

PLATE VIII.



Fig. 1. MORTAR STONE, NO. 1, SHEEPSTOR.

*Photo R. H. Worth.*



Fig. 2. MORTAR STONE, NO. 2, SHEEPSTOR.

*Photo R. H. Worth.*

## BLOWING-HOUSES IN THE VALLEYS OF THE SHEEPSTOR BROOK AND THE GLAZEBROOK

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### SHEEPSTOR BROOK.

In the year 1930, Mrs. Legassick, of Colleytown, Sheepstor, found two mortar stones forming part of an old hedge close by the Sheepstor Brook, near Colleytown. Her husband, Mr. Richard Legassick, brought these to my notice. They are near the ruins of a building which, from the evident trace of a leat leading thereto, was under suspicion as a possible blowing-house. Close to the ruins Mr. Legassick had also noticed a deposit of tin slimes, the waste from the powdered ore. I questioned him as to any mould stone, and learnt that "some sort of trough" had been built into the wall of a linhay by the public road.

On investigation this "trough" proved to be a good example of a mould stone, with a cavity also for a sample mould. It is

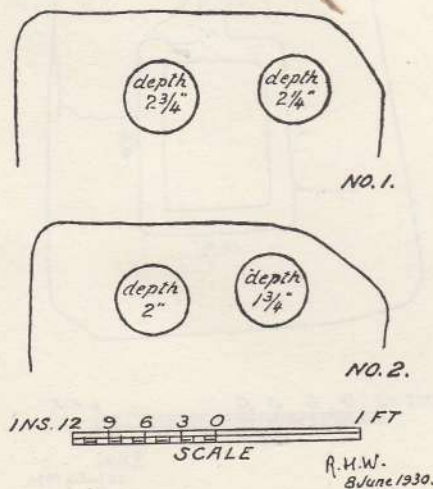
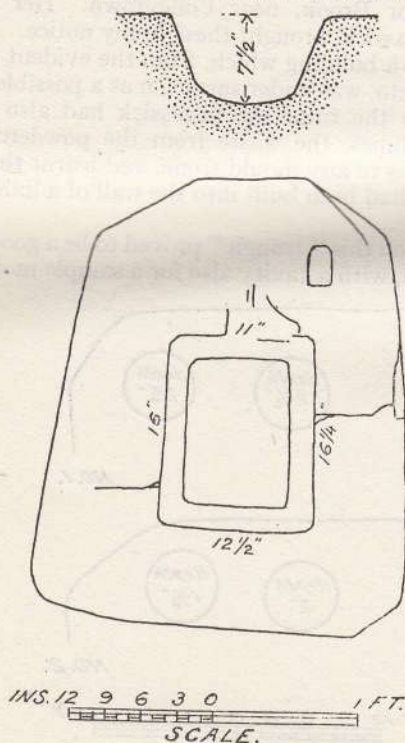


Fig. 3. MORTAR STONES, SHEEPSTOR.

in a very dark spot, and usually hidden by the farm implements which, except at harvest time, occupy the linhay, measurement and photography were accordingly postponed to the end of July, 1930.

The mortar stones have each two mortars, the hollows being from  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches to 6 inches in diameter, and from  $1\frac{3}{4}$  to  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches in depth. Views of the stones are given in Figs. 1 and 2, plate VIII, and drawings to scale in Fig. 3 in the text.

The cavity of the mould measures  $16\frac{1}{4}$  inches on one side at the top, and 16 inches on the other side; the end dimensions are respectively  $12\frac{1}{2}$  inches and 11 inches. In the bottom the mould measures  $12\frac{1}{2}$  inches by  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches, the depth at centre is  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The sample mould is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  ins. by  $2\frac{1}{4}$  ins., and  $1\frac{3}{8}$  ins. deep. The stone has been cracked by the heat of the molten metal. As in all moulds from Dartmoor blowing-houses, the material is granite. Fig. 4, plate IX, is a view of the Mould, and Fig. 5, in the text, is a measured drawing.



R.H.W.  
26 July 1930.

Fig. 5. MOULD STONE, SHEEPSTOR.





Fig. 4. MOULD STONE, SHEEPSTOR.

*Photo R. H. Worth.*



Fig. 6. "Wishing Pool", GLAZEBROOK.

*Photo R. H. Worth.*

This blowing-house is on the right bank of the brook, hard by the point at which a bridge carries the footpath which leads through the fields from Colleytown to Yellowmead. The map of the six inch O.S. on which it should be marked is sheet CXII, N.E., Devon., the location lon.  $4^{\circ} 1' 15\frac{1}{2}''$  N. and lat.  $50^{\circ} 29' 20\frac{1}{2}''$  N. The linhay in which is the mould is outside, and to the east of, Colleytown yardgate, by the roadside.

#### GLAZEBROOK.

Last year Mrs. M. Eckett Fielden had her attention drawn to a mortar stone on the right bank of the Glazebrook; she has reported the matter in *Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries*, Vol. XVII, p. 43; and she had also kindly informed me thereon. The stone was new to me, and added interest to an adjacent building as positively identifying it as a blowing-house. The site is a little above the pool which Crossing has called the "Wishing Pool", and about 100 yards below Glaze Meet; from these data it can readily be found, the house is quite near the stream, and the position can be indicated on six inch O.S., sheet CXIX, S.E.

I have no faith in "Wishing Pool" as a place-name. Crossing has succeeded in imposing it upon the local inhabitants, who have accepted his nomenclature, as has too often happened. But his explanation that those who leap across the pool, and while so doing loudly express a wish, will receive their desire, is sufficiently absurd to refute itself. Few of us may get our wishes, but the matter is luckily not so hopeless as if it depended upon the athletic feat in question. In the confirmation whereof I find an excuse for giving a view of the pool, Fig. 6, plate IX. Far more probable is it that the pool was one of the many "Washing Pools", formerly used for sheep washing; indeed, it is the only place on the moorland course of this stream which is well adapted to that use.

The mortar stone has two pairs of mortars, one on each of two adjacent faces, which meet at rather less than a right-angle (about 80 degrees). When the tinnern found a suitable stone they worked it to the full, and very frequently formed mortars on two sides, usually opposite sides—obverse and reverse—but sometimes two adjacent faces. There is, for example, another such stone in the blowing-house on the right bank of the Meavy, above Nosworthy. There the angle between the faces is almost precisely a right-angle; and that stone has yet further been used to form a bearing for an iron axle, in fact there are three grooves in it formed and polished by such an axle.

Fig. 7, plate X, gives a view of the mortar stone by the Glaze, and Figs. 8, a, b, c, are measured drawings.



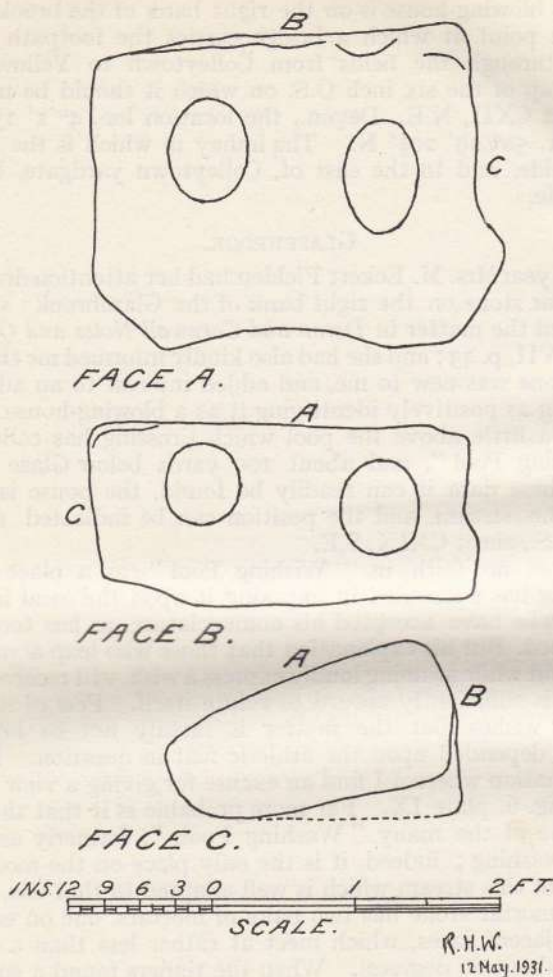


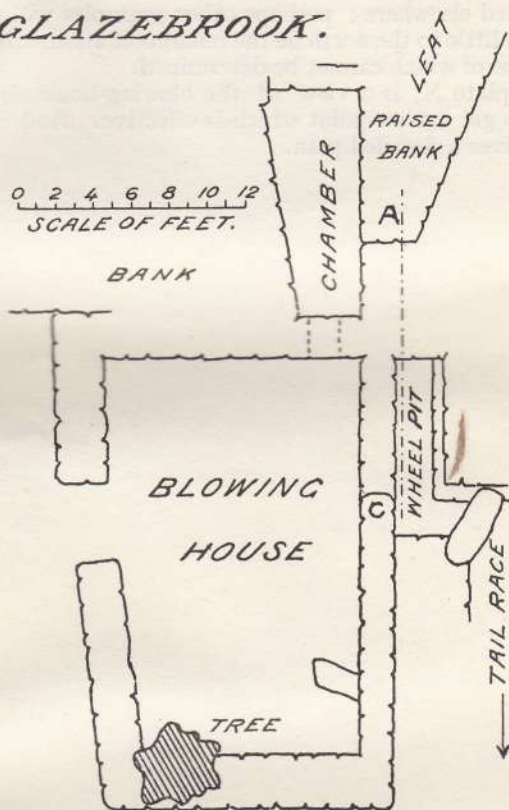
Fig. 8. MORTAR STONE, GLAZE BROOK.

The blowing-house has some interesting features. Its internal dimensions are, length 20 ft. 6 ins., breadth at the one end 13 ft. 6 ins., and at the other 12 ft. The wheel-pit is well marked, and is 9 ft. in length, with the tail race turning off from it at right-angles.

As is usual, the building is set against a bank on the end or side where is the leat. In this instance the natural ground level was not high enough to bring the leat to the building, and so an artificial bank was added, from which a short wooden

launder would conduct the water to the wheel. Alongside this support for the leat a chamber has been excavated in the natural bank, 12 feet in length, and of a mean width of a little over four feet, being five feet at the end farthest from the house, and about four feet at the house end. This chamber communicates with the house by an opening in the party wall,

### GLAZEBROOK.



### PLAN.

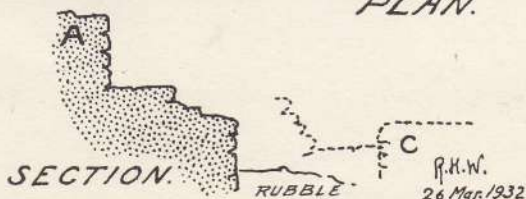


Fig. 10.

1 ft. 7 ins. in width, and 1 ft. high in the clear. It is difficult to determine the use of this chamber, it is at too low a level to serve as a pond for the water passing on to the wheel, and the opening is into the house, and not into the wheel-pit. It may have been part of the flue of the furnace, for the collection of tin-bearing ashes, but this is a mere guess. Such a chamber would certainly function, but it is a refinement which I have not detected elsewhere ; perhaps other examples will now be found. A little to the north lie the remains of another building the purpose of which cannot be determined.

Fig. 9, plate X, is a view of the blowing-house, but it is difficult to get a view-point which is effective. And Fig. 10, overleaf gives a detailed plan.

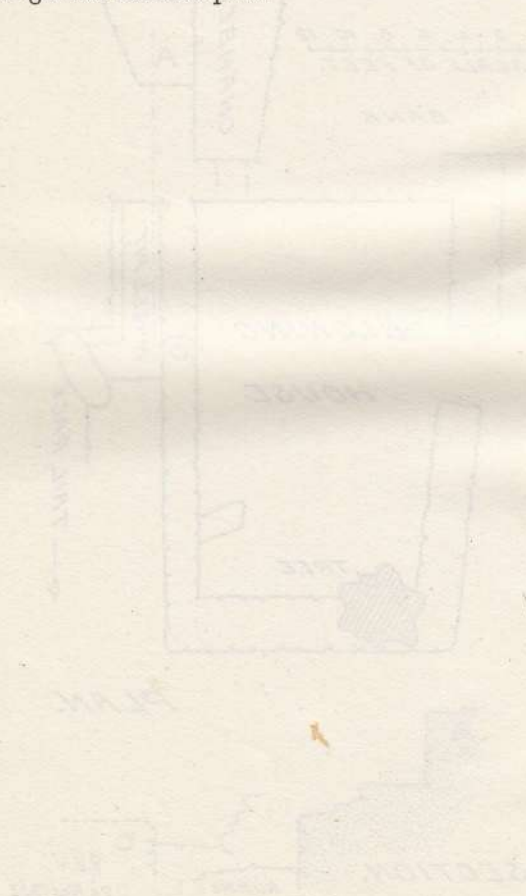






Fig. 7. MORTAR STONE, GLAZEBROOK.

*Photo R. H. Worth.*



Fig. 9. BLOWING-HOUSE, GLAZEBROOK.

*Photo R. H. Worth.*

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