



Promoting awareness of the archaeology  
and history of North Devon

## Newsletter, Autumn 2015

This newsletter is a bit late, but as you've received your winter programme via John Bradbeer, NDAS Secretary, and as the programme can be found on the NDAS website, it hopefully won't have caused you to miss anything. Three major projects have dominated the year: the final season of excavation at Little Potheridge, the continuation of the Longstone Landscape Project and the completion and publication of the Society's 'Heritage Handbook', all of which are the subject of reports below.

In more general, but relevant terms this might be the place to update you on some matters of public concern which are of interest to NDAS members. Firstly, you may have gathered via the Press that the future of the North Devon Record Office is still in the balance, but that there is some hope of a reprieve. Devon County Council concluded a couple of months ago that their scheme to transfer their officers from the Civic Centre to the Barnstaple Library building, shifting aside the Local Studies Library, the Records Office and the North Devon Athenaeum was proving too difficult and expensive, and so the idea was dropped. Currently negotiations between the newly formed Southwest Heritage Trust, the Devon Heritage Centre, the County Council and the Town Council are ongoing, but the Athenaeum at least is safe, while the fate of the records is still uncertain, though clearly the pressure is on to retain them in North Devon. Secondly, you may have read of plans to extend the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon providing more gallery space specifically to accommodate a social history display and education area. The aim is to better represent the history, life and character of North Devon. Plans produced by Gale and Snowden Architects envisage an extension towards the Long Bridge with a design which echoes the form of Bridge Chambers and which would replicate in a modern idiom the Gothic Bridge House which formerly stood in this position and which was demolished in 1963 when the bridge was widened. The new building together with Bridge Chambers would present the effect of a gateway to the town. At present a bid has been made for HLF funding, the result of which is expected in December. Should this be successful, then other funding streams should fall into place. In order to meet the projected cost of £1.8 million, there will however remain a need to seek sponsorship from private bodies and individuals, so should you know of potential sponsors, please do your best to point them in the right direction!

### Little Potheridge, Season 3, 2015:

Chris Preece

In 2014, excavations had revealed a north/south linear packed with kiln debris (muffle fragments, kiln bricks, pipe clay, pipe stems and bowls). The down-slope nature of this linear suggested that the kiln would have been to the north, in the field now separated by an east/west hedge-bank.

So, in 2015, targets to the north were sought. Bob Shrigley's geophysics survey had revealed a distinct area to the west of the north/south medieval hedgebank, suggesting deeper soil. This corresponded with the evidently made-up ground to the north of the site hut, above the hedgebank. The east end of this area corresponded in alignment with the debris linear to the south and was

obviously worth investigating. The gradiometry survey had been generally disappointing and the only faint anomaly offered was a 'hotspot' to the north-east of last year's excavation where the extant east-west and north-south hedgebanks join.

Two trenches were therefore sited to investigate these targets. The first, T7 (10m x 4m), was targeted to locate the gradiometry 'hotspot'. As the turf was removed however, this merely revealed the remains

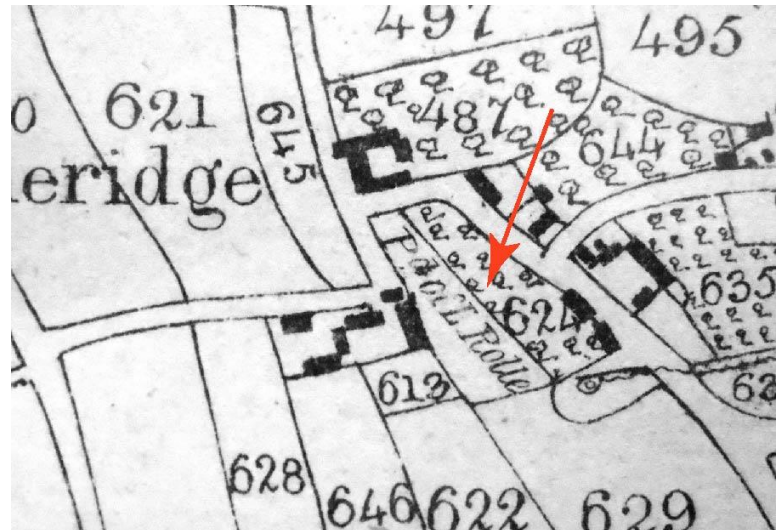


Fig.1: Estate Map of 1794

of a fairly modern bonfire. The trench was taken down to natural and was shallow in depth suggesting it had been not been ploughed. This accords with its use as an orchard (numbered 624) on the 1794 estate map (Fig. 1). Very few finds were recorded and those only in the shallow topsoil. No features were noted in the subsoil and this trench was therefore closed down.



Fig.2: Nigel Dymond measuring for a section drawing in T8



Fig.3: Revetment (T8)

Trench 8 (12m x 4m) was then opened up to the west and was immediately promising (Fig. 2). At the east end, immediately below the turf, was a spread of stone mixed with a considerable quantity of pipe stems and bowls. This was where the medieval hedgebank noted in 2014 was expected to be and the stone probably represented the remains of the base of the hedgebank following levelling. This was left in situ for cleaning by trowel later. To the west however, the made-up ground evidenced by geophysics and observation was revealed and this was removed down to features. The first of these

(Fig. 3) was a revetment (a wall faced on one side only, for retaining earth). This curved at its east end and had been adapted into a drain. To the south of this was a dump of stones and bricks and when these were removed a metallised surface was revealed. This ran east-west and addressed the revetment. The latter may have been a garden feature subsequent to clay pipe production (the 1842 tithe map shows a rectangular domestic building up-slope, at the north end of the field). To the east of the drain, a pit had been dug and filled with pipe kiln debris and a compacted surface adjacent to it suggested the end of a barrow run for tipping.

On the last day a sondage was made at the west end of the trench through the metallised surface which revealed another metallised surface beneath it.



Fig.4: Bowl with John Pardon initials on spur.

These phases suggested demolition and clearing out of a kiln probably originally located in the north of the field and subsequent use of the area for horticulture. Analysis of the bricks (many showing signs of repeated firing) suggested that they were of a different size to those found in 2014, hinting at a second kiln. This theory was given more substance by initial study of the pipe bowl forms in this area, most of which on initial inspection appeared to be later (for example, many of the fluted examples were found, the last in the typology). Another form was new, again later in date, with the Pardon initials appearing on a spur for the first time (Fig. 4)

As with previous years, the site provided some unusual finds. A rare pipe bowl dating from 1840-60 (outside the range of Pardon pipes and therefore intrusive) depicts a French Hussar.

One of the kiln bricks had a circle incised on it, divided into 12 segments (Fig. 5). This might be interpreted as a 'clock' used to mark the time of firing. There are earlier parallels of these devices in church porches thought to have been a way of notifying congregations of the time of the next service. Something like chalk or a blob of putty could have been used to mark the time.



Fig.5: 'Clock' on burnt kiln brick

Three seasons of excavation, even for a kiln site, have produced a huge amount of material. This is now being analysed, recorded and prepared for publication, hopefully for submission in October 2016. Little Potheridge is important due to the quantity of kiln material produced (unparalleled anywhere in the South West, for the extensive typology of pipes and wig curlers, the fascinating associated finds and the story of the dismantling of the kiln(s) which excavation has revealed. Although the precise location of the kiln(s) has not been identified, the information gained has been considerable.

NDAS is most grateful to Devon HES, the DAS and the CBA for grants for the three seasons' work, to Phil Collins and family for their enthusiasm and support (particularly the equipping of the site hut), to Dave Locke for his help, to Clinton Estates and the farmers (Nancekivells, father and son) for allowing

## Longstone Landscape: Update October 2015

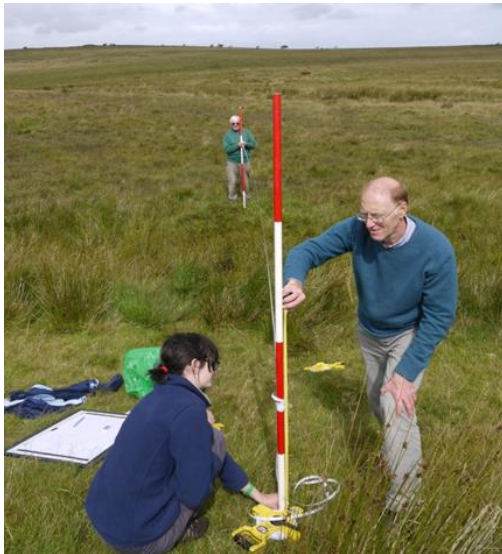
Linda Blanchard

### Spring Head Flint survey

All areas targeted for walking have been covered at least once, with the exception of the Swincombe area, but unfortunately the lack of exposed peat has meant that very little flint has been found. There will be a walk-over of Homer Common on 21st November meeting at 10.30 am at Two Gates



### Barrow survey



There are eleven barrows in the Chapman Barrow group and six of them have now been surveyed with a few details still to be added. The team have also surveyed Longstone Barrow which was particularly challenging due to its size and exposure to winds. We will keep plodding on with the surveys and if anyone wishes to adopt a barrow to survey, please get in touch with Linda Blanchard. The next survey date will be Sunday Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>. GSB have done a full geophysical survey of Longstone Barrow, a smaller possible barrow and a rectangular feature on the moor. The final report is due imminently.

*Surveying the Chapman Barrows*

### Radworthy

The deserted settlement has now been surveyed with volunteers working with Terry Green and Hazel Riley, however there is still more to do, including looking at some of the platforms identified. The team are keen to do some geophysical survey and it is hoped this may be carried out in conjunction with NDAS. Terry has also made contact with a descendant of the last family to live at Radworthy – the Harris's.

### Quincunx



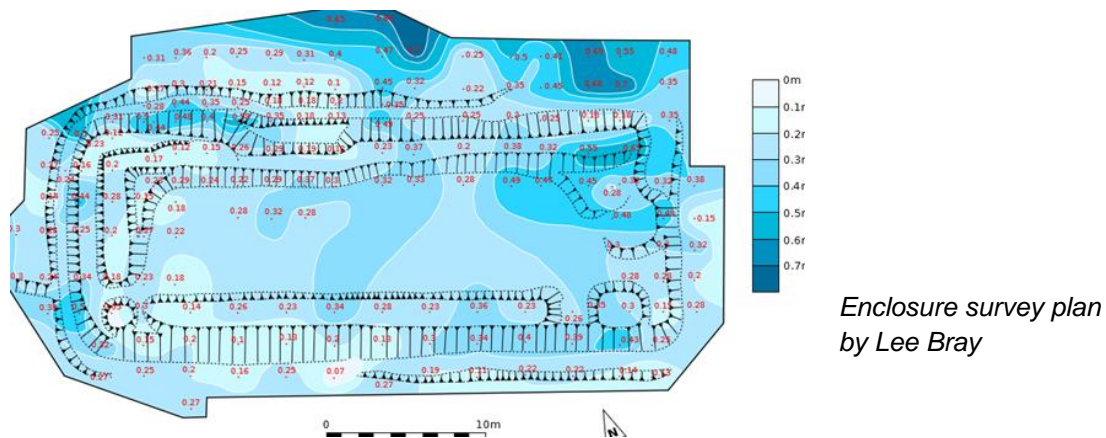
There is a need to consider whether re-erecting fallen stones from the Quincunx is desirable or whether this would make them more vulnerable to damage from vehicles on the moor. Before this could happen landowner permissions would be required as would excavation. Mark Gillings of Leicester University has developed a methodology for this. A longer term vegetation management regime would also be desirable to ensure their protection in future.

*Fallen stone from the Quincunx*

Photo: Doug Mitcham

## Enclosure Survey

This enigmatic feature (possibly a mortuary enclosure) has been re-surveyed and drawn up with peat depths superimposed on the plan. No further work is planned for this site.



## The Reverend Chanter

Research in the record offices into Chanter, who excavated one of the Barrows, is still ongoing. Some letters have been found in Exeter, however these mostly relate to his correspondence on church plate. One set of papers which appeared promising is currently missing.

John Frederick Chanter, 1853 – 1939, was born in Barnstaple, completed his education with an MA from Jesus College, Cambridge, was from 1886 to 1916 Rector of Parracombe and on his retirement went to spend the rest of his life in Exmouth. He was buried in the churchyard of St James Church, Swimbridge.

Like many 19<sup>th</sup> century men of the church he pursued antiquarian interests, writing a number of books and presenting numerous papers to the Devonshire Association to which he was elected in 1901. In 1902 he asked R Handsford Worth (who was reporting to the Association for the Barrows Committee) if Chapman Barrows had been opened recently and amid laughter Worth replied that they were opened in 1302 but he did not know of any recent openings! Chanter went on to pursue his own research into the barrows and produced his report on what we currently call Chanter's Barrow in 1913.

## Tithe survey

John Bradbeer has kindly extended his study of the Northern Devon Tithe Maps to include the Longstone Project area and his survey is to be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

*We will be sorry to say goodbye to Faye Balmond as our support officer when the Exmoor Moorland Initiative draws to a close, however we hope to welcome her (and her baby son William) as a volunteer on the Longstone Landscapes Project and a potential new member of NDAS.*

## The Heritage Handbook

You should be aware by now that this NDAS publication is available to members for £10 and to non-members for £12.50. Our first print-run of 200 is nearing exhaustion, so we expect to be going to a reprint fairly shortly. If you ordered a copy to collect from the Museum and have not yet done so, then be aware that the stock is liable to run out.

You may or may not know that the publication process hit a stumbling block at the last minute when our chosen publisher went into administration, leaving the completed books stranded, fortunately not with the now embargoed publisher, but in the hands of the binder. As the publisher was unable to pay him for his work, he was not willing to release the books to us, unless we covered his costs. At that stage we had spent all of our sponsorship money, but were saved by South West Archaeology Ltd who covered the unexpected cost. We are of course grateful to South West Archaeology Ltd for their generosity. We now have the problem of selecting an alternative publisher for any further print-run. In all of this Bruce Aiken, who designed the book and made it ready for publication, has been extremely helpful and therefore to him too we owe a debt of gratitude.

### ***The NDAS Annual Dinner***

*This is a reminder that the annual dinner will take place on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 7.00 for 7.30 at the Barnstaple Hotel. If you haven't already booked, please use the booking form and menu appended to this newsletter.*

## **Lithics workshop with Henrietta Quinnell**

Derry Bryant

On 20th June a Lithics Recording Workshop was held in South Molton Assembly Rooms. The day was led by Henrietta Quinnell (Exeter University). Henrietta was assisted by Trev and Sue Dymond, members of Tiverton Archaeology Group, who have been working on analysing and recording lithic collections from the Tiverton area, alongside Henrietta.

Nine members of NDAS and one member of DAS attended the workshop. This was a follow-on from the previous session with Henrietta, which had been an introduction to lithic production i.e. how flakes, cores, and finally tools were produced in prehistory, and how to recognise them as worked pieces in the landscape.



*Members taking instruction on lithics recording from Henrietta Quinnell*

The purpose of the latest workshop was to remind attendees of basic lithic production, and then to set about creating a recording method. Henrietta has developed a methodology of recording sheets, using categories of description and analysis, for recording both collections and individual pieces. She suggested that any future collections found in North Devon be recorded in this way in order to create a useful and consistent record.

Lithics used on the day were from the collection from Huish, near Merton, collected by Phil Collins and Dave Locke. Attendees were each given a small collection of pieces which,

using, under guidance, the sheets provided by Henrietta, they were able to identify and classify and record onto small labels. The details would be later transferred to the recording sheets.

It was a most useful day and we are very grateful to Henrietta, Trev and Sue for coming along and must also thank Pat Hudson for bringing the refreshments. Henrietta has since provided digital copies of the recording sheets which we will be able to use to record any new collections, including those from Huish. If anyone would like copies of this information, please contact Derry Bryant at [derrybryant@btinternet.com](mailto:derrybryant@btinternet.com)

The recording of the lithic collection from Huish is ongoing. If anyone is particularly interested in helping Derry with analysis and recording, please get in touch with her so that another informal day can be arranged.

## **Churchyard Yews Project *and* the Devon-Newfoundland Connection**

John Bradbeer

In the last Newsletter the origins and aims of this project were outlined and an appeal made for volunteers to participate. This is a brief up-date on progress since then. Two members volunteered to help and we have had some data from one of them. I am afraid that I have been busy with various other things and I have not had much opportunity to survey churchyards in the Tamar valley area as I planned. At present we have records for a dozen parishes, principally those in the South Molton deanery. There is clearly a great deal more to do. So I would ask members to see if they could complete a survey form for any churches that they happen to visit. Forms and instructions are available from the Society's website. However, we were hoping to gather data on the other trees present in the churchyard to see if there were any associations (or indeed any oppositions) between yew trees and other species. As autumn is now upon us and the deciduous trees will be shedding their leaves and I suspect that many of us will be less confident of our tree identification from bark alone, then the survey probably will restart in earnest next spring. It would be good to have done at least half of the northern Devon parishes by this time next year, so another 60 or so to go!

The Devonshire Association is organising celebrations in the county of the four hundredth anniversary of the formal colonization of Newfoundland in 1617. Devon was particularly important in the life of the colony and soon became a pivot of the Newfoundland salt cod trade. The Devonshire Association plans a symposium at County Hall on the weekend of 8-9 April 2017, which will include keynote lectures from prominent Newfoundland historians and archaeologists and performances by folk musicians from Devon and Newfoundland. It seems that Newfoundland's folk music is a unique fusion of Devonian and Irish sources. North Devon Archaeological Society is represented on a group planning activities in Barnstaple and Bideford in the week before and the week after the symposium in Exeter. In Bideford, the emphasis will be on pottery and clay pipes and will probably include pottery workshops and there will be exhibitions in Barnstaple and Bideford with a Newfoundland theme.

## **Foundrydata: a Heritage Project using Digital Technology.**

Jonathan Prus

Foundries used to be almost everywhere. The metal work that they produced filled the streets factories and homes of Britain (and much of the rest of the world) and is rapidly disappearing. The firms have mostly closed. Everyday stuff is being melted down, often leaving no trace and certainly no written or photographic record.

Eddie Birch and I have decided to try and capture this information before it's too late. Collecting all this is a huge task and will only happen if the project is democratic and engages many interested people. It is envisaged, if you like, as a sort of wiki-foundry-pedia. The web-site is [www.foundrydata.org](http://www.foundrydata.org) and anyone can access the saved data without password or registration.

Just now there is a limited amount of test data posted (a few hundred foundries, castings etc.), but you can see the intended scope of the project. There is probably no well-defined end to this job, but we expect to turn it into a useful research tool within a year or two. Within a few months we expect to have a viable "digitised heritage" resource.

The database divides into four main sections:

- Artefacts (castings, their locations, descriptions and photos)
- Foundries (the manufacturing process and its physical location)
- Firms and People (the history of who, what, when and where)
- References (printed and digital sources to test or validate the above)

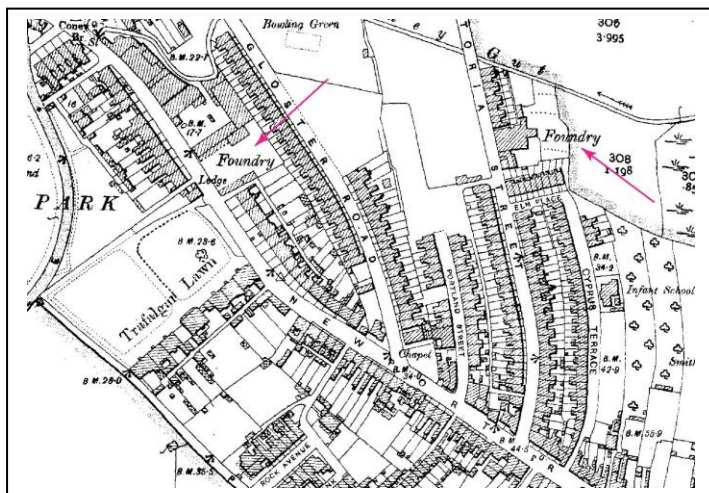
and these sections are interlinked so that (for example) the record of a lamp post is linked to the foundry that made it. (But the range of interesting castings is vast ranging from huge engine parts, bridges and ordnance to miniscule brass "toys".)

This note is an invitation to join in. The sorts of activity involved include:

- Posting your existing images and information
- Combing the streets and taking pictures of castings (and the foundry marks on them)
- Locating and researching the foundries
- Tracking the people and firms who did this work, building a history
- Working out what technology was used and how it was propagated.

If you wish to add material you will need a password.

If you're curious about this please give me a ring on 01435 830155 or email me: [jonathan@foundrydata.org](mailto:jonathan@foundrydata.org)



*Two foundries in Newport, Barnstaple as recorded in 1905.*

Ordnance Survey 2<sup>nd</sup> edition



## **NDAS WINTER PROGRAMME 2015-2016**

### **Tuesday October 20th 2015:**

*Little Potheridge seasons 2 and 3 and Hermit light keepers of Medieval Devon and Cornwall.*

Chris Preece. (Professional archaeologist and NDAS member Chris has conducted the excavations at Little Potheridge over the last three years. Pursuing his marine interests, he has also recently published a paper on lighthouse keepers.)

### **Tuesday November 17th 2015:**

*The Ipplepen Prehistoric & Roman Site in Context.* Bill Horner.

(As Devon County Archaeologist, Bill is well placed to tell us about this recently discovered Romano-British settlement west of Exeter and its significance for reassessing Roman Devon.)

### **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015:**

NDAS annual dinner at the Barnstaple Hotel, 7.00 for 7.30.

### **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016:**

*The Longstone Landscape Project.* Rob Wilson North and Terry Green. (Rob is Conservation Manager for Exmoor National Park and has studied and recorded the archaeology of Exmoor for over twenty years. Terry is an archaeologist and former NDAS chairman, and will unpick the development of the deserted settlement at Radworthy on the edge of the moor above Challacombe.)

### **Tuesday February 16<sup>th</sup> 2016:**

*North Devon's Ancient Bench Ends and the Renaissance.* Todd Gray (Todd is a Research Fellow of the University of Exeter and one of the most prolific writers and researchers on the history of Devon. He will talk about his passion for the carved benches in the Churches of Devon.)

### **Tuesday March 15<sup>th</sup> 2016 at 7.00pm:**

NDAS AGM, to be followed by a talk from Alex Bellisario of the Citizen Project (Significant archaeological sites along our sinuous coast and on the foreshores of our tidal estuaries are continually eroded by winds, waves and tidal scour. CITiZAN (Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network) is the first systematic national response to this threat. Alex is the CITiZAN Archaeologist for Outreach in Portsmouth, based in the Nautical Archaeology Society offices. )

### **Tuesday April 19th 2016:**

*The South Australian - a Historic Shipwreck near Lundy.* Keith Denby. (Keith is a longstanding member of Ilfracombe & North Devon Sub Aqua Club and has dived this wreck site for nearly thirty years. Conditions are too challenging to carry out archaeological survey but the club has managed to secure funding for Wessex Archaeology to undertake remote survey work on the wreck of this 19th century Clipper. )

## NDAS Annual Dinner

Ashford Suite

The Barnstaple Hotel

Braunton Road, Barnstaple, EX31 1LE.

7.00 for 7.30pm Tuesday 8th December 2015

2 Courses £17.95 and 3 Courses £20.95

(Tea & coffee is included in the price.)

### BOOKING FORM

Name/s Attending:

Contact Phone:

Contact Email:

Starter Choice/s:

Main Course Choice/s:

Dessert Choice/s:

No deposit required!

Booking form and full payment for meal/s must be sent to me by no later than Tuesday 24th November.

Booking form and cheque payable to 'NDAS' to be returned to:

Bob Shrigley, 20 Skern Way, Northam, Bideford, EX39 1HZ.

Phone: 01237 478122 Email: [rvs1120@gmail.com](mailto:rvs1120@gmail.com)

**Homemade Soup of The Day**

Freshly Baked Bread Roll and Butter

**Prawn Cocktail**

Marie Rose Sauce served with  
Brown Bread and Butter

**Duo of Chilled Melon**

Fresh Fruit and Mango Coulis

**Various Fruit Juices**

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**Roast Silverside of Beef**

Served with Yorkshire Pudding  
and Horseradish Sauce

**Roast Devon Turkey**

Served with a Bacon Roll, Chestnut Stuffing  
and Cranberry Sauce

**Homemade Chickpea and Mixed Bean Roast**

Spinach, Mushroom, Apricot  
with a Vegetable Gravy

**Grilled Fillet of Salmon**

Finished with Sauté Smoked Salmon and Dill

All mains are accompanied by a selection  
of the following Potatoes and Vegetables;

Cauliflower and Broccoli Mornay,  
Buttered Brussel Sprouts with Chestnuts  
Orange and Ginger Carrots,  
Roast Potatoes, Minted New Potatoes

\*\*\*

**Indulge yourself in our mouth-watering  
homemade desserts. Choose from:**

**Christmas Pudding**

Brandy Sauce

**Homemade Sweet of the Day**

**Fresh Fruit Salad**

Devon Clotted Cream

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**Freshly Brewed Filter Coffee**

Cream and Minted Chocolate