

DARTMOOR TIN MINING

History & Heritage

Bruce Boulton

This book looks at early mining activity on Dartmoor from the twelfth century, when Stannary Law in Devon was first established, through the following centuries when mining remained largely an activity of the individual; the 'Old Men' toiling either alone or in small groups. This was before the era of industrialised mining by which time the miners largely ceased working for themselves and became employees of corporate mining operations.

Tin mining on Dartmoor has left an indelible mark on the moorland landscape, from the early tin streaming activity through to the later underground workings. Remains of blowing houses, wheel pits and tinner's burrows are there in abundance, although those walking on the moor may not recognise them for what they are. This book will enhance the reader's understanding of the moor's history by bringing the early story of miners and mining to life, not least through over 250 photographs included, dating from the earliest years of photography through to pictures taken today. Together with the informative text and illustrations, these photographs exemplify the importance of the Dartmoor Trust Archive in being able to evidence changes that have taken place on the moor in the past 150 years or so, along with capturing what can be seen in the landscape today.

As interest in our industrial heritage has become more to the fore, a final chapter has been included containing photographs of the last years of mining operations on Dartmoor and from Kelly Mine, Lustleigh, where work is continuing to preserve and restore a former mine site, the last of its kind on Dartmoor.

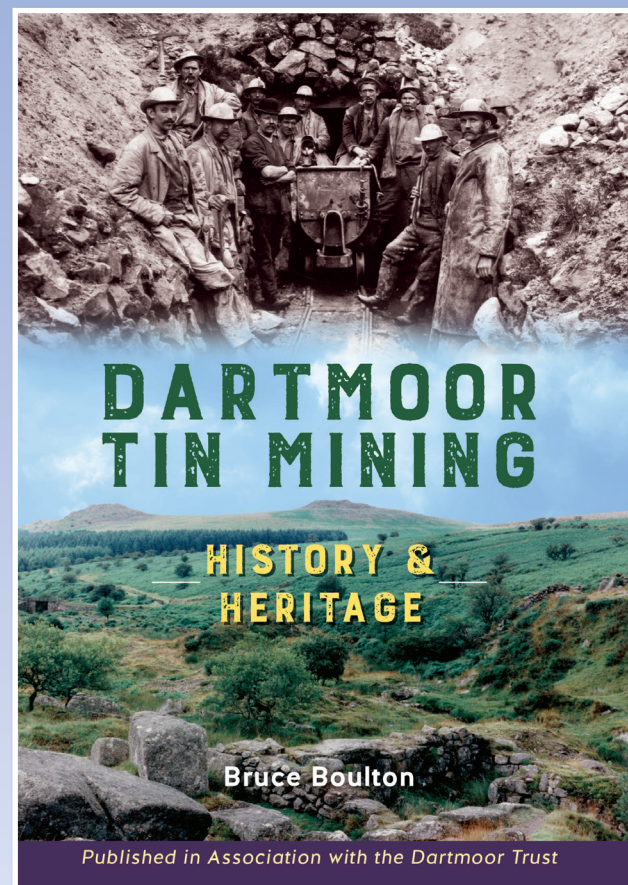
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bruce Boulton is a member of the Kelly Mine Preservation Society, although his interest in underground exploration stems from his boyhood at Rock House, Chudleigh – formerly well known as Rock Nursery Garden, Caves and Café. Bruce's back garden comprised the massive redundant limestone quarry, an overgrown Victorian jungle with 80ft cliffs and a labyrinthine system of caves. Before the age of ten he became assistant to the pioneer bat researchers, John and Win Hooper, studying Greater Horseshoe bats, a cause necessitating scrambling through subterranean darkness in order to record and ring them. This in turn led to visits to many former mines and a lifelong interest in that subject; a passion shared by Mary and Jessica Walmesley whose original text forms the core of this book. Now retired, Bruce continues his love of gardening and, when he has time, makes pottery.

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