

A MANATON CENTURY

A Dartmoor Parish 100 Years Ago

Simon Butler

Of all the Dartmoor border parishes Manaton preserved its remoteness well into the last century. While improved roads and railways brought the moor increasingly into the compass of everyday travel, guidebooks of the day warned would-be visitors to Manaton of the perils faced in crossing deep valleys and moorland streams in order to reach the tiny cluster of houses surrounding the village green. Only in the 1920s, following the construction of a new road from nearby Bovey Tracey, did tourists in any numbers begin to 'discover' the picturesque delights that Manaton had to offer.

This slow pace of change provides an opportunity to look back over the past hundred years or so and to highlight the differences in this moorland parish then and now. When a collection of over 400 paintings and drawings of Manaton and the moor came to light, made by the artist William Henry Jones between 1900 and 1920, they provided the perfect opportunity to compare the parish and its people during the past century.

Combining the detailed paintings with historic photographs, maps and local stories, *A Manaton Century* provides a fascinating portrait of this unique moorland parish.

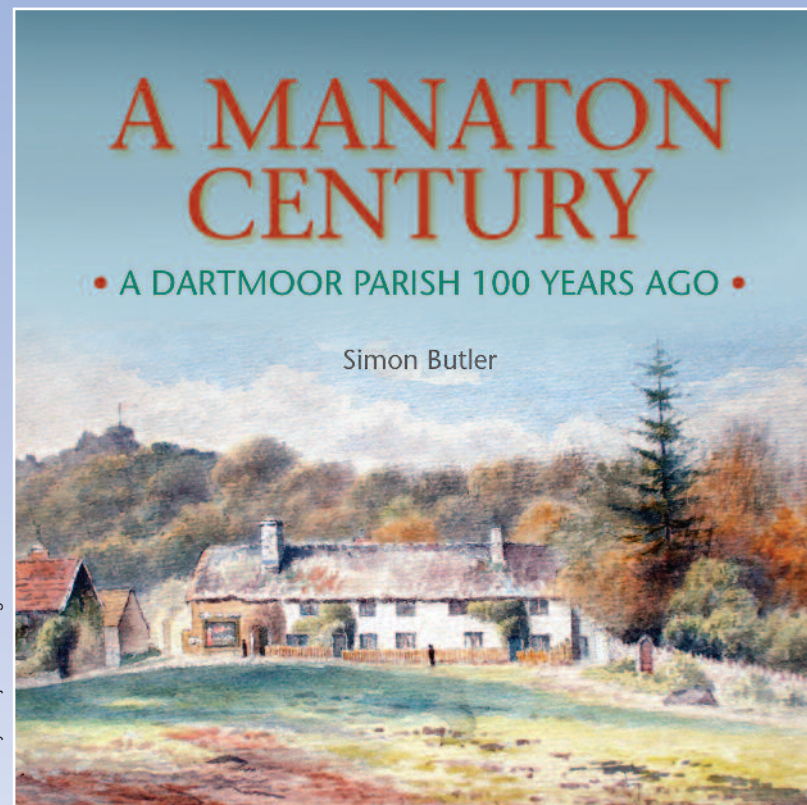
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Simon Butler is a writer and consultant to the publishing industry, having directly published over a thousand books during a long career. He is a Director of the Dartmoor Trust and of two major regional arts organisations. His own writings include the bestselling *The War Horses*, and a companion volume *Goodbye Old Friend*. More recently his book *The Farmer's Wife*, looked at the history of women workers on the land, while *Land Girl Suffragette* told the story of the artist Olive Hockin. Having lived on Dartmoor for over forty years he describes the writing of *A Manaton Century* as a true labour of love.

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HALSGROVE TITLE INFORMATION



Format: Gate-fold paperback, 80pp, 230x230mm,
150 paintings, sketches, maps and photos
Price: £9.99
ISBN: 978 1 906551 46 9
Imprint: Ryelands
Published: September 2019



Halsgrove Publishing, Halsgrove House, Ryelands Business Park, Bagley Road,
Wellington, Somerset TA21 9PZ Tel: 01823 653777 Fax: 01823 216796
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