

THE “LONELY SHEPHERD” OR “PICA STONE”

(SO 217 144 ON DARREN DYSGWLFA ABOVE BAILEY’S TRAMROAD & CLYDACH GORGE .)



Cut by early 19th century quarrymen into approximate human shape and left attached to its bedrock, the “Lonely Shepherd” has since acquired myths akin to those associated with genuine prehistoric standing stones. On Mid-Summer’s Eve it is said to “*drink at the Clydach River below*”, and “*look for a wife*”, occasions claimed to bring death to any who witness them. Until 1914 and the First World War it is said local people gathered here at Mid-Summer to white-wash and robe the stone before feasting and dancing alongside – rites possibly inspired by ancient folk-memories and ritual. Clearly visible from the A465 road, this fine viewpoint is accessible by footpath from Bailey’s Tramroad.

Taken from “Heads of The Valleys Heritage” - a compilation of important local sites produced by Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum