The path, always duly marked with modest monuments to the popular faith, lowers toward the railway station, gets over a small bridge on the dell of Biosio and goes down in sight now of the Pioverna delta where Bellano lies. The quiet Cappella della Madonna Addolorata (Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows) comes before the junction with the provincial road 62. This must be walked up for a few dozen metres on the right to pick up the track again and to cross the bridge of San Rocco over the Pioverna stream that just here under forms the Orrido di Bellano (Bellano Ravine) recently brought back to its original beauty. This ravine, the provostal Church dedicated to the Saints Nazaro, Celso and Giorgio, the wooden statues of the small church dedicated to Saint Marta, the alleys and the narrow, shady yards of the old town centre will at last take up any wait for the train to come back to Varenna.

Varenna, February 2009

On the Wayfarer’s Path, from Varenna to Bellano

A LITHOLOGICAL BOUNDARY
Looking closely at the walls along the track, you will notice that at a certain point the stones become different from those seen before. At first they are greyish calcareous stones or purple red porphyries then there are very clear granitic stones (gneiss and schist). The fact is that you have got past the partition line between the sedimentary cover, typical of the foothills of the Alps and which was formed in the Triassic period (250 - 210 millions of years ago), and that of the crystalline base that here emerges. Suddenly the path gets past a deep and large man-made wall: it is what remains of the funicular which, at the beginning of the century, linked up the railway station to the imposing hydrotherapic place, founded at Regoledo by Francesco Maglia in 1858. The Grand Hotel Regoledo, as was called in those times, had renowned guests among which Arturo Toscanini, Ignazio Nievie, Amilcare Porchelli, padre Agostino Gemelli, Massimo D’Azeglio, Antonio Stoppatti, Cesare Cabiati. The strange building, very long and narrow, is now a branch of the Istituto Sacra Famiglia di Cesano Boscone and can be seen high up, dominating a wide green clearing.

THE BOUNDARY STONES
They are on the edge of the mule track. They are three and are engraved with the date 1773 and the initials of the municipalities of Perledo and Bellano that border here. Further on you will find again other stones because the administrative limit ran along the path. Near the stones there is a modest chapel that has a precious Crucifixion of the XV century.

The author wish to thank all the volunteers who, with their enthusiasm, constancy and lots of hard work, kept the fascinating path well practicable; an insubmersible and irreplaceable effort.

He therefore thanks Albano Marcarini, friend and master, for his helpfulness and collaboration.
This walk is a short, but picturesque part of a much longer excursion route, first put out in 1989 and called “Wayfarer’s path”. It runs from Varenna to Bellano along a thin mule track that winds along the side of the mountain among chestnut woods and mild cultivated slopes. In a few hours time it collects the best of the landscape characters in this part of Lombardy: majestic landscapes, botanical and geological peculiarities, tokens of both, places of the popular imagination, traces of old, mule tracks, vineyards and olive groves which must have been sung by poets and writers at length and for a long time. Yet there are those who the routes will still add to the meaning of these routes and will help to enjoy better the routes of the area. Through the centuries Lake Como has been an attractive natural link for the trade from Milan to the western shore of the lake. It seems to be linked with a certain rapidity, by the great postal road from Milan to Como, or Brivio (according to the preference for one or the other track calling it with its most charming name: precisely “the Wayfarer’s Path.” It runs from Varenna to Bellano, where the signposts can clearly be seen, the path gets down with cobble steps (on the sides wide patches of allium ursinum which smell full of the air in spring) and it crosses the valley of the Lavena torrent (beheved as an artificial arroy, the Wayfarer’s Path goes immediately uphill to the charming small church of Madonna di Campaello, passing under its porch adorned with two, opposite, statues. Then it reaches Beglina (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a medieval house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Going along Vico Stretto it gets out on a sharp turn of the carriage road which must be followed downhill nearly as far as the next turn of the road where it takes Vezio’s Cesta Bassa. Not far away, wonderful views straight to the lake can be savoured, in spite of the wrought iron gate, a house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a medieval

THE VEZIO CASTLE
It is set in a splendid position, dominant the Centre Lago, of which it was one of the most important signifying points. It is a castle-enclosure dating back to the XII – XIII century, with a square tower surrounded by a pentagonal circle of walls with towers at the corners. In ancient times a second castle was surmounted up the whole and went down to include and guard the built-up area of Varenna. Even today one can find traces of this in the cultural maps. Vezi is hamlet of Perledo while the Castle is under the town council of Varenna. And now it is time to start our walk.

The lake has the power to mitigate the climate and other offer, flag in full-wear, the signs of the ancient aerial places reveals in advance the first warmth of spring. The path is well marked with orange metal arrows and plates and this sweet sunny tour begins. At Ghironda, behind a hotel, just next to an old marble plate of the, signifying the Ghironda area, we take Via della Croce. So the stepped rise toward Vezio begins and it will be followed as far as the small settlement lying on a saddle at about 150 meters above the lake level. In Vezio it is advisable a short descent towards the castle, before walking along the Wayfarer’s Path. "Wayfarer path". It runs from Varenna to Bellano along a thin mule track that winds along the side of the mountain among chestnut woods and mild cultivated slopes. In a few hours time it collects the best of the landscape characters in this part of Lombardy: majestic landscapes, botanical and geological peculiarities, tokens of both, places of the popular imagination, traces of old, mule tracks, vineyards and olive groves which must have been sung by poets and writers at length and for a long time. Yet there are those who the routes will still add to the meaning of these routes and will help to enjoy better the routes of the area. Through the centuries Lake Como has been an attractive natural link for the trade from Milan to the western shore of the lake. It seems to be linked with a certain rapidity, by the great postal road from Milan to Como, or Brivio (according to the preference for one or the other track calling it with its most charming name: precisely “the Wayfarer’s Path.” It runs from Varenna to Bellano, where the signposts can clearly be seen, the path gets down with cobble steps (on the sides wide patches of allium ursinum which smell full of the air in spring) and it crosses the valley of the Lavena torrent (beheved as an artificial arroy, the Wayfarer’s Path goes immediately uphill to the charming small church of Madonna di Campaello, passing under its porch adorned with two, opposite, statues. Then it reaches Beglina (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a medieval house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Going along Vico Stretto it gets out on a sharp turn of the carriage road which must be followed downhill nearly as far as the next turn of the road where it takes Vezio’s Cesta Bassa. Not far away, wonderful views straight to the lake can be savoured, in spite of the wrought iron gate, a house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a medieval house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a medieval house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a medieval house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a medieval house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a median house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a median house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a median house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a median house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a median house-tower and the baroque church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Then it reaches Regolo (320 m.), a lovely village that in its centre hides a median house-tower and

THE BLACK MARBLE QUERRIES OF VARENNA
The abbott Amoretti, in 1824, stated to be “that hard and pretty marble that we call occhiodino, because it by many eyes seems formed and it is composed of blackish marble and white spar, that now and then fills the openings left by the sea bodies intermingled.” Divide Bertolotti, in 1821, noted down in his journey on Lake Como: “Then we walked by the querries of marble which layers, overwhelmimg the lake in a nearly perpendicular line, make the work of extraction hard and risky, so that you often see workers, tied in the air with ropes, hitting with the tools on the hard stone, hanging on the precipice.”

THE DRY STONE WALLS
Up to now, walking along the path, you certainly have had the chance to notice the beauty of the walls that defining it. They are mighty manufactured works that sometimes are near two metres height. The stones, kept together using only compression without the need of mortar or of other binder. Where, they do not fit exactly thinner stones are inserted so to make the wall solid and compact. In fact it is exposed to very strong pressures and you the seasonal pressure of some pieces of mountain swallows (Rhipidura pyrrhopterus) has been observed.

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Suggested period
Autumn, spring

QUERRIES OF VARENNA

THE BLACK MARBLE QUERRIES OF VARENNA

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