

*itineraries*  
*for*  
*independent travel*  
itforit

**DARTMOOR**

*12 day itinerary*



## **DARTMOOR**

### **12 day itinerary**

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Cover image Church of St Michael de Rupe - Brentor Church

# **DARTMOOR**

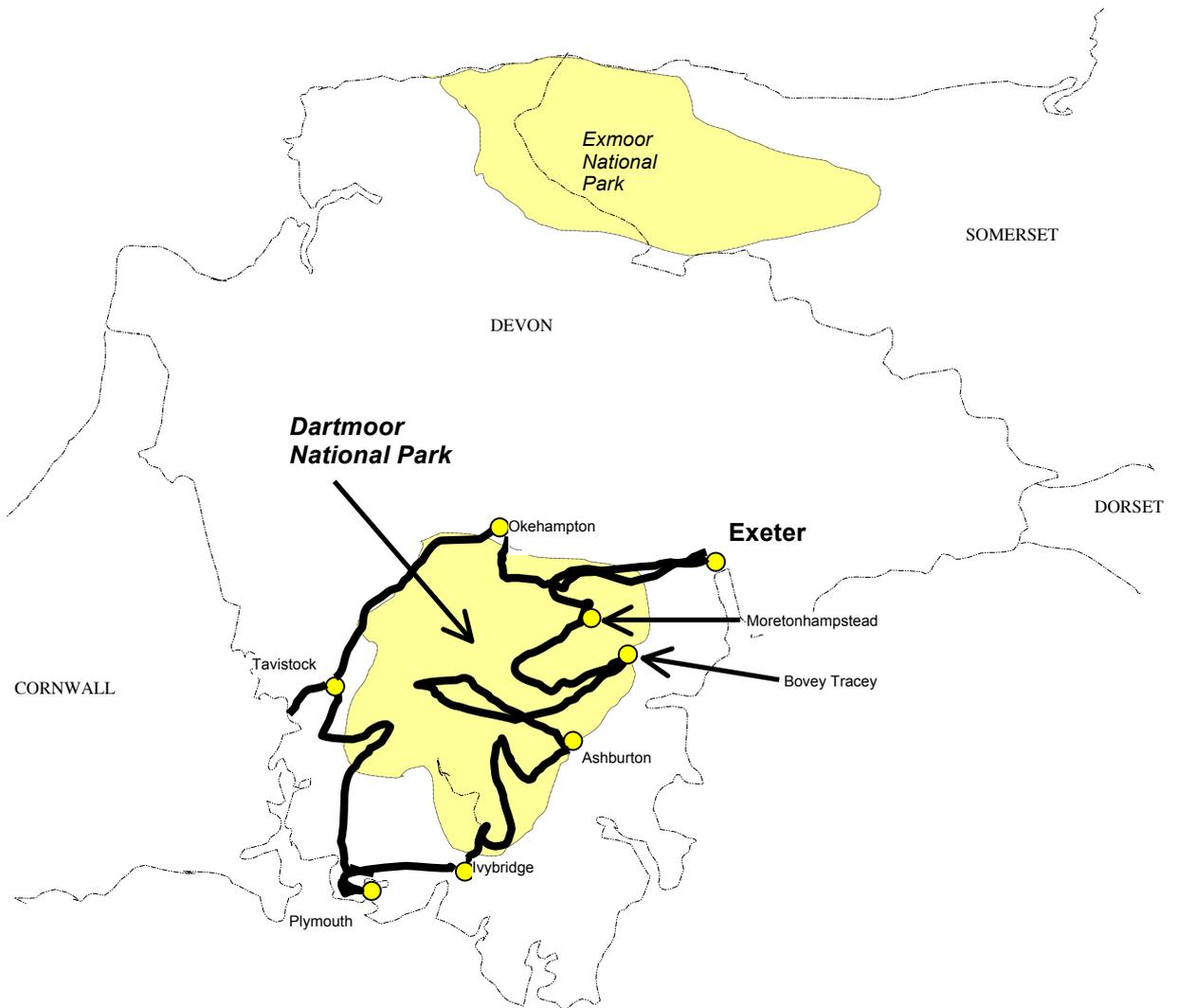
## **12 day itinerary**

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# DARTMOOR

12 day itinerary



# **DARTMOOR**

## ***12 day itinerary***

Many years of travelling, and thoroughly enjoying, the States and National Parks of the USA, and also National Parks in Britain, have provided a good insight into the essential features to see and things to do. There are so many books to read, and so much tourist information to absorb on arrival at each destination, that precious time can be lost in trying to discover the most advantageous points of interest. This itinerary sets out in clear bulleted lists just what to see and do.

There is no preoccupation with giving advice about the cheapest or best airline, car-hire company, restaurant, or hotel. You are free to choose any of these, without any reference to the itinerary. No inducements or enticements are taken from organisations trying to boost their profits. This itinerary highlights facts and legends (where appropriate), to help you get the best out of your time.

This itinerary has been prepared with various assumptions, and attempts to provide a well-researched route, without the need to instruct travellers in the art of travelling. This means that there has been no attempt to give tiny details, such as how to read a map, or where to find all specific places, unless the signposts are not clear enough. Many places are well signposted.

Many of the places in this itinerary can be visited at any time of the year. However, we have assumed that the itinerary will be taken by car during the normal tourist months, and so there will be no problems with any opening times of houses, museums, or hotels, etc. The walks suggested are suitable for the summer months, between about May and September.

Accommodation is usually easy to find, and on most occasions it is not necessary to book in advance. However, if you wish to stay in a particularly popular area, or time of the year, then you are strongly advised to book well in advance. Campsites are often available. There are some small hotels in the country areas, and larger ones in the towns. In the country areas of Britain, it is normal to stay in private homes providing 'Bed & Breakfast', and it has been our experience that these provide cheap, comfortable accommodation in relaxed surroundings. We have stayed in modern homes, and old cottages and farmhouses - one was at least 1,300 years old, with breakfast served in an old chapel!

Day numbers allow for one day of travelling at each end of the itinerary. Most people will need these travelling days.

Although the days are marked as Day 1, Day 2, etc., there is no reason why you cannot spend two or more days at one of the overnight stops. You may have relatives in the area, or just wish to lengthen the tour a little, to accommodate some aspect you find particularly interesting, or do some shopping. Just alter the day number, and carry on at your own pace.

Mileages on each day should be taken as being rather approximate, depending on how many features you visit along the route. Some days you may cover fewer miles, some days you may cover more - but the overall distance should be about right.

# DARTMOOR

## 12 day itinerary

### OVERVIEW

- **The Devon countryside** has a beautiful, interesting mix of vast tracts of barren moorland, farming, and pretty villages, with many dry-stone walls, and hedge-topped banks.
  - It is believed that the high banks developed when Devon was a Royal Forest for hunting. The deer were preserved for Royal shooting parties, but they also damaged farmers' crops. Consequently, the farmers built banks and grew high hedges to keep them out.
- **Dartmoor National Park** covers 365 sq. miles, and about 30,000 people live here, many connected with farming.
  - It is a granite moorland, with areas of heath and bog, and has been attracting tourists since the early-1800s.
  - Most of the land is privately owned, but public access is allowed over wide areas. Much is owned by the Duchy of Cornwall, controlled by Prince Charles.
  - Some of the area is used by the Ministry of Defence for training and is not always open to the public.
- **Open moors** are grazed by sheep and cattle and roamed by Dartmoor ponies.
  - All these animals belong to 'commoners' who have rights, inherited from medieval farmers, to pasture stock on the un-enclosed land on Dartmoor.
- **A tor** is a rocky summit of the moor, from the old English 'torr' meaning high place.
  - They are granite outcrops, formed originally from molten rock pushing up through softer layers.
- **Leats** are man-made watercourses, usually to carry water to mills, for washing ore in the mining industry, or to supply a community.
- **A Cob** is a type of wall, built on a sound, solid foundation. The wall is made of mud and straw, and must be kept reasonably dry at all times, otherwise it returns to its natural state. The roof and dry foundation are both vital.
- **Clapper bridges** have a very basic design, with varying numbers of uprights - depending on the width of the water to be crossed.
  - The horizontal part of the bridge is just a slab of rock, which spans between two uprights.
- **Outside Dartmoor**, a large area southeast of the National Park, in the South Hams District, was devoted to thousands of American soldiers during World War II. It was used for training and preparation, before invading enemy-occupied France.

continued.....

## Humans on Exmoor

- **Evidence** shows that Dartmoor has seen human activity for over 10,000 years. There are many ancient burial grounds, and standing stones in circles and rows.
  - Regrettably, none of the circles or stone rows is in perfect condition, and deterioration has taken place by the forces of nature, and by military operations.
  - **Burial mounds** are commonly called 'cairns', and can be either a mound of soil, or a pile of stones, or a mixture of both. Ring cairns have no mound, but just a ring of stones.
  - **Stone circles** are considered to be 4,000 years old. Remains of charcoal have been found at the original ground level. This indicates the purpose of the circles may have been for ceremonial fires, cremations or sacrifices - nothing has been confirmed.
  - **Stone rows** are also considered to be 4,000 years old. They can be as short as 35 yards, and up to 6 miles long. Burial mounds are often nearby.
  - **Cysts** are like coffins, but are made of hollowed out stone.
  - **Hut circles**, between 3 and 10 yards in diameter, were the foundation stones for wooden buildings.
    - They are usually grouped together, as in a village.
  - **Stone walls** can be seen, which were ancient field enclosures.
    - The stone enclosures on Dartmoor (and various other stone-works) are generally accepted to be from the period of about the 1200s to 1400s.
- **Field boundaries**, called 'reaves', can be seen as long low mounds of rocks and soil. They are sometimes miles long.
- **Boundary stones and route markers** are shaped in various different ways.
  - Boundary markers are upright stones, with a carved letter.
  - Route markers are generally upright stones, carved in the shape of a cross.
- **Tin** has been mined from about the 1200s, and there are many scars on the landscape, old spoil heaps, miners huts, tramways and railways. (See the section about 'Tin Mining on Dartmoor', on page 13.)
- **Granite** quarrying has been an important industry. It still continues on a smaller scale.
- **China clay** quarrying first started in the 1800s, and is still a big industry.
- **The Army** has used the area for training since the 1800s, and there is evidence of rifle ranges and observation posts.
  - There are various live firing ranges still used for military purposes. They are all in the northern area of Dartmoor. None of this itinerary goes into the areas.
  - They are not used all of the time, and access is often possible to the areas. Details are available from many places, including Information Centres and Post Offices.
  - YOU MUST OBEY THE WARNING SIGNS.
- **Farming** still takes place in much of the area.
- Where these activities have taken place, and then deserted, nature has taken over, and the one-time disfigurements have blended harmoniously to make for an interesting environment.
  - There is much to learn from our predecessors, who have vastly altered the terrain.

continued.....

**Humans on Exmoor** (continued)

- **Periods of history** can be very confusing, and are often vague, with many periods overlapping, and differing between many parts of the world. The following is a simplified glossary of British history.
  - **Stone Age** is divided into three separate ages.
    - **Palaeolithic** was from about 2.5 million years ago, to about 12,000 years ago (10,000 BC).
    - **Mesolithic** was from about 12,000 years ago, to about 5,500 years ago (10,000 BC to 3,500 BC).
    - **Neolithic / Megalithic** was from about 5,500 years ago, to about 4,000 years ago (3,500 BC to 2,000 BC).
  - **Bronze Age** was from about 4,000 years ago, to about 2,700 years ago (2,000 BC to 700 BC).
  - **Iron Age** was from about 2,700 years ago, to about 2,000 years ago (700 BC to 43 AD).
  - **Romans** were in occupation from 43 AD to about 400 AD.
  - **Middle Ages** were from about the 400s AD to 1485.
    - **Early Middle Ages** were from about the 400s AD to 1066.
    - **Dark Ages** were a period of the Middle Ages, from about 650 AD to 850 AD.
    - **Medieval** was a period of the Middle Ages, from 1066 to 1485.
  - **Tudor** was during the reigns of Henry VII, Henry VIII and Elizabeth I from 1485 to 1603.
  - **Stuart** was during the reigns of James I, Charles I, Charles II, William III & Mary II and Anne from 1603 to 1714
  - **Georgian** was during the reigns of the four Georges I to IV (1714-1830).
  - **Victorian** was during the reign of Victoria (1837-1901).
  - **Edwardian** was during the reign of Edward VII (1901-1910).

continued.....

## **USEFUL INFORMATION**

### **Walking**

- This is the most popular activity, with so many long and short walks available.
- There is free access to the 90,000 acres of unenclosed open moorland, both for walkers and on horseback. There are also over 500 miles of public footpaths.
- There are various long distance trails, which pass across Dartmoor. For example:
  - The 'Two Moors Way' is 102 miles between Ivybridge at the south of Dartmoor, to Lynmouth on the north of Exmoor.
  - The 'Tarka Trail' is a figure-of-8, 180 mile loop trail from Okehampton to Exmoor.
  - The 'Templar Way' is 18 miles from Haytor Quarry to Teignmouth.
  - The 'Dartmoor Way' provides two, 90 mile, circular routes around the periphery of Dartmoor, either on foot or by bicycle.

### **Letterboxing**

- This is an unusual pursuit, which started in 1854, when a glass jar was left for visiting cards within a cairn in northern Dartmoor.
- Many boxes are hidden in various places over the moor. They are all placed in natural holes or cavities, and contain a visitors' book, a rubber stamp and an ink pad. Most are difficult to find.
- The 'Catalogue of Dartmoor Letterboxes' is published twice a year, which provides clues about where the letterboxes are located. Updates are published every two weeks.
  - Details of letterboxing can be found at local shops.
- The finder stamps his own book or card, and also leaves his own stamp in the visitors' book.
- Searching for these boxes is an obsession with some walkers.

### **Other activities**

- Various activities available on the moor are horse-riding, pony-trekking, rock climbing, fishing and 'cycling.

### **Time to visit**

- This itinerary has been created on the assumption that you will visit during the months of May to October. At other times, some of the attractions will not necessarily be open. However, the beauty of the landscape is still available, and can be just as enjoyable.

## Travelling information

- **Maps**
  - It has been our experience that the **Ordnance Survey Landranger** maps are the best to use. The scale of these is 1:50,000, which is about 1.25 inches to 1 mile.
  - They are available throughout Britain, at bookshops, and similar outlets. They are also available from various internet 'stores'.
  - The recommended maps for this itinerary are:
    - **Number 191** Okehampton & North Dartmoor.
    - **Number 192** Exeter & Sidmouth.
    - **Number 201** Plymouth & Launceston area.
    - **Number 202** Torbay & South Dartmoor.
- **Map grid references**
  - Every town and village, etc. in the itinerary has a map grid reference. This has been calculated using the above maps. It is a very simple way to pin-point a place.
  - All Ordnance Survey maps are covered by a series of horizontal and vertical grid lines, spaced 1 kilometre apart.
  - Grid references are 6 figure numbers, e.g. 794757, on map number 191.
  - To find where this grid reference is, look along the bottom of the map for a number 79, and then the next figure (4) indicates how many tenths to move further right, i.e. four-tenths of that box.
    - Then look along the side of the map for a number 75, and then the next figure (7) indicates how many tenths to move further up i.e. seven-tenths of that box.
    - Where your two imaginary lines meet, i.e. 794 and 757, this is at a farm called 'Lenda'.
- **Distances and directions**
  - Every town and village, etc. in the itinerary has an approximate distance from the previous place, together with the approximate direction.
    - The distance is in a straight line on a map. This is provided so that you can easily find each place, before you start to travel. The distance is not necessarily the distance along the road - it is almost certainly very much longer!
  - It is worth noting that the altar is at the east end of a church, and on upright headstones, the inscriptions generally face east.
- **Driving information**
  - If you are hiring a vehicle, then you should read the hire agreement carefully, in order that you do not contravene any of the conditions of hire. Many parking areas are not paved, and it is suggested that driving on this type of surface may well be acceptable to the hire company. However, *itforit* cannot be held responsible for varying conditions of hire companies.
  - The total distance you will travel on this itinerary will be about 340 miles.
    - Conventional 'Fly-Drive' types of itineraries often state just the minimum distances, which do not allow for the normal extra bits of driving - like going out for a meal, going shopping, missing the exit off the road, etc.
    - *itforit* believes the total will be a reasonable judgement of your actual mileage, based on:
      - Our own experiences.
      - The assumption that you go to many of the places, but not all of them.

continued.....

## **Admission Information**

- **Admission charges**
  - Nearly every place makes an admission charge.
  - Exceptions to this are government establishments.
  - It is worth looking for coupons giving discounts on admission prices. You will find these at Tourist Information Centres, hotels, etc. If none is on display, it is still worth asking.
- **The National Trust**
  - This is Britain's leading conservation charity. It is not dependent on the government for funding, but relies on voluntary contributions to care for the countryside and buildings in its custody, in perpetuity.
  - Membership of the National Trust provides certain benefits, including 'free' entry to properties.
  - On this itinerary, there are various places owned by The National Trust. For some, there is no charge, but others have entry fees. In any year, the membership cost would be more than the separate entry fees, and therefore it is not a good 'investment'. However, if other National Trust properties are to be visited at another time, then it may be worth considering.
  - Details of the above are available from National Trust properties, or by telephoning 0870-458-4000, or visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk).
  - Citizens of the USA may consider joining The Royal Oak Foundation.
    - The membership dues are tax-deductible (it is a '501-c-3' charity), and it provides many benefits, including 'free' entry to properties.
    - Telephone (in the USA): 1-800-913-6565
- **English Heritage**
  - This organisation conserves buildings, as does The National Trust, but generally the buildings are not complete, such as old castles. It is the duty of this organisation to stabilise the properties, to prevent any further decay, and allow public access.
- **Great British Heritage Pass**
  - This is for overseas visitors only, on production of a valid passport. The pass is available in various 'time lengths'.
  - For a fee, this provides 'free' entry to many properties around the United Kingdom, including those belonging to The National Trust, English Heritage, plus many more organisations, and also private properties.
  - It is good value, if you are going to visit more properties than in this itinerary. For this itinerary alone, it is not a good 'investment'.
  - More details are at [www.visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com)
  - It is available from:
    - Most of the large Tourist Information Centres, in cities, ports and airports.
    - Britain Visitor Centre, 1 Lower Regent Street, London.

**What to see and do**

- This itinerary is essentially based on Dartmoor, with various extra places added around its perimeter.
  - Exeter is included, as it is the County town of Devon, and is steeped in history.
  - Plymouth is included, for its rich maritime history.
  - Places like Bovey Tracey, Tavistock, Morwellham Quay and Okehampton are included as they have close links with the story of Dartmoor. Some of them are larger towns, which provide opportunities for accommodation.
- It is not expected that everything in this itinerary will be undertaken.
  - It is impossible to see everything on Dartmoor in 12 days!
  - There are about 4,000 years of history, and a large area of land to cover.
- *itforit* recommends that you select the day's activities from the choices described, and allocate time accordingly.
- Essential places to visit are ***in bold and underlined***.
- Interesting places, such as towns and villages, walks, etc. are ***just underlined***. As many of these places as possible should be included in the itinerary, in order to achieve maximum enjoyment, together with understanding of the history and culture of the area.
- *Suggested walks are in italics. Distances are always stated for the total return or loop. It is recommended to do as many walks as possible, to get the most out of this itinerary.*
- Tourist Information Centres are always worth visiting.
  - They give a very good overview of the area, together with its history, culture, geology, etc.
  - *itforit* does not presume to be a better authority than Tourist Information Centres.
  - *itforit* itineraries prepare you for a place of interest, and suggest the essential items to see and do.
- All places have rules about damage to the environment, litter, camping, and so on. Please ensure that you abide by these regulations.

# DARTMOOR

## 12 day itinerary

### Tin Mining on Dartmoor

Tin mining is a very important part of the history of Dartmoor. These notes will help to understand its significance, and the effects on the scenery and culture of the area.

#### Uses of Tin

- Tin is a soft metal, which is easily worked and combined with other metals to form alloys of pewter (tin and lead) and bronze (tin and copper).
- Pewter was once popular for jewellery, for those who could not afford silver and gold, and it was used for cooking and drinking utensils.
- Bronze was used for making church bells and firearms.
- Modern uses include the production of stannic acid, solder, insecticides, as an alloy with titanium, and as tin plate in tin cans, etc.

#### Dartmoor Tin

- It is believed that the Romans mined tin on Dartmoor.
  - They called tin 'Stannum' - hence the chemical symbol 'Sn', and 'Stannary Towns' were appointed in Devon (see below).
- It was not until the 1100s that the industry really became established, and at this time Dartmoor was the largest producer of tin in Europe.
- Tin deposits are not found in many places in Europe. Devon and Cornwall have been centres for the tin mining industry for about 2000 years.
- In 1524, the height of tin mining was achieved, with 252 tons produced.
- Mining for tin on Dartmoor finally stopped in the early-1900s.

#### Mining

- The tin on Dartmoor was found as tin oxide, or cassiterite - commonly called tinstone. It is black, and was initially found in the streams in the sand and gravel, having been naturally washed out of the tin-bearing rocks.
- At first, the ore was simply taken out of the streams with shovels and pans.
- Later, as the stream tin deposits were exhausted, the tin-miners had to work back to the tin-bearing rocks in granite.
- Mining finally became an underground operation, as the surface deposits became exhausted.

continued.....

### **Crushing**

- After being collected as tinstone, it has to be crushed to a powder, and then washed.
- The crushing process was easy at first, as nature had done most of the work in the streams. At that time it was probably reduced to a powder with a crude pestle and mortar.
- A later crushing method involved a flour-mill kind of operation, using revolving millstones powered by horses or water.
- The final crushing method reverted to the pestle and mortar system, mechanised in mills with water power. These were called 'Engine Houses'.

### **Washing**

- The washing process was done in a large container of water, called a 'buddle'.
- Essentially, the powdered ore was stirred around in the buddle, where the heavy tin laden particles dropped to the bottom, and the lighter waste was washed away.
- Early buddles were just boxes, with running water.
- Later versions were more elaborate with the crushed rock particles being fed along a duct, and dropped onto a central cone. Swirling water then took away the lighter particles to the outer edges of the buddle, leaving the heavier, tin laden particles near the centre. The water was released from the buddle, and it was then relatively easy to collect the tin laden particles.

### **Smelting**

- The black tin laden particles had to be heated, to extract the tin.
- Tin melts at about 450°F (232°C), and so a peat fire would be lit, to melt out the tin from the impurities.
- Early smelting produced impure tin, so a second smelting was necessary.
- In the 1200s, 'blowing-houses' were built with furnaces, assisted by water-powered bellows.

### **Stannary Towns**

- Impurities in the tin caused arguments about quality, and so standards had to be set.
- Tin could only be smelted, weighed, and sold at designated places. These places were called Stannary Towns.
- In the 1300s, four Stannary Towns were appointed - Tavistock, Ashburton, Chagford and Plympton. Each Stannary Town controlled its local area, also called a stannary.
- At a Stannary Town, tin was checked (assayed) for purity, and then stamped by a Royal official. Tax was also collected for the Crown.
- It was illegal to smelt tin anywhere, other than at Stannary Towns. However, it seems that smuggling was a common practice.

### **Stannary Courts**

- The mining laws of Devon were settled by the Stannary Courts.
- Each of the four Stannary Towns held Courts, and any litigation was settled - whether it was connected with tin mining or not.
- Lydford Castle was built in 1195 as a prison, so that any offenders could be incarcerated.

### **Tinners' Parliament**

- The actual laws were made and amended by the Great Court of the Tinners' Parliament, which was made up of 96 Stannators.
- 24 Stannators were appointed by each of the four Stannary Courts.
- From 1198, they met on irregular occasions at Crockern Tor, which was an equal distance from all four Stannary Towns.
  - Initially, meetings were about twice each year. However, by the 1500s, there were only six meetings in 74 years.
  - The last meeting is believed to have been in 1749.
- The Tinners' Parliament had great powers to make decisions, and could over-rule local landlords.
- The area covered by the four Stannary Towns produced a vast amount of tax for the Crown, and consequently the Tinners' Parliament became a powerful authority.
  - Tinners were exempt from all local taxes and Crown taxes, except for the tax on tin.
  - In 1338, the Crown tried to impose extra taxes on tinners. However, a tinners' strike quickly altered the idea.

### **Tinners**

- Anyone could establish himself as a tin miner. He merely had to mark out the land and register the claim with the Stannary Court.
  - The landowner had no rights to stop the claim of a tin miner.
- Almost everyone working within the tin mining industry called himself a tinner, including the supporting trades. Consequently, he became entitled to the rights, privileges and protection of the Stannary Courts.
- Life for a tinner was a harsh one, with many dangers.
  - He usually lived away from home, in a hut, near his work.
  - He lived on a very poor diet, working in dirty conditions, and all weathers.
- Individual tinners did not make a fortune. The wealth was created for the share owners of the syndicates.
  - Share ownership of mines and tin-works was held in many different parts of society - land owners, financiers, the Church, and the Jewish fraternity.

### **Tinners' Rabbits**

- The emblem called the Tinners' Rabbits is found in various churches in Devon. They are set in the roof-bosses of the fine barrel roofs.
  - A particularly good, blue-painted roof-boss is at North Bovey.
- The design is as a triangle, each rabbit having two ears, but there are only three ears between them all.
- It is a matter of conjecture, whether the rabbits are actually hares, and whether they are used to describe the Holy Trinity, or the Tinners' symbol.
  - It is not known which 'organisation' used it first!

# DARTMOOR

## 12 day itinerary

### Overnight summary, with alternatives

Overnight suggestions are in main towns and cities.

- Accommodation could be taken anywhere in each local area.
- Information Centre telephone numbers are provided. They have accommodation registers, and can provide lists, etc.
- There are also many Village Information Points, often at the Post Office, newsagent, petrol station, pub and village shops.
- The Dartmoor Tourist Association web site can provide information at: <http://www.dartmoor-guide.co.uk>

<b><u>Day 1</u></b>	Exeter Information Centre: 01392 265700
<b><u>Day 2</u></b>	Exeter Information Centre: 01392 265700
<b><u>Day 3</u></b>	Moretonhamstead Information Centre: 01647 440043
<b><u>Day 4</u></b>	Bovey Tracey Information Centre: 01626 832047
<b><u>Day 5</u></b>	Ashburton Information Centre: 01364 653426
<b><u>Day 6</u></b>	Ivybridge Information Centre: 01752 897035
<b><u>Day 7</u></b>	Plymouth Information Centre: 01752 264849 & 01752 266030
<b><u>Day 8</u></b>	Tavistock Information Centre: 01822 612938
<b><u>Day 9</u></b>	Tavistock Information Centre: 01822 612938
<b><u>Day 10</u></b>	Okehampton Information Centre: 01837 53020
<b><u>Day 11</u></b>	Exeter Information Centre: 01392 265700
<b><u>Day 12</u></b>	Your onward journey

Date.....

**Travelling day**

- This page may be used to make notes about your travelling arrangements, in order to arrive at Exeter - ready to start on your itinerary on Day 2.
- If you have arrived early at Exeter, and wish to see some of the sights, please refer to Day 2.

**Overnight around Exeter** ("ex-it-er")

Date.....

The first day of your *itforit* itinerary! Exeter is not within Dartmoor National Park, but has so much history, it cannot be missed.

Approximate miles = 10

Today's map number - **192**

### **Day around Exeter**

- This is the County Town (the capital) of Devon, and is centred around its beautiful Cathedral.
- The Romans created the original town of Isca Dumnoniorum in about 80 AD. About 200 AD, they built a wall around 93 acres of the town, 75% of which can still be seen.
  - In addition to the walls, much of the original harbour and quay remain.
  - The Roman walls have been modified over the centuries. Many of the gates were demolished for road-widening schemes.
- In 1068, it was the only town not defeated by William the Conqueror, after the Battle of Hastings.
  - After 18 days the two opposing sides made peace and the people of Exeter allowed the Normans into their city.
  - Gytha, the mother of the defeated King Harold in 1066, took refuge in the city, and escaped through the West Gate, whilst the Normans entered through the East Gate.
- The city was a major centre for wool processing and exporting, especially in the 1700s.
- Much of the city was destroyed in World War II, but various old features and buildings remain, in amongst the modern buildings.
- The word 'hay' appears frequently in the city, e.g. Princesshay and Northernhay. It is a corruption of the Saxon 'ge-haeng', meaning an enclosed area.

### **Exeter - 1 day walking tour** (4 miles return walk)

Parking is suggested at one of the central parking areas.

This walking tour starts from the Tourist Information Centre in Paris Street, which is well signposted.

From the Tourist Information Centre, walk away from the traffic island along Paris Street.

After about 300 yards, turn left into the pedestrian area of High Street.

After about 50 yards, turn right into an arcade, named 'Romangate Passage'.

#### • **Underground Passages**

- The 'shop-front' entrance is close to the 'Boots' shop, within Romangate Passage, on the right.
- These passages were constructed in the 1300s to provide a maintenance tunnel for lead pipes, which carried water into the city from natural springs.
- There are guided tours from 10-00am daily, except on Sundays.
  - A tour should not be undertaken by anyone perturbed by confined spaces.



**Exeter** (continued)

Return along Romangate Passage to High Street, and turn right.  
After about 75 yards, turn right along Castle Street.

- **Assize Courts**
  - These are at the far end of Castle Street.
  - They were built in 1774, on the site of the inner bailey of Exeter Castle, which had been built about 1068, ordered by William the Conqueror.
  - There is no public access.

Turn left at the end of Castle Street, with Rougement House on the left.

- **Rougement Gardens**
  - This small area was once the moat of the Norman Exeter Castle. The gardens were laid out in the 1700s.
  - **Norman gatehouse**
    - This is opposite Rougement House. It is all that remains of the castle, which was built in 1068.
    - Four Devon so-called witches were tried here in 1682 and 1685, and hanged in the local area of Heavitree.
  - **Athelstan's Tower**
    - This is at the other end of Rougement Gardens.
    - The tower has a small gateway through the Roman wall, leading to Northernhay Gardens.
    - It was not built during the reign of King Athelstan, but in the late-1100s. The original Roman herring-bone brickwork can be seen within the gateway.
      - Athelstan was the first sovereign to have the title 'King of England'. He died in 939 AD, aged 44.

Go through the gateway of Athelstan's Tower into Northernhay Gardens.

- **Northernhay Gardens**
  - This is the oldest public park in England, having been laid out in 1612. The current design was laid out in the 1920s.
  - It has an interesting war memorial, with large bronze figures.

Turn left within Northernhay Gardens, to exit onto Queen Street.

- **Royal Albert Memorial Museum**
  - This is in Queen Street, on the left.
  - Built in 1865, it has an excellent natural history section, together with a impressive display of Exeter silver - gathered when the city assayed silver.
  - Together with local history display, it also houses Roman remains from 'Isca Dumnoniorum' - now called Exeter.
  - It is open Monday to Saturday, 10:00am to 5:00pm.
  - Admission is free.

Continue along Queen Street, to reach another section of High Street.

- **High Street**
  - There are many fine façades of buildings, which are now shops.
  - Gandy Street, off High Street (to the left), is a narrow medieval street with buildings from the 1800s.
  - St Stephens Bow is almost opposite the end of Gandy Street. It is an attractive archway.



continued.....

**Exeter** (continued)

- **High Street** (continued)
  - **The Guildhall**

- This is to the right of Queen Street.
- It is the oldest municipal building in Britain in regular use. The City Council meets here.
- There has been a hall on this site since at least 1160. The present Guildhall was built in 1330.



- The magnificent timber roof was constructed in the late-1400s.
- The impressive portico entrance and façade were built in 1594. They are clear statements of the wealth of the city from the woollen cloth industry. At the same time, a set of 80 differently carved wooden wall-panels were installed.
- The Mayor's chair was made in 1697.
- It has been used as a Court, and condemned criminals were held here before being hanged outside, next day.
  - Judge Jeffreys presided over the 'Bloody Assizes' here in 1645.
- There are displays of Exeter's regalia, silver and Lord Nelson's sword.
- It is normally open, unless it is in use for civic functions.

Leave High Street along a street almost opposite The Guildhall, which leads almost immediately into Cathedral Yard and the Cathedral area.

- **Cathedral area**

- There are many fine buildings around the Cathedral, covering every type of architecture from the 1300s to the present day.
- During the early-1970s, part of the area was excavated to reveal a Roman bathhouse and basilica. It has since been recovered to preserve the remains.
- **Mol's Coffee House**

- This is an Elizabethan building from the 1500s.
- It is a wonderful timbered building, with white walls and an ornate gable.



- The Royal Arms of Elizabeth I, dated 1596, on the front is called Gloriana's Dragon.
- It was a favourite meeting place for Francis Drake, Walter Raleigh and other famous sailors.

**Exeter** (continued)

- **Cathedral area** (continued)

- **The Ship Inn**

- This is in Martin's Lane, adjacent to Mol's Coffee House.
- It is reputed to have been the favourite inn of Sir Francis Drake.

- **Exeter Cathedral Church of St Peter**

- Building for this magnificent Gothic Cathedral commenced in 1112. It was restored in the 1870s.
- It has no towering spire, but uniquely has two imposing stone towers. At the west end, is an immense sculptured window.



- There are many interesting features and beautiful windows. The vaulted ceiling is the longest in the world.
- R D Blackmore (1825-1900), author of *Lorna Doone*, is commemorated on the west wall of the nave.
- The blue astronomical clock in the north transept, made in the 1400s, is thought to have inspired the nursery rhyme 'Hickory Dickory Dock'.
- The misericords in the Quire are the oldest medieval set in the country.
  - Misericords are small carvings on the underneath of a lifting seat, which provides support for someone standing.
  - One is of an elephant, which is thought to have been modelled on the first elephant to have been brought into Britain.
- In St James' Chapel there are stone carvings of a cat, a mouse and a rugby player.

- **Cast Iron Bridge**

- This is at the opposite end of the Cathedral area to Mol's Coffee House.
- It is a fine cast iron bridge, built in 1814 over Cathedral Close. The span links two sections of Roman wall.

Return to High Street and turn left.

- **Carfax**

- This was the medieval name for the crossroads of High Street, Fore Street, North Street and South Street.
- It had a fountain, and was the water collection point for Exeter - the water having arrived by pipes in the 'Underground Passages' (see page 18).

Continue past Carfax into Fore Street.

continued.....

**Day 2** (continued)

## **Exeter** (continued)

- **St Nicholas Priory**

- This is in a small street called The Mint, off Fore Street, about 200 yards past Carfax.
- Benedictine monks founded the original Priory in 1087. The remains of this include the 1100s undercroft, with its spectacular rib-vaulted ceiling.
- The Priory grew, and there are still remains of the kitchen fireplaces, built in the 1200s. The Guest Hall was added in the 1400s for the Prior to entertain.
- During the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII in 1536, some of the Priory was dismantled, but much of it was saved by women, who were angered by the destruction.
- There are limited opening times, usually in the afternoon.

Return to Fore Street, and turn right.

- **Tuckers Hall**

- This is in Fore Street, about 100 yards from The Mint.
- It was founded in 1489 as the wool trading hall, for the Guild of Weavers, Fullers and Shearmen.
  - A 'tucker' is an alternative name for a 'fuller', who washed the cloth.
  - The Guild still continues, although it is now more of a prestigious organisation, taking part at ceremonial occasions in the city.



- The building was originally a chapel, but an upper floor was created in the 1500s. It has marvellous panelled chamber, with exposed roof-beams.
- The coat of arms above the entrance gate depicts tools of the wool trade.
- It is open for restricted hours during the mornings, on restricted days.

Continue down Fore Street for 100 yards, and turn right into West Street.

- **West Street**

- **Church of St Mary Steps**

- The clock on the tower has three 'quarter-jacks', which strike the hour. They are known as Mathew the Miller, and his two sons.

- **Stepcote Hill**

- This is a narrow, steep pedestrian street with 100 steps, at the side of the Church of St Mary Steps.



- **'The House that Moved'**

- This is opposite the Church of St Mary Steps.
- The three-storey, timber-framed building was built in the 1400s.
- In 1961, it was moved 150 yards on rollers to its present position, to make way for a bypass.
- There is no public access.

continued.....

**Day 2** (continued)

## **Exeter** (continued)

Continue along West Street, and at the junction with a main road, Western Way, turn left.

After about 100 yards, turn right down Quay Hill.

### • **Quayside area**

- Over the centuries, the city has had problems to maintain itself as a sea port.
  - In 1282, Topsham ("tops-ham") - a town nearer the sea - built a weir across the River Exe, and forced all cargo to use its docks.
  - After nearly 300 years of legal arguments, the weir was removed, but by then the River Exe had too much silt, making it un-navigable.
  - In 1564, a canal was excavated to bypass Topsham, and return trade direct to Exeter. It is the oldest 'pound lock canal' in England.
    - A 'pound lock canal' is the standard system of having a lock chamber (a pound lock), followed by a stretch of water (also called a pound), which acts as a reservoir.
- This area was laid out in the 1500s, based around the River Exe, and has many 1800s warehouses.
- The height of its prosperity was in the 1700s, when it was exporting woollen cloth all around the world.
- The Quayside was used as 'Liverpool' in the television drama *The Onedin Line*.
- **Quay House Interpretation Centre** (also variously called *Quay House Visitor(s) Centre*)
  - This has a limited history of Exeter as a port.
  - It has a 15 minute audio-visual presentation, called 'A Celebration of Exeter', which describes the city and its history.
  - Admission is free.
- **Custom House**
  - This was built in the 1681, and is the oldest in England.
  - There is no public access.
- **Quayside cellars**
  - These are an assortment of 'shops' called 'cellars', built into the hillside, along the riverfront.
  - They are mostly selling antiques, and other collectibles.

The best way to return to the Tourist Information Centre in Paris Street, is to return up Quay Hill, cross Western Way back into West Street, and then turn right into Fore Street.

It is then about 0.75 mile to walk up Fore Street, past Carfax, along High Street, and back to the Tourist Information Centre in Paris Street.

## **Overnight around Exeter**

Date.....

Your first taste of the pretty villages of Dartmoor. Maybe a walk today, but don't miss England's newest castle.

Approximate miles = 45

Today's map numbers - **192 & 191**

**Leave Exeter** west on the B3212 road, signposted for Moretonhampstead.

### **Dunsford**

- This is about 7 miles west of Exeter, at 813892.
- This is an attractive village, with pretty thatched, cob cottages set on a hill, with a 1300s church at the top.

### **Steps Bridge walk**

- *This starts from the 1816 Steps Bridge, which is 1 mile south of Dunsford, on the B3212 road, with a parking area at 802884.*
- *It is possible to walk along the bank of the River Teign ("teen"), possibly as far as Fingle Bridge (see next page), which is about 4.5 miles away (9 miles return). Any amount is worthwhile, and it is reasonably level.*
- *The River Teign valley is beautifully wooded, containing Cod Wood and Bridford Wood.*

### **Drewsteignton** ("droo-stain-tun")

- This is about 5 miles northwest of Dunsford, at 736908.
- It is an attractive village, with a square bordered by a church, a pub and various cottages.



- **Church of the Holy Trinity**
  - The lychgate is unusual, as it is built into an almshouse on one side.
    - A lych is the old word for a body. A roofed lychgate was a place to rest with the coffin, before a funeral service.
- **The Drew Arms**
  - This is a true old English pub in the square, where drinks are ordered at the tap room counter.
  - Mabel Mudge was the landlady here for 76 years. She retired when she was 99, and her history is displayed on the inside walls.
  - 'Drew' is spelt correctly, not as in the Drewe family of Castle Drogo (see next page).
  - It is a commercial establishment, not necessarily recommended by *itforit*, but it is an interesting place.

continued.....  
**Day 3** (continued)

### **Drewsteignton Village walk**

- *This is a 1.5 miles loop starting within the village, with excellent views over the village, moor and the River Teign valley. It ascends about 75 feet.*
- *From the church square, take the turning towards Chagford and Castle Drogo.*
- *After 100 yards, take a stile right, up over a wall.*
- *Keep the hedge on your right, and through the gate at the end of the field.*
- *Follow the hedge around to a signpost, and keeping right down the hill, the path goes past a disused quarry in woodland.*
- *On reaching a quiet lane, turn right back to the village.*

### Fingle Bridge walk

- *This starts from Fingle Bridge at 743900, which is 1 mile southeast of Drewsteignton, and clearly signposted.*
- *Over Fingle Bridge, the main pathway is to the left, being reasonably level.*



- *Other walks are possible from here. The area is very popular, but it is easy to escape from the crowds.*
- *Walk for as far as you wish along the beautiful, wooded valley of the River Teign.*
- *Fingle Bridge was built in the 1500s over the River Teign, which is popular with fishermen for salmon and trout.*
- *R D Blackmore, the author of *Lorna Doone*, called this 'the finest scene in England'.*

### Castle Drogo ("droh-goh")

- This is about 1.5 miles west of Fingle Bridge. The entrance is at 726907.



- It is a magnificent granite castle, which was built between 1910 and 1930. It was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens for the millionaire Julius Drewe, who made his fortune from tea and the 'Home and Colonial Stores'.
  - Julius Drewe had moved to the area, believing he descended from a Norman Baron, called Drogo de Teign. He also added the final 'e' to his name in 1910, as he had established a link to a Drewe family in Devon. He died in 1931, aged 75, just after the castle was completed.
- It is situated on a hilltop, overlooking the wooded valley of the River Teign. The strategy of design was to demonstrate features of castles over many centuries.
  - A major feature is the astounding detail of the carving of the granite stonework, both inside and outside.

continued.....  
**Day 3** (continued)

### Castle Drogo (continued)

- It has many interesting rooms, kitchen areas, a chapel, its own telephone system, central heating, and a hydro-electric supply providing a Direct Current system.
  - There is a self-guided tour of the house.
- There is a wonderful formal garden, complete with a massive circular lawn, containing four croquet lawns.
- *There are many good walks around the estate.*
- This is a National Trust property and opening times should be checked on 01647-433306, or visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk). It is generally not open on Fridays.

### Spinsters Rock

- This is in the tiny farming hamlet of Shilstone, which is about 1.5 miles west of Castle Drogo at 701908.
  - It is accessed through a gate to a field, opposite Shilstone Farm.



- It is a massive stone, supported on top of three upright rocks, and was the burial chamber of local chieftain, who died 3,500-2,500 BC.
  - It is likely that others were also buried here, under a long earthen mound.
- In 1862, the stones fell down, and according to legend it was re-assembled by three unmarried women, before breakfast.

### Chagford

- This is about 2 miles south of Spinsters Rock, at 702876.
- The name is derived from 'chag' the old word for gorse or broom, and the ford across the River Teign.
- This is one of the four Stannary Towns, appointed in 1305. (See the section about 'Tin Mining on Dartmoor', on page 13.)
  - It was a very important town, with 40% of Devon's tin being taxed and stamped here.
- **Market Square**
  - This has been the centre for trading cattle, sheep and wool. 'The Pepper Pot' is the unusual market house in the square.
- **James Bowden and Son**
  - This is a hardware shop in the main street, by the square, and was established in 1862.
  - The small road front belies the extent of the shop - it is seemingly endless, as it extends back and back.
  - There is a small museum at the rear of the shop, which can be viewed through an internal window.

continued.....  
**Day 3** (continued)

### **Chagford** (continued)

- **Church of St Michael the Archangel**

- This was dedicated in 1261. Some of the original building remains, but much of it dates from the 1400s.
- Inside the church, in the floor of the chancel to the right of the altar, is the poem inscribed for Mary Whiddon:
  - *Reader wouldst know who here is laid  
Behold a matron yet a maid  
A modest look a pious heart  
A Mary for the better part  
But dry thine eies, why wilt thou weepe  
Such damselfs doe not die but sleep*
  - This poem commemorates the bride, who was shot outside the church after her wedding service, in October 1641. The miscreant was a former suitor.
  - A similar event occurred in R D Blackmore's romance *Lorna Doone*. However, it is also possible that the author was inspired by a traditional story at Oare Church on Exmoor, where his grandfather had been the Rector.
- There are various fine bosses in the barrel roof, one of which is of the Tinnars' Rabbits.
- Outside the church, at the east end, is an excellent view of the River Teign valley and Castle Drogo - 2 miles away.

### Kestor Rock walk

- *This starts at Batworthy, which is about 3 miles southwest of Chagford, at 662866.*
  - *It is best to approach this starting point from Chagford via Waye Barton, Thorn and Yeo Farm, eventually crossing a moorland road for about 1 mile. Another route, which appears more direct, is not suitable for cars.*
  - *There are almost no distinct paths on this walk, but the whole walk is very clear from Kestor Rock.*
- *It is an excellent 3-5 miles loop walk, ascending about 220 feet.*
- *From Batworthy, walk uphill on an obvious path, until you see Kestor Rock to your left.*
- **Kestor Rock**
  - *This is at 665863, and has three water-worn basins in its top. The largest of which is about 6 feet across.*
  - *From this vantage point, it is possible to see the entire walk. To the west is Shovel Down. To the northwest is Scorhill Circle.*
- **Shovel Down**
  - *This is at 659860, and has a stone circle, five stone rows, and standing stones.*



continued.....  
**Day 3** (continued)

### Kestor Rock walk (continued)

- **Clapper Bridges**

- *There are three small clapper bridges about 1 mile northeast of Shovel Down. They cross the North Teign River and Walla Brook to Scorhill Circle, on the way to Scorhill Circle.*
- *Teign-e-Ver Clapper Bridge is a quaint old bridge, which was re-built in 1826, and restored again in 1999.*
- *Just east of the bridges is an unusual massive boulder, with a water-worn hole, large enough to crawl through. It is almost in line with an estate wall.*
- **Scorhill Circle**
  - *This is about 1.25 miles north of Shovel down, at 655875.*
  - *It is one of the best stone circles on Dartmoor, about 80 feet in diameter, with about 25 stones.*



- *From Scorhill Circle, retrace your steps, following the estate wall, back to Batworthy.*

### **Moretonhampstead**

- This is about 6 miles east of Batworthy, at 754860.
- It was once a prosperous market town, having been granted a Charter for a weekly market by King John in 1207.
- It became a major coaching stopover, for travellers between Exeter and Plymouth.
  - In the 1700s, it had 18 pubs. The remaining five are over 300 years old.
- A previous thriving wool industry declined in the 1600s and 1700s.
- In the 1800s, fires destroyed numerous old buildings.
- It has continued to be a busy, small shopping centre.

#### **Cross Tree**

- This is in Cross Street, by an entrance to the Church of St Andrew.
- The original elm tree was a 'Dancing Tree'. In 1807, its branches were cut, and a platform constructed so that a band of musicians - French prisoners from Dartmoor Prison at Princetown - could entertain the townsfolk.
- The 200-year-old elm tree died in 1903, and the present copper beech tree was planted in 1912.

#### **Almshouses**

- These are in Cross Street, just past the Cross Tree.
- They were built in 1637 of granite, and have a fine portico entrance. The colonnade has 12 round granite columns.



- Prior to being almshouses, the building is thought to have been a workhouse.
- They are owned by The National Trust, and are private residences, not being open to the public.

### **Overnight around Moretonhampstead**

**itforit**  
.com

**Day 4**

Date.....

Interesting walks today, taking in about 3,000 years of history.

Also some fascinating churches to see, and a sad grave.

Approximate miles = 50

Today's map number - 191

**Leave Moretonhampstead** southwest on a minor road.

**North Bovey** ("bu<sup>v</sup>-ee" or "bo<sup>v</sup>-ee")

- This is about 2 miles southwest of Moretonhampstead, at 740840.
- It is one of the best preserved villages on Dartmoor, with many fine features around the attractive sloping green.

• **The Green**

- A Medieval stone cross is at its lower end.
- There are oak trees with commemorative plaques, a horse mounting block, and a water pump.

• **Church of St John**

- The chancel was built in the 1200s, and rest in the 1400s.
- In a boss of the barrel roof of the chancel is the best example of the Tinnors' Rabbits.



- There are various cottages, some of which are thatched, dating from at least the 1700s.
- The Ring of Bells Inn was built in the 1200s.

**Grimspound walk**

- *This is about 3 miles southwest of North Bovey, and starts at 697808.*
- *It is a 1 mile return walk, ascending about 150 feet up the hill to this settlement, inside a stone-walled compound.*



- *Grimspound is a Bronze Age shepherds' settlement, from about 3,000 years ago.*
  - *The compound wall was originally about 6 ft high, and 9 ft thick, and was used by shepherds for the overnight protection of their livestock.*
  - *Inside the compound are four acres of land, and the remains of about 24 stone huts. Each hut had stone sleeping shelves, lintels over doorways, and was about 15 feet in diameter.*
- *This is reputed to be the place where Watson hid, in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Arthur Conan Doyle.*

continued.....

**Day 4** (continued)

**Warren House Inn**

- This is about 2 miles west of Grimspound, on the B3212 road, at 674809.

- It has had a fire continually burning since 1845, when it provided warmth for tin miners.
  - The pub was once on the other side of the road. When it was rebuilt in its present position, burning embers were transported to the new fireplace, to keep the tradition alive.
- It is the 5<sup>th</sup> highest pub in England, at 1,420 feet.
  - The highest pub in England is Tan Hill Inn, near Richmond, in North Yorkshire, at 1,732 feet.
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> highest pub in England is the Cat & Fiddle Inn, near Buxton, in Derbyshire, at 1,690 feet.
  - The 3<sup>rd</sup> highest pub in England is The New Inn, at Flash, in Staffordshire, at 1,518 feet.
  - The 4<sup>th</sup> highest pub in England is The Kirkstone Pass Inn, near Ambleside, in Cumbria, at 1,481 feet.

### Vitifer and Golden Dagger Tin Mines walk

- *This starts about 300 yards northwest of Warren House Inn, on the B3212 road, at 675812, at a parking area called 'King's Oven'.*
- *It is a 3 miles return walk descending about 300 feet into a valley. It could easily be lengthened into a good loop walk.*
- *It goes to disused mines, exploring a valley which was one of the most important tin-mining areas on Dartmoor, for around six centuries.*
- *Walk past the steel wire barrier, along the obvious wide track, down into the valley.*
  - *As you walk down to the path, you will see medieval enclosures on the other side of the valley, which may date from the 1200s to 1400s.*
  - *At the base of the valley, on both sides of the West Webburn River, are the remains of the Vitifer Tin Mine. The buildings are now almost down to ground level, but can still be identified.*
- *Cross the granite bridge over the river, and turn right, along another obvious track along the valley floor.*
  - *At a division in the path, go straight on, not taking the path to Soussons.*
  - *About 1 mile after Vitifer Tin Mine, there are the remains of 'Dinah's House', the Mine Captain's house.*
  - *This is at the Golden Dagger mine, which was worked until the 1930s. Dinah's House continued to be inhabited until the 1940s.*
  - *There is a good explanation of the building, and also a description of other nearby remains.*
    - *The engine house was used to crush the rock.*
    - *The 'buddle' was used to separate the crushed rock into two different types.*
- *Return the same way, or walk further, if you wish.*
  - *Longer, alternative routes can be selected, which would provide good loop walks.*

continued.....  
**Day 4** (continued)

### Postbridge

- This is at 647790, on the B3212 road, about 2.5 miles southwest of Warren House Inn.



- Here is the largest and most upstanding clapper bridge on Dartmoor.
  - Each of the three horizontal slabs of rock is about 15 feet wide, and the span of the bridge is 43 feet.
- It was built in the 1200s to cross the East Dart River. It was vital for communication between the Stannary Towns of Chagford and Tavistock.
- This tiny community is regarded as Dartmoor's geographical centre.

### **Widcombe in the Moor** ("wid-ee-cum")

- This is about about 5 miles southeast of Postbridge, at 718768.
- **Widcombe Fair**

- This famous fair is recorded from 1850, but is likely to have started much earlier.



- It is held annually on the second Tuesday in September.
  - The original fair was held as a market for stock and produce.
  - It is now a country fair, with craft and produce stalls, maypole dancing, horse jumping, prize-winning stock, and a costumed 'Tom Cobley' and Town Criers.
- The various men mentioned in the song, *Widcombe Fair*, all lived in the late-1700s and early-1800s, but not necessarily at the same time. They were probably from the 12-mile-distant village of Spreyton, and supposedly visiting the fair, having borrowed a grey mare from Tom Pearse.
  - The song tells how "Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney, Peter Davy, Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawk, Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all" went to the fair on the mare. Unfortunately, the mare did not survive the day.
  - It is said that the song was devised to test the sobriety of the singer.
- **The Square**
  - This originally had two trees, an elm and a yew.
  - The yew tree was planted in 1860. Locally killed foxes were exhibited on its branches, as a bounty was paid for each dead animal.
  - The elm tree died in the 1979, and had been much used as a Dancing Tree, where the branches were cut to hold a platform for musicians.

continued.....  
**Day 4** (continued)

### **Widcombe in the Moor** (continued)

- **Church House**

- This is on one side of The Square.
- It is now used as an information centre and village hall.



- It was built about 1500 for parishioners to rest and drink, before going to church.
- In the 1800s the lower floor was used as almshouses, and the upper floor as a village school.
- Church of St Pancras
  - This is unofficially called 'The Cathedral of the Moor'.
  - The oldest part of this was built in the 1300s, and the west tower was added in the 1500s, with money from tin miners.
  - In 1638, the tower was struck by lightning. It collapsed, killing four men and injuring 62 others.
    - A legend claims this lightning strike was a visit of the Devil, to claim souls of the men playing cards in church.
- The Old Forge
  - This is near The Square, and claims to have a 1500s chair belonging to Tom Cobley.
- Butte Park
  - This is now The Green, behind the Church of St Pancras.
  - It was used in the past for practising archery.
    - In 1466, a law compelled every man to own a longbow. He also had to practise regularly, and could be fined one halfpenny ("hayp-nee") for not doing so. This law has never been repealed.
- Saxon Well
  - This is on the Ponsworthy road about 20 yards below the Post Office.
  - It has reputedly never run dry, but is now not used.
  - The housing around it was built in the 1600s.

### Hound Tor

- This is about 2 miles northeast of Widecombe in the Moor, at 742790.
- Here, the wind whistles through the crags, and thought to sound like the wailing of a pack of hounds.
- Locals believe this was one of the inspirations for Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.
- *Below the tor are the remains of a medieval village, called Hundatora Village. These remains can be viewed by walking 100 yards past Hound Tor towards the southwest.*

continued.....  
**Day 4** (continued)

### Jay's Grave

- This is beside the road, about 1 mile northwest of Hound Tor, at 732799.



- This sad grave is thought to be that of Kitty (or Mary) Jay, who was seduced and then spurned by a boy. Full of remorse, she hanged herself in a barn.
  - Variations of this story abound. Some are that: she was aged 16 or 18; she was an orphan living on a farm; she was working on the farm from a workhouse; she was seduced by either another farm-hand, or the tenant-farmer's landlord's son; the tenant farmer was possibly her father; she was raped; she took her life the following day; she was pregnant; the tragic event took place in the 1600s, 1700s or 1800s.
- As a suicide, she was not allowed a burial at the local church, and was interred at this lonely place, at the junction of three parish boundaries.
- In the 1860s, an exhumation took place, and proved there was a young woman's skeleton in the grave. The present design of the grave dates from that time, when the remains were re-interred.
- The simple grassy mound, with its unpretentious headstone, reputedly has flowers on it at all times.
  - How, and when, the flowers are placed there, is a mystery. They are alleged to be the generosity of a benevolent ghost.

### Bowerman's Nose

- This is about 1 mile northeast of Jay's Grave, at 741804.
- It is a granite outcrop, which has a startling resemblance of a nose.
- There are two basic explanations for the name.
  - A Norman huntsman, who lived rough on the moor, was turned to stone by a witch.
  - A 1600s John Bowerman, with a big nose, and lived in North Bovey.
- The shape can be clearly seen from the road.

### Manaton

- This is about 1 mile northeast of Bowerman's Nose, at 750813.
- This village is a rather straggling area, split into two parts.
  - Near the 1400s Church of St Winifrede, there are attractive whitewashed cottages around the green.
  - A separate area is about 1 mile southeast, with more houses and the Kestor Inn.
- Wingstone Farm, at 747811, is where John Galsworthy (1867-1933) lived for 18 years, and wrote *The Forsyte Saga*, in 1922. In 1932, John Galsworthy won the Nobel Prize for Literature. The farm is not open to the public.

continued.....  
**Day 4** (continued)

### Becky Falls walk

- *This walk starts just below the Kestor Inn at Manaton.*
- *It is a 1.5 miles loop walk, descending about 100 feet.*
- *Take the lane signposted to Water. After about 300 yards, there is a small parking area on the right, just before a junction.*
- *Walk from here to the junction and turn right.*
- *Continue along this road, which becomes a rough track, and then a path.*
- *On meeting another path, turn right, and follow the way-marked path all the way back to the Kestor Inn.*
- *The path goes through Houndtor Wood, and gives a view of Becky Falls, which are more of a cascade over rocks, than a high waterfall. The actual falls are on the private property of Becky Falls Woodland Park (see below).*
  - *Confusingly, Becky Falls are in Becka Brook. The general view is that 'Becky' is a modern corruption of the original word.*

### **Becky Falls Woodland Park**

- This is about 1 mile south of Manaton, at 760800.
- It is a privately owned area, with an admission charge. There are various walks, a gift shop, restaurant and craft centre, together with animals, appealing particularly to children.
- The main path, of course, goes via the famous Becky Falls.

### **Lustleigh** ("lust-lee")

- This is about 2 miles northeast of Becky Falls, at 785813.
- It is a very attractive village, with the road circling the church, with many thatched cottages and houses. It is often missed by tourists.



- **Town Orchard**
  - This is just down a minor road by the Post Office. An ancient May Day Festival continues every year, with maypole dancing and other festivities in this 'orchard'.
  - There is a large granite outcrop called 'The Cleeve', where the May Queen is crowned.
  - In 2000, a granite throne was placed on top of 'The Cleeve' for the May Queen ceremony.
  - Since 1954, all May Queens have had their names inscribed on the side of 'The Cleeve'.
- **Church of St John the Baptist**
  - Much of this was built in the 1200s, although the north aisle and tower are from the 1300s to 1500s.
  - As the church was built within a graveyard, surrounded by a wall and a road (originally a lane), it is probable that an even earlier graveyard dates back to 400 to 500 AD. It is possible that the site is a pagan burial area.
  - **Datuidoc's Stone**
    - This is inside the church, and is believed to be a grave marker for a Christian burial about 550 to 600 AD.
    - The inscription on the stone is understood to mean 'The stone of Datuidoc the son of Conhinoc'.
    - At one time, the stone had been used for paving the porch.

continued.....  
**Day 4** (continued)

### **Lustleigh** (continued)

- Lustleigh Cleave
  - This is a famous beauty spot, where the River Bovey flows through a thickly wooded valley of trees.

### Lustleigh Cleave and Hunter's Tor walk

- *This walk is 3 miles return, with the path starting between two houses called 'Logan Stones' and 'Grove', at 775815, in the area of Lustleigh.*
  - *To find the start of the walk, go downhill from the church towards Rudge. After about 150 yards, turn sharp right up a very narrow, steep lane marked 'Unsuitable for wide vehicles'. After 1 mile, turn right at a junction. After 150 yards, there is a parking area on the left.*
- *This walk is steep at the beginning, along a sunken path. It then rises steadily, eventually ascending a total of about 500 feet.*
- *It goes up through woodland, and then onto the ridge above Lustleigh Cleave.*
- *Before the path leaves the woodland, it goes past Raven's Tor. Once onto the ridge, there are excellent views of the moor, and Lustleigh Cleave - the wooded valley of the River Bovey.*
- *At the end of the ridge is Hunter's Tor.*

### Haytor Quarry walk

- *This starts about 3 miles southwest of Lustleigh, opposite the lower Haytor parking area, on the B3387 road, about 0.25 mile west of the turning to Haytor Vale, at 765772.*
- *It is a 1.5 miles loop walk, ascending about 175 feet.*
- *Much history of granite quarrying can be seen. The whole area is very popular with walkers - particularly up to Haytor Rocks.*
- *With the massive Haytor Rocks about 0.5 mile to your left, follow the wider path - at about 90° to the road - for about 0.5 mile to the gate into Haytor Quarry.*
- *Inside the quarry, the path winds around a pond. Some old lifting gear, used to move the granite blocks, can be seen.*
  - *Granite quarrying here was an important industry for only a short time. Cornish granite became more popular from about 1850, as transport was easier, and quarrying at Haytor ceased in 1858.*
  - *The granite from Haytor was used for many famous buildings, including London Bridge, which was built in the 1830s.*
    - *In 1968, London Bridge was sold to the USA. Lake Havasu City, Arizona paid \$2.6 million for the bridge. It then cost \$7 million to transport and reassemble - being re-opened in 1971.*

continued.....  
**Day 4** (continued)

### Haytor Quarry walk (continued)

- Leaving the quarry by a stile, take the path downhill to a 'granite tramway'.
  - The granite tramway is a sort of railway where the 'rails' were made of granite, 4 feet apart.
  - It was built in 1820, to transport granite over 10 miles from Haytor quarries to Teignrace. From there it was taken by canal to the sea.



- Horses were used to pull flat-topped wagons along the tramway. Other quarries in the area had steep gradients, which required a team of up to 18 horses.
- Follow the disused granite tramway to the left.
- After about 200 yards, keep right at the granite tramway junction, and walk by the 'rails' down to a moorland road. Turn right at the road, and on reaching the B3387 road, turn right again back to the parking area.

### **Bovey Tracey** ("buv-ee" or "bov-ee")

- This is about 3 miles east of Haytor Down, at 815785.
- It is a market town with the usual facilities, such as banks and shops. Originally, it was just called Bovey, but in the 1100s the extra word was added to honour the local 'de Tracey' family.
- **Church of St Peter, St Paul and Thomas of Canterbury**
  - This is at the top of the town, in East Street - over the brow of the hill.
  - It was built by Sir William de Tracey, in repentance for his part in the murder of Archbishop Thomas à Becket, in Canterbury Cathedral, in 1170.
    - He thought his wife was closely involved with the Archbishop, so he agreed to be involved in the murder.
    - He later discovered that the story was incorrect, so he built this church.
  - The brass eagle lectern, was preserved in a pond during the Civil War. Its mouth is a coin slot, with a chute to its tail, where a box was placed to collect a local tax, called 'Peter's Pence'.
  - The rood screen is very large, corbelled at the top, and originally had a platform for musicians.
    - 'Rood' was the Saxon word for cross. Rood screens were a separation of the chancel from the nave, often with a locked door.
- **Parke Estate**
  - This is west of the town centre, across the A382 road.
  - It is owned by the National Trust, and has over 200 acres of riverside meadows, parkland and mature woodland.
  - Parke House, built in 1826, is leased to the Dartmoor National Park Authority, as its headquarters. Some of the other buildings are used by the National Trust management team.
  - It is a beautiful area, and open daily for walking, with no admission charge.

continued.....  
**Day 4** (continued)

### **Bovey Tracey** (continued)

- **Riverside Mill**

- This is close to the town centre, by the 1600s bridge over the River Bovey.
- It houses The Devon Guild of Craftsmen, who make and sell contemporary crafts - which are reputedly the best outside London.
- There are exhibitions and demonstrations throughout the year.
- 1 mile south on the A382 road
  - **House of Marbles & Teign Valley Glass**
    - This claims to have probably the largest selection of marbles in the world.
    - There is a marble museum, and a pottery museum, and it is possible to watch glass-blowing and shaping in the factory.
    - In addition to the gift shop, there are various marble runs of the most intricate designs.
    - Outside are some preserved kilns and pottery buildings.
    - Admission is free.
  - **Cardew Teapottery**
    - This is a factory making a huge selection of ordinary and novelty teapots.
    - There is a short, self-guided tour of the factory.
    - There is also a teapot museum, a shop, and an activity centre - providing the opportunity to paint your own pottery.
    - Admission is free.

**Overnight around Bovey Tracey**

More interesting walks today, villages, gunpowder and a prison - but not in the same place!

Approximate miles = 50

Today's map numbers - **191 & 202**

**Leave Bovey Tracey** west on the B3387 road.

### **Buckland Beacon walk**

- *This walk starts about 6 miles southwest of Bovey Tracey, at 738738.*
- *It is a 1.5 miles return walk, ascending only about 50 feet.*
- *From where the road goes onto the open moor at Buckland Common - just past a cattle grid - walk slightly uphill, alongside a stone wall, which goes in a long arc. Eventually, cut across the moor to the outcrop.*

- **The Ten Commandments Stone**

- *This is actually two tablets of granite on the east side of the rocky tor outcrop, at 735732. It was carved by a stonemason called Clements.*



- *Clements lived in a hut on this Tor for six months, from the 15<sup>th</sup> December 1927 to the 14<sup>th</sup> June 1928. These dates are commemorated on one of the tablets. The entire inscription was re-cut in 1995.*
- *A local landowner originally commissioned the work, apparently for personal, religious reasons. He paid Clements for his work, and provided him with one loaf of bread each week. There was high unemployment at this time, and this task was considered to be providing work.*
- *Above the Ten Commandments Stone, nearer to the top, is another stone carving recording the height at 1,282 feet. This was cut in 1935 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V, who succeeded to the throne in 1910. (A local leaflet is incorrectly published, with the wrong King.)*

continued.....  
**Day 5** (continued)

### **Buckland in the Moor**

- This is about 1.5 miles southwest of Buckland Common, at 720732.

- It is a very small community, divided into two parts. One part is around a group of thatched cottages and craft centre. The other is around the church.
- The group of beautiful thatched cottages is on a corner, and much photographed for calendars and jigsaws, etc.

- **Church of St Peter**

- The original church was built in the 1100s. It was greatly re-built in the 1400s, and the wonderful carved rood screen dates from that time.
- The tower has a peal of eight bells. The original five bells were installed in the 1700s, the other three in 1932.
  - The tower clock chimes 'All things bright and beautiful' on each quarter-hour.



- The clock does not have numerals for the hours - the positions have the letters of 'My Dear Mother'. It was paid for by a wealthy local man, in the 1930s.
- The quaint thatched building outside is now used as a vestry, but was once a Sunday School.

### **Dartmeet**

- This is about 3 miles west of Buckland in the Moor, at 672733.



- It is a beautiful area where the East Dart River and West Dart River meet to become the Dart River.
- There are parts of an ancient clapper bridge, which was damaged beyond repair in a flood of 1826.
  - The road bridge had been built in 1792, and it was consequently decided not to rebuild the ancient bridge.

### **Princetown**

- This is about 5 miles west of Dartmeet, at 590735.
- At 1,300 feet, it is the highest town in England.
- In the 1700s, Thomas Tyrwhitt ("ti-rit"), who was Lord Warden of the Stannaries and Secretary of the Duchy of Cornwall, decided to transform part of Dartmoor to become farmland.
  - The severe weather and open area caused Tyrwhitt's plans to fail, so he altered them to include the now-infamous prison.
  - The town became devoted to the prison and the housing of its officers. Prison officers are now allowed to live outside the area, and the housing is now used more by the farming community.

continued.....  
**Day 5** (continued)

### **Princetown** (continued)

- **Dartmoor Prison**

- This was built in 1806 to house French prisoners of war, captured in the struggle with Napoleon.



- When Britain was at war with the USA over maritime rights, between 1812 and 1815, many captured Americans were confined here. The so-called 'Dartmoor Rebellion' occurred when inmates revolted for their mistreatment. Many were killed and wounded.
- After hostilities ceased with France and the USA, the building was not used, until it became an ordinary prison in 1850. Since then, it has housed many notorious criminals. It currently holds about 600 inmates.
- Various inmates have escaped into the bleak, inhospitable surroundings. All have been recaptured, except for Frank 'the mad axeman' Mitchell, who escaped in 1966, aged 37.
- **Dartmoor Prison Museum**
  - From the centre of the town, this is just after the prison entrance, on the left.
  - It covers all aspects of prison life over the centuries, including cells, locks, uniforms and types of employment.
  - There is an interesting array of weapons, which have been confiscated from prisoners.
  - There is also a section of old agricultural and mining implements, related to the prison.
  - A video presentation gives a history of prison life, and reform.
  - It is not open on Sundays and Mondays.

### **Merrivale walk**

- *This starts about 3 miles northwest of Princetown, at 553750.*
- *It is a 1 mile return walk, ascending about 30 feet - most of which is the bank up from the road.*
- *It goes to reputedly the best collection of ancient stones on Dartmoor.*
- *From the small parking area, about 0.5 mile east of the hamlet of Merrivale, walk straight uphill onto the moor.*
- *On the moor top, cross over a small leat, with its miniature bridge.*
- *There is then a double Stone Row, stretching about 250 yards eastwards.*
- *Continue walking in the same direction, to a well defined Stone Circle, and a Standing Stone.*

continued.....  
**Day 5** (continued)

### **Wistman's Wood walk**

- *This starts at Two Bridges, about 4 miles east of Merrivale, at 609751.*
  - *There is a parking area, opposite the Two Bridges Hotel, about 100 yards east of the bridge.*



- *It is a 3 miles return walk, slowly ascending about 175 feet.*
- *From the parking area, head north along a clear track, following the line of the stream to your left.*
  - *Crockern Tor can be seen about 0.5 mile to your right as you walk north, at 616757.*
  - *This is the old meeting place of the original Tinnners' Parliament, but nothing remains now.*
- *At Wistman's Wood there are ancient oak trees, thought to date from the 1300s. They are stunted and gnarled, with age and the severe weather.*
  - *They are a small surviving part of the ancient Royal Forest of Devon, and have avoided being damaged by grazing because of the accumulation of rocks in which they grow.*
  - *The wood is an important site for rare lichens, ferns and mosses. Please tread carefully, as you enjoy this extraordinary small area.*

### Powder Mills

- This is about 2 miles northeast of Two Bridges, at 629769.
- The village of Powder Mills is now a private settlement of just a few houses and a pottery studio.
  - The pottery studio has a few details and photographs of the old gunpowder factory.
- On the left side of the road to the village, there is an old proving barrel, which was used to test each batch of gunpowder.
  - It is more easily seen (on your right) when returning to the main road.
- The actual Powder Mills gunpowder factory was built in 1844, and was powered by water.
  - It produced gunpowder mainly for copper and tin quarries, and employed 100 people.
  - It closed in 1897, after dynamite had been discovered, and there was a general decline in the mining industry.
  - Making gunpowder was a dangerous occupation. The buildings were constructed very substantially of granite, but had turf roofs. In the event of an explosion, the roof was blown off, and sideways damage to other buildings was minimised. An explosion in 1857 caused damage costing £500 - there is no mention of human injury.
- *There is no right of way from the village of Powder Mills to the old gunpowder factory, but there is a footpath from opposite a parking area marked 'Lich Way', about 0.75 mile east of the turning to the village. The path can be rather boggy.*

### Ashburton

- This is about 8 miles southeast of Powder Mills, at 760700.
- See Day 6 for details.

### Overnight around Ashburton

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**Day 6**

Date.....

## **Start the day in Ashburton**

### **Ashburton**

- This is the largest town within Dartmoor National Park, and was once a prosperous town, based on tin mining and wool.
  - It is one of the four Stannary Towns, being designated to stamp and tax tin since 1285.
  - The River Ashburn was the site for many woollen mills.
- Since 820 AD, there has been a Saxon official called a Portreeve.
  - The Portreeve is the only person enabled by Act of Parliament to represent the Monarch in legal matters.
  - He is elected each year, together with Ale Tasters, Bread Weighers and a Bailiff.
  - The office is now a charitable function to attend fund-raising events and represent the town.
- There is a weekly market in the Town Hall, each Tuesday morning.
  - There is an annual Carnival Week at the end of June.
  - There is also an 'Ale Tasting & Bread Weighing Ceremony' on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of July each year.
    - This relates to the effects of the Magna Carta in 1215, which set down rights and justices for English citizens.
    - Formerly, there was no control over the quality or price of ale and bread - or of other commodities.
    - Ashburton has records from the 1200s of purveyors of bad ale being fined.
- The kerbstones in the main streets are made of various shades of granite from the nearby quarries. Locally, they are called Ashburton Marble, and show their colours best when wet.
- In 1834, William Wills was born here. In 1861, together with Robert Burke, they were the first to cross Australia from south to north. They died on their return journey, from a lack of food and water.
- **North Street**
  - **The Mermaid Inn**
    - This is almost on the corner of West Street, and is no longer an inn, but has a distinctive granite arch.
    - In 1646, General Sir Thomas Fairfax, the Civil War Roundhead leader, lodged here and had his headquarters.
  - **House of Cards**
    - This is 50 yards from West Street. It was a 1600s gaming club, but is now a grocery shop.
    - The face-hung slates on the front are cut in the design of playing cards.

continued.....  
**Day 6** (continued)

### **Ashburton** (continued)

- **East Street**
  - **Ashburton Museum**

- This is opposite North Street.
- It is open on some afternoons each week during the summer.
- Church of St Andrew
  - This was originally built in the 1100s, but was completely rebuilt in the 1400s.
- St Gudela's Well
  - This is past the Church of St Andrew, continuing to the top of the hill. Then turn left down Old Totnes Road, and it is at the bottom of the hill, just before the bridge.
  - St Gudela is the ancient patroness of the blind, and water from the well is reputed to be good for weak eyes.
  - The 1300s granite cross by the spring was removed prior to 1510. In 1933, it was reinstalled, after its discovery being used as a farm gatepost.

### River Dart Country Park

- The entrance to this is about 2 miles west of Ashburton, at 742697.
- It is a residential centre, based at Holne Park and house.
  - It is particularly aimed at children, with an adventure playground and educational visits.
- *There are excellent walks in the extensive parklands, particularly along the River Dart valley.*
- It is open April - September from 10:00am to 6:00pm, during which times there is an admission charge. Outside these times, there is free entry for walking.

### Holne ("hown" or "holn")

- This is about 2 miles southwest of the River Dart Country Park, at 705696.
- It is a quiet, charming village, with its church dating from about 1204.
- Church House Inn was built by the church in about 1329, to provide accommodation for visitors.
- Charles Kingsley, author of *The Water Babies* and *Westward Ho!* was born at the rectory in 1819.

Dartmoor ponies roam freely on the open moorland.



continued.....  
**Day 6** (continued)

### Buckfastleigh ("buck-farst-lee")

- This is about 3 miles southeast of Holne, at 736662.
- It is a market town, once famous for wool and cloth.

- In 1333, it had its first weekly market.
- The neighbouring village of Buckfast (see next page) is now more a 'suburb' of Buckfastleigh.
- **The Valiant Soldier**
  - This museum is at the lower end of Fore Street, in the town centre, next to the Tourist Information Centre, almost at the junction with Station Street.
  - A former pub, it is a 'time-capsule', caught in the 1960s. It had been a pub for over 200 years.
  - The former owners closed its doors, continued to live upstairs, but left the pub exactly as it was - with furniture, glasses, bottles, packets, and even money in the till. There is also a kitchen and scullery.
  - It is an authentic working man's pub of the 1940s and 1950s - before the days of jukeboxes and pub meals.
  - Upstairs is the original living accommodation of the former owners.
- **Church of the Holy Trinity**
  - Access to this is about 150 yards from The Valiant Soldier.
    - From The Valiant Soldier, walk past the Tourist Information Centre, and turn left into Station Road.
    - Walk over the River Mardle bridge. Just past a row of cottages, there is a set of steps on the left up to the Church.
  - The 196 cobbled steps are called the Devil's Steps.
    - They apparently were high enough to keep the Devil out during the night, when he supposedly reversed the building work done each day on the Church.
  - The church was built in the 1200s, but was destroyed by fire in 1992, in an arson attack.
  - One small building by the church escaped the fire - that which encloses the tomb of Squire Richard Cabell of Brooke, who died in 1677.
    - Legend claims that he was so evil, his tomb had to be enclosed to stop his spirit haunting the area. When he died, black hounds apparently ran across Dartmoor.
    - This legend is claimed to have been one of the inspirations for Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.
- **South Devon Railway**
  - This is about 0.25 mile east of the town centre.
    - From the foot of the Devil's Steps, turn left along Station Street. After about 100 yards, turn left along Dart Bridge Road. After a further 100 yards, turn right down a lane, which goes under the A38 road.
    - The station is about 300 yards along the lane.
  - It provides steam train excursions through 7 miles of the River Dart valley to Staverton and Totnes.
  - The station was built 1872 on the South Devon Railway branch line.
  - In 1897, it was transferred to the Great Western Railway.
  - In 1962, it was closed by British Rail.
  - In 1969, it was re-opened for tourists.
  - There are frequent daily journeys in the summer.

continued.....  
**Day 6** (continued)

### **Buckfastleigh** (continued)

- **Buckfast Butterflies & Dartmoor Otter Sanctuary**

- This is very close to the South Devon Railway, and is well signposted.



- It has butterflies from around the world, together with chrysalises - which you may be lucky enough to see hatching into butterflies.
  - There is a variety of butterflies, including the Owl Butterfly with a wingspan of 6 inches. They all fly freely in the large, landscaped hothouse.
  - There are also caterpillars, Terrapin turtles, large Koi carp, and a colony of leaf-eating ants from Mexico.
  - Birds, such as African finch and quail, are kept to eat predators.
- Different species of otter are housed in various outdoor pools, and can be seen from an underwater viewing area. They can also be seen sleeping in their holts (nests).
  - Feeding times are at 11:30am, 2:00pm and 4:30pm each day.
- It is open daily during the summer months.

## **Buckfast**

- This is almost a suburb of Buckfastleigh, about 1 mile north, at 740672.
- **Buckfast Abbey**

- This monastery was founded in 1018 by King Canute.
- It is now a thriving Benedictine Monastery, with free admission for visitors.



- In 1148, it became a Cistercian Monastery.
- In 1539, it closed during the Dissolution, under the orders of Henry VIII, and the site became derelict.
- In 1806, a mill owner bought the site, but became insolvent after he had built his mansion - which is now part of the Abbey.
- In 1882, French Benedictine monks returned here.
- In 1907, four monks began to rebuild the Abbey Church, and their work was completed in 1938.
- The Abbey is renowned for the Buckfast Bee, which is world-famous amongst bee-keepers, for being resilient to disease, and is not easily provoked into attack. It has been the life's work of one monk.

continued.....  
**Day 6** (continued)

## **Buckfast** (continued)

- **Buckfast Abbey** (continued)

- In more recent years, the monks have been skilled at making stained glass, and have supplied over 150 churches.
- New gardens have been created - including a Physic Garden, a Herb Garden and a Lavender Garden, which is now the National Lavender Collection.
- There is an audio-visual presentation, exhibition and restaurant, together with a bookshop, a gift shop selling the famous tonic wine and honey, and a Monastic Produce shop.
- The monastic quarters are not open to visitors.
- Close to Buckfast is a large mill, which washes and prepares wool. It is then transferred elsewhere for the production of Axminster carpets.

### Rider's Rings walk

- *This starts at Shipley Bridge, about 4 miles southwest of Buckfastleigh, at 681629.*
  - *Shipley Bridge is a tiny farming community, where the road reaches far into the centre of the moor. Consequently, it is a very popular place for walkers.*



- *At the small parking area, there are the remains of an old clay works, which look more like the remains of a castle. The area around the River Avon is very attractive- ideal for picnics and relaxing.*
- *The walk is 4 miles return, slowly ascending about 250 feet.*
- *It starts at the parking area, and follows the River Avon northwards, along a water authority private road.*
- *The first mile of this walk is along a steep-sided valley, with the remains of settlements. There are banks of rhododendrons along the river, making it a good walk for early summer.*
- *The second mile is onto open moorland.*
- *The walk ends opposite Rider's Rings settlement enclosures, which are more easily seen in the spring and early summer, before the bracken has started to grow.*
- *To see the Avon Dam Reservoir, walk along a wide grass track to the right for an extra 0.75 mile (1.5 miles return). The dam was constructed in 1954, amid much controversy, as it is within the National Park.*

continued.....  
**Day 6** (continued)

### Hartford Moor walk

- *This starts just west of Bittaford, about 4 miles southwest of Shipley Bridge, at 658573.*
  - *It is best to take the road to this point, under a railway bridge at 660566, from the B3213 road. This road climbs about 300 feet in 0.75 mile. Here, there is parking for about 12 vehicles.*



- *The path goes deep into Hartford Moor, and any distance is worthwhile. To go as far as Butterdon Hill (see below) is a 4 miles return walk, steadily ascending about 475 feet.*
- *It goes into barren, desolate areas in the heart of Dartmoor, and provides an insight to the severe and windswept environment.*
- *The walk goes northwards, following an old railway track, and gives good views over the moorland.*
- *Along the walk there is a long Stone Row of upright standing stones, and also two shorter ones crossing it at 90°. There are various short Stone Rows, Stone Circles, Hut Circles and remains of settlements, especially from tin mining.*
  - *Much of the Stone Rows is not obvious, but between Western Beacon and Butterdon Hill a row of about eight standing stones can be seen.*

### Ivybridge

- This is about 2 miles west of Bittaford, at 635565.
- It is a market town with the usual facilities, such as banks and shops.
- It is a starting point for the Two Moors Way, through Dartmoor to Exmoor.
- *A 1.5 miles return walk starts from the Tourist Information Centre, and is reasonably level.*
  - *With the Tourist Information Centre on your left, walk past the footbridge and take the path on the left, which becomes Costly Street.*
  - *At the junction, turn left over New Bridge, and immediately right alongside the River Erme.*
  - *After about 0.25 mile, take the woodland walk through Longtimber Wood to the new railway viaduct. The original viaduct, built by Brunel in 1848 for the Great Western Railway, is now reduced to a few pillars.*
  - *This walk could be extended as far as you wish.*

### Overnight around Ivybridge

Plymouth is steeped in history, and was used for many famous voyages. It has a special significance for Americans.

Approximate miles = 20

Today's map numbers - **202 & 201**

**Leave Ivybridge** west on the A38 road.

**Saltram** ("sɔrl-trum")

- **Note:** This is included because it is a National Trust property. However, it is of no specific relevance to Dartmoor, and does not open until 12 noon. If less time is allocated to Plymouth, then it is worth a visit.
- This is 3-5 miles east of Plymouth, and 2 miles west of Plympton, between the A38 and A379 roads. The entrance is at 529549.
  - It is not possible to gain access to Saltram directly from the A38 road.
  - Access is from the 'Marsh Mills' interchange, about 8 miles from Ivybridge. The route is clearly signposted, returning back along the B3416 for 0.5 mile, and then taking a right turn.
- It is a fine Georgian House, built in the 1700s, with extraordinary plasterwork by Robert Adam (1728-1792), and furniture by Thomas Chippendale (1718-1779). It was owned by the wealthy gentry Parker family until 1957.
- There are many examples of the original, fashionable, 1700s Chinese decorations.
- The 1700s Great Kitchen is a feature, with original equipment. It has an almost unique fan-driven spit. The heat in the chimney drives a fan, which in turn drives a set of gears down to a large spit, in front of the fire. The fire bed can be extended or contracted, depending on the size of carcass on the spit.
- There is an excellent Orangery in the garden. The Chapel houses a gallery of art by local artists.
- The 400 acres of magnificent gardens extend down to the River Plym, and have various follies, shrubberies and specimen trees.
- The house was used in the 1996 film of Jane Austin's *Sense and Sensibility*. It was the Dashwood's family home of Norland Park.
- This is a National Trust property and opening times should be checked on 01752-333500, or visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk). It is usually open in the afternoons, but generally not open on Fridays or Saturdays.

**Plymouth** ("pli-muth")

- This has a great seafaring history, as it had one of Europe's deepest anchorages.
- The city of Plymouth is made up of three original villages. One of these was Sutton, and the name is still recognised in Sutton Harbour.

continued.....  
**Day 7** (continued)

**Plymouth** (continued)

- The name is derived from 'plym' meaning 'plum', as the area was used for plum-growing.
  - Plymouth has been spelt in many differing way - even on the same map, and it appears that 'y' and 'i' were almost interchangeable.
  - In 1086, in the Domesday Book, the original village of Sutton was called Sutona, which could mean 'southern tree'.
    - The Domesday Book ("dooms-day") of 1086, listed all properties, in order to assess tax due to King William the Conqueror.
- Francis Drake and John Hawkins added to its importance in the 1500s.
  - Francis Drake sailed from here to defeat the Spanish Armada in 1588.
  - Between the mid-1500s and mid-1600s, the population doubled, as Plymouth became a prosperous, busy port.
- The Pilgrim Fathers set sail from here in 1620 to start a new life in the New World aboard the 'Mayflower'.
- Captain Cooke launched his voyages of discovery from here in the 1700s.
- Many convicts were shipped from here to Australia.
- Plymouth was very badly damaged during World War II, and much has now been rebuilt.
  - The burnt-out empty shell of the Church of Charles the Martyr has been left as a memorial to the adversities suffered by the city. It is in the centre of a traffic island on entering Plymouth from the east.
  - Fortunately, much of the historic areas escaped damage.
- It still has the largest ship-building facility in western Europe.
- The Sound - the channel of water between river and sea - is used more than ever, with the Royal Navy being the largest user.
  - The Naval Dockyard of Devonport, founded in 1691, is the largest in Britain.

### ***Plymouth - 1 day walking tour***

It is suggested that you park near to The Barbican, which is clearly signposted. There is a Barbican multi-storey parking area - on the opposite side of the harbour from The Barbican(!), near to the National Marine Aquarium - and this provides quick, easy access to places of interest.

The price of the car park appears to be high, but a special offer has been available previously, which makes the parking very cheap.

- From the Barbican parking area, walk past the National Maritime Aquarium (as it does not open until 10.00am), and over the footbridge, across Sutton Harbour. Following the route below will return you to the National Marine Aquarium.
- ***The Barbican***
  - This is the old town of Sutton, on the opposite side of the footbridge.
  - The small area was home to many 1500s merchants and captains, and the narrow, winding streets have many old buildings.
  - It includes the waterfront area where many epic voyages started.
  - Pleasure trips are available from here, around the docklands and warships.

continued.....

**Day 7** (continued)

***Plymouth*** (continued)

- **Pilgrims Point - The Mayflower Steps**
  - This is at The Barbican, at the waterfront.
  - Here is a stone arch, together with a memorial placed in the pavement. It commemorates the Pilgrim Fathers setting sail from Sutton Harbour for the New World in 1620, to escape from religious persecution.
  - A replica Mayflower set sail from here for New England, in 1957. (This is featured in the *itforit* New England itinerary.)
  - There are many plaques set in the wall here, commemorating famous voyages.
    - One is to the Tolpuddle Martyrs, regarded as the founders of British Trades Unionism, who returned here from Botany Bay, Australia in 1837, having been pardoned.
- **Plymouth Mayflower**
  - This building is to the right (north, inland) of Pilgrim's Point - The Mayflower Steps.
  - It is a museum with a film and exhibits about the area, including a history of the harbour from 1220.
  - The emphasis is on merchants and their families, together with emigration to the New World, and the Pilgrim Fathers.
- **Island House**
  - This is to the right (north, inland) of Plymouth Mayflower.
  - It was built in the 1500s, and is where some of the Pilgrim Fathers spent their last night in England.
    - On the outside wall is a list of all the people on board the Mayflower.
  - It is now the Tourist Information Centre, from where tickets for the Royal Citadel can be purchased (see next page).
- **Southside Street**
  - This is to the right, and behind Island House.
  - **Jacka's Bakery**
    - This very small shop is at 38 Southside Street.
    - It is the oldest bakery in Britain, and is believed to have made the ship's biscuits for the Mayflower.
  - **Coates Gin Distillery**
    - This is at 60 Southside Street.
    - It is the only place in the world able to make Plymouth Gin, which has a distinctive flavour from the ingredients called 'botanicals'. London Gin can be made anywhere in the world.
      - The Dutch first produced gin, providing it to troops before battle - hence 'Dutch courage'.
    - It was established in 1793, in the same premises. A copper pot still has been used for distilling for 100 years.
    - Part of the building is thought to have been a Black Friars' monastery, built in 1425.
    - A 40-minute guided tour is available.

Return to Island House.

continued.....  
**Day 7** (continued)

- New Street

- This is to the left, and behind Island House.
- It is a quaint, narrow, cobbled street, built in 1581 - then called Rag Street. It has many timber framed and jettied houses, where the upper floors overhang.



- Elizabethan House

- This is at 32 New Street.
- It is a late-1500s typical Tudor House.
- The staircase is a spiral around an old ship's mast.
- It provides a living history experience, based in 1620, with costumed interpreters.
- Period furnishings are also in each room.

- Elizabethan Garden

- This is at 40 New Street.
- Wealthy merchants once lived here with servants' homes built in their back gardens.
- When the area became overcrowded, and the merchants moved out, the area became a slum.
- The servants' homes have been removed in recent years, and this peaceful garden has been created behind the original homes.

Return to Island House, and continue along the waterfront for a further 150 yards.

Turn right up Lambhay Hill.

- Royal Citadel

- This is about 150 yards up Lambhay Hill, on the left.
- **Note:** Tickets can only be purchased from the Tourist Information Centre at Island House (see previous page).
- It is a massive fortress built next to The Hoe between 1666 and 1675 by Charles II, after the Civil War of 1642 to 1646.
  - It was claimed to be defending the harbour, but many of the guns were threateningly pointing towards the town, because it had supported the Parliamentarians during the Civil War.
- It is home to the 29 Commando Regiment, Royal Artillery.
- It has 0.75 mile of ramparts with good views of The Barbican and the Sound.
- The wonderful Baroque Main Gate is of Portland stone with a niche, which originally housed a bust of Charles II. The bust was replaced with cannonballs, on the Citadel's surrender.
- There is the Royal Chapel of St Katherine.
- Also on display is an Argentine gun, captured in the Falkland Islands in 1982.
- Guided tours of 1.25 hours are available in the afternoon, between May and September.

Turn left out of the Royal Citadel.

continued.....  
**Day 7** (continued)

- **The Hoe**

- This is immediately outside the walls of the Royal Citadel.



- It is an open promontory area ('hoe' means high place, or promontory) above the waterfront, and is the famous area where Francis Drake was playing bowls as the Spanish Armada advanced.
  - It is thought that he did not interrupt the game, as the wind and tide were in the wrong direction, and so a battle was not probable for some time.
- Francis Drake's statue is based on the one at Tavistock, his home town (see Day 9).
- Drake's Island can be seen in The Sound. It is now used for military purposes, but has previously been used as a prison, a fort, and as an adventure centre.
  - It is thought that Francis Drake moored here, on the return from his round-the-world trip, which was sponsored by Queen Elizabeth I. He needed to find out if she was still alive, and that he was still in favour.
- Across The Sound, 2 miles out, is Plymouth Breakwater.
  - It was built between 1812 and 1840 to create a more sheltered harbour.
  - It is 1 mile long with a lighthouse on the west end, and a cage on the east end - a safe place for shipwrecked sailors.

- **Smeaton's Tower**

- This is in the centre of The Hoe, and is part of the old Eddystone Lighthouse, which stood 14 miles out to sea on the treacherous Eddystone Rocks.
- It was in continuous use from 1759 to 1882, and was only replaced because the rock on which it stood was eroded by the sea.
- It was designed by Smeaton to resemble an oak tree - broad at the base and tapering towards the top.
- The construction design was considered to be a conquest of the elements, as stone structures would normally be swept away. The previous two lighthouses had been destroyed by the sea and fire.
  - The foundation blocks were dovetailed together, and then pegged with oak bolts.

- **Plymouth Dome (now closed)**

- This was below The Hoe, close to the seafront.
- It was a superb hi-tech time-travel experience, covering 400 years of Plymouth's history, including great voyages around the world, and the city's devastation during World War II.
  - There was a good audio-visual presentation, and also live radar and satellite communication hands-on opportunities.
  - A typical 1500s street had the appropriate smell.
- Currently, it is being considered whether to re-open with a restaurant, and so it is worth checking if it has re-opened.

continued.....  
**Day 7** (continued)

Return uphill to The Hoe, and continue walking away from the sea, past the Naval War Memorial, and along Armada Way.

- **Guildhall**

- This is on the right corner of Royal Parade.
- It was built in 1873, there having been a Guildhall on the same site since the 1400s. It was badly damaged during World War II.
- The Coat of Arms of Plymouth is on The Hoe side of the building. It was transferred from the poorhouse in the 1630s.
- It is built more like a cathedral, with beautiful painted windows, and magnificent statues towards the rear - along Royal Parade.

From the rear of The Guildhall, continue past the Church of St Andrew, turn right down St Andrew's Street, and up some steps to the rear entrance of the church.

- **Prysten House**

- This is opposite the rear entrance to the Church of St Andrew.
- It was built in 1498 for a wine merchant, Tomas Yogge, and is the oldest house in Plymouth.
- The name is derived from 'Priests House'.
- The entrance on the upper floor has a memorial to American prisoners, captured in 1812.
- The lower floor - at street level - is now commercial premises.
- Opening times are rather vague, depending on finding somebody holding the keys in the Church of St Andrew.

Return down the steps into St Andrew's Street, and turn right.

- **Merchant's House**

- This is in St Andrew's Street, immediately behind the Magistrates' Court.
- It is a four storey Elizabethan building, from the 1500s, and houses a museum of Plymouth's history.
- Its name was derived from a Merchant Adventurer, who owned the house in the early-1600s.



- The rooms of the museum are 'themed' on the nursery rhyme *Linker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor*. They depict the social history of Plymouth, particularly the differences between the wealthy and poor.
  - Each room depicts the trade named in the rhyme - except for Beggarman, which has been changed to Apothecary, as a pharmacist also once lived in the house.
  - The Apothecary's room is his complete shop.
  - The Barbican Ducking Stool is displayed, which was used to discharge punishment at the quayside.

Follow the clear signposts back to The Barbican.

continued.....  
**Day 7** (continued)

- **National Marine Aquarium**
  - This is just across the Sutton Harbour footbridge from The Barbican.
  - The displays are set out on different levels.
    - The visit starts with modest displays at the upper level. As the visit progresses, the displays become bigger and bolder, culminating in the massive Shark Theatre tank.
  - Feeding times are displayed at the ticket desk.
  - There are excellent displays of a stream, estuary, sea shore, and reef habitats.
  - There is an excellent section on seahorses - the largest collection in Europe.
  - The opening time is 10:00am every day.

**Overnight around Plymouth**

Today, you could take in a modern fort, china clay, water supply, White Rajahs and Sir Francis Drake's home.

Approximate miles = 45

Today's map numbers - **201 & 202**

**Leave Plymouth** north on the A386 road.

### **Crownhill Fort**

- This is on the northern outskirts of Plymouth, just off the A386 road, at 487593.



- From the A386 road, take the exit 0.5 mile after the A38 interchange - there is a signpost, but it is very close to the exit. Turn left here into Crownhill Road. After about 100 yards, turn right at a small traffic island, following the small fort-symbol signs.
- It was built between 1863 and 1872, to protect the Royal Dockyard at Devonport, Plymouth.
  - Palmerston Forts, named after Prime Minister Lord Palmerston, were built along the south coast to protect England from possible attack by the French.
  - This fort had over 30 huge cannon directed inland, towards Dartmoor - a stealthy inland attack was expected. It was part of a series of forts and batteries north of Plymouth.
  - There are only two surviving Palmerston Forts - the other is at Dover - but Crownhill Fort is the only one open to the public, and is exceptionally well preserved.
  - This was the most advanced fort of its kind, and cost £76,409 to build. It was never used in action, as new technologies made it redundant. However, it was retained by the army for over 100 years, until 1986.
- There are massive cannon, in restored emplacements.



- There is the only Moncrieff Counterweight Disappearing Gun in the world. In combat, it was raised over a parapet, fired, and then dropped down again.
- Special cannon-firing events take place during the summer.

continued.....  
**Day 8** (continued)

### **Crownhill Fort** (continued)

- There are almost 0.66 of a mile of tunnels, passages, rifle galleries and magazines.

- The ingenious design can only be understood by walking around the fort and its passages.
  - The ammunition was stored close to the gun emplacements.
  - Men could move around the fort, under cover.
  - Quarters and passages are hidden beneath massive ramparts, built of concrete and earth.
- It provides a good insight into the Victorian soldiers' way of life in the 1890s, with a guardroom, sergeant's quarters, barrack rooms, prison cell, and a display about the Devon and Dorset Regiment.
- Its most recent military use has been as an assembly point in 1944 for the D-Day landings, and in 1982 for the Falklands war.

### Dewerstone Rock walk

- *This starts about 4 miles northeast of Crownhill Fort, at 534637.*
- *It is a 1.5 miles return walk through woods, and up to a tor for excellent views. It rapidly ascends about 450 feet.*



- *The ruins in the parking area are of china clay drying kilns. The china clay was transported here by water, in an underground pipe from Shaugh Moor (see below).*
- *From the parking area, cross the footbridge over the River Meavy, and follow the footpath of granite boulders.*
  - *Where the granite boulders finish, continue uphill.*
  - *When you arrive at some crags in the trees on your right, this is the top of Dewerstone Rock, which drops down to the River Plym below. It is popular with rock climbers.*
  - *Continue uphill to your left. This section is steep.*
  - *Eventually, you will come out onto a tor on Wigford Down. From here, there are wonderful views over the moor, and also towards Plymouth and The Sound.*

### Shaugh Moor china clay area ("shor")

- Access for a view of this is from Cadover Bridge, which is about 2 miles northeast of Dewerstone Rock, at 555647.
  - A public road goes southeast from here to Blackaton Cross at 571632. After this point it becomes a private road, with a gate. At the end of the road, a better view of the area is available if you walk about 20 yards to the right, to look over some raised ground.
  - Along the roadside, there are some excellent, ancient granite marker stones.
- Shaugh Moor is a massive china clay quarrying area, extending about 2 miles south to Lee Moor. The area is about 6 square miles.
- China clay has been quarried here since 1830. The clay is moved to vast settling tanks, where the heavier impurities sink in the water. The purer china clay stays in suspension in the water, and settles later.
- It is an ugly blot on the beautiful landscape, but china clay is valuable.
  - China clay, or kaolin, is a white clay, which does not lose its colour when fired. It is not very pliable, and is used for producing fine china and porcelain, paper and cosmetics.

continued.....  
**Day 8** (continued)

### Burrator Reservoir

- This is about 2 miles north of Cadover Bridge, at 555680.

- Sir Francis Drake is famous for his sailing escapades around the world, and his encounter with the Spanish Armada, but he also did much good for the people of Plymouth.
  - In 1589, Plymouth was short of water. While he was Mayor, Francis Drake financed an 18 mile leat to take water to the city. It was used for 300 years.
  - The beginning of the leat was at a position now in the depths of this reservoir.
- There were problems with the leat water freezing. Also, in times of drought, Plymouth was without water. A reservoir was required, and work commenced here in 1893. It was enlarged just 20 years later, raising the water level by 10 feet.
- A road goes round the perimeter of the reservoir, through attractive woodland.
- *There are many walking opportunities from the road, particularly into the woodland.*

### Sheepstor

- This is about 0.25 mile south of Burrator Reservoir, at 560677.
- Church of St Leonard
  - This 1500s church has an unusual carving above its 1600s entrance. It is of an hourglass, in addition to a skull, with ears of corn in its eyes, and bones in its mouth. It was intended to remind worshippers that their death would inevitably arrive, and consequently to remain faithful.
  - Inside the church, there is an excellent rood screen - although it is a 1900s copy of the original. There are also deeply carved pew ends.
  - The church is a shrine for people from Sarawak, Malasia, as the three 'White Rajahs' were buried here.
    - The Aberdeen granite tomb of Sir James Brooke is in the churchyard. He was the first British Rajah of Sarawak, for which he was made a KCB (Knight Commander of the Bath). He had retired to Sheepstor in 1863, and died in 1868.
    - The other two 'White Rajahs' buried here are Charles Anthony Brooke, and Charles Vyner de Windt Brooke.

### Meavy ("mee-vee")

- This is about 1 mile southwest of Sheepstor, at 540673.
- The village green has two oak trees.
  - One oak tree is only about 100 years old, having been planted here after World War I.
  - The other is considered to be about 800-1,000 years old. It is reputed to be the last Dartmoor Dancing Tree, where the branches were cut to hold a platform for musicians and dancers at times of festivals - particularly May Day.

continued.....  
**Day 8** (continued)

### Buckland Abbey

- This is about 3 miles west of Meavy, at 486667.



- This was originally a Cistercian Monastery, built in 1278. It was dissolved in 1539.
  - Between 1535 and 1540, Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries of England, as they were notorious for their wealth and corruption. He declared himself head of a new Church of England, separate from the Church of Rome.
- In 1541, Sir Richard Grenville, a rival of Sir Francis Drake, bought it for £233, converted it into a house, and lived here.
- In 1583, Sir Francis Drake bought it for £3,400, having leased it for two years. This was his home for the rest of his life.
  - In 1596, he died of dysentery and was buried at sea, in the Caribbean.
  - He died childless, aged about 54, having married twice.
  - The house was retained by his family until 1946.
  - In 1938, a serious fire in the upper floor damaged the roof, but further damage was avoided, and the roof was repaired.
- There is a self-guided tour of the house.
- There are many fine rooms, including a 1500s kitchen.
- The famous Drake's Drum is on show, which is claimed to beat whenever England is in danger.
- There are exhibitions about life in a monastery, the dissolution and the Armada.
- The 1300s Great Barn is one of the largest in Britain.
- There are beautiful grounds, a herb garden, and craft workshops.
- This is a National Trust property and opening times should be checked on 01822-853607, or visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk). It is open all the year, but generally not on Thursdays.

### **Tavistock**

- This is about 5 miles north of Buckland Abbey, at 480745.
- See Day 9 for details.

### **Overnight around Tavistock**

A famous market town, and learn about copper and tin mining - all inextricably linked with Dartmoor.

Approximate miles = 15

Today's map number - 201

## **Start the day in Tavistock**

### **Tavistock**

- This is a market town, dating back to Saxon times of around 700-800 AD. It is the largest town in West Devon, and its prosperity came from the wool, tin and copper industries.
- In 1105, the first Pannier Market was held here, when Henry I granted a Market Charter. Locals could bring their produce here in panniers to sell.
  - It is still held every Friday, in the 1800s Pannier Market building, behind Bedford Square. The building is used for various different markets on other days - Tuesdays are antiques and crafts, Wednesdays are Victorian effects.
- In 1305, it became a Stannary Town, to weigh, stamp and charge tax on tin.
- In 1796, copper was discovered, and the town suddenly became very important again. The largest of the copper mines were worked outside the town, but some were close to the centre.
- By 1900, the copper was exhausted, and the town reverted to a normal market town.
- The biggest landowners in the area have been the Dukes and Earls of Bedford. They have generously contributed to the development of the town, and elsewhere.
- **Bedford Square**
  - This magnificent mid-1800s showpiece - for which the town is indebted to the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Bedford - is in the centre of the town. It has the Town Hall, Court Gate, Guildhall and Police Station, Bedford Hotel, and the Parish Church.
- **Benedictine Abbey (remains)**
  - This was founded in 974 AD by King Edgar's brother-in-law, Ordulf. It was in the area, which is now approximately Bedford Square and the Parish Church.
  - It was once a massive Abbey, almost as large as Exeter Cathedral, and was once the wealthiest Abbey in southwest England.
  - There is now very little left, except for five obvious parts in and around Bedford Square.
  - Court Gate, in Bedford Square, was the main entrance to the Abbey. It was refurbished in 1824, and now forms part of the Guildhall and Police Station group of buildings.
  - The tower of the Parish Church was once an Abbey gateway.
  - A small L-shaped section of wall is in the Parish Church grounds, near Plymouth Road.
  - The Great Western Gate is next to the Bedford Hotel, almost opposite the L-shaped wall. The Abbot's 1400s residence is also attached to it.
    - It is more popularly called Betsy Grimbal's Tower, which is a corruption of The Blessed Grimwald, who was a saint in the 800s AD.
  - The Abbey Chapel, between Bedford Square and Abbey Bridge was originally the dining hall.

continued.....  
**Day 9** (continued)

### **Tavistock** (continued)

- **Parish Church of St Eustachius**

- This dates from the 1300s, and has a tower with a magnificent set of 10 bells, which are operated by a mechanical carillon.
- There is an ophicleide hanging on the tower wall, which was played in the tower gallery, before the organ was installed.
  - It is a brass instrument, with keys for notes and a rather coarse bass sound.
  - The name comes from the German 'ophis' (snake) and 'kleis' (key). It was a popular instrument in the 1800s, before the tuba was invented.
- A stone in the floor below the ophicleide commemorates Ordulf, who founded the Abbey. His supposed leg bones have been re-buried here.
- A roof boss near the organ has the three golden Tinnners' Rabbits.
- Close to the Tinnners' Rabbits is an 1876 stained glass window by Burne-Jones and William Morris.
- There is an interesting memorial to Judge Glanville, who died in 1600. In the memorial, a kneeling figure holds a skull, and there are three small headless children.
- The Altar table in the Clothworkers' Aisle (the south aisle) dates from the 1500s.
- The entire church has beautiful carved beams and bosses, together with superb carved oak, mid-1800s, pew ends - which are all different.
  - Three pew ends in the Clothworkers' Aisle have interesting carvings: a happy face, a sad face, and a minute white ivory mouse.
- **Drake Memorial**
  - This is on a traffic island in Plymouth Road, about 0.75 mile southwest of Bedford Square.
  - It was erected in 1883.
  - Sir Francis Drake was born in the early-1540s, at a farm in the hamlet of Crowndale, about 1.5 miles southwest of Tavistock. The location is private and no access is possible.

### **Morwellham Quay** ("mor-wel-ham")

- This is about 4 miles southwest of Tavistock at 445696.
  - From Tavistock, take the A390 road towards Liskeard.
  - After about 3 miles, turn left for Morwellham Quay. It is well signposted.



- Although it is not on Dartmoor, it provides an insight into the way of life for miners, allied trades and their families, relevant to the areas visited in this itinerary.
- Half a day is the minimum time that should be allocated here. More time may be necessary at peak tourist times.
- The name is derived from 'ham' meaning 'accessible land', and this was near to the village of Morwell.

continued.....  
**Day 9** (continued)

### **Morwellham Quay** (continued)

- It is a living history museum on the site on an old copper mine, and an inland port on the River Tamar.
- It was used as the location for the BBC's 'Edwardian Farm'. 12 1-hour programmes were filmed here, for showing in the autumn of 2010.



- The River Tamar is not only important as an ancient shipping passage, but it is used for much of its length as the boundary between Devon and Cornwall. Its source is about 5 miles from the north coast, and almost cuts Cornwall off as an island.
- Since 1970, it is being restored to depict its heyday of the 1840s to 1860s.
- It had been a centre for shipping for about 1,000 years, having been founded by Benedictine monks before 1066.
  - Over the centuries, tin, silver, lead, copper, manganese and arsenic have all played their part in the history of the village.
  - It was once the richest copper port in Queen Victoria's Empire. It employed over 200 people. In the 1850s, Morwellham was a more active port than Plymouth. The River Tamar had more shipping than the River Mersey.
  - In 1868, the copper was exhausted, and then arsenic was mined from the 1870s. Arsenic was used as an insecticide, and at one time there was said to be enough of it on the quayside to poison the world's population.
  - By 1900, Morwellham had been abandoned.
- It is a village with a port, a restored ketch, an inn, workshops, cottages with gardens, lime kilns, a school, an overhead railway, and a farm. There are also various indoor displays.
- There are guides in period costume, and shire horses working in the village.
- There are demonstrations such as barrel-making, rope-making and metal-testing.
- There is a wardrobe of 1860s clothes to try on, and many activities for children.
- There is an electric tramway into the 'George and Charlotte' copper mine. Visitors experience the mining conditions, as described by the guide, with light effects and models of miners. The mine was first worked in the early-1700s, and last worked in 1868.
- *There are riverside and other walks, particularly into a Wildlife Reserve, which is in an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'.*

## **Overnight around Tavistock**

A slower day today, with over 1,000 years of history, and beautiful walks.

Approximate miles = 35

Today's map numbers - **201 & 191**

**Leave Tavistock** north on a minor road.

### **Church of St Michael de Rupe / Brentor Church**

- This is about 4 miles north of Tavistock, at 472804.
  - **Note:** It is about 1 mile southwest of the village of North Brentor.
- It is a tiny church, perched at 1,100 feet on the outcrop of Brent Tor.



- It was built about 1130, with the tower being added in the 1400s.
- Legend claims that it was built by a merchant sailor, who survived a terrible storm at sea.
- The views are excellent from here, and on a clear day Plymouth Sound can be seen to the south, and Exmoor to the north.
  - Because of the good vantage point, it was used during World War II as a lookout position by the Home Guard.



### **Wheal Betsy** ("weel")

- This is about 2.5 miles east of Brentor Church, at 510815.
- It is just to one side of the A386 road, with a small lay-by, and gateway to provide access on foot, down to the ruins.
- This is the only remaining engine house of a mine on Dartmoor. The remains are some of the best preserved in Devon and Cornwall.
- Silver and lead were originally mined here, and then copper and arsenic. The mine closed in 1877.



- This engine house once contained a large beam pump, powered by steam. The boiler was heated by burning peat.
- 'Wheal' is a Cornish word, meaning 'mine'.

continued.....  
**Day 10** (continued)

### **Lydford** ("lyd-fud")

- This is about 2 miles north of Wheal Betsy, at 510847.
- It is a quiet, quaint, old village, with many cottages along its 1-mile-long street. There is a parking area opposite the Castle Inn and Hotel.
- It is thought there has been a settlement in this area since the 400s-600s AD. It became a very important town in the 900s AD.
- There was a mint here, producing coins in the reign of King Aethelred II, who died in 1016. It is unclear whether he was born in 968 or 979.
  - He is better known as 'Ethelred the Unready'. This title is derived from his ill-fortune in various battles, which lost England to the Danish Vikings. 'Unraed' or 'Uraed' was Old English for 'needing advice'.
  - Many of the minted coins were used to pay the Vikings to go home. They had settled into the country, but were considered to be undesirable.
  - Most of the remaining Lydford coins are now in the Royal Stockholm Museum.
- **Castle Inn and Hotel**
  - This was built in the 1500s, and was once the home of the Rector of the Church of St Petroc.
  - It features in Charles Kingsley's *Westward Ho!*
  - In the bar to the right of the entrance, there are some wall display cases with a small collection of coins minted at Lydford 1,000 years ago.
- **Lydford Castle**
  - This was built in 1195, as a prison for offenders against the Stannary laws and the hunting laws of the Royal Forest of Devon.
  - The stone keep still remains, and has a deep structure, down into the earth mound. Prior to the earth mound being built, the entrance was at an upper level, making the lowest floor level ideal as a prison.
  - In the 1300s, when it was used as a prison court, it is said that prisoners were hanged first, and tried later. This notorious system was named 'Lydford Law'.
  - It is maintained by English Heritage. This is no admission charge, and a leaflet is available in the Church of St Petroc (see next page).
- **Norman Castle**
  - This is behind the Church of St Petroc, and access is by a gate, between Lydford Castle and the church.
    - It is necessary to walk down the field, and then bear left to the far corner.
  - Built in the 1000s, it is in a perfect position on a spur, high up between two gorges.
  - It was built mainly of timber, and was abandoned in the middle of the 1100s, after a disastrous fire.
  - Only grassy banks are now to be seen, on which the timber structure had been built.

continued.....  
**Day 10** (continued)

- **Church of St Petroc**

- Most of the church (the chancel and nave ) was built in the 1200s. It was dedicated to St Petroc, the Welsh prince who lived in the 500s AD.



- The tower was added in the 1400s, being built 2 feet away from the nave - to avoid disturbing services. When the end wall was knocked through, the gap had to be filled - this is better seen from outside.
- The superbly carved oak screen was based on a 1400s design, and installed in 1904.
- In medieval times this was the largest parish in England, with 50,000 acres. Consequently, there are many old graves, with interesting granite headstones.
- **George Routleigh's tomb**
  - This is by the south entrance to the church.
  - He died in 1802, aged 57, and his epitaph is famous, as he was a watchmaker.
  - The horizontal tomb-lid has a grandfather clock carved onto it, and the long epitaph has many details and puns from his profession, for example:
    - *Integrity was his mainspring,  
And prudence the regulator,  
Of all the action in his life.*
  - A transcription is available inside the church.

- **Lydford Gorge**

- This is just south of the town of Lydford.
- There are two entrances, 1.5 miles apart, at each end of the property. The north entrance is the main entrance, with all the usual facilities.
- The property is centred around the River Lyd and its turbulent water in narrow chasms. The whole area is in beautiful, shady woods.
- It is thought the gorge was a hideout for the Gubbins Gang - a 1600s band of highway robbers.
- **Devil's Cauldron walk**
  - *This is a 0.25 mile loop walk, starting from the north entrance. It descends about 75 feet.*
  - *It drops down into the ravine to see a succession of whirlpools in a narrow chasm.*

continued.....  
**Day 10** (continued)

**Lydford** (continued)

- **Lydford Gorge** (continued)
  - **White Lady Waterfall walk**
    - *This is a 0.25 mile loop walk, starting from the south entrance. It descends about 125 feet.*
    - *It also drops down into the ravine, to see the dramatic 90 feet high White Lady Waterfall.*



- **Complete circuit walk**
  - *This is a 3 miles loop walk, starting from either entrance. It includes the first two walks, descending about 125 feet.*
  - *It is an attractive walk going along the river on one side, and returning through woods on the other side.*
- This is a National Trust property and opening times should be checked on 01822-820441, or visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk). It is generally open daily.

**Okehampton** ("ohk-hamp-tun")

- This is about 8 miles northeast of Lydford, at 588953.
- See Day 11 for details.

**Overnight around Okehampton**

It's the last day, before returning to Exeter - make the most of it!

Approximate miles = 35

Today's map numbers - **191 & 192**

## **Start the day in Okehampton**

### **Okehampton**

- This is an ancient town, and is mentioned in the Domesday Book.
- It is believed there was a Saxon settlement here. It was first documented in 980 AD, being a place where slaves were set free.
  - The slaves were released at a crossroads, and were able to choose their own future.
- During the mid-1880s, much of the town was re-built.
- The town has always been closely connected with farming, and is now a centre for food processing.
- Fore Street is the main street, but was originally divided into two sides by a row of wooden houses down the centre.
  - In 1862, the central row of houses was demolished during a road-widening scheme.
- **Chantry Chapel of St James**
  - This is in Fore Street, and was first built in 1381, with the tower being added within 20 years.
  - During the road-widening scheme of 1862, most of the Chapel was demolished, leaving a small part and the tower.
  - Now at a strange angle in the wider street, it has become famous.
  - It has a wonderful carved pulpit dating from 1666.
- **Museum of Dartmoor Life**
  - This is in Museum Courtyard, just off West Street, close to the Tourist Information Centre.
  - It is housed in a disused 1800s water-mill. The waterwheel has been renovated.
  - It shows how people have lived on and altered Dartmoor, and the surrounding areas.
  - It is divided into three sections: Archaeology and Sociology, Industry and Mining, Farming and Craft.
  - It is generally open daily, from 10:00am.
- **Okehampton Station**
  - This is about 0.75 mile south of the town centre, on a hill.
    - From the main crossroads in Fore Street, travel south along George Street. After about 150 yards, bear left along Station Road.
  - It was built in 1871, but was closed by Lord Beeching in 1968.
  - The station buildings have since been restored, making it popular with railway enthusiasts.
  - There is also a model railway exhibition.
  - Trains run between Exeter and Okehampton on Sundays during the summer.

continued.....

**Day 11** (continued)

### **Okehampton** (continued)

- **Okehampton Castle**

- This is about 0.75 mile south of the town centre.
  - From the main crossroads in Fore Street, travel south along George Street. After about 150 yards, bear right along Castle Road. It is well signposted.



- It was once the largest castle in Devon.
- There are considerable ruins of this motte and bailey castle.
  - The 'motte' is the man-made hill, on which the castle was built.
  - The 'keep' is the castle on top of the motte. This large motte has a keep, together with extended walls - called 'curtain walls' - around the top of the motte.
  - The 'bailey' is the courtyard within the keep, and within the curtain walls.
- During the late-1000s, the original, small motte and bailey were built.
- During the 1300s, some extra sections were added, being the living quarters for the owners and their guests.
  - The extension has a Great Hall, living quarters, kitchen, chapel and guest rooms.
- There is a 40-minute personal stereo, audio-tour, which guides you through the ruins.
  - It tells the story of the sinister purpose of a castle, together with a day in the life of the lady of the castle, and the social arrangements for her guests.
  - There is plenty about the toilets in the castle!

## Belstone

- This is about 3 miles southeast of Okehampton, at 619936.
- It is a small, quaint, farming community, and is the highest village on Dartmoor, at 300 feet.
- Post Office
  - This is by the upper village green, in an old Zionist Chapel, built in 1841.
- Stocks
  - These are on the lower village green. They are set in large granite pillars, and the offender has a large granite block as a seat.



continued.....  
**Day 11** (continued)

## Nine Maidens Stone Circle walk

- *This starts in Belstone, at 616933.*
- *It is a 2 miles return walk, ascending about 250 feet.*



- *Leave the end of the road, and go through a gate onto a dirt track.*
  - *Follow the wall on your right for 0.25 mile, to where it turns right.*
  - *Continue on the dirt track for 200 yards, to where the track divides.*
  - *Turn 90° left onto the moorland.*
  - *The Stone Circle is 200 yards ahead, at 613928.*
- *It is a good circle of about 16 or 17 stones.*
  - *Legend claims that the standing stones, known as 'The Nine Maidens of Belstone Common', come to life and dance on Hunter's Moon (the first moon after the full moon nearest to the autumn equinox) - or on any day at 12 noon.*
  - *Another legend claims that they are brothers, called the Seventeen Brothers.*
  - *Whatever legend is being considered, it appears that the people involved were dancing on a Sunday, and were turned to stone for irreverence. Apparently, whenever they dance, the stones end up in different positions.*

### **Sticklepath** ("stik-ul-parth")

- This is about 2 miles east of Belstone, at 642942.
- It is an attractive village, with thatch and slate roofed cottages, some from the 1600s.
- The name of Sticklepath means 'steep path'.
- **Finch Foundry**
  - The name is a misnomer as it is not a foundry, but a forge.
    - The Finch Brothers had previously been a foundry-men, but converted these buildings from two small mills into a forge.
  - The forge operated from 1814 to 1960, when a wall collapsed, and it was decided to close the business.
  - It is a water powered forge, which produced hand tools for agriculture and mining.
  - The water is diverted from the River Taw, along a leat to a launder, which holds the water before allowing it to fall on the over-shot waterwheels.
  - There are three water wheels, which power:
    - Two large tilt hammers, shears and a drop hammer.
    - A grindstone, bandsaw, and polisher.
    - A fan, which promotes heat for the hearths, for the forge-workers and a smithy.
  - There are frequent working demonstrations.
  - This is a National Trust property and opening times should be checked on 01837-840046, or visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk). It is generally not open on Tuesdays.
- **Quaker Burying Ground**
  - This is immediately behind Finch Foundry.
  - The 200 Quaker parishioners were converted to Methodism by John Wesley in the 1700s. This was the first Devon village in which he preached.

continued.....  
**Day 11** (continued)

### **Throwleigh** ("throw-lee")

- This is about 3 miles southeast of Sticklepath, at 668908.
- The quaint village is very small, with its granite cross and duck pond.
- **Church of St Mary the Virgin**

- This is picturesque, having been re-built with granite generally in the late-1400s.
- It is set in a corner of the village, with thatched cottages around.



- A thorn tree, in the east wall of the churchyard, is thought to be a cutting from the Glastonbury Thorn.
- Glastonbury, in Somerset, has a thorn tree, reputed to have grown from the pilgrim's staff of St Joseph of Arimathaea, when he visited England in 63 AD.
- Tradition claims that he thrust the staff into the ground, and it started to grow and blossom.
- In 1653, the holy thorn tree was cut down by a Puritan, but cuttings had been taken. The thorn at Throwleigh is thought to have come from the original tree.

**Ide** ("eed")

- This is about 16 miles east of Throwleigh, at 898903.
- It is a small village, separated from the greater Exeter conurbation by the A30 road.
- There is an attractive area by the ford over the River Alphin, with a set of 1600s cottages raised along a narrow pavement.
- Opposite is a thatched pub, called The Huntsman Inn.
- The small area around the cottages, ford and pub provide a perfect country picture at the end of your itinerary.

**Overnight around Exeter**

### **Travelling day**

- This page may be used to make notes about your travelling arrangements for your onward journey.
- At *itforit*, we hope you have enjoyed your itinerary, and that you will try another.
- If you have any comments about the itinerary (good or bad), please let us know.