

to its granite crown west of Dart; but the same elevation, while it protects the old house from the west wind that usually sweeps the moor, also serves to shut out much sunshine. For half the year Ballaford hides the sun soon after noon. The slope of the land all tends north-westward, and the flank of the hill casts a shadow that swallows the homestead during a greater part of each day. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, thanks to the wealth of valley pasture and other circumstances, this spot long ago tempted enterprise; and Dagger Farm, before ruin and decay overtook it, before a human tragedy left it to tumble into ruins, had seen full measure of prosperity.

Three generations succeeded there; then that happened which broke the thread of good fortune and turned men away from the river-side homestead for ever.

When Gregory Newcombe, with a grant from the Duchy of Cornwall, erected his house and set to work to enclose and reclaim this virgin earth of Dartmoor, there was dug from a Danmonian barrow a scrap of metal. The prehistoric tomb had been scattered to make a grass meadow, and its human ashes dispelled; but the metal flake being submitted to the antiquaries of that time—though, indeed, archaeology was but an infant science then—rejoiced the wise men, who declared this blade to be a fragment from the Age of