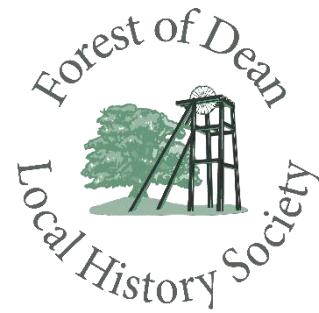


# MINERS MEMORIAL PROJECT

## Fatalities in Iron Mines



Registered Charity 1094700

This document forms part of the Miners Memorial Project and contains records of **fatal accidents** which occurred in Forest of Dean iron mines in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

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## Buckshaft



Fatal Accidents					
Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Cooper	Richard	12/01/1851	24	Miner	
Taylor	William	19/02/1892	62	Miner	Fall of ground from a sandy joint. It seems that he was aware of the stone being dangerous and he had set a prop under it and proposed setting another, telling his son that he would first work off a piece of ironstone at the side but while engaged doing so the stone fell and killed him. He was a miner of 40 years experience.
Evans	Thomas	14/10/1892	59		Killed by the falling of a stone in the side of a billy road.

The main photograph shows the site of Buckshaft mine as it was in 1963. The circular wall in the right middle ground surrounded the original shaft (now covered by a pumping station). The house in the background was one of the 19th Century mine buildings. There are a few scowles, which preceded the opening of the mine, one immediately behind the building shown in the above photograph. William Crawshay was reported to have mined for iron illegally in Linegar Woods. The large scowles shown below, are probably among the ones worked by him.

The Cinderford Iron Mine, Drybrook Mine Level, Trowditch, Brinchembe Level, part of Perseverance, Cooper's Level, Old Orles, As You Like It and Hattons Level gales were combined to form part of Buckshaft (or Buckshraft) Iron Mine, which was leased to Richard Cooper in 1834. The various gales, which became Shakemantle Iron Mine, were awarded to William Crawshay of Cyfarthfa Castle and Moses Teague of Cinderford in 1841. A shaft had been sunk at Buckshaft in 1835. It was 620 ft deep, and was connected by a crosscut and

level (No.1, completed in 1855) with St Annal's Shaft (SO 662 143). No.2 Level, completed in 1876, led to both St Annal's and Shakemantle Land (SO 652 113) Shafts. No.3 Level (1886) also connected with Shakemantle. These levels were driven in the mineralised Crease Limestone. The depth of the workings led to problems with water, but the necessary pumping engines were installed on the two Shakemantle Shafts. The ore was sent to Cinderford Ironworks on Crawshay's private tramroad. Output from Shakemantle declined during the 1890s due to closure of the ironworks in 1894, the increasing difficulty of extraction and cheap imports of Spanish ore. An attempt at further development in 1898 was unsuccessful, and the mine was closed in September 1899, the remaining 160 men and boys being paid off. The total output of the mine between 1841 and 1899 was 1,650,000 tons of ore. Buckshaft itself produced 17,641 tons in 1880, and was particularly renowned for its red ochre (Crawshay's Red).



*A  
Buckshaft  
scowle in  
1963*



*Pumping  
station  
above  
Buckshaft  
mineshaft  
(SO 654  
121)  
looking  
south*



*Scowle  
behind  
Buckshaft  
'house',  
taken  
from SO  
65493  
12019,  
looking  
NW*



*A  
Buckshaft  
scowle,  
taken  
from  
SO65540  
12184,  
looking  
SW*



*A Buckshaft  
scowle, taken  
from SO  
65540  
12184,  
looking north*

Photograph of pumping station taken by John Sheraton, November 2004.

All others taken by Ron Beard, modern photographs taken in January 2006

## China Engine



Photograph taken by Geoff Waygood, February 2004

Fatal Accidents					
Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
James	Emanuel	20/02/1868			It appears that James worked the night shift with another man in driving the heading and having charged a hole as usual and set fire to the fuse, the powder exploded but failed to bring away the piece of rock intended. James again charged the hole with powder and whilst in the act of withdrawing the wire (or pricker), the powder exploded and killed him.
Kear	George	21/05/1892	56	Miner	A stone, from the side of the main road or the level where he was engaged repairing fell unexpectedly and injured him. He was removed to the Gloucester Hospital but died on his way there.

The above photograph (SO 5902 0677) looking west, shows old iron workings near the site of the former China Engine mine. However, the actual site has been cleared and levelled, and is now just a grassy area in woodland.

China Engine (or China) Iron Mine was one of many pits in the Noxon Park area. It was in existence by 1835. The shaft was 189 ft deep and reached a crosscut to the '235 ft' Level. The latter is about 4,600 ft long and trends both northwest and southeast of the shaft. The '375 ft' Level was driven from Oakwood Mill Land Level (SO 597 066), and is about 4,300 ft long. There were extensive workings between the two levels, mostly in the mineralised Crease Limestone. The total output from China Engine, New China Level and Oakwood Mill Land Level in 1880 was 8,115 tons. In that year the mine was operated by the Forest

Haematite Iron Ore Co. The Oakwood Tramroad, a branch of the Severn & Wye Railway, was extended to China Engine Mine under a licence of 1855, giving direct rail access to Parkend Ironworks. It is estimated that at least 300,000 tons of ore were raised from the mine before it closed in about 1885.

## Easter Mine



### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Carter	George	13/05/1853	40	Miner	Fall of stone.

Easter Mine engine house is the last remaining iron mine engine house to remain standing in the Forest of Dean. As one of the longest working mines there are also some remains of walls, and what may be engine mounting blocks.

Easter Iron Mine gale was granted to James Grindell of Dark Hill in 1846, but it was leased to Osman and James Barrett and J.G. Borlase in 1852. By 1866 the mine had three shafts (300, 340, and 354 ft deep) and more than 1000 tons of iron ore were being produced each month by 50 men and boys. A fourth shaft was eventually sunk, and there were connections with New Dun, Tufton, and Oak (or Primrose) Pits. The mine was taken over by the Easter Haematite Iron Ore Co. Ltd in 1874, and a siding was installed at Milkwall when the Severn & Wye Railway's Coleford Branch opened in 1875. Output was 8,994 tons in 1880, but work ceased in 1883 and the company was wound up in 1884. After this the mine had a chequered history, and the gale passed through several owners. Only 13,000 tons of ore were produced between 1900 and 1916, when the mine was bought by the Easter Iron Ore Mines Ltd. A further 7,000 tons were raised before operations were halted in March 1917. The company went into liquidation and the gale was forfeited in 1924. In 1927 Henry Doughty established the British Colour & Mining Co to work the Easter tips, as well as deposits at Old Ham Iron Mine, for ochre. This concern produced pigments until about 1975. Water for industrial use was pumped from No. 4 shaft.





*The former  
engine house  
(SO 5853  
0916)  
looking west*



*Masonry  
remains,  
looking east*

Photographs taken by Tony Middleton, January 2004. Historic photograph from A Pope collection

## Edge Hill



### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Matthews		26/07/1851			Killed by rock fall.
Roberts	John	26/11/1851			Killed by the falling of a 4 ton stone upon his leg. Died at Glos Infirmary gates.
Waite	Abraham	15/04/1868	38	Miner	Killed after sounding clod above his head, back & neck. 3 to 4 cwts fell from roof of dipple he was working in.
Ferris	John	12/01/1870	59	Miner	Crushed by accidental fall of large stone.
Roberts	George	12/08/1870	59	Miner	Fracture of neck by a large stone having accidentally fallen upon deceased.
Barnard	Clement	24/04/1874	13	Miner	Crushed by the fall of roof
Barnard	Tom	14/08/1874		Miner	
Barnett	Timothy	19/08/1874	44	Miner	Killed by a fall of stone whilst driving a shot hole.
Moore	Henry	14/09/1874	23	Miner	Fell out of cage whilst descending a shaft, having been seized by a fit of apoplexy or epilepsy.
Blewitt	Henry	03/03/1875	13	Miner	Suffocated by the fall of iron down a trill into a stage hole in which deceased got for the purpose of bringing ore down from the trill. .
Roberts	Richard	25/03/1875	14	Miner	Killed by the falling of a quantity of stone whilst deceased was sorting iron ore, breaking his thigh & fracturing his skull, died the next day. .
Gardner	Thomas	16/11/1877	38	Miner	Killed by fall of stone. 2 killed.
Ferris	Joseph	16/11/1877	43	Miner	Killed by fall of stone. 2 killed.

## Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Malsom	George	09/05/1878	40	Miner	The cog wheels of the winding engine got out of gear and the cage fell down the pit. 2 killed. Manslaughter charges against Philip Smith banksman.
Moore	Thomas	09/05/1878	42	Miner	The cog wheels of the winding engine got out of gear and the cage fell down the pit. 2 killed. Manslaughter charges against Philip Smith banksman

There are few surface remains of the Edge Hill iron mine. Early workings were accessed from old level entrances, some of which can still be seen.

The gale of Westbury Brook was applied for by Thomas and Moses Teague and James Mountjoy, on behalf of Sir Josiah John Guest (owner of the Dowlais Iron Co.), in the mid-1830s. A new shaft had reached a depth of about 680 ft by 1837, and the first iron ore was won in 1843. A tramroad to Bullo Pill on the Severn had been constructed by this time, but after the Great Western Railway's Forest of Dean Branch opened in 1854 this terminated at a transhipment wharf at Whimsey. Westbury Brook (also known as Edge Hill) Mine worked an area two miles long from north to south, which included the Deans Meend gale. Two crosscuts (No. 3 at 570 and No. 4 at 666 feet below surface) were driven eastwards from the main shaft into the Crease Limestone, and from each headings were driven both north and south. There were also two older (pre-1837) shafts: Beech Pit (at least 150 ft deep) and Old Pit (360 ft with two levels, Nos 1 and 2). Water was a major problem, and a 45-inch Cornish rotary beam engine was installed for pumping. Production of iron ore in 1880 was 12,413 tons. About 958,000 tons were produced between 1843 and 1893, when the mine closed, much of it being transported to Dowlais. The gale was surrendered in 1902.



*Site of the former shaft (SO 661 169) looking NE*

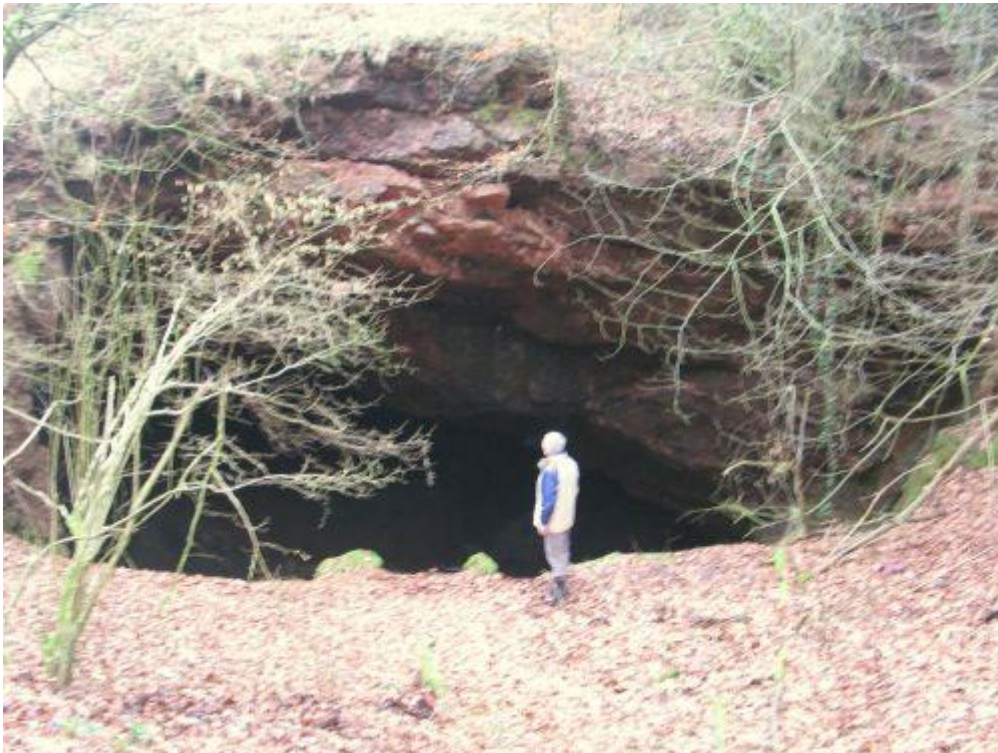


*Old level  
entrance (SO  
663 165)  
looking west*

Photographs taken by John Sheraton, December 2004 and January 2005.

Historic photograph from A Pope collection

## Noxon Park



### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Jacobs	Charles	17/06/1870	15	Miner	Crushed by a large quantity of iron mine which accidentally fell upon deceased.

Noxon Park contains some of the most spectacular and best-preserved examples of ‘scowles’ (ancient near-surface iron-ore workings) in Dean. These consist of hollows, channels, quarry-like rock faces and rock pillars, as well as underground workings. They generally follow the outcrop of the Crease Limestone, part of the Carboniferous Limestone Series, but some ore was won from the underlying Lower Dolomite. Recent detailed studies have indicated that scowles are to a large extent natural features, representing ancient cave systems in the Crease Limestone into which deposition of iron minerals during Permo-Triassic times was concentrated. Nevertheless, significant modification of such ‘fossil’ karst topography during mining activity over many hundreds of years is evidenced by the presence of pick marks, drill holes, and spoil heaps, as well as the volume of material which must have been extracted. Although direct evidence is scanty, it is possible that some of the workings may date back to Iron Age or Roman times.

Royalties from mining were being paid to the Crown in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and there were six small pits in the mid-1700s. Once the near-surface ore was worked out, mining was extended underground. One of the largest was China Engine Mine, at its peak in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and there are extensive underground workings between there and Bream Tufts, connected to Oakwood Mill Land Level (SO 597 066).

Noxon Park Mine (c. SO 595 060) is said to have been 120 ft deep; the above photograph (SO 59497 05888) looking S, is probably part of this mine. It was operated by the Great Western Iron Co. in 1880, when 7,028 tons of ore were produced. The total output of the Noxon Park mines between 1841 and 1918 may well have exceeded 500,000 tons of ore.



*A pit in  
Noxon  
Park*



*A chasm  
and water  
channel in  
Noxon  
Park*



*'The Joint', Noxon Park (SO 59457  
05888) looking ENE*

Photographs taken by Ron Beard, January (pit) and February 2004,  
and by John Sheraton (chasm), February 2001

## Perseverance



### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Roberts	Richard	01/08/1877	68	Hitcher	Killed by falling out of a cart to the pit bottom, caused by an imperfect signalling system

The most obvious evidence of the site of Perseverance iron mine is the capped shaft, as shown in the above photograph (SO 65140 112450) looking NW.

The Perseverance and Findall Iron Mine gale was owned by Edward Protheroe and William Crawshay by 1841, although Perseverance Pit and Findall Level were worked separately at that time. The Perseverance shaft (sunk at some time before 1855) was 385 ft deep and there were two levels (Nos 3 and 4, 4,750 ft and 4,800 ft long, respectively). There were also two surface levels: Findall Level (SO 654 104), used as a drainage level and connected to No. 2 Level underground, and an unnamed adit connected to No. 1 Level. All the underground levels (Nos 1-4) were driven in the mineralised Crease Limestone. In later years the mine was worked by Henry Crawshay & Co Ltd and a cut-out was driven from the bottom of Perseverance shaft to Shakemantle Mine. 1537 tons of ore were produced in 1880. There was a siding on the Great Western Railway's Forest of Dean Branch, but much of the ore may have been sent to Cinderford Ironworks on Crawshay's private tramroad. The mine closed at the same time as Shakemantle, in September 1899.





*Perseverance engine house is on the right of this photograph*

Photograph taken by John Sheraton, May 2002. Historic photograph from the A Pope collection

## Primrose



Fatal Accidents					
Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Coombs	Lot	06/06/1901	14	Billy carrier	Is supposed contrary to Rules and practice to have been hanging on to a cart which was being drawn up to the surface and to have lost his hold falling away to the bottom of the shaft which is only a shallow one.
Elley	Richard	12/11/1903	60	Miner	He was killed by fall of roof which was liberated by his comrade pulling down a keystone.

Some rough ground and masonry remains mark the location of Primrose or Oak pit (SO 5803 0948) as seen in the above photograph, looking north.

In 1841 the gale was awarded to Thomas Cheese Davies of Lydney and George Powell of Berry Hill.

Oak Pit was one of the 'Land' or shallow iron mines. It produced a small amount of ochre between 1878 and 1902.



*Rough  
ground,  
looking NW*



*Rough  
ground  
alongside the  
Perrygrove  
Railway,  
looking SW*

Photographs taken by Robin Warren, February 2004

## Princess Louise



### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Hoare	William	23/01/1875	39	Sinker	Killed by the premature explosion of a dynamite cartridge due to the use of excessive force of a wooden rammer by deceased.

The shaft of the Princess Louise mine, seen above (SO 59255 06772), can be found close to the Oakwood Tramway near Clements End. A stone wall and remains of some building foundations can also be seen nearby.

Princess Louise Iron Mine is one of many pits in the Noxon Park area. There was a level (New China) here by 1835, which produced 410 tons of ore in 1865. The Princess Louise shaft, 600 ft deep, was sunk to drain the ground to the dip of the '235 ft' level in China Engine Mine. The Crease Limestone, the main host of the iron ore, was not reached. The Oakwood Tramroad, a branch of the Severn & Wye Railway, was extended past Princess Louise to China Engine Mine under a licence of 1855, giving direct rail access to the Parkend Ironworks. Like China Engine, of which it was part, the mine closed in about 1885, although there appears to have been some activity in more recent years.



*Another view of the shaft*



*A wall near the shaft*



*Foundation  
remains*

Photographs taken by Ron Beard, January 2004

## Robin Hood



Photograph taken by John Sheraton, February 2003

### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Watkins	James				
Watkins	William	03/12/1875	14	Miner	Crushed by the accidental fall of ore and roof.

Robin Hood mine, near Coleford can be located by the remains of a stone building and other masonry as shown in the above photograph (SO 5595 1187) looking west.

Two fatalities are shown in the table, but it is likely that they refer to the same person and that one of the forenames is incorrect.

Robin Hood (or Highmeadow) mine was opened in 1826, and was worked both for iron ore and high-quality ochre, which was used as a colouring material. The deposits occur in the upper Crease Limestone and lowest beds of the Whitehead Limestone. There were two shafts - the Deep Pit was sunk through Drybrook Sandstone and Whitehead Limestone into the Crease Limestone to a depth of 212 ft, and the Land Pit was sunk into the Whitehead Limestone at 63 ft. Most of the workings lie to the northwest of the pits. An attempt was made in 1885 to drain the mine, and thus enable further areas to be opened up, by means of the Highmeadow Water Level (near SO 555 129). This was completed in 1908, but no connection was made with the pit. About 2,500 tons of red ochre were mined before the pit closed in 1927, although quantities declined sharply after 1921. It was re-opened in 1940 by the Ministry of Supply, and Canadian soldiers assisted with the working, but output (mainly ore) was small and the mine was finally abandoned in 1944.

## Saint Annals



### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Perry	John				
Davies	William				

The photograph above was taken in 1963 (SO 6636 1434) looking east, and shows the old waste tip and the circular wall around the shaft. The more recent photographs show how the tip has been largely levelled, and the shaft capped.

The various gales which became Shakemantle Iron Mine were awarded to William Crawshay of Cyfarthfa Castle and Moses Teague of Cinderford in 1841. A shaft was sunk on the St Annal's Iron Mine gale, which was part of this concern, in 1849. It was 657 ft deep, and was connected by a crosscut and a level (No. 1) to Buckshaft Shaft (SO 654 121) in 1855. A second level (No. 2), completed in 1876, led to both Buckshaft and Shakemantle Land (SO 652 113) Shafts. These levels were driven in the mineralised Crease Limestone. The depth of the workings led to problems with water, but the necessary pumping engines were installed on the two Shakemantle Shafts. The ore was sent to Cinderford Ironworks on Crawshay's private tramroad. Output from Shakemantle declined during the 1890s due to closure of the ironworks in 1894, the increasing difficulty of extraction and cheap imports of Spanish ore. An attempt at further development in 1898 was unsuccessful, and the mine was closed in September 1899, the remaining 160 men and boys being paid off. The total output of the mine between 1841 and 1899 was 1,650,000 tons of ore. St Annals itself produced a considerable quantity of red ochre.





*Partially levelled tip,  
looking west*



*The capped shaft*



*Plug in the centre of  
the shaft cap*

Photographs taken by John Precious, March 2004. 1963 Photograph taken by Ron Beard

## Shakemantle



### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Cooper	James	10/02/1870	40	Miner	Crushed by a piece of iron & stone which fell from the side of a churn (chamber).
Morgan	Peter	29/05/1895	56	Iron miner	Was seized with apoplectic fit while sitting down resting from his work and died shortly afterward.

There are very few surface indications of the presence of Shakemantle Iron Mine (SO 652 113), other than disturbed ground and possible masonry remains. The site was much affected by the working of Shakemantle Quarry which resulted in levelling and subsequent construction work.

In 1829 the Cinderford Iron Co. sank a shaft (Lime Kiln Iron Mine), which was possibly on the Cinderford Iron Mine gale on which the Shakemantle shafts were situated. The Drybrook Mine Level, Trowditch, Brinchembe Level, part of Perseverance, Cooper's Level, Old Orles, As You Like It and Hattons Level gales were added to form part of Buckshaft Iron Mine, leased to Richard Cooper in 1834. A shaft was sunk here in 1835. In 1841 the gales were owned by William Crawshay of Cyfarthfa Castle and Moses Teague of Cinderford, who were also involved with Cinderford Ironworks and Lightmoor Colliery. A shaft was sunk on the St Annal's gale, which was added to the area, in 1849, and a second shaft (Deep Pit) at Shakemantle in the 1850s. Shakemantle Mine thus comprised four shafts: St Annal's (657 ft deep), Buckshaft (or Buckshraft, 620 ft), Shakemantle Land (at least 230 ft) and Shakemantle Deep (about 470 ft). There were eventually four levels driven in the Crease Limestone, and two crosscuts to ore in the Drybrook Sandstone. Three of the levels connected (via crosscuts in some cases): Buckshaft with St Annal's (No. 1, completed in 1855), Shakemantle Land with Buckshaft and St Annal's (No.2, 1876), and Shakemantle with Buckshaft (No. 3, 1886);

No. 4 Level (1895-9) was driven for 7,100 ft from Shakemantle Deep Shaft. As the workings extended to a depth of nearly 900 ft there were problems with water, and a 36-inch pumping engine was installed on the Land Pit and a 60-inch engine on the Deep Pit. There was a siding on the Great Western Railway's Forest of Dean Branch, but most of the ore was sent to Cinderford Ironworks on Crawshay's private tramroad. Output declined during the 1890s due to closure of the ironworks in 1894, the increasing difficulty of extraction and cheap imports of Spanish ore. An attempt at further development in 1898 was unsuccessful, and the mine was closed in September 1899, the remaining 160 men and boys being paid off. The total output of the mine between 1841 and 1899 was 1,650,000 tons of ore.



*The opening  
of  
Shakemantle  
shaft (now  
capped)*

Photograph taken by John Sheraton, May 2003. Historic photograph from A Pope collection

## Sling Pit



### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Bowery	James	18/01/1850	15		Killed after skip was drawn up over pulley wheel by engineman.

The site of Sling pit is now a green area near the Miners Arms public house in Sling, as shown in the above photograph (SO 551 078) looking NE. The pit was part of a complex of underground workings and the historic photograph (below) shows the New Dunn mine which was situated nearby.

In 1841 Old Sling Pit was galed to Richard and William Nash, who leased it to George Elwell Jackson, a Birmingham ironmaster. By 1859 the gale belonged to William Talbot, who also owned Old Bow, Old Ham, and Lambsquay gales, although these had been largely worked out by 1862. In 1866 Old Sling had a 315 ft deep shaft, employed nearly 100 people, and was producing around 1,000 tons of ore per month. The gales were leased to William Fryer in 1874, and he constructed sidings and transhipment wharves (with a tramroad connection from the pit) on the Severn & Wye Railway's Sling Branch in 1876. The gales and sidings were transferred to Messrs Warren and Frederick Watkins in 1903, becoming Frederick's alone in 1911. The Old Sling and Old Bow gales were assigned to the Coleford Iron Co in 1917, but reverted to Watkins in 1921. He continued to work it in conjunction with Dun Pit, but by 1928 the market for iron ore had plummeted, and Messrs Watkins diversified into second-hand machinery. 367,000 tons of ore had been extracted from Sling Pit between 1838 and 1917, with 9,986 tons produced in 1880 alone.



*New Dunn  
Iron Mine*

Photograph taken by John Sheraton, November 2004. Historic photograph from Watkins of Sling

## South Oakwood



Photograph taken by Geoff Waygood, February 2004

### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Kear	Thomas	20/06/1880	26	Miner	Killed by explosion of a shot whilst ramming with an iron rammer.

The South Oakwood adit is set into a bank in Bream Grove Wood (SO 61078 04890) and is surrounded by forest (coppice and overwood). Large broken slabs of limestone have fallen in at the entrance.

South Oakwood (Rose in Hand or Pastor Hill) iron mine comprised three levels on the northern side of Tufts Brook. 13,000 tons of ore were produced between 1870 and 1872.

## Wigpool



### Fatal Accidents

Surname	Forename	Date	Age	Occupation	Cause
Marfell	Cornelius	08/05/1865		Miner	Killed with Miles Symmonds after being tipped down shaft after engine collar broke, releasing steam & thus any control over engine.
Symonds	Miles	08/05/1865		Miner	Killed with Cornelius Marfell after being tipped down shaft after engine collar broke, releasing steam & thus any control over engine.
Holmes	George	04/01/1870	56	Banksman	Fell down shaft probably by accident.
Yemm	William Boseley	08/08/1872	18	Miner	Crushed by the accidental fall of a stone weighing 5 tons from the roof.
Bevan	Thomas	22/10/1880	29	Miner	Fall of stone. He had been cautioned by the men in charge not to go beyond where the timber was standing but did so and the top fell upon him.

Remains of Wigpool iron mine include the former engine house, shafts and surface excavations and irregularities. There are several mine entrances (including Steam Hole and

Sway Hole) on Wigpool Common near SO 655 197, as well as areas of scowles (ancient near-surface workings), including 'The Delves'. The excavations include former surface workings which were used as a cinema by American troops during the second world war. The course of a former tramway can also be found with what appear to be loading wharves that were once used by the mine.

Wigpool Iron Mine comprised the Wigpool, Belt, Wigpool Belt, Injunction Belt and Injunction iron mine gales. The first two of these were granted in 1846, and Injunction Iron Mine gale in 1850. By 1854 the gales were held by Messrs Allaway, who had interests in ironworks and tinplate works in Lydney, Lydbrook and Cinderford. A shaft (No. 1 Pit) had been sunk by about 1858, when a 30-inch horizontal rotary engine was installed for both winding and pumping. Production of iron ore was sporadic in the 1860s, but had risen to 6,815 tons by 1870. Financial problems resulted in the formation of a new company, the Lydney and Wigpool Iron Ore Co Ltd, in 1871. Expansion of the mine soon took place, with the addition of the Wigpool Belt gale, and production reached 22,106 tons in 1873. The No. 1 (or Deep) Pit was sunk to a depth of 530 ft in the Lower Dolomite (part of the Carboniferous Limestone Series), and the No. 2 Pit (SO 654 198) to 380 ft. Most ore was won from the Crease Limestone, but significant quantities also came from the underlying Lower Dolomite. About 150,000 tons were produced between 1861 and 1883, much of it being dispatched down a tramroad which ran, via Westbury Brook Iron Mine, to Whimsey on the Great Western Railway's Forest of Dean Branch. There was also a tramroad connection to Mitcheldean Road on the GWR's Hereford, Ross and Gloucester line. By 1883 the company was again in financial difficulties and went into liquidation in 1886, the plant being auctioned off the following year. Several attempts were made to re-open the mine between 1911 and 1923. It was bought by a Mr Witfield for £4,000 in 1915 and some ore was raised, but the project was abandoned in 1918. Some further work was done by the Wigpool Coal and Iron Syndicate (later Co.) in 1921-7 from the Bailey Level, originally driven in 1906 as a gold mine! However, only 3,000 tons of ore were won, and the company soon went into receivership.



*The former engine house (SO 652 194) looking SW*





*The "American Cinema" (SO 652 194)*



*"Sway Hole" (SO 654 197) looking ENE*



*Possible loading wharves (SO 65365 19849) looking south*

Photographs taken by John Sheraton, March 2002, loading wharves by Ron Beard, January 2005.

Historic photograph from A Pope collection