

## JOHN TAYLOR AND SONS - A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP



Figure 3. John Taylor snr. (b.1779 - d.1863)  
[Courtesy of Patrick Taylor].

John Taylor and Sons of London, mining consultants, mining company promoters and mine managers, operated in various parts of the world for about 130 years, through five generations of the Taylor family. In reality the history of John Taylor and Sons deserves more detailed research than the very brief history provided in the following pages.

The mid-19th century mining activities of John Taylor and Sons (London), were initially centred on England and Wales but quickly spread to the Iberian Peninsula, where they successfully managed lead and copper mines for nearly 70 years. By 1880, Taylors were starting to concentrate their efforts in countries of the British Empire, particularly India, Australia and New Zealand and even briefly in Egypt and the Sudan, when those countries came under British rule. Consequently the

Linares mines were neglected, a situation that lasted until 1904.

Taylors obtained further capital for their Linares mines and formed new companies to work the Cerro Muriano copper deposits near Córdoba. By 1910, they had left Linares, but kept the companies operating elsewhere in Spain until 1919. The sale of the Cerro Muriano mine to a Spanish company in 1919 severed their interest in Spanish mining.

### FIRST GENERATION - JOHN TAYLOR SENIOR

The life of John Taylor Senior (Figure 3) has been covered by Burt.<sup>1</sup> Briefly, John Taylor was born in Norfolk, England in 1779 and eventually trained as a land surveyor and civil engineer. At the age of 19, he was appointed mine manager of Wheal Friendship Mine, near Tavistock, Devon. He rapidly gained a good reputation by introducing mechanised ore dressing, and improved the shipping arrangements.

In 1812 he left Devon and after a brief interlude in London became mine agent to the Grosvenor family, later to become the Dukes of Westminster, who operated a significant group of lead mines, in Flintshire, North-East Wales. Some ten years later he set up the family home at Coed du, Rhydymwyn in North Wales and established an ironworks and foundry to supply and service mining equipment.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 4. John Taylor jnr. (b.1808 - d.1881). [Courtesy of Patrick Taylor].

Taylor's reputation grew and in 1818 he gained an additional appointment. The Duke of Devonshire made him agent for his lead mines on Grassington Moor, Yorkshire and the Ecton Copper Mine, Staffordshire. The same year saw him form his first mining company, the Consolidated Mines at Gwennap, Cornwall. Others companies followed and John Taylor was acquiring considerable mining experience coupled with a run of success.<sup>3</sup>

However, not all his ventures were successful. His first attempt at mining abroad, the Real del Monte silver mines in Mexico failed with heavy financial losses. This episode in Taylor's life has been well documented by Randall,<sup>4</sup> whilst Todd<sup>5</sup> describes in detail the Mexican mining operations from a Cornish perspective.

Briefly, in 1823, Taylor was approached with a proposal to work mines in Mexico. Taylor clearly liked the idea and the Real del Monte Company was formed but virtually from the outset there were legal complications regarding the rights to work the rich silver mines in the Bolaños district. However, a considerable amount of money was invested in the enterprise in both manpower and machinery and although there were some minor successes, the operation eventually failed, possibly due to weak management. *'Perhaps the most serious fault in the firm's management was the refusal on the part of the London administrators to grant much discretionary authority to the head of the establishment in Mexico'*. Other factors that led to the demise of the operation included costly mining decisions that gave back little in return, leading to the winding up of the company in 1849.<sup>6</sup>

The Real del Monte episode must have been valuable experience for Taylor and it may have given him an insight into Spanish practices and etiquette. Eventually, John Taylor, together with his sons John and Richard, would successfully manage mines worldwide. In Spain and Portugal they established mining operations in seven areas, and the majority were a success. John Taylor senior died in 1863.

## SECOND GENERATION - JOHN AND RICHARD TAYLOR

The marriage of John Taylor senior to Ann Pring in 1805 produced three daughters (Anne, Susan and Honora) and two sons, John (born 11 August 1808) and Richard (born 4 March 1810)<sup>7</sup> After a formal education at Charterhouse School and Manchester College, York both sons gained practical experience in mining by visiting some of the classic European mining regions such as the Harz Mountains, Germany and both returned to Britain in 1828.<sup>8,9</sup>

John Taylor jnr. (Figure 4) was appointed by his father to a senior managerial position in the Flintshire lead mines, before taking up the management of the Halkyn and Great

Mold mines. Later, under his father's direction he would also open up some of the abandoned mines of Cardiganshire and take them to a prosperous condition. He was also given responsibility for the mines on Grassington Moor and the Minera mines in Denbighshire. In 1845 he was admitted into partnership with his father.<sup>10</sup>

Richard Taylor's (Figure 5) career went in a slightly different direction. He took on the management of the Consolidated and United Mines at Gwennap and other mines in Cornwall. During his association with these mines, he made many improvements to their ore-dressing technology, making them efficient and reducing costs. Richard was also appointed minerals agent to the Duchy of Cornwall, a position he held until 1852 (He was succeeded by Professor Warington Smyth).<sup>11</sup> In 1851, he also joined his father in London and the partnership of John Taylor and Sons was born.<sup>12</sup> Initially, they confined most of their efforts to Great Britain but gradually extended their interests into Europe.



Figure 5. Richard Taylor (b.1810 - d.1887). [Courtesy of Patrick Taylor].

John became involved with Spain, first at Hiendelaencina and later in 1853 at Linares. In addition, he was associated with the Lusitanian Mining Company which operated mines in Portugal.

Their management of the Pontgibaud lead mine in Central France also occupied a great deal of time for both John and Richard. The latter, had been given further responsibility further afield at the Cape Copper Company's mine in South Africa. Towards the end of his life, Richard was devoting more time to mining in South-West England. He was one of the founders of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, of which he was the honorary secretary for thirty-seven years and its president in 1877.

John was perhaps slightly more prominent at company meetings than Richard and it was said of John that: *'At the periodical meetings of his companies Mr. John Taylor (junior) was a welcome and fluent speaker. No gathering was considered complete which was not addressed by him or his brother. He had the peculiar faculty of being able to explain mining operations with an absence of technicalities which must often have been welcome to those whom he addressed. His descriptions of plans and sections were singularly clear, and gave the most uninitiated in the mysteries of mining a clear notion of what was going forward. He was most careful in his statements, and never led his hearers to indulge hopes which events were unlikely to realise. His forecasts of the probable results of mining operations were often surprisingly accurate, and no shareholder ever left his meetings who could truly say that all the information he asked for had not been forthcoming. In fact the public learned to rely greatly upon him, and*

*so it came to pass that the name of John Taylor and Sons upon the face of a prospectus went a long way towards the successful floating of a new enterprise.'*

John Taylor jnr. played a significant part in the running of the Linares lead mines managed by John Taylor and Sons, as did Richard to a lesser extent. John Taylor jnr. died on 20 April 1881 at the age of 72, and Richard died aged 74 on 28 December 1883 from an acute attack of bronchitis.

### **THIRD GENERATION - JOHN TAYLOR III ET AL.**

The third generation of Taylors and their involvement with the business of John Taylor and Sons became complex. Activities were centred on two localities: the Sandycroft Foundry, Flintshire, North Wales and the London office at 5 and 6 Queen Street Place, however, by this time the majority of the male members of the family were involved with mining and the family business.

#### **John Taylor Junior's family**

In 1840, John Taylor junior married Harriett Enfield, at Bramcote, Nottingham. They had eleven children that included:

John Taylor III, born 1841, became a partner in 1871, retired 1902, died 1920.

Frances Anne Taylor, born 1843.

Henry Enfield Taylor, born 1845.

Philip Meadows Taylor, born 1847.

Frank Taylor, born 1849, became a partner about 1890, died 1909.

Anne Pring Marten Taylor, born 1851.

Susan Harriett Taylor, born 1853.

Robert Taylor, born 1855, became a partner about 1884, died 1921.

Edgar Taylor, born 1858, became a partner about 1893, retired 1927, died 1942.

Edward Taylor, born 1858 (twin of Edgar, died in 1858).

Edward Sydney Taylor, born 1860.

John Taylor III (Figure 6) was educated at Hove House School, London University, and the Royal School of Mines and subsequently studied practical mining in Wales and Devon, working underground in the Wheal Friendship mine, Tavistock. For the majority of his early life he lived in North Wales, at Sandycroft where he managed the foundry. He became head of John Taylors and Sons in 1883 when Richard Taylor died. It was a position he held until his retirement.<sup>13</sup>

In his early career, he made one visit to Cañada in 1868 and three visits to the United States to inspect mines in California, Nevada, Missouri and Illinois in 1871-2 and two years later spent a considerable amount of time in Spain and Portugal.

He was appointed engineer to the Halkyn District Mines Drainage Company in 1874, and supervised the dewatering of the area with a major drainage adit.

John Taylor's main claim to fame was his involvement with the Kolar Gold Field, India, where he is still regarded as the 'Father of the Kolar Gold Field.' *'It was largely*

*due to his foresight and energy that the Kolar Gold Field arrived at success after the singularly unpropitious results following its prospecting and early development.* From 1880 onwards he was involved with the formation of a string of companies, Mysore Gold, Nundydroog, Ooregum, Champion Reef, Balaghat and others, to develop the gold field. He was regarded as having saved the industry from extinction.

He was also Director of the Cape Copper Company. He died aged 78 on 24 August 1920, at Weston, Bath.<sup>13,14</sup>

In November 1875, John married Rosa Kate Bicknell, the sister of A.C. Bicknell who had been taken in as a partner in John Taylor and Sons. He managed the Sandycroft Foundry and Engine Works, conjointly with Frank Taylor, John's brother. The marriage was an auspicious event and lasted all day, with sports and other merriment being arranged for the foundry workforce, followed by a grand dinner in the evening.<sup>15</sup> The marriage produced five daughters, which effectively curtailed any future involvement in John Taylor and Sons for that line of the family.



*Figure 6. John Taylor III. (b.1841 - d.1920). [Courtesy of Patrick Taylor].*

It would appear that John would spend more and more time managing the mining side of the business. By 1884, John Taylor III was in partnership with his cousin, Richard Heneage Taylor (son of Richard Taylor). However, for whatever reason, this partnership was dissolved and Richard Heneage Taylor was replaced by John Taylor III's brother, Robert Taylor as a partner, who would ultimately play a more significant role in the business.<sup>16</sup>

Whilst, John, Frank, Robert and Edgar embraced the family partnership, the second son of John Taylor junior, Henry Enfield Taylor, embarked on a slightly different career path.

Henry Enfield Taylor was born on 6 September 1845. After undergoing pupillage under his father, both in London and Sandycroft, in 1868 he was appointed engineer of the Taylor's mine in Central Wales. In the same year, he married a Miss Hughes at Goginan, Central Wales.<sup>17</sup>

In 1873, however, he left the family business and became an independent consulting mining engineer, setting up his practice in Chester. He was awarded contracts in France, Germany and Spain and in various parts of Britain. His appointment as conservator and engineer for the River Dee Conservancy ensured he had a very busy life. He had responsibilities for designing sea and dock walls, and designed the programme for



Figure 7. Edgar Taylor (b.1858 - d.1842).

deepening and improving the River Dee between the sea and Chester. He was also involved with several local coal mining companies including the Mostyn Coal and Iron Company Ltd.<sup>18</sup> and the Hanmer Portland Cement, Coal and Coke Company Ltd<sup>19</sup>.

Other contracts of note included the cable tramway to the top of the Great Orme at Llandudno, Hawarden Waterworks and drainage works on Halkyn, as well as being a consulting engineer for Nobel's Explosives, at Glasgow.

He still retained his connections with Cardiganshire where he served on the Commission of the Peace. His local knowledge was invaluable, and he frequently gave evidence on Parliamentary bills. He died relatively young at the age of 59, on 7 August 1904.<sup>20</sup>

Frank Taylor was educated at Carshalton School and the Royal School of Mines, where he won the De La Bêche Medal in 1871. In 1872 he joined John Taylor and Sons and made inspection visits to America, the West Indies, Spain, Portugal and Australia. He became manager of the Sandycroft Foundry and in 1890, a partner of John Taylor and Sons.<sup>21</sup> He married Marion Robinson of Rochdale in 1892 when the employees of Sandycroft Foundry were granted a half-holiday in celebration of the event.<sup>22</sup> He was a well known racehorse owner and director of several gold mining companies. He died in December 1908, aged 60.<sup>23,24</sup>

Robert Taylor ultimately became a senior partner in John Taylor and Sons in 1884.<sup>25</sup> He seems to have spent much of his mining career associated with the Kolar Gold Field for which received a knighthood (New Year's Eve honours list) in 1920 for services to India. He is listed as a director of Mysore Gold.<sup>26</sup> He died in 1921.<sup>27</sup>

Edgar Taylor (Figure 7) After his involvement with various mining companies managed by John Taylor and Sons, for example The Tolgullow United Mines Company Ltd., he became a partner in John Taylor and Sons in 1893.<sup>28,29</sup> He was involved in their operations in South Africa and India.

During World War I, in his capacity as the President of the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy, he sat on the Ministry of Munitions advisory panel.<sup>30</sup> He did attend some of the Linares meetings after the death of John Taylor III.

Edward Sydney Taylor. He was born at London, and married Dora Maxwell Walsh at Rockbeare, Devon in 1889.<sup>31</sup> He was at the time living at Hawarden and eventually became the managing director of the Sandycroft Foundry branch of the business. He died in 1939 at St. Albans.<sup>32</sup>

### **Richard Taylor's family**

Richard Taylor's family was also large. He married Caroline Anne Dyke at Torquay in 1838, and they had ten children:

- Caroline Emma Taylor, born 1839.
- Gertrude Anne Taylor, born 1841.
- Susan Baker Taylor, born 1842.
- Richard Heneage Taylor, born 1844.
- Charles Dyke Taylor, born 1845.
- Percyvale Taylor, born 1847.
- Honora Taylor, born 1850.
- Arthur Taylor, born 1852.
- George Hart Taylor, born 1853.
- Florence Taylor, born 1855.

Richard Heneage Taylor the eldest son of Richard Taylor, after a short period with John Taylor and Sons, left the partnership. The 1881 census records that he was a civil engineer living with his wife, Donna Eliza Lydiard, (married in 1868) in Chelsea, London.<sup>33</sup> The obituary for his younger brother, Charles Dyke Taylor indicates that Charles was an assistant to Richard, who was managing the Val Sassam mines in Switzerland and the Gonna mines, Sardinia in the mid-1860s. Taylors maintained an interest in Italian mining and Richard produced several reports for the Monte Catini Copper Mining Company Ltd. in the late 1870s.<sup>34</sup> He is also listed as a Director of the Mysore Gold Mining Company Ltd, India that was formed in 1880. In 1884 he resigned as a partner in John Taylor and Sons.<sup>35</sup> He died in 1898.

Charles Dyke Taylor, the second son of Richard Taylor, was born in Cornwall on 19 September 1845. After completing his education as a civil engineer he worked as an assistant to his brother Richard Heneage Taylor until 1868. He then took up an appointment as resident manager of the Redruth and Chacewater Railway in Cornwall, living at Devoran. At the same time he was the representative for John Taylor and Sons in Cornwall and Devon and managed the Wheal Friendship Mine, Tavistock; the Restormel iron mine, Lostwithiel and other mines in the area and made several advances in mineral processing methods.<sup>36</sup>

In 1875, Charles developed a pulmonary disease and for health reasons went to work for the Cape Copper Company in South Africa (another Taylor managed company). His health did not improve and in 1876 he returned to England and died a short time afterwards at Falmouth aged 31.<sup>36</sup>

Percyvale Taylor was born in 1847 at Falmouth. He studied mechanical engineering. His first appointment was with Messrs. T.B. Jordon in South London. In 1867, he must have started working for John Taylor and Sons as he went to Pontgibaud, France, to run the smelter and the desilverising plant which was managed by John Taylor and Sons. In 1872 he resigned his position and went to work at the Panther Lead Works in Bristol, presumably with his father Richard Taylor.<sup>37</sup>

It is probable that he left the services of John Taylor and Sons about the time of his father's death and entered into partnership with M.P. Burthe, of Paris. He inspected mines in various countries that included France, Spain and also Malaya (Straits Settlements). He returned to London and died there in 1906.<sup>37</sup>

Arthur Taylor was born in 1852. It is probable that he studied mechanical engineering as by 1875 he is listed as a graduate member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and became a full member in 1883.<sup>38</sup>

He was employed by John Taylor and Sons as his address is listed as 6, Queen Street Place. In 1880 he was at the Pontgibaud lead works, central France and in 1885 was at Perak, Malaysia on a tin mine prospect. He married Nancy Emilie Bontoux in 1888, the daughter of Nosky Bontoux<sup>39</sup> who was the Director of the Pontgibaud mines.

By 1896, Arthur may have left the services of Taylor as he was a mine manager for the Sociedad Anglo-Vasca, Villanueva del Duque, Provincia de Córdoba, Spain. His home address then was 21, Victoria Road, Kensington, London, rather than the offices of John Taylor and Sons. In the early 1900s, he became involved with the Sopwith Company's lead mines in the Posadas area, west of Córdoba. During his time with the company (Calamon Mining Company of Spain, Limited)<sup>40</sup> he wrote a paper on, '*A new type of jig for the separation of metallic ores.*'<sup>41</sup> He died about 1932, probably in London.

It is interesting to note that Richard Taylor's eldest daughter, Caroline Emma, married Alphonse Raymond Etchats in 1868. Etchats also managed mines in the Córdoba area of Spain and almost certainly gave Arthur his first appointment in Spain.

George Hart Taylor seems to have been involved with mining and John Taylor and Sons, until about 1885, living for much of his early years in the Devoran area of Cornwall. He was the manager of the Restormel iron mine, Cornwall from 1877 to 1883,<sup>42</sup> and secretary of the Redruth and Chacewater Railway Company.<sup>43</sup> Both were connected in various ways with John Taylor and Sons, e.g. ownership and registered offices, respectively. He was an artist of note and won various prizes locally for his work.

However, in 1885 he withdrew his membership from the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society and emigrated to Queensland, Australia.<sup>44</sup> It is not known what he actually did there but he continued painting. In 1898, his painting of 'Zennor Cliffs, Cornwall' won a Brisbane Arts Society prize.<sup>45</sup> He made several trips back to England in 1900 and 1915 and also visited New Zealand. At some point after that date he returned permanently to England and died in South Kensington, London in 1940.<sup>46</sup>

#### **A Spanish gold mining venture that failed**

It was during the third generation of the Taylors that the partnership became more and more involved with gold mining. This interest would culminate in their very successful endeavours in India and eventually in Australia and New Zealand. It was possibly this attraction for gold that lured John Taylor and Sons to become involved with a gold mine venture in Galicia, North-West Spain.



The Monte del Oro Mining Company Limited was registered on 22 October 1886 with a nominal capital of £75,000 in £1 shares. Not wishing to expend large amounts of money on equipment, the prospecting was confined to a series of shallow levels driven by miners who were brought to Galicia from the Alamillos Mine, Linares, a distance of 700 kilometres. However, after exploring the mine for six years the venture failed.<sup>47</sup>

Whilst the shareholders made little from Monte del Oro, Taylor's did at least cover their expenses. Their services as managers were set in stone in the Monte del Oro Company's Articles of Association. As managers they would be paid £400 per annum, plus £200 for other salaries etc. and a further £200 for providing a company secretary. In addition they would be paid any extraneous expenses, as well as £750 for forming the company and acquiring concessions. They would also receive a further commission if the mine was a success.<sup>48</sup>

#### **FOURTH GENERATION PARTNERS OF JOHN TAYLOR AND SONS**

With John Taylor III having only daughters, it was the sons of his brothers that made up the 4th generation partnership of John Taylor and Sons.

Three sons of Henry Enfield Taylor:

Henry Claude Taylor, born 1873.

Hugh Frank Taylor, born 1874.

Arthur Enfield Taylor, born 1875.

Only son of Frank Taylor:

Sydney Enfield Taylor, born 1897.

Two sons of Edward Sydney Taylor:

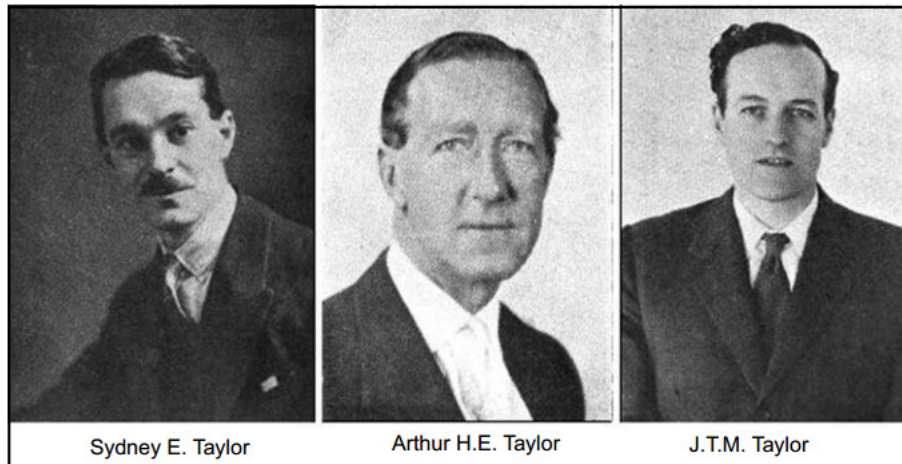
Guy Sydney Maxwell Taylor, born 1889.

Kenneth Baring Taylor, born 1891.

Henry Claude Taylor was born in 1873, in London and was educated at Rugby School. He started working for John Taylor and Sons immediately after finishing at Rugby. He married Marion Bridges at Ealing in 1899 and was made a partner in John Taylor and Sons in July 1899.<sup>49,50,51</sup>

He travelled to various places on behalf of the company, including Australia and Burma. As a director of a number of the Taylor companies working on the Kolar Goldfield, he probably visited India as well. He was also a director of several oil companies including, British Burmah Petroleum and the East Petroleum and Finance Company. He died from heart failure whilst commuting from his home in Slough to the office on 5 April 1933. His funeral on 12 April was attended by 35 members of the staff of John Taylor and Sons.<sup>52</sup> *'His charming personality gained the affection of a host of friends, whilst his kindly nature and consideration secured the steadfast loyalty of those who worked under his direction.'*<sup>49</sup>

Hugh Frank Taylor was born in 1874 at Aberystwyth. He seems to have spent much of his life in the Hawarden area and was heavily involved with the Sandycroft Foundry. He is described as an engineer and became a member of the Manchester Geological and Mining Society in 1907.<sup>53</sup>



*Figure 8. The last three Taylors who were partners of John Taylor and Sons.*

His marriage to Gladys Rolt on 30 August 1904 was short as he died on 28 February 1910.<sup>54</sup>

Arthur Enfield Taylor was born in 1875 at Aberystwyth. He married Olive Marjorie Tillard on 15 April 1903 at Godmanchester. In 1918 he was awarded the Order of the British Empire for services during World War I. He was head of the Establishment Branch of the Explosives Supply Department, Ministry of Munitions. As a partner in John Taylor and Sons, he was a director of the Balaghat Gold Mining Company (Kolar Goldfield, India). In addition he was a keen sportsman, a member of the Marylebone Cricket Club and an international hockey and ice hockey player. He died in 1931.<sup>55</sup>

Sydney Enfield Taylor became a partner in John Taylor and Sons on 1 January 1928, on the retirement of Edgar Taylor.<sup>56</sup> Sydney was born in 1897 at Watford, Hertfordshire. In 1926 he married Joan Rawlinson. He died in Surrey in 1978.

For most of his career, he was associated with the Taylor's operations in India and occasionally in Africa, for example the Kavirondo Gold Mines Limited, in Kenya.<sup>57</sup> Always a leading figure in the metal mining industry he was appointed in 1953 Chairman of the U.K. Mining Association, an organisation formed to serve the governmental needs of the non-ferrous metal mining industry in the United Kingdom.<sup>58</sup>

Guy Sydney Maxwell Taylor was born at Hawarden in 1889. He was a student at the Royal School of Mines and he added to his qualifications by completing a mining course at Tywarnhale (Perranporth) and Coombeandanescombe (Calstock) in 1909. He worked in Southern Rhodesia for twelve years, followed by a period in the Timmins and Kirkland districts of Cañada and was a senior partner in John Taylor and Sons.

During World War I he went to France with the Royal Engineers, in the 172nd Tunnelling

Company and was, in the early part of 1915, involved with the destruction of Hill 60. He was caught in three gas attacks and was seriously wounded and nearly lost his life. After this event he was transferred to the RAF and for the remainder of the war held the important position of Deputy Chief Inspector of Aeroplanes. He gained the rank of Major<sup>59</sup> and died in 1942.

Kenneth Baring Taylor was born in 1891 at Hawarden. He was educated at Rugby School and studied engineering at the University of Liverpool. In 1912 he went to South Africa but at the outbreak of World War I he returned to England to serve in the Royal Welch Fusiliers (Flintshire Regiment). He attained the rank of captain and was awarded the Military Medal.<sup>60</sup> He was made a partner of John Taylor and Sons on 1 January 1924.<sup>61</sup> Like most partners in the business he was involved mainly with the mines at Kolar. He died on 11 April 1941 after a short illness.<sup>62, 63</sup>

In 1903, when John Taylor III retired, his Spanish responsibilities were split between the other partners. Henry Claude Taylor, for example visited Linares with William Frecheville, a mining engineer of note. A decision was made to explore the veins at depth and introduce compressed-air powered rock-drills and replace the old kibbles with a double cage or skip-winding system. To offset some of the expense, the Linares Lead Mining Company was restructured in 1906.<sup>64</sup>

#### **John Taylor and Sons in 20th century Spain and elsewhere**

However, despite the investment, the first decade of the 20th century was a period of decline for John Taylor and Son's operations at Linares. New sources of lead from places like Broken Hill, Australia, were flooding the markets and the price for lead ore was fluctuating considerably but generally falling. At Linares, no new significant reserves had been discovered. In addition, there were problems with the coal supply. An unwelcome complication was that the Spanish government had increased taxes on mining operations.<sup>65</sup>

There were however, other small sources of income in the Linares area. It is apparent that as mining engineers the staff of John Taylor and Sons also provided a local consultancy service. For example, when Reginald Bonham-Carter was killed in a mining accident, the mine captain for the Linares Lead Mining Company was called upon to value the Abundancia Mine that Reginald owned. Correspondence indicates that just to undertake the work Taylor's charged £200 with any other expenses incurred being extra. Should the Taylor's report be used to sell the mine then Taylor's would expect a further fee of £250.<sup>66</sup>

Elsewhere in Andalucía, John Taylor and Sons were involved with one final relatively successful mining venture. The Cerro Muriano Mine, just to the north of Córdoba, was re-opened in 1900 by the Cordova Exploration Company. Local entrepreneurs had become interested in the mine's potential, including the British Vice-Consul, Richard Carr.<sup>67</sup> More capital was needed to work the mine efficiently and so possibly as a result of Carr's efforts, The Cerro Muriano Mining Company was formed in 1903 and John Taylor and Sons were appointed managers. Messrs. Frank, Robert, Edgar, Henry

Claude and Arthur Taylor were all listed as being involved.<sup>68</sup> In order to explore the most northerly veins, a sister company, the North Cerro Muriano Mining Company, was established in 1906 and took over the northern group of concessions.<sup>69</sup> Having established the extent of the workings and reserves both companies were wound up and reformed as the Córdoba Copper Company in 1908.<sup>70</sup> After a short run of moderate success during World War I, the company was sold in 1919 to a Spanish concern. Taylors took all the capital raised to India and re-formed the company as the Indian Copper Corporation.<sup>71</sup>

The Linares Lead Mining Company and Cerro Muriano were the last of Taylor's mining operation in Spain but they were not their last worldwide. The 1911 Mining Year Book, lists members of the Taylor family being involved with mining on most continents, for example: Robert (director of 19 companies), Henry Claude (7) and Edgar (10). The latter also became President of the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy.<sup>72</sup>

The first decade of the 20th century saw John Taylor and Sons expand their interests at for example: Waihi, North Island, New Zealand and Beaconsfield, Tasmania, and other areas of Australia. The British administration of Egypt and the Sudan opened up other gold mining opportunities and Taylors floated various companies to exploit the situation but none were successful.

By 1932, the family involvement in the partnership had changed considerably, only two members of the family, Henry Claude and Edgar were listed as directors of seven Indian gold mining companies.<sup>73</sup> The reducing number of family members meant that the John Taylor and Sons had to take in non-family, professional mining engineers, as partners, for example, Thomas Pryor, who came from a family of Cornish mining engineers and Robert Nye who was made a partner in 1942.<sup>74,75</sup> Whilst much of their work was now centred on India, the partnership was occasionally involved with other continents, for example with the formation of the South African Torbonite Mining and Refining Company in 1934.<sup>76</sup>

## **FIFTH GENERATION AND THE FINAL YEARS**

The winding up of the Linares Lead Mining Company Ltd in 1917, followed two years later by the sale of their Cerro Muriano Mine to a Spanish Company, brought to an end John Taylor and Sons interest in Spain. This would probably have happened in 1921 anyway because a Spanish Royal Decree, issued on 14 June 1921 brought mining back under Spanish control.<sup>77</sup> Such was the decree's significance to British mining companies in Spain it was published in several English newspapers.<sup>78</sup>

Even darker times were coming. The 1930s in Spain were turbulent, culminating in the Spanish Civil War (1936 to 1939). The few remaining foreigners associated with mining left the country if they could and only returned after World War II to recommence operations.

During World War II John Taylor and Sons also suffered a great loss. Their long

established offices in the City at 5 and 6 Queen Street Place, London, was destroyed by German bombing in 1941. It prompted one shareholder of the Mysore Gold Mining Company to remark, *'It was with great sorrow that we heard that our managers, Messrs. John Taylor and Sons, had lost through enemy action, their old historic building; but I have no doubt that honey will continue to flow to the stockholders from a new hive, and that things will go on well again.'*<sup>79</sup>

The granting of Indian Independence in 1947, marked the beginning of the end. Eventually on 29 November 1956, the Kolar gold mines were nationalised and their involvement as significant mine owners ceased, although the Taylors were retained as mining consultants by the Mysore Government.<sup>80,81</sup> At the time the three working members (Figure 8) of the Taylor family were: Sydney Enfield Taylor (born 1897 and died 1978, son of Frank Taylor), Arthur Hugh Enfield Taylor (born 1907 and died 1983, the son of Hugh Frank Taylor) and John Tillard Meadows Taylor (born 1922 and the son of Arthur Enfield Taylor).

In India, the remnants of the Indian Copper Corporation that evolved from the Córdoba Copper Company still survives as part of the Indian Government owned Hindustan Copper Ltd.<sup>82</sup>

John Taylor and Sons successfully operated their business for over 130 years, through five generations of the same family. They were associated with Spanish mining for 70 of those years. In 1969, still functioning as a partnership, they finally closed the business.<sup>83, 84</sup>

## **JOHN TAYLOR AND SONS - MINE MANAGERS AT LINARES**

John Taylor and Sons would eventually manage five companies in the Linares - La Carolina mining fields. The Linares Lead Mining Company Limited, the Fortuna Company Limited, the Alamillos Company Limited; their three 'Drops of Comfort' were located close to Linares, whilst the Buena Ventura Company operations were to the west close to the town of Guarromán. The locations of the mining concessions worked by the four companies is shown in Figure 9. The fifth company, Spanish Mining Properties Limited was located in relatively unknown mining country to the Taylors, to the west of the La Carolina. The Taylors may also have had influence on the management of several other British owned mining companies on the south-western side of the field near the town of Bailén.

It was common practice for at least one member of the Taylor family to give a mining report at the various Linares company meeting. The reports were sometimes based on occasional visits to Linares by one of the Taylors but mostly they were prepared by their mine superintendent or managers at Linares.

The first managers of Pozo Ancho, were drawn from the initial group of Cornish miners who came to Linares in 1849. There seems to have been a regular flow of miners particularly from Cornwall, who may have come from Taylor managed mines. However, towards the end of the 19th century miners were often recruited by the firm of William Rich and Sons, Redruth, who acted as local agents for John Taylor and Sons.<sup>85</sup>

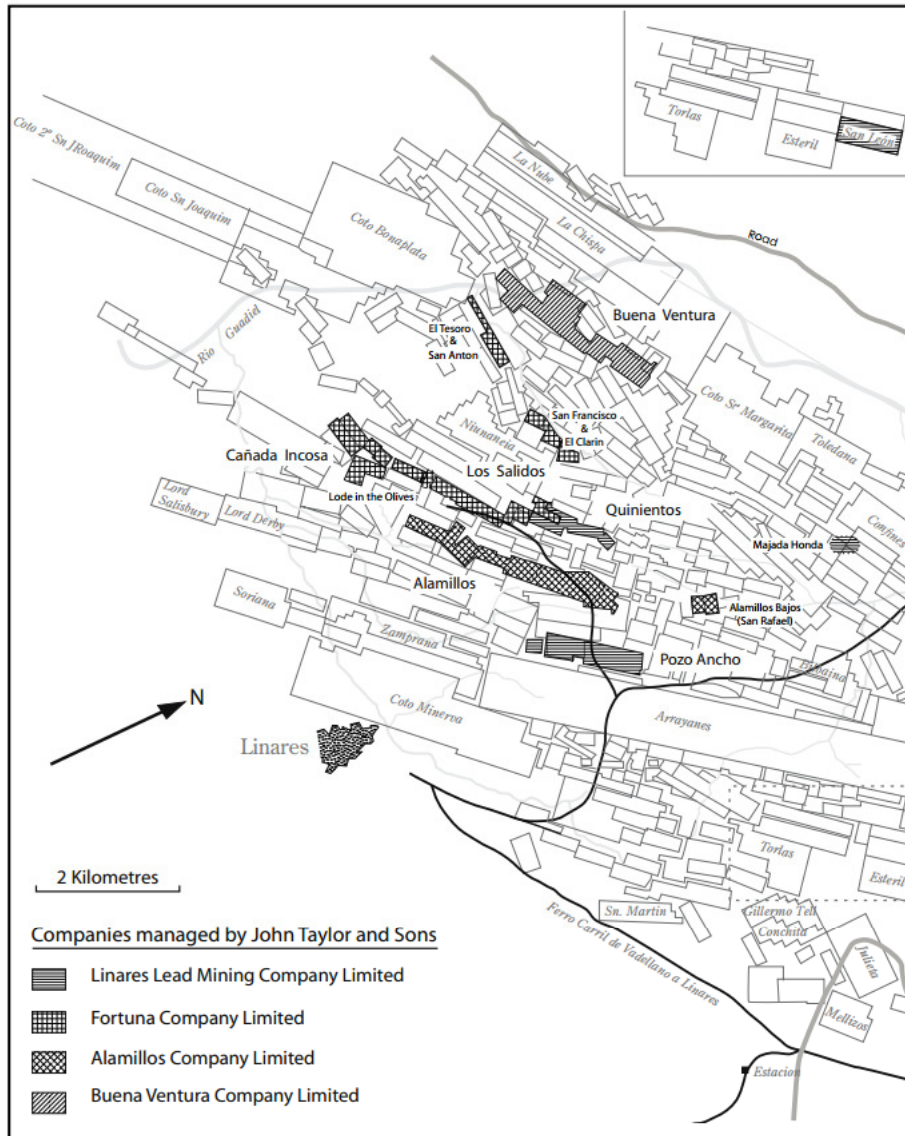


Figure 9. Plan showing the locations of the mining concessions worked by the John Taylor and Sons managed companies in the Linares area. [Author].

John Taylor and Son's main representative in Linares was their superintendent or agent. Their first agent was Captain Henry Thomas, who had been with the Linares Lead Mining Association/Company since its inception in 1849. He announced his retirement in 1857.<sup>86</sup>



*Figure 10. Ernest Woakes driving his Wolsey in Spain [Woakes, E.R., 1906, 'Motoring in Andalucia', *The Autocar*, 12 May, p.614.]*

Joseph Lee Thomas filled the post; it is believed Lee had originally come to Linares as mine captain for the short lived Las Infantas Lead Mining Company formed in 1853. Whilst working for the company he wrote the pamphlet, 'Notes on the Lead-mining District of Linares' in 1857.<sup>87</sup> It was a resumé of mining in the Linares area and was widely circulated at the time. In 1858, we find Lee Thomas acting as superintendent for John Taylor and Sons.

However, Lee Thomas's tenure only lasted a year. He was quickly replaced in 1859 by Charles Tonkin, who it is believed did have a Cornish mining background but came from Ireland. Tonkin was probably the most successful of the mine superintendents, surviving there until his retirement in 1895. His son, also Charles, replaced him that year.<sup>88</sup>

The circumstances are unclear but in 1899 Nono Kitto replaced Charles Tonkin junior, as the John Taylor and Sons mine superintendent in Linares. Kitto (perhaps regarded as having more experience) came from another well known mining family. Nono's father had successfully managed the Foxdale lead mines on the Isle of Man for a number of years. Nono Kitto was a graduate from the Royal School of Mines<sup>89</sup> and seems to have

vigourously promoted the Spanish Mining Properties company. However, this venture failed, and perhaps accepting the blame for this, he tendered his resignation to John Taylor and Son's in 1903.<sup>90</sup>

Ernest Russell Woakes was Taylor's last superintendent in Linares. He was a new breed of engineer. His father had no mining background whatsoever as he was a Harley Street surgeon in London. Woakes was a graduate of the Royal School of Mines and had successfully managed mines in Cañada.<sup>91</sup> He came to Linares in 1903 and supervised the modernisation of the Taylor's mining operations. His love of motoring perhaps surpasses his mining prowess. He owned several cars (a Wolsey and an Austin) (Figure 10), perhaps the first car in Linares and wrote various articles about his motoring adventures in Spain.<sup>92</sup>

Whilst John Taylor III seems to have been responsible for most of the Indian mining operations, it appears that the other responsibilities of John Taylor and Sons were divided up between the other brothers, Edgar, Frank and Robert. At this time, considerable effort was also being made to promote the family's other business interest, the Sandycroft Foundry located in North Wales, as well as their British mining interests in England and Wales. Perhaps it was due to complacency, built on continuing profits but the partnership's mines in Spain and France continued with little new investment or modernisation. It prompted one commentator in 1903 to remark at the appointment of Ernest Woakes as manager for the Taylors' operations in Linares, '*His job is rather a rotten one, for the Taylor's have neglected their mines here for a long time, and now send him to try to mend matters, but with hardly any money to do it.*'<sup>93</sup>

Carmichael, a friend of Woakes, makes a similar observation in 1905 and mentions that a large number of mines in the Linares mining field had closed having exhausted their known ore bodies.<sup>94</sup> The heydays of healthy profits were clearly waning and, perhaps in some quarters, the dealing in shares had taken precedent over actual mining, although this certainly wasn't the case for the remaining British companies.

By 1910 Woakes had been posted to the Kolar Goldfields and John Taylor and Sons had left Linares, signifying the end of a successful sixty year mining association with the area.

## References

1. Burt R., 1977, '*John Taylor: mining entrepreneur and engineer 1779-1863*', Moorland Publishing Company, Buxton, UK, pp. 15-16.
2. Williams C.J., 1997, '*Metal Mines of North Wales: a collection of pictures*', Bridge Books, Wrexham, UK, illustration and caption number 57.
3. Burt R., '*John Taylor*', pp. 21-33.
4. Randall R.W., 1972, '*Real del Monte: A British Mining Venture in Mexico*', The Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas Press, Austin, USA.
5. Todd A.C., 1977, '*The Search for Silver: Cornish Miners in Mexico, 1824-1947*', The Lodenek Press, Padstow, UK.
6. Randall R.W., '*Real del Monte*', pp. 213-217.



7. Burt R., 'John Taylor', p. 16.
8. *Minutes Proc. Inst. Civil Engineers*, LXX, 1882, pp.428-430, 'Obituary: John Taylor'.
9. *Minutes Proc. Inst. Civil Engineers*, LXXVI, pp. 73-74, 1884, 'Obituary: Richard Taylor'.
10. *Minutes Proc. Inst. Civil Engineers*, LXX, 1882, pp.428-430, 'Obituary: John Taylor'.
11. *The Morning Chronicle* (London), 2 February 1852, 'Duchy of Cornwall'.
12. *Minutes Proc. Inst. Civil Engineers*, LXXVI, pp. 73-74, 1884, 'Obituary: Richard Taylor'.
13. *Trans. Inst. Mining Metallurgy*, XXX, 1921, p. 484, 'Obituary John Taylor (III)'.
14. *The Times* (London), 2 September, p.7, 1920.
15. *Cheshire Observer*, 13 November, p.8, 1875.
16. *The London Gazette*, 23 May, p.2303, 1884.
17. *Baner ac Amserau Cymru*, (Denbigh, Wales), 22 August, 1868, 'Goginan'.
18. *The Morning Post* (London), 25 November p.1, 1875, 'Prospectus for the Mostyn Coal and Iron Company, Ltd'.
19. *The Morning Post* (London), 5 June 1883, 'Prospectus for the Hanmer Portland Cement, Coal and Coke Company, Ltd'.
20. *Minutes Proc. Inst. Civil Engineers*, 160, 1905, 'Obituary: Henry Enfield Taylor'.
21. *The Times* (London), Thursday, 12 June, p.12, 1890, 'The Money Market'.
22. *Cheshire Observer*, 24 September, p.4, 1892, 'Marriage of Mr Frank Taylor'.
23. *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 9 February, 1909.
24. *Trans. Inst. Mining Metallurgy*, XIX, pp.605-606, 1909-1910.
25. *The London Gazette*, 23 May, p.2303, 1884, 'Partnership notice'.
26. *The Times* (London), 1 January, p.13, 1920, 'New Year Honours'.
27. *The Times* (London), 6 April, p.13, 1921, 'Deaths: Sir Robert Taylor'.
28. *The Times* (London), 22 April, p.14, 1886; 'Prospectus of the Tolgullow United Mines Company Limited'.
29. *The Times* (London), 1 July, p.6, 1893, 'The Money Market'.
30. *The Times* (London), 2 April, p.8, 1917, 'British minerals for the war'.
31. *The Western Times* (Exeter), 4 January, p. 8, 1889, 'Miss Dora Maxwell Walsh and Mr Sydney Taylor'.
32. *The Times* (London), March 29th, p.1, 1939, 'Deaths'.
33. *The Times* (London), 14 July, p.1, 1868, 'Marriages'.
34. *St James's Gazette* (London), 5 January, 1882, 'Prospectus: The Monte Catini Copper Mining Company Ltd'.
35. *The London Gazette*, 23 May, p.2303, 1884, 'Partnership notice'.
36. *Proc. Inst. Mech. Engineers*, p.22, 1877, Obituary: Charles Dyke Taylor'.
37. *Proc. Inst. Mech. Engineers*, p.344, 1906, 'Obituary: Percyvale Taylor'.
38. I am grateful for Antonio Cabrera, Málaga, Spain for information relating to Arthur Taylor.
39. Information from the Taylor Family - Family Tree. Courtesy of Patrick Taylor.
40. Vernon R.W. and Vernon M., 2016, 'Don Regino' Bredon, UK., p.191.
41. Taylor A., 1908, 'A new type of jig for the separation of metallic ores.' *Engineering News*, 17 December, p. 685.
42. Burt R., Burnley R., Gill M. and Neill R., 2014, 'Mining in Cornwall & Devon', University of Exeter Press, CD database.
43. *The West Briton and Cornwall Advertiser*, 28 August, p.8, 1879, 'Redruth and Chasewater Railway Company.'

44. *Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society*, 1885, 'Minutes.'
45. *The Brisbane Telegraph*, 27 July, p.6, 1898, 'Art Society.'
46. *Evening Despatch*, 18 December, p.8, 1940, 'Announcement of George Hart Taylor's death.'
47. TNA., BT31/3740-23306, 'Monte del Oro Company Limited'.
48. TNA., BT31/3740-23306, Articles of Association (The Schedule), pp. 31-32.
49. *Cheshire Observer*, 16 September, p.6, 1899, 'Marriage of Mr H.C. Taylor'.
50. *The Times* (London), 1 July, p.6, 1899, 'The Money Market'.
51. *The Times* (London), 12 April, p.14, 1933, 'Mr. H. C. Taylor'.
52. *The Times* (London), 12 April 1933, p.15, Deaths.'
53. *Trans. Manchester Geological and Mining Soc.*, 30, p.104, 1907, 'New members'.
54. *Trans. Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, p.199,1915, 'Hawarden Parish Church - Plaque number 54.'
55. *The Times* (London), 14 December 1931, p.17, 'Deaths'.
56. *The Times* (London), 31 December, 1927, p.18, 'Business Changes'.
57. *The Times* (London), 31 January 1936, p.19, 'Kavirondo Gold Mines Limited'.
58. *The Times* (London), 20 November 1953, 'U.K. Mining Association'.
59. *Cornishman*, 24 August 1939, p.7, 'Major G.S.M. Taylor at Redruth'.
60. *Chester Chronicle*, 5 January 1918, p.8, 'The Military Cross'.
61. *The Times* (London) 1 January 1924, p.19, 'New Year Business Changes'.
62. *The Times* (London), 14 April 1941, p.1, 'Deaths'.
63. *The Mining Magazine*, 64-65, 1941, p.255, 'Obituary'.
64. TNA, BT31-17812-89389, 'Linares Lead Mining Company Limited'.
65. Vernon R.W., 2014, 'The Linares Lead Mining Company: A successful British enterprise in Spain', in Albert Broder, Miguel Á. Pérez de Perceval Verde, Alejandro Sánchez Rodríguez, Carmen Marchán Sanz (eds.). *La inversión extranjera en la minería española*, Instituto Geológico y Minero de España, Madrid, p.313.
66. Hampshire Record Office, Winchester, UK, BC 94M72 F409. Bonham Carter Collection, 'An agreement between Walter Bonham-Carter and John Taylor and Sons, 31 December 1907'.
67. TNA, BT31-7254-51302, 'Cordova Exploration Company Limited'.
68. TNA, BT31-10289-77283, 'Cerro Muriano Mines Limited'.
69. TNA, BT31-11434-87892, 'North Cerro Muriano Copper Mines Limited'.
70. TNA, BT31-18512-99101, 'Córdoba Copper Company Limited'.
71. Vernon R.W., 2006, 'British archival information relating to mining operations in Spain and Portugal. An overview with examples from Andalucía', *De Re Metallica*, Sociedad Española para la Defensa del Patrimonio Geológico y Minero, Madrid, 6-7, p.64.
72. *The Mining Manual* (London), 1911, Skinner W.R. (ed.), pp.1233-1234, 'Mining Directors'.
73. *The Mining Year Book* (London), 1932, Skinner W.E. (ed), p.738, 'Mining Directors'.
74. *The Cornishman and Cornish Telegraph*, 11 March 1943, p.4, 'Our Cornish Industries'.
75. *The Times* (London), 9 February 1942, p.7, 'Mr. Ralph Nye taken into partnership'.
76. *The Times* (London), 14 November, 1934, p.20, 'Prospectus for South African Torbonite Mining and Refining Company Limited'.
77. *Gaceta de Madrid*, 15 June 1921, 166, pp.1023-1024.
78. *The Cornubian*, 14 July 1921, p.5.

79. *The Cornishman*, 3 July 1941, p.5, 'Note Bombing of 6 Queens Street Place'.
80. *The Times* (London), 25 April 1956, p.17, 'Kolar Goldfields.'
81. Anon, 1957, *The Kolar Gold Mining Undertakings: Oorgaum, KGF*, Ooregum Printing Press, India.
82. *The Times* (London), 13 March 1972, p.20, The Indian Copper Corporation was nationalised by the Indian Government and the company's operations were taken over by the Hindustan Copper Limited, a Government of India enterprise.
83. Anon, 1957, *The Kolar Gold Mining Undertakings: Oorgaum, KGF*, Ooregum Printing Press, India, plate facing p.1.
84. Burt, 'John Taylor', p.64.
85. *Cornishman*, 24 August 1939, p.7, 'Major G. S. M. Taylor at Redruth'.
86. *Mining Journal*, 1857, p. 255, , 'Linares Lead Mining Company AGM'.
87. Thomas J.L., 1857, 'Notes on the Lead-mining District of Linares'.
88. *Mining World and Engineering Record*, 13 April 1895, p.606, 'Linares Lead Mining Company meeting report'.
89. *Mining World and Engineering Record*, 14 October 1899, p.610, 'Linares Lead Mining Company meeting report'.
90. *Mining World and Engineering Record*, 25 April 1903, p.614, 'Linares Lead Mining Company meeting report'.
91. Vernon R.W. and Vernon M., 2016, *Don Regino*, Bredon, UK., p.144.
92. Woakes E.R., 1906, 'Motoring in Andalucia', *The Autocar*, 12 May, p.614.
93. Hampshire Record Office, Winchester, UK, 94M72/ F400, Bonham-Carter Collection, 'Letter dated 30 August 1903 from Reginald Bonham-Carter to Sibella, his mother'.
94. Carmichael N., 1905, 'Lead Mining in the Linares District, Spain', *British Columbia Mining Record*, 12/8, pp.291-297.

TNA The National Archives, Kew, London.

BRITISH MINING No.103

**JOHN TAYLOR AND SONS AND  
THEIR THREE 'DROPS OF COMFORT'**

**THEIR LEAD MINES AT LINARES,  
JAÉN, SOUTHERN SPAIN**

by

ROBERT W. VERNON



MONOGRAPH  
OF THE  
NORTHERN MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY  
JULY 2017

Published in July 2017  
by

THE NORTHERN MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY

Nelson, Lancashire

The right of Robert W. Vernon to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means without prior written permission of the publisher.

Author: Robert W. Vernon.

Edited and typeset in 10 point Times New Roman by Richard Smith.  
Printed by Fretwell Print and Design, Healey Works, Goulbourne Street, Keighley, Yorkshire, BD21 1PZ.

Bibliographical reference:

Vernon R.W., 201, '*John Taylor and Sons and their three "Drops of Comfort" - their lead mines at Linares, Jaén, Southern Spain*', British Mining, No. 103, Northern Mine Research Society, Nelson. pp. 250, ISBN-13: 978-0-901450-73-09.

*Cover illustration: The Linares Lead Mining Company - Pozo Ancho Mine. The engine houses of the 'San Juan' whim engine (left) and the San Tomás Shaft pumping engine dominate the mine site today just as they did 150 years ago.*

ISSN 0308 2199  
ISBN-13: 978-0-901450-73-09  
© Robert W. Vernon