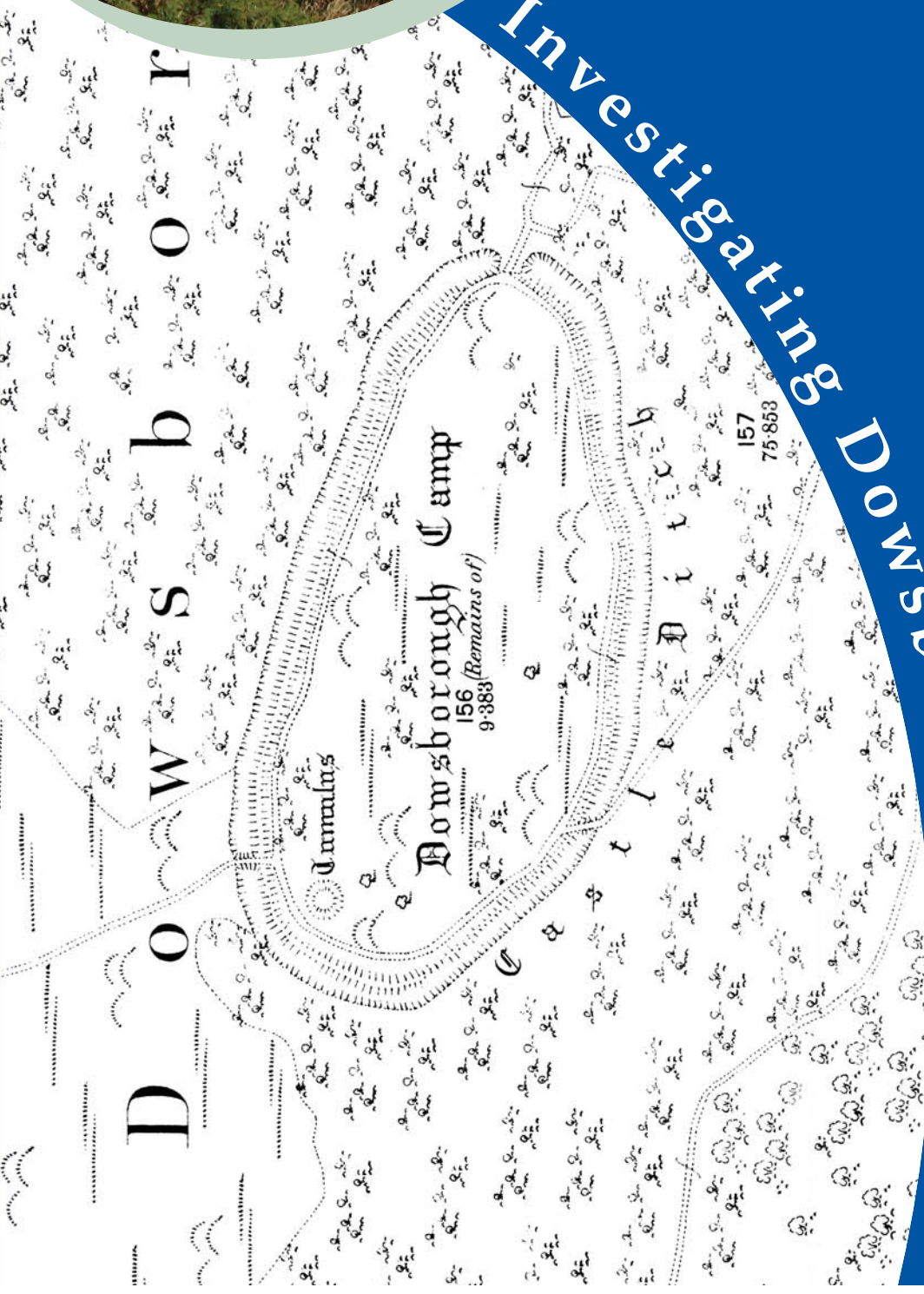




Teacher's Pack

Quantock Hills Office
Castle Street
Nether Stowey
TA5 1LN
01278 733642

Investigating Dowsborough Hillfort



INTRODUCTION:

Dowsborough Hill lies in the heart of the northern Quantock Hills. Dowsborough Hill has a wonderful example of an Iron Age fort on its summit that offers superb views to the north, east and west of the Quantocks. The walk to the hillfort takes you through wonderful examples of scrub oak woodlands with areas of heathland nearby. The area is important for plants, wildlife and the historic environment with the designation of Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). On this walk red deer, buzzards, ravens and many species of birds can be seen.

DIRECTIONS:

From the North & East: go to Nether Stowey, head into the village, up Castle Street and follow the signs for Crowcombe. You will pass over a cattle grid (with a Quantock Common sign) and after approximately 1.5 miles you will come to Dead Woman's Ditch car park.

From the South & West: follow signage for Crowcombe. Once in the village follow signs for Nether Stowey. You will go up a steep hill and at the top you will pass over a cattle grid (with a Quantock Common sign) and after approximately 1.5 miles you will come to Dead Woman's Ditch car park.

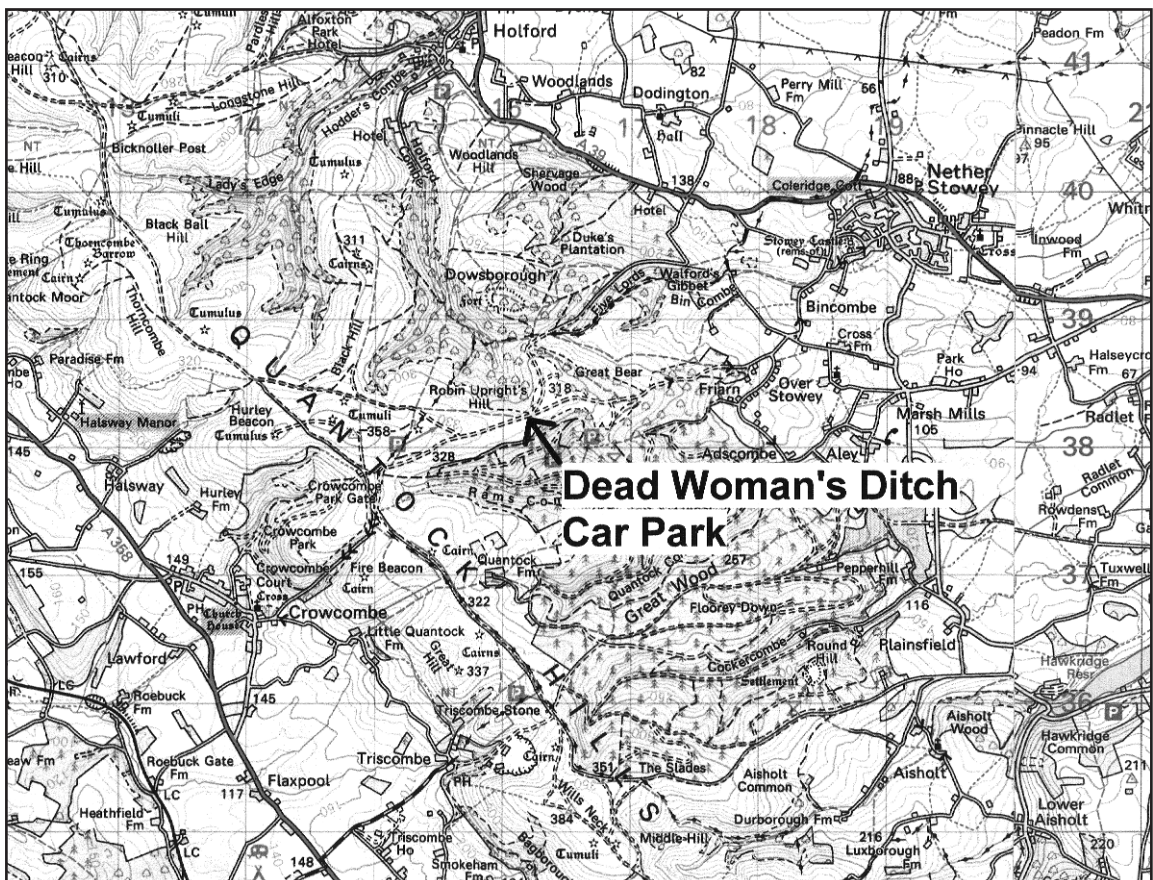
It is not recommended to take coaches up to Dead Woman's Ditch, though the lanes and car park are ideal for mini buses.

Prepared by Rachel Shaw for the Quantock Hills AONB Service, 2006.

FACILITIES:

There are no toilets available at the site.

The nearest facilities are in Nether Stowey, approximately 2 miles away.



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Acknowledgments

Many people have contributed to this pack. Particular thanks are due to Somerset Heritage Services, Michael Riley (Somerset LEA History Advisor) and Hazel Riley (English Heritage).

Iain Porter, Development Officer, Quantock Hills AONB Service

Prepared by Rachel Shaw for the Quantock Hills AONB Service, 2006.

INTRODUCTION

WHY VISIT DOWSBOROUGH?

Because...

...it is such a special site!

...not only for the beauty of its surroundings, its rich plant and animal life but because of the story it tells of Somerset's prehistoric past. It is one of only a few hillforts of this size and scale in Somerset, and is protected as a nationally important archaeological site.

...it is a challenge!

Dowsborough hillfort is big, dramatic, but hidden by trees. You have to work hard to find it, and then the adventure can begin.

...it is mysterious!

It has never been excavated. There are no visitor notices up there to tell you what to think, just plenty of clues for the landscape detective.

...it is adaptable!

Successful visits can be made by any age group from Key Stage 2 to adults. It is of course, ideal for an investigation in History or Geography, but you can plan your visit around more or less any National Curriculum subject.

...it opens the door to the Iron Age!

Its size, the scale of its defences and strategic position all show that Dowsborough Hillfort must have been a place of great significance to the ancient Dumnonii people of the South West.

Find out more about the people who would have lived here by also visiting the **Peat Moors Centre**, near Glastonbury. Here you can go inside reconstructed Iron Age roundhouses, smell the woodsmoke, see the sorts of animals they would have kept, and try out ancient Iron Age skills and crafts for yourself. School visits are encouraged, but must be pre-booked.

...we can help you!

Don't worry if you've never done anything like this before. We have done a lot of the preparation for you in this pack. The evidence and ideas collected here will help you to explore and understand the site and to plan a successful visit. We are happy to talk through your visit with you, and put you in touch with other people who can help.

**So, let your class become 'landscape detectives' for the day.
Plan a visit to Dowsborough Iron Age hillfort and give them
an experience of Somerset's past that they will remember.**

SITE HEALTH & SAFETY REVIEW

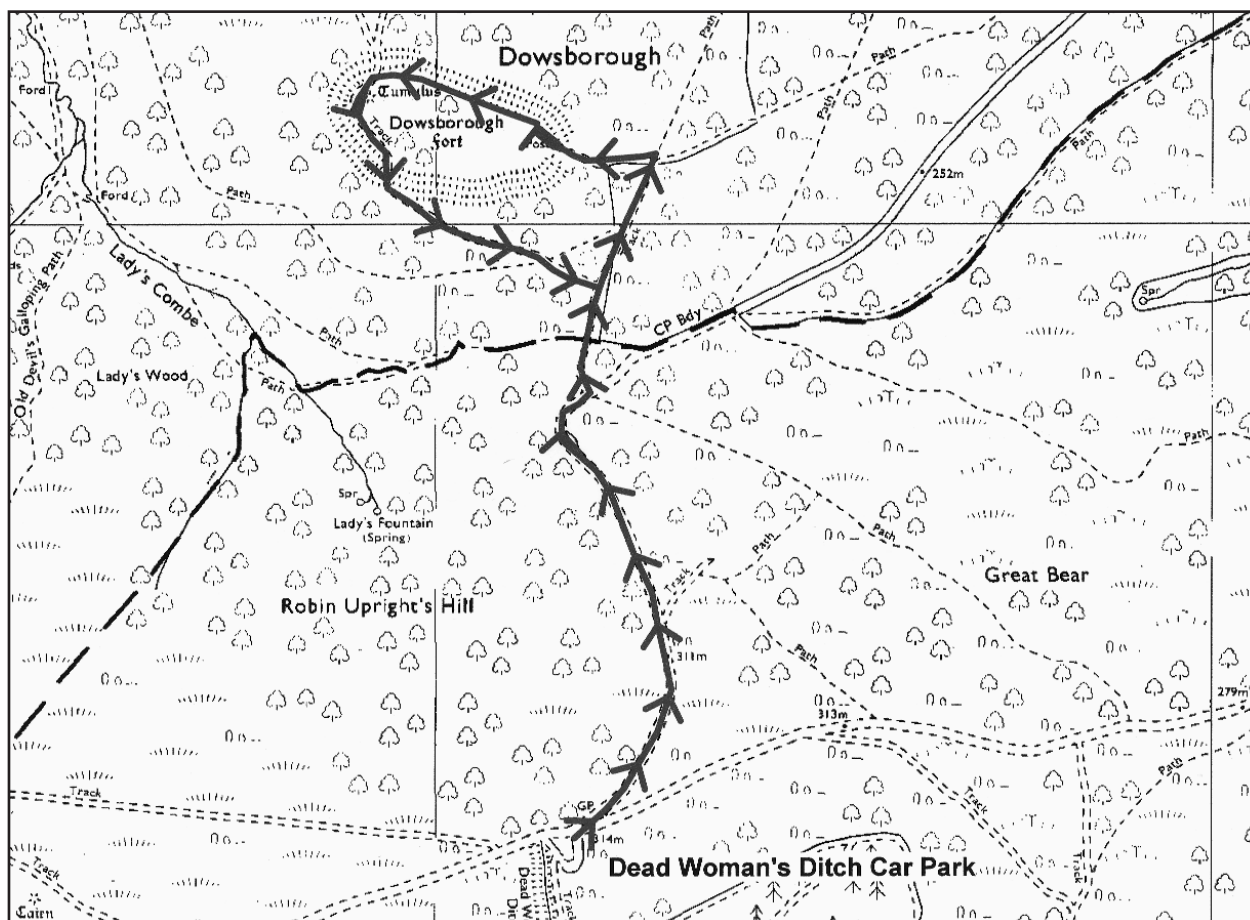
Leaders Name:	
Activity:	Dowsborough Site visit
Date & Time:	

First Aid Provision:		
Lone Working Procedures:		
Emergency Procedures:	Exit point on road below Dowsborough Hill Fort	
Incident reporting Procedures:		
Identified Hazards	Who is at risk?	Risks from hazards (high, medium, low) (Include how they will be managed)
Vehicles on road	Students & Leaders	Low. Supervise students when on the road, leaders to have high visibility vests at head and tail of walking line.
Route surface	Students & Leaders	Low. Route survey carried out once a year. Any problems found with route to be reported to the AONB office as soon as possible.
Weather	Students & Leaders	Low. Leaders to be aware of weather forecast
Ticks	Students & Leaders	Low. Students remain on tracks and wear appropriate clothing (long trousers, socks and suitable footwear.

Conditions:

1. This form is for visits that fall outside the CDM Regulations.
2. The leader is aware and agrees to comply with all Health & Safety Legislation.
3. The contractor shall keep the site tidy and clear of rubbish at all times and comply with the relevant waste management regulations. At the completion of the contract the site should be left clean and clear of rubbish.
4. All accidents should be reported to the event leader with 24 hours.

DOWSBOROUGH SITE PLAN



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Signed and agreed as an accurate statement of Health & Safety matters

Signed on behalf of

(School)

Dated

UNIT OF WORK

INVESTIGATING DOWSBOROUGH HILL FORT

History/Geography
Key Stage 3
Upper Key Stage 2

ABOUT THE UNIT

This unit was developed as a one-off investigation of an ancient site with a group of Key Stage 3 History pupils on an Enrichment course at Kilve Court Outdoor Education Centre.

The Unit would work with older KS 2 children as a whole class or group activity, or within KS 4 Humanities.

The framework could also be adapted for older students of History, Geography or Archaeology, to develop skills and methodology.

- It gives children the opportunity to get outside and explore a physically demanding 'mystery' site.
- It also introduces children to a range of historical and archaeological evidence and geographical fieldwork methods, and to assess these critically.
- It requires them to think logically and work out a systematic way of progressing their investigation.
- Working on site also gives them the chance to think about the hillfort in its wider historical and geographical setting and to reflect on questions of conservation and visitor-use of such places.

The Unit consists of a field trip to Dowsborough Hill, which takes at least 2-3 hours (excluding travel) and two classroom sessions, one before and one after. It could be linked with a visit to the Peat Moors Centre (Reconstructed Iron Age settlement) or the Tribunal Museum, Glastonbury (finds from the Glastonbury 'Lake Village').

Where this Unit could fit in

KS2 History

- Local Study
- 'How was British (ie Iron Age/ Celtic) Society affected by the Romans'?

KS2/3 Geography

- Local Study
- Environmental Issue

KS3 History

- Introductory Unit

KS4 Humanities Unit

Vocabulary

Centuries, period, BC, AD, sources, interpretations, site, relevance, usefulness.

Invasion, territory, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Celts, Roman Empire, tribal, defensive, artefact.

Landscape, features, erosion, visitor-pressure, resources, population, settlement, location.

Coppicing, boundary, rampart, profile,

Speaking and listening –

- Ask questions to gain clarification and further information and show relationships between ideas

Resources

Evidence sheets (included)

- OS map Explorer 140 (Quantock Hills)
- Field equipment as required
- Additional maps and aerial photos for this unit are kept at the Quantock Hills AONB Office and can be borrowed.

Useful links:

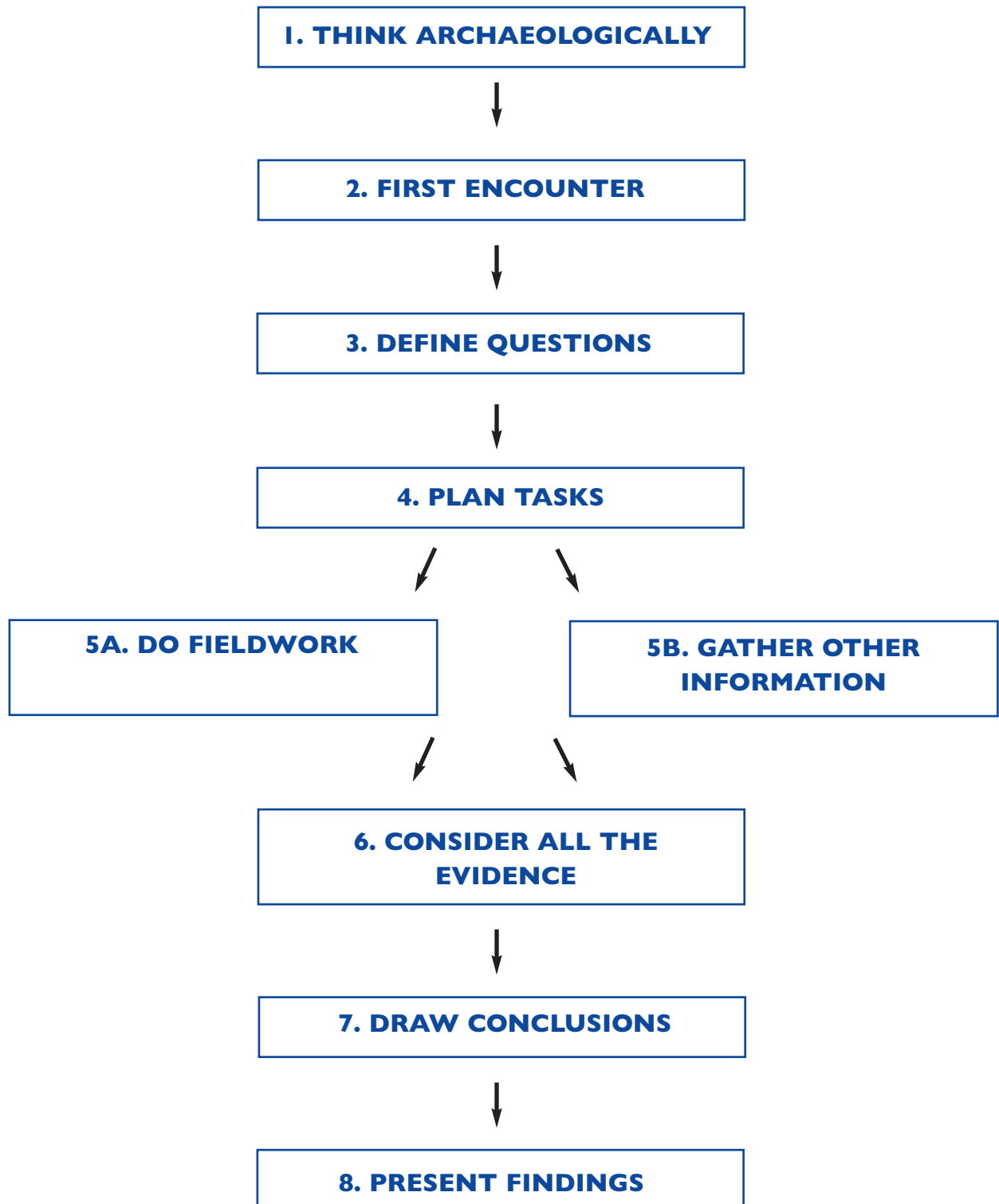
Somerset Historic Environment Record www.somerset.gov.uk/somerset/cultureheritage/heritage
Peat Moors Centre
www.somerset.gov.uk/somerset/cultureheritage/heritage/pmc

EXPECTATIONS

During this unit, pupils will:

- Ask historical and geographical questions.
- Suggest investigation sequences.
- Experience decision making.
- Collect/record/present evidence.
- Analyse evidence and draw conclusions.
- Use, evaluate and extract information from a range of primary and secondary sources: aerial photos, pictures, maps of different ages and scales, websites, written reports and surveys.
- Use appropriate fieldwork techniques and equipment, measuring, observing, photography, drawing sketch plans and making field notes or audio-recordings of observations and thoughts.
- Gain knowledge and understanding of the use humans have made of a particular location over time.
- Reflect on issues of responsible conservation of historic sites.

Stages of the process



INVESTIGATING DOWSBOROUGH HILLFORT

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Resources
1. THINK ARCHAEOLOGICALLY Pupils should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand the concept of 'Material Evidence' ● Realise that archaeology has a particular way of looking at and interpreting material evidence ● Understand that archaeologists need a clear field work strategy and appropriate methods ● Grasp that archaeology is about being a landscape detective, not just digging holes! 	<p>Discussion or presentation to cover these main concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Idea of PREHISTORY: before the written word - 'before history'. We can only go so far back using the evidence of what people wrote down. ● To go further back into the past we have to use other sorts of evidence: what people made and used, and changes they made to their environment. <p>This is called MATERIAL EVIDENCE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ARCHAEOLOGISTS are the experts on using material evidence to help us understand the past even when there is nothing written down. ● Archaeologists DISCOVER, RECORD, INTERPRET and LOOK AFTER material evidence. ● Archaeologists are like DETECTIVES OF THE PAST. They are observant, they record all the evidence accurately, and they ask probing questions. Then they put together the evidence to make the most likely explanation. ● To do this investigation, we must learn to THINK ARCHAEOLOGICALLY 	<p>This was done by inviting an archaeologist to talk to the pupils.</p> <p>Could use part of a Time Team programme (choose one that doesn't emphasise digging)</p> <p>Or Look at a range of present day artefacts, including buildings and the 'tamed landscape'</p> <p>Check out English Heritage's resources for schools</p>
2. FIRST ENCOUNTER Pupils should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognise features on air photographs ● Relate air photos to modern OS map ● Compare maps of different scales and ages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Allow pupils time to get used to looking at the air photos. Talk about all the features they notice. ● Point out the regular oval shape (Dowsborough hillfort) without identifying it. Would a shape like this be natural or man made? Are there clues about its size (relate it to other known features). What might it be? Brainstorm ideas. ● Search for the feature on modern map. What is it called today? ● ▲How long has it been there? Look at earlier maps to see how far back it has been recorded. 	<p>Air photo (source 5)</p> <p>(Air photos can also be seen online on SWGfL Infomapper and the SHER website.)</p> <p>Modern map of Quantocks. OS Explorer 140 Maps (Sources 7 and 8)</p>
3. DEFINING QUESTIONS Pupils should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Think adventurously around what they would like to know about this mysterious site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brainstorm and write down all pupils' questions. ● Then edit and refine them to manageable proportions, discussing which are the 'big' open-ended questions, and which are questions of detail which might draw a blank. ● Record some of the suggested theories. 	

INVESTIGATING DOWSBOROUGH HILLFORT

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Resources
3. DEFINING QUESTIONS Pupils should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognise that some questions may lead nowhere, while others may lead to more discoveries. ● Select the questions they want to pursue. ● Formulate several hypothetical answers. 	Questions might include variations on the following: WHAT WAS IT FOR? HAS ITS USE CHANGED OVER TIME? WHO BUILT IT? WERE ANY BATTLES FOUGHT THERE? WHEN WAS IT USED? WHAT WAS LIFE LIKE THEN? WHY WAS IT BUILT THERE? ARE THERE ANY OLD STORIES ABOUT IT? WHAT ABOUT ITS FUTURE?	
4. PLAN TASKS Pupils should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formulate their field work plan ● Think through practical implications ● Recognise the limitations of research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decide which questions could be pursued by fieldwork and which by book research. ● Plan the tasks, decide what equipment to take. ● Recognise that knowledge about Dowsborough is limited and they may have to make inferences from other sites. ● Recognise that they may need to research the period in general to suggest answers to some of the questions. <p style="text-align: center;">THE BIG QUESTION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">See separate activity grid for some examples of 'Big Questions' and how to plan related fieldwork.</p>	See Planning Grid 'The Big Question'
5a. DO FIELDWORK 5b. GATHER OTHER INFORMATION Pupils should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Undertake tasks as planned, and record findings appropriately. ● Decide if further tasks are needed, and whether there is time for them. 		

INVESTIGATING DOWSBOROUGH HILLFORT

Learning objectives	Possible teaching activities	Resources
6. CONSIDER ALL THE EVIDENCE Pupils should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider how far their original questions have been answered. ● Recognise that the original questions may need to be modified in the light of new evidence, or lack of it. ● Some questions may be unanswerable. 		
7. DRAW CONCLUSIONS Pupils should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be clear about the evidence upon which the conclusions are based. ● Distinguish clearly between fact and opinion, especially when using secondary sources. 		

	THE BIG QUESTION	SUGGESTED TASKS	POSSIBLE RESOURCES
ON SITE	What was it for?	❖ Investigate ditch, rampart and entrances. (you could use plan 2 to help). Do their size and structure suggest a defensive use? Are the ditches on the inside or the outside of the banks? Measure profile of ramparts. Do all three entrances look original? How easy would it have been to get in? Investigate the inner area. Are there any visible signs of habitation?	Plan of site (source 7) Measuring Equipment Sources 2,3,4. Map of area Cameras Tape recorders Selected photographs, for comparison.
	Why was it built there?	❖ Note natural features that may have affected choice of location. How far can you see from the hilltop? Role play: defend and attack the site. Locate (and measure?) the Bronze Age burial mound. Did its position influence the siting of the hillfort?	
	Has its use changed over time?	❖ Identify other man-made features in the vicinity eg the field boundaries, the trackways and footpaths, the flagstaff. Also the presence of coppiced woodland. How do they relate to the story of the hill?	
	What about its future?	❖ Look for evidence of present activity on the hill (visitors, walkers, mountain bikers, animals) and of associated problems: Litter, erosion, damage by vehicles. Start to consider issues eg public access v. conservation; what is the 'essential character' of the area?	
DESK TOP RESEARCH	Who built it?	❖ Find out as much as possible about the site itself, other investigations of it, and different interpretations that have been put forward over the years.	Reference material in the Dowsborough pack, OR visit Local History section of Library.
	What was it for? When was it used?	❖ Use the SMR bibliography to start with, and follow up other references to research the site.	
	Are there any old stories about it?	❖ Recognise that some of these questions cannot be answered by focussing solely on Dowsborough itself.	
RESEARCH THE WIDER PICTURE	What was it for? What was life like then?	❖ Discover more about the Iron Age by finding out about other sites where more work has been done eg Glastonbury Lake Village (Peat Moors Centre), South Cadbury, Danebury, Maiden Castle. ❖ Look at Iron Age artefacts. (County Museum Service). ❖ Study maps of Iron Age Somerset to see. Dowsborough in the context of other sites. Decide what can be inferred about Dowsborough from this wider picture.	Suggested publications in pack. Pictures in pack. Pupil sheets 3,4,5.

PREPARED BY RACHEL SHAW FOR QUANTOCK HILLS AONB

SOURCE 1

Downloaded from Somerset Heritage Environment Record (SHER)
www.somerset.gov.uk/heritage

33306

Site Name: Dowsborough hillfort, Holford
SCHEDULED MONUMENT: Dowsborough hillfort and associated round barrow [No:24007]
Civil Parish: Holford
Grid Ref: ST 1602 3912 (ST 13 NE)



Public access:

The public accessibility of this site is unknown but it should be visible from a public right of way. Please assume that the site is private property. [Information last updated on 16 December 2002]

Details:

Dowsborough camp c340 yards by 170 yards. The defence is a bank of stones with a ditch and second rampart below, following the natural line of the hill. The upper bank has been demolished for some distance along the along the S face from the W. The entrance seems to have been at the apex on the SE, but the banks have been altered and the ditch partly filled in. {1}

Univallate hillfort with a nearly complete counterscarp bank. Entrance at E end. The wide gap in the ditch is an original feature and an amorphous scatter of stones inside the rampart may indicate that the entrance was originally more complex. {2}

Contour hillfort with main rampart 4m above an outer ditch with counterscarp bank. Second gap on N side where a ridgeway runs away northwards. Interior entirely overgrown. Name perhaps the same personal name as that for Daws Castle. {3}

All heavily wooded except for c30m on N side Bank much more eroded. Evidence of small fires. Inner rampart 9 to 17ft above present surface of the ditch. {4}

Large univallate hillfort, oval in shape enclosing 2.7ha. Bank up to 1.5m high (tumbled along part of S) outer ditch creating 2-3m drop, counterscarp up to 1.5m high on all but parts of N and W. Two apparently original entrances, though a number of probably later narrow causeways and gaps. NW entrance is a simple causeway and gap (suffering severe erosion). Entrance on E tip of fort from ridge is more complex. S rampart slightly intumed, N disturbed with ditch partly infilled but may have been similarly intumed. Entrance way leads between ramparts and continues as passage between two flanking structures which include circular probable guardhouses. Mound inside NW entrance (PRN 33307), possible barrow or later fire beacon. Rest of interior under dwarf oak and shrubs, mainly accessible but the only feature apparent is a shallow round hollow, perhaps a charcoal burning feature. {8}

A post was erected near the E entrance to commemorate the coronation of George V. {10}

The post has now fallen. There are local memories of a wartime emplacement here. {11}

Scheduling affirmed with new national number on 20/6/1994 (was Somerset 95). {12}

continued over

Condition is much as before but erosion is becoming severe at the NE where there is a view point and a new path has formed. {14}

The worst erosion scar where the path leaves the fort northwards was recorded, infilled and reseeded in 2001. {15}

Site surveyed by English Heritage from September 2001. The earthworks enclose an elongated oval shape of about 3ha and run roughly along the 325m contour. They comprise a bank and ditch with intermittent counterscarp bank with an overall width of some 20m. The rampart is [?]1-1.5m wide, 1.2m high and composed of stone and earth. The ditch is [?]1m wide and 4.5m deep. The counterscarp is 1m high, 1m wide and absent on the NW angle and for some 50m along the N side. There are 4 well defined entrances, only one (at the eastern angle) appears to be original. It has been disturbed but appears to be a simple gap in the earthworks. The rampart is slightly raised and inturned at the terminals.

There are several hollows in the interior which appear to be mining trial holes. This may be the interpretation for the hollows near the entrance which have previously been interpreted as guard chambers etc. They are however similar to late/post-Roman additions to the hillfort at Cadbury Congresbury (North Somerset SMR No 389). There is also what appears to be a hollow for a small building 6.6m long and 3.6m wide set behind the southern rampart but this could also be conjoined trial pits. {16}

References:

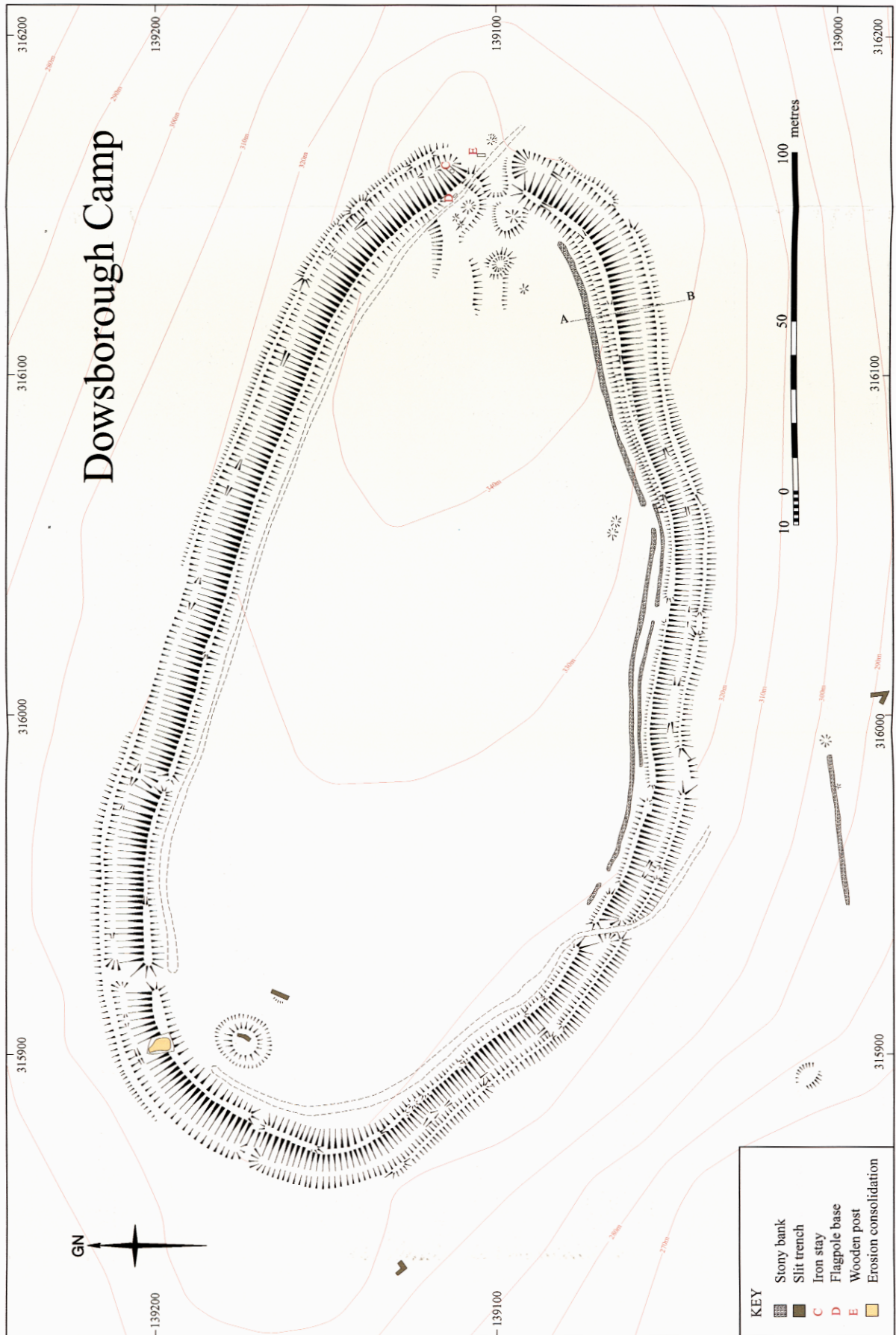
- 1 Description - VCH Somerset 1911 vol 2, 492
- 2 Detailed records - Ordnance Survey Archaeology Division 1965 ST13NE2 SCPD
- 3 Description - BAR 91 Burrow, I 1981 "Hillfort and Hilltop Settlement...", 226-27
- 4 Detailed records - HBMC Field Monument Wardens report SCPD
- 5 Mention - Burrow, E 1924 "Ancient Earthworks and Camps of Somerset", 80
- 6 Mention - Page, J.W.L 1890 "Exploration of Exmoor", 290-91
- 7 Mention - Allcroft, A.H 1908 "Earthwork of England", 631
- 8 Detailed records - MPP fieldwork, Preece A, (1993)
- 9 Sketch plan - Preece, A (1993), in HER files
- 10 Mention - Lawrence, B. "Quantock Country" (1952), 28
- 11 Personal communication - Croft, RA. SCC (1993)
- 12 Correspondence - English Heritage to SCC (13/7/1994)
- 13 Aerial photographs - Cambridge University Collection of aerial photographs QB 45 (25.6.1955) in HER files
- 14 Detailed records - Field monument warden's report (21/4/1998) in HER files
- 15 Detailed records - Grove, J *Somerset Monument Management Scheme: Dowsborough Hillfort* unpublished report (2001) in HER files
- 16 Survey report - Riley, H *Dowsborough Camp, Holford, Somerset*. Unpublished English Heritage report AI/23/2002 (2002) in HER files

Record created by:

Ed Dennison in March 1984

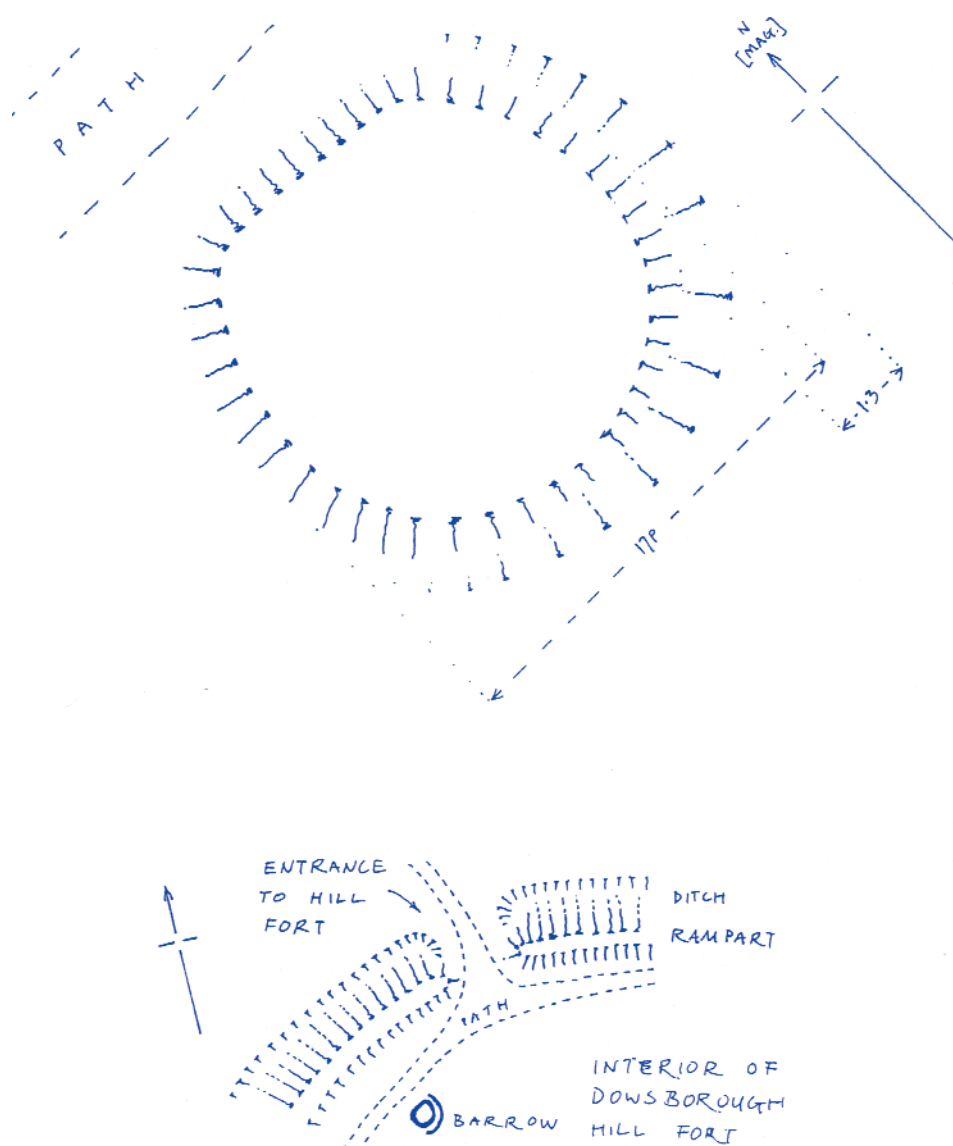
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SOURCE 2 - SURVEY OF DOWSBOROUGH CAMP



© English Heritage. NMR

SOURCE 3 - ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY (BARROW)

Survey	Quantock AONB S.M.R. 33307 P.R.N. Q20
Date 10.10.86	<p>A steep sided, flat topped mound approximately 1.3m high with some surface disturbance on the top. It is not quite circular and where it lies against the hill slope to the S & E, there is a ditch up to 0.5m deep and generally about 1.3m wide.</p> <p>The flatter N. side of this feature may be related to the track which runs past it at this point and has previously clipped the edge of the mound.</p> <p>There are small oak trees on the mound and in the ditch which should be removed.</p>  <p>© SCC Historic Environment Record</p>

SOURCE 4 - WARDEN'S REPORT

Those responsible for looking after Dowsborough have to strike a balance between letting visitors come and explore the ancient site, and protecting it from too much wear and tear.

A few years ago, a problem started to be noticed. This passage describes the problem. When you visit the site now, look out for evidence of what was done to improve things.

“Dwarf oak woodland covers most of Dowsborough Hillfort. This protects the hillfort from erosion. There is undergrowth of bilberry, heather and bracken.

Several paths cross the hill. Most visitors use the path which leads into the hillfort across the southern ditch and bank, around the inside of the ramparts, and away from the hillfort at the eastern end, these paths are well-used, but stable. Other paths are less-used. There do not seem to be any paths worn across the interior of the fort.

At the north west corner of the hillfort, there is serious erosion of the bank. This is a popular viewing point, with no trees or plants to block the view. All the vegetation has gone, leaving the soil of the banks exposed and without protection. It looks as if horses have been ridden over the bank here as well, causing further damage, and eroding a new path, which cuts right through the bank. Much material from the bank has filled up the ditch. Further damage to the hillfort defences is likely to occur if nothing is done to prevent it.”

SOURCE 5 - AIR PHOTO, 1955



© English Heritage Copyright, NMR

SOURCE SHEET 5 SOURCE SHEET 5 SOURCE SHEET 5 SOURCE SHEET 5

SOURCE 6 - OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

Activities that you could have seen on Dowsborough Hill until the early 20th Century.



Stripping bark off oak trees, to use for tanning leather



Building a pile of wood for burning to produce charcoal

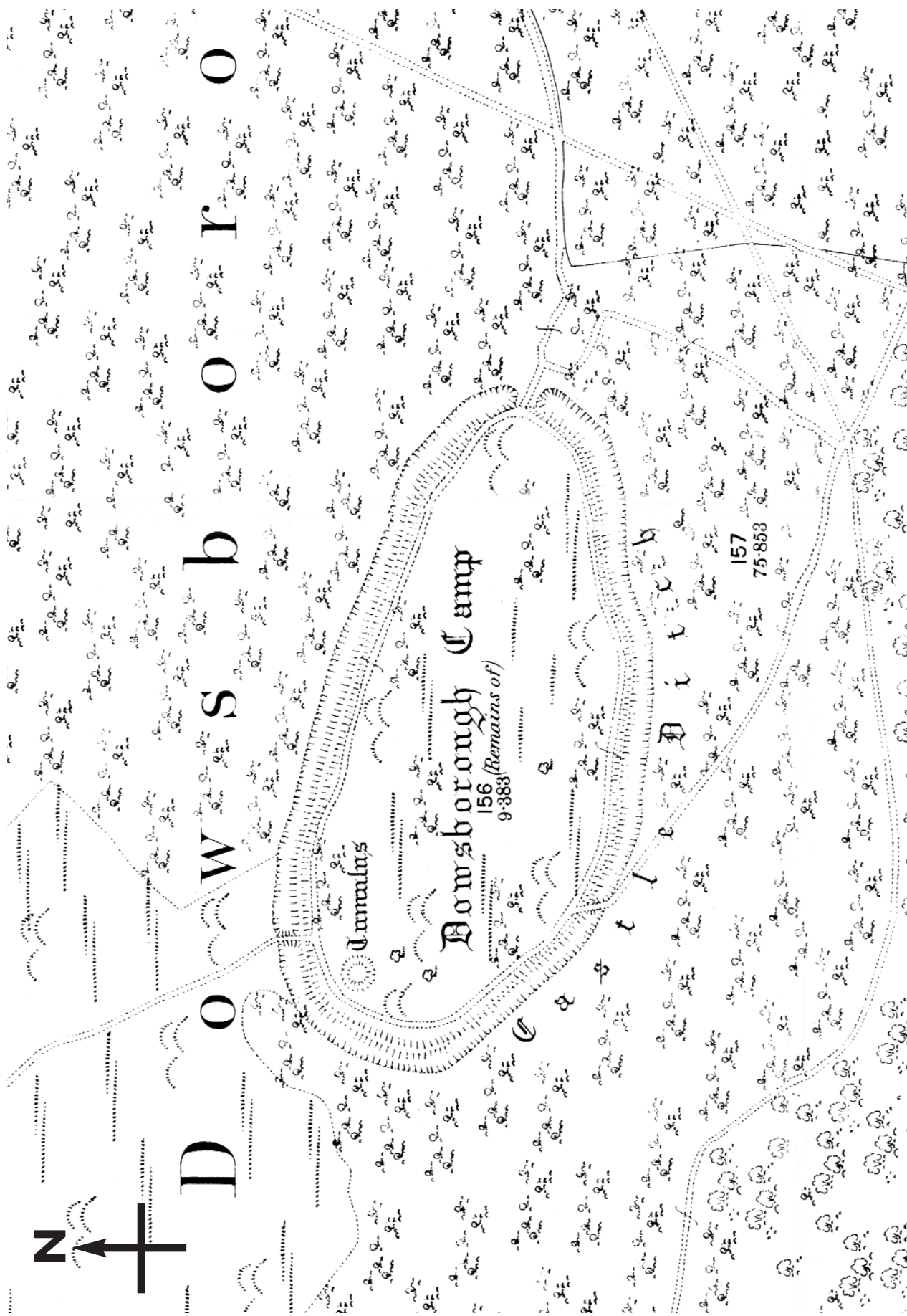


Tending the slowly charring wood

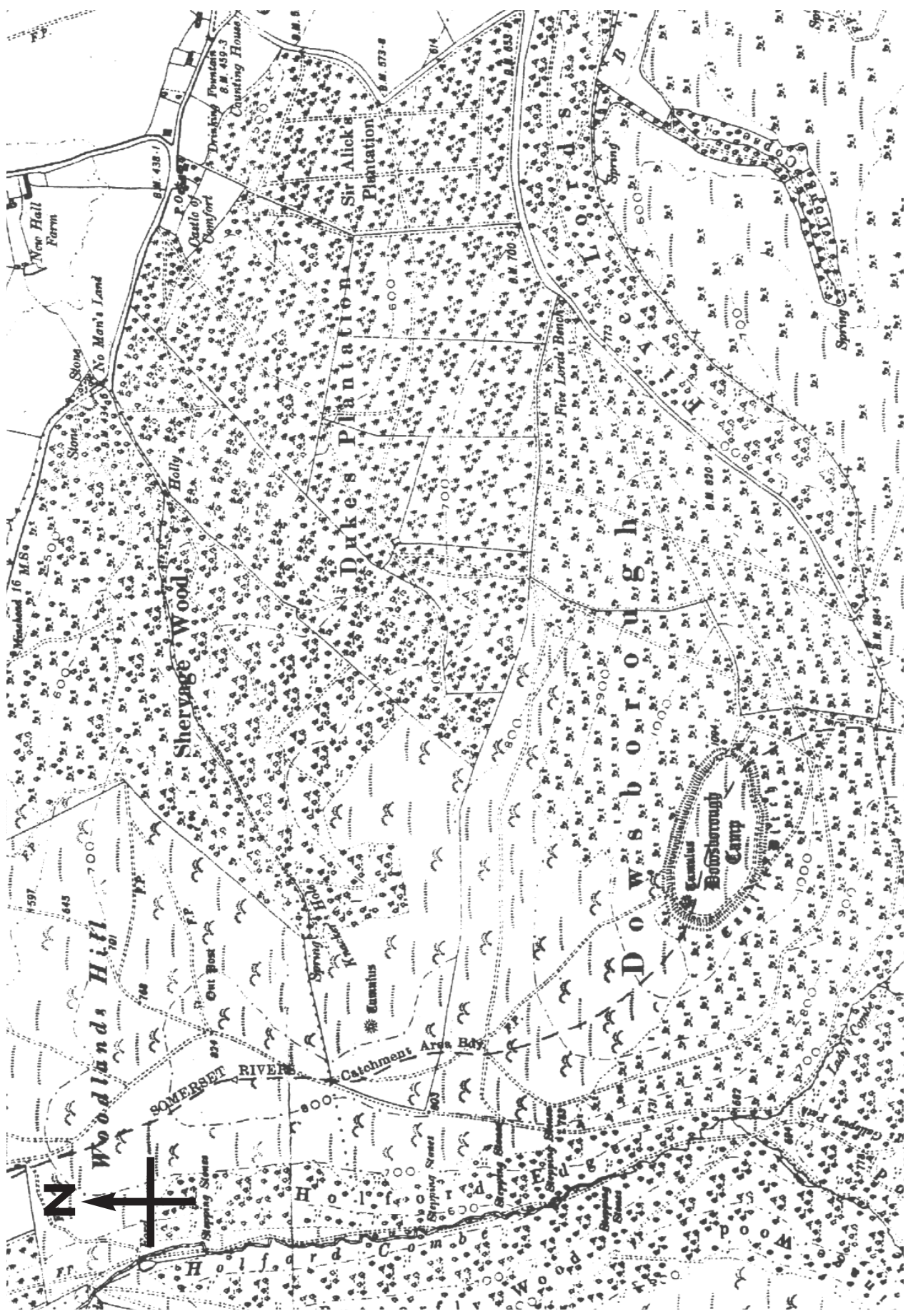


Transporting timber

© The Museum of Rural Life.

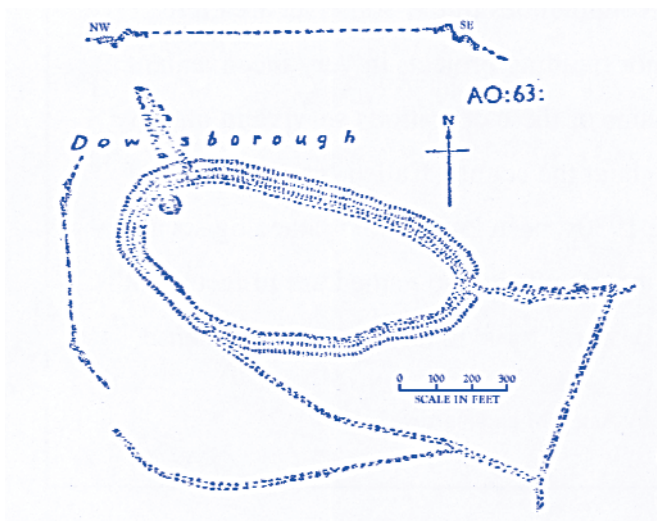


SOURCE 8 - OS MAP, 1902



DOWBOROUGH HILLFORT

SOURCE 9 - EXCERPT FROM 'ANCIENT EARTHWORKS OF SOMERSET', 1924

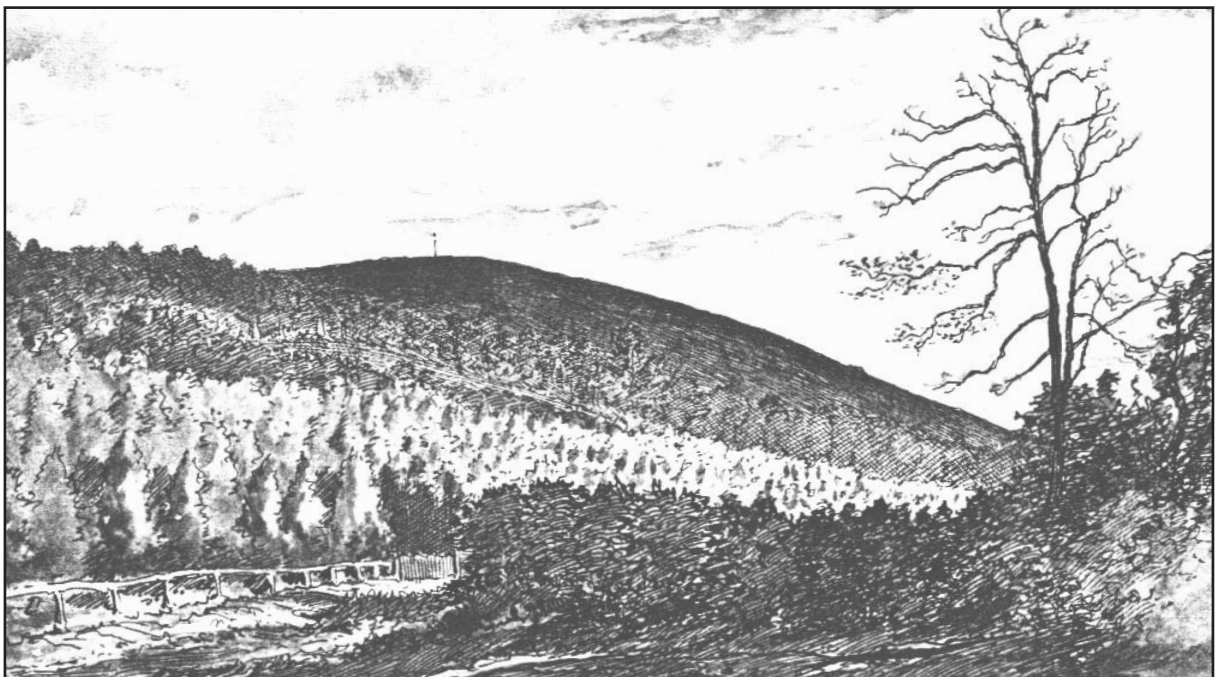


My Drawing of Danesborough - or Dowsborough-Hill is taken as I saw it from Holford Stowey Road one evening in autumn - impressive in its black and stern outline against the light of the setting sun. The camp is on the topmost point of the hill (1,094 feet) at the end of a narrow ridge, and is roughly

oval in shape, about 340 yards long and 170 wide much overgrown by oak plantations. The bank is about 12-14 feet above the bottom of the ditch and 3-4 feet above the area of the inclosure, with an outer counterscarp from 4-7 feet.

At the north end of the camp is a round barrow with a flat top.

See 'Victoria County History of Somerset' vol ii., page 492
Allcroft's "Earthworks of England," pages 71n, 89, 388n



DANESBOROUGH HILL, FROM THE NETHER STOWEY ROAD

SOURCE 10 - EXCERPTS

During the first millennium BC, many communities in the Somerset area felt compelled to embark on a series of **major building projects** in very **inconvenient locations** on exposed hilltops. The remains of these operations survive in massive splendour at fifty or more places throughout the county. Called '**camps**' by early antiquarians, these sites have, since the 1930s, been known to archaeologists as 'hillforts'. The title is a misleading one. **Not all sites** so named are in fact on hills, nor does it seem at all probable that they were 'forts' in any true military sense.

Ian Burrow in 'The Archaeology of Somerset' by Aston M and Burrow I, 1982

TYPES OF SETTLEMENT IN IRON AGE BRITAIN

The remains of over **3,000** Iron Age dwelling sites (settlements) survive in Britain. At least another 3,000 settlement sites are known of through cropmarks.

The types and sizes of the settlements depended on the nature of the **surrounding countryside**, and what materials the people could find for their houses. They could be as small as a single farmstead, lived in by just one family, or as large as a hill top town, with several hundred people.

On the West coast of Scotland, they built large drystone towers or '**brochs**'. Hillforts are mainly built in Wessex, the English/Welsh border and Eastern Scotland. Sometimes, the Iron Age people organised and **divided up large areas** of land by making very long ditches and banks (called **linear earthworks**).

Archaeologists have excavated some of these sites, like South Cadbury hillfort in Somerset. At a famous site near Glastonbury they discovered the **preserved** remains of an **Iron Age village**. However, there is still much more to find out about where and how Iron Age people lived.

All the source material in this pack is extracted from the Dowsborough Reference Folder, which is a collection of sources held at the AONB office in Nether Stowey.

Most of the references used in this pack were obtained from:

- ❖ Somerset Heritage, County Hall, Taunton. (01823 355426)
- ❖ SCS Design & Print, County Hall, Taunton. (01823 358045)
- ❖ Somerset Studies Library, Paul Street, Taunton. (01823 340300)
- ❖ Somerset Archives and Record Office, Obridge Road, Taunton. (01823 278805)

Further material specifically relating to the Quantocks is available at the library, Nether Stowey.

Source 1. Somerset Historic Environment Record. 2004

Downloaded from the HER, www.somerset.gov.uk/heritage.

Every county or unitary authority maintains a Historic Environment Record. The Somerset HER consists of a computerised database of all archaeological sites, historic landscape features and listed buildings. It contains records for thousands of sites and is constantly updated as new information is acquired. Members of the public are encouraged to report any new finds or observations to the HER so that the record is as comprehensive as possible.

Entries for three sites are included. Each record classifies the site by various criteria, gives a brief description and a bibliography. This lists all main sources for the site, including written reports, aerial photographs, maps, personal communications, and gives the location of any artefacts, if known.

The HER is the best starting point for researching a specific location. It is consulted as part of the planning process, and is now available online.

Source 2. Survey of Dowsborough Camp, English Heritage 2004.

This was produced as part of a survey of archaeological features on the Quantock Hills, using modern equipment. Many new sites were recognised for the first time.

Source 3. Quantock AONB Archaeological Survey. (barrow) 1986.

(By Richard McDonnell) (Obtained from the Somerset Heritage)

The round barrow (Bronze Age burial mound) inside the hillfort defences is a separate, earlier feature and is scheduled along with the hillfort. As a SAM (Scheduled Ancient Monument), it has to be managed appropriately by the responsible agency, in this case the County Council, as Dowsborough is part of the Quantock AONB. The site was surveyed in 1986, and it was recommended that oak trees on the barrow be cut down.

Source 4. Field Monument Warden report (hillfort and barrow) 1998.

(by Alan Graham) (Obtained from Somerset Heritage)

This recent report highlights the problem of erosion on the hillfort and discusses possible ways of managing the situation.

NOTES ON THE SOURCES

Source 5. Air Photo. 1955. Viewed from the north

(Obtained from the Somerset Heritage Crown copyright)

AIR PHOTOGRAPHS

Air photographs capture an instant in time, and therefore become unique historical sources in their own right. Unlike maps, which only show selected, understood features, an air photo shows everything visible at the time, whether understood or not. Since these features may be temporary (such as a cropmark, only visible under certain conditions), or vulnerable, (such as a hedge line, or a derelict building) an air photo is sometimes the only record of their existence.

This is the best air photo of Dowsborough. It is taken facing south. The network of footpaths can be seen clearly, and compared with the early OS maps (sources 7 and 8). The photo was taken in June, so the trees are in full leaf. This obscures the outline of the hillfort. However, it is clear that only half the hillfort was tree-covered in 1955, whereas today trees cover the whole of the interior.

Source 6. Photographs from the late 19th/early 20th Centuries

(Obtained from the Museum of English Rural Life's online collection)

Although these photographs are not from Dowsborough, they show woodland activities that were taking place in the managed oak woodland of the Quantocks for centuries. Evidence for coppicing, possible charcoal burning pits, and tracks for carting timber can all be seen on Dowsborough Hill.

Source 7. 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map. Sheet XLIX 9. 1 st EDITION

(Obtained from Somerset Studies Library)

This first properly surveyed representation of Dowsborough Hillfort, from the 1880s, is interesting for what it does and does not show. It shows the inner bank, but not the smaller, outer bank. It shows none of the details on the east entrance (compare with Source 2). The flag post is not shown. The mound, or tumulus, is shown as more complete than on the survey of 1986 (Source 3). The interior of the hillfort is shown as less wooded than its surroundings, suggesting that the present overgrown appearance of the site is recent.

Exploring the site with this map rather than a modern one is a good initial activity.

Source 8. 6 inch Ordnance Survey Map. Sheet XLIX N.W. 1902

(Obtained from Somerset Studies Library)

SECONDARY SOURCES

Any interpretation of an archaeological site must be seen as provisional. How the site is understood depends on the author's view of the past and the current state of knowledge. The discovery of new evidence or the development of a new theory can change the picture at any time. These sources show how thinking about Dowsborough has changed over time.

Source 9. ‘Ancient Earthworks and Camps of Somerset’, E. Burrow. 1924

(obtained from Somerset Studies Library)

This charming publication was intended to encourage the ‘automobile driver’ to get off the main roads and explore the secrets of the landscape. It is a gazetteer of earthwork sites, categorised by type, as appearing in 6 Ordnance Survey maps, and with some hitherto unrecorded sites. Each entry consists of a brief description, based mainly on the Victoria County History and a line-and-wash drawing, by the author, showing the site in its landscape setting. The illustrations were all made in 1923 and 1924. The view of Dowsborough can be compared with the same view today. The flagpole is visible.

Source 10. ‘Hillfort and Hilltop Settlement.’, I. Burrow. 1981

(obtained from Somerset Studies Library)

These extracts place Dowsborough into a wider Iron Age context.

PROFESSOR BARROW SAYS

Here are 10 things you might notice when you explore Dowsborough for yourself. Tick the box if you can verify my statements. ✓

1	It is surrounded by a large rampart, a deep ditch, and then a smaller (counterscarp) bank.	
2	Today the slope measures between 3 and 5m from top of bank to bottom of ditch.	
3	There are signs of bad erosion of the defences.	
4	It is oval in shape, enclosing an area of 2.7 ha.	
5	Its design follows the contours of the hill.	
6	It has a simple entrance at the NW, and a more complex one at the E.	
7	There are other entrances which may not be original.	
8	It is overgrown with trees which show signs of having been coppiced.	
9	There is a round barrow (mound) at the NW, just inside the ramparts.	
10	The E entrance has been altered in modern times: a stony surface around the site of a flagstaff. (You might even spot the remains of the staff itself!)	



Use your feet, eyes and brain!
They are the best tools.



What can you find out about it?

i Dowsborough Hillfort has never been excavated

Other things I noticed



SITE IN DANGER SITE IN DANGER SITE IN DANGER**CODENAME:****DOWSBOROUGH****MISSION:**

YOU ARE THE ONLY PEOPLE EVER TO HAVE NOTICED THIS ANCIENT FEATURE. IT IS ABOUT TO BE DESTROYED FOR EVER AS PART OF A MAJOR REDEVELOPMENT OF THIS AREA.

WITHOUT YOUR EVIDENCE NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW IT EVEN EXISTED.

TASK:

YOU MUST THEREFORE PRODUCE THE BEST POSSIBLE FIELD RECORD IN LIMITED TIME WITH **ONLY** THE RESOURCES YOU HAVE WITH YOU.

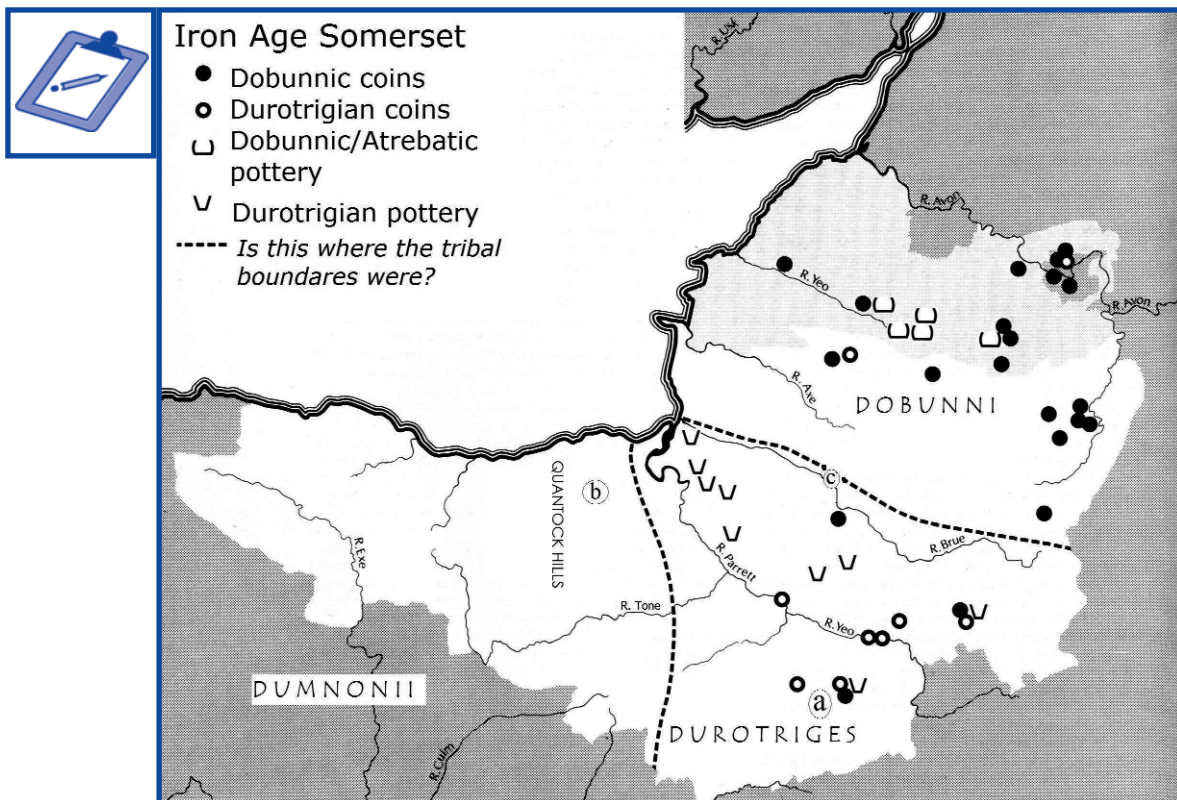
STRATEGY & EQUIPMENT USED:**TEAM MEMBERS:**

(A GOOD FIELD RECORD IS AS ACCURATE AS POSSIBLE, INFORMATIVE AND OBJECTIVE)

We want to discover more about:

To do this we need more evidence, from:

IRON AGE SOMERSET



i The map of Somerset shows where archaeologists have found pottery and coins made by Iron Age tribes. Each tribe had its own distinctive coins, and its own style of pottery. We can use this evidence to work out where the tribal territories probably were. It is more difficult to work out where the boundaries between the territories were.

Study the map to complete this:

The _____ (BUNDINO) had territory in North/West/East Somerset.

The _____ (MUNIDION) had territory in North/West/East Somerset.

The _____ (GEORDRITUS) had territory in North/West/East Somerset.

Do you agree with the position of the tribal boundaries? Give as many reasons as you can.

INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR W. BARROW

- A SOMERSET ARCHAEOLOGIST

Q I am trying to find out about Somerset before the Romans, but I don't know where to start. There doesn't seem to be anything written down from the Iron Age. Is that right, Professor Barrow?

A That's correct. There's very little written evidence. The Iron Age people themselves didn't read or write. There are a few descriptions written by Roman writers at the time, but we don't know how accurate they are.

Q Are there any other clues to help us?

A Oh yes. They left us other sorts of evidence, like the things they made. The biggest clues are the places they lived.

Q Do you mean the hillforts? Like Dowsborough?

A Yes, but I don't like the word '**fort**', because some of the hill top sites were probably just meeting places, or religious sites, or for keeping cattle. I don't think they spent all their time fighting, although there can't be much doubt that those massive banks and ditches at Dowsborough must have been intended to scare someone off. Of course, they lived in other places too, more like ordinary villages.

Q Are there any Iron Age villages in Somerset?

A Yes indeed. The most famous one was excavated over a century ago at Glastonbury. You can see some of the Glastonbury finds, and reconstructed houses at the Peat Moors Centre.

Q What other clues are there from the Iron Age?

A Well, there are all the other things they made, or at least the objects that have survived, which is not the same thing. Pottery is a good example, because it doesn't rot away in the ground. We have found plenty of pieces of Iron Age pottery. We can sort it out by its style and decoration and the clay they used. Then we can work out when and where the pots were made, and where they ended up.

Q What about coins?

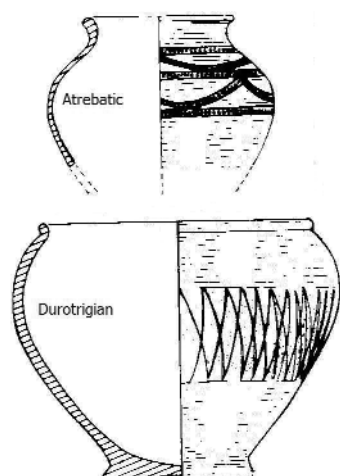
A Coins, yes. By the end of the Iron Age, they were occasionally using coins. The inscriptions on coins make them easy to date.

Q What does all this evidence tell us?

A Well, for one thing, we have started to work out a broad time framework for Iron Age Somerset. When and where people were living, whether they were all the same or in different groups with different customs, whether these groups had anything to do with each other. This table gives you an idea, but you have to use your imagination to fill in the gaps.

THE PROFESSOR'S NOTES

8th-6th century BC	Wessex-type pottery starts to appear in East Somerset. Almost no pottery in West Somerset	Some hilltop sites in use as early as 1000 BC
6th-4th Century BC	The East Somerset pottery continues to be very similar to the Wessex pottery, with some local variations.	First hill forts built in East Somerset. No pottery to date for the West Somerset hillforts
4th-1st Century BC	First appearance in Somerset of Glastonbury ware, based on pottery from Cornwall and Devon. Wessex type pottery continues in East Somerset.	Some hill forts went out of use. Others were developed and refortified. They were important central places, and many people lived there.
1st Century BC to Roman conquest	Tribes begin to mint own coins. From the coins and the pottery, we can work out, that there were three different tribal areas in Somerset. No coins have been found from West Somerset hill forts.	The hillforts in South Somerset were strongly fortified against the Romans, and archaeologists have excavated evidence of massacres. No such evidence has been found in hill forts in East Somerset. We don't know what happened to the West Somerset hill forts.



* Study the professor's notes. Underline any evidence which supports the theory that three distinct groups of people lived in the Somerset area.