



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

**Herefordshire Woodlands  
Archaeological Survey,  
Part 1  
Upper & Lower Evens,  
Mortimer Forest  
Herefordshire Archaeology  
Report No. 137**

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.

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Upper & Lower Evens, Mortimer Forest  
Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. 137  
Herefordshire Archaeology, December 2004.**

*Summary:*

*The survey described in this report (EHE44191), 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 late and post medieval periods. These included charcoal burning platforms, areas of quarrying and woodland management boundaries.*

**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 Upper and Lower Evens, Mortimer Forest (EHE44191). 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.

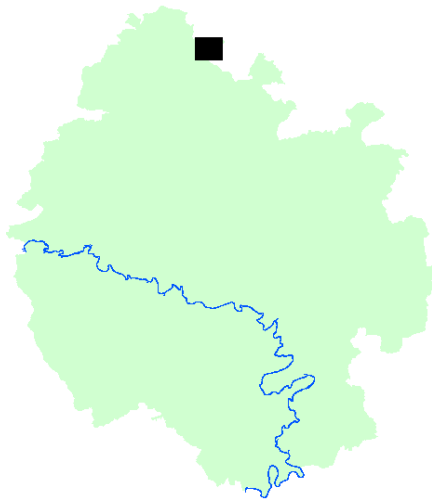
Since 1999 Herefordshire Archaeology has been involved in regular discussions with the Forestry Commission concerning the lack of archaeological data available when management plans are being prepared and applications for Woodland Grant Schemes are submitted. As a result of these discussions, the Forestry 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***

Upper and Lower Evens are located at NGR: SO 495 730, within the parish of Richard's Castle approximately 4 km south-west of the Shropshire market town of Ludlow. The woodland covers the eastern, southern and south-western facing slopes of Mary Knoll, between 150m and 250m O.D., (Ordnance Survey, 1998).

Geologically, the Upper and Lower Evens survey area is underlain by siltstone and limestone beds of the Whitcliffe Formation of the Upper Ludlow Shales. (British Geological Survey, 2000; Earp and Haines, 1971).



The Historic Landscape Characterisation Study for Herefordshire (HLC) describes the survey area as woodland, part of the Richard's Castle estate, with the adaptation of enclosures from woodland (HLC 83). (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 survey area, and it is therefore assumed that no fieldwork that has resulted in a published record has taken place here previously.

**Figure 1: Upper & Lower Evens Location.**

#### ***Method***

The primary survey work at Upper and Lower Evens took place on 7<sup>th</sup> April 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 Multinavigational 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 (Figures 2 and 3)***

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.

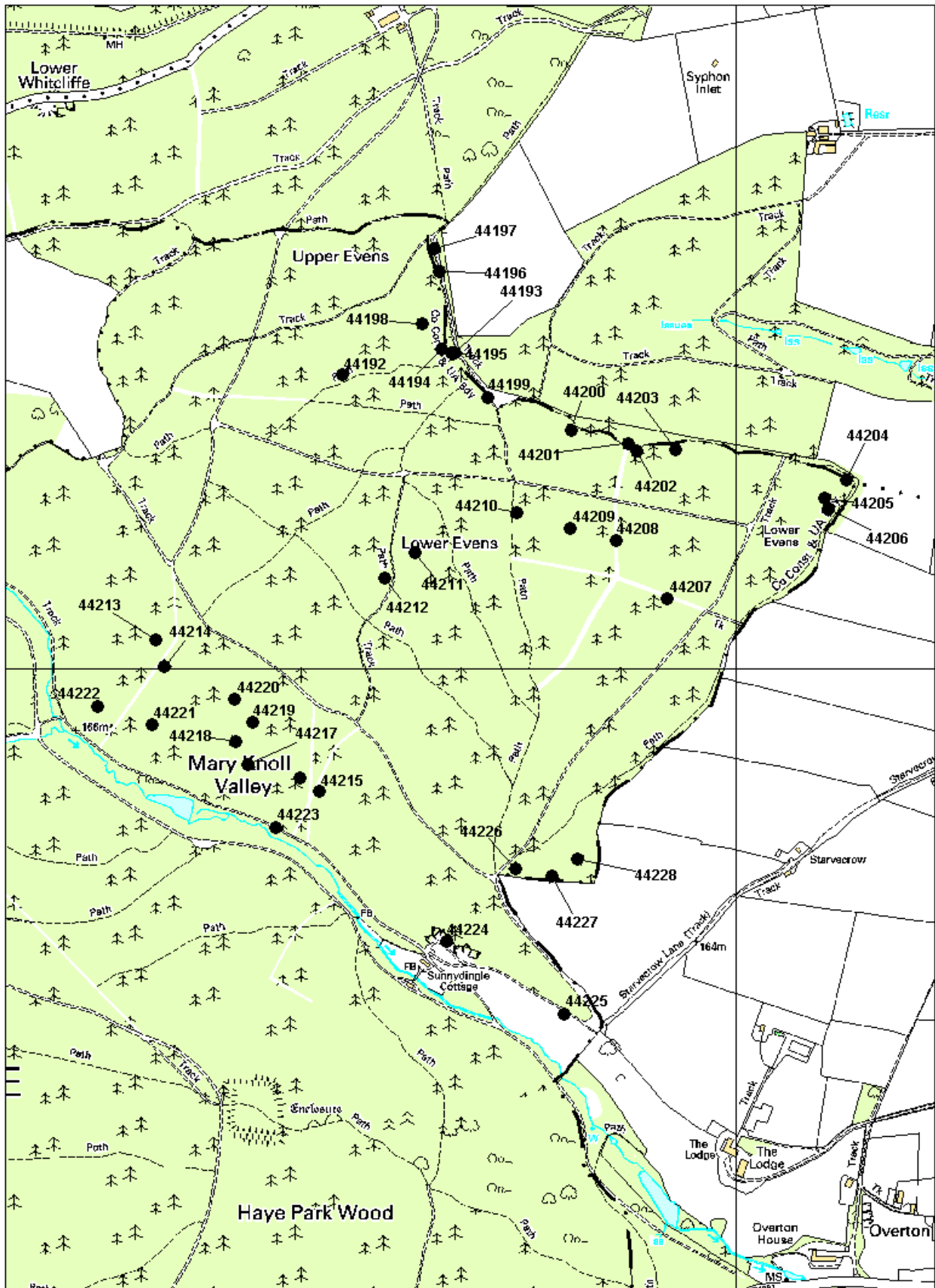
### **Woodland management features**

A total of sixteen charcoal burning platforms were recorded within the wood during the survey. Eleven of these were grouped together on the steep south-west facing slope overlooking Mary Knoll Valley (HSM 44213 – 44223). These ranged in size from 6m to 12m in diameter and comprised a circular, levelled platform excavated out of the hill-slope with a pronounced lip of spoil on their down-slope side. A second group of two charcoal burning platforms was recorded just inside the north-eastern corner of the wood (HSM 44204 and HSM 44205). Platforms HSM 44207 and HSM 44211 were located within Lower Evens whilst charcoal burning platform HSM 44228 was located close to the south-eastern corner of the survey area.

The recorded distribution of this class of monument would suggest the presence of a large scale charcoal production industry within the woodland at-least during the post-medieval period. The grouping together of charcoal burning platforms is commonly recorded. Constructing a number of platforms in close proximity suggests that whilst some are being fired others are being raked out after firing and others are being stacked in preparation for burning. Such, almost continuous, activity would suggest a comparatively large workforce within the wood for much of the year.

Despite the number of charcoal burning platforms recorded during the survey, it is likely that this class of monument is under represented in the survey due to terrain and vegetation cover. Large portions of both Upper and Lower Evens have relatively young planting over them, making feature recognition difficult. In addition to the problem with areas of dense vegetation, the lack of slope over some areas makes the recognition of artificially levelled areas problematical.

No saw pits were recorded during the survey. This suggests that either lumber was not being processed within the woodland or that most if not all of the woodland was being cultivated as coppice for the production of charcoal, hop poles and pit props.



**Figure 3: Location of features recorded during the survey.**

### **Woodland boundaries**

A number of boundary features were recorded during the survey although it is difficult to ascribe the term 'woodland boundary bank' to any of these due to the fact that the northern, eastern and to some extent the southern boundaries of the survey area coincide with the county boundary between Herefordshire and Shropshire. Therefore earthwork boundary features exist which not only describe the woodland edge but also serve the purpose of delineating the county and parish boundaries.

Such features usually comprise a large bank with a ditch on either one or both sides, e.g. HSM 44193, HSM 44203 and HSM 44226. Associated with boundary bank HSM 44203 is a concrete boundary marker inscribed, (or cast), with the letter "S" (HSM 44206). Its stone predecessor lies, half buried, next to it. The main variation concerning this type of feature is one of scale. The boundary banks range in size from just over 1m wide (HSM 44193) to 4m wide (HSM 44227), suggesting a number of phases of re-definition from the medieval period to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Industrial features**

A total of three quarries or areas of quarrying were recorded during the survey. These ranged in size from a linear quarry, (HSM 44225), in excess of 40m in length and 20m wide, to an area approximately 80m square comprising contiguous small delves, (HSM 44201), approximately 6m in diameter. The extensive area of delves (HSM 44201) was located mid slope between the county boundary and Lower Evens and would suggest a well organised but small scale industry possibly lasting for a considerable period of time. The two other quarries (HSM 44224 and HSM 44225) were both located within Mary Knoll Valley and were cut into the steep slope. Both quarries appear to relate to single events. In the case of HSM 44225 this probably relates to the construction of a cottage approximately 30m to the south-east (Sunnydingle Cottage), in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Hollow ways**

Four sections of hollow way were recorded during the survey. HSM 44192 ran on an east – west axis and comprised a 1m deep, 2.5m wide, route-way leading from the centre of Upper Evens to its eastern boundary. At this point it was joined by HSM 44195, a 2m wide and 0.4m deep hollow way which runs north, eventually cutting through the county boundary bank HSM 44197. Running off this section of hollow way approximately 30m south of the northern boundary is a spur (HSM 44196), which runs in a westerly direction. A final stretch of hollow way runs south from the intersection between HSM 44192 and 44195. This comprised a 2m wide and 0.4m deep hollow way which runs through Lower Evens to the eastern end of Mary Knoll Valley.

### **Other Features**

In addition to the features relating to woodland management and industrial processes recorded above, a small number of features were recorded during the survey that relate to other aspects of management and land-use.

Two deer leaps were recorded during the survey. HSM 44199 comprised an earthen mound constructed against the stone boundary wall (HSM 44194), approximately 5m in diameter and 1.5m high. HSM 44202 was similar in scale and appearance although

in this instance it had been constructed using the spoil from a small quarry or delve, (part of HSM 44201).

A pair of parallel banks were recorded aligned on a roughly east / west axis within the eastern portion of Lower Evens (HSM 44208). Each bank was 3.5m wide and continued for over 40m. Between the banks was a 2.5m wide ditch, 0.75m deep (HSM 44209). Both banks are similar in height, (approximately 0.5m), and appear to be well spread and of some antiquity. It is difficult to ascribe a purpose or date for the surviving earthwork as it appears to be isolated.

## ***Discussion and Implications***

### ***Site and feature condition***

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 particularly within the central portion of the wood. Relatively recent planting made access into some areas impossible.

### ***Implications regarding the archaeological resource***

The features recorded during this survey were generally well preserved. With the exception of additional access tracks being constructed (particularly on the steeper slopes) there is little threat to their survival

### ***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.

### ***Implications for future field work.***

This rapid survey has recorded a number of features associated with past woodland management and former land use. These would suggest that the entire area surveyed has been intensively managed as woodland at least from the late medieval period onwards.



## **Bibliography**

British Geological Survey (2000) *Solid and Drift Geology. Ludlow, Sheet 181*. London: HMSO.

Soil Survey of England and Wales (1971). *Soils of Midland and Western England 1:250,000*. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

## **Acknowledgements**

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.*

<b>HSM No.</b>	<b>Easting</b>	<b>Northing</b>	<b>Site Type</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Description</b>
44192	349369	273481	Hollow way	Post Medieval	2.5m wide and 1m deep, Sinuous
44193	349538	273518	Woodland Boundary Bank	Medieval	1.5m wide with ditch on N side
44194	348538	273522	Stone Wall	Post Medieval	1m wide and 1.2m thick
44195	349532	273518	Hollow way	Post Medieval	joins first hollow way
44196	349511	273651	Hollow way	Post Medieval	2.0m wide and 0.4m deep
44197	349503	273688	Boundary Bank	Medieval	County boundary cut by many tracks
44198	349484	273565	Platform	Post Medieval	roughly circular 12m diameter no charcoal
44199	349592	273444	Deer Leap	Post Medieval	Earthen mound c. 5m in diameter and 1.5m high against wall
44200	349728	273391	Lynchet	Medieval	Facing NE and 1m high
44201	349821	273368	Quarry	Post Medieval	Large area of quarrying / delves, 80m square
44202	349836	273356	Deer Leap	Post Medieval	Constructed using spoil from a delve
44203	349900	273359	Woodland Boundary Bank	Medieval	1m wide and 0.25m high with ditch to NW
44204	350179	273308	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	7m in diameter
44205	350143	273279	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	8m in diameter
44206	350149	273261	Marker Stone	Post Medieval	Concrete marker inscribed with 'S' stone precursor half buried next to it.
44207	349886	273114	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	7m in diameter
44208	349801	273209	Bank	Medieval	Pair of parallel banks 3.5m wide
44209	349727	273230	Ditch	Medieval	Runs off end of bank, 2.5m wide and 0.75m deep
44210	349638	273255	Hollow way	Post Medieval	2m wide and 0.4m deep
44211	349473	273189	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	7m in diameter
44212	349422	273148	Ditch	Post Medieval	1.5m wide on SE/NW axis
44213	349048	273046	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	5m in diameter
44214	349062	273003	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	5m in diameter
44215	349316	272799	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	7m in diameter
44216	349283	272821	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	7m in diameter
44217	349198	272842	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	8m in diameter
44218	349178	272880	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	5m in diameter
44219	349207	272911	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	5m in diameter

44220	349177	272949	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	5m in diameter
44221	349042	272907	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	7m in diameter
44222	348952	272938	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	6m in diameter
44223	349244	272739	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	6m in diameter
44224	349523	272553	Quarry	Post Medieval	30m in diameter
44225	349717	272434	Quarry	Post Medieval	40m long and 20m wide
44226	349637	272671	Woodland Boundary Bank	Medieval	1.2m wide bank with ditch on either side
44227	349696	272660	Bank	Medieval	Very eroded 4m wide straight bank
44228	349739	272687	Charcoal Burning Platform	Post Medieval	10m in diameter