



Key Vocabulary

Borying Hammer



Hand hammers like these were used by the miners to beat the boryer (chisel) into the rock to make a hole. To make the hole, the boryer would be twisted between each stroke of the hammer.

Replica Dynamite with Safety Fuse



An explosive introduced to Cornwall in the 1870s that was more reliable than gunpowder. Sticks of dynamite were placed in the holes drilled by the miners in order to blast out the tin lode. Safety fuses burnt at a constant rate and so when cut to different lengths, miners could set blasts in sequence.

Candle



Candles used to be made of tallow (animal fat) and were the main source of light underground. However when lit they produced a lot of smelly smoke and sparks. The wicks were made into a loop, so they could hang off miners' jackets. Wet clay from the mine was used to stick the candle to a hat or mine walls.

Tin Ore (Cassiterite)



This is the rock that the miners in Geevor were looking for. The black crystals are the tin-bearing mineral of Cassiterite, or 'Black Tin'.

Tin



Tin doesn't occur naturally in rock as a metal, but as black crystals. This 'Black Tin' (Cassiterite) had to be smelted (heated up) to turn it into usable metal, or 'White Tin'. Tin is often used for solder in electronic circuit boards, as well as in producing plastics jewellery and biochemistry.

Boryer, or Borer



This chisel-ended steel tool was used with a borying hammer to drill holes into rock. As the hole got deeper, longer boryers were used (2ft, 4ft and 6ft). Into the holes explosives like gunpowder, or later, dynamite and gelnite sticks were wedged in.



Bal Maidens
at work

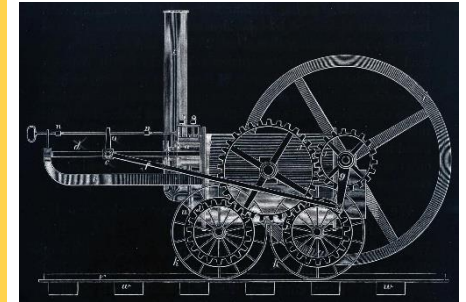


Local History Study: Tin Mining in Cornwall



Richard Trevithick invented the world's first **Steam Locomotive** in 1801. Not only did this lead the way to have transport to take workers and the rocks in and out of the mines but also led to machines that could actually hammer into the rock to do the hard work and extract ore quicker.

Famous Cornish Inventors



Cornish inventor **Sir Humphry Davy** created what is now known as the **Davy Lamp** in 1815. It was designed to be **lit safely** for miners to use **without allowing the heat from the flame to explode the concentration of methane gas** often found as miners dug deeper.

