

Halliggye Fogou Mawgan-in-Meneage Cornwall

Archaeological watching brief and survey



Historic Environment Service (Projects)

Cornwall County Council

A Report for English Heritage

**Halliggye Fogou,
Mawgan-in-Meneage
Cornwall**

Archaeological watching brief and survey

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The site works was carried out by Rhos Construction Ltd., thanks especially to Pete Robinson.

Within the Historic Environment Service, the Project Manager was Anne Preston-Jones. The watching brief was carried out by Charles Johns, who also compiled this report, and the survey by James Gossip and Imogen Wood.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of the Historic Environment Service projects team and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

Cover illustration

EDM survey of the fogou in progress (photo: HES GDP 0018)

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Abbreviations

CRO Cornwall County Record Office

EH English Heritage

HER Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record

HES Historic Environment Service, Cornwall County Council

NGR National Grid Reference

OS Ordnance Survey

PRN Primary Record Number in Cornwall HER

RIC Royal Institution of Cornwall

1 Summary

This report describes the results of archaeological recording carried out by the projects team of the Historic Environment Service, Cornwall County Council on behalf of English Nature and English Heritage during the blocking of a 19th century hole leading into the fogou at Halliggye near Trelowarren on the Lizard peninsula (NGR SW 7133 2394). The work comprised a watching brief undertaken in November 2004, augmented by a survey of the area using electronic distance measuring (EDM) equipment in January 2005.

The conservation work did not disturb or damage the existing fabric of the fogou. No finds were recovered. The EDM survey indicated that the actual position of the fogou lies to the east of that shown on the Landline mapping and will be a useful tool in future management of the site.

2 Introduction

2.1 Project background

Halliggye fogou is a Scheduled Monument, number 15414; it is an English Heritage-managed Guardianship site, with open public access, which is managed for English Heritage on a daily basis by the Trelowarren Estate.

The fogou is also of importance as the winter hibernation site of Horseshoe bats, a protected species, and for that reason the fogou is from October to March(?), to protect the bats from disturbance.

To enable the bats to be appropriately protected during hibernation, two grilles were designed and fitted by English Nature in 2000. These included a large removable grille across the main entrance and a second permanent grille to protect the 19th century access through the roof of the curving passage. Unfortunately the second grille was vandalised and removed within a very short time of initial fitting and has never been replaced. This was of concern for a number of reasons:

1. Access could be gained to the fogou at any time of the year through the 19th century hole in the roof, so that the winter protection of bats was only effective in deterring visitors who did not know the site and were not aware of the alternative and unprotected opening.
2. Access in winter through the opening in the roof of the curving passage had the effect of taking people straight into closer proximity to the parts of the fogou where the bats hibernate. It is known that the roosting bats have retreated into the further parts of the fogou over the last few years.
3. Worn paths leading to the alternative access indicated very clearly that it was used by local children at all times of the year, presumably because it was a challenging, exciting and secret way into the fogou. The result was that active erosion was occurring around the mouth of this entrance. Although this had affected only the earth fill around the fogou's stone walls it could have led eventually to damage of the fogou structure itself.
4. In creating this access to the fogou in the 19th century, stones were removed which supported one of the stone lintels of the fogou's roof. Although apparently stable, this was a potentially dangerous situation, particularly since the route was regularly used by large numbers of children.
5. A further Health and Safety issue concerning this access point was that the hole in the roof of the fogou was an irregular hole set in a hollow below the general level of the ground and with a drop of about 1.5m down to the floor of the fogou.

The opening in the roof of the fogou's curving passage has no historical significance. Its existence was threatening the important bat colony, and causing damage to the fogou. It was therefore concluded that action should be taken to prevent access to the fogou via this route. After careful consideration of a number of options, it was decided that the best method would be to re-build the opening in the roof of the fogou and then backfill the hollow into which it is set, thereby getting rid of this point of access altogether.

Accordingly a proposal for the necessary management works and archaeological recording was prepared by Ann Preston-Jones, the English Heritage Field Monument Warden (FMW) (Preston-Jones 2004).

2.2 Location and setting

Situated in the parish of Mawgan-in-Meneage on the Lizard peninsula, Halliggye fogou (NGR SW 7133 2394) is one of the finest fogous in Cornwall. It lies within the north-west part of an Iron Age/ Romano British round, the area of which lies entirely within the hamlet of Halliggye, and is part of the Trelowarren Estate.

2.3 Description

The fogou comprises a north-south 20m long stone-lined chamber with a 28m long curvilinear passage (creep) with a westward branching extension ending in a small side chamber; both are over 2.0m high in places. Another, smaller, creep 5m long leads off from the north end of the main passage.

3 Brief history

3.1 Archaeological history

Halliggye fogou is mentioned by Borlase (1769), Polwhele (1803, 129) Lysons (1814, 220), Henderson (1916, 251) and Hencken (1932, 145)). It was restored in the mid-19th century by Sir Richard Vyvyan (Vyvyan 1885).

In 1950 the fogou was described as being situated in a partly destroyed round, its original entrances were blocked (Clarke 1960, 28).

The fogou shown on the 1880, 1907 and 1963 OS maps. It is listed as extant in the parochial checklist for Mawgan-in-Meneage (Dowson 1966, 78).

Excavations by Bill Startin for the Department of the Environment in 1980 and 1981 in advance of maintenance repairs showed that modifications had been made on several occasions. Although no date could be given for when the fogou was first built, nor its purpose discovered, evidence showed it to still be undergoing modification in the later Iron Age and that it was probably not blocked before the Roman period. The fogou is sited within a circular earthwork and the excavation produced Iron Age, Roman and post-Roman pottery (Startin forthcoming).

The fogou has been described most recently by Ian Cook (1993, 53-61).

The fogou was originally scheduled (no 387) was in November 1979 and the scheduling was revised in January 1996 to include the remains of the associated round. The scheduled monument number is 15414.

3.2 The 19th century hole

The main point of access to the fogou is now through a re-creation of the original entrance on the south. A second original opening, via the northern creep, and out through the rampart of the round, is now blocked. A further small opening through the roof near the centre of the curved passage was created in the 19th century, and was for a long time the main point of access: it is this which is the subject of this report.

William Borlase failed to find the fogou when he visited the area in July 1751 and the site was first recorded by the Rev^d Polwhele who visited the fogou in 1803. He probably entered via this hole and noted that the fogou 'lies nearly concealed from observation, under the turf and soil, and almost eludes discovery till we stumble on the mouth of it. The mouth opens very near the hedge of what my guide called a meadow: and the meadow and two little fields are elevated above the level of the field...Sliding down the aperture and entering the cave to the south-west, on our hands and knees' (Polwhele 1803).

Cooke notes that the hole was caused by part of the walling having fallen into the long curved passage and was then the only way in and presumably the feature that led to the discovery of the site (Cooke 1993, 54), so it might be possible to date the formation of the hole to the first two or three years of the 19th century.

Cooke notes that a publicity leaflet for Trelowarren's 'Woodland Walk' gives (gave?) a lurid idea of the fogou as an underground retreat citing the 19th century hole as the original entrance where 'if an attacker came in feet first they would be cut off and a similar fate awaited his head if he attempted entrance that way' (in Cooke 1993, 61). It is unclear where this idea was derived from; in the 1885 report by Sir Richard Vyvyan, with an introduction by the Rev^d Jago and postscript by JT Blight, the writers entertained no such illusions and all noted that the hole was modern:

'..but the ditch having long ago been filled up the old entrance is deeply buried, and a less painful way of access has been found. This is near the junction of hedges (or what appear to be such) between the two enclosures. In the corner of the lower one, by the high embankment, is now a pit for the most part overgrown with ferns and other wild plants. It is partially faced in side with modern stonework and contains steps of similar character'.

'These lead down to a small irregular opening – the present mouth of the fogou, broken in through its side'.

'Having first descended by way of the steps to this black hole, I thrust myself in – legs first, backward and downward – and was soon standing on a large pile of loose debris in a long, narrow, stone corridor, extending in a curve to my right and left...' (Jago 1885, 256).

'A – Place where part of one of the side walls fell in:- the present entrance' (Vyvyan 1885, 256) – referring to his plan of the fogou (Fig 3).

'The present entrance is A on the accompanying plan [Fig 4] - however this is not the original one, but simply a hole pierced in the side in modern times' (Blight 1885, 260).

Nevertheless, the hole was an aspect of 19th century tours of Trelowarren's park, and as Rev^d Jago noted the outside approach to the hole was formalised by stonework facing and steps leading down. There was a walk from the mansion which went first to the Mount to the west of the fogou. Having climbed this, visitors would have a marvellous view of the estate, and down to Halliggye. From the Mount, they proceeded to Halliggye, to see the fogou. And from there, they went to Venton Gannell, where some 'pleasant peasants' would be on display at their pretty thatched cottages. Features of interest and landscape features on the estate are marked by plantings of Holm oaks, for instance Gear and Caervallack. At Halliggye, the area above the 19th century entrance (but neither of the other two entrances) is planted with Ilex – thus marking the importance of this entrance at the time (Sir Ferrers Vyvyan pers comm to Ann Preston-Jones).

3.3 World War Two

During World War II the fogou was used as an ammunition store by the Manaccan Auxiliary Unit in case of invasion (Defence of Britain Project ref AH506)..

4 Objectives

4.1 Overall objectives

- To protect the hibernating bats during the winter
- To prevent further erosion to the fogou

- To restore what is in effect 19th century damage to the fogou at this point
- To improve the structural condition of the fogou by providing support for an apparently unsupported lintel.

4.2 Archaeological objectives

- To ensure that there was no damage to the fogou;
- To enable any problems arising in the course of the work to be addressed from an archaeological point of view;
- To record any features of significance that might be revealed by the work.

5 Methodology

5.1 Guidelines for the management work

- The work to take place outside the bat hibernation season;
- Rebuild the hole in the roof of the fogou in such a way that the existing fabric is undisturbed;
- Rebuild the hole with stone that is a reasonable match for the existing stonework of the fogou;
- The rebuild to be of dry stone construction: no mortar of any kind to be used;
- Any stone used in rebuilding the hole should be obtained from outside the area of the Scheduled Monument;
- Place a layer of geotextile on top of the restored stonework, before backfilling the hollow, in order to distinguish archaeological layers from the modern fill;
- Backfill with earth obtained from outside the Scheduled area;
- Re-profile the area after backfilling so that it matches the level of the ground all around.

5.2 Watching brief

An archaeologist monitored the blocking of the hole and made a photographic record of the process.

5.3 Survey

It proved unfeasible to carry out the sketch survey of the fogou and 19th century hole based on the OS Landline mapping as specified in the project proposal because field boundaries some 3m wide are shown as single lines on the Landline (Fig 7). After discussion with the FMW it was decided to undertake a total station (EDM) survey of the fogou and environs. Survey data from the instrument was drawn up using AutoCAD software and overlaid onto the Landline mapping and the 1982 survey of the fogou by Startin (Fig 8).

The survey shows:

- The fogou;
- the position of the 19th century hole;

- its relationship to adjacent boundaries;
- adjacent boundaries;
- trees.

5.3.1 Archiving

Site plans, section drawings, photographs and any other records were completed and indexed, according to standard HES procedures.

5.3.2 Report

The end product of the project, in addition to the restored 19th century access to the fogou, is this archive report describing the management work undertaken and presenting the results of the archaeological recording.

6 Description of the management work

The hole in the fogou wall was blocked using stonework that would blend with the existing walls of the fogou. The hole was backfilled with earth brought by wheel barrow from outside the scheduled area (Figs 9-13).

7 Results of the archaeological recording

The management work took place on a grey, overcast and drizzly Monday in November. The work did not disturb or damage the existing fabric of the fogou. No finds were recovered.

8 Conclusion and recommendations

- It is gratifying that the fogou has been restored to its original Iron Age state, a sentiment that is doubtless shared by the roosting bats.
- The EDM survey will be a useful tool for future management of the site.
- The condition of the fogou and blocking should be periodically monitored.

9 References

9.1 Primary sources

Ordnance Survey, c1880. *25 Inch Map* First Edition (licenced digital copy at HES)

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- Vyvyan, RR, 1885. Account of the Halligey Cave, Trelowarren. *JRIC* **8, 3**, 256-9

10 Project archive

The HES project number is **200400619**

The project's documentary, photographic and drawn archive is housed at the offices of the Historic Environment Service, Cornwall County Council, Kennall Building, Old County Hall, Station Road, Truro, TR1 3AY. The contents of this archive are as listed below:

1. A project file containing site records and notes, project correspondence and administration and copies of documentary/cartographic source material (file no 200400619).
2. Electronic drawings stored in the directory `..\CAD ARCHIVE\HALLIGYE FOGOU 200400619`
3. Colour slides archived under the following index numbers: GCS 34692-34698
4. Digital photographs stored in the directory `..\Images\SitesE-H\Halliggye 200400619`
5. This report held in digital form as: `G:\CAU\HE PROJECTS\SITES\SITES H\HALLIGYE FOGOU 200400619\HALLIGGYE WATCHING BRIEF REPORT.DOC`

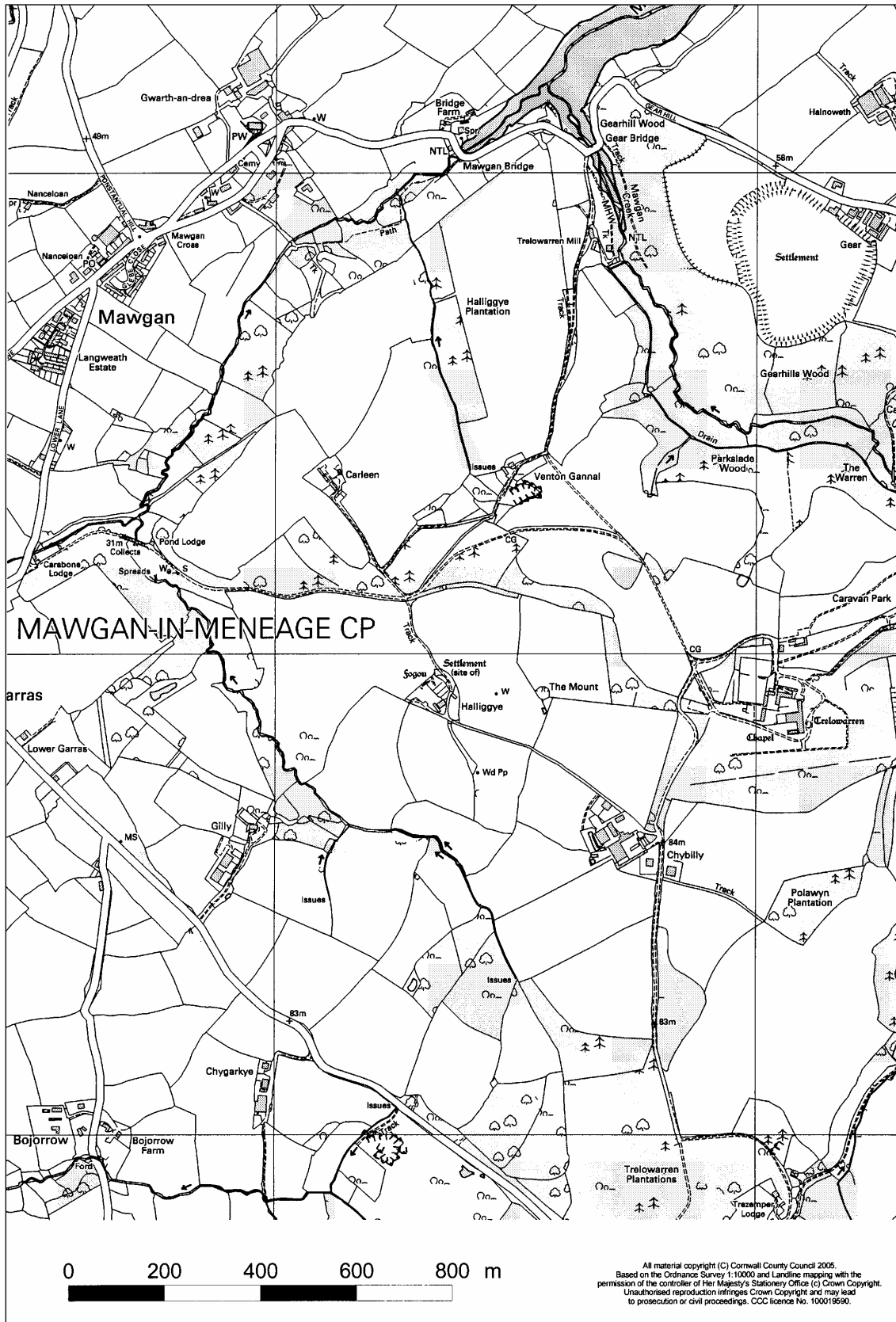


Fig 1 Location map

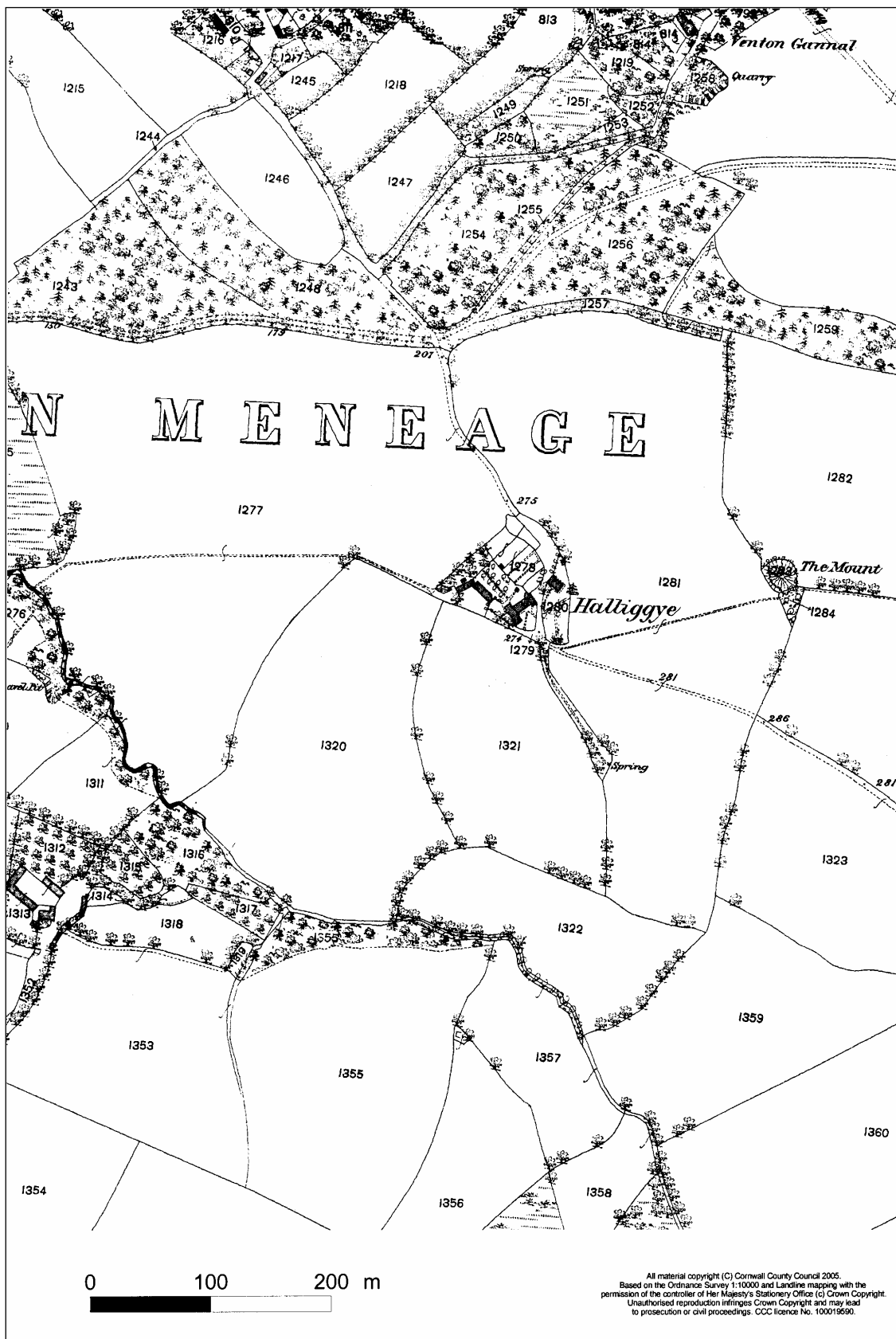


Fig 2 First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map, 1880

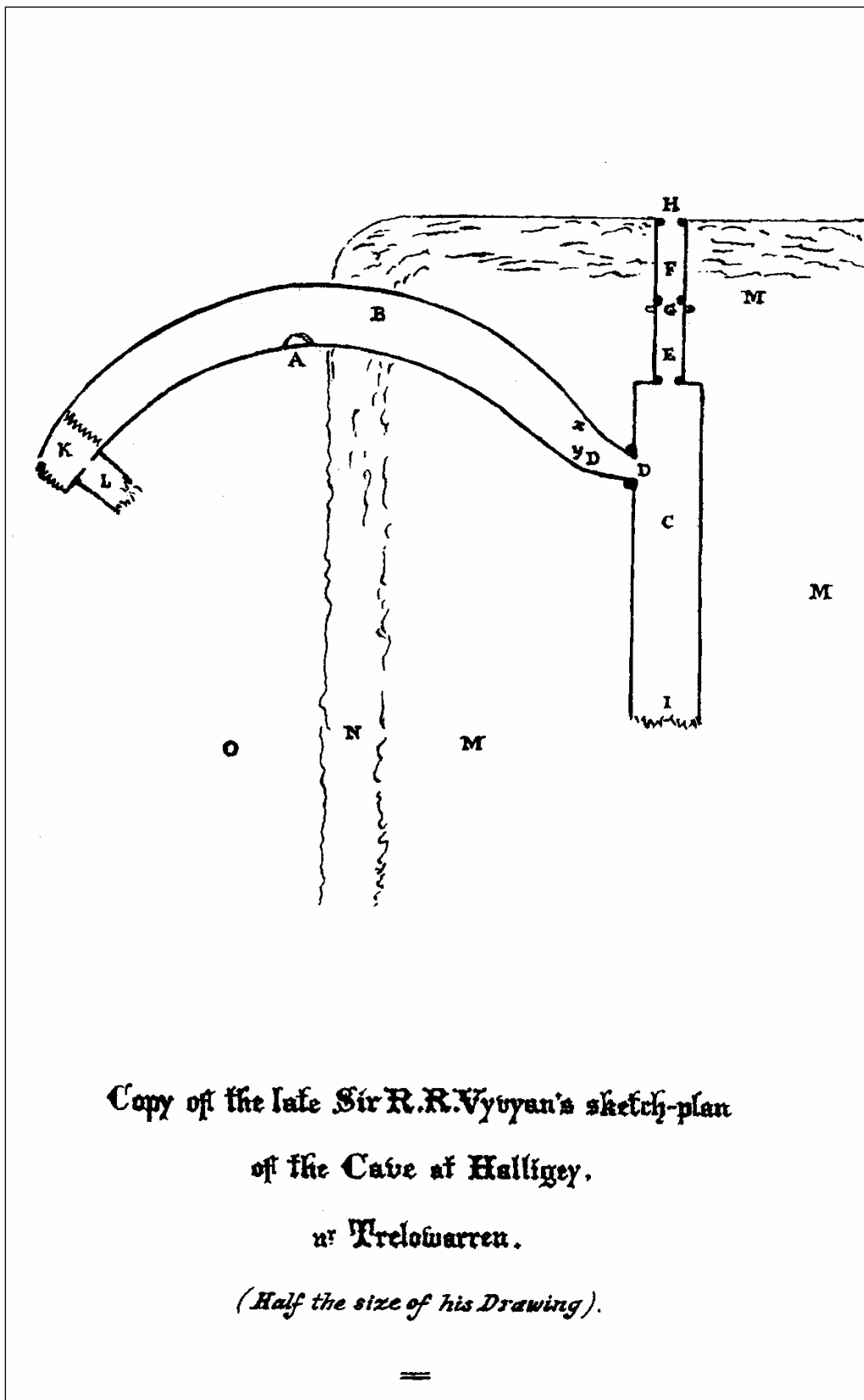


Fig 3 Revd Iago's copy of Sir Richard Rawlinson Vybyan's plan, c1885

PLAN AND SECTIONS
OF THE
FOGOU,
AT HALLIGEY,
TRELWARREN.

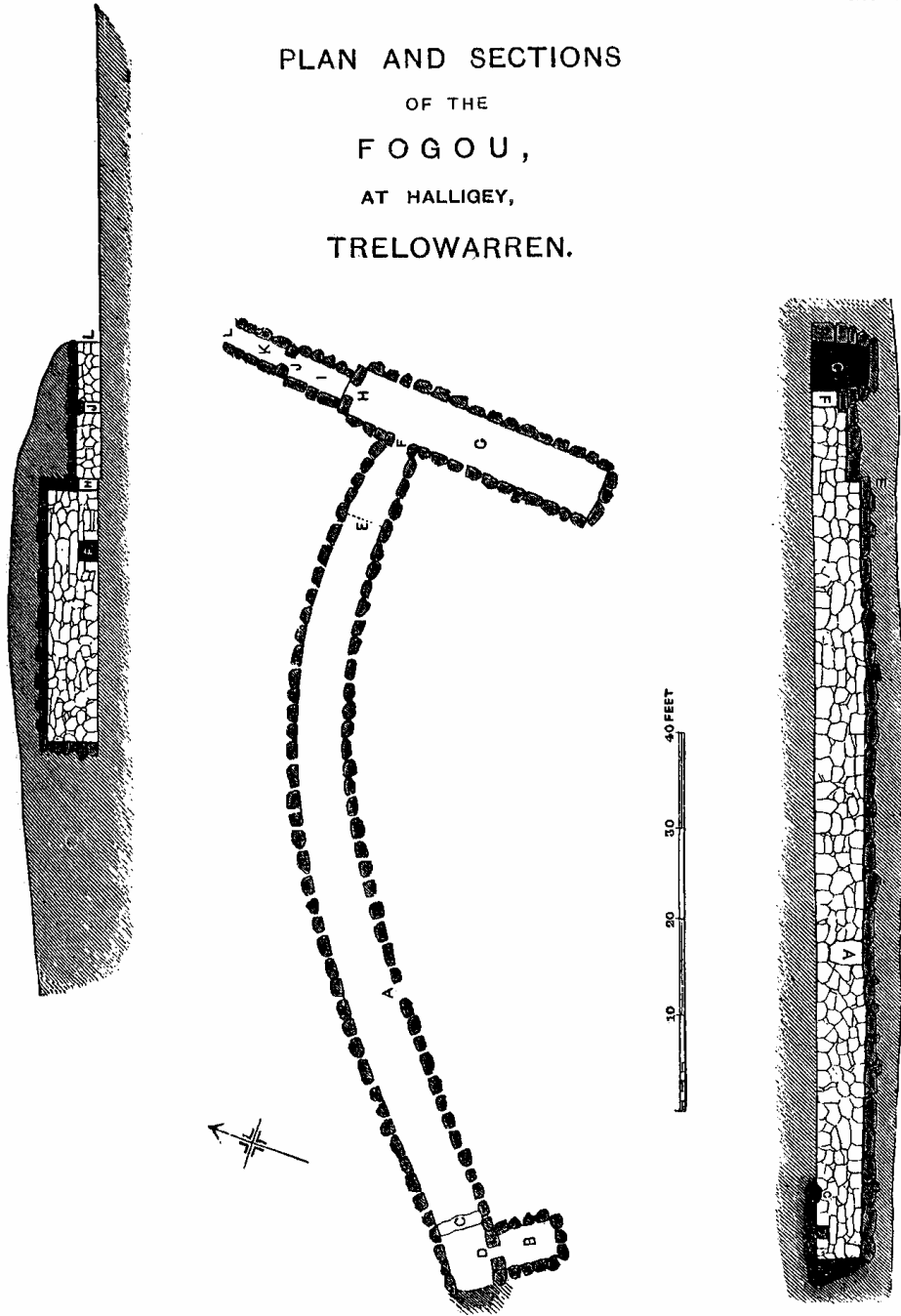


Fig 4 Plan and elevations by JT Blight, c1885

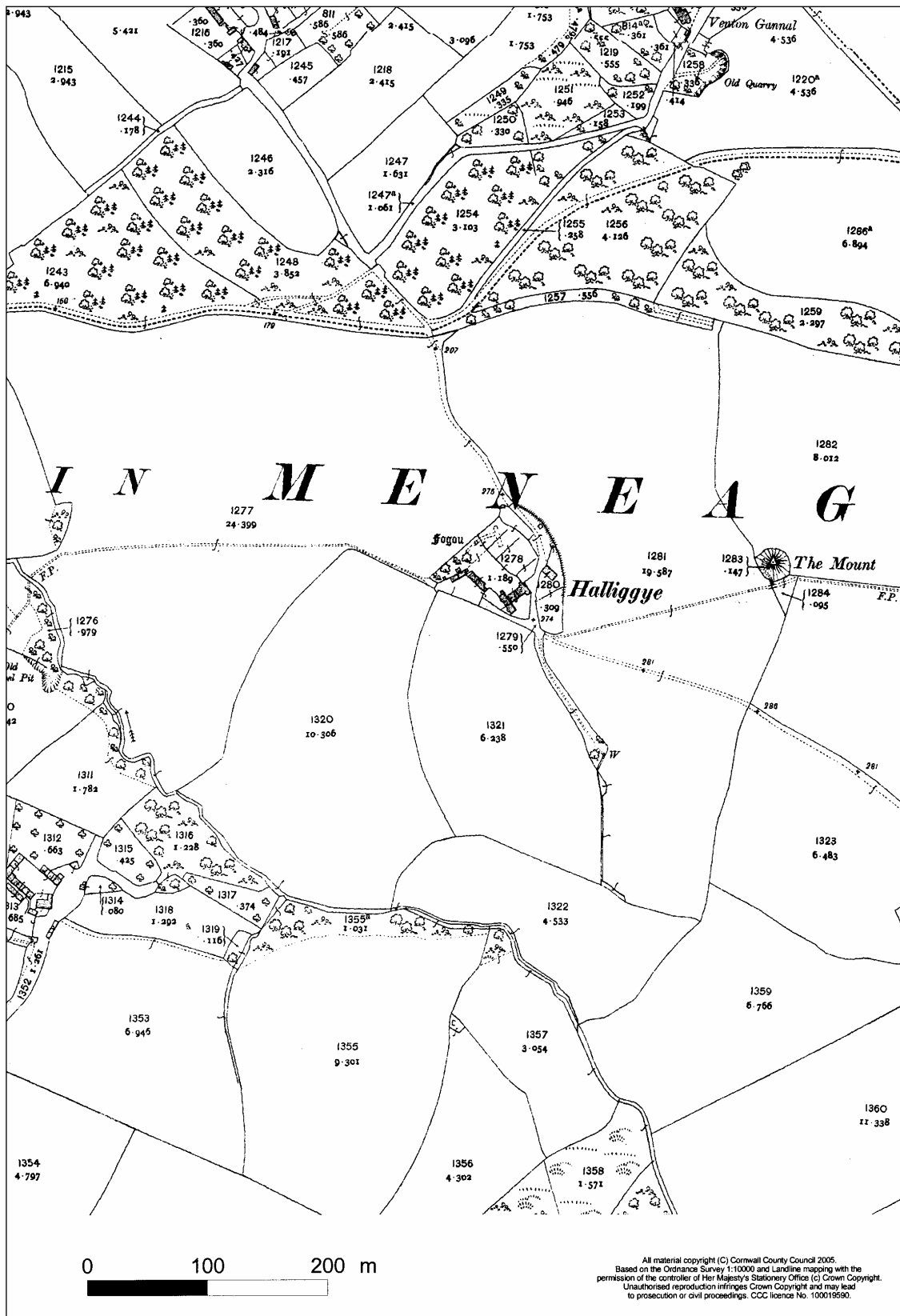
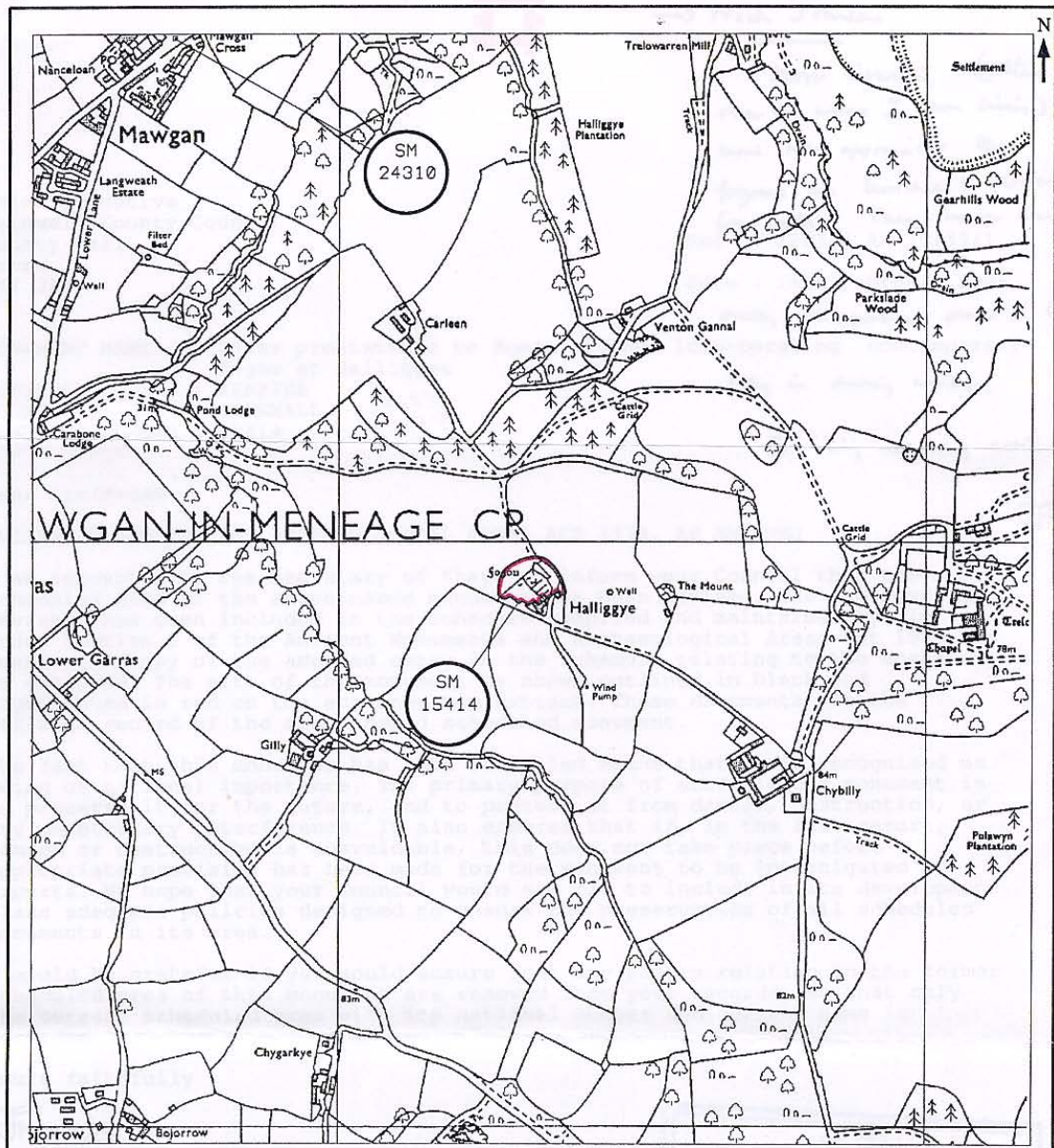


Fig 5 Second Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map, 1907



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For identification purposes only

Site Name: Later prehistoric to Roman round incorporating contemporary fogou at Halliggye

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| County: Cornwall | District: Kerrier | Parish: Mawgan-in-Meneage |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|

Notes:
For exclusions - see text record
Part Guardianship

| | |
|---|---|
| Key: Monument No. Location/extent of site | Scale: 1:10000 Derived from: 1:10000 Centred on NGR: SW71332392 Extract from OS sheet: SW72SW |
| | Date: 16.10.95 Monument No.: SM15414 |

English Heritage

Fortress House 23 Savile Row London W1X 1AB Telephone 071-973 3000 Fax 071-973 3001

Fig 6 The scheduled area

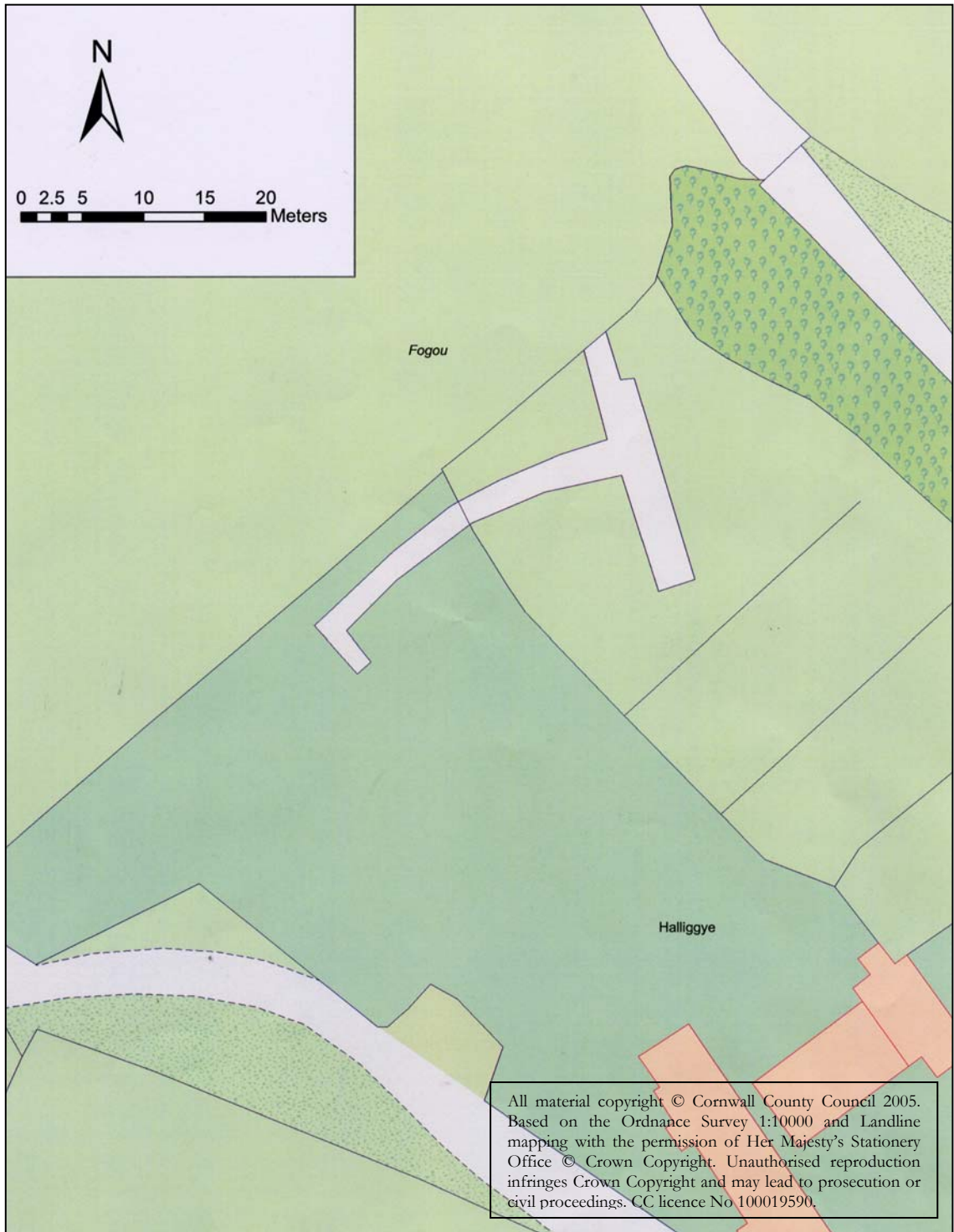


Fig 7 OS Landline mapping of the site

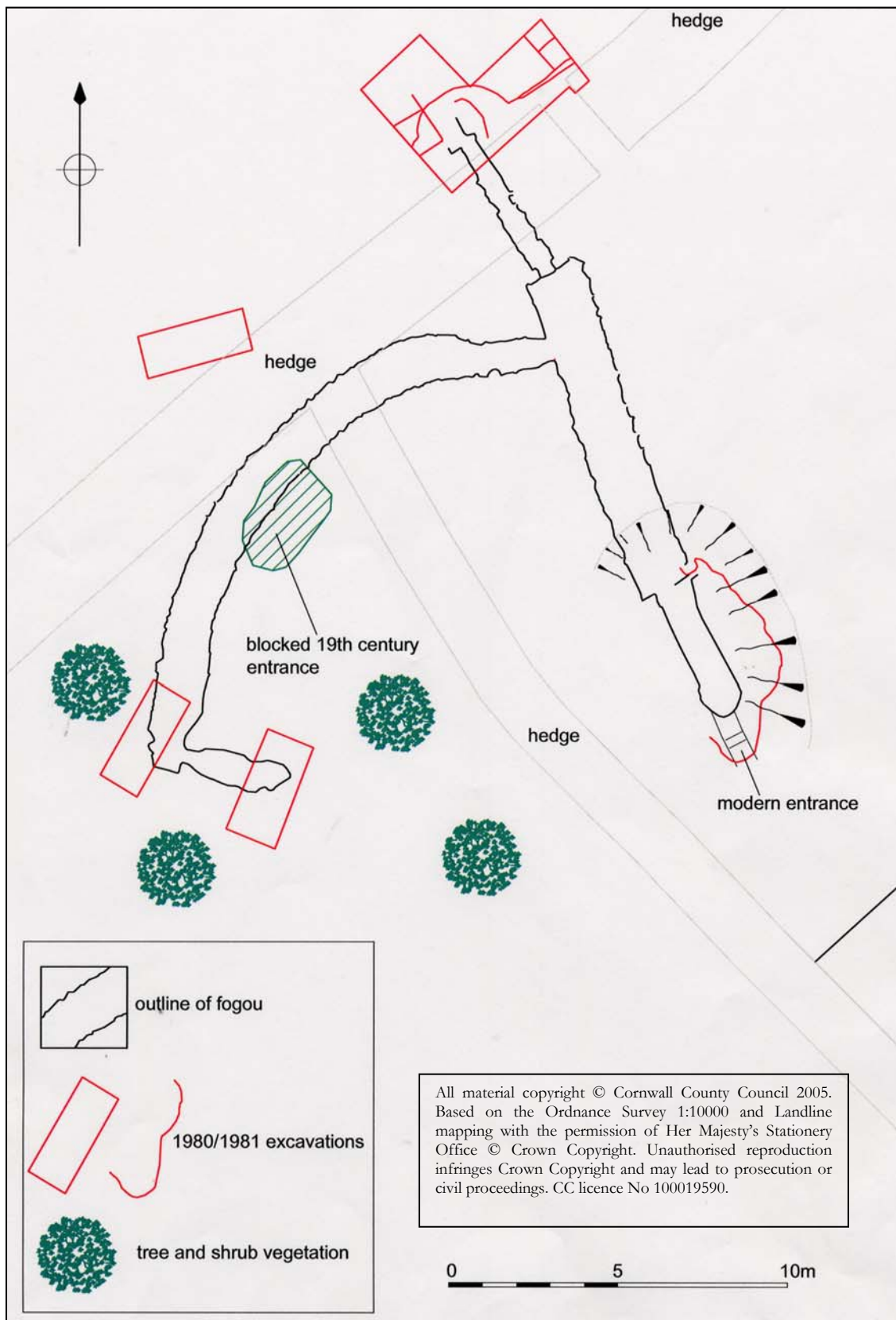


Fig 8 HES EDM survey 2005 overlaid onto Ordnance Survey digital mapping (2003) and Bill Startin's 1982 survey of the fogou



Fig 9 The 19th century hole in September 2004 (photo HES GDP/ antiquarian hole Sept 04)



Fig 10 The hole just before blocking, November 2004 (photo: HES GCS 34692)



Fig 11 Blocking in progress (photo HES GCS 34698)



Fig 12 Blocking in progress (photo HES GCS 34696)



Fig 13 The stone blocking from inside the creep (photo HES GDP /0002)



Fig 14 The site of the 19th century hole, January 2005 (photo HES GDP /00012)