

THE MAURY AND BURFOOT MINES, TADDINGTON AND BRUSHFIELD, DERBYSHIRE

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This note describes in outline what there is to see on surface at one of the best surviving but little known areas of lead mining in the Peak District. It is a sad fact that with the ongoing removal of surface hillocks for their gangue minerals and as part of agricultural improvement, there are only few places in the Peak District where you can stand and see lines of hillocks following vein after vein crossing the landscape and making a significant visual contribution to its character (Barnatt 2000; Barnatt and Penny 2004). A range of different types of features are present at the Maury and Burfoot Mines, described below, which mostly lie on the steep slopes to the south side of the River Wye at Millers Dale; difficulty of access has inhibited their removal.

The descriptions given here are derived from recent field visits and from the study of aerial photographs. It was the original intention to place observations in the series of notes on Peak District mines compiled by the authors in the Society Newsletter. However, so many features were recorded in this one area that this extended note is the result. While some parts of the remains are easily inspected from adjacent footpaths, all are on private land and permission to visit them should be sought from owners. To the west, much of the land is within Priestcliffe Lees Nature Reserve, while other land is farmed from Brushfield and Priestcliffe.

The Surface Remains

The most obvious features at surface here are the hillocks that cross the steep slopes obliquely at a variety of angles, with Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein trending east/west and Maury Rake and Dove Rake north-east/south-west (Figure 1). All three rakes are depicted on 18th century mining maps (Roberts 1767; Cook n.d.) as comprising more than one line of mineralisation along parts of the veins, given various names in mining records, which are noted here, but for simplicities sake are each given a single or simplified name (as above). In the late 18th century, the eastern part of Lees Rake is shown on Cook's plan as running closely parallel to Burfoot Old Vein (alternatively named Swindales Vein). Further west Burfoot Old Vein is shown running diagonally up the hillside, diverging from Lees Rake and following a line of hillocks visible today, and then running closely parallel to Dove Rake. The south-western part of Dove Rake was sometimes known as *Bole Torr Rake*. An added complication occurs around the Booth Lee Pipe, where mining accounts indicate it intersected veins known variously as Lees Rake, Burfoot Old Vein and Torrtops Vein, the last either a further branch vein or an alternative name. Various parallel veins and also pipeworkings are also recorded at Maury Mine (see below).

In some places the hillocks along the main rakes are over 20m wide and in excess of 2m high. Along all these veins there are intermittent hillocks which appear to be associated with now blocked shafts, while others presumably result from opencast vein working, surface trials in the same and ore processing. The south-western continuation of Dove Rake across flatter land above has largely been hillocked except near its south-westernmost end.

There are also a series of specific features of interest. The most significant of these, following Figure 1, are:

A. Maury Mine

Extensive hillocks lie within a large belland yard at Maury or Moorhigh Mine, the wall of which was probably not built until after 1848 as it is not shown on the tithe map of this date (Gratton 1848). Many of the hillocks have been turned over and part-removed, probably in the 19th century, thus many features

expected to be found associated with the dressing floors are no longer present. However, two adjacent shafts, now capped, remain at the upslope northern side of the belland yard. Next to the engine shaft there is one of the best remaining examples in the orefield of a gin circle, of 11.5m diameter with a small central mound, horse track and shelter/retaining wall on the northern side. The adjacent climbing shaft lies to the east and further in this direction there is a drywalled coe. South of the engine shaft there survives a small circular hollow with a tiny rectangular feature just beyond, walled on three sides, the open side facing the shaft; this is of uncertain interpretation but may be a small ore-storage bin or was a surround for a knockstone. There are the remains of a small sludge or buddle dam at the eastern end of the belland yard and to the south-west one circular pond, perhaps only a later agricultural feature, and a possible rectangular water storage pond downslope of a large flat-topped hillock. A 1767 mine plan by Roberts shows that the mineral veins here were complex, with the main Maury Rake running north-east/south-west, with two parallel veins close by on the southern side, extending towards the river and known as Glutton Rake and Whitecoe Vein. Lees Rake to the south trended east/west along the line of surviving hillocks here. There was also a north-west/south-east trending pipeworking, known as Rogers Pipe, which probably ran under the eastern half of the belland yard. The 1767 plan shows three shafts within the area later defined by the belland yard wall. There are also two agricultural limekilns and adjacent quarries just outside the belland yard to the north.

B. Reprocessing Complex, Maury Rake

High on the ridge crest above Maury Mine there is a particularly interesting set of large, flat-topped hillocks of crushed and presumably sieved material to the north-east, and high buddle dams to the south-west. At the focal point from which the features radiate there are barely distinguishable hollows and suggestions of structures but not enough is visible to interpret them in detail. At the crest of the westernmost hillock there is a rectangular hollow that may be the site of a buddling trough. There is no obvious shaft associated with these hillocks, and although Hearthstone Shaft lay in this vicinity in 1767, it may well be that the surface features here were created in the 19th century during a mining episode which concentrated on

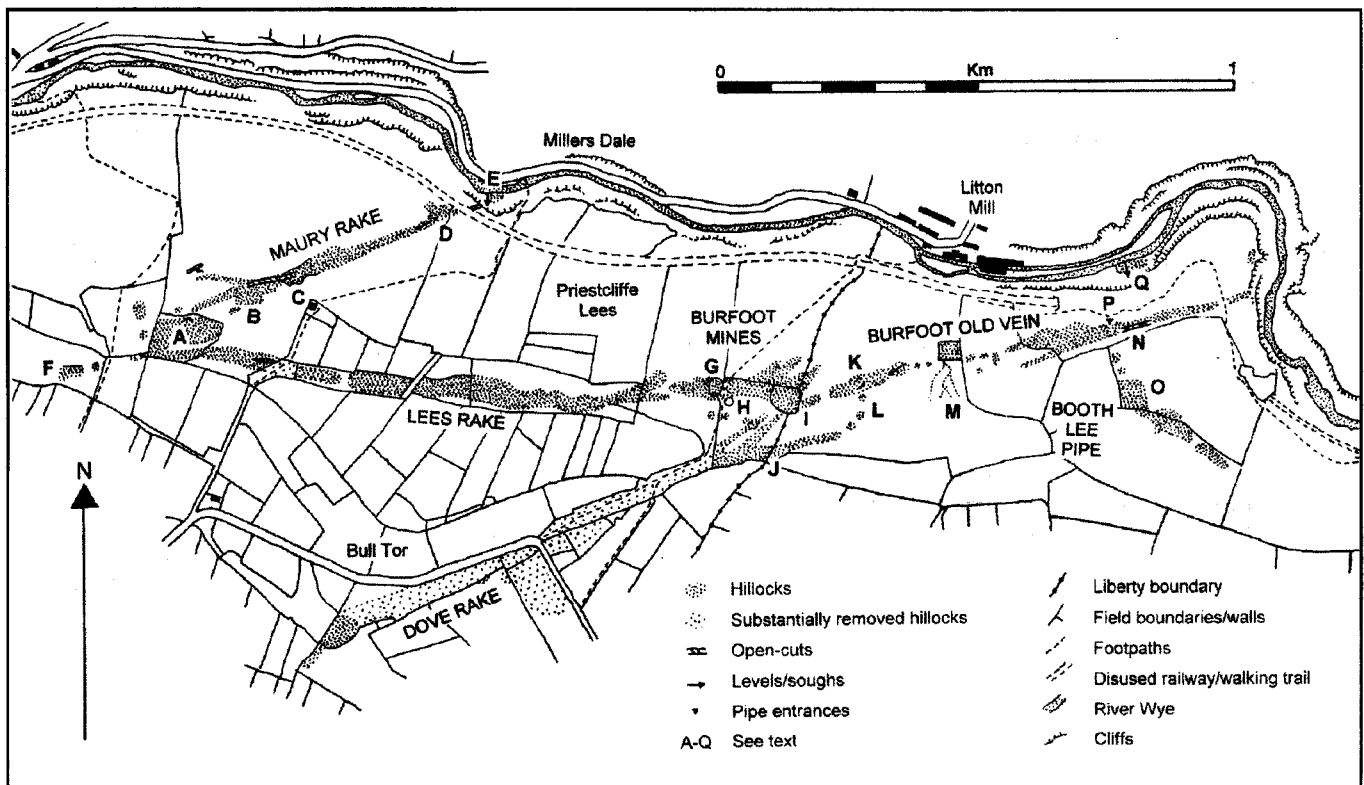


Fig. 1. Plan showing the location of veins at the Maury and Burfoot Mines.

extensive reworking of the adjacent hillocks, as well as those at Maury Mine (A) and the open cut to the north-east (C).

C. Open-Cut and Belland Yard, Maury Rake

Here there is a shallow but wide open-cut into the vein with limestone cheeks, presumably once deeper, that runs over the ridge crest. The north-east end lies within a ruined irregularly-shaped belland yard, built in two phases. At its south-west end there is a walled-off shaft, now blocked, with a large circular pond to the belland yard's southern side. Nearby, at the end of the open cut, there is a small, rectangular, possible buddling pit with two compartments, placed adjacent to footings of the original belland yard wall. The open-cut immediately downslope from here has been filled with a small buddle-dam. The large hillock below has been enclosed by an extension to the belland yard. A short distance further downslope there is a further rectangular pit on a large hillock top with fragmentary footings of what appear to be small rectangular structures immediately upslope; this may be another small buddling area.

D. Moorhigh New Level and Dressing Floors, Maury Rake

This is a fine example of a small 19th century mine complex associated with a level driven into the vein in the late 1860s at the point where the Upper Millers Dale Lava outcrops. The level has now run in, although a short length of this was explorable a few years ago. A tramway in a short walled cutting ran from its entrance to the dressing floor and downslope tip. To its north-west side there is a ruined coe, with traces of a curving belland yard wall behind, perhaps from earlier operations on the site. On the opposite side of the tramway from the coe, there is a shallow U-shaped hollow, with a deeper circular hollow beyond, a small flat platform nearby cut into the hillside and a small heap of gangue and mineral beyond; all these features are presumably associated with mineral processing. A short stretch of tramway bed leads to a high waste heap. The north-western half of this has been removed for re-processing and at the base of the concave robbing pit there are two small rectangular buddle-dams, with the possible, largely-buried, traces of a curved buddle dam downslope. All three are associated with the

hillock re-processing, each replacing the last as progress into the hillock was made. A small probable water channel leads downslope to the railway cutting. While used water at a buddle-dam would normally be allowed to run freely downslope, the presence of the railway perhaps led to its egress being controlled.

E. Maury Sough Tail and Shaft, Maury Rake

Water issues from the collapsed tail, with a walled channel to the river and the ruins of an adjacent coe. A lidded shaft at the base of the cliff above enters the sough, with the vein cut visible in the cliff. The sough was driven following Maury Rake south-westwards to Maury Mine (Rieuwerts 1987).

F. Belland Yard, Lees Rake

The disturbed hillocks within a belland yard have a capped engine shaft with associated walling of uncertain interpretation and a small rectangular enclosure below. There may once have been a gin circle next to the shaft, but this hillock has been removed. Ruined coes and small capped shafts exist nearby.

G. Belland Yard, Lees Rake

An oval belland yard defined by a ruined drystone wall, which was probably not built until after 1848 as it is not shown on the title map of this date (Gratton 1848), is attached to a long field wall running down the slope. The hillocks within, while high, have been reworked and there are now no clear signs of features. A late 18th century mine map (Cook n.d.) shows a shaft a little further west, where there is a conspicuous shaft hollow surviving with toadstone in the hillock, which was described as being sunk 'to get through the channel in the Lees Vein'. This deep trial sinking below the Upper Millers Dale lava, which reached 69 fathoms (126m) deep, via the shaft and a series of sumps (internal shafts), was probably wound with hand stowes.

H. Washing Pond, Lees Rake

This walled pond adjacent to the public footpath has been terraced into the hillside with a high embankment and retaining wall on the downslope side (Plate 1). This is a fine example of

a dressing feature, with a deep central circular pond, now dry, surrounded by more gentle sloping sides to the enclosing wall. It has clearly been used for washing and possibly buddling ore, as the gently sloping sides surrounding the pond hollow comprise clay and other fine material dumped as a result of these processes; the floor surrounding the pond was presumably originally flat. The pond appears to be shown on a late 18th century mine map (Cook n.d.) and is depicted on the tithe map of 1848 (Gratton 1848). To the west, on the other side of the field wall there is a short sinuous stretch of a possible leat leading towards the pond.



Fig. 1. The walled ore-washing pond adjacent to Lees Rake at the Burfoot Mines.

I. Belland Yard, Burfoot Mine, Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein

A sub-rectangular belland yard defined by a ruined drystone wall, probably not built until after 1848 as it is not shown on the tithe map of this date (Gratton 1848), interrupting a long field wall to the east running down the slope at the lordship boundary. Close to the junction with the belland yard wall to the south-east there is a small undressed limestone pillar, standing about a metre high, that is thought to be the liberty boundary stone recorded in 18th century Barmaster's entries. In the northern wall of the belland yard there is a rare example of a drystone-lined, semi-circular, bouse team (ore-storage bin) with a raised barrow-run leading to it from the mineral workings upslope to the south (Plate 2). A small channel leads downslope from the bouse team to two sub-rectangular pond-like hollows associated with ore processing. In the south-east corner of the belland yard, close to the boundary stone, there are the footings of what appears to be a large, well-made, rectangular structure. This was perhaps a building and there is a symmetrical circular hollow at the centre that may be either a pond or a collapsed shaft top. Alternatively, the upslope part, which is abutted by the belland yard wall may be a second ruined bouse team, while that on the other side of the hollow may be a coe of more typical size. The high and predominantly limestone hillocks within the rest of the belland yard have been turned over and there are no clear signs of shafts and associated features. Shafts are shown on a late 18th century mine map (Cook n.d.), one against the liberty boundary described as being the 'Burfoot Old and Present Shaft' and another a short distance to the west, named 'Swindales Old Shaft', said to be sunk on 'a

pipe' that trended to the south-west, presumably below the line of shaft hillocks running up the hillside here.

Beyond the belland yard to the west there are two possible sub-rectangular ponds just below an embanked miners track leading to the upslope side of the belland yard from the hilltop. The final section has been robbed as it approaches vein working coming down the hillside and there is no gateway into the belland yard, indicating it was disused during the last phases of mining.

J. Possible Miners Stile, Dove Rake

A stile through the Liberty Boundary field wall, on the line of Dove Rake, is not on a current public footpath and may have been made to facilitate access to the mines.

K. Belland Yard, Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein

A small ruined hillock-top belland yard. There are two short stretches of curved wall bases surviving, and a bank across the

Fig. 2. The bouse team with barrow-run above at one of the belland yards on Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein at the Burfoot Mines.



centre with a hollow to either side, presumably associated with buddling or other ore-processing.

L. Dove Rake Old Sough.

Amongst the hillocks of Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein there is a near-horizontal, steep-sided, cutting entering the hillocks from the downslope side, which turn westwards and leads shortly to a run-in and overgrown adit entrance. Above to the east there is a line of three isolated hillocks, presumably at air shafts, leading up the hillside and a fourth at the east end of the Dove Rake hillocks. These surface remains are associated with Dove Rake Old Sough which was apparently driven to dewater this rake (Rieuwerts 1987).

M. Belland Yard and Water Channels, Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein

A rectangular belland yard defined by a ruined drystone wall, attached to a long field wall running down the slope that was built sometime before 1811 (Potter 1811) and possibly 1649 (anon. 1649). There are a series of sinuous channels descending the steep slope above from the spring line at a presumed clay wayboard outcrop. The westernmost is clearly artificial and channelled water to the dressing floor. At the base of this leat, in the south-west corner of the belland yard there are a series of small dry ponds and hollows. The first is oval and part-embanked on the downslope side. A narrow water channel leads downslope to an upper buddle dam (see below). To the western side of this channel there are two narrow sub-rectangular hollows, possibly once buddling troughs and a banked oval pond below. Immediately beneath this is the small upper buddle dam, cut through by a water channel from the lower pond to a much larger buddle dam below. This long narrow feature, the shape of which is governed by the belland yard wall, fills much of the northern part of the dressing floor. The hillocks to the south-east are much turned over and there are now no clear signs of an engine shaft and other features that presumably once existed here.

N. Open Cut, Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein/Torrtops Vein

A short stretch of shallow open cut, the limestone cheeks with an excellent example of horizontal slickensides, presumably once significantly deeper but now part-backfilled with deads. One very small shothole was observed similar to those noted below underground in the Boothlee Pipes.

O. Hillocks, Boothlee Flat

The extensive hillocks here, on the extension of Boothlee Pipe workings, are at the site of the 17th century *Ouldfeild Over Fflott Grove*, later known as Boothlee Flat. They are the only known surviving surface expression in the orefield of workings developed of documented *Fflot* work, i.e. at an outcropping pipe. Further untouched hillocks with shafts and coes run to the south-east.

P. Boothlee Pipes

Adjacent to a small informal footpath on the steep hillside there are four pipeworking entrances, one blind, one blocked and two leading to underground workings. Above, in hollows at workings on surface, there are several sites of shafts, one open and descending a short distance to the pipeworkings below. In the blind entrance there are a series of adjacent trial drill holes of different sizes.

Q. Sterndale or Torr Tops Sough Tail

This inaccessible sough tail, which has run in, can be easily identified from across the river. The hollow at its site has an adjacent ruined coe to the west on a small flat-topped hillock and a larger waste hillock from its drivage to the east. The

sough was driven southwards into the hillside, to intersect Torrtops Vein/Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein, which it followed westwards (Rieuwerts 1987).

Below Ground

Many of the workings are no longer accessible or they remain unexplored, but there are two notable exceptions. Detailed description of these workings is beyond the scope of this note, in summary:

Maury Sough has been entered in recent years via a short air shaft near the tail and has been followed for several hundred metres (John Wild *pers. comm.*). The sough in parts has impressive packs of deads to either side, with iron rails on the floor and small hading stopes above (Ford and Rieuwerts 2000, 59 and back cover). It is often full of water and the shaft is lidded with no general access.

The accessible parts of Boothlee Pipes comprise a short but complex series of pipeworkings of uncertain date adjacent to vein workings at Torrtops Vein/Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein. Parts of the pipeworkings were possibly created by firesetting. Elsewhere there is heavy pickwork and shotholes, with small examples that may be relatively early in date. At the inner ends of some of these there is a central hole, indicating the use of a drill bit with central point. Such bits were described by Hooson in 1747 as '*square at the Shoulders and seldom above an Inch in length, before it ends in a sharp Point, the square is very true made and keen withal, and a little hollowness of the sides betwixt the Edges thereof; these are the most Ancient and much used in my memory*' but these probably had gone out of use by the mid-18th century at latest, as he goes on to describe a different type, named '*chisel bits*', as '*now all in use*'. In places these workings are unstable, as mining has caused roof breakdown.

The History of the Mines

The history of the mines has recently been researched for an unpublished report by Jim Rieuwerts for the National Park Authority (Rieuwerts 2001), who has kindly allowed a summary of the information in the relevant sections to be included in the account given here.

Medieval mining in the Maury and Burfoot Mines is undocumented but this may well have been taking place; the hilltop above Lees Rake is named Bull Tor or Bole Torr and medieval smelting in a bole hearth may well have been carried out here.

Surviving documentation of miners giving evidence during disputes between Thomas Eyre and the Earl of Devonshire proves that mining was taking place at Boothlee and elsewhere in the general vicinity in the last years of the 16th century (Public Record Office DL 1 and DL 4, various).

Existing documentary evidence for mining increases for the 17th century onwards. The first to be documented in this period is Maury Mine.

Maury Mine

At the time of his death in 1653, Lionel Tynley of Holmesfield, a prominent lead merchant, owned an 1/8th share in the mine and also an unfinished sough here (Lawrance 1931), the tail of which is now lost. Over half a century later, miners, referring to both mine and sough, which were flooded and abandoned by 1647, stated that '*the undertakers after several years workmanship Att great expense found the nature of the work soe difficult and were forced to leave and relinquish the same*'

(PRO, DL 1/470).

Mining was recommenced in 1694 at Maury Rake, Lees Rake and elsewhere, when a partnership set possession stowes in an ambitious venture to work the mines. Sometime shortly after 1694 a second sough was started but again its position and extent are not known. By 1711 £1000 pounds had been expended and it was said the new sough would be finished within a short time '*having in great measure loosened the water troubling the said veins*' (PRO, DL 1/470). Small amounts of ore are known to have been measured at Maury Sough at various times between 1732 and 1740, while after 1743 Maury Mine began small but regular ore production for much of the remainder of the 18th century.

Despite poor output from the mines, sough driving again commenced in about 1763/64 (Rieuwerts 1987), this work was certainly at river level (Figure 1, E), either as a new venture or possibly a refurbishment and extension of one of the earlier drainage attempts. A detailed plan of 1767 shows that by that date the sough was about 800 feet (245m) in length, still 650 feet (200m) short of the main mine complex (Roberts 1767). It probably reached the mine in early 1774, when extensive trials were made at Maury Mine, which were disappointing as '*they have found the vein much plundered*' (Sheffield Archives, Bagshawe Collection 494). Only small-scale mining was carried out after October 1775. The engine shaft and gin engine at the main mine (Figure 1, A) presumably date to this 1770s period of work.

The Maury title was later obtained by a Priestcliffe miner named George Goody, in December 1816, who with Thomas Goody had worked Windoway or Grantley Grove on Lees Rake from at least 1811 and mines west of the Maury Mines from 1812. A few years later they were sold to Thomas Oldfield and then in turn to Thomas Walton in 1822. What work was done at Maury Mine in the early 19th century, if any, is unclear. Thomas Oldfield's son, John, worked the title from about 1829-30 onwards, probably concentrating his efforts above river level and at surface, as hinted at by an agreement in 1846 to allow the water level of the Wye to be raised for a dam for the use of Litton Mill with the result that the sough was flooded (Sheffield Archives, Bagshawe Collection, 3523). The reworking of hillocks on the ridge-top (Figure 1, B) may date to this period (or they are later).

In the 1860s Edward Miller Wass acquired the Maury title and drove the Moorhigh Level (Figure 1, D) in 1868 (Chatsworth Barmaster Collection). Little is known of this operation, but it may have concentrated on removal of low grade ores from underground. Green *et al.* stated in 1887 that '*At the Moorhigh Mine a good deal of brown as well as some white ore was raised*'. It is not clear when the adit hillock was reworked for reprocessing in the small buddle dams here, and by whom, but Wass still owned the title at his death in 1886.

Lees Rake and Dove Rake

Much work probably took place in Lees Rake and Dove Rake before the earliest documentation, which dates to the 18th century. Mines in the Burfoot title, including those in Brushfield Liberty, are known to have been in work in 1709-13, and probably near-continuously in 1726-63. Named mines include Burfoot Grove, Old Grove, Nether Grove and Over Grove. Production was small throughout this period. In 1709-13 only 20 loads were mined at '*Burfoot beyond Wye*' (Sheffield Archives OD 1149). At Burfoot Grove between 1727 and 1734 annual production inclusive of lot ore and waste ore (smitham) fluctuated from over 90 loads to as little as three loads

(Derbyshire Record Office, Br-T L71), while from 1735 to 1741 a total of only a little under 100 loads was produced.

Sterndale or Torr Tops Sough (Figure 1, Q), which ran from the river to Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein/Torrtops Vein, was first recorded in 1738 but when it was driven is not known. Another sough (Figure 1, L) is shown on the late 18th century plan (Cook n.d.). It was also recorded in 1810 when meers were given away in Dove Rake. The Barmaster noted that possessions began '*from opposite an old sough that was drove from Burfoot Old Vein to the dove rake, which said Old sough is about five Meers of ground within Brushfield Lordship and ranges westwardly into the Kingsfield*'. Whether this is a true high level sough driven for the purpose of dewatering the mine, or a haulage level that took water, is unclear. When these two soughs were created is unknown, but they may date from documented periods of somewhat-increased activity in the general vicinity in the late 1720s and early 1730s, or they are possibly earlier.

From at least 1770 the Burfoot Mines (working Lees Rake, Dove Rake and associated smaller veins) were worked continuously on a somewhat more ambitious scale by two successive partnerships of investors, the first fronted by Mr. John Barnes (who also probably ran the Duke of Devonshire's limekilns at Peak Forest) and the second by Mr. Henry Turner. Joseph Cook of Tideswell, a well-known mining agent, oversaw the mines on Turner's behalf. Output was small until April 1788, but from 1788 to 1794 this mining produced 2155 loads of ore (exclusive of lot and smitham), two thirds of which was obtained in the last three years (Chatsworth Barmaster Collection). A surviving plan and notes by Cook show this work concentrated on the brink of the hill, in the area of Dove Rake where hillocks have now mostly been removed. A deep trial through the toadstone was also sunk on Lees Rake (Figure 1, G) but was presumably unproductive. After 1794 output declined dramatically, with only 120 loads in the next two years, whilst by 1797 only belland was being measured, which continued until 1809.

In the 19th century only small-scale working at well-trieved mines and their hillocks took place, including work by Benjamin Wyatt that was begun in 1806 (Chatsworth Barmaster Collection). The 'Boothlee Mining Company' was in existence by 1860 and brought an action for trespass in the Small Barmoot Court in 1863 against the 'Portaway Company', who owned Burfoot Vein and had re-opened Sterndale Sough, for removing ore from the adjacent Torrtops Vein, the title of which was owned by the first mentioned company (Derbyshire Record Office, Br-T, L28/1).

The Boothlee Pipes and Adjacent Mines

Seventeenth century documentation is known for the Boothlee Pipes (Sheffield Archives, Bagshawe Collection, 702). Small Barmoot Court hearings held at Monsal Dale in 1670 and 1671 verified mining in *Burford Bottom* (possibly at the east end of Lees Rake/Burfoot Old Vein/Torrtops Vein), at a new rake at '*Corly on ye north side Brushfield Pasture*' (unlocated but somewhere in the vicinity) and at '*Ouldfeild Over Fflott Grove*' in '*Boothlee*' (Figure 1, O). A Barmoot Court held at Brushfield in 1733 heard that John Mycock at Boothlee Mine owed a miner, Bartholomew Hounsfild, the enormous sum of £33 in unpaid wages; at the same court there was also a claim for debt at the adjacent '*Torr Top Grove*' (Chatsworth Devonshire Collection).

Boothlee Pipe (Figure 1, P) was at work during the years 1732-39 but only 83 loads were obtained, while Torrtops Vein was worked intermittently between 1729 and 1742 producing 133

loads (Derbyshire Record Office, Br-T, 1.71; Chatsworth Devonshire Collection). The pipe, and the adjacent vein workings and sough, were acquired by Richard Bagshawe and partners in 1767, together with a mine wagon, all for £7. As noted above, Sterndale or Torr Tops Sough was reopened in the 1860s and ore obtained from the veins it drained.

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