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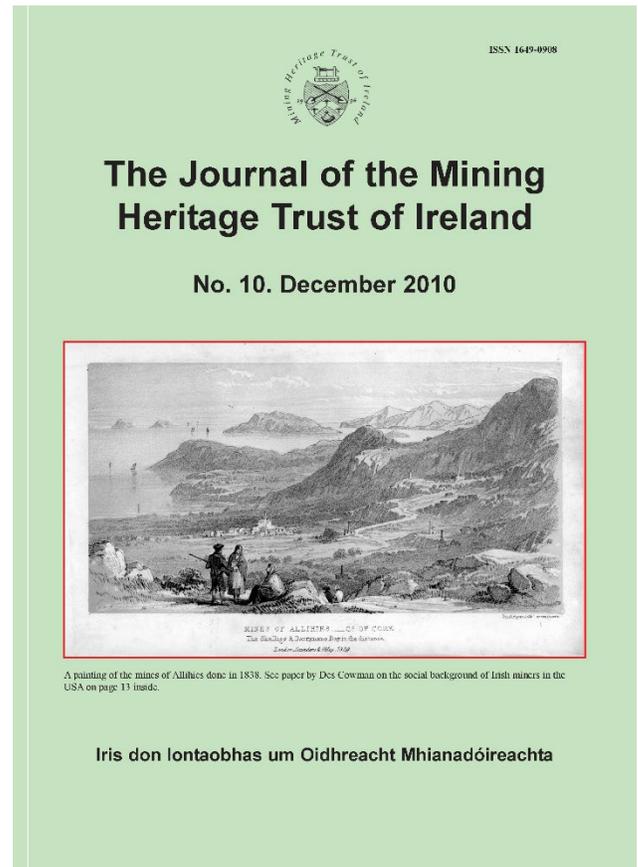
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THE BARYTE MINES OF WEST CORK

by Des Cowman

Abstract: Since the first account of these mines was published in 1988 (Cowman and Reilly) much new information has emerged and the history of these workings can be brought into the 20th century. Where the 1980s research still stands it is summarised and woven into the new material. Since the narration comprises a bewildering sequence of name changes, the tables below are provided. The official name of the mineral barium sulphate, approved by the International Mineralogical Association is 'baryte' but it has frequently appeared in older literature and popular mining literature as 'barytes', 'barite', 'barites' and other variants, which are used in their original form as appropriate, e.g. in company names. *Journal of the Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland*, 10, 2010 3-10.

CONTEXTS AND PEOPLE

In the early 1850s new markets had opened up for the baryte which presumably had been noticed in the various explorations for copper and other minerals. A demand for it had arisen in paper hanging, cement, plaster paris, grease, soap and crystallising sugar beet (MJ 1853) and over the following decades new uses for it were found (SE 1873). There was one major attempt in west Cork to exploit this market (Duneen) and four (Derryginagh, Dereenlamane, Scart and Letter on Mount Gabriel) tentative attempts.

The only other major baryte mine in Ireland was in Gleniff on the north-west slopes of Ben Bulbin in Sligo worked between 1894 and 1913 and the top of Ben Bulbin from 1973-'79 (see Foley 2009). Apart from that there seem to have been only three trials. One hundred tons were shipped from Belfast in 1878 from an unknown source, 149 tons from Oughterard in Galway in 1882 and an unspecified amount from Derrynoid in county Derry in 1910 by eight workmen (MS). The only other record of an aspiration towards baryte mining is in the ownership by an *Irish Barytes United Mining Company* of an unlikely old copper mine at Coosheen near Schull about 1907, although this may have referred to a baryte mill (PP1908). This was one of 72 other "minor occurrences" of baryte in a listing of 1923 (Hallissey).

Ownership of the various baryte mines of the area c. 1900 is complex with the same people owning a number of mines. The census of 1901 & 1911 (www.irishcensus.ie) helps to clarify who worked what.

Cave, Arthur Saunders Oriel: His father, Thomas Saunders Cave, had developed mines at Ballycummisk and Cappagh in the 1850s and 1860s (Cowman and O'Reilly 1988, pp 115-6). Arthur was born in 1854 and his father died unexpectedly in a railway station when the boy was 13. At some stage Arthur lost his sight in a shooting accident (*Macay typescript*) and was recorded as blind in 1901. He registered himself then as a "mining agent" with his 17 and 18 year old sons as "assistant mining agents". He had a younger son and older daughter and along with his wife,

Jane, and two servants lived in a ten to twelve roomed house at Coosheen. In 1889 he commenced mining for baryte on Mount Gabriel and took over Dereenalamone in 1899 in which year he also built a baryte mill on his land as described below. Much of his energy went into raising capital in London but is unlikely that he or anyone else made money out of the mines. By 1911 none of the Cave family were in County Cork.

The Storer brothers, Edward and Alfred: They do not appear in the census of 1901 but by 1911 there is a clan of them, originally from Scotland but afterwards living in Liverpool. They had no experience of mining and there is no evidence about why they should have involved themselves in west Cork baryte. Edward was born in 1878, and in 1911 was living in a rented house in Muckcross close to the Duneen mine. His wife, Hilda was also Scottish as was the nurse that looked after their one year old daughter. His brother, Alfred, was four years younger (i.e. 29) and was living with his 65 year old mother at Gorteenroe, Bantry, 41 year old sister and two servants. They rented six rooms of a nine room building. He described himself as "Barytes mill manager". They first appear in 1906 mining at Scart (see below re accident) and at Derryginagh and by 1907 they also had control of Duneen. They must have had business contacts in Liverpool as that name is in the various companies they set up.

CLONAKILTY

Baryte was noted at Duneen Bay (townlands Dunmore and Mountain) as early as the mid 1830s (Weaver 1838) but there is no record of when the first mining of it took place. A map of the Duneen area of 1854 shows a baryte mill but the accompanying promotional literature mentions only the prospects for silver,

(DUNEEN, Mountain, Lady's Well)

	WORKED BY	TONS	COMMENT
1851-'55?	?		Worked in 1855 (Triphook 1856)
1875-'77	W.B.Beamish	12,460	
1878-c'82	Duneen Bay Mining Co.	25,201	Worth £25, 613. London Co.
1883-1904	Cameron, Swan & Co..	76,709	Worth £64,930. Newcastle-on-Tyne Co.. Peak employment 93 in 1887.
1905-'06	William Gunn		14 employed 1905
1907-'18	Liverpool Barytes M. Co.		Also owned Scart and Derryginagh.
1919-'23	Cookson Barytes Co..	13,128	
1947-54	3 groups involved	890	
1954-'82	Ladyswell Mining Co..		Local consortium & Texan Co. From '66.

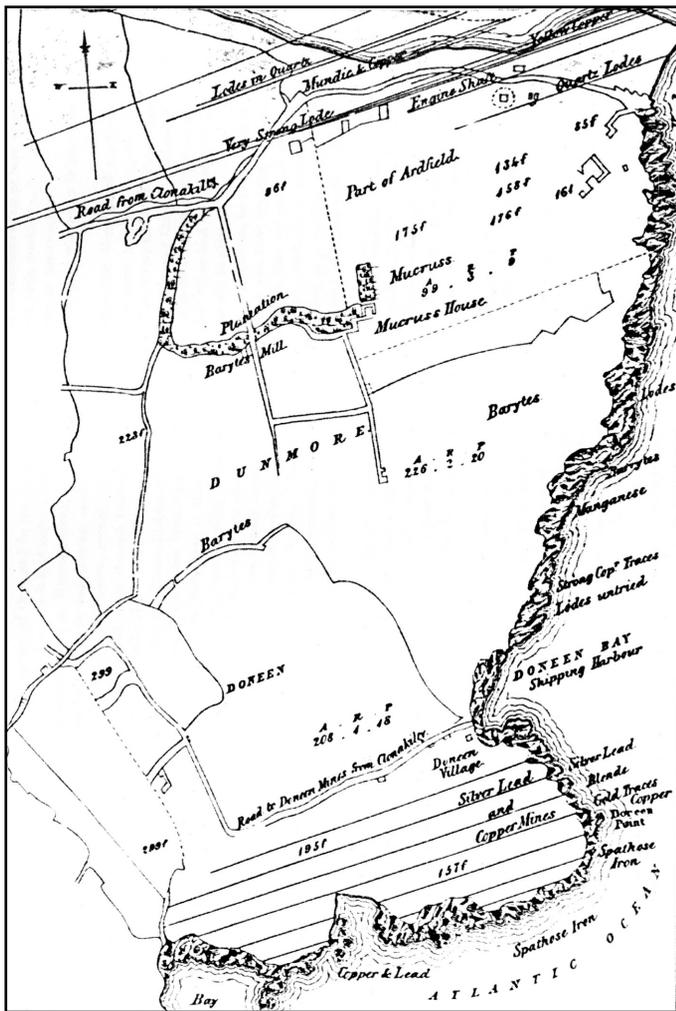


Figure 1. Plan from The Clonakilty Consolidated Mining Company dated August 1854 showing a barytes mill already in existence at Duneen.

lead and copper on either side of the baryte (Guildhall library) - adjoining. A form of copper "mining" did take place in January 1867 when the San Francisco was wrecked here and locals stripped the hull of its copper sheeting! (PP 1867).

Duneen was reopened, after twenty years, in July 1875 by landowner W.B. Beamish who the next year sought London capital for a suspiciously high £30,000 (SEYB). A new company seems to have arisen from that imaginatively called *The Barytes Mining Company* with a Henry Beamish as director and local manager Captain Carden (SS 27 Jan. 1894) or Cardew (Slaters Directory 1895, p 253)

Over 12,000 tons of baryte ore was sold in 1876 and '77 (Min. Stats.) but apparently that did not produce profit as in the latter year the mine was leased to Robert Bell of London who launched *Duneen Bay Mining Company* offering 20,000 £1 shares to the public. Some arrangement seems to have been made with Cameron Swan (or Strong) of Newcastle on Tyne who apparently marketed the product as "Shamrock Brand" (Harte). The peak of that operation was in 1878 with 8,311 tons sold for £12,466 and while there was a major falling off thereafter, nevertheless the mine continued to provide profit over 25 years (averaging nearly 5,000 tons with a value of about £3,000 annually) before petering out in 1902 with a final 72 tons (Min. Stats.).

The social spin-off of this cannot be fully determined but official employment figures are available from 1883 when 51 worked in Duneen; 28 of those were let go the following year but 46 taken on in 1885 the peak of employment being over the next two years at 77 workers and 93 in 1887. Thereafter workers kept on being laid off with just 6 underground in 1901-'02 and about 30 over-ground. Such irregularity of employment provided no stability for the local community. In Duneen townland, for instance, a pre-famine population of 127 was reduced to just three people by 1891: while the decline in Ardfield parish as a whole was not so dramatic it went progressively down from an 1841 total of nearly 2,500 with under 1,000 left fifty years later (PP Census of Population).

In 1893 as a schooner departed from Duneen with a hundred to tons of baryte for Liverpool but never reached there. A severe storm not alone wrecked the *Betsy Nichols* under captain Roberts but another vessel under his son (SS 12 & 19th Jan. 1894). The next winter a boat with cargo from Duneen took refuge from a storm near Cobh, dragged two anchors and was sunk by the Cork Steam Packet. The baryte was insured, but not the boats (SS 16th Feb 1895). Mining continued until 1902 with 36 employed and a final 72 tons sold. With closure there was just a caretaker (Min. Stats.).

A watercolour of the mine was made in 1892 by James L.B. Morris (below). It shows on the right what is said to be a tall

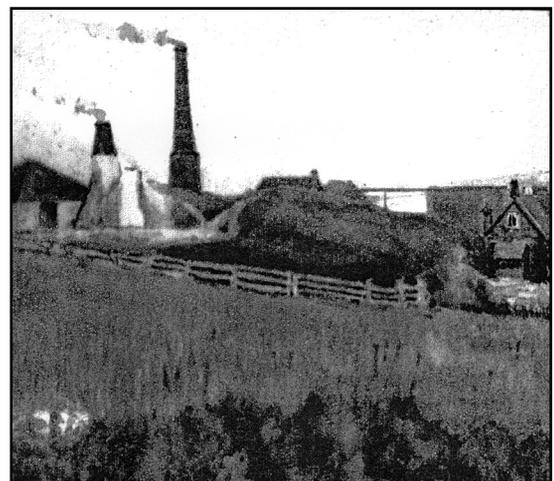
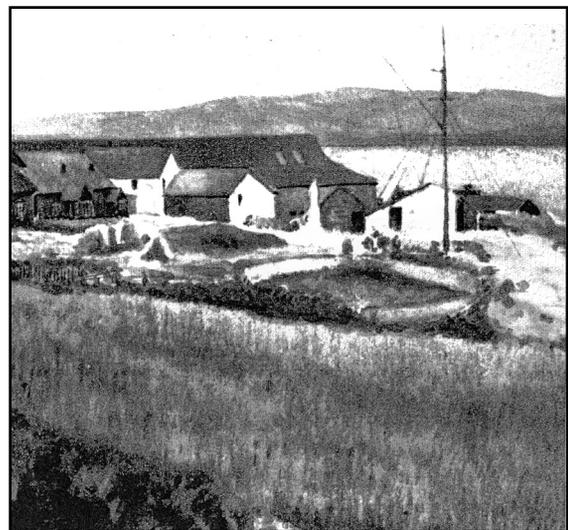


Figure 2. Two halves of the watercolour of 1892

chimney for ventilating the mine (square base, tapering round upper part) and a lower one (conical) described as for the boiler house of a steam engine, presumably for a crushing mill. These might make some sense the other way around, but why would that mine need such ventilation? A number of undetermined buildings stand on the left with a mast to the right. This was said to be for sending coded messages to head office in London (not Newcastle) although how that would have worked in pre-wireless days is a mystery (A/R Journal).

Some detail also survives of a strange accident there in November 1899 with three fatalities and three serious injuries from burns. Apparently waste from the various surface processes was stored in a funnel-shaped pit from which it would be released into the mine below as backfilling. It included cinders and ashes from the boilers. After a period of dry weather these re-ignited and plunged into the mine, burning those in the level below (SS 9th Dec 1899, inquest).

The company there continued to be called *Duneen Bay Mineral Company* in 1901 (MJ 1901, p.291, ad) and perhaps when held briefly by a William Gunn in 1905 possibly mainly to rework the old tips as twelve of the fourteen he employed were on the surface. It was then taken over by the Storer brothers who simply added the prefix "Liverpool" in 1907 but dissolved it the following year and brought it under the umbrella of *Liverpool Barytes Company* the name of their Derryginagh and Scart operations (BT 18204). How or why the flooded mine was taken over by them goes unrecorded but by 1910 they had unwatered it to a depth of 60 fathoms (about 115 meters). They then had 16 underground and 30 surface workers, building up to 24 and 49 in 1913. Manager Edward Storer ran into what proved to be a perennial problem at Duneen - labour relations. Strikes are reported in October 1911 and March 1913 (SS 11th Oct. & 23rd March). Presumably the refined baryte went to Liverpool, increasingly in more reliable steam ships. However one cargo of 220 tons was lost when a steamer under another Capt. Roberts (relation of the father and son lost in 1899?) hit a rock in thick fog off the Cork coast. The crew were saved (SS 18th July 1914).

They continued working there over the war years which proved to be a boon to them as German baryte no longer competed for the British market (SS 21st Oct. 1916). However their mine at Scart was worked out by 1916 and Derryginagh looked the same so they moved their machinery to Duneen and extended their operation to the adjoining Mountain townland (SS 2nd Sept. 1916). Altogether they raised about 39,000 tons of baryte over ten years (Min. Stats.). This continued to be sold as "Shamrock Brand" (Harte). The only detail of this operation was that they had a gas turbine that leaked, poisoning a nineteen year old engineman (SS 5th Feb & 14th Oct. 1916). At that stage there was a new manager, Charles Halsall (SS 1st Jan. 1916). Two reasons were given for their closure in 1918. One was that escalation of wages had made the mine uneconomical (Min. Stats. and Harte). The Geological Survey were sufficiently concerned about the closure to send two people to investigate. They concluded that the corrosive mine water ruined one of the pumps causing the mine to flood (GSI ms. reports 1918).

Duneen was taken over in 1918 by *Cookson Barytes Co.* of Newcastle on Tyne. Using electricity they pumped the mine sufficiently to extract 13,128 tons up to 1923 before folding, apparently due to labour difficulties, this being a troubled time in Irish history. In 1921 there were said to be 110 people employed (SS 8th May 1926). The company's own records (Harte) show wages having more than doubled between 1914 and 1922. The unionised workers also demanded bonuses, and the company decided it could not afford this anymore but would close the mine. A telegram from union offices suggested they go back to work without bonuses (SS 8th April 1922). Nevertheless there seem to have been continuous strikes, the carters causing particular problems. To resolve this, the company bought two steam wagons, but then the new wagon drivers went on strike! The solution to this may have been to build a jetty at the adjoining townland of Muckcross and they shipped directly from there between November 1922 and closure in April 1923. They then sold all surface machinery and at some stage, mine heritage having no importance, chimneys and other buildings were demolished (Harte; A/R, O'Connell;).

That should have spelt the end of Duneen mine but about 1945 the mine was reassessed by the state company *Minerai Teoranta* who estimated that it would take 25 weeks to pump out the flooded workings (GSI, MRO 0113, 0137, 0175). In November 1947 the local paper reported a rumour that *Benbulbin Barytes Company* were re-opening Duneen (SS 1st Nov.) and over the next six months two trial shipments of 300 and 350 tons were sent from there to Bristol (SS 6th March & 29th May 1948). The following year a Hans Vajda from Budapest was said to be mining at Muckcross (SS 26th March 1949). Then in 1951 a Sheffield company were said to be mining in the area with first shipment of 240 to Garston, Liverpool in January 1954 (SS 30th Jan.)

It is not clear what the relationship is between all this and a local consortium under Seamus Harte being set up in 1954. By October 1954 they (? - attributed to O'Donovan Brothers) sent 300 tons to Bristol (SS 2nd Oct) with two other 300 ton shipments by Harte the following year to Manchester and Garston (SS 24th Sept. & 31st Dec. 1955). Sometime thereafter they set up *Ladyswell Mining Company* with Lord Carbery as chairman and Harte as secretary (SS 11th Jan 1975). Next mention is 1960 when the Ladyswell company employed English contractors to pump out Muckcross and the intention of building a mill (SS 6th Aug. 1960). By 1966 Harte's operation was said to be "small scale" (presumably no mill) but that a Texan company was testing there (SS 19th Feb. 1966). Nine years passed before it was announced early in 1975 that *Milchem Incorporated* (who also had an interest in Tynagh) would begin drilling and two years later they still had not reached their target to test below 360 feet (SS 11th Jan. 1975; 20th Aug. 1977). In 1979 they began to export Duneen baryte to New Orleans for use in oil drilling. This, however, did not produce salvation and by the early 1980s it was obvious that it had no commercial future. It seems that operations petered out rather than there being a formal closure (Harte).

MOUNT GABRIEL (LETTER AND SKEACH)

	LETTER	TONS	
1862-'74	Mount Gabriel Mining Co..		Started by Charles Thomas
1889-'94	Arthur Cave	400	Tons in '94 only
1895-'01	Mt. Gabriel Barytes & Umber Co.	3,100	Worth £1,870
1902-'09	Irish Barytes & Umber Co.	1,178	1902 to '04.
1910-?	Dereenlamolane Barytes Mines Ltd		11 working 1911; 1 in 1912.

"Iron-stained" baryte was reported to have been raised at Letter in 1853-'54 and testing took place at the same time in Scart. Another attempt was made to re-open Letter for both baryte and copper in 1857 with the establishment of a *Mount Gabriel Mineral Company*. (MJ 1858, p. 16 & 764) The ever-optimistic Charles Thomas investigated Letter in 1862 and perhaps his interest stimulated the setting up of *Mount Gabriel Mining Company*. However, local management was given as a James Sampson over the 11 years from 1863 but there is no record of what activity took place there (Min. Stats).

Letter was investigated again in 1889 by Arthur Cave (Daily Independent 30/12/1892) and over the next few years 800 tons of baryte were said to have been raised (Hallissey, p. 19) although it is not clear whether the 400 tons recorded in 1894 (MS) is included. This led Cave to invest in a refining mill on his land at Coosheen east of Schull in 1893 (SS 2nd Aug 1893). Needing English capital he formed the *Mt. Gabriel Barytes & Umber Company* with 2000 £5 shares on offer in 1895 (MJ 1896, p. 124) and he also took a lease on Dereenamalane. 3,100 tons (worth £1,870) are recorded for that year and 1896 but then nil. Nevertheless money apparently was spent on an extension of his mill and on a major p.r. exercise in throwing a party there for his all his workmen and the neighbours (SS 3rd Jan. 1897). He turned his need for further English capital into a crusade with a local testimonial on his departure for London (SS 10th April 1897).

Presumably he came back empty handed as just two people are recorded as working on the surface (watchmen?) in 1899 (MS).

Apparently new capital was sought from London in 1900 and when Cave returned from there he made extravagant claims, not only for baryte, but promising the reopening of the local copper mines (SS 10th Nov. 1900). However, the following year he established a new London-based entity *Irish Barytes & Umber Company* with a new manager, E.J.

Whelan. They raised 1,178 tons between 1902 & '04 (MS). In 1903 while the Mineral Statistics give 16 working on Mt. Gabriel, all on the surface, a local account says there were 70 employed between mine and mill. Of the latter, it says the mill stones were driven by 120 hp steam engine (SS 5th Nov. 1903). Associated with this was one Edward Gunn (brother of William of Duneen?) who by 1906 was declared bankrupt owing over £8,000. He claimed that this was because he had underwritten the assets of the company and was owed by them £6,000 (Times, 10 May 1907).

The *Baryte and Umber Company* nevertheless apparently continued to mine up to 1908 as there were eighteen people employed in 1905 and six underground with one on surface in both 1907 & '08. When that operation finished ("discontinued" in 1909) it was apparently decided to work Letter in association with Dereenalomane in 1910 and *Dereenlamolane Barytes Mines Ltd.* was set up. A John Inglis somehow managed both but is likely that Letter was worked only in 1911 when eleven people were employed, all underground so these were probably just searches. When this proved negative, the mine was abandoned and apparently never worked again.

There was another little trial on the South side of Mount Gabriel at **Skeagh**, the first report of it being 1917-'18 (GSI MRO 0146) when a 157 foot level was driven into the hill, a shaft sunk from it and a 15 foot level driven both ways from the bottom. In the process 150 tons of baryte was produced, but that was still lying at the mouth of the adit some years later (Hallissey p. 19-20).

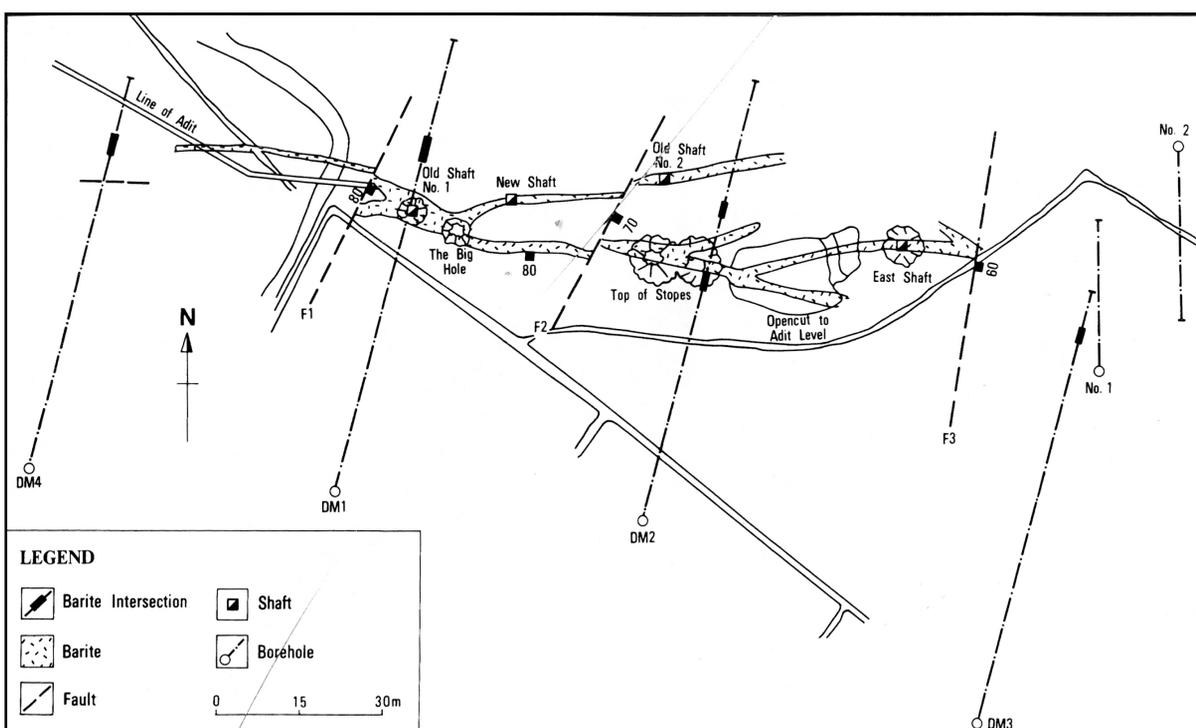


Figure 3.
Surface plan
of
Derryginagh
Mine (after
Reilly 1986).

DERRYGINAGH

Dates	Name of company	Tons	Comment
1854-'55	Barytes Co. of Ireland		
1863?	?		
1872-'76	Bantry Bay Barytes Quarry	Nil?	
	Irish Ochre and Umber Co.		
1877-'79	Bantry Bay Barytes Company	2,000?	Continuation of 1872-76 Co.?
1885-'96?	Coats and Eddy	2,535	Tons 1894-'96 only
1906-'13	Liverpool Barytes Co. Ltd.	?	67 employed 1908; 5 in 1913; owned Scart
1918-	Cookson Co.	Nil?	Owened Duneen

DERRYGINAGH

Of the 1850s and '60s operations no evidence survives. A visitor to Derryginagh in 1864 (Beete Jukes) described it as "partially opened a little before my visit". It was revived again (at least on paper!) in the mid-1872 with the founding in London of *Bantry Bay Barytes Quarry Ltd.* The shareholders included five "Mine Agents" all based in the U.K. They didn't actually own Derryginagh and it took them until Jan. 1876 to complete a deal. Within 12 months the company had gone into liquidation: the beneficiaries of the £9,000 capital are not identified (BT 1720 & 2111).

However, major shareholders named as Watson Brothers operating as *Bantry Bay Barytes Company* commenced operation in 1877 on what was described as a vein 200-300 yards long and 10 to 15 feet wide (Hardiman 1880). They were said to be capable of raising 20 tons a day, shipped out of Bantry. A J.S. Thorpe was recorded as mine agent there 1877-'79. In 1879 they disappear from the record and are replaced inappropriately by the *Irish Ochre and Umber Company* but there is no record of whether they worked there. The only record of subsequent production is a suspiciously even 1,500 tons in 1885 when it was in the brief (1885-'86) ownership of Coats and Eddy (Min. Stats.).

The mine was revived in 1906 with ownership 1907-'13 by *Liverpool Barytes Co. Ltd.* who also owned Scart and Duneen being the creation of the Storer brothers. A civil bill was taken against them at Bantry Petty Session by dismissed mining engineer, Thomas Warburton, for £39 due because three months' notice was not given. The case revolved around a burst steam pipe for the pumping engine and the case for the plaintiff was that A. T. Storer, works manager, had no experience of mining problems having been manager of a paint factory (not baryte based) in Liverpool. The defence case was that the burst pipe was not dealt with because Warburton was drunk! Various witness testified that he had a drink problem, one of whom once saw him "stretched on the floor of his office", drunk (SS 27th June 1908).

The Storers, despite lack of mining background (see below re Scart), were certainly entrepreneurial and apparently had an electrical generator at Derryginagh and proposed selling street lighting to Bantry. (SS 22nd Aug. 1908). They also made an arrangement with Bantry Rural District Council to build a mill on the edge of town and to be supplied with town water (SS 28th Sept. 1907 & 29th Feb, 1908). They must have put steam engines on their two mines (the other being Scart) but had trouble finding cartage of coal to both mines and of baryte from mines to mill (SS 14th Nov. 1908 ad for cartage repeated 29th May 1909). By 1911 they had taken over the failing Duneen mine and transferred some of the Bantry workers there (SS 1st April 1911). The height of their Derryginagh operation seems to have been 1908 to 1911 when employment was in the high 50s petering to 5 in 1913. Presumably it closed thereafter although the mill was still working with reduced capacity the following year (SS 14 Oct. 1914). However, exploratory work must have

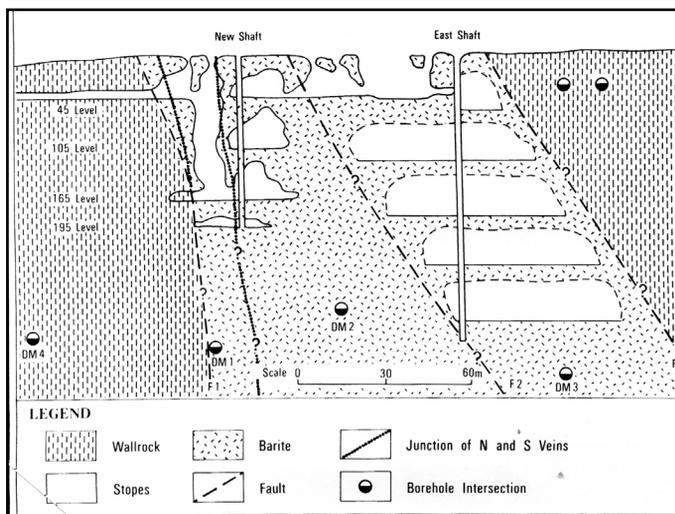


Figure 4. Longitudinal section of Derryginagh Mine with the inferred structure and worked areas (after Reilly 1986).

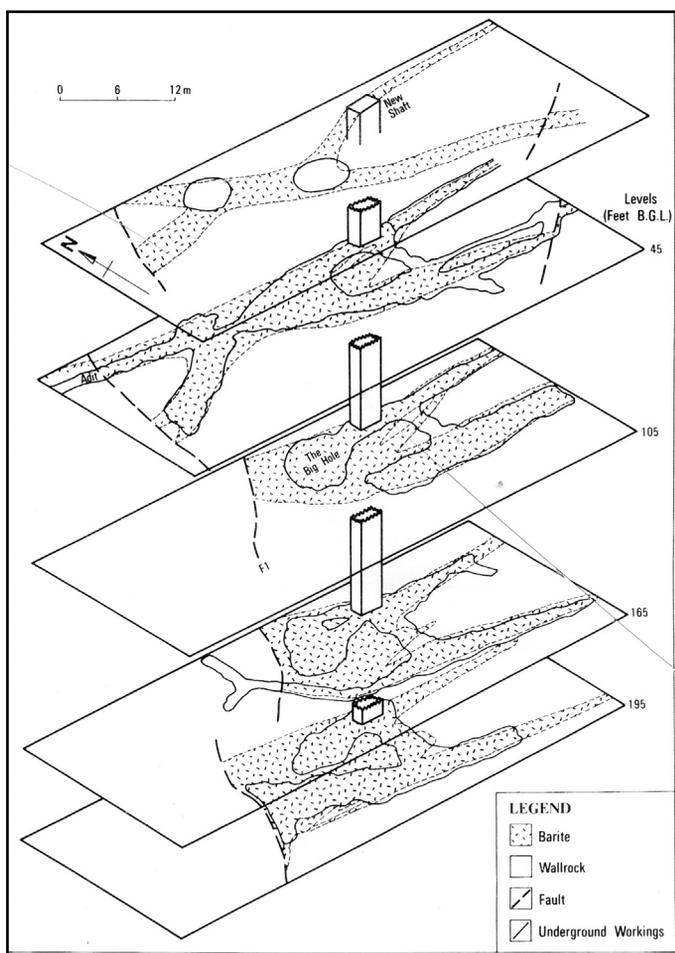


Figure 5. Isometric view of Derryginagh mine (after Reilly 1986).

continued there during the baryte boom war years as a new lode was discovered in 1915, the engine was restored and new machinery installed as much had already been moved to Duneen. The subsequent output is not recorded but early in 1916 a large steamer (a rare sight for Bantry) loaded 1,000 tons of baryte (SS 5th Feb 1916). From 1916 to 1918 an average of about 30 people were employed at the mine with no mention of whether the mill in Bantry was working.

In 1918 it was taken over by the Cookson company (owners of Duneen) but they do not seem to have worked it (Hallissey 1923, p 26). It underwent a resurrection in 1949 apparently under the Hungarian Vajda (variously spelt) who had a brief interest in Duneen. He had a haulage contract with one George O'Mahony who brought three cargoes of baryte to Bantry. Two of them apparently went and the other was left there blocking the quay (SS 16th April, 7th May & 7th July 1949). It was still there five years later (SS 20th Feb. 1954). Then, in 1955 the first ship in Bantry since the two shipments of 1949, took 360 tons for Liverpool from Derryginagh reportedly (or from the pile on the quay?) and ten years later 550 tons from Derryginagh were loaded on a German ship for Liverpool (SS 6th Aug 1955; 3th Oct. 1965, includes photo of ship).

When the mine was unwatered in 1975 it was discovered that much of the timbering had collapsed so it was considered unlikely that it would ever be worked again (Cowman and Reilly 1988, p.99). However, Derryginagh is being revaluated at the time of writing and has been unwatered to No. 1 level by Sunrise Resources (Critchley 2010).

SCART

		TONS	
1862-'65	Bayle & Co.		
1873-?	Scarts Barytes & Mineral Co. Ltd.	201	In '76
1878-'79	J.E Dorrington & F. Lipsham	1150	In '79, worth £1,725
1880-'81	?	221	
1906	Storer & Storer		9 employed
1908-'09	Liverpool Barytes Co.		Storer brothers

Testing was reported in Scart 1853-'54 but the first name associated with it is in 1862 under Bayle and Co.. However, in 1865 it was noted as "suspended" (Min Stats). Scart's *Barytes & Mineral Co. Ltd.* was founded in 1873 (BT 1814) and may have been responsible for the 201 tons sold from there in 1876. A visitor there in 1877 reported an open-cast pit 90 feet (c. 27 meters) deep, 30 ft (c. 8m) long and 15ft (c.4m) wide which suggest much more than two hundred tons (Hardman 1878). Presumably they were gone when Mssrs. Dorrington (of Gloucestershire) and Lipsham took over successively from 1878-'79 but had the same manager both years, James Mitchell. Baryte was recorded as being exported from Scart over the next two years also, with no record of ownership or management. This is an anomaly of the Mineral Statistics but it is likely that Mr. Mitchell was still involved.

Complicating this unsatisfactory record is a statement that timber platforms had been put in place in the late 1870s and the mine had been kept pumped until 1893. This emerged when some of that timbering collapsed in 1906 killing two men: from the subsequent inquiry Scart had been bought by the Storer

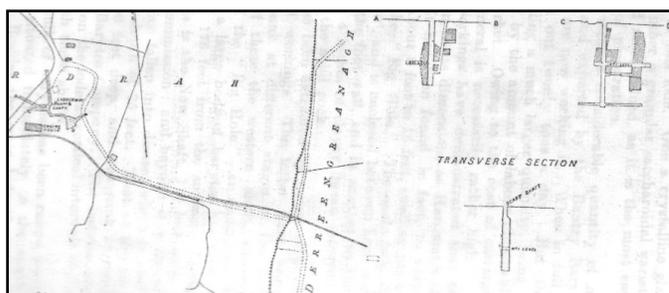


Figure 6. Scart, seemingly representing its final phase c. 1909 (Hallissey 1923, p 23).

brothers who pumped it out to see whether there was any baryte left. Before they closed the operation they brought their sister and the wife of one down onto the platform. Once they had returned six of them started to lift the pump when the timbering gave. The two Storer and a civil engineer named Jones grabbed ropes or the pump and the three labourers fell into the water below. Two disappeared and one was rescued by Storer. It turned out that none of those on the platform had any mining experience whatsoever, including the Storer (SS 4th Aug. 1906).

Incredibly, two years later Edward Storer was back again in Scart, this time officially as manager for the *Liverpool Barytes Co.* (who were also running Derryginagh), a company probably set up by the Storer brothers. In 1910 it was again "Discontinued" (MS), this time presumably permanently. A plan of this final phase (adjoining) shows what had been done in showing some worked stopes, a rectangular "engine house" (no chimney, no boiler house shown), and sociologically interesting in this remote area, an elongated block called "lodgings".

DEREENALOMANE

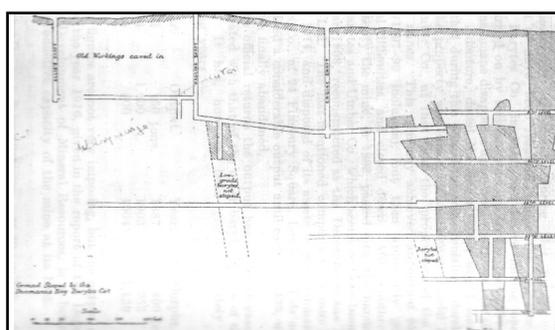


Figure 7. Dereenalomane: The hatched area on right was worked.

One (unlikely) account of the discovery of baryte at Dereenalomane (variously spelled) was that local ship-owner, James Bennet, used stone from there as ballast, that its nature was identified at its destination and reported back to him (Hallissey, p 10). In any case, in 1851 a consortium calling themselves Bennet, Justice and Co. placed an ad in the Mining Journal offering crude baryte "of excellent quality and colour at reasonable terms" (MJ 1851 p.485). Reportedly a buyer was found in Liverpool who was prepared to pay 22/6d per ton. 1,400 tons of undressed baryte were said to have been raised over 15 months by 3 miners and three labourers at six to seven

DEREENALOMANE

1851-'52	Bennet, Justice and Co		
1854-'55	Bandon Sulphur & Barytes Copper Mining Co.	3,791?	
c.1862-	Martyn, Denis & Co.		
1866-	Bandon Barytes Mining Co.		A subsidiary of Martyn etc.?
1872-'75	British Barytes Co.		A subsidiary of Martyn etc.?
1883-'87	Durrus Barytes Co.		Owned by John H. Matthews
1899-c.'03	Mt. Gabriel Barytes & Umber Co.		Started by Arthur Cave
1914-'20	Dunmanus Bay Barytes Co.		London Co., manager F. Ahler

shilling per ton yielding 40% profit after transport (MJ 1854 p. 166). Presumably they reached the maximum depth for cheap extraction at 15 fathoms (about 28 meters) on a lode 2 ¾ feet wide (MJ 1854 p 166). When visited in 1853 the mining operation was said to be "extensive" (Triphook).

The reason for the various cautions in the paragraph above was that this was part of a promotion for a new company whose subsequent behaviour showed lack of any integrity. Details of that are given elsewhere (Cowman and Reilly, p. 101) but may be summed-up thus: in January 1854 London "directors" set up a company with the catch-all name *Bandon* (after landowner, the Earl of Bandon) *Sulphur and Barytes Copper Mining Company*. Complaints that the enterprise was a scam soon followed, countered by the usual laudatory reports on the prospects of the mine, mainly anonymous. In July 1854 the directors decided to re-launch themselves as the *Barytes Company of Ireland*. Shareholders saw through this ploy and the controversies continued. Some baryte may have been raised in 1854 and 1855 but not enough to pay for the London establishment. By late 1855 the bubble had burst and miners were reported to have gone unpaid.

Dereenalomane was revived in the early 1860s, at least on paper, by Martyn, Dennis & Co. of Liverpool recorded as owners 1862-'75 (Min. Stats.). This may have been a holding company or agency as a *Bandon Barytes Mining Company* was operating there in 1866 (Cundick 2002) although there is no annual record of production. This seems to have been re-formed as *British Barytes Company* from 1872 with a nominal share value of £50,000 (MJ 1875 p 799). They were reported to have immediately shipped four cargoes of baryte probably to Birkenhead where they had opened a processing plant the following year (MJ 1872 p 864 & 1873 p 1267). A description of the mine in 1872 comments adversely that processing did not take place locally but that about 5,000 tons of crude sulphite of baryte had been shipped out every year since 1862. Then the mine was shallow 40 fathoms (about 75 meters) deep but the baryte "appears inexhaustible". A steam engine did the pumping and winding (SE 23/11/1872). In praising the "liberality" of the Earl of Bandon a correspondent says that he sent a box of mineral samples to the two local national schools to stimulate geological awareness (SE 18/10/1873). He was well ahead of his time!

In 1875 they were said to have shipped out spar rather than baryte (MJ 1875, p. 799). That seems to have ended the operation as that same year they surrendered their lease (Matthews indenture). Possibly it was this company that had investigated nearby townlands, especially Portiroe which was said to have

been discovered by William Thomas in 1867 and "proven" by his brother Charles in 1872 (MJ 1873 p. 1427 & 1875 p. 845). When visited in Oct. 1873 "several tons of splendid barites" had been dug out of trenches in a valley there in search of a main lode (SE 16/10/1873). Presumably it was never found as no more is heard of this.

Dereenalomane probably lay idle from 1875 and 1883 when it was reopened by John T.

Matthews operating as *Durrus Barytes Company*. He sent his son John Hobson Matthews to supervise the opening of the mine and he was there when Charles Thomas sank on to a baryte lode which had been previously missed. The miners were each given a celebratory two shillings which Matthews hoped would be drunk in moderation! Young Matthews also drew a peculiar sketch of the mine showing a winding engine with smoking chimney that must have been there from some earlier phase. (Matthews' diary and indenture). Despite the finding of the new deposit the output was small, peaking at 1000 tons in 1884, declining thereafter in both tonnage and number employed, with closure in 1887.

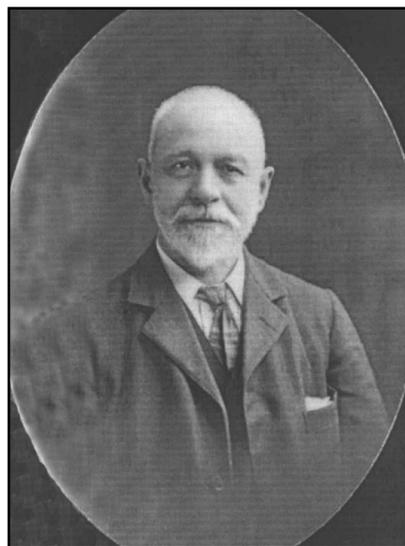


Figure 8. John Hobson Matthews

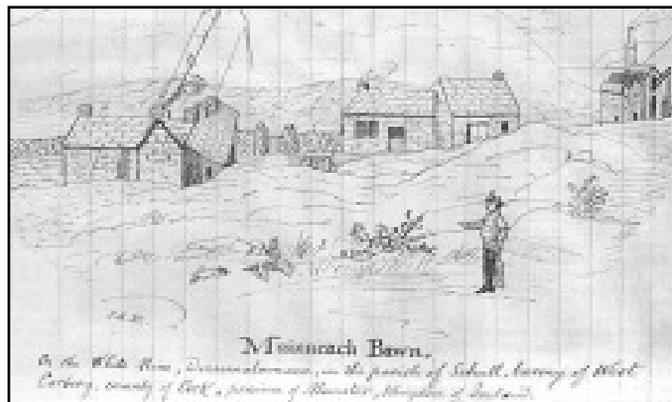


Figure 9. John Hobson Matthews' peculiar drawing of Dereenalomane mine.

Dereenalomane was revived in 1899 by Arthur Cave under the name *Mount Gabriel Barytes and Umber Co.*. He also revived the eponymous working (see above). From 1902 an E.J. Whelan was managing both mines for a renamed entity *The Irish Barytes and Umber Company*. Dereenalomane was their

major operation, however, with pre-war employment varying considerably ranging for 17 in 1909 to 83/82 in 1912-'13. It was visited in 1909 by a local man who refers to a diesel engine there and to a 185 hp gas powered mill (SS 6th Nov. 1909 letter).

Production figures are available for 1903-13, a peak strangely being in its final year, 13,110 tons (worth nearly £10,000) and a low of 888 tons (£666) in 1907 (Min. Stats.). Otherwise there is little reportage of this phase except for two accidents there in 1905; a falling stone killed one that Spring and other was disabled by a rock fall while he was drilling that Autumn (SS 15th April & 4th Nov. 1905). In 1907 the engineer, Harold Jones, who had survived the accident at Scart the previous year was killed in Dereenalomane (SS 7th & 21st Sept. 1907). Four tons of baryte fell on a miner there in 1912 (SS 21st Dec. 1912). At some stage post 1909 an aerial ropeway was constructed to transport the baryte for shipment from Dunmanus Bay. One of its buckets injured a boy in 1913 (SS 1st Nov. 1913).

The mine may have lain idle briefly but it was restarted in 1914 by a London based *Dunmanus Bay Barytes Company* with Frank Ahler as manager. Possibly the costing behind this was based on a processing plant with the refined baryte being sent by the continuous aerial ropeway to a jetty on the bay (GSI, MRO 0146; MJ 1915 p.116 ad). By 1916 there said to be 150 working for the company earning 27/6d per week thereby creating a shortage of agricultural wages (SS 22nd Jan. 1916). Specialised people such as engine drivers got 30/6d (SS 23rd Oct. 1915). The aerial ropeway was vandalised in 1920 during the "troubles" the cable being cut and wagons thrown into the sea (CE 10/4/1920) which presumably put an end to the operation. The remains of the pylons are still there but the mine was apparently never worked again.

Ex-manager Ahler must have really believed in the mine because over 30 years later (1951) he was back again in Dereenalomane drilling - presumably with no positive result (GSI MRO 0146 & 0147, *Mineraí Teoranta* Report). It was only with difficulty that members of MHTI found any evidence at all of mining there during visit in 2004.

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