

North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers
Nicholas Wood Memorial Library

Family history

a resource guide

Introduction

Mines have usually employed large numbers of workers - usually hundreds of thousands - and at a peak after the First World War the 3000 or so mines of all types in the UK employed over a million people, so its quite likely there are mining ancestors in your family, especially if the family has lived in a mining area. However the largest database of mining names has about 250 000 entries, so finding someone may not be straightforward, unless they died in an accident. Resources listed below may identify people, though not usually with much personal detail.

Useful book

Tonks, David *My ancestor was a coalminer*. 2003
Genealogical guide.

Name indexes

Durham Mining Museum web site has a
Master name index

<http://www.dmm.org.uk/masterix/index.htm>

noting the information given, eg

Newspaper article

Managers Certificate

Accident fatality

Enquiry witness

Durham Miners' Association membership

Award for Gallantry

Membership of IME, NEIMME, etc

Tombstone - name mentioned

Position in a mining company/NCB/Mines Inspectorate

Personal Page

Who's Who entry

Census extract

- Over 250000 entries

Also there are some constituent indexes:

Index of names

<http://www.dmm.org.uk/names/index.htm>

Searchable database of those killed in mines - mainly in Cumberland, Westmorland, Northumberland, Durham, North Yorkshire.

Personal Index published in the 'Guide to the Coalfields'
<http://www.dmm.org.uk/gttc/index.htm>

Newspaper articles

<http://www.dmm.org.uk/articles/indexnam.htm> Transcribed material. Search by date, colliery or person's name

Colliery Workers/Employees

<http://www.dmm.org.uk/employee/index.htm>

Durham's Hidden Depths - Durham Record Office

<http://www.durhamrecordoffice.org.uk/Pages/AdvancedSearchHiddenDepths.aspx>

Indexes to the Durham Miners' Association trade union records with over 180,000 names.

Surname Index - Scottish mining website

<http://www.scottishmining.co.uk/19.html>

This index contain names listed on the site including non-fatal accidents, men involved in rescue attempts, people who gave evidence at inquiries etc. It excludes known fatal accidents (which are indexed in the Accidents section). Some names listed may have died in the accident but this has not been confirmed with a death certificate.

Accidents

The Inspectors of Mines Reports list fatalities by name, and in some cases those injured but not killed, up to 1914. Names of witnesses are given.

Coalmining Accidents and Deaths - Coalmining History Resource Centre

<http://www.cmhrc.co.uk/site/disasters/index.html>

A searchable database of over 160 000 names of people killed or injured in mines and quarries 1700-2000. It is not complete and may have inaccuracies.

Welsh Mining Disasters - Welsh Coal Mines site

<http://welshcoalmines.co.uk/Photo.htm>

Has names.

Accidents and Disasters - Scottish Mining website

<http://www.scottishmining.co.uk/5.html>

Names, including some for people injured.

See also the Library resource guide: *Mining accidents and safety*

Inquest/coroners reports

These go to the local archives - for example, Tyne & Wear and Woodhorn have some - and are not available to the public for 75 years.

Reports of inquests can appear in local and national newspapers.

(See also *Looking for records of a coroner's inquest* - The National Archives)

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/looking-for-person/coroners-inquests.htm>

In relation to mining accidents inquest details may be part of the report of a specific accident - either as a separate report or in the Inspectors annual report. Durham Mining Museum has some transcribed texts:

<http://www.dmm.org.uk/inquests>

and some of their newspaper articles and accident reports refer to inquests.

Compensation

Compensation for fatal and non-fatal accidents and sickness was provided by relief funds, trade unions, employers insurance schemes and, in the case of major disasters, disaster funds often from public subscription.

NEIMME has Annual Reports from the Northumberland & Durham Miners Permanent Relief Fund Friendly Society for 1878-1887 and a separate report for the 1880 Seaham explosion that give details of payments made to individuals. Otherwise information may be found in the records of the various societies and of individual mines held in local county archives.

Lists of mines with names of managers

Robert Hunt's *Mineral statistics* 1845-1881

Mining and mineral statistics of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland 1882-1896

List of mines worked 1888-1919 [NEIMME: 1897-1919]

List of mines in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Isle of Man 1920-1950

Owner, Manager and Under manager, number of persons, minerals worked. Index of owners.

Burt, R. Waite, P. & Burnley, R. *The Durham and Northumberland mineral statistics : metalliferous and associated minerals 1845-1913* 1983.

General introduction. Mines: ownership, management (names), production

Burt, Roger; Atkinson, Michael; Burnley, Ray & Waite, Peter. *The Derbyshire mineral statistics: metalliferous and associated minerals 1845-1913*. 1981 *Similar content*.

Gill, Mike & Burt, Roger *The mines of Yorkshire: metalliferous and associated minerals. (British Mining (72))*. 2003 Owners, worked by, agents, index to names, grid references.

The Library has a few handbooks with details of mines:

Colliery year book and coal trades directory 1922-1963/4 [NEIMME: 1928, 1939-64]

List of collieries with directors, manager; who's who; name index

Guide to the coalfields 1948-95 [NEIMME: 1953-59, 1961-63, 1965, 1967, 1969-70, 1973-81, 1983, 1986-89, 1991]

Collieries, with manager; name index

Reid's handy colliery guide and directory for the counties of Northumberland, Durham and Yorkshire. 1913

Reid's handy colliery guide and directory for the counties of Northumberland, Durham, Yorkshire, Cumberland and Westmorland. 1921.

List with owners, managers, engineers, inspectors, fitters with addresses – some home ones.

Colliery handbook for Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Warwickshire. 1900.

Lists of mines with managers; list of mining engineers/surveyors

The North Country and Yorkshire coal annual for 1921.

Companies; lists mines with managers; statistics

The South Wales Coal Annual for 1912

Lists mines with managers; statistics; wages

Other lists of mines

There are lists of mines in Northern England for various years from 1869 to 1991 at the online Durham Mining Museum

<http://www.dmm.org.uk/lom/index.htm>

Many have Agent, Manager, Under Manager.

A-Z List of Mines – Coalmining History Resource Centre

<http://www.cmhrc.co.uk/site/maps/azlistofmines/index.html>

No names are included but there are location maps.

A searchable database of mines where there are remains is at AditNow

<http://www.aditnow.co.uk/list-of-mines-uk-international>

There is a Library resource guide: *Individual mines*

Lists of members – usually with addresses

Engineers and managers might be in the members lists for various professional bodies.

In journals

North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers. Transactions 1852-1920

Institution of Mining Engineers. Transactions 1889-1960

National Association of Colliery Managers. Proceedings. Members lists by region. 1889-1967

Mining Institute of Scotland. Transactions 1880-1923, 1927-8

Separate lists

Institution of Mechanical Engineers 1938, 1943

Institution of Civil Engineers. 1929.

Lists for 1881-1914 are in *Charter, supplemental charters, by-laws, and list of members of The Institution of Civil Engineers*

Certificates of competence

Home Office *List of persons to whom certificates of competence and of service have been granted.* 1873-95, 1896-1910; 1911-23, 1923-28, 1929-33, 1934-38, 1939, 1940

Managers and under managers. Some variations of title.

The online Durham Mining Museum (<http://www.dmm.org.uk/certs/index.htm>) has used these publications to create an index to the names of those gaining certificates up to 1910.

Occupations

Mining Occupations (19th century) - Durham Mining Museum

<http://dmm.org.uk/educate/mineocc.htm>

Mining occupations (1967) - Durham Mining Museum

<http://dmm.org.uk/educate/mineocc0.htm>

Mining Occupations (1886) - Scottish Mining Website

<http://www.scottishmining.co.uk/3.html>

Terminology

Greenwell, G.C. *A glossary of terms used in the coal trade of Northumberland and Durham.*

1849 in *Tracts* **48**, 425-484

Greenwell, G.C. *A glossary of terms used in the coal trade of Northumberland and Durham*, 3rd ed. 1888

Gresley, W.S. *A glossary of terms used in coal mining*. 1883.

Nicholson, W.E. *A glossary of terms used in the coal trade of Northumberland and Durham*. 1888.

Some glossaries have illustrations.

NEIMME archives

Until 1872 all of the miners of Northumberland, Cumberland and Durham were employed under the Bond system. By the terms of the bond they were obliged to submit to various fines and conditions and to work continuously at one colliery for a whole year. After agreeing to the bond a miner was to consider himself the servant of the owners at all times whether they could find him work or not. No minimum wage, long working hours, sometimes paid in tokens which had to be spent in the mine owners shop. Often required to pay for their own work tools. (From <http://www.haswell-history.co.uk/bond.html>)

The Institute Library has a number of bonds in its archives.

Local archives

Colliery Personnel Records – Durham County Record Office

<http://www.durhamrecordoffice.org.uk/Pages/InformationLeafletsItem.aspx?LeafletRef=20>

This guide provides a list of those records which contain names and, in some cases, other information, of miners and other colliery workers.

Coal Mining Records for Family Historians - Northumberland Archives

<http://tinyurl.com/woodhornfamily>

A brief overview of some of the records held that may provide further information about coalmining ancestors.