

WINSTER AND THE MILL CLOSE MINE STRIKES 1917 - 1919

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Abstract: By the end of the First World War wages at Millclose had lagged behind inflation and some Winster miners formed a lodge of the Derbyshire Miners Association. Strikes and lockouts followed and there were unusual instances of picketing and "tin-canning" of blackleg miners at Winster, and the formation of an abortive co-operative mining venture at Raithe Mine, Elton.

INTRODUCTION

Strikes amongst lead miners were very unusual. There had been a strike, lockout and dismissals during the building of the Hillcarr Sough in the 1760s by members of the Stanton-by-Birchover Sick Club over working on Sundays and another a century later at Coalpithole Mine near Peak Forest when an eight-hour day was imposed. So outbreak of labour unrest at Millclose between 1917 and 1921, and the affiliation of a "Winster Lodge" to the Derbyshire Miners Association (DMA), based in Chesterfield, was virtually unprecedented. How did this come about?

MILLCLOSE MINE 1900-1920

By the time of the First World War, Millclose was a long-established mine. Edward Miller Wass, who had re-opened the old Watts Shaft in 1859 which led to the development of the main Millclose Mine on its present site had been long dead (1886), though the subsequent attempt to sell the mine in 1886 had failed and the mine was still operated by the E.M. Wass Trustees as Wass and Son (see Willies *et al* 1981 for a general account and photographs of the mine). Major Thomas Henry Denman, who was the principal trustee, took an active role in the mine management though L.C. Stuckey was the mine manager, with Samuel Petts as the underground manager.

The mine operated very traditionally. It still had six-hour shifts until during the war it was agreed to "temporarily" move to eight hours. Most work underground was done on bargain, with each bargain period lasting six and seven weeks alternating, though there was also day work underground as well as at surface. There had been some changes, probably forced on the mine to allow it to comply with the Metalliferous Mines Act (1872), including the appointment of deputies with responsibility, each shift, for underground management and safety. The claimed advantage of retaining the bargain system was the inability otherwise to supervise men in the scattered workplaces of the mine, though it was obviously also a key element in downward pressure on wages by regular opening of work to competition, and in sharing the risks when the limit of knowledge of the deposit was virtually limited to the depth of a pick-blow. As a large mine it had a considerable "staff", of managers, deputies, engineers and office-people, and a clear hierarchical distinction was made between these and ordinary miners, best exemplified by the footbridge over the river, (supposedly) limited to staff-use only. Apart from Stuckey, who lived at Cowley Hall next to the mine, most mine staff lived in Warren Carr or Darley Dale.

The two or three hundred men who worked as miners seem to have mainly come from Wensley and Winster where the mine was the major employer, and footpaths partially paved with gritstone linked these places to the mine. Others came from Birchover, Crossgreen, Oaker, Two Dales, Darley Dale and

Darley Bridge and from even further away - considerable walking distances each day - at places such as Bonsall, Elton and Matlock. From what former miners have said, the men at Winster looked on the mine as their own, and tried, probably successfully to judge from the names of those who took bargains, to dominate the teams of men who worked there. Some had worked at the mine for thirty or forty years, and as with many mines which worked on the bargain system, there was a tacit agreement that the established men would get preferment over outsiders when bargaining: it was difficult to manage otherwise. Very likely the War had made the employment of older men more necessary to the mine than usual and, for instance, the Winster War Memorial at the church has many names who would normally have followed, or even replaced, their fathers and uncles down the mine.

The War affected the mine in other ways too, though much less than it did coal mines and miners. The demand for lead encouraged working at as fast a rate as possible, and money had been made available from the Munitions Department to pay for some further mine development - for instance the Munitions Winze. Probably the mine was producing about 5000 tons of lead a year during the war.

There are indications the mine was considered nearing the end of its life. The Munitions Winze and other developments had had little success in defining major new working areas, and there was probably the traditional Derbyshire reluctance on behalf of the Trustees to sink further large sums of money into the kind of development that modern companies would have thought essential. Though it had been a high producer by Derbyshire standards it was also at high cost, and some 158 tons of water had to be pumped for every ton of lead concentrate produced. Much of its equipment was old, though probably fairly well-maintained. The three pumping engines, Baby, Alice and Jumbo had been installed around 1870 and 1880 with the first pair second-hand even then. The mine engineer, Daniel Morgan, had made considerable changes in the years just after the century began, including a Greens Economiser, automatic stoking and Galloway boilers, and had built an overhead cable-way from the Jumbo boilerhouse to some 500 yards from Darley Station (the Darley Cricket Field today) to bring coal in and take gravel spar and lead concentrate out (see Willies *et al* 1989).

Ore from the mine was brought out via the Lees Shaft, where the winder was also from c.1870. This had a double-cage system and brought material up in mine-tubs which tipped into a hopper from which the ore was then conveyed on a rope-hauled tramway to the dressing floors. This system and the treatment of ore in jigs, rotary buddles and James' slime tables, and the surface equipment were adequate but definitely of the earlier era. Together with the narrow-gauge (12 inches) man-tramming system over long distances which went on below ground, the transport system was distinctly creaky: indeed one of the first suggestions of John Saxton, a mining engineer appointed by the Derbyshire Miners

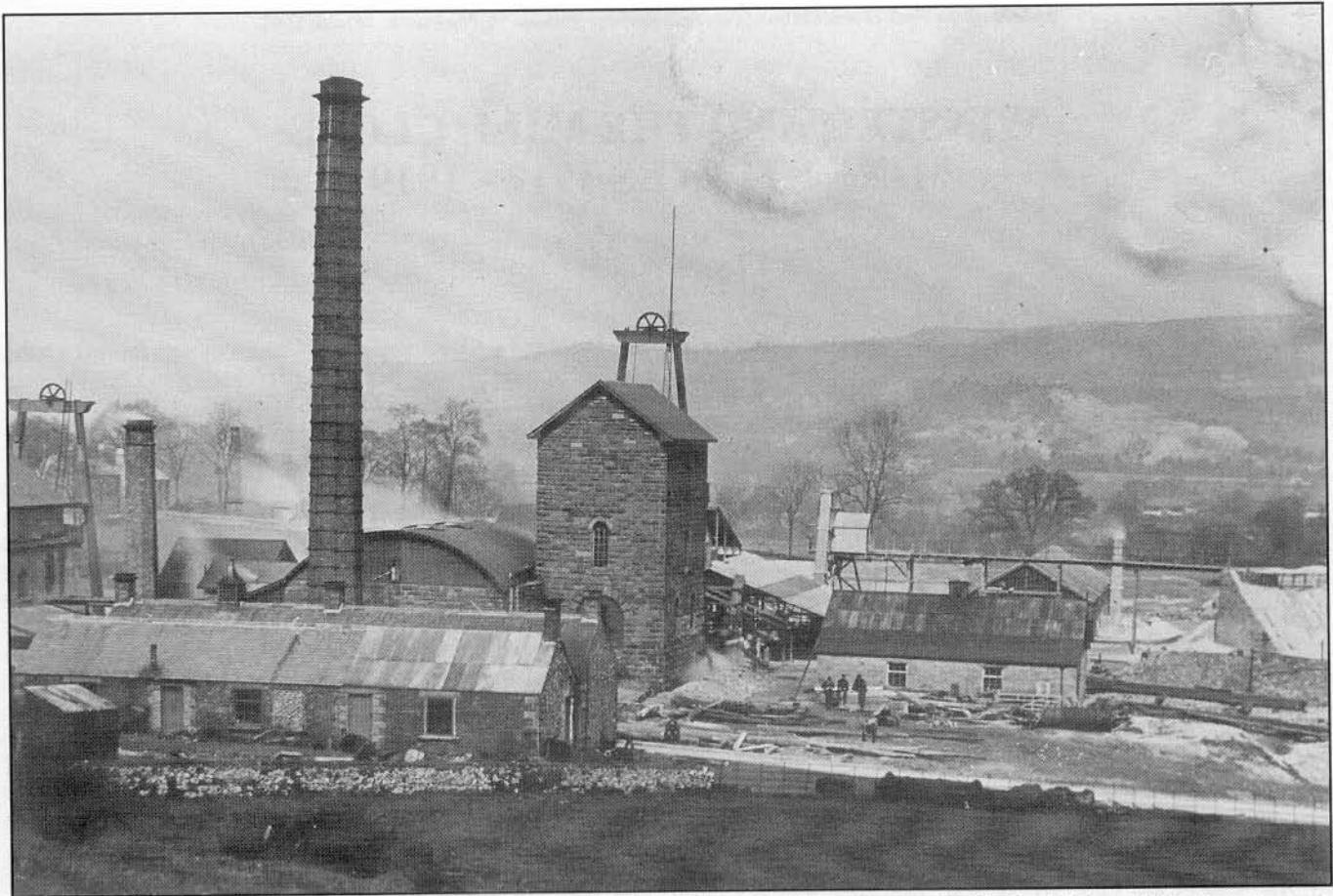


Plate 1. Millclose Mine about 1910. The "Jumbo" enginehouse and Warren Carr Shaft is central, with the "Baby and Alice" enginehouse and shaft on the left. The aerial ropeway, which ran from the "Jumbo" enginehouse, was not yet built.

Association to examine the mine in 1918 (Winster Parish Magazine March 1985), was to put in horse-tramming.

It was a mine, the engineer John Saxton said too, which had "peculiar methods of payments, old servants and length of service, petty jealousies, and other matters incidental to an old family mine, . . . in an area where other mines were not available to men with a grievance, causing spirited miners to think a good deal, say nothing, and lose efficiency".

It is not surprising, therefore, that in late 1919 Denman put the mine up for sale by tender as a going concern. It was a time when leases on adjacent properties to the mine itself (Mrs. McCreagh Thornhill of Stanton Estates and the Duke of Rutland and the Haddon Estate amongst others), essential to the mine, were due to be renewed, and at a time where the mine was still in considerable production and when favourable engineering reports could still be obtained without too much exaggeration. But it was a worn-out mine; it required considerable expenditure to develop, and the labour discontent was possibly the last straw. It was bought by Frederick Chambers, owner of the nearby, much smaller, Mawstone Mine at Youlgreave, whose major interest was the Stanton Ironworks, near Ilkeston and Nottingham (DRO.504B.L410).

THE DERBYSHIRE MINERS ASSOCIATION (DMA)

Coal mining, in the large mines east of Chesterfield, by comparison was hugely advanced technically, with very large mines and companies predominating in production, just before the beginning of the War reaching the highest ever coal production. Labour organisation, mainly as trade unions (this section depends heavily on the account of *The Derbyshire Miners* by Williams 1962), was well developed with the

Derbyshire Miners Association's headquarters at Saltergate in Chesterfield linked to other associations in the Miners Federation of Great Britain. A Triple Alliance of the miners with other trades' unions had recently been formed, and though the War ended its political programme for a decade, there was a combination of idealism and militancy which attracted fierce loyalty to trades unionism and the Labour Party by both miners' leaders and their followers. The War brought significant gains to the miners' unions: they gained respectability for their contribution to the war-effort, were involved in economic planning, and were in constant contact with Ministry of Labour. They had thus been able to substitute joint negotiating committees and arbitration in place of the all-out strife which had characterised much pre-war bargaining. They were active members, for example, of committees for reducing absenteeism, a problem which had grown during the war which owners felt resulted from the loss of their right to instantly fine lateness and absence, and by the destruction of the Butty System (which was somewhat akin to the "Bargain System" in lead mines) where "slackers" would not have been tolerated. Part of the gains made by the DMA and similar bodies was in the adoption of regional scales of pay, though in pre-war years there was discontent over the long time since these had been revised: it was a considerable triumph, therefore, when the 1888 agreement was renegotiated in 1911. This was the base on which pay scales were calculated during the war as inflation took its course, and by the end of the war the actual payments were some 50% higher than at the beginning.

The development of strong unions in coal mining led to well-trodden paths of personal advancement amongst idealistic and politically aware coal miners. The usual route, after a decade or two of life as a collier, beginning as a putter (trammer) and gradually progressing on to the coal face, and active participation in the local lodge or branch of the union, was appointment as the statutory checkweighman, or as branch treasurer, secretary or

president, then to such permanent union posts as compensation officer, DMA Treasurer, and DMA President. Such positions allowed a pro-active role in the Independent Labour Party and in becoming a candidate for a more-or less winnable Parliamentary seat. Men in such positions also became deeply involved in local government - as borough, district or county councillors, as school-governors, and, somewhat more rarely, as magistrates. Trade unionism also had its education system - the local institutes and its "staff-college", Ruskin College at Oxford, from where at least one of those involved at Winster came. At that period Ruskin was much influenced by militant Syndicalist ideas from France and the USA, perhaps too much so for some of those at Saltergate (Williams 1962).

In towns such as Chesterfield, Alfreton, Ripley and Bolsover, and in the smaller mining villages such as Carr Vale, Blackwell and the like, such men were powerful, politically aware members of their communities, whilst the DMA was a very powerful body in Chesterfield, nominating and financially supporting local MPs such as William Edwin Harvey and James Haslam whose statues still stand at the DMA headquarters at Saltergate in Chesterfield. Many were moderate, or became moderate in their outlook and more than a few were associated with Methodism which helped re-assure the wary. All, however, were well-seasoned men in their union, tough and uncompromising, pragmatic as well as usually idealistic, skilled in oratory and in leading their men, whilst their union was able to provide financial and legal backing for their actions, which might otherwise have led to them being crushed under the weight of employers and force of the law.

By 1917, however, the gains made had both affirmed the position of the moderate pragmatists, and led to the development of others with more fiery attitudes and idealism who were, as it were, clawing their way up the highly competitive trade union ladder. Both types were represented in those who came as delegates, almost as missionaries, to Winster.

BUT IN WINSTER

This form of class and political consciousness was not a characteristic of lead mining or villages such as Winster, though the village certainly was not unduly deferential towards those who lived in the larger houses and formed part of county society. Rather they seem to have maintained a sturdy independence. Not a few Millclose miners were like the Batemans. Sam Bateman had a small farm on East Bank with less than a dozen cows in milk, providing it for the village and selling surplus via the Rowsley Station dairy. His two sons, Sam, who went underground, and Bill who went into the office, followed him to Millclose. Great Close farm, likewise, was part of this dual economy, which fitted particularly well with the six-hour shift and the more precarious and generally lower (than coal mining) earnings from lead mining. Of the 600 or so people who lived at Winster, probably at least half were in a family which had a connection with a small farm or allotment with which to supplement their income or from a shop, trade or job in mining or quarrying. Escaping village society meant leaving, rather than treading, the union path. Many were, instead, involved in the three friendly societies which had lodges in the village, and in activities such as organising the annual feast, and perhaps especially the Winster Dance, which seems to have had considerable prestige: Harold Wild of Winster, who became a Millclose deputy, was the "King" for many years. There is no reason, however, to think Winster miners could be any less stubborn and determined despite their lack of political education.

UNREST AND STRIKES

The focus of discontent amongst Winster miners was the "Winster Lodge", whose president seems to have been John Millward. It is

possible the lodge was that of the Oddfellows Friendly Society. In the war years its Secretary was Paul Thomas who had charge of the engines at Millclose and lived at Warren Carr (pers comm. 16 Feb 1982 with Harold Thomas. As a schoolboy he helped his father with the Oddfellow accounts), but Winster also had lodges of the Royal and Ancient Order of Buffaloes and the Foresters friendly societies active in the village, all with miners as members.

During the war, whilst coal miners wages' rose regularly, those at Millclose were more tardy, and when concessions were made, then, it was later claimed (and contested), the percentage increases were based on the day wage, and calculated so that bargain wages were not increased. As a result, in 1917, the Winster Lodge contacted the DMA, and became a branch of that union. It was not the only lead mining branch - those at Mawstone Mine at Youlgreave also seemed to have joined about the same time, and the DMA was a little later involved in a competition over which union should represent the fluorspar and lead workers at Ashover Mines Ltd (DT 9/3/1917). The employers there had suggested to their workers they join the National Union of General Workers, which particularly catered for local quarrymen. According to Frank Hall, the Secretary of the DMA, and a Justice of the Peace, whose oratory usually had a nice turn of humour within it, the Ashover Mines Ltd. directors had said they wished to be on the best of terms with their workpeople. "Quite a nice beginning, and carried out to the letter by giving you all notice", said Hall at a meeting with the dismissed employees and newly joined DMA members at the White Lion in Ashover. It was Frank Hall who was called to address the miners at Winster and other villages during their troubles with Mill Close.

According to the Union, it was the utter helplessness of the men, their low starvation wages, longer hours and increased cost of living which drove them into the arms of the DMA in 1917. According to a correspondent (DT 18/8/1917), the surface and underground men had in fact been given a rise in about February, but this was obviously considered insufficient, and since the proprietors later claimed to have been proposing soon after to discuss a further substantial increase, this was clearly so. On the 14th July 1917, the DMA attended at a meeting with the Millclose men which seems to have been organised by the Mine proprietors. The long delay was caused as three of the proprietors were away on war duty. The men, just as had happened at Ashover, left negotiations to the Union. No immediate progress was made, the proprietors sticking to their initial 30% offer. After futile negotiation the union called the first of five strikes in three years.

The agitation came to a head in mid-August 1917. In a letter to the *High Peak News* of the 18th August, L.C. Stuckey published a list of the weekly wages earned by the seven teams or "companies" (Mosley's; Stone's; Taylor's; Goodall's; Gratton's; Bateman's; Ingman's) employed at the mine, up to the 4th of August. It covered a ten-week period, in which each week eleven shifts of six hours had been worked, and included the time of the bargain-making shift. This makes it obvious that double six-hour shifts were normally worked (a claimed advantage at a much earlier date of the six-hour shift system). For this the men earned between £3 2s 5d and £2 2s 6d per week. A correspondent, possibly briefed by the mine management, also pointed out that the men mostly had other occupations such as farming and shopkeeping, so the men "have been paid well". It is unlikely, however, that coal miners would have thought so at that time.

Instigated by the DMA, a week or so after Stuckey's letter, the men refused new bargains and, depending on the viewpoint, either struck or were locked out, only returning to work on the condition matters could be settled within three weeks. The demands of the men had been drawn-up by John Millward of Winster, and were put in writing to Denman and Stuckey by Frank Hall of the DMA. They were simple: colliery rates of pay and, if bargains were necessary, they should be for six months, or be got rid of.

MILL CLOSE MINE.

NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES.

The Proprietors have great pleasure in recognising the improved efficiency of the work now being done both below and above ground as compared with past experience, by increasing the percentage on rates of Pay from 45 % to 50 %.

The statement has frequently been made by and on behalf of men who joined the Derbyshire Miners' Association that the higher wages in force during the past 2 years were entirely due to the action of the Derbyshire Miners' Association.

This statement is absolutely untrue.

In the Spring of 1917 the Proprietors were in communication with Mr. Stuckey as to raising the 30 % previously given to 40 % when the Miners presented their first set of claims, and it was decided to defer making this 10 % advance until a Meeting could be held at which a full discussion could take place, this Meeting being called for 14th July, 1917, the earliest date on which the Proprietors could all obtain leave from military duty.

In view of the cost of living and the price of Lead the Proprietors would, if left to themselves, have granted before the end of 1917 a further 10 % advance, making a total of 50 %.

As it was the Proprietors attended at the Mine for the Meeting on 14th July, 1917, only to find that their Employees had been ordered not to meet them, and the Derbyshire Miners' Association then proceeded to call a Strike and force an Arbitration.

The Proprietors fought the fantastic claims formulated by Mr. Frank Hall before the Arbitrator in September and October, 1917, when the Arbitrator disallowed most of them. He however awarded an advance of 45 %, which the Proprietors have duly paid.

It will be seen that the result of calling in the Derbyshire Miners' Association has been that throughout 1918 and up to 26th July, 1919, the Proprietors under compulsion of the Award by which they were bound paid 45 % instead of the 50 % they would have paid voluntarily.

The extension of the Coal Controller's Award to Metalliferous Mines was in no wise attributable to the Derbyshire Miners' Association.

Now, that Members of the Derbyshire Miners' Association have ceased to be employed at Mill Close Mine the Arbitration Award is ended, and the Proprietors are once more free to meet their Employees unhampered by its provisions; and now that the old established Firm of Wass & Son may claim safely to have weathered the industrial storm which has been raging since last July, the first act of the Proprietors is to make up the 50 % advance which they would have been prepared to give 2 years ago.

Their second act is to invite their Employees to form a "Pit Committee" to consist of elected representatives of underground and surface workers, the Committee when formed to meet the Management monthly and discuss any matters affecting the Mine with a view to the welfare of all concerned.

It is suggested that the Committee consist of 7 Members, 3 of whom should represent the underground workers, 2 the ore dressers, and 2 the remaining Employees.

The Proprietors express their conviction that good will come out of past evil, and that a new era of prosperity has opened for Mill Close Mine now that efficiency and contentment have replaced the sulky slacking of the past 2 years.

Dated 24th October, 1919.

FOR WASS & SON,

(Signed), T. HERCY DENMAN,
Agent.

Fig. 1. Notice to employees issued by T. Percy Denman of Mill Close Mine. Reproduced by permission of the Derbyshire Record Office. DRO/D3376/Box 32).

DERBYSHIRE MINERS' ASSOCIATION.

MINERS' OFFICES,
CHESTERFIELD,
NOVEMBER 28TH, 1919.

Strike at Mill Close Mine.

Our attention has been drawn to a circular signed for Wass & Son, by T. Henry Denman, Agent, in which are to be found a number of garbled statements not merely misleading, but untrue.

It was the utter helplessness of the men, their low starvation wages, longer hours and the increased cost of living, that drove the workmen to seek the assistance of the Derbyshire Miners' Association.

The circular, which is a mere jumble of words, nothing more than balderdash, is issued for a purpose. Paragraph 2 disclaims that the D.M.A. were responsible for the increased wages the men have earned during the last two years.

Will Mr. Denman tell the public what the average earnings of the underground workers were six months before the D.M.A. appeared on the scene and six months after? Will he deny that they were increased 150 per cent.? If he does not give the figures, we will.

He refers in paragraph 4 to an increase of 30 per cent. and what would have happened but for the men joining the D.M.A.

We challenge him to prove that the 30 per cent. increase he is said to have given to the underground workers increased their wages by one penny per day. Will he take it on? If he does not, the reason is only too clear.

The 30 per cent. was nothing less than a fraud and swindle on the men—this was proved to demonstration at the arbitration. The arbitrary and unscrupulous method of bargaining that existed deprived the men of every fraction of the percentage. Every penny increase has been due to the action of the D.M.A.—indeed the new offer the firm is making is owing to the pressure of this Union. If that pressure disappeared wages would go down. However, there is no intention of relieving the pressure. As time goes on it will be increased.

Another statement made in the circular in reference to the War Wage is that it is in no wise attributable to the D.M.A. Then why all the correspondence, all the deputations, the visits of representatives of the Ministry of Munitions? The following letter will decide this point:—

Mill Close Mine,
Darley Dale,
Matlock,
22nd November, 1917.

Dear Sir,

Re War Wage of 1/6 per day.

In reply to your letter of the 20th November instant, which has reached me here this morning, I beg to say that we know nothing about the above, nor have we received any Circular on the subject from the Munitions Department.

We have this morning received from the Chief Industrial Commissioner's Department a copy of Mr. Stoker's Award on the recent arbitration proceedings, and I am now engaged in making arrangements for payments in accordance therewith.

Yours truly,

T. HENRY DENMAN.

Frank Hall, Esq., J.P.,
Saltergate,
Chesterfield.

"Now," says Mr. Denman, "that the members of the D.M.A. have ceased to be employed at the Mill Close Mine, the arbitration award is ended." Could anything be plainer? Herein is the motive of the proprietors. The award gave the men a real increase of 45 per cent., not a sham and delusive percentage. It did more than this, it protected the men from the arbitrary and unscrupulous method of bargaining which kept the wages at the low average level of less than 5s. a day, and in some cases the figure was as little as 2/10 per day. It is easy to understand why the award hampers the proprietors and why they desire a free hand. It is so that the men may be again enslaved to a system that kept them at the verge of starvation, and make fabulous profits for the owners.

The D.M.A. is out to protect its members from the onslaughts of capital against the dismissal and starvation of men who have given the best days of their lives to enrich the owners.

FRANK HALL,
FRANK LEE,
JOHN SPENCER.

In reply, L.C. Stuckey laid out the position of the mine:

They could accept the principle of a minimum underground wage only if it could be fixed under a rate required to provide comfortable living conditions to a local standard: they could not agree to a shift wage for ore getting because of the impossibility of supervision.

They would agree to one person from each company for each of the three shifts to take part in the bargain-letting procedure (thus lessening the control of the leaders of the companies).

Labourers for wagon-filling and tramping were to be appointed and paid a fixed rate by the (bargain) Companies, subject to the approval of Wass and Son of the men to be employed.

Wass and Son agreed to a 46 hour week based on six hour shifts at three-quarters the full shift rate, but would not add 50% to the last bargain rate basis. The return to the old established six hour shifts would be regrettable because of the decrease in output this would cause.

Any changes which would raise pay would cause the proprietors to weed-out ineffectual labour and maintain a higher standard of work efficiency than had been tolerated in the past, and no workman would be justified in thinking himself permanently employed.

Also that it would be considered a reason for ceasing to work at Millclose if any workman indulged in paid employment away from the mine, thereby reducing his capacity for work at the mine.

And finally that they would not be agreeable to advancing pay by 50%, and that bargain periods of six and seven weeks were as long as was fair to both the proprietors and miners of Millclose.

As a result of this uncompromising position by Wass and Son, after the three weeks had expired, in September, on the Saturday, the men again came out, and were not persuaded back until the following Tuesday. At that time the bargain-takers accompanied the manager, Mr Stuckey, down the mine to agree new bargains, with the night shift commencing at ten o'clock that evening, and it was understood that the dispute was to go to arbitration, and there were even rumours that unless an agreement was reached, the Government would take over the mine (High Peak News 18/8/1917).

The arbitration took place in Matlock Town Hall on the 28th of September, with H.H. Richardson, K.C., M.P., the main representative for the owners, and Frank Hall, Secretary of the DMA presenting the miners' case, before Mr Stoker of the Chief Industrial Commissioner's Department. Seventeen points were put forward for consideration, the last, added by the owners, was quickly agreed - it protected the Millclose from secondary striking as a result of coalmining disputes. The DMA case involved several major principles that Hall wished to get accepted: that the wages paid did not include the war-time bonuses paid to coal miners; that the wages should be comparable to those paid to coal miners; that the bargain periods should be extended to twelve months; and that there should be a minimum wage at a reasonable level paid weekly, and made up to the full bargain rate monthly. *Inter alia*, the report (DRO. NCB. Dep.. 23/1. C10/2), which is not complete, gives a substantial amount of detail of the practices at the mine.

Since the war began, the pre-war "price list" in coal mines had risen three times by a war bonus, in equal parts amounting to a 30% increase. On the previous day a further arbitration award gave Midland Colliery workers a further 1/6 (one shilling and sixpence old money - 7½p new). Men working at the coal benches (faceworkers) would after this be getting about 16/- per shift. There was considerable argument over how average wages should be compiled for a lead mine, in which bargains were made by "companies", gangs of miners 6 or 8 to 20 (and occasionally 30) strong, every six or seven weeks alternating. How were double shifts and absent periods included for example. But eventually it was agreed that in the last few months, the rates per

man had varied between 6/2 and 12/10 a shift, with an average of 8/8 (a marginal amendment suggests 8/10½). This was after all deductions for explosives (supplied by the mine but deducted from gross payments) and any war bonuses were included. Evidence was given that in two years (not specified, but after 1911), the wages over 10,000 shifts had averaged 4/4½, and had been a little less the following year over 12,000 shifts. Since the beginning of the war, lead prices had risen from about £20 a ton to £29 10s. The detailed evidence has not survived, but it seems that wages since the first outbreak of unrest in May 1917 had, in fact, risen, and that the payments before May had been substantially less than 8/-, perhaps averaging, then, around 6/6. The last reckoning had had the highest average wages ever paid, around 10/-. This was all complicated by an increase to eight hour from six hour shifts which had taken place since May, which Hall argued was not fully compensated.

When men were taken off driving or ore-getting on bargain, they were paid 6/1 per shift as a day wage. Wages of other day-workers were:

Winders 8/-. This was a shift of 12 hours on duty, but 8 hours at work.

Stokers and firemen 5/6 per 8 hour shift.

Pumpmen 7/10: they worked, said L.C. Stuckey, on a varying time which is very difficult to understand, grown up over the course of years. Petts, the undermanager said they were paid for six shifts totalling 72 hours.

Washers, grinders and pressers (the ore dressers) got 5/- per 8 hour day

Over the minimum wage Hall was frank, in that he felt a high minimum wage would give leverage for increasing the bargaining rates, and suggested this should be set at 14/- per shift (including the war bonus) and should be paid weekly. Coal miners had had minimum wages even before the Minimum Wage Act - it would not be necessary for it to be imposed by statute. As was quickly pointed out, this was 50% above the level of the most recent bargain. The arbitrator was clearly very sympathetic to weekly wages - this would help keep the men out of debt. On minimum wages he was less sure. Experience in other arbitrations had produced evidence that men were prepared to slack and rely on the minimum wage if this was set at a living level. Richardson was more adamant. Millclose had paid minimum wages for difficult bargains on some ten occasions, and at each and every time this had led to the miner idling, content to rely on his wage.

Hall's address took a considerable time to put, and the arbitrator must have appeared, from his own comments, to have been in sympathy with several points: the low wages and in relation to debt, the six or seven weeks between pays, whilst the position over the war bonus was not clear and should have been so. He was not too likely to have been over-impressed by the high wage claim by itself: Hall had his members to impress and would have probably hoped for a mid-position settlement.

Richardson set out in his turn to minimise the impact of Hall's claims. In the mine's history there had not been a single dismissal. Only ten men had left of their own volition, and five or six of these had later returned. An example of harmonious relations. Prior to the involvement of the DMA, on the 19th of May the management had listened to the claims of the men after a meeting, for 6/- a shift (6 hours) and a 15% war bonus (i.e. 6/11 total), which reflected, he said, the men's idea of a reasonable wage. Since then it had gone up to 8/8 on average and higher recently and to put it up to the high level the DMA demanded would cause the dismissal of 50% of the work force. It would not be possible at that rate to work any but the best places. The intervention of a Mr Ellis on the 7th July had led to not a single bargain being let for three weeks, at a time lead was vital to the war effort. Mr Ellis had "beset himself to stir up as much blood as possible". Unlike coal,

where increases came "out of the pocket of an unhappy public", the price of lead was set internationally, so the whole loss arising from increases would fall on the mine. The suggested 12 months contract period was impracticable, "the nature of the ore is unknown and you are blindfold, it is pure guesswork", and the frequent bargains allowed for adjustment where conditions were too poor or too generous. Evidence was given of the employer making-up for a previous bad contract by being more generous at the next, so a minimum wage was not necessary: this was a difficult area for either side to argue and Hall was able to provide specific instances, using the men's actual wage tickets which went back to 1911, where this making-up was not overly obvious, but in other cases it does appear to have been so.

The full results of the arbitration do not appear to have survived, but according to Denman, the DMA made "fantastic claims . . . most of which were disallowed by the Arbitrator". He did, however, award a 45% increase which was put into force in November 1917. Major Denman had claimed the Proprietors, because of the rise in price of lead and cost of living, were already planning (in the early Spring of 1917) to (and did) give a 30% increase which had been put forward to them as necessary by Mr Stuckey, the manager. Using a scale based on the cost of living and the price of lead, the wage would have risen 50% by the end of 1917. This, Denman later said rather triumphantly, left the miners on the arbitrated 45% increase rather than the 50% that would have been given without the intervention of the union and that, in fact, the DMA had had no positive influence at all.

Matters were clearly not quite so simple as this, and the DMA made the reasonable point that its entry had led, over six months, to increases of (it was claimed, without detail) over 150%, and that the initial 30% the Proprietors had awarded prior to arbitration was "a fraud and a swindle" so calculated as not to benefit the underground men at all, even by so much "as one penny a day" (DMA notice, 28/11/1919). Certainly the Union's case would have impressed the Winsters miners, and the proprietors had at least been tardy in adjusting wages in face of complaints from the men.

Serious trouble began again on the 28th of July 1919, when four miners, all members of the DMA were discharged and some 70 (police estimate - the DMA said 82) other underground miners came out on strike in protest, and on the 9th of August these were joined by the 26 smelters at Lea Lead Works, who had no personal grievance, but were out in sympathy. The DMA informed the mine that they were prepared to call out the stokers if the underground men continued in work (they later claimed, somewhat ingenuously, this was not to hazard the mine), and on the 25th of August the stokers came out also, but the boilers and pumps were manned by non-union men without real difficulty (DRO./D3376 Box 32).

By the 21st of August, Wass and Co. had discharged a further 32 surfacemen, on the grounds of reduced output. It is not known whether these were members of any union. According to Williams (1962 p600) the management closed a number of workings, transferred non-unionists to union-members workings, and dismissed the four men on the grounds there was no work for them - there is little reason to doubt this, and every reason to believe, that, with falling prices, the mine management had determined to enforce Mill Close as a non-union mine, perhaps with an eye to the as yet, unannounced, sale of the mine.

So far police reports (all police data below is from DRO./D3376 Box 32) emphasised there was no threat expected to public disorder. By the middle of September, however, there was still no sign that either side was willing to give way, and the DMA clearly decided to meet the challenge head-on. Two "delegates" were despatched to Winsters with plenary powers to end the strike successfully: John Spencer and Henry Hicken. Spencer was a

permanent official, the General Treasurer of the DMA in 1919 whilst Hicken was a rising "firebrand", then Secretary of the Williamthorpe Lodge, and due to be elected the DMA Treasurer a year later. Both were local councillors in their communities. Hicken had a Methodist background, and was still wont to deliver sermons and lectures on religious topics. As was no doubt intended by the DMA, his personality had the greater impact on Winsters. He was described by Williams (1962 p.583-4) as being a powerful orator, extremely militant, of impressive appearance with long hair, an immaculate white shirt with collar and no tie and had a most colourful and dominating personality, which endeared him to many miners. According to the *Derbyshire Times* (27 Nov. 1920) he tried to make the flesh creep with "threats of red revolution" revelling "in anticipation of gore and bloodshed".

In the traditional "peacefully if we may, forcibly if we must" school of militant trade unionism, the DMA first concentrated on moral means of persuasion to convince the "blacklegs and scabs" who remained in work of their errors. In a handbill of 22nd September, one of several collected assiduously by the police, the reasons for the strike were carefully explained.

The war had brought changes and the men had reacted positively, but now when the men wished to return to six hour shifts so the full numbers of miners could keep their employment, the Owners had dismissed their old workmen. The Owners were attempting to smash the strike by taking on non-union labour - **traitors to the cause of Labour**, who were digging a pit into which they were sure to fall: bad conditions, low wages, and workmen set to fight each other instead of the common enemy, the employer, who took the best out of a man before turning him away and throwing him on the scrap heap. The blacklegs were being bribed by a bonus to play the traitor, and were carving out for themselves the curses of honest men and women . . . and finally "you must take sides, either with the human needs of labour, or serfdom and slave labour".

And in a no less traditional response, Major Denman brought out a corresponding blast. The employers took pleasure in recognising the improved efficiency of their workforce, and in the absence of the union (strikers were dismissed and given their cards) were no longer bound by the arbitrators award of 45%, so had advanced wages to 50%. Had it not been for the union, this could have been enjoyed for over two years, though this bold claim was somewhat modified by noting the actual date of the award was only after the Mine had successfully weathered the "industrial storm which has been waging since last July". The second response of the Owners was to invite the formation of a "Pit Committee", to meet the management monthly to discuss any matters affecting the welfare of all concerned. Finally, that "efficiency and contentment have replaced the sulky slacking of the last two years".

This was certainly no olive branch, and the DMA resolved on further action, sending six delegates to Winsters and the other villages involved, and in early November arranging a lecture tour. Frank Hall, the President, was to speak at a miners' meeting at Chesterfield on the Monday, and the delegates were to address meetings at Two Dales (Tuesday), Holloway (for the lead smelters on Wednesday), Elton (on Thursday) and Winsters (on Friday), with a further miners' meeting at Winsters on Saturday the 8th of November. All miners were requested to attend the meetings, and to "Choose whom you will serve, Humanity or Mammon". In the same week the delegates were to make maximum efforts to bring the "blacklegs and scabs" to heel. It was to be one of the most eventful weeks in Winsters' and Mill Close's history.

Five of the delegates were all termed "Councillor", both by the Union and by the Police in their reports, whilst the sixth, Benjamin Lee, was from Ruskin College. They included Henry Hicken, but not John Spencer. Samuel Sales, from witness statements, was from the same mould as Hicken, with whom he

NOTICE.

MILL CLOSE LEAD MINE STRIKE.

WORKERS' OF WINSTER AND DISTRICT UNITE—You have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to win.

MONDAY, at **2-30**, Miners' Meeting addressed by **Mr. F. HALL**, Chesterfield.
TWO DALES, Tuesday, Nov. **4th**, 7 p.m.
HOLLOWAY, Wednesday, „ **5th**, 7-30 „
ELTON, - Thursday, „ **6th**, 7 „
WINSTER, - Friday, „ **7th**, 7 „
Saturday, Miners' Meeting at Winster, 2 „

The following Gentlemen will address the Meetings:—

Councillor H. HICKEN, Councillor **W. TAYLOR**,
„ **S. SALES**, „ **J. RANDLE**,
„ **T. KYTE**, **B. LEE**, (Ruskin College)

YOU are invited to attend these Meetings.
Choose whom ye will serve—
Humanity or Mammon.

E. A. Marshall & Son, Printers, Winster.



COUNTY OF DERBY

POLICE WARNING

WHEREAS complaints have been received that certain persons have unlawfully endeavoured to induce employees of the Mill Close Mines, Darley Dale, to cease work,

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that any repetition of this offence will be dealt with according to Law.

F. R. ANLEY, Major,

CHIEF CONSTABLE OF DERBYSHIRE.

County Chief Constable's Office,
St. Mary's Gate, Derby.
11th November, 1919.

Bemrose & Sons Limited, Printers, Derby.

sometimes shared religious meetings, and was addicted to threats (of course from unknown third parties!) of dark nights, blood and gore. *The Derbyshire Times* (13 November 1920) advised Hicken to take Sales with him "to Ireland or to Russia" and described them as extremists. Sales was sometimes criticised as the owner of a small and modest two seater car, but found it easy to shrug this off. He was a skilled negotiator, and his pit, Grassmoor, was claimed as the first to get rid of butties and the first in the area to introduce pit-head baths. Rather less is known of the others, Thomas Kyte was also described as on the militant section of the union, James Randle was a County Councillor, of William Taylor we have no personal data, leaving Benjamin Lee, of Ruskin College. He was one of those who most loudly called for a general strike in 1911, and amongst other criticisms, was one of "only the revolutionaries . . . shouting out for a strike, and by another one of those who "failed to get a stall . . . and developed socialistic tendencies". They must have appeared a formidable body of men.

What happened is particularly well described in the file of witness and police reports (DRO.D3376, Box 32), and began soon after mid-day on Tuesday the 4th of November. A large crowd had gathered in the centre of Winster, near the Market House, including Henry Hicken and James Randle. When George Hardy and George Gregory came by on their way to work, the crowd fell in behind Hicken and Randle, and followed the two workers, beating tin cans and boxes with sticks and "the whole village was in an uproar through the terrible noise caused". When told to be quiet by Constable German the crowd took no notice, but the crowd did not assault either of the men as they accompanied them the half-mile to the stile of the footpath from the road near the school to the mine. This happened twice more, as Dennis Wild and John Gregory also left for work. Amongst the local demonstrators were named:

Samuel Bateman of Wyn Tor Street
 Henry Bark, Senior and Junior of East Bank
 Ernest Boam of Main Street
 Anthony Gregory of East Bank
 George and Thomas Heathcote of East Bank
 William Mosely of Pump Lane
 Joseph Mosely of Wyn Tor
 Herbert Newton of East Bank
 James Newton of East Bank
 Henry Newton of West Bank
 William Stone of Main Street
 Joseph Stone of Pump Lane
 John Isaac Greatorex of Main Street
 John Heathcote of Great Close Farm
 Samson Walton of Wyn Tor Street
 Joseph Newton of East Bank
 John Stone of Bonsall
 Mrs Edith Bateman of Wyn Tor Street
 Mrs Sarah Ann Newton of East Bank
 Mrs Mary Elizabeth Heathcote

Several others were noted at other times: William Ellis, and two other women, Bertha Mosely and Elizabeth Rouse, whilst two, Ernest Marshall of Matlock and Herbert Gell of Wensley, came from outside Winster carrying a banner "Blacklegs and Scabs" in front of three working men. One of the working men was Arthur Marshall of Winster, giving a hint of inter-family disagreement which in the closed society of Winster must have been fairly frequent.

It is obvious that only a portion of the men involved and very few women were noted in the lists which were compiled from witnesses. There was probably considerable reluctance to "notice" more than the obvious local leaders of the crowd, though, perhaps surprisingly, John Millward was nowhere mentioned in police

statements. William Mosely was particularly noticed as he spent the time playing the concertina and there is a hint of an atmosphere similar to the Winster Wakes in more than a few comments, though rather one-sidedly so.

When the crowd was asked again to be quiet, both Hicken and Randle told them to be quiet also, but after 150 yards, "the tin beating started again with the whole village again in uproar and children shouting and beating tins with the others". They were led on by Mary Elizabeth Heathcote who told the children the Police had nothing to do with it. She carried two pieces of tin which she clashed together and shouted "you blacklegs, taking my bread away, Boo! Boo" and "was shouting and behaving more like a lunatic than a person with reason, and all the time inciting the children to carry on the same". It is not difficult to understand the distress and anger of the women.

This behaviour, which the Police rightly considered was intended to intimidate those who continued working went on for four days, though the "tin canning" was less in evidence after the first and second days. The working men, probably advised by the police, usually took the road rather than the footpath, since "persistent following" in this manner was a public order offence, which led to the delegates receiving a written warning from the Chief Constable. The way home therefore became via Darley Bridge where many of the working men were met by another crowd which generally accompanied them "calling and tincanning" in the usual noisy manner, to the top of Wensley village, with a further session as they came past the Winster boundary, into the centre of the village, and sometimes to outside their homes. Very little physical violence seems to have taken place.

The following working men gave statements

George Gregory of West Bank - Mine Deputy
 George William Hardy of Croft Yard - Mine Deputy
 John Gregory of West Bank
 Dennis Wild of Crown Yard
 Arthur Marshall
 Richard Henry Walker of Woolley Yard
 John Wild
 Herbert Hardy
 Thomas Webster Rains
 George Wild of West Bank
 Cecil Lowndes of Elton

As for the lists of demonstrators, this can only have been a portion of the men from Winster, and probably includes those considered the most "respectable should a case come to Court", or those against whom specific acts were made. None of the demonstrations seem to have affected the men going on the early or late shifts, or coming off early or late, and no doubt others dodged the crowd, though it is also possible the police were not present on all occasions.

The police were particularly interested in the delegates, noting that they clearly commanded the crowd, raising their arms for action or silence and addressing the crowd. Sales and Hicken, as would be expected created most comment. Hicken, for instance, walked alongside Richard Walker, Arthur Marshall and Cecil Lowndes between Wensley and Winster, and amongst other remarks called out "Scabs and Blacklegs we havnt (sic) got to the worst yet, dark nights are coming and there'll be blood for supper". Sales humourously was in the habit of marching the crowd, calling out, left, right, left right, and calling for three cheers for the strikers when they left them at the stile. Lee also ironically used military terms, calling out "halt" and "about turn" to his crowd. On another occasion Superintendent Stone of the Bakewell Police Station (who knew Sales) asked him if it was any

use asking him to stop the following, to which Sales replied, "We call this peaceful picketing, we are only walking on the road", to which Stone responded that it was persistent following, which was an offence. Sales suggested that if anyone was summoned for this, "summon the delegates, not these people", to which the reply was, "that will be decided by the Chief Constable". Sales denied to the Superintendent that he had used the "blood for supper" etc. statement, though Arthur Marshall had claimed in a witness statement that Sales had said that if he had been one of the men down there (meaning Darley Bridge) he would have pitched him into the brook, and that these were only preliminary meetings, dark nights were coming and there would be blood for supper.

There is little indication that the working men bent much under this pressure. Richard Walker of Woolley Yard didn't know what would have happened if it was not for the police, but George Gregory of West Bank was more robust. He had had a tin and a stick beaten just in front of his face by George Heathcote, but, "I told him to stop and he then became wise", and the worst affected seems to have been one man who was followed home and had dirt kicked over his legs and back by the crowd.

The most robust attitude was taken by George Hardy, one of the mine deputies. His crowd was led by Hicken, who told him they had had "orders from Chesterfield the pressure is not to be relieved". In reply Hardy told him that "if they were pleased with it, it did not displease me", but that he "considered it was really the work of the middle ages, and it did not matter so long as there was no Violence". Hicken replied they were not for violence, but "we cannot be responsible for Violence in the night", to which Hardy answered that was a game two could play at. And to Hicken's comment that "you are a good one if you can stand this day by day", Hardy simply said "I can".

The police action was limited to increasing the number of officers at the scene, issuing the warning to the delegates and to posting some forty warning notices on the routes taken by the working men and in the affected villages. By the fourth day the noisiest action had died down, and the numbers in the crowd, or at least those reported, had lessened, with only Mary Elizabeth Heathcote noted on all occasions. No legal action was taken, and subsequent action by the DMA avoided conflict of this physical nature. A further letter was published by the DMA in late November 1919, defending their position, and claiming that before their intervention wages had been at the low average of 5/- a day, with some as little as 2/10 per day. It was easy to understand why the proprietors wanted a free hand "it is so the men may again be enslaved to a system that kept them at the verge of starvation and made fabulous profits for the owners".

There was no formal ending of the strike and it dragged on until March 1920. The smelters at Lea, for example, had also remained out on strike, but on the 10th of December 1919 six non-union men were back at work, enough to work one furnace (over three shifts) and the others, or at least those acceptable to the management, returned soon after. Just before this, but after the events in Winster, the mine was advertised for sale by private treaty, with tenders to be delivered to the Auctioneers office (Fuller, Horsey, Sons and Cassell of London) by 28th of February, but on the 15th of January the Chief Constable reported (as he did on all the events regarding the Mill Close strike) to Sir Basil Thomson, Director of Intelligence at Scotland House, London, that the Mine had been sold to Mr F. Chambers, owner of the Bradford Vale Mining Company's Mawstone Mine at Youlgrave.

Chambers very quickly entered into the spirit of the dispute: he had the Mawstone Mine Manager, G.E. Bacon, instruct the Mawstone men to work at Millclose, and all but six of the 35 men employed there, members of the DMA, considered themselves victimised and came out on strike, receiving strike pay, as well as their cards. A few days later four of the remaining six were laid off

as it was impossible to run the mine. It looked briefly as if the strike might spread, but Chambers, showing a little wisdom at last, relented, and allowed the four men back, after only a few days, though it was March before all the men were back at work.

On the 19th of March Sir Basil was informed that all the men whom the Millclose Company would accept had returned to work (this included Sam Bateman), and all others were employed elsewhere. But the DMA's involvement was not yet quite ended.

In November the DMA had seriously considered whether the whole Association should come out on strike, and informed the Minister of Labour and arranged for a question to be asked of the Minister in the House. In retrospect this was clearly no more than an attempt to bring wider influence to bear, and it must have been clear to the DMA that after the failure of the (mild) "physical force" at Winster that the strike had failed. Instead the DMA turned to an older millennial socialist idea, somewhat akin to the "Land Plan" of Fergus O'Connor after the failure of Chartism around 1850: a co-operative mining venture. To further this, enquiries were made to the Barmaster regarding the taking of titles to three mines, each of which were at one period owned or partially owned by Wass "who had shut them up against the Miners" as the then Barmaster stated. These were the Yatestooop and the Plackett Mines, both in Winster, and the Raithe Mine in Elton, near the Church (Barby (Barley) Close Mine near Wensley was also taken over by striking miners - DRO/D4383/2). Yatestooop proved too difficult to acquire - although the main shaft was within Winster, the useful workings extended into Birchover, which was a private liberty, and thus not in the power of the Barmaster, John Mort, to gift. But both Plackett and Raithe were claimable, and the necessary action was taken, using the DMA's lawyers, to do this. On December the 24th, the police reported that machinery had been set up on Plackett and some of the miners were at work there. Others at about the same time were busy at Raithe, though all the miners were still in receipt of strike pay.

A report on Raithe Mine by John Saxton the Sheffield Mining Engineer, was favourable (reported as "glowing") but in a limited sense only. Overhead costs of running such mines were low, propping was unnecessary, and main expenditures were on explosives and candles. Some pumping might be necessary but drainage was "by gravitation, by the Yatestooop Sough". It was clearly impossible to define what ore might be available, but Saxton can hardly have been unknowing about this aspect, and some, at least, of the DMA must have been cynical enough to see this venture as nothing more than a means of saving face for the Union. But some perhaps not.

To finance the scheme, at first subscriptions were raised from the lodges, then a penny per week levy was placed on all members, and Hicken was placed in charge. But there were obvious limits to how long things could go on on this basis and in May, following a further good report, it was determined to set up a Raithe Lead-Mining Company Ltd, with a nominal capital of £7000. Chairman of the new company was Henry Hicken, Secretary Samuel Sales, with John Spencer, William Harpur of Creswell, John Millward of Winster, William Harwood of Elton and Andrew Nedin (Naydon?) of Winster as the other directors. But the response of members of the DMA was desultory, and only about £1000 had been subscribed by the end of the year, which was soon expended, and little, if any ore was produced to defray the costs (Williams 1962 p601-03). The main work done was to extend the Yatestooop Sough towards Gratton.

In a final appeal to his union, couched in millennial terms, Sales put forward "the natural right of the worker, the control of industry by the worker". If the DMA was not prepared for this, then it should stop "our pious attitudes and admit our inferiority in comparison with the other side".

DARLEY DALE, near MATLOCK

In the County of Derby.

Particulars, Plans and Conditions of Sale

OF THE

IMPORTANT

FREEHOLD AND LEASEHOLD PROPERTIES

KNOWN AS THE

“MILL CLOSE LEAD MINE,”

Situate at DARLEY DALE, near MATLOCK,

COMPRISING A

Freehold Surface Area of about 19 acres

WITH

Leasehold Mining Rights under about 300 acres

of the adjoining Estate, which, together with the

SUBSTANTIAL FREEHOLD BUILDINGS

AND THE

FIXED PLANT AND MACHINERY,

Will be offered for Sale by Tender,

In ONE LOT as a Going Concern, by Messrs.

FULLER, HORSEY, SONS & CASSELL.

Tenders, which must be in the form contained in these Particulars, must be delivered at the Auctioneers' Offices by Four o'clock in the Afternoon of

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28th, 1919.

The Mines may be inspected at any time by appointment with the Manager, and Particulars with Plans and Conditions of Sale had of the Vendors' Solicitors, Messrs. MEE & CO., Retford, Notts; or of Messrs. FULLER, HORSEY & CO., 11, Billiter Square, London, E.C. 3.

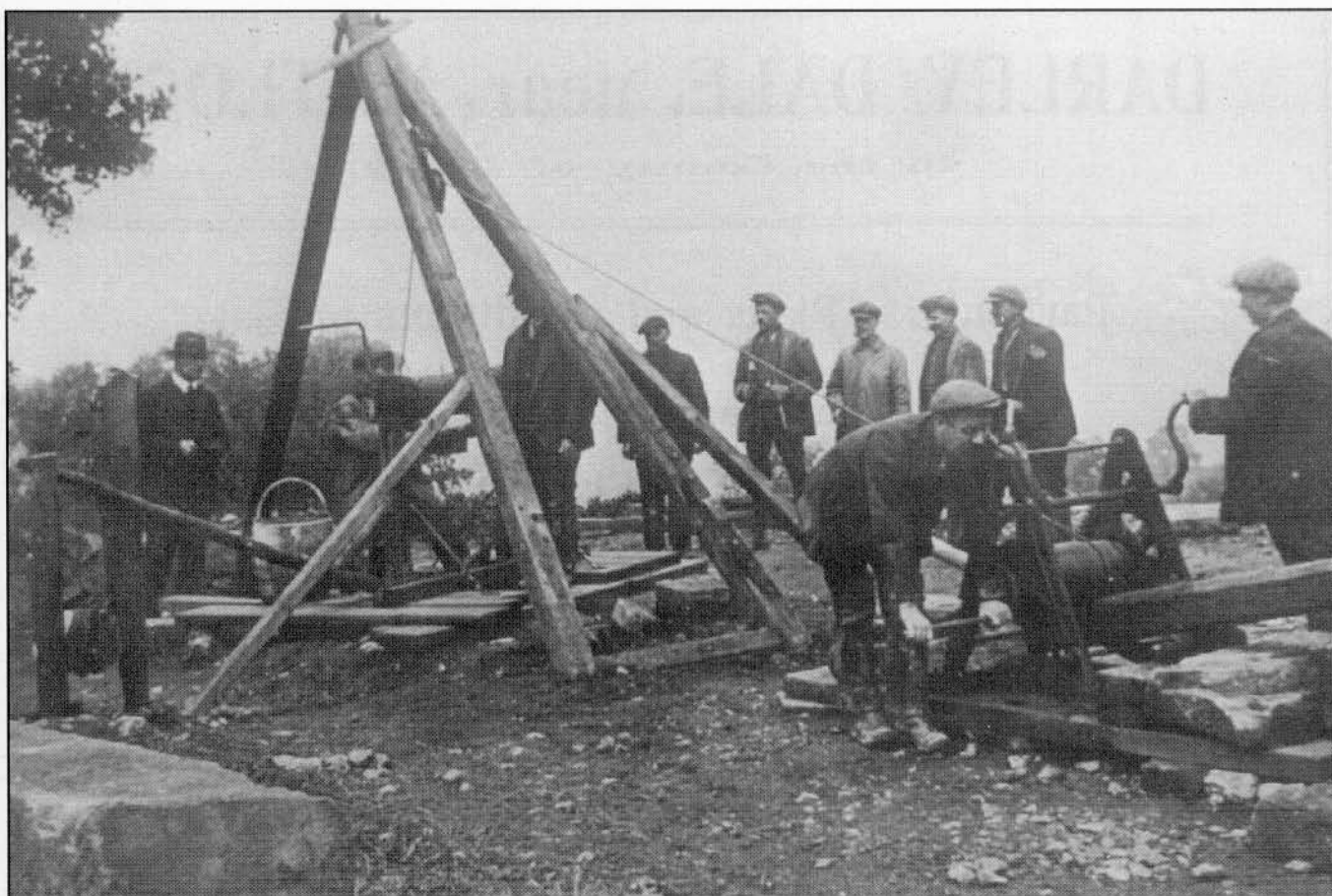


Plate 2. The Raithe miners after the strike was over. These were the men who either refused to go back, or who were rejected by the management of Millclose Mine. From left to right: A. Fengls; A. Naydon; C. Stone; R. Stone; W. Hayward; A. Goodwin; B. Slack; W. Walker; J. Millward; W. Millward and, on the winch, W. Stone. Photo donated by the late John Millward (grandson of J. Millward and son of W. Millward) to the Miners' Standard Inn at Winster.

CONCLUSIONS

According to Williams (1962 p.603) lack of capital had brought to an end yet another experiment in co-operative production. This is not strictly so. The venture might be viewed as an attempted, misconceived, return to a golden age of "free mining" - which, if it ever existed at all was several centuries earlier, but it totally ignored the lessons available to the DMA in the highly capitalised

coal mines with which Sales and Hicken were familiar, and the example of Millclose itself which in 1869-1880 had cost some £75,000 of Wass' own money to bring into profitable production. The question was never put as to why "the other side" were not already engaged in production at Raithe. One wonders how many of those involved really believed in the possibilities of the venture. Hicken and Sales and Millward perhaps, but clearly few others on the DMA Committee shared their views on this matter, and others, less naïvely motivated, at Winster, must have seen it only as useful sop for bringing in some, any, income rather than a means to a long-term profitable concern. It was in reality a concern set up to employ the men available, not a concern dominated by the need first to test the mine's potential as economically as possible, and then to invest for a potential profit, and as such had very little chance of success indeed.

One might ask mischievously if the Raithe Mining Company paid colliery wages, or even wages as high as at Millclose? One thing is certain, they certainly could not compete with Major Denman and the Wass Trustees' final gesture. The sale of Mill Close seems to have raised some £127,000. Out of this £10,000 was shared by the men who had remained at the Mine throughout the dispute (D.T. Dec 1920).

In his report to the DMA about Millclose, John Saxton in 1918 (Winster Parish Magazine, March 1985) had this to say:

"Old customs and expectations must die out; petty jealousies and pent-up feelings also, and I must impress upon you that each and every man must put out all his best work and skill for all parties concerned, and it would be better for all your officials and delegates to impress this thoroughly upon the workmen at a mass meeting."

Raithe Mining Co.

Have opened an old shaft about 50 yards SW of Elton Church, at the head of the Yatestoo Sough, with the intention of continuing the sough westwards, along the Coast Rake to unwater the NW - SE veins between Elton and Gratton Dale.

The depth of the shaft is about 115 yards and of the sough at this point 120 yards.

The vein is reached by a X-cut about 10 yards long. The Coast Rake at this point runs a little S. of W. and fades to the south, though it is very nearly vertical. The south wall of the vein is very well-developed, and shows horizontal slickensides. On the north the ground is much broken, and there are numerous pockets of ore, some being 15-20 inches across [a sketch showed a cavity containing barites with calcitic galena, calcite with isolated crystals of galena, and blende].

Fluor spar is a very rare occurrence as is pyrite. Black stone similar to that at Millclose occurs in the vicinity of ore bodies.

Old workings East of the church run into country of Black Limestone with black chert.

(1923 Report on Raithe Mine supplied by Peter Naylor).

Whether the delegates did impress the men with this is unknown. But the owners did, and just as much as were the men who joined the union, they were fighting for their industrial life. Millclose was very near the financial edge at this time, and even after the obvious lower manning after the strike it all but closed in the five years after 1920. The success of the 1930s was still long away.

In Winstar, very little appears to have orally survived about this strike. In over 30 years of inquiries about the village, not a single comment has been made to the writer about the events between the 4th and 7th of November 1919, even in long discussions with men like the late Dennis Wild who worked through the dispute, and with both the late Sam and Bill Bateman whose father was one of the strikers. At the most, vague comments have been made about divisions of opinion in the village over the strike. It is as if the history of the events were to be buried, with one side with unpleasant memories of being called "scabs and blacklegs", the other of behaviour quite out of character with traditional village life - like out of a medieval drama, as George Hardy might have said. In recent years interest has been roused by "*Millclose: The Mine that Drowned*" (Willies *et al* 1989), and by photographs exhibited in the *Miners Standard* at Winstar, where John Millward was earlier the landlord, and perhaps a little more has yet to emerge from the collective memory of the village. For this reason, after considerable thought, I have listed the names of the main characters of both sides in the drama so that families can appreciate the impact, good and bad, that the Mine had on their grandparents and great-grandparents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I remain grateful to fellow authors, Harry Parker and Keith Gregory for the material collected during the preparation of our *Millclose, The Mine that Drowned* (1989), and to many ex Millclose Miners and especially Eric Fisher and Bill and Sam Bateman, all of whom, I regret to report, have died in the last year or two. I received considerable information about the mine and its enginemen from Harold Thomas of Derby whose family subsequently donated both photographs and records to the Society

(PDMHS Collection, Derbyshire Record Office) and access was given to the photograph of the Raithe miners by Brian Saville of the *Miners Standard* at Winstar: it was given to him by John Millward the grandson of the Lodge President in 1919. Additionally, long ago Peter Naylor gave me a copy of a report on Raithe Mine which I have also used here. I wish to thank those who have helped consistently over many years at the Local Collections of the Derbyshire County Library at both Matlock and Chesterfield, and at the Derbyshire Record Office. In particular I wish to couple the latter with the name of Mrs Michael Brooke-Taylor who gave permission for access to papers in the Record Office (504B.L410) not normally available to readers. Permission has kindly been given by the Derbyshire County Council for several posters in the Derbyshire Record Office Collections (DRO) to be reproduced here. I was particularly fortunate when just after beginning this paper to be directed towards the Police Records by John Slater of Brassington, through John Peel. Back copies of the *High Peak Advertiser* were examined, many years ago, at their offices at Buxton.

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- DT = *Derbyshire Times* (Microfilm at the Local Collection of the Derbyshire County Library).
- DRO - Derbyshire Record Office

Lynn Willies.