



NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 7

MAY 1998

Cumann Oidhreacht na Mianadóireachta

MINING HERITAGE SOCIETY OF IRELAND

MHSI

PROGRAMME

Sunday 6th September. National Heritage Day. As in previous years the Society will run a variety of outdoor meetings to show people their mining heritage. Nick Coy at Avoca, Des Cowman at Bunmahon, Martin Critchley at Silvermines & Shallee are some trips. Offers of other local events welcomed as soon as possible please.

Sat 12th - Sun 13th September. MHSI trip to Sligo area Eamonn Grennan will lead a trip to the lead mines at Ballysodare and the barite mines at Ben Bulben, and possibly the coal mines at Arigna. Pat Hughes will give the Society a talk on the Saturday night about the history of iron and coal mining at Arigna. Further details will be notified to members once arrangements are confirmed.

Autumn 1998. Following proposals from Dave Naylor, we have modified plans to arrange a meeting for the autumn on the recent exploration and mining in Ireland from the 1940's to the 1970's. This will now be a publication. For further information contact Dave Naylor or Martin Critchley at ERA Maptec, 36 Dame street, Dublin 2, or Matthew Parkes at the Geological Survey of Ireland, Beggars Bush, Haddington Road, Dublin 4 (01-6041493).

10th - 13th November 1998. IV International Mining History Congress, in Guanaajuato, Mexico. There is an interesting programme. Details from Email: miningcongress@infosel.net.mx John Morris (01-6041473) and Matthew Parkes have registration forms. Please make contact soon for info!

Other events may be organised shortly, but notice will be in Newsletter 8, or by letter.

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EDITORIAL

Readers will notice the change in the title from History (Stair) to Heritage (Oidhreacht). The report of the AGM explains why. It was the unanimous decision of those present to change the emphasis from History to Heritage with all its implications for recording and preserving the physical as well as the written records of our mining past. The new title reflects more accurately the activities of the society.

One aspect of this is the on-going site inventory. Another, is the aspiration to have all engine houses and associated areas at risk in the Republic protected under the Sites and Monuments Act. This is now being done. Tipperary and Cork are currently being worked upon and the Ballycorus flue and chimney have already been listed.

Editorial apologies for the late issuing and somewhat attenuated format of this current newsletter. Held back for now is Ken Brown's article on the Cornish engine houses of west Cork and a number of occasional items. They will appear in the autumn, as well as any other material sent to the editor – Des Cowman, "Knockane", Annestown, Co. Waterford.
[Tel. 051-396157;
email: dcowman@iol.ie]

MINUTES OF THE 1997 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(held Sat 14th February, 1998 11.00 am, Geological Survey of Ireland, Dublin 4.)

Present: Gay Cannon, Gerard Clear, R.D. Cluskey, Des Cowman, Nick Coy, Martin Critchley, John Davies, Ruth Delaney, Peter Eggleston, Keith Geoghegan, Eamonn Grennan, John Hamilton, Peadar McArdle, Mike Moore, John Morris, Billy O'Brien, Kevin O'Hagan, Pat O'Connor, Gareth Ll. Jones, Matthew Parkes, Adrian Pearce, Tom Reilly, Nick Southwick, Eamonn de Stafort, Alan Thomas, Edwin Thorpe.

Apologies: Ken Brown, Nigel Burns, Norman Campion, Stuart Chester, Paddy Doyle, Howard Fox, Pat & Paddy Geoghegan, Rob Goodbody, John Higgins, Kevin McGurk, Marie Merrigan, Peter Moore, Stephen Moreton, Mike Simms, Blaise Treacy

Agenda Items

1. Chairman's welcome and address

John Morris welcomed everybody.

2. Minutes of 1996 Annual General Meeting held on February 8th 1997.

The minutes, published in Newsletter 4, were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Proposed: Adrian Pearce, seconded by Eamonn Grennan

3. Matters arising.

Nothing which did not appear on the agenda elsewhere.

4. Secretary's report

The activities of 1997 were briefly reported, commencing with the 1996 AGM. John Colthurst led a meeting at the Ahenny slate quarries in March. Alan Williams assisted by Dan Tietzsch-Tyler led a trip to Allihies in April. Thanks were expressed to all of the Allihies Community who laid on a superb lunch for the members. In May the Geoghegans opened their doors for a weekend of fun, work and skill development at Glengowla. Norman Moles organised a lecture and fieldmeet to the Newtownards and Conlig lead mines in Co. Down, also attended by delegates of an Institute of Mining and Metallurgy meeting on Europe's Gold Deposits. After National Heritage Day with a range of events at Bunmahon, Avoca, Glendalough, Kenmare, Ahenny and Glengowla, the autumn had another trip led by Des Cowman and Ken Brown to Knockmahon and Slieveardagh coalfield. The level of local enthusiasm at all these meetings was most encouraging. Thanks were given to all the leaders and organisers of the meetings. A workshop on the Ecology of old mine sites, with a fieldtrip to Avoca, was held in October, but a talk scheduled for November had to be postponed to April 1998.

Three newsletters were published, and 4 committee meetings held through the year (Mar, Apr, Aug and Nov). Other business involved ongoing involvement with the Vale of Avoca Development Association (VADA), Wicklow County Council and others concerned with the mining heritage at Avoca. Thanks are due to John Morris, Nick Coy, members of VADA and Ken Brown for their active involvement here.

The Chairperson responded recently to comments by Michael Woods, the Minister for the Marine, at a Lead Zinc Study Group of exploration companies, congratulating him on his public commitment to mining heritage, and alerting him to the Society's efforts.

The Committee has been continuing efforts to resolve insurance and liability issues, but this is too broad a question for the Society alone. The continued need to represent the interests of mining heritage as a Society is clearly present, but other responses to enquiries and events have necessarily been muted. Development plans for the Society are on the agenda. The Secretary thanked everyone who had contributed to the work of the Society in many ways, over a busy and worthwhile year.

5. Treasurer's Report

Martin Critchley presented the accounts. For most of the year there were about 108 members, but a flux of new members joined through the registration process of the Ecology of old mine sites workshop, but these were actually in advance for 1998. Although the cash position was reasonable, the need for a good reserve for publications was noted. Gareth Ll. Jones suggested opening a one-month notice deposit account for the Society's cash reserves to reduce the bank charges, which was agreed by the meeting.

6. Editor's Report

Des Cowman outlined his troubled efforts with the Newsletters due to computer problems. Concerning the Mineral Statistics publication, Des reported the progress to date which had also been put back by corruption of his computer data. It was now back to near completion.

7. Constitutional amendments

The previously circulated amendments proposed were discussed. Pat O'Connor outlined his views on changing the name of the Society, and the secretary read out 4 written observations received, which were all in favour.

Amendment 1

After some discussion amongst those present the written amendment proposed by Pat O'Connor was modified by addition of *"That the name of the Society be changed from Mining History Society of Ireland to Mining Heritage Society of Ireland, which comprehends all consequential changes to the name of the Society in the Constitution, bank accounts, letterheads etc."*

For: unanimous.

Amendment 2

After discussion of the issues the original proposal was amended to read:

"That the Committee be empowered to create two new classes of membership, a sustaining membership and an event membership, neither of which carry voting or other rights."

It was passed unanimously. The updated Constitution is to be re-issued to members.

8. Election of 1998 Committee

As the nominations received by the Secretary equalled the positions available all persons were deemed elected without the necessity for a vote.

The 1998 Committee is thus:

Chairperson	John Morris	Committee Member	John Hamilton
Vice Chairperson	Nick Coy	Committee Member	Eamonn Grennan
Treasurer	Martin Critchley	Committee Member	Billy O'Brien
Secretary	Matthew Parkes		
Editor	Des Cowman		

The Chairperson formally thanked Kevin O'Hagan for his contribution to the Society, and welcomed the new Committee member, John Hamilton. He spoke to encourage more active participation for sustenance of the Society, and reminded members that he would have to resign at the end of 1998. He also thanked the secretary for organising the Ecology Workshop.

9. National Monuments Acts

Billy O'Brien gave a detailed interpretation of the legal position of mining remains as archaeological sites and their protection under law as it is now, both in the Republic and also in Northern Ireland. The substance of his talk is being printed in Newsletter 6 and 7. Billy O'Brien encouraged the Society to make use of National Monument Records to protect sites by getting them into existing State mechanisms.

Following Billy's talk, Ruth Delaney stated the role of the Heritage Council and emphasised the benefits of Inventory work as a means of protecting sites. The Heritage Council will be anticipating input from the MHSI Inventory to their broader Industrial archaeology Inventory, once it is fully operational. Although varying views were noted, in connection with restraints placed on emergency work in minesites, and also possible conflict with mineral ownership law, there was a consensus that the Society's focus should be on the opportunities, and the establishment of the Society's *bona fides* as the experts on mining heritage. The establishment of a working group (Ruth Delaney, Billy O'Brien and Martin Critchley) to address the issues was proposed. The Committee should develop a Code of Conduct incorporating legal position.

10. Inventory.

After lunch, Martin Critchley outlined progress on the database, using Microsoft Access, for mining heritage inventory. Getting information is critical. Also map bases to plot and locate sites is important. Eamonn Grennan offered to act as a map co-ordinator, to assist people in getting the appropriate maps. Assistance from the Heritage Council via publication grants or through a Buildings at Risk Register may be available. People volunteered to co-ordinate and target sites in different areas. (The names are listed elsewhere in the Newsletter).

11. Society Development

The Chairperson noted the need to have a membership drive, a programme to get major funding, and other measures to expand the base of the Society. A minimum annual fee of £100 was agreed as that which should be sought from the new class of sustaining member. Reciprocal advertising is to be offered to such members for the newsletter etc. More PR was required. Suggestions offered included screens at Dublin airport for tourist info, membership application forms on the Web page, also the inventory sheet.

A proposal by Dave Naylor for a publication and or a meeting to capture much oral and fragile history of 1950's-1970's exploration for minerals in Ireland eg Tynagh. This was considered a useful idea and will be run perhaps late 1998 or more likely in 1999. Many names and ideas were noted on this project idea. Interest of a community group in Tynagh in their local mining heritage has been communicated to the Secretary and this may be a good venue for a workshop meeting. Further discussion of programme possibilities and offers (see programme) was followed by a video session of Society activities during the year.

ECOLOGY CONFERENCE AND FIELD TRIP TO AVOCA

As the programme given in Newsletter 5 and details sent to members indicates, this was too wide ranging a workshop for justice to be done to it here. Summaries of the papers were given to the forty nine participants and it is intended that the proceedings will be published by the Royal Irish Academy in the journal *Biology and the Environment*. The Field Trip to Avoca the following day (19th Oct.) reflected many of the themes of the conference as well as exploring other aspects of the area. Starting at Cronebane open pit and proceeding around "Mount Platt" (the dominant waste tip named after the mine manager of the 1970s, Jim Platt) the group was given details of the recent history and geology of the area by Vincent Gallagher, Pat O'Connor, and Peadar McArdle.. Interpretation and comment on the flora, from colonising lodgepole pines to bacterial growth in the mine waters, was imparted by Howard Fox and other participants. That afternoon we visited Tigroney, looked at Williams's engine house from outside its present fencing and proceeded uphill to the ochre pits and Baronets winding engine. Howard pointed out the various stages of colonisation of the waste tips and rock faces by various lichens and other vegetation. An interesting case study was noted where a fire had been lit on one of the waste tips providing an island of nutrition for grasses and pine. This attracted rabbits whose droppings provided further nourishment for the grasses of this green pocket. We then proceeded across the valley to Ballymurtagh and Ballygahan mines. Disregarding the open County

Council waste site, we were given a run down on the engine houses and the mineral railway by Nick Coy. In the company of Jervis Good we then looked at the trial beds for revegetating the extensive waste heaps in upper Ballymurtagh. This led to some animated discussion about whether and how such waste tips should be treated. With much food for thought, as an Autumn chill set in, we said our farewells. For this participant an enriching biological dimension has been added to his interest in old mine sites, particularly Avoca.

“GOLD IN THE HILLS”

On Weds. 8th April, Ron Callender gave a lecture to the Society about his interest in the historical aspects of gold mining. This was very much from a personal perspective and was amply illustrated by a series of excellent colour photographs taken by the speaker. (Ron explained in the course of his lecture how he used a painting by light technique to photograph underground workings, rather than the usual flashgun method).

In recent years, Ron has been active in gold panning and he was involved in the organisation of the World Gold Panning Championships at Leadhills, Scotland. His interests in this area led to contacts with Finnish gold prospectors, whose lifestyles and methods must closely follow those ‘old-time’ prospectors from the Gold Rush eras. Also in Finland, Ron was asked by the Gold Mining Museum to organise an exhibition of gold mining in the UK and Ireland. The UK display is now complete and Ron is seeking assistance with the Irish display. A discussion at the end of the lecture brought forward several offers of assistance and Ron is actively pursuing these!.

Many thanks to Ron for coming over to talk to us and for the Geological Survey of Ireland for use of the lecture theatre.

THE PROTECTION OF MINING HERITAGE IN IRELAND

PART II

[Part I of Dr O'Brien's article, published in Newsletter 6, was introductory and explained how the National Monuments Acts (1930-'94) apply to mine and quarry sites].

MINING HERITAGE AND IRISH LAW

How does the NMA seek to protect archaeological heritage in the Republic and how do its various provisions affect the activities of the Society and its members? There are two areas of concern, namely the protection of archaeological sites and landscapes on the one hand, and the protection of archaeological objects on the other.

Archaeological Sites and Landscapes

Regarding the former, the Act clearly states that it shall not be lawful for any person to demolish, disfigure or physically interfere with a registered historic monument or archaeological area without licence permission from the State. This includes underwater archaeological remains. The penalties for such interference are currently a fine not exceeding £1,000 and/or imprisonment not exceeding 12 months on summary conviction, or £50,000 and/or 5 years imprisonment on conviction on indictment. Clearly some activities are more injurious than others and the State might not regard the removal of vegetation in the same light as the illegal excavation of spoil deposits and other archaeological remains. Nevertheless, any activity which physically interferes with a registered mine or quarry site is covered under this law.

As well as protecting archaeological remains from malicious interference, section 26 of the 1930 Act states that it shall not be lawful for any person to dig or excavate on archaeological sites without permission from the State. Provision is also made to licence excavation for archaeological purposes. Any unlicensed excavation or digging in a registered archaeological site is illegal no matter what motives are presented for carrying out this work.

Archaeological Objects

There are many provisions in the NMA dealing with portable objects of archaeological and historical interest. In addition to the above provisions which make it illegal to dig in the search for archaeological objects, the 1987 amendment prohibits the use of detection devices like a metal detector for this purpose. The possession of such a device in or near an archaeological site without licence permission is now illegal. Regarding the ownership of objects, the 1994 amendment clearly states that the State is the owner of all archaeological objects that may be found, unless it decides to waive that right. Furthermore, anyone who finds an archaeological object is required by law to report it to the Gardai or to the National Museum of Ireland within four days. The latter will then decide whether the State wishes to acquire the object in question and has the discretion to offer a financial award to the finder for responsible citizenship. Further provisions of the NMA make it illegal to sell archaeological objects, to physically alter or damage them in any way or to export them from the State.

What all of this means is that there are no automatic rights to private ownership of archaeological objects in Ireland. Anyone in possession of an unreported archaeological object discovered since 1930 is in effect breaking the law and thus liable for prosecution. Members of the Society are not allowed to amass private collections of archaeological artefacts or must report any finds to the National Museum of Ireland. Strictly speaking, this law also applies to the collection of mineral and rock samples from archaeological contexts such as spoil heaps.

A CODE OF CONDUCT

The above provisions of the NMA place a legal imperative on the conduct of the Society and its members. This need not unduly restrict our activities, but rather will help us to stay on the right side of laws that are very much in keeping

with the aspirations of the Society. The implications of the NMA for our activities may be summarised in the following four recommendations:

- Do not dig or physically alter any archaeological sites or objects.
- Do not search for archaeological objects where this searching physically interferes with the site. Do not use detection devices without State licence approval.
- Report all artefacts finds to the gardai or National Museum of Ireland within four days of discovery. The State will then decide on the future ownership of these objects.
- Do not collect or sell archaeological objects or attempt to remove same from the State.

These recommendations based on the NMA clearly apply only to mining heritage within the Republic of Ireland. While the legislation in Northern Ireland is different, the same restraints more or less apply with regard to the protection of archaeological sites. This code of conduct should be adopted for the island as a whole, not only as a legal imperative, but as a matter of responsible practice. Finally, NAMHO and its members in Britain must be made aware of the very different legislation pertaining to archaeological heritage in Ireland and in particular, the very strict laws relating to the collecting and removal of artefacts from the State.

STATE AUTHORITIES

In the Republic, the two State authorities charged with the protection and management of archaeological heritage are the **National Museum of Ireland and Duchas - the Heritage Service**. The latter was formerly part of the old Office of Public Works and is now a branch of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands. Both Duchas and the National Museum obtain their statutory powers from the National Monuments Act 1930-94 and are the principal enforcing authorities for this legislation. In Northern Ireland, the principal State body charged with protection of archaeological heritage is the **Environment Service** of the Department of the Environment. This body obtains its powers under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. This body may also deal with artifact discoveries, where the **Ulster Museum** also has an important role.

Duchas - The Heritage Service

The National Monuments and Historic Properties Section (NMHP) of Duchas is the body principally concerned with the protection of archaeological sites and landscapes in the Republic of Ireland (address: 51 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2). As well as initiating prosecutions for offences committed under the terms of the Act, the NMHP can also intervene directly to protect threatened heritage sites in a number of ways. Firstly, through direct acquisition of land, whether obtained through compulsory purchase provisions in the Act or mutual agreement with landowners. The latter can also include what are termed Guardianship Orders where the State takes sites under its control without direct land transfer.

To date, only one mine site in Ireland has been directly acquired by the State for reasons of conservation. In 1995, Duchas purchased the Bronze Age copper mines on Mount Gabriel, Co. Cork as part of its contribution to a European heritage initiative. This creates a useful precedent where other mine sites of historic interest may eventually be acquired. Also coincidentally included in this category are

mine sites located within the State-owned National Parks, for example, the Ross Island and Muckcross mines in Killarney.

A further provision of the NMA allows the State to directly intervene to protect threatened sites by the issuing of Preservation Orders. The latter are usually only applied as a last resort in response to a specific threat. Preservations Orders were issued in 1970 to protect both the Mount Gabriel and Derrycarhoon copper mines in west Cork, so again there is a precedent here to protect mining heritage. Generally, the State tries to anticipate such threats by obtaining prior knowledge of proposed developments affecting archaeological sites and subsequently intervening directly in the planning process.

The primary mechanism here is the Record of Monuments and Places, a permanent inventory of archaeological sites and areas in the Republic. This is issued to various planning authorities, previously in the form of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), but now as the Record of Monuments and Places. Over the past 25 years, the Archaeological Survey branch of Duchas has been conducting a 26-county survey of known archaeological sites which are then included in constraint maps issued to local planning authorities. All landowners are now required to give the State at least two months notice of their intention to carry out any work which affects an archaeological site or area included in this register. This gives the State sufficient time to discuss the possible archaeological implications with landowners and, where necessary, place preservation orders on threatened sites.

The implications for the protection of mining heritage are obvious. It is vital that all mine and quarry sites of historic interest are included in the Record of Monuments for each county which are issued to planning authorities. This process is currently underway, however Duchas has not been consistent in its approach to mining heritage, principally because of the 1700 AD cut-off date that has been applied. Thus, 18th- and 19th-century mine and quarry sites are generally not included in the work of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland, however there is no reason why this cannot happen. A precedent here is provided by the Survey's work in Co. Cork where many of the major 19th-century copper mines in the county are included in their inventory.

In coming years, the Society must ensure that all major mine sites in Ireland are represented in the Record of Monuments and Places and surviving structures are placed on a register of architectural heritage which Duchas is also compiling. We must ensure that important mine and quarry sites appear on the Record of Monuments issued to local planning authorities who can then intervene directly where proposed developments threaten mining heritage. In those cases, the local planning authority will refer the potential impact to Duchas who might then seek expert advice from the Society and its members. In this way, the Society could perform the same important consultative role in heritage matters as An Taisce or the Irish Georgian Society.

National Museum of Ireland

This body has responsibility under the NMA for the protection and conservation of archaeological objects in the Republic (Kildare Street, Dublin 2). As well as initiating prosecutions for offences under the Act, it is the central archive and conservation facility and has a major role to play in terms of public presentation and education through its

exhibition areas in Kildare Street and the recently acquired Collins Barracks centre.

Under the NMA, all archaeological objects found within the State since 1930 and in the future must be reported to the National Museum of Ireland (NMI) within three days. The latter will then decide whether the State will claim ownership and whether to compensate the finder accordingly. Within the NMI, there are two divisions which can play a direct role in the preservation of mining heritage. The Antiquities Division has responsibility for archaeological objects dating from the prehistoric past up to recent times, while the Art and Industry section deals with those finds from recent centuries. The former already houses finds from the Bronze Age copper mines of Ireland and will contain the archive from the recently excavated Ross Island mine in Killarney. The Art and Industry section, to my knowledge, does not have collections relating to mining heritage, however this may change now that this body has acquired new space in the Collins Barracks facility.

One long-term objective of the Society could be to encourage the NMI to develop a permanent display on mining heritage, possibly as part of the Art and Industry section. Other bodies such as the Geological Survey of Ireland may also develop such exhibitions, however it must be stressed that only the NMI has the legal authority to amass collections of archaeological artefacts. The Society should assist the NMI in every way to develop a central archive of artefacts pertaining to mining heritage; these can then be loaned to outside agencies for exhibition purposes where necessary.

Finally, there are many other bodies in Ireland which can intervene to protect mining heritage, either directly or through their role as a pressure group. The Heritage Council is currently developing its role as a major consultative body for all heritage matters in Ireland and will be very influential in future policy decisions. Other groups, such as the Department of the Environment, local government authorities, An Taisce and other pressure groups all have a role to play in the protection of mining heritage.

Northern Ireland

While awareness of industrial heritage is slowly growing in the Republic, there has been considerable interest in

Northern Ireland since the 1950s. Published inventories of industrial archaeology are available and the State maintains a record of important sites and buildings. There is no cut-off date in operation here and industrial sites of all types up to recent times are included.

The Environment Service of the Dept. of the Environment is the central body in Northern Ireland dealing with State protection and management of archaeological heritage. This body obtains its powers from the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. They maintain what is called the Monument and Building Record which includes a number of archives, including the Sites and Monuments Record, the Listing Buildings Record, the Industrial Heritage Record, all of which are relevant to mining heritage. Their archives are accessible to the public from offices in Hill Street, Belfast. The Environment Service also deals with the discovery of artefacts, as does the Ulster Museum. In Northern Ireland, mining heritage may also be protected, directly or incidentally, in various planning and rural protection legislation.

CONCLUSIONS

It must be admitted that the State has not afforded the mining heritage of Ireland the same consideration as other archaeological remains. This must be seen as neglect in the face of huge demands on its resources rather than any stated policy. Indeed, in its support for the Ross Island project and the recent acquisition of Mount Gabriel, the Irish State has shown itself well disposed towards the protection of mining heritage. The Society is now in a position to raise the profile of this mining heritage and ensure that sites of more recent date are fully protected under the NMA and planning legislation. To gain a role as a respected consultative body, it is imperative that we observe the highest standards with regard to the preservation of mining heritage. How can we expect the State to protect mining heritage using the full authority of the NMA if we do not strictly observe the law in this regard. At issue is responsible conduct and the good name of the Society which will bear directly on our ability to act as an effective pressure group to protect this heritage. The formulation of a code of conduct, which includes the provisions of the NMA stated above, will be an important step towards this objective.

William O'Brien. National University of Ireland, Galway.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT HISTORIC MINE AND QUARRY SITES: NATIONAL MONUMENTS AND HISTORIC PROPERTIES SECTION OF **DUCHAS - THE HERITAGE SERVICE**, DEPT. OF ARTS, HERITAGE, GAELTACHT AND THE ISLANDS.
CONTACT: DUCHAS, 51 ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN 2 (01-6613111)

FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT ARTIFACTS: ANTIQUITIES DIVISION OR ART AND INDUSTRY DIVISION OF THE **NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND**.
CONTACT: NATIONAL MUSEUM OF IRELAND, KILDARE STREET, DUBLIN 2 (01-6777444)

NORTHERN IRELAND

FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT MINES, QUARRIES: THE **ENVIRONMENT SERVICE**, DEPT. OF THE ENVIRONMENT, NORTHERN IRELAND.
CONTACT: MONUMENTS AND BUILDING RECORD, 5-33 HILL STREET BELFAST (01232-543004).

FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT ARTIFACTS, CONTACT THE ENVIRONMENT SERVICE OR **THE ULSTER MUSEUM**.
CONTACT: ULSTER MUSEUM, BOTANIC GARDENS, BELFAST (01232-383000)

MISCELLANEOUS

ITEMS RECEIVED BY THE SOCIETY, WITH THANKS

- Donated by Ike Wilson of Cheshire
Material (as yet unsorted) relating to Tynagh mines 1965-'73 comprising 69 plans, 45 tracings, 8 folders and two notebooks
- Donated by Stuart Chester (the first three being nicely bound photocopies)
The Avoca Mineral Tramway by K.A. Murray in the *Journal of the Irish Railway Record Society*, 1947
Geological and Statistical Notes on Irish Mines by Rev. Samuel Haughton, 1854
On the Mines of Wicklow and Wexford by Warington W. Smyth, *Records of the School of Mines and of Science applied to the Arts*. 1853
Manual of Mining Tools 1871, plus accompanying Atlas of Engravings to illustrate the Manual of Mining Tools by William Morgan, 1871
A Quick Look at The Mines of Baravore Glenmalure, Co. Wicklow, Eire by N.Burns and S. Chester 1997
- Donated by Martin Critchley
The Nenthead Mines by M.F. Critchley, *Bull. Peak Dist. Mines Hist. Soc.* Vol 9, No. 1 (2nd revised edition 1998).
[Copies of this can be purchased from the Peak District Mining Museum, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire, Tel. 01629-583834]

NOTES ON CAIME LEAD MINE, COUNTY WEXFORD.

Caime and its adjoining mineralised townland of Balhyhighland lie west of Enniscorthy [T899401]. On the much overgrown site at present is a large waste heap which looks as though it was reworked in the 20th century, scattered other waste and two chimneys but no discernible remains of engine houses. One of the chimneys is of conventional Cornish design the lower section being granite and upper part brick with a flange. The other chimney is more problematic being entirely brick with the opening higher above ground than would be usual to accommodate a Cornish-type flue.

While there may have been trials on this site earlier on, it was leased for 35 years by the Mining Company of Ireland in 1825, shortly after their inception. Ten years were to pass before a decision was made to work Caime. Investigation indicated the wet nature of the terrain and the necessity of purchasing a pumping engine.ⁱ Possibly this was done on the basis of a report giving 70% lead values with 15 ounces of silver per ton, plus the possibility of copper.ⁱⁱ A further attraction was the convenience of the site. Ore could be drawn less than five miles along the flat road to Enniscorthy whence it could be river-borne on the Slaney to Wexford for shipment to the company's smelter at Ballycorus.ⁱⁱⁱ

Apparently the Mining Company of Ireland saw great potential for Caime over the first two years and in 1838 they added a crushing engine to the existing pumping engine. Presumably they did not anticipate the extremely fragmented nature of the lead deposit^{iv} nor the porous nature of the rock around. Conditions underground were described in 1841 as "more like going into a river than a mine"^v.

At what stage these difficulties became apparent was not reported to the company's shareholders who instead were proffered a series of excuses for the continuous losses at the mine up to 1842, e.g. - work was progressing in clearing out the old shafts (1837-8); the required machinery was slow in coming (1838-9); cut-backs were necessary in the interest of the shareholders (1840); they were searching for the "great lode"; there was difficulty with their immediate landlord (1842); the price of lead had fallen (1843).^{vi} All these were no doubt true but the reality was a loss of £1850 in the operation between 1841 and '43 on production of 1500 tons of ore approximately^{vii}. At the end of 1843 shareholders were told that the "great lode" found, but -

"after a very long and expensive search has again been cut off, and from the loss sustained by previous searches, the unproductiveness of the lode, the difficulty and consequently great expense in dressing the ore, the extreme low price obtained for it when dressed, your board have decided on the suspension of the workings and the removal of the machinery to other concerns, if not sold at the mine."^{viii}

This did not prove as easy as anticipated because earlier difficulties with their immediate landlord, John Howlin, resurfaced. He claimed that the Mining Company of Ireland was obliged to compensate him for damage done to his

land and a local jury awarded him £325 compensation at the end of 1844. The company however claimed that the jury had no right to make such an award and Howlin brought the matter to the court of Queen's bench the following April. The matter hinged on the wording of an Act going back to the tenth of George First. The outcome was that Howlin was granted his compensation but without costs.^{ix}

The Mining Company of Ireland raised just under 500 tons in 1844 at a loss of £531, with a loss of over £700 on the 218 tons raised the following year.^x The company now (1845) stripped the mine of anything worthwhile and reportedly demolished the buildings.^{xi} Nevertheless they continued to hold the lease and may well have kept a caretaker there over the next 16 years until 1861 when they "*deemed it expedient to surrender the premises at Caime by which they are relieved from all further responsibility in connection with that concern.*"^{xii}

There is no record of anybody else attempting to work Caime after that, with the possible exceptions noted. The remains now standing would seem to date to that short ten year period.

NOTES

- ⁱ. Mining Company of Ireland reports: 2nd 1835, 1st & 2nd 1836; 1st 1838.
- ⁱⁱ. W. Warrington Smyth, *Records of the School of Mines and of science applied to the Arts*, Vol. I, pt. iii, "On the Mines of Wicklow and Wexford", HMSO 1853, p 387-8.
- ⁱⁱⁱ. Mentioned in *Parliamentary Gazateer I*, London 1837, p. 296. Also in T.C. Foster *Letters to the Times 1842*, Appendix 25.
- ^{iv}. As is clear from Brokenshar's plan of Caime dated 1841 in GSO files (under "Dublin")
- ^v. Roper, loc cit, p. 859 (883).
- ^{vi}. Mining Company of Ireland, half annual reports 1836-43.
- ^{vii} ibid 1841-'43 incl.. No production figure is provided for first half 1843.
- ^{viii} . ibid, first rep. 1844
- ^{ix} ."In the matter of John Howlin with Richard Purdy, secretary to the Mining Company of Ireland" in *Irish Law Reports*, Vol. VIII, Dublin 1846, p. 145-152.
- ^x MCI reports 1844-'45 and Min. Stats. 1845.
- ^{xi}. Mining Company of Ireland 1st Report 1846 shows 189 tons of ore being sold for the previous six months which suggests that rich pillars may have been stripped. On Brokenshar's plan (loc. cit.) is a superscription by W.W. Smyth dated 1845 noting "Caime - previous to being knocked in 1845"
- ^{xii}. ibid 1847-61 accounts show sums of £30-£70 p.a. "expenses" in relation to Caime. Quote in 1st Report 1862.

MINING HERITAGE INVENTORY - AN UPDATE

Contributions are coming in to Martin Critchley. John Hamilton has agreed to co-ordinate coverage so please contact him at Westering, Clover Hill, Killorglin, Co Kerry or phone 066-62443. There will be a listing of coverage of the country so far in Newsletter 8, but don't wait till then. Go out and do a basic report of your local mine site in the format distributed in the Newsletter. Contact Martin Critchley if you need more forms. Information at this stage need only be basic, it can be improved once we have a broad picture. There are fewer activities for the spring this year to allow more active fieldwork by members on their local mining heritage. The following persons have agreed to take responsibility for given areas (but any additional information for these areas would also be welcome).

John Hamilton Eamonn de Stafort & Martin Critchley Nick Coy	Kerry North Tipp. Inc. Silvermines Avoca and Wicklow	Tom Reilly Keith Geoghegan Des Cowman	West Cork Glengowla Waterford, South Tipp.	John Morris Eamonn Grennan Matthew Parkes	Monaghan Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon Dublin
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We particularly need persons willing to provide information for the following areas: - Clare, Kilkenny, Mayo and anywhere else you know of!