

# **CHILDREN'S EMPLOYMENT COMMISSION 1842.**

REPORT by H. HERBERT JONES,  
Esq., on the Employment of  
Children and Young Persons in  
Mines and Mineral Works in North  
Wales and on the State, Condition,  
and Treatment of such Children and  
Young Persons.

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# COMMISSION

(UNDER THE GREAT SEAL)

## FOR INQUIRING INTO THE EMPLOYMENT AND CONDITION OF CHILDREN IN MINES AND MANUFACTORIES.

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**VICTORIA**, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith: To Our trusty and well beloved Thomas Tooke, Esquire, Thomas Southwood Smith, Esquire, Doctor in Medicine, together with Leonard Horner and Robert John Saunders, Esquires, two of Our Inspectors of Factories, Greeting:- WHEREAS, an humble Address was presented unto to Us by Knights, Citizens and Burgesses and Commissioners of Shires and Burghs in Parliament assembled, humbly beseeching Us that We should be graciously pleased to direct an Inquiry to be made into the Employment of the Children of the Poorer Classes in Mines and Collieries and the various branches of Trade and Manufactures in which numbers of Children work together, not being included in the provisions of the Acts for regulating Employment of Children and Young Persons in Mills and Factories and to collect information as to the time allowed each day for meals and as to the actual state, condition and treatment of such Children and as to the effects of such Employment, both with regard to their morals and their bodily health; NOW KNOW YE, THAT WE, reposing great trust and confidence in your ability and discretion, have nominated, constituted and appointed and do by these presentiments nominate, constitute and appoint you the said, Thomas Tooke, Thomas Southwood Smith, together with, Leonard Horner and Robert John Saunders, to be Our Commissioners for the purposes aforesaid and We do hereby enjoin you to obey all directions touching the premises which shall from time to time be given you, and any two or more of you, by one of our principle Secretaries of State and for the better discovery of the truth in the premises, we do, by these presentiments, give and grant to you, or any two or more of you, full power and authority to call before you such persons as you will judge necessary, by whom you may be the better informed of the truth in the premises, and to inquire of the premises and every part thereof, by all other lawful way and means whatsoever and We do hereby also give and grant unto you, or any two or more of you, full power and authority when the same shall appear to be requisite, to administer an oath or oaths to any person or persons whatsoever, to be examined before you, or two or more of you, touching or concerning the premises and Our further will and pleasure is, that you Our said Commissioners, or any three of you, do, with as little delay as may be consistent with a due discharge of the duties hereby imposed upon you, Certify to Us, under your hands and seals, or under the hands and seals of any three of you, your several proceedings in the premises; And We further will and command, and by these presents ordained, that this Our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you, Our said Commissioners, or any two or more of you, shall and may from time to time proceed in the execution thereof, and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued, from time to time by adjournment: AND WE HEREBY COMMAND all and singular Our Justices of the Peace, Sheriffs, Mayors, Bailiffs, Constables, Officers, Ministers, and all other of Our loving Subjects whatsoever, as will within Liberties as without, that they may be assistant to you and each of you in the execution of these presentiments. And for your assistance in the due execution of this Commission, We have made choice of Our trusty and well beloved Joseph Fletcher, Esquire, to be the Secretary of this Our Commission, whose services we require you to use from time to time, as occasion may require. In witness thereof, We have caused these Letters to be made Patent. Witness Ourselves at Westminster, the Twentieth day of October, in the Fourth Year of Our Reign.

By Writ of Privy Seal,

EDMUNDS.

**LETTER OF INSTRUCTIONS EXTENDING THE TERMS OF THE COMMISSION TO  
“YOUNG PERSONS”**

*Whitehall, February 11th, 1841.*

GENTLEMEN,

THE QUEEN having been pleased to comply with the prayer of an humble Address presented to Her Majesty, in pursuance of a Resolution of the House of Commons, dated 4th. of February, 1841, ‘That Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to direct that the Commission appointees in answer to an Address of this House, on August 4, 1840, for the investigation of certain branches of Infant Labour, do include within its inquiry the Labour also of Young Persons designated as such by the provisions of the Factory Act’ I am delighted by the Marquis of Normanby to desire that you will include within your inquiry the Labour of Young Persons designated as such by the provisions of the Factory Act accordingly.

I am, Gentlemen,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
(Signed) F. MAULE.

*The Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition  
of Children employed in Mines, &c.*

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# Children's Employment Commission.

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**REPORT by H. HERBERT JONES, Esq., on the Employment of Children and Young Persons in Mines and Mineral Works in North Wales and on the State, Condition, and Treatment of such Children and Young Persons.**

**TO HER MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS.**

Gentlemen,

In March last I received your instructions to proceed to North Wales to collect evidence which shall show the present condition of children and young persons who work together in numbers in North Wales, and also to report thereon to you from the evidence so collected by me, as well as from my personal inspection of works wherein such children and young persons are engaged.

In compliance with these instructions, and with those conveyed to me in circular letter received from your secretary, Mr. Fletcher, dated the 19th. July last wherein it is requested that "a separate report be made on mines, collieries and mineral works, as distinguished from manufactories employing children and young persons," I proceed to report accordingly.

As respects mines, collieries, and mineral works, my inquiries have been to the coal-fields of Denbighshire and Flintshire, and to the lead-mines in the latter county.

In the mines and coal-pits considerable numbers of children and young persons are employed. I have, however, no data on which to compute the numbers I have not had returns from all the works to which I sent tabular and there are a great number of small works employing only a few hands which I sent no forms. The returns that have been made me, and my own personal inspection, enable me to say, that the number of children and young per-employed in the mines and collieries in North Wales must amount to some thousands.

It is only in the collieries of Ruabon that girls under 18 are employed, *in* mines no females have any employment. I have great satisfaction in reporting that, though girls find work at the pit mouth, they never go under ground, such a practice has not yet found its way into the northern parts of the principality. The number who work on the surface is comparatively few and the custom of employing females at all is confined to the district around Wrexham.

At each pit two females are placed to assist in *banking* the coal, and, where there is no steam-engine or horse-whimsey, also in turning the winding-barrel by which the coal and ironstone are brought to the surface. In most cases the females employed exceed the age of 18, as strength is required there are but few under that age and rarely any to be found under 13. There is nothing in the employment of banking coal which is repugnant to the feelings and the manner, conduct, and dress of females so engaged appear respectable and decorous. They work generally from six in the morning till six in the evening, and have their meals brought them to. They are hired by the charter-masters, and paid by them. Their wages being from 6d. to 1s. a-day.

From the evidence I have taken it will be seen that the girls 'on the bank' usually marry early, that they are not deficient in the knowledge and discharge the domestic duties, and that they make good wives and mothers. In respect their health and physical condition, the evidence of the medical men proves of the work they are engaged in rather tends to improve both than to detract from either. They are represented by them as enjoying excellent health. By their constant exertion of their strength the muscles acquire a development, and their carriage a manner, which may be somewhat out of character with feminine appearance. In other respects they suffer nothing when put in comparison with any class among the lower orders. On the contrary, in figure and complexion they have the advantage of most.

In some of the useful domestic duties they may be somewhat deficient, such as sewing, washing, and baking, but as their time is not completely occupied at the pits, and as they are always

at home on Saturday and in the evenings, they are not wholly without the knowledge of those necessary acquirements, which require no great talent or industry in being learnt.

Few females on the bank have been at school, and very few can read, though they all, or nearly all, attend Sunday-school, and seldom absent themselves from Divine worship. Their morals are considered not inferior to those of other females of the working classes. They are frequently pregnant, it is true, previous to marriage, but this is not unusual amongst the lower orders in Wales, and appears to throw no great slur on the character, whether afterwards married or forsaken by the putative father. Marriage, however, in 99 cases in 100 takes place, and though the immorality is greatly to be lamented, it is to the honour of the parties concerned that marriage so frequently follows pregnancy, and that bastardy is not more common.

The age at which children enter the pits differs, I find, according to the workings. If the seam of coal be thin, as for instance from two to three feet, children even as young as six years are taken but I met with only few instances where children commenced work in the coal and ironstone pits at such an age. Seven is by no means an uncommon age in the Ruabon district, where the seams are thin. Nine and ten, however, are the ages at which the great majority begin to go into the pits.

In respect to the children and young persons who are employed at the lead-mines in North Wales, ten is the usual age at which they begin to work. Their employment very rarely leads them *into* the mines. They work on the surface, in breaking, picking, and washing the ore, so as to prepare it for the smelters.

In the coal and iron pits they occasionally work at night, in which case there is a day and a night set of hands, and a proportionate number of children and young persons in each set. The boys at the lead mines never work at night but in summer they frequently work from two to four hours overtime, in winter never.

In the collieries the children and young persons go to the pits at six o'clock in the morning, and begin to descend as soon after as may be. They are always on the surface again by six in the afternoon, frequently by four or five. In those pits where the work is carried on through the night the men and boys who form the night set of hands descend at six in the evening and remain at work till four or five in the morning, when their places are taken by the day set. In pits where there are not a day and a night set occasionally there is work over-hours but colliers rarely work overtime. Of course when the men remain in the pits beyond the usual time the children also remain. The hours of work never vary with the seasons. In summer, however, when the demand for coal is not so brisk, it frequently happens that only four or five days' work can be obtained in the week. Casualties, such as the engine being out of repair, or the falling in of the roof of the works now and then, derange the system, and render it necessary that the men and boys should work for a day or two a greater number than the usual hours, but these occasions are not of frequent occurrence, and do not entail an lasting hardship, though perhaps two or three days of extended labour may be required.

At the mines no casualties occur to render it necessary to extend the hours of labour, though in summer advantage is in some works taken of long-continued daylight, and the boys are kept at work some hours beyond the fixed time, whereas in winter the want of light puts a stop to the work of washing the ore, which often ceases at four o'clock.

The boys generally assemble at the lead-mines at six o'clock a.m., and commence work as soon after as possible. They generally take breakfast at home, and only eat dinner while at the work, for which an hour is allowed. It is brought to them by their friends, and they eat it where they work, though in bad weather they are allowed to go into the engine-room both to warm their food and to eat it. The same time is allowed in summer as in winter for dinner, though in winter as little time as possible is taken by the children, as the work must be proceeded with while daylight lasts.

The boys in the pits are variously employed, as in keeping the air-doors, filling the waggons, riddling coals, pumping, drawing, hooking on, and driving the horses and asses under ground. Cutting the coal and bringing it to the surface are a matter of contract. The masters contract with colliers, who are called chalter or charter masters, and they hire all the hands employed, so that masters have but little authority in the work, and hold themselves irresponsible to the persons hired by the charter-masters.

When a child first goes into the pits he is taken down by his father or some friend who has employment in the work. He is usually put to keep an air-door, or to some light work. In examining the boys few would own that they felt much fear or distress on entering the pits, and all say they very soon became used and reconciled to their work. They are for the most part the children of colliers, and from infancy become familiar with the idea of underground work, and anxious to go below and begin to work. This wish of course meets with no opposition from parents, who, lured by the wages, are never backward in sending their children to the pits, as soon as they can get them into employ, so that no sooner is a collier's son able to exert a little muscular force than he becomes an underground machine destitute of the slightest mental cultivation.

Drawing or pushing the coal waggons, which in North Wales are called pyches, forms the principal employment of children and young persons in the pits. Drawing is performed by means of a chain passing from the pyche between the boy's legs, and fastened to a girdle around his waist. Being thus attached to the load he draws it by stooping down, proceeding along 'all-fours.' Some push the pyches from behind, which is done by the hands and forehead. The children describe it as immaterial to them which method they pursue. In low works, where the seams of coal are very thin, they draw, as they can stoop lower than in the attitude of pushing.

At first the chain in drawing is apt to excoriate the skin, and sometimes causes so much soreness as to oblige the boys to leave off work for a day or two, but no other evil arises from this unnatural and in appearance brutal mode of work the boys, and custom soon reconciles and inures them to their wretched fate. The pyches being loaded, they are drawn or pushed, in the manner described, from the working to the main or horse ways, there to be met by the empty or return pyches.

Where the main-ways are of sufficient height to admit of horses or asses they are employed in drawing the pyches along them to the bottom of the shaft, which they are brought to the surface either by the engine, horse-whimsey, or turn-barrels worked by men or women on the bank. Where the main-ways are low as not to admit either horses or asses the boys continue to draw or push pyches to the bottom of the shaft. There are relays of hands at intervals of 30 or 40 yards. The main-ways are laid with iron rails to facilitate the operation of drawing. The pyches generally contain from 2 cwt. to 4 cwt. of coals.

The different underground operations must be conducted with great regularity the least disorder would create disarrangement throughout the work. It might be supposed that the men, ever anxious of gain, would overwork the children placing too much coal on the pyches. This is not the case, and for an obvious reason, the object would defeat itself, the children would be unable to draw the necessary distance, a stoppage would take place, and everything would go confusion.

It may be asked is not cruelty resorted to, and blows and kicks inflicted to make them exert all their powers? This is a question I frequently put to the children and others but I found it was not so. Interest is an all-powerful motive in human affairs, and charter-masters know it would not accord with theirs to put a greater load than can be drawn with something like ease. Each has his task to perform. What the men cut the boys must carry off. There is no room in the pits for an accumulation of coal, a due proportion of boys is therefore always employed to prevent a stoppage, which would throw all hands into disorder.

The work of these children is a grievous subject for reflection and a sad spectacle to behold. They pass the day in working many fathoms under ground, where daylight never enters, and in excavations that will not in many instances admit them to stand in an erect position. The air they breathe is full of dust and noxious gases, and dangers surround them on all sides. Pitiably indeed is their mad condition. But amidst so many dangers and hardships I was gratified to find that when at work they are seldom if ever beaten or otherwise maltreated by their taskmasters. Agents would not allow it if the charter-masters were so inclined but it does not appear that there is any inclination to oppression. On the contrary, they are treated with humanity and propriety by the charter-masters and colliers, many of whom are religious and good moral characters, and often pray aloud in the pit and give good advice to both children and adults. The work of the day concluded, all hasten to the surface.

More caution, I think, ought to be taken to enforce the rule which limits in each colliery the number who shall ascend or descend at the same time. I have seen little attention paid to the rules in this respect, hence accidents are not of unfrequent occurrence.

As soon as the children came up I was surprised and pleased to observe the alacrity with which they went to play. They were quite alive to their amusements and enjoyed themselves with all the vivacity of youth and health, preferring their games to going home to their food. When examining Mr. James Jones, the under-ground bailiff at the British Iron Company's collieries at Ruabon, he, in answer to my question whether the boys were fatigued and wearied by their day's work so that they could not enjoy recreation when it was over, replied in his native tongue, "*No, they bound like young goats from their work to their play.*" The language was a little figurative, but I found the fact as he stated it.

From personal examination of the children and young persons at many collieries, and from the information I obtained from several medical men of extensive practice amongst the colliers, I am enabled to state that they are by no means an unhealthy class. I expected to find them suffering under numerous diseases, and martyrs to a thousand accidents. My surprise, however, was excited by their general good health and that neither by the peculiarity of their work nor from accidents were many cases to be found amongst them of personal deformity, physical imperfection, or peculiar diseases, nor do I think their growth stunted. They were of the usual height of other boys. A little peculiarity may be observed in their gait, from the long-continued action and tension of some of the muscles and the relaxation of others, but it is scarcely observable.

The boys employed at the lead-mines, as I before said, are very rarely in employment below the surface. Mining requires strength; and until 18 or 20 years of age few engage in underground work. Where the ventilation is by young lads about 12 years old are occasionally employed in pumping air different parts of the mine and as the men work by night, so the boys who pump are also employed at night. Each set pumps 12 hours, with only short interval for meals. The whole number of boys engaged in this work is but small, probably in all the lead-mines in Flintshire it does not amount to 60, perhaps it may be under 50, and to be met with only in a few mines near Holywell, where the workings are deep and extensive.

It is in preparing ore for the smelters that boys are so extensively employed at the mines, and their work is all performed on the surface in the open air. Formerly the boys used to break the lumps into small fragments by means of hammers. The dust arising from this operation was in part inhaled by them, only produced bad effects, as it tends to induce constipation of the bowels and a peculiar kind of colic, and laid the foundation of many constitutional diseases. At present there are few works in which the ore is not broken by machinery, an improvement which lessens labour and reduces the chances of ill health. When broken, the ore is conveyed by boys to the washing-pits and tubs, and by other boys it undergoes several washings through riddles. The parts which contain metal go off with the water. The lead, on account of its specific gravity, sinks the bottom of the sieve, and by means of these washings is soon fitted for smelters.

The work, as I saw it performed in summer, appeared rather agreeable than otherwise but being in the open air, and entirely connected with water that the hands and arms are always wet, and the feet very often so, it must in winter be a cheerless occupation, and likely to produce bad health. In this, as in many other works, habit must do a great deal, as, from all the testimony I could collect, these boys are a healthy class and in those works which I inspected in the summer they were as healthy, if not as robust, a set of lads as I ever saw, and this notwithstanding the tendency to constipation from the particles of lead ore which they must occasionally swallow when at work, or which are taken up by the absorbents from the external parts of the body, where in much dust laden with lead must necessarily lodge during the time of work. Sufficient caution is not taken to induce the boys to wash themselves before taking their meals and before going to bed they ought to change their apparel as soon as work is over but there is little or no caution used.

The work of preparing the ore for the process of smelting is usually contracted for, and the contractor hires the boys and pays them by the day. I particularly inquired into the treatment of these boys when at work, and from others as well as from themselves I heard no complaints nor found any instances of cruelty or oppression. The mining agents all say that they allow of no personal chastisement being inflicted on the boys. My observation of them while they were at work and while under my inspection leads me to believe they are well treated; and though they work about 10 hours a-day, and in summer 12 or 13 hours, that they are not oppressed or much fatigued. When they left off work they appeared fresh and lively, and engaged in play with animation and joy.

Boys engaged at the lead-mines are not much in the way of accidents, and in appearance and physical strength are inferior to no set of working lads.

In the collieries and mines there are no stated and fixed holidays, though the boys often take a holiday and on occasions of public rejoicings the works are usually stopped.

They are hired by the contractors whom they assist, and they generally make their own contracts and receive their own wages but there is no instance, I believe, in Wales of masters lending money to parents to be repaid out of the labour of their children. The amount of wages in the collieries and mines is pretty much on a par, according to capability boys receive from 2s. 6d. to 10s. a-week, and are paid by weekly wages-all of which, or nearly all, the parents receive for food and clothing.

No means appear to be taken to enforce or encourage the exertions of the children, those in the pits *must* get through their *task*, and those on the surface are overlooked by the contractors. A fair day's work is expected by him, nor will he give more wages than he sees a boy fairly earns. The idle he turns off. I saw no position to idleness on the part of the boys, and none to vexatious interference and oppressive urging on the part of the contractors, either in the collieries or the mines. I believe, and all the evidence taken by me proves, that great regularity and propriety is observed in the works and that in North Wales there is no system of cruelty or bad treatment towards the youths while at work.

The physical condition of the boys is very satisfactory. It is observed that the Welsh in stature do not come up to the standard of the English and Scotch. The observation may be founded on fact and accounted for by the little intermixture foreign blood, which, till of late years, took place in the principality, at least in northern parts. The distinctive character which has almost up to the present time has been preserved in Wales is likely very soon to be lost. The increase of works, improved state of the roads, and the general introduction of steam-vessels, have tended to bring into Wales an immense influx of English, Scotch, and Irish, persons of all ranks, who intermarry with the Welsh

families. In the course of inspection I cannot say I met with any appreciable difference in the stature of the Welsh. Those employed in the pits and at the mines were at least equal personal appearance and stature to the children of the same age and station in same neighbourhood not put to any such labour.

In respect to food I must observe that the diet in Wales is of a lower order than that of England. Less of animal and more of milk and farinaceous food is used but everywhere the children have a sufficient quantity of nourishing diet, though in quality it may be esteemed inferior. Children at work in the pits and mines breakfast before they leave home. Their dinner is brought to them by their friends and consists of bread, butter, potatoes a little bacon occasionally, with milk or broth. They have supper at home on their return from work. Most of them have a piece of bread and butter to eat between breakfast and dinner, and between dinner and supper, which is eaten while at work.

Their physical condition is a proof that they have a sufficiency of nutritive to maintain health and strength and their food is certainly both in quality and quantity equal to that which children of their station and neighbourhood have who do no work. Their clothing is in most instances well calculated to their work and situation. The collier boys have thick coarse woollen jackets in common wear, and the boys at the mines are sufficiently clad. None whom I examined in either class less than two suits and three shirts. Some boys pleaded the want of good clothes as an excuse for not attending Divine worship and Sunday-school. In a few instances perhaps the plea was really true, but in many it was merely an excuse, though it may easily be supposed all the boys are not clothed equally well. At neither the pit nor the mines is it usual for the children to have a change of clothing to put on after work. It may not be requisite in the pits, but at the mines, where they work in the open air in all sorts of weather, a change would be desirable, especially as the working clothes must be loaded with the dust of lead-ore.

It is difficult to say whether the amount of sickness amongst these children be greater than amongst the children of the poorer classes employed or remaining at home unemployed, as I found but few who were not employed in the pits or at the lead mines. Those so employed are a healthy class, and evidently suffer nothing from the nature of their work, with the exception of the liability to the peculiar state of the bowels which the children employed in picking and washing the lead ore are occasionally subject to. It is, however, easily removed by aperients, and is rarely dangerous, as is proved by the evidence of the medical men in Mold and Holywell, who also prove that the surgical diseases prevalent among the children in question are only such as are caused by accident, as burns, bruises, dislocations, and fractures, and that hernia, distortion of the spine or joints or any other maladies to which human nature is liable, are no more common than amongst other children not so employed. Nor are acute medical diseases found to prevail more amongst children in the mines and pits than others. Mr. Roberts, surgeon at Ruabon, states that fever, when once in a collier's house, generally runs through the family and in crowded villages through all the families. He attributes this to no peculiarity brought on by the nature of their work, but to the smallness of their cottages, the want of due ventilation, the total neglect of external cleanliness and drainage the cottage floors being on a level with the ground, and the pig-sty and dunghill close to the door. The medical men allege that the colliers and miners hear the usual means of cure, such as bleeding and depletion in inflammatory diseases, and amputation when necessary, as well as others differently employed.

In reporting on the moral and religious condition of the children employed in the coal pits and mines you will be gratified to learn that it is much improved of late years. I have the opinion of all Classes to confirm this assertion. The time was, and but a *few* years ago, when the colliers and miners were a dissipated and almost a lawless class, the colliers especially, the miners in a less degree. They spent their leisure hours, and the Sabbath in particular, in the public-houses, in noise and riot, assembling together along the road sides, or sauntering in the adjacent fields. They had dog-fights, bull-baitings, and fights and broils amongst themselves. They would take delight in annoying all passers-by, and they were great trespassers on neighbouring fields and plantations. The children, following the example of parents and friends, were equally bad, and often exceeded them in mischief and vice. As for attending Divine worship or Sunday-school, such things were scarcely thought of and swearing and profanity of all sorts were general. This lamentable state of things may be accounted for.

The parish churches existed before the collieries and mines were worked as they now are, and, though frequently very inconveniently situated, were equal to the religious wants of a rural and small population, but are by no means calculated for the large population these works have given birth to. The colliers and miners, living in cottages and villages of late origin, were left without pastoral care or church accommodation, and being as it were without the pale of the church under no instruction, and without religious or moral restraints, guided only by their desires and passions, can it be a matter of surprise that after the toils of a loathsome employment under ground they gave

way to the temptations of the tavern, were immoral, and alike the scourge and fear of the neighbourhood? The knew nothing of religion, therefore did not hesitate to desecrate the Sabbath which they only recognised as a day giving them cessation from labour, and which the devoted to barbarous amusements, trespasses, and disgusting revels.

This state of things has happily, in a great measure, passed away, the task of reform was undertaken by the Dissenters, and unpromising, nay, almost hopeless, as it appeared, being persevered in, has changed the character of the people and accomplished more than could have been expected.

There is now in North Wales no village however remote or obscure, where sectarian places of worship have not been built even to the number of three or four, some on a large and expensive scale. The money to build them has been raised by small and long-continued subscriptions from the lower and middle classes of the people, among whom dissent in North Wales is almost universal.

The national and free schools, so commonly established, have done little good for the collier and miner. The children are taken too early to work to benefit by attendance at them, and, being almost all Dissenters, there is a prejudice against an establishment where the doctrines of the church *only* are inculcated, and where the rules render it imperative on the scholars to go to church in a body with the teacher. The children, the subject of this report, have few opportunities of obtaining any education. There are everywhere dame-schools, though under no guidance but that of the teachers. To these the children frequently go, but, being taken from them when they obtain work, they are rarely able to read when they leave. Amongst the collier boys not one in ten can read with anything approach correctness, or so as to comprehend the sense of what he reads. Those in the mines are almost, though not quite, as illiterate, probably because they do not go to work so early. Both classes are, however, utterly ignorant. It is an uncommon circumstance to meet with one who can read, write, *and* cast accounts.

There is, however, a growing desire for education evinced, but while children are at work from morning to night, and sometimes all night, there is little time in which to gratify this desire. The Sunday-school is, however, a means by which many, both adults and children, learn to read, and are instructed in religion and the Bible. In every chapel of dissent, and there are a great many in the coal and mining districts, there is a Sunday-school. The children, with few exceptions, attend Divine worship in these chapels frequently three times every Sunday, and often in the evenings on week-days. They are also very punctual in attendance at the Sunday-school. The method of teaching is such, that though the number attending is great, the progress made is slow. It would necessarily be so in a school open only one day in the week, even were the tuition good, but in the Sunday-schools in the chapels there are no other teachers than those of the congregation who are willing to undertake the task. Those who can read a little and know something of the history of the Bible teach others who are more ignorant.

Many learn a good deal by these imperfect means, especially those who make use of their leisure hours in improving themselves. On the other hand, I have met with a great many children and young persons who have been at a common or dame school for a year or two as a class unfit for other labour, and unable to turn to other employments for a livelihood.

Though the children in the collieries are healthy, the same cannot be said of them as they advance in life. The seeds of disease are early sown. The chest soon becomes affected. Can it be expected that health can be maintained by persons who work below ground for 10 or 12 hours daily from the early age of 8 or 9 when the lowness and the narrowness of the pits, the foulness of the air, the dust, dirt, and dampness which exist in them, are considered, the wonder is, not that they get asthmatic and consumptive, but that their health continues so long unimpaired. It is the same with the lead-miners. Derangement of the bowels and bronchial diseases are sooner or later sure to make their appearance, and to these diseases the miners become martyrs, the majority falling a sacrifice before the age of 50.

Notwithstanding it is well known among miners and colliers that disease is the sure concomitant of underground work, and premature death almost certain, it requires no persuasion to get children to engage in the employment. The boys who wash the lead ore on the surface show great anxiety to go *into* the mine to work and persuade their parents to take them below often before they have acquired sufficient strength to handle the mining tools with effect. Miners work only six hours or at most eight in the twenty four. The few hours of *their* labour, compared with the number the boys are obliged to work at washing the ore, may with the hope of additional wages, be the great stimulant to their wishes. The same anxiety is observable among the children of the colliers, they are ever anxious to leave school to go to work in the pits. The parents have no necessity to urge them to the task, it is undertaken with all good will. It is rather to put a restraint on their inclination in this respect than to urge them to the pits that the interference of parents is required.

It is observed that the children no sooner go to work than parental authority begins to cease the children soon form an estimate of their own value, and find how much the family depends on their earnings. Children thus emancipating themselves are too much left to their own guidance. None, or at most only here and there one or two, will attend a night-school, should there by chance be one, but night-schools have been very much given up, as teachers find so few to attend them. The present system of 12 hours' work scarcely admits the possibility of attendance at a night-school. No sooner have the children had a little recreation after the toils of the day, and taken supper, than it is time to go to bed.

The little leisure after the work of the day is not, however, altogether taken up in play colliers and miners have a potato crop in the field of a neighbouring farm every effort is made by scraping the roads and collecting dung to obtain a heap of manure, and when the time for planting arrives every spare hour is occupied. During the summer the crop requires weeding, hoeing, &c., and in the autumn the business of digging-up, carrying, and storing the potatoes requires time and attention, and 18 usually performed by the parents and children in tile evenings after they have left the pits and mines, each working with a willing heart, well knowing that a plentiful board during winter and spring, and the means of feeding a pig, depend in a great measure on the success of the potato crop. Thus they find employment for much, of their spare time in an occupation that is healthful and remunerating. Nor are they deficient in fondness for cultivating their little gardens. In the months of April, May, and June, when I was in the coal and mine district pursuing my investigation it was a source of gratification to me to witness the activity and the pleasure it which they were animated while digging their gardens and managing their potato crop. Nor, in these operations did they appear to me to display less dexterity and skill than other cotters.

In examining the works, I made it my business to inspect the head-gear and the means of descent into the pits and mines. As may be expected, some works were not so well provided as others but the ropes, chains, and other tackle, appeared to me in sufficient order, though I could not help thinking that due precautions against accidents are not always taken, especially in ascending and descending. Both adults and boys seem thoroughly careless and incautious and masters and their agents little less so. Rules may be made in each work forbidding more than a certain number of persons to go down or up at the same time, but these rules are not enforced. A proper person ought to be stationed at the mouth of every shaft, whose business it should be to see that all is right, and that every means to prevent accidents are put in force. It may be said that this is the business of the banksmen, but they are persons in no authority, and therefore it cannot be expected of them to exercise any.

In the lead mines the descent and ascent are not made in buckets part of the shaft is divided off for the purpose, in which ladders are placed, and at certain distances there are stages for resting. Every shaft is not exactly alike. In the larger works they are more convenient, and the ladders slope a little. In the smaller, the ladders are quite perpendicular, and not always boarded off from that part of the shaft allotted to the buckets in which the ore is brought to the surface. By the ladders so placed the miner finds his way in and out of the mines, holding a candle in one hand to light him in his progress. The depth of some mines is very great, and the exertion required for the ascent is very considerable. I have seen the miners arrive on the surface much exhausted, panting for breath, scarcely able to speak. Observing the great distress which the ascent occasioned, I could not but conclude that the of the exertion must be injurious, especially to the more elderly miners and to those in whom bronchial affections already exist.

The shafts are frequently small in circumference, allowing but a very limited space for the miners to descend. I measured one, from which three persons had just come to the surface in so exhausted a state that it was with difficulty they could speak. They panted for breath like horses after a race, and their faces were purple and swollen. The circumference measured only 15 feet, so that I was astonished how the buckets in the centre of the shaft and the men on the ladders could find room in it. Nor was there any one at the mouth of the shaft to prevent accidents during the ascent of these men. The proprietor and myself met there by accident as the men were ascending I am sure it would be difficult in this shaft to pass a bucket in its descent without coming into contact with it.

In the county of Anglesey there are some small collieries, and a large and important copper mine, and there are also some copper mines of a less important character in the counties of Carnarvon and Merioneth, in which children and young persons are employed; Some of them are females, though there are but few under the age of 18 years, but in the coal works no females are employed.

Everything I have previously said of those who work in the mines and collieries in Flintshire and Denbighshire applies in all respects to the children who work in the copper-mines and in the collieries of Anglesey.

There is little or no difference in the nature of the work, the hours of work-and wages are much the same; nor is there anything in the general manner, conduct, health, morals, or education of the one that does not apply to the other.

They suffer no oppression, nor any cruelty or privations, much less personal chastisement when at work.

In many of the hills in Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire slate abounds. Great many quarries are opened and extensively worked and as a great number of children and young persons are employed in them, perhaps I may be allowed to make some passing observations on them notwithstanding these works do not come under the denomination of mines or mineral works.

If I were called on to say in what works in North Wales, where children young persons work together in numbers, they are most healthy, robust, well conditioned, and well paid, I should not hesitate in giving the preference to the slate quarries.

The work is all carried on in the open air. It is free from danger, healthy, easy and remunerative. Healthy on account of the absence of dirt, dust, and noxious vapours. Easy, inasmuch as the boys do not work under task-masters, and though, to a certain degree, both dexterity and quickness are necessary, there is no constant, undeviating strain on any particular set of muscles, no unnatural attitudes are required while at work. Nor is there a necessity for labour prolonged beyond the hours, nor for keeping pace with others while at work. Remunerative because wages are ample and paid most punctually, and in the most unexceptionable manner. Nothing in the least approaching to the truck system being allowed.

The slate is brought from the quarries to the *bank* in blocks such as admit of being converted into slates for roofing are slit and cut into shape of various sizes by the children and young persons. For this work they are paid by the thousand, the price paid varies according to the size and denomination, whether 'ton', 'duchess', 'countess', or 'lady'.

To acquire due expertness, it is said to be necessary that the boys (there are no females employed at the slate-quarries) should begin to slit and cut when young, or three years afterwards, and yet unable to read. Education, in fact, is at a very low ebb indeed amongst the and mining children and may be said to depend entirely on the Sunday-schools. When the total neglect of these poor children is taken into consideration, can we wonder at their extreme ignorance?

The evidence I have taken will throughout demonstrate that everywhere the Sabbath is decently and indeed religiously observed, that there are few children who do not attend Divine worship very constantly, and that most of them go early to Sunday-school. That swearing and profane language is not common, and in fact, that the moral state of the coal and mining districts is much improved and that the children are well conducted, orderly, attentive to their duties, and generally free from vice, though in manners and external appearance they are uncouth, and their mental cultivation is neglected. There is a spirit of improvement growing up amongst them, and a great desire to learn to read. This spirit if due advantage were taken of it, might lead to happy results. The Sunday-schools might be made a more efficient means of satisfying the educational wants of the lower orders in the absence of better means they may do some good, and though but few comparatively have learnt much in them, they have introduced a new spirit and given a new turn to the ideas and the pursuits of the working classes, and new tone to their manners and morals.

A collier rarely changes his occupation, and though some have done well in other pursuits, yet one who has spent his infancy in the pits is fit for *few* if any other employments in after-life. Some haven taken farms, others have become masons or farm-labourers, but a person who is once a collier may be said to continue all his life. The same may be said of the miner. When I was on my inspection at Ruabon, the British Iron Company discharged from their coal and ironstone pits many hundred children and adults. Few of them entertained any thoughts of endeavouring to gain a livelihood by other means than their usual work. Many migrated to Scotland, England, and South Wales, many went about the Country with begging petitions, and though the hay harvest was going on, few sought employment from the farmers. The distress amongst them was great but though they asked for parochial relief they would not go into the workhouse. Their habits and the work they have always been accustomed to in the pits render them as a class unfit for other labour, and unable to turn to other employments for a livelihood.

Though the children in the collieries are healthy, the same cannot be said of them as they advance in life. The seeds of disease are early sown. The chest soon becomes affected. Can it be expected that health can be maintained by persons who work below ground for 10 or 12 hours daily from the early age of 8 or 9 when the lowness and the narrowness of the pits, the foulness of the air, the dust, dirt, and dampness which exist in them, are considered, the wonder is, not that they get asthmatic and consumptive, but that their health continues so long unimpaired. It is the same with the lead-miners. Derangement of the bowels and bronchial diseases are sooner or later sure to make their appearance, and to these diseases the miners become martyrs, the majority falling a sacrifice before the age of 50.



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In examining the works, I made it my business to inspect the head-gear and the means of descent into the pits and mines. As may be expected, some works were not so well provided as others but the ropes, chains, and other tackle, appeared to me in sufficient order, though I could not help thinking that due precautions against accidents are not always taken, especially in ascending and descending. Both adults and boys seem thoroughly careless and incautious and masters and their agents little less so. Rules may be made in each work forbidding more than a certain number of persons to go down or up at the same time, but these rules are not enforced. A proper person ought to be stationed at the mouth of every shaft, whose business it should be to see that all is right, and that every means to prevent accidents are put in force. It may be said that this is the business of the banksmen, but they are persons in no authority, and therefore it cannot be expected of them to exercise any.

In the lead mines the descent and ascent are not made in buckets part of the shaft is divided off for the purpose, in which ladders are placed, and at certain distances there are stages for resting. Every shaft is not exactly alike. In the larger works they are more convenient, and the ladders slope a little. In the smaller, the ladders are quite perpendicular, and not always boarded off from that part of the shaft allotted to the buckets in which the ore is brought to the surface. By the ladders so placed the miner finds his way in and out of the mines, holding a candle in one hand to light him in his progress. The depth of some mines is very great, and the exertion required for the ascent is very considerable. I have seen the miners arrive on the surface much exhausted, panting for breath, scarcely able to speak. Observing the great distress which the ascent occasioned, I could not but conclude that the exertion must be injurious, especially to the more elderly miners and to those in whom bronchial affections already exist.

The shafts are frequently small in circumference, allowing but a very limited space for the miners to descend. I measured one, from which three persons had just come to the surface in so exhausted a state that it was with difficulty they could speak. They panted for breath like horses after a race, and their faces were purple and swollen. The circumference measured only 15 feet, so that I was astonished how the buckets in the centre of the shaft and the men on the ladders could find room in it. Nor was there any one at the mouth of the shaft to prevent accidents during the

ascent of these men. The proprietor and myself met there by accident as the men were ascending I am sure it would be difficult in this shaft to pass a bucket in its descent without coming into contact with it.

In the county of Anglesey there are some small collieries, and a large and important copper mine, and there are also some copper mines of a less important character in the counties of Carnarvon and Merioneth, in which children and young persons are employed. Some of them are females, though there are but few under the age of 18 years, but in the coal works no females are employed.

Everything I have previously said of those who work in the mines and collieries in Flintshire and Denbighshire applies in all respects to the children who work in the copper-mines and in the collieries of Anglesey.

There is little or no difference in the nature of the work, the hours of work-and wages are much the same, nor is there anything in the general manner, conduct, health, morals, or education of the one that does not apply to the other.

They suffer no oppression, nor any cruelty or privations, much less personal chastisement when at work.

In many of the hills in Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire slate abounds. Great many quarries are opened and extensively worked and as a great number of children and young persons are employed in them, perhaps I may be allowed to make some passing observations on them notwithstanding these works do not come under the denomination of mines or mineral works.

If I were called on to say in what works in North Wales, where children young persons work together in numbers, they are most healthy, robust, well conditioned, and well paid, I should not hesitate in giving the preference to the slate quarries.

The work is all carried on in the open air. It is free from danger, healthy, easy and remunerative. Healthy on account of the absence of dirt, dust, and noxious vapours. Easy, inasmuch as the boys do not work under task-masters, and though, to a certain degree, both dexterity and quickness are necessary, there is no constant, undeviating strain on any particular set of muscles, no unnatural attitudes are required while at work. Nor is there a necessity for labour prolonged beyond the hours, nor for keeping pace with others while at work. Remunerative because wages are ample and paid most punctually, and in the most unexceptionable manner. Nothing in the least approaching to the truck system being allowed.

The slate is brought from the quarries to the *bank* in blocks such as admit of being converted into slates for roofing are slit and cut into shape of various sizes by the children and young persons. For this work they are paid by the thousand, the price paid varies according to the size and denomination, whether 'ton', 'duchess', 'countess', or 'lady'.

To acquire due expertness, it is said to be necessary that the boys (there are no females employed at the slate-quarries) should begin to slit and cut when young, or they will never make clever workmen. Accordingly many commence when very young, even before they are eight years old, but the general age is about 10.

In a year or two at most they become adept at the work, and are able to earn fair wages. If industrious they may obtain from 1s. to 1s. 6d. a day. I have seen boys not above 12 or 13 years old, who were earning as much as 13s. or even 14s. a week by working 10 hours a day. All depends on industry and quickness both are necessary to enable a lad to earn such high wages.

The boys, though left very much to their own discretion as to the number of hours they work daily or in many quarries they are allowed to come and go when they choose, appear to require no other stimulus to exertion than wages and the necessity of earning a livelihood hold out.

There are no overlookers to keep them at work or to task them, there is consequently no oppression and no cruelty, nor is there any overtime or night work to keep the boys from recreation or from sleep.

They are warmly and comfortably clad, and, even when at work, are well dressed and clean-looking. In this respect they differ from any other class of working children I have seen. They are cheerful, healthy, sober, industrious, and brought up in religious habits, a picture of well-regulated industry. If I could add that their minds were cultivated, the picture would be complete.

Like children in other works, they begin to labour too early in life. The first object of parents in regard to children, and indeed of children themselves appears to be employment for wages. This object attained, all thoughts of school, except indeed of the chapel Sunday-schools. These I have before observed are deficient in the means of teaching, and, though they are conducive to much good, few comparatively learn to read in them, and still fewer to read with tolerable correctness.

The boys in the quarries are generally the children of the quarrymen or of the neighbouring cottagers. They live in a state approaching to primitive simplicity. Their food consists chiefly of barley or oatmeal bread, milk, and potatoes. There are few cotters in North Wales who have not a

crop of potatoes, which affords them a supply of this necessary of life during the year, and the cultivation of which occupies a good deal of the spare time and attention of every family.

In the quarry districts the Sabbath is strictly observed, indeed throughout North Wales this is the case. Excepting in Scotland I have nowhere else witnessed so complete a cessation from secular employment and so little in the way of amusement indulged in on the Sunday as in North Wales, more especially in Anglesey, Carnarvonshire, and Merionethshire, even amongst those who work together in numbers.

The working people are nearly all dissenters from the Church, and regularly attend divine worship in their respective chapels two or three times every Sunday, and frequently during the week when the chapels are open in the evenings.

The Chapel Sunday-schools are numerous attended by young and old apparently being desirous of instruction.

The Dissenters have for many years worked most zealously in bringing the people to relish religious instruction, in promulgating the Scriptures, and cultivating among the lower and middle classes a knowledge of the doctrines of Christianity. The success of this zeal is everywhere exhibited in the immense number of chapels which have been built within the last 30 years. The money to build them has been drawn from the pockets of the farmers, small tradesmen and working orders, by means of penny subscriptions in the chapels, to which even boys who are earning wages contribute. It is also observable in the immense number of attendants at the chapels, in the desertion of the churches, and in the improved moral and religious habits of the people.

Churchmen are awakening from the supineness which they had given way to in North Wales. They are making great and laudable exertions to render the talents and their ministry useful and extensive.

In most of the localities of large works it happens that the parish church are, not calculated to give accommodation to a fourth part of the parishioners, and are in conveniently situated as regards the new population which these works have given birth to. The same may be said of the situation of the glebe-houses, so that whether the incumbent be curate or rector it is next to impossible for him to be of much advantage to the new settlers.

In some places efforts have been made to meet the emergency. At the Penrhyn Quarries, near Bangor, the proprietor some years ago built a chapel for the benefit of the quarrymen. The proprietors of the Anglesey Copper mine rebuilt the parish church of Amlwch on a large scale and Mrs. Oakeley has just built, in the parish of Festiniog, in Merionethshire, a handsome and commodious church, and endowed it liberally. It is situated in the midst of a considerable population, consisting entirely of persons working at or connected with large slate quarries, who, from the distance of the parish church and the residence of the clergyman, previously felt no bond of union with the establishment.

Notwithstanding these and other instances of individual zeal, the Church has but small provision, either as regards places of worship or ministers of religion, in places where they may be said to be most required, namely, where bodies of people, who work together in masses, have come to reside, and have built large villages where formerly there was scarce a house.

What the Established Church has not yet been able to supply the Dissenters have. Chapels have everywhere been built by them, and their efforts, always unsupported, and often scoffed at, by the clergy, gentry, and influential proprietors, have been attended with signal success, and prove how much depends on careful and persevering instruction whether those who are brought together in numbers by large works shall be moral, religious, and of decent conduct, or brawlers, drunkards, profane, and obscene.

That they are not of the latter stamp in North Wales at the present time I cannot help attributing (and many of the persons whom I examined also attribute in a great measure) to the unceasing zeal, the eloquence, and the untiring devotion in the cause of religious instruction exhibited by the dissenting preachers.

Secular instruction is very little attended among those who work together in numbers, and it is pitiable to witness the ignorance which surrounds them. There are many free schools in North Wales. There are dame-schools, and national schools to which the clergy and many lay persons pay unremitting attention, and in which they take a great interest but the children of whom I am to report derive little if any benefit from them. The early age at which they begin to labour allows of scarce an interval, except the Sabbath, for attendance at school. Some may have been a year or two at school before going to work, but they soon forget the little they had learnt, though there are instances of some who, by their own exertions at home, and by means of Sunday-school instruction, improve their little store of knowledge, and learn not only to read, but to write and to acquire the first rules of arithmetic.

The religious restrictions of the national schools being unpalatable to the great body of dissenters, and the hours of instruction in them interfere so completely with the hours of work, that

though, in other respects, they are well calculated to effect much good, little advantage is taken of them by the children in the mines, collieries, and quarries, who, though well disposed to learn, and attentive to all religious duties, which are carefully taught them, are allowed to grow up without any attention being paid to instruct them in reading and writing, which would open to them so extensive a field for mental improvement, and of rational enjoyment.

In comparing the condition of corners, miners, and quarrymen, and their children, with that of agricultural and other labourers, I found they had better wages, that they live better, their houses are better furnished, and their clothing, if not superior, is at least equal. Nor do they work more hours.

Up to the years of adolescence, and for some time after, the health and physical condition continue good but, unlike the labourers in agriculture and the quarrymen, the miners and the colliers begin to fail in health and strength early in life. At 30 a miner begins to look wan and emaciated, and so does a collier at 40, while the farming labourer and the quarryman continue robust and hearty.

It is said but few colliers arrive at the age of 60, and still fewer miners. This I believe to be fact, though I met with several who had attained that age but they were few indeed compared with the vast numbers engaged in these branches of industry. Bronchial affections attack both miners and colliers, to which disease they sooner or later fall martyrs.

The moral condition of these classes has been represented to me as formerly exhibiting a sad picture of depravity and ignorance. At present they are much improved, and suffer nothing when put in comparison with agricultural labourers, and others of the lower and working orders.

The justices of the peace who live in the neighbourhood of mines, collieries, and quarries, say they are but little troubled with cases in which these classes are involved and never hear any complaints of the children being over-worked, ill-treated, or cruelly used. In proof of the improved social and moral condition of the colliers, I can not help remarking that there are two villages in the parish of Ruabon, *viz.* Rhosymedre and Rhosllanerchrûgog, each of which contains a large population, say some thousands. They are all colliers or forgemen, or persons connected with the coal and iron works. Neither a justice of peace, a clergyman, or a gentleman or any one in authority, except perhaps a constable, lives in either place, and yet these villages are by no means scenes of riot or debauchery. The inhabitants conduct themselves with order and propriety and though their exterior is uncouth and their manner but little refined, they are peaceable, and generally inoffensive sober and industrious, attentive to religious duties, and apparently anxious to improve their minds. In each place there are many dissenting chapels and in Rhosyinedre a new church has lately been built, to which a zealous and effective clergyman has been appointed.

The chapels here, as elsewhere, are always crowded with attentive congregations and dissent has for so long a time planted her standard in the midst of the population, without opposition from the Church, that it will require all the energies of this new pastor to compete with the various sects, and to obtain for himself a congregation from amongst the colliers and other labourers.

Banks for savings are to be found in all the towns, and are much valued and resorted to. Friendly clubs and benefit societies are everywhere established amongst colliers, miners, and quarrymen. They are admirably adapted as a provision against times of distress, whether occasioned by accident, sickness, lack of employment, or death in the family. There are but few who do not join one or more. They are usually managed by the operatives themselves, and prove inducements to economy, and a means whereby persons otherwise ignorant become aware of the benefits which accrue from social habits and institutions, and the value of combining for the purposes of mutual assistance.

There are clubs which are to supply the subscribers with clothing, clocks and, other articles of useful furniture and there are building-clubs. A cottage clothing, and furniture are thus within the reach of each person who subscribe and within a period of time which is limited by the terms of agreement.

Banks for savings are found to be most valuable institutions they induce habits of carefulness, industry, and propriety, and, with benefit-societies and friendly clubs, have a tendency to produce what is desirable and valuable in all, but more wanted among the working-classes, self-respect.

*Temperance* and *teetotal* societies have been established within the last few years throughout North Wales, more especially in the counties of Anglesey and Carnarvon. They have been joined by great numbers and the pledge, in many instances, has been faithfully kept.

These societies have already done great good, particularly in the neighbourhood of large works and by enlisting, as is the practice, as many of the youth of both sexes as are willing to join them. I trust the rising generation may benefit and that a general disgust at drunkenness may characterise the people of Wales.

In concluding, I can assure you that, though secular education is neglected and the children are set to work in the mines, collieries, and quarries, when mere infants, there is little, if any, cruelty to

complain of in their general treatment and while drunkenness, riot, and profligacy are on the decline, temperance, moral and religion are spreading their hallowed influences everywhere amongst peasantry of North Wales and all those who work together in numbers.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, Your most obedient servant,

H. HERBERT JONES,

Sub-Commissioner.

*Edinburgh, December 20, 1841.*

# EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN.

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EVIDENCE COLLECTED BY H. HERBERT JONES, ESQ.

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COAL, IRON, LEAD, AND OTHER WORKS IN DENBIGHSHIRE AND  
FLINTSHIRE.

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BRITISH IRON COMPANY'S COAL AND IRON WORKS,  
DENBIGHSHIRE.

No. 1. Mr. Richard Wood, General Manager. Examined April 26th.

He has been long used to large works, and the management of men and children working together in numbers in iron and coal works, but has only been a few months in his present situation. The British Iron Company's works are the largest in Denbighshire. Fewer men and children are now employed than there were some time ago, many having been discharged from the works in consequence of the depression of trade, and a great many more have been noticed that their services are to be dispensed with. The men in the forges are given to drink and immorality. Their earnings are always ample and often large. Much is spent at the beer-shops, and he fears they spend the Sabbath very discreditably. The colliers have less wages, and are better conducted. They earn from 13s. to 15s. a week, those in the forges from 15s. to 35s. a week. There are now employed by the Company in these works about 1054 men, 52 women, 380 boys and 23 girls.

The collier children begin to go into the pits some as early as seven years old. The general from eight to nine. They keep the air-doors, draw the pyche by the girdle or push before them; it contains usually from 3 10 4 cwt. and does not run on a rail. They usually work in the pits from six to six, and take about an hour and a half out of that time meals. They sometimes work at night or over-time, though very rarely now. They are paid by the charter-masters, and earn from 3s. 6d. to 8s. a week. He has every reason to believe that the children and young persons are well treated in the pits, and never beaten. There are no printed rules, but he would turn any man from the works for beating a child. There is a good deal of poverty just now amongst the colliers. The children are not always roughly clad and they have sufficient food, but the quality is inferior compared with such as is by the labouring classes in England. The children either receive their wages themselves or they are paid to the parents.

He would not allow them to be personally ill-treated or wages to be stopped on any account. They generally are taken, when they commence work, by either the father or some friend into the pits, and thus taught to cut coal when they become strong enough. They go into the pits here at a younger age than in Monmouthshire and South Wales. I can only account for this from the seams of coal being so here that small boys are necessary to keep the doors and to draw or hurry the coals. There is nothing so very peculiar in the work of a collier as to require that he should in to work at an early age, either to learn the art of cutting coal or to injure him to the air or other peculiarities of under-ground work. Children are better fitted to draw and to the thin seams of the works here than men or large boys. Girls and women never go below the surface in this or in any of the works in this district. The children and young sons must necessarily work the same number of hours as the adults—they depend on each other, what the men cut the boys must take away, and the pits must be kept clear. Anything that would prevent the men from work would also prevent the boys, and vice versa. The collier boys are healthy and vigorous. The men, as they advance in life, often have a difficulty breathing, and the appetite fails a little. They are usually sent to the pits before they can read or write, and few of them have opportunity to learn afterwards, though he believes many attend Sunday-schools in the chapels of the Dissenters, which are very numerous. The boys the

forges also work from six to six, and some of them begin to work when they are nine or 10 years old. They earn somewhat more wages than collier boys, and have often had a little schooling. Many of them read very well and some can write. They have been taught in some small schools or in the national or free school. Most of them are the sons of forgesmen, the collier boys are commonly the sons of colliers and the forgesmen can afford to keep sons longer at school than the colliers can theirs. This accounts for their superior intelligence. There are 25 boys under 13 working in the forges at present. The youngest is 11 he is a lifter. Very few accidents occur in the forges. A boy is now and then burnt a little but he soon learns to take care of himself. They are all healthy. Iron-works are reckoned healthy.

There are no girls employed in the forges or mills. The females all work on the colliery in banking the coal. The work is hard and continues from six to six, but very rarely later. They are healthy, and often well looking. There is nothing in the nature of the work to injure the frame. It may render the appearance masculine, but has no other physical effect.

They cannot know much of domestic duties, being so little at home, but they appear well conducted and well clothed, and it is said by those who have been long in the works, that they not less moral than other girls in the neighbourhood. They are commonly the daughters, and generally become the wives, of colliers.

Accidents sometimes happen, both in the collieries and in the forges. They frequently occur from the negligence of the persons who are hurt but every care which can be thought of is used by those in charge or authority to guard against accidents. All the head-gear of the pits and all the machinery are the best that can be procured. An accident occurred last January, whereby six young men lost their lives entirely by negligence. They hooked the pyche, in which they were going to descend, to a chain which had just before received a violent concussion that cracked it but they did not think of examining it. When they were being lowered into the pit the chain gave way, and they were all killed. Another accident occurred in February by which four men were killed. They were charter-masters, and it was their business to examine the rope. This they neglected to do, it gave way, and they fell to the bottom. Had they examined it they would have found the rope was faulty. There is very great carelessness on the part of the men. They are used to danger and never think of avoiding it by precaution and those whose particular duty it is to examine the head-gear, neglect too frequently to do so even though they are threatened with punishment. Colliers are in general very ignorant and the children much neglected, but the Dissenters are taking great pains to bring them to Sunday-schools, where persons of all ages are taught to read. An evening-school on a good principle, and the attendance of the work-children enforced by the master, would do a great deal of good. The children are not by any means unfitted by the previous work of the day to receive instruction, even though they may have been 12 hours in the pits. They no sooner come to the surface than they begin to play and amuse themselves, and if masters in general would interest themselves more in their welfare, a great change for the better might be effected in their manner and conduct. The collier children, and colliers in general, are by no means inferior in intellect, shrewdness, or appearance to the other working classes, nor are the children worked beyond what they can bear. It would, however, be well that they had less work and more education. They are indifferently fed, and many of them have but poor clothing.

## **No. 2 Mr. James Jones, Underground Agent.**

He has been 15 years in these works, began to work himself at eight as a collier boy, has never known what it is to be ill. He was first in the collieries in South Wales and used to go down at six in the morning, and take a bit of bread and cheese and work till one. He worked seven hours without stopping, then had the remainder of the day to themselves. It would not do to introduce that system here, men and boys could not earn bread for themselves according to present wages. He considers 12 hours below ground too much for both men and boys, it must be injurious to health to be so long confined in bad air and underground damp. It would not do to bring men and boys to the surface at mid-day to eat their dinner as it would take up too much time, and unless they changed their clothes they might take cold by sitting in a wet dress in an atmosphere much colder than that they would leave in the pits. The colliers are generally very healthy and strong up to the age of 40 or 50, they then often have a difficulty of breathing, and they at younger ages than agricultural labourers or handicrafts men. They drink and smoke good deal, and spend much of their wages in this way and in eating. The appetite being delicate they often indulge in something nice when they have money. Their wages are paid every month and frequently advances are made them before the end of the month, but it is done by means of a ticket on a shop which is kept in the works, and sanctioned by the manager being a great convenience to the men employed in the

works. They are not obliged to buy a thing at this shop unless they cannot wait till pay-day for payment of wages.

The children are employed by the charter-masters, who contract with the masters cut and bring the coal to the surface. They pay the men and boys whom they set to work, and the charter-masters only receive payment monthly, they cannot pay those employed by them more frequently. He does not think it would make any difference to the men and boys whether they are hired by the proprietors or by the charter-masters. They would only be paid the same. The boys are not over-worked while below ground, unless it be that they are too long at work. The pyches are never overloaded for the boys, it would be useless to do so as the could not be drawn, and thus the work would be rather stopped than hastened. A boy draw 3 or 4 cwt. for 15 or 20 yards, when not on a rail. He will draw it two or times the distance when on a rail. No complaints have ever been made to him by the boys of any ill treatment while they are at work in the pits. He believes the men are kind to them, an everything goes on very regularly and properly, and though the charter-masters contract with the boys, they are not allowed to turn one off without giving a very good reason. Women and girls who bank the coal are generally well conducted and there is very little improper or indecent language used in their hearing. The girls generally marry colliers and make them good wives, even though it may happen that they prove in a state of pregnancy previous to marriage, in which case, however, they are but rarely forsaken by the putative father, and marriage usually takes place before the birth of the child. Collier boys brought so early to work that they seldom are taught to read before coming to the pits. It would be a very proper thing to make them go to a night-school, and if they could be brought to the surface after 10 hours in the pits they might have sufficient time for school. The Dissenters are doing all they can to bring the boys, and indeed the men, to Sunday-schools to learn to read and be taught religion, and many now go, and show themselves anxious to learn but many still stay away both from the schools and from public worship. The men who do so smoke and go to beer-shops, the children run about or play at marbles while service is performed in the churches and chapels. They used to be a very rude set, they are much improved of late. He attributes this to the spread of religion and of temperance societies. It so that those whose habits are not improved appear ashamed of being absent from worship, and of being given to drink.

An evening teacher might be employed in large works, or in the neighbourhood of many smaller and if masters would make a rule that every person in their employ should attend school every evening for an hour or two, the greatest benefit would follow to all concerned, and the teacher could be paid by a very trifling poundage on wages. I am sure a little education given to children who work together in numbers, would not only keep them from idleness but improve their understandings and give them different ideas. Children could not begin work too early if the hours were according to their years, and they were made to go to school after work. The children employed in the iron-works and collieries in this parish far exceed in numbers the children of all the other working classes of the same age. They are chiefly the children of Dissenters, and he is told that 3000 attend the Sunday-schools of dissent, and only 350 the Sunday-schools connected with the church. Thus while religion is taught on the Sabbath, how easily some plan might be laid down for educating the children at week-day schools after the hours of work. The collieries of this district all work the same hours, and are regulated in the same way, little or no difference in any of the work, and wages pretty much alike.

### **No. 3 April 29th. John Hughes, Assistant Underground Agent.**

I go into the pits every day. I see that all is safe, and I measure the work. I never see the children ill-used or badly treated, and I am sure they are not. We desire the charter-masters to reason with them when they do wrong, and never to beat them. I would rather turn them from the works than beat them. I don't think they hear much bad language in the pits, formerly there was much swearing, now there is very little. Many of the colliers are elders in the chapels, and often pray when they enter the pits in the morning and again when they eat at noon, and they correct not only the boys but the men when they do or say anything improper. Many of them are teetotallers, and the good example they show is beginning to do some good and improve the morals of the colliers. I don't think it would be of any good to bring the boys to the banks of the pits to eat their meals. They would not be a bit more comfortable, and it would put the works into confusion and much time would be lost. Proper evening-schools are much wanted. The men and children are in general very ignorant. The Dissenters are very active in trying to prevent the Sabbath being broken, and in teaching religion in the Sunday-schools, but thought some are able to read pretty well who have been at no other schools. Yet without daily teaching it is difficult to learn. Those



who have learnt to read are generally good and industrious and try to get on, and if all children were taught I think it would be better for them and for masters.

Few accidents occur here from foul air in the pits. We have safety lamps, but it is not often that we find any cause to use them. I don't know that colliers' work is unhealthy, and appear to enjoy health, but certainly I believe they do not live long after 50 or 60. We take every precaution to prevent accidents, and, according to the number of persons employed, I think but few have occurred. All our chains and ropes are of the best sort and often examined. I consider colliers just as clever as other people. They seldom change their employment, but when they do I see no difference in their work or in themselves to other labouring people. I know some who were colliers that are now farmers, bricklayers, &c., and they get on very well.

#### **No. 4 John Edwards, aged 16.**

He began to work in the pits at 10. He has always been healthy and never overworked. He work sometimes 13 hours underground but generally 12. He does not eat before going to work but takes breakfast with him and eats it in a few minutes, about 10 o'clock. His dinner is sent down the pit by his mother or sister and he has but a few minutes to eat it, as all are desirous to get the task finished. One of the charter-masters prays before they eat. Her is never beaten for doing wrong, or rewarded for good conduct. He was at a day-school for a short time before going to work. He attends the Wesleyan Chapel and Sunday-school regularly and has learnt to read in a small easy book has never been put to write or to make figures. There is no school connected with the work. He would like to go to an evening school.

#### **No. 5 Daniel Price, aged 14.**

He began to work at 12 and pushes the coal pyches in the pit. The work is rather hard for him and he feels sometimes tired at night. He works from six to six. Only a short time allowed for meals. His sister brings his dinner to the pit, and it comes down with the meat for the others. It is generally warm and he eats twice in the 12 hours, and has supper at home. He is always healthy, except when he had scarlet fever and cough. He never met with an accident, and does not remember seeing any one else hurt seriously when at work or in going up or down the pit. He hears no one pray in the pit and cannot pray himself. He cannot say the Lord's Prayer. He never hears prayer except at chapel. He has never been to church except one or two times with a funeral. His father and mother go to chapel regularly, and he goes with them. He has plenty of food-milk, bread, butter, and potatoes, very seldom anything else. Coffee sometimes, or pottage when there is no milk. Wages from 4s. to 7s. a week, according to work. He sometimes play\* two or three days a week. There are no fixed holidays, but often there is no work to be had when anything happens to the engine. His father receives his wages. Two pence in the pound is stopped to pay the doctor belonging to the work. He has another suit of clothes for Sunday. His father is a collier, and works with him. He was never at any but a Sunday-school at the chapel of the Baptists. He is beginning to read the Bible in Welsh. He cannot write at all but wishes he could read and write. He is not at all too much tired to learn at nights.

#### **No. 6 Manuel Owens aged 14.**

Has been at work upwards of three years and does not think the work heavy. He pushes the coal-pyches in the pits. Has 1s. 6d. a- day. His father works with him. He has good clothes, two suits, and plenty to eat. The men often swear and he never hears them scolded for it. They use him very well. He seldom works more than five days a week, sometimes only four when the engine is out of order or the roof of the works has fallen in. He plays, but never goes to school when out of work. He goes regularly on Sunday to the chapel and to school. Cannot write at all and is just

*\*The colliers, when there is no work for them in the pits, say they 'play.' The demand being slack when the Sub-Commissioner was in this district, there were one or two days of 'play' in most works every week.*

learning to spell words. He would like to go to a day-school. He does not like to be out of work and would rather work six days than be idle. He went to work at first by his own wish and was not forced to it by any one.

**No. 7 April 29th. William Jones, aged 17.**

He began to work in the pits at 12. He sometimes draws by the girdle, sometimes pushes the pyches. He prefers drawing. Fell down the pit about 18 yards. There was no one but himself to blame. He hurt his head and broke his arm and was disabled for nine months. Had a week from the parish, and lived with his parents. He works from 6 to 6, and earns 2s. 2d a day. He pays 8s. a week to his mother for board and lodging, the remainder supplies him with clothes. He seldom works more than five days a week, oftener four than five. His wages do not average more than 9s. 6d. a week. He has saved no money whatever. He goes to Wesleyan Chapel and school on Sunday and can read easy words. He has never tried to learn writing. He cannot say any prayers and never hears any except at chapel. The men seldom swear or use bad language. He swears sometimes himself and knows it is wrong, but does not think about it.

**No. 8 Charles Hughes, aged 13.**

Has been at work four years in collieries. He likes his work. He is at it about 11 hours daily for five days a week. He works as many days as he can and feels tired sometimes, but can always play when the work is over. He would like an evening-school. He is quite healthy. He never swears himself, and seldom hears others. He never goes to any place of worship but the Baptist chapel and attends the Sunday-school. He is beginning to spell. He pays 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. a year towards books. He can't write at all. He earns about 8s. 6d. a-week and pays his parents 7s. 6d. for board and lodging. He never works at night by any chance.

**No. 9 Robert Davis, aged 12.**

He has been nine months at work and drives the whimsey horse from 6 to 6, except an hour and a rest for breakfast and dinner. Dinner is brought to him warm. He plays after work. He was never at school except on Sunday. Earns 2s. 6d. a week, his mother receives it. He is well fed and has good clothes. He is always well. He was never at church and goes to chapel because mother goes. He knows no difference between church and chapel.

**No. 10 David Roberts, aged 16.**

Does not know when. He would not have known his age at all only that his father told him a week ago. He has been five years at work and pushes the coal pyches underground. He never worked anywhere but in the pits. He would as soon draw by the girdle as push but it does no matter to him which. He has 1s. 10d. a day, and works from 6 to 6. He is paid by charter-master and wages are all settled every month. Two of his age go down the pit together, but a young boy always goes down with a man. He has plenty to eat, bread, potatoes, butter, and seldom has any flesh meat. Sometimes tea or coffee. He never comes up to eat meals. He would rather do so than eat in the pit. Work is not constant, sometimes as little as three or three and a half days a week. One day is generally used for sharpening tools. The engine often stops. On Saturday they go to work at three or four, and get finished by one, and work more that day. He goes to chapel regularly, and often two or three times on week day evenings. He never knew an accident happen in the pits. There is very little bad air where he works and no necessity for safety lamps. He is always in good health. He has a good change of clothes. Can't nor write.

**No. 11 Robert Jones, aged 12.**

He has been a year in the pits and draws by the girdle 2 cwt. in a pyche for 20 or 30 yards. He has never been ill. The girdle hurt him at first, but did not stop work, and soon got used to it. He

has 6d. a day for four or five days a week. His mother sent him to work, and receives his earnings. He only goes to the Baptist Sunday-school and can't read or write.

**No 12. Edward Perry.**

He cannot tell his age; is told he is 16. Has been six years at work. Draws by the girdle for 11 or 12 hours daily. Has 2s. a day. He works sometimes three and a half or four or five days a week. He would like to work full time. He goes to Sunday-school but was never in a church. He can't read or write. He was taken from school to go to work. He could read a little in the Welsh Testament, but soon forgot all. He would like to go to an evening-school. He has plenty to eat and two suits of clothes. He has worked on extraordinary occasions 24 hours without rest, and was paid for two days. He was much tired, but soon got right.

**No. 13 Henry Jones.**

He says he is 16 but does not know his birthday. He has been working four years in the pits and has 1s. 6d. a day, but seldom works more than four or five days a week. His mother receives all his wages. He eats twice a-day in the pits with no regular time allowed for meals. He would rather come up to eat, but it never is done. He is never beaten. The work not heavy. His clothes are pretty good. He goes to Sunday-school and to chapel. He was never more than once or twice in a church. There is very little swearing in the pits.

**No. 14 May 3rd. Ann Tomkins, aged 17.**

She has been six weeks at work. Earns 1s. 6d. a day. She banks coal with her father and never works overtime. She works from 6 to 6., sometimes only four or five days a week. She can sew and read a little and is well clothed. She goes to Baptist chapel, never to church. She was never at church more than twice.

**No. 15 May 11th. Mary Williams, wife of Robert Williams, Coke-filler.**

She has sons of 14, 16, and 18 years old working in the colliery. She receives her husband's and their wages. All is paid at the end of every month in cash. She deals 'in the shop,' because she thinks it a good one but as she does not draw wages beforehand she is not obliged to deal in it and never was even asked to take anything out of 'the shop.' She never heard of any one being refused work because he had demanded wages to be paid in cash. Her sons are not at school and she teaches them pretty well herself and times are too hard to spare money for schooling. The boys are all well treated and she never heard of a complaint. Her commenced at 9 years old. The eldest suffered because the work was wet but got well when he went into another pit. It was only his chest that was affected. He can't say whether children go to pits too young and work too many hours. She thinks not, as colliers, men and boys, are as health is other people. The masters take no pains in their moral training but the Dissenters do. They try to make them religious, and to bring them to Sunday-schools. Two of her sons went to an evening-school last summer. They paid each 10d. a week to the teacher. They improved very much. The teacher keeps school on his own account in his own house.

**No. 16 Elizabeth, wife of Hugh Davies, Forgerman. Ann, wife of Thomas Jones, Metalman.  
Elizabeth, wife of Richard Jones, Forgerman.**

They were severally examined by the sub-commissioner. Their evidence corroborated that of Mary Williams.

## **GARDEN COLLIERY, Ruabon, Denbighshire. (April 30th, 1841.)**

### **No.17 John Tinna, aged 11.**

But does not know when. He has been working two years and drove the pony in the pits for six months. He now draws by the girdle at 1s. a day. He had 1s. 4d. a day at first but wages have been lowered. He works from 6 to 6. with half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner. He has not always so much. He has sometimes come up to eat, though but very seldom. The men never beat him. He goes three times every Sunday to worship at Methodists' chapel, and to the Sunday school. He is learning to spell words but can't read yet. He is questioned in the Testament. He never has been at a day-school. He sometimes worked all night when the pits had to be cleared. He is very healthy. He never hears bad language in the pits. Some of the men often pray aloud.

### **No 18 John Owen, aged 13.**

He has been at work near four years. Has 1s. a day. He can read a little bit and goes to Sunday-school. He corroborates the evidence of John Tinna in all things.

[The sub-commissioner also examined Richard Davies, Ellis Jones, Thomas Parry, William Edwards, John Humphrey, John Parry, all boys, varying in age from 12 to 17. All give the same testimony. They are extremely ignorant, but healthy and appear desirous of going school. Their treatment they say is good. They have food enough of inferior quality, and have good clothes but complain of not working many days a week.]

### **No 19 Sarah Jones, aged 18.**

She has been three years at work and banks coal. She has 1s. a-day but never works more than five days. The work is hard, but she is now used to it and does not mind it. She would like to work six days if she could, because of the wages. She stays at home when there is no work and mends her clothes. She can't sew very well and has never at school, except at the chapel school on Sunday. She goes to chapel regularly but to church never. She is well and properly treated at work. She stays 12 hours on the bank. Her meals are brought to her. She never works at night. She is allowed to take home coals every day, what she can carry on her head, for the use of the family. She has never been down in the pit.

### **No 20 Elizabeth Davies, aged 17.**

She has worked on the bank four or five years. She has 1s. 2d. a day and works from 6 to 6 three, four or five days a-week. She would like to work full time, but is not allowed. She never works at night. She can't sew much, but mends her clothes. She is decently and properly treated. She goes to chapel regularly but can't read or write. She is quite healthy, and has good clothes. She has never down the pit.

[The sub-commissioner examined other females. They are generally from 16 to 20 years of age, are well clad, and fine-looking healthy persons and they all say they prefer working at the pits to any other employment.]

## **PLAS KYNASTON COAL AND IRON WORKS. (May 1st, 1841.)**

### **No. 21 Richard Lee, aged 17.**

Has worked seven years. Sometimes draws, at others pushes the pyches in the pits. He likes pushing, he thinks, best. He earns 2s. 6d. a day. He generally works five days, never more. His parents get his wages and send his food to him, always warm. He has good clothes. He is down 12

hours a day. He is not particular as to length of time he takes to eat. He seldom washes before he eats. He is always well. He goes to church. There is no chapel in Chirk parish. He can read but not write. He was in Chirk school two years before beginning to work. It is a free-school. The Bible and Testament were the books in the school. He works sometimes at night, if there is need, that is very seldom. There is some foul air, but not much, in the pit where he works. A little explosion took place last week, by which a boy was burnt, but not very badly. He is very well. He does not know how the doctor is paid. There is no fund in the work for paying him. He is a member of the friendly club called the Lodge Club, in which he pays 2s. 6d a year for a doctor, and 1s. a month to receive 6s. a week when ill or disabled, and his friends from £2 to £3 after his death, towards funeral expenses. Has very good health. His eyes not at all affected. He feels them a little queer when first he comes into the sunshine, but only for a few seconds. No one is beaten and no punishments are allowed.

**No. 22 Robert Jones, aged 16.**

Has been five years in the pits. He earns 1s. 8d. a day. He works about five days a week and always comes up on Saturday at noon, and then leaves work. He has sufficient food and clothing and never at a day-school. He goes to Sunday-school at chapel where he is just beginning to read. He was never beaten, and is well treated. He receives his wages regularly.

**No. 23 Gomer Davies, aged 14.**

He has been three years at work in the pits. He works usually from six to six with a short time for eating allowed. Sometimes he works 14 hours if the task is not finished. The task is to draw what the men cut. The men task themselves to cut a certain quantity every day. He does not know the quantity it is not always the same. He goes to chapel, but not every Sunday. He goes to church sometimes and sometimes to Sunday-school and can read a little in Welsh, but can't write at all. He is healthy and has plenty to eat. He earns 1s. 6d. a day, and about 7s. a week and has two suits of clothes.

**No. 24 Edward Price, aged 17.**

He can't say when he will be 18. He began to work at seven. He went willingly, and has continued to like underground work. He gets 2s. 2d. a day. Work is uncertain and sometimes he gets only three days a week. He draws by the girdle and lives at home with parents, who get his earnings, almost all, for food and clothes, of which he gets a sufficiency.

**No. 25 John Jones, aged 19.**

He has worked in pits many years and earns 2s. 2d. a day. This would be sufficient if there was work for six days in the week, but often works no more than three, sometimes on account of the roof falling in, sometimes the engine wants cleaning or repairs, a day is lost in sharpen the picks and repairing tools, &c. He goes to Sunday-school at chapel but can't read yet. He can say the Lord's Prayer and hears it sometimes in chapel. He is questioned in the Chapel school on religion. He would like to be able to read and write.

**No. 26 Charles Roberts.**

He will be 14 next birthday, but does not know when that will be. Has been working between six and seven years and gets 1s. 10d. a day. His mother gets all the money. He is never thrashed or otherwise ill-treated. He hears cursing and swearing in the pits sometimes, though very seldom. He never smokes or drinks, none of the boys do. He can read a little, but not write. He goes every Sunday to school at the chapel, and also to public worship. He can't say the Lord's, Prayer. He never did pray, because he can't.

**No. 27 Edward Lewis.**

He is a bit passed 15 and has been four years at work. He earns 1s. 6d. a day. He never works so many as six days a week. His mother receives his earnings. He likes work well enough. He goes to church or chapel regularly, and to Sunday-school. He can read a little and was never at any but Sunday-school.

**No. 28 Job Roberts, aged 18.**

He has been at work three years and draws by girdle. He likes the work and has 1s. a day and his mother draws the wages. He has learned to read in the Sunday-school at chapel. Goes to chapel every Sunday, regularly. He is very healthy and has good clothes and food.

**No. 29 William Jones, aged 15.**

He has been five years at work and has 1s. 7d. a day. He draws by girdle. He can read and write and was at Mrs. Biddulph's school at Chirk, and paid nothing, that was before going to the pits. The boys and girls taught in the school were obliged to go together every Sunday to church. He left off going to church when he left school, and goes now to chapel.

**No. 30 Jeremiah Bradley, Mine and Underground Agent.**

He has been a collier from early youth. He thinks the children and young persons employed in the pits are always healthy. The men are apt to get a tightness of breath, and become unfit for the pits, even before 60. The boys are pretty well clad and have enough to eat. Not many girls are employed in the colliery, and none underground. They are generally well conducted. They bank the coal, and the man who works with them is usually the father or uncle. Only two females are employed at a pit head. These girls, when married make as good wives and mothers as the generality of poor women. They may not be so good at sewing and mending, but they are equally moral, and, for the most part, healthy and industrious. He sees but little improvement in the morals of colliers for the last 20 years. They appear more religious, but he does not think them more moral. They certainly drink less but smoke very much. They are not a saving and thrifty class of people, very few put by any money. Those who do usually buy or build for themselves a cottage. Thinks they would improve in every respect if they were taught to read and write. He would prefer employing persons who can read and write. He thinks it would be better for the boys not to go into the pits till 12 years of age and that they would be much benefited by being taught to read and write. He thinks the schools in the neighbourhood of the works not good for much. The chapel Sunday-schools do some good.

**PLASISA AND PEMBEDW COLLIERY, RUABON. (May 3rd, 1841.)**

**No. 31 Mr. Thomas Evans, Underground Agent, aged 44.**

He has been a collier since he was eight years old. First he attended the air-doors, then drew the pyches, and afterwards cut coal. He has always had good health. The children have generally good health in the pits. The system of management is the same at this work as at others in the district, the charter-masters take the coal to cut, to carry, and to bank, hire the hands, and pay the wages themselves. They go into the pits about six a.m., and generally remain till the same hour in the evening. Sometimes they finish the task as early as four o'clock. He does not think it would be any advantage to the boys if hired by the agent instead of the charter-master, as they are fairly paid. He sees to that himself, and that no one ill-uses them. He would turn a man off for being cruel to a boy in the works. They are not overworked, and begin to play as soon as they come up. There is little or no foul air in the works, and they have had no accident for three years. There are guards for the men's heads in going down and up the shafts but they seldom use them, they are not wanted, the shafts are so well built and secure. Two or three men, or a man and two boys, go down at a time. There are no orders given as to the number. He does not think the work hurts the children in the least. They are all healthy and stout and no complaints are ever made by them.

Men and children seldom work more than five days a week, often less. He does not think it would be better that they should work fewer hours daily and work six days a week, instead of 12 hours a day and only four or five days a week. He considers it would be better they should go to school the whole of one day each week, than a short time every day. Most of the children go to Sunday-schools, some have been taught to read by this means. The collier families here are all Dissenters, and most of them attend public worship. He thinks it would be a good thing to oblige the children to attend an evening school. A teacher might be paid by a poundage on all wages, as the doctor is paid. The times are bad but the sum required might be spared, it would be but little. Education would do good, the children would be better able to turn to some other employ if necessary, and they would be better conducted. They should not go down to work before 12 years old, especially if they can be kept at school. He thinks the girls who bank the coal are decent and well conducted, and make good wives and mothers. They can all sew a little, enough for poor people. He knows many who are mothers of large families that formerly worked at the pit head, and they are in every way, creditable and respectable persons, and keep their houses very clean and comfortable.

**No. 32 Sarah Williams, aged 15.**

She began to work six months ago and works from six to six at banking coal. Her mother was so employed before she married. Her father is a collier. She earns about 5s. a week and all goes to her mother to keep her. She can read a very little, but is taught at Sunday-school. She goes three times every Sunday to chapel, but was never in church. She can sew a little and mend stockings. She is healthy, likes work, and is very well used by every one about the work.

**No 33 Ellis Jones, aged 16.**

He has been eight years at work and gets 2s. a day, or from 8s. to 10s. a week. She pays 8s. for his board and lodging. His mother is dead and his father lives at a distance. He goes to chapel three times every Sunday, and attends chapel school. He is beginning to spell small words. He drives the pony in the pits. There is but little swearing amongst men or boys. He receives wages regularly, and is well treated.

**No. 34 David Jones, aged 32.**

He began to work in the pits at eight and has continued to do so ever since. He has always been healthy. He earns about 15s. a week, seldom more, sometimes less. He is married and has children. The eldest is six years old. If there was a good school would try to spare a little to send his little child there though it is very hard now on colliers, their earnings are much less they were. He thinks it would be a good thing if his children can get a little education. He can read and write a little bit, taught himself, except what he learnt at Sunday-school. He thinks he could earn a livelihood as a labourer on a farm, but has not been used to anything much except as collier. He does not think the children in the pits are worked too much, but it would be better they should go to school instead of beginning to work so young as they do. Colliers are obliged to work a great many hours to gain a livelihood, miners work much less and have better wages.

**No. 35 Thomas Medeley, Schoolmaster, Ruabon.**

He has kept school at Ruabon for 18 years and has every year about 100 boys at school from 6 to 14 years of age. They are the sons of farmers, handicraftsmen, and farming labourers. He has none of the sons of colliers or forgesmen. He charges 1d. a week for teaching reading 2d. for reading and writing, and 3d. for reading, writing, and arithmetic. There is no school, close to the collieries and forges except some dame-schools. The children from the works go to no school but the chapel school on Sunday, where they are taught little else but religion. He perceives an increasing desire amongst all the lower orders for education. Model and industrial schools are much wanted. They would have a beneficial tendency without doubt. Young lads of 7 or 8 years old will commonly learn to read an easy book and be able to write his name in six months in his school. He teaches on the Lancaster system, though he does not strictly adhere to it. Knows all classes of working people in this district very well from being so on a resident, and being much engaged in parish affairs. Thinks the colliers not too poor to spare a small weekly sum towards

paying a teacher. They are better off than the farm servants but they are improvident and spend all in gratifying their appetites for food and drink, and they are fond of dress. He thinks the employment of a collier healthy, but they do not live as long as others, can't say why, but it is a common observation. There is unctuousness often in the manners of the colliers, which amounts to a peculiarity. They don't appear to have so much knowledge of the world when they come to town and mix with other but they do not want for sociability or shrewdness, and are by no means inferior in intellectual qualities to others of the labouring classes. They generally marry amongst themselves and it is a saying, "*once a collier and always a collier*", but they sometimes leave the and work on the land, and some have got into small farms and do very well. There penny a month subscription to the library here, the books have been bought by subscription in the first place of the gentry and others, and is kept up by the penny subscription. The books lent out. There are about 200 volumes of useful, religious, and entertaining books, and about 60 monthly subscribers of 1d. each. They are much read, especially in winter. None of colliers or miners subscribe. There are several schools in and about Ruabon, but the colliers and miners take no advantage of them, though if so inclined the distance would be no objection. Is sure that education has a good tendency among the lower orders. From experience of long standing can say that it gives them a greater feeling of independence a propriety of conduct and that marching children to places of worship from the school, walking in order, gives them ideas of reverence and decorum which are apt to remain w them ever after.

### **No. 36 Mr. James Eday.**

He is agent to the Hon. Frederick West's Aberderfyn Coal and Ironstone Works near Ruabon and has been accustomed to mines all his life, and has been for seven years here. He thinks children and miners as well treated in this part of Wales as they are in any works in wall or America, and he has been long in both. He thinks children should not go into the till 12 years old, 12 hours every day below ground must tell upon the constitution in time, it is even better that they should be idle than work for so many hours when very young they would make equally good colliers and be more able for fatigue if they were not allowed to enter the pits before twelve years old-thinks they would live longer. It is long-continued work in early years that gives colliers such a pallid and thin appearance. There are girls employed in the works, they bank coal and some are as young as 13 or 14 years. They earn from 10d. to 1s. 6d. a day. The work is not very hard. They usually come at six in the morning and work till six in the evening, though they seldom work more than five days a week. The charter-masters hire and pay them in general. Sometimes when we are sinking and driving they are hired by the agent. Accidents sometimes occur. There is inflammable in the pits, and there have been three explosions within the last three years. We have done much to improve the ventilation, and with good effect. The men use the safety-lamps and every precaution to avoid accidents is taken. The children are very well treated by the charter- masters and other men. The girls who work on the bank are healthy and well conducted. They marry young, generally to colliers, and make as good wives and mothers as any other class of working people. The boys and girls are generally very ignorant. They have no education. Many attend Sunday-schools, but religious teaching is alone attended to in these schools.

### **No. 37 May 4th. 1841. Rev. Robson.**

**You are, I believe, sir, a justice of the peace, acting in the district of Ruabon ?** - I am, and, have so acted for 35 year.

**Has there been much improvement in the condition of the miners, colliers, &c., in your district within that time?** - They are pretty much the same. They are more given to poaching perhaps in consequence of the increased quantity of game of late years. Many are brought before the bench at petty sessions, charged with acts of poaching Formerly there was little game, and therefore fewer poachers.

**Is there any improvement of late years in the moral training of the children of colliers, and miners, &c., in this district?** - No, I am not aware that there is.

**Are many complaints made by masters against colliers and miners?** - No, I think not, they give the justices very little trouble.

**Do you find that the children or females are ill-used by masters or workmen?** - No, I don't think they are, nor do I think they have much to complain of in respect to being hard worked.

**Do they get their wages well paid, and without frequent recourse to the justices?** - There is a great deal of complaint in this respect. The charter-masters are often unable to pay, on account of



unforeseen difficulties in working the coals. I do not think the charter-masters are dishonest or disinclined to pay, but they often cannot, and some distress consequently ensues, and the justices are appealed to.

**No. 38 John Jones, Schoolmaster, Rhosmedre, Ruabon.**

**How long have you been a schoolmaster?** - Five years, and I have kept this school since 1839. I was previously at Gresford school.

**What number of boys have you at school now?** - Fifty-eight, and my wife has 47 girls in her school.

**What are your school hours?** - In summer from nine till twelve, and from two till five; in winter the hours in the morning are the same, but in the afternoon we go in at half-past one and stay till four.

**On what system do you teach?** - As near the Lancastrian as possible.

**How is the school supported?** - By subscription, and by payment of 2d. a-week from each.

**What are the ages of the children?** - From six to fifteen years.

**Do you conduct the school on a plan laid down for you by others?** - I teach in my own way, but the Rev. Mr. Price, the incumbent of the new church and he comes every Friday evening to examine the classes.

**Do you conduct the children to public worship on Sunday from the school?** - Yes, always

**Are the children of Dissenters admitted to this school?** - Yes, but they must comply with our rules as regards Church principles, in which we educate the children.

**Do the children of Dissenters often come to your school, and in what proportions?** - Yes, and I should say in the proportion of one-half, chiefly Wesleyans, some Baptists, but no Calvinists.

**Do you find that these children after they leave your school continue to go to church, and remain in connexion with the Church?** - No, they almost universally go to the Dissenting chapels.

**Do many of the children of the colliers and forgemen attend your school?** - Yes, in proportion of a fifth of all my scholars.

**Do you find them as quick and as amenable as other children?** - Exactly, there is no difference.

**Are any of your present scholars ever employed in the pits or forges?** - No.

**Do you think if there were a good evening-school that the children and young persons employed during the day would go to it after work?** - I tried such a school, but could make nothing of it. The school filled, but I could get no payment. There was no reluctance on the part of children or parents to take advantage of the school, but I was obliged to give up for the want of payment.

**Did you find the children in the evening-school incapable of applying their minds to learning after the fatigues of a day's work?** - Oh yes, they did not appear to me more weary or tired than others who had been doing nothing all day and they were coming on very well when I was obliged to close the school.

**Have the colliers, forgemen, &c., so little wages that they cannot spare a small sum weekly to pay for their children at a night-school?** - Oh, no. They spend their money in drinking, eating, and clothing extravagantly. They might easily spare a little out of their earnings of the working children themselves.

**Is dissent from the Church prevalent among this class of persons?** - Dissent is more prevalent among colliers than forgemen.

**Is dissent almost universal?** - Yes, amongst those we are speaking of.

**Is that a reason why you have so few of this class in your school?** - Oh yes. They don't wish their children to be brought up to Church principles.

**There are I am told 4000 persons in Rhosmedre, can you tell me how many children are receiving instruction at schools?** - With my wife and me there are 100. In Mr. W. Hally's day-school about 40, in a small dame-school about 12.

**Is there great want of moral training amongst the children of miners and colliers?** - Not more than there is amongst the other children of the lower orders.

**As a class, do you consider them as moral and as industrious as others?** - Yes, quite so.

**No. 39 May 5th, 1841. Mr. Benjamin Frederick Wilson.**

**Have you been long accustomed to the management of collieries, mines, &c.?** - Yes, about 11 years. I am the trustee for the Messrs. Pickering's Coal and Iron Works at Ruabon, and manage them.

**Is the condition of children working in the pits improved of late years?** - Yes, much improved in consequence of the introduction of temperance societies, and the care of the Dissenters in chapel schools, and they are well clothed and fed in general.

**My question related to their condition as to work in the pits?** - I think they are less heavily worked. The number of hours is the same, but the roads are better kept, the rails better laid, and the pyches neither so heavy or so cumbrous, and therefore the labour of drawing is lighter.

**The load may however be larger?** - No, I don't think it is.

**Have complaints ever been made that the boys are ill-treated or overworked in the pits?** - No, never. In this district they are, I believe, everywhere humanely treated.

**Are wages well paid?** - Yes, very well.

**Are there any truck-shops?** - The men in our work petitioned about seven years ago for the establishment of a shop.

**On what grounds?** - On account of the high charges in neighbouring shops.

**How is the shop conducted?** - By persons regularly brought up, and the charges are as low as in any of the shops in large towns.

**Are the men allowed much credit in the shop?** - They are allowed one month's credit.

**Does the shop operate at all oppressively to those who are obliged to deal in it?** - Not at all. They may have all their wages paid in money if they choose, and no harm. They may or may not buy at the shop.

**If the charter-master fail is there much distress occasioned thereby?** - I don't think so in our works it never has occurred.

**Are any pains taken with the moral training of the children?** - Yes, certainly. The Dissenting ministers take great pains and our colliers are chiefly, if not entirely, Dissenters. The Churchmen take equal pains, but our people, being Dissenters, have not the advantage of advice and assistance of the Established clergy.

**Since so much pains have been taken, is there a perceptible improvement in the manner and conduct of the children and young persons?** - Very much so. After work formerly them and children were riotous, drunken, and fond of barbarous sport. They are now more order and sober, and attend evening chapel two or three times a week, and two or three times every Sunday.

**Is it your opinion that they would improve still more if evening-schools were established in the mining localities?** - I think they would have an excellent tendency, and I believe the children would be glad to go to them, the difficulty would arise from the unwillingness of parents to set aside a small weekly sum for the teacher.

**Could not a rule be made in each work that a small poundage on wages should be taken for the purpose?** - It would be the cause of some discontent, but in time they might be reconciled, especially when they begin to find the children improve, and thereby better adapt them in cases of necessity to gain a livelihood by other occupations.

**What are the means they have at present of gaining knowledge?** - They are scanty and have nothing of a secular nature, being almost entirely confined to religion. Children in chapel Sunday-school may in time learn to read, but nothing more.

#### No. 40 Richard Roberts, Surgeon, Ruabon.

**Have you had much practice amongst colliers?** - Yes, I have the principal practice amongst the works.

**Are the children male and female usually healthy and well formed?** - Yes, indeed.

**Is there anything in the nature or duration of the work in and about the pits to produce disease?** - No, certainly not but I think the children go to work when too young, and too many hours.

**Are there cases of diseased joints, distortions, or other physical disorders, brought on in consequence of early and long-continued work?** - Not many. I certainly think that early we have a tendency to relax the ligaments of the knee-joint and also the ankle.

**Have you many cases of this description?** - No, not many. I have seen some few of swelling of the bruising of the knee-joint, brought on by fatigue in early youth.

**Is there any provision by the masters for payment of the medical men?** - Yes, 2d. in the pound on the wages of all persons employed is stopped for the purpose. This affords medical attendance for the whole family, and medicine also, whether in cases of accident or sickness.

**At what age may children safely commence work in the pits?** - At about 12, their powers are then more developed. We have more cases of illness in those between 9 and 12 years old than those between 12 and 16.

**What are the usual medical cases?** - Dyspepsia, brought on by beginning to work when too young, and a food short of nutriment.

**Does it lead to other diseases?** - No they soon recover and then get used to the work.

**Do you know whether the children are ill-treated in the pits?** - I think not, I have no reason.

**Have the children or the parents for them ever complained to you on the subject of too much work?** - No, nor are the parents likely to complain, as the children earn wages which not only support them but also in part support the family.

**Do you think it would be right to prevent parents having such unlimited powers over their children?** - No, it would not. It is the interest of parents to keep their children in health, as they depend so much on them.

**What are the surgical cases which generally present themselves to you amongst colliers?** - Contusions, simple and compound fractures, burns, and lacerations. Accidents happen occasionally, though not often, we have but few cases of fracture. In 26 years practice amongst colliers, miners, forgemen, &c., I have had but six amputations five of which succeeded, the sixth did not, in consequence of haemorrhage before I could be brought to the patient. He sunk two days after the operation.

**Have you more difficulty in treating medical and surgical cases with success in this than other classes?** - The houses in which they reside are small, and the families generally large. In such circumstances the chances of recovery are always less, in better houses chances would be equal I think.

**How is it their houses are so small?** - They frequently build for themselves. They crowd their houses together and there is little or no drainage thought of. Their means will not allow them to build better dwellings.

**Are they subject to chronic diseases?** - By no means subject to them.

**What are the chronic diseases they are most subject to?** - Bowel and stomach cases.

**Do the colliers and miners live as long as other workmen?** - I don't think they do. A collier at sixty is a very old man and I rarely see them arrive at that age. They work too early in life, and their mode of living tends to shorten life. They often drink hard and the noxious air in the pits must in time affect them.

**Have they any means of being provided with wine or nutritive food when recovering from illness?** - Yes, by parish relief. They have seldom any other means. They rarely save money for such emergencies.

**Are pains taken by masters or others in the moral training of the children?** - Not much, except in church and chapel schools on Sunday.

**Are they generally well conducted?** - They are rude and uncouth in manner, perhaps from mixing so little with others.

#### **No. 41 May 8th, 1841. Thomas B. Davies, Surgeon, Ruabon.**

**Have you been long in practice here?** - Yes, I served my time here, and now assist my father. We practice much among collier families.

**Are they a healthy class?** - A very unhealthy one.

**Are the children unhealthy?** - No, not unhealthy but they are delicate, especially when first be at work, and the girdle, by which they draw, excoriates and hurts. They however soon get well accustomed, and then they are as healthy as other classes.

**Does their work often tend to distort the joints or to other physical affections?** - No, I don't think their work has any such tendency. We have but few cases either medical or surgical amongst collier boys.

**Are the collier boys worse subjects for medical and surgical treatment than other boys?** - They bear depletion in acute diseases, and the usual remedies, like others.

**Is it safe to work children underground for 12 hours out of the 24?** - My experience would lead me to say it is, though my reason would point out to me that hard labour and hours in early youth underground, where there is dampness and noxious air, must tend injure health and stop the growth of children.

**At what age may they more safely commence work with a probability of maintaining health, so as to injure an expertness as workmen?** - I don't think children would be injured by to beginning work at early ages, unless kept to it for too many hours. They require rest and recreation frequently but if they are to commence work on the 12-hour system, I think they be allowed till 13 or 14 years old to remain at school. They could work six hours out the 24 when very young. At first the work is light, they keep the air doors or drive horses or donkeys.

**What means have they of procuring wine and proper nourishment during sickness?** - They in general poor. The only means is the parish. The medical men of the Union may order wine and the relieving officer must obey the order.

**Are they well housed and cleanly?** - Their houses are small but cleanly, within, externally are not so, there is all manner of filth, and scarcely any drainage.

**What are the evil effects arising therefrom?** - I don't know what disease may be actually perpetrated by the external want of cleanliness and drainage, but cures are more difficult and protracted in consequence.

**Is the work of the female children such as to produce disease or physical injury?** - Their work has no evil tendency and I have observed that they are frequently dyspeptic. It may be that their diet wants proper nutritive qualities. It is chiefly farinaceous with buttermilk and potatoes. They are never distorted and we observe that when they become mothers their labours are natural and their children well formed and healthy.

**Is there much bastardy?** - No, and bastardy cases are more rare, I think, since the alteration of the law in respect to bastards.

**When married are they as domestic and as well fitted for domestic duties as others?** - Yes, equally so.

**Do colliers often try other means of gaining a livelihood?** - Very rarely indeed. I know of few such instances.

**Is it from inaptitude?** - They are so much underground from early youth that I believe they never think of a change. I am unprepared to say whether they, as a class might or might not be able to apply themselves with success to other occupations. I see no reason however why they may not.

**What are the surgical cases which you most meet with amongst colliers?** - Fractures, dislocations, contusions, and burns from fire-damp, but none of them are of frequent occurrence.

**Is cure as easily effected as with other labouring persons?** - There is no difference, and the treatment is the same.

**Do the children exhibit the same capacity to learn?** - Yes, their manners are a little peculiar, but they are not less intellectual, and suffer nothing in comparison with other children in that respect at least.

#### No. 42 Mr. Thomas Williams, Rhosmedre.

**Have you been long in the parish of Ruabon?** - I was born and bred in it, and was overseer of the poor last year and know all the works in it.

**Be so good as detail to me what you know of the present condition of the colliers, miners and forgemen in the district?** - There is a good deal of stagnation in the iron and coal trade, the works are very slack and many have been thrown out of employ. A great many blasts have been blown out, only a few now remain. Several workmen have gone elsewhere to look for employ. I began life as a collier and remained at that work many years. I am now a stone-mason.

**At what age do the children go to the pits?** - Those that can keep their children at school. They will not let them go till they are 12 years old. Few can keep them so long. They therefore generally go at 10, but very often at seven and eight.

**What age ought a child that has fair play to be before he works in the pits?** - I think he ought to be 14. The work is often heavy, and from the first continues about 12 hours a day, with but little time for food, and without change of clothing in the pits, though many of them are very wet. I speak from experience.

**Do the boys get fully half an hour allowed for breakfast and an hour for dinner?** - Yes, I think they generally get pretty near the full time, though there is nothing to mark the time. There is some improvement since I began to work. We then took our meat with us in the morning, and ate it cold, now two meals are brought by the friends twice a day and sent down the pits warm. This is a great advantage.

**Are the boys and girls generally well treated?** - Yes. Girls only work on the bank everybody is civil to them. The boys are now never beaten, and though the work is hard they are well treated.

**Do they get their wages well and properly paid?** - I hear no complaints, but in many works they get the greatest part through the tomy-shop? Sometimes the charter-masters fail and then application is made to the justices but there is no fraud intended.

**What would ensue if they were to insist on payment in cash?** - It is now a system to go to the shop, and no one ever insists on cash but I know the system is much complained of and the people would be more contented to have their wages paid in cash.

**How often are wages paid?** - Once a month, at the end of a fortnight. An advance is made by an order on the shop, which must be taken out in goods and at the end of the month what is taken from the shop is stopped out of the earnings.

**Is there any evil attendant on this system?** - Yes, many crowd the shop at once and several are detained there two or three hours before they can be served. This has a tendency to make the women idle gossips. It is a bad medium through which to receive wages.

**As overseer of the poor, have you reason to know that there is more disease and sickness amongst the families of colliers and forgers than others?** - It is a question difficult to answer. Most of the families of the lower orders are those of colliers and forgers I could not make a comparison. Seeing the works they are engaged in, the smallness of the dwelling-houses, and that underground work requires some time to accustom the children to it, I should think they are more liable to disease and sickness than others.

**Are the children well brought up and well behaved?** - The Dissenters take great pains with their religious education, and they are better conducted than one might expect, considering that they have scarcely any education except on Sunday in the chapel schools.

**Don't they go to day-schools?** - Very few. They go to work when too young, and a great help by means of their earnings towards the support of the family.

**Would you consider it proper to limit the working hours to eight or nine hours a day and to enforce a system of education?** - I should consider it a great blessing were it possible to bring such a plan into effect.

**Might not a small portion of wages be set aside for payment of teachers?** - Indeed I think there might be a small poundage on wages set aside for the purpose. I don't think the plan would be well received by the parents but, like other systems, the people would soon get used and reconciled to it and if there were good teachers nothing could be better for the children.

**Is the employment of young females on the bank of immoral tendency?** - I have not found it so. They marry young, it is true, but they are decently behaved and well conducted and are as good wives as others, being industrious and hard-working.

**Is there much bastardy amongst them?** - No, they are not worse than others employed at hard work and of late there is much improvement in that respect.

**To what do you attribute the improvement?** - I don't know exactly but when I was a constable about 15 years ago, I had a great deal of trouble with bastardy cases, but last year, while overseer of the poor, I had not one case.

**No. 43 May 6th, 1841. Mr. John Lewis, Solicitor, Clerk of Petty Sessions at Ruabon and Wrexham.**

**How long have you been justice's clerk?** - Two years. I had previously been clerk to the former one.

**What are the usual charges made by either masters or men in the coal and iron works in your districts?** - Non-payment of wages. Considering the numbers employed, and the extent of the works the complaints are by no means numerous.

**Be so good as describe the nature of these complaints?** - Sometimes complaints are made in consequence of a misunderstanding as to the amount of wages due but on examining the cases it is found that the truck system has been carried on to a considerable extent. Wages are settled but once a month and in the mean time such as require advances must be content with credit on the shop.

**Does it appear that in these shops the full value of the money is not given?** - No, I have no reason to know it.

**Does it appear that the owner of the work is also the owner of the shop?** - I don't know that is. It does not appear.

**Have children, or persons for them, made complaints of wages being unfairly withheld from them?** - Yes, several. The charter-masters, in defence, frequently urge their inability to pay. In some cases wages are entirely lost, in others, time for payment being given when they are paid by instalments. Many complaints originate in long-standing accounts, and where both parties are often ignorant of figures, mistakes and misapprehensions easily arise without fraud being intended but most cases are easily arranged without the necessity of proceeding to an adjudication.

**Are complaints of ill usage or overwork frequent?** - No, very few indeed. I can't call to mind at this moment any case.

**Are there complaints lodged against the children by the masters?** - They have occasionally a complaint of negligence, and of loss sustained in consequence; but complaints on either are seldom brought before the bench.

**Do you ever hear of the men making a practice of sending the boys into the pits with a lighted candle to ascertain if foul air existed?** - Never before the bench, but I casually heard of such a case, and that a boy was burnt in consequence, but in general the boys and girls well treated and have little to complain of.

**Have complaints been made before the bench of the inefficiency of the tackle or head-gear in and of the collieries, or of negligence whereby accidents have occurred and life endangered?** - No, I have never known such a complaint made.

**Is there much immorality and bastardy?** - There has not been a single case of bastardy before the justices since I have been clerk of petty sessions.

**Is it that cases are more rare, or that there is in the new law that which prevents the parish officers from applying for orders of affiliation?** - I think there is a considerable check to but at the same time it may be that the difficulty in succeeding to obtain an order of affiliation may deter parishes from seeking redress from a putative father.

**It is your opinion that bastardy has decreased since the law has been altered?** - Yes, it is decided opinion that bastardy has decreased in this district.

**Are complaints frequent of assaults, either indecent or otherwise, on the female workers in the collieries?** - No, very few indeed, and none with intent to violate the person.

**Compared with the other labouring classes, are the collier families inferior in moral character, personal appearance, or intellectual vigour?** - I consider them equal in moral character and personal appearance to the other classes, and equally intellectual.

## MORTON COLLIERY, RUABON. (April 8th, 1841.)

### No. 44 Samuel Cunnah, Manager, about 36 years of age.

**Have you many hands employed?** - Under 30. About 18 men, 7 boys, and 2 women.

**How many years have you been engaged in collieries?** - Twenty-four.

**Have you been long here?** - Yes, some time.

**What age ought boys to begin work in the pits?** - Thirteen or fourteen. They ought to be school till then.

**Do you consider early work is bad for children?** - Yes, because I think it stops the growth and they are better at school.

**Are they worked too hard?** - I think they are for very young children 12 hours in the day too much.

**Which do you prefer as workmen, those who have learned a little, or those who cannot read and write?** - The well-taught, most certainly.

**Are the small or large works better conducted?** - They are pretty much alike in this county try. In the Welsh collieries they are very civil good, and proper people, more so than in those I have been working at in England. The preachers here do a deal of good, and the teetotal system works wonders. The people are becoming better in every way.

### No. 45 John Prythuck.

**What is your age?** - I can't tell.

**Did you never hear?** - No.

**How long have you been in the works?** - Two years.

**What work did you commence with?** - Attending the air-door.

**What do you do now?** - Drive the donkey in the pits.

**What time do you go to work in the morning?** - I go at six.

**Do you eat before you go?** - Yes.

**When do you next eat?** - At nine.

**Is your meat warm?** - Yes.

**Who brings it to you?** - My mother.

**Is there any fixed time for dinner?** - Yes, one o'clock.

**How long is allowed?** - A quarter of an hour.

**Are you ever beaten?** - No.

**What are your wages?** - Sixpence a-day.

**Do you work six days?** - No, from four to five.

**How much did you earn last fortnight?** - Six shillings and sixpence.  
**Do you go to School?** - No.  
**Do you go to church?** - No.  
**Do you go to chapel?** - Yes, on a Sunday.

**No. 46 Richard Thomas, aged 17.**

**How long have you worked in coal-pits?** - Eight years.  
**Have you always had good health?** - Yes.  
**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, I was in an evening-school.  
**For what length of time?** - For a quarter of a year.  
**What were you taught?** - To read and write.  
**Can you write your name?** - Yes.  
**Can you write anything besides your name?** - Very little.  
**Were you instructed in English?** - No.  
**Who paid the teacher?** - I did. 4d. a-week.  
**Why did you not stay longer than a quarter of a year?** - Because I had not money enough to pay.  
**What is the greatest number of hours you ever worked in one day?** - Fifteen hours.  
**At what work?** - Pushing the corves.  
**Were you paid extra?** - Oh yes.  
**Would you work extra hours if allowed?** - Yes, I would  
**Are the boys well treated?** - Yes.

**No. 47 Edward Roberts, aged 12.**

**How long have you been at work?** - Two years.  
**What wages have you?** - One shilling and four pence a-day.  
**For how many hours work?** - Twelve hours.  
**Can you read and write?** - Yes.  
**Who taught you?** - My father.  
**Is he a collier?** - Yes.  
**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, for three-quarters of a year, learning to read religious books.  
**Would you like to go to an evening-school?** - Yes.  
**Who receives your wages?** - Myself.  
**What becomes of them?** - I give all to my mother.  
**Do you pray?** - No, my father does sometimes for the family.  
**Does any one ever pray aloud in the pits?** - Yes, John Edwards, who is blind, sometimes prays.  
**What is his work?** - He draws the coal-waggons.  
**Have you ever witnessed any accidents?** - No, not in this pit.  
**How do you get your meals?** - They are all sent down to us in our baskets. My mother brings mine.

**No. 48 Edward Rogers, aged 10.**

**How long have you been at work?** - About two years.  
**Is the work hard?** - No, pretty well.  
**Have you food enough?** - Yes.  
**Have all the boys?** - Yes.  
**Do you work six days in the week?** - Oh no.  
**Would you rather work all week?** - I should not care.  
**Were you ever in school?** - Yes, about half a year.  
**Can you read?** - Yes, and write, and cast accounts,  
**Do you go to Sunday-school?** - Yes, at Baptist chapel. We have prayers at home every night.

**No. 49 Thomas Williams, Collier, aged 59.**

He says he has always been working in mines, and has four children working under ground. The conduct of colliers and miners, he says, in this country, is much improved. The works are all worked under the same system. The children are well treated and very rarely beaten. Many of the colliers are very humane and religious, and pray aloud before meals. He thinks children should begin to work when young, in order to make good colliers, though he has known farm labourers turn colliers and make good workmen, but can never cut coal like a collier. The means of getting education are very deficient, and but for the preachers and Dissenters they, the colliers, would be totally neglected in this neighbourhood. He says Rhos Lianerchrygog, which is a village in the middle of the coal and iron works, contains about 4000 souls, there is no church within two miles, though there are many chapels built by Dissenters, and that no clergyman or gentleman lives amongst them, and yet they are quiet, orderly, and sober and do not often quarrel. There are two day-schools in the village, over which no one has any management but the teachers. The schools are seldom attended by the boys who work, but many young ones go at 2d. or 3d. each. There is also a small girls' school, where sewing is taught. The girls who work at the pit head are generally well conducted, and make good wives. There is certainly some bastardy, but less than could be expected.

#### **No. 50 Mr. Robinson.**

He says he has been three and a half years agent to Jones, Burton, and Co., of Ponkey Coal and Iron Works, Ruabon and that there has been no alteration in the mode of working since he came. He finds the miners and colliers, and he lives in the midst of them, quiet, well-conducted, sober, honest, and industrious. There has been a deduction of wages lately in consequence of the low price of iron. The men behave well to women and children, and of late years are much improved in morals, in consequence of the number of chapels built by Dissenters, and the schools connected with them, and in consequence of temperance societies. He thinks the rising generation will be religious, sober, and moral, so much pains being now everywhere taken to improve and cultivate the mind. He thinks that secular instruction is too much neglected, and that evening-schools on a good system would be of great use, as the children have time enough after work and they have all Monday and Saturday afternoon, in which they do no work. Colliers are at present very poor, and would perhaps find it difficult to pay teachers. He thinks if children could be kept at school till they are 13 or 14 years old, instead of going to hard work, it would be better for them, and they would make just as good workmen but unless at school they had better be at work. The girls who work at the pits are a well-conducted decent, class, and become good wives and mothers. There are no boys, he says, employed in any kind of work in the fusing or making of iron in his forges.

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### **PLAS MOSTYN COLLIERY, WREXHAM. (May 10th, 1841.)**

#### **No. 51. John Rogers, Collier.**

**Have you worked in other pits than the one you are now employed in?** - Yes, but I have been here for some years.

**Have you always had good health?** - Yes.

**Have the boys too much work do you think?** - They have always worked from six to six, and are well and strong but it would be better that they did not work such long hours when under the age of 12 or 13.

**Do they make as good colliers?** - Yes, certainly they would. A few hours work daily would be sufficient for that purpose.

**Could a collier change his employment as easily as other workmen do, with equal chance of success?** - I know no reason to prevent his doing so.

**Is the Tommy-shop system carried on in the works in Wrexham parish?** - No.

**Do you consider it fortunate that the masters here have no shop?** - Yes, we would rather see our earnings paid in money than in things out of the shop.

**What does the difference in your opinion amount to?** - At least 1s. in 10s.



**You are now in a work where there is no shop, if you had the offer of employment with advanced wages in a work with a shop, would you accept the offer?** - No, not unless the rate of wages was equal to at least 2s. 6d. in the pound.

**Do you hear great complaints made against the shop system?** - Yes, I hear the families who are under, and suffer by the system, complain loudly.

**Is the umbrella always used as a protection to those going down and up the shafts?** - Yes.

**Is there always a person at the pit head to see that the head-gear is right, and to prevent accidents?** - Yes, always.

**I observe you can write, do you find it of advantage to be able to do so?** - Yes, I find it a great advantage, it would be an excellent improvement if all the boys were taught to read and write.

### **No. 52 Daniel Ellis, Underground Agent.**

**How long have you been used to coal-works?** - Nearly 40 years. I began to work in them at 10 years old.

**Is there any improvement in the system of working coal since you began?** - Yes, a good deal. We work it now narrower than formerly. When we used to work a greater width more gas was generated and the danger greater.

**Is there much firedamp and bad air in the pits at present?** - Nothing to do any harm as we have plenty of air now.

**How do you get it?** - By good air-ways and shafts.

**Have there been explosions within the last three years?** - No, none.

**Is a person always stationed at the pit head to prevent accidents?** - Yes, always, the person who lands the coals.

**How many ascend and descend at once?** - From one to six.

**Has the person at the pit head authority to prevent more than six?** - Yes, but I have heard the men will sometimes take no persuasion, but go to the number of eight or nine at a time. When I hear of it I threaten to turn them off and scold a good deal.

**Do the men always use the safety lamps?** - Yes.

**Are the charter-masters kind and humane to the boys?** - Yes, in this work they never over task or beat them.

**Were you ever in a work with a tommy-shop?** - No, except a short time once in a lead work.

**Did the workmen approve of it?** - No, I don't think they did, but as they could not get money they took goods.

**If they had insisted on having money would they have been discharged?** - I suppose they would.

**Do you know of an instance?** - I can't remember one, but I know that many have lost their employment for so doing though I can't just now call to mind any particular person.

**Are the wages of the children also paid through the medium of the shop?** - Yes, the same.

**How much in the pound do you estimate the loss to the workmen by this system?** - From what I know myself and from all I hear, the loss is from 2s. to 3s. in the pound, and the women are often sent away without getting anything after waiting perhaps two or three hours.

**Do you think it would be better to lessen the number of work-hours for children in the collieries?** - Our works are high and have plenty of air, and I have no reason to think that the work injures the health or the growth, but I think it would be better they should get little schooling.

**If masters were to insist on children in their employ being sent to an evening-school, your the parents or children object?** - At first perhaps they might, but I think they would soon yield, and in a short time get reconciled and like the plan.

**Is the evening-school in this district a good one?** - The children are taught reading, writing and accounts, at from 3d. to 5d. a-week for each boy.

**Is the schoolmaster a trained teacher?** - No, but he is a pretty good teacher.

**Is he a Churchman?** - He is not very steady. He was a Dissenter but he now goes to church.

**Does he take the scholars with him?** - No.

**Has he any other payment than such as he gets from the boys?** - He has nothing but what the children pay him.

**What is the moral condition of the collier children?** - They are much improved. The Dissenters take great pains to make the men sober, and to train the children in regard to habits.

**Do colliers often leave the pits and go to other labour?** - No, very seldom indeed.

**Why don't they?** - I can't say.

**Is there anything to prevent them?** - No, if they wished to turn their hands to other work there is no reason why they should not succeed.

**No. 53 Samuel Rogers, aged 18.**

**How long have you been at work in the pits?** - Eight years.

**What wages have you?** - 1s. 10d. per day.

**Tell me when and how you get paid?** - Every Saturday I am paid in full in cash.

**Are the boys in the pits well treated by the men?** - Yes, very well.

**Is there any firedamp?** - Yes, a little.

**Do the men use safety lamps?** - Yes, every day.

**Who goes first into the pits in the morning, the men or the boys?** - The men, always.

**Have many accidents occurred lately?** - I don't remember any within the last four years,

**Have you always been healthy?** - Yes, during the eight years I have only had an illness of a week.

**Is there much swearing in the pits?** - No, I seldom hear any.

**Are your meals brought to you, and are they warm?** - Yes, my mother or sister brings them to me, and they are always warm.

**Can you read and write?** - I can read in Welsh, but I can't write.

**Would you like to learn?** - Yes, I should.

**Why don't you go to an evening-school?** - My mother has only what my two brothers and I can earn to keep the family, and therefore can't spare money to pay a teacher.

**How did you learn to read?** - In the chapel school on Sundays. **Do you never go to church?** - No, never, only to chapel.

**No. 54 William Rogers, aged 16 years and 6 months.**

**How tall are you?** - Near six feet.

**How long have you been working in the pits?** - Six or seven years.

**Are you and have you always been healthy?** - Yes

**What is the height of the mainways and headways where you are at work?** - Five feet.

**Can you read and write?** - No, neither.

**Did you ever go to school?** - Yes, to a chapel Sunday-school.

**What wages have you, and how often are you paid?** - 9s. 6d. a week if I work every day and I am paid every Saturday.

**No. 55 Edward Jones, aged 15.**

**Can you read and write?** - I can't write at all, but I am beginning to read an easy book.

**Who teaches you?** - They teach me on Sunday in the chapel.

**Do you attend chapel every Sunday?** - Yes, twice every Sunday.

**Do most of the boys go to chapel every Sunday?** - Yes, very few stay away from chapel.

**Do many of them go to church?** - None of the collier-boys go to church that I ever heard of

**Where you ever in a church?** - No, never.

**What wages have you?** - 1s. 4d. a day.

**Do you work six days a week?** - No, very seldom more than five.

**Who draws your wages?** - I do, and give them to my mother.

**Why don't you go to an evening school?** - I have no means of paying the master.

**What does he charge?** - 3d. for teaching to read, 5d. for reading and writing.

**Do the men who work in the pits drink much?** - They drink a good deal sometimes.

**Does your father drink?** - Sometimes on Saturday nights.

**No. 56 William Kelly, aged 13.**

**How long have you been at work?** - Two years.

**What is your work?** - I attend the air-doors.

**At what wages?** - 6d. a day.

**Do you go to school?** - Yes, on Sunday to the chapel-school.

**Do you go to church?** - No, never.

**Can you read and write?** - No, I can't. They are teaching me to spell in the chapel.

**How many hours do you work?** - I go to work at six and leave off at six.

**Do you ever work at night?** - No, never.

**Do you like work?** - Yes.

**Are you much tired at night?** - No, I am not.

**Not so tired but that you might go to school?** - No.

**You get enough to eat?** - Yes.

**Have you good clothes?** - Not very good but I have a pretty good suit of clothes for

**Do you play much on Sunday?** - Not much, but I play sometimes.

#### **No. 57 Joseph Chaloner, Coal-weigher.**

**How long have you been in these works?** - Thirty-five years.

**Were you a collier?** - No, a miner.

**How are the boys hired here?** - By the charter-masters, at daily wages, varying from 6d. to 2s. a day.

**Do the children work the same number of hours as the men?** - Yes, from six to six.

**Do they work overtime?** - Not of late years, as the demand for coal has decreased.

**Is the health of the boys affected by the work?** - No, I don't think so. They are all healthy and strong.

**Is it necessary to begin work when very young to make expert colliers?** - Oh, no. They had better be at school till 12 years old but if not at school they are better in the pits than idle at home.

**In your opinion on the tommy-shop system?** - A very bad one. Both loss of time and loss of money. I have heard people say they would rather work with us at 17s. a week than for 20s. where there is a shop.

**Are the morals of the children much attended to?** - Those that will go to chapel and the day-schools are well trained. Every effort is made to bring them, but many still keep away.

**What schools are there in the neighbourhood?** - There is but one that I know of except in Wrexham. John Rogers is the teacher.

**How was he appointed?** - He keeps a school in his own house, on his own account.

**Does he take the boys with him on Sunday to church or chapel?** - No, never; he does not assemble them together on Sunday.

**Was he trained for a teacher?** - No, he was first in an apothecary's shop.

**Is he paid otherwise than by the children?** - No.

**Do girls work here in the collieries?** - No, never.

**Are the colliers and collier boys as well conducted as other classes of labouring people, and equally as healthy, clever, and social?** - Oh, yes, equally so; but they go to work too early, and they get less education than others.

**Is the Sabbath well kept by the colliers and their families?** - Yes, far better than it used formerly used to be.

#### **No. 58 John Kelly, aged 14.**

**How long have you been at work?** - About five years.

**Are you healthy?** - Yes.

**How long have you been at work?** - About five years.

**Are all the boys healthy who work with you?** - Yes, all of them.

**What wages have you?** - 7d. a day.

**Who agreed for the wages?** - My father, and he receives them.

**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, before I went to work, for about two months, at a day school.

**What did you learn?** - To spell words.

**Can you read or write?** - No, neither.

**Do you go to a school now?** - Yes, to a Sunday-school.

**What are you taught there?** - To spell words and questions out of the Testament

**Were you ever in church?** - Yes, I have been to church.

**How often?** - Perhaps twelve times in my life.

**Do you go to chapel?** - Yes, three times every Sunday, and often in the evening on week-days.

**Would you like to go to an evening school?** - Yes, I should.

**Would you like to spare a little out of your wages to pay the teacher?** - Yes, I should be glad to do so.

## **BRYMBO COLLIERY AND IRON-WORKS, WREXHAM. (May 12, 1841.)**

### **No. 59 Samuel Jones, Underground Agent.**

He has been upwards of 23 years a collier, and three years in this work as underground agent. He used always to be down 12 hours a day. He thinks colliers more delicate than many other classes of working people but does not exactly know the reason. He supposes that early work hard labour below the surface, and great perspiration, cannot be otherwise than unhealthy. He says there is but little firedamp in the Brymbo Colliery, and that no explosions have taken place within the last three years. He thinks it better that the men and boys should remain in the pits to eat rather than come up, as they would be liable to catch cold in the cabin, coming from work in a heated state, perhaps in wet clothes and the cabin is seldom large enough contain half the number of workmen.

### **No. 60 Samuel Thomas, aged 15.**

He has been at work more than five years and draws by the girdle. He works usually 12 hours, sometimes only six hours a day. He works with his father, who is a charter-master. Men and boys in pits often swear. Boys smoke a good deal and would drink if they could get it. He is always very healthy, so are the other boys. He seldom works more than four days a week and gets 1s. 6d. a day. He does not work more than four days a week because there is no work would like if there was. He was never at school except on Sunday at chapel-school and can read little in an easy book. He would like to go to school if there was one, and if his father on spare the money. He never goes to church but attends chapel twice every Sunday. He never hears masters or overlookers rebuke any one for swearing.

### **No. 61 John Womsley, aged 15.**

Says he is five feet nine inches high. He cuts coal in the pit now and has been nine years at work, and always well. Drew by the girdle before he began to cut coal. He does not consider it hard work. He gets his wages once a fortnight in full, except a stoppage of 2d. in the pound to pay a medical man. He never has been under the doctor's hands. He goes to chapel and can read a little, but cannot write. He has his food warm, and is always well used. He would be very glad to go to a school.

### **No. 62 John Hughes, aged 12.**

He does not know his birthday. He drives the ass in the pit, and draws by the girdle. He gets 10d. a day, and works four or five days a-week. He receives his own wages, and gives them mother. He was never at any but a Sunday-school and is in the 'Reading-made-easy'.

### **No. 63 John Jones, aged 16.**

He draws by the girdle. He has been two years in the pits, and was five years at farm-work and always in health. He has 1s. 6d. a day and works sometimes only three or four days because there is but little demand for coal. He goes to church and Sunday-school where he is learning to spell small words. He cannot write at all. He hears a good deal of bad language in the pit but is always well treated and was never beaten. He likes the pits better than the farm. He has good clothes and plenty of food.

### **No. 64 Edward Jones, aged 11 years and 9 months.**

He has been three years and a half at work and attends the air-door. Has 6d. a day, but only earns about 2s. 6d. a week. He is always well. He goes sometimes to church, often to chapel. He

an read a little. He plays a good deal on Sunday with other boys, but goes sometimes to Sunday-school.

**No. 65 James Jones, aged 35.**

He is a collier and has always had good health. His wages about 2s. 6d. a day, but he complains that he cannot get work more than three or four days a week. Some of the men drink a good deal. Some are teetotallers. The boys are always well used and they play after they come up. They are not at all tired after working all day. He says he has been in works where there was a tommy-shop there is none in this work. He does not like a shop but prefers having his wages paid him in money. There is an evil in being obliged to take the articles from a shop, whether good or bad, cheap or dear, and sometimes without wanting them. He hears the system is carried on in the works about Ruabon and knows of no advantage which a tommy-shop can be of to the men. He would rather work here for 17s. than at Ruabon, where there is a shop, for 20s. *“Even if the shop is fair one likes to have one's money to go where one likes with it.”* Boys here are pretty well off for clothes, and they get plenty to eat, sometimes bacon, always potatoes, bread, and milk.

**No. 66 Samuel Jones, Underground Agent, (continued).**

He says the children are seldom ill. They soon get used to the work. They get to look pale, but they eat and sleep and play like others. He does not think 12 hours in the pits too long if the boys are not under 10 years of age, but it would be better that they should not work such long hours till they are 13 or 14. That would be early enough order to make good colliers. They should be at school. He knows that it is a great advantage to men to be able to read and write and figure. Finds the benefit of having been taught, It is very useful. He knows that in times of riot and difficulty, those who have been taught are more easily reasoned with. With the ignorant there is only folly and violence. He found it so in these works when there was rioting. No pains are taken in the works in training the children in morality but the chapel people take great pains, and so do the churchmen. Most of those who can read were taught on Sunday in chapel-schools. The children were formerly very rude and ill-conducted, especially on Sunday. They are much improved, though there is much room still for amendment. If they were educated they would improve much. Useful education is wanted. It would have a good effect on their conduct and morals.

**No. 67 May 13th, 1841. The Rev. John Davies, Incumbent of Brymbo.**

**Have you been long in your present incumbency?** - No, but was previously in Mold, amongst colliers and furnacemen.

**What is the present state of moral training amongst the collier children and young persons?** - At a very low ebb. They go to work before they have had any education, and receive none afterwards, except such religious instruction as is afforded at the various places of worship on Sunday. They are under no control whatever, and are extremely ignorant.

**Are there no day-schools in Brymbo?** - There is a small day-school, which has only just commenced.

**How is the teacher appointed and paid?** - He is on his own account, and has only what is paid to him by the children.

**Is he a trained teacher?** - I cannot exactly say, but I think him competent to teach the elementary branches of education.

**Is there any desire manifested on the part of parents or children for education?** - Very little. The opportunities have been few and there are no cheap schools and proper masters. If there were I dare say the desire for instruction would increase.

**What is your opinion respecting the labour of children in the pits. Does it begin at too early an age and continue too many hours?** - Work is now slack, and the children are seldom pits the full time, and many days there is no work at all done, so that I cannot say they work either too young or too long at a time Besides, the robust appearance of the children show health. However, I may venture to say that hard and long-continued work in early years cannot but be injurious to the constitution.

**Are the children humanely treated by masters and men?** - I have heard nothing to the contrary

**Is there an improvement in morals and in the mode of spending the Sabbath of late years?** - No difference in moral conduct, but the Sabbath within the last five years is a little observed.

**Is it your opinion that education has a tendency to improve the social and moral condition labouring people?** - Yes, though I would not recommend that the lower orders should have any education unconnected with religion.

**Have you had any opportunity of judging of the conduct of the lower orders so as to offer an opinion whether those partly educated are on the whole better conducted than the totally ignorant?** - I have had only few opportunities of judging, but I should say that those partly educated are the best conducted.

**Are they more patient and enduring under distress and privation?** - This question involves many considerations, and I am not prepared to answer it.

**Would you recommend that the lower orders should be educated?** - Yes, certainly I would.

**On what account?** - It would raise them in the moral and social scale, and afford many opportunities for amusement in leisure hours which, for want of more rational means, are now spent in beer-shops or in barbarous sports.

#### No. 68 Richard Briscoe, Esq., Wrexham.

**Are you a proprietor of coal-works?** - Yes, I have been so since 1825.

**Would you approve of educating colliers and miners and those who work together in numbers?** - I would to a certain extent. They should be taught to read the Bible, but no more.

**Would you go further than Sunday-school teaching?** - Certainly not.

**Does your experience lead you to conclude that there would be evil in educating them in writing and arithmetic?** - It does. I think education makes the lower orders dissatisfied with their employment, and they wander through the country in search of better, which they do not find and they generally return destitute and unfitted for their accustomed employment.

**Have you observed in times of distress which class is best conducted, those entirely untaught, or those who can read and write?** - Those whose education allows them to read the Bible and no more. Those who can write I find restless, and carry on correspondence with all parts, which is often a source of evil.

**Is there more pains taken now than formerly in the moral training of children in the lower orders of society, and especially those of colliers and miners?** - Not a doubt of it both by churchmen and dissenters.

**Are these children well conducted in general?** - Generally they are. They are more civilised and orderly, and the Sabbath is more strictly kept.

**How do you account for the improvement?** - By the attention now paid to the morals by clergy, laity, and dissenting preachers.

**Are the children well treated who work in the pits, mines, and forges?** - Yes, there is not the least oppression in respect to them, and they are healthy and strong.

**Are wages fairly and punctually paid?** - Yes, except that the tommy-shops in some works are injurious to the families of workmen. It is better to have 15s. in money than credit at the shop for 20s.

**Is the system extensively carried on?** - Only in a few works.

**Do you think the present means of Sunday-schools are sufficient for even the limited education you would advocate?** - Quite so.

**Are children brought to the pits at too early an age, and required to work too many hours consecutively?** - I do not believe they are. They are healthy, and therefore I cannot think they are too early or too hardly worked.

#### No 69 Edward Williams, Esq., Surgeon, Wrexham.

**Have you had much practice amongst the colliers and miners in this district?** - Yes, for four years.

**Are the children oppressed by the work allotted them?** - I consider very young children, say from seven to ten years old, are overworked when there is a demand for coal and iron.

**At what age would you recommend that children should begin work under ground?** - If they merely drive the asses or keep the air-doors, they may begin at an early age, but to draw pyches ten hours a day requires that they should be at least ten years old.

**Have you seen many cases of physical injury in consequence of early and long continued work?** - No, few, if any.

**At what age do they generally begin to work?** - About seven or eight years of age.

**Are they a healthy class?** - Yes, I think they are.

**What diseases are they most subject to?** - Their diet is not very nutritive. They are subject to dyspeptic complaints.

**Are the children subject to dyspepsia?** - No more so than children and young persons otherwise employed. It is as they advance in years that dyspepsia and pulmonary complaints arise.

**Is it your opinion that these complaints would equally prevail if children were prevented working in the pits and mines till 10 or 12 years of age?** - As relates to pulmonary affection I think they would, but dyspepsia is, I imagine, the effect of poor diet and vitiated air.

**Would it be desirable that the children should be obliged to put on dry clothes when they come to the surface?** - Of course, and humanity would justify a compulsory regulation to that effect.

**Are the young women employed at the pits healthy?** - Yes, certainly.

**Is there anything in the nature of their work which tends to physical injury?** - Experience proves the reverse. Parturition with them is usually safe and easy and I have had but few of distorted pelvis to deal with.

**What sort of wives and mothers do they make?** - They are deficient in the knowledge of the domestic duties, especially sewing.

**Are they less moral and less virtuous than others?** - I can't say they are.

**Is there much bastardy?** - Yes.

**More than amongst other young women?** - Perhaps not.

**Will the families of colliers and miners appear to disadvantage when put in comparison with the other labouring classes?** - No, I think not. Their general appearance and their moral conduct justify this opinion.

**Are pains taken in their moral training?** - Masters and parents take none. Churchmen and Dissenters take great pains on Sunday to instruct them in Sunday-schools.

**What are the surgical cases you usually meet with amongst them?** - Accidents cause many cases, burns, contusions, &c.

**Do you find the same means of cure admissible with them in cases of inflammation and do they bear amputations as well as others?** - I bleed more cautiously with them and in some severe cases of acute disease, I resort to the most active measures, which they bear like other people, and they bear amputations equally well.

**Do you think them equally long lived?** - Perhaps not.

#### **No. 70 Mr. Thompson, Frwydd Coal and Iron Works, Wrexham.**

He has been very long acquainted with collieries and iron-works and is his father's agent. He employs fewer hands now than formerly in consequence of a want of demand. Contracts with charter-masters to cut the coal and to bring it and the ironstone to the bank, and they, the charter-masters, hire, the hands, including the boys and young persons. He never stipulates with the charter-masters as to the number of hours the children are to work or as to their wages. Generally the children work with either their fathers or friends. He never hears any complaints either that the boys are ill-treated or over-worked. The usual hours of work are from six to six, but such is the want of demand for coal and ironstone that they generally leave the pits by four o'clock. They have formerly, when trade was brisk, worked harder and for more hours than they do now, but they never worked overtime. The children usually begin work when nine or ten years of age. It is at first light, they drive the asses or keep the air-doors, and as they continue in health, are strong and well formed. He concludes that underground work does not conduce to disease. They are like the children of other working classes. They dress as well when not at work, are as well conditioned and equally intellectual. Their opportunities of getting education, however, are few, merely in Sunday-schools. There are small dame-schools, but the children who work seldom or never attend them. There are no schools with trained teachers. The masters in the small day-schools are generally ignorant people and not fit to teach. They charge from 2d. to 4d. a week. Two pence a week is stopped out of all wages for the medical men. Parents would object to stop a small sum for the payment of a teacher, indeed at present they could ill afford it. The children require teaching. A little education would be a great benefit to them. It would improve their minds and keep them as they grow into manhood from the beer-shops and from mischief. There is some firedamp in the workings. At first it was with difficulty they could get the colliers to use the safety lamp. They now always use it. The morals of all classes of workpeople are improved. The great majority are Dissenters, and each sect has a chapel. They take great pains to bring the children to divine worship, to instruct them in the Bible, and to teach them to read.

[The works at Prwydd are carried on in the same way as other collieries in the district. The children are equally healthy, well fed, and well clothed, and humanely treated, but very ignorant. The same complaints of small wages and a stagnation in trade are made here as in all other works in the neighbourhood.  
H. H. J.]

**No. 71 May 6th, 1841. Isaac Jones, Agent to the Pant Iron and Coal Works.**

He says he has been used to coal and iron works for at least 24 years. The present works at Pant are partly stopped in consequence of the bankruptcy of Mr. Greenhow, the proprietor. The iron-works have stopped entirely and the blasts blown out, on which account many hands have been thrown out of employ, and have gone to Scotland and elsewhere to search for employment. The same system of letting the coal to charter-masters to be cut and brought to bank holds in the Pant works as in the other works in this district. They are paid from 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. a ton. He believes the children are very properly treated. They work about 12 hours a-day, but not more than four or five days a week. They are very ignorant, though the Dissenters take great pains to bring them to chapel and to Sunday-school, to instruct them in religion. It is much to be regretted, he says, that so little pains are taken to instruct them in useful knowledge also. He thinks that, if children could be at school till 12 years old, and not go to the pits till that age, they would make just as good colliers and be better men. The earnings of the children go far towards the support of the family, it cannot therefore be a matter for surprise that poor people are so anxious to get their children into employ when young. The girls who work in banking coal behave well and become domestic wives. There has been great improvement in the morals of people who works in the pits. He accounts for it by the attention paid to them by Dissenters.

**No. 72 April 31st, 1841. Mr. Ward, Proprietor of Collieries at Chirk and Ruabon.**

He says he has great experience as a coal-master, as also an agriculturist and finds it difficult to draw any distinction in disposition or in physical and mental qualification between the collier and the farm-servant. He is decidedly and on principle averse to extend education amongst the lower orders, especially amongst colliers and those who work together in numbers. He would confine their education to reading the Bible. He has never known any good come from teaching them writing and arithmetic.

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**CEFNI COLLIERY, RUABON. (May 1st, 1841.)**

[It was Saturday afternoon when the Sub-Commissioner visited this work, and all the hands had left. The clerk informed the Sub-Commissioner that there were 13 boys usually at work in the pits, three of whom were under 13 years of age. They earned about 1s. 6d. a day, but at present they did not work more than four days a week. The Sub-Commissioner saw the collier-men, some working in their gardens, others sitting on the walls smoking, many dressed in their Sunday clothes going into town, and the boys in groups playing at marbles. There was a reluctance on the part of men and boys to speak to the Sub-Commissioner. They had been told, they said, that Government was going to interfere to prevent children from working in the pits, and to oblige parents to pay for educating them. The children appeared all in health and spirits, and to enjoy their diversion. Few of the men or boys had washed themselves properly, and most of them were in their pit dress of good stout woollen texture. There appeared to be but little drinking. The Sub-Commissioner then went to the schools, but they were shut, and in returning overtook the funeral procession of a collier. There were 50 or 60 men and women, all colliers, dressed most respectably, and conducting themselves with great propriety.]

**No. 73 May 11th, 1841. Philip Young.**

**What is your occupation?** - I am clerk in the office of the British Iron Company at Ruabon.

**Have you been long in the office?** - Only six months.

**Is the truck system carried on in the work?** - There is a shop in the work, but there is no compulsion. Those who don't like to spend their money in it may have their wages in cash.

**Who owns the shop, and is it within the walls of the works?** - It is within the walls I can't say who owns it. The name over the door is 'James Russel.'



**Can you tell me how it is conducted?** - I don't know. I keep the forge and furnace accounts, and Mr. Wood, the manager, pays the men. I get things for my own family from the shop, and find them as good and the price as reasonable as elsewhere. I believe it is conducted fairly, and with no loss to the workmen or their families.

**Where were you before you came here, and are you used to large works?** - At Newport, in South Wales, and I have been in the works of Varteg, in Monmouthshire.

**Are the works of iron and coal here carried on much in the same way as they are in South Wales?** - I see no difference. Working-hours are the same, the boys begin work as young, and wages are much alike.

**Is the conduct and morals of the colliers also pretty much the same?** - Yes, I think so. They drink more there than here but the Dissenters are gaining equal influence, and they are taking great pains to teach the children and men religion and morals. In respect to the Sabbath, I think it more strictly observed here than in any place I ever was at.

**Is education also on a par?** - There are, I think, more and better day-schools there than I see here, and secular instruction is more attended to.

**Do you think there is any evil in taking the children into the pits when very young?** - I think there must be, seeing that there is no medium. The boy no sooner is taken to the pit than he must work there for twelve hours each day. Eight hours would be sufficient for a boy under 12, and if possible, he should be at school two or three hours every day. A little education would prove a great blessing to him. Parents here seem to think nothing about the education for their children.

## COED TALWR AND LEESWOOD COAL AND IRON WORKS.

No. 74 May 14th, 1841. Mr. Charles Harrison, Manager.

**Have you been long accustomed to coal and iron works?** - Yes, all my life.

**Are there many children and young persons in the works of which you are manager?** - We have had a great many. The number is now reduced, in consequence of depression in our trade.

**What are their working hours?** - They work 12 hours but have near two hours out of that time for meals.

**Are they often at work longer than you mention?** - No.

**Are they at work at night?** - On particular occasions they have worked at night, in which case we had a day and a night set.

**Do you think twelve hours below ground is too much for a young boy?** - I don't think so, in these works especially, as there is but little foul air, and the ventilation is very good.

**At what age do they usually begin to work?** - Often at seven or eight years old. At first they do little else than keep the air-doors, therefore do not feel oppressed by the work.

**Does the health suffer?** - I have seen no bad effects arise.

**Are they as healthy as the children of other classes of labourers?** - Yes, quite so.

**And as well off in respect to food and clothing?** - I should say better.

**Are they as intellectual?** - Quite so.

**Do they go to school?** - They generally go to school before they begin to work, many of them read, a few only can write.

**Are there any day-schools or night-schools near the works?** - There are some day-schools few children take advantage of them but most of them go to the Sunday-schools belonging to the church or chapels. Churchmen and dissenters show great anxiety to get them to the Sunday schools.

**Their education, then, is chiefly of a religious nature?** - Chiefly so.

**Are pains taken by masters or others with their moral training?** - No especial pains, except in the schools.

**Do you approve of educating the working classes?** - Certainly I do.

**You would teach them writing and arithmetic, as well as instruct them in reading and in religion?** - Yes, I would.

**Are those who have been taught better workmen, and more easily guided?** - No, I don't think them better workmen, but they are more easily guided.

**Do you see the children at their amusements?** - Yes, very often.

**And do they exhibit equal liveliness, quickness, and vigour as other children and young persons?** - Quite as much.

**Do you give employment to many young females?** - Not to many.

**How are they employed?** - In loading ironstone.

**Is it hard work?** - They work as they like themselves, and are paid accordingly.

**Have they taskmasters?** - A woman looks after them but we have not more than from six to ten females in all, and they are all healthy, strong and of good conduct.

**Is there a good deal of bastardy amongst the young women employed in the coal and ironstone works in this district?** - No, I think there is even less than amongst those employed in agriculture. They conduct themselves very decently.

**Would you think it proper to shorten the hours of work for children, and oblige them to attend school two or three hours daily?** - No, I think they might go in the evenings after work. They have plenty of time for education as well as recreation.

**Is there a medical man engaged to attend on your workpeople and their families?** - Yes.

**How is he paid?** - By a poundage on all wages of 2d. He attends them as well in sickness as in accidents.

**Are the colliers, miners, &c., in your and other works in this district as well conducted as those employed in agriculture?** - I should say they are better conducted, and fully more sober. They are also very observant of the Sabbath and of religious duties.

**Is there a shop belonging to the works?** - Yes.

**How often are wages paid?** - Once a month.

**Do you make advances in cash to the needy previous to the day of payment of wages, if required or must they take a ticket of credit on the shop?** - We frequently make advances in go cash, in fact, whenever we are called on and there is no obligation on any one to deal in the shop.

#### **No. 75 Robert Parry.**

**How old are you?** - I think I am near 13 years old.

**How long have you been at work?** - About three years, between the coal and iron work.

**In what work are you now engaged?** - In working the ironstone below ground.

**How many hours a day?** - Twelve hours.

**What time is allowed for meals?** - A short time for breakfast, and an hour for dinner.

**Is your food sent to you warm?** - Yes.

**Is the work hard?** - I feel tired sometimes.

**Do you never work more than twelve hours?** - No.

**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, about two years.

**Can you read and write?** - I can read a little in Welsh, but I can't write.

**Do you go to church?** - Yes, regularly.

**And Sunday-school?** - Yes.

**What wages have you?** - One shilling and two pence a day, but only work four or five days a week.

**Who pays you?** - The charter-master who hires me.

**How do you receive your wages?** - A part in money, the remainder in things from the shop.

**How often are wages paid?** - Once a month.

**If you want money in the middle of the month, can you get it?** - No, we have a note on the shop, and at the end of the month that is brought to account.

**Do you play after work?** - Yes.

**Would you not like to go to a night-school?** - Yes, I should.

**Do they swear much in the pit?** - Yes, sometimes.

#### **No. 76 Josiah Newnham.**

**How old are you?** - About 12. My father and mother are dead, and I don't know exactly.

**With whom do you live?** - With my father-in-law.

**How long have you been at work?** - About three years.

**Does work agree with you?** - Yes, I am healthy.

**Have you been at school?** - Yes, at the chapel Sunday-school.

**Can you read?** - Yes, a little in Welsh.

**What work do you do in the pits?** - Filling and hooking, and I have been drawing.

**What are your wages?** - One shilling a day.

**Do you change your dress after work?** - Yes, if I come up wet.

**If there was a night-school would you go to it?** - Yes, I would rather go to it than play.

**You well treated when at work?** - Yes.  
**And at home?** - Yes, I have plenty to eat.

**No 77 John Griffith.**

**How old are you?** - Eleven.  
**How long have you been at work?** - Two years.  
**Were you ever hurt in the work?** - No, never.  
**Were you ever ill after beginning to work?** - Yes, for about a week. I took cold.  
**Do you work twelve hours a day?** - Yes  
**Do you go to school?** - Yes, to the chapel-school, on Sundays.  
**Can you read?** - A little.  
**Whose son are you?** - I am a bastard.  
**With whom do you live?** - With my grandmother.

**No. 78 Griffith Jones, Underground Agent.**

**Can you read and write?** - Yes, I learned in a night-school, when I was employed by day the pits.  
**Did you begin to work when you were young?** - Yes, at eight.  
**Are colliers and miners more sober now than formerly?** - Yes, a good deal.  
**Are they better clothed?** - Yes, they are.  
**Do many of the colliers and miners read and write?** - Not many.  
**Are those who have been taught better men and workmen than those who have not?** - There is no difference.  
**Which behave best?** - I can't say.  
**Is there much improvement in their way of living since you were young?** - Yes, they are better clothed, and go more to chapel, and keep Sunday better. They often drink and smoke a good deal still, but less than formerly. Swearing, and bad language and fighting, is much diminished, and there is more religious feeling. The temperance and benefit societies make people think more, and take more care how they behave but education is still neglected.  
**Do you think it would be right to teach all the children to read and write?** - Yes, at all events to read.  
**Are you a teetotalter?** - Yes, I have been so for five years.  
**Is the system doing good, and in any joining?** - Yes.  
**Do you pay the charter-masters?** - Yes.  
**If they want money before the cud of the month may they have it?** - Yes, either money or a note on the shop.  
**Are you sure they may have money?** - Yes, they may and no obligation to go the shop.  
**Do many accidents occur in the works?** - Yes, occasionally.  
**On what account?** - Frequently from carelessness, especially in hooking on, whereby some have fallen.  
**Has the head-gear ever broken?** - No.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined many of the boys and all their evidence went to prove that they are kindly treated and not overworked and that they are healthy, but generally very ignorant.]

**No. 79 May 15th, 1841. Edward Thomas Hughes, M.D., Mold.**

**Do you practise as a surgeon?** - I am a general practitioner.  
**Have you been long in practice?** - Ten years.  
**Does your practice extend amongst colliers and miners?** - I practise much among miners, but less among the colliers.  
**At what age do boys in this district begin to work in the mines?** - About ten years of age.  
**What is their employment, and is it below the surface?** - Boys are seldom underground in the mines. They work on the surface, and are employed in breaking and washing lead ore.  
**Is it laborious work?** - No.  
**Has it a tendency to injure the health?** - Decidedly not.

**Do you know whether they work at night?** - No, they do not.

**Are they healthy?** - Very much so.

**Is there anything in the nature of their employment, or the duration of it, which has a tendency to produce disease or physical disorganisation?** - Certainly not. The boys have occasionally slight attacks of lead-colic, in consequence of not washing themselves before eating they thereby swallow with their food particles of lead.

**Has not this a tendency to produce permanent disease?** - No, it is of easy cure.

**Do you think that cleanliness ought to be enforced?** - I can't say whether enforcing such a system would be necessary.

**Have you ever thought it necessary to caution masters that they should make provision for the boys to wash themselves previous to taking their meals?** - No the cases are rare and never fatal but cleanliness is always desirable and, as there is plenty of water, they might without much trouble wash their hands and faces.

**What are the diseases of the miners in lead?** - Chronic rheumatism, chronic bronchitis lead-colic, dyspepsia, with pyrosis.

**To what do you attribute them?** - The lead-colic from inhaling and swallowing particles the sulphurate and carbonate of lead. The other diseases they suffer in common with other classes of working persons, in consequence of inhaling the dusty particles with which they surrounded when at work, and from exposure to subterranean damp.

**No caution, then, you think, can obviate the occasional occurrence of these complaints?** - No, the miners are very cleanly, and are also careful in changing their clothes when they come to the surface.

**Are they not subject to acute diseases?** - Rarely, occasionally acute rheumatism and inflammatory catarrh.

**Will they bear the usual remedies of depletion?** - Yes, well.

**And have the usual remedies equal efficacy with them?** - They have.

**Then, in their diseases, and in the treatment, there is nothing peculiar?** - No.

**Are the boys well treated?** - Very well here.

**And not over worked?** - No, so far as my observation goes.

**Are the cottages of the miners cleanly and well ventilated?** - Generally so.

**Have the children means of acquiring the rudiments of education?** - Only by Sundayschools in the churches and chapels.

**Are there any pains taken in the moral training of the children?** - The masters take none in their moral training or education. The clergy and dissenters do. There are national schools, which are well conducted but the children in the mines cannot take advantage of them, and have only the Sunday-schools to trust to.

**Do you think a day-school in a large work necessary, so that the children should receive instruction in leisure hours?** - If they have leisure, of course. I should much approve of a plan whereby they might receive secular instruction.

**Are there any girls or women employed in the mines?** - I don't know that there are any. I believe there are none.

**In visiting the sick you must have made observations which will enable you to say whether those who have received some education are more patient and enduring than the totally ignorant?** - I can't say I observe any difference. They are all moral and well conducted, and the great majority have been taught to read the Scriptures.

**No. 80 May 17th, 1841. The Rev. Evan Hughes, Wesleyan Minister, Mold.**

**Have you been long a resident here?** - About two years.

**Were you previously in a mining country?** - I was resident at Llanrwst, where there are slate quarries and some small mines.

**DO your ministerial duties bring you much in contact with miners and colliers, and their families?** - Yes, throughout this district.

**Are they in general well conducted, sober, and moral?** - In general they are. They are much improved of late years. We find them better inclined to receive moral and religious instruction

and, since the introduction of temperance and teetotal societies, they attend worship and the chapel schools.

**Are the children easily prevailed on to attend Sunday-school, and do you find an improvement in conduct as they improve in reading?** - Yes, and much more so since parents have taken the temperance pledge for they are now fond of attending the schools, and are glad to receive instruction. We find in proportion as they attend divine worship and the Sabbath-school they leave off bad habits, and become more contented.

**Do you think the children employed in the mines and pits are over-worked?** - They work more hours in the collieries (and it is underground work) than the boys at the mines, who work entirely on the surface

**Have the children time enough, under the present system of work, for healthful recreation and for education?** - I think it cruel to keep children in the pits for twelve hours together, where the only light is that of a candle in an impure air, and often in wet and damp and I fear the children are often worked beyond what Nature intended. I think it would be right that they should not work more than six or eight hours in the pits in a day and if they could be taught in a school after they finish work it would be indeed a mercy to these poor children.

**At what age would you recommend that they should commence work?** - If they are to work, they now do, twelve hours a day, surely they ought not to commence till they are thirteen fourteen years age, but with less work they might begin earlier.

**Do you think it would be better that they should be doing nothing at home than be sent into the pits at eight or nine years of age as they now are?** - I cannot think it right to work young boys underground for twelve out of the twenty-four hours, whatever might be their condition if unemployed but I trust they would find some means of education and it would be most desirable, and worthy of a Christian country. That means should be taken to ensure education to those who work together in numbers. We endeavour to give religious instruction in our chapels and the government and the masters should find some means of providing suitable education on the week days.

**Have pains taken in the moral training of the children?** - Some parents, who are religious yes, take pains with their children but in general they are neglected by parents and masters.

**Are they on the whole moral and well conducted?** - Very much so but they want education. We exhort them to be of good conduct, and to refrain from vice and bad language and we find they are improving.

**Is bastardy less frequent now in the mining districts?** - Yes, I have reason to think so.

**Have parents or others ever complained to you of had treatment towards their children in mines by either masters or men?** - No, never.

**Do you know of any case of bad health in consequence of early or of over work or hard treatment?** - No, I know of no individual case

**Are the children generally healthy?** - Yes, generally.

## ARGOED AND EWLOE COLLIERY, MOLD. (May 19th, 1841.)

### No. 81 Joseph Evans, aged 13.

**When were you 13?** - I don't know.

**Who told you that you were 13?** - My father lately told me so, and that I was two months more than 13.

**How long ago did you begin to work?** - A year.

**What work were you put to first?** - Pumping the water out of the pits.

**Did you pump by a handle?** - Yes.

**For now many hours during the day?** - I have pumped 12 hours, but generally 10 hours.

**Had you no time to rest?** - No time. I worked at night.

**Had you no time to eat?** - We eat as we worked.

**How long did you continue to work in this way?** - I don't know exactly. I was full three months.

**Every night?** - Yes, except Saturday night.

**Did you also work in the day?** - No.

**Did you work on Sunday?** - No, I used to go to the pit at six one evening to work till six next morning.

**What wages had you?** - I got 6s. a week for this work.

**Who was at work with you all night in the pits were there other boys?** - Only John Catheral, a workman. We had nobody else in the pit all night.

**Is there not a steam engine. Why, therefore, were you pumping in the pits?** - The steam engine did not reach to the part where the water was so we had to pump it up to the level where the engine could carry it off and we worked at night in order to have the place clear for the men next morning.

**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, I can read a little, but not write.

**Are you well treated, and are your wages well paid?** - Yes, I am very well treated, and my wages paid to my mother.

#### **No. 82 Samuel Jones, aged 16.**

**How long have you been working?** - Six years or more.

**At what work?** - I attend the engine.

**Can you read and write?** - I can read, but not write.

**How many hours a-day do you work?** - Twelve hours.

**With what intervals?** - The engineer has very little time to eat, and when it is stopped he has to clean it.

**Is it hard work?** - It is constant attention for 12 hours.

**Do you clean the engine when it is at work?** - Such parts as I can clean I do.

**Has an accident ever occurred to you?** - No, never.

**Are you healthy?** - Yes.

**How long do the other boys work?** - Sometimes more, sometimes less, according as the finish the task.

**Ever more than 12 hours?** - No, generally about 10 hours.

**Are they well used?** - Yes.

#### **No. 83 Joseph Tarrett, aged 10.**

**What age were you when you began work?** - Eight years of age. He has never been ill always well treated. He can neither read or write. He goes sometimes to chapel and Sunday-school but not always.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined many more of the boys, all ignorant, though most of them attend Sunday-school. They work from six to six, as in other places, and appear active and healthy. A fatal accident occurred while the Sub-Commissioner was here a man took out the pin by which the windlass was kept, the weight in the bucket overpowered him, he let go, and the winding-handle struck him on the head with such force as to cause immediate death. No one was to blame but himself. He was well accustomed to the windlass, and knew that the weight was great. He ought not, therefore to have taken out the pin without assistance to hold the winding handle but it is quite extraordinary how incautious even the best and oldest workmen appear to be. The boys appeared healthy, and cheerful, and said they had good clothes, and were well fed.]

#### **No. 84 May 18th, 1841. Peter Parry, Esq., Mold, Surgeon and County Coroner.**

**Have you had much practice amongst colliers and miners in the Mold district?** - Yes, for 34 years.

**What are the diseases to which they are most liable?** - I think they are generally healed like other persons who work hard, they are liable to chronic and acute diseases.

**Do you use with them the same means of cure as you do with others?** - Exactly.

**Do the children work at too early an age, consistent with health and the development of their physical organs?** - Not here. They begin to work when about 10 years old, and if are not worked out of proportion to their age it is not too early.

**Do you say that a boy 10 years old is able to bear 10 or 11 hours work in a day?** - I think even in a healthy mine 10 hours work is too much for a boy under 13, if the work is beyond the powers, health will be affected, and the mental faculties would also then suffer.

**As a medical attendant you must have frequent opportunities of observing what pains taken in the cottages with the moral training of children?** - I don't think any pains are taken.

**Are their morals at a lower ebb than those of the other labouring classes in the district?** - -No.

**Are they as well-behaved, as orderly, and as intellectual?** - I don't know any difference.

**As coroner, have you occasion to know that circumspection and proper precaution are wanting on the part of masters to prevent accidents?** - They are all very cautious. The accidents which do occur are generally in consequence of inattention, and a want of due precaution on the part of the men and usually of the sufferers themselves.

**Is education much neglected?** - It is in the week days but on Sunday there are schools in all the places of worship, but the boys are very ignorant.

**Would you recommend that the boys should not work for so many hours, and that they should be at school a portion of every day?** - I think eight hours work is as much as boys under 13 years of age should undergo, especially below ground, and that they should be two or three hours at school.

**Are they well clothed and fed?** - Yes, very properly.

**Do the men drink much?** - There is much less drinking now than formerly; temperance societies and smaller earnings may be the cause.

**Are their houses clean and tolerably well furnished?** - Yes, they are much upon a par with labourers in general.

**Are the accidents very numerous?** - The district is large, and according to the number of works accidents are not more frequent than might be expected, or easily prevented.

#### **No. 85 Rev. Isaac Harris, Independent Minister, Mold.**

He is well acquainted with the coal and mining district of Mold. The colliers, and miners, and their families generally attend divine worship on Sunday, not all, but most of them. It is pitiable to observe what little pains are taken by parents or masters with the morals of the children, and to observe what numbers of young creatures are almost totally neglected. They have few opportunities of learning anything to advance their temporal or spiritual interests. The little they hear, or are able to learn, on Sunday cannot have much effect but if they could be at school in the week days, were it only for two or three hours, what they would so learn, combined with the Sabbath instruction, might improve them much. They are not harshly treated when at work, nor are complaints made of their being overworked but if the hours of labour were fewer it would, I think, be better for them. Churchmen and Dissenters would do well to combine their efforts with a view to afford means to have them taught to read and write. Until pains are taken little improvement can be expected. They are all day either at work or in idleness, and until something is done to cultivate their understandings, they must remain in ignorance and almost in barbarism, a disgrace to a Christian country. From the progress made in the Sunday-schools it is evident there is a desire to learn, and if proper means were adopted, there is no doubt the children would thankfully receive instruction.

#### **No. 86 May 17th, 1841. Mr. Edward Williams, Clerk of Petty Sessions.**

**Are many cases brought before the bench of justices by colliers and miners against the masters, or by masters against them?** - Sometimes the workmen and the children make complaints for non-payment of wages. These complaints arise out of a difference in keeping the reckoning. I do not think either party has dishonest intention. Accounts run on sometimes for months and they are very indifferently kept, so that when a final settlement is intended a dispute occasionally arises which is brought before the justices. After a little investigation on their parts the case is usually settled to the satisfaction of both parties, and a warrant to distrain is seldom had recourse to.

**Are no complaints ever made by the boys of being ill-treated either by the men in the pits by masters?** - No, but very rarely though they may be, and I have no doubt often are ill-used.

**Are the colliers, or miners, or the boys who are employed in pits and mines, often brought before the bench for offences of any sort?** - Yes, for trespasses, assault, larceny, and sometimes for felony, and frequently for drunkenness and maltreating the police.

**Are they more orderly than formerly?** - I think they are. There is still great room for improvement.

**Which class more frequently appears before the justices, the totally ignorant or those who been taught to read and write?** - The totally ignorant in the full proportion of two to and when and when a person who has been taught to read and write is brought up on a warrant or summons he is generally more reasonable and more easily persuaded of his error.

**Are there any pains taken in the moral training of the children employed in the pits and mines?** - No particular pains, neither masters nor others seem to pay any attention to their training.

**Do you think the children are made to work when too young?** - Yes, I certainly do. I think it stunts their growth.

**Is there any other evil?** - It must, I should think, be an evil for a child to be at work for hours every day, in a pit in dark and narrow passages, full, as I have been made to understand, of bad air, dirt, and often wet.

**Have you anything to observe on the method of payment of wages?** - Yes, I think the men should have their wages paid at the work. The plan is often different, the chartermasters receive their money in full from the managers. The men and boys whom they employ are in many instances obliged to meet the charter-masters at a public-house, where the wages are paid, and where a great deal of money is often spent. The public-houses they frequent are often of the lowest order, and the settlement being on Saturday night. It is not an uncommon thing for some of the men to remain all night, and even all Sunday, in these houses, where the greater part of the wages are consumed, to the great detriment of families.

#### **No. 87 Rev. Owen Jones, Calvinistic Minister, Mold.**

**Are the colliers and miners generally of good conduct?** - Miners, I think conduct themselves better than colliers, there might be improvement in both.

**How do you account for the difference?** - The miners are generally only six hours underground, never more than eight. The colliers are from ten to twelve. They live in houses built adjoining each other near the pits, and when work is over they congregate, and drink, and smoke, use bad language, and often quarrel. The children suffer by the bad example and improvement of the mind cannot take place. The miners live often at a distance from each other, they cultivate their gardens and are more prudent.

**Are the boys well-treated?** - Yes, by the masters, but the men often ill-treat and thrash them.

**How long are the collier-boys at work?** - Twelve hours or thereabouts.

**At what age do they begin to work?** - At 11, seldom much younger.

**Are they oppressed by the work at first?** - No, they keep the air-doors and the rails at first.

**Are the health and the growth impeded by the work?** - They inhale foul air, they are constantly in a stooping posture, and the dirt, dust, and heat in which they live when in the pits cannot conduce to health or growth, I think.

**Has the work a tendency to demoralise the boys?** - Yes, they hear bad language, there is fighting and wrangling, and when mere children they often begin themselves to smoke, and even to drink.

**Do they attend divine worship?** - Most of them do not attend any place of worship.

**Do the parents not attend divine worship?** - I think a great many of them neglect public worship.

**Can most of the children read a little?** - I am not certain, many can.

**How do they learn?** - They are taught in Sunday-schools.

**Would it be better that they should not be so many hours at work below ground?** - In regard to health and growth no doubt it would, even if idle but in a moral view it would be no better unless education were provided for them.

**Do you think secular education would tend to improve morals?** - Yes, I do.

**And be of advantage to them afterwards as workmen?** - Yes.

**Do you speak from experience?** - Yes, I have had extensive opportunities of judging, especially when I was employed three years ago at a colliery near this town. I there found that the best men were those who could read and write. If unfortunately there was any dissatisfaction and quarrels they were always the most reasonable and the most easily satisfied. They possessed influence also over the other men, and they used it in allaying irritation and in bringing others to reason.

**If good night-schools were established near large works would the children attend them?** - Yes, a little pains taken at first to induce them might be necessary. If they once saw advantage there would be no difficulty afterwards, especially if the masters were well trained teachers and the charges moderate.

#### **No. 88 May 24th, 1841. Mr. Richard Jones.**



**Are you the relieving officer of the Mold district? - Yes.**

**Are the miners and colliers greater in numbers in Mold than others who gain a livelihood by labour? - Yes.**

**Will you describe to me the condition of the men and children employed in the pits and mines, under the circumstances presented to you as relieving officer? -** There are here more widows and children of colliers and miners than of other labouring men on the books, in consequence of the frequent accidents which occur. There are not above six men on the books of the age of 80 years, two of them were colliers, he thinks. There are only twelve men on the books of the age of 70, of these he thinks four are colliers and four are miners. Accidents are often taking place in the pits and mines, and children are often killed. The accidents often happen in consequence of the ignorance and inexperience of the children, and frequently from casualties against which they could not provide. Children are generally healthy and when at work, do not die more frequently than children in other employment. When fever is prevalent the colliers and miners are very subject to it, and it runs through whole families in consequence of the smallness of the houses, which are often clustered together and not well ventilated or very clean, but the mortality is not greater than when fever attacks other families in district. He thinks the children are sent to work when too young; they are generally taken school to work, a complete stop is thereby put to education, and their morals and principles are undermined, and though they may keep in health they are very ignorant and rude. Not one in twenty attends a night-school, and many of them leave off going to church or chapel being entirely independent of parents or any one else, their morals become tainted in early life, and their minds are quite uncultivated. He finds those among the men who had some education more reasonable and easily managed than the totally ignorant. The colliers and miners drink much, and often to excess, but they are better than they used to be. The teetotal system is a good one, and many take the pledge and keep it. None of the working colliers are receiving any parochial relief, while they have work they support their families even when in sickness, and there is generally a medical man engaged to attend them, who is paid by a poundage on wages. The boys who work are well paid and have sufficient food and are generally well clad. The collier boys are a ruder set than other working boys. Sunday, however, is generally well observed by all classes, and though there are many who do not attend divine worship, yet they do not, as was formerly the case, play, riot, and gamble. All the working classes are improved in that respect.

[The Sub-Commissioner applied to Mr. Wynne Eyton, Mr. Warburton, and the Rev Mr. Clough, the justices of peace for the Mold division. They said that the colliers and miners gave them very little trouble, and that they were not more addicted to crimes than others of the labouring classes. The miners and colliers live at a distance from them, and they professed to know but little of their habits and customs. Mr. Clough paid great attention to the national schools but there are but few collier and mine boys in them and those who come there are taken away when young, and often forget what they have learnt. The justices say they have no reason to think the boys in the mines and pits are otherwise than well and humanely treated. Nor were they prepared to say they were either worked when too young or too many hours in the day. They believed the boys were healthy as a class, and that the work and confinement below ground had no prejudicial effects on the health or mental faculties. But few complaints respecting wages were made before them. That long accounts of wages had occasionally to be settled before them, but in these cases there was rarely any appearance of improper intentions. They arose out of misunderstandings, and were easily adjusted. They had always found the colliers, miners, and foremen as honest as other classes, and their health pretty much the same. They had reason to believe in some works the truck system was carried on to the loss of the families of workmen, but no complaints had been made before them by any individuals so as to implicate those engaged in it.]

## **MOSTYN COLLIERY HOLYWELL.**

**No. 89 June 7th, 1841. Daniel Cottrel, clerk to the Messrs. Eyton of Mostyn Colliery.**

And he has been so for eight years. He says we have had turnouts several times amongst the workmen. They stood out for wages. On these occasions I always found those who had had some education were more reasonable than others who were quite ignorant. I could talk to them with more probability of convincing them and of showing them their error but it was useless to talk to or to argue with the ignorant. I find the ignorant at all times less easily convinced and less manageable. Those that have had some education attend more to their religious and moral duties. The ignorant are less inclined to do their duty both towards God and man. Children should be all educated. I have often thought it a pity they worked so much, with so little attention paid to their moral training. It is wrong to work them so many hours and if works could be carried on without

putting children to labour at nights it would be well to prevent them. I have not known any children whose health has been injured by work either day or by night but it is unnatural to suppose that work all night can be healthy. I think, regards the health of workmen, those who are employed in the pits and forges are no less healthy than others. There is, I think, but little difference and they are equally well conducted and intellectual. All classes of labouring people are much improved of late years in their general conduct. I attribute this to the strenuous efforts and admonitions of the Dissenters, and the temperance societies have done a deal of good. No especial pains are taken masters or others in the moral training of the children. There are no schools belonging works. In my opinion the people themselves, and society at large, would benefit much by general system of education. The boys in the works are everywhere well treated, and wages punctually paid and every care is taken in this work to prevent accidents, and to keep the head-gear of the pits in good order and repair.

**No 90 William Jones, aged 14.**

**How long have you been at work?** - Four years.

**At what work?** - I began by keeping the air-doors in the coal pits and I now riddle coals in the pits.

**Can you read and write?** - I can read in Welsh, but I can't write.

**Were you ever at a day-school?** - Yes, for a short time, before I was taken into the pits.

**You go to a Sunday-school?** - I go every Sunday to chapel and to school.

**Have you been doing so for some time?** - Yes, ever since I could walk, I think.

**What is taught in the Sunday-school?** - They begin by learning to spell words, and are taught to read in that way. We are taught the Bible.

**Can you read the Bible?** - No, not yet.

**How many hours are you in the pits every day?** - Sometimes ten hours, sometimes more than twelve.

**Do you work at night?** - I have done so sometimes when the pits had to be cleared but then did not work next day.

**Is there much swearing in the pits?** - Some of the men swear a good deal.

**Does no one check them for doing so?** - There is no one to do so. Sometimes one that belongs to the chapel will tell those that swear that it is sinful to do so.

**Are they laughed at for telling them so?** - No.

**Are the pit boys often beaten and ill-used by the men?** - No, not often. Those that swear will sometimes beat the boys that work with them but I work with religious men who never swear, or ill-use me.

**What are your earnings?** - From to 6s. 6d. a week.

**No. 91 Edward Hughes, aged 12.**

**How long have you been in the pits?** - About fifteen months.

**What is your work?** - Attending air-doors and rails.

**What are your wages?** - 3s. a week.

**How many hours are you in the pits?** - About twelve hours, often less.

**How do you go into the pits?** - Down Hill.\*

**Can you read?** - A little, in an easy book.

**Were you ever at a day-school?** - Yes, for about half a year before I went to work but I learnt nothing.

**Do you attend divine worship?** - Yes, always in the chapel, three times every Sunday.

**Are you ever beaten by the men?** - No, never.

**Do they swear much?** - No, not much.

**What do you employ yourself in after work?** - I play but sometimes I go to chapel.

**No. 92 David Jones, aged 14, twin-brother to William Jones, the by examined previous to the last.**

**Do you work in the pits?** - Yes, I have done so for five years.  
**What is your work?** - Driving the pyches on the rails.  
**Is it hard work?** - No, not very.  
**What wages have you?** - A bout 7s.. 6d. a week.  
**How often do you receive wages?** - Every fortnight.  
**Who gets your wages?** - My father.  
**How many hours are you in the pits every day?** - I go down about six in the morning, I am always up by six in the evening, often by four.  
**What do you do after work?** - I play, and go to evening chapel two or three times a-week.  
**Can you read?** - A little in Welsh.  
**Are you healthy, and well treated by everybody?** - Yes, very healthy, and well treated I everybody.

**No. 93 Robert Roberts, aged 17.**

**How long have you been in the pits?** - A little more than two years.  
**Were you otherwise employed before you went into the pits?** - Yes, at the lead-mines washing lead ore.  
**Why did you go to the coal-pits?** - My father removed to this neighbourhood, and I work here from Messrs. Eyton.  
**Which work do you like best?** - I would rather work in the pits.  
**Are you healthy?** - I have a difficulty of breathing.  
**Do you attribute it to the work in which you have been engaged?** - No, I was and my mother is so.  
**What number of hours do you work in the day?** - From ten to twelve hours.  
**Do you work at night?** - No, not now; I used to work a week by night and the following week by day, when there was a press of work.  
**Was your health worse when you worked by night?** - No, just the same.  
**Can you read and write?** - No, I can do neither.  
**How so?** - I see my clothes too poor to go to school.  
**What are your wages?** - 10s. a week, sometimes not so much. I lose a day often, when work is slack.  
**Who receives your wages?** - My mother gets all.  
**Do you attend divine worship?** - No, not always, my clothes are so poor.  
**Do your parents go to church or chapel?** - No, not always.

*\* An inclined plane from the surface to the workings.*

**Do the boys or men fight or quarrel much in the pits?** - No, I never see them do so.  
**Is there much swearing?** - Not much.

[A most ignorant lad, and looks very unhealthy.]

**No. 94 Robert Roberts, aged 15.**

**How long have you been working in the pits?** - Two years.  
**How many hours a-day?** - From eight to twelve hours every day.  
**Do you ever work overtime?** - No, never.  
**What are your wages?** - 1s. 3d. a day.  
**Do the boys fight or quarrel much in the pits?** - No, I never see them.  
**Do they swear much?** - No.  
**Do you attend divine worship?** - Yes, I go to chapel two or three times every Sunday, often on week-days in the evenings.  
**Were you at school before you began to work?** - Yes, for two or three years.  
**Can you read and write?** - Yes, a little.  
**What school were you at?** - A small school. I paid 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. a week to the teacher.  
**What did he teach?** - Reading, writing, and accounts.

**No. 95 June 8th, 1841. Peter Williams, Surgeon, Hollywell.**

I have been 23 years in practice in Holywell. During that space of time I do not recollect a single case of physical imperfection occasioned by the nature or the duration of work in this district. The works consist of lead-mines, collieries, and manufactories of lead, copper, &c. &c. The large cotton mills have ceased to work for about two years. In some of these works children begin to labour at early ages, especially in the collieries, and for the most part work for 12 hours, either by day or night, out of the 24, and even more when there is a press of work. The chief diseases to which they are liable are those of the brouchiæ and occasional disorders, in those employed in the lead-works, of the stomach and bowels, in the form of '*colica pictonum*' arising from absorption of lead, which is in general easily cured by purgatives. The other disease, *viz.* that of the bronchial tubes, is of gradual growth. Young persons exhibit no symptoms of this disease, but the seeds are early sown, and it is an observation we make, that miners and colliers, by the age of 40, generally become affected by chronic bronchitis, and commonly before the age of 60 fall martyrs to the disease. I would not undertake to say that if miners and colliers were not employed so early in life and for so many hours a day under ground, their lives would be prolonged, but it is natural to suppose that long-continued work at early ages below the surface, in dampness and an atmosphere loaded with foul vapours, must have a tendency to produce disease, and especially disease connected with the respiratory organs. I am not prepared to assert that the early employment of children for many hours daily and nightly in mines and large works has the effect of disturbing the physical powers or of confining the mental faculties, because I am not blind to the fact that children so employed come to maturity in health and vigour. But humanity and science must surely unite in condemning a system which enlists the labour of children for many hours uninterrupted in close and confined workshops, or in badly ventilated subterraneous excavations. I am not aware of any surgical diseases or topical affections to which these classes of workmen are more liable than others. Even chronic rheumatism, which I am told is prevalent in other districts, is but little the subject of complaint here, and the workmen are, for the most part, very healthy and hardy, until the symptoms of affections of the bronchial tubes show themselves. You ask me whether, from my professional visits or from other means, I am able to say whether there is any improvement of late years in the morals of the men and children who work together in numbers. I must say in reply, that I consider there is improvement. Formerly there was great laxity of morals, which was very observable on the Sabbath but the present system of extending education, and the great exertions made by the clergy and Dissenters, have certainly improved the moral condition of the people and to me it is made evident, by my frequent visits at the bedside of the sick, that the virtues of patience and resignation, united to prayer and thanksgiving, are now more apparent. I am sensible that the children still stand in need of a better system of moral training and mental cultivation. There is very little of either, and there can be but little if the whole day, and often the night, is spent in labour. Such a system scarcely admits of the possibility of improving the moral condition or of cultivating the mind. Parental authority is lost, and but little or no control over the children can exist after the hours of work. The masters attempt none, and the wages eared by the labour of the children are such as to tempt the parents quietly to resign theirs. In respect to food and clothing, I cannot help thinking the children are very well of. I consider that a system of education upon a comprehensive and general plan would have a most beneficial tendency.

**No. 96 May 29th, 1841. John Jones, Relieving Officer for the Holywell.**

He is much among miners and colliers, forgemen, lead and copper workers, &c. The children involved in these works are generally healthy, fully as much so as the children of agriculturists are their equals at least in morals and personal appearance, perhaps their superiors. Though the children and young persons employed in these works are healthy, still it is that they soon get to look old, and they often become asthmatic before they are they are not as long-lived as agriculturists. Amongst those persons of 80 years of age now on the pauper list, he does not think there is one who has been a miner or collier. Of those of 70 some have been colliers, some miners, but they are very asthmatic. There are more widows of miners and colliers on the parish books than of any other class of persons, though the husbands of some may have been killed in the works, yet he cannot but think that disease brought on by early and constant work below ground and in bad air is in part the cause. He considers the children in collieries a rough set: they go to work too early in life, and have no opportunity to improve their minds or manners afterwards. He finds those persons have had no education far more difficult to deal with than those who have been

taught read and write. There is no such thing as reasoning with them. They curse the law and the makers of the law, and never listen to reason. He is sure that if children could be kept at school till 13 or 14 years old there would be less dissatisfaction and dissipation, and perhaps less pauperism. There are several orphans in the workhouse, but the guardians never think of putting them out as colliers and miners. He cannot say why, but supposes it is out of pity for them, as every one would consider it a degradation to be so placed, unless particularly applied for by an uncle or near relative. They are frequently put out to farmers, but it often happens that, induced by the wages, they leave the farmer to work under ground. He believes that the boys are well treated, and that they have good food and clothes. The colliers and other persons, when in employ, live comfortably, and generally respectably. Few of them save any money. Those who have been careful usually build a house for themselves so as to sit rent free.

**No. 97 Mr. Edward Jones.**

**Have you been long in this district?** - Yes, all my life.

**Are you well acquainted with all the large works?** - Yes, very well.

**Will you give some description of the people employed in them?** - I consider those employed in the lead and copper manufactories the hardest worked and the most unhealthy. The children are brought to all the works too early in life. They frequently work by night as well as by day, and all possibility is thus denied them of improving their mental condition. They leave school too soon, and they have no means afterwards of obtaining instruction. They ought to have fewer hours of work, and a day-school should be provided for them, nor should they be allowed to work at all by night. Masters do not consider the subject, or they would surely endeavour to mitigate the labour of young children, and I know they are for the most part kind and humane persons. I am a guardian for the parish of Holywell, and though at this time there are many orphans and other children in the workhouse, yet no one thinks of proposing to send them to work in the pits or mines, or even in the manufactories. I consider, and suppose others do, that their physical and moral condition would be injured by going there. There is reason to believe that the best results would follow a systematic plan of general education, seeing the great change which has been wrought in this district since Churchmen and Dissenters have interested themselves so much in instructing children and adults in Sunday-schools. Confined as the instruction must necessarily be when it is merely given one day in the week by unaccustomed teachers, yet the consequence is that the Sabbath is no longer desecrated by riot and gambling, and by drunkenness and noisy sports, as was the case formerly. Sobriety and a desire for instruction have taken the place of barbarity, and there is now more order and some religious training everywhere. I have no reason to think that the children ill-treated in the works. They appear well clothed, and their food is plentiful. The work generally have clean and comfortable dwellings, and when in work have a sufficiency to their families respectably. Some drink to excess, and show bad examples to the boys, but drunkenness is by no means so common as it has been.

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**BRITISH COAL AND IRON COMPANY'S FORGES, &C., RUABON.**

**No. 98 April 9th, 1841. Richard James, aged 16.**

**How long have you been at work?** - Six years.

**Was you in school before you began to work?** - Yes, at Bilston, my parents paid for me 6s. a quarter.

**What did you learn?** - Reading, writing, and figures.

**Have you been at school since you came to this country?** - Yes, at Cefn Mawr, at quarter.

**What did you learn there?** - The same as at Bilston.

**Did they teach alike in both places?** - Yes.

**What wages have you?** - 1s. 8d. a day.

**Have you always six days' work in the week?** - No, last week we only worked five days.  
**What is your work?** - I am a moulder in the forge.  
**Did you think the work very hard at first?** - No.  
**Then you don't think it hard now?** - No.  
**Do you like your work?** - Yes.  
**Are you often ill-used or beaten by the men?** - No, never.  
**Are your wages paid regularly?** - Yes.  
**Who pays you?** - George Brice, the head moulder. He hired me.  
**What do you do with your wages?** - I give them to my mother.  
**What time is allowed for meals, and where do you eat them?** - I go home to meals; the half an hour allowed for breakfast and an hour for dinner.  
**How many hours do you work in the day?** - We go to work at six and leave at six.  
**Do you ever work overtime?** - Yes, often, for three or four hours.  
**Do you like working overtime?** - Yes, I like it because I get more wages.  
**Do you ever work all night?** - Yes, often.  
**How long have you worked without rest?** - Thirty-six hours.  
**Were you ever ill?** - Yes, I had the fever once.  
**Was it in consequence of hard work?** - No, I caught cold. How, I don't know.  
**How were you supported during illness?** - I belong to a club and had 5s. a week from it  
**What do you pay to the club?** - All the workmen in the forge belong to it, and 2d. in pound on wages is stopped, and also 2d. in the pound to pay a doctor.  
**What is the most you ever earned in a month?** - Two pounds.  
**Is there much bad language and swearing in the forges?** - No, I seldom hear any.  
**Are there any rules in the works for fines, punishments, or rewards?** - No, but I have a present from George Brice of 3s. for doing my work well.  
**Did he also give to others?** - Yes, I have seen him give to others.  
**Do you go to divine worship?** - Yes, to the Methodist chapel, and I attend the Sunday school.  
**Have you always sufficient food?** - Yes.  
**And good clothes?** - Yes.  
**Do you always wash yourself after work?** - Yes.  
**Did you begin to go to work with your father?** - Yes, he was in the forges.  
**You can read and write?** - Yes.

**No. 99 Edward Tudor, aged 12.**

**When were you twelve?** - I don't know.  
**How do you know you are twelve?** - My mother told me so.  
**How long have you been working?** - Two years.  
**What is your work?** - I am a moulder.  
**Do you think it very hard work?** - No, not very hard.  
**How long have you ever worked without rest?** - Three turns.  
**How many hours is a turn?** - Twelve.  
**Have you been ill since you began work?** - No.  
**What are your wages?** - 3s. a-week.  
**Who pays you?** - George Brice, I work for him.  
**Does he reward you sometimes if you do your work well?** - He has made me a present sometimes.  
**Does any one ever pray aloud in the works?** - Yes, George Brice often does.  
**Have you good clothes and plenty of food?** - Yes.  
**Do you go home to meals?** - Yes.

**No. 100 Thomas Jones, aged 12.**

**How long have you been at work?** - Three quarters of a year.  
**At what work?** - I am a straightener in the forge.  
**Is it hard work?** - Not very hard work.  
**What are your wages?** - 5s. a-week.  
**What are the hours for work?** - From six to six.  
**Do you work overtime, and ever all night?** - Yes, sometimes.

**Have you good clothes and sufficient to eat?** - Yes.  
**Can you read?** - No.  
**Do you go to school?** - No, except to the Sunday-school at chapel.

**No. 101 Benjamin James, aged 14.**

**When were you fourteen?** - I don't know.  
**How long have you been working?** - More than two years.  
**What is your work?** - I am a moulder.  
**What is the greatest length of time you have ever worked in the forge without rest?** - Three turns, thirty six hours.  
**What payment had you?** - I was paid as for three days work.  
**Are you healthy?** - Yes, always.  
**Can you read and write?** - No.  
**Don't you go to any school?** - No, except to a Sunday-school.  
**Have you good clothes and plenty to eat?** - Yes.

**No. 102 Edward Richards, aged 13.**

**How long have you been at work?** - Two years.  
**What is your work?** - I am a shear-lad.  
**What is that?** - I carry away the ends of the iron from the big and little mill.  
**Is it hard work?** - Yes, it is pretty hard.  
**Do you work at night?** - No, never.  
**Do you wash yourself before you eat?** - Very seldom.  
**Do you at night?** - Yes.  
**Who has your wages?** - Mother, she sometimes gives me a two pence.  
**Have you good clothes?** - Yes.  
**Do you go to church?** - I used to go, but I now go to chapel.  
**Do you go to Sunday-school?** - Yes.  
**Can you read and write?** - I can read a little, but I can write only a very little.  
**Do you like to go to school in the evening?** - I would sooner work or play.  
**Why don't you like school?** - Because the master used to beat me.

**No. 103 William Evans, aged 10.**

**When will you be eleven?** - I don't know indeed.  
**How long have you been working?** - About twelve months.  
**What is your work?** - I am a lifter.  
**What is that?** - I lift the bar of hot iron over the roller.  
**Is it dangerous work?** - Yes, if one is not quick.  
**Were you ever hurt?** - Yes, I was burnt once.  
**How many hours a day do you work?** - From six to six.  
**Do you work overtime?** - Not often.  
**Have you good food and clothing ?-Yes.**  
**Are you well treated by the men?** - Yes.

**No. 104 Jacob Davies, aged 11.**

**How long have you been working?** - Almost four years.  
**What wages do you earn?** - 10d. a-day.  
**What is your work?** - I handle the clay-engine.  
**Then you are not in the forge?** - No, they make bricks for the ovens and the kilns and I turn the handle of the clay-engine.  
**Do you work over- time?** - No.  
**Do you work every day in the week?** - Seldom more than five days.

**What do you do when there is no work?** - I play about with other boys.  
**Are you always well?** - Yes, always.  
**Are you well used in the work?** - Yes.  
**Can you read?** - Yes, a very little.  
**Can you write?** - I am just beginning to learn.  
**Who made the agreement for your wages?** - My father, and he gets my wages.

**No. 105. Thomas Jones, aged 12, near 13.**

**How long have you been working?** - Five years.  
**What are your wages?** - 1s. 5d. a-day.  
**What is your work?** - I am a piler in the forge.  
**What is that?** - I pile the iron after it has gone through the rollers in the forge.  
**Can you read and write?** - Yes. I was at the church-school at Rhos Medre.  
**Are you healthy?** - Yes.  
**Does not the heat or the forge affect you?** - No.  
**Have you good clothes?** - Yes.  
**And plenty to eat?** - Yes.  
**Are you well treated in the work?** - Yes.  
**Do you go to divine worship?** - Not always.

**No. 106 Samuel Price, aged 13.**

**Have you been long at work?** - Three years.  
**What is your work?** - I work with the boiler makers.  
**Are you healthy?** - Yes.  
**Working agrees with you?** - Yes.  
**Are the boys well treated in the works?** - Yes.  
**Do you hear much swearing amongst the men?** - No, not much. Sometimes they swear in the forges.  
**Can you read and write?** - Yes, a little.  
**Where were you taught?** - I was two years at the Ruabon free-school before I to work.  
**Have you have not been at any school since?** - No  
**What books were used in the free-school?** - Bible and Testament  
**Have you good clothes?** - I have two suits of clothes.  
**How many meals a day have you?** - Three meals.  
**Have you nothing between dinner and supper?** - Sometimes at four o'clock.  
**Have you always enough of food?** - Yes.  
**Do you regularly attend divine worship?** - Sometimes.

**ACREFAIR IRON WORKS, Ruabon, Denbighshire.**

**No. 107 Thomas Rees, aged 48, roller. July 6th, 1841.**

He began work, he thinks, when he was about five or six years old, as a collier boy, pits in South Wales, at 4s. per week. The boys in South Wales never hurry or push the pyches and that work is done there by horses, the seams of coal being from four feet in thickness. He went from the pits to work in the forges when he was seven or eight old, having done nothing in the pits but keep the air-doors. His father was a collier and he went to the pits because his mother told him to go, and because he was required to earn something to keep him. He remembers the first time he ever went below ground. It was with one of his father's friends. He was much frightened, and cried a good deal, but he was coaxed and cheered by the person who took him into the work, and



he soon became accustomed, and to being below. He was never at school, and cannot read and was never at Sunday-school. He felt much tired to go on Sunday, and had no opportunity of going to a day-school. He considers himself very unfortunate in not having had some education, and that he is unable to read. He sees others able to do so, and that they derive a great deal of pleasure from reading, and have the satisfaction of knowing and reading what is in the Bible. He goes to church and chapel almost every Sunday. He has five children, two of them are working with him in the forge, one 15 the other 12 years of age. He earns himself about £2. a-week, sometimes more. The boys earn from 4s. to 9s. a week and he and they work by the piece, at the rolls, and work from six to six, one week by day, the other by night. He does not find that the night-work injures the health of the boys or his own but thinks they do not sleep so well by day as by night, nor is the appetite so good. He and the boys always wash themselves before eating and before going to bed. His boys went to school before they came to work at the forges and can read and write pretty well. He is paid about 6s. a quarter for teaching them at a small day-school, where they were taught reading, writing, and arithmetic. The work is so heavy, and the heat so great, that thirst is very great, and he is obliged to drink a deal of small-beer but seldom drinks much strong ale or liquors. He used to get drunk often, and spend a great deal of money drink, but does not do so now, nor does he let the boys drink anything stronger than small-beer. He finds there is no necessity for strong ale or liquor, notwithstanding the heat of the forges and the great thirst but he thinks the more drink that is taken the greater the thirst. He has often collected tried to conquer the thirst by chewing substances, and refraining from drink, but did not succeed. He finds that all the wages which he and the boys can earn go in food, clothing, and drink, and in payment of subscription to his club. He can save nothing. The boys in the work are well used. The master does not allow of ill-usage towards them. His own boys go to school every evening of the week when they work by day, but they are too much tired to go to school the week of night-work. He finds they come on very well by this means. He thinks that all boys who work only from six to six might learn very well by going, after work, to a night-school, it would be just as good for their health as play. He has known many who have learnt very well and done well in the world by going to night-school after work. His boys always attend Sunday-school and divine worship in chapel, but there are many men and boys in this neighbourhood who never go to divine worship, and who play and gamble on Sunday. He thinks those who can read, and have been at school, are more attentive to their duties, and go more to church or chapel than others who have never been at school, and consequently know no better. He has no doubt whatever that those who can read and write are better behaved than those who cannot. He has been in works where the men have turned out for wages, and though he is unable to read himself, he must say that those who could do so were least inclined to riot. They know the danger of breaking the law, and were afraid. He has four men and three working under him at the rolls and they are all healthy. He thinks the iron-works healthy, though occasionally the men get a difficulty of breathing. He thinks the men in the forges do not live so long as agricultural labourers and thinks the colliers are more healthy than the forgemen. He has never been in a collier's house and knows nothing of them. He believes they are as well behaved as other people.

his  
(Signed) THOMAS <math>\times</math> REES.  
mark.

**No. 108. Joseph Norton aged 33 years. May 6th, 1841.**

He began to work when he was 12 years old and was at a day-school for four years before he began to work, and can read, write, and cast accounts. His first work was as a lifter the rolls in the iron works. He is now head roller, with two men and four boys under him. He works by the ton, and earns about 30s. a week on an average but has earned as much as £3 a week, but that was very seldom. He does not work overtime, as there are two sets a night and a day set. He finds it very hard work both for himself and the boys. He could drink three or four gallons a day of beer and he is sure he drinks two quarts of beer a day, and fully a gallon of water. The boys drink buttermilk and water, and very seldom beer. The boys are much tired at night and it is a pity to see them employed in such hard labour for so many hours a day, but they are glad to get work, notwithstanding they are sorely pressed at first, and cry and fret a good deal, but they soon come used to it. He has one boy working with him who is not above 12 years old, who gets only 4s. a week, and his parents are so poor they can't give him sufficient food or clothing, let alone giving him any schooling. He has been only been 12 months in Wales and finds the children very

ignorant, and worse behaved than in England, and so, he thinks the men and women are. They do not keep the Sabbath well here. The children play more, and the men go more to the public-house, but they are not so bad as they were. The boys are generally well treated in the works, but he thinks them poorly clothed and feed but cannot say why, as the wages are as much here as in England, and supposes the men and women are worse managers, and the men drink more here in any place he was ever in. He thinks if they were educated that would not be the case. He always finds those who have benefited by education are the best people. Those who are ignorant are careless about everything. The houses here are not so good as they are in Staffordshire, nor do the women keep them so clean. He is sure that the houses of those who have been at school, and can read and write, are much better kept than the houses of ignorant people and they contrive to make their wages go further, and to live more comfortably. Wherever masters of works have been strict in enforcing or advising parents to send their children to school they are better conducted and more regular. It would, he is sure, be a great blessing if children could get a little schooling. He has been able to save about £300 and to lay it in houses. Accidents sometimes occur, even though every precaution is taken. The boys I often run and lark, and he is often afraid they will fall into the rolls. The machinery is properly fenced or boxed off, but nothing will make men or boys cautious, and therefore they get burnt. Sometimes when there is a press of work the boys are with difficulty kept awake at night. They are ready to sleep as soon as ever there is the least stop in the work but they are generally well treated, and never work overtime.

(Signed) JOSEPH NORTON.

**No. 109 Joseph Jones, aged 35 years, bead roller. July 6th, 1841.**

Wages are by the ton and average from 30s. to 60s. a week. He does not consider the work healthy as the heat is so great, and the work so heavy, that perspiration is very copious, and thirst enormous. He began at nine years old at straightening bars from the rolls. He was not forced to work, but went of his own accord and was always well used. He earned at first 8d. a day and the work always agreed with him, though he has been ill occasionally. He was at school a short time before he began to work and learned to read, but has never been at school since, except a Sunday-school, which he goes to now. He attends divine worship every Sunday at the chapel. He has four children, the oldest a girl 13 years old, who has been at school, and can read and write. The second is a boy, 10 years old, has been at school, and can read and has been at work for a month. He intends him to go to school again. He never associates with the colliers and does not know why but supposes because he has but little time. They are as good as other people. He subscribes to a friendly club, but has saved no money. He thinks but few do, even though many of them are very sober people, and have as good wages as himself. The people here are as good as those in England, and keep the Sabbath as well. There is not so much swearing as there used to be, and many go to church or chapel. Sunday-schools are much better attended than formerly, and people think more about giving their children schooling. He sends his children to school because he is sure that it is a great advantage to be able to read and write. He has felt the loss of not being able to write himself but might have done better if he had learnt. He finds the children who go to school, and those who have had some education, are better behaved and steadier than those who know nothing. He hopes to be able to see his children good scholars. He does not know that masters take any pains to have children well brought up as they are allowed generally to do as they like. Some parents are strict with them, but not many.

his  
(Signed) JOHN >< JONES.  
mark.

**No. 110 Thomas Leonard, aged 46 years, forge manager.**

He began work in the forges at eight or nine years of age and went to work because he did not like school, and contrary to his parents' wishes, who wanted him to stay at school. He could read before he began work, but cannot write, which is a great loss to him. He has often repented he did not remain at school and learn to write as he might have done better in life. He sees how great a benefit education is, and wishes all children could be at school till they can read and write. He has been a manager of the forge for 12 years and is sorry to say that many who have had some education are as badly behaved as others who have had none, but that is not the fault of having

been taught, but is, he thinks, the effect of chance or some such cause, and probably they would have been much worse if they had not been at school all. He knows nothing of any other people than such as are about the forges. The forgemen cannot resist drink, and consequently spend much of their wages in drinking and the boys begin to do so at the age of 13 or 14, and the heat of the forges is such as make the temptation too great to be resisted. There are four beer-shops within a few yards of this work and they give a vast deal of trouble, by enticing the men to drink, when they should be at work. Much of the earnings that should go to the family are spent there, and poverty the consequence. Beer-shops do a deal of harm, and meetings often take place in them the purpose of planning mischief. Wages amongst forgemen are quite sufficient, but in consequence of the number of beer-shops many of the families are much distressed, and cannot get sufficient food and clothing because of the money spent in them. A great many, three parts out of four, of the forgemen and their families are well-conducted and orderly people, and spend their time, and the Sabbath in particular, in a very proper manner children have not many advantages, they have too little education, and begin to work very young. He does not consider that work, even when children begin very young, does the health any injury but it would be better for children to be kept at school till they are 12 13 years old, or if they could have education some part of every day, as they now have in factories. He thinks the people are much better educated in this country than they used be. 24 years ago they were very bad. They never went to school, and never thought of divine worship. Since then the Dissenters have built chapels everywhere, and there are Sunday-schools in them, these have brought about a great reform, and everywhere a desire to level now perceptible. The people are more sober and careful. Those who go to chapel and Sunday-school are usually very particular in their conduct. They often save a little money, and live comfortable than others. The children of these people are well fed and clothed, and trained but others, with the same rate of wages, are quite the reverse. They drink and neglect their families, and their houses are uncomfortable. In proportion as they are educated and attend Divine worship they improve in good conduct and in ideas of comfort, and become anxious for their children's welfare. Good day and night schools are much wanted near works. Those at a distance are of no value to working people. In this parish there are many schools, but none near enough to the works. Temperance and teetotal societies are increasing and doing a vast of good. He knows many in this work who were extremely drunken, but who have been sober ever since they have taken the pledge. He knows one who was a notorious drunkard whose family was in a wretched condition, but who took the pledge two years ago and has never tasted ale or spirit since. He is now in good circumstances, his house is comfortable, and his family have sufficient clothes and food, and he is a constant attendant at chapel and Sunday-school. He believes there are many similar instances of reform brought about by the teetotal societies. Bastardy was formerly very common in this county and amongst the families of forgemen and others and it is now greatly decreased. Though there is still much immorality, there can be no doubt that much improvement has taken place, and he thinks if there was a general system of education the improvement would be still greater. The boys are not ill-used in the works. He makes it a rule to prevent any man beating a boy. He would rather encourage than beat a boy. He never knew good come of beating any one. Many of the forgemen have very comfortable houses, most of them have a clock in the house, and the furniture is neat and clean. There is evidently a growing desire for comfort. They are much prouder and higher in their ideas than they used to be, most of them have a cloth on the table for dinner, and eat with a knife and fork, and they always wash themselves as soon as they go home. The boys under him are hired by the rollers or puddlers or whom ever they serve, and are paid by them. He believes they are well and regularly paid every fortnight. Some of the boys work by the day, and are employed in the forges wheeling barrows, keeping the rails, sweeping, &c. and these boys are under him (examinant), and paid at the rate of 7s., 8s., and 9s. a week, and paid by the manager of the work, Mr. Wood. They come at six and go at six. They get their meals in the work, an hour and a half being allowed them for breakfast and dinner. They generally wash themselves before they eat, and are very healthy.

#### **No. 111 The Rev. Edward Edwards.**

I am curate of Wrexham, and have been so for three years and a half. I was for 17 years the officiating clergyman of Marsden, in the diocese of Ripon, and conducted the Sunday-school there for fourteen years. Marsden is in a dense manufacturing district. I am a practical man. I consider that education, generally speaking, has not any good tendency unless it is based on religion, and religion taught according to the formularies and catechism of the Church of England. Secular education, unless combined with the doctrines and discipline of the Church, I consider as likely to

have an evil tendency. In my domicilliary visits to the poor I have observed greater predisposition and aptitude to receive religious comfort and consolation and instruction, and to submit with patience to the Divine will, among those who have been educated in the Sunday-schools of the Establishment, than among those who have had education elsewhere, or than those who have had no education. I have observed that those who have had some education, but who were not religiously disposed, were the most forward in producing a state of insubordination against employers among the employed. Their knowledge seemed only to puff up the mind and to render it less subordinate to superiors. I think secular education without sound religious instruction is like placing a razor in a man's hand. It may be made useful, but it may serve as the instrument of self-destruction. I would not be the advocate of any system of secular education unless at the same time the doctrines of the Church of England, which are the doctrines of Scripture, were assiduously and taught by the clergyman of every parish, being what he is bound to do by the constitution of the Church. I consider that the immorality and irreligion of the present day to a great extent be justly ascribed to the neglect of this important duty amongst clergy. I found that the strict attention which I paid to this duty for 14 years at Marsden produced an extensively beneficial effect upon the moral character and religious learning of the operatives, inasmuch as by means of the Sunday-school conducted upon sound scriptural and Church principles, education had the effect of reducing the number of bastards from 12 annually to 3 or 4 in a population of 2400, while at the same time the communicants church increased from 7 to 60. The Sabbath was more strictly observed both by adults and children, drunkenness decreased, men, women, and children became more attentive to the performance of their relative duties, and the moral aspect of the parish underwent considerable improvement. I consider that too little attention is paid to the moral training of the children. I do not think that employment of young children together in numbers has any immoral tendency. At Marsden, where all the children were put to work at early ages, they are more moral than in parishes where no large works were carried on. Much however may depend on the care of masters and the strictness of overlookers. Nor do I think that early work has a tendency to injure health, or to prejudice the cultivation of the mental powers. In the parish of Wrexham there are but few works where children are employed together in numbers. I believe they are neither overworked nor ill treated and they are moral, and for the most part well conducted. In that part of the parish where the works are carried on we find comparatively but few bastards are born, even though many young females are employed in works. The parish is large, and contains about 12,000 persons. The means of education for the working classes consist of a national school in the town of Wrexham, calculated for 220 boys and 70 girls, another at Bersham for 50 boys and girls, and a new one building. Each child pays 1d. a week and reading, writing, and arithmetic are taught, and the girls are instructed in sewing and knitting. The children who attend these schools seldom or ever go into large works. They are situated in a distant part of the parish, where hitherto they have had only the and Dissenting schools to depend on for education.

(Signed) EDW. EDWARDS, Curate of Wrexham.

**No. 112 William Jones aged 42. July 7th, 1841.**

He began life as a farm-servant and went into the coal-pits at 21 to hurry at 3s. a day. He found the work at first very difficult, and was often much frightened and disheartened. He hurt himself often against the sides and lost his appetite and spirits, but in a quarter of a year became reconciled, and has always had his health. He remained in the pits for four years or more, and saved a little money, and bought a cart and horse, and for a few years made a livelihood by carting and selling coal, and was able to keep his family pretty well. About two years ago lost horses by sickness, and was obliged to go to work under ground in the ironstone works. He earned 2s. 8d. a day, and his boy, 14 years old, earned in the same work with him 1s. 10d., by which he was enabled to keep his family pretty well, but has not been able to give any education to his children, four being now alive. Three weeks ago the ironstone works at Acrefair were stopped, when lie and all the men and boys, to the amount of about 700, were thrown out of work. Many of them have left the country in search of work, a few have had work in the neighbouring pits, but the remainder are living in great poverty, begging about the country in gangs of from three to eight persons in a gang. He lives only in the hopes of getting employ, otherwise he and his family must go to the workhouse. Those who work the ironstone are able to work in the collieries. He found no difficulty in learning to cut coal, but he could not do so as well as those who had gone into the pits when young. He has been hitherto been able, by sobriety and economy, to live and keep his family very decently but he cannot do so in this country under 13s. a week at the least. He could do so for less if not obliged to

deal in the truck-shop, which he considers as equal to 2s. a week. The colliers in this country, as a class, are very poor, and have been so for a year or more. Many have been obliged to sell their clocks and some of their furniture to provide food for the family. He has a house rent free. Two small houses were left him by a relation, one he has been obliged to sell, and must sell the other soon unless he gets into work. The children in the pits are generally well treated by the men. There are instances to the contrary. He has seen the boys beaten by the men for not working sufficiently fast, even though they were working as much as they well could. The poor children would cry and beg for mercy. The underground agent prohibits the men from beating the boys, and if they complained they would suspend them, or perhaps turn them off. He has often seen the men make the boys work long after six in the evening. The poor things would cry, and say they could work no longer, and were in want of supper but the underground agent would not know of the ill-usage the children would be afraid of telling, as they might lose their employment. He thinks there is of late much improvement in the treatment of the children. As the chapel people spread the knowledge of the Scriptures, and as the old as well as the young now attend the Sunday-schools, there is less cruelty and less wickedness. There used to be a great deal of drunkenness amongst all classes of workmen and swearing was general, but many of those who used to swear now pray aloud and there is also much less drinking. Many of the colliers and iron-workers have houses of their own, but times are now so hard that they must part with them. They live on poor diet of potatoes, bread, and milk are the chief articles of food, and coarse woollen cloth or thick flannel is their usual clothing. The children generally go to the Sunday-school, and Divine worship. At least, they go much more than they did a few years back, and are better conducted. In leisure hours they play about, but many go to evening chapel, and to learn something. On the whole, there is a great amendment in the conduct and character, of the working classes, as men, women, and children all begin to think of the necessity education. When the men were turned out of the works here they applied to the parish relief, and were offered the workhouse for themselves and families, but few would go in, those who have a house or clock must sell them before any relief will be given. Has been able to learn to write, but can read a little, having learnt at Sunday-school.

#### **No. 113 Jonathan Jones, aged 42.**

He was turned out of the ironstone works at Acrefair a month ago, the works being stopped not been able to get employment. He had no money when the work stopped. He has lived since on charity. His family consists of a wife and four children, none of them earning any wages. They have all suffered much for want. His wife was brought to bed only 10 days ago and has been very ill. The Parish officer has given him 4s. since her confinement. He has but little furniture, none that he can spare, or he would sell to supply the wants of his family. He was offered the workhouse, but will not go there till obliged to go, or starve. Colliers in this district badly off. Wages are much less than they were. They send their children to work when very young, that they may earn something. One of his boys, aged 14, used to work in the pits with him. He began at seven years old. He was never at any but a Sunday-school could not afford to send him to a day-school, which he regrets much, as he is sure it is a advantage to be able to read and write. Those who have been educated are generally well off, and they are superior people to those who have had no schooling. They are more serious and have better judgement. The ignorant always look up to them for advice, and they think more of them. The boys in the pits are sometimes hardly used by the men that employ them, and sometimes are beaten, but they are not overworked, and they generally are and as soon as they come on the bank they begin to play, and often play rather than to supper. They are pretty well fed and clothed, but sometimes wages will not allow buying clothes. They are improved very much of late in their general conduct. They swear so much, and they go more to Divine worship and to Sunday-school. They are ignorant for the want of education, but they may, by constant attendance, learn to read in the Sunday-school and the Dissenters are very attentive) and anxious to improve them.

#### **No. 114 Robert Davies, aged 37.**

His wages, when he was turned out of the iron-works, were 12s. a week. He hurried in the pits. His health is not good, but he was able to work. Has been out of employ for four months, and is determined not to go into the workhouse if he can get a morsel to eat by honest means. He began to work at 11 years of age and considers iron and coal works healthy and that 12 hours a day for work is not too much. He cannot read or write, and was never at Sunday-school, but he now goes to Sunday-school, and hopes to learn to read. Is a single man, and lives with his sister. Colliers

and iron-workers were a swearing, drinking, and a thoughtless set in this neighbourhood, but now there are a great many chapels, and religion is spreading very much, and making them a great deal better. The boys are getting fond of Sunday-schools, and are becoming attentive, and attend Divine worship more frequently than they did. Indeed, there is a great improvement of late in the conduct of all working people.

**No. 115 Ann Lloyd, wife of Abela Lloyd.**

She who works in the forges with wages at 10s. a week, and did get 30s. a week, but wages are lessened. She has seven children, three boys now at work, ages 21, 14, and 12 years. Their earnings are from 14d. to 3s. 6d. a day. The eldest boy had a good education, and can read, write, and cast accounts but the other two have been neglected, as the wages would not afford education when they were young. They go sometimes to school on Sunday, but they refuse occasionally, because their clothes are not good. Times have been bad, and meat dear. She and her husband always go to church or chapel, but the boys do not always go. They are sometimes very sleepy. They work in the forges, and every other week work all night. They are healthy, and never complain of hard work or hard usage. She never hears them swear, and they are well conducted. She gives them as good food as she is able, bread, potatoes, bacon, and milk. They do not spend much in drink, and are quiet and in health.

**No. 116 James Jones, underground agent.**

**You have lately been under the necessity of stopping the ironstone works, and some of the 20 collieries belonging to the British Iron Company here, about how many men, boys, and females did you discharge at the same time?** - About 500 men, about 150 boys between 13 and 18 years of age, about 25 under 13, and about 25 girls from 17 to 20 years old.

**What has become of them all?** - They are, I believe, most of them begging. Some went to Lancashire to look for work, but have returned.

**Why did they return?** - The colliers in that country abused and threatened them, and they returned on account of the dread of violence.

**Had many of them saved money?** - No, very few if any of them. Many had a house, but it was mortgaged to its value. Wages have for a long time been low, and colliers have been getting poorer.

**Have they conducted themselves quietly and peaceably since their discharge?** - Very much more so than might be expected, considering their sufferings.

**Why won't they go to the workhouse?** - There is a prejudice against it. A large number did go, but they remained only a few hours. They said the food and treatment was such as they could not put up with.

**Are colliers very nice in their eating?** - No but their constitution is delicate. They would eat weak gruel, or bread and water and salt, with a little pepper, or bread and butter-milk to fat broth or vegetable broth. They have been much more quiet and patient than I have expected.

**How do their families exist?** - They are in a miserable state. The children are going about begging. They have very little food.

**Do you think, under similar circumstances, they would have been as peaceable some years back?** - Oh no I they would have broke out into violence.

**Why do they not now?** - They are more moral and more religious. The chapels have spread sound notions of propriety and duty, and every one seems convinced that outrage and violence are not only against law, but also useless.

**Do you think they will continue peaceable if they remain long unemployed and without the means of living?** - I think they will, at least as long as they get anything and as long as the potatoes which they have in the ground will last. On these they may subsist for some time. Most of them have a potato crop in the adjoining farms.

**Have many of them clocks in their houses?** - Many, I dare say, had, but latterly their houses have been but wretchedly furnished.

**Have the chapels been well attended since the works have been stopped?** - Yes, crowded. The preachers have alluded every Sunday to the unfortunate condition of the families and advised patience and resignation, and have been most attentively listened to. I am sure only a sense of religion that has kept them quiet. Ten years ago, under circumstances something similar, they were very outrageous, and would not allow those who had work to go to. There is nothing of the kind now.

**They, you say, are most of them ignorant, if they had education given them, as well as preached to them, would they still be peaceable and patient?** - Yes, still more so. Those who can read and write, I think, are the best amongst them. Education will never men worse, but will surely improve their minds and dispositions. Of that I am certain from long experience.

(Signed) JAMES JONES.

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## **BONT Y CONSULTY IRON WORKS, near Ruabon.**

**No. 117 William Butler, aged 46. July 8th, 1841.**

**How long have you been employed in iron-works?** - I began to work at 11 years old under my father as a puddler.

**Had you any schooling?** - Yes, for some years, till I went to work, but not afterwards.

**What did you learn?** - To read, write, and cast accounts but I wish I had been longer at school.

**At what school were you?** - At a day school at 6s. a quarter.

**What did you work at after you were out of your apprenticeship?** - A puddler all my life till I had my present situation.

**What is your present situation?** - Forge manager.

**Do you think you would have had it if you could not read and write?** - No, I should not. could not have undertaken it. I have accounts of everything to keep, also of wages.

**What wages had you as a boy?** - About 6s. a week.

**Have boys more or less now?** Pretty much the same.

**What are your wages now?** - 30s. a week, and a house and coal.

**Is this a large work?** - No, about 50 men, and about 35 boys.

**How many under 13?** - Perhaps 15.

**What is the youngest age?** - Eight to nine.

**What wa does do the youngest earn?** - 8d. a day.

**What wilr one of 18 earn?** - 2s. or 2s. 2d. a day.

**What do the head rollers and puddlers earn?** - They work by the ton, rollers, perhaps, son weeks as low as 30s., other weeks as high as 50s., puddlers less, they may average 35s. a week.

**Do they drink much?** - No, our men are sober in general. There are exceptions. If find them drink we oblige them to leave the work or sign the temperance pledge.

**Do they keep the pledge?** - Yes, often. Several here have done so for three or four year and have never broken it. I am myself an instance for three years. I have never drank anything but milk, water, or small-beer. I was previously given to drink. and used often to to extremes.

**Do you hire the boys?** - No, the rollers and the puddlers with whom they work.

**Do they use them well?** - Yes, generally, I believe.

**Do they ever beat them?** - No, I should prevent it. I would not allow it. I never saw a man strike a boy when at work.

**What are the hours of work?** - From six to six night and day. We have a night and day set.

**Do you work on Sunday?** - No, never. The set that this week works by day will work week by night. Our repairs are never made on Sunday, but always on Monday morning.

**What do the men and boys do on Monday when repairs are going on?** - They ao nothing.

**How do the forgemen and boys spend their leisure time?** - I can't say exactly. Some smoke more, I think, than does them good, some dig in their gardens, some are religious people, and go to chapels. The boys usually play.

**Are the boys educated at all before they go to work?** - Some, I expect, are. They attend the Sunday-schools.

**Can most of them read and write?** - A good many of them.

**Do your men read and write?** - No, but few of them.

**Do you look upon education as a good thing for working men?** - Yes, I believe it capital. It turned out so for me. I sbould like to see them all educated.

**Wherein would the advantage be?** - There would not be so much trouble with them. There would be more reason in them. A man that knows nothing fears nothing. They would be easily managed.

**That regards only the masters, but how would education be of advantage to the men?** - It would be a great comfort to them to be able to read and write. A man could pass an or two very pleasantly in reading at home. He might instruct his children, and it is enable him to become a manager of works.

**Have boys time enough to go to school in the evenings after work?** - They might attend night-school, and an hour or two in the day when their work is at night. Some do, not many. Nobody thinks of it.

**Are the boys well conducted?** - Yes, I never hear them swear and I believe they go to church or chapel every Sunday, and also to Sunday-school.

**Is there much improvement in the conduct of men and boys since you were young?** - A great deal. There is not so much drinking, or swearing, or gambling and churches, chapels and Sunday-schools are better attended.

**To what do you attribute the improvements?** - The people get more enlightened and religious in consequence of the greater number of churches and chapels, and the desire education, which has been brought about by the industry and zeal of the Dissenters.

**Are those who neglect public worship, and who are careless of their conduct, less though~ than they used to be?** - Yes, much less. Everybody seems improved, and there is much is order and regularity, especially on the Sabbath.

**Does early and long-continued work by night and by day affect the health of the boys you employ, and prevent their growth?** - No, I don't believe it does. I worked as hard as any boy ever did, and it never affected me either in health or growth. The heat of the forges is so great that the temptation to drink is very great.

**Are the boys well clothed and properly fed?** - Yes, I believe they are.

**In what estimation are the colliers and collier boys held?** - They are looked upon as an ignorant, stupid race.

**Are they less intelligent than others?** - Yes, I think they are. They are rough in their manners, and not like other working people.

**To what do you attribute this?** - To going early below ground, and mixing but little with other classes.

**Do you go much into the houses of your work-people?** - No, I go to but few houses except my own.

**Do you know if they live comfortably?** - Indeed I don't know.

**Do they save money?** - Very few of them. Some are well off.

(Signed) WILLIAM BUTLER, Manager.

#### No. 118 Edward Price, aged 16 last May, wages 1s. a day.

**How long since you began to work?** - Five years.

**What were your wages when you first began?** - 8d. a-day.

**What was your first work?** - I was a collier boy. My father was a collier, and took me with him. I was two or three years in the pits. I drew the pyches by a girdle.

**Did you like the work?** - No, indeed I didn't. The charter-master would not give me fair play. He cheated me in wages, and when I complained he said he would fix me, and fouled the road, on which I had to draw, with his stool, and made me draw through it and then my father took me out of the pits and put me to school for a quarter of a year. My father then got me into the forge, and I have been at work ever since.

**If you had had a kinder master would you have continued in the pits?** - No, I did not like the pits. If I could have got other work I should have left them. The damp and the sulphur did not agree with me.

**Have you been well since you have worked in the forge?** - No, I caught a cold by going into the river after work, and was three weeks ill. I have been well ever since I recovered.

**Do you find your present work hard?** - No, I like it.

**What wages have you?** - 1s. a day

**Do you work overtime?** - Yes, in summer, when there is light, I work two and a half hours overtime three or four days a week.

**Do you work at night?** - No, I have worked at night, but not often.



**Can you read, and write, and cast accounts?** - I could, but I have lost a good deal. I can still read.

**Do you read often?** - Yes, when I have time I read the Bible or some religious books.

**Do you go to Divine worship and Sunday-school?** - Yes, I go to Wesleyan chapel and the Sunday-school every Sunday three or four times.

**What did your father pay for your schooling?** - It was a church-school, but we paid 2d. a week.

**Did your master always take the boys to church?** - Yes, always twice every Sunday.

**Were the boys in the pits ill-treated when you worked below ground?** - Yes, the big boys would thrash the little ones and the charter-masters often beat the boys.

**What for?** - The masters would try to make us draw more than we ought, and if we said anything they would beat us.

**If the manager knew that they did so would he allow them?** - I don't know. We never made complaints.

**Where you ever hurt in either in pits or forges?** - No, never.

**Have you good clothes?** - Yes, middling. A Sunday suit besides the one on me.

**Do you get good food?** - Yes, bread and butter, and tea or coffee, for breakfast, potatoes and for dinner, and bread and milk for supper.

**Have you plenty?** - Sometimes I have, and sometimes I have not. The money is often scarce. My father is a collier, and is often without work. My brother is also a collier. They are both out of work, and have been so for near two months, and there is only what I get to keep us all, and there is a family of five.

**Has your father been obliged to sell any of the furniture since he has been out of employ?** - No, not yet. We live near to my grandfather, and he helps us.

**You a clock in the house?** - Yes, the house is pretty well furnished.

**Are you a teetotaler?** - Yes.

**Why did you become one?** - I don't know. I was persuaded. I have been so for five years, and have never broken the pledge.

**Do many boys join?** - Yes, but many have broken the pledge.

(Signed) EDWARD PRICE.

#### No. 119 Watkin Jones, aged 36, wages 15s. a week.

**What is your employment?** - I take account of the stock, and have the charge of it.

**What other employment have you been engaged in?** - I began as a labourer on the land only three years ago that I began my present employ.

**Can you read, write, and cast accounts?** - Yes, a little of each, enough to keep a book of stock.

**In what school were you?** - I was but very little in school. I was forced to work before I read or write well. I persevered and taught myself.

**Have you much pleasure in reading?** - Oh yes, it is the greatest pleasure I have.

**What do you read?** - I read my Bible and Testament, and am never tired of them.

**Are the boys in this work properly treated by the men?** - There is no work carried on in a more quiet and respectable way than this. The boys are always civilly treated by masters and men; many of us are teetotalers and professors of religion.

**Who hires the boys?** - The men that take the work, the rollers and puddlers.

**Are many of them very young?** - From ten years and upwards.

**Are they healthy?** - Yes, I believe they are.

**And well conducted?** - Oh yes, very well.

**Do think 12 hours' work every and work at night, injurious to the health and growth of boys?** - They look pale, but I think they are fully as healthy as other boys. They perspire a great deal, and are obliged to quench their thirst. Forge work is very hot.

**Do you think they begin work too young?** - I don't know. It may perhaps stop their education, but it is better to work than to be idle. I can't think it injures their health.

**Do you think it would be better that all children should be taught to read and write before going to work?** - There can be no doubt about it.

**Of what advantage is it to working men?** - It would enlighten them in their Bible, and give them the knowledge of God. It would give them comfort at all times, especially in sickness and in difficulty and they might better their condition, as many have done, by being able to write and keep accounts.

**Does it ever make them discontented and ready to combine against their masters?** - No, if they improve in the knowledge of God they will never be discontented.

**Have you seen any 'turn-outs' among the men?** - No, there are many now turned out of employ, and though there is great poverty and want, yet the people behave quietly and patiently. This is owing to the religious instruction they get in the chapels and Sunday schools.

**Then you think education is a good thing for the labouring classes?** - Oh yes, for themselves and for the nation at large.

**Is there any pains now taken in the moral training of children?** - Yes, by the Dissenters and indeed by the Church, and parents are getting more careful.

**Are the labouring classes pretty well off?** - No, they are very poor at present in his neighbourhood. I don't remember so much distress since I have been born.

**To what is that owing?** - Owing to trade being so bad, and the stoppage of work.

**Do you find that wages have any effect upon the morals of the labouring classes?** - Yes, if the wages were more steady morals would not be much affected. Sudden rise or sudden falls in wages certainly unsettle people's minds, and often tend to mischief.

**But if they were educated would this happen?** - I should think not. Indeed, I see who have been religiously educated not easily turned aside.

(Signed) WATKIN JONES, Stock-taker.

### No.120. William Davies, aged 30 last May.

**When did you begin work?** - When I was nine years of age.

**What did you begin with?** - Sweeping the forge.

**What next?** - Catching at the rolls.

**Were you ever hurt?** - Yes, I burnt my eye. A flash of fire from the rolls fell on my eye by which I was out of employ nine months. I was at home, and had 7s. 6d. a week from the club.

**Is the forge work healthy?** - I never worked at anything else, and have been always been healthy. There are some with whom it does not agree, especially those that do not sweat. The heat overpowers, and makes them sick.

**What are you now, and what wages have you?** - A puddler. I have 7s. 6d. a ton on all the iron that is made out of my furnace, which gives me about 21s. a week.

**Are you married, and have you a family?** - Yes, and four children, the oldest about five,

**Can you read and write?** - Yes, and cast accounts. I learnt in a school in South Wales. My father paid for me about 8s. a quarter.

**Do you find your learning of any use or any comfort to you?** - Yes, I can keep my accounts of the iron, and it is a great comfort to be able to read. I can write my letters to my friend in South Wales, and read theirs in return and if I can afford all my children shall go to school. Two of them are now at school, though only five years old.

**Are there good schools here?** - Only middling, I believe. I teach my children a myself.

**Are the boys in this country as well taught as in South Wales?** - Yes, partly the same perhaps more of them read and write in South Wales There are more schools near the works.

**Are the people here well conducted and sober?** - Yes, the same as in South Wales.

**Are the boys better trained than here?** - No, I think not.

**Do the parents take good care of them here?** - Yes, for going to Sunday-schools.

**Are they well fed and well dressed here?** - Yes, very good for dressing.

**Are they well treated in the works?** - Yes, sometimes. I never thrashed one of them.

**Do many accidents occur to the children?** - No, not many. Occasionally they are burnt a little.

**Are the families of workpeople generally pretty comfortable?** - Yes, indeed but times are hard. I have not a clock, although my wages appear high I can hardly pay my way.

**Are you a teetotaller?** - No, but I am not a drunkard. I sometimes drink a pot of beer. Our work is so hot that we require some drink. I had a pint of ale toady, cost me 3d., and a quart of beer for 1d. This is my general allowance.

**Do the boys drink ale and beer?** - Sometimes, though very seldom. They generally quench their thirst with milk and water.

**What do the boys do after work?** - They play a little. They have no evening-schools to go to.

**If there were schools in the evening would they attend?** - I think they would. They go to Sunday-school regularly, and that shows they have an inclination to learn.

(Signed) WILLIAM DAVIES.

### No. 121 Jonathan Roberts, aged 11.

**How long have you been at work?** - About two years.

**What is your work?** - I am a piler of the iron in the forge.

**What wages have you?** - 10d. a day.

Have you been at school? - Yes, a little. I can read a Welsh Testament. I can't write.

**Do you ever read the Testament?** - Yes, every Sunday.

**Do you go to Divine worship on Sunday?** - Yes, three times regularly, and I go to the chapel Sunday-school.

**Do the men in the work behave kindly to you?** - Yes, they never beat me, but are very kind to me.

**Does the work make you very thirsty?** - Yes, my mother brings me milk and water to drink.

**Have you always good health?** - Yes, always.

**Who sent you at first to work in the forge?** - My mother got me work, and I was glad to take it.

**Did you like the work at first?** - Yes.

**Were you ever burnt?** - Yes, a very little two or three times.

**Do you get enough to eat?** - Yes, plenty, bread, milk, potatoes, and bacon.

**Have you two suits of clothes?** - Yes, and four shirts.

**Where is your father?** - He went to America when I was born, and my mother has heard nothing of him for five or six years.

**How many children has your mother?** - Only one besides myself. My brother is 13 years old, and is in this work, and earns 10d. a day. His wages and mine is all my mother has, except that she bakes a little white bread for sale.

**Is your house pretty comfortable?** - Yes, we have two beds, and a good clock, and other things.

**Does your mother keep you very strict?** - Yes, she will not let us out at night, and obliges us to go to chapel.

**Do you work at night?** - Yes, every other week.

**What are the hours of work?** - From six to six.

**Do you ever work on Sunday?** - No, never.

**Do you work overtime?** - Yes, last week I worked by day, and I worked overtime each day from six in the evening till midnight, and was paid for half a day each time I worked over.

**Do you like to work overtime?** - I don't care. I do it because I am told.

**Would your mother be angry if you refused?** - I dare say she would, but I like to earn wages.

**Does your mother get the money you earn?** - Yes, all and all that my brother earns.

**Do you play after work?** - No, I never play. I go home to my mother and go to bed.

### **No. 122 Thomas Jones, aged 12.**

He began work at eight years old and his present wages are 10d. a day. He is always healthy and goes to night-school. He can read a little, and is beginning to write. He goes to chapel regularly, and to Sunday-school. He is well treated and has plenty of food and clothes. He works in the forge as a straightener and works from six to six, and night and day alternate weeks. His father is a shoemaker, lives comfortably, and the house is well furnished.

[Examined several other boys, all give the same evidence. None could write their name, all could read a little, and said they went to Sunday-school and to chapel.]

### **No. 123 George Brown, aged 28.**

**How long is it since you began to work?** - I began at 14.

**What were you doing till you were 14?** - I was at school for about seven years.

**Can you read, and write, and cast accounts?** - I can read and write, but I know but little figures and I am out of practice.

**At what school were you?** - At a free school in South Wales.

What was taught in the school? - Reading and writing.

**Did the master take all the boys to church with him on Sunday?** - Yes, always.

**Do you continue to go to church?** - No, I go to chapel I am a Wesleyan.

**Do you attend the Sunday-school?** - No.

**What wages have you?** - I am a roller, and work by the ton. I earn about 30s. a week.

**What family have you?** - A wife and two boys, the oldest is four years old.

**Are you able to lay by a little money?** - No.

**Are you a subscriber to a friendly club?** - No.

**Do you drink much?** - I drink in moderation. At work I am obliged to drink a deal of beer, or milk and water.

**Is your house well furnished?** - No, I have but little in it. I am only just getting into a house. I lived with my father before.

**Are the boys well treated in the work?** - Yes, they are never thrashed, and their wages are regularly paid.

**How many boys are under you?** I have one.

**Who hires them?** - I did.

**With whom did you agree for their labour?** - With themselves.

**To whom do you pay their wages?** - To themselves.

**Do they ever work overtime?** - No, there are two sets of hands each from six to six, and alternate weeks they work by night.

**Do you ever work on Sunday?** - No, never.

**Are the children well behaved in general?** - Yes, very well.

**Do they go to Divine worship and to Sunday-school?** - Yes, most of them do.

**Is there more pains taken to educate children now than when you were a boy?** - Pretty much the same.

**You say you were lately working in Scotland, are wages better there?** - A great deal.

**Is house-rent and living dearer there?** - Living is about the same, house-rent is less there.

**Are the people in Scotland better conducted, and more attentive to religious duties, here?** - They are very well behaved people in Scotland, and they are better educated there than here. They are all good scholars.

**Do the children all go to school there?** - Yes, the schools are conveniently situated the works, and the children all go to school either in the day or at night.

**Do you think education is a good thing for labourers?** - It is. I am sorry I have not been able to retain what I had. It is a great blessing to a poor man to be able to read and write and to study the Bible.

(Signed) GEORGE BROWN..

**No. 124 Rev. John Price, Incumbent, Rhos y Medre, Ruabon.**

**How long have you been incumbent of Rhos y Medre?** - Three and a half years.

**Your duties lead you, I believe, very much amongst colliers, miners, forgemen, &c.?** - Yes.

**What is the present moral condition of these people?** - I cannot give them a good character. They drink a great deal, are very ignorant, irreligious, under but little moral restraint, sensual and ungovernable. Of course there are many exceptions, and some very worthy people. No gentry live amongst my flock. It consists almost entirely of persons who gain a livelihood by coal and iron works.

**What schools are there open to the children?** - Two dame-schools, one national school, and one school Independent, and kept by Mr. Mahady on his own account.

**What are the numbers now being educated in these schools?** - In the dame-schools there not more, I think, than 30. In the national about 110 and in Mr. Mahady's about 70.

**What is the extent of the population?** - I believe it is about 4500.

**What proportion of those in the schools may be the children of colliers?** - Probably it be a tenth, and another tenth may be the children of forgemen and others employed in the works. The remainder are the children of artisans, shopkeepers, publicans, clerks in the and farmers' children, and the children of farm-servants.

**Do the children of the colliers, miners, &c., when out of work, attend the schools?** - No, they remain at home idle.

**Are there Sunday-schools?** - There are Sunday-schools belonging to each place of work and there are nine besides the church.

**What is taught in them?** - The New Testament chiefly, but first they are taught to read.

**Do many learn to read merely by attending on Sunday?** - I think so, though it is process.

**Who teaches?** - Some of the adults of the congregation who can read, and who are approved of and appointed by public consent to teach.

**What class of operatives are the best conducted, the colliers, miners, forgemen, or agricultural servants?** - There are but few agricultural servants, I consider them the best conducted and after them, I prefer the colliers and miners to the forgemen. The latter get larger wages, their work produces thirst, and a habit of drinking is brought on. They go to the beer-shops and meeting together in these places in numbers, they often neglect their families, and troublesome, and difficult to manage. On the other hand, the colliers are underground nearly all the day, and

though they often drink, yet, having smaller wages, and fewer opportunities of meeting together in numbers, they are certainly more orderly, though in very ignorant.

**Is there any desire evinced by the different classes for getting their children into the schools?**

- Too little, as appears by the small proportion of their children who attend. The temptation of wages is too great to be resisted by parents, and the children are sent to work when ought to be at school.

**At what age are the children generally sent to work?** - The collier boys go often at years old. Those to the forges are a year or two older.

**They are taken from school, I suppose, to go to work?** - Those that do go to school are taken away, but most of them have been at no school except on Sunday.

**Do you consider that any bad consequences are the result of work in early youth?** - Yes, children too soon become independent of their parents, and when parents lose all control there is no knowing the excesses of which they may be guilty. They are brought in contact with all sorts of characters. They hear profane and obscene language. They are subject to severe and often cruel treatment. They early become smokers and drinkers and mental cultivation is checked, and immoral habits acquired.

**Do you think the health is injured by the early and long-continued work to which youth is subjected in collieries, forges, &c.?** - I should say it is, even though health may be retained for a long time, yet I cannot but think it must eventually give way and I am sure those classes are not so long-lived as agriculturists, carpenters, shoemakers, tailors, &c.

**Are wages here subject to much variation?** - Yes.

**In a moral point of view, what effect has such variation?** - When wages are high all is spent. The habit of living well is the consequence and when wages fall the people run in debt, and debt is always a forerunner of immorality.

**Do none of them save money?** - Very few indeed.

**Are their cottages well furnished?** - Yes, indeed. All are pretty well furnished I have seen in most of them a good clock, a good chest of drawers, and a considerable degree of neatness and comfort. Their houses within are very well kept, but there is a total absence of cleanliness without doors, sufficient, I think to produce disease. Drainage is neglected. I have observed when fever gets into a house it affects most of the family, and is with difficulty got under.

**How are they clothed and fed?** - I think they are generally well fed, especially the families of the forgemen. The colliers are content with inferior food, but they have sufficient in quantity and as for clothing on Sundays, I see them well dressed, but when working they are very poorly clothed.

**Are the women of these classes domestic, and do they take pains with their children?** - I can't say they are. They take food to their husbands and children to the works, and there they learn to gossip, and often to neglect their children and domestic affairs.

**Do the women and young females work in the collieries?** - Yes, not in the pits, but on the bank. This also prevents the women from acquiring proper domestic habits and a knowledge of domestic duties. It leads also to improper connection and sexual intercourse.

**Do they marry when very young?** - Yes, they are usually in a state of pregnancy before marriage, and of course there are many cases of bastardy.

**When wages are high do domestic comforts increase, or is intemperance the consequence?** - In most cases intemperance.

**Do these classes cultivate their gardens?** - No, not much.

**Do they cultivate potatoes in the fields of farmers?** - Yes, generally and thus they obtain, at an easy rate, a winter's supply.

**How is the Sabbath kept?** - A great many drink. The Dissenters have greater influence preventing desecration of the Sabbath than in anything else, so that, on the whole, I may say is well kept. The boys, however, will play and many of them do so even during the hours of Divine service.

**Is there much fighting and brawling?** - Yes, a good deal, even on the Sabbath, though 're is obvious improvement in that respect.

**What are the chief amusements of the people and children?** - The men have but few amusements. They quoit sometimes, they play at cards, and smoke. The children have marbles, pitch and toss and begin to smoke when not more than 13 or 14 years old.

**Which keep the Sabbath most strictly, those who are poor, or those that have high wages?** - I think those that are poor. High wages, I find, do not tend to improve morals but when wages fluctuate much there is produced a greater tendency to evil conduct.

**Is it by mere chance that the labouring classes choose the religious sect to which they adhere, or do they understand the doctrinal points of difference?** - I think by mere chance, it having made a selection they are taught by the preacher and elders the points of doctrine of the sect, and they often become pretty well versed in Scripture, especially on the doctrinal points.

**Would you restrict the hours of labour for young persons under 18, and enforce a system of education?** - Yes, I think that all children working together in numbers should be restricted to fewer hours work than they have at present, and should be placed under legislative protection as is the case with children in factories.

(Signed) John PRICE.

## **GWERSYLT FORGES.**

### **No. 125. James Oxley aged 13. May 14, 1841.**

**How long have you been working?** - Near five years.

**How many hours a day?** - Twelve, except those allowed for meals.

**What are they?** - Quarter of an hour for breakfast and half an hour for dinner.

**Do you work at night?** - Yes, every other week.

**How many hours?** - The same as in the day, 12 hours.

**Do you work on Sunday?** - No, never.

**Do you ever work overtime?** - I did so some time ago.

**How long did you ever work without rest?** - A night and a day, but I used to rest on the floor for an hour in the night.

**Did you do so often?** - Once a week for some time, Friday night and all Saturday.

**How many meals had you?** - Four-breakfast, dinner, supper, and once in the night.

**Did you go home to eat?** - No, the meals were brought to me from home.

**What is your work?** - Wheeling iron, working at the furnace, and straightening the wire.

**Were you obliged to work so many hours?** - I was not forced, I was wanted. I worked with my father.

**Then he was with you?** - Yes.

**What wages had you for the 24 hours work?** - A shilling.

**Are you healthy?** - Not very.

**What is the matter?** - I am always coughing.

**What is the cause?** - The day and night work, and getting cold.

**Did you ever stop at home on account of illness?** - Only one or two nights.

**Did you ever wish to stop?** - No, never.

**Are you ill treated in the work?** - No.

**Are you never thrashed?** - Sometimes by my father.

**For what?** - When the irons have got fast in the rolls.

**Was it dangerous work?** - I used to get burnt sadly.

**Was it your fault?** - No, it was the bolters.

**Have you had any schooling?** - Yes, a little.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes, a little

**What books can you read?** - The Bible and Testament, and other books.

**Can you cast accounts?** - Yes, a little.

**Where were you taught?** - In South Wales.

**Were you long at school?** - Yes, I was at school in South Wales, and afterwards came we came to live here.

**Who paid the teachers?** - My father paid 10d. a week in South Wales.

**Do you go to church?** - No, to chapel.

**Do you go to Sunday-school?** - Yes.

**What is taught you there?** - Only the Bible.

**Have you good clothes?** - I have a Sunday suit.

**Have you enough to eat always?** - Yes.

**Do you sleep well after the fatigue of long work?** - Yes, only the cough sometimes is bad.

### **No. 126 Henry Dodd, aged 15.**

**How long have you been working?** - From two to three years.

**Were you at school before you began work?** - Yes.

**Can you read and write?** - I can read, but I can write only a very little on a slate. I can just write my name and no more.

**What school were you at?** - I was six or seven years at the free-school in Wrexham.  
**Do you go to church every Sunday?** - No, to chapel and to the chapel school.  
**How many hours a-day do you work?** - Twelve.  
**Do you work at night?** - Yes, every other week.  
**What wages have you?** 1s. 4d. a day.  
**Who hired you?** - The head roller. He takes the work by the piece, and hires and pays us.  
**What is your work?** - Winding the wire as it comes from the rolls, and weighing.  
**Is it dangerous work?** - No.  
**Have you had an accident?** - No.  
**Is any of your wages stopped to pay a doctor?** - No, none.  
**When one is required how is he paid?** - By ourselves.  
**Do you go to school?** - Only to the Sunday-school.  
**Is there much bad language made use of by the men and boys in the works?** - Some, very seldom.  
**Are there any rules in the work against swearing, fighting, &c.?** - No.  
**Are there any fines?** - I was once fined 2s. 6d.  
**For what?** - For putting the tongs in the roller.  
**Did you put them wilfully or accidentally?** - It was an accident.  
**Were you also thrashed?** - No.  
**Were you never beaten?** - No.  
**Are there any rewards for doing well?** - No, none that I ever heard of.  
**Are your wages regularly paid?** - Yes.  
**Do you work overtime?** - No, but I sometimes work for another if he is ill or wants to be away.  
**Do you mean that after you work the day you continue to work all night for another absent?** - Yes.  
**Do you receive the wages for the 24 hours?** - I receive the wages.  
**Does this often happen?** - Not often.  
**Were you compelled to work all night?** - No, I did not like to refuse.  
**Then you would sleep all next day?** - Yes, and the other boy would take my place.  
**Are you healthy?** - Yes, I have had no illness since I began to work.

[This boy, though he had been six or seven years at school, could only read a little but write at all in other respects he appeared by no means dull or stupid, and gave his answer with readiness.]

### No. 127 Philip Johnstone.

**Are you the manager of the Gwersylt Iron forges?** - Yes, I have been so for more than four years.  
**What are the hours of work?** - From six in the morning to six in the evening with one set of hands, and from six in the evening to six next morning with another set.  
**Is any part of the work carried on on Sunday?** - No.  
**Who pays the men and boys?** - The head roller, who takes the work by the ton.  
**Are they fairly paid?** - Yes, very fairly.  
**Is any part of the wages ever stopped on any pretence?** - No, none.  
**Are the men or boys ever fined by way of punishment?** - We threaten them for the purpose of making them careful for their own sakes, but if a fine is taken, which seldom or scarcely ever happens, we give it back to some of the family.  
**Do you find it answer a good purpose?** - It is meant to answer a good purpose, but it is so seldom taken that it amounts to nothing.  
**Have many accidents happened in the works within the last two years?** - No, very few. Those few were from heedlessness.  
**How did they occur?** - They were burns, from want of due caution, with the hot iron.  
**Would not rewards as well as fines have an advantage?** - I dare say they might, but we never tried them, and indeed the fines are more in name than in reality.  
**Is there a school belonging to or near the works?** - None The nearest is a mile and a half off, and therefore of no advantage to our boys.  
**Do you think children are much neglected as regards education in this district?** - Quite so, it is a very large parish, but we have no school near these works, there is one at some distance off.  
**Would education be of advantage to them?** - Yes, I consider education would be of the greatest advantage.

**Do you prefer those workmen who can read and write?** - Yes, I do, I always find them the best. There are exceptions of course. I think all children should be taught before they begin to work, and that they should continue to go to school for some part of the day after they begin work.

**Then you would shorten the hours of labour to enable them to do so?** - I am not prepared to answer that question but they might go to an evening-school for a couple of hours every evening if a school were in or near a work. Even under the present system of 12 hours work.

**Would be no time for recreation?** - It would be better to make some sacrifice than keep the children in ignorance and masters themselves would benefit in the end by a better of workmen which education would certainly give them.

**Is any care taken by masters or others in the moral training of children?** - I fear they are much neglected, neither parents or masters take any pains. The children have their own way. The Dissenters take great pains to get them to chapel and Sunday-school and, in respect to attending worship and keeping the Sabbath, they have effected a great improvement. I indeed many, both children and adults, have learned to read in the Sunday-school.

**Are the children and young persons in the forges overcome by the heat, and do they lose their health and vigour by early work in an atmosphere so heated?** - No, they are very healthy.

**Does not so many hours work, attended as it necessarily must be with profuse perspiration, to exhaust the children, and to prevent their growth?** - Not at all. They never appear tire.

**Are they well clothed, and have they sufficient food?** - Yes, they have sufficient food and nothing. The great want they labour under is education and moral training.

**Do the men drink and swear, and thereby offer evil examples to the children?** - There is little swearing, I think, and far less drinking than formerly. The Dissenters have done much to reform them.

**Are their dwelling-houses generally comfortable?** - They are small, but clean and comfortable.

## CATHERAL'S BRICK WORKS. Buckley Mountain Mold.

No. 128 Thomas Edward. May 18th, 1841.

**How old are you?** - Turned of 12.

**How long since?** - I don't know.

**How long have you been working?** - Three years.

**Have you ever been ill-used by master or men?** - No, but I was beat once by one of the me.

**What for?** - Something about the work that I did not please him.

**Did he hurt you much?** - No.

**you complain to your master?** - No.

**Have you ever been at school?** - Yes, at Mr. Catheral's school, belonging to the works.

**What was taught in the school?** - Reading, writing, and accounts.

**Can you read?** - Yes, a little.

**Can you write your name?** - Yes, almost.

**Did you not you write your name here?**

[showing him his name as having been written by him in the Return Table of Questions]

Yes, but master black-leaded it for me first.

[Here Sub-Commissioner examined him, and found him perfectly incapable of reading the lest words, and he could not write at all.]

**Do you go to school now?** - No, I work all day.

**What are your work hours?** - From six in the morning to six in the evening, and sometimes an hour or two more.

**Do you ever work later than eight at night?** - No.

**Do you ever work all night?** - No.

**Is there no night-work?** - Not for the boys.

**What wages have you for a day's work?** - 5s. a-week, and extra for work after six in the evening.

**Are you obliged to work overtime if required?** - Yes, we must work if we are wanted.

**What time is allowed for meals?** - Half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, and 20 minutes for evening luncheon.



**Are you allowed a full hour for dinner?** - The boys, as soon as they have eat their meal, are obliged to clean the clay-troughs, to get sand and water to be ready for the men to begin work as soon as the hour for dinner is over.

**Is it the same at breakfast?** - Yes, we eat as fast as we can, to get everything ready for work.

**Do the men thrash or ill-use you if you neglect to have all ready by the end of the hour?** - We are often threatened, but very seldom beat.

**Did you ever complain to the master?** Yes, and he has often said we ought not to be made to work while the men are eating, but still we are obliged to do so.

**Are you much tired at night?** - Yes, sometimes very much tired.

**Do you work barefoot?** - Yes.

**Are your feet and hands injured by the work?** - The feet are; and in winter both hands and feet get much chapped and sore, in consequence of the heat of the floor and the cold and frost outside.

**Does the work cause you to perspire much?** - Yes, very much; the sweat runs down over us.

**Do you eat where you work-that is, on the brick floors?** - Yes.

**Might you go home to your meals?** - No.

**Is there any convenience for washing yourself before you eat?** -

**Are your meals warm?** - Yes, our friends bring our victuals to us.

**Are you often so much tired or in so much pain that you cannot sleep?** - Sometimes fl' feet have smarted so much that I have been very long before I could sleep.

**Is your health good, or as good as before you began to work?** - Yes, I am always well.

**Do you work as long in winter as in summer?** - Not always. We leave off work when it gets dark, though we sometimes work by candlelight. We don't come to work in the winter it is light.

**Are wages the same in winter as in summer?** - Yes.

**Do you ever go to school in the winter evenings?** Yes, I went all last winter.

**What did you pay?** - Nothing. Mr. Catheral pays the master himself, the scholars only pay one half penny a week for candles.

**Do you go regularly to church on Sunday?** - No, to chapel.

**Is there a Sunday-school in the chapel?** - Yes.

**What is taught there?** - Reading and questions.

[Here the Sub-Commissioner asked the boy the most simple questions in the Old and Testament, but he could not answer any.]

**What do you do with your wages?** - I give my mother 5s. every week, but what I was working overtime I keep for myself.

**How much did you ever earn in a week by overtime work?** - 2s. is the most, often 6d. and nothing in winter.

**What do you do with this money?** - I keep most of it for clothes.

**Have you good clothes?** - Not very good, but I have another suit.

**Have you good and sufficient food?** - Yes, always.

### **No. 129 Joshua Kenrick.**

**How old are you?** - I shall be 13 this summer.

[He confirms the evidence of Thomas Edwards in every particular relating to the work and is quite as ignorant. He would not attempt to write his name because he cannot. His master pencilled his name in the table of questions, and he wrote over it with pen and ink. He rarely goes to public worship, and gives as a reason for absenting himself that his clothes are so poor that he is ashamed of going, and his mother will not give him any other, though she takes all his earnings. His ignorance is indeed lamentable.]

### **No. 130 Joseph Griffith.**

**How old are you?** - 13 last month.

**How long is it since you began to work?** - Six months.

**Were you at school before you went to work?** - Yes, for three or four years.

**Mr. Catheral's school were you at?** - Yes, the school which the master of the work set up.

**What was taught you?** - Reading, writing, and figures.

**What is your work?** - I am a brick-runner.

**Is it hard work?** - Rather, the floor is so hot it makes us very thirsty. We drink a deal of water. The sweat runs down us when we are working. The men make us riddle sand, clean the troughs, and carry water, as soon as we have eat our meals, so that we have not so much time as they have to rest at meal-times.

**Do the men ever beat or ill-use you?** - No, never. They often threaten, but the master not allow them to beat the boys.

**Do you work at night or overtime?** - Never at night, sometimes in summer two hours later than six in the evening, for which we are paid extra.

**Are you forced to work overtime?** - We never require to be forced, no think of refusing.

**Do the boys fight and quarrel much amongst themselves?** - Not much, the master won't allow it.

**What do you do in winter after work?** - I go to school.

**Is Mr. Catheral's school open in the evening?** - Yes, always.

**Do you go to public worship and to the Sunday-school regularly?** - Yes, I do.

**Have you good clothes and food?** - Yes.

**Do your parents go to chapel regularly?** - Yes, always.

[N.B. This boy could read, write, and work small sums, and answer scriptural questions.]

### **No. 131 John Evans, aged 10.**

**What length of time have you been working?** - More than a year.

**At what work?** - I work in the clay-pit, filling the waggon and hooking on.

**Have you the full time allowed for meals?** - Yes, in the clay-pits we have the same time as the men.

**Do you work in all weathers?** - Yes, and it is very wet and cold sometimes.

**Do you ever work overtime?** - Yes, when we are wanted. We work in summer often till eight o'clock, but never in winter.

**Are you beat or ill-used ever?** - Never. The men are not allowed by the master to beat the boys.

**Are the boys' wages regularly and fair]y paid?** - Yes, always, every week.

**Do you attend school?** - Sometimes I go to a night-school.

**Do you attend public worship?** - Sometimes, and I sometimes go to Sunday-school.

[On examining him I never met with more complete ignorance in anybody. John Evans, another boy, was exactly the same; their names appeared in the tabular form masters' returns as written by themselves, but the master had pencilled their names before they would attempt to write them.]

### **No. 132 Thomas Parry, aged 13.**

**How long have you been at work?** - Three years.

**What is your work?** - Running bricks.

**Is it hard work?** - Ay, very. It makes us sweat terribly. We drink a deal; we could drink anything, even dirty water from the ditch.

**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, for a long time.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes, and do sums.

[The Sub-Commissioner found him very well taught, but it appeared his father was able to him, and used to take him to public worship, and to Sunday-school. Mr. Catheral, the master of the work, gives every encouragement to the boys to go to a which he has close to the work, and the teacher, whom he pays himself, appears attentive to his duty, and capable of teaching the common rudiments but the people in this neighbourhood are uncouth and rude, and do not seem to estimate either religion or education and it is impossible to meet with more ignorance than most of the boys in this work showed when examined by the Sub-Commissioner. Mr. Catheral says he is determined to preserver with the school, and is encouraged to hope that it may eventually be of great advantage to the neighbourhood, as the people are beginning to be much more orderly and well conducted than they were a few years ago. Mr. Catheral has also built, at his own cost, a chapel for the sect called In dependants, and he pays the minister himself (£40 a year), and tries persuade his workpeople to attend that or some other place of public worship.]

**No. 133 Mr. Henry Craven, manager. May 26th, 1841.**

I been long used to brick-works. Boys begin to work at nine or ten. They work 10 a day, seldom more. Their health does not suffer, as is shown by their robust appearance, indeed no boys can look more healthy. I much lament to say, that as soon as they to work they think no more of school, and often forget what they may have previously learned. There are night-schools to which they might go, but very few ever take advantage of them. Parents seem to have no inclination to persuade their children to go to school but indeed parental authority is almost at an end here when the children begin to work. Their earnings in a great measure support the family, parents, therefore, appear afraid of using any authority over the working children, but allow them to do just as they like. Neither do masters my authority over them after their work is over for the day, though, by their persuasion, might be induced to go to school and to public worship. The Clergy and Dissenters are strenuous in endeavouring to bring the working families to a stricter observance of the Sabbath and there is no doubt much improvement in consequence. The places of worship the Sunday-schools are now well attended, and the people are evidently improving in morals. Their minds require cultivation and if children could be made to attend school regularly till they are 13 or 14 years old, and to have less work, they would improve in moral character. It is pitiable to think of the state of ignorance they are in. While they are so conducive to the products and the prosperity of the country by their labours, it is much to be lamented that so little pains are bestowed in their moral training or mental cultivation. There are thousands of young persons within a small district here who are in total ignorance of everything not immediately connected with their own work. I know parents and children who entirely neglect public worship and Sunday-schools, and I do not hesitate to say they are far behind those who do attend to their religious duties, and who show an inclination to be taught, both in good manners and in moral conduct. Wages are good, and they live and dress well and, if masters were to insist on children being educated, a vast improvement would soon take place in the conduct and bearing of the working population. I have the opportunity of seeing and knowing those employed in the collieries in this neighbourhood they are more unhealthy, both in appearance and in reality, than those employed in other works, such as the brick and pottery works. Their earnings are, however, fully equal. They are a less cultivated, a ruder, and more immoral class, I think, than the pottery and brick people and the agriculturists.

**No. 184 William Edwards, aged 14.**

**When did you begin to work?** - At 1 years old.

**How many hours a day do you work?** - I must run 2000 bricks every day I begin at six and generally finish before five in the afternoon.

**Do you ever work overtime?** - Now and then, only seldom.

**What wages do you earn?** - Five or six shillings a week.

**Are you well treated well at work by both master and man?** - Yes, always.

**Are your wages paid weekly and in full?** - Yes, regularly.

**Can you read?** - No.

**Do you go to school?** - Sometimes to Sunday-school.

**Do you go to public worship every Sunday?** - Not always.

**Were you ever at school?** - No.

[The Sub-Commissioner found this boy totally ignorant, and very rude.]

**No. 135 John Griffiths, aged 13.**

**How long have you been working?** - Two years.

**What is your work?** - I run bricks.

**How are you paid for your work?** - I run 2000 bricks a day, and take up 660, that my task. For this I get 6s. 8d. a week, and sometimes another shilling for working overtime.

**How many hours a day do you work?** - I work about 10 hours.

**Is it hard work?** - Yes, the floors are so hot that the work is hard on that account, perspire terribly and drink a great deal of water.

**Are you and the other boys injured in your health by the work?** - No, we are all healthy.

**Were you at school before you began to work?** - Yes, I was two years at the national-school, and learnt to read and write and to cast accounts, but I have forgot. a great deal.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined the other boys in the work, they all agreed in the evidence of William Edwards and John Griffiths, in respect to the work, wages, and treatment. They were, in general, extremely ignorant and uncultivated, when I met with an exception it that the parents of the boy had been somewhat educated, and were constant attend public worship and Sunday-school, and were strict with their children.]

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## **PANT Y MWYN LEAD MINE, near Mold.**

**No. 136 Edward Tregilgas, overlooker of the washers of ore. May 1841.**

**How long have you been in this work?** - Fifteen years.

**Do you employ considerable numbers of boys in the mine?** - There are no boys in the mine. Those we employ are on the surface, washing, picking, and preparing the lead ore for smelting.

**Are many boys under 13 employed in this and other mines in washing Are many boys employed under 13 in this and other mines in washing and preparing ore?** - Our number is not great, seldom more than 40 under 18 years old.

**At what ages do you take them?** - From 10 years and upwards, we have had some as young as eight.

**Is it hard work?** - No, I cannot say it is.

**Is it prejudicial to health?** - No, but seldom. If particles of lead ore are swallowed produce complaints of the bowels, which are easily cured by opening medicines.

**Do not they necessarily swallow particles of ore when engaged in breaking it and riddling it?**

There is now in most mines machinery which by means of cylinders breaks the ore small pieces. Still in the operations of picking and cleaning the ore the boys must swallow some, and this renders the bowels costive, but there are very few cases of illness in consequence.

**Do they eat their meals at the work or go home?** - At the work, some who live home.

**Do they wash their hands and faces before they eat?** - Yes, generally, they are ordered do so.

**Is there a room for them to eat in, and convenience for washing?** - They may eat in engine-room, and there is plenty of water in which they may wash.

**But there is no soap or towels, I suppose, allowed for the purpose?** - None.

**Have you ever known a boy die in consequence of complaints brought on by swallowing particles of lead ore?** - No, never. The complaint is easily cured.

**What number of hours do they work in the day?** - They come at six in the morning, and leave at six in the evening.

**What time is allowed for meals out of that?** - An hour for dinner.

**Do they work overtime?** - Very seldom, now and then they work till eight o'clock in summer.

**Are they compelled to do so?** - No, no compulsion is required, they are glad to be employed, as they get extra wages.

**Are they well treated when at work?** - Yes, very well treated.

**Do you bent them yourself or allow others to do so?** - No, I can keep them at work without beating them.

**Do you punish them by fines?** - No, I threaten to discharge them, which is enough.

**Do they swear and use bad language, and quarrel and fight much among themselves?** - No, very little. I check all bad conduct, they behave very well.

**Can many of them read and write?** - Not many, I fear.

**Do you ask them the question, or whether they attend public worship when you hire them?** - No, never.

**Have most of them been at school before they began to work?** - I cannot say, but I think not.

**Is there a school near the work?** - No, except sometimes a small day-school.

**Is there a night-school?** - No, there is none.

**How do they learn to read?** - They are taught in the Sunday-schools in chapel.

**Do they in general attend Divine worship?** - Few go to church, but most of them go to chapel and the chapel-school on Sunday, and even in the week-days when it is open in the evening, as it frequently is.

**Do the miners and heads of families generally attend public worship?** - Yes, most of them, I think.

**Do you think the boys would go to an evening-school if one with a good teacher were set up?** - Yes, I think they would; they learn a little in the chapel Sunday-schools, which gives them a desire to increase their knowledge.

**Amongst the miners which are the best conducted, those who can read and write or those cannot?** - Those who have been taught, I prefer them. They are more to be trusted, I think.

**Are the manners of the miners and the boys employed together in numbers in this district 'much improved of late?** - Yes, they have given up fighting and gambling in a great measure. They keep the Sabbath more properly, and most of them are very attentive to their religious duties, and anxious to improve themselves in Sunday-schools.

**Are they also more sober?** - Oh, yes, there is no doubt of it.

**Do they improve in their mode of living as they improve in morals and religion?** - I don't know that they do, but I think they live more comfortably, I seldom go into their cottages.

### No. 137 Mordecai Lloyd, aged 16.

**When did you begin to work at the mines?** - I have been working for five years.

**What number of hours do you work daily?** - We come at six and go at six.

**What time is allowed for eating?** - An hour in the middle of the day for dinner.

**Do you get breakfast before you come to work?** - Yes.

**Is there a place under cover for you to eat your dinner in?** - No, no place except the engine room, which we may go to if we like.

**Are you in good health?** - Yes, very.

**Are all the boys?** - Yes, they sometimes are ill like others.

**Does the work make them ill?** - They get the pain and sickness in the stomach sometimes.

**Have you ever had it?** - I have had my bowels bound, and have had to take purges, which done me good in a short time.

**Do the boys sometimes die of the complaint in the stomach and bowels?** - No, never, I re.

**Dies it produce bad health?** - No, not that I know of.

**Do you wash your hands and face always before you eat?** - Generally.

**Were you told to do so?** - Yes.

**Are you fined or otherwise punished if you neglect to do so?** - No, but we are told to do so.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes, a little.

**Where did you learn?** - I was at a day-school before I began to work, and I go to the Sunday-school.

**Do you go to a night-school?** - No, there is none that I know of.

**Do you attend it if there was one?** - Yes, I would like to go to a school.

**do you attend Divine worship regularly?** - Yes, at chapel twice every Sunday.

**Do the boys swear much and often fight?** - No, very little.

**What do you do with yourself after work?** - I go home.

**What do you do?** - In the summer I clean the potatoes and do something about the house, and I sometimes play.

**Do you ever go to the tavern?** - No, never.

**Have you good food and clothes?** - Yes, pretty good.

**What have you to eat in general?** - Bread and milk, and potatoes, and a little bacon.

**What wages have you?** - Ten pence a day.

**Are they regularly and fully paid?** - Yes.

### No. 138 William Evans aged 17.

**How long have you been working in the mines?** - Six or seven years, but I have only been in this mine about a year.

**What wages have you?** - Nine shillings and sixpence a week.

**What is your work?** - Washing the ore.

**Is your health good?** - Yes, very.

**Have you ever had a complaint in your bowels?** - I have had my bowels bound.

**Did you take anything to relieve you?** - Yes, a purge or two. **Did you soon recover?** - Yes, immediately.

**Do you consider it hard work for young boys to wash lead ore?** - Not very.

**Is it looked upon as unhealthy work?** - No.

**Do you always wash your hands and face before you eat?** - Not always, but I generally

**Were you ever at work under the surface?** - No.

**Do not boys at 17 generally go under ground to work?** - Very few do till they are 18 or

**Do you work overtime?** - No, but seldom.

**Do the boys swear much and often quarrel and fight?** - No, very little.

**Are they ill-used and beaten by the master or men?** - No, never.

**Are there fines for swearing and rewards for doing well?** - No, neither.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes, a little.

**Where did you learn?** - In a small day-school before I went to work.

**Have you not been to school since?** - No, except in the Sunday-school.

**Do you go to Sunday-school regularly?** - Yes.

**And to Divine worship?** - Yes.

**Do most boys?** - Yes, I think so.

**Do they play much on Sunday?** - Sometimes.

**Do they go about making disturbances and doing mischief?** - No, never.

**Is there a night-school near the work?** - No.

**Would you go to it if there were one?** - Yes, I should be very glad.

**Have you good food?** - Yes.

**And good clothes?** - Yes.

**No. 139 Robert Powel, aged 10 years and 6 months.**

**How long have you been working at the mine?** - Three years.

**Were you at school before you began to work?** - No.

**Were you obliged by your parents to begin to work?** - No, I wished it.

**Do you like the work now?** - Yes.

**Would you rather go to school?** - No.

**Is the work hard?** - No.

**Did it tire you at first?** - Not much.

**What do you do?** - I pick the ore, and help in washing it.

**What wages have you?** - Two shillings and sixpence a week.

**What had you at first?** - About 2s. a-week.

**Do you come to work at six in the morning?** - Yes, like the other boys.

**Did you do so from the first?** - Yes.

**When the other boys worked overtime did you also?** - Yes, always.

**Have you good health?** - Yes, very. I have never had a day's illness.

**Can you read?** - Not much. They are teaching me in the Sunday-school.

**Do you attend church and Sunday-school regularly?** - I go to chapel and Sunday-school every Sunday.

**Do the men or boys ever beat you?** - No, never.

**Do you receive your wages regularly, and what becomes of them?** - I get my wages regularly and, my parents have them for my keep.

**Do you get plenty to eat, and have you good clothes?** Yes, both. Do you play on Sunday? Sometimes a little.

**Do the boys go about on Sunday in numbers doing mischief and rioting?** - No, I know of.

**Do most of them go to public worship?** - Yes, I think they do.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined many other boys. They all gave similar evidence that which is recorded. Edward Jenkins, aged 11, Robert Adams, aged 11 years and 9 months, Jonathan Smith, aged 11, and William Jones, aged 11, had each been since they were eight years old. They were very healthy, liked work, and were comfortably clad. Most, if not all, the boys in this work attend Sunday and public worship, and were orderly and well conducted. Children are anxious to be taken into the work as soon as they do anything. Every boy in the neighbourhood would go to work at six or seven if masters would employ them.]

**No. 140 Mr. Daney, cashier.**

**How long have you held your present situation as cashier to the Mining Company?**

Seventeen years.

**Can you tell me whether there has been any improvement in the method of lead-mines of late years?** - The system is much improved in respect to ventilation by shafts, drifts, &c., and more care is taken in propping and securing the mine. Ladders are now always used for ascending and descending the mines, and every precaution adopted for avoiding accidents. Cylinders propelled by steam-power are used instead of manual power by hammers for breaking up the lead ore ready for washing, whereby the health of the children and young persons employed is not so much endangered.

**Are there fewer accidents in the mines, and is the health of those employed in dressing the ore on the surface better since the adoption of these improvements and precautions?** - Yes, by certainly.

**Are there any children under 13 years of age at work in the mines?** - No, none underground. They seldom go to work in the mine till 18 or 20.

**At what age do they usually commence work on the surface?** - About ten years old, but some begin as early as eight or nine.

**How many hours a day do they work?** - About 10 hours.

**Are they hired by the company or by the contractor?** - They are hired and paid by the company.

**Are they well treated by the overlooker and the men?** - Yes, I am sure they are.

**Is there an order that they shall not be beaten?** - It is understood that they are not, and I believe they never are. The proprietors do not allow any bad treatment.

**Have any complaints ever been made by the boys or by their parents of cruelty or harsh treatment?** - I never heard of or remember a complaint being made.

**Are they subject to any particular complaints arising from their work?** - If they swallow much of the dust from the lead ore the bowels often become bound, but a little opening medicine soon removes the complaint. Before the introduction of machinery for crushing the ore they used to be more subject to this complaint, as it was impossible to prevent some of them being swallowed when they broke the ore with hammers.

**Lead miners, I believe, are said to be unhealthy, do you find them so?** - Yes, they become subject to a complaint in the chest before they have worked many years in the mine. It comes on gradually, but affects most of the miners, some sooner than others.

**From what cause?** - I suppose the dampness and closeness of the mine, and the dust they swallow when at work,

**Do they live long after they first become affected?** - Yes, but it eventually proves fatal. Miners are not long-lived as a class.

**How many hours in the 24 do they work in the mine?** - Some six some eight hours.

**Are the young persons employed on the surface desirous of going into the mine to work?** - they are all ambitious of becoming miners, and would go down very young if allowed.

**Can you inform me if any pains are taken by parents, masters, or others, in the moral training of children and young persons employed in the mines?** - No, I know of none.

**Can they generally read and write?** - Many can read, though few can write.

**Are there day or night schools near the work?** - There is a national school, to which the proprietors of this mine subscribe largely, but there is no nigh-school.

**Do the working boys attend the national school?** - Many of them attend it before they begin work, none afterwards.

**What hours is the school open?** - From 9 a.m. to 12 at noon, and from 1 to 4 p.m.

**What is taught in the school?** - The common rudiments.

**Is the school free to all boys?** - Yes.

**Is the master paid?** - By subscription.

**Is he a trained teacher?** - I can't say.

**If the school were open in the evenings alter six o'clock do you think it would be attended by the boys who work during the day?** - I think it would.

**Have the proprietors of this mine ever expressed a wish that it should be open after six in evening for the benefit of their working boys?** - I never heard that they did.

**Is it your opinion that they would be incapable of benefiting by instruction after a long day's work?** - No, I don't think they would be more in the nature of a recreation, and would prove of much advantage. They now play, or are idle after their work.

**Are the boys employed on the surface of the lead mines equal to others in the district not so employed in their mental and physical powers, and in moral conduct?** - Yes, fully so. Perhaps they are superior to the boys employed in agriculture, they certainly are to the collier boys. I think

they are more shrewd, more of them can read and write. They look better and dress and are more attentive to their religious duties.

**Are girls or women ever employed in any work connected with the mines?** - No, never.

**Are the boys any night-work?** - Never but sometimes they work an hour or two overtime.

**What occasions do they work overtime?** - Only now and then, when we want the ore cleaned up for sale.

**Do they ever work overtime for many successive days?** - Oh no, perhaps for a night or two the end of the month they may work till eight o'clock.

**On the whole, then, you say that their work while on the surface is neither oppressive, dangerous, or unhealthy, nor likely to**

## TALWR COCH LEAD MINE, Dyserth, Flintshire.

No. 141 Thomas Parry, aged 16. June 2nd, 1841.

**How long have you been at work?** - About seven years.

**What is your employment?** - Washing and dressing the lead ore.

**Is the work performed on the surface?** - Yes.

**Were you ever at work in the mine?** - No, never under ground.

**What time do you go to work, and what time do you leave off?** - We go at six in the morning and leave off at six in the evening.

**What time is allowed for meals?** - An hour only in the middle of the day for dinner.

**Do you wash yourself before you eat?** - Yes.

**Is there a place for the boys to wash in, and soap and towels allowed?** - No, we wash in the water near the mine.

**Is there a place under cover for you to eat in?** - No, except the engine-room.

**Are you quite well in health?** - Yes.

**Have your bowels been affected since you began to work?** - No, not at all, except sometimes a little bound.

**Are the boys all well?** - Yes, all, I think.

**Do you work overtime?** - Sometimes, I have several times since I came to work staid till 11 o'clock at night at work.

**Were you forced to do so?** - I was told to work, but I was not forced.

**Would you have refused if you dared?** - No, I was paid for a day and a half and wanted the money.

**Were you very much tired on these occasions?** - Yes a good deal.

**Could you eat and sleep as usual?** - Yes, exactly the same.

**When you worked till eleven at night, could you get up next morning so as to begin work at six o'clock?** - Yes, the same as any other day.

**What do you earn?** - I get 6s. a week.

**Do you always work six days a-week?** - Yes, always.

**Are there any fixed holidays during the year?** - No, but we often have a holiday.

**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, before I went to work but not since, except to school in the chapel.

**Can you read?** - I am beginning to read in an easy book.

**Do you go to public worship regularly?** - Yes, to the chapel three times every Sunday.

**Do you say any prayers?** - No, I can't say any.

**Do you never hear any prayers?** - No, except at chapel.

**What do you do with yourself after work is over in the evening?** - I play about and get my supper, and sometimes clean the potatoes.

**Would you like to go to a night-school?** - Yes, I should.

**What is the greatest number of hours you were ever made to work without being allowed time to rest?** - I have several times worked from six in the morning till six next night, being 36 hours.

**Not in washing ore?** - No, I was attending the bricklayers when they were making a building in a great hurry. I never worked at washing ore more than from six in the morning till eleven at night.

**Have you sufficient food, and what does it consist of?** - Yes, we have potatoes, milk, bread and butter, and sometimes bacon.



**Have you a better suit of clothes than what is now on you?** - Yes, I have a Sunday suit

**No. 142 Peter Jones, aged 9.**

**How long have you been at work in the mine?** - Near a year.  
**Were you at school before you came to the mine?** - Yes, for a very short time.  
**Can you read and write?** - No, I am beginning to spell in the chapel Sunday-school.  
**Do you go to public worship and Sunday-school every Sunday?** - Yes, regularly to chapel  
**Do you say any prayers?** - No, none.  
**Does no one in your house?** - No.  
**Do you go to chapel in the evenings on weekdays?** - Sometimes.  
**Do you work 12 hours every day?** - Yes, except an hour at dinner.  
**Does the work tire you much?** - No, not much.  
**Do you ever work after six in the evening?** - Yes, though very seldom.  
**Till what time?** - Till nine or ten o'clock.  
**Are you quite well?** - Yes, I am quite well.  
**Have you good clothes?** - Pretty well.  
**Do you get three meals a day?** - Yes, every day.  
**Have you plenty to eat at each meal?** - Yes, plenty.

**No. 143 Thomas Pickering, aged 16.**

**At what age did you begin to work in the mines?** - At eight.  
**Were you in school before you began to work?** Yes.  
**At what school?** - At the free-school.  
**What did you learn?** - I learnt to read and write.  
**Can you read and write now?** - Yes, a little.  
**Have you been at school since you began to work?** - No, only at the Sunday-school at chapel.  
**Do you go to Divine worship and Sunday-school regularly?** - Yes, regularly, three times  
**Have you washed and dressed lead ore for eight years?** - Yes, but I have began to work in he mine for some months.  
**During the time you were engaged in washing ore on the surface have you been often ill?** - I was sometimes. I have had the measles and colds, but have never been ill in consequence of being engaged in washing the lead.  
**Did your stomach and bowels never suffer?** - Very little.  
**Had you never to take medicine in consequence of your bowels being confined?** - Yes, two 10 or three times.  
**Have you lost much time from confined bowels?** - No, very little.  
**How many hours a day did you work when washing ore?** - From six in the morning till six in the evening.  
**Did you frequently work overtime?** - Sometimes in summer till 9 or 10 o'clock, but only 15 very seldom.  
**Were you always very careful in washing your hands and face and in changing your clothes after work?** - I generally did so, but I often neglected it.  
**How many hours a day do you work now that you are a miner?** - Six hours. There are four sets of hands, and each set works six hours.  
**Did you go into the mine by your own desire?** - Yes, my father works in it, and I go with him.  
**Are the miners paid by the day or by a portion of the ore?** - They are paid according to the quantity of ore raised.  
**What wages do the miners make?** - Sometimes more than others, but from 10s. to 20s. a week generally. I only get 6s. a week.  
**Miners are unhealthy people are they not?** - Not always.  
**Are you not afraid of losing your health by working in the mine?** - I have not been thinking about it.  
**How do you go into the mine?** - By ladders.  
**Are there frequent resting places?** - Yes.  
**Does not it tire you very much to climb up the ladders?** - Not much.  
**Have you ever observed whether any of the older miners are much tired by coming up the ladders?** - Yes, they appear so.

**Is the air very much heated in the mine?** - Where I work it is well ventilated, but still it is warmer than on the surface.

**Is there much swearing and bad language in the mine?** - No, very little.

**Are wages regularly paid?** - Yes, regularly.

**Would you like to go to a night-school?** - Yes, but there is none.

**Do you smoke and drink much?** - No, not at all.

**Are there many lads under 18 who work in the mine in raising ore?** - No, but few, only seven or eight I think.

**Are any younger than you?** - No, about my age, from 16 to 18.

**Are they healthy?** - Yes.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined many other boys employed at this mine. They are a healthy and even a robust looking set of lads, and do not appear to suffer at all from the nature of their employment in preparing the lead ore for the smelting houses. Their work is in the open air, and is of such a nature that their feet must be often wet the whole time they are at work. The Sub-Commissioner saw them engaged in their different occupations, and although the work may not be very oppressive, yet it is by no means light, and being continued for 12 hours with little intermission, and occasionally even 14 or 15 hours, it is astonishing they are so healthy and cheerful. They are all, with only an exception or two, warmly and properly clad, and it is evident, from their appearance, that they have sufficient nutritive diet. They are, however, in utter ignorance, being all taken from school to work, and having little or opportunity of improving afterwards. A school is, however, being erected, by the proprietors of the mine, for the benefit of the neighbourhood and may do good.]

#### **No. 144 Jane Davies, widow.**

She is the mother of four children, two of them are in service, and the other two are boys under the age of 14, and both work at the mines in washing and dressing lead ore. She says they were at a small day-school, in the neighbourhood of Talwr Goca Mine, before they went to work and that they were beginning to learn to read when she got them into work, that they were about 10 years old, that each of them has been nearly two years at work, and gets 3s. a week. They work about 10 hours a day, and sometimes more, for which they get extra pay. They are quite healthy, and never appear to be tired or to think the work too much. They come home about seven o'clock, and in summer after they eat they go to the field to weed and hoe the potatoes, and they do other little jobs about the house. In winter evenings they go to bed early. She is supported by their wages and some little that her eldest son allows her out of his wages for his board and lodging. She says, she and her boys go regularly to the Sunday service in the chapel, and the boys go to Sunday-school where they are being taught to read. She would like them to go to school very much, but if they had less wages, or were obliged to pay for being taught, she should not be able to support them. At present they have sufficient food, but it consists of bread and potatoes chiefly. They have tolerable clothes, and are very well conducted. Her cottage, consisting of two rooms, is clean, and neatly though scantily furnished.

#### **No. 145 Robert Griffith, aged 32.**

**Are you a miner?** - Yes.

**How long have you been working at the mines?** - I began to wash lead ore at 9, and at 19 went into the mine to raise lead ore.

**Were you always healthy?** - Yes, till latterly. I have been of late rather oppressed at my chest.

**While you remained on the surface washing ore were you quite well?** - Yes, very well.

**When did you find the oppression you mention come on?** - About two years ago, when I was working in a wet mine, and the air not good.

**Are you better than you were?** - Yes, I have lately been working in a drier and ventilated part of the mine.

**Are most of the miners similarly affected?** - Many are but there are also many as old or older than me who remain in good health.

**What remedies do you take?** - None, except that I take opening medicine sometimes.

**Are you long under ground?** - Generally only six hours in the 24. We sometimes work with three sets of hands, and then I am in the mine eight hours.

**Do the lead miners live long?** - No, it is said they do not; there are not many above years of age, they cannot work many years without getting the complaint in the breast, which most miners die.

**Are there collieries in the neighbourhood?** - Yes.

**Colliers are longer under ground, I believe, than miners?** - Yes, they are often 10 or 12 hours in the pits, and go below the surface to work at 10 or 12 years of age.

**Do they get the same complaint in the chest?** - Some do.

**Do they live longer than the miners?** - Yes, I think they do. I know two or three colliers who are older than any miners that I know.

**Which make the best wages?** - I don't know. I think the colliers make more steady wages. Some months the miners make a good deal, the next they may fall short and earn but little.

**Both miners and colliers, I believe, are paid by the quantity?** - Yes, but the colliers are generally the same quantity, and therefore their earnings do not vary very much. The miner being paid by the weight of ore, must depend on the state of the vein, sometimes it is very good, at others it will yield but little.

**Which class is best off on the long run?** - I don't know. Both colliers and miners are badly off at present, and can barely subsist their families upon their earnings.

**Which class are most liable to accidents when at work?** - I think the colliers are. Air in the pits sometimes takes fire and kills or burns many.

**Do the miners always go down and come out of the mine by ladders?** - Yes.

**When the depth of the mine is great is not the exertion of ascending the ladders very great?** - Very great indeed, but there are resting-places.

**Do not those whose chests are affected appear to suffer greatly in the exertion of ascending?** - Yes, very much. They are often quite black in the face when they come up.

**Do you feel any increased pain in your breast when you ascend?** - Yes, a good deal.

**Why don't the miners come up in buckets as the colliers do?** - There have been many accidents, so many, that in most mines there is a strict order against coming up in the buckets.

**Why should there be greater danger in mines than in collieries?** - The shafts in are better built, and quite perpendicular, which in mines are not always so.

**Do you think that the violent exertion of coming to the surface is injurious to the miners and to those whose chests are already affected?** - I don't know, but I cannot think it must be injurious, as they appear when they arrive at the surface quite out of breath and exhausted.

**Have you any sons at work at the mine?** - Yes, one boy of 13.

**How long has he been at work?** - Upwards of three years.

**When will he be fit to go into the mine to work?** - It requires strength to be a miner. Boys go as soon as they can get any of the miners to take them. They are always wanting go, because when they begin to raise ore they are looked upon as men, and begin to receive part of the earnings of miners.

**Do the mine agents and overlookers object to boys going into the mines to work?** - Very few boys go, because it is not the interest of miners to take them. Those that go before have become men are usually taken by their fathers or near friends, and I do not see any objection made by the overlookers but it would never answer to have many boys in the mine.

**Are the miners generally subscribers to friendly clubs?** - There are but few who There are a great many clubs, and all of them have many members.

**What is the chief object in view in these clubs?** - To make some provision against sickness and accidents by a weekly allowance from the funds of the club. There is there are also clubs clocks, clothing, and other objects.

**Are the houses of the miners comfortable and tolerably furnished?** - Pretty well.

**Do miners drink much?** - Some do, others are teetotalers and drink nothing. There is much less drinking of late years.

**Are the miners more moral and religious than they used to be?** - Yes, there are chapels everywhere, and now almost every one attends public worship and Sunday-schools.

**If boys were not brought to work till 12 or 13 years of age would it be better for them?** - No, they had better be at work than idle Besides, the work does them no harm, they are able to make a livelihood. In hard times like these parents could not bring up a family if the boys were not at work. **But if instead of being 11 hours a day at the mine they were to be only eight or nine hours, and two hours at school, would not that be more suitable?** - I don't know how it would be. If they work less, their wages will be less, and I am sure it would be difficult to spare anything out of the earnings they make. It is already very hard upon many, and it will be still harder if wages are less.

**Is there an inclination, do you think, amongst the working classes to have their children educated?** - Yes, no doubt of it, they almost all go to a day-school till they begin to work, and afterwards they go to the Sunday-schools, which shows that there is a wish to improve. Every one sees how useful it is to be able to read and write and cast accounts.

**Can you read and write?** - No, I only read a very little. I was taught in the Sunday-school. I hope to be able to read the Bible soon.

**How do the miners pass their spare time?** - Almost all of them have a garden and a crop of potatoes in the farmers' fields, and they attend to them. They have many odd jobs about the house to do. Some of them will work at another mine, or in a venture of their own.

**Do you mean that, after working six or eight hours in this mine, they will work the same time in another?** - Yes, some do this, though masters do not like the practice, and often forbid it.

**What do you mean by a venture of their own?** - A few miners will join together and try for lead, and if they find it they continue to mine, or sell the work.

**Are not the men who work in this manner soon out of health and incapable of working even the usual six hours?** - Some are, and others are not.

**Is the Sabbath better kept than formerly by the miners and their families?** - Yes, a great deal, every one seems anxious to attend Divine worship, and to improve themselves in Sunday-schools.

## MILWR LEAD MINE, Holywell.

No. 146 James Jones. June 4th, 1841.

**How old are you?** - 17 years old.

**How long have you been at work?** - Five years in this mine, and a year in another.

**What is your work?** - I wash and dress lead ore.

**What are the hours for work?** - We begin at seven in the morning, we have an hour at dinner, and leave work at six in the evening.

**are your wages?** - 7s. a week.

**Do you work overtime?** - Very seldom, only two or three hours once or twice a month in summer.

**Do they wash and dress ore in the night?** - No, never.

**Is it hard work?** - Not very.

**Does it tire the young boys?** No, I don't think so.

**Is it unhealthy work?** - No, it often binds the bowels, but not dangerously.

**Are you and the other boys healthy?** - Yes, very.

**Do you ever work in the mine below the surface?** - No, the boys work on the surface.

**Do many men work with the boys?** - No, the washing is done by boys.

**What age is the youngest boy in the work?** - Ten, I think.

**How long has he been working with you?** - A year.

**Was he not much tired when he began first?** - I don't think he was.

**Are the boys well treated when at work?** - Yes, always.

**Are they ever beat?** - No, perhaps a slap now and then.

**How are they punished?** - The overlooker scolds and threatens to turn them off.

**Do they swear and fight much among themselves?** - No, not much, the overlooker won't allow it.

**Can most of the boys read and write?** - No, but few can write but some can read,

**Can you read and write?** - No, I can't write at all, but I can read a little in the Testament.

**Where did you learn?** - At the Sunday-school.

**Were you never at a day-school?** - For a short time before I went to work.

**Were you taken from school to go to work?** - Yes.

**Who got your wages?** - My mother.

**Does she still receive them?** - I give them to her all.

**Do you go to church every Sunday?** - Yes, always to chapel two or three times, and to Sunday-school.

**Do the boys generally go to church or chapel?** - Yes, very few stay away.

**Do you go home to meals or are they brought to the work to you?** - Our friends bring our dinner to the work.

**Is there a room in which you may eat your dinner?** - No, only the engine-room.

**Does the overlooker insist on your washing yourselves before you eat?** - No.

**Do you wash yourselves before you eat?** - Some do, others don't.

**Are you not told that it will be conducive to your health to wash yourselves before eating?** - Yes.

**Do you work under cover either in winter or summer?** - No, never.

**Are not your hands constantly immersed in water, and your feet generally wet while at work?** - Yes.

**Are your hands and feet injured by the constant wet in winter?** - No, not much.

**Do you get sufficient food and clothing?** - Yes, always.

**No. 147 Richard Hughes.**

**How old are you?** - Ten.

**Have you been long at work?** - A year and a little more.

**Who agreed with the overlooker for your wages?** - My father.

**Do you work the same hours every day as the other boys?** - Yes, from seven in the morning till six in the evening.

**Does the work tire you much?** - A little.

**Do you eat and sleep well?** - Yes.

**Does the overlooker, or do any of the men or boys ill-use and beat you?** - No, never.

**Do you work by the day?** - Yes.

**What wages have you?** - 3s. a week.

**Do you receive your own wages?** - Yes.

**What do you do with them?** - I give all to my mother.

**Were you ever at school?** - I go always to Sunday-school.

**Were you never at any other?** - Yes, at a day-school, but I left before I could spell.

**Can you read now?** - I can read in an easy book small words.

**Do you go to church every Sunday?** - No, I go to chapel regularly.

**Is your home far from the mine?** - No, not far, a mile perhaps.

**Do you work the same number of hours in winter as summer?** - We work only while it light.

**Have you the same wages?** - Yes.

**Does the overlooker make you work very hard?** - Yes, he won't let us be idle.

**Does he ever keep you after the usual hours of work if he thinks you have been idle during the day?** - No, never.

**Do you hear much swearing in the work?** - No, very little.

**Is it dark when you leave your home in a winter morning to go to work?** - Yes, quite dark.

**And dark when you return at night?** - Yes.

**Is it not dangerous to walk in the dark in consequence of the many mines that are open?** - Yes, but I know the way, and go with my friends.

**Are the boys liable to many accidents when at work?** - No, very few.

**Is your health good?** - Yes.

**Do your bowels suffer by the work?** - No, very little.

**Have you been obliged to take any medicine, or have you lost any time from work you came to the mine?** - No, neither.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined the boys, in number about 30, they all gave evidence to the two whose examinations were taken. One, William Williams, whose age had been at work since he was eight years old He and all the boys appeared in good health. They were suitably clad, and said they were well treated at the work, and had sufficient food and clothing. They all said they could read a little, but only six could write even names. They go to no school but the Sunday-school. They attend chapel regularly, perfectly ignorant, uncultivated, and rude.]

**MATHER AND CO.'s Desilverizing Works, &C., Bagilit, near Holywell. MAY 28th, 1841.**

**No. 148 Mr. Buckley. May 28th, 1841.**

**How long have you been accustomed to works where numbers of adults and young persons work together?** - I have been many years in large works, and have been 15 years manager of these works.

**When men or boys are hired, are any inquiries made as to whether they can read or write, or whether they go regularly to church or chapel?** - No such inquiry is ever made.

**Do most of the men and boys read and write?** - Yes, most of them, I think, can read write a little at least. They can most of them read a little, and many can write.

**Are any females employed in these works?** - No, none.

**Are there many boys under 18?** - No, only a few, not more than 9 or 10 at most

**Are many under the age of 13?** - No, only two or three ever. At present there are none.

**How many hours do they work daily?** - Ten and a half. They come and go at six, have half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner.

**Do they work overtime?** - It very rarely, though it sometimes does happen, that we require the men and boys to work overtime. When an order has to be executed in a limited time they do work for two or three hours extra, but it is very seldom.

**What wages do the boys earn?** - From 5s. to 7s. a week.

**Is their work very oppressive?** - No, those who work near the furnaces find it hot, but I do not see that they are oppressed or even fatigued by their work.

**Are they healthy?** - Yes, very.

**Are the men and boys well conducted and orderly?** - Yes, more so than they used to be.

**Are the men more sober and more religious?** - Yes, much more so.

**Do they ever beat or maltreat the boys?** - No, never. That would not be allowed even if they were so inclined, but I never hear of such a thing.

**To what do you attribute the improvement which you think has taken place in the moral and religious conduct of the men?** - To the increased number of places of public worship, of day-schools, and of Sunday-schools, to temperance societies, and to the exertions of Church-men and Dissenters.

**Do you think, as the morals of the working classes improve, there is also improvement in their mode of living, in their dress, &c.?** I think there is.

**From the experience you have had, would you say that those men and boys who have been educated are to be preferred as workmen?** - From all the observations I have made I am led to believe that those who can read and write and have a turn for reading are to be preferred as workmen, though there are exceptions. Those who have been tolerably educated understand their work better and do it more accurately than the ignorant. They are also more reasonable in times of difficulty and distress, and are more easily made to comprehend the subject about which there may be a dispute. I see no difference in their morals, all our people being both religious and moral.

**I suppose, as a matter of course, the Sunday is now more strictly observed than it was formerly?** - Bagillt used to be notorious for barbarous and rude sports, gambling, drinking, and rioting, even on Sunday. This is by no means the case now even on week days, and on Sunday there is nothing of the kind. No doubt there are individuals still who drink, and even riot, but no family men do, and it is reckoned disgraceful even in young men to be seen drunk. A new chapel of ease which a large portion is free to every one, has been lately erected, and a very efficient and zealous clergyman does the duty. A national school for boys and girls has also been built. They were both much wanted, and have already done much good.

#### No. 149 Hugh Matthew.

**How old are you?** - Sixteen at this time.

**How long have you been working?** - More than four years.

**What is your present work?** - Lead pipe drawing. I used to keep the fire in the furnaces.

**What wages have you?** - Five shillings a week.

**How many hours a day do you work?** - Twelve hours but we have half an hour allowed for breakfast and an hour for dinner.

**Do you go home to meals?** - Yes.

**Do you work overtime?** Very seldom. When work is brisk we do sometimes work a quarter of a day over.

**Is the work of the boys in lead and the desilverizing processes very hard?** - No, but those who attend the furnaces are subject to great heat.

**Are you healthy?** - Yes.

**Are all the boys?** - Yes.

**Are you and they well treated by the overlookers and the men?** - Yes, very well treated.

**Do you receive your wages regularly and fairly?** - Always.

**What do you do with your wages?** - My mother gets all for keeping me.

**Do you get sufficient food and clothing?** - Yes.

**Do you go regularly to church or chapel?** - Yes, regularly.

**Can you read and write?** - No, I am learning to read in the Sunday-school.

**Do most of the boys in Bagillt Works attend public worship constantly?** - I think they do.

**Is there much play going on amongst them on Sunday?** - No, but little, I believe.

#### No. 150 William Griffith, aged 12 years and 10 months.

**For how long have you been working?** - Near two years in this work. I was working before here for some time in the Down Hill Colliery.

**Why did you leave the colliery?** - Because we removed from there to Bagillt, and I got work.

**Which do you like best?** - I liked the colliery very well but I like the smelting is better.

**What is the nature of your present employment?** - I attend the furnaces, &c.

**Is it hard work?** - Not very.

**many hours a day do you work?** - We come to work at six, and we leave at six.

**What time is allowed for meals?** - Half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner.

**Do you go home to meals?** - Yes.

**Do you work overtime or at night?** - No.

**Do you ever work at night?** - When I was at the colliery I have worked at night.

**On what occasions?** - When a ship had to be loaded in a tide, I have worked from six in the morning till one next morning, being 19 hours, and was only an hour and a half all that me for my meals.

**Did you do this often?** - Not often but I did so three or four times.

**On these occasions when you worked till one in the morning, when did you return to work again?** - The same morning at six as usual.

**Did you feel great fatigue?** - No, but little.

**What age were you then?** - Between nine and ten.

**What wages have you now?** - 4s. 6d. a-week.

**What becomes of your wages?** - My mother has them.

**How many meals do you have on a day?** - Three.

**Have you sufficient at each?** - Yes.

**What does your mother give you to eat?** - Tea or coffee, or bread and milk for breakfast, potatoes and milk, or potatoes and meat or bacon for dinner and tea or milk and bread at night.

**Have you good clothes?** - I have two suits of clothes.

**Are there fixed holidays in the work?** - Yes, we have three holidays in the year, Easter and Whit Monday, and Christmas Day, and we have half a holiday the day on which the masters give a dinner to their workmen.

**Do the boys also dine with the masters?** - No, we get a present of a shilling each instead.

**Is the dinner given every year?** - Yes.

**Are there many boys under 13 years of age in the work at present?** - No, I don't think there are any at all.

**Are there many under 18?** - I believe there are 10 or 11.

**Do many of them read and write?** - Yes.

### No. 151 Joseph Matthew.

**How old are you?** - I am not yet 14, but I shall be in three or four months.

**How long is it since you began to work?** - Two years.

**How many hours a day do you work?** - I work ten and a half.

**Does that include the time for meals?** - No, we are at the work by six in the morning, and leave at six in the evening.

**Do you work overtime?** - No, never.

**What wages have you?** - 5s. 6d. a week.

**Are they paid regularly and without deductions?** - Yes.

**Can you read and write?** - I can read a little, but can't write at all.

**Were you at school before you began to work?** - Yes, for a short time.

**Where do you learn to read?** - At the Sunday-school in the chapel.

**Do you regularly attend Divine worship?** - Yes, always.

**Have you sufficient food and clothing?** - Yes, I give all my wages to my mother, and she finds me in everything.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined the other boys in this work, nine in number, ages from 14 to 18. They agree with the evidence previously given in everything relating to the work. They are all healthy looking, and apparently well conducted, and have good clothing. They can read and seven can write their names. They all say they attend Divine Sunday-school regularly, and that they have comfortable homes. They are all ignorant, but appear desirous of education.]

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## PASCOE, GRENDEL, AND Co., Copper Manufacturers, Greenfield, Holywell

No. 152 John Wynne. May 29th, 1841.

**How old are you?** - 12 last Christmas.

**How long have you been at work?** - Two years.

**What is your work?** - I work in the copper mill raking up copper, &c.

**How many hours a-day do you work?** - 10 hours. We come at half past six, out of which time we have an hour and a half allowed for meals.

**Do you go home to meals?** - Yes.

**Do you work overtime?** - Yes.

**Do you ever work at night?** - Yes, every other week.

**You work then one week by night, the other by day?** - Yes.

**And occasionally you work overtime?** - Yes, I often work an hour and a half over and get paid accordingly.

**When do you begin to work at night work?** - I begin at 6 p.m. I work till 8, with half an hour allowed for supper. I then work till 1 a.m. and rest till 3, then work till half past 5, and go home, unless I work overtime

**What wages have you?** - 5s. 6d. a week.

**Is your wages regularly paid?** - Yes.

**Is it your wish to work over time?** - I like to do so.

**Don't you feel fatigued by working so many hours together?** - Very little.

**What is the greatest number of hours you ever worked at one time?** - I once worked day, all that night, and all next day till 12 at night.

**During that time had you time allowed for rest?** - I had two hours allowed, from 2 in the morning.

**Where do you sleep the two hours in the night that are allowed for rest?** - I sleep floor in my clothes.

**Have you often worked a day and a night without going home to sleep?** - Yes, often.

**Does your health continue good?** - Yes, very good.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes, in Welsh and English.

**Do you go regularly to church or chapel?** - Yes, I go to chapel every Sunday two or times.

**Do you attend Sunday-school?** - Yes, every Sunday.

**Do the men or boys or both who are in the work with you swear much?** - I hear some of the men swear a good deal.

**Is there no rule in the work against swearing?** - No.

**Does no one rebuke them?** - Nobody.

**Is there no system of rewards or punishment in the work?** - No, none.

**Do you not go to any school besides the Sunday-school?** - Yes, the week I work by night I go from my work to school for an hour and a half.

**Are you not too sleepy and too much fatigued to go to school after the work of the night?** - No, not at all.

**Do many boys in the work do the same?** - No, one or two do, but no more.

**What is the school you go to?** - It is a small school near the work.

**Is it supported by the company with whom you work?** - No, we pay a small sum to the master.

**Is there not a national school free to all who like to go to it?** - Yes, in Holywell.

No. 153 John Hughes.

**How old are you?** - I don't know.

**Are you 8, 9, or 10?** - I don't know at all.

**Did you never hear?** - My friends say I am 11.

**How long is it since you began to work?** - A year and a quarter.

**What is your work?** - I am in the warehouse.

**At what work?** - Anything that is required, I carry the copper and pack it, and those kind of jobs.

**Do you never work in the mill?** - No, I am only in the warehouse. I help to pack.



**How many hours do you work each day?** - About 11 hours out of that there is an hour a half allowed for meals.  
**Do you work overtime?** - Yes, an hour or two now and then, not often.  
**Do you go to school?** - No, except sometimes to Sunday-school.  
**Can you read?** - I am learning.  
**Were you never in school?** - Yes, for a very short time in the day-school before I began to work.  
**Who receives your wages?** - I do, and give them to my parents.  
**What wages have you?** - 3s. a week, and a little more if I work overtime.  
**Have you enough of food?** - Yes.  
**What does your mother give you at meals?** - Bread and butter, potatoes, milk, and a little meat.  
**Do you get three meals every day?** - Yes, every day.  
**Are you better clothes than those you have on?** - Yes.  
**Do you regularly go to church or chapel?** - Yes.  
**Do you play often on Sunday?** - Yes, a little sometimes.  
**Are you in good health?** - Yes, I am very well.

### No. 154 William Jones.

**How old are you?** - I am 15.  
**How long have you been at work?** - Near two years.  
**What wages have you?** - 5s. 6d. a week.  
**What is your employment?** - A behinder, I stand behind the rolls to lift the hot copper as it comes through the rolls and to put it back over the rolls.  
**Do you work day and night?** - Yes, every other week.  
**How many hours do you work in the 24?** - We come and go at six and when we work in lay we have an hour and a half for meals. In the night we have two hours and a half allowed for meals.  
**When working by night, do you sleep during any part of it?** - We cease working at 1, and begin again at 3. In that time I sleep on the floor in my clothes.  
**What is the greatest number of hours you ever worked without going to bed?** - When I was a mopper I once worked four stem's without going home to bed.  
**What is a stem?** - A stem with us means the work for a day or night.  
**You therefore worked two days and two nights?** - Yes.  
**Were you very much tired?** - Yes, of course.  
**Did your appetite or sleep fail you on going home?** - No.  
**Do you often work so?** - No, only once.  
**Do you frequently do two stems without going home?** - I have done so.  
**On what occasions?** - When the other behinder who ought to come to take my place has unable to come to work.  
**Would you have preferred not working on these occasions?** - I never thought much about is the practice, and I got paid for two days instead of one.  
**Is your health good, and has it always been so since you began to work?** - Yes, very good.  
**Do you work on Sunday?** - No.  
**Never?** - I never did but the week I am to work by night I go to the mill on Sunday at six in the evening to commence the night's work.  
**Is the work at the rolls very exhausting from the heat?** - It is very hot, but we soon get used to it.  
**Does it make you very thirsty?** - Yes, very.  
**What do you get to drink?** - Cold water, or milk and water.  
**Do the men drink a great deal?** - They all drink a great deal.  
**What have they besides water?** - Few have anything but water or milk. Sometimes they have small beer.  
**Do none of them have ale?** - Not in the work.  
**Are there any teetotallers among the men who work in the mills?** - Yes, men and boys.  
**Can you read and write?** - Yes.  
**Where did you learn?** - In the national-school before I began to work.  
**Did you pay anything?** - No, not for being taught, but we paid some trifle for fire, I think  
**What did the master teach?** - Reading, writing, and arithmetic.  
**Was it the custom of the school to assemble on Sunday and to go from the school to church with the master?** - Yes.

**No. 155 Richard Williams.**

**How long have you been at work?** - Near three years and a half.

**How old are you?** - Fifteen.

**What wages have you?** - Seven shillings a-week.

**Are your wages regularly paid?** - Yes, quite regularly.

**And always in full?** - Yes.

**Do you ever get more than 7s. a week?** - Yes, if I work overtime.

**Does it often happen that you work overtime?** - Not very often.

**Would you wish it to happen more frequently?** - Yes, I like to earn as much as possible.

**What do you do with your wages?** - My mother has all, except what I get by overtime.

**Do you drink or smoke?** - No.

**Have you plenty food and clothes?** - Yes, like other boys.

**Do you get three good meals every day?** - Yes.

**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, at the national school.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes.

**Do you read the Bible often?** - Yes, I do.

**Do you go to church regularly?** - I go to chapel and Sunday-school.

**Are the boys who work with you well treated by the masters and the men?** - Yes,

**Do much swearing and bad language go on among the men and boys?** - No, very little.

**Is there fighting and quarrelling?** - No, now and then there may be a quarrel, but not often.

**Do you work by night?** - Yes, every other week.

**Do you often work a day and at night without going home?** - Not often, very seldom indeed.

**Do you go to school when you are off work?** - No.

**What do you do with your leisure time?** - I have very little leisure time. When I have my supper it is almost time to go to bed, and when I work all night I sleep almost all day.

**Do you sleep as well in the day as at night?** - No, I don't think I do quite so well.

**Do accidents frequently happen to the men or boys in the mills?** - No, but very seldom.

**No. 156 William Evans, aged 17.**

**Have you been many years at work?** - Yes, near four years.

**What is your work?** - I work in the mill as a pickler.

**How many hours daily?** - Ten hours.

**Do you work by night?** - Yes, every other week.

**Do you often work overtime?** - When required I do, but that is not very often.

**What wages have you?** - Seven shillings a week.

**Will that keep you?** - I live with my friends, and they keep me for my wages.

**Have you sufficient food and clothes?** - Yes, always.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes, I learnt at the national school in Holywell.

**Do you go to church every Sunday?** - I go to chapel.

**Why do you go to chapel, you were brought up to go to church?** - Because my friends all go, and I only went to church because it was the rule of the school to do so.

**Do you know what the difference between the church and your chapel is?** - No, I don't.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined the boys in this work. There are only two under 13 years of age and they are all healthy, active, and intelligent youths. Out of 28 there were only five who cannot write their names. They all read a little, and most of them read well. They work alternately a week by day, and the following week by night. All say they are treated when at work, and that the work is neither unhealthy nor oppressive and that never object to work overtime when required. They are comfortably clad, and appear well conducted.]

**No. 157 Mr. Charles Garland.**

He has been agent in this work for many years and is a strong advocate for education, and would be glad that a plan could be devised which should make it general and while it afforded all classes the means of instruction, should not have the effect of impeding works, or throwing and young persons out of work, and thus cutting off their means of support. In these works the boys work with the men. There is a day set and a night set but if the boys should be prevented by the legislature from working ten hours in the day, and from working at night, he does not see how they

can carry on their operations. The boys are not oppressed by their work, and are healthy, and when at work are well treated. Wages are punctually paid, and, by means of the earnings of the boys, families are provided for which would otherwise in many instances be upon the parish.

**No. 158 Mr. William Lloyd.**

**Are you the teacher at the national school in Holywell?** - Yes, I have been five years and my wife also a teacher in the girls' school.

**At what age do the boys generally go to the school?** - They come at different ages, some as young as seven, generally at eight.

**Do many of them go from school to the large works, and to the mines and collieries in the neighbourhood of Holywell?** - Yes, many of them do.

**At what age do they go to the works?** - When they are about 11 years old.

**Can they read and write by that age?** - Yes, if they have been two or three years at school. Those who cannot speak English when they come to school are much longer in learning than others who can.

**Do any continue to attend school after they have began to work?** - No, they seldom or never think of school afterwards, except the Sunday-school in the chapels and they often forget what they have learnt when with me, especially those who have not been well grounded.

**What is the moral and religious condition of the children in this neighbourhood who work together in numbers?** - The moral condition of the children here I consider better than in large towns. They are very honest, though I must say they are great swearers. They are in general quiet and well conducted. In respect to religion they are for the most part constant in their attendance at Divine worship and though they go to church the dissenting chapels are very well attended, and the Sabbath is well observed.

**Do you take your schoolboys every Sunday to church?** - Yes, they come to the school, and from thence they are walked to church.

**Were you trained for a teacher?** - No, I was a hairdresser, and intend to return to my trade, as I am not sufficiently paid.

**How is the school supported?** - By subscription.

**What do you teach the boys?** - Reading, writing, and arithmetic.

**Does your wife teach the girls to sew and knit?** - Yes.

**Do the girls go from school to be employed in any of the works?** - No, not since the large cotton mills have been stopped.

**How long ago did they stop?** - About two or three years ago.

**Do you ever hear of the children in the large works being worked beyond their strength?** - I think the boys are too hard worked for their years. They have sometimes to work 18 hours out of the 24, and that for many successive days.

**Do you know of any bad effects from such continuous work?** - No, but I have heard of boys loosing their appetites and drooping in consequence.

**Do you think 10 or 11 hours' work daily is too much for boys under 13 years old?** - Yes, I think eight hours for a boy under 13 is as much as he ought to be employed in any work.

**In case they were only eight hours at work how would you propose they should fill up their time?** - They should be allowed some time for play, and they should go to school for two or three hours every day as the factory children do. Play is necessary to the health and growth of children, and they require education to cultivate their understandings.

**Are the boys in the large works very ignorant?** - They must be so, as they be to work when young, and before they have learnt, many of them, even to read an easy ~k and to write their names.

**Are the working classes in this district pretty well off and able to live comfortably?** - The works have not been so brisk as they were formerly, but I think the working classes are not badly off on the whole.

**Are they sober and industrious?** - Very industrious, and becoming more sober and well conducted daily.

**Are they improving in moral and religious habits?** - No doubt they are, and in social habits also. The clubs and friendly societies and the spread of temperance clubs, with the zeal and exertions of the Clergy and Dissenters, have done a great deal towards improving the habits of the working classes.

**Do you find those who are pretty well educated better behaved and get on better than ignorant?** - Yes, I think so in general.

# NEWTON, LYON, AND Co., Manufacturers of Copper, Lead, &c

## No. 159 Edward Morris.

**How old are you?** - I am 17, but don't exactly know when I was born.

**Did you never ask your parents?** - No, I never asked them my age to a day, but they said I was born in summer just about this time 17 years ago.

**What wages have you?** - Six shillings a week.

**How many hours do you work daily?** - A day's work is from six to six, with an hour and a half allowed for meals.

**What work are you employed at?** - I grind the red lead.

**How long have you been so employed?** - Near two years at that work, but I was for some time before employed in rolling it.

**Do you ever work overtime?** - Yes, very often.

**As often as three or four times a week?** - Yes.

**Do you work at night?** - Yes, if required.

**Are you often required?** - Yes, I worked all last night.

**And also all yesterday?** - Yes, and I shall work till five o'clock this afternoon.

**How long will that be without going to bed?** - It will make me three days work and three days wages.

**What length of time in the 35 hours have you for rest?** - Five hours and a half altogether.

**How?** - Half an hour for breakfast yesterday, an hour for dinner, half an hour for supper, two hours at midnight for sleep, half an hour again for breakfast and an hour for dinner.

**Have you very often in the course of the two years you have been in the lead work been employed in the same way for a day and two nights?** - Yes, often.

**Is it your own wish to work so hard?** - I do as I am told, and as others do, but of course I would rather be in bed.

**Are many of the boys kept as long at work as you say you have been?** - Yes.

**When you sleep in the middle of the night do you undress?** - Oh no, there is no bed to go to.

**Where do you sleep?** - On the floor where I work.

**Do you sleep soundly?** - Yes.

**Are there conveniences for washing yourself in the works?** - Yes, we have water, soap, and a towel provided.

**Do you always wash yourself before meals and before going to sleep?** - Yes, I perhaps forget sometimes.

**Does the overlooker make you do so?** - No, but I do so because it is right, and because is better for my health.

**Is your health good?** - I often feel a little poorly and my bowels get bound, so that I take castor oil.

**Are you often so poorly as to prevent you from coming to work?** - No, I never lose a day.

**When you work for so long a time without rest does your appetite fall off?** - No, but I can't eat my supper so well, or my breakfast next morning.

**Do you go home to meals?** - Yes.

**Are they warm and comfortable?** - Yes.

**And sufficient in quantity?** - Yes.

**Do you work on Sunday?** - No.

**Do you go to public worship every Sunday?** - I go to chapel generally three times on Sunday.

**Do you go to a Sunday-school?** - Yes.

**Can you read and write?** - I am beginning to read a little, but I can't write at all.

**Was you never at a day-school?** - Yes, when I was young, but I was taken away when went to work.

**How long were you at school?** - About two years.

**What do you do with your wages?** - I give them to my mother.

**Do you never put any into the savings bank?** - No, I have none to spare.

**Have you good clothes?** - Yes, pretty good.

**Is there much swearing, quarrelling, or fighting, in the works amongst either the men?** - Very little.

**Are the boys ever beat by the men or the overlookers?** - There is very little of that.

**Would the masters allow it?** - No, I think not.

**Are boys ever kept at work after the usual hours by way of punishment? - No.**

**No. 160 John Price.**

**How old are you? - Fifteen and a half.**

**What wages have you? - Four shillings a-week.**

**Is it long since you began to work? - Four years.**

**What is your work? - I now work behind the rolls. I used to work as a mopper.**

**How many hours a day? - Twelve, with an hour and a half for breakfast and dinner allowed.**

**Do you work at night? - Yes, every other week I work by night.**

**When you work by night, when does the work begin, and when does it end, and what time is allowed for meals and rest? - We begin at six in the evening, and leave off at six in the morning.**

**There is half an hour allowed for supper and two hours at midnight for rest.**

**Do you ever work overtime? - Yes, often.**

**For what number of hours? - Frequently the whole night, when it is my week to work by day, or the whole day when I work by night.**

**Is this your week to work by day? - Yes.**

**Did you work all last night? - Yes, I worked overtime all last night. When I finish my work today I shall have earned since yesterday morning three days wages.**

**Did you sleep in the night? - Yes, I slept the two hours.**

**Without undressing? - Yes, I slept on the floor in the forge.**

**Do you often work 36 hours without going to bed? - Yes, often when the work is brisk.**

**Is the work behind the rolls oppressive? - Yes, at first the heat is so great as to make one very hot and very thirsty.**

**What do you drink when at work? - Water, sometimes buttermilk and water.**

**Do the men in the forge drink much? - Yes.**

**Do they drink ale and spirits? - No, they sometimes have small beer**

**Is your health good? - Yes, I am never ill, but I often feel poorly after being long at work.**

**On occasions of long continued work do you eat and sleep well? - Not very well, especially if I work as I am doing now, two days and a night without going to bed.**

**When you leave off work to-night will you go to bed immediately? - Yes, if I have nothing to do when I go home.**

**When will you return to work? - To-morrow morning as usual.**

**And will you work all to-morrow night also if required? - Yes, certainly.**

**Have you ever been required to work another 36 hours with only the interval of one night for sleep? - Yes.**

**Did You ever refuse to work under such circumstances? - No, never.**

**Would your parents be angry at you were you to refuse? I don't know, perhaps they would.**

**Do you receive your own wages? - My mother does.**

**What becomes of them? - All goes for my keep and clothes.**

**Have you plenty of food and good clothes? - Yes.**

**What is your food? - Bread and butter and tea or coffee, or such like, for breakfast, potatoes and meat for dinner and bread and milk or bread and meat for supper.**

**Can you read and write? - Yes.**

**Where did you learn? - At a day-school, before I began to work.**

**Do you go to Sunday-school? - Yes, always when I can.**

**Do you regularly attend Divine worship? Yes, when I am not prevented by work.**

**Do you work on Sunday? - I have worked often all Saturday and Saturday night till seven, eight, nine, and ten o'clock on Sunday morning and then I go to bed all day, but I go to chapel at night, then again, I go to work on Sunday evening at six o'clock, when it is my for night-work, which prevents me going to chapel every other Sunday in the evening.**

**Are the boys well treated by the men and the masters when, at work? - Yes.**

**Are they often beat? - Sometimes they may get a slap, but it is very seldom.**

**Have you your wages fully and regularly paid? - Yes, every Friday.**

**Who agreed with the masters of the work for your wages? - I did myself with the manager.**

**No. 161 William Davis**

**How old are you? - Eleven years and a half.**

**How old were you when you began to work? - I have been working a little more than a year.**

**What is your work?** - I am a mopper in the forge.  
**What wages have you?** - Two shillings and sixpence a week.  
**How many hours a day do you work?** - Twelve.  
**What time is allowed for meals?** - Half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner.  
**Do you work at night?** - Yes, one week by night, the next by day.  
**Do you work overtime besides?** - Yes, often.  
**A whole night or a whole day?** - Yes, I have often worked two days and a night without going to bed.  
**Do you work on Sunday?** - Yes, sometimes.  
**Have you ever worked all Sunday?** - Yes, all Sunday and all Sunday night.  
**If you refused to work overtime or on Sunday would you be punished or turned off?** - I know, I never did refuse.  
**Have you not known others refuse?** - No.  
**Would your parents be angry were you to refuse?** - I don't know. We know we must work, therefore we don't talk about refusing.  
**Do you ever sleep while at work?** - No.  
**Would you be punished were you to sleep?** - I might get a slap, perhaps.  
**Is your health good?** - Yes, but I feel a pain in my breast and lose my appetite when I very hard for a long time together.  
**Do you attend church or chapel regularly on Sunday?** - Yes, when work does not prevent me.  
**Does it often prevent you?** - Yes, it does.  
**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, before I came to the works.  
**In what school were you?** - At a day-school in Holywell,  
**Is it the free school?** - Yes.  
**When at school were you obliged to go with the other boys to church?** - Yes.  
**Could you read and write before you left?** - Yes, a little, I go to the Sunday-school at as often as I can.  
**Do you live with your parents?** - Yes.  
**Did they agree with the manager for your wages?** - No, I agreed myself.  
**Do they get your wages?** - Yes.  
**Have you good food and clothes?** - Yes.  
**And a good bed?** - Yes.

#### No. 162 Edward Williams.

**How old are you?** - I am 14.  
**When were you 14?** - I don't know.  
**How do you know you are 14?** - Because my parents tell me so.  
**Did you not ever think of asking them on what day and in what month you were born?** - No.  
**How long have you been at work?** - A year.  
**What is your work?** - I work the sieves in the shot-tower.  
**How many hours a day?** - From six to six, except when I go to meals.  
**Is time is allowed for meals?** - Half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner.  
**What wages have you?** - Three shillings a week.  
**Do you work over hours?** - Yes, often for two or three hours, and sometimes more.  
**Do you work all night?** - Yes, every other week.  
**Is the work hard?** - No.  
**Are you much fatigued when you work overtime?** - No, not much.  
**Is your health good?** - Yes, very.  
**Do you go home to you meals?** - No, my friends bring my food to the work to me.  
**Is it warm?** - Yes.  
**What does it consist of?** - Bread and milk or bread and butter and tea for breakfast, a the same at night and meat or bacon and potatoes and bread at dinner.  
**Are there conveniences for washing yourself before you eat?** - Yes.  
**Do you take advantage of them always?** - Not always.  
**Were you at school before you began to work?** - Yes, at the free school.  
**Were you taken from the school when you began to work?** - Yes.  
**Can you read and write?** - Yes.  
**Used the master to take you and the other boys to church on Sunday?** - Yes, always.  
**Do you now go to church regularly?** - Yes, as often as I can.

**Does the work sometimes interfere with your going to church?** - Not often. If I have work late on Saturday I am glad to stay in bed part of Sunday.  
**Who made the agreement with the manager for your wages?** - My friends.  
**Who receives you wages?** - My friends or myself.  
**Have you good clothes and a comfortable home?** - Yes.  
**Are the boys in the shot-tower well treated when at work?** - Yes.  
**Are they never beat?** - No.  
**How are the boys punished if they are idle or do wrong?** - They are scolded, and threatened to be turned off.  
**Is there much swearing and bad language amongst the men and boys in the work?** - No, but little.  
**Is there much fighting and quarrelling?** - No.  
**Are the boys generally healthy?** - Yes.  
**And ready to play when work is over?** - Yes, but there is not much time for play, glad to get home to go to bed when we don't work overtime.

### **No. 163 John Williams.**

**How old are you?** - Thirteen last Christmas.  
**How long have you been working?** - Two years and a half.  
**What wages have you?** - Three shillings a week.  
**What is your work?** - Making brass nails.  
**Is it hard and tiresome work?** - No.  
**Are you obliged to remain in the same posture for a long time?** - No.  
**Is your health good?** - Yes, always.  
**How many hours a day do you work?** - From six to six, but we have an hour and a half out of it for meals.  
**Do you work on Sunday or by night?** - No, never.  
**Nor overtime?** - No.  
**Can you read and write?** - I can read, but I can't write.  
**Where did you learn to read?** - In the free school before I went to work, and I go to the Sunday-school at chapel.  
**Do you attend Divine worship regularly?** - Yes, I go to chapel two or three times on Sunday.  
**Have you plenty of food and clothing?** - Yes, pretty well.  
**Have you always meat or bacon at dinner?** - No, not always.  
**Have you as much food as you like?** - Yes, sometimes I could eat more, but not often.  
**Are there any fixed holidays?** - Yes, Christmas Day, and Whit Monday, and Easter Monday, and half of Good Friday are holidays.

### **No. 164 Richard Griffith.**

**How old are you?** - I was 15 last November.  
**How long have you been working?** - A year.  
**What is your work?** - I work with the coopers.  
**What wages have you?** - 3s. a week.  
**Do you work overtime?** - Sometimes.  
**On Sunday?** No.  
**What are your working hours?** - From six to six.  
**What time is allowed for meals?** - An hour and a half.  
**DO you go home to meals?** - Yes.  
**Have you good food and clothing and a comfortable home?** - Yes.  
**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, at the free-school in Holywell.  
**Can you read and write?** - Yes, and account.  
**Are you very well in health?** - Yes.  
**Are you well treated in the work?** - Yes, very well treated.  
**Is there any system of fines or rewards for bad or good conduct?** - No.  
**Do you hear much swearing when at work?** - A little, but not much.  
**Are there any fixed holidays?** - Yes, two or three holidays, and as many half holidays, in the year.  
**Do you go to public worship on Sunday?** - Yes, always.

**No. 165 John Yarnell.**

**How old are you?** - Just turned 14.

**How long have you been at work?** - Two years and a half.

**What is your work?** - I work behind the rolls in the copper mill.

**What wages do you get?** - 4s. a-week.

**Are they paid regularly?** - Yes.

**To whom are they paid?** - To me or my friends.

**Who made the agreement for wages?** - I did.

**Do you give all your wages to your mother?** - Yes.

**And does she supply you with everything?** - Yes.

**Does she give you sufficient food and clothing?** - Yes.

**Do you work overtime?** - Yes, often.

**And by night?** - Yes, I work by night one week and in the day another and often work all night and all day when we are very busy.

**What is the greatest number of hours you have worked without going home to bed?** - I have several times said at work for two days and two nights with no more sleep than from one to three in the night.

**Where do you sleep from one to three?** - On the floor on a copper sheet.

**On these occasions do you feel a loss of appetite and very much tired?** - Yes, I have been so that I could scarce eat or sleep, but my health is quite good and not at all injured.

**Is it not very dangerous work behind the rolls?** - If one is not quick one may be burnt.

**Are you never so sleepy as to be in danger falling on the hot copper or into the rolls?** - No.

**Were you ever hurt?** - No, only a little burnt now and then.

**What weight have you to lift over the rolls?** - About a hundredweight.

**Are you ever beat by the head roller, or any of the men, or bigger boys?** - No, we are very well treated.

**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, at a free-school in Chester, before we came to Holywell.

**Do you go to school now?** - No, I have no time.

**Do you go to church and to Sunday-school?** - Yes, whenever I can, but I can't always on account of the work and being very glad to lie in bed when I have worked all night.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes.

**No. 166 William Jones.**

**How old are you?** - I was 15 on the 1st. May last.

**How long have you been working?** - For four years.

wages have you? 5s a week.

**Who made the agreement for your wages?** - Myself.

**What is your work?** - I was behind the rolls in the forge, but I am now a scrubber of sheet copper.

**Is it hard work?** - Yes.

**Is it as hot as behind the rolls?** - Yes, it is very hot.

**Do you work at night?** - Yes, every other week.

**Do you work overtime?** - Yes, very often.

**For how long?** - Sometimes 12 hours.

**Then you work 24 hours successively?** - Yes, I have worked 36 hours often.

**Is your health good?** - Yes, it is always good.

**Did you ever sleep when at work in the forge?** - No, I don't remember that I ever did when working, but we sleep on the floor of the forge two hours every night.

**Were you ever at school?** - Yes, at the national school in Holywell.

**Can you read and write?** - I can read pretty well and write also.

**Do you go to school now?** - I have no time.

**Do you like to work overtime?** Yes.

**Would your parents be angry if you refused?** - I don't know, I suppose they would not like me to lose the wages.

**Are the boys well treated when at work?** - Yes, very well treated.

**Do you like work?** - Yes.

**No. 167 Robert Owen.**



**How old are you?** - Near 17.

**How long have you been working?** - Near seven years.

**What is your work?** - I work in the forge.

**What wages have you?** - 8s. a-week.

**Have you been at school?** - Yes, before I went to work I was at the free-school in Holywell.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes.

**Do you work 12 hours a day?** - Yes, and often over-hours.

**Are the boys in the work well treated?** - Yes.

**Do you ever see them sleep when at work?** - No, they may be tired and sleepy, but they must not sleep.

**Do none of them lose their health by working so hard as they are obliged to do?** - No, we all keep our health very well.

**Are the wages sufficient for maintenance?** - They are little enough.

**Who generally receives the boys wages?** - The boys themselves, sometimes their parents.

**Have you sufficient food and clothing?** - Yes.

**Do you always go to public worship on Sunday?** - Yes, I have many times been prevented! from going by working Saturday night.

**Do most boys go to church or chapel?** - Yes, I think they do.

**Do many of them drink or smoke?** - No, only a few.

**Do the men who work in the copper-mills drink and swear much?** - Some do, many them don't drink anything but milk or water, and many of them are religious men.

**Do you hear many complain that the work is too much for them?** - No.

#### **No. 168 Robert Owens.**

**How long have you been employed in these works?** - About 18 years.

**When did you begin to work?** - When I was 11 years old.

**Was the work regulated pretty much the same then as it is now?** - Yes, exactly the same.

**The hours of work were they the same?** - Yes, I think we worked more over hours then.

**Describe how you were worked?** - We used to work all day except an hour and a hour allowed for meals. The night-set used to work less, they had half an hour allowed for supper and two hours, from one to three, for sleep but we used often to work 36 hours without going home to bed.

**Is it the same now?** - Yes, but we are not called on so often to work so many hours.

**Did your health not suffer?** - No, not in the least.

**Many I suppose have been unable from bad health to remain in the work?** - No, very few. I scarcely remember one.

**Does the great and the constant perspiration exhaust the men and boys, and produce disease?**

The heat and perspiration are very great and some of the men used to drink a great deal but their health did not suffer. The men were often led to drink in public-houses after work, and used to drink to excess, and many injured their health in that way, but there is very little drinking now to what there was, and I think the health of the men is better.

**Are the boys well treated in the work?** - Yes, very well treated, but they are obliged to work very hard.

**Are the boys now often obliged to work 36 hours without going to bed?** - Sometimes they are.

**Do you find them disinclined to work so much?** - No.

**Don't the parents object to their children remaining so long at work?** - No, times are hard and the wages are wanted for the support of the family.

**Do you think it right to work young persons so hard by night as well as by day?** - It would be better not, growing boys ought to have their sleep, and some time for play, but they are very well.

**Do most of them leave school to go to work?** - Yes, most of them are at school till they begin to work

**Do they never go afterwards?** - Very few indeed, except to Sunday-school, they have no time.

**Are they generally well conducted and attentive to their duties?** - Yes, generally, and anxious to attend Divine worship, there is a great improvement in that respect. The boys used to play a great deal on Sunday, and the men were seldom out of the public-house. It is now different, and the chapels and Sunday-schools are well attended.

**Are parents anxious now to get their children to school and that they should attend worship?**

Yes, in general.

**Do more young persons read and write now than when you were a boy?** - Yes, certainly.

**Do the working people live better, that is, are their houses better furnished, and have better food and clothing?** - I don't see much difference. They earn less wages than they did.

**Do you think that education tends to the comfort and to improve the condition of the working classes?** - No doubt of it.

**Do masters take any pains in the moral training of the children and young persons employed by them?** - No, none.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined a great many of the boys and men employed in these-works, they all confirm the previous evidence as to the frequency of working over-hours, and of continuing at times to work for 24 and 36 hours successively but they are all looking healthy and well, and agreed together in opinion, that though frequently tired, weary, and exhausted by the work, yet that their health is not affected. They agreed that the boys are well treated when at work, and wages well paid and that any measure to prevent night-work, and to shorten the hours of work, would be unfavourably received by parents, and even the boys themselves. The boys in this work, with but few exceptions, can read and write, but are notwithstanding very ignorant. Their only opportunity for cultivating the understanding is in the Sunday-school.]

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## **MR. ROSKELL'S LEAD SMELTING AND ALKALI MANUFACTURING WORKS, Flints.**

### **No.169. Robert Hughes.**

**How old are you?** - I am 13 and a half.

**When did you begin to work?** - About 16 months ago.

**Were you at school before you went to work?** - Yes, for a year and a half.

**Have you been since?** - No, except to Sunday-school, which I regularly attend.

**And do you also attend Divine worship?** - Yes, I go to church every Sunday.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes.

**What is your work?** - Breaking limestone and ironstone ready for mill.

**Do you work in the open air?** - Yes.

**How many hours each day?** - We come and go at six, and have an hour and a half allowed for meals.

**Do you work overtime?** - No, never.

**Nor at night?** - Never.

**Do none of the boys?** - No, none.

**What wages do you earn?** - We are paid by the ton.

**How much a ton?** - 9d. a ton.

**How much are you usually paid at the week's end?** - About 4s. or 5s.

**Then you break about a ton a day?** - Yes, about that.

**Are you never engaged about the furnaces?** - No.

**Are none of the boys?** - None.

**Who made the agreement with the manager for your wages, and who receives them?** - I did myself with Mr. Roskell, and I receive my own wages.

**What do you do with them?** - I give all to my mother for my keep.

**Do you go home to meals?** - No, I bring my food with me.

**Is there a room to eat in and convenience for warming your food?** - Yes.

**Have you always plenty to eat?** - Yes.

**What does it consist of?** - Bread, milk, potatoes, and meat, and such like.

**Have you good clothes?** - Yes, very good.

**Do you work under cover if the weather is bad?** - We may do so, but we seldom do.

**Are the boys obliged to break a certain quantity every day?** - No, we are only paid for what break, but we try to break a ton a day.

**Are they all kind and civil to you in the work?** - Oh, yes, very kind.

**Were you ever beat by any one?** - No, never.

**Do the boys fight and quarrel much when at work?** - No, they would be scolded or perhaps turned off if they did.

**How many in family is there in your house?** - Seven including my father and mother.  
**How many are in work?** - Only my father and myself.  
**What does he earn?** - From 10s. to 15s. a week.  
**Is your cottage comfortably furnished?** - Yes.  
**How many beds are there in it?** - Three.  
**Do your father and mother go to church regularly?** - No, they go to chapel.  
**You say on go to church, why don't you go with them to chapel?** - Because I like church better.  
**Why so?** - Because I always went there when I was at the free school, and I like to go.  
**Do the men and boys swear much in the work?** - No, very little.  
**What do you do after work?** - Sometimes I play with the other boys, or I help my mother about the house.  
**Do you never go to a night-school?** - No, I don't think there is one.  
**Would you like to go to a night-school?** - Yes.  
**Do you ever read at night?** - Yes, I often read my Bible in the evenings, and always on Sunday.  
**What is your father?** - A smelter.  
**Does he go to the public-house very often?** - No, very seldom indeed.

### No.170. John Hughes.

**How old are you?** - Twelve and a half.  
**How long have you been at work?** - More than a year and a quarter.  
**How many hours a day do you work?** - Twelve.  
**What time is allowed for meals?** - An hour and a half.  
**Do you work overtime or on Sunday?** - No, never.  
**What wages have you?** - 9d. a ton for breaking lime and ironstone.  
**How much can you break in a day?** - I break from half to three quarters of a ton.  
**Who receives your wages?** - Myself.  
**Were you at school ever?** - Yes.  
**Can you read and write?** - I can read, but I can't write yet I am learning at a night.  
**Do you attend a night-school after your work?** - Yes.  
**Where?** - Near my home at Bagillt.  
**How far from the work?** - Near two miles.  
**What are the school-hours?** - I go at seven and leave at nine.  
**Are you not very much fatigued by walking to and from the work, and by working day?** - Not very much.  
**What do you pay at the night-school?** - 4d. a week for reading and writing.  
**Do many working boys attend the school at night?** - Twelve or thirteen.  
**What works do they belong to?** - The collieries.  
**Can they read and write?** - They are learning.  
**Do they attend regularly?** - Yes.  
**Are their fathers colliers?** - Yes, I think they are.  
**What is your father?** - A smelter.  
**How much does he earn weekly?** - 13s. or 14s.  
**How many in family are you?** - Six.  
**Do any earn wages except your father and yourself?** - No.  
**Do you live comfortably?** - Yes.  
**Do you go to Sunday-school and to public worship?** - Yes, always.  
**Do your parents?** - No, never.

### No. 171 Thomas Ingleby Dyson.

**How long have you been overlooker of Mr. Roskell's smelting works?** - Sixteen years.  
**Do most of the men and boys employed by you read and write?** - A great many of them can read, and many write.  
**Is there a school belonging to the work?** - No.  
**Are there schools in the neighbourhood which are calculated for the working classes?** - Yes, there are national schools and common day schools.  
**Are parents anxious to avail themselves of these schools, and to send their children to them?** I think they are, but boys go to work at 10 or 11 years old, and then leave school, so that afterwards they have no means of improving themselves, except at Sunday schools.

**Are the Sunday-schools well attended?** - Yes, not only by the young of both sexes but also by many adults.

**Do most of the families of the working classes attend Divine worship?** - Yes, most of them do. There are many parents and children who I fear stay away.

**Are they more attentive to their religious and moral duties than they were formerly?** Certainly they are. There are more places of worship, and they are all well Sabbath is better kept by far than it used to be, and there is much less drinking and gambling.

**To what is this improvement attributable?** - Churchmen and Dissenters are everywhere very zealous in bringing the people to public worship and to Sunday-school. Education is more general and friendly clubs and temperance societies are everywhere established and the people are more enlightened.

**Have their domestic comforts increased as their morals have improved and education spread?** - I think so. They dress better, and I think their houses are cleaner and better furnished.

**Are wages as good?** - Much the same.

**What do boys in your work earn?** - They work by the ton, and a good hand at 15 years of age will earn 9d., or perhaps a little more, per day.

**Do your lads ever work overtime?** - No, never.

**How are they employed?** - In breaking limestone, and ironstone.

**Is it hard work?** - By no means, and they work as they like themselves.

**Are they well treated when at work?** - Yes.

**Are they industrious and well conducted?** - Yes, in general.

**How are they punished if idle or obstreperous in conduct?** - They are dismissal, and occasionally some are dismissed.

**Are any boys employed in this work about the furnaces, or in any of the processes of smelting or manufacturing alkali?** - None under 20 years of age.

**Do any of your boys work on Sunday?** - No, never.

**Do they go home to meals?** - Some do, others remain.

**Are their meals warm?** - Those that remain may warm their meals if they choose as there is every convenience for the purpose.

**Do the boys or their parents usually make the agreements for work and wages?** - Generally the boys themselves.

**And do they receive their own wages?** - Yes, sometimes the mother does

**Have they good and sufficient food?** - Yes, I think they have. Their appearance and constant good health prove it.

**Do you prefer those workmen who have had some education and who can read and write to those who are totally ignorant?** - No doubt I do; they are better in every respect.

**Would you recommend that children who work for a livelihood should all have education up to a certain age?** - I think that children are brought to work too early in life. Not that work appears to affect the health or growth of children, even though in many works the labour is hard, and continued for an unreasonable length of time, but because as soon as they begin to work they have no other means of cultivating their minds except the Sunday-school, and though many learn to read in these schools, and are instructed in the Bible, yet that is all they can learn there, so that education may be said to cease as soon as children begin to earn wages.

## **SHOT AND LEAD WORKS, Chester.- Walker, Parker, and Co.**

**No.172 William Sloane, overlooker, July 11th, 1841.**

**How long have you been in this work?** - Nearly 10 years.

**Is it necessary to employ boys under 18?** - Quite necessary.

**Is there any other necessity than exists in the difference of wages?** - No other.

**Can a boy do as much work in the employment given him as an adult?** - Yes, and sometimes more.

**Is there a system of rewards and punishments kept up?** - None.

**Is there much swearing and bad language amongst those under you?** - There is a good deal. I endeavour to suppress it as much as possible. I have dismissed more than one for swearing.

**Had it a good effect?** - Yes, I think so.

**What number of hours do the boys work?** - From six to six, from which is to be taken an hour and a half for meals.

**Do they work overtime?** - Sometimes, though but seldom. Less now than formerly.

**Do you find any objection, on the part of the boys or their parents, to work overtime?**- None

**Why do you work overtime less frequently than you did?** - The trade is not so brisk.

**Do you think the number of hours for boys work could be lessened, without injury to the masters and with advantage to themselves?** - The hours of work might be lessened, I think, without much injury to masters, but I don't know with what benefit to the boys, unless they were obliged to go to school. The time would only be thrown away, and might be spent worse than in working.

**How are the boys employed?** - In casting pipes, in piling and rolling lead, and making haybands, &c.

**Are they not employed in any of the processes of making red and white lead?** - No, never.

**Who are employed in these processes?** - Men and women.

**Is the employment injurious to health?** - Yes.

**Do the fumes arising from the processes extend all over the works, and affect the health of boys and men otherwise employed?** - No, we do not find that they do.

**Are the boys healthy?** - Yes, very healthy.

**Is the health of those employed in making red and white lead often and much affected?** - Yes, their health becomes much affected.

**What steps are taken to counteract, as much as possible, the unhealthy tendency of the work?**

We supply those employed with medicine and medical advice, we supply soap, water, and towels for washing and we provide clothes for them to work in, which they put on when they go to work, and take off as soon as work is over. We also have these clothes washed. There is a room for the use of the women, in which there are water-closets. We caution them not to eat with soiled hands, and use our best endeavours to keep them in health and when we find any of them losing health we try to put them to other employ till they get better.

**Do you find any difficulty in procuring either men or women to work in the red and white lead processes?** - None but I must own we are obliged to put up with the refuse of the people Those who offer their services are usually loose characters.

**Are the boys not contaminated by the evil example?** - I fear they frequently are. Indeed, some of them are the parents or near relatives of the boys.

**Have you any school belonging to the work?** - None. In the city of Chester there are many free-schools for the education of children.

**Are most of the boys you employ able to read and write?** - Most of them, I think, can read a little, and write.

**Does your experience lead you to conclude that the working classes would themselves be benefited by education, and that education would produce you better workmen?** - Yes, decidedly. All our best men are those who have had some education, and the most troublesome and most worthless are those who are quite ignorant.

**Which are the most attentive to orders and the most easily guided, the educated or the ignorant?** - The educated and they have generally considerable influence in guiding others.

**Are the morals of those working together in numbers in Chester at a low ebb?** - Yes, I fear so, at least in our works. They are, however, gradually improving. They do not drink quite so much, there is less disgusting language used, they are more civilised in every way, and are becoming more religious.

**To what do you attribute the improvement?** - To the attention of religious bodies. The Sectarians have been taking great pains.

**Has not education been much attended to of late years?** - Yes and as education advances morals improve.

**Are there many schools to which the labouring classes can have access night, as well as day-schools?** - Yes, there are many at from 1d. to 6d. a week, and there are many free.

**Are wages good in Chester?** - Yes, pretty well.

**Are the wages of the boys sufficient to provide them in food and clothes?** - Yes, I think they are.

(Signed) WILLIAM SLOANE.

#### No.173 Christopher Davies, aged 14.

**When did you begin to work?** - Two years ago.

**In what work?** - In Messrs. Walker and Parker's lead-work, where I now am.

**What wages have you?** - 5s. a week.

**What is your work?** - Lead pipe casting.

**Is it hard a and difficult work?** - Not very.  
**Were you ever employed in other labour?** - No.  
**How many hours do you work daily?** - I work from six a.m. to six p.m.  
**What time out of that is allowed you for meals?** - Half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner.  
**Do you work over-hours?** - I worked this week five hours overtime, but for two months before I only worked the usual time. In the winter I worked daily, during three months, 16 hours.  
**Was it by choice you did so?** - They told me to work, and I never thought of refusing.  
**Were you at school before you began to work?** - Yes, I was at school till I came to the work.  
**Have you been at school since?** - No, except some time on Sunday.  
**Do you always attend Divine worship?** - Only sometimes.  
**Why don't you attend regularly?** - My aunt, with whom I live, wishes me to go, but somehow how I don't.  
**Do you ever work on Sunday?** - No, never.  
**Have you neither father or mother?** - No, my mother is dead, and my father ran away.  
**Why did he run off?** - I don't know.  
**Do you receive your wages yourself?** - Yes.  
**What do you do with them?** - I give all to my aunt except what I get for over-work.  
**Are you healthy?** - Yes, very.  
**Are you well treated in the work?** - Yes, always.  
**Are your wages punctually paid?** - Oh, yes, always.  
**What do you do on Sunday and in the evenings after work?** - After work I play about, or do something in the house. On Sunday I go to church or chapel sometimes take a walk in the country, or stay at home.  
**Can you read and write?** - Yes.

(Signed) CHRISTOPHER DAVIES.

**No.174 John Wakefield, aged 16.**

**How long have you been at work?** - Three years but I have been only 18 months in Messrs. Walker and Parker's work.  
**What is your work?** - Rolling and piling lead.  
**Is your health good?** - Yes.  
**Can you read and write?** - Yes.  
**When were you at school?** - For some time before I began to work.  
**Did you leave off school when you began to work?** - Yes.  
**Have you not been at school since?** - No.  
**Do you attend Divine worship and Sunday-school?** - Yes, regularly, in chapel.  
**Are the masters and workmen kind to the boys?** - There is no reason to complain.  
**Do they ever beat the boys or treat them cruelly?** - Never.  
**Do they allow of bad language and swearing?** - There is bad language and swear there is no punishment.  
**Do you work overtime?** - Yes, two hours most days.  
**Are you obliged to do so?** - No, I do so because I earn more wages.  
**Are wages punctually paid?** - Yes, punctually.  
**Do you ever work all night?** - Never.  
**Why don't you go to an evening-school?** - I don't know, the evenings I work overtime and it would be impossible.

(Signed) JOHN WAKEFIELD.

[The Sub-Commissioner also examined John Dentith, aged 16, who had been at work three years, wages 5s. a week, John Connalty, aged 15, who had been at work four months, wages 7s., William Parrott, William Lander, Joseph Williams, Robert Ackerly, Thomas Thomas Davies, Joseph Ledsome. James Higham, &c. and they all confirmed the previous evidence of kind treatment in the work. They were seldom employed overtime, but were glad to work over-hours. They were all healthy, well fed, and well clothed, and 9 out of 14 could both read and write, and all but two could read. It appeared by their evidence that they generally attended Divine worship and Sunday-school, and most of them confessed that they often swore and used bad language while at work.]

**No.175 John Oldfield, Esq., clerk of petty sessions, Holywell, Flints.**

**Have you long acted as justices' clerk?** - About 20 years.

**Have complaints been frequent before the bench, arising out of disputes between masters and miners, colliers or manufacturers and their men?** - No, I can recollect none, except such as were brought by the factory inspector three years ago against the master manufacturers in cotton mills for not adhering to the provisions of the Factory Act, since which time the cotton mills have stopped.

**Do you remember no complaints of masters of collieries, mines, or manufactories against their operatives, or vice versa, the operatives against their masters?** - No, none, and as respects the children and young persons employed in the works in this district, though the hours of labour may be many, there is, I believe, no want of kindness in their treatment.

**Have complaints been made on account of wages?** - No, none, except when the colliers turned out for more wages, but there was no complaints for default in payment.

**In the turns-out you allude to how were they settled?** - By arbitrators mutually appointed, and with the assistance of the justices of peace sitting in petty sessions.

**Were the arrangements thus made satisfactory to all parties?** - Yes, to all parties.

**In coming to the arrangements was there a marked difference in conduct and intelligence shown by those who had received some education?** - Certainly, the men who could read and write were selected by the others to come to arrangements, and those arrangements were trusted to them.

**Did the disputes and the turn-out originate with those persons so selected?** - No, I believe not, I never heard that it was so.

**Did you think they acted with shrewdness and discretion, and with a knowledge of the circumstances of the case, such as persons quite uneducated were not likely to exhibit?** - However I might condemn the proceedings of the turn-out, I must say these persons showed more tact and knowledge than I could have supposed, and such as ignorant persons could not have brought into play.

**Are there any especial pains taken by masters or parents in the moral training of children of the working classes?** - No, none, except what may arise from going to places of worship and attending Sunday-schools, and from the increased number of day-schools everywhere, so that most children have some schooling before they go to work.

**Compared with agricultural labourers, are those employed in the mines, collieries, &c. better or worse conducted, or is their temporal condition better or worse?** - There is but little difference in conduct, and I think the temporal condition of those who work together in numbers, at least as far as relates to earnings, is superior. Indeed, it is shown to so by the desire of farm servants to go into the mines to work. Great crimes are of rare occurrence here. Petty thefts are more numerous, and I believe are on the increase, but they are as commonly committed by the one class as by the other. They consist chiefly in theft of property left exposed on the surface of mines, &c.

**Do you think that those who work together in numbers in your district are more moral religious than formerly?** - No doubt of it. They seem very attentive to their religious duties in attending Divine worship, and in a proper observance of the Sabbath, and they are becoming much more sober and orderly every day.

**On the whole the justices of the peace are not often called on to interfere in their disputes, in disputes between them and their masters?** - Complaints are very seldom made before and indeed they give the justices much less trouble than might be expected in so large a population.

**Do you think that children are over-worked?** - I cannot say that they are, as there is little if any night work, but as they are at work all day from early age there is little chance of being improved by education.

**What would be the result of abridging the number of working hours in the case of persons under 18, and of doing away with night work entirely?** - It would have a tendency to add to comforts and to the health and growth of the children, and would allow time for education. In a pecuniary point of view it would not be so desirable, as there may be a diminution wages of the individuals, though it would require an additional number of hands to perform the work.

**Would you recommend that some hours should be taken from work to be spent by children at school?** - I certainly should, but I think it would be better that children should be at work as they now are rather than do nothing, though a certain quantity of recreation is very necessary.

**Though wages may fluctuate, and may not now be equal to what they were some years ago, do you think there is any improvement in the condition of the families of miners, &c.?** - Yes, I

think there is. Clubs and friendly societies, the spread of education and temperance, with other circumstances of the times, all conduce to improve the moral and temporal condition of the lower orders in this district.

(Signed) J. Oldfield.

No.176 Robert J. Mostyn, Esq., of Calcot. August 13th, 1841.

**Have you been long resident in this district?** - All my life.

**How long have you long acted as a justice of the peace for the county?** - About four years.

**What is the condition, moral, temporal, and physical, of the miners, colliers, and those who work in the manufactories in this district?** - The lead miners are as moral and as enduring under hardships, and as peaceably disposed, as any class of people I know. The colliers are less peaceable and not so tractable when in distress, and those in the manufactories tolerably moral and well conducted. Those in the manufactories receive the largest wages, the colliers next, and the miners the smallest. In proportion to the amount of earnings the lead miner, are perhaps the most comfortable. The manufacturers are superior to the colliers. I cannot say that I have gone into their houses with a view of making myself acquainted with their relative circumstances, but these are my impressions from a long intercourse amongst the above classes, and intimate acquaintance with their language. As for their relative condition, I know but little difference up to the age of 25, at which time the health of lead miners frequently begins to suffer by reason of having worked in ground badly or imperfectly ventilated. We do not find that the health of the colliers gives way so early in life or in the same degree. As for those who work in the manufactories, lead, iron, and in this district, I believe they are more healthy and live longer than either of the other classes.

**What are they in respect to religion?** - The lead miner here again holds the highest place being in general pretty regular in attendance at public worship I fear the other two classes are less religious, but much upon an equality with each other.

**Are the three classes, generally speaking, peaceable and well conducted towards their neighbours and each other?** - Yes, I think they are all as well conducted as the working classes generally are in any country that I am acquainted with.

**Are you well acquainted with the mining or coal districts elsewhere?** - Yes, with those of many parts of England.

**Do those in this district suffer at all by comparison with the districts in England with which you are acquainted?** - I think they are here more moral and more religious than the same classes are in England, and crime much less frequent.

**Are there any pains taken in the moral training of children?** - I fear too little.

**Are they well treated in the works?** - Yes, generally so.

**Are many complaints made before you of ill treatment by masters or by men?** - Very seldom indeed. Sometimes disputes as to the payment of wages arise between masters, men, and boys. There is seldom any dishonesty at bottom, and they are generally easily arranged.

**What is the state of education in the district?** - Very deficient.

**Is the deficiency in consequence of the early age at which children go to work or in consequence of the paucity of schools or other cause?** - Owing to both. If all the were to go to school there would be no accommodation. On the other hand, the of hours which children are engaged in work will not admit of devoting the necessary education.

**Do most of the children go to school till they are taken to work?** - No, scarce a tenth.

**Are they induced to go to work by the parents, or by the force of example, and voluntary?** Partly both.

**Do the health and morals suffer by going to work in numbers at early age?** - They do not, the morals do. They have not education and principle to guard them example.

**Do you know whether parents make contracts with masters for the service of the for longer terms than a year?** - No, seldom for so long.

**Are they over-worked?** - No, I think not, but up to the age of 12, I should wish less work and more education.

**Do workmen live more comfortably now than they formerly did?** - Within my memory there is a marked change for the better.

(Signed) R. J. MOSTYN.



**No.177 Owen Owens, Rhos y Cae, Halkin Mountain, Minister of Independent Congregation.  
August 9th, 1841.**

**How long have you been here?** - Twenty years, and I have laboured in my vocation as a Christian minister the whole time.

**Does your congregation chiefly consist of miners and their families?** - Yes, have some farmers and their families and servants.

**Have you a Sunday-school in the chapel?** - Yes.

**Are the miners punctual in their attendance at public worship?** - Yes, pretty well.

**Are they more so than formerly?** - Yes, considerably more so.

**Are there many other places of public worship in the neighbourhood besides your chapel?** One only, a Wesleyan chapel.

**Then your neighbours all attend either in your chapel or the Wesleyan?** - Yes, there are few who go to the parish church a mile and a half off, and there are some I believe who go to no place of worship. Of the latter, however, there are I am sure not half a dozen.

**Are they generally attentive to their religious duties?** - Yes, I believe they are. They are attentive to public worship and to Sunday-school. When the chapel is open on week days I have a good congregation, and many of the heads of families train their children very well, and pray aloud and explain the Scriptures to them.

**Do you visit the families of your congregation frequently in their own houses?** - Yes, I do.

**With what view?** - To examine them in Scripture, to advise and exhort them, and I always pray with them.

**Do you find them anxious to improve?** I do.

**Is the condition of the miners both moral and temporal improved within the time of your ministry?** - Yes, they have become sober and well conducted. They seldom swear or gamble. The children are brought to hear the word of God and to the Sunday-school, and the style of furniture and cottage is improved though I believe they earn less than they did in the mines, yet from improved habits they live more comfortably.

**How do they pass their evenings after work?** - Most of them have business at home in their houses and gardens, and in their potato crop. They often come to chapel. They are sober and industrious, and though often suffering from poverty they are honest and striving to get a livelihood.

**Are the miners and their families as respectable as a class as the small farmers and the farm servants?** - Yes, fully so, and as well conducted.

**Are the boys and young persons employed in the mines well treated?** - I never hear any complaints.

**Are they over-worked?** - I think that they go to work young, and 11 or 12 hours work for persons under 14 is too much, and prevents the possibility of going to school, so that they must grow up in ignorance.

**Do you find many learn to read by attending Sunday-school?** - Yes, a great many have learnt to read who have had no other means of learning. Both adults and young persons attend the school, and all equally anxious to learn.

**Are there many friendly clubs in the neighbourhood?** - Yes, most of the miners subscribe to a friendly club.

**Do you recommend them to do so?** - Yes, I do, as the means of being of great use to them in sickness and in distress.

**Are the miners a healthy class?** - They are not long livers. They are subject to asthma, which comes on in some instances before 30 and they often die early. It is a rare thing see a miner of the age of 60.

**Are the boys who work at the lead-mines healthy?** - Yes, but they are subject to take because they work in all weather in the open air, and frequently over their shoes or in water.

**Do the masters of works pay any attention to the education or moral training of the boys they employ?** - I don't know of any especial pains they take. Many of them scribe to schools, but they do not encourage or enforce education among their boys.

**Do you keep a day-school?** - I do.

**Do the children of the working classes attend?** - Yes, they are mostly miners children.

**At what age do they usually come and how long do they continue at school?** - Some come as young as five, and they remain till they can get work.

**What do you teach them?** - Reading, writing, and arithmetic.

**What number of scholars have you?** - About 30 boys and girls.

**Are there any other school near?** - No, none nearer than a mile and a half.

**What do they pay you for teaching?** - From 2s. 6d. to 3s. a quarter.

**Do many learn to read and write before they go to work?** - Yes, many, but they often forget after they go to work.

**Are those who have had some education better conducted and more industrious than those who have not?** - Oh yes.

**And more domestic and attentive to their duties?** - Yes, they are. They have evidently the advantage of the ignorant in conduct and in principles.

**Are the girls in your school taught to sew?** - Yes.

**Do they generally make good and domestic wives?** - Yes, I believe they do.

(Signed) OWEN OWENS, Congregational Minister, Rhos y Cae.

## DEEP LEVEL HALKIN MINE.

No. 178 Thomas Redfern, aged 48 August 9th, 1841.

**How long have you been a miner?** - Twenty four years used to mines, though I have not worked much under ground. I have been employed chiefly in dressing lead ore.

**What is your present employment?** - I am and have long been an overlooker of the boys who dress the ore in this mine.

**What number of boys are employed under you?** - Twenty two.

**What are the various employments they are engaged in?** - Some wheeling, some picking, others washing and breaking the ore.

**What wages have you and they?** - I have £3. 15s. a month, and the boys 2s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. a week, according to what they can do.

**Are any of the occupations you have named considered unhealthy?** - No, the boys are all healthy. I have heard the boys formerly complain of having complaints in the stomach, but not of late.

**What number of hours do they work daily?** - They come to work at seven a.m. and leave at six p.m., out of which they have an hour for dinner allowed.

**Do they work overtime often?** - Yes, sometimes when we are busy, especially at the end of the month, when we weigh the whole ore that has been dressed, in order to pay the miners.

**What number of hours do they then work after six in the evening?** - They work till half past eight for three or four nights in the month, but only in summer, as they do usually work except by daylight.

**Do they ever work all night?** - No, never.

**Do you find it difficult to keep them orderly and industrious?** - Yes.

**Can you do so by other means than by beating them?** - Oh yes, the threat of turning them off serves pretty well. We often turn one off, which has a good effect in discipline.

**Can any of them read and write?** - Yes, I think many of them read and some can write.

**Do you inquire when you hire them whether they can do so or whether they attend public worship and Sunday-school?** - No, we never make such inquiry.

**Is there a school near the mine?** - Yes, there is a free-school supported by Lady Westminster.

**Do most of the boys attend it?** - A great many attend it on Sunday, but as every who takes advantage of it must attend church with the master, fewer go to it than were left optional to them to go to church or to the dissenting chapels.

**Do most of the boys in your employ and those in the neighbourhood attend some of worship and Sunday-school?** - Oh yes, nearly all. They chiefly attend the dissent chapels and the schools belonging to them.

**Is there any especial pains taken to train them up in good moral habits?** - Parent more particular than they used to be. The Dissenters have taken great pains to get them to attend chapel and Sunday-school, and now there are very few indeed who away. The elders of the chapels go about on Sunday exhorting parents and child go to chapel.

**Then you think that the Sabbath is more strictly kept and that parents and children are more moral than they used to be?** - Much more so. It used to be that men and never thought of going to public worship on Sunday, but amused themselves in playing and in drinking, and rioting. They used also to swear a great deal, but there is much less now. The chapels are often open in the evenings on week days, and are well attended by young and old.

**Is there a desire for education amongst the youths?** - Yes, but they have no time except on Sunday, and there are no night-schools. The boys generally go to school till they begin to work, but as they are taken at 8 or 10 years old to wash the ore they make but little progress.

**Do many of the miners read and write?** - Yes, many.

**How did they learn?** - Some in day-schools, but many at Sunday-schools and at home.

**Do you find any difference in the conduct of those who have been instructed from who are quite ignorant?** - Yes, they are more civil and better conducted, more fond of their families, and more attentive to religious duties.

**Do you find those miners who can read and write more inclined to economise wages and more anxious to improve their condition than others?** - Yes, I do.

**Are the families of miners better off than they formerly were?** - I think they have well furnished houses and better ideas, but times are not so good as they were.

**How do they spend their evenings after work?** - They go sometimes to plant and manage their potato crop, mend shoes and clothes, and attend their clubs.

**Then you think the working classes are more sober, more religious, and more rational in their conduct than they formerly were?** - There is no doubt about it.

**How did you learn to read and write?** - I was at a day-school before I began work and at a night-school afterwards.

**Could you have taken the duty of superintending the dressing department if you could not read and write?** - No, I could not.

**Do you think it would be a good and proper thing to have all children educated even though going to school might reduce the number of hours of work and consequently the amount of wages?** - Certainly it would.

**Would it also be better for masters to have workmen who are educated?** - Yes, I am sure enough of it.

**Have the boys good clothes and plenty of food?** - Yes.

**What does their diet consist of?** - Bread, butter, potatoes, milk, and bacon.

**Are the boys well treated while at work?** - Yes, very well treated.

(Signed) THOMAS REDFERN.

#### No. 79 Mr. Thomas Williams, aged 46.

**How long have you had the management of mines?** - About 20 years.

**In this country?** - Yes. I was brought up in Cornwall as a miner, and worked 15 in the copper, tin, and lead mines.

**Do you employ many boys in this mine?** - A good many on the surface, not above six in the mine.

**What do those under ground do?** - Pumping in air to the mine for ventilation.

**Is it hard work?** - No, not at all.

**Is it unhealthy?** - No, quite the reverse.

**How many hours do they work below ground?** - Six, never more in the 24 hours.

**What wages do you give them?** - About 10d. a day.

**What age do you employ them?** - Never younger than 10.

**Are the boys you employ both those under and those above ground well treated, well fed, and well clothed?** - Yes, the boys in this work and in this neighbourhood are as much so as can be expected.

**Are they well conducted?** - Yes, generally speaking.

**Are pains taken in their moral training?** - Yes.

**By whom?** - By their parents in the first place and by the ministers of religion.

**Then their parents are moral and well conducted?** - Yes, the boys are generally the children of miners, and now-a-days miners are moral and religious people taking them as a class.

**Were they not so formerly?** - By no means, neither here or Cornwall.

**To what do you attribute their improvement?** - To religious education, which has been brought about by sectarians building places of worship in every situation where there was increased population, and by the zeal of churchmen and sectarians in getting up schools and in persuading families to attend public worship, the Sabbath is now properly kept for most people, and there are but very few who do not attend Divine worship and Sunday-schools.

**Are the miners more orderly, better conducted, and more attentive to their work and their domestic duties than they used to be?** - They are much more so.

**Are they more desirous of improving their habits and condition?** - Yes, it is evident from their strictness in attending public worship on Sunday and week days, in their desire also to prove their minds by attending Sunday-schools, by having better furniture in their houses and more comforts, such as clocks, sheeting, table-cloths, &c.

**Have they better food?** - Yes, I think they have, though they have not such high wages, they have better economy since their habits have improved, and since the introduction of temperance societies.

**Do more persons in the working classes read and write now than formerly?** - Yes.

**Are parents more anxious to send their children to school?** - Yes, much more so, but in consequence of the children going to work when young they are not able to profit much by their desire but many learn to read in the Sunday-schools, both children and adults.

**Do you prefer those workmen who have been somewhat educated?** - As regards their work I could make no choice, but I should expect the educated to be more correct, though I have seen many instances to the contrary.

**Do you approve of a general system of education as a means likely to improve the con-of the working orders?** - Most certainly. It would be the means of cultivating the minds people without injuring masters.

**Is lead mining an unhealthy occupation?** - Yes, it is.

**At what age do miners generally begin to work under ground?** - Some begin at 15, others not till 20.

**What complaints are they subject to?** - To a sort of colic, which is brought on from swallowing particles of lead ore, and to asthmatic complaints.

**At what age do they usually begin to show symptoms of asthma?** - Some by the time they are 25, most of them by the age of 35.

**Are miners short-lived?** - Yes, they are generally carried off before they are 50, many live to the age of 60 or 70, but the generality die early, and of asthma.

**Do many save money?** - No, not many, lately provisions have been too dear, and earnings small.

**Do they usually come on the parish when their health is such as to prevent them from working?** - Many go on the parish, many can work a little on the surface, and most of them subscribe to friendly clubs.

**Are many miners killed by accidents?** - Yes, they are subject to accidents from blasting, falling into the pits, from earth falling on them.

**Is there fire-damp and choke-damp in the mines?** - None in these mines, many of them are well ventilated, but they are improving in the means of ventilating every day.

(Signed) THOMAS WILLIAMS.

In regard to the health of miners, I believe that the improvement in the steam engine, whereby we are enabled to carry our excavations to far greater depths than formerly, has tended to shorten the life of miners. When we work at great depths the air, in spite of every effort is much rarefied and very warm, and cannot therefore but prove detrimental to health, and the means of hastening the asthma.

**What is the temperature of the air at the lower workings of your mine in comparison to those nearer the surface?** - Often 30 degrees. The temperature in the deep mines is often 96 degrees of Fahrenheit, when the temperature in the upper is only 60 or below 60.

(Signed) THOMAS WILLIAMS.

#### No. 180 Edward Redfern, Aged 15.

**How long have you been working ?** - Five years.

**What is your work?** - Washing and dressing lead ore.

**Is it hard work?** - Not very.

**How many hours a day do you work?** - Ten hours including one for eating.

**What wages have you?** - One shilling a day.

**Do you work overtime?** - Very seldom, and when we do it is only for a couple of hours.

**Is it healthy work?** - Yes, we are all healthy.

**Do you ever work under ground?** - No, never.

**Can you read and write?** - I can read in Welsh, and am beginning to write.

**Were you at a day-school?** - Yes, at the national school before I went to work.

**Do you go to any school now?** - Only to a Sunday-school.

**Do you go regularly?** - Yes, either once or twice every Sunday.

**Do you attend public worship?** - Yes, regularly.

**Do your parents also?** - No, my father is sick and my mother cannot leave him.

**Is your father a miner?** - Yes, he broke his leg in the mine five years ago, and he has had no work since.

**How is he supported?** - He is allowed 3s. a week by the parish. I have two brothers at work, and their earnings with mine support the family.

**Do you get food enough?** - Yes.

**What food?** - Potatoes, bread, milk, butter, and sometimes bacon.

**Have you good clothes?** - Not very good, but I have two suits.

**What do you do on Sunday?** - I go to chapel and chapel-school once or twice and I play and walk about.

**What do you do in the evening after work?** - In summer I clean the potato crop, help mother, and play.

**Can you say any prayers?** - Yes.

**Do you say them often?** - Yes.

**Why don't you go to evening-school?** - There is no evening-school near.

**Would you like to go to school?** - Yes, I should.

**Are you well treated by every one in the work?** - Yes.

**Is your cottage well furnished?** - Not very well, we have a clock and two beds, and bed-clothes.

**How many meals have you each day?** - Three meals.

(Signed) EDWARD REDFERN.

#### **No. 181. John Jones aged 16.**

He has been working six years in dressing ore and is quite healthy. He has 1s. 3d. a day, monthly without deduction, except 2d. a month to pay the doctor. He can read and write and is well treated by every one. He has plenty of food, and a change of clothes and lives with his mother. His father is dead, being killed in the mine about 13 years ago. One brother and one sister also live with her and the family is supported by his wages and his brother's, which amount to 10s. a week. They have a crop of potatoes which occupies his spare time in summer, in he reads his Bible often, and helps his mother. He goes to chapel three times every Sunday. attends Sunday-school and seldom hears much swearing among the miners or boys. They all attend public worship, and many are very religious. His cottage is pretty well furnished is a clock, two beds, and good bed-clothes. The family all eat together, their meals are warm and they live comfortably.

(Signed) JOHN JONES.

#### **No.182 Francis Carrington, aged 13.**

He has been two years at work and gets 4s. a week. His father died at 48, of asthma and he was a miner.

#### **No. 182a William Lloyd, aged 13.**

He has 4s. a week.

#### **No. 182 Joseph Davies, aged 13.**

He has 4s. a week.

[And several others give the same evidence in respect to their health, work, and also in respect to their food and clothing, and attendance at public worship, &c.]

(Signed) JOSEPH DAVIES,  
FRANCIS CARRINGTON.

[They were all taught at Lord Grosvenor's school.]

#### **No. 183 George Boden, aged 34. August 10th, 1841.**

**Have you been long accustomed to mining, and what is your present occupation?** - No, I have only been accustomed to mines for the last few years, during which time I have managed the Long Rake Mine on the Halkin Mountain.

**Do you live on the mountain?** - Yes, I do, and am surrounded by mines and miners.

**Do you employ many hands?** - Twenty six men, no boys, and no females.

**What is the present condition of the miners and their families whom you employ, and those in your neighbourhood?** - They are in general poor. The wages of miners average about 12s. a week, perhaps in each family there may be a son or two who are in employ, at from 2s. to 6s. or 7s. a week. These wages, with a crop of potatoes which almost every family has, with what they can make by keeping a few sheep and an ass on the waste or common, allow them to live tolerably comfortable, some, however, are very poor and out of employ.

**How do they live when out of employ?** - I can't tell, and it is hard to tell. They have potatoes, but they must when out of employ find it very difficult to provide themselves families with food.

**Do they go on the parish?** - No, seldom they contrive to live, but I don't know how, till they get into employ.

**Do many of them read and write?** - No, not many. They learn to read in Sabbath-schools, but very few can write.

**Are they sober and industrious in general?** - Yes, in general they are. Many join temperance societies. Indeed there is a vast deal less drinking at the present day than there was even two years ago.

**Are they generally domestic and careful in training their children in good moral habits?** - Yes, I think they in general are, the miners always go home from their work to their families. There are two public houses in the neighbourhood but I think they might close, they get but little business.

**Are they attentive to religious duties?** - Yes, very, they seldom miss going to public worship, and they take their children with them, the young and old attend Sunday-school, and appear desirous to learn and to cultivate their minds.

**How do they usually spend their evenings after work?** - I generally see them busy either cutting turf for fire, gathering manure, planting or hoeing potatoes. There are not many idlers, and I think them well conducted, steady people, and bear poverty and hardship without much grumbling.

**Are their cottages tolerably furnished?** - I have been used to see cottages in England, and I think those in this neighbourhood are neither so good, nor so well and comfortably furnished. They sleep here often in the same room in which they eat, and seldom have a table cloth or knives and forks.

**Do they dress pretty well?** - Some of them do, and they are all very careful of them.

**Are the children industrious and generally well behaved?** - Yes, they are industrious and civil, but I think them behindhand in manners and education when compared to the children of English cottagers and workpeople.

**Is their food good and sufficient when they are in work?** - They have very little flesh meat, and they live chiefly on barley-bread, potatoes, milk, and a little butter. They call this sufficient food, but English workmen would not. They are certainly more hardy than the English, and live more temperately.

**Are the miners healthy?** - Yes, pretty well, except those who work in badly ventilated mines.

**Are there many such mines?** There are some, but every method is used to ventilate.

**Are not miners subject to complaints of the chest?** - Yes, many are affected as early in life as 26. They generally die of asthma and few live to the age of 50 if they continue to work in the mines.

**Do some of them save money?** - Yes, occasionally, but I believe very few, times are and have been hard with them, but they are better managers than they were, and all the money that used to go in drink is now saved to the family.

**Would a general system of education have a tendency to improve the condition of the working classes?** - Yes, it would in my opinion do infinite good in this and every other place. I have always found those who have taken their education well are the best people, and I would prefer them as workmen.

(Signed) GEORGE BODEN.

**TRELOGAN MINE, parish of Lianasa, Flintshire.**

No. 184 Ellis Griffith, aged 49. August 2nd, 1841.

**Have you always been a miner?** - Yes, ever since I was 10 years old, I began by washing lead ore and black jack.

**What was your father?** - He began life as a sailor, and afterwards, when about 30 years old, became a working collier.

**Did he at the age you mention begin for the first time to work in coal-pits, and did he continue in health?** - Yes, and he became a collier, and could cut coal as well as others, but did not get his health as well as others who began earlier in life. He became asthmatic, in 10 or 12 years was obliged to get other employment. He had five sons, but did not send any of them to the coal-pits.

**How long did you continue to wash ore on the surface?** - About 11 years, I then went to work as a miner.

**Do you consider the washing of lead ore a healthy employment?** - Yes, I was always healthy, so were all the boys who worked with me, fully as healthy as any other employment.

**Is the lead miner usually healthy?** - Pretty well while he is young, but as he gets into years he often gets asthmatic.

**What is your present employment?** - I look after the boys who wash the lead ore.

**Do you hire the boys?** - Yes.

**With whom do you make the engagement for the boys services?** - Generally with the parents.

**What is the age you usually begin to employ them?** - I employ them sometimes as young as nine.

**What wages does a boy at nine or ten usually earn?** - About 2s. a week at first, the wages increase as the boys get used to work and at 12 a boy will earn from 3s. to 4s. 6d. a week and at 16 he will earn about 7s. 6d. or 8s. a week.

**Whom do you pay the boys earnings?** - To themselves generally, often to their parents.

**Do they work by the piece?** - No, by the day. I give them a task, sometimes it is performed before the hour of leaving off work, when they may either go home or work overtime if work is brisk.

**What are the hours of work?** - From seven a.m. till six p.m., out of which there is half an hour allowed for dinner.

**If the task is not performed do you keep the boys beyond six o'clock to finish it?** - No, never.

**Do you punish them?** - I seldom have occasion to thrash them, though I sometimes do.

**How do you punish them?** - With a bit of a stick to keep them quiet that's all.

**On what occasions do you punish them?** - When they quarrel among themselves. There are many of them employed together I am obliged to punish sometimes, or no work would be done.

**Do you ever punish them for idleness, or for being behind with their task?** - Yes, sometimes for idling, but never for being behind with the task.

**Have any of the boys or their parents complained of your treatment either to the proprietors or to a justice of peace?** - No, never, I was never complained of for beating or ill-treating a boy, and never brought before a justice on that or any other account.

**Do you employ the boys overtime frequently?** - Only sometimes, never in winter. In summer we occasionally give them two or three hours overwork, but there is no force used may go home if they like.

**Can they work under cover, or are they obliged to work in all weather without shelter?** - We don't work in all weather, we stop in very bad weather. We have no cover over though we have screens to windward.

**Whose sons generally are the boys whom you employ?** - Generally they are the sons miners, but we don't make any inquiry as to their parents.

**Do most of them read and write?** - Most of them read a little, few of them can write.

**Do any of them go to night-schools?** - It is not always that there is a night-school, sometimes in winter there may be, and the boys who live near often attend it.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes.

**How did you learn?** - I never was in any day-school, I learnt by perseverance Sunday-school.

**Is it desirable that a boy should be able to read and write?** - It is desirable for them, but it is not required for their work.

**Have you ever observed whether those who can read and write behave better, and the world better, than those who cannot?** - I cannot say I have made enough of observation to answer the question, there are good and bad of both sorts.

**Do more persons read and write now than formerly?** - Oh, yes, a great many, the Sunday-schools in the chapels are the means of teaching many to read, and there are more day-schools than there used to be.

**Are the people better behaved in consequence?** - Yes, certainly.

**What difference do you perceive?** - They are not so much for cursing and swearing or drinking, nor do they fight and quarrel so much and they keep the Sabbath very strictly and they almost all go to some place of public worship.

**Are the parents careful in bringing up their children in morality and religion?** - Not very careful, except on Sunday, when they generally make them go to worship and to school.

**Do the boys generally get sufficient food and clothing?** - Most of them do, others are deficient. All depends on the parents, if they are steady and good the children are well clothed and fed, if they are drunken and good for nothing the children suffer.

**Is there a truck-shop belonging to the work?** - No, none.

**How do the miners and the boys usually spend their evenings?** - In summer the miners generally attend to their gardens and potato crop, in winter they mend their shoes, or have some jobs about the house to do. Many go to public-house. The boys either play their parents with any work there may be going on. The chapels are open two or three times a week of an evening, and many men and boys attend.

**Are there any boys under 18 employed below the surface?** - Yes, one now and then with his brother, but it is very seldom and until 18 the boys will earn more in washing ore than in mining.

**How many hours in the day do the miners work?** - Only six, they go below at six till twelve, another party go down at twelve and comes up at six. We have four sets of hands for the 24 hours, but no boys work for ore.

**What wages does a miner get?** - From 10s. to 15s. a week.

**If you could not read and write would you be able to undertake the management of washing the ore?** - No, I could not.

**What wages do you make?** - Sometimes more, sometimes less, the average may be a week, I get 20s. a ton.

**You said you sometimes punish the boys, do you ever reward them?** - No, never, excepting that I encourage them by praises when they do well.

**Are any females employed in the mines?** - No, none.

**Are the cottages of the miners clean and well furnished?** - I cannot tell much about them, I very seldom go into any of them.

**Are there collieries near this mine?** - Yes.

**Are the colliers generally worse or better off than the miners?** - There is very little difference in their condition, the collier works more hours, and is sure of wages. The miner sometimes makes little or nothing, at others his earnings are large, according as he meets with ore.

**Which have the best health?** - It is said the colliers have and, because it is supposed the lead-mines are unhealthy, the miners stay below little more than half the time the colliers do. Both miners and colliers are subject to complaints in the chest when they get old, and the miners sometimes have colic and diseases of the stomach.

(Signed) ELLIS GRIFFITH, Washer of Lead Ore.

#### No. 185 James Bowen, aged 45, under-ground agent.

**Were you brought up in the lead-mines?** - Yes, I have been employed in them since I was eight and a half years of age. I began with my father as a worker in the mine. He was a miner and I went into the mine under him to shovel and wheel the earth from the mine, and continued to do so till I could work as a miner, which I did at the age of 16 and I worked as a miner for 19 years.

**What wages did you earn as a boy?** - At first 4s. a week. Wages were better then than now.

**How long have you been underground agent?** - 12 years.

**What wages have you?** I have £150 a year.

**Do you employ any boys under 18 in the mine?** - Yes, we have five.

**What is their work?** - Loading and wheeing the refuse in the mine.

**How many hours in the 24 are they employed?** - Only six.

**What are their ages?** - From 13 to 15 years.

**What wages do they get?** About 9s. or 10s. a week.

**To whom is their wages paid?** - They work with their fathrs and the money is paid to fathers of the boys, who settle with their sons.

**Are the boys subject to ill-treatment in the mines?** - No, I believe there is no such thing.



**Are they healthy?** - Yes.

**Are the lead miners generally healthy?** - Yes but gradually they become subject to asthma, so that at the age of 60 they mostly become unfit for work.

**Are they subject to other complaints from the lead?** - Yes, the bowels often get confined and they have severe colic, but it is easily cured by purges, and few die of it. I keep opening pills in the office purposely to give the miners when they are attacked.

**Besides the five boys you employ in the mine, what other boys are employed?** - We have a number of boys washing lead ore on the surface.

**You heard Ellis Griffith just now examined in reference to these boys do you confirm the evidence he gave me in all particulars?** - I confirm his evidence in respect to the washers of ore in every particular.

**Are the washers also subject to colic?** - Yes.

**Do you give them the pills also?** - Yes, but we have a doctor engaged for the men

**How is he paid?** - A deduction of 4d. a month for each man, and something less for each boy is made out of their earnings, for which he attends them in cases of sickness or accidents.

**Are any other deductions made out of the wages?** - No, no other.

**How often are wages paid?** - Every month, regularly.

**Are many of the boys and men able to read and write?** - Not many, scarcely more than in ten, perhaps not so many.

**Is it desirable that they should be able to read and write?** - Not for our work. I see no evidence in those who can read and write and those who cannot.

**Is there no difference in their general conduct?** - None whatever that I can see.

**Do you think education gives no advantages?** - Oh yes in working it gives none but it enables a man to push on and to become an agent and a head washer, which he could not do otherwise and at home he may employ his spare time in reading and in improving his mind and in teaching his children.

**Do you read and write?** - Yes. I was at a day-school when I was young, but I learnt after I was a man, and chiefly in the Sunday-school, and by keeping at it when I had time.

**Would you recommend all children to be taught to read and write?** - Oh yes, it is their fault if they make a bad use of their knowledge.

**Are the miners and the boys generally well conducted?** - They are a great deal more so of years, since there are so many Sunday-schools in the churches and dissenting chapels, since the clergy and dissenters have begun to take so much pains in admonishing and teaching the people. They were formerly very rough in their conduct, great drinkers, swearers, Sabbath-breakers. They are now reformed, and all the children go to Divine worship and many attend the Sunday-school. Very few keep away, and the number is daily less.

**Do you perceive any improvement in the mode of living, in the style of cottages, in the furniture, food, and clothing, and in the morals of the miners, colliers, and their families?** - Yes, great improvement. They behave themselves more orderly, they dress better, have better houses, the furniture is better. As for food, it is much the same-potatoes, milk, butter, and, with a little bacon.

**Have they usually enough of food?** - I believe they have.

**Do the miners generally plant potatoes in the fields of adjoining farms?** - Yes.

**Who cultivates them?** - Those who plant them and it gives employment to the families after the hours of work.

**Have you had any opportunities of remarking whether those who have had some education conduct themselves better in times of difficulty and danger, and in sickness and sorrow, than others who have had none?** - In every opportunity I have had I always saw that the persons who could read bore up against difficulties better than others who could not, and would console themselves and their families by reading the Bible. They were also more easily brought to see things in a reasonable light than others.

**Would you recommend that all children should be kept at school till they can read and write?** - Yes. most certainly.

**As the working people improve in their method of living and increase in comforts, do you find them more attached to home and frequent the public-house less?** - Yes. Some time ago there was a thriving public-house close to this mine. Since the miners have gone to chapel and the Sunday-school they gradually forsook the public-house, so that it is now given up for want of business.

**How do the men and boys spend the Sabbath?** - They almost all attend worship three or four times a day. There is very little play, and not much drinking.

**Have they all a change of clothing and a Sunday suit?** - Yes, almost every one.

**Do they save money?** - Very few, more now than formerly. Many are teetotallers. There are friendly clubs, and they mostly join one or other of them.

**Then you think the condition of the working classes in this neighbourhood is improving?** - Yes, decidedly so.

**(Signed) JAMES BOWEN, Under-ground Agent, Trelogan Mine, Llanasa.**

**No.186 Robert Jones, aged 17.**

He began to work at 10 years old as a washer of lead ore at 2s. a week and he gets now 9s. a week. He works ten and a half hours a day and has half an hour allowed for dinner. He works somewhat less winter than summer, as they can only work by daylight. The work is not hard, and he enough. Sometimes it produces colic, but not often and it is easily cured. Occasionally in summer he works two hours and a half overtime, for which he is paid 4½d. Wages are paid every month, but there is always a fortnight's wages remaining unpaid, and a deduction of a month towards payment of the doctor. Generally works six days a week. If the weather very bad work is given up and a deduction of wages takes place according to the hours lost. A task is given the boys every morning by the head washer. Those who perform it before six in the evening are allowed to go home, and those who have not performed it are allowed to leave work at six. The boys are kindly treated. Sometimes the head washer punishes them with a stick when they deserve, but never severely. When required to work over hours the boys may stay or not as they like. There is no coercion. He never had an accident and accidents seldom occur to the boys, and when they do it is their own fault and carelessness. He always attends public worship at a dissenting chapel four times every Sunday and sometimes in the evening on week-days. He can read the Bible and learnt at a Sunday-school. He cannot write. He reads a little in the Bible almost every night. His father is sieve-maker and he seldom goes to public worship. His mother also seldom goes. They are careful people, and do not frequent the public-houses or swear or do evil, and though they attend worship themselves, they oblige him and his brothers and sisters to go to chapel constantly. He has two sisters and four brothers, all of them earning a livelihood except one, who seven years old. They live in a good cottage, and have an acre of land attached to cottage consists of two rooms, in one of which they all sleep in three beds. The house is well furnished, having a good clock, &c. Their food consists of tea or coffee and bread at fast, potatoes, milk, and bread for dinner, the same at supper, with now and then a little bacon.

**No.187 William Evans, aged 15.**

He has been at work washing lead ore for five years at 5s. a week, paid monthly. He has been always in health and does not find the work heavy. Works sometimes over-time. He is always well treated and likes his work. He goes regularly to chapel three or four times Sunday, and sometimes in the evening on week days. He goes to Sunday-school, can the Bible and can write a little when learnt in a day-school before he began to work, and has lessons in reading and writing sometimes from his father. His father is a blacksmith, and has 10 children. They are all constant in attendance at chapel and they live comfortably and have sufficient food and clothing.

**(Signed) WILLIAM EVANS.**

**No.188. Robert Williams, aged 16.**

He works as a washer of lead ore and has been working for seven years. He has 7s. 6d. paid regularly every month. He is a bastard and has never lived with his mother but boards with a widow, to whom he gives all his wages for food and clothes, of which he gets sufficient. He likes his work, and is always in health. He is well treated in the work and seldom or never public worship, and never has been to any school. He drinks a little sometimes, especially when his wages, which are paid by the head washers in a public-house. He smokes also when he get tobacco. Has never had good advice and says he would rather stay at home on Sunday and eat and smoke than go to chapel. He swears sometimes but never steals or lies. He is perfectly ignorant, though an active shrewd lad.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined 12 other boys belonging to the mine, ages from 13 to 16. All give the same evidence as regards work, treatment, and wages. They are all have good clothes, and are constant

attendants at chapel, and most of them at chapel schools. They live with their parents, and appear desirous of being educated. At present, they are in a state of almost utter ignorance. Here, as everywhere else, the proprietors appear to take no interest in the moral training or education of the children and young persons employed by them, though they subscribe to the national school. A more healthy or intelligent-looking set of boys the Sub-Commissioner never saw, but they were entirely left to their own guidance. Except on Sunday, here is no apparent interest taken in their moral training or mental cultivation.

## **HENDRE LEAD MINE, Halkin, Flintshire.**

**No.189 Edward Roberts, aged 49. August 3, 1841.**

**Are you agent to the Mining Company?** - Yes, I have managed the mine under two directors for 12 years.

**Were you ever a working miner yourself?** - Yes, I began to wash lead ore at 10 years old, and when 15 I went into the mine to bore and cut the ground.

**Were wages better then than now?** - I think they were. I believe my first earnings were 5s. a week and boys now get only 3s. or 3s. 6d. a week when they first begin to work.

**How long did you work as a miner?** - About 16 years.

**What number of hours did you work each day?** - Six hours.

**Did your health continue unimpaired?** - Yes, and it still continues so, though I worked very hard.

**Does not the work generally produce ill health?** - It often does as it gradually injures the breathing powers and makes miners asthmatic before 60 years of age the chest is often diseased, and many even at 40. The mines are I think better ventilated than they used to be, and the health depends in a great measure on the ventilation.

**Are there any particular complaints to which lead miners are subject?** - Sometimes they have colic. I never had it but difficulty of breathing is the disease they all come to sooner or later.

**Do you know any person who has been a miner from early youth, and who has attained the of 70?** - Yes, one or two, not more. I know some at 60 who are still working, but their chests are affected.

**Are the boys desirous of leaving the work on the surface to commence miners?** - Oh yes, as soon as possible.

**On what account?** - They expect to earn more, and the hours of work are fewer.

**What are the hours of work on the surface?** - From 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and in as long as it is light whereas below ground the work continues only six or eight hours.

**How do you employ the boys on the surface?** - We set the ore to be washed by the ton, and contractors hire boys by the day to wash and riddle it.

**At what age do they usually begin to work?** - From 10 to 12, some earlier.

**What wages do the boys earn?** From 3s. to 8s. 6d., according to their capability.

**Do the operations require skill and dexterity?** - Not much. They soon acquire the dexterity that is wanted.

**Are they overworked do you think by the contractors?** - Oh, no, the work is not very heavy.

**Are they ever beaten or ill treated?** - No, I believe, never in this work.

**Do you see that they are not ill-used?** - Yes, I would not allow a boy to be beaten.

**How is the proper discipline kept up?** - They are threatened with fines, and sometimes are turned off for a few days, or if the case is very bad we do not take them again.

**Do you question a boy before he is taken into the work whether he has been to school, or whether he can read and write, or whether he attends Divine worship?** - No, we never think of such a thing.

**Do you know whether they attend Sunday-school?** - Yes, they generally attend Sunday-school, but we do not make a point of inquiring or desiring them to attend.

**Is there any school belonging to the work or near to it?** - No, none belonging to the work. There is no day-school nearer than three miles to the work.

**Do you know whether many of the miners can read and write?** - Most of them can read a in Welsh, and some can write.

**How were they taught?** - They were for the most part taught to read in the Sunday-school, those who write were taught in a day-school and some teach themselves.

**The miners, as they work but six hours a day, must have a great deal of spare time, how do they generally spend it?** - They do small jobs both for others and themselves. Most of them have

potatoes planted in farms near them, and they occupy much of their time. Their gardens take some of their time, and they cobble the shoes of the family, and some take ventures.

**What do you mean by taking ventures?** - Two or three or more miners will get a tack note from a proprietor of land, and sink in search of ore.

**Are these ventures often successful?** - No, but seldom and most masters try to prevent hem taking tack notes. Some masters make it a rule that their miners shall not take ventures.

**What is the present condition of the miners and their families?** - They are pretty well off. The average earnings of the miners last year came to 15s. a week.

**Can they support a family comfortably for 15s. a week?** - Yes, especially if the boys of a family are in employ.

**Have any set of hands more wages than others?** - We aim at 15s. a week for the pitmen, and 12s. for the borers and drivers.

**Why should the pitmen have more than the borers?** - They have more care on them and dexterity. They have the care of the pumps. arid indeed of the mine in general, and have to leave their work of boring to examine into tile state of the pumps, &c. and they also attend on Sunday in turns in case anything should go wrong with the engine and the pumps.

**Are the cottages comfortable and tolerably furnished?** - I think they are. There is considerable improvement in the method of building the cottages, and the furniture is better. Most cottages have a clock.

**Do the miners live better and are they better clothed than formerly?** - Oh yes. They have more animal food, and their gardens afford them vegetables, and the supply of potatoes is generally plentiful. Many of them have a cow, and some live in their own cottages and they dress well.

**Do many save money?** - Only a few.

**Do they smoke and drink much?** - Most of them smoke, and many drink, but there are less drinking than there used to be. Many indeed are teetotallers.

**Do the temperance societies increase?** - There are many of them, but I don't think they increase.

**Have they done ally good?** - Many have joined them, but I don't think they have much good.

**To what then do you attribute the decrease in drinking?** - There may be something in the fashion of the times, and the clergy and dissenters try to put it down.

**Is education increasing in this neighbourhood?** - Yes, there are more schools in the country and there is a Sunday-school in every chapel.

**What is the moral condition of the working classes here?** - It is better than formerly. There is not half the swearing and bad language used, Divine worship is well attended by and young, and the Sabbath well kept. Many go to chapel in the evening on week days, the Sunday-schools are filled and there appears to be a great inclination to acquire knowledge and many cottagers have family prayers twice a day.

**As they improved in religious and moral habits, do they become more desirous to acquire comforts of life?** - Yes, I am sure they do.

**Do many of the boys read and write?** - Not many write, most of them have learnt ill Sunday-schools to read a little.

**Are the cottagers more domestic and peaceable since they have become more attentive their moral and religious duties?** - Yes, evidently so. I remember when they used to be at home, when they were noisy, always quarrelling and fighting, and committing depredations of all sorts. When the Sabbath was a day of riot and drunkenness, things are now very much altered, they are orderly, well dressed, attentive to their duties, and the Sabbath is well kept.

**How do you account for the improvement?** - The different sectarians have made great exertions. Chapels have been built in every place, and Sunday-schools in them all of them. To these things I attribute the improvement.

**Do you find that those who have been educated are better conducted and more managed than others who have had no education?** - I infinitely prefer those workmen who have had some education, they will listen to reason and may be persuaded more easily than others.

**What advantages does education give to a cottager?** - It allows him to get on in the way which he would not otherwise do and he can teach his children and improve his own mind besides finding a pleasant employment in books.

**Would you recommend a general system of education for the children of the working classes?** - Yes, I sincerely wish such a system could be brought about. It would be better for the people themselves and also for the country, of that I am sure.

(Signed) EDWARD ROBERTS, Agent.

No.190. John Roberts, aged 14.

**What is your work?** - A washer of lead ore.

**What is your wages?** - Nine pence a day.

**How long have you been a washer?** - Three years and a half.

**Is your health good?** - Yes, very good. I had a little illness once in consequence of catching a cold and I was then a month ill.

**Do you like your work?** - Yes.

**Is it bard work?** - No.

**What are the hours of work?** - We come at seven, and leave at six in the have an hour allowed for dinner.

**Do you only eat once during the hours of work?** - We are also allowed a few minutes o'clock to eat a piece of bread and butter, or a little bread and milk which we bring with us.

**Do all the boys bring a luncheon with them?** - Yes, all.

**Where do you get your dinners?** - Our friends bring our meat to us warm, and we eat the engine room.

**Do you work in the open air?** - Yes.

**Do you work in all sorts of weather?** - No, when the weather is very bad we are sent home.

**Is an account taken of the hours lost by bad weather?** - Yes, the head washer keeps the account.

**Do you always find his account correct?** - Yes, always.

**Do you keep an account yourself also?** - Yes.

**How do you keep the account?** - By notches on a stick.

**How often are wages paid?** - Alternately every four weeks and five weeks and we are paid in full.

**Where do you receive the wages, and by whom are they paid?** - The head washer pays us in a tavern.

**Is it expected that the boys should lay out something on drink at tile tavern?** - No, they sell loaves there, and some of us buy a loaf now and then, and some of the older boys take half a pint of ale sometimes.

**Do some of the older boys stop in the tavern and get tipsy?** - No, never. I never saw one of them tipsy.

**Do the boys smoke?** - No, none of them smoke.

**Can you read and write?** - Yes, I can do both a little. I can't read well in English, but I can read anything in Welsh.

**Do you understand figures?** - I was taught, but I have almost forgotten all I learnt.

**Where were you taught?** - I was at a day-school for near four years before I began to work.

**What sort of school were you at?** - Lord Westminster's school, we only paid 1d. a-month.

**Were you taken to church by the master on Sunday?** - Yes, all of us.

**Do you continue to go to church?** - No, I always go to the dissenting chapel three times on every Sunday, and to the Sunday-school in the chapel every Sunday.

**Do many of the boys go to chapel?** - Yes, some go to other chapels. We don't all live near eachother.

**Do your father and mother attend chapel?** - Yes, constantly.

**Does your father or mother pray aloud at home?** - Yes, every night my father prays aloud.

**Can you say the Lord's Prayer and Church Catechism?** - Yes.

**Do you attend any school now?** - No, except to the Sunday-school.

**Is there a night-school near you?** - No, none, if there was I would attend it.

**Would you like to improve yourself?** - Yes, very much.

**Do most of the boys read and write?** - Almost all the boys that live near my Lord's school can read and write.

**Are the boys who have been at school better behaved than others who have not been at school?** - I know no difference.

**Do the boys who work with you swear much?** - Some of the older boys swear now and then, but the head washer always scolds them for it, and except when they are irritated. I don't think any of them swear.

**Do any one in the work pray aloud?** - I never heard any one. Some time ago one of used to give good advice to us all, something like a preacher would, but he has left and no one does so now.

**Was he listened to?** - Yes, by the boys, but the men did not listen to him.

**What is your father?** - A miner.

**What wages does he get?** - Not always the same, from 12s to 17s. a week.

**Have you brothers and sisters?** - Yes, one brother older than me, and three sisters younger. My bother is in the work with me.

**Who gets your wages?** - My father gets my wages and my brother's and my sisters are at school.

**Do you get sufficient food and clothing?** - Yes, we get plenty bread, butter, milk, and noes, and once a week bacon or beef, and our garden produces vegetables.

**What do you do after work?** - Play, and work in the garden and in the potato-field, and sometimes I read.

**Were you well treated when at work?** - Yes, very well treated. No one ever beats us.

**Do you fight and quarrel much amongst yourselves?** - No, not much. The head washer prevents us.

**Do you ever work overtime?** - No, never.

**Do you ever kept at work later than six in the evening?** - No, never.

**Have you ever been down in the mine?** - Yes, I once worked for a short time in a mine. I preferred it to working on the surface, and hope to get work again in the mine soon.

(Signed) JOHN ROBERTS.

### No. 191 John Evans, aged 10.

**How long have you been working?** - A year.

**What is your work?** - I pick the ore, and sometimes riddle it and help to wash it.

**Is it hard work?** - No, not very.

**What wages have you?** - 7d. a day.

**Had you 7d. when you first began to work?** - No, I had only 6d. a day.

**Who made the agreement for your wages?** - I myself.

**Who receives your wages?** - I do, and give them all to my mother.

**Do you work overtime?** - No, never.

**How many hours do you work in the day?** - From seven a.m. to six p.m., except when we eat.

**What time is allowed for eating?** - We have a few minutes to eat a luncheon at ten o'clock, an hour, from twelve to one, for dinner.

**Do you eat your dinner?** - In the engine room when it is cold, otherwise out in the air.

**Is your dinner warm?** - Yes, when I like to warm it. I bring it with me in the morning.

**Do the boys wash their hands and faces before they eat?** - Yes, generally.

**Are there orders for you to do so?** - No.

**Are you in good health?** - Yes, very good.

**Are the boys generally healthy?** - Yes, all of them.

**What is your father?** - He is gamekeeper to Sir Stephen Glynne.

**Does he live at home with you?** - No.

**Do you go regularly to church or chapel?** - No, I have very poor clothes, and I am ashamed of going.

**How is it that you have such poor clothes?** - My mother requires all my earnings to pay for my food, and won't give me clothes when I require them.

**Was you ever at a day-school?** - No, I go sometimes, but not often, to the Sunday-school.

**Can you read a little?** - No, I am learning a b c.

**Does your mother go to Divine worship regularly?** - Yes.

**Does she not try to take you with her?** - No, she tells me to stay home when my clothes are ragged.

**Can you say any prayers?** - Yes, my mother taught me the Lord's Prayer, and makes me say it every night.

**Have you sufficient food?** - Yes, I get plenty of food, bread, meat, and potatoes, and bread and milk.

**Did you ever ask your mother to get you better clothes?** - Yes, but she said she had no means of getting any for me.

**Would you like to go to school?** - Yes.

**What do you do with yourself when your work is over?** - I collect manure for potatoes and I help to clean the potato crop, and do other jobs about the house, and I sometimes play a little.

**Do the boys when at work, or after work, fight and swear much?** - No, every one is very peaceable, except by some chance.

**Are the boys well treated in the work?** - Yes, by every one.

**Were you ever hurt in the work?** - No, never.

**Do accidents often happen to the boys?** - No.

### No. 192 Peter Williams, aged 14.

**At what age did you commence work?** - 10 years old.

**What was your first work?** - Pumping water to wash the ore.

**What were your wages?** - 3s. a week.  
**What is your present work?** - I wash ore.  
**What are the hours of work?** - From seven a.m. to six p.m., out of which we have an hour for dinner and a few minutes for luncheon.  
Do you bring your food with you to the work? - Yes, and I warm it in the engine room I like, but I generally eat it cold.  
**What is your food?** - Bread and butter, potatoes, milk, and sometimes bacon.  
**Have you enough to eat?** - Yes, quite enough.  
**What do you get in the evening when you go home?** - Tea and bread and butter, son broth, or potatoes and meat.  
**Have you good clothes?** - Yes.  
**Can you read and write?** - I can read the Bible, but I can't write.  
**Where did you learn to read?** - In the chapel Sunday-school.  
**Were you never at a day-school?** - No, never.  
**Was there no day-school near you?** - Yes.  
**Why did not you attend it?** - I don't know, my father did not send me.  
**Do you attend Divine worship regularly?** - Yes, three times every Sunday I go to the chapel and I attend the Sunday-school every Sunday morning.  
**What is your father?** - He is now a quarry man. He was a miner.  
**Why did he leave the mines?** - Because his breathing was getting tight.  
**What is his age?** - I don't know, but he is a young man.  
**Is he a sober man?** - Yes, very sober.  
**Does he pray aloud to his family?** - Yes, every night and morning.  
**Can he read and write?** - Yes.  
**Does he teach his family?** - Yes, he gives me a copy often, and I say a lesson to him every day.  
**Has he saved money?** - No.  
**Is his house comfortably furnished?** - Yes, we have three beds, a clock, and a good dresser.  
**Tell me how you dine on Sunday when you are all together?** - We have a cloth table, and each a knife and fork, and we have meat and potatoes and a pudding.  
**Does your father smoke and drink?** - He smokes, but never drinks and he is a teetotaller.  
**Do the family all sleep in one room?** - Yes.  
**Have you a servant-girl?** - Yes.  
**Where does she sleep?** - In the room, she has a bed to herself.  
**Have you no sisters?** - None.  
**What does your father do after work?** - He cobbles our shoes, manages the garden and the potatoes, and he reads and writes sometimes, and teaches us.

#### **No.193 Thomas Davies, aged 14.**

**How old were you when you began to work?** - 13 years old.  
**What wages do you get?** - 7d. a day. I only got 6d. at first.  
**What is your work?** - I lift the lead ore that has gone through the mill into the riddles.  
**Is it hard work?** - Yes.  
**Does the work affect your health?** - No, I had the measles badly, but I am now quite well, and I like the work.  
**Can you read and write?** Yes, I was three years at Lord Westminster's school before I began to work.  
**What did you pay for being taught?** - 1d. a month.  
**Did you go to church with the master?** - Yes, we all went with the master to church regularly.  
**Do you go to church or to chapel now?** - I go regularly to chapel three times every Sunday, and I attend the chapel Sunday-school.  
**Why don't you go to church?** - My father and mother go to chapel.  
**Is your father a religious man?** - Yes, he is a professor, and prays to us night and morning.  
**Can he read and write?** - He can read, but not write.  
**What is he?** - A miner.  
**Has he good health?** - Only middling health. His breathing is becoming affected.  
**How old is he?** - He is 49.  
**How long has his breathing been affected?** - Two years ago, when he was working in a badly ventilated mine. He now works where there is good ventilation, and his breath is better.  
**Is your dinner brought to you?** - I bring my dinner and luncheon with me, and eat in the engine room and when the weather is cold I warm it.

**Do you wash your hands and face before you eat?** - Yes, almost always.  
**What do you do at night after work?** - I play with other boys at ball or marbles, and I help my father with the potatoes and the garden, and in winter I read with my father.  
**What food do you get?** - Bread and meat and potatoes and sometimes butter and bacon.  
**Is your father a careful person?** - Yes, but he can't save any money.  
**Is there good furniture in your house?** - Yes, we have four beds, a clock, three tables, &c.  
**Do you all eat together on Sunday?** - Yes.  
**What have you for dinner?** - Potatoes and meat and a dumpling.  
**Is there a cloth on the table, and knives and forks?** - Yes.  
**What do you do on Sunday evening?** - We all go to chapel.  
**Does your father go to the public-house?** - No, he is a teetotaller, and has been so for five years. He never drinks or smokes.  
**Do your neighbours live pretty much in the same way you do?** - Yes.  
**And all go to chapel on Sunday?** - Yes.  
**Do the boys play much on Sunday?** - No, sometimes little children do, but boys of my age do not.  
**Do the men play at games, and smoke and drink?** - No, they never play, some smoke, but I don't think they go to the tavern on Sunday.

[The Sub-Commissioner examined 25 boys in this work, from the age of 11 to 18. They were all healthy, fine boys. Their employment is washing and picking lead ore. They all attend Divine worship, and Sunday-school regularly and are well fed, and have tolerable clothing.]

#### No.194 Peter Jones, aged 55.

**Have you been a miner?** - Yes, ever since I was eight years old.  
**How many years were you working in the mines?** - Fully 20 years.  
**Did you continue healthy?** - Yes.  
**What wages have you now?** - I take the ore to wash at 6s. a ton, and make tolerable profits.  
**Do you hire the boys?** - Yes.  
**With whom do you make agreement for their services?** - With themselves.  
**At what age do you take them?** - About 10 years old.  
**How many boys under 18 years old do you employ?** - From 20 to 30, sometimes more, sometimes fewer.  
**What wages do you give?** - From 3s. to 10s. 6d., according to capability.  
**How many hours do they work in the day?** - From seven a.m. to six p.m. out of which I allow them an hour and a quarter for meals.  
**Do you ever beat them?** - No, I only scold them, and if necessary suspend them or turn away.  
**Does the work of washing and picking ore injure the health?** - No, I don't think so.  
**At what age do the boys usually begin to go below the surface and become miners?** - At 20 years of age.  
**Do you consider the lead-mines unhealthy?** - Yes, all miners early become short-breathed. At 45 years old miners begin to fail, and few at 60 continue healthy. I only know one miner who has attained the age of 77, and he has not been able to work for the last six years.  
**Do miners lay by money, so as to live when old without coming on the parish?** - No, very few indeed put by any money.  
**What wages do the miners generally make?** - From 12s. to 18s. a week.  
**Do they drink much?** - Some only as many are teetotallers, and those who are not do not drink anything like so much as they formerly did.  
**Are they generally moral and religious people?** - Some are. There is more morality and religion by far amongst them now than formerly. It used to be dangerous for a person to travel near the mines, now no one is molested, and the miners are generally orderly, sober, and peaceable. They attend chapel or church regularly and it is quite an uncommon thing for any one to absent himself from public worship, and there is no fighting, gaming, and drinking now on Sunday as there used to be.  
**How do you account for the improvement?** - I attribute it to the great number of chapels, the zeal of the Dissenters, and the Sunday-schools, and there is a general wish among the people to improve their condition.  
**Do many of the miners read and write?** - Many read, but few can write. They have learnt to read in the chapel Sunday-schools.



**Is there any pains taken in the moral training of the children?** - Yes, the chapel people take great pains. and generally the children are well conducted.

**Is there a growing desire for education among both adults and young persons?** - Oh, that is very perceptible.

**Do you think it would be desirable that all children should be educated?** - Yes, it would be very desirable.

**Do you find those who have had some education better conducted, more tractable, and more sober than others?** - Yes, I would rather employ a set of workmen who had been well educated than a set totally ignorant.

**Do you find them more domestic and more inclined to do what is right and reasonable than others?** - Yes, I think they are in every way better as a class.

**Can you read and write?** - It is my misfortune that I cannot write. It is also a great loss to me, with my habits, and the trust that my employers place in me. I might have been very well off in the world if I could write, but in my youth few were sent to school, indeed there were scarcely any schools, and I could not learn after I got into places of trust to write, but I have learnt to read the Bible, &c.

#### No.195 Thomas Harrison, Esq. August 4th, 1841.

**Have you been used to mining concerns for many years?** - Yes, all my life. I have had the management of mines ever since I was 20 years of age.

**Do you see any difference in the condition of the miners now in comparison to former years?**

Yes, they are more comfortably clothed, their food is better, and their houses better furnished in this country than formerly.

**Are they also more moral and more religious?** - Yes, they are very attentive to religious duties, and more industrious. They are much more civilised, sober, and well conducted, their whole bearing is superior to what it formerly was.

**To what do you attribute this improvement?** - I cannot say, except that there is a general spread of knowledge, and this may operate in a beneficial manner.

**Are wages better?** - Everything is by the job, and I think on the whole earnings are greater than they were.

**If wages are not much better how do they afford to live in a superior manner?** - To bet management and greater frugality.

**Are they more sober?** - Yes, a great deal. There are still many who drink nearly all the wages, and their families are in poverty, but in general the miners are much reformed and are very steady.

**Do many of them read and write?** - A good many read, and some few can write.

**How have they been taught?** - Some have been at day-schools when young, and others have learnt to read in Sunday-schools, and many have taught themselves at home.

**Is there a desire for education amongst them?** Yes, very great. I see it every day increase.

**Do they send their children to school?** - Yes, but they can't remain long, as they go to work when young, and they often forget all they have learnt, except reading, which is kept up the Sunday-schools.

**Do parents and children generally attend Divine worship?** - Yes, there are Dissenters chapels everywhere, and they, I believe, are well filled. The churches are neglected by the common people, they all, or nearly all, go to chapel.

**Do they keep the Sabbath strictly?** - Very much more so than formerly.

**Are they honest and upright in their dealings?** - Yes, in general.

**Do you approve of educating the lower orders and those who work together in numbers?** - Yes, education on a comprehensive system must do good. I give the preference to work who have been educated a little, they are more rational, and it would be very satisfactorily to me as an employer and a mine agent to find them able to keep an account.

**Are there many schools for the lower orders of children in the mining districts of this country?** - There are a good many in the towns, not so many in the country but they are increasing.

**Do you find parents and children desirous of taking advantage of any school which is advantageous to them?** - Oh, yes.

**Are you a proprietor of cottages?** - Yes.

**Do miners and others connected with large works occupy them?** - Yes.

**Do you find them more particular now than formerly in the style of cottage, and in the furnishing?** - Yes.

**Do you build a better kind of cottage now than formerly?** - Yes, much better.

**Are rents the same?** - Rents are better, and cottages easily let.

**How many rooms does a miner's cottage usually consist of?** - We now build them two rooms below and two above, formerly there were never more than two.

**Do you consider that separate rooms in a house conduces to the morality of the family?** - I cannot but think that separate rooms for the men and women must be conducive to good morals.

**Are there many children employed in the mines in this district?** - Yes, on the surface in washing and picking the ore.

**At what age do they usually begin work?** - From six to ten years old.

**How many hours a day do they work?** - From seven a.m to six p.m. in the middle of the day and they are allowed an hour for dinner.

**Do they work at night?** - No, never. They now and then may work in summer till eight or half past eight on particular occasions, for which they get extra wages.

**What wages do they earn?** - From 4s. to 12s. a week. according to age and capacity.

**Are they well treated when at work?** - Yes, I believe they are very properly treated.

**Are they well fed and clothed?** - Yes, I think so, I never heard any complaints.

**Do you think young persons may be worked so many hours daily without injury to their health and growth?** - Yes, the work is not oppressive. They retain their health, and their growth increases with their years.

**Do you think that it would be right to prevent masters from having the power to work children so many hours as they now do, and that they should go to school daily for a certain time?** - Yes, it would be a very proper thing. Their wages would be lessened, of course, which would be a loss to the parents, but the advantage gained by education would be more than a counterbalance.

**According to the present hours of work they can get no education?** - They might at this time of the year go to an evening-school.

Do you consider education is an advantage to a labouring person? - I consider it a great one.

**Have you had opportunities of judging?** - Some, and I consider those who have been educated are more domestic and more steady. They are more to be trusted, and have often become overlookers and agents of mines. Several of our miners have risen on account of being able to write and read, the want of which would prevent the best workman from promotion.

**Are any females employed in or about the mines?** - None.

**Which class, miners, colliers, or those employed in the manufactories of this neighbourhood, do you look upon as the most respectable?** - The colliers are less esteemed than the miners or manufacturers. They are not so sober. Those employed in the manufacture of lead, copper, iron, &c. get the best wages, but they spend a great deal in drink but they, and, indeed the working classes generally, are improving much.

**Can you tell me whether the comforts of the cottages are much increased of late?** - Yes, clocks are now general, beds and bed clothes are better, there is better furniture, and the cheapness of all things connected with a cottage induces to their purchase. Besides, there are now everywhere associations of all sorts to provide furniture, to make a provision in times of sickness and distress, and there are many friendly clubs These institutions have done a great deal towards ameliorating the condition of the working classes, and they are set on foot and conducted by themselves.

(Signed) THOS. HARRISON.

#### No. 196 John Davies, Trelogane Mine.

**How old are you?** - Forty-nine.

**Have you been always a miner?** - I began to work about the mines as a washer, wheeler, &c. when eight years old, and at 10 years old I went to work in the mine with my father, to clear the refuse. At 16 I began to work as a miner, and have continued to work in the mine ever since.

**Is your health been good?** - I have had one or two severe illnesses, one illness was a corn-fever, the other originated in my being up to my middle in water in the mine for several hours, owing to a stoppage in the engine, and my wish to finish a piece of work. The disease it affected my head, and afterwards gatherings arose on my neck, one succeeding another for nine weeks, when I was again able to go to work. I have often seen persons similarly circumstanced, similarly affected, but few so severely as I was. My breathing began to be slightly affected 10 years ago, and is gradually becoming more difficult, but I am quite able to keep at work, and hope to be able for many years to come.

**Do most miners become diseased in the chest?** - Yes, they begin at 40 or 45, and by the time they are 60 they become almost unfit for work. Very few arrive at the age of 60. I think they

generally die before they are 60 and I don't know any person who has been always a miner who has arrived to the age of 70.

**When a miner can no longer work in the mines what becomes of him?** - Some get work on surface but not one in 20 is fit to go to work on a farm. Those who have joined clubs get a weekly support from them, and some go on the parish.

**How many save money?** - Very few. The only money put by is the subscriptions to clubs. I don't think one in a hundred has money.

**Do they live better now than when you were young?** - I don't think they do.

**Is not the furniture, the clothing, and the food better than when you were young?** - Perhaps they are. It is very hard upon us now, our earnings are but small.

**What wages do miners now earn?** - I don't think, during the last year, we earned in this year more than 10s. or 11s. a week. We are paid according to the quantity of ore we rise.

**Is there much difference in the conduct and habits of miners of late years?** - Yes, great they are now anxious to go to hear the word of God, on week days as well as on Sunday, and they go to Sunday-schools, where the grown-up people are as desirous of being taught as the children, or, perhaps, more so. I have known hundreds who have learned to read in the chapel Sunday-schools. These people become fond of home, and read the Bible to themselves and their families, and a great many cottagers now pray aloud every night, and some every night and morning, to their families. Formerly, after work and on Sunday, the miners used to collect together to gamble or to fight and quarrel and used to go to public-houses. There is no such thing now, every one seems desirous or getting borne to his family to cultivate his garden and his potatoes, and to do some good for himself and his family.

**Do they take pains in bringing up their children properly?** - Yes, most people do and the children are better behaved by far than they used to be. They keep the Sabbath properly, and almost all go to public worship and to Sunday-school and when the chapels are open in week days they are well attended.

**Do you see any difference in the conduct and circumstances of those who have had education from those who have had none?** - Yes; they become more thoughtful, and, I think, strive more for their families than others.

**Are there many teetotalers in the mine?** - Yes, many, who were great drunkards have become sober, to the great benefit of their families, who are now comfortable, but were it a wretched condition formerly.

**Do you think that the temperance societies have done good?** - Oh, yes, great good. I know many who have kept the pledge for many years, and who are not now likely to return to drunken habits. There used to be several public-houses near this work, four of them have lately been obliged to shut up, so much has drinking decreased of late.

**Are the boys who work about the mines well treated?** - I think they are very well treated it is thought wrong now to beat or ill-treat children.

(Signed) JOHN DAVIES.

**No. 197 James Pickering, aged 41, schoolmaster in Lord Westminster's, charity-school, Halkin, Flints. August 12th, 1841.**

**How long have you been employed as a schoolmaster?** - 13 years and a half.

**Always in Lord Westminster's school?** - No, I have been here only nine years and a half. I was at the national school at Overton previously.

**Does Lord Westminster support this school entirely?** - No, there are some other subscribers.

**Is there a girls school as well as a boys school?** - Yes.

**How many scholars are the rooms calculated to hold?** - About 110 in each room.

**What is the age children are usually sent to you?** - Many as young as five, few older than seven.

**Till what age do they remain at school?** - They often leave at eight or nine, few remain till eleven.

**What are the parents of the majority of the children?** - Miners. There are some children of small farmers and agricultural servants.

**Do they pay anything?** - 1s. entrance, and 1d. a month towards fire.

**Don't they pay for books?** - No. There are, I should have mentioned, a few children pay 1s. a quarter to the funds of the school.

**Why should they be charged?** - Because their parents can afford.

**Have you the sole management of the education?** - Yes, in the boys school, and teaches the girls.

**Does the minister of the parish or a committee of subscribers visit the school often, for purpose of examining the children?** - The Rev. Mr. Williams, the rector, often does. Lady Westminster makes us visits, also Miss. Jones, the rector's niece. They all take a great interest in the education of the children.

**Were you educated with a view to teach?** - No, I was educated at a day-school.

**What is your salary?** - £70. a year between myself and wife, and we have no perquisites except a house rent free.

**What is the number of boys now at school?** - About 70, and as many or more girls.

**What do you teach the children?** - Reading, writing, and arithmetic. My wife teaches the same, also knitting and sewing.

**According to what system do you teach?** - Bell's system.

**To what work do the boys in general go when they leave school?** - The mines. mining district, on which account boys do not remain in school as long as they do in other places.

**Before they leave you for the mines what progress have they in general made in education?** - Most of those who have been two years in the school can read pretty well, and can write and have gone through the four first rules of arithmetic.

**Do many continue to come to the school after they have commenced work?** - No, the hours for work and those in which the school is open are the same, they could not, therefore, come and to their work also, but I have known many instances of the boys coming to school a rainy day, when too wet for work.

**Under such circumstances, do you take them into school?** - Yes, always.

**Do you find that they have forgotten what they had previously learnt with you?** - Not much as might be expected. There are Sunday-schools to which many boys go, and keep up their knowledge of reading, and what they had learnt in scriptural exercises.

**Are there any night-schools to which the boys who work in the day might go?** - I there are not any.

**Many of those whom you educated must be now grown into manhood, do you know what their moral and religious condition now is?** - I can not reply to the question, as I have lost sight of them but I know that though they have been educated by us in Church principles and were regularly taken to church, yet few of them continue steadfast, they generally become Dissenters, and go to chapels of dissent.

**Are any pains taken by parents or masters in the moral training of children?** - Masters make none. Parents have become more desirous of getting their children into school, and most of them take their children to some place of public worship every Sunday, and to a Sunday-school, but I know of no other moral training by parents. I think the people here in general well behaved, and attentive to religious duties, even though they may dissent from the Church.

**Is there any improvement in their moral conduct within your memory?** - Yes, very great.

**In what respects?** - They are much more sober, more orderly, more civil, and a great deal more attentive to the duties of the Sabbath. There is now little of those barbarous sports, such as cock-fighting, bull-baiting, dog-fighting, and fighting and quarrelling amongst themselves.

**Are they more attentive to their families and their domestic duties?** - As a matter of course they are.

**Are their domestic comforts increased?** - Certainly, they have superior furniture, and live in a more comfortable manner.

**Do the boys who work in the mines get sufficient food and clothing?** - Yes, I think they do.

**Are they well treated at their work?** - I believe they are. I hear nothing to the contrary.

**Are they over worked, considering their youth?** - No.

**Do they retain their health?** - Yes, they do.

**Has the work a tendency to impede their growth or to poison their morals?** - They grow into manhood like other boys, and I do not think their morals become corrupted any more than in other employments.

**Are the miners and their families equally as respectable as agricultural servants and labourers in this district?** - Yes, I think they are.

**Physically, mentally, and morally?** - Miners lose their health early in life, and therefore, at the same age as agriculturists, they are physically inferior. Their minds and morals are fully equal to other classes.

**Have you ever heard of any individual cases of cruelty to children employed in the mines?** - Never.

(Signed) JAMES PICKERING.

**How long have you been rector of Halkin?** - About a year and a half.

**Were you accustomed to a mining and coal district previously?** - Yes, for 15 years.

**At what age do the boys usually go to work in the mines in your parish?** - Usually about ten, sometimes at earlier periods.

**Do their parents oblige them to go?** - I suspect, indeed I have no doubt, they do. The temptation of wages induces them.

**Are they generally at school previous to commencing work?** - Yes.

**Do they go to school after commencing work?** Only to Sunday-school. The generality attend Sunday-school, either in church or chapel.

**Are they well treated at work?** - I have every reason to believe they are. Their work is on the surface, and not of a nature to impose great hardship on them.

**Do they work at night?** - Yes, such as work in the mine at the air-pump.

**Are they usually healthy?** - Yes, they are.

**What is their moral condition?** - I should say that, as far as my experience goes, it is such would stand a comparison with the moral condition of the youths in other employments.

**Is there any pains taken by masters, parents, or others in their moral training?** - I am disposed to doubt it. With the exception of a little parental authority which may be exercised over them, there is, I think, none. I am not aware that masters or agents interest themselves the moral welfare of the boys they employ.

**Do they not subscribe largely to schools?** - They do not, except in one single instance in parish or neighbourhood. That instance is Messrs. Crockford and Co., of the Deep Level Mine.

**Is the character of miners and their families much improved of late years?** - I cannot say but I am bound to say that, during a season of great privation about six or seven years no people could conduct themselves better than the lead miners. On the contrary, they were very insubordinate.

**Did the distress of the times equally affect both classes?** - No, not simultaneously but under similar sufferings and distress the colliers were very insubordinate, and inclined to riot. I never knew any cabals or meetings amongst the miners to raise the rate of wages, but I have known many instances where the colliers have done so.

**How do you account for the good conduct of the miners, and the insubordinate conduct of colliers, under similar circumstances?** - The miners do not work together in such large numbers as the colliers, and there is greater competition for labour amongst them. Perhaps the colliers may be a ruder set in consequence of being so much below ground. They stay below ground 12 hours, whereas the lead miners do not work above half that time.

**Do the children who work at the mines get sufficient food and clothing?** - I have reason they have. They appear robust and healthy, some come to the Sunday-school and I see others going to or from their respective places of worship, and they are all well dressed and well conducted.

**What is the condition of the miners family, as regards his cottage, food apparel, and pursuits?** - Their cottages are clean and tolerably well furnished. Their diet is, I think, superior to that of the ordinary country labourer, their dress is good and their pursuits harmless, and of a domestic nature. There is but little drinking, and but little glaring immorality.

**Are they desirous of taking advantage of the opportunities afforded them of education?** - I don't think they are particularly so.

**Are they regular in attendance at public?** - I believe they are, either in church or chapel, or both.

**Do the children also attend public worship regularly after they begin to work?** - Not many come to church, and I am much afraid they don't go elsewhere.

**Is there much drinking, gambling, or playing on Sunday?** - Not to my knowledge. I believe not.

**Are the habits of the working classes improved of late years?** - I see but little difference except as regards drink, and they are certainly are more sober. The system of mutual support has extended greatly throughout this district, and there are now few who do not belong some friendly society.

**Do many save money?** - I don't think they do.

**Do many own the cottages in which they live?** - Yes, several in this parish.

**Are those who own the cottages they live in more comfortable and generally of superior conduct to others?** - I fancy they are in better circumstances, but I have no reason to think their conduct is better.

**Are you an advocate for the education of the working classes?** - Yes, I am decidedly.

**Have you seen any beneficial results?** - I think they become better informed, and their minds more cultivated, and in general their conduct is better.

**Would you advocate a general system of education?** - I don't think I would be disposed advocate a compulsory system of education, but I think good might result from a education among the youths who work together in numbers at early ages.

**Would you take some portion from the time now occupied in labour to devote to education?** - Yes, I think it would be expedient to do so. I think, after the fatigues or a long day's work. The children and young persons would not be well disposed to learn or capable of receiving profitable instruction, therefore the hours of labour should be lessened to give time for education.

**Do you think the colliers, as a class, are at all inferior to miners or agriculturist as respects morals, personal appearance, clothing, and economical habits?** - I am think that the colliers, as a class, are inferior as respects morals and personal appear the miners and the agricultural labourers in this district. The length of time spent daily in work, the congregation of large bodies of men during the hours of labour within a confined space, the contamination necessarily attendant upon such congregation, the absence all inspection and restraint from the masters at the time, the very early age at which employment in the collieries, are all circumstances which seem to me to act prejudice the moral habits of the collier. I am not competent to give an opinion as to the quantum of labour required from the collier and the miner while at work, but I have always understood that more exertion is required from the former, and I suspect they think they are justified in indulging to excess to make amends for previous exhaustion. Thus habits of intemperance too often engendered, and a want of economy and an absence of self-respect too frequently follow.

(Signed) WILLIAM MADDOCK WILLIAMS, Rector of Halkin.

**No.199 Edward Lloyd, Esq., of Cefn.**

**Do you act as a justice of peace?** - Yes.

**Have you been connected with mines?** - Yes, and am so now.

**Is it your opinion that boys are sent to work in mines and in manufactories at too early age?** - Yes, the work in which they are engaged at the lead and copper mines does I believe, take them under ground, and as they work on the surface may not be unhealthy but 12 hours continuous work for children under 13 is too much, and I think they should not be worked at all at night.

**If the work is not unhealthy why should you object to it?** - Because I consider that a system of continuous and unrestricted work for many hours together, even by day, must be baneful to health, but work by night must have an immoral tendency, and must no doubt development of the physical and mental powers. I consider it absolutely necessary that children should have some hours every day for recreation and however useful may be, their education ought to be attended to. Without recreation and education must become mere working machines, and remain in a state of ignorance approaching to barbarism.

**Has there been no improvement of late years in the moral and temporal condition of the lower or working classes?** - I think the great exertions made of late years in instructing in Sunday-schools both by Churchmen and Dissenters have had a beneficial tendency and there is an evident improvement in the morals and intelligence of the working class know of many instances of adults who have been taught to read in the Sunday-schools, has improved their conduct and bearing in a remarkable manner. These persons now their leisure time more rationally. They have become sober and domestic and having learnt to read themselves they endeavour to teach their children, and in this way order, temperance and a higher feeling are engendered and the lower orders become more moral and more religious.

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