

# **HAFOD 1994**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXAMINATION  
OF THE  
'LADIES WALK'  
FOR  
THE WELSH HISTORIC GARDENS TRUST/  
YMDDIRIEDOLAETH GERDDI HANESYDDOL CYMRU  
BY  
D G PHILLIPS BA**

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The trenches are labelled in the order in which they were excavated.

# PREFACE

A series of archaeological investigations was carried out at Hafod, between May and July 1994, in advance of path restoration by the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust. The path called the 'Ladies Walk' was constructed with a view for the 'picturesque' by Colonel Thomas Johnes at the end of the eighteenth century. Using a combination of written descriptions and archaeological examinations it is hoped that the route of the path can be reconstructed in full.

The archaeological work was carried out by David Phillips whose brief was to cut a number of trenches across the assumed route of the path. This was to investigate if the assumed route of the path was correct, and if the path was present, to consider the nature of its construction. A trial trench was also laid across an area of building debris to ascertain if it was the site of a building. Archaeological work was also carried out where the route of the path passed through the remains of a structure called the 'Rustic Alcove'. This was investigated to clarify the nature of the building and its relationship to the path.

In total twenty-five trenches of varying dimensions were examined as well as the area around the Rustic Alcove. The results were of a varying nature depending upon the areas under investigation. Within the woodland and areas that had not been extensively cultivated traces of the path could be recovered but where the ground had been cultivated no traces of the path could be seen. As a result some of the main routes of the path could be clarified and the nature of the path's general construction could be clearly identified but in areas that had been ploughed all traces of the path were lost.

# INTRODUCTION

This excavation was commissioned by the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust to investigate the route and nature of the 'Ladies Walk' in advance of its reconstruction for use by the general public.

The 'Ladies Walk' was originally constructed at the end of the eighteenth century by Colonel Thomas Johnes as part of his general scheme of improvements on his estate at Hafod. The route of the path attempted to take in many of the natural beauties of the surrounding landscape and was constructed with a view to the picturesque. Owing to its unique nature, in that it was an exemplary estate set in the rugged Welsh landscape and extremely isolated, it was visited at various times by many authors, poets and painters (Inglis-Jones) who left varying descriptions of it. Using these descriptions, especially that of George Cumberland and the map he commissioned by Blake, the general route of the path was traced but archaeological investigation was needed to clarify certain parts of the route and the nature of the materials used to construct the path as well as its dimensions.

The Hafod estate (NGR SN760730) is now part of Forest Enterprise property and much of the land is covered in pine trees. The land consists of a series of valleys and hills with the Afon Ystwyth flowing through the centre. The land is surrounded by a mountainous landscape, much of it being lined with deciduous and coniferous trees and is very picturesque. It is situated two miles north-east of Pontrhyd-y-groes, two miles south-west of Cwmystwyth and four miles south-east of Devil's Bridge, while twelve miles to the north-west lies the coastal town of Aberystwyth. To the east lies the Cambrian mountain range almost effectively isolating Hafod from this direction. Public access is from the car park adjacent to St Peter's church (NGR SN768736) where there are various forestry paths and roads leading through the estate: the 'Ladies Walk' also passes the church.

The excavations were undertaken by Mr D G Phillips BA on behalf of the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust with the aid of volunteers and Ceredigion Training, between 23 May and 8 July 1994. I am grateful for the aid of Richard Evans, John Sherlock, Nigel Cross, Elizabeth Townsend, Mike Andrews, Sean Neighbour and Terry Elliot who volunteered to work on the excavation and Jim Spiers, Bryan Dawes (supervisor), Andrew Pearce, Huw Reynold, Simon Stratton, Gary Stratton, Stewart Perrins, Ian Shires, Roderick Silvester, Colin Jones and Glenville Thomas of Ceredigion Training whose excellent assistance made the work possible. I would also like to thank Forest Enterprise for all their assistance, especially Ron and Alex for their advice and for allowing us access to the old mansion site for camping while the work was being carried out. I would also like to thank Michael Norman, Chris Holder and Andrew Sclater from the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust for their help, as well as Linda and Roger Hallett for giving me additional information about Hafod. I am also highly indebted to Madeleine Wuidart for all her long-term help.

# THE SITES

With a view to recovering traces of the 'Ladies Walk' a series of trenches of varying dimensions, depending upon the topography, was laid across the assumed route of the path. In various places the route was obvious, for example on a cut ledge, but where it was less certain longer trenches were laid out in the hope that they would traverse the path at some point. A number of different landscapes were examined, woodland, fields and a river valley.

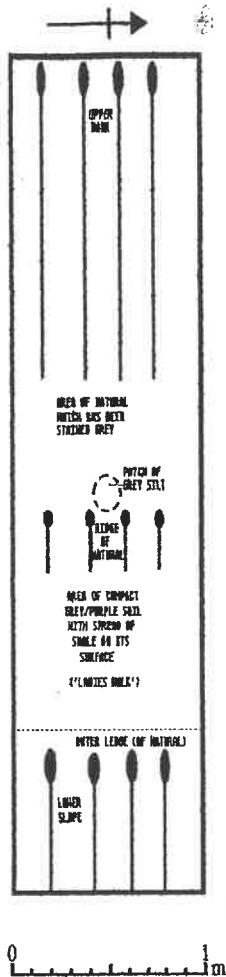
The first area examined was in woodland between the present day forestry road and St Peter's church (NGR SN767735). This had originally been an oak forest but the trees were removed in the nineteen fifties and later replaced by conifers. Forest Enterprise had recently thinned the area and much brash had to be removed by the Ceridigion Training group in order that excavations could take place. In total ten trenches were excavated in this area.

The first three trenches were excavated on the wide ledge leading uphill to the church, which for ease of description will be known as the 'Church Walk'. This runs north/south and is set in a steep 45 degrees hill slope which runs down to the east. This area was examined because the ledge-cut path was wider here than at any other point on the route of the path, being twice as wide as normal. By examining this ledge it was hoped to ascertain if the original path for the 'Ladies Walk' had been narrower and that at some later date a wider track had been cut on this part of the route, taking advantage of the ledge already cut in the hillside for the 'Ladies Walk'. The wider track presents somewhat of an anomaly in that it does not lead anywhere: it descends from the church for some distance and then stops, modern beaten tracks weaving through the woods being the only continuation of this route. At one point an obvious path ascends from the forestry road to the east, but it was uncertain if this was the 'Ladies Walk', therefore one trench was excavated at the junction between the ascending path and the wide track to ascertain the nature of their joining. The two other trenches were opened above and below this junction to see if there were any changes in the construction of the track at these points.

For ease of description the underlying, undisturbed soil will be known as the natural.

## TRENCH A

An area 4.2m x 1m was examined across the 'Church Walk' (east/west), which included the upper and lower banks of the ledge-cut track. The area was covered in moss and leaf mould which was first removed. This revealed several contrasting surfaces. The upper bank on the western side slopes up at approximately 45 degrees to the horizontal, and comprises an orange gritty clay, which appears to be the natural underlying surface. At the base of the bank is a 0.75m wide strip where the soil is similar to the natural but has been discoloured slightly grey. There are also small pockets of what appears to be a riverbed gravelly silt in this area, the thickest being 0.01m thick. To the east of this is a



slightly raised 0.15m wide area of the natural orange gritty clay. To the east of this is a further surface set slightly lower than the inner strip and comprising a compact grey/purple gritty soil 0.75m wide and 0.02m thick (a very small strip was removed to examine the depth and nature of the soil) with a thin spread of small pieces of shale material over the surface. The outer 0.3m of the ledge was again found to be the natural underlying material which then slopes off steeply downhill to the east.

From the evidence recovered there appear to be two phases of construction in the track. There is the outer part of the ledge comprising the 0.3m strip of natural and the compact grey/purple soil overlaid with a shale spread. This may well have been the original 'Ladies Walk'. The compact grey/purple material and shale surface comprise the walk with the natural outer lip giving some form of safety measure at the edge of the path. The path was then widened to form a track, whereby the inner (western) bank of the 'Ladies Walk' was cut away to form the wider 'Church Walk'. The surfacing of the 'Ladies Walk' must have continued in use as no overlying material was recovered, while the inner part of the ledge was covered with riverbed silts to form a metallised surface. As the centre of the ledge is a slightly raised area of natural it must be assumed that just the inner and outer metallised surfaces were in use. This would make it appear that the track may have been meant for the use of carts. As the track was never completed, it could not have been used very heavily by carts, which would mean

that no wheel marks could be found to confirm the use of the track.

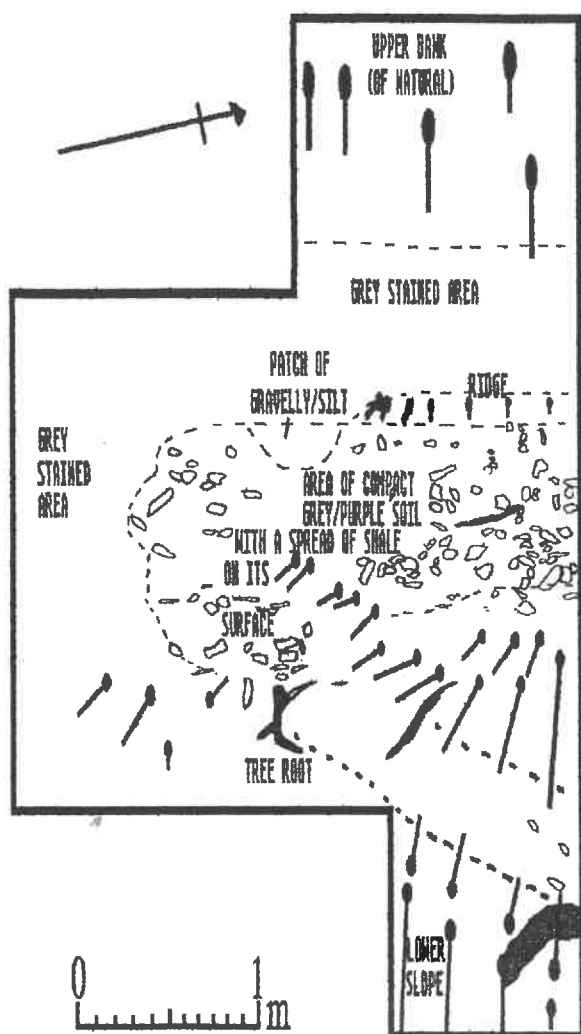
## TRENCH B

A much larger area was opened for trench B as this was the important junction point between the ascending path and the wider track. A roughly 'L' shaped area was exposed, 6m across the track (east/west), 2m wide across the western upper bank and 3m wide across the track and ascending path (north/south). This irregular shape was used as tree stumps had to be taken into consideration.

The moss and leaf mould was removed from this area to reveal a similar pattern to trench A. The inner (west) bank was found to comprise the natural orange gritty clay, and was very disturbed by large tree roots. Below this bank the inner half of the track again comprised the natural which had been shaded grey by an overlay of gravelly silt which had eroded away except in a few small pockets. This area had also been much damaged by large tree roots. At the southern end of the excavation this area of greyed natural was found to extend across the entire width of the track. At the northern end of the excavation there was still a difference between the surfaces. To the east of the inner metallised surface was a ridge of natural 0.15m wide which tapered out after running south for some 1.5m. To the east of the ridge was an area of compact grey/purple gritty soil with a spread of shale over its surface, some of the pieces of shale being noticeably



larger than those in trench A. This surface was approximately 1m wide and ran for 2.2m south before sweeping around to the east in a curve and continuing to follow the route of the ascending path. The path also banked slightly as it went around the curve, it sloped gently down towards the east then north as it turned, allowing for an easier turn. It was noticed that as this surface curved around, some of the grey silty material had spread over its western inner edge. Where traces of the grey/purple surface and shale could be seen on the ascending path it was much narrower, being approximately 0.5m wide but tree roots have caused a certain amount of damage to the path's edge on the final approach to the wider track.



The evidence points to a two phase construction in this area. The original 'Ladies Walk' ascends the hill from the north-east then curves tightly to run north towards the church. This can be seen by following the course of the compact grey/purple material with the spread of shale on its upper surface. This ascends the hill then curves around to follow the route of the 'Church Walk'. When the later wider track was cut the ledge formed by the 'Ladies Walk' was utilised: the inner (west) side of the track was metalled, the 'Ladies Walk' was not re-surfaced but used as it was. Where the 'Ladies Walk' did not exist a wider ledge had to be cut to form the track. This can be seen to the south beyond the area of the 'Ladies Walk' where the 'Church Walk' is uniform in its construction across its entire width. Here the surface of the track is consistent with the surrounding natural but has been stained grey. As a gravelly silt was used for metalling the second phase, some traces having been recovered, then it would have left a grey stain on the

upper surface of the natural, although it has now been mostly eroded away. When the track widened to the south of the 'Ladies Walk' an amount of gravel could have quite easily been spread over the edge (west and south side) of the curve in the walk as the new track butted against it. That there were no traces of gravel spread over the original grey/purple material, except where the two surfaces met and changed, would definitely seem to indicate that the surface of the original path was not overlaid with new material but used as it was.

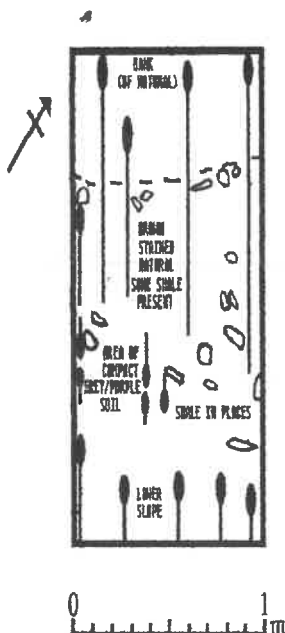
## TRENCH C

Trench C was opened up to investigate the nature of the track, 'Church Walk', to the south of the turn in the 'Ladies Walk'. It was 2m (east/west) x 0.6m (north/south) and 6.8m south of trench B. Removal of the moss and leaf mould revealed a surface of uniform nature. The surface consisted of the natural underlying soil, the gritty clay material. On the outer eastern side there was a 0.3m wide strip where it was the original orange colour but over the rest of the excavated area it had been stained grey.

This would indicate that the dark compact material that comprises the 'Ladies Walk' did not continue any further south than where it was found to be ascending from the east and that a wider continuous track had been cut in the area of trench C. A lip 0.3m wide had been kept clear on the outer (eastern) edge of the track as a safety margin, while the rest of the surface must have been metalled with a grey gravelly silt which stained the surface grey.

Trenches D through to J were opened on the ascending path between the forestry road and the 'Church Walk'.

## TRENCH D



This was opened approximately 3m north-east of trench B on the ascending path and was 2.5m x 1m. On the western side of the trench was a sloping bank. The upper part of the bank was showing the brighter orange of the natural while the lower 0.5m was more of an orange/brown colour with some traces of shale lying on its surface. At the base of this, running north-east/south-west was a slight depression 0.015m deep x 0.3m wide which had a fill of the dark, grey/purple compact material with traces of overlying shale. To the east of this the ledge was still relatively flat, although it was sloping up towards the south-west, and was approximately 0.85m wide. Its surface was again the orange/brown colour similar to the lower half of the bank. Beyond this the ground fell steeply away.

In this trench obvious traces of the path's construction material have been found but not extending over the entire width of the path. That the natural has been stained a darker colour (orange/brown) over the outer, eastern, side of the ledge would seem to indicate this part of the ledge was once overlaid with some darker material which had eroded away. This darker staining, both on the bank and the ledge, may have been caused to some degree by disturbed material rolling down the slope and over the path during the



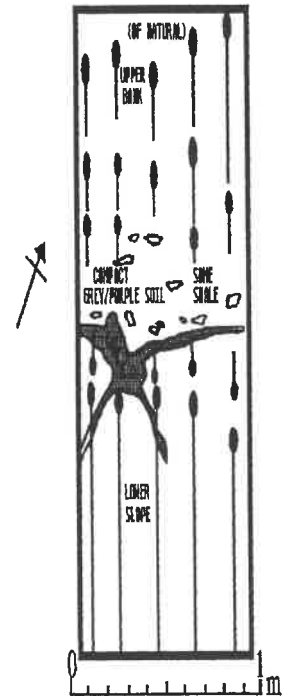
construction of the 'Church Walk', as this area of path was very close, just below it. Due to heavy tree root disturbance in the area no clearer picture of the original topography can be gained, but it is certain that a ledge was cut to form a path and that some of the material used in the construction of the 'Ladies Walk' was found on the ledge.

## TRENCH E

This trench was very similar to trench D and was approximately 4.5m east of it and was 3.5m (east/west) x 1m (north/south) in area. The western side comprised a sloping bank which was of an orange/brown colour. At the base of the bank was a ledge, sloping upwards to the south-west, and approximately 0.6m wide. The dark grey/purple compact soil with some traces of a shale overlaid this surface. To the east of this was a large tree root which overlaid the rest of the ledge for a width of 0.5m. Beyond this the ground sloped steeply away.

Again, as with trench D traces of the construction material for the 'Ladies Walk' were found on a ledge cut into the hillside. The upper bank was not the bright orange colour of the natural one might expect, the bright orange being the criterion for seeing the original cut in the hillside. But again material from the construction of the 'Church Walk' could very easily have rolled downhill and covered this area staining it a slightly darker colour than the natural orange, as it is not far below the track.

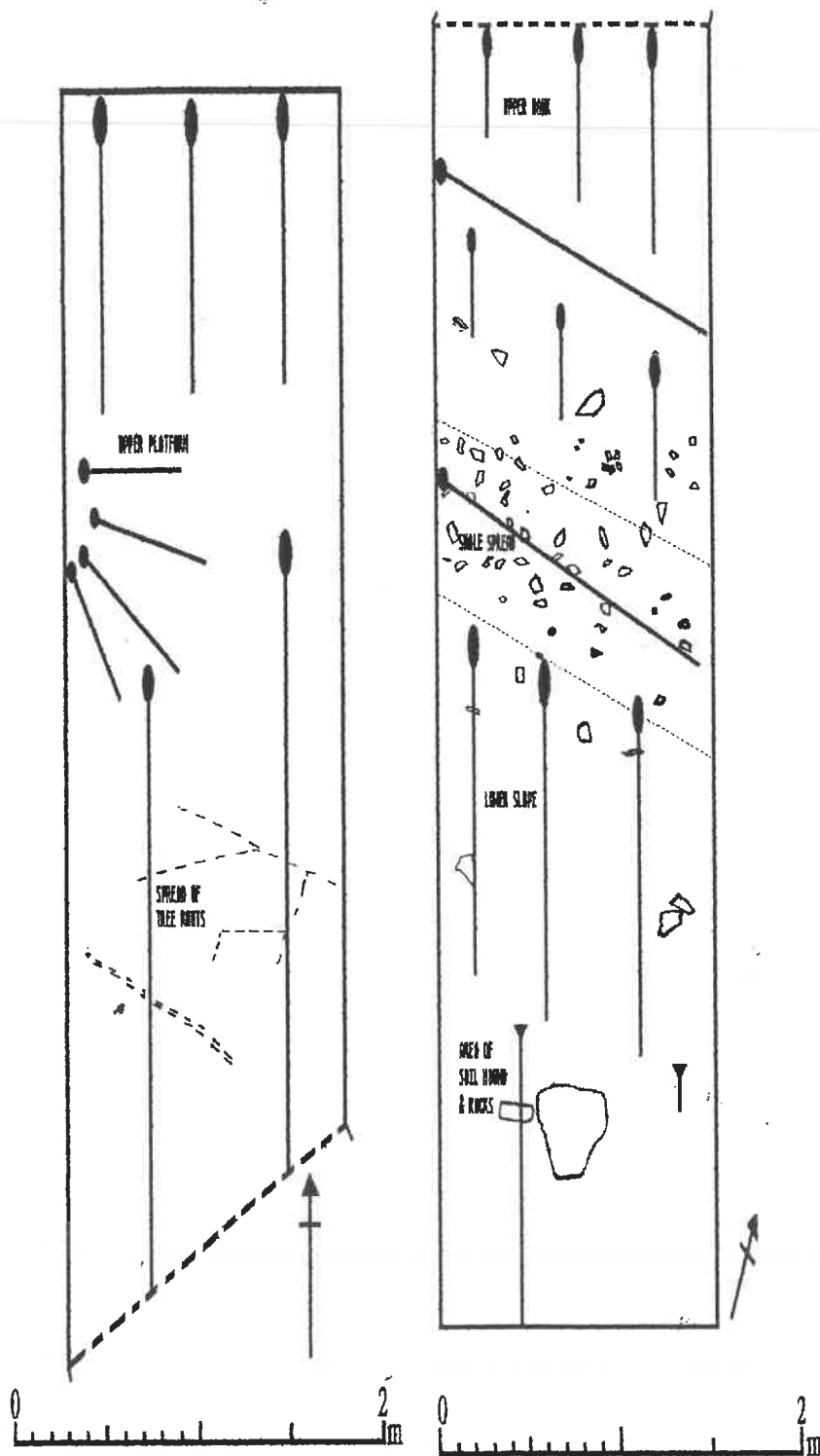
In both cases D and E there are obvious remains of path material, the grey/purple soil, which can be traced up onto the outer (eastern) side of the 'Church Walk'. This would seem to indicate that these parts of the path are linked but are of a separate build from the later 'Church Walk' track.



## TRENCH F

Trench F was of much more considerable length and changed direction in the middle to take account of the landscape. It was initially opened to investigate the nature of a platform on the hillside but was extended to include some of the slope below it. The initial opening was 5.5m across the platform but a further extension of 6.8m was added. The trench was 1.5m wide.

Clearance of the surface material on the platform soon revealed it to be the site of a large tree which must have toppled, cutting a slope in the hillside to the west and throwing up a bank on the eastern side. The routes of once large tree roots weaving their way through the centre of the platform could leave no doubt as to its nature.



The lower section of the trench presented a different picture. After descending the slope on the side of the platform a ledge was uncovered which had traces of the grey/purple material and a spread of shale over its surface. The ground then sloped away for some distance before reaching a raised area of soil and large stones. There was a short steep drop over the edge of this mound then the ground sloped away quite steeply again towards the forestry road.

From the turn between the two parts of the trenches, the lower part of the trench ran south-east/north-west. For 2.5m the trench sloped steeply down over the side of the platform. A ledge which was 1m wide and running north-east/south-west then cut across the trench. The ledge ascended towards the south-west but sloped gently towards its outer edge. Traces of the grey/purple compact material overlaid with a slight spread of shale covered the surface of the ledge. The ground then sloped away for another 2.5m before levelling out. The ground levelled out for about 1m before coming to a sheer drop of 0.6m.

The levelled area seemed to comprise a number of large stones with soil spread around and over them. This seemed to be some sort of spoil heap which could be seen tapering off towards the north-east.

Considering the dimensions of the platform, over 5.5m wide, the tree which created it must have been of a considerable size, and probably of some antiquity, as the present root mats are not of the same proportions. It would therefore seem likely that it was an

upstanding tree when the 'Ladies Walk' was constructed and had to be taken into account when the route was laid out. Therefore to find the path ledge running around the edge of the root area would seem quite consistent if the tree was taken into account. When the tree fell the path itself might have been slightly damaged, especially on the edge nearest the tree. This may account for the slight raising of the ledge on its upper side, which does not seem to occur elsewhere. If the ground was raised up from some depth it could cause it to slope without breaking the surface, thus making the path slope slightly outwards. The lower (south-east) break in slope could have been caused by the depositing of material when the path ledge was excavated or even come from an area of further workings on the route of the path. There is no way of telling if this material is contemporary with the path but as the material lies parallel with the path it would seem likely.

To the east of trench F there is a natural break in the hillslope, where the ground becomes more level, which runs almost east/west and is up to 10m at its widest point. It could be estimated where the course of the path ran on this natural platform from the direction it was pointing in trench F but to make certain that information collected about the path was correct, long trenches were opened up across the platform in order to ascertain for certain the correct route of the path.

## TRENCH G

This trench was 6m x 0.6m and ran north/south across the more level ground. The nature of the ground was less clearly defined here as the natural underlying soil had been disturbed at some time making it very difficult to differentiate between different surfaces based on their colours. The overall colouring of the soil was brown but the surfaces could be told apart by the differences in their consistency. At the upper (north) end of the trench the ground sloped gently down to the south and consisted of a gritty clay. There was then a ledge 1m wide where the ground levelled out. The surface material appeared much more compact and of a more organic nature here and had traces of a shale surface. This was consistent with the nature of the path as recovered elsewhere. Below this ledge (south) the ground again slopes gently away to the south and then falls steeply beyond the edge of the more level ground. Here the soil was much less compact having many loose stones in its surface and at the lower end of the trench (south) there appeared to be more of what was probably a mound of spoil. This consisted of a number of large stones with soil deposited over and around them, although the size of the mound seemed smaller and less distinct than the mound found in trench F.

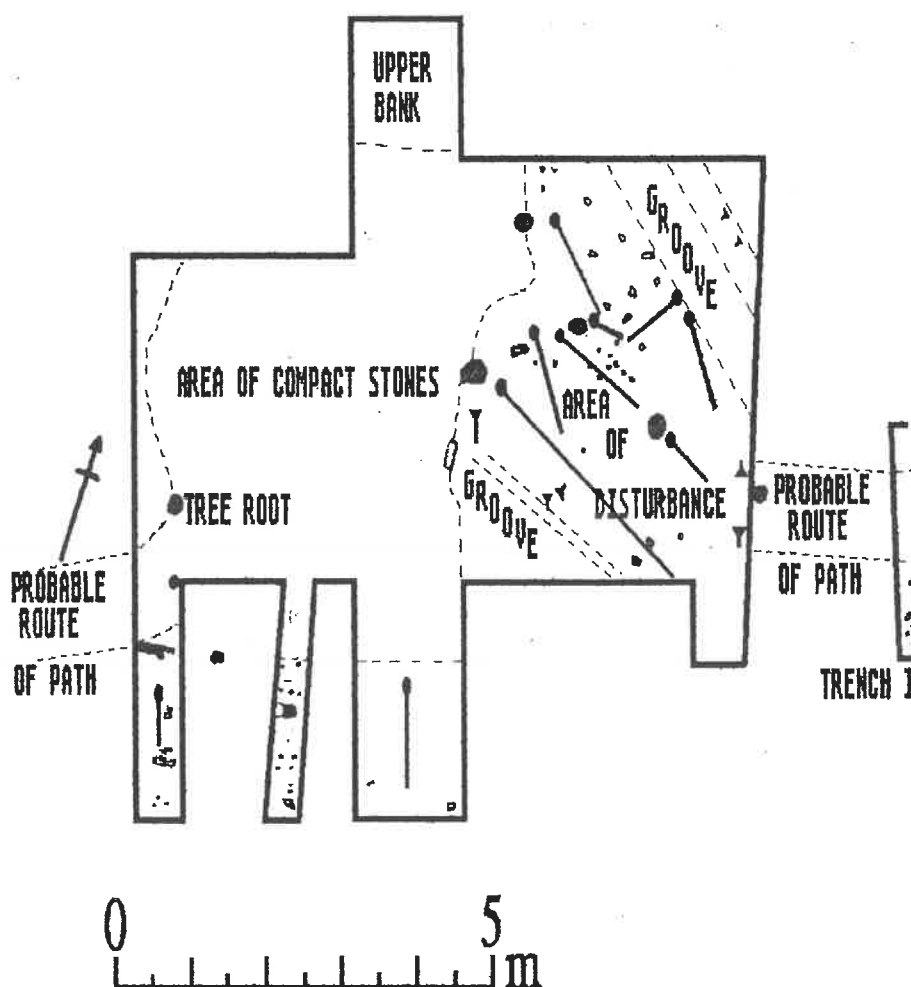
As the ground is reasonably level here a thin layer of topsoil could have started to build up and stained the natural a much darker colour, so no bright orange natural was recovered which would have made the original cutting of the path stand out. Also the natural break in the slope, where the ground levels out, is an obvious route onto the hillside for any form of machinery which has to gain access to work with the trees. Therefore the dark staining throughout the overall length of the trench could be accounted for by machinery also tracking over the area and compressing the soil. There are the obvious remains of many oaks in this area, and machinery would have been used in the nineteen fifties to remove the wood, including probably the one that stood on the site of trench F as this is the upper end of the more level ground. It was

also noticed that the path was not so clearly defined here almost as if it had been eroded and this may be accounted for if machinery had tracked over the area. The spoil mound at the southern end of the trench is an obvious continuation of the mound found in trench F but is starting to taper off.

## TRENCH H

Originally trench H was 10.5m x 1.5m running approximately north/south across the widest and most level point in the change of slope. It was noticed that in the heavy rains a spring issued forth from the centre of this area, making it uncertain if there would be any features present. Although the ground was still wet and very sticky, it became obvious almost immediately that the surface below the humic material was very different to any so far encountered, being a very compact stone surface. In order to uncover the full extent of this surface and to ascertain if the path ran on to this surface, further trenches were opened until an area some 10m x 8m was fully exposed. Due to a large number of trees and tree stumps in the area many of the crucial features in this trench were damaged.

The compact stone surface covered some 4m (east/west) by 6.5m (north/south) with a rounded end to the west and it sloped gently to the south. The eastern end had been destroyed so it was impossible to find its full extent in this direction. The stones were rough and angular, very densely packed, none appeared to be very large, at the most 0.15m x 0.15m usually smaller, and had traces of a gravelly silt around them. The silting was more concentrated in the area of the spring and may have been a natural washing out due to the action of the spring rather than being laid down. On the south-west corner of the platform a number of trees and a large tree root had destroyed the junction between the path and the platform; as a result it was not possible to tell how the



two joined but it was clear that the path was directed on to the platform from its angle of approach. Likewise the junction between the path and platform on the eastern side was completely destroyed but it was clear that the path would have run on to the platform. There were no traces of the path to the south of the platform where the ground is reasonably level.

On the east side of the trench there were changes in the colours of the surface material which indicated that the platform had extended beyond its present boundaries. At the edges of the trench, close up against the steeper hillslope, was the clearly defined orange natural gritty clay. Where the natural was on the more level ground it was stained brown. Abutting the stone packed area the soil was an orange/grey colour with some traces of stone and three very obvious grooves in the surface running diagonally across the trench. There were also many tree stumps in this area.

To the south of the trench, beyond the compact stone area, the ground surface was the natural but again stained a brown colour. The spoil mound that had spread downhill from trench F was found to taper out in this area.

This platform of compact stones appears to have been man-made. Although there are many areas where some gravel or stone can be seen in the natural on the hillslope, nowhere else is there such a well defined area of compact stone. From the remaining traces it would seem that the area was originally of a roughly oval shape with the path entering and exiting from the south-east and south-west sides. There may have been some attempt to make the surface less rough by adding a layer of gravelly silt, as can be seen by a few remaining traces of this sort of material in the area of the spring but the spring itself may have produced this material. On the east side of the trench the platform appears to have been destroyed by ploughing or some sort of dragging action which has turned the soil over, mixing the orange natural and grey material of the platform together and at the same time producing the three grooves in this area. That this area has a large number of trees/tree stumps in it compared with the compact stony area which has none, would seem to indicate that the area has been worked at some time in the past. As the platform of compact stone extends on its upper limit (north) from the break of the steep hillslope above, the path could not have passed above it and as there is no trace to the south, plus the fact that the line of the path on either side of the platform points to the platform, it must have formed an integral part of the path.

## TRENCHES I & J

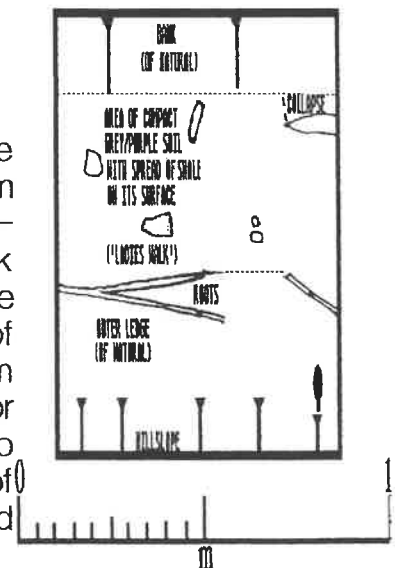
Trenches I and J were opened across the more level ground to the west of trench H to try and establish the approach route of the path onto the platform. Trench I was 3m x 0.6m, while trench J was 6m x 0.6m and both ran north/south. Both revealed a gentle slope on their upper (north) side which consisted of the brown stained natural. There was then a level ledge, with a compact grey/purple soil on its surface and a few traces of shale, which was approximately 1m wide but had a lip of about 0.4m of natural on its outer (south) side. To the south the ground sloped away gently at first and then steeply as it fell away down to the present forestry road.

Traces of the path were found in both trenches, consisting of a ledge where the gentle slope in the ground at this point had been levelled to take the path, being 1m wide. The path material only appeared to be approximately 0.6m wide in this area but it could have been eroded away especially on its outer edge by work in the vicinity.

The second area of excavation was close to the Peiran falls (NGR SN 769735). This consisted of four trenches, three being on the ledge leading up from the falls towards the forestry road, while the fourth was close to the base of the falls. The ledge was very clear and had been cut into a near vertical hillslope. At one point there were clear traces of stone revetment: part of this was investigated although as little as possible was touched in order to preserve it in its present moss-covered state.

## TRENCH K

This trench was 1.5m x 2m, encompassing the bank above the excavation and the fall on the outer edge. This trench was 6m south-west of the stone revetment and ran north-east/south-west. Clearance of the humic overburden revealed that the bank (north-west) consisted of the natural orange gritty clay. There was then a strip 0.9m wide of loose shale. To the south-east of this on the outer edge of the ledge was an area of natural, 0.5m wide, which then fell at 90 degrees to the horizontal for approximately 0.6m. The ground then fell away very steeply to the valley floor. Owing to the danger created by the steepness of fall below the ledge not much of this area could be investigated but it was clear there was no stone revetment at this point.



As the shale surface was so loose, to confirm that it was the path and not just shale collapse, and to confirm the nature of the path's construction, it was removed. This revealed a dark grey/purple compact soil 0.9m wide, although its outer edge (south-east) was damaged by a tree root.

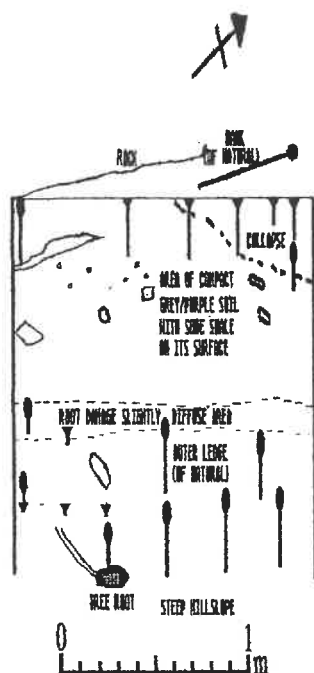
It seems clear from this trench that a ledge was cut into the hillside to accommodate the path. The path was 0.9m wide, its base was the compact grey/purple soil and this was overlaid by a loose shale surface. The outer edge of the ledge was not paved having a 0.5m outer edge comprising the natural. Due to the very compactness of the natural no revetting was needed on this section of the ledge/path.

## TRENCH L

This trench was opened in order to investigate the ledge and its relationship to the stone revetment. The trench was 2m x 2m and was opened up at the north-east end of the

revetment. The surfaces recovered from this trench were very similar to those in trench K but in order to obtain the necessary width for the ledge some protruding rock had had to be cut away at the inner (north-west) edge of the ledge, at the base of the bank which consisted of the natural orange gritty clay. There was a 0.9m wide strip of compact grey/purple soil spreading out across the ledge from the base of the bank and

this had some traces of shale on its surface. This entire area of ledge was so overgrown with root mat that the path surface had been considerably disturbed. There was again an outer (south-east) strip of natural 0.5m wide although this was slightly browner than normal.



Below the outer lip of the ledge at the south-east end of the trench was a stone revetment 0.6m high. This revetment was moss-covered and as little as possible of the moss was removed. It was clear however that the revetment consisted of dry stone walling and appeared to be constructed of pieces of local shale stone, perhaps pieces cut from part of a cliff face during the construction of the ledge. The revetment was built on a small crescent-shaped platform. This was the only place where there was such a platform below the outer edge of the ledge, the rest of the outer edge of the ledge comprising the very steep hillslope. The north-east end of the revetment had been destroyed by a tree growing at this point, of which only a stump now remains, but where the revetment ended the bank of natural appeared to continue: beyond the tree stump the outer bank definitely comprised only the compact natural.

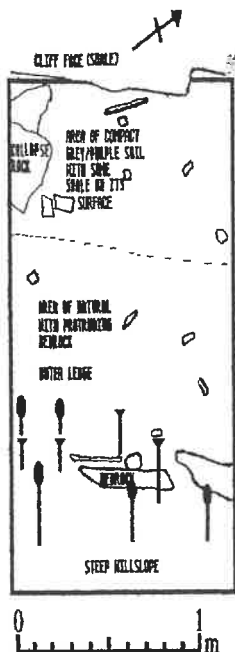
This part of the ledge is different from the rest in that there is a small platform below it. To cross this platform it must have been necessary to construct the outer revetment to keep the ledge at a constant width as it ascended the very steep hillside. There must also have been a rock face projecting out across the platform, most of it just below the level of the ledge, but when the ledge was constructed a small amount of rock must have been cut away at the base of the inner bank where the rock was slightly exposed through the natural above the level of the ledge. This must have been done in order to keep the route of the ledge in a straight line. Behind the revetment the ground must have been levelled using the excavated natural soil from another part of the ledge. This showed little sign of staining due to disturbance and therefore must have been excavated and deposited immediately behind the revetment. The path must have then been laid over this surface in the usual manner.

## TRENCH M

This area of ledge was examined as it had obviously been cut through a cliff face. The trench was 2m x 1.5m and 15m to the north-east of the revetment.

At this point the ledge had to cross a rock outcrop which sloped downhill at approximately 85 degrees to the horizontal. It was clear that the rock face on the inner





(north-west) edge of the ledge had been cut away to form a vertical face due to the alteration in angle of slope of the cliff face. Below the humic material the ledge was covered in rock debris up to 0.6m deep on the inner (north-west) edge of the ledge. The cliff face had obviously been frost damaged and fresh large pieces of shale were clearly ready to fall onto the ledge. The debris consisted mostly of shattered shale, pieces varying in size from small fragments to large rocks 0.5m x 0.5m x 0.05m, and some soil. This debris was removed to reveal the compact grey/purple soil which had some traces of shale surfacing, but it was difficult to differentiate between natural collapse and metalling, except where the collapse lay at irregular angles to the horizontal. The compact surfacing extended from the base of the cliff towards the outer edge of the ledge for 0.9m. The collapse and the path material had been heavily disturbed by root mat which had bound them together but the compact path material could still be differentiated. A narrow strip of this compact grey/purple material was removed and found to be some 0.02m in depth.

On the outer edge (south-east) of the ledge there was again a 0.5m wide strip of natural. This natural overlaid the bedrock. This could be seen in the area just below the outer edge of the ledge where there was mostly bedrock but with some natural over it. The outer edge of the ledge was vertical for 0.6m before then following the natural steep slope of the hill.

In order to create the route for the path the natural cliff face had been cut away to form the inner side of the ledge, the outer edge being a combination of natural with some rock just below the surface. The path material had then been laid on the inner (north-west) side of the ledge. The path was 0.9m wide, the usual compact grey/purple soil indicating this, while beyond the path, on the outer edge, there was a gap of 0.5m from the edge of the path to the drop at the side of the ledge. This was presumably a safety factor to stop people walking too close to the edge of the ledge and to stop erosion.

In all three trenches K, L and M a clear-cut ledge had been created to take the ascending path up the hillside away from the falls. In the different parts of the hillside it had been necessary to adjust the construction to take account of the landscape. The ledge was either cut into the compact natural gritty clay or rock and if it was necessary the outer edge of the ledge was reveted to keep the ledge at a constant gradient and width.

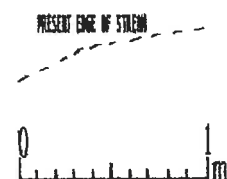
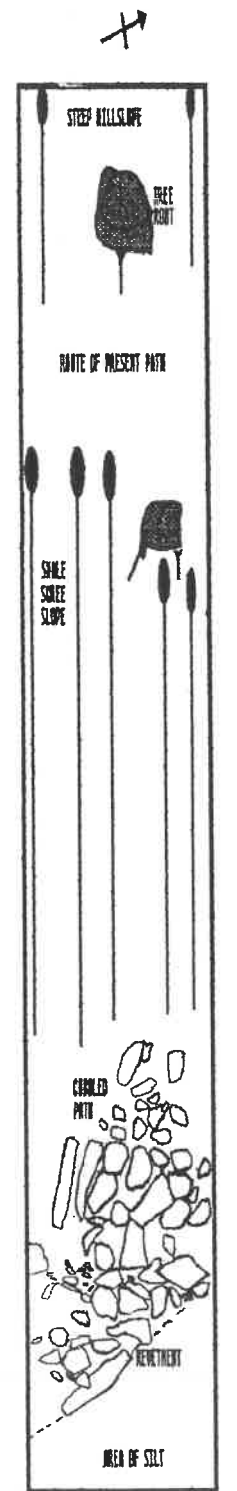
## TRENCH N

This trench was near the base of the Peiran falls, it was 1.5m x 7m and lay east/west. This position was decided upon because the trench at its highest point (west) would cross the present path while the lower end reached the edge of the river bank. In the area of the trench the exact route of the path was unclear. The present path rises up from the valley floor, is quite narrow, and appears to take a route to the west of some of the present pine trees, almost seeming to take them into account. To the north of the trench the path is not very clear and appears to drop back down on to the original route

of the path where it becomes much more well defined again. It seemed unusual for the path to descend slightly again on an ascent but the river had eroded away parts of the bank just before the path left the valley floor making its original point of ascent unclear. Above (west) the present path is the very steep hillslope which comprises the natural. The present path is a narrow ledge, 0.8m wide, its surface appears similar to the natural but is stained much darker because it has been walked over and is heavily disturbed by tree roots. The excavation revealed that the present path showed no sign of surfacing. It appears to be a route created by people walking this way regularly to avoid the scree slope at the base of the hill and the area eroded by the river.

The middle section of the trench revealed a scree slope of very loose shale. This shale slope seems to start just below the edge of the present path and in fact may well undercut it. The exact depth of the shale could not be found because if any more had been removed during the excavation it would have undermined the present path. At what appeared to be the base of the scree slope the ground levelled off. An area of cobbling was then revealed. This comprised a strip of rounded river-washed stones, with some traces of silt between them, laid to form a horizontal surface 0.9m wide. This strip runs north/south and points towards the more certain route of the path uphill to the north. On the outer (north) edge of the cobbles is a revetment. This has been much damaged by the river undercutting its lower edge, but large facing stones can still be seen in place at its upper level. At the base of the revetment are a number of stones that have obviously been washed out of it and there is also a large deposit of river silts. These silts formed a platform in front (north) of the revetment 1.2m wide but this in turn is being undercut by the present flow of water in the stream. It was not possible to find the base of the revetment because removal of the silt platform might have caused what is left of the unstable revetment to collapse and destroyed what little evidence remains of the path. Excavations around the inner (south) edge of the cobbles did reveal that the angular shale did not stop at the cobbles but continued to slope down beneath them. Again the depth of the shale/path could not be tested without destroying the path so it was left intact.

It would seem clear from the excavations that the present path is of more recent origins created to bypass the difficult scree slope and area undermined by the river. The original path was reveted on its outer (north) edge and the surface was created by using river-rounded stones which were probably packed with silt to form a better walking surface. It would seem most likely that the revetment was built at the base of the scree slope and filled in



behind to create a horizontal surface over the scree and then cobbled. Much of the revetment has been washed away and more scree has descended over this area of the path making it almost impassable in its present state, which would account for the newer present route of the path.

The third area to be examined was in the area called Pendre field (NGR SN763735). This is north-east of the mansion site and south-west of the church. Here it was hoped that the route across the field and its entry point into the field could be recovered. However due to the extensive use of this land all evidence of the path appeared to be erased. Six trenches were opened up in this area, some of them quite extensive, in the hope that they would cross the route of the path.

## TRENCH O

This trench was 'L' shaped, one arm being 14m long and running north-west/south-east, the other arm joining at the south-east end of the first, was 28m long and ran north-east/south-west. The trench was laid out over a platform, the shorter arm running along its level surface, the longer arm extending down the south-west sloping side. The turf was removed and the floor of the trench cleaned. Other than the topsoil, which varied greatly in depth but was an average of about 0.25m deep, no other layers were discovered until the natural was reached. In this area it is a very compact gritty grey clay with some stone present. This was found uniformly over the entire floor of the trench except where a modern drainage channel (running north-east/south-west) crossed the north-west end of the arm on the platform. Its surface showed very clearly, being brown in colour and was far less compact. It was not excavated as water was still flowing through the system, as could be ascertained by inspecting a drain further down the field, and it was not thought necessary to inspect a modern functioning feature in case any disruption to the system was created. Throughout the entire length of the trench modern ceramics and glass were found. There were also pieces of ironwork found, most of it recognisable as nails. These finds came from the topsoil and were found as deep as the surface of the natural.

Here the topsoil lay straight on top of the natural but any features, such as the modern drain, showed clearly in this material. No traces of the path were found.

It was hoped by moving the investigations to the edge of the field around the area of the most likely entry point for the path, it might be traced and then followed into the field.

## TRENCH P

In some ways this trench was unrelated to Pendre field being some distance into the woods to the south-east of the field. It was opened across what looked like the route of a cut track. When the humic material was removed the natural was immediately

revealed, with no traces of path material. The natural was the same gritty material found in the rest of the woods but this material appeared to have been stained slightly brown, rather than being a bright orange. It looked as if it had been rutted by machinery running over it while it was wet. It was especially rutted on what would have been the slightly down slope side of the track where any water would have run. This must have happened some time in the past allowing the ruts time to mellow out slightly. Further examination of the area also revealed what appeared to be a number of field boundaries which would have joined to form a 'T' shape just to the south-east of the trench. The cutting of the track had destroyed the junction of the boundaries and it must be assumed from this that it must be a later track, perhaps used as part of forestry management at some time, because the construction of an earlier footpath would probably have taken account of a boundary rather than cutting a big hole in it. Slight traces of this track can also still be traced leading into Pendre field, and although it has been cut by modern paths which have disrupted being able to see it clearly and in total, it would still seem far too steep for the route of the 'Ladies Walk' where it enters the field.

This clearly looks like a more modern track but it does follow a very obvious route down the hillside out of the woods and may have been the original route of the 'Ladies Walk', but no evidence can be found for this, especially in the light of the obviously more recent disruption in the area.

## TRENCH Q

This area was opened on the edge of Pendre field where it was hoped the path might be entering the field. There was what appeared to be a rock-cut ledge running for a short distance parallel to the edge of the field (north-east/south-west) and it was thought the path might run on this. After removing the humic material it was found that the inner (south-east) side of the ledge still had some rock protruding through the floor of the ledge, and considering the near vertical cliff face above, it would seem unlikely that this surface would have been left so rough if the cliff face had been cut away above. Upon coming to the north-east end of the rock ledge the ground was found to slope away very steeply (down to the north-west) and no path could have been present here.

This appears to be a natural rock ledge while beyond it the ground slopes so steeply it would not allow the passage of a path.

## TRENCH R

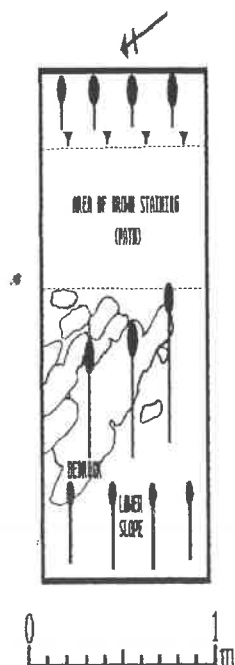
In the hopes of crossing the route of the path as it entered the field a long trench 1m x 20m was opened at right angles (south-east/north-west) to the boundary fence. This revealed a narrow ledge (1m wide), which was covered in flat stones consistent with those used to construct a wall on the hill above, but which had now collapsed and fallen down the hillside. In front of the ledge the ground fell steeply away for 1.7m, having some stone spread over the higher part of the slope. It appeared as though the ground had been cut away in front of the ledge and the stones on the lowest point of the slope had been swept away leaving it clear at this level. From the base of the steep slope the field continued to slope down to the north-west at approximately 45 degrees for a further

13m. In this area the removal of the topsoil again revealed only the natural gritty grey compact clay with some stone present. Modern ceramics and glass as well as nails were found in this area. For the final 6m (north-west end) the trench levelled out across the field crossing a bracken patch. The roots were very tightly packed in the topsoil and did extend into the natural but the same stratification of the area was revealed, topsoil covering natural.

No trace of the path could be found bisecting the trench. However the way the ground had been shaped alongside the fence was consistent with the area having been ploughed on numerous occasions. As the plough did not go right up to the fence it left the stone-covered ledge but had cut a steep bank in front of it, sweeping away the stones which were on the lower part of the slope. As there appears to be no trace of the path in the field but there is evidence for ploughing, this would seem to suggest that the path has been ploughed out in Pendre field.

## TRENCHES S & T

Two further trenches were opened in the field on what was hoped was the route of the path: trench S on the north-west side of the field, being 5.2m x 1m, and trench T on the south-east side of the field which was 4.1m x 1m. In both cases the topsoil was removed to reveal the natural. Modern ceramics and glass were found in both.



Again any evidence of a path, if it had been present, must have been destroyed by ploughing.

The area around the site of the mansion (NGR SN759734) was examined next. This was to try and recover traces of the path leading to and from the mansion.

## TRENCH U

A trench was opened across an obvious ledge which runs north-east away from the front of the mansion towards Hawthorn Cottage. The turf was very thin in this area, only 0.04m to 0.05m thick, and beneath this was a compact surface. On the upper (south-east) side of the ledge the soil had spread down the slope and half way across the ledge.

The soil was identical in nature to the natural but stained light brown. The outer (north-west) side of the ledge was covered in a similar soil but this was a much darker brown. The outer edge (north-west) of the ledge comprised very irregular bedrock. Below the bedrock was the orange natural and this surface sloped away steeply towards the north-west. After closely studying and comparing the different soils it was decided that the light brown soil covering half the ledge was slumped natural from the slope above, which had become slightly stained by its movement downhill. This was removed to

reveal the true width of the ledge. The dark brown stained surface extended from the base of the slope for 1m out towards its outer edge. There was then 0.5m of bedrock curbing on the outer edge of the ledge before the ground fell steeply away. After removal of the slumped material from the inner edge and upper slope the undisturbed natural was revealed beneath showing that this was the original cut of the ledge.

There can be little doubt that this is a path. The ledge being over 1m wide and continuous up the side of the hill cannot be a natural or animal-made feature. It again shows most of the characteristics of the 'Ladies Walk' – the dark stained walking surface and the outer safety part of the ledge.

## TRENCH V

To explore further the possible routes a path might have taken from the mansion a trench was opened to the north-west of the present large barn. This was 12.5m x 1m and covered the central area between the barn and the hedgerow to the north-west of it. Topsoil was removed to a depth of between 0.25m to 0.3m to reveal the natural. This was similar to the natural uncovered in Pendre field, being a gritty grey clay with some stone present, but the gravel/grit content was much higher than in Pendre field.

No trace of a path was recovered, but this area may well have been ploughed unlike the area of the ledge as examined in trench U, where it may have been protected from ploughing because of the very steep nature of the slope.

## TRENCH Y

The final trench opened in the area of the mansion was south of the front of it below the ridge formed by the present drive. This was on a line with the path coming up from the large bridge crossing the Ystwyth and the front of the mansion. It was hoped that the exit point of the path from the mansion could be recovered, or the original Johnes drive which may have formed the first short part of the walk. A trench 6m x 1m was opened but this again just revealed the natural below the topsoil and it may well be that this area has been ploughed at some time or the construction of the present drive eradicated the old one.

Two further trenches were opened, one to try and recover the route of the path in the Alpine Meadow and the second to try and recover information as to whether there was a structure in the area which is known as the Cold Bath.

## TRENCH W

The narrowest point of the river bank in the Alpine Meadow was chosen to try and recover information about the nature and route of the path in this area (NGR SN767732). A trench could be run across nearly the entire width of the bank at this point, excluding

the present path. The trench was 6m x 0.85m and approximately 140m east of the place where the present track descends into the meadow. It ran north/south between a large cliff face to the north and the river to the south. When the dense undergrowth was removed a number of well-bedded large boulders were found at the base of the cliff. To the south of these was a strip of shale 1m wide. Beyond this again, to the south, the surface was consistent, being a grey compact gritty clay/silt material. The shale was removed to identify the nature of the surface below it, as it may have been fractured remains collapsed from the cliff face. The surface below was much drier than the other surrounding surfaces and seemed to be almost of a dry peaty nature. There were also a number of small round river-washed stones found in the surface of this material.

As the shale-covered strip was so different from the surrounding soil there can be little doubt that the path ran close to the base of the cliff and was metalled with the shale material. This again goes some way towards proving that in undisturbed areas such as this and trench U, the route of the path can still be recovered.

## TRENCH X

This is the proposed site of the Cold Bath (NGR SN763732). In this area there is a large amount of building material. It was uncertain if this was deposited rubbish or the remains of a building. The area was covered in brash, which was removed, and then a trench was laid across one of the larger mounds of building material. The trench was laid east/west and was 4m x 1m. It was hoped to confirm if there was any form of structure beneath the loose material. The humic material was removed and then the building rubble investigated. No coherent pattern to the material was found as it was removed. It consisted of a jumble of bricks, stone, flooring tiles and roofing slates. Some mortar, chunks of plaster from a wall or ceiling, as well as ceramics, glass and metal were recovered.

Examination of the area was hampered by the roots of one of the nearby trees cutting through the area of the trench but no brick or stone footings were found when all the building material was finally removed. However beneath the building material several different surfaces were revealed. These could be divided into four distinct strips running north/south across the trench. At the western end is a strip of brown/grey gravel. This is 1m wide and appears to be the natural of the area but as the intact archaeological layers were not removed this could not be more fully examined. To the east of this, very much disturbed by the tree roots is a strip, 1m wide, of fine grey silt. Examining a very small area exposed by roots showed that this was overlying a grey gravel which appeared to be 0.15m deep. To the east of this again was another strip of the brown/grey gravel, which may be the natural. This strip is 0.75m wide. The final strip on the eastern side of the trench is 1.25m wide, but may extend further into the unexcavated area beyond the trench and comprised a grey gravel with some stones present and appears in a small area that was examined to be up to 0.12m deep. Both grey gravel areas appear to be cut into the brown/grey gravel and have straight edges.

Due to the fact that archaeological layers were not being removed, these areas could not be examined any further, but considering the nature of the surfaces – their straight edges and different fills, it was felt that there might well be the remains of a structure



here which would need to be explored as a whole and removing any material from a trench could damage the overall picture. The different surfaces may well represent the sites of walls and floors and considering no modern ceramics were recovered from the site it may well be of some antiquity.

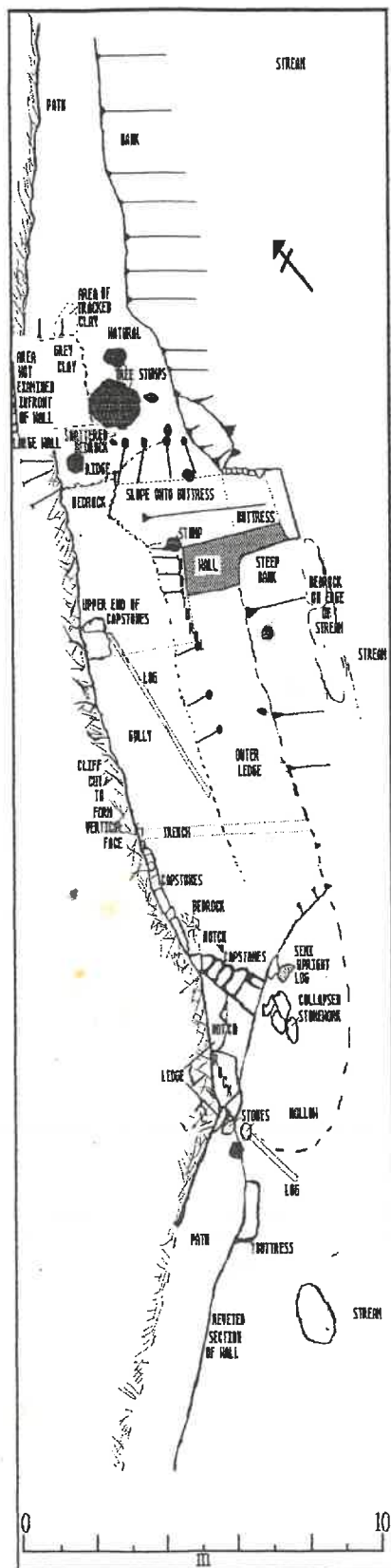
# THE RUSTIC ALCOVE AND ITS APPROACHES

As the exact nature of the Rustic Alcove was uncertain, it was decided that it should be investigated prior to path re-instatement because it was felt that the area could be in danger from pedestrian erosion. This erosion could damage any underlying archaeological features making it extremely difficult for any future archaeological work to be carried out and the true nature of the area to be understood. With this in mind the approach from the south-west and the Rustic Alcove were examined. As with the rest of the excavations at Hafod none of the archaeological layers were removed. The modern overburden of leaf mould, humic material and root matter were all that were removed in order to reveal the outline, if any, of the underlying archaeological features.

The Rustic Alcove (NGR SN769736) is situated on the west bank of a fast-flowing stream called the Peiran which feeds into the Afon Ystwyth. The Peiran feeds down, running from the north-east to the south-west, from the area of Pen y Garn and Rhos Peiran (NGR SN 790770). A short distance to the north-east of the Alcove are the picturesque Peiran Falls, which it seems were to be viewed initially from the Alcove. The Alcove is approached from the south-west following the obvious path along the western bank of the Peiran from the area of the mill and stone bridge. The path's ascent from the stone bridge is reasonably gentle and the ground levels out between the Alcove and the Falls: from there it climbs more steeply towards the forestry road and the church (see above).

It was felt that in order to understand the Rustic Alcove the south-west approach route should be investigated first. It was hoped that this might give a clearer concept of what happened to the path as it approached the Alcove and as a result make the route through it more understandable.

# THE AREA OF THE HOLLOW



The approach comprised a hollow or cut in the river bank on the route of the path. The floor of the hollow itself was in places a metre below the path's normal level. There was then an ascent in a gully obviously cut from the rock from the hollow to the Alcove. The area around the hollow was investigated, as well as the approach route on either side of it and two trenches were laid across the gully.

The hollow is approximately 6m x 3m and 1m below the level of the present path. The base of the hollow is above the normal running level of the stream but when the water is high it obviously pours through the hollow. The humic and river-washed material was removed from the hollow and its surrounds. This revealed on the north-eastern bank a stone-lined and capped culvert running across the route of the path (approximately north/south) which fed into the hollow. This section of culvert is 2m long with capstones up to 0.5m wide. The outer (south) end had collapsed into the hollow but it could still be seen that one side (north-east) had a dry stone lining while the other side (south-west) appeared to take advantage of the bedrock as a lining. None of the capstones were lifted so the fill or cut of the culvert could not be examined at this stage. On both sides of the culvert the ground surface is bedrock, except for its constructed outer edge where it feeds into the hollow. It must be assumed that the channel forming the culvert was cut through this bedrock and that the capstones must rest on the bedrock on either side of the channel, except for the area where it was built up.

Below where the outer edge had collapsed into the hollow, a large pile of loose stones was found. These had obviously been part of the culvert at one time and as a result were left in situ below the mouth of the culvert. Some river silt had built up in the base of the hollow, up to 0.15m in places, but it could clearly be seen that this was a modern deposit as plastic bags were protruding from it. As this silt was removed other modern finds were recovered: modern ceramics, glass and metal. The removal of this silt clearly showed that the mouth of the culvert had collapsed some considerable time ago, as more collapsed stone was revealed buried within it and this was resting on the compact material beneath the silt.

Removal of the silt also revealed that the base of the

north-east bank was mostly river-worn bedrock. However on the outer (south-east) edge of this bank it was noticed that there was a covering of what appeared to be the gritty clay natural which was stained a light brown compared with its normal orange colour and spread over and down the side of the bank, going beneath the level of the silt. The natural may have been stained brown by disturbance in the area or may have been redeposited here.

Protruding from the silt near the mouth of the culvert was what appeared to be a half round timber, 0.9m showing above the surface of the silt, its diameter being 0.3m. It was leaning at nearly 45 degrees and it was thought at first that it might have been a slightly displaced support for a bridge or platform. Upon removal of the silt it was found to extend only a few centimetres beneath the surface and had been leaning against the collapsed stonework. No other traces of it were found or post holes below the silt. It therefore must be assumed that it was river-deposited and that no wooden upright supports could have been put in place here. The underlying bedrock makes this impossible, as it continually appeared between the underlying compact material, which also showed no traces of post holes. It can only be concluded that any bridging of the hollow could not have used wooden supports set on end.

The rest of the floor of the hollow revealed no other features, although there are a few large stones lying around which look like large capstones. One oak beam, 3.5m x 0.15m, was also found lying on the south-west side of the hollow, one end at the base of the path the other pointing out into the stream. This may have been part of a structure if the hollow was bridged, but it appears a little short to bridge the present gap considering the angle at which it would have had to lie, making it seem unlikely that it was a bridging beam. It may just be water deposited.

To the rear (north-west) of the hollow is a narrow ledge which appears to be running from one bank to the other. A very large angular rock is sitting on this ledge making passage from one bank to the other via this ledge impossible. Clearance of humic material from the ledge and around the rock revealed that the ledge was not continuous but stopped level with the end of the rock on one side (north-east) while on the other side (south-west) it became much more sloping as it went behind the rock. The stratified layers of the bedrock are running at 45 degrees to the horizontal so it seems very unusual that the ledge should be horizontal. It must therefore be assumed that the ledge to either side of the rock must have been carved flat at some time because the rest of the bedrock can be seen to be fracturing at a natural 45 degrees angle. That the levelling of the ledge seems to take account of the rock would appear to indicate that the rock was in situ before this work was carried out. It would also seem impossible that the rock should be able to fall from a considerable height from the cliff above and halt on such a narrow ledge. It must therefore be concluded that it fell some considerable time ago in antiquity when the ledge must have been wider, and that the ledge has been made narrower by the action of the stream. This would seem to infer that the rock was in its present position when the path was constructed and that the path had to take account of the rock.

On the ledge to the south-west of the culvert there is a triangular shaped notch cut into the surface of the ledge. It is not quite an equilateral triangle, having the longer side of 0.6m facing the hollow, while the other two sides which go to form a point, facing the cliff

face, are 0.4m long. The cut was formed taking advantage of the 45 degrees stratification of the bedrock, with the deepest part being at the point of the triangle, away from the hollow. There appears to be a second triangle on the north-east side of the culvert. It is not quite as clear as the one on the ledge, being slightly obscured by the uneven nature of the surrounding bedrock, but it does appear to form a reciprocal notch to the one on the ledge. These notches may have been the resting points for some sort of bridging structure, eg timber beams.

On the south-west side of the hollow the present path comes to an abrupt halt. At the end of the path is a flat capstone which is lying alongside the ledge, where the path and ledge merge, and a second one which appears to have slipped over the end of the path and is now lying just below the edge in the hollow. The last 2m of path on the approach to the hollow have no strengthening in their outer facing and these slabs may have been positioned at the end of the path to stop erosion and make footing more secure while stepping into the hollow. These may well be more recent additions to the path since there does not appear to be any form of structure for bridging the hollow as it presently stands. No traces of older bridging point supports can be found here either and considering the difficulty in getting around the fallen rock, it would seem unlikely that the hollow was ever bridged from this point.

2m south-west of the hollow the nature of the path changes. Beyond this point the outer face of the approaching path is reveted. Although the revetment has collapsed in several places its remains can still be clearly seen, whereas on the final approach to the hollow the path shows no sign of revetment. It must be assumed that the path has two phases, the part from the revetment to the hollow perhaps being a later addition to extend the path to the hollow. It was also noticed that where the revetment appears to end it bulges out towards the river and a very large stone, 1.5m long, has been placed in the footings at this point. Considering the size of stones in the rest of the revetment this seems unusual and makes the revetment appear buttress-like. Directly opposite this part of the revetment on the other side of the stream (south-east) is a large horizontal slab and it may well be that this was a bridging point. A ledge can be followed for a very short distance on the far side and then two depressions can be seen which would support bridge beams. These depressions are reciprocated by the triangular notches on the north-west side of the stream. If the stream were bridged here both bridges would be nearly horizontal, just over a metre wide and they would solve the problem of crossing the hollow. If the support beams of the second bridge were laid into the triangular notches this would mean that the landing point would have obscured a very obvious man-made culvert which might have detracted from the natural picturesque.

# THE AREA OF THE GULLY

From the north-east bank of the hollow the path approaches the Rustic Alcove through a rock-cut gully. On the north-west side of the gully the near vertical cliff face rises and then slopes away towards the north-west. The cliff face must have been cut vertical but no signs of tool marks can be seen. The face has weathered however and signs of fresh breaks can be seen following the natural stratification. The floor of the gully is approximately 2.5m across before it again rises up about 0.6m onto a ledge which is approximately 2m wide. On the eastern side of the ledge the ground falls away steeply, nearly vertically, to the rocks at the side of the stream. The gully ascends quite steeply from the hollow to the Alcove and is full of humic material which is wet due to the almost constant flow of water through it. When first examined there was a long (7m) beam lying diagonally across the gully from the inner (north-west) side, its top end level with the outer (south-west) face of the wall which is adjacent to the Alcove buttress. It was thought at first it was one of the many pines which cover the surrounding area but when it was removed to facilitate examination of the gully floor, it was found to be oak. A second similar beam (7.6m) was found lying on the ledge.

Two areas were examined in the gully: one trench approximately half way up the gully and the area around the entrance to the Alcove. The area around the Alcove was examined first. The humic material was removed along with the root mat that was present in it. At no point was this material very deep and its removal immediately revealed a bedrock floor to the gully. No cut marks could be seen on the bedrock but most of it is smoothly worn so none could really be expected. Against the base of the cliff capstones were revealed. These were lying flat and were similar to the ones capping the culvert. The stones were not lifted so no investigation of any channelling could be made. The outer (south-east) side of the gully comprised a sloping bank of soil which spread up and over the outer ledge. This was very similar in nature to the natural but was pale brown: this could indicate disturbed natural. This surface was left in situ so its relationship to the bedrock or any cutting of the bedrock could not be explored.

The trench lower down the gully was explored next. This revealed basically the same features. The shallow humic material was removed to expose bedrock over the greater part of the gully floor; this was much more angular however than that near the entrance to the Alcove, following the natural line of stratification. Against the base of the inner (north-west) cliff face there were capstones but these did not appear to be resting over any sort of cut channel. The capstones were lying at a 45 degrees angle to the gully floor, one side resting slightly up from the base of the cliff, the other lying on the bedrock floor. Although the capstones were not removed it could clearly be seen that due to the rough angularity of the bedrock that comprised the gully floor and the angle at which they were lying, there could be no drainage channel cut beneath them. On the outer (south-east) side of the gully the pale brown soil similar to the natural was again recovered. This spread up over the side of the gully and across the outer ledge.

To clarify the extent of the capstones the humic material was removed from their surfaces between the central trench and the out-flow culvert. Although not all the capstones were cleared for the full length of the gully it must be assumed that they run from a point just outside the Alcove down to the culvert. All the lower (south-west)

capstones could be seen clearly resting on the bedrock with no traces of channelling, which would perhaps seem to indicate that they must have been raised at their edges at one time if they were to function as drain covers.

That the gully has been cut from the rock is reasonably clear, as is indicated by the vertical inner (north-west) cliff face, and the nature of the gully itself, in that it is not a natural cut for this situation. What is unclear however is the extent of the original rock outcrop. At first it was thought that the cliff may have extended to the outer edge (south-east) of the ledge and that the gully and ledge were cut at the same time. Examination in the areas of the trenches and culvert showed that the ledge had a spread of the pale brown compact gritty clay over its surface. This material had spread down the outer (south-east) side of the gully, across much of the area around the culvert and down the bank into the hollow. In the central area, on the inner (north-west) side of the ledge the bedrock rises vertically through the humic material for up to 0.2m, which seems unusual as most of the inner (west) edge of the ledge is rounded. This would seem to indicate that the original rock outcrop had extended as far as the ledge, and when the gully was cut straight through, where the outcrop was widest in the central area, some was still left upstanding, rather than doing any extra cutting. Also the cutting of the gully may have caused some of the natural to spread down its outer side. From this it must be assumed that the ledge was there prior to the cutting of the gully.

The ledge may have been an earlier path which went out of use when the gully was cut. As the ledge fades out in the area of the culvert and there is a spread of the pale brown gritty clay material on and around the north-east side of the hollow, this may indicate this part of the ledge could have been originally naturally wider and taken advantage of as a landing spot for the path when bridging the hollow.



# THE RUSTIC ALCOVE

Having ascertained the general nature of the approach from the south-west up to the Rustic Alcove, the Alcove itself was then examined. The entire area of the Alcove was examined, which included the area of the buttress with its adjacent wall and the area in front of the larger wall set into the face of the hillslope. As with the rest of the examination none of the archaeological layers were excavated, only the overburden of humic material and dense root mat was removed to reveal the surface features of the archaeological layers. From this it was hoped that a general outline of the Alcove's features would be revealed, enough to allow the laying of the new path to continue without damaging any of the archaeology of the area.

The trench across the entrance to the Alcove was extended through into the Alcove up to where a ridge is formed by a change in ground slope, the slope up from the south-west meeting the level ground in front of the larger wall. This showed a continuation of the smooth surfaced bedrock which ran nearly up to the ridge but became fractured and irregular over the last metre before the ridge, following the line of natural stratification at 45 degrees to the horizontal. On the inner (north-west) side the vertical cliff face gave way to a hillslope after passing into the Alcove. This would have been the natural angle of slope and if the angle of slope was followed down the gully this could easily have formed part of the original rock outcrop which was cut away when the gully was created. It is only because the rock has been cut away in the gully that there is such a noticeable difference in the cliff face. This slope is covered in moss and some humic material but except for an examination around the base of the slope it was left intact. This examination revealed that very little rock had been cut away at the base of the slope. There was a vertical face of 0.6m to 0.7m at the base of the slope compared with the several metres cut away in the gully.

At the base of the slope is what appears to be a shallow groove, 0.2m to 0.3m wide and 0.1m deep, cut into the bedrock floor. It appears to have been tooled out taking advantage of the natural stratification of the bedrock. Owing to a tree stump the upper extent of the groove could not be found below the ridge but the groove does appear to be leading towards the capstones. It halts level with the change in hillslope, where the gully-cut vertical face ends: there is then a gap of 0.8m to the top end (north-east) of the capstones but there are natural grooves in the bedrock which would carry some of the water into a capstoned drain if necessary. It may be that the capstones continued further up-hill to meet the groove at one time, although no traces of them were found, and if the capstones were somehow built up to allow the passage of water beneath them it would seem feasible for the groove to feed into a capstoned drain.

The actual floor of the gully/path as it enters the Alcove is 2m wide with a smooth bedrock floor. On its outer (south-east) side the edge of the path is banked up and comprises the pale brown gritty clay material. As the path enters the Alcove, passing the low wall adjacent to the buttress, it appears that the soil has been cut forming the outer edge of the gully. This cut follows the inner (north-west) edge of the ledge and then tapers out, just beyond the wall, inside the Alcove. Leaning against the north corner of the wall was a very rotten tree stump. This was lifted out of the way and the small hole that remained showed clearly that just below the pale brown soil was the

bright orange natural. This would seem to confirm that the upper levels of the natural have been disturbed and stained pale brown. This would further seem to confirm that the gully was cut through a bank of natural as well as the rock outcrop.

The buttress was examined next. It is 2m wide and extends 1.7m from the stream bank. Its faces are constructed of flat stone and are built onto the bedrock at the side of the stream. The faces of the buttress could not be examined without scaffolding set in the river and at this stage of the examination it was not thought necessary; the upper surface was examined however.

After the humic material was removed a brown gritty clay surface was revealed. This again had all the appearance of disturbed natural and probably was redeposited natural which was used to form a walking surface on the buttress. There were also a few loose stones lying on this surface at the base of the adjacent wall which had undoubtedly collapsed off the wall when the removed tree stump had originally fallen against it. This sloping surface extended from near the end of the buttress (south-east) up to the area where the path enters the Alcove. Owing to the two different slopes it appears that the path sloping up through the gully from the south-west continues straight uphill to the ridge and onto the level ground in front of the larger wall. These differences in slope must have been man-made because the slope up from the buttress has obviously been cut through a bank of natural, this probably supplying the surface material for the buttress. Where the buttress ends and the bank begins, although the brown soil continues, traces of the orange natural faintly show through in places. This must indicate that the natural has been cut away but the upper surface has been stained brown. On the north-east side of this area, it becomes more obvious that the slope has been cut through a bank of natural, in that the ground rises steeply, 45 degrees, to meet the ridge thus forming quite a steep bank. This bank is of natural although it has been heavily disturbed by tree growth (now containing many stumps). What this would appear to indicate is the ledge on the outer side of the gully rose at a constant height to meet the ridge and level ground in front of the large wall but when the buttress was constructed the ledge was cut through to form the present surface which comes off the buttress.

Around the north-east and south-east sides of the buttress the walling comes up level with the walking surface. In some places these stones are very loose and great care was taken not to remove too much soil from around them but they are very vulnerable and will need consolidating, especially on the north-east side. On the south-east side there is a horizontal ledge 0.35m wide which extends the full width of the outer end of the buttress. It is also set slightly below, 0.05m, the edge of the sloping surface of the buttress. Why this part of the buttress surface should be different it is impossible to say as there was no evidence to indicate its use. It may have supported a horizontal wooden beam?

On the south-west side of the buttress is a low wall. This wall is roughly 'L' shaped, one side running down the side of the buttress, the other out onto the ledge. Although of an irregular shape the wall appears to be of one build having no obvious joins, which would show different phases of construction. The main bulk of the wall is 1.5m x 1.5m and sits on the ledge, the north-west side resting just above the edge of the gully, while the south-east side hangs precariously over the stream having been built partly down the side of the stream bank. The wall is of dry stone construction and is reasonably

compact but the oak stump that was removed from the north corner must have been more substantial at one time and when it fell against the wall an obvious indentation was made diagonally from the north corner across the surface of the wall. Except for this obvious indentation the main bulk of the wall seems reasonably intact, standing at its highest point to approximately 1.3m. The section of wall running out onto the buttress is much less substantial: it is narrow (0.5m), only one stone's width but it widens and curves round as it joins into the main bulk of the wall which thickens it up slightly. At its furthest extent (south-east) it stops short of the end of the buttress at the edge of the horizontal ledge. This part of the wall appears to be seriously damaged standing only a couple of courses of stones high and is in need of immediate attention to stop the remaining stonework falling into the stream.

The second much larger wall is set into the north-west bank on the flat platform to the north-east of the buttress. The wall stands to just over 2.5m, is 2.5m wide and 0.7m thick. It is of a dry stone construction, its face being substantially overgrown with moss. The main face appears to be reasonably stable but both ends are in need of immediate attention as the stone work is gradually collapsing. The upper level of the wall presents the appearance of a curve, the centre being the highest point. It is not possible to ascertain if this level was originally horizontal and some of the stones on either side have fallen away, or if it was constructed in this form to allow for a curving roof. The wall is set back into the bank which has obviously been cut away to accept the wall. This means the wall does not obstruct the route of the path.

In front (south-east) of the wall is a compact sticky grey clay surface. This surface is horizontal, compared to all the other surfaces around it which are sloping, and extends out from the base of the wall, both its ends exactly in line with the ends of the wall. The surface extends for some 2m in front of the wall. At this point the surface has been destroyed by very substantial tree roots. In amongst the tree roots there are slight traces of the grey clay mingled with the natural which would seem to indicate that the surface extended for a further 0.3m to the south-east, making its original width some 2.3m. This surface seems very consistent with being some sort of flooring in front of the wall. The humic material was very thin over this surface, being only a few millimetres thick, but as soon as it was removed and the floor was rain-washed it became very sticky, which would seem to indicate that it must have been roofed over or it would not have lasted very long. This became clear very quickly because as the floor surface is on the present main route of the path its upper surface becomes easily damaged, especially when the surface is wet, by walkers who cannot be diverted. That this damage has been occurring for some time can be seen in that a trail of clay can be traced leading away to the north-east from the main clay surface. As usual none of the archaeological layers were removed so the depth of the clay surface could not be ascertained. As a result it is imperative that this surface is either investigated or protected immediately, as it is uncertain how much remains.

To the south-east, between the clay floor and the bank of the stream the area has been heavily planted with trees and although only stumps now remain it is impossible to gain any information from this area as it has been heavily disturbed. Clearing away of the humic material around the stumps has revealed the natural orange soil which would seem to indicate that there were no surfaces present here but if there were any thin archaeological layers they could very easily have been destroyed by the tree roots. The one substantial thing to notice in this area is that the stream widens, causing the width of

the platform to narrow to the north-east of the large wall. In this area there is only one route that the path can take because of the constriction of the walking platform but to the south-east of the wall the path could have passed over the grey clay surface or gone around the outside edge of it in the area which is now covered by the tree stumps, but its route cannot be ascertained owing to the disturbance in the area.

A further area that must be mentioned is the area on the south-east bank opposite the buttress. Owing to the dangerous nature of this area it could not be fully explored but there did appear to be the remains of footings for maybe another buttress. The way some of the bedrock fractures it almost looks like laid stonework and it is not clear in this case if it is fractured bedrock or laid stonework. There is indeed a great deal of bedrock in the area but a buttress could have been built at this spot which would infer that there was a bridged stream crossing at this spot. There is a path which clearly leads from the mill to the bridge above the falls but the one place it disappears for a short distance is opposite the Rustic Alcove. This path does not appear to relate to the 'Ladies Walk' as it does not fit Cumberland's description but if there were a bridge crossing between two buttresses it could account for the buttress on the north-west bank and it seeming to have no relationship to the large wall as they were of different builds.

# CONCLUSION

Although the archaeological layers were not removed, by exposing their upper layers some conclusive evidence has been found about the path. In areas of less disturbance, such as the woods or in areas difficult to plough, the route of the path can still be recovered. However where there has been more intensive agricultural activity the path appears to have been destroyed.

*In the area between the forestry road and St Peter's church* much of the path surface still remains intact. On the wider 'Church Walk' the original 'Ladies Walk' can still be seen running up the outside edge of the track. It appears clear that the 'Ladies Walk' was not covered over but used intact as the outer metalled surface, while the inner part of the track had a different metalling laid. The new, wider, track was cut on the inside edge of the 'Ladies Walk', but beyond the turn where the path ascends from the area of the forestry road the track was one cut wide where the 'Ladies Walk' was not present. The 'Ladies Walk' could be traced because it was of a reasonably consistent construction wherever it was uncovered. Its lowest layer always appeared as a dark material, usually a dark grey/ purple gritty material with a covering of shale – in some places the shale was practically eroded away but the under-surface could still be clearly seen containing a few pieces of shale in its upper surface. It is uncertain if the under-surface was deliberately laid prior to the shale being laid down or if it was the result of the shale affecting the natural material underneath. It may even be that the lowest layer was created as a result of dead organic material leaching down through the shale. As the path appeared much more well defined in the woods it may be that leaves falling on the path had rotted down and leached under the shale, especially considering that the parts of the path found in the more open areas had a less well defined under-surface. In these cases there would have been less organic material to tread into and through the shale surface.

Whatever the nature of the material that formed the path, it could clearly be traced from the forestry road up onto the 'Church Walk'. In some places the edge of the path was eroded or it may have been buried by material slumping downhill. Tree roots had caused considerable damage, even altering the original ground level in places, but enough of the path surface material was recovered to confirm its route and nature. It comprised the dark gritty under-surface with a shale covering.

On this section of the path's route a viewing platform was described by Cumberland. In order to confirm or deny this an obvious platform was examined but this only revealed evidence of having been the site of a large tree. However the recovery of a compact stone surface, which the path ascended onto and exited from would seem more in keeping with a viewing platform. Although partly destroyed this platform is completely different in nature to any other surface on the route of the walk. It is most definitely man-made with no natural comparable surface in the area. This may not be the viewing point described by Cumberland but it is part of the path and would have made an excellent viewing point for looking down the valley.

*The path's ascent from the Peiran Falls to the forestry road* again revealed the path



as having been constructed of similar material to the above: the dark gritty under-surface with a shale covering. In a similar manner to the 'Church Walk'/'Ladies Walk' the path had been carved out of a steep hillside. A ledge was cut from the area of the falls up to where the ground flattens out near the forestry road. To achieve a steady gradient and a constant width on the path it was cut through rock and the natural gritty orange clay, it was also reveted where it had to cross a small platform. On the ledge the path's average width was 0.9m: this comprised the under-surface and a shale covering. There was also an outer strip, 0.5m wide, to the ledge which was of exposed natural. This appears to have been some sort of safety feature which would have kept walkers directed away from the outer edge of the ledge.

Near the falls the path was found to be of a different nature to anywhere else that was examined. Here the outer edge of the path was reveted where it crossed a shale scree slope alongside the stream and then back-filled behind the revetment and finally given a cobbled surface. This surface was constructed of rounded river-washed stones. The recovery of this surface confirmed that the present route of the path is new – it was created to avoid the shale slope and the collapsing old path, the river having undermined the revetment. It does not appear to be constructed however, as the 'Ladies Walk' had been, but just worn into the hillside by numerous walkers.

*In contrast the areas examined in the vicinity of Pendre field* did not reveal the route of the path. It can be clearly seen that this area has been constantly worked, specifically ploughing in the field and forestry work in the woods, and as a result all traces of the route of the path have been erased from the landscape.

*Similarly in the vicinity of the mansion site* most traces of the path have been erased by ploughing, but where a steepness of slope has inhibited ploughing the path can still be traced on a ledge cut in the side of a steep hill slope. The path is still similar in construction to those parts found in the woods in that it has a dark under-surface, is approximately 0.9m wide, and has an outer strip of natural which is 0.5m wide. The shale surface was not recovered however so it is uncertain if there was one on this part of the path but the formation of an under-surface would perhaps lead one to suspect that there may have been some form of metallated surface here at some time. The other alternative is that the dark material on the surface of the ledge was formed by people walking on it but as it could not be removed because the archaeological layers were being left intact this cannot be confirmed. It seems unlikely that the path could have been formed on a strip 0.9m wide with a straight edge, as it is seen elsewhere, merely by walking it.

*That the part of the path examined in the Alpine Meadow* did have a metallated shale surface over the dark under-surface does go some way towards confirming that even in the more open parts of the path's route there was metallating. That this part of the path is close up to the cliff face also shows us a difference in attitude towards path routes. The present path runs along the river bank allowing a view of the river, whereas the 'Ladies Walk' ran close to the cliff which gave a view of the meadow – different perspectives have been emphasised at different times.

*Although large sections of the path can be recovered it is different with buildings.* There are paintings of the Cold Bath (Friends Of Hafod) but as an upstanding building there remains little evidence for its existence. The mound of building material examined

was exactly that, a mound. There were no traces of a structure found but the regular features found in the ground beneath do point to a building having once existed on this spot.

*Although the areas comprising the Rustic Alcove and its approach* route from the south-west were not fully excavated, in that only the surfaces of the archaeological features were revealed beneath the humic material, a considerable amount of detail was uncovered about the nature of these areas. The evidence would seem to point to at least two phases of construction.

*In the area of the hollow* there appear to be no traces of any structure that was used to bridge the hollow and it could well be that it was avoided by crossing the stream from the wider, almost buttressed, reveted path to the south-west of the hollow, crossing to a rocky ledge and then returning to the north-east bank of the hollow. The hollow is extremely deep on the north-east side and it would seem most unlikely that it could be climbed into and out of again without some difficulty as happens at present: therefore it must have been bridged across or around in some fashion. That there is a large rock obscuring the direct bridging of the hollow and that it appears to have been there for some substantial time, would perhaps direct one more towards the idea of crossing the stream and immediately coming back across, especially when the notches carved in the bedrock would have ideally taken wooden bridge supports. Also such bridges would be almost horizontal, causing no difficulty in crossing, whereas a platform across the hollow would have been at a steeper angle and difficult to build. This would add credence to the idea of a double bridged crossing. Two long beams thrown across the stream with a platform across them to walk on would be much easier to construct than a platform across the hollow where upright supports and multilayered beams would be needed to bridge the gap and get around the rock.

As the north-east bank of the hollow was reasonably wide at all times or appears to have been, and as it shows little evidence of having been cut away as the natural is present over most of its surface, it would have been an ideal landing spot. It would then appear that the earlier route up the slope from this spot to the area of the Rustic Alcove might have been on a ledge which went around a rocky outcrop. This ledge is still in place forming the wide outer ledge between the gully and the stream, having a surface of worn natural and showing evidence of the remains of the base of a rock outcrop on its inner edge. It is not clear whether this route would have stayed on the outside edge of the bank following it until the walking platform narrowed to the north-east of the large wall or if it stayed close to the cliff face. If the ledge rose straight to the area in front of the large wall this would mean that the level of the surface of the ledge was constant until it reached the ridge. From this it could be inferred that the buttress and adjacent wall were not in place when this route was in use but when they were constructed the wall was built on the path/ledge and the buttress surface dug through it, supplying the material for the surfacing of the buttress. The larger wall and any construction relating to it might have been in place at this time. No post holes were found but the extent of the grey clay flooring in front of it gives some concept of its dimensions. As stated before it is uncertain whether the path went through it or around it, both being possible.

The second phase is the cutting of the gully. The rock outcrop was cut away and the floor of the gully hollowed out. This created the vertical cliff face on the inner edge and left most of the original ledge intact on the outside edge. Water running through the gully is an obvious problem which is still present so drainage was put in. This comprised a



stone-capped drain running down the inner edge of the gully and then feeding out through a culvert which crossed the lower end of the gully and fed into the hollow. That the culvert was so substantial and turned nearly at right angles to the inner cliff face seems to indicate that it must have taken account of a bridge landing at this point, as it would have been much easier to direct the culvert straight into the hollow. The culvert ran centrally between the two notches that would seem to indicate the bridge landing spot and would have been hidden by the bridge in order to stop it detracting from the picturesque. The surface of the gully floor is very rough, water-washed and treacherous underfoot, and considering the sloping angles of the capstones and the obvious lack of channelling beneath them in places, it would seem more consistent if there were a better walking surface such as if the path level were raised. If the beam found lying diagonally across the gully were laid down the side of the gully, a capstone width out from the inner face, and the slightly thicker beam found lying on the outer ledge were placed down the outer side of the gully, a compact surface could have been laid between them and the capstones laid from the cliff face onto the beam. With the beams being of different thicknesses it would mean the path surface sloped slightly towards the capstoned drain. This compact surface could have been removed when the beams were pulled out of position or washed away when it became unsupported.

That the Rustic Alcove was the initial viewing point for the falls would seem to suggest that the gully was carved out in order to keep the walkers low so that they could not see the falls until they were by the large wall. The buttress and its adjacent wall may have been part of this scheme in that the buttress was constructed to support the wall so that it obstructed the view until the last minute, when one came out by the large wall. Considering the force of the stream at times, the buttress needed to be substantial or it would have been washed away. A large wall was not needed to obscure the view, but it had to be built 'L' shaped as it was partly built into the stream bank and this was needed to give it strength. That the surface leading down to and across the buttress is quite steeply sloping would suggest that it was not used as a viewing point and that the buttress was constructed purely as a wall support unless it was part of a bridge. This can only be ascertained if the far side of the stream is explored more closely. Considering the slope leading down onto the buttress, this would seem to indicate that the path coming up the gully was directed more straight to the area in front of the large wall.

There appear to be no features relating to the buttress other than the adjacent wall and perhaps the horizontal ledge on its outside edge and it would seem from this that it would be difficult to see any structure in this area. Except for the large wall itself and the grey clay floor in front of it, not much can be assigned to the platform before the wall either. However, considering the nature of the floor, if it were not covered it would easily be destroyed: as a result it seems more likely that this area was roofed. No post holes can be found to suggest beams that would support a roof but as the area where any post would be has been so heavily disturbed, there is not much hope of clarifying this situation.

The curve in the upper level of the wall might be echoing a curved rustic-type roof and if there were a roof in this area, considering how the wall is set back into the bank almost as if it were in an alcove, this may be the actual site of the Rustic Alcove, which would have been a separate structure to the buttress as there appears to be no link between them on the ground.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The archaeology of Hafod is obviously extensive but due to the usual limitations only a small part of it could be explored. There is always the urge to open one more trench just to try and examine other possibilities but the archaeological examination did in this case reveal a major part of the route of the 'Ladies Walk'. As the brief was to recover the route of the path and to attempt to understand the nature of the path's construction it was not necessary to remove the archaeological layers, but if a more detailed analysis of the material used to construct the path were made in small areas, the nature of the underlying surface might be discovered – whether it was deliberately laid or was formed by organic material leaching through the shale. As the new path will be laid over the old path without disturbing it there is little to be gained from disturbing the archaeological layers, except perhaps for the small detailed analysis.

In the case of the buildings, the examination of the Cold Bath area did reveal some form of activity having taken place. Beneath the mound of rubble were what appeared to be regularly laid out surfaces. In a trench archaeology cannot fully explain what is being seen with regard to a complete building's outline and it is dangerous to make assumptions from one small area as to what is being found; considering the obvious age of the material recovered from the building rubble mound and that there are regular features in the ground surface, it would appear that this area needs to be explored more fully to give any final answers. The archaeological layers beneath the building rubble were left intact so that if a larger examination of the area were to take place the area of the trench would not appear as a hole in the overall picture and the complete lay-out of the area/building could be seen, which is what is necessary if this area is to be fully understood and to confirm if it is the site of the Cold Bath.

The Rustic Alcove revealed little more than was already known in some ways, because the discovery of bedrock with no features cut into its surface meant no path or building outline could be seen, but it has given information to help in the construction of the route of the path through this area. It can be said that the removal of all tree roots might help to clarify the picture slightly but considering the damage that has already taken place this is unlikely. However removal of the tree roots might facilitate redirecting the route of the path away from the grey clay surface in front of the large wall, as this is in danger of being eroded. Excavation of a small area of this clay might also help in the better understanding of its relationship to the larger wall and confirm if it was a floor in front of the wall. This surface does need to be protected if it is not to be examined more fully as it will erode away because of its relationship to the present route of the path which is directly on it.

Full examination of the gully and the capstone drain might also explain the relationship between the gully and the Alcove and perhaps confirm if there were definitely two phases of construction. It might help to confirm the building sequence in the area of the Alcove, if the outer ledge were fully explored to see if it were the route of an early path and if it continued up through the area that now comprises the buttress and its adjacent wall.

In the area of the hollow the collapsed stonework might be removed to confirm what the front face of the culvert looked like and also to allow further examination of the hollow floor to confirm if there are any post holes there under the collapse. Detailed examination, stream permitting, of any suspected bridge landing points on both sides of the stream might also help clarify the bridge crossing spots.

Although not strictly speaking archaeological in nature, the conservation of the walls should be a consideration as parts of them are in danger of collapsing.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

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