

# AYTON MOOR

SCARBOROUGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FIELD SURVEY A

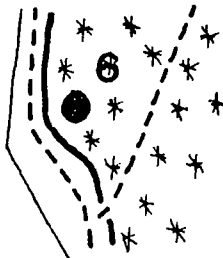
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The Archaeological Society is interested in preserving these monuments for future generations. Please contact the Museum or the society if you think any are suffering damage.

Five of the sites in this area are Bronze Age burial mounds about 3,500 years old, and though they lie in agricultural land they are still remarkably well preserved. SITE ONE lies in the field to the east of the derelict building known as Wilkinson's shed. It stands four feet high and is covered in stones from modern day field clearance. The mound at SITE TWO is crossed by the footpath, and as one walks onto the mound, still six or seven feet high, the path crosses a small hole from when it was dug. It is recorded by Elgee in his book "Early Man In North East Yorkshire", that a local antiquary called Tessiman opened many of the barrows on Ayton Moor in the 1850's. It was common practice to open several barrows in one day, but detailed records were not kept and it is virtually impossible to relate objects in museums to the sites they were found.

The footpath also crosses the earthworks known as the Skell Dykes, (SITE THREE). A short section of the bank with a ditch on either side still survives to an impressive height in the trees on the edge or How Brow, whilst the rest of the dykes cross agricultural land and have been used as a field boundary. They are still visible amongst the bushes and small trees and there is a footpath along the southern half of the dykes from the track to Osborne Lodge. They originally continued southwards to a valley called Seavegate Gill, near Ayton, and together with the steep slope above Forge Valley the dykes would have securely enclosed about half a square mile of plateau top. They probably derive their name from the Norwegian "Skial" meaning a boundary, but it remains a mystery when they were built and whether for the protection of men or animals.

The grass covered barrow at SITE FOUR is clearly visible from the road leading to Osborne Lodge. There is a deep pit in the centre and in 1955 the fragments of two burial urns were found by rabbit catchers. To the east a second barrow, SITE FIVE is visible from the road on top of a slight rise. It is four feet high and though left unploughed is covered in field clearance boulders.

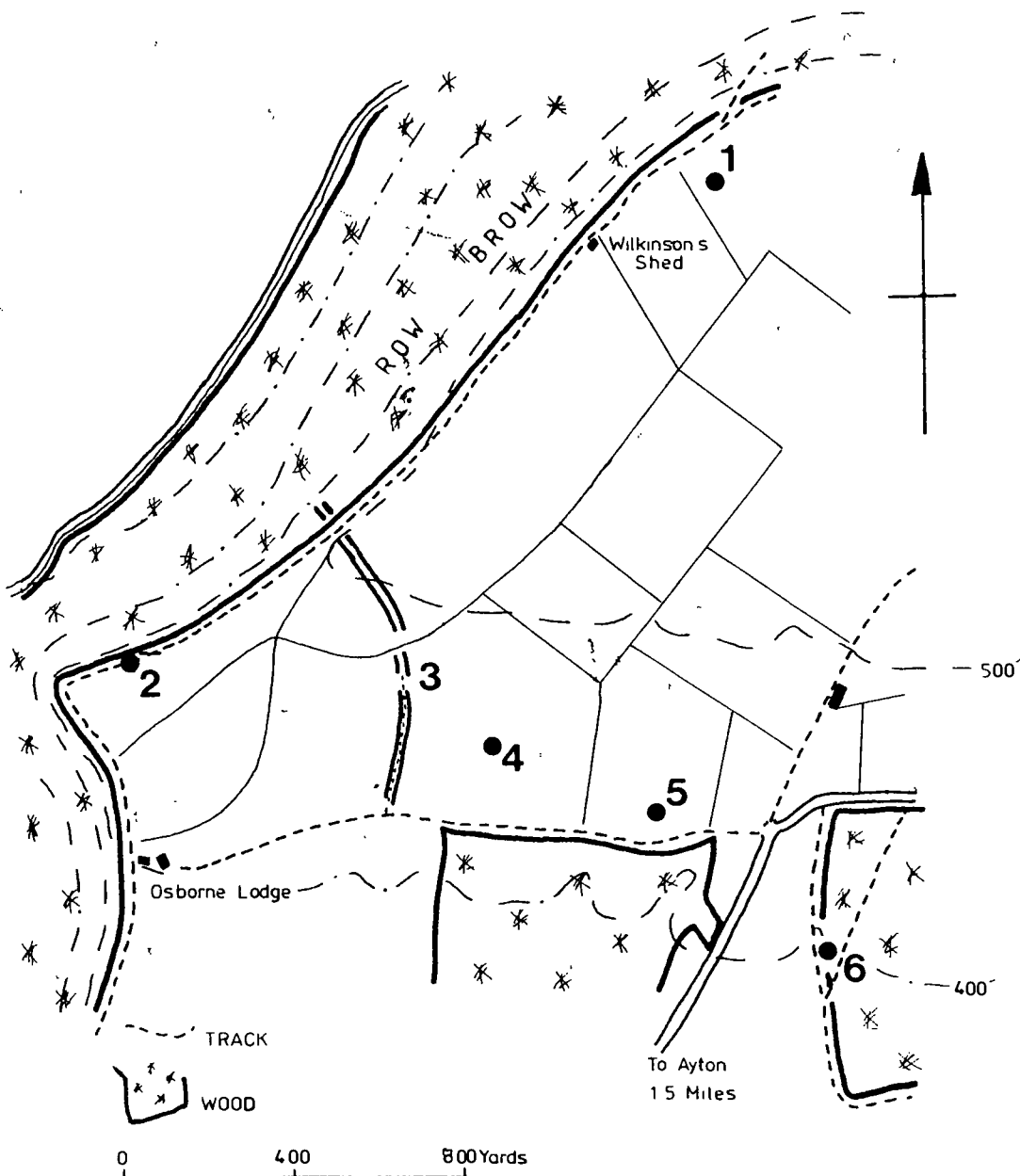


SITE SIX lies at the edge of a forest plantation. It has not been ploughed though trees are growing on top. It is 20 yards from the track at the top of a slight slope.

# MAP A AYTON MOOR

AYTON MOOR

0 1 2 3 Miles



## GRID REFERENCES

SITE 1 TA 000 882  
 2 SE 986 873  
 3 SE 99 87  
 4 SE 994 872  
 5 SE 997 870  
 6 TA 001 867

## SEAMER MOOR

### SCARBOROUGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

#### FIELD SURVEY B

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Probably the most interesting archaeological site on Seamer Moor is the tree covered hill called Seamer Beacon. On the western slope there are two Bronze Age burial mounds, approx. 4,000 years old and a third (SITE TWO) standing six feet high lies in a pasture field just to the south. Crowning the summit of the hill (SITE ONE) are the ruins of the beacon tower and one of the fallen stones is inscribed with the name of "Baron Albert's Tower". The repair of the beacon was the responsibility of the eastern division of Pickering Lythe Wapentake in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The site was excavated in 1925 and a v shaped ditch was found surrounding the hill and was thought to be the defences of a Roman beacon tower. The site commands views out to sea and inland as far as the Roman fort at Malton.

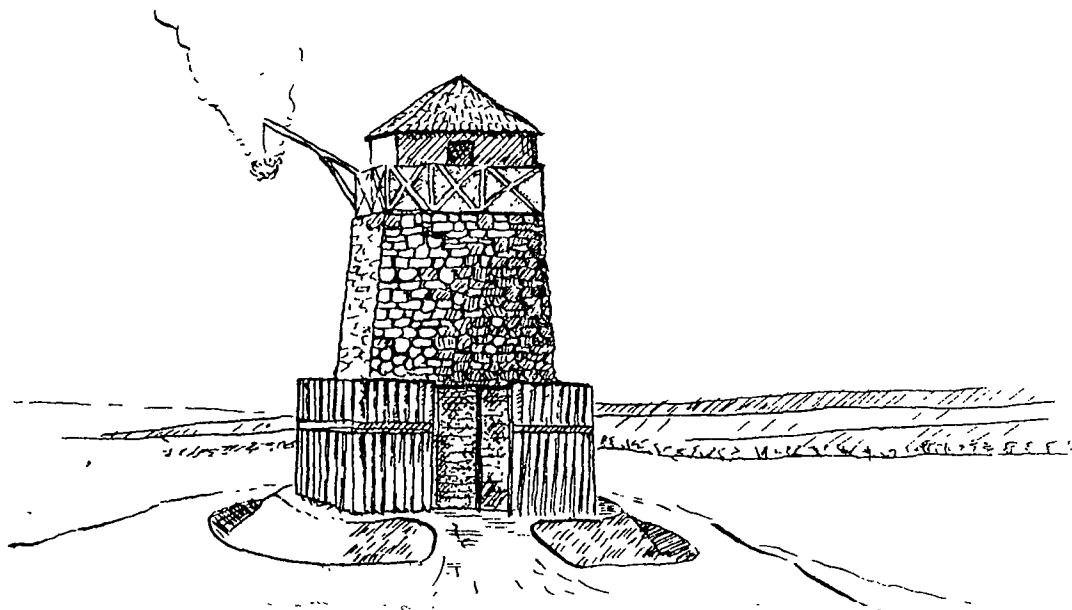
Also visible 300 yards away is the mound called Hagworm Hill. (SITE THREE) This was excavated by Lord Londesborough in the mid 19th century. At the centre of the mound was a cairn surrounded by an outer circle of large stones, all buried under the earth mound. It contained two cremations accompanied by "Food Vessels" and flint arrowheads.

Nothing is known of the contents of the barrow at SITE FOUR, but there is a large hole in the top of the four feet high mound, testifying to an unrecorded excavation.

Sites Five and Six are the surviving fragments of a system of dykes which used to cover this part of the moor, and were perhaps field boundaries. They used to dividd the ground as far as Seamer Beacon into a series of large enclosures.

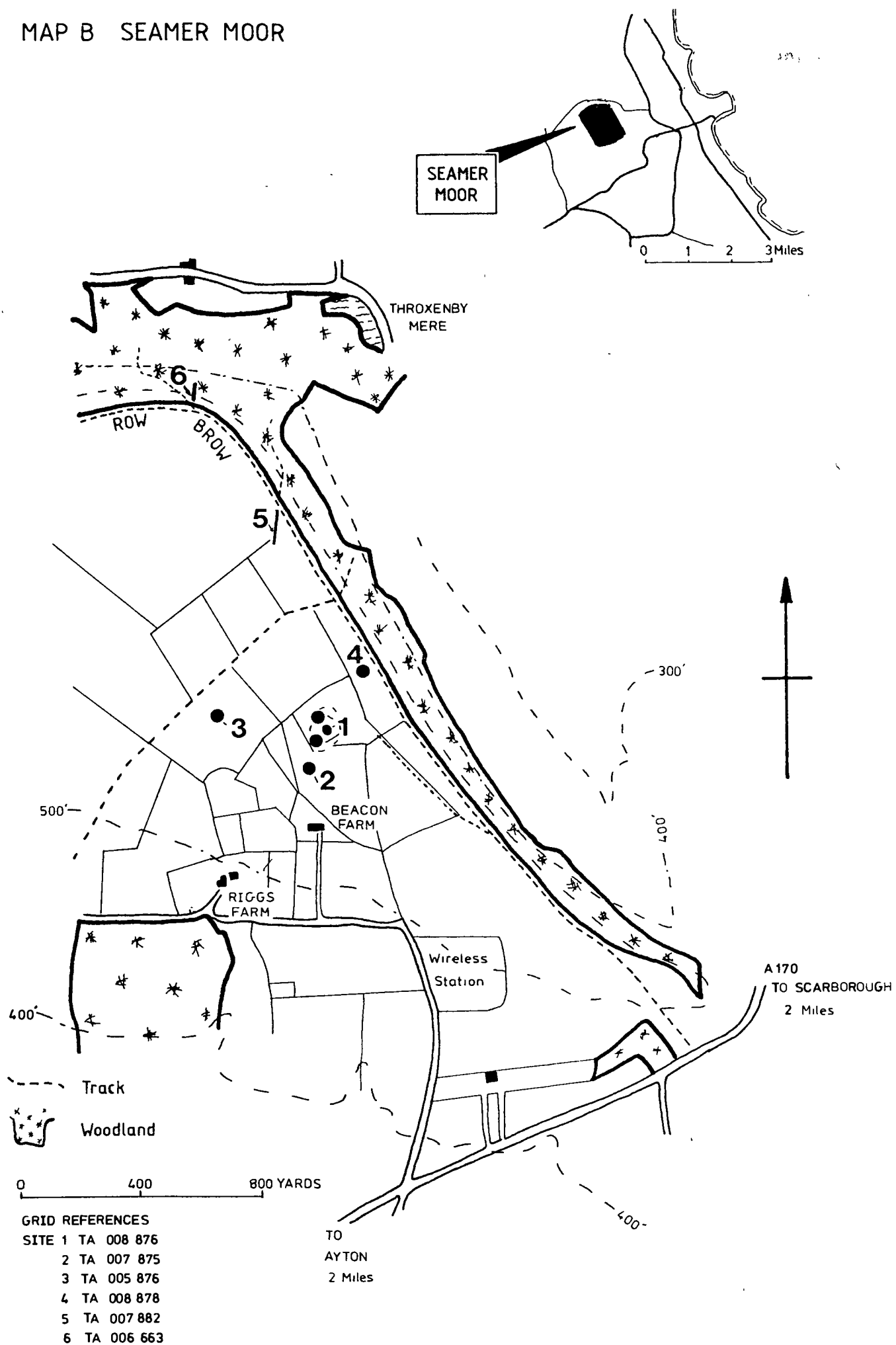
At SITE FIVE there is a depth of four feet between the bottom of the ditch and the two banks on either side.

At SITE SIX there survives a ditch three feet deep and five to six feet wide on the edge of Row Brow running down the hillside. It is not known how old these earthworks are.



A ROMAN BEACON TOWER

# MAP B SEAMER MOOR

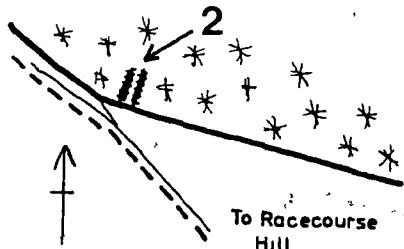


# SEAMER MOOR

## SCARBOROUGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY FIELD SURVEY C

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SITE ONE is a rectangular enclosure, visible as an earthwork in the 19th century, but now only when the sun casts long shadows. It may date to Roman times because a Roman tile was found in an adjoining field, and Roman enclosures of similar plan have been excavated at Newnham's Pit



Staxton and at Crossgates. Sites Two and Three are fragments of the same boundary dyke which once ran north to south across Seamer Moor. It may have been contemporary with the enclosure because it cuts off the promontory on which it lies. At SITE TWO there are two banks and two ditches running down the tree covered slope, and at SITE THREE two banks and two ditches also surrounded by trees.

Five Bronze Age burial mounds, probably around 3,500 years old, still

survive in this area, though many others must have been destroyed without trace over the years. The finds from some have been recorded.

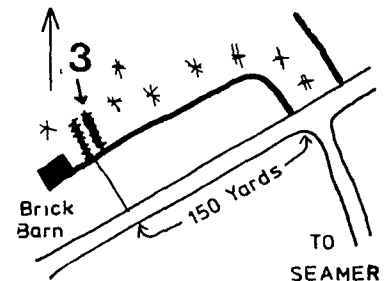
SITE FOUR was excavated in 1934 and 1966 and cremated bones of four people were found as well as fragments of pottery and implements of flint.

At the centre of the mound was a cairn of stones 30 feet in diameter. The barrow is now ploughed down and only the western slope can be seen against the skyline looking north from the entrance to Moor House Farm, on a slight break in slope.

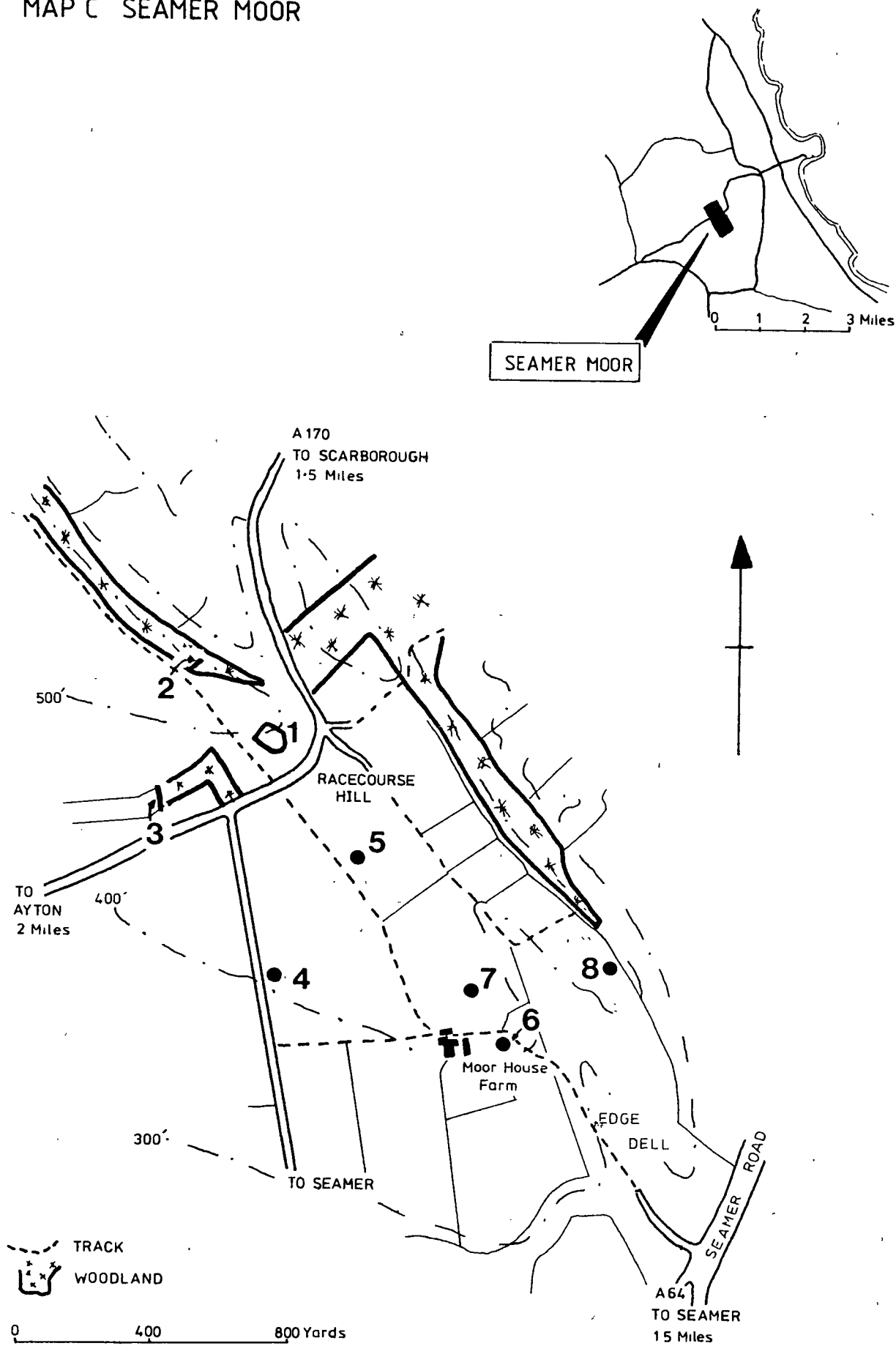
At SITE SIX, the mound is three feet high and 25 yards across and covered in grass, lying in the plantation adjoining Moor House Farm. It was excavated in the mid 19th century and at the centre a stone cist was found containing a broken burial urn.

SITE SEVEN is less than 200 yards away and is now only visible as an insignificant rise on the horizon looking north from the plantation.

SITE EIGHT also occupies a skyline position on the opposite side of Edge Dell. It survives as a rise three feet high which can be seen from the farm gate near Site Six, looking eastward against the backdrop of Oliver's Mount.



# MAP C SEAMER MOOR



## GRID REFERENCES

SITE 1	TA 019 868	6	TA 025 860
2	TA 017 869	7	TA 024 820
3	TA 015 863	8	TA 028 861
4	TA 019 861		
5	TA 021 865		