

Final Perambulation of Exmoor Forest.

BY MR. E. J. RAWLE.

IN the year 1815, Parliament passed an act [55 Geo. III, cap. 138] authorising the inclosure of the royal forest of Exmoor; and, in accordance with provisions contained in the said act, an official survey was made in 1816. The final award of the Commissioners appointed for this purpose was enrolled in the Court of Exchequer, and includes a complete perambulation. In this record the metes, marks, limits, and bounds of the ancient forest—or rather what remained of it at that date—are so clearly and precisely located, that it has been thought desirable to make them more generally known.

The following particulars have been extracted verbatim:—

Q. R. MEMORANDA R. TRIN. 58, GEO. III, ROT. I.

“**To All** whom these Presents shall come or shall in any wise concern. We, Richard Hawkins of Kingsbridge, in the county of Devon, Gentleman; and Thomas Abraham of White Lackington, in the county of Somerset, Gentleman; send greeting. Whereas by an act of parliament passed in the 55th year of his present Majesty’s reign entitled ‘An Act for vesting in his Majesty certain parts of the Forest of Exmoor, otherwise Exmore, in the counties of Somerset and Devon, and for enclosing the said Forest’ [proceeds to recite fully the provisions of the said Act.]

And whereas we the said Richard Hawkins and Thomas Abraham having taken upon ourselves the burthen and execution of the said Act, and having first severally taken the

oath prescribed by the said Act, and having appointed Richard Henry Strong of Tiverton in the county of Devon, Gentleman, our clerk to assist us And whereas the Commissioners of his Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues did by writing under their hands bearing date July 25th, 1815, nominate and appoint Frederick James Kelsey of Chichester in the county of Sussex, Gentleman, to be the Surveyor for viewing, surveying, and measuring the open Commonable Grounds and waste Lands in the said Forest. And whereas in pursuance of the powers and directions given to us by the said recited Acts, and pursuant to public Notice for that purpose duly given, We have ascertained, set out, and determined and fixed the boundaries of the said Forest, and also the boundaries of the Parishes, Manors, Hamlets, or Districts adjoining thereto, and have stated a description in writing of the same boundaries as follows:—

From a certain place or boundary stone called Hooked Stone upon the said Forest, the boundary of the said Forest southward is marked and distinguished by several boundary stones extending to a place called Hascombe Pound or Halscombe Pound near Dunsbrook stream, and pursuing the same direction by several boundary stones placed between Halscombe bank and Dunsbrook stream, which stream is within the said Forest and flows in a parallel line with the said boundary stones to a boundary stone called Litton-foot Stone near a place called Willingford Water where Dunsbrook stream and Litton Water join; the said Forest being abutted on the east all the way from the said boundary stone called Hooked Stone to the said boundary stone called Litton-foot Stone, by a common called Hawkridge Common in the parish of Hawkridge in the said county of Somerset. From the said boundary stone called Litton-foot Stone, the boundary of the said Forest takes a westerly direction across Willingford Water and up the stream called Litton

Water as far as a boundary stone, which is placed between the common called Molland Common in the parish of Molland in the county of Devon, and the common called Twitchen Common in the parish of Twitchen in the same county: the said Forest being abutted on the south all the way from the said boundary stone called Litton-foot Stone to the last mentioned boundary stone between Molland Common and Twitchen Common, by the said common called Molland Common in the parish of Molland in the said county of Devon. From the said last mentioned boundary stone between Molland and Twitchen Commons, the boundary of the said Forest still extends in a westerly direction up the said stream called Litton Water as far as the head of the said stream, and then takes a north-westerly direction from thence towards and unto a boundary stone called Sandy-way Stone adjoining the public road leading from Northmolton in the said county of Devon to Exford in the said county of Somerset: the said Forest being abutted all the way from Molland Common to the said boundary stone called Sandy-way Stone, by the common called Twitchen Common in the said parish of Twitchen. From the said boundary stone called Sandy-way Stone the boundary of the said Forest still proceeds in a north-westerly direction by and along several boundary stones leading towards an inclosure called Darlock Corner, and then passeth along near the said inclosure in the same direction to a boundary stone near a Landmark called Coles's Cross, and thence in the same direction along other boundary stones placed near certain inclosures called Shortacombe and Buttery Corner to a place called Two Burrows which burrows are within the said Forest, from thence the said boundary continues in the same direction along several boundary stones in a line which intersects the public road leading from Northmolton aforesaid to Simonsbath Farm in the interior of the said Forest, and extends to a boundary stone called Horsehead Stone

near the end of a Landmark called White Ladder, which last mentioned boundary stone called Horsehead Stone divides the commons called Northmolton Common in the parish of Northmolton aforesaid, from another common called Whitefield Common in the parish of High Bray in the said county of Devon: the said Forest being abutted all the way from the before mentioned boundary stone called Sandy-way Stone to the said boundary stone called Horsehead Stone by the said common called Northmolton Common in the parish of Northmolton aforesaid. From the said boundary stone called Horsehead Stone the boundary of the said Forest still continues to extend in a north-westerly direction by and along several boundary stones to a boundary stone placed in a burrow called Settaburrow, and from thence in the same direction to a boundary stone near a place called Shrowlsbury Castle or Saulsbury Castle and contiguous to a Bog or Swamp called Moules Chamber, and from the said last mentioned boundary stone the boundary of the said Forest takes a northerly direction along several boundary stones to a boundary stone called Longstone or Lew-combe Stone which divides the said parish of High Bray from the parish of Challacombe in the said county of Devon: the said Forest being abutted all the way from the said boundary stone called Horsehead Stone to the said boundary stone called Longstone or Lew-combe Stone by the commons called Whitefield Common, Bray Common, and Gratton Common in the said parish of High Bray. From the said boundary stone called Longstone or Lew-combe Stone the boundary of the said Forest continues to extend in a northerly direction along several boundary stones to a boundary stone called Edgerly Stone, and from thence takes a north-westerly direction by other boundary stones for about a quarter of a mile, and then in a northerly direction up a hill called Bill Hill to a boundary stone called Twizzel-mark Stone, and in the same direction by several

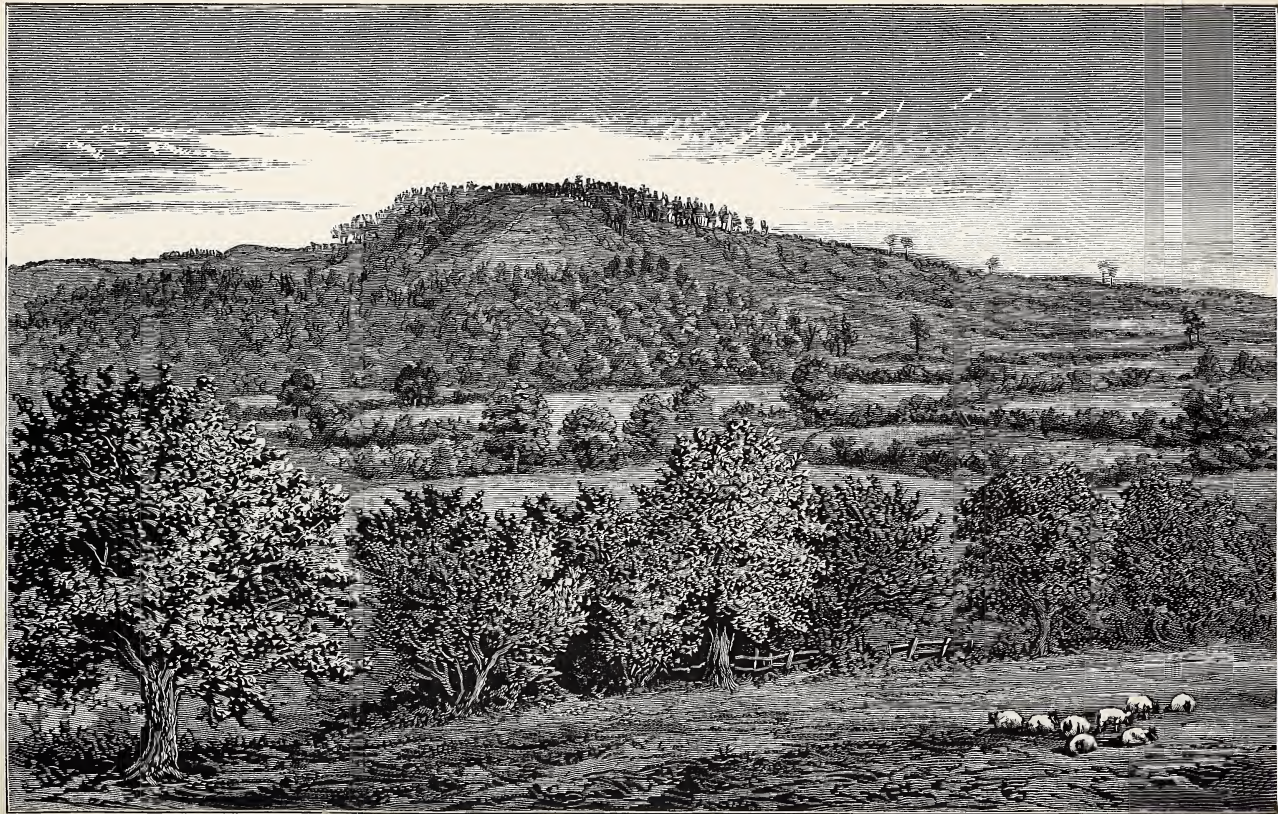
other boundary stones passing by Woodburrow to a stone called Saddle Stone which divides the said parish of Challacombe from the parish of Linton in the said county of Devon: the said Forest being abutted all the way from the said boundary stone called Longstone or Lew-combe Stone to the said boundary stone called Saddle Stone by the commons of Challacombe-Rawleigh and Challacombe-Regis, in the said parish of Challacombe, the said last mentioned boundary of the said Forest intersecting in several points the road from Southmolton to Linton and running in a direction nearly parallel to the said road. From the said boundary stone called Saddle Stone the boundary of the said Forest takes an easterly direction along three or four other boundary stones and then extends over the hill and down to Ruckham Combe. From Ruckham Combe the said boundary extends along several boundary stones over the opposite hill called Benjamy Hill, and still continuing in an easterly direction passes by several other boundary stones down to Warcombe Water, the said boundary then crosses the water and extends in the same direction up Furze Hill Common, along several boundary stones to the corner of an inclosure called Hoar Oak Inclosure, and along the boundary stones near the said inclosure to a place called Gammons Corner, and from thence to a boundary stone on the left or north side of the tree called Hoar Oak: the said Forest being abutted all the way from Saddle Stone to the said boundary stone near Hoar Oak by the common called Linton Common in the parish of Linton in the said county of Devon. From the said last mentioned boundary stone near Hoar Oak the boundary of the said Forest continues to extend in an easterly direction across the stream of water called Hoar Oak Water which divides the said parish of Linton from the parish of Brendon in the said county of Devon, along several boundary stones up the side of the hill and over Cheriton Ridge and down to a stream called Waterhead

Brook, crosses the said water and extends by boundary stones in the same direction to a hill called Hoar Tor Hill, passes over the said hill and down to a stream called Hoccombe Water which then becomes the boundary of the said Forest and flows in an easterly direction between the said Forest and a hill called Badgery Hill in the said parish of Brendon, the said Forest is bounded by the said last mentioned stream as far as a place called Badgery Water where the same and another stream called Longcombe Water join at the foot of a hill called Trouts Hill: the said Forest being abutted all the way from Hoar Oak Water to Badgery Water by commons called Brendon Common and Badgery Common in the said parish of Brendon. From the said water called Badgery Water which divides the parish of Brendon from the parish of Oare in the county of Somerset, the boundary of the said Forest takes a south-easterly direction a short way up Longcombe Water and then an easterly direction along several boundary stones through a place called Lannicombe Burrows to a boundary stone in the centre of a burrow called Longcombe Burrow, and still continues easterly over a hill called Little Tunshill to a boundary line on the head of Great Tunshill from whence it takes a northerly direction towards and unto a boundary stone at a place called Stover, from thence it takes a north-easterly course by several other boundary stones on the side of Stover Bottom under Kittuck Hill to a stream called Chalk Water, it crosses the water and passes through certain mounds called Kittuck Burrows to a boundary stone on the opposite side, from thence the said boundary extends in an easterly direction along several boundary stones over Mill Hill to a burrow called Black Burrow: the said Forest being abutted all the way from Badgery Water to Black Burrow by Oare Common in the parish of Oare in the county of Somerset. From the said burrow called Black Burrow which separates the said parish of Oare from the

parish of Porlock in the said county of Somerset, the boundary of the said Forest stretches in a southerly direction along several boundary stones to a burrow called Owlomans Burrow at which the parishes of Porlock, Stockpero, and Exford in the said county of Somerset unite in a point: the said Forest being abutted all the way from Black Burrow to Owlomans Burrow by Porlock Common in the said parish of Porlock. From Owlomans Burrow the boundary of the said Forest extends in a south-westerly direction along several boundary stones to a mound or burrow called Larks Burrow, and from thence inclining southward down Spracombe Combe to Spracombe Water, crosses the said water and then turns in a southerly direction along several boundary stones to a boundary stone near Orchard Farm Inclosure, from thence it proceeds in a south-easterly direction along several boundary stones passing near Orchard Corner and from thence in an easterly course near the site of a house called Orchard House otherwise Redbrook House, and crossing the river Exe proceeds in the same direction near certain old enclosures called West Mill Farm, ascends Ridgestone Hill leaving Ruscombe Down on the left and extends to a boundary stone called Redstone or Ridgestone near Ridgestone Gate, and then takes a westerly direction passing near Ashill Farm on the left, to a boundary stone near Ashett Corner along boundary stones by the side of the road leading from Exford in the said county of Somerset to Barnstaple in the said county of Devon, from Ashett Corner inclining to the south-west it crosses the said road near Honeymead Corner and then takes a southerly direction by boundary stones along an ancient greenway to Newland Ridge, and from thence in the same direction ascends White Hill to a boundary stone on the top, which separates the said parish of Exford from the parish of Withypoole in the said county of Somerset: the said Forest being abutted all the way from Owlomans Burrow to the said boundary stone

on the top of White Hill by Exford Inclosures and Exford Common in the parish of Exford in the said county of Somerset. From the last mentioned boundary stone on the top of White Hill the boundary of the said Forest extends southward to the road leading from Withypoole aforesaid to Simonsbath Farm, crosses the said road and continues in the same direction by a beaten track to a boundary stone near the river Barle, crosses the said river and takes a southwesterly direction by the side of the said river to Sherdon Hutch where Sherdon Water communicates with the river Barle, which water is within the said Forest and is the boundary thereof, passes a short way up Sherdon Water as far as Sherdon Rock from thence it takes a southerly direction along several boundary stones through Kingsland Pitts, ascends Dillacombe Hill to a boundary stone on the top of Dillacombe, then crosses the road leading from Exford aforesaid to Northmolton aforesaid and continues in the same direction along several boundary stones over Landker Hill to a boundary stone near the road leading from Withypoole to Southmolton, and from thence extends in an easterly direction to a stone called Hooked Stone which separates the said parish of Withypoole from the parish of Hawkrige: the said Forest being abutted all the way from the said boundary stone on the top of White Hill to the said boundary stone called Hooked Stone by the common called Withypoole Common in the said parish of Withypoole.

And Whereas the said Frederick James Kelsey, the Surveyor, having proceeded to view, survey and measure the said Forest, and the open and commonable parts thereof, and to describe or lay down the same by way of map or plan, setting forth the number of Statute acres, roods, and perches By the said survey and plan it appears that the said Forest and the open and commonable wastes thereof, do contain twenty thousand and thirteen acres, three roods, and thirty-three perches."



BEACON HILL

(From a photograph).