

# GAZETTEER OF TIN AND LEAD ORE DRESSING SITES IN GREAT BRITAIN

Marilyn Palmer and Peter Neaverson

## INTRODUCTION

Further to our earlier article in the Bulletin (Bull. PDMHS, Vol. 10, No. 6, 1989 pp.316-53) a number of additional sites have now been located and supplementary information obtained for others. We are grateful to Richard Lamb for drawing our attention to certain Yorkshire sites, and Lynn Willies for further Derbyshire sites.

## CORNWALL CALLINGTON DISTRICT

HARROWBARROW, PRINCE OF WALES SHAFT, SX 400706. Approached from the A390 road west of Gunnislake. Rotative beam engine house, stone breaker and stamp-axle supports.

## CAMBORNE AND REDRUTH DISTRICT

KING EDWARD MINE (SOUTH CONDURROW), SW 663389. Approached from Troon, SE of Camborne. This mine is the training centre for the Camborne School of Mines and Tony Brooks has been responsible for the reconstruction of a demonstration early twentieth century dressing plant which includes a battery of Californian stamps, shaking tables and a Cornish frame.

## CUMBRIA

NENTHEAD, NY 784433. In the original gazetteer this site was inadvertently placed in County Durham and the work was actually carried out under the auspices of Cumbria County Council.

## DEVON

BECKAMOOR COMBE, SX 535757. Approached from B3357 road from Tavistock to Two Bridges. An extensive area of medieval and post-medieval tinstreaming works which is being surveyed by the Dartmoor Tinworking Research Group. There are obvious remains of a tinner's hut, rectangular buddles and settling pits. See DTRG. Newsletter No. 2, January 1992.

DEVON GREAT CONSOLS, SX 425735. On the east bank of the River Tamar, an extensive arsenic works with prominent chimney stack. The site is heavily forested and is difficult to approach on account of heavy metal contamination. Most of the remaining buildings are listed and include the ruins of two Brunton calciners, a bottle furnace, crusher, arsenic mill and an extensive condenser system linked to the remote chimney stack. The site was surveyed early in 1989 by Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit led by A.R. Pye and T. Dixon (*Devon Archaeological Society Proceedings* No. 47, 1989).

WHEAL FRIENDSHIP, SX 506795. Approached from a minor road east of the village of Mary Tavy, Another extensive arsenic works which is heavily overgrown. There are remains of calciners, condensing chambers and flue.

GAWTON, SX 452689. On private land on the east bank of the River Tamar, with its own riverside quay. Extensive remains both of the mine and several phases of arsenic works, which were scheduled in 1986. The buildings include a crusher house, Brunton calciners, refinery furnace, flue system and a leaning chimney stack. It was surveyed in 1988 by the Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit. A report has been published, which was awarded the AIA's Fieldwork and Recording Award in 1990 and an article will be published in *Industrial Archaeology Review*, Vol. XV, No. 1 (1992).

MERRIVALE. SX 553 768, 783, 767. Approached from the A390 road between Tavistock and Two Bridges near Merrivale stone quarry. Dartmoor National Park have protected part of the area which includes archaeological remains from the Bronze Age to the seventeenth century. These include three tin blowing houses beside the River Walkham, The Dartmoor Tinworking Research Group under the direction of Sandy Gerrard and Tom Greeves are excavating the upper mill which contains a tin blowing furnace, a stamping mill and mortar stones and a rectangular buddle. See *DTRG Newsletter* No 2 January 1992. Other remains of the Dartmoor Tin Industry are described by Tom Greeves in *Devon Archaeology* No. 3, 1985.

## DERBYSHIRE

BEANS AND BACON MINE, BONSALL MOOR. SK255593 (area). Remains of stone-lined buddles and waste slime-heaps etc.

BONSALL LEYS SK267575. Approached by footpath from the Slayley Winstar Road, at the eastern edge of the large enclosure. Large triangular-plan, stone-lined, sloping buddle, with associated small slime ponds in groove of open rake.

HIGH LOFT MINE, MATLOCK. SK 292588. Underground remains of log-washers, used 1950s and 60s, for fluorspar treatment.

HORSEBUTTOCKS AND WINSTER PITTS MINES, WINSTER. SK 247603 to 245606. Underground hutching (jigging) and buddling equipment, with associated waste. See Penney, D. and Dixon, E.M. 1990 *Horsebuttocks and Winstar Pitts Mines, Winstar. Bull. PDMHS. Vol. 11, No. 2, pp.63-71.*

KNOWLES MINE, MATLOCK SK286592. Second World War and after dressing plant remains for fluorspar and lead minerals.

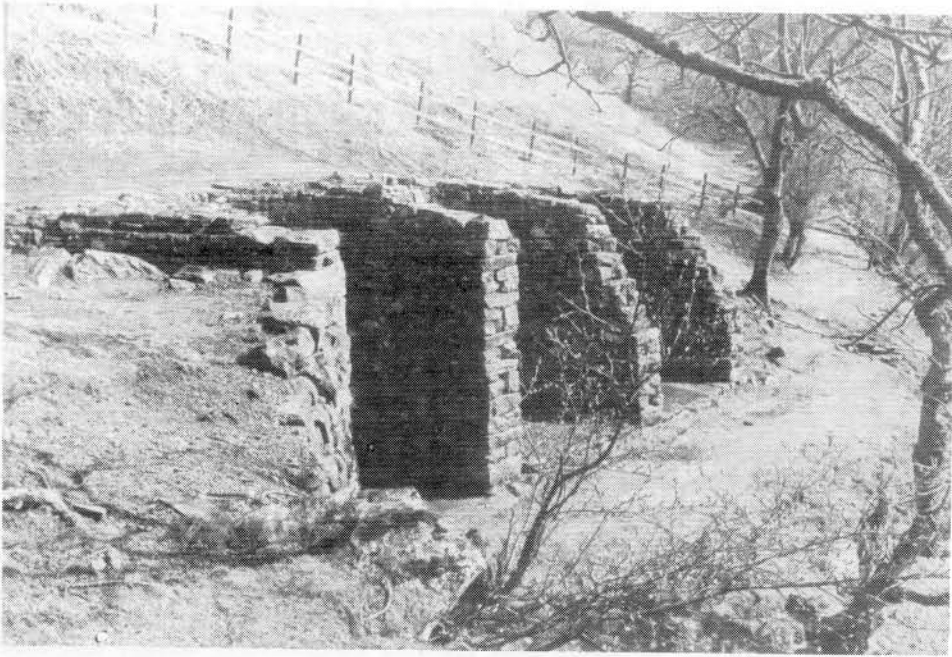
LOW MINE, BONSALL. SK284583. Second World War remains of concrete floors for dressing of fluorspar and lead minerals.

MILLCLOSE MINE, DARLEY DALE. SK261623. Remains of concrete building which housed the mine dressing plant, with waste tips, part of overhead tramway etc. Access: permission of H.J. Enthoven Ltd. required. See Willies, Lynn; Gregory, Keith; and Parker, Harry. 1989 *Millclose: The Mine That Drowned*. Scarthin Books, Cromford.

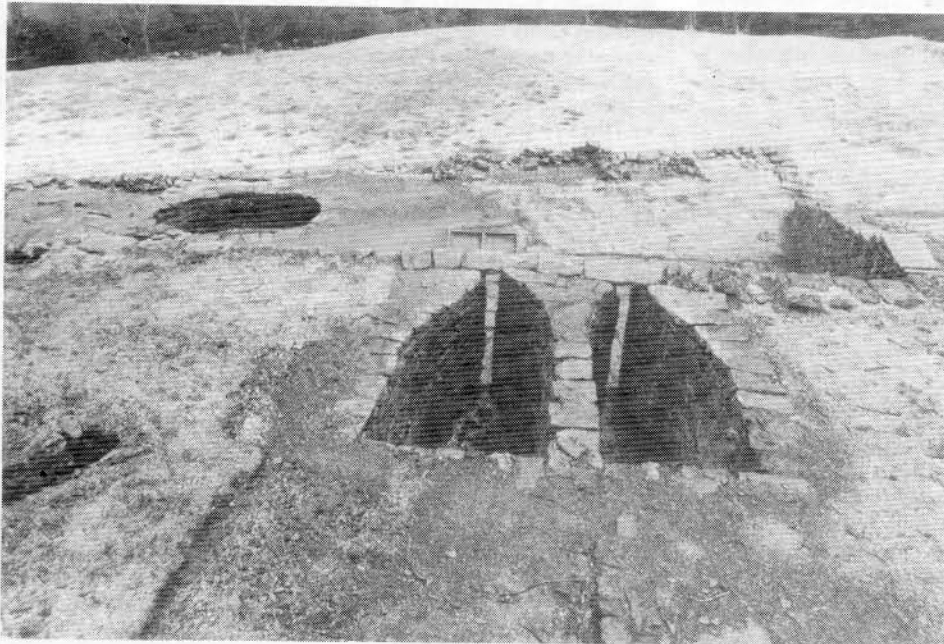
MOULDRIDGE MINE, PIKEHALL, DERBYSHIRE. SK 194595. Blake-type crusher, jigs, and other equipment formerly placed underground, now largely removed to the Crich PDMHS. Exhibit. See Pearce, A; Ludditt, R; Straw, M; Taylor, W; Watson, J. and Watson, R. 1984 *Mouldridge Mine, Pikehall, Derbyshire. Bull. PDMHS. Vol. 9, No. 2, pp108-22.*

ORCHARD MINE, WINSTER (WESTON SHAFT) SK 239604 Underground hutching and buddling equipment. Survey and report being undertaken.

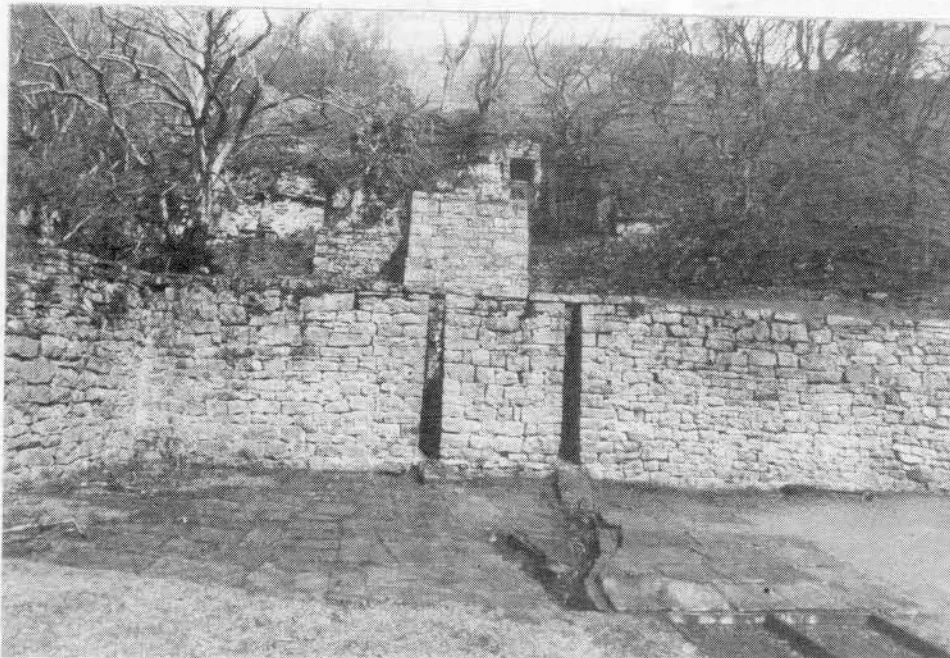
TEARSALL MINE, WENSLEY. SK 262600. Underground chambers with sieving and buddling equipment. Now destroyed by fluorspar open-working. Photographs and plans in L. Willies Collection, and see Flindall, Roger. 1974 *A Survey of a Mine in Tearsal Rough, Wensley. Bull. PDMHS. Vol. 5, Pt. 6, pp.373-382* for location of washing floors on the mine plan.



**Plate 1. Beldi Hill,  
Yorkshire: Bouse teams.**



**Plate 2. Beldi Hill: Boat  
shaped classifiers with  
dressing floor below.**



**Plate 3. Beldi Hill: In the  
foreground, the paved  
dressing floor, with channels  
running from the vertical slots  
in the classifiers to settling  
tanks.**

## YORKSHIRE

APEDALE\*, SE 019945. On East Bolton Moor, approached by track from the minor road from Grinton to Redmire. Remains of two dressing floors with water courses and wheelpits.

BELDI HILL (PLATE HOLE) DRESSING FLOOR, NY 90300071. Permission to visit this site must be obtained from the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The remains include bouse teams, a crushing wheelpit and weights and some unique boat-shaped structures which probably contained a button-hole launder in the vertical front slots and were used as classifiers. Below these is a flagged dressing floor, settling pits, a dumb buddle and the remains of a buddle or Cornish round frame.

CONONLEY, SD 979461. Approached from Cononley village, west off the A629 road south of Skipton. A spectacular site where the mine dumps are crowned by an engine house which contained an in-house rotative beam engine. The site is in the care of the Earby Mines Research Group. The early dressing floors are buried under waste tips in the adjacent valley, but there are remains of bases for shaking tables from an early twentieth century reworking of the mine beside the engine house. See M.C. Gill. (No date but 1988?) *The Yorkshire and Lancashire Lead Mines*. British Mining No 33.

HURST PRYES LEVEL\*, SE 066025. Approached from minor road to Hurst off Marske to Fremington road. Remains include bouse teams, wheel pit and tramway. See L.O. Tyson 1989 *A History of the Manor and Lead Mines of Marrick, Swaledale*. British Mining No 38.

LOVER GILL, SD 878964. Can be seen from the Buttertubs Pass road south of Muker. Two large open-fronted ore bins set into spoil heaps from a level. Evidence can be seen of knocking floors and settling pits.

OLD GANG, HARD LEVEL NY 973006. Located upstream from Old Gang Smelt Mill, a range of ore bins with level dressing floors beside the stream. Inside the lower smelting mill, remains of an ore classifier and a shaking table have been uncovered during the survey and recording of the Old Gang smelt mills supervised by David Cranstone for the North Yorkshire Dales National Park. See Cranstone, D. 1990 *The Old Gang Smelting Mill, The 1990 Season: Archive Report*. Yorkshire Dales National Park, and Francis, A; and Cranstone, D. 1992 *Old Gang Smelting Mill: the 1991 Season. Archive Report*. Yorkshire Dales National Park.

SLEI GILL, STROTHWAITE\* NZ 017021. Approached from minor road north from Reeth along Arkengarthdale. Remains consist of crusher wheelpit, weights and tramway.

(The authors would like to thank Mr R.P.H. Lamb for information on sites marked with an asterisk \*)

## WALES

CWM ELAN, SN 901652. Approached from B4518 west of Rhayader through Elan village, across dam for Carreg-ddu Reservoir to Henfron. The remains consist of a ruined wheelpit and crusher house with the support timbers still in place. Below this is a jig base and a round buddle, again with the timber supports for the overhead feed in situ.

GAMFA FAWR, SH 78715951. Approached by forestry tracks off minor road from Gwydyr Castle to Capel Curig. The remains of early dressing floors, including knocking stones and a stone-built rectangular buddle. See R.W. Vernon and J.D. Bennett 1991 *Mines of the Gwydyr Forest Part 3: Parc Mine, Llanrwst and adjacent sets*.

MINERA, CITY SHAFT SJ 275509. Approached from the City Arma public house on the B5426, west of Wrexham. Extensive reclamation has taken place because of heavy metal contamination, but the employment of archaeologist Bill Slater has enabled several dressing floors to be recorded before destruction. Below the restored City Shaft Engine House, a new car park has been built adjacent to an excavated dressing floor which includes a round buddle. The halvans site referred to in 1989 has been back-filled.

NANTIAGO, SN 826863. On the foothills of Plynlimon, approached from the A44 road west of Rhayader. The sad remains of a Pelton wheel-driven dressing plant, including a sizing trommel and numerous wooden tanks.

NANTMOR, SH 600400. off A4085, south of Beddgelert at the foot of the Cwmbuchan aerial ropeway, Two centre head buddles used for copper ore dressing

NANT-Y-EIRA, SN 827874. Above Nantiago in the Hafron Forest near Plynlimon. In addition to the Bronze Age open cut, remains can be found of a crusher house, jig floor and buddle.

RHEIDOL UNITED, SN 715782. In the Vale of Rheidol near Aberystwyth. Two splendid ore bins used as wash kilns, behind which the lead carrying water to them can be clearly seen: there is also a crusher wheel pit.



Plate 4 (above). Nantiago, Wales: The wrecked sizing trommel with wooden settling tanks.

Plate 5 (below). Nantiago: Remains of the Pelton wheel with settling tanks in the background.

