

UNDERHAYES, OLCHARD, IDEFORD, DEVON

(NGR SX 87971 77109)

Results of historic building recording

Teignbridge District Council planning reference 16/01762/LBC,
condition 4

Prepared by:
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On behalf of:
Mr James Baker

Document No: ACD1541/2/0

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AC archaeology

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Contents

	<i>Summary</i>	
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Aim	2
3.	Methodology	2
4.	Historical background	2
5.	The property and the apotropaic marks	4
6.	The context of the apotropaic marks	6
7.	Sources consulted	6

List of Illustrations

Fig. 1: Site location

Fig. 2: Extract from the Ideford tithe map, 1841

Fig. 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch map, 1889

Fig. 4: North and west elevations of the hayloft

List of Plates

Plate 1: Underhayes viewed from the driveway, looking north. (1m scale)

Plate 2: West end of the south exterior elevation, looking north-northwest. (1m scale)

Plate 3: North exterior elevation, looking east

Plate 4: North interior elevation of the hayloft, looking north-northwest. (1m scale)

Plate 5: Detail of marks at west end of north elevation, looking north-northwest

Plate 6: Detail of central marks on the north elevation, looking north-northwest

Plate 7: Detail of marks at east end of north elevation, looking north-northwest

Plate 8: Detail of inscribed lines inside of a circle, looking north-northwest

Plate 9: East interior elevation of the hayloft, looking east-northeast. (1m scale)

Plate 10: South interior elevation of the hayloft, looking south-southeast. (1m scale)

Plate 11: West interior elevation of the hayloft, looking west-southwest. (1m scale)

Plate 12: Detail of marks at south end of west elevation, looking west-southwest

Plate 13: Detail of 'V', 'W' and 'M' inscribed lines at south end of west elevation, looking west-southwest

Plate 14: Detail of 'WAlt' inscribed at the south end of the west elevation, looking west-southwest

Plate 15: Detail of 'V', 'W' and 'M' inscribed lines at south end of west elevation, looking west-southwest

Plate 16: Detail of marks at north end of west elevation, looking west-southwest

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The recording was commissioned by the owner, Mr James Baker, who facilitated access to the property, and was carried out by Liz Govier. The illustrations for this report were prepared by Leon Cauchois

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of AC archaeology and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

Summary

An historic building record of apotropaic marks within the hayloft at Underhayes was prepared by AC archaeology in February 2017. The investigation was undertaken in advance of the conversion of the hayloft to accommodation.

Underhayes is a farmhouse of early to mid 17th-century date. The apotropaic marks is located within what is probably an 18th-century extension at the lower end of the house formerly containing stables on the ground floor with the hayloft above. They consist of circles, daisy wheels and a recurring theme of the letters 'V', 'W' and 'M' style crossing of lines.

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

1.1 Historic building recording was carried out by AC archaeology on 11 January 2017 at Underhayes, Olchard Lane, Ideford, Devon (NGR SX 87971 77109; Fig. 1). The investigation was commissioned by the owner Mr James Baker, and required under condition 4 of the grant of Listed Building Consent by Teignbridge District Council (reference 16/01762/LBC) for "alterations to internal layout and re-opening of former window". Guidance on the scope of works was provided by the Teignbridge District Council Conservation Officer.

1.2 Underhayes is located in the hamlet of Olchard, 1.3km to the west-southwest of the village of Ideford. It is situated within a small, south-facing combe above the spring line at a height of 90m aOD. The underlying geology of the area is varied, with the property being situated on Devonian Limestone of the East Ogwell Limestone Formation; there are no superficial geological deposits recorded (British Geological Survey online 2017).

1.3 Underhayes is a Grade II Listed Building (National Heritage List no. 1097080; Devon County Historic Environment Record MDV39683), with the following description prepared in 1987:

Farmhouse. Mostly circa early/mid C17, but possibly a remodelling of an earlier house, some early C18 refurbishing, late C19 or C20 re-roofing. Rendered cob; slate roof, gabled at left end, hipped at right end; axial stack, projecting front lateral stack with truncated shaft. The present plan is a 4 room and through passage arrangement. Internal evidence suggests that the early core, which may pre-date the C17, was a 2 room and through passage plan, the lower end to the right, the hall to the left of centre with an axial stack backing on to the passage, the lower end (probably the kitchen) heated by the front lateral stack. The small unheated inner room appears to be an addition but is unlikely to be later than the C18. It appears always to have been a service room. The right hand room, adjoining the lower end, was a stable with loft over: the stable has been converted to house accommodation but the loft is still used as an outbuilding. There is evidence of an early C18 refurbishment including a first floor corridor giving access to the first floor bedrooms. Single-storey 1 room plan addition at rear left, at right angles to the hall, is probably C19 or C20. 2 storeys. Asymmetrical 3 window front, no windows to the right of the front lateral stack (the converted stable). Approximately central front door with a flat corrugated iron canopy. Good circa early C18 front door with fielded panels and a pegged doorframe. The 2 left hand ground floor windows are 4-light casements, 4 panes per light. Ground floor window right is a 2-light casement, 3 panes per light. First floor windows are 3 and 4-light casements, 3 panes per light, 1 a C17 mullioned window with deeply chamfered mullions on the inner face. Interior. Several features of interest, including a very complete early/mid C17 hall with ovolo-moulded cross beams incised with a cross before the stop. Good open fireplace with ovolo-moulded lintel and moulded granite jambs. Ovolo-moulded doorframe between passage and hall. The stairs in the hall rise adjacent to the stack and may originally have been a newel stair but

later adapted to a straight stair with plain splat balusters. 1 chamfered stopped C17 first floor doorway. The thick cross wall between the hall and inner room has a 1-light first floor window with a circa C17 or earlier timber frame suggesting that the wall was originally external. On the ground floor the inner room has a chamfered axial beam. There are a number of small cupboards in the thickness of the walls in the passage, hall and stair well: they all appear to be C18, some with fielded panels, 1 with butterfly hinges. The lower end cross beams are boxed in and the fireplace has a C20 grate, possibly concealing earlier features. The roof trusses are late C19/C20 and the pitch of the roof has been altered, probably when the roofing material was changed from thatch to slate, but the stubs of 1 probably C17 truss survive, it may be a jointed cruck. The house was formerly in the ownership of Torre Abbey. Deryck Seymour suggests that the lower end may have been a court room, but if this were the case it is difficult to know where the kitchen would have been sited. A good house of the region with a very complete C17 hall and a front elevation, conspicuous from the road and unspoiled by C20 windows. Seymour, D., Torre Abbe (1977), p.p. 269-272.

2. AIM

- 2.1** The approved scheme includes conversion of a former hayloft into two bedrooms and a bathroom. Inscribed onto two of the walls of the loft are apotropaic daisy wheels and other marks. The aim of the investigation was to prepare a record of the marks prior to works commencing.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** The record was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation prepared by AC archaeology (Passmore 2017), and was prepared to Level 4 as set out in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (Historic England 2016), and carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (revised 2014), as well as the AC archaeology *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2*.

- 3.2** The record comprised the following elements:

- A written description of the hayloft, including the fabric of the walls and the apotropaic marks, along with any surviving fixtures and fittings;
- A photographic record, principally of the hayloft and the apotropaic marks, but also including general exterior views of the property to place the stables and hayloft in context; and
- Production of scaled internal elevations of the two walls displaying the apotropaic marks.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Figs 2 and 3)

- 4.1** Olchard is a small hamlet within the civil parish of Ideford, located between the Rivers Exe and Teign. The parish includes the villages and hamlets of Ideford, Olchard, Ideford Combe and Hestow, all of which are small residential and farming communities. In addition to the Listed Building entry, the Devon County Historic Environment Record has an entry for Underhayes relating to a reference to the property in a deed dated 1637 where it was called *hayes-in-olchard* (MDV17767). No earlier references have been located, with *The Place-Names of Devon* only noting a reference to *Underhayes* in 1649 (Gover *et. al.* 1931, 475). However, it has

been suggested by D. Seymour in his 1977 book *Torre Abbey, An Account of its History, Buildings, Cartularies and Lands*, that the building is a remodelling of an earlier 14th-century house. This was proposed due to the record of a Charter dated to 1411 stating that Underhays had been given to the Abbey along with the four other farms forming the hamlet of Olchard by the benefactor Peronilla de Holrigge. He also suggests that the west end of the property was a court room.

4.2 The earliest identified map to depict the property is the 1841 Ideford tithe map (Fig. 2). The farmhouse is recorded within Plot 190 as *House and Garden* forming part of *Hayes Farm* tenement. Table 1 below lists all of the plots associated with Hayes Farm on the 1839 apportionment. The farm buildings are set around a yard with the dwelling located on the northeast side, aligned east-northeast to west-southwest with two small projections on the south side at the east end, with the farm buildings forming a sub-U-shape to the southwest side of the yard. The garden is to the north of the property and extends to the east.

Plot number	Land Owner	Land Occupier	Name/ Description	State of Cultivation
175	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Outer Longthorn	Arable
176	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Inner Longthorn	Arable
177	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Clay Park	Pasture
178	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Willow Plot	Willows
179	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Kiln Close	Pasture
180	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Higher Kiln Close	Arable
181	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Bramble Hill	Arable
182	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Kiln Orchard	Orchard
183	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Nursery Plot	Arable
184	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Higher Meadow	Arable
185	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Lower meadow	Arable
186	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Little Orchard	Orchard
187	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Higher Stroll	Arable
188	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Lower Stroll	Arable
189	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	Hilly Orchard	Orchard
190	Reverend Nicholas Watts	Jane Tucker	House and Garden	Homestead

Table 1: Detail from the Ideford Tithe Apportionment (1839)

4.3 Within the wider landscape surrounding *Hayes Farm* much of the land is shown to be in agricultural use and is bound on all sides by farmland belonging to *Wells Farm*. The Devon Historic Environment Team has classified the land immediately surrounding the building as modern orchards planted with fruit trees. Directly to the east and south the land has been classified as medieval enclosures based on strip

fields. Within the wider landscape to the east is an area of modern enclosures with some sinuous medieval boundaries surviving in places.

- 4.4** By the time of the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1889 (Fig. 3) the farm is called *Underhays*, and the dwelling now has a range projecting south from the south elevation off-centre to the east. It is long and narrow and is probably the extant partially open-fronted shippon/stables. The U-shape farm buildings to the southwest also show some extensions projecting into the yard and a horse engine house on the rear south elevation. A small building to the east of the farmhouse against a hedge-bank can be also identified. Orchards are depicted surrounding the farmstead and an old quarry is annotated to the south (within Well farm).
- 4.5** The second edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1905 shows no change to the farmstead, and it is not until the 1939 25-inch Ordnance Survey map (published 1946) that a few changes are recorded. The west end of the farmhouse is shown to be divided from the main house, representing the stable and hayloft. The horse engine house and the small outbuilding to the east are both no longer depicted.
- 4.6** By 1956 an additional extension to the rear of the U-shape farm buildings had been constructed. The small outbuilding to the east of the property has returned and a small enclosure to the east of this structure is now present.
- 4.7** By 1992 the U-shape ranges of farm buildings and associated extensions have all been demolished and replaced by a large cattle shed. As the older outbuildings are not mentioned within the Listing of 1987 it may be assumed that these buildings were demolished prior to this time. The large cattle shed has subsequently been demolished.

5. THE PROPERTY AND THE APOTROPAIC MARKS (Fig. 4; Plates 1-16)

The exterior (Plates 1-3)

- 5.1** The property is a two-storied vernacular cross-passage farmhouse, dating to the early to mid 17th-century. It is rectangular and aligned east-northeast to west-southwest. The front of the property faces Olchard Lane, with the rear overlooking a vegetated roughly cobbled yard. Abutting the east end of the south elevation is a late 19th-century extension and to the rear of the cross passage a late 19th-century linear outbuilding. The walls are constructed of lime-rendered cob and stone, with two concrete block buttresses at the west end of the south elevation, positioned to either side of the taking-in door of the hayloft. There are two S-shape steel ties in the north elevation; any associated ties in the south elevation are not visible externally. The building has a turnerised slate roof with a straight end to the east gable and a hipped roof over the hayloft at the west end. It has a central axial stack and a projecting front lateral stack.

The interior

- 5.2** The internal ground-floor arrangement is currently a four-room and through passage arrangement, with two rooms either side of the passage. The main house was not recorded during the survey but details given in the Listing description are set out in section 1.3 above. The west end room has a concrete floor and the level is considerably lower than that of the main house. This room was formerly a stable and is now used as a utility room. Above the utility room is the hayloft, which was the focus of this historic building recording. Access to the hayloft is through a taking-in door in the rear south elevation and internally a trapdoor located towards the east end of the north elevation.

The hayloft

- 5.3** The north elevation (Plates 4-8) retains original plaster with modern repairs at the edges. This wall displays the majority of the daisy wheels, circles and concentric circles. They are consistently in a central horizontal band and extend the full width of the room; the marks are inscribed at variable depths into the plaster. Along the lower half of the elevation there appears to be some damage, with abundant gouges visible, possibly from former threshing or crushing machinery.
- 5.4** The east elevation (Plate 9) displays the same plaster to the lower third of the wall as on the north elevation. The upper section projects out into the room, with parts of a timber stud wall exposed displaying scars for former lath and plaster. The panels between the studs are finished in a different plaster to the remainder of the room. A wall plate below the studs has been removed and replaced with a single course of buff coloured 'Candy' brick. Other modern alterations and insulation are also visible.
- 5.5** The south elevation (Plate 10) incorporates the central taking-in door. To the east of this opening the wall is finished with its original plaster. Elsewhere rubble stonework is visible, along with several phases of repair and rebuild including probable late 19th- or 20th-century repointing. Above the taking-in door a concrete lintel has been inserted and the stonework above rebuilt.
- 5.6** The west elevation (Plates 11-16) retains its original plaster with modern repairs at the edges. Here is another band of apotropaic marks inscribed into the plaster, and extending the full length of the room. Daisy wheels, circles, concentric circles and inscriptions including double 'V's, 'W's and 'M's and possibly the name 'Walt' are inscribed into the plaster. The marks have been inscribed at the same height as those on the north wall.
- 5.7** The ceiling has been freshly plastered and the floorboards are recent replacements.

The apotropaic marks

- 5.8** The predominant depicted marks are circular motifs ranging from simple circles and concentric circles to complex ones with petals within forming a daisy wheel. Many of the circles are overlapping and they range in size 0.15-0.36m in diameter. The marks have been inscribed at variable depths into the plaster. The circles are compass-drawn with varying degrees of competency/success.
- 5.9** These compass-drawn designs have been recorded on buildings and their fittings (such as doors) and furniture throughout Britain. Many barns have them near the main entrance to protect the harvested crops, although other local examples have been recorded away from openings (Andrew Passmore *pers. comm.*). They are generally accepted to have been apotropaic marks, believed to provide protection against ill-fortune and to bring good luck. However, there is no documented source to prove this, but it is likely that they form such a common part of traditional folk practice that their purpose was never recorded.
- 5.10** In addition to the circular motifs, a recurring theme of 'M', 'V' and 'W' style crossing of lines can be identified, some of which are placed within the circular motifs. It is believed that the use of the 'V' and 'M' shapes, along with 'W' representing double Vs for Virgin of Virgins, were used to invoke the protection of the Virgin Mary, and this style of marks generally dates from the 16th to 18th-centuries (Hall 2015, 153).
- 5.11** Towards the south end of the west elevation near to where a cluster of 'V', 'W' and 'M' are located there is the possible inscribed name 'Walt', which appears to be of

the same period as the other inscriptions. Additionally, towards the west end of the north elevation, were two 'F' style crossing of lines and an 'e'. Within a circle below an 'F' and the 'e' is a 'W' and 'M' style crossing of lines with a 'D' or 'P' at either end.

- 5.12 Modern pencil-drawn graffiti of a naively-produced man, and the inscription 'MB L AC' were noted but not recorded.

6. THE CONTEXT OF THE APOTROPAIC MARKS

- 6.1 The current farmhouse at Underhays dates to the early to mid 17th-century and has a three-room and cross-passage form, typical of vernacular houses of this period. The Listing description records that its core may be a rebuild of an earlier house, which may tie in with the limited early documentary references.

- 6.2 The west end of the building, which was the focus of this study, is probably an extension to the main house. No clear physical evidence for this was recorded during the survey, but a 17th-century plan form with four primary ground-floor rooms would be unusual. The fenestration, which is typically agricultural (rather than domestic), and discontinuity in floor levels, also points to this bay being a later addition). The recent use as a stable with hayloft above ties with the fenestration and probably reflects its original function.

- 6.2 The apotropaic marks on the plaster of the north and west elevations would therefore be of 18th-century date and coincide with a period when the belief that such marks provided good fortune and protected the harvested crop. When considering the purpose of the room as a hayloft this seems most plausible – other examples have been recorded in Devon threshing barns (Andrew Passmore *pers. comm.*). The number of overlapping circles and daisy wheels suggests that they were not all drawn as a single event but over a period of time, perhaps at the time of the annual harvest.

7. SOURCES CONSULTED

Gover, J. E. B., Mawer, A., & Stenton, F. M., 1932. *The Place-Names of Devon Part II*. Cambridge: University Press

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Passmore, A., 2017, *Underhays, Olchard, Ideford, Devon*, (NGR SX 87971 77109), *Written Scheme of Investigation for historic building recording, Teignbridge District Council planning reference 16/01762/LBC, condition 4*, AC Archaeology document no. **ACD1541/1/0**

Websites (accessed February 2017)
British Geological Survey on-line viewer
www.bgs.ac.uk

Devon County Council
<http://www.devon.gov.uk/tithemaps.htm>

National Heritage List for England
<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>

Old Maps repository
<https://www.old-maps.co.uk/#/>

The Genealogist:
<https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/>



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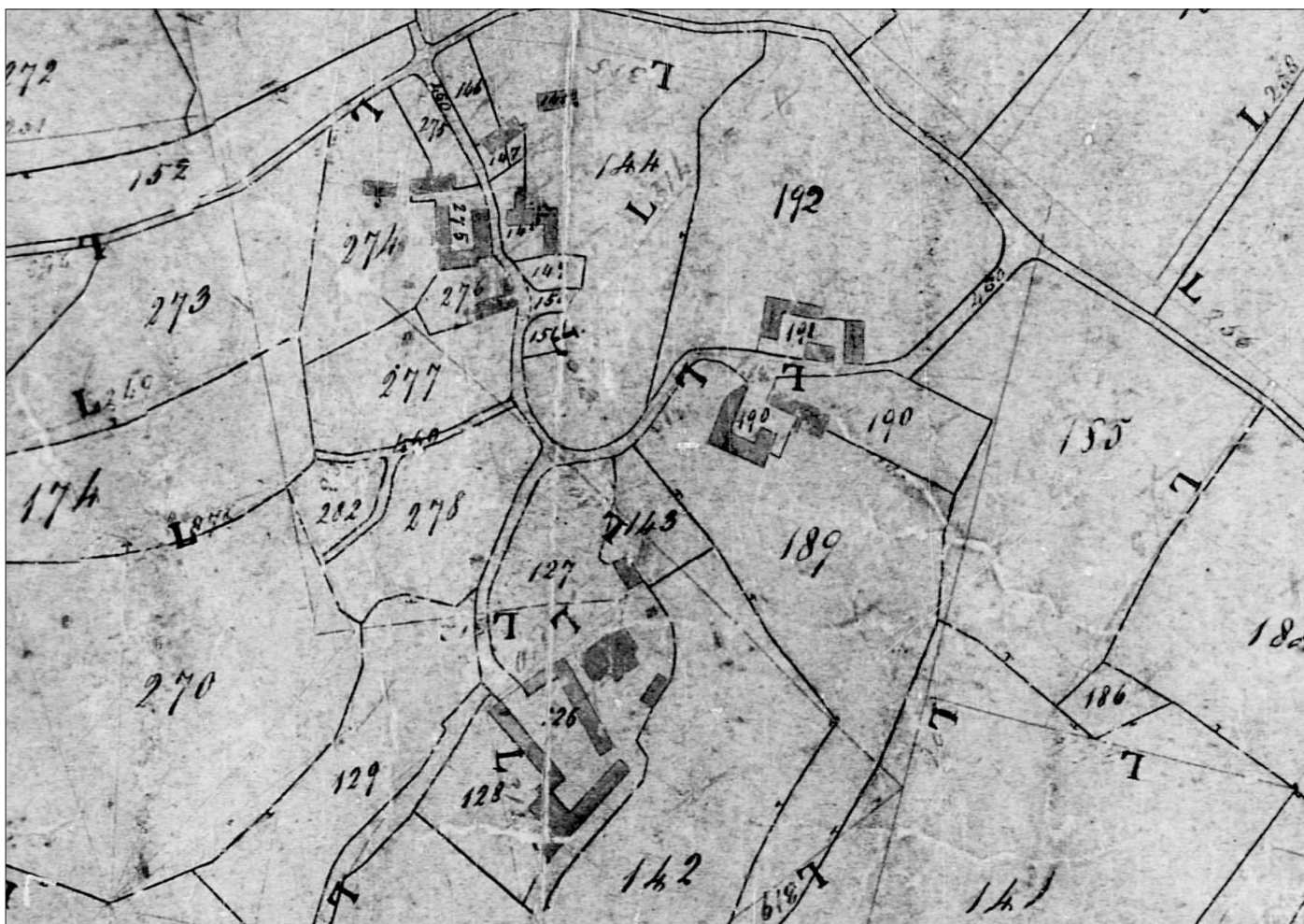


PROJECT

Underhayes, Olchard Lane,
Ideford, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 1: Site location



PROJECT

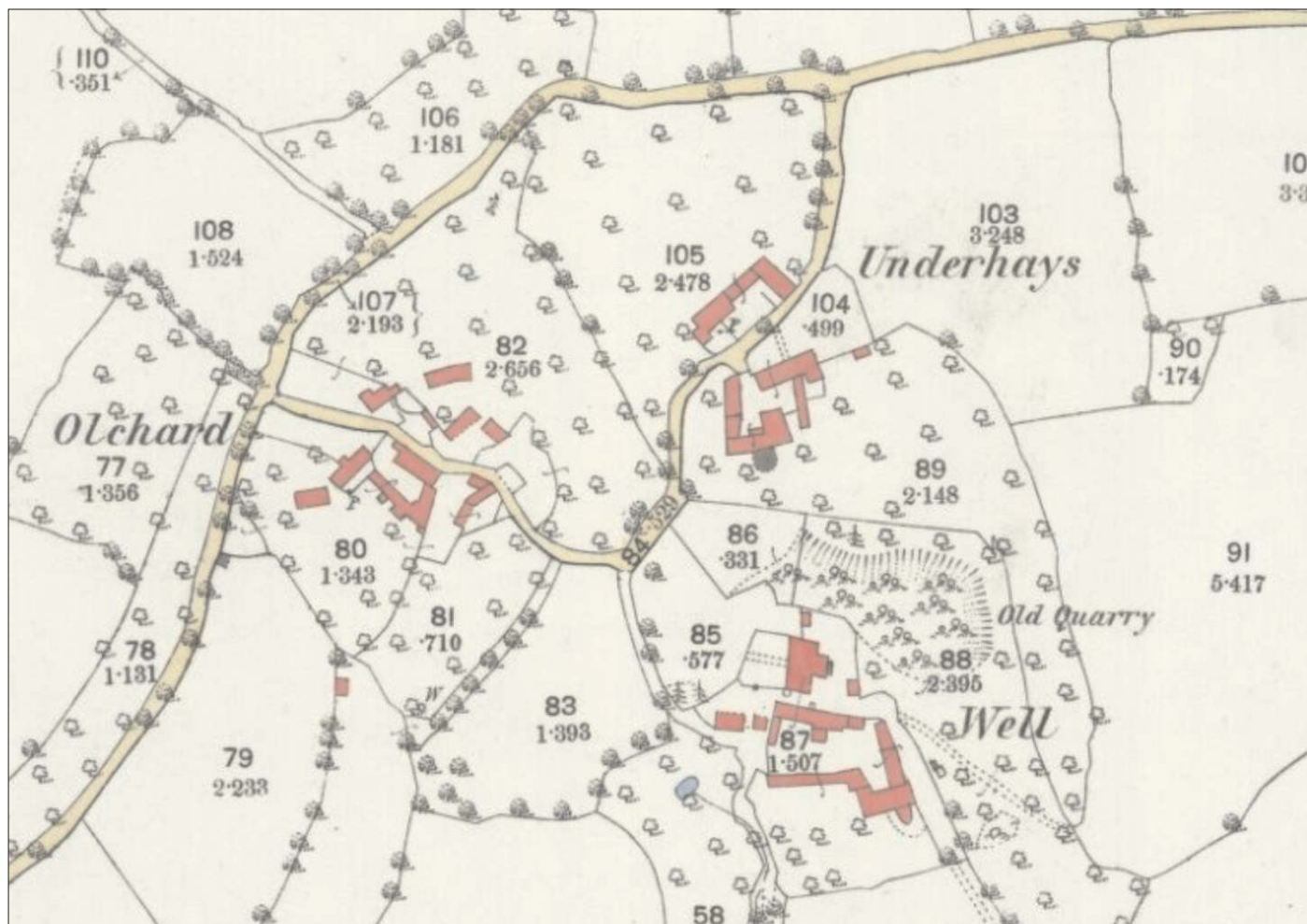
Underhayes, Olchard Lane,
Ideford, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 2: Extract from the Ideford tithe
map, 1841



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PROJECT

Underhays, Olchard Lane,
Ideford, Devon

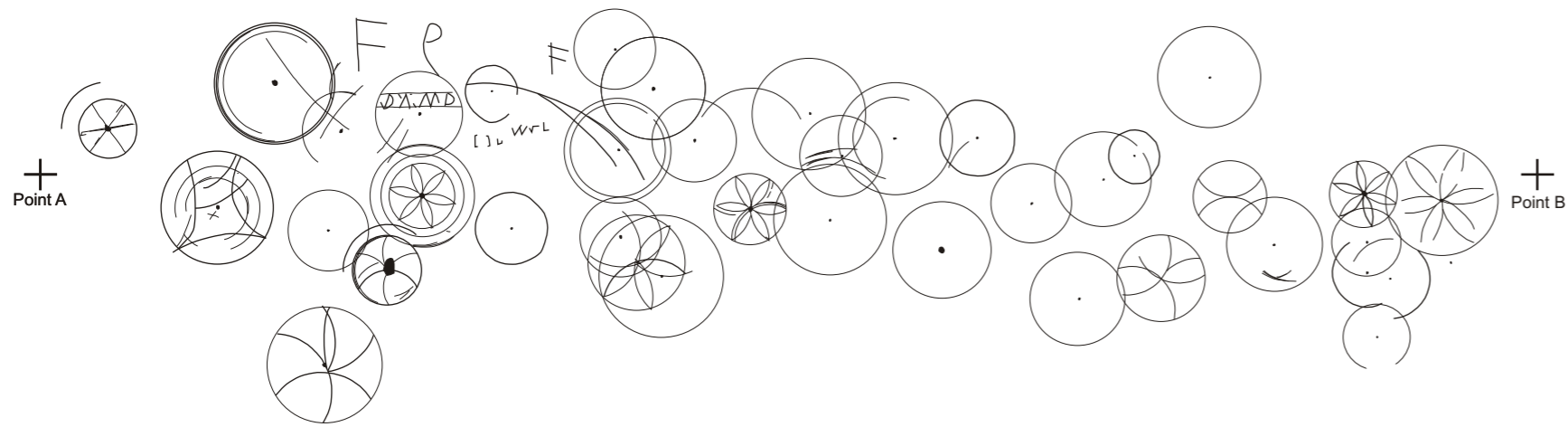
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Fig. 3: Extract from the Ordnance
Survey 25-inch map, 1889

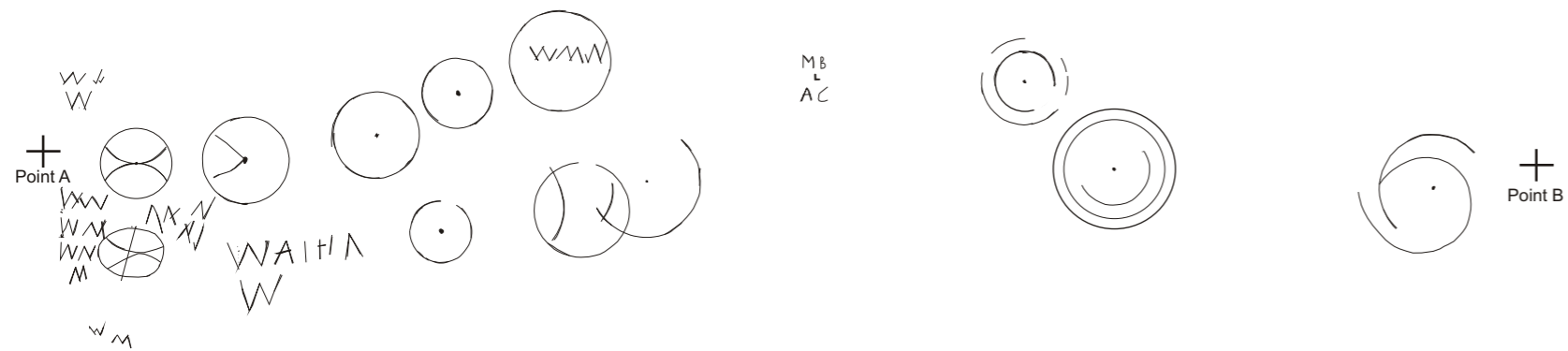


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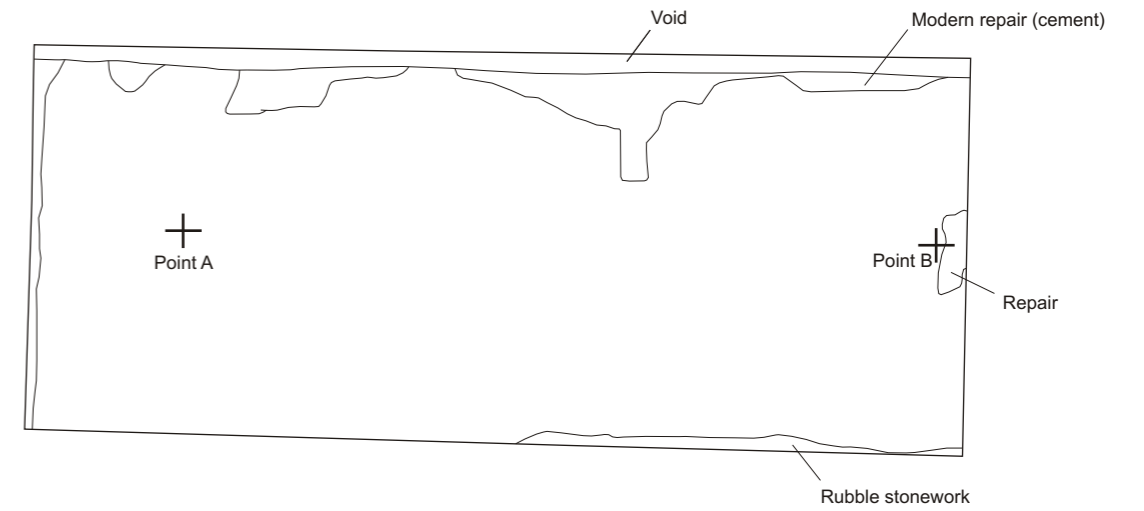
a) Detail of daisy wheels on north elevation of the hayloft



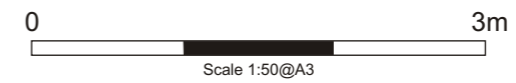
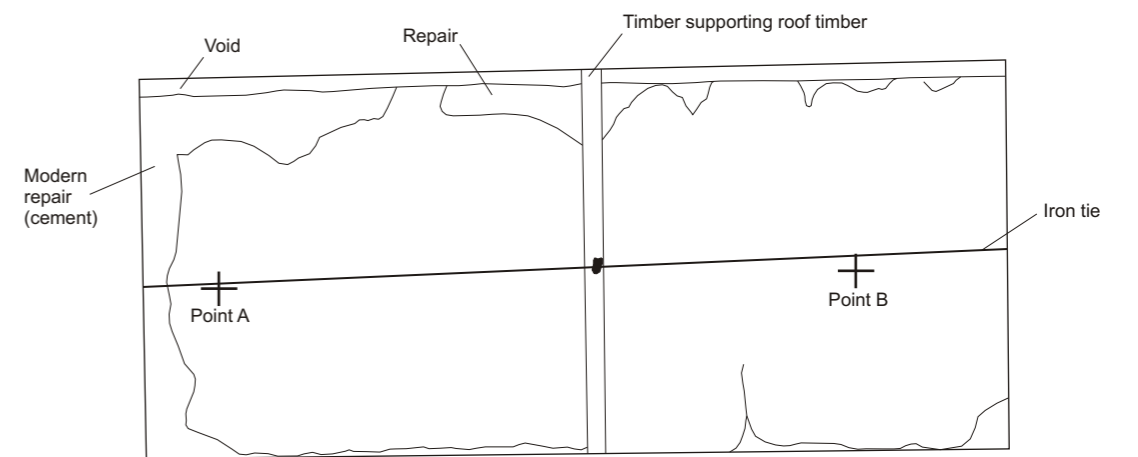
c) Detail of daisy wheels on west elevation of the hayloft



b) North elevation of the hayloft



d) West elevation of the hayloft



PROJECT
Underhayes, Olchard Lane,
Ideford, Devon
TITLE
Fig. 3: North and west elevations
of the hayloft



Plate 1: Underhayes viewed from the driveway, looking north. (1m scale)



Plate 2: West end of the south exterior elevation, looking north-northwest. (1m scale)



Plate 3: North exterior elevation, looking east



Plate 4: North interior elevation of the hayloft, looking north-northwest. (1m scale)



Plate 5: Detail of marks at west end of north elevation, looking north-northwest



Plate 6: Detail of central marks on the north elevation, looking north-northwest



Plate 7: Detail of marks at east end of north elevation, looking north-northwest



Plate 8: Detail of inscribed lines inside of a circle, looking north-northwest



Plate 9: East interior elevation of the hayloft, looking east-northeast. (1m scale)



Plate 10: South interior elevation of the hayloft, looking south-southeast. (1m scale)



Plate 11: West interior elevation of the hayloft, looking west-southwest. (1m scale)



Plate 12: Detail of marks at south end of west elevation, looking west-southwest



Plate 13: Detail of 'V', 'W' and 'M' inscribed lines at south end of west elevation, looking west-southwest



Plate 14: Detail of 'Walt' inscribed at the south end of the west elevation, looking west-southwest



Plate 15: Detail of 'V', 'W' and 'M' inscribed lines at south end of west elevation, looking west-southwest



Plate 16: Detail of marks at north end of west elevation, looking west-southwest

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