

BRITISH MINING No.39

MEMOIRS 1989



Arx, R. von, 1989
“Vignette on ‘Caegynon’”
British Mining No.39, NMRS, pp.26-27

Published by the
THE NORTHERN MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY
SHEFFIELD U.K.

© N.M.R.S. & The Author(s) 1989.

ISSN 0309-2199

VIGNETTE ON “CAEGYNON”

Rolf Von Arx

SYNOPSIS

In the picturesque valley of the river Rheidol in the vicinity of Devil's Bridge in Cardiganshire lies the Caegynon mine which has been worked intermittently for several centuries.

On 11th May 1864 Thomas Bonsall of Glanrheidol leased “all and singular lead copper and other mines and veins lodes beds nests and bunches of lead ores argentiferous lead ores copper ores tin ores and all other ores minerals and metallic matters(...) under all that messuage or tenement farm and lands commonly called and known by the name of Caegynon situate lying and being in the parish of Llanbadarnfawr” for 21 years to William Henry Punchard of 20 Saville Road, Bow Road, in the county of Middlesex. The land in question was in the tenure of John Benjamin and measured 20 acres 3 roods and 30 perches. The dues amounted to 1/15 of the gross monies produced by the sale of the ores. One condition specified that at least six working miners be employed at all times. It is not known if Punchard had any work done at the mine, but on 20th October 1865 he assured the directors of the Cardiganshire Lead Mines Co. Ltd. in writing that in consideration of their taking an assignment of his lease from Bonsall he would agree, at any time when called upon, to procure the necessary papers and signatures for the lessees of the property even if Bonsall “may die in the mean time”. On the same day an assignment of the lease was signed between Punchard and the Cardiganshire Lead Mines Co. Ltd. The payment was £250 in cash and £300 secured by two bills of exchange payable 6 and 12 months respectively after date of signing.

Four years later the Cardiganshire Lead Mines Co. Ltd. was in very serious trouble and unable to pay its debts. An Extraordinary General Meeting was held at 4 Allhallows Chambers in London on 2nd November 1869, which passed the resolution to wind up the company and to appoint Colonel Thomas Jameson as liquidator. In this capacity he assigned the mine on 24th February 1870 to Thomas Fuller of 23 Old Jewry Lane in London, the payment being £400. Fuller presumably was a sharedealer because already on 3rd March 1870 he brought about a spectacular sale by assigning the property to the Caegynon Lead Mining Co. Ltd. for no less than £16,000 in cash. The assignment bears the paper seal of the Company and the signatures of the G. Gowan and Septimus Goldsmid, Directors, and Francis Reed Wilson, Secretary.

How far the involvement of some people in the mining business reached is proved by the fact that Wilson was Secretary between 1870 to 1876 – perhaps simultaneously - in at least two other companies: The Roman Gravels Mining Co. Ltd. (1871) and The Leadhills Silver Lead Mining & Smelting Co. Ltd. (1876), and also lessee for the West Pant y Go Silver Lead Mining Co. Ltd. in

connection with mines in the parishes of Halkyn and Northop in the county of Flint. Thus, his activities spanned from Wales to Shropshire to Scotland. Septimus Goldsmid was later one of the lessees of the South Caradon Mine in Cornwall (1885).

(Sources: Original lease and assignments. Background information from David E. Bick: *The Old Metal Mines of Mid- Wales, Part 2*)

Rolf Von Arx
 Buchzelgstr. 39
 CH-8053,
 Zurich
 Switzerland.

