

Easter 1985 Pibble Mine

Pibble mine is situated about three miles north of Creetown in Galloway and is arrived at by either driving up a long and incredibly muddy track or crossing an even longer and muddier mountainside from a distant road. Four members made it to the mine; they were Dave Blundell, Alastair Lings, Chris D Jones and myself.

The surface remains are very impressive. There is a ruin of a beam engine house and a waterwheel pit both of which are rather spectacular, more so because of the remote situation and the majestic scenery.

There appears to have been three levels, serving a vein which runs NE-SW. The lowest level has run in but the others are open. The top level, outside which is an unfenced and partially overgrown shaft, runs for perhaps thirty feet before the floor is swallowed by a deep stope. This was explored as far as was possible, which was not far, and the stope was seen to disappear on into the gloom.

The middle level was full of little surprises and, although I hate to admit it, not fully explored because of the faint-heartedness of certain individuals. A short distance in, beyond a heap of stones nearly blocking the level and directly below a rise which was timbered over at the top, the water level rose from a few inches to chest deep. Only one person was brave enough to enter the water.....yes, it was myself.

After about 30 feet I managed to climb up into a quite extensive stope which I explored to my utmost and managed to win into the shaft which rose to the entrance of the top level. The shaft was full of timber and large rocks and Dave and Alastair were dropping stones down to gauge the depth, so I was obliged to retrace my steps without winning into the continuation of the stope, which I presume was on the other side of the shaft.

An interesting feature or features discovered in this level were the ends of a wooden powder cask and the shards of a cast iron kibble (The Pibble Kibble).

Later in the day Alastair stripped almost naked to cross the river fleet, wearing only underpants, vest and hard hat. He discovered two short iron trials in the undergrowth, and these, he maintained were ample reward the inconvenience suffered.

Later still, in the splendid evening sun, we had what turned out to be a four or five mile walk to the incredibly elusive Dromore Mine which is not in the place it should be in according to D.Bs literature. We eventually discovered the mine but could not summon the enthusiasm to venture underground. The surface remains were quite interesting. There were ruins of buildings, a magazine and what appears to have been a chimney stack from a barracks or office.

Alen McFadzean