

**SURVEY OF RADWORTHY FARMSTEAD AND AN  
EARTHWORK ENCLOSURE**  
Longstone Landscape Community Archaeology Project

**PROJECT REPORT**

By Hazel Riley



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Produced for the Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership with funding  
from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Exmoor National Park Authority and the  
Malcolm MacEwen Trust

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OASIS PROJECT NO 215572

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

EH English Heritage

ENPA Exmoor National Park Authority

GPS Global Positioning System

LLCAP Longstone Landscapes Community Archaeology Project

NMP National Mapping Programme

NMR National Monuments Record

OSGB36 Ordnance Survey National grid

OSTN02 Ordnance Survey transformation parameters for conversion of WGS84 coordinates to the Ordnance Survey National Grid coordinates

RCHME Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England

RICS Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

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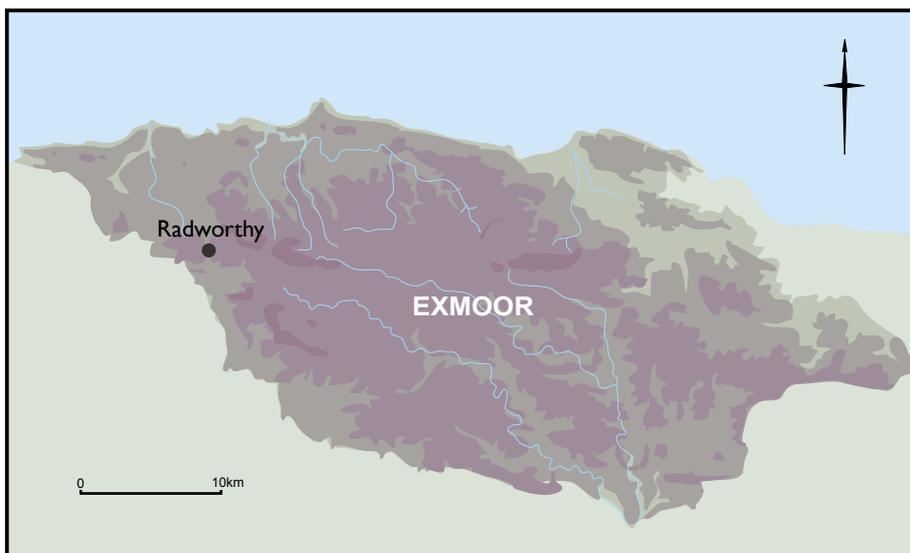


Fig 1 Location map

## ABSTRACT

The remains of a post-medieval building associated with an extensive relict field system have been recorded by volunteers for the Longstone Landscapes Community Archaeology Project. Documentary research and field survey has suggested that a medieval settlement may have existed elsewhere at Radworthy and several platforms or enclosures may indicate the site of this settlement.

## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

County: Devon

District: North Devon

Parish: Challacombe

Exmoor HER: MDE 10873

## INTRODUCTION

A large scale survey of the remains of the farmstead at Radworthy was undertaken as part of the Longstone Landscape Community Archaeology Project. This is a project which aims to research, record and more fully understand the moorland archaeology of Challacombe Common and is being undertaken by Parracombe Archaeology and History Society, the residents of Challacombe and Parracombe, North Devon Archaeological Society, the Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership Scheme and Exmoor National Park. This survey and report was commissioned by the Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership Scheme for the Longstone Landscape Community Archaeology Project ([www.heartofexmoor.org.uk](http://www.heartofexmoor.org.uk)).

## Location, topography and geology

The farmstead at Radworthy lies at the eastern edge of an extensive relict field system which occupies most of a small spur between the two headwater tributary streams of the River Bray, some 2km north of the village of Challacombe, on the western side of

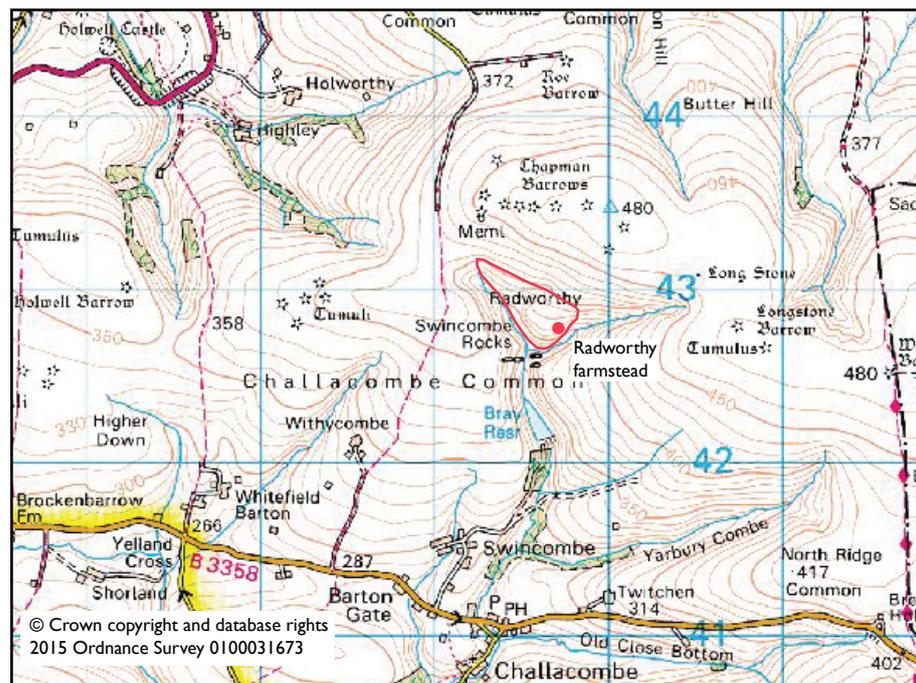


Fig 2 Survey location and topography

Exmoor National Park (Fig 1). The fields are laid out on the south facing slopes of the south side of Challacombe Common, between c 440 and 350m OD. The farmstead lies at SS 6990 4283 (Fig 2). The underlying bedrock consists of Combe Martin Slates of the Devonian period ([www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk)).

## PREVIOUS WORK

The field system was mapped from air photographs as part of the Exmoor NMP project (Hegarty and Toms 2009) and the farmstead was recorded as part of the RCHME's survey of Exmoor National Park (Exmoor HER MDE 10873; Riley and Wilson-North 2001). Terry Green has undertaken documentary research into the history of Radworthy and the LLCAP carried out a survey of the field system (Green 2015).

## HISTORY

Radworthy was a Domesday manor; although there is some doubt as to whether this refers to Radworthy in Challacombe parish, the subject of this study, or the land at North and South Radworthy in the parish of North Molton. If Radworthy in Challacombe was the Domesday manor, then the infields of the relict field system correspond roughly to the one virgate of ploughland recorded for the manor in Domesday. The name Radworthy is recorded in 1198 and 1242. By the early 14<sup>th</sup> century Challacombe was held by the Raleigh family; following a marriage in 1402 the Raleigh estates became part of the Chichester possessions and remained so until

they were passed to the Fortescues in 1768. Lord Fortescue is recorded as the owner of Radworthy in the tithe survey of 1840 (Green 2015). The legal wranglings of James Boevey often throw light on the history of the commons around the Royal Forest of Exmoor. In 1687 Jeffrey Lock stated that he had, in right of his wife, a quarter of Radworthy, in all 35 acres, in the parish of Challacombe Raleigh. He stated again in 1691 that he had



Fig 3 (left) Extract from the OS 1804 map Barnstaple (bl.uk)

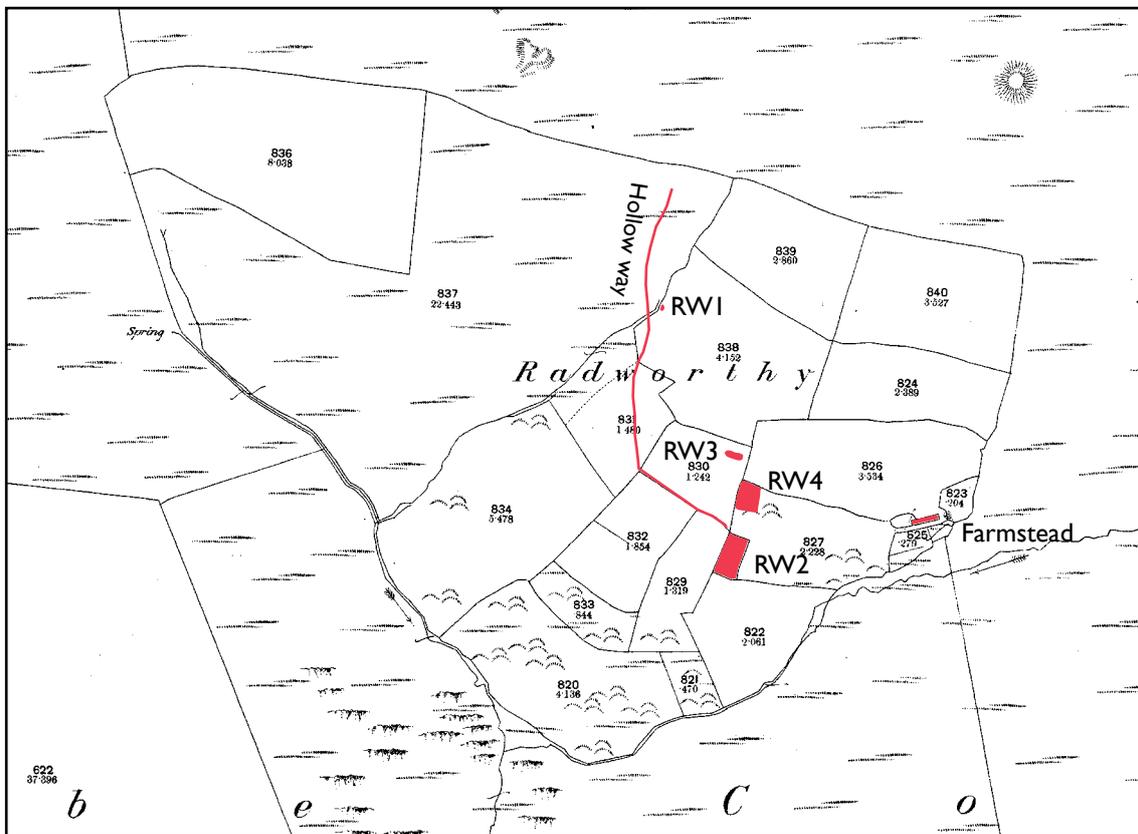


Fig 4 (above left) Extract from the Challacombe tithe map 1840 (Reproduced with the kind permission of Devon Archives and Local Studies Service)

right of common for sheep without number on Challacombe Common, in right of his one quarter of a tenement called Radworthy (MacDermot 1973, 369-370; 375).

The lease on Radworthy was granted to John Slader in 1740 and the document includes a plan which defines an area of 35 acres which seems to equate to the infields of the relict field system. John Slader was the leasee and tenant of Radworthy in 1780. John Gammon became the tenant in 1803, he took over the lease in 1806, then it returned to John Slader with William Harris as tenant. In 1826 the lease passed to William Dovell who was also the tenant, then the lease passed to Lord Fortescue in 1827. By the time of the tithe survey in 1840 William Crang was the tenant (Green 2015). Radworthy was uninhabited at the time of the 1841 census but in 1851 it was the home of John Harris, a farmworker, his wife, a flax spinner and their five children (Burton 1989, 26). The OS map of 1804 shows that the farmstead was in roughly the same place as the ruins which exist today; some of the field boundaries are evident and it does seem that the northern boundary of the holding included the outfields which are not mapped on the tithe map (Figs 3 and 4). The tithe map shows the enclosures of the infield and also indicates how one of the large barrows on Challacombe Common has been used as a marker for the eastern side of the holding, and that it was known as Radworthy Barrow at this time (Fig 4). The first edition map of 1889 depicts the holding with the farmstead, several small enclosures around that building, the enclosures of the infield with an outfield divided into two on its NW side. The name Radworthy is given to the holding (Fig 5).

Fig 5 Extract from OS 1st edition map 1889 with location of farmstead and other features



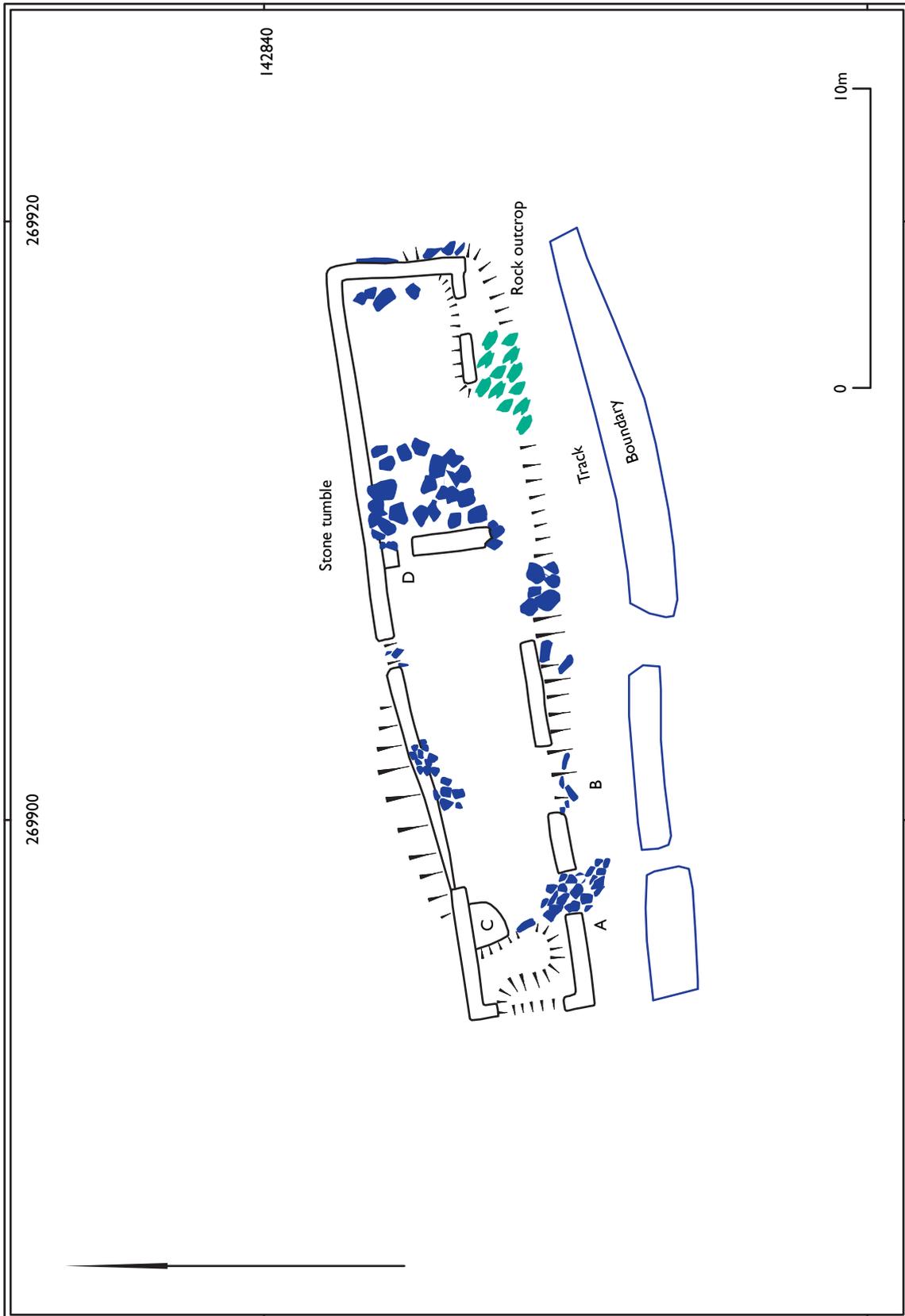


Fig 6 Plan of the remains of the farmstead at Radworthy (1:200)

## THE SURVEY

The fieldwork was carried out during May 2015. Control points were fixed by survey grade GPS. The farmstead remains were recorded using graphical methods at a scale of 1:100; the earthwork enclosure was recorded at a scale of 1:200 using graphical methods at a scale of 1:200. Figure 6 reproduces the farmstead plan at 1:200 scale and Figure 19 shows the earthwork enclosure at 1:200 scale. A photographic survey of the farmstead remains was undertaken.

The GPS-derived geodetic WGS84 coordinates were transformed to the Ordnance Survey National Grid (OSGB36) using the Ordnance Survey's grid transformation (OSTN02) in Leica's GPS post-processing software. Observation times were based on those recommended by the OS and the RICS in order to obtain accurate heighting information (OS 2010; RICS 2010).

### Archive arrangements

A CD with copies of the report and the photographic survey has been deposited with the Exmoor HER.

## DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION

### The farmstead

The remains of a long, narrow rectangular building stand on a level platform. The building is oriented SW/NE and has overall internal measurements of 24.5m SW/NE by 3-4m NW/SE (Fig 6; Front cover). The walls are built of local shillet or slate slabs and are 0.6m wide. They stand to a height of c 0.4-0.5m high on the south side. On the north side, where the building is cut into the slope of the hillside, the walls are up to 0.9m high in places (Figs 7 & 8). A few fragments of brick were noted on the site during the survey. The building is divided into two rooms. The western room is 15m long and is 3m wide at the west end and up to 4m wide at the east end. A fragment of lime mortar or plaster was found on the north wall. The west end has been damaged by a large beech branch and the south wall is fragmentary with stone tumble making interpretation difficult, but possible entrance gaps can be seen (Fig 6 A,B; Fig 9). The west end of this room may have contained a fireplace and chimney, with perhaps the remains of a bread oven in the NW end (Fig 6, C; Figs 10 & 11).

*Fig 7 Detail of south wall (Terry Green)*



*Fig 8 Detail of north wall (Terry Green)*



The eastern room is 8.6m long and 3.4m wide, the dividing wall is 0.6m wide and up to 0.75m high. A possible gap or opening was noted at the north end (Fig 6, D; Figs 12 & 13). The south wall is in a ruinous state and no obvious openings can be seen; a rock outcrop has dictated the layout of this side of the building (Figs 6 & 12). The farmstead is surrounded by several small enclosures; the west end of the building cuts into the end of one of these, suggesting that this part of the building may be later than the enclosure (Fig 5). The farmstead fronts onto a narrow track which leads out into the fields with steep garden plots below it to the south; to the north of the farmstead a terraced path runs from the NE corner of the building to the fields (Figs 14 & 15).



*Fig 9 (left) Possible entrance gap A (Terry Green)*

*Fig 10 (above left) ? Fireplace and bread oven at west end of western room (Terry Green)*

*Fig 11 (above right) Detail of ? bread oven (Terry Green)*

*Fig 12 (below left) The eastern room (Terry Green)*

*Fig 13 (below right) Detail of the internal wall (Terry Green)*



### The platforms and enclosures

Four enclosures and platforms were noted during the course of the LLCAP survey work (Fig 5, RW1-4). A well defined, sub-rectangular platform (RW1) lies on the eastern edge of the hollow way which runs from Challacombe Common through the relict fields as it turns north to run up the west edge of the infields. This is 4.5m NW/SE, 3m NE/SW wide and terraced into the slope by 1m (Fig 16). This is probably a level platform for a building, most likely associated with agriculture at Radworthy in the medieval or post-medieval period.

A rectangular enclosure (RW2) lies in the corner of a field some 175m to the SW of the farmstead at Radworthy. The enclosure is 37m long, 18m wide, with a level interior, and is defined by substantial earthen banks. This enclosure is marked on the tithe map and is named as a 'Garden.' The hollow way noted above runs along the NW side of this enclosure (Fig 17). The enclosure was in use in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as a garden plot; its level interior suggests it could have been occupied by buildings or structures associated with agriculture and subsistence, such as peat and log stacks, hay ricks, barns or other outbuildings.

A small sub-rectangular platform (RW3) lies some 178m NW of the farmstead at Radworthy. It is 11m long, 6.5 m wide and terraced into the hillside by 0.8m with a front scarp c 0.7m high (Fig 18). This feature is not marked on the tithe or 1<sup>st</sup> edition maps. It may have been occupied by a small building associated with agriculture or

Fig 14 (left) Track in front of farmstead and steep garden plots below (Terry Green)



Fig 15 (below left) Terraced path behind the farmstead (Hazel Riley)

Fig 16 (below right) Platform RW1 by the hollow way in the relict field system (Hazel Riley)



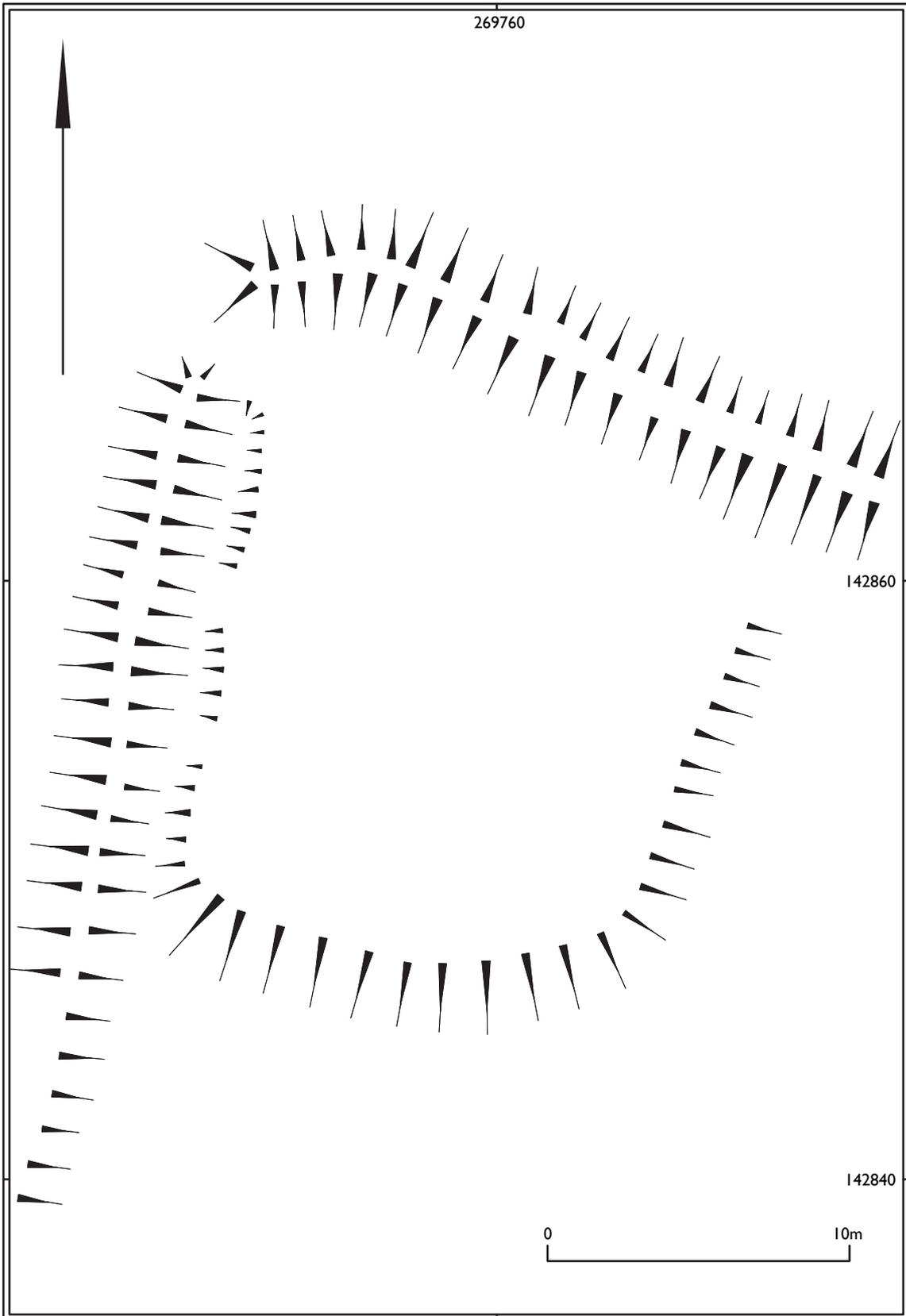


Fig 19 Plan of the square enclosure RW4 west of Radworthy farmstead

subsistence; on the other hand several irregular areas to the north of this may be small quarry scoops or other disturbances and the area requires further investigation.

Some 150m to the NW of the farmstead is a square enclosure (RW4), 16m NW/SE by 16m NE/SW, defined by substantial scarps some 0.4m high, with a gently sloping interior (Fig 19). The enclosure lies in the NW corner of one of the infields of the relict field system. The smoothed nature of the earthworks contrasts with the well-defined field boundaries, together with the vestiges of the west side of the enclosure by the field bank, suggest that the enclosure is earlier than the field boundaries (Figs 19 and 20). The enclosure may have been occupied by buildings or structures associated with agriculture and subsistence, such as peat and log stacks, hay ricks, barns or other outbuildings.

## CONCLUSIONS

The building remains at Radworthy probably date from the later post-medieval period: the width of the walls and the location of the building in a rather awkward location at the edge of the field system, with little space for a barn or other outbuildings both suggest this. The size and plan of the building suggest that this was a two-roomed dwelling house, perhaps single storey with space in the roof for extra sleeping accommodation. The 1851 Census shows that a family of seven lived here.



*Fig 17 (top left) Rectangular enclosure RW2 SW of the farmstead at Radworthy (Hazel Riley)*



*Fig 18 (top right) Keith and Julia standing on the north and west sides of platform RW3 to the NW of Radworthy farmstead (Hazel Riley)*



*Fig 20 (right) Keith and Jenny are standing on the south side of the square enclosure RW4; field boundary on the right (Hazel Riley)*

The lack of agricultural buildings associated with this building is perhaps explained by the point noted by Terry Green (2015) that the tenants of Radworthy in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were, generally, not the people who actually farmed the land.

The documentary evidence suggests that there was most likely a settlement here from as early as the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD, which probably continued to be used in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. The farmstead remains at Radworthy may occupy the site of the medieval farmstead, but further work needs to be done on the sites of the platforms and enclosures (RW1-4) to fully understand the location and nature of any medieval settlement at Radworthy.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Terry Green and volunteers from the LLCAP undertook the fieldwork and carried out the photographic survey of the farmstead remains. The landowner allowed access to the site. Terry Green supplied copies of his work on the history of Radworthy and the relict field system surveys.

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## **SITE GAZETTEER**

Exmoor HER MDE 10873 Location: 269900, 142830

Type: FARMSTEAD

Period: POST MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: The remains of a long, narrow rectangular building stand on a level platform at the east edge of the relict field system at Radworthy. The building is oriented SW/NE and has overall internal measurements of 24.5m SW/NE by 3-4m NW/SE. The walls are built of local shillet or slate slabs which are 0.6m wide. They stand to a height of c 0.4-0.5m high on the south side, and on the north side, where the building is cut into the slope of the hillside, the walls are up to 0.9m high in places. The building is divided into two rooms. The western room is 15m long and is 3m wide at the west end and up to 4m wide at the east end. The chimney and fireplace probably occupied the west end of this room and the remains of a possible bread oven were noted. The eastern room is 8.6m long and 3.4m wide. The dividing wall is 0.6m wide and stands up to 0.75m high. This is the remains of a small dwelling house. It probably dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century and was occupied by a family of seven in 1851.

References: 10873a\_NE\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873b\_NW\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873c\_NW\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873d\_N\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873e\_W\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873f\_W\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873g\_N\_26MAY15\_HRILEY;

10873h\_N\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873j\_N\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873k\_E\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873l\_SW\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; 10873m\_E\_26MAY15\_HRILEY

RW1 Location: 269694, 143026

Type: BUILDING PLATFORM

Period: MEDIEVAL; POST MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A well defined, sub-rectangular platform lies on the eastern edge of the hollow way which runs from Challacombe Common through the relict fields as it turns north to run up the west edge of the infields. This is 4.5m NW/SE, 3m NE/SW wide and terraced into the slope by 1m. This is probably a level platform for a building, most likely associated with agriculture at Radworthy in the medieval or post medieval period.

References: RW1\_NE\_26MAY15\_HRILEY

RW2 Location: 269741, 142806

Type: ENCLOSURE

Period: POST MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A rectangular enclosure lies in the corner of a field some 175m to the SW of the farmstead at Radworthy. The enclosure is 37m long, 18m wide, with a level interior, and is defined by substantial earthen banks. This enclosure is marked on the tithe map and is named as a 'Garden.' The hollow way which leads from Challacombe Common through the relict fields runs along the NW side of this enclosure. The enclosure was in use in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as a garden plot; its level interior suggests it could have been occupied by buildings or structures associated with agriculture and subsistence, such as peat and log stacks, hay ricks, barns or other outbuildings.

References: RW2\_S\_26MAY15\_HRILEY

RW3 Location: 269742, 143891

Type: PLATFORM

Period: MEDIEVAL; POST MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A small sub-rectangular platform lies some 178m NW of the farmstead at Radworthy. It is 11m long, 6.5m wide and terraced into the hillside by 0.8m with a front scarp c 0.7m high. This feature is not marked on the tithe or 1<sup>st</sup> edition maps. It may have been occupied by a small building associated with agriculture or subsistence; on the other hand several irregular areas to the north of this may be small quarry scoops or other disturbances and the area requires further investigation.

References: RW3\_NE\_26MAY15\_HRILEY

RW4 Location: 269760, 142860

Type: ENCLOSURE

Period: MEDIEVAL, POST MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A square enclosure, 16m NW/SE by 16m NE/SW, defined by substantial scarps some 0.4m high, with a gently sloping interior, lies in the NW corner of one of the infields of the relict field system. The smoothed nature of the earthworks, which contrasts with the well defined field boundaries, together with the vestiges of the west side of the enclosure by the field bank, suggest that the enclosure

is earlier than the field boundaries. The enclosure may have been occupied by buildings or structures associated with agriculture and subsistence, such as peat and log stacks, hay ricks, barns or other outbuildings.

References: RW3\_NE\_26MAY15\_HRILEY; RW4b\_S\_26MAY15\_HRILEY

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