

TEMPLE MINE HISTORICAL SURVEY



Temple Miners c1900 (Simon Hughes Collection)

Edited by Graham Levins



**Welsh Mines Preservation Trust
Yr Ymddiriedolaeth Cadwraeth
Mwynfeydd Cymru**

HISTORICAL SURVEY OF TEMPLE MINE

The aim of this desk top survey is to collate all the data on Temple Mine in one document. I have included all the published information that I have been able to find, plus additional material and a short history on the mine from Simon Hughes.

Temple Mine was originally part of the Llwyn Teify sett, until it was formed into a separate sett, the date of which is not known. The Temple No 2 Adit (middle adit) is driven towards the Bwlchgwyn 40fm level.

- 1876 Temple Lead Mining Co was formed in 1876 under the management of Charles Thomas, but had ceased to exist within a year.
- 1876-1877 Charles Thomas Chief Agent.
- 1877 The company was revived and John Croucher, formerly of Tynyfron, was appointed to supervise the erection of the new plant, which commenced in June with the 30'x4' wheel to drive the Blake's jaw crusher and a set of 24" roll crushers. In the autumn this was followed by a dressing mill which contained a three compartment jig, two flat buddles, two round buddles and a mechanical dolly tub driven by a 14'x2' wheel. 4 men working on surface.
- 1878 42 men working 24 underground, 18 surface.
- 1878-1881 John H Croucher Chief Agent.
- 1879 45 men working 33 underground, 12 surface.
- 1879/1880 Work started on the pit for the main 40'x4' wheel, outside middle and deep adits, and a leat of 1¼ miles to provide water for the wheel. The wheel was set to work in February 1880; it drove pumps for the underground shaft in the deep adit to the 20fm level via flat-rods, a 200hp compressor for the rock-drills, hoists for the mine, and the inclined plane via pulleys and 400fms to the road from Ystumtuen.
- 1880 Spargo refers to Temple Mine as Llwyn Teify Isa.
Secretary and Manager T P Thomas, Local Agent Captain Barbery.
34 men working 20 underground, 14 surface.
- 1881 The mine had been sunk 20fms below the deep adit but the ore shoot was poorer than anticipated and no further sinking took place. 100 tons galena and 22 tons of blende sold. John Croucher departed from the area; it may be that he was only brought in to supervise the erection and construction of the new machinery. 16 men working 12 underground, 4 surface.
- 1882 John Davies Chief Agent. 4 men working underground
- 1883 Temple Lead Mining Co appears to have gone into liquidation. Mine suspended.
- 1886 3 tons of lead ore returned. 17 men working 16 underground, 1 surface.

- 1886-1888 The beautifully equipped Temple Mine was taken up by the Cardigan United Mines Ltd, along with Llwyn Teifi and Bwlchgwyn, with Absolom Francis as agent. The Cardigan United Co sunk Rawcliff's Shaft to a depth of 15fms.
- 1886-1889 A H Jenks Chief Agent.
- 1887 17 men working 12 underground, 5 surface.
- 1888 13 men working 11 underground, 2 surface.
- 1889 1 man working on surface. Mine suspended.
- 1907 Lerry Mining Co proposed to begin work at Temple.
- 1908 Owners Booth, Brooks and Richards. 6 men working 4 underground, 2 surface.
- 1908-1911 R Richards Chief Agent
- 1909 4 men working underground
- 1909-1912 Aberystwyth Silver Lead Mines Ltd
- 1910 2 men working underground
- 1911-1913 Mine Idle
- 1912 F C Moorwood Chief Agent

A BRIEF HISTORY OF TEMPLE MINE

Simon Hughes

I first visited the Temple Mine in 1968 and judging by the recent photographs, it remains little changed.

In 1968, Alf Jenkins was alive and living alongside the church, then retired, he had worked at a number of mines starting with his uncle at Nant y creiau in 1907 and finishing under Carrington at Tynfron in the late 1920s with a few years away as a military policeman. He had worked at Temple in 1917, and at Penrhiw, with Captain Richard Richards, until 1924 after he returned from his military service. He was a grand old fellow and I wished that I had spent more time with him.

At this time I was still at school studying for my "A" levels and was told that Murchison and Sedgwick once met at Parson's Bridge, sometime in the 1830s. In our studies we also found that the little quarry at the west end of the bridge was cited as a good locality for *Monograptus Sedgwickii* and spent many a happy hour cleaving lumps of poorly stratified shale during supposed revision and library time.

In 1971 further interest was taken in the mine but it bore little resemblance to Alf Jenkins's description of "going in for a good distance". From the water flowing into the deep adit we concluded that the

main level had to be the middle one and that a light builder's ladder would have to be procured to enable us to climb 30 feet up the west end of the stope into the middle adit. The lode at Temple is rather poor with the middle adit (No. 2) being driven 250 metres along the lode as a drift before being abandoned. However, there is a cross cut driven 150 metres north through two thin stringers before cutting what appears to be the Castell – Ystumtuen Lode. Here the middle level turns left and follows this lode, as a drift, for 80 metres where some atle had come down a stope, or rise, and prevented further exploration. Surprisingly, there is a large air receiver located in the adit just before this fall and also a rise into upper workings, it remains unexplored ! This matched the description laid out in Captain Richards's survey book of 1917 once in the possession of Alf Jenkins but its current whereabouts is unknown. A copy of our 1971 survey is appended. Note that Captain Richards's survey shows that it was impossible to access Bwlchgwyn via the Temple No. 2 Adit in 1917.

The CCW became involved with the site in 1977 and Dr Glyn Jones commissioned a short report with the hope of raising some finance for maintenance but unfortunately this came to nothing. Even at this date they were viewed as romantic ruins in suspended animation. This was at about the same time that the Welsh Development Agency were setting up their Land Reclamation Unit, I surveyed the site on their behalf in 1979 and only found minimal damage and pollution attributable to former mining activity.

In the late 1980s I undertook a great deal of work for the WDA on the extent of the Ystumtuen, Penrhiw, Bwlchgwyn and Llwynteifi Mines and the discharge from the No. 9 Adit in Cwmrheidol. As far as I was able to ascertain, had the Temple No. 2 Level (Middle Adit) been continued for much further west, there was every possibility that it would meet the Bwlchgwyn 30 fathom level heading east. If we accept the multitude of 19th century descriptions, Llwynteifi would appear to be a warren of 17th and 18th century workings on various branches, or shoots, of the Ystumtuen Lode. Five pages of text from a report regarding this period are appended. It is important to note that Temple is a recent entity formed on part of the old Llwynteifi Mine that was divided as explained later.

Professor O. T. Jones, and the *Mineral Statistics*, notes the output of Temple as 20 Tons of Zinc Ore in 1881 and a meagre three and a quarter tons of lead concentrate in 1887 but I cannot agree with this and conclude that much of its output must have been mis-filed probably with Bwlchgwyn, Penrhiw or Cwmrheidol. Absalom Francis's comments on Llwynteifi, published in 1874, are of interest as he states that a new lode had just been found about 40 fathoms south of the great lode and that this had been dubbed Pryse's Lode. This part of Llwynteifi was then separated and then became the Temple Mine. Some years earlier, unknown adventurers had driven an adit to the west from near the top of the hill, possibly it was the same adventurers who drove the Nant y moch adit in the gorge above Rawcliffe's Shaft. For some years this was thought to be East Llwynteifi Mine but as years pass by I am more inclined to refer to it as The Llwynteifi Eastern Adit as opposed to the East Llwynteifi Adit that lies on the east bank of the Rheidol opposite Temple.

It is many years since I braved the chest deep water from the Nant y moch stream to investigate this level (SN 7485 7000), driven west for about 50 metres and terminating with cross cuts to both the south and north displaying massive ribs of hard quartz and breccia, many metres wide, but no sign of any ore whatsoever. It is a great shame that this adit is not more accessible to geologists as I could find no structural instability, or winzes in the floor, and the lode provided a real spectacle. Kelvin Davies explored the Llwynteifi Eastern Adit (7466 7821) in the 1990s and confirmed that it is simply a fifty metre drift without any winzes or rises and does not communicate with the neighbouring Llwynteifi Mine to the west.

About fifty metres to the south of the Llwynteifi East Adit, alongside a most beautiful footpath from Ystumtuen to Yspyty Cynfyn, via Parson's Bridge, lie the slightly bedraggled remains of a compact stone circle attributable to the Bronze Age, this is the Druidic "*Temple*" after which the mine was named and where the fairies are supposed to dance. The Parson's Bridge is shown on Morris's Map of the Common of Perveth drawn in the 1740s, whilst Ysbytty Cynfyn church was once a *chapel of ease* to Llanbadarn Fawr church, itself once a cathedral, and is of sufficient importance to enough to be marked by both our earliest cartographers, and its antiquity is clearly depicted in both John Speed's map of 1610 and Jensen's map of 1646.

As to the origins of the huge stones built into the churchyard wall at Yspyty Cynfyn, some think that they were set in position prior the Victorians whilst others insist that the church was built within another Iron Age stone circle, no proof exists to strengthen either hypothesis. It may well be the case that the smaller stones were broken up to build the first of the churches. Meyrick notes these stones in 1810 and also mentions that the pews were regularly put outside to enable traditional, all night, wrestling bouts and weight lifting to take place within the church as an annual festival..

I have never found stone hammers, or any shards thereof, at Llwynteifi, where there appears to be no copper worth the digging. Neither Lewis Morris nor Absalom Francis suggest that there was ever any Roman exploitation here and whilst the workings are primitive and simple, there are no indications that these mines are anything other than late 17th through to the early 20th century.

EXTRACTS CONCERNING TEMPLE & LLWYNTEIFI MINES FROM A Brief History Of The Ystumtuen Mines 1990

Lewis Pugh's tenure of the Ystumtuen Mines ended in 1844 and the Nanteos Estate then granted the mines to the highly reputable firm of John Taylor & Son. The Ystumtuen, Penrhiw and Bwlchgwyn Mines were owned by the Nanteos Estate, and the three appear to have been let together for the previous century. However; in the mid 19th century, Penrhiw passed out of the Nanteos Estate and into the hand of the Williams family of Llanfrothen sometime between 1845 and 1850 until at least 1870; maybe as part of a marriage settlement. To the east of these mines lies Llwynteifi which was owned by the Davies family of the farm of that name. This land was divided when the property was left between three sons, one of whom sold his share to the Richards of Penglais Estate and another sold his share to his brother. This resulted in the old Llwynteifi Sett being split into Llwynteifi Uchaf and Llwynteifi Isaf, both being held by Davies, and Temple which was held by the Penglais Estate.

The documentation of these mines is greatly improved after 1845 when Sir Robert Hunt started compiling the Mineral Statistics as part of the function of the Geological Survey. These show the output of individual ores, the ownership and management of the mines on an annual basis and assist greatly with subsequent chronicling. It is recorded that in 1845 the Penrhiw & Ystumtuen Mine were being worked jointly as the Nanteos Mine under the auspices of John Taylor and that Penrhiw produced 46 tons of rather inferior grade lead ore by the efforts of 36 persons.

Between 1850 and 1854, very little appears to have changed at these mines, partly for want of mutual co-operation. Nanteos remained fairly buoyant and eventually merged with Penrhiw in 1855 and some minor interest was being shown in the Tynyfron Mine but this did not result in any development.

Francis states that it was originally the intention of the Bwlchgwyn company to purchase Penrhiw Mine but the negotiations resulted in the Bwlchgwyn Mine being sold to the Penrhiw company.

The merging of Nanteos with Penrhiw appears to have been precipitated by the possibility of being able to drain Bwlchgwyn through the 46 fathom level of the Penrhiw Mine. Alderson's Adit or the No. 6 Level was then driven east towards the Penrhiw 46 fathom level; the levels holed through in the April of 1856 but the Penrhiw 46 lay about 5.4 metres / 18 feet above the No. 6 which was smoothed out by building a long ramp between the levels rather than tipping the ore into a chute and thus creating unnecessary double handling. When I was last in the No. 6 Adit (1995), this ramp was the most easterly accessible part of the workings and lay just below the Nant Coch boundary between Ystumtuen and Penrhiw, but the ground conditions were abominable at it may now prove difficult to reach this point.

Whilst there are only sketchy accounts of any work being undertaken at Llwynteifi in the first half of the 19th century this appears to be on account of it being a small Sett on a private estate. Whilst the greater part of this mine lies outside the present study area it cannot be ignored as there is direct communication from Llwynteifi into Bwlchgwyn and the water made in this mine, by and large, drains out of the Cwmrheidol No. 6 Adit.

There can be little doubt that parts of the Llwynteifi Mine are centuries old and pre date written records whilst the surface works immediately to the east of Bwlchgwyn Mine have not been disturbed since the Nanteos Estate encroached onto the Crown Manor. There are remarkably few 18th century mine sites which have survived in such an intact state. Lewis Morris's sketch of these works about the year 1745 differs little from the present. The Temple Mine was part of Llwynteifi prior to it being formed into a separate Sett; it should be noted that the Temple No. 2 Adit was driven towards the Bwlchgwyn 30 fathom level and it is far from certain that they never connected. This could help to partly explain the meagre return if the Temple middle adit simply served as a footway into Llwynteifi where ore was being hauled to surface at Penrhiw. Note that one of the Llwynteifi adits on the eastern side of Mynydd Bwlchgwyn is recorded as having been driven about 180 metres and is now almost flooded to the roof, this does not connect to any other workings. This appears to be all that remains of the East Llwynteifi Mine.

J.H. Murchison connected Bwlchgwyn and Penrhiw Mines by extending the Penrhiw 46 fathom level to the east whilst a drift was driven west off the Bwlchgwyn Engine Shaft at the 47 fathom level, this was not an outstanding success as the Bwlchgwyn 47 holed through at 6.1 metres / 20 feet below the Penrhiw 46. This allowed the Bwlchgwyn Mine to drain naturally to about 6.7 metres / 22 feet below the 40 fathom level but meant that any work below the 40 involved raising the water to the 30 fathom level. As a consequence of this error, the Bwlchgwyn 50 fathom level appears to have been abandoned prematurely. In hindsight, Murchison must have regretted not having continued the 40 fathom level to the west as it was impossible to tram their ore out of the adit and they continued to bear the cost of winding it to surface, and dressing it at the Bwlchgwyn floors rather than at the newly erected mill in Cwm Rheidol.

Murchison's report of 1869 contributes comparatively little to the understanding of the sub surface operations. He mentions that Captains James Paull of Goginan and Henry Boundy of Cwmsymlog both had high opinions of the lodes and the cheapness with which they could be worked. Both of these gentlemen worked for Murchison at Cwm Brwyno and Penrhiw respectively and they cannot have been in any position to point out the numerous problems. On a short shoot in the floor of the No. 6 adit a

winze had been sunk to the 18.2 metre / 10 fathom level and to raise the ore and water a small waterwheel was installed in a neighbouring stope.

Sufficient water was available from the old Ystumtuen workings to turn it, further descriptions of this mine are provided by Absalom Francis in his "History of the Cardiganshire Mines" published in 1874. At Penrhiw, the Engine Shaft was sunk to 36.4 metres / 20 fathoms below the adit but the claims that Bwlchgwyn was drained to the bottom and that the ore could be trammed out along the adit are simply not true. All water had to be pumped to surface, as the adit had not been holed through, and there was insufficient water for pumping, winding and dressing in most seasons. Messrs. Taylor sold the mine and it was last worked by Mr. Murchison who drove the adit level into Bwlch Gwyn. Murchison abandoned the mines in 1865.

Of Llwynteifi Mine, Liscombe, in 1870, states that the adit level has been driven some distance and when it intersects the lode will probably reveal a rich deposit. Two fine veins form a junction in the sett, and at surface present a great mass of gossan, spar and blende.

Spargo reports that Llwynteifi Mine is on the property of Captain Richards of Penglais on a 12 month tack note, secretary and manager being T.P. Thomas. The old men worked here extensively on the middle lode to nearly 30 fathoms below the surface about 1770. At this time the water was pumped by hand in wooden pumps. The mine is now drained by the Ystumtuen adit which enters the property at 70 fathoms, and gives a back of forty fathoms under the old bottoms. The adit reached the boundary through the Bwlch Gwyn Mine on the south lode, on which vein all the ground has been taken away close up to the boundary. A branch of this adit follows the North Lode and displays a robustly chiselled "**TP 1752**" that is believed to be a Nanteos Estate (Thomas Powell) meerstone from the time of Lewis Morris, when the ownership was in dispute.

The Temple Mine is referred to as Llwyn Teifi Isa by Spargo who states that $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of outcrop crosses the sett and that it was held on a tack note with an option for a 21 year lease. Secretary & Manager, T.P. Thomas with Captain Michael Barbery as local agent on the mine. An adit has been driven about 80 fathoms but will have to be cross cut seven fathoms to cut the lode at thirty fathoms below the surface. The Ystumtuen lode crosses the river Rheidol to the east of the mine and shows a six inch rib of galena.

The Aberystwyth Mine comprises the Bwlchgwyn and Penrhiw mines. It is bounded by Llwynteifi to the east and Ystumtuen to the west. Bwlchgwyn worked considerably more than a century ago. Along with the other Nanteos Mines it was let to Mr Lewis Pugh until about 1844 after which the mines were let separately. It suffers from drought in summer and frost in winter and could only be worked for half of the year. During Mr Taylor's tenure, the Ystumtuen adit was extended into Penrhiw. The managers of Bwlchgwyn determined either to purchase the Penrhiw mine or sell them Bwlchgwyn. The Penrhiw Co. purchased Bwlchgwyn and amalgamated the two properties into the Nanteos Consols Mine.

At this time (1870) Penrhiw was worked to about 30 fms. below adit and Bwlchgwyn to 20 fms. The present company was formed about 18 months ago with a capital of £ 50,000. They commenced working at Penrhiw to good profit, new machinery was erected on both mines, and good lead ore was found about 40 fms. from the Llwynteifi boundary in driving the 40 fm. and under the 30.

Francis, in 1874, reported that Llwynteifi worked until about 1870 when new management commenced a cost book operation and have now registered a company with a capital of £ 15,000. A great deal of detail is given regarding the various lodes and workings, including the Nant y Moch adit. The Llwynteifi adit has been driven in from the east side of the hill, some 90 fms., by a former company and will give about 25 fms. of backs at the top of the hill. Nantymoch level has been driven for about 40 fms. Pryse's lode has recently been discovered as lying about 40 fms. south of the main lode and had been driven upon for about 10 fms. when a slide disordered the lode locally, it carries a leader of 4" of blende interspersed with galena.

In 1875, the seldom sober Captain Robert Northey relinquished his lease on Tynyfron and, whilst Thomas Hodge of the Caegynon Lead Mining Co. had expressed an interest in taking a licence from the Nanteos Estate, it was granted to Captains Nicholas Bray and Captain James Phillips, both from the Goginan area. Initially they appointed John Croucher as their manager but within a year he took up the manager's post at Temple Mine, a post which he held until 1881.

The Temple Lead Mining Co. was formed in 1876 under the management of Charles Thomas but had ceased to exist within a year. The company was revived in 1878 and John Croucher, formerly of Tynyfron, was appointed to supervise the erection of the new plant which commenced in June with the 30' x 4' wheel to drive Blake's jaw crusher and a set of 24" roll crushers. In the autumn this was followed by a dressing mill which contained a three compartment jig, two flat buddles, two round buddles and a mechanical dolly tub driven by a 14' x 2' wheel. In the following year, work started on the pit for the main 40' x 4' wheel, it was set to work at Temple in February 1880 and drove a 200 H.P. compressor, and hoists for the mine and the inclined plane to the road from Ystumtuen village. By 1881 the mine had been sunk to 36.5 metres / 20 fathoms below the No. 1 Adit but the ore shoot was poorer than anticipated and no further sinking took place. The total production for all their efforts up to that point was a meagre 20 tons of rather indifferent grade zinc blende worth £ 50. John Croucher departed from the area at this time and may only have been appointed to supervise the erection and construction of the new machinery. The Temple Lead Mining Co. never actually produced any lead and appear to have gone into liquidation in 1883 but in a much grander manner than the Tynyfron Lead Mining Co.

Whilst Absalom Francis's text of 1874 fails to note anything other than Pryse's Lode his "*Map of the Mines*", published in 1878 shows the Temple Sett and notes the deep adit. Immediately to its north is Llwynteifi that is credited with a deep adit and having made returns of £ 20,000. On the east bank of the Rheidol, he shows East Llwynteifi. The Temple Mine is also shown on his 1881 "*Map of the Mining District of Cardiganshire & Montgomeryshire*".

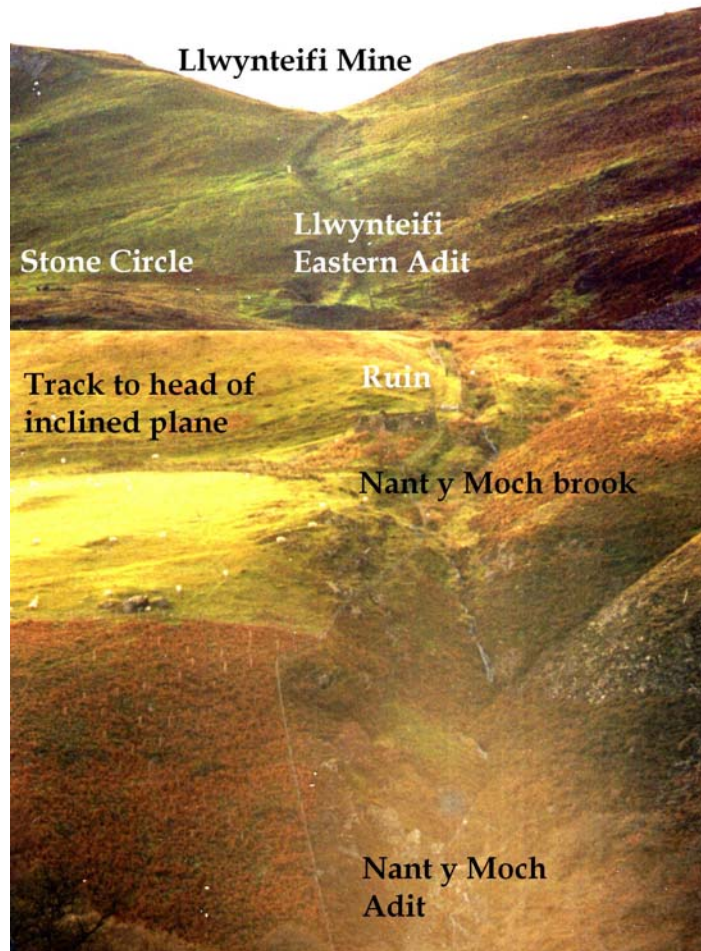
Within three years the beautifully equipped Temple Mine was taken up by the Cardiganshire United Mines Ltd. along with Llwynteifi and Bwlchgwyn but this venture only lasted from 1886 until 1888 or '89. Further attempts were made at reviving Temple in 1908 - '10, 1913 and finally in 1917.

Messrs. Booth, Brooks & Richards took a lease of the Penrhiw & Temple Mines in 1908. No doubt encouraged by the apparent success of Cwmrheidol and Ystumtuen, they then formed "*The Aberystwyth Silver Lead Mines Ltd.*" in 1909 with Captain Richard Richards managing both their mines. Despite producing 170 tons of indifferent grade zinc blende and 101 tons of average grade lead concentrate from Penrhiw between 1910 and '12, the partnership did not thrive. Booth & Brooks withdrew from the company in 1913 and left Captain Richard Richards to superintend the 9 men below ground and 2 surface workers at Penrhiw.

The Mines Inspectorate's records show that Penrhiw was still being run by Aberystwyth Silver Lead Mining Co. Ltd. in 1920 with 4 men employed below ground; this is the last official entry for Penrhiw. It appears to have finally closed in 1924 with absolutely no hope of revival as the plant was then dismantled. This account was told to me by both the late "Old Joe" of Ystumtuen, and the late Alf Jenkins of Yspyty Cynfin who also informed me that it was he and Captain Richard Richards who were the last men to have come up the ladders out of the Penrhiw workings before the pumps were finally stopped.



Alf Jenkins at Tynyfron circa 1925.



Simon Hughes - 26th April 2007

Composite photograph of Nant Y Moch Brook

LOST MINES OF MID WALES MANUSCRIPT – SIMON HUGHES

East Llwyn-teifi SN 7490.7928

According to Thomas Spargo, Llwyn-teifi Isa' - where an adit had been driven about 80 fathoms by 1870 in order to cut the lode 30 fathoms below the surface. This property adjoins Llwyn-teifi Ucha' and both must lie to the west of the Rheidol, as the lode could be seen crossing the river on the east of the sett. Llwyn-teifi Isa' later became the Temple Mine whilst Llwyn-teifi Ucha' is now simply known as Llwyn-teifi. In his account, Spargo makes no mention of East Llwyn-teifi, and only Liscombe gives

contemporary reference that it lay close to Yspytty Cynfyn where a shaft had been sunk and an adit driven on what is supposed to be the Nant y Cria lode in which some good stones of ore have been met with.

Liscombe, writing in 1870, is insistent that East Llwynteifi has been driven on the Nant y Creiau Lode whereas Francis, 57-8, describes it as working the Ystumtuen Lode.

In his work of 1874, Francis states that the River Rheidol forms the western boundary of East Llwynteifi, and the mine adjoins the Crown or Tynyffordd Mine, an adit had been driven here in 1870, heading east for about 15 fathoms before cross cutting about 40 feet to gain a back of 15 fathoms where it cut the lode. He later states that Llwynteifi, not Ucha' or Isa', lies on the west bank of the River Rheidol between East Llwynteifi and Bwlchgywyn.

Francis's map of 1878 confirms East Llwynteifi as a small sett lying on east bank of the Rheidol on the Ystumtuen – Castell Lode, between the Llwynteifi and Crown Mines.

Thirty years ago we spent some time looking for the East Llwynteifi Mine on the east bank of the Rheidol above Parson's Bridge but could find nothing that matched the contemporary descriptions. There is an adit marked on the OS maps at SN 7490.7928, opposite Temple but it is no more than a couple of fathoms long and does not fit the given descriptions. There were no indications of there having ever been a shaft in the vicinity. It is also quite possible that East Llwynteifi may have been a short-lived part of the Esgair Wynion or Erw Barfau sett, and puffed up out of all proportion.

MINES OF WALES – THOMAS SPARGO (c 1869/70)

p48 Llwyn Teify Isa

In the south bank of the River Rheidol, on the ground of Messers Davies, of Llwyn Teify, near Aberystwyth, and extends from the Rheidol River exactly to the brow of the hill, a distance of three fourths of a mile; held under a tack note, with promise of lease for twenty-one years. Secretary and Manager T. P. Thomas Esq., Local Agent, Captain Barbery, on the mine. Through this ground passes what is termed the Estyn-ty-hen vein, and the middle and south lodes, which unite at the top of the hill, and form an immense mass of gozzan and spar, impregnated with lead and blende, throughout the entire distance. This lode is very large, being from fifteen to twenty feet wide, and is certainly the finest gozzan yet met with in the county.

Nothing has ever been done on this part, with the exception of an adit that has been driven in about eighty fathoms, but this driving is not on the course of the lode, so that a cross-cut will have to be driven seven fathoms from the present forebreast, which will reach the vein thirty fathoms from the surface, where there is every possibility of finding good ore. The Estyn-ty-hen lode may be seen crossing the River Rheidol immediately to the east of this ground, with a branch of lead ore in it six inches wide. Deep adit levels can be brought in so as to give a back from the river to the top or brow of the hill, all the way on the course of the lode of 150 fathoms, and there is every facility for bringing an abundant supply of water, in fact more than sufficient for all purposes in every season of the year,

THE MINES OF CARDIGANSHIRE, MONTGOMERYSHIRE AND SHROPSHIRE –LISCOMBE & Co (1870)

p15 East Llwyn Teifi

Lies about eleven miles east of Aberystwyth, and close to the village of Ysphyty Cynfyn. A level with a shaft in connection has been driven on what is supposed to be the Nant-y-Cria lode; good stones of ore have been met with, and the lode presents a very favourable appearance.

[According to Simon Hughes this is a description of Esgair Wynion Mine not East Llwyn Teifi. Ed]

HISTORY OF THE CARDIGANSHIRE MINES – A FRANCIS (1874)

p61 Under Llwyn Teify

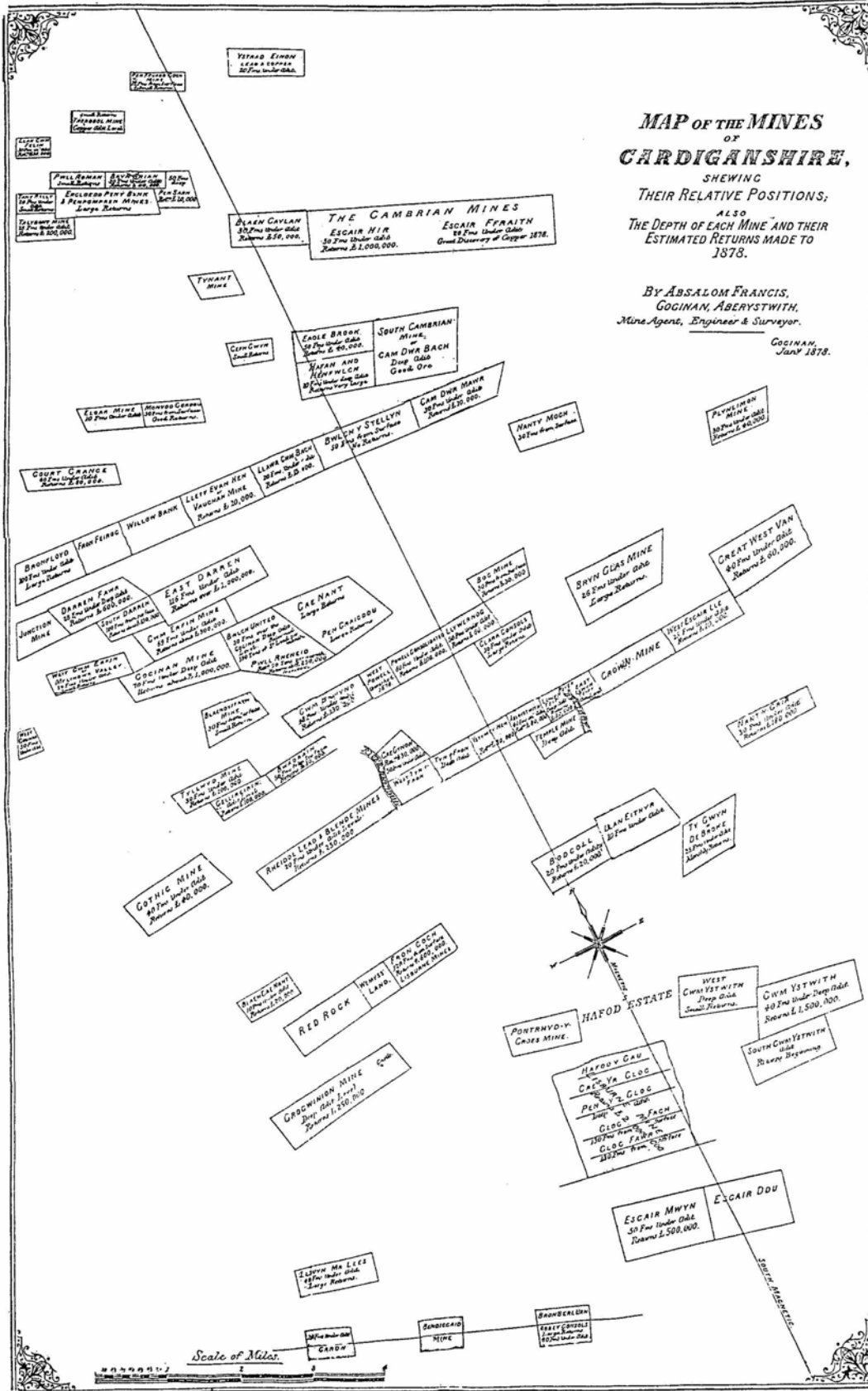
Again going further east, and to within a distance of about 50 fathoms from the Rheidol, a deeper level called Nantymoch Level, has been driven in for about 40 fathoms, the main portion of the lode here is standing to the north. To continue this level with the utmost dispatch should be the great object of the present company, and which, if adopted, cannot fail to put the mine into a lasting state of prosperity and dividends.

p57/58 East Llwyn Teify

Which is a piece of ground adjoining the Crown Mine, and to the west of it, having the river Rheidol for its western boundary. More than a century ago Mr Morris, a well known writer and historian, and a gentleman who has left us an immense amount of important information concerning the mines of this county, reports, that the Great Ystymythen vein, in crossing the river Rheidol at this place, shows a rib of lead ore six inches wide, solid, with a considerable quantity of blende.

I have never seen this lead ore myself, but I have talked with a dozen people on whom I can place important reliance that such is the fact, and that Mr Morris's statement is in no way exaggerated. About four years ago [1870] a local company was formed for working the mine, who commenced their operations by driving an adit level at the east bank of the Rheidol. They extended this level about 15 fathoms, through one of the finest veins that it is possible to meet with, gaining a back in that distance of 15 fathoms. They then cross-cut the lode for about 40 feet, the lode containing sulphur, blende, spots of copper, and lead ore; but what, in my opinion, is a more unmistakable sign of great riches here during the whole of this cross-cutting, at distances of from two to three feet, there were branches of sugar and crystallised spar, varying in size from six inches to two feet wide. That these quartz branches will turn into solid masses of lead ore, when a sufficient depth has been obtained, say 50 fathoms, I have no more doubt than I am writing in my paper; and before treating on the other veins or branches in this grant, and as the companies, some of them at least, are known to me, I should advise them to take an old man's advice and belief, which is, that if they go frittering away their capital in surface trials, they will have none left to proceed to make trials in depth, where ore can only reasonably be expected to be found, and the sooner they cut short the present mode the better, and make preparations for the sinking of the mine to the depth before-named of 50 fathoms, devoting their energies at this depth to the trial of the ground westward of their intended sinking, and under the lead ore ground known to exist in their grant and crossing the river Rheidol. The capital subscribed is sufficient for this purpose, and I must here fill up an omission that escaped me, and, that is that the mine passed from the local party before into the hands of a gentleman from London, who will undoubtedly give the property the trial it deserves.

ABSALOM FRANCIS MAP 1878



THE CAMBRIAN MINES
 ESCAIR N^o 1
 30 Fms Under Gable
 Returns £150,000.

ESC AIR F^o 1
 30 Fms Under Gable
 Returns £1,000,000.

EAGLE BASSON
 30 Fms Under Gable
 Returns £40,000.

SOUTH CAMBRIAN
 Mine,
 CAN DWA BACH
 Dine Gable
 Gw&G Ore

CAN DWA MAIR
 30 Fms Under Gable
 Returns £20,000.

BWLYN Y STELLYN
 30 Fms Under Gable
 Returns £20,000.

LEWIS CON BACH
 30 Fms Under Gable
 Returns £20,000.

LEWIS CON BACH
 30 Fms Under Gable
 Returns £20,000.

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 30 Fms Under Gable
 Returns £20,000.

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 Returns £20,000.

**MEMOIRS OF THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY Vol XX
O T JONES (1922)**

p148-149

TEMPLE (6-in Sheet, Card. 7 S.E.)

From the Rheidol gorge west of Ysbytty Cynfyn adits have been driven on a lode which ranges parallel to, and about 50 yds. south of, the Castell lode. It dips steeply to the south and has a downthrow of about 25ft. The lode-matter on the dumps consists of brecciated mudstones with abundant quartz and considerable quantities of blende, in association with galena; it look promising material, but only 3 tons of lead ore were returned (1887).

LEAD MINING IN WALES

W J LEWIS (1967)

p193

Nothing else worth recording occurred north of the Ystwyth River until 1907 when the price of lead ore rose to £20 a ton, and high-grade blende was £6 a ton. A company known as the Scottish Cardigan Mines Ltd, was now formed to work the Loveden and Bwlch-glas mines. A zinc concentration plant was erected and the shipment of concentrate begun. For the first time in the history of the industry in mid Wales, motive power was produced by a gas plant. Another company – the Lerry Mining Co – was developing the Leri and Brynarafr mines, and it proposed was also to begin work at the Temple, East Goginan, Gwaith-coch, Nantyrarian and Caegynon mines. Yet three years later only Bwlch-glas was at work and its annual output was well under a hundred tons.

THE METALLIFEROUS MINES OF WALES – D MORGAN REES

PUB: 1972 AMGUEDDFA NO 12, WINTER 1972,

p13/14

One of the most impressive of Cardiganshire's lead mine sites is that of the Temple Mine, one which has received only scant notice from an historical standpoint. The 6 in to 1 mile map shows *old levels* and *old level* on the west and east banks of Afon Rheidol a short distance north of Parson's Bridge. The remains of the dressing floors are on the west side of Afon Rheidol, the grid reference being SN 749 791.

In his well known work, 'The Mining District of North Cardiganshire and West Montgomeryshire', *Special Reports on the Mineral Resources of Great Britain*, O T Jones placed the Temple Mine in the chapter on Cardiganshire Mines with a total output of less than 1,000 tons. In an alphabetical list of the mines he indicates that Temple Mine worked for one year only, in 1877, producing 3 tons of lead ore and 20 tons of blende. Professor Jones's detailed description of this mine is, understandably short:

From the Rheidol gorge west of Ysbytty Cynfyn adits have been driven on a lode which ranges parallel to, and about 50 yds. south of, the Castell lode. It dips steeply to the south and has a downthrow of about 25ft. The lode-matter on the dumps consists of brecciated mudstones with abundant quartz and considerable quantities of blende, in association with galena; it look promising material, but only 3 tons of lead ore were returned (1887).

In the present context the importance of this paragraph lies in the information that the mine was situated in the Rheidol Gorge. The area occupied by the dressing floors of Temple Mine is on a narrow ledge on the western bank of the river a short distance upstream from Parson's Bridge. The land falls

very sharply from the 700 ft. to the 600 ft. contour line and down to the bed of the river on both sides. The present path which runs along the sloping ground on the west side of the river does not provide for easy walking. It is remarkable to think that the proprietors of this mine were prepared to erect dressing floors in such a position, which can only be described as perilous. The present waterwheel pit, which is at right angles to the Rheidol is 32 ft long, has an internal width of 5 ft. 9 in. and walls 3 ft. 6 in. thick. Its external height is now only 13 ft. There appears to be two levels of crushing floors upstream from the wheelpit and one of these was, it is fairly obvious, completely taken up by round buddles.

The buddle was used in the process of metallic recovery after the ore had been reduced to a pulp or slime. It consisted of a shallow circular pit formed in the ground and when the slimes were poor it was usual to have a second buddle near the first for re-treating. The sides of the pit were formed of stone or brick and the floor, which had a slight inclination outwards, was often made of smooth planed boards. In general terms the slimes were distributed at the centre with a stream of water, and spread and stirred on the sloping boards with rotating arms with brushes. As it was distributed towards the circumference the slime deposited in its passage the rich ore, according to its specific gravity – the richer towards the middle and the poorer at the circumference. The outflow of waste water flowed through a small sluice gate in the circumference of the buddle and on occasion along wooden launders to a second buddle in which the recovery process was repeated.



Buddles and launders, Temple lead mine (Roy Day)

The dressing floors at Temple Mine still provide evidence of a pair of buddle and superficial clearance work was enough to reveal the wooden launders of yellow wood linking them together. The photograph shows a part of one of the crushing floors on the right, one which probably accommodated the stamps, operated by the waterwheel, which were used for fine crushing. The outline of a buddle is seen in the middle of the photograph with the launders leading away from it, in the form of a right angle, to the left. In the background flows the Afon Rheidol.

From the Rheidol gorge west of Ysbytty Cynfyn adits have been driven on a lode which ranges parallel to, and about 50 yds. south of, the Castell lode. It dips steeply to the south and has a downthrow of about 25ft. The lode-matter on the dumps consists of brecciated mudstones with abundant quartz and considerable quantities of blende, in association with galena; it look promising material, but only 3 tons of lead ore were returned (1887).

A short distance upstream there is a second waterwheel pit on a ledge close to the bed of the river. The second edition of the 25 in. to 1 mile map shows a water course flowing towards this pit from above, but tree growth has made it difficult for this to be identified. Directly above this wheelpit, immediately to the west of the path already mentioned an adit level runs into the hillside.

The problem of how materials were carried to this site and the ore- the little that was mined – taken away from it was partially solved by an unverified reference to an aerial ropeway, ‘which went over the mountain’, given by a local inhabitant.

THE OLD METAL MINES OF MID WALES Part 2

DAVID BICK (1975)

p27 TEMPLE

Though beautiful or even spectacular terrain often surrounds the metal mines of Wales, its presence nowhere more hindered the miner than at TEMPLE * (749793). The mine occupies part of the Llwynteifi sett a stones throw above the Parson’s Bridge in the Rheidol Gorge, and exploited a lode south of the main Castell-Caegynon lode by means of three adits driven westwards. It was worked by the Temple Lead Mining Company from 1876 to 1881 and Cardigan United † in 1886/7, under Absalom Francis as agent.

To provide power the first company cut a leat out of the solid rock of the gorge, and for nearly half the total 1¼ miles it had to be built up from 1½ inch pitchpine supported by iron rods. A 40 ft x 4 ft waterwheel was installed outside the middle and deep adits and its duties comprised pumping an underground shaft to the 20 fm level via flat rods, working a compressor for rock drills and powering a drawing machine. The latter wound ore from the shaft and operated an inclined tramway at the surface via pulleys and 400 fathoms of steel rope.

A little downstream at the dressing floors, a 30 ft x 4 ft waterwheel was coupled to a Blake’s stone crusher and 24 ins diameter rolls, and a 14 ft wheel drove the dressing machinery. To aid transport of ore and materials a tramway incline ascended several hundred feet to meet a cart track that followed a circuitous route to Bwlchwyn.

After about 50 fathoms drivage, the middle and deep adits came into good ore and over a hundred tons of galena was sold in 1881 together with 22 tons of blende; but after this encouraging start the lode petered out in both length and depth. Attempts to locate payable ore by crosscutting north to the Castell lode were equally disappointing. A few years later Cardigan United drained the mine and sunk Rawcliff’s Shaft close to the river upstream of the pumping wheel to a depth of 15 fathoms, also with the intention of crosscutting to the Castell lode. The sole output of this venture was 3 tons of lead ore derived from the old workings.

The most impressive remnant at Temple is the massive and awesome pumping wheelpit rising sheer out of the river, with a network of foundation walls alongside that once supported the compressor and

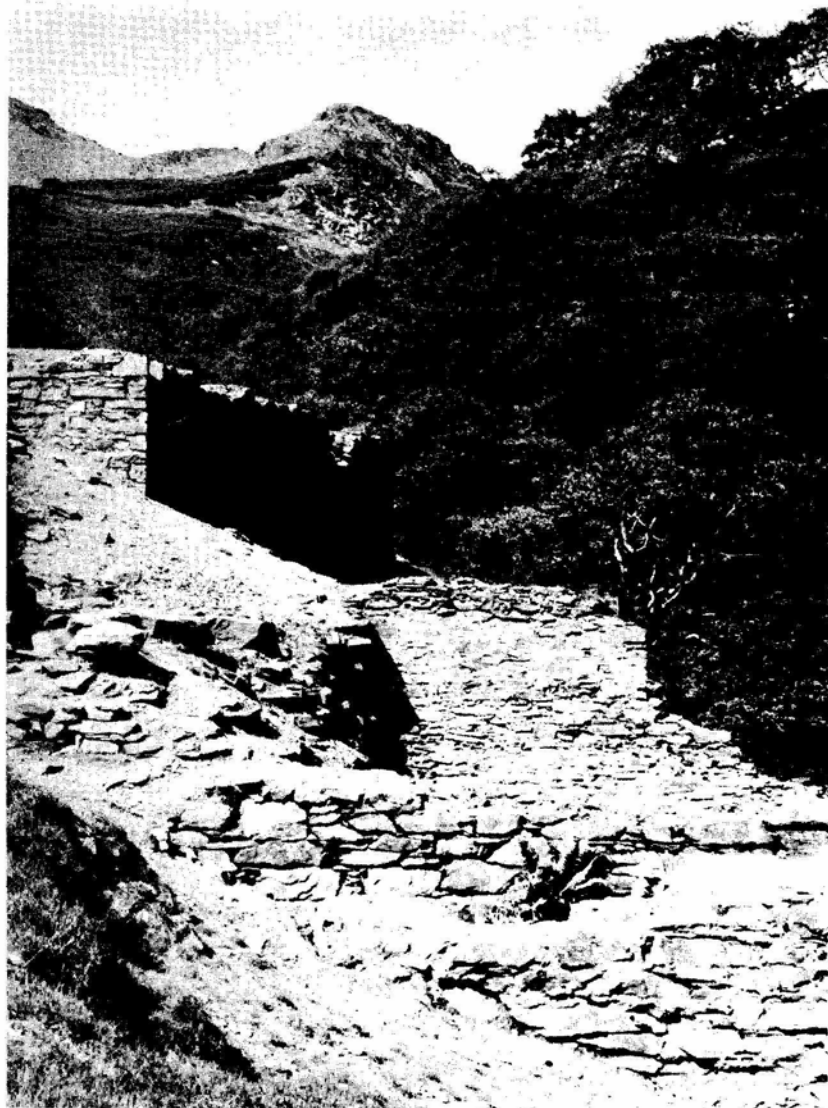
drawing machine. The dressing floors are also worth seeing but in any event, a walk there is worth the effort for the scenery alone.

* My thanks are due to Peter Lloyd Harvey for information on this mine.

† Mining companies were often suffixed 'United', and if the name reminds us of football, the association is appropriate for mining shares were in many respects the 'pools' of the 19th Century.

Addendum

Temple. This mine drained Bwlchgwyn in exchange for the use of their winding facilities. The agreement ceased circa 1885 and both companies suffered in consequence. The connecting level (Middle adit) is now blocked but still has a good railway and a big air- receiver in it.



Temple. The pit for the crushing machine wheel is in the foreground, with two masonry ore slides in heavy shadow. There are also fine remains of two circular buddles.

**THE MINES OF CARDIGANSHIRE
J R FOSTER-SMITH (1979)**

P62-63

Temple

Cwmrheidol Ph. SN 749 793

The Castell Vein system was worked to a small extent at this mine, though the main workings are upon a subsidiary vein to the south of the main fracture. This vein strikes east-north-east and occurs in the lower beds of the Frongoch Formation. No details of the workings or their history are known; but the chief ore mineral appears to be sphalerite, of which much may be seen on the dumps. The mine was active in 1887, when 3 tons of lead ore were produced. The workings lay on both banks of the Afon Rheidol.

Ref.: OTJ., pp.148-9. WJL., p.193. DEB Pt.2., p.27.

THE MINES OF CARDIGANSHIRE – R BURT, P WAITE, R BURNLEY (c1985)

| TEMPLE | PONTERWYD | | SN 749792 0246 |
|--|--|-------------|----------------|
| Production: Lead | Ore(tons) | Metal(tons) | Value(£) |
| 1887 | 3.25 | 2.50 | 20.00 |
| Zinc | Ore(tons) | Metal(tons) | Value(£) |
| 1881 | 20.00 | 8.00 | 50.00 |
| Comment 1881 TEMPLE LEAD | | | |
| Ownership: | 1876-1877 TEMPLE LEAD MINING CO.; 1878-1883 TEMPLE LEAD MINING CO.LTD.; 1886-1889 CARDIGAN UNITED MINES LTD.; 1908 BOOTH,BROOKS & RICHARDS; 1909-1912 ABERYSTWYTH SILVER LEAD MINES LTD.; 1913 RICH.RICHARDS | | |
| Comment 1883 SUSPENDED; 1889 SUSPENDED; 1911-1913 IDLE | | | |
| Management: | Chief Agent 1876-1877 CHAS.THOMAS; 1878-1881 JOHN H.CROUCHER; 1882 JOHN DAVIES; 1886-1889 A.H.JENKS; 1908-1911 R.RICHARDS; 1912 F.C.MOORWOOD | | |
| Employment: | Underground | Surface | Total |
| 1877 | | 4 | 4 |
| 1878 | 24 | 18 | 42 |
| 1879 | 33 | 12 | 45 |
| 1880 | 20 | 14 | 34 |
| 1881 | 12 | 4 | 16 |
| 1882 | 4 | | 4 |
| 1886 | 16 | 1 | 17 |
| 1887 | 12 | 5 | 17 |
| 1888 | 11 | 2 | 13 |
| 1889 | | 1 | 1 |
| 1908 | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| 1909 | 4 | | 4 |
| 1910 | 2 | | 2 |
| 1913 | 1 | | 1 |

**ROYAL COMMISSION FOR ANCIENT AND HISTORIC MONUMENTS IN WALES
INTERNET DATABASE**

Ref No: 9342

TEMPLE (748 793)

Metal Mine – Lead, Zinc

**THE FUTURE OF DERELICT MINING SITES IN DYFED
DYFED COUNTY COUNCIL (1984)**

p11

TEMPLE

Lead, small site located deep in Rheidol gorge. Access by footpath (ROW) from Ysbyty Cynfyn (car park). Shaft; levels (open); wheelpits; crusher house; ore slides; buddles; tramway; leats.

p17

This small mine is located in the deep gorge of the Rheidol Valley between Ponterwyd and Devil's Bridge. Access is via a footpath (ROW) from a small privately-owned car park at Ysbyty Cynfyn on the A4120, with a walk of about half a mile involving a steep descent into the gorge to Parsons Bridge. The reasonably well-preserved masonry remains combined with the mine's beautiful situation in the wooded Rheidol Valley make the mine ideal for the general tourist, and an interpretative board would be useful. However the site is on the edge of an SSSI, and so any proposed increase in utilisation should be referred to the Nature Conservancy Council.

CAMBRIAN MOUNTAINS METAL MINES PROJECT DYFED COUNTY COUNCIL (1988)

Mine: D51

Ref: D51 **Name:** Temple
Grid ref: SN749793 **EAU ref:** 574

Location : The Temple mine is near Parsons Bridge and within the Rheidol Gorge. The site is located adjacent to the A4120 approximately 1.5 ha south of Ponterwyd. The site is frequently visited.

History : A small mine worked by the Temple Lead Mining Co. 1876-1881, then by Cardigan United until 1887. The output totalled 150 tonnes of Lead and 0.25 tonnes of Zinc.

Surface Remains : Derelict buildings cover 0.75 ha. The wheelpit rises sheer out of the river. There are open levels, remains of a crusher house, ore slides, buddles, tramway and leats.

Shafts etc : None identified.

Spoil : Coarse mine waste (0.5 ha) and intermediate waste (0.25 ha). The spoil on site is not recorded as having a high heavy metal content.

Erosion : There is no evidence of erosion of material on site.

Vegetation : Surface remains on site are largely surrounded by vegetation. The remains themselves are largely unvegetated.

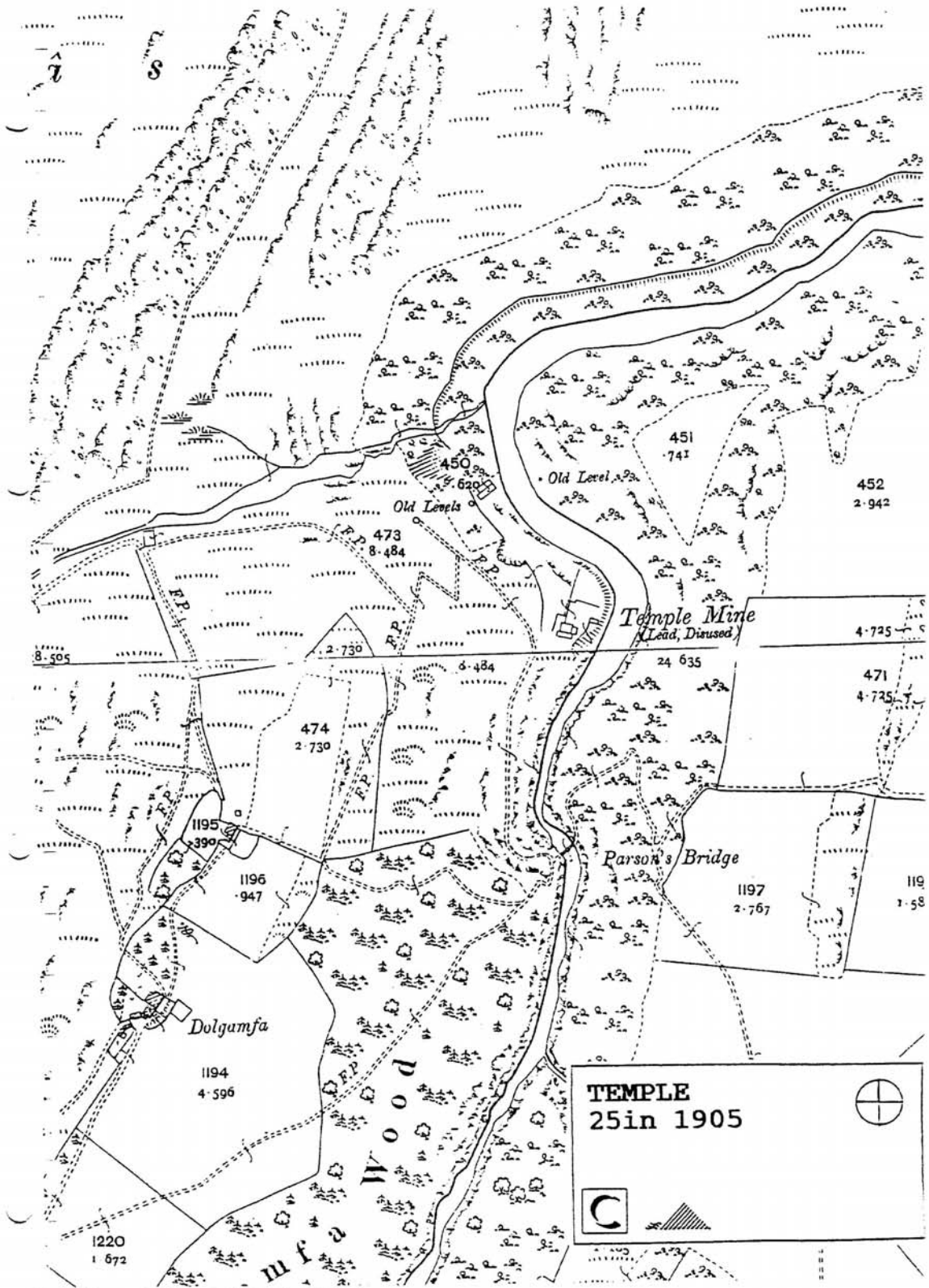
Conservation Interest : The site is adjacent to the Rheidol Gorge SSSI. A survey of lichen was briefly conducted on site by the NCC.

Access : Right of way (footpath) from Ysbyty Cynfyn on A 4120.

Danger : Site located in precipitous section of gorge with consequent dangers. Site itself is not dangerous.

Visual Impact : Very attractive and dramatic position. Site adds to romantic beauty of location.

Conclusions : Visually interesting site. The site is not of great historic or archaeological value. The site attracts many visitors due to it's position and the beauty of the gorge. A private car park is located alongside the main road.



METAL MINE STRATEGY FOR WALES – ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (2002)

MINE NAME: TEMPLE

Archaeological

Welsh Mines Society

The site is not currently proposed for scheduling, however there are significant structures and earthworks on this site primarily related to the application of water power. Also on site are entries to various underground features. Down stream from the pumping and winding wheel pit are the dressing floors with associated mountings and earthworks, evidence for the ore preparation processes used.

Temple mine, its waterwheel pit and associated leat, are in a dramatic setting. Any remedial work could damage the landscape and archaeological value of the site. Careful consideration of the issues is required before remedial work is carried out and the basic requirements of a topographical survey and archaeological assessment need to be carried out.

Cadw

Archaeological interest not known to Cadw, but the site requires assessment.

Cambria Archaeology (Dyfed Archaeological Trust)

The mine is part of the Llwynteifi sett. Remains: derelict buildings, wheel-pit, crusher house, ore slides, buddles, tramway, dressing floor, leats. The most impressive remains are the wheel-pit and dressing floor.

Mineralogical

No comments

Biological (Habitat / Species)

Countryside Council for Wales

The site is a SSSI / SAC which is lichenologically important with areas requiring preservation.

Nine rare lichens as follows.

Area 1: Three lichen in the wheel-pit 'B'.

Two lichen on a wet rock face beside the footpath above the crusher house.

Area 2: One lichen in wheel-pit 'C'.

Four lichens on spoil near 'D'.

It is also an important bryophyte site, because of the woodland surrounding the northern part of the site.

Choughs are suspected at around SN 7470 7930, but no nesting site has been located.

Other

Welsh Mines Society

There are no plans to promote the site, but it is well placed for low level interpretation. This impressive site is in spectacular location in the Rheidol gorge with access only being possible by foot. Poor access has left the mine buildings in a wonderful state of preservation and any problems ought to be dealt with by good management rather than by a reclamation scheme. The old leat is a superb feat of engineering which follows the river Rheidol for several hundred metres upstream, into an otherwise inaccessible gorge, and is worthy of conservation. The Middle Adit, alongside the footpath by the wheelpit, was eventually driven under the neighbouring Llwynteifi mine

and appears to drain the eastern part of it. Also; It ought to be noted that a disruption of the discharge from Bwlchgwyn and Penrhiw through the Cwm Rheidol Number 6 adit may well come to surface through this adit and create significant pollution of the Rheidol. This mine was originally part of the long defunct Penglaise Estate and it is believed that the site is owned without reservation of the minerals to a third party.

Countryside Council for Wales

There is a footpath through the site (but it is not a right of way). The site is close to Parson's Bridge which is used regularly by bikers.

Ceredigion Council

One of the most spectacularly sited mines in Wales with stone structures bordering gorge of Afon Rheidol in a narrow wooded valley. Links to west by footpath with group of mines in the Ystumtuen area, and to east with church and standing stones at Ysbyty Cynfyn. No public right of way across site but near river crossing on Parson's Bridge.

Structures include walls of dressing mill with buddle circles and large 40' wheelpit. No spoil remains on site and so presume source of contamination is from mine drainage. Due to landscape sensitivity of site would suggest minimal intervention and great care with design of any scheme.

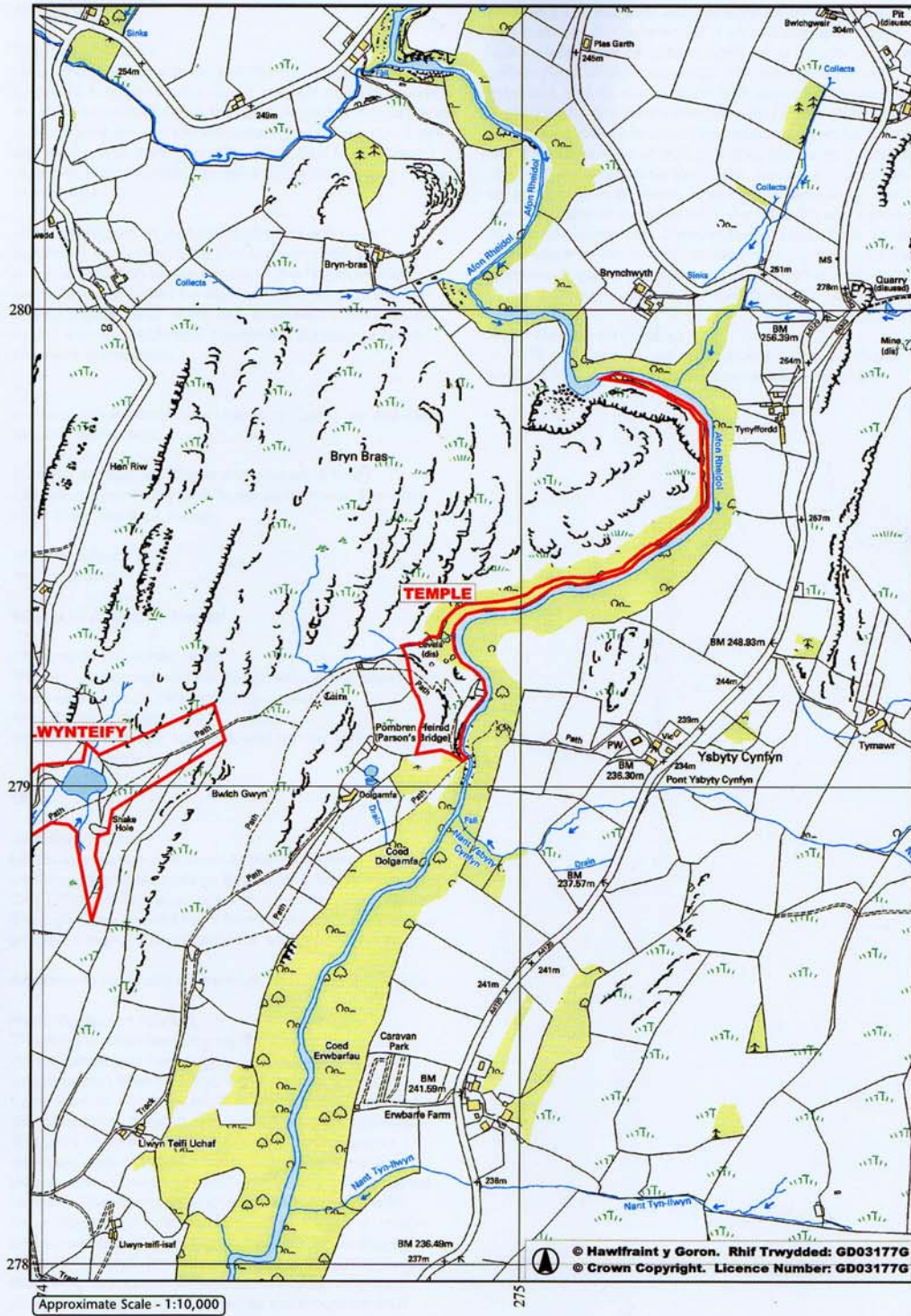
Pentir Pumlumon Tourism

Located in the Rheidol gorge, these workings clearly illustrate the ingenuity of mining engineers in Victorian times. Significant masonry features continue to exist, including two wheelpits, ore slides, buddle circles, the line of a conventional tramway and that of the incline by which the mine was kept supplied. The plant was necessarily unconventional owing to the geographical constraints of the location, and the site demands careful consolidation and interpretation. Sub-surface, the workings contain interesting features including an underground pump shaft & balance bob, together with a riveted compressed air receiver. At the top of the steep hill-slope are the ruins of the smithy, office, and winch housing for the incline, linked by cart track to Ystumtuen. This is an important site, which should be maintained at the highest possible level of conservation by its owners, the CCW. Parson's Bridge lies on the route of the proposed Miner's Way through N.E. Ceredigion, and a permissive footpath is being developed to link with the Temple Mine site. Comprehensive interpretation of the features is highly desirable. A cross-cut north from No.2 Adit cut the Castell Lode and anecdotal evidence would suggest a link with Llwynteifi, the possible source of the pollution in the Temple Deep Adit. Controlled access for educational purposes should be maintained as part of the CCW management strategy.

Welsh Development Agency

In 1978 this site was perceived as not doing significant environmental harm, therefore not ranked by WDA.

TEMPLE





7.

THE TEMPLE LEAD MINE - PARSON'S BRIDGE

INTRODUCTION. This Factsheet describes a 'self-guide' trail which will take you into one of the most beautiful & fascinating sections of the Rheidol valley. The Trail starts in the car park adjoining St John's church at Yspyty Cynfyn, a tiny hamlet mid-way between Ponterwyd and Devil's Bridge on the A.4120. Using the existing footpaths in conjunction with this Factsheet you can learn a great deal about the characters who made this tiny part of Mid-Wales so famous.

St JOHN'S CHURCH. Immediately next to the car park (Point 1.) you will find the ancient Christian church (Point 2.) uniquely set within the exact confines of a much earlier pagan stone circle. If you look carefully you will see some of the remaining standing stones actually built into the very wall of the church burial ground. This has been a site of worship for centuries and after the establishment of the Cistercian Abbey at Strata Florida in about 1160, Yspyty (Welsh for hospice/hospital) Cynfyn became a resting place for pilgrims and monks travelling this way on monastic business. Samuel Meyrick writing in his 'History of the County of Cardigan' published in 1808 mentions some fascinating folk traditions involving the ancient church.

'Throwing of heavy weights and stones with the hand was much practised in former times..... Henry the Eighth, after his accession to the throne, ... retained "the casting of the barre" among his favourite amusements. It is still continued in Wales, particularly in Cardiganshire, where the people have a meeting once a year at certain chapels, Yspytyt Ystwith, Yspytyt Cenvyn, etc for this purpose. They remain in the chapel all night to try their activity in wrestling, all the benches being removed, and the spectators, different from the ancient regulations, are generally young women, and old champions, who are to see fair play.'

The church graveyard contains tombstones commemorating many old lead miners as well as the first ill-fated quads recorded in Wales. The sad story of this little family, born in the lonely farmstead of Nantsyddion, is told in the cold, grey slate of the headstone.

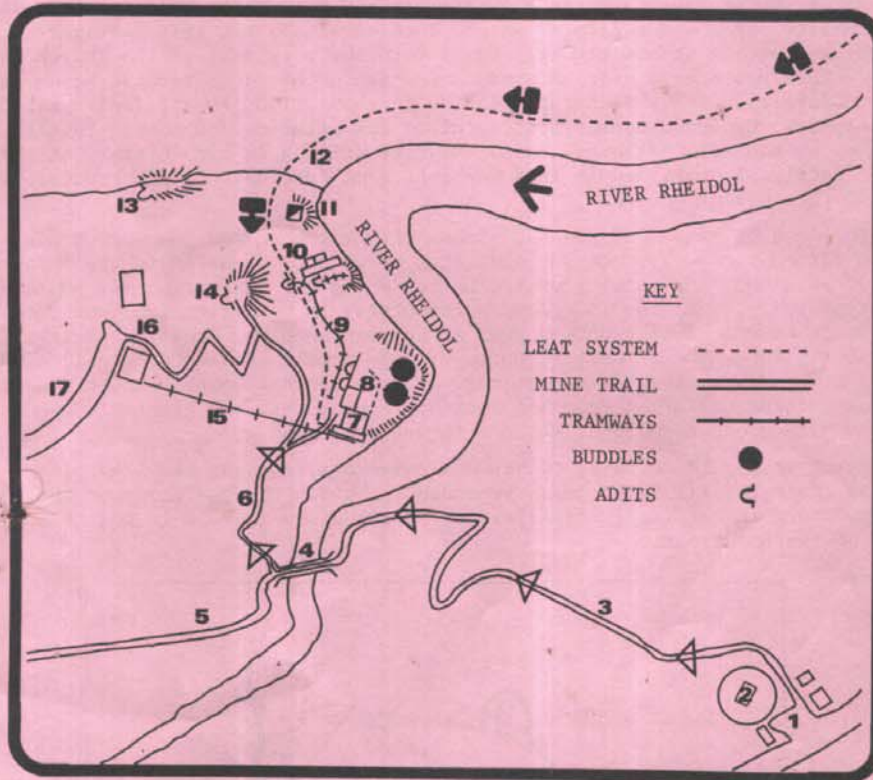


St JOHN'S CHURCH, YSPYTY CYNFYN.

Nowadays, St John's is one of the best kept churches in Ceredigion, largely through the unstinting efforts of Mr Alf Jenkins, the honorary Churchwarden who lives nearby. You will find a small collecting box on the wall of the churchyard and donations towards the upkeep of the church would be very welcome.

FOLLOW GEORGE BORROW. Once through the gateway you are now on the trail to Parson's Bridge (Point 3.), a route taken by the famous writer George Borrow in 1854 as part of his historic journey through 'Wild Wales.' See how the present well-maintained footpath and steel bridge compare with Borrow's description in the mid-19th century.

'Passing through a field or two we came to the side of a very deep ravine, down which there was a zigzag path leading to the bridge. The path was very steep, and, owing to the rain, exceedingly slippery. For some way it led through a grove of dwarf oaks... nearly at the bottom, however, where the path was most precipitous, the trees ceased altogether. Fearing to trust my legs, I determined to slide down... arriving at a little shelf close by the bridge without any accident... The bridge consisted of a couple of planks and a pole flung over a chasm about ten feet wide... The torrent rolled about nine feet below the bridge; its channel was tortuous; on the south-east side of the bridge was a cauldron... The river was rushing and surging, the pot was boiling and roaring, and everything looked wild and savage.'



SKETCH MAP OF THE TEMPLE LEAD MINE TRAIL, PARSON'S BRIDGE.

Once at the Parson's Bridge (so named because former incumbents of St John's came this way to visit parishioners around Ystumtuen village) you have reached No. 4 on the route map. Take the right-hand fork which leads to the Temple Lead Mine by way of a stile. The left-hand fork is a major local footpath to Ystumtuen; well worth-while if you have the extra time. Approaching the old mine from this direction you can immediately see some of the problems that faced the engineers of yesteryear such as the fact that the mine never had any road access and that there was virtually no flat land in the bottom of the gorge on which to lay-out the processing plant. With great ingenuity, these problems were overcome. By using our map & looking at the field evidence for yourself, you can start to think like an industrial archaeologist and begin to unravel the fascinating flow-system of the Temple Mine. If you're wondering about the name, this was derived from the stone-circle, the druid 'temple' at Yspty Cynfyn.

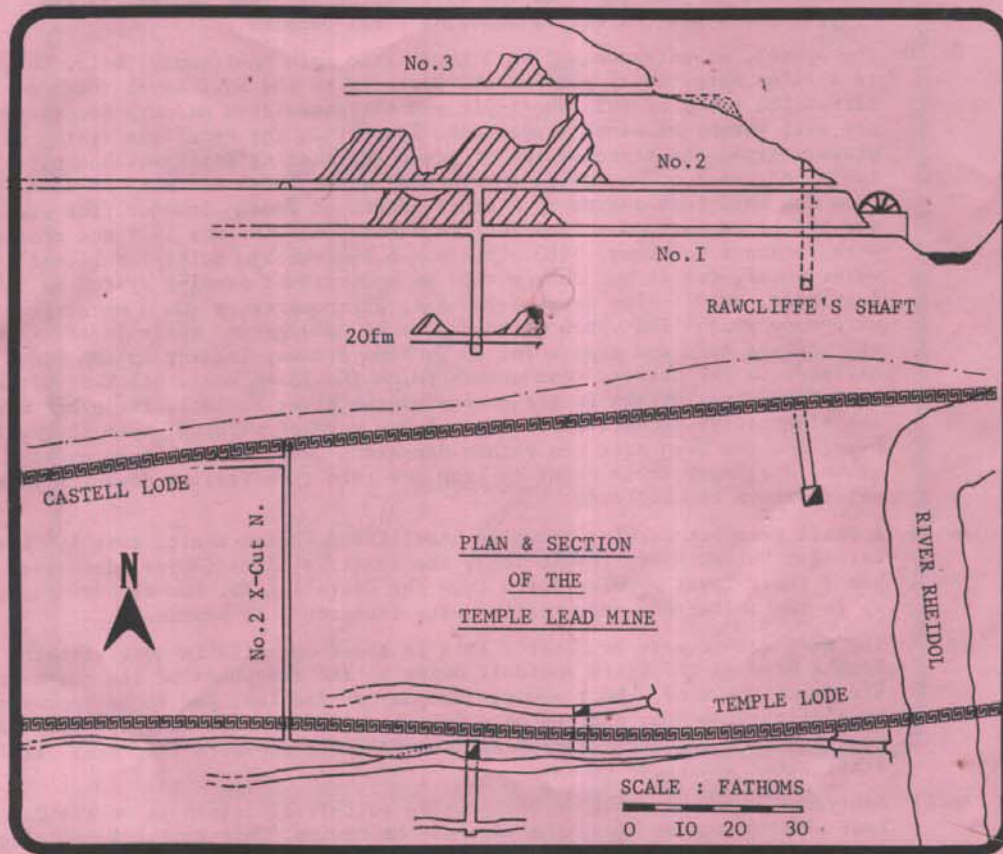
THE MINE SITE.

- No. 7 Ruins of the crusher-house and water-wheel pit. Contained an overshot water-wheel 30' x 4' plus a set of 24" crushing rolls (similar in design to those at Llywernog Museum). Installation took place between June and October 1878. Just above and behind the crusher-house you will see a masonry plinth. This supported a Blake's Stonebreaker which pre-crushed the ore to a size acceptable to the roller crusher (i.e. 1½" cube)
- No. 8 Main Dressing Floors fed by two semi-circular ore-bins (traditionally referred to as ore 'slides'.) Constructed September/October 1878. The Mine boasted one 3-compartment jigger, two flat buddles, eleven slime pits, two round buddles (these remains are easily recognizable) & one mechanical 'Dolly Tub', all worked by line-shafting and pulleys driven by a 14' x 2' water-wheel (similar to the Eagle Foundry water-wheel at the Llywernog Museum.)
- No. 9 Tramway linking No.2 Level (the Middle Adit) with the ore-bins above the Dressing Floors. As you walk along the line of the tramway you may notice the occasional wooden sleeper still surviving in situ. Parallel with the tramway and on your left, is the watercourse or 'leat' which fed the crusher wheel and the entire dressing floor complex.
- No.10 The portal, or entrance, of No.2 Level (the main haulageway) below which is a large water-wheel pit and the entrance to the No.1 Level (the Deep Adit.) The ruins of this wheel-pit and the associated masonry foundations are well worthy of close inspection. Apart from the excellent state of preservation, the features are of great engineering interest. The pit contained, as a prime mover, an overshot water-wheel 40' x 4' in size fed from the main leat system by a short length of wooden launder. The wheel was bought as part of a 'job-lot' in a mine sale in June 1879 and started work in about February, 1880. This was a remarkably 'multi-functional' water-wheel, for it not only worked an underground pumping system in the Deep Adit, but it also drove a 200 H.P. air-compressor and a mechanical wire-rope winch. The winch hoisted from an underground shaft in the floor of the Deep Adit and also wound an incline tramway leading up the steep hillside to the nearest road access point (No.15 on map). All that from one water-wheel driven by the energy of the River Rheidol. The plant was the alternative technologists dream! One word of warning; both the No.2 Level and the Deep Adit are rather dangerous owing to collapsed underground stagings. It is safer to keep out than risk falling down the dark voids within the hillside.
- No.11 A small prospect working known as Rawcliffe's Engine Shaft, sunk by the Cardigan United Mines Co. in 1887. The shaft is 15fms (30yds) deep and has a short level running north into the Castell Lode. Now flooded right up to the collar and potentially quite dangerous, so beware.
- No.12 The main watercourse or 'leat'. This is about one mile in total length from a wier on the River Rheidol. Owing to the steepness of the gorge upstream of the mine, about 400fms (800yds) of the leat had to be conveyed in a pitch-pine box, chained onto iron bars driven into the rock face. If you have time see if you can find some of these supports - several still exist after all these years.
- No.13 Nantymoch Level. An ancient prospecting adit-level driven in on the Castell Lode which outcrops along the line of the ravine. This powerful geological fracture was responsible for the severe 'kink' in the course of the River Rheidol upstream of Temple Mine. The Nantymoch Level pre-dates the operations at Temple and was driven as part of the Llwynteifi Mine many years before.
- No.14 No.3 Level entrance. Under no circumstances go into this tunnel. A very short distance inside, the floor disappears into thin air owing to the collapse of the original timber stagings. If you were to walk in here in the darkness you would fall down through a cavern into the Deep Adit, 200 feet below! So be warned & keep out.
- No.15 The inclined tramway which linked the mine with the cart-track system from Ystumtuen village. You can still see where the rails were located because of the slight difference in the plant colouration. The lower terminus was next to the crusher house.

No.16 Slightly north of the tramway top terminus was the mine smithy. The ruins of this building can still be clearly seen.

No.17 The cart-track from Ystumtuen which was the only access to the whole Temple Mine complex.

THE UNDERGROUND WORKINGS. The Temple lead mine was worked basically by a series of three Adit-levels driven in on a vein of lead ore originally discovered outcropping in the bed of the River Rheidol. The three levels were eventually linked up underground by the removal of the vein lying between them. This process, known as 'stopping' is fully explained in our Factsheet No.1. In order to follow the vein at greater depth, an underground shaft was sunk below the floor of the Deep Adit Level and this reached a depth of 20fms (40yds) in 1881. Another important project was the exploratory cross-cut, driven northwards from the No.2 Level to test the famous Castell Lode where it ran within the mine boundary. Rawcliffe's shaft has already been described as point No.II on the trail. From the description of the mine given in the 'Mining Journal' and from survey notes made by Captain Richard Richards of Ystumtuen in about 1917* it has been possible to reconstruct an underground plan & section showing the interrelationship of the workings.



* Kindly loaned by Mr Alf Jenkins of Yspty Cynfyn.

Other Publications in this series (available from the Museum Bookshop)

Factsheet No.1 - 'How a lead mine worked below ground.'

Factsheet No.2 - 'How a lead mine worked above ground.'

Factsheet No.5 - 'A history of mining in Mid-Wales.'

Factsheet No.8 - 'The Cardiganshire Miner - How he lived & worked.'

Send an s.a.e. for our full Booklist to:- The Director, Mid-Wales Mining Museum, Ponterwyd, Aberystwyth, Dyfed. Tel. 0970.85.620.

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