

Merrymeeting Forge

Gwennap,
Cornwall, UK
TR16 6BL

A History



By Leonard Szepietowski

2018

Contents	Page
Prefix	3
Introduction and derivation of name	4
Chapter 1 – The Building – The current building – The buildings’ evolution	6
Chapter 2 – The Occupants – Census records – Electoral Register	15
Chapter 3 – The Location – Merrymeeting on the map (including maps)	28
Chapter 4 – Notes on the Turnpike Road – historical maps of Cornwall showing road development searching for the triangle formation	37
Appendix 1 – Some Trengove family local records	56
Appendix 2 – Selection of photographs of the forge	57
Appendix 3 – Wills from the 1600’s	63
Appendix 4 – Local history appeal	65
Appendix 5 – Extracts from ‘Gwennap – a descriptive poem’ by William Francis, published 1845	66
Historical notes	73
Further reading/References and Authors Note	74

Prefix

This was supposed to be a short retirement project lasting a few months but it has turned into a fascinating, if at times frustrating, dip into local history records lasting, off and on, years, as the research was fitted around the normal demands of life with children leaving home, grandchildren appearing, etc.

The initial stages were straight forward enough – we have lived here for over forty years and had carried out many improvements and developments which led us to some detailed understanding of the structure and it also meant that the recent history was covered. The next stage was to use on-line resources such as the Census Records 1841 – 1911 and the Electoral Registers 1948 – 1982, the gap between 1948 and 1982 was covered by records held in the Cornwall Records Office in Truro. This section is where one of the great puzzles arose – see Chapter 2 (pg14), as the Merrymeeting site seemed to house an extraordinary number of people in the early period. The next puzzle came when trying to establish when the current building was actually built as the obvious resource of records from the previous owners, the Williams Estate (of Burncoose, Scorrier and Caerhays), could not be accessed. Even the history of the turnpike road running alongside the property proved elusive – see Chapter 4 (pg36). Resorting to a wider approach via general Cornwall road development maps and turning to the records of neighbouring estates, Tresamble and Trevince, together with a couple of local histories filled in some of the jigsaw.

Staff at the Redruth Reference Library were very helpful with a good range of maps; the curator, David Thomas, and his staff at the Cornwall Records Office in Truro, proved to be a font of knowledge; the resident curator, Angela Broome, at the Cornwall Museum also checked their archives; a friend from the Beauchamp family (owners of Trevince) delved into their family history archives to assist in this endeavour; and local neighbours contributed photographs and maps adding to the trail.

With all the twists and turns, the detective work required in following through the various sources and clues has proved a fascinating and absorbing exercise with an intriguing result.

The extract from a Descriptive Poem on Gwennap in Appendix 5 (pg 66) published in 1845 provides a description of the immediate area which could apply equally today (except we have far more traffic). It also gives an intriguing comment on Merrymeeting as it appears that the Cornish militia marched 'through it' to carry out war games across the road at Tresamble in the early 1800's. (From 1803–05, Britain stood under constant threat of a French invasion during the Napoleonic wars. The Royal Navy, however, secured mastery of the seas and decisively destroyed a Franco-Spanish fleet at the Battle of Trafalgar in October 1805). Does this imply a hamlet or that they passed by?

It proved a satisfying way to take advantage of periods of quiet in the course of daily life. Also my thanks to my wife, Sue, for her tolerance, or was it relief, at the times I spent out of the house on my researches.

As a final comment please note the research findings are limited and, in places, confusing. If anyone can help with further details or clarifications then please get in touch.

Merrymeeting Forge



2017 (See Appendix 4 for more pictures)

Introduction

Every house has a history and the house we live in is no exception. It started as a humble smithy with a cottage attached and has developed into a large family home of some character in the two centuries since it was built. The intriguing questions arise – why was it built here? When exactly was it built? Why is it called Merrymeeting Forge? Who lived here and what did they do? How was the building and use of it changed over the years? Since my retirement I have tried to answer these questions about the forge and have come across fascinating answers as well as puzzles which I have put together in a format I trust the reader finds interesting.

It is over half a century since the ring of hammering on an anvil sounded in Merrymeeting Forge but we are constantly reminded of the original purpose – recently I dug up another horseshoe in the garden.

It is now purely a domestic dwelling although the building was originally constructed in the early 1840's as a working forge in the traditional Cornish longhouse design with accommodation for the blacksmith and his family incorporated at one end. My wife and I have lived here happily since the late 1970's, our children were born, grew up and left home in the time since and, as have previous occupants, we made some changes to the building to make it a large comfortable home to suit our needs.

With any old building of character where usage has evolved over the years, there is always an intriguing history attached to its purpose, reason for its location, the alterations and adaptations over the years and, of course, the history of the people who have lived in it.

Using any available sources such as the house deeds, the Cornish library resources, Census records and relevant books written about the area (not, unfortunately, including the records of the Williams Estate held at Caerhays Castle from whom we acquired the property as many of their records of that period were destroyed in a fire some years ago) a fascinating picture emerges which may be the history of only one building but shows how we and our immediate environment are influenced by not only our own needs but also the local geography, local historic developments and the times we live in.



Detail from the Gwennap Tithe Apportionment 1839. The property (in the north east corner of a long triangle) was described as 'Cottage and Court', the north west corner as 'Plantation' with the rest described as 'Close'. All belonging to John Williams Esq.

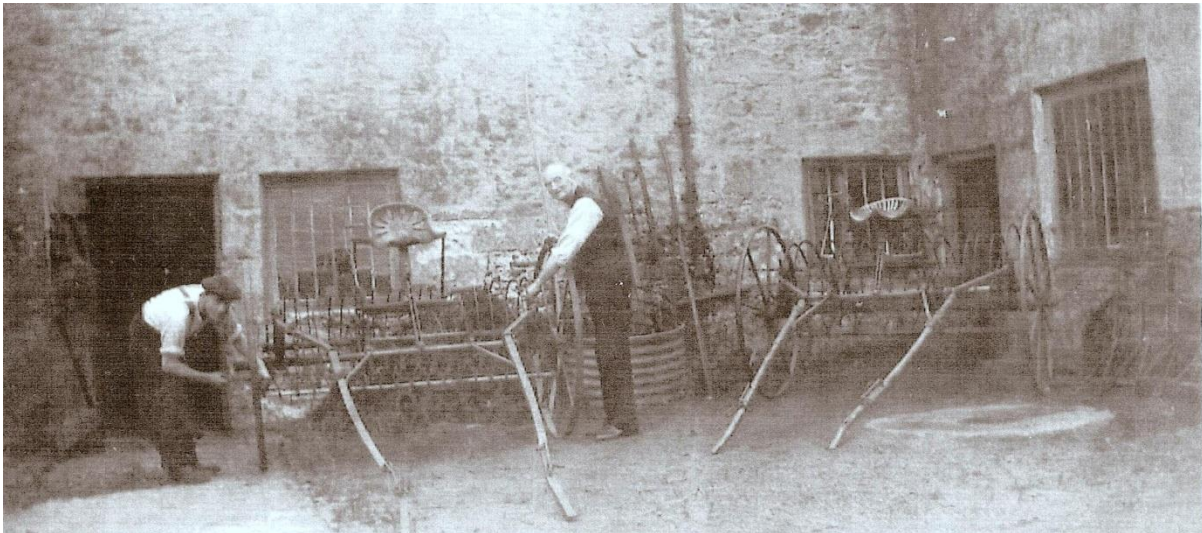
The name

According to Cornish place names compiled by R Morton Nance, 'Merrymetony' is most likely an Anglicisation of 'myr an mytyn' which means 'morning aspect' in Celtic. The building is aligned north-south with the original front (and all the large windows) facing east thus it is lit up by the morning sun as it rises – this would have been even more the case where the forge was originally situated (between 1300's (or earlier – see pg 28) and 1800's) further up the hill, at the other end of the triangle, on an exposed junction of roads. Another possibility is that it derives from the English 'pleasant meeting place' – a name for places where several roads meet (and it would be applicable to the site of a busy smithy). The prevailing winds blow from the south-west therefore the back of the current building (the side on the lane and the forge access – the new 'front' of the house you see on arrival) had only one window – a small window at the head of the stairs providing light to the landing and with (still original) wooden shutters, to withstand any winter gales. Another reason for the blank wall facing the courtyard would have been to keep sun out of the forge so that the smith could see the state of his fire and the colour of the heated metal more easily.

Chapter 1

The Building

Although built in granite and in the style of a traditional Cornish 'long house' as a blacksmith's shop incorporating accommodation at one end it earned the title 'Forge' as a development from 'Smithy' by extending the products beyond horse-related work such as farriery to include all sorts of metalworking – in its prime there were two forge furnaces in operation. I was told by a local farmer some years ago that he remembered a very busy business with two full-time blacksmiths and six apprentices in the early 1900's – as a boy on his father's farm he relished the occasions when he was sent to the forge with a horse for shoeing or some implement to be mended so he could watch all the bustle and activity accompanied by the noise of hammers, the flying sparks and the smell of hot metal. The original massive round stone wheel-plate on which metal tyres were fitted to cartwheels is still here although now propped up against the wall having been moved (with a great deal of effort) from its working position embedded in the forecourt outside the forge. The forecourt was mainly cobbled and a section remains in front of the main door.



Early 1900's (?) Note the granite wheel-stone set in the ground.

The current Building

The building design was based on the Cornish Long House, it is 75 feet long, one room deep, 16 feet high, 2 foot thick stone walls of granite stone on the outside with rubble infill



in the middle. A lean-to coal store was built at the forge end. Dressed granite lintels over the windows and doors with square dressed granite quoins set outlining the buildings corners and door/window apertures show it was a solid construction of some class. As with most traditional Cornish buildings in the area the thick stone walls were laid on clay with no foundations, the forge floor was beaten earth and compacted ash and the cottage part had slate flooring laid directly on earth. The roof is traditional black/grey slate tiles. Originally a large wooden louvered air/smoke-vent structure was set on the forge roof to supplement the forge chimneys (visible in 1978 photograph above although since removed).

All windows are of the single glazed, wooden sash, type although the forge widows



overlooking the courtyard were metal uprights with overlapped glass panes set in between. The original sashes lack 'horns' which supports a building date before 1850. The forge part of the building had a main wide stable door (big enough for a shire horse to enter – on the wall opposite this door a tethering ring remains), a window beside it and a smaller (normal) door at the other end of the courtyard. One very tall window with a low sill looked out on to the garden and there was a door leading out into the garden beside it.

About one third of the long house was devoted to the living accommodation with its own access and divided off from the smithy by an internal, two foot thick, granite wall extending up to the roof.



The cottage front door opened into the living room/kitchen with a large window looking out on the garden and a back door opposite leading out into the rear cottage garden adjoining the forge courtyard; a Cornish range would have been set in the chimney alcove on the left; the room has a comfortable 7 foot 3 inch head height with exposed ceiling joists. To the right of the main door was a door leading into a square parlour with its own large



window looking out onto the garden and with a slate surround fireplace set in the thickness of the north wall.



A fairly steep narrow single-flight staircase (fully boxed in originally to stop heat from the kitchen escaping) is set opposite the window in the living room/kitchen leading to a small landing and (originally) three bedrooms upstairs.

All three bedrooms had a large window each facing east onto the garden and two had fireplaces. The only window on the west side is a small one on the landing at the top of the stairs which still has the original shutters.



Water for the smithy and the cottage was collected off the roof with gutters emptying into storage barrels at either end of the building. The rain water used for drinking and cooking would have been filtered before use.



There was no bathroom, and toilet facilities consisted of an earth privy set outside at the cottage end of the building although there may also have been one for use by the workforce at the other end. Interestingly the privy was still in place in the 1970's, complete with an old wooden seat and a wooden door but with sections of heavy corrugated metal from a Second World War Anderson Shelter forming the curved roof and sides.

The building is set on a plot of about one third of an acre with the main garden (now mainly lawn but originally set out as an apple orchard with fruit bushes) on the side away from the lane with a narrow garden at the north end of the building and a small garden and a courtyard on the lane side.

The large garden is bounded by the main road on the north side, woodland on the east and would have led into small fields on the south side (now self-seeded woodland) leading up to the apex of the triangle where the ancient smithy once stood.

The whole plot of building, gardens and woodland is positioned high up on the side of the Gwennap valley (at an elevation of 94m above sea level), triangular shaped, covering about two acres bounded by roads on the three sides – main Redruth to Penryn A393 road (previously the turnpike toll road) on the north side forming the top of the triangle where the current building is situated; the Gwennap to Stithians/Four Lanes road to the east/southeast; and the original Lanner to Stithians road (more of a tarmac lane now) on the west/southwest which meets the other at the southerly apex of the triangle. On the other side of the roads surrounding the triangle are fields on two sides and the wooded gardens of the Burncoose Estate on the other. Two bungalows from the 1920/60's are situated across

the lane opposite the forge courtyard on either side of the lane leading to ancient Devis Farm and a lane leading to Gwennap village branches off on the other side of the A393 main road.

The buildings' evolution

There can be no certainty on the dates of the changes made to the building to suit the evolving needs of the business and the blacksmiths family occupying the cottage but the sequence was something like:

1840's – 75 ft longhouse-style rectangular granite building comprising of two-thirds blacksmith workshop and one third cottage accommodation with a solid dividing wall between them. The building is orientated North/South with the cottage at the North end. A lean-to coal shed was attached at the end of the smithy at the south end. Set in a triangular

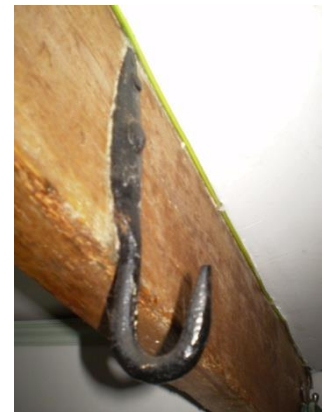


site comprising of one third of an acre orchard garden, one third of an acre of woodland, and one and half acres consisting of two fields divided by a low wall. A cobbled courtyard and kitchen garden were accessed from the lane. The whole site was contained between the lane and two roads. Water was supplied by collecting rainwater in large storage tanks and an outside privy was built in the narrow garden strip at the cottage end.

1860's – lean-to kitchen (9 x 13.5 ft external dimensions) added to the cottage on the west side entered from the house through the previous back door, the door itself was relocated on the north side of the new kitchen providing a more sheltered entrance.

A chimney was built into the north wall of the new kitchen to serve the built-in copper to heat water.

Maps of the period still show the area of the triangle consisting of the long forge building in one corner, a garden behind it with woodland behind that filling one third of the triangle, the rest, up to the apex, being two fields.



1870's – extension wing (17 x 22 ft external dimensions) built onto the forge end of the building incorporating the entrance to the coal shed and providing more forge space. The wall between the old and new building was taken down forming a new, much enlarged, L shaped space and the previous bottom forge entrance door was converted into a window. . The west wall of the extension incorporated a chimney to serve an additional forge fire. The original roof was left intact and a square pitched roof added over the extension. A second rainwater storage tank was added at that end to serve the new forge. By this time the two fields in the triangle had been allowed to turn into self-seeded woodland which remains to this day.



1890's – the blacksmith's large family required more space therefore an extra (fourth) bedroom was added to the cottage by building it upstairs in the forge space, providing access to it through a new door made in the solid dividing wall and taking a slice off the end bedroom to make a corridor to reach it. It would have been about this time that the fireplace in that bedroom was sealed off to make best use of the reduced wall space. A new window was built in the new bedroom overlooking the garden designed to match existing windows. At the same time the space formed below the new bedroom was converted into a forge office with a wooden partition separating it from the working forge and a window added to match the others on the garden side.

1930's – there are indications that the cottage had a major upgrade with a new brick-surround fireplace replacing the original in the downstairs parlour and a similar one put in to replace the range in the living room - the original large space was filled in behind it although the original mantelpiece remains. Removal of the range would only have been possible if an alternative means of cooking was in place – most probably a gas cooker in the new kitchen run on bottled gas. That would also explain the gas light fitting above the old range mantelpiece discovered embedded in the plaster when that wall was stripped for re-rendering in the late 1970's – there is no mains gas available in the area. The cottage still used an outside earth closet.



1940's – a small glass lean-to conservatory was added enclosing the original front door and the parlour window. Also a flimsy lean-to glassed utility area was added to the end of the kitchen where a sink was installed utilising water piped in from the storage tank outside. It would have been about this period that the flush toilet was built at the end of the coal shed with access to it both from the forge and from the garden. The below-ground block septic and soak away tanks were built to service the new toilet although water was still supplied from the rainwater storage tanks. The door from the forge into the garden was removed and the space filled in.



1949?



1978 West (lane) side

The building was left abandoned and neglected for a couple of years in the mid 1970's until we arrived finding leaking roofs throughout, internal soot covered walls in the forge part with a beaten earth floor, ghosts in the bedroom (according to my wife) and bats in the coal shed. The garden was overgrown and running wild with apple trees and fruit bushes only just discernible through the tall grass and weeds.

1970's – 1980's - major house renovation and conversion work included replacement of the tiled roof; removal of the vented forge cowling; reinforcing several blackened and soot-eroded beams in the forge (about a foot of soot was found to have accumulated above the fourth bedroom ceiling); soot-blackened walls (the forge space was open to the rafters) were cleaned; and bitumen flooring was laid over the broken cottage slate floor and a concrete floor was laid in the forge area (which also reduced the Radon Gas readings taken in 1979 to acceptable levels).



1978 East (garden) side

Mains water was connected via a buried supply pipe (in 1978) brought up from Gwennap village some quarter of a mile away – across two large fields, under the main road (fortunately a culvert was found and utilised), across two other fields, under the lane and to the courtyard. The rain water storage tanks at both ends of the building were removed.

A new drainage system was put in below ground with a new round fibreglass septic tank. The old square, slab built tank with its linked soak-away tank could not be used as it had been built too high up in the ground to allow sufficient flow or capacity for modern use as the old forge toilet had been built three feet above the building floor level. Both the old tanks were utilised as a soak-away for the new tank.

The smallest bedroom at the top of the stairs was converted to a bathroom.

A Rayburn Royal cooker (initially solid fuel but later converted to oil and since updated to a Rayburn PJ) was installed in the living room fireplace occupied by the range in the past.

The brick dividing wall between parlour and living room was reduced and the internal door removed to provide a large open plan room making a sitting room and a linked dining room.

The extended part of the forge was converted (in 1985) into self-contained accommodation comprising of two bedrooms, bathroom downstairs with living room and kitchen upstairs. Old door and window were replaced and new windows cut in the stone wall upstairs looking out onto the courtyard and downstairs looking out onto the lane. An internal door downstairs links the accommodation with the central part of the building. A platform decking was built on the kitchen level to provide external space, a rear access and fire-escape route.

A flat roofed garage (20x15 ft) with car pit was built attached to forge end/south end of house (1986).

A utility room (12 x 9 ft) with larder and downstairs toilet was added as an extension to the kitchen (replacing and enlarging the old, flimsy utility area), the old back door was relocated

in the new utility room to face the rear garden and an internal door put in its place. At the same time the copper and its chimney were removed and the end wall (which became the wall between the kitchen and utility room) replaced with a thinner one (1987).

1990's – central part of the building (the original forge) was converted into the drawing room with an en-suite master bedroom above (1993). The original large sash window in the forge looking out on the garden was converted to French doors and two windows added upstairs, one overlooking the garden and the other overlooks the courtyard. A Velux window provides natural light in the new bathroom.

The old forge office was converted into a study and the partition wall replaced by a block one with a glass section to allow natural light into a corner of the new drawing room.

A panelled entrance hall was built between the study and the main forge door which became the new main entrance to the house. The courtyard (west) side of the building became the 'front' of the house and the original front (east) side, looking out onto the garden, became the 'back'.



One of the alcoves on either side of the living room fireplace was knocked through to provide a door to the hall/study/drawing room and a door added thus linking up the building as one integrated house.

A large lean-to conservatory (54 ft x 9 ft) was added on the garden (east) side of the house (in 1996) enclosing all the downstairs windows and the French doors providing a considerable extension to the ground floor with access at both ends from within the house or from the garden.

A tree-house was built among the trees edging the garden (which still stands) boundary.

2000's – workshops added along the north side of the garden (aluminium construction on a concrete base).

Storage area added under the platform decking attached to the forge conversion on the opposite end of the building to the original cottage (2002).

The whole triangle was included in the designation of 'within a **World Heritage Site**' in 2009 as comprising part of the mining history of Cornwall as the site and building belonged to the Williams family at the time they were developing extensive mining interests in the area.



Animal traps and water hand-pumps found in the forge – all the contents were sold off by auction when the widow of the last blacksmith left in 1975/6. The building remained unoccupied until 1978.

Chapter 2

The Occupants to date (estate tenants until freehold sold in 1978)

It has been quite a task but a fascinating journey to trace the previous occupants via Census records (from 1841) and Electoral Register records (from 1922). In addition records of Baptisms and Burials of residents of Merrymeeting from Gwennap Church records covering 1813 – 1845 (earlier records do not show places of residence therefore could not be used).

Baptisms of Merrymeeting residents 1813 - 1845

		Child's name	Surname	Parents	Fathers occupation
1815	Sept10	John	Herring	William, Alice	Labourer
1816	Sept16	Mary Ann	Trengove	Thomas, Martha	Blacksmith
1817	Feb9	Elizabeth	Sampson	Edward, Jenny	Miner
1818	Dec15	Samuel Thomas	Trengove	Thomas, Martha	Blacksmith
1819	Jan2	William	Sampson	Edward, Jane	Miner
	Dec25	Susan	Knockey	Richard, Susan	Miner
1820	Apr25	Benjamin	Whitburn	Edmund, Elizabeth	Farmer
	Dec25	Thomas	Wicks	William, Mary	Miner
1821	Feb4	Thomas	Trengove	Thomas, Mary	Blacksmith
1822	Feb2	Nicholas	Thomas	Nicholas, Susanna	Saddler
	Jun5	Benjamin	Whitburn	Edmund, Elizabeth	Farmer
	Dec22	May Ann	Wicks	William, Mary	Miner
1823	Jan9	John	Trengove	Thomas, Martha	Blacksmith
1824	Feb22	Richard	Knockey	Richard, Susanna	Miner
1826	Feb5	May Jane	Stevens	Richard, Mary	Miner
	Jun28	William	Kellow	James, Brigit	Miner
	Sept18	Elizabeth	Chapman	Matthew, Elizabeth	Husbandman (free tenant farmer)
1827	Jun3	William	Michell	James, Tamsin	Miner
	Jul26	Noah W	Gill	William, Jane	Miner
	Dec26	Joseph T	Kellow	James, Brigit	Miner
1828	Apr13	John	Herring	William, Mary	Husbandman
	May25	Mary Jane	Stevens	Richard, Mary	Miner
1829	Mar5	Martha Jane	Trengove	Thomas, Martha	Blacksmith
	Apr26	James	Whitburn	Edmund, Elizabeth	Husbandman
	Jun9	Mary	Kellowe	James, Bidy	Miner
1831	Jul31	James W	Trengove	Thomas, Martha	Blacksmith
	Dec31	Jane	Gray	John, Jane	Miner
1833	Oct6	William H	Trengove	Thomas, Martha	Blacksmith
1835	Apr20	May Anne	Gray	John, Jane	Miner
1836	Sep11	Charles H	Hughes	William, Anne	Gardener
1837	Apr21	George	Carbis	Samuel, Elizabeth	Miner

	May7	Richard	Bennetts	Jeremiah, Ann	Labourer
	Sep10	Elizabeth Anne Murton	Trengove	Mary Anne	?
1838	Aug31	William	Pearce	William, Elizabeth	?
	Oct7	George W	Carbis	George, Mary Anne	Miner
1839	Mar31	Martha	Carlyon	John, Alice	Husbandman
1840	Apr19	John Nicholas	Gould	Edward, Blanch	Yeoman (cultivates his own land)
1842	May8	George Harris	Bennetts	Jeremiah, Ann	Husbandman
	Sep25	Richard Pearce	Gould	Edward, Blanche	Farmer
1844	Feb4	John James	Penaluna	Thomas, Avis	Carpenter

Burials of Merrymeeting residents 1813 - 1845

		Name	Age
1818	Apr17	Ann Hoskin	87
	Dec4	William Allen (Miner)	46
1819	Jan2	Marion Morcom	1
	Dec7	Ann Whitburn	62
1820	May1	Benjamin Whitburn	4 weeks
1823	Feb13	Thomas Jennings	?
1829	May4	James Whitburn	3 months
1832	Jan12	Anne Nicholas	87
1834	Oct3	Mary Jennings	87
1839	Jun5	Thomas Trengove – inflammation of the lungs (Blacksmith)	44
1840	Jan18	Jean Matthews	86
1841	Mar31	Catherine Penaluna – consumption	25
1842	Apr13	John Penaluna	66
1843	Mar27	Jean Wicks	82
	Burials from Gwennap Workhouse (shown here out of interest)	1814 – 1 1815 – 2 1816 – 3 1817 – 5 1818 – 4 1819 – 2 1820 – 1 1821 – 3 1822 – 3 1823 – 1 1824 – 3 1825 – 3 1826 – 3 1827 – 4 1828 – 1	

Census records 1841 - 1911

It emerged as (and still is) a confusing picture – on the 1839 Tithe Map the site is described as ‘cottage and yard’ but was it a row of cottages as there seemed to be eight families living there in 1841 i.e. 43 people ranging in age from 80 years to 10 months, including the family of a blacksmith (Tregrove) and a blacksmith’s apprentice?

By 1851 it was down to six families - 20 people ranging in age from 68 to 13 years. The Tregrove family were still there and one of the members had the occupation of blacksmith.

Ten years later, by 1861, there was a further reduction to three families – 6 people ranging in age from 57 to 3 years -no blacksmith. But there is a blacksmith (Henwood) and his family shown as living in Burncoose Cottage, just round the corner.

In 1871 John Henwood (a son of the Burncoose Cottage Henwoods), a blacksmith, and his family of wife, daughter and father-in-law were living at the forge.

By 1881 there is another change as Henry Rowe, blacksmith, with his wife and young family of three daughters and a son are living there with a sister-in-law.

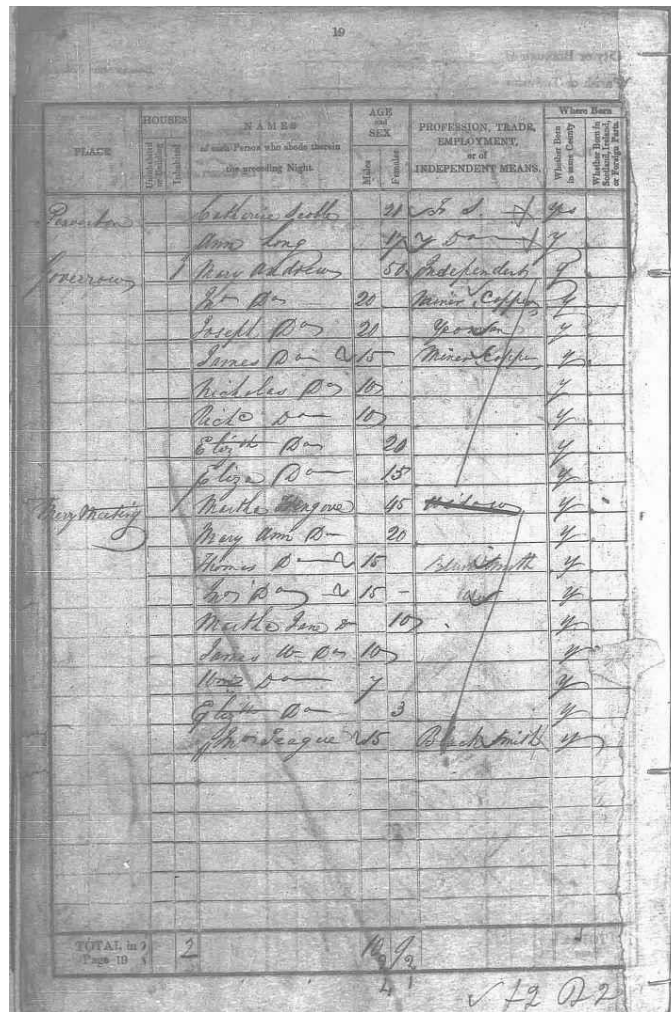
The confusion arises due to the location descriptions used by the census – this cannot all be one site but maybe an interpretation of the immediate locality. In 1841 (eight families) it is called ‘Turnpike Road at Merrymeeting; in 1851 (six families), 1861 (three families) and 1871 (one family) it is called ‘Merrymeeting’; in 1881 Henry Rowe (blacksmith) and his family are shown as living on the Burncoose Estate (to which the forge belonged) and two other (non blacksmiths) families living at Merrymeeting. The record for 1891 shows the Rowe family (now with 8 children) still living on part of the Burncoose Estate with no mention of Merrymeeting. They are still there ten years later in 1901 although one of the children has left home. Merrymeeting is not identified as their residence until the census of 1911, by which time only two grownup daughters are still at home.

With this confusion, these records are no help in determining when the present building was actually built and first occupied. Architectural evidence indicates a date before 1850 and blacksmiths (Tregrove) certainly lived in the immediate vicinity and probably at the forge before that time but their records were lumped in with their near neighbours.

It is interesting to see from the maps in Appendix 1 (page 56) that up to 1870 the triangle consisted of the forge site with a plantation (woodland) and two fields. By 1878 the two fields had ceased to be used for agriculture or pasture and had been allowed to go over to woodland. This coincides with the move from multiple-family-occupation to the single blacksmith’s family in residence as seen above.

At the time of writing this history we have another three years to wait for the 1921 census release (i.e. in 2021).

It is also interesting to see the evolving occupations of the residents around and in the forge as initially they were based on mining and farming, moving on to include school teacher and post office assistant, and now people with degree-level occupations.



Example page from the 1841 census return

Census	Location	Surname	First name	Age	Relationship	Occupation
1841	Turnpike Road* at Merrymeeting (Forge site?)	Wix	Joan	80	Widow	
	Row of cottages with courtyard ?	"	Thomas	20	Son	Miner
	Triangle=2 fields(Close) plus woodland (plantation)					
	See maps 1839 and 1843 in Appendix 1 (pg56)	Penaluna	John	60	Head	Agricultural Labourer
		"	Eliza	60	Wife	
		"	Thomas	20	Son	Carpenter
		Couch	James	45	Head	Hatter
		"	James	15	Son	
		"	Elizabeth	12	Daughter	
		"	Mary	10	Daughter	
		"	John	4	Son	

		Whitburn	Sarah	25		
		"	Will	10m		
		Whitburn	Edmund	47	Head	Yeoman
		"	Sarah	45	Wife	
		"	Edwin	14	Son	
		"	Sarah	9	Daughter	
		"	Elizabeth	7	Daughter	
		"	Mary	5	Daughter	
		West	Ann	50		Independent
		Carbis	Mary	40	Widow	
		"	Mary	4	Daughter	
		"	George	2	Son	
		Winn	Mary	13		Female servant

		Carlyon	John	35	Head	Agricultural labourer
		"	Alice	35	Wife	
		"	Mary	11	Daughter	
		"	Sarah	10	Daughter	
		"	John	9	Son	
		"	Edward	7	Son	
		"	Jane	5	Daughter	
		"	Martha	2	Daughter	
		Martin	Richard	20	Head	Copper miner
		"	Jane	20	Wife	
		"	Elizabeth	1	Daughter	

		Trengove	Martha	45	Widow	*Ne Whitburn, daughter of James (mine agent) and Ann Whitburn. Married Thomas Trengove (blacksmith) in July 1816. Thomas died June 1839 of inflammation of the lungs.
		"	Mary Ann	20	Daughter	*had daughter Elizabeth Ann in August 1837 by Peter

						Murton (miner) but married John Phillips in 1841
		"	Thomas	15	Son	Blacksmith
		"	John	15	Son	Blacksmith * married Mary Penhallurick in 1846 and went to Australia with brother Thomas and Mary's family. She died of Pthisis without having children. John remarried and was a blacksmith in Ballarat (town north of Melbourne). He was killed by a horse - his widow and children moved to NZ to be near her brother.
		"	MarthaJane	10	Daughter	
		"	JamesW	10	Son	
		"	William	7	Son	
		"	Elizabeth	3	*Mary Ann's Daughter	
		Teague	?	15		Blacksmith

*Notes supplied by Wendy McArthur, Invercargill, NZ. John Whitburn was her great great grandfather.

1851	Merrymeeting (Forge)	Whitburn	Sarah	56	Widow	Farmeress
------	----------------------	----------	-------	----	-------	-----------

	site?)					
		"	Jane	18	Daughter	
	Triangle=2 fields(Close) and woodland	"	Mary	16	Daughter	
		West	Ann	65	Lodger	Assists as servant

		Williams	Elizabeth	45	Widow	Garden labourer
		"	John	21	Son	Gardener
		Trengove	Martha	56	Widow	*moved to London later with William. She died in London.
		"	James	20	Son	Blacksmith *died in London in 1890 of bronchitis.
		"	William	16	Son	Tailor *great great grandfather of Angela Croft, Wakefield, UK
		"	Elizabeth	13	Grand daughter	Scholar
		Martin	James	31	Head	Agricultural labourer
		"	Elizabeth	29	Wife	
		Carbis	Samuel	48	Head	copper miner
		"	Elizabeth	50	Wife	
		"	Samuel	16	Son	copper miner
		"	Elizabeth	12	Daughter	Scholar
		"	Jane	6	Daughter	Scholar
		Whitburn	Stephen	68	Head	Farmer *brother of Martha Trengove
		"	Mary	66	Wife	
		"	Richard	25	Son	Farmer *drowned in Feb 1853

1861	Burncoose Cottage	Henwood	William	58	Head	Master Smith employing 2 men
		"	Pricilla	54	Wife	

	Moved to new Forge?	"	John	30	Son	Smith
		"	Charlotte	28	Daughter	
		"	Mary A	22	Daughter	Dressmaker
		"	Emily	19	Daughter	

1861	Merrymeeting (Forge site?)	Richards	Elizabeth	58	Head	Housekeeper
		Dunstone	James	33	Head	Copper miner
		"	Sarah Ann	32	Wife	
		"	Mary Ann	3	Niece	
		Curtis	Thomas	67	Head	Retired publican
		"	Mary	61	Wife	

1871	Merrymeeting (Forge ?)	Henwood	John	40	Head	Blacksmith (listed in the local Trade Directory in 1866)
	New Forge. One long building (Longhouse design)	"	Catherine May	36	Wife	
	Triangle=2 fields(Close) and woodland	"	Ada	6	Daughter	Scholar
	See map 1870	Pearce	James	70	Father-in-law	Copper miner

1881	Burncoose extract (Merrymeeting Forge?)	Rowe	Henry	30	Head	Blacksmith
	Forge extended with wing addition by 1878	"	Hanorah	34	Wife	
	Lean-to scullery/washroom (with hot-tub)/kitchen showing by 1878	"	Caroline L	5	Daughter	Scholar
	Triangle now all wooded	"	John H	4	Son	
	See map 1878	"	Mary G	3	Daughter	
		"	Amy	1	Daughter	
		Williams	Elizabeth	16	Sister-in-law	Dressmaker

1881	Merrymeeting (Burncoose?)	Thomas	William	65	Head	Retired Agricultural labourer
		"	Prudence	45	Daughter	Housekeeper
		Dunstan	John	47	Head	Tin miner
		"	Grace	44	Wife	
		"	John	19	Son	Tin miner
		"	Margaret	9	Daughter	Scholar
		"	Grace	5	Daughter	Scholar
		"	Edith	4	Daughter	
		"	Catherine	1	Daughter	

1891	Burncoose extract (Forge?) (no record of Merrymeeting)	Rowe	Henry	40	Head	Blacksmith, employer
	Extra bedroom added upstairs into forge space	"	Hanorah	45	Wife	
		"	Caroline L	16	Daughter	
		"	John H	13	Son	
		"	Mary G	13	Daughter	
		"	Amy	11	Daughter	
		"	Farnham	9	Son	
		"	Elizabeth	7	Daughter	
		"	Herbert	4	Son	
		"	Edith	1	Daughter	

1901	Burncoose extract (Forge?) (no record of Merrymeeting)	Rowe	Henry	50	Head	Blacksmith, employer
	Amy has left home	"	Hanorah	55	Wife	
		"	Caroline L	26	Daughter	Post Office * Assistant
		"	John H	23	Son	Journeyman Blacksmith
		"	Mary G	23	Daughter	
		"	Farnham	19	Son	Blacksmith Apprentice
		"	Elizabeth	17	Daughter	Elementary ^ School Teacher
		"	Herbert	14	Son	
		"	Edith	10	Daughter	

1911	Merrymeeting (Forge)	Rowe	Henry	60	Head	Blacksmith
		"	Nora	65	Wife	
	Only two daughters still living at home	"	Mary Grace	33	Daughter	
		"	Elizabeth	27	Daughter	Elementary Teacher

*At Gwennap Post Office?

^ Not in Gwennap as both the boys and girls schools were closed about 1880

Electoral Register

There is a gap between the census records as they are only released after 100 years and the next readily available occupier records are from the electoral register available online from the ONS from 1948 and records covering 1922 to 1948 from the Cornwall Records Office. The ones we have are consistent in showing one blacksmith family in occupation at any one time until the forge ceased business and became a private residence in 1978 but still leaves the puzzle of where in 'Merrymeeting' another three families lived at least until the early 1920's – the Homes-Link bungalow across the road was built in 1921.

1922	Merrymeeting (Forge)	Rowe	Henry			
		"	Honora			
	Merrymeeting - Other	Dunstan	William			
			Annie			
		Hocking	John			
			Emily			
		Richards	Thomas L			

1923	Merrymeeting (Forge)	Rowe	Henry			
			Honora			
	Merrymeeting - Other	Dunstan	William			
			Annie Jane			
		Richards	Albert E			
			Elizabeth J			
		Hocking	John			
			Emily			
		Richards	Thomas L			

1924	Merrymeeting (Forge)	Rowe	Henry			
			Honora			
	Merrymeeting - Other	Dunstan	William			
			Annie J			
		Richards	Albert E			
			Elizabeth J			
		Hocking	John			
			Emily			
		Richards	Thomas L			

1925	Merrymeeting (Forge)	Rowe	Henry			
			Honora			
	Merrymeeting - Other	Dunstan	William			
			Annie J			
		Richards	Albert E			
			Elizabeth J			
		Hocking	John			
			Emily			
		Richards	Thomas L			
		Harris	William C			
			Clara			

1926	Merrymeeting (Forge)	Rowe	Henry			*Electoral District U - Lanner
			Honora			"
	Merrymeeting - Other	Hocking	John			"
			Emily			"
		Harris	William C			"

			Clara			“
		Dunstan	William			*Electoral Dist. K - Cusgarne
			Annie J			
		Richards	Albert E			
			Elizabeth J			

*It was noted when looking through the manual electoral records that Merrymeeting appeared in two districts which may indicate two sites although records library staff thought it more likely that recording errors occurred, for example in 1922 William and Annie Dunstan were recorded at Merrymeeting in both district U and K – but it went on for some years!

1927	Merrymeeting (Forge)	Rowe	Henry			Electoral District U – Lanner
			Honora			“
	Merrymeeting - Other	Harris	William C			“
			Clara			“
		Dunstan	William			Electoral Dist. K - Cusgarne
			Annie J			“
		Pill	William H			“
			Phoebe			“
		Richards	Albert E			“
			Elizabeth J			“

1928	Merrymeeting	Harris	Clara			Electoral Dist. U – Lanner
		Dunstan	William			Electoral Dist. K - Cusgarne
			Annie J			
		Richards	Albert E			
			Elizabeth J			

1929	Merrymeeting	Dunstan	William			
			Annie J			
		Pill	William H			
			Phoebe			

No-one recorded at Merrymeeting in 1930 and 1931

1932	Merrymeeting	Pill	William H			
			Phoebe			
			William J			

1933	Merrymeeting	Rowe	Henry			
			Amy			
			Elizabeth			
		Harris	Clara			

1934	Merrymeeting	Rowe	Henry			
-------------	--------------	------	-------	--	--	--

			Amy			
			Elizabeth			
		Harris	Clara			
		Pill	William H			
			Phoebe			

1935	Merrymeeting	Rowe	Henry			
			Amy			
			Elizabeth			
		Harris	Clara			
		Pill	William H			
			Phoebe			

1936	Merrymeeting	Rowe	Henry			
			Amy			
			Elizabeth			
		Harris	Clara S L			
		Pill	William H			
			Phoebe			

1937	Merrymeeting	Rowe	Henry			
			Amy			
			Elizabeth			
		Harris	Clara S L			
		Pill	William H			
			Phoebe			

1938	Merrymeeting	Rowe	Henry			
			Amy			
			Elizabeth			
		Harris	Clara S L			
		Pill	William H			

1939	Merrymeeting	Rowe	Henry			
			Amy			
			Elizabeth			
		Harris	Clara S L			
		Pill	William H			

No records for 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944 (WW II)

1945	Merrymeeting	Polkinghorne	Edith			
1946	Merrymeeting	Polkinghorne	Edith			
		Dunstan	John			
		"	Olive			

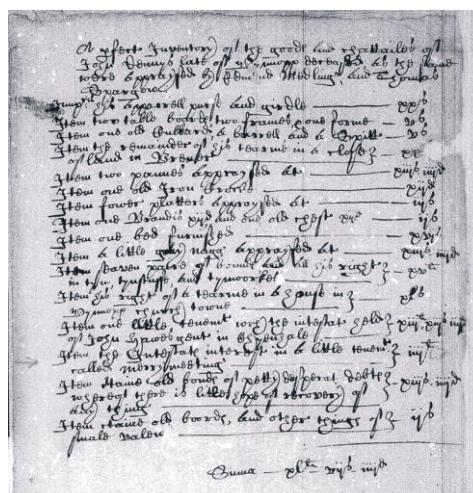
1947	Merrymeeting	Polikinghorne	Edith			
		Dunstan	John			
		"	Olive			
1948	Only forge/smithy shown at this road junction on OS map although Homes-Link had been built in 1921	Dunstan	John		Head	Blacksmith
		"	Olive		Wife	
1958	"	Trussell	Charles		Head	Blacksmith
	Homes-Link + Eglosderry bungalows opposite forge showing on 1962 map	"	Dorothy		Wife	
						Mr Trussell (b 1901) died 1968. Buried in Gwennap.
1972	"	"	Dorothy		Widow	
1976	"	"	Dorothy		Widow	Mrs Trussell (ne Morris) (b 1911) died 2003. Buried in Gwennap.
	We purchase the freehold from the Williams Estate in 1978					
1981	"	No entry (?)				
1982	"	Szepietowski	Leonard	34	Head	BSc MgtSc, Indus. Marketing, Insurance, NHS IG. Retired 2008
		Szepietowska	Susan	32	Wife	Artist, Nurse, P/T Carer, Retired fully 2014
(1985)	Square bit converted 1985 (The Anvil)	James	Geoffrey	35	Tenant	S/E Carpenter. Moved out 2018
		James	Agnes	33	Wife	Seamstress Moved out 2018
	1985	Szepietowski	George	0	Son	MSc. Mech. Eng. Left home 2010. Design Engineer
	1988	Szepietowska	Anna	0	Daughter	BSc Psychology. Left home 2012. Commercial Marketing/HR

Chapter 3

The Location

At one time all local communities needed ready access to a blacksmith to shoe horses, repair tools and equipment and other daily repair needs to keep businesses and households functioning - most villages had a blacksmiths shop ('Smith' is perhaps the most common English surname). Blacksmiths or workers in metal fashioned our civilization moving man out of the stone age through the bronze age, iron age, the industrial revolution to modern times (and our throw-away society) – it is still a highly regarded craft even though most of the work is now carried out on an industrial scale and most smithy's became garages when motor transport took over from the horse-drawn carriage.

There is some confusion as to the original or correct location of 'Merrymeeting' – see maps in Appendix 1(pg56), but reference was found to property at Merrymeeting in the wills of John Dennys of Gwennap 1636 and Richard Dennes, tinner, of Gwennap 1641 (Appendix 3 pg63).



Will of John Dennys of Gwennap 1636

According to CC James in his 'A History of the Parish of Gwennap in Cornwall' published in 1947, a document dated 1520 refers to a smithy at Burncoose (Celtic: bron cos – hill of the wood) as Burncoose-goef (Celtic: gof – a smith). "This smithery is known to have stood on its present site for a very long period. This refers, without doubt, to the blacksmith's shop at Merrymeeting which formerly stood about 100 yards south of the present building in the corner of the small plantation. The early smithery was owned for a long period by a family called Trengove (see 'Occupants' history in Chapter 2 (pg15) above and Appendix 3 (pg63) below. Angove means 'Smith' in Cornish) an interesting example of the name of a blacksmith who worked here and left a name, Burncoose-goef, attached to the place."

That would make sense as on that site the original forge described was situated where three ancient lanes meet – a good location for such a business for hundreds of years. The forge was moved to the current location after the toll road between Redruth and Penryn/Falmouth was constructed in the mid 1700's between the growing town of Redruth

in an important mining district, and the port, and thus forming the triangle of garden and woodland of the present site. (See Chapter 4 (pg37) below for a further discussion on the building of the turnpike). The Gwennap 'bypass', cut across fields to link two of the ancient roads to give a more direct route providing a more gradually inclined road compared to the original steep route out of Gwennap village. The new route also avoided the need to negotiate a sharp bend past the church. Moving the forge from the bottom or the apex of the triangle to the newly made top corner of the triangle positioned it on the new 'main road' as well as replacing an old building with a new one constructed of local granite. Nothing is left of the ancient forge although there is a squared beam set high in the current building that has the remains of iron straps and could have been part of the old structure.



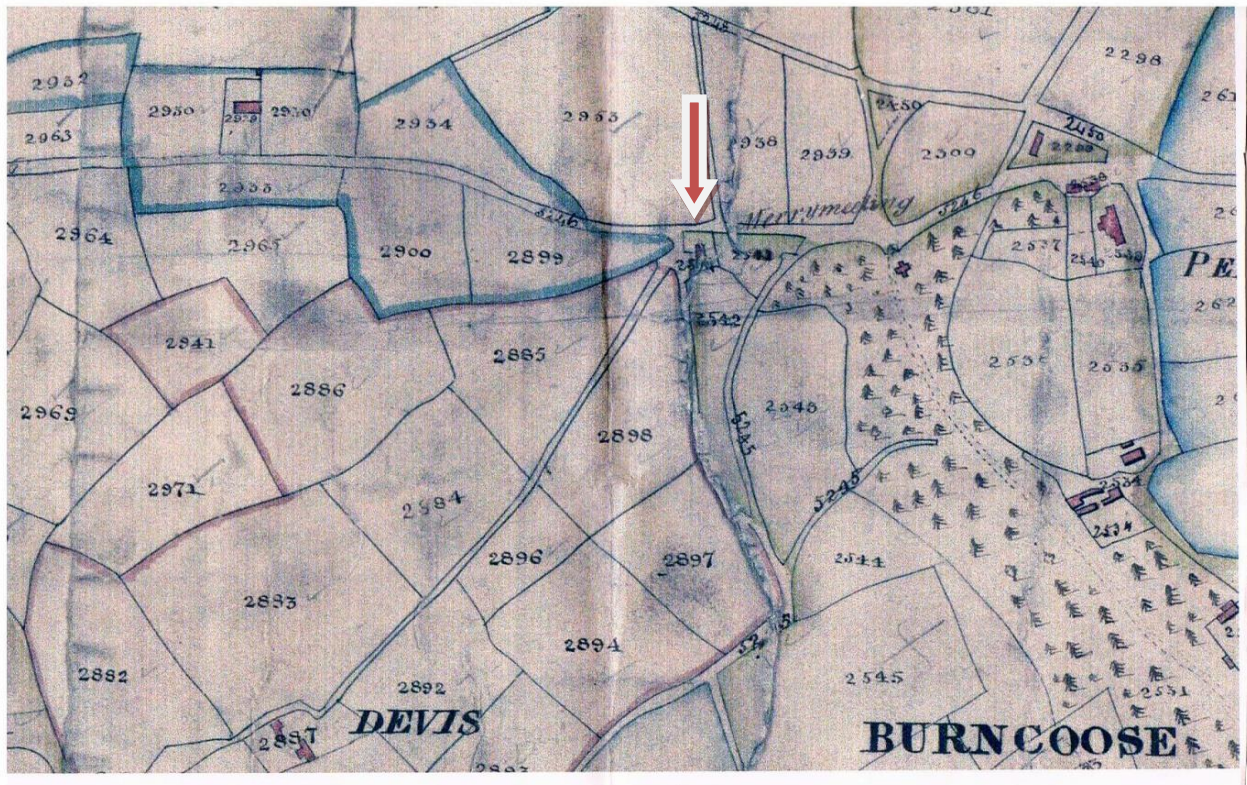
Merrymeeting on the map

Summary of map details (individual maps below)

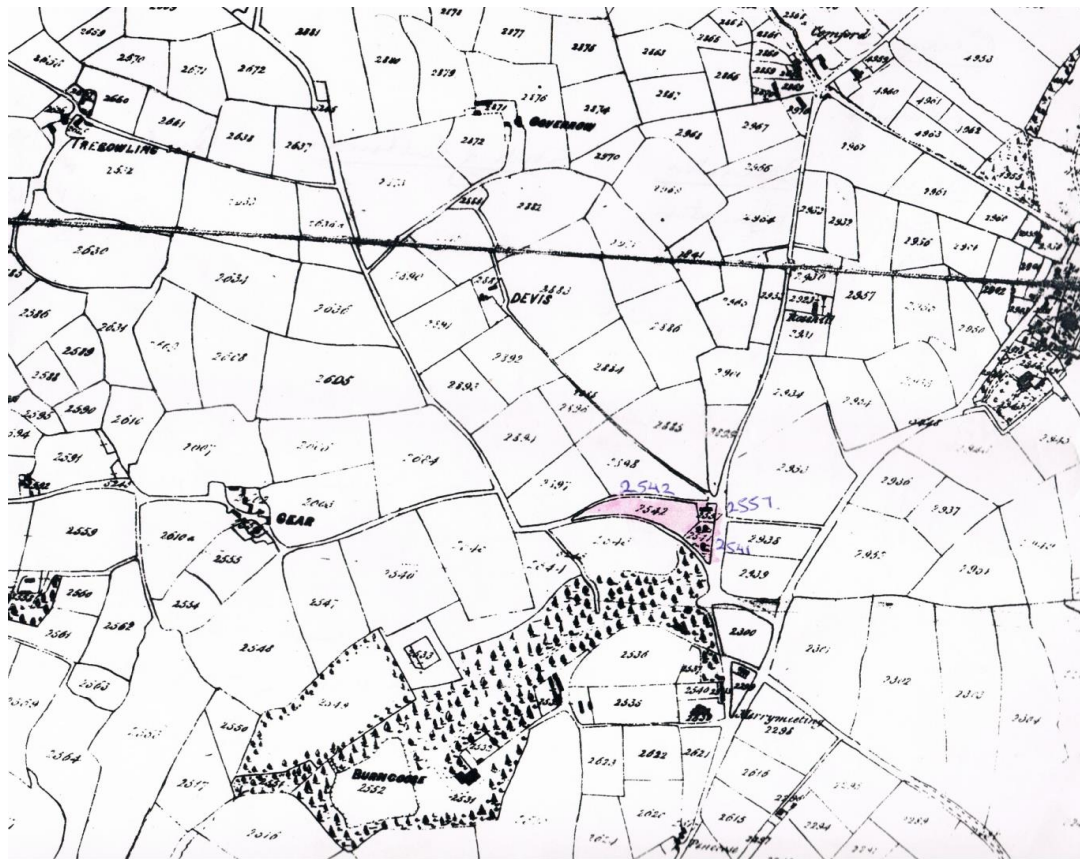
1809	<i>Triangle shown but not detailed enough for buildings</i>
1813	<i>"</i>
1839	<i>Cottage(s) and yard - Well (?) and plantation, Triangle=2 fields(Close) Landowner John Williams; consist of cottage and courtlage, plantation and way close (arable). On turnpike road from Redruth to Penryn.</i>
1843	<i>Cottage(s) and yard, Plantation, triangle shown as one field but Merrymeeting name next to Burncoose Cottages ??. Landowner John Williams; consist of cottage and court, plantation and way close (arable). On turnpike road from Redruth to Penryn.</i>
1845	<i>No visible change</i>
1870	<i>" Shows Elvans Courses (vein of a type of rock) bypassing the triangle and no mine tunnel under or very near the triangle</i>
1878	<i>New smithy and triangle now all woodland</i>
1888	<i>No visible change</i>
1908	<i>No visible change</i>
1928	<i>No change – just Smithy shown on OS map</i>
1962	<i>Homes-link and Eglosderry bungalows showing</i>
2009	<i>No change (CCC site map) (similar to 1997 map)</i>



1813 First published OS map
Triangle shown but not detailed enough for buildings

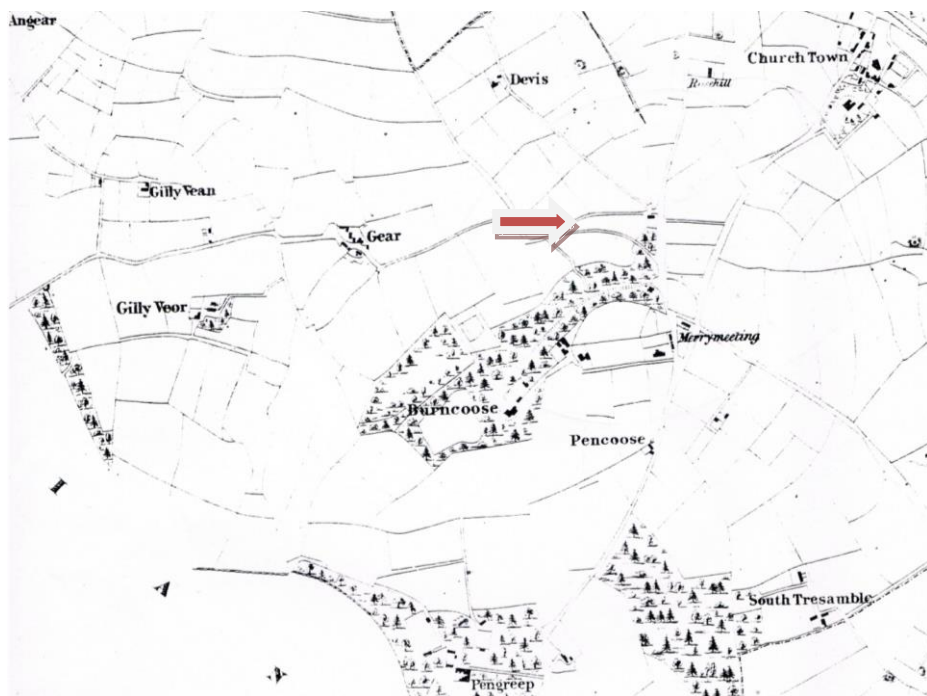


1839 Tithe map
*Landowner: John Williams. 2557 – Cottage and Courtlage; 2541 – Plantation (and well?)
 2542 – Arable, Way Close; 5245 – Road to Blowgey, Trethalon, Gear, Burncoose and
 Trebowling; 5246 – Turnpike road from Redruth to Penryn*



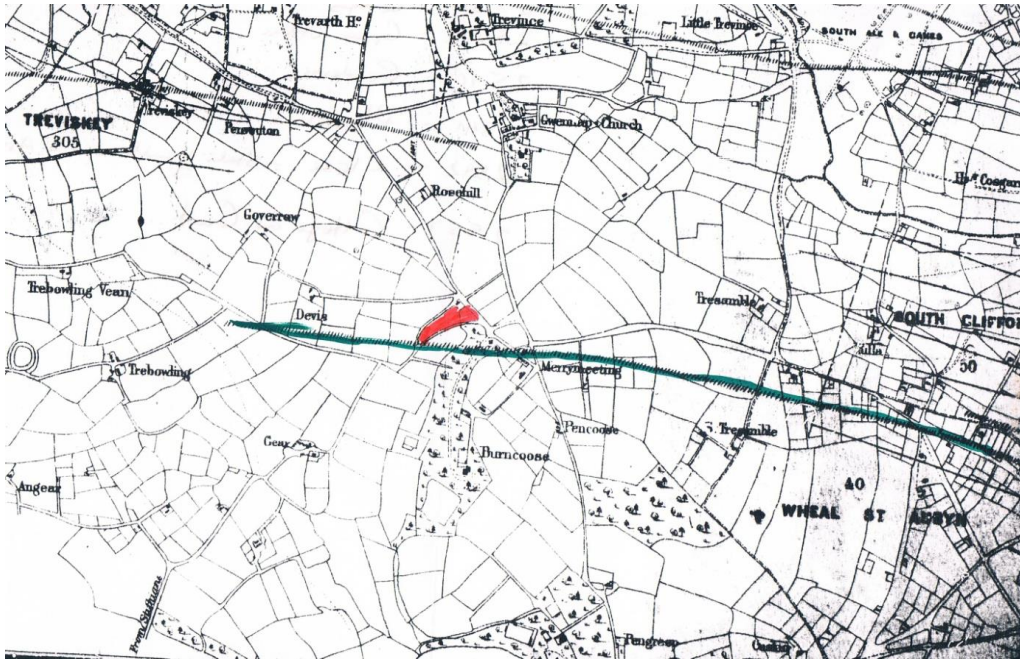
1843 Tithe map

Cottage(s) and yard, Plantation, triangle shown as one field but Merrymeeting name next to Burncoose Cottages ?? . Landowner John Williams; consist of cottage and court, plantation and way close (arable). On turnpike road from Redruth to Penryn.



1845 Geological map

No visible change in the triangle from 1843



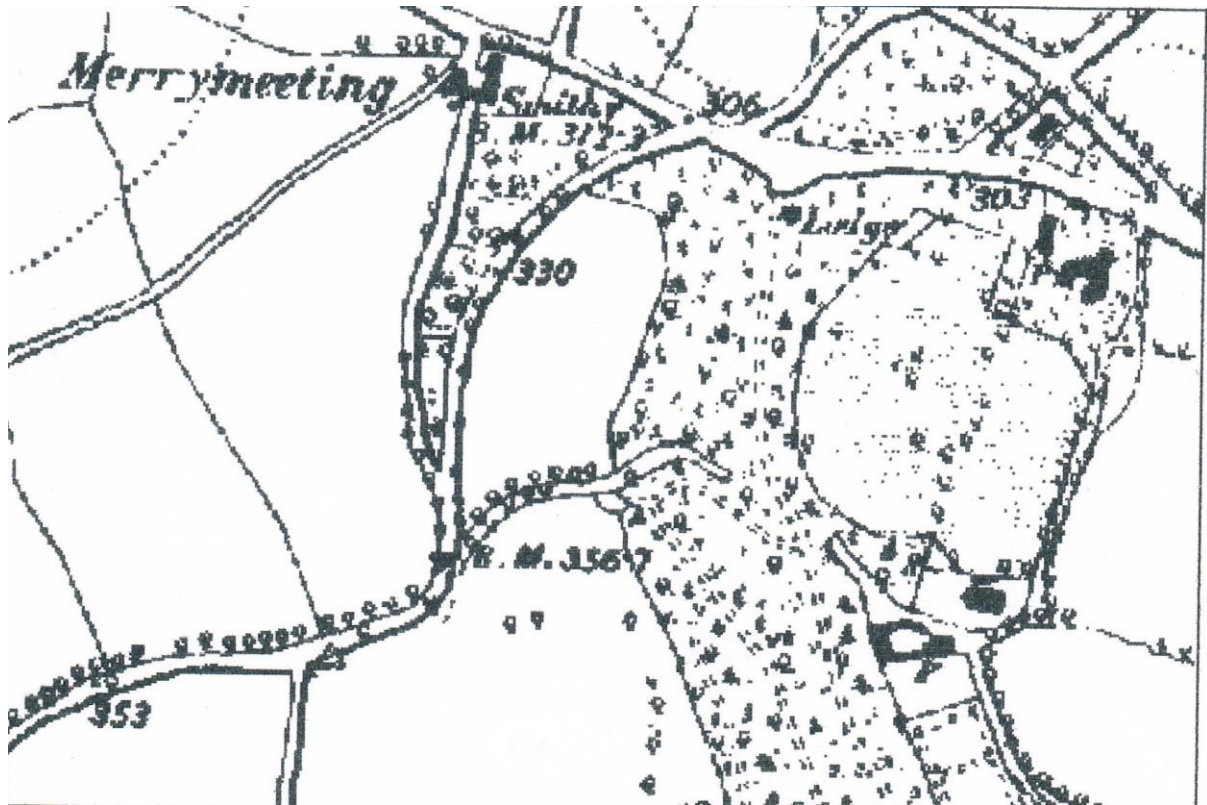
1870 Elvans (Greenstone) Courses map

Shows Elvans Courses (vein of a type of rock) bypassing the triangle and no mine tunnel under or very near the triangle



1878 OS map

New smithy building shown (with some sort of extension across the road) and triangle now all woodland although ancient wall dividing the original fields is marked and the top of the triangle field is numbered separately

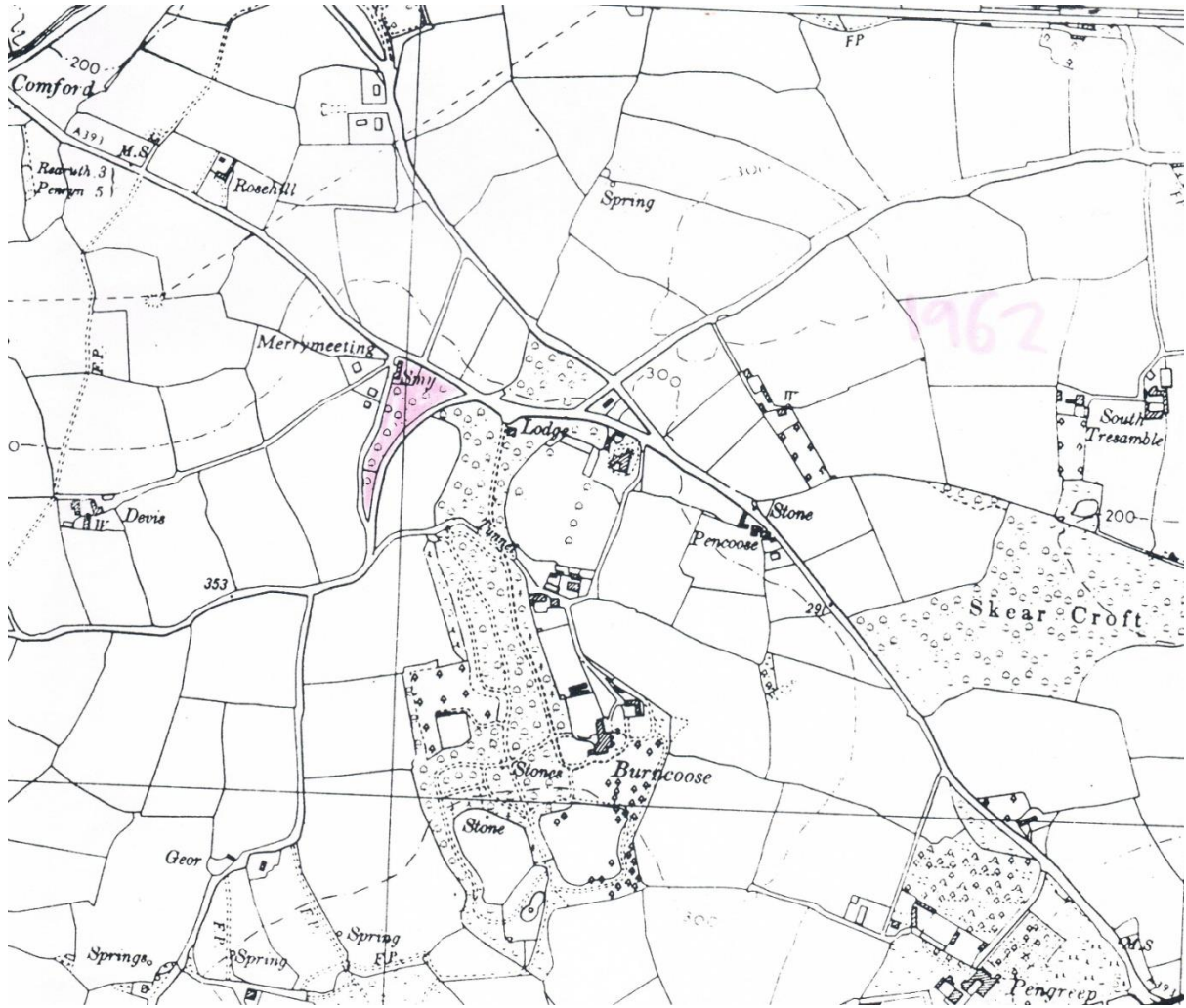


1888 CCC map

No change from 1878 but the ancient wall dividing the top of the triangle is clearly marked and the smithy extension across the road is still there

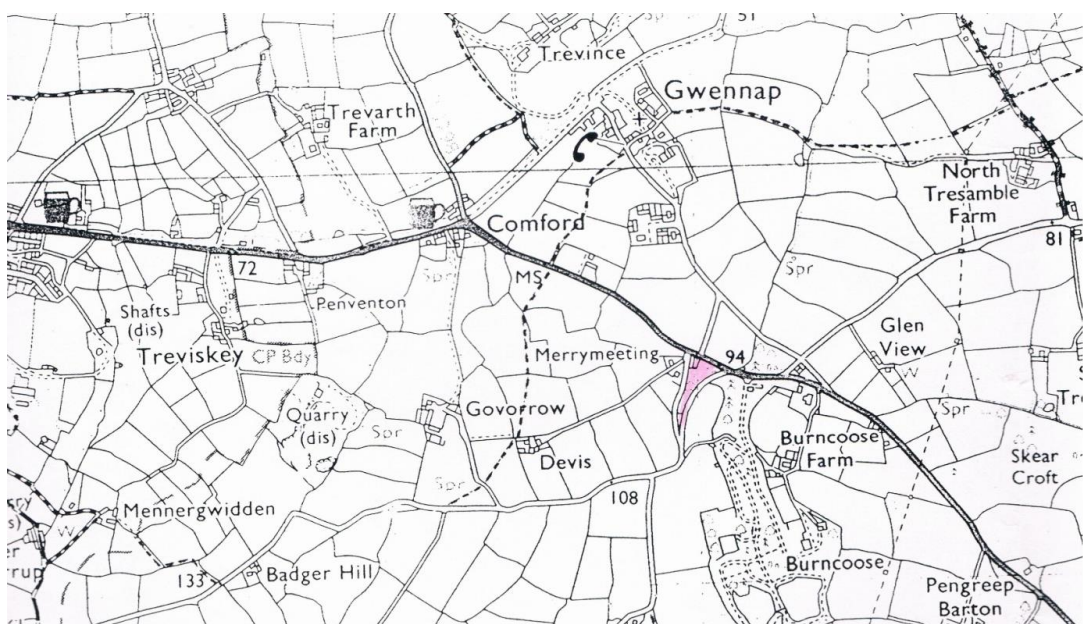


1908 OS map



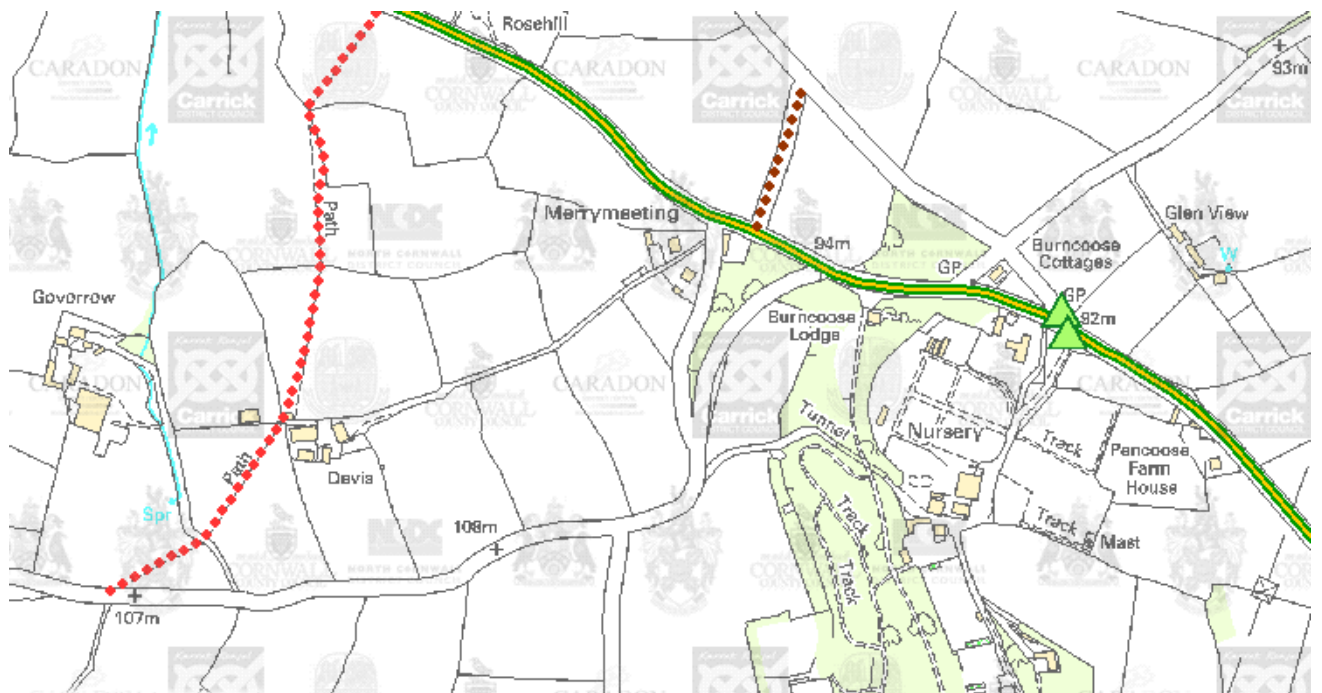
1962 OS map

Homes-link and Eglosderry bungalows showing opposite the forge



1997 OS map

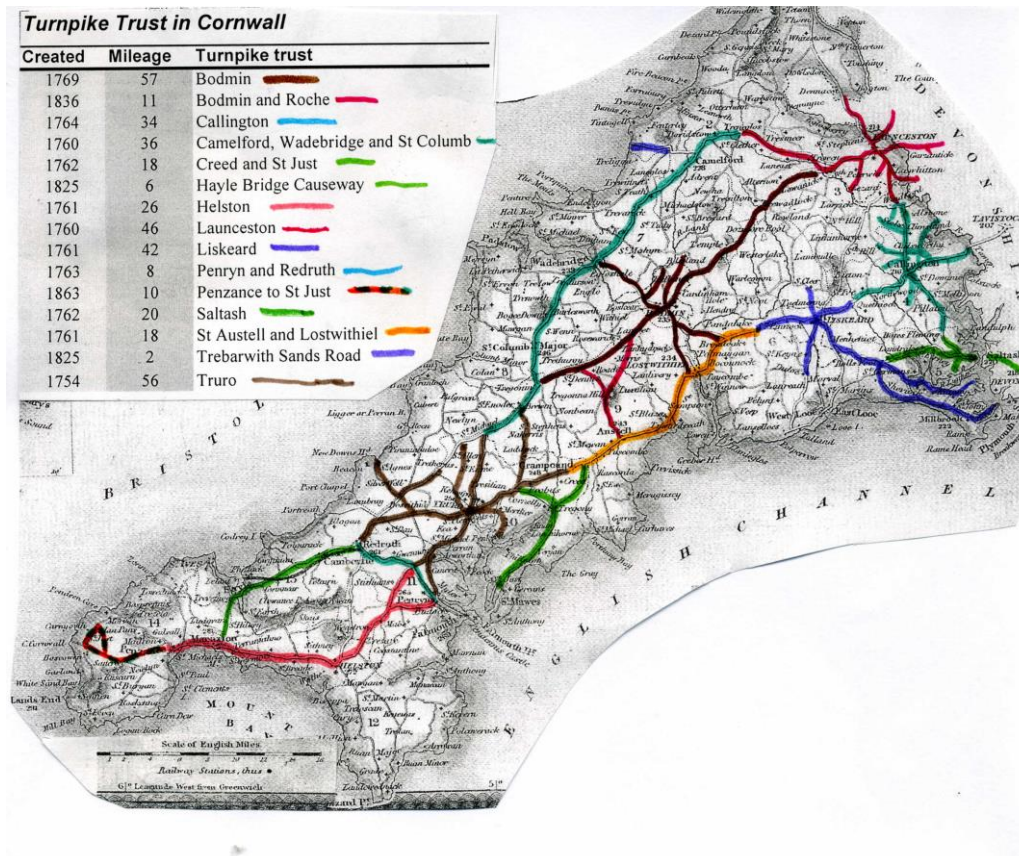
Recent view



2009 CCC map

Chapter 4

Notes on the Turnpike Road



The Penryn and Redruth Trust was created in 1763 to turnpike the highway from the mining areas around Redruth to the quays on the River Fal. Road leading from New Street and Pig Street in Penryn to Redruth all in the County of Cornwall (map above from Lysons in his Magna Britannica updated by Alan Rosevear).

Patrick Taylor in his 'Toll Houses of Cornwall' identified four toll gates on this turnpike road: Terrell's Gate, positioned south of Redruth town centre where the A393 starts climbing out towards Lanner; Comford near the Fox and Hounds at the bottom of the hill leading to the Forge (then called Hare and Hounds); Bray's Gate, possibly at the bridge in Ponsanooth; and White Gate, at the north-west end of Penryn where the side road turns off the Helston road (via Treliever) on the hill to the A39.

However there are no records or maps remaining of the work undertaken or to pinpoint the date the turnpike road was actually built therefore some detective work was undertaken to establish the period using historic road maps listed and extracts shown below:

**Historic Cornwall Map notes re A393 section leading to the formation of the triangle
See below for the maps used.**

1576	St Wennap and St Stithians churches shown
1607	"
1650	One main route along spine of Cornwall shown (?)
1659	" (?)
1664	" (?) branch to Helston and Truro from Bodmin
1695	" and more roads (?)
1707	No direct road between Penryn and Redruth
1720	" Exeter to Truro 79miles
1724	"
1741	Lis-Lostwithiel-Grampound-Truro-Marazion-Pz-LandsEnd Camelford-Padstow-StColumb-StMichael-Redruth-Pz
1756	" (Spine and south coast routes)
1760b	Philleigh-ferry(Trelissick)-top of estuary(Bissoe)-Stithians 1763 Turnpike Road Penryn - Redruth Act approved by Parliament
1767	Redruth-Gwennap-?
1769	as 1760 with road to Penryn from (Bissoe)
1769b	Sithians-Clowance-Marazion plus road from Redruth to (FourLanes)
1784	" plus road from Redruth-(Chacewater)-Truro (also on a map of 1787)
1791	Main road Redruth to Truro via St Day also Truro to Penryn
1793	Main road appears (?) to bypass Gwennap
1801	Main road Redruth to Penryn via Gwennap village (?)
1804	"
1814	Current roads (including toll gate ?) in place(Toll house at Comford)
1825	Current main roads clearly shown (but not detailed enough to show the triangle)
1837	"
1877	"

It is still not clear from the maps when the turnpike road actually opened although they indicate that it may have been in use by 1793 but the 1801 and 1804 maps show the main road going through Gwennap. It is not until the 1814 map that the turnpike road is clearly in use. This seems a long time after the Act was passed allowing it to be set up in 1763 – of course the maps are not very detailed or totally accurate so could simply be out-of-date and needed revising by the time they got into print.

The Fox and Hounds at Comford at the bottom of the hill has 1742 inscribed on the wall and was probably erected to cater for passing trade on the main road from Redruth which then carried on to Penryn via Gwennap village. It would also have provided a convenient resting stop for horses hauling heavily laden wagons coming from the Redruth mining area before going on to tackle the steep hill out of Gwennap to get on to the road to Penryn on the other side. When the Redruth to Penryn turnpike road was constructed, carrying the main road straight past the inn allowing traffic up the hill bypassing Gwennap, a Toll Booth was set up on the opposite side of the road. Note that the Act setting up the Turnpike Trust was not passed until 1763.

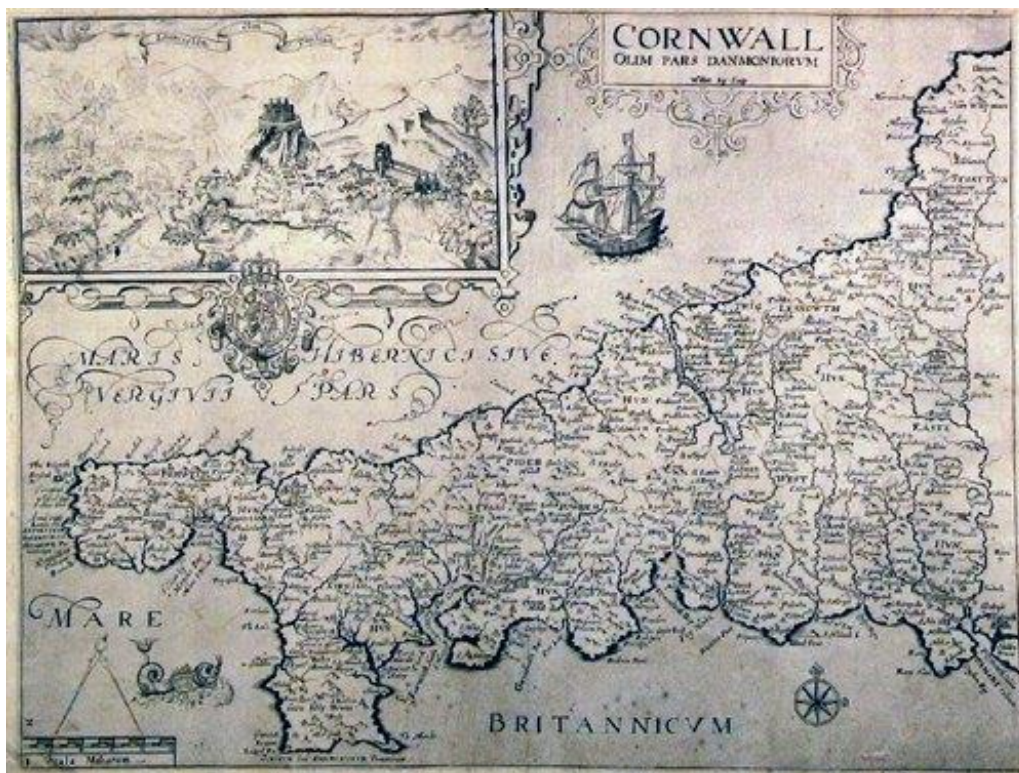
The 1801 map below shows the fields between the turnpike road and the old main road through the village to be well defined which suggests that the 'bypass' route was taking

advantage of an existing minor road or track past Merrymeeting which was already a triangular site.



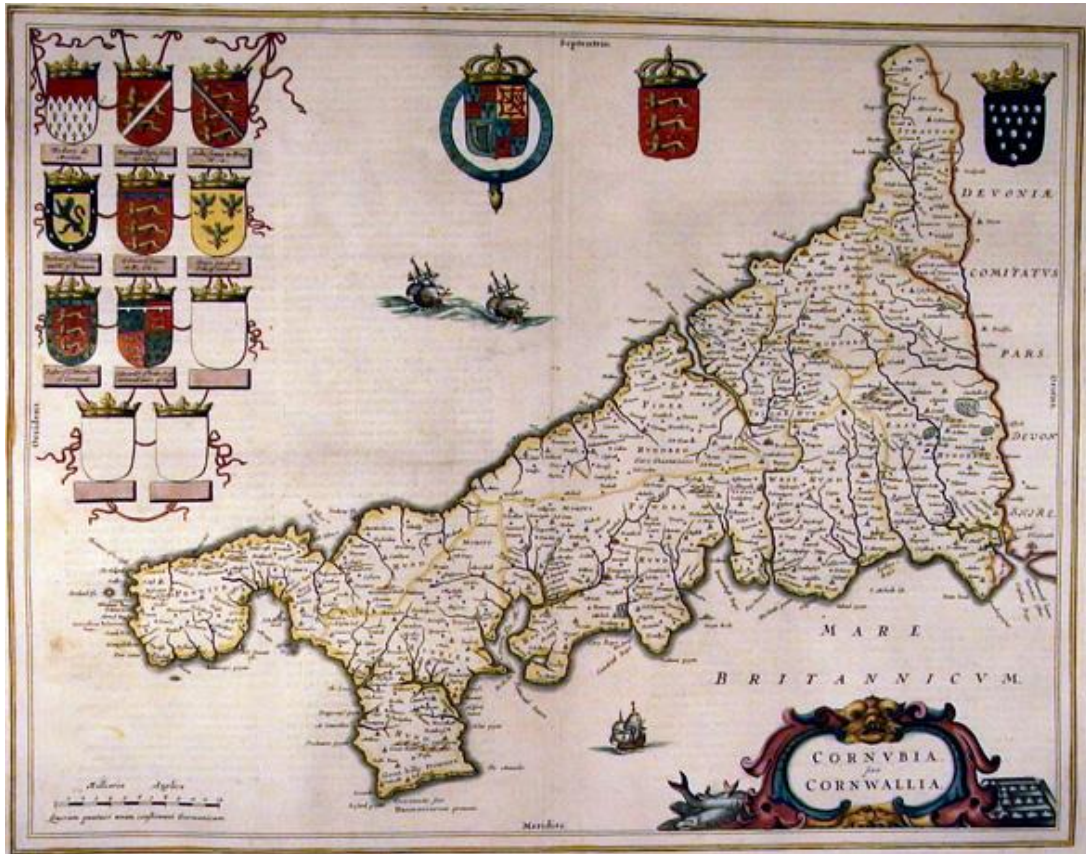
1576

St Wennap and St Stithians churches shown



1607

St Wennap and St Stithians churches shown

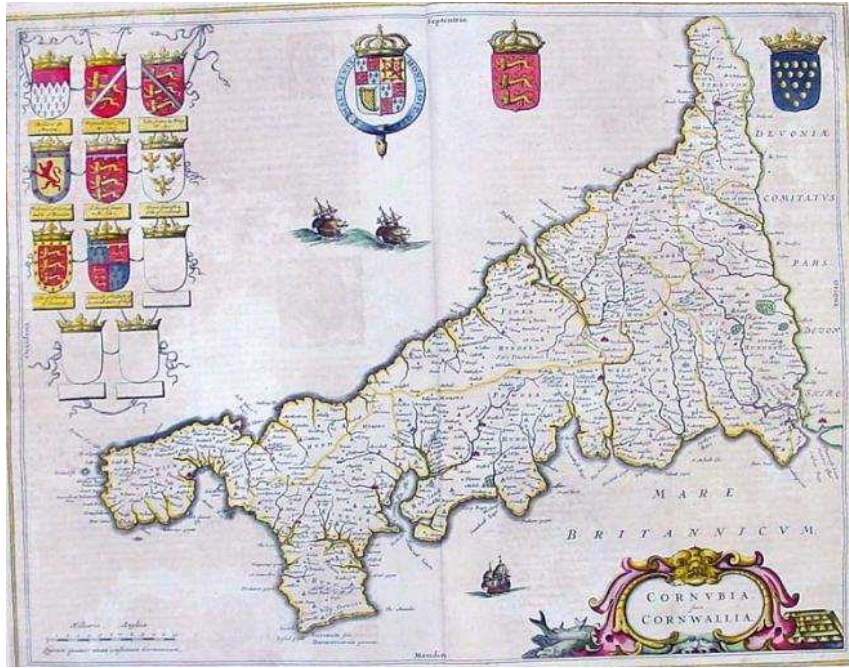


1650

One main route along spine of Cornwall shown (?)

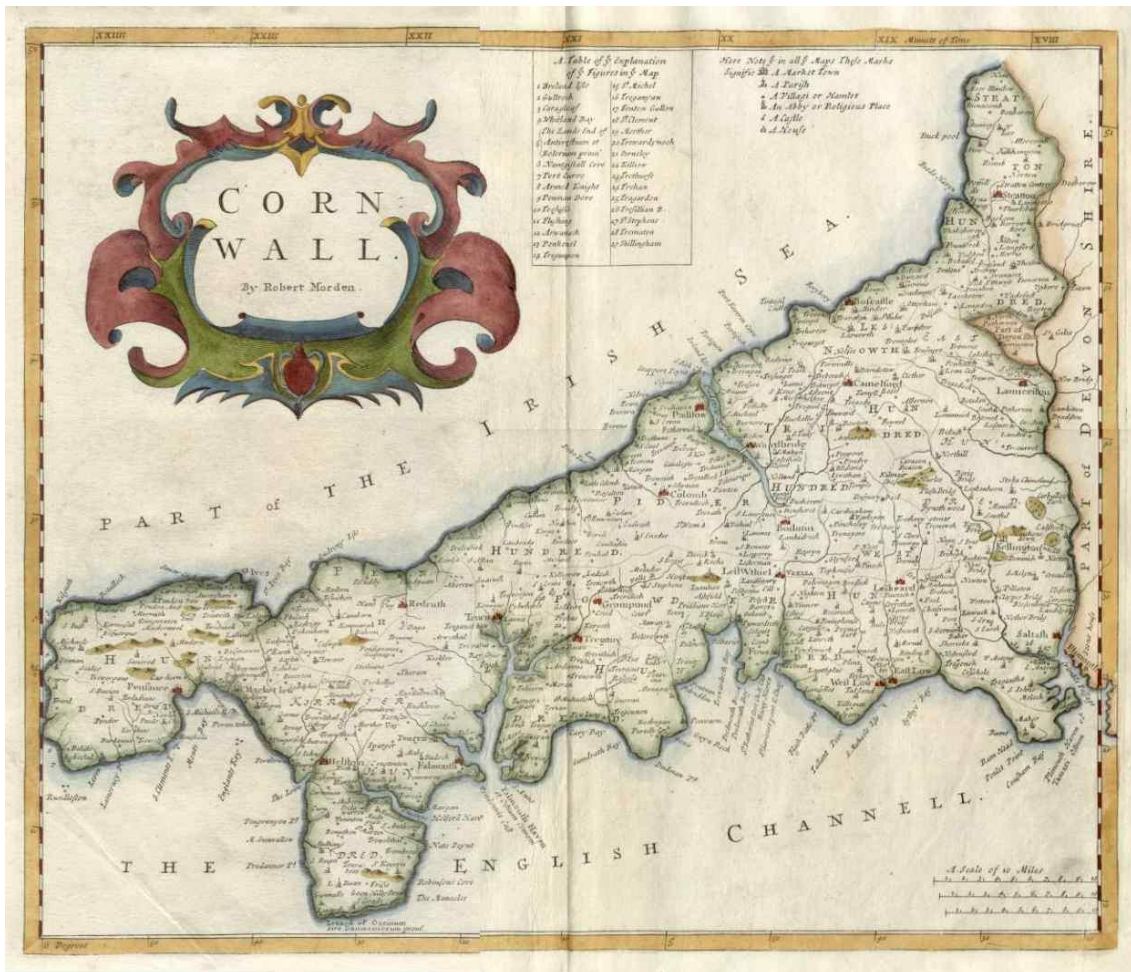


1659 *One main route along spine of Cornwall shown (?)*



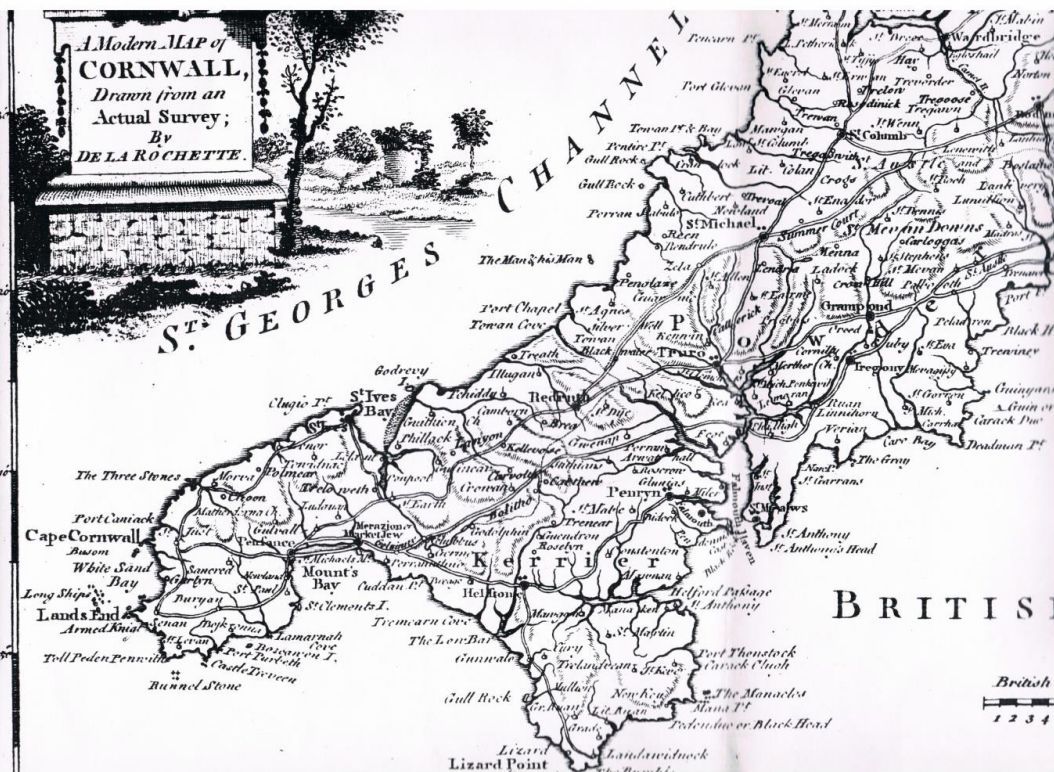
1664

Main spine route through Cornwall and branch to Helston and Truro from Bodmin



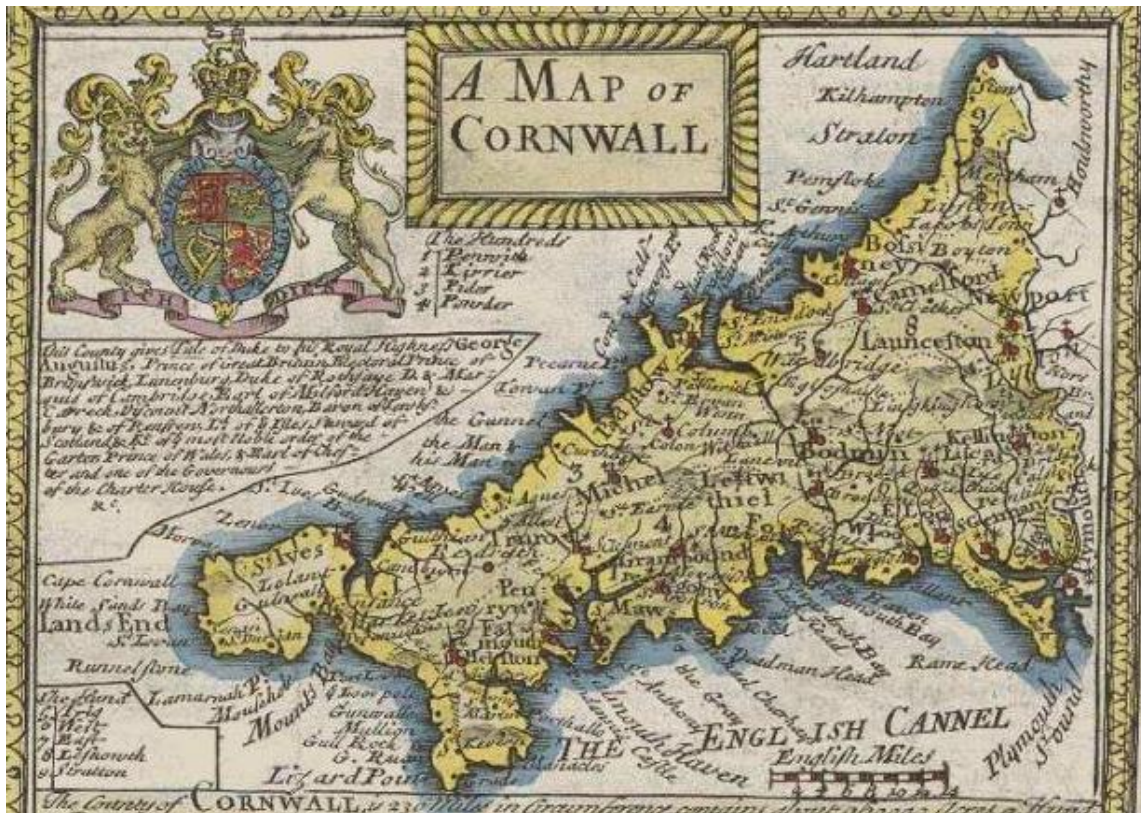
1695

More roads shown but no direct main road between Penryn and Redruth



1707

Still no direct main road between Penryn and Redruth



1720

No direct road between Penryn and Redruth. Exeter to Truro 79 miles.

- A. Penwith Hundred
- B. Kirrier
- C. Powder
- D. Pider
- E. West
- F. East
- G. Trig
- H. Lesnowth
- I. Stratton

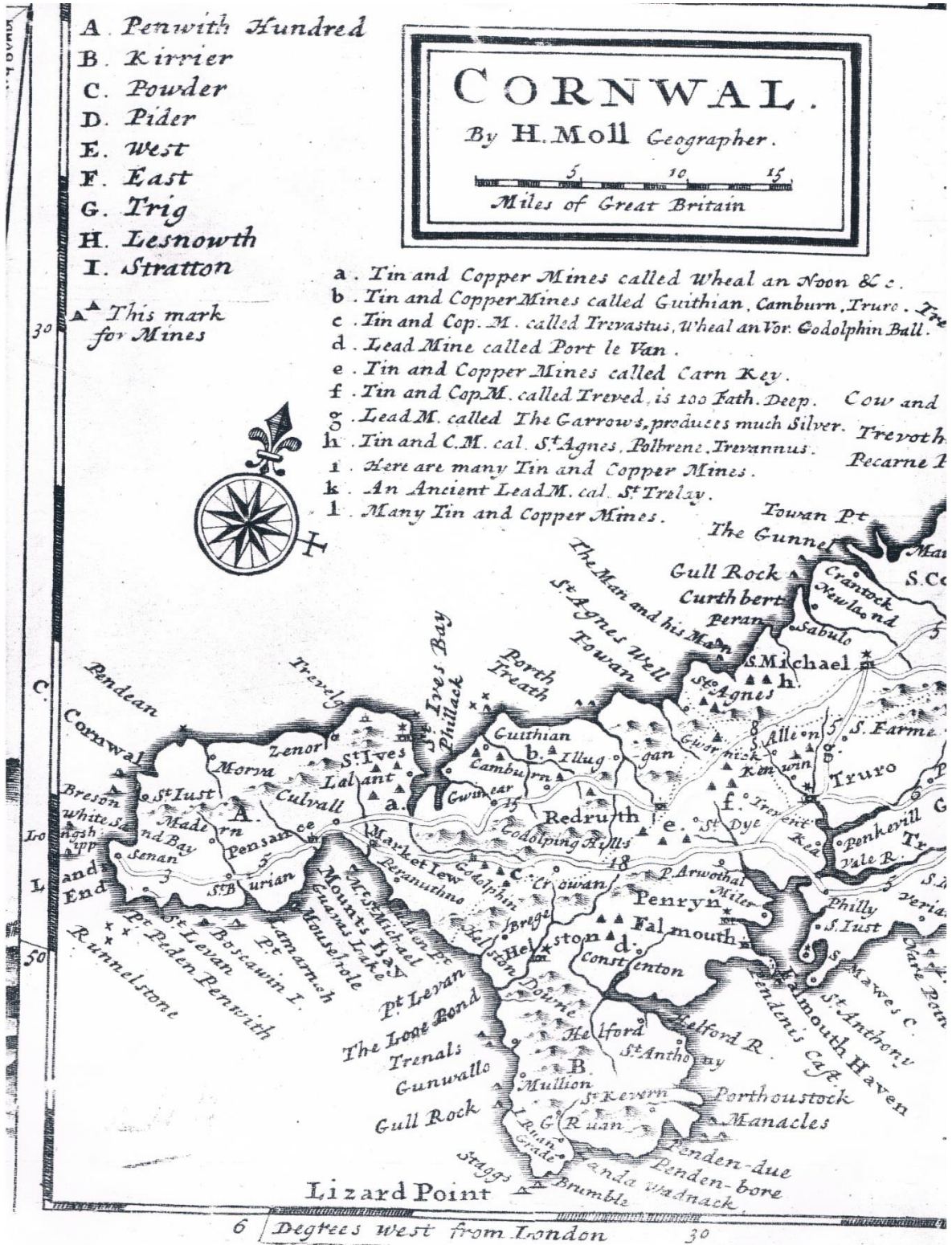
▲ This mark for Mines

CORNWAL.

By H. Moll Geographer.



- a. Tin and Copper Mines called Wheal an Noon &c.
- b. Tin and Copper Mines called Guithian, Camburn, Truro, Tre
- c. Tin and Cop. M. called Trevastus, Wheal an Vor, Godolphin Ball.
- d. Lead Mine called Port le Van.
- e. Tin and Copper Mines called Carn Key.
- f. Tin and Cop. M. called Treved, is 100 Fath. Deep. Cow and
- g. Lead M. called The Garrows, produces much Silver. Trevoth
- h. Tin and C.M. cal. St Agnes, Polbrenz, Trevannus. Pecarne I
- i. Here are many Tin and Copper Mines.
- k. An Ancient Lead M. cal. St Treloy.
- l. Many Tin and Copper Mines.



6 Degrees West from London

1724

No direct main road between Penryn and Redruth

A Map of CORNWALL, West from London.

16

Cornwall sends 44 Members to Parliament, having 21 Boroughs, 9 other Market Towns, & 161 Parishes.

Bodmin. Market Sat. Fairs Jan. 25. Marr. Aug. 10. Decem. 6. Sat. after Midlent Sunday & Midsum. after Whitsunday, sends 2 Memb.^r

Boanicy sends 2 Memb.^r Fairs July 15. Nov. 9.

Camelford. Market Frid. Fairs May 15. July 7. Aug. 26. Frid. after Mar. 10. sends 2 Memb.^r

Eastlooe sends 2 Memb.^r Fairs Feb. 2. Sept. 29.

Fowey. Market Sat. Fairs May 1.^o Sept. 10.
& Shrove Tuesday, sends 2 Members.

S. Germans sends 2 Members, Fairs May 28 & Aug. 1.^o

Grampond. Market Sat. Fairs Jan. 10. & June 11.^o sends 2 Members.

Hellton. Market Sat. Fairs July 3. Aug. 29. Oct. 28. the 2. Sat. before S. Thomas, Saturd. before Midlent Sunday, Sat. before Palm Sunday & Whitsun Monday, sends 2 Members.

S. Ives. Market Wed. & Frid. Fairs Good Frid. & Sat. before Advent Sunday, sends 2 Memb.^r

Kellington sends 2 Memb.^r Fairs Apr. 23. Sep. 1. Nov. 4. Holy Thursday & Trinity Thursday.

Launceston sends 2 Memb.^r Fairs June 29. Nov. 6.

Lelkard. Market Sat. Fairs Aug. 15. Sep. 27. Shrove. Mond. Holy Thursd. Mond. before Palm Sunday & Mond. before Dargford & Mond. Leftwihuel. Market Frid. Fairs June 29. Aug. 24. & Nov. 2.^o sends 2 Members.

S. Maw's sends 2 Members.

S. Michael's sends 2 Memb.^r Fairs Oct. 28. & Monday after S. Michael.

Newport sends 2 Members.

Penryn sends 2 Members, Fairs May 1. July 7. & December 21.^o

Salcath sends 2 Memb.^r Fairs Feb. 2 & July 25.

Tregony Market Sat. Fairs. April 25. May 3. July 25. Sept. 1. Nov. 6. & Shrove Tuesday sends 2 Members.

Truro. Market Wed. & Sat. Fairs Nov. 19. Wh. after Midlent Sunday & Whitsun Wed. sends 2 Memb.^r

Westlooe sends 2 Members, Fair April 25.

The Rivers are Alan, Fowey, Haule, Looe, Loo, Tamar, & Vale.



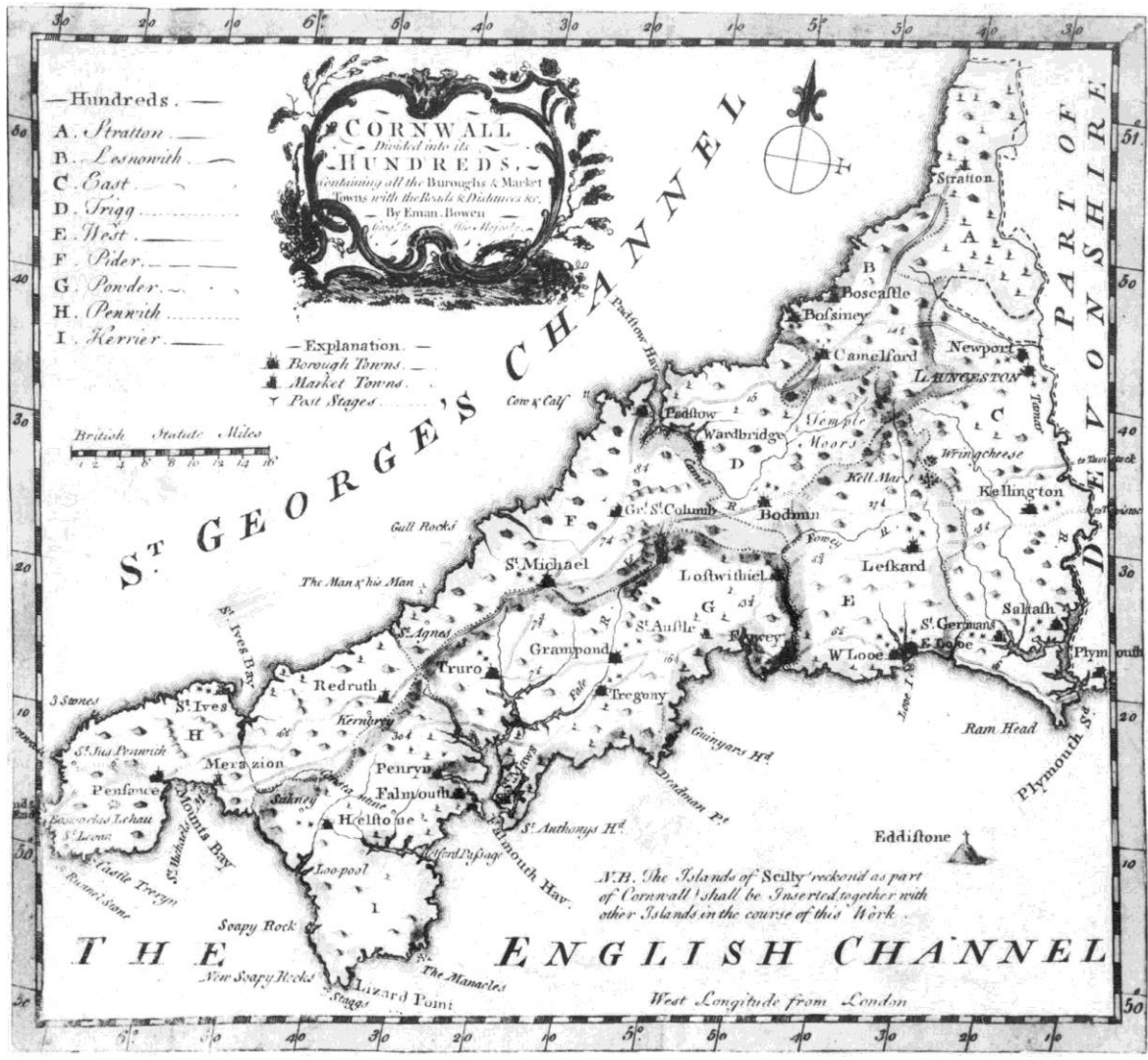
W. Badestlade Solin.

Published by the Proprietors T. Badestlade & W. C. Jones Sept. 29. 1741.

W. H. Jones Sculpt.

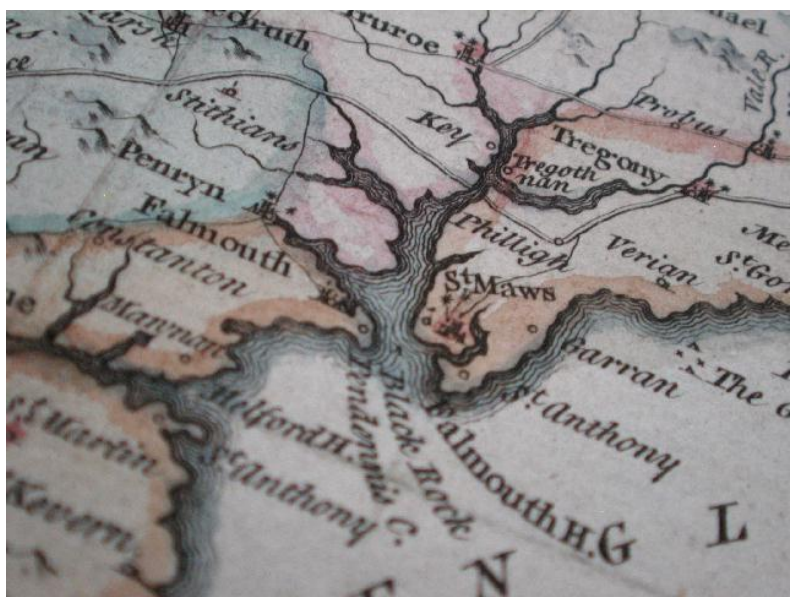
1741

No direct main road between Penryn and Redruth



1756

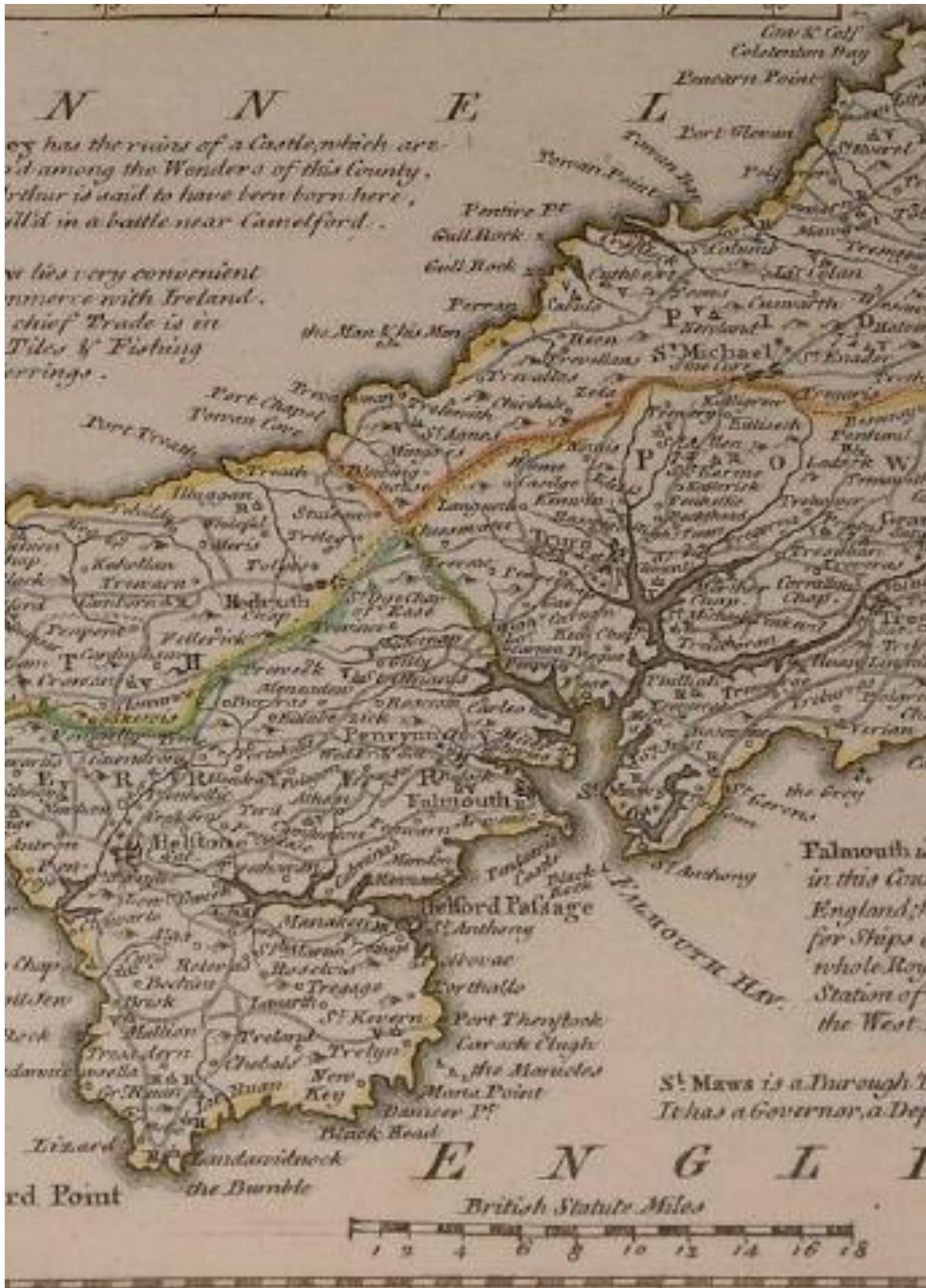
No direct main road between Penryn and Redruth



1760

No direct main road between Penryn and Redruth

Note: 1763 Turnpike Road Penryn - Redruth Act approved by Parliament (Toll house at Comford)



1767

Redruth-Gwennap-Penryn via minor routes shown



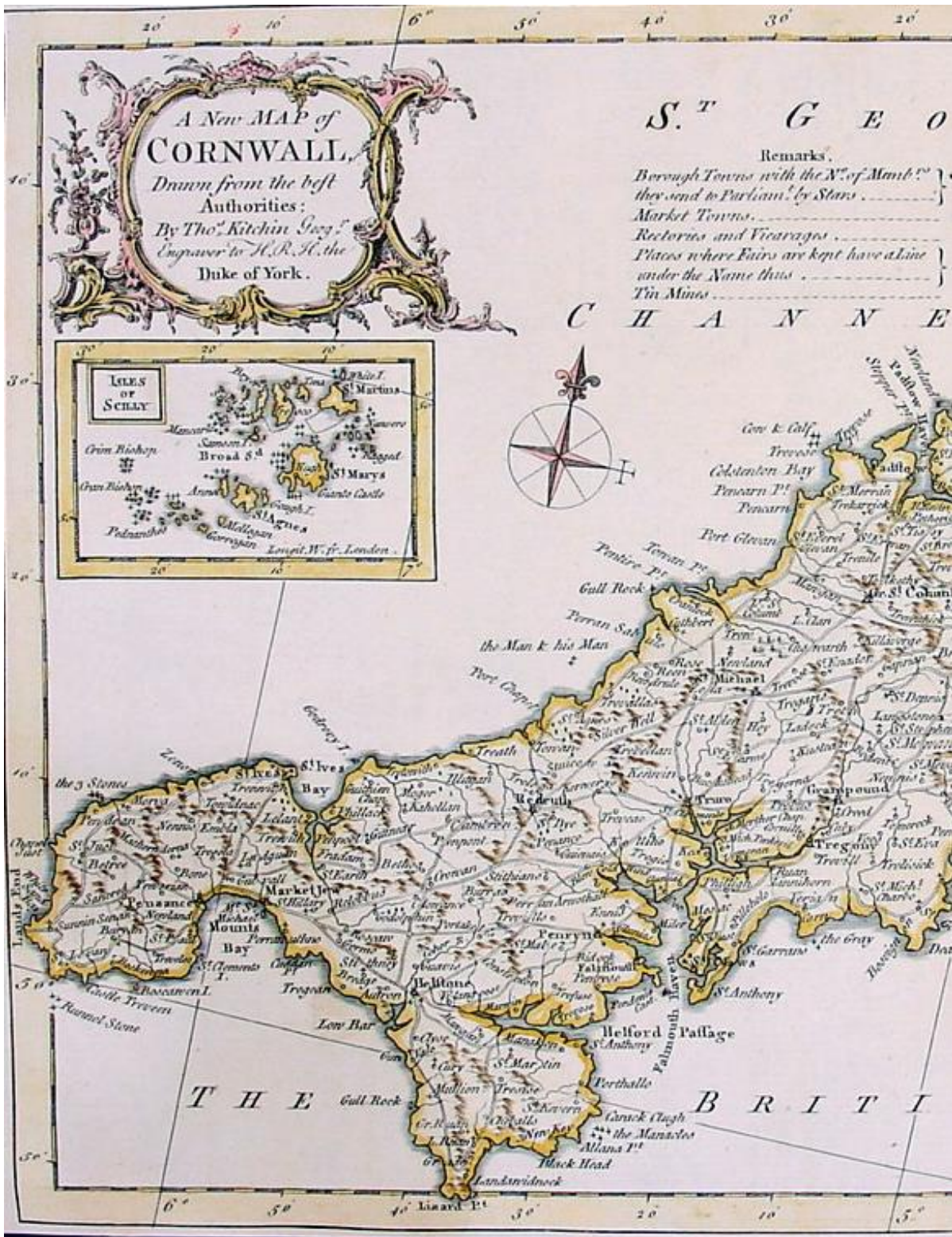
1769

As 1760 with road to Penryn from (Bissoe)



1769b

Sithians-Clowance-Marazion plus road from Redruth to (FourLanes)



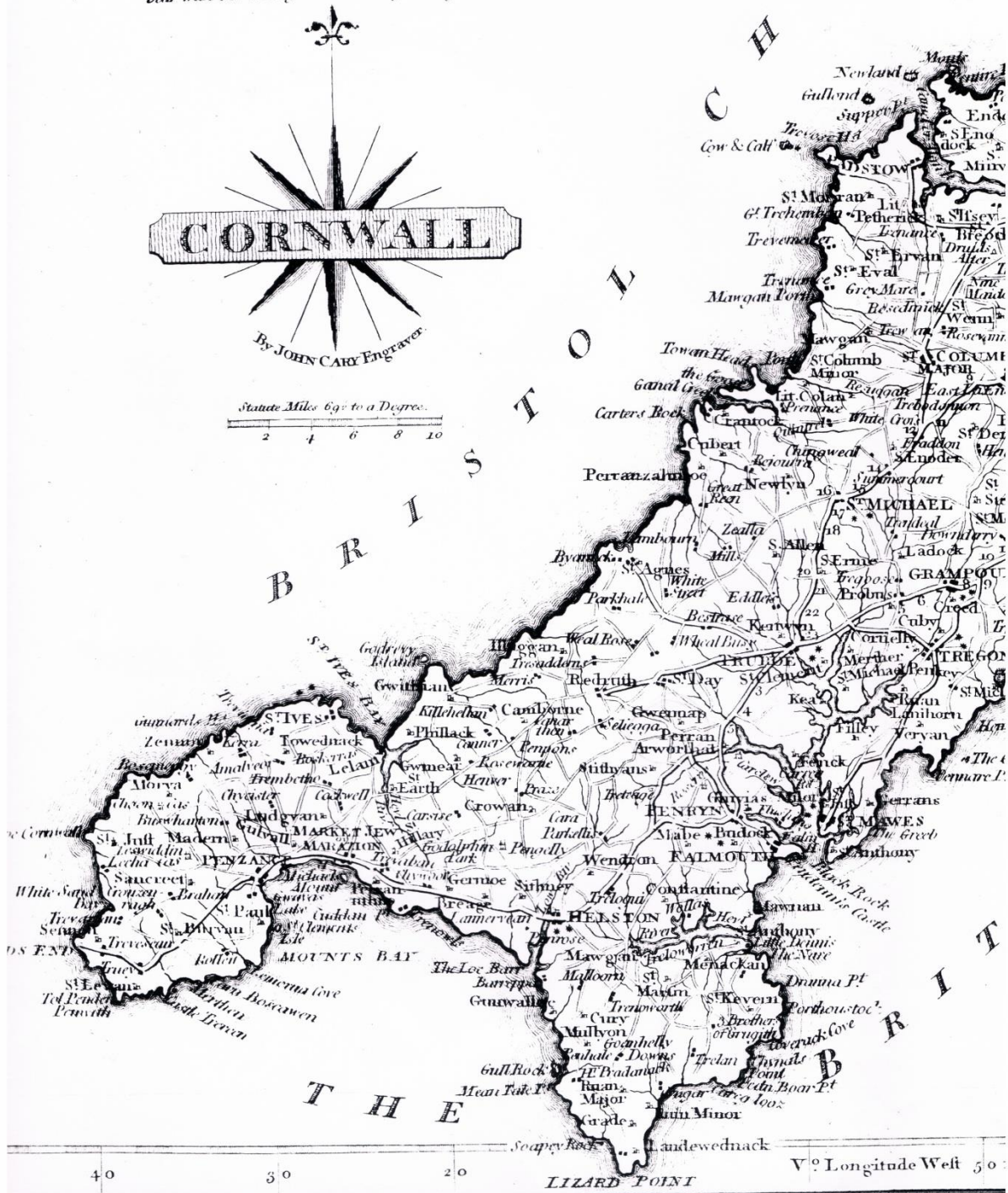
1784

Also road from Redruth-(Chacewater)-Truro (also on a map of 1787)



1791
 Main road Redruth to Truro via St Day also Truro to Penryn

Note. The *SICILY ISLES* lying too far west of the *Land-End* to be inserted in their proper place without reducing the size of this Map they are therefore placed here to shew the form and proportion they bear with this County to which they belong.



1793

Main road appears to bypass Gwennap



1801

Main road Redruth to Penryn shown going via Gwennap Churchtown (?)



1804

Main road Redruth to Penryn shown going via Gwennap Churchtown



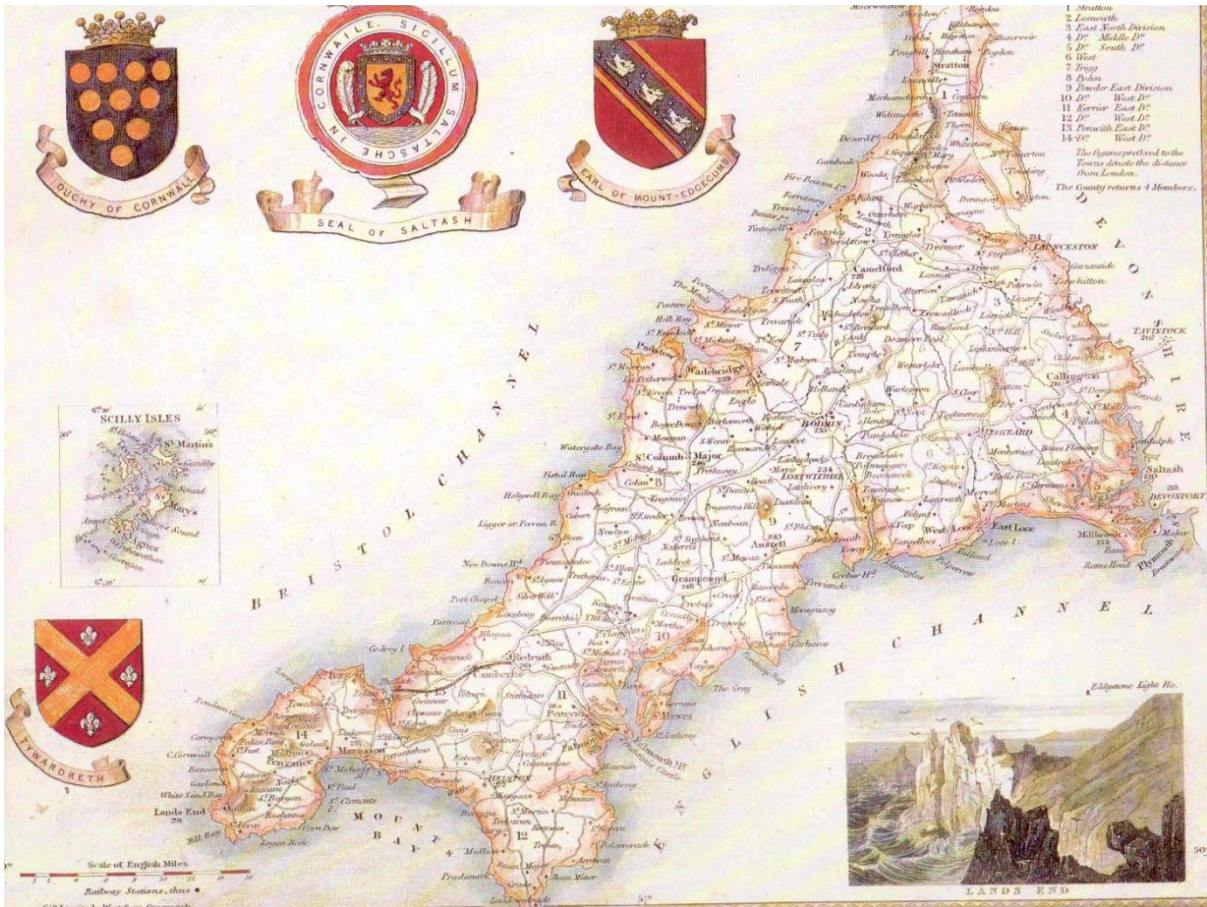
1814

Current roads (including toll gate at Comford) in place



1825

Current main roads clearly shown (but not detailed enough to show the triangle)



1836

Current main roads clearly shown (but not detailed enough to show the triangle)



1837

Current main roads clearly shown (but not detailed enough to show the triangle)



1877

Current main roads clearly shown (but not detailed enough to show the triangle)

Appendix 1

Some Trengove family (the main blacksmith family in early times), local records

Gwennap Parish Register 1658 -1743

1677	15 March	Rebeeka buried
1693	1 March	Prudence baptised, daughter of James
1703	22 May	Alice, daughter of James, married Francis Kent
1709	6 May	Prudence (widow) buried
	30 October	Elizabeth married William Kent
1713	29 June	Prudence married James Kent
1731	5 June	James baptised, son of Reginald and Elizabeth of Perranaworthal (and father of child baptised/christened)
1739	4 April	John buried, son of Jacob of Kenwyn
1742	23 May	Jacob baptised, son of Jacob and Jane (and father of child baptised/christened)

The Poor Law Records of Gwennap 1799 – 1808

Gwennap Churchtown Vestry ordered as follows:

Jan 1801 "To Catherine Trengove a trowsers and a pair of shoes for the boy and a pair of cards." (cards: instruments with iron teeth used to comb wool or hemp to raise a nap).

Feb 1801 "To Jane Trengove to have a shift and 2/- per week." (shillings)

March 1801 "To Jane Trengove to have bedsheet and blanket, a rug. Necessary to have 3/- per week."

March 1801 "To Catherine Trengove's two sons, two shirts each."

April 1808 "Pay John Edwards 1 years rent for Richard Trengove."

Appendix 2
Photographs of the Forge



1978 back



1978 front



1978 garden



1978 upstairs in cottage



1979 back



1979 front



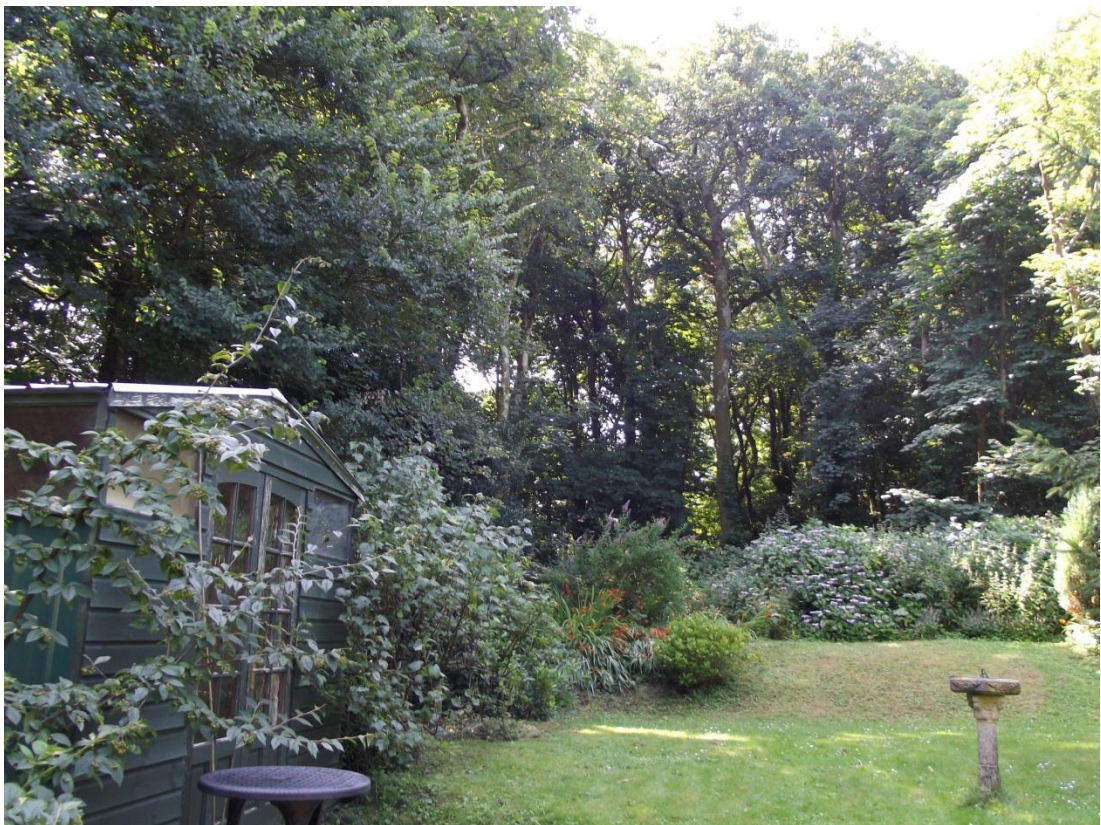
2017 front/forge



2017 front/kitchen



2017 back



2017 garden/woods



2017 garden/house

Appendix 3 – Wills from 1600's passing on property at Merrymeeting

A yfport Inventory of the goods and chattels of
 John Denny's late of the County of Dorset deceased as he is
 words expressed by Edward Moding and Thomas
 Dargow

Item the Apperell purst and yirdle ———— 20^s
 Item two table boord & two framob, & one form — 20^s
 Item one old Chubbard, a barrell and a Cypitt — 20^s
 Item the remainder of his tenard in a roff — 20^s
 of land in Broude

Item two pound apperell at ———— 20^s 10^d
 Item one old Iron Broude ———— 20^s
 Item four platters apperell at ———— 10^s
 Item one Broude yird and one old rope yird — 10^s
 Item one bed furnisshod ———— 20^s
 Item a little galy nagg apperell at ———— 20^s 10^d
 Item seven parcel of bound and all his riggt — 20^s
 in the tympitt, and tympitt

Item his riggt of a tenard in a roff in — 20^s
 the County of Dorset

Item one little townit wch is intostate gold — 20^s 10^d
 of John Spawt's out in the County of Dorset

Item the intostate intostate in a little townit — 10^s
 called Merrymeeting

Item Hains old bond of patty despotat. debt — 20^s 10^d
 wch is the old bond of patty despotat. debt
 of the County of Dorset

Item staid old boords, and other things of — 10^s
 small value

Suma — 20^s 10^d

Will of John Denny of Awenney 1636

D 384

AP/D/384

A true Inventory of all the goods and chattels
 of Richard Deanes of the parish of St. Dunstons
 deceased taking appraised by the hands of
 the Executors Anno Domini 1641 by Edmund Cresswell
 Thomas Deane and John Deane the younger
 Lambert Wardon & Thomas Swanton

Impment for rib weaving apparill	1	0	8
Item 2 ff. gables	1	10	
4 bolsters		6	8
6 Bedsteads		18	
2 xillens		2	
2 brass potts		4	0
2 Iron potts		3	
2 brand Irons		1	8
one pott & a pair of Irons		2	4
one pott & 2 Buckets		3	8
one pott & a barrel & a brewing bene		5	
one pott & a pott		1	8
2 Irons		5	
2 saltstills & 12 trentons		3	
2 goat ruggs & a glass		1	4
one small silver spoon		1	4
3 old Carles		3	
6 wooden dishes & a table		0	
one beere stool & a beere stand	1	0	8
one box	1	4	
5 rings		12	
2 Lint in one small tank called Courtale		3	
one list on rib weaving loom in Crossway		1	0
one old list on a decayed Messuage called	1	0	8
untwisting line		3	0
for rib right in severall time boundes money		20	
and C. Frisane		13	4
for Dutypet Tyme		1	0
for rib right of the nature of some stuff broken		3	6
for some of the same nature of other nature		1	0
for some of the same nature of other nature		3	6
for some of the same nature of other nature		3	4
for some of the same nature of other nature		61	00
Suma totalis		61	00

Edmund Cresswell
 John Deane
 Lambert Wardon
 Thomas Swanton

Will of
 Richard
 Deanes,
 of
 St. Dunstons,
 London,
 1641-1642

Appendix 4 - Local History Appeal: Merrymeeting Forge, Gwennap



The present owners are working on the history of the building/former smithy using many available sources but are finding gaps and inconsistencies. They would be very grateful for any help. They moved in in 1978 and have no photographs prior to this date; the forge was built as part of the Burncoose Estate in the early 1800's but most of the Estate records of the period were lost in a fire some years ago; the building is situated along the A393 which developed from the Redruth to Penryn turnpike road – the turnpike Trust was set up in 1763 but no records of the actual road construction, or even date of completion, have survived. Even census records are confusing as 11 families are recorded living at Merrymeeting in 1841. If you can help with information or pointers to sources please contact **Len or Sue on 01209 860844.**

This article appeared in the Gwennap Parish Newsletter Winter 2014 and resulted in some photographs from the 1940's thanks to Mrs Sue Martyn.

Appendix 5 Extract from:

GWENNAP :
A DESCRIPTIVE POEM.
IN SEVEN CANTOS.

BY WILLIAM FRANCIS.

REDRUTH :
PRINTED BY J. MAY, FORE-STREET.

1845.

We'll ascend on the south to much higher ground,
And from thence will survey the landscape around ;
What a charming appearance does nature display !
Sol, sinking in glory, now softens his ray.
This beautiful hill, once so rugged and bare,
What may be effected by tillage and care
Delightfully proves, green and fair are the fields,
Cheering hopes of rich harvest the scenery yields ;
Here and there fine wheat fields, in verdure, are seen,
The oat crops just peeping, and hay fields between ;
There cattle are grazing the pastures among,
And the plough-boy full merry is singing a song ;
Farmers view their potatoes with heartfelt content,
And depend on that crop to pay off their rent.
Weary miners returning at close of the day,
Vans, coaches, and carts too, are on the highway ;
This field path is pleasant, it leads on to Gear, *
With Devis * before and Combe-Ford † in the rear ;
These names, purely Cornish, the slightest survey
The reason why giv'n to the mind will convey ;
Except that at Devis in past times the sheep
In the crofts rang'd at large, and through ev'ry creep,
Midst the dense and high furze with rabbits and hares,
Where now the glad farmer his harvest prepares.
Goverrow § I look at, while mem'ry recalls
The ancient stone stair-case, and mouldering walls,

* Devis, Davas or Davat, the sheep's place.

† Comford, or Comfort, i. e. Combe-Ford, the great road or pass betwixt the hills, but more properly the ford or passage over the river in the valley, referring, no doubt, to the passage across the stream at the bottom of the lane leading to Carharrack.

§ Goverrow, or Govarrowe, the place of many springs or brooks, plural of Gover.

Trebowling,* was the name assign'd to thy ground,
From Tre, seat on the hill, and Buelin, a round ?
Thy encampment once stood secure on the hill,
A circle its form as is manifest still ;
Wendron, Stithians, and Gwennap men, cheek by jowl*
There met at the hurling,† or play'd with the bowl ;
And there, too, perhaps, the war-chariot was seen,
When the Roman insulted Icenis's fam'd queen ; §
Or when for dominion the Saxons contended,
And Arthur the brave Danmonium defended ; †
Or when the Dane entered Valubia's fair haven,
And advanc'd to rapine under their raven ; ||
Or still later when civil commotions * arose,
And Cornwall supported her sovereign's cause ;
Here was carnage, and blood empurpl'd the fields,
Whose verdure and plenty Justitia now shields ;

• This round was undoubtedly an ancient fortress ; the present proprietor in clearing out the vallum or ditch for manure, discovered considerable quantities of ashes, and also stones which had evidently undergone the action of fire, no doubt of the garrison fires. At Trelispick, not far from Trebowling, but in Stithians parish, are some remains of another ancient fortification, where, I am informed, the occupier of the land has discovered some ancient coins and trinkets supposed to have belonged to the garrison.

Thus, Burncoose * and Cheycoose, † Pencoose § and
 To woodlands refer as shown by Roskilley. [Gilley, ‡
 And doubtless some twenty long centuries past
 When the bank of the Fal supplied the tall mast, ||
 And the king of the trees from the forest was torn
 For the mightiest ship that ocean had borne ;
 Then did our prime woods in their glory appear,
 Yielding shelter and food to the timid red deer ; †
 The tame and wild swine with their progeny fed
 On nutritive acorns, and beech branches spread

* Burncoose, the high wood, or hill wood, or from Bern, a heap or rick, and Coose, a wood, the rick in the wood.

† Chycoose, from Chy, a house, and Coose, the house in the wood.

§ Pencoose, from Pen, the head, and Coose, the head of the wood.

‡ Gilley or Killey, a grove chiefly of hazel trees or of thorns.

Merry-meeting, the name betokens good cheer,
 Perhaps long absent friends or lovers met here,
 And breath'd their soft wishes, and plighted their vows,

With fond hopes all buoyant which kind age allows
To the young lovely pair, th' morn of life cheering,
Whilst doubt, envious foe, aside is leering :
Or perchance it was once a place of resort,
Where neighbours met often for riot or sport.
When Imperial France inflated with glory,
Thought Britain subdued should blazon her story ;
Then Cornwall arose at the sound of alarm,
And depots were drain'd her militia to arm ;
Just forty years since Merry-meeting survey'd
The troops, horse and foot, west Cornubia display'd,
As through it they marched, and grand was the sight
Of the troops who met at Tresamble sham fight ;
On the opposite hill the foemen appear'd,
And Officers nobly the Volunteers cheer'd ;
The foes' cannon advanc'd, and their light troops scour'd
The plain, while our terrible batteries pour'd
A deafening crash whose effect was soon trac'd
And taught foes that Britons would not be disgrac'd.
The enemy's object to turn our left flank
Was seen as they skirted the opposite bank ;
But their ranks were soon thinn'd for many then fell,
Ere they reach'd their object by crossing the dell ;
Yet this they effected and threaten'd our rear,
'Twas then our great danger began to appear ;
With firmness heroic our volunteers burn'd,
But fearful the moment, position thus turn'd,
Some able manœuvre our troops must perform

To meet the foes' charge and their batteries storm ;
The bugle sounds, hark ! down they pour in thick files,
The cavalry gallop o'er hedges and stiles,
And with energy fall on the guns of the foe,
The foot wheel about and front instantly show,
Bayonets are cross'd, when our murderous fire
Sweeps the column's head and the remnant retire.
Thus the Cornish were taught to wield sabre and gun,
And how fields too were gain'd and victories won.
Gallia's boast dissolv'd like the sham-fight in smoke,
When Russia and Spain to their interest awoke ;
The French troops came not for our navy oppos'd,
And the scenes of the drama at Waterloo clos'd.
Tresamble * is seen on the big belly hill,
Whoever ascends it in haste surely will
Acknowledge with panting and short-breathing sigh,
And the fair so burden'd will never deny

Historical Notes

The Williams family of Gwennap and Scorrier grew in power and wealth from being humble tinners at the end of the 17th century to control of a quarter of all copper mines in Cornwall by 1800 with estates at Burncoose (they moved there in 1715), Scorrier (Scorrier House was built in 1778) and Caerhays (Castle purchased in 1854 whilst the family were renting Trevince (the house and estate next to Burncoose) from the Beuchamps). This was achieved through hard work, mine management skills and enterprise utilizing the latest technology available to them at the time.

Cornish mining peaked in the 1860's although the decline in the Gwennap area (once the richest mining area in the world) started a decade earlier. The Williams family moved to tin mining, mainly in the Dolcoath area, where tin was found in great quantities below the worked out copper seams.

Although situated near The Copperhouse (built 1819) – headquarters for the Williams mining operations – and the property of the estate, it is unlikely that Merrymeeting Forge did more than peripheral work for the mines and was more concerned with estate support and the farrier needs extending to the local farming community – just as the old smithy would have done for centuries before.

Paraphrased from 'The State of the Poor' March 1796 government report. Section on Gwennap (pg43)

Gwennap covered 4 sq miles, had a population of about 4000, involvement in mining (mainly copper) was the main occupation. These men were better paid than most labourers in England.

Ordinary wages were about 40 shillings a month. Prices of provisions: wheat 11 shillings a bushel; barley 4 shillings and 6 pence a bushel; butchers meat 5 ½ pence the pound.

Farms were small and the principle articles of cultivation were wheat, barley, oats and potatoes. Tithes were usually rented by tenants. One half of the parish was waste land.

There were 8 inns or alehouses in the parish.

The poor were chiefly relieved in their own houses (see also appendix 1 pg 56 above). 40 however were maintained in a workhouse (see records of deaths in chapter 2 pg 15) in which there was no sort of manufactory and their weekly allowance was 2 shillings and 3 pence each.

Notes from 'History of Gwennap' by C C James

There was a boys school in the Churchtown (Gwennap) in the 18th century which was by far the largest in the parish with about 200 boys. A girls school, built about 1825 was demolished in 1890. Both schools in the village closed about 1880.

The population of the parish had more than doubled from 4,594 in 1801 to 10,794 in 1841 due to copper mining but the mining declined severely by 1861 leaving many families in trouble. In February 1847 £450 was raised locally with the object 'of relieving their poor neighbours in their present distress'.

Further reading/references:

History of Gwennap by C C James 1947

The Ancient Roads of England by Jane Oliver 1936

Toll Houses of Cornwall by Patrick Taylor

Magna Britannica by Lysons updated by Alan Rosevear

The State of the Poor. March 1796 government report

Gwennap: A descriptive Poem by William Francis 1845

Truro/Cornwall Reference Library

Online census records and other online sources

Authors note

As a final comment, I hope you found this compilation as interesting as I did when putting it together and please note the research findings are limited and, in places, confusing. One advantage of using digital media to present these findings is that one can expand maps electronically to see more detail.

If anyone can help with further details or clarifications then please get in touch. Areas of particular interest are the history of the Toll Road, Gwennap section, and any estate or other maps showing the triangle before 1839.

Email: szepietowski@hotmail.com