

NOTES

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE LIFE OF CHARLES MOORE (1815–1881), SOMERSET GEOLOGIST

Copp *et al.* (1999) published an account of the life and work of Charles Moore, the Victorian amateur geologist whose fine collection is now held mainly by the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution and the Somerset County Museum, Taunton. This note aims to amend and extend some information in that paper.

Previous workers had given Moore's year of birth as variously 1814 or 1815. Copp *et al.* (1999, 3) settled on 1814. This was largely because Moore's birthday was 8 June; he died on 7 December 1881; and his death certificate and his coffin inscription (as reported at the time) both gave his age as 67 years. However, the correct year of birth is in fact 1815. The registers of the Old Meeting (i.e. congregation) of the Ilminster Presbyterians (Public Record Office RG4 1554, p. 68; Torrens 1977) record that 'Charles son of John and Anna Moore of the Parish of Ilminster was born June 8, 1815, and baptized August 6, 1815 by me John Evans'.

The confusion over the year of Charles Moore's birth evidently arose from an error set in stone, so to speak, by those dealing with the practicalities consequent on his death, who recorded an erroneous age of 67 in the coffin inscription and on the death certificate. Perhaps the miscalculation was theirs, for Moore himself correctly gave his age as 65 in the spring 1881 census, which records him and his wife Eliza (aged 67) at 6 Cambridge Place, Bath, with three servants – one (presumably) married couple, Joseph and Susan Owen, in their 50s, born in Mangotsfield and Kilmersdon respectively, and one 21 year old single female, Annie Denning, from Vobster.

The marriage of Charles's parents, John Moore and Anna Eames (*not* Sophia as given by Winwood 1892, 4, and, following him, Copp *et al.* 1999, 2), is recorded on 24 April 1810 at Ilminster parish church (see IGI at <http://www.familysearch.org/Eng>). This is, of course, the local Anglican church, but the Moores would in any case have had to comply with the legal requirement for marriages to be solemnized by this State church. In fact, their true affiliation was to nonconformism, and the family evidently had a long connection with the Presbyterian 'Old Meeting' of Ilminster, as is suggested by the record of his father John's own baptism there in 1768. The Old Meeting registers also record the baptism there of Charles and his siblings, enabling us to confirm and complete the list of the Moores' children:

1. William, baptized 24 April 1811
2. Sophia, 23 January 1814
3. Charles, 6 August 1815
4. John, 22 February 1818
5. Sarah Munden, 9 April 1820
6. Mary Anna, 13 April 1823

We also take the opportunity to draw attention in the county literature to the forthcoming memoir by Savage (2004 in press) which, amongst other things, records the date of the marriage of Charles Moore and Eliza Dear as 14 January 1854, from the marriage certificate.

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THE BARWICK PARK FOLLIES

Barwick Park stands on the high ground to the south side of Yeovil. Its southerly aspect provides distant views across the Oxford Clay Vale to the level tops of the Chalk Escarpment. It is famed for some rather strange follies. Much has been written and surmised about their purpose and design. One cannot climb up them as one can the tower on St Michael's Hill at Montacute. Neither were they, as far as we know, built to commemorate a famous person or event such as the Hood Monument near Compton Dundon. We do know that they are shown in paintings of Barwick House from the 1780s.

They define the boundaries of the park. To the west is the 75ft Messiter's Cone surmounted by a ball and standing on an arched support, to the south a slender needle, tilted at the top, to the north the cylindrical 'Fish Tower' and to the east 'Jack the Treacle Eater' in the form of a tower mounted on an arch. The latter name recalls a local legend.

One of the most intriguing and interesting aspects, and one which seems to have been overlooked, is the material of which they are built. There are a great variety of building stones in South Somerset but the stone used for the greater part of the follies has not been generally used for buildings. It is a brownish fine-grained sandstone with a decidedly rough character compared with the Ham Hill stone which graces so many buildings in the nearby villages.

The folly known as 'Jack the Treacle Eater' is the best place to study this stone. It appears as large lumps that are often nearly 1m in width. One can find thin laminations suggesting that it is a water-laid deposit but these are frequently disturbed by a complex pattern of tubes, holes and trails suggesting that the sediment has been reworked by various invertebrate animals searching for food in what was at the time soft sediment on the sea floor. Elsewhere these sandstones yield ammonites that date the rock back to the Jurassic period some 170 million years ago.

Very similar sandstones are found on the south side of Yeovil in the nearby sunken lane on the south side of Barwick Park near Barwick Church and they can be viewed from the station platform at Yeovil Junction. The general slope of the strata is to the south as can be seen in the sides of the recently widened A37 road cutting south of the Barwick roundabout.

These sandstones are set in irregular beds of yellow sands that are shown on the geological map (Sheet 312 Yeovil) as the Yeovil Sands. The outcrops extend westward to Ilminster, northwards to Castle Cary and southward to the coast at Burton Bradstock via Beaminster.

Some of these sandstones are in beds of even thickness whilst others appear as lumps of varying size referred to as doggers or concretions. These concretions are the result of changes in the chemistry of the sediments whereby the soft sediment has become cemented with calcium carbonate. The latter is an important constituent of limestones including the Ham Hill stone. The concretions tend to stick out of the walls of the holloways as they are harder than the sands and are a hazard for motorists who drive too close to the sides of the cuttings.

The whole of Barwick Park is underlain by the Yeovil Sands rock formation and therefore the most ready source for the follies may have been the grounds of Barwick Park itself. Barwick House is partly let into the hillside and this may have yielded some concretions. Another major source could well have been the attractive lake in front of Barwick House. There is a dam at the southern end of the lake and a large bank on the south-west side holds the lake to the side of its valley. The bank and dam indicate a large excavation and this must have yielded a considerable number of concretions. They would not have been the most suitable material for buildings but might well have been used to erect a series of rather eccentric embellishments to the estate.

Messiter's Cone, known otherwise as the Rose Tower, has a finer texture being partly built of thin sandstones containing abundant bivalve shells but again drawn from the Yeovil Sands. Several of the Barwick follies are capped with Ham Hill Stone.

HUGH PRUDDEN

SAXON TIMBER FROM PORLOCK MARSH

In February 2003 a worked piece of timber was discovered in an intertidal channel on Porlock Marsh by Mark Blathwayt. The item was exposed in the side of the main breach channel that cuts through the shingle ridge and the surface of the Marsh. The wood was recovered by Mark Blathwayt, Vanessa Straker and Richard McDonnell; the sediment descriptions and locational record were later made by Vanessa Straker and Richard McDonnell.

The piece is a roughly hewn, radially split oak plank with two mortices crudely cut through the thickness of the plank with clearly visible tool marks and little care shown for any precision or neatness (Figs 1 and 2). There is no evidence of seating pressure or function. The item is slightly bowed along its length with its convex side as side A and the concave side as side B. The tool marks were identified as having been made with an iron tool (Richard Brunning, pers comm).

It is 775mm long by 165mm wide and 72mm thick at the centre. The mortices are 310mm apart and are not aligned. Mortice 1) is 108mm long by 60mm wide at its narrowest. On side A it is 160mm long and on side B 120mm long. Mortice 2) is 76mm long by 50mm wide at its narrowest. On side A it is 115mm long and on side B 105mm long. There are more tool marks evident on this mortice.

With only 40 annual growth rings the wood could not be dated by dendrochronology and a ^{14}C measurement was sought. The result was 1120 ± 40 BP (SUERC 1699-(GU-11322)). The calibrated age range of 780–1020AD, 95.4% probability, puts the wood securely in the Saxon period (McDonnell 2004).

It is currently being conserved by the Mary Rose Trust.

The item was recovered from the N facing cliff of alluvium on the S side of the breach channel at SS 87601 47829 at *c.* 2.7m OD (McDonnell 2003). The item lay horizontally on its convex face at the water level of the ponded breach stream 1.3m below the surface of the marsh and oriented at 100° (mag). It appeared to be located within an uninterrupted deposit of

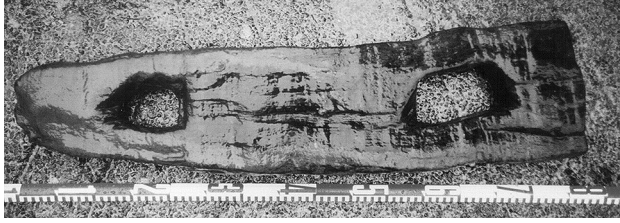


Fig. 1 Side A, convex side with tool marks particularly evident on left-hand mortice

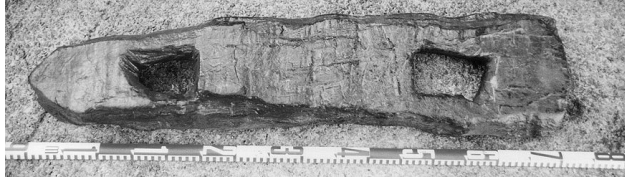


Fig. 2 Side B, concave side with tool marks evident

alluvium at least 1.3m deep with no indication of lying in, or close to, a palaeochannel. The same stratigraphic sequence, described below, was evident on the opposite side of the breach channel and also some way inland of the find site up the channel.

The upper 1.1m of the exposed profile comprised a grey (10YR 5/1), soft silty clay with reddish brown mottles (5YR 4/3). The overall effect was a reddish brown clay with no coarse components though with limited root penetration associated with the salt marsh vegetation in the upper 200mm. The lowest 200mm of the exposed profile comprised a grey (10YR 5/1) silty clay, slightly firmer, and with possibly more clay content than the upper section; occasional bi-valve remains were present. These two units are considered to be the same material but with some oxidisation of iron in the upper horizons. The boundary between is a merging one over some 100mm.

This is the second timber with mortices cut through it to be recorded in Porlock Bay. The first was found in the Tidal Pond in 2001 and since it was not only unstratified but awash in the sea it was not retained (McDonnell 2002a). It should be noted, however, that at this time the breach stream flowed into the tidal pond. This item was 2.4m long with a branch 1.19m long which had a splintered end; the bole was 180mm diameter below the branch (Fig. 3). The base had been chamfered on both sides to form a two sided, wedge-shaped end and had been worked with a straight-edged tool. The record shows very similar, roughly cut mortices, through the thickness of the wood at a comparable scale. It is possible that these two items come from the same or similar, local structures.



Fig. 3 Part of the undated timber, NB remains of second transverse mortice at left, chamfered, end

Limited archaeological monitoring of the intertidal area and the marsh has been undertaken since the breach of the shingle ridge in 1996 (McDonnell 2002b; 2003; 2004) and continues to be supported by the Exmoor National Park Authority. Mark Blathwayt is thanked for his help and interest with this item.

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ROMAN POTTERY FROM THE CHARTERHOUSE VALLEY

Surprisingly little material has so far been published from the Roman and later mining site in the Charterhouse valley. The present note is presented as an adjunct to the forthcoming report¹ on the work of 1993–6 on the so-called fortlet and rakes on the western side of the valley. The material evidence was collected by Mr A.C. Pass within the period 1867–76 at a time when efforts were made to excavate the large mounds of metal waste at Charterhouse and to resmelt the remaining ore. The results were meagre and the project petered out. Although there was no organized system of observation and record, considerable amounts of Roman pottery were recovered by Mr Pass and these were presented by him to the Somerset County Museum in 1883.² Many other objects were scattered at the time and their whereabouts are unknown, a pattern repeated at the time of the flood in 1968. Other material collected by Pass was deposited in the Bristol Museum.

The date range of the decorated vessels runs from about AD 75 to 150 at the latest. The sherds are mostly large, though many are abraded, probably by the action of water. One vessel, no. 5 below, is virtually complete. The collection (assemblage would not be an appropriate term) is dominated by late Flavian to Hadrianic bowls of Form 37, three of which bear name stamps in the mould of central Gaulish potters. The remainder are Flavian south Gaulish vessels of Forms 29 and 30, though one vessel is a product of Les Martres de Veyre. The catalogue is as follows:

1. Form 29. Southern Gaul. Style of Masclus. Claudian or early Neronian.
2. Form 29. Southern Gaul. Base only. *c.* AD 80–100.
3. Form 30. Southern Gaul. Style of Crestio. *c.* AD 80–100.
4. Form 30. Southern Gaul. Unattributable, but probably Flavian in date.
5. Form 37. Southern Gaul. Virtually complete, though in fragments. Late Flavian or Trajanic.
6. Form 37. Les Martres-de-Veyre. AD 100–120.
7. Form 29. Base only. Name stamp CRISPUS. Trajanic.
8. Form 37. Central Gaul. Name stamp SACER. AD 120–145.
9. Form 37. Probably X-6. Hadrianic.
10. Form 37. Central Gaul. Name stamp GEMINUS. Hadrianic.

11. Form 37. Central Gaul. Name stamp PVTRIV. Usually linked with the workshop of BVTRIO. If so, AD 120–145.

Plain samian

At least 46 vessels are represented, mostly by large sherds, many with modern breaks. Two are probably Claudio-Neronian in date, but the majority are Flavian and earlier 2nd century. Three vessels are of Form 27, the rest being mainly Forms 18 and 18/31. Flavian and early 2nd-century vessels predominate.

This material, in its sum, is the largest late 1st and 2nd-century body of material so far published from Charterhouse-on-Mendip. It is an important complement to the large Claudio-Neronian deposit in the ditch of the first phase 'fortlet', excavated in 1994–5 and shortly to be published. This material from the 'lead-workings', presumably in the Charterhouse valley, is valuable confirmation of continued working here, in support of the dates supplied by inscribed ingots of Hadrianic and Antonine date. It is interesting that the Pass collection contains nothing from the late 2nd, 3rd or 4th centuries, though there was probably deliberate choice on his part of which sherds to preserve and deposit.

¹ I am grateful to Stephen Minnitt for access to this material and for permission to publish it here.

² F. Haverfield in VCH Somerset (1906), 335.

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