

# CABAN

JANUARY, 1957



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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,  
4 OLD MITRE COURT, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

## *New Year Message*

from

SIR CHARLES R. A. OAKELEY, BART.

I and my fellow directors unfortunately cannot possibly get to know you all personally on our visits to Blaenau Ffestiniog, but the welfare of the quarries—and that means all who work at them—is continually before us.

A January issue of "Caban," therefore, provides a most welcome opportunity of sending you our very best wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

CHARLES OAKELEY

Chairman

● *Front Cover : Rural scene just off Blaenau Ffestiniog's main street.*

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"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.



*The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress try their hands at craftsmen's jobs. In the mill the Lord Mayor splits a slate and, in the mine, his daughter wields a hammer on a block of slate.*

## BIRMINGHAM EYES ON WELSH SLATE

WE were pleased to welcome to Oakeley in September the Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Alderman Ernest W. Apps, and members of the City Council. Although, in the words of the Lord Mayor the object of his visit was "to see other people's jobs" it had an underlying significance directly concerned with the possible use of Welsh slate for roofing large numbers of houses in the second largest city of Great Britain.

With the Lord Mayor, who was accompanied by the Lady Mayoress—his daughter, Mrs. John Collins,—were Councillor W. Milner,

chairman of the City Council's House Building Committee; Councillor Frank Price, chairman of the Public Works Committee, and Councillor Ivor Thomas, chairman of the Works Committee of the Birmingham water undertaking.

During the party's tour of the Oakeley workings the point emerged that Birmingham was faced with the problem of re-roofing many pre-war council houses. Councillor Thomas, the only Welshman on the City Council—he once worked in a Ffestiniog quarry—has been seeking to impress upon his colleagues the

virtues of Welsh slates and endeavouring to persuade them to specify slate for the re-roofing work.

To quote Councillor Thomas : "I have succeeded in bringing with me today the chairman of the house building and public works committees and I am hoping that as a result of this visit they will be impressed not only by the industry itself but by the value of slate as a long-life roofing material".

Pertinently observing that the value of any roof lay in the length of its life, Councillor Thomas expressed to *Caban* the opinion that the task of re-roofing 30,000 to 40,000 council houses in Birmingham would not now be necessary had the roofs originally been built of Welsh slate.

### *Merit and quality*

Following their tour of the Oakeley mine and mills, the Lord Mayor and his party were entertained to luncheon at the North Western Hotel, Blaenau Ffestiniog, where Mr. Harry Cutts, our Managing Director, said it had given him and his staff particular pleasure to show the operations which go to the making of the renowned Welsh slates.

Few commodities in any sphere of life had over a hundred years retained in their purpose the merits and quality of Welsh slate, said Mr. Cutts. This had been proved year in, year out, by architects and surveyors, and the evidence was to be found in many building schemes up and down the country for which Welsh

*Welcoming the civic party, Mr. Cutts greets the Lady Mayoress. On the right is the Lord Mayor, and on the left Councillors Milner, Thomas and Price.*



slate had been chosen.

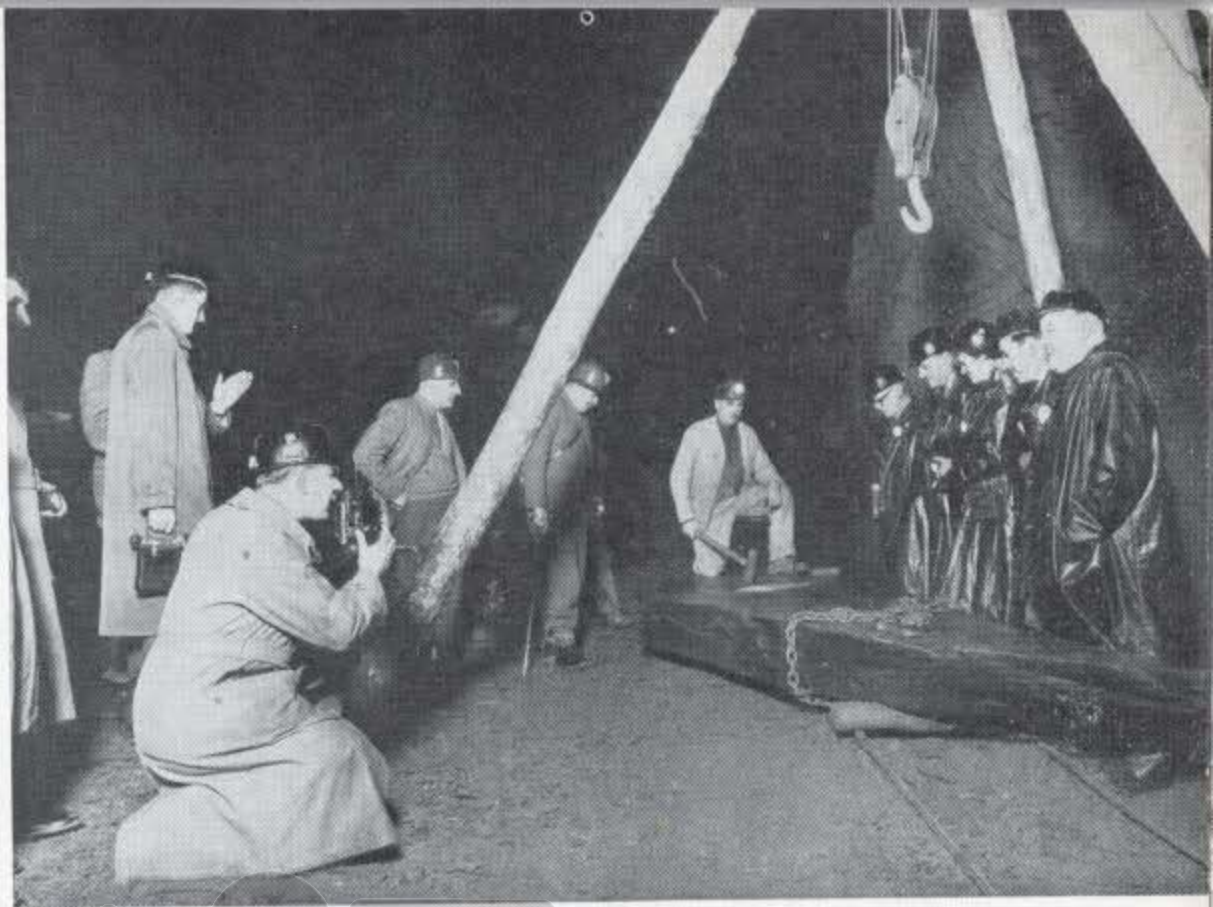
Some recent examples were at the New Towns at Basildon, Hatfield, Harlow and Aberdeen, and houses at Durham, Hexham, Pembroke, Dumfriesshire and various other places. Current work in London included housing contracts at Lambeth, West Ham and Acton; flats in Regent Square and old people's houses at Ruislip.

Welsh slates were also used in schools, churches and hospitals in Great Britain and Ireland, in various works for the Service Departments, and for several important jobs in Europe. "Welsh slates have such lasting qualities that when old buildings have been demolished the slates have been found to be in such good condition generally that they have been used over again", said Mr. Cutts.

### **Invitation**

Regret was expressed by Mr. Cutts that Sir Herbert Manzoni, the city surveyor of Birmingham, and Mr. Shepperd Fidler, the city architect, were unable to be present. "We would be delighted to welcome them to our quarries at any time", he said, and added that he was anxious to foster still greater interest by local authorities in the slate industry of Wales.

There was a particular welcome for Councillor Ivor Thomas "to



*A pillaring demonstration in P.8.*

his home town", and Mr. Cutts congratulated him on achieving the high office of councillor of the City of Birmingham.

### **Pleasant memories**

Responding to the welcome extended to the Lady Mayoress, his colleagues on the City Council and himself, the Lord Mayor expressed much pleasure at being shown round one of the slate quarries of Ffestiniog. They had seen the machinery at work in the mine and the mill and real craftsmen at their job. It had all left a most impressive picture in their minds. They would return to Birmingham with very pleasant memories of the people they had met and, the Lord Mayor said, he was sure that those whose duty it was to look into the merits of various building materials would very carefully examine their future policy in the light of what they had seen that day.

The luncheon party also included Councillor O. W. Roberts,

chairman of the Ffestiniog Urban District Council; Mr. D. O. Jones, Clerk of the Council; Mr. Gwilym Humphreys, manager of the Oakeley Quarry; Mr. Llewelyn Hughes, one of the rockmen who met the visitors underground, and Mr. Morris Roberts, an Oakeley slate maker.

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*"It is my personal wish that the result of our most interesting visit will eventually bring tangible results from the City and that your excellent slates will find their way to the thousands of roofs in Birmingham and to the new town we are eager to build".*

*This message was sent to Mr. Cutts by Councillor Ivor Thomas following his return to Birmingham.*

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Councillor Roberts was asked by the Lord Mayor to convey to his council the greetings and good wishes of the Birmingham City Council, and replied that he would be honoured to do so at his authority's next meeting.

Ffestiniog's problem was very different from that of Birmingham, said Councillor Roberts, who went on to say that conditions in the quarries had improved greatly since he left in 1942. While the Ffestiniog Council had done and would continue to do their best to attract additional industries to the

town they realised that slate quarrying was the basic industry of the district.

### **Contrast**

It is of interest to note that the previous day the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress had visited a coal mine at Keresley, and before going down had been "searched" for matches by a mine official. No such precautions, of course, were necessary when they and their party went underground into the "free atmosphere" of the Oakeley workings, under the guidance of Mr. Cutts and Mr. Humphreys.

Chambers on P Floor, nearly 1,000 ft. down, were chosen as the most conveniently reached by the Lady Mayoress and the city councillors. They wore the regulation helmets for the trip which, in contrast to the pit-cage descent of the previous day, was made by the steeply-inclining railway.

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### **Lively interest**

Underground the visitors saw most of the processes involved in extracting slate in the rough, and the "channelling" equipment which is the machinery chiefly employed to cut across the slate vein.

The Lady Mayoress showed the liveliest interest in the underground activities, insisting on seeing everything of consequence. In P 8, after watching Llewelyn Hughes and Morris Hughes splitting a block of slate, she indicated her desire to "try her hand". Lifting the hammer, the Lady Mayoress exclaimed: "Oh! it's



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*In a slate chamber, nearly 1,000 feet underground*

*Slate maker and City councillor — brothers Joseph Thomas (left) and Ivor Thomas meet at Oakeley.*



heavy”, but nevertheless she gave the chisel two or three good whacks and earned the approving smiles of the onlookers.

Before returning to the surface the party looked into P floor caban where, as on other floors underground, rockmen and other workmen gather for their mid-day meal. Above ground, the visitors spent some time in Bone Goedan Mill watching Robert G. Goodman splitting slates and John Griffith Hughes finishing them on the dressing machine. Here, following the earlier example of the Lady Mayoress, the Lord Mayor manipulated the slate maker's tools to produce a cleanly split slate.

### ***Slate fan for Lady Mayoress***

Before leaving Oakeley, the Lady Mayoress was presented with a slate fan as a souvenir of her visit. Similar mementos were later sent to Councillors Price and Milner. The privilege of making

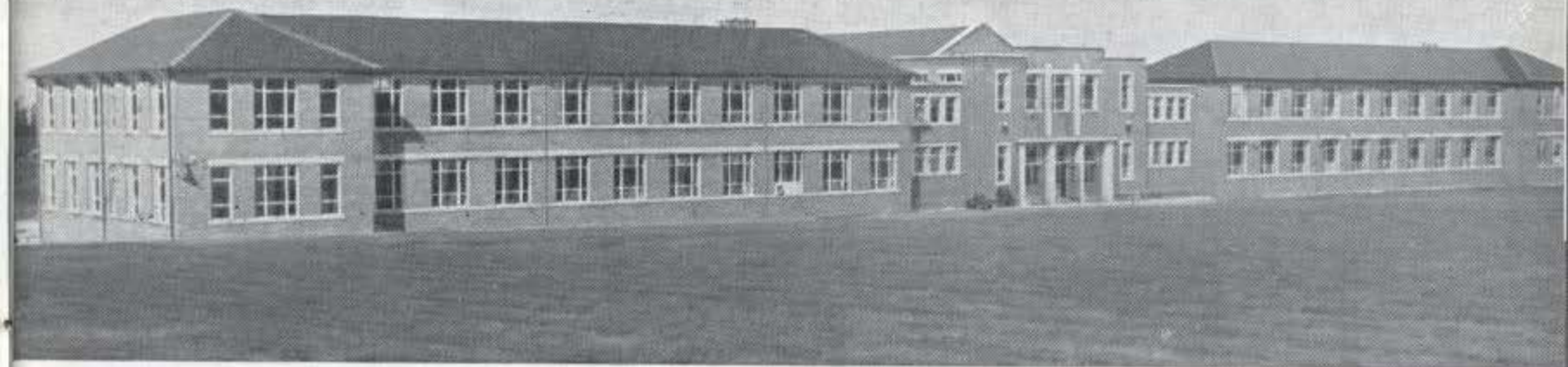
the presentation to the Lady Mayoress fell to Joseph Thomas, a slate maker who is a brother of Councillor Ivor Thomas. The brothers had met earlier in the day after a lapse of two years.

### ***In different spheres***

Councillor Thomas, who left Ffestiniog more than thirty years ago, is associated with the building trade in the Midlands and has been a member of the Birmingham City Council since 1945. His brother, Joseph, has worked at Oakeley since that year. A third brother is Mr. T. O. Thomas, conductor of the Oakeley Male Voice Choir.

After the luncheon at Ffestiniog the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress left for Cardiff to pay a civic visit to the capital of Wales. Councillors Price, Milner and Thomas stayed in Blaenau for an hour or two before returning to Birmingham.





South-east elevation of Ysgol Eilradd Clawdd Offa.

## Oakeley slate roofs college and school in Flintshire

**L**OCAL authorities up and down the country are among the largest users of Welsh slates and two examples of the many recent public works schemes mentioned in the previous article are illustrated in this page.

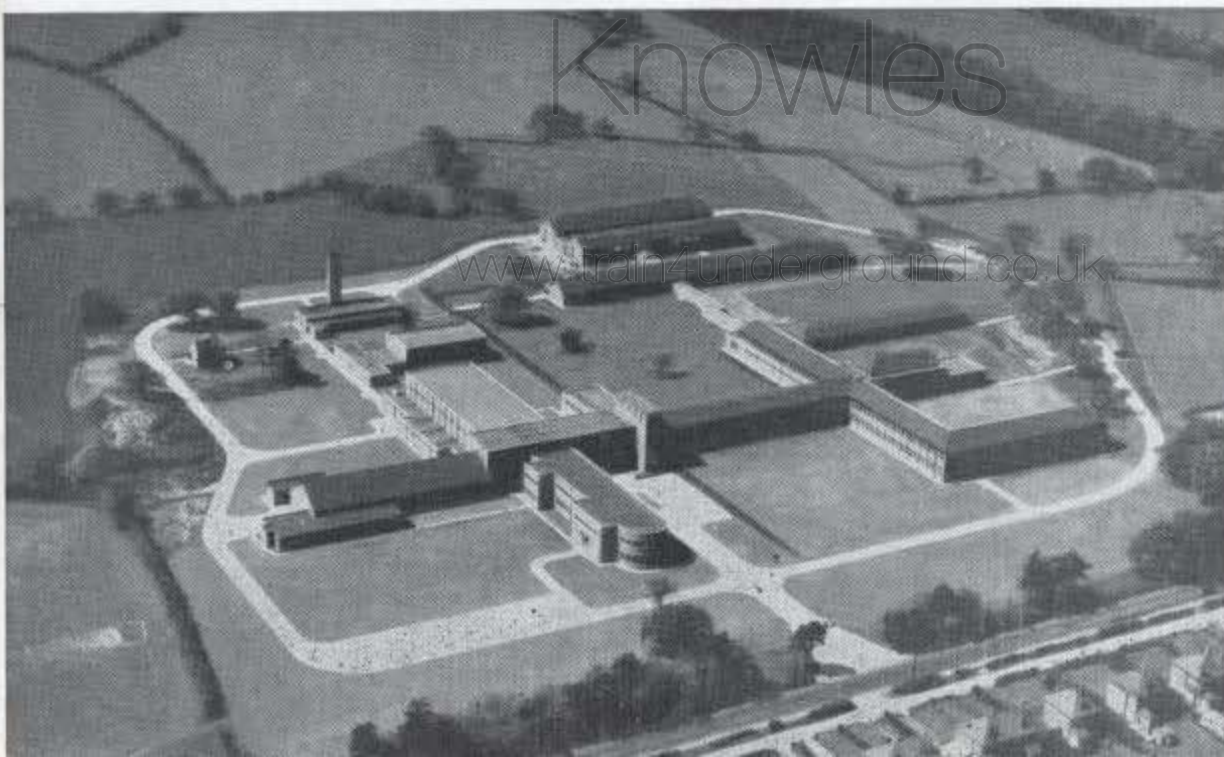
The photographs are of the new secondary modern school built by the Flintshire County Council at Prestatyn, and opened on August 30th, 1956, and the Flintshire Technical College near Connah's Quay (pictured below from the air).

Mr. W. Griffiths, L.R.I.B.A., the county architect, was responsible for both these fine new buildings and we are indebted to him for facilities to reproduce the photographs.

It is interesting to note that it is Mr. Griffiths' policy to use, when possible, materials manufactured or produced in North Wales in the construction of all buildings in the county.

Both the school and the college are roofed with Oakeley slates. In reference to the technical college, Mr. Griffiths notes that owing to the shortage of timber at the time the slates were fixed on steel grillage with rustless steel clips. The Manchester Slate Company were the sub-contractors.

Prestatyn's school, which was built at a cost of £150,000, and has accommodation for 500 children, has been given the Welsh name "Ysgol Eilradd Clawdd Offa" (Offa's Dyke) in accordance with the authority's policy of bestowing upon their schools names with historical associations.



Among those at the opening ceremony, which was performed by Alderman G. O. Williams, of Prestatyn, were Lord Macdonald of Gwaenysgor, Mr. Nigel Birch, Secretary of State for Air and

Continued on  
page 26

# From Underground Chamber to the "Roof of the World"

## *Welsh Slates in the making*

**F**OREGOING pages feature the extensive use of the world-famous Welsh slates as roofing material giving lasting protection against the weather, yet not many people outside the quarrying towns are familiar with the operations involved in winning slate from the subterranean mass of rock extending far below the surface of the earth.

### *Story in pictures*

In the following pages we have endeavoured to illustrate with a series of photographs the successive stages in the production of roofing slate—the attack on the "vein" between layers of igneous rock where it has lain for millions of years, the journey of the blocks from the stygian depths of the mine into daylight, and the making of the finished article in the mill on the surface.

The scene is set in the Votty mine—in Chamber 3, Floor M, some 500 feet below ground. In the picture opposite the figures of the rockmen are dwarfed by the vastness of the cavern in which they work. This chamber, one of the many, is in reality a chamber three floors high, developed as such by extending the working of M.3 through the floor that previously separated it from the two-floor chamber (L.3) immediately above.

From floor to roof the vertical height of M.3 is 170 feet, which makes it by far the highest and biggest chamber in the mine. Its "high level" section, reached from M floor by a short but steep incline built on the remaining M/L rock-face, and equipped with an air lift, has been worked for about five years and yields the finest quality "old vein".

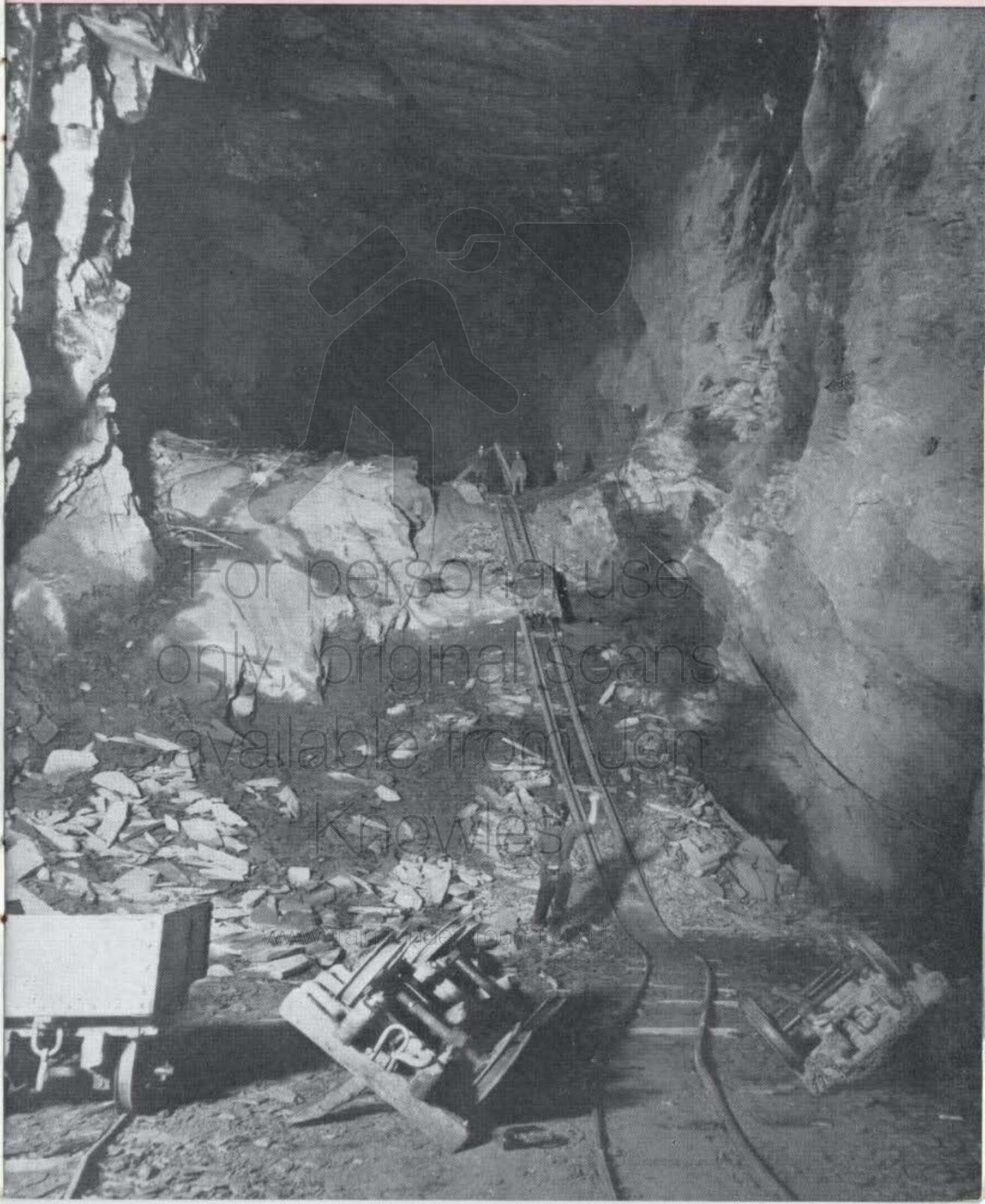
The senior rockman partner during this period, Owen Rowlands, has worked at M.3 for over ten years. The enlarged chamber he says, is "good" for a steady supply of "old vein" for some years yet. Owen Rowlands and his partner John Samuel Owen have spent their working lives in the quarries, the former for 45 years and the latter for 22 years.

### *Upward and outward*

Their "opposite numbers" in the mill—the surface partnership whose task it is to cut up the blocks and make the slates—were Richard David Jones and James Roberts. These four, and the rockmen's underground assistants, Edward Edwards and Gwilym Jones, are the men who mainly figure in this picture-story by which we follow the upward and outward journey of a block of slate bearing the symbol M.3, denoting the chamber where it originated.

# *Location of the Slate*

*Chamber 3, Floor M, 500 ft. down*



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Core of the mountain—the slate in situ. Rockmen get to grips with the slate in the mass. The scene of operations is the "high level" section of M3.



Preparing to extract a block from the rock-fall, a task made easier with air-winch and stout wire ropes.



A massive block of slate, weighing about ten tons, is reduced by splitting it across the vein.

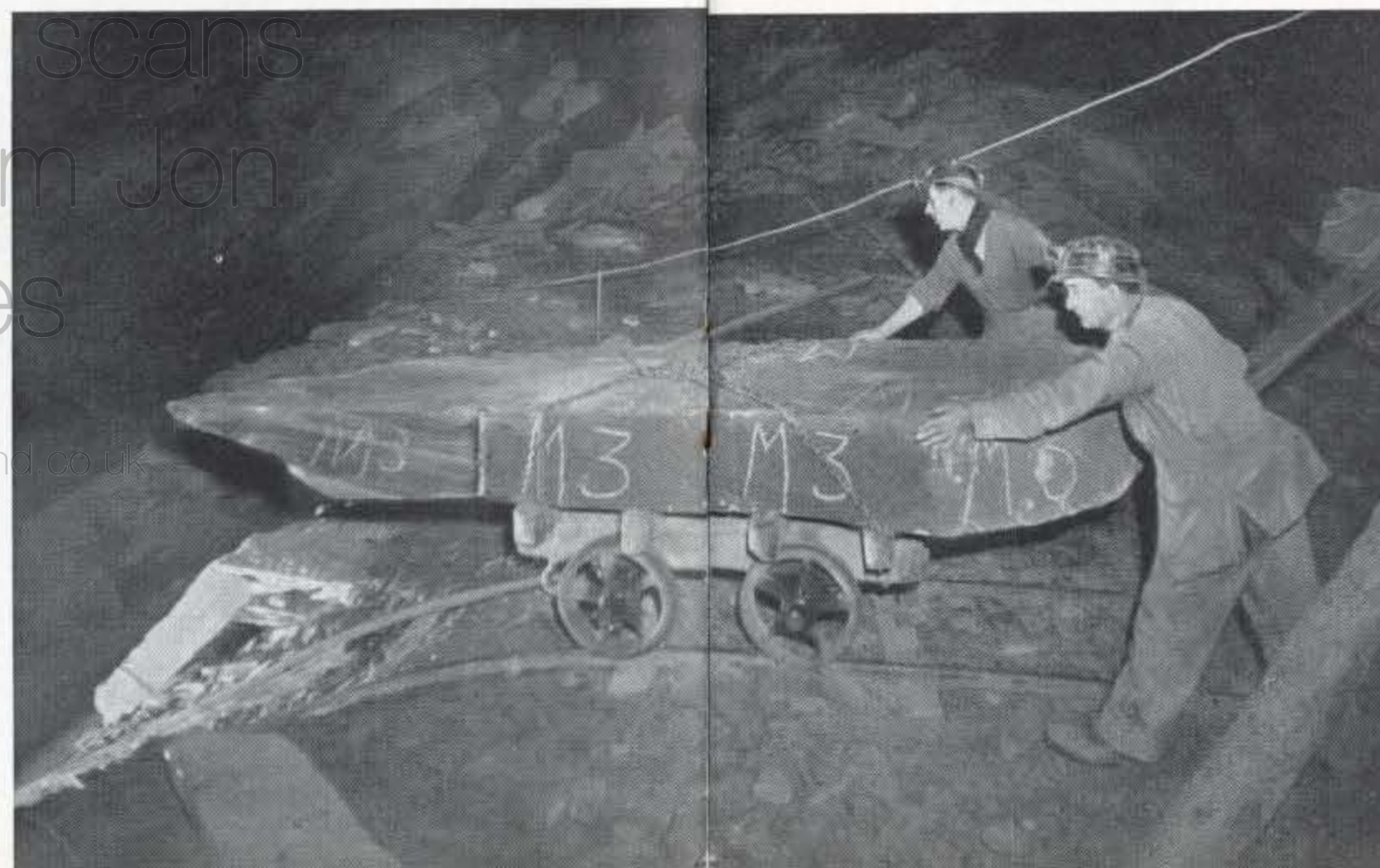
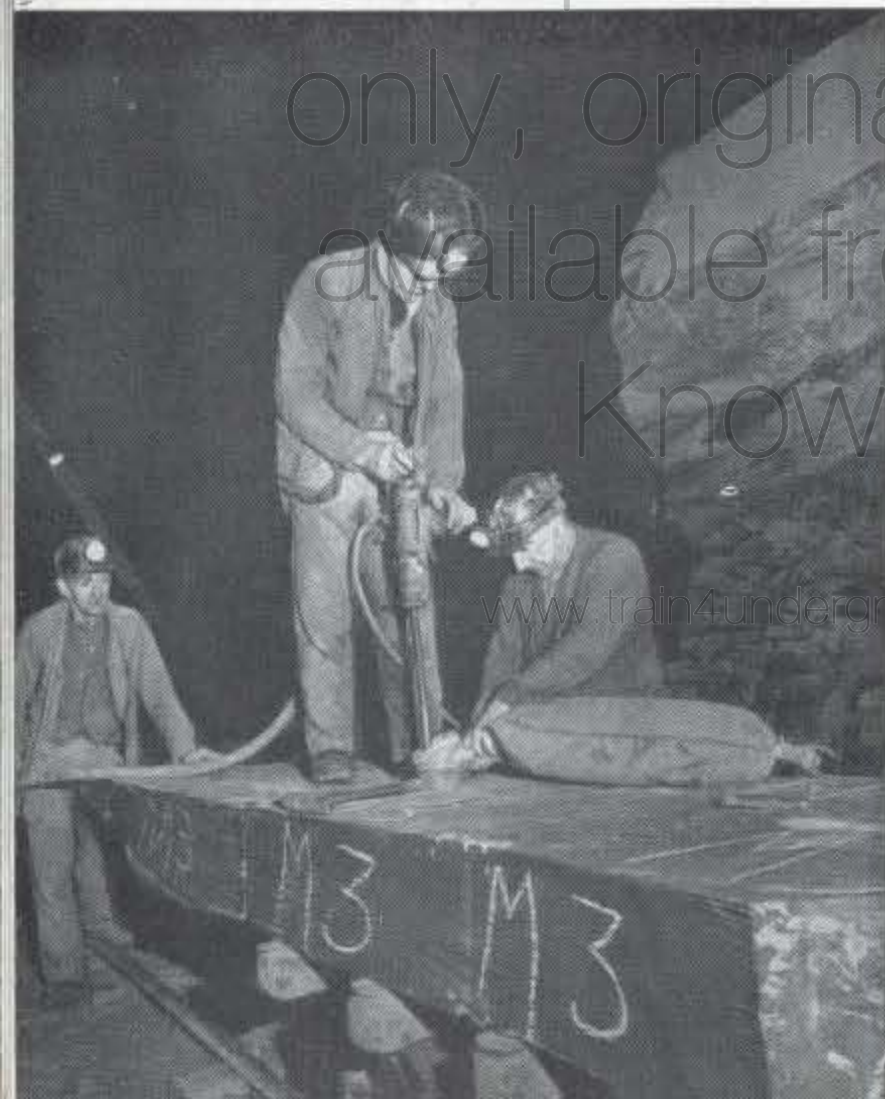


A block of manageable size, now identified by the partnership symbol M3, is hoisted by air-winch for loading on to a trolley to be run underneath.

A pillaring hole is drilled in readiness for the further reduction of the block by the surface partnership. Every particle of dust created by the drill is sucked away by the dust extraction unit.

Over the edge, controlled by the air-winch, goes the block on the first stage of its journey to the surface. This is the only place in the mine where a block of slate moves "down" an incline.

The trolley carrying the M3 block is pushed along the railway track through a short tunnel to the foot of the first upward haulage incline.

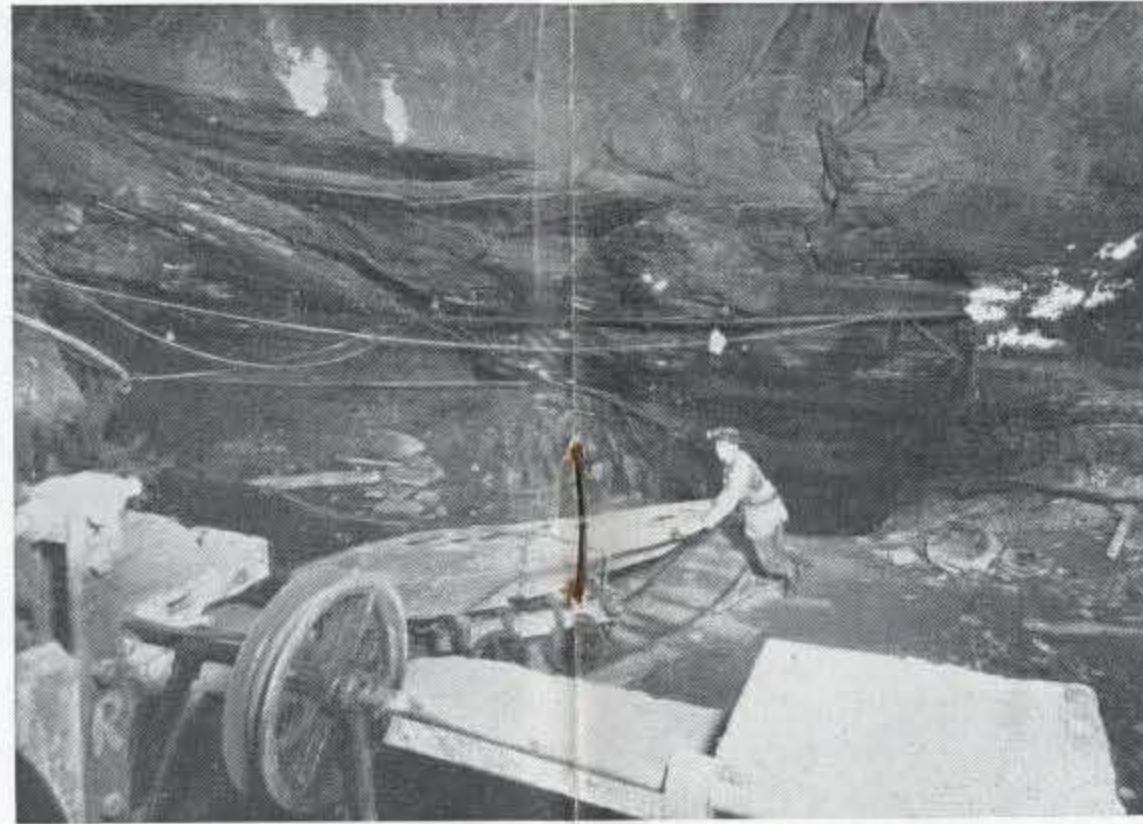


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*At the junction, the block is swung round on a turntable preparatory to hooking on to the power-drawn cable for haulage up the MK. incline*



*Emerging from the depths, our special block is turned into the level leading to the main incline and hitched on to a loco train.*



*Exposed to daylight after millions of years the block emerges from the mine in a train of trolleys.*

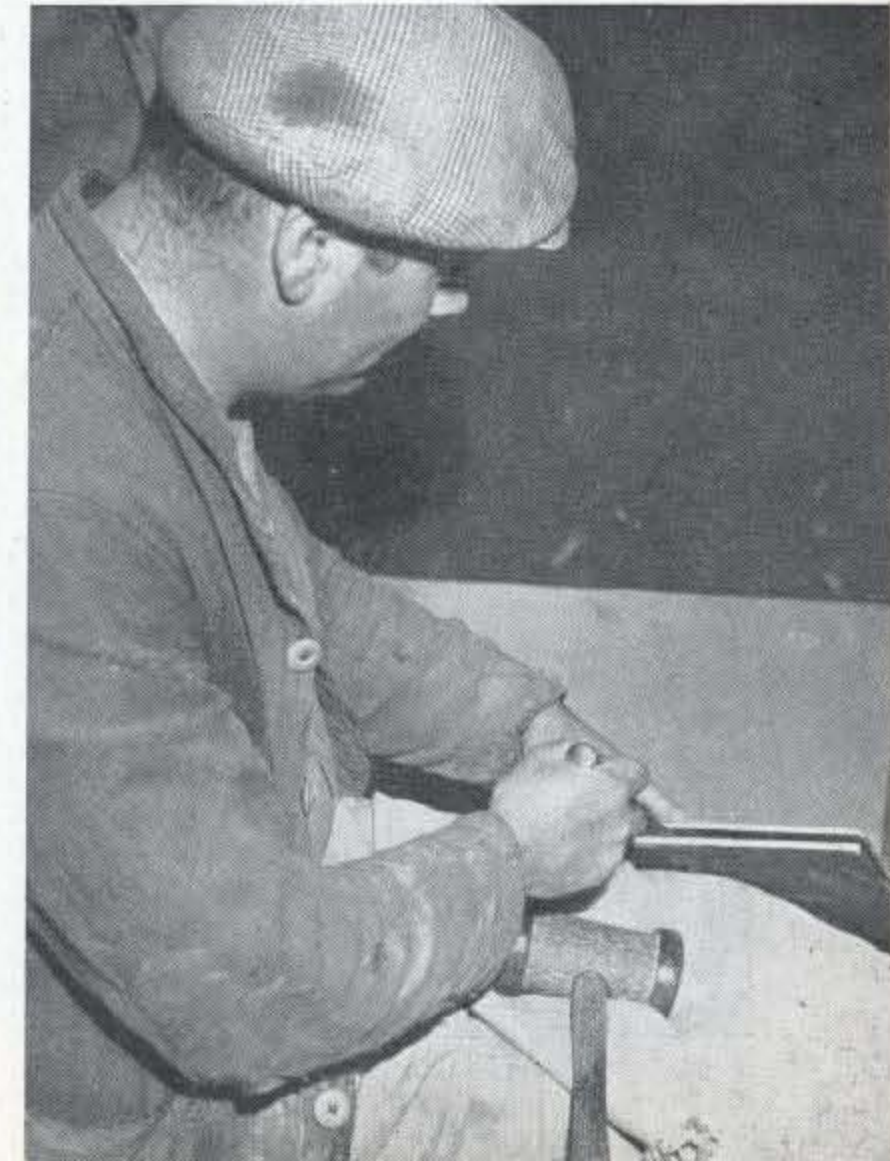
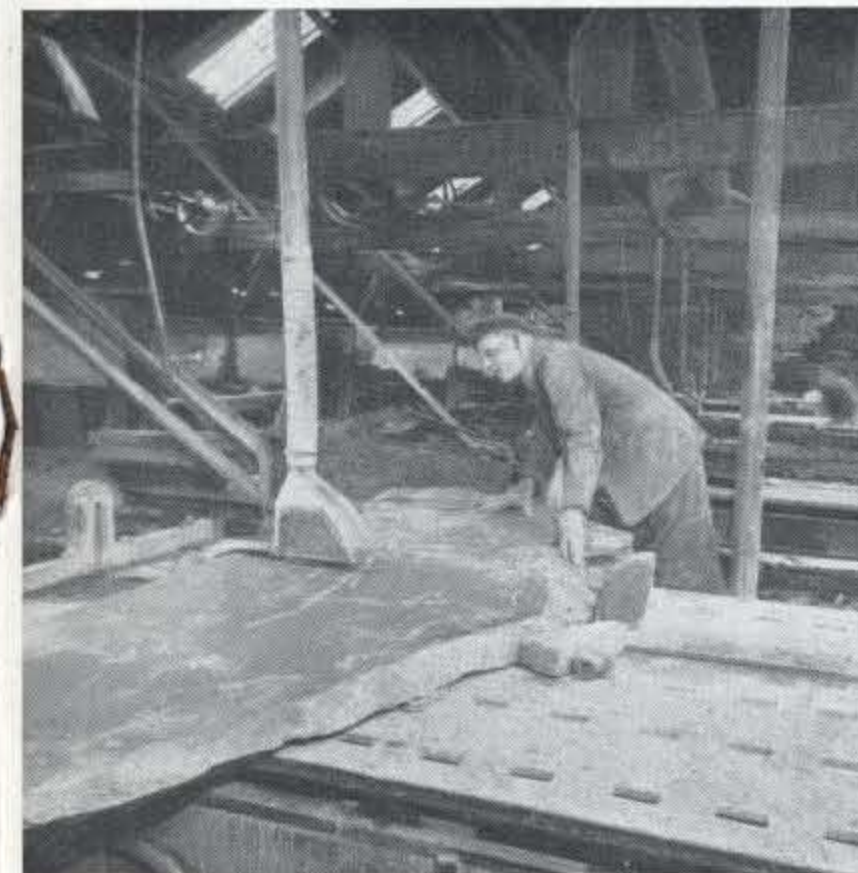
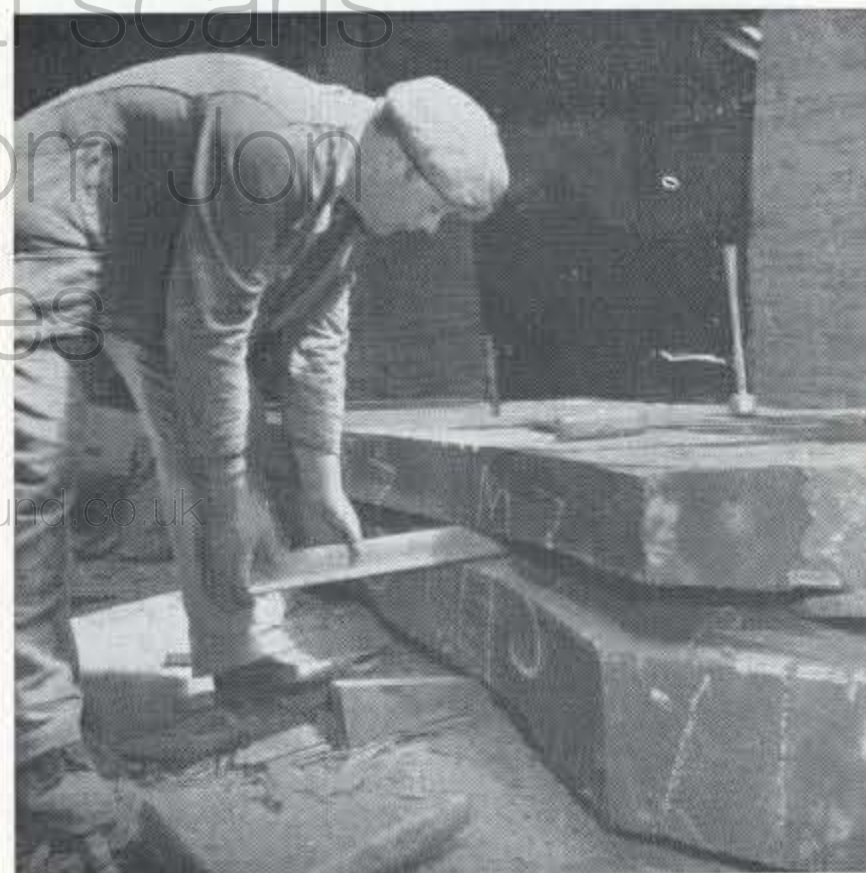
## FROM MINE TO MILL

*Our block moves off the weighbridge platform; it was entered in the records at 1 ton 17 cwt.*

*The rockmen's partners take over, and in the mill the block is reduced to convenient slabs by splitting it along the vein.*

*On the sawing table one of the slabs is cut up in a way that will yield the maximum number of slates with the minimum of waste.*

*A slab of slate goes from the saw table to the slate maker who, with chisel and mallet, expertly splits and re-splits it to yield a number of fine roofing slates of uniform thickness.*



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*Left:*

*The final stage is the dressing of the slate. Under the revolving blades the slate maker first secures a square edge and then trims the slate to its maximum possible measurement within the standard range of sizes, quickly determined by the slotted gauge fixed on the machine.*

*Right:*

*The finished product, stacked according to size, ready for transport to the despatch wharf*



*Below:*

*Despatch point. Scene at the wharf adjacent to the Blaenau Ffestiniog railway station as a consignment of slates is loaded. Collwyn Jones (left), wharf clerk, and William Ernest Griffiths, foreman, count the slate, and John Owen (Erw Fair) and Griffith Williams (right) load them into a waggon.*



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## ROCKMAN'S ADVENTUROUS JOURNEY



*The blizzard which hit North Wales on Christmas Day swept a Votty rockman, Robert Arthur Williams, into the news. An ambulance taking him from his home in Penrhyndeudraeth for an emergency appendicitis operation at Bangor was stopped by snow near Llanllyfni. Williams spent the night in a farmhouse and on Boxing Day an R.A.F. helicopter flew him to Bangor. Our picture shows the patient being carried from the aircraft after it had landed on the College sports ground.*

## CHRISTMAS FEATURE AT BLAENAU



*Christmas festivities at Blaenau Ffestiniog got off to a good start when one of the largest crowds seen in Diphwys Square watched Councillor O. W. Roberts, chairman of the Urban Council, switch on the lights of a decorated Christmas tree. The gift of Mrs. Inge, of Plas Tan-y-Bwlch, the 25-ft. tree was set up by the local branch of Toc H, represented at the lighting-up ceremony by Mr. Alun Williams.*



Oakeley "queen", Miss Olwen Jones, makes a presentation to Mrs. Cutts. This picture shows how tastefully the exhibition was arranged.



Mrs. S. E. Morgan shows coffee mat with which of



to Mr. Cutts a crocheted she has won a number prizes.



Some of the linen displayed is admired by Mrs. Harriet Jones (left) and Mrs. Ellen Roberts, who made the table lamp.



Eight years old Gwenda Roberts puts the finishing touches to an embroidered table mat. She is the daughter of Dennis Roberts, clerk at the Votty office

## OAKELEY HANDICRAFTS

See

## CLUB EXHIBITION

page 21



Mr. William Jones, slate maker at Votty, sets up his slate models—a fan and the unmistakable silhouette of Sir Winston Churchill.



Among the ladies who prepared the exhibition were (from left) Mrs. S. E. Morgan, Mrs. A. Owen, Mrs. R. Owen, Mrs. B. Hughes, Mrs. E. Jones, Mrs. D. Roberts and Miss Gwenda Jones.



Mrs. Emlyn Jones shows her tapestry work to Mrs. Cutts (left) and Mrs.



Gwilym Humphreys.



One of the finer details of a piece of tapestry is pointed out by Mr. William Jones to Mrs. A. Jones (left) and Mrs. J. Evans.



# Holiday Snaps Competition

## Prize-winners

OUR 1956 "Holiday Snaps" competition drew a good entry and there was so little to choose between the best two pictures that they were adjudged equal first. They were submitted by Robert Thomas Jones and Dan Jones, and each receives one guinea. Second prize of 15s. goes to Peter Owen, and the third of 7s. 6d. to John A. Jones.

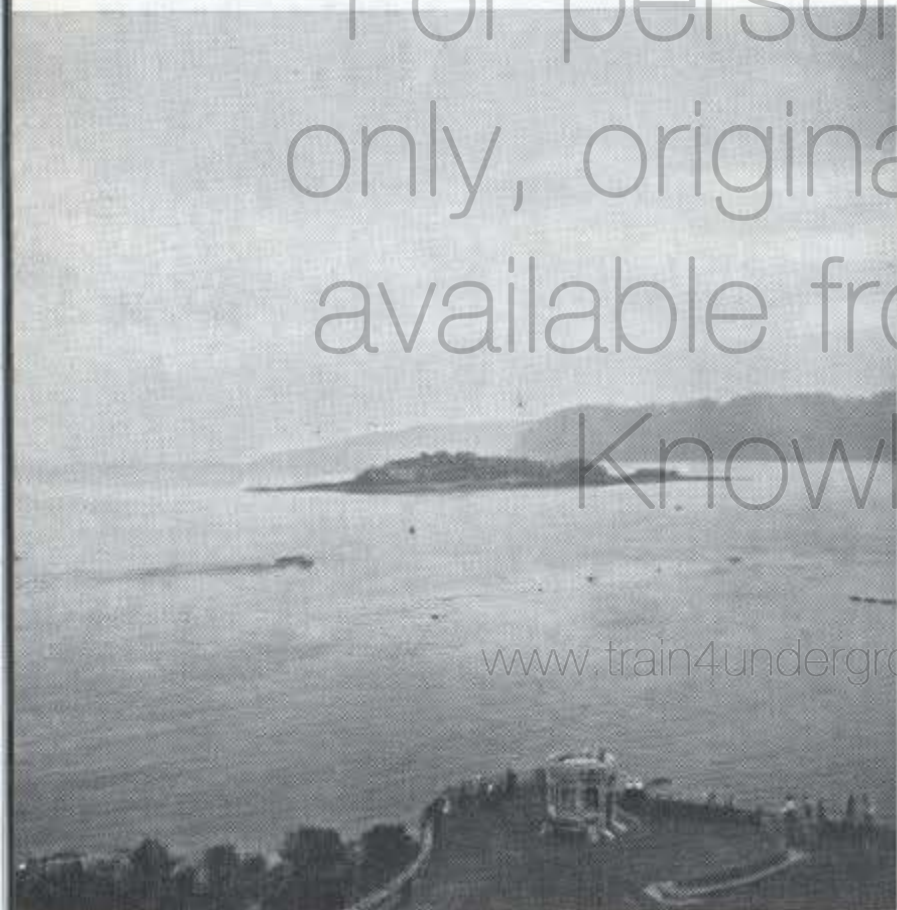


*This view of Drake's Island from Plymouth Hoe won second prize for Peter Owen.*



*By a tumbling stream near Dolwyddelan angler Meirion Ellis studies the prospects. This snap was Dan Jones' entry.*

*On a trip to the Isle of Man in the "St. Seiriol", John A. Jones snapped Isaac Williams, a retired rockman, at the wheel, and gained the third prize.*



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*A sunny day finds Robert Thomas Jones pursuing his favourite pastime at Llyn Gamallt.*



## *Handicrafts Exhibition*

**A**N enterprising venture of the Oakeley Club was a handicrafts exhibition which attracted entries enough almost to fill the club room and certainly make an impressive and attractive display.

Beautiful examples of embroidery, tapestry, crochet and needlework, basketry and other handiwork of ladies identified with the Oakeley and Votty Quarries were on view. In the main, the exhibition reflected feminine activities which may seem somewhat strange having regard to the variety of interesting hobbies pursued by quarrymen.

Among items which particularly captured the attention of visitors were a collection of souvenirs from all parts of

the world and a home-made eiderdown in lovely colours which was spread over the billiards table.

Mr. Harry Cutts, our Managing Director, opened the exhibition and remarked how impressed he was with the handiwork shown. The company, he said, were anxious to foster every activity within the club, and he expressed the hope that the exhibition would be the forerunner of many.

Mr. Cutts complimented Mr. Humphrey Lewis, chairman of the Oakeley Club, who presided, and was chiefly responsible for the venture, and remarked that if there were more willing workers like Mr. Lewis then the club would enjoy greater success.

# STUDIES IN EXPRESSION

## *Caban K, Oakeley*

**W**E present another series of individual snapshots, taken this time underground in Caban K at Oakeley. These pictures convey something of the cheerful spirit which prevails in the cabanau during the mid-day break. Our photographer's visit to Caban K was further enlivened by a song from 68 years-old John Roberts.

*Below. First row (from left): W. H. Edwards, Robert Goronwy Hughes, Hugh Jones, Emlyn Jones, Thomas Young and (above) John S. Jones.*

*Second row: William E. Jones, Evan James Evans, John Roberts, Alfred Hughes, Richard Jones.*

*Opposite page. First row: Elwyn Griffith, Ifor Jones, Glyn Williams, John Arthur Hughes.*

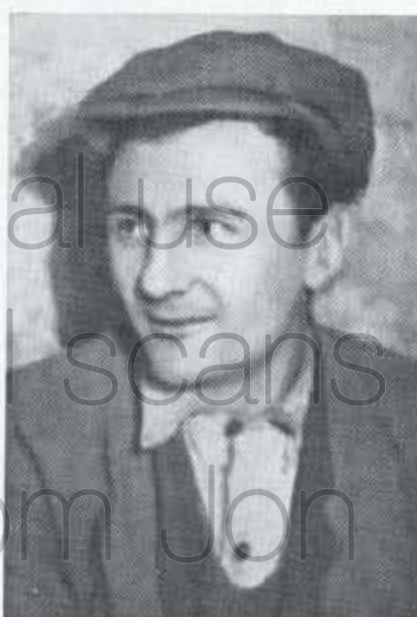
*Second row: John Williams, William H. Chart, Cadwaladr Jones, John Edryd Hughes.*

*Third row: Robert D. Hughes, Edward Edwards, Enoch Morris, John Edwin Hughes.*

*Fourth row: Bleddyn Williams, Robert Jones, Ellis O. Hughes, G. Orthin Roberts.*



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## Men of many parts

CULTURAL activities of our quarrymen are ably represented in the sphere of drama by David Griffith Griffiths, Oakeley Wharf manager, and Richard David Jones, Votty slate maker, who had the distinction of appearing at the national drama festival at Llangefni in October.

They were chosen after audition from about seventy amateur actors in North Wales for parts in the Welsh drama "Porth Ewin", an adaptation for the theatre of John Ellis Williams' radio play.

Both have made many successful appearances with the Blaenau Ffestiniog Drama Company with which Richard David Jones has been associated for nearly twenty years and David Griffith Griffiths since 1948.

This local company, which was started by Mr. John Ellis Williams, the noted Welsh author, playwright and producer, and now has Mr. W. D. Jones as producer, must be one of the busiest groups of amateur players in North Wales for, according to Mr. Griffiths, they give some forty to fifty performances during

## Between

the winter season. It is the company's proud boast that in the many competitions they have entered and, on occasion, met



David Griffith Griffiths



# Ourselves

the challenge of South Wales, Blaenau Ffestiniog have never been out of the first three places.



*Richard David Jones*

## *Oakeley Choir's new badge*

**M**OTIF of the attractive new badge of the Oakeley Male Voice Choir (reproduced below) is a crossed mallet and chisel—symbols of the quarryman's craft—worked in black on a white shield surrounded by laurel leaves. The name "Côr Meibion Oakeley" is picked out in gold thread within gold borders.

This distinctive badge, which has a dark red base, was designed by Mr. George Ellis, a member of the choir whose wife is the choir's accompanist. It adds a pleasing splash of colour to the new black blazers worn by the singers, with grey flannel trousers, white shirts and black ties—together a smart dress which has evoked complimentary remarks.

In November the choir, under their conductor Mr. T. O. Thomas, broadcast in the Welsh Home Service in the series "Ein Côr Ni". During the programme

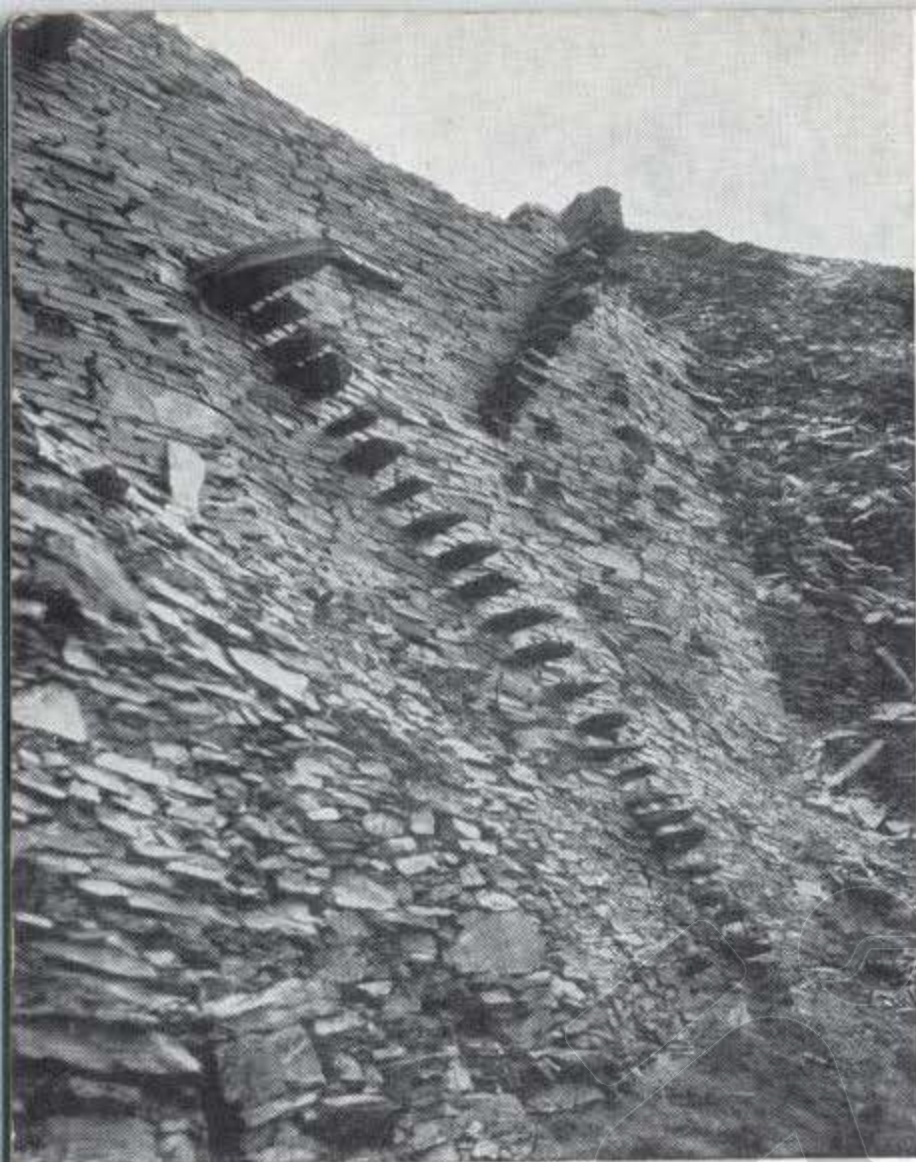


Dennis Roberts, Votty clerk, who is vice-chairman of the choir, and four of the singers from the Oakeley Quarry—Hugh Gwilym Jones, Joseph Thomas, Anthony Evans and William O. Williams—were heard in interviews with Ifan O. Williams, of the B.B.C., who presented the programme.

The concert, given before an invited audience at a Ffestiniog chapel vestry, was also recorded for transmission as a Welsh magazine feature in the B.B.C.'s Overseas Service. Letters received "back home" indicated that the broadcast was very well received by Welsh listeners in America.

## *Memorial at Dolawel*

**T**HIS old photograph received from William Jones, slate maker at Votty, shows the scene at Dolawel during the unveiling of the memorial to Oakeley quarrymen who made the supreme sacrifice in the 1914-18 war. The Oakeley Choir (left) sang at the service, accompanied by the Oakeley Silver Band, some of the members of which are to be seen to the right of the picture.



### *Slate stairway*

**A**N odd feature at Votty, reminiscent of some medieval structure, is this stairway of projecting slabs built into a high wall of slate near the entrance to the mine. This stairway was once used by quarrymen to reach the mountainside workings—but that was a very long time ago.

### **COLLEGE AND SCHOOL IN FLINTSHIRE**—Continued from page 9

*M.P. for West Flintshire, and Sir Wyn Wheldon of Prestatyn. Our company was represented by Mr. Gwilym Humphreys, the Oakeley manager, who was accompanied by Mrs. Humphreys.*

*The aerial view strikingly illustrates the spacious site and buildings of the new Technical College. Situated in a rapidly growing industrial area, the college is generously equipped to serve the diverse industries and trades already in existence or expected to be developed. Apart from lecture rooms, laboratories and workshops, the buildings include a splendid hall equipped for musical and dramatic performances, dining rooms, a library, gymnasium and common rooms.*

## **Our roving camera records...**

### *Gauge sticks*

**N**OW almost to be described as museum pieces, the gauge sticks seen here belonged to the late Humphrey Jones, widely known in Wales as Bryfdir, poet and National Eisteddfod adjudicator, who was a slate inspector at Oakeley for many years.



Bryfdir was probably the last inspector to carry a gauge stick which, at one time, was also used by quarrymen when dressing slates with a hand-knife. This work, of course, is now performed on machines in which are incorporated fixed gauges that automatically determine the size of the slates as they are dressed by the operator. In our picture, Idris Jones, an Oakeley inspector, demonstrates how the stick was used.

## Learners in the Craft



*Budding craftsmen at Oakeley—a group of apprentices whose terms of service range from a few weeks to a few months. They are (from left): Elwyn Evans (aged 16), Gareth Jones (15), Gwynfor Edwards (15), Edgar Jones (15) and Geraint Williams (16). Gwynfor, Gareth and Edgar are former pupils of the Blaenau Ffestiniog grammar school. All five are learning the craft of the slate maker. Edgar Jones works at Bonc Shafft and the other four at the Middle Quarry Mill.*

### Presentation

AFTER having been caretaker of the Oakeley Club since its inception, Mrs. H. M. Jones left at the end of November to reside with her daughter at Wrexham and, before her departure, she was presented with a gift from the Oakeley Choir in recognition of her particular work for them. Dennis Roberts, vice-chairman of the choir, who made the presentation, referred to Mrs. Jones as a staunch supporter of the choir, and his appreciative remarks were endorsed by several members. The new caretaker of the club is Mrs. Roberts, wife of John Gwilym Roberts, quarryman at Oakeley.

### Obituary

WE regret to record the death, which occurred suddenly on December 3rd, 1956, of Mr. Ifor Ll. Thomas, who was wharf manager for more than thirty years until his retirement. Our readers will recall that the previous issue of *Caban* contained an article describing Mr. Thomas' experiences during a visit he made to America in 1955.

#### OUR BACK COVER PICTURE

*A London artist, Miss L. Pullar, finds inspiration in a familiar scene—the slopes of Allt Fawr below which are the old surface workings of the Oakeley Quarry. Down in the hollow and almost at the foot of the perpendicular rock to the left is the cave-like entrance to the mine.*





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*"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder"*

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