

BONEHILL

THE EVOLUTION OF A
DARTMOOR HAMLET
at WIDECOME-IN-THE-MOOR

E.H.T. Whitten

Hidden in the heart of Dartmoor, Widecombe-in-the-Moor is sometimes said to be the most visited village in England; this is undoubtedly an exaggeration, although its name is well-known throughout Britain and beyond. There is a huge influx of visitors all year, as cars and coaches on the roads and in the car parks testify, despite the many narrow, tortuous, and steep access lanes. Walkers abound along the lanes and in the pubs. On the second Tuesday of each September, the traditional Widecombe Fair (first recorded in October 1850) and Uncle Tom Cobley and his grey mare attract thousands of visitors.

The present book tells the story of the evolution of one small hamlet, Bonehill, that lies in the Parish of Widecombe within the encircling Moor and within sight of Widecombe's famous church, known as the 'Cathedral of the Moor'. The history and development of Bonehill is surprisingly complex, but much of what the author has uncovered in his research applies also to many of Dartmoor's remote settlements. For this reason the story of Bonehill, spanning ten centuries, will be of interest to all those who have an interest in the history of the moor. Ancient field boundaries, granite Dartmoor-longhouses, and extensive unpublished documents illuminate this book which is highly illustrated with contemporary photographs, original documents maps and prints



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Tim Whitten, a chartered geologist, has had a home within Dartmoor National Park for almost 30 years. He has served on Widecombe Parish Council, been Chairman of Widecombe Primary School governors, and Treasurer of Widecombe Fair for 13 years – he's currently the Fair's President; for several years he ran a small herd of bullocks in Bonehill. He left school in Essex at 15 during World War II. As a university teacher and administrator in London and the USA, he travelled extensively and published two technical books and over 100 journal articles. He is a senior fellow of several British and American geological societies; long-time sailing interests are reflected in his having been Commodore of the Royal Western Yacht Club of England. Dartmoor is home, where he lives with his wife Cleo.

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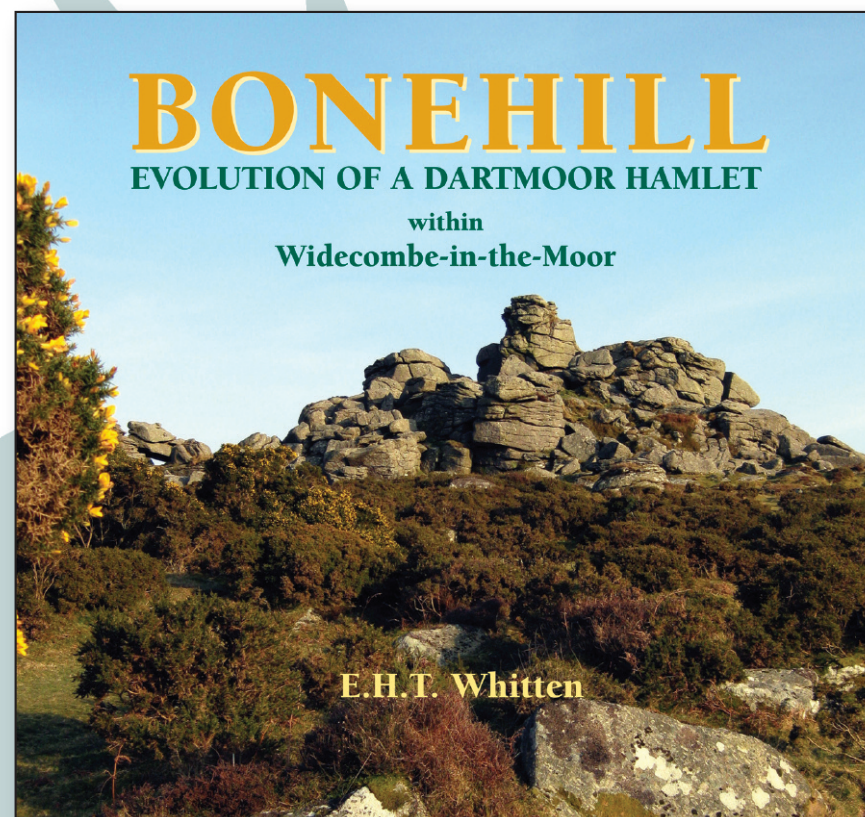
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A scenic view of a rolling green landscape. In the foreground, a dark stone wall runs along the bottom left, with a large, leafless tree on the left and a smaller tree on the right. The middle ground shows a green field with a few small buildings and a distant hill. The sky is blue with some light clouds.



Left: *Widcombe's St. Pancras Church 1 km away to the west, as seen from Bonehill Lane.*



Below: Road through Bonehill Gate from the open Moor by Bonehill Rocks leading down to Bonehill hamlet; the walls are built with the abundant local granite boulders (field stone). Large holly trees flank the road, along with gorse and last-year's bracken. The hog's back of Hamel Down forms the western horizon across the West Webburn River valley, January 2009.



Example of a double-page spread.

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