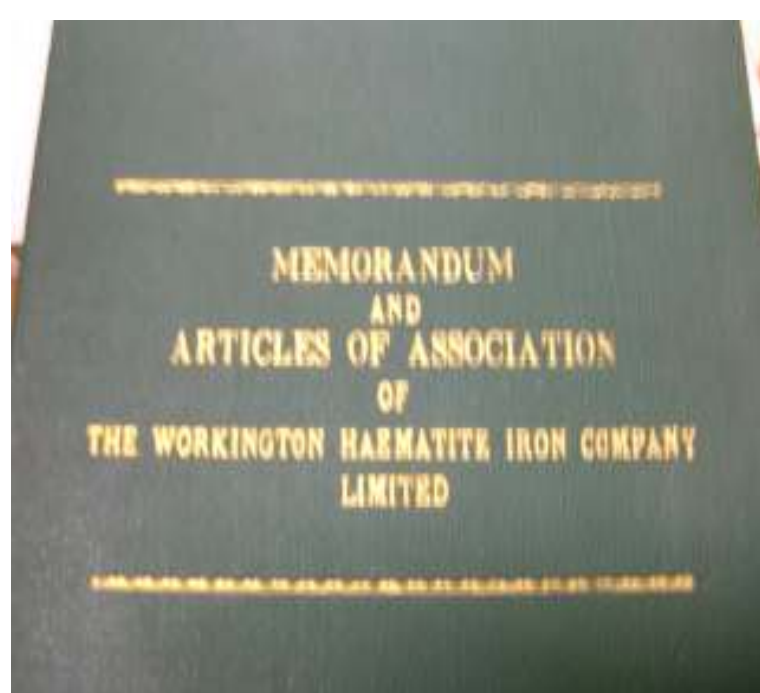


British Steel in West Cumbria

Before the Steelworks



Steel was being made in Workington from 1856, and prior to that there were iron companies in the area, but they were not always based in Moss Bay. The maps show Moss Bay in 1865 and 1899, and the growth of the steel industry is obvious. The first Moss Bay site was built by the Derwent Iron Company, but was later taken over by Charles Cammell and Company. The first



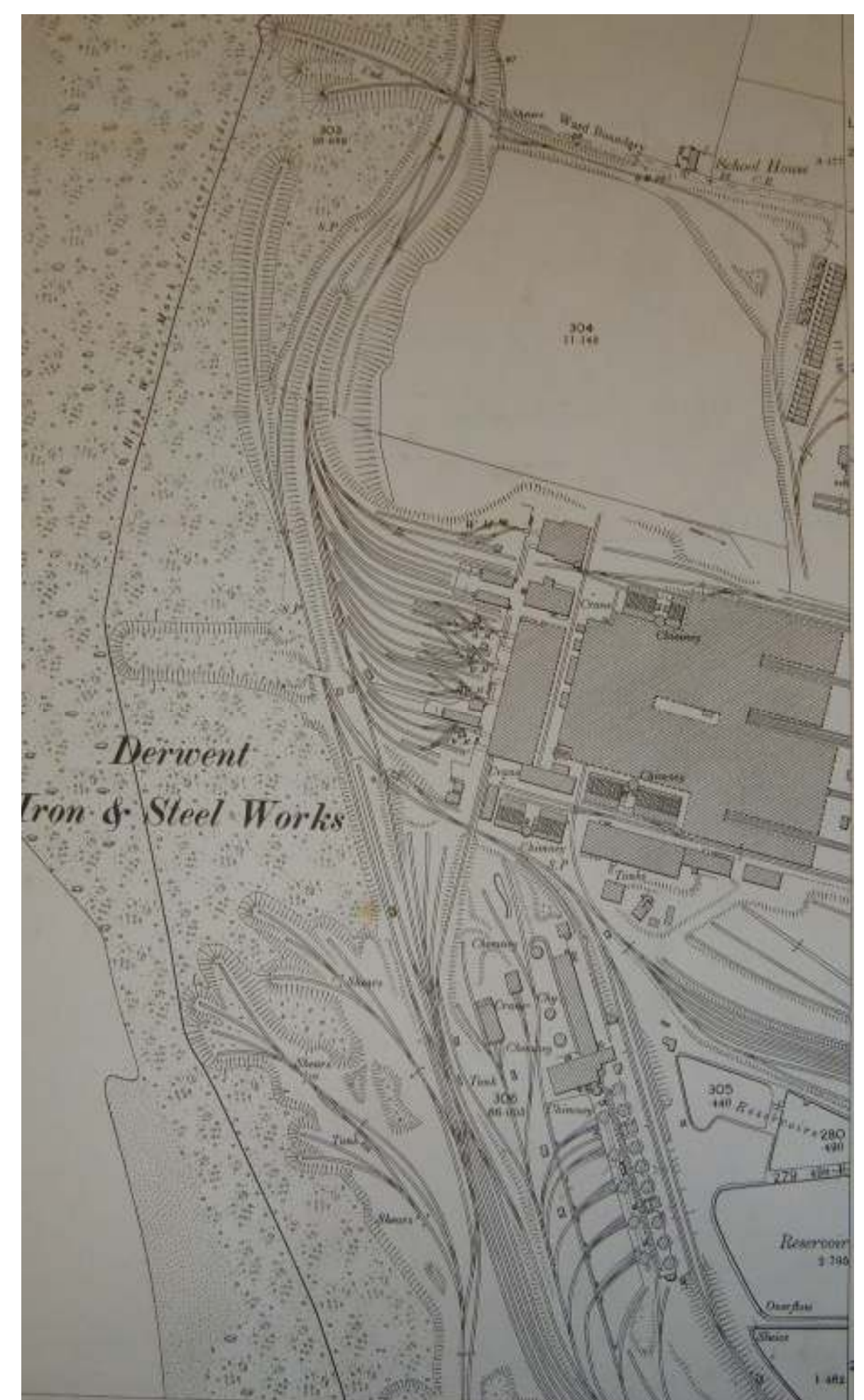
Memorandum and Articles of Association
ref.YBSC/3/4/1

company to make steel in Workington was the Workington Hematite Iron Company, which was formed in 1856. The records contain its

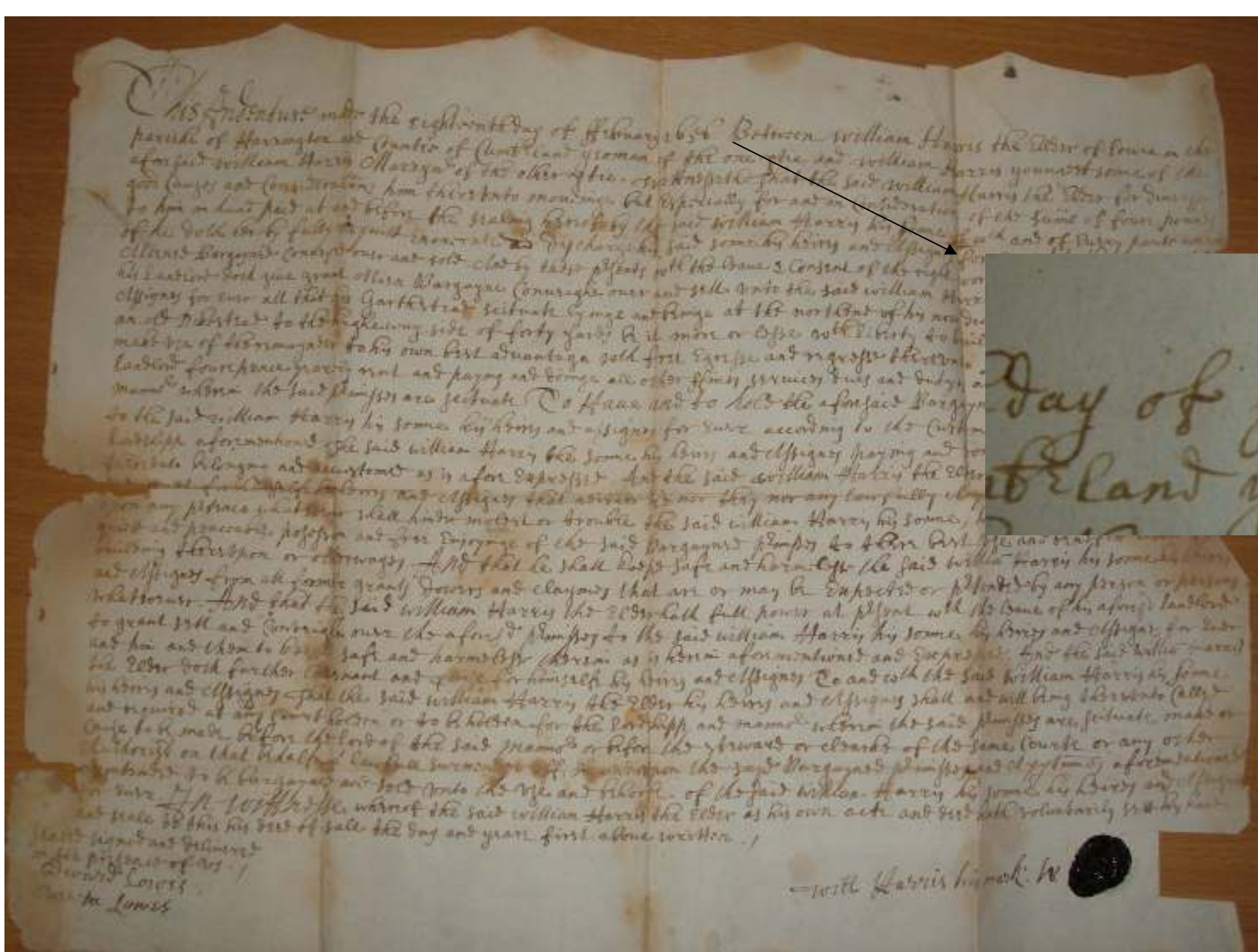
Articles of Association, as well as those of some of its successors.



Ordnance Survey 53.10, 1st edition 1865 (above), and
Ordnance Survey 53.10 2nd edition 1899 (right)



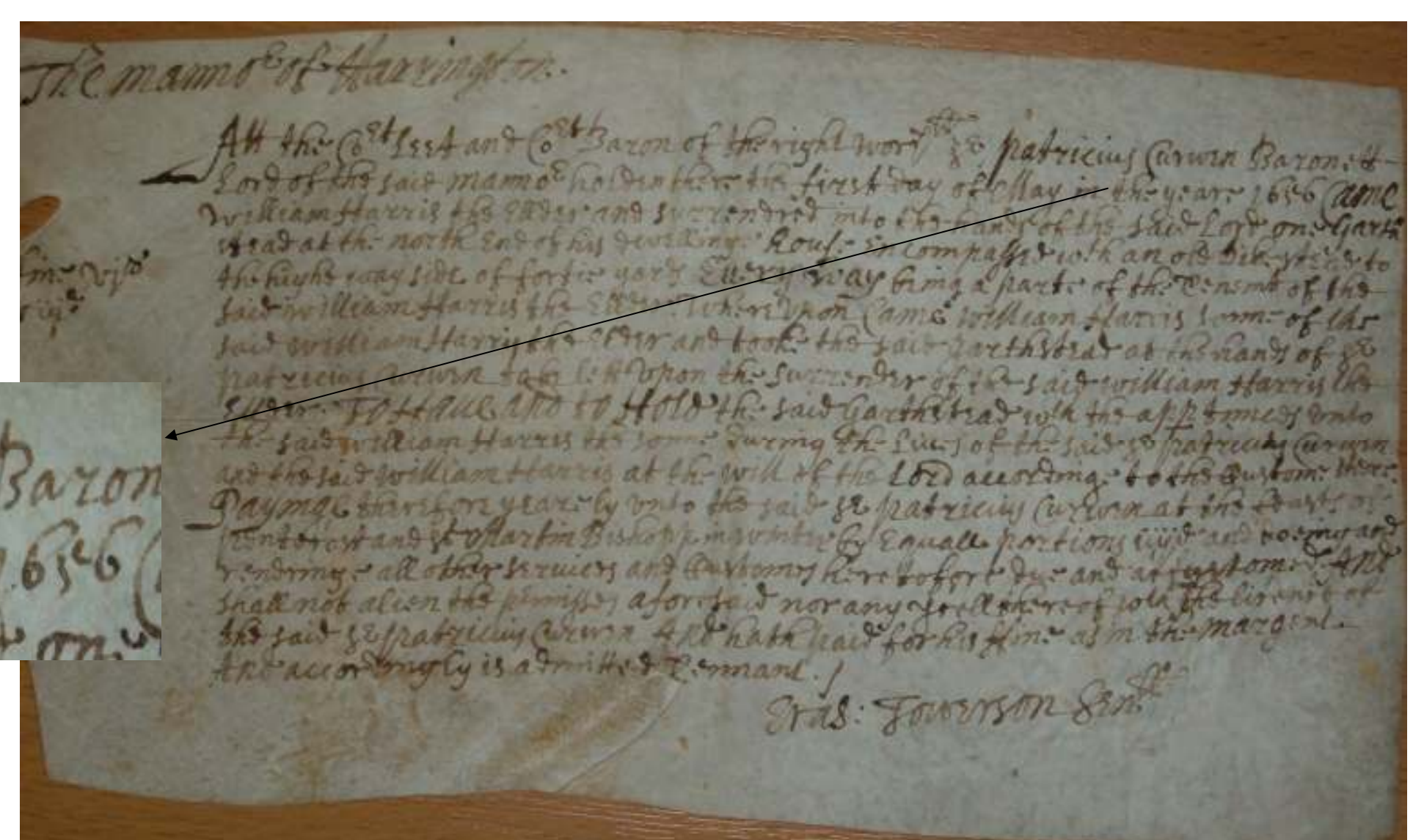
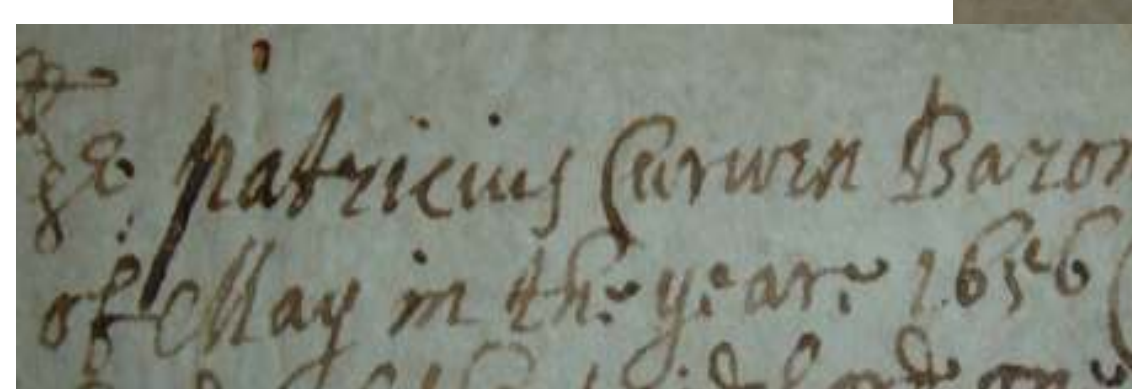
The records cover far more than just the steelworks, they also contain a history of land ownership in and around Workington, which can be seen through title deeds. The earliest title deeds come from the 17th century, and refer to land in Lowca and Harrington. There are also deeds for land at Egremont, Beckermeth and Rowrah.



Conveyance of land at
Lowca, from February
1656.
Ref.YBSC/1/1/8/1

Some of the deeds refer to the Manor of Harrington. The Lords of the Manor of Harrington were the Curwen family of Workington Hall, who were also Lords of the Manor of Workington. In 1656 the Lord of the Manor was Sir Patricius

Curwen. More information about the Curwen family and records relating to the manors of Workington and Harrington can be found at Cumbria Archive and Local Studies Centre, Whitehaven.



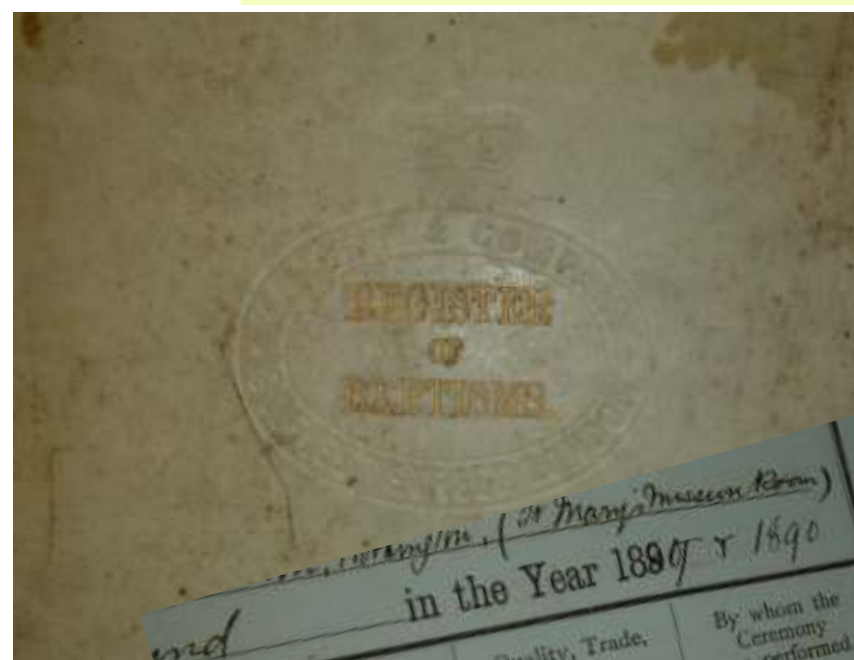
Admittance to the Manor of Harrington. Ref.YBSC/1/1/7/1

British Steel in West Cumbria

More than just work

There was more to life in the steelworks than work. Many of the workers lived near the steelworks, and the community of Moss Bay grew up around it. This is reflected in the records of the local parish church, Westfield St Mary, which began as a mission in the 1880s. All the occupations in this baptism register seem to be related to the steelworks!

Westfield St Mary's Baptism Register.
Ref.YPR 44/1/2/1/1



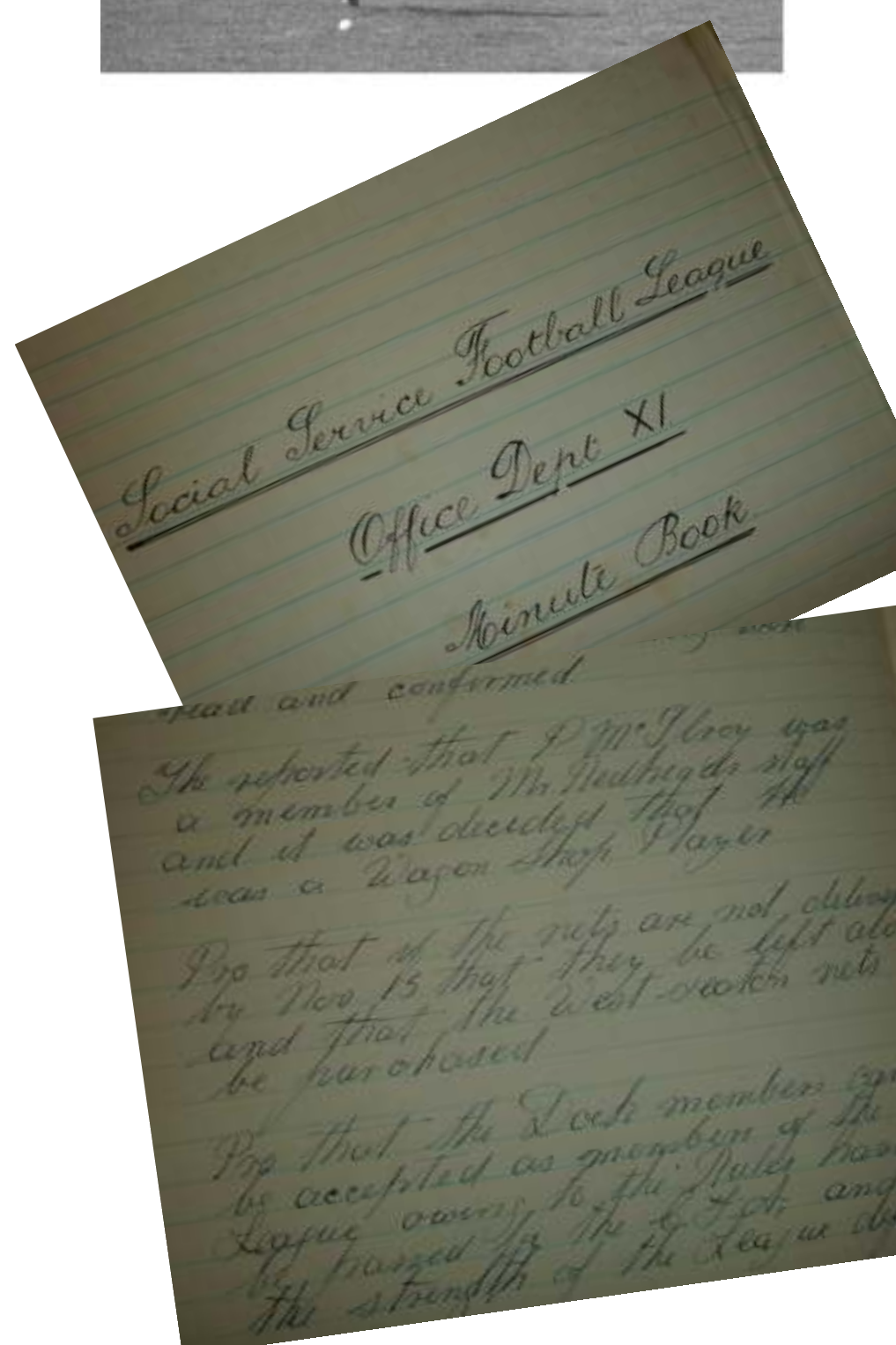
Thomas Edward Mary Amelia	Green	Annie Pitt Road	Steel Works	Amice (Curate)
James & Harriet	Baggott	Westfield	Furnace man	Amice (Curate)
James T. Sarah	McVittie	Westfield	Ironworker	Amice (Curate)
John & Annie Eliza	Hall	Westfield	Engineer	Amice (Curate)
James Samuel Mary	Beeton	Westfield	Steelworks	Amice (Curate)
Joseph Roll Turner	Millership	Annie Pitt Road	Labourer	Amice (Curate)
Pitt Roll Turner	son	Westfield	Steel Works	Amice (Curate)
	Westfield	Westfield	Labourer	Amice (Curate)

The company records also show the social life of the workers. There were lots of sports teams, including football, hockey and cricket, and both the men and the women of the works had their own teams. The large number of photographs within the collection include many taken from events in the social club.



1978 Football team above. Ref. YBSC/22/5/6/10
1978 Hockey team in action. Ref. YBSC/22/5/6/3 (left)

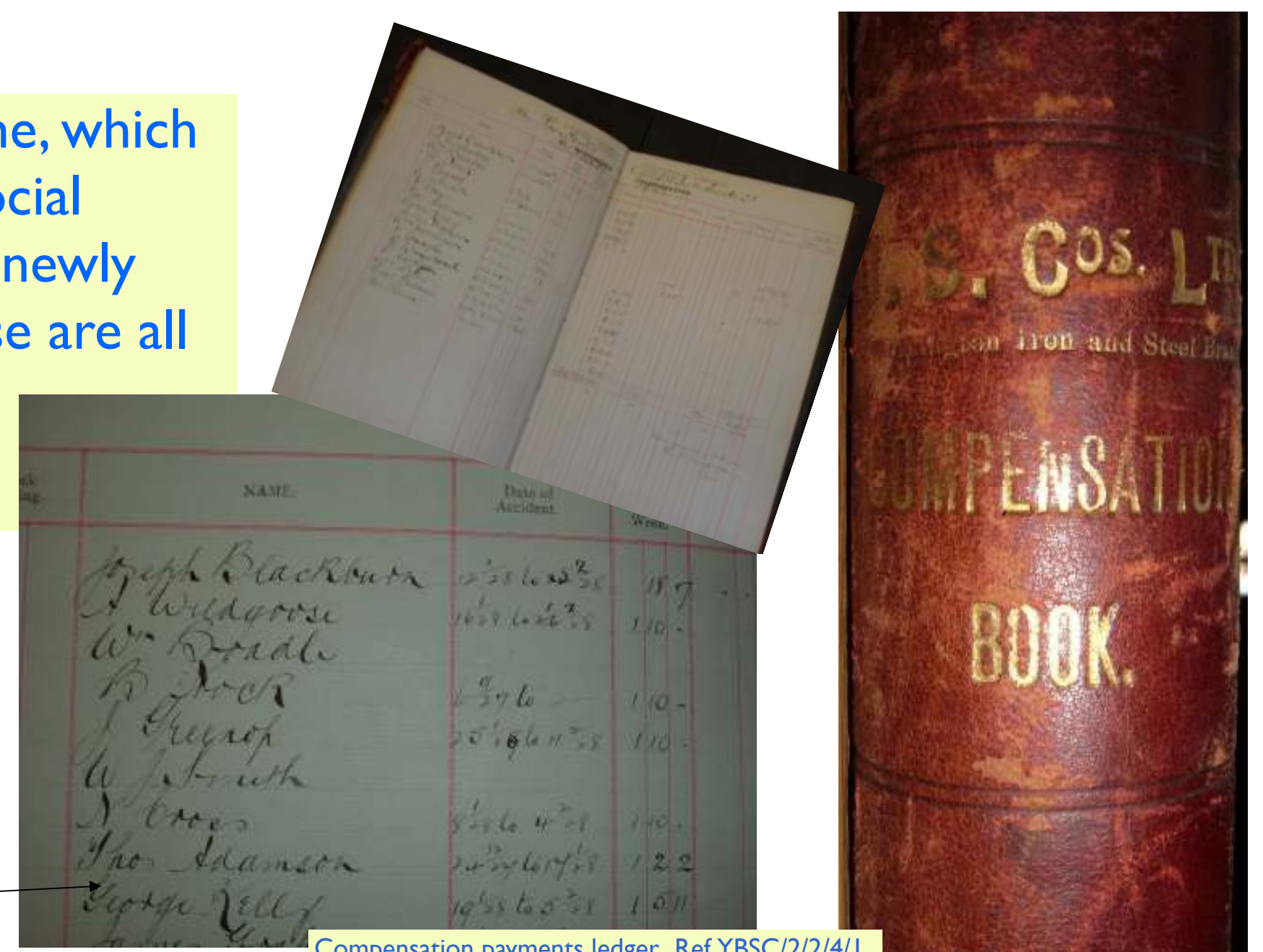
The photographs on the left are from the 1970s, but the football team was in existence long before that. Included with the records are club minutes from the 1938-1939 season, some teams were clearly much better than others, as the results show! The minutes show that there were rules about which teams could be League members, and that these were strictly applied. Not all the social side of the works involved sports, or the social club. The companies also provided for their workers, including when they had retired. There are many photographs of entertainments put on for local children and for retired staff. Retirees were taken on trips, including some to Blackpool, and the Jubilee Cottages were built to house pensioners.



DATE	OPPONENTS	VENUE	RESULT
SEPT. 24	CUMBERLAND COAL CO. LTD.	HOME	2-3 CORN. 2
OCT. 8	DOVENBY	AWAY	5-6 CORQUITT 2
" 15	BRICKLAYERS	"	1-2 CORQUITT
" 22	LOWEY	"	0-4
NOV. 5	DOVENBY	AWAY	3-0 CORN. 2
DEC. 3	SHELL SHOP	"	5-0 STEEL 5
JAN. 14	RAIN BANK	"	0-5
" 21	BRICKLAYERS	"	2-3 WHARF 2
FEB. 18	DOVENBY	AWAY	5-4 CORN. 2
" 25	SHELL SHOP	"	8-2 CORN. 2

YBSC/2/6/1 bottom left and YBSC/2/6/2 above and top left

There was also a regular staff magazine, which gives a lot more information about social activities, as well as who was retiring, newly started, or had just got married. These are all available at Cumbria Archive and Local Studies Centre, Whitehaven.



Compensation payments ledger. Ref. YBSC/2/2/4/1

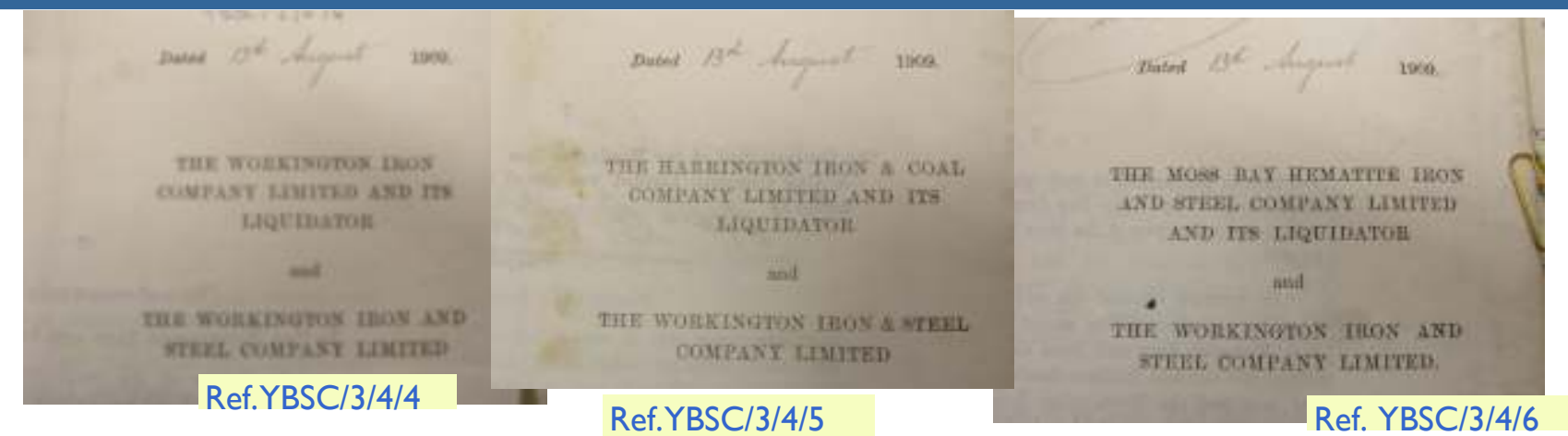
Even when they could not work, the companies were still able to help their employees. These compensation books show payments made to workers because of accidents at work. This was before the Welfare State, when sick pay from the Government was minimal, so must have helped make life easier for employees injured or ill as a result of work.

British Steel in West Cumbria

Outside the Steelworks



Originally there were lots of small steel companies, including the Harrington Iron Company, the Moss Bay Hematite Iron and Steel Company and the Workington Iron Company, amongst others. Records show that the companies often closed down, or were taken over, until in 1909 they amalgamated, each one of them closed, and they all became one, much bigger company—the Workington Iron and Steel Company.



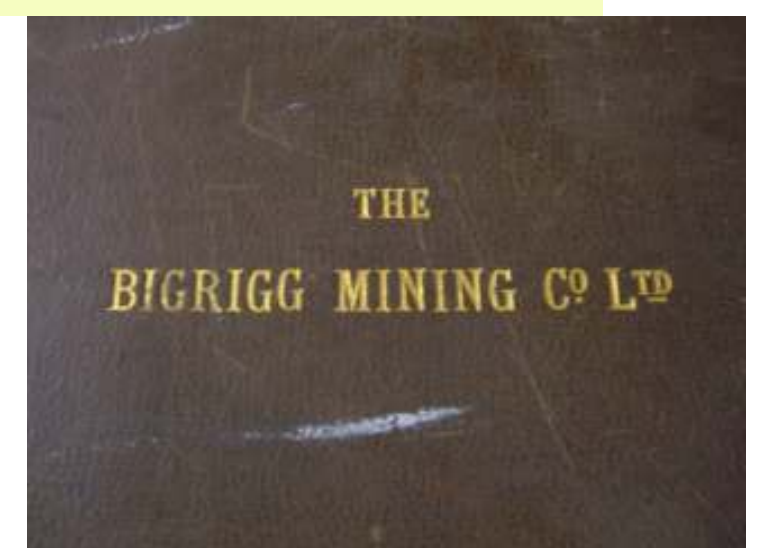
Records relating to the amalgamation, showing the names on agreements for sale.

Although the steel industry in Cumbria is mainly associated with Workington, there were also related businesses all over West Cumbria. These ranged from iron ore and coal mines, to coke

Bigrigg Ledger Ref. YBSC/9/2/1 right
St Helens Ledger Ref. YBSC/10/2/2/1 below

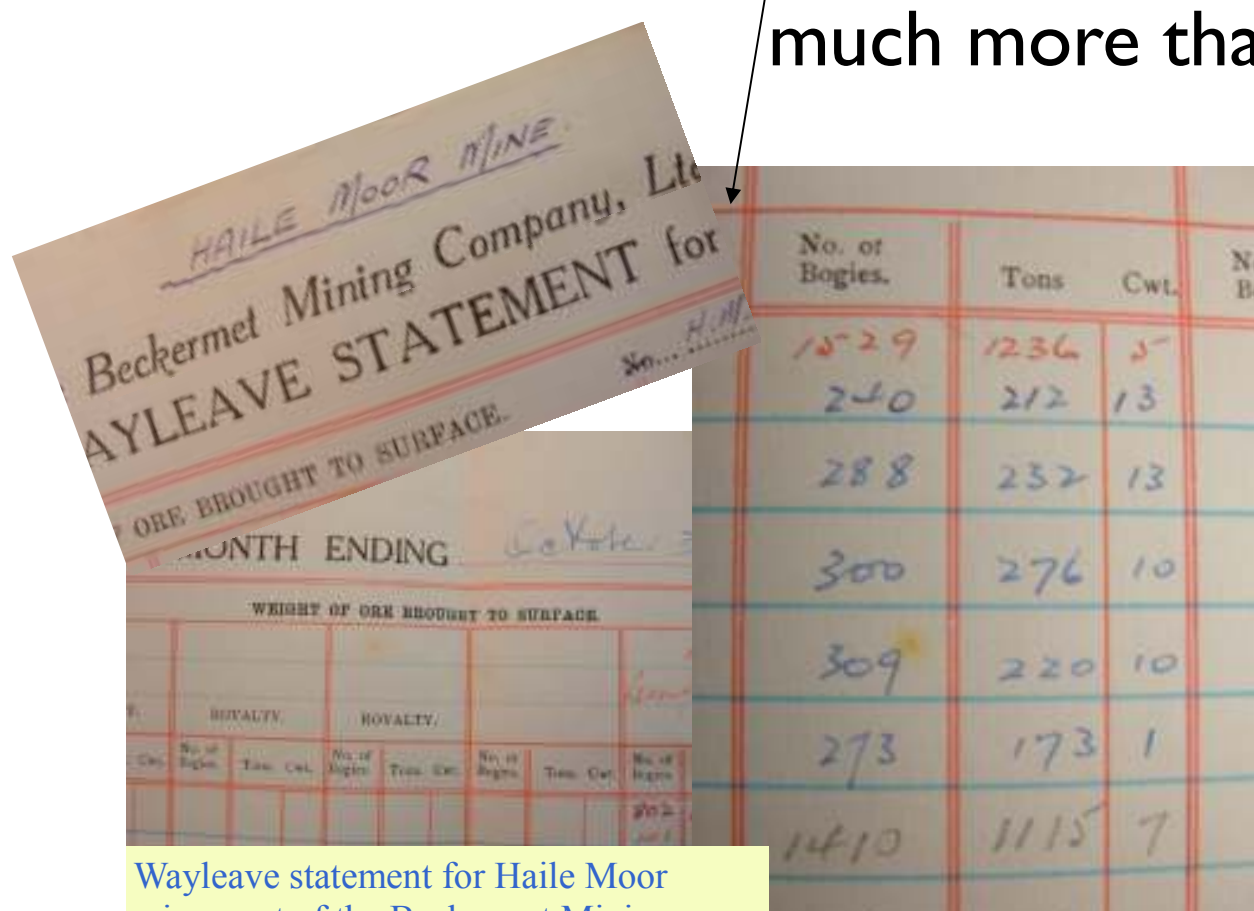


ovens, tar manufacturers and the Workington Docks. Many of these smaller companies had become part of the United Steel Companies, which later became the British Steel Corporation. North of Workington were the St Helens Colliery and Brickworks Company, and the Risehow Colliery, both at Flimby. The United Coke and Chemicals Company, which produced tar, was based at Lowca, there was a coal mine at Moresby and iron ore was mined at Egremont and Bigrigg, although the largest iron ore mine was based at Beckermeth. Further down the coast were the steelworks in Barrow.



Further information about the Barrow Steelworks can be obtained from Cumbria Archive and Local Studies Centre, Barrow.

The Beckermeth Mining Company was formed in 1903, records show details of boring to try and discover seams of ore and also of how much ore was mined. The records show much more than just how much ore was mined. There are also details of exploration to find new seams of ore, title deeds that show agreements made with land owners to mine the ore on their land, and financial records.



Wayleave statement for Haile Moor mine, part of the Beckermeth Mining Company. Ref. YBSC/8/4/3/6

Boring Journal detail. Ref. YBSC/8/4/1/13

N°2. BECKERMETH MINE			
Base of	Base of	Base of	Remarks
Section	Borehole	Limestone	
1093 75	8146 25	1194 34	
2163 68	3052 68	3007 68	
1470 23	1218 23	1072 98	
967 31	674 31	368 56	
2431 01	3331 01	2359 01	
2093 60	1940 60	1752 60	
622 05	549 05	343 05	

DESCRIPTION	Rate	Value	Rate	Value
Level 1 Bottom	10	0	10	0
1000 00	0	0	0	0
1000 00	0	0	0	0
1000 00	0	0	0	0
1000 00	0	0	0	0
1000 00	0	0	0	0
1000 00	0	0	0	0
1000 00	0	0	0	0
1000 00	0	0	0	0

The Egremont Mining Company's register of shareholders. Ref. YBSC/12/3/2



Some of the companies have details of shareholders, like the Egremont Mining Company. Its register of shareholders gives a list of names, where they were from, and their occupation. They were not always local, or the kind of people you might expect. As well as iron masters and solicitors, there is at least one married woman, from a time when many women still spent all their time at home. Shareholders also came from as far afield as Devon and North Wales.

119 R.E. Higgin	Working in	10	0
226 R.E. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
72 Mrs. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
2000 North Lonsdale Iron Works Ltd	Whithaven	10	0
201 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
202 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
203 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
204 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
205 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
206 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
207 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
208 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
209 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0
210 Mr. H. H. Hurler	Whithaven	10	0



Not all companies were part of the larger company. There are records for the Cumberland Storing Company, which remained independent, although many of the people involved in the larger companies were also on its board or were shareholders.

Memorandum and Articles of Association for the Cumberland Storing Company. Ref. YBSC/14/1/1

British Steel in West Cumbria

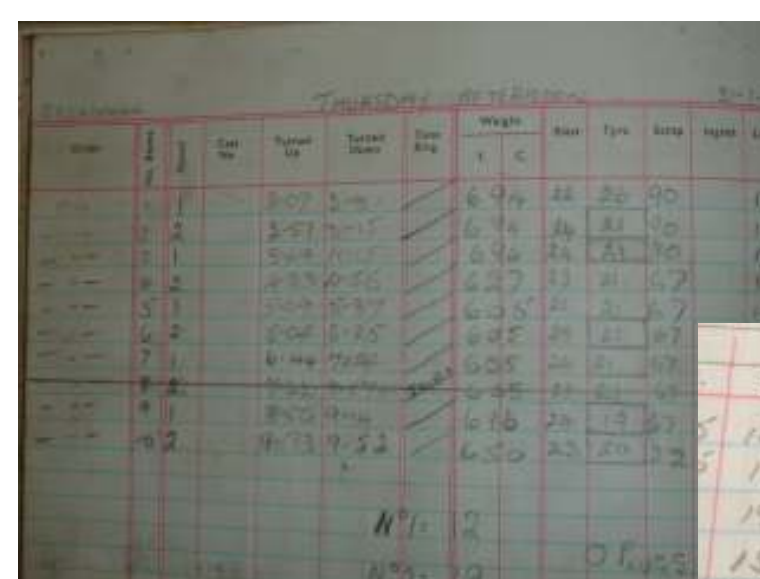
The steelworks



The steelworks in the 1940s
Ref. YBSC/22/1/124A

The steel made in Workington was known to be of a very high quality, and was exported all over the world. It was made using the Bessemer process, named after its inventor, Sir Henry Bessemer, which involved massive Bessemer converters turning iron into steel at very high temperatures.

Bessemer books give details of each shift, noting any problems during the shift that might account for any figures that might differ from expected. There does not seem to be any further information about what happened to the unfortunate man who fell off the roof!



Pages from Bessemer book.
Ref. YBSC/1/3/1/2

ANALYSIS									
STEEL					IRON				
Si.	S	P.	Mn.	CARB.	S	Si.	P.	Mn.	
10	007		1.10	1.11 X	0.05	2.26			
11	028		1.04						
19	031		1.08	3/5 GUM!					
15	029		1.07		0.00	0.16		89	
17	029		1.24						
	032		1.38						
	032		1.26						
	029		1.00						
18	038		1.24						
14	034		1.09						
14	036		1.00						



The Bessemer Converter, left
Ref. YBSC/22/2/1/184
Molten steel, above
Ref. YBSC/22/2/1/198



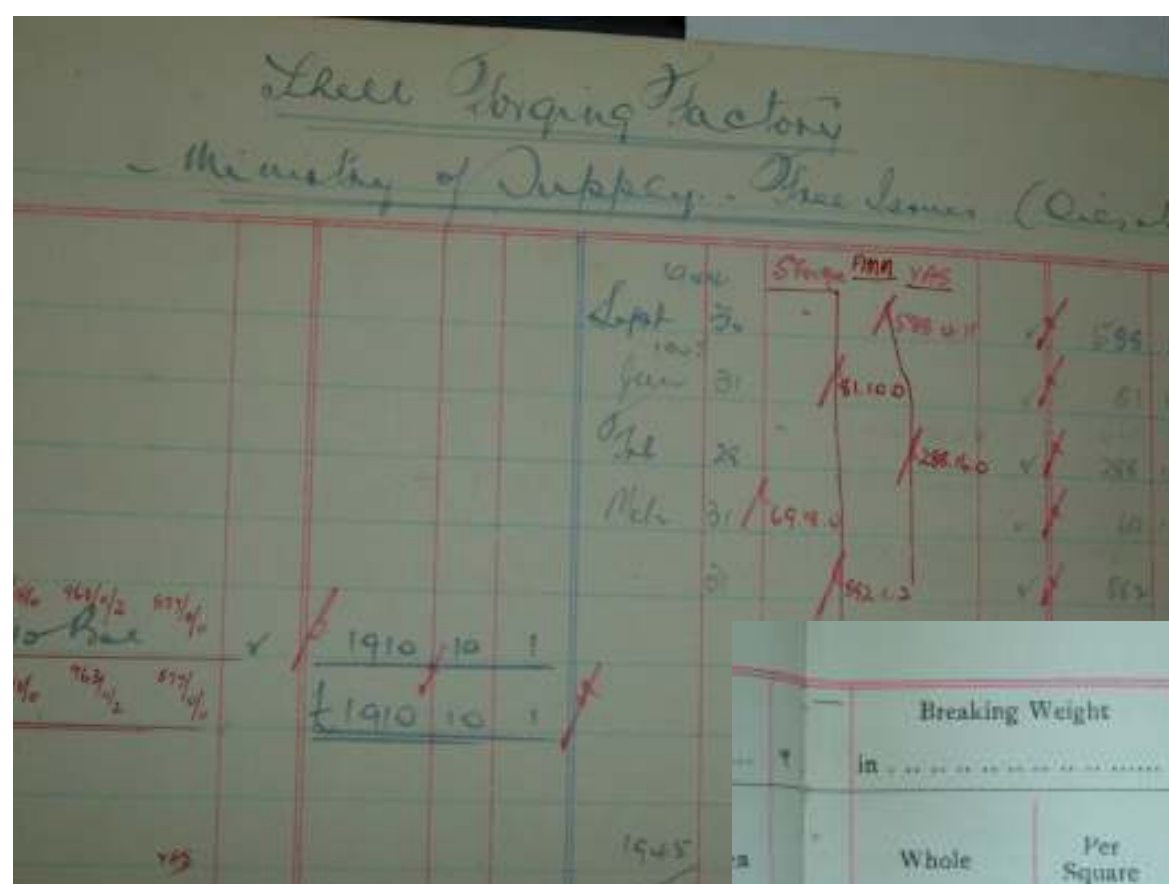
Ref. YBSC/22/1/126A

The Workington works made rails and steel sleepers. The men at work in the photo below are in the sleeper mill.

Ref. YBSC/22/1/126C

During the Second World War, the steelworks made shell casings. The records include the accounts for the shell forging factory, and also the test books for the shells, which

contain information like breaking weight.



Left, Shell Forging Factory Cash book.
Ref. YBSC/2/2/1/1
Below and below left: Tensile testing books for shells. Ref. YBSC/2/3/5/11

Other records contain financial comparisons for the Bessemer and Sleeper Mill and for the Blast Furnaces. These give details of the materials used and their costs.



Cost Comparison Book
Ref. YBSC/2/2/3



As well as all the different kinds of records

mentioned here, the collection includes a large number of photographs, many financial records, minutes of committees within the Corporation and files on expansion and new projects. There are also a large number of plans of the steelworks, and of the other land owned by the Corporation, in



One of the last rails to be rolled at Workington, August 2006
Ref. YBSC/22/2/2/4

addition to publicity material produced by the Corporation. All of these records are available to view at Cumbria Archive and Local Studies Centre, Whitehaven.



Some of the plans in the collection



Last blow of the Bessemer, July 1974
Ref. YBSC/22/2/2/4