

5.1. Level of pauperism comparing pitmen with other workers, supplied by J. W. Day, Chairman of the Houghton-le-Spring Poor Law Union, to the 1842 Children's Employment Commission.

Note: Miners' aversion to the Poor Law was well-known, and many mining companies provided some medical care in cases of accident which, along with 'smart money' in the North East, and miners' subscription to Friendly Societies, enabled many to avoid using parochial assistance. However, as these figures show, the parish remained an important source of relief for miners and their families in times of need.

The Union contained about 20,000 people according to 1841 census 'nearly the whole of which number are connected with the collieries'.

		1837	1838	1839	1840	1841
Pitmen	Men	41	52	54	51	45
	Women	123	130	140	139	129
	Children	262	258	242	253	211
	TOTAL	366	440	436	443	385
Other Persons	Men	60	85	69	46	54
	Women	179	201	208	196	187
	Children	168	175	199	153	158
	TOTAL	407	470	476	395	399
GRAND TOTAL		773	910	912	838	784

Workhouse population: 6 men over 50 of whom 1 is a pitman; 4 women, 3 aged over 50 none of them connected to a pitman and 8 children (4 above and 4 below 10) of which 3 belong to pitmen.

Source: *PP 1842 (381), Appendix to the First Report of the Commissioners. Mines. Part 1. Reports and Evidence from Sub-Commissioners, p.718.*