

Eden Philpotts Walk and Talk

Thanks to funding from Learn Devon, 12 enthusiasts were able to go in search of the lost Dartmoor writer Eden Phillpotts, who was born at the end of the nineteenth century and lived until 1960 and the age of 98. He was a contemporary and friend of Agatha Christie, Arnold Bennett and Thomas Hardy.

Following the plot

First, the group met at the Edgemoor Hotel where Phil Page gave a talk about the author and his work. The group then set off to Yarner Wood, the setting for *The Forest on the Hill*, published in 1912. They started at one of the former Gamekeepers Lodges, where Timothy Snow, the main protagonist, lived and worked as gamekeeper. Next on to the copper mine, to see where the murder was committed and to find out more about the story, which is set around Yarner, Ilsington and Dury.

Eden Philpotts fans look at the house where the author placed his heroine



The group then went on to walk on Trendlebere Down and North Lodge where the

heroine of the story, Drusilla Whyddon, lived. Next to Ilsington to try to identify the home of Lot Snow, the villain of the piece, who lived next to the lych gate. A walk around the village and graveyard was followed by a discussion on who would be selected to play the roles in a modern film of the book!

Web of intrigue

The first pages of *The Forest on the Hill* state that, in the woodland “war was the recognised state; all were fighting; none knew that it was so. The feeble met the powerful, and might was pitted against guile, or the single strength of the strong challenged the combined strength of the weak.” The story ultimately ends in tragedy, but along the way readers are drawn in to an exciting web of intrigue that the walkers enjoyed recounting.

All participants agreed that it was a fascinating and ‘most enjoyable’ day and were keen to do another walk later in the year based on another Eden Phillpotts book, *The American Prisoner*.