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**A SURVEY OF 'WOOD LEVEL' AT BRANDLEHOW MINE,  
NR. KESWICK, CUMBRIA.**

By R.E. Hewer.

Brandlehow mine is situated on the S.W. shore of Derwentwater, stretching up the flank of Catbells. It has produced a variety of ores, mainly galena, cerussite and blende. The vein was discovered higher up the fell by the 'old man' who sank several small shafts and cut away the vein for a considerable distance on the surface. As the levels were worked out, lower ones were driven which drained the upper workings and extracted the ore between them.

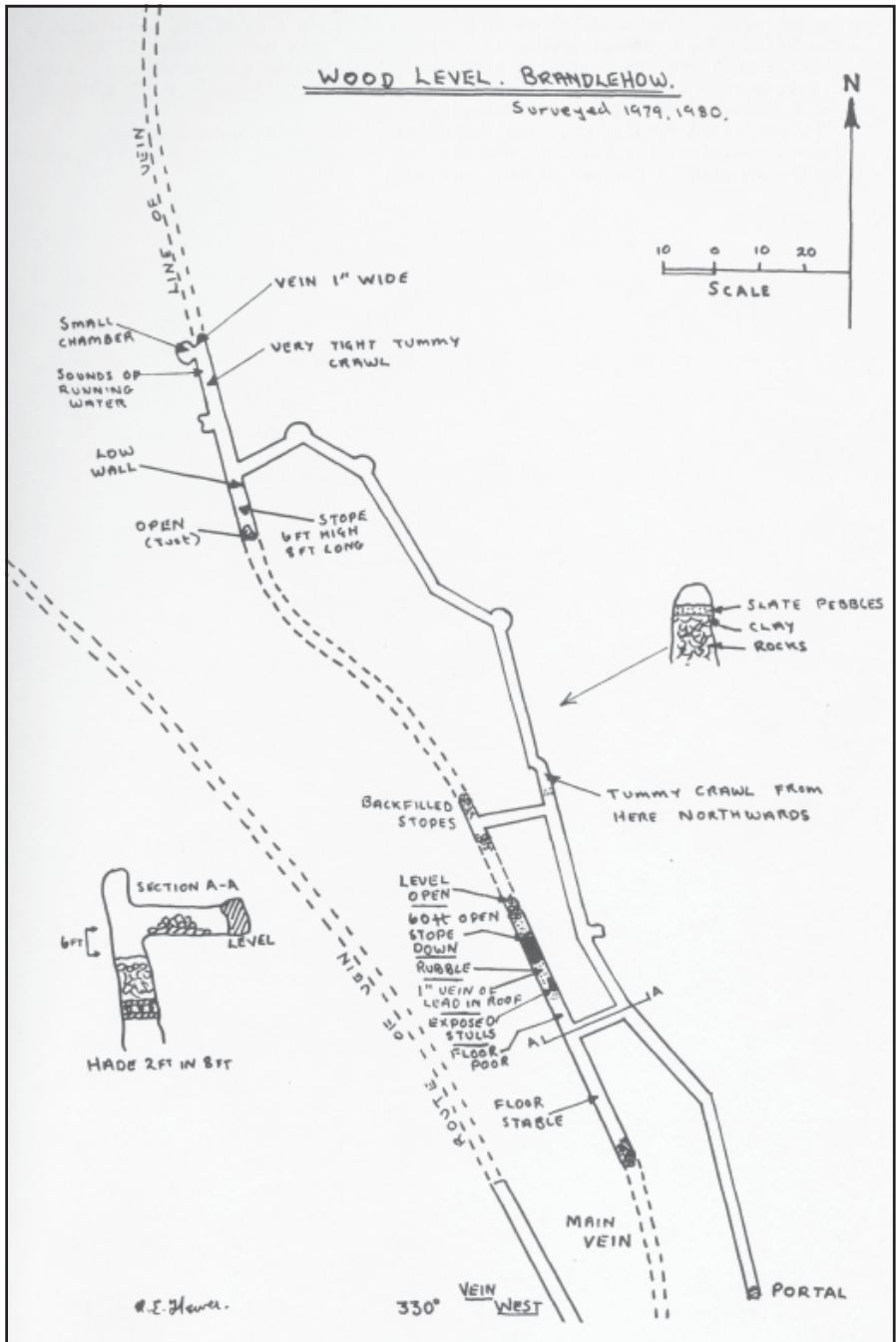
Approx. 220ft above the edge of the lake on the main vein lies Wood Level. The vein at this height splits and diverges by as much as 54ft. The main 'Wood level' is below 'Whitwells level' but on the true vein and the latter is underhand stoped at the entrance, (stopping now covered with rubble, cans and wire but water can be heard trickling down through the workings). Wood level has recently unwatered itself. It is rumoured that someone had a dig at a lower horizon with rather spectacular results! There has been some work done on a new track to the wood which has exposed part of Salt Sump Shaft and the pent up water may have escaped this way.

The water level in Wood level was previously about three feet deep as leaves, twigs and fir cones still adhere to the sides at varying heights. The level wanders considerably taking a roughly parallel course to the vein which runs between 335° and 345°.

After a distance of 70ft from the portal a backfilled crosscut 12ft long west enters onto the vein proper. The vein at this point is accessible for 30ft, north and south of the crosscut by means of side stepping from the foot to hanging walls. The vein is three feet wide and the level is approx. 5ft below the crosscut, the whole of the level having descended either by settlement and compact ion due to water immersion or by the collapsing of stulls below allowing the rubble filled level to fall. South of the crosscut the level feels firm underfoot and runs for 30ft before backfilling from above has collapsed into the level. North of the crosscut the level is unstable. 6ft along the level a large hole to one side of the floor shows stulls and long poles supporting sugary quartz and rubbish and a further 3ft reveals a large block of rubble supported by rotten stulls. The condition of this area within the last year has deteriorated considerably. Immediately above the fill there is a rib of galena about one inch wide exposed in the roof, it is about three feet long. The roof is about 6ft above the floor of the crosscut.

Immediately northwards the stulls and long poles stretching onto the block of rubbish have given way revealing the stoping and stulls below dropping away [or at least 60ft hading eastwards at 2ft per fathom. The opening is about 10ft wide. The level continues but is inaccessible unless one is good at the "splits"!

A SURVEY OF 'WOOD LEVEL' AT BRANDLEHOW MINE



Returning to the main level, this carries on for a further 50ft to another westerly crosscut which again leads into the vein. The latter is completely backfilled and collapsed from above, vein direction 335 degrees.

A curious development is met with at this point. The level (Adit) is backfilled with rubble to within 18 inches of the roof. A small channel was cut through the top of the rubble to a depth of 9 inches. It would appear that whilst the whole of the level had been flooded, the fill has now settled allowing a stream to flow over the fill thus forming a 1½ inch layer of small rounded pieces of slate and pebbles. Obviously the stream has been flowing over the fill for many years. Underneath this layer there is another 2 inch layer of clay followed by stones.

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The level continues 115ft as a long low crawl, finally turning sharply west into the vein. Southwards there is a small 6ft by 6ft high stope protected by a low wall. The workings appear to go far below this horizon but all are rubble filled. To the north the stope ends with the adit but the level continues as a very tight crawl for a distance of 25ft ending in a small 6ft square chamber. The vein is 1 inch wide.

The collapsed stoping near the beginning of the drive seemed to be worthy of further exploration but the condition of the workings is so bad the descent into the stoping is now out of the question.

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