



**OAKFORD
ARCHAEOLOGY**

**Archaeological monitoring at Wallon,
Drewsteignton,
Devon**



on behalf of
Kate Steed and Peter Robinson

Report No. 14-06

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OAKFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological Groundworks and Historic Buildings

44 Hazel Road,
Wonford
Exeter,
Devon
EX2 6HN
tel: 07834 591406
e-mail: info@oakfordarch.co.uk
web: www.oakfordarch.co.uk

AUTHOR

MFR Steinmetzer

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1. INTRODUCTION

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out by Oakford Archaeology (OA) at Wallon, Drewsteignton, Devon (SX 7737 9034), between March and May 2014. The work was carried out as a condition of listed building consent (0624/13, condition 9) granted by the Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) for alterations to the existing building.

1.1 The site

The main house is a Grade II Listed Building which lies 4km to the east of the historic core of Drewsteignton village (Fig. 1). The archaeological work was commissioned by the current owners of the property, Ms. Kate Steed and Mr Peter Robinson, in advance of the complete refurbishment of the house. The works involved the removal of concrete floors in the hall, cross-passage, parlour and kitchen.

1.2 Geological background

The site of Wallon lies on the eastern edge of the parish of Drewsteignton (Fig. 1), at a height of 124m AOD, on high ground overlooking the River Teign. The underlying solid geology of the area belongs to the Crackington Formation - Interbedded Mudstone and Sandstone, sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 312 to 326 million years ago in the Carboniferous Period (BGS Sheet 326).

2. AIMS

The aims of the projects were to preserve by record any historic building fabric or architectural detail that was to be obscured, removed or otherwise affected by the development, and to disseminate the results of the investigation by appropriate reporting and deposition of the archive in a public repository, either online with the Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations (OASIS) or with the Devon Heritage Centre (DHC).

3. METHODOLOGY

The work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by OA (2014), submitted to and approved by the DNPA under the planning conditions, prior to commencement on site. This document is included as Appendix 1.

Excavation was undertaken under archaeological control. Concrete and underlying modern deposits were removed to the level of either natural subsoil, or the top of archaeological deposits (whichever was higher). Areas of archaeological survival were then cleaned by hand, investigated and recorded.

The standard OA recording system was employed. Stratigraphic information was recorded on *pro-forma* context record sheets, plans and sections for each trench were drawn at a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate and a detailed black and white print and colour (digital) photographic record was made. Registers were maintained for photographs, drawings and context sheets on *pro forma* sheets.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 General background

Wallon House is a small, former farmhouse lying a short distance to the east of the village of Drewsteignton, its size reflecting a large and prosperous farming establishment. The layout of the house perpetuates that of an earlier house which was probably first constructed as a three

room and cross-passage house in the early 16th century. The property was extensively refurbished in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Further changes and alterations were undertaken during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Also spelt Wallen, Wolland, Wollond, Walland or Wallond, the name of the medieval manor of "La Walle" ¹ or "Walle juxta Teynton Dru" ² may be derived from the old English *weala*, meaning 'land occupied by Britons' ³.

Nothing is known of the early history of the manor until the 17th century when it belonged to the Colridge family, who were at that time fairly modest farmers and small traders based mainly in Dunsford, Drewsteignton and Doddiscombleigh. In 1624 Wallon was owned by Humphrey Colridge, although by the mid-17th century the estate was either rented or had been sold to Samuel Gostwyk ⁴. Sometime during the early 18th century Wallon passed into the ownership of the Gorwyn family. By the mid 18th century, John Gorwyn also inherited the farm of Lambert, near Crockernwell, and adopted the name Lambert.

4.2 Wallon House

The tithe survey of Drewsteignton parish took place in 1840 (Fig. 2), revealing that the property was owned and occupied by William Lambert. The map clearly shows the main house and a large building range at the western end, as well as two smaller agricultural buildings clustered around a central courtyard. By the 1851 census the Lamberts owned 350 acres, living at Wallon with five servants ⁵.

Although Wallon remained with the Lambert family until the late 19th century, following the death of William Lambert in 1853, Wallon was let to the Strong family ⁶. In 1887 Charles Lambert inherited the property and sold it three years later. The area was mapped by the Ordnance Survey in 1888, when the property was shown in the greatest detail thus far (Fig. 3), and a small building range had been added at the rear of main house and west wing.

When the property was sold in 1890 Wallon was described as being 'in a most favourable part of the valley of the Teign...commanding some of the best fishing and shooting in the neighbourhood'. The house was described as 'a superior and most comfortable farm residence, with seven bedrooms, a store attic, front and back stairs and offices including a salting house, a large dairy with drying-room over and a paved area to the rear with pump, wash-house and closets'. In addition to the main house the sale brochure described the adjacent farm buildings, which consisted of 'a woodshed, two pigs' houses, a cow-house, an ash-house with loft over, a spacious slated barn, a chaff-room, a pound-house with chamber over, a machine house, a fattening shippen, a cart linhay, a cider cellar, and a calf and root house with loft over'. There were also other buildings 'a trap and cart house, a waggon house, 7-stall carthorse and nag stables, a fold-yard with shippen for 10 bullocks, a calves' house, a second barn and an open linhay' ⁷.

¹ Assize Rolls.

² Lay Subsidy Rolls.

³ Gover 1932.

⁴ DHC rent book.

⁵ 1851 Census.

⁶ DHC 1853 W Lambert will.

⁷ DHC

The property remained remarkably unaltered throughout the early 20th century, as is evidenced by the 1905 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 4).

5. RESULTS

The excavation plan (Fig. 5) shows the positions of the cobbled floor and wall revealed within the parlour and kitchen (Pls 1-3). No evidence of earlier flooring survived in the cross-passage and hall due to modern truncation associated with the insertion of concrete floors.

5.1 The parlour

The depth of concrete and sub-base (100) overlying the cobbled floor (101) varied considerably in the parlour, reflecting the gradual northeast-southwest slope. The removal of approximately 0.1-0.2m of concrete and sub-base exposed elements of an earlier cobbled surface in the parlour.

The cobbled surface consisted of small to medium size sub-angular worn limestone fragments on a bed of sand that overlay the natural subsoil. No evidence was found for a drainage gully and the flooring is likely to be part of the early 18th century phase, when the longhouse was extensively refurbished and the original shippon divided into a parlour and a small service kitchen built at the east end.

Although no evidence of a possible fireplace in the north wall of the sitting room was observed (Keystone 2013) a fine layer of ash (dashed line) covered the cobbled surface immediately in front and to the east of the low cupboard.

5.2 The kitchen

Work in the kitchen uncovered the remains of a northwest-southeast aligned wall foundation (103). This was approximately 3.25m long and 0.5m wide and consisted of limestone rubble, laid in rough courses. The bonding material consisted of crumbling, pale yellow lime mortar. No bricks or re-used building stone were identified. The wall clearly abutted the north wall and therefore represents a later insertion or alteration.

There is little doubt from the position of the wall that it was constructed at the same time as the major early 18th-century refurbishment and extension to Wallon House - the addition of the parlour and service kitchen. The wall was probably designed to support floorboards associated with the substantial suspended floor located in the northeast corner of the service kitchen

There was no surviving evidence of the earlier shippon floor

6. PROJECT ARCHIVE

Due to the limited nature of the findings a project archive will not be produced. A summary of the investigations has been submitted to the on-line archaeological database OASIS (oakforda1-184618) and the Dartmoor National Park HER.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was commissioned by Ms. Kate Steed and Mr. Peter Robinson and administered by Marc Steinmetzer (OA). It was monitored for the DNPA by Andy Crabb

and Keith McKay. The fieldwork was carried out by J. Martin and M. Steinmetzer. The drawings for this report were prepared by M. Steinmetzer.

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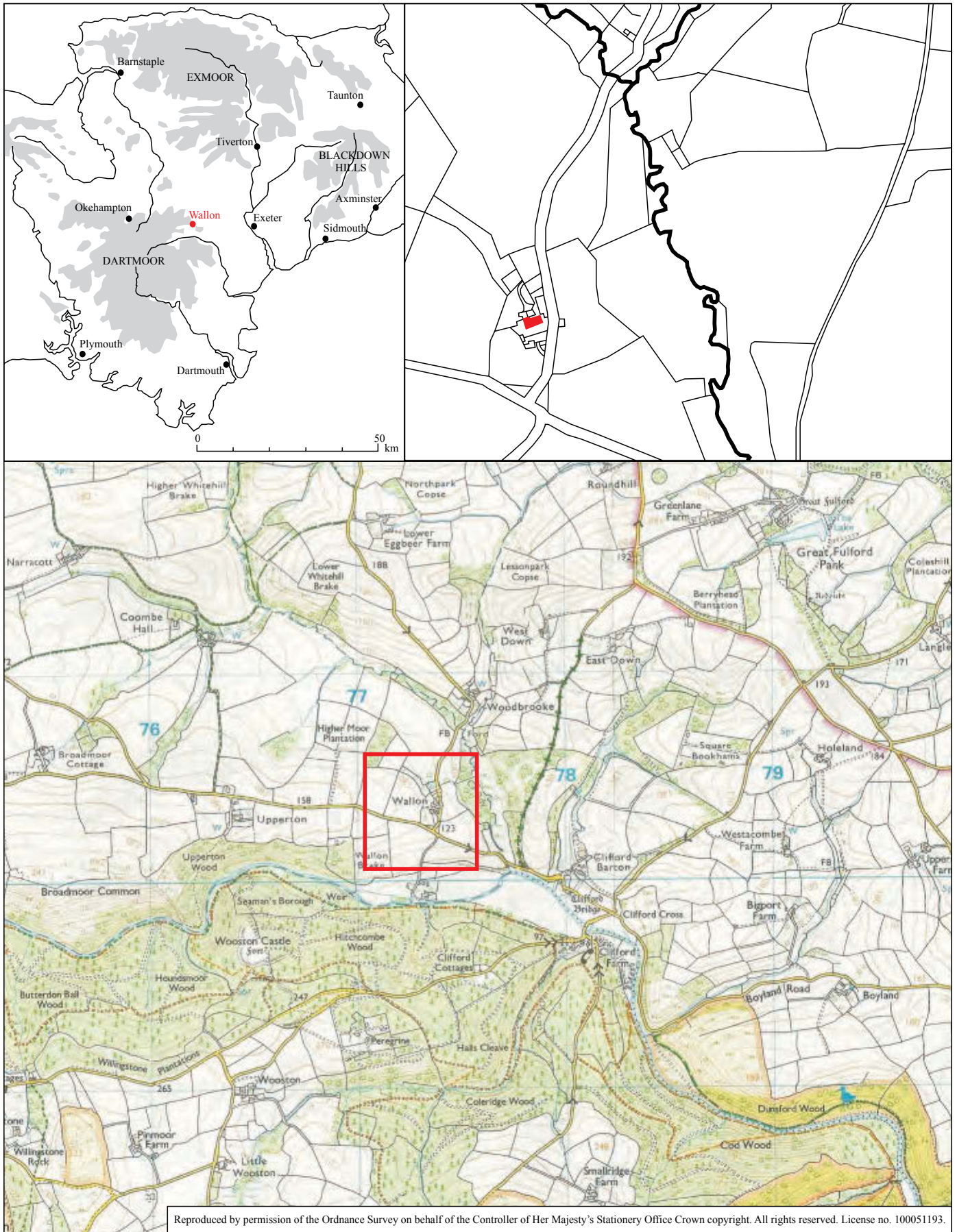


Fig. 1 Location of site.

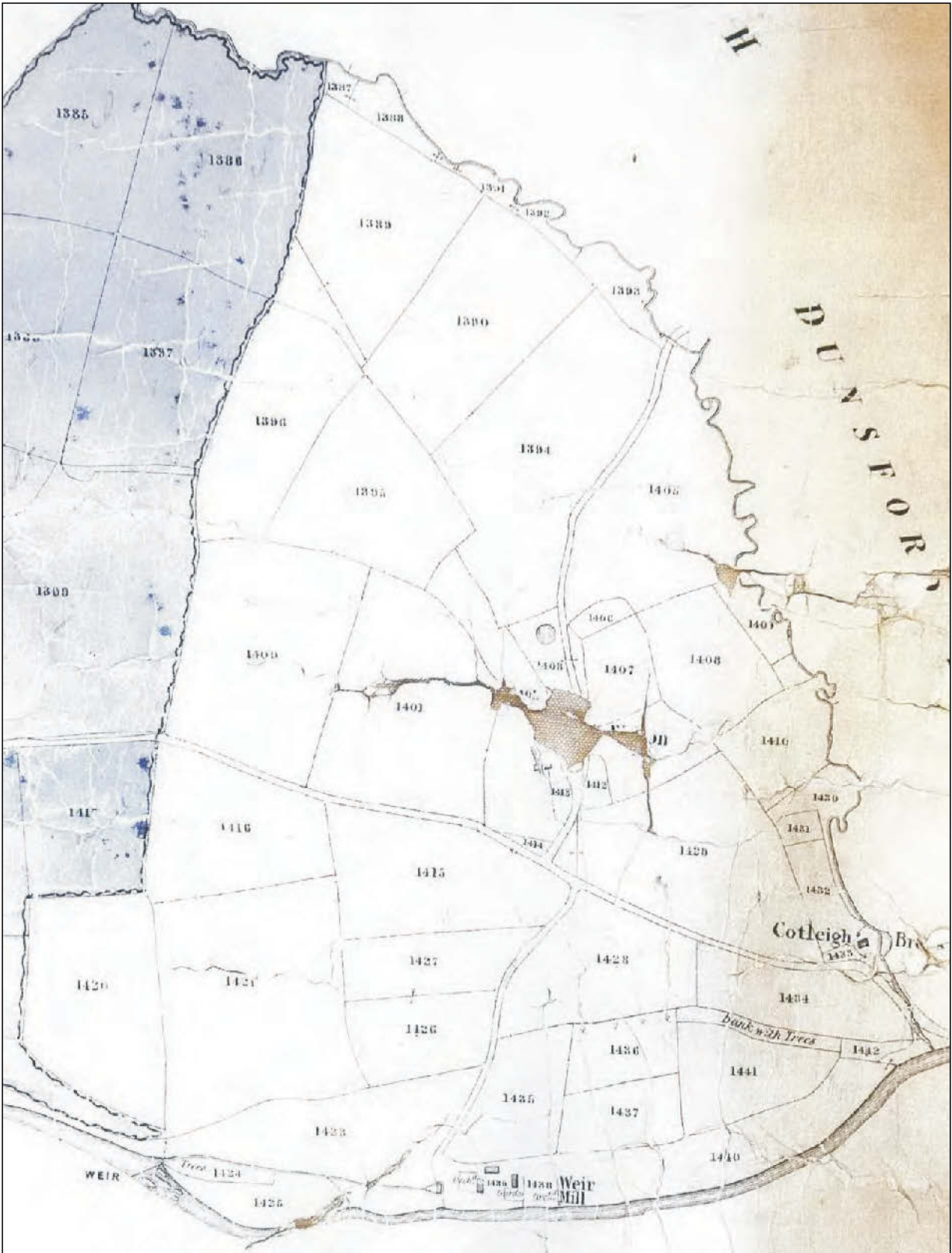


Fig. 2 Detail from the 1840 Drewsteignton tithe map with tear across Wallon.

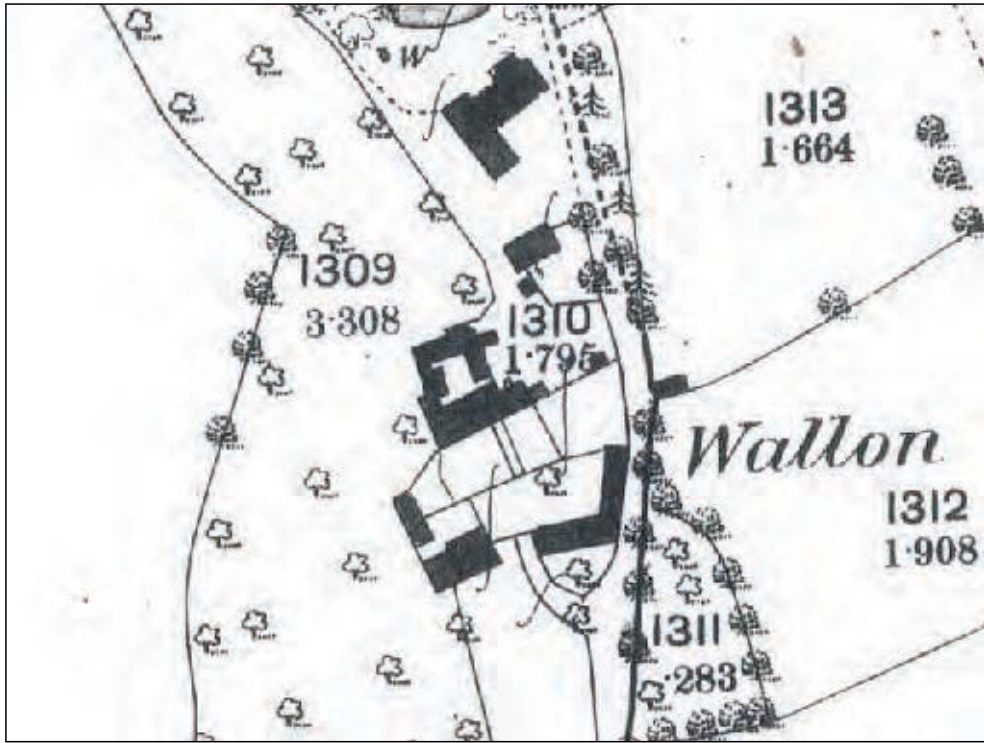


Fig. 3 Detail from the 1st edition 1888 Ordnance Survey map.

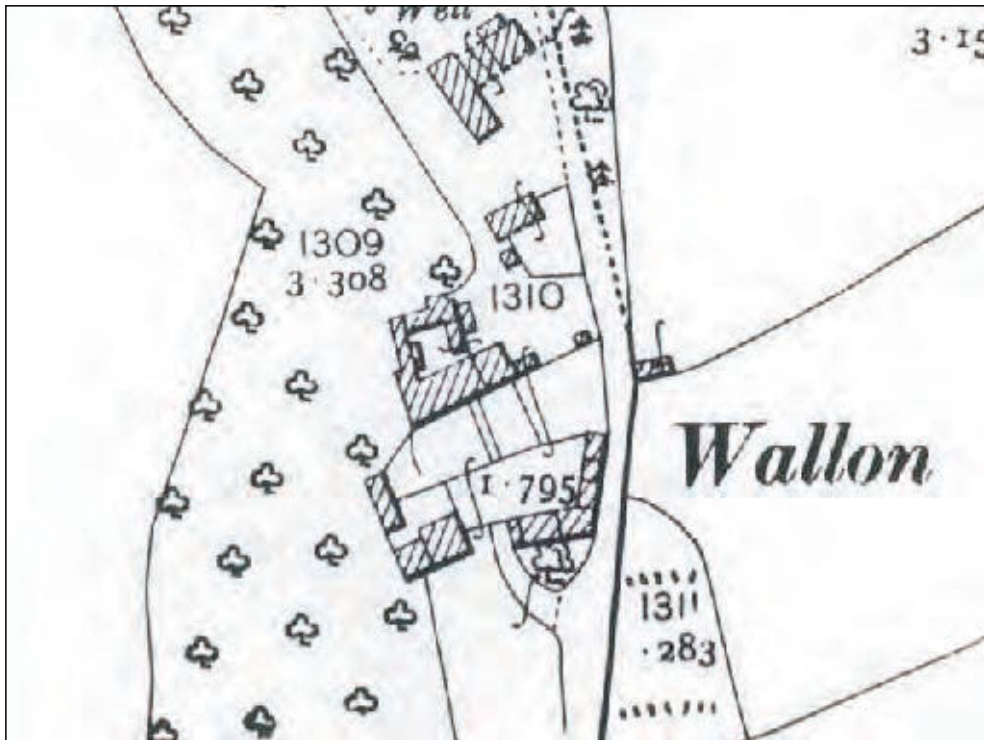


Fig. 4 Detail from the 2nd edition 1905 Ordnance Survey map.



Fig. 5 Plan of Wallon showing location of observations.



Pl. 1 General view of cobbled floor (101) in sitting room. 1m and 1m scales. Looking northeast.



Pl. 2 General view of cobbled floor (101) in sitting room. 1m and 1m scale. Looking east.



Pl. 3 General view of wall (103) in breakfast room. 0.5m and 1m scale.
Looking west.