

BRIEF REPORT ON THE AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF THE
UPPER AMMAN VALLEY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO YNYS DAWELA FARM

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1.0 Introduction

2.0 History and archaeology of the upper Amman valley up to the 18th century

2.1 History of the upper Amman valley from the 19th century

2.2 Industrial Brynamman and the development of mining at Ynys Dawela

3.0 Appendix

3.1 Sources consulted

3.11 Unpublished Mss Sources

3.12 Published Sources

3.13 Published Mapping

3.2 Brief/Commission for report

1.0 Introduction

This study has been prepared following a commission received from Carmarthen-shire County Council to undertake historical research to aid the production of an interpretive leaflet proposed for Parc Ynys Dawela.

The brief (see section 3.2) encompassed a very wide range of topics for study and owing to the limited resources available it has only been possible to provide the most general overview focusing upon the agricultural and industrial development of the Upper Amman valley with particular reference to Ynys Dawela Farm.

The preparation of this report has been hampered by the lack of detailed historical research undertaken to date in this area and it has therefore been necessary to take a wider area into consideration than would have been preferred in order to place Ynys Dawela farm in context within the Amman valley.

2.0 History and archaeology of the upper Amman valley up to the 18th century

Little known evidence exists of prehistoric settlement or activity within the Amman valley; much of the physical evidence for such being confined to the marginal land and commons which enclose and define the valley. On the summits of the Black Mountain and Mynydd y Betws there are a number of funerary cairns defining the burial sites of individuals of high status dating from the Early Bronze age (c.2500BC to 1500BC). Notable examples include the cairn groups of Tair Carn Isaf and Tair Carn Uchaf which dominate the skylines of the westernmost summit ridges of the Black Mountain.

During the late Neolithic/early Bronze age period, it is known that the climate was warmer and drier than today thus presenting more favourable conditions for settlement on land now considered to be marginal in modern farming terms. Within the narrow confined valleys which drain the Black Mountain and Mynydd y Betws there are extensive remains of abandoned settlement sites which are the subject of present study. Many of these are likely to date from the prehistoric and mediaeval periods when there was again a relatively warmer interlude in comparison with modern conditions.

Evidence of prehistoric activity within the enclosed land of the valley is likely to have suffered more from the effects of land improvement and agricultural erosion. As such, much of this archaeology is likely to be revealed only as cropmarks where buried remains effect differential rates of growth within an agricultural crop and can then be detected by aerial survey. However as much of the agricultural land within the valley is currently under pasture, such evidence is only likely to be revealed over a long period of intensive study under favourable conditions; grass being strongly resistant to parching from drought except under exceptionally dry conditions.

Some of the smaller and irregular shaped fields within the valley exhibit characteristics which may be expected whereby agricultural land is created from primary woodland clearance; a process known as assarting. Elements of these enclosures may well therefore incorporate features which are prehistoric in origin although further work of a multi-disciplinary nature would be necessary to confirm this.

Prior to the acts of union of 1536-42, the upper Amman valley was divided for civil administrative purposes between the Marcher lordship of Gower and the more ancient Cantref Bychan; the latter was further split into the commotes or lordships of Perfedd and Is-Cennen, the river Pedol being the common boundary between the latter two units at their most southerly limit in the Amman valley. Following the acts of Union, these administrative division were perpetuated; Gower forming part of the new County of Glamorgan and Cantref Bychan becoming part of Carmarthenshire. It is from the early Tudor period that the earliest documentary references of use to us become available.

We are fortunate that the origins of some of the farming units within the study area and the boundary between farmland and mountain have been studied in some detail in recent years (Bowen-Evans, 1991). From this research it has been suggested that the mid nineteenth century system of farms (on the eve of the rapid industrial expansion in the Amman valley) had been established by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It has been concluded that the boundary between farmland and the Black Mountain common in the Brynamman area has been constant for at least 400 years. It has also been suggested that prior to the sixteenth century there were also intermixed parcels of land in the immediate area of Ynys Dawela, since documentary evidence has been found to demonstrate the process of consolidation and engrossing of properties.

These processes were also occurring elsewhere during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with the building up of farms and estates.

An early published map of the area is Emanuel Bowen's 'South Wales' of 1729. This map depicts the Amman valley as being devoid of the large houses and seats of the gentry which proliferate elsewhere particularly in the Tywi valley to the north. Only one building is depicted within the Amman valley, Tu yr heol [sic], possibly only by virtue of its proximity adjacent to an important cross-mountain highway close to its boundary with the Black Mountain. Emanuel Bowen also depicts a fulling mill along the banks of the Amman. However, the overwhelming impression that one is given of the Amman valley during the early 18th century, is that of a relatively impoverished, marginal area (even for West Wales) without any indication of the rapid industrialisation and expansion which was to occur in little more than a century ahead. An enlarged section of Emanuel Bowen's map of South Wales is reproduced in this report as Map 1.

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the large estates were commissioning surveys of their holdings. These consisted of large scale plans, frequently accompanied by a terrier which detailed each field name, acreage and land-use. These plans served a multitude of purposes, enabling estate managers to monitor agricultural production and to plan for improvements to estate farms; they may also have served as tangible expressions of the extent, status and importance of estates to their owners since many were highly colourful and ornate in design. Unfortunately for local historians, Ynys Dawela farm does not appear to have been part of any great estate holding and as a consequence since such surveys were very expensive to commission, an important record of the farm's development up to this period is not available to us. However, it is possible to extrapolate from comparisons with adjacent farm holdings where such information was recorded, the nature of agricultural activities on Ynys Dawela farm at this time. Map 2 reproduced in this report is a copy of one such contemporary survey carried out; it is a plan of nearby Bryn Pedol farm dating from 1803. It is interesting to note that of the 102 acres, 36% of the farm area consisted of arable (15 enclosures), 40% consisted of meadowland (6 enclosures), 20% consisted of pasture (10 enclosures) and only 3% of the land area was managed as woodland. These proportions appear to have been fairly typical of this time and underline the importance of both meadowland and arable over permanent pasture.

Linking the upper Amman valley with north Carmarthenshire, a new cross-mountain highway (later known as the Bryn Road) was turnpiked and improved following its adoption by the Llangadog Turnpike Trust in 1779. However, after an initial outburst of enthusiasm and effort, by 1785, interest shown by the Trust in the road appears to have diminished; their only interest being maintenance as far as the limekilns on the northern slopes of the Black Mountain. This underlies the lack of economic importance and exploitation of the mineral reserves of the Amman valley at this time even though the existence of coal would have been known. Even Dr Richard Bevan, a Neath surgeon who was actively involved in improving the cross-mountain road with the Llangadog Trust, to the extent of investing his own money in the project, appears to have been more interested in the search for lead on the Black Mountain.

2.1 History of the upper Amman valley from the 19th century

The first true, systematic survey of the Amman valley was carried out by the Ordnance Survey at a scale of 2" to the mile during 1812. A copy of this map is reproduced here as Map 3. The scene depicted is a purely agricultural one with scattered farmsteads typical of any other West Wales scene at this time. It is likely that some working of coal was occurring at this time but, this is likely to have been of a small, non-industrial scale. This is the earliest map which depicts Ynys Dawela farm. Note however that the field boundaries shown are merely illustrative of the existence of enclosure and not necessarily accurately surveyed features. The Llandeilo road from what later became Brynamman is shown and also the new cross-mountain highway (the Bryn Road) which was turnpiked in 1779 but, note that the line of the A4069 road is absent.

The minutes of the Llangadog Turnpike Trust do not appear to have survived from the early years of the nineteenth century. We can therefore only speculate as to why they petitioned for a new act (passed in May of 1813) to abandon the Bryn road and to construct in its place, a brand new highway to the east viz: The line of the present A4069. By 1819, the new turnpike road was opened; the work was supervised by one John Jones of Brynbrain, Cwmllynfell and unlike the Bryn road, his work has stood the test of time. In 1820, the first tollgate known as the Ystrad Celyn Gate was set up on the new turnpike road near to the site where Capel Gibeia was later built. In 1823, the Farmers Arms was opened, believed to be the first public house in the neighbourhood, on Gwter-fawr farm. In the following year, the turnpike road was extended south of the Amman along the course of the road known today as Heol-y-Parc to Gwaun-cae-Gurwen. The road had been on stop for five years allegedly due to the opposition of the same John Jones of Brynbrain who feared that his mining interests viz: Level yr Office (site unidentified) would be harmed by competition from potential, future mining ventures, now accessible from the new road.

The next published survey of the Amman valley is that of the Old Series 1" to a mile map, first issued in 1831 and based upon a thorough revision and resurvey between 1825-28 of the original survey of 1812. An enlarged copy of an early state of this map (c.1831) is reproduced here as Map 4; here we again see Ynys Dawela farmstead depicted but, not named. There is still yet little visible evidence of the forthcoming industrial development of the valley. Turnpike roads are depicted; one follows the line of the present day A474 road from Ammanford to Neath and the second, the new road from Gwaun-cae-gurwen to Llangadog, the A4069. There is no railway development at this time.

In 1838, John Jones of Brynbrain built a large house adjacent to the new cross-mountain turnpike road on the Carmarthenshire side of the Afon Amman and named it "Brynamman". The house was described by Enoch Rees (Hanes Brynman a'r cylchoedd, 1896) as a beautiful mansion with lovely gardens around it and was the very first house in the place with a slate roof! John Jones (of Brynbrain) can truly be called the father of Brynamman. Not only did the name of the house he built take over that of Gwter-fawr as the name of the expanding town, but his establishment of the Amman Iron Works provided the focus of much of the early industrial activity and hence growth of the town of Brynamman.

The Tithe Commutation Act was passed in 1836 which provided for the reform of tithe payments to the established church based upon agricultural output. The principle behind this act proposed for tithe payments to be replaced by a money rent charge based upon the actual value of tithes paid in the seven years to 1836 and adjusted annually thereafter in line with market prices of cereal crops.

The responsibility for the survey necessary to establish such a system lay with the tithe commissioners who authorised and oversaw the preparation of maps and awards. The commutation of tithes had already begun during the course of enclosure and in such areas, tithe surveys were unnecessary.

Many tithe maps and awards are quite detailed documents which list field names, acreage and land use. Unfortunately, the tithe survey for Llandeillofawr parish is variable in the amount of detail given and in the case of Ynys Dawela farm, only the acreages of its constituent enclosures are given. At the time of the tithe survey (1838), Ynys Dawela farm was 72-1-19 acres in extent which was slightly larger than that of the average holding. It was owned and occupied by David Jones who did not appear to have interests in any other land in the area, neither as owner or tenant. Across much of the Amman Valley, formerly within the parish of Llandeillofawr, it is only possible to reconstruct the pattern of farm holdings and ownership during the mid-nineteenth century. However, one striking feature to come out of an examination of the pattern of tenure in the Ynys Dawela area is the compact and consolidated nature of the holdings and also the regularity of the boundaries between holdings. This is particularly evident in the case of Ynys Dawela farm itself with respect to its western boundary with Nant Gwineu farm and its eastern boundaries with the holdings of Bryn Bach and Gwaun-yr-Esgair. Map 5 illustrates the pattern of land-holding within the vicinity of Ynys Dawela farm at the time of the tithe survey. It is important that these boundaries are examined in conjunction with the results of the on-going hedgerow survey since this may confirm the special nature of these features with respect to the many shorter length boundaries in the area. The pattern of land tenure strongly suggests that some degree of landscape planning has occurred within this area and in following Bowen-Evans' conclusions concerning the stability and antiquity of the system of land holdings then, there is every reason to assume that this process must have taken place by the sixteenth century at least. It is possible that such a planned system may have been imposed upon an earlier (possibly intermixed) layout since there are patterns of enclosures close to the mountain boundary particularly within Bryn Bach and Bryn Uchaf farms which do not neatly fit into a simple, planned mechanism. Examining the relationship of the pattern of land tenure with respect to the course of the road westwards from Brynamman known as Llandeillo Road, it is clear that this road is a later feature, at a number of junctions respecting and truncating sections of the holding boundaries.

Between 1842-6, a railway was built by John Jones of Brynbrain from Garnant to Brynamman. It was an extension of the Llanelli & Dock Company railway.

The first place of worship was established at Brynamman between 1842-4 by the building of Capel Gibeia. At the beginning, there were only 56 members. A new chapel building was erected in 1856 (the old building becoming a day school), the number of members then being 300 and twenty years later, this had again increased to about 700 in number. The school received a government grant and was also helped by voluntary contributions from workers. It continued to be held here until the construction of a purpose built school in 1868.

In 1848, the then owner of the Amman Iron works, Mr Llewellyn built a row of 20 company houses, known as Old Company Row, which was described by George Borrow in later years (see below). In 1849, the district was badly affected by a Cholera outbreak.

Earlier in 1840, the new Farmers Arms was built also adjacent to the new turnpike road but, this time on the Glamorganshire side of the bridge.

It was here that George Borrow is likely to have spent the night on his journey through Wales in the mid 1850's and where in the public bar, perceived the "distrust of the Welsh", spoke at length of the "Wonders of Russia" and retold a "grand ghost story" to a roomful of miners and carters gathered on a wet and windy night. The following morning looking north from his room in the New Farmers Arms, he observed "a roaring brook was foaming along towards the west, just under the window. Immediately beyond it was a bank, not of green turf, grey rock, or brown mould but of coal rubbish, coke and cinders; on the top of this bank was a fellow performing some dirty office or other, with a spade and barrow; beyond him, on the side of a hill, was a tramway, up which a horse was straining, drawing a load of something towards the north-west. Beyond the tramway was a grove of yellow looking firs; beyond the grove a range of white houses with blue roofs, occupied, I supposed, by miners and their families; and beyond these I caught a sight of the mountain on the top of which I had been the night before, only a partial one, however, as large masses of mist were still hanging about it. The morning was moist and dripping, and nothing could look more cheerless and uncomfortable than the entire scene". Such was his impression of upper Brynamman in the mid 1850's. Maps 6 & 7 (Amman Iron Company, 1857) depict the area as described above by Borrow. The roaring brook is of course the river Amman, with the Cinder tip to the north; the railway and the fir trees can be seen in front of the range of white houses with blue roofs known later as Old Company Row. After settling his bill at the New Farmers Arms, Borrow set off for Swansea and on his way described, "Gutter Vawr consists of one street, extending some little way along the Swansea Road, the foundry, and a number of huts and houses scattered here and there. The population is composed almost entirely of miners, the workers at the Foundry, and their families." Map 8 (Amman Iron Company, 1857) depicts the area to the west of the Foundry, viz: Gwter-fawr farm, as described above by Borrow.

A volume of plans was prepared in 1857 which depicted the extent of the Amman Iron Company's minerals estate. The plan of Ynys Dawela farm comprises 69-2-18 acres and consists of 34 enclosures. Unfortunately, no field names are given as in the case of the tithe survey although woodland and meadowland are differentiated on the 1857 plan. Characteristically, the larger enclosures are meadows which seems to have been the norm in the Amman valley. Much of the woodland is concentrated adjacent to the main watercourses bounding the farm, viz: Afon Amman and Nant Gwineu. Map 9 (Amman Iron Company, 1857) is a tracing of the 1857 plan of Ynys Dawela farm. Further work would be necessary to elucidate the past land use of the other smaller enclosures which are likely to have consisted of a combination of arable and ploughed grassland (Cae field names) on the better land and permanent pasture (possibly with pollarded trees) on the poorer quality fields (Coedgae/Coetcae field names).

In 1860, the number of houses at Brynamman amounted to 146. By August 1862, the Swansea Vale Railway began to build their railway line from Ystalafera to Brynamman; it was formally opened in 1864. In this year, the name Brynamman was adopted for the growing settlement in place of Gwter-fawr, at first by the naming of the new railway station. A verse was penned to commemorate this change:

*Mae newid yr enw yn dipyn o beth,
mae enw canolig ar le da - yn dreth;
Wel dyma y flwyddyn a diolch am hyn,
Y claddwyd y Gwter - a codwyd y Bryn !*

In 1870 and 1871, two new chapels were established in the district, a Baptist chapel at Banwen known as Siloam and a Calvinistic Methodist chapel called Moriah. In 1882, two more places of worship were established, Ebenezer Chapel and St. Catherine's Church.

In 1872, 20 new houses were built in this year for the tinsplate workers by the Amman Iron Works company and in the following year, a row of 20 houses known as the Cannon houses were built for underground workers.

In 1874, the Midland Railway took over the Swansea Vale Railway and another 20 houses were built for tinsplate workers by the Amman Iron Company increasing the number of houses owned by the company to 82.

By 1883, there were 380 private houses, 8 taverns, 26 shops and 4 places of worship in Brynamman. The population at this time amounted to nearly 2,000.

A piped water supply was brought to Brynamman from a spring-fed reservoir in 1884-5 and by 1895, 305 houses as well as the public buildings had direct water supplies. There were also 28 public taps provided along the roadsides.

In 1886, the Great Western Station was established at Brynamman alongside that of the Midland Railway opened in 1864.

The independent schoolhouse originally housed in the earlier chapel building of Capel Gibeia was eventually sold to the Llandeilo Union School Board in 1893 for 1,200. Up to this time, the school was run under the Amman Works company with the manager, Mr Strick as chairman. On the sale of the schoolhouse, 700 of the 1200 raised was donated toward the cost of a Public Hall built in 1896.

In 1895, the Old Farmers Arms was rebuilt and renamed the Brynamman Hotel and in the following year, the Llangiwg School Board built a new school at Glynbeudy off Park Street in Lower Brynamman. By 1895, the population of Brynamman stood at 3,200.

A series of maps is incorporated within this report (see Maps 11 to 15) to illustrate the development of the Brynamman area between 1876 and 1913. Undoubtedly this incorporates the most dynamic period in the development of the area from a predominantly agricultural to an urban, industrialised landscape. It has not been possible to explore the development of the area following the First World War within the resources allowed for this report. It is likely that, there would be much of interest from this period onwards to occupy a further report by itself; from a social perspective, the establishment and achievements of the Brynamman Unemployed Welfare Committee during the 1930's being one of the most notable.

Also missing here is a chapter which needs to explore the decline of the traditional, heavy industries and the resultant effect this has had on the local community. How has the area responded to these changes ? What of post-industrial Brynamman ?

In 1935-6, the area was surveyed as part of the first national land utilisation survey under the direction of Sir Dudley Stamp. The survey of the Amman valley depicts the predominance of permanent and rough pasture interspersed by industrial and housing development. The extent of arable land including fallow, short ley and rotation grassland within the Amman valley appeared to be negligible, contrasting starkly with the emphasis a century earlier.

The reasons for the de-intensification of farming activity by the late 1930's lay outside the Amman valley and were linked with the decline of agricultural prosperity in Britain from the late 1870's to the outbreak of the Second World War. The repeal of protective legislation, the introduction of refrigeration and the rapid developments in agricultural production overseas particularly in North America, brought British grain and livestock products into competition with that from overseas.

Generally, in a regime of falling prices, arable crops are likely to be reduced and livestock production likely to be increased. For much of the Amman valley where soils, topography, rainfall and drainage do not lend themselves to more intensive arable systems, the effects of unfavourable market conditions for arable crops led to the wholesale switch toward livestock farming. The rate of these changes in the Amman valley has not however been explored in any detail and this could be a further topic of research.

2.2 Industrial Brynamman and the development of mining at Ynys Dawela

The original surveyors' drawings of the Amman Valley (1812) depicts a largely agricultural scene although it is likely that small, non-industrial scale working of coal must have been extensive by this time. A copy of this map is reproduced as Map 3. Nevertheless, two coal pits are depicted at the head of the valley; a sign of later developments. These locations are typical of early collieries, exploiting shallow reserves of coal, typically sited at elevated locations on slopes where the problems of underground flooding could be obviated by means of simple and inexpensive drainage adits.

Cartographic evidence suggests that there were a large number of drift workings of this type, particularly on the northern slopes of Gwaun-cae-Gurwen, creating an extraordinary mining landscape of excavations and spoil tips probably dating from the early 19th century; this can be seen as depicted by the Ordnance Survey 1st edition sheet, Glamorganshire II surveyed in 1876 - see map 11. Both coal and ironstone deposits appear to have been important during the nineteenth century and a number of iron mines are depicted by the O.S. (1812) within Cwm Llynfell and Cwm Twrch. Undoubtedly, the availability of both local coal and ironstone and also limestone within easy reach on the Black Mountain encouraged the siting of the Amman Iron works by the mid nineteenth century at Brynamman.

It was the physical impact of these early coal and ironstone workings on the landscape which gave its name to the district up to the mid-nineteenth century, the pre-cursor of Brynamman, Gwter Fawr - the great gutter. Enoch Rees' (Hanes Brynamman a'r cylchoedd, 1896) opinion on the origins of the great gutter was that it was hundreds of years old and created by deliberate erosion, as a means of identifying buried and deeper seams of coal or ironstone by a process which Rees describes as searching the "scrapeings". This method of working, of "the old people", involved impounding large quantities of water on a hill and then releasing it rapidly downhill, scouring the overlying deposits which were swept away to reveal the underlying geology. Thus according to Enoch Rees, it was by "*searching the scrapeings made the gutter into Gwterfawr*". It is interesting to note anecdotal references to this activity in the coal mining areas; it appears to have been widely used as an exploratory technique in mid Wales for lead and copper ores and is thought to be an extremely ancient (and environmentally unfriendly!) method of prospecting known as hushing. Exploitation of the deeper reserves of coal took place later from the mid 19th century onwards when more substantial capital investment and improving technology allowed the installation of effective pumping equipment to de-water underground workings by means other than gravity.

The type of coal found in the Amman valley is anthracite or stone coal/'glo carreg' as it was known. The development of the coal mining industry was comparatively late in the Amman valley compared to other parts of the South Wales coalfield, as was experienced across the Llanelli coalfield for instance. There were a number of reasons for the late industrial development of the Amman valley; the principal being that demand for anthracite coal developed quite late and was of a much smaller scale than that of steam coal.

Anthracite coal, being low in volatile, bituminous matter, was comparatively difficult to fire and being slow burning in nature was of little use to nineteenth century industry which relied so heavily on steam generated power. Coal such as that at found at nearby Llangennech was famed worldwide during the early nineteenth century as the choice of steam coal used by the East India Company to power its ships.

It was with the development of coal-fired central heating systems and markets for cleaner, smokeless fuels for domestic and commercial markets that demand for anthracite coal developed; consumption increasing markedly between the years 1890 and 1913. Figure 1 shows level of coal production in South Wales between 1860 and 1936. Note that the development of the anthracite industry was much later and of a comparatively smaller scale with respect to soft and steam coal consumption.

Another reason for the late development of the industrial potential of the Amman valley was its comparatively long distance from the ports on the South Wales coastline compared with other parts of the coalfield. It was only with the development of a widespread transport infrastructure, particularly that of the railway network, that large scale development of the area's mineral deposits became possible.

The O.S. Old Series 1" to a mile map issued in 1831 based upon thorough revision and resurvey between 1825-28 (of the original survey of 1812) is reproduced here as Map 4. Again, there is little evidence of industrial development of the valley although a colliery is shown at Gwter-fawr; elsewhere the scene is a rural one.

By the late 1830's and early 1840's, serious moves were being made to exploit the mineral reserves of the area. A conveyance dated 8th January 1842, preserved in the archives of the Neuadd Estate at the Swansea Record Office, alludes to an attempt to establish a mining district by agreement of local freeholders through the sale of mineral rights to form a consolidated block of land to facilitate the large scale exploitation of mineral reserves. With particular reference to Ynys Dawela, significant sections of the conveyance read as follows:

" and whereas by an agreement in writing bearing the date the twenty third day of February one thousand eight hundred and thirty eight under the hands of David Jones of Ynysdawell [sic] in the parish of Llandilofawr in the county of Carmarthen farmer and the said Joseph Martin and John Jones the said David Jones agree to sell and the said Joseph Martin and John Jones agreed to buy a moiety of all the veins of coal ironstone and clay sandstone and so forth and whereas in or about the beginning of the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty eight a project or undertaking was formed between the said Joseph martin and John Jones for combing their existing mineral properties contiguous to the river Amman and for obtaining others adjoining thereto in concert so as to form a sufficient district of country containing coal and ironstone to be offered to a joint stock company or other adventurers disposed to carry on operations on a large scale either in partnership with the said Joseph Martin and John Jones or otherwise as might appear ultimately advantageous and it was in pursuance of such a project or undertaking that the said Joseph Martin and John Jones obtained a conveyance of the hereditaments mentioned and comprised in the said recited indenture of the thirteenth and fourteenth days of May one thousand eight hundred and forty and contracted for the purpose of the hereditaments comprised in the said first recited agreement of the twenty third day of February one thousand eight hundred and thirty eight and obtained the said lease of thirteenth day of May one thousand eight hundred and forty"

The 1842 indenture also gave rights to the partnership of Joseph Martin and John Jones to erect any building or structure, to build any railway or canal and also the power to draw water in order to further the exploitation of mineral reserves in the area. In addition to Ynys Dawela farm, the other properties involved in the creation of this mineral district were Gorsto, Bryn Issa (Eskyr-y-Gelin), Tyr Noyadd, Wauncaegurwen, Gorsgoch, Cwmamman, Bryn Ucha and Clunborddy [sic].

Between 1842-6, a railway was built by John Jones of Brynbrain from Garnant to Brynamman. It was an extension of the Llanelli & Dock Company railway and built for the main purpose of transporting the coal of 'Level y Bresen' mine (unidentified) to its market.

In 1847, a Mr Llewellyn bought out the works of John Jones of Brynbrain and in the same year, two blast furnaces were installed by the former. The works were situated on Cwmammam farm to the east of Lower Brynamman, on the Glamorgan-shire side of the river Amman. The company's portfolio of assets included an estate of land and mineral rights covering 990 acres. However it should be emphasised that the company's interest over much of this land did not include the freehold nor farming lease; it merely possessed the mineral rights. This was certainly the case with Ynys Dawela farm. A volume of plans dated 1857 depicts the extent of the company's minerals estate. In total, the properties 'acquired' included Neuadd, Gorsgoch, Gwter-fawr (see Map 8), Cwmamman (see Map 10), Gorsto, Cwmteg and Blaen Cwmteg farms, part of Gwaun-cae-Gurwen common (all Llangiwg parish), Cwmnantmoel Farm (see Map 7) (Llangadog parish), Bryn Ucha, Bryn Isha (see Map 6) and Ynys Dawela (see Map 9) farms (all Llan-deilofawr parish).

In 1848, the first lot of pig iron was produced by the Amman Iron Works and a new forge was added shortly after in 1851. By 1861, a large new forge was installed and by this time, the works were now owned by the Amman Iron Company. The works situated on Cwmammam farm were mapped in 1857 and consisted of a complex of two furnaces, a "new pit", coke ovens, "mine kilns", a pond with water courses, tramroad and incline, workshops and an office. George Borrow visited the works during the mid 1850's. After a breakfast of *"excellent tea, buttered toast and Glamorgan sausages"* and having been informed of a *"considerable iron foundry"* nearby, Borrow decided to take a look and shortly after arrival, was given a guided tour of the place. Borrow then witnessed, *"... a large steam engine at play, terrible furnaces, and immense heaps of burning, cracking cinders, and a fiery stream of molten metal rolling along."* Map 10 (Amman Iron Company, 1857) depicts the works as described above by Borrow.

In 1855, the Gwter Pit was sunk, being about 110 yards deep.

In 1868, a third blast furnace was added to be known as "Ffwrness Fawr" and in 1872, a tin works added to the complex at the Amman Iron Works on the opposite, Carmarthenshire side of the Afon Amman. In May of 1873, the Ynys colliery was started originally by a group of nine local young men. This was a drift mine to the middle and lower seam. The plan of Ynys Dawela farm dated 1857 forming part of the minerals estate of the Amman Iron Company carries an annotation dated 25th March 1873 to the effect, "Gave up these minerals being of no use to ??? nor iron ???. GBS". It is therefore unlikely that anything but trial workings were made on Ynys Dawela farm before 1873 and no development was made thereafter by the Amman Iron Company or its successors.

There are two disused coal workings: an old coal pit near Pen-waun-ynys cottages and an old coal level near Cornel-fach cottage depicted on the 1:2500 1876 O.S. map of the area. It may be that these two trial workings were made by the Amman Iron Company in order to establish the viability of working the mineral resources beneath Ynys Dawela farm. It does not appear however that the results were favourable since the company surrendered its lease to the minerals on Ynys Dawela farm by 1873.

In May of 1873, Enoch Rees reported that the Ynys colliery was started by a group of nine local young men. This was a drift mine to the middle and lower seam. It appears likely that this working is that depicted by the 1876 O.S. map as "Ynys Dawela Level" to the south and east of the farmstead (see Map 16).

In 1874, there was a long strike of some 6 months duration in the collieries of the region which appears to be the first significant industrial conflict in the Brynamman area; it ended without favour to the workers. A further dispute involving the workers at Pwll and Cannon collieries began in March 1880 and lasted 12 months and 5 days, ending by arbitration. The strikers, members of the Miner's Federation of the Anthracite Coal region were demanding equal terms with other colliers in the region. The strike eventually forced the temporary closure of the three furnaces and forge at the Amman Iron Works. Finally, the employers and representatives of the colliers agreed in 1882 to adopt a system whereby wages in the region would follow the "sliding scale of steam coal".

In 1884, Pwll Newydd y Waun colliery was begun, the same year as that in which Pwll y Gwter colliery closed. In 1889 work was begun on the Glynbeudy tinplate works and by the following year it had started production.

By 1905, the 2nd edition 1:2500 O.S. plan (see Map 17) depicts further infrastructure developments at the Ynys Dawela level with connections to the G.W.R. Garnant & Brynamman branch railway. A ventilating station was established at the site of the "Old Coal Pit" depicted on the 1876 map. To the north-east, a small reservoir was built - for unknown purpose. To the west of Pen-waun-ynys cottages, a colliery shaft had been sunk after 1876 but abandoned by 1905; possibly by the same company since it is likely that they would have taken on the mineral lease for whole farm from the Amman Iron Company.

By the turn of the century, the only working collieries of note in the area apart from Ynys Dawela colliery were Gwaun-cae-gurwen, Pant-y-Celyn and Cwm-teg collieries. There does not appear to be any mention by this date that ironstone was an important product. The tinplate works built by the Amman Iron Company had closed by this time.

By 1913, the Ynys Dawela level had changed its name to Ynys Amman colliery and seems to have been further developed with buildings near the level entrance, one with a chimney stack - probable engine house. The area taken up by colliery waste was spread over a wider area, to the east of the level entrance (see Map 18).

By the advent of the first world war, the other working collieries in the area included Gwaun-cae-Gurwen, Cwm-teg and Amman collieries. The site of the Amman Iron Works had by this stage been taken over by the Amman Brick Works.

There are 13 sets of documents and mine abandonment plans relating to coal mining based on the original farm area of Ynys Dawela dated between 1911 and 1956 which were deposited with the British Coal Mining Record Office. Some of the plans are undated and could be earlier. In addition, it is clear from notes on many plans that they incorporate information from older, unspecified drawings and are therefore composite documents.

The earliest plans as one might expect, carry the name of Ynys Dawela colliery and relate to the working of the middle or upper Gellideg seam below Ynys Dawela farm to the north of the Afon Amman.

A later set of plans dating from the 1930's are entitled Brynamman Colliery and although it is clear that the workings were accessed from the original (Ynys Dawela) drift, by this date they included workings not only to the north of the Amman but also to the south side of the river extending across a wide area. The owners at this time were the Henderson's Welsh Anthracite Collieries Ltd.

All of the plans were prepared at the scale of 2 chains to an inch and relate to the working of the following named seams: Lower (standard Lower Gellideg) [vein abandoned on 14th November 1934], Middle (standard Upper Gellideg) vein, Little Brass (standard Five Quarters) vein, Brynlloi vein (same as Bryn vein?), Bryn (standard Garw) vein, Trigloyn (probable standard Bute) vein, Peacock (probable standard Lower Ninefeet) vein. Figure 2 is an undated copy of a vertical section through the coal measures in the Cwmamman area found amongst the mine abandonment plans for Ynys Dawela/Brynamman colliery. It illustrates the vertical displacement, thicknesses and names of the seams found in the area.

The latest date on these plans with reference to the actual extent of coal working is given as 25th May 1935; the latest date on the set of plans relating to Ynys Dawela/Brynamman colliery is 18th April 1942. It therefore seems to be unlikely from these sets of plans that the mine was still working at nationalisation in 1947.

Between 1948 and 1952, the National Coal Board Opencast Executive requisitioned 54 acres of land at Ynys Dawela. However, the interest at this time lay in the previously unworked shallow reserves to the north of the Ynys Dawela farmstead in a wide strip of land parallel and to the south of Llandeilo road. An area of approximately 9 acres in extent was excavated between July 1952 and April 1953; the working was known as the Pen-waun-ynys opencast. A total of 32,149 tons of anthracite was recovered; the names of seams worked were the Rider, Middle and Lower veins. Resoiling was completed in September 1954 and the land subsequently returned to agriculture in November 1954.

3.0 Appendix

3.1 Sources consulted

Carmarthen Record Office:

Dynevor Mapbook 5, various

No.11 Glanyrafon; No.40 Garn; No.42 Treginllath
No.55a Cefnyforest; No.56 Llwyndrainog; No.78 Clyndreinog
No.88 Cynhordy; No.90 Tir Sir Walter; No.91 Tirycloed
No.93 Tir Rhys Shon

City of Swansea Record Office:

Neuadd Estate D/D SB 13/1
(part), 1842

Conveyance of freehold and leasehold estates in
Llandilofawr, Llangadog and Llangiwg parishes including
(i) Gorsto, (ii) Bryn issa (Eskyr-y-Gelin). (iii) Tyr
Noyadd, (iv) Wauncaegurwen, (v) Gorsgoch, (vi) Ynisdawel
(vii) Cwmmamman, (viii) Brynucha and (ix) Clunbordy farms

Neuadd Estate D/D SB 13
E/1, 1857

Volume of Maps of land and minerals belonging to the Amman
Iron Company 1857 comprising (i) Noyadd, (ii) Gorsgoch,
(iii) Gwterfawr, (iv) Cwmmamman, (v) Corstoe, (vi) Cwmteg,
(vii) Blaencwmteg, (viii) Cwmnantmoel (ix) Brynucha, (x) Bryn
issa, (xi) Ynis Dawela (xii) Part of Gwauncaegurwen

National Library Of Wales:

DTM Jones Colln A15, 1806

Bryn Pedol

William Jones Colln 10
(Acc. PG4623), 1833

Map of Cwm in the parish of Llanguicke

NLW map room, 1812

Original Surveyor's Drawing, Sheet 189

NLW tithe maps, 1838

Llandilofawr Parish tithe map & schedule.

NLW tithe maps, 1838

Llangadock Parish tithe map & schedule.

NLW tithe maps, 1838

Llanguicke Parish tithe map & schedule.

NLW tithe maps, 1846

Bettws Parish tithe map & schedule.

British Coal Mining Record Office (Abandonment Plans):

12852, n.d.

Plan of Ynys Dawela Colliery Scale 2 chains to inch

13154, n.d.

Ynis Colliery Middle Vein Scale 2 chains to inch

SW 2765, 1911

Ynys Dawela Colliery Middle Vein Scale 2 chains to inch

11427, 1935

Brynamman Colliery Lower Vein Scale 2 chains to inch

10799, 1932

Brynamman Colliery Plan of Bryn Vein Scale 2 chains to inch

11599, 1935

Brynamman Colliery Plan of Brynllloi Vein and Middle Vein
Scale 2 chains to inch

SWR 1531, n.d.	Brynamman Colliery Std Lower Gellideg [Lower vein] Std Garw [Bryn vein] Std Five Quarters [Little Brass vein] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1530A, n.d.	Brynamman Std Upper Gellideg [Middle vein] Std Lower Gellideg [Lower vein] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1530B, n.d.	Brynamman Colliery Std Upper Gellideg [Middle vein] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1530C, n.d.	Brynamman Colliery Peacock Vein [Probably Std Lower Nine feet] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1530D, n.d.	Brynamman Colliery Trigloyn Vein [Probably Std Bute seam] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1531B, n.d.	Section of coal seams as proved in the district of Cwmanman
SW 327, 1956	Pen-waun-ynys Opencast. Scale 1:2500

Dyfed Archaeological Trust:

Sites and Monuments Record

3.12 Published Sources

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Bowen-Evans M, 1994	Tamaid i aros pryd: to whet your appetite in Report of the County Archivist 1993-4 West Glamorgan County Council.
Evans MCS, 1985	The Forgotten Roads of Carmarthenshire: 2. Llangadog to Trecastle, Brynamman and Swansea in Carmarthenshire Antiquary Vol.XXI 1985. Carmarthen
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Rees E, 1896	Hanes Brynamman a'r Cylchoedd. Ystalafera
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3.13 Published Mapping

Bowen Emanuel, 1729	South Wales
Land Utilisation Survey, c.1947	Brecon and Llandovery. Sheet 90
Margary H, 1992	The Old Series Ordnance Survey Maps of England and Wales. Volume VI Wales. Lympe Castle.
Ordnance Survey, 1877	1st Edition 1:2500 County Series Carms.XLIX.3/Glam.II.3 Southampton.
Ordnance Survey, 1883	1st Edition 1:10560 County Series Glam.II. Southampton
Ordnance Survey, 1891	1st Edition 1:10560 County Series Glam.II(part)/Carms.XLIX NE Southampton
Ordnance Survey, 1900	2nd Edition 1:10560 County Series Glam.II NE/Carms.XLIX NE Southampton
Ordnance Survey, 1906	2nd Edition 1:2500 County Series Carms.XLIX.3/Glam.II.3 Southampton.
Ordnance Survey, 1908	2nd Edition 1:10560 County Series Carms.XLIX NE/Glam.II NE Southampton
Ordnance Survey, 1918	3rd Edition 1:2500 County Series Carms.XLIX.3/Glam.II.3 Southampton.
Ordnance Survey, 1921	3rd Edition 1:10560 County Series Carms.XLIX NE/Glam.II NE Southampton

Cont'd ...

Commission to Ynys Dawela

- (iii) Industrial Revolution in Brynaman, Garnant and Gwaun-cae-gurwen When? For what reasons? ~~Where~~ came the immigrant workers? When did developments/new housing cease? Why?
- (iv) Cwm Aman Coal Mine. Dates (formerly Andersons?) Finished 1935? Kind of coal; from where? Kind of pit; production level at its height. Coal screening (dry) done in 1960s.
- (v) Tinplate Works - ditto.
- (vi) Railway - ditto (It eventually led to the cutting off of Parc Ynys Dawela low field.

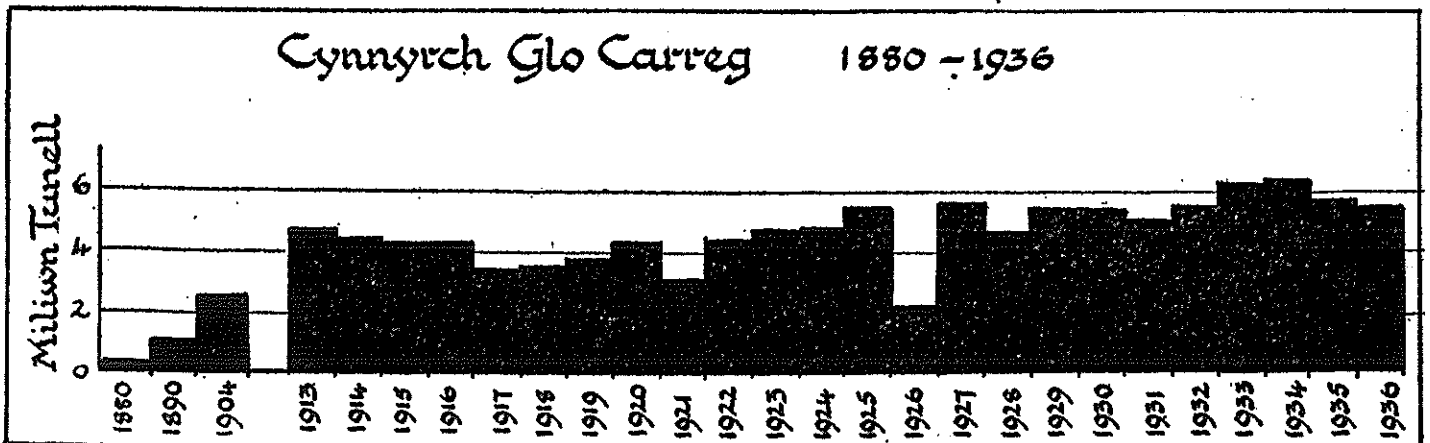
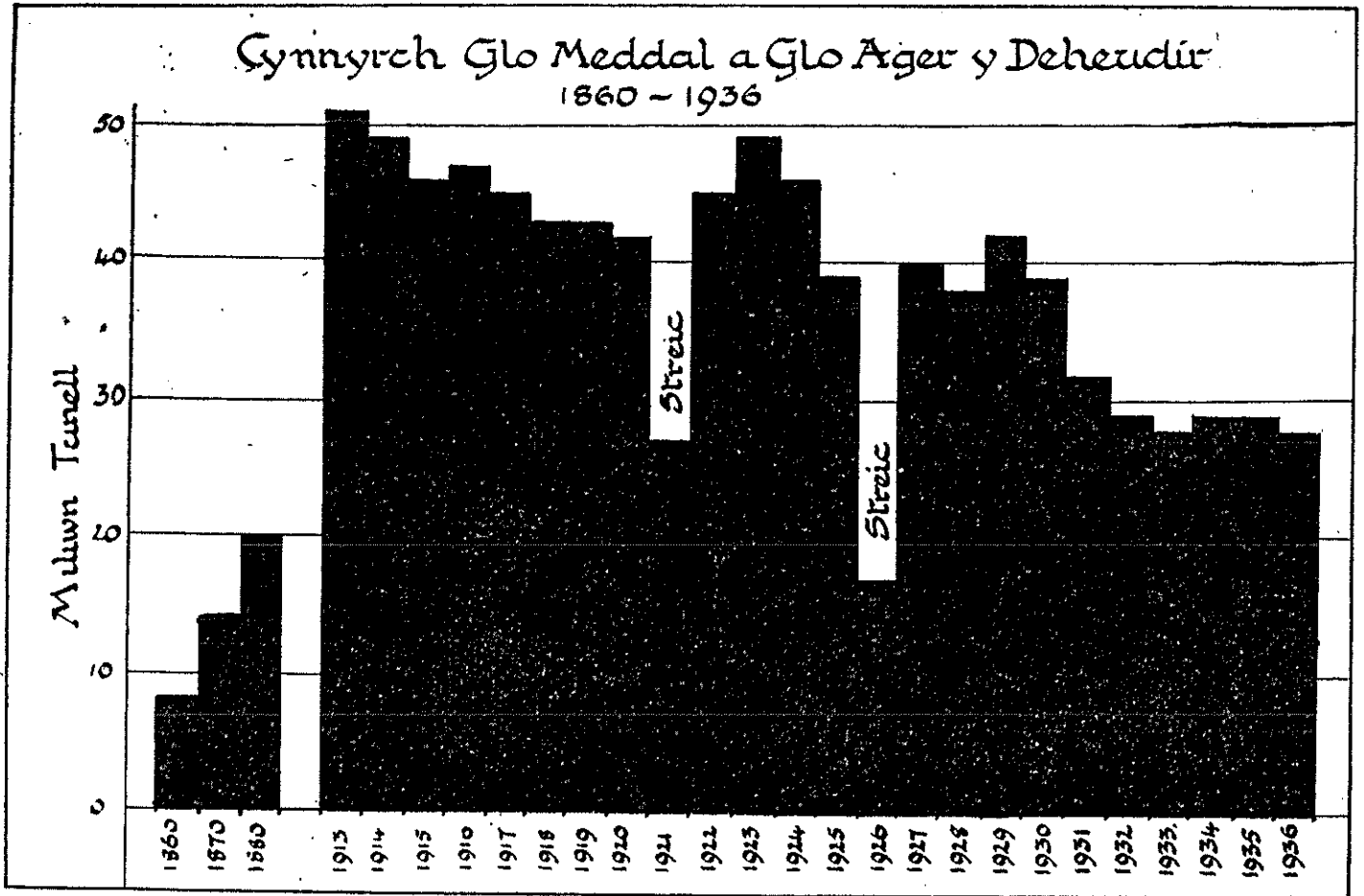
If any of this thinking seems to you a bit wrong headed, please correct it, and, of course, make your own interpretations.

Yours sincerely,



Countryside Officer.

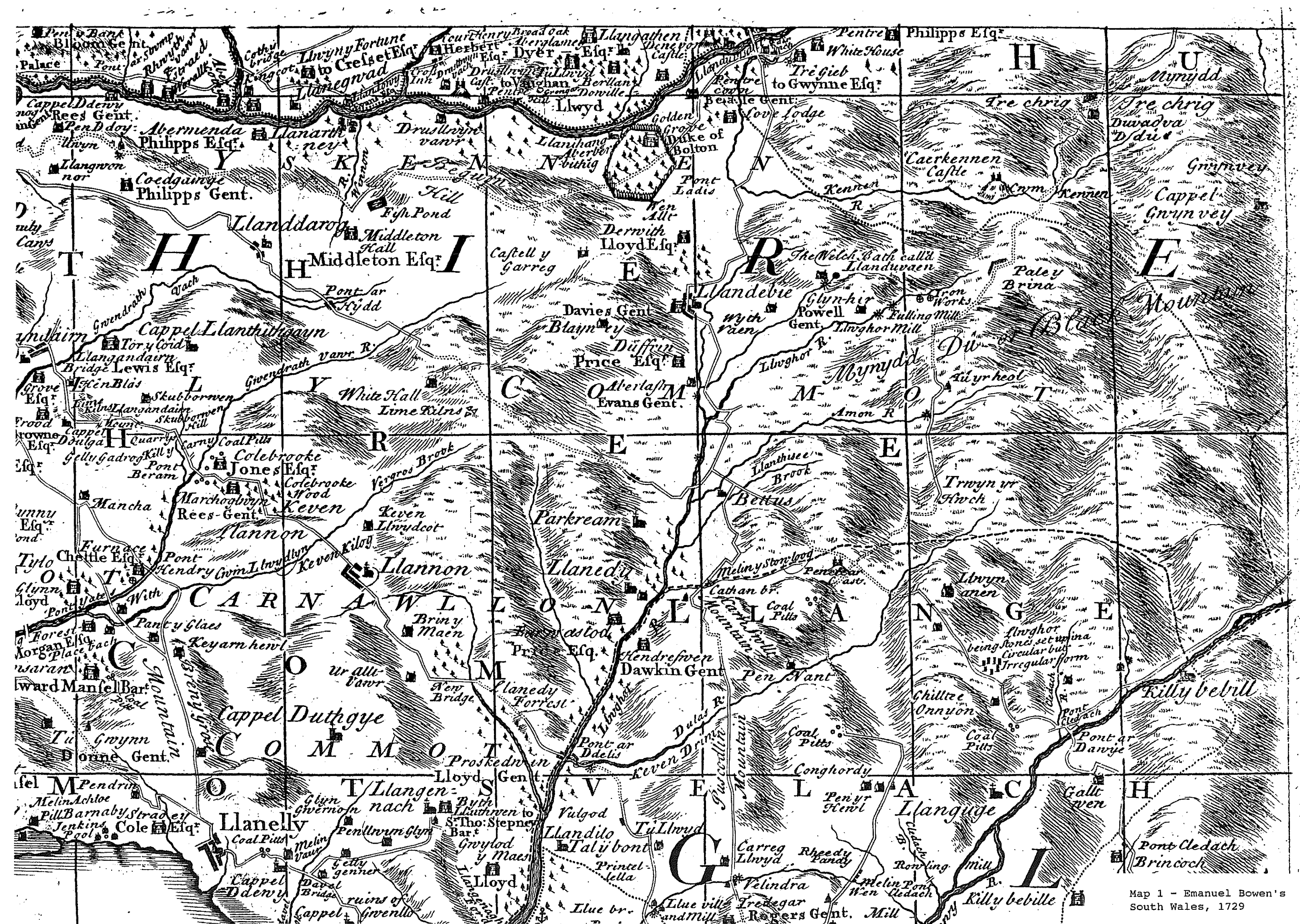
Figure 1 - Level of coal production
in South Wales between 1860 and 1936



SECTION OF COAL SEAMS AS PROVED IN THE DISTRICT OF CWMAMMAN CARMARTHENSHIRE

NAME OF SEAM	THICKNESS OF SEAM		DEPTH FROM RED VEIN	THICKNESS OF INTER STRATA	REMARKS
	FEET	INS		YARDS	
RED VEIN	3	6			THESE SEAMS AND DISTANCES ARE AS PROVED AT THE GWAUN CAE GURWEN PITS
				76	
COAL	1	0	76		
				88	
COAL	1	3	164		
				42	
SOAP VEIN	1	8	206		
				26	
STWRIN VEIN	1	10	232		THESE SEAMS AND DISTANCES ARE AS PROVED IN THE CWMAMMAN DISTRICT
WHITE VEIN	2	6	240	8	
				27	
BLACK VEIN	3	0	267		
				23	
LITTLE or PENGRAIG	2	6	290		
				18	
HARLO or LOWER DO	1	3	308		
				22	
BIG VEIN	4	6	350		
BLACK VEIN	2	6	338		
				8	
				24	
BRASS VEIN	3	3	362		
				17	
TRIGLOIN VEIN	4	0	379		
				29	
BRYNLLOI VEIN	2	8	408		
				44	
LITTLE BRASS VEIN	1	6	452		
MIDDLE VEIN	2	8	461		9½
LOWER VEIN	3	0	471		10

Figure 2 - Vertical section of coal seams in Cwmamman District n.d.

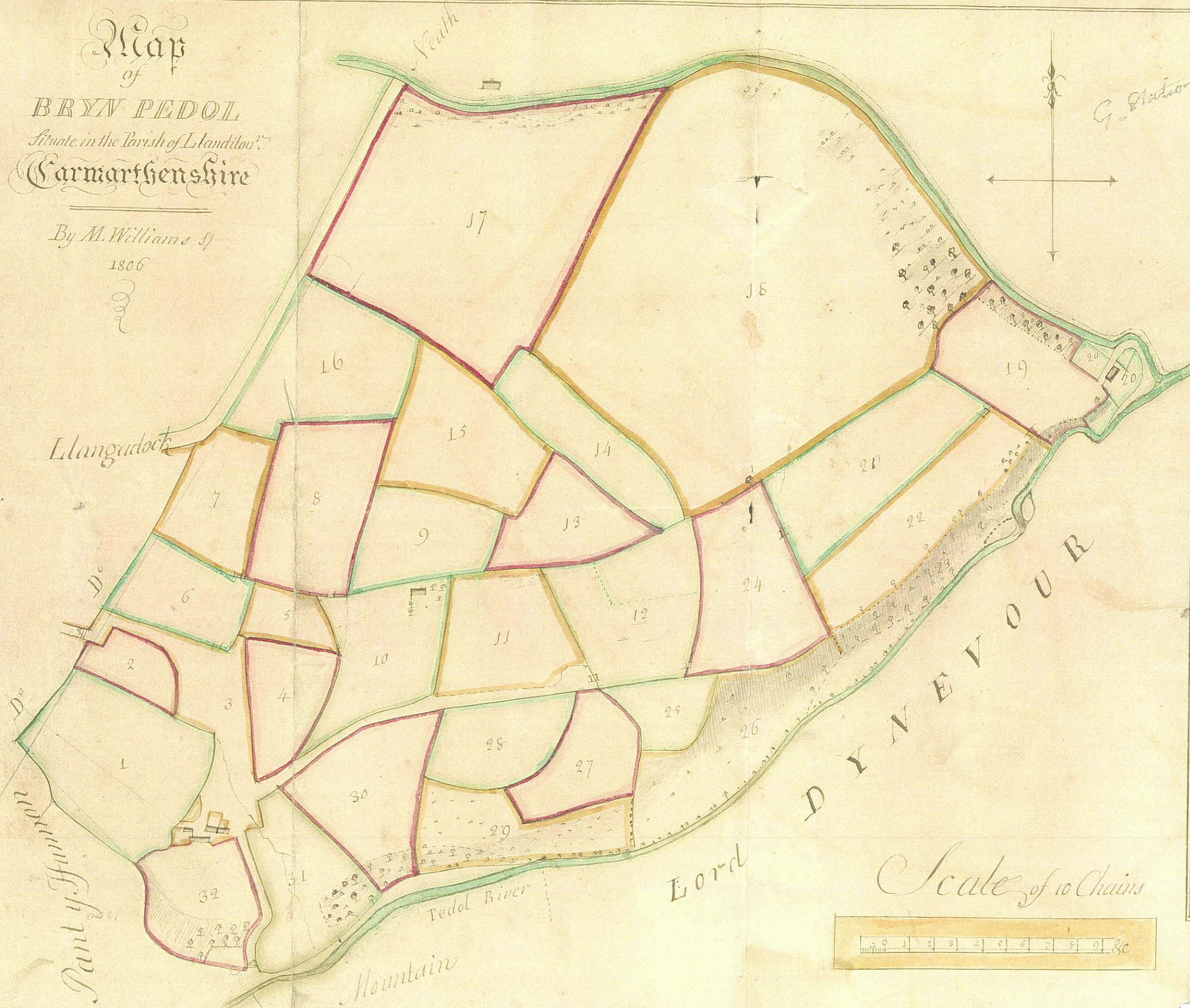


Map 1 - Emanuel Bowen's
South Wales, 1729

Map
of
BRYN PEDOL
Situate in the Parish of Llandilow
Garmarthenshire

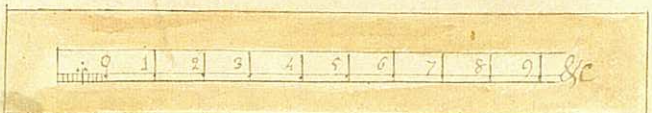
By M. Williams Esq

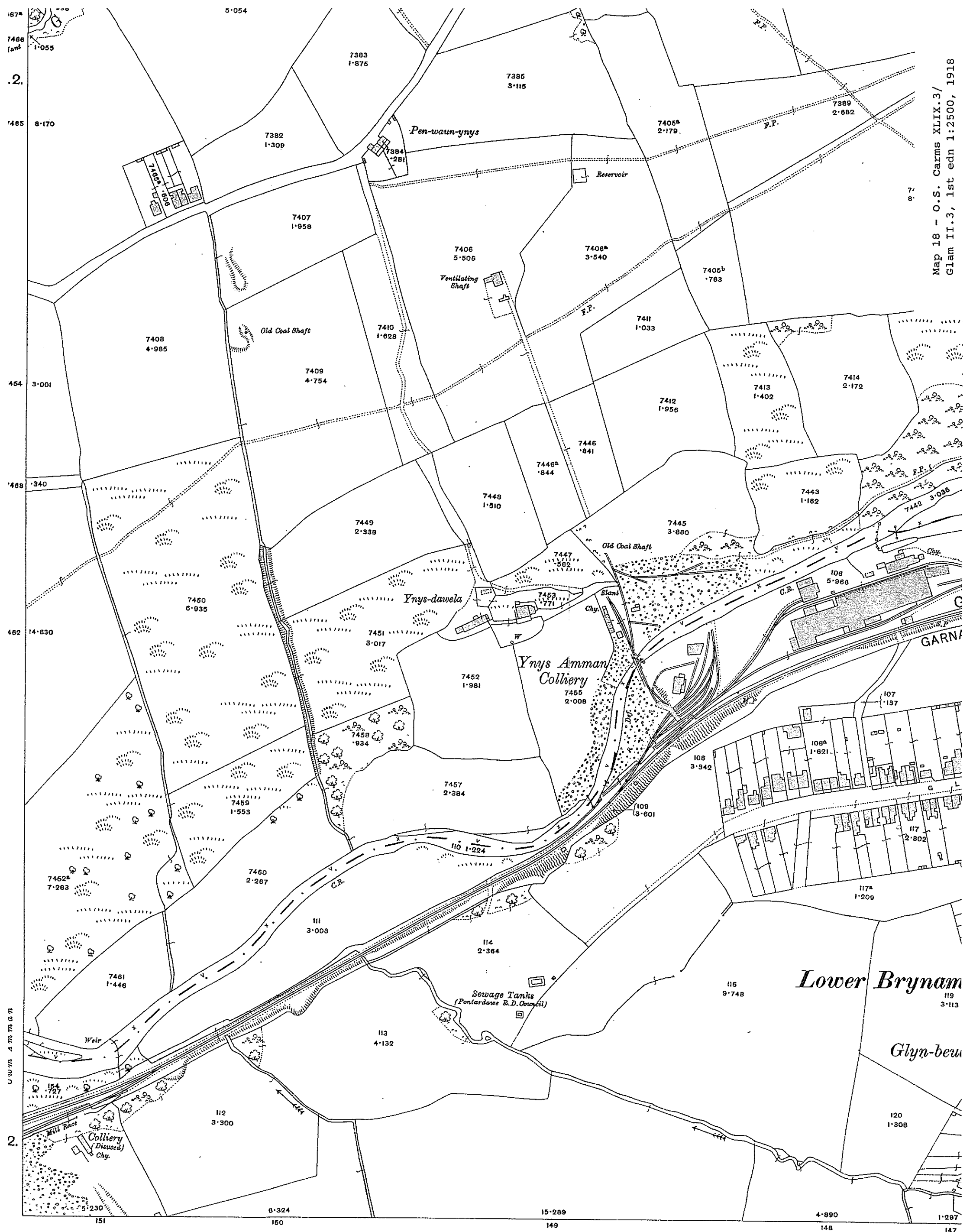
1806



No	FIELD'S Names	Qualit	Statute	
			A	R
1	Cae uchlaw'r Ty	Arabl	3	3
2	Waun fach	Mead	1	0
3	Coedgae and Houses	Past.	2	0
4	Ditto	D°	1	2
5	Cae bach	D°	0	3
6	Cae crwn	Arabl	1	3
7	Cae bryn	D°	2	0
8	Cae bryn cenol	D°	3	1
9	Cae bryn isa	D°	2	0
10	Cae pen twyn	D°	2	3
11	Coedgae coch	D°	3	0
12	Cae r lloi	D° & P	3	0
13	Cae r Gerddinen	D°	2	1
14	Cae main	D°	2	0
15	Cae llwyn du	D°	3	0
16	Cae pant	D°	3	1
17	Gwaun y gors ucha	Mead	10	2
18	Gwaun y gors isa	D°	21	1
19	Cae r bont	Past	3	0
20	Cot and gardens		0	1
21	Waun newydd	Mead	3	2
22	Coedgae isa	Past	3	0
23	Wood under Ditto	Wood	1	3
24	Coedgae ucha	Past	3	0
25	Cae rhyg	Arabl	1	0
26	Graig under D° Ws	Past	2	1
27	Cae r graig	D°	1	3
28	Cae r Cnmen	Arable	1	2
29	Coedgae r Eithin	Past	2	1
30	Craig yr Eithin	Arabl	2	3
31	Cot r myth	Mead	2	1
32	Waun don y Ty	Mead	2	0
Tott			102	0

Scale of 10 Chains

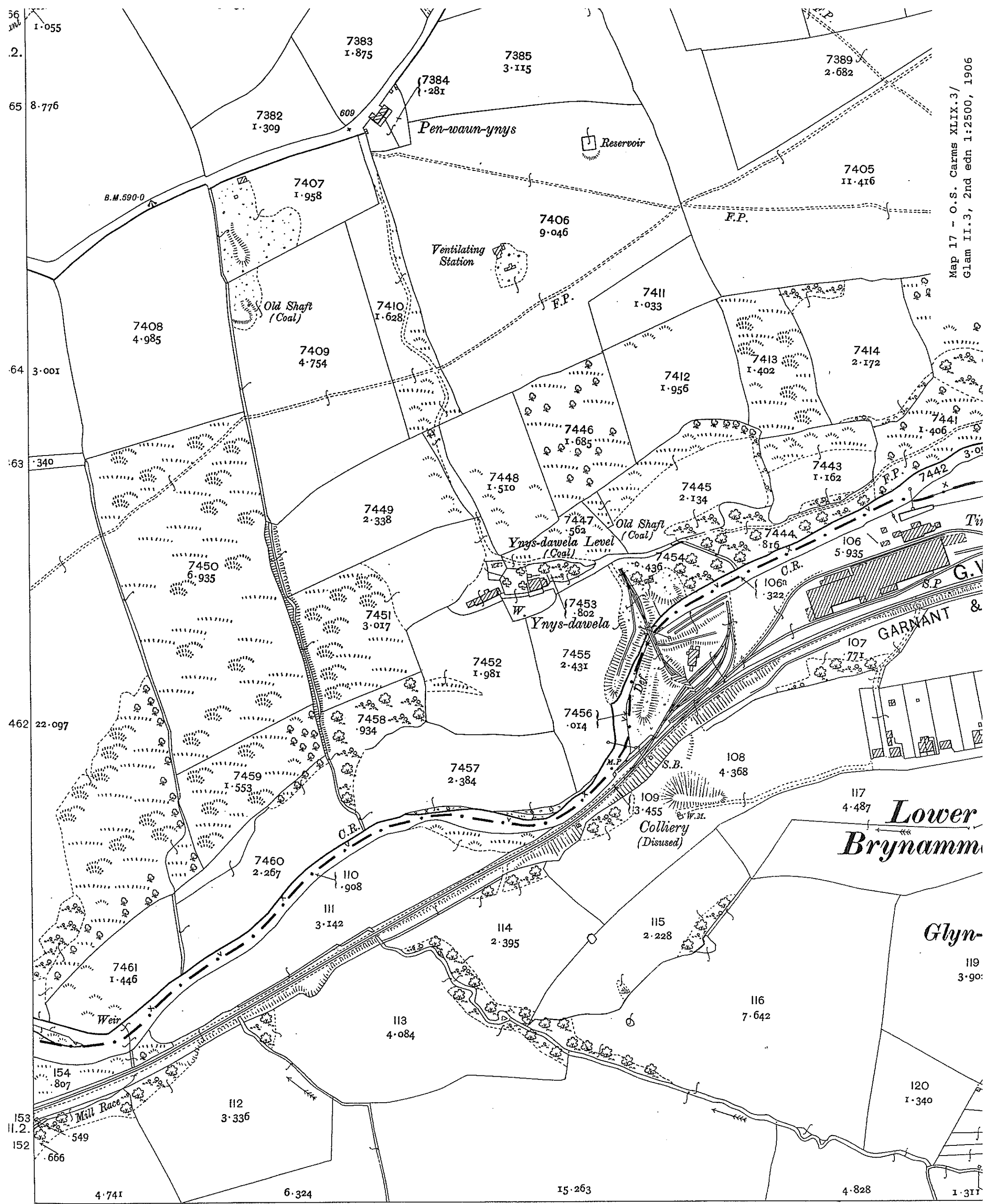




Carmarthenshire Surveyed in 1878.
Glamorgan.....Surveyed in 1876.
Reprint 20/25, 50/30, 50/41.

CHARACTERISTICS AND SYMBOLS FOR BOUNDARIES, &c.

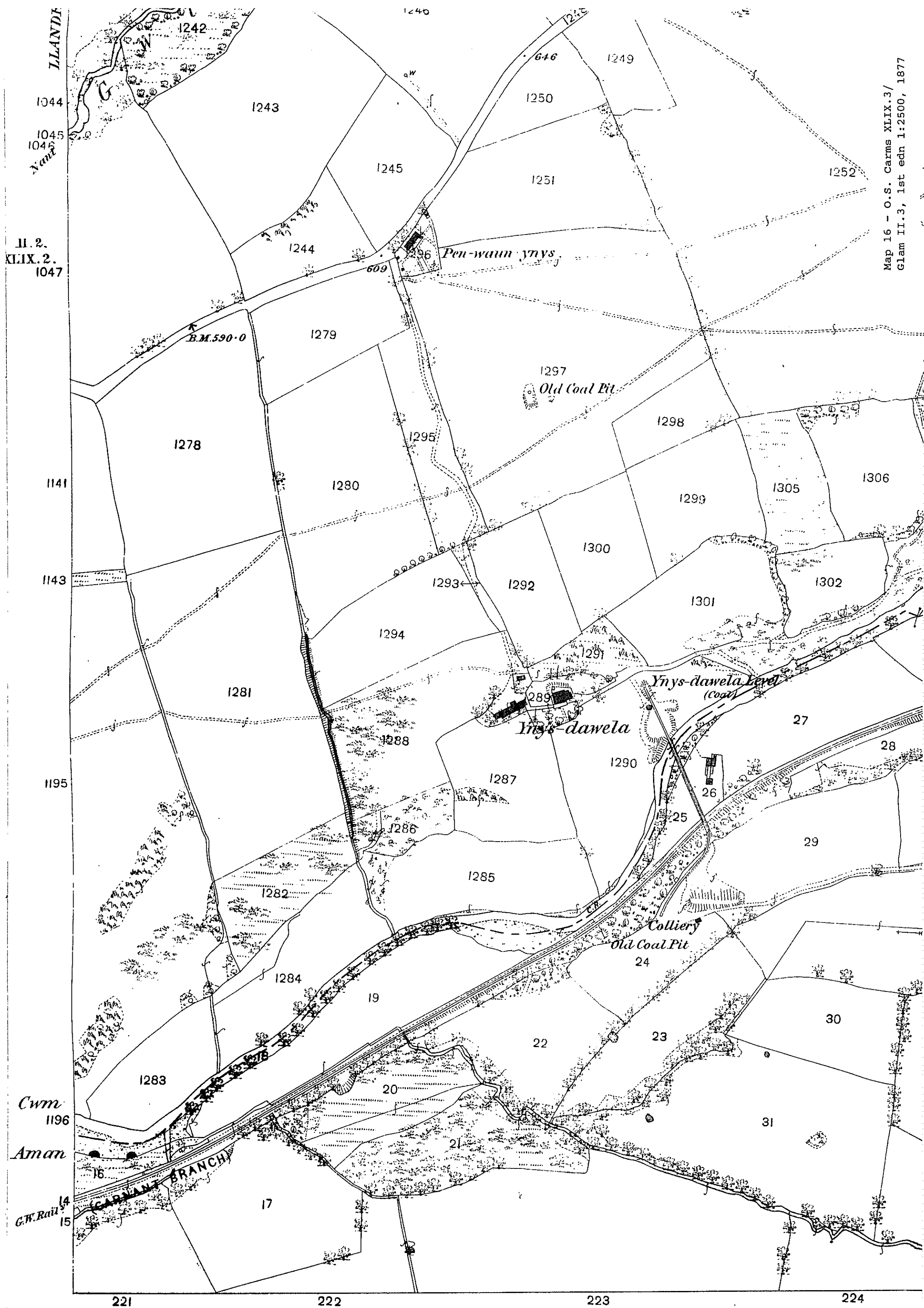
County	County	C	Municipal Wards	W	Change of Boundary, indicating the point at	Every parcel is numbered Its area is given underneath Braces indicating that the sp included in the same reference
	Boroughs	C	Urban Districts	D	which the character of a Boundary changes	
	Parliamentary	P	Civil Parishes	P	Antiquities (Site of)	
	Municipal	M	Rural Districts	R	Trigonometrical Station	
					Poor Law Unions	



Carmarthenshire, Surveyed in 1876. Revised in 1905.
Glamorgan " 1876. " 1896.
Reprint, 50/12.

CHARACTERISTICS AND SYMBOLS FOR BOUNDARIES, &c.

County	County	C	Municipal Wards	W	Change of Boundary, indicating the point at which the character of a Boundary changes	Every parcel is numbered. Its area is given under Braces indicating that it is included in the same risk. For other information
	County	E	Urban Districts	D		
	Parliamentary	P	Civil Parishes	P		
	Municipal	M	Rural Districts	R		
Boroughs	County	C	Municipal Wards	W	Antiquities (Site of)	Poor Law Unions
	County	E	Urban Districts	D		
	Parliamentary	P	Civil Parishes	P		
	Municipal	M	Rural Districts	R		

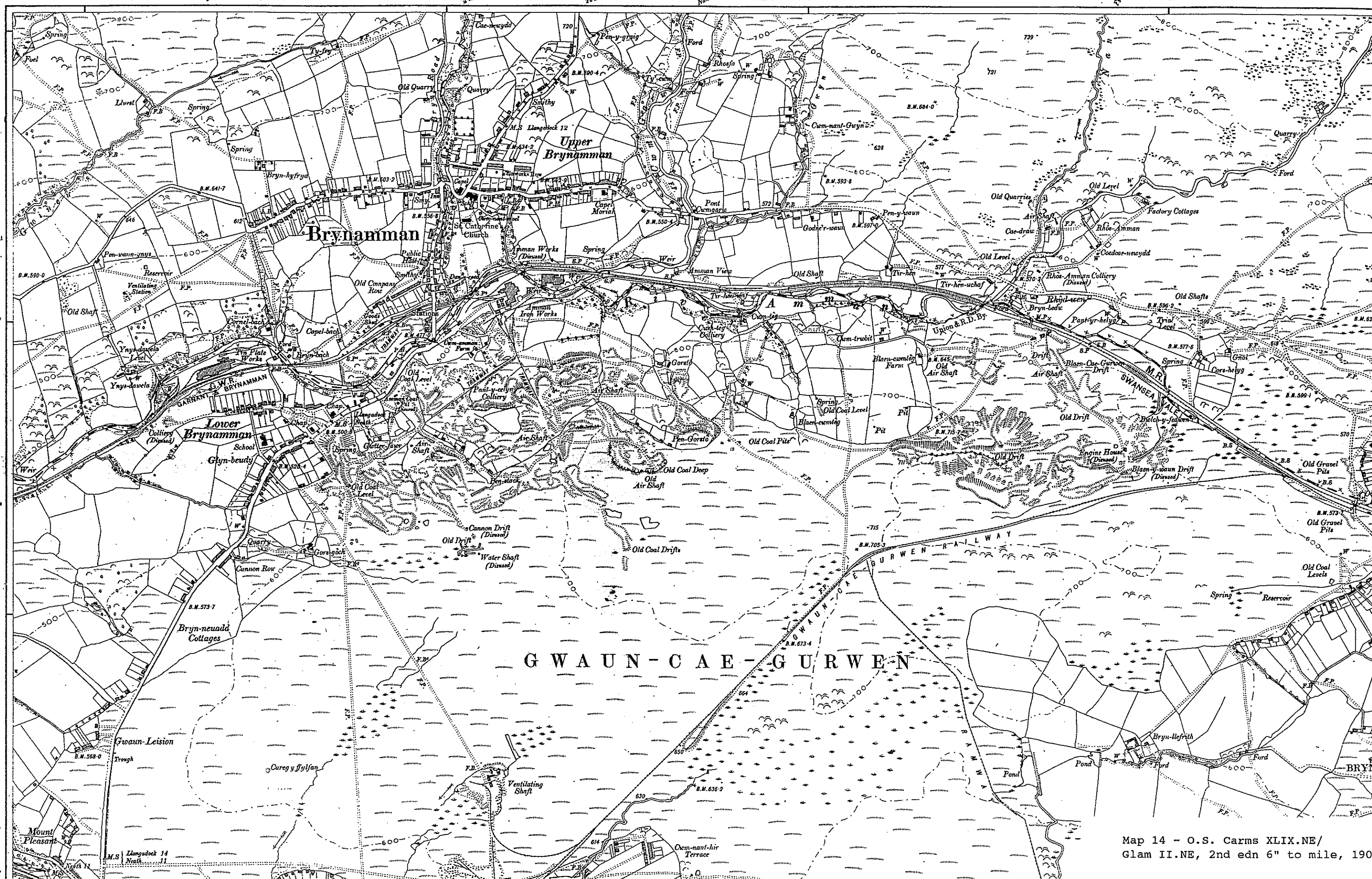


Map 16 - O.S. Carms XLIX.3/
Glam II.3, 1st edn 1:2500, 1877

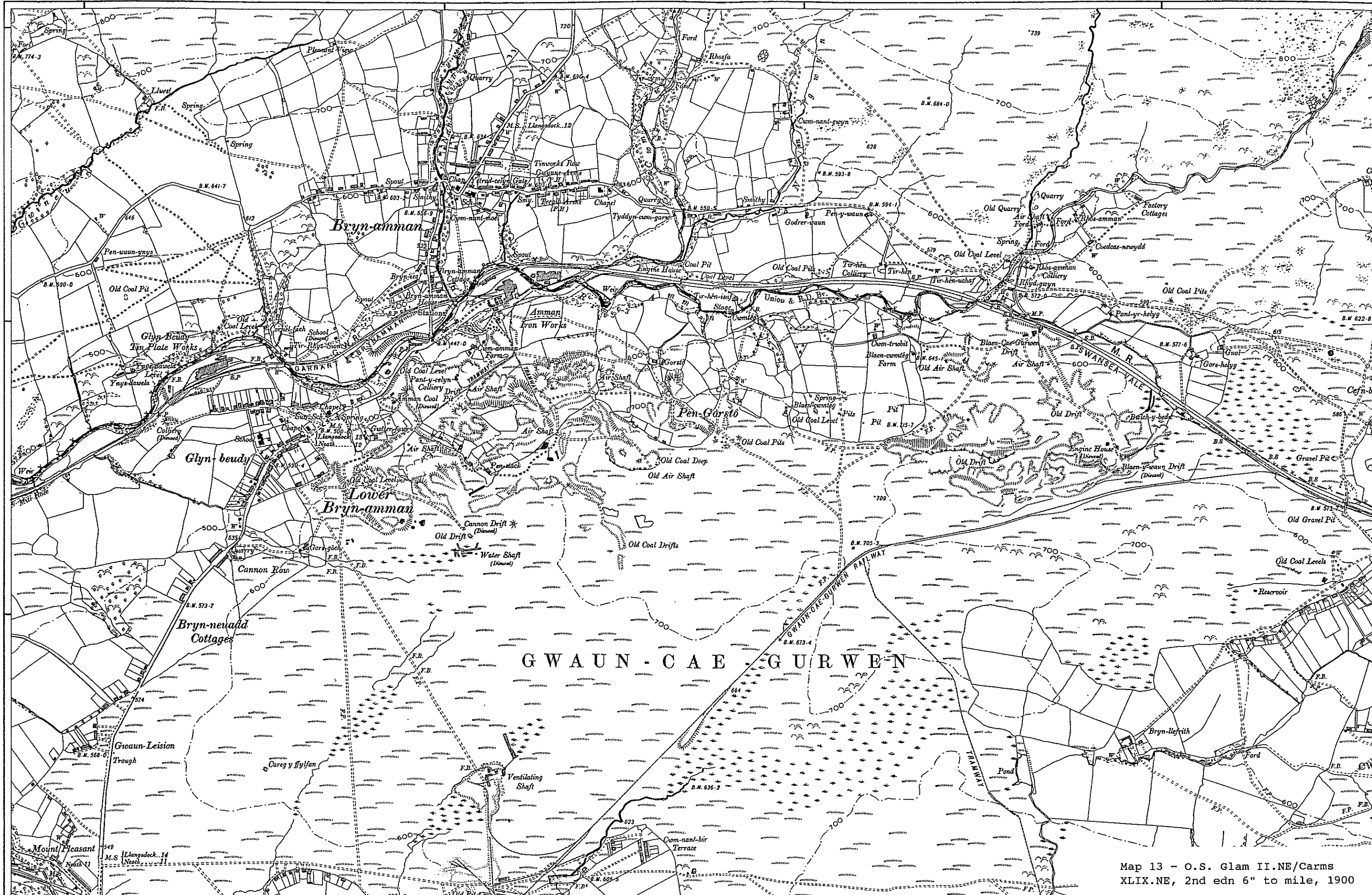
Scale 2500 or 25344 Inches to a Statute Mile or 208.33 Feet to One Inch



Map 15 - O.S. Carms XLIX.NE/
Glam II.NE, 3rd edn 6" to mile, 1921



Map 14 - O.S. Carms XLIX.NE/
Glam II.NE, 2nd edn 6" to mile, 1901



Map 13 - O.S. Glam II.NE/Carms
XLIX.NE, 2nd edn 6" to mile, 1900

BLACK MOUNTAIN
Foel-deg-ar-bedol

LLANDILO FAWR

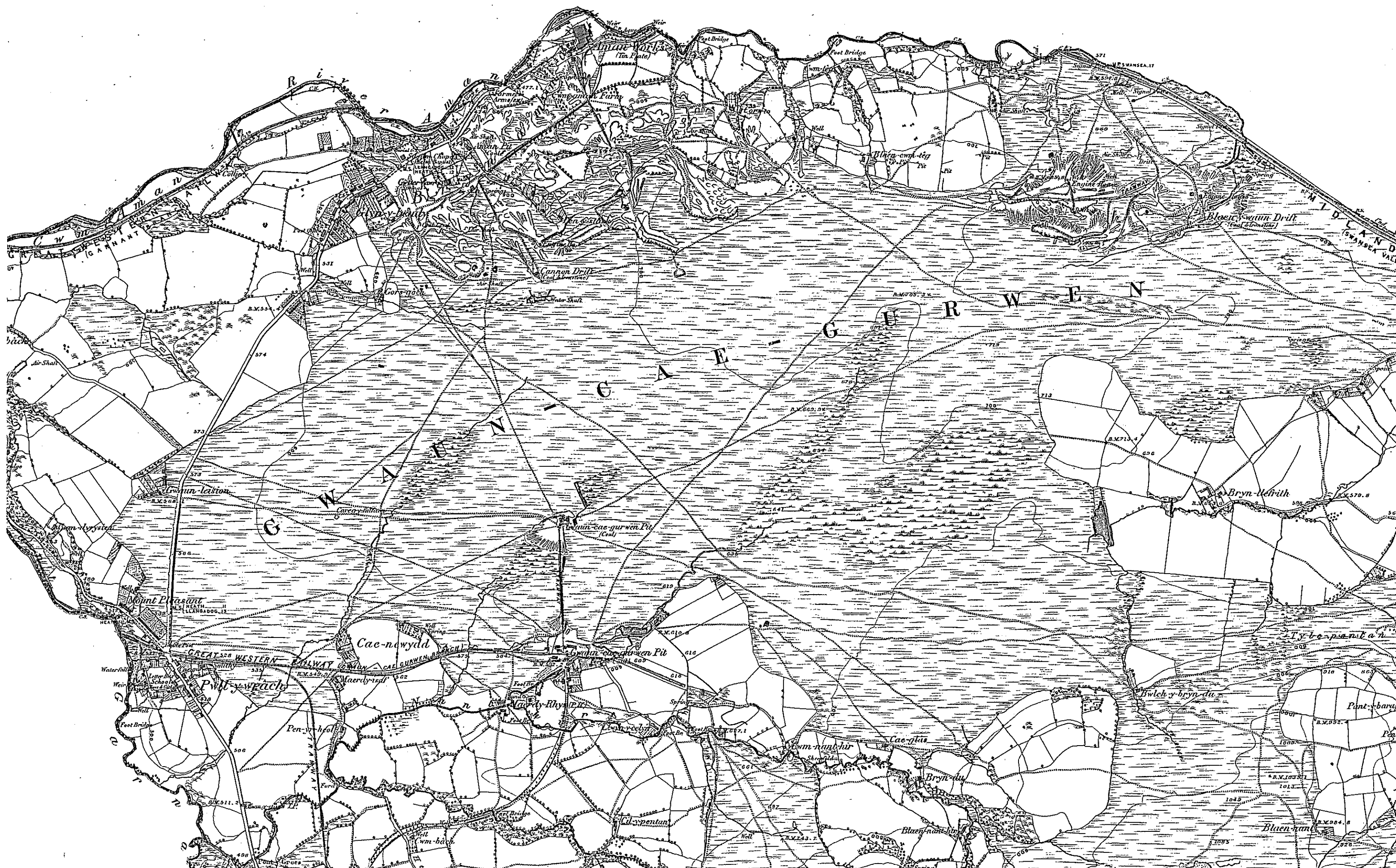
QUARTER BACH
Cae-newydd

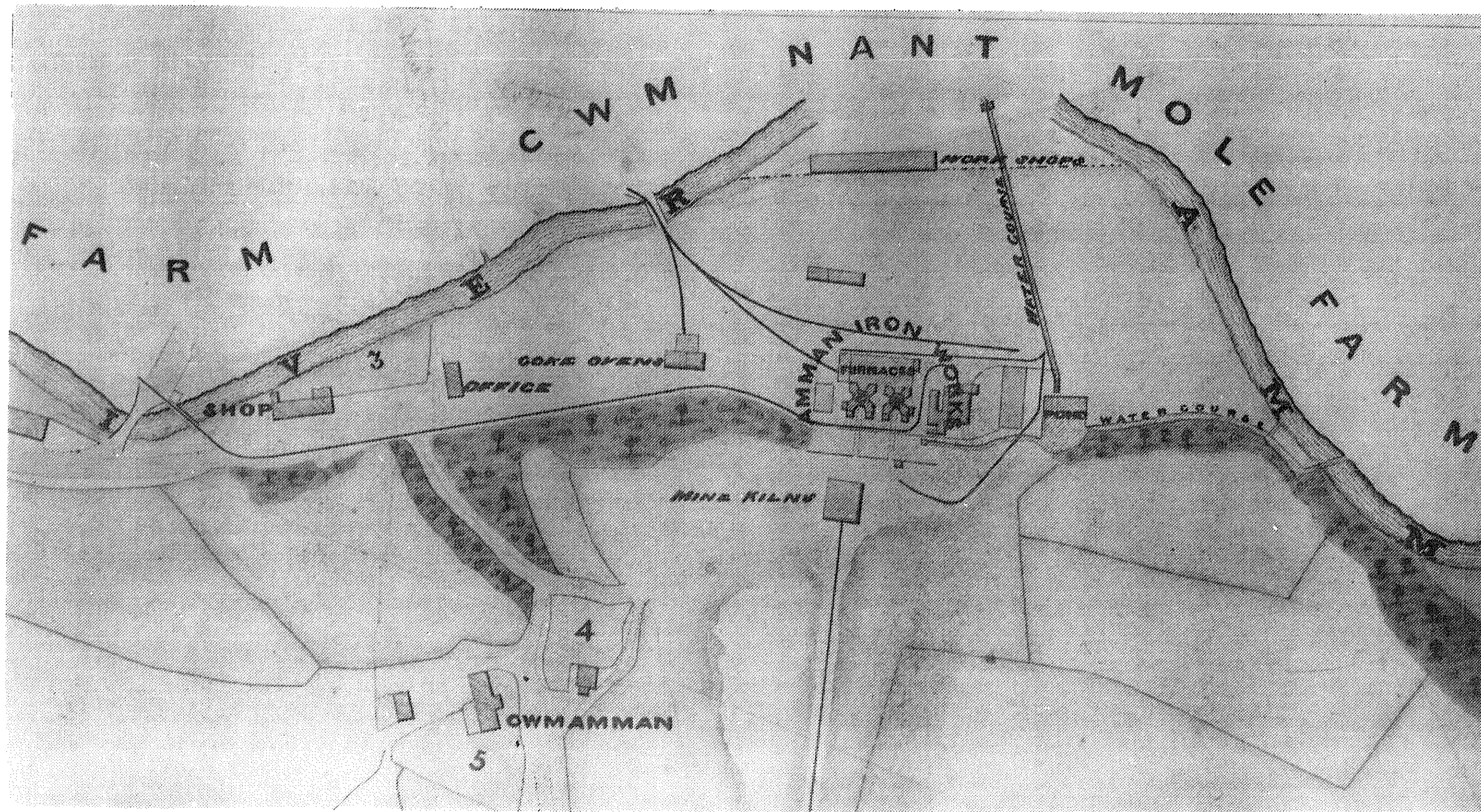
Carm. XLIX.S.E.

BLACK MOUNTAIN
Carmarthenshire...
Glamorganshire. P

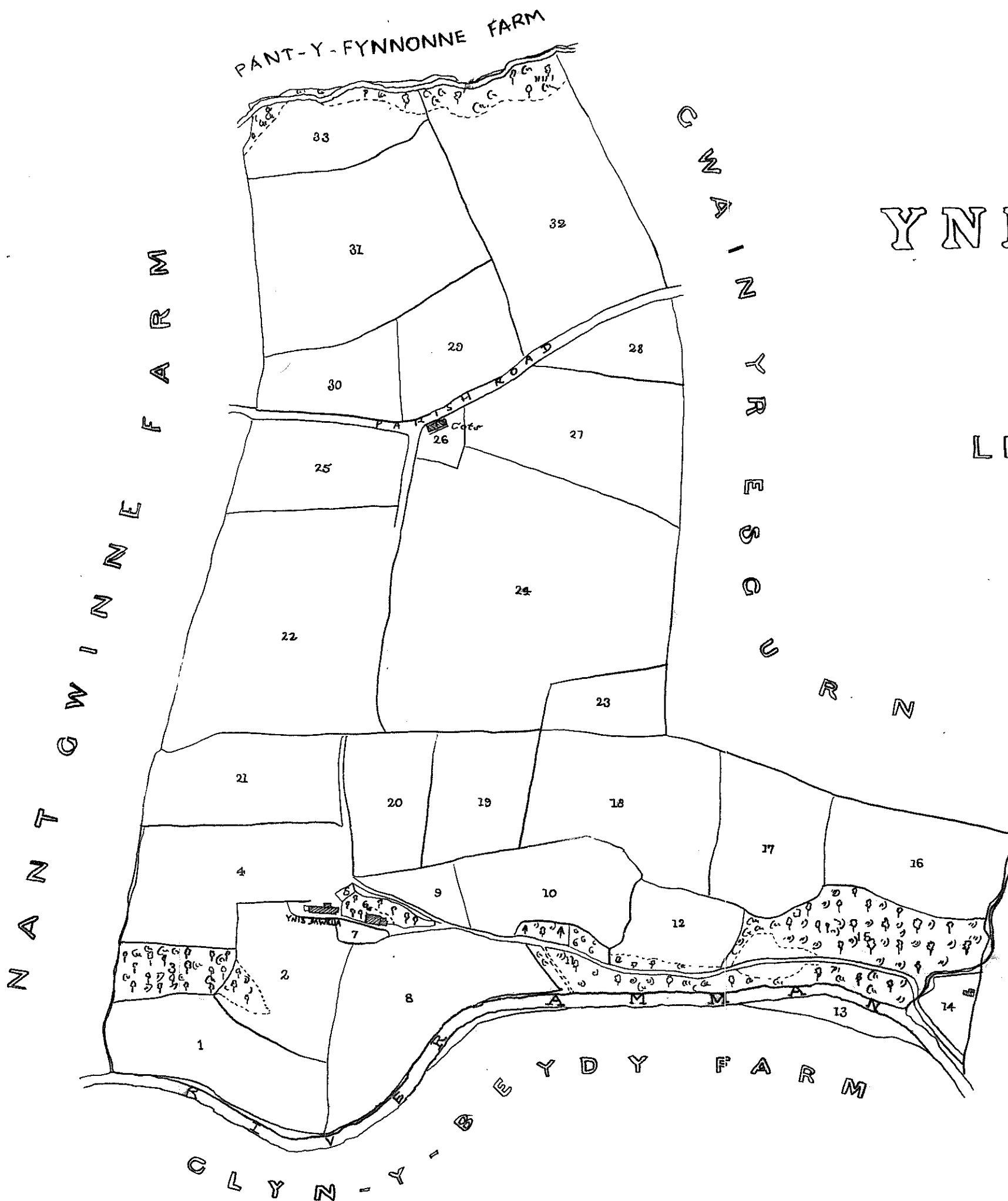


Map 12 - O.S. Carms XLIX.NE/Glam II
(Pt), 1st edn 6" to mile, 1891





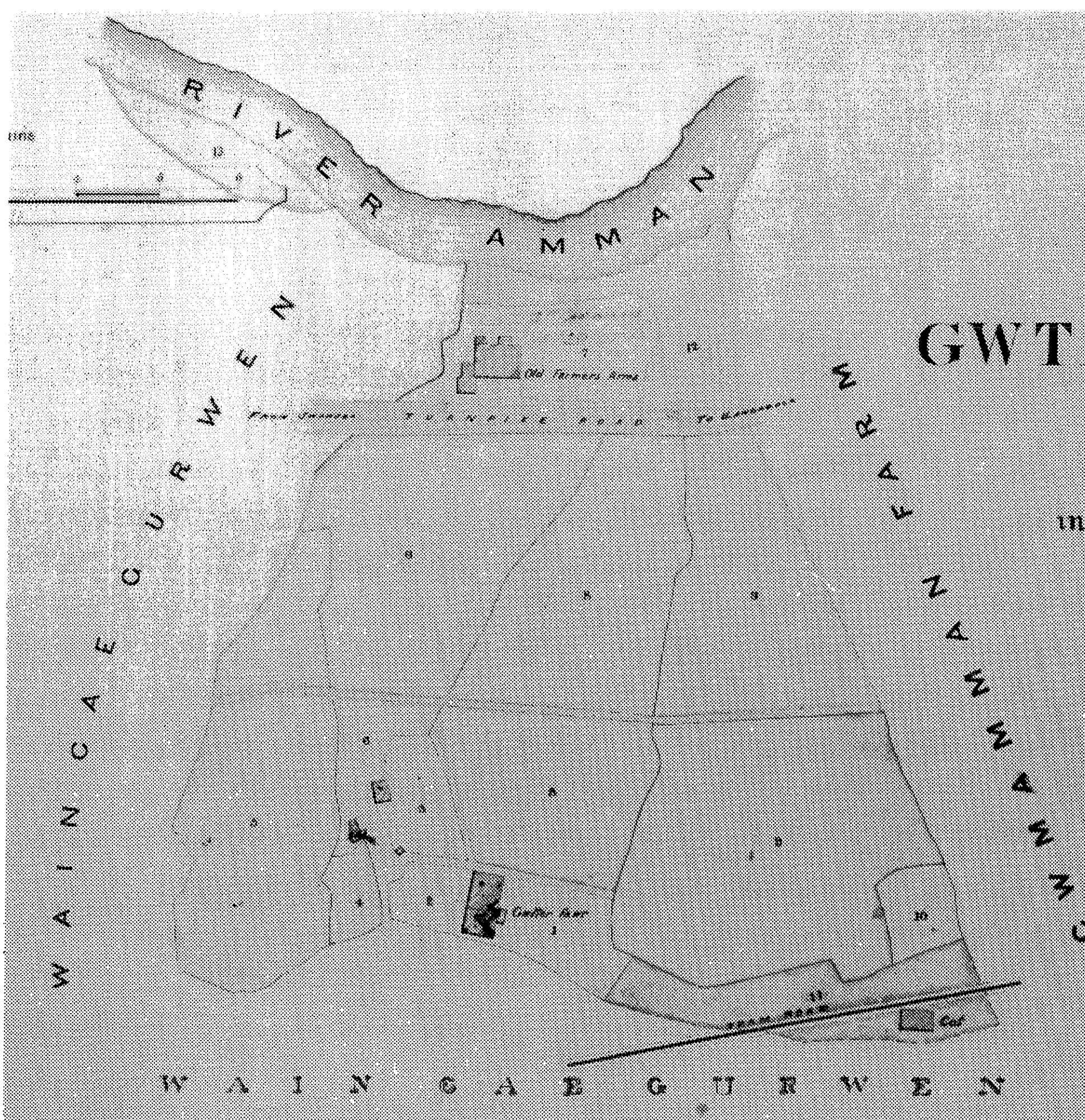
The Amman Iron Works, 1857.



REFERENCE

No		A	R	P	No						
1	FIELD	2	2	0	20	Do.	27	3	6		
2	Do.	1	2	30	21	Do.	1	2	10		
3	WOOD	0	3	38	22	MEADOW	2	1	4		
4	FIELD	2	3	31	23	CROFT	6	1	0		
5	CROFT	0	0	5	24	MEADOW	0	3	30		
6	HOUSE & GARDEN	0	1	22	25	FIELD	8	3	24		
7	GARDEN	0	0	23	26	COTS & GARDENS	1	3	31		
8	FIELD	3	1	7	27	FIELD	0	1	20		
9	Do.	0	2	12	28	Do.	3	0	38		
10	Do.	2	0	2	29	Do.	1	0	9		
11	WOOD	1	2	25	30	Do.	1	3	3		
12	FIELD	1	0	15	31	MEADOW	1	1	24		
13	CROFT	0	1	23	32	Do.	5	0	9		
14	COT & GARDEN	0	1	26	33	Do.	4	3	20		
15	WOOD	2	0	16	34	WOOD	1	3	0		
16	FIELD	2	0	28			0	2	30		
17	Do.	2	0	25							
18	Do.	3	1	25							
19	Do.	1	3	3							
		27	3	6							
						Total	69	2	18		

1857



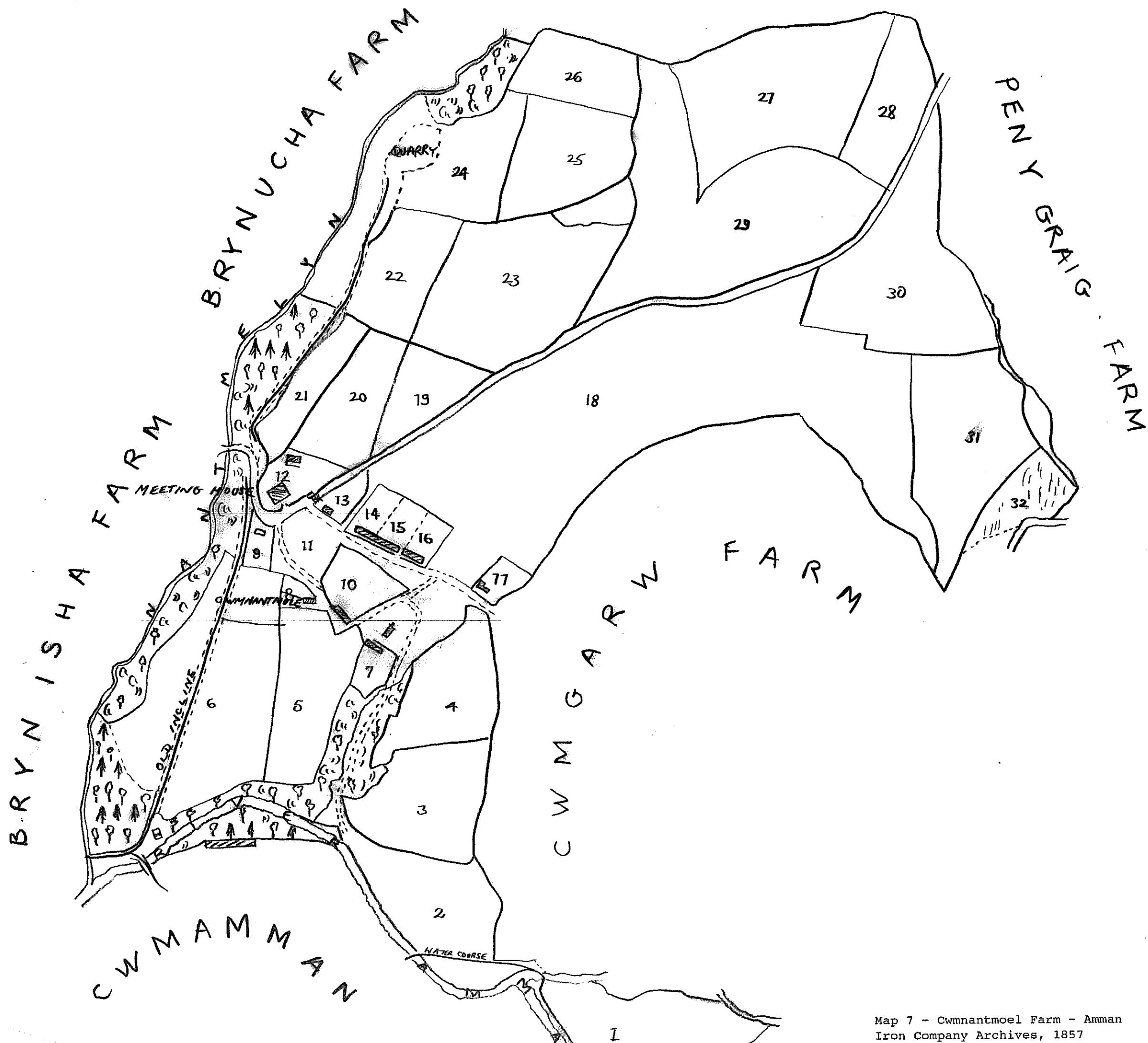
PLAN
— OF —
GWTER FAWR FARM
— in the Parish of —
LLANGUICK
in the County of Glamorgan

REFERENCE			
No	A	R	P
1 <i>House & Garden</i>	0	0	30
2 <i>Garden</i>	0	0	30
3 <i>Do.</i>	0	0	22
4 <i>Grove</i>	0	0	0
5 <i>Field</i>	0	3	7
6 <i>Do.</i>	0	3	23
7 <i>Pasture Area</i>	0	1	3
8 <i>Field</i>	1	0	10
9 <i>Do.</i>	1	2	13
10 <i>Grove</i>	0	0	24
11	0	1	15
12 <i>House</i>	0	0	35
13 <i>Do.</i>	0	0	30
<i>Total</i>	5	3	27

Gwter Fawr Farm, 1857.

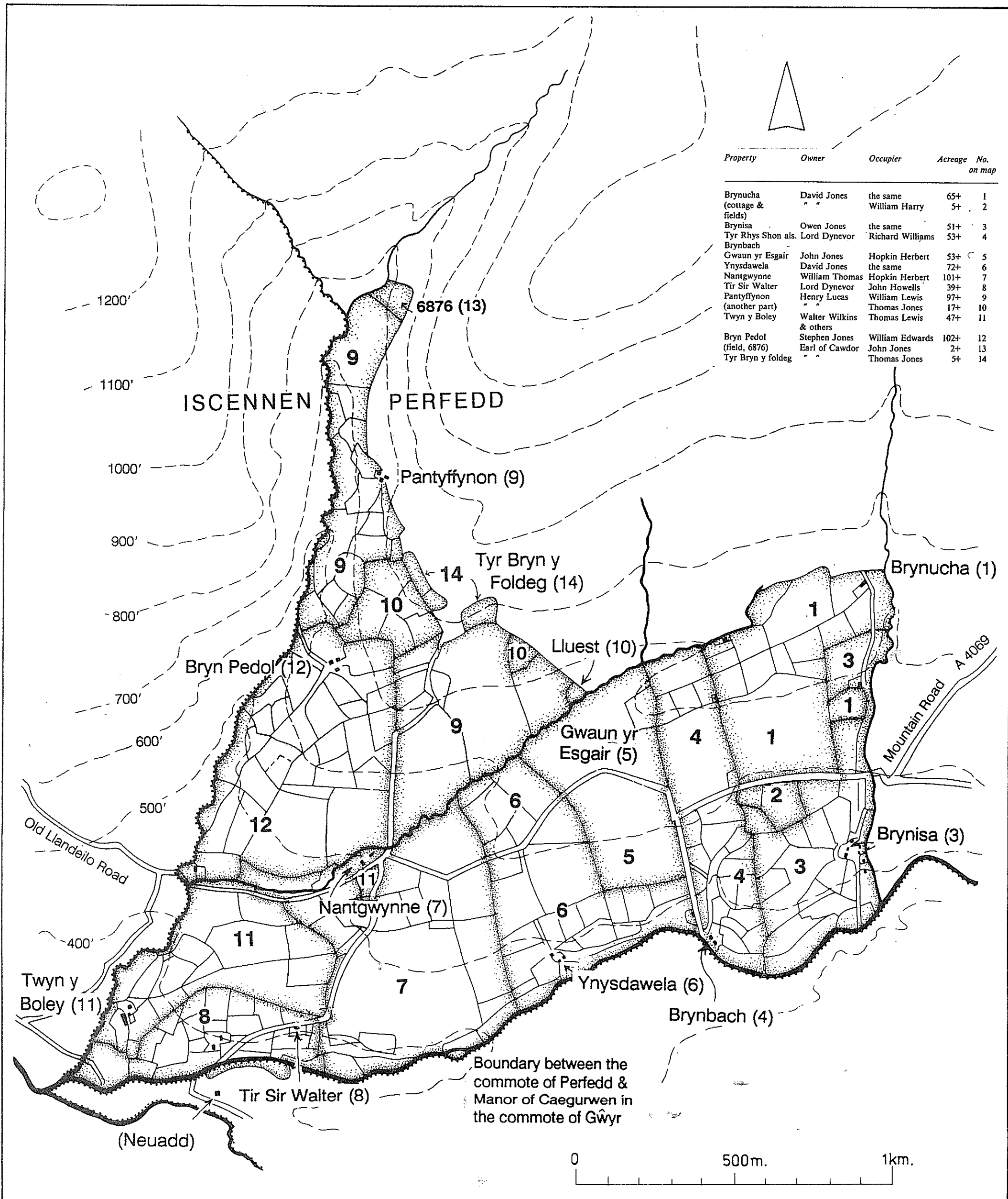
REFERENCE

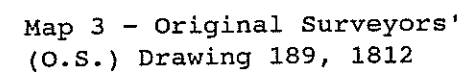
N ^o		A	R	P
1	FIELD	3	1	4
2	DO	3	0	2
3	DO	2	0	6
4	DO	1	3	28
5	DO	1	2	8
6	DO	5	1	23
7	COT A GARDEN	0	0	32
8	DO	0	0	13
9	DO	0	0	30
10	CROFT	0	2	10
11	WASTE	1	3	30
12	MEETING HOUSE	0	2	5
13	COT A GARDEN	0	1	2
14	DO	0	1	12
15	DO	0	1	8
16	DO	0	1	2
17	DO	0	1	5
18	DO	15	0	21
19	DO	1	0	30
20	DO	1	2	15
21	DO	0	3	35
22	DO	1	3	5
23	DO	4	0	35
24	DO	2	0	0
25	DO	2	0	28
26	DO	1	1	28
27	DO	4	2	5
28	DO	1	2	10
29	DO	6	1	30
30	DO	4	2	18
31	DO	3	2	4
32	WOOD & QUARRY	7	0	5
33	GWAIN YRESBURN	26	3	25
34	FIELD	1	3	16
35	MEADOW	24	1	19
36	FIELD	1	0	2
TOTAL		134	1	35

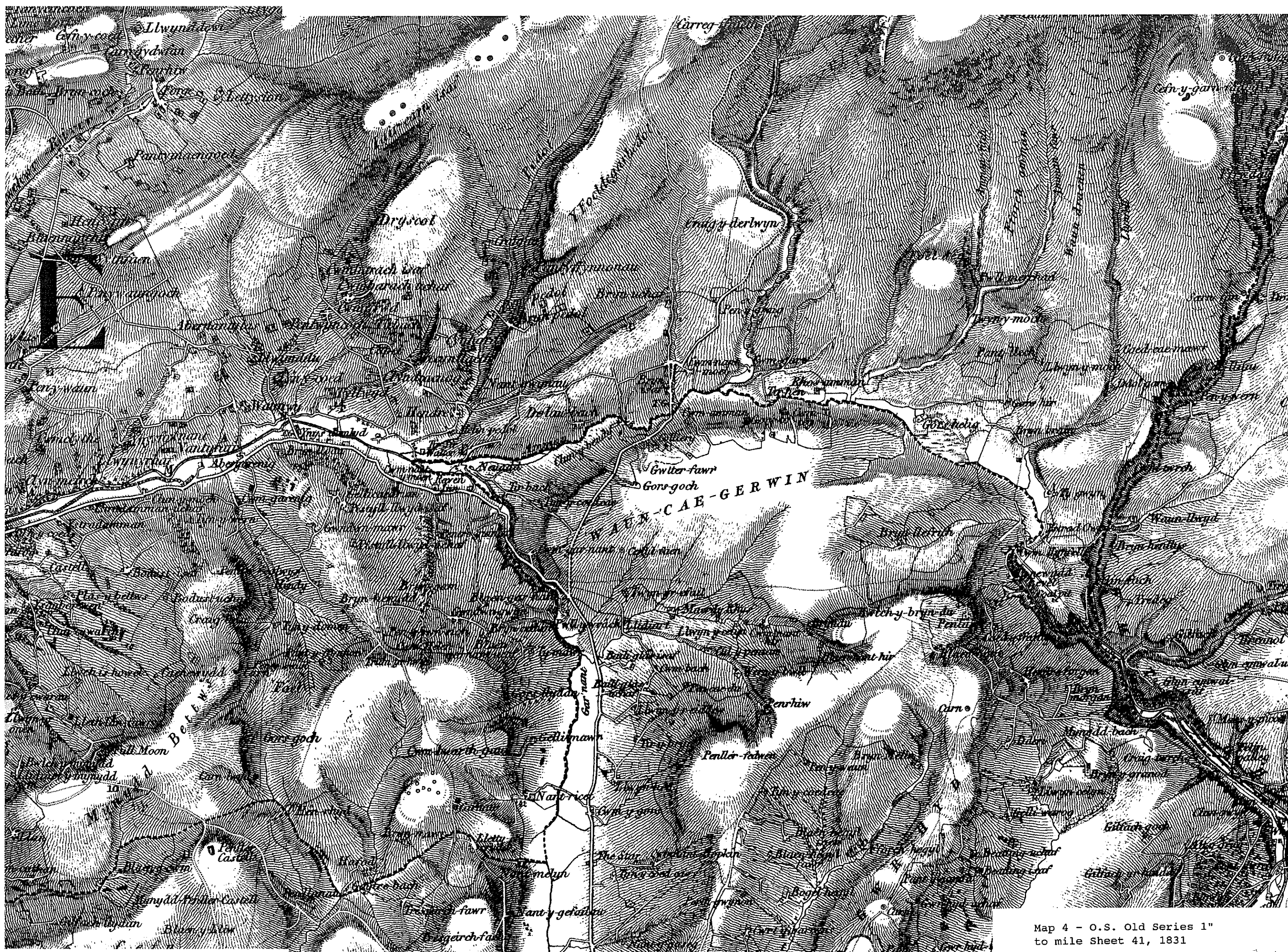




Map 6 - Bryn Issa Farm - Amman
Iron Company Archives, 1857







Map 4 - O.S. Old Series 1"
to mile Sheet 41, 1831

SWR 1531, n.d.	Brynamman Colliery Std Lower Gellideg [Lower vein] Std Garw [Bryn vein] Std Five Quarters [Little Brass vein] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1530A, n.d.	Brynamman Std Upper Gellideg [Middle vein] Std Lower Gellideg [Lower vein] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1530B, n.d.	Brynamman Colliery Std Upper Gellideg [Middle vein] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1530C, n.d.	Brynamman Colliery Peacock Vein [Probably Std Lower Nine feet] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1530D, n.d.	Brynamman Colliery Trigloyn Vein [Probably Std Bute seam] Scale 2 chains to inch
SWR 1531B, n.d.	Section of coal seams as proved in the district of Cwmmamman
SW 327, 1956	Pen-waun-ynys Opencast. Scale 1:2500

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Sites and Monuments Record

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Eich cyf / Your ref :

Fy nghyf / My ref :

JD/KT

Dyddiad / Date :

18th December, 1996

RECEIVED 18 DEC 1996

Please Ask For: Mr. Jim Davies
Extension: 3668
Direct Line:

Ms. H. James,
Dyfed Archaeological Trust,
Carmarthen Street,
LLANDEILO, SA19 6AF.

Dear Ms. James,

Commission to Ynys Dawela

I intend producing a Parc Ynys Dawela interpretive leaflet in the (new) County Series this April 1997. I should be very pleased if you could provide us with back-ground historical research to the value of £600.00.

The period would be 1850-2000 re the industrial revolution and its effect on a single farm. The elements I see now as most needing emphasising are:

- (i) Pre industrial Brynaman. Did it exist? Ditto Garnant and Gwaun-cae-gurwen.
- (ii) Ynys Dawela Farm at the tithe time. How many acres? Family or workers? What stock? What crops? How much and how many? Tenancy or otherwise? Droving? Self sufficiency - where was the nearest corn mill? cloth mill? tannery? river fishing? Fuel - coppice? coal? Construction timber - hedgerow trees? Building material?
(We note glacial boulders used for hedge banks - c. 20cmØ.
Farm abandoned 1942, son (69) still lives in Ynys Cottage by the main road entry.

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Cont'd ...

Commission to Ynys Dawela

- (iii) Industrial Revolution in Brynaman, Garnant and Gwaun-cae-gurwen. When? For what reasons? Where~~ce~~ came the immigrant workers? When did developments/new housing cease? Why?
- (iv) Cwm Aman Coal Mine. Dates (formerly Andersons?) Finished 1935? Kind of coal; from where? Kind of pit; production level at its height. Coal screening (dry) done in 1960s.
- (v) Tinplate Works - ditto.
- (vi) Railway - ditto (It eventually led to the cutting off of Parc Ynys Dawela low field.

If any of this thinking seems to you a bit wrong headed, please correct it, and, of course, make your own interpretations.

Yours sincerely,



Countryside Officer.