

Maurice Retallick

Changes in varieties of stock on the common.

So going back to your younger days and when your father was farming at Bagtor and using the common up here, what other changes have you seen in terms of the management of the moor?

Well the stocking is drastically different than it was, traditionally before the hardy types of cattle and sheep were kept on Dartmoor, Dartmoor was stocked for a few months in the summer with the traditional breeds of South Devon cattle and Devon Longwool sheep and the also the White Faced Dartmoor and the Greyface Dartmoor, those sheep were prevalent on the commons but only for a few months in the summer, but then the hardy breeds started to come onto Dartmoor, the Scots Blackface sheep and the Galloway cattle and others and they were then onto the moor and grazing most of the year round.

When would that have been?

Well the first Scots sheep were brought down to Dartmoor round the turn of the century, 1910 or 20, the Galloway cattle have come since, we started keeping Galloway cattle in the '50s on this part of the common.