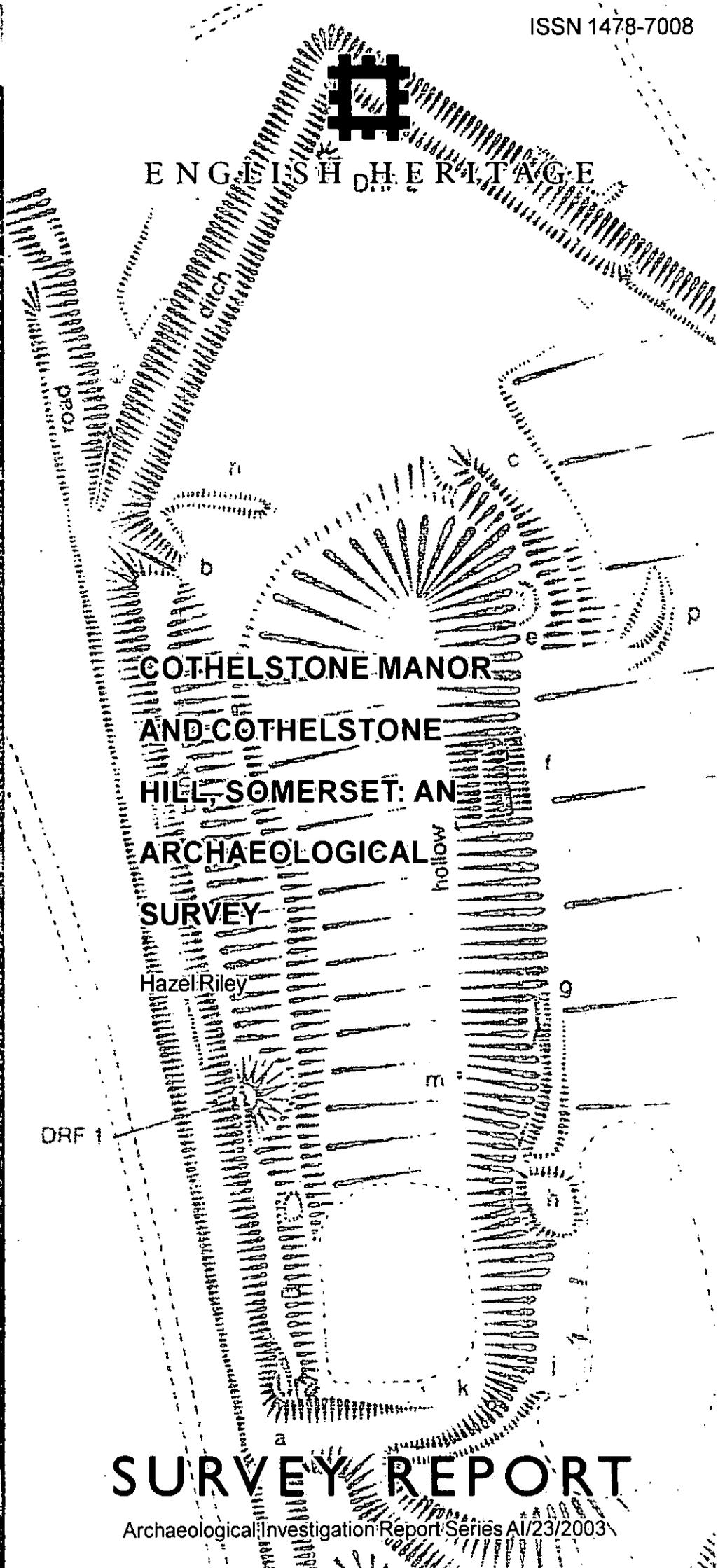




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**COTHELSTONE MANOR
AND COTHELSTONE
HILL, SOMERSET: AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SURVEY**

Hazel Riley

SURVEY REPORT

Archaeological Investigation Report Series AI/23/2003



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**COTHELSTONE MANOR AND COTHELSTONE HILL,
SOMERSET: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

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Frontispiece: Cothelstone Manor house and church (NMR AA048448).

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

Summary

Location

The survey

Geology, topography and land-use

HISTORY OF RESEARCH

HISTORY OF THE SITES

The Manor of Cothelstone

The Manor of East Bagborough

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

Cothelstone Hill

Cothelstone Manor in the medieval period

The medieval manorial landscape

Cothelstone Manor in the early post-medieval period (1550-1650)

East Bagborough Manor

Terhill House

Terhill Park

Cothelstone House

Cothelstone Park

Industrial remains

The 20th century

CONCLUSION

METHODOLOGY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIST OF REFERENCES

FIGURE LIST

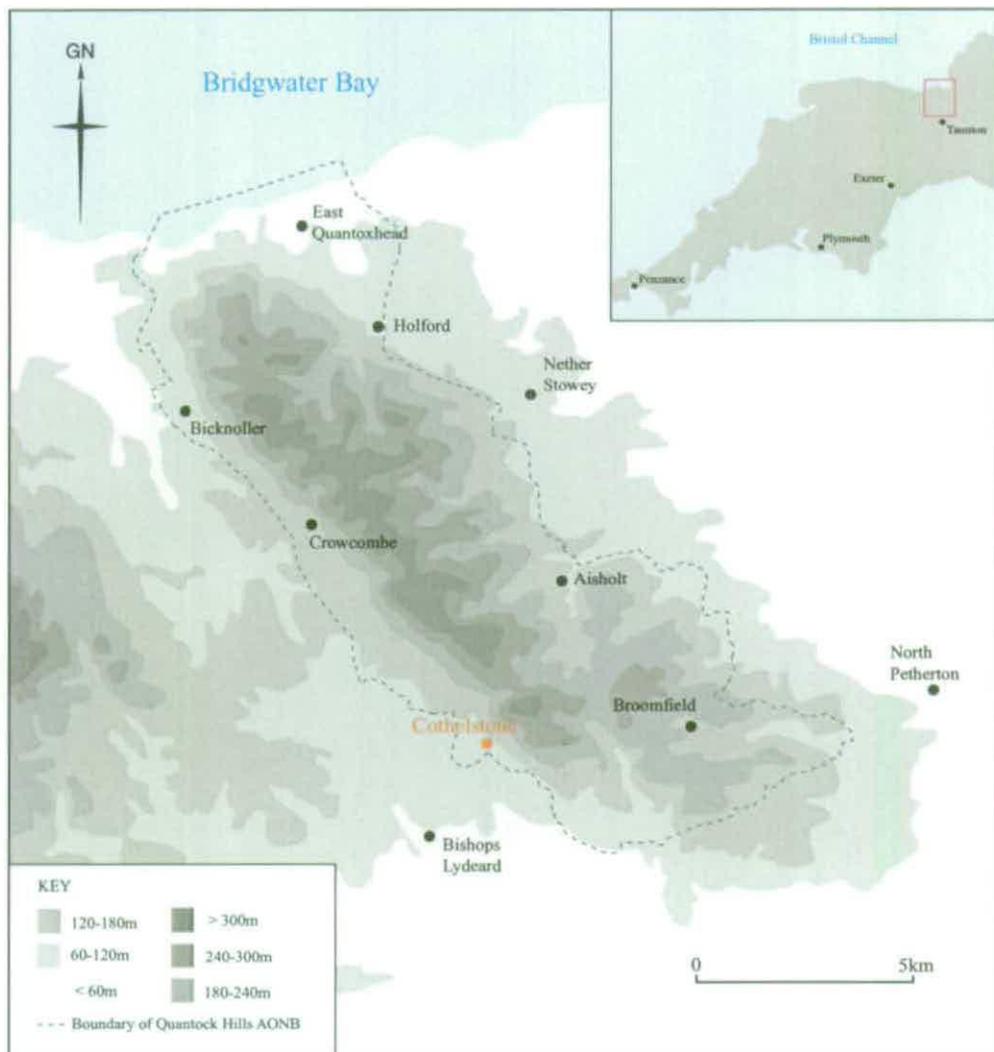
- Frontispiece Cothelstone Manor: manor house and church (NMR AA048448)
- Figure 1 Location map
- Figure 2 English Heritage survey plan: extant archaeological features and site location
- Figure 3 Cothelstone Hill: Exmoor ponies and the remains of the Beacon Tower
- Figure 4 Cothelstone Hill: English Heritage 1:2500 survey (reduced)
- Figure 5 Cothelstone Hill: English Heritage 1:200 earthwork survey of barrows and tree ring enclosure (reduced)
- Figure 6 Cothelstone Hill: English Heritage 1:200 earthwork survey of tree ring enclosure and WWII bunker (reduced)
- Figure 7 Cothelstone Hill: English Heritage 1:200 earthwork survey of the Seven Sisters and pillow mound (reduced)
- Figure 8 Cothelstone Hill: air photograph looking southwest (NMR 15859/22)
- Figure 9 Cothelstone Hill: the tower in the early 20th century
- Figure 10 Cothelstone Manor: air photograph looking northeast (NMR 15859/33)
- Figure 11 Cothelstone Manor: English Heritage 1:1000 earthwork survey (reduced)
- Figure 12 Cothelstone Manor: Manor Cottages, front elevation (NMR AA046411)
- Figure 13 Cothelstone Manor: detail of medieval doorway, Manor Cottages (NMR AA046419)
- Figure 14 Cothelstone Church: monument to Sir Matthew Stawell (NMR AA048515)
- Figure 15 Cothelstone Church: monument to Sir John Stawell (NMR AA048522)
- Figure 16 Cothelstone Manor: evidence for the medieval landscape
- Figure 17 Cothelstone Manor: the gatehouse (NMR AA048455)
- Figure 18 Cothelstone Manor: the gateway (NMR AA048451)
- Figure 19 Cothelstone Manor: the garden courts, banqueting house and summer house, Cothelstone Hill behind (NMR AA048460).
- Figure 20 Cothelstone Manor: the early post-medieval house and gardens
- Figure 21 Cothelstone Farm: the barn (NMR AA048459)
- Figure 22 Cothelstone Manor: detail from the 1733 estate map (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services)
- Figure 23 Cothelstone Manor: surveying the relict field system to the northeast of the manor house
- Figure 24 Manor Cottage, East Bagborough: 17th–century plasterwork overmantel

- Figure 25 East Bagborough: English Heritage 1:1000 earthwork plan (reduced)
- Figure 26 Terhill House: extract from 1778 estate map showing the house and garden layout (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services)
- Figure 27 Terhill House: extract from 1778 estate map showing the front elevation of the house (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services)
- Figure 28 Terhill House: English Heritage 1:1000 earthwork plan (reduced)
- Figure 29 Terhill House: Higher Terhill in the 1970s (reproduced with permission of D and M White)
- Figure 30 Terhill Park: English Heritage 1:2500 earthwork plan (reduced)
- Figure 31 Terhill Park: the Grotto
- Figure 32 Terhill Park: extract from 1778 estate map showing the grotto (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services)
- Figure 33 Terhill Park: extract from 1778 estate map showing park building (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services)
- Figure 34 Terhill Park: extract from 1778 estate map showing the obelisk (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services)
- Figure 35 Terhill Park: carved stone head
- Figure 36 Terhill Park: stone gate piers at the north end of the park
- Figure 37 Cothelstone House: the south front in 1935 (NMR BB71/11,137)
- Figure 38 Cothelstone House: the lodge
- Figure 39 Cothelstone House: extract from the OS 1st edition map of 1888 (Somerset 60.9)
- Figure 40 Cothelstone Park: looking north across towards Terhill Park
- Figure 41 Cothelstone Park: extent of the park and 19th-century plantations and woods
- Figure 42 Cothelstone Park: English Heritage 1: 1000 earthwork plan of the rotunda site (reduced)
- Figure 43 Cothelstone Park: Park End lodge and entrance gates

INTRODUCTION

Summary

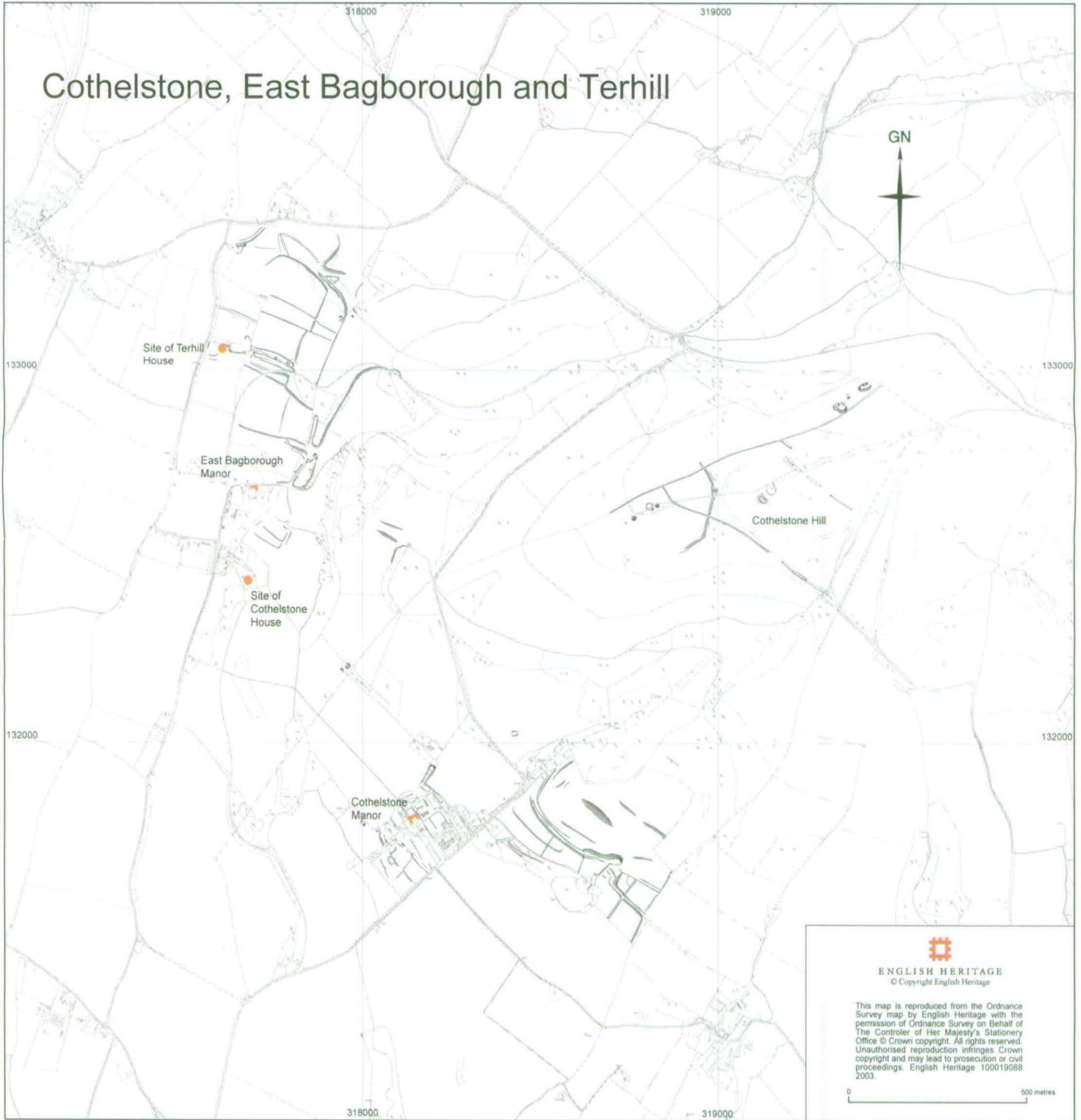
The archaeology of Cothelstone Hill, Cothelstone Manor, Terhill Park and Cothelstone Park was considered as part of the English Heritage survey of the Quantock Hills AONB. Extant earthwork remains from many different periods were recorded. A brief assessment of the principal buildings was carried out. Cothelstone Hill contains several prehistoric barrows and an Iron Age linear bank and ditch, post-medieval pillow mounds and tree-ring enclosures. Evidence for the medieval landscape around Cothelstone Manor is considered. Terhill Park contains the remains of several buildings, including a fine late 18th century grotto. The site of Terhill House has been identified, and the remains of water features and carriage drives associated with this small 18th century landscape park were recorded.



Location

Cothelstone Manor lies on the southwestern edge of the Quantock Hills AONB, some 9kms north-west of Taunton at ST 181 318. Cothelstone Hill lies to the northeast of the manor house, centred at ST 190 326. Cothelstone Park and Terhill Park are located to the northwest of the manor house (Figs 1 and 2).

Cothelstone, East Bagborough and Terhill




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0 500 metres

Figure 2. Location of the main sites considered.

The survey

The area was considered as part of the English Heritage archaeological survey of the Quantock Hills AONB. The survey was carried out by the Archaeological Investigation team based at the Exeter Office of English Heritage during July and August 2003. The prehistoric and later earthwork sites which form such an outstanding group on Cothelstone Hill were recorded at a scale of 1:200. The earthworks preserved in the various parks were recorded at a basic scale of 1:2500, with 'windows' of more detailed work carried out around Cothelstone Manor and the site of Terhill House.

Geology, topography and land-use

The Cothelstone Fault runs northwest/southeast across the study area. Older rocks of the Devonian period occur to the northeast of the fault: Cothelstone Hill and Terhill Park lie on Leighland and Cutcombe Slates of the Devonian period. Outcrops of Aisholt Limestone and Roadwater Limestone trend northeast/southwest across these rocks. To the southwest of the fault are the younger Otter Sandstones and Mercia Mudstones of the Permo-Triassic group (British Geological Survey Taunton sheet 295).

The underlying geology has influenced the topography of the area. To the northeast of the Cothelstone fault, Cothelstone Hill rises steeply from 150m up to 330m; the topography of Terhill Park is equally dramatic, rising from 150m to 240m. These slopes are currently planted with a mixture of broad-leaved and coniferous woodland or used as permanent pasture. The summit of Cothelstone Hill is managed by the AONB and is home to a herd of Exmoor ponies (Fig 3). Below about 100m, the land falls away more gently and the current land-use is mainly arable, with pasture in Cothelstone Park.



*Figure 3.
Cothelstone Hill:
Exmoor ponies and
the remains of the
Beacon Tower.*

HISTORY OF RESEARCH

There has been little archaeological work in the area until very recently. Cothelstone Hill was visited by Leslie Grinsell in his survey of the barrows of Somerset (Grinsell 1969) and is mentioned in his work on the archaeology of Exmoor (Grinsell 1970). In 1972 turf was removed during the construction of the circular bridleway on the hilltop. This exposed a scatter of worked flint and chert, including several scrapers and arrowheads. The majority of material was considered to date from the Neolithic period (Norman and Norman 1974, 56). An early Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead is also recorded from the hilltop (Grinsell 1970, 196).

A hoard of bronze ornaments and weapons was found in 1794 on the south side of the Quantock Hills during drainage of marshy ground. These were described as two twisted bronze torcs and two looped palstaves. This hoard may have come from the area around Cothelstone House, as another report of a bronze torc and a battle axe, found when draining an alder bed near Cothelstone House may relate to the same hoard (Somerset HER 43004).

Cothelstone Manor and the church of St Thomas a Beckett were visited by members of the Somerset Archaeology and Natural History Society in the 19th century (Anon 1898). Cothelstone Manor was described at the beginning of the 20th century (Country Life 1908). The principal buildings have been the subject of the listing process. Manor Cottages, a row of cottages to the west of Cothelstone Manor and Manor Cottage, East Bagborough, were investigated by the Somerset Vernacular Architecture Group (Williams 1973; 1990). Cothelstone Manor appears on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.

A survey of Cothelstone Park was carried out in 1998 to support an application for grant aid to the Countryside Stewardship scheme. This survey looked at both documentary and landscape evidence to provide 'a brief overview of the core of the historic landscape of the estate and to consider its wider historic significance' (Nicholas Pearson Associates 1998, 1). This document sets out the history of the estate in some detail. The survey work included a selective tree survey and a site survey based on Ordnance Survey plans and estate plans.

A geophysical survey and excavation were carried out on the southern edge of the study area by the Southern Quantocks Archaeological Survey in 2001. Investigation of prehistoric and Romano-British crop mark features in arable land to the south of Cothelstone at Stoneage Barton Farm also revealed the remains of a cemetery dating from the 7th century AD, one of only a handful of such sites in the country (Webster 2002).

HISTORY OF THE SITES

The Manor of Cothelstone

The genealogy and history of the Stawell family is set out in great detail in 'A Quantock Family: The Stawells of Cothelstone and Their Descendants, the Barons Stawell of Somerton, and the Stawells of Devonshire, and the County Cork by Col. George Dodsworth Stawell (1910).

Although Stawell writes of William the Conqueror settling Cothelstone on Adam de Coveston (1910, 18), and Collinson states that the parish of Cothelstone has been in the possession of the Stawell family since the Conquest (1791, 249), Cothelstone Manor is not included in the Domesday survey of the county (Thorn and Thorn 1980). The earliest well documented members of the Stawell family seem to be Geoffrey of Coveston (or Cothelstone) who held the Stawell estate (near Moorlinch, Somerset) in 1166 and Geoffrey of Stawell who held a knight's fee at Stawell of the abbot of Glastonbury in 1189 (Dunning 2002, 129).

Cothelstone Manor descended through the Stawell family, who became a powerful family in Somerset and the west country (Dunning 2002, 129-33). One of the most well known members of the family was Sir John Stawell (IV, 1599-1662), a staunch Royalist. According to Collinson he was 'one of the most eminent persons in this county for estate, wisdom, and prudence' (1791, 251). Sir John was a member of the Long Parliament, and he led the troops who won the first action of the Civil War in Somerset, at Marshalls Elm, near Street. As the Royalist cause failed, Sir John was imprisoned in Newgate and tried for treason. Cothelstone Manor was partially demolished and his estates were confiscated. During the Commonwealth the Cothelstone estate was given to Lady Stawell and her children for their living. After the Restoration, the manor house was repaired and was principally used as a farmhouse. After Sir John's release from imprisonment in 1650, his estates were restored to him and he lived in the Hext mansion at Low Ham near Somerton which became the Stawell's principal residence.

The Cothelstone estate passed from Henry Bilson Legge, last Lord Stawell of Somerton, in 1792 (Stawell 1910, 456), when it was sold to Edward Jeffries, the treasurer of St Thomas' Hospital, London. The estate was inherited by his grandson, Edward Jeffries Esdaile. He was responsible for building a brand new mansion house, Cothelstone House, finished in 1820, laying out Cothelstone Park and rebuilding Cothelstone Manor house in the 1850s.

The Manor of East Bagborough

The manor of Bagborough seems to have been divided into two since the 11th century. Domesday lists Bagborough as the property of William de Mohun, paying tax for 3 hides and valued at 100s (Thorn and Thorn 1980, 25,51).

Collinson suggests that this is the manor of West Bagborough, later a property of the Luttrell family, then of the Stawell family at the time of Sir John Stawell's (IV) death, and still

part of their estate in 1791 (Collinson 1791, 242). The Stawells held land in West Bagborough in the middle of the 16th century (Stawell 1910, 61).

Another entry in Domesday records that Ralph of Reuilly holds Bagborough from Ralph Pagnell. It paid tax on 1 hide and was valued at 50 (Thorn and Thorn 1980, 31,4). Collinson equates this with East Bagborough, in 1791 described as a village. East Bagborough was once the property of the Luttrells, but by 1791 was 'in the possession of Thomas Slocomb, esq; who has a seat here called Tirhill; with a park, ascending almost to the top of Quantock-Hill.' (Collinson 1791, 243). The Stawell family had an interest in East Bagborough, however, bordering as it did on their Cothelstone estate. Disputes over land in East Bagborough are mentioned in documents concerning Geoffrey de Stawell and his wife dating to 1300-1 (Stawell 1910, 27). A messuage and land in 'Baggebury' are held by the Stawells in 1361 (Stawell 1910, 323).

By the middle of the 18th century, Thomas Slocombe owned the old manor of East Bagborough. Little is known of this gentleman, save a dispute with a neighbour over a water supply which is chronicled in some detail (Allen 1983, 268-9). He built a new mansion house, Terhill House, on high ground above East Bagborough, at what is now called Higher Terhill. This house was built by 1778. Slocombe laid out a landscape park at Terhill, possibly as early as the 1750s (Nicholas Pearson Associates 1998, 5). When Edward Jeffries bought the Cothelstone estates in 1792, he also purchased Terhill from Thomas Slocombe, thus bringing together the two properties and considerably expanding the Cothelstone estate. Edward Jeffries' grandson, Edward Jeffries Esdaile built a new house, Cothelstone House, on a site close to the old manor house of East Bagborough, and laid out a park around this new house. Cothelstone House was demolished in 1968 (Hinton 1999, 228).

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

Cothelstone Hill

The summit of Cothelstone Hill contains an outstanding group of extant archaeological remains (Fig 4). These range in date from prehistoric burial mounds through to features from the Second World War. The context of the later features can only be understood with reference to the history of the Cothelstone estates. There are two Bronze Age burial mounds on the western edge of the hill (Fig 5). The best preserved of these lies at ST 1876 3260. The cairn comprises a grass covered, stony mound, 16m in diameter and 1.3m high. The base of the cairn has the appearance of having been ploughed over, this is particularly apparent on the north and south sides. Two hollows on the south and east sides of the mound are relatively recent and may represent the remains of unrecorded excavations on the mound. A small depression 30m to the southwest of the cairn is probably a quarry scoop, possibly for cairn material. Such quarry scoops have been identified close to some of the major cairn groups on Exmoor, for example on Robin and Joaney How near Dunkery Beacon and Cosgate Hill (Riley and Wilson-North 2001; Jamieson 2002a).

The second burial mound lies to the east, at ST 1883 3262. The northern edge of this mound has been clipped by a track, giving the mound an ovoid appearance. The mound is grass-covered, it measures 14m east/west, 12m north/south and is 1.1m high.

A certain amount of confusion has arisen over the classification of some of the earthwork features on Cothelstone Hill. In the 19th century, the Ordnance Survey surveyors mapped three features which they called tumuli (OS 1888). One of these is a circular embanked feature which lies just to the west of the burial mound described above, at ST 1818 3263. The bank is 22m in diameter, 1m wide, 0.9m high with a short section of ditch on its northeastern edge. The two gaps to the northeast and the southwest are caused by a track which cuts through the feature. A hollow and spoil mound on the southeast side appear to be relatively recent. More recent interpretations (for example Grinsell 1970, 58) suggest that this is not a tumulus but a tree ring. This is supported by the depiction of a single conifer inside the bank on the Ordnance Survey map of 1888. The possibility that this is a Bronze Age ring cairn should also be considered. In its favour is the close association of the feature with the burial mound described above. Similar groupings of ring cairns and burial mounds occur on Wills Neck and Black Hill for example. The size of the feature also argues in its favour, at 17m in diameter it compares with the small ring cairns on Wills Neck (11m and 15m) rather than the tree ring enclosures along Weacombe and on Great Bear (30m and 40m respectively). The presence of a short length of ditch, however, suggests that it is not a ring cairn. None of the the ring cairns identified on Will's Neck, for example, have ditches, nor do ditches seem to be a feature of those published on Bodmin Moor and Exmoor (Johnson and Rose 1994, fig 37: 24-26; Riley and Wilson-North 2001, figs 2.24,2.25).

Much of the summit of Cothelstone Hill has been subject to ploughing in the post-medieval period (below). It would be expected that a small ring cairn would show signs of damage

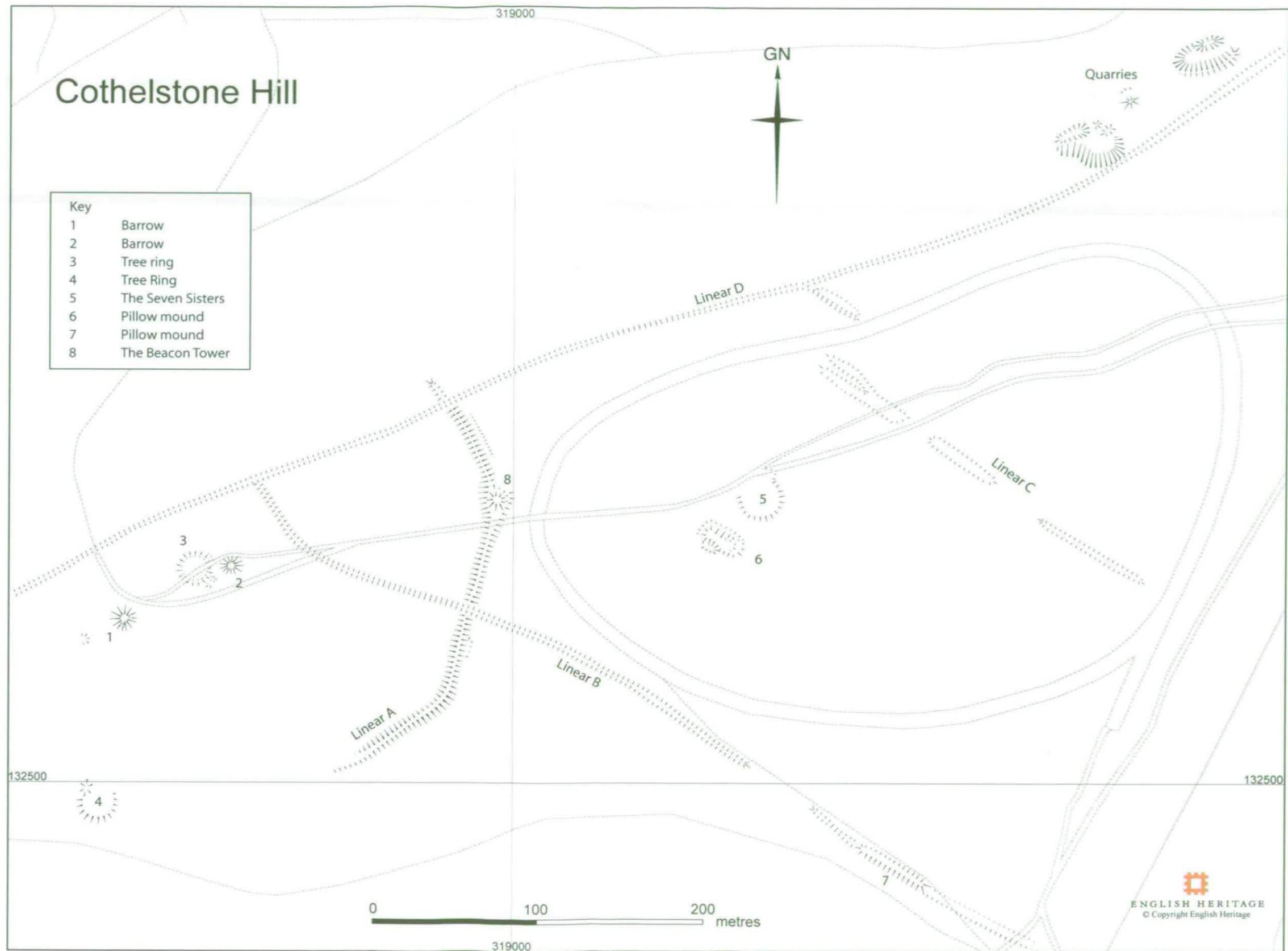


Figure 4. Cothelstone Hill: English Heritage 1:2500 survey (reduced).

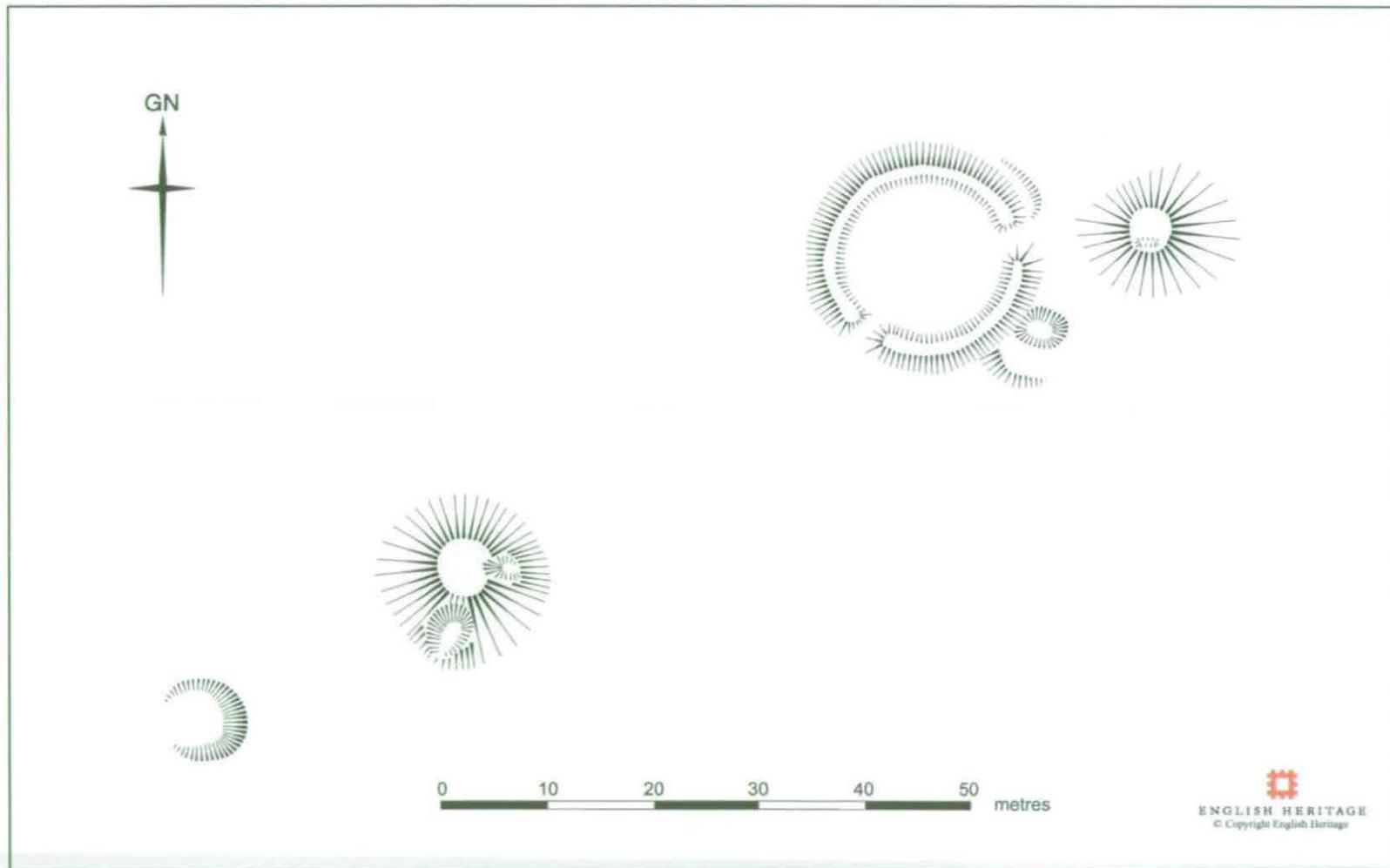


Figure 5. Cothelstone Hill: English Heritage 1:200 earthwork survey of barrows and tree ring enclosure (reduced).

from this period of cultivation. The feature is, however, relatively fresh in appearance and this, together with the lack of any plough encroachment and the presence of a ditch suggest a post-medieval tree ring rather than a Bronze Age ring cairn.

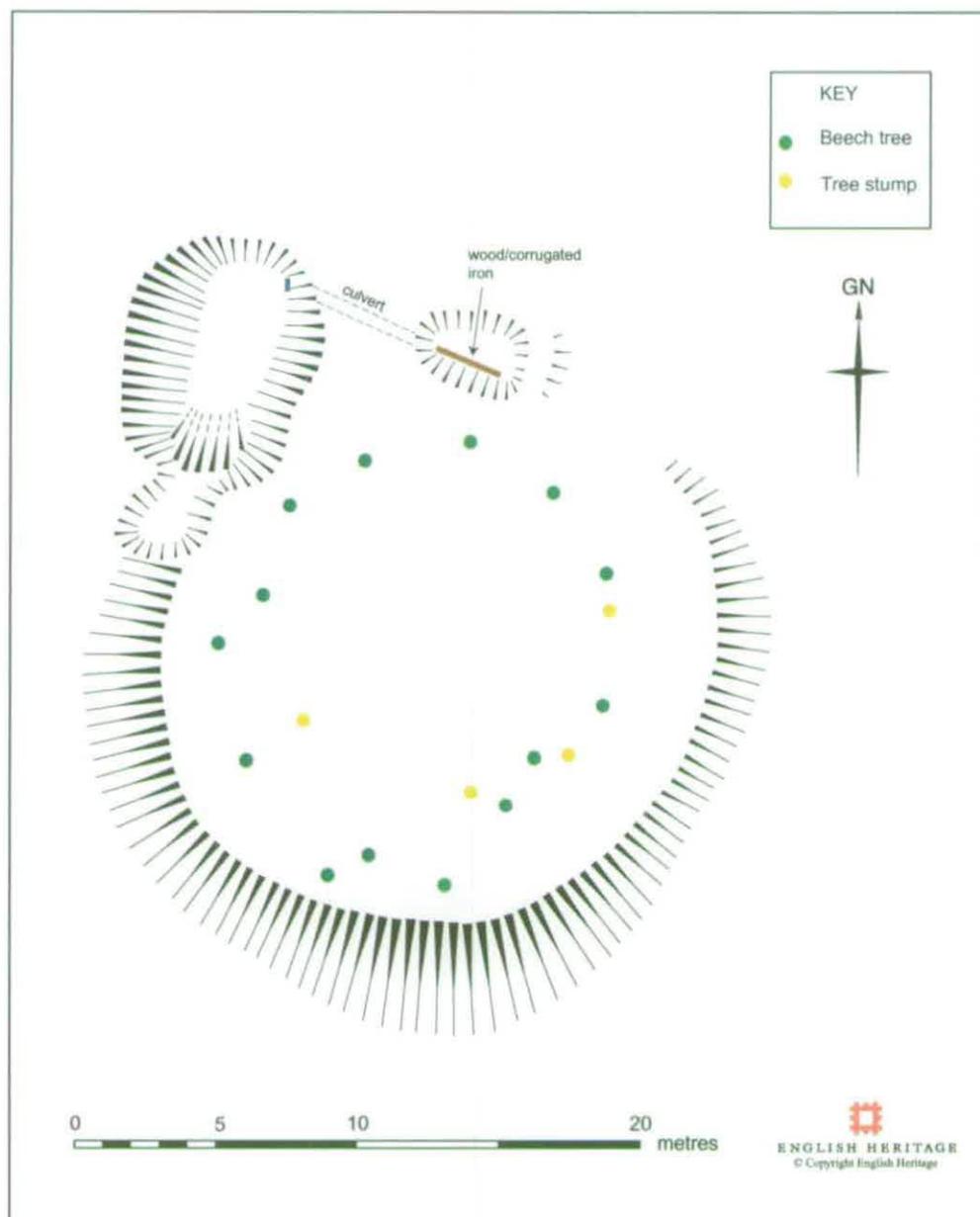


Figure 6.
Cothelstone Hill:
English Heritage
1:200 earthwork
survey of tree ring
enclosure and WWII
bunker (reduced).

Some 160m to the south, now on the edge of scrubby woodland, is the second feature classified as a tumulus on the Ordnance Survey map of 1888, located at ST 1875 3249. This is a sub-circular platform, some 24m in diameter, defined by a scarp with a maximum height of 1.2m (Fig 6). On the platform are 14 beech trees, arranged in a circle, together with four tree stumps. Its morphology, together with its location on a slope below the summit of the hill, argues strongly for its interpretation as a tree ring. On the northern edge of the platform are two large hollows, linked by a culvert, representing the remains of an underground bunker or storage chambers, dating from the Second World War (C Tilley, pers comm).

The third feature previously interpreted as a tumulus is the well known Seven Sisters. This name refers to a clump of beech trees, visible from the Vale of Taunton. The feature, at ST

1915 3267, comprises a partially embanked circular platform, 24m in diameter and 1.2m high (Figs 3 and 7). The platform is composed of earth and stone, and some stone is exposed in small areas of erosion. On the platform are five beech trees, six tree stumps and three hollows which represent the remains of tree throws. A small pond has been built into the northern side of the platform. The platform occupies a prominent position on the summit of Cothelstone Hill and is surrounded by the earthwork remains of vehicle tracks; on the northwestern side these give the appearance of a very slight ditch.

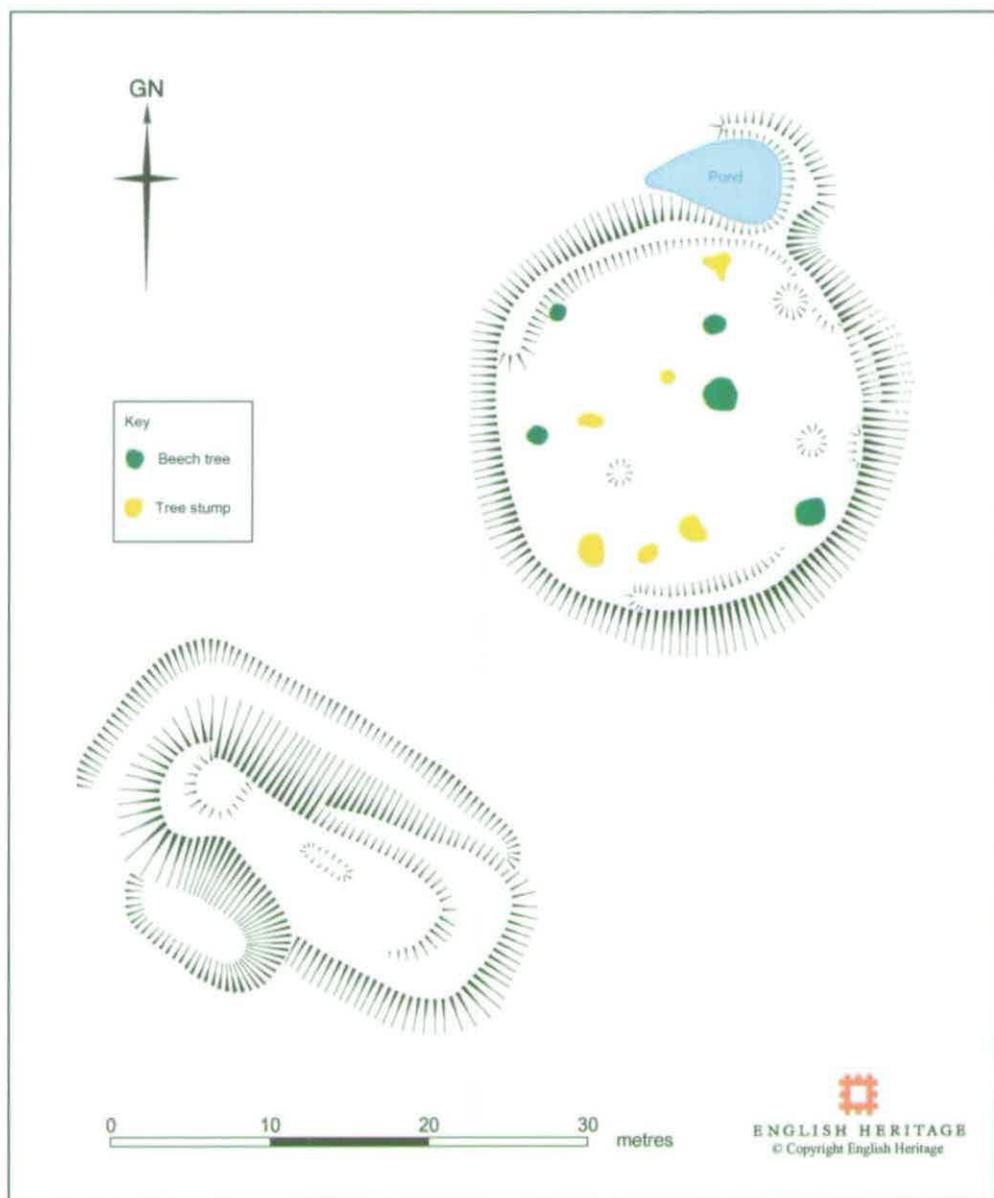


Figure 7. Cothelstone Hill: English Heritage 1:200 earthwork survey of the Seven Sisters and pillow mound (reduced).

The beech trees are very obviously part of an ornamental planting scheme. The circular platform, however, could well represent the remains of a large prehistoric platform cairn. On the Quantock Hills, similar cairns occur on Great Hill and West Hill, for example. One of these cairns on West Hill has the remains of ornamental planting around its edge. Published examples on Bodmin Moor compare in size and profile (Johnson and Rose 1994, fig 37: 18,19). The highly visible location of the Seven Sisters on a hilltop is also typical of other platform cairns on the Quantock Hills.

Some 40m to the south of the Seven Sisters is a rectangular mound, at ST 1912 3265 (Fig 7). This mound has been variously interpreted as two confluent burial mounds, a pillow mound or of recent origin. The mound is orientated northwest/southeast and measures 27m by 12m, it is 1.3m high. It is flanked by a ditch on its northwestern and northeastern sides. A deep sub-rectangular hollow on its southwestern edge is a relatively recent quarry pit, air photographs taken in 1947 show that the ditch originally extended along the southwestern side. The surface of the mound is rather irregular. The feature was planted with beech trees in the latter years of the 20th century. The morphology of the earthwork and the presence of the ditch strongly indicate that this is a pillow mound, generally dated to the medieval or early post-medieval periods and constructed as an artificial rabbit warren (Williamson 1997).

A further rectangular mound lies on the southern side of the hill at ST 1923 3244. This is much larger than the pillow mound described above. It is some 54m long, 8m wide and up to 1.3m high. The top of the mound is quite irregular in appearance, at least some of this is due to animal activity. A ditch may lie along the northern side of the mound, but this is difficult to ascertain due to the presence of scrubby vegetation and a modern track which runs along the northern edge of the mound. The mound overlies a linear feature (described below). The mound's origin and function remain unclear. It does not appear on any of the Ordnance Survey 19th century mapping. It could be a pillow mound, and if it is it represents a large example of this type of monument. Its position, towards the head of a combe, could suggest the mound was associated with the sporting/recreational use of the hill, which developed in the 19th century as the estate was increasingly used for shooting. However, it is difficult to see the mound functioning as, for example, a shooting butt, and on balance the mound is most likely to be a very large pillow mound. It compares in size to examples on Minchinhampton Common, Glos, which were interpreted as post-medieval in date (Smith 2002).

The summit of Cothelstone Hill is criss-crossed by linear earthworks of varying forms. Their interpretation is hampered by areas of vegetation which remains dense throughout the year.



Figure 8. Cothelstone Hill: air photograph looking southwest (NMR 15859/22).

However, a combination of field observation and air photographic interpretation has allowed the following sequence to be postulated (Figs 4 and 8).

Linear A: A bank with an intermittent ditch runs for some 280m across the western edge of Cothelstone Hill, cutting off the western end of the hilltop. Both the northern and southern ends turn out to the west as the linear runs off the hilltop. The bank is 2.5m wide, 1.4m wide and the ditch 0.8m deep. The northern end of the bank has been damaged by ploughing, and both ploughing and tracks have slighted the central portion of the linear. The southern section survives as a good earthwork but the southernmost part is difficult to discern in scrubby woodland. Linears B and D both overlie this earthwork, and the Beacon Tower is built on its northern angle. The form of this earthwork, together with its relationship with Linear B and the episodes of ploughing, strongly suggest that this is a later prehistoric linear earthwork, cutting off the western edge of Cothelstone Hill, and as such is a significant new discovery. Cross-spur and cross-ridge dykes are relatively common on the Quantock Hills, most are associated with Iron Age enclosures or hillforts. A recent systematic study of the extensive linear ditch systems of Wessex showed them to have their origins in the Late Bronze Age (Bradley *et al* 1994).

Linear B: This a broad, spread bank which runs for some 500m across the southwestern edge of Cothelstone Hill, it is some 7m wide and 0.6m high. A post-medieval pillow mound has been constructed on this bank, and parts of it have been ploughed over.

Linear C: A very degraded bank, some 7m wide and 0.5-1m high, runs for 240m across the northeastern edge of the hill. It runs parallel to Linear B and has also been ploughed over.

These two banks (Linears B and C) probably represent the remains of some of the earliest field systems on Cothelstone Hill, with phases of later cultivation effectively removing all but the fragmentary remains of this episode.

Linear D: A bank, 6m wide and 1.2m high, runs for some 800m across the northern edge of Cothelstone Hill. For much of its length it is sharp in appearance, and this portion is marked as a boundary on 19th and 20th-century maps. The bank is much more spread at its northeastern end, and this part is not depicted on those maps. Part of this bank seems to have functioned as a boundary until quite recently. Traces of ploughing can be observed both to the north and south of this bank.

The remains of a circular building, known as the Beacon Tower, lie at ST 1899 3267. The remains comprise a circular mound 11m in diameter and 1.4m high, with much stone scattered around. The remains of a doorway survive on the southeastern side. The tower was built by Lady Hillsborough, later Baroness Stawell of Somerton, in the later part of the 18th century, between 1768 and 1780 (Kemeys-Tynte 1920, 296). Some photographs of the building taken in the 19th century show it as a robust circular tower, built of randomly coursed stonework and about 10m high. A doorway and two windows can be seen on the southern side of the tower (Fig 9). The tower was evidently substantially complete at the

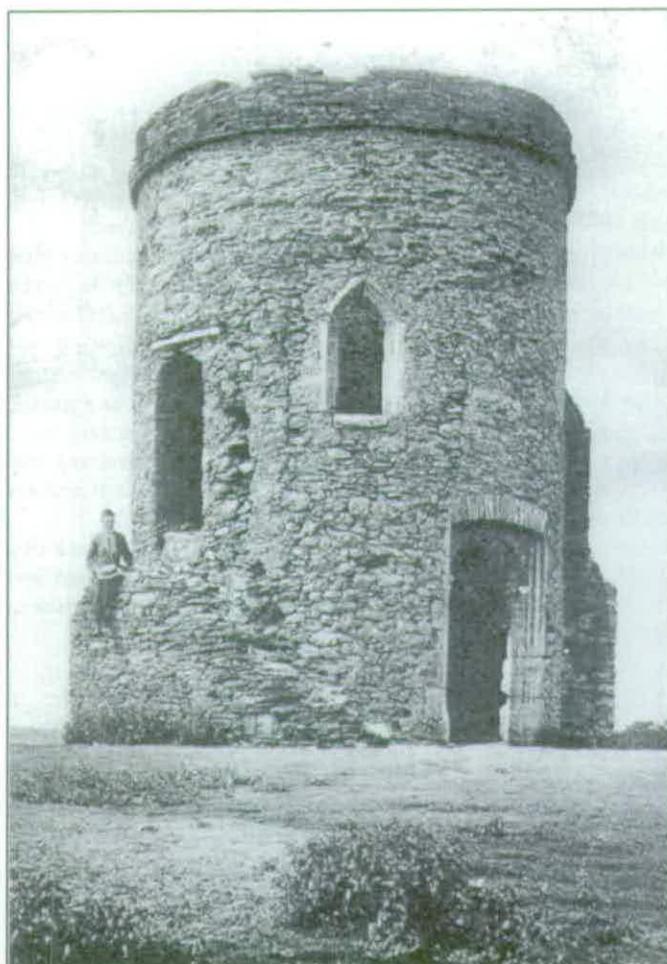


Figure 9. Cothelstone Hill: the tower in the early 20th century

beginning of the 19th century, but was badly damaged by a gale in 1917 or 1918 (Kemeys-Tynte 1920, 295).

A small area of stone quarrying lies on the northeastern edge of Cothelstone Hill at ST 1935 3290. These quarry pits were for limestone – Roadwater Limestone outcrops along the northern edge of the hill. A lime kiln lies close to the road at ST 1880 3297, this is in a rather ruinous state but appears to date from the earlier part of the 19th century.

Cothelstone Manor in the medieval period

Although Cothelstone Manor is well known as a medieval manor, the principal residence of the Stawell family, it was used for some 350 years as the estate farm. This has resulted in the scant survival of extant archaeological remains. What does survive, however, is a rich source of documentary evidence, together with the buildings themselves. The story is one of a high status medieval manor, followed by its abandonment by the family in the middle of the 17th century, when the manor became the home farm of the Stawell's Cothelstone estates.

The complex today consists of Cothelstone Manor, the gatehouse, the gateway, Manor Cottages, the church of St Thomas a Beckett, the Banqueting Hall, a summer house and a group of farm buildings (Figs 10 and 11). The dates of Cothelstone Manor, the gateway and the gatehouse have been the subject of some debate: Pevsner suggests a date of before



Figure 10.
Cothelstone Manor:
air photograph
looking northeast
(NMR 15859/33).

1560 (1958, 135-6), Listed Building reports give a date of mid-16th century for the complex, and *Country Life* suggests the latter half of the 16th century (*Country Life* 1908, 55). There seem to be no documentary references to the building of this house. If the dates given above on stylistic grounds are correct, then it was built by Sir John Stawell II, who was lord of the manor between 1541 and 1603. This Sir John is best remembered for his involvement in the mustering of arms, horses and men for the fight against the Spanish Armada (Stawell 1910, 69-70).

In 1633 Thomas Gerard in his *Particular Description of the County of Somerset* says of the Stawells of Cothelstone: 'Their mansion house is fair and ancient, pleasantly seated on the declining of a hill towards the South, and accommodated with a park adjoininge.' (quoted in Stawell 1910, 457).



Figure 12.
Cothelstone Manor:
Manor Cottages, front
elevation
(NMR AA046411).

Cothelstone Manor

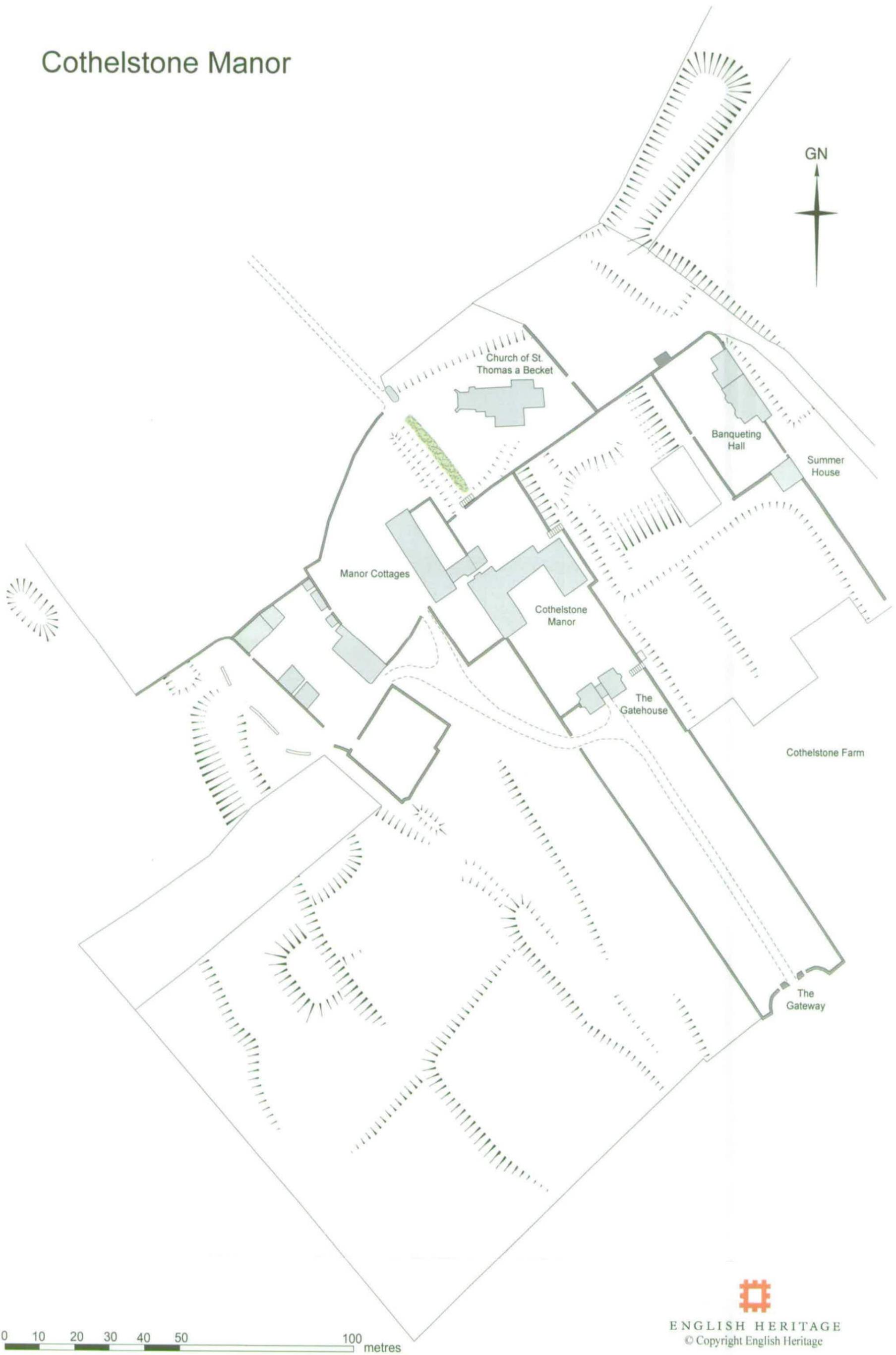


Figure 11. Cothelstone Manor: English Heritage 1:1000 earthwork survey (reduced).

Part of an earlier building survives in what is now a row of cottages (Manor Cottages, locally known as Church Cottages) to the west of Cothelstone Manor (Figs 12 and 13). Some survey work was carried out in 1973, and EH Architectural Investigation plan to carry out detailed recording of this building in 2004. Prior to this work, the suggestion can be put forward that this was the hall of an earlier manor house, dating from the late 15th century, and used as service accommodation after the new house was built (Williams 1973, Listed Building report). The possibility also exists that the building represents a range of service accommodation which itself incorporated a hall, for an earlier manor house (B Jones, pers comm). Robert Stawell I was lord of the manor between 1439 and c 1500. This Robert Stawell was Sheriff of Somerset in 1467 and 1468, he received several commissions from the king and in 1461 was appointed in the office of the king's butler to provide wines in 'divers places within the realm for the king's household' (quoted in Stawell 1910, 47).



Figure 13. Cothelstone Manor: detail of medieval doorway, Manor Cottages (NMR AA046419).

Documentary evidence relating to the old manor house at Cothelstone is scanty. A document of 1541 records that Dorothy, the wife of John Stawell II, shall have 'the use of all my beds being in the mansion house of Colchelston, and all the vessels belonging to my kitchen, bakehouse, and of the said mansion house' (quoted in Stawell 1910, 338-9). Robert Stawell wills to his successor a silver bowl with a cover and 'all the ornaments belonging to my chapell' in the late 15th century (Country Life 1908, 54). These two references suggest that the old manor house had separate service accommodation - the kitchen and bakehouse - and a private chapel.

The farm buildings associated with the old manor house may have been on the site of the 18th- or early 19th- century farm layout described below. However, a building platform to the northwest of the church is in an unusual position. A large building is shown here on the estate map of 1733, and is depicted on this site up until the latter part of the 19th century. This is an important site, close to both house and church, and the building could have been the tithe barn for the manor farm. Pigeon House Close lies adjacent to this site, and the building depicted at the top of the close on maps from 1733 until the latter part of the 19th century could well be the manorial dovecote, located a short distance away from the house and close to the warren.

The earlier medieval layout of the manor was a familiar juxtaposition of manor house and church, with the parish church of St Thomas a Becket lying only 40m to the northeast (Frontispiece). The church contains some 12th- and 13th- century fabric, but is mainly of 15th- century date; the church was restored in the latter part of the 19th century. The south chapel contains several monuments to the Stawell family, including the tomb of Sir Matthew Stawell (died 1379) and his wife, and a monument to Sir John Stawell II (died 1603) and his wife (Figs 14 and 15).



Figure 14.
Cothelstone Church:
monument to Sir
Matthew Stawell
(NMR AA048515).



Figure 15.
Cothelstone Church:
monument to Sir John
Stawell
(NMR AA048522).

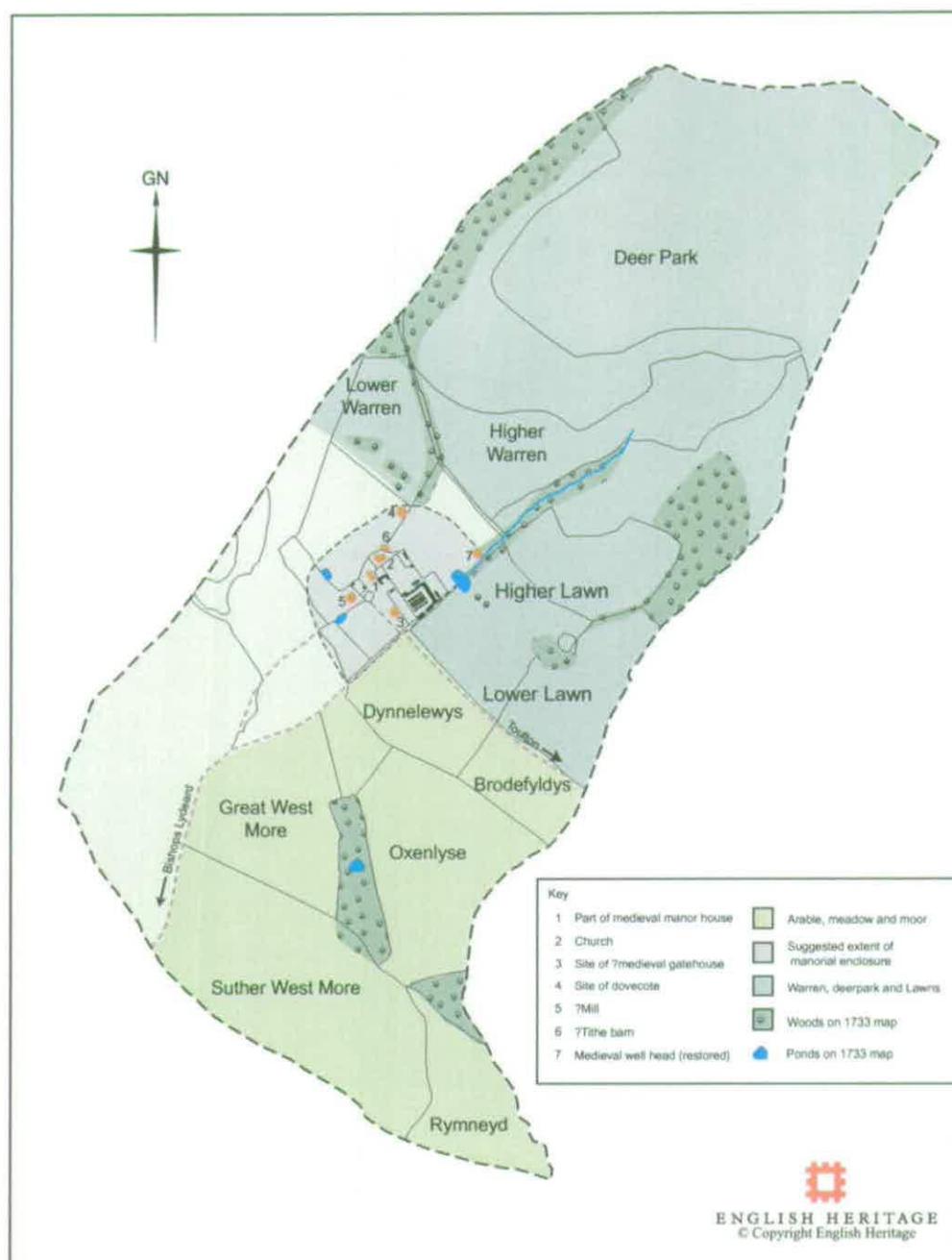


Figure 16.
Cothelstone Manor:
evidence for the
medieval landscape.

Before the turnpike road was built in 1783 (Stawell 1910, 463), the lanes to Cothelstone from Toulton and Bishops Lydeard ended at Cothelstone: access to the manor, church and Cothelstone Hill was controlled by the lord of the manor. The present approach to Cothelstone Manor is a 19th-century creation. A study of the 1733 estate map and Edward Jeffries Esdaile's memoirs (evidence set out below) suggest that the original approach to the new manor house incorporated the old gatehouse to the medieval manor as well as the newly built gatehouse. The suggested medieval gatehouse is depicted as a small, square building, it lies directly opposite the junction of the lanes from Toulton and Bishops Lydeard, and leads to the old manor house.

A substantial hollow way is shown on 19th-century maps (OS 1889), running from the 19th-century lodge of Cothelstone House towards Manor Cottages and the church. This could be the remains of a second approach from Bishops Lydeard, perhaps to the farm and mill buildings southwest of the house.

The medieval manorial landscape

Documentary evidence suggests that Cothelstone Manor was at the heart of a formal, manorial landscape in the medieval period. In the latter part of the 16th century, 'Sir John Stawell, knt, hath one grounde inclosed for deere at Cothelston of one myle compass and keapeth twoo mares according to the statute' (quoted in Anon 1898, 50). Cothelstone has, in 1633, 'a park adjoyninge' (quoted in Stawell 1910, 457). Cothelstone Hill is named Cothelstone Park at the beginning of the 19th century, the name includes the lower slopes as well as the hilltop (OS 1802). The tithe map names Cothelstone Park and Hill, it also names Higher Lawn and Lower Lawn, occupying an area of gently sloping ground at the foot of Cothelstone Hill, adjacent to Cothelstone Manor. To the northwest of the manor are Lower Warren and Higher Warren (SRO 1838).

Figure 16 shows the suggested extent of the deer park in the late 16th century. The park takes in the whole of Cothelstone Hill, with the lower slopes to the west and east of the house being taken up by a warren and the Lawns respectively, thus bringing the park into the environs of the manor house itself. The northern boundary of the park runs for some 800m from Park End (now occupied by a 19th century lodge for Cothelstone House, below) to the northern corner of Buncombe Wood. It survives as a substantial ditch with a bank on its southern edge. The ditch is 4m wide and 2m deep, while the bank is 2m wide and 1.5m high. This could well be the medieval park pale for the deer park, and as such is a significant feature of the historic landscape. A drystone wall of local stone lies on the southern edge of this ditch, and follows it for much of its course in varying states of repair. Lengths of walling also occur on the southern slopes of Cothelstone Hill. This is difficult to date, but the boundary seems to be in existence by 1800, dividing the hilltop from enclosed land and woodland to the south (OS 1802). The suggested area of the park, including the warren and the Lawns is roughly 135 ha (333 acres) – nearly half of the area occupied by the historic parish of Cothelstone. The use of Cothelstone Hill as part of the deer park meant that, unusually, the parish of Cothelstone had no common land on the hill. However, the Stawells had rights of common elsewhere on the Quantocks: a will from 1542 mentions 'common of pasture on the hill of Quantoke parcels of the manor of Cothelston....' (Stawell 1910, 339).

There are several ponds shown on the 1733 estate map. A large pond occupies a prominent position at the foot of Cothelstone Hill and to the northeast of the manor house. This pond was cut in two by the turnpike road in, but both halves retained water at the end of the 19th century. It was filled from the stream which issues from Paradise Combe. By the end of the 19th century (OS 1889) the pond was supplying water and water power to Cothelstone Farm, but prior to this it does not readily serve any of the post-manor farm buildings. Its location, in the southwestern corner of the park, close to the warren, suggests that it could be part of the medieval landscape, part of the park rather than a fish pond or stew pond.

The traditional location for Cothelstone's fish ponds is in the Grove, a wood to the south of the manor. A small pond, now much disturbed and overgrown, does survive, but there is no evidence for a series of ponds in the Grove as recounted by Edward Jeffries Esdaile (Stawell 1910, 461). The area of the Grove was farmland in the middle of the 16th century, and the

Grove is rather a distance from the probable extent of the manorial complex. The most likely location for the manorial fish ponds is to the southwest of the manor. The earthwork remains of a pond, some 20m long, 10m wide and 1.2m deep, lie at ST 1800 3178. A second pond, now much overgrown, lies at ST 1803 3170. These ponds are linked by a stream on the 1733 map. The ponds are associated with the name 'Mill Pond' on the tithe map. They could be related to the manor mill, although its location is unknown. The ponds could equally be the remains of the manor's fish ponds. Further weight to this interpretation is given by the fact that Cothelstone Lake, 250m to the east, was also known as the Fish Pond.

An important document from the middle of the 16th century balances this evidence. Thus far we have looked at evidence for a lordly landscape. A will dated 1542 gives the names of several fields (published in Stawell 1910, 339). Some of these occur on the tithe map, thus their position can be suggested with some certainty. So by the middle of the 16th century there was a block of fields to the south of the manor and the Lawns. The names indicate meadows, woods, and perhaps some land relatively recently enclosed from the low lying ground – Great West More and Suther West More.

The medieval parish of Cothelstone was a long, thin strip of land. It contained marshy low lying ground at its southern extremity, with arable and pasture, rising up to the woods and wood pasture on and around the deer park on Cothelstone Hill. Evidence for the woodland is suggested by the depiction of several woods on the 1733 map, and a suggestion of wood pasture is given by the depiction of clumps of trees in the Lawns. The importance of hedges as a wood resource is also illustrated on this estate map (Fig 22).

The above documentary and field evidence can be combined to suggest the approximate extent and location of the medieval manorial enclosure (curia). Its suggested extent (Fig 16) covers some 6 ha (15 acres) and compares with those identified at Kilve (3.5 ha) and East Quantoxhead (4 ha) (Jamieson 2002b; Jamieson and Jones 2004). At opposing corners of the enclosure were bodies of water. The enclosure contained the church, manor house, outbuildings and farm buildings, the manor mill and a dove cote. There would also have been gardens and orchards, supplying herbs and fruit, as well as decorative plants (Landsberg 1995). The southeastern boundary followed the stream and the lane from Toulton, this turned to form the southwestern edge of the enclosure, following a watercourse. At the northwestern corner of the enclosure were the fish ponds (or mill ponds). The northern boundary is marked by the site of the dovecote and by St Agnes' Well, which has a medieval well head, restored in the 19th century.

Cothelstone Manor in the early post-medieval period (1550-1650)

Some time around the middle of the 16th century, the old manor house with its hall and outbuildings was completely remodelled. The hall of the medieval house was retained, and used as service accommodation. A new house was built close to the old hall range. The orientation of the house had changed and a new gatehouse was built directly in front of the new house (Frontispiece and Fig 17).

Esdaile's journals and the estate map of 1733 help to explain how the elements of house and gatehouse were articulated. Esdaile explains that the new manor house actually had two lodges. He takes us on a journey from the front of Cothelstone Manor out to open countryside: 'Passing through an archway (the extant gatehouse) we find ourselves in a wide open space, all walled, and another porter's lodge before us. At the time of writing this [1855] not a vestige remained to mark the site of any such, but very old people remember heaps of stones lying about ' (Stawell 1910, 460). In fact, the location of this gatehouse is shown on the estate map of 1733 (Fig 22). It lies directly opposite the lane from Toulton and

is most likely to be the position of the gatehouse for the medieval manor house (above), retained to add prestige to the approach to the new house. Esdaile also notes that a white stoned, semi-circular arch finally led one out of the confines of the manor. This arch has been remodelled and now stands opposite the extant gatehouse, it originally spanned the lane from Bishops Lydeard (Stawell 1910, 460) (Fig 18). The approach to the new house at Cothelstone was thus very grand indeed, the visitor passed under an arch, then into a courtyard, through a gatehouse and into another courtyard. Finally, the visitor passed through another gatehouse into a final courtyard to face the house itself.



Figure 17. Cothelstone Manor: the gatehouse (NMR AA048455).

Figure 18. Cothelstone Manor: the gateway (NMR AA048451).

A new house, in a new position and with a new gatehouse, needed new surroundings. Two buildings associated with the gardens of Cothelstone Manor survive. The Banqueting Hall dates from the early 17th century. It was probably originally built as a garden building – a banqueting house or lodgings - but has been subsequently used as a house (Fig 19). One of the lower rooms contained decorative oak panelling, and still retains an ornamental plasterwork frieze. The second building is a gazebo or summerhouse, lying in at the northern corner of an area known as the bowling green (below) (Fig 19). The date of this small building is problematical. The Listed Building report gives a date of late 16th century, however a brief investigation suggested a date of around the middle of the 19th century (B Jones, pers

Figure 19.
Cothelstone Manor:
the garden courts,
banqueting house and
summer house,
Cothelstone Hill
behind
(NMR AA048460).



comm). A building is shown on this site on the estate maps of 1733 and 1792, suggesting that the current summerhouse replaced an earlier building. This is confirmed by Esdaile, who notes in his journal that it had suffered from fire damage.

A combination of the estate map of 1733 and field evidence can be used to suggest that the layout around Cothelstone Manor was composed of three rectangular enclosures, each sub-divided (Fig 20). Several high garden walls, of local stone and brick, remain, showing much evidence of repair over the years (Fig 19). The central block was slightly narrower than those flanking it. It contained the two gatehouses and the manor house, including the service accommodation formed by the old house. The church lay outside this arrangement in its own rectangular enclosure. The large enclosure to the northeast of the house contained the two garden buildings. The late 19th-century farm buildings occupy the southern portion of this enclosure, but it seems that the banqueting house lay at the end of its own enclosure, and the summer house in the corner of its own enclosure. The earthwork remains of a path linking the two courts can be discerned. The remaining earthworks are difficult to interpret, but most likely relate to later use of the area, as kitchen gardens when the manor house was a farm house, and as gardens after the manor became a family home once more. The features to the southwest of the summer house are probably associated with a modern tennis court, although it is traditionally known as the bowling green. Esdaile recounts how 'In trenching the site to form a garden, the bowls with their jack were met with, some two feet below the soil, the game never more resumed' (Stawell 1910, 461).

The enclosure on the southwest of the house is now defined by earthworks – scarps which survive in an area known as Dairy Orchard on the tithe map. The earthworks define two regular enclosures, overlain by the earthwork remains of a track to the 18th- and early 19th-century farm buildings. These enclosures may be part of a formal garden layout, pre-dating

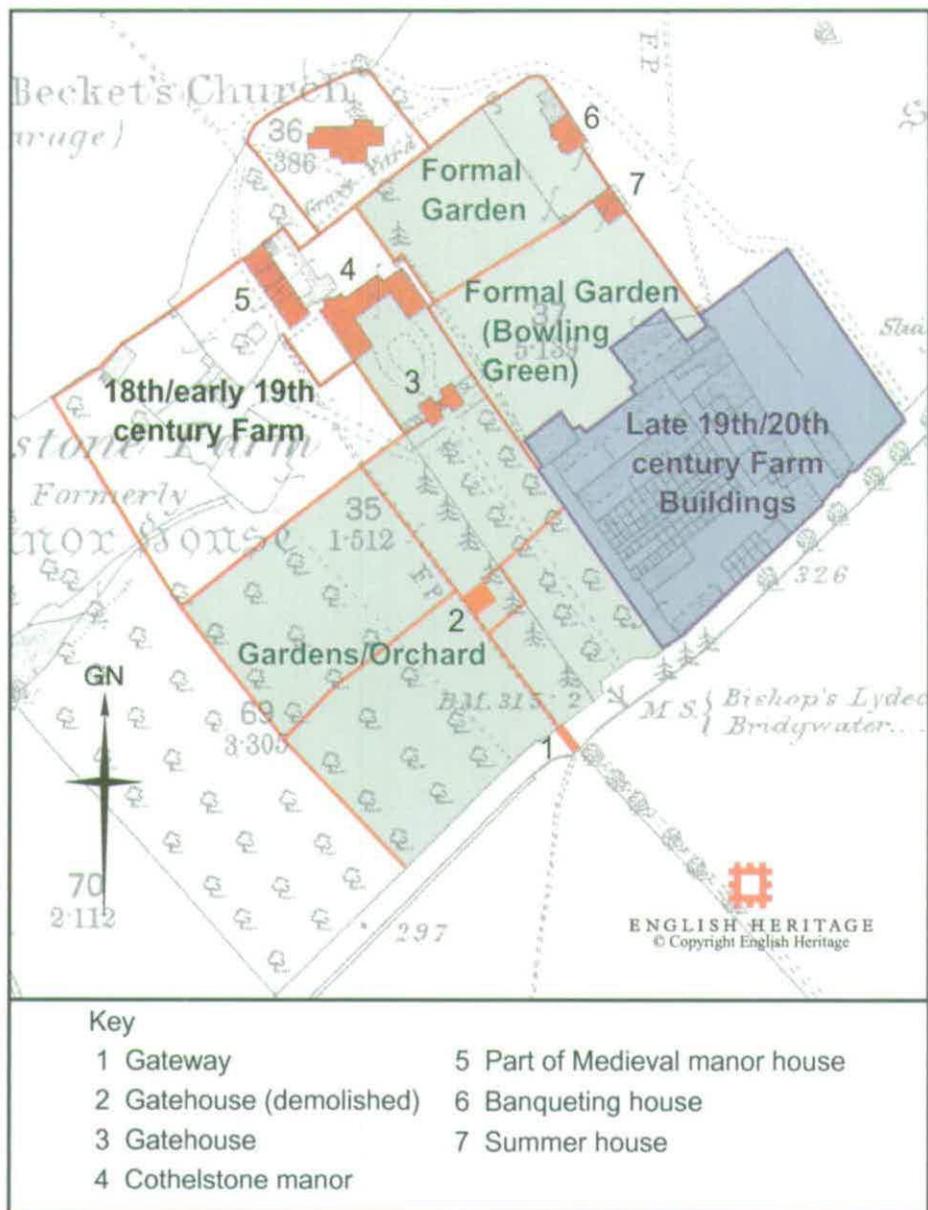


Figure 20.
Cothelstone Manor:
the early post-
medieval house and
gardens.

the use of the manor as a farm. If so they are an important survival. They could relate to the use of the area as an orchard in the 19th century, but none are shown on the tithe map or the 1st edition map (SRO 1838; OS 1889).

What would the gardens have contained? The early 17th century was a time of conservatism in Somerset's houses and garden designs. Bond notes that Somerset Jacobean houses, such as Court House, East Quantoxhead, are architecturally conservative, and he suggests that local garden design was similarly conservative. Typical features of gardens of this date are plats, terraces, topiary, water features and banqueting houses (Bond 1998, 52).

The wider landscape was probably much as described above. In 1633 Cothelstone is described as having an adjoining park (Stawell 1910, 457). The contraction of the warren to the environs of Cothelstone Hill is suggested by the extant pillow mounds on the hill (above), although we have no evidence to suggest that the cultivation of the Lawns began before the manor's use as a farm in the 1650s.

Cothelstone Farm

Some of the most striking features of Cothelstone now are the splendid Victorian farm buildings to the east of the house. These represent one of the latest phases of major building at Cothelstone, and were constructed some time between 1838 and 1889 (SRO 1838; OS 1889). They are most likely to belong to the latter part of this period, between 1850 and 1870, when farm buildings were regarded as industrial buildings, reflecting the need for efficiency and mechanisation (Wade Martins 2002, 112). Locally, this was the time when Edward Esdaile Jeffries restored the manor house. The farm buildings are laid out in a manner typical of a model farm of this period. A large barn for storing and processing animal feed forms the heart of the complex, with buildings for livestock laid out below the barn, to aid the delivery of feed to the animals (Figs 20 and 21).



Figure 21.
Cothelstone Farm:
the barn
(NMR AA048459).

Before this farm complex was built, however, the farm buildings were much closer to the manor house and church. Four buildings are shown in a rather haphazard group to the west of the manor house and Manor Cottages in 1733 (Fig 22). By 1792 this has become a farmyard flanked by buildings, with a central building, probably a cart shed. A flavour of the farmyard is given in an (undated but pre-1855) account of the manor: 'It (the manor house) is used as a farm-house, and the various ancient outbuildings have become stables, cow-houses, sties, cider-mill, etc' (quoted in Stawell 1910, 464). A scarp marks the edge of this late 18th-century farmyard, and the platform for one of the buildings survives close to the wall. The footings of the central building can be discerned.



Figure 22. Cothelstone Manor: detail from the 1733 estate map (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services).

The remains of a field system lie on the lower slopes of Cothelstone Hill to the northeast of the manor. This comprises four small square fields to the east of The Lawns, and several lynchets on the steeper slopes above. A hollow way leads up into Paradise Combe. Much of this field system was in use in the early 18th century and the early 19th century, as shown on the estate map of 1733 and the Ordnance Survey map of 1802. The prominent lynchet running northwest/southeast to the north of the track to the Lawns was in use as a field boundary in the late 19th century (OS 1889) (Figs 2 and 23).

A small sub-rectangular enclosure on the western side of one of these relict fields (ST 1875 3165) is all that remains of a small building marked on the estate map of 1733. This was probably a small barn or shelter for stock. The earthwork remains of a pond for watering stock lie at ST 1842 3202. This probably dates from the 18th or 19th centuries. A stone sheepwash lies in Kiln Close at ST 1805 3283 and appears to be of 19th century origin.

The cultivation remains on Cothelstone Hill most likely date from the period between 1650, when the Stawells moved from Cothelstone to Low Ham, and 1800, when the estate was taken over by Edward Jeffries, who embarked on a programme of improving and landscaping his new estate.



*Figure 23.
Cothelstone Manor:
surveying the relict
field system to the
northeast of the manor
house.*

East Bagborough Manor

The other main area of extant archaeological remains on the Cothelstone estate lies to the west of Cothelstone Manor. The small settlement at Lower Terhill, sometimes still called by its older name of East Bagborough, lies at the foot of the steep slopes of Lydeard Hill, in a similar position to Cothelstone Manor. Its location at the junction of two lanes is also reminiscent of Cothelstone. East Bagborough has been part of the parish of Bishops Lydeard since pre-Conquest times (Finberg 1964), but the extent of the old manor of East Bagborough

can be suggested by comparison with Cothelstone Manor (above). The parish of Cothelstone comprises a long narrow strip, containing lowlying ground, farmland on the gently sloping farmland, and the hillslopes backed by Quantock Common. The parish of Bishops Lydeard runs right up over Lydeard Hill and down into next valley. Subtract this chunk of Bishops Lydeard and a narrow strip of land remains, taking in all of these land types and backing onto Lydeard Hill – the manor of East Bagborough.

Manor Cottages and Terhill Cottages contain the remains of a substantial medieval house, with an open hall which had a solar over the inner room and was ceiled by the early 16th century. Plasterwork overmantels and decorative plasterwork on a ground floor ceiling date from the earlier part of the 17th century (Williams 1990; Penoyre and Penoyre 1994, 71) (Fig 24). The building has been identified as the manor house of East Bagborough (Listed Building report).



Figure 24. Manor Cottage, East Bagborough: 17th–century plasterwork overmantel.

Some 150m to the northeast of Manor Cottage is an area of earthworks (Fig 25). These comprise a substantial rectangular platform with a hollow way on its western edge. The platform measures 80m x 40m, is level at its northern end and slopes away gently to the south. The platform contains some rectangular hollows at its northern end, traces of a subdivision towards its southern end and the footings of a substantial wall at its northeastern corner. To the west of the hollow way is a small platform, built into the base of a lynchet.

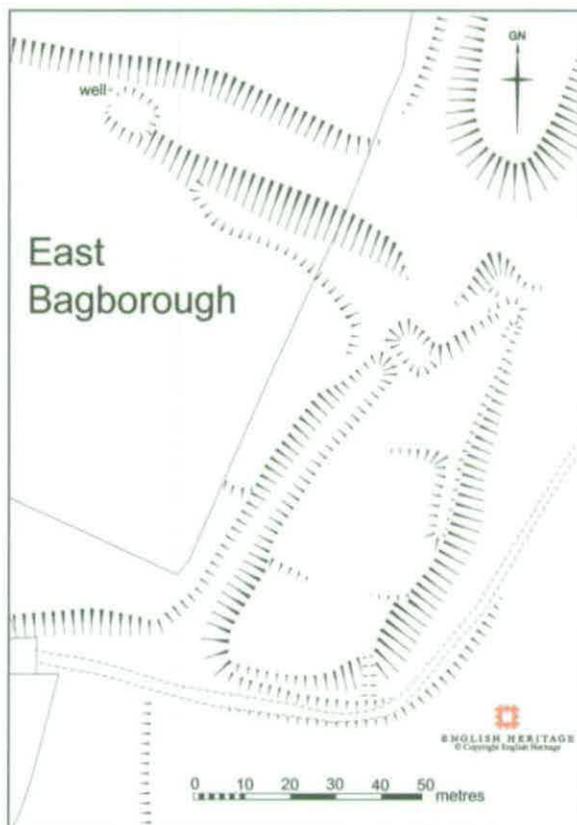


Figure 25. East Bagborough: English Heritage 1:1000 earthwork plan (reduced).

The estate map of 1778 shows two or three buildings located at the southern end of this platform. They appear to be farm buildings or cottages. On the estate map of 1778 the edge of platform is marked as a field boundary and a rectangular building is depicted, adjacent to the western side of the hollow way. Here, the hollow way changes direction and there are the remains of slight hollows and scarps. A small block of woodland is marked at the spot where the earthwork platform survives. No buildings are shown on maps of this area after 1778.

The map evidence, combined with the earthwork evidence, suggests that this was an area of settlement before 1778. The estate map of 1792 names the area Higher Court Meadow, suggesting that a house of some pretension was associated with this area. The form and location of the platform are very similar to that of Chapel House, Adscombe, where the remains of a medieval chapel stand close to the earthwork remains of a manor house (Riley 2002). The platform is certainly substantial enough to have contained a large building such as a manor house. Three possibilities are suggested. The first is that the platform contained the original manor house of East Bagborough. This complex may have contained a church or chapel, as there is no church at East Bagborough. At some time early in the medieval period, the house was demolished and a new house was built at Manor Cottage. The second is that the platform represents the remains of a formal garden, part of the layout of East Bagborough Manor. The main argument against this is that it lies in a rather awkward position, divorced from the house itself. A third option is that the platform contained a small hamlet or farm, part of the settlement of East Bagborough. The second and third options need not preclude the first. More detailed architectural investigation at Manor Cottage and geophysical survey on the platform could resolve this uncertainty.

Terhill House

Thomas Slocombe built a new mansion house at Terhill, shown as complete on his 1778 estate map. The map evidence for this building shows it in both plan and elevation (Figs 26 and 27). It was evidently a substantial three-bayed building, facing south, with large windows on both the west and east wings to take advantage of the wonderful views across the Vale of Taunton afforded by the site. Some of the site is now occupied by a house, Higher Terhill, but the remains of a substantial hollow, some 25m long, 20m wide and 1.2m deep, mark the site of Terhill House (Fig 28).

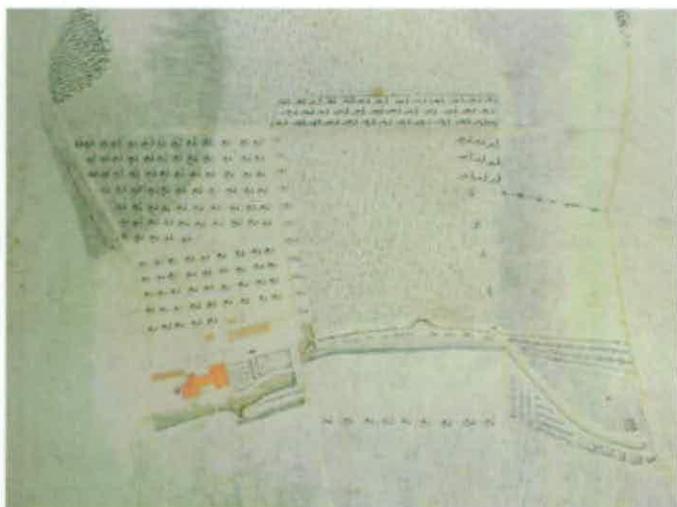


Figure 26. Terhill House: extract from 1778 estate map showing the house and garden layout (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services).

Figure 27. Terhill House: extract from 1778 estate map showing the front elevation of the house (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services).



When Edward Jeffries took over the estate he was unimpressed with the house. His grandson, Edward Jeffries Esdaile, describes it as:

Originally several cottages flung together to which was added at each end a good large room, a music room to the east and a kitchen to the west. The house was 120 feet in front, and with the exception of the two apartments mentioned contained only two other, viz, a very small drawingroom, and ditto breakfast room, the centre being occupied by two halls and an open colonnade, the whole building was in a ruinous state being built of bad materials and by bad workmen (extract from the Memorandum of Edward Jeffries Esdaile, 1830-66, quoted in Nicholas Pearson Associates 1998, 17).

The same document also indicates that the cottages on the west of Terhill House were formerly outbuildings such as the brewhouse, whilst those to the east were stables and a coach house built by Edward Jeffries, except for a long building – named the Tallet – evidently dating from Thomas Slocombe's time. Higher Terhill itself occupies the site of the buildings to the west, the house and outbuildings have been extensively rebuilt and restored, but some of them follow the footprints of these earlier buildings (Fig 29). There is earthwork evidence for a building to the north-east of Terhill – most likely Edward Jeffries' coach house. The 1778 estate map shows an arrangement of garden terraces and a small canal below the south front of the house, and a formal garden to the east, but no earthwork remains of these features can be discerned.

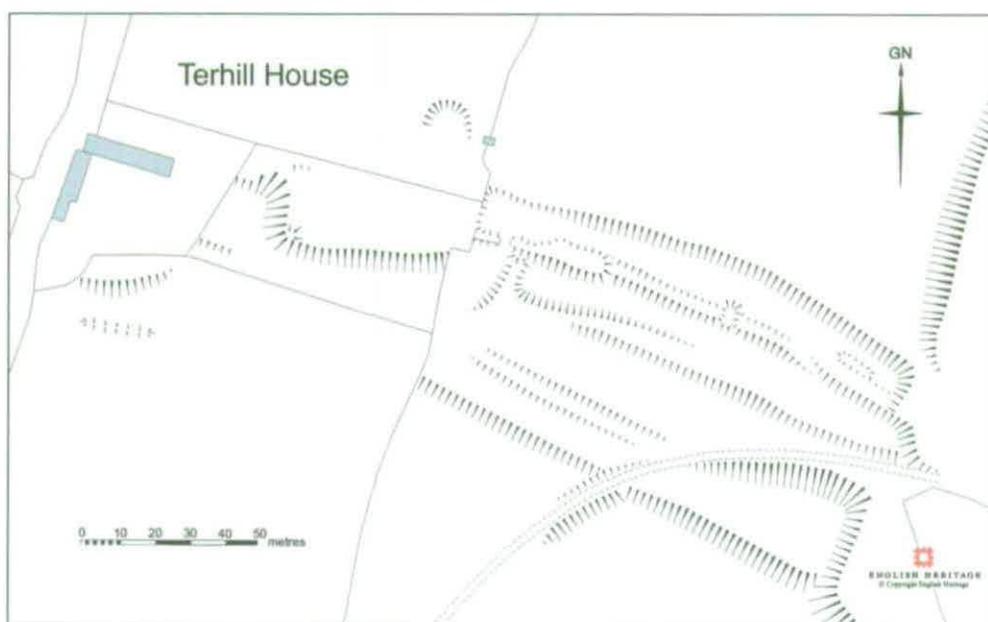


Figure 28. Terhill House: English Heritage 1:1000 earthwork plan (reduced).

Figure 29. Terhill House: Higher Terhill in the 1970s (reproduced with permission of D and M White).



Terhill Park

Edward Jeffries Esdaile was also rather scornful of what he considered to be the rather parochial landscape park which Slocombe laid out around Terhill.

Mr Slocombe was a character, offering as instance of a strong mind left to itself, he spent his money and his time in what he considered adornments of his Estate, but in fact follies, to show this it need only be mentioned that to reach his house you had to cross two Canals, or narrow shallow ponds over a Draw Bridge, the said Pond running thus the centre part which formed the division, about 3 feet wide, was a strawberry bed!!! (extract from the Memorandum of Edward Jeffries Esdaile, 1830-66, quoted in Nicholas Pearson Associates 1998, 17).

In fact, the map evidence and earthwork evidence combine to show that Terhill Park is an excellent example of a small landscape park dating from the middle of the 18th century. It contained several buildings and statues, water features and carriage drives, and the whole was constructed upon an earlier field system. The area of the park thus preserves a relict field system of medieval or early post-medieval date; 18th century statuary and ornamental buildings; the earthworks of water features or canals and the remains of carriage drives (Fig 30).

Evidence for the extent of the park comes from two sources: the landscape itself, together with the estate maps of 1778 and 1792, and the Ordnance Survey map of 1802. The park covers an area of some 21 ha (52 acres), taking in the very steep ground to the north of Terhill, as well as more gentle ground to the south. Its northern boundary is formed by the road from West Bagborough to Birches Corner, the eastern side follows a relict field boundary, the southern boundary is the settlement of East Bagborough and the western boundary is Terhill Lane. By 1792 the southern area contained small arable enclosures and orchards, as well as meadow and pasture.

Figure 30. Terhill Park: English Heritage 1:2500 earthwork plan (reduced).



One of the most important survivals in Terhill Park is the grotto (Fig 31). This lies some 250m to the southeast of Terhill House, at ST 1784 3291 and occupies a prominent position, enjoying views out over the Vale of Taunton. The building is shown on the estate map of 1778, that same map shows how the grotto was the destination for a walk from Terhill House, through the formal gardens and across a canal (below). The grotto is built of local slaty sandstone with quartz detailing and is remarkably well preserved. The grotto is built into the base of a slope and is 5m wide, 3m deep and 3.5m high. It contains five stone lined niches, each 1.8m high and 1.1m wide, the central niche has a further niche above. Two arches, divided by a central pier, form the entrances into the grotto. A small niche is built into the front elevation above the central pier. The front elevation is capped by a large boulder and traces of external pilasters can be seen. A small fragment of rusticated stone survives at the top of the western pilaster. An elevation of a grotto on the estate map of 1778 is very similar to this grotto (Fig 32). The drawing shows the pilasters capped with goat skulls, deer skulls above the arches, and a satanic figure standing above the central pier. No figures, however, survive on the building, if, indeed, they ever existed.

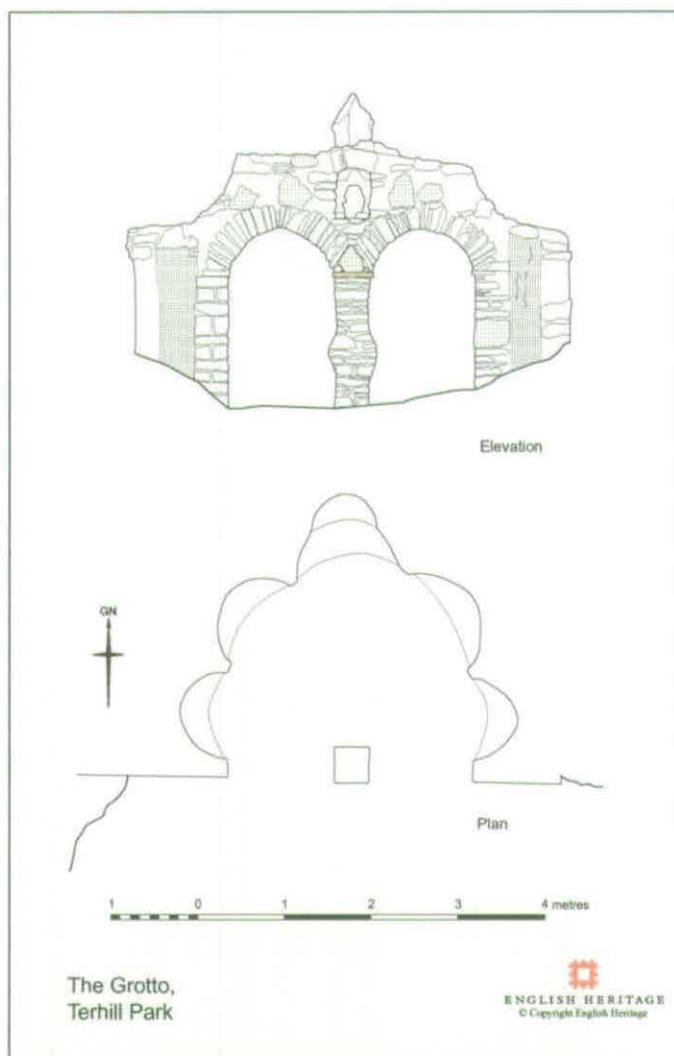
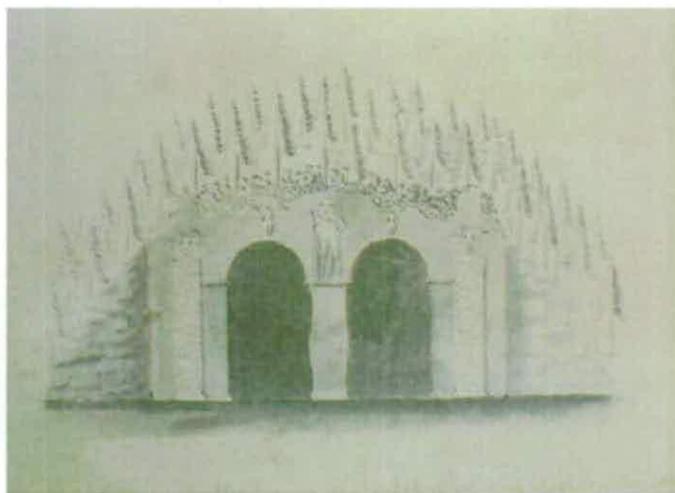


Figure 31. Terhill Park:
the Grotto.

Figure 32. Terhill Park:
extract from 1778 estate map
showing the grotto
(reproduced with permission
of Somerset Archive and
Record Services).



There is both documentary and map evidence for several other buildings and statues within the park. A well preserved building platform lies towards the northern end of the park, at ST 1794 3314. It is cut into a relict field boundary. The platform is rectangular and measures 12m by 8m. This could be the site of one of the three buildings shown in elevation on the 1778 map, possibly the rather chunky, squat one on the right of the map (Fig 33). The remains of a substantial stone building, built on a somewhat irregular mound of stone and earth, lie towards the top of the park at ST 1765 3334. This is the site of a building in the

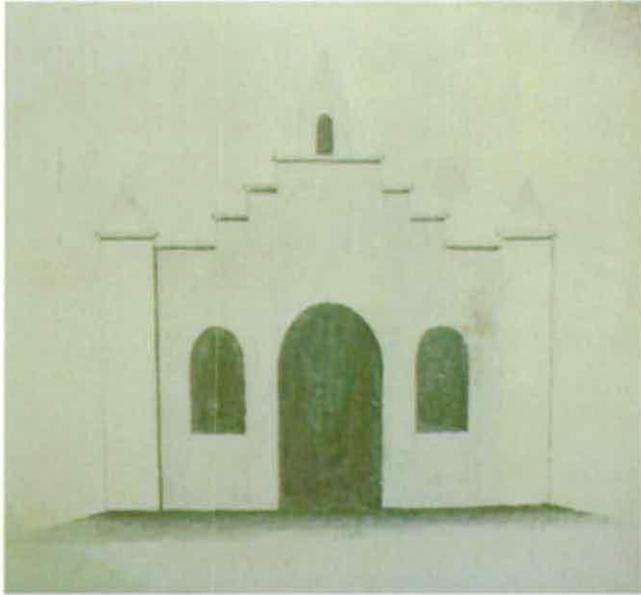


Figure 33. Terhill Park: extract from 1778 estate map showing park building (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services).

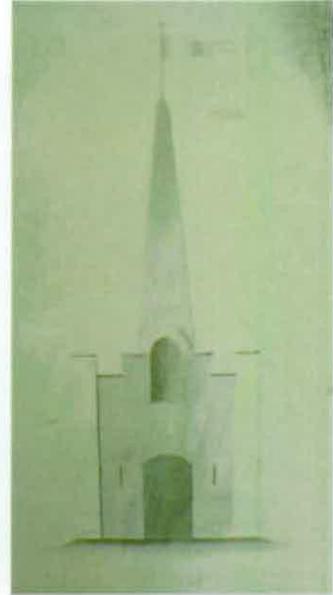


Figure 34. Terhill Park: extract from 1778 estate map showing the obelisk (reproduced with permission of Somerset Archive and Record Services).

park, perhaps the obelisk shown in elevation on the 1778 map (Fig 34), and described in the late 19th century as 'a shattered square tower, called by the neighbours a hunting-tower, but in reality....a folly, built, probably, in the last century' (Page 1890, 271).

Only one statue remains in Terhill Park. This is at the very top of the park (ST 1785 3338) and was recently restored by the Friends Of Quantock. It is a stone representation of Jupiter and was described rather uncharitably as 'a strange object' in the late 19th century: 'A little prospect seat is surmounted by a top-heavy and inexpressibly hideous and inartistic nude figure, presumably a man,the Roman nose (broken), wig-like locks, and generally barbarous appearance would fix as the date of its erection the debased period of a hundred years ago' (Page 1890, 271). A notice of a sale in 1792 records this statue together with nine others, which are collectively valued at between £75 and £85 (SRO Esdaile Papers).

The western approach to Terhill House was rather direct. Terhill Lane, which formed the western boundary of Thomas Slocombe's park, is a well established way up to Tilbury Farm and Lydeard Hill from Bishops Lydeard, and a short drive connected this lane to the northern side of Terhill House and its outbuildings. A far grander approach to the house was from the park, where avenues of trees flanked a drive. A canal lay on the south of this drive. The drive led to the coach house to the northeast of the house (above), a stone gatepost survives. The remains of the drive and the canal are preserved as earthworks, and some of the original avenue of trees also survives. The earthworks comprise a series of scarps and banks, most now rather smoothed over by ploughing, covering an area of 120m by 60m, and conforming to the canal layout shown on the 1778 map (Figs 26 and 28).

A path led from the formal gardens by the house, across a canal, giving the impression of crossing a large body of water or moat. Here, the path is carried on a substantial earthen and stone bank, 40m long, 5m wide and 1.2m high, and a revetment wall is decorated with

a finely carved stone head (Fig 35). Unfortunately this has been damaged recently (M White, pers comm.), but it could represent Neptune. The walk continued, following the course of the drive, then diverging south towards the grotto (above), all the while flanked by canals.



Figure 35. Terhill Park: carved stone head.

On the estate map of 1778, the drive runs east to the edge of Terhill Park, then turns sharply south towards East Bagborough. By 1802, however, a track or carriage drive links Terhill Park with Park End to the northwest, presumably constructed by Edward Jeffries after he moved into Terhill House.

An imposing entrance lies at the northeastern corner of the park, leading from the West Bagborough road (Fig 36). Two tall gate piers of local red sandstone with paler stone detailing are reminiscent of the entrance to the 19th century Cothelstone Park at Park End Lodge (below). They may have been erected by Edward Jeffries, or they may belong to the earlier Terhill Park. A path or drive from this entrance down to Terhill House would have been very steep, but would have taken full advantage of the views from the top of the park.



Figure 36. Terhill Park: stone gate piers at the north end of the park

As well as the canals close to Terhill House, the landscape park contained a number of other water features. Two ponds in Kiln Close were to become part of a series of ponds which fed the Fish Pond at Cothelstone House (below). A very large pond is shown on the 1778 estate map at the bottom of Terhill Meadow, east of Pilgrims' Cottages. This pond became incorporated into the large orchard which lay between East Bagborough and Pilgrims' Cottages in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It was this pond that became the centre of a dispute between Thomas Slocombe and Frances Hamilton of Bishops Lydeard. In 1791, rival workmen spent the whole day diverting a stream which flowed down to Pilgrims' Barn, first to Mrs Hamilton's fields, then to Mr Slocombe's pond, and so on. The dispute was finally settled by Mr Gibbs, the tenant of Cothelstone Manor, who said that both parties were in the wrong, and that most of the water should flow down to East Bagborough, for the stream was the village's water supply (Allen 1983, 268). The canals around Terhill House were presumably fed by local springs; a small pond and leat at the top of the park are of 20th century origin.

One of the most striking features of Terhill Park is the way in which the remains of an extensive relict field system have been preserved in the park (Fig 30). Some of the field boundaries comprise substantial lynchets, and the fields were in use until the middle of the 18th century, when the park was created. Edward Jeffries Esdaile records that Thomas Slocombe pulled down many hedges to form a park (Nicholas Pearson Associates 1998, 17). Some of the oldest trees in the park may well have been hedgerow trees left when the park was created, for example the large oaks towards the top of the park. A group of lime trees on the southern edge of a large quarry north of Terhill House appears to be a survival from the 18th-century planting regime. Some planting was also carried out in the 19th century, when the park became part of Cothelstone Park (below).

Cothelstone House

Edward Jeffries died in 1814 and the estate passed to his grandson, Edward Jeffries Esdaile. It had long been recognised that Terhill House was not a suitable country residence for the family (above). A new site to the south of East Bagborough was chosen and work began on planting trees and shrubs well before the house itself was started in 1817. In 1820 the Esdaile family took up residence in Cothelstone House, a neo-classical mansion designed by Charles Harcourt Masters and George Manners (Fig 37). Cothelstone House was approached via a new drive through the park (below), with a lodge at the gates (Fig 38).



Figure 37. Cothelstone House: the south front in 1935 (NMR BB71/11,137).



Figure 38. Cothelstone House: the lodge.

The site of the house is now a grassy platform, the shrubberies are overgrown but they conceal the brick walls of a glasshouse and some fragments of masonry. A short length of terrace walling survives on the northern edge of the site, as do sections of the former ha-ha.

The stables, outbuildings and estate workers' cottages still remain, together with a bridge which crosses Terhill Lane to the walled garden (Fig 39). Many photographs of the house, its interior, and the gardens exist, together with recollections of life on the estate by former workers and residents (NMR Listed Buildings Collection; Hinton 1998; Mead and Worthy 2001).

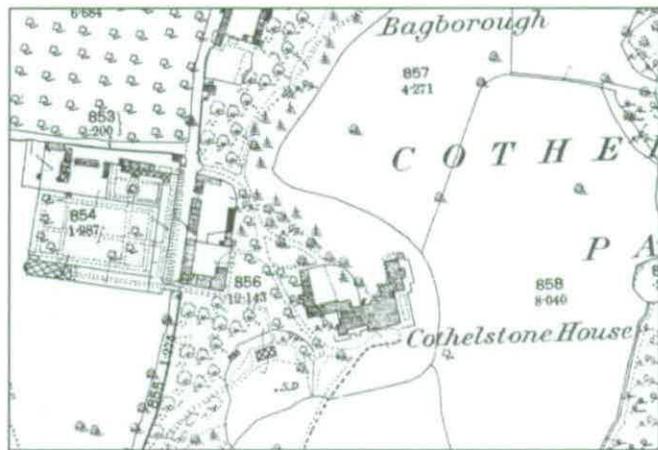


Figure 39. Cothelstone House: extract from the OS 1st edition map of 1888 (Somerset 60.9).

Cothelstone Park

Cothelstone Park was created to the south and east of the new house. Its focus was a large lake, sometimes known as the Fish Pond, fed by several ponds in Kiln Close. The park took in the old landscape park at Terhill and large areas of plantations were set out on the lower slopes of Cothelstone Hill. Edward Jeffries Esdaile recorded much of this work in his journals (Nicholas Pearson Associates 1998, 10-14).

The 19th century designed landscape around Cothelstone House was extensive and brought in aspects of the medieval manor and deer park, as well as the existing 18th-century park

(Fig 40). The area of parkland proper stretched from the top of the old Terhill Park down to the lodge on the Bishops Lydeard road, taking in an area of some 80 ha (198 acres). Some of the old parkland trees survive, particularly to the south of the house site and along the drive (Nicholas Pearson Associates 1998).



Figure 40. Cothelstone Park: looking north across towards Terhill Park.

The park was bordered by extensive plantations to the northeast, and by arable fields to the southeast. Cothelstone Manor and church formed a picturesque element in the southeastern corner of the landscape, and the old medieval deer park on Cothelstone Hill backed the park to the north and northeast (Fig 41).

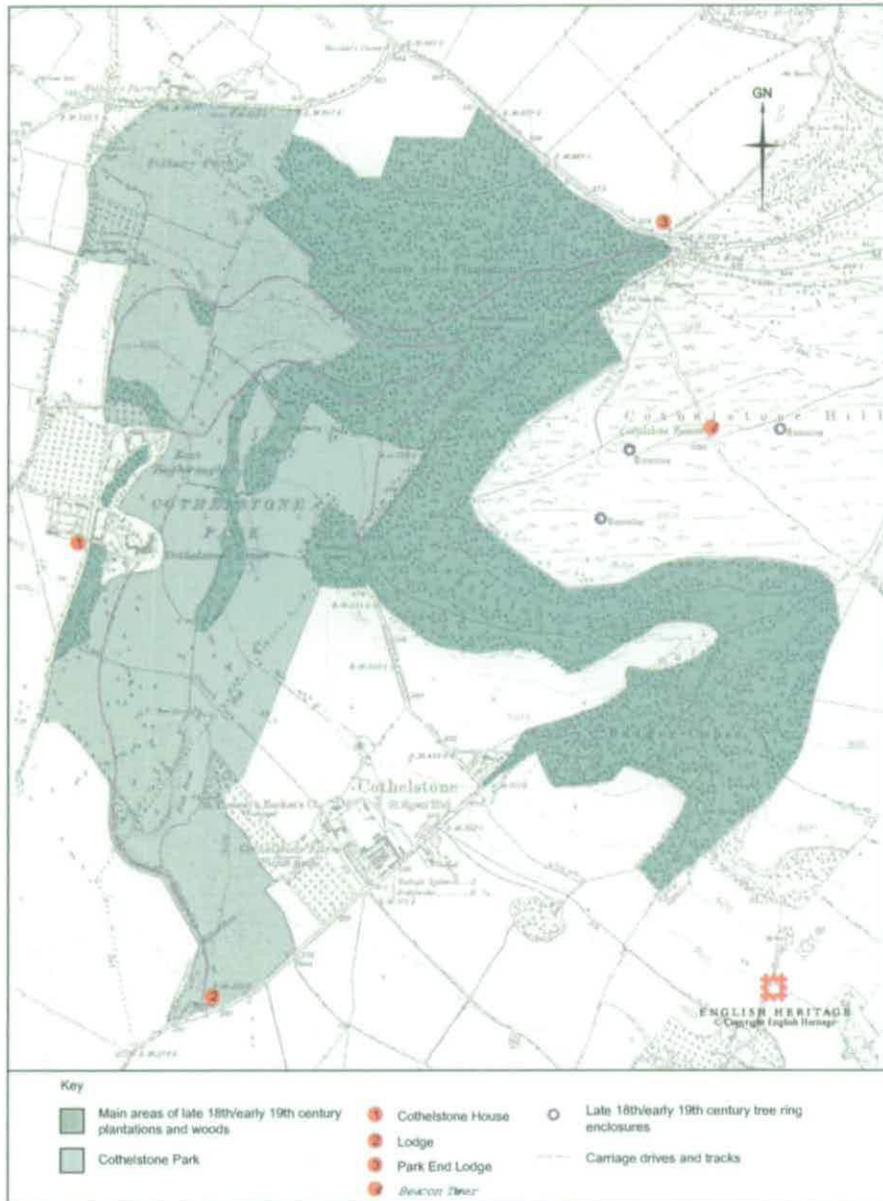


Figure 41. Cothelstone Park: extent of the park and 19th-century plantations and woods.

Some of Thomas Slocombe's buildings were presumably retained. His statues were the subject of a sale in 1792 (above), but Jupiter still stands at the top of the park, a majestic if somewhat incongruous figure in this rolling hill country. The obelisk became ruinous only relatively recently (Page 1890, 271). An engraving of Cothelstone House, from a drawing by J P Neale of c 1882 shows a rotunda to the north of Cothelstone House, high up in the park (Siraut *et al* 1992, 36). In about this situation are the remains of a small platform below an earthwork enclosure, with the remains of ornamental planting (ST 1791 3324) (Fig 42). There is nothing depicted in this area on the 1778 estate map, but the 1792 working map of the estate, which shows much of the early 19th-century landscaping work in progress, clearly depicts a circular building surrounded by trees on this site. A building platform lies at the edge of Twenty Acre Plantation at ST 1810 3330. This sub-rectangular platform has traces of a stone floor, and lies at the edge of the drive from Park End Lodge to Cothelstone House (below). It is the site of a wooden rustic summer house, erected by the estate carpenter in 1832, and destroyed by arson in the 1960s. Its location is confirmed in two ways. It is recorded as being built at the summit of Cliff Field – the platform lies at the top of a field called 'Higher cleave' on the estate map of 1792. A local resident recalls picnicking at the summer house in the earlier part of the 20th century (Nicholas Pearson Associates 1998, 10,15; M White, pers comm.).

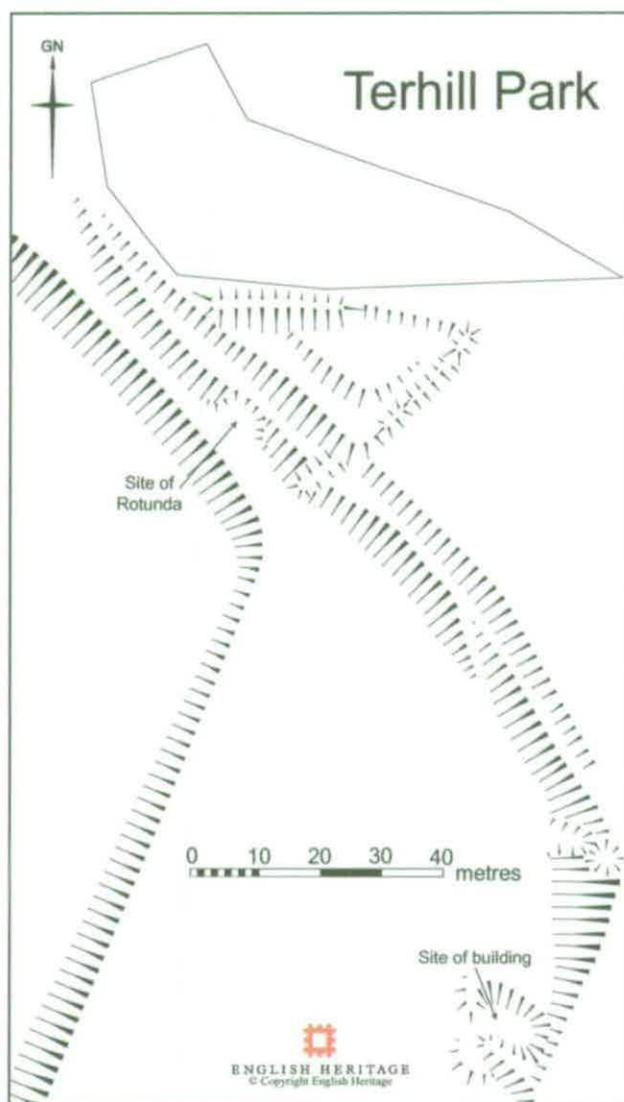


Figure 42. Cothelstone Park: English Heritage 1: 1000 earthwork plan of the rotunda site (reduced).

Figure 43. Cothelstone Park: Park End lodge and entrance gates.



As noted above, soon after Edward Jeffries bought the estate, new drives and tracks were laid out, and Park End became an important way down to first Terhill House, then to Cothelstone House. This approach was formalised by sturdy gate piers, now incorporated into a garden wall, and by the construction of the lodge at Park End sometime in the early 19th century (Fig 43). The summer house built in 1832 lay along the drive.

Industrial remains

The Cothelstone estate contained numerous quarries, both for limestone and for building stone, lime kilns and timber plantations. There are good examples of limestone quarries with associated lime kilns on Cothelstone Hill and in Kiln Close. The remains of a small shaft or trial pit, with associated spoil heap, lies at ST 1795 3220. This was probably dug in the late 18th century, when copper ore was sought and mined on a small scale in the Quantocks. There are documentary references to earlier extraction or prospecting sites across the Cothelstone estate, but no such sites could be identified (Hamilton and Lawrence 1970, 69-72). Some 350m to the southeast is large rectilinear hollow to the northeast of the church, at ST 1818 3190. This is unlikely to be a hollow way, as in the medieval period, access to Cothelstone Hill was restricted (above), but by the latter part of the 17th century the hill was cultivated and the estate map of 1733 shows that the pre-turnpike route lay well to the west of this hollow. A possible explanation is that this hollow, too, is the result of 18th-century copper prospecting/extraction. It lies at about the same height and topographical position as that described above.

The 20th century

Two survivals from the Second World War have been identified: the underground bunker on Cothelstone Hill has been described above. A two-storey brick building lies at ST 1778 3152, near the lodge to Cothelstone House. The building is described on OS maps as a 'tank'. However, it appears to be a well preserved example of a ROC (Royal Observer Corps) observation post, probably dating from c 1944/45 (Lowry 1995, 32; fig 8b). Dense vegetation, however, precluded further investigation.

DISCUSSION

This small area of land in the southwestern corner of the Quantocks contains an astonishing and often bewildering array of extant archaeological remains. Some of these have been preserved by chance, but the vast majority of them owe their survival to the history of the area, and most recently, to the sympathetic management of the estate by the current owners.

The survey has resulted in the discovery of a number of new archaeological features, and many others have been recorded for the first time. One of the most significant discoveries is the linear earthwork which crosses Cothelstone Hill, suggested here to be of late Bronze Age or Iron Age origin. It is only by considering the history of the Cothelstone estate that the archaeology of Cothelstone Hill can be understood. The prehistoric archaeology survived because, in the medieval and early post-medieval periods, the hill was a deer park. A period of cultivation occurred, similar to that which happened over much of the Quantock Commons. On Cothelstone Hill, this can be quite firmly dated to the time after Cothelstone Manor became a farm in the middle of the 17th century, to the time when the estate was bought by Edward Jeffries in the late 18th century. A puzzling event, however, is the construction of the Beacon Tower on the hill by Lady Hillsborough, between 1768 and 1780. Why go to the expense of erecting such a building when the family lived elsewhere, and the estate was a farm, rather than a pleasure ground for the family?

Cothelstone Manor is remarkable for the wealth of historic buildings it contains, including part of the medieval manor house, the restored late 16th-century manor house, the gatehouse, and the garden buildings which were an important adjunct to the house itself. Documentary and earthwork evidence has enabled the medieval and early post-medieval layouts of the manor to be suggested.

Terhill Park is an important survival of an 18th-century landscape park, preserving the earthworks of an elaborate set of canals and an earlier relict field system. The 19th century was, in some ways, a pivotal time for the area. The acquisition of the estates by a sympathetic family meant that many of the historic features were preserved. The manor house was expertly renovated and restored, Terhill Park was incorporated into a larger park, and Cothelstone Hill was taken out of cultivation. Several very fine buildings belong to this period. Although Cothelstone House no longer remains, the stable block, lodge and Cothelstone Farm remain.

METHODOLOGY

A walkover survey of the estate was carried out in July 2003, as part of the fieldwork for the EH Archaeological Survey of the Quantock Hills AONB, carried out by Archaeological Investigation staff at the Exeter Office. This resulted in the decision to carry out a basic scale 1:2500 survey of the archaeological remains, and identified the need for areas of large scale survey and building recording. Record photographs were taken.

The earthwork survey was carried out in August and September 2003, using Trimble 4700 GPS (global positioning system) equipment. The GPS data was processed and transformed to the Ordnance Survey National Grid (OSTN02) using Trimble's TGO GPS data processing software and taken into an AutoCad environment for further work. Due to the amount of woodland and buildings, several areas were recorded using a Trimble 5600 EDM. Data was processed using Trimble's Geosite software, and transformed to the National Grid using common points with the GPS survey via KeyTerraFirma's transformation programme. Large scale surveys of several areas were undertaken using a mixture of EDM and GPS control as appropriate, and the surveys were finished using graphical methods.

A brief assessment of the buildings was carried out in September 2003, with the resulting decision to carry out a detailed architectural investigation of Manor Cottages in 2004.

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