

Phil Newman

The extent of tin streaming and the beginning of granite quarrying.

We have documentary evidence that tin was being extracted in Devon in the 12th century, but there's always the possibility that it was being extracted a lot earlier than that, the zenith of the industry was in the 15th century when there was a peak of production and thereafter it fell quite considerably down into the 18th century when virtually nothing happened.

So moving onto the more industrial past here at Haytor can you describe what happened here in the 1820s?

Yes, well granite has been a major building material on Dartmoor since the third millennium BC, if you look around us actually on Haytor Down there are many prehistoric houses built from granite using moor stone, which is the stone they found lying around, which had broken off the main outcrops, and then right into the medieval period, not far from here is Houndtor Village, which is also a medieval village built from granite and of course the churches in the area are all built from granite, Ilsington and Widecombe. But there wasn't actually a granite industry as such until the early 19th century with the development of explosives, to actually quarry stone, that's when these quarries actually started to become developed, they were developed by a chap called George Templer in about 1820 we think, although possibly a little earlier, and he seems to have got a contract for London Bridge, which is one of many contracts he managed to procure for Haytor Granite. Haytor's actually the first industrial quarry on Dartmoor, and there are five quarries all together, Haytor Quarry is the largest and most developed, but there was also Hollwell Quarry, which is also a very large impressive quarry, there's another one called Rubble Heap Quarry, another one called Harrowbarrow Quarry and a fifth one called Emsworthy.