

COLEMAN'S STAIRS ROAD

John Coleman was a man of some substance who owned several acres of land in the Epple Bay area during the late 16th and early 17th centuries. In one of the earliest maps of the village it gives the name of the road we now call Albion Road (leading from Station Road to the sea & Gap) as "Colman's' Road".



Whether it was he who had the gap cut in the cliffs to help fertilise his farmland with seaweed, we do not know, but the Gap has always been known as Coleman's Stairs. In the earliest photo of it, taken from the beach, you can see that there was indeed a short flight of stairs at the foot of the gap where it met the shore. These only disappeared when the undercliff was repaired and reinforced after the 1953 storm. The photo on the left was taken in 1919.

When John Colman died during a Plague epidemic in 1619, his will indicates that he was a wealthy man. The fact that his name has remained attached to this area for over 400 years tells us quite a lot about the high esteem in which he was held by his fellow villagers at that time.

There are several views of the Gap taken from the top looking down towards the sea and the area is still seen as an area where fairly high status properties were (and still are) built.



The view above of the Gap shows how narrow it is and in 1912, when the photo was taken, the stairs were still at the foot of the cliff.