

## Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Whitestone, Teignbridge	<b>National Grid Reference:</b> SX 8687 9434	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Archaeological monitoring and recording at St Catherine's Church, Whitestone, Devon.		<b>Photo attached:</b> Y
<b>Planning Application no:</b> n/a	<b>Recipient museum:</b> n/a	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> oakforda1-194724	<b>Museum Accession no:</b> n/a	
<b>Contractor's reference number:</b> OA1214	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b> 07/10 and 10/10/2014	
<p><b>Description of works:</b></p> <p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Oakford Archaeology in October 2014 at St Catherine's Church, Whitestone, Devon (SX 8687 9434). The site (Fig. 1) lies to the east of the church, on the edge of the graveyard. The work was commissioned by Teignbridge District Council as part of remedial works to the east boundary wall. The church is grade I listed and dates to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, although the south transept might be of an earlier 14<sup>th</sup> century date. The chancel was partly rebuilt in 1888 by the Exeter architect Robert Medley-Fulford. The medieval <i>Witestan</i> or Whitestone is first referred to in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and the church appears to have been the focus of the early settlement. The present main settlement lies on the old Exeter to Okehampton road.</p> <p>A watching brief was maintained during works associated with the construction of a new retaining wall. The works entailed the complete removal of the collapsed section of graveyard wall and the excavation of a safe working area to allow work on the new foundations. This impacted on an area within the graveyard approximately 12m x 1.5m in an area where there was no evidence of surface-marked graves. The initial removal of the collapsed section of wall was monitored for any architectural fragments that might have been re-used in the construction of the wall, while all soil stripping was carried out using a toothless grading bucket under the direct supervision of the archaeologist.</p> <p><b>Results:</b></p> <p>The works exposed evidence of a thin topsoil overlying a mid reddish brown silty clay graveyard soil. This contained patches of naturally occurring degraded shale. Inspection of the area showed very little evidence of archaeological features. Removal of the collapsed section of graveyard wall exposed the remains of an earlier retaining wall, consisting of roughly squared red volcanic stone. 67 sherds of late 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial wares were recovered from the infilling behind the current graveyard wall.</p> <p>The Whitestone tithe map of 1840 (Fig. 2) shows that the northeast corner of the graveyard formerly consisted of three plots (Nos. 889, 890 and 891). Plot 889 was owned by the Revd Charles Browne and consisted of a cottage and outhouse. The remaining two plots were owned by the Earl of Devon and rented to a John Stocker, the village schoolmaster, who lived there with his wife Elizabeth and daughter Ellen. The two plots contained a cottage and outhouse, with a garden and pound. By the late 1860's the property was leased to William Cheriton, the son of a local farmer. By the time of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map of 1888 (Fig. 3) the three plots have been amalgamated into the graveyard.</p> <p>The following extracts have been copied from the Whitestone Vestry Minute Book EDRO PV2:</p> <p>Page 38: [copy of letter to Rev. Wilse Brown, Whitestone]: "Powderham Castle, January 24<sup>th</sup> 1872, Dear Sir, I have contemplated adding the site of the old Cottage and the small garden at the corner to the churchyard for a long time; and if it is unoccupied and of no further use to Mr Cheriton, the sooner it is done the better; and you are quite at liberty to take the stone, brick and cob for building the wall and filling up. The old timbers may be given to Mr Cheriton. I do not imagine they are of much value except</p>		

for the fire. It would be desirable to have a good sweep at the corner to make an easy turn in the road; and this you will no doubt take care shall be done, I am, dear Sir, yours truly, John Drew

Page 37:

February 1872: "The Earl of Devon is Proprietor of a small cottage at the north east corner of Whitestone Church Yard. As it has long been in a ruinous condition, Mr Drew, the Earl's Steward, on my application, gave me the cob and stone for the purpose of carrying out the North Fence of the Churchyard a few feet and filling with the hollow to a level with the rest of the yard. In consequence I request the Church Wardens to sign the requisite permission that no Rector of Whitestone may be expected to keep the said fence in repair after the alteration is completed."

"We hereby give the Reverend Wilse Brown, Rector of Whitestone, permission to move the north-east fence of Whitestone Church Yard, so as to fulfil the intention of Mr Drew for the widening the public road at that part".

**Conclusion:**

The works exposed the remains of an earlier graveyard retaining wall. Although located to the south of the buildings identified on the 1840 tithe map a context for its demolition and the large-scale rebuilding of the current wall might be the demolition and incorporation into the graveyard in 1872 of the three properties described in the Whitestone Vestry Minute Book.

**Project archive and OASIS entry**

Due to the limited nature of the work and lack of any finds a project archive will not be retained. A summary of the investigations has been submitted to the city historic environment record and to the on-line archaeological database OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological InterventionS) and forms the only record and archive of the project.

**Bibliography:**

**Devon Heritage Centre**

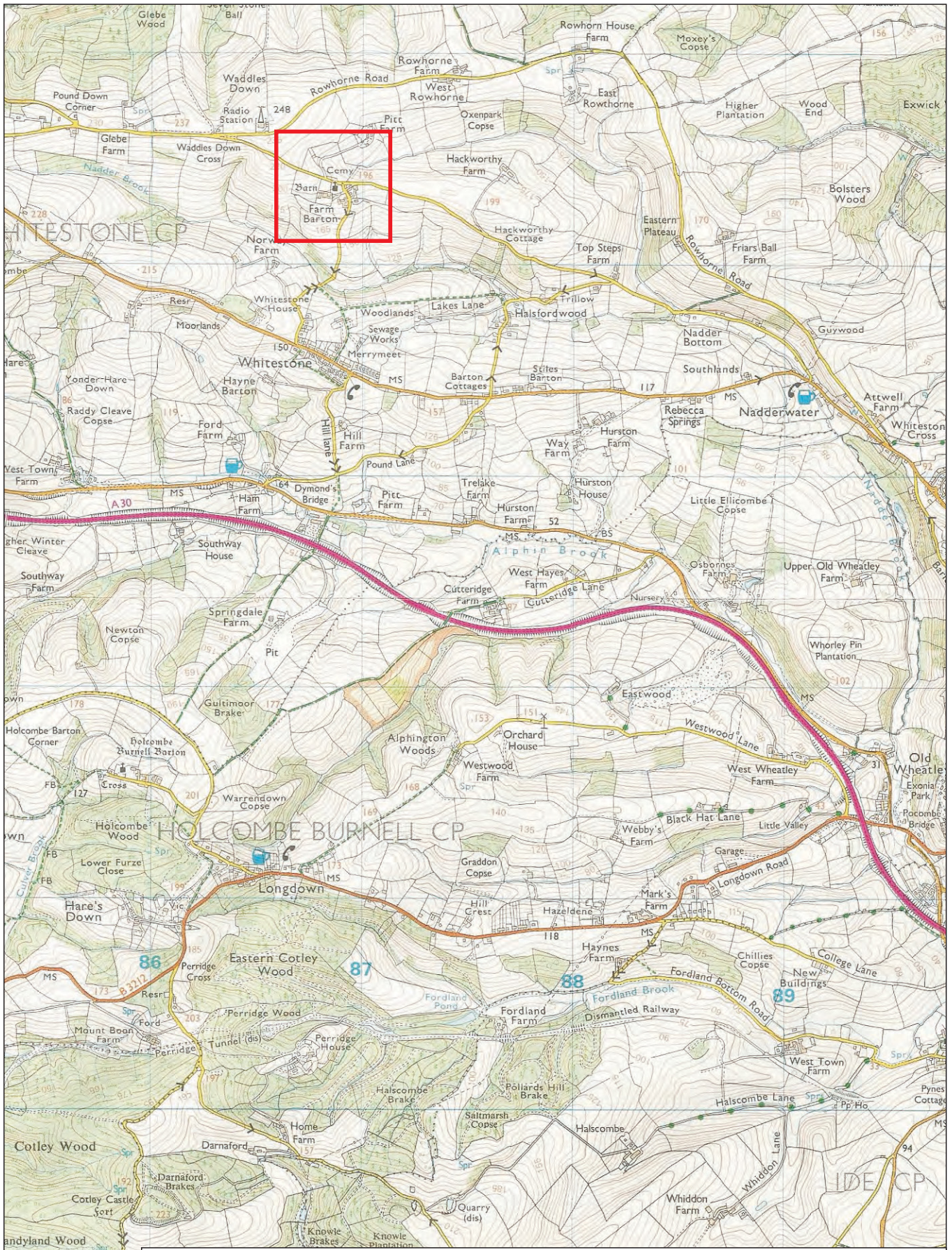
Whitestone 1840 Parish tithe map and apportionment  
Whitestone Vestry Minute Book EDRO PV2  
White's 1850 Directory  
Devon Record Office Z17/3/7 1798 map book [site not included]  
D1508M/E/Surveys/V/8 1787 [site not included]  
Glebe Exchange and map 2947A/PB 12 1888 [site not included]  
Letters and papers Whitestone tithes - Rev. C. Brown 2947A/PB 5-9 1839-1840  
19thC Transcriptions of documents 2947A/PZ 5 1780 [land tax assessment] Not able to identify site.  
*Ordnance Survey*  
County Series 1<sup>st</sup> edition (1888) & 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1905) Sheet number: 79/4, 1:25"  
Ordnance Survey Plan (1972) Sheet number: 8694/8794, 1:2500 A

**Recorder:**

L Brown & MFR Steinmetzer (Oakford Archaeology)

**Date sent to HER:**





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Fig. 1 Location of site.





Fig. 2 Detail from the 1840 Whitestone tithe map.

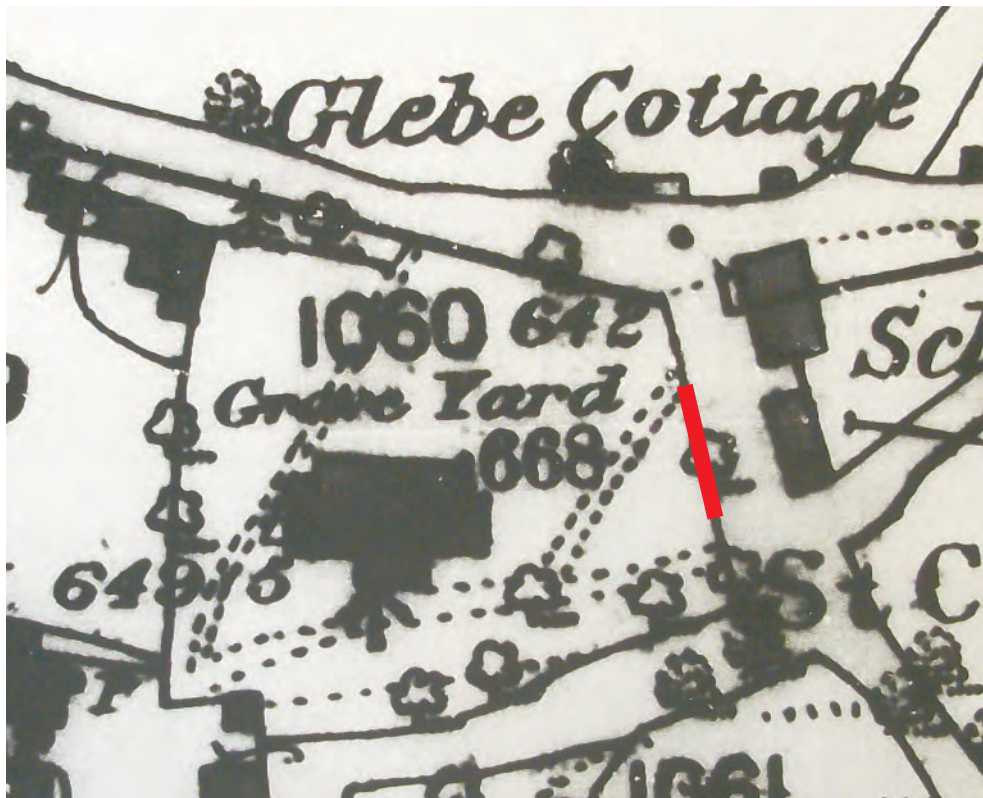


Fig. 3 Detail from the 1887 1st edition Ordnance Survey map Devonshire Sheet LXXIV.4.





Pl. 1 General view of earlier wall foundation. 0.5m scale. Looking southwest.



Pl. 2 Close-up of earlier wall foundation. 0.5m scale. Looking southwest.