

# Dinorwig

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## **Introduction**

Dinorwig slate quarry, situated along the north side of Llyn Peris, under the shadow of Elidir Fach, is one of the most astounding places I have ever seen. The fractured landscape ought to be ugly, a mountain riven by man and made naked, but is an unexpectedly beautiful place.

For a more detailed history of the workings I suggest a look at Miles mouldings trip report, one that proved very useful on visits to Dinorwig, and not to be ignored from a safety point of view. My own report is less mine exploration and more of an attempt to highlight the incredible beauty of this place.

## **A day out**

Leaving late in the day, the plan was to catch the quarry bathed in January sunshine to combat the biting cold wind coming through the Pass of Llanberis.

A good place to park is the overflow car park just before the bridge as you drive toward the slate museum, I believe it is open reasonably late and is just a short walk across the bridge to a slate staircase into the quarry.

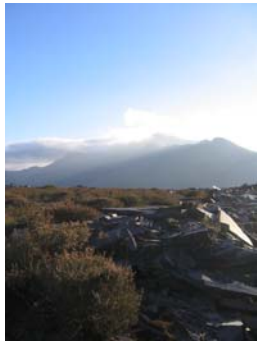
Climbing the staircase brings you out at the top of the first of many inclines. Follow the path around and Dinorwig opens up before you. It's very hard to imagine the scale of this place as you take a first look around and the ascent through the workings to the top is deceptively long.

It is also difficult to pick a route, not through any extremity, but more the sheer



enormity of choice. This trip took me up the next incline with the aim of reaching the higher workings in good time for a nose around.

The highest workings at Dinorwig and the summit of Elidir Fach can be seen in the background of this shot. Elidir Fach stands 795m above sea level and the quarried rock extends to a height of perhaps 650m. Fach's sister peak Elidir Fawr can also be reached, and at 925m is a place worth dressing warm for in winter.



From here, head across the fenced path, then climbing more incline and tending slightly to the right it is possible to climb above a flooded working with skeletal trees and drowned buildings.



Two of the tunnels described and pictured by Miles are on the far side of this pool, just behind the tree. On another day these are well worth a visit, although do be aware of the sharp drops at the end of many of the tunnels at these workings, today though a short climb up a further incline reveals two more tunnels mentioned by Miles.



The first, and smaller of the two is flooded and definitely in need of waterproofs before venturing in. The second leads to a branch as described

by Miles, going left beware of the sharp drop at the exit. Looking to the right there was what appeared to be a quantity of fallen rock at the end, so my nerve deserted me in favour of the open air.

One of the most interesting aspects of Dinorwig is the machinery still in situ. Most of the inclines have the winding drums and brakes intact to a large extent, and at some of the higher works the incline drums are built below ground. These sunken rooms are a little hazardous if you come across them unprepared since the wooden roofing is often rotten and well hidden with scrub.

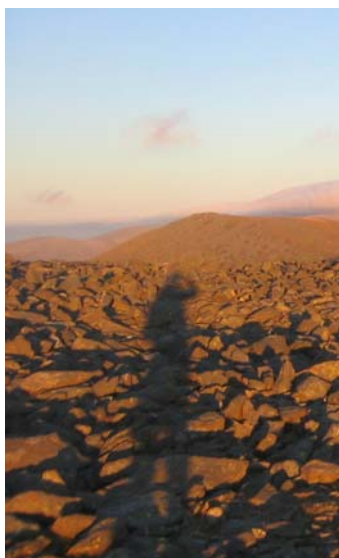
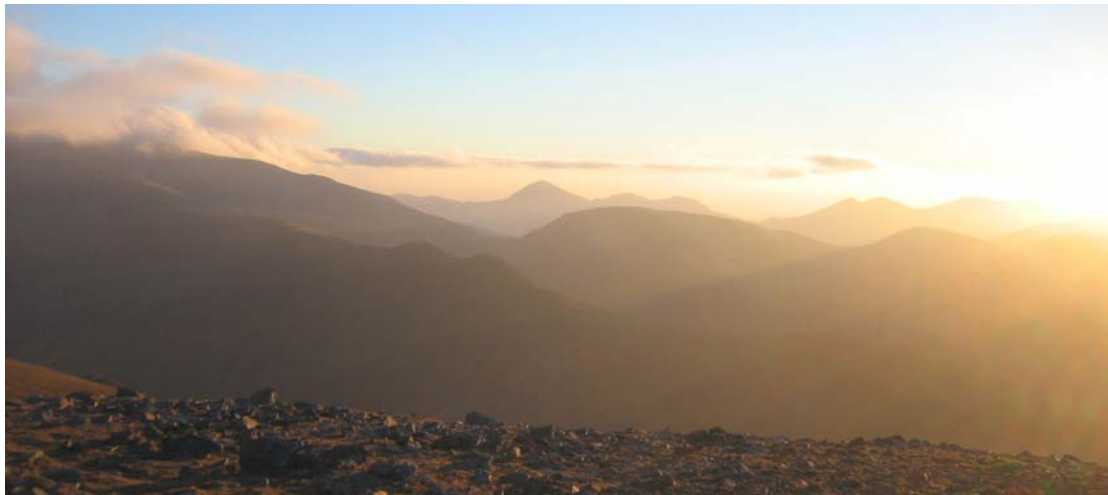


Following a slate stairway to the right (pictured above) I made another ascent to the higher levels. Once there it is possible to see another commonly used method of transporting slate. The Blondin ropeway was named after Charles Blondin who walked a tightrope over Niagara Falls, his nerve being far stronger than mine I stayed well clear of the edge. The example shown below may have been used rather than railway to avoid tunnelling through harder rock.





So with time running short before sunset and the temperature dropping as shadows advanced, further exploration was abandoned, but note taken of some buildings containing Ingersoll Rand equipment for a future trip. Almost to the top up a further couple of inclines, one seen above with the tables still intact, and a scramble through a hole in the fence I made way up the untouched summit of Elidir Fach beyond the access road.



Worth it, yes, and then back down quickly from the chill wind for hot tea.