

**Richard Ingleby of Springfield**

by Mr. Paul Evans

"May success be his reward, for the seasonable and useful importation of barley in the late time of scarcity; a critical relief to the numerous miners on the adjacent mountains, in which he had no more interest than in the rest of the human race" (1)

So wrote Thomas Pennant, of Richard Ingleby in his book "The History of The Parishes of Whiteford and Holywell" (1796). At the time Richard was the owner of a lead smelting works in Flint to which lead ore from the lead mines he owned or leased came to be processed.

Richard was probably the Gt Grandson of Richard and Agnes Ingleby of Monyash in Derbyshire, his Grandfather also called Richard was born in Bakewell Derbyshire abt 1688-9, he married Sara (h) Johnson (2) and sometime in the first decade of the eighteenth century he became part of a wave of Derbyshire men, which included his two brothers Daniel and Hugh, who came into N.Wales, mainly Halkyn and the surrounding area, to work in the lead mining industry, a movement that had started in the later years of the previous century. The Ingleby's became prominent in the industry as either managers or owners of lead mines. They became minor gentry and married into fellow mining families. (3) (Smedley, Whitehouse and Hooson). Debt and bankruptcy also played a part in their lives.

Richard and Sara's eldest son Thomas was baptised in Halkyn in 1711 and in 1733, in Llanarmon yn Ial, he married Elizabeth Pierce, daughter of John and Dorothy, who was heiress to a small estate of 21 acres called Pistyll Uchaf (Upper Spring) Thomas rebuilt the house in the 1760's, possibly in 1766 after Dorothy's death and renamed it Springfield. It is now been converted into the present Springfield Hotel alongside the A55 Expressway.

Thomas like his father held important positions in the London Lead Mining Company which controlled the main lead mining interests in the Halkyn area and owned, also the Gadlys lead smelting works in Bagillt. (4) The Company was known in N.Wales as the Gadlys Co. (5) Thomas and his father were under agents of the company at their mine at Llangynog, Montgomery where they were prominent in the administration of the mine, attending the quarterly pays and setting bargains. (6) The Company left N.Wales in the 1790's after amongst other reasons a "scandal" involving their interest in the Trelogan mine in Llanasa. (7)

When Thomas's Father died in 1734, the trustees of his will were well known figures in the local lead mining industry. William Hooson, another Derbyshire man who later compiled the 'Miners Dictionary' in 1747 (Thomas is listed as a subscriber), Edward Cheney who mined in the Mold area and was known as 'Lord' Cheney after he bought the manor of Moynash, Derbyshire, (8) Joseph Critchley who was the chief Miner on Halkyn mountain for the London Lead Mining Co and Thomas Barker who was the main agent in North Wales for the London Lead Mining Co. (9) The Barkers befriended the family and assisted in their rise to fortune

Richard's father Thomas apart from working for The London Lead Mining Co was also cultivating his own business interests in the Mold area. In 1746 his name appears in an indenture (10) signed by Anthony Langley Swymmer, one of the Lords of Mold regarding land he held in tenure in the Mold area and also in the accounts (c 1761) of the Lords of Mold. It is also likely he was involved in lead mining activities with the Gadlys Co in Llanarmon yn Ial. (11)

In 1736 our Richard was born, although he seems to have been baptised twice, in Holywell on May the 29th with just his father Thomas recorded and also in Halkyn on the same day with his mother Elizabeth recorded this time as well. This double baptism seems to occur again in the family, sometimes several months apart, this time involving Richard's grandchildren

Richard was married three times. His first wife Elizabeth Griffiths, he married in Mold in 1763 and they had a daughter Sarah who was baptised in February 1764. Elizabeth died the following year and in 1766, again in Mold, Richard married Elizabeth Jones and in May 1767, their daughter Elizabeth was baptised. A son was buried in the January of 1767 but no name is mentioned and I have not found a baptism. Tragedy strikes again in 1768 and Richard is widowed for the second time, with Elizabeth being interred in Halkyn old churchyard.

In September 1770 Richard marries for the third time to Sarah Totty in Holywell. Sarah (one of 22 children) was the daughter of, John Totty, an ironmonger from Holywell who had shares in mining ventures; her mother Mary was a Lloyd of Cornist Bach, Flint.

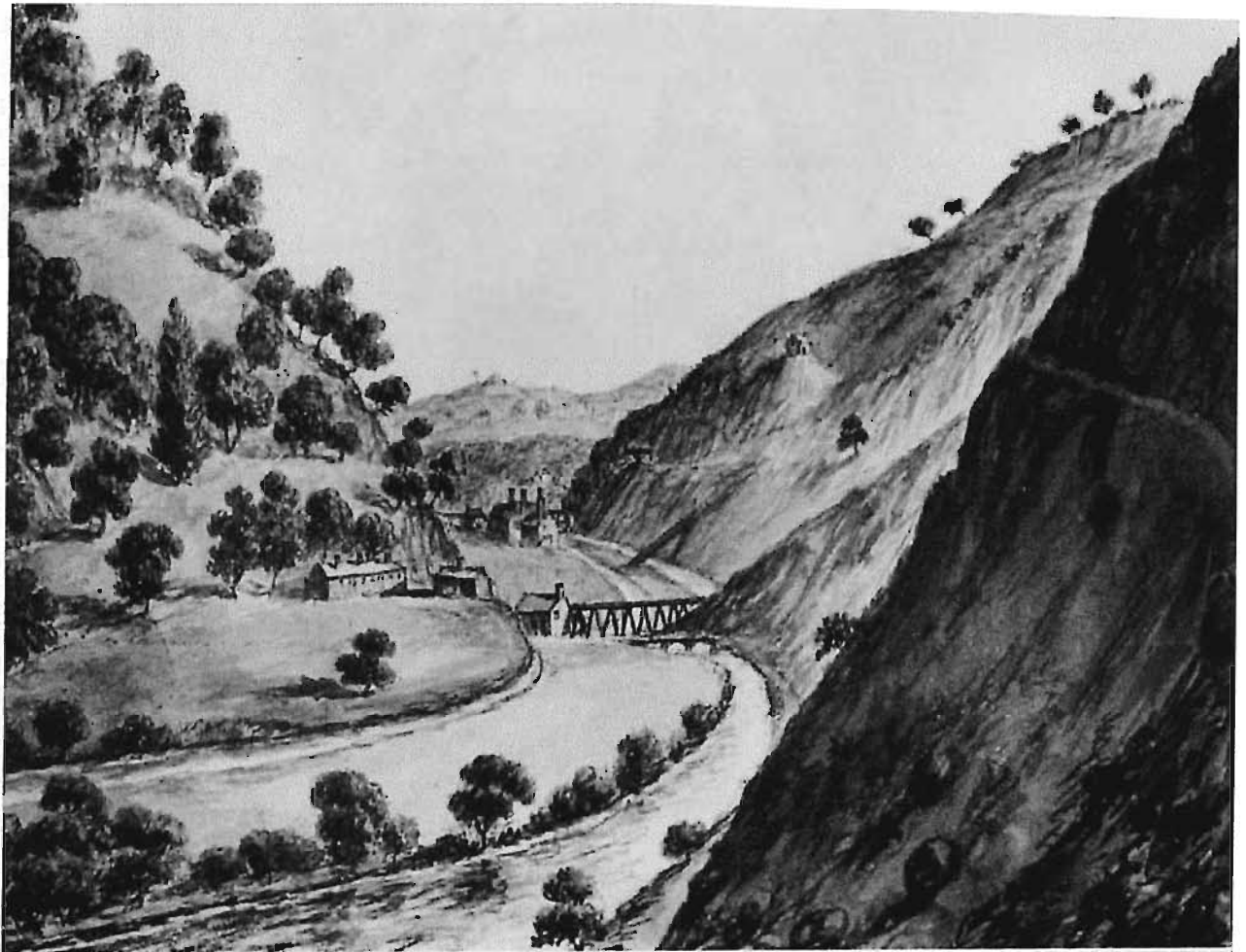
Three of her brothers were well connected, Thomas, a naval lieutenant during the American War of Independence, became a Rear Admiral and was a contemporary of Nelson. A memorial to him stands in Westminster Abbey, erected by another brother William who had made his fortune in business.

A third brother, the Rev Hugh Totty D.D (Oxford) became chaplain to George IV and lived to the age of 102. (12)

Although it seems probable that Richard involved himself in his father's lead mining interests he seems to have started out in business as a grocer. Whether he became a Grocer when he married Sarah, or was already in the business is not known but he is described as a former grocer when he leases the Pen y Fron mine (1785-6) in the Alyn Valley south of the village of Rhydymwyn. Richard certainly threw himself wholeheartedly into this new venture, besides the Pen y Fron mine he also leased another Alyn Valley mine, Llyn y Pandy (13) and although lead mining was said to be in somewhat of a decline in the area, he and his brother William in the following year took a 21-year lease on 25 by 4 mears of land at Windy Gap on Halkyn Mountain (a mear was a Derbyshire unit of measure of approx 30 yds). It was soon producing 500 tons of lead ore annually. (14)

At first Richard suffered several years of losses in his Alyn valley mines no doubt due to the fact that lead mines in that area were subject to flooding on a great scale, so much so that some of the lower levels could only be mined during long dry spells of weather. These flooding problems may have been the reason behind the letter from Richard, in 1785, to John Lloyd, one of the Lords of Mold, urging the continuation of the Gwernymynydd adit level. (15) The problems though did not stop him building a smelter and a lead rolling mill nearby. It was the first time that lead had been smelted in the Mold area for nearly 100 years. (16)

Evidence of these efforts to drain the mine can be seen in a picture drawn in 1796 by Richard's cousin, John Ingleby who worked for Thomas Pennant (20)

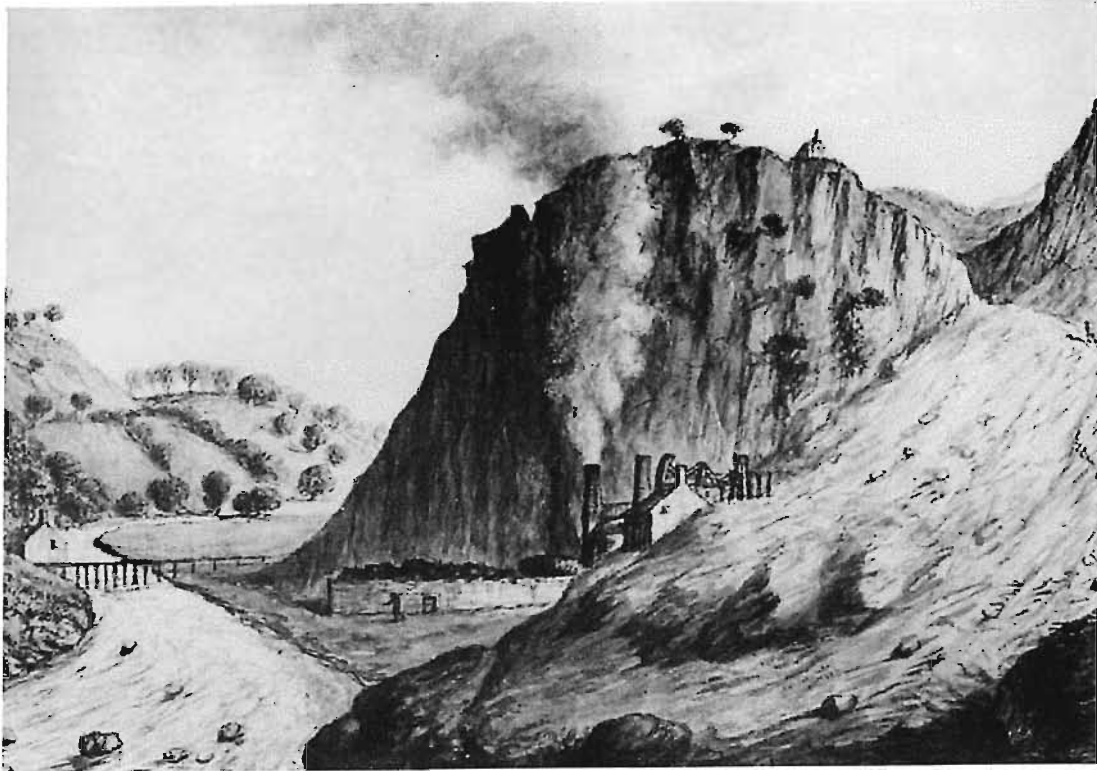


**Pen y Fron Mine 1796** a watercolour by John Ingleby

The small building half way up the hillside on the right was the engine house for the large Newcomen steam engine. Two of the three water wheels can be seen either side of the buildings in the distance, which were the smelting works with a rolling mill situated further downstream  
The works in this picture were built around 1786

In 1788 a bill appears before Parliament from the Flint Canal Co proposing the building of a canal from Pentre Rock, Flint to Greenfield. Richard was among a number of Industrialists who had petitioned for this bill and although I do not think he was a prime mover, it does show that he associated with some powerful people in the local industrial scene. John Wilkinson, the founder of Bersham ironworks, who pioneered the machining of cylinders so crucial to Boulton and Watt's steam engines, The Rev Edward Hughes of Kinnel who was one of the landowners on Parys Mountain, Anglesey, and Thomas Williams, Lawyer and another owning land on Parys Mountain. Thomas was known as the 'Copper King' and much has been written about him elsewhere. The bill was passed but interest fell away and the canal was never built. (21)

Richard by the mid 1790's was a wealthy man and unfortunately a Widower again, Sarah having died in Feb 1790 age 45. With Sarah he had had 11 children between



**Llyn y Pandy Mine, 1796.** Watercolour by John Ingleby  
This was painted at the time that John Wilkinson owned the mine

By the early 1790's, Richard seems to have solved his problems and made his fortune. Walter Davies (Gwallter Mechain) reports that this was done "with no other engines than pickaxes, buckets, ropes, windlasses and wheelbarrows, he for some time quarried out from 30 to 50 and sometimes as much as 100 tons of ore per week." and the main vein was said to be over 7 feet wide. The expense of raising the ore and dressing it was no more than 10 shillings a ton, while it sold for an average of 9 pounds a ton. The lead was rolled into sheets and sent to Flint for export.<sup>(17)</sup> The ore raised at Pen y Fron by Richard probably accounted for good part of the 27,553 tons estimated to have been raised before the 1820's. The rentals of the Gwysany estate in which all bar the most westerly part of the mine was situated record 2,544 tons in the years 1796-1801 <sup>(18)</sup>. By this time Richard was no longer working the Llyn y Pandy mine and records show that John Wilkinson of Bersham ironworks took over the lease of Llyn y Pandy in about 1792. Another example of the flooding problems that Richard had to put up with comes from the Rev Richard Warner who visited the mine in 1796. <sup>(19)</sup>

"A little lower down the river is a mine called Pen y Fron belonging to Mr. Ingleby. This is drained by a steam engine of the old construction (this would have been a Newcomen) and a water wheel. Independent of these are 2 other wheels which raise the water from the lower levels to the main level. With all this power Ingleby is scarcely able to get to the bottom of his work except when the weather be particularly dry. Were he able to effect this completely, his profits would be immense since the mine is incredibly rich. There being one vein of solid ore 2 and half yards width, besides several other seams. In the few instances where he has gotten to the bottom no less than 70 tons of ore have been raised per week"

1771 and 1786 and with the 2 surviving daughters from his previous marriages it would have made for a busy household. A daughter Mary Anne married her cousin Robert Chambres Chambres of the family of Llysmeirchion and Plas Chambres near Henllan; Robert's mother was Charlotte Totty, Sarah's younger sister. (22)

In 1796 Richard bought a small estate in the Halkyn Township of Lygan y Lan, from the Butler family of Cornist, (who were also related to the Totty's) which included the Nant Mill and a property called Coppa'r Fran. He took out several mortgages on this estate from John Hughes a merchant from Chester (23) and he uses this money to finance several business ventures. It is quite probable that that this John Hughes is the Father in Law to Richard's son John. Apart from his mining interests in Halkyn, the Alyn valley and the smeltery in Flint, where he had also acquired buildings for the storing of lead ore etc, in 1803 land in Sychdyn, Northop is leased with the plan of extracting coal probably for use in the Smeltery (24) and he, along with his sons John, an officer in the Militia (25) and Charles took out a lease on land and minerals in the Barony of Moycullen in Co Galway, Ireland. (26) Richard was also involved with a partnership headed by Henry Vigars and had interests in mines in Minsterley in Shropshire. (27)

In 1803 John Hughes died and any debts owed to him passed to the trustees of his estate including his daughter Ann. Richard's debt at the time was over £8,000 pounds (approx £240,000 today) and this was said to be three times what the estate, he used as collateral was worth. (28) This debt did not stop him 2 years later raising more money with a mortgage of £7,000 and £3,000 pounds unfortunately this brings his money problems to a head and it is noted that a document linked to this mortgage states that Richard could not repay and became greatly in debt. (29) More evidence can be found in an agreement between Richard and the Cobb family of London in which Richard mortgages land and buildings in Flint to the Cobbs to secure delivery to them of 150 tons of lead or its value in money. The lead was not delivered and so the Cobb family took possession and put the land and buildings up for sale. (30)

The reasons for Richards's financial problems were not hard to see. The early years of the nineteenth century were a bad time for the lead industry. The industry relied heavily on the export market and many of these markets were closed due to the war against France. Production at Pen y Fron had slumped to under 50 tons possibly due to water entering the lower levels of the mine and may have accounted for the failed delivery of lead to the Cobbs. (31) A previous conflict thirty years before, namely the American War of Independence was the cause of bankruptcy to many local industrialists, including Richard's brother in law, Thomas Smedley. Richard was probably able to lease cheaply, mines and other workings at that uncertain time and make his fortune when hostilities ceased. It is somewhat ironic then, that another conflict should cause him to lose it all.

In 1807 Richards mines and works went into administration and the business was run by trustees who may have been, or included, his son's John and Charles. In 1810 a state of bankruptcy was taken against Messer's John and Charles Ingleby but was not until 1812 when the firm was finally declared bankrupt. (32) The Chester Chronicle dated Friday June 12, prints a notice.

"The Commissioners in a Commission of Bankruptcy awarded and issued against John Ingleby, of Lygan y Wern, and Charles Ingleby, of Soughton, in the county of Flint, lead-merchants, dealers, chapmen and partners, intend to meet on Friday the 12th day of June next, at eleven O' clock in the forenoon, at the Feathers Inn, in Chester....."



The closure of Pen y Fron mine and the Flint smelt works must have had a large effect on the working population of Flint, because at the time Flint industry was dominated by coalmining and the smelt works. Richard may have been able to weather the problems with the export markets but a lack of financial reserves proved to be his downfall as it did with many other individuals and partnerships. (33) The trustees of John Hughes took possession of the old Butler estate and eventually the Grosvenor estate acquired this. (34)

Other members of the family suffered as well. Richards's uncle, William was said to be a fugitive from debt and another uncle, Joseph was said to be indebted to Henry Vigars.(35) John Ingleby faced eviction from the fine house of Lygan y Wern in Halkyn but it was not until 1819, after much correspondence that the Grosvenor Estate finally had him and his family removed. (36)

Richard died on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 1824 at the age of 88 whilst living with his daughter Charlotte and her husband Archibald Thomson at Springfield. His funeral took place in Halkyn Parish church on December 15th and he is buried with his second and third wives, in what is now the old churchyard. The entry in the burial register is extremely detailed.

"Richard Ingleby, Esq. Son of Thomas and Elizabeth Pierce age 88 of Springfield"

And so ends the life of what Burkes; Landed Gentry calls "A man of great ability and Philanthropy."

- 1; Thomas Pennant; History of the Parish's of Whiteford and Holywell; 1796,p 282,
- 2; Burkes Landed Gentry Ingleby's of Valentine; c1900 p. 842, some destruction of earlier registers has rendered the proof of this point difficult.
- 3; B. Ellis; Halkyn Mountain Communities; 1993,
- 4; B.Ellis; Halkyn Mountain Communities, 1993,
- 5; J.N.Rhodes; The London Lead mining Co in N.Wales, unpub thesis 1970
- 6; J.N.Rhodes; The London Lead mining Co in N.Wales, pp.213-217 unpub thesis 1970
- 7; J.N.Rhodes; The London (Quaker) Lead Company and the Prestatyn Mines Scandal; Vol 22, pp 42-53 Flintshire Historical Society Publications
- 8; C.J.Williams; Lead mines of the Alyn Valley, Vol 29, pp 51-87 Flintshire Hist Soc Pub 1979-80. Edward Cheney left the valley in 1739 with his debts unpaid and his assets were seized in 1741
- 9; M. Bevan Evans; Gadlys and Flintshire Lead Mining in the 18 Century, Vol 18,pp Flintshire Hist Soc Pub 1960
- 10; Coleman Collection; D. D 1,343 NLW
- 11; Wigfair estate deeds and Documents; NLW
- 12; Mary Unwin; Chambres of Plas Chambres, Vol 3,pp 99-106 appendix; Denbighshire Historical Society Publication
- 13; C.J.Williams; Lead mines of the Alyn Valley; Vol 29, pp 51-87, Flintshire Hist Soc Pub 1979-80
- 14; B Ellis; History of Halkyn Mountain, 1998
- 15; C.J.Williams; Lead mines of the Alyn Valley; Vol 29, pp. 51-87, Flintshire Hist Soc Pub 1979-80
- 16; J.N.Rhodes; Lead mills at Mold, Vol 25 p.30 Flintshire Hist Soc Pub 1971-72
- 17; C.J.Williams; Lead mines of the Alyn Valley; Vol 29, pp 51-87, Flintshire Hist Soc Pub, 1979-80; note books of Walter Davies.
- 18; C.J.Williams; Lead mines of the Alyn Valley, Vol 29, pp 51-87, Flintshire Hist Soc Pub, 1979-80; some doubt has been cast on these figures by the author
- 19; W J Lewis; Lead Mining in Wales, pp139-140, (1967)
- 20; John Ingleby collection; N.L.W
- 21; George Lloyd; Flint Canal Co, Flintshire Hist Soc Pub Vol 19, pp 87-90, 1961; K.Davies & C.J.Williams; The Greenfield Valley, 1977 p.34, Richards name does not appear in the former.
- 22; Mary Unwin; Chambres of Plas Chambres, Vol, 3 pp 99-106. Denbighshire Hist Soc Pub
- 23; B Ellis; History of Halkyn Mountain, 1998

- 24; Wigfair estate deeds and Documents, 1663, date March 25 1803, N.L.W
- 25; B.Owen; Welsh Militia & Volunteer Corps 1757-1908, Flintshire and Denbighshire militia, Part 1; John is listed as a Captain in 1801
- 26; Aldersey deeds, Date 1802. Valentine Blake of Galway esq. to Richard, John and Charles Ingleby of Springfield in Co Flint, esq. and Edward Byrne of Liverpool, merchant
- 27; J.N.Rhodes; The London Lead mining Co in N.Wales, pp.213-217 unpub thesis 1970
- 28; B Ellis; History of Halkyn Mountain, 1998
- 29; Clough and Butler Archives, Title deeds, 218, 4 Jan 1805, West Sussex Record Office
- 30; Peniarth Est. Papers DF654 - 5, 14-15 April 1807; N.L.W
- 31; C.J.Williams; Lead mines of the Alyn Valley; Vol 29,, pp 51-87 Flintshire Hist Soc Pub, 1979-80
- 32; J.N.Rhodes; The London Lead mining Co in N.Wales, pp.213-217 unpub thesis 1970
- 33; K.Davies; Settlement and Population in Flintshire 1801-1815, Vol 25, pp70, 75, Flintshire Hist Soc Pub, 1971-72
- 34; B Ellis; History of Halkyn Mountain, 1998
- 35; J.N.Rhodes; The London Lead mining Co in N.Wales, Ingleby Family tree, incomplete; unpub thesis 1970
- 36; B Ellis; History of Halkyn Mountain, 1998;