

## **New Hawne Colliery**

New Hawne Colliery, situated between the towns of Cradley Heath and Halesowen, on a 48 acre site to the North and East of Hawne Lane, west of Hawne and stretching South to the main Stourbridge Road, was so called to distinguish itself from Old Hawne Colliery which was very close by. It started life with an indenture dated 11th Apr 1864, the parties to it were Richard Spooner of Brickfields in Worcester and Henry Marshall of Ward End, and eight directors of the New British Iron Company. The company was based at South Sea House in London. Spooner and Ward owned land in and around Hawne, and the indenture gave them the mineral rights. Grant of the mineral rights was for thirty years from 30 Jun 1863 and they had to sink at least one pair of pits or shafts within five years.

The coal and minerals were carried away in trucks on the local railway that spanned the River Stour past Timbertree Colliery into Congreaves Railway sidings where they were tipped into trucks to be carried away.

Along with coal and ironstone rights, the company was given the right to quarry clay and make bricks, tiles and quarries within the area.

The New British Iron Company on 23rd June 1873 entered into an agreement with Shelah Garratt, a Dudley coalmaster, who owned Hawne Bank Farm which was situated on the south side of Hawne Lane. The mineral rights which Shelah Garratt granted to the company rested in such deposits as might lie under the sloping fields of the farm: an area of 38 acres 2 roods and 37 perches. The price was £17,429 1s 3d.

On the plan attached to the grant, there is an undated pencil note which reads, "All mines worked out. No new lease granted". The inscription is repeated on the front of the deed and dated '6/10/09.'

In 1894 the British Iron Company fell into debt and part of its assets were sold to Shelah Garratt and Son, and Robert Fellows Ltd.

New British Iron Company found themselves being sued in Chancery, and that on Tuesday, 30th July 1895, a portion of the company's freeholds and copyholds were sold off by auction at the Dudley Arms hotel, the sale obviously being to satisfy the company's creditors.

Shelah Garratt was one of those creditors (the company had fallen behind with either its rents or its royalties, or both) he had died on 24th September 1893. The business continued as S. Garratt and Son.

The partnership between Shelah and Job was dissolved 26<sup>th</sup> March 1883 (1), Job continued the business under its original name of Shelah Garratt and Son; a plaque with the firm's name and the date '1895' is still set in the wall of an office which was rebuilt when Job Garratt, took over the colliery

Job Garratt had six sons himself, as well as four daughters; he was a typical nineteenth century Black Country patriarch-capitalist; who combined shrewed business sense with diligent public service. He was Mayor of Dudley in 1881-82, gave generously to Dudley Library, feasted his workmen on the occasion of Garratt family weddings, and saved Halesowen's market cross for the town by paying for its re-erection when it blew down in a gale. He had lived the life of a country gentleman in his house at Wassell Grove, near Clent, where he held open house and grounds to Sunday School and other parties. The house contained its own theatre where Garratt's son Shenstone, regularly produced plays for the entertainment of his family and their friends. When Job

Garratt died in 1909, he left estate valued at over £103,000. (2) His fortune was founded on the Garratt colliery enterprises at New and Old Hawne, Timber Tree, Park Head and Himley.

His enterprise at New Hawne seems to have flourished, Two other surviving deeds from 1897 and 1900, are grants, or renewals of grants, made to Job Garratt by his sons, who were presumably acting as their grandfathers heirs, and who were grantors jointly with one James Robert Marchant of Middlesex, a barrister. (3)

The deeds echo the earlier ones closely, with a few minor alterations of detail. For example, the royalty on bricks had been increased to 2/- (Two shillings in old money) a thousand and disputes were now regulated by the Arbitration Act of 1889.

Life at the colliery during its closing years was not without excitement. On one occasion the stables were destroyed by fire, despite the combine efforts of both Halesowen and Stourbridge Fire Brigades who took over an hour to bring the blaze under control. The fire was believed to have been caused by wind, which blew flames from a fire close to the stables onto the building where they ignited the woodwork.

Then, during the 1921 Miner's Strike a thousand rioting miners overturned loaded coal trucks at the colliery. There was a mineral railway linking the pit with the goods yard at Corngreaves.

The colliery survived the 1921 strike but succumbed to the 1926 General strike during which the pumps were unmanned, the colliery workings flooded and it was considered uneconomical to drain them when the strike ended. New Hawne's two shafts were filled in, as was required by the covenants on the various leases.

*1. The London Gazette, May 11 1883*

*Notice is hereby given, that the Partnership heretofore subsisting between us the undersigned, Shelah Garratt and Job Garratt, trading under the style or firm of S. Garratt and Son, as Coal Masters and Coal Merchants, at Dudley, in the county of Worcestershire and in the city of Worcester respectively, has been, as from the 26<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1883, dissolved by mutual consent. All debts owing to or from the said late partnership firm up to and on that day are respectively received and paid by the said Job Garratt, by whom the said businesses will now be and are as from that time carried on upon his own behalf alone.*

*--Dated this 30<sup>th</sup> day April, 1883.*

*Shelah Garratt.*

*Job Garratt.*

*2. Today it would be valued at over £8,000,000. using the retail price index and £42,000,000. using average earnings index. So we can say he was a millionaire.*

*3. James Robert Marchant was Job Garratt's cousin, his mothers maiden name was Merchant and her brothers name was also Job. On the 1881 Census (extracted from the IGI) Job now has his name spelt as Marchant, he is listed as an Independent Minister, birth place Dudley, Worcestershire.*

*James Robert Marchant was also an author:-*

*Barrister At Law: An Essay On The Legal Position Of Counsel In England (1905).*

*Wild Birds Protection Acts, 1880-1896.*

*Commercial History. An Introductory Treatise For The Use Of Advanced Classes In Schools.*

*And co-author of:- Cassell's Latin dictionary: Latin-English and English-Latin*

*Extracted, edited, with additional notes, from a copy of the article in 'The Blackcountryman' summer 1971, Article supplied by Clem Phillips.*