

# Rill Cove Finds Record



## Project Report

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## Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by English Heritage. The English Heritage Project Officer was Mark Dunkley. I would also like to thank Mike Hall for his cooperation and assistance with this project.

Cover photograph: Object number 227 – a pair of dividers.

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## Project Name

### Rill Cove Finds Record

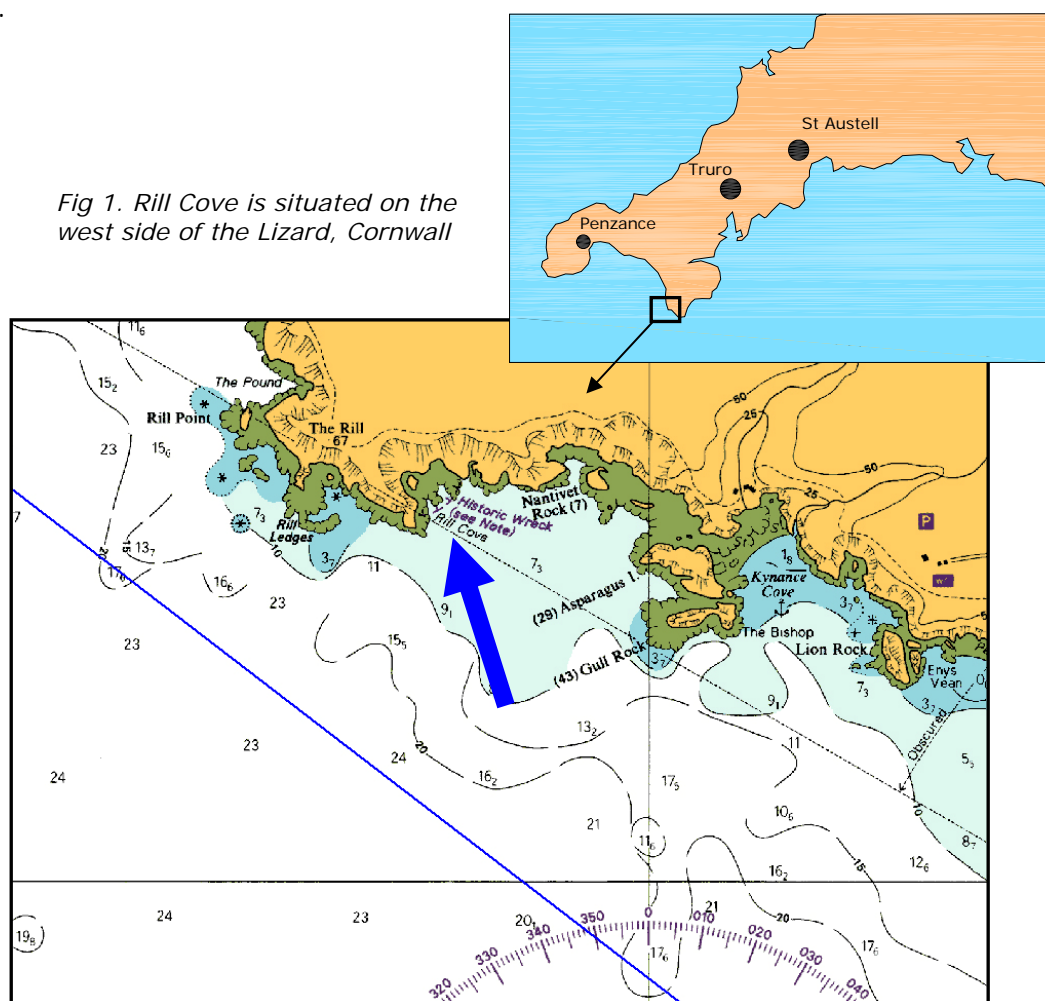
## Summary Description

This project recorded the finds recovered from the protected wreck site at Rill Cove. The finds were recovered between 1976 and 1992 and are currently in the possession of the site licensee Mike Hall.

## Background

The Rill Cove site was discovered by Ken Simpson and Mike Hall while diving on the wreck of a wooden fishing vessel *Kerris Read*. A small cast-iron gun was located, with a number of silver coins concreted to it. Further investigation located further coins and a small number of other artifacts. The site was designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act on 15th March 1976. During 1976 a site survey was undertaken, including a site plan. The original licensee was Ken Simpson but this changed in 1988 to Mike Hall.

*Fig 1. Rill Cove is situated on the west side of the Lizard, Cornwall*



Between 1976 and 1992 seven separate seasons of excavation were undertaken by Ken Simpson, Mike Hall and Tony Randall. Details of this work are contained in the annual licensee's reports, currently held by English Heritage Maritime.

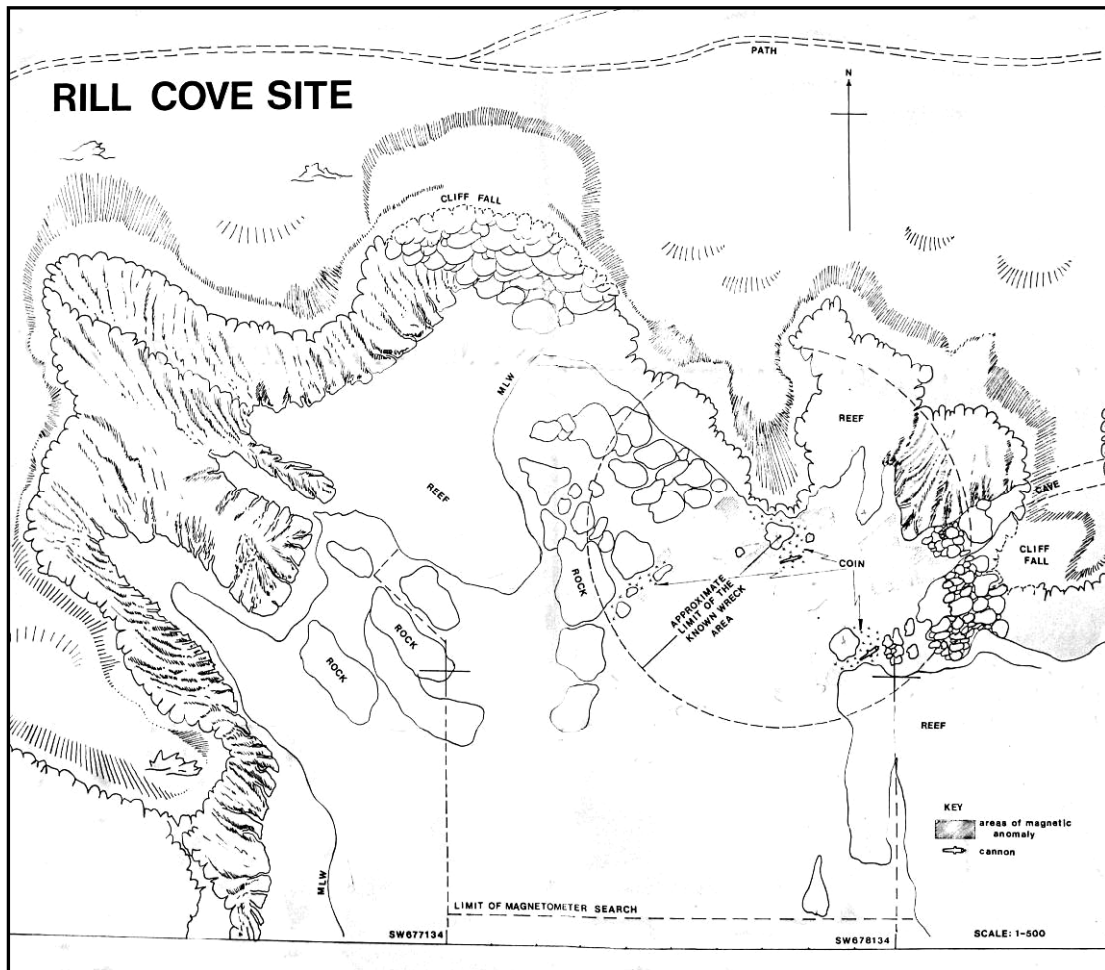


Fig 2. Rill Cove site plan – based on the 1976 survey drawn by Tony Randall

The site has yielded a number of artifacts typical of those expected from an early 17<sup>th</sup> century shipwreck. By far the largest group of objects consists of silver coins; the date range of those recorded is from 1590 to 1606. No excavation has been undertaken on the site since 1992. Some of the silver coins recovered have been sold at auction, but unfortunately there is no record of the coins which were sold.

## Objectives

The principal aim was to produce a record of the objects recovered from the Rill Cove site. The record consists of a finds database which conforms to the relevant NMR thesauri and is also compliant with the ADS data standards. Each object was photographed using a high quality digital SLR with dedicated micro lens. The record is in the same format as that recently produced for the PHW material in Charlestown Shipwreck Museum and the finds record of the St Anthony.

The need to record these objects is amply evidenced by the fact that an unknown number of the coins from this site have been sold at auction. The current whereabouts of these objects are not known. No record of these objects exists; indeed, we do not know with any degree of certainty how many were sold. Now there is a record of the remaining objects in case further dispersal takes place.

## Methodology

### Scope

There are 510 records in the Rill Cove finds database and 907 digital photographs. The total size of the digital record is just over 2 gigabytes. All the objects held by Mike Hall are included in the database.

### Recording

The objects were recorded directly to computer using a simple Microsoft Excel database. No paper records were made. Objects were measured using digital callipers for the smaller objects and a tape measure for the larger objects. Where appropriate, the objects were weighed using a calibrated digital laboratory balance (0.1 gram discrimination). All objects were photographed using a digital SLR mounted on a copy stand. The objects were illuminated using two photoflood lights as there was no available daylight where the photographs were taken.

## Data Fields

Data Field	Data type	Notes and NMR Thesaurus
ID No	Number	Unique identifier. Note that some numbers in the sequence were not used – in which case the record is marked <b>number not used</b>
O class	Text	Object class in <mda archaeological objects> or <Test thesaurus fixtures and fittings – Ship fittings> where relevant entries exist
O type	Text	Object type in <mda archaeological objects> or <Test thesaurus fixtures and fittings – Ship fittings> where relevant entries exist
O name	Text	Object name - Preferred term in <mda archaeological objects> or <test thesaurus fixtures and fittings – ship fittings> where relevant entries exist
Material	Text	<NMR Main building materials> where relevant entries exist
Numbers	Numeric	Where multiple and numerous identical objects exist (eg five musket balls) this field shows how many there are.
Description	Text	Description of the object
Condition	Text	<REP93 condition>
DIM	Text	Dimensions in mm
Weight	Numeric	Weight of object in grams – only recorded for items such as ingots, shot etc where weight is relevant
Period	Text	<RCHM archaeological period>
Precise date	Text	Precise date where indicated (eg on coins)
Recovered	Text	Date recovered where known
Marked	Text	Where the object is marked with a number or identifier this is recorded.
Photographs	Text	Alphabetic characters record how many photographs were taken. For example 'A' denotes a single photograph, 'ABC' three photographs. Photographs are labelled RC, followed by the ID number, then an alphabetic character. For example RC0155B is the label for the second photograph of object number 155
Notes	Text	Used for additional information.
Recorded by	Text	Initials of the recorder
Record date	Date	Date the record was made

Fig 3. Table showing the data fields used in the finds database

## Photography

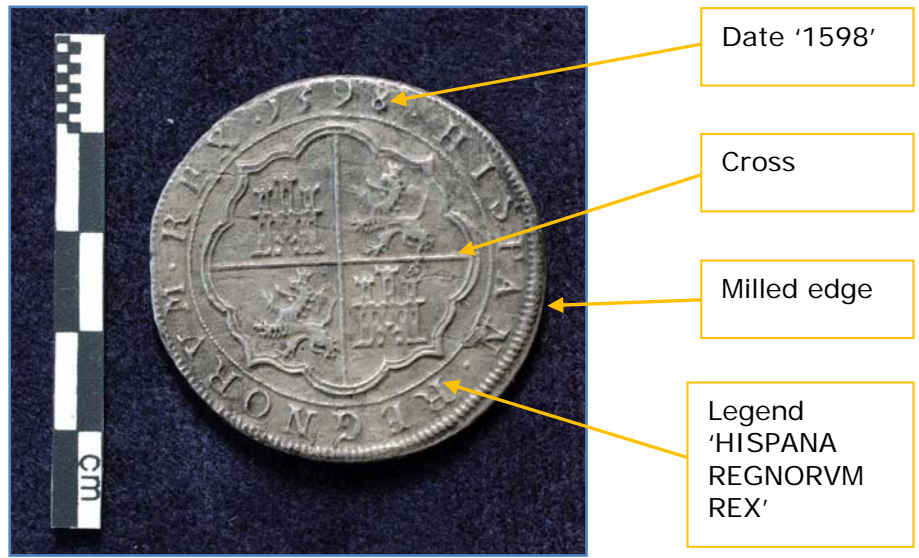
All objects were photographed using a Nikon D70 digital SLR with a 60mm micro Nikkor lens – which allows reproduction ratios of up to 1:1 – ensuring detailed photographs of even the smallest objects in the collection. The camera was mounted on a photographic copy stand fitted with a bidirectional lighting system. The resulting images were stored in raw format (maximum quality) and as compressed jpegs (reasonable size). Other file



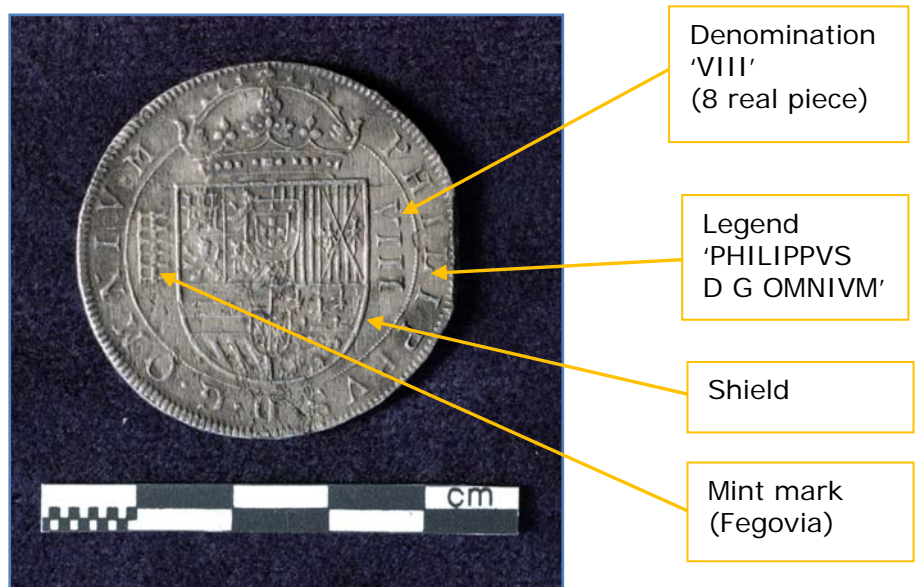
formats can be generated from the RAW files using Nikon editing software (for example uncompressed tif files). Each photograph was named (RCnnnn) and the file names cross-referenced to the object data records – see the data field specification in fig 3 above.

### Coin Recording

Reverse (REV)



Obverse (OB)



The above illustrates the coin description for object number 136

## Results

The Rill Cove site is named after its location; the reason for this is that no identification of the shipwreck has been made. The only wreck of this period recorded in *The Shipwreck Index of the British Isles* (Larn 1995) is an unidentified wreck of 1628 wrecked at Rill Cove - 'About nine years ago, a ship from St Lucia was wrecked at the Lizard, laden with silver in bars and pieces of 8..' (CSP.Dom. Ch1 Vol. CXIII p258). The objects from this site are also unusual in that the majority of items recovered are silver coins. The tables below summarise the finds by object type and by material. Whilst there are clearly some objects pertaining to the wreck itself, it is clear that the overwhelming majority of the finds are coins.

Object name	Number
Anchor	1
Bell?	2
Bottle cap	3
Buckle	1
Button	8
Chain plate	1
Clenched bolt	1
Coin	2021
Dividers	1
Handle	1
Hook	1
Ingot	1
Measuring rod	1
Object	16
Peg	1
Pot	50
Rivet	5
Sheave	1
Sheet	32
Shot	5
Sounding lead	2
Stone	1
Vertebrate remains	1
Vessel	9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2166</b>

Material	Number
Bone	1
Ceramic	50
Copper	1
Copper alloy	38
Glass?	1
Hemp?	1
Iron	5
Lead	34
Pewter	11
Silver	2020
Stone	2
Wood	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2166</b>

Fig 4. Tables summarising the artifacts in the Rill Cove database by object name and by material. Note that the totals given are for object numbers not data records.

## Interfaces

Two objects from this site are on display at the Charlestown Shipwreck and Heritage Centre. These were recorded as part of the recording of protected wreck material at Charlestown (English Heritage project 4825 main). These are record number 147, a banded iron chambered gun and 548, a silver 4 real piece. The records from the Charlestown protected wreck material are available on the ADS website.

## Ownership

Copyright of the record and photographs is owned by English Heritage.

## Metadata

The following is the metadata for the finds record – it follows the layout suggested by the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) in their guidelines for depositors.

Title	Rill Cove finds recording project
Description	A record of the finds recovered from the designated wreck site Rill Cove. The identification of the wreck is unknown.
Subject	Maritime, wreck, watercraft, designated wreck, artifacts from shipwrecks
Coverage	Rill Cove. Town – near Helston, Cornwall. Country – United Kingdom. Period – early 17 <sup>th</sup> century
Creators	Compiled by Kevin Camidge, commissioned by English Heritage
Publisher	Unpublished
Dates	Dataset created 2008
Copyright	Copyright English Heritage
Relations	This is a record of material recovered from the designated wreck site of Rill Cove on the Lizard, Cornwall.
Language	English
Resource type	Artifact record
Format	Artifact record – Microsoft Excel (XLS) and ASCII (CSV) file. Photographs stored as JPEG (JPG) files. This report Microsoft Word (DOC) and (PDF).

*Fig 5. Metadata table*

The finds record and photographs are stored on the DVD ROM – which is located at the end of this report. The finds record is stored in two different formats; as a Microsoft Excel file and an ASCII CSV

file (readable by any database programme). The first line of the CSV file contains the record field headings. Subsequent lines contain a finds record, each field separated by commas. The fields are ordered and formatted as described in the table in fig 3 above. The filename of the photographs is constructed from the project code (RC) followed by the object number. Different views of the same object are distinguished by an alphabetic character. All filenames conform to the ADS filename format specified in their guidelines for depositors (alpha-numeric characters, full stop and underscore are the only characters used).

Folder	Filename	Description	Format
	Rill_Cove_Finds_Report.doc	This report	Microsoft Word (DOC) and Adobe (PDF)
Finds_Record	Rill_Cove_Finds.xls	The finds record - One file	Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet (XLS)
Finds_Record	Rill_Cove_Finds.csv	The finds record - One file	Comma delimited ASCII file (CSV)
Photographs	RC0001A.jpg to RC0510B.jpg	Digital object photographs. 907 files	JPEG

*Fig 6. Table showing the contents of the DVD ROM*

## The NMR thesauri

For each data field of the finds record, the NMR thesaurus which was used is shown in fig 3 above. In a few cases there was no suitable term in any of the NMR thesauri – these are detailed below.

### Material (NMR Main building materials)

It is often not possible to distinguish between copper, brass and bronze by visual inspection – especially when the objects are much corroded. This is often the case when they have been submerged in seawater. Accordingly, where no positive identification was possible, the term *copper alloy* has been used to describe the material.

### Object name (MDA Archaeological Objects or Test Thesaurus Ship Fittings)

A number of difficulties were encountered in finding suitable terms in the relevant thesauri. These were mainly where a positive identification of the object concerned was not possible. These are detailed in the table below.

Sheet metal	A number of fragments of lead and copper sheet were recorded. The exact function of these items could not be identified. These were recorded with an object name of sheet, with no object class or type being recorded.
Handle	It is quite common to be able to identify an object as a handle without being able to say what class or type of object the handle is from. Object name recorded as handle, class and type left blank.
Unidentified	Several objects were recorded which could not be identified. These were assigned the object name <i>object</i> , but class and type were left blank.

The DVD ROM (Finds record & digital photographs)