

COALS AND RAILS :

the autobiography of

ANTHONY ERRINGTON

a Tynside colliery waggonway-wright

1776 - c.1825

Edited

by

P. E. H. Hair

5

Anthony Errington was born in 1778 and died, at the age of 69, in 1848. He wrote his autobiography between 1823 and about 1830, and it deals with his life up to about 1825, when he was 47 years of age. He was born and died at Welling-on-Tyne, and he spent his working life, at least during the period of his autobiography, within a few miles of his birthplace, among the collieries of the lower Tyne valley. His rank in society was that of a skilled tradesman, and his particular trade that of colliery waggon-and-waggonway-wright.

Waggonways and waggonwaymen

Coal was first mined along the Tyne in the Middle Ages, and by the end of that period large quantities were being exported by sea to London and other ports in the coal-less South East of England. During the sixteenth century, the mines on the Tyne (together with those on the Wear, the second riverain inlet to the coalfield) greatly increased their output, to meet an increased demand for coal, for domestic and industrial purposes, both in the South and locally. Coal, a bulky commodity, could be profitably transported in an age of poor roads only by water, and the mines of the Tyne were first dug at the river's edge. But by the end of the sixteenth century these mines were exhausted and newer workings were started, further from the river. It was to carry the coal from these inland mines to the river that the first waggonways were laid.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the double-railed waggonway was built entirely of wood. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, iron rails were introduced, first of cast iron, then in the 1790s of drawn iron. Meanwhile mines were being opened further and further back from the river. By the time Anthony Errington became a waggonway-wright, in 1792, some of the Tyne waggonways were ten miles long, and the total length of waggonways running to the river was well over one hundred miles. The further extension of the waggonways was limited only by the lack of economic traction power. The waggons were pulled by horses: only in a

few steep places was there any mechanical traction (a device applied the gravity power of the descending full waggons to pull up the empty ones).

The Tyne collieries employed waggonways not only on the surface but also underground. Their introduction into the workings went on steadily throughout the eighteenth century, and by the end of the century there were as many miles of way below ground as above. Since the underground ways had regularly to be lengthened or shortened as the working proceeded, and since they required more maintenance than the surface ways, colliery waggonway wrights spent much of their time underground.

A. E. was taught this trade by his father, Robert Errington. Born the son of a farmer in a Northumberland village about a dozen miles from the Tyneside colliery district, Robert followed his family when they moved South to a farm in the midst of the Wearside collieries. Around 1750, the father retired from the farm, and young Robert then went - as his son Anthony relates - 'to the woods to work with Axe and Saw'. Having learnt the art of woodworking from his apprenticeship among the trees, Robert next turned to the more specialised trade of making waggons and waggonway. He began as a waggon-and-waggonway-wright around 1755, and continued to make a living by this trade for 45 years, retiring in 1799 at the age of 67. In the same year that Robert Errington retired, his youngest son Anthony completed his apprenticeship to the same trade. Anthony worked as a waggonway-wright from 1799 at least until the early 1820s, and he speaks in his autobiography of a son, Anthony Fenwick, who in 1818 was apprenticed to the trade of his father and grandfather. Thus for not less than 65 years there were Erringtons working as waggon^{-and-}waggonway-wrights in the collieries of the North East.

The years in which the Erringtons were at work were momentous years for the North East coalfield and hence, ultimately, for industrial Britain. These years saw a rapid increase in the demand for coal, which resulted in the multiplication of collieries and the intensification of coalworking: while the technical difficulties encountered - the greater distance from

the river of the new collieries, the more persistent presence of water and gas in the deeper seams - and the pressure of vigorous economic competition led to the introduction of a number of improvements in the techniques of coal production.

Little could be done to alter the process of coal-getting at the face, but the arrangements for the transport of the coal, from the face to the shaft, up the shaft, and from the shaft to the ships, were greatly modified and improved. After 1750, the use of waggonways underground, with horses or ponies to pull the waggons, became more general. In the 1770s, cast iron rails, and in the 1790s, drawn iron rails, replaced the earlier wooden ones. From the 1780s onwards, Watt's rotary steam engine replaced the horse-gin or water-wheel employed previously to wind coal up the shaft. By 1800, inclined-plane haulage systems using gravity power were being incorporated in the waggonways wherever practicable, even underground. Finally, between 1812 and 1815, experiments with steam traction were conducted on the surface waggonways of four Tyne collieries, as follows: (1) at Cocksledge Colliery in 1812 by the owners, the Brandlings, using a locomotive built by John Blenkinsop, the viewer of the colliery on the Brandlings' Yorkshire estate at Middleton, near Leeds; (2) at Wylam Colliery in 1813 by William Hedley, the viewer; (3) at Heaton Colliery, also in 1813, by William Chapman, a local civil and mechanical engineer and inventor; (4) at Killingworth Colliery, in 1814, by the enginewright, George Stephenson. By 1823, the year in which A. E. began to write his autobiography, many of the Tyne waggonways were carrying steam locomotives; and while the autobiography was being written, the first public railways in Britain were opened.

The locomotive builders Blenkinsop, Hedley and Stephenson, and the waggonway-wright Anthony Errington, were all born within a few years of each other, all at places within ten miles of Newcastle. Blenkinsop, before he was sent by the Brandlings to manage their Yorkshire colliery, was taught his trade by his cousin, Thomas Barnes, the viewer of Felling

Colliery, and hence may have been personally known to A. E., who also worked at Felling under Farnes. Hedley built his locomotive at a colliery only twelve miles from the one in which in that year A. E. was working: Stephenson at Killingworth was only four miles away, Chapman at Heaton only three miles. The waggonways on which these early locomotives were tested were exactly the same as those built by A. E.. So directly is the modern railway descended from the Tyne waggonway that the width between the flanges of the rolling stock today is identical with that between the flanges of the waggons made by Robert Errington in the 1750s. Waggonway-wrights and colliery engineers thus together brought the Railway Age into being; and the Erringtons and their colleagues might be considered as the first railwaymen.

Underground dangers

Colliery waggonway-wrights spent much of their time underground, and thus shared with the other colliery underground workers the vicissitudes of contemporary working life below the surface. Much of A. E.'s autobiography is concerned with his adventures among the perils below.

His lifetime coincided with a dramatic period in the history of the struggle of the Tyne colliers with the natural forces of their underground world. In the later eighteenth century, thanks largely to the efficacy of the Newcomen steam pump, the colliers were able to begin operations in deeper and wetter seams. But though they had conquered water, they found themselves menaced by another product of the depths, a gas which escaped from the coal, and exploded, when it came in contact with the flame of the candle, by the light of which the collier worked. Moreover, the explosion of this first gas generated a second gas which choked all human beings in its path as it was drawn silently through the airways of the mine.

Fire-damp (as the first gas, methane, was called locally) had been met in small quantities in the upper seams, and explosions with loss of life had occurred ever since coal was first worked in the Tyne basin. But these

were infrequent and petty catastrophes compared with the major disasters which occurred in colliery after colliery in the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century. Hundreds of men died in these years as the result of explosions, and adding the deaths from other forms of violence - inundations, shaft-accidents, roof-falls, etc - probably about one in ten of the colliers on the Tyne was killed each decade.

A. E. tells of many narrow escapes from death underground, but refers only casually to what he might well have considered - in his own language - one of the most fortunate interventions of Providence on his behalf. In 1811 he suddenly decided to leave Felling Colliery, although he had worked there for nearly twenty years, and his father had worked there for thirty years before that. On the 25th of May, 1812, gas in Felling Colliery took fire and the mine exploded. Both shifts of men were below, 128 men in all, and 92 were killed. According to A. E., an old man once prophesied to him that disaster would strike Felling, but since, by his own dating of the episode, the prophecy was made about fifteen years before the disaster, it was not this which induced him to leave ~~Felling~~ the colliery.

The Felling explosion had important consequences. Deeply disturbed by the distress caused, the vicar of the parish, the Reverend John Hodgson, published a pamphlet describing the disaster and calling for measures to prevent further such explosions. Shortly afterwards, a Society for Preventing Accidents in Coal-Mines was formed, whose leading members included Hodgson, and John Buddle, the most distinguished mining engineer of the day. Buddle was then in charge of Percy Main colliery, to which A. E. had recently moved, and the autobiography tells how Buddle formed a branch of the new society at Percy Main. Buddle also wrote a pamphlet for the society on the ventilation of mines. The society achieved its greatest success when it approached Sir Humphrey Davy, the great chemist, in the hope that he would discover a chemical method of neutralising mine gases. Instead, Davy used gauze to produce, in 1815, the first practical mining

safety-lamp.

The early safety-lamps were unpopular with the colliers because, though they were safe to employ where there was gas, they gave a wretchedly poor light. They were therefore used only where the risks of explosion were greatest: inevitably, they were sometimes used too sparingly, with the results that explosions still occurred. Nevertheless, from the time that the safety-lamp was introduced, the mortality rate from explosions declined steadily. A. F.'s only reference to the safety-lamp is when he was exploring Tynemouth Castle in 1818. He took a safety-lamp to a shop to be lit, and the shopkeeper justly described it as an 'invincible lamp'.

Economic discontent

These were stirring years for the colliers of the Tyne, and not only because of the struggle for underground safety. On the surface, the colliers also had their struggles, as they engaged in spasmodic movements of economic discontent. A pamphlet of 1792 called the coalminers a 'very turbulent set of men', and this was a reputation they had earned because of their many strikes and acts of disorder throughout the eighteenth century. The legend that before the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1824, the working class of Britain was cowed and submissive to its masters dies hard; and little has yet been written about the movements of economic discontent among the Tyne coalminers during the period of Anthony Errington's autobiography.

The year before Robert Errington settled as a waggonway-wright at Felling, all the colliers on the Tyne and Wear came out on strike. There was probably another general strike in 1792, the year ~~Anthony Errington~~ A. E. became a waggonway wright, but if there was, the local newspapers suppressed the story. The French Wars began, and many colliers joined the Army and Navy. By 1800, there was an acute shortage of labour in the coalfield, and the colliers seized the opportunity to exert pressure on their masters for higher wages. At this period, the colliers were engaged on an annual contract which was renewed on the same date throughout the coalfield. They therefore formed a grand secret combination, and at hiring time refused to be engaged

at any colliery unless the owner paid higher wages and a substantial hiring tip. So successful was this combination at hiring time in each of the years 1800 to 1804 that the hiring tip, which had been about half a guinea in the 1790s, rose in 1804 to from 12 to 20 guineas, the last sum being almost half the amount of a collier's annual earnings. However, in 1805 the coalowners in turn combined, refused to meet the demands of the colliers, and after a short stoppage, won the day. The colliers' combination did not come to life again till 1810, when there was once more a general strike in the coalfield. Between 1800 and 1815, the colliers enjoyed a measure of prosperity and displayed the militancy of economic confidence. But the end of the War called a pause in the expansion of British industry, and the return of demobilised soldiers and sailors to the collieries gave the coalowners a surplus of labour. In these changed circumstances, the colliers were unable to express their economic discontent as actively. Little is heard about combinations, and there was no further general strike until 1825.

It is difficult to assess precisely the social significance of the economic unrest of this period. Some writers imply that the workers suffered hourly from a sense of grievance, and that the dominating interest in their lives was the economic struggle. But there were many movements among the working classes which seem to have been at least as popular as the movements for economic or political advancement. And a large proportion of the workers had probably only the most spasmodic connections with any movement.

In his autobiography, Anthony Errington makes not a single reference to the strikes and combinations of the colliers - nor does he mention the strikes of other local workmen, such as the keelmen (who were, if anything, more strike-prone than the colliers). This underlines the fact that, although he shared the perils of the colliers underground, in terms of social status A. E. was a skilled tradesman and not a collier. Hence, it would be misleading to consider his autobiography as that of a typical collier.

The only economic unrest he mentions is his own when he thinks he is being underpaid, and he puts this right by moving to another colliery where he is better appreciated. As a waggonway wright, he appears to have had no difficulty in finding jobs even after the war. And at the collieries, he had more contact than the average worker with the managerial staff - deputies, overmen, viewers, agents - and even with the coalowners.

A waggonway wright was not engaged with the colliers at an annual hiring, but was taken on when work was pending. He worked normally on a piece-contract, undertaking to build a particular length of way or a particular number of waggons, and to maintain them for a given period. He was paid fortnightly like the colliers, but his net earnings were subject to a cost-bonus system, whereby part of the cost of the materials in the waggons or way he was building came out of his own pocket, in return for which he earned a bonus as long as he maintained them. The average earnings of a waggonwright appear to have been only a little better than those of a collier. Anthony Errington mentions receiving around £1 a week. Colliers' wages averaged, in the first decade of the century between £1 and £1. 5. 0, and in the second decade between 15s. and £1. It was the regularity of employment and the fact that at his work he was largely his own master, rather than the economic advantage, which gave the waggonway wright a higher social status than the ordinary collier.

Recreations

Tyneside workers had many leisure-time activities, apart from organising trade unions and strikes. Politics was not one of them, and neither in the 1790s nor after 1815 did the propaganda of the democratic reformers make much impression in the Tyne valley. A national movement which was much more successful there was that of Methodist religious enthusiasm. Wesley himself had often preached in the colliery villages around Newcastle, and during the French Wars, the influence of Methodism was considerably strengthened. Soon there was a Methodist chapel in every village, and the meetings in these were attended regularly by thousands of workers. How Methodism affected Anthony Errington will be described later.

But most of the workers found other ways of spending their leisure time. The alehouse occupied a fair amount of that time. The temperance movement had not yet begun and the practice of drinking liquor at every

point of social intercourse was still respectable. A great many of A.E.'s adventures begin or end in the alehouse.

Walking (sometimes from alehouse to alehouse) and outdoor sports were other favourite activities. Fortunately the Tyneside worker did not have to travel far to find green fields and fresh air. This can be best shown by a description of the lower Tyne valley in A. E.'s day.

Tyneside around 1800

Then as now, the centre of population on the lower Tyne was Newcastle, ten miles from the mouth of the river. A commercial and residential town, it stood at the North end of the only bridge across the river. With Gateshead, its small sister-town at the other end of the bridge, it accounted in 1800 for a population of about 40,000. Newcastle had already expanded beyond its medieval city walls and had taken in several small mining and agricultural villages. Gateshead was to expand in the same way in A. E.'s lifetime.

Down-river from Newcastle and Gateshead, another 40,000 persons lived in riparian towns, villages and hamlets. Half lived in the fishing and general ports of North and South Shields, near the river's mouth, the rest in a score or more of small settlements, most of which owed their existence to nearby collieries. On the South bank, between South Shields and Gateshead, the main settlements were Jarrow, Hebburn, Heworth and Felling; on the North bank, between North Shields and Newcastle, the main settlements were Percy Main, Howden, Willington Quay, Wallsend, Walker and Pyker.

Coal was the principal industry of the whole district. The river was generally full of vessels - coal ships lying off, and the little boats, or keels, which brought the coal from the terminus of the waggonways to the ships. Shipbuilding and repairing establishments and ropeworks along the river; and the iron and chain manufactory at Gateshead all served the coal trade. As yet there were few other industries on Tyneside.

In the villages and hamlets nearest the river lived sailors, keelmen and the workmen in the ancillary industries; in villages and hamlets further back and near the mines, lived the colliers. Most of the colliery settlements contained only two or three streets of houses: some of them had

been founded within A. E.'s lifetime. Between these settlements and behind them, the country was bare. North of the Tyne stretched large expanses of moor, South the land rose quickly to fell; both moor and fell were as yet little cultivated.

Anthony Errington's homes

A. E. was born at Felling, a village, or more correctly, a group of hamlets to the East of Gateshead. Felling Shore, Low Felling and High Felling occupied the positions suggested by their names on the slope of the fell rising from the river. They were too small to have much social life of their own, and the Felling man who sought a night's conviviality, or the Felling woman who wished to restock the larder, generally tramped a long mile into Gateshead or another mile across the bridge into Newcastle. The hamlets of Felling had developed mainly since the opening of Felling colliery in 1777. Like many other settlements which had appeared since the ecclesiastical partitioning of England in the early Middle Ages, they were not part of the parish with which their social ties were closest, i.e. Gateshead. Instead they formed part of the parish of Jarrow, a town four miles down river, which had once been a monastic settlement and the home of the Venerable Bede, but by 1800 was only a small mining village. Jarrow parish being so large, it was split into two; and Felling village was in a chapelry which took its name, Heworth, from the village next to Felling in which the chapel was actually situated. Thus, Felling was in the Chapelry of Heworth, in the Parish of Jarrow.

The registers of the chapel of Heworth contain the records of the marriage of A. E.'s parents, of the births of some of their children including Anthony, of Anthony's first marriage and of the birth of one of his children. A. E. was not a member of the Established Church: he was a Roman Catholic and a loyal son of his church, and he therefore probably never attended Heworth chapel except when he was married there. But he went to school at Heworth, and one of his adventures as a school boy nearly led to his being buried alive in Heworth churchyard. The countryside around Felling and Heworth was a paradise for schoolboys - above the villages were bare fells; between the villages were fields and woods, with occasional pits and waggonways; below the villages were bustling quaysides and the busy river.

At the age of 13 A. E. began work in Felling colliery, and after being bound apprentice to his father, worked there for eighteen years. He would probably have remained there even longer, as his father had done, if his home had not been broken up by the death of his wife. Felling colliery at that time was a mine of no great distinction. Owned by a prosperous local family of the landowning squirearchy, the Prandlings (after whom it was sometimes known as 'Prandlings' Main' colliery), its several pits were then working the High Main seam. Not until 1810 were sinkings made to the deeper Low Main seam, and A. E. left the colliery shortly afterwards. The transference of activities to the new seam unfortunately brought the colliery a certain notoriety, first because of the explosion of 1812, and secondly, because the abandonment of pumping in the High Main led within a few years to the drowning out of several collieries still working that seam lower down the coal basin.

From Felling, A. E. moved in 1811 to Percy Main colliery, a few miles across and down the river. While Felling was in the County Palatine of Durham, Percy Main was in the County of Northumberland: the Dukes of Northumberland, the Percys, owned the land and gave their name to the colliery sunk there in 1799. Percy Main, both the colliery and the village which grew up round the colliery, were only a dozen years old when A. E. arrived. This infant settlement must have had little in it to occupy a young man, and A. E. probably spent most of his leisure time either in nearby North Shields, or back in Felling - boatmen carried passengers across the river - where his father still lived and where presumably his own young children were being brought up. In his loneliness Anthony came very near to acquiring a second wife while at Percy Main. The colliery worked the High Main coal in two pits, the Percy opened in 1799, and the Howdon opened in 1804. The viewer (manager) of the colliery was John Buddle of Wallsend, who was fast rising to be the most eminent viewer in the coalfield.

In 1814, A. E. left Percy Main and went to Fawdon colliery, three miles North West of Newcastle. Fawdon was an even newer colliery than Percy Main, having only been opened in 1810, and the village contained only a few dozen houses. The workmen there were in the habit of walking

into Newcastle, across the intervening Town Moor; and on this moor, after a visit to a Newcastle alehouse, A. E. saw two visions relating to the disastrous inundation of the nearby Heaton colliery.

He moved again in 1816 and resumed work under his former employers, the Prandlings. As well as their estate at Felling, this family owned land immediately North of Newcastle, at Gosforth, and they worked a colliery at Kenton, near Gosforth. To this they added, by purchase in 1817, the neighbouring colliery of Coxlodge, and in 1825 they opened a mine at Gosforth itself. Coxlodge colliery had been the scene of the experiment with the Plenkinsop locomotive in 1813. After that, the head of the Brandling family had become acquainted with George Stephenson and was Stephenson's prime backer in his claim to have invented the first successful safety lamp. Since Gosforth colliery was not opened when A. E. rejoined the Prandlings, all his work must have been done for Kenton and Coxlodge collieries, unless the waggonway to Gosforth was laid several years before the mine itself was sunk. Again he was living within walking distance of Newcastle.

In 1818, Anthony moved again, his fourth move in seven years. This time he moved further from the Tyne than he had ever been before. Backworth colliery, his new station, was four miles North of Percy Main, in part of the coalfield previously unworked, and was only opened in the year A. E. joined it. A group of partners owned the colliery, one of whom was the Mr. Taylor mentioned in the text, while another was John Puddle the mining engineer. The waggonway from Backworth to the Tyne was unusually long and in 1821 a stationary steam engine was introduced to haul the waggons on ropes.

But by then, A. E. had moved yet again, this time to Walker, a colliery sixty years old, near the Tyne and only one mile East of Newcastle. From Walker, Anthony could look across the Tyne and see on the South bank the hamlets of Felling where his industrial pilgrimage had begun. Did he eventually return to work at Felling? We do not know, for at this point his autobiography breaks off.

The reason for the autobiography

In 1823, Anthony Errington began to write his autobiography, an unusual exercise for a semi-literate man. What induced him to do this? The most likely explanation is that the autobiography was intended to demonstrate the respectability of his religious allegiance.

A. E. was a Roman Catholic. It is one of the several odd features of the autobiography that his religious persuasion is only once directly mentioned. Nothing in his terminology when speaking of the Christian religion or when repeating prayers indicates that he was other than a Protestant. Today such eirenicism from a Roman Catholic would seem strange, but the spirit and the circumstances of the Catholic church ^{were} very different in Anthony Errington's day. Though no longer actively persecuted in England, its few adherents found it wise to lie low and to assimilate their way of life to that of the Protestant majority in the country, to as great an extent as was theologically possible. Paucity of priests and chapels made it difficult for the laity to receive adequate instruction, and left mainly to their own devices, they were content to pass on the tradition of the Old Faith to their children, without emphasising publicly those aspects of it which were likely to aggravate their Protestant neighbours.

A. E.'s name appears in the fragmentary registers of the Roman Catholic chapel at Newcastle, the one nearest to his home at Felling. Four of his children, including a natural child, were baptised there. He further appears in the register several times as a godfather. (One of his adventures begins with his setting out on a Sunday morning to attend this chapel at Newcastle.)

The autobiography contains a very few casual references to the family faith. At one point A. E. and his father are referred to as 'papists', and at another point A. E. notes that he sought advice on the subject of ghosts from the 'Catholic preast at Newcastle'. Slight though these references are, in pointing to two aspects of his religious belief they provide a clue to much of A. E.'s mentality, and help to explain some of the more puzzling episodes in his life.

A. E. recounts how, as a child, he took part in scenes of dairy magic when he compelled butter to set. The words of the spell he used were from the Protestant terminology, but the gesture he admitted making on one occasion, and probably made on all, 'the sign of the Cross' - presumably crossing himself - was a piece of non-Protestant ritual. The Old Faith and the Old Magic were no doubt confused in the minds of the Protestant peasantry: strange gestures, wonder-working objects, mysterious sacraments continued to give the impression that all papists were in closer touch with the Supernatural world than were simple Protestants. Hence, when the butter refused to set, the Catholic Erringtons were sent for.

A. E. was a very superstitious man. The degree of superstition which appears in his autobiography was almost certainly not typical of the Tyneside workman of the period. Heavy drinking and the sudden disasters of the mine gave the colliers some excuse for seeing visions and listening to omens, yet evidence from other sources suggests that they were on the whole rather a stolid and unsuperstitious set of men. There were exceptions and we meet some of them in A. E.'s account. But A. E. suggests many times that he had been specially favoured and had been vouchsafed visions and omens denied to other men. And, to return to his religious faith, A. E. suggests in one very significant episode that Roman-Catholics are abnormally sensitive to the supernatural. The episode is that of the vision on the Town Moor. A. E. and two friends who are specifically stated to be Catholics, are walking in company with two other men who are arguing about points of Scripture, that is, they are Protestants. The vision appears to the three Catholics: the Protestants, blinded by their Bibliolatry, see nothing.

In A. E.'s day, the Roman Catholic faith earned its adherents little respect. In 1825, a Catholic Religious Defence Society was formed in Newcastle, "in order to stem the torrent of calumny, misrepresentation and abuse, which is so lavishly poured forth by certain bodies of men, styling themselves 'Religious Tract Societies', 'Continental Societies', 'Irish Evangelical Societies', 'Gospel Trust Societies', etc. etc. against the Catholics of the United Kingdom." The misrepresentation and abuse

complained of was nothing new: but the active complaint was. The 'Catholic Revival' was under way, and after the French Wars the Roman Catholics began to demand more public respect for their faith. The Newcastle Catholic Religious Defence Society aimed to publish and distribute gratuitously works 'defending our principles': and it is likely that A. E. had the same general object in mind when he began his autobiography, only two years before the Society was founded.

The most active Protestant sect on Tyneside in A. E.'s day was 'the Methodists', and it is not difficult to imagine how a loyal but rather simple-minded Catholic would fare when forced to work alongside those Protestant enthusiasts. One of the most popular doctrines of the Methodists of this period was that concerning Divine Providence. The Methodist Magazine filled many of its pages with anecdotes on the lines - two men riding a horse, one a Methodist, one a blasphemer; the horse stumbles, the Methodist saved, the blasphemer killed; thus once again 'the Providence of God illustrated'. The crudity of the anecdotes and the belief could hardly be exaggerated: but obviously they were very well received by the Methodist rank and file. The phrase 'Providence of God illustrated' was for a time so much heard that one non-Methodist in Newcastle was sufficiently galled to issue a handbill which read: 'Stage Coach Overturned. Four Methodist Preachers Travelling to a Conference killed. Is this the Providence of God illustrated?'

Anthony Errington's autobiography would in part pass for that of a Methodist of his day: his first paragraph speaks of 'the hand of Divine Providence being over me in all my actions', and later he wrote 'I was possessed with a lively Faith in the Providence of God over Mee, and I cared not what the world said on me.' This explains and justifies the apparently self-congratulatory nature of many of the anecdotes: A. E. in recording his successful, (sometimes astonishingly, or even unbelievably, successful) feats in life is not praising himself but thanking Divine Providence. And thus A. E. is out-Methodisting the Methodists: he is determined to show them, and the world, that Divine Providence is extended to the much-abused Roman Catholics, indeed that Roman Catholics may sometimes receive more than an equal share of the divine attention.

A.E.'s attempts to win respect for his own faith would not have impressed many at the time, if it had been known. But the modern reader of A. E.'s autobiography may well be impressed by his guileless loyalty to Roman Catholicism and his tolerance and kindness to those of other persuasions. There is a simple appeal in the brief episode of 'George Hawkes drunk ... That evening they had got two much and cowped the cart at Robers Corner ... I had to set to and get them gathered out of the gutter ... Shortly after, I met them again in Gateshead. He had just denied my Fauther of carrying His Market Poak in his cart to Felling. I told him one good turn deserved another. Put they said it was not their wish to do any good turn to a papist ... 3 weeks after, I found them in the same ditch at Robers Corner. I stood and looked. They was no worse but boath drunk and the Limer of the cart broke. I gethered them up for the second time. She said, "I thought a papist would not have done so to a protestint!" I left them to go home.'

Death

Although the autobiography breaks off around 1825, Anthony Errington lived until 1848. His death-certificate tells us little more about him. He was a waggonwright, aged 69, living at High Felling: the cause of death was 'Disease of lungs 5 months Certified': the informant was one Mary Ann Errington, who was present at the death. 'Taking this with me, that their is a just God to judge me in life and after death, that I may meet the Just in that Plesed manshon of Pliss wheare the Just rain for all Eternity with their God through the redemshon of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is my hope of reward.'...

The manuscript

Anthony Errington's manuscript autobiography is in the Local Collection of Gateshead Public Library, where it is listed as O/Errington 61/2. It apparently reached the library among the unsorted remains of a local antiouarian earlier this century. It consists of 25 loose sheets, pagineted in pencil (omitting blanks) as 40 pp.. When the manuscript was first seen (in 1950), the sheets were completely out of order. The writing scrawls, but is legible, and there seems no reason to doubt that this manuscript is A. E.'s original in his own hand.

Editing

The text has been edited in the following ways. (1) The anecdotes have been arranged as far as possible in chronological order. (2) Punctuation has been added : the original had none. Yet the manuscript text has a style of a kind, a rambling style which enables one to picture the author, ~~scribbling and scratching~~ putting down on paper, rather painfully and after much head-scratching, the memories which are drawn out mainly by loose association of ideas. Clause leads to clause, and the sentence-break is out of place. But though we could perhaps listen to and understand prose of this kind, it is almost unreadable in print. Full stops have therefore been inserted wherever they are essential to easy understanding, though the text has not otherwise been chopped up into fully grammatical sentences. (3) The spelling of the original has been largely retained, because part of its oddity arises from the fact that A.E. tended to spell as he spoke, in the Tyneside dialect. To preserve this flavour of the original, the spelling has only been altered where A.E.'s choice of letters would be utterly mystifying to the modern reader. The initial difficulty in reading should be greatly reduced after a few paragraphs. (4) Dialect terms are indicated in the text by an asterisk, and explained at the foot of the page. (5) Local and technical references are numbered in the text and discussed in footnotes.

[1] [THE REASON OF MY WRITTING] The reason of my wrighting the particulars of my life and Transactions are to inform my famely and the world. I write this from pure motives of Justice and trowth, and that whether with or against myself. I shall explain every Transaction as Breat as posable. Taking this with me, that their is a just God to judge me in life and after death, that I may meet the Just in that Blesed manshon of Bliss wheare the Just rain for all Eternity with their God through the redempshion of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is my hope of reward, the hand of Divine Providence being Over me in all my actions, so that I have often repeated that saying of Pacient Joe that all things woork together for good - an Old Collier of Benton moore, the Poat.⁽¹⁾

[2] I shall devid my life to the Diferent stages, that of my Birth and famely, that of youth at school, that of Prentishop, that of Jurniman, that of Marringee, that of Widdower, that of Marrige.⁽²⁾

[3] [MY FATHER AND MY MOTHER] My father, Robt Errington was Sun of William Errington of Nither Witten, Northumberland, Farmer at the Langlee, who removed from their to Kiblesworth, near Lamsley, in Durham, where he farmed.⁽³⁾ My grand farther, being aged, they declined farming

(1) that saying - Romans 8.28.

Benton Moor - on the West side of Newcastle.

patient Joe (ASB?) ~~with the collier poet, is not known to history.~~

(2) A.E. was married twice. The autobiography does not adhere strictly to the scheme here mentioned.

(3) Nether Witten - a farming village 20 miles N.N.W. of Newcastle. The register of the parish church shows that Robert, son of William Errington, was born there in 1752.

Langlee, or Longlee - a farm near Nether Witten village.

Kiblesworth and Lamesley - neighbouring villages, 5 miles S. of Newcastle.

instead my farther going to the woods to work with the Axe and Saw, which he Continued at for some years, and then hired himself to make waggons and waggon way, which business he continued for 45 years. Then he took a small farm at Felling and declined business as a waggon wright, and lived their to the age of 86. (4)

[4] My mother was born at Mattin moore houses and when very young, her farther being dead and the step mother married again, she had to make plase at 11 years of age, and was at sarvise at Powders Close, near Hebron Quay, on the South side of the Rivir Tyne. (5) When my farther and her married, they set up the first house at High Felling, in the Chepelry of Hueth in the Parish of Jarrow, County of Durham. (6) And their dwelled and Brought up 4 Suns and 5 Daughters. (7) My sister Isable, who Died of the Warter in the Brain at 11 years of age, was called after my mother, Isabella Errington (her maiden name Carr). She was a very very industrious dutiful mother amongst her family.

[5] And my farther was the very patron of Industry and honesty. he was Beloved by all, all ways ready to do good to any one. He loved to be in Sochiel Company, and all ways endeavored to restore peace when any frocthan^z took plase. He was the

z - frocthan i.e. friction.

(4) Robert Errington lived from 1732 to 1818: he worked as a waggon wright from 1754 to 1799.

Felling - a group of hamlets (High Felling, Low Felling, Felling Shore) situated on the E. side of Gateshead, and on the S. shore of the River Tyne nearly opposite Newcastle. During A.E.'s lifetime these hamlets became industrial suburbs of Gateshead. Robert Errington lived at Felling from at least 1766, and Felling is the scene of the greater part of his son's autobiography.

(5) Matten. - a farming village 15 miles S.W. of Newcastle
Hebran i.e. Hebburn Quay - a hamlet on the S. bank of the Tyne, 5 miles E. of Newcastle.

(6) Hueth i.e. Heworth - a village immediately to the N. of Felling
Jarrow - a mining village (but once a monastic settlement and famous for its connection with the Venerable Bede): Felling, 4 miles W. of Jarrow, was included in Jarrow parish, in the part of it that made up the chapelry of Heworth.

(7) According to the register of Heworth chapel, Robert Errington and Isabella Carr were married there in 1766. Being Roman Catholics, their children were not baptised at this chapel, but the births of four of them were registered there in 1772, 1774, 1776 and 1778. Unfortunately the register covering this period of the nearest Roman Catholic chapel (at Newcastle has been lost.

first that put two Convoys^{zz} upon the pit waggons, first that invented the Double switch, first that made the Self acting incline^{zz} of waggonway in the Ann pit of Felling, first that made the waggons for the Old Paul Colliery, near Gateshead, first that laid the waggonway in the rope walk, at South Shore, for Chepman's patent lay, in the year 1799.⁽⁸⁾ He rode the first waggon of coals from the Ann pit, Felling, to the Rivir Tine. (It was high main^{zz} coal. Felling Colliery was begun by Charles Brandling Esq 15 of October 1777, Robt Errington waggon and waggonway wright) He Rode the first waggon from the Venter Pit, Low Main seam, the first waggon from the Discovery pit, South of High Felling, and the first waggon from the John pit near the Sunderland road (and what took plase that day I shall menshon hear after).⁽⁹⁾

[6] He had his Collier Bone Broke in the Ann pit by a waggon running a main.^{zz} Six different times he had the ribes broke on the left Side by accidence. He was very healthy to the age of 76 and during the last 10 years of his life was effected with the Rumatis at times.

zz convoy (technical term) = a hand-levered brake.

self-acting incline (tech.) = a sloping waggonway, so arranged that the descending full waggons draw up the empty ones.

High Main and Low Main (tech.) = coal seams in the Newcastle coalfield.

running amain (tech.) = breaking loose of waggons on an incline and their running down it out of control.

(8) A.E. claims that his father introduced improvements in the design of waggons and way. Chepman's patent lay - William Chapman, engineer and inventor, patented a rope-making machine in 1797, which was introduced at his brother's ropery at Gateshead Shore.

(9) Brandling - Robert Errington worked for the Brandling family, the owners of Felling colliery, for over 20 years, and was present at the opening ceremonies of four of the pits at this colliery. At this period, when a new Tyneside pit was opened it was usual to have a public celebration: as the first waggon of coal moved down the waggonway to the river, bands played, guns were fired, and the owners and workmen marched in triumphal procession to a field where the workmen were given a free meal and drink. Apparently it was the prerogative - or the duty - of the waggonway wright who had laid the new waggonway to ride on the first waggon of coal.

[7] He declined going down the pit to waggonway in the year 1799 after a singlar delivarence. Having been Employed on the Sunday night making some new road underground and setting the Crain in the Ann pit, near 10 Oclock on the Monday morning my farther and I, Anthony, got on the rope to come up the pit. My farther and one Samwell Brown was in the Loop of the rope. At the surface, I got safe off the rope and the Banksman took hold of my farther's hand. But as soon as their feet touched the ground, the hook that had brought them up Broke and dropped between thear feet. They both nealed down and returned god thanks for their delivarence. After this, I had to take Charge of the pit work.⁽¹⁾

[8] But to return. He wrought at waggons and waggon way all day, and 3 and 4 nights a week he was down the pit, Erning to get mony to bring up his famely. And he gave us all a Education so as to make us fit for business. And his Law was to us all to be honest, to be Charatable, to shun bad Company, and to keep the Comandments in a Christin life. And to love each other was the Charge from our parents. May the Blesing of Blesings be with them Boath now and for ever in the Name of Jesus Christ our Saviour our redeamer.

[9] [ANTHONY ERRINGTON BORN] The youngest sun of my farther's famel I Anthony Errington, was Born at Felling, in the Chaplry of Huarth in the parish of Jarrah, County of Durham.⁽¹¹⁾ At 2 years of age was Ejected with the Agoos.⁽¹²⁾ At 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years I was very ill, having

(10) crain - small hand cranes were employed underground at road junctions to lift baskets of coal on to waggons.

rope...hook...loop - workmen travelled up and down the pit shaft on the end of the winding rope, clinging to it, or standing or sitting in a loop, or on the hook by which the baskets of coal were raised and lowered. In this case there was apparently a loop below the hook.

take charge - Robert Errington was 67 when he retired: A.E. who had been apprenticed to the trade for seven years and now took his father's place, was 21.

(11) A.E.'s birth was registered in the Heworth Chapel register: he was born in 1778.

(12) Ejected with the agoos - injected against the ague (?).

ejected in the small pock and being blind 9 days. The only medicine was the white of an Egg and Brandy. The Scab Came off my face by enointing with goose grease and this brought it off without any pimples. Soon after this I had the hooping Cough and had medicine from a man riding upon a pyc bald gallaway who Brought me 2 poney worth of Sugar Candy and Ordered Cream and Cours Shiger 3 times a day which soon restored me to health.

[10] [FUT TO SKOOL] During my Childish days, my farther made me a small waggon with 4 wood wheals which I took delight to trale after me, which was ingrafting in me my Farthers Branch of Trade. In a later day, I was put to Skool to Mrs Thobren at High Felling. Haveing a small stopage in my speach which made me lisp, I oft got the Lethor Strap over me. One morning in the Spring, Matthew Bell and I played truant, and We went to his farther, where he was plewing^{zz} near Friars Goose wood, and we was burd nesting.⁽¹³⁾ We found a black bird with 4 Eggs and returning $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour after, had the mortification of Seeing a Wazell Eating the Eggs which Escaped from us into its hole. The morning following, mistress asked wheare wee had bean, and not giving a satisfactory answer, we was sentenced to be hugged. That was, a stronger boy took each arm over his shoulder and leaning forward, breeches being opened, we got the Cat of 9 tails over us severly. And wee durst go no more a bird nesting.

[11] I closely attendea school to read. . When I got lorned^{zz} to spell, one day Thos Nisbet and severell others was standen to say speling, and I sounded the word "stranger", which he had not done, and I got before him. At 12 Oclock, he struck me and made

zz gallaway (dialect) = horse, pony.

plewing (dialect pronunciation) = ploughing.

lorned (dial. pr.) = learned.

(13) Friars Goose - a stretch of land between Felling and Gates-head.

my nose bleed. On which a batel comenced, and I proved
Conckerror by thrusting him into a Boghole and made him all dirt.
On going to school again and mistress being informed by he, I was
sentenced to be hugged as before, mistress not hearing my report.
But upon a nibouring woman saying that he gave the first offense,
she repented and made a small pcesent to me - when it was too la

[12] [BURRIED ALIVE] Shortly after I was put to Wm Yollowly of Low
Huerth to figure in Arithmetick. Having bean one month at school
at dinnertime I went into the Church yard to read the grave stone
Thear being a new digged grave, 4 strong lads took me and put
me in the grave, One at my feet and One at my head, when the
Other said the buriell sarvice over me and at the same time
with the spade put some soil on me. The boys left me their.
I was then betwean 2 Coffins that was not fallen in and my finger
Ends could reach the grass. I set one foot upon the Coffin and
Climbing up, the Earth fell in and Jamed me in the Corner of the
grave. I cannot discribe what a smell I felt. I dryed my tears
and got some of the Earth by with my hands, and got one leg out
and by removeing a little more got out of the grave. On going
to skool I informed the Master who fell to them with the Cain,
and after he was tired he dismissed me to go home, having such a
bad smell about me, being on a Levell with the Dead. I informed
mother of the Case who instently stripped me and wshed me from
the Crown to feet. And I got on fresh close, the others being
burnt with fire for fear of the plage. On my return to school,
severell persons said to me - Thou has cheated the grave for
Once. (14) The fear of being burried alive made me start in my
sleep at night for a long time after, and for severell years
after I thought I felt the smell of the Dead Corps. The boys

(14) The dialect of County Durham still today employs 'thou'
and 'thee'.

left the school for fear of the Reverend Wm Glovers punishment
(I never now their names.)

[13] [AN EXPERIMENT] Some time after this, on returning home from school, at the Hollihill pit, there was a Cube and fire^m for the draft of air, and a fire plate which was read hot. Being prompted by 3 other boys, what did we do but each one put his Excrement upon the plate and left it frying like pancakes, as we called it. A short time after, I was affected with griping and was very ill for 2 days. The other 3 boys being affected in like manner being 2 days from school. I refer this to men of Physick to explain by what power it acts upon the body after separation.

[14] [SINGLER CASE OF BIRD NESTING] One day at dinner time I went to Huerth Buros, near the Sunderland road Bridge, and having found 4 young birds in the nest, was turning over all the stones to catch worms. 2 boys turned up a large stone and it being my turn to click the worms, to my great surprise there was 2 hagworms^{se} 16 inches length which I nearly touched but did not. Setting to with thin slate stones we cut them to inch pieces. Our time for school was past and going their, we had not gone 20 yards when we saw 2 Ducks coming out of the Burn and swallow them up. We went to school and I told the master, who instantly sent us to the house of Thos Roe. The house being locked up, we returned to school. The next day we went and informed the houskeeper who had missed the ducks. She with us went to see for them and near 10 O'clock we found them on the East Bank. They had been making home and had got from the place 150 yards and was lying 5 yards off each other in a putred state,

^m cube and fire (tech.) = a fire with a chimney above, arranged over a pit shaft to draw air from the workings below.
hagworm (dial.) = snake or blind worm.

(15) Wm. Glover - incumbent of the curacy of Jarrow 1775 - 1808.

Covered with flies and Creeping reptils. I went for the Clark of the Parish, John Gutree, and hee with many others came to see them. He digged two holes and Buried them. The house Keeper rewarded us for so much trouble, as they had kept them on the intent to use them when the Master had Company which might have poisind the whole.

[15] After this a short time, some Schoole felloys and I was slinging stones from our garters. I did not leave go in time and the stone came on my left eye and I thought it was out. I was blind of it for 6 weeks. But by weshing with the water of the Bothe Well every morning I got my sight back, which was soon as good as the other. (16)

[16] [A PISTLE FOUND] One morning as we were going to School, I found one Beer barrel Brass Cock, one Glass file Bottle, with some Gun Powder in it and one Brass tea spoon, which I took up with great fear thinking it was a pistle belonging to some rober as there had bean several people Robed on the way from Newcastle to Shields and Sunderland, the roads being infested at night by foot pads. Upon letting the Master see what I had found, he shoed the same to the Constable of the Parish, which returned the opinion that they had been used as the means of detaning a poor man 2 days before on his road home and robbing him of a few shillings.

[17] [A GOOD DOCTRINE] Returning from School one evening I was informed my Old School Mistress was very ill and that she wanted to see me. My Mother and I went to see her that same Evening. She got hold of my hand and said I was to be one of her pall bearers. None of us more than 12 years of age, wee bore the pall all the way from High Felling to the Hewerth Church near One Mile. She was lamented by all what

(16) Here the text adds a barely comprehensible note on the Bothe Well - "place Felling Dean, South side of the Sunderland road, under the west bank, is cut out of the rock, walled with huen stone 6 feet depth, stone steps to go down the well, was filled up being too cold to bath in, a padick put in in the month of June".
padick i.e. paddock (dial.) = frog.

knew her. She was a Native of Ireland and a good Doctress, scild in Letting Blood and Driving venom out of the feet or hand I saw one boy take hold of a hagworm with fore finger and thumb and instantly he felt pain. I perswaded him to go to the mistress but he did not go until the next day when his whole hand was swelled. The Mistress rubbed it and it bursted and a cup full of Poison came out. It was a few weeks before he got better.

[18] [LEARNING TO SWIM] in the time of Huerth school. On the Asencion day, the Hair and Aldermon of Newcastle upon tine goes from Newcastle to meet the tide at Timmouth Bar and proceeds fr thence in full Buty of Posesion of the River Tine up to Newbourn Mr Yallowly gave us play and I with many more went to see the barges, off the post towards Shields. Wee thought we would Bathe in the River at a plase Called the Yow Hole. After going in, in a sudden, I got off the ground and was taken in a whirl Edey of the tide. The boys seeing my danger and indivering by throwing stones to plosh me out, I at the same time kept myself up with my hands. But I was like to go down. One recolection struck me. I was either to do as the Paddicks^r did or go down. I instantly struck off and swam to shore. I was feared of bathing for some years after, yet had many a time a little swim practise.

[19] [SAVING A MAN AT A PIT] Wheare the Felling Colliery was won, stood two main engines, one of 9 feet stroke, 6 feet Cilendar, 16½ inches the woorking barrel. (18) The Botum pump split, and t Colliery stopped for one week. My father was assisting and I went with his Diner. 2 Pumps were being raised on 2 Crabs^r with 4 horses drawing. Sopworth Morley, Inginear

SE paddock (dial.) = frog.

crab (tech.) = capstan worked by horses, employed for drawing loads up a shaft.

(17) Tynemouth Bar and Newburn - at the mouth of the Tyne and about ten miles up river, respectively. An account of this traditional Ascension Day ceremony can be found in Brand's History of Newcastle, Newcastle.

(18) engines - these were pumping engines which drew water up a shaft out of the underground workings.

was upon the pump top guiding them up the pit and his brother Christopher Morley was driving the horses and had to mind the pull. When near 10 fathum⁵² of the top, the horses being tired, I, standing at one side, saw the North Crab, ^{rope} give way, One strand between the foot sheave and main Crab. Instantly I shouted, hold the Crab, the rope was breaking! Christopher Morley made a jump of great length to put the pail in and stood trembling every bone of him. Mr Thomas Barnes, the Viewer, being neare, came and inspected the rope. (19) He ordered Stopworth Morley to come off the pump top and came to me and lifted off my hat and clapped my head and said he would make a man of me. He asked who I was and my farthers name being given, he did not forget me, but at the first pay, paid me hauf a Crown for the word of Comand. Having acted so, I was always beloved by Stopworth Morley and many a pint of bear have been rewarded with by him.

[20] [SAVING IBEN ON THE WAGGONWAY] Near to this time, my farther sen me with a lettar to one Mathew Gray, Waggonwright, at Shirif Hill Colliery. (20) The waggonway lay near the Windmill Hills and went down the north side of the hills to the rivir tine, and at the Coal staithe Mathew Gray lived. I was about half way down the bank when thur was two Waggon coming after me amain. The latter ones Convoy had broken. I ran up the hillside and their being som old timber lying I throwed some pieces across the rails which threed the first waggon off the road. And runing across the bye way, the After One struck the Corner of the first and Intangled, when both of them stopped in the by way gutter, 10 yards off 2 Light waggons and 1 horse and men,

* 10 fathum i.e. 60 feet.

(19) The viewer was the manager and head engineer of a colliery. A.E. respectfully refers to all viewers as 'Mr.'. This man, Thomas Barnes, was the most famous viewer in the North East coalfield at the end of the eighteenth century. He worked for Brandlings for many years and died in 1801.

(20) Sheriff Hill colliery - 2 miles S. of Gateshead.

which was in great jeopardy of their lives. In this I also was rewarded, by Math. Gray and the 4 waggomen, of a Drink of ale and half a Crown.

[21] [TO BE A BLACKSMITH] I then being 13 years of Age, My farther would put me to trade. I went one week to the Cuntry to be a Blacksmith. On the friday My Master ordered me to take the Sho off an old greasy heeled horse, the smell of which made me throw my dinner. At 4 oclock the Farmer and Master being in the 3 horse shoes, I went and told the Master the horse was stripped and that I would never be Blacksmith if that was the work. He gave me a drink of ale and said the thing would go off. But I kept throing some time and at last my mother asked what was the cause. She thout^z it did not agree with me and I returned to School.

[22] [THE PIT FIRES] At night I had to go down the pit to repair waggons and waggonway and was frequently 2 or 3 nights in a week down. In the Venter pit one night, My farther and I was going in the way to the East, and at the 5th siding the switch wanted repairing. Ther was a trouble^z in the mine of a 2 feet rise to the East, and som drops of water fell from the top. My farther was moistening the Clay for the Candle when the gas that had gathered above the Levell of the Air took fire, and went from us to the East. (21) At this we stepped into a Sump^z up to the Nees in water. Further out than the trouble, the fire returned back to the dyke^z and went out, leven us in darkness 500 yards from the pit botum. (22) Wee then made our way to the shaft. There was no other person in the pit but One man, Wm Rodgers, keeping the furnis. He knew what had happoned us and was coming to See for our safety and returned with us.

z thout (dial.pr.) i.e. thought.

trouble (tech.) = a break in a coal seam.

sump (tech.) = a fairly shallow pit dug to drain away water.

dyke (tech.) = another name for the 'trouble'.

(21) clay - the miner's candle was fixed into a ball of clay, both when carried in the hand and when standing by itself.

(22) darkness - the explosion had blown out the candles which they dared not relight because of the gas in the air.

The fire had blown down 3 doors and some Bratish.* We got them put right and when the Overman, John Brown, Came down in the Morning, he would not believe us that any such thing Could take plase. We was not down the next night and he was the first that went in the same plase. It fired again and he was sore burned, face and hands and breast, and said, "Who would have thout that!"

[23] [TO BE A FARMER] After the pit firing, I did not like going down. So my Farther put me to be a farmer. I entered the week before Christmas to be a farmer near Hilton Castle, (23) County of Durham and was there one week. I did not like my place. I had to lead turnups upon a sledge with an old reasty horse up to the knees in snow. Being only upon trial, I gave farming in.

[24] [CONDEMNED TO WALK THE PLANK] About this time, I got acquainted with the boys of Felling Shore and one Wm Hall who worked at the Staithe invited me to go in a boat on the Seterday afternoon to Shields. I went and got some Mussells at the Lowlights and came into the harbor. Then the tide flowing, we made our way home. When we got to the East end of Jarrow Quay, a fight took place in the boat between Wm Hall and the boy the boat belonged to. There were 11 boys against us two and they drove us to the head of the boat. A board being plased over the side, wee two was Condemned to walk the plank. On jumping in, we was up to the shoulders in warter on the Edge of a large Sand Bank, and taken no notice of the Tide, we had to swim from the sand with our Close on to Jarrow Quay. The Boys in 2 ships lying by the quay seeing our treatment felt for us and gave us Beef and Biskets to eat. We filld our pockets to set us home, and reached home at 9 oclock the same Evening. And repented going a pleasuring.

* bratish i.e. brattice (tech.) = a hanging canvas door employed to divert an air current.

(23) Hilton Castle - 3 miles W. of Sunderland and about 10 miles from Felling.

(25) (APPRENTICE TO MY FATHER) At 14 years of age I then formed the resolution of being my farthers branch of calling; Waggon and Waggonway Wright. I started to clean the way for 8d per day,

and going with my farther and brother John, in a short time the fear of the pit left me. And with being in various parts of the mine, I understood the Carrying of the air^{xx} (yet never had anything to do with that part.) I was taut the pit language and got on with my trade very well.

[26] I had worked 2 months with my farther, working with the Axe and adge and augers, when a Ship Builder at Pelling Shore of the name of Doegg tried to perswade me that to be a Ship Wright was a botter trade.⁽²⁴⁾ But I at last named it to my farther and agreed to be bound Apprentice to him. No time was lost and Thomas Robison, Taylor on Gateshead Fell, Senior and Junier, was Bondman. A fue days after, the Ship Builder came to me and would wish to have me. I told him he might leave off for I was determined to be my farther's trade.

[27] [WORKING WITH THE ADGE] At this time, Mr Chepmans patent laid rope at the South Shore near Gateshead was to commence making. My farther had laid a wood railroad for the Waggon to travell upo with men turning handles upon the waggon, working tooth and pinio wheals. The first day, this laid 20 fathoms of Ships hauser rope. The whole length of the rail road not being finished, on the Setorday afternoon I went to Assist finishing the way and working with the Adge, right hand and left hand, I was taken notice of by Wm Chepman and Others, and for my Activity was presented with 3s 6d and to have my supper and Lowens.^{xx} The whole of the Machenicks on the Tine and Wear was present, and when one fathom was laid, there was much regoising and hesazes^{xx} and guns firing. There was 21 barrels of 8d Beer

xx carrying of the air (tech.) = the coursing of the air, the system whereby a single current of air was made to ventilate all the parts of a mine.

lowens (dial.) = allowances.

hesazes i.e. huzzahs.

(24) Doegg -- a shipbuilder of this name is listed in a directory of Newcastle and District published in 1841.

given to the Peepel, and all men rejoiced at the improvement. (25)

28

SINGULAR PROPHECY. During the five weeks my farther was at South Shore, I Anthony had to go down the Venter Pit to repair way and waggons, and no one with me. William Rodgers was furnesman and he came in to bear me company. Then for one half hour he took me off the railway into the waste and said to me, "Anthony, we will go to prayer." He prayed to God through our Lord Jesus Christ. I was silent. After prayer he gave me the Book to Kiss with a promise of secrecy untill that should be fulfilled which was shown to him in a Vishon, which he had to reveal to none but me. The Vishon was, that when the Barriers^z was worked off in the later part of the High Main seam that wee was in, the seam below would be to Sink to, and that then their would be Hevey Misfortunes, but that I would escape. And some of the Men would escape but some would fall here. I had to kiss the Book again and promise never to speak on that until it was fulfilled, which promise was kept. (26) We then returned to our duty and was always afterwards good friends.

z barriers (tech.) = barriers of coal left between sets of mine workings, to hold back water or gas.

(25) There is some confusion in the chronology at this point. The last episode appears to have occurred shortly after A.E. was apprenticed in 1792, but the work at Chapman's ropery was not undertaken till 1799 (according to paragraph 5 of the account).

(26) Writing in the 1820s, A.E. intended this prophesy, which was supposedly made at an uncertain date in the 1790s, to refer to a famous disaster at Felling in 1812, when 92 miners were killed in an explosion. The Low Main seam in which the explosion occurred was reached only in 1810.

THE POWER OF CHRIST REINETH.

One morning 6 oclock as my Farther and I was just gone out of the house, there was an aged woman came with 2 jugs, One for Old milk and the other for butter Milk. My Mother and 2 of my sisters had started at 4 Oclock in the Morning, but they was still Chirning. So the old woman set her jugs down and came away. She passed my Farther and I at work, and said, "Thee might churn away there... (2) I went home to breakfast and took my Farther's down to where we were working on the railway. Then at 9 Oclock my sister Jane came to my Farther, and said, "You have to set Brother Anthony home directly. Mother cannot get no butter." Farther said, "Go lad, and god be with thee."

I run home and was out of breath. Mother in tears called me into a small room and told Me what to do. By this time there was 10 or 12 women waiting for butter and milk. I went up to the Barrel chirn and took hold of the Handell and said, "Depart from mee, O all ye that work Inequety, and let the Poore^x of Our Lord Jesus Christ rein, in the name of the Fauther Sun and Holy Coast." And turning 3 times from me, first the second turn I felt the Butter on the Breaker and turning 3 times back, the Butter was flap flap flap on the breakers. When I stopped, Mother was in tears. I said, "Mother, heare is the butter." She came and said a short prayer, which was, "I thank thee, O god, thee hast Manifest thy Poor above the Enemy." The Nibouring women were astonished.

x poore (dial. pr.) = power.

(27) The old woman, piqued at not getting her butter milk, put a spell on the butter making.

The Event was Every Ones talk. (20)

31 THE SECOND CASE. One Month after this, Henry Stobbs, Farmer at Carhill, Came down to Felling Shore and asked my father for Me to go with him. It was near 10 O'clock, yet his Mother could not get Butter. My father said, "Go and god be with you". I got on to the horse behind him and was soon at Carhill. The kitchen there was full of women and men. I went to the churn which was much bigger than my Mother's and drew the Cork and Breathed into it. Then I put the Cork in and took hold of the Handle. All was silent. I said, "Depart from mee, O all ye that work Iniquity, and let the Poor of Our Lord Jesus Christ reign, in the name of the Father, of the Sun and of the holy goast". I gave the sign of the Cross and turning 3 times from me, I felt the butter, and turning 3 times back again, the Butter was flap flap flap. I gathered it a little more and the Mother took out the Butter. She offered me some money which could not be taken by me. The Men and Women said it was a miricle. I took from her hand a peace cake and a pat of the Butter milk, and returned home.

32 THIRD CASE. 6 weeks after this, I and Father was at Felling Shore working when a Man on a Horse Came for me to go to Squire

(28) Persuading butter to set was a common duty of English rural magicians. The following magic rhyme is said to be still used in some districts:

Come, butter, come,
Come, butter, come,
Peter stands at the gate
Waiting for a buttered cake
Come, butter, come.

(See the chapter 'The witch in the dairy', in G.L. Kittredge, Witchcraft in Old and New England, 1928.) The rhyme quoted illustrates the connection in the popular mind, in the post-Reformation period, between the Old Religion ('Peter at the Gate') and the Old Magic. As Bishop Corbett put it -

By which we note the Fairies
Were of the old Profession.

No doubt the handful of Roman Catholics in England were regarded with some awe by the Protestant peasantry because of their mysterious gestures (breast-crossing and genuflection) and wonder-working objects (holy water, relics and medals). And hence A.S. becomes a magician: as will appear in the next paragraph, all he does is to make an un-Protestant gesture, 'the sign of the Cross' over the butter barrel.

Russells of Low Heweth. The House Keeper there could not get Butter having Churned five hours. It was near 10 O'clock when I arrived at the kitchen. The Squire did not go to Newcastle at his usual time, 9 O'clock, but was present. I asked the woman, had she put any warm Water in it, and she said, "Near a gill!" I drew the cork and Breathed in to it. I then took hold of the Handel. All was silent. And I said, "Depart from Me, O all you that work Inequity and let the Poor of Our Lord Jesus Christ reign, in the Name of the Faather, Sun and Holy goast." I turned 3 times from me and the second time felt the butter, and turning 3 times back, it was heard by all present to flap - flap - flap on the Brickers. Squire Russell was standing 2 yards off with his hands toward heaven, and he said, "Good god, what a Miriclo!" "Come in hear!" (to the next room) the Squire said, and asked me, would I have a little Cheas and Bread and a drink of bear. Which I took in the Squire's Company He offered me some Silver but I told him I could not take money for maintaining the Poor of god. He shook hands with me and said, god be with me all my days.

33

BROTHERLY LOVE. My brother Geordie enlisted to the 15th. ridgment of foot. He had bean in 3 years when one Sunday morning I went to Sunderland Barricks to see him. When I got there all was in a bustle. On Setarday the route had comed for the regiment to march for Irland on the Monday morning. I made a preposition to the Sargan for my brother to come and stop all night at faathers house before he went away. I said I would carrie his gun home. The Sargant said, I must go ^{to} the Captan. Wee met the Captan and told him the request. He said we was all to go to the Cornell. The Captain related to the Cornell my request and the Cornell said, "I see, the schame is for your brother to Desert." I answered, "and he durst not be a deserter, he would be disowned by faather and Mother, Brothers and Sisters." On this he told the Captan to write a pass for one Night, and said

my Brother should rejoin the Regiment at Felling where they had to pass the house on their march. His baggage being tied all up, we started at One O'clock P.M. and reached Felling at three. The whole Family and the Village was uplifted at the respect given us. Fauther laid the plan for the Regiment Coming in the Morning at Nine O'clock with 1500 men and officers. My Brother was in the last Company, or Light Company, and when he stept to his place, Fauther and Brother John were on his right hand and I on the left. Fauther wished the Captan to halt, and all the officers was to come in to the Cotage to take a refreshment, Cheas and Bread for the Comerades and A Cold Table for the Officers. The Cornell said we was a fine Family and he put down in his Book a memorandum what my Fauther said, Geordie was to be a Vallient solder, to Concer or Die, Never to Desort. I requested the Captan to allow him one more night at home which he granted by leaving a Corprell with my brother. We rose at 5 O'clock next morning and Brickfast was on the table. I accompanied my Brother and the Corprell to Newcastle and set them to the west gate. They was plased in the Reargard. Brother said, "Hearc, there is a shilling, go with us!" The Sergent seccoded it by the glasses again which I paid for. But I would not take the shilling. I said, "Should my Brother die in battle, wright for me and I will take his gun." He wrote this down and bad fare weel. But the Sergent run and told the Captan of the gard who called, "Halt! A. Errington has volenteared to the Redgment!" On this there was 3 Cheers, which made the Horse Ridgment at the Barricks to Sound to Arms and come full gallop thinking the Ridgment had Mutinied. Which was

a mistake. (29)

34

It was 19 years before we could receive one letter from my Brother. 24 years after he left Newcastle he came home, not one wound on him, nor lash on his back. Out of 1500 men at Newcastle, there was 26 left alive of that number. They was a short time in Ireland, then went and took the Island of Barbados. (30) 300 died there of the sweating sickness. He had it for 6 weeks. He took 3 pints of rum the first week per day, after that had 6 pints per day, sweating day and night. Those that could not sweat it out died in a few days. He was discharged with a Serjent's pension of £25 19s 10^hd per year. Wherefore I was not called upon to serve. He lived 13 years after and was burried at South Shields.

35

A STOLEN GALLAWAY.³¹ There was two brothers, weavers by trade, who dwelled in Yorkshire. Now the colliery horse keeper William Turnbull was at Broughthill Fair and bought 6 gallaways and brought them back to Felling and down the pit. One of these was the Brothers' gallaway. They got intelligence of the gallaway being sold at the fair and that it was gan North. So the two sets off and got to the Black Bull in Gateshead, and the landlord directed them to William Turnbull. And they came to the Venter Pit. Turnbull requested me to go down the pit with

x gallaway (dial.) = horse, pony.

(29) It seems likely that in this episode, as in certain others, A.E. was having his leg pulled and did not realise it. It is clear that he was often regarded as a rather simple fellow. The story of the horse regiment sounding to arms because they thought the infantry had mutinied sounds like an invention to embellish the yarn, yet it is not out of keeping with the military history of the period. This episode probably occurred in 1794: in 1795 several foot regiments stationed in Newcastle mutinied and paraded in disorderly fashion through the streets, the men chanting their grievances to the townspeople.

(30) A.E. was wrong here. Barbados in the West Indies was already a British possession: but it was the military base for the successful expedition of 1794 against the French island of Martinique. The 15th regiment of foot sailed from Cork to Barbados and from thence to Martinique. (J.W. Fortescue, History of the British Army, vol. IV, pt. I, p.p. 351, 354.)

one of them while he went with the other. These men had not been down a pit before and was very feared. The Stables was 60 yards from the Pit Bottom, and the large furnaces they passed reminded them of Hell. One of them said of the gallaway, "If it does not neigh when it hears my tongue, it is not Ours." We went forward and on Entering the Stable passed 16 stalls. The gallaway was in the 17 stall. It nield directly it heard him and when the brother approached it Licked him with its tongue. He got his arms around its neck and they both shed tears of Joy, and said, How in the world would they get it out of the pit? I and one of the brothers asended and put the horse not down, and got the gallaway up safe to the surface. The brothers rewarded us with Cheese and Bread and ale and they returned to their home with the Gallaway.

36

THE TAYLOR'S GOOSE. I, Anthony, had to go to Newcastle upon Tine on errend for my Farther. When I got to the North End of the Bridge, Thos. Robison, Senior, informed me that there was a Wager of 20 guinies that a strong man, a taylor, had to throw a taylor's goose from the half moon battery over the houses and shops to the Bridge End. (31) Leave was given by the Mayor of Newcastle, and Constables were sent to stop the streets. On word being given, the Man flung the goose away. But a man jusceled him as he threw it and the goose fell in the north side of the ridge of a house. Then said Thos Robison, I should go for it and he would be Bond for my honesty. (32) On this, I went with a Shop Boy to the garret of the house. 2 Slates was broken near the chimney and Wee had several Boxes to move before we could find the goose. On going to the door,

(31) Bridge End - Newcastle Bridge was then the only bridge across the lower Tyne. Half Moon Battery was a locality near the bridge, formerly the site of a gun emplacement.

(32) Thos Robison - probably the same man who was bondman for A.E.'s apprenticeship.

the Bridge and Street was full of men. The cry was, "Here she is! Here she is!" Being taken to the Battery, the goose was once more flung by the same man. The road was cleared and street stopped. Then the call was, "Let flee!", when she cleared the ridge, and easing off the house by three feet, let on the pavement and flew 5 yards along. Thus the second flee, the taylor won the 20 guineas. I had to go with Mr Robison to the 3 bulls heads to have a drink of ale. And he said I was a Lucky Lad, and highly respected by the taylor.

37

SINGULAR MEETING. One Sunday Morning, I was going to Church in Newcastle and going along the Sandhill, I saw a man standing on the flags,* the Very Picture of my self, being in One uniform of dress, Complexion, and hair alike. (33) He looked and I looked, and he said, "I think I have found my Shaddow". The bells of St Nicklos started the first peal as we entered into conversation and walked along the Close past the Infirmary, and we got to the Read Lyon at 12 O'clock opposite wheare my friend dwelled. (34) The Farther and Mother and a younger Brother was at Church, the sister was Cook. He laid the plan of Interview. As soon as they went along the passage, I was to go in and enter the first door to the right hand, turn to the right, set my hat on the side table and I would find diner on the plate. I did this and sat down and got 2 bites when the Mother said, "Wheare was thou, Tom, I did not see thee!" Being eating I did not answer, when the Sister said, "Mother! That is not our Tom!" The Mother and Farther said, "What?" and she was wrong, but upon this the real Tom entered. The Mother and Farther both dropped Knife and Fork. Tom said, "I have sent my Shaddow to Diner." Then Tom sat down near me and it was

* flags (dial.) = pavement.
(33) Church - A.E. lived in Felling but the nearest Roman Catholic chapel was at Newcastle.

(34) St. Nicklos - St. Nicholas', the parish church of Newcastle.

hard to tell which of us was their child. His Father, Mr. Bilton, was a Mill wright, and both sons were Millwrights. We spent the day together and agreed that he was to go to my Father's the same way. I instructed him and he went and sat down and had begun to eat when my Sister Jane said, "Mother! That is not our Anty!" Father and Mother said, "Tass, thou art out of thy mind!" But she insisted, upon which I entered and said that I had sent my Shaddow before me. We got dinner over and Mother set the botel on the table, and we enjoyed the afternoon in sochel friendship. I saw Tom twice after and shall relate hereafter what Occurred. (35)

38

MANCHESTER WAGGON AND EIGHT HORSES AND DRIVER AND PONEY.

I, Anthony, was going to Newcastle upon the Setarday in August, Newcastle fair day, at 2 Oclock PM to meet Mother and Fauther. A waggon was passing along the Sunderland road at Gateshead, laden from the South. Walking sharply to overtake it near Jackson Street, I came up to it, and the Whoals being nearly Eyteen inches bredth, I saw the far hind wheel wriggle. On stooping and looking, the Axell was broke and was five inches worked out. I instantly called, "Stop the waggon! Your arm is broke!" The Driver hearing, said to the horses, stop, and they stopped instently. He came wriding to me and from his Poney, looked at the Axell and said, "Good God! What Providence! Next he said, "Whats to be done?" I answered and said, heare was a Smith Shop close at hand. Then I went for Thos. Hedly, Smith, but he was at Newcastle and only a boy in the shop. I said to the Waggoner that I was a waggon wright and I would assist him. I went down streat to a Publick house where 9 of Mr Haukses Smiths was, having done their weeks work. (36) I

(35) There is nothing further about Tom in the autobiography as we have it.

(36) Mr. Haukses Smiths - Messrs. William Hawkes and Co. owned an ironworks at Gateshead.

requested 6 of them to go to Hedleys Shop and mend the Axell promising them pay and Lowens. The Men jumped up and set to and made a good job of it, making it stronger than it had been. The Waggoner paid the men and gave Lowens too, and then offered pay to me. I objected and said I was a Prentice and could not take Money and that I wanted no pay for Gods Providence. On this, he was astonished. We got all clear from the Street and the Waggon proceeded on to Newcastle, being detained only 2 hours. 4 months after, my Fauther and I was in Gateshead and the Waggoner and his Master was there. I went to see how the Arm was. He said, "Quite strong. Stop, my Master is here", and they came cross the street to My Fauther. The Master shook hands with him and said, "You have a wonderful Sun." The Waggon had had in it one thousand pounds worth of glas for Newcastle. The Master said he would treat us both, and Insisted of My Fauther to take 3 hauf Crowns, which was done to buy me a new hat.

39

SINGULAR ESCAPE. One day I was ascending the Ann pit at 3 O'clock PM. There was one boy in the Loop with me and 8 more on the rope, one above the other. When we were 20 fathums from the top the Crank of the Winding Engine broke, and we fell back 2 fathums. I instantly grasped the boy with me and said to the others, "Clag^x to, boys!" They did so and all kept hold. One quarter of the Crank eye fell down the pit but Missed us all. It carried away the scaffold at the botum. On this, I called up that all was safe, run down the Crab. They did this and I told the boys not to touch the rope until it came to me. I stedeved the new rope and the boys changed rope one after the other. These being drawn up, the Crabrope was lowered again for the other boy and I. Wee got safe up, but standing speaking with Anderson, he said, "Stop, thou art lamed!"

x clag (dial.) = stick, adhere.

The Blood was running down my side over the top of my trusers. I stripped and found I had been cut on the wright Shoulder blade to the bone which bled freely. A woman ran and brought a Cup ful of Brandy and Loaf Sugar which stopped the Bleeding. This wound healed with out any more trouble but continued for 20 years a red lump the size of a hors bean. We returned home, thanking Our God for deliverance. I suppose that the cut had been done by one of the Iron Wedges.

40

(37) (H.B. This Ingine landed One Corf per Minute, 3 Score per hour, 12 hours per day. With one hour changing men, 33 score was the days work. The pit had been at work every day except Sunday for 3 weeks. There was 2 sets of pumps lifted the Water from a drift 20 fathoms below and delivered it to 2 Large Ingines. There was a Staple[†] 100 yards from the Coal to the Drift at the botum of which was a Dam and a horse foot Valve, 10 inches in diameter. This valve was worked by a wood Spear and Lever to the stone round the top of the Staple. Not being secured by good props the Stone gave way, taking frame, lever and spear down to the botum, and the valve being engaged admitted only part of the feeder. Hence when the Ingine worked reglar, the Ingine stroked on air. Not having the weight of the Colum of Water (the flywheel was 27 feet) the veloscty obtained broke the Crank. Some Ignorent men said the Brakeman could break the Crank when he wished. Seldom one lasted more than 3 weeks.)

41

ROBERT BURNS THE SCOTCH BARD. I Anthony Errington with John Hall, Matthew Sanderson and Thomas Hutchison, had to go from

† staple (tech.) = a small shaft sunk between seams, or in order to collect water.

(37) This section and some later sections provide a detailed account, in technical language, of certain aspects of colliery engineering practice in A.E.'s day. Some of the terminology is archaic which makes it more difficult to arrange the text intelligibly. It seems likely that A.E. kept a work diary and that he copied technical details from this diary into his autobiography.

Felling to Gosforth Colliery, a land sale colliery, to repair the railway, and on the Monday the Coals was sold near the Moor edge, Morpeth road. John Hunter was agent and had a Brother in the Old Flesh market who kept the sign of Dog and Duck. Hunter said we was to go there and have one gallon of Ale. There was 10 men in the house, tradesmen, and one of them was singing one of Burns' songs. A man passed me and sat down on the edge of the bench. Shortly after I saw him sobbing in tears. I went to him and said, "Whic are you so sorrowful? We are all cheerful here." He answered he was the Author of the song. I instantly went to the table and said, "Jentlemen, Robert Burns in Company!" One said, "I now him." and came and shook hands with him. He was ushered upstairs and Mary Morchents sent for the Barber to shave him. He was stripped and clad all in new in $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour. Supper was ordered for 16 men at a subscription of 2s each and wee was not to leave the Company. After supper, Burns was requested to sing his favoret, Sweet and Lovely Jean. At 3 Oclock in the morning it was so efecting to the hearers there was not one drie Cheak in the room. Each drunk what he liked and the cost was 6s to each, supper and drink. At 4 Oclock wee broke up and returned to our duty at Gosforth. (38)

42

DETECTING A THIEF BEFORE SUNRISE IN THE MORNING. Sandwell Haggerston was night watch at the Discovery pit, above High Felling. When he came down at 11 oclock one night to get Super,

(38) Though Burns would not have been out of place in such an alichouse scene, it can hardly have been he. According to his biographers, his only visit to Newcastle was in 1787, while this episode must have occurred in the later 1790's. It was probably 1795 or 1796, since Burns died in the latter year, and it is unlikely that literate workmen on the Tyne would have been unaware of his death. The bard addressed a number of lines of verse to Jean, but I have been unable to trace a song 'Sweet and Lovely Jean'.

one Mary HALL, washerwoman, saw him pass by a stile by the railway gate. She thought she would get one Swill³¹ of Coals in his absence, and did so. She came with the Coals and the Swill upon her head to the Stile, but could then go no further, nor could she get clear of her load. And there she had to stand till 3 O'clock on the Whit Sunday Morning, since Haggerston returned to the pit the other way. Brother John and I was going up the railway and we saw the woman standing with the Coals on her head. Haggerston saw us approaching the stile and came down running and shouting, "Stop!" He took a paper from under the Stile, whereon the woman tossed the Coals down, took the Swill with her and went home. Brother and I was within 5 yards when this took place. Haggerston told me after that it was as he wished to stop for the woman was fast enough. He was skilled in Astronomy and understood the Floor of the planets. This Brother and I was witness too.

43

TO CHANGE OF LIFE. Mrs Hall who kept the Felling gate, had only one daughter, and Charles Purves, Clark at Felling Colliery, was her sooter. (39) They came from Alandale. Purves and I got Equented and I used to go with him to the gate in the Evening. At this time, Ann Hindmarsh was houskeeper to Mr Sill, Squire Ellisons Stewart. I got equented with her and in proses of time I Married her and we set up house at High Felling where my first Sun was born. (40) 12 months after, we shifted to Low Felling.

(39) Felling Gate - turnpike gate.

(40) The connection between the Felling gate and Ann Hindmarsh is not made clear in the text. Perhaps Ann was a friend of the gatekeeper's daughter. Or perhaps she passed through the gate each evening on her way home from Mr. Sill's. Or perhaps it was simply that A.E. was encouraged by his friend's example to 'get equented' with a young lady. The Heworth chapel register records the marriage of A.E. and Ann Hindmarsh of the Parish of Gateshead in 1798. It also records the birth of a son Robert, but the year is unfortunately not given: A.E.'s wife is here described as 'Ann Hindmarsh of Kirkwhappington' (a village 10 miles N.W. of Newcastle). The autobiography refers to the birth of a daughter in 1800, and four children were alive in 1809. But Robert was the only child whose birth was recorded in the Heworth chapel register. And only one child, Isabella, born in 1806, was recorded in the baptism register of the nearest Roman Catholic chapel.

The cause was one for us both. I had been down Hollihill pit at night and got home at 2 O'clock Ann opened the door for me and related that she had seen a Spiret dressed in Blue Silk. I told her not to mention it to the neighbors. The fire was dull and I lit the Candle to get Supper. After washing I went to lock the door. On turning round, I saw the figure of a tall slender Woman dressed in sea blue silk which walked into the Garden and Disappeared. I kept this to myself thinking Ann would not dare to Stop at night when I was at work. There was one empty house at Low Felling which I applied for and got, and we shifted the next day. This poor of seeing a Spiret, Man or Woman, that is born in the twilight before the sunrise in the Morning, was the case with me and Ann also. (This from the Reverend William Wharton, Cathlick Priest, Newcastle on Tyne.)⁽⁴¹⁾

44

HOLLIHILL PIT, BLADEN. ⁽⁴²⁾ (From the Hollihill pit a South drift ran 14 fathoms below the seam of high main coal 374 yards to a Staple sunk 21 feet and a gin to draw the coal. Aprile the 10, 1800. 140 yards of way from the botum of the Staple to the West, the Coal rising 2 inches in a yard. A stone drift from the top of the Staple to cut the coal 118 yards to South West. Aprile the 17, 1800. 107 yards of way laid South and

(41) This priest was perhaps the Reverend William Warrilow S.J. who is known to have served at the Newcastle chapel at about this time. E. Mackenzie, History of Newcastle, p. 565.

(42) This paragraph consists of notes on the development of a section of the Felling mine. The quoting of exact figures and dates suggests that A.E. was drawing on a work diary. The notes refer to a number of underground tunnels ('drifts') which had been excavated ('driven') in different directions from a small underground shaft ('staple') in which a winch ('gin') was employed. One of the tunnels ran to the galleries ('headways' and 'bords') at the coalface. In these tunnels, A.E. was busy laying waggonway. One tunnel was approaching the boundary of the coal worked by this particular pit, and was therefore near the area worked by a neighbouring pit (which took its name from Admiral Keppel, first Lord of the Admiralty 1782, died 1786). Also this tunnel (or perhaps another - it is not quite clear) was thought to be approaching some abandoned workings which might have water in them: hence borings through the coal at the head of the tunnel were being made to test for water.

and East down to winning roadways from the Staple bottom. From the top of the South East bord, it was droven down 637 yds to boundary, South from East end of Howorth church. West and North East side of Admiral Keppel pit, borehole 60 yds of soled Coal left. 27 January 1801. 133 yds West and boring feared of old pits above the High Felling, 2 of such pits not down to the high main.)

45

The South East bord was commenced and was droven night and day. But when it was 200 yds down, it got a blower.⁽⁴³⁾ This blower blew out water along with some gas. It was in a 10 inch brick wall which was close plastered like a brattice. At 200 yards away the blower sounded like a Boy beating a drum, and so it was called The Drummer. 2 Depeties,^{ff} and 12 men and boys was working nearby boaring. I was working alone repairing the horse road near 50 yards out by side of The Drummer. Suddenly The Drummer Ceased Beating. I made my standing candle safe and with the other Candle in my hand approached The Drummer. When 5 or 6 yards off, I stopped and could decess a mist coming down out of the hole where the water had comed. This was pure gas. I had presence of mind to run to the high way to give the Alarm. When I got there the Depety said the gas was just coming and he called to all men and boys to put out their Lows.^{ff} They and I retreated to the waggonway. There we had the scale^{ff} from two doors, fresh air. We ordered all out to the pit shaft. The 2 Depeties, Nickell Urwin, Robert Stove, and I went back to see how

* depeties i.e. deputies (tech. and dial.)

= colliery underground foremen.

Lows (dial.) = candles.

Scale (tech.) = leakage of air through a door.

banksman (tech.) = the workman at the surface who gives the orders to raise and lower the rope in the shaft.

(43) blower. - a crack or hole in an underground wall through which gas or water or both are blown out from a natural reservoir behind. In this case the blower began by blowing out mainly water which was inconvenient but not dangerous.

it was going on. It was silent and had backed the air from top to bottom 5 or 6 yards. ⁽⁴⁴⁾ There was no time to be lost, and we ran out to the pit bottom. The men there had called up but there was no person waiting at the pit head at this time. So I called up with all my strength of voice. William Anderson the Banksman^M heard me in his Bed and said to his Wife, "That's Anty Brrington!" He came running to the pit. I told him to call out John Straker the Viewer, Ralph Brown wasteman and all hands. And the furnes must be put out smedly, we were in great danger. ⁽⁴⁵⁾ Straker came down and the wasteman went Emetly and put the furnace out which was at the Rodney pit. Brown and Straker, Staves and Urwin and I went in to see how it was going on. We herd it roving as the presser of Stoom from a large boiler. By this time the gas had backed the air 6 yards out past where I was working. We had seen plenty and made all possable spead Out, to go to bank when the wastemen had got the furnace safe out. We got to bank and Mr. Straker said I was worth my weight in gold. I had saved my own life and others and the Whole Colliery. N.B. It was 3 days before the Blower spent off, after which the work got on again.

[46] [HANGING IN THE SHAFT] One month after this, on a Monday morning, Joseph Hunter, Overman, and a Horskeeper and a fue boys went Down first. Nickel Urwin and Morton Greenar got in the Loop and I got on the Rope above. When we had decended 30 fathums, the Rope surged on the rowl and we dropped 2 fathum. ⁽⁴⁶⁾ We called, "Stand fast! Look to the rowl!" We had to be slung

x banksman (tech.) = the workman at the surface who gives the orders to raise and lower the rope in the shaft.

- (44) backed the air - the gas had advanced this distance.
(45) Furnace - the underground furnace which drew air into the workings. There was danger of an explosion if the escaping gas reached the shaft where the furnace was situated.
(46) surged on the rowl - the winding rope, as it was being unwound from a roller, slipped from its coil.

to the pullic train. There were 20 men at bank waiting to go down and they passed us a small card to lash ourselves to the rope with. The Deputies did so but I could not effect it. The overseen, feared of me falling, got 2 bottles of Hay Lightened up and put at the foot of the shaft and their jackets on top. We hung one hour and 20 minutes before the rope was put wright on the rowl. William Anderson said, "Keep up they hart, Anty!" In about 10 minutes they loused the seasing and lowered us to the Botum. (47) I could not stand up, my Leggs and thies was num. I stripped off and Joseph Hunter rubbed my thies and leggs with both hands until the Blood got Circalation. The others was done the same with. I once more returned Alinity god sincear thanks for his Merciful providence over mee.

47

HILLPIT FIRE AND LOSS OF LIFE. At the time the East board was driving East down and 3 days before The Drumer was got, the bord fired on the friday and one man was burnt. (48) The bargon men^{ks} gave up on account of the fire and none was at work Setarday and Sunday night. I and John Clark was down Sunday night, the only two men down. He was an old man and I assisted him to load the timber waggon. He got the horse and went in alone. I had some repairs to make in the South drift and it was 2 hours when I went to see after him. I met him near the Staple. He said, "Anthony, you must not leave me this night for I have seean a Spiret." "Dont be feared, John," I said, "Let me see where you saw hit." We had to go 50 yards nearer the pit and he said, "This is the plase." The Spiret was a man

ks bargon i.e. bargain men = men who were employed on contract or bargain.

(47) loused the seasing - set free (to lowse (dial.) = to come to the end of a job, loose oneself, knock off) what had seized (?)

(48) the bord fired - gas which had accumulated in the gallery, or bord, exploded.

with a scarce Countenance running at full speed. I said,
"Deal down, John!" and we both prayed to god to Preserve us
from the Danger of the pit. At the same place, as I was going
in again, I saw the Spirot with scarce Countenance and it passed
me on the Left Side running at full speed. I said, "O god,
be with me and this man", which was then within hearing. John
and I kept together and at $\frac{1}{2}$ past one James Bell, horskeeper,
and Joseph Hunter, overman, came down. John Clark told him what
we had seen. He would believe nothing what we said. We
ascended the pit, and went home, but at 8 oclock I went back over
to the pit. Some men was coming up and when they got to bank
they jumped out of the Corf and over 2 other Corvs and run home.
This was James Bell and Thos. Craggs. As soon as I saw James
Bell, I knew the Spirot was the same. He had been burned and
Died after 20 hours. (49) Craggs recovered. Thus the
Providence of god made me return to the pit and meet the man.
He left a wife and 7 children, all girls. On the Tuesday 2
deputies was to go to this same bord, but William Hunter went
alone. The whole Air of the pit was forced by a brick wall to
within 4 feet of the Coal in front. He was on the left hand
where the air turned to the righthand. Suddenly a blower blew
out and his face was all cut. His candle was 3 yards back from
the blower, he clicked it and there was no fire. Then he run
out and told all to run for their life. Near 9 oclock in the
morning he ascended the pit, just as I got on the pit top. This
blower was the one that was later called The Drummer.

(49) Miners involved in underground explosions often received extensive superficial burns which, while not immediately disabling, made the sufferers frantic with pain. Horrifying descriptions of the injuries inflicted were given in a medical treatise written by a Newcastle doctor in 1797. (S. Kentish, A Treatise on Burns, 1797, reprinted 1817) Miners were generally given medical attention in their own homes since the few hospitals on Tyneside were located in the large towns, some distance away from the mining villages. In the 1790's and 1800s severall hundred North East miners died from burns (or, to be more exact, from the septicaemia which generally set in as a result of uncouth medical treatment).

It was advertised in all the newspapers of England, Ireland and Scotland. The question was, what was the real valliuo of the 3 United Countries? This was 3 weeks advertised. (50) I was working alone and put my thought on that. One evening I made a Statement and directed it to the Printer, Solomon Hitchin, and he might give it a trial. I Sined it Anthony Brrington, Meckenick, Felling. After 10 days the London papers said the grand question was solved by a Meckenick of Newcastle upon Tyne. This soon spread and I was called the greatest Scholar in England and could not walk 5 yards on the Street without being requested to join company. Questions were proposed to me, was it done by Algebra or Problems or by Disimals? I declined answering those questions. For 2 or 3 weeks I could not keep clear of drink. I had to leave off going to Newcastle for a month. But one day I had to go to my Brother in law in High Prier Stroat, and 6 shop keepers came to the house inquiring for me. Brother and I went with them to the bay and barrell. They wished me to tell them how I solved the problem. And as I was the greatest Scholar in England, they would propose a question. 4 questions was proposed. One was, had god an equall? A second, what weight of Pressar of Air is there on a man's body? The others were in Algebra and Dismells. I declined answering. I would not start to please them. I could not put off my time there. But there was a stout woman thore called Nanny Hare who carried flesh. She called for a gill of Ale and hearing their questions, said, "I will propose a question that none of all ye Seven can answer, that is, what never was, nor never will be?" Shortly after, I went to the backyard to make wanter. There was a small room joining this, and the woman went into there and calling me, gave me a Hare you ges

(50) I have been unable to trace the advertisement. It probably appeared in 1801, the year in which Great Britain and Ireland were united. If so, the advertisement was not in all the newspapers.

from where, and said, that was never straight nor never should
beo. (51) The men bot that I could not solve that question.
But I produced the hare and they owned up and paid the glasses.
I stopped aside and gave the woman a glass unperceived.

49

The answer I gave to the question in the newspapers was that
the population had been taken that spring, men, women and children
so many millions. (52) The government of great briton vallieued
every one at 350 a piece. But that if wo the Peopcl did not
defend the land, it would belong to Some Others. That was the
real valliew of the 3 Countries. (53)

FELLING GALLERY 1803.

50

The BONE SETTER. Anthony Brington was going to dinner
along the Summer house row when Jane Robson came out and exclaimd
"O Lass, my bairn's neck is out!" I jumped into the house and
the child was on the floor. I took hold of it and placed the
underparts between my nees and got the edge of my hand under the
Jaw and pulling gently the bone went in with Knack. The
child cried and the mother was sitting. I gavo her the child
and she fainted and I had to hold her and the child and call for
help and thus 3 women came. I got my hands washed and then
was told the cause. The Busem^{se} had falled between the door and
the hinge, and the mother coming down stairs with the child, she
fell and the child-also. Thus Providence saved its life. I
then got the name of Cleaver^{se} Anty.

51

BAD MONEY. At Felling I was paid every 14 days. I had to
go to the Office for the pay note, then to the signor the

se busem (dial.) = broom
cleaver (dial.) = bone-setter.

(51) Hare - i.e. a hair, apparently in this case a pubic hair.
Incidentally the name of the stout and raggyish female was
probably spelt Hair, which is a more common Tyneside name
than Hare.

(52) The first national census of Britain was taken in 1801.

(53) It is a pity that A.E.'s account of his successful answer
is so condensed. However, it appears that the answer took the
form of a hearty patriotic slogan reflecting the popular and
official viewpoint during the recent long war with Franco.

shakespear to get change. I had 3 men's money and my own. I called for 52 of change for pound notes from Robert Miller, Landlord. He gave me two bags, I opened one and he went away. On opening the other, they was soverings inside instead of shillings. I instantly rung the bell and when he came I told him he had given bad money. He flew into a rage of pashon. I said. "Look hear!" and on seeing the Soverings he said, "I beg pardon, it is a grand mistake." He brought on to the table one quart of hot Ale and Brandy and the Landlady said, "Well done, honest Anty!".

52

NEWCASTLE DATE. My Niboor and I went to Newcastle and bought Beef 2d. per lb. below the morning price at 9 Oclock. We left it for the cart on Monday. On going to the end of Newcastl bridge I had to go to the Necessary. The man at my right hand got up and there was one of the Dealers, a Woman, came in and said, "With your leave, Jentlemen, them that is needful cannot be mindful." She sat down near me and dropped, then took my Shirt Lap and wipered and said, "Your foaks will wash before ours. Goodnight!" I was greaved at her treating me soo. The trick was in the newspapers, I was called a farmor the name not known. I called this a Newcastle date. ⁽⁵⁴⁾

53

PROVERBE. "He that digeth a pit for his Neighbour shall fall unto it himself."

Before the Felling pit holed the waste, one pumping Engine was double Shift. George Bailey was Plugman in one shift, Matthew Wilson in the other and they changed shift fortnitly. Mark Stevenson was fire man to George Bailey. One Thursday morning Mr. Straker came down and, near me, said, "Mark, what was the matter last week? The Steem was bloing off from the Engine at 5 Oclock." "I cannot tell, Sir," Mark replied,

(54) A later anecdote (paragraph 89) refers to an event at the town of Alwick (pronounced Annick) which A.E. calls an Alwick-date (i.e. anecdote, in the Tyneside pronunciation). So A.E. calls this a Newcastle-date. Perhaps a pun is also intended on a local scatological term.

"We stopped 1½ hours and sometimes 2 hours to get a bit rest, then we start again." (55) After that the orders was that the Engine was to work Single Shift. George Douglas was now working wright and he and George Bailey was provoked at Mark telling Mr. Straker what he did. So the two formed a plot for Mark. A few days after, I was working near where Mark was whealing his Coals in, when Bailey called him. They stopped the engine and I followed Mark to see what was wrong. Bailey was up stairs while Douglas was at the plug train. (The Plug had to be put into the Landery box and all leaks stopped in the pumps.) Douglas said to Mark, "Thou has to put thy thumb heare.", and he put his own thumb on the Scoggan of the Injection. Bailey upstairs seeing the thumb on the Scoggan through a hole in the floor, nocked the prop out and the Scoggan took Douglas's thumb off by the second joint. He exclaimed - it was the wrong man! I withdrew without being seen by him and on that I kept it to myself for fear of their Envie. This I saw and the innocent man escaped the plot.

54 PILL DOCTOR. I was returning of the pay friday evening, very stormey from the North East with drifting snow. I herd a moan and stood and lisent. I found a Man in the railway gutter, snow lying over him and water under the snow. I got him out and took him to Padickhall. He dwelled in Gateshead and had got two much. I washed him and got super and then to bed. He had to look for his box at a publick house where he had bean in the morning. He was Dr. Anderson, the pill doctor. Thus I was an instrument in the hand of good in saving his life.

55 [ASSAULT AT BANKERS] One Setarday I was at Newcastle and in

(55) The simple-minded fireman told the boss that the engineman was spinning the work out in order to keep the pump going double shift.

the flesh market bought 3 stone of Beef and put in to Mr. Barker's closet at 11 O'clock A.M. When I called for the bag at 3 O'clock he had sent it away in mistake with the Jesment market cart. He sent 2 girls for the bag and took me into a small room and gave me a pint of ale and the London papers. I was reading when 4 young men came into the room. One said, "Your the man that killed my Brother, you Bu..... I will kill you." The koo was inside the door, he locked the door with the 4 inside. He took the Porest and the other took the fire shovell. I held y the pore with my left hand and riched it from him. The other with the shovel I struck near his hand. Then I gave the first a Tempeler, and whealing round on the other, gave him a back hander over the Jaw and Cheak. He dropped. Another was striking at my side. I tossed him throw the window and the other jumped out after him. 2 Sargents were called and the 4 was taken into custody. The window was valued 16s. damage. I explained they were under a mistake, they took me for one Bilton. Bilton had fought with a mason and the mason had died after the fight.⁽⁵⁶⁾ Bilton left the Miller the west countrey and went South and was no more heard of. This was the Shaddow taken for real man. The landlord now me, my name was Errington, and it was critical to now one from the other. The men begged pardon. The girls came with my beef from Jesment, and the sergents, Landlord and I had a glass each. They would not request me to atend the Court on the Monday.⁽⁵⁷⁾ They would state the case and said like was a bad work. I parted friends and returned home.

pore - poker, dialect.

(56) Bilton, the mason, and the miller mentioned in the next sentence, were apparently prize-fighters.

(57) This suggests that there was no court case: the men probably bribed the sergeants to be released.

56

One month after I was at Barkers and he again gave me the papers and took me to the same room again. Shortly after he brought in an old man, a Collier belonging to Willington.⁽⁵⁸⁾ He brought him a pint of beer and said, "Now you will sit comfortable here." I read the papers, but shortly after there came in 4 young men who brought their pint and glass with them. They laid there pint on the same table with the old man's pint. I had my eye on them. They pulled off his wig and one of them struck him twice in the briest.* He burst into tears. I laid the paper down and asked whie they cursed the old man so. The answer was, "Had they toung or we will give thou the same." I jumped up and gave him a tempeler, I took another' heals out, the 3rd I gave a blow in the Stomick, the other was already out of the door. I stopped and brought out the old man still in tears. The Landlord called and the same sergents came. The old man said, had I not bean there, they would have killed me. They were handed off to the Kitty for the assolt. The old man said I was to come that day fortnet and I would be paid for my kindness. I did so, and there was 32 men and women came which offered me money, but it was not taken. I said I would take a glass or two with the men. The Sergents came to see me and there was 5s. for me for the asalt, and the Magistrates said it was a manly action to save the old man. They was bound over to keep the poace with the old man for 12 month and had all expence to pay. Thus I was rewarded 10 fold by the friends and many others for standing up in defence of the Aged.

57

THE PEHEYMIE JACK OF NEWCASTLE. In the three bulls heads I was in Company with a taylor when 6 men came in from work. They would buy 2 pies a peace if the pie jack would

(58) Willington - a vilage near Wallsend. * briest (dial. pr.) = breast.

change a pound note. Change was bad to get and he had only 6 shillings. I lent him 14 shillings which much obliged the man. The jack said, "O Lovly, I will now thee again." 14 days after, I met him. He said I was to have a pie and he gave me the money borrowed. 6 months after, when I had bought 3 stone of beef cheap and my pocket was nearly ashore, I met him again on the Street. He said I was to have a pie. Go in, he said. I went with him but I told him I was nearly ashore. He said, "Lovly, there is $\frac{1}{2}$ Crown for thee, more if thee says what." I saw him no more for 8 years for he was transported to Vandemons Land for 7 years. One day I was in the old custom house, sandhill, when in comes Jack with his basket. He looked at me and said, "Lovly..." I took out the hauf Crown and one penney for a pye and laid them down. He sat down and shed tears, and said. "Lovely, one hundred times and more I have thought when far away, should Lovely be living I will be hauf a Crown to good. The Brewer hearing what passed, brought a full quart on the table to Injoy ourselves, which we did.

58

HOLDING THE WASTE WITH LOSS OF LIFE. On the 27 March, good Friday, 1807, the Discovery pit was working to the West and the Crain was 13 pillars up. (59) George Hunter and George Riddly was in a bord 5 bords north of the Crain, Hunter on the right and Ridley on the left. Between 10 and 11 oclock Riddly with his pick holed into the waste and water rushed into the bord. (60) Riddly fled before the water but Hunter stopped in the Cornr of the board and was drowned. At the bailing plase nearby was

(59) pillars - pillars of coal divided bord from bord.
(60) the waste - a section of underground workin, abandoned and therefore often standing full of water. To hole into the waste was one of the most disastrous occurrences in coalmining, since the water released might flood out the new workings within a few hours, or even minutes.

working John Carr, a putter, and Andrew Anderson, to keep the Air Court clear. They too was drowned. Other men were cut off by the water and unable to reach the shaft, so Robert Brown, overman, William Hunter and I descended the pit. When we got near the dyke, the water was 6 ft high, 1 ft 6 in. depth at 4 in fall in a yard. The way was all washed away, and we could not hold a foot. Near one O'clock the feeder^x abated and we got in, to see for men and boys surviving. All got out safe except this 3 and a 4th was at the top of the pump with little hope for his life. On the Saturday the water abated. On the Saturday evening all hands were on search for Ridley and Carr. I thought that the man at the pump top might be alive though the one at the bailing point was gone. I and Edward Rogers went directly to Mr Straker who saw the hope and ordered 18 men to go with him directly. They had 18 yards of standing to take out but to their joy they found one man, Ralph Hall, alive but very weak, and took him home. At 2 O'clock Sunday morning he came round again, and was ordered by Mr Brandling to go no more down the pit. At 4 O'clock Easter Sunday, Robert Brown, William Hunter and Anthony Errington descended to search for the two bodies wanting. The board was full of water to the roof. I stripped off and swam in with a piece of chalk in my mouth and made a chalk mark 25 yards in where I could go no further. On the Sunday night we pumped this water out and found Ridley 4 yds by the chalk. Carr was found under a fall of stone on the Tuesday. The two was buried at Heworth. I lowered Ridley into the grave.

x Feeder (tech.) = stream of water underground.

On the Thursday following I had to take 2 depeties down the pit with me so I went near 3 O'clock P.M. to James Trumble* who dwelled next door to Riddly. I went up to the house (Riddly dwelled up stairs on the right hand) and as I entered the house I cast my eyes up and saw Riddlies Spirit turn into his own door. Trumble was standing on the left hand down stairs and he said, "Anthony, I have seen Riddly!" I told him to say nothing but to go for Edwd. Rodgers, Overman. We counselled and I told them the sole could not rest because there was money hidden. I went with Rodgers to Mr Robson, the Agent, and told him the story. He held up his hand and said, good god, was it so? We then had to send for the widdow and Bouters. Mr Robson kept them in tauk for 1½ hours while Rodgers and Trumble sarched and found Coin in 3 diferent plases, worth near 39 in the whole. Which was given to Mr Robson to give to the widdow when she might want. His sole was seen no more. May he rest.

BAD COMPANY. I was at the Freemason Lodge, Gateshead, one night and after leaveing the Lodge, William Ray and I were in Company. Ray dwelled at Felling shore and I dwelled in a cottage where Lees factory is at present, and we came together to the Friars goose staithe. On passing that, Ray said, "How Devell, if there bee a devell, Come on to the road and let me see thee!" On this, I left the foot path and went on to the head rig, and said, "O God, deliver me from the Enemy!" We walked the length of the field and then Ray had to go throw a Stile. I left him there and had to make my way along throw a wood where their was a gutter 3 foot briedth to step over. I was feeling with my foot for the edge when a Ball of Fire came down the wood. I jumped the gutter by the light given and I got safe home at

* Trumble (dial. pr.) i.e. Turnbull.

20 minets past 12 Oclock. At 6 Oclock in the Morning I was going to work when I was called on to stop by William Ray, who asked what time I got home. I told him and he said, "Dam the Devell to Hell, it was 4 Oclock when I got home and I hardly have a whole bone in my body. I have been over tree tops and thorn hedges, and all the Close that I had on is torn to rags." His wife told me a Short time after that she burnt them in the oven. He was an unbeliever of Athiest Cast of mind. I was never more in his Company. I returned god thanks for my preservation from the poor of the Enemy.

[61] [DEATH OF WIFE] During the time I dwelt in the Cotage my wife took very ill. I was making a railway at Sudick for Mr Wake and I was sent for to go home in all haste. (61) When I got home she could not speak and she Departed Life on the 9 March, 1809. (62) Thus I was left with 2 Suns and 2 daughters to Lament the loss of a Mother and honest partner in Life. I shortly after left the Felling work and went to Benwell to work. I dwelled at Felling but was at Lodgins at Benwell. (63)

[62] [A MASON SAVED] On the 21 of October, 1809, returning home to Felling on the Setarday, I met with Padison Solsby, Brother trade man. (64) We had 2 quarts of Ale at 2 Oclock and parted. I made my Marketingst on the road to the Bridge in a small bag.

* marketing (dial.) = market purchases.

(61) Sudick i.e. Southwick -- a village 7 miles W. of Sunderland.

(62) The burial of Ann Berrington is not recorded either in the Heworth chapel register or in the register of the Roman Catholic chapel at Newcastle.

(63) A.E. had lived at Felling since birth, but he now began to roam. His first move was to Benwell, a village on the Western outskirts of Newcastle, where there was another colliery owned by the Brandlings, the owners of Felling.

(64) brother trade man -- i.e. a waggonway wright. There may have been in existence a trade association or (as it was often called in Northern Britain) brothering.

When on Newcastle Bridge I saw 2 Masons repairing three Chimneys of a house in Gateshead, opposite the Blue Bell. I thought they was in great danger. I left the bridge and walked in the middle of the Street. As I looked up, the rope broke. One clung by the slate, the other came head first down. I dropped my bag and placed my self one leg in the Channel, the other on the flag. He dropped on to me and my back to his back, carried me down. Mr Liddle of Ravensworth, a young gentleman with his Servant Riding behind him, jumped off his horse and lifted me up and called for ^aSergen. (65) And said, "The noblest action that ever was done by man!" We was taken to the hauf moon and Mr Liddle demanded the frunt room. Wee both stripped and the Sergen examined us and no Bones were Broke. But on the Sunday I found there was a Leader of my Shoulder was put out. On the Monday, Joseph Wood, Edge tool maker for the Hawks, and Charles How of Newcastle, made a Collection on the Street for the Man that had Saved the Mans Life. 13s 4d was laid on the table for me, but I could not take money for what Devine Providence had done, I was not my own Master. I presented the money to the poor of the Parish of Gateshead, for which I was to be a freeman. Squire Liddle paid 5s to the Sergen and treated each of us with one glas of brandy, and he said the man saved, Joseph Dalton, Mason, was to treat me one glas more which was done. One of Hawkes Smiths had my bag and all I had bought was safe in hit. I made home haveing sore Shoulders from the fall which wore off in a fuo days.

63

DIVINE PROVIDENCE. When at Benwell I lodged at Fenem Lodge with Mrs Bowman a widow. Thur was a man, a Baptist preacher, also stopped there and I saw him give her one day 18s which he

(65) Liddle of Ravensworth - Ravensworth Castle, not far from Gateshead, was the family seat of the Liddles, a wealthy and influential family of landowners and coalowners.

said he had got for preachen at Newcastle. On the Sunday, I went to Felling and a girl that had lived Servint with us called at our house to see the famcly. She said her sister was married to a yorkshire weaver who had two sons and imployed two Jurnimen. But he had taken off to be a preacher, leaving his wife and children. From the discription given by the girl, this was the man who had stayed at Benwell. Near 12 months after, when I had left Benwell, I met the preacher and Mrs Bowman, the Landlady, together and we went to an inn and had one pint of Ale. In his absence, she let me see the Widding ring they had bought that day. Her husband had been Stuart for the Earl of Carlilo and was left £400 cash, the Intrest of 4000 in the funds. I tould her she was not to marry the preacher for he had a wife and 2 children. But she would not listen. She had one Sun a farmer near Morpith, his name Anthony Bowman, and I sent word to him to look sharp after his mother. (66) The same day I was accosted by a Man selling Blankets who wished me to by a pair which I did. He came from Yorkshire so I asked him if he new such a man as the preacher. The Answar was, quite well and where he dwelled. I told him of the decait he was doing and he said, "I will write to his wife to come down." She came three week following. And the Sun came the same day the wife and children came. I was driven in Speret to go the house also. Mrs Bowman called the preacher Saton and the Sun turned him out never to come there no more. I told the Sun how I discovered the Imposter who said the Providence of God had gided mee. He took his mother home to be more safe and I saw thease people no more.

(66) Morpeth - a market town 15 miles N. of Newcastle.

64

(67) RECALLED FROM BENWELL. The HOLLINHILL pit at Pelling had worked for sometime as Landsale for John Grove. (68) John Straker and John Brandling had 500 Chalder⁵² of Coals stored at the pit which was sold to Scotland. But the railway had been taken up. So I had to begin on the Monday morning with 12 hands and lay down 345 yards of railway, which was completed on the wednesday at 4 O'clock and 3 Chaldern of Coals were shipped that Evening. A wager of 20 guineas was bot and won by Straker that the Ship should have the Coals on the wednesday. We was rewarded with one hauf Barrel of Ale and Cheas and Bread that Evening.

65

JOHN PIT RAILWAY. (69) There was 951 yds of Cast Iron railway from John Pit to Paddockhall turn. It was a great day at John Pit when it was completed. The first coals were taken to the river on the 8 of October, 1810, with 21 guns firing on the balast hills. (70) My farther was playing on the fiddle down the waggonway on the top of the first waggon. (71) When 50 yards from the Staith, one of the guns burst in 3 peaces, and one peace cleared my Fauthers head^{by} 12 inches. But I was charged not to

* chalder (tech.) = a measure of coal, on Tyneside
53 cwt.

- (67) This paragraph heading is in fact the only reference in the text to A.E.'s return from Benwell to the South side of the Tyne.
- (68) Landsale - the production of coal for sale to a local market to which it was transported by land, as distinct from 'seasale', the production for more distant markets to which it was transported by sea. Most of the Tyne collieries sold most of their coal by sea and therefore counted as seasale collieries.
- (69) After the title of this section the MS reads 'April the 18 1811': but a different date is given a few sentences later.
- (70) balast hills - the Ballast Hills were along the river bank and were formed from ballast dumped by incoming coal ships.
- (71) Old Robert Errington was now aged 79 and had been retired for nearly 10 years, but having worked in so many of the Pelling pits in his day he was invited to attend the official opening of this new one.

tell him by Mr Brandling lest it would damp his spirits. He had to dine with the Company at Felling Unicorn Inn. One John Hunter had my Fathers fiddle in Charge while the Company was at Dinner and he was playing to please the Company downstairs, when Mr Straker came down, seized the fiddle and Broke it over a Chair top. After he was informed what he had done, he sent to Felling Hall for his own fiddle. My fathers fiddle lay broke 12 years and then Straker got it repaired which cost £1. 4s. I got my Fauther safe home and thus Ended the great day at the first Coals from the John Pit.

66. HARDWARE SHOP IN THE SIDE. (72) The shop belonged to 2 Brothers, Turnbull ther name. I Anthony entered the Shop once to buie a gimlet and handsaw file. One of the brothers was up stairs poorly and at 3 Oclock P.M. the Shop filled of people in a fue mincts. I was requested to look to a little and had to wait for 1½ hours. I was going to Leave, having got the gimlet and file when a Cart stopped at the door. The owner came in and said to Mr Turnbull, "Will you take your Money?" Mr Turnbull said to me to stop. The man paid £15 for goods he had ^{had} Cridet for and I had to witness the payment. He then ordered £15 more goods to be redey on the tuesday following. 2 months after I called at the Shop to buie a pair of Pliers. They was laid on the Counter for me when a young Gentleman came in and said these was just what hee wanted. Heare the second time the shop filled and I was left waiting and keeping an eye on the goods for the Turnbull: for 1½ hours. The Brother that had been poorly said, "Good god, what an unlucky man is this!" At last the People got served and I was going away when the same Cart stopped again and the Owner spoke to mee. The Merchant paid £15 again which I had to witness.

(72) the Side - a street in Newcastle leading down to the Quay.

Then Mr Turnbull and mee and I went to the pack horse and had a glass a peace. The Merchant travelled Northumberland and the borders of Scotland. Mr Turnbull told him of the shop filling twice and he said, "God! Providence was with me!"

67

TEMPTATION TO BEE WITNESSED ON MAN. One Saturday I was in Newcastle and with my Brother in Law at the Cock, head of the Side. 2 well dressed Men of the Scotch Dialect was their, who would treat us with Spirits. They said they had come from the South and they wanted a Strong man who would assist one of them to take there trunk down to the queyside. They said Brother might go home and I would do very well. At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 I went with the 2 men. I asked where the trunk was and they said, "We will soon be their." On the North side of St Nicklos Church yard was a wood Railing, and on going down the railing there was 3 of the rails out. This way these 2 men got into the Church yard. I made Warter and Considered that they might murder mee and send me off to Edinburgh. Wheron I made the best of my way to Newcastle bridge and from there home. I had been in a grave before.

68

A MAN PREVENTED FROM HANGING. On the 21 February 1811 I had bean at South Shealds on business for the Colliery. Returning home on Hebran fell a man came riding hard and said, "My lad, can you run? Their is a man going to hang himself! Follow mee!" He turned off the road and I followed him, having run $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, and at the upper end of a field, the Servint man of George Worker was up a tree. He had a rope fast to the tree when the horsman got hold of him and said, "Come down, thou must not do that this time!" I led the horse and he led the man to the Farmhouse and dilivired him to his Master with Orders to watch him. His name was Lightfoot. The horse man and I had a pint of ale at Low heurth. He told me he was Ellington the Miller. He was called a wise man in the district. When we parted at huerth bridge, he said to me, "You are not easily fritened?" I said, "No!" I had not gone 100 yds when Lightnings flew on all sides of me, yet I

took no hurt. I saw the wise man once again in Gateshead and he said, "How did you get home?" and he lafed and said he was jesting. 4 years after the farm servant did hang himself.

69

GEORGE HAWKES DRUNK. One Setarday night I was returning from Gateshead. It had snowed 2 hours, but the moon got up and 50 yds from gateshead street, Sunderland road, I saw a man lying covered up by the snow. I hollowed him and he answered. Then I got him up and led him to hewarth. The bad language he had would have made any man leave him on the road. We got to Huerth and had one pint of ale, then I left him. 14 days after, he and his wife was in the Bucher Market. He said he was own me a pint and I went with him, with the result that the wife did not know what to say bad of me. That evening he had got two much and Cowpod^{xi} the Cart at Robers Corner near dark, the wife in the cart. As I was returning home, I had to set to and get them gathered out of the gutter. Then she had nothing to say. Shortly after, I met them again in Gateshead. He had just denied my Fauther of carrying his Market Poak^{xii} in his cart to Felling. I told him one good turn deserved another. But they said it was not their wish to do any good turn to a papist. Where on I said, "I will see thee lying in the gutter before thou dies." 3 weeks after, I found them in the same ditch at Robus Corner. I stood and looked. They was no worse but boath drunk and the Limer of the cart broke. I gothered them up the second time. She said, "I thought a papist would not have done so to a protestint!" I left them to go home.

70

SHIFTING TO PERCY MAIN. (73) Mr Strakers fine promises to Anthony proved false. He gave George Douglas 24s per week and

xi cowped (dial.) = tipped, turned over.
poke (dial.) = sack, bag.

(73) Percy Main - a colliery and hence a village of the same name on the N. side of the Tyne about 6 miles E of Newcastle. The Colliery was named after the local landowning and coalowning family, the Percys, Dukes of Northumberland.

and could give Anthony no more than 18s, though Douglas was no better workman. On this I left Felling and went and engaged myself at Percy Main and started on April 24, 1811. I left against my will. I was leaving my aged father with none to help him but 2 sisters. But Straker's coldness to me was back. Mr. Robson the Steward wished me to stop in Mr Brandling's employment and said Straker was out of his head. (74) But I had received Arles^m then for to go to Percy Main.

71 My enemies reported that I had gone to a place where I could not make a livelihood for my family. Yet my first pay for 14 days was £3 1s 0d. And on the 17 May my son Robert started at Percy Main, waiting on the Banksman, John Taylor, and received wages with me for 9 days at 1s per day. When done with that, he was employed with his father.

[72] [MY SON VERY ILL] The Howden pit holed into the Percy pit and the water which came through had been standing 3 years and was like as much Vitrol. (75) Robert and I had to work on the way half legs depth in this water for 12 hours on the 24 July 1812. He got washed and breakfast and went by water to Felling. When he got there he took very ill and got the doctor, who said he was in a fever. I also went to bed and could get no warmth in my feet and legs. So I got one gill of Brandy and washed them in it and wrapped them close up in flannel. Then I went to bed again and I got 3 hours sleep. And being all over sweating, I was quite well on Sunday morning. On the Sunday night I went to work at 6 o'clock

* arles (dial.) = a present of money given to a workman when he joined a new employer or commenced a new agreement.

(74) A.S. had worked for the Brandlings for nearly 20 years: his father had worked for them for 30 years before that.

(75) Howden - a village near Percy Main Colliery which gave its name to one of the pits.

and got home at 10 on the Monday when I received a Letar saying that Robert was ill. I made no delay but got the Steamboat up and was at my Fathers at 12 Clock. (76) The Doctor came at the time and I told him what was the cause of the fever and what I had done to myself. He called for a bottle of brandy direct and washed him with it. This being done I had to leave him to go to work that night at 6 Clock. My Son was 14 weeks down of the Fever. The Soles of his Feet nearly came off. Afterwards I bound him to Mr Huisan of Newcastle to be a Painter, plumer and guilder for 7 years. He served faithfully to his Master and the Master was faithful to him and made him a complete tradesman. God be with him wheare Ever he goes.

73

1813 HOWDEN PIT BLASTED. On the Whitsunday night 44 men descended the pit. The Overman George Cooper and 2 deputies went to the East drift, where there was a blower of gas in one of the boras. They found a stone had fallen and knocked down an air door and they put the door up again. But meanwhile the foul air came along the back headways and into the main way to the shaft. (77) I and 6 wastemen had got on to work there when I saw the Candle was just at the Firing point. (78) I shouted, "Put out the Lows!" Andrew Bell said, "Lord have Mercy upon us, we are all dead men!" I assumed the Comand and said to Ritcherd Martan, "Run and put out all the Lights and Stir up the furnice and make the flame go

(76) According to the standard local histories, the first steamboat only reached the Tyne in 1814, two years after this episode.

(77) The collapse of an air door had disrupted the ventilation of the pit. As a result, the gas from the blower had accumulated and was moving the wrong way, towards the place where A.E. and his gang were working.

(78) The presence of gas in the air is shown by changes in the shape and colour of a naked flame. A.E. saw from his candle flame that the quantity of gas in the air around them was almost sufficient for an explosion to occur.

up the shaft." No had to tell the furnaces and then got the
Pore, broke up the fire and the gass fired in the shaft and went
up into the high Regens. (79) It blasted 6 times and the whole
Country around soon was at the pit. A man on a horse went off to
Walls End for Mr Buddle. (80) None would come down until he came
 $\frac{1}{2}$ past 9 he came and Samiell Cooper with him and the Swot was
dropping off them. There was 2 doors to Percy pit and the Scale
came through to Howden. One man was going to throw open this
door but I told him he was to stop and to keep his Light in, which
he did. One man went in the Dark to the Overman who would not
come out. After 2 hours waiting in silince the Man came back
from the Furnace and told us that all was well. We got Lights
and begun work. When Mr Buddle came down he was astonished at
seeing the Candles burning after the pit had blasted, and he said,
"Men, how is this?" Andrew Bell said, "Mr Buddle, had it not
bean for Anty Errington, wee would have bean all dead men. He
scried^z it just at the firing point, and you know what is heare,
3 yds off - 18 boards and 16 pillers of creeper waste bared off

^z scried (dial.) = detected, observed.

(79) The gas was deliberately exploded as it passed over the ven-
tilating furnace at the foot of the shaft. As it was night
time and there were few men in the mine, the furnace fire was
low, and hence the ventilation was poor and could not be trusted
by itself to carry the gas away to the surface. The furnace
fire had to be stirred up because most furnaces were so arranged
that the foul air passed up a by-shaft and avoided direct
contact with the fire. (This explanation attempts to make
sense of a very curious episode: it may be that an explosion
in the shaft was less dangerous than one in the workings, but
it was still a very dangerous occurrence - and not perhaps an
altogether necessary one.)

(80) Mr. John Buddle, whose home was at Walls End, a village
near Howden, was the most eminent colliery viewer of this period.
The supervising engineer of many mining concerns in the North
East, he was also consulted professionally by coalowners in all
the other British coalfields. He acted for many years as the
Secretary of the "Vend" - the famous cartel of North East mines
selling coal on the London market - and he was one of the found-
members of the Society for Preventing Accidents in Mines, the
body whose activities led to Davy's invention of the safety-lamp.
Buddle gave evidence on the subject of the coal trade and on the
subject of accidents in mines before several parliamentary
committees. A man of some education and culture (unlike most
of the earlier colliery engineers), he was a friend, or at least
a respected acquaintance, of many of the great coalowners of the
North East.

by a bord end stopping!" (81) Mr Buddle said, "Godd god, what Providence! Such a thing for me! The pit to blast and no man hurt! The like has not bean in the Anells of history!" Mr Buddle proceded further in and on returning brought the Overman out with him, who would not believe that it was so. Every man that was in the Pit was ordored to be at the Ofice at 12 Oclock on the Monday. Mr Buddle had all the Owners of the Colliery preasant. Andrew Bell was calld in first and said to the Owners, "Anthony Errington was the first that seried it Just when it was going to fire. He gave the Comand to put out the Lows and ordered Ritchená Martan to the Furnice. He saved all our lives." Anthony was then called on. Mr. Buddle said, before the owners of the Colliery, "Thee hath saved thy own Life and all the Men and Horses and the Colliery. I will confer the Overman's place on thee." I thanked him but said there was young men in the Colliery coming up in Exptacion of such places, I had served 7 years a trade all I wanted was to live by my trade, he should give his favor to such as I had mentioned. He answered and said, "Owners of this Colliery, did ever Man make a more Pathitick speach toward his fellow Man?". Mr Buddle shock hands with me and said, "Anthony, thee shalt live by thie trade all the days of thie Life." Which promise he fulfilled to his death. (82)

(81) creeper waste - a part of the waste in which the pillars of coal had collapsed under a 'creep', that is, an advancing pressure wave of the strata above. Such an areawas usually badly ventilated and hence was often full of gas.

(82) Since Buddle did not die till 1843, and since all the other evidence suggests that A.E.'s account was written before 1830, this statement must be regarded as merely a rhetorical flourish.

The society was to consist of overmen, deputies, wastemen, hewers and others. Both pits being in a dangerous state, I intended one meeting and I saw clearly that the Overmen downed each one that spoke. (83) But I wished to be heard and I said this. Supposing a fire to take place underground. The explosion breaks down the air doors. Then the whole of the Air escapes from the Interior of the mine. So the after damp* is left which produces death to those men meeting it. Having explained this, I then proposed an Improvement which I saw was what was needed. I was shouted at by the Overmen in great derision, what did I know?, but silence was insisted on by the hewers who said I was to speak and not to be interrupted. I said that there should be a valve door used underground, whose frame should be cut in the solid Coal or Stone on each side and with strong hinges to keep the air in its course after a fire. (84) The following morning Mr Buddle came down. One of the hewers told him how the Society was conducted and that Anthony Errington had made a proposition which was nocked down by the Overmen. Mr Buddle came to me and inquired what it was concerning. I told him and he said, "Come with me to the shaft of

* after damp - an asphyxiating gas which appeared after a mine explosion. (see footnote 84.)

(83) A.E. means that the overmen, who should have been the technical brains of the mine, treated the suggestions put forward by the inferior workmen with great contempt.

(84) A.E.'s argument here is sound, and the suggestion which he claims to have made was a sensible one, although not perhaps an original one. The high mortality associated with gas explosions in mines was due, not to the direct effects of blast, but to the generation in the explosion of an asphyxiating gas ('after-damp' = ~~after-damp~~), which, because of the blowing down of the air doors and the consequent disruption of the ventilation, drifted through the workings killing all in its path. A.E. therefore suggested the installation of swinging air doors which would give way to the blast and then fall shut again. In this way normal ventilation would be resumed immediately after the explosion and the gas would be rendered harmless by mixing with the incoming air. Doors of this type were adopted in several collieries at about this date.

- 22 -

Howden pit." He marked the place and the door was made and a frame cut in the top and side so that a blast would keep it up either way it came. The same like door and frame was done at Percy pit.

[75] [SAVED BY A DOG] After this, all that attended the Society was treated with a super at North Shields, Mr Buddles intent being that we should frame Love and Friendship toward each others welfare. We parted all friendly and returned home. On the road, a strange Dog came to me and walked close. I said, "Poor fellow, has thee lost this Master?" I gave him a peace Spice and he kept with me. I then dwelled at Howden, and on my way there had no company but the dog which I called Tom. In the last quarter of a mile, going along a foot path I heard a faint moan. When I stopped, 2 men got up from some bushes and said, was I going to Howden? I answered, yes. He said, "Have you any mony?" I answered, I had 1s 6d. He said, "B..... your eyes, lets have your Money!" Whereon the dog downed him. The other Man seeing the dog upon his Marrow^z attempted to rescue him, and evaded me when I rushed to strike him. I then run away and had gone one hundred yards when I herd a foot coming after me. I sweated thinking it was the men but it was only the dog which licked my left hand and left Blood on my hand and then Incircled me. I walked home over ditch and hedge and it kept 20 yds distent. On reaching home, I gave it super and it lay down.

z marrow (disl.) = mate, associate.

[THE DOG STOLEN] The dog stayed with me for some time. But one day as my second son was taking the Dog out on a string at dinortime, one Gordon a Shipwright, seeing the Dog, took it from my boy. I got home from work at 2 Clock P.M. and found the boy in tears. So I said I would go soon and get the dog back. Gordon was a Stranger to me but had a fitting black Carrecter. I feared him so that when I went to a publick house to find him, I sent an Old Man for him. When he came, I told him I had sent for him to Drink first, which he did. Then I asked him by what Athoroty he had taken the Dog from my Boy. He flew in a rage and was for nocking my Eycs out. But I called on a Constable to take Gordon and we would go direct to a Magistrate and the Dog with us. The Constable a taylor by trade took him in the Kings name as preasner. When he found this, he calmed himself and said, "B..... the Dog, I will go and fech hit." Which he did and delivered it on the string to Constable and said he would have nothing more to do with it. Whereon I paid the Constable 2 quarts of Ale and 1s 6d for he had lost $\frac{1}{2}$ of a day. The Constable spent the shilling on more ale. Then the Boy came and took the dog home. On the Setarday I took the dog to my Fauthers and there it was a gardien to him and Sister. Its ferther history will be related here after. (85) Thus once more Divine Providence sent the gardien to rescue me from the Robers.

FIRE IN HOWDEN PIT UP THE DIKE TO THE WEST. By this fire some men were burnt and one had his leg broke. And one boy fell down the pit when coming up. That night several Men went to make all wright. A short time after, the pit fired again and the coal and timber in the bord took fire. No

(85) Nothing further about the dog appears in the account as we have it.

ships Gun and Balls and intended to fire up the boards. But Mr. Buddle coming before the gun had gone down, led water and the fire engine was used instead and put the fire out. The gun was not used for fear of ingering the stoppings. However there was a Blower in the north headways which burst down the Blue Stone and came out of the post stone and hissed like a Serpent. Mr. Buddle decided to trie the utiety of the gun with this blower. He requested as many as had any desire to see the experiment tryed to go to the bord. A musket was brought and then I with a long Lathe set the blower on fire which was 8 feet above the Coal head. The fire was 2 yds long and 2 feet thick, when the musket was loaded with ball and fired, and it put the blower out. It was tried a second time and was the same, und a third time. And we was satisfied that the Cannon would have put the fire out had it been used at the board. (86)

78

BODILY FEAR OF SIX MEN. This was in the same way up the dike. John Marchel and I was partners. On the Sotarday at 2 Oclock P.M. we was shifting the Crain 2 pillers. We had been at work some time before this happened. We heard a noise as a tram^z running and Marshel went to see who was working. But he could see no One. He came and told me he could not find them. I said, 'Never mind, let us have our own work done.' Then 6 Men came down to start work, and before they started they herd the noise of a tram running up one board and down the other. So they came to see if we had been running a tram. The answer was, 'No, not us.' They said the pit was hanted and they durst not start. They went for Samiell Cooper, the Viewer, and he came

* tram (tech.) = waggon used for carrying timber, rails, etc.

(86) Accounts of Buddle's life refer to his experiments with percussion as a fire extinguisher at about this time. He was carrying out these experiments on behalf of the newly founded Society for Preventing Accidents in Mines.

with Bible and Prayer Book, and accused us - 'what had we been
frietning the men for?' We said we had not done soo. We had
to leave off work and go with them 3 bords to the South where
there was othor 3 to the Barrier. We was all to go to prayer
when Marshel herd the tram again and exclaimed, 'D... there its!'
When the sound came longer and stronger and Nothing to see they
was sure there was going to be a Hevey Misfortune. Being all
in Constornation they would not stop in the pit. I said, 'If
you all go away Marshel and I will stop. I have no feare on
me, we will have our work done first.' I said, 'Can none of
you Percieve what it is?' No, they could see nothing. I said,
'Sammie, they are loading the rollies in Jarrow Corperation way
and thats what we hear.'⁽⁸⁷⁾ Sammie Cooper gave a great shout -
'Who was aw tolling that tee?' I made answer and said he might
go to Jarrow and inquire and he would find it to be the case.
He said neither me nor no man could make him believe that we
could hear throw one hundred yds of Solid Coal. But he went
and found as I had said. After they left us wee got our work
done and got safe home. The way was to be ready on the Monday.
On Sunday night Overmen and Depeties in full muster came in and
Marshel and I was there. The way started and at 4 Oclock Mr.
Buddle came and Cooper told him what had transpired. Mr. Buddle
came to me and said, 'Let us sit down.' Being seated, he said,
'Anthony, thee has made a grand discovery! Thee hath a
penetrating mind in a coal mine. Thee hath done a good deed.
The pit would have been laid in had thee not made the Discovry.'
And he said I was a perticular man. I said the wise men of
Percy Main called me a fool - what did I know?. But I judged
them not. I was possessed with a lively Faith in the Providence
of God over mee, and I cared not what the world said on me.

(87) Jarrow Corperation way - Jarrow faces Percy Main across the
River Tyne, and Jarrow colliery worked the coal under the river
next to that worked by Percy Main colliery. Corperation Way
was presumably a district of Jarrow colliery.

Mr. Buddle said, 'There is something what put that in your head, Anthony.' I answered, "Experience. I was at Felling Colliery when waste men and viewers came from St. Antons Colliery where coal was worked in the high main before Felling. (88) These waste men was sure that the Felling pit would hole in a few days because they had herd the Pick and Mell and wedge clear, although the Felling should have left a 50 yds Barrier. So the Felling men stopped the work 5 hours without Equenting Mr. T. Barns, the viewer, and lined the pit. (89) The following day Mr. Barns and 2 depeties came at night and Lined the pit. I had to go with him to assist, when it was discovered that the shortest length of board to drive was 18 yds, while some were 20 - 25 and the farthest was 30 - 36, while still leaving 50 yd of barrier. That is the fact, Mr. Buddle." "I am quite satisfied. Mr. Barns would be Correct. Your statement is good. You and your partner must get your lowens, and Samie will pay it." Thus a noise could be herd throu the Soled Coal 118 yds. This explained the hearing and not seeing at this time.

[79] [OUT FROM THE TRAPOT]. I was drinking tea at the new hare and hounds, Newcastle quey, one day after Mr. Thomas Dods, Viewer at Hebron colliery, lost his life. Mr. Buddle established the widdow with what is called a Monadge, that was, to pay 5s. or 10s. per fortnet for linen and wearing aparall. (90) On the pay Setarday I called to pay my own money and that of other two. On going to Mrs. Dodds' room there was 12 women there getting tea. I was asked to sit down and get a cup with them. But ^{it} was Brandy out from the tea pot. I was astonished. I had to take Mrs. Dodds' book, and write down the money for each man's name. The whole Company was in Capable of walking alone so at 3 Oclock P.M. I led Mrs. Dods to the Hebron boat. The W/heriman and I each took two of the women and we got them all and their marketing in to the

(88) St. Antons - St. Anthony's colliery, across the Tyne from Felling.

(89) lined the pit - surveyed and measured the workings, to make sure they were not approaching too near St. Anthony's.

(90) monadge - apparently a clothing club.

boat. I went with them to Heddon. I took care of Mrs. ...
and set her home. I gave her the book and the money and then
parted for Percy Main.

80

EMERIGE OF A WOMAN. One day I was going along the footpath
toward North Shields near Chirton when I met 2 wimon. (91) One
said, "Come along with us and I will put a wife in your hand."
I walked along with them. I met a man who said, good day, and
told me to be aware. (92) I was aware of sumthing that they was
going to, it was to drink tea at the sign of the Wormouth bridge.
But when we got there, this womens father and mother and Samuell
Cooper were there. And these was so pleased that I had comed
with the woman Jane. I was to have gone to work at 6 Oclock but
Samiell said he would excuse my going that night. And Jane and
I, we would Ingage our selves. On the Sunday, a fortnet after,
her Brother came and I was to go down to his house near six
Oclock at night very dark. I told him I would come shortly.
Then I praid to god to gard me in the Jurnee and back. As I was
going down a Narrow pass I went with my breast against a gate post
which gave me a Stunner. I thought, "Thou art as an Angel of god
who met Balom in the way!" (93) But I considered to go on and
make no stop. I went. At the house, the botels were brought
on to the table to help our self. In comes Samiell Cooper a
widdower as myself, and was so glad to see me their, and nothing
would serve but to have the wedding day apointed. But I was not
well from the Stun I got so I begd to be excused, I was quite
unwell.

I returned home and saw Jane two times after that and then
she left home. I called to see her and the Mother said she had
gone away to work at a house where the Housekeeper was ill. In
duo time some months afterwards I met a lad from the North. He

(91) Chirton - a hamlet on the West side of North Shields, not
far from Percy Main.

(92) This very significant story is unfortunately told confusingly.
Remember that A.E. was a widower in his mid-thirties; and
remember that when two women offered him a wife, a stranger (who
presumably knew the two women) told the rather simple A.E. to
beware.

had come to Percy Main to break an Engine and the Engine not being ready, he was to Labour to me. The first night he told me what a surprise his Landlady had put him under. He had mentioned to her one Jane whom he had met in the North at Spittal where she was lying in at her Aunts, and the Landlady had wished him down never to mention that to No One. (94) I was kind to the lad and got the whole Secret from him. A short time after, the Overseer from Tweedmouth came and the child was a boy, father was Samie. (95) He sold the child to Mr. and Mrs. Hogg to bring up for £25 and his friends reported I had bribed Jane to father on him. Where on one woman who new my family went to see this child, and she said it was none of Anty's get, his children had strong bone in them. It was not mine. I had nothing to do with the woman. The man that I met the day I met Jane near Chirton had told me to be aware, and I was well aware that she would not do for me. She was a soldier's wife, he a deserter and then in Ireland. The child lived 6 weeks and then died. The Brother's Son went to Mr. Hogg to have the money returned but no money was returned. (There was 5 in kindred bitter Enemies.)

[82] [NO MORE PEACE AT PERCY MAIN] After this I had no more peace at Percymain. The way was to be let afresh and I was cut out by one of my men by making Sam a present of a Pig 18s vallius. (96)

(94) Spittal - a fishing village near Berwick on Tweed, 60 miles N. of Percy Main.

(95) overseer from Tweedmouth - the Overseer of the Poor, a Parochial official one of whose jobs was to establish the paternity of bastard children born in the parish; Spittal was in the parish of Tweedmouth.

(96) Waggonwaymen worked on contract, and Sammy Cooper the Overman say to it that A.E.'s contract was not renewed. As A.E. goes on to explain, this meant a heavy financial loss. Waggonwaymen paid part of the expense of laying way out of their own pockets, but after that had only to maintain the way and were paid a bonus for every score of waggons that used it. A.E. lost his contract before the maintenance-bonus recouped his capital outlay.

Thus I was deceived in my Agreement. I had laid 3 Inclines and found the Nails and Candles for Score price which at the

beginning did not pay wages. So I had to suffer loss. When I left I was £15 in dot for nails and candles and the total loss was £30. I went to Fawdon as Waggonwright and in one year redeemed £15.⁽⁹⁷⁾ The next year I got all Stright.

Thus I many a time said the gate post was as an angel in the way to deter me from the woman. May God Judge between us, he is dead and I am living. His Son George Cooper was called the wisest man in Percy Main. It was he that shouted me down at the Society, and what did I know?.

[84] [INGAGED AT FAWDON] I was ingaged at Fawden Colliery as Waggon and Waggonway wright at 19s per week. I started on the 12 August 1814. I was at Lodgings 2 months and then, when I was beginning to make 12 Chaldren Waggons at 1s 4d per piece, I got a house and coals at Hensharber. My Daughter Ann, 14 years of Age, was my housekeeper. But there was at that time a Fever raging and she took the Fever and died in 2 days. Which was a Loss greatly felt. She was buried at Gosforth. I got a houskepr that I had before at Felling. I was Careful and saved all I could to pay detts and I got all paid.

85 A VISION. I went to Newcastle and bought the Market and sent it home. There was 2 Brothers called Howays and John Stewert, a Catholic, and we had a drink of Ale and passed away the Evening. It was 11 Oclock when wee 4 set off home to Kenton by the foot path from the Kowgate along the West end of the Moor.⁽⁹⁹⁾ On this path the Brothers was in deap Jrgiment Consorning the Isralites at the pasage of Jurden. One said the

(97) Fawdon - a colliery and village about 3 miles N.W. of Newcastle.

(98) A.E. denies again that he was the father of Jane's child. Be that as it may, he did have at least one illegitimate child. According to the register of the local Roman Catholic chapel, "Die 12 Aug 1810 nata est... Sarah, filia Ant. Errington et Joannae Richardson..." No other Ant. Errington appears in this register: our A.E. had been a widower for eighteen months when this child was born. It is perhaps unlikely that the 'Joanna' of 1810 was the Jane of 1814.

(99) the Moor - the Town Moor, an open tract, lay between Newcastle and Kenton, the next village to Fawdon.

were Murderers, the other the Contrary. ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ John Stuart and I left them and walked on. We was within one hundred yards of the North hedge when we met 2 women with hoods on, one man before, 4 bearers and pall and Corps, one man behind. Close to this was following the same on the foot path. We stood off on one side and counted 43 Corps. We walked forward and the last 2 or 3 came swimming over the hedge. We followed the last and they all Esended over the hedge to the West. We walked up to the Brothers who was still in argiment. We said to each other that they had not seen the Vission and we kept it from them. We thought to ourselves that it was a forerunner of some great Misfortune. Raulph Jackson, Ingine Wright at Fawden, related the Vision that Stewart had seen 4 days after and asked me what I thought on hit. I studied and said I was Arm in Arm with Stuart at the time. He was astonished how I could keep secret such a thing. His thought was the same as ours, the fore noledge of a great Misfortune.

86

On the 3 of June Heaton pit holed the Jesment waste under the toon moore, which debarred 50 and upwards of getting out of the pit. They was there 6 months and had life for some months. ⁽¹⁰¹⁾ One Sunday morning I got up at 4 Oclock. I could not rest and went out to walk. I was led by the Speret to heaton pit. I was standing looking at the pumping engine when the Engine Man said, had I any kindred in the pit? I answered, no. He said

(100) Joshua, chapters 3 and 4. But A.E. seems to have confused the story of the crossing of the Red Sea with that of the crossing of the Jordan.

(101) The disaster at Heaton colliery (on the Northern outskirts of Newcastle and some of whose workings may well have been under the Town Moor) occurred on the 3rd of May (not June), 1815. 75 workmen were trapped by an inrush of water from the waste of a nearby abandoned mine at Jesmond. The bodies were not recovered till nine months after the disaster. It was popularly supposed that the victims had remained alive for part of this time: in fact all were dead within a few hours of the first inrush of water, being either drowned or asphyxiated by the gases which were driven into the workings where they had taken refuge.

Mr. Buddle and the wastemen was down, he was expecting them back every minot. He sined to me to stop. They shortly after came up very miry and exasted. They requested some Spiret and revived and walked home. Mr. Buddle said, had I any friends below? I answered, no. He then asked me the reason of my being their. I told him I was not my own Master. I was led by the Devine Speret to that Intorview. Then I returned home to the Femely.

87 HUNGRY MILKMAID. Before my daughter died we got one pint now milk in the evening. One day I had got my tea and was done when she came with the milk. I asked her to have a cup of tea. She said she would, she had not got one bite that day. Wheare on daughter put more tea in, I cut some bread and daughter put butter on. We said she was to make a good tea and welcome. She said their was not a bite of bread in her house. When she got home with the milk they got each a penny roll and milk. The femely shortly after left Kenton and I saw the girl no more for 13 years. Then one day I was going to South Shields and in the Sleck Row their was a Woman called after me, was my name Anty Errington? I said, yes. "Come heare, I want you!" I returned back and was asked to go into the house. What did you want with me, I said. Her husband was sitting and said, come in. She said to her husband, "This is the man that saved my life when I was dieing of hunger!" She said I was to have some thing to eat and drink. I took a slice of Beef and Musterd and a glass of rum. Her husband said she had told him 100 times of that, and I was quite welcome. Her name was Hope and she said she had not changed her name for her husband's name was Hope too. Thus I was rewarded after 13 years.

88 THE SECOND VESSION ON NEWCASTLE MOORE. I had been at Fellin and left after diner and going throw Newcastle I called at the

Fawdon house. The same John Stuart was thur and was going away. I desired him to stop and take a share of my pint, then I would go with him. We set off and the sun set when we were entering on to the Moore. Crossing to the grandstand we saw a great company of men cuming up the North side and said to each other that they had bean at a burial at Gosforth. We walked hard to fall in with them. But soon they was out of speaking with, and we stood and waited to see what road they took. They escended over a hill and went out of sight. Wee waited to see them rise the other hill. We thought they was long and went forward to see. Nothing their. We went up to the Kowgate and inquired after the men, their was none come their. This was a short time after the Heaton men was got and burrid. It pleased good in his Devino Providence to reward us with the figgure of Soles as Men in the Dawn of the Day. We said, God give rest to these Sowls.

89

THE ALNWICK DATE. Ralph Lawson, Bankman at Fawdon, had a sumens for the court of Alnwick.⁽¹⁰²⁾ He came to me for their was no time to be lost, and I went with him to the Master. There was upwards of £3 to be paid and they advanced him £4 10s and told him he would have time for the 5 Clock Coach to Morpeth. He set off and got all settled and returned. At the Kowhill fair that year their was 16 of us Fawdon men in company, and the Master and a Schoolmaster of Dinnington Colliery came in and was hearty with us. The Master said ho was glad to see the best of the Colliery there. It was agreed we was to sing a song each or pay one glass. 2 songs was sung and it was the Schoolmaster next. He said ho could not sing but would relate an Anick date. On hearing which Lawson exclaimed, "Away with your Anick dates,

(102) Alnwick - a market town 30 miles N. of Newcastle.

let us have a Newcastle one!" On which the whole company burst into laughter. The Schoolmaster up and left the company much offended. He could not refrain from the Anick date, but it was Newcastle date that evening.

90

SAVING A MAN'S LIFE. At Fawdon I was returning home on a very stormy night with drifting snow on the road side. The foot path 4 feet breadth was covered up. I was on the middle of the road when I heard a moaning and sought the cause. I got a man out of the snow where he was benumbed with cold. I had 100 yards to get him to my home and I warmed him by the fire. He was the same Doctor Anderson that I had once before rescued. When he came round and looked at me, he exclaimed, "Good god, this Anty! Thee has saved me the 2nd time. I did not know who it was till now. God be praised for his Providence over me or in the morning I would have been dead." I got supper but he could eat little and went to bed. In the morning he got breakfast and the road being blown up, had to make for the turnpike road to Newcastle. This Doctor Anderson was always travelling with pills and was subject to get two much. He was an honest man, well respected in the Counties of Durham and Northumberland. He dwelled in Gateshead to his death.

91

LEAVING FAWDON. I had got the waggon finished and was repairing when on the pay night I was informed that my wages would be the next pay 3s per day, that was 1s per week off. On the Monday I got a message to go down to Gosforth, there was one wanted me. (103) When I got there it was Mr. Thos King, the Viewer for Mr. Brandling. He had bought 10 waggons at Murton and wanted a

(103) Gosforth - a village 2 miles N. of Newcastle.

waggon wright. On saying that to Mr. Wm. Brandling, he said, where was the Erringtons? "I demand one of the Erringtons, my old servants." Thus I went down and was engaged giving 11 days notice to quit. It was 3 weeks before I got a house. I got 20s per week. I was working at Gosforth when Bell and Brandling bought Cocklodge Colliery and on the first of August 1817 every man was trot with strong bear, with colours flying and cannon firing. (104) I made the new frames and was fully employed for the first year. I then had to go to Cocks Lodge to work.

[92] [LEAVING GOSFORTH] But when one Richard Marshall had to leave Little Gosforth and go to assist to put up high Howth Engine, I was ordered down to Little Gosforth to take charge of what was wanted. He had been 3 weeks at Howth when I met him at one o'clock at the Barros bridge. He had his marketing and was going to Dean Houses. I stopped him and told him what had occurred. Then on the Sunday morning a shave maker, John Brown, called and said he was going to Longbenton with shaves and I went with him. When we got to the burn the water had taken away the plank, and we had to go down to the railway bridge. There we saw Marshal, a Brakeman, Banksmen, 2 Depeties and one blacksmith all at work cleaning out sum pipes that had furred up. That morning, before I went to Newcastle, I had asked the brakemen concerning these pipes and was told that they would go to our pay Saturday. But this was Marshal's pay Saturday. I told Marshal I would not be his 'beat need' and took my tools away on the Monday. (105) Mr. King coming on the Tuesday said I was to go to Gosforth. I said, no, I would have a hearing before Mr. Brandling. But he said he would not interfere between Mr. King

(104) Cocklodge - a hamlet near Gosforth.

(105) A.E.'s account of why he left Gosforth is far from clear. It would appear however that he caught the man Marshall doing certain work which, in view of the time and place, he considered should have been done by himself - and for which perhaps he would have received overtime pay. beat need - a dialect expression meaning, last resource, stand-in, stooge. One thing is clear from this episode - A.E. was becoming more crotchety as he reached middle age.

and I. I said, "Good day, Jontelmen." and went to heaton.
[93] [ENGAGED AT BACKWORTH] Joseph Smith told me they wanted a
waggon wright at Backworth so I set off there and was Ingaged
and came and started at one o'clock and worked quite Savege.
I would not stop to speak to no one for 10 days until after I
got paid and all cleared up. Then I got my tool chist to
Newcastle and from there to Backworth. September the 13, 1816,
Anthony Errington and his son, Anthony Renwick Errington, set to
work at Backworth Collicery at making waggons. After the pit got
in, the railway was to lay and incline to make. I was in the pit
12 months and more.

[94] [MARRIED AGAIN] My Fauther died when I was at Cocks Lodge at the
age of 86. I then was intent on marrieing and our nibour said,
"Surely you will give Mary the forst offer?" So I said, "Marie,
wilt thou have me?" She answered, shee would see what her
mother said. It was then 3 O'clock Setarday. She said she would
go direct and see what the answer was. She returned on the
Sunday night. They was agreeable, where on we got married. (106)

95 BACKWORTH PIT FIRE. We had lentheaned the plane by 2
pillers and on the Friday and Setarday set double doors above the
incline wheal. 3 men went down at 12 O'clock to clean the boards
of stones. When they opened the first door, it instantly fired,
blood down boath doors and burned the men. Before 1 O'clock I
got to the pit. Roger Hutton, one of the men that was burnt
was at the top of the pit. Another came to the botum and came
up. They boath died. Mr. Olliver came to me and said, durst
I go down with him? I said, yes. Mr. Olivr and I worked near
2 hours before any help came. We got the doors up and the

(106) A businesslike courtship on both sides. Why Mary had
the right to the first offer is not revealed, but can perhaps
be guessed. Mary's maiden name was Pearson. The baptisms
of two children are recorded in the registry of the Roman
Catholic chapel - Mary in 1819, George in 1821.

Brotishes and Stapons put up with deals. So the pit got to work again and I had to attend the railway.

[96]

[A PROMISE TO DRINK NO MORE] On pay night I got my money and set off home at 4 oclock. One William Grame was merry, so I took care of him and led him home. His house had stone steps at the end and the botum step was broken at the end of the handrail. As I got him into the house the falso step made me fall, and Grames girl said, "Mother, the mens drunk and fallen down." She brought a light, but I had lost nothing and got home at 8 Oclock. The next day my daughter Sarah had to ^{go} to the well for warter and Grames daughter was in company. (107) When the pot was filled Sarah had to help the other girl to put it on her head and then the girl should have lifted with one hand to help Sarah. But she walked away and said Sarah might get her drunken farther to help. Sarah had to wait one hour before a Woman came and helped her and came home with her. She was crying and relating to Mother when I got home from work. This praid upon my mind and I made my daughter a promise I would drink no more. I vowed to god not to taste speret or bear or small bear for one year. Which vow I kept for 13 months. Then at Worker I had imbibed gass in my chest and was bad for 3 weeks. I had to go to work one Sunday night and 2 depeties was to go with me. They was at the publick house and had hot Ale and Brandy. One said to me, "Thee is dissy on thy feet, drink that!" A glass offered I took it and had to run to the door to throw up. But I got a second and it stopped. I returned god thanks. I had taken it as a modison. I had recours to the same when poorly and thus ended my vow.

(107) Sarah is presumably the daughter of 'Joanna'; she is now aged about 8.

There was a lady, a profotress, who had pamphlets printed saying the Inchantment had to be broke on the Tynmouth races and faire day by a Dane. Mr. Taylor of Backworth applied to his wastemen for men to go and travell the subteraneous passages under the Castle. (109) He wanted one of them to take charge and to mark down the lenth of such places as were found. None of them would go first but I told him I durst go. There was 6 and I was 7, and a taylor belongen North Shealds went with us. We prepared 2 Davoo lamps, 2 Steelmills, 2 dried hadocks, and 2 lb. of candles. (110) On the fair day I went to a Spice Shop to get the Davoo lighted and the woman sceing it cried out it was an invinsable lamp. On taking the second she observed my red hair and shouted, "There is the Dane going to break the Inchant!" We decended a shaft 4 feet squair and to a depth of 12 feet, the botum being filled with stones. There was an Archway for 12 or 16 yds, creeping way, and then the hight was 7 feet, walled with newn stone from the shaft to the end where the wall ceased. The soil had fallen in after 50 yards. We looked but could see no more there. On the seabanks there was one more hole. We got all in by creeping 20 yds when we got into a place 16 feet long and 12 broad with 5 drifts from this. Looking up I observed day light through the

Tynemouth is

(108) Tynemouth castle enchantment - a town on the N. side of the mouth of the Tyne. The castle, a seventeenth century building on a medieval site, was partly reconstructed at the end of the eighteenth century as a barracks. The nature of the 'enchantment' is not explained in the text, and no references to it have been noted elsewhere.

(109) Mr. Taylor - the owner of Backworth Colliery.

(110) This lists the underground lighting equipment of the period. Candles were in general use. Where there was gas about, steelmills which threw out a shower of sparks and were considered (wrongly) to be incapable of igniting gas, were sometimes employed. As a last resort, miners occasionally tried to work by the phosphorescent glow thrown out by stale fish. The Davy lamp, the first safety lamp, had only been invented two or three years before this episode, and was not yet widely used.

brier bushes growing over the top. I then perceived that it had been used in the time of Seage as a Drawwell. There was a much decayed Sistron at the botum and stone spouts up each drift at the botum of a seam of coal and segar clay. The water was in the clay and had dripped into the Sistron. On looking round one of the men said, there was a Devil's Imp. I said, "Catch him, but, heare, take the taylor away first." On which he clung to my arm. This was a large spidar, its legs behind and before covered with hair, the body being near one inch long, quite black. (111) We then thought to return and going to the Timmouth inn the Landlord made a celebration for us. There was brandy, rum and jin for the ladies and it was who was to be first with hauf crowns on the table. The ladies on seeing the large spidars, fear was on some of them, but I told them not to be feared, they was only spidars. We paid the landlord and had 18s to good. We agreed to go to the Wormouth bridge and have supper privet, which we did, the taylor with us, then we returned home. (112)

98

THE JUES BUREEL GROUND AT BACKWORTH. I got a line from my Brother William to go and have dinner on board the Alexander of London loading coals at Cocks Lodge spout. I advised the master who he was to set on in my room, and went and had dinner and then went to Shealds. The ship did not go to sea that night because there was no moon so I stoped with my Brother and

(111) A sentence in the MS which is partly indecipherable is omitted here. It reads 'On searchen we found than a tobacco box.'

(112) When Tynemouth Castle was being reconstructed around 1800, several skeletons were discovered and there was much public interest in the ruins. But the only reference to a later exploration of the underground passages which has been noted is in W.S. Gibson, A Guide to Tynemouth, 1849, p. 130. This speaks of an exploration 'not many years ago', when a well and a square chamber were discovered.

sisters to $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 P.M. To go home I had to go to Chirton and up the Billimill lane. It was dark but the road was drie. I could just decern the house tops and tree tops. The Jues has a buriell plase there and on coming near it, I had the Contemplation that they would bee up on the Day of resorrection as well as those in the Church yard. When suddenly there was a ball of fire come from the West crossing 5 yd before me, and I felt the heat as it dasselled my eyes. I kept walking forward when I found I was on the back of something. At this my hare lifted my hat. It was running away with me. It then started to bray and I knew it was an ass. I got off and said, "Poor sillio beast, thee has given me a flayst!" I got very well home and went to work. At 2 Oclock Mr. Oliver came. I told him I had brought a couple of biskits and a slice of corned beef, and I related to him my jurnie and return. Mr. Buddle came at 4 Clock, but I did not see him, so he waited to 10 oclock to have the story from my own mouth. Mr. Taylor and he got a good larf at the Cudoyst and I. At this time the pit holed to a bore hole and the warter was beating the Ingine. All at hand was called to get prepared for plugging the hole. After 4 hours 17 men got the hole plugged, all getting as wet as water could make us. We was told to go and get brandy and injoy our selves. I got a pint of new Milk and stopped a short time and returned home.

99. SINGLOR BATELE IN NE CASTLE. On the Setarday morning the wife and I went to Newcastle market and in the Bucher market bought Beef and Mutton. The Bucher gave us a stake and went with us to the eating house in Dowrie lane, where he left us. We got what satisfied us and left 2 peaces of meat and bread.

st flay (dial.) = fright.
cuddy (dial.) = horse, donkey.

The house was boxed, one table and bench on each side. Each seat would take four and we took the right hand seat. I set the basket on the window, then 2 of Jurge Hawks' Blacksmiths came in. I offered them the plate and warm meat, which they accepted, then they got change and parted their money. They was sitting near the wife. On this a Farmer and a Miller with his dusty close came to sit on the other side of the table. The Farmer sat down but the Miller said, "I will not sit aside such durtie things." The Smith said, "The clean man and his wife had no felt with us sitting near them and you are a dustie miller." The miller said, "Thow little dirty thing, I will kick thie arse." The Smith said, "I dare fite thee." They went into the lane, the Brewer on one side and I the other to keep the croud back. They were a very unequall pair, the Smith was 7 stone, the Miller 18. They had 3 meetings. The Smith soon had the Miller blind and he had to be led into the house. The Landlord and the Company said the Miller was the first Egresor whereon he was to pay one gallon of Ale to the Company. He paid the gallon, and hauf an our after he would fite him again. The Brewer and I went out again and kept the crowd back. They had 3 more meetings. The Miller never hit the Smith. The last meeting the Miller was standing straddling and allowing the Smith to go behind throw between his legs. The Smith made the Blood flie out of his nose and shut one eye. The Miller gave in and was led into the house and paid the second gallon of ale. Before the second fite, I said to the Smith, "Thee is Mr. Hawksee man, hear, there is 5s for thee. Keep up they hart." 4 Months after I had to order some waggon wheals at Mr. Hawksee. Near 12 Clock P.M. the Clark and I was going to have a little Cheaso and Bread. On entering the house, the Smith was there

with his father and 6 brothers, and said, "Heere is the man that lent me 5s when I fit the great Millor." The elder brother jumped up and called for a glass of brandy. The Clerk said, no, not yet, the Smith was to go with us to Mr. Hawks. He said, "Good man. For backing my Servint, I will give thee 5s. Go and get your Lowens." I got no farther that day and passed the afternoon with farther and 7 sons. Afterwards they left Hawkes and went to Hull river.

100

TO WORKER. (113) Mr. Thos. King was viewer at Worker where he got 2 Engines and opened 2 pits to the botum. But he gave the owners up and they had to applic to John Straker to be viewer which he accepted. One John Foster and his 2 Sons had laid the railway down, and had 20 waggons to make when Mr. Straker entered. But Foster had drawn as much money as if the whole job had been finished. So Mr. Straker sent for me, and Mr. Taylor as senior master granting me to go, I was Ingaged as a more faithful servant.

(113) Worker i.e. Walker - a village and colliery 3 miles E. of Newcastle, and more or less opposite Felling.