

**TWENTIETH REPORT OF THE BARROW  
COMMITTEE.**

*TWENTIETH REPORT of the Committee, consisting of Mr. P. F. S. Amery, Rev. S. Baring-Gould, Dr. Brushfield, Mr. R. Burnard, Mr. Cecil M. Firth, Mr. J. Brooking-Rowe, and Mr. R. Hansford Worth (Secretary), appointed to collect and record facts relating to Barrows in Devonshire, and to take steps, where possible, for their investigation.*

Edited by R. H. WORTH, Hon. Secretary.

(Read at Exeter, 31st July, 1901.)

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**RIFLED KISTVAENS IN THE PLYM VALLEY, DARTMOOR.**

*(Continued from Nineteenth Report.)*

THE following errors in last year's Report have already appeared in *Errata et Corrigenda* appended to the Index of vol. xxxii. The corrections are here repeated for those who may have only reprints, or may bind reprints in one volume.

Page 52, line 10 (page 7 of reprint), "Nos. 8 and 9 and circles adjacent." This should be "Nos. 7 and 8 and circles adjacent." Throughout this section, as far as line 29 on page 53 (page 8 of reprint), "No. 8" or "8" should read "No. 7" or "7," and "No. 9" or "9" should read "No. 8" or "8" wherever referring to kistvaens.

Five kistvaens are described in the present Report; of these, two are marked on the six-inch Ordnance sheets. The following table gives the number of the six-inch quarter-

sheet, on which each kistvaen should be marked, and the approximate latitude and longitude of each:—

TABLE GIVING APPROXIMATE LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE OF KISTVAENS.

Distinguishing No.	Site.	No. of Quarter-sheet, 6" O.S.	Longitude W.	Latitude N.
10	Legis Tor . . .	CXII. S. E.	4° 0' 40"	50° 28' 17"
11	Hentor . . .	CXIII. S. W.	3° 58' 54"	50° 28' 31"
12	Shavercombe . . .	CXIII. S. W.	3° 58' 42"	50° 28' 27½"
13	Great Gnat's Head . . .	CXIII. N. W.	3° 57' 27½"	49° 29' 41½"
14	{ Grim's Grave, Lang- combe . . . }	CXIII. S. W.	3° 57' 22"	50° 28' 49½"

Throughout the following descriptions all bearings have reference to *true north*. The order adopted is a progression from west to east, starting, as in last year's Report, at the extreme western end of the valley.

Reading the two Reports together, the actual order in which the kistvaens occur is 1, 10, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14.

10. *Legis Tor* (Plate XII).—This kistvaen lies in a direction approximately 17 degrees south of east from the summit of *Legis Tor* and at a distance of 250 yards. The width between the side-stones at the north end is 1 foot 9 inches, and at the south end 3 feet 4½ inches; but these measurements are taken from end to end of the stones and not at right angles to their direction. The eastern side-stone is 3 feet 1 inch in length and the western is 3 feet 4 inches long. No end-stones remain, and therefore the true length is unobtainable. The eastern side-stone is still firmly set, but the western has apparently been somewhat displaced.

To the south of the kist lies the cover-stone, of which the greatest length is 5 feet 4 inches, the greatest width 4 feet 2 inches.

Direction of length of eastern side-stone, 19 degrees west of north.

This kistvaen was opened when the *Legis Tor* hut circles were being examined in 1896, and gave no yield of either flint, pottery, ash, or charcoal.

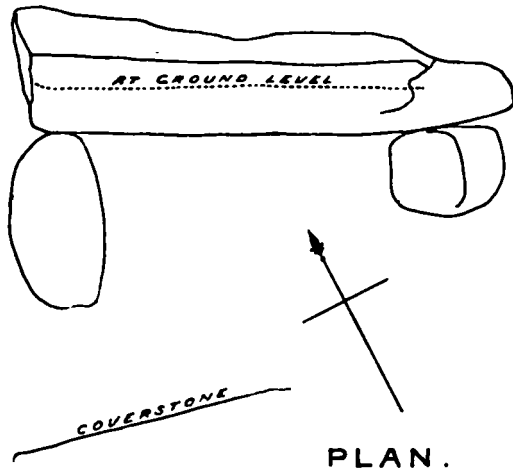
Its chief peculiarity is that it has been built on an earth-fast boulder, the surface of which is some little distance below ground-level and forms a stone floor to the kist.

PLATE XIII.

HENTOR.



VIEW. *LOOKING 60° E OF N.*



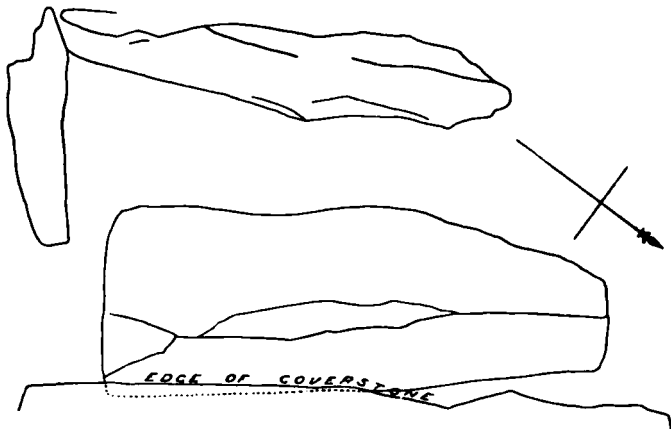
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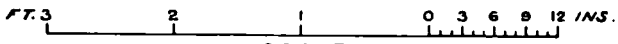
PLATE XIV.  
SHAVERCOMBE.



VIEW.      *LOOKING 28° E OF S.*



PLAN.



SCALE.

R. H. WORTH. 1901.

It was originally covered by a barrow, the present diameter of which is 16 feet.

11. *Hentor* (Plate XIII).—On the northern slope of Hentor, not far from the Shavercombe kistvaen (12), which is marked on Ordnance map. One side and both ends of this kistvaen still stand, and the cover-stone lies hard by. The south-eastern end-stone, which had partly fallen inwards, was re-erected after the kist had been excavated.

The dimensions of this kistvaen are: length, 2 feet 3 inches; breadth, 1 foot 4 inches at north-western end, 6½ inches at south-eastern end, this last dimension being somewhat remarkable. In order to partly compensate for the extreme narrowness, it appears that the side-stone still standing has always leant towards the end-stones, and so given about 8 inches more width at the floor of the kist. The other side-stone may have been similarly set, but only one half of this remains, it having been broken along its length at some unknown date. The half remaining was buried in refilling the kistvaen. Direction of length, 63 degrees west of north. Result of excavation, the remains of a modern pocket-knife, apparently one lost by the author in 1889.

This kistvaen has been covered by a barrow, and apparently surrounded by a stone circle having a diameter of 11 feet.

12. *Shavercombe* (Plate XIV).—Marked on Ordnance Survey. Two sides, one end-stone, and the cover-stone remain. The kist has been covered by a barrow, and lies in a stone circle of 10 feet 6 inches diameter.

The eastern side-stone had fallen against the western and completely closed the kist. This stone was, last year, turned back to admit of excavation, and has been left so.

Dimensions not properly ascertainable: length, probably 3 feet; breadth, at south end, probably 1 foot 6 inches; depth, which alone could be exactly ascertained, 2 feet 8 inches; direction of length of kistvaen, 26 degrees west of north.

No results from excavation.

13. *Great Gnat's Head* (Plate XV).—Four hundred and thirty-three yards S.S.E. from Plym Ford (on the Abbot's Way). May be most readily found by keeping the summit of Lower Harter in line with northern side of pile of rocks crowning Legis Tor.

Consists of two sides and one end-stone. The sides have

fallen apart, which is unusual; and the end-stone, which leant well over the kist, ultimately falling in consequence of the operations of excavation, has now been set in approximately vertical position.

Dimensions not properly ascertainable: length, probably 2 feet 8 inches to 3 feet; breadth, probably 2 feet 5 inches; depth, which alone could be exactly ascertained, 2 feet 7 inches; direction of length, 78 degrees west of north.

No results from excavation.

In the approximate centre of this kistvaen a pit had at some time been sunk 1 foot 5 inches below the level of the floor, or 4 feet below the upper edge of the side-stones. Similar pits were found in 11, 12, and 14, but if original they had been entirely cleared out by previous searches, for not even ashes were to be found in them.

No trace of the barrow remains round this kistvaen.

Twenty feet from the centre of this kistvaen, in a direction 30 degrees west of south, lies the centre of a small barrow of 9 feet diameter.

This barrow was carefully examined, and proved to cover a circular, carefully paved area, while beneath the flat paving-stones lay a large flat stone which closely resembled the cover-stone of a kistvaen. This latter, however, rested on the "calm" or subsoil everywhere, and covered neither a pit in the "calm" nor a kistvaen. The indications are that this paved area corresponds to the circles found in connection with kistvaens 7 and 8, Deadman's Bottom, Langcombe.

A layer of peat between the upper paving-stones and the subsoil may probably account for the fact that the latter shows no sign of alteration by heat.

*Grim's Grave, Langcombe* (Plate XVI).—Shown on Ordnance Survey. A fine and perfect specimen, standing in a mound surrounded by a circle of nine stones, all standing; diameter of circle 18 feet.

The author has elsewhere<sup>1</sup> described the cover-stone of this kistvaen as trimmed square to fit it.

The cover-stone lay diagonally across the kist, and has now been lifted out and lies within the circle on the south side. It proves that two cover-stones were used, neither of which was in any apparent way trimmed or dressed to fit the kist. A good instance of the necessity for thorough examination.

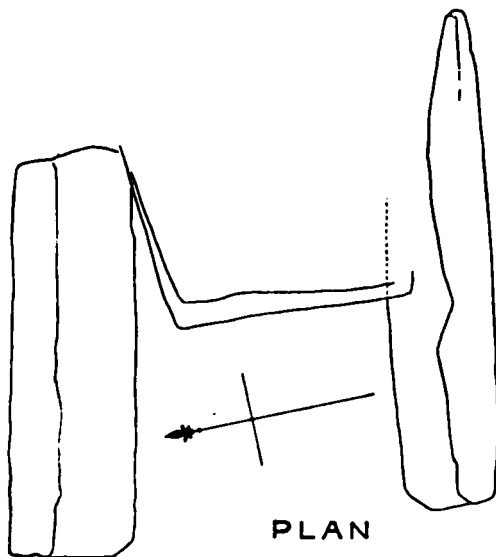
Dimensions of kist: length, 3 feet 1½ inches to 3 feet 6½ inches; breadth, 2 feet 6 inches to 2 feet 7½ inches;

<sup>1</sup> "The Moorland Plym," *Trans. Plymouth Inst.*, 1889-90.

PLATE XV.  
 GREAT GNATS HEAD.



VIEW.    *LOOKING 63° E OF S*



PLAN



R. H. WORTH 1901.

SCALE.

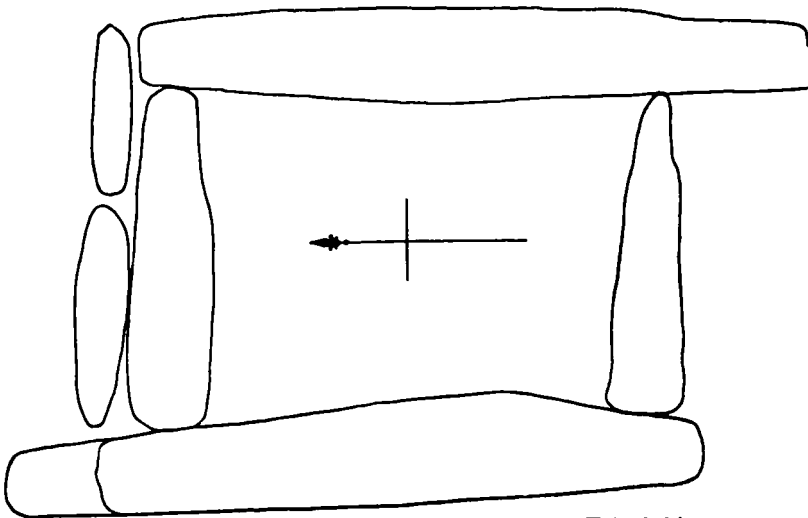
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PLATE XVI.  
GRIMS GRAVE .      *LANGCOMBE*



VIEW.      *LOOKING S.W.*



PLAN.





depth before excavation, 2 feet; original depth, 3 feet 3 inches; direction of length, 1 degree east of north.

No result from excavation, but a flint flake was found on the surface of the ground within a few feet of the kistvaen.

The southern end-stone was disturbed in order to permit the cover-stone to be removed from within the kist, but has been replaced in its original position, which was carefully marked, and is absolutely secure.

This exhausts the list of previously rifled kistvaens at present known to exist in the Plym valley, the author having been in error in stating, in the paper previously referred to, that a second kistvaen existed on Wigford Down, near the summit; another case of deceptive appearances.

We now have details of fourteen kistvaens in this one valley, and the opportunity may be taken to see how far any uniformity of orientation exists, as has sometimes been claimed. The following table gives the direction of length of each of the fourteen kistvaens as referred to the true north:—

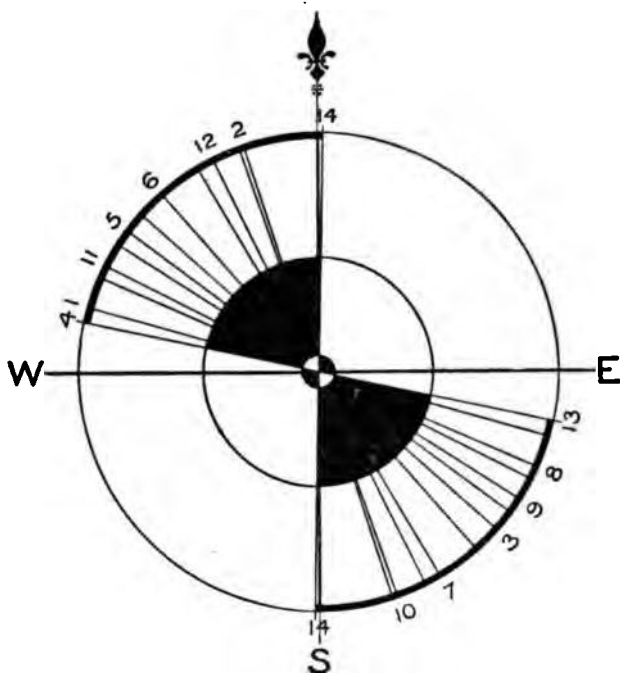
14.	Grim's Grave . . . . .	1° E. of N.
2.	Gutter . . . . .	18° W. of N.
10.	Legis Tor . . . . .	19° W. of N.
12.	Shavercombe . . . . .	26° W. of N.
7.	Deadman's Bottom . . . . .	30° W. of N.
6.	Langcombe . . . . .	41° W. of N.
3.	Lee Moor . . . . .	48° W. of N.
5.	Drizzlecombe . . . . .	53° W. of N. <sup>2</sup>
9.	Calveslake . . . . .	57° W. of N.
11.	Hentor . . . . .	63° W. of N.
8.	Deadman's Bottom . . . . .	66° W. of N.
1.	Wigford Down . . . . .	74° W. of N.
4.	Drizzlecombe . . . . .	78° W. of N.
13.	Great Gnat's Head } . . . . .	

The accompanying figure gives graphically the information contained in the above table.

Within one degree the directions of length all fall between N. and W. and S. and E., being limited to rather less than the N.W. and S.E. quadrants.

A range of 79 degrees, however, does not accord well with any conception of uniformity, and the case of the two kistvaens at Deadman's Bottom, where the difference in direction is 36 degrees, although only a trifle over 30 feet intervenes, emphasises the diversity.

<sup>2</sup> Incorrectly stated as 38° W. of N. in the Nineteenth Report.



With the exception of 10, *Legis Tor*, no one kistvaen points even approximately to any hilltop; it might however, be claimed that in this case an attempt was made to point to Little Trowlesworthy Tor, and were there confirmatory instances the claim might be granted. As it stands it is probably a coincidence and no more.

The rising, the setting, and the midday sun are alike unavailable as objects from which the directions of these kistvaens might have been determined, even after allowing seasonal variation in position and the further local variations due to an irregular horizon.

It remains, none the less, that not only in this valley, but all over Dartmoor, the general direction in length of kistvaens (with some few exceptions) lies within the N.W. and S.E. quadrants of the corrected compass. (R. H. WORTH.)