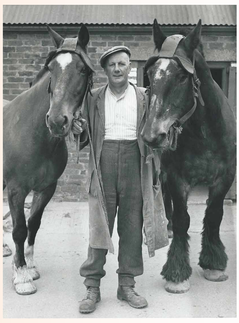
Miners Lives

The aerial ropeway linked the mine with the railway sidings at Holton le Moor

The Pit Ponies

Pit ponies were used at Nettleton Top to pull the trucks from the rock face to the sidings. The blacksmith shod the ponies and some of them were inclined to be a bit vicious. They each had their own name on the stable at Nettleton Top and after the pit closed the ponies were looked after and allowed to graze freely on the land.



Nettleton Top, Bill Portass, horseman with Monty and Darkie 1961

The Driver at Nettleton Mines

Miners made their own way to work if they lived nearby but the driver picked up workers from as far as Market Rasen and the prisoner of war camp at Ludford, where most of the men were Poles and Ukrainians.

He also used to take the apprentices to college at Scunthorpe for day release and evening courses. He collected pit props from Grimsby and did repairs on the aerial ropeway when required.

The Engineers

"As an apprentice I spent time working in the different workshops – the loco workshop, the machine shop and the plant workshop, where I maintained the excavators for the Nettleton Bottom open cast workings. In the blacksmith's workshop, Josef, a Hungarian, was a brilliant blacksmith but very volatile. You kept out of his way when he was angry!

As an apprentice electrician I used to repair and service the locos on Saturdays. We developed a new compressor house providing air for the picks underground."

Josef, the Hungarian blacksmith, second from left, with Mr Thomas, the mine manager, third from left

Carpenters workshop in 1965

The first compressor house and workshop for Nettleton Top Mine

Miners' Wages and the Mine Office

Miners were paid piecework – the more tubs you filled the better your wage-packet. They tried to fill about 12 – 15 one-ton trucks a day and that paid about £5 - £6 a week. That was good money.

After the war the Mines Office was opposite the stable for the pit ponies. The office staff had to tally up the number of trucks each miner had dug, to work out what each man should receive in his wage packet the following week. Each Friday the Mine Manager went to the bank in Caistor to draw out the cash for the wages.

There were three shifts: 6-2, 7-3 and 8-4pm. Lots of men liked the 6-2 because they could fit in a bit of farm work afterwards, especially during harvesting.

Miners wages 11 Mar 1966

Mine surveyor John Bassingthwaite

Nettleton Top iron ore trucks

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