

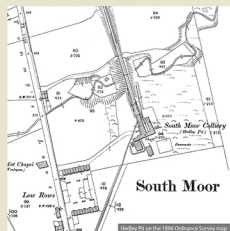
## The Hedley Pit

This is the site of the Hedley Pit. Thomas Hedley Brothers sank the pit in 1885, making it the last of the three deep mine pits on this trail. The shaft descended to a depth of 566 feet (172.5 metres) to reach the Low Main seam. This pit was worked for over 60 years, eventually closing in 1947.

During the First World War coal production fell across the country. The loss of manpower to the military services, the suspension of international orders and the difficulty of obtaining imported materials all contributed to this decline. At South Moor, the Hedley and Charley Pits were combined in an attempt to rationalise production. In 1914 Hedley yielded 302,636 tons (307,492 tonnes) of coal and Charley 116,935 (118,811 tonnes). By 1918 the combined output from both pits was only 232,129 tons (235,854 tonnes), less than half the pre-war total.



Hedley Pit in Old South Moor



South Moor



Cavilling rule book, 1895. One of the many rule books used by the miners.

### Cavilling

Preserved in the archives at Durham County Record Office is a cavilling rule book for Hedley Pit from 1895. The miners of the Durham and Northumberland coalfields developed cavilling as a random lottery system for sharing out the places where coal hewers worked. Each quarter, pairs of hewers (known locally as marra) would draw lots for every working place in the pit. Hewers were paid by the quantity of coal they produced and rates of pay were based on location and working conditions. A poor cavil affected earnings and the dangers the marra were exposed to.

By organising the allocation of work amongst themselves the miners gained protection from victimisation by the colliery managers. The origin of the cavilling tradition is unknown but it is clear that both owners and workers accepted and perpetuated the custom until heavy mechanisation made it obsolete.

The rule book is heavily annotated and was obviously well used. Along with rates of pay it outlines the procedure for fatal accidents. Traditionally the mine closed when a man died at work. This caused practical problems for the South Moor Colliery owners because their mines worked so closely together. In 1894 the owners and workmen agreed that only the pit where the accident occurred should be laid idle. Until the Workmen's Compensation Act 1897 gave workers the right to compensation for personal injury, men had to contribute to non-compulsory subscription schemes that paid out in the event of an accident, or sue their employer.

### Mining Fatality

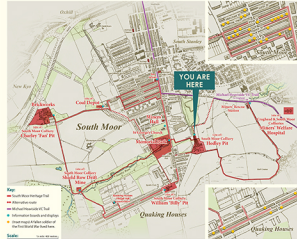
William Henry Cudlip, of 13 Poplar Street, South Moor, was seriously injured at Hedley Pit on 11 August 1915. His leg was broken and his back injured by a fall of stone. The piece of stone that struck him measured 4 feet by 3 feet and was 16 inches thick (122 x 91 x 41 cm). He died eleven days later in Newcastle Infirmary. According to the Stanley News of 26 August:

"He was unmarried, and would have attained his 34th year on 26 September. He was the third son of Samuel and Ann Cudlip. Five years ago the parents lost the misfortune to lose their second son, who was also killed in a colliery accident."



Mr Dixon & Mr Gough with a pony at Hedley Pit, South Moor.

The writing on the tub says: "Plenty coal for the man who burst the pipe".



### South Moor Heritage Trail

South Moor and Quaking Houses were typical colliery villages that developed before and just after the First World War, around four collieries of William Hedley's South Moor Colliery Company.

South Moor Heritage trail is a five mile circular walk around key eight heritage sites of South Moor and Quaking Houses that existed during or soon after the First World War. Each site is marked by an interpretation board detailing the significance and heritage of the site. Each interpretation board is linked via a QR code to a South Moor heritage website providing further information about the history of the site. Rights of way between the eight sites along the trail are marked by 'way markers' to keep you on the right path.

Over two hundred miners from South Moor and Quaking Houses were killed in the First World War. Their names are engraved at the gates of the First World War Memorial Park. The Heritage Trail marks the former colliery houses in which they lived with a fallen soldier plaque - can you find them in the colliery terraces?

