made for quality and, on the other hand, reductions for ammunition and other necessities used in the work.

The best slate was of varied quality. There was best slate, seconds, best pegs and second peg. The roughest slate was called "Tom". John Bownass recalls that during one month two men and himself did well, for the weather was fine. "We made about 6s. 4d. a day, but when the month end came the boss came along with his hammer and knocked our price down. If you were making 5s, a day you were alright". "Day men" in the quarries usually received 4/6. Horse-drawn carts transported the newly quarried rock to the railway stations at Windermere and Coniston. The carters could manage two journeys to Coniston in a day, but only one journey to Windermere.

The quarrymen were a sturdy, independent breed, and their large families seem to thrive even though only 30/= was coming into each house for the week. Slate was bringing the quarry owner between £7 and £10 a ton, but trade slackened when many cheaper roofing materials were marketed. It has only rallied in recent years, and the green slate of Westmorland is now used extensively for the facing of buildings, as well as for roofing purposes.

The quarrymen worked hard and played hard. Quoits was a popular game for the evenings, and dances were held at which music would be provided by a man with a melodion or fiddle. Dancing continued well into the next day. There was also the diversion provided by fox-hunting. Both Anthony Chapman and William Porter came to the district with their hounds, and the quarrymen quietly slipped from their work for a day's sport. "One day the boss saw the men moving from the quarry and he shouted: 'Has them yowling things com'd again?' Quarrying had its moments of pleasure and humour, but it was a hard life - hard indeed for those families who lost men through accidents and had to live on the small compensation paid by the quarry owners.

Many quarries are still being worked in Lakeland. But since John Bownass was a young man conditions have improved out of all recognition and machines have been devised to cut most of the heavy work. Yet he never once suggested to me that the had been born too soon.



A dresser trims the slates to their final shapes. A stack of finished slates can be seen on the left.



The slate leaves the quarry on Honister for the splitting sheds. Here it is reaved and dressed.

These Men Handle Green Slate



PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ROBERT WELFORD

on the Breezy Heights of Honister

Honister green slate being prepared for the saw which cuts it into handy pieces.



A reaver splits the slate to the correct thickness, and then the slate passes to the dressing floor.



Ambrosius Hochstetter.

One of the first 'German' (Central Alps and others upland) trading houses to settle in Antwerp was the one from the Hochstetter brothers from Augsburg. The two brothers, Ambrosius and Jan, were already living in Antwerp since 1486. On the 22nd of November of the same year, they bought the premises "De Plancke", until then owned by Jan Danneels, a cloth manufacturer. It was a huge house and warehouses, with its main entrance to Kipdorp (*still a main street in Antwerp*).

Two years later Ambrosius and Hans bought the property next to them, owned by Jan van Lyere. The following years, and this until 1529, they extended their landholding between *Kipdorp* and *Lange Nieuwstraat*. Their property from *Markgravestraat*, with its own houses, the cloth manufactures chapel, the Sint Niklaas court and chapel, all this was one big plot owned by the Hochstetters. They had built a distinguished rich residence and extended it with a 'beautiful tower'.

It is true; the Hochstetters brothers made Antwerp the centre of their activities and their luxuriance. A chronicler from Augsburg narrated that Ambrosius Hochstetter was able to visit the Archduke Maximilian in his prison in Bruges, where he promised to give him enough money to satisfy the Bruges authorities. The bond with Maximilian gave them the opportunity to settle and have their activities in his most important cities, including Antwerp.

In their time the Hochstetters were shameless, impudent, monopolistic people who tended to bring together big capital in order to buy all kinds of goods, if necessary above the normal value, and in the end sell them at a much higher price. Their trading activities were in India and in the first years of the XVI century they had a second line in spice trade of all kind, chiefly pepper, and this mainly between Lisbon and Antwerp.

A contemporary (Sender) wrote: '... sovereigns, monarchs, counts, gentleman, commoners, farmers, servants, all lent money to Ambrosius Hochstetter, whatever amount it was, and he did pay them five percent' (very little for that time). Many farm labourers with no more than ten guilders were convinced that their money was safe. This is why Ambrosius Hochstetter, for quite some time, possessed over a million guilders. It served him to price-fix not only for worldwide articles but also small common goods such as wood, wine and grain. More than once, he bought the whole stock so that he could raise the price in every country.

It is impossible to check how far this negative reputation is justified. Further reading reveals that Ambrosius partners complained about unfair dole out. (1517)

The glorious years of the Hochstetters were between 1512 to almost 1526. They were the silver kings and copper barons in Tyrol, the financially mighty in Antwerp. The company were now called "Ambrosius and Hans Hochstetter Brothers and Fellows". From 1526 onwards their credentials are lost. According to their trade with England from 1527, they seem to have seized all kind of new industries in order to save the business. They became the great moneylenders for the privileged upper class in the Low Countries, against the Fuggers. However, the latter will destroy them not long after!

Lazarus Tucher, the man of the pepper and later of the high finances, was to be the successor of the Hochstetters. In 1529 all the Hochstetter properties were confiscated and sold. In 1532 the Antwerp council drew a street through the middle of that property and named it “Hochstetterstreet” This lasted for quite a long time until its name was changed, now *Beurzestraat*! The contemporary regretted the destruction of the so beautiful court and tower.

In 1529 Ambrosius Hochstetter begged Fugger for financial help; 100,000 guilders were needed, but it failed. Lazarus Tucher laid hands on all the Hochstetter properties in Antwerp. An agreement between creditors and the Hochstetters came about in 1530, but the affected never recovered. Nothing more is heard or known from Ambrosius.

Rudy Devriese, Antwerp.

Camping Platform on Honister Crag!



A new planned feature to add to Honister Slate Mine’s list of extreme attractions is the Camping Platform designed to allow two people to spend a night together on the face of the Crag. Included is warm protective equipment, lighting, all the necessary belay equipment to ensure the night-time passes safely and a Booths hamper containing food and drink. The platform is accessed by abseiling down from the route of the Via Ferrata directly above.

The Mine Explorers Poem, by Tony Holland

In thru the portal crawling past the dead sheep,
Trying to keep our chins above the water so deep,
The holes in the floor were not there before,
Flooded sumps are a breeze when there's new ground to explore.

The chamber of death waits for victims to kill
With its hanging boulders, it's part of the thrill.
Along the tunnel of horror, where the floor is collapsing
We are sure we can hear the ghosts of old miners laughing.

Thru the tightest of squeezes, you had better breathe in.
Except the oxygen here is getting ever so thin.
Is that Sulphur Dioxide or has somebody farted?
A nice dose of Radon, and we have only just started.

We get to the shaft, the bottomless pit,
Fig 8 descenders are our best bit of kit.
Our rope is so ancient it's almost a crime,
But we got it off eBay so it's got to be fine!

The light from my torch is getting quite low.
If I had some spare batteries I could brighten the glow
My emergency candle has never been lit
Good job really, cos my lighter is shit!

The rub points are nasty, and the rope is well scarred
But the hangers have held, their rust was so hard.
At the base of the shaft the rope is too short,
With no knot to stop me I slide off onto the floor.

In the level of horror, we are finally at the bottom
The stemples that are left are looking definitely rotten.
Shivering with cold while we listen to rock falls
Is the way out still open and the route not forgotten?

And if we get out, the angry farmer awaits.
Shotgun up the arse is the mine trespassers fate.
But we've been here before, and it's nothing we fear,
'Cos we are Mine Explorers and adventure is here!

CUMBRIA AMENITY TRUST MINING HISTORY SOCIETY

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