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There is one "Clove" tree (*Eugenia atomatica*) among the Nutmegs. This specimen, which is taller than any of the Nutmegs, is the only one in the Island and needs the special conditions afforded by the Gully for its successful growth. The Clove tree is cultivated extensively in the Islands of Madagascar and Zanzibar for the dried unopened flower buds which are the "cloves" of commerce. At certain seasons these are found on the ground beneath this tree.

**SECTION 5.**

After passing the last of the Nutmeg trees the footpath enters section 5. Here there are numerous Coconut trees (*Cocos nucifera*) and specimens of the Tree Fern (*Cyathea arborea*) on both sides of the footpath. These handsome Tree Ferns are now rarely found in Barbados. The specimens in the Gully were rescued from a small holding, which was about to be cultivated for commercial crops, and transplanted to their present positions. There is a specimen of the "Bearded Fig Tree" (*Ficus citrifolia*) on the rock wall on the left, and on the right the relics of a drinking-water-trough for animals alongside a water pool maintained by a perennial spring.

**SECTION 6.**

Passing a large rock boulder to the left, the footpath enters section 6 where the Gully broadens and there is an avenue of handsome Coconut Palms. Several ornamental towering trees have been planted on the gentle slope on the left, but their growth has been persistently inhibited by damage inflicted by monkeys. At the north end of the avenue of Coconut Palms an area has been selected for the establishment of a lily pond. The footpath now broadens and rises to the level of the gateway at the northern end of the Gully. Immediately before reaching the gateway, a footpath to the right leads to toilet facilities and a flight of steps on the left leads to the top of the rock bluff from which a magnificent view can be seen of an attractive area of the so-called "Scotland District".

**GAZEBO.**

On the left of the footpath a flight of steps leads to the top of the rock bluff where there is a Gazebo. From this point a magnificent view can be seen of an attractive area of the so-called "Scotland District".

**CAR PARK.**

There is a car park outside the gateway at this northern entrance of the Gully.



**WELCHMAN HALL GULLY**

**A GUIDE FOR VISITORS WALKING THROUGH THE GULLY.**

The descriptive notes in this Guide are recorded in a manner suitable for a visitor entering at the southern end of the Gully.

VISITORS ENTERING THE GULLY FROM THE NORTHERN (or CAR PARK END) should read the INTRODUCTION first and then turn to Section 6 in the Descriptive Notes and work backwards to Section 1. Right and left directions will be reversed, of course.

## INTRODUCTION.

THE WELCHMAN HALL GULLY is a ravine about three quarters of a mile long and varying in depth from 30 to 50 feet. The geological formation of this ravine or "gully" has been caused by a crack or split in the coral limestone cap which covers the greater part of the Island. The ecological conditions in the Gully, particularly the effect of persistent moisture and of shelter afforded from the strong winds which frequently blow over the surface of the Island, permit the healthy growth of several plant species which could not and do not thrive in exposed surface conditions. There is some evidence that many of the introduced or imported plant species were planted before the end of the nineteenth century.

In regard to animal and bird life, wild monkeys live in or near the gully and may often be seen. These are an old world species which were introduced into the Island. The bird population is small and the three species most frequently seen are the Blackbird (*Quiscalus fortirostris*), the Wood Dove (*Zenaidura macroura*) and the Ground Dove (*Columbigallina passerina*).

The Barbados National Trust assumed possession of the gully in 1962, but very limited funds have been available for developments or improvements. It has been the policy of the Trust to maintain most of the Gully in its natural condition; The introduction of ornamental flowering plants has mainly been restricted to the two ends of the gully. Although the Gully has frequently and mistakenly been referred to as a "Botanical Garden", it has never been the intention of the Trust to develop it as such.

There is a footpath through the Gully and a cat park at the northern end.

## DESCRIPTIVE NOTES.

### SECTION 1.

Enter through the gate at the southern end of the Gully into section 1 and proceed down a series of steps. Several ornamental plants have been established on both sides of the footpath, the more noteworthy being a collection of *Ficus* (*F. religiosa*, *F. religiosa* and spp.) which flower from April to June and two specimens of the beautiful yellow flowering *Cassia multijuga*. On the right there is a well sheltered area in which a collection of begonias, ferns and other shade-loving plants are being established.

At the bottom of the steps the footpath bends to the left and in about ten yards on this side a small hole may be observed in the side of the rock cliff containing water. The water percolates through the limestone cliff and maintains a constant level in the hole throughout the year; it is claimed to be a source of drinking water for wild bird life. The roots of Rock Balsam (*Clusia rosea*) may be seen hanging down from the cliff.

On the right hand side there are several ornamental plants; of special note is the Morning Glory Climber (*Ipomoea* sp) with its attractive purplish-blue flowers, which usually wither by midday, and the beautiful maiden hair fern (*Adiantum tenerum*) which thrives in damp areas at the base of the rock cliff. The Gully is particularly rich in fern species, many of which are indigenous and now extinct in other parts of the Island. They can be seen in all sections growing wherever

suitable shelter and moisture are available. As the footpath bends to the right, there are specimens of the "Pagoda plant" (*Clerodendrum paniculatum*) which in season bears very ornamental "pagoda-shaped" flower heads. The footpath bends to the left again and straightens for the last 50 yards of Section 1. To the left the rock cliff is covered with ornamental flowering creepers the most vigorous of which is *Thunbergia grandiflora*. The Begonias (*Begonia nivalis*) on this side of the footpath flower in the early months of the year. On the right side there is a specimen of the "Chinaman's Hat" (*Holmskioldia sanguinea*), miscellaneous ornamental plants as well as another specimen of the *Cassia multijuga* tree.

### SECTION 2.

The footpath rises at the entrance of section 2. Here the Gully floor is partly blocked by large boulders and the natural vegetation has been left undisturbed. About 15 yards to the left, a formation in the limestone resembles an elephant's head. On the right side a subsidiary footpath rises steeply to a rock ledge from which a good view of the vegetation can be obtained. (The monkeys which inhabit the Gully are reputed to congregate here and use it at night). This vegetation is a fair example of the kind of forest which once filled the innumerable gullies of the area and must also have covered much of the surface of the Island. The main footpath now bends to the left, descends to the lowest point in the Gully, bends to the right and rises slowly for about 40 yards. In this section there are some fine specimens of the Bitter Bark tree (*Picrasma antillana*) now very rare in the Island, tall "Poison" trees (*Sapium hippomanne*), Birch Gum (*Bursera simaruba*) with its thin flaky bark, and the prickly Macaw Palm (*Alphanea erosa*) which is indigenous to Barbados. (Specimens of the Macaw Palm have been sent to and established in the Fairchild Gardens in Florida). We now enter a less constricted part of the Gully. On the right hand side there are conspicuous specimens of stalactites and stalagmites in the rock cliff. Also a few specimens of the Cocoa tree (*Theobroma cacao*) which would not survive in unsheltered positions in the Island. Also rooted in the Gully floor are three very tall specimens of the Breadfruit tree (*Artocarpus communis*). These have smaller leaves than the variety commonly grown in the Island and are said to be from the original clones brought to the West Indies by Captain Bligh of "The Bounty".

### SECTION 3.

The Gully narrows at the entrance of section 3 which extends over a short distance of about 40 y There is a collection of different species of palm in this section, the most noteworthy of which are the Cohune Nut palm (*Scheelea urbaniana*) and two tall vigorous Cabbage palms (*Roystonia oleracea*) the trunks of which are covered with the Barbados Ivy (*Ficus repens*). There is also a specimen of the so-called "Travellers palm" (*Ravenala madagascariensis*) which is not a true palm but belongs to the Banana family. Several other varieties of palm exist in the Island and are being continuously introduced into other sections of the Gully.

### SECTION 4.

As the footpath bends sharply to the right it enters section 4 and is densely shaded by the "Nutmeg Grove". The Nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) is a handsome evergreen tree native to the Molucca Islands; The plants were introduced into the Gully over a hundred years ago. The fruit are fleshy, resembling nectarines, and when ripe burst open showing scarlet mace covering the brown shell inside of which is the well-known nutmeg.

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92 BARBADOS Botanical garden flowers

South in St. Thomas Parish lies a veritable Garden of Eden, property of the Barbados National Trust, in Welchman Hall Gully. The garden is full of fruit tree, spice-bearing trees, natural caves, and exotic flowers:

- 92A Chinaman's Hat
- 92B One of the caves contains a huge pillar (four feet in diameter), combining stalactite and stalagmite, which appears to support the roof. The entrance is screened by thick shrubs and you also find Bearded Fig Vines.
- 92C Double-Ixora
- 92D Red Bougainvillea
- 92E Shell or Ginger
- 92F Traveller
- 92G Bougainvilleas and Croton
- 92H White Begonia
- 92I Wild Ginger
- 92J Chalice Flower

Photographs by Angel Hurtado, Technical Unit of Visual Arts and Crafts