

**Historic Building Assessment
and
Documentary History**

Of

**FARM BUILDINGS AT
HEAD BARTON FARM,
CHITTLEHAMHOLT,
DEVON**

*By R.W. Parker
and
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For the Kingsnympton Park Estate



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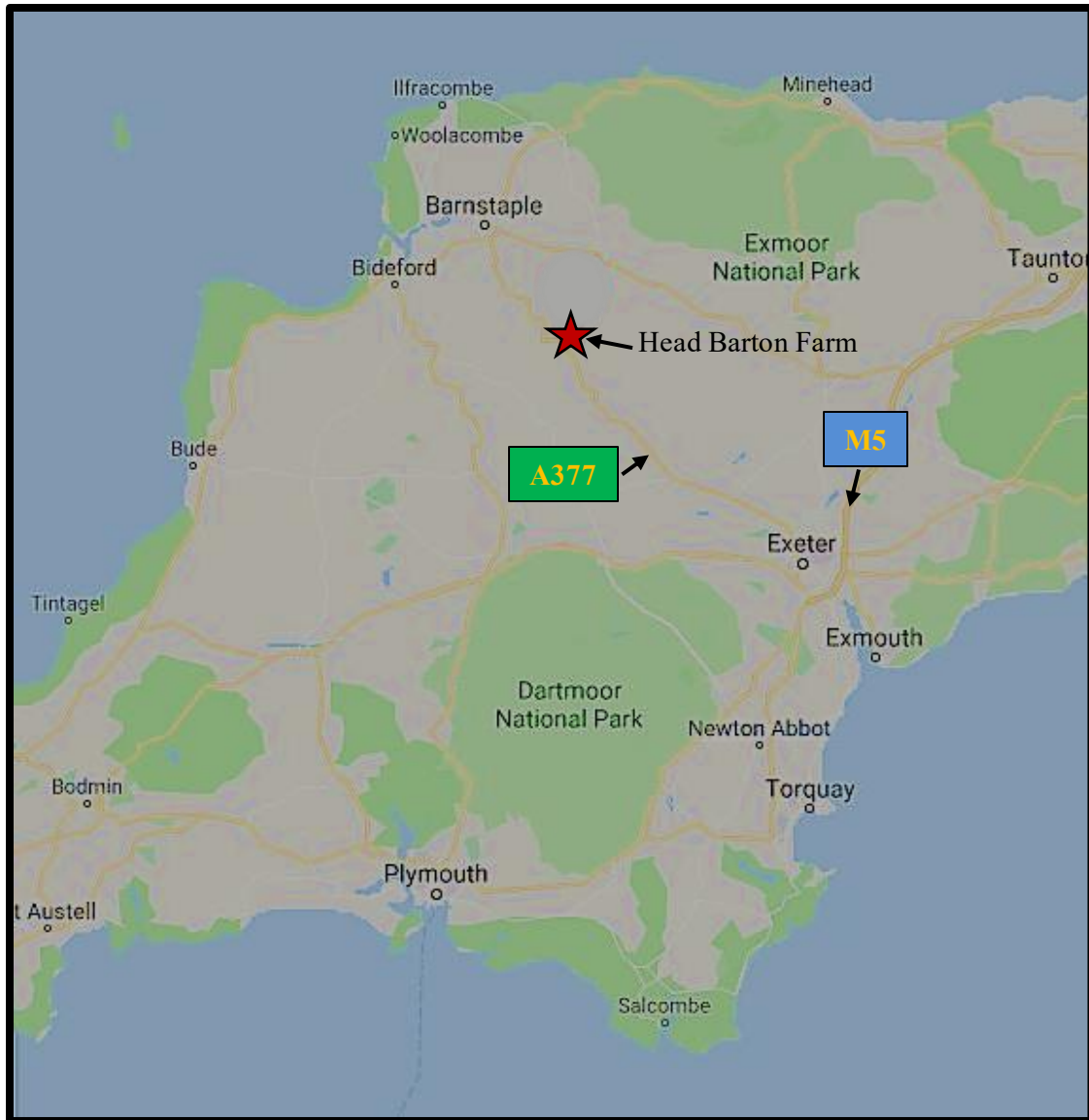
Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	<i>Page:</i> 1
1.2	Methodology	3
2.	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	3
2.1	The site	3
2.2	Archaeological sites in the vicinity	4
3.	DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH	5
3.1	The early history of Head Barton	5
3.2	Early Manorial Lords and owners of Head	5
3.3	The 15th and 16th Centuries	6
3.4	16th and 17th Century occupation of Head	7
3.5	The 18th and 19th centuries	9
3.6	The Mannings at Head	13
4.	BUILDING SURVEY	14
4.1	The Trap House	17
4.2	Linhay I	17
4.3	The Threshing Barn	18
4.4	The horse-engine house	23
4.5	Linhay II	23
4.6	Linhay III	24
4.7	The granary and ?stables	27
4.8	The poundhouse or press house	28
4.9	The western stables	31
4.10	The piggeries	31
4.11	Later buildings	33
5.	CONCLUSION	33
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	35
	SOURCES CONSULTED	35
	CONDITIONS	36

List of Illustrations

Fig. 1	Aerial view of the southern part of Chittlehamholt (Google Earth), showing the courses of the Mole and the Taw around The Head.	Page: 1
Fig. 2	Aerial view of Head Barton Farm showing the area of the building survey outlined in white (Google Earth).	2
Fig. 3	Extract from Benjamin Donn's 1765 <i>Map of the County of Devon</i> , showing the old road to Barnstaple running through the site (circled), and the original site of Head Mill on the river Taw (arrowed).	2
Fig. 4	Court Roll for the Manor of Chittlehampton 1537	7
Fig. 5	Extract from the Marriage Settlement of William Gay and Elizabeth Beaple, detailing Richard Beaple's land	8
Fig. 6	Peter Atkins' signature on the deed of sale of Head Barton to John Langwill, dated 1702	8
Fig. 7	Valuation of Head 1759	8
Fig. 8	The Tithe Map for the parish of Chittlehampton showing Head Barton and Head Mill as they stood in 1845	11
Fig. 9	Detail of the above; the farmhouse, shown in pink appears to occupy the site of the existing piggeries.	11
Fig. 10	Head Barton in the late 1880s from the OS 1st edition 1:500 map.	12
Fig. 11	Head Barton in 1903 (County Series Sheet no. XXXI.11, 2nd Edition).	12
Fig. 12	Head Barton in 1967 showing the new structures added to the south of the buildings (SX 6618/6718).	15
Fig. 13	The farmhouse (right) and adjacent buildings, looking north	15
Fig. 14	The farm buildings seen from the eastern end of the yard	16
Fig. 15	The trap house at the eastern end of the southern range of buildings, showing the corbelled eaves detail.	16
Fig. 16	The south elevation of the trap house, showing the brick weatherings built into the gable of the adjacent lincay.	16
Fig. 17	The south elevation of the trap house, showing the brick weatherings built into the gable of the adjacent lincay.	16
Fig. 18	The north elevation of lincay I.	16
Fig. 19	The south elevation of lincay I (right) showing the differing masonry of the upper section of walling beneath the eaves, the partially blocked opening in the east wall of the threshing barn (arrowed) and the east elevation of the horse-engine house (left).	19
Fig. 20	The north elevation of lincay I showing the brick pier with corbelling marking the original western limit of the building (left) and the ventilation screens to the western bay of the extension (left).	19
Fig. 21	Detail of the post and base supporting the western bays.	20
Fig. 22	The partially blocked opening in the east wall of the threshing barn.	20
Fig. 23	The north elevation of the threshing barn, showing the secondary extension to its east end (left) and the 19th-century pent roof over the main doors.	20
Fig. 24	The south elevation of the threshing barn, showing its relationship with the horse-engine house (right).	21
Fig. 25	The interior of the threshing barn, looking west, showing the roof structure.	22
Fig. 26	The west-facing elevation of the horse engine house and the pent roofs over the barn doors.	22
Fig. 27	One of the Shuttered windows of the horse-engine house.	22
Fig. 28	The interior of the horse engine house showing the traces of beams and openings in the south wall.	22

Fig. 29	The north front of Linhay II showing the late 19th-century enclosure of the lower part of the façade.	25
Fig. 30	The south elevation of Linhay II showing the much patched and buttressed rear wall of cob and stone with later buttresses.	25
Fig. 31	The interior of Linhay II showing the staggered joists of the first-floor structure.	25
Fig. 32	Detail of the construction of the north front of linhay II showing the junction of the wall posts and the principal first-floor beams.	25
Fig. 33	The first-floor interior of Linhay II, looking west, showing the lapped collars of the roof trusses and the cob walling.	25
Fig. 34	The interior of the loft of Linhay II looking east, showing the redundant sockets for an earlier first-floor structure in the gable wall.	25
Fig. 35	The south elevation Linhay III, showing the cylindrical piers supporting the first-floor structure and roofs.	26
Fig. 36	The north front of Linhay III showing later enclosure of the façade.	26
Fig. 37	The western gable of the double linhay III showing possible evidence for a half hip.	26
Fig. 38	The interior of the north side of the double linhay showing the timber manger below the pitching void and the remains of modern cattle stalls.	26
Fig. 39	The interior of the first floor of the double linhay showing the single loft with a central pitching void serving both sets of mangers.	26
Fig. 40	The east front of the granary and possible stable block close to the house.	29
Fig. 41	The lower northern wing adjacent to the piggeries (not surveyed).	29
Fig. 42	The gable end of the granary showing the loft access.	29
Fig. 43	The rear elevation of the granary showing possible stable ventilator windows.	29
Fig. 44	The interior of the possible stable showing chutes from the granary floor above and the door to the poundhouse .	29
Fig. 45	The interior of the granary, looking north-east.	29
Fig. 46	The south elevation of the stable (left) and poundhouse (Right) from the farmyard.	30
Fig. 47	The interior of the poundhouse, showing the cider press and the construction of the loft floor.	0
Fig. 48	The interior of the poundhouse looking towards the northern stair	30
Fig. 49	The remains of a belt drive and transmission shaft above the doorway in the north wall of the poundhouse loft.	30
Fig. 50	The south elevation of the stable showing 19th-century red brick repairs to the openings and jambs	30
Fig. 51	The north elevation of the stables.	30
Fig. 52	The interior of the stable showing the head walk forming a cross passage through the building.	32
Fig. 53	The roof and loft over the stables.	32
Fig. 54	The piggeries at the north edge of the site.	32
Fig. 55	Detail of the attractive door furniture on the piggeries and many other buildings.	32
Fig. 56	The unusual projections at the piggery door jambs.	32
Fig. 57	The interior of the piggeries showing a feeding hatch from the headwalk.	32



Location Plan: Location of Head Barton Farm in North Devon (based on a map by Google Earth).

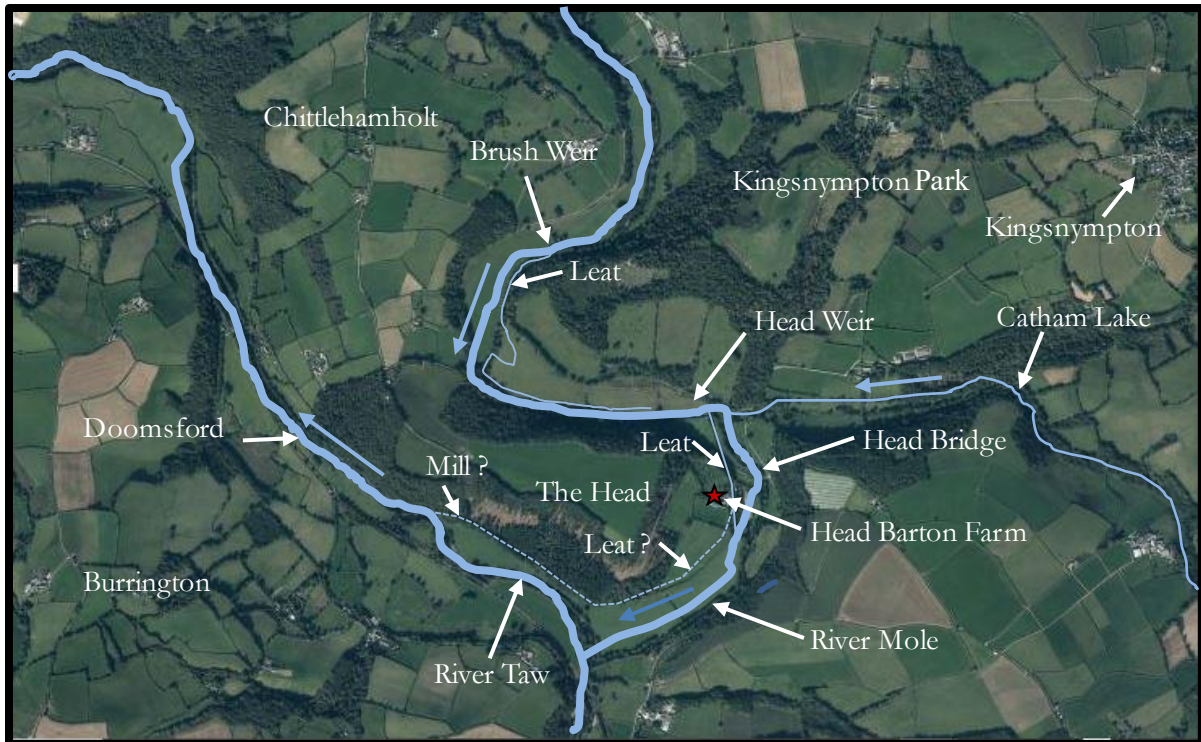


Fig 1 Aerial view of the southern part of Chittlehamholt (Google Earth), showing the courses of the Mole and the Taw around The Head.

1: INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an assessment of historic farm buildings at Head Barton Farm, Chittlehamholt, Devon, EX37 8HA (SS 66603 18173). The report was commissioned by Donna Collier of Savills (UK), on behalf of the Kingsnympton Park Estate in August 2019. The report has been prepared by Richard Parker Historic Buildings Recording and Interpretation in order to inform an application for full planning and Listed Building Consent for alterations to the historic farm buildings at Head Barton

The site of the farm is an ancient one, lying in a deep valley south of Chittlehampton and north of Chulmleigh, beneath the steep wooded promontory of Head, near Head Bridge, which lies on the B3226 near the confluence of the rivers Mole and Taw (Fig 1 and Location Plan). These rivers surround and form the boundaries of the modern parish of Chittlehamholt. Chittlehamholt was historically a part of the parish of Chittlehampton. The name means *a forest settlement of the people of Chittlehampton*. It is commonly referred to as “Holt”.

Chittlehamholt formerly served as an emparked or enclosed woodland for the manor of Chittlehampton, where timber, game and other resources were preserved. The holt seems to have been divided into farmsteads after 1539, when the holt is recorded to have been ‘disemparked’ after a long period of neglect (Andrews 1961, 144), though Head may have been a separate manor outside the ‘holt’ (Ibid., 150). Chittlehamholt was a chapelry of Chittlehampton from 1838 until 1863 and became a civil parish in 1885. The modern village lies to the north of the site, close to the boundary with the parishes of Satterleigh and Warkleigh, whereas Head Barton lies at its south-eastern tip and now forms part of the Kingsnympton Park Estate, a Registered Historic Park and Garden (HER reference MDV67874).

The farm buildings stand to the west of Head Barton farmhouse, a 19th-century Grade II listed building. The house remains in use as a private residence and does not form part of the present application. The adjacent mill and mill house are also Grade II Listed and unaffected by the present proposals. These structures have not therefore been surveyed as part of this project.

The farm buildings are also listed Grade II and include historic linhays, barns, stables, a



Fig. 2 Aerial view of Head Barton Farm showing the area of the building survey outlined in white (Google Earth).

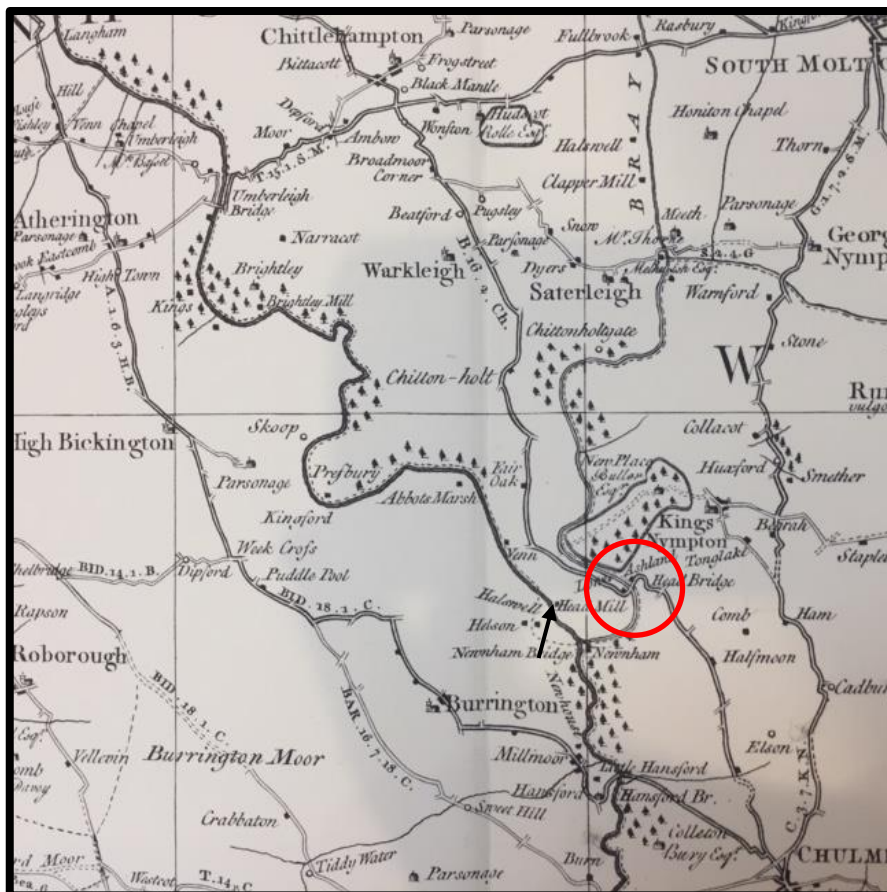


Fig. 3 Extract from Benjamin Donn's 1765 *Map of the County of Devon*, showing the old road to Barnstaple running through the site (circled), and the original site of Head Mill on the river Taw (arrowed)¹

¹ Reprinted in Facsimile with an introduction by W.L.D Ravenhill (Devon & Cornwall Record Society 1965)

horse-engine house and a piggery arranged around two farmyards. Some of the buildings are of 19th-century date, representing model farm buildings more-or-less contemporary with the existing farmhouse, but others are possibly of 18th-century date or earlier. These structures include several impressive open-fronted lincays, a threshing barn, stables and a possible poundhouse.

The current proposals are for the repair and conservation of the buildings which, though currently in relatively good structural condition, are no longer used for agricultural purposes. The owners of the property are seeking to find a sympathetic new use for the buildings and the proposals include the partial conversion of parts of the complex to provide two residential units, and the repair and conservation of the remaining areas to serve as camping barns and a bat roost.

The present archaeological and documentary assessment was commissioned to inform and support the application for these specific works but was also intended to be of service in the case of future planning applications for other buildings on the estate. The assessment therefore included a desk-based study of the archaeological potential and documentary history of the site, undertaken with the aim of understanding the context of the existing structures, and a study of the history of the wider estate. At the same time an historic buildings survey was undertaken to establish the structural history and development of the buildings, their original function, state of preservation and significance.

1.2 Methodology

The archaeological works were carried out by Richard Parker Historic Buildings Recording and Interpretation in late August 2019. The desk-top study of the documentary and tenorial history of the site, including a map regression examining all readily available historic maps and pictorial sources, was undertaken by Lucy Browne. The research carried out for this report took place in the Devon Heritage Centre, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter and all original documents examined, including maps, are from their collections. Parish registers have been examined using either microfilmed original copies or scans of original images on Find My Past (www.findmypast.co.uk). Newspapers have been examined using scans of original images on British Newspaper Archive (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk).

There are manorial and parish records for Chittlehampton archived in the North Devon Record Office in Barnstaple which should also be examined in future investigations but would have exceeded the time limitations of this research.

The buildings survey was undertaken by Richard Parker. This latter element consisted of a non-invasive visual inspection of the buildings and the production of a digital photographic record of the buildings as now existing, prior to any works, with manuscript notes which form the basis of this report. The results of the documentary research and map regression are given in section 3, below, while the results of the building survey may be found in section 4.

2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

2.1 The site

The farm lies in the north-eastern corner of the sharp bend formed by the Head promontory and the River Mole, which runs first eastwards to the north of the promontory, then southwards to the east of the farm and finally turns westwards to the south of the site to its confluence with the Taw just below Newnham Bridge. The Taw flows to the north and north west along the western edge of the parish (Fig. 1). To the west of the farm buildings, between the river valleys, the ground rises steeply to a height of 454 feet above sea level, its steep sides densely wooded and its summit open, forming a tongue of arable land separating Head Wood (north) and Head Wood (south). To the east and south of the site are low lying river meadows. The Kingsnympton Park Estate lies

in the neighbouring parish, on the north-eastern bank of the Mole, north of the farm buildings, and is approached by a long driveway near Head Bridge.

Head Barton Farm is approached by an access road leaving the B3226 at Lake Bridge which crosses the mill leat just north of the site. The access road runs alongside the mill leat to Head Mill and mill house and then curves to the west below the farmhouse and rises to form a track running uphill between the two groups of farm buildings and from thence onto the Head. Prebendary Andrews (Andrews 1961, 152) suggests that this track originally formed the main road from Exeter to Barnstaple, and that it crossed the river Mole at an ancient bridge upstream of Head Bridge, near Head Weir and close to its junction with Catham Lake, where remains of a bridge were still detectable at the time he was writing. The road may have been diverted and a new bridge made in the late 18th century, possibly in order to remove the public road from the vicinity of Kingsnympton Park.

2.2 Archaeological sites in the vicinity

The area appears to have been occupied from an early date, since a number of ancient remains have been found in the area, including Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowheads (Historic England Monument No 34293) and flint scatters from the Neolithic period (Monument Nos 34483 and 910294). In a field immediately to the south of the site earthworks are visible, including circular, ditched mounds which are suggestive of either a barrow cemetery or a settlement, possibly of Bronze Age or Iron Age date (HER reference MDV 30072). A polished stone axe head was found just north-west of the farm buildings (HER reference MDV114038). The early OS maps also record ancient quarries to the north of the site.

Kingsnympton Park is a Grade II Listed park and garden occupying the large area on the east bank of the river Mole north of Head Barton and Head Bridge. The park appears on Benjamin Donn's 1765 map (Fig. 2) as a long, hour glass-shaped fenced enclosure, narrowing in the middle between two bulbous ends. According to the Historic England List Description (Listing reference 1001661) the park was first established in the 15th century at the instigation of Sir Lewis Pollard, justice of the King's Bench under Henry VII. The estate later passed through the hands of the Northcote family of Pynes, near Exeter before passing in 1740 to the Bullers of Downes, at Crediton. The present mansion replaces an earlier house and is considered one of the finest Palladian houses in the county, built for the Bullers to the designs of Francis Cartwright (1695-1758) of Dorset. It was then known as 'New Place', as it appears on Donn's map. The house is not thought to occupy the site of the earlier mansion, though some reused stone doorways are incorporated into its basement (Cherry & Pevsner 1989, 523).

The parkland was laid out under the advice of Lord Bathurst of Cirencester Park (*ibid.*) and included a great terrace, a lower terrace and many plantations. The estate was sold to James Tanner in 1843, by which time it had been disemparked, though elements of the park pales still remain. The park appears to have utilised existing structures, such as Kingsnympton church and steeple and Snydles Barn as eye catchers. There are also stables, lodges, bridges and an octagonal pavilion.

The area is rich in natural and man-made watercourses. On the northern bank of the Mole, within the area of the park, the remains of a leat are visible coming off the Mole at Brush Weir and running parallel to the river all the way around the headland to the east of Kingsnympton Park. This leat may have served a mill to the north of Head Mill, but no visible trace of this remains and it is not marked on early maps.

A second mill leat taken from above Head Weir passes through the Head Barton Farm site and features a bypass channel running from the leat just above the mill to rejoin the Mole below Head Bridge. Below the mill the tailrace continues southwards to the east of the farm buildings to rejoin the river. This leat may formerly have continued further south and west of the site, curving around the headland parallel to the Mole through low-lying meadows to join the Taw,

since the remains of a derelict watermill, leat and launder were observed by Prebendary Andrews in the 1960s, and by Exeter Archaeology during a field survey in 1993, concealed in the dense woodland underneath Head Wood South (Monument No. 910312: Andrews 1961, 152). The derelict mill is recorded and labelled as Head Mill, on Benjamin Donn's *Map of the County of Devon*, 1765, (Sheet 2b). Neither this mill nor its leat appear on the tithe map of 1845, nor do they appear on any later maps of the area, and it seems likely that the mill was superseded by the present Head Mill at some time in the late 18th or early 19th century.

A further significant site for the social history of the area is a late 19th-century mission church, built as a chapel of ease to Burrington in the 1870s at Bridge Cross, near the junction of the Mole and the Taw. It is a prefabricated building, its walls clad with horizontal weatherboarding. Though it is no longer in ecclesiastical use it appears to be well-preserved and some of its furnishings, including a remarkable 1870s altar and reredos, possibly a repurposed sideboard designed by one of the leading church furnishers of the 19th-century, have been retained and are now in use at the parish Church of Burrington.

3. DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH (by Lucy Browne)

Head Barton appears in some, but not all, of the manorial listings (rentals and surveys) of Chittlehampton examined for this research, despite being nearer to the extent of Chittlehamholt's own manor. *Devon Place Names*² lists several spelling and name variants for Head Barton found in historic documents and calendars. It was named *Heved* in 1272 (Calendar of Charter Rolls), *Havede* in 1305 (Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem or IPM) *La Hefde* in 1328 (Feet of Fines³) *Heaved* 1350 (IPM) and *La Hevede* 1356 (Calendar of Ancient Deeds). Another spelling, found in various records during the research is *Hedd*.

3.1 The early history of Head Barton

From the surveys recording the extent of the Head Barton estate, as well as its description as a *capital messuage and barton* (principal house and farm in a manor or estate) and *manor* (or sub-manor – i.e. a manor within a manor) in its own right, Head Barton was evidently an important property in both the manor and the parish of Chittlehampton. The Lords of the Manor of Chittlehampton would have been the “owners” but might never have been nearer to the land than its name on a balance sheet. Their tenants might have occupied it themselves or sub-let it.

3.2 Early Manorial Lords and owners of Head

At the time of the Norman Conquest, the Manor of Chittlehampton was held by a Saxon thane⁴ called Godwin who might have been the brother of King Harold. His lands included the Manor and formed part of the estates which became the Barony of Gloucester. This feudal barony was consolidated when William Rufus granted the lands to his follower (and possibly his cousin) Robert FitzHamon (died 1107). FitzHamon was said to have remained in favour through the reigns of William I, William Rufus and Rufus's younger brother Henry I.

Daniel and Samuel Lysons, writing in 1822⁵ [referred to as “Lysons”] listed the families who were Lords of the Manor of Chittlehampton, and owners of Head beginning with “Robert Fitzhamon whose heiress married the first Earl of Gloucester”, the Spencers followed by the Earls of Warwick. It then passed to the families of Daubeny, Earls of Bridgewater, and the families of Pollard and Venner. Lysons named “the Right Honourable Lord Rolle” as the current lord of the

² Volume VIII of the English Place Names Society series

³ Feet of Fines for Devon transcribed by the Devon & Cornwall Record Society 1912

⁴ One who held land of the Crown or a military nobleman

⁵ Magna Britannia Volume the Sixth containing Devonshire (Part II, page 101)

manor in 1822, who inherited the estates from his father Dennis Rolle Esq, who was in turn heir to his cousin Samuel.

John Hooker (1526 – 1601)⁶ in his Chronological Synopsis⁷ includes “Hamlet of Layhyda” in his list of tythings within the Hundred of South Molton. In *Hundreds of Devon*⁸ by Rev Oswald J Reichel, the editor Lt. Col. F B Prideaux noted “Layhyda seems to be Head Barton in Chittlehampton. As Hede, this “*manor*” [Prideaux’s italics] was held in 1418 by Sir John Herlee, husband of Margaret Polglase, of the manor of Chittlehampton, which was then possessed by Richard Beauchamp and Elizabeth his wife in her right.”⁹

The early history of the Manor is an exercise in descent through the female lines. The first Earl of Gloucester was Robert Fitzroy, an illegitimate son of Henry I who married Mabel, the heiress of Robert FitzHamon as noted above. Thus, the Manor of Chittlehampton would have passed into the estates of the Gloucester Earldom. Robert and Mabel’s granddaughter Amice, daughter of William, 2nd Earl of Gloucester, married Richard de Clare, Earl of Hertford, and their descendants eventually inherited the Earldom of Gloucester (and Chittlehampton). The 7th Earl of Gloucester, Gilbert de Clare (1291 – 1314) a supporter of Edward II, had no surviving children when he was killed at the Battle of Bannockburn, and left his sisters as co-heirs, with the earldom becoming extinct. His sister Eleanor (1292 – 1337) married Hugh le Despencer the younger (c.1286 – 1326), taking her brother’s property, including the Manor of Chittlehampton (and Head) with her. Hugh and Eleanor’s daughter Elizabeth le Despencer (c1327 – 1389) married Maurice de Berkeley (c1330 – 1368), and their grand-daughter Elizabeth de Berkeley (1386 – 1422) married Richard Beauchamp, 14th Earl of Warwick (who spent his life principally fighting the Hundred Years War and Owain Glyndwr).

Sir John Herlee or Herle, identified by Lysons as holder of the “manor” of Head, might not have come by it through honest means. Northumberland-born, he had settled in Cornwall some time before 1382 when, at the local elections of the second Parliament of that year, he provided guarantees for the attendance of one of the knights of the shire, Sir Richard Cergeaux. According to Herle’s entry in *A History of Parliament*,¹⁰ he managed to obtain a substantial landed estate in Devon and Cornwall. He negotiated with John Cergeaux¹¹, second husband of Elizabeth, daughter and sole heir of Sir William Champernowne. Elizabeth had “lost her wits” as had her son. For a sum of money, Herle secured the hand of Elizabeth’s daughter Margaret Polglas and custody of Margaret’s brother. On Cergeaux’s death in 1388, Herle took Elizabeth into his custody and induced her to grant him her property. Despite a court case in 1396, Herle managed to retain the estates. He died in 1418, the date given in Hooker’s Chronical Synopsis, which suggests the evidence for his holding Head might have come from records of probate or manorial succession.

3.3 The 15th and 16th Centuries

According to the Rev J H B Andrews in his detailed article *Chittlehampton*, published in the Transactions of the Devonshire Association¹² there is a gap in information about the manorial descent during the 15th Century. The Manor was apparently “found among the possessions” of Giles, Lord Daubeney, one of the chief supporters of Henry VII when he died in 1507. Andrews continues: “The [16th] century saw the end of the old nobility, one of the most illustrious of which

⁶ John Hooker alias John Vowell of Exeter: historian, writer, solicitor, antiquary, civic administrator and member of Parliament. From 1555 to his death he was Chamberlain of Exeter.

⁷ MS 5827 in the British Museum, page 129 – Risdon’s version printed in 1811 according to Reichel’s editor, F B Prideaux.

⁸ Published for the Devonshire Association, edited by Lt Col F B Prideaux in 1929 (Supplement, Part III, page 75)

⁹ Prideaux’s reference: *A.D. Inq. 6 Hen V Ser I File 33 (34)*

¹⁰ <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/herle-sir-john-1418>

¹¹ Brother of Richard

¹² Volume XCIV (1962) pp 233 - 338

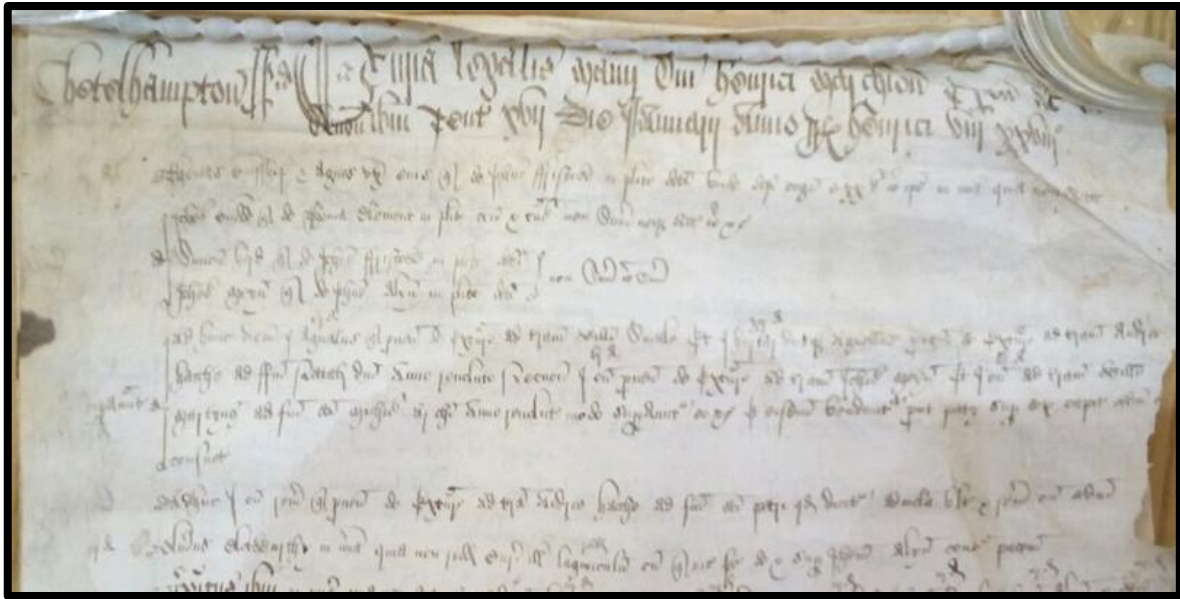


Fig. 4 Court Roll for the Manor of Chittlehampton 1537

was Henry Courtenay, Earl of Devon, created Marquis of Exeter in 1525. It is not known how he came to be possessed of Chittlehampton from the son of Giles, Lord Daubeny, but he certainly held it in 1537 for a manor court roll of that year has been preserved.”

This court roll for the Manor of Chittlehampton, archived in the Devon Heritage Centre¹³ records, as translated by Andrews¹⁴, includes the phrases “the heir of Hedde” came to court “and gave both for his suite at court and for his homage that year 12d” (Fig. 4).

While Lysons described the Daubenys as Earls of Bridgewater, the title created in 1538 for Henry Daubeny, 9th Baron Daubeny after the Chittlehampton lands had passed on. After Courtenay’s execution in 1540, the manor was granted to George Carew who drowned in 1545 on the Mary Rose. In 1552, Sir Peter Carew of Mohun’s, Ottery, sold the manor to Sir Hugh Pollard of Grilston for £1,000 and it remained with this family until the following century.¹⁵ In 1638 Sir Lewis Pollard sold it to John Giffard Esq of Brightley in Chittlehampton.

3.4 16th and 17th Century occupation of Head

Andrews’s article *The Parish of Chittlehamholt* comments that in 1552, Head was described as a manor when Sir Hugh Pollard of Kingsnympton, his son Lewis and daughter Jagnet held “hed and hed myll” for their lives of Thomas Hatch of Aller esquire “by copy of court roll after the custom of the manor of hed.” It might be that it was a sub-manor at this time, but no independent records have so far been identified. Pollard granted to Hatch, in exchange for tenements in Bishopsnympton and Chulmleigh, an improvement in the mill weir fixed upon his land and relinquished the lease.¹⁶

An article published in the *North Devon Journal*¹⁷, describing the background to the Beaple monument in Barnstaple Church, tells of Richard Beaple (1564 – 1643), a wealthy merchant, ship owner, member of the Spanish Company, and thrice Mayor of Barnstaple. “...Beaple succeeded

¹³ CR/579 Court Roll 1537

¹⁴ *The Parish of Chittlehamholt* by Rev J H B Andrews (Transactions of the Devonshire Association, Volume XCIII page 150 (1961)

¹⁵ Andrews pp 254 – 255

¹⁶ As Footnote 12

¹⁷ 16th February 1882

Beaple all any tyme or tyme hereafter bymitted expressed or declared of and in the
That is to saie of and in all that the Mannor or Mannors of Reed and Poole
 shall panyshes of Shillshampton, Surrington, Leigh Surrington and Shulmeleigh in the
 situat tynge and tynge in the said parishes of Shillshampton and Shulmeleigh. And likewise

Fig 5 Extract from the Marriage Settlement of William Gay and Elizabeth Beaple, detailing Richard Beaple's land¹⁸

Fig 6 Peter Atkins' signature on the deed of sale of Head Barton to John Langwill, dated 1702

	Value
7000 Three Brehan's now in their Prime and the best of fruit	7 15 0
4000 The Barn Ck. Mead and Hoppy Gr	11 10 0
10000 The Home Mead	11 17 6
14000 The two Mill Meadows a Marshes	7 0 17
10000 The Arrow Marsh	17 0 15
6000 Hartwells Gr	10 0 17
5000 The Lady's Hop a New Mead	9 0 12
1000 The 3 Corned Mead	2 2 0
2000 The better Lesse	11 0 12
1000 The further Lesse and the Little Gr	3 0 07
1000 The Swans Ham a Marsh	2 2 0
2000 The Chase a Kings Close	3 7 0
3000 The Little Ball	5 2 0
7000 The Great Gr	13 0 12
1000 The South Field South Field the Middle Field	5 2 0
16000 The Ragg Ham	10 0 10
5000 Head Gate Close	12 0 10
Long Close	15 2 0
Rode Close	8 2 0
Several Paths of best Ground	10 2 0
Gardens &c	65 0 0
	1 1 12
1520	
120	
10007	

Fig. 7 Valuation of Head 1759¹

¹⁸ 96M/Box90/1 1641 - 1679

in acquiring the great object of mercantile ambition in that day an “estate” says the report. “This was the “barton and demesne¹⁹” as it is still called in the Charity Trustees’ accounts, of Hedd or Head in the parish of Chittlehampton, which remained in 1668 in the possession of Richard Gay, one of his grandsons.”

The reason for the inclusion in the Charity Trustees accounts was that a codicil in Beaple’s will of 14th November 1642²⁰ directed that £20 out of his “barton and demesne” of Head should be used for the poor people of Barnstaple each year.

The Devon Heritage Centre holds, in its collection entitled Rolle of St Giles (Clinton Devon Estates) at 96M Box 71, further documents pertaining to Chittlehampton including manorial deeds, settlements and wills connected with the families of Gay, Giffard and Rolle. These records are not all separately catalogued, and further exploration for relevant material might pay dividends for future research.

Richard Beaple’s daughter and heir took Head into the North Devon family of Gay, that of the famous playwright John Gay. Elizabeth Beaple married Anthony Gay of Goldsworthy, on 6th June 1609.²¹ Their son William Gay, described as of “Hedd, Chittlehampton” in Vivian’s Visitations married Elizabeth, daughter of John Coffyn of Portledge on 24th August 1648 at Monkleigh (Fig. 5). Hedd was described as both “the Manor or Manors of Hedd” and “All that capital message, barton and farm called Hedd” in a 1649 marriage settlement for William Gay and Elizabeth Coffyn.²²

William died in 1651, leaving a will²³ describing the disposal of chattles at Head and “my house at Barnstaple”. Disappointingly for this research, he does not describe Head in any way.

Richard Gay, William’s brother was described as “of Hedd” in 1664²⁴ in an indenture which recorded, amongst other things, that Richard had “lately purchased the manor of Chittlehamholt” from the feoffees of Sir Lewis Pollard, deceased. The indenture concerns the disposal of land following William’s death, and Hedd is mentioned as *not* being included in the sale recorded here, as William’s widow Elizabeth had a life interest in the “capital message, barton or farme of Hedd and the demesne lands meadows pastures mills woods under woods and appurtenances thereunto belonging situate and lying in the parish of Chittlehampton.” A surrender dated 16th May 1664²⁵ recorded Elizabeth, now re-married to Josias Calmady, relinquishing (for a sum of money) her interest in Hedd to Richard, her brother-in-law.

3.5 The 18th and 19th centuries

According to Lysons, the Tiverton family of Atkins were linked to Head in the late 17th and early 18th century. Henry was baptised 11th July 1692 and Thomas was baptised on 1st October 1699 in St Peter’s Church, Tiverton, sons of Peter. Peter Atkins, “Gentleman of Head in the parish of Chittlehampton” is recorded selling land to John Langwill, Taylor of Tiverton on 30th December 1702; his signature and seal from the deed are shown in Fig. 6.²⁶

The administration of the estate of Peter Atkins of Chittlehampton was left to his only surviving son Henry in 1727. A transcribed marriage record stated that Peter married a “Mistress Mary Gay” but this has not been verified and no original marriage record has yet been found. Various indexed Chancery records give pieces of genealogical information. A bill dated 1721

¹⁹ Demesne – i.e. the lord’s own land, farmed for his sole use.

²⁰ PROB 11/192/519 Will of Richard Beaple, Merchant of Barnstaple proved 1645

²¹ *Visitations of Devon* edited by Col. Vivian

²² 96M/Box71/8C Marriage settlement 1649

²³ PROB 11/218/590 Will of William Gay of Chittlehampton, Devon proved 27th October 1651

²⁴ 96M/35/22/55

²⁵ As 20

²⁶ 96M/Box 76/32

describes Peter Atkins as “gent of Chittlehampton” and his son Henry as his “heir apparent”.²⁷ A bill and two answers dated 1728 name “Mary Atkins aged 5 years (only daughter of Thomas Atkins, gent deceased late of Head, Chittlehampton, Devon), infant (by Joan Atkins, widow of said Thomas Atkins, deceased, her mother)”.²⁸ On 14th September 1722, Thomas Atkins and Joanna Snow of Chittlehampton had been married in Bideford by licence. Mary appeared to be their only child.

In 1757, the Chulmleigh Overseers interviewed a miller called John Herden who “went to Chittlehampton and agreed with Henry Atkins Esq to serve him as miller at Head Mills at 2s 6d a week. After about a year, he agreed to rent the mill at a yearly rent of £25, after 6 months he gave up by consent and paid the rent”. This doesn’t give the dates of the events. However, the description of Peter and Henry as gentlemen suggests that Head and Head Mills were still important in the manor and parish.

From 1708 the manors of Chittlehampton and Brightley were owned by Samuel Rolle, Esq. of Hudscott, and by his son Samuel, who on his death in 1746 left them to his cousin Denys, whose son John (born at Hudscott 1751) was in 1796 created Lord Rolle. By his will the estate remained in trust from 1842 until the death in 1906 of the tenant for life, the Hon. Mark Rolle, when it reverted to Lord Clinton.²⁹

From the later 18th century, Robert Wackerell appeared as the occupier of Head. The above valuation (Fig. 7) shows quite an extensive estate of farm land. Documents from the 96M collection³⁰ include:

- Rack Rents due Lady Day 1751 to Denys Rolle Esq collected 13th May following: [Head is not listed in the main body of the document]. *Received. Of Mr Jno Mozzis for keeping of Cattle at Head 01.16. 00*
- A list of Manorial Tenants: *1768: Tenants: Robt Wackerell: Bartons & Tenements: All Hedd Barton except the Great Wood Miss and Mill Ground. For 7, 14 and 21 years from Lady Day 1765. £63*
- 1772: A Particular of the lands of Denys Rolle Esq in Chittlehampton, Warkley and Horwood now let at Rack Rent:
Tenants: Robert Wackerell. Tenements: *Head Barton [note in different hand, looks added later: £20 a year paid as of this to the poor of Barnstaple] Rents: £63.*
Tenants: John Wannacott. Tenements: Head Mill. Rents: £16
Received of Robert Wackerell £21, 15 & 10 ½ which with £25, 9 & 1 ½ allowed him for Disbursements and Money paid by him before to and by the order of John Trowler makes £47, 5 which appears to be in full for nine months rent of Head Barton due at Michaelmass last.

Wackerell is also described as such in a lease dated 1776³¹ and appears in the Land Tax Assessments from 1780 (the beginning of the run) until 1786, tenant of “Denys Rolle Esq” for “Head”.

²⁷ C 11/2724/43

²⁸ C 11/1846/2

²⁹ From the Chittlehampton Magazine No. 15: The Manor of Chittlehampton by Rev J H B Andrews, transcribed by David Ryll (viewed on the Genuki website 13th October 2019 www.genuki.org.uk)

³⁰ 96M/Box 3/15

³¹ 146B/0/L/20

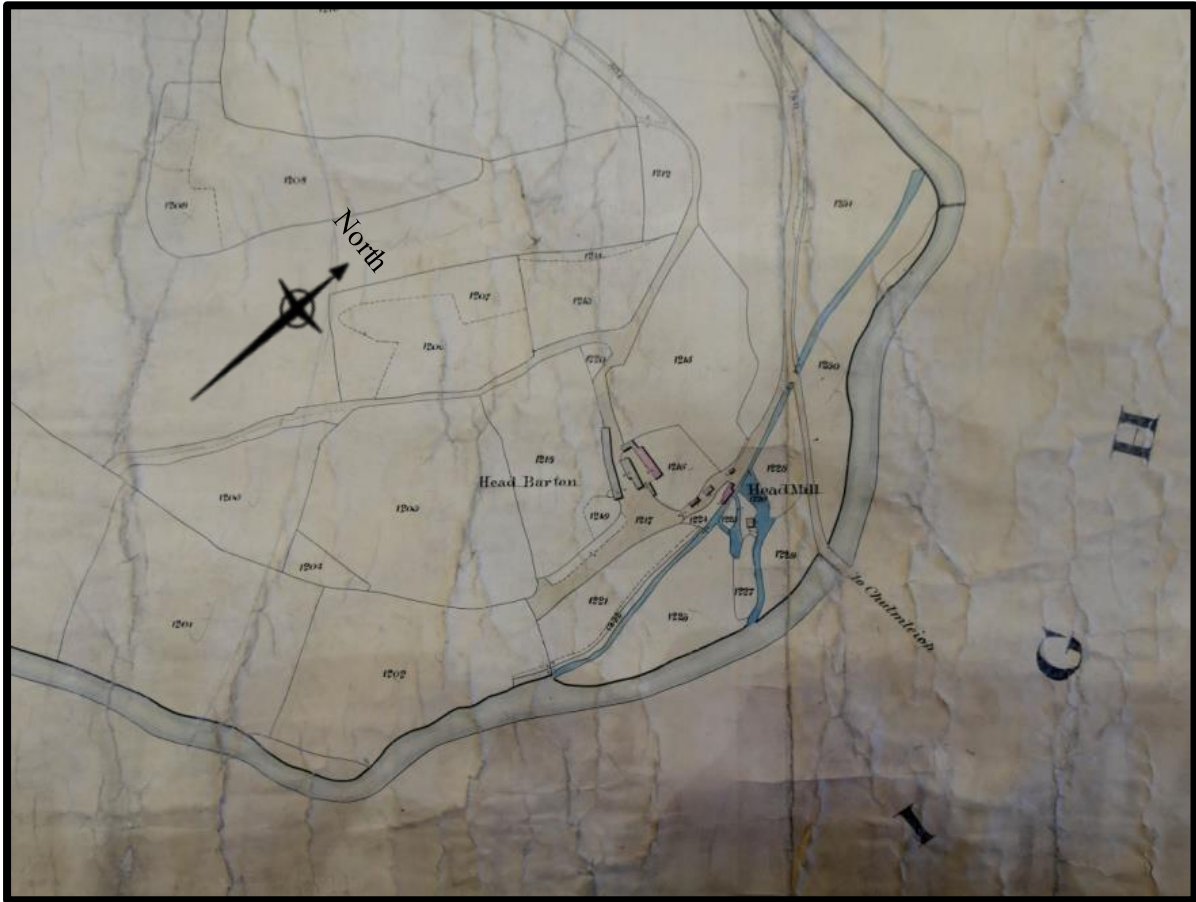


Fig. 8 The Tithe Map for the parish of Chittlehampton showing Head Barton and Head Mill as they stood in 1845

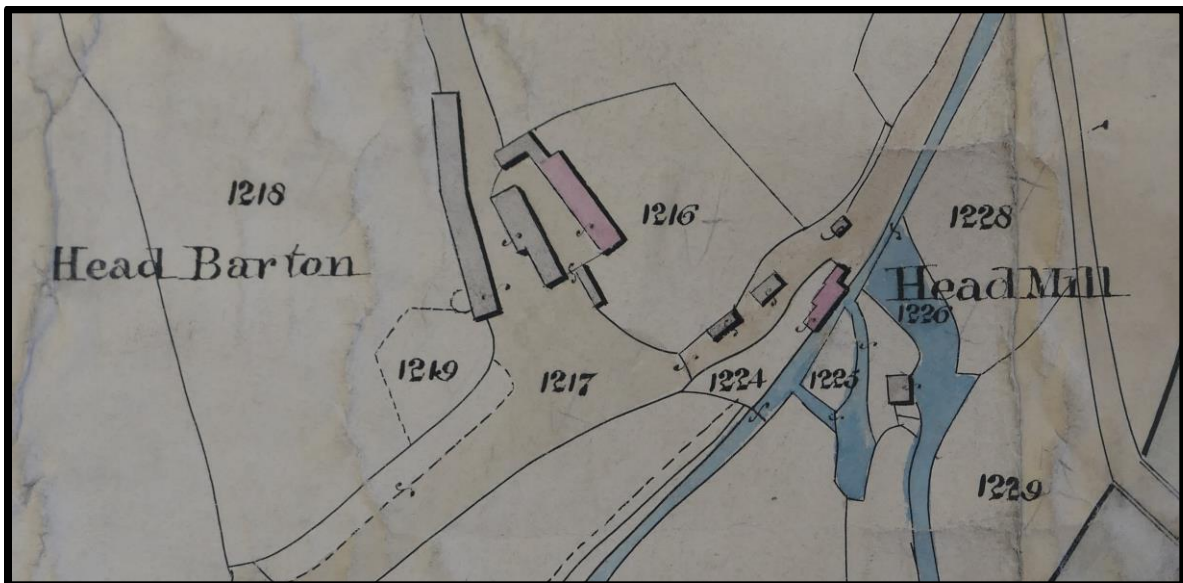


Fig. 9 Detail of the above; the farmhouse, shown in pink appears to occupy the site of the existing piggeries.

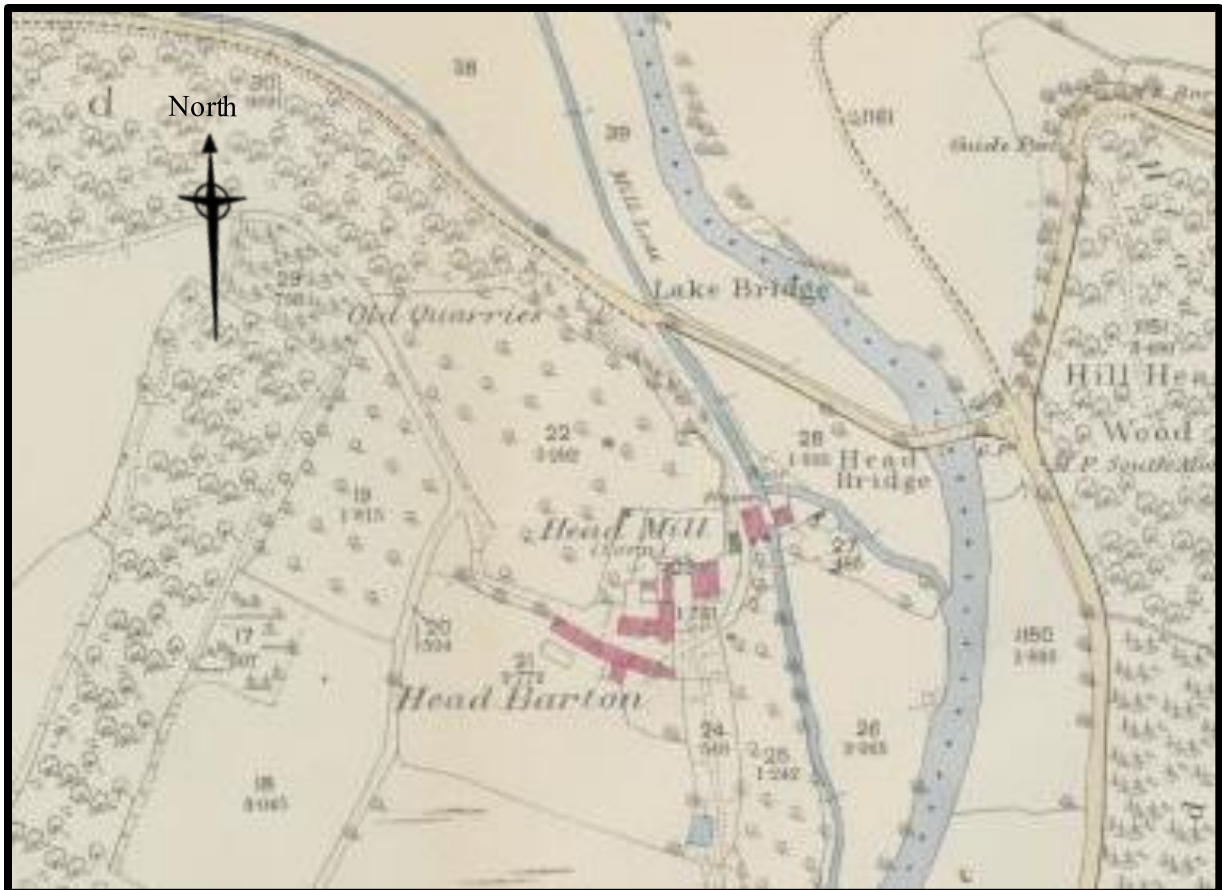


Fig. 10 Head Barton in the late 1880s from the OS 1st edition 1:500 map.

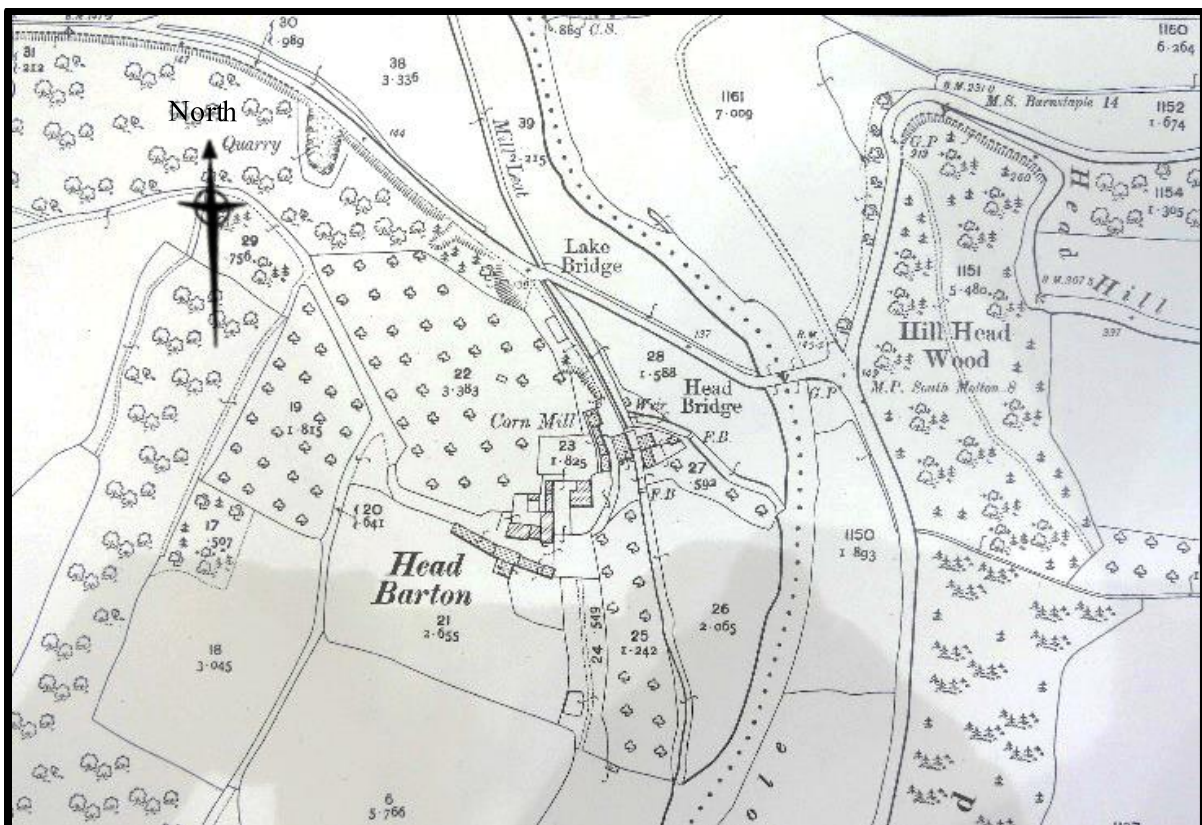


Fig. 11 Head Barton in 1903 (County Series Sheet no. XXXI.11, 2nd Edition).

3.6 The Mannings at Head

From 1787, the Manning family began their long association with Head which was to last into the 20th century. William Manning appeared in the Land Tax Assessment, the tenant of “the Right Hon. Lord Rolle” for “Head Barton” until 1831 when his son James Manning’s name replaced his until 1832, the end of the run. James, son of William and Grace Manning of Chittlehampton, was baptised in King’s Nympton on 9th January 1811. He married Mary Huxtable in Chittlehampton on 28th June 1831, the year he was recorded as occupier of Head Barton. James and Mary Manning’s son James was baptised in Chittlehampton on 1st January 1834, James senior described as a yeoman farmer.

Three Manning couples were having children baptised in King’s Nympton in the late 18th and early 19th centuries: William and Grace, John and Rachel and Henry and Mary, and the families spread out into the neighbouring parishes during the following decades. More research might find them brothers; they were probably at least cousins.

Rather confusingly, there was a second James Manning in Chittlehampton, baptised in King’s Nympton on 23rd March 1817, the son of John. A more in-depth genealogical study of the Mannings would sort them out; it is important to know which James, John and William are appearing in records at any one time.

The Tithe Apportionment for the parish of Chittlehampton (part 2) in 1840 records the owner of Head Barton as “Trustees of the Late Lord Rolle” and James Manning as occupier. The total acreage of the farm was given as 131 acres, 3 roods and 31 perches. James Manning is also listed as occupier of Head Mill. The accompanying tithe map (Fig. 9) shows the farm buildings laid out much as at present, though the farmhouse (shown in pink) appears as another parallel range to the north of the farm buildings, on or near the site of the Piggeries. It is possible that this was the site of the early farmhouse.

The 1841 census lists James aged about 30 years old, with Mary Manning, also about 30 and children Mary, Sarah, Elizabeth and Catherine. At the Mill are John Manning, Miller aged about 65 and Rachel aged about 60 with James, 20 and Henry, 17. James Manning (Head) and John Manning are listed under Farmers in White’s Commercial Directory for 1850.

The 1851 census³² lists James aged 40, farmer of 113 acres at Head Barton, employing 4 outworkers, with his wife Mary and elder daughters, additional children, James, Lucy and John, and three live-in servants, so Head Barton was the evidently still a thriving concern. Next door was William Manning aged 53, farmer of 30 acres, probably the son of John and Rachel Manning, baptised in King’s Nympton in May of 1798. Over at the Mill was the widowed Rachel Manning heading the household and “occupying 6 acres with the Mill”. Her son James was now Miller and they kept a house servant and a general servant.

The image of the 1861 census return³³ on the Ancestry website (www.ancestry.co.uk) is very faint, but it looks as though James was away from home on census night, while his wife Mary erroneously wrote in his details, then crossed them out. However, evidently James was now farmer and miller, and their son James aged 18 was listed as a miller. In 1871³⁴, this was the situation, with James senior aged 60, his sons James aged 28 and John aged 23 all listed as farmers and millers, and the Mill Cottage unoccupied.

At this period the farmhouse was rebuilt on a new site, possibly because the earlier building had been destroyed by a fire (Andrews 1961, 152), though no record of such a disaster has been encountered during the research. The new farmhouse is a typical and very handsome building of its period, bearing the date 1872. The reconstruction of the farmhouse seems to have been the first episode in a programme of rebuilding and remodelling the farm buildings which continued throughout the end years of the 19th century.

³² HO 107/1891 Folio 771, Schedule no. 9

³³ RG 9/1437 Folio 106, Schedule no. 29

³⁴ RG 10/2181 Folio 131, Schedule no. 43

The *North Devon Journal* of 1st April 1880 reported the marriage, on 18th March, of James Manning of Head Mills, Chittlehampton and Miss Elizabeth Underhill of Week House Farm, Winkleigh, and the 1881 census showed that everything had moved around at Head again. James and Mary Manning were still living in Head Barton, aged 71 and 72, James described as a farmer of 135 acres employing two labourers and one boy. Their son John was living with them, aged 31, an unmarried “farmer’s son”. Next door at the Mill lived James junior aged 38, a farmer of 42 acres employing three men and one boy, one miller and what might be “one miller’s son”. His wife Elizabeth was 36, born in Wembworthy and they had a four month old son Thomas.³⁵

Kelly’s Directory for 1883 lists James Manning for Head Barton. It is probable that the death registered in the South Molton District May – June 1886, for James Manning aged 76 was James senior. The following year, on 10th November, “James Manning, Miller and Farmer” was listed in the column “Information for Creditors” in the *North Devon Journal*. By 1891, James junior, Elizabeth and Thomas were living at 6 Park Place, Winkleigh.

Kelly’s lists “Manning, John, farmer, Head Barton” from 1889 until 1902. The 1891 census³⁶ lists John and Elizabeth Manning (nee Elizabeth Nott) living at Head Barton with four small children, John’s sister Sophia and three servants. The Mill meanwhile was occupied by George Pope, Miller and Corn Dealer, his wife Emma and their tiny son, and a stray Manning, Edith aged 13 listed as “visitor”. 1901 showed a similar set-up apart from more small children. However, on 24th July the following year, the *North Devon Journal* reported the death, at Head Barton, of John Manning aged 56 on 13th.

From 1907 until 1927, “Manning, Eliza (Mrs) was recorded in trade directories at Head Barton. The 1911 census recorded Eliza living at Head Barton, a widow aged 55, occupation “general Farmer”³⁷ and from various activities reported in the local newspapers, she continued to farm for over quarter of a century, seeing the Manning family out of Head Barton after around 150 years. Finally, The *North Devon Journal* of 24th March 1927 reported a sale of live and dead stock at Head Barton “on behalf of the executors of the late Mrs E Manning”.

Finally, the Govier family were recorded as replacing the Mannings, and keeping Head Barton going as the farm it had always been. “Govier, Richard L. Farmer” was the entry in the last Kelly’s Directories before World War II.

4. BUILDING SURVEY (by Richard Parker).

The farm buildings are aligned from east to west in two groups on either side of a narrow yard (Figs. 12, 14) which, as mentioned above, is believed to have been the former main road between Exeter and Barnstaple, descending from Kingsnympton to cross the river Mole north of the site and then turning sharply to the west below the farmhouse before ascending the Head and following the ridge northwards to Chittlehampton and Barnstaple.

The buildings to the south of this track include a cart shed or trap house, at the east end of the range, an open linhay or cart shed, a threshing barn to the west of this, with an horse engine lying to the south and, west of this a long open-fronted linhay facing north-east. At the western end of the range as a most unusual back-to-back linhay with open fronts facing both north east and south west, with a single loft over allowing two sets of cattle to be fed from a single loft. This is a most unusual and highly attractive building.

To the north of the track, immediately west of the farmhouse is a handsome 19th century building bearing the inscription ‘MR 1882’, possibly serving as stables with a first-floor granary above. A range of lower, one-storey buildings extend to the north, which were not inspected as they appear to be in use by the tenants of the farmhouse. To the west of the granary is a pound house, possibly a survival from a much older building and west of this a large stable, again with an

³⁵ RG 11/2242 Folio no. 95, Schedule no. 33 and 34

³⁶ RG 12/1772 Folio no. 25, Schedule no. 29

³⁷ RG 14/283/2/13

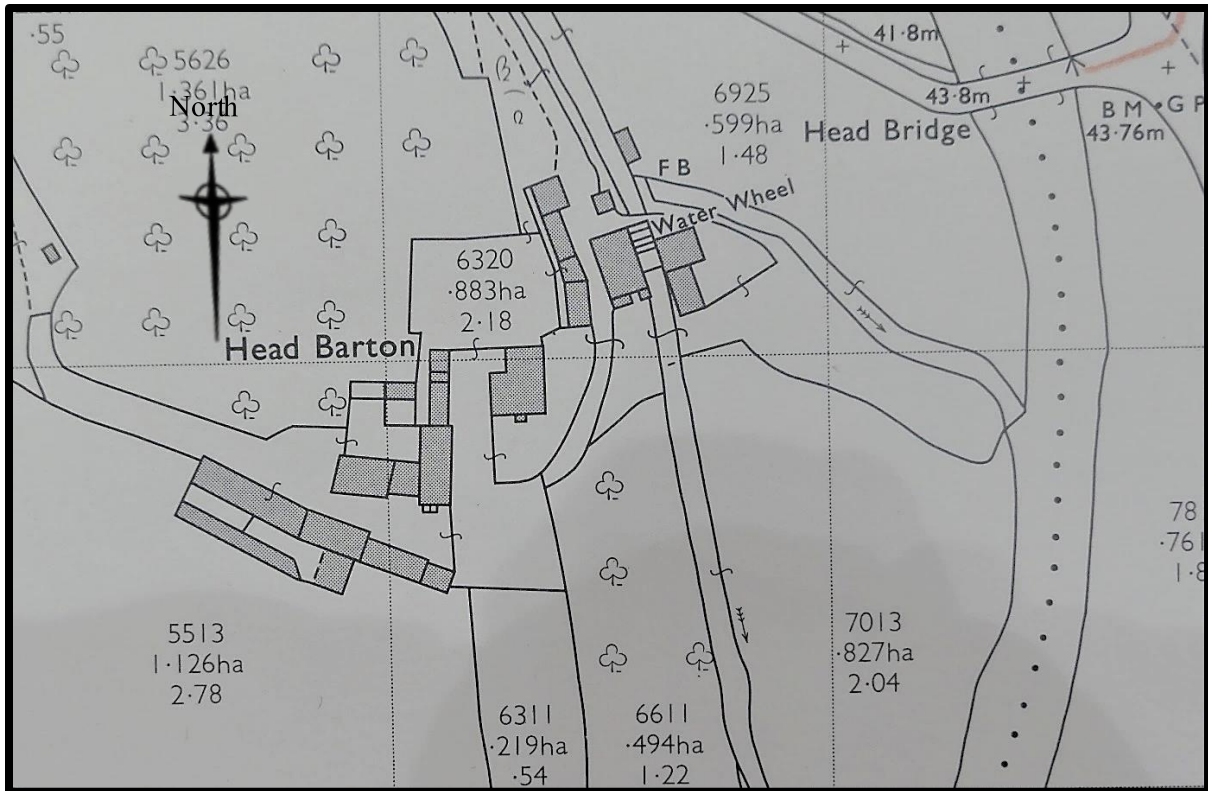


Fig 12 Head Barton in 1967 showing the new structures added to the south of the buildings (SX 6618/6718).



Fig 13 The farmhouse (right) and adjacent buildings, looking north.



Fig. 14 The farm buildings seen from the eastern end of the yard.



Fig. 15 The trap house at the eastern end of the southern range of buildings, showing the corbelled eaves detail.



Fig. 16 The south elevation of the trap house, showing the brick weatherings built into the gable of the adjacent linhay.



Fig. 17 The trap house roof showing the roof truss with raking struts and suspension rod.



Fig. 18 The north elevation of linhay I.

unusual layout allowing two groups of stalls to be serviced from a single head walk. North of this, within a small walled enclosure, are piggeries. As these seem to be directly connected with the low buildings extending north of the granary, it is possible that the latter range contained slaughterhouses and facilities for preparing the pig meat.

The tithe apportionment (Chittlehampton 2) of 1842 provides evidence of some of the functions of the land in the immediate vicinity, though it does not describe the function of individual buildings. The site of the existing piggeries appears to have been the site of the ancient farmhouse, for example. This is shown in pink of the accompanying tithe map, dated 1845, with a large garden surrounding it, extending to include the site of the present farmhouse, and orchards beyond it in the large field to the north. South and west of the farmhouse the tithe map shows the yard extending for a considerable distance along the south-eastern boundary of the field south of the farm buildings, which is identified on the tithe apportionment as 'Barn Close'. A small sub-circular enclosure in the eastern corner of this field is identified as a 'Mowhay'; this may have included the long strip of land alongside it which is neither numbered or labelled (Fig. 9). On the other side of this road and yards, alongside the leat, was a further orchard. The field to the west, containing the possible prehistoric remains, is named 'Moor Close', and is described as arable land.

4.1 The Trap House

The trap house lies at the east end of the southern range of buildings, close to the farmhouse and with its main entrance opening outside the walled area of the farm yard. It was almost certainly used for the storage of a domestic vehicle such as a trap or gig, rather than a farm vehicle.

This small single-storeyed building (Figs 15, 16) is of stone construction, of snecked brown Culm-measures rubble with orange, wire-cut brick dressings, under a slate roof. The roof is low-pitched and contemporary with the building, its eaves plates continuing beyond the gable wall and supported on bull-nosed corbelling- a detail also found in the presumed granary building dated 1882. It is probable that both buildings are contemporary.

The west wall (Fig. 15) has a wide, low, segmental archway containing double doors, hung on long, square-ended strap hinges, stamped at their terminals by way of ornament. The archway is in poor condition and may be at risk of collapse. Above it is a louvred ventilator opening with a slate sill and brick dressings, now almost entirely masked by ivy. The north and south walls feature small ventilator openings with brick dressings and segmental arched heads, both retaining their metal ventilator grilles. The northern wall is much overgrown with ivy.

The interior is a single undivided space, currently used for the storage of a cart. The walls are whitewashed but un-plastered, and the floor is at least partially cobbled, though not all of the cobbling is visible.

The roof is unceiled, of two bays supported by a single truss, consisting of a tie beam linking the principal rafters, which are supported by a pair of raking struts (Fig. 17). There is no king post, but instead an iron suspension rod secured by bolts at both base and apex. There are two levels of purlins supported above the backs of the principals by cleats, and a plank ridge supported on a saddle block above the apex. On the basis of the orange-red wire-cut brick dressings and other details, this building probably dates from the later 19th century. It is likely to have been erected between 1882 and 1900.

4.2 Linhay I

This is a long, low single-storey structure with an open front to the yard to the north (Fig. 18) and solid masonry walls to the south and at the gable ends, where it butts against the threshing barn and the trap house (Fig. 19). A further solid wall divides the building into unequal sections, the eastern part being three bays in length and the western part of two bays only. It is probable that the eastern three-bay part of the building is earlier and that the western bays were added to it.

The roof at the eastern end of the building rises higher than that of the trap house and features the same corbelled brick detail supporting the eaves projection. The gable also shows brick flashings or weatherings for the profile of the trap house roof.

The only opening in the south wall is a small doorway at the western end, with bull-nosed wire-cut orange brick dressings, which gives access from the two-bay section of the building to Barn Close. The lower part of the walling in the south wall is of slightly different character from the upper, incorporating smaller blocks, up to a height of just under half a metre below the eaves, where larger and darker blocks are visible (Fig. 19). This seems to represent more than just a building lift or differential staining of the areas not sheltered by the eaves, but a significant break in construction. The lower part of the wall may survive from an earlier structure with the same footprint, possibly one of the structures shown on the tithe map; the present building is probably a late 19th-century reconstruction of that building.

These brick weatherings are absent from the eastern wall of the barn, and it is evident that the relationship between these two structures is more complex and that the barn is earlier than the linhay. This is particularly evident just above the roofline at the west end, where the roof structure can be seen cutting across an opening in the east wall of the barn (Fig. 19). This opening has the same orange brick dressings as the other openings and the quoins of the late 19th-century buildings; it seems to have been abandoned and partially blocked soon after construction.

The open north side of the linhay is supported by chamfered wooden posts, now resting rather insecurely on modern concrete blocks, presumably because the lower parts of the original posts had rotted away or because earlier stone bases have been removed. The tie beams of the roof structure are housed in slots in the heads of the linhay posts, passing over then and chamfered under the eaves. The bressummer supporting the eaves is either notched over or housed in the upper surface of the tie beams, however this detail is not entirely clear.

The western part is separated from the eastern bays by a solid stone wall which seems to have been intended as the western gable of the original building, as its brick corbelling for the support of the eaves is still visible extending westwards under the later roof. This seems to argue that the building originally terminated here, leaving a space between this structure and the barn.

The western two bays of the linhay are thus clearly secondary, but, as the construction of this two-bay extension to the building is identical with that of the eastern part, it is likely that there was no long delay between the completion of the building and the addition of the extension. Indeed, the roof structure appears to be continuous over both sections. The western bays are partially enclosed by a timber ventilator grille, parts of which remain. The marks of the vertical Battens are still visible in the underside of the bressummer and the linhay post in this section of the building retains its original chamfered stone base and sockets for the middle rail of the ventilator screen (Figs 20, 21).

The internal walls of both parts of the building are whitewashed but un-plastered. The roof is of the same construction as that of the trap house, except at the eastern end, where diagonal wind braces appear below the lower purlins. These are not repeated at the west end or in the extension to the building. The reason for this is uncertain.

This linhay is likely to be of mid-to-late 19th-century date, like the trap house, but it appears to have been either built in two phases or modified during construction to extend as far as the barn. The south wall of the building is at least in part earlier than the present structure and may suggest that the change of plan took place before the building had even been completed.

4.3 The Threshing Barn

This building is clearly of two phases, the western part being of earlier date than the eastern part. The barn appears to have been symmetrical originally, with central opposed doors in its north and south walls for creating the winnowing draught, showing that the barn was designed for hand threshing. The eastern bays are a later addition to enlarge the structure.



Fig. 19 The south elevation of linhay I (right) showing the differing masonry of the upper section of walling beneath the eaves, the partially blocked opening in the east wall of the threshing barn (arrowed) and the east elevation of the horse-engine house (left).



Fig. 20 The north elevation of linhay I showing the brick pier with corbelling marking the original western limit of the building (left) and the ventilation screens to the western bay of the extension (left).



Fig. 21 Detail of the post and base supporting the western bays.

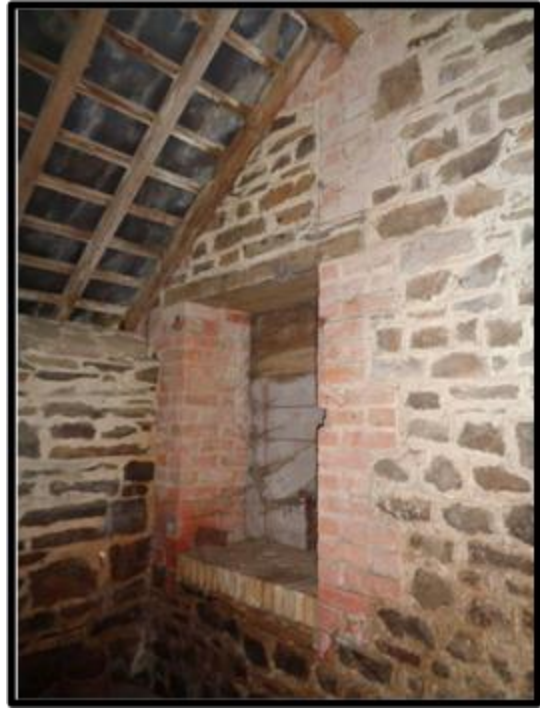


Fig. 22 The partially blocked opening in the east wall of the threshing barn.



Fig. 23 The north elevation of the threshing barn, showing the secondary extension to its east end (left) and the 19th-century pent roof over the main doors.



Fig. 24 The south elevation of the threshing barn, showing its relationship with the horse-engine house (right).

The older part of the building has stone walls to a height of approximately two or three metres, above which the walling is of cob covered with cement render, lined-out to resemble snecked rubble. The newer eastern part of the barn is entirely of stone with brick dressings of the same type as previously described and must date from the later 19th century. This addition was probably contemporary with the addition of the horse engine house, when the farm adopted threshing with a machine.

The lower part of the south elevation of the early part of the barn has stone walls about two to three metres in height, with cement-rendered cob walling above (Fig. 23). The main doors have solid, square-sectioned buttresses of stone without brick dressings though their upper parts have been entirely rebuilt in brick, presumably replacing earlier cob. The doorway has a wide, low, segmental arch and weathering, over which a pent roof has been constructed in the late 19th century, supported on small struts springing from corbels flanking the buttresses. The doors all bear hinges and furniture stamped with a bold, capital letter 'R', probably referencing the Rolle estate. There are no ventilation slits or other openings and the barn was presumably lit by simply opening both pairs of doors. The eastern part of the barn is a later addition dating from the late 19th century, with stone walls rising to eaves height and dressings of red wire-cut brick. This part of the elevation has a small window with red brick dressings presumably to provide light for those operating the threshing machine. A doorway in the east wall formerly has been partially blocked by the roof of the adjoining linhay (Fig. 22)

The south elevation of the barn has lower stone walls, to about two metres in height, with the same rendered cob masonry above. The buttresses on either side of the main threshing doors are of solid stone, without brick dressings, but have been wholly rebuilt above. Above the doorway is a similar late 19th-century pent roof supported on struts springing from semi-circular corbels. The eastern part of the elevation is partially masked by the horse-engine house. Here the



Fig. 25 The interior of the threshing barn, looking west, showing the roof structure.



Fig. 26 The west-facing elevation of the horse engine house and the pent roofs over the barn doors.



Fig. 27 One of the Shuttered windows of the horse-engine house.



Fig. 28 The interior of the horse engine house showing the traces of beams and openings in the south wall.

end of a massive beam is visible, sawn-off flush with the surface of the wall. This may have projected into the horse-engine house to support the pinions of the capstan. Alternatively, the beam may have crossed the barn to support the threshing machine on a first-floor structure, since removed. The aperture for the drive shaft from the horse engine to the threshing machine may have passed through an aperture in the wall above the beam, now blocked.

The interior of the threshing barn (Fig. 25) is a single space, currently filled with bales of hay. This stored material obscures the threshing floor, which is believed to survive intact, as it is mentioned in the Listed Building descriptions (see appendix). There are no surviving internal partitions or platforms. The walls are simply plastered, except for the lower sections where the stonework is exposed. It is possible that there are blocked sockets for beams in the walls, but any evidence of these is currently obscured. The roof structure is of late 19th-century date and similar in construction to those of the adjacent linhay 1 and the trap house. It seems the original roof of the barn was entirely renewed when it was enlarged eastwards in the late 19th century. The absence of any evidence of chases for wall posts probably indicates that the original roof was a relatively simple 'A'-frame structure. At the western end of the barn there is no gable above eaves level, which may suggest that the original roof was hipped at this, and probably at both ends.

The threshing barn appears to be an earlier building remodelled and extended in the later 19th century. Although it contains no easily dated features, and its date cannot be established with any kind of certainty, the character of the stone walling, without any evidence of put-log holes (scaffold holes characteristic of medieval and early post-medieval building practice) and the absence of any cruck chases or any features indicative of an early roof structure in the cob walls above this, it is considered unlikely that the building is earlier than the 18th century. It is probable that the barn was first constructed in the late 18th century and that it was remodelled in its present form in the 1880s after the farm was improved under the ownership of the hon. Mark Rolle.

4.4 The horse-engine house

This large building was probably added with the eastern end of the threshing barn in the late 19th century. It has an open front to the west, supported by a single chamfered post (Fig. 26). To the east the building has a pair of small shuttered windows retaining their original fitted shutters (Fig. 27). The remains of a large beam is visible in the south wall of the barn which, as previously suggested, may have supported either the upper pinion of the capstan and presumably also the gearing which transferred the power generated by the horses to the transmission shaft passing through the barn wall to drive the threshing machine (Fig. 28). The roof of the horse-engine of the house is of the same period and character as the roofs previously described, though it has a variation in that the collar or tie beam is doubled. There are two levels of purlins and a plank ridge.

4.5 Linhay II

This is one of the oldest structures now visible at the site and is in correspondingly rickety condition (Fig. 29). The building rises steeply with the hill slope to the west and the first-floor platform is therefore not level but slopes steeply eastwards. It is clear that this can never have served as more than a tallet or hay loft.

The building has a solid rear wall towards the south, of mixed construction (Fig. 30), buttressed by shallow 19th-century raking buttresses with red brick dressings. This wall appears to have been truncated at the construction of Linhay III to the west and must pre-date it, whereas the cob upper portion seems to be later than Linhay III. It is possible that the stone lower section of Linhay II represents an earlier yard wall which was truncated at the construction of Linhay III and was then raised to form the rear wall of a new linhay infilling a former space between Linhay III and the threshing barn.

The western and eastern gable walls are also of cob over stone footings rising to a height of approximately 1.5 metres. One unusual feature is a row of redundant sockets visible in the east gable wall. These do not seem to relate to the present internal floor structures, and it is suggested that this wall, which corresponds with the west wall of the threshing barn, may perhaps survive from an earlier structure on the site (Fig. 34).

The lower part of the north elevation (Fig. 29) is now enclosed with 19th- or 20th-century boarded partitions but was originally open. The boarding incorporates three plank doors and a ventilator window of later 19th-century date, all of which have handsome strap hinges and latch mechanisms bearing the letter 'R', probably to mark these improvements as the work of the Rolle estate.

The original open front was framed by five tall posts, only crudely squared and chamfered, resting on a low stone wall which raised the floor within the linnhay above the level of the yard. This cannot, therefore, have been a cart linnhay and must presumably have been used as a shippin or cow-house. The five vertical posts have housings in their rear faces to receive the ends of the principal loft beams, which are lodged in these housings and have long tenons passing through deep mortises in the posts and secured with pegs (Fig. 32). It is unfortunately not possible to ascertain whether these are open or closed mortises, due to the timber cladding of the fronts of the posts, though the former seems most likely as this was a common feature of linnhay construction.

The loft beams and joists are of a blond, wide-grained timber, probably of elm, the floor joists being staggered from bay to bay, simply resting on, rather than housed or tenoned into the principal beams (Fig. 31). The timbers are crudely but effectively shaped and laid flat so that their irregular form in an horizontal plane does not affect the floor. They are agreeably wiggly. The floor boards are in relatively poor condition but are also probably of elm and may be contemporary.

The first-floor loft is approached by a vertical loft ladder in the south-western corner. The roof appears to have been reassembled or rebuilt at some period, as there is evidence of a number of redundant sockets. It consists of five 'A'-framed trusses crossed and pegged at the apex with pairs of square pegs (Figs 33, 34). The collar beams are reused, showing the remains of half-lap joints, now redundant, at one end, and a series of peg-holes at relatively regular intervals in the underside. The purpose of these is unclear, though the loft may have been divided into separate bays by partitions supported by vertical studs, alternatively there may have been a second loft or storage area, above collar level, and these holes might have served to peg down joists or boards. The feet of the existing trusses do not seem to relate well to the posts supporting the open front, and it is likely that they are replacements, or have been reset. They rest upon a smaller post situated behind the original posts, and bear spacer blocks which fill a notch in the heads of the earlier posts and support a subsidiary rafter in each truss, above the level of the earlier principal rafters. This device seems designed to compensate for the thickness of an earlier thatched roof covering, and probably dates from a time when the roof was reconfigured and altered to bear its present lighter covering of a 20th-century corrugated material (Asbestos?). The original roof, which was perhaps of late 18th- or early 19th century date and is likely to have been thatched, was rebuilt or modified in the 19th century, perhaps because it had suffered some form of structural failure. The present roof was then created by reusing elements of the old trusses, reconfigured and supported on additional posts. This roof also appears to have been thatched. The present roof was created in the 20th century by the removal of the earlier purlins, rafters and roof covering and the creation of a new roof of very light construction over the top of the earlier trusses.

The present furnishings, including concrete troughs, stalls and a head walk are of 20th-century date.

4.6 Linnhay III

This remarkable building is a double-sided linnhay facing in two directions, both north and south, and appears to be very nearly in its original condition, though it has been re-roofed in a modern corrugated material. On the south side the façade is divided into four bays by tall cylindrical stone piers no more than $\frac{1}{2}$ a metre in diameter and rising about 3 or 4 metres in height (Fig. 35). The first-floor beams are built into these piers, as is the bressummer of the first floor. The east and



Fig. 29 The north front of Linhay II showing the late 19th-century enclosure of the lower part of the façade.



Fig. 30 The south elevation of Linhay II showing the much patched and buttressed rear wall of cob and stone with later buttresses.



Fig. 31 The interior of Linhay II showing the staggered joists of the first-floor structure.



Fig. 32 Detail of the construction of the north front of Linhay II showing the junction of the wall posts and the principal first-floor beams.



Fig. 33 The first-floor interior of Linhay II, looking west, showing the lapped collars of the roof trusses and the cob walling.



Fig. 34 The interior of the loft of Linhay II looking east, showing the redundant sockets for an earlier first-floor structure in the gable wall.



Fig. 35 The south elevation Linhay III, showing the cylindrical piers supporting the first-floor structure and roofs.



Fig 36 The north front of Linhay III showing later enclosure of the façade.



Fig. 37 The western gable of the double linhay III showing possible evidence for a half hip.



Fig 38 The interior of the north side of the double linhay showing the timber manger below the pitching void and the remains of modern cattle stalls.



Fig 39 The interior of the first floor of the double linhay showing the single loft with a central pitching void serving both sets of mangers.

west walls are of stone almost to first-floor level but of cob above- the floor joists being built into the cob and therefore clearly primary.

The north side of the building also features three cylindrical piers, though in this case the stonework rises only to first-floor level, above which the piers are constructed of cob (Fig. 36). The roof trusses rest upon timber baulks on top of the cylindrical columns, which are suggestive of truncated tie beams. This is perhaps unlikely as tie beams at this level would have greatly interfered with the headroom in the loft.

The stone wall separating the northern and southern parts of the linhay rises only to first-floor level, above which tall vertical posts rise to support the ridge (Fig. 39). The loft floor beams run uninterrupted across the head of this wall from north to south whereas the floor is interrupted at the centre by a pitching void serving the mangers below.

The floor of the south-facing section of the linhay is cobbled and retains a modern concrete cattle trough beneath a much more ancient timber manger extending for two bays (Fig. 38). All the beams and joists appear to be of elm, as is the loft floor over them.

The roof trusses rest upon timber baulks on top of the cylindrical columns, which are suggestive of truncated tie beams. This is perhaps unlikely as tie beams at this level would have greatly interfered with the headroom in the loft. The principal rafters seem to be built into these piers without either ties or pads. The east and west walls of the linhay rise above the eaves line in the form of truncated gables, as though the original ends of the building were half hipped.

The present roof retains most of its early fabric in the trusses, but the purlins are modern, raising the roofline above the original trusses, no doubt to compensate for the former thickness of a thatched roof. A truss of slightly different type built into the eastern gable end suggests that this part of the roof was modified when Linhay II was constructed. The western end of the roof seems only to have been modified in the 20th century when the original thatched roof was replaced.

The interior of the northern side of the linhay is still furnished as a shippon with a wooden manger and concrete stalls. The remains of further ancient wooden mangers are stored in the loft. The western two bays preserve much older furniture, including wooden troughs, part of a wooden manger and the remains of very substantial stall partitions which may well be contemporary with the building. These bays are enclosed by very rough plank doors with wooden latch mechanisms and mixed strap hinges probably reused from elsewhere. The timber enclosure is formed of halved logs, set vertically and alternating, a most unusual technique.

The roof and loft of this building are not accessible due to concerns about the condition of the floor, however the three 'A'-framed trusses appear to be contemporary with the building. They have applied collars secured with pegs and secured to the central posts below the ridge (Fig. 39).

4.7 The granary and ?stables

This magnificent building, built in 1882, has a five-bay frontage with a central entrance of orange brick dressings and a loft door in a small gabled chicket projecting into the roof (Fig. 40). There are pairs of windows on the ground and first floors to north and south. The ground-floor windows have 'T'-shaped mullions and transoms to allow an upper glazed light of ten panes, and pairs of shutters below. To the north a lower building extends to the north, east of the piggeries (Fig. 41); this structure was in use by the tenants of the farmhouse and was not surveyed, though it is likely to be contemporary with the granary.

The gable ends of the granary have the same corbelled details at the eaves noted on Linhay I and the Trap House, and the south end bears the inscription 'MR 1882'. There is an external stair of open slate steps rising against the southern gable, providing access to a loft entrance flanked by a pair of small windows (Fig. 42). In the northern gable a single window looks out over the roof of the northern buildings. The western elevation of this building faces onto a

second, smaller yard to the rear. This has a blind upper storey but a row of small ventilator grilles below of a type usually found in stables.

The ground-floor interior is a single long rectangular room with un-plastered, un-whitewashed walls, and an open-joisted ceiling with herringbone strutting (Fig. 44). As many as seven timber chutes have been cut in the floor, including one large hopper. There are two vertical chutes in the northern, penultimate bay, an angled one and a further vertical one in the central bay and two vertical chutes in the southern penultimate bay. The chutes were formerly fitted with horizontally-sliding shutters to control the flow. Many still have plastic sheaths which confirm that these chutes were in use until relatively recently. The first-floor structure has also been reinforced by the introduction of numerous props as though what was stored above was of considerable weight. In the western wall is a door into the adjoining pound house. Although no furnishings survive it is possible that this ground-floor space was originally designed as a stable, and that it was later converted, by the introduction of the chutes, into a place for packing of bagging the grain stored in the granary above.

The first-floor room is divided into two unequally sized rooms by a timber partition. The rooms have plastered walls, but are unceiled, the structure of the roofs being displayed (Fig. 45). The room contains some evidence of partitions perhaps forming grain storage bins. These include the remains of mortices in the floorboards for vertical posts and cement screeds apparently marking the outline of the walls of the grain bins.

The roof is of one phase throughout, having 'A'-framed trusses with paired collars on each side, as in the roof of the horse engine house, and a central iron suspension rod. The two levels of purlins are supported upon cleats and there is a plank ridge balanced on a saddle block. The roof is similar, but not identical with the other roofs in the late 19th-century farm buildings, as there are no raking struts. The roof is covered with slate.

4.8 **The poundhouse or press house**

This building is a relatively large sub-rectangular structure containing a single ground-floor room with a loft over. The building has no entrance or openings to the south, but opens by a doorway and window to the yard north of the buildings adjoining the piggeries. Both of these openings are of late 19th-century date and curiously domestic in character. The lintel over the doorway is an older, chamfered lintel perhaps reused in this position.

The interior has a ceiling of three bays with boldly-chamfered beams (Fig. 47) retaining straight-cut stops- though these are a bit miscellaneous and do not all match. The unmoulded squared joists, some bearing the marks of laths and nails have been reset in this position, probably from a domestic building, perhaps the lost early farmhouse. Many have been rotated in their sockets and wedged to level the floor above. The character of the beams and joists would seem to be pre-date the 19th-century buildings and would be compatible with a date in the 16th or 17th centuries, though it is likely that they were removed here from another structure.

The room contains a handsome cider press (Fig. 47), though this too has probably been re-sited here since it cuts into the ceiling joists. A stair-ladder in the north-eastern corner of the room leads to the loft and also cuts through the ceiling (Fig. 48).

The first-floor loft has a small loft hatch to the yard, with red brick dressings. Close to this is the remains of a piece of farm machinery, consisting of part of a belt drive and transmission shaft (Fig. 49). Unfortunately, there is no evidence for where the power to drive this machinery came from; it seems unlikely that this kind of machinery could have driven the cider press, and it is possible that the shaft provided power to a missing piece of machinery, such as an apple cutter. The roof is the same as that in the granary and must have been entirely replaced when the farm buildings were reconstructed in the late 19th century. The building may, however, be considerably older and may perhaps be recognised on the tithe map of 1845 (Fig. 9).



Fig. 40 The east front of the granary and possible stable block close to the house.



Fig. 41 The lower northern wing adjacent to the piggeries (not surveyed).



Fig. 42 The gable end of the granary showing the loft access.



Fig. 43 The rear elevation of the granary showing possible stable ventilator windows.



Fig. 44 The interior of the possible stable showing chutes from the granary floor above and the door to the poundhouse .



Fig. 45 The interior of the granary, looking north-east.



Fig. 46 The south elevation of the stable (left) and poundhouse (Right) from the farmyard.



Fig. 47 The interior of the poundhouse, showing the cider press and the construction of the loft floor.



Fig. 48 The interior of the poundhouse looking towards the northern stair.



Fig. 49 The remains of a belt drive and transmission shaft above the doorway in the north wall of the poundhouse loft.



Fig. 50 The south elevation of the stable showing 19th-century red brick repairs to the openings and jambs.



Fig. 51 The north elevation of the stables.

4.9 **The western stables**

This large two-storey building also pre-dates the 19th-century buildings and has a stone and cob elevation looking south towards the main farmyard. At present the frontage (Figs 46, 50) is symmetrical at ground-floor level, with a central doorway and a pair of flanking windows, all with orange brick wire-cut dressings of 19th-century date.

At first-floor level there is a small loft hatch set off centre. This opening represents the partial blocking of a much larger and earlier loft opening, the timber sill of which is still visible in the elevation. The lintel of an earlier blocked doorway is also visible just to the west of the present south doorway in an area of disturbed masonry. There is, perhaps, evidence of a further doorway in the region of the present western window. The building must therefore be a survival of one of the earlier structures represented on the tithe map of 1845.

The western gable end of the building is probably a 19th-century rebuilding of the original structure, since it is entirely of stone with red-brick dressing and quoins (Fig. 50). The elevation has a loading hatch at first-floor level and a ventilation hatch above this. The building is currently occupied by an owl or owls.

The rear elevation of the stables (Fig. 51) has low stone walls beneath the cob upper storey. These walls show some evidence of further large openings, though whether they were doorways or windows is unclear. All of these openings have been blocked and, at present, apart from the central doorway, the elevation is blind, covered with render which masks any evidence of further building breaks. In addition, much of the upper storey is masked by ivy.

The interior of the stables is divided into two equal sections by a cross passage running from north to south which doubled as the head walk from which the mangers were supplied. The mangers have integral wooden troughs which seem also to have been served from the head walk. The north and east walls were fully plastered originally, and plaster remains on the upper part of the south wall. The first-floor structure throughout is of 19th-century date and, unfortunately, the building is currently used for storing a large amount of reclaimed building materials, including many historic doors and window frames, to the extent that any evidence for earlier floor sockets, partitions and openings are almost completely obscured.

The floor surface appears to be cobbled, but is much obscured by debris. It may well retain evidence of an earlier arrangement of the interior. The present arrangement has each half of the building laid out as a single large loose box, there being no obvious sign of any division into separate horse stalls. It is possible that this was a nursery stables for rearing foals. Alternatively the interior may have been divided into more conventional stalls by temporary barriers or hurdles, which do not survive.

The loft at first-floor level is currently inaccessible but has a magnificent 18th-century roof of six bays defined by five 'A'-frame trusses with butted apexes and half-lapped applied collars secured with square pegs and spikes. Like the other early roofs in the complex this has also been raised by the addition of new timbers over the original trusses and covered in a corrugated material, possibly asbestos, in lieu of the original thatch.

4.10 **The piggeries**

The piggeries also date from the 1870s or 1880s and probably occupy the site of the earlier farmhouse. They consist of a low range of buildings, almost square in plan, under a pitched slate roof (Fig. 54). The piggeries are very sturdily constructed of snecked rubble with red brick dressings. The main façade looks out onto a walled enclosure onto which four doorways open. These have all retained excellent quality door furniture manufactured specially for the Rolle estate and bearing the Capital letter 'R', as found across the entire site (Fig. 55). Unusually, the doorways have projecting blocks of ham stone built into their eastern jambs which formed very sturdy stops for the doors (Fig. 56).

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Fig. 52 The interior of the stable showing the head walk forming a cross passage through the building.



Fig. 53 The roof and loft over the stables.



Fig. 54 The piggeries at the north edge of the site.



Fig. 55 Detail of the attractive door furniture on the piggeries and many other buildings.



Fig. 56 The unusual projections at the piggery door jambs.



Fig. 57 The interior of the piggeries showing a feeding hatch from the headwalk.

The interior of the piggery is exceptionally well preserved, divided into four pens, each with a low but substantially constructed partition with a cat-flap-style hatch opening upon the head walk, which extends across three fourths of the north side of the building (Fig 57). This is accessed by a doorway in the east wall of the building, presumably from a passage or alley near the western side of the farmhouse.

4.11 Later buildings

To the south of Linhays II and III a row of modern corrugated iron sheds has been erected to form a third small farmyard enclosed by gates and fencing between the west end of the southern range of farm buildings and the western façade of the horse-engine house. This structure dates from the mid 20th century and was in existence by 1967. It is likely to have been constructed to provide new cow sheds to replace the earlier linhays, which may at this point have been converted to storage.

5. CONCLUSION

Although the farm buildings at Head Barton may occupy an ancient site, recorded as a substantial property in the 1270s (see page 5), the present buildings, as at many Devon farmsteads, have been rebuilt in later centuries to reflect changing agricultural practices. There is no evidence of medieval fabric in the existing structures, though it is highly likely that buried remains of the medieval farmhouse and buildings survive at the site, and elements of the earlier structures may have been preserved within the existing walling of the later buildings. The close proximity of a possible prehistoric settlement or barrow cemetery immediately to the south of the farm buildings is clear evidence of the potential for archaeological remains relating to early occupation and exploitation of the site. Such remains might easily be exposed during re-servicing during the conversion of the buildings.

The surviving early buildings were probably laid out to reflect the line of the road from Exeter to Barnstaple, which appears to have passed directly through the site. The buildings preserve this layout today. Despite much later 19th-century intervention the footprint of the existing structures still reflects the footprint of the buildings shown on the 1845 tithe map which, to our present knowledge, is the earliest map to show the layout of the farm buildings in any detail. The medieval buildings of the site are also likely to have followed this alignment, respecting the roadway. One major change in the layout of the site seems to have been the relocation of Head Mill from its original site on the Taw to its present site on the Mole just north-east of the farm buildings. This change may have been made in the late 18th century – or perhaps the early 19th century – possibly as a result of the improvement of the roads in the area and the reconstruction of Head Bridge on a new site below the site of the earlier bridge.

The earliest fabric now identifiable in the buildings is probably the floor structure in the poundhouse, which incorporates substantial chamfered beams with large, square-sectioned joisting and square-cut stops. This fabric may date from the 16th or 17th century but has perhaps been reused here. It may have been derived from the demolished farmhouse, since the detail appears to be domestic rather than agricultural in character. The cider press, which survives intact, also seems to have been relocated here, perhaps during one of the later 19th-century remodellings of the buildings. Much of the rest of the building, including the roof, has been reconstructed in the late 19th century.

The principal survivors of the 18th- or early 19th-century farm buildings are the large western stable, parts of the threshing barn, and the two western linhays, Linhay II and Linhay III. The threshing barn, like the poundhouse, has lost its original roof and east wall, but the north and south walls and the west wall all appear to retain fabric of early date. The presence of sockets in the west external wall of the barn, which do not relate to the existing Linhay II, show that the barn

is the earliest of these two buildings and that there was formerly another structure to its west. The date of the barn cannot be easily established without evidence of its original roof but it is probably a late 18th-century structure, typical of its period, and would probably have had a steep roof with 'A'-frame trusses and fully hipped end gables prior to its extension in the 19th century. The barn may have been constructed against a yard wall, which survives running along the southern edge of the site, and which now forms part of the rear wall of linhays I and II. The wall seems to have been truncated at the construction of linhay III. Like the barn, the wall is not easily datable, and it quite conceivably follows the line of a boundary earlier than any of the existing buildings.

Linhay III is probably the most outstanding survivor of the early buildings on the site. This well-preserved and most attractive structure is very unusual, being a double linhay with two open fronts serving north and south-facing shippens covered by a single loft. The cylindrical piers of the open-fronted elevations are more usually found in the South Hams or on Exmoor and the single loft, with a central pitching void for fodder serving both shippens is the only example of its type known to the author. Apart from the loss of its thatched roof the building is almost complete. The roof structure is unusual and might perhaps date from the mid 18th century, though an earlier date, in the late 17th century, is possible. Some early furnishings, including wooden mangers are preserved. The enclosure of the lower part of the north elevation is perhaps of 20th century date.

Linhay II may date from the late 18th- or early 19th century, though there is some evidence that it has been dismantled and reconstructed, or at least that the roof has. It seems to have been built against an earlier yard wall and is a Devon linhay of the conventional type with its open front supported on wooden posts. The shippen on the ground floor retains its furnishings and head walk, though there is no pitching void from the loft-floor above, the loft presumably being for storage only. The roof shows evidence of having been dismantled and reconfigured, but even after this intervention it was probably thatched. Both the hipped ends of the threshing barn and the half-hipped gable of linhay III were rebuilt when this linhay was erected. The linhay is a handsome example of this type of building and probably dates, in its present form from the mid 19th century. Its frontage appears to have been enclosed during Rolle Estate ownership in the late 19th century.

The other early building to survive at Head Barton is the western stable. This is probably also of late 18th- or early 19th-century date, though much remodelled in the 19th century, when it appears to have been reconfigured as a nursery stable containing two large loose boxes. The roof is typical of the 18th or 19th centuries but the red brick dressings of most of the existing openings and quoins are a mark of the late 19th century alterations. This building also preserves original furniture, including mangers and a most unusual head walk in the form of a cross passage.

The later 19th-century buildings at Head Barton are of exceptionally high quality; attractive and well-designed model farm buildings of the period. These include the granary building, Linhay I and the Trap House at its eastern end, and the exceptionally well-preserved piggeries west of the modern farmhouse. These buildings are characteristic of the late 19th-century, with attractive architectural detailing, solidly built doors and partitions and distinctive ironwork for the door furniture, including strap hinges, latches and window catches. These buildings were probably constructed between 1880 and 1907 for the Hon. Mark Rolle. The farm buildings at Head Barton thus reflect around 200 years of investment in high-quality and up-to-date farm buildings by the owners of the site, which it is hoped the current proposals will preserve and enhance for the future.

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