

# CABAN

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*THE MAGAZINE OF THE OAKELEY AND VOTTY SLATE QUARRIES*



# CABAN

THE OAKELEY SLATE QUARRIES CO. LTD.,  
 THE VOTTY AND BOWYDD SLATE QUARRIES CO. LTD.,  
 BLAENAU FFESTINIOG, NORTH WALES,  
 MITRE COURT CHAMBERS, OLD MITRE COURT (off Fleet Street),  
 LONDON, E.C.4

● FRONT COVER: *A brilliantly sunny day in early September made our front cover picture, photographed from the bottom of the 300-ft. K incline, main entrance of the Oakeley mine. Only during two short periods of the year—in March and September—is the sun so positioned in the sky as to shine through the opening in the rock at the head of the incline. Another picture on Page 5.*

"Caban" is the name of the type of mess-room in which the men of Oakeley and Votty meet for their meal-break . . . and which is also the centre of social life, and passing of information throughout the quarries, hence the title of this magazine

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## MR. HARRY CUTTS



Our readers will have already learned of the death of Mr. H. Cutts on 16th November.

Harry Cutts joined the companies in 1934. He was appointed General Manager and Secretary in 1943 and became Managing Director in 1953. Although he retired from that position at the end of 1956 he remained a director of both the Oakeley and the Votty companies.

He was entirely devoted to the interests of the quarries and of those who work there. By his death both companies have lost a very wise counsellor, and all associated with them, a very dear friend.



# SLATE AND ITS EXTRACTION

**A**N interesting study of slate and its extraction is to be found in one of this year's new books "The Mineral Wealth of Wales and its Exploitation," by Trevor M. Thomas (published by Oliver and Boyd, price 30s.) It is a comprehensive survey of the country's mineral resources and their economic significance.

What the author says of the slates of North-west Wales is that they are of unrivalled quality and available in unlimited quantities. Explaining that geologists restricted the use of the term slate to "those fine-grained rocks which display the property known as slaty cleavage," the author observes that this property might be developed in suitable fine-grained rocks of any age which had suffered the pressure effects of major earth movements. In Britain workable slates occurred in the older formations, the Pre-Cambrian, Cambrian, Ordovician, Silurian and Devonian.

In Wales, the working of slates had been almost wholly confined to the Cambrian, Ordovician and Silurian formations, and more particularly to the first two.

## *In Snowdonia*

Localising the author's discussion of the slate-bearing rocks, we quote: "Slates occur widely in the Ordovician rocks of the Snowdonia region and the adjoining country to the south-east. The strike of the rocks is approximately the same as that within the Cambrian slate belt of central Caernarvonshire and there are several parallel tracts of country in which slates have been worked. The most important of these extends from near Betws-y-Coed in the north-east through Blaenau Ffestiniog to Llanfrothen in the south-west, a distance of about 12 miles.

"The best slates in this belt are found around Blaenau Ffestiniog; here they are

on the whole finer in grain than those of central Caernarvonshire and are mostly blue-grey in colour with lustrous surfaces. There are at least seven 'veins' of workable slate separated by grit bands. A few of these 'veins' are more than 50 yards thick in places. Because of their fine grain the cleavage of some of these slates is well-nigh perfect, making it possible to obtain exceedingly thin sheets."

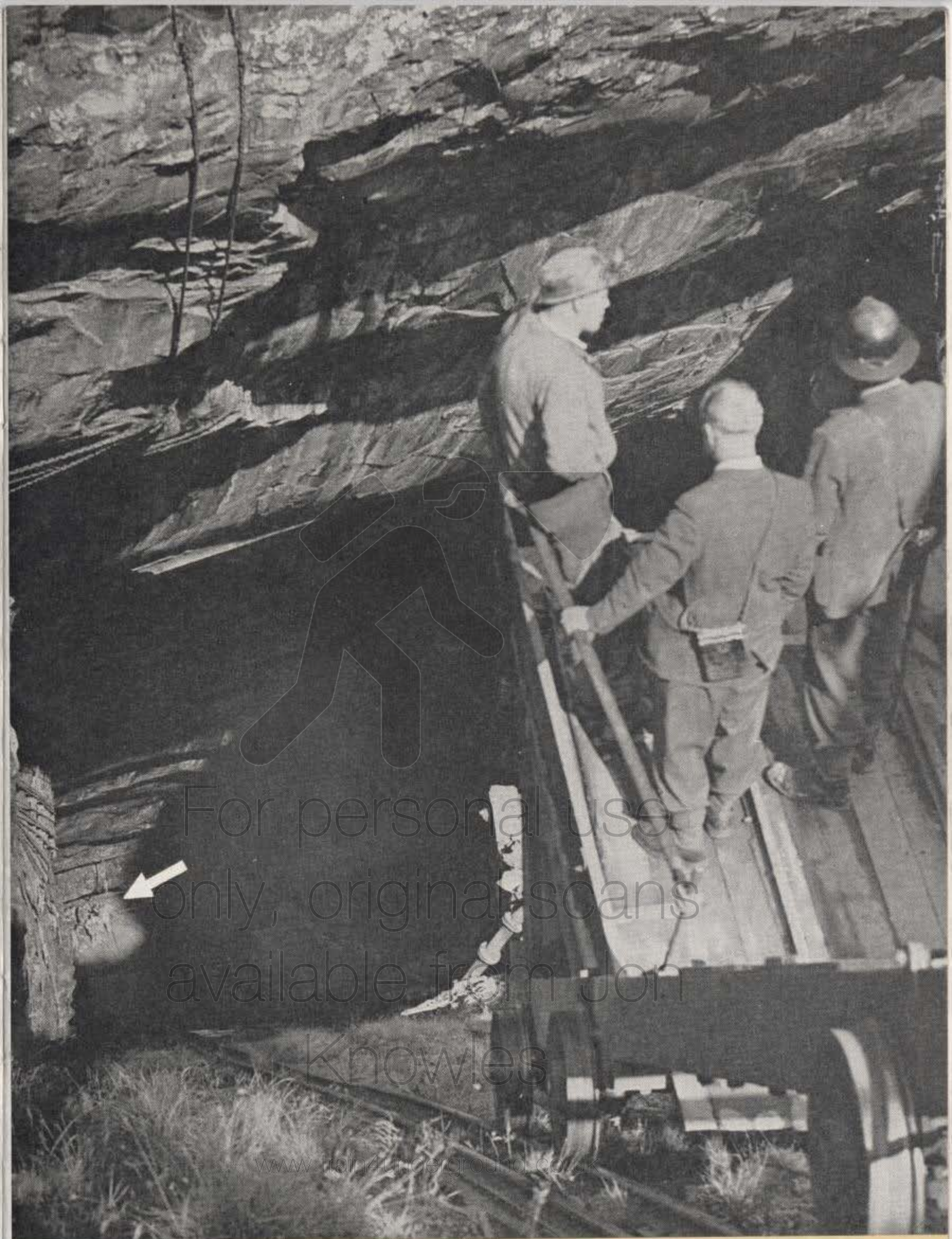
## *Underground galleries*

In the Blaenau Ffestiniog district the slate 'veins' did not show such steep dips as in central Caernarvonshire. These averaged about 30 degrees and this when added to the mountainous nature of the country, had necessitated the adoption, at many of the undertakings, of mining rather than open quarrying as the most economic form of working. "As a result some 40-50 per cent of the good slate remains ungotten in the huge pillars left for roof support of the underground galleries. This method of working, however, saves the removal of immense quantities of overlying grits."

Describing some of the Blaenau Ffestiniog mines as very large the author observes that they had been simultaneously operated at several different horizons, and the difference in level between the uppermost and lowermost galleries might exceed 1,000 feet. Individual working areas were in the form of large chambers which might be as much as 120 ft. in length, 40 ft in width, and over 100 ft high.

The Oakeley mine is mentioned as one where many of the upper mine chambers have been worked out to the open air. In these cases overburden was first removed and the former roof-supporting pillars at the last stage. That had been found to be profitable where the thickness of overburden to that of slate did not greatly exceed a ratio of 3 to 1.





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*"Caban" photographer caught this picture on one of the very infrequent occasions when the sun shines through the opening of K incline. In the pool of light at the bottom of the shaft, 300 feet down, are a group of quarrymen, indicated by the arrow since at that distance they are too small to be clearly seen.*



# Y BARICS

—Gan JAMES PARRY

**N**A, nid rhagor o atgofion un No gadfridogion y rhyfel diwethaf sydd i ddilyn y teitl hwn. Nid hanes beunyddiol milwr cyffredin ychwaith.

I chwarelwr nid cartref catrawd o filwyr yw'r 'barics' ond y llety a ddarperid ar un adeg ar gyfer gweithwyr a deithiai o ffordd bell i'r chwarel. Arhosai'r chwarelwyr hyn yn y barics yn ystod yr wythnos ac aent adref i fwrw'r Sul. Yr oedd bywyd yn rhatach a chaent lawer mwy o ryddid mewn barics na phe baent yn lletya mewn tai.

Deuthum i fyw i'r barics gyntaf pan ddechreuais weithio yn y chwarel yn llanc, tua diwedd y rhyfel byd cyntaf. Ond yr oeddwn wedi clywed llawer o sôn am y barics cyn imi erioed ei weld, gan fod fy nhad yn 'bricsio'—fel y gelwid byw yn y barics—yn Ffestiniog o'm blaen. Rhenid pob barics i nifer o unedau bychain. Yn wir edrychent yn debycach i res o dai nag i westy. Yn ein barics ni yr oedd pedwar 'tŷ' ac arhosai pedwar neu bump o ddynion ymhob un.

## *Nesaf i'r tân*

Yr oedd dwy ystafell ymhob tŷ—un llofft ac un ystafell fyw. Wrth ffenestr yr ystafell i lawr grisiau yr oedd bwrdd hir, a mainc i eistedd wrtho. Wrth ben y bwrdd, y nesaf i'r tân yr oedd un cadair freichiau. Neilltuid hon i'r hynaf o'r criw, ac ef oedd yn gyfrifol am dalu'r rhent a thalu'r biliau am bopeth a brynid ac y cud, megis glo, paraffin a the.

Talai pob lletywr swllt yr un bob mis o rent, a deuswllt yr un y mis i ddynes a ddeuai i lanhau'r tŷ a chynneu tân yn barod erbyn y deunent adref gyda'r nos. Defnyddiem ganhwyllau i oleuo, ac nid oeddynt hwy yn gostus iawn. Telid yr holl gostau yn fisol, ar ddiwrnod tâl; ac os yn perthyn i'r chwarel yr oedd y barics, delid y swllt rhent o'r cyflog.

Codai pawb yn ei dro i wneud tân yn y bore, a gofalai pob un am ei goed tân ei hun. Y gamp oedd cael tân coch gwresog cyn i'r lleill godi, a chodai rhai yn fore iawn er mwyn sicrhau hynny. Yr oedd gan bawb ei gwpwrdd bwyd ei hun—rhyw focs ar y pared gyda stwffwl a pheg ynddo i'w gadw ynghaead. Ni fyddai neb yn ei gloi. Yn y cwpwrdd cadwem y bwyd a ddygem gyda ni o'n cartrefi bob bore Llun.

## *Y badell ffrio*

Byddai un padell ffrio ym mhob barics; a'r rheol oedd i'r cyntaf godai yn y bore gael ei defnyddio gyntaf, a'r cyntaf i mewn gyda'r nos yr un fath. Cedwid y badell ar hoelen ar y pared, a hawdd oedd adnabod ei lle gan fod ôl saim yn diferu ar y wal oddi tani.

Ceid bywyd cymdeithasol pur bleserus yn y barics. Treuliem gyda'r nos yn darllen, canu emynau o'r tafleni cymanfaoedd, chware "draughts," ac yn dadlau a thrafod pynciau fel gwleidyddiaeth, crefydd, a materion y dydd. Cadwai pawb ei dymmer yn dda iawn yn y dadleuon hyn, ac ni chlywais ffrac erioed, er y gwahaniaeth barn. Clywais y cynhelid cyfarfodydd gweddi yn y barics amser y diwygiad, a chofiaf rai yn mynd i gapel y Rhiw i'r seiat a'r cyfarfod gweddi.

Âi'r rhan fwyaf ohonom i'r cyfarfod gweddi ddechrau'r flwyddyn. Ond aeth crefydd i chwarae rhan llawer llai amlwg cyn i gyfnod y barics ddarfod a daeth pethau fel y cwponau ffwtbol i gymryd ei le; a daeth cywiro'r cwpon yn rhan o fywyd y barics. Y newid hwn, mae'n debyg, a barodd i'r hen Ddafydd Ifan Dre' ddweud wrth un o'r hogiau un nos Lun "Wil bach, 'rwy't ti'n gwneud y barics yma'n uffern hefo dy 'hard lines!'"

Yn y barics i fyny yn y chwarel, yr oedd yn arferiad i bawb fwyta eu swper gyda'i gilydd. Os aethai un o'r criw am dro i farics arall ac heb ddychwelyd mewn



*Adfeilion ben farics  
chwarel Holland,  
1,300 o droedfeddi  
uwchlaw y mor,  
yng nghodre'r  
Allt Fawr.*



pryd i swper âi'r "band" i'w nôl. Rhyw fand taro pur swnllyd oedd hwn o offer-ynau mor bersain â bwcedi, piseri a thuniau yn cael eu taro â darnau o bren. Safai'r band o flaen y barics y byddai'r troseddwr ynddo, a dal i guro nes y doi allan; ac yna ei hebrwng yn ôl i'w farics ei hun. Ystyrid hyn yn gryn sarhad arno.

Deuai ambell chwanen ar ei thro i'n poeni, a gosodai rai gwrlid—rhyw blanhigyn sy'n tyfu mewn lleoedd gwlyb—rhwng y matresi i geisio eu difa neu eu symud i ffwrdd. Ond ni phoenid ni gan chwain lawn gymaint ag y credech wrth glywed rhai straeon a adroddid am chwain y barics. Un ohonynt oedd y goel y deuent i chwilio amdanom os nad oeddem yn y gwely cyn deg o'r gloch. Clywais befyd am un hen frawd ym marics y Rhosydd yn llusgo'i wely allan i'r haul un bore braf yn y Gwanwyn. Gofynodd rhywun iddo beth yr oedd yn ei wneud. "O," meddai, "dim on mynd a'r plant yma am drip!"

Digwyddai troeon digon trwstan yn aml. Cofiaf un tro ddadlau brwd ar adeg etholiad, tra yr oedd William Jones o'r Garn wrthi yn paratoi swper a chymryd rhan wresog yn y ddadl yr un pryd. Agorodd baced chwarter pwys o dê, ac heb iddo ef na neb arall sylwi beth a wnai, rhoddodd lwyaid neu ddwy yn y canestr, a'r gweddill yn y tebot. Bu sôn hir am y tê hwnnw.

Dro arall aeth dau ati i wneud pwddin reis. Rhoddodd un ohonynt y llefrith

yn y sosban a gofynodd i'r llall faint o reis oedd eisiau, "Well iti roi'r pwys i gyd gan fod yma ddau ohonom," meddai'r llall. Pan ddechreuodd y pwddin ferwi drosodd aeth un ohonynt i nôl powlen i godi peth iddi i'r pwddin gael lle yn y sosban. Pan lanwyd y bowlen aed i nôl un arall, ac felly llanwyd pob bowlen, piser, jwg a chwpan yn y lle, ond dal i godi wnâi'r pwddin. Dechreuodd y ddau fwyta o'r sosban, ond daliai'r pwddin i chwyddo a chodi. Ni wn ddiwedd y stori na phwy a fwytaodd weddill y pwddin!

### *Stori y glo*

Y stori gyntaf a glywais am farics oedd yr un a glywais gan fy ewythr Harry a oedd yn bricsio yng Nghwmorthin. Daeth un o'r stiwardiaid, Andreas Roberts, i'r barics un diwrnod a dweud wrthynt am glirio popeth o'u heiddo. Yr oedd rheolwyr y chwarel, meddai ef wedi penderfynu tipio rwbél ar ben y barics a'i ddileu, gan eu bod yn amau fod y gweithwyr a letyai ynddo yn dwyn glo'r chwarel.

Syfrdanwyd y criw gan y fath gyhuddiad, a mynent, ar eu gwir, nad oedd yr un ohonynt erioed wedi cyffwrdd yn y glo. Ond ni wrandawai'r stiwart ddim ar reswm meddai f'ewythr, a chlirio fu raid, a chladdwyd y barics. Ar ddiwedd ei hanes trist dywedodd f'ewythr—"Ond

*Parhad ar dudalen 8*



## CRAFTSMEN AT BONC GOEDAN

**S**UBJECTS of our snapshots on the opposite page are the quarry craftsmen whose workshops are grouped on Bonc Goedan—the fitters, the carpenters and the blacksmiths.

Each group have a tiny caban within their workshop where they gather for their mid-day meal and chat. The exception among the snapshots is Ivor Roberts who, at the time the picture was taken, worked in a kind of "splendid isolation" in the weighing room and also operated the quarry telephone exchange. He has since transferred to other work at Oakeley.

*1st. Row (left to right):*

*Arwyn Davies, John Arwel Jones, and Hugh O. Jones.*

*2nd. Row:*

*John Penri Jones, Donald C. Thomas, and Glyn Evans.*

*3rd. Row:*

*Elfed C. Jones, Evan G. Jones, and David B. Jones.*

*4th. Row:*

*Ifor Glyn Roberts, William Llew. Owen, Griffith H. Roberts, and Ben E. Jones.*

### Y BARICS (parhad)

cofia di 'doeddau ni ddim wedi prynu clap o lo ers pedair blynedd chwaith!"

Er y miri a'r hwyl rhyw wneud y gorau o'r gwaethaf oedd byw mewn barics wedi'r cyfan; a phawb yn dyheu am weld yr wythnos yn tynnu i'w therfyn er mwyn cael mynd adref i fwrw'r Sul. Ni fyddai neb mewn tymer dda iawn i ddechrau'r wythnos, ond gwellai'r hwyl ar bawb fel yr ai'r wythnos ymlaen. Trobwynt yr wythnos oedd pan glywid gyntaf rywun yn dweud "Mae o wedi syrthio ar ei wyneb i ti." At y tamed menynt y cyfeirid. Deuai pawb a phwys o fenyn gydag ef fore Llun, a thua nos Iau neu fore Gwener aethai'r cilcyn menynt cyn lleied fel na allai sefyll mwy, a syrthiai ar ei wyneb—arwydd sicr fod yr wythnos ar ddod i ben. Fel y canodd William Williams, Bryn Llys, Blaenau Ffestiniog:

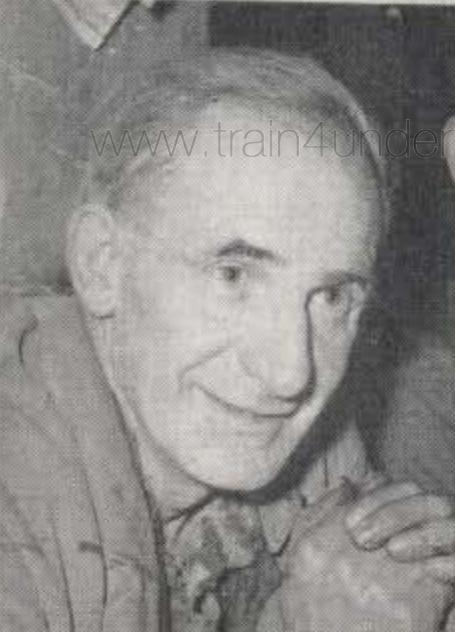
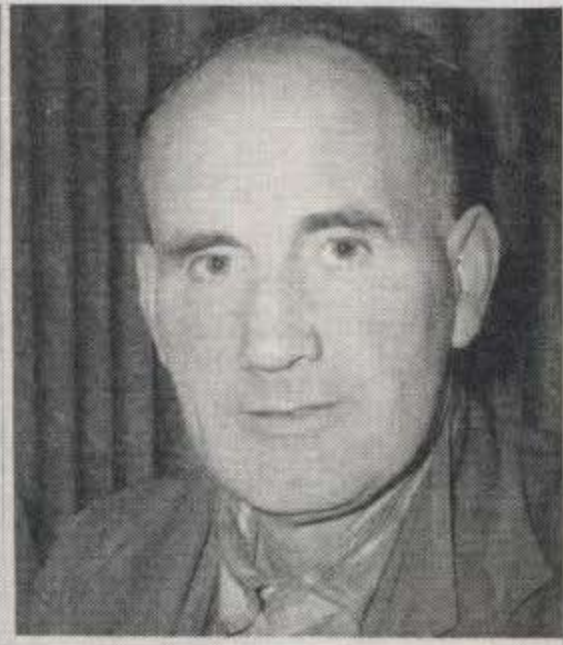
At weithwyr y Garn y cyfeiriai. Teithient yn y trên bach gyda gweithwyr Beddgelert, Tremadog, Penmorfa ac eraill, a deuent yn ôl ar y trên fore Llun. Ar fore Llun dechreuai'r gwaith ychydig yn ddiweddarach nag ar ddyddiau eraill, er mwyn i'r gweithwyr hyn gael amser i fynd i'r barics i newid eu dillad a chael cwpaned o dê cyn dechreu gweithio. Pan ddaeth trafndiaeth yn fwy hwylus daeth cyfnod y barics i ben; ac er fod llawer o atgofion melys yn aros amdanant nid oedd neb yn mwynhau byw mewn barics rhyw lawer.

Clywais mai gweld gweithwyr y Garn yn cerdded heibio ar brynhawn Sadwrn, yn eu hwyliau gorau am eu bod yn mynd adref ar ôl bricsio am wythnos a symbolodd Emrys, y bardd o Borthmadog, i ganu'r emyn sydd a'i ail bennill fel hyn:

*Pan yn gweithio'n galed  
Yn Ffestiniog drwm  
Melys ydyw meddwl  
Nos Sadwrn eto ddaw.  
Ar ol bod yn barics  
Ar hyd yr wythnos faith  
Mae'r gweithwyr fore Sadwrn  
Yn cychwyn ar eu taith.*

*O! mor hoff yw cwmni'r brodyr  
Sydd a'u hwyneb tua'r wlad  
Heb un tafod yn gwenieithio—  
Heb un fron yn meithrin brad;  
Gwlith y nefoedd ar eu profiad,  
Atsain hyder yn eu hiaith,  
Teimlant hiraeth am eu cartref,  
Carant son am ben y daith.*





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# Party memories for

THESE pictures should bring for the children of our quarrymen happy recollections of the 1961 party when they were entertained by the Oakeley Club at the Queens Hotel. An excellent repast prepared by Mrs. Wale was followed by a fascinating display of ventriloquism and conjuring tricks by Mr. Glyn Foulkes Williams, whose dummy "Taid" was again a great favourite. Guest of honour was 83-year-old Mr. David Roberts, representing the quarry pensioners, who was accompanied by his daughter, and gifts were distributed by Mr. Dennis Roberts.



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# your family album



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**F**OR 17 years pumps attendant at the Votty Quarry, Robert Thomas retired in February after a total of 44 years service with the company. A colleague writes of him: "Never was there a more youthful pensioner. At 65, he is as nimble and sprightly as most men half his age . . . he was a good footballer in his time and is today one of the most faithful and enthusiastic supporters of the town team."

On his retirement, Robert Thomas received a tea service from the Votty staff and his fellow-workmen, the presentation being made at a ceremony in the quarry by John Edward Jones. Richard David Jones presided and he and many of those present paid tribute to Robert Thomas and extended good wishes to him and his wife.

Two other Votty quarrymen, John Williams and William Roberts, have similarly been presented with gifts on their retirement after many years service.

## PARTING GIFTS AT VOTTY



*Mr. and Mrs. Robert Thomas at home, with their presentation tea service.*



# “PEN Y CEI”

Gan JOHN O. JOHN

**E**FALLAI y gofyn rhywun—wrth weld fy enw uchod—pa gysylltiad sydd rhwng hwn a'r *Caban*? Atebwn innau imi ofyn i Bryfdir yn 1920 beth oedd y rhagolygon am job yn chwareli Stiniog? “John bach,” meddai, “does 'na ddim siap chwarel arnat ti.” “Hwyrach wir,” meddwn innau, gan ychwanegu, “does na ddim siap lwmp o gaws ar ll'godan bach chwaith, ond mi fedar honno wneud cythral o dwll ynddo fo.”

Fel yna yr oeddwn i yn siarad yr adeg honno hogia. Ond cofiwch, pan gaiff y car bach bynctiar hyd yn oed heddiw, mi fydda i—ar y pryd—yn ei chael hi'n anodd gynddeiriog i ddweud adnod.

## *Porthladd y Blaenau*

Pan oeddwn yn blentyn yr oedd chwareli'r Blaenau a Pen y Cei yn y Port yn anwahanadwy. Mewn gair, porthladd y Blaenau oedd y Port. Galwyd y lein bach yn Ffestiniog Railway, ac felly, nid amhriodol fyddai i'r awdurdodau fod wedi galw Pen y Cei yn Ffestiniog Harbour. Heb y llechi ni byddai angen y llongau. Neu, o leiaf, go brin y buasai neb call yn mentro adeiladu llong i gario mwyar duon i China. Ond dyna fo, 'doeddwn i ddim ar y pwyllgor enwi.

Y mae fy nyled yn fawr i'r chwareli am ramant fy mywyd cynnar ym Mhen y Cei. Pe gofynnid i fachgen o Borthmadog hanner canrif yn ôl “beth wyt ti am wneud wedi gadael yr ysgol?” yr atebiad parod a fyddai “Mynd i'r môr.” Yr oedd hyn yn anochel fel ag yr oedd i hogyn arall o'r un oed yn y Blaenau fod ai fryd ar fynd i'r chwareli. Yr oedd brecheddau y ddau yn yr un dorth.

Yr oedd yn amlwg o'r cychwyn i mi yn yr ysgol nad oedd unrhyw alwad arall ar ein cyfer ni yr hogia' ond y môr. Yr oedd yr adroddiad a ddysgwn yn

Standard I yn awgrymu hynny. “Y Morwr Bach” ydoedd hwnnw:

“Do, do, fe aeth o gam i gam  
At fwrdd y llong o dŷ ei fam. . .”

Yr oedd blas heli'r môr ar y rhan helaeth o'r gwersi. Dysgem sut i ddweud yr amser oddi ar yr haul cyn gallu dweud hynny ar wyneb y cloc. Pa ryfedd bod y bechgyn yr adeg honno yn mynd i'r môr yn ddeuddeg oed.

Diwrnod mawr i blant yr ysgol oedd diwrnod lansio llong. Yr oedd yn arferiad ar achlysur felly i'r plant orymdeithio i'r cei. Ac felly y bu un tro. Martsio yng ngofal yr athrawon. Yr oedd rhaff wedi ei rwymo o biler i biler o gylch yr harbwr i ddiogelu'r plant rhag disgyn i'r dŵr. Safem yn drefnus tu ôl i'r rhaff.

Bechgyn lleiaf Standard I ar y blaen; Standard II o'r tu ôl iddynt, a'r trydydd rheng yn dilyn, hyd at y bechgyn talaf yn Standard VII. Amcanwyd yn dda. Ond yn ymarferol methiant a fu y cynllun. Daeth y funud yr llong Isallt adel ei chryd ar y lan. Gyda'r seremoni arferol tarawyd hi yn ei hochr â photelaid o win, a dechreuodd lithro yn araf i'r harbwr. Ond cyrhaeddodd tri o'r bechgyn lleiaf Standard I y dŵr o flaen y llong. Yr oedd pwysau y bechgyn trymaf o'r tu ôl iddynt yn fwy na fedrai y rhaff ei gynnal. Ond yr oedd digon o gychod wrth law i'w codi o'r dŵr cyn gynted ag y bu iddynt ddisgyn iddo. Ac yn wir, nid oedd angen y cychod i'w hachub. Gallai plant y dref y pryd hwnnw nofio bron cyn dysgu cerdded.

## *Jac Portigi?*

Fy ffefryn mawr i o holl forwyr y lle ydoedd Jac Portigi—cyfaill hynod ddi-grif o Portugal. Hwylodd gyda llongau'r Port am flynyddoedd. Dyn canol oed ydoedd yn cyflawni goruchwylion “galley boy” yn y llongau—paratoi prydau bwyd



i'r criw. Rhyw fath o gegin bach ydoedd "galley" yn y llong, ac eisteddwn yn un ohonynt gyda Jac ar brynhawn Sadwrn. A'm bryd ar fynd i'r môr gan gychwyn yn y galley, dechreuais ei holi pa fodd i baratoi prydau bwyd i'r criw. Ac mewn Saesneg a oedd mor glapiog a'm eiddo innau, dywedodd: "Me make pwdin reis now," Fe aeth ati yn ddiymdroi; ond yn wahanol iawn i'r hyn a welais gartref, ni roddwyd y pwdin mewn dysgl i'w grasu; yn hytrach tywalltwyd y cwbl i sospan ai roi i ferwi ar y stôf. Bu yno yn ffrwtian nes ei fod o mor galed a haearn. Pwdin ar gyfer cyn manholt oedd hwn ac nid llwy. "Too hard Jac bach," meddwn wrtho. "No, no," meddai. "Slipi pwdin reis no good at sea. Big wave come and hit ship and pwdin reis slipi all over you."

### *Oedran yr addewid*

Gyda'r awydd mawr am fynd i'r môr yn gwresogi fy ngwaed, fe gerddwn i'r cei yn aml at amser pen llanw. Dyna'r adeg y gwelwyd ambell lanc yn chwythu ei blwc cyn i'w long hwylio, a deuai cyfle ar adeg felly i rywun arall gael neidio i'r llong ac i fwrdd ag o. Ni bum i mor ffodus, ond cefais addewid droeon y cawn long wedi cyrraedd fy mhedair-ar-ddeg oed. Yr oedd cŵyn yn yr ardal ar y pryd fod rhai capteiniaid yn hwylio gydag ambell blentyn deuddeg a thair-ar-ddeg oed. Hynny oedd wir. Ond fe ddaeth oedran yr addewid a minnau yn ddyn a darn pedair-ar-ddeg oed.

Euthum i'r cei wedi clywed fod Capt. Evans o'r llong George Casson yn chwilio am hogyn. Yr oedd yn hwylio y diwrnod hwnnw efo llwyth o lechi am Hamburg. Ond ar y flodd i'r cei cwrddais â llanc arall a oedd ar yr un perwyl a minnau. Aethom ein dau at Capten Evans. Yr oedd Edmunds, y bachgen arall, flwyddyn yn hyn na mi ac yn gryfach ei gorff. Ef a gafodd y job. Cefais innau yr hen addewid y cawn drip y fordaith nesaf. Fe hwyliodd y George Casson am Hamburg, ond ni ddychwelodd. Ar Awst 4, 1914, daliwyd y criw a'r llong a buont yn garcharorion yn yr Almaen hyd derfyn y rhyfel. Fe ddaeth y criw adref yn 1919. Daliodd yr Almaenwyr ei gafael ar y George Casson. Ysgwn i beth ddaeth o'r llwyth llechi?

## Letter from America

**C**ABAN received in June the following letter from Mr. John S. Burdick, writing from 924 West End Avenue, New York.

*Recently I had the good fortune of being introduced to your magazine, "Caban."*

*In 1884 my mother, Elizabeth (Owen) Burdick, daughter of Richard and Catherine (Thomas) Owen, was born at 72 High Street, Blaenau Festinog. I am an engineer interested in hoists, movable bridges and inclined railways. These two facts gave me considerable interest in what I saw and read in "Caban."*

*My reading so far has been limited to the October 1950, February and June 1951, and November 1954 issues. Will you please tell me how I could obtain future copies and where in New York I might see other past issues?*

*I look forward to the day when I can visit Blaenau Festiniog and, if possible, see the quarries. In the meantime I am enjoying your very interesting magazine.*

We were pleased to send further copies of *Caban* to Mr. Burdick together with a cordial invitation to him to visit Oakeley or Votty whenever he comes to this country.

---

Erbyn hyn diflannodd y llongau hwyliâu am byth o'r Port ac ychydig iawn o'r hen griw fu'n hwylio arnynt sydd yn aros heddiw. Y mae'r mwyafrif wedi cyrraedd yr hafan ddeg ers blynyddoedd, a gyda chenedlaeth arall bydd y gweddill wedi croesi'r "bar" am y tro olaf. Ond y mae'r atgofion hudolus am ddyddiau'r llanw ym Mhen y Cei yn dal i gynhyrfu'r galon. Diolch am gyfraniad y chwareli i'r diddanwch nad â yn angof.

Cytunaf â Bryfdir a Chaptan Evans erbyn hyn. Yr oeddwn yn rhy ddisiap i wneud chwarelwr na llongwr. A bellach 'does gennyf ddim gwell i'w wneud na cheisio gwasanaethu'r unig Un nad yw'n malio sut siap sydd ar ei weision ond iddynt fod o ddifrif.



## A message from our chairman

Mr. Quintin V. Hoare, O.B.E.

*AS this year we have an issue of "Caban" appearing just before Christmas it gives me a most welcome opportunity of sending my best wishes to our readers at the quarries.*

*Everybody knows that it has been a most difficult year. The Directors appreciate very much the loyalty of*



*the quarrymen who have done so much towards providing the supplies urgently required by our friends in the trade.*

*I am sure that we shall all continue to do our best in the coming year and so maintain the reputation and influence of the Oakeley and the Votty Quarries' products in the building world, where slate continues to be held in the highest esteem.*

*With that we can have confidence in the further years to come.*

*I wish you a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

QUINTIN HOARE.

## WELSH SLATE

THE words quoted were spoken by Mr. William Griffiths, L.R.I.B.A., the Flintshire county architect in his farewell speech to the county council at Mold in May.

Welsh slate, he said, had been used whenever possible in the county's public buildings and it was a sore point with him that it was not used more widely. The initial cost might be high but a roof of Welsh slate was a lovely thing which virtually lasted for ever and cost nothing in subsequent upkeep.

Mr. Griffiths, who retired on June 1st, has been succeeded by Mr. R. W. Harvey, one of his staff.

### *Oakeley slate*

One of the latest buildings in Flintshire to be roofed with Oakeley slate is the county primary school at Mold, pictured here. Built at a cost of £57,000 for 400 children, the school has ten classrooms, an assembly hall, dining room and kitchen.

Of traditional construction, the school was designed by Mr. Griffiths's department and as far as possible local materials have been used. It was scheduled for completion by the end of July.

The slates were supplied through Messrs. James G. Tuxford, builders' merchants, Conway, and the school was built by Dutton and Peters, Ltd., of Mold.

Two bungalows, one pair of three recently built at Denbigh, are shown as attractive examples of smaller-scale roofing with our Welsh slates. The suppliers for this contract were also Messrs. Tuxfords.



# ROOF "A LOVELY THING"



*Bungalows at Denbigh*



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*£57,000 primary school at Mold*



# TERMAU'R CHWAREL

**D**YMA'R ail restr o'r termau—  
gyda'r ystyron yn Saesneg. Tybed  
a oes rhai wedi eu gadael allan?

Llithrodd dau wall i'r rhestr gyhoeddwyd  
yn rhifyn Rhagfyr, 1960; fel hyn sy'n  
gywir—

Cowntis bach : 18in. x 10in. slates.

Cowntis bach culion : 18in. x 9in. slates.

**Dad-lwytho** : To unload.

**Dad-lwythwr** : Unloader—in particular of large  
blocks of slate in the mill.

**Dad-fachu** : To unhook or unhitch.

**Dail** : Thin slaty scales seen on a cleaved surface.

**Deiliog** : A sign of good cleavage.

**Danjar** : A wooden implement attached to the  
top of a tip to facilitate tipping.

**Dant** : A cog—thus "rhoi dant" means to put  
a brake on to prevent a cog-wheel slipping.

**Dechra' mis** : The start of the contract period.

**'Dengid adra'** : A premature, devious and sur-  
reptitious departure from work.

**Di-frigo** : To remove top rock, i.e., that nearest  
the surface—the overburden.

**Diwedd mis** : The end of the quarry contract  
period.

**Diwrnod i'r brenin** : An unproductive day  
though some work was done.

**Diwrnod lladd mochyn** : A most busy day—a  
reminder of the days when killing a pig on a  
smallholding was quite an event.

**Diwrnod gosod** : The day contracts or lettings  
for slate-getting are arranged.

**Dobio** : To knock, hit, strike.

**Dolan** : A link.

**Down datsh** : A "cushion" made of old rags,  
soil, etc., to receive the front wheels of a wag-  
gon being tipped.

**Dragio** : To break up.

**Dreifar** : A driver.

**Dreifar plwg** : Chisel used on the 'plug and  
feathers' when that implement has to be driven  
well home.

**Dros doman** : Over the tip.

**Dros llwybr** : Over the path.

(Both terms were used when a man was sacked  
or discharged.)

**Drym** : Drum—usually the drum over which  
a haulage wire rope coils.

**Dwbwl bach** : 12in. x 6in. slates.

**Dwbwl hand** : Double-handed hammer.

**Dwr** : Apart from the literal translation—water  
—it also means the place where solid rock and  
therefore water is to be found at the bottom  
of the rock face in a chamber.

**Dybl nymbar** : A reference to a pay of double  
figures.

**Dyn dwbwl** : A particularly strong man who  
can do the work of two ordinary men.

**Dytsian** : A duchess slate—i.e., size 24in. x 12in.  
*Pl.*, Dytsis.

**Dytsis bach llydin** : Small wide duchesses, i.e.,  
22in. x 12in.

**Dytsis bach culion** : Small narrow duchesses,  
i.e., 22in. x 11 in.

**Dyfn** : A floor or the distance between two  
floors underground.

**Dyn tynnu peth peryg** : Safety man ; a securer.  
**Dyn wrth y dydd** : Man working at the day  
rate, perhaps a journeyman.

**Dyn twll** : Underground man.

**Ebill** : Drill.

**Ebill main** : Thin drill used when the least  
possible explosive charge is to be made.



*Slate fan.—This excellent example, special-  
ly made by the late Richard Davies, Oakeley  
slab-maker, was presented to the Prince of  
Wales, now Duke of Windsor, when he  
visited Blaenau Ffestiniog in 1923.*

**Ebill plwg** : Drill used in conjunction with the  
plug and feathers.

**Echel** : Axle.

**Enbyd** : The warning shout given before an  
explosive charge is fired.

**'Fall'** : Fall of rock.



**Fan** : Ornamental fan made of slate (illustrated).  
**Ffeiar** : An explosion.  
**Ffeil** : File.  
**Ffelos** : The fourth quality slates.  
**Ffelo mws** : The lowest quality—a term not now used.  
**Ffens** : Fence.  
**Ffitar** : Fitter.  
**'Fitting shop.'**  
**Ffiws** : Fuse.  
**Fflags** : Slabs (slate).  
**Fflei gang** : Gang hastily assembled to do a quick job.  
**Fflewyn** : Flake. *Pl.* **Fflawia**.  
**Fflodiart** : Flood gate.  
**Ffolt** : Geological fault.  
**Ffon bren** : Circular piece of wood for placing explosives in a shot-hole ; a wooden rammer.  
**Ffordd** : Tram-road or rail-track.  
**Ffordd lawn** : Tram-road for loaded vehicles only.  
**Ffordd wâg** : Tram-road for empty vehicles only.  
**Ffordd drwodd** : Passage cleared through—usually through debris.  
**Fforddolio** : Platelaying.  
**Fforddoliwr** : Platelayer.  
**Ffôs** : Channel.  
**Ffosio, torri ffôs** : Cutting a channel with a hammer and special chisel on the end of a slate block for the purpose of pillaring it.  
**Ffôs rwbel** : That place in the mill alongside the tram-road where waste is thrown.



*"Gefail gaps"—the crimping pincers used to attach a detonator cap to a fuse.*

**Ffôs ddwr** : Water channel.  
**Ffustion** : Fustian.  
**Ffynd bach** : Form of saving club for holidays, etc., run and managed by the men themselves.  
**"Fish plates."**  
**"Fly wheel."**  
**Gaddo hi** : Threatening promise to make things hum.  
**Gafael** : Grasp, grip.  
**Gafael cynta'r ochor rydd** : Slate next to the "free side" cut, sometimes damaged by explosive.  
**Gafael trosol** : Good leverage grip with a crowbar.  
**Ail afael** : Taking a second grip.  
**Mewn gafael** : In gear ; at grips.  
**Yn ei afael** : In gear.

**"Gauge."**

**Gefail beipia'** : Pipe pincers.  
**Gefail gaps** : Detonator pincers.  
**Geidar** : A safeguard. An additional parallel rail on a curve.  
**Gêr** : Gear, tackle.  
**Gloddfa Ganol** : Middle quarry.  
**G'neud cyflog** : Making (good) wages.  
**G'neud wagan** : Fitting pieces of slate around a waggon to get a bigger load.  
**I g'neud hi** : Having done well—or badly. Term used to suit circumstances.  
**Go'** : Blacksmith.  
**Gordd** : Sledge hammer ; mallet.  
**Gordd holsti** : Splitting mallet of wood bound with metal rings.  
**Gordd fforddoliwr** : Platelayer's sledge hammer.  
**Gorffan cerrig** : To finish the requisite number of slates to complete a quarry hundred, half or quarter.  
**Gorfadd ar ei chefn hi** : Idling, slacking.  
**Eu cael nhw i orfadd** : Stacking slates properly and tidily in the quarry.  
**Gosod** : To let, i.e., to fix and agree terms on which wages are earned.  
**Gosodiad** : A letting.  
**Graen** : Grain, lustre.  
**Grant** : A contract having failed to make the anticipated wages, a certain amount may be added to attain a higher figure ; this amount is called "a grant."  
**Grisia'** : Steps or stairs.  
**Gwaedu** : Bleeding, testing or starting. When the first block of slate is being taken from a very large one it is referred to as "bleeding" the block, "Gwaedu'r plÿg."  
**Gwaelod inclen** : Foot or bottom of an incline.  
**Gwaelod y gwaith** : Bottom of the mine.  
**Gwaith** : Work.  
**Mae 'na waith ynddyn' nhw** : A reference to good workable slate.  
**Gwasg** : Pressure or squeeze. Slate rock becomes "difficult" when subject to over-pressure, especially in the mine.  
**Gwegian** : Tottering. The condition of a mass of rock before its fall.  
**Gweithio wrth y dydd** : On the day rate.  
**Gwenithfaen (Gw'nithfaen)** : Hard rock overlying the slate beds.  
**Gwerthyd** : Spindle or axle.  
**Gwinedd** : Waggon flanges.  
**Gwniad** : Joint, often with quartz material in it.  
**Gwtar** : Gutter. A derogatory term for a poor bargain or chamber.  
**Gwyneb** : Rock face.  
**Gwynt** : Rock is tapped with a hammer for the tell-tale hollow sound. If it sounds hollow it is said "mae 'na wynt yna."  
**Gwynt hollt** : Not perhaps a true cleavage—it may have been formed by something else.  
**Gwythien (gwithan)** : Vein or bar across a slate. Many of these are identified by quite colourful names.  
**Gyrru** : To drive.  
**Gyrru lefal** : Driving a level (tunnel).  
**Gyrru ffôs** : Cutting a channel.



**Gyrru arni** : Working hard—driving.  
**Gyrru rwff** : Driving a roof-tunnel.  
**Gyrru bwrdd yn ol** : Pushing or prising back the saw table.  
**"Half hitch."**  
**Handlan craen** : Turning handle of a hand-crane.  
**Hannar** : Half—a slatemaker's reference to half a hundred slates.  
**Hannar stem** : Half a day.  
**Hegal** : Leg—usually refers to a crane-leg.  
**Hegla' craen** : Crane legs.  
**Hel (casglu)** : Collecting.  
**Hel clytia'** : Collecting or gathering blocks of slate.  
**Hel i lawr** : Cleaning or clearing the loose pieces from the top of the rock face.  
**Hel stemia'** : Time-keeper's job.  
**Helmet.**  
**Hen lygad** : Old vein—possibly the first bed of slate worked in the district.  
**Hetar** : Triangular shape.  
**Hetri** : Head cross-piece of a "frame" of timbers underground.  
**Hitar** : Electric heater.  
**Hô** : Rest or breathing space.  
**Hogi** : Sharpening.  
**Hogwr** : Sharpener—usually of saws.  
**Holland** : Quarry opened by Samuel Holland ; the upper quarry.  
**Hollt** : Cleavage.  
**Hollti** : Cleaving or splitting.  
**Holltwr** : Slate splitter.  
**Hollt dda** : Good cleavage.  
**Hollt ddrwg** : Bad cleavage.  
**Hollt un ochor** : One-side cleavage—a difficult one.  
**Hollt dyn** : Tight cleavage—another difficult one.  
**Hollt fêr** : Block of slate may have one face which is not naturally split but which may be a joint not on the cleavage plane. That block has a "hollt fêr."  
**Hollt fel sibols** : Cleavage like young onions : A very good one.  
**Hwtar** : Hooter.  
**Hwyllo** : Wheeling.  
**Hwylwr** : Man who wheels or pushes vehicles along.  
**Hyd** : Certain length of slate rock—usually about six feet.  
**'Hyd y pum' w'ithan** : That length which contains the "five veins."  
**Hyd mawr** : Another particular length in the old vein.  
**Inclen** : Incline.  
**Injian** : Engine or machine ; also a slate-making mill.  
**Injian naddu** : Cutting or dressing machine for shaping slates after they are split.  
**Injian hogi** : Saw sharpening machine.  
**Injian dradl** : Foot operated dressing machine.  
**Injian dyllu** : Rock drilling machine.  
**Injian fawr** : Large rock drilling machine—mainly used for channelling.  
**Injian K** : Building where the K-incline (trunk) motor is housed.  
**Injian bach** : Locomotive, steam or diesel.  
**Injian fflags** : Slate-slab making mill.

**Injian newydd** : The new mill.  
**Irad** : Grease.  
**Iro** : To grease.  
**Isrif** : Minimum guaranteed day-wage.  
**Jermon** : Journeyman.  
**Jim crow** : Platelayer's rail-bending implement.  
**Jini** : Pseudo—affectionate term for a quarry waggon.  
**Joci** : Small block of slate loaded on a larger block for transport from mine to mill.  
**Jygyn** : Small load—usually of rubble.  
**Jympar** : Before pneumatic machines, vertical shot holes were drilled with six foot long steel drills, by hand-operated down and up action, hence "jumper."  
**Labrwr** : Labourer.  
**Labro** : To labour.  
**Ladi** : Rock drill similar to the jumper, but longer.  
**Ladis** : General term for 16 in. long slates—Ladies.  
**Ladis wyth** : 16in. x 8in. slates'  
**Ladis naw** : 16in. x 9in. slates.  
**Ladis deg** : 16in. x 10in. slates.  
**Ladis bach** : 14in. x 8in. slates.  
**Ladis bach culion** : 14in. x 7in. slates.  
**Lamp** : Lamp. An underground official may be referred to as "the lamp."  
**Lamp fawr** : Inspection lamp.  
**Landing** : Top of an incline.  
**Lantarn** : Lantern.  
**Lefal** : Level or tunnel.  
**Lefal ddwr** : Water drainage tunnel.  
**Lefal goed** : Timbered level or tunnel.  
**Lefal meinners** : Tunnel where miners work—generally on development or exploratory work.



*Platelayer William Llewelyn Owen demonstrates the use of the "Jim Crow," the piece of equipment employed for bending rails.*





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*This hand-railed zig-zag stairway—"Grisia" to quarrymen—links K and L floors of the Oakeley mine. Built with slate slabs of course, it typifies other stairways connecting working levels away from the central inclines.*



- Limpin** : Linch-pin. A pin to hold a wheel on its axle.
- Wedi colli limpín** : Is used to describe anyone who has lost his temper and cannot control himself—like a wheel that has lost its linch-pin.
- Ling** : Link.
- Ling 'gorad** : Open-end link.
- Lindys** : Parasites. All those not directly concerned in actual production are thus termed—a most unfair description.
- Liwt, ar ei liwt ei hun** : On his own behalf.
- "Loom"** : Water storage place underground.
- London iorcs** : Strap or string tied over the trousers below the knees.
- Lorio** : To lower.
- Luro** : Fairly large lump of rock regarded as worthless for slate-making.
- Lwmp** : Lump ; **fel lwmp oddiwrth feiar** : A particularly shapeless lump of slate sent to the mill—like a lump straight from a blast.
- Llanast** : Disorder, mess.
- Llawr** : Floor.
- Llawr agor** : Chamber floor.
- Llechan** : A slate.
- Llechan gownt** : Slate on which the stock and despatch record is kept.
- Llechi sgwennu** : Writing slates.
- Llêd** : Width. In particular a width of 14in. or 12in., which are the standards aimed at by the rockman.
- Lledu** : Widening. That part of the work done by miners after the initial roof-tunnelling of a chamber.
- Lletraws** : Oblique.
- Lli'** : Saw.
- Lli' deimond** : Diamond saw (diamond impregnated).
- Llifio** : To saw.
- Ll'nau (glanhau)** : To clean, to clear up.
- Ll'nau eira** : To clear snow.
- Llwyth** : Load.
- Llwytho** : To load.
- Llwythwr(s)** : Loader(s) of finished slate.
- Llwyth ar 'i ben** : Waggon load of rubble that has tipped forward.
- Llwyth o glytia'** : Waggon load of blocks of slate.
- Llwyth o rwbâl** : Load of rubble.
- Llyffant** : Raised lump of harder rock in slate—the size of a frog's back.
- Llygad** : Bed of slate or vein.
- Llygad newydd** : New vein—the lowest slate bed in the geological formation.
- Llygad cefn, llygad coch** : Back vein. The top but one of the slate beds.
- Llygad mochyn** : The topmost bed—the North vein.
- Llygad bach** : The bed above the old vein—the narrow vein.
- Llygad iddi** : When a vehicle is de-railed and only one wheel off the track a short piece of rail is placed under the axle end and lifted with two crowbars. This operation is termed "rhoi llygad iddi."
- Llyncu, ydi o'n llyncu?** When a second charge of explosive is necessary and when the charge is actually put in, this question is asked.
- Llywydd** : Each "caban" (messroom) has its elected "Llywydd"—or chairman.
- Maen** : Stone—grinding stone.
- Mainc 'sglodion** : Bench on which split slates are placed before being dressed.
- Mainc gerrig** : Bench where finished slates are placed.
- "Make"** : Production.
- Malu baw** : Breaking up poor or worthless slate-making material.
- Manag fawd** : A thumb protective piece of rubber used when dressing slates.
- Marcio** : To mark.
- Marc pen trwyn** : A barbaric custom, now stopped, whereby boys on entering quarry employment were "initiated" by older boys by having their noses scratched by a piece of slate.
- Mashin** : The weighing machine.
- "Mediums"** : The second grade or quality of finished slates.
- Megryn**.
- Meinar** : Miner. The man who drives the level and other development work.
- Melfared** : Corduroy.
- Melin** : Mill.
- Menyg naddu** : Hand protective pieces of rubber used while dressing slates.
- Milgi** : Very short rail fitted to fill in a gap in a rail sometimes.
- Miniar** : Kind of chisel.
- Mis 'Dolig** : Pre-Christmas quarry month.
- Mis Bank Holiday** : Pre annual holiday month. (Both these are usually the best months of the year for production and wages.)
- Mis pump** : Once every four or five years a five-week month is necessary to come into line.
- Gwynab fel mis pump** : Long face.
- "Miss cue"** : When a hand is hit instead of the chisel.
- Modrwy** : Ring that keeps the "plug and feathers" together.
- Moelyn** : Kind of chisel.
- Mwrthwl** : Hammer.
- Mownti** : Poundage—part of the wages system.
- Mwrw** : Three slates.
- Naddu** : To cut or dress slates to shape.
- Naddwr** : Slate-dresser.
- Naddu at beda'r slap** : Cutting or dressing the four edges of a slate in four movements without missing one stroke of the revolving knife. The sign of an expert.
- Newid lli** : Changing the saw ; also an opportunity for a smoke or chat.
- Nog, nogyn** : Dognail.
- "North Spar"** : Whinstone dyke traversing the whole mine and found in all the beds of slate.
- Noson waith** : Work-a-day evening.
- Noson gwario'r cwawl** : Thursday evening, when all the money has been spent!



\*\*\*\*\*

# Holiday snaps competition

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**F**IRST PRIZE in our 1961 Holiday Snaps Competition goes to J. G. Jones (Oakeley) for this domestic interlude in which a hungry caller receives a titbit from Mrs. Jones and her grand-daughter.

★

In London's Trafalgar Square, William Llewelyn Owen (Oakeley) and his grandson, John, feeding the pigeons—a picture he sent in to win second prize.

★

John J. Williams (Oakeley) receives third prize for his snap of a familiar scene on Llandudno's promenade children fascinated by the Punch and Judy show.



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**M**R. AND MRS. JOHN OWEN are caretakers at Erw Fair, our despatch offices, and it is interesting to note that Mrs. Owen is continuing a family record of service at the

# between

house which has already extended nearly 60 years.

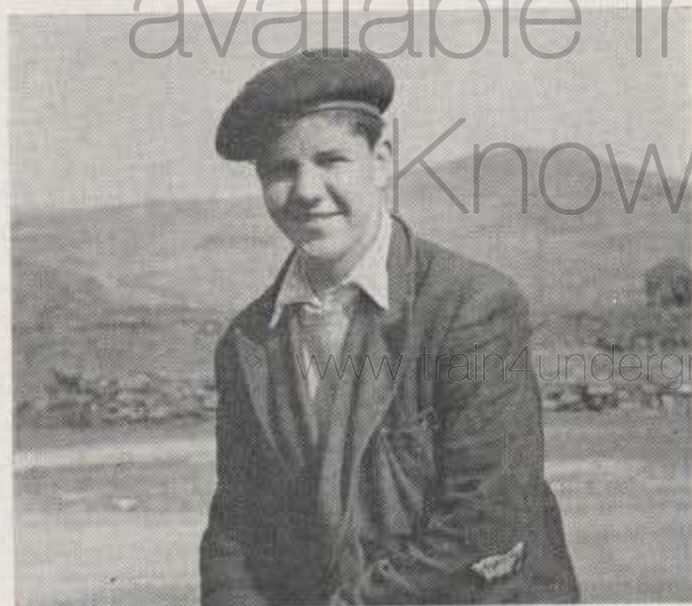
Mrs. Owen is the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Richard Davies, who were caretakers at Erw Fair from 1903 to 1926, and she and her husband took over the post from them. Mr. Davies was also caretaker at the Oakeley Quarry.

Before his retirement from the quarry Mr. Owen worked underground and on the surface at Oakeley and for a period was responsible for servicing the saws and the shafting. From 1951 he worked as a loader at the dispatch wharf and retired in 1958 after a total of 37 years service.

### Learning the craft

**V**OTTY apprentice slate-maker Richard David Davies, aged 18, who entered the quarry in December 1960, was joined earlier this year by his 16 years old brother Derek Westerman Davies (right). Derek, who is keenly interested in metalwork and woodwork, is an apprentice fitter.

Youngest apprentices at Oakeley are Merfyn Edwards, below left, and Frank Thomas. Both are 15 years old and both are learning the craft of the slate-maker.



available from Jon Knowles

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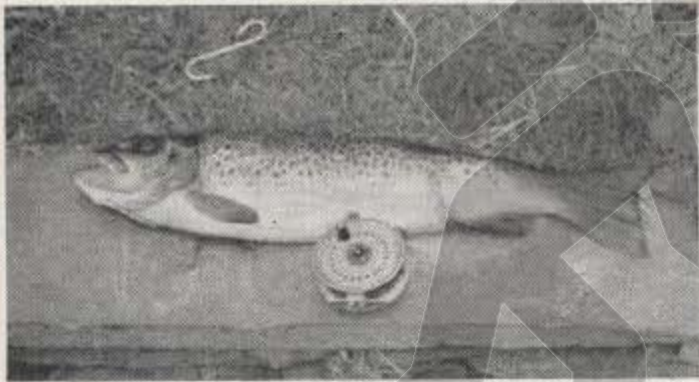
# ourselves

*Councillor from Votty*

## *Good start to his holiday*

**G**AMALLT LAKE yielded one of its biggest trout, a fine specimen weighing 4 lb. 12 oz., to flyfisher Robert Thomas Jones, slate-maker at Bonc Siafft, on the evening of the first day of the annual quarry holidays.

And to find out more about his catch he sent some of its scales to the Trout and Salmon Autopsy Service of Liverpool University's Zoology Department.



The report gave the trout's age as just over nine years, and added: "It seems to have grown well and is of about average weight for a trout of that age."

The fish rose to a large artificial sedge fly—"Rhwyfwr Cochddu"—fished wet, reports Robert Thomas Jones, secretary of the Cambrian Angling Association, who adds these statistics for his catch: Length 22½ inches, girth 11½ inches.



**V**OTTY clerk Dennis Roberts has added local government to his other active interests outside the quarry. He won a seat on the Blaenau Ffestiniog Urban Council in a by-election in June for a vacancy in Rhiw Ward, to become a councillor in the year which also marks his completion of 25 years service in the Votty Quarry office. He joined the staff on leaving school.

Treasurer of the Oakeley Club since its inception, Dennis Roberts has been treasurer for five years for the town's annual carnival, and he is the secretary and a deacon of Calfaria Baptist Chapel, Blaenau Ffestiniog. During the second world war he served with the R.A.O.C. at home and abroad.

## *Fun on the island*

*Among those who went away for holidays... Oakeley men enjoy a spot of fun in the Isle of Man.*





# Place for Welsh slate in Guildford Cathedral



Photo: Sydney W. Newbery

*The cathedral is shown in this drawing as it will appear when completed, the tower having still to be built.*

WELSH slate had a place in the building of Guildford Cathedral which was consecrated in May this year by the Bishop of Guildford, Dr. G. E. Reindorp, an occasion at which the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, Princess Margaret and her husband, Mr. Antony Armstrong-Jones (now Earl of Snowdon) were present.

Guildford Cathedral is only the second entirely new cathedral built on a new site consecrated in this country in the past 400 years—Liverpool Cathedral is the other—and our quarrymen will be

interested to know that Oakeley slates were used for the damp-proof courses below the nave, the foundation stone of which was laid by Princess Margaret.

The nave is the widest of any cathedral in England, except York Minster. It is 75 feet wide, while the length is 365 feet and the height to the reinforced concrete vaulting 65 feet.

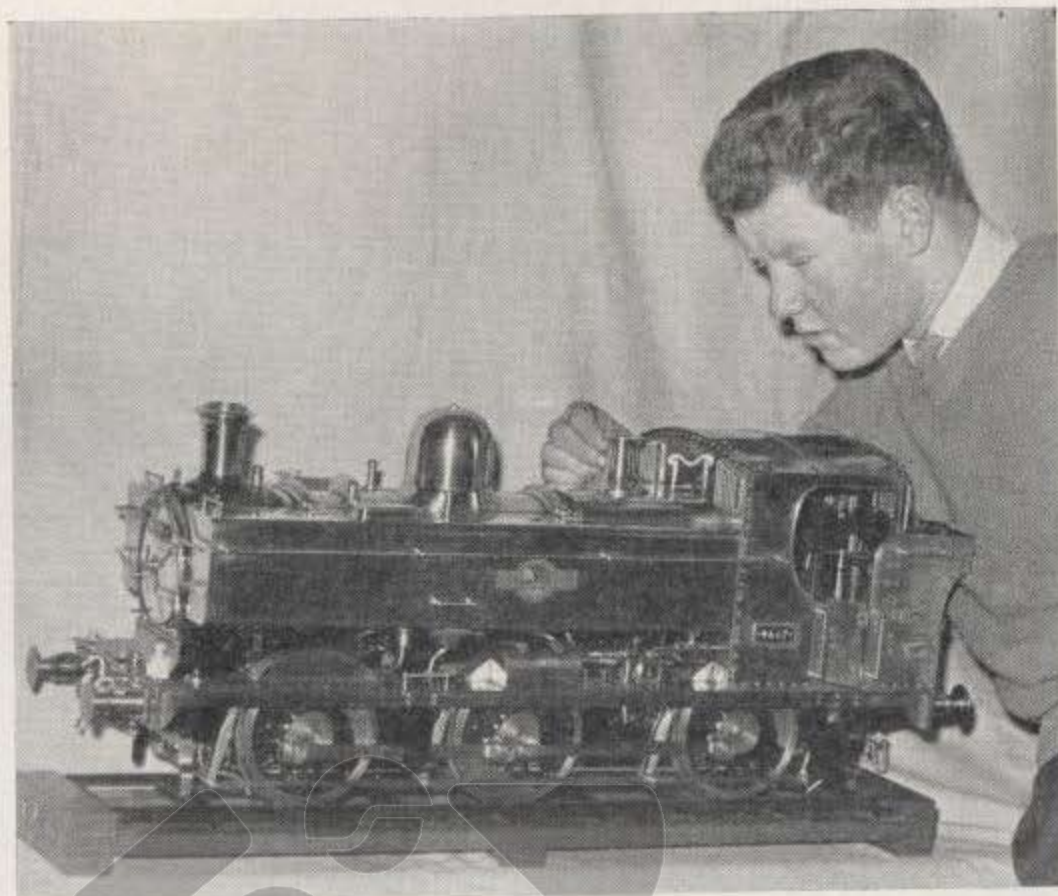
Sir Edward Maufe is the architect of the cathedral and the slates for the damp-course of the nave were supplied by our company through Hooper and Ashby Limited, of Guildford.



# Product of a quarryman's skill



*Raymond Cooke Thomas with the model engine he helped to build.*



This splendid scale model in five-inch gauge of an 0-6-0 pannier tank engine is the latest product of the skill of William John Williams, compressor attendant at Oakeley, whose model engineering hobby is well-known to his colleagues and in Blaenau Ffestiniog.

The model is a working replica of one of the engines which was used on the Bala—Blaenau Ffestiniog line, formerly a branch of the G.W.R., now closed.

In building it in his little workshop near his home in the Middle Quarry, William John Williams had the enthusiastic assistance of schoolboy Raymond Cooke Thomas, a pupil of the town's Ysgol Sir. It took them two years and seven months to complete their task.

Raymond is the son of Arthur Cooke Thomas, who works in the slab mill at Oakeley, and a brother of his, Donald, is a blacksmith there.

## Caban hynaf ei draddodiad

**M**AE Caban Bonc Siafft yn sicr o fod y caban hynaf ei draddodiad yn y chwarel, hon. Mae cof gennyf er yn hogyn ieuanc am y trafodaethau, y dadleuon a'r atreithiau ar faterion crefyddol a gwleidyddol. Byddai gwrando ar ambell i gymeriad gyda'i ddawn gellweirus a phroffoclyd yn anfon saeth i'r galon, a medrai y gwyr hyn yrru ias o euogrwydd yn aml arnom ni ieuentid a bery i ni deimlo rhyw fath o her i ddilyn eu camrau.

Credwn mae diogelwch fyddai yn wadu a cheisio portredu yr ysgarmes oedd gwleidyddol gan y byddai rhain yn pery i'r "mercury" yn y "thermometer" ferwi, yn aml mewn geiriau aflan ac annoeth.

Prin y byddai y darlun yn gyflawn heb gyfeirio at yr eisteddfodau blynyddol a gafwyd o gylch y Nadolig. Yn wir, anhawdd ydyw credu y ceid gwell safon mewn eisteddfodau lleol nac a gafwyd yn yr eisteddfodau hyn. Nid oedd ball ar baratoadau yr ymgeiswyr ac mae gan lawer i'r ymgeiswyr hyn, a oedd yn ddigon eiddil eu cymwysterau, lawer i ddiolch am eu cyfle yn eisteddfodau'r caban. Wrth gwrs, peidied neb a meddwl nad oedd gan y beirniad swm go dda o'r gras achubol hwnnw sydd mor brin, ac yr oedd ganddynt hefyd beth o'r trysor arall hwnnw—sef digrifwch. Yr oedd rhai ohonynt yn gallu bod yn dipyn o "wags." Gwrandewais fwy nag unwaith

*Parhad ar y dudalen nesaf*



# Bonc Goedan — 40 years ago



**O**AKEL'EY quarryman Richard Henry Jones lent this photograph of a group at Bonc Goedan in 1921 and *Caban* is also indebted to him for supplying a complete list of names.

*Seated (from left): Thomas Hughes, William J. Morris.*

*1st Row: John Hughes, Hugh Roberts, William Lewis, Robert Lewis, David Morris, Thomas Davies, Richard Owen, Robert Vaughan Lewis.*

*2nd. Row: Hugh Davies, Evan Jones, Robert Morris, William Lloyd Roberts, John Evans, David Gwilym Jones, Griffith Andreas Jones.*

*Back Row: John Roberts, Thomas Griffith Jones, Elias Jones, Richard Hughes, Richard H. Jones, Robert O. Jones, William Roberts (Maentwrog), William Owen, William Jones, Robert Williams.*

**"CABAN HYNAF"**—parhad ar ddatganwr yn cael ei godi i'r llwyfan heb ddim ond llais cryglyd, heb fedru nodyn o gerddoriaeth yn bloeddio ei lygaid o'i ben i geisio ennill y gamp, ac yn cael clod trwy ddealltwriaeth y beirniad a'r ymgeiswyr eraill.

Beth ydyw diddordebau y caban heddiw? Wedi camu'n fras drwy'r cyfnod dan sylw teg ydyw cymharu ein cyfnod heddiw a'r hyn a fu. Gweddus yw cyfaddef fod gwahaniaeth, ond nid gormodedd yw tystio fod yma lawer o bethau yn aros. Mae cyfnod y trafodaethau a'r anerchiadau wedi mynd. 'Does dim myfyrio a pharatoi heddiw. Ond mae'r eisteddfod yn fyw—er yn egwan.

O oedi yn fyfyriol a chymharu cyfnod doe a chyfnod heddiw gwelir yn glir iawn fod gwahaniaeth mawr. Er hynny, mae yna ddiddordeb a pharatoi. Er engrafft, ar ddiwedd dyddiau yr eisteddfod ddiwethaf gwahoddwyd Mr. Harry

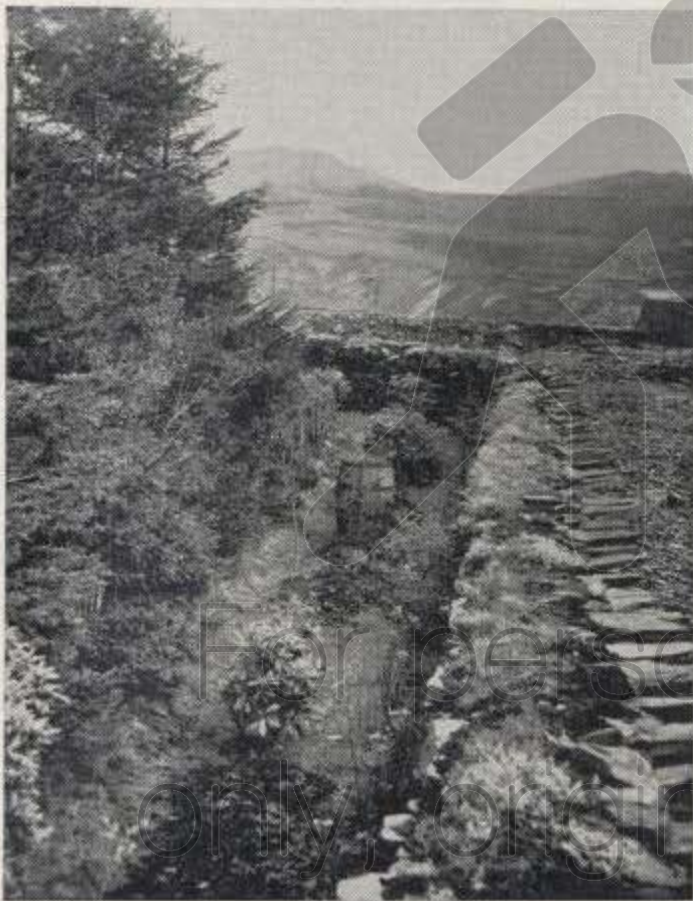
*I'r dudalen nesaf*



# GARDEN IN THE QUARRY

THE small plantation which gives the Oakeley office buildings a verdant distinction in a typical quarry landscape of slate, rock and bare mountain, has sometimes evoked puzzled glances from the uninitiated and intrigued forest officers visiting the quarry.

It was stony ground indeed when some 25 years ago the then manager embarked upon an experiment of growing trees with the dual purpose of providing a windbreak and decorative relief for the quarry's administrative headquarters.



*Our back cover picture shows the Oakeley plantation and here the camera looks into the garden.*

The initial problem of planting on the unpromising surface of Bonc Goedan was overcome by setting seedling trees, mainly spruce, in soil-filled barrels. Their growth was watched with interest, even outside the quarry precincts, and other trees were contributed by the Friends of Ffestiniog, a local society concerned with amenities, and similarly planted.

Cultivation of the plantation became a hobby, subsequently to be embraced by

others. A former cashier, Mr. Jones Williams, built around it a protective wall of slate, topped with projecting slates to prevent agile goats and sheep reaching the greenery.

In course of time, the growing trees burst the barrels, and with the addition of sand and a liberal application of ashes from various sources, the soil was built up so that the plantation, begun as a hopeful experiment, has also become a garden of sorts.

In recent years this has been the spare-time care of Llewelyn Owen, who performs a variety of jobs at Oakeley. From the garden have come strawberries, black currants and potatoes, while plants and flowers grown there include lupin, forget-me-not, white rock and parsley fern.

True, the trees are not as tall as they would be, grown in more fertile ground, but the man who planted them could hardly have imagined that his experiment would also produce a garden in the quarry.

## "CABAN HYNAF"—parhad

Parry i'r Caban i ymarfer ei ddawn fel darlithydd. Cafwyd anerchiad campus ar emynwyr Cymru—yn arbennig emynwyr yr un emyn. Ei faes oedd cymeriadau a galwedigaethau y cyfansoddwyr. Ac yr oedd yn wledd ac yn addysg inni ddeall eu hanawsterau yn ogystal a helynt a'r helbul fu yn eu bywyd. Soniai am ferch i swyddog ar long oedd yn emynydd, yr hon a esgynnodd drwy arholiadau i fod yn swyddog ei hunan ar fwrdd llong. Peth tra anghyffredin. Canwyd llawer o'r emynau yn ystod y ddarlith. Amcan yr ychydig sylwadau hyn am Gaban Bonc Siafft ydyw ceisio ennyn diddordeb y cabanau yn gyffredinol a meithrin diddordeb ein brodyr yn y cabanau. Onid trwy ymdrech a dyfalbarhad y bydd yn bosibl i adfer yn ôl unwaith eto y traddodiad gwerinol a hawliai chwarelwyr goleuedig Gogledd Cymru.

*Ysgrifennydd.*





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*Oakeley offices and the quarry "garden"*

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