INFORMAL REPORT ON SITE VISIT TO THE HOLYHEAD MOUNTAIN CIRCLE.

16 AUGUST 1980

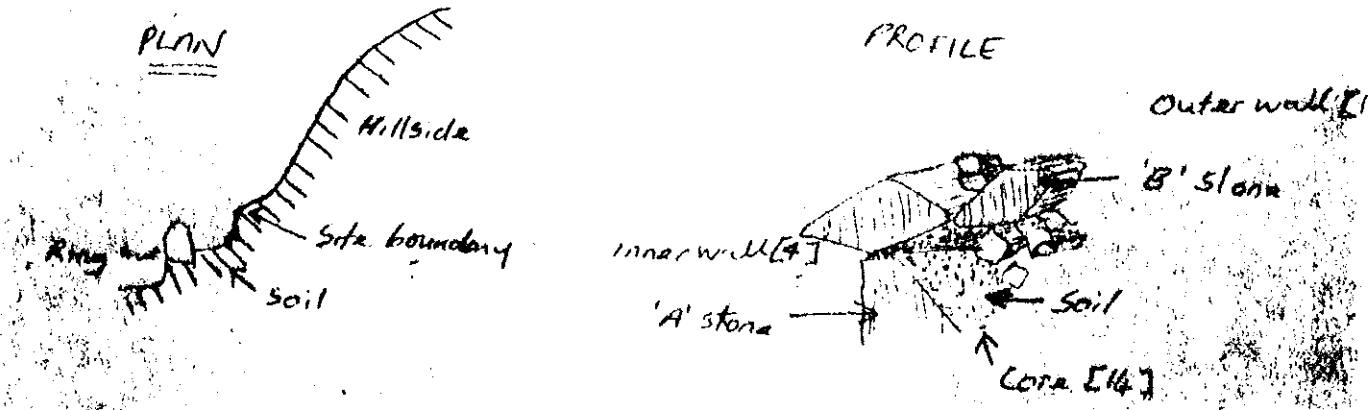
AML REPORT 3373

Maureen A Cirling

The Holyhead Mountain Circle at South Stack, Holyhead, Anglesea consists of a number of ring circles on a hillside overlooking the sea. The buried soils at the site have previously been investigated by Dr H C M Keeley and the purpose of my visit was to advise on any soil problems encountered in this season's excavations. The following areas were investigated;

SOIL PROFILE AT CONTEXT [20] (SLIDES 27, 28)

The profile was situated below the outer stone of a hut wall where it faced the site boundary.



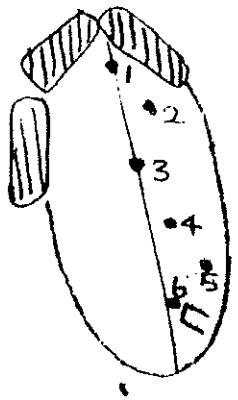
The relationship of stone A to B was sought - was stone A either naturally in situ or did it form part of emplaced structure?

Stone B sealed a buried soil which displayed a sub-angular blocky

structure and orange mottling which increased with depth. The clay movement and mottling might have developed in a natural soil creep deposit which had banked against stone A, in which case, A would have been <u>in situ</u> at the site. It is possible, however, that this soil had been present under A but removed if stone A does represent an emplaced wall-stone, and no firm conclusion could be made about its status.

STONE CIST AT CONTEXT /140/ (SLIDES 29, 30, 31, 32 and 34)

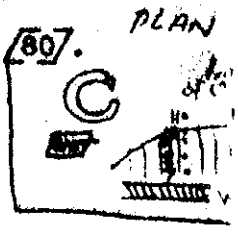
The stone lined cist was floored with a fine grey silt displaying occasional mottles. Iron pan formation and more marked mottling were present in the sections (behind the lining-stones) at the sides of the cist.

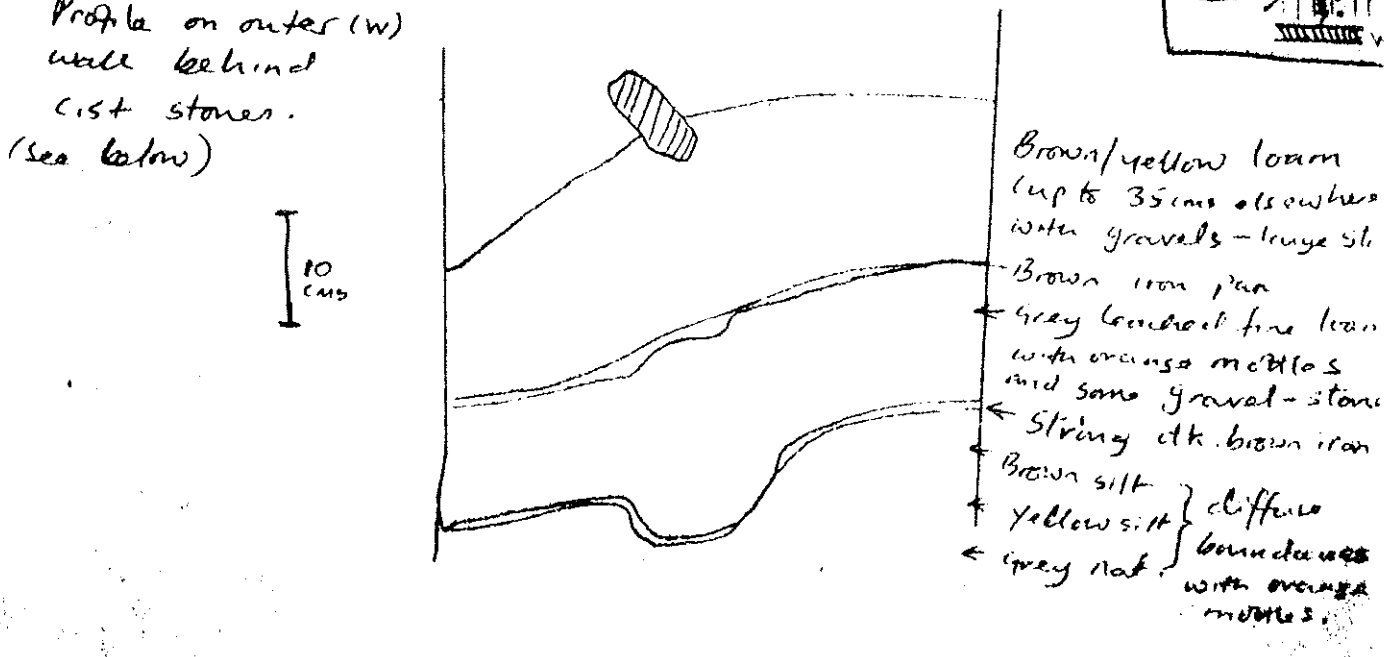


Position of samples from remaining soil of stone cist

Samples of the cist infill were test sieved at the site for any biological remains, but these proved to be inorganic.

The cist floor was sampled for possible phosphate analysis to test for a possible inhumation, although it was not known whether the conditions at this context were suitable for the procedure. The position of the 6 samples is shown above. Control samples for comparison were taken from the old ground surface from inside the boundary wall at context [80].



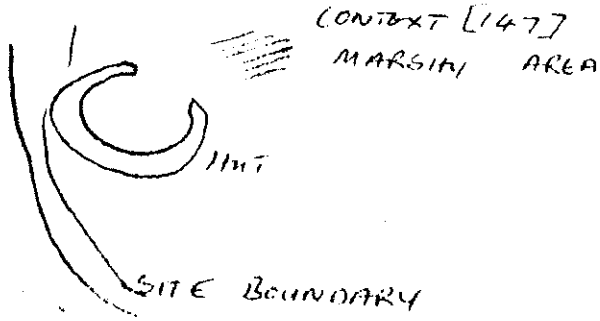


The deposit in the opposite (ie West) face of the cist consisted of a fine, uniform, silty loam with occasional pebbles up to 10 cms diameter, and scattered gravel. The deposit was a uniform brown colour with some leaching and orange mottling at its base, and it contained more silt than the cist floor material. Earthworm activity was in evidence, and the deposit might have formed as a layer of casts against the cist stones, or as a material fill of wind-borne silt and/or soil creep which filled the space between the orthostat and pit side, and which was then disturbed by earthworms.

SUMP-LIKE FEATURE AT CONTEXT [147]

The deposit in a depression near the entrance was waterlogged at the time of its excavation.

Test sieving of two 2kg samples revealed that it had been penetrated by fine, modern rootlets, indicating that the waterlogging had not been maintained. The test sieving did produce charcoal fragments and flecks and <u>very</u> occasional charred weed seeds. In addition, the deposit was sampled for possible pollen analysis (for J R A Greig) although lack of permanent waterlogging has probably resulted in decay of any contained pollen.



TERRACE FEATURE AT CONTEXT [67]

The buried soil under the retaining wall /64/ was sampled for charcoal for possible analysis by Mrs Keepax, with soil samples, rather than visible charcoal remains, being collected at this context.