COAL MINING RECORDS

By far, one of the best websites for coal mining history is that of the Coal Mining History Resource Centre. It is a free website with a wealth of information and guidance for researchers to delve into and start discovering. Here are highlights of some of the information available on the site:

Pre-1850

Many personnel records did not exist as they do today, and therefore information about workers is often hard to come by unless they had an accident or even died from injuries, this could often get reported in a local newspaper. There was no systematic recording of mining deaths. The records are very longwinded and the quality of the information is lacking.

1850-1914

Many of the details in this time period from records on CMHRC website are taken from the lists of deaths in the Mines Inspectors Reports and some from Ian Winstanley's* research. The reports covered deaths and some injuries in coal, oil shale and metal mines as well as quarries. The names were recorded officially from 1850-1914 and there are over 90,000 entries - a staggering number.

Post 1914

The source of this material are the Mines Inspectors Record Of Accidents which has to be transcribed from hand written documents so like many transcriptions, there may be some minor errors or inaccuracies which generally arise from difficulties in reading the originals. In many cases there is no indication as to whether it was a fatal accident and the CMHRC have erred on the side of caution entering it as injured.

Websites of interest

Coal mining disasters
http://www.cmhrc.co.uk/site/disasters/

Ancestry
UK, Coal Mining Accidents and Deaths Index, 1878-1935
https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/9735/

Welsh Coalmines
http://www.welshcoalmines.co.uk/

South Wales Coal field collection
https://www.swansea.ac.uk/library/richard-burton-archives/information-about-some-of-our-collections/south-wales-coalfield-collection/

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*Ian Winstanley is a retired science teacher with a heavy interest in the history of mining which started from looking into his own family connections to the mines. He has collated most of the information on the CMHRC's website

South Wales Coalfield timeline
http://www.agor.org.uk/cwm/timeline.asp

Coal mining National Museum Wales
https://museum.wales/curatorial/industry/coal-mining/

South Wales Coalfield
https://www.nmrs.org.uk/mines-map/coal-mining-in-the-british-isles/swales/

The National Coal Mining Museum for England
www.ncm.org.uk/Downloads/44/tracing_your_mining_family.pdf

As many coal miners moved around the country looking for work when new shafts were sunk, you can often find ancestors located a long way from home. These other websites may be of interest to many of you searching across the UK:

National Coal Mining Museum
http://www.ncm.org.uk

The North of England Mining Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers
http://www.mininginstitute.org.uk

The Durham Mining Museum
http://www.dmm.org.uk

Mines Rescue
http://www.healeyhero.co.uk/

The Mining History Network
https://projects.exeter.ac.uk/mhn/

Scottish Mining Website
http://www.scottishmining.co.uk/