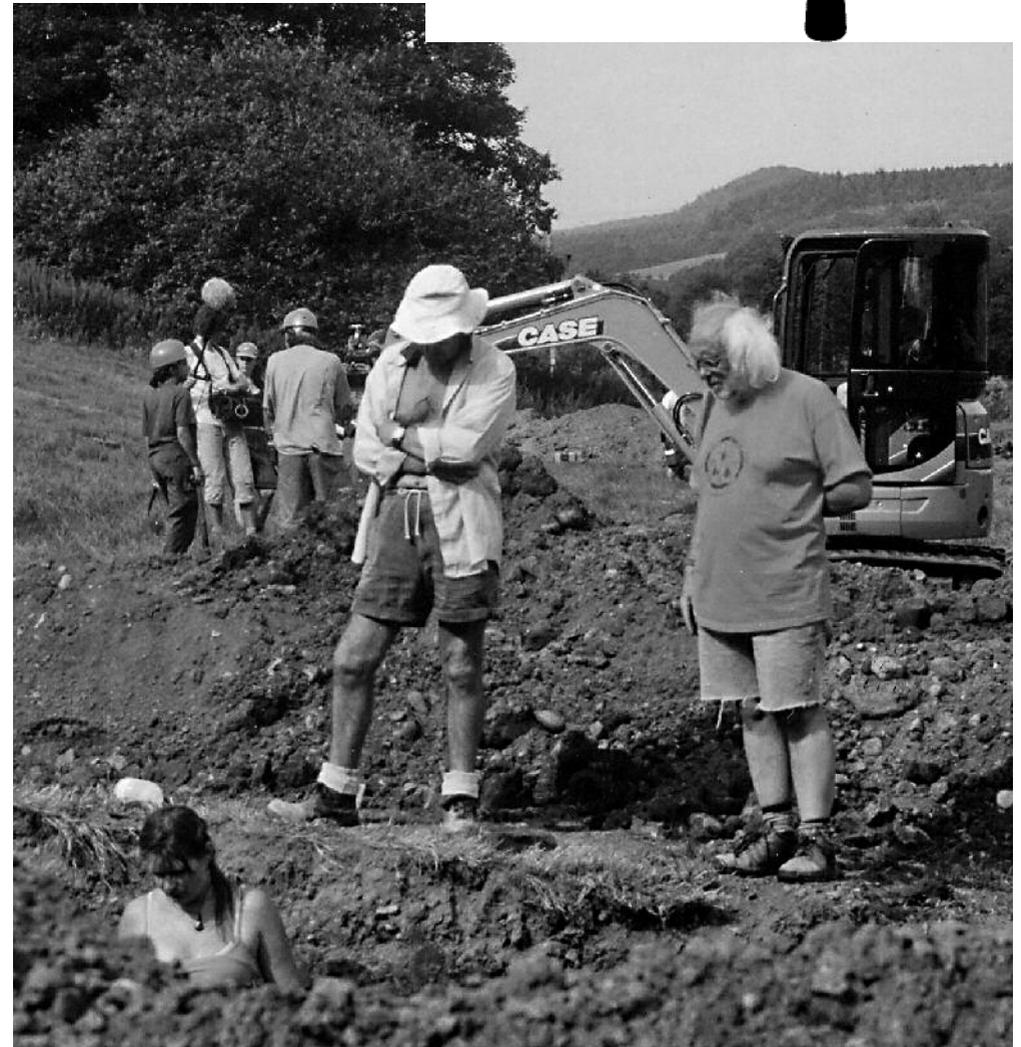


Maureen Wood

We have been very sad to learn of the death of Maureen Wood who has been a member of NDAS for a good 30 years and has served for many years as a committee member. In the 1970s Maureen served on the Barnstaple and North Devon Rescue Archaeology Committee and was involved in the digs in Green Lane, Paiges Lane, Potters Lane and Tully Street. For the Society she has represented continuity and a valuable link with those early days of North Devon archaeology. In recent years Maureen has been associated with the Barnstaple Heritage Centre and her interest in Barnstaple's history has led her to produce books on Barnstaple Fair, the Pannier Market and the railway. She was a delightful lady who will be missed by her family and friends to whom we extend our sympathy. She will of course be greatly missed by this society and as an expression of our appreciation a contribution of £25 has been sent to the Heritage Centre. Members wishing to commemorate Maureen with their own donation should send this to Barnstaple Heritage Centre, Queen Anne's Building, The Strand, Barnstaple.



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Cover Picture: David Parker and Mick Aston considering the contents of a trench.

Useful contacts

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|--|
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| Derry Bryant (NDAS Secretary) 01769 572963 |
| Sally Cotton (South Molton and District Local History Society) 01769 572378 |
| Janet Daynes (ACE Archaeology, Winkleigh and District) 01837 83925 |
| Trevor Dunkerley (Combe Martin Silver Mines Research and Preservation Society) 01271 883833 |
| Jane Green (NDAS Treasurer and Membership Secretary) 01271 866662 |
| Terry Green (NDAS Newsletter) 01271 866662 |
| Collette Hall (NDDC Conservation Officer) 01271 346436 |
| Sean Hawken (Community Landscapes Project) 01392 263851 |
| Deborah Laing-Trengove (Hatherleigh History Group) 01837 810310 |
| Alison Mills (Museums Service) 01271 346747 |
| Jenny Yendall (Tiverton Archaeological Group and South Molton Museum) 01884 255397 |
| Lyn Walmesley (Teign Archaeology Group and Secretary CBA South-West) 01392 432184 |
| Rob Wilson-North (Exmoor National Park Authority Archaeologist) 01398 323665 |
| David Parker (NDAS Projects) 01271 865311 |
| Hazel Parker (NDAS Fund Raising) 01271 321197 |
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| Trevor Dunkerley (Combe Martin Silver Mines Research and Preservation Society) 01271 883833 |

Other Archaeological Bodies:

Devon County Historic Environment Record:
01392 382246
Portable Antiquities Scheme: (RAM Museum Exeter):
01392 665983
Council for British Archaeology (York):
01904 671417
National Sites and Monuments Record (Swindon):
01793 414600
Devon Record Office: 01392 384253
North Devon Local Studies and Record Office: 01271 388607
West Country Studies Library: 01392 384216

Editorial

Shrinkage and Growth

If you study the section headed 'Officers of the Society', you will notice that our once populous committee has suffered some attrition. The reasons are various – including, very sadly, the death of one long-standing member – but the development has been worrying since the Society is supposed to represent the interests of a large number of people spread across the whole of northern Devon. In these circumstances it is important to have a strong committee to present a range of viewpoints and to take well debated decisions. The existing committee has therefore taken the step of co-opting four NDAS members to join their deliberations for the remainder of this year (ie. up to the AGM in April) in order to maintain comprehensive representation. Not having been put to the vote at an AGM, these individuals may be regarded, under clause 4d of the NDAS constitution, as associates invited to serve on the committee. The Society will be invited to vote on their full membership of the committee at the AGM.

The NDAS Committee has invited James Coulter, Stephen Hobbs, Margaret Reed and Judy Parker to join them. James Coulter and Margaret Reed are both well known local historians. James has taken on some of the task of producing the newsletter and Margaret has devoted time to pursuing documentary sources for the Parracombe Project. Stephen Hobbs is a dedicated Hartland historian and archaeologist and Judy Parker has been admirably energetic in publicising the Society's existence and activities throughout the area.

The addition of 'historians' to the committee as opposed to 'archaeologists' makes the point, which has been raised before in this newsletter, that the division between history and archaeology is old-fashioned and outdated; it also begins to address the odd fact that, although many local communities have their historical societies, there

is no overarching historical society for northern Devon, and just as oddly, there is none for Barnstaple or Bideford or Ilfracombe. If you look on the website of the Devon History Society you will find that they list local history groups in the county, but none is north of Chulmleigh or Wembury. The focus is mainly on Exeter, South Devon and Dartmoor, another symptom of the usual Devon divide between north and south. We know however, from the experience of the Local History Days that we held in 2004 and 2005 that there are numerous groups in the northern Devon area beavering away and who would be glad to have a forum where they could exchange ideas and information. It might be objected that there is no virtue in perpetuating a division between north and south in the county, that there already exist county-wide societies to which people are able to subscribe. However, we are most of us aware that north and south Devon have a different culture and demography and that therefore interests differ. NDAS has done a good job over the last five or six years of bringing together people from across northern Devon who share an interest in the region's archaeology. Why not do the same for history? In fact, as has already been said, history and archaeology are fully complementary, so we have no option but to head in this direction.

As to publicity, Judy Parker has done a first class job of pointing out to people in the area that we are here and active. She has put on a roving display of the Society's activities in various libraries and has missed no opportunity to distribute our leaflets to anyone who will take them; this has resulted in a crop of new members and we are grateful to Judy for her efforts. Partly as a result of our raised profile, the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) South-West Division has asked us if we will host the CBA South-West Annual General Meeting in North Devon in April 2007. This is quite a feather in our cap and of

course we should be very happy to do so. No arrangements are as yet finalised, but at present Hartland is proposed as a venue.

Finally, XArch, the Community Archaeology Project based at Exeter University, has already proved its worth in our area. Projects at Hartland and at Brayford and our own project at Six Acre Farm have benefited from the technological input that XArch is able to make available. As has been emphasised before, the aim of this project is to involve local people in their own "backyard" archaeology and to provide financial and technical support so that local projects can develop along lines which produce sound results while encouraging a sense of local ownership. XArch is in the position of providing a conduit between local knowledge and interest and the academic world where detail is added to and may alter the fabric of the broad brush picture of the past that academics construct. XArch continues to merit our support.

Officers of the Society

Chairman:

Terry Green

Vice-Chairman (Acting):

Alistair Miller

Meetings and Correspondence Secretary:

Derry Bryant

Treasurer and Membership Secretary:

Jane Green

The NDAS General Committee:

Representing Members:

Derry Bryant, Malcolm Faulkner, Terry Green, Jane Green, Mary Houldsworth, Marion Hughes, Jonathan Lomas, Alistair Miller, David Parker, Hazel Parker, Chris Preece.

Representing Associated Groups:

June Aiken (Parracombe History and Archaeology Society), Sally Cotton (South Molton Archives), Harry Cramp (Torrington History Society), Deborah Laing-Trengove (Hatherleigh Archaeological Group), David Purnell (ACE Archaeology Winkleigh and District).

Representing Interested Bodies:

Malcolm Prowse (North Devon District Council), Alison Mills (Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon).

CBA AGM

The Council for British Archaeology (CBA) have requested NDAS to host their Annual General Meeting to be held on Saturday 21st April 2007 in Hartland Parish Hall. This is something of a feather in our cap and should be an exceptionally interesting day. The provisional programme follows:

- 09.30 – 10.00 Arrival
- 10.00 – 10.30 CBA AGM
- 10.30 – 11.00 Coffee
- 11.00 – 11.45 Terry Green: *NDAS*
- 11.45 – 12.15 Keith Gardner: *Lundy*
- 12.15 – 13.00 Stephen Hobbs: *Hartland*
- 13.00 – 14.00 Buffet Lunch
- 14.00 – 16.00 Field trip(s) (to be arranged)

Final details will be in the Annual report (Feb/March)

The Saxon Boundaries of Hartland Hundred

Stephen Hobbs

Is it possible, on the basis of documents and features of the landscape, to suggest the boundaries of early land-holdings within Hartland Hundred?

The Hundred of Hartland extended from the north and west coasts of the present parish east as far as Bucks Mills, then south to include Woolfardisworthy, Welcombe, Meddon and Southole. There was also the satellite area of Yarnscombe in the farther south east, which will be excluded from this discussion.

There are few known Saxon charters for this region of North Devon, the closest to Hartland being that for Newton St Petroc, though there are indirect indications of charters for Worthygate, Annery, Orleigh, Thornbury and Braunton. Early reliable evidence of a Hartland charter comes from the will of King Alfred, c.AD 881, in which he bequeathed land identified as Trig (Stratton, Cornwall) and Hartland, amongst other land gifts, to his elder son Edward.

Domesday Book indicates the existence of independent manorial holdings at Meddon, (South) Hole and Milford. These can still be identified within modern land tenures by the claims on the commons and wastes of the manors, and so we can be confident that Meddon, (South) Hole and Milford were always outside the greater land mass of Hartland Manor. It might be argued in addition, that Stoke (St Nectan) was a separate manor, since Gytha, wife of Earl Godwin, was recorded as having granted her manor of Stoke for the support of a group of secular canons.

After 1066 Hartland was a Royal manor, passing subsequently to the Dinham Family. The date at which the manor was transferred to the Dinhams is unknown. It is known however, that between 1160 and 1189 the brothers Geoffrey and Oliver Dinham gave land at Stoke and within the manor of Hartland for the foundation of a

new Augustinian abbey. This act establishes that the Dinham's had control of what can be identified as the Hartland landmass and that such control extended over the lands at Stoke St Nectan. Whether this power of overlord extended to the other manors within Hartland is not known. At the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries the Hartland monastic holding passed intact into the ownership of the Abbot family and has remained a private estate until recent times. During the approximate 300 years that the Dinham held Hartland it was their largest and most important Devon manor in terms of income and supply of produce into the Dinham household housed at Kingskerswill and later Nutwell, both in south Devon.

The Dinham estate papers are interesting in establishing the form of administration used within Hartland. From these it is clear that the Hartland manor was sub-divided into three units: Butterbury, 'Castel' (sic) and Hind-Harton plus the separate Borough of Harton (established c.1290). These three divisions were each administered by a reeve, responsible to a travelling bailiff acting for the Dinham family. As to location, suffice it to indicate that Butterbury was at the south western corner of Hartland, abutting the (South) Hole manor grounds; here aerial photographs indicate a possible habitation and field-system perhaps centred on what is today the hamlet of Hardisworthy. Castel (sic) is the north of the parish from possibly Blegberry in the west past Highford to the east. Although there is some indication of field systems at Blegberry there is no obvious location, as at Hardisworthy, for an administrative centre. The existence of a number of fields with the suffix 'castel' along the central ridge of this area was taken by Chope to suggest the existence of a castle. This remains an open question, as is the location of a primary residence within Hartland for the travelling Dinham

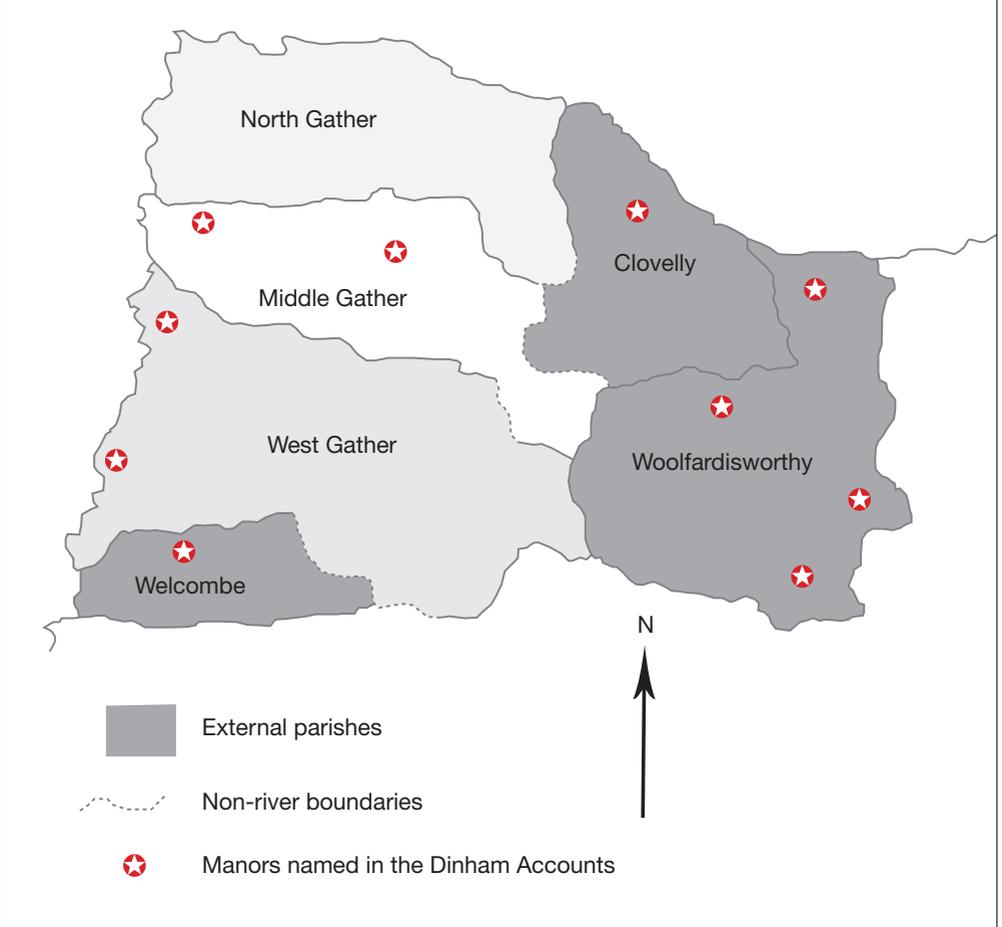
household.

Identifying the administrative divisions of Hartland may not seem important until comparison is made with documents relating to the 'Governors of the Church Goods' (1597-c1660) and a system for the collection of money known as 'the Gathers'. There existed three collectors of the Gathers within regions identified as North, West and Middle. It is possible to plot the areas covered by each of these collection units from the books of account of the collectors (see Fig 1). It is clear from the plot that each Gather essentially used the main river valleys as a boundary, thus we have the Abbey river dividing North and Middle while the Spekes river does the same for West and Middle. The area covered by the Dinham Borough of Harton can similarly be defined as an area running approximately from the present Hartland Mill to Harton Cross and as a ribbon of strip fields along the modern main road.

If the Gathers are to be identified with the Dinham administrative areas, then the division can be projected back into the 12th century. We now have to ask whether pre-Dinham there were areas termed the East Gather and the South Gather. If this was the case, then we might propose that Clovelly and possibly Bucks Mills formed an East Gather and Woolfardisworthy the South Gather, thus encompassing the 'compact' Hundred of Hartland (Fig 1). Welcombe may have been integral to the West Gather as it was not separated from the ecclesiastical parish until later. If that were to be accepted then the identification of these as independent but collective administrative areas could well indicate that they originated as early Saxon charter areas.

Is there support for this in the landscape? Certainly the use of rivers as a boundary element is not uncommon. The work of Della Hook on pre-Conquest charter-bounds of Devon and Cornwall

HARTLAND HUNDRED: The 'Gathers' of Hartland and the External Parishes



indicates that rivers are the most common form of boundary, the largest of which is the Tamar separating Devon and Cornwall. From Fig 1, it can be seen that the small boundary lengths that are not formed by rivers are indeed minor and may have been marked by springs or other features. Within Hartland it is certainly possible to identify a

number of features that are relics of boundaries to such as the Deerpark, The Warren, and to some extent individual hamlets and farmsteads. Similarly the pattern of fields taken from the tithe map, when used in conjunction with aerial photography, is allowing a further reassessment of the area's development.

Documenting Parracombe

Margaret Reed

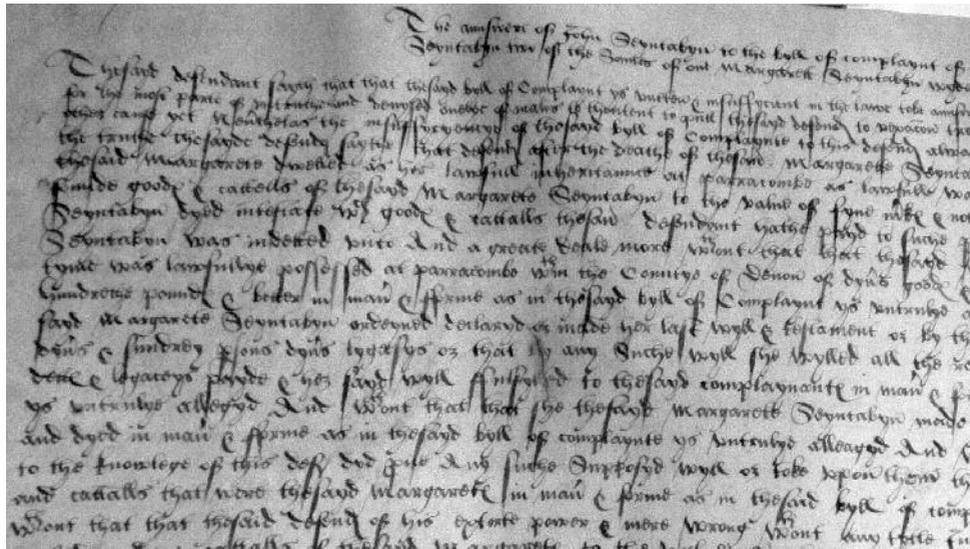
As part of the NDAS Parracombe Project, I was invited to 'do a documentary sweep in local record offices...towards providing a framework of recorded history for Parracombe'. On re-joining the society after an absence of some years I had thought that humble pot washing was likely to be my main contribution, in preference to kneeling in muddy holes. Instead I was offered the exciting task of discovering any records that might assist in tracing the evolution of the parish of Parracombe, and in particular of the landscape history. The important archaeological fieldwork carried out by the Society in the last five years, combined with the enthusiasm and dedication of the members of the Parracombe Archaeology & History Society in researching and publishing *Parracombe and the Heddon Valley – an Unfinished History*, makes my task much easier than starting with a blank canvas. I hope that I can provide some answers to the queries, fill in some of the gaps and maybe add a few extra

pieces of the puzzle along the way.

May I at this point make a plea for any documents or records relevant to Parracombe's past that may be in private hands? I have already been given access to some such papers, and would welcome more if available.

So, what information have I located so far in this quest for relevant documents? Domesday is of course the most likely start, failing a Saxon charter or two that have, so far, not materialised. From the time of the Norman Conquest onwards life in this upland Devon parish can be traced through official records running like a thread through a thousand years, from a time when the parish as such did not exist and much of it was uncultivated heath and moor. The survey of 1086 records three manors or estates, each previously owned by Saxons: Parracombe, Middleton and Rowley. These later grouped together to form the parish as we know it today.

Fourteenth century tax returns based on goods



Part of a 16th century document relating to a dispute at Parracombe (National Archive: Photo Susan Moore)

Investigating a Fulling Mill at Combe Martin

Trevor Dunkerley

In an earlier edition of this journal, we wrote about the research carried out in 2004 to try to determine the presence of a fulling mill (more usually known as a tucking mill in Devon), at the Mine Tenement site in Combe Martin.

Field names of Rack Park (where fullled woven broadcloth was hung and stretched on frames and tenterhooks to dry) were noted above the Mine Tenement site, suggesting the presence of a fulling mill on these warm south-facing slopes.

The leat was traced from the top of Chapel Lane, along Watery Lane, through a deep cutting made through the Devonian shillet at Corner Lane (Plate 1) and across the fields to Mine Tenement; the water supply being constant throughout the year and in plentiful supply. There was evidence from the North Devon Journal of a millpond at Mine Tenement in 1840, when a report noted the drowning of the blacksmith's son. In 1813 a sale notice advertised a 'nearly new iron waterwheel along with all machinery and 100 fathoms of flat rods' suggesting a new wheel had been purchased for an existing mill of some description, to pump water from the mines. The quick sale of this wheel, not long after purchase, suggested that the venture had quickly failed. It is worthy of note that in the 1840's a new mining venture used steam power to raise water from the mines. A lesson from the earlier venture may have been learned.

However, there was no documentary evidence to be found. Records mentioned the lower (Loverings Garage) gristmill and the upper (Pack of Cards) gristmill, both post Domesday. There is also a mention of a water-driven grindstone being out of action through a lack of water, and the possibility of a malt mill somewhere in Combe Martin village. Just one line of evidence for a fulling mill came to light in 2005. The entry simply said '1724, Poyntz to Geo. Ley, all that leat, the fulling mill, cottage and garden'. There

or land indicate how the population gradually increased in numbers and wealth, thus creating the need to bring more land under cultivation. Through Norman, Plantagenet, Tudor and Stuart reigns a number of surveys record names and other details of the inhabitants and the development of the farms. Sheep, which provided the bulk of the population with a living, figured largely in the economy of the parish for centuries. There has been a church in Parracombe for at least eight hundred years, maybe more. The patrons of the living and the rectors they appointed during that time exerted significant influence upon the lives of the inhabitants, especially in the matter of tithes.

In the sixteenth century the records show how Parracombe prepared for the possible arrival of the Spanish. Each male was named and trained with longbow, musket or pike if fit to do so, or if unfit, but with means, was charged with providing the equipment. In the event, no invasion occurred. Other surveys tell us how many fire hearths there were in 1674, how the land was used and what taxes were raised. Wills provide us with an insight into the wealth of some of the local gentry and which properties they owned.

In the nineteenth century we have the tithe maps and awards and the census returns. In the twentieth century, perhaps the biggest changes of all in lifestyles occurred. Communications have evolved over the years, from track-ways to turnpikes, railways and new roads suited to modern traffic. Living memory is invaluable in this respect, much of it found in the works of Arthur Smyth, J F Chanter, local newspapers and *An Unfinished History*. The list of sources is endless and varied; all are important in adding to the history of Parracombe and its evolution into the twenty-first century and there is so much still to be discovered. I hope to be equal to the challenge.



Clive, Michelle and Mary at work. Note the depth of overburden, the layers of sediment at the bottom of the section and the position of the buttress.

wastes. The whole assemblage had already offered considerable insight into the life of the 19th century miner and blacksmith in Combe Martin and the decision to hand excavate was justified.

The complex stratigraphy posed its own challenge to the excavators in ensuring that the details were accurately drawn and recorded. What

had started as a 2x2m test pit was quickly becoming a large open area excavation. By mid summer it was agreed that we should 'take stock' and discussions with the owners of the site led to the agreement that, because of the historical and archaeological importance of the discoveries to the village of Combe Martin, the excavation should proceed as an open area excavation over a number of seasons, with the foundations and millpond preserved as a historical feature.

What has been exciting is that the primary fills of the millpond, which was initially clay lined, have revealed a few sherds of late Saxon pottery, and many sherds of North Devon medieval wares. At the close of this season's work we are no nearer to understanding why there should be internal buttresses to a millpond wall. Are they the buttresses to a substantial mill building that abutted the millpond?

What is now clear is that at some date prior to the 19th century, a very large working platform was cut into the hillside and the complex of buildings and millpond was constructed. All this occurred before recorded mining at the site; the waste from this activity subsequently covered almost completely that which had gone before.

Finally, I must pay tribute to those who have assisted at the site during 2006. As amateurs interested in archaeology their enthusiasm and hard work has been exceptional and it has been a very happy community team who have learned so much as the excavation has progressed. They are: Mary (Flowa) Houldsworth, Clive Comer, Michelle Thomas, Roger Burton and our dumper driver Mitch Warburton, with occasional assistance from Jim Knights, Richard Boudier, and Judy and Dave for the research and flotation work. Well done to you all!

Needless to say, we hope to return to the site in the spring of 2007. You are welcome to join us in this exciting Community Archaeology Project.

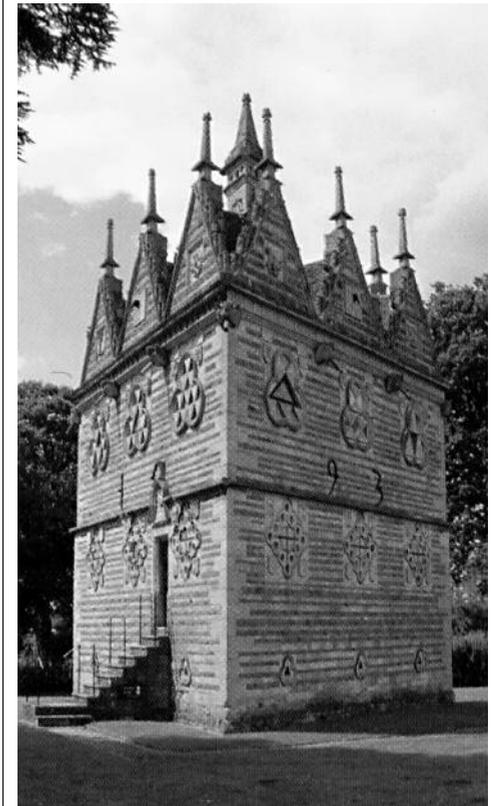
Rabbit Warrens

David Parker

The name 'warren' is frequently found among the field names of the nineteenth century tithe apportionments, as is also the word 'coney' in one form or another. Most medieval manors had their 'coneygar' and in this coastal area, the ends of promontories such as Baggly Point and Morteheo were often set aside as warrens.

The expression 'rabbit warren' would to many people conjure up a picture of a dozen or so holes in a hedge bank but in former times these were usually quite large well- managed enterprises and an important factor in the economy. Probably the earliest documented record is dated 1135 when Drakes Island at Plymouth was granted to Plympton Priory *cum cuniculi* meaning 'with the rabbits'. Incidentally, until the eighteenth century, the term 'rabbit' was confined to the young; 'coney' being the name for the adults. Commercial warrens were in existence by the thirteenth century, the rabbits being valued as much for their fur as well as for their meat. Over the following centuries, along with fishponds and dovescotes, warrens became widespread across the country, with manors, mansions and monasteries joining in the production. In some areas with the progress of time alternative sources of meat became available and rabbits lost some of their importance and became the source of meat for the poor. In other regions they retained their value and as late as the 1920's on an estate in Norfolk, thirty warreners were employed taking 120,000 rabbits each year. Many warrens were quite large in area being enclosed by walls or banks over fifteen kilometres in length to keep the rabbits in and poachers and predators out.

In many warrens the rabbits were provided with mounds of earth to make their burrowing activities easier, these are called 'pillow mounds' and could be of considerable size ranging from less than six metres up to a hundred and fifty metres in length, most being four to six metres



Sir Thomas Tresham's unique three-sided lodge at Rushton, Northamptonshire. (Photo: T.Williamson)

wide and one meter high. Some archaeologists have even excavated pillow mounds in the belief that they were prehistoric structures.

Like other occupations, rabbit warrening developed its own jargon. The surname Warren and the place name Warren Farm being the most obvious. The use of 'coney' is common, there being three Coney Parks in Combe Martin. A 'coneygarth' was an earlier name for the rabbit enclosure near a manor house and there is or was a 'conagars' near the Alverdiscott road leading

Time Team Dig at Dotton

Hazel Parker

out of Bideford. There are many ways of spelling 'burrow' and it is possible that the many Borough Roads etc were connected with rabbit warrening. Clapper or Clapere is an interesting title and appears to be a nursery where the breeding does and young were kept for extra care and protection.

The warreners who cared for and eventually killed the rabbits were often provided with purpose-built accommodation; sometimes quite up-market. One at Thetford in Norfolk was built in the early fifteenth century and is now in the care of English Heritage. Another at Rushton in Northamptonshire has all the appearances of a folly (see photo). It was in fact built in the 1590s by Sir Thomas Tresham who apparently did not agree with the religious changes of the time and as an act of defiance built his warrener's lodge with a triangular plan to emphasise his commitment to the Trinity and the Tridentine mass. There appears to have been some rivalry between landowners to provide fancy accommodation for their warreners, which also illustrates the importance of rabbits at the time.

Have a look around at field and street names in your area as they could give clues to past uses. A valuable source of information is the Shire archaeology publication *The Archaeology of Rabbit Warrens*. I am greatly indebted to the author Dr. Tom Williams for allowing most of the above information to be extracted from his book.

NDAS volunteers were invited to assist at a Time Team dig held early in July at the site of Dotton Mill in East Devon. The aim of the dig was to answer various questions including 'how old was the mill that was demolished in 1968' and 'was there an earlier mill elsewhere on the leat?'

The Devon County SMR (now HER) records that the mill was operational until 1946 and was demolished in 1968. When the record was compiled in 1980 the leat at the site was still traceable from the weir, but by the time it was amended in 2001 no trace of mill or leat was visible. It is thought that it was a grist mill (ie. a mill for grinding grain), which was constructed of tarred brick with either an over-shot or breast-shot wheel (an over-shot wheel is turned by the force of water falling on paddles at the top, whereas a breast-shot wheel is turned by the force of water acting on the paddles around the horizontal). Attached to the mill was the miller's cottage.

Time Team had been contacted by Laura Whittock, who had done a lot of research at the site to compile an A' level essay. Laura had built up a sequence of construction and demolition of the complex of ten buildings associated with the mill at various times and, although the population of the hamlet never exceeded more than five families, it did have its own church, indicating a stable community.

Recorded in the Domesday Book, the mill site now belongs to Clinton Estates. In Domesday Book it was recorded as belonging to Baldwin, the Sheriff of Devon. It was then passed on to the Cistercian monks from Dunkeswell Abbey, then to the Duke family of Otterton. It later went into the hands of the Rolle Family and William Farrant took up the tenancy of the mill c.1640; it passed through three generations of his family. After this the Stokes family took over as millers, with the Carter family occupying the mill for much of the



Dotton Mill in the 1920s.

19th century. Mr Lethbridge then ran the mill with the Creed family taking over the roll of millers in the dilapidated building upon his death in 1936. The mill was last used in 1946 and was demolished in 1968 because it was considered unsafe.

Mary Holdsworth, Pat Fishleigh and I arrived at the site on Day One and were introduced to Jon Willers, the researcher for Time Team. We were to be pot washers. By the early afternoon we still had no pottery to wash, so we were shown around the site. Trench One was dug on the site of the known mill, with Phil Harding as trench supervisor. This would be the main site for the three days; however a small trench (Trench Two) was opened on the suspected line of the leat. Mary and I were soon in there; having been asked to dig we were in quicker than you could say "I'll get my trowel"! A stone revetment had been uncovered, dating it to the medieval period, so at around 4pm it was decided that a scene should be shot, and it would be the one that ended Day One on the programme.

Day Two saw Dave and Judy Parker and June Aiken arrive as pot washers, along with Mary and myself as diggers. It was very hot and dusty, so the trenches were surrounded by bottles of water and sun block. A lot of pottery had been discovered on the site, with John Allen on hand to examine it. All of it was medieval, with occasional pieces of North Devon Ware and Somerset Slip Ware. I was in Trench Four for the day, digging with Matt, Brigid and Helen from Time Team. The trench was opened as the ground penetrating radar had shown some anomalies, which could indicate a pre-existing mill, as well as a tailrace. Another trench had also been opened, which was on the site of the miller's cottage. A lovely area of terracotta coloured square tiles was uncovered, all of which were intact and none were chipped; they were going to be removed to see what they covered. After lunch it was all systems go and in the afternoon there was a lot of excitement in Trench One as a fully intact grinding stone had been uncovered. Would an older mill be proved to have existed in Trench Four? What could the



David Parker and Mick Aston considering the contents of a trench.

millstone tell us? Could the miller's cottage provide us with any dates? Tomorrow would reveal all.

The final day arrived and it was the hottest so far. Again Mary and I arrived to dig and Derry Bryant, Brian Hummerston and Malcolm Faulkner were on hand to do the pot washing. As yesterday, the drone of mechanical diggers could be heard as we descended the lane to the site. It was 9.10am and there was an excited buzz. Mick Aston was discussing with Helen and Tim Taylor what the plan would be for the day regarding Trench Four. They decided that the trench needed to be extended, with an area within the trench dug deeper to investigate the leat. Mary and I worked in this trench for the morning, with Derry multi-tasking - pot washing and helping us out.

After lunch I was set to work in the miller's cottage trench. Mary was put to work with Phil Harding in Trench One and stayed there for the afternoon's filming. This trench revealed another



Happy pot washers Judy, Mary, David and June.

whole grinding stone, which again was set in the ground very close to the one previously discovered.

By the end of Day Three, the leat had been confirmed and various samples had been sent off for carbon dating.

All of the results and findings of the dig will be shown when the program is aired January-March 2007.

Six Acre Farm, Lynton: Update

Mary Houldsworth

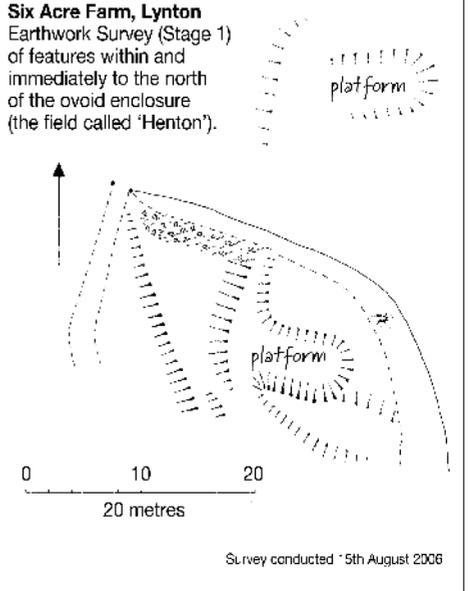
In the Autumn 2005 edition of the newsletter we wrote about a developing interest in Six Acre Farm between Parracombe and Lynton. We reported that an initial visit had shown us what appeared to be a building platform inside an ovoid enclosure bounded by a corn-ditch. Medieval pottery had been found and the name of the field, 'Heanton' recorded in the tithe apportionment, suggested a settlement site. Since that first visit a number of surveys have been carried out. Mary Houldsworth writes:

Since I first visited Six Acre Farm to photograph the corn ditch for an 'A' level archaeology project, Elizabeth and John Rodwell have given their permission for NDAS members to undertake surveys. Before we were able to answer the question: 'to dig or not to dig and where?'—resistivity and magnetometry surveys were needed, in order to provide data on which to base decisions.

On a wonderfully warm day in June, two teams enjoyed learning how to set out and complete resistivity surveys. The first 20x20 meter square surveyed, included the platform inside the enclosure. Here the survey identified a rectangular feature characterized by high resistance with an area of low resistance inside it. This corresponded well to the visible platform. The survey was extended to take in what appeared to be another platform near the gate into the next field and we went on to survey this field as well. However, the results when processed failed to show anything obviously significant.

While one team was mastering the geophysical survey, the other team took to the hills to survey field boundaries. This turned up another corn-ditch, and in one of the boundaries, a large stone-lined sheep-creep. (These features are quite rare and hard to explain – they enable sheep to wriggle through to the next field, but why??) The field boundary survey continued in

Six Acre Farm, Lynton Earthwork Survey (Stage 1) of features within and immediately to the north of the ovoid enclosure (the field called 'Heanton').



The initial results of the earthwork survey. We are confident of the platform to the south; the one to the north becomes more likely with each survey.

July, which would have completed the twenty-two fields surrounding the enclosure, had not one team had problems map-reading! So, if any excellent geographer is free to join the teams before winter arrives, please ring!

In August on a very chilly day, an earthwork survey was conducted by Rob Wilson-North, while the rest of us looked on and learnt how it's done. Using a plane-table and an alidade, a sighting device used to determine or measure directions and angles in the landscape, we were together able to record the building platform and another possible platform in the field to the north. We hope to complete this survey before next spring.

The team returned in September to continue resistivity survey in the field to the north of the enclosure, aiming to concentrate on the possible



A sheep-creep at Six Acre Farm. What are they actually for?

second platform. Strimming off the thistles made it all look more promising, and when the survey data had been processed, the possibility of a second building outside the enclosure became stronger.

Finally in late October Sean Hawken of XArch (the Community Archaeology Project of Exeter University) carried out a training day to conduct a magnetometry survey. The nature of the ground made this difficult, but the preliminary results do suggest something of interest in the second platform area. They did not however, give any indication of a hearth anywhere, which would have been good for dating purposes.

When all the surveys have been completed, the Projects Group will discuss the findings and present plans for future work to the Committee.

The interest of this site is that it appears to represent an abandoned medieval settlement in an area for which we have corresponding medieval documentary material. The documentation relates to a dispute over grazing rights in a period (13th century) when traditional



Learning to use the alidade.

grazing land was being eaten into by the plough. It was a period of settlement shift and expansion. Evidence of something more extensive than just a single building together with the field name 'Henton' might in fact suggest that this is the original site of Caffyns Heanton which is now on the other side of the valley. Ed.

North Devon Sgraffito

Mike Palmer

I am a recent NDAS member; a mechanical engineer by profession with no formal archaeological training but just a keen eye, lots of enthusiasm and a passion for all local archaeology and especially seventeenth century pottery. I am presently working on four sites, the first of which is Pickards Down on both sides of the large hill above Whiddon Valley next to the reservoir. My original motive for researching this site was in hopes of finding some evidence of Romano British occupation. Thus far, no such evidence has come to light but instead, lots of seventeenth century sgraffito pottery sherds, all of which appear to have been made locally at the castle mound site (Photo 1). From their wide distribution it was clear that they were midden scatter, probably from the bottom of the hill. The site had been suggested by Alison Grant in her book *North Devon Pottery: the seventeenth century* as a possible source for galena lead glaze. There is a disused lead mine on the site (NGR 578330) and a shaft (NGR 578332) last worked



Sgraffito sherds from Whiddon Valley site

in 1869. During the 1650's Alexander Horwood was the landowner. He was a rich merchant and mayor of Barnstaple and the pottery finds date from early to late seventeenth century.

My second site is at West Ashford near Limekiln Lane. I first went there on a hunch to look for more local sgraffito and it paid off. Again, from the distribution pattern, it was clear that they were midden scatter, probably from the top



Pottery finds from Taw River site.

Catching them Young

Terry Green

of the field. The nearby farmhouse was built on the site of an old manor house, which could account for their presence. There are lots of lumps and bumps in the top of the field and according to the landowner, these are the remnants of a row of three sixteenth or seventeenth century cottages and an old well. The bottom of the field is very sandy and shell-strewn from a time when the river Taw was much higher up the shoreline. Also, a right of way existed across the bottom of the field before the current road was built.

The third site is on private land at East the Water, Bideford. This site is different from the other two as the sgraffito finds are wasters from a presently unknown pottery. It is not yet clear whether these were dumped on site or from one of Bideford's known potteries or from an unknown kiln nearby. A lot more research will be required to determine which is correct.

My fourth site is the biggest of all: the River Taw. I have had some fantastic finds of seventeenth century and earlier pottery from the river which came to light mainly because of the building work on the new Barnstaple bridge which changed the course of the river slightly. (Photo 2)

My future plans are to do more original field studies on as many sites as possible having sgraffito pottery sherds in the Barnstaple area. I feel this project does have merit as some of the rim shapes and many of the designs and patterns found have not, to my knowledge, been recorded elsewhere. All my finds including sgraffito, clay pipes and seventeenth century plain ware, have been recorded and some photographed by Barnstaple Museum for which I must thank Ruth Spires and also Alison Mills for her expert advice. As yet, little is known about the seventeenth century Barnstaple potters but hopefully my research will shed more light on their history and that of Barnstaple.

In June I was asked to talk to children at Northam Primary School about archaeology. I assumed at first that the children would be in Year 6 or at least Year 5 and therefore old enough to tackle a few abstract concepts: I didn't want to implant any idea that archaeology was about treasure seeking, but rather was a way of learning about people and life in the distant past. I was surprised to find therefore, that I was being asked to address five and six year olds. Clearly I hadn't read up Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum!

It was explained to me by the teacher, Ann Joyce, that the class had been talking about dinosaurs and fossils - they had even learnt the word palaeontologist! They had also talked about early humans living in caves and had made their own cave in a corner of the classroom. In line with the current teaching of history, they had discussed how we can know anything about the past and had come up with the concept of archaeologist. They wanted to meet one!

So on 8th June I turned up at Northam and, after tea and biscuits and a little orientation from Mrs Joyce, I was introduced to the class. I'm over 6 feet tall and they were very small. With them seated on the floor in a semi-circle, the size difference was even greater, so to avoid them straining to look up at me, I spent most of the time down on one knee.

The idea I wanted to get across was that basically archaeologists take dead people's rubbish and try to work out how they lived. So I took in a Tesco's bag of Coke cans, crisp packets, chocolate wrappers, old light bulbs, etc. and, producing them one by one, asked the children what we could know about the people who left this rubbish behind them. They had no problem with this, and once we'd got through a barrage of contributions about favourite crisps and the need not to eat too much chocolate, we moved

An Ecclesiastical Spot at Frithelstock

James Coulter



The Northam multiperiod dig!

on to the next stage where I dropped a plate on the floor and produced sherds of late 20th century pottery. This brought further contributions about domestic incidents, but led quite nicely into discussing what might happen to broken pottery and how it might end up in the ground.

We moved on to the class sand tray which had been salted with a selection of ceramic bits and pieces from Iron Age (NOT from North Devon!) to Roman to medieval to post-medieval to modern plus a few bones, teeth and buttons. Trowels were handed out to volunteers and time was now spent on a somewhat haphazard dig (no stratigraphy) during which one child after another gained the limelight by holding up a find for inspection. At each discovery I announced an approximate age for the find and gathered from the exclamations that someone had made a good job of developing a sense of historical time in the young minds (or they just enjoyed going ooohh!)

I don't know whether I succeeded in developing an understanding of archaeology, whether there might be any future Phil Hardings or even Barry Cunliffes in Northam, but we all enjoyed it.

About two miles west of Torrington stands the ruined remains of Frithelstock priory, one of the very few such of the seventeenth or thereabouts monastic houses which existed within the county before the Dissolution. Founded in 1229 as a daughter house of Hartland Abbey, the canons of Frithelstock in 1351 became involved in a somewhat comical dispute with John Grandisson the diocesan bishop of Exeter when it came to his notice that they had built a chapel in a nearby wood called Waddycleve dedicated to Mary the Virgin in which they had placed an altar and an image. In breach of canon law they had neglected to have the chapel licensed and consecrated by the bishop and moreover it was alleged that having become a place of popular pilgrimage, unorthodox religious rites being practiced there were more than somewhat idolatrous. In November 1351, Grandisson wrote to the rural dean of Hartland and the vicars of neighbouring parishes demanding that the chapel building and all its contents should be destroyed on pain of excommunication. In their reply, the rural dean and his colleagues confirmed that the image and the altar had been removed and that the building was standing empty but that the canons would be willing to destroy it if required. This seemingly reasonable response brought a wrathful reply from the bishop demanding that the building be destroyed forthwith and the prior to appear before a commission of enquiry to explain his disobedience. A brief response from the rural dean informed the bishop that his orders had been carried out which at first glance would appear to be the end of the story—but not quite yet.

In the latter 1700s, Jeremiah Mills, dean of Exeter, sent a questionnaire to all the parishes within the diocese requesting information about many things including the presence of chapels.

Englands Past for Everyone:

Victoria County History Exmoor Project Update. Anne Todd



From March - June 2006 the EPE volunteers were divided into three projects; Historical Farm Buildings, Deserted Farmsteads and a Green Lanes Project. Training sessions were organised to enable the volunteers to produce outlined descriptions and surveys, use documentary sources, digital cameras and navigational GPS, and input the survey information into a database. Further training will involve archaeological field survey and excavation procedures to be carried out sometime in November.

Historic Farm Buildings: Eighteen farmsteads have been surveyed in Somerset ranging in size and condition, but all full of character. The survey has included the measuring of 138 farm buildings, 310 doorways, 188 windows, 46 other types of opening, and 14 associated features including ponds, walls, banks etc. We now have a list of farmsteads in the Devon areas of Molland,



Volunteers recording a green lane near Withypool.

The entry for Frithelstock contains the following note:

On a Tenement called Waddecleve, Part of ye Priory Lands, is a Dwelling House which goes by ye name of ye Chappell, near a Mile from ye Priory. Its Make shows it to have been a chappell.

In 1929 the local historian R. Pearce Chope, quoting the vicar of Frithelstock, reported that the dwelling house previously known as Waddycleve was now known as Mount Pleasant. It still exists and is to be found at Ordnance Survey grid reference SS 476 193.

It is interesting to speculate why the canons and local clergy appear to have conspired to deceive the bishop. North Devon was a remote place in the fourteenth century far from the power centre of Exeter and such places tend to inspire strong local loyalties. Besides, the generous donations of pilgrims to the chapel of Mary at Waddycleve had made it into a nice little earner until Henry VIII put a stop to all that.

On a carved bench end in the parish church at Frithelstock there is an amusing relic of the contest between the bishop and the prior where they are shown putting out their tongues at each other.

Twitchen, East & West Ansty and these surveys will be carried out over the next few months.

Deserted Farmsteads: Two groups of volunteers—one based in the Devon Records Office and one group based in the Somerset Records Office have undertaken the task of map-regression and the use of other documentary resources to ascertain all the deserted farmsteads and cottages in the Devon areas as mentioned above. We have recently started to survey these desertions, so far completing three with plenty more to do. This work will carry on until March 2007.

Green Lanes – Volunteers have surveyed 21 green lanes in the Withypool area, most of which are in extremely good condition and show little signs of damage from recreational vehicles users, horse riders and cyclists. These volunteers have so far recorded the dimensions of a variety of hedge

boundaries, different surface conditions and taken photographs of any characteristics. We hope to carry this survey on until March 2007.

To keep the volunteers updated, a meeting has been organised for March 20th at the South Molton Museum, with guest speakers from London, Bristol and Exmoor EPE staff.



Volunteers recording at Broford Farm, Dulverton.



Volunteers recording at Prescott Desertion at Exford

Two NDAS Summer Walks

Terry Green



The group standing in one of the ditches of Clovelly Dykes. Note the height of the bank on the left.

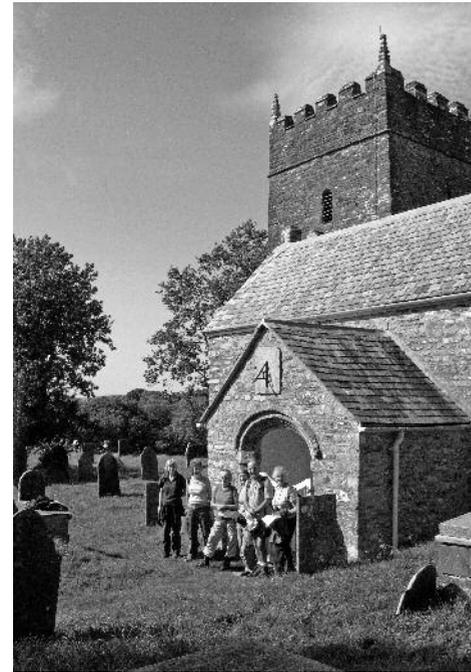
During the summer NDAS members enjoyed two archaeological walks (both of which were announced in the Spring 2006 newsletter.) The first, a walk round Clovelly Dykes took place on 18th June and the second, an archaeological walk round Parracombe, took place on 9th September.

The visit to Clovelly Dykes had been arranged by Derry Bryant and was led by Cressida Wootton from the Devon County Archaeological Service (or, as it is now to be known, the Historic Environment Service or HES). Fifteen members of NDAS and the Hartland Historical Society turned up in the yard of East Dyke Farm on a rather grey and damp afternoon, and were led off by a rather goose-pimpled Cressida who had left Exeter in high summer weather.

In the Spring newsletter we wrote about the

archaeology of Clovelly Dykes, but it is not until you visit that you realise the scale of the work. This is a truly massive earthwork built to impress. The inner enclosures are set apart by huge banks and ditches dug from basically level ground without the benefit of natural topography to lessen the work. The photograph of the group standing in the ditch gives some idea, but the true ditch bottom is still a long way below our feet. The earthworks in the outer enclosure are less impressive, amounting to little more than Devon hedge-banks, and there exists the possibility that these in fact originate as the baulks between medieval cultivation strips. On the other hand, existing earth banks may have been exploited by medieval cultivators.

By the time the group arrived in the central



At the door of St Petrock's Church in Parracombe.

enclosure, the weather had brightened up and it was pleasant to sit down and speculate. Ideas were thrown around, some sound, some less so. But what became clear as we looked thoughtfully about us was that there are platforms in the central enclosure which would repay geophysical investigation. One of these days perhaps?

The September walk at Parracombe was less well attended, but the weather was perfect and we had a good day. Starting at Higher Bodley, we visited Beacon Castle and descended past Killington to Bumsley Mill. On the now apparently featureless hillside below the "castle" we became aware of low earthworks and could trace small enclosures of what appears to be a relict field-system. Descending through woodland to Bumsley Mill we came across a different kind of

archaeology: initials and emblems carved into the bark of beech trees by servicemen camped nearby during World War 2, the graffiti now grown out, but a visible memorial nevertheless. From Bumsley we walked up hill and across fields to Bodley, where we ate our sandwiches in Julia Holtom's garden. Next we visited Holwell Castle, wondering yet again why this Norman motte and bailey is there at all. Finally we made our way over the defunct railway line to the old church of St Petrock, where we enjoyed the un-Victorianised charm of the interior and paused for a group photo. The original intention had been to go on to Holworthy, but we had spent too long probing and discussing as we went, so time was against any continuation. From the church we returned to the cars by a deep and shady track past Heddon Hall, the former parsonage and original "priest-town" or in its Parracombe version "Prison" (as in Prisonford – there was never a prison here!) With a few fresh ideas on Parracombe's archaeology buzzing around, we ended the day in bright sunshine as it had begun.

Adverts to boost Income

As you have probably noticed, the newsletter now contains some small adverts which help towards printing costs. The cost for a ¼ page advert in one issue is £7.50, and for ½ page is £15.00.

If you would like to place an advert yourself, or could approach a local business for sponsorship, please let the Newsletter Editor know on 01271 866662.

Every little helps!

Explore North Devon, a Community Heritage Project

Tim Wormleighton

An innovative Internet-based resource that will allow communities in northern Devon to collect and research information about their local heritage and present it to a global audience has received an award of £50,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project, called Explore North Devon, is a partnership between Devon County Council archives and coast and countryside services, North Devon and Torridge District Councils museums service, The National Archives and community groups in Bratton Fleming, Hartland, Morteohoe, Torrington and Winkleigh. It is being funded as part of the *Archives 4 All* phase of the popular *Access to Archives* programme, which offers a searchable database www.a2a.org.uk of historical records collections from over 400 repositories across the country.

The project will provide opportunities for local

people to contribute content to a digital community archive and become involved in research and data collection work in their area. Partnership funding of an additional £12,000 has been contributed by the Northern Devon Coast and Countryside Service to carry out landscape interpretation projects in the communities lying within the North Devon Area of Outstanding Beauty. Most of the participating community groups have existing collections of photographs, documents, objects and oral history recordings and these will be incorporated into the resource alongside the newly created digital content.

Events to launch the Explore North Devon project will be held in each of the five participating communities over the coming weeks. Once the necessary computer equipment and Internet connections have been installed in village halls or other community venues, the recording work will begin in earnest. The project funding lasts until March 2008.

Devon County Council Executive Member for Culture, Councillor Sheila Hobden, comments: 'We are delighted to receive this award from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It will enable us to support a number of rural communities to develop their own community archive of information that is important to them and provide the means to allow them to share their discoveries with the wider world. By doing this, we hope to promote both a sense of local identity and sustainable tourism through informed enjoyment of a much-visited part of the world'.

HOLIDAY CHALET Bucks Cross, North Devon

2 Bed chalet (sleeps 4) on holiday park.
Glorious sea views of Bideford Bay from chalet.
4 miles from Clovelly, on coastal footpath.
30 mins to surfing beaches.

Lounge/diner, kitchen area, bath/shower,
1 double 1 twin bedroom. Large sun deck with
panoramic view of sea: Lundy, Saunton, Croyde.

Heating, linen, electricity included.
TV/DVD/microwave.

Park facilities (April to October) inc 2 pools,
bar, restaurant, takeaway, tennis, entertainment,
shop, childrens' entertainment

Also available off season – great base
for walking/fishing/golfing holidays.
Enquire for details.

Contact: Mrs D.Bryant 01769 572963

Email: derrybryant@hotmail.com

Dates for Your Diary

North Devon Archaeological Society:

Wednesday 6th December: The NDAS annual dinner. This year's dinner will be at the Royal and Fortescue Hotel in Barnstaple at 7.30pm. (Contact: Marion Hughes 01271 374738)

Monday 15th January: Pilton Community College, Chaddiford Lane, Barnstaple, 7.30 pm: *Aspects of Hartland: in Pursuit of St Nectan:* Stephen Hobbs.

Monday 19th February: Pilton Community College, Chaddiford Lane, Barnstaple, 7.30 pm: *Black and White: Culm Mining and Lime Burning in North Devon:* James Coulter.

Monday 2nd April: North Devon Archaeological Society AGM, Pilton Community College, Chaddiford Lane, Barnstaple, 7.00 pm.

Monday 16th April: Pilton Community College, Chaddiford Lane, Barnstaple, 7.30 pm: *To be or not to be ... scheduled?* Nick Russell of English Heritage.

Saturday 21st April: CBA AGM: Hartland Parish Hall. 09.30 – 16.00 (see notice)

May: Myrtle Ternstrom, an expert on the archaeology of Lundy, has offered to lead a walk for us on Lundy in May. (Details in annual report in Feb/March.)

Devon Archaeological Society:

All DAS winter meetings take place at 8.00 pm at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Queen Street Exeter, unless otherwise indicated. Meetings are free and open to non-members. For further details contact Pamela Wootton 01392 275332.

Wednesday 6th December: *Dating Causewayed Enclosures: Neolithic Hembury and the South-West:* Dr Frances Healey.

Thursday 18th January: *The Site of Rathgall:* Prof. Barry Rafferty (Joint event with the Prehistoric Society.)

Thursday 15th February: *The Cob Building Tradition in Devon:* Peter Child.

Tuesday 13th March: *The Roman Aqueduct at Dorchester,* Bill Putnam.

ACE Archaeology, Winkleigh:

Saturday 2nd December: at Winkleigh Community Centre: *Flint Recognition.*

(Contact Janet Daynes and Gordon Fisher on 01837 83925)