

British Mining No. 18.

# THE NON-FERROUS MINES OF THE SOUTH WALES AREA

J.R. Foster-Smith.



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## **THE NON FERROUS MINES OF THE SOUTH WALES AREA.**

by

J.R. Foster-Smith C.Eng, FGS, FIMM.

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### **NB**

This publication was originally issued in the A4 format then used by the society. It has now been digitised and reformatted at A5. This has changed the original pagination, which is given in square brackets.

**Cover illustration** by P.C.D. Brears.

This depicts the men of the day shift at the Ogofau Mine, Carmarthenshire, in 1938, holding the first bar of gold produced when the mine was being worked by Roman Deep Holdings Co. Ltd. (British Goldfields No.1.)

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## **PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD.**

### **THE NON FERROUS MINES OF WALES** by J.R .Foster-Smith.

In order that this series of volumes can be bound as a complete work if desired (with the exception of Vols 1 & 2 which were issued before 1976 in a duplicated quarto format) the typeface and layout of this volume is similar to past issues in the series.

Mr. Foster-Smith's work on the non-ferrous mines of Wales was first prepared for publication by the Northern Cavern & Mine Research Society in 1967 under the auspices of their editor, Mr. D.T. Richardson. Due to unforeseen circumstances, five years were to elapse before the first volume, dealing with Denbighshire, was issued. The 'first' volume is, in fact, a misnomer since a transposition occurred whereby volume 1 (The nonferrous mines of Flintshire) was issued in 1974 after volume 2.

Thereafter, the Society has issued subsequent volumes in this seven part series when the opportunity and finances permitted.

Because of the greatly extended time scale over which this series has been published, none of the earlier volumes are now available – other than the volume on Cardiganshire which may be out of print by the time this issue appears. However, for those who hold the earlier parts, the author has provided a short corrigenda covering the whole work.

In publishing this final volume - a task which has taken nearly a decade to complete – the society cordially acknowledges the patience and forbearance of the author and his financial assistance which has latterly expedited publication.

Part 2 Non ferrous mines of Wales. Denbighshire. NCMRS 1972 O.P.5.

Part 1 Non ferrous mines of Wales. Flintshire. NCMRS 1974 O.P.7.

Part 3 British Mining No.4. The Mines of Anglesey & Caernarvonshire. 1977.

Part 4 British Mining No.6. The Mines of Merioneth. 1977.

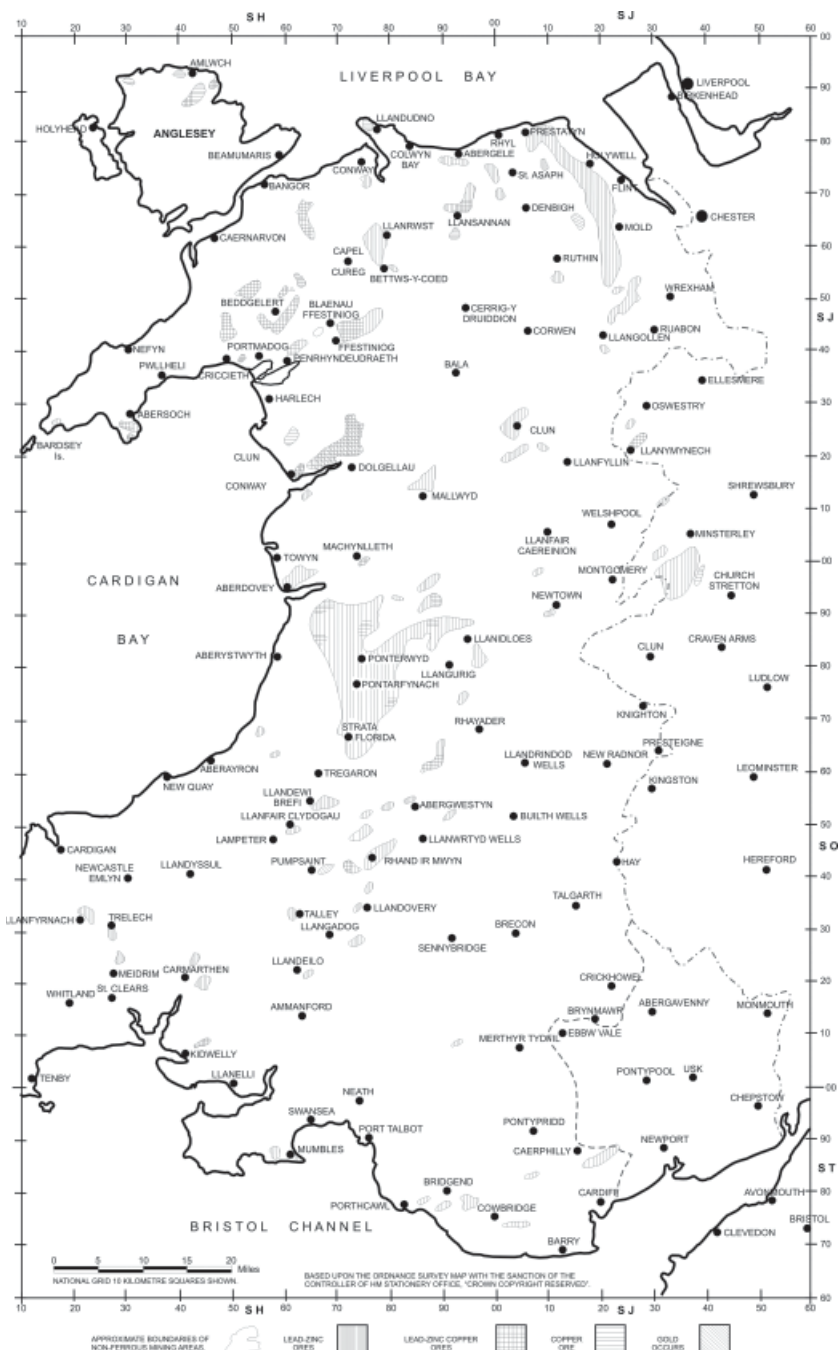
Part 5 British Mining No.10. The Mines of Montgomery & Radnorshire. 1978.

Part 6 British Mining No.12. The Mines of Cardiganshire. 1979.

Part 7 British Mining No.18. The Non-ferrous mines of the S. Wales area. 1981.

We have been requested to bring attention to the following:-

Although David Bick's series The "Old Metal Mines of Mid Wales" is listed in the bibliography of some of Mr. Foster-Smith's monographs as being among the titles drawn upon by the author in their compilation, we have been requested to make it clear that this is not the case. Mr. Bick's series was



NON-FERROUS MINING FIELDS OF WALES

BASED UPON THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF HM STATIONERY OFFICE. (CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED)

0 5 10 15 20 Miles  
NATIONAL GRID IN KILOMETRE SQUARES SHOWN

APPROXIMATE BOUNDARIES OF NON-FERROUS MINING AREAS. LEAD-ZINC ORES LEAD-ZINC-COPPER ORES COPPER ORES GOLD OCCURS

actually written and published subsequent to the completion of Mr. Foster-Smith's manuscripts and should therefore be treated as a separate and additional source on the subject.

The corrigenda relating to past volumes will be found at the end of the Bibliography.

R.H. Bird, Editor.

[4]

### **AUTHOR'S NOTE**

This monograph is one part of a larger work which sets out to make a complete survey of the sites and nature of all the presently identifiable non-ferrous metal mines and trials in Wales. Each monograph covers a county of major importance or a group of counties of lesser importance from the point of view of metal mining.

The purpose of the work is to put on record the locations of and some brief notes upon as many of the non-ferrous metal mines as it has been possible to trace during a long period of research into the industry. It is hoped that the work may be found useful not only to students of industrial history, but also to the geologist or mining engineer who may have occasion to investigate the mines of Wales.

Many of the smaller mines and trials have now been almost or entirely obliterated and their location is no simple task. An exhaustive study of old records and large scale maps has been necessary, combined with a physical examination of the ground whenever possible, in order to locate many of the sites known to exist and so to compile the information given herein. Even so it has not been possible to locate accurately all the mines of which there are known records. However what has been done may save future researchers much time and trouble.

In a work of this nature it is quite impossible to claim that the data given is original and it has been necessary to draw upon all the available published sources of information. These are listed in the bibliographies for each section of the work. Neither can it be claimed that all the information given in this work is indisputably accurate or complete, since in so comprehensive a work some mistakes are inevitable; but every care has been taken to avoid the inclusion of incorrect data. Nevertheless corrections and amendments will always be welcomed by the author.

[6]



## **THE MINES OF BRECKNOCK**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Brecknockshire is not an important county so far as mining is concerned. The known non-ferrous metal mines and trials are few in number and of small extent.

A group of small mines lies near Abergwesyn, where lead and zinc ores with a little copper ore occur to the north and west of the village. These deposits are in Ordovician rocks and some of the veins known are probably a continuation to the north-east of those worked at the more important mines of Rhandirmwyn, in Carmarthenshire.

A second group of mines lies in the Rhiwnant valley, a tributary of the Claerwen river. Here lead and copper ores have been worked from veins which also occur in rocks of Ordovician age. The last active operations in this area were at the end of the 19th century and it is most unlikely that any further mining would be permitted since all the mines lie in the catchment of the Birmingham Corporation Elan Valley Waterworks.

Some purely minor occurrences of lead ore and barite are found along the northern rim of the South Wales coalfield, mostly in the narrow outcrops of the Carboniferous limestone, but also in rocks of Devonian age. These deposits have produced little if any ore, but have been prospected from time to time.

Output from the county has never been large and most of it was obtained from the mines in the Rhiwnant valley, less from the Abergwesyn area and practically none from anywhere else. The recorded output from mines in Brecknockshire since 1845 is 2,382 tons of lead ore concentrates and a few tons of copper ore. So far as the future is concerned, there is no reason to expect that any significant discoveries will be made within the county. As noted above, the mines of the Rhiwnant valley are sterilised and the only other possibility for any significant discovery seems to be in the Abergwesyn area, though even there it is not possible to point out any hopeful indication.

### **DETAILS OF THE MINES**

#### **1) RHIWNANT**

Llanwrthwl Ph. SN/891617

The workings here appear to have been the earliest in this small and isolated mining field. There is no clear record of the earlier workings in the area, but the existence of some veins, striking a little east of north and occurring in rocks of Ordovician age was evidently known during the 18th century, when the first trials were probably made. These veins cross the eastern end of the hill which divides Afon Claerwen from Afon Rhiwnant and were first explored



from Craig Plwm on the south side of the Claerwen river. These workings were reopened in 1844, on a small scale, but in 1849, the Nantycer Mining Company was formed and more extensive development work was commenced, both here and at the southern end of the sett, at Craig Rhiwnant, which became Nantycar Mine proper and is dealt with below.

[8]

At Rhiwnant the veins were found to contain copper, lead and zinc ores, with the copper ore predominating, but after some quite extensive development work had been done between 1849 and 1853, the results in depth were not very promising and these northern workings were more or less abandoned in favour of the southern mine.

At Rhiwnant the engine shaft was sunk to a depth of 53 fathoms and the shaft and dressing floors were powered by a waterwheel of 50 feet diameter. Output from these workings was small and consisted mainly of copper ore apparently, the shallower workings being reported as quite rich in places, but it is not possible to separate the output here from that obtained from Nantycar Mine itself.

Refs: TMT - p.203, WJL - p.253, GWH - pp.84-5, MJ - 1850-3.

## 2) **NANTYCAR**

Llanwrthwl Ph. SN/885609

This mine was developed from about 1852 onward, on the southward continuation of the veins worked at Rhiwnant, noted above. This continuation of the veins to the south was also worked at Dairhiw Mine, on the South side of Afon Rhiwnant, as noted below.

At Nantycar the veins are of a similar nature to the parts of them worked at Rhiwnant except that lead and zinc ores appear to have been more common in relation to the copper ore. The engine shaft is close to the river and the workings here, which showed great promise at first, proved to be rather disappointing upon further development. Nevertheless work was continued under various owners until 1883, when Nantycar was abandoned in favour of the new mine which had just been discovered further upstream at Nantygaw. A small but steady output of lead-zinc ore was obtained during most of the active life of this mine, and some copper ore was returned during the earlier years of activity.

Refs: P & D - pp.266-71 (Output figures.) TMT - p.203, WJL - pp.253-4, WJH - pp.291-2, GWH - pp.84-5. MJ-1850-1881, at various times.

3) **DALRHIEW** (or **DALRHIW**) = **RHAYADER** (?)

Llanwrthwl Ph. SN/886607

The veins worked here are, as stated above, the continuation southward of those worked at Rhiwnant and Nantycar Mines and occur in the same country rocks. The mine is situated on the south bank of Afon Rhiwnant at the eastern end of Craig-y-Dalrhiw. The main vein system is here crossed by the so-called "Lead Vein", which strikes a little north of east and was also worked. It may be the same vein which was worked at Nantgarw Mine, further to the west.

The mine was first developed in 1850, following the discovery of some rich copper ore at Rhiwnant and the main object of this new enterprise was again the production of copper ore. The early working consisted of a level driven southward on the Copper Vein from the south bank of the river, but by 1851, a shaft was commenced above the adit level and this shaft seems to have reached a depth of 37 fathoms during the life of the mine. Operations continued, though not very actively at times, until 1859, when the company was wound-up. The mine was again at work from 1862 to 1867, but a renewal of interest in 1881, did not lead to any further development. A small output of lead and copper ores was achieved between 1851 and 1862, but although to judge from the amount of waste rock on the heaps, the workings must be fairly extensive, the mine seems never to have been very successful.

[9]

Refs: P & D - pp 0266-71 (copper output figures), TMT - p.203, WJL - p.253, GWH - pp.85-6, GWH – pp.85-6, MJ - 1850-59, and 1881.

4) **NANTGARW** (or **NANTYGARW**)

Llanwrthwl Ph. SN/874606

The vein worked here was discovered about 1877 and the mine commenced work in 1882, the first sales of lead ore being made in 1883. The workings are situated in Nant-y-carw, a tributary of the Rhiwnant stream and lie on the eastern slopes of Esgair Ganol.

In 1886, the Builth Lead Mining Co. Ltd, acquired the mine and worked it with some success until 1893, after which the Nantgarw Mining Co. Ltd, continued operations until 1899, when the workings were abandoned, probably due to the acquisition of the area by the Birmingham Corporation Waterworks.

The recorded output from the mine is 2,177 tons of lead ore Concentrates.

## ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MINES BY COUNTIES

NOTE: An asterisk before an entry in the list indicates that the name given is an alternative one to that by which a mine is generally known.

<b>BRECKNOCK</b>	County No.	Page
ABERGWESYN = NANT-BRAN = NEWTON =		
NANTYBRAIN = EAST NANTYMWYN	6	10
CEFN COCH	5	10
CEFN-COED-Y-CYMMER	15	12
CRAIG-Y-DDINAS	13	12
CYNNANT-FACH	9	11
DALRHIEW (or DALRHIW)= RHAYADER	3	9
*EAST NANTYMWYN (See ABERGWESYN)		10
ESGAIR DAFYDD	10	11
LLANIGON	12	12
MOEL PENDERYN	14	12
*NANT-BRAN (See ABERGWESYN)	6	10
*NANT-BYR (See CEFN-COCH)	5	10
NANTGARW (or NANTYGARW)	4	10
NANT GYRNANT	8	11
NANTYBRAIN (See ABERGWESYN)	5	10
NANTYCAR	2	9
*NEWTON (See ABERGWESYN)	6	10
*RHA YADER (See DALRHIEW)	3	9
RHIWNANT	1	8
TALACHDDU	11	11
TRAWSNANT	7	11
<b>CARMARTHEN</b>		
BANC BWLCH-CEFN-SARTH	22	20
BENLAN	19	20
BANC-CLAWDD	4	15
BLAEN-NANT-MELYN	8	16
BLAEN-WERN	1	15
BRECHFA	46	27
BRYN-BEDD	3	15
*BRYN TOWY AND NANT (See VALE OF TOWY)	40	23
BWLCH-Y-RHIW	7	16
CAE-GLAS	20	20
CAESARA = GREAT WELSH SILVER-LEAD =		
CWMBRAN (or CWMBRANE) = CASSARA (or CASARA)	54	28
*CARMARTHEN CONSOLS (See VALE OF TONY)	40	23
*CARMARTHEN LEAD MINING SYNDICATE		
(See CYSTANOG)	41	25
CARMARTHEN UNITED = TRELECH = CWM TRELECH	26	21
*CASSARA (or CASARA) (See CAESARA)	54	28
CASTELL GORWYN	30	22
CEFN-YR-ALL T-UCHAF = PARADISE LODE	52	28

	County No.	Page
*CERRIGMWYN (See NANTYMWYN)	12	17
CLOS-GLAS	48	27
CNWCH-Y-BEDW	18	20
*COPPER MOUNTAIN (See MYNYDD-Y-GAREG)	61	32
CRAIG RHOSAN	15	19
CREIGIAU LADIES	6	16
CRIBBYN-DU	9	17
CWM BLAEN-Y-GARNANT	60	32
*CWMBRAN (or CWMBRANE) (See CAESARA)	54	28
*CWMGWILLY (See GAT-GOCH)	37	23
*CWM TRELECH (See CARMARTHEN UNITED)	26	21
CYNNANT	11	17
CYSTANOG = NORTH TONY AND CYSTANOG = LLANGUNNOR		
= GRAND DUCHESS = NORTH TONY = PEN-LAN		
= CARMARTHEN LEAD MINING SYNDICATE = HENDIR	41	25
GAT-GOCH = CWMGWILLY	37	23
GELLI-FELEN = LADY ELIZA NORTH	56	29
GILFACH	57	32
*GLANSEVIN (See MAN-DINAM)	51	27
*GRAND DUCHESS (See CYSTANOG)	41	25
*GREAT WELSH SILVER-LEAD (See CAESARA)	54	28
*HENDIR (See CYSTANOG)	41	25
HILL OF TONY	36	22
LADY ELIZA = WHEAL MORGAN = LADY ELIZA SOUTH	55	29
*LADY ELIZA NORTH (See GELLI-FELEN)	56	29
*LADY ELIZA SOUTH (See LADY ELIZA)	55	29
LLANDILO	44	26
*LLANDOVERY CONSOLS (See St. DAVIDS)	53	28
LLANEGWAD	45	26
LLANFYNYDD	47	27
*LLANGUNNOR (See CYSTANOG)	41	16
LLWYNCALENNIG	32	22
MALLAEN (or MALLANE)	17	19
MAN-DINAM = GLANSEVIN	51	27
MERLIN HILL	38	23
MINEFIELDS	24	20
MYDDFAI	59	32
MYDRIM (or MEIDRIM)	27	21
MYNYDD-Y-GAREG = COPPER MOUNTAIN	61	32
NANTARNELLE	16	19
NANTYCERNI	28	21
NANTYGARREG	29	21
NANTYMWYN = CERRIGMWYN	12	17
NORTH NANTYMWYN	10	17
*NORTH TONY (See CYSTANOG)	41	25
*NORTH TOWY AND CYSTANOG (See CYSTANOG)	41	25
OGOFAU (or GOGOFAU) = OLD ROMAN MINE = ROMAN DEEP	5	15
*OLD ROMAN MINE (See OGOFAU)	5	15
PANTAU (or PANTEY)	35	22

	County No.	Page
PANT-GLAS	33	22
PANTYGLEIEN	39	23
*PARADISE LODGE (See CEFN-YR-ALL T-UCHAF)	52	28
*PEN-LAN (See CYSTANOG)	41	25
PEN-RHIW-RHAIADR = WEST NANTYMWYN	14	19
PEN-Y-GARREG (or PENEGARREG) = TALLEY	49	27
PISTYLL-GWYN	34	22
PONT-AR-LLECHAU	50	27
PONT-YR-YNYS (or PONTRHWNWS)	43	26
RHIWIAU-ISAF	58	32
*ROMAN DEEP (See OGOF AU)	5	15
ROSE HILL	25	20
St. DAVIDS = LLANDOVERY CONSOLS	53	28
SOUTH TOWY	42	26
*TALLEY (See PEN-Y-GARREG)	49	27
TEIAUBACH	31	22
*TRELECH (See CARMARTHEN UNITED)	26	21
TROED-Y-RHIW	23	20
TY-CERRIG	2	15
TYNYBEDW	21	20
VALE OF TONY = BRYN TONY AND NANT = CARMARTHEN CONSOLS	40	23
WEST NANTYMWYN	13	18
*WHEAL MORGAN (See LADY ELIZA)	55	29
 <b>PEMBROKE</b>		
FRON-LAS	4	36
FRON-LWYD	5	36
LLANFAIR - NANT-GWYN	3	36
LLANFYRNACH	6	36
LLWYNCELYN	8	37
LLWYN-YR-HWRDD	7	37
RAMSEY HEAD	1	34
St. ELVIS	2	36
TREFFGARNE	9	38
 <b>GLAMORGAN AND MONMOUTH</b>		
*ALL SLADE (See BISHOPSTON)	1	40
BARRY	30	48
BEAUFORT CONSOLS	3	41
*BELL MINE (See St. HILARY)	18	45
BISHOPSTON = ALL SLADE	1	40
*CAERPHILLY (See CEFN-ON)	24	46
CANDLESTON	7	42
CEFN-ON = CAERPHILLY	24	46
CEFN-PARC = CLUNN PARK	20	45
CLIVE = RHYDYGWERN	27	47
CLIVE UNITED	25	46

	County No.	Page
*CLUNN PARK (See CEFN-PARC)	20	45
COED-ELAI	21	46
COYCHURCH = SOUTH WALES CONSOLS	11	43
*DUNRAVEN CONSOLS (See PENLLYN COURT)	15	44
FLATHOLMISLAND	31	48
GARTH	23	46
*GELLI ARAUL (See LLANGAN)	14	43
*GOLDEN MILE (See TWMPATH)	16	44
GROVE	5	42
LLANGAN = GELLI ARAUL	14	43
LONGASH	2	41
MACHEN	28	47
NEW BEAUPRE	17	43
NEWTON DOWN	6	42
OGMORE DOWN	9	42
PENLLYN COURT =TEWGOED = DUNRAVEN CONSOLS	15	44
PENTRE	19	45
PENTYRCH	22	46
PORTHCAWL POINT	4	42
*RHYDYGWERN (See CLIVE)	27	47
RUTHIN	12	43
St. ATHAN	29	48
St. BRIDES MAJOR	10	43
St. HILARY = BELL MINE	18	45
*SOUTH WALES CONSOLS (See COYCHURCH)	11	43
SUTTON	8	42
*TEWGOED (See PENLLYN COURT)	15	44
TWMPATH = GOLDEN MILE	16	44
TYLE NEWLAND (or TYLL NEWLAND)	13	43
WEST CLIVE	26	47