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Dartmoor's Alluring Uplands

Transhumance and Pastoral Management in the Middle Ages

A striking and famous feature of the English landscape, Dartmoor is a beautiful place, with a sense of wildness and mystery. This book provides a new perspective on an important aspect of Dartmoor’s past. Its focus is transhumance: the seasonal transfer of grazing animals to different pastures. In the Middle Ages, intensive practical use was made of Dartmoor’s resources. Its extensive moorlands provided summer pasture for thousands of cattle from the Devon lowlands, which flowed in a seasonal tide, up in the spring and down in the autumn. This book describes, for the first time, the social organisation and farming practices associated with this annual transfer of livestock. It also presents evidence for a previously unsuspected Anglo-Saxon pattern of transhumance in which lowland farmers spent the summers living with their cattle on the moor. Winner of the Devon Book of the Year Award 2013.

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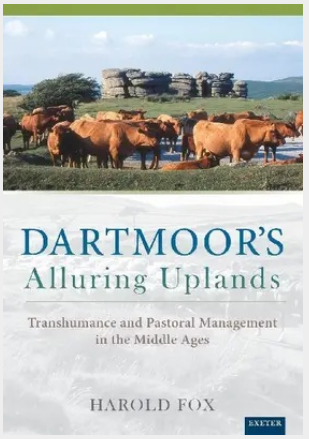

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