

***Reconstructing the Medieval Landscape of Devon:
Comparing the Results of Cartographic Analysis
and the Domesday Survey***

**Submitted by Richard John Sandover,
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Abstract

This thesis sets out to create a map of parts of Devon at Domesday. This will be achieved by pursuing two themes. The first is a map regression that will identify the core farmland (that is the land that was 'anciently' enclosed), while the second establishes an interpretative framework that will allow selected Domesday metrics to be interrogated. The Domesday metrics will be used to corroborate the results of the map regression.

Five case study areas have been selected to cover a series of different *pays* within the county, extending from the floodplains in the south-east across to the top of the Blackdown Hills and up to the fringes of Exmoor. Each case study area was created around two parishes, and their tithe maps and associated apportionments have been transcribed into a GIS to serve as the basis of the map regression.

The map regression will follow two paths. The first analyses the fieldscape, removing evidence of 'modern' enclosure and arriving at a map of the land that was enclosed early in the historic period, while the second concentrates upon the settlement patterns, trying to establish a counterpart to the map of the fields. The Domesday data pertaining to the agricultural exploitation of the land and to the population will be interpreted to provide two products: one that may be used to corroborate the 'Domesday' map of the fieldscape and the other to both inform, and assess the postulated settlement pattern of the same date The

establishment of continuity is fundamental to the success of this project and a lot of effort is expended attempting to identify links between the Domesday and tithe data. Additional mechanisms that may also promote continuity have been identified and are utilised throughout. In addition to the use of the limited records, the work in each case study area is supported by palynological analyses from pollen sequences within the locale and attention has been paid to the existence of ancient woodland in each parish.

Working in a county that has a dearth of early records, the combination of map regression with corroborative evidence from Domesday works very effectively at a parochial level, but difficulties in determining the extents of the Domesday manors complicate a similar check at that more local level. Credible maps for each parish, which can probably be dated to *ca.* 1086, have been produced, using a methodology that may be adapted for use elsewhere.

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