

WATCHING BRIEF AT THE GANN, ST ISHMAELS PEMBROKESHIRE MARCH 2006



Paratowyd gan: Archaeoleg Cambria
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WATCHING BRIEF AT THE GANN, ST ISHMAELS, PEMBROKESHIRE MARCH 2006

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Photo. 1: General view of building work

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Cover Photo. : Digging out for rear extension. View N

SUMMARY

A site visit was made during foundation excavations for a rear extension to The Gann, St Ishmaels, Pembrokeshire, in order to record revealed archaeological deposits. Nothing of archaeological interest was apparent.

INTRODUCTION

Cambria Archaeology-Heritage Management, as advisors to Pembrokeshire County Council Planning Department, identified potential impacts on the archaeological resource on proposed rear extension to the rear of the house, at The Gann, St Ishmaels, Pembrokeshire (national grid reference SM 8150 0700, planning application no NP/05/309).

The Gann is a traditional cottage with an adjoining single-storey building. The buildings have been terraced into the sloping hillside. Adjacent, to the north, is a small spring. The single-story building had been gutted for reconstruction. Its stone walls were clay/soil bonded. The north gable end had a blocked fireplace (Photo. 1). This single-storey building may be an earlier dwelling. Two buildings are indicated on a map of 1795 and also one of c. 1837. However, no structures are shown here on the tithe map of 1839, and the schedule No 135 lists it as "field by the sea".

There are a number of archaeological sites nearby (see table 1 in appendix). Of particular importance are the prehistoric find spots PRN 2985, 11745 and 35068. Although the locations recorded may not be accurate, they indicate activity within the immediate area, and as there is a spring adjacent to The Gann, the planning authority considered it possible that important archaeological remains associated with these might survive below ground.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the watching brief were to characterise and record the extent, chronology and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits identified during the groundworks.

RESULTS

A single site visit was made to the site on 17th March 2006 when the excavation for the rear extension was well advanced, and this was completed during the visit.

The excavation at the rear of the house (*cover photo*) was approximately 2m deep. Geological deposits from 1m down from the ground surface was a pale brown slightly sandy silt with 75% small to small medium stones, locally known as Rab. Above this from 0.5m down there was a layer of orange brown clay with 3% medium angular stones and 5% gravel. This deposit was slightly banded consisting of more than one layer. All appeared natural. On top of this and up to the surface there was 0.5m deep topsoil. The depth of this topsoil possibly partly due from up-cast of earlier terracing. The only artefacts seen within the excavation spoil were two large fragments of earthenware were found, possibly part of a chimney pot.

The adjacent overgrown spring was photographed (Photo. 2); there were no signs of any ancient earthworks, such as burnt mounds. However, small earthworks could have been cleared and incorporated into the adjacent hedge banks.

CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological evidence was encountered during this watching brief. It is considered probable that the site was too steep to have been suitable for ancient settlement. However, it is quite likely that the spring, although possibly slightly in a different location in the distant past, was utilised in prehistoric times, given the adjacent find spots and the apparent lack of fresh water in the immediate area.

SOURCES

1795 Estate map by Frances John, Hugh Stoke's Land. Ref HRO D/RKL/1194

1837+ Plan of property of A L Stokes. Ref HRO D/RKL/1194

1839 St Ishmaels Tithe Map and Schedule

Ordnance Survey 1887 First Edition 6" Pembs XXXII-SW

APPENDIX: Table 1. Adjacent archaeological sites from Cambria HER

2985	GANN FARM	SM81530692	FIND SPOT	Mesolithic; Neolithic	Two flint flakes and two waste pieces recovered from the edge of a quarry, possibly in soil that had already been removed from the quarry. This makes their original recording as a flintworking site uncertain
2987	PICKLERIDGE	SM81270708	FINDS	Iron Age?; Roman?	No further finds found during fieldwork. BA & KM 1997
11745	GANN THE	SM814072	FIND SPOT	Prehistoric ?	A flint, which exhibited signs of working and secondary working, which may have been caused by wave action. NAP 2004.
13312	TREWARREN	SM81920720	ROUND BARROW?	Bronze Age	This looks a convincing barrow from the AP. However it seems almost impossible that such a large mound would have escaped attention
16092	THE GANN	SM81560691	QUARRY	Post Med	Small quarry, approximately 10m in diameter. A bungalow has now been built within part of the quarry. BA & KM 1997
16428	PICKLERIDGE	SM813070	STEPPING STONES	Post Med	These stepping stones have been replaced by a small modern submersible bridge. BA & KM 1997
28650	SLATEHILL FARM	SM81830702	SEARCHLIGHT BATTERY	Modern	Air Defence, Searchlight Battery, two concrete hut bases. RJC.Thomas, 29.01.93.
34459	DALE ROADS	SM81430694	LIME KILN	Post Med	The limekiln was identified from 1st Edition OS. There was no trace above ground, however within the locality, distinct coal and gravel deposits were seen within the low cliff section. Along this stretch the coastline is actively eroding. BA & KM 1997
35068	THE GANN	SM81450693	FLINT WORKING SITE?	Mesolithic ?; Neolithic?	Flint waste material was noted eroding from cliff face and may represent a flint working site. Other flint material (PRN 2985) discovered a short distance away may also be associated. NAP 2004.
48318	TREWARREN	SM818920722 1	STANDING STONE?	Bronze Age	Possible standing stone cleared to a field boundary to the west of, and intervisible with, PRN 13312. NC 2003.

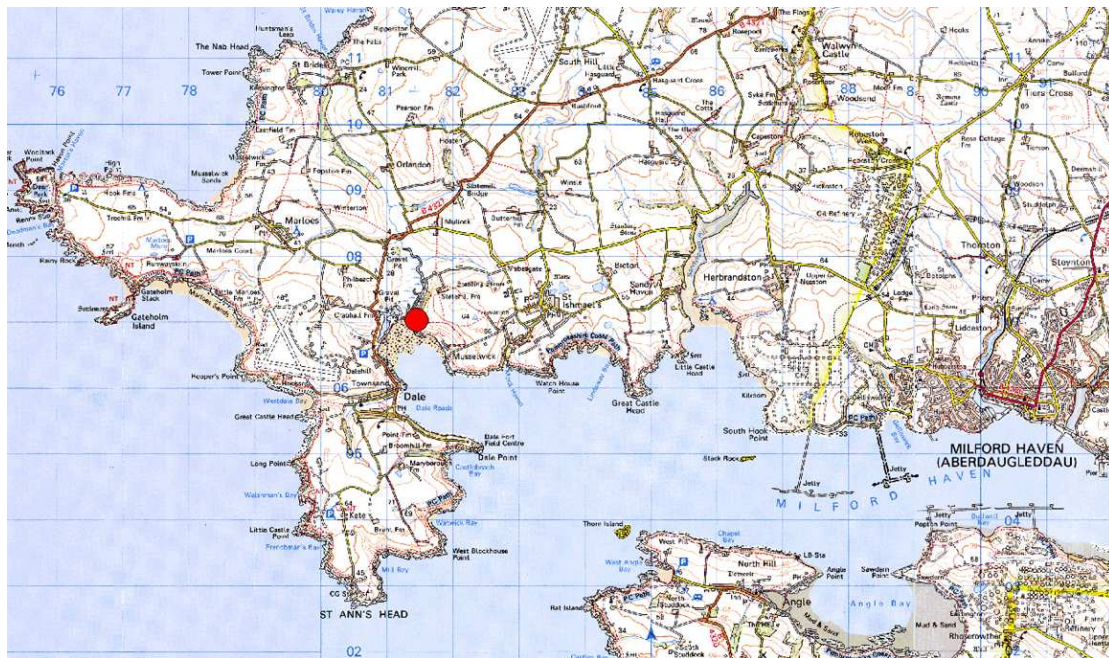


Figure 1. Location map, based on the Ordnance Survey

Reproduced from the 1995 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Cambria Archaeology, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A

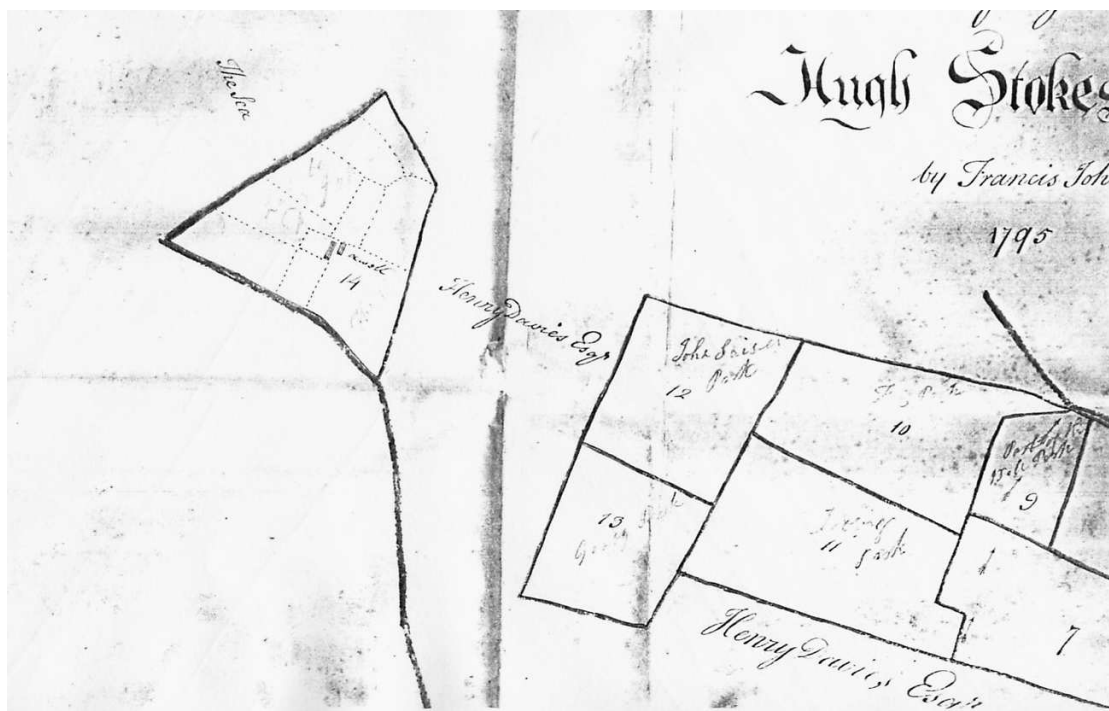


Figure 2. 1795 map. The Gann on the left of the map



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Photo. 1: General view of building work



Photo. 2: General view of overgrown spring. View E

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Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
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ar ran Archaeoleg Cambria, Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.
on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

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