



## Califat Coal Mine, St George's Hill, Swannington

### Photographic Report Of LIHS Excavation - March 2020

Swannington Heritage Trust own the Califat Spinney, which is the site of the Califat Coal Mine (1855-1873). Leicestershire Industrial History Society have led the monthly excavation of the coal mine buildings near the Califat winding shaft since June 2006.

Swannington Heritage Trust produce this monthly photographic report for the benefit of SHT and LIHS, so that they can share it with their members, volunteers and supporters. LIHS make the technical recordings of the dig and will produce a report at the end of the excavation.

### Coal Storage Pavement Bottom Step



The bottom step had been placed in position to gauge the width when making the sleeper retaining wall. The step was removed then replaced on top of cement to hold it firmly in place. This will provide the foundation for the other steps to be added.





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#### **Stoke Pit**



The material at the bottom of the stoke pit was cleared to reveal a rough brick floor. There was discussion on whether this was a firebox pit.

It was considered unlikely (but possible) that the stoker would stand in the pit and lift coal up to the boiler's firebox at the height of the boiler cradles. It was felt that it was more likely that the boiler's firebox came down into the pit so that the stoker could shovel coal in on the level.

#### **Stoke Pit Retainer**



The stoke pit retainer was protected with a plastic sheet and fixed in position.





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The stoke pit retainer enabled soil and turf to be abutted to it so that a steady slope can lead from next to the engine house to the stoke pit steps.

### **Engine House**



The top of the engine house was weeded.

The level of the pea shingle needs to be raised by a couple of inches when some is ordered for the rest of the project.





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### Break



The all important break enabled diggers to catch up with personal lives, society and events and as usual put the world to rights.

### Miners Cottages



Work focused on clearing the area at the back of the cottages, thereby exposing the rear pavement.





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Spoil was removed from the side of the front porch.



Finds were a green bottle and pieces of a thick sheet of glass.





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### Califat Raspberries



At the back of the miners' cottages there was a profusion of raspberry canes. A number were dug up and distributed amongst the diggers. During the summer it is hoped that there will be photos from all over the county of diggers enjoying their Califat raspberries.

### Early Days

#### *Excavation Of Alabama Shaft Engine House 1993-1999*

The late Peter Neaverson's photographs of the dig.







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Swannington Heritage Trust has given Leicestershire Industrial History Society permission to return to the Alabama site. The intention being to remove the weeds, soil and loose bricks so that an assessment can be made of what to do next.