



Starting Points Series

3. Tracing your mining family

Background

The Museum library does not generally keep archival material such as employment details, accident books, wage or duty books which would record individual names. If these survive, they would be held by the local record offices nearest to where the mine was located. To date, there is no central list of miners and where they worked prior to 1947. The National Coal Board recorded employees from 1947 and these records are kept by Iron Mountain; however access is mainly given to ex-miners enquiring about their own records.

Please see below for other sources we have, which may list an individual you are researching.

Sources in the Museum Library

Reports of Select Committees, (e.g.) 1842 Children's Employment Committee: A good source for names of individuals. You may be fortunate to find your ancestor if they were working at this time in one of the areas under investigation.

The Guide to the Coalfields, published from 1948-1992. This lists area personnel as well as the agent, mine manager and under-manager at National Coal Board collieries.

The Lists of Mines, published separately from 1900. Originally incorporated in selected Reports of the Inspectors of Mines and provides details of the mine owner, manager and under-manager for each working mine.

The Colliery Year Book was published from 1925. It provides the names of the chairman, senior managers, secretary and agent of each mining company. It also includes a collieries who's who plus names of coal merchants.

List of members of the Institute of Mining Engineers, published in alternate years from 1900 to about 1918

The Inspectors of Mines Reports list fatalities by name, and in some cases those injured but not killed up to 1914. Separate disaster reports where over ten people were killed may also contain names of people involved in rescue. These reports also list prosecutions and names of the recipients of awards, and those who have passed their manager qualifications.

Lists of recipients of manager qualifications for 1896 -1910

Colliery Guardian obituaries from 1885. If the person was someone of note in the industry, his death may be recorded along with some details of his life.

Lists of Albert, Edward and Empire medal recipients and the Order of Industrial Heroism

List of students at the Royal School of Mines for 1851-1920, 1947, 1958 and 1960

Coal Magazine was produced from 1947 by the NCB and continued as Coal News. The privatised industry produced RJB Mining and UK Coal News. The earlier volumes have a lot of information on individuals but none are indexed. Events such as anniversaries, awards, winners of competitions, presentations, work achievements, personal success and retirements are covered, often with a photograph.

Library Information Files include a selection of biographies of more famous miners, owners and engineers. There is also a selection of autobiographies and recollections by individuals.

Other sources to try

The National Archives

Coal mining records from various government departments from 1850, including Reports of Inspectors of mines 1850 – 1968.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

Census Records 1841 – 1911

The censuses for the above years are available on The National Archives website. It is free to search, but there is a charge to view and download the transcripts. This can provide information on an individual including what job they did down a mine; where they lived; when they were born and when they died.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/census/>

Local Archive Services

Use this website to see if mining documents still exist, including employment records of the colliery you are interested in and where they are kept.

www.a2a.org.uk

Local Studies Libraries

The libraries will have a lot of information on the area, including OS Maps and local newspapers of the time, often including information on mines and miners in the area.

Useful Websites

Please see Useful Links on the Library webpages which can be found at www.ncm.org.uk