

CWMBRWYNO MINE, EXPLORED.

By ROY FELLOWS

This mine is situated just off the A44 Aberystwyth road, about 3 miles West of Ponterwyd. There is a minor road on the left just before the bends, which gives access to the site. Proceeding up a hill one passes the run in Deep Adit down in the valley to the right, also the rubbish filled Western Shaft on the hillside to the left. Soon, extensive spoil heaps come into view, these emanated from the run in Upper Adit, which must have been the main tramming level. Above the road is the open Shallow Adit, at about SN 704806, and higher still, a row of shafts. All shafts are blocked some distance down except one, this connects with the aforementioned Shallow Adit. Shallow Adit is driven as a crosscut, and about 25 metres of knee deep wading reaches the vein. This is all the water there is, the rest of the mine is dry. There is a collapse on the vein, but a way on to the left. A short crawl reaches a point where daylight comes in from above and the level breaks into the head of a narrow stope which fades down to the left. Shallow Adit is explorable for some distance through collapsing workings. But the main way on is down. Damian McCurdy informs me that he explored this level some years ago, and that there was no way down, so there must have been a collapse, which opened this pitch up. The whole place is very unstable, so care is needed. More on this later. I placed some bolts in 1994, and made a partial descent. However, I decided that it was far too dangerous, and came back up. In 1995 I returned, and cleared a lot of rock from the pitch head. I also took out the upper part of a stull a few feet down. It is now reasonable with care, a boulder the size of a fridge is best avoided. The pitch itself is an easy 50ft down the footwall, the landing being a pile of debris. Upper Adit is explorable in both directions. East passes through some interesting small stope workings to a collapse at about 45 metres, The passage here is a mass of clog prints. there are no signs of any previous modern explorers. West passes a winze on the left to reach a collapsed stope. This was almost passable by a ledge on the footwall. but for the last few feet. I fitted a traverse line here, of good quality climbing rope. It is an easy traverse, which belies the difficulty I had doing the job. At one point there was nowhere to place a piton, however, by shear luck I noticed a shot hole just above my head. Also by shear luck I found a steel bar to fit it. Also, on the other side was a pile of loose boulders which I had to negotiate. They are now at the bottom of the stope. The passage gained was about 40 metres of interesting level to a forehead. There are many tallow candle stubs on the hanging wall side, and a climbing chain leads up to a working platform. The aforementioned collapsed stope can be freely descended via a rubble slope, but is blind. The winze back down the level has a heavy balk of timber across it suitable for a belay, I have also placed two bolts nearby as a back up. A short length of electron or a daisy chain is needed to get in and out at the top. The pitch is just over 30feet freehanging to a narrow sloping ledge, to where the pitch breaks into the roof of an enormous stope. This position is very exposed. The impression is of being a "fly on the wall" Looking around one is impressed by the enormity of this huge underground void, formed by the complete collapse of major sections of the hanging wall.

There is another 70 feet of near vertical descent to a floor of rubble. This pitch is clean rope all the way down, with no rebelay necessary. To the West is a rubble slope from the collapse of the stope in the level above, here there are huge boulders perched above ones head. To the East it is possible to negotiate more huge boulders to reach another large winze. It looked about 60feet, but too dangerous to descend. A rock thrown down produced a splash. I had the impression that this area is all resting on timber. What may be the 32-fathom level can be seen breaking in about 20 feet up, but cannot be reached. Cleaning my ropes after my last visit I was alarmed to find that the rope used on the first pitch was cut about a-third of the way through. I never noticed this when I was prusiking out. I did hear a fall of rock while in the mine but thought nothing of it. I would strongly recommend therefore, that an exploration group leave someone watching the rope at the head of the first pitch.

CWMBRWYNO MINE

SHALLOW ADIT ENTRANCE AT SN 704806

ACCESSIBLE WORKINGS

- ↑ STOPE UP ↓ STOPE DOWN
- ☐ WINZE □ RISE
- × COLLAPSE F.H. FORHEAD
- Bf. BACKFILL T. TRAVERSE
- 10 METRES
- R.F. 1995

