NDAS
NORTH DEVON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Promoting awareness of the archaeology and history of North Devon

Newsletter, Spring 2021

Blinking in the Daylight?

Fingers crossed, touch wood, hoping the entrails have been read aright, Spring 2021 finds us cautiously emerging from the long night of Covid-19. Considering the predominant age-profile of our membership, many if not all of us will have had our two vaccinations by now and could hope for a return to doing the things that raise the spirits of an archaeologist. There's already been one (socially-distanced) fieldwalk organised by Derry Bryant (reported below), and given that what we do is mainly in the open air, there is the tempting possibility of days out. Chris Preece is offering the possibility of some shoreline survey and the dig at Dulverton will, we hope, be able to go ahead. We have no real idea of when we shall be able to resume our talks programme face to face rather than through a screen. Having said that, I'm sure we have enjoyed the talks brought to us via Zoom, and we owe particular thanks to Henrietta Quinnell for generously giving us her time to deliver to our home screens four excellent lectures on Devon's prehistory. However, accustomed as we may have become to the protocols of zooming, there's no substitute for the spontaneous exchange of ideas as we mill about with a cup of tea in hand after listening to a flesh and blood speaker. So cross your fingers and trust that the PM's roadmap for opening up stays on track and that by the time I compile the next newsletter, we shall be back to normal – whatever that turns out to be. Meanwhile this manages to be a full and varied newsletter, and what better way to kick off than with a report of actual field-work? TG

NDAS Fieldwalking at Little Weare Barton Farm

Sarah McRae provides the following account:

With our archaeology events shelved in 2020 and with limitations to numbers of participants as we now emerge from lockdown, activities in 2021 have begun in a small way. Derry Bryant took up the challenge to kick-start events by arranging a fieldwalking activity – firstly as an exercise to see whether any of us could remember how to set up, undertake and record a walk (!) and secondly, to use the opportunity to explore a potential site of interest at Little Weare Barton Farm, at Gammaton Moor and overlooking Weare Gifford and the Torridge Valley. The site was one of a number of areas suggested by Keith Hughes - thanks Keith!

According to the HER, the farm was the site of a small scatter of some flint cores, lumps and flakes found during the 1940s by the current farmer's grandfather (the Chamings family have owned the farm for some 6 generations) and how held at the RAM in Exeter. Just over the road from the farm, another HER record indicates a large double-ditched enclosure – sadly nothing can be seen of this structure on modern Google mapping (nor by visiting the location itself) but luckily, Keith Hughes brought in a local history book which showed an aerial photo taken around 1947 with the enclosure clearly marked in the crops. So, with previous flints found close by and with the knowledge that there

Walking the lines at Little Weare Barton – brown soil and stones!

had been some kind of human activity in the field next door, the area looked ripe for further investigation. Although much of the farm was under cultivation or plough at the date of the walk, we had the opportunity to explore a recently rolled & sown field adjacent to the ring-ditch field.

So, with a maximum number of 6 volunteers each day, we rolled up at the field gate on the Friday morning wondering if any of us could remember how to set up 20m squares and 2m wide "walk lines". We needn't have worried - within moments the NDAS team had swung into action, hoisting the ranging poles, rolling the tapes out, placing the marker pegs and setting out the string lines. We were now set for action!

However, our next problem was actually spotting anything on the ground apart from STONES and MORE STONES! The field was just endless brown earth and stone, stretching away down the hillside and up toward Gammaton Moor. But our trusty NDAS team rose to the challenge, slowly walking up and down each 2m wide walkway, stopping here and there to pick up and examine anything "unusual" on the top of the soil - at times we resembled a small flock of wading birds, bending and pecking at the ground!

Some of i

Derry Bryant with our two youngest fieldwalkers – Georgie and William Chamings

Slowly but surely, the flint finds began to emerge – some flint cores (some burnt), tiny bladelets, scrapers & flakes. We covered six 20m squares on Friday and again on Saturday and four on Sunday, when we had a visit from farmer Richard Chamings and his family, keen to see what we were up to. We showed them a few of the finds and allocated them a walkway with the challenge to see what they might find – and within 10 minutes, they had 2 bladelets stowed away in their finds bag!

In total we turned up 52 items – all flint material except for 4/5 roundish pebbles which could be sling-shot (to be confirmed). All the finds are currently being cleaned, examined, photographed or drawn and Derry is aiming to have a full report available in the next few weeks.
The collection appears to be Mesolithic.

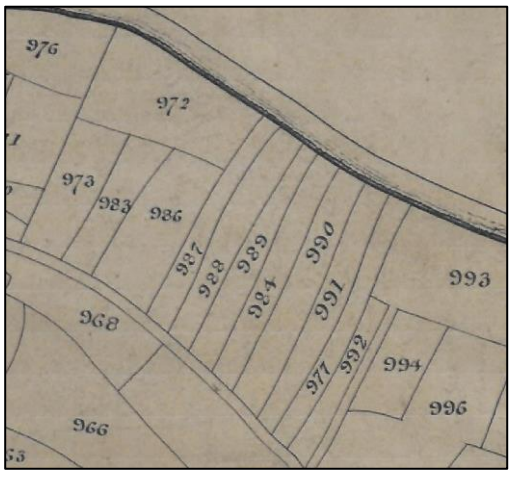
Our very grateful thanks to Richard and Jackie Chamings for letting us use the field and to our eagle eyed team of Keith Hughes, Nigel and Rosemary Dymond, Ruth Downie, Bob Shrigley, Michael Castle, Mark Lund, Ann White, Michael Jones, Sarah McRae and Derry Bryant.

The Leper Fields, Taddiport

John Bradbeer

The two remaining medieval strips known as the Leper Fields as seen from Castle Hill, Torrington, March 2012

On page 54 in the March/April 2021 issue of *British Archaeology* there is an atmospheric winter photograph of the surviving Leper Fields at Taddiport, taken from Castle Hill in Torrington. The text says little about the fields other than the fact that for the cover of Sam Turner's book, *Medieval Devon and Cornwall,* for which the BA picture was taken, an alternative shot was chosen. The Leper Fields are perhaps little known outside of Torrington, and here I want to summarise what is known about them.



The Leper Fields on the Little Torrington Tithe Map of 1838

The picture above shows the two surviving Leper Fields running from Muxey Lane down to the river Torridge, with the field to the right as the site of earlier fields, now amalgamated. It is interesting that the survivors are J shaped, which is usually taken as a sign that when the fields were ploughed, the plough was partly turned at the end of a furrow producing the bottom of the J before the next furrow was ploughed. The Little Torrington Tithe Map of 1838 shows that there were then seven strip fields and hints that there may have been more, for parcel 992 appears to have lost its northern end and parcels 973, 983 and 986 could well be amalgamations of more strips, and parcel 972 by the river perhaps incorporates the northern ends of 973, 983 and 986. The Tithe Apportionment shows that most of the parcels were under an acre in size, with even parcel 972 only a little over 1.5 acres. For the seven clearly marked strips, there were six owners, with the two strips owned by John Dayman, parcels 984 and 991, not adjoining each other. There were also six different

occupiers with William Handford the only man to have two parcels (parcels 984 and 989). Four of the parcels were described as meadow and the other three were arable. None of the Leper Fields actually had this as part of the name recorded in the Apportionment. In 1992, the County Archaeologist visited the surviving fields and found small quantities of medieval pottery exposed from damage to the hedge-banks caused by livestock. John Allan identified the sherds as being from North Devon ware dating from c 1250 to 1450.

The Apportionment also intriguingly lists four small blocks of land belonging to the Magdalene Lands Charity. These amounted to a little over 17 acres, but were not located next to the Leper Fields.

There are records from 1344 of the foundation of a hospital at Taddiport by Ann Boteler, a daughter of the Earl of Ormonde (the Butlers of Nenagh Co Tipperary and Kilkenny, in Ireland) but the first reference to it as a Leper Hospital is not until 1418. There are other chapels dedicated to St Mary Magdalene in the dioceses of Exeter, and all were related to Leper Hospitals. Its function as a Leper Hospital seems to have survived the dissolution of the chantries in Henry VIII's time and there is a reference in the churchwarden's accounts at Clawton of a payment to the 'hospital of Taddiport', perhaps as a contribution to the upkeep of a parishioner being cared for in the hospital. Whether the surviving church of St Mary Magdalene in Taddiport was the hospital's chapel is not clear and no obvious traces have been found of the hospital. At some time in the eighteenth century the old charity to support the hospital was wound up and the assets divided between Great and Little Torrington, with the Magdalene Lands Charity of the Tithe Survey running the lands in Little Torrington parish. Whether the Leper Fields were property once owned by the Hospital, or whether they were where the inmates or those who looked after them might have worked is not clear.

The surviving fields have been given to Torrington council in order to protect them and a tiny slate plaque has been placed by the gate of one of them.

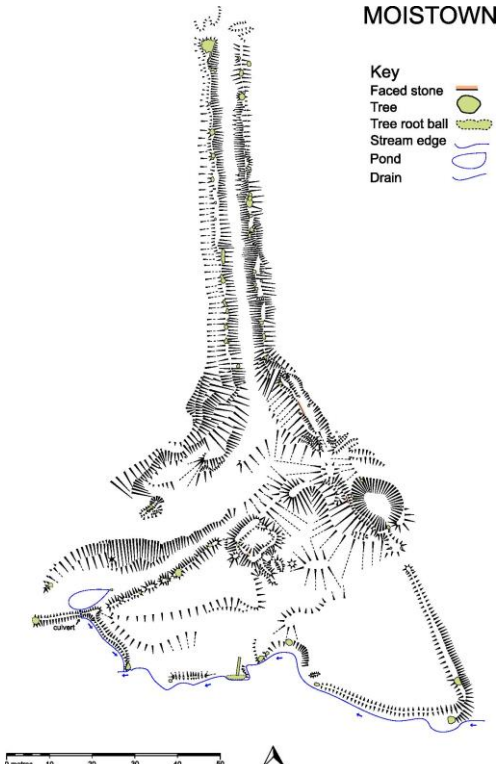
The Moistown Archaeology Project

Janet Daynes of ACE Archaeology Club at Winkleigh has supplied the following report on the group's long-standing project on a deserted settlement in the parish of Broadwoodkelly. Known as Moistown, the site is located at NGR SS6276 0562.

Last Year, 2020, would have been the 13th season of work at Moistown for ACE Archaeology Club, but like most things last year it was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic. We are hoping to restart activities there this year and have tentatively pencilled in some dates for excavation, from the 21st of August to the 5th of September.

The Moistown Archaeology Project started back in 2008 when ACE was invited to train members of Broadwoodkelly History group in earthwork survey techniques. The chosen site at Moistown, part of Pattiland Farm, is large, so it took quite a few years to complete the survey, especially as much spiky undergrowth had to be cleared first. This revealed traces of buildings that appear on the Tithe map.

Off-set survey training in the hollow way.



The completed earth work survey.

Roger Moyes, who was associated with Okehampton Castle owned land in Broadwoodkelly in 1301. We do not known if he and his family lived at Moistown, although the name does rather suggest it.

It is thought that the original holding of Moistown was large and possibly of high status, but in more recent times parcels of land were sold off and the buildings gradually declined. In the 1901 census no one was recorded living at Moistown. A 1946 RAF aerial photograph showed some of the buildings still standing; these have since been demolished.

After the earthwork survey was completed and a project outline written, ACE carried out dowsing and geophysical surveys in preparation to excavate. With much encouragement from the current landowners, we started digging in 2013 and have returned every year since.

What has been found so far? The maps, backed by the earthwork survey, show a range of buildings, set around a courtyard. It would appear that we uncovered the more recent parts of this at the start of the excavation and have been working back in time to the earlier, possible longhouse. Much of the overburden removed is demolition material, this being from two distinct periods; the turn of the 19th/ 20th Century and the 1970s.

In the foreground, the cobbled passageway, the fine cobbles of the parlour are under the ranging poles, the granite hearth is on the left. The base stones of the wall have been robbed out.

The south-east wing, looks to have been added in several stages, the final being a 17th Century parlour and passageway. The passageway allowed access from the cobbled courtyard, to the parlour and rear of the building. Both are cobbled, the passageway with local stone and the parlour with very pretty, small cobbles imported, possibly from North Tawton. The parlour had a granite hearth which had been burnt out, and in the bedding material there was found a piece of 16th Century pottery. This is the only find from a secure context so far! Backing onto this room is the outshut, which has the base of a copper (for heating water) in one corner. The rest of the wing needs more excavation to determine the function of each room.

Just visible in the foreground, the outshut built onto the rear of the parlour, . The copper base is the circular structure by the ranging pole.

The south-east wing and outshut, were demolished at the turn of the 19th/20th Century, and it looks as though all of the decent building stone, granite thresholds and anything of value was removed from the site, presumably to be sold. Very little cob was found here, so either that was reused, or this later part of the building was constructed mainly of stone. It looks as though some of the midden may have been used to level the the site at this time, as industrial and modern pottery was found in the lower level of this context with early medieval, including Saxo/ Norman, in the upper.

The rest of the building complex was demolished during the 1970s, possibly with heavy machinery, and there is little evidence of any building material salvaged this time, just wholesale destruction! Here in the older part of the building, great slabs of cob overlay what was left of the (stone) wall bases, and appears to have been levelled off by machine. This later demolition material was easy to identify because of the presence of plastic, which of course was non-biodegradable then.

Under the ranging poles, the concrete floor with the hearth on the right. In the background, top left, the heavily mortared porch, the back wall to the right.

Digging through demolished cob has been such a 'joy' to our volunteers! But dug through it they have, to reveal what looks like the older part of the building, where there was evidence of mud plaster floors and leaded windows within the demolition material. The wall bases had little mortar in them, except for a porch, which looks to be a later addition. In 2019, I had hoped to find evidence of a shippon, to ascertain if Moistown had been a longhouse, but this was stymied by the discovery of a concrete floor and hearth which had been cobbled together from reused stone, brick and granite, probably in the early/mid 19th Century when the place was divided up and tenanted. I found this very frustrating at the time, thinking that I would have to wait a whole year before we could carry on, but here we are nearly two years later and I can't wait to start work again!

If you want to know more about what we have found at Moistown go to our website: https://acearchaeologyclub.wordpress.com/moistown/

Mapping Archaeology in the Early-Victorian Landscape

Former North Devon resident Martin Ebdon has undertaken the interesting and worthwhile task of converting the tithe maps of c.1840 to modern OS format, He explains himself below.

I devote a lot of my spare time to drawing historical maps. My objective is to make maps that are comparable with the Ordnance Survey's 1:25,000 scale Explorer maps, but which show the landscape not as it is now, but as it was about the year 1840, just before the railways arrived in this county. I am publishing this work as a series of maps which I call the *Devon in 1840* series. So far, they cover northern Devon. They may be purchased from the Martin Ebdon Maps website, https://www.martinebdon.co.uk, or using Amazon.

I mainly use the scale 1:16,000, or about four inches to one mile. This is a large enough scale to show field boundaries and many field-names, while also making it possible to show quite a large area (covering several parishes in full) on one sheet of paper. In addition, I make larger-scale maps of the towns and some villages, and also of landscapes that have special historical interest such as Braunton Great Field and the parkland around Castle Hill House. These more detailed maps are printed on the other side of the sheet.

From an archaeological standpoint, perhaps the greatest interest of maps of the early nineteenth-century landscape is locating the many farmsteads and other minor settlements that were occupied at that time but later abandoned. However, in this article, I want to focus instead on features that went out of use long before 1840. My maps include what cartographers call antiquities, or features in the landscape of archaeological interest. I indicate antiquities by the time-honoured trick of labelling them with a distinctive typeface that evokes 'oldness'. The illustration (Fig. 1) shows the earthwork known as The Beacon, high above the cliffs near Martinhoe, seen here in the context of early nineteenth-century fields. This earthwork is known from excavation by A. Fox and W. Ravenhill in the 1960s to have been a Roman outpost.

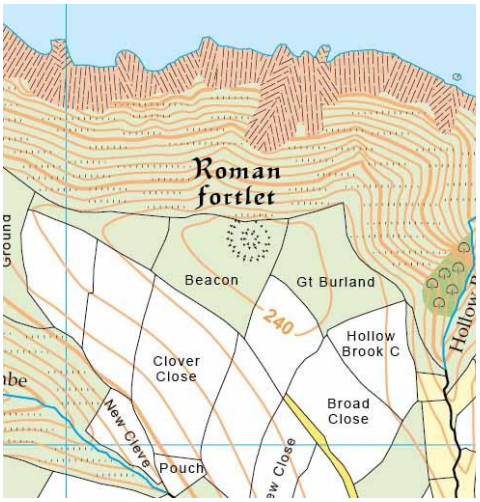


Fig. 1: The Beacon, Martinhoe. Map date 1842.

It is not obvious how to treat archaeology on a map of the landscape in 1840. How old should a feature be for it to be considered an antiquity? For instance, a fort built during the Napoleonic Wars might be labelled as an antiquity on a present-day map, but it would hardly have been treated that way in 1840, when it was not even forty years old. In fact, I have chosen 1651, the end of the Civil War, as a cut-off date: only features older than that may be marked as antiquities. This is one of several rules I have devised for deciding what antiquities to include on the maps.

One of the rules is that antiquities that were entirely destroyed before 1840 are not generally shown. In other words, a feature is shown only if there was something in the landscape that an observer at that time would have seen. Actually, I relax this rule in cases of exceptional interest. Some examples are on my town-map of Barnstaple, which is based on a map made by John Wood in 1843. Barnstaple was formerly a walled town with four gates, but only one of them, the West Gate, was still standing in 1843 (it was demolished in 1852). Nevertheless, I have added antiquity labels to mark the sites formerly occupied by the other three gates. The extract in Fig. 2 shows the site of North Gate.

As far as possible, I try to represent antiquities on the maps in the state they were in around 1840. Again, the guiding principle is that the map should show what an observer at the time would have seen. Of course, that may be very different from the appearance of the site today, and in fact the maps show many earthworks and stone monuments that have now been destroyed.

My challenge, then, has been to list antiquities that were extant in Devon around 1840, with enough information about each site to plot it on a map, appropriately labelled. Unfortunately, for the great majority of antiquities, no record was made until near the end of the nineteenth century, which is four or five decades after the period of interest. This brings us to the problem of sources of evidence. My maps are derived mainly from tithe maps, the large-scale parish maps produced mostly between 1839 and 1842. Tithe maps are an excellent source of information on buildings, roads, field boundaries, and parish boundaries, and the apportionment documents associated with them are a rich source for place-names and details of land use. However, tithe maps are usually a disappointing source for antiquities.

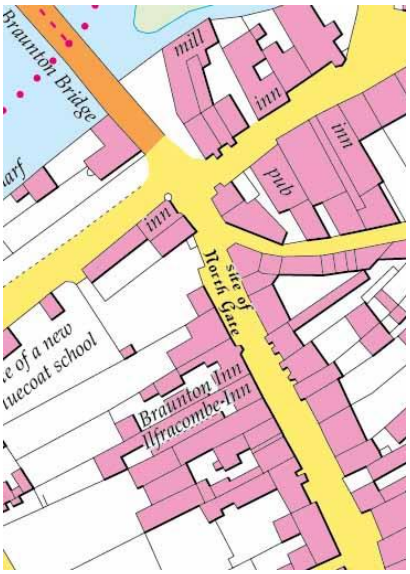


Fig. 2: Site of North Gate, Barnstaple. Map date 1843.

There are a few exceptions. The Braunton tithe map gives the exact position of St Anne's Chapel, isolated among the sand dunes of Braunton Burrows. Described as a ruin by Lysons in 1822, the site is shown on the tithe map as a small rectangle, suggesting that some remains were still visible in 1840, although they disappeared soon afterwards. Another example is on the Lynton tithe map: in the moorland of Lyn Down, the surveyor marked the position of a monolith named Long Stone, and added a remark 'nothing particular here but a stone about 7 feet high'. This must have been the standing stone still present near the site today (Fig. 3), although Lyn Down was enclosed around 1860 and the stone is now in a field and not at its original position. (It is not to be confused with the well-known Long Stone near Chapman Barrows.) But a few exceptions aside, tithe surveyors did not record earthworks or stone monuments on their maps because they were not relevant to the maps' purpose.

The first methodical record of antiquities was made by Ordnance Survey with the publication of their County Series maps at scales 1:10,560 (6 inches to 1 mile) and 1:2500. In north Devon, surveys for the first edition were made in the 1880s. The great majority of the plans of ancient earthworks on my maps have been copied from that source. By ancient earthworks, I mean those features that survive in the landscape only as mounds and ditches, including hillforts and settlement enclosures of Iron Age date, and castles of the motte and bailey type like Holwell Castle near Parracombe. Earthwork plans on County Series maps have sometimes been criticized as the surveyors were not archaeology specialists. For instance, the plan of the Roman fortlet at Martinhoe (Fig. 1) is notably different in shape from the plan made by the excavators in their 1966 report. However, County Series plans are sufficient to convey the size and general form of the monument, which is all that can really be shown on a map at 1:16,000 scale. I also think that an earthwork that was intact in the 1880s would not have changed much since 1840, so it is reasonable to use the same plan on a map of the locality at that date.

Fig. 3: Lyn Down monolith.

County Series maps are also an essential source of information about stone monuments of various kinds, from Neolithic or Bronze Age standing stones to medieval roadside crosses. Those maps are a more problematic source for stone monuments than for earthworks, for two reasons. First, the authenticity of a stone as a prehistoric monument is sometimes questionable, and second, it is not unknown for stones to be moved, so that a monument shown at a particular place on the County Series map might not have been at the same spot in 1840. I have already mentioned the monolith on Lyn Down which is not now at its original position. To make a judgement about whether or not to mark an antiquity on the map, if its status is open to doubt, I have followed professional archaeological assessment of the site in the Historic Environment Record (HER) online databases. These comprehensive inventories, maintained by Devon County Council and by the National Park Authorities for Dartmoor and Exmoor, can be accessed through the Heritage Gateway website.

I should say that although I have made heavy use of County Series maps as source material for antiquities, I have not copied the descriptive labels on those maps, which were sometimes rooted in nineteenth-century amateur archaeology. For example, three sandstone blocks on Witheridge Moor would not be described today as ‘Druidical stones’, as they were on the County Series map of 1889. Ordnance Survey’s treatment of archaeology became more professional after 1920 with the appointment of an Archaeology Officer, although most large-scale map sheets for Devon were not revised until after the Second World War. Incidentally, because their status as prehistoric monoliths is doubtful, I decided against marking those stones on my Witheridge map.

Antiquities have always been at risk of loss, either by outright destruction such as the demolition of a building, or by erosion such as ploughing over an earthwork. No doubt some could be seen in 1840 that were then lost without any record. It follows that no map drawn today of the landscape at that time can give a complete picture of the antiquities that were actually present. There are tantalizing references to stone circles and the like in works by early topographical writers such as Risdon and Lysons (see L. V. Grinsell, *The Archaeology of Exmoor*, 37–49), but the state of those monuments in 1840, if indeed they had ever existed, cannot now be recovered.

Since the Second World War, archaeologists have discovered many sites of interest by searching aerial photographs for soil-marks and crop-marks that reveal buried structures. Often, nothing remarkable can be seen at these sites at ground level. Some sites of this kind might have been actual earthworks in 1840, but I have resisted the temptation to show them on my maps if there is no evidence that an earthwork was extant at that date. To give just one example, on Rowley Down, south of Parracombe, a soil-mark of a rectangular enclosure can be seen clearly on a number of air photographs taken in 1946 and 1947; but a map of Rowley Down made in 1797 does not show anything that corresponds to this enclosure, despite showing remains of some ‘old banks’ in a different part of the moor. Was the feature on the air photographs an upstanding earthwork in 1840? No certainty is possible, and I have generally followed the maxim ‘if in doubt, leave it out’.

Occasionally, there are discoveries of antiquities that are subtle but still visible features in the landscape today. Reports about them can be found by searching the HER online databases. I show these sites on the maps, if there is enough information to depict them with reasonable accuracy at the map's scale. Some of them are not yet on Ordnance Survey maps. One example is a hillfort at Halsdon, to the west of Dolton, which was reported in 1980. Part of this earthwork is in a Devon Wildlife Trust nature reserve and I went to look at it in 2019. Located at the top of a ridge between the River Torridge and a stream, there is a bank and ditch in woodland on the south-west side, and the earthwork is traceable through pasture to the north where it is visible in air photographs. The east side has been lost to road improvement. All the information in Fig. 4 comes from the Dolton tithe map and apportionment, except the earthwork and contour lines. Notice that the field within the hillfort was named Berry Hill at the time. Field-names like Berry Close, Burrow Park and Castle Close often indicate some kind of ancient earthwork (possibly ploughed-out long before the tithe survey), and because of their significance I have made a point of including such names on the maps.

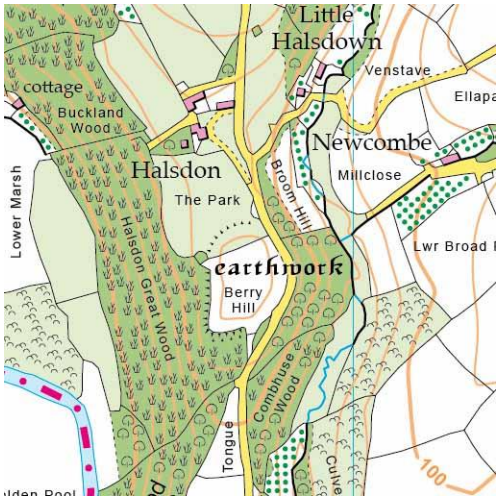


Fig. 4: Halsdon hillfort. Map date 1842.

North Devon and Torridge in the Grey Literature

John Bradbeer and Stephen Pitcher have for some time now been scanning reports submitted by commercial units to the Archaeological Data Service (ADS), reports which constitute 'grey literature'.

What is grey literature? In in its simplest terms grey literature refers to reports produced, usually by commercial archaeological contractors, as part of the planning process. Unlike papers in academic journals, these reports are not anonymously peer-reviewed, although some of the more striking discoveries are eventually written up and published this way. However, the grey literature meets the requirements both of the planning process and of professional bodies such as the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and is internally quality assessed.

Why is grey literature produced?

In roughly its present form, archaeological assessment was made part of the planning process by Planning Policy Guidance 16 issued in 1990 in the aftermath of outcry at the threatened destruction of the remains of the Rose Theatre in London by urban redevelopment. Local planning authorities are required to assess the impact of development upon the historic environment, including archaeology and, where appropriate, to insist upon investigation prior to the granting of planning permission. In deciding upon the appropriate action, the local planning authority will consult the entries in the relevant Historic Environment Record and take advice from the County Archaeological Team. The costs of any work required are to be borne by the developer and the reports produced placed in the public domain, as grey literature. The Planning Practice Guidance, as it now called, has evolved over the last thirty years and the volume of grey literature produced annually has grown substantially. The Archaeological Data Service at the University of York has become a central repository for these reports (https//:archaeologydataservice.ac.uk).

What types of report are produced as grey literature?

A number of different types of investigation are required by the local planning authority and sometimes two or three are initially required and sometimes, when necessary, a site may then see further evaluations, including geophysics and trail trenching and generate further reports. The main types of report commonly featuring in the grey literature are shown in Table 1, with a brief outline of what is entailed.

Type of report	Brief description
Building appraisal	Visual survey of the building – interior and exterior. Some preliminary assessment of the building's construction, character and importance is usually attempted
Building recording	Close survey of the building, with detailed measurements and careful recording of evidence. Historic Building Records required for Listed Buildings. Often some sort of chronology of the building's evolution is attempted
Desk-based assessment	Analysis of relevant maps, documents, academic books and papers for the site and its immediate environs. Classic reference sources tend to be Domesday Book; the Tithe Survey of *c*.1840; the first edition of large scale Ordnance Survey Maps; and aerial photographs
Evaluation	Usually involves trial trenches or pits, with location of these selected because of indications in cartographic, geophysical and aerial photographic evidence or local topography. Sometimes a sampling grid is used to ensure coverage of a larger site. In a few instances a metal detection survey is part of the evaluation.
Geophysics	Earth resistance, gradiometry and magnetometry are the three principal methods used. The geophysical work may be of an entire site or of specific areas identified as of interest from other sources
Impact assessment	This is usually confined to the visual impact of the proposed development upon the archaeology and historic environment. In the case of wind farms, this usually involves mapping the visual field over which the wind farm would be seen. Archaeology would usually be a part of an Environmental Impact Assessment, which has been backed by a European Union Environment Directive but EIA has only been used for a handful of very large developments
Monitoring and recording	Involves a qualified archaeologist being on site whilst work, especially ground work, is carried out as part of the site preparation and building construction. Details are recorded of soil profiles and any finds as this work proceeds.
Walk-over assessment	The site is walked over by archaeologists and details which may merit further investigation are noted. This often follows from Desk-Based Assessments
Watching brief	Very similar to monitoring and recording but is usually employed where there is limited prospect of there being significant archaeology to come to light

Table 1. The various forms of report constituting the grey literature

For the planners, a first step in assessing planning applications for their potential archaeological impact is to consult the Historic Environment Record. This contains brief entries on all sites and finds

with archaeological or historic significance. However, it has to be admitted that this is a reflection of past effort and what is known but not a complete list of all such sites, which could be regarded as potential or unknown. Northern Devon's entries in the Historic Environment Record tend to be less numerous than those from the south of the county, as nineteenth century antiquaries and twentieth century archaeologists were more active in the south. The planners have tended to err on the side of caution and have taken the absence of Historic Environment Records as not implying the absence of potential archaeology, so most applications within or close to the historic core of settlements have an archaeological evaluation as a condition attached. However, the general lack of significant findings following such evaluations in North Devon and Torridge might embolden developers to challenge the imposition of archaeological conditions and equally planners might not wish to be seen to be overly fussy or anti-development. The present system reflects a tentative compromise which could easily be overturned by central government taking a more pro-development stance.

Twenty years of grey literature from Torridge

There were no reports until 2003 and since then 222 reports have been produced, originating in 54 of the 63 parishes within the District, although the larger settlements of Bideford, Great Torrington, Holsworthy and Northam/Appledore/Westward Ho! yielded over half. Possibly the most significant finding from the grey literature was evidence at Winsford Park, west of Bideford, of a prehistoric field system on a completely different alignment from the present fields, which are presumed to have been medieval in origin. Dartmoor and Exmoor have both such systems and on Dartmoor they are known as reeves. It has long been thought that there were equivalent field systems in lowland Devon but until recently there has been little confirmation. Clovelly Dykes is one of the largest and most imposing Iron Age multivallate enclosures in Devon but has seen only limited investigation and so work in 2017-18 that confirmed the existence of further ditches and ramparts south of the A39 is of great interest. Although only a few sherds were found at Bishops Farm Cookbury and Pitt Hill in Shebbear, these were of Romano-British pottery and suggest continuity of settlement at these sites rather than new creations in Saxon times. At Henscott in Bradford parish, work in 2005 found sherds of Trevisker ware, a type of Bronze Age pottery common enough in Cornwall and South Devon but rarely encountered in Northern Devon. At the site of the Old School in Winkleigh, sherds of medieval North Devon ware were found, not unexpected in the village core, but the temper was of granite, not previously encountered in North Devon ware and indicating a new and previously unknown centre of production.

Several iconic structures were the object of Historic Building Surveys, including Tanton's Hotel in Bideford, the Town Hall and Vaughan' s Glove Factory in Great Torrington and Great Potheridge House in Merton. Despite three reports at this latter site, the precise chronology of the evolution of the house remains uncertain. As part of repair and restoration work, two churches have seen tree-ring analysis of the timbers used in their construction. At St Andrew's church in Alwington, the nave gave felling dates of 1401-1426 and the south aisle 1499-1524. At Bradworthy felling dates for timbers from the nave and south transept were 1300-1360. In Bideford at numbers 1-5 Bridge Street, roof timbers gave felling dates over quite a range from c 1570-1620 to c 1670-1720. The report could not be certain whether these were approximate construction dates, or whether work used a mixture of new and re-used timber. Work on the embankment outside Tanton's Hotel in Bideford yielded interesting palaeo-environmental information on the Torridge and a small creek at this site.

Twenty years of grey literature from North Devon

There have been 227 grey literature reports in North Devon District, starting in 2002. Of the 66 parishes within North Devon there were grey literature reports from 53, although most of the parishes saw only one or two reports whereas the six urban settlements of Barnstaple, South Molton, Fremington, Tawstock, Ilfracombe, and Braunton yielded 75, about a third of the total. Of the rural settlements, Brayford produced 10 reports, demonstrating the rich archaeological resource in the

parish but also the significant opportunities offered by the large quarry below Charles. Perhaps given this emphasis on the larger settlements, the actual amount of positive new knowledge generated was rather disappointing, although as several reports make clear, the sites investigated had been redeveloped many times and any archaeology present had been lost, particularly by nineteenth century ground-works and site preparation.

Of the 17 geophysics and excavation reports selected as highlights, 9 provided new information on prehistoric settlement and occupation. Amongst these were a significant group in the Charles area of Brayford and some edge of town sites in Barnstaple, where archaeological investigation in advance of proposed residential development has revealed evidence of much earlier occupation. Four other locations where such evidence was revealed were at the southern end of the route of the Barnstaple Western Bypass, in part of the Fullabrook Down Windfarm site, on a site at the southern edge of South Molton and in a field adjacent to the parish church in Newton Tracey. The last of these sites yielded the suggestion that a late pre-historic enclosure may have subsequently formed part of an early mediaeval barton/church enclosure. Some of these sites also revealed the limitations of developer-led archaeology, where excavation was limited to the footprint or depth of development and opportunities were not taken to widen or deepen the area of excavation, when significant features were discovered.

Three of the reports in Barnstaple also illustrated stages in the development of the town and its industries., whilst reports on the south west edge of Exmoor, in North Molton and Brayford added to knowledge of the iron working industry. A series of historic building surveys added to our knowledge of significant buildings in the area, both in Barnstaple and in rural areas, particularly at Arlington Court.

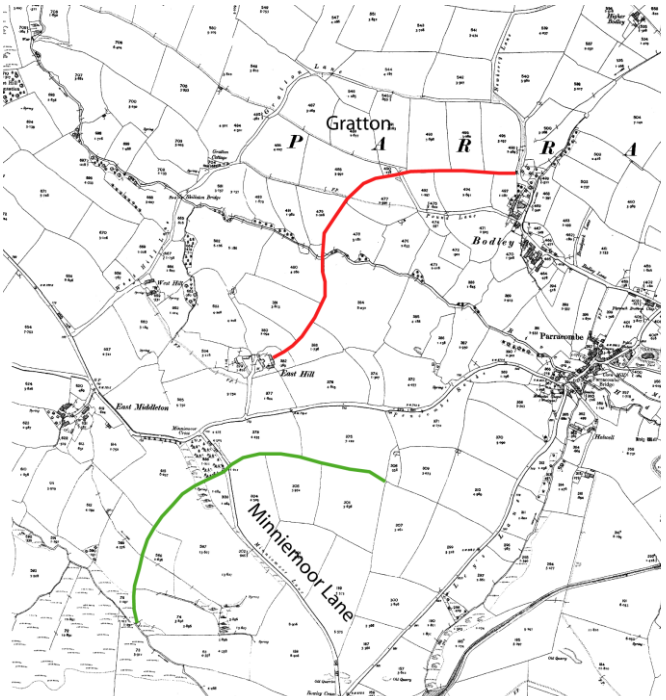
Amongst the other surveys, a significant number took place in, and often at the behest of, the Exmoor National Park Authority, often working in partnership with Historic England, or its predecessor English Heritage. This demonstrates both the rich archaeological resource within the National Park and the strength that having an active archaeological team brings to the investigation of that resource.

The Parracombe Mince: A Discussion of Field Names.

Terry Green

Buried among the field names of Parracombe, as recorded in the Tithe Apportionment of 1839, are examples of the longevity of the early medieval terminology of land management. Until late medieval enclosure, and on top of that, the Parliamentary Inclosures of the 18th and 19th centuries, the distinction between closely managed arable together with meadow land on the one hand and ‘the common’ on the other was deeply embedded in the landscape. The farther we look back into landscape history, the more evident it becomes that settlements and their arable land – their ‘in-by land’ - were islands in a vast sea of open, uncultivated land, generally known in Devon as ‘moor’. Whether settlements were nucleated, as in much of central England from the 8th century, or dispersed, as is still largely the case in the Southwest, some sort of clear demarcation between managed land and the open moor was probably necessary, both to keep grazing animals away from crops and to confirm rights over the resources of the common.

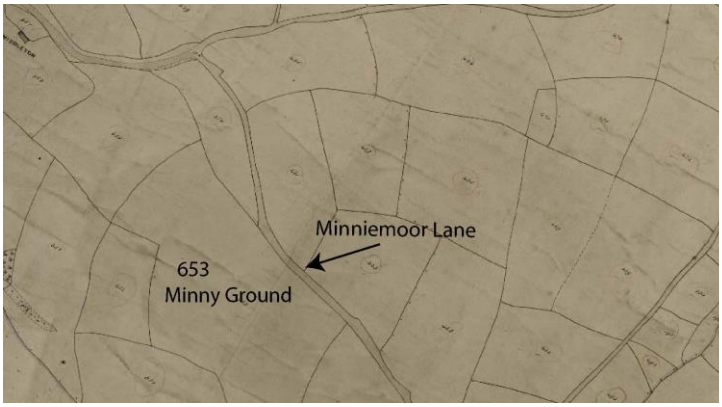
The Anglo-Saxon term for community and by extension for common land was *gemǣnnes*, based on the adjective *(ge)mǣne*, meaning 'common' (compare German *gemein* and *Gemeinde*, respectively 'common' and 'community'). The name of Manaton on the edge of Dartmoor contains a derivitive of *(ge)mǣne,* as does Manadon also on the fringes of Dartmoor, while Manley lies towards the Blackdown Hills, all three places situated on land which, until medieval expansion of settlements and ploughland would have been on open 'moor'. The element also crops up in certain field-names, where communal use is implied. The other term *gemǣnnes* is preserved in Kent and Sussex where areas of the Weald, formerly providing valuable wood-pasture, are known as The Minnis and The Mens respectively. There are probably other instances elsewhere in England.



Extract from the 1905 2nd Edition 25 inch OS map showing the two long boundaries, the 'Minnie' boundary in green and the 'Mince' boundary from West Bodley to East Hill in red.

In this short piece we are concerned with Parracombe, North Devon, lying within Exmoor National Park. To the southwest of the village centre, a lane leading off the A39 is known as Minniemoor Lane leading on to Minniemoor Cross. The lane's course cuts through a long, curving boundary following the eastern edge of a triangular strip of land that looks very much like a stock funnel, suggesting the controlled movement of stock from the moor. Lidar aerial coverage shows the evidence of medieval plough strips both to south and north of the long, curving boundary, so that if the interpretation of the name Minniemoor is correct, then we might propose expansion of arable cultivation onto the moor in the medieval period.

To the north of this area is the hamlet of Bodley where a lane called Pound Lane leads from West Bodley onto the area known as Gratton, crossing another long curving boundary which, on the tithe map of 1839 (and today discernible on lidar coverage), can be seen to run in a sinuous line from Bodley as far as the farm known now as East Hill adjacent to Minniemoor Cross. To the west of this boundary is a field named, in the tithe apportionment, Meana Ground (tithe map number 444), while to the immediate southwest of the point where Pound Lane crosses the boundary, the tithe map shows, lying against the curving boundary, a trapezium-shaped field named, in the tithe apportionment, Mince Ground (tithe map number 289). Adjoining to the southeast is Minces Ground (tithe map number 328). The 'Mince' element is very likely in this context to desend from the Anglo-Saxon *gemǣnnes* just as do the Minnis and the Mens in Kent and Sussex.



Extract from the tithe map of c.1840 showing the long curving boundary, Minniemoor Lane and the field named Minny Ground. Note the break in the long boundary with probable stock-funnel.

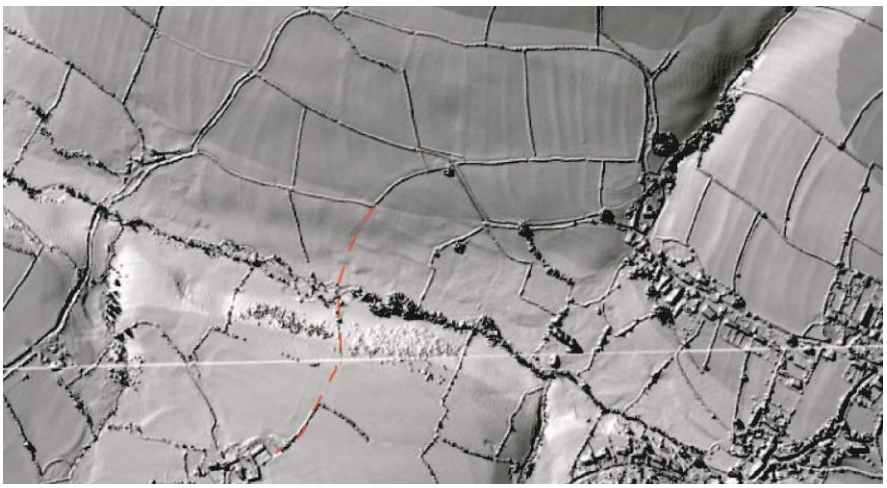
Extract from the tithe map of c.1840 showing the long curving boundary from West Bodley to East Hill.

289: Mince Ground

328: Minces Ground

PL: Pound Lane

Additionally, Pound Lane takes an odd course, leading west from West Bodley, then turning sharply north to follow the edge of a field numbered 329 on the tithe map, but unnamed in the apportionment, before emerging onto the area called Gratton. This field together with field number 328 (Minces Ground) to its south appears to represent a triangle of land which is cut in two by the westward course of Pound Lane. It seems reasonable to suggest that 328 and 329 together were once Minces Ground. One might tentatively suggest that this triangular unit also reflects a former stock funnel from the *gemǣnnes* guiding stock from the moor onto cultivated land. The significance of the name Pound Lane is unclear, but in this immediate context implies the nearby presence of a 'pinfold' or pound for the coralling of stray animals.



Lidar coverage provides evidence of medieval plough strips both south and north of the curving boundary, those on the south more sparse and less regular that those on the north, suggesting a discontinuity. Those on the north inhabit the area named Gratton, and would appear to represent an extension of the arable onto the earlier *gemǣnnes* or common moor.

To conclude, the field names involving the elements *meana, minnie* and *mince* and their location up against long, curving boundaries as well as the name Minnie Moor all point to an early period of land management predating the widespread development and extension of arable in the form of medieval plough strips. The preservation of Anglo-Saxon terminology, particularly the relatively specialised term *gemǣnnes* may suggest developments pre-Conquest, perhaps as early as the 8th or 9th century, but equally the ploughing up of the moor may reflect population growth and the expansion of markets in the 13th and early 14th centuries. The observation that the two curving boundaries do not readily relate to each other topographically may suggest two separate periods of expansion onto the moor. Whatever the truth of it, the persistence of Old English terminology buried in the Parracombe fieldscape is remarkable.

Volunteers wanted!

South West Archaeology are looking for some volunteers to help with some socially distanced pot washing and sample processing at their offices in Pathfields, South Molton if any NDAS members are interested.

Some members have already helped process part of a mostly 17th century assemblage recovered during excavations in Westward Ho! earlier this year. The finds are associated with an abandoned farmstead, which appears to have been very shortly lived, and as such the assemblage is very tightly dated and will prove very useful in understanding North Devon Pottery types from that time. Having ruined the gardens of two members we now hope to be able to provide opportunities for NDAS over the summer to further help process these and perhaps other finds. Depending on uptake we can undertake this on an ad-hoc basis to volunteers convenience or as a series of set days. Please contact Natalie or Sam at South West Archaeology on mail@swarch.net or 01769 573555

TG, with gratitude to all those who have contributed, making it possible to maintain our Society newsletter at a difficult time.