

# CABAN

MAY, 1954



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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.,  
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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.

- Front Page: Caban "O", Oakeley (see News Exchange).
- Below: "N" Floor Personalities (see News Exchange).





# From Floor to Floor

## *The Lower Levels*

**I**N OUR INDUSTRY the way down is also the way ahead, though we must hasten to point out that in the literal interpretation the way down is not necessarily along the route, nor by the means shown in the accompanying photograph.

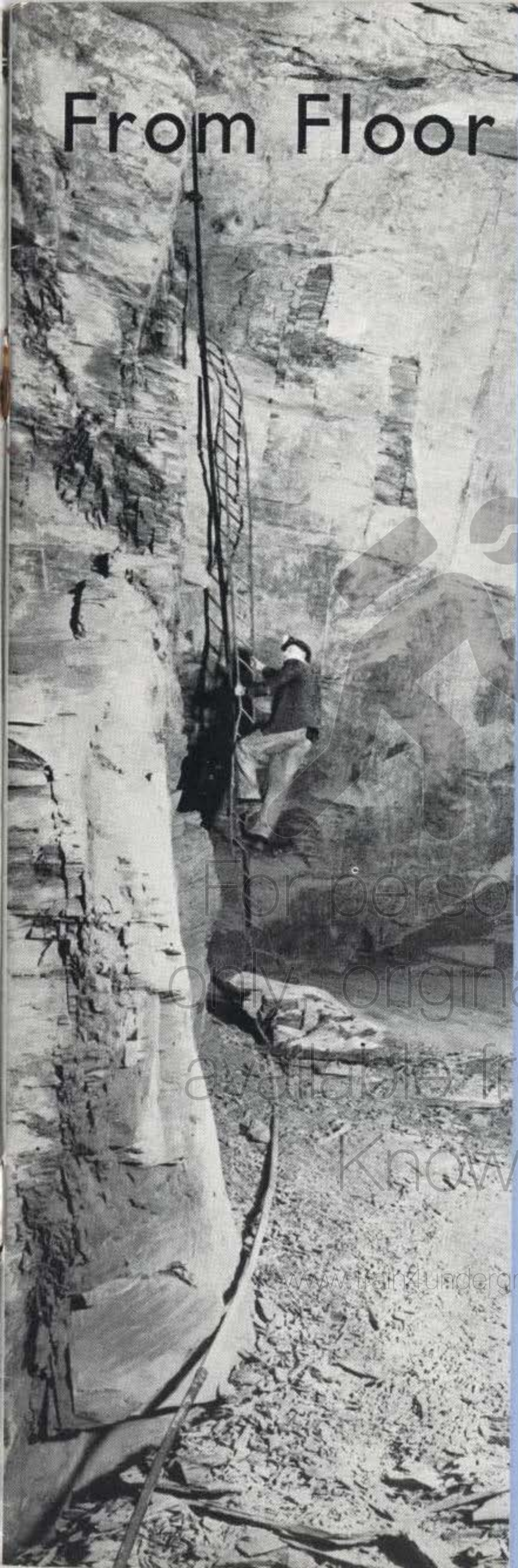
The picture on this page, showing Tom Roberts, a securer at Oakeley, confidently descending a wire-rope ladder from N to O floor, nevertheless has a bearing, as will be seen, on the all important factor governing events in our slate mines, which is, that we never rest in our pursuit of new fields of endeavour.

Tom Roberts, in fact, is using a temporary means of approach to and from a development zone to carry out routine inspection of installations essential to production and the safety of the mine.

The normal way down is shown in the striking picture on the back page of this issue, where it will be seen a giant staircase, zig-zagging down to a floor of a worked-out chamber, gives easy and comfortable access to the working places. The staircase route continues out of the picture down to O floor and reaches upwards to the main entrance level on K floor.

### *Delving Deeper*

Delving deeper into the middle distances in our review of the floors as they descend, the pattern





of new development becomes clearer with the certainty that slate-winning at Oakeley remains, truly, a cumulating long-term operation with a future potential none-the-less productive than have been the results of the immediate past.

The emphasis on new development cannot be avoided. The undermanagers, whose job is to bolster as well as sustain the regular flow of good blocks to the mills, live and move in the labyrinth underground in a kind of private world which, though physically shut in by massive surrounding walls, has its horizon so distant that it must be measured in years.

Being the men deputed to carry out the design of things they see not only that which is there, but all that which experience and

special knowledge assures them is to come. Attention must constantly be projected well ahead, and in most cases for years ahead, seeing through the blank bulk of a chamber wall to events and operations which will fructify when present day 'prentice hands will be fully experienced partners in the ancient craft of slate winning.

### ***Planned Progress***

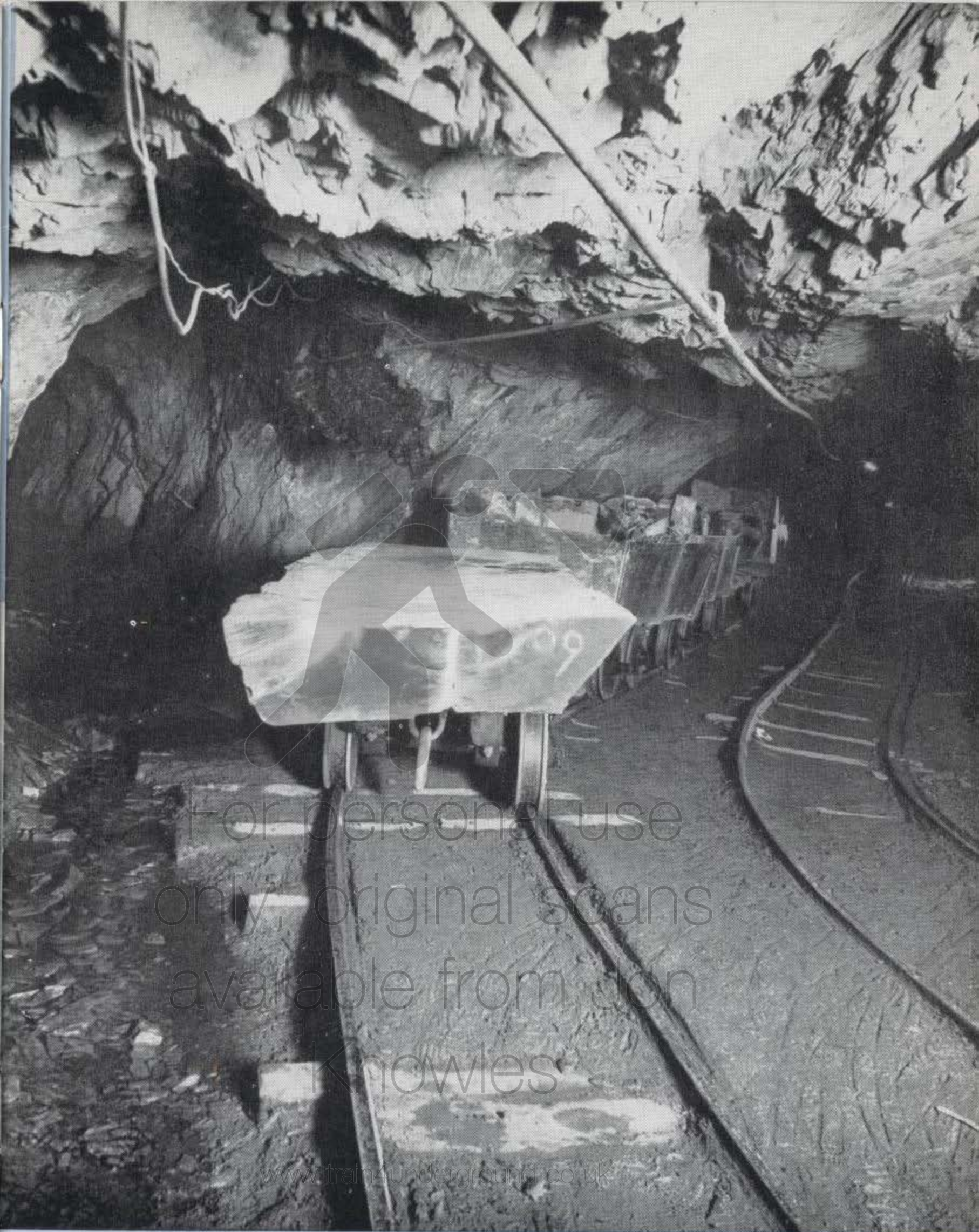
Long-term planning is an essential and complementary element in the surge of activity underground—a rhythmic process of ordered exploration, skilled preparation, actual development and, finally, rewarding production lasting for years.

This sequence of events yields nothing more rewarding than the sight, first thing in the morning,

*Miners widening M.B.10*







*Typical traffic run from O floor Oakeley.*





*On to N.B.10, Oakeley.*

of a typical run of traffic such as that we have illustrated newly out of O floor where development is in full swing. The train of blocks, with the inevitable waste, is seen marshalled and awaiting transfer to the surface via the main haulage system.

In our last issue we paused at the point where miners Lewis Griffiths and Joseph Freeman were reported widening the new chamber M.B.11, while rockmen were about to enter M.B.10 to take out the first thickness of slate.

The way down to N floor, as we have indicated, is via a staircase solidly built up from many tons of waste sawn ends of slate. The men pictured on the staircase are engaged on N floor.

It is a long walk down through the years of earlier development, passing a number of chambers in advancing or advanced stages of production, before, at N.B.9, we encounter the sound and shape of things to come in the newest New Vein development zone.

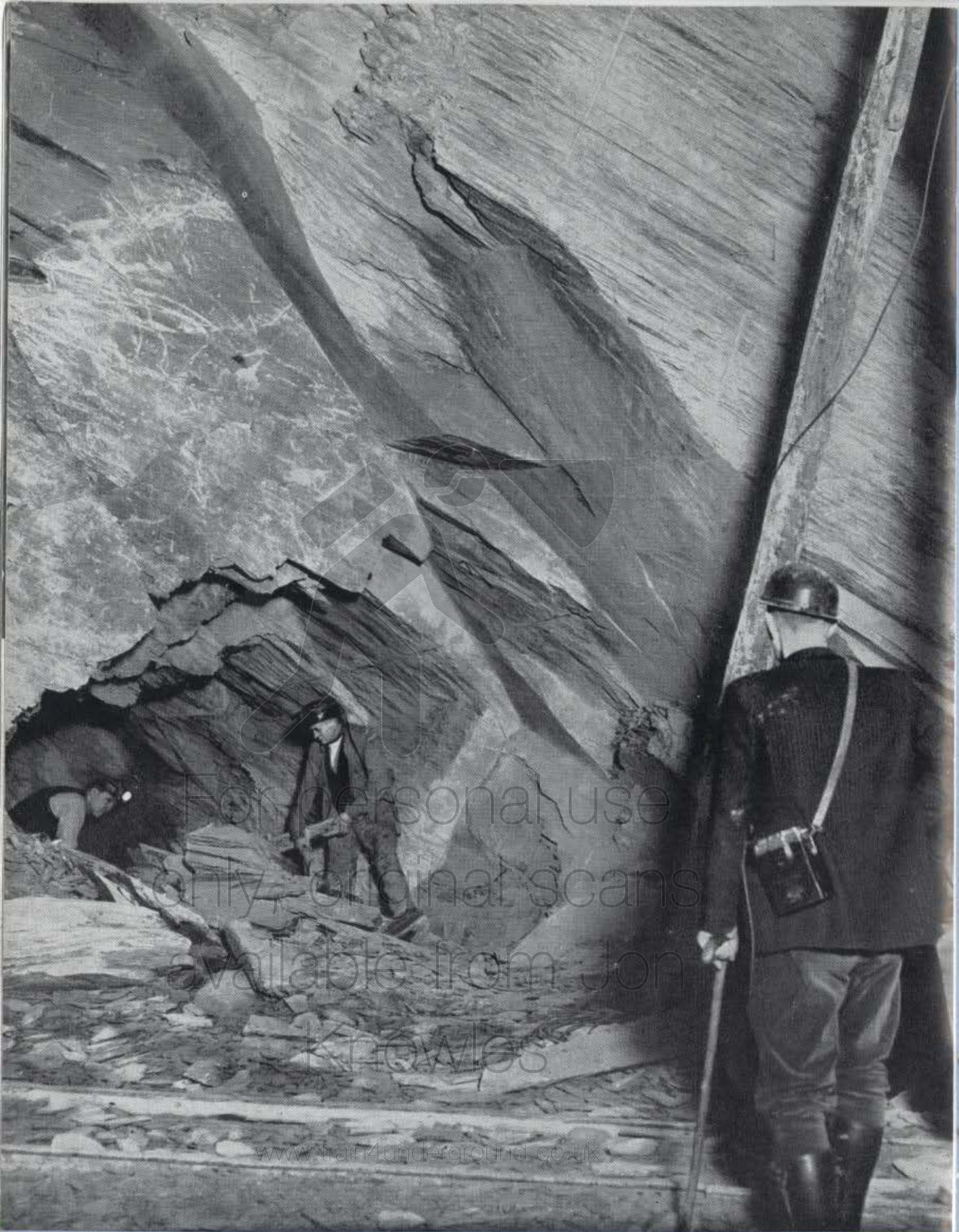
At work in N.B.9 is another of our father and son partnerships—rockmen David Morris Jones and his son, Hugh Morris Jones. The tradition of family craftsmanship remains strong at Oakeley; we like it that way. The rockmen are pictured in the act of boring a pillaring hole in a large block levered down almost to the floor of the chamber preparatory to splitting it into more manageable proportions for dispatch to the





*Father and Son partnership, Oakeley—D. and H. M. Jones, rockmen.*





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*Traffic short cut in the making*



other half of the partnership, the slatemakers at work in the mills on the surface.

### *Father and Son*

The power and precision of both the men and their machine are graphically conveyed in the study of father and son. The air-driven boring tool is firmly held and directed by David Morris Jones, a most experienced rockman. His son, meanwhile, operates the regulation dust extractor which draws away and holds every particle of dust raised by the revolving drill, at the same time facilitating visual control of the pillaring operation.

The sturdy bulk of the rockman on the ladder is derived, as David Morris Jones says, as much from his zest for hill walking as his

agility as a rockman, clambering up and down the slope of the vein.

David Morris Jones springs from farming stock, but his preference for the slate industry has not diminished his interest and association with the countryside. His chief pastime is to walk the surrounding hills and country roads observing the seasons come and go, noting the bird and animal life, and calling on farmer friends. "I am a rockman by trade, but I am a countryman, too," he insisted.

### *Steel on Rock*

Mingling with the distinctive note of the pillaring drill biting easily into the slate was the harsher sound of hardened steel driving into solid rock coming from beyond the wall of the chamber.

*"Follow-through" development. Roofing, O.B.1*





Here, taking place, was the inevitable development. N.B.9 is open and producing. N.B.10 could not be far behind!

But development is not always in time or in step with the desired rhythm of our progress. It was so here, where miners were at work driving out in a northerly direction almost at right angles to the easterly run of the floor, seeking the "chert," the hard layer of rock above the vein of slate, before striking out to extend the group of chambers.

Joseph Freeman, whom we saw assisting in corresponding development work on the floor above, was here with his veteran partner, David Douglas Evans. The miners explained that sometimes the strata played tricks with their calculations and that it was necessary

carefully to read the signs lest a lot of well meant effort came to naught. One simple and effective aid to reading the signs are the surveyors' direction lines, suspended like plumb lines from the roof and shown in our picture of the miners' level.

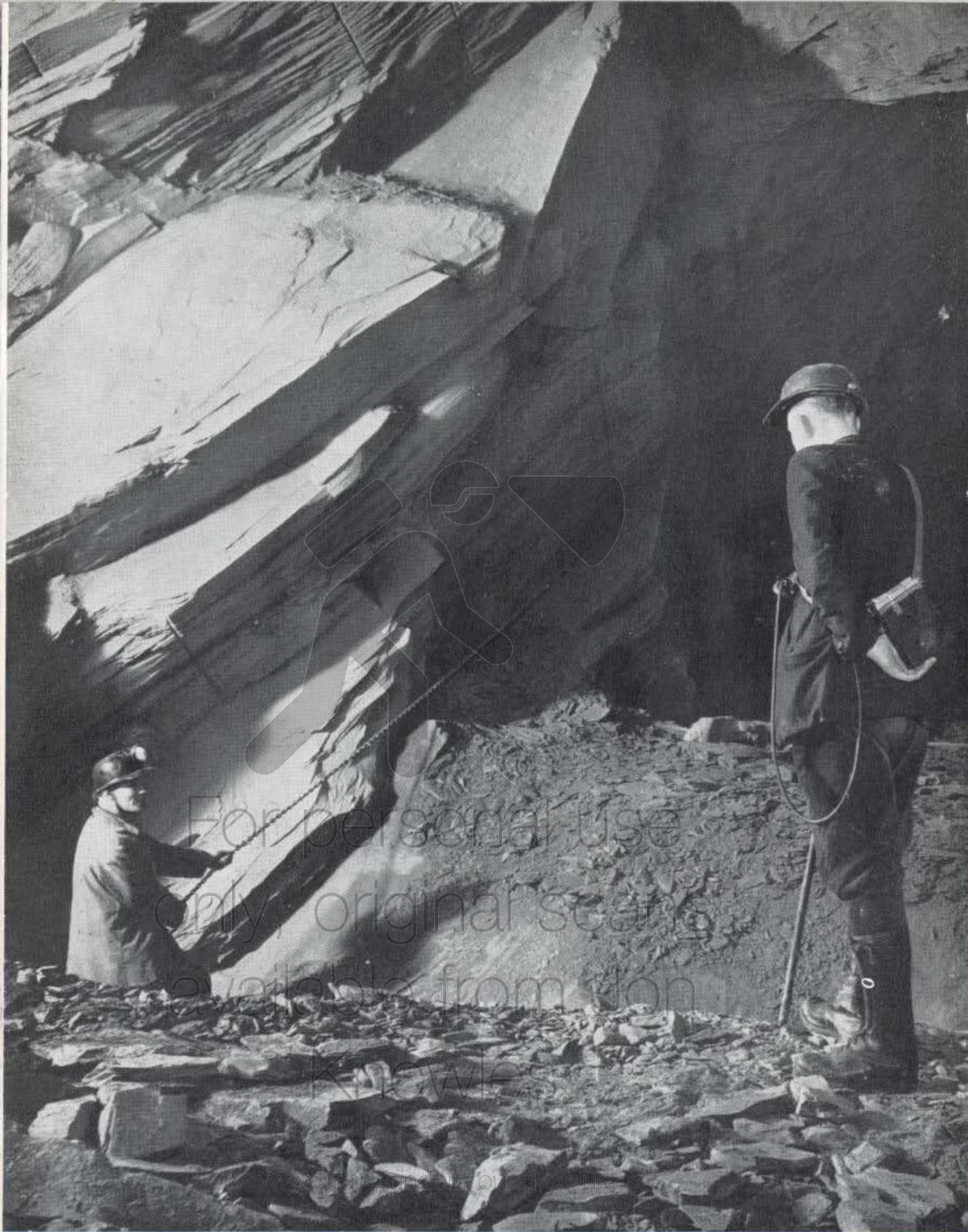
### **"Exploration"**

A glance from behind, keeping both tell-tales in line, shows the direction which must be followed and which is known as the pillaring line. The device also reveals any unwanted deviation. This form of "exploration" by the miners is, of course, carefully calculated and controlled, and must conform to a master plan of development which, as in the New Vein districts, eventually becomes common to a group of succeeding floors.

*Miners . . . at the end of the line*







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*Widening O.B.2 after the "follow-through"*



The miners' ultimate objective is the opening of N.B.10 and to make a way to N.B.11, but is not the only consideration in the task. It is also necessary to prepare a roofing or tunnel following the slope of the bed from the floor below.

This provides for an extension and improvement of the natural ventilation to the twin areas of development above and below the floor.

Roofing may also be a starting point from which to widen a chamber below. The way ahead thus builds up into an inter-related, purposeful engineering project designed as much to improve conditions for the present as to cater for the future. A further example of the link-up in the general scheme of development occurred at N.B.7.

### ***Traffic speed-up***

To speed up the movement of traffic expected from the new development a level was cut through a corner of the great wall separating N.B.7 from its neighbouring chamber, N.B.6, on the south side. The tunnel will by-pass traffic across the chamber floor on to the traffic level serving N.B.6, thence, via a more convenient approach, to the main incline midway along the floor.

This diversion serves not only to improve traffic facilities, but in the long-term approach creates a certain freedom of movement, enabling the scope of projected development on the floor below to be very much widened.

A stage in the progress is shown in our picture of rockmen Richard Stoddart and William Hughes Evans emerging, with a ladder from the unfinished tunnel in the wall.

William Hughes Evans, who started with us as a slatemaker, came back to Oakeley following service in Korea, where he had operated with a raiding and demolition squad. He was present in Korea during the first retreat in 1951, serving with the brigade of infantry which fought its way back to the relief of beleaguered American forces. Thereafter he was engaged in a number of exploits, none of which he is disposed to discuss. He admits, however, that his work was calculated to achieve the maximum nuisance value for the common enemy. His "demolitions" are now strictly controlled operations.

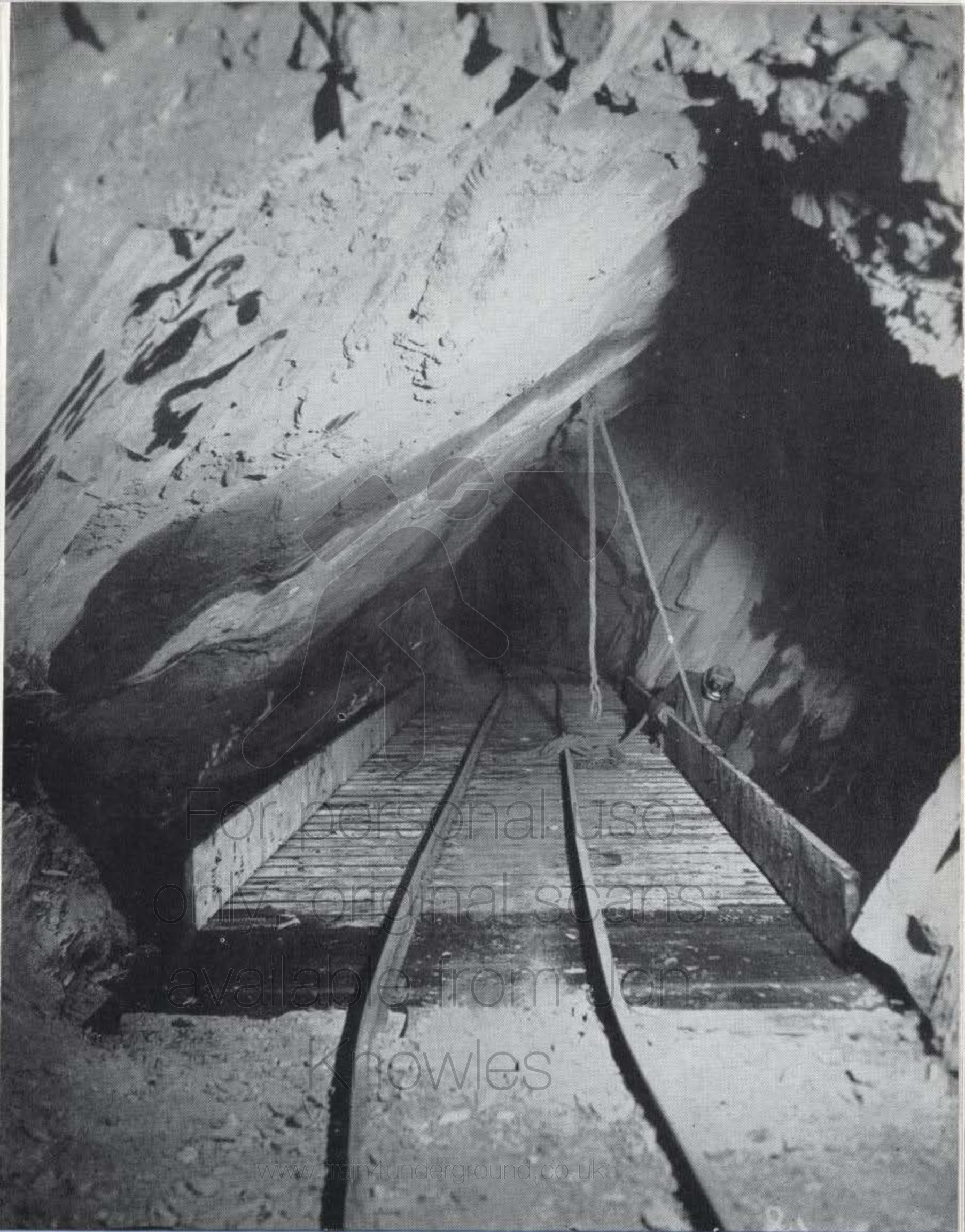
### ***The "Nether Regions"***

The "Q" floor, approximately 800 feet below the site of the Quarry Office, may be designated as definitely in the nether regions. We reach it via a further easy descent along the main staircase. Our objective here is new development in the New Vein at the eastern and western ends of the floor.

Development may reveal itself in unexpected places. Just as the quiet of an unlighted length in the level starts to encourage a belief that all must be achieved in that particular zone a glow of reflected light suddenly emerging from what

*Continued on page 16*





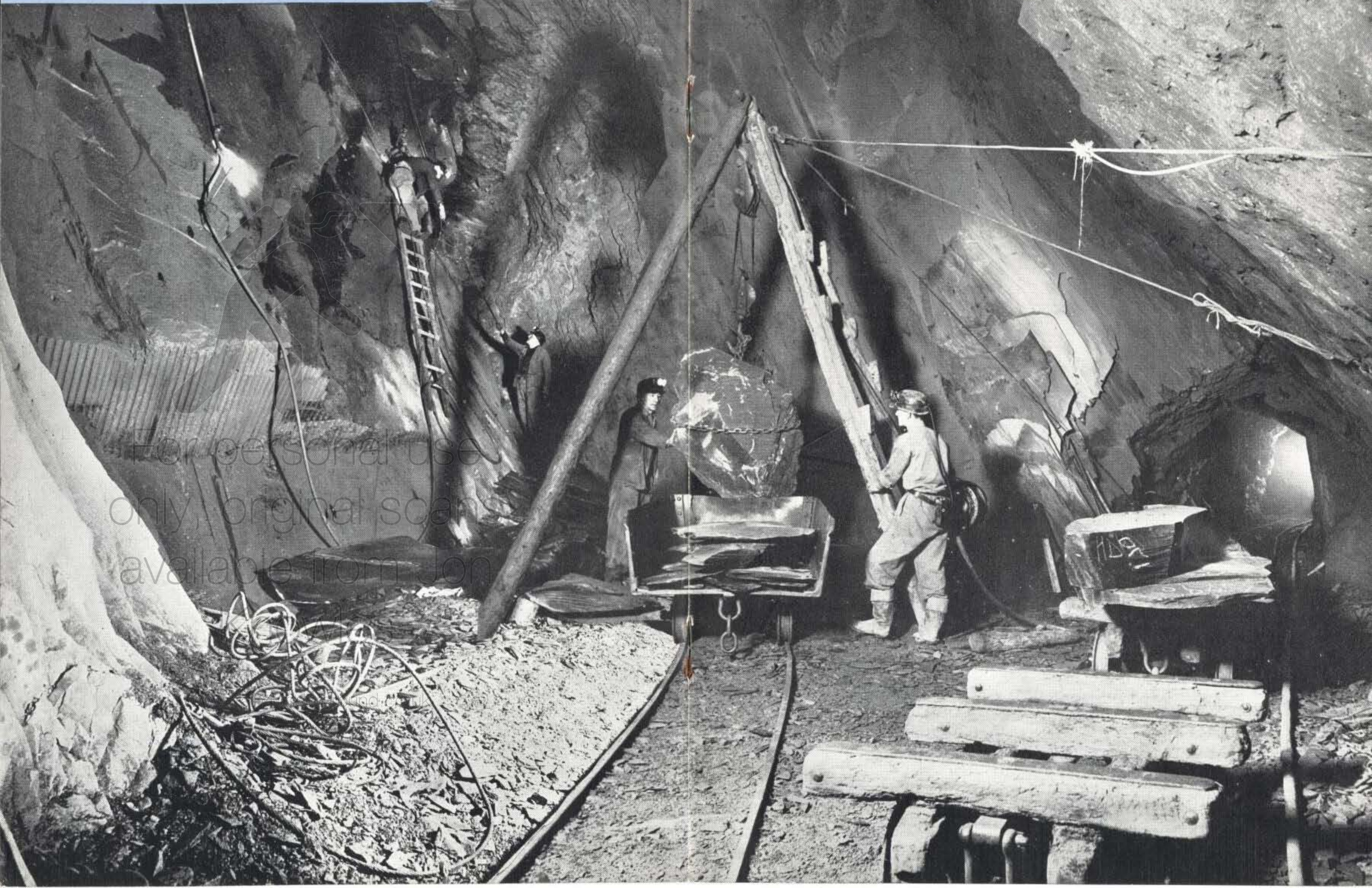
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*New bridge for new traffic, Oakeley*



New Vein development in the western district at Oakeley, showing chamber O17 in full production and the level (bottom right) driven well forward in readiness for the opening of O18 and other chambers (see "Floor to Floor")





## FLOOR TO FLOOR

*continued*

appears to be a hole in the floor of a worked-out chamber relieves the darkness ahead to confuse the uninitiated and to alert the questioning mind. It was so at O.B.1 on our journey down. To all intents a deserted chamber, we were pulled up short by the rattle of chain in the darkness, then the glow through the floor, followed by a lighted helmet emerging literally through the floor. Under the light was the quizzical face of Robert Williams, showing mutual surprise.

He had hauled himself up through the roofing tunnel from the floor below on a visit of inspection.

### *Hole in the Floor*

The hole in the floor, located a few yards from the level and against the wall inside the mouth of the emptied chamber was, as he explained, the first stage in another practical form of development, which, in due course, would enable the rockman and his partner to work upwards and under the *bôn* carrying the level and converting it into a natural bridge of rock and thence onwards, at the angle of the vein to win the huge weight and thickness of slate forming the floor of O.B.1.

The crater-like lip of the hole, which we have illustrated, is the top of the roofing tunnel driven up from P.B.1. Rockman Robert Williams is on the chain examining the top and sides. Below, at the base of the roofing, the operation known as widening, was taking place.

The original roofing from P.B.1 is discernible on the wall of the level in the background of the picture. The gain anticipated by the second roofing in the foreground is represented in part by the space between the two apertures. Actually, the whole floor of the chamber comes within the compass of the development.

### *Following Through*

This form of development adds considerably to the life of the lower chamber, enabling it to yield its maximum possible production and to take a considerable "premium" in the form of blocks from the unused floor of a complementary chamber above in which usual methods of production have eased.

In O.B.2 the next phase in the "follow through" movement was well advanced. Our picture illustrates the position clearly.

Standing on the *bôn*, or natural bridge left by rockmen working under and through from P.B.2 some 60 feet below, and looking ahead into the recesses of the worked out chamber is Under-manager Morris Jones. Rockman David Roberts is seen balanced on a chain at the extreme end of a widening which started, as in O.B.1, with an exploratory roofing tunnel emerging as a hole in the floor. In this instance the roofing tunnel has lost its identity.

Working laterally from the bottom of the roofing and across the face of the vein, P.B.2 rockmen have widened and won their way upwards until, as the picture shows they emerged under the *bôn* or traffic level projecting the face of



the rock forward and upward actually into the floor of the dis-used O.B.2. The top of their chamber thus became the lip of the floor above, and what remained to be gained was the mass stretching beyond into the darkness of the picture and into the hidden depth below.

### ***Natural Bridge***

The provision of a natural bridge for the traffic level over a joint undertaking in this category is not always practicable. In some cases the bôn must also be taken out and in its place must be constructed the more orthodox type of bridge with steel girders, wooden floor and steel stays.

An example of the sturdy bridging called for in our industry was provided on "O" floor where a new construction supported by 40

feet steel girders spanned the gap left by the removal of a natural bridge over P.2. The new bridge, photographed in its unfinished state and before the installation of stays to be pinned to the roof, was erected by Oakeley engineers. It is a heavy duty traffic viaduct built to carry the new traffic from the O.B. district down to the incline on "O" floor.

Tom Roberts, the securer, is pictured inspecting the stanchions. He has made his way to the scene via the temporary ladder from "N" floor, a route which the new bridge is designed to supersede.

### ***New Vein Development***

Out in the western district on "O" floor development follows the more straightforward course

*Continued on page 19*

*Miners Eric M. Hughes and Stefan Pogodzinski widening I.34, a new chamber in the New Vein at Votty.*







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*Renewing roof timber, Oakeley*



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# *The Timberman at Work*

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OUR MANY readers outside the immediate circle directly engaged in the winning of slate cannot fail to have been impressed by pictures stressing the massive dimensions of our underground workings and, in particular, by the apparent reliance on natural support for the expanse of lofty roof. This is true in general. The great chambers, in which the slate is won from the vein, are hewn from the solid, the roof being supported on walls of live rock thirty to forty feet thick. The levels, too, for the most part are tunnelled and self-supporting, but very occasionally, where there is faulting in the strata, or evidence of other weaknesses, resort is made to the use of timbered support.

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## **FLOOR TO FLOOR** *continued*

with new chambers being mined, prepared and added to the group producing New Vein.

The study of full-scale activity we have illustrated on pages 14-15 presents with almost panoramic effect the course which we follow. The subject for our study is O.17, one of the new chambers in the new district. O.17 is typical of both the momentum and rhythm of productive development.

The tell-tale ribbing of the channelling machine shows where a free side has been cut at the foot of the rock to facilitate and speed up the rockman's task.

The rockman, Robert D. Edwards, is up on the chiselled face of the vein drilling a hole capable of blasting down a forty-ton block. Hugh Martin, his partner,

An example of the skill of the timberman is seen here in the illustration of a section of the traffic level on K floor at Oakeley, where William H. Jones, who gained his skill as a miner in the South Wales coalfield, is pictured renewing roof timbers. In his hand he has a wedge of timber, fashioned with the adze, and is preparing to insert it in the uneven rock above. The four upright pillars of timber behind him are temporary supports, safeguarding the timberman as he removes cross-members for renewal.

The timberman selects and cuts the side and cross timbers to suit the exact requirements, fitting each piece of timber perfectly to form a solid, sound and lasting structure which, with the ingenious wedging above the cross-members, gives a guarantee of security.

stands by with the dust extractor. A labourer is filling waste into a waggon, and a block awaits dispatch to the incline. This is the workaday scene, relieved on the right by a glow of light made by miners at work driving a level through the wall of the chamber, driving ahead to new chambers and new vistas of industry and production.

We leave the story of the venture from floor to floor at this stage watching the miner, William John Jones, and his apprentice, George Ratcliffe, a newcomer from Liverpool, forging ahead literally at the end of the traffic line and, as our picture shows, levelling up the bottom and side of the tunnel which soon will give access to O.18 and other chambers yet to come.





Ronald B. Roberts



R. A. W. Shepard

# NEW BOYS

In this issue we introduce and to the trade at Votty—two who slatemaking, one who has entered fourth, who joins us as a junior pictured each at work in his res

**R**ONALD BRYAN ROBERTS, member of a Blaenau family with a long association in the industry, who, at the age of 15½ years, comes to us from Blaenau Ffestiniog Grammar School.

Ronald is seen splitting a small block of slate, the product of which he will trim and dress to the size required for use as damp courses.

Like several of our younger employees, Ronald Roberts is a keen and active member of the Blaenau Ffestiniog squadron of the Air Training Corps. Already he has attained the status of senior cadet and his spare time is devoted to furthering his proficiency with a view to qualifying for rank as corporal. His specialities, he says, are navigation and flight engineering. In camp at the R.A.F. base at Shawbury he had opportunity last summer of studying these skills at first hand during training flights in an Anson aircraft seated alongside the pilot. "We went through a 'bumps and circuits' course with some cross-country flying. It was a great thrill—landing and taking off—and I am looking forward to more of it this summer," he said.

**R**ODNEY ALAN WERNER SHEPARD, also a product of the Grammar School, and aged 15½, is seen at the other end of the Votty mill actually in the act of dressing damp course slates. Rodney Shepard comes from London. He was a war-time evacuee who stayed to assimilate not



# AT VOTTY

welcome four new 'prentice hands intend to master the skill of the engineering shop, and the clerk at the quarry office. We have a wide sphere, and here they are :

not only the Welsh language but the traditional local way of life, and has taken his place alongside people he knows well learning an ancient craft. Rodney is a basic cadet in the Blaenau A.T.C. squadron.

**G**ARETH WILLIAMS, whose steady eye and strong right arm stand him in good stead while manipulating stocks and dies, is an apprentice fitter with the Votty engineer. We see him making lin. bolts from steel salvaged from old waggon axles. Gareth's hobbies are stamp collecting and fishing with the emphasis on stamps. He has over 4,000 stamps from all parts of the world in his collection, most of them supplied by his brother, a ship's officer who, says Gareth, "started me off as a collector when I was a small boy."

**L**EONARD GOODMAN, also a Grammar School boy, and seen at the telephone in the Votty office, is aged 19, and comes to us as a junior clerk. Leonard is no exception to the tradition of the quarries, his father, a slatemaker at Oakeley, having been with us thirty-five years.

Also in the nature of things, our new junior clerk has a useful hobby. In his case it is carpentry. He is a member of the St. David's Guild and, being an enthusiastic billiards player, looks forward to improving his game as a member of our Oakeley and Votty Club.



*Gareth Williams*

*Leonard Goodman*





# CYFNOD I'W GOFIO

## Richard Jones yn dechreu Cyfnod y Chwareli yn Ffestiniog

**P**AN ddechreuwyd gweithio y chwareli yn y cylch hwn nid oedd gan y chwarelwyr arfau priodol tuag at eu gwaith, nid oedd peiriant yn unman, felly 'roedd rhaid gwneud y goreu o'r arfau oedd ganddynt. Gweithid y dyddiau hynny yn yr awyr agored gan y creigwyr, ac yn y waliau gan y chwarelwyr. Rhyw gytiau wedi eu hadeiladu ganddynt hwy eu hunain oedd y waliau, a gwelir olion o'r rhain, a'r rwbwl naddu o'u cwmpas yn agos i'r man lle tynai'r creigwyr y cerrig.

### Yr Arfau Gweithio

Dyma rai o'u harfau: haearn pileru (nid wyf ym meddwl fod ganddynt y plwg i bileru carreg y pryd hyn, ac mai yr haearn pileru oedd yn gwneud y gwaith hwnnw); pirim a chowjan; cyllell bach a'r trafel: a rhys i dori rhyw fath o ben i'w holli, a gwnaed hynny drwy dori bwlch, yna taro ar ei gyfer gyda'r rhys. Nid oedd creiniau, dim ond symud gyda trosolion, a byddai'n ofynol i'r dynion a elwid yn frasholltwyr drin eu cerrig yn hwylus i'r chwarelwr, ac wir yr oedd medrusrwydd yr hen weithwyr hyn gyda'r pirim a'r gowjan, a thrin clwt, i fyni ag unrhyw chwarelwr. Mae'n debyg mai ebill a morthwyl oedd gan y creigwyr i dyllu, ond daeth y jumper i fri yn fuan iawn, math o ebill oedd y jumpar, rhyw saith droedfedd o hyd, gyda dau ben iddo, pen taro a'r pen corddi. 'Roedd clap trwm rhwng y ddau ben. Pen taro rhyw hanner llath o hyd, a'r pen arall yn bump a chwech. Taro'r twll yn gyntaf, a'i daro hyd nes cyrhaedd y clap, a dipyn o orchest fyddai taro twll at y clap heb stopio. Yna ei droi i'r pen arall, ai gorddi eto at y clap. Os na byddai y jumper yn ddigon o hyd i gyrhaedd y Slout, yna byddai'n rhaid cael y Ladi i'w orffen. Golygai hyny weithiau gorddi twll hyd at ryw bedair llath neu ragor.

### Y Melinau

Ymhen rhai blynyddau daeth tro er gwell yn hanes y chwarelwyr, pan ddaeth y peirianau a'r melinau, yn lle y waliau. Cafwyd byrddau cyfaddas i lifio, ag injans naddu yn lle y gyllell fach a'r drafel. Injan naddu un gyllell oedd y rhai cyntaf yma, yn gweithio i fyni ac i lawr fel gwelir injan hogi llifiau heddiw. Cofiaf un o'r rhai hyn yn hen injan pen inclen chwarel uchaf, ac 'roedd yno fwrdd plaenio, yn cael ei droi a'r olwyn ddwr, gogyfer a'r fynedfa i Lefel Fawr. Daeth eu gwell pan gafwyd injan naddu dwy gyllell fel a ddefnyddir heddiw, a'r pric mesur yn yr ochr chwith, yn lle yr ochr dde fel cynt. Olwynion dwr oedd ymhob chwarel i droi y melinau, a llawer oedd ohonynt, ac ar gof amryw sydd fyw heddiw, a bu ambell chwarel yn dibynnu ar yr olwyn ddwr hyd ei diwedd. Daeth eto newid mawr pan ddaeth yr ager i sylw, ag i gael ei ddefnyddio yn lle'r olwynion dwr. a dyma sydd wedi fy nghymhell i ysgrifenu ychydig am y Drivers a'r stokers yn Chwareli Oak-eley.

### Y Gyrrwyr a'r Tanwyr

Dechreuaf yn y Chwarel Uchaf. *Chwarel Holland*, fel yr arferid ei galw. Nid wyf yn cofio i mi weled ol olwyn ddwr yn y rhan uchaf, ond cofiaf yn dda am yr hen dy-injan oedd ar dalcen yr hen injan, ond wedi adeiladu yr injan newydd, pa un sydd ar ei thraed eto, fe adeiladwyd ty injan newydd, a Jonah Roberts oedd y driver, ac yn gofalu am y boiler, gan gadw y peirianau yn lân a threfnus, ag un felly oedd Jonah, ac yn byw yn y chwarel. *Injan Isaf.* Robert Griffiths, Llwyngell, oedd y driver yma, yntau yn gofalu am y boiler a'r peirianau, a'u cadw'n lân, gan ofalu am oilio'r cyfan. Cyfeiriais at olwyn ddwr pen yn inclen, 'roedd honno yn bod cyn adeiladu y Felin Isaf, pa un a



weithiai gydag ager. *Chwarel Ganol*. 'Roedd dwy felin yma, y Felin Fach a'r Felin Fawr. Thomas Davies, oedd yn gofalu am ddreifio y Felin fach a'r boiler. Yn y pen agosaf i ben y llwybyr o'r Felin Fawr, dyma lle roedd Edward Jones, yntau yn gofalu am y boiler a'r dreifio. Roedd y ddau ddreifars yma yn byw yn nhai y chwarel, lle mae rhai o feibion Edward Jones eto'n byw. *Pen yr Inclen* i'r injian Fawr. Yma roedd Robert Thomas, Llwyngell, yn gofalu am dri neu bedwar boiler. Roedd digon o waith iddo gario glo gyda berfa i ffidio y boiler i hun, a gwnai hynny wrth ei fodd a'i fedr. Dreifars pen yr Inclen ac ar y Stage oedd John Hughes Llangollen, a Edward Wynne o Drefriw. Ar ben yr Inclen yma, 'roedd prysurdeb eithriadol, a'r dreifars a'u llygaid yn sefydlog ar yr Inclen, pa un oedd a phump ffordd, ac yn codi o bum dyfn, a'r "fall" lle 'roedd llawer yn gweithio y pryd hynny. 'Roedd yna griw ar ben yr Inclen, dyma enwau rhai ohonynt: Ellis Jones o'r Llan, John Ben Jones o'r Manod, Simeon Jones Tanygrisiau, David Williams, Nantymarch, Maentwrog, Edwin Morris a Elias ei frawd. Fe fyddai'n werth genym edrych arnynt yn dadfachu y cerbydau fel y byddent yn dyfod i fyny, a'r dreifars yn eu landio yn eu speed, nes y byddai'r cerrig yn landio yn y Felin, a'r rwbwl yn mynd hyd at y Machine bwyso. Roedd y dynion hyn yn codi dros fil o dunelli o rwbwl, heblaw cerrig i'r ddwy felin bob dydd, a Robert Isaac Jones, Dinas Road, gyda'r Loco yn dreifio i ben y domen. Nid oedd pen y domen y pryd hynny ond just ar gyfer lle mae y Slat Mill heddiw.

### **Bonc Coedan**

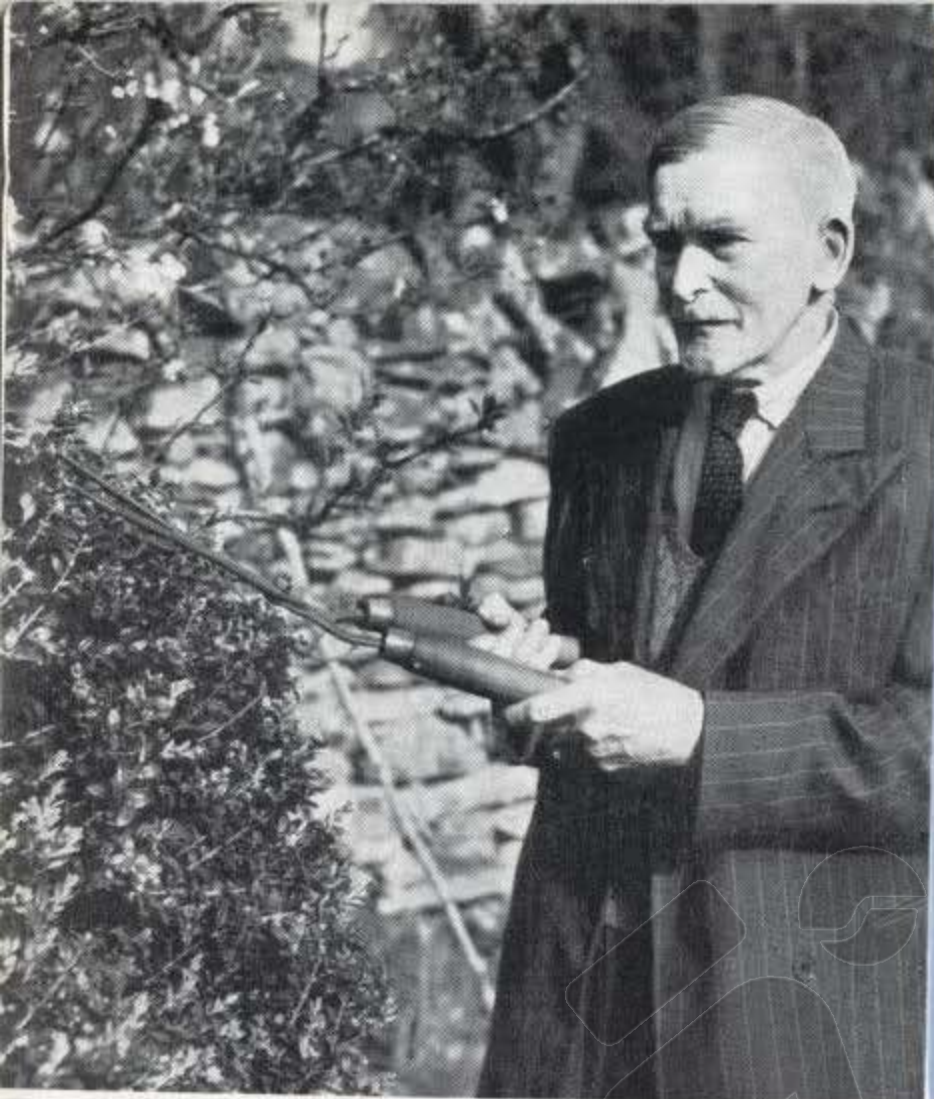
Yma eto 'roedd prysurdeb garw ar yr inclen, er nad oedd yn codi'r pryd hynny ond y rwbwl o'r "fall," a'r twll. Nid oedd Melin Bonc Coedan wedi ei hadeiladu, a dyna lle roedd pen y domen, tipio i lawr i gyfeiriad Clogwyn mawr ac i gyfeiriad Penybont a Thalwaenydd, ac wedi llenwi y gwagle yna yr adeiladwyd Melin Bonc Coedan. Dreifar pen inclen oedd William Davies (Sais) yn byw yn Dinas Road, a Richard Jacob ar y Stage yn dysgu dreifio. Dewi Mai o

Feirion yn gofalu am y boilers, a Richard Roberts, Clogwyn Brith, yn dreifio y Loco i ben y domen. Wedi adeiladu y Felin, Hugh Hughes oedd y Dreifar ac yn gofalu am y boiler, yntau yn byw yn Rhiw. Dreifar Inclen yr I, John Williams, Dolwyddelen, a Tommie Morton ar y Stage. Inclen K William Davies, Talwaenydd, a William Jones yn L. Pwmp Mawr, John Edwards, Talwaenydd, a Robert John Davies, Rhydsarn, a gerddai foreu a nos i Rhydsarn. *Inclens y Mynydd*. Hugh Jones (hen gerrig) sef tad Robert J. Jones, ysgrifenydd Undeb y Chwarelwyr, a Thomas Williams, Talwaenydd. *Dreifars Melinau Bonc Shaft*, John Morris Jones a Joseph Harry Roberts. Yn dreifio y Loco a dynai y rwbwl o'r Cutting yr oedd Thomas Roberts, mab Jonah Roberts, a bu John ei frawd yn dreifio hyd nes yr aeth drosodd i'r America. Dreifar gwahanol i'r rhai wyf wedi eu henwi ond y pwysicaf ohonynt sef yr hen wron John Chart, dan ei ofal ef oedd y Siafft Fawr, lle bu ar hyd ei oes. Dwr oedd yn gweithio y siafft; tanc o ddwr wrth ben y cage yn falance i godi'r bloc, a bu John Chart yn ofalus ag yn llwyddianus gyda'i waith. Gresyn i'r chwarel golli defnyddioldeb yr hen shaft. Byddai'r cerrig yn glanio yn y felin yn wlyb ac yn wlydder i'w gweithio. Nid rhaff oedd yn weindio y ddau cage, ond cadwyn a honno yn mynd rownd y ddwy olwyn ar y top, ac yn glwm ar waelod a top pob cage, yr oedd y chain yn ryw chwech dolen o led, a byddai'n rhaid weithiau eu tori er mwyn cwtogi y chain. Pe digwyddai i un cainc dori fe wyddai John Chart ar unwaith, a gofalai y byddai archwiliad yn cael ei wneud, er y byddai hynny yn cael ei wneud o leiaf yn fisol. 'Roedd yna ddau oedd yn tynnu-a-rhoi ar y siafft, a dyma y pwysicaf o honnynt, sef Moses Roberts, Talwaenydd, a fu yma hyd ei oes, yna William Chart, John Evan Chart, Cornelius Roberts, William Williams (Sir Fôn) ag amryw eraill yn eu tro, y cwbl yn bartners ar y dunnell, ag yn clirio'r felin. Y mae un o'r criw eto'n aros, sef John Edwards, Talwaenydd. Dreifar Melin Penybont oedd David Williams, yn gofalu am y ddwy Felin.

Nid wyf wedi enwi dreifars oedd ar Inclens y twll. Soniais am John Edward

*Parhad ar dudalen 27.*





# News Exchange

## 61 years at Oakeley

**R**OBERT JOHN DAVIES, newly retired driver of the Middle Bank haulage, Oakeley, whom we picture in his sunlit garden at Rhyd y Sarn, will be 80 next birthday. He has retired with a record of 61 years' service on pumps, compressors and haulage at Oakeley, and with an attendance record almost unequalled.

Robert Davies is spending his retirement in one of the most delightful retreats in the Dwyryd Valley. His home is the birthplace of Tanymarian, the eminent Welsh hymnologist and author of the oratorio "Storm Tiberias." A plaque over the door commemorates the association.

Robert Davies is a member of a long line who have lived at Rhyd y Sarn, and it is this association which gives him most pride. He does not regret the years of walking up and down the long hill to and from Oakeley in all weathers,

though he was grateful he said for the inauguration of the bus service which in his later years carried him "from door to door."

The long link with Oakeley is maintained by Edmund Davies, his son, employed as unhooker on Bonc Coedan.

## Caban "O", Oakeley (See picture, front page)

**T**HE gay group pictured on our front page is of some of the men on O Floor, Oakeley, seated in their rock-girt Caban. In the picture are: William R. Edwards, caban secretary, who is seen keeping the company amused; Eddie Crilly, a comparative newcomer, and who hails from Birkenhead; George Ratcliffe, an apprentice miner; Idris Evans; Gwilym E. Jones; Morris Hughes; R. D. Edwards; Hugh Hughes and William J. Jones.



## **Ffarwelio â Mr. Edward Jones**



*Yr olygfa yn Votty adeg ffarwelio ac anrhegu Mr. Edward Jones, sydd newydd ymneilltuo o fod yn rheolwr y chwarel, gan y staff a'r chwarelwyr. Cyflwynwyd yr anrhegion ar ran y staff gan Mr. Emlyn Jones, ei olynnydd, ac ar ran y gweithwyr gan Mr. Robert Jones. Cyflwynodd Mr. Ieuan Jones anrheg i Mrs. E. Jones.*

### **Quarry Club Queen**

**S**MILING SALLY JONES, aged 17½, of 2, Cambrian Terrace, Rhiw, elected by ballot, Oakeley and Votty Club Quarry Queen for 1954. Sally is the second daughter of William Evan Jones, Oakeley labourer, and Mrs. Jones, and is employed as a machinist at a local clothing factory. The Quarry Queen-elect will be crowned at the Club sports-carnival in the summer.

### **"N" Floor, Caban**

(See picture, page 2)

**S**EATED under the natural slope of the strata in Caban N, Oakeley, are (l to r) David Roberts, Richard Stoddart, H. Morris Jones, David Morris Jones, William Hughes Evans, Edgar Daniels (caban secretary), Hugh Edward Jones and Benjamin Jones.







Owen Samuel Owen

## Votty Hooker

**D**OWN on 6 and 7 floors at Votty will be found genial Owen Samuel Owen, hooker, and now, after 54 years continuous service, almost an institution in the mine.

The family tradition of service which is a feature of our slate mines is strongly represented in this instance. John Glyn Owen, father of O. S. Owen, was pump attendant at Votty for nearly 50 years.

## Polish War Veteran

**STEFAN** POGODZINSKI, a Votty miner, whom we have pictured elsewhere with his partner, Eric M. Hughes, widening in a new chamber at Votty, settled at Blaenau after a long and varied career as a soldier and miner.

He was in the van of Polish resistance to the German invasion in 1939, fighting with an anti-tank unit. When his country was overrun he made his way through the Balkans into Syria, where he joined the French forces. With the fall of France in 1940 his determination to "have another crack" at his country's enemies sent him across the Syrian border into Palestine. There he linked up with

the British Forces and moved quickly into Libya with a newly formed Polish Brigade and saw much action in beleaguered Tobruk. The next phase was service with the 1st Tank Division with the Army of Liberation.

He continued with the Division into Germany and remained in the conquered country with the Army of Occupation until demobilisation in 1947. Having elected to make Britain his home he married a Dutch emigre and began work as a forester.

He gravitated to slate mining via the local lead mines and has now settled with his young family at Blaenau Ffestiniog. His two daughters, aged four and six years respectively, he says, speak Dutch, their mother's tongue, some Polish, English, and of course, Welsh.

"Welsh is their first language, and it is now evident that my wife and I must soon make a real effort to learn the language also."

## Eisteddfod Nadolig Caban

### Bonc Shafft, Oakeley

**LYWYDD**, Edward Jones; trysorydd, John S. Williams; ysgrifennydd, Owen Williams. Beirniaid, cerdd, J. Parry Hughes; stori fer, George Penny; y quiz, Edward Jones; araith byr fyfyr, William Griffith.

Dyfarniadau: Unrhyw stori fer ddoniol, Glyn Roberts.

Can ddoniol neu gân gwerin, i rai dan 25 oed, Anarawd Jones.

Quiz i griw o bedwar partner, tim Harry Parry.

Her unawd (agored), Iorwerth Roberts Araith byr-fyfyr, Idwal G. Davies.

Canu emyn neu garol (agored), Anarawd Jones.

Darn heb ei atalnodi, Arthur Wynn Evans.

Gwneud brawddeg saith gair gyda'r lythyren a'r gair roddir ar y pryd, Robert Thomas Jones.

Deuawd (agored), cyfartal gyntaf, Arthur W. Evans, Evan R. Jones, a Gwyn Morgan, Glyn Roberts.

Arweinydd yr eisteddfod oedd Thomas H. Jones, a'r arweinydd canu, Hugh Idris Roberts.





## **Transformer House, Votty**

A GLIMPSE into the enlarged transformer house at the top of Tuxford incline at Votty, showing (left) an additional B.T.H. rectifier/transformer newly installed in the new annexe to augment the electric power supply to the Votty mine.

This annexe was built of slate waste sawn-ends by Hugh P. Roberts, a Votty mason. The sub-station now houses transforming equipment of 500 k.w., the main supply of 11,000 volts A.C. being reduced and rectified to the standard voltages of 500 and 250 D.C. The rectified current provides for haulage pumping, and other purposes throughout the mine.

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### **CYFNOD I'W GOFIO (*parhad*)**

pwmp mawr. 'Roedd y pwmp yma yn cael ei ystyried yn un o'r pwmpiau mwyaf, wedi ei wneud gan berchenogion Foundry De Winton, Caernarvon. Yr oedd yn codi dwr y gwaith o'r L i fyny i'r G, yna allan i Pantyrafon. 'Roedd iddo dri neu bedwar strokes, ond nid wyf yn cofio faint oedd yn ei godi bob stroke, ond mae erbyn heddiw wedi myned i'r scraps, ac mae yna electric pwmp yn gwneud ei waith yn yr L ac yn taflu 1,200 o alwyni bob munud. Nid oes angen yr hen foilers, y cwbl wedi myned i'r seraps, a'r trydan wedi cymeryd lle yr ager. Yn Pantyrafon, ger agoriad y Twnel Mawr, pan oedd yr ager yn troi yr Inclens a'r melinau, 'roedd yna ddau neu dri yn gwneud dim ond dadlwytho glo o dryciau yr L.M.S. ac yn llwytho tryciau bach perthynol i'r gwaith er mwyn cyflenwi y boilers bob dydd. Dynion wedi myned i wth o oedran oedd y rhai hyn, ac wedi cael eu hanfon ar "light job," yn ol barn Mr. Roberts y manager y pryd hynny. Ar adegau pan fyddai dipyn yn brysur yn y glo arferid rhoi help iddynt y pryd hynny, ac felly digwydd-

odd i Griffith Parry (Dolwen) fod allan ohoni, fel y byddai'n arfer gennym ddweud. Anfonwyd Griffith i'r glo, ac ar ddiwedd y dydd dyma ddywedodd ef, ag yntau yn ei breim fel dyn ifanc: "Cythral o le ydi yr iard lo yma, yn enwedig i weithio yn ochr Ned Williams y Penrhyn yma," a doedd ar Griffith ddim eisiau myned i'r glo wedi hynny. Dyma enwau yr hen gymeriadau oedd yno y pryd hyn. Humphrey Morgans a Dafydd Williams, Beudy Bach, Dolwyddelen, Edward Williams o'r Penrhyn.

Fel yna dyma fi wedi rhoi ychydig ar bapur o hanes adran o weithwyr na welais fawr grybwylliad am danynt o'r blaen, ond teilyngant sylw fel dynion fu a'u calonau yn eu gwaith. Mae yna rhyw ddau neu dri yn fyw oedd ar ben Inclen brysur y chwarel ganol, sef Ellis Jones (mi gredaf yn byw yn Aberdaron), a Simon Jones, Tanygrisiau, y ddau dros eu pedwar ugain. Buasent lawn deilwng i gael eu galw i Buckingham Palace i dderbyn medal am eu gwasanaeth. Hir oes eto i'r ddau hyn.





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FROM "M" TO "O," OAKELEY.  
(See "Floor to Floor")

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