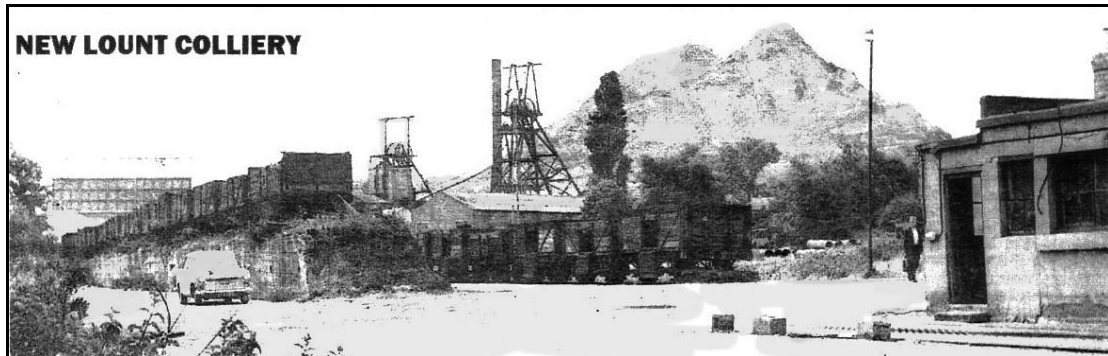


**NEW LOUNT COLLIERY DRIFT MINE
SHAFT AND MAN RIDER PROJECT -
OPENED 1956**



**BY SAMUEL T STEWART - DECEMBER 2021
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DRIFT MINE SHAFT AND MAN RIDER PROJECT

Part transcribed from the Leicester Evening Mail -
Friday 30th December 1955

500 YARD DRIFT MINE SHAFT AT NEW LOUNT COLLIERY TO BE OPENED EARLY IN THE NEW YEAR

A new "Drift Mine Shaft" which has taken about a year to construct will be opened at the New Lount Colliery, early in the new year. [This was about two years following the construction of the drift shaft from the disused Coleorton No.3.\(Bug & Wink\) pit yard to New Lount Colliery in order to improve the ventilation in that pit.](#)

The drift, a sloping 500 yard long tunnel with a 1 in 5 gradient, connecting the underground workings with the pit yard will supersede the two vertical shafts which for 30 years have been used to wind coal to the surface.

Instead of being raised by conventional winding methods, the entire output of the pit - about 1,600 tons per day, will flow up the newly constructed sloping tunnel on a conveyor belt. Without any handling, it will pass to the screening plant.

Mr. A. D. Butterely, the production manager, told the evening mail today: "The scheme will be operating in few weeks".

MORE PRODUCTIVE

"It is possible that it may contribute to raising production to 1,900 tons per day. Its introduction will release about 40 men for other and more productive tasks in the pit."

The two original shafts are to be maintained and **used for man riding (see later photograph)** and the carriage of stores. This will save miners having to walk long distance to commence their work.

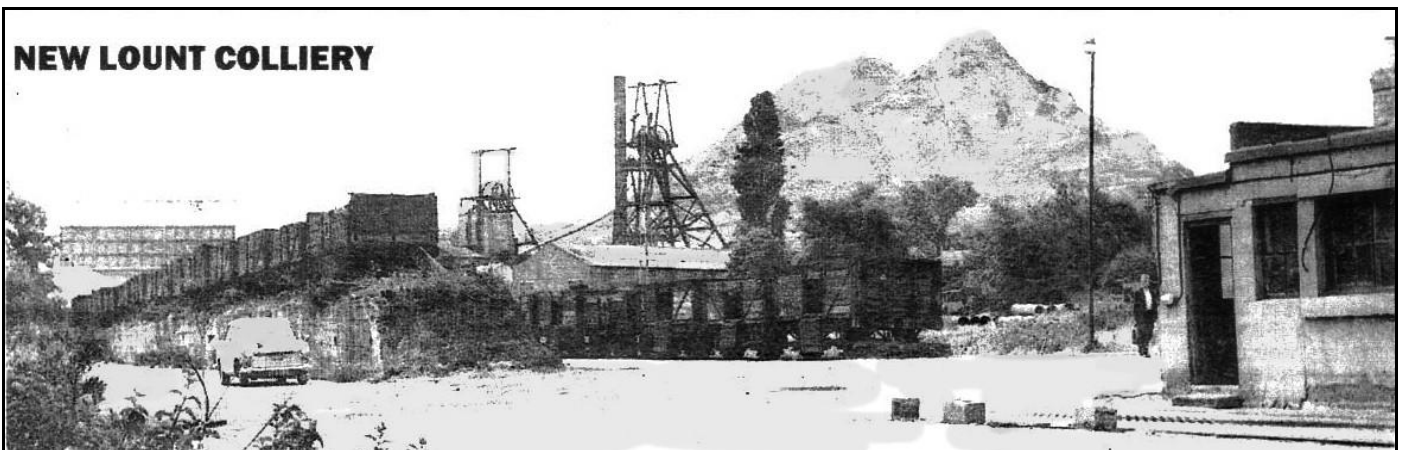
The conversion has been planned by Mr. P. L. Richardson, the pit manager; Mr. F. Ashley, area chief engineer; Mr. J. Emmerson, group manager and Mr. Butterly.

New Lount pit, about 100 yards deep is relatively shallow and therefore suited to drift mining methods.

See photographs and diagrammatic sketch on the following pages:-

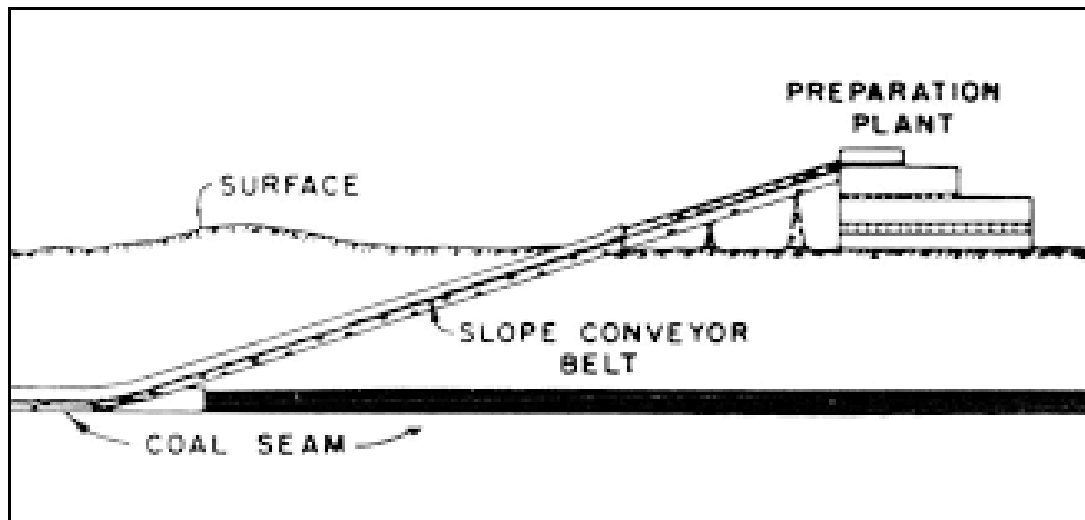


The new sloping tunnel emerges at ground level. The whole output of the pit will be travelling along a conveyor belt within the tunnel which then traverses directly to the screens.



NEW LOUNT COLLIERY

In the distance is the conveyor system which took the coal from the coal seams to the screens and can be seen running along the top of the upper picture. On the right is the weighbridge.



Basic representation of the drift mine shaft at New Lount colliery



Men employed at New Lount Colliery board the "man-rider" at the pit bottom for the underground ride to their workings. They are among the first in Leicestershire to benefit from the scheme to end miles of foot-slogging for men employed underground. This special Times picture was taken before the start of the early shift yesterday.

The name of the person on the far right front of this torn newspaper cutting is Peter Wilton



Note that the "deputy" at the front of the "Man Rider" is carrying his "Yard Stick".

A COAL MINER'S YARD STICK

A turned wooden rod for measuring the distance between pit props and the length of coal seams mined.



A pit deputy was an underground official who was responsible for an area of coal working. The yardstick was a mark of rank within the pit and showed that the possessor was a colliery official.

Historically, a yardstick was used to measure the length of a coal seam that a miner was expected to hew during his shift. Later, yardsticks had several other uses:

It was used to measure the distance between pit props supporting the roof to check that they were set to the regulation distance apart.

It was also used to detect firedamp (methane) where there was a high roof. A yardstick raised a safety lamp towards the roof level and a trained eye could detect the change in the appearance of the flame when firedamp was present. Firedamp is less dense than air and it accumulates under the roof.

A pit deputy would carry an aspirator bulb fitted with an adaptor that fitted over the brass ferrule on his yardstick. He would squeeze the air out of the bulb and then quickly raise it to the roof where it would inflate, sucking in a sample of air at roof level. The air collected was then squeezed into a Garforth safety lamp where any change in the flame could be detected.