

A HISTORY  
OF THE  
PARISH OF BARGROVE

IN THE

COUNTY OF DEVON

BY

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*of Exeter.*

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DARTMOOR IN ROMAN DAYS

In the time of the Emperor Claudius, when Rome successfully conquered southern Britain, a century of men from the Legio IX Hispana was called to quell a small uprising in the kingdom of the Dumnonii. Traveling to what is today called Dartmoor, the Legionaries discovered Druid priests engaged in human sacrifice — a practice outlawed by Caesar — within 'the Burnt Grove.' The Legion fell upon the bearded priests, but the druids called their allies, the People of the Hollow Hills, and by their magics and by the fearful power of the Old Gods, the Romans were defeated. Only one man survived to tell the tale, and he was mad. This event is placed by my reckoning in the vicinity of Bargrove village, whose name may well be a corruption of 'Burnt Grove,' perhaps on the hill the locals call Eagle Tor, in approximately 48 AD. Interestingly enough, the IX Hispana was considered a cursed Legion thereafter, and vanished to the last man in the mists beyond Hadrian's Wall.

A similar — if somewhat less specific — tale is told about survivals of the most