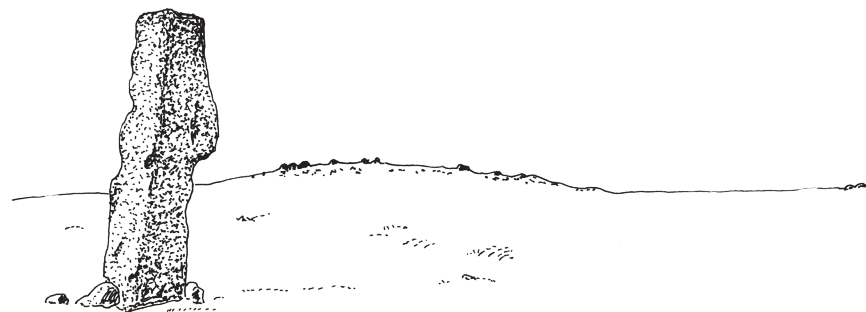


DARTMOOR

365



DARTMOOR 365

Also by John Hayward

A New Key to Wild Flowers
101 Dartmoor Letterboxes
An Hour's Stroll on Dartmoor
Your Dartmoor Century

An exploration of every one
of the 365 square miles in the
Dartmoor National Park

by

John Hayward



2nd edition by
Rob Hayward

Curlew Publications

Preface

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The coincidence of there being 365 days in a year and 365 square miles in the Dartmoor National Park was the acorn that grew into the oak tree of exploration that resulted in this book. It must also be admitted that the satisfaction of collecting things, and of knowing that a complete collection was easily attainable, spurred me on and made the visiting of every one of those square miles a labour of pleasure.

Except for only about three squares where I had already wandered and made notes, every one was visited during 1989 or 1990. Whether I was tramping the remote hills on foot or exploring the border lanes in a car I kept to an average of four square miles explored on every excursion. I made numerous sketches on site and took even more photographs. These were black and white ones that I processed myself. Thus, I could use the photos to finish off any drawings that rain, mist, wind or time had prevented me from completing in the open.

During my wanderings I met many farmers and householders who often went out of their way to show me things of interest. To these I owe my thanks as well as memories of pleasant encounters. As background reading on topography and history I found the numerous books by Harry Starkey, Eric Hemery, and William Crossing indispensable. For plant lore I dipped happily into the works of Anne Pratt, Geoffrey Grigson, and a collection of notes I had made over many years.

At no time was it difficult to find something of interest to include: more often there were problems of what to omit. The vast expanses of open moorland merely offered a different set of choices from the enclosed farmlands of the border country. Some omissions may be surprising: for example, Dartmeet, Widcombe, and Princetown are not featured. You cannot explore the Moor without passing these crowded places frequently, so I deliberately looked for something else in those square miles.

All you need then is a map, compass for use in wild and lonely places, a determination to colour in all 365 squares and a longing to find out what such places as Deadman's Bottom, Ephraim's Pinch, Hangman's Pit, Bloody Pool, Look and Weep, The Crock of Gold, The Elephant's Nest, The Dancers, and Cowflop Bottom are really like.

... And if it happens to be a leap year?

Even that has been taken into account...

Preface

Second edition

This book was originally written by my late father back in 1991 and I'm sure he hadn't expected it to still be going strong over 25 years later. However, although tors, kistvaens and bondstones have been there for millions, thousands or simply hundreds of years and will probably be around for many years yet, other features are more ephemeral in archeological timescales. Thus, rights of way have changed and modern structures succumbed to the ravages of time.

With the rise of the internet and social media a Dartmoor 365 community had built up, so it was felt that an opportunity to update the book with current information from its many participants could be taken. The ethos and style of the book, however, had to stay the same and major changes were prevented by the limited availability of my father's pen and ink drawings.

A call for updates was issued and the response was fantastic. Where feasible these suggestions were incorporated. Additionally, online mapping and GPS receivers allowed grid references to be accurately checked.

The originals of the included maps with the grids have long since disappeared, so new ones were created by aligning a grid with an OS map and comparing the intersection points. The new computer-generated grids and digitised maps are clearer, more accurate and a bit less wobbly when compared to the hand drawn originals.

It is acknowledged that Dartmoor National Park has expanded since this book was originally written and is now 368 square miles; however, to keep to the original inspiration of one page per day of the year, no new squares have been added.

Rob Hayward 2018



The Devil's Kitchen

Glossary

Adit

Horizontal entrance to a mine.

Blowing house

Building used to smelt tin.

Boundstone / Bondstone

Stone that marks the boundary of a parish or other land. Bondstones mark the boundary of the Forest of Dartmoor.

Buddle

A circular trough with a conical boss in the middle, used in tin mining.

Clapper Bridge

Bridge formed by large flat slabs of stone.

Cleave

Steep valley.

Clitter

Debris of what was formerly the higher part of a tor.

Gert / Beam

Deep open tin working.

Greensward

Areas where the vegetation is dominated by grasses.

Impost

The top slabs of a clapper bridge that you walk on.

Kistvaen

Bronze Age burial tomb.

Leat

Manmade trough to transport water.

Logan stone

A rock balanced on a point which can be set in motion.

Reave

Bronze Age long, generally straight, stone boundary wall.

Shippon

Cattle shed.

Staddle stone

Mushroom shaped stones used to raise granaries off the ground.



Staddle Stones

Introduction

The 365 Squares

In 1991 Dartmoor National Park had an official area of 365 square miles. An inch grid drawn on a 1" map, whose edge follows as accurately as possible the park boundary shows that this is true. Small areas of the park outside the grid exactly balance small areas of "non-park" that are inside.

Apart from the Museum of Dartmoor Life in Okehampton—and no exploration of the Moor would be complete without a visit to it—only one site in this collection lies outside the Park boundary: the Finch Foundry is a hundred yards or so beyond the border.

In general, a distance of about a hundred yards has been allowed as a "margin of manipulation" when deciding into which square to place any item that fell on a grid line. Only rarely has this limit been exceeded: once to avoid trespassing in Okehampton military camp, and perhaps half a dozen times to include a particularly interesting site that otherwise would have had to be omitted.

The book makes many references to other pages or squares. These are formatted to make identifying them easy, so square N 8 is written as [N 8].

Maps

The Ordnance Survey "Outdoor Leisure" map of Dartmoor (OL28) is by far the best generally available map for exploring the Moor and is the one always referred to in the text. It covers 99% of the National Park on a scale of two and a half inches to a mile (1:25,000). Any reference in the text is to this map.

Grid References

Grid references, from the SX range, are in the top right corner of each page. In every case a six figure reference is given to pinpoint the principal item featured in any square. Grid reference convention is that the area concerned would lie mainly to the north and east of the grid reference but where the item is close this may not have been followed.

Entrance Fees

With reluctance a few places have been included where entrance fees are charged. This has only been done when it has seemed that these sites are the ones most worth visiting in any particular square mile. Even so you may find that at most of them you can see all that interests you without having to pay, especially if you are on foot.

Spellings

The spelling of place names is normally taken from the map. This forms an obvious standard, even in cases where a "better" spelling exists. Alternative spellings, found on signposts for instance, are usually mentioned.

Riverbanks

The left and right banks of a river are the ones you would have on those sides if you were to stand in the middle of the stream and face the way the water is flowing.

Firing Ranges

The three contiguous army ranges are shown on the maps overleaf. The red and white boundary poles and the red flags flown when live firing is taking place are all very obvious. If the red flags marking any range are not flying by 10 a.m. there will be no firing that day.

In general, the ranges are open to walkers during all holiday periods (from mid-July to mid-September on the largest range), at all weekends (except Willsworthy) and on many other days as well. Firing schedules are available online, in local establishments such as post offices, police stations, pubs, and in the local press every Friday.

Verses

These light-hearted pages are included to add variety to both the features to be noticed in the landscape and the reading matter. The essence of enjoying them is to have at least a nodding acquaintance with the original songs and poems on which they are based. Some of them have already appeared in two earlier books.

Measurements

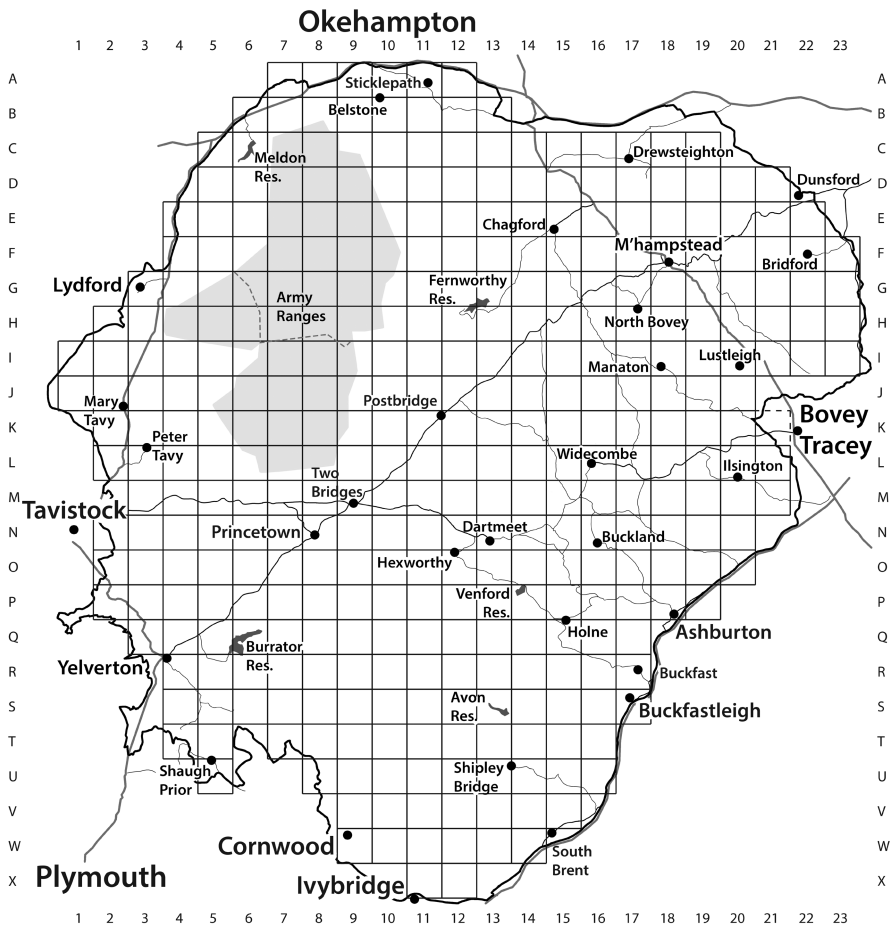
The measurements have been kept as imperial since most are estimates and little would be gained from a conversion. Where it states yards simply read as metres. For more unusual measurements (acres...), or where greater precision has been quoted, a metric equivalent has been added in brackets. Don't worry, imperial units are easy, just remember 12 inches to a foot, 3 feet to a yard, 6 feet to a fathom, and an acre is a furlong by a chain...

Where areas or volumes are referenced it has often been converted into a number of metres square/cube rather than m², simply because it's easier to visualise a square where each side is 64 m than 4,096 m² (approx acre).

Facebook "Dartmoor 365" group

There is a large active "Dartmoor 365" Facebook group where members post photos, drawings, resources and general Dartmoor information. As well as car stickers and badges they have even produced a waterproof 1:25,000 OS map of the whole Moor with the grid overlaid.

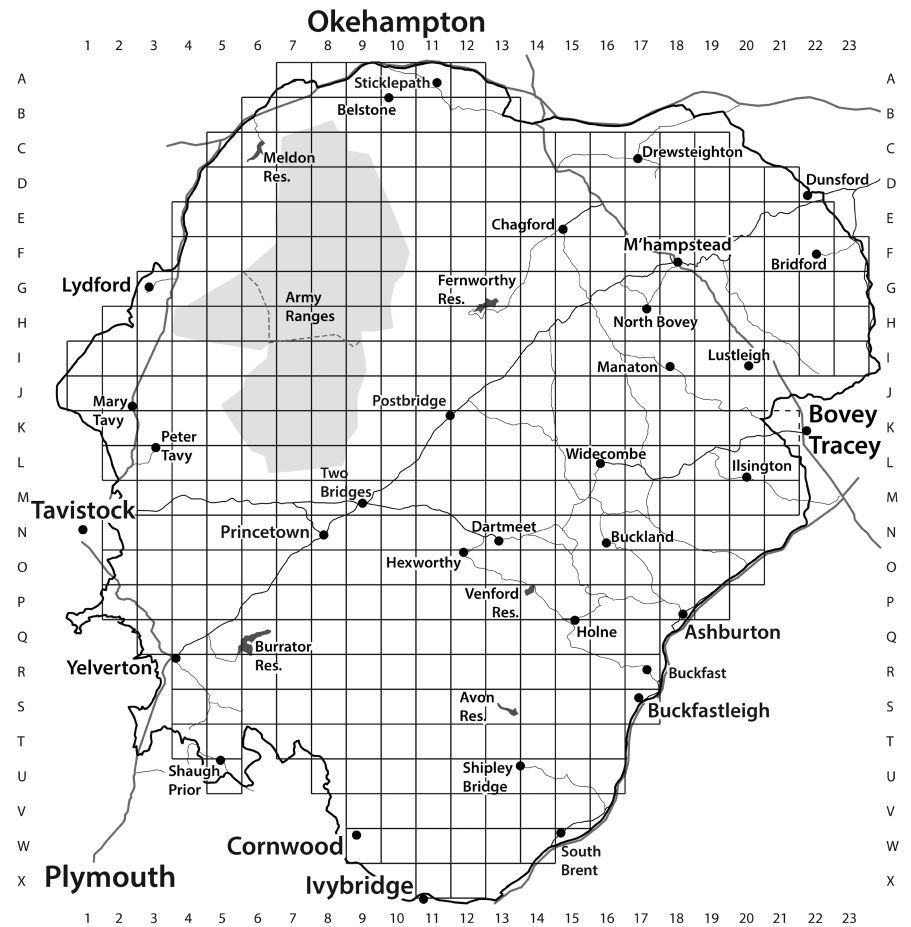
The 365 Squares



Only the most useful roads are shown on this map. There are many more especially in the border country.

The second map is provided so that those who like collecting things and recording excursions can colour each square after it has been visited and the items described in it have been identified.

The 365 Squares



For this purpose it would be reasonable to allow yourself occasionally a little latitude. For example, if you have climbed Amicombe Hill and have seen a Red Grouse (somewhere else on the Moor), then you would be entitled to colour [F 7]. The many squares containing wild flowers might also fall into this category.

For those who were brought up not to deface books, even when there is a map included specifically for that purpose, there are downloadable high-resolution versions at www.dartmoor365.org and on the Facebook group.

