

COMPLETION OF THE NATIONAL TRUST LANDSCAPE HISTORY SURVEY OF LUNDY, 1989-1999

By

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INTRODUCTION

After the initial two preliminary notes on progress published in the Lundy Field Society Annual Reports (Claris, 1989 & 1990), it was decided that instead of continuing with yearly reviews it would be better to wait until the Landscape History Survey was complete, before publishing the results. A successful week's visit to Lundy this April finally saw the completion of the measured survey, and we have since designed a strategy and outline programme for publication of its results.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

The National Trust Landscape History Survey of Lundy has been a long-term project, running for ten years, from 1989 to 1999. It was requested by the Landmark Trust as an aid to management, following a recommendation in the initial archaeological survey report (Thackray, 1989) which provided an index and inventory to known sites on Lundy to that date. It was funded by the National Trust, supplemented for several years with annual grants from Devon County Council, and in 1996 with an additional grant from English Heritage. The survey took place as a series of annual two-week field visits and was staffed by a core of professional National Trust archaeologists, supported by able teams of volunteers, both professional and 'amateur'. The aim of the survey was to accurately record the location and extent of all known and previously unknown archaeological sites in their landscape context (see Claris, 1989). Features were surveyed in detail by EDM (electronic distance measuring) theodolite and then plotted at 1:1000; in some cases, features were also planned at a larger scale using tape and offsets (Fig. 1). Each feature was given a unique identifying number, a written description including a condition statement, and individual management recommendations; where possible, each feature was also photographed.

The achievements of the survey can best be measured in terms of an extension of existing knowledge, rather than for its 'new' discoveries. The digitised plots can now indicate the location and relationships of sites and areas of archaeological sensitivity, more accurately than has been possible before. The advantages of this will really be seen, once the next stage of the survey is reached, which will be to overlay the digitised survey information (the completed plan of surveyed features) onto a GIS (Geographical Information Systems) map base of the island. It will then be possible to analyse, for example, the relationships between coastal 'batteries' or 'lookouts'; to understand the ways in which the archaeological survival relates to the topography and to begin to build up models for historic phasing of sites. Apart from the academic and research advantages, we also anticipate additional, practical management-related benefits, which are outlined below.

As further insight is gained from analysis of the survey results, it is anticipated that short notes will appear in the pages of the Annual Report, perhaps concentrating on discrete areas, rather than the whole survey. The purpose of this article is therefore to explain our strategy for using the survey results, rather than to discuss the material itself

A STRATEGY FOR PRESENTATION OF ITS RESULTS

Because of the sheer volume of data, and the advances in technology since the project began in 1990, we now think that the best approach for publication will be a phased one, designed to answer different and specific needs. In brief, these are envisaged at a first level as a fairly simple A3, folded map-based leaflet, indicating the extent and nature of the principal archaeological survival. The leaflet will be aimed at the day visitor with only a few hours on the island, or with only a glancing interest in its historic landscape. At the second level, there will be a new, colourful field guide. In the much longer term, a third level will publish the findings of the survey in greater depth; this might be alongside the results of independent ongoing research on the post-medieval history of Lundy. This will certainly not happen quickly, and discussions to date have been only at a very general and superficial level.

MANAGEMENT OF THE ISLAND'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVIVAL

Whilst it is intended that these publications should meet the needs of the public seeking more information on the island's archaeology, it is essential that it should also provide the Landmark Trust with easily available and usable archaeological data to help them manage and conserve the archaeological survival on Lundy.

Owing to the volume of detail arising from the survey, it appears that the most convenient way to make this available to the Landmark Trust is in an electronic form. This would seem preferable to a run of bound and printed inventory lists which would take up space on the shelf and quite probably, and understandably, gather dust. Consequently, our current aim for management provision is to overlay the digitised survey data onto a GIS map base, with the SMR (Sites & Monuments Record) and scheduling data attached. This would enable an operator to locate an area on the map, and then pull up the plotted survey data, along with the attached SMR description and management recommendations for specified sites, and any linked monitoring photographs or drawings.

For the Landmark Trust on Lundy, such a system would have the additional benefit of potential integration with other Lundy data. Information on the SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and the Marine Nature Reserve, or the island's infrastructure, could be overlaid onto the computerised map base, and different data accessed according to need. There is still much detail to discuss, not least, the funding for this, but this is the way in which our thoughts are currently moving. In the meantime, we will be preparing a set of general management guidelines in printed form for Lundy's archaeological survival, which it is hoped will be a valuable extension to the existing ones.

IMPLICATIONS OF INCREASED SCHEDULING PROVISION ON LUNDY

The results of our survey have had the immediate effect in 1998 of extended protection of the archaeology through increased scheduling by English Heritage; the number of scheduled sites on Lundy has now increased from thirteen to forty-one. This has serious, legal implications for the island, its owner and managers and its visitors. The English Heritage Field

Monument Warden for the region has an important role to play in helping advise on the practical management of these protected monuments, and she was among those who visited Lundy in April with the National Trust survey team, as part of an ongoing consultative process. The important issue here is to view this increased protection not simply as a constraint, which as a conservation measure it undoubtedly and intentionally is, but also as a positive support for the island's individuality and 'special' significance. In simple terms the island's total landscape might be regarded as an area of particular archaeological importance; the apparently 'blank' areas which lie between the scheduled monuments and those known archaeological remains for which scheduling is not appropriate, may hold just as much potential archaeological information as those that are legally protected.

To this end, all who visit or are involved in Lundy's welfare, need to know more about its archaeology in order to better understand it and care for it. This is our ultimate aim, and the proposed strategy has at its heart the intention to promote understanding and awareness and to encourage public support and enjoyment of Lundy's distinctive historic environment.

Preparatory work has already begun on the initial publications, and it is anticipated that the National Trust Archaeological Advisers will also be involved in contributing to the Landmark Trust's proposed interpretation area in the Rocket Shed.

RECENT FIELD VISIT TO LUNDY BY THE NATIONAL TRUST ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY TEAM (APRIL 1999)

On the recent visit to Lundy, the National Trust's team was accompanied by Vanessa Straker, the English Heritage Environmental Archaeologist for the South-West, whom we had invited to carry out an initial assessment of Lundy's potential for environmental analysis, following earlier work by Professor G.W.Dimbleby in 1960s (see report by Gardner, 1969).

Vanessa measured the depth of peat and soil development in a number of areas including Gannets Combe, Widows Tenement, and Pondsburry, and took a number of sample cores. Her initial response was enthusiastic, and her forthcoming report on these deposits will indicate the potential value of further research. Although the survey has increased our knowledge about the location and extent of Lundy's archaeology, absence of any recent, extended excavation makes interpretation difficult. Good environmental research would potentially go some way to improving on existing knowledge of occupation and settlement on Lundy and would be a significant support to the survey.

Another member of the team was John Stewart, the National Trust's Adviser on the Conservation of Archaeological Sites and Monuments. At our request, John examined rates of deterioration and erosion on stonework at Quarry Cottages, the guardhouse building on Marisco Castle Parade Ground, the West Coast Battery, and the Early Christian inscribed memorial stones within Beacon Hill Cemetery. Samples of mortar and lichen growth were taken, and his reports and monitoring and conservation recommendations will follow later in the summer of 1999. Photographs, plans and elevations of these structures made by the National Trust survey team in the course of the last ten years proved invaluable in his analysis.

A PROPOSED LUNDY COLLECTION

Finally, it would be appropriate here to mention that the National Trust's Devon Region now has its own professional Archaeologist. Shirley Blaylock is based at the Parke office, Bovey Tracey, and has already been involved in the Lundy survey. Shirley hopes to maintain good liaison with the Warden, Manager and staff on Lundy, and will be beginning to address a longstanding issue for the island, which is the location of artefacts found during past excavations and chance finds made by visitors. Caroline Thackray (National Trust Archaeological Adviser at Cirencester) and Myrtle Ternstrom (Lundy Field Society) have already made initial progress with this in locating scattered individual collections; what is needed now is a recognised location for existing 'homeless' collections and future collections of artefacts from Lundy to provide a source for genuine research. The proper location for this would be an English Heritage-accredited museum, preferably local to Lundy, and negotiations for achieving this have already begun. The National Trust is already acting as a temporary curator of some Lundy collections, including material arising from the Field Society's past work on the island by Tony Langham, Keith Gardner, and more recently, John Schofield and Chris Webster. This has always been regarded as an interim measure, pending the establishment of an approved, single collection for Lundy, and we are now keen to find a satisfactory solution, so that Lundy material may be more easily available for serious research and study.

It is also intended that a very simple system for the deposition of chance, surface finds should be set up on the island. This would mean that in the event of an archaeological find being picked up from the surface, the finder is encouraged to hand it to the warden. She will ask the finder to complete a simple *pro forma* with details of location, description and condition of the find. It will then be bagged along with the label and handed to the archaeologist on her next visit for identification, and if appropriate will then be passed to the museum or agreed accredited source for conservation and curation. The purpose of this is simply to provide a mechanism for dealing with incidental finds, *not to positively encourage* people to go out and search for them. Our concern is that chance finds may currently be leaving the island in people's pockets, simply through the absence of any stated reporting procedure, and this is an attempt to address that concern and prevent loss of archaeological material, even if unprovenanced. In legal terms, of course, such artefacts belong to the owner of the property, in this case the National Trust, although it is envisaged that a loan agreement with an accredited museum will be negotiated for such depositions.

In conclusion, the archaeological survey is not so much complete, as about to enter a new era. The data collection process has been achieved, and the interpretation and presentation of the information gathered is about to begin. A framework for liaison has been established between the Lundy Warden, the National Trust Archaeologist in Devon, and the English Heritage Field Monument Warden for the area; with the substantial increase in numbers of scheduled sites for Lundy, this closer relationship should provide better support to archaeological management. Meanwhile, research will continue to take place, and inevitably, theories and knowledge will change; what the recent survey will have achieved is a statement of the known extent and likely significance of the archaeological survival on Lundy in the 1990s, and at the very least, a sound baseline for its management.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to convey our thanks to all the volunteers over the years, who have worked

with energy and enthusiasm to produce survey results of high quality, and to the staff of the Landmark Trust who have provided support and practical advice. The National Trust would also like to thank Devon County Council, the British Academy, and English Heritage who all contributed via grants to this project.

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Figure 1: (*Opposite*) Detailed ground plan, elevation and section of ruined building at the North End, known as John O'Groats. The feature represents a Bronze Age burial mound whose elevated position has since been adapted for the site of a later, post-medieval stone building, function unknown. It is now ruinous. *Surveyed by Jeremy Miln, for the National Trust Archaeological Survey of Lundy, May 1990 (National Trust Copyright).*

