

Report on Field trip to Coppet Hill, Goodrich on 30 March 2019

Five Woolhope Club members plus fourteen Teme Valley Geological Society members met our leader Ros Skelton in Goodrich Castle car park. The day was perfect for picnics. We started from the Castle to observe the stones of the keep and the outer defensive walls.



This is a view from the south-west across the moat. The keep was built around 1150 out of a grey coloured stone of local quartz-rich sandstone and includes some Forest of Dean quartz conglomerate. The tower was made from local Old Red Sandstone quarried from the moat. The south-west tower was built in 1296 by William de Valence and then more building was added by the Talbots in 1326.

From the castle we returned to walk through the village noting all the building stones some of which may have come from the castle!



We visited Goodrich church of St Giles and noticed the local Old Red Sandstone and a brachiopod in a limestone within the porch.





Members gathering near the Preaching cross.

From here we continued uphill to the exposure of the Huntsham Hill Conglomerate which marks the unconformity between the Brownstones of the Lower Old Red Sandstone and the Tintern Sandstone Formation of the Upper Old Red Sandstone. The unconformity is where the middle Devonian is missing.







We continued up the path to the trig point and paused to look at the landscape pointing out north of Ross to where an old abandoned meander of the Wye had been and what the ice age had done to change the scenery. On Coppet Hill we had a lovely picnic.



From here we returned down towards the lime kilns along the substantial stone wall built by the Vaughan family of Welsh Bicknor to 'iron out' the original boundary of Coppet Hill common which left them with more of the valuable limestone quarries. Beyond lies the Vaughan estate and the location of the Lower Limestone Shales of the Carboniferous Limestone Series. The Vaughan limekilns lie below the road; those we passed (see illustration) belonged to Goodrich. The boundary between Welsh Bicknor and Goodrich had been a major source of dispute for centuries because of the rights to the limestone.



On our way back towards the castle we caught sight of Flanesford Priory (below), Priory of St John the Baptist founded by Augustinian Canons by Sir Richard Talbot in 1346 and also Kerne Bridge over the Wye, built of similar rock in the 1820s.





Tea and refreshments awaited the party at Goodrich Castle.