



Fig 7-B

THE BLEICHERT ROPEWAY OR PENDANT TRAMWAY

Refer to Fig 7-4 in the book, of the cut end of what we thought was the inbound rope anchor.

Further research on site has made possible a different interpretation.

An excursion on Thursday 30th April 2009 to the undercliff area under the anchorage point for the ropeway, revealed a few interesting items.

We excavated the end of the discarded inbound rope. The “rope” in this section is a piece of cast steel rod 35mm in diameter, as the rope had been damaged so severely by the carrier wheels their solution was to replace the rope with the bar. This seems to spring from Schultze’s experience working with bridges, where tie rods like this were used to tension bridge elements together.

There is a socket at the end of the bar FIG 7-A into which is a 30mm diameter piece of inbound rope.. Unfortunately this particular part of the rope fell very close to a creek bed, so it has been constantly wet for the past 109 years, and the rope is very corroded.



Fig 7-A

A further expedition on Fri 8th May 2009, we cleaned up the rope end and socket. The rope appears to have been cut. Fig 7-C & 7-D.



Fig 7-C



Fig 7-D

This changes the conclusions concerning the rope remains below the second cliff. They may be the result of a separate attempt to recover or repair the inbound rope.

We also took some measurements of the bar that was used to replace the track rope. It was 35 mm diameter (same as the rope it replaced because it had to fit into the existing joining sockets) and was in two lengths one of 17 M and one of 22 M. The bar had a single small ridge running along its length. Fig 7-F We propose that this is a result of the rolling method used to produce the rod.

This is the point of insertion of the rod into the socket. Fig 7-E



Fig 7-E



Fig 7-F

The bar had been joined by utilising the standard Bleichert rope joiners. New internally threaded sockets would have to be made to accept the bar and the threaded insert. The two halves are then screwed together with a right hand/left hand threaded insert and kept in place by a whitemetal plug. You can see the faint two lines of the edge of the insert in the LH photo Fig 7-G and the hole for the 'C' spanner to tighten it all up in the RH photo. Fig 7-H.



Fig 7-G



Fig 7-H

Here is a photo of the tip of the whitemetal plug from another joiner further down the inbound rope.



The small shiny plug is in the centre of the picture.

There is also a part number stamped on the socket L 25. We assume L for "links" or left hand thread and 25 for the size of the thread in mm.

There is a broken off piece of rope lying beside the Scenic Railway track 100 feet below this point, partially buried. The terminating bolt, the right hand one in fig 7-B was found lying beside it in the creek bed. The rope has maybe 20 rope clips on it all jammed up together and the remains of a sling. See FIG 7-C



FIG 7-C

The clips are on the RHS of the picture.



FIG 7-D

Our Hypothesis

Our current hypothesis is that as the rope and terminating bolt are definitely in evidence, the rope could not have been terminated as we suggested in the book. The rope was terminated with the large terminating bolt in the timberwork shown in Fig 7-3, and then a tie bar was used to take that tension back to the rock to absorb the pull of the rope.

We further propose that the track rope and the whole timber structure was left in place while the tramway was being used, as the haulage rope still had to be turned using the two sheaves visible on the northern end, (closest to the photographer) from whence they were directed over the edge of the cliff along the line where the tension trolleys are standing in the background.

We also propose that the rope was dropped over the cliff during an unsuccessful attempt to recover it after AKO&M abandoned the site.

The following evidence points to this:

The packed up clips:

The sling, chain and rod.

The chain on the bar and the chain on the rope end.

If during the recovery attempt, the line of clips slipped and didn't provide a point to which a further fastening could be made, the tie rod in 7-4 could have been chopped through to get rid of, what by then, must have been a tangled mess, over the edge of the cliff.

We have photographs of an aerial ropeway at Capertee FIG 7-E which was used to bring timber down from the plateau. I haven't measured the rope yet, but the rope looks like it could be Bleichert rope. We have yet to account for the missing 100 M of outbound rope at the Southern end of the ropeway. It is possible that when the Northern recovery failed, the rope was recovered from the southern end, as the tramway was still active and the rope could be brought out in 40 M sections on the tramway, just dragging along the ground, hitched to the haul rope.

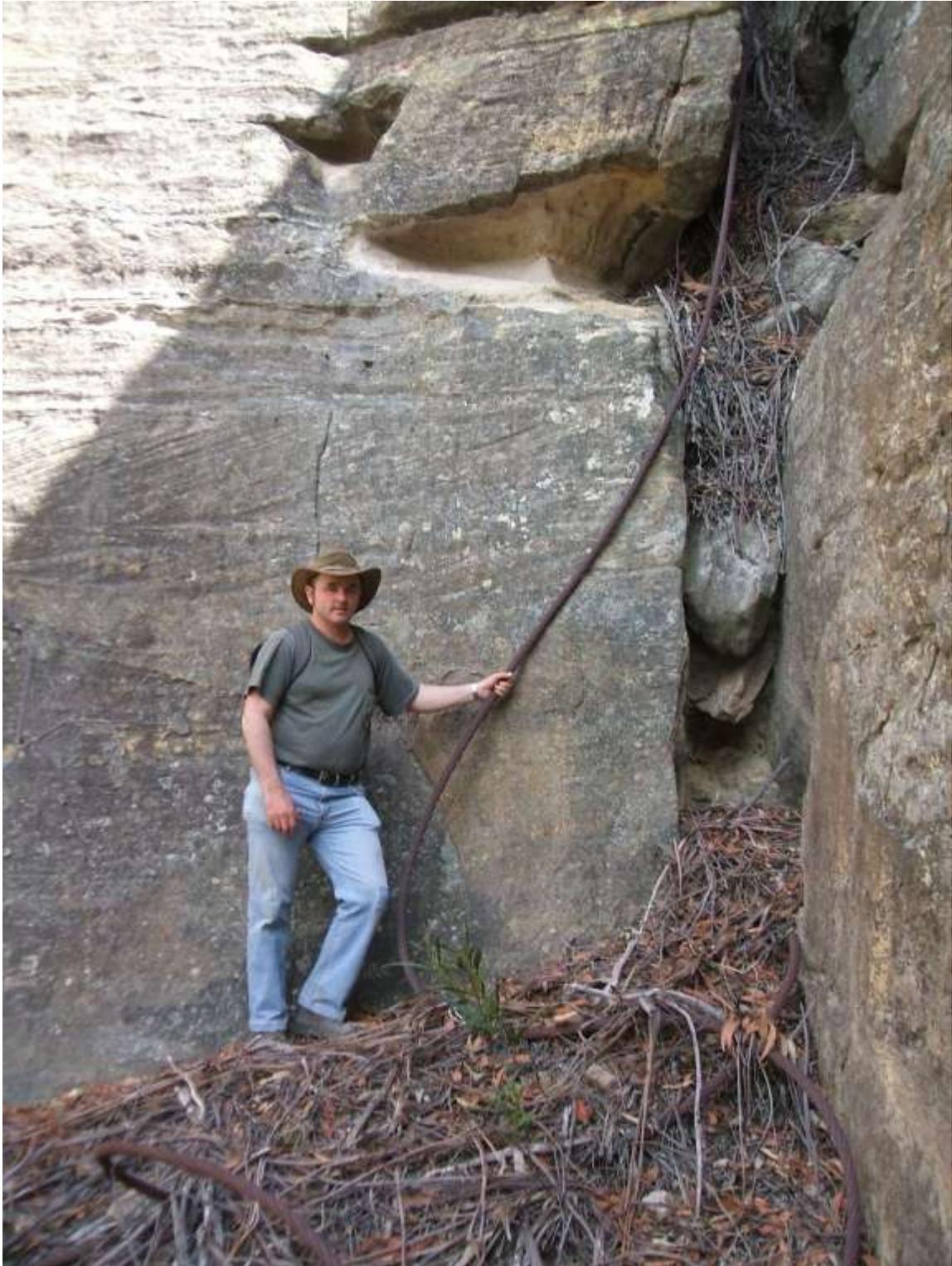


FIG 7-E