Field Journal Stata Florida 2025



Image 1: Aerial Photograph of Strata Florida Abbey (Driver, 2018)

Site

- Overview
- The Abbey
- Church and graveyard
- The woods
- Mines
- Bumpy field

Skills

- Hachure surveys
- Measured survey
- Dumpy levels

Site

Overview

The sites we explored at Strata Florida were the 12th century Cistercian Abbey, Saint Mary's Church and Graveyard, the Abbey Woods, the Abbey Consols Mine and the Bumpy Field. To further understand the site, we walked halfway up the hill towards the Pilgrim statue to view the sites from higher up. The U-shape of the valley indicated that it was formed by a glacier (Allen, 2017 p. 48). There were also **indications** of the wildfires that burnt at the beginning of April 2025 (Buckland, 2025). The Abbey Woods were visible on the left and the Abbey Consols mines to the right. The Abbey was below but the layout was difficult to determine from the angle, had I gone further up the hill this would have been easier to see. The Church and Graveyard to the right of the Abbey were clearly **visible.** Some other interested parties in this landscape are the Strata Florida Trust, Cadw and National Resources Wales (Austin, Benzant and Barker, 2022, p. 5).



Image 2: Photograph of the Abbey Consols Mine, the Church and Graveyard (Stewart, 2025a)



Image 3: Photograph of obstructed view of Strata Florida and the Church and Graveyard (Stewart, 2025b)



Image 4: Photograph of The Pilgram statue (Stewart, 2025c)

Strata Florida Abbey

Strata Florida Abbey was founded in 1164 and then re-founded in 1184 at its current location SN7467 6573, the Abbey was then closed during the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII in 1539 (Austin, Benzant and Barker, 2022, p. 1). The step-down baptismal font appears to be what the Abbey was built around as it is not centred suggesting it may be older than the rest of the Abbey. There is also Celtic symbolism on the archway that is still standing. The Abbey is under the protection of Cadw, and open to the public meaning the site has been altered to ensure safety. The site is maintained as seen with the grass being cut short, so features are visible.



Image 5: Photograph of Abbey Archway (Stewart, 2025d)



Image 6: Photograph of Step-down Baptism font (Stewart, 2025e)

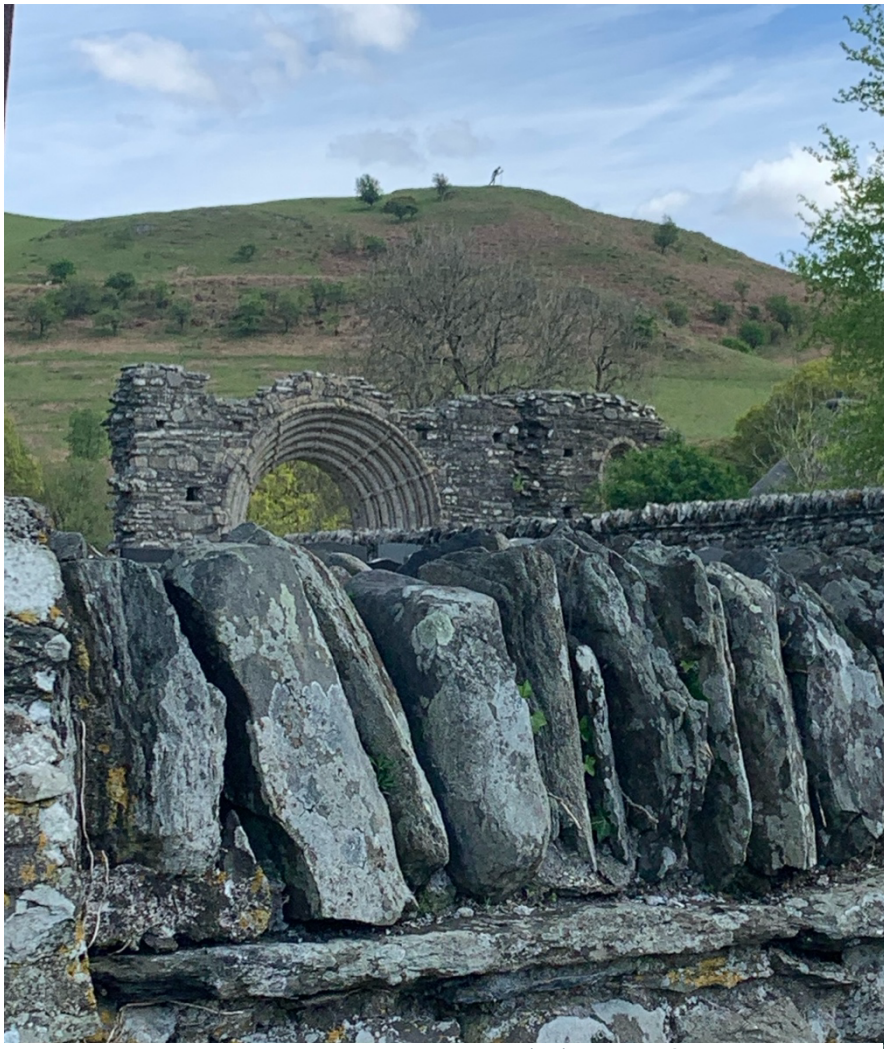


Image 7: Photograph of Abbey Archway and Pilgrim statue (Stewart, 2025f)

Saint Mary's Church and Graveyard

The Churchyard contained a mixture of graves of different ages and levels of grandeur. There were numerous chest tombs with slate ledgers, many headstones as well as other monument types. In the churchyard there is a bank that connects two yew trees, one of which is believed to mark the grave of poet Dafydd ap Gwilym. Many monuments were falling apart, broken or covered but there was evidence of some caretaking happening as the grass was being cut during the time I was there. The Church is small and was rebuilt in 1815, inside the church there are 4 stained-glass windows donated in the 1960's (RCAHMW, 2025), the pulpit had graffiti carved into it including, ' MD : F' , '1724' and '1798' along with another I cannot make out.



Image 8: Photograph of the high alter and Stained-Glass window in St Mary's Church (Stewart, 2025g)



Image 9: Photograph of the Stained-Glass Window above the pulpit at St Mary's Church (Stewart, 2025h)



Image 10: Photograph of a Stained-Glass Window at St Mary's Church (Stewart, 2025i)



Image 11: Photograph of illegible graffiti on the pulpit in St Mary's Church (Stewart, 2025j)



Image 12: Photograph of '1798' graffiti on the pulpit in St Mary's Church (Stewart, 2025k)



Image 13: Photograph of 'MD:F' graffiti on pulpit of St Mary's Church (Stewart, 2025l)



Image 14: Photograph of '1724' graffiti on pulpit of St Mary's Church (Stewart, 2025m)



Image 15: Photograph of Yew tree potential burial marker of Dafydd ap Gwilym in St Mary's Churchyard (Stewart, 2025n)

The Abbey Woods

On the way into the woods, there were trees growing out of the stone wall indicating the wall is older than the trees. The water from the river was redirected through a pipe which would have powered a wheel. At the entrance to the woods, there was a large metal object, equipment left by an American bridging unit. The road or Holloway that was used to bypass the Abbey was an area where I completed Hachure drawings. There was evidence of drainage ditches being used to move water across fields, these areas now have reeds growing. The main trees I saw in the Abbey Woods were oak, birch and hazel, the oaks could have been used for charcoal although it is hard to detect in the archaeological record (Austin, Benzant and Barker, 2022, p. 40). There are also the remains of what could be an iron age cairn, it could also be a pile of discarded rocks from farming or building practices. There was an abundance of features in the woods which could be explored further.



Image 16: Photograph of river being redirected through a pipe (Stewart, 2025o)



Image 17: Photograph of pipe used to redirect water (Stewart, 2025p)



Image 18: Photograph of metal object left by American Bridging Unit (Stewart, 2025q)



Image 19: Photograph of the road in Abbey Woods (Stewart, 2025r)



Image 20: Photograph of stone wall in Abbey Woods (Stewart, 2025s)



Image 21: Photograph of potential iron age cairn (Stewart, 2025t)

The Abbey Consols Mines

The Abbey Consols mine was primarily a lead mine, the last recorded output was in 1913 (Natural Resources Wales, 2016). However, there is debate over when the mines were first used, Sables (2015) argues that mining had taken place before the 18th century as far back as the Cistercians. This is because other Abbeys were involved in mineral production and after a fire in the 13th century there was lead available to clad the entire Abbey roof (Sables, 2015, p.10). The only structure still standing is the cart shed, a few other buildings were in ruin including a house.



Image 22: Photograph of the Cart Shed at Abbey Consols Mine (Stewart, 2025u)



Image 23: Photograph showing the ruins of buildings behind the Cart Shed at the Abbey Consols Mine (Stewart, 2025v)



Image 24: Photograph showing the ruins of a house from the Cart Shed at Abbey Consols Mine (Stewart, 2025w)



Image 25: Photograph of the inside of the house at Abbey Consols Mine (Stewart, 2025x)



Image 26: Photograph of the house and Cart Shed at Abbey Consols Mine (Stewart, 2025y)

The Bumpy field

The field was the site of a previous excavation and had a large ash tree near the centre which was the area that the measured survey and dumpy levels were focused.

Skills

Hachure Survey

The main skill learnt and practiced was using Hachure Surveys as a rapid site surveying technique. The first area of focus was the Abbey Woods, specifically the old road which was enclosed by an earthen bank and a stone wall. For the Hachure drawing I narrowed the area down to a focal point, drawing two solid lines to indicate the top of the earth bank and the stone wall. Using my steps as a guide, I then counted my steps from the top to the base of the mound, I did this on both the wall and bank and used a dotted line to show the base of the slopes. I also counted my steps along the wall in the area. The trees and tree stump provided reference points to other features such as the animal tracks and the break in the wall. To add the slopes to the survey, Hachure lines were used, the triangle **indicates** the direction of the slope, and the line determines the length. The closer together, the steeper the slope and multiple triangles **indicates** the slope is interrupted. Annotations included the species of tree, stones that were clearly visible and fallen branches. Despite being a rapid site survey, it took the first few days to understand and feel more confident doing Hachure surveys. I also did two Hachure drawings in the Bumpy Field but struggled to make a broader drawing of a larger area of the field so focused on two areas, three of the many anthills that appeared to be covering something in the south of the field and a track likely made by a tractor. The last area where I made Hachure drawings was the Abbey Consols Mine, I drew two features however I am unsure of exactly what they are.

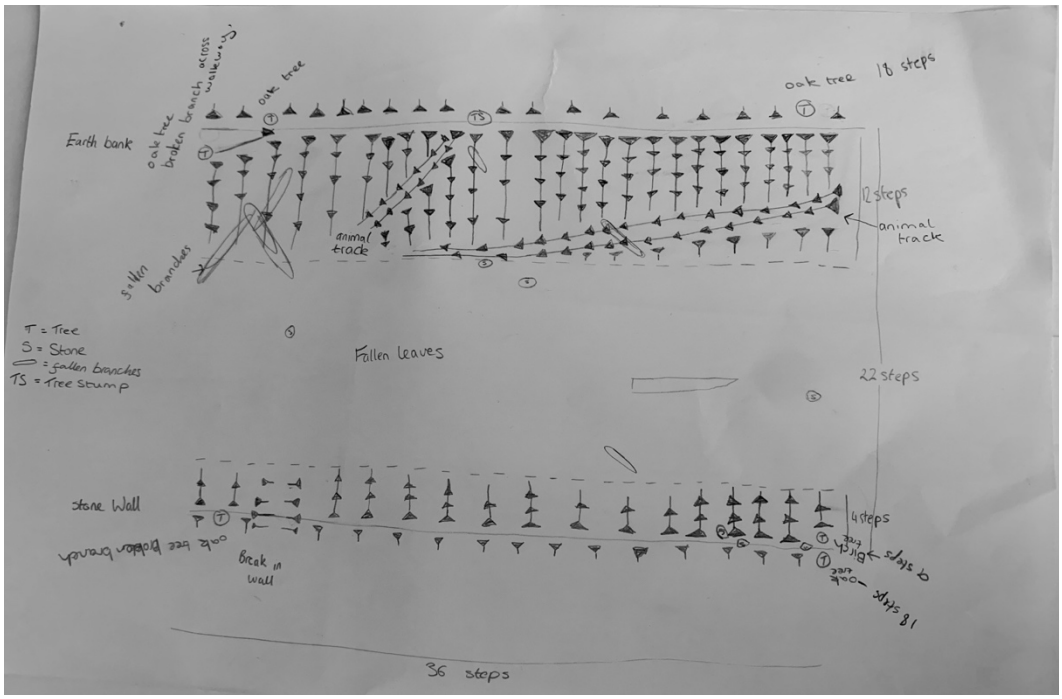


Image 27: Hachure drawing from Abbey Woods (Stewart, 2025z)

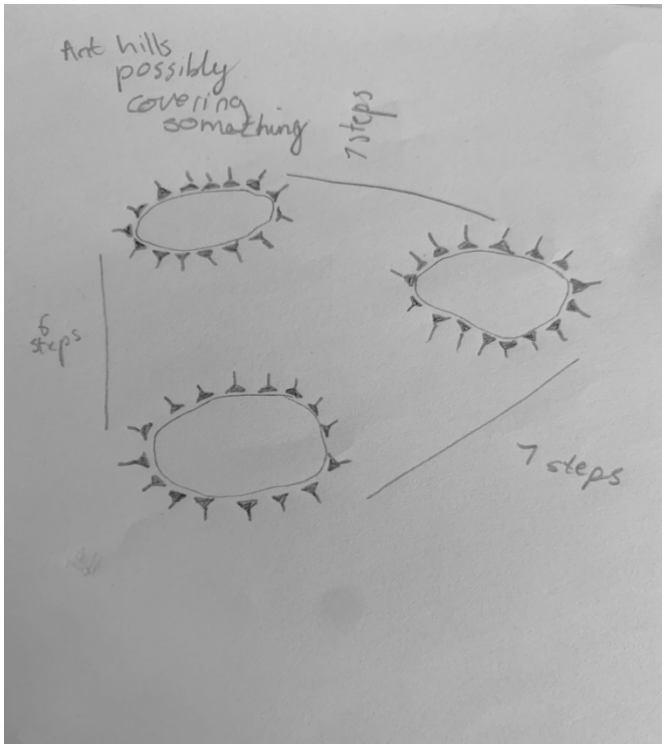


Image 28: Hachure drawing of anthills in bumpy field (Stewart, 2025aa)

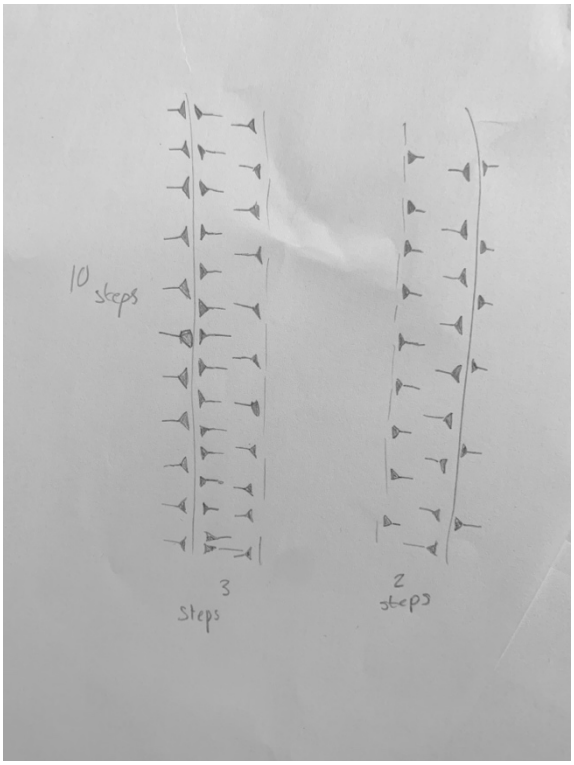


Image 29: Hachure drawing of track in bumpy field (Stewart, 2025ab)

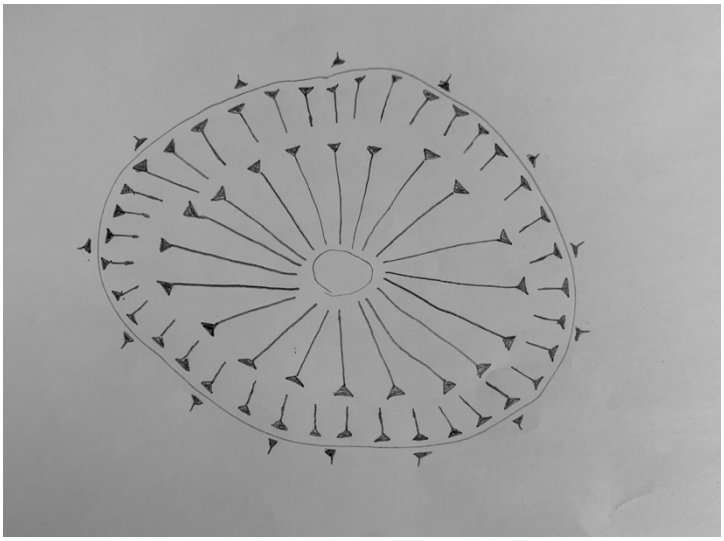


Image 30: Hachure drawing of circular feature at Abbey Consols Mine (Stewart, 2025ac)

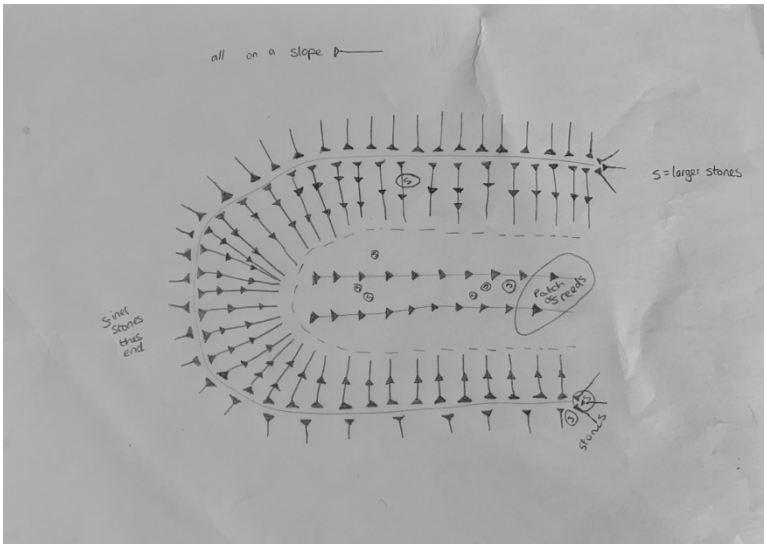


Image 31: Hachure drawing a horseshoe shaped feature at Abbey Consols Mine (Stewart, 2025ad)

Measured Survey

For the last two days on site, we were doing a measured survey in groups to more accurately draw the features around the Ash Tree in the Bumpy field. The first decision that needed to be made was that of scale, 1: 10 and 1: 20 would not fit the area on the piece of Permatrace used and 1: 100 would have made it harder to draw in detail so 1:50 was chosen. The Permatrace was placed over graph paper to plot points to scale. The baseline, a 30 meter tape, was set out across the area and then two intersecting lines were placed at right angles from that baseline. To achieve right angles, Pythagoras theorem was used. Choosing a spot on the baseline one person extends a tape out 4 meters and then someone else stands 3 meters down the baseline, another person connects the 4 meters out and 3 down with another tape until the connecting tape reads 5 meters. Then the 4 meter tape can be extended to create an intersect, there were two. The next task was to begin measuring, we began with the mound by the tree and measured out with a tape from the baseline at meter intervals plotting the front of the mound the top and the back. We then had to measure out to reference points, these needed to be fixed and spread out so we used a fence post and anthill. This was because the baseline moved between the 2 days and on the second day, we were able to use the reference points to line up and move the previous day's results onto the survey despite the new baseline. We also drew Hachure lines onto the measured survey by connecting the points plotted and added minimal annotations. The information required on the measured survey included the results of the dumpy level, our names, the site, the date, the scale and north, this information was on the bottom right-hand side. However, our results for the dumpy level are on a separate page.

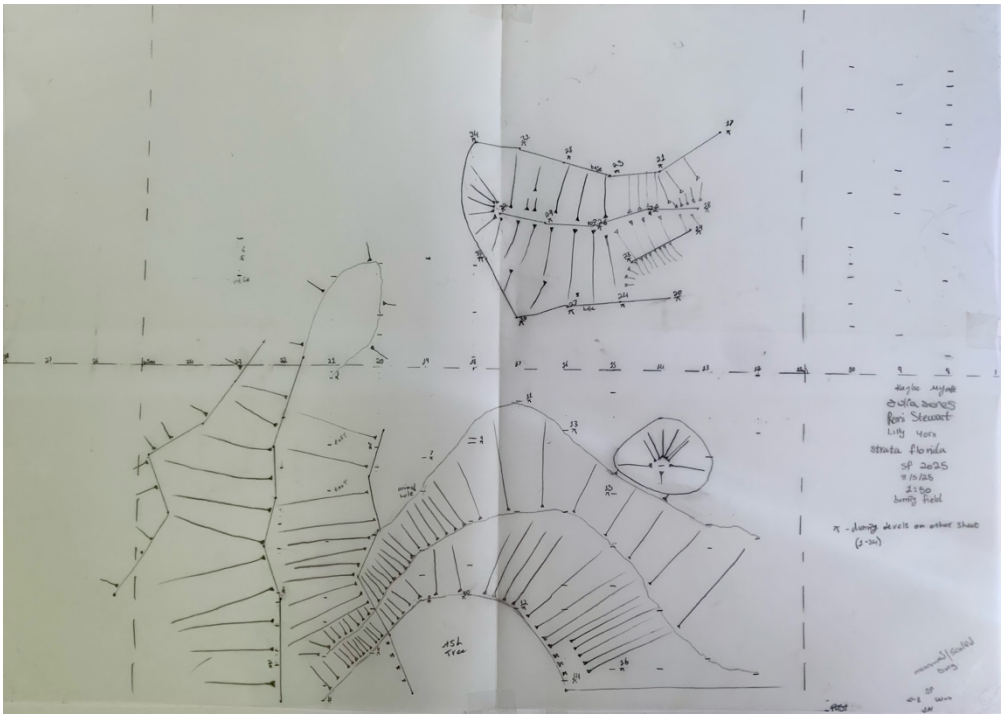


Image 32: Measured survey of bumpy field (Stewart, 2025ae)

Dumpy levels

Dumpy levels are used to record the difference in elevation on a site. The first thing we needed to do was establish a Temporary Bench Mark (TBM) which was a stone with an x on it set at 100 meters. The tripod was then set up to the height of the shortest person enabling everyone to use the dumpy level. Then you attach the dumpy level to the tripod and level it using the base dials until the bubble level is central. The Backsight reading was taken by placing the staff on the TBM and taking the reading in our case it was 1.63 meters. We then added the TBM figure of 100 meters to the Backsight to get the Columnation this was used to work out the reduced levels. We then took Foresight readings from 34 points on our measured survey and to get the reduced levels we subtracted the Foresight from the Columnation. To mark on the survey where we took readings, the benchmark symbol is used where the arrowhead and horizontal bar meet. This was not done accurately on our survey as they are to the side of the point measured. The symbols were labelled 1 to 34 which corresponds with the sheet of readings.

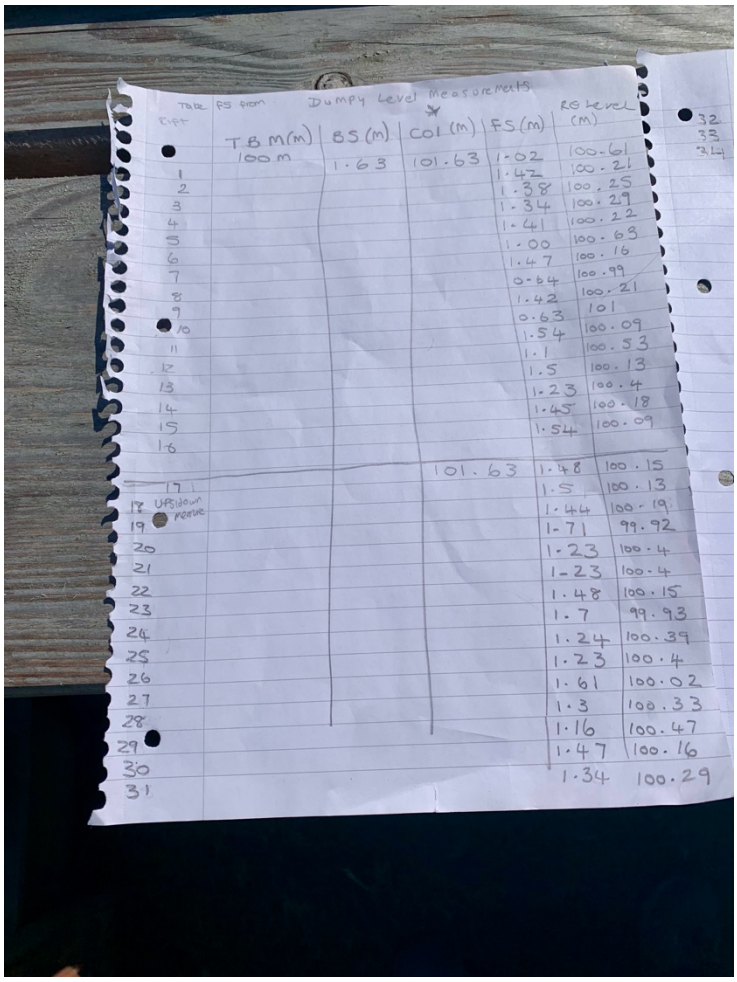


Image 33: Photograph of page 1 of dumpy level readings (Stewart, 2025af)

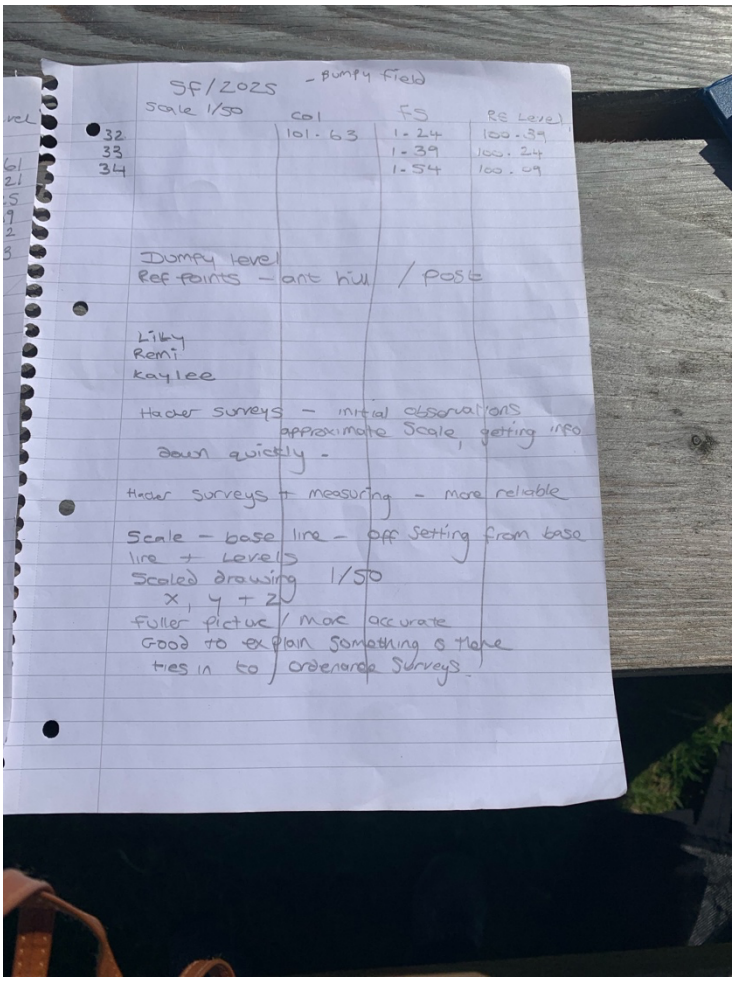


Image 34: Photograph of page 2 of dumpy level readings (Stewart, 2025ag)

Reference list

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Sables, D. (2015) 'The Monks Who Mined?' *Mining History: The Bulletin of the Peak District Mines Historical Society,* 19(3) pp. 8 – 20

Stewart, R. (2025a) *The Abbey Consols Mine, the Church and Graveyard*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025b) *Obstructed view of Strata Florida and the Church and Graveyard*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025c) *The Pilgram statue*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025d) *Abbey Archway*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025e) *Step-down Baptism font*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025f) *Abbey Archway and Pilgrim statue* [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025g) *High alter and Stained-Glass window in St Mary's Church*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025h) *The Stained-Glass Window above the pulpit at St Mary's Church*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025i) *Stained-Glass Window at St Mary's Church*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025j) *Illegible graffiti on the pulpit in St Mary's Church*. [photograph]

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Stewart, R. (2025l) '*MD:F' graffiti on pulpit of St Mary's Church*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025m) '*1724' graffiti on pulpit of St Mary's Church*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025n) *Yew tree potential burial marked of Dafydd ap Gwilym in St Mary's Churchyard*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025o) *River being redirected through a pipe* [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025p) *Pipe used to redirect water.* [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025q) *Metal object left by American Bridging Unit* [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025r) *Road in Abbey Woods*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025s) *Stone wall in Abbey Woods*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025t) *Potential iron age cairn*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025u) *Cart Shed at Abbey Consols Mine*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025v) *Ruins of buildings behind the Cart Shed at the Abbey Consols Mine*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025w) *Ruins of a house from the Cart Shed at Abbey Consols Mine*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025x) *Inside of the house at Abbey Consols Mine*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025y) *House and Cart Shed at Abbey Consols Mine*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025z) *Hachure drawing from Abbey Woods*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025aa) *Hachure drawing of anthills in bumpy field*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025ab) *Hachure drawing of track in bumpy field*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025ac) *Hachure drawing of circular feature at Abbey Consols Mine*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025ad) *Hachure drawing a horseshoe shaped feature at Abbey Consols Mine*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025ae) *Measured survey of bumpy field*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025af) *Page 1 of dumpy level readings*. [photograph]

Stewart, R. (2025ag) *Page 2 of dumpy level readings*. [photograph]