An Account of the Making of Pitch, Tar and Oil out of a Blackish Stone in Shropshire, Communicated by Mr Martin Ele the Inventor of it.

In Broseley, Bentley, Pitchford and other places adjacent in Shropshire there lies over most of the Coal-pits or Mines, a Stratum or Layer of a Blackish Rock, or Stone of some thickness which is Porous and contains in it great quantities of Bituminous Matter.

This Stone being brought to the Workhouse is ground small by Horse Mills, such as are used for grinding Flints to make Glass of; the Powder is thrown into great Coppers of Water, whereby boiling, the Bituminous Matter is separated from the Stony or gritty this last sinking to the bottom, the other swimming on top of the Water.

This Bituminous Substance being gathered together and evaporated, comes to the Consistence of Pitch, and with the help of an Oil distilled from the Stone, and mixed with the Pitch comes to be thinner or like Tar, the uses of both which Materials either for Shipping or otherwise, these substances are said to supply, nay even go beyond. And this has been tried on several Boats this Three or Four Years past and does not crack as the ordinary Pitch or Tar, but always keeps black and therefore is proposed to hinder the Worm from getting into the Ships pitched with it.

There is likewise Distilled from this Stone an Oil which may be used for Oil of Petre or Turpentine, and has been tried by divers Persons in Aches or Pains.

The whole will be better conceived by the following diagram

A A - Represents the River Severn.
B B - The Hills or Rocks where are the Coalpits or Mines.
C C C - The Pits from whence those Stones are taken.
D - The Storehouse whither they are brought.
E E E - Are Horse-Mills for grinding them to Powder.
f f f - Coppers wherein the Bituminous Matter is separated from the stony or gritty by being boiled in them.
G - The Still-house for the Distilling the Oil.
H H H - The road from the Coal-pits to the Severn.
I - A well of Water to supply the Coppers.