

The Borlase family and the Rimington Railway Carriage

Mary Bairstow remembers that there were ‘cabins’ used for holidays and weekends in the 1940’s, 1950’s and 1960’s. There was a railway carriage in Back Lane and a tram at Gazegill. The focus of this article is on the Borlase family and the supposed story that they lived in a railway carriage, which may have become the ‘Skeleron Jolly Croft Camp’. The latter was close to the Skeleron lead mines at Hollins Farm, off Stopper Lane.

Within the Hollins Farm area, there is part of a medieval field system, a lime quarry and its kiln, plus the scattered remains of the Rimington or Skeleron Lead Mines. From Hollins Farm, a public footpath runs past ‘Pudsey’s Bell Pits’ and across the site to Skeleron Lane at Ings End, but to explore more fully please ask the farmer’s permission.

The story starts in the 16th century with Squire Pudsey of Bolland Hall in Bowland. Standing by Pudsey’s ‘Bell-Pits’ (now known as shaft mounds), you can look at the distant views over the Ribble Valley from Longridge Fell to Penyghent and speculate, because of the nearby Roman Road, as to whether the Romans mined lead at Skeleron. There is no evidence to support such a hypothesis, but William Pudsey, Squire of Bolland Hall, did try a little ‘coining’. This involved removing a little silver from many legal silver coins, melting the silver down and making his own coins. He claimed that the silver had been extracted from the lead mined at Skeleron. Supposedly mining silver, he also did not declare the mine as a ‘Mine Royal’. He was only saved from a beheading by being pardoned by Elizabeth I. She was his godmother.

There is no surface evidence of mining in the 17-18C’s, but the mines were briefly reopened in the 1820-1850’s for barytes, which was used in the manufacture of paper, paint and cloth. Many families from the rural areas of Yorkshire worked a dual-economy system of farming with mining and/or quarrying to provide an adequate income. With the lead veins being worked out, miners and farmers from the Yorkshire Dales migrated into the industrial areas of Lancashire and Yorkshire to escape rural poverty in the 1850’s. The Wiseman family from Kettlewell came to Hollins House in 1851 and mined barytes. Joseph Baynes was a Carperby farmer of 90 acres, but, sometime after the birth of his youngest child, Elizabeth, in 1863, he had moved as a shepherd to the Whitaker’s Hargrove Estate in Padiham and he was there in 1871.

By 1876, Messrs Baynes & Colville (see n10) had re-opened the Skeleron mines and were producing small amounts of lead, zinc and barytes. Joseph and his wife, Agnes, from Grisedale, had 4 daughters and 1 son, John, who was born in Carperby in 1860. Moving from Padiham to Rimington, John was a lead-miner in 1881 and he boarded with Susy and Ephraim Briggs in one of the tall weavers’ cottages at the junction of Stopper Lane and Newby Lane. He had previously worked for his father, before the mine was managed by John Borlase Snr and his son, William Henry. In the 1881 census, there were 7 lead and barytes miners: John Baynes from Carperby, Samuel Godfrey from Devon, John Johnson from Shropshire, Joseph Tattersall from Chatburn and 3 from Cornwall – John Snr and William Henry Borlase and John Osborne. James Borlase and James Wiseman worked at the mine when required.

Joseph Baynes, the mine superintendent or agent, died in 1877 and it was the Cornish Mine Captain, John Borlase Snr, who, from then, ran the barytes, lead and zinc mine for Baynes & Colville (later the 1880 York & Lancaster United Mining Co.) until 1884. The Borlase family, totalling 5 people, supposedly lived above Pudsey’s ‘Bell-Pits’ in an old ‘railway carriage’ brought, reputedly, from Rimington Station and it was photographed by Edmundson Buck in the 1920’s.

Borlase Surname – its origin and distribution:

In Old Cornish, the name ‘bur-glase’ means ‘the green summit or top’. A descendant of Taillefer, the celebrated follower of William the Conqueror, is said to have settled at Borlase in the parish of St. Wenn, co. Cornwall, which is just west of Bodmin. From this manor he assumed his surname, his family has since branched out and the name has been variously written as Burlas, Borlas, Borlase, Burlae, Burley and Birley.



Figure 1: The main destinations of Cornish migrants

The surname Burlase today is most commonly found in Cornwall, whilst worldwide the name occurs in 10 countries. In the UK, there are 47% of the people with this name, while 39% are to be found in Australia and New Zealand. There are small numbers, particularly in the USA, Canada and South Africa, which taken overall, reflects the influence of Cornwall's mining and maritime, both merchant and naval, industries as they spread throughout the British Empire.

Another branch of the distinguished Cornish Borlase family was for ages resident at Pendeen, near Land's End. Sir Walter Borlase was made a 'knight – banneret' by Edward IV after the battle of Barnet. Dr Borlase, author of "The Antiquities of Cornwall," was born close to Pendeen in St. Just in Penwith, in 1695. Sir William Borlase's Grammar School was founded in Marlow, Bucks in 1624. From the 1841 census, our Borlase family of Cornwall was associated with various parts of the rich mining area of Cornwall before they moved to Rimington about 1880.

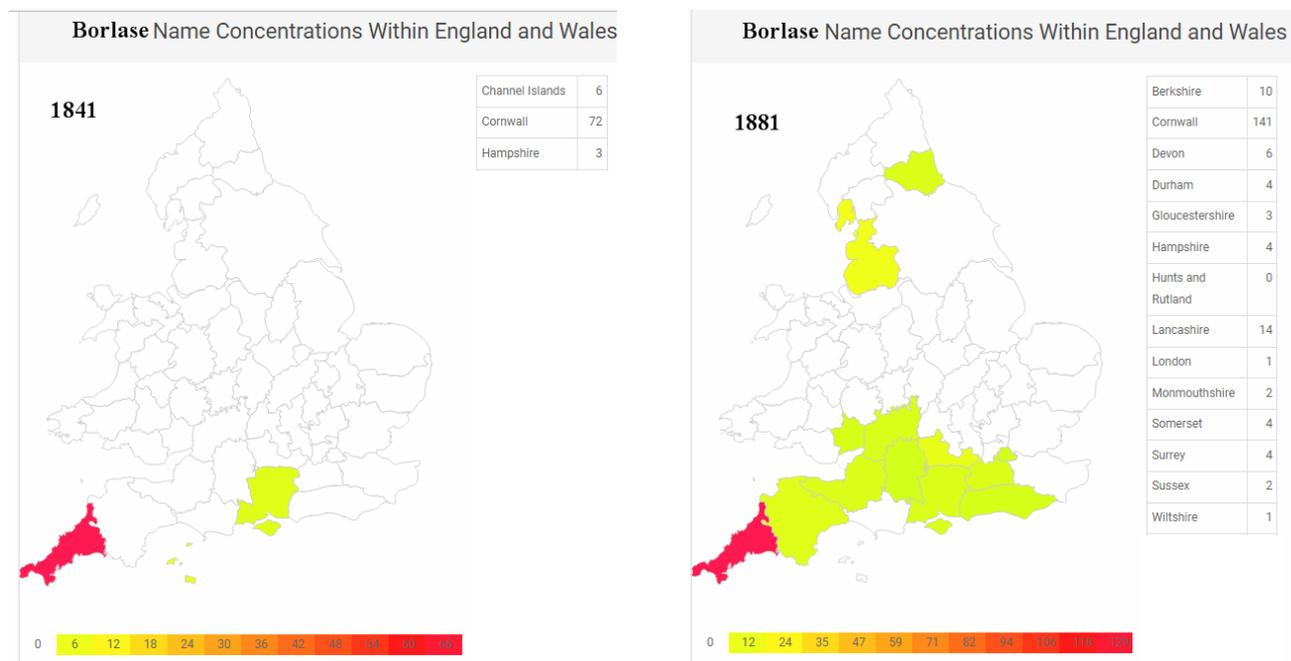


Figure 2: The Impact of Cornwall's mining decline on the Borlase name distribution 1841-1881 – see sources.

John was the most popular forename in the Borlase family and the first-born male was given this name for at least 5 generations throughout the 18th to 19th centuries. John Borlase VSnr (1796-1860's) was born in St Austell, married to Mary Wills in St Austell in 1819 and died in Cornwall in the 1860's. He was a carpenter and it is likely that he worked underground shoring up the rock walls of Pendeen's tin and copper mines. From 1841-1861, he lived in St Just in Penwith, which is close to the famous Botallack and Geevor tin and copper mines of Land's End.

The period from 1840-1880 was a difficult time for Cornish mining, as they suffered from cheaper imports, the Cornish ores began to run out and the mines to close. The tin and copper mines of West Cornwall closed first and many miners moved east to the newly-opened lead mines around Bodmin Moor. Many of these had also closed by the 1880's, leading to Cornish families migrating to UK ports and coalfields, North Country ore-fields and overseas to the Empire, the Americas and Spain. The Borlase family were prey to these changing economic fortunes and their census locations and children's births paint a vivid picture of these fluid and difficult times, as is shown on Figure 3.

John VSnr and Mary had 7 children and the eldest, John Snr (1818-1884), also became a carpenter. He married Sophia Jane in Camelford in 1838 and they had 6 children. Their births were recorded at St Enoder, Wendron, St Just, St Mewan and again at St Just, while in the census the family was listed at St Just in 1841-51, Redruth in 1861 and Truro in 1871. Their meanderings reflect their continual search for work and consequently their change of address.

John Snr's eldest son, John Jnr, who was born in St Enoder in 1838, married Sophia Elizabeth Hill in 1862. They lived in and around Redruth, Calstock and St Allen in Kenwyn where he became a builder, farmer and inn-keeper. Unlike many of his immediate family, as a farmer, he did not leave Cornwall.

After 3 sisters, John's younger brother, William Henry, was born in St Just in Penwith in 1851 and his achievements seem to suggest that he was the most intelligent, ambitious and capable of the family. By 1871, he had trained as a mine accountant. In 1873, he married Rebekah Corin in Penzance and their first child, William Henry Jnr, was born in St Columb Major in 1875. By 1880, he was in Cheshire and a year later he was in Rimington, as his second son, Arthur Joseph, was born in Rimington and was just 2 weeks old at the time of the 1881 census.

Figure 3:

Movements of the Borlase family in Cornwall 1796-1875

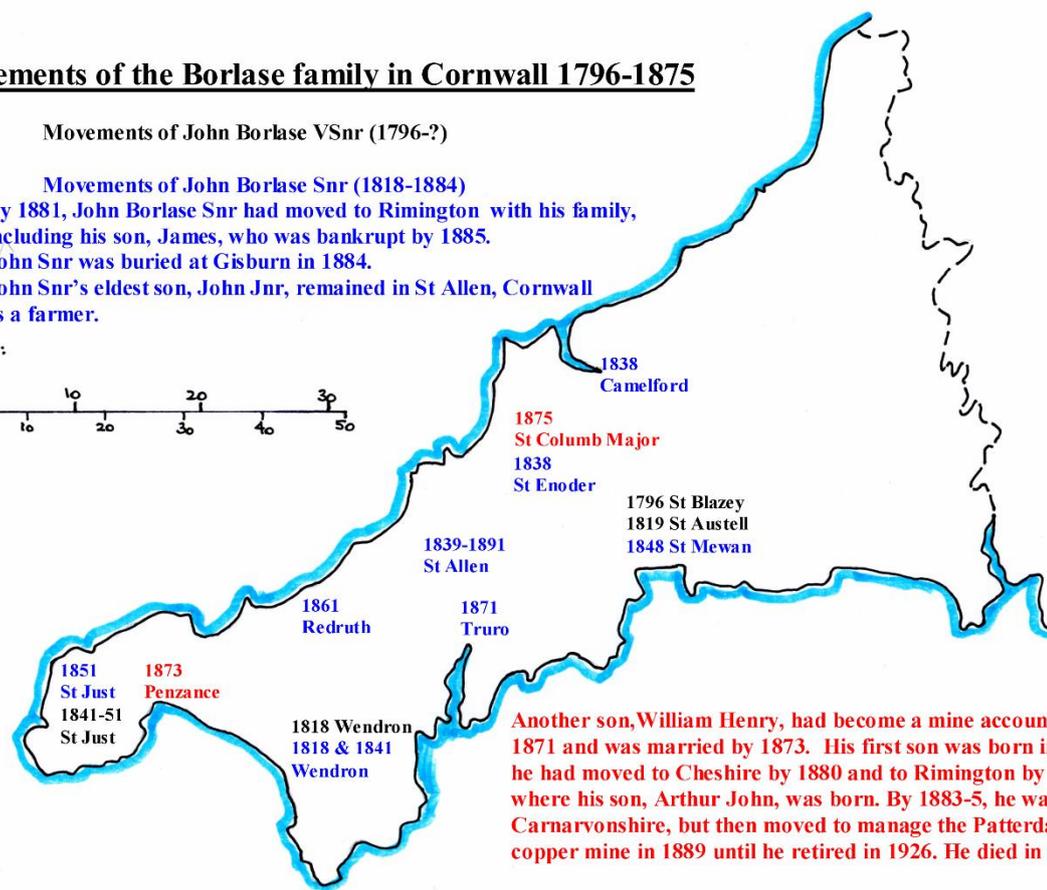
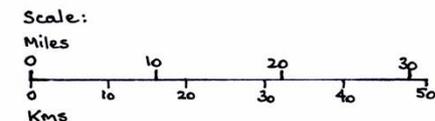
Black Movements of John Borlase VSnr (1796-?)

Blue Movements of John Borlase Snr (1818-1884)

By 1881, John Borlase Snr had moved to Rimington with his family, including his son, James, who was bankrupt by 1885.

John Snr was buried at Gisburn in 1884.

John Snr's eldest son, John Jnr, remained in St Allen, Cornwall as a farmer.



William Henry's parents, Mine Captain John Snr and Sophia Borlase, were recorded in the 1881 census as employed as 'Lead Mine Agent' and living in Rimington in the property numbered '59', between the houses of Tom Rhodes and Sarah Masterman.

Brian Stott wrote: 'I have pencilled in John Borlase as living at 'Miners Cottage, Ings End'. Tom Rhodes was farming 'Stubbs Wood' land, while Sarah Westerman was living at 'Ings End', as was William Duerden. William Bulcock was at 'Clough Head' and the Dean family were at 'Higher Gills'.

'Hollins Farm' appears to be occupied by Benjamin Bulcock with 'Oxclose' being the previous property and the two 'Howcroft' cottages being the next ones. Richard Spencer, the next name on the census list would have been living in what is now 'Overbrook' in Stopper Lane right next to his carpentry business in the wind-powered saw mill.'

'Regarding William Henry's time in Rimington. I personally believe that he lived at what became 'The Old Manor House /The Old Thatched Cottage', which was quite befitting his status. My reasoning is this: although the 1881 census frustratingly only numbers the properties in the township of 'Rimington', a sequence of properties can be deduced with the help of the '71 and '91 censuses. James Dean, farmer of 135 acres, was farming Stoops Farm at Stopper Lane in 1881. This is the last property in Stopper Lane before another farmer (and land agent of the lord of the manor, George Lane-Fox), Richard Gill and family are listed. He farmed at Manor Farm in Rimington village. I believe he had moved next door into the new, recently built, Manor Farm house from 'The Old Manor House' sometime between 1871-1881. This leaves two properties, 'Susie Cottage' and the 'Old Manor House', to be accounted for between those of James Dean and Richard Gill. If I am right the 1881 census shows the then tiny 'Susie Cottage' was occupied by Susannah Holden and her lodger Charlotte Dean, and William Henry Borlase and family would therefore be living at the 'Old Manor House' next door.'

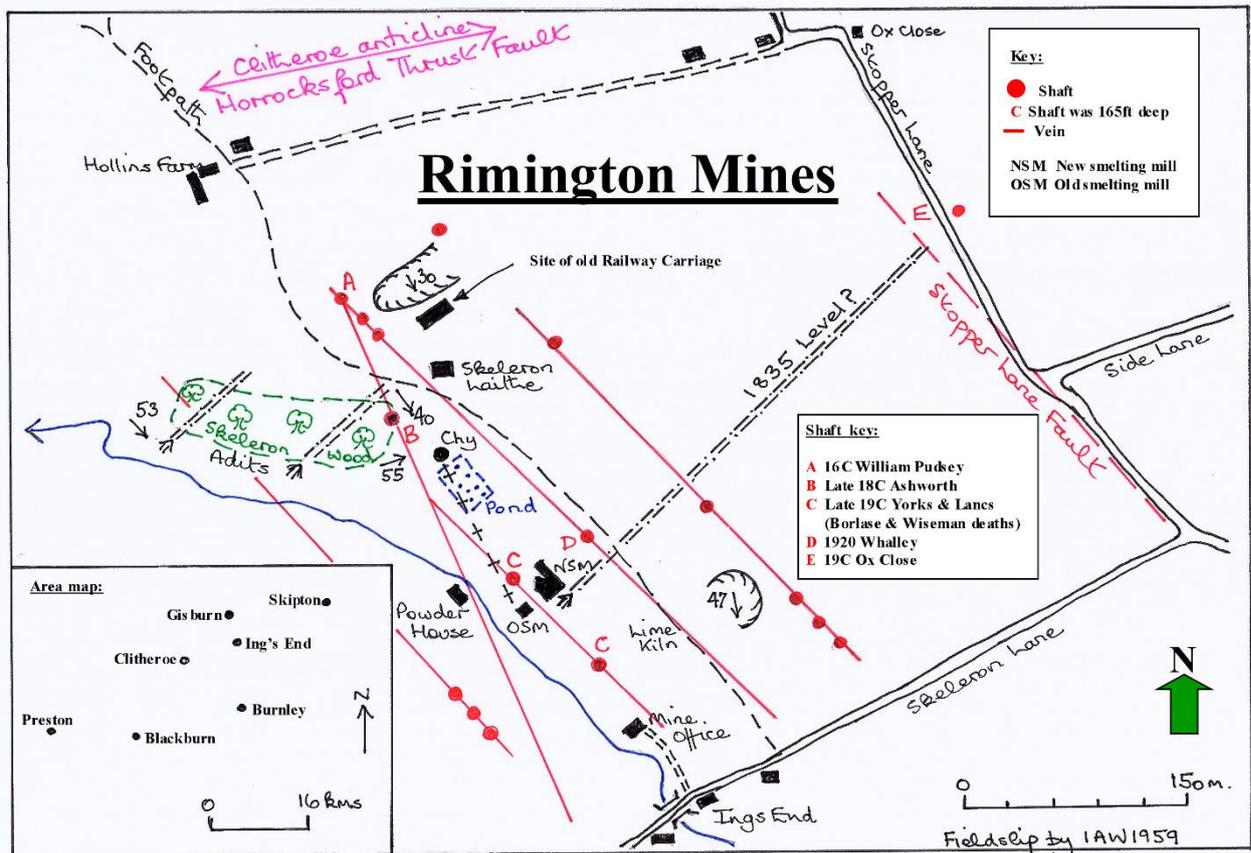
It was William Henry who persuaded his father, the Cornish Mine Captain, John Borlase Snr, and his younger brother, James, to come to Rimington and work the Skeleron barytes, lead and zinc mine for the owners, Baynes & Colville. The mine was firstly renamed as the 'York and Lancaster Mine at Skelhorn' and later as the 'York & Lancaster United Mining Co.' According to IA Williamson, they mined no zinc deposits, but did raise 57.6 tons of lead and 2657 tons of barytes between 1880 and 1885. The veins were thin and often not continuous. To raise so much ore was a great achievement and much to the credit of their expertise, experience and tenacity. Unfortunately, the prices paid were low and the mine seriously struggled to support 7 miners and their families.

In 1884 came disaster. The Company was fined £5 for irresponsible storage of explosives, James Wiseman, the banksman, fell to his death down the 165ft shaft and John Borlase Snr, the mine captain, died. The Company was liquidated and James Borlase, John Snr's youngest son, ex-railway contractor and new mine agent, was declared bankrupt in 1885. Mining operations came to a sudden and calamitous end.

James Borlase had married in 1883 to a Jane Doggett in Windsor. They came to live in Rimington and by 1891 their home was in the 'Mining House'. This is most likely to have been the 'Mine Cottage' at Ing's End, but could have been the railway carriage. Four of their 5 children were born in Rimington between 1886 and 1892. Their first child, Jane, died after 8 days and was buried at Gisburn, whilst their last child was born at Sophia Borlase's house in Liverpool in 1894. Interestingly, their children were all baptised at St Mary's Church, Gisburn, but, by 1901, James' wife and family were all in Hounslow. Shortly afterwards, all the children were christened on the same day of the 6th June 1903 in Watford. In 1911, it is assumed that James had died, as Jane was recorded as a widow.

John Borlase Snr's family are supposed to have lived in a railway carriage by the old quarry above Hollins Farm and close to Skeleron Laithe and the mine. They would have been able to grow vegetables and fruit in their small garden, but, on little income, their life must have been a struggle to make ends meet.

Their 'railway carriage house' is difficult to prove. A long house, like a railway carriage, does not appear on any OS map from 1884-1914 and the later maps have not yet been consulted. The first hint is on the 1940's aerial photo on Lancs CC Mario. There is a stronger hint with a distinctive angular shadow on the 1960's photo. In the 1998 LUAU report a 10 x 5m building platform was recorded at SD 81452 45088 and in Brian Lee's 2001 booklet on 'Rimington-Ribblesdale's Lost Silver Mine', the carriage is shown on his sketch map. This map is in turn based on the 1959 sketch map by IA Williamson in his booklet: 'The Skeleron or York and Lancaster Lead Mines'.



Adapted sketch map from 1959 IA Williamson and Brian Lee's booklet of 2001 by Brian Jeffery.

After his death, John Snr's widow, Sophia, had moved from Rimington to Toxteth Park, Liverpool by 1891 and was living there 'on her own means', with her daughter, Kate, and grandson, George. It is assumed that they were financially supported by her son, the more prosperous, William Henry Borlase.

William Henry, the mine engineer, and his family lived in greater luxury in the 'Old Manor House' on Rimington Lane. He must have left Rimington shortly after 1881, because it is known that he moved to Caernarvonshire. It was there that his

last two children, Edward Thomas and Mary Corin were born in 1883 and 1885 respectively. However, according to the Craven Herald, William Henry was surveying the Skeleron mine at his father's request in September 1884 (see n11). On the 17th September, he had descended the mine shaft with John Johnson, while his father was on the bank top with James Wiseman. William Henry found James at the bottom of the 165ft shaft with his skull smashed in and his right-leg and left-arm broken. In 1890, William Henry took the job as Chief Mine Agent for the Patterdale Copper Mine near Glenridding in the Lake District. He lived at Greendale House and he ran the mine very successfully until he retired in 1926. He was very highly respected by the local Patterdale community as a mining engineer and he died in 1933.

By 1891, or shortly afterwards, the remaining lead miners in Rimington had all disappeared. In the 1891 census, John Baynes had become an engine tender at Narrowgates Mill, Barley. The banns for his marriage were read in October 1884, but the marriage was postponed for a year, due to the death and burial of John Borlase Snr on the 18 October. He married Emily Manlove in Gisburn, St Mary's in 1885 and he listed himself as an engine driver. He briefly worked in Derbyshire in the late 1880's and early 1890's as two of his children were born there in 1887 and 1892. By 1901, they had 3 children called Joseph, Thomas Manlove and Agnes Daisy and he was a farmer at Lower Sabden Hall in Goldshaw Booth in the period 1901-1911.

Based on the absence of early map evidence, but the positive 'railway carriage' evidence from Mary Bairstow, Iain Williamson and Brian Lee, the Borlase family probably lived in the 'Mine Office' or 'Miners' Cottage, Ings End'. This appears as the house occupied by James and Jane Borlase and named as the 'Mining House' in the 1891 census. The railway carriage shown below, as the 'Jolly Croft Camp, Rimington', probably appeared in Rimington in the 1920's.



The 'Jolly Croft Camp' Rimington by E Buck: photo courtesy of Pete Garnett.

The carriage was photographed by Edmundson Buck (1859-1941) and it is likely that it was taken after 1901, when he went professional, and before 1930. The carriage continued to be used at weekends and for holidays by a Blackburn family until the 1960's. Its final use was as a chicken-hut before it became too dilapidated and was demolished in the 1970's.

Notes on Sources and Further reading:

1. 1841-1911 UK census courtesy of Ancestry.com and FindMyPast.co.uk, which are available in public libraries;
2. FamilySearch.org.uk data on vital data and Cornish documents courtesy of Cornwall Record Office;
3. Lancashire bmd data on Freebmd, Lancashire bmd and Lancashire Online Parish Clerks;
4. *Samuel Murphy's excellent book about Lead Mining 'Grey Gold' has a section on the Borlase family - ISBN-13: 978-0952636076. There is a good summary from this book in 'Patterdale TODAY Edward Thomas Borlase';*
5. A similar article can be seen on www.ullswatermemorial.co.uk which focuses on Lt Edward Thomas Borlase, the third son of William Henry Borlase (1851-1933);
6. IA Williamson, 1959: *The Skeleron or York and Lancaster Lead Mines*;
7. Brian Lee, 2001: *Rimington – Ribblesdale's Lost Silver Mine*, booklet in Clitheroe Library;
8. M.C. Gill, 1987: *The Yorkshire and Lancashire Lead Mines, A study of Lead Mining in the South Craven and Rossendale Districts*, NMRS, British Mining no.33; and

9. Surname distribution maps for 1841-1911 census data: <https://your-family-history.com>
10. Blackburn Standard 13 Oct 1877 p6 mentions that the mine is owned by Oswald Baynes and Henry Colville, but that it is run by Richard Baynes, Oswald's third son. Richard was born in Askrigg in 1847 and was with his grandparents, Oswald Snr and Isabella Baynes, in 1851 (HO107 2380/22 p17). In 1861, he was a grocer's apprentice in Dewsbury, while in 1871, he was a cotton manufacturer in Lytham. Richard married Patience Sutton on the 21 May 1873 at Carlisle and they returned to live in Lytham. Their daughter, Ida Mary, was born there in 1874. Richard and his family lived in Rimington in the late 1870's, but between 1881 and 1891, he had left to become a coffee broker in Birkenhead and a bakery manager in Hastings. The family had returned to Westmorland by the late 1890's as Richard died at Temple Sowerby aged 53 in late 1899.

Baynes or Baines is a very common surname in the Yorkshire Dales and it would be very easy to confuse one family with another. The use of certain forenames does not make the puzzle any easier.

Oswald Baynes Snr married Isabella and they were both born about 1790. Only 3 children have been traced: Mary (1815-1828), 1822 Oswald Jnr and 1824 John. They lived in the Askrigg area in 1851 and their grandson, Richard, was there as a visitor on census night.

It was Oswald Jnr who, along with Henry Colville, owned the Skeleron mine lease. He married Agnes Webster in 1841 and he became a farm bailiff in Cheshire. They had about 7 children and their third child, Richard, born 1847 and mentioned above, was the man who married Patience Sutton in 1873 and who was the Chief Mine Agent for the Skeleron mines from 1876-1881.

Joseph Baynes was born in Carperby in 1830 and he is listed in the 1841 census as having 2 elder sisters, Jane and Alice, and an elder brother, John. Their birthdays would all fall between 1826 and 1830. It is tempting to assume that he, Joseph, and his elder siblings were also the children of Oswald and Isabella, but no evidence has been found for this link.

Joseph married Agnes Lund in 1852. They had 4 children with the eldest 3 being girls, Mary Ann, Margaret and Isabella. Their only son, John, was born in 1860 and it was he, at the age of 19, who worked in the Skeleron mine in 1881.

While Joseph Baynes was running the mine until his death in 1877 and his son, John, continued to work at the mine until 1880/1, no family connection has been found between them and Oswald Baynes, the mine owner.

11. Relevant articles in the Craven Herald can be found in 20/9/84 p5, 27/9/84 p3, 23/5/85 p3 and 5/9/85 p3;
12. Aerial photos from Lancs CC Mario, Google Earth, Bing maps and Lidar from www.lidarfinder.com;
13. Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU) 1998 report for Lancs CC: *Rimington Lead Mines, Lancashire*. Site 23 on page 27 describes a 10 x 5m building platform at SD 81452 45088; and
14. Wikipedia: Sir William Borlase's Grammar School, Marlow, Buckinghamshire.

Document dated 22 October 2021 and written by Brian Jeffery. It is based on the information listed above and on the 'railway carriage' photograph provided by Brian Stott of Foulridge, via Dorothy Falshaw of Gisburn from a Facebook post by Pete Garnett.