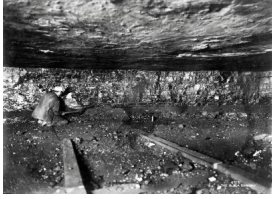


## Early Underground Mining

Written by J Harold Utley  
Tuesday, 07 April 2009 09:00

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### **Early Underground Mining in Hopkins County by J Harold Utley Hopkins County KY**

**Historian.** Little is known of the early history of Hopkins County except that in 1775 Colonel Richard Henderson, in the name of his company, Transylvanian Land Company, bought what is now Hopkins County from the Cherokee Indians. The Commonwealth of Virginia passed laws nullifying his treaty with the Indians. As compensation for his efforts Virginia gave him 10,000 acres of land in what is now Henderson County.

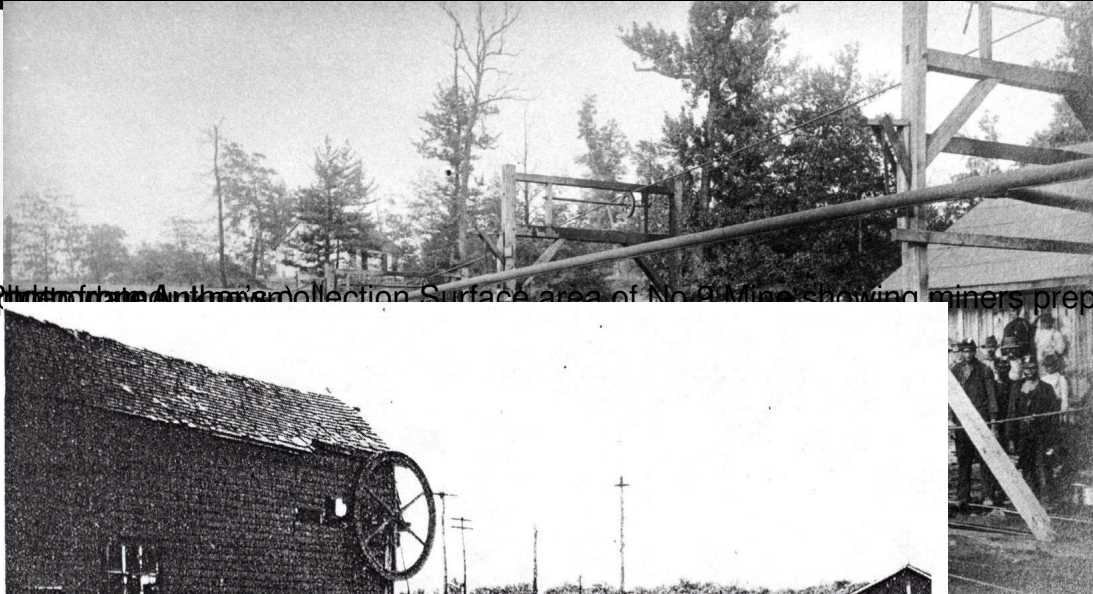
After Henderson County was created from part of Christian County, Hopkins County was created from the southern part of Henderson County.

The early settlers took little notice of the presence of coal as the first coal used in Madisonville was brought from Pittsburgh in a barrel. The coal was burned in a grate in the Weir and Wilkins store in the area now occupied by the Court House Annex.

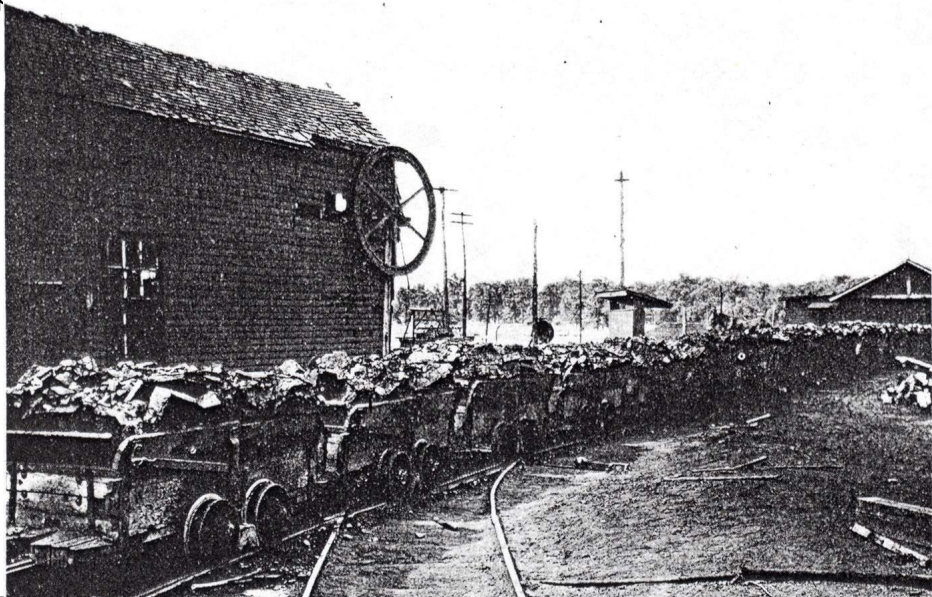
The earliest use of local coal was by Jack Woolfolk, a blacksmith from Hall's Post Office (Earlington). He discovered the outcrop of the No 11 coalbed in Hunting Branch. He took some to his shop and discovered that coal heated his forge much hotter than wood. Coal possibly had been mined previously from "house coal" mines along a coal outcrop for home heating or trading.

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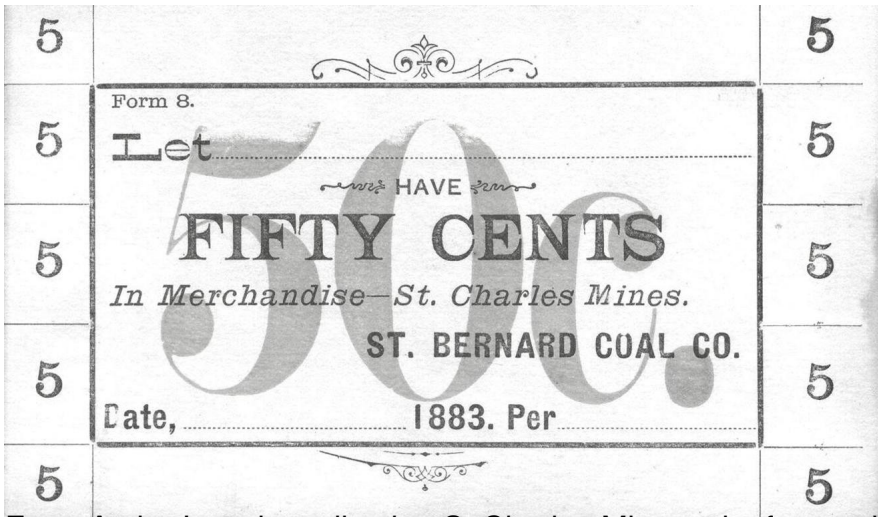


Surface area of No. 9 Mine showing miners preparing to go



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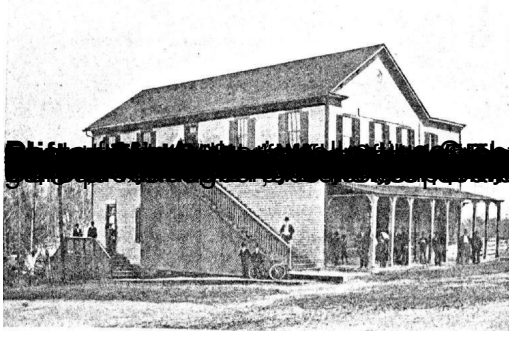
Author's print collection—St Charles Mine script for use in company store



Author's print collection—Hecla Coal Co. building, Hecla, Michigan, 1889



Author's print collection—Crestree Tippel at Ilsey



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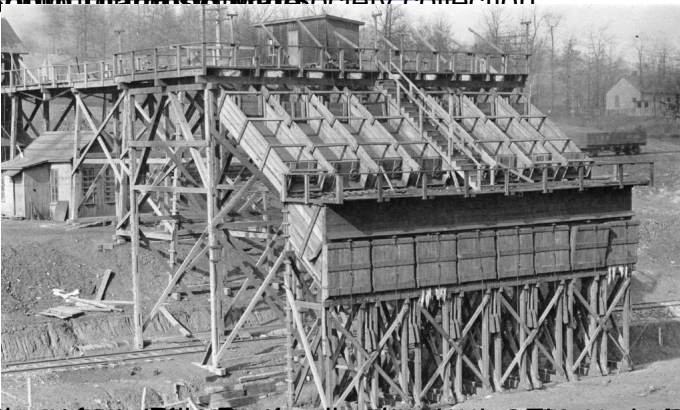
Flourish of the early days of the coal industry in the West. The brick building is



Another view of the early days of the coal industry in the West. The brick building is



South of the headframe. The Society collection



Another view of the early days of the coal industry in the West. The brick building is

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