



Herefordshire Archaeology
Conservation and Environmental Planning
Planning Services
Environment Directorate
Herefordshire Council

**Herefordshire Woodlands
Archaeological Survey,
Part 1
Callow Hill Wood, Ewyas
Harold**

**Herefordshire Archaeology
Report No. 138
December 2004**

Report prepared by
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Herefordshire Archaeology is Herefordshire Council's county archaeology service. It advises upon the conservation of archaeological and historic landscapes, maintains the county Sites and Monument Record, and carries out conservation and investigative field projects. The County Archaeologist is Dr. Keith Ray.

**Herefordshire Woodlands Archaeological Survey,
Part 1
Callow Hill Wood, Ewyas Harold
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Summary:

The survey described in this report (EHE42844), formed part of the Herefordshire Woodlands Archaeological Survey undertaken in partnership with the Forestry Commission. A rapid site identification survey was carried out in the wood concerned, using a hand held Global Positioning System to record the location of the features that were recognised as having archaeological significance.

Earthwork features were recorded within the wood that illustrate the intensive use of the woodland resource in the post medieval period. These included saw pits, charcoal burning platforms, quarries and woodland management boundaries.

Of particular interest was the presence of an earthwork thought to represent a Civil War breastwork relating to the first skirmish in the county.

Disclaimer: It should not be assumed that land referred to in this document is accessible to the public. Location plans are indicative only. NGRs are accurate to approximately 10m. Measured dimensions are accurate to within 1m at a scale of 1:500, 0.1m at 1:50, and 0.02m at 1:20.

Figures contain material from the Ordnance Survey. The grid in this material is the National Grid taken from the Ordnance Survey map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. This material has been reproduced in order to locate the site in its environs.

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Introduction

This report provides an account of a rapid survey of Callow Hill Wood, Ewyas Harold, (EHE42844). The survey was carried out in 2004 within year 1 of the Herefordshire Woodlands Archaeological Survey, which followed a pilot study undertaken by Herefordshire Archaeology in partnership with and grant-aided by the Forestry Commission. The purpose of the survey is to begin to document the archaeology of woodlands in the county. Woodlands are areas of high archaeological potential in that they have seldom been subjected to the types of disturbance associated with intensive modern agriculture. Relatively little information concerning archaeological sites within woodland has been recorded in the past. Access is often difficult, aerial photographs are of little or no use for site identification and until recently recording an accurate location within woodland was often not practicable.

Woodland boundaries have often moved over the centuries, sometimes expanding to encapsulate and preserve evidence of alternative land-use (for instance, field systems) and on other occasions shrinking and being subject to differing forms of woodland management. These variations in land-use inevitably influence the kind of ecological data that can be obtained from different areas of woodland. Archaeological survey can contribute significant data concerning woodland history, management history and sequential development, and this can provide independent evidence of historical change. It is only when the changes throughout history within a wood have been documented and understood in this way that a well informed management strategy can be implemented.

Since 1999 Herefordshire Archaeology has been involved in regular discussions with the Forestry Commission concerning the lack of archaeological data available when management plans are being prepared and applications for Woodland Grant Schemes are submitted. As a result of these discussions, the Forestry Commission has grant aided Herefordshire Archaeology to undertake a two phase pilot study, Phase One of which took place in 2001-2, and Phase 2 took place in 2003. The surveys carried out in early 2004 were an extension to this initial pilot work.

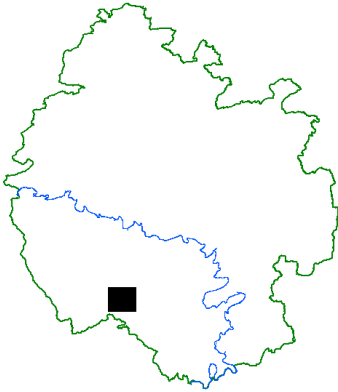
The survey for each woodland area identifies the potential for the survival of archaeological features and samples the types of features present. Further planned survey may re-visit woodlands identified in the rapid reconnaissance surveys as being of high archaeological potential and will involve a more detailed survey. This will illustrate the density of archaeological sites within the woodland and record the relationships between features to enable some degree of understanding concerning the evolution of the woodland.

Location

Callow Hill Wood is located at NGR: SO 395 281, within the parish of Ewyas Harold. The woodland covers the top and sides of a low hill at an elevation of approximately 124m OD (Ordnance Survey, 1998).

The solid geology comprises the Eardiston Association. This is made up of reddish, well drained, coarse, loamy soils over hard sandstone, shales and limestone. (Ragg, Beard et al. 1984. p171).

The Historic Landscape Characterisation Study for Herefordshire describes Callow Hill Wood as woodland surrounded by degraded sinuous boundaries derived from the enclosure of former common arable areas, (HLC 433). There is also evidence for later, more angular boundaries indicating a degree of more recent enclosure. (Ray and White, 2003).



Previous fieldwork / records

Prior to the survey taking place the county Sites and Monuments Record was consulted. However, no entries were found indicating the discovery of sites within the present woodland, and it is therefore assumed that no fieldwork that has resulted in a published record has taken place here previously.

Figure 1: Callow Hill Wood Location.

Method

The primary survey work at Callow Hill Wood took place on April 15th 2004. The survey comprised a rapid assessment of the potential of the woodland to contain well preserved archaeological features. Features were mapped using a hand-held Silva Multinavigator Global Positioning System, enabling a ten figure grid reference to be recorded for each feature. This system is accurate to within approximately 5m under tree canopy.

The wood was walked in transects aligned roughly north / south and approximately 50m to 100m apart. If a large feature was encountered and no other features of archaeological significance can be seen, then this feature was followed and features 50m either side of it recorded. Field observations and grid references were recorded on a dictaphone and transcribed at a later date.

The following survey comprises only a rapid appraisal of the woodland and should not be taken as exhaustive or its results as entirely definitive. It is intended to record the type of features present, their state of preservation and their relationships to other features within the woodland.

Field conditions

The weather during the survey was fine and dry and visibility within the wood was generally good.

Results (Figure 2)

The recorded data from the survey is described in detail within this results section. This section is concluded by a brief discussion highlighting the historical development of the woodland as understood using the 2004 survey results. The significance of recorded features and management implications are then commented upon within the subsequent discussion section.

Appendix 1 contains a simple data base which cross references each site to the Ordnance Survey National Grid, (NGR), and the series of unique Sites and Monuments “Primary Record Numbers” (PRN), allocated following the transcription. These numbers are referred to within both the text and illustrations. They are prefixed by HSM, these initials relating to Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record unique numbers.

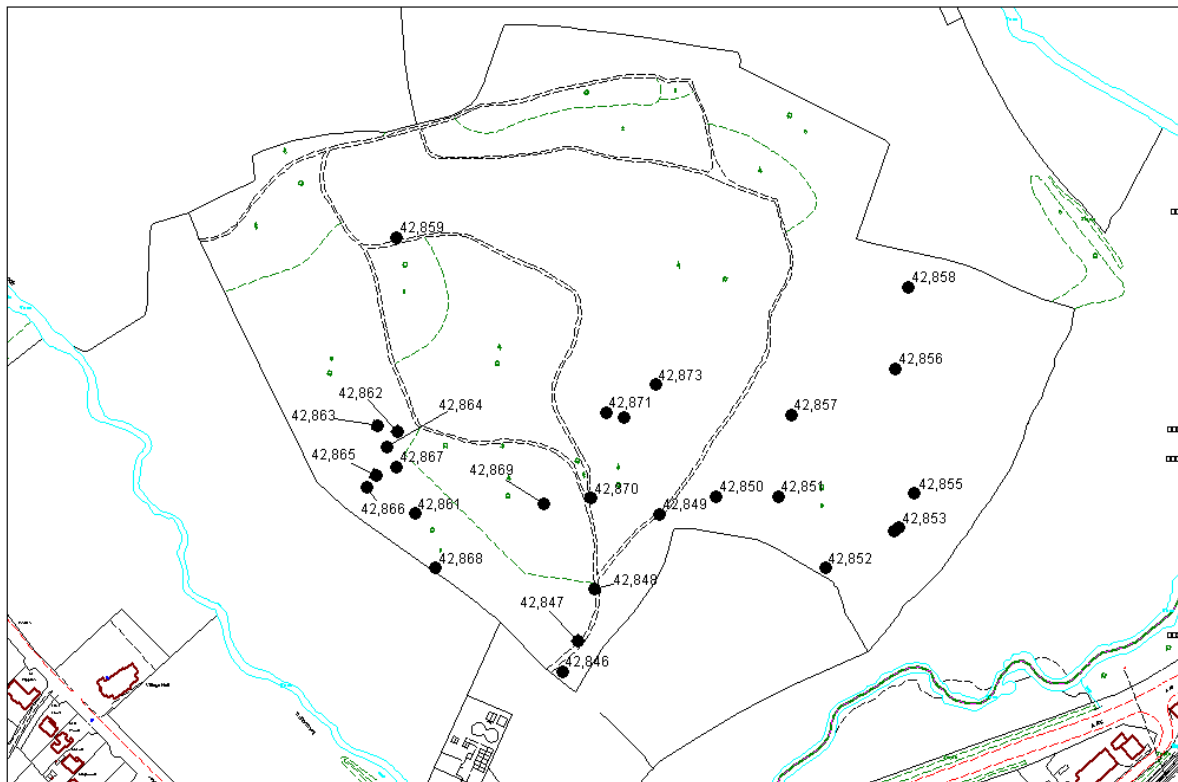


Figure 2: Location of features identified during the survey

Woodland management features

A total of eight charcoal burning platforms were recorded. These ranged in size from 5-10m in diameter and in the main comprised a level, circular platform with a pronounced down-slope lip. This class of monument is often only visible in areas where there is a reasonable degree of slope. It is therefore likely that other charcoal burning platforms exist on the hill-top and within other areas of level ground that do not show up as earthworks. It is therefore likely that this monument class has been under represented, and that the charcoal burning industry was more intensive than the eight recorded platforms suggest.

A single saw pit was recorded within Callow Hill Wood, (HSM 42850). The earthwork remains comprise an oval depression between 4 and 6m in length, 1.5m wide and 0.3-0.5m deep with spoil on their down-slope sides. This feature is a large example located close to the woodland boundary.

The presence and distribution of these classes of features suggests that either:

- The woodland has been primarily managed historically for the production of coppiced timber predominantly for the production of charcoal, or
- The woodland has been managed with standards and an under-storey of coppice but much of the lumber has been taken elsewhere for sawing.

Woodland boundaries

Callow Hill Wood appears to have a good series of woodland boundary banks running around its southern and eastern sides, (HSM 42849). However its northern and western sides comprise a drop into the surrounding fields rather than a built bank. It is possible that these sides of the wood did once have woodland boundary banks and that these have been eroded by ploughing.

Industrial features

A total of nine quarries or areas of quarrying were recorded. These ranged in scale from 4-6m diameter delves, (HSM 42847) to larger industrial scale extraction area in excess of 25m in length and 6m wide, (HSM 42864). The location of these, together with the elongated shape of many quarries suggest that veins of limestone are being exploited presumably for the extraction of lime for use in agricultural improvement.

Communication / extraction routes

Four lengths of hollow way were recorded, (HSM 42846, HSM 42851, HSM 42852 and HSM 42856). HSM 42846 comprised a 2.5m wide and 1.2m deep route way running up-slope from the south-western corner of the wood. The course of this feature could only be traced as it ran up the steepest part of the slope prior to it gradually getting less distinct as the degree of slope lessened. This route way appears to have been the principal access way into the central and northern areas of the wood.

HSM 42851 was similar in size to HSM 42846. However, this section of Holloway ran along the outside of woodland boundary bank, HSM 42849 on the southern side of the wood and did not appear to enter the wood. At the south-western corner of the wood this section of hollow way was cut by a later route way (HSM 42852). This runs into HSM 42851 to continue in a southerly direction. It also continues northwards, cutting the woodland boundary bank, and entering the wood to run in a north-easterly direction, diagonally up-slope for over 100m.

Hollow way HSM 42865 was located on the eastern side of Callow Hill and comprises a 3.5m wide and, (in places) 2m deep route way. It is possible that HSM 42856 is a

continuation of hollow way HSM 42852 as both sections head in a north-easterly direction. However, hollow way HSM 42856 is considerably larger than HSM 42852 and may either represent a separate section of route way or a section which has been more heavily used than the others.

Buildings/structures

At SO 39521 27835 there are a series of earthworks relating to a sunken stone and brick building, (HSM 42845). It has a partially collapsed brick chamber with a stone outlet or flue running from its southern end. The chamber is approximately 2.5m wide and over 5m in length and contains some water. It contains a cast iron pipe and a number of large stones appear to have collapsed into the chamber that may have made up the roof, suggesting that this was fully enclosed. Leaving the chamber and running to the south-southwest there is a channel which runs out into a field cuts the woodland boundary bank and continues out into a field, running to the southwest for at least 50m. Immediately to the east of the chamber there is a rectangular depression approximately 1.2m deep and 5m long and 1.5-2m wide. It is possible that this represents a second chamber that has completely collapsed. It is suggested that this structure represents the remains of some form of cistern or reservoir dating from the late 19th or early 20th century.

A substantial embankment was recorded running around the top of the break of slope on the southern side of Callow Hill, (HSM 42870). This comprised a 3.5m wide and 1.2m high bank with a 2m wide ditch on its up-slope side, which curved round the southern side of the hill from NGR SO 39521 28028 to NGR SO 39652 28048 – a distance of nearly 150m. The bank had distinct terminals at either end. Running south from a point close to the western terminal was an additional section of bank, 4m wide and over 1m high, with a 2m wide ditch on either side. Unlike the curving bank that followed the contour, this section of bank and ditch was very straight, running down slope for approximately 60m before terminating abruptly. On the western side of the hill a third section of embankment was recorded, (HSM 42867). This was approximately 50m in length, 3.5m wide and 1.2m high with a 2m wide ditch on either side. This section ran straight down the hill slope and had an abrupt terminal at each end. It is clear that all three sections of embankment are related to a single structure and that this structure had no connection with agricultural, industrial or woodland management practices.

It is believed that this group of earthworks represent the remains of a defensive breastwork dating from the Civil War. The portion of the earthwork that follows the contour looks directly over the main route-way between Hereford and Abergavenny. The two straight sections of breastwork could have been manned and used, (in the case of HSM42867), to look towards the village of Ewyas Harold and, (in the case of the southern arm of HSM 42870), as a defensive feature to get within range of the road. A skirmish took place at Ewyas Harold in November 1642, (recorded as the first Civil War action in the county). There are a number of references to this action:

“...They who set their faces against the royalists were few in number, and fewer still were the friends who complained of them. The place from which some of these tormentors of the petitioners had issued, and where they had fixed their quarters, was Harold’s Ewyas (or Ewyas Harold).....Late in the evening of November 12 the Earl of Stamford called a

council of war upon advice that 350 foot of the enemy were posted within five miles of the city (Hereford); and it was resolved that a party commanded by Kyrle should be sent to surprise them.....The expedition, having gone out further than had been contemplated, returned without the loss of a man, but also without bringing in a single prisoner. The Royalists had intended as near an approach as had been reported; but the information proved merely a lure to draw Kyrle and his party to a greater distance. When they reached the place that had been pointed out, and where they thought to have surprised these new-raised soldiers in the negligence or habitual repose of a Sabbath morning, they found that they had been deceived; but learning that they were at Harold's Ewyas, and being keen from their late success, they were unwilling to return without an attempt to dislodge them. If the Cavaliers were not thoroughly prepared to receive them, it would not have been the fault of the country people, who showed great goodwill and alacrity in giving warning of their approach. Arrived at the scene of action, the commander, with his lieutenant and three privates advancing before the rest found six Raglan soldiers

"...In spite of a slight success at Presteign (in which Captain Charles Price, the "Prince of Radnorshire," was captured), Stamford's position at Hereford soon became difficult. Powder was scarce, and he could not pay his men; while a force from Raglan, under Lord Herbert, overran the county, pillaging those who were suspected of favouring the Parliament. A strong detachment of this force held Ewias Harold, through the whole month of October and part of November. The village had acquired a certain importance, which it held through the greater part of the war. For the road north through Salop being insecure, merchandise and military stores seem to have been commonly conveyed by a circuitous route from Ewias Harold up the Golden Valley, and so into Radnorshire; thus reaching Chester and North Wales without passing near Hereford or Ludlow. The garrison of the village naturally harried the few supporters of the Parliament in the neighbourhood, amongst whom were William Newport, Minister of Kenderchurch, and Richard Greenleafe, Vicar of Kilpeck. These and others asked help from Stamford at Hereford against the "barbarous cavaliers of the Welsh parts." Colonel Kyle was commanded to go out from Hereford with a party and surprise the village, which he did on Sunday morning in the middle of November. Killing the little guard of six Raglan soldiers at the entrance to the village, they rushed into the place, and, taking the defenders by surprise, shot fifteen men, the rest escaping to the hills on either side. Hanging upon a tree near the church the body of one of the slain, they marched back to Hereford. This was the first skirmish of the war, involving bloodshed, in our county..."

Bannister 1902

It is likely that either troops stationed behind this breastwork were involved in this action, (although it seems too large a fortification to be held by the six soldiers that were reportedly guarding the entrance to the village), or that the breastwork was constructed after this event in order to give warning of, or, to deter further attacks.

Former land use

A series of three field lynchets was recorded within the eastern portion of the wood, (HSM 42854, 42855 and 42860). All were aligned on a north-east / south-west axis, at a slight angle to the natural contour of the slope. Each lynchet was approximately 8m wide and over 60m in length with an average height of 1.5m.

Discussion and Implications

Site and feature condition

The majority of features recorded were well preserved with little modern disturbance. It is possible that part of the Civil War breastwork has been truncated by later quarrying.

Feature recognition was difficult within the northern and eastern areas of the wood due to gentleness of slope, areas of level ground and dense undergrowth. This means that some classes of earthwork e.g. charcoal burning platforms, saw pits and storage and stacking areas / platforms, are almost certainly under-represented.

Implications regarding the archaeological resource

Callow Hill Wood contains a number of features relating to historic woodland management. These include evidence for the production of charcoal and limited evidence for the processing of lumber. A considerable area of the south-western portion of the wood contains a series of lime quarries. The linear nature of these suggests that veins of lime rich rock were being exploited. This material was presumably taken to be processed at a lime kiln, (or lime burning platform), nearby but not located within the area surveyed.

The survival of earthwork features comprising a Civil War breastwork is of major significance and may be considered to be of regional importance for this class of monument. Very few earthwork monuments relating to military action during the Civil War have survived within the county. The breastwork within Callow Hill Wood is of particular significance due to its almost complete survival and therefore it's ability to be understood in terms of function and strategic importance as a military earthwork. Its status may be further raised when the detailed documentary sources regarding the events during the 1640's, in and around Ewyas Harold are taken into account.

Implications for future management

The features recorded during this survey were generally well preserved. The construction of further access tracks should be avoided. If this is not possible then every care should be taken to minimise damage to the breastwork. Equally the tracking over the breastwork with heavy machinery, (skidders, etc.) should be avoided if possible. If this is not practicable a thick layer of brash should be placed on top of the section of monument to be affected by works.

Site and feature condition

The majority of features recorded were well preserved. Feature recognition was difficult in some areas within the wood due to gentleness of slope and areas of level ground. This means that some classes of earthwork e.g. charcoal burning platforms and storage and stacking areas / platforms, are almost certainly under-represented. The northern portion of the wood was very overgrown and this has resulted in a lack of feature recognition and recording here.

Implications for future management

Care should be taken if further access ways and extraction routes are to be constructed. However, the lack of internal boundaries facilitates the planning of a route or routes that would have minimal impact on the archaeological resource.

References

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Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the help and co-operation of the owner of Callow Hill Wood for their assistance and co-operation with access for this survey.

The Forestry Commission for their commitment to this survey scheme.

Dr. Keith Ray, County Archaeologist, for his editorial input into this report.

Archive

1 Dictaphone tape
1 Transcription Record
1 Excel Database
1 Mapinfo data file
This document

Validation

Herefordshire Archaeology operates a validation system for its reports, to provide quality assurance and to comply with Best Value procedures.

This report has been checked for accuracy and clarity of statements of procedure and results.

Dr. K. Ray, County Archaeologist.

Appendix 1: Database of features and grid references.

HSM No.	East	North	Site type	Period	Description
42845	335921	227835	Cistern / Reservoir	19 th Century	Brick chamber with stone lined outlet which cuts Woodland boundary bank
42846	339530	227830	Holloway	Post Medieval	1m deep and 2.5m wide.
42847	339542	227854	Quarry / delve	Post Medieval	4m in diameter cut into side of Holloway
42848	339555	227895	Quarry / delve	Post Medieval	Series of 5-6m diameter delves
42849	339606	227953	Woodland Boundary Bank	Post Medieval	1m wide with a ditch on either side
42850	339650	227967	Saw Pit	Post Medieval	5-6m long and 2m wide aligned SW/NE
42851	339699	227967	Holloway	Post Medieval	Runs within external ditch of Woodland Boundary Bank
42852	339736	227911	Holloway	Post Medieval	Cut by Holloway 42851
42853	339794	227943	Charcoal burning platform	Post Medieval	7m in diameter and cuts lynchet 42854
42854	339790	227940	Lynchet	Medieval	8-10m wide and aligned NE/SW
42855	339806	227970	Lynchet	Medieval	Parallel to 42854
42856	339791	228067	Holloway	Post Medieval	3.5m wide and up to 2m deep heads to the NE
42857	339709	228031	Charcoal burning platform	Post Medieval	8m in diameter and facing East
42858	339801	228131	Charcoal burning platform	Post Medieval	10m in diameter and facing north
42859	339399	228170	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	6m in diameter and facing NW
42860	339398	228021	Lynchet	Medieval	Runs for c. 60m to the south
42861	339414	227954	Quarry scoop	Post Medieval	4m in diameter
42862	339400	228018	Quarry	Post Medieval	8m long and cuts lynchet 42860
42863	339384	228022	Quarry	Post Medieval	8m long and up to 2.5m deep
42864	339392	228006	Quarry	Post Medieval	Linear quarry c. 25m long
42865	339383	227983	Quarry	Post Medieval	Linear quarry 3.5m wide and c.20m long
42866	339376	227974	Quarry / delve	Post Medieval	4m long and 2.5m wide

42867	339399	227990	Breastwork	Civil War	Bank 3.5m wide and 1.2m high runs SW
42868	339430	227911	Charcoal Burning Platforms	Post medieval	2 conjoining platforms in large scoop c. 15m in diameter
42869	339515	227961	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	6m in diameter and facing south-east
42870	339552	227966	Breastwork	Civil War	Runs WNW then divides to run around contour
42871	339564	228033	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	5m in diameter and facing South-east
42872	339578	228029	Quarry / delve	Post Medieval	6m in diameter and 1.6m deep
42873	339603	228055	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	5m in diameter and facing South-east
42874	341900	230709	Quarry	Post Medieval	6m long, 2.5m wide and 0.5m deep