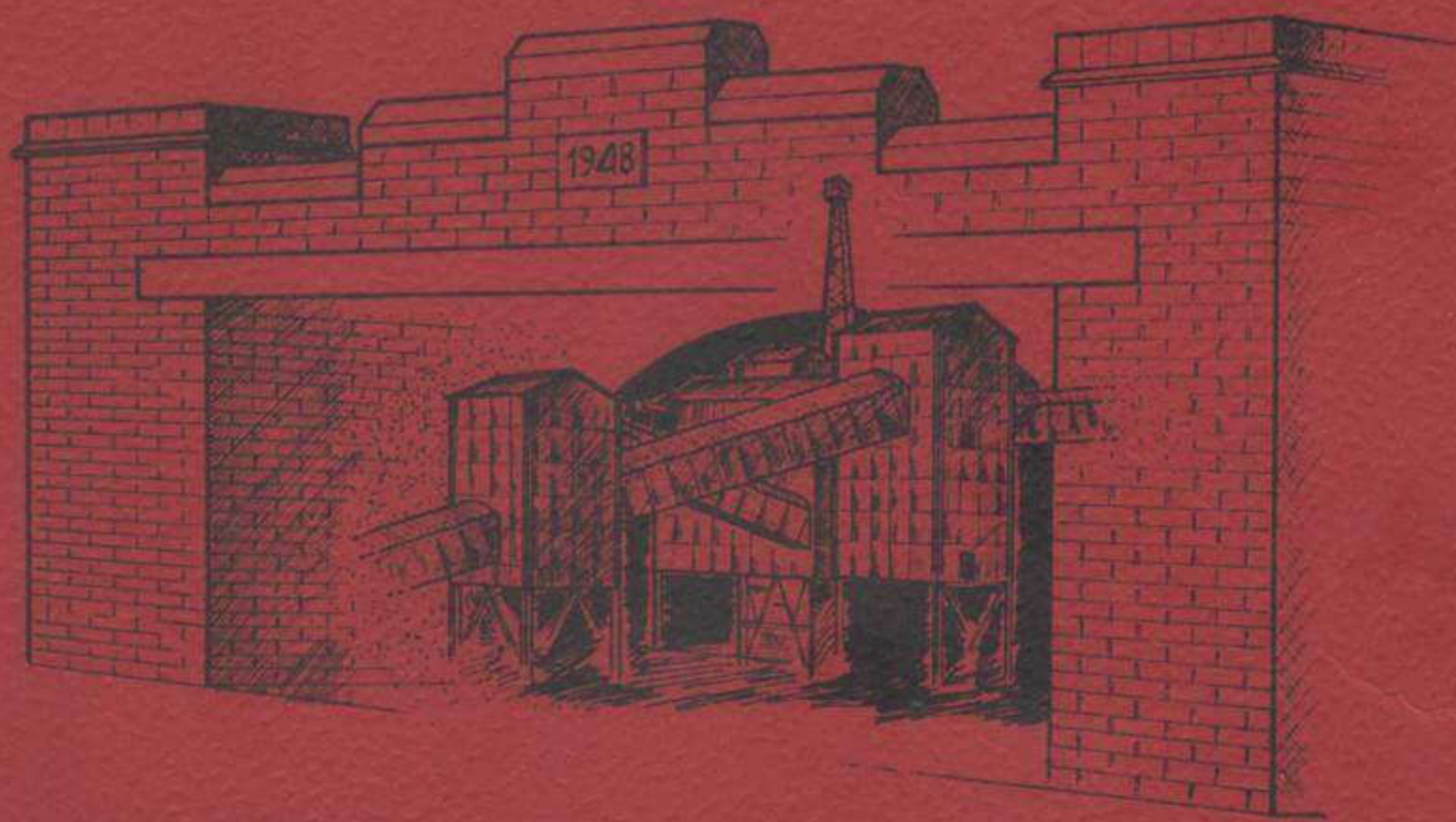


NORTH DERBYSHIRE AREA



NATIONAL COAL BOARD

OXCROFT COLLIERY



1873 - 1974

C O N T E N T S

A BRIEF HISTORY

ISOMETRIC PLAN OF SEAMS

LIST OF MANAGERS

OXCROFT COLLIERY

1901 - 1974

One of the facts of life is that however successful and eventful it may be it must ultimately draw to a close. Coalmining is no exception and the life of Oxcroft Colliery is over.

Having led the field in productivity and profitability for many years, the mine has run its course and production has come to an end with the exhaustion of its reserves.

However, Oxcroft can be proud of its many creditable achievements over the years, some of which are recalled in these pages.

A Brief History

Oxcroft Colliery is one of fourteen collieries in the North Derbyshire Area of the National Coal Board and is situated a mile and a half from Bolsover.

No. 1 Pit

The first shaft - the no. 1 pit - was sunk 1,603 feet by the late Sir Arthur Markham to the Deep Hard Seam in 1901. Working commenced in the Top Hard Seam. This top quality seam, 64 inches thick, was worked until 1914. In anticipation of its exhaustion, the High Hazel Seam was initially developed in 1910 and was the seam working when the Oxcroft Colliery Company Limited acquired the colliery in 1918. At this time there were some 500 men employed at the mine.

Working in the High Hazel Seam continued until adverse geological conditions led to the closure of the pit in 1945, the majority of the men transferring to the No. 3 Colliery which was itself in some difficulty.

No. 3 Pit

Originally known as the Barlborough Colliery, the no. 3 shaft was sunk by the Staveley Coal and Iron Company in 1873 to the Top Hard Seam. The Oxcroft Colliery Company Limited acquired it in 1930 and developed the High Hazel Seam.

Production continued with mixed fortune until 1946, when adverse geological conditions and water problems resulted in rapidly declining productivity, which nearly resulted in closure of the colliery.

However, a newly developed face was brought into production at this time and the exceptionally good results achieved and maintained allowed the colliery to continue in production for a further three years.

No. 5 Drifts

Consideration had been given before the war to the sinking of drifts from the surface and, indeed, two drifts - the no. 5 drifts - were commenced in 1938, but operations were suspended with the onset of world war II.

Towards the end of the war operations were resumed on these drifts and in 1944 connections were effected to the nos. 1 and 3 collieries.

In 1949 the winding of coal from no. 3 shaft ceased, the coal being then brought to the surface via no. 5 drift. This coal was prepared for the market in the no. 1 pit coal preparation plant, which was re-conditioned.

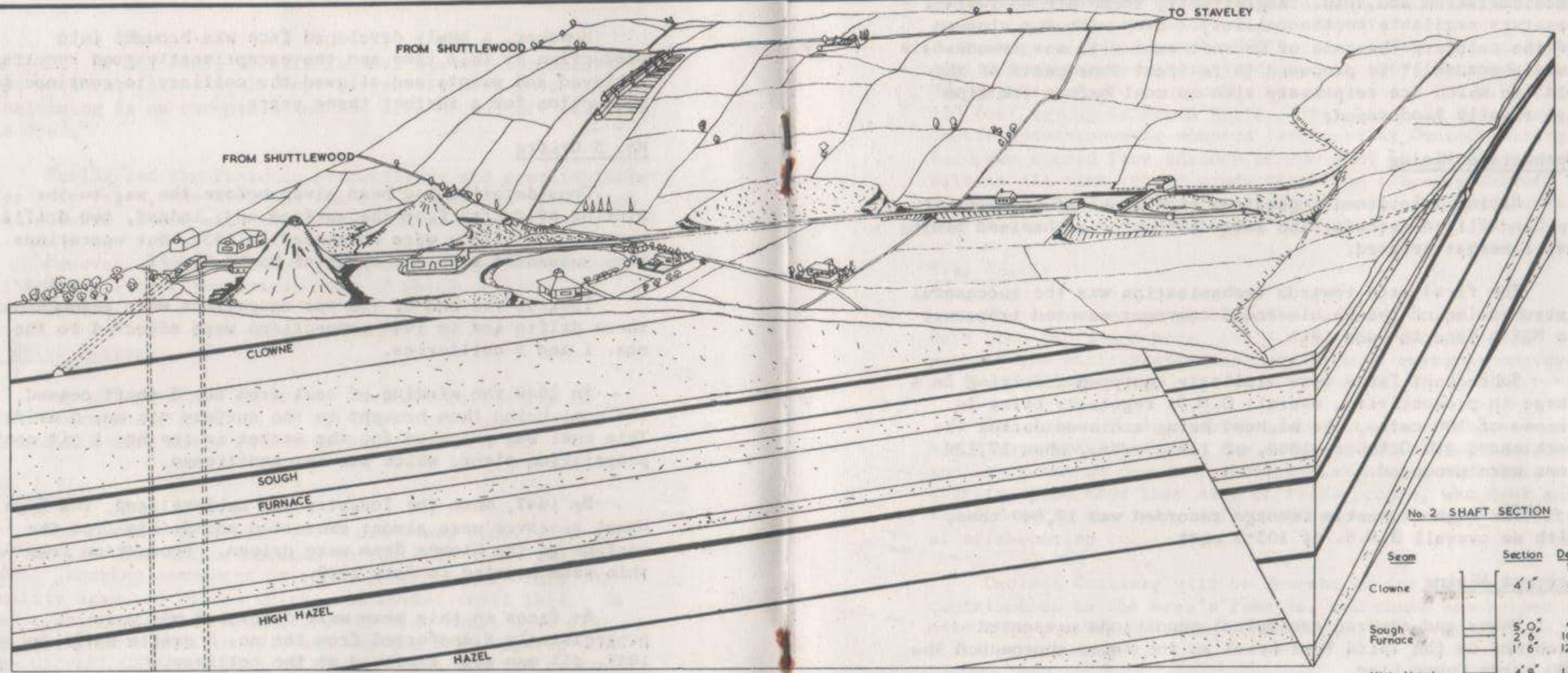
By 1947, when the Industry was nationalised, the High Hazel reserves were almost exhausted and drifts from the surface to the Clowne Seam were driven. Production from this seam started in July 1949.

As faces in this seam were developed men were progressively transferred from the no. 5 drifts until by 1947, 455 men were employed at the colliery.

The coal was won at this time by longwall coal cutting and hand-filling onto conveyors and thence by a series of conveyors to the coal preparation plant.

Production in this seam continued at excellent productivity levels, the overall output per manshift being constantly in excess of 50 cwts. - a record O.M.S. of 59.5 cwts. overall being achieved in April 1960.

In 1961 a 250 horsepower conveyor drive was installed in the main intake drift, but this was found inadequate to deal with the production and it was replaced in January 1962 by a 300 horsepower drive.



OXCROFT COLLIERY DRIFT MINING
SURFACE LAYOUT

No. 2 SHAFT SECTION

Seam	Section	Depth yds.
Clowne	4' 1"	23
Sough Furnace	5' 0"	94
	2' 6"	106
	1' 6"	128
High Hazel	4' 8"	167
	2' 10"	207
	1' 11"	214
Top Hard	5' 4"	292
Dunst 1st Waterloo	2' 10"	337
	1' 6"	351
2nd Waterloo	2' 9"	364
Bottom Ell	3' 0"	426
Deep Soft	11' 3"	485
Deep Hard	3' 10"	534

OXCROFT SURVEY DEPT.

The entry to the Clowne Seam was the salvation of the colliery, which has made a substantial contribution to the Area results - of the order of £1 million per annum. Over its whole life of the order of 37 million tons of coal have been extracted and sold. Regrettably, there are no further reserves available to the colliery. Even with the closure of the colliery the sale of Oxcroft coal will not immediately cease because it is proposed to re-treat some parts of the old tip which are relatively rich in coal before the tips are finally landscaped.

Mechanised Mining

Having maintained a constant high level of productivity by hand-filled methods, the introduction of mechanised mining was somewhat belated.

The first step towards mechanisation was the successful introduction of the double-ended conveyor mounted trepanner to N38's face in June 1966.

Subsequent faces were similarly equipped resulting in a surge in productivity, overall O.M.S. regularly being in excess of 100 cwts., the highest being achieved during the week ended 4th October, 1969, at 113.6 cwts., when 17,124 tons were produced.

The highest weekly tonnage recorded was 17,849 tons, with an overall O.M.S. of 103.3 cwts.

Retreat Mining

Water and adverse geological conditions presented problems on the Third West Level as the faces approached the 100 yards Cover Line.

This precipitated the need for alternative methods to win the area of coal beyond this line.

The Dosco Dinthead was successfully introduced to develop the faces for retreat mining, achieving record advances in excess of 125 yards per week.

The first retreat face commenced production in September 1971, and eight such faces have been worked successfully, enabling an area of coal containing around half-a-million tons to be won, which would have been impossible to work by advancing techniques and has kept the colliery viable over the latter years.

The last retreat face, N58's, was started up immediately after a month's industrial strike - on Monday, 11th March, 1974 - with only seven weeks in which to extract all remaining available coal. To date records have been established on this short 120 yards face in that the retreat record for a double-ended conveyor mounted trepanner in Derbyshire, established on G30's face at High Moor Colliery, of 110 feet has been surpassed, and in the fifth week the European and world records for advance of a D.E.C.M.T. of 150 feet, set up in South Notts. Area, has been surpassed, the double ended conveyor mounted trepanner at Oxcroft making a European record face advance of 206 feet in a week, together with an all time record production from a single Oxcroft face of 10,078 tons, at a face output per manshift of 435 cwts. and an overall O.M.S. of 140.8 cwts.

Team Spirit

The achievements at Oxcroft Colliery, a few of which have been mentioned here, could not have been possible without the whole-hearted co-operation of everyone employed at the colliery.

The admirable team spirit inculcated over the years has always prevailed, and the workmen, officials, management and staff can be proud of their achievements, and it is gratifying to know that many of these people, who rank among the finest in the land, will continue to serve the Industry at neighbouring collieries.

Oxcroft Colliery will be remembered for its valuable contribution to the Area's results, and those who helped to make this possible will be acknowledged wherever they go within the Industry.

MANAGEMENT OF OXCROFT COLLIERY

COMPANY DIRECTORS immediately prior to
Nationalisation:

Gerald Garlick
John Campbell
Richard Parker

MANAGEMENT since Nationalisation:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
H. Jones	Manager	1/1/47	6/3/52
G. Bunting	Manager	6/3/52	31/12/56
A. McNeish	Manager	1/1/57	31/1/60
H. Jones	Manager	1/2/60	31/1/63
J. E. Hancock	Manager	11/2/63	1/7/64
J. B. Howarth	Manager	1/10/64	20/6/66
J. Rodgers	Manager (became Agent/Manager 1/1/68)	20/6/66	1/2/69
C. Hawkesley	Agent/Manager	1/2/69	11/6/73
F. G. Hicken	Agent/Manager	11/6/73	To date
D. Hunt	Deputy Manager	20/2/67	1/9/73
L. Edwards	Deputy Manager	1/3/70	15/9/71
J. R. Hunter	Undermanager	1947	1949
F. Marsden	Undermanager	1949	31/7/63
L. Harris	Undermanager	1/8/63	1/1/65
W. W. Bryan	Undermanager	1/4/65	1/7/68
B. E. Hadfield	Undermanager	1/12/67	6/5/68
F. Tildesley	Undermanager	1/4/68	1/4/72
A. A. Seal	Undermanager	14/10/68	1/12/70
J. A. Bruce	Undermanager	1/1/69	26/5/69
C. A. Hall	Undermanager	11/5/70	To date
S. W. Hunt	Undermanager	26/10/70	13/11/72
I. G. Slater	Undermanager	7/8/72	To date
R. Atkin	Asst. Undermanager	26/1/59	5/6/61
L. Harris	Asst. Undermanager	4/9/61	1/8/63
T.J. Charlesworth	Asst. Undermanager	26/8/63	13/2/67
A. A. Seal	Asst. to Manager	10/7/67	14/10/68
J. A. Inger	Asst. to Manager	1/4/69	To date