

METRIC SURVEY OF PART OF JOHN KNIGHT'S
GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS, ASHCOMBE,
SIMONSBATH

PROJECT REPORT

By Hazel Riley



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A metric survey of the historic landscape features at White Rock Cottage and the south part of Ashcombe has recorded the remains of John Knight's designed landscape associated with Simonsbath House. Some of the features may date from 17th and 18th centuries when Simonsbath Farm was the only documented settlement on Exmoor Forest. Two of the gardens mentioned in documents of the 1830s have been located: the layout of the Garden by the River is clear and many garden features are evident; part of White Rock Garden also survives. White Rock Cottage, the Tool Shed and the Grotto were part of this designed landscape and formed a focal point for both the Garden by the River and for White Rock Garden, which were both approached by terraced walks and paths from Simonsbath House. The terraced walks in Ashcombe were part of John Knight's original plan for a formal landscape setting for Simonsbath House. They may also have provided the opportunity to enjoy views of the wider Exmoor landscape around Simonsbath.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

County: Somerset

District: West Somerset

Parish: Exmoor

Exmoor HER: 22117 White Rock Cottage

Exmoor HER: 22303 Grotto

Exmoor HER: 22304 Stables

Exmoor HER: 22305 Quarry

Exmoor HER: 22434 Ashcombe garden and plantation

INTRODUCTION

A large scale metric survey of the historic landscape features in the lower part of Ashcombe Plantation was requested by the Exmoor National Park Authority in order to help future management of the area (Riley 2013). The survey was focussed on land that forms part of Exmoor National Park Authority's land holding.

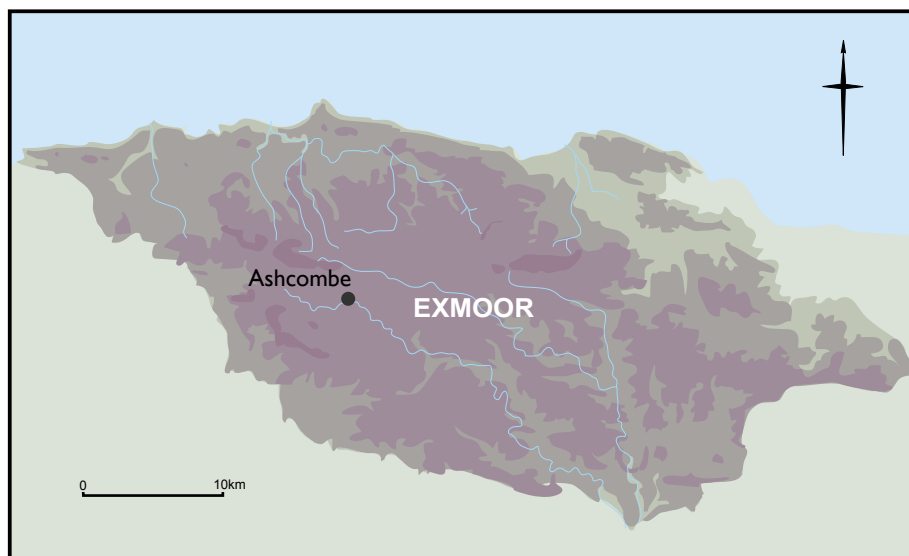


Fig 1 Location map

Location, topography and geology

The survey area is at the southern end of Ashcombe Plantation, Simonsbath, at NGR SS 7735 3945 (Fig 1). Ashcombe Plantation occupies the lower part of the valley of Ashcombe Water, which runs from Great Ashcombe to its confluence with the River Barle at Simonsbath Bridge. A second stream runs from Little Ashcombe, west of Clovenrocks Bridge, to join Ashcombe Water at White Rock Cottage (Fig 2). The underlying geology consists of Kentisbury Slates of the Devonian formation (bgs.ac.uk).

PREVIOUS WORK

There is very little published information on the gardens and grounds of the Knight family's Exmoor residence, Simonsbath House. Roger Burton notes that Ashcombe Plantation was 'part of the former pleasure grounds of the old house' (Burton 1994, 130). He also writes about Simonsbath School, which was built at White Rock cottages by Frederic Knight in 1857. Miss Olive Badger, schoolmistress from 1928-36, was very keen on making gardening a proper part of the school curriculum:

'As there was practically no garden to the schoolhouse Miss Badger also asked his Lordship (Lord Fortescue) if he would allow her the private use of a piece of land adjoining the house. This was agreed at a nominal rent. The plot contained six huge beech trees and many other smaller trees and shrubs, set in a perfect wilderness of weeds and brambles. With the help of a couple of workmen and her senior boys the jungle was cleared, paths made, and earth moved to make flower beds, with a star shaped bed for flowers cut by a friendly neighbour. Lord Fortescue was most impressed when next he visited her.'
(Burton 1994, 99)

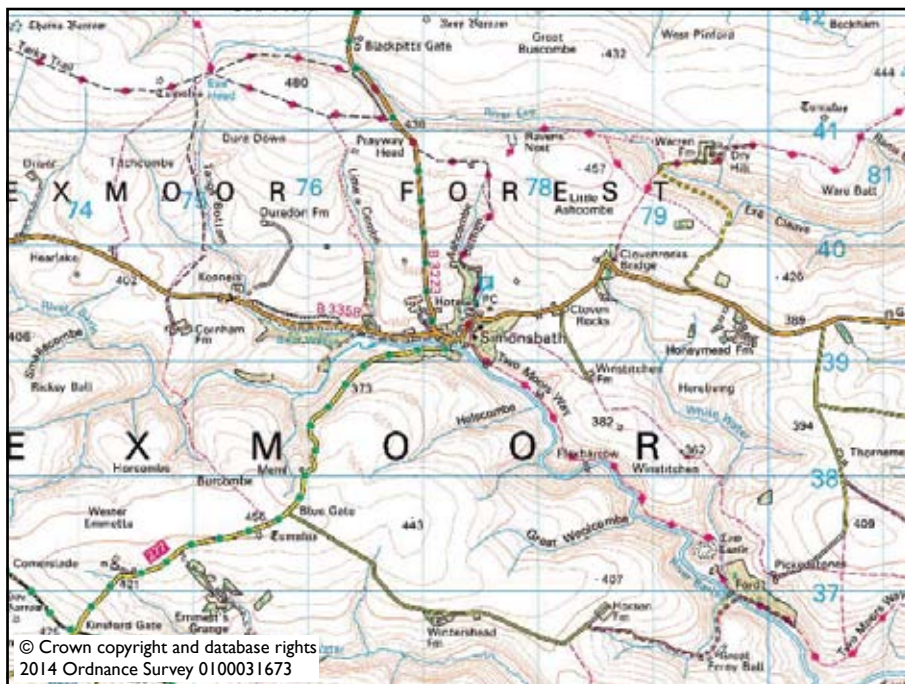


Fig 2 The survey area: location and topography

After Miss Badger left, gardening lapsed at the school, but it was re-introduced by Miss Bartlett and Mr Cripps in 1944. 'By this time the gardens used by Miss Badger and her pupils had been taken back into the estate farm, and new gardens were made in the small field behind Simonsbath Lodge [House] and the shelter belt of trees, where a number of villagers had their plots' (Burton 1994, 104).

Interviews with people who attended Simonsbath School and from Exmoor Estate workers suggested that there was a ruined wall in Ashcombe Plantation and a stone bridge over Ashcombe Water NE of the car park (information from Rob Wilson-North).

Exmoor National Park Authority commissioned a report in 2004 to establish whether their land at Simonsbath, including Ashcombe, formed the garden or pleasure grounds of Simonsbath House (Garrett 2004). It also looked at the building history of the house and village and the wider landscape in the environs of Simonsbath. In particular, the report examined the documentary evidence on the history of Simonsbath House and its grounds. A walkover survey of Ashcombe identified some of the features surveyed and interpreted here, such as the large quartz boulders, terraced paths and the bridge abutment at the head of Ashcombe (Garrett 2004, 28-32). The report summarises the evidence for the existence of gardens and pleasure grounds in Simonsbath and this summary is used as the historical background to the historic landscape features surveyed in Ashcombe and discussed below:

'An inventory of 1833 records two gardens associated with Simonsbath House called the "Garden by the River" and "White Rock Garden", the latter located near the estate building of White Rock Cottage. It also mentions a "Gardener's Tool House."

Accounts from the 1830s reveal the establishment of a "New Garden", walled and possibly situated behind the house.

Labour accounts of the 1830s and 1840s reveal the regular employment of gardeners at Simonsbath.

Two indentures and a property valuation book confirm that there were gardens and pleasure grounds exclusively associated with Simonsbath House in the 1860s. However, it is very difficult to establish the exact nature or location of these areas.

'Fortescue material and modern recollections suggest that Ashcombe contained a naturalistic, woodland garden at least by the early twentieth century. It seems highly likely that this was based on an original Victorian layout.

The correspondence of a Fortescue land agent reveals the existence of gardens around Simonsbath House in 1898, 1899 and 1900.

The map evidence, coupled with observations of the current site and the unpublished documentary material just listed, all point towards the existence

of gardens created by the Knights and reinforced by the Fortescues....[These were] on the land that runs along the Ashcombe stream to the north east of Simonsbath House....[and] on the higher ground directly behind the house up to the Simonsbath Nursery Plantation'
(Garrett 2004, extract from Report Summary)

Prior to the purchase of the White Rock Cottage building complex by the Exmoor National Authority, South West Archaeology was commissioned to undertake a desk based assessment and building survey of the complex in 2012 (Green *et al* 2012). The conclusions of this work form the basis for the role that the buildings at White Rock played in John Knight's gardens at Ashcombe and White Rock.

The study of the buildings concluded that the original White Rock Cottage, as a cottage ornee, and a grotto, formed an element of the picturesque landscape around Simonsbath in the 1830s. White Rock cottages were also part of the estate centre, housing variously the school teacher, a shepherd, a land surveyor, gardeners and a gamekeeper in the 19th and 20th centuries. As the village grew, the school at White Rock played an important role in the social development of the community, and has links with the present population as it remained in use until 1970 (Green *et al* 1970, 29).

THE SURVEY

The survey was carried out in March 2014, after initial clearance of some ash woodland and willow scrub which was obscuring most of the archaeological features (Front cover). The features were recorded at a scale of 1:1000 using an EDM and completed by graphical methods (Fig 3). The survey was located to the OS National Grid (OSGB36) by fixing several points with survey grade differential GPS. The GPS-derived geodetic WGS84 coordinates were transformed to the Ordnance Survey National Grid (OSGB36) using the Ordnance Survey's grid transformation (OSTN02) in Leica's GPS post-processing software. Observation times were based on those recommended by the OS and the RICS in order to obtain accurate heighting information (OS 2010; RICS 2010).

Two areas in the northern part of Ashcombe Plantation were also surveyed. These are the area where the main path around the valley meets the leat, and the remains of a stone bridge at the northern end of Ashcombe Plantation. These features were surveyed at a scale of 1:100 using graphical methods and located to OSGB36 using OS map control and mapping grade GPS. A third area was also investigated: the area to the south of White Rock Cottage and Simonsbath School, where the OS 1st and 2nd edition maps show a small garden. The area was difficult to access because of scaffolding and vegetation. A combination of OS map detail and controlled sketch survey was used to depict the historic landscape features which survive here.

DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Medieval and early post-medieval features

On the east side of Ashcombe Water, some earthworks are clearly earlier than the earthwork remains of the designed landscape at Ashcombe. A bank, AC1, is the earliest feature recorded here. It is cut by a terraced track, AC2, and the bank and ditch AC3, has been constructed on top of it. Coppiced ash trees grow on the bank (Fig 4). The bank ends on the large quartz outcrop AC15. The track AC2 is associated with an area of quarrying, AC14, on its south side.

These features could be associated with enclosures and access relating to Simonsbath Farm which was established in the mid 17th century. However, the 1818 Inclosure map for Exmoor Forest shows no features on the east side of Ashcombe Water (Fig 5) (SRO Q\Rde 140), suggesting the bank AC1 and track AC2 could be medieval or early post-medieval in date. The bank and ditch AC3 is aligned with the current boundary of Ashcombe Plantation and may be the original eastern boundary of the Ashcombe enclosure by John Knight (Fig 6).

Fig 4 (top right) Medieval or early post-medieval bank cut by track (1m scale) (Hazel Riley)



Fig 5 (below right) Extract from the Inclosure map for Exmoor Forest 1818 (SRO Q\Rde 140)

Fig 6 (below) Part of the original enclosure boundary at Ashcombe (1m scale) (Hazel Riley)



The gardens and designed landscape at Ashcombe

The survey area contains earthwork remains which relate to two of John Knight's gardens identified by Caroline Garrett from documentary evidence, and to a wider designed landscape in Ashcombe. The analysis of these earthworks set out below strongly indicate that the latter was part of John Knight's original plan for the formal landscape around Simonsbath House. It has been modified in the later 19th and 20th centuries.

The Garden by the River

This garden has very definite boundaries: to the NW, north and east the garden is enclosed by a stone wall. To the south Ashcombe Water and the large slate quarry bound the area. The wall survives in a ruinous state, but enough remains to be able to suggest its original form. The best preserved part is on the east side of Ashcombe Water. Here the wall is constructed of small slate slabs, with no mortar, this may be the remains of the footings where the wall crossed the river; south of this, the wall is revetted into the hillside above the river (Figs 7 and 8). West of Ashcombe Water the wall is quite ruinous (Fig 9); the NW boundary is quite different. It consists of a scarp with a path below (Fig 10). Some slight stony mounds lie on the path. The presence of the stony mounds suggests that the stone wall was robbed, perhaps to provide material for repairs to the leat revetment. The terraced path in front of the wall could be an original feature: it is blocked by the leat at a point where the Ashcombe enclosure wall turns sharply. The walk would have provided views of the garden from above as



Fig 7 (top left) John Knight's garden wall by Ashcombe Water (1m scale) (Hazel Riley)

Fig 8 (below) John Knight's garden wall east of Ashcombe Water (1m scale) (Hazel Riley)

Fig 9 (below left) John Knight's garden wall on the west of Ashcombe Water (Hazel Riley)



well as out to the wider landscape around Simonsbath. There are also some steps in the wall nearby, indicating another entrance into the garden (Fig 11). The slate quarry, AC11, formed part of the south boundary of the garden; it may have supplied the stone for John Knight's unfinished extension to Simonsbath and was incorporated into the garden layout by necessity as it occupies most of the land between the enclosures of Simonsbath Farm and the steep valley of the River Barle (Fig 12).

The garden is approached from Simonsbath House by a substantial path, terraced into the hillside with views down to the River Barle and, as the path crosses into the garden at the quarry, to the sparkling quartz outcrop on the west of Ashcombe Water (Fig 13). Contained within this garden are some large quartz outcrops and smaller, earthfast quartz boulders (Fig 14). The area around the largest quartz outcrop has been excavated to emphasise the rock and to make a level area in front of it (Fig 15). A terraced path, AC6, runs below the quartz outcrop, and a path leads up from it to the quartz outcrop. A second terraced path, AC7, leads up to the eastern boundary wall, and a third, AC8, leads up to the NW boundary (Fig 14). All three paths are cut by a water worn gully, AC18, caused by the diversion of the leat AC13 in c 1890 (OS 1st and 2nd edition maps). The terraced path AC6 runs through the remains of the boundary wall (Fig 9), where there are several large quartz boulders and a lump of quartz visible in the remains of the wall. This suggests the presence of a formal opening – perhaps a gateway or arch - in the garden wall, leading out into the designed landscape of Ashcombe beyond.

Fig 10 (top right) Terraced walk below the garden boundary (Hazel Riley)



Fig 11 (below) Steps in the Ashcombe boundary wall (Hazel Riley)

Fig 12 (below right) The slate quarry in the garden by the River (Hazel Riley)





Fig 13 (top right) Path from Simonsbath House to the Garden by the River (1m scale) (Hazel Riley)
 Fig 14 (top left) Quartz outcrop, boulders and terraced walks in the Garden by the River (Hazel Riley)
 Fig 15 (above left) Quartz outcrop and terraced walk in the Garden by the River (Hazel Riley)



Fig 17 (left) The terraced walk and the leat in Ashcombe Plantation (1m scale) (Hazel Riley)

Fig 18 (above right) Stones set up across the leat in Ashcombe Plantation (0.5m scale) (Hazel Riley)

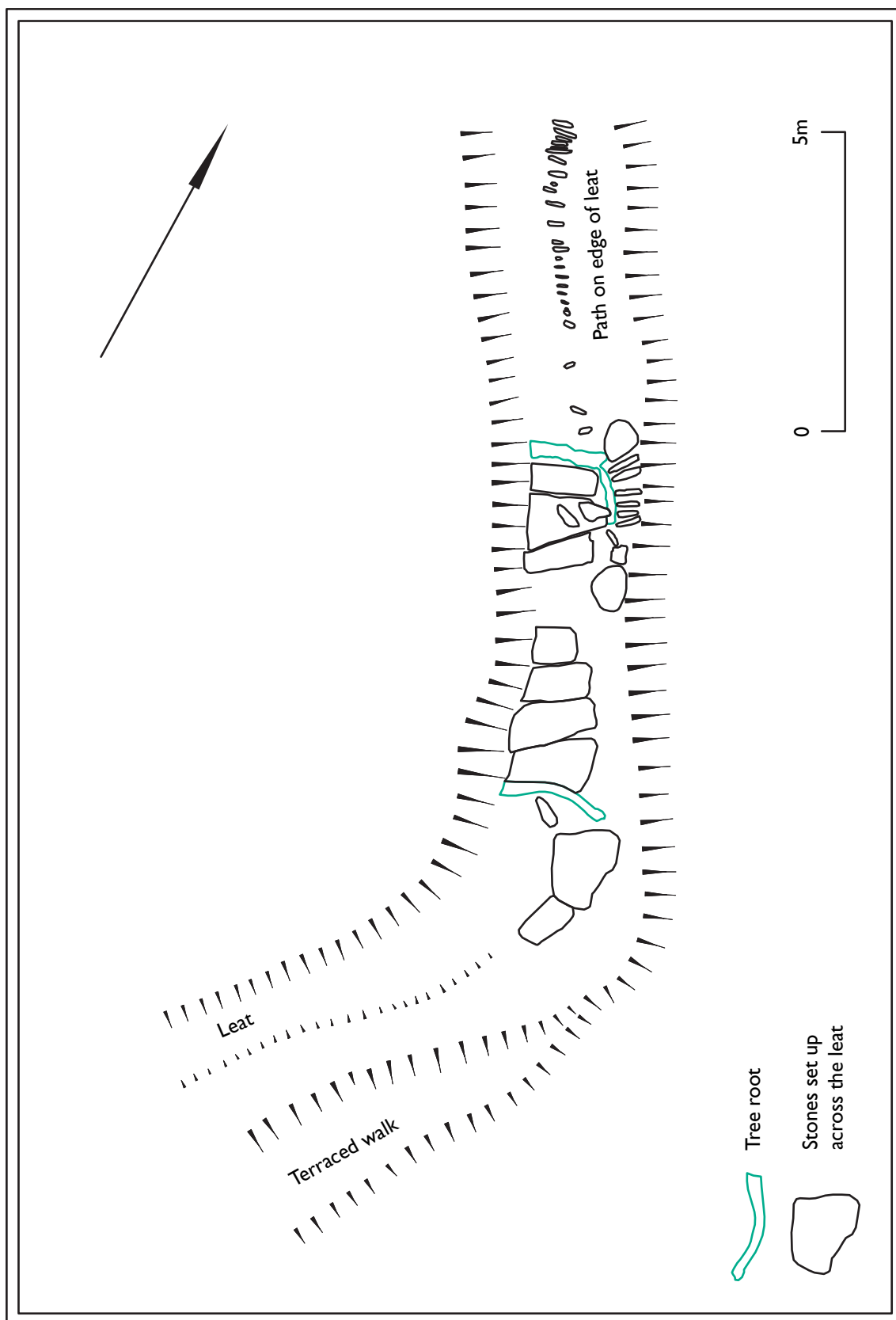


Fig 16 Plan of the terraced path and leat in Ashcombe Plantation

The designed landscape in Ashcombe

The terraced path AC6 leads north up the west side of Ashcombe. At SS 77384 39704 the leat clearly overlies this path (Figs 16 and 17). The leat is used as the path here and several large stone slabs have been set over the channel (Fig 18). At the head of Ashcombe the remains of a stone structure, AC16, are visible in the west side of the Ashcombe Water (Figs 19 and 20). This is at the point where the path crosses Ashcombe Water on the 2nd edition OS map, where a foot bridge is marked. The path on the western side of the river here is obscured by modifications to the course of the leat, but it is clearly visible on the eastern side, where there are also well preserved sections of drystone walling which are parts of the original Ashcombe enclosure (Fig 21). Small sections of the terraced path are visible on the eastern side of Ashcombe, but much of it is obscured by fallen timber. A clear section survives to the east of John Knight's boundary wall, where it leads past a second large quartz outcrop (Fig 3, AC15). This, like the outcrop contained within the Garden by the River, has been partially excavated to form a platform and emphasise the size of the outcrop (Front cover). The path is now cut by the car park and a footpath; on the 1st edition map the path is shown curving sharply down the hillside then turning to cross the boundary wall and Ashcombe Water (Fig 22). Much of this area is now disturbed by the late 19th-century diversion of the leat. At a hollow, two small upright stone slabs and a quartz boulder on the east side the river, AC19, together with a scarp, AC10, on the west of Ashcombe Water may be the remains of this crossing.

The leat, AC15, on the west side of Ashcombe forms part of the designed landscape. It takes water from Ashcombe Water at the north boundary of Ashcombe Plantation at SS 77296 39869 and follows the contour until it meets John Knight's boundary wall at SS 77263 39464. The leat was diverted here c 1890, but the earthwork remains show that the leat originally ran for a further 200m to the back of Simonsbath House. This leat may have been constructed by John Knight when he took over Simonsbath House.



Fig 19 Plan of the bridge remains at the northern end of Ashcombe

It may well have its origins in the 17th or 18th centuries as a reliable water supply to Simonsbath Farm: the presence of the leat would explain the irregular shape of John Knight's Ashcombe enclosure. The leat has clearly been modified in the 19th and 20th centuries. Some concrete structures have been constructed in the channel. The 2nd edition map shows how the leat formed part of the circular walk around Ashcombe by 1902 (Fig 23). A path led from the channel diversion to join the leat again at SS 77324 39510. Here, two quartz boulders have been set up in the side of the leat, emphasising the continuing importance of quartz in this designed landscape (Fig 24). A path led from Simonsbath House, through the gardens immediately behind, into Ashcombe in the early 20th century (2nd edition map); it used part of the leat where the eastern bank broadens to the SW of the quarry.

White Rock Garden

The OS 1st edition map shows a garden to the south of White Rock Cottage (Fig 22). The eastern part of this garden has been recently levelled (Fig 25), but the eastern part contains several features which can be directly related to the 1st edition map (Fig 3). A hollow, AC21, which runs up to the buildings (Fig 26) is the remains of a path which probably linked the garden to White Rock Cottage, the Tool Shed and the Grotto before the school was built in 1857. This path was also the way from Simonsbath House, via the entrance drive, to White Rock Cottage. West of this is a drystone wall, AC22: the remains of the wall which separated an orchard by the river from the

Fig 20 (right) The bridge remains at the northern end of Ashcombe (1m scale) (Hazel Riley)



Fig 21 (below right) The terraced walk and drystone boundary wall at the northern end of Ashcombe (Hazel Riley)

Fig 24 (below) Quartz boulders set on the edge of the leat above the Garden by the River (1m scale) (Hazel Riley)



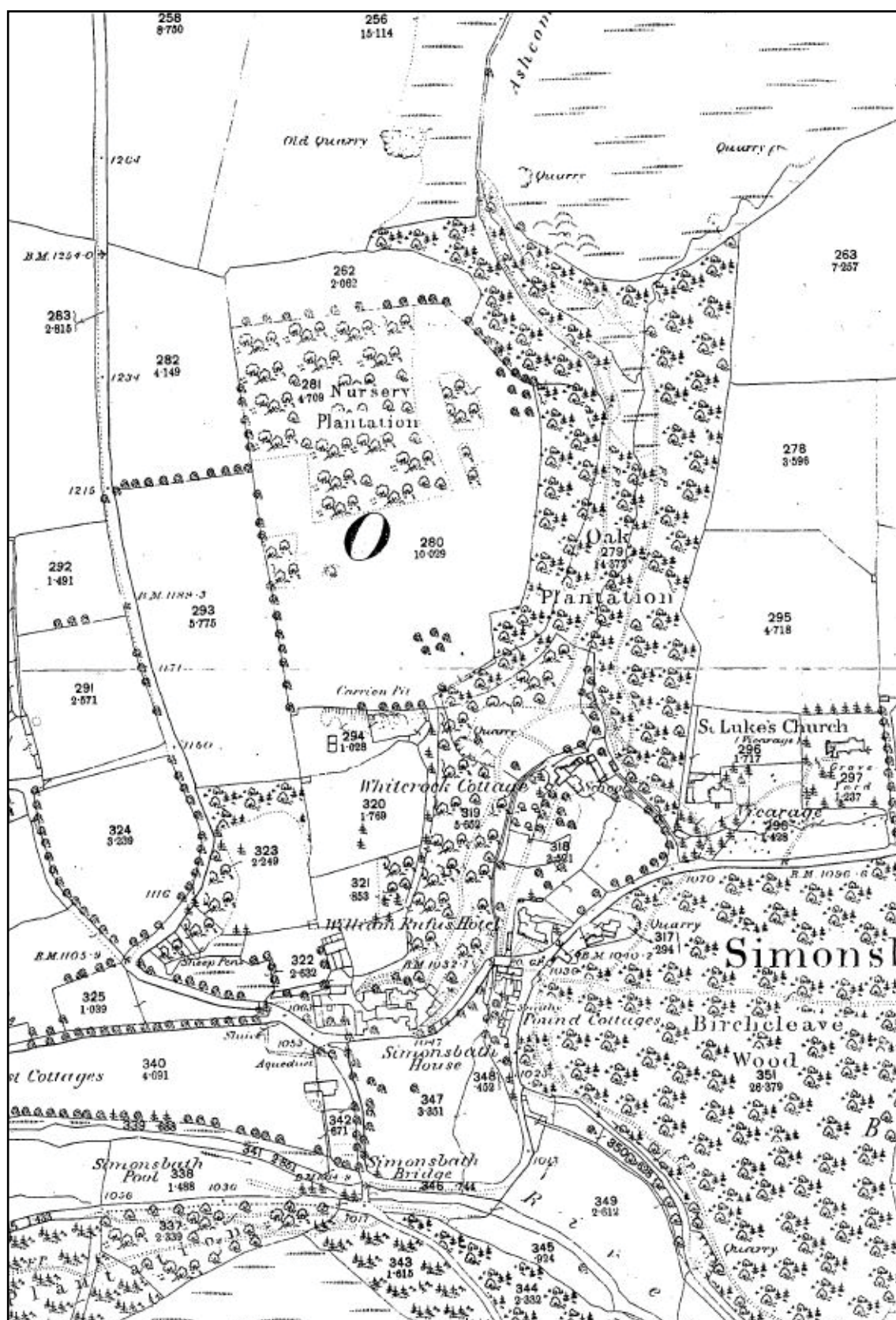


Fig 22 Extract from the OS 1st edition map (1888)

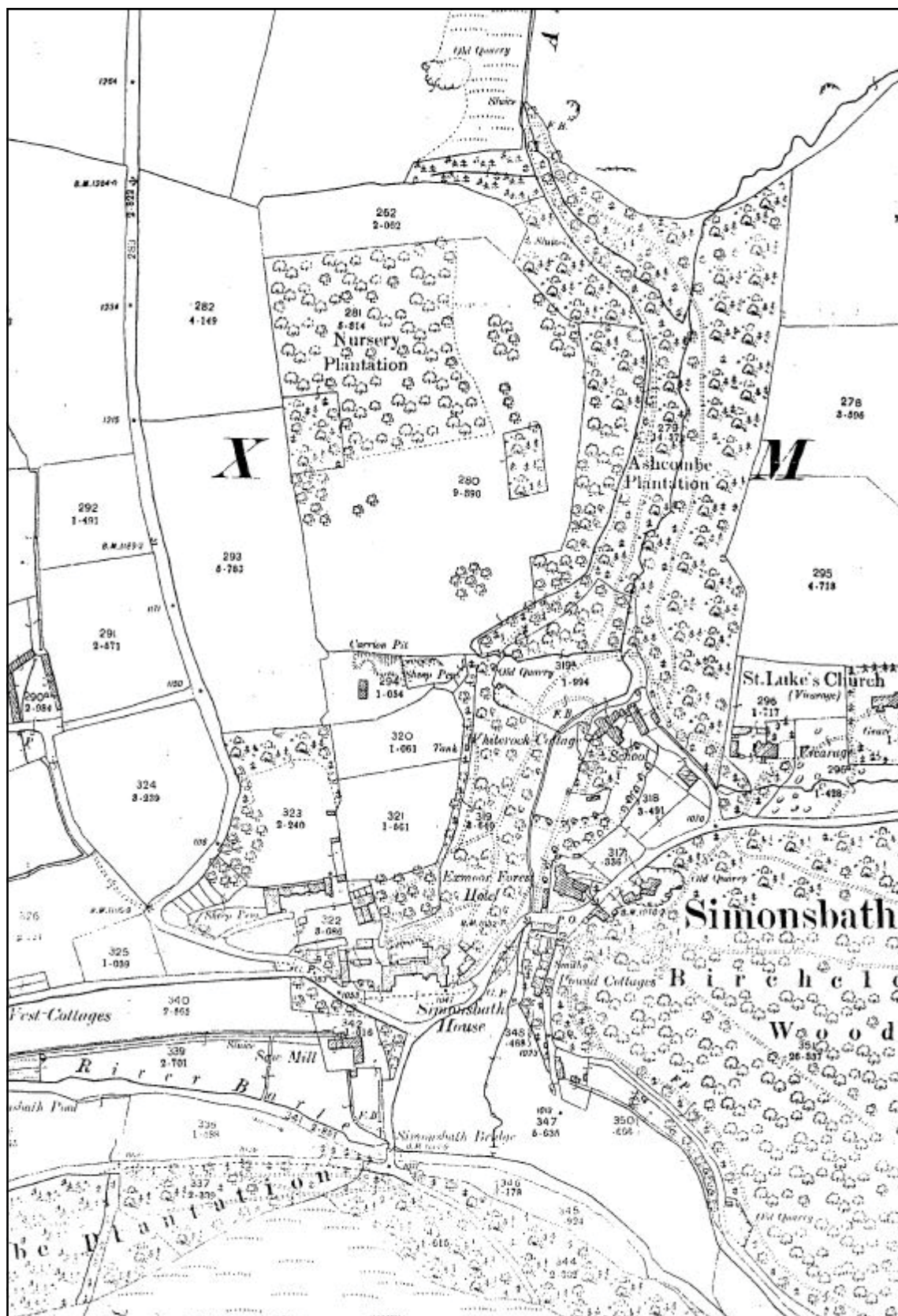


Fig 23 Extract from the OS 2nd edition map (1902)

garden on the 1st edition map. To the east is a scarp with a mound at its northern end, AC23 (Fig 25). It may have been a landscape feature: there are some large grown out coppiced trees on the mound, but difficulties of access and undergrowth hampered interpretation of this area.

These garden features would seem to be part of John Knight's 1833 White Rock Garden. Their date is suggested by several points: they appear on the 1888 1st edition map; the path seems to be associated with the building layout before the school buildings of 1857; the boundary scarp and mound curve towards the original core of the White Rock building complex rather than the school buildings; in the 1920s the school had no provision for teaching gardening and were provided with a plot of land behind Simonsbath House (Burton 1994, 99).

CONCLUSIONS

The survival of so many historic landscape features in this small area is remarkable. Some of the features may date from 17th and 18th centuries when Simonsbath Farm was the only documented settlement on Exmoor Forest. If this is the case then one, the leat, has influenced the layout of John Knight's designed landscape at Ashcombe.

The survival of so much of John Knight's designed landscape associated with Simonsbath House is also highly significant. We now have the physical remains to support the documentary evidence analysed by Caroline Garrett (2004). The location, size and layout of the Garden by the River are clear, as is part of White Rock Garden. White Rock Cottage, the Tool Shed and the Grotto were clearly part of this designed landscape and formed a focal point for both the Garden by the River and for White Rock Garden, which were both approached by terraced walks and paths from Simonsbath House. A photograph taken in the early 20th century (SRO A/BAZ/1/13)

shows the area around the stables and car park as mostly clear of trees, suggesting that the terraced walks in Ashcombe provided the opportunity to enjoy views of the wider Exmoor landscape around Simonsbath.

Fig 25 (below) The garden wall with levelled 19th-century orchard behind (1m scale)(Hazel Riley)

Fig 26 (below right) Remains of path from Simonsbath House to White Rock Cottage in White Rock Garden (1m scale) (Hazel Riley)



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Rob Wilson-North for help with interpretation and survey. The work of Caroline Garrett (2004) and South West Archaeology (2012) forms the historic landscape context for this survey.

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SITE GAZETTEER

AC1

Location: NGR 277429 139509

Type: BANK (EARTHWORK)

Period: MEDIEVAL; POST-MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A bank 3.5m wide and 0.5m high in the designed landscape at Ashcombe. The bank is cut by a terraced track and is overlain by a boundary bank which date from the medieval or post-medieval periods. The feature could be associated with enclosure and access relating to Simonsbath Farm which was established in the mid 17th-century. However, the 1818 Inclosure map for Exmoor Forest shows no features on the east side of Ashcombe Water (SRO Q\Rde 140), suggesting the bank could be medieval or early post-medieval in date.

References: AC1_NE_28MAR14_HRILEY

AC2

Location: NGR 277419 139499

Type: TRACK

Period: POST-MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A track 3-5m wide terraced into the hillside in the designed landscape of Ashcombe. The track may be associated with an area of quarrying on its southern edge. This feature could be associated with access relating to Simonsbath Farm which was established in the mid 17th-century.

However, the 1818 Inclosure map for Exmoor Forest shows no features on the east side of Ashcombe Water (SRO Q\Rde 140), suggesting that this could be medieval or early post-medieval in date.

References: AC2&14_SE_28MAR14_HRILEY

AC3

Location: NGR 277442 139493

Type: BOUNDARY BANK

Period: POST-MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A bank, 4m wide and 0.5m high, with a ditch on its east side. The feature is aligned with the current boundary of Ashcombe Plantation and may be the original eastern boundary of the Ashcombe enclosure by John Knight.

References: AC3_S_28MAR14_HRILEY

AC4

Location: NGR 277358 139520

Type: GARDEN WALL; TERRACED WALK

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: The remains of a drystone wall enclosing John Knight's 'Garden by the River' in Ashcombe. The wall was probably complete by c 1830. The wall survives as a revetment up to 1m high on the east side of the garden, a short length of coursed slates up to 1m high where it crosses Ashcombe Water, and as a low stony mound on the west of the river. The NW side has been robbed, perhaps to provide stone for repairs to a leat above the wall. A terraced walk runs below this NW section, giving views across the garden out to the wider landscape around Simonsbath.

References: AC4a_S_30MAR14_HRILEY; AC4b_S_30MAR14_HRILEY; AC4c_W_30MAR14_HRILEY; AC4d_NE_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC5

Location: 277344 139492

Type: GARDEN FEATURE

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: A large outcrop of quartz, 8m long, 2.5m wide and over 3m high, has been partially excavated to emphasise the rock and to provide a level platform in front of it. It is accessed by a short path leading from one of the terraced walks in the garden. Several smaller quartz boulders are scattered across the garden. This is part of John Knight's Garden by the River which was constructed by c 1830.

References: AC5a_N_30MAR14_HRILEY; AC5b_N_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC6

Location: 277363 139507

Type: TERRACED WALK

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: A terraced path, 2-2.5m wide, runs through John Knight's Garden by the River, and through Ashcombe, giving views out to the wider landscape around Simonsbath.

References: AC6_NE_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC7

Location: NGR 277364 139495

Type: TERRACED WALK

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: A terraced path, 2m wide, on the western edge of Ashcombe Water, in John Knight's Garden by the River, constructed c 1830. Part of revetment wall on the downslope side visible following vegetation clearance in 2014.

References: AC7a_NE_30MAR14_HRILEY; AC7b_NW_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC8

Location: NGR 277291 139454

Type: TERRACED WALK

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: A terraced path, 2m wide, in John Knight's Garden by the River, constructed c 1830.

References: AC8_N_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC9

Location: NGR 277306 139401

Type: TERRACED WALK

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: A terraced path, rock-cut in places and 2-3m wide runs from the south edge of the survey area into John Knight's Garden by the River. It was the main way to access the garden from Simonsbath House, with views across Ashcombe Water out into the wider landscape as well as glimpses of garden features and the buildings at White Rock Cottage, and was constructed c 1830.

References: AC9_NE_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC10

Location: NGR 277368 139458

Type: PATH

Period: Victorian

Description and interpretation: A scarp on the western side of Ashcombe Water could be remains of a path shown the 1st edition map which led to a bridge across the river. The area is now disturbed by machinery making further interpretation difficult.

References: AC10_E_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC11

Location: NGR 277292 139427

Type: QUARRY

Period: MEDIEVAL; POST-MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A disused slate quarry, 35m long, 20m wide and 5m deep on the southern edge of John Knight's Garden by the River. The quarry may have been the source of stone for Simonsbath House in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

References: Exmoor HER 22305; AC11_NW_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC12

Location: NGR 277253 139418

Type: WALL

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: A drystone wall on the SW side of Ashcombe Plantation survives in various states of repair. The best preserved stretches are 1.3m high, 0.5m wide with quartz blocks set in to the top. Steps through the wall at NGR 277259 139462 suggest a way into John Knight's Garden by the River from the NW.

References: AC12a_NW_30MAR14_HRILEY; AC12b_NW_30MAR14_HRILEY; AC12c_NW_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC13

Location: NGR 277296 139869 to 277241 139317

Type: LEAT

Period: POST-MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A leat runs from the north end of Ashcombe Plantation to Simonsbath House. It comprises a channel, 4m wide and 0.5-1m deep, rock cut in places. The downslope edge has a stone revetment for much of its course. The leat was diverted by 1902 and the feature became part of the designed landscape at Ashcombe. It supplied water to Simonsbath House in the 19th century, and it may well have its origins in the 17th or 18th century.

References: AC13a_N_05MAR14_HRILEY; AC13b_S_05MAR14_HRILEY; AC13c_NE_30MAR14_HRILEY; AC13d_N_30MAR14_HRILEY;

AC14

Location: NGR 277295 139427

Type: QUARRY

Period: POST-MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: An area of quarrying on the east side of Ashcombe, 5m wide, 8m long and 2m deep, is probably related to the quartz outcrops nearby

References: AC2&14_SE_28MAR14_HRILEY

AC15

Location: NGR 277406 139485

Type: GARDEN FEATURE

Period: POST-MEDIEVAL

Description and interpretation: A large outcrop of quartz, 10m long, 2m wide and over 3m high, has been partially excavated to emphasise the rock and to provide a level platform in front of it. It lies on the east side of Ashcombe Water, by a terraced path, part of the circular walk around Ashcombe, just before the path turns sharply to return into the Garden by the River.

References: AC15_N_28MAR14_HRILEY

AC16

Location: NGR 277298 139861

Type: BRIDGE

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: The remains of a stone structure on the west side of Ashcombe Water at the north end of Ashcombe Plantation. It comprises a drystone wall, 3.2m long, 0.30m wide and 0.75-1m high. A stony mound, containing quartz blocks, lies on its west edge. This is the remains of a bridge which took a path over Ashcombe Water. It probably dates from c 1830 when a terraced walk around Ashcombe was laid out by John Knight.

References: AC16a_S_30MAR14_HRILEY; AC16b_SW_30MAR14

AC17

Location: NGR 277295 139413

Type: GARDEN FEATURE

Period: 20TH CENTURY

Description and interpretation: A small, narrow platform, 10m long and 2m wide lies on the south edge of the quarry at Ashcombe. A single conifer lies on its east edge. This could be for a seat or statue, marking a viewpoint over the area, and probably dating from the early 20th century.

References: AC17_N_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC18

Location: NGR 277276 139465

Type: DRAIN

Period: 20TH CENTURY

Description and interpretation: A channel, 1-5m wide and up to 1m deep runs from the leat at the Ashcombe enclosure boundary wall down to Ashcombe Water. This is a channel dug to divert the leat away from Simonsbath House. A stone gate post has been placed over the channel above the quarry. The leat was diverted by 1902 (2nd edition map).

References: AC18_N_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC19

Location: 277381 139476

Type: GARDEN FEATURE

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: A small hollow, 5m long, 2m wide and 0.5m deep, with two small upright stone slabs lies on the east edge of Ashcombe Water. A quartz boulder lies to the south of this on the edge of the river. This is the area where the terraced walk around Ashcombe crosses the river into the garden by the river and could be associated with this.

References: AC19_E_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC20

Location: NGR 277378 139452

Type: WALL

Period: 20TH CENTURY

Description and interpretation: A revetment wall, over 10m long, 1m wide and over 1m high on the west bank of the river, south of the footbridge by the car park at Ashcombe, probably dates from after 1952 when the area was badly damaged by floodwaters.

References: AC20_S_30MAR14_HRILEY

AC21

Location: 277347 139375

Type: GARDEN PATH

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: A hollow, 4m wide, up to 0.5m deep and 40m long lies to the SW of White Rock Cottage. This is path through White Rock Garden, which linked the grotto, White Rock Cottage and the Tool Shed to Simonsbath House c 1830.

References: AC21_NE_18APR14_HRILEY

AC22

Location: NGR 277340 139383

Type: GARDEN WALL

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: The remains of a drystone wall, 0.5m wide, 40m long and up to 1m high, lies to the SW of White Rock Cottage. This is a garden wall which separated the garden from an orchard in White Rock Garden in c 1830.

References: AC22_W_18APR14_HRILEY

AC23

Location: NGR 277367 139385

Type: GARDEN FEATURE

Period: VICTORIAN

Description and interpretation: A substantial mound south of White Rock Cottage could be part of White Rock Garden or designed landscape at Ashcombe, but access and vegetation at the time of survey made further interpretation difficult.

References: AC23_S_18APR14_HRILEY

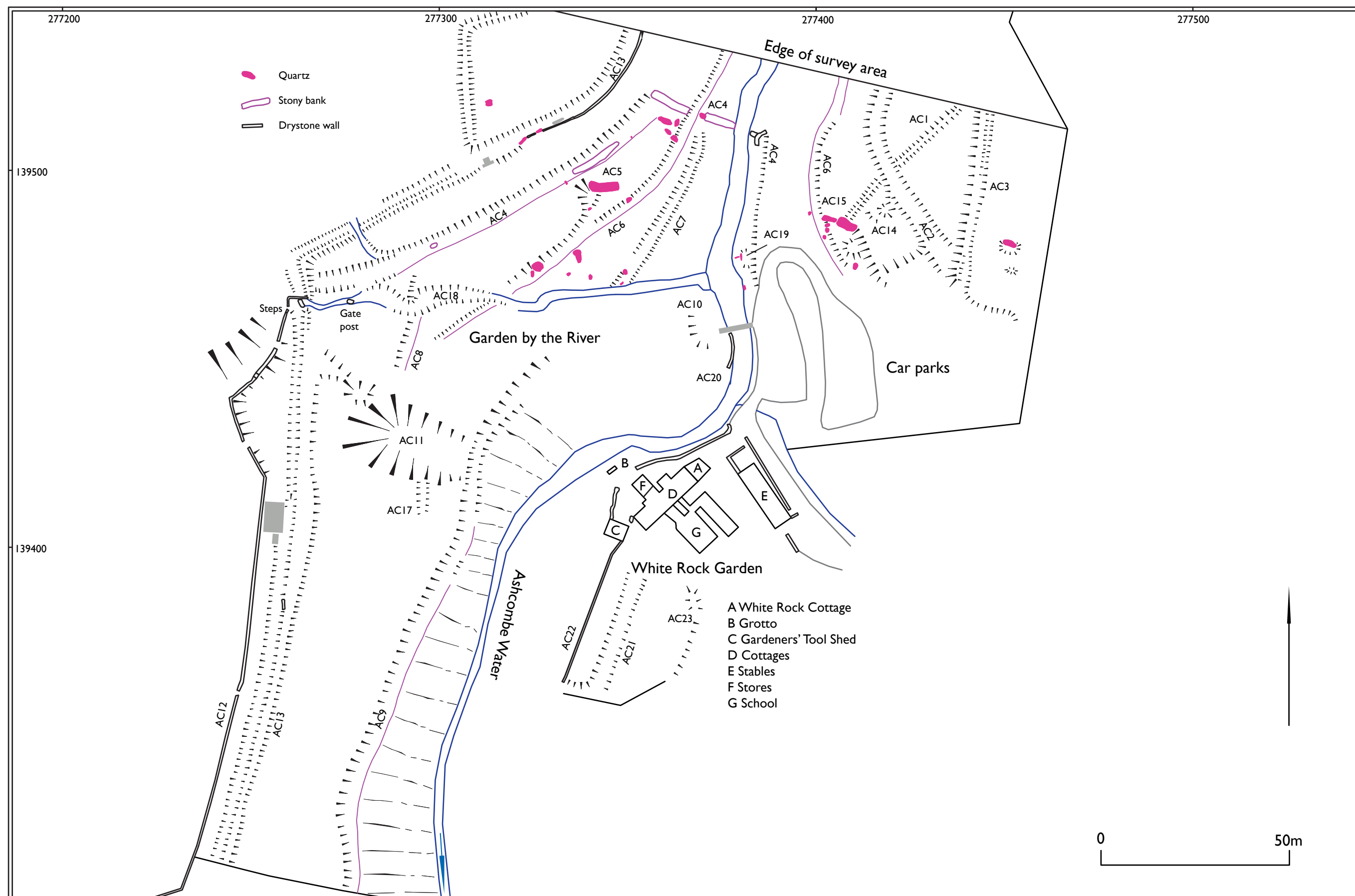


Fig 3 Survey plan of the remains of the gardens in Ashcombe(1: 1000 scale)

