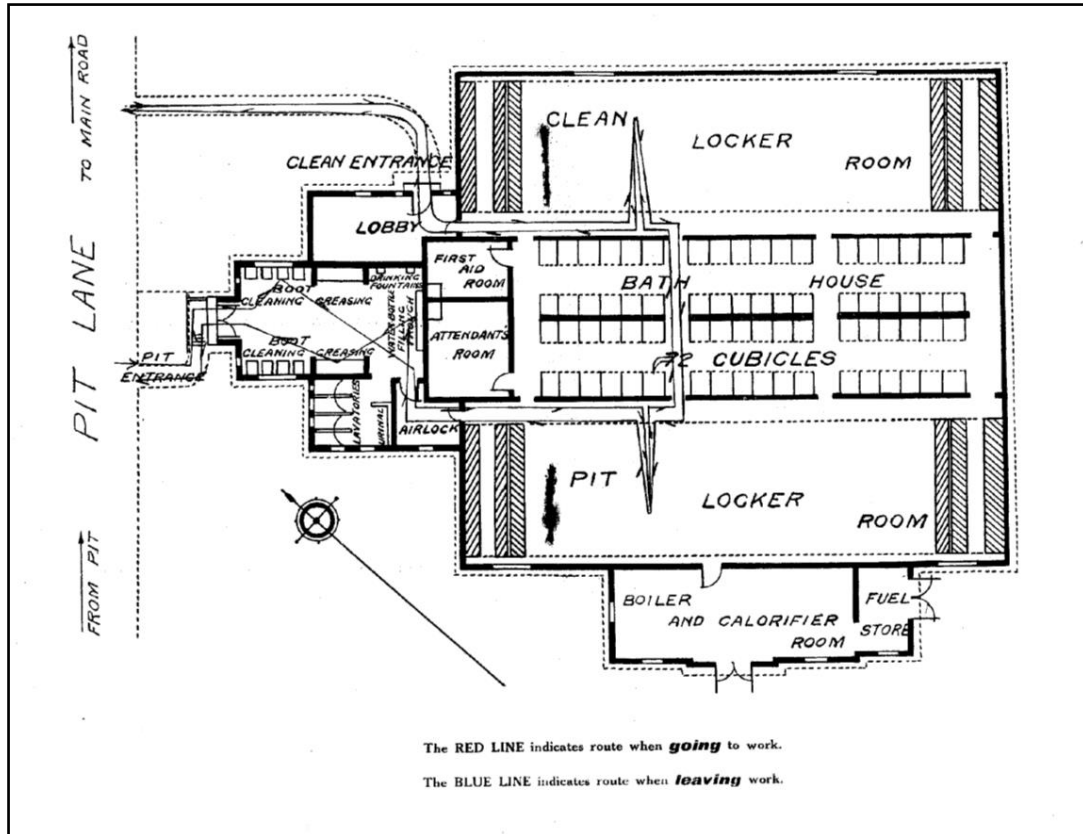


NEW LOUNT COLLIERY PIT HEAD BATHS AND CANTEEN



BY SAMUEL T STEWART - DEC 2021 / UPDATED AUG 2024 /
SEPTEMBER 2024

FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPHS

The upper illustration shows the layout of the Pit Head Baths, which was included in the opening programme. The complete programme is included later.

The lower photograph of New Lount Colliery, taken from the pit yard, in the early 1960's depicts the head stocks, coal wagons and pit banks (slag / spoil heaps), known by the miner's as Sabrina Pass. In the distance is the conveyor system which took the coal from the coal seams to the screens. The building to the right is the weighbridge offices.

CONTENTS

PAGE 3 - OPENING OF NEW LOUNT COLLIERY PIT HEAD BATHS

PAGE 6 - PROGRAMME OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING

PAGE 9 - SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON THE BATHS

PAGE 13 - A NEW CANTEEN ADDED

© Samuel T Stewart - December 2021

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by means, electronic, mechanical or otherwise without first seeking the written permission of the author.

THE OPENING OF NEW LOUNT COLLIERY PIT HEAD BATHS - WORK STARTED JULY 1929 AND OPENED JULY 12TH 1930 BY FRANK HODGES. THE FIRST PIT HEAD BATHS TO BE BUILT AT COLLIERIES IN LEICESTERSHIRE

BATHS DE LUXE AT LOUNT.

PROVISION FOR 1,000 MINERS.

MR. FRANK HODGES' STRIKING SPEECH.

The official opening of pit head baths at New Lount Colliery, marks an event of not only local, but, to quote Mr. Frank Hodges, of national importance. These baths, erected at a cost of £14,800 by the Miners' Welfare Committee, and providing for 1,000 miners, are the last word in pit head baths. The opening was performed by one of the most striking and popular personalities in the mining industry, Mr. Frank Hodges.

There was a large and representative gathering at the opening ceremony, which immediately followed a luncheon served in the Newbold School. The opening function took place immediately outside the baths. Those who had accepted invitations included:

Directors of Leicestershire Colliery and Pipe Co., Ltd., and associated companies—Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hodges, Mr. R. D. Hardy, Mr. C. H. Hardy, and the Misses Hardy, his Grace the Duke of Montrose, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Curzons and Miss Curzons, Dr. and Mrs. C. Baring Horwood, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Johnstone, Mr. J. C. Robertson, Mr. and Mrs. E. D. P. Hardy.

Leicestershire Miners' Welfare Committee's representatives—Mr. T. Gowdridge, Mr. G. J. Brookes: miners' side, Mr. T. Harris, Mr. J. Moore, Mr. J. Pargeter, Mr. H. Spencer, Mr. J. Gamble, Mr. T. Clarke, Mr. T. Kenny, Mr.

stricted output. His task in life now was one of national rationaliser. What was the problem of the miner was also that of the cotton, steel, and other industries. They had got to avoid doing anything that would restrict their exports. In his opinion they had got to go in for rationalisation, amalgamations would have to proceed, sales reorganised, &c., and the more they were free from external influences the better would they be able to reach the desired end. The industry could not be pulled round by politicians or Parliament, but by the pooled experiences of the management and manual workers. He wished all the miners who used the baths and the wives and children who would benefit by the change would long live to enjoy the benefits.

THE SPIRIT OF HARMONY.

The Chairman said that they at New Lount

Column one of three pages

Column two of three pages

Moore, Mr. J. Fargeter, Mr. H. Spencer, Mr. J. Gamble, Mr. T. Clarke, Mr. T. Kenny, Mr. A. Hollyoak; owners' side, Mr. W. Lindley, Mr. J. Edwards.

Baths Management Committee and wives—Mr. and Mrs. W. Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. H. Evans, Mr. and Mrs. T. Williams, Mr. and Mrs. W. Rowell, junr., Mr. J. Bamborough and Miss Bradshaw, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Greenall, Mr. and Miss Mackie, Mr. G. Jones and Miss North, Mr. and Mrs. H. Booth, Mr. and Mrs. J. Richards, Mr. and Mrs. J. Clamp.

Other guests and workmen—The Right Hon. Earl and Countess Ferrers, Sir Wm. Edge and Lady Edge (Liberal M.P. for Bosworth Division), Mr. Duffell, Mr. and Mrs. E. Winterton (Labour M.P. for Loughborough Division), and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Winterton, Mr. and Mrs. S. Dutton, Mr. and Mrs. Staniland, Mr. and Mrs. R. Learmouth, Dr. and Mrs. Garry, Mr. and Mrs. Trivett, Rev. and Mrs. Canham, Rev. and Mrs. Hughes, Mr. and Mrs. Shields, Commander B. T. Coote (of the Miners' Welfare Committee, Mines Department), Mr. Woodland (architect in charge), Mr. B. Wells (of Orton and Co., builders of the baths), Mr. F. J. Bayliss (sub-contractor), Mr. and Mrs. E. Martin, Mr. J. R. Felton (mines inspector) and Mrs. Felton, Mr. Pickering, C.C., Mr. and Mrs. J. Rossell, Mr. and Mrs. J. Orton Leeson, Mr. and Mrs. A. Marriott, Mr. and Mrs. G. Robinson, Mr. and Mrs. W. Spare, Mr. and Mrs. W. Poyser, Mr. Rowell, senr., Mr. T. Turner, r. John Richards.

Mr. R. D. Hardy, who presided, said if he were to confine himself to the strict duties of chairman, he should simply say, "Here's is Frank Hodges." He needed no introduction there, or any mining community in the kingdom, or the world. He was known by everyone from pit boy to director. To help the miners and the industry by every just means had been his life ambition. He had aimed at achieving improvement without discontent to any class. Some people could only see one side of the question—their own; some people could see two sides; but Mr. Hodges had that rare gift—he could see three sides, the two opposing forces and also the side of conciliation. Although the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street had stolen his services, he still had a warm heart for the coal industry and for their enterprise at Lount. He suggested that Mr. Hodges had come there in the wrong garb; he should have come in bathing costume, so that they could have seen his fine physique.

AN OCCASION OF HISTORIC INTEREST.

Mr. Hodges said that the chairman had spoken of him in too flattering terms. He wished he deserved it. That occasion, he went on to say, was an occasion of historic interest, not only from the Lount Colliery point of view, but also from the district welfare point of view. It was also of importance from a national point of view, because it marked a step forward in the social advancement of the miners. These baths were the first of their kind in the county of Leicester, and to be the first was also a good thing. He added that Sir William Edge had realised that in the Parliamentary race. Sir William, in the house of Commons, had demonstrated his interest for the miners. Proceeding, he said that each man would have two lockers. They should not get nervous; it did not mean "lock-ups." There would be two for each man—one for the pit clothes and the other for the clean clothes. He had seen them referred to as "Baths de luxe," or luxury baths. Well, why not? Why should not miners have some luxuries. The cost had been heavy, the Welfare Fund having expended £14,800 on them. He had hoped to see a canteen also installed, and had hoped that they would yet be provided. He congratulated the committee on the way they had worked and carried out the scheme, the men for having balloted for the baths, and the directors on the help they had given. Time was when those kind of things were regarded as impossible dreams. He was not very old, but he could remember attending meetings of

The Chairman said that they at New Lount had a spirit of hope and harmony which they hoped would extend to the whole world.

Mr. George Curson expressed thanks to the committee for the opportunity afforded of being present at that "christening" ceremony. He remarked that he was the first director to go down the shaft in a bucket before a cage was available. They were indebted to Mr. Frank Hodges for his magnificent speech; would to God there were more Frank Hodges in the world. Proceeding, he said that during the war and since he got to know the miner, and to admire his qualities and sympathise with him and his family. He wished the men and the Management Committee every success.

Mr. T. Gowdridge, Secretary of the Leicestershire Miners' Association, and a joint secretary of the Miners' Welfare Committee, said that opening ceremony was a great event. What Mr. Hodges had told them would convince them that the district and national committee were anxious that they should have social services that would be beneficial to this and future generations. Their experience was that various schemes they helped financially were of general benefit, but in a pit head bath it benefited the miner and his family. He suggested that the provision of such baths would extend the life of the miner and benefit his health generally. He hoped that the men at the Colliery would take full advantage of the facilities provided.

MORE BENEFITS FOR MINERS.

Mr. G. J. Brooks, the vice-chairman of the Welfare Committee, also spoke. He said the penny a ton on output was levied under the 1920 Act. They were aware of the way in which the money had been spent in the villages. In the past the benefits had been such that everyone had enjoyed the facilities, and he held that future expenditure should be for the exclusive benefit of the men, and suggested that provision should be made for miners in their old age. He congratulated the Central Committee on the fact that the whole of their share of the fund was devoted to the welfare of the miner—in research work to minimise explosion, and the provision of scholarships for miners' children. To the young miners he would say get education and use it for the benefit of their fellow men. He urged them, too, to join their trade unions. They had been militant in the past, perhaps there had been the need; but to-day they had to be conciliatory, and get round the table to see how they could solve the problems that confronted them. When using those baths, be courteous to one another, and help any comrades that might be unwell.

The Chairman said they could endorse all that the speakers had said. The builders, Messrs. Orton and Co., had offered to present a clock to be placed on the outside of the baths.

Mr. Bernard Wells, on behalf of the contractors, handed over the clock, and Mr. Rowell, receiving the clock, and said they all hoped that everyone using those baths would enjoy to the full the amenities provided.

THANKS.

Mr. Taylor, on behalf of the committee, moved a vote of thanks to all who had taken part in those proceedings, and said he had been delighted at the way in which the men had responded to the scheme. He paid special tribute to the Chairman and Mr. Hodges. He mentioned the excellent services rendered by various gentlemen in furthering the scheme, and said that Mr. W. J. Hardy was the pioneer of the scheme, and they all regretted that he was unable to be present owing to physical unfitness.

Mr. H. Booth seconded, and it was heartily received.

Mr. Hodges then proceeded to unlock the Baths, which were thoroughly inspected by all present.

They were in full operation to-day.

OF THE LATEST TYPE.

The Baths are vested in Trustees of whom

as impossible dreams. He was not very old, but he could remember attending meetings of miners when they voted unanimously against such a thing as pit-head baths. Well, there had been a change, and there was practically a unanimous desire for pit-head baths to-day. There might be conservative miners who were still against such an innovation. He could not imagine what the wives and mothers would say to such an attitude. He had had some experience, and believed that his own mother's life could have been extended had she not had the hard grind of looking after six sons who worked in the pit and brought home the unavoidable dirt. Passing on, he said that there were already 65 schemes for pit-head baths in the country, catering for 84,000 miners. If every miner in the country was provided with pit-head baths it would cost £14,000,000. It had been decided for a start to spend £4,000,000, and they were the first in Leicestershire to have such baths, and he prophesied that in a little time there would be a rush on the part of the industry to have such amenities. The cost was met by a levy on the output of coal, and this brought in £1,000,000 a year, which was known as the Miners' Welfare Fund. The royalty owner, against whom many hard things had been said, would find his life shortened; but in the meantime he had to contribute a percentage to the welfare fund.

TRIBUTE TO LORD CHANCELLOR.

Mr. Hodges said that very few people got their due in their life time. Some got more than their due. He desired to point out that this scheme arose out of the recommendations of Mr. Justice Sankey, now the Lord Chancellor, and it must be fitting that such a man should be the Lord Chancellor at this time. He wished also to compliment a man not well known to them. He referred to Commander Coote. He was the man regarded in the miners' department, as the inspiring spirit of this movement. It was a fitting thing that the industrial welfare organisation should be able to produce such a man as Commander Coote. He (Mr. Hodges) advised the men to study the directions which had been issued. If they were observed the baths would operate like clock work, and why should they not? He advised them to memorise the directions. He had been informed by Mr. Taylor, the manager of the colliery, that every man had undertaken to use the baths. There were conditions that might make it reasonable for men to be exempt, but a dislike for water was not one of them.

Proceeding to refer to the industry generally, he said that at the moment it was in the hands of politicians. He should have thought that the lessons of the past would have been so terrible that owners and men would have combined to keep it out of the hands of politicians. The outstanding feature of the trade in the last 18 months had been the great effort made to put the industry on an economic footing.

BREAK FROM OLD FORMULAS.

The last eighteen months of the industry had revealed to him a real effort to break away from the old dogmas and formulas. It was only recently that pits had been able to show a profit on turnover, although the latest figures indicated a drop again. What of the future? Was the industry going to be able to improve the lot of the men and the directors see a possibility of making some profit, or was the future to be one of uncertainty, liquidation, short time, and re-

OF THE LATEST TYPE.

The Baths are vested in Trustees, of whom there are four—Messrs. W. Taylor, H. Evans, T. Williams and W. Rowell, jun. They with the following will act as a management committee—Messrs. J. Banborough, H. Booth, J. Clamp, M. A. Greenall, G. Jones (treas.), J. B. Mackie, and J. Richards; Mr. H. Evans being the secretary.

The opening ceremony took place this afternoon under the chairmanship of Mr. R. D. Hardy, by Mr. Frank Hodges, J.P., a former Secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and ex-M.P. for the Lichfield Division.

The building and equipment is of the very latest type. It is the first installation of Pithead baths in Leicestershire and is the product of several years of accumulated experience by the Miners' Welfare Department in other coalfields, and of hard work and a considerable expenditure of money. There are 2,000 Clothes Lockers in the Building, two to each man. These are separated into two sections, the "Clean Clothes section" being entirely away from the "Fit Clothes section." The Lockers are heated and wet clothes are dried therein. There is seating accommodation and floor space in plenty, and a white-tiled First Aid Room for attention to minor cuts and scratches.

Electric brushes are provided for cleaning boots on coming out of the pit and the workman goes down with his boots greased to commence the shift. Special taps are fixed for the filling of water bottles. Proper and sufficient lavatory accommodation is provided and the whole building is efficiently heated, lighted and ventilated.

Cleanliness is one of the main points in the Baths administration, and the building lockers and contents will be fumigated periodically. Detailed instructions have been furnished to each employe, and the Baths were in full operation on Monday. The Committee conclude their direction to the men by inviting them to adopt this slogan—"Our Baths and our responsibility."

The Baths were open for inspection after the official opening to-day, and the New Lount Collieries Athletic Club had arranged a varied and interesting programme of sports and competitions on its grounds, to which visitors were invited.

DOG'S MID-OCEAN RESCUE BID.

Jean Marie Martin, aged 30, of Boulogne, a fireman on the French trawler *Gris Nez*, fell overboard when the vessel was in the West Scottish fishing grounds.

His plight was not observed by any of the crew, but Turc, the ship's five-year-old Newfoundland dog, with whom Martin was a favourite, leaped overboard to the rescue.

Turc gripped Martin and struggled to keep him afloat, but exhaustion at last compelled him to release the man.

Then the cry went up, "Dog overboard," and Turc was rescued, but a long search failed to reveal any trace of the man.

This story of a dog's devotion was revealed when the trawler reached Fleetwood on Tuesday.

The lift boy at premises in Farringdon-road was found dead with his head jammed between the lift and the shaft.

PROGRAMME OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING

PROGRAMME OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING

Saturday, 12th July, 1930.

Chairman: MR. R. D. HARDY.

The Baths will be Officially Opened by
FRANK HODGES, ESQ., J.P.

who will be supported by

Mr. G. CURSONS, M.B.E., J.P.

Mr. T. GOWDRIDGE

AND

Mr. G. J. BROOKES.

The Opening Ceremony will commence at 2 o'clock prompt and after the Baths have been declared open, those present will have an opportunity of inspecting them.

The New Lount Collieries Athletic Club has arranged a varied and interesting programme of Competitions and Sports on its grounds for its Members on this day, and visitors to the Baths are invited to witness these and thus complete a happy day.

It is particularly hoped that all workmen will bring their wives and friends. The Baths will be open for inspection until 5.30 p.m., and will also be open on the Sunday following, from 2 o'clock until 8 p.m.

On Monday, the 14th July, the Baths will be in operation and used by the men.

C. J. Lewis, Printer, Ashby. 35584.

NEW LOUNT PITHEAD BATHS LEICESTERSHIRE.

*A Great Step
Forward.*

To be Officially Opened by
FRANK HODGES, ESQ., J.P.

ON
12TH JULY, 1930.

and handed over to the Trustees, for the Use and Benefit
of the Workmen of New Lount Colliery.

IN THE CONFIDENCE that every one using the Baths will study the comfort of others and the success of the Pithead Baths scheme in general, the Management Committee, in the pages following, set out in detail the whole organisation and arrangements so that you may be fully conversant with them.

It is, perhaps, needless to mention the benefit this erection is to yourself and especially to your home, and every provision has been made for your convenience when using the Baths.

THE BUILDING and equipment is of the very latest type. It is the first installation of Pithead Baths in Leicestershire and is the product of several years of accumulated experience by the Miners' Welfare Department in other Coalfields, and of hard work and a considerable expenditure of money.

There are 2,000 Clothes Lockers in the Building, two to each man. These are separated into two sections, the "Clean Clothes section" being entirely away from the "Pit Clothes section."

The Lockers are heated and wet clothes are dried therein.

There is seating accommodation and floor space in plenty, and a white-tiled First Aid Room for attention to minor cuts and scratches.

Electric Brushes are provided for cleaning boots on coming out of the Pit and the workman goes down with his boots greased to commence the shift.

Special taps are fixed for the filling of water bottles.

Proper and sufficient lavatory accommodation is provided, and the whole building is efficiently heated, lighted and ventilated.

2

Cleanliness is one of the main points in the Baths administration, and the building, lockers and contents are fumigated periodically.

ARRANGEMENTS.

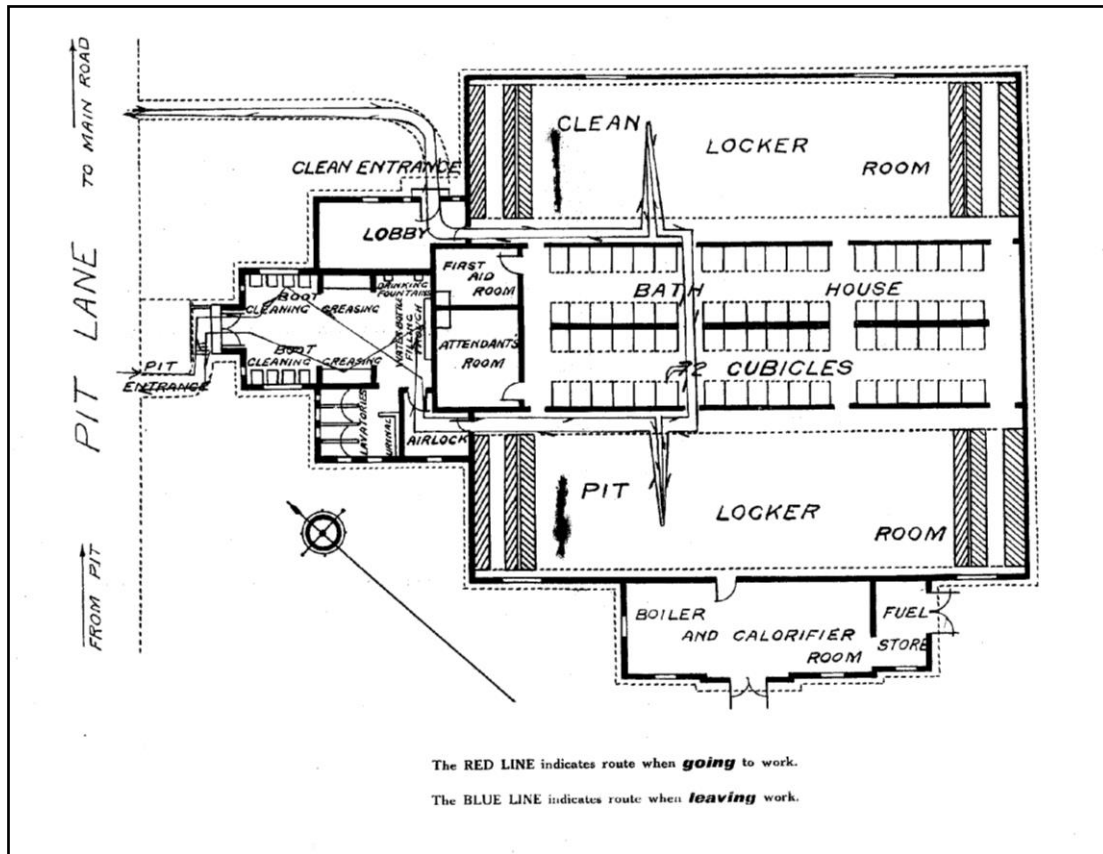
The two Locker Rooms, containing 1,000 Clean Clothes Lockers and 1,000 Pit Clothes Lockers respectively, are situated one on each side of the Bath House. These Lockers are divided into six "Locker Sections," each represented by a different colour. The coloured Locker Ticket issued to him gives the man's permanent locker number and colour. To each man is allocated two Lockers, one for his clean clothes and the other for his pit clothes, and both his Lockers bear the same number.

ON ARRIVAL AT THE COLLIERY the workman proceeds to his Locker in the "Clean Clothes Locker Room." In this he will place his clean clothes and put his boots on the rack beneath. He should always close the door of his Locker, and, if he thinks well, he may provide himself with a small padlock and key with which to secure the door.

The man's progress is then to his "Pit Clothes Locker," carrying his soap, tray and towel.

A convenient practice is to wrap the latter around the the waist for covering, but bath slips can be purchased from the Attendant at a small charge and kept for this purpose. The soap trays are part of the locker equipment.

3



The way to the Pit Clothes Lockers lies through the Bath Cubicles section. Entrance to this section is through one of the four doorways, and crowding will be avoided and arrangements greatly facilitated if each man will proceed through the doorway over which is painted as a guide the locker numbers and colour of his Locker Section, e.g., if he holds a Red Section ticket he should follow that colour; if a Green one, he must follow the Green.

Passing through the Cubicle Section the man will reach the "Pit Clothes Locker Room" where will be his pit clothes, left there from the previous day and since dried. After dressing for work the towel and soap are left in his Locker until the workman's return at the end of the shift, and the locker door is closed.

Proceeding through the doors at the end of this room he will find the specially designed water-bottle taps, which will supply excellent drinking water. Here, also, are the boot-greasing arrangements and lavatory accommodation, and the workman then passes out of the exit door to the Colliery.

ON RETURNING FROM WORK, the man enters the Baths again by this same door. He will clean his boots on the revolving electric brushes just inside, after which he re-enters the Pit Clothes Room to leave his pit clothes in his "Pit Locker."

As the Lockers are internally heated it is obviously necessary to close the door to ensure drying of the contents.

Boots should be placed on the rack below the Locker, or hung up inside it, rather than put on the Locker bottom, which will get very warm and probably crack them.

Again using his towel as a covering, or putting on his slip, the bather takes soap and tray into the Cubicle Section, and, choosing any cubicle bearing his section colour, turns on the shower. There are 72 cubicles in the Bath House, divided into six groups of twelve.

In practice the average bathing time per person is four to five minutes.

It is a wise precaution to finish off the Bath with a cold shower to avoid contracting a chill.

After bathing, the man proceeds, with soap and tray, through the proper doorway to his clean clothes locker. In this, after dressing, he will leave his wet towel, soap and tray, and will then pass out through the "clean entrance."

SANDALS.

If the workmen desire sandals in which to pass about the building, instead of in bare feet, the Management Committee will arrange to provide these at a small cost.

"FIRST AID."

A First Aid Room is installed, and properly fitted up, and it will be to the workman's interest to make use of this for treating small cuts, scratches, etc. Prompt attention to these very often saves considerable suffering and loss, and no matter how small the injury it is obviously the wiser plan to give it a few moments' attention.

ATTENDANTS.

The Attendant on duty is responsible, amongst many other things, for the general cleaning of the baths building and, although considerable attention has been given to the

lay-out of the baths with a view to minimising this labour, an immense amount of help can be given by the men themselves endeavouring to bring into the building as little dirt as possible. This collaboration will assist in the Baths being kept quite "spick-and-span."

Soap, Towels and Slips can be obtained from the Attendant when required, the charges being fixed by the Management Committee, and the men will find these prices to be surprisingly low.

SMOKING.

Smoking in the building is strictly forbidden, on the grounds of safety and cleanliness.

FUMIGATION.

It is found desirable to fumigate all Lockers and the Building at frequent intervals. On these occasions it will be necessary for all locker doors to be left unfastened. There is no need to remove clothes, and notice will be posted when fumigation is due.

LOST PROPERTY.

Lost property, when found, will, of course, be handed to the Attendant for return to the owner. Anyone losing property must **immediately** notify the attendant if his assistance is desired to recover it.

NOTICE BOARD.
KEEP YOUR EYE ON THIS!
For Items which affect you.

8

MANAGEMENT

The ownership of the Baths is technically vested in the Trustees, and the management of them is placed in the hands of a Joint Committee which possesses a knowledge both of the Workman's requirements and ideals and also of administration. The financial contributions which the men themselves make for the maintenance and upkeep of the installation is augmented by a voluntary contribution from the Colliery Company which is keenly interested in the project.

The Management Committee is fully appreciative of the auspicious start which the Baths will have and feels confident that by economical arrangements on its part and the necessary co-operation of the men, the maximum efficiency and usefulness will be obtained at the lowest possible cost to the Workman himself.

FINALLY

YOUR SLOGAN SHOULD BE

OUR BATHS ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

They represent a great step forward in the social standing of the Miner, the value of which will be immediately apparent to him, but the responsibility for their proper use and preservation is his own. By adopting this Slogan individually you will be demonstrating your appreciation of the efforts made on your behalf by all concerned.

SUMMARISED DIRECTIONS.

GOING TO WORK:—

1.—ON THE FIRST DAY, MONDAY, the 14th JULY, come to work in your PIT CLOTHES and bring with you your—

Clean Clothes and Boots.

Your Towel and Soap will be at the Baths.

(AFTER THE FIRST DAY, of course, you will KEEP your PIT CLOTHES, BOOTS, TOWEL, &c. AT THE BATHS and come in your clean clothes).

- 2.—Enter the Baths by the SIDE ENTRANCE, and proceed to YOUR Locker in the "CLEAN" LOCKER ROOM, where you will leave your clean clothes.
- 3.—Take your TOWEL, SOAP (and the SOAP TRAY which you will find in the Locker), through the Cubicle Room to your other Locker in the "PIT CLOTHES" LOCKER ROOM! Here you will leave your Towel, Soap and Tray.
- 4.—Proceed to work through the door labelled "TO WORK" stopping to fill your water bottle at the SPECIAL TAPS, and to GREASE YOUR BOOTS as you go out.

COMING OUT OF THE PIT:—

- 1.—Enter the Baths by the FRONT ENTRANCE (down the steps). Clean your BOOTS on the electric brushes, and go through the door marked: "PIT CLOTHES LOCKER ROOM."
- 2.—Here you will—
 - (i) Place your boots on the rack under YOUR Locker.
 - (ii) Put your pit clothes into the Locker to dry and close the door.
 - (iii) Wrap your towel around you and take your SOAP and TRAY to one of the CUBICLES marked with the same colour as your Locker Ticket, and hang up your towel.
- 3.—THE SHOWER is obtained by turning the Switch, which you will find in the Cubicle. Regulate the warmth of the water by moving the Switch to right or left.
- 4.—After bathing and drying, proceed to your "CLEAN" LOCKER, containing your clean clothes, dress, and so home, leaving your Towel, Soap and Tray in the Locker for next day.

A few minutes study of the Plan will put you in possession of the details of the lay out of the Baths and a man's progress through them both to and from work. The red line indicates his route when going TO work and the blue one when LEAVING work.

NEW LOUNT PITHEAD BATHS

LEICESTERSHIRE.

TRUSTEES.

W. TAYLOR. T. WILLIAMS.
H. EVANS. W. ROWELL, Junr.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

THE TRUSTEES

and

J. BAMBOROUGH M. A. GREENALL
H. BOOTH G. JONES
J. CLAMP J. B. MACKIE
J. RICHARDS

Secretary: H. EVANS. Treasurer: G. JONES.

Secretary's Address:—

c/o THE LEICESTERSHIRE COLLIERY & PIPE Co., Ltd.,
108 MARKET STREET,
ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON THE BATHS

"Pit head Baths" were brought into use through the 1926 Miner's Act

New Lount was the first colliery in the Leicestershire Coalfield to have pit head baths, and these were opened on July 12th 1930 by Frank Hodges, who at this time was not shown as being on the board of Directors at New Lount. However he was recorded in the press as officially being appointed Managing Director and Chairman in 1933.

The following are interesting miner's recollections, partly referring to New Lount baths, which appear in "The Leicestershire Miners", Volume 2 by Colin Griffin. Copyright is owned by Colin Griffin :-

If the accident record was disappointing between the wars, so was the record on an essential element in the improvement of the miners' health and well being: the provision of the pit head baths. In 1937 there were only two collieries with pit head baths in Leicestershire (New Lount and Whitwick collieries) despite the widespread belief that the pit head baths are an extremely sound investment from every point of view. Frank Smith recalled that before there were baths.... I used to get so stinking wet we used to walk over the fields to where I lived to avoid coming through the streets, because you looked so filthy and stank. Moreover, if the miner was "freezing cold" when he arrived home in wet clothes and simply stood in front of the fire to thaw out, then your trousers would stand up like they were made of concrete. Washing facilities at home varied enormously. If you'd got a bath at home you were lucky....otherwise they used to take their clothes off and just stood them round the fire drying, filthy clothes and everything else and only a bit of sink to wash in....they hadn't got anywhere to wash properly....they'd perhaps got no facilities for hot water or they just boiled the kettle on the fire and that sort of thing. There were scores of places like that there were. Eric Saunders lived in a house without facilities for boiling water: You'd have to go round the back and wash in a tub, a great big tub of cold water. I've washed in snow when there's been ten foot of snow, my brother used to bath me in it. The Summers family boiled water in a big iron pot and since there were seven miners in the household washing arrangements had to be adjusted accordingly, me Dad, before he'd have anything to eat and drink, would take his shirt off and wash right down as far as he could....I'd have me meal without washing....it used to be 9 or 10 o'clock at night before you'd wash you....I'd eat then go footballing, go out dog-training and all such as that.

In some households, the lack of privacy was as much of a problem as the lack of easily available water. You know you could not have a proper wash unless you locked yourself away....I don't know how some of them managed, they must have been real embarrassed, in front of the children and everything else, you know, must have been naked....Must have been, had got to do it.



A Coal Miner bathing at home

*It is little wonder under these circumstances that most miners' believed that baths was the finest thing ever brought out for miners' and that the opening of pithead baths was an occasion for a public celebration. **Frank Hodges boasted at the opening of the first pithead baths at New Lount, that they accommodated 1,008 men each of whom is provided with two lockers, one for his home clothes and one for his pit clothes. I have seen them described in one of our daily papers as "baths de luxe". Well, is there no reason why miners should not have a little luxury as well as other members of the community? There are 72 cubicles, with separate sections for the clean and dirty clothes, for the unwashed miner and the washed miner. The plans would have enabled a canteen to be added but the Welfare Committee cannot pay this out of the Bath Fund. Time was when pithead baths were regarded as an impossible dream. It is not so long ago since their introduction into this country was opposed by the men for many reasons. Many popular superstitions were behind this opposition. The first was that nobody could wash the miners back like the "missus" or that too frequent washing of the back resulted in muscular weakness, that no-one could dry clothes like the good wife and perhaps lurking behind these superstitions was the thought that the miners would be called upon to pay the cost of installation and upkeep. I believe the demand for cleanliness and hygiene among the miners of this country is now practically universal....***

There is no reason why a workman should not leave the colliery spick and span in absolutely clean dried clothing, with resulting improvement in his health, and I believe an improvement in his "morale and social standing".

Thomas Gowdrige, the miners' leader "felt sure that the baths would be appreciated by the miners and also by their wives and mothers", while George Brooks, one of New Lount trustees, urged that "in using the baths they would be kind and courteous to one another. Don't use bad language and if you see a brother in distress, assist him. The miner in the past has been looked upon as someone who produces coal. After today....the whole world will say: these men are not only miners but gentlemen".



A typical pithead baths scene

Pit head baths tokens became available after the 1920's (see earlier photograph). The baths were free for the miners, although they had to pay for the use of the colliery's soap and towels (2d or 3d per week) unless they provided their own. **In 1938, an extension to the pithead baths and a new canteen was opened.**





The above is an actual photograph taken in New Lount Colliery baths in 1943.
It is taken from Jeremy Paxton's book entitled "Black Gold"
(copyright of photograph is owned by the originator)

A NEW CANTEEN ADDED ADJACENT TO BATHS

Transcribed from the Leicester Evening Mail - Tuesday 22 March 1938

Canteen Added to Baths at Colliery

A canteen added to the pithead baths at New Lount Colliery was **opened** yesterday by Mr. Frank Hodges, chairman and managing director of the company, and Mrs. White, his daughter. In performing the opening ceremony, Mrs. White spoke in terms of admiration of the canteen and of its undoubted usefulness. Mr. Hodges, remarking on the facilities provided, said there was no doubt that such provision would encourage the men in their growing realisation that their health was of supreme importance to them. The cost of the canteen has been met by the local welfare committee.

There follows two photographs of miners having thier dinner in the canteen in 1943.

