

archenfield archaeology ltd

project ref AA_21



Llanerch-y-Coed, Clifford, Herefordshire
an archaeological survey

Huw Sherlock and P J Pikes
2001

Caplor Farm, Fownhope
Herefordshire, HR1 4PT
Tel: 01432 860003
www.archenfield.com



archenfield archaeology ltd

Principal Archaeologist: Huw Sherlock BA, Diparch, MIFA

Archenfield Archaeology Ltd is a multidisciplinary archaeological consultancy, offering a complete range of archaeological advice and services to the public and private sector. We specialise in giving archaeological advice to developers, housing associations and private individuals. We also undertake archaeological intervention, from monitoring to full-scale excavation; building survey; landscape and geophysical surveys and community-based historical and archaeological projects.

*Llanerch-y-Coed, Clifford, Herefordshire: an archaeological survey
2001*

text: Huw Sherlock and P J Pikes

project manager: Huw Sherlock

cover photograph: Limekiln Meadow, Llanerch-y-Coed

archenfield archaeology report number 19



Contents:

Llanerch-y-Coed, Clifford	2
The Background	3
The Woodlands.....	7
The Ancient Woodland.....	7
The 20 th Century Plantation	7
Conclusions	9
Bibliography	10
Cartographic References.....	10

Figures:

Figure 1: Extract from OS 1:2500 scale map	2
Figure 2: Extract from the Clifford Parish Tithe Map, 1842	4
Figure 3: Extract from the 1903/04 OS 1:2500 plans.....	6
Figure 4: Extract from the English Heritage revised Scheduled Ancient Monument map	8

Plates:

Plate 1: Looking north-west through the beech woods.	7
Plate 2: the easternmost of the two bowl barrows looking south east (2 metre scale)	9

Llanerch-y-Coed, Clifford

NGR: SO275426

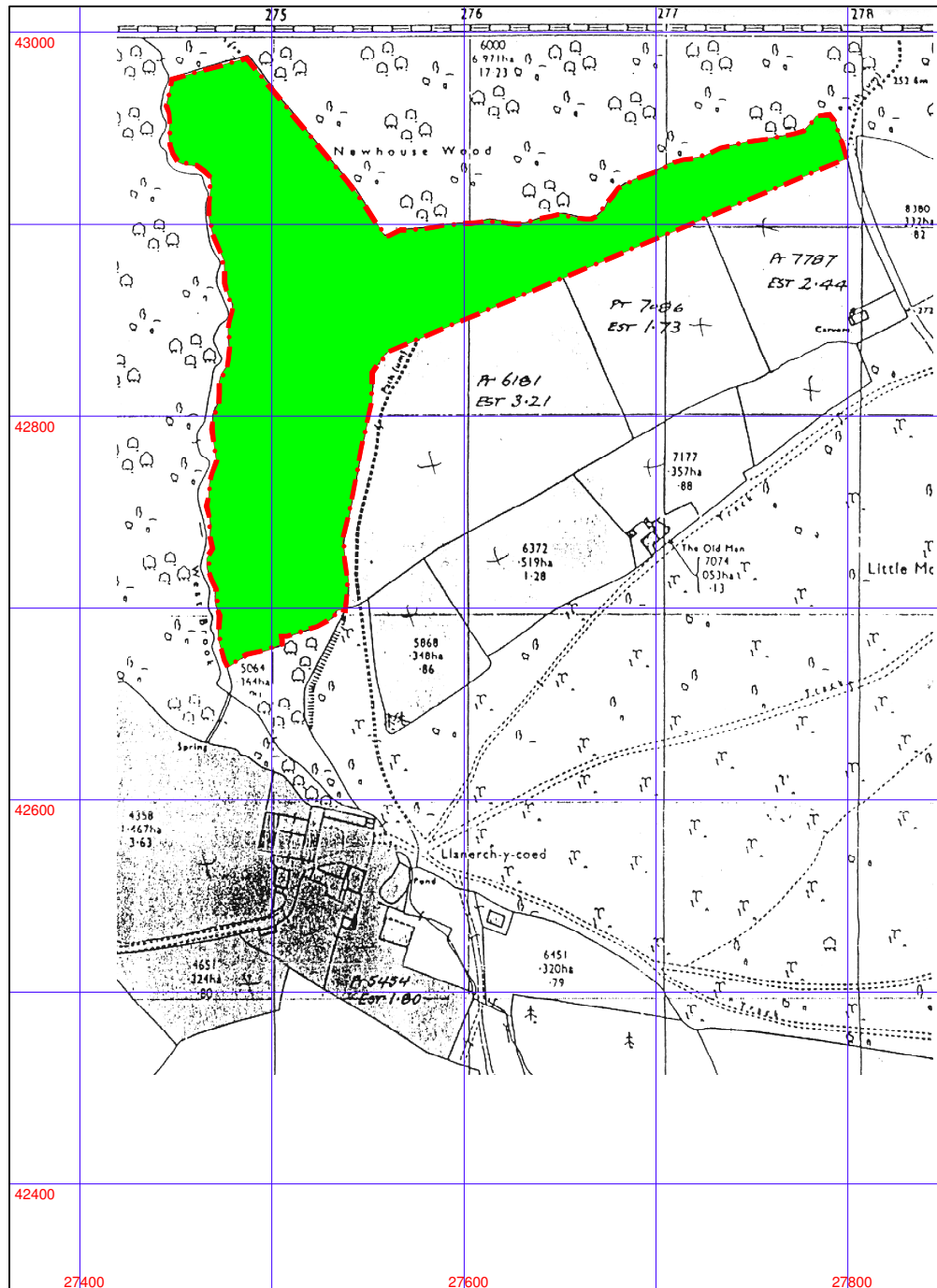


Figure 1: Extract from OS 1:2500 scale map showing the woodland surveyed marked in green.

The Background

The parish of Clifford largely coincides with the castellary created by William fitz Osbern shortly after the Norman Conquest. When fitz Osbern's heir, Roger of Breteuil, forfeited his lands for rebellion in 1075, the castle was granted to Ralph Tosny who held it directly from the crown. According to Domesday Earl William had built the castle on waste land which had been held by a certain *Bruning* in 1066¹, and the castle lay in the kingdom of England but not in any hundred (Remfry, 1994, p1).

From Ralph, Clifford passed to his son-in-law Richard des Ponts, who took the surname Clifford. Clifford Castle was the home of Fair Rosamund, the mistress of Henry II, and who was ensconced, and later allegedly murdered, in Woodstock Palace.

Clifford was an important castle and communication was officially catered for by a sergeant at Kingston whose duties, in exchange for a messuage and garden in Kingston, included the conducting of the king's writs from thence to Clifford.² The defences at Clifford were hurriedly improved in 1402 after the Herefordshire levy had been heavily defeated by a Welsh army led by Owain Glyn Dwr at the battle of Bryn Glâs, or Pilleth, in 1402.

When fitz Osbern built Clifford Castle occupation of the area was already well established, and had left traces in the form of bronze age burial mounds on Little Mountain, to the north-east of Llan-y-Coed. Such burial mounds were usually constructed close to agricultural land, and sometimes on land which had previously been ploughed.

Climatic deterioration led to the abandonment of Bronze Age upland agricultural land. Edges of these areas became literally marginal, as cycles of economic pressure and climatic variations led to them being re-utilised for arable land and abandoned again by turn throughout succeeding centuries. Land was, however, always utilised for some purpose. Steep slopes, which could not be ploughed, were used as woodland, providing fuel, building timber and wood, and pannage for pigs. Unwooded uplands were used for grazing.

Llan-y-Coed farm is situated at the eastern edge of Little Mountain, an area of upland common. It is variously called *Llan-y-Coed* or *Llanerch-y-coed* on modern maps; the sign on the farm gate is *Llan-y-Coed*. The name is recorded as *Lanercoyt* in the early 14th century³ and Bruce Coplestone-Crow (1989) suggests no other etymology than the straightforward Welsh 'church of the wood'. The 1841 census records that Theophilus Barnet, aged 52, was the farmer at *Lanycodde*. In 1846 the tithe apportionment records Richard Williams as the occupier of *Llanycodde* Farm and the 1851 census records him as the farmer at *Llanicoade*. The 1861 census has George George at Llanycodde.

The 1910 Inland Revenue land valuation has the name Llanerchoed, and the occupiers as James and John Williams. It is perhaps in this spelling that the present Llanerch-y-Coed version of the name has its origins.

In 1846 the bulk of the farm lay to the south west of Little Mountain but a three-field enclosure, Lime Kiln Meadow (tithe map numbers 783, 787 and 788 – figure 2), and a piece of steeply sloping, unnamed woodland (tithe number 782), both lying to the north of the farmhouse, were also part of the farm. The Lime Kiln

¹ 'qua teneb *Bruning* TRE'

² Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem for the reign of Edward I, 18th June 31 Edward I.

³ Lanercoyt 1309-24 in H J Ellis and F B Bickley (eds) *Index to Charters and Rolls in the Department of Manuscripts, British Museum*. 2 volumes 1900 and 1912 (Coplestone-Crow, 1989)

element of the field name may refer to nearby lime kilns - three limestone quarries lie immediately to the east. There is also a possibility that primitive lime kilns actually stood on the land which formed the field (Field, 1989). Another, theoretical, possibility is that the two Bronze Age barrows in the field were mistaken for old lime kilns at some stage. A ruined cottage, once known as the Old Wood stands on the eastern extremity of the meadow.

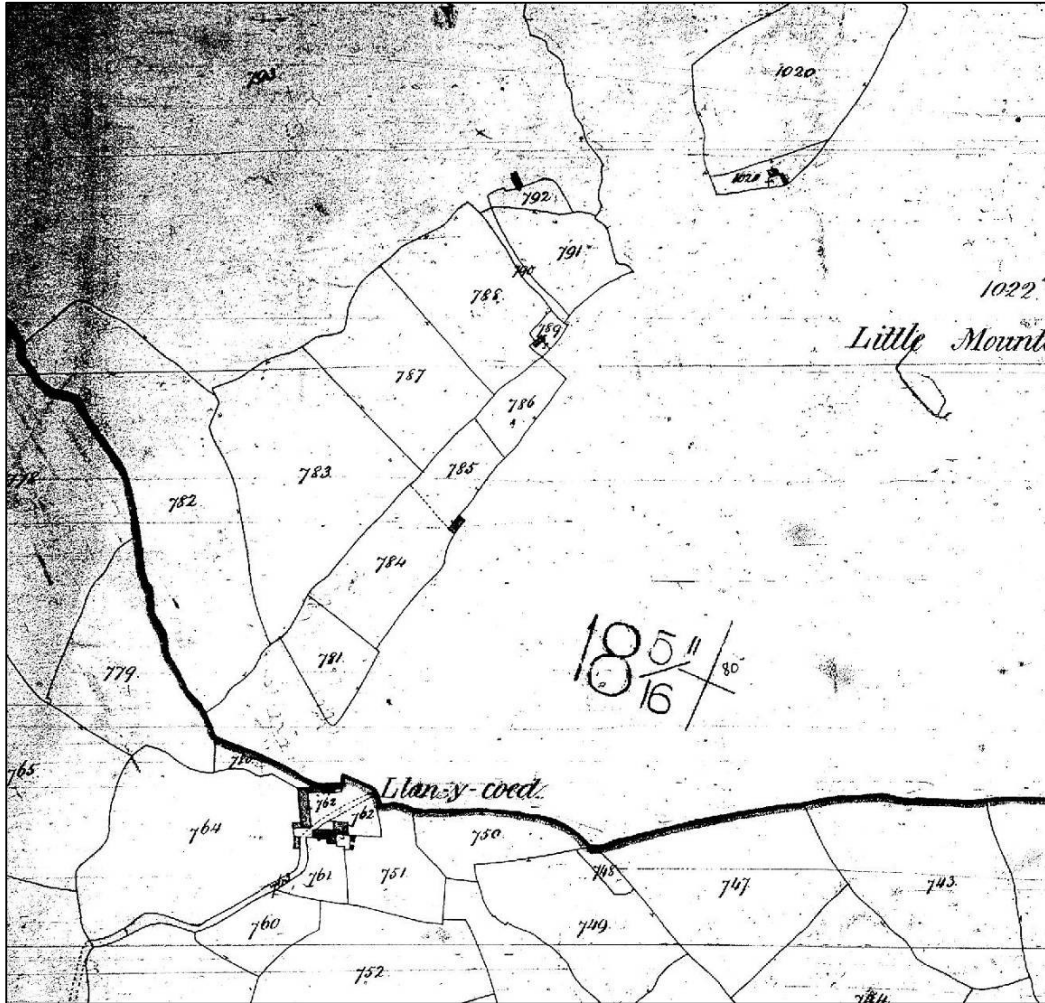


Figure 2: Extract from the Clifford Parish Tithe Map, 1842

To the south-east of Lime Kiln Meadow lie a series of four small enclosures. The three south-eastern ones (tithe numbers 781, 784 and 785) were in the occupation of Samuel Dyke in 1846 and the ownership of the Reverend Humphrey Allen. Parcels 781 and 784 were arable and 785, described as house yard and plock, was pasture. This block of land was described as a cottage and garden in 1910 when it was occupied by John Jenkins and owned by W H Vaughan of Peterchurch. The house is marked on modern maps as 'The Old Man'.

To the north east of these enclosures is another small field (number 786 on the tithe map). William Carver, a local labourer, enclosed this piece of land out of the common of Little Mountain some time shortly before 1783¹. Carver died in 1794 and in 1824 his son, also called William, sold this piece - referred to as *Carver's*

¹ Conveyance in Herefordshire Record Office – Document J12/II/6

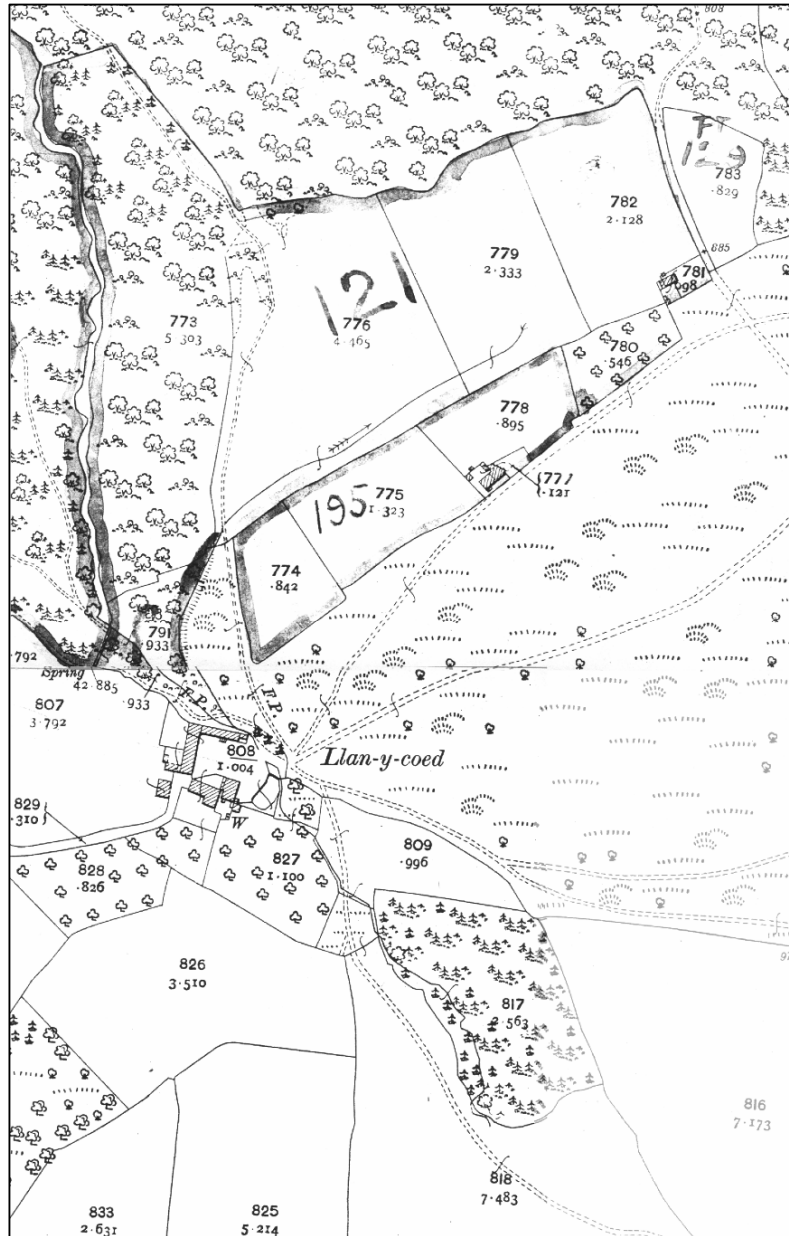
Plock, to the tenant of *Llanymoed*, Theophilus Barnet. Barnet sold it on again to Colonel Thomas Powell who owned it at the time of the tithe apportionment. The Reverend Webb later acquired this piece and in 1910 it formed part of *Llanerchoed* Farm, which was still in the ownership of the Webb family in the person of E R Webb.

In 1846 James Delahay, a labourer, was the occupier of the plot, described as arable and orchard, renting it from Colonel Powell. Delahay, aged 66 in 1851, and his slightly older wife Margaret, a washerwoman, lived in the adjacent Old Wood Cottage, in the eastern corner of Lime Kiln Meadow, renting the cottage itself, with its small garden, from the Reverend Webb.

The north-eastern edge of Lime Kiln Meadow is defined by a roadway which connects the common land of Little Mountain with Newhouse Wood to the north. To the east of this road, field 791 was arable in 1846 and the adjoining piece of land, 782 on the tithe and now absorbed into the wood, was pasture. Both this pieces of land were occupied by Thomas Barrett in 1846 and owned by the trustees of the late Francis Rigby Brodbelt. To the east of these, and forming an isolated enclosure on little mountain the trustees also owned plots 1020 and 1021. 1020 being arable land also occupied by Thomas Barrett while 1021 was a house and garden in the occupancy of James Price.

Lime Kiln Meadow, appears to have been, as the name implies, a meadow. It was watered by means of a leat, which led from the stream at a point immediately north of Llan-y-Coed farmhouse. From there it followed the contour on the western side of little mountain before flowing into the meadow (see figure 3).

Figure 3: Extract from the 1903/04 OS 1:2500 plans (the two sheets have been joined). Note that the direction of flow of water along the now abandoned leat is clearly indicated.



It is held locally that Little Mountain is on a drovers trail (G J Linklater - pers comm). Certainly by the end of the 18th century some 30,000 cattle were being driven out of mid-Wales to Hereford each year (Godwin and Toulson, 1977). Their route took them to Clyro, not far to the north-west.

The Woodlands

The woodland at Llanerch-y-Coed is composed of two distinct elements, a strip of ancient woodland to the west and a later 20th century larch plantation to the east.

The Ancient Woodland

The ancient woodland at Llan-y-Coed lies on very steep west facing slope. Woodland on steep slopes is common land utilisation in pre-industrial Britain.

The eastern side of the northern part of the wood is the only part which is not steeply sloping. Here, a shoulder of Little Mountain slopes gently down to north-west, carrying a trackway. This ridge is heavily rutted with up to five distinct gullies, some over 60cm deep in places. The wood, which is not named on the tithe apportionment, was owned in 1846 by the Reverend John Webb, and occupied as part of Llanycoed Farm by Richard Williams.

The 20th Century Plantation

Plate 1: Looking north-west through the beech woods.



Running east from the ancient wood is a strip of larch plantation dating from early in the second half of the 20th century.

The northern boundary of this wood has a bank with the remains of an old hedge. This bank and hedge formed the boundary between three pieces of meadow (783, 787 and 788 on the tithe map – see figure 2) known collectively as Lime Kiln Meadow which also formed part of Llan-y-Coed farm in 1846, and Newhouse Wood to the north.

The southern boundary of this piece of woodland, a wire fence, dates from the creation of the plantation in the period following the Second World War. Within this wood the old hedge-lines which original divided Lime Kiln Meadow into three, are visible as a fossil with a bank and trees.

Just inside the south-eastern boundary of the plantation, and each side of the south-western of the two fossil hedge-lines, are the remains of two Bronze Age Bowl Barrows. The eastern barrow¹ has a number of large pieces of stone on the southern side.

Figure 4: Extract from the English Heritage revised Scheduled Ancient Monument map showing the location of the two bowl barrows (original scale 1:10,000).



The core of the western barrow² is exposed and appears to be composed of stone. Both barrows show evidence of having been robbed at some time. The entries in both cases having been made from the southern, downhill, side, leaving platforms of spoil which now form slight terraces. Both are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, a protection which extends for two metres around both.

¹ National Monument Numbers– Herefordshire 28871: Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record number 1432

² National Monument Number – Herefordshire 27507: Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record number 4202

Plate 2: the easternmost of the two bowl barrows looking south east (2 metre scale)



Conclusions

The area of Little Mountain around Llan-y-Coed seems likely to have had human activity since at least the Bronze Age. The older wooded area although ancient, in the sense of existing for a few hundreds of years¹, may not be old in the archaeological sense. It is usually held that barrows were positioned on skylines. If this is so then the area of Newhouse Wood, to the north of the larch plantation which occupies the northern part of Lime Kiln Meadow is likely to have been treeless in the Bronze Age.

The barrows themselves have trees on and around them. The existence of these trees implies some damage to these monuments, but any removal would similarly entail damage.

The piecemeal enclosure of parts of Little Mountain can be demonstrated to be occurring as recently as the late 18th century (see above). However, the possibility that there are earlier enclosures in the area exists.

The whole area seems to be archaeologically sensitive and would certainly merit a full investigation at some stage. In the meantime, any woodland management should be undertaken with this in mind.

¹

Ancient woodland is defined here as in Rackham, 1980 – i.e. woodland '*in existence before some date such as AD 1700 as opposed to those which are more recent*'. Primary Woodland he defines as woodland which '*has been brought under management without ever having been cleared of trees*'.

Bibliography

- Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem for the reign of Edward I
Tithe Commissioners, 1846, Tithe Apportionment for Clifford Parish, Herefordshire. Public Record Office - microfilm
1909 Inland Revenue land valuation – Duties on Land Values, County of Hereford, Division of Peterchurch – parishes of Clifford, Cusop and Dorstone. Herefordshire Record Office AG9/73
- | | |
|---|---|
| Copleston-Crow, Bruce, 1989 | <i>Herefordshire Place-Names</i> , British Archaeological Reports, British Series No 214 |
| Field, John, 1989 | <i>English Field Names, A Dictionary</i> . Alan Sutton |
| Godwin, Fay, and Toulson, Shirley, 1994 | <i>The Drovers Roads of Wales</i> . Wildwood House |
| Remfry, Paul Martin, 1994 | <i>Clifford Castle 1066-1299</i> . SCS Publishing, Worcester |
| Rackham, Oliver, 1980 | <i>Ancient Woodland: its history, vegetation and uses in England</i> . Edward Arnold |
| Thorn, Frank & Caroline, eds, 1983 | <i>Domesday Book, Herefordshire</i> . Phillimore |

Cartographic References

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Tithe Commissioners, 1842 | Clifford Parish Tithe Map |
| Ordnance Survey, 1904 | 2 nd Edition 1:2500 County Series – Herefordshire sheet XXXI.6 |
| Ordnance Survey, 1903 | 2 nd Edition 1:2500 County Series – Herefordshire sheet XXXI.10 |

Copyright

Archenfield Archaeology will retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act* 1998 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provide an exclusive licence to the client for use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project.

