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Tintagel Castle and Island, Cornwall: Archaeological Survey Enhancement

Mark Bowden and Elaine Jamieson

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TINTAGEL CASTLE AND ISLAND CORNWALL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY ENHANCEMENT

Mark Bowden and Elaine Jamieson

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SUMMARY
The Island at Tintagel was surveyed in 1984 by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England but for various reasons the written account to accompany the plan was not completed. This report is the result of a project undertaken in 2015 to enhance the survey and provide that account and to update both in the light of research undertaken in the intervening three decades. The report describes approximately 200 features of archaeological interest and throws new light upon many of them, especially those relating to the post-Roman, 13th century and post-medieval phases of the site.

CONTRIBUTORS
Fieldwork was undertaken by the authors. The drawings were prepared for publication by the authors with the assistance of Philip Sinton. Photographs are by the authors, except for the front cover image which is by Damian Grady. Pete Herring provided useful discussion at various points during the project, especially regarding his parallel work on The Haven and the tracks to south and east of the castle, which is the subject of a separate report (Herring 2016). We also wish to pay tribute to our former colleagues Martin Fletcher and the late Norman Quinnell, whose survey undertaken with manual theodolite and tapes is so accurate and thorough.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Historic England is grateful to Susan Greaney of English Heritage for commissioning this work and assisting with its successful completion both on site and behind the scenes; we are particularly grateful to her for pointing us in the direction of Tristan and Yseult and for useful discussions on that topic. Many thanks also to Matt Ward and his colleagues, the custodians of Tintagel on behalf of English Heritage, for their professional helpfulness and friendly hospitality.

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DATE OF SURVEY
Fieldwork was undertaken between 10th-13th February and on 26th-27th March 2015.

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This Research Report is dedicated to the late
Professor Charles Thomas
with gratitude

Frontispiece: Tintagel Island, the main terrace of Site C from Site G to the south

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Cover photo: Tintagel Island from the north-north-west, 10th February 2010 ©Historic England 26570-024

INTRODUCTION

Tintagel is a multi-period site occupying a headland, part of which is now effectively an island, on the north Cornish coast (Fig 1). It is centred at SX 049 891 in the modern parish of Tintagel. The site is surrounded on the seaward side by cliffs and rises to a height of approximately 85m above sea level. To the north-east and sheltered by the Island and the adjacent headland of Barras Nose is the Haven, a small but secure natural harbour (*see* Herring 2016). The village of Tintagel, formerly Trevenna, stretches south-eastwards from the site of the Borough Mill and the 19th-century King Arcthur's Castle Hotel. In the medieval period this was all within the manor of Bossiney, which has its own Haven and a small motte-and-bailey castle.

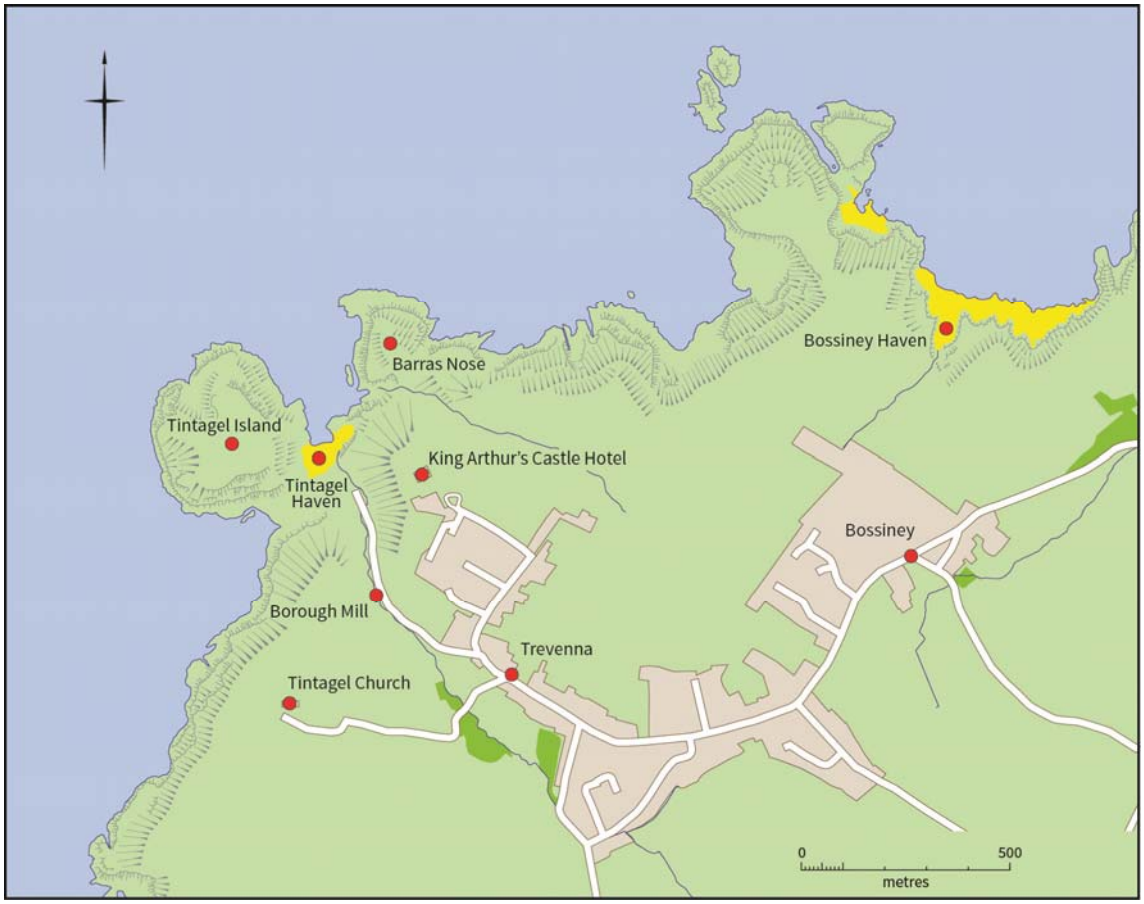

Fig 1: location

In 1984, following a serious fire the previous year that had destroyed the vegetation over a large part of the western side of Tintagel Island and exposed previously unknown archaeological features, the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) undertook a measured analytical survey of the earthworks and

masonry structures of the site. The plan was published with a brief note (Thomas and Fowler 1985) but no full report seems to have been prepared. The reason for this may be discerned between the lines of Thomas and Fowler's description of the work (1985, 16): they state that initial survey was undertaken by Norman Quinnell and Martin Fletcher of the RCHME Exeter office – this covered the burnt area and established control for survey of the rest of the Island and Upper and Lower Wards at a scale of 1:500; according to their account the survey was completed by RCHME in March 1985 under the supervision of Cyril Wardale and Desmond Bonney; the plan was then 'annotated archaeologically by them and PJF[owler] on 2 April when more detail was added, especially in the burnt area following recent rain' (ibid). Quinnell and Fletcher had been taken off their main task of investigating Bodmin Moor to undertake the Tintagel work; these two 'indians' had then been overwhelmed by 'chiefs' (Wardale and Bonney were heads of the Exeter and Salisbury offices and Fowler was Secretary of the Commission) – the task of writing up the work presumably fell somewhere between all these individuals. Martin Fletcher (pers comm) confirms that he and Norman Quinnell completed the full survey in 1984 using a manual theodolite and tape measures. Peter Fowler then informed them that he and Charles Thomas would take over the project on completion of the survey; there was according to Fletcher no further measured survey in 1985. Unfortunately the archaeological annotation mentioned by Thomas and Fowler, if it existed, seems to have been lost. The nature of the extra detail recorded on 2nd April 1985 is uncertain; it does not seem to exist in the archive and is not included on the archive plan (reproduced here, much reduced, as Fig 2). Martin Fletcher recalls that 'The working conditions on much of the site were awful because of the thick layer of ash and the friable nature of the burnt peat sub-surface. Much damage was caused by foot fall on it' (pers comm).

Several contour surveys of the Island were undertaken by commercial companies on behalf of the RCHME and English Heritage (EH) in the late 1980s and in 1990.
In 2014 a programme of enhancement to visitor facilities and information at Tintagel made it necessary to check the 1984 survey. After a site visit in August 2014 by Pete Herring, Susan Greaney and Mark Bowden, it was decided to annotate and add to the existing survey and to produce, so far as possible, the report that the RCHME Investigators of 1984-5 would have written, had they been given the time and resources. This was named the Tintagel Survey Enhancement Project and was carried out by the authors of this report. In the event it did not prove possible to confine the report to what was known in 1985, as the considerable discoveries of the intervening

three decades had to be taken into account. The 1984 survey proved to be, as expected, metrically accurate and substantially complete; just two buildings and a few other minor features on the Island were added, including features not present in 1984 (a fire fighting equipment store, path erosion). Features outside the scope of the 1984-5 work (to the south of the Lower Ward and in the Haven) were also surveyed; the tracks and the Haven are the subject of a separate report (Herring 2016). Though some of the features supplied in 1984 are no longer visible they have not been deleted, as it is assumed that they are still present under renewed turf growth (or, even if destroyed by erosion, that they were genuine features which add to the story of the site). The enhanced survey is presented here as Fig 3 and in sections at larger scale in Figs 30-34.

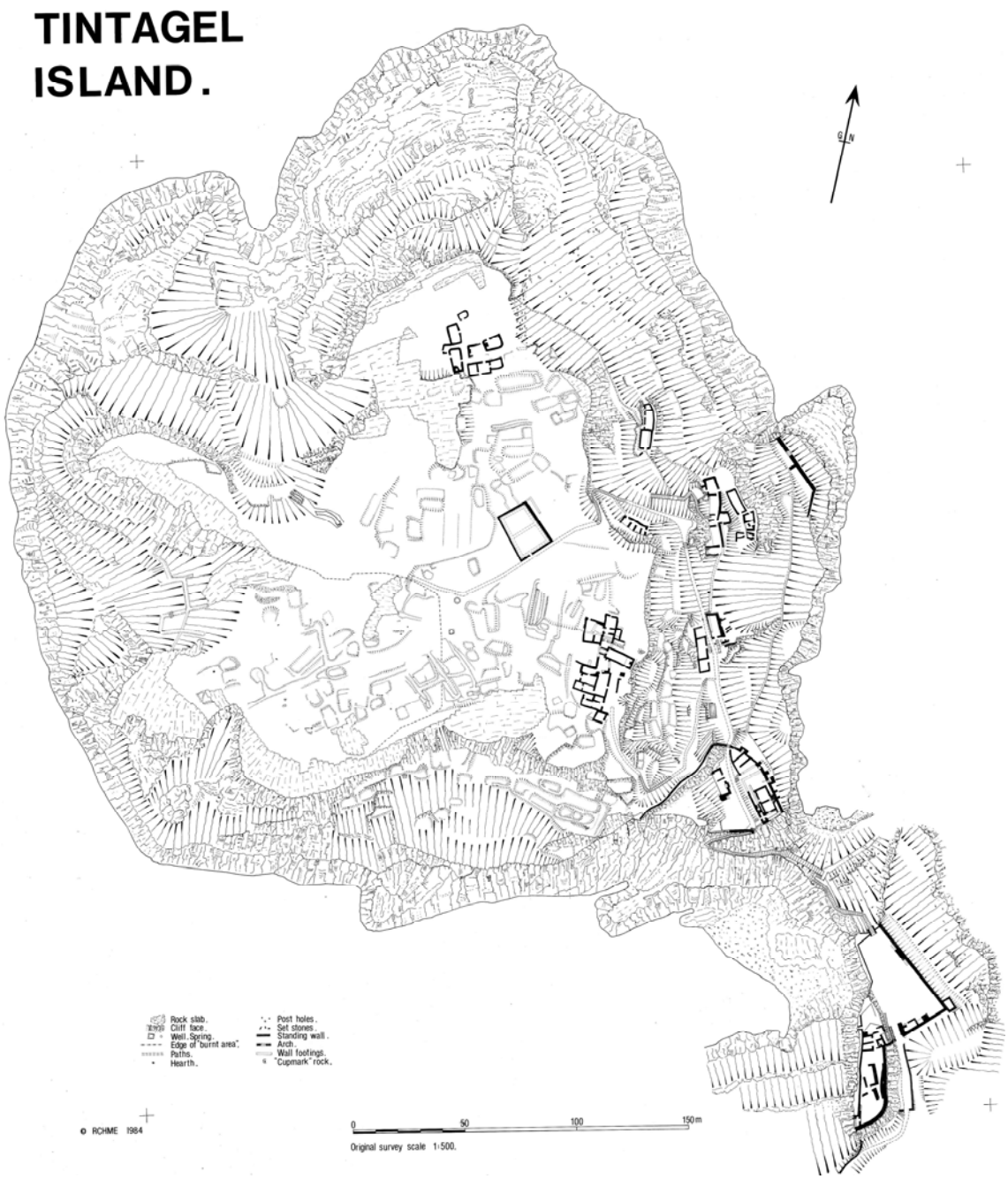

*Fig 2: 1984 RCHME drawing reduced from survey scale of 1:500; in the original drawing natural slopes were shown in black and archaeological features in red (*see *Thomas and Fowler 1985* and *Thomas 1993, colour plate 4) ©Crown copyrightNMR*

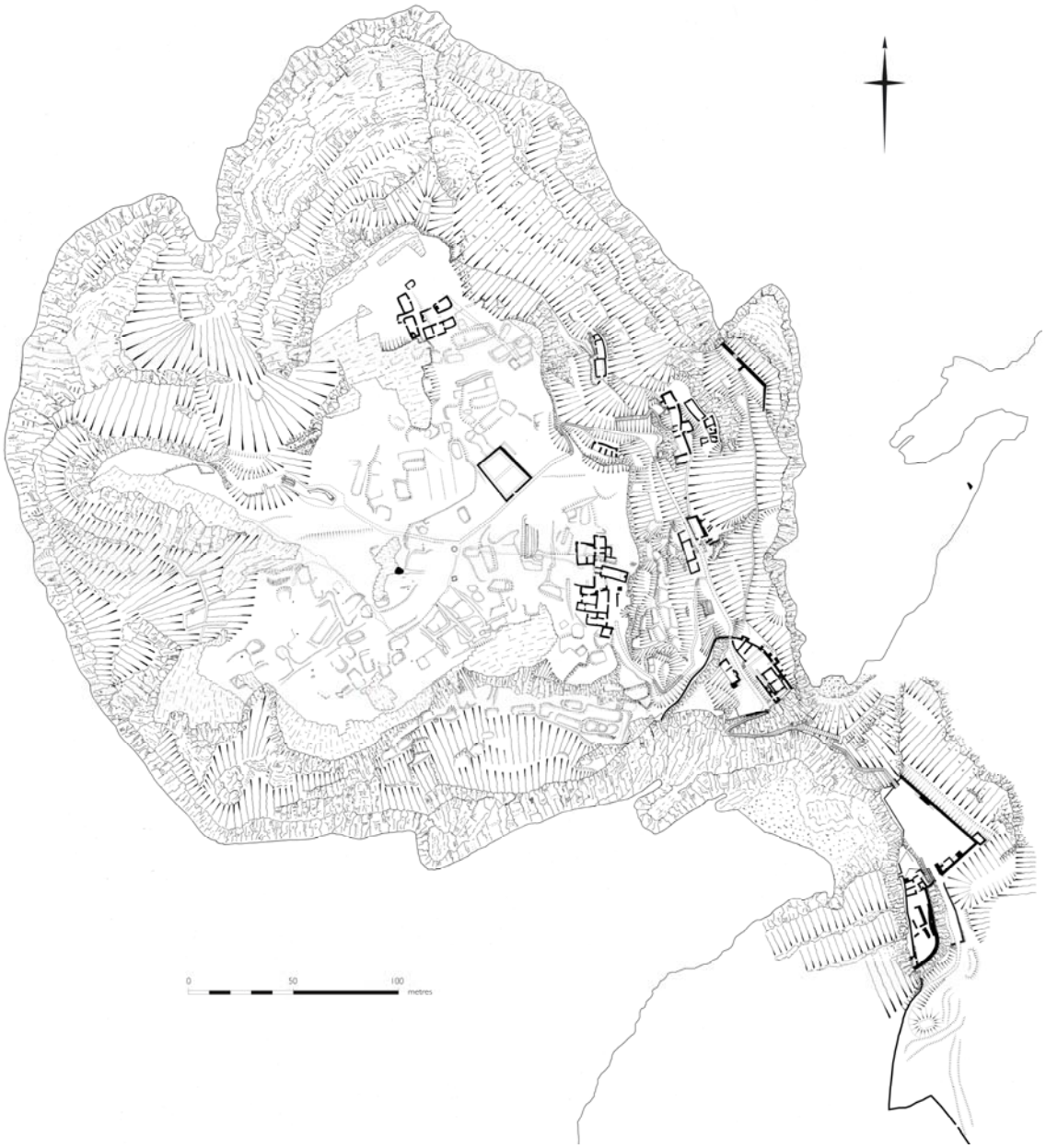

Fig 3: 2015 enhanced survey plan reduced from original at 1:500; see Figs 30-34 for details
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PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The history of archaeological and historical research at Tintagel has been rehearsed many times (e.g. Thomas 1993) and will not be repeated in detail here. After some minor work on the medieval chapel in the 19th century, major excavations were carried out by the Ministry of Works in the 1930s and 1950s under the supervision of CA Ralegh Radford. Charles Thomas referred to his 'affection and respect' for Radford and noted that it 'gives me no pleasure to disagree with his ideas and conclusions' (1993, 8). Radford's interpretation of the site – as an early monastery – in the 1930s was bold and accorded with the evidence then available; he was doing what archaeologists should do – making a credible narrative out of meagre information. The poor quality of the excavations carried out under Radford's direction can be seen as an example of the generally very low standard of archaeological excavation that obtained in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s; Radford tended to refer to these operations as 'clearance'. The work also involved reconstruction; the consolidated remains now visible were built out of the rubble walls discovered and are not original. The survey drawings made by JA Wright at the time of Radford's operations are an important record (Barrowman *et al* 2007, 7-16) but little other information is available. What is unforgivable in any excavating archaeologist is failure to publish; even in this regard Radford has some excuse, as a large part of his archive was destroyed in the Blitz; however, it would have been of great benefit if he had at least followed his initial interim report (1935) with further interims until 1939 and again after 1956; the papers published in 1942 and 1962 do not constitute interim excavation reports. Unfortunately Radford clung to his monastic narrative for the post-Roman era of the site long after new evidence had made it clear that this interpretation was incorrect.

The site was surveyed at basic scale (1:2500) for the Ordnance Survey in 1976-7 (coincidentally by Norman Quinnell and Martin Fletcher, before their transfer from OS Archaeology Division to the RCHME); this survey added several previously unknown building foundations, prompting further study by Charles Thomas and Peter Fowler in 1980-1, which in turn led to a recommendation for complete analytical survey (1985, 16); this was carried out in 1984 as described above. In the 1970s, '80s and '90s and into the early 2000s various works on the site required archaeological investigations, mainly undertaken by the Cornwall Archaeological Unit (e.g. Reynolds 2006; Thorpe 2007). Meanwhile, re-appraisal of various aspects of the site, and finds recovered from it, was ongoing (e.g. Thomas and Thorpe 1988). Between 1990 and 1999 another

major programme of research excavation was undertaken on behalf of EH, and this included an important re-appraisal of Radford's work (Barrowman *et al* 2007; Harry and Morris 1997). In 2003 two small trenches were excavated at the behest of a television company (Thorpe 2004).

This report was substantially completed before the excavations undertaken by the Cornwall Archaeological Unit on behalf of English Heritage in the summer of 2016.

EARTHWORK DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION

Features relating to Radford's Sites A to H are dealt with first. Then unexcavated earthworks and structures are listed in order, starting on the flanks of the Island and then the plateau, with some additional features at the end. It should be noted that though the top of the Island is described here as a plateau for convenience, it is in fact an undulating area with high points to the north-west and south, and a natural hollow running across the centre.

Site A and the Chapel

This site was excavated by Radford and was the best recorded and most discussed of all the excavated areas on site until the 1990s excavations brought Site C to the forefront. The buildings of Site A were restored, with a maximum wall height now of 0.8m. Three trenches extended north-eastwards from the main excavated area; of these, the south-western extremity of trench A/1 is perhaps visible as a slight depression (not surveyed).

001 'Arthur's Bed' – a probable medieval grave; now filled in and marked by two slate slabs, one incised with a small cross (Fig 4).

Fig 4: 'Arthur's Bed'

002 Hollow, up to 1.4m deep; this is either a natural feature or a quarry (or possibly disturbance from the 1930s excavations of Site A).

003 Bank, 0.3m high, protruding from the corner of the southernmost excavated room of Site A, turns a sharp angle to the north; this probably represents another, unexcavated, cell.

004 The gap in the reconstructed wall between rooms 8 and 10 of Site A has stone running across under the turf; the Wright archive drawing suggests that there was no door here (Barrowman *et al* 2007, 13-14).

The Chapel overlies the Site A buildings at a slight angle to their general alignment. Its walls survive to a considerable height; some door and window openings are discernible, as is the division between chancel and nave; there is a substantial west porch. First cleared in the 19th century, the Chapel was further explored in the 20th century and a two-phase dating suggested (Thomas 1993, 110-14), though the dating evidence is not conclusive (*see* Discussion, below). An altar slab, found apparently in one of the Site D buildings (possibly 028) in the 19th century (ibid, 51-2), has been placed on the altar.

Site B

Site B was cleared by Radford's workmen between 1933 and 1938.

005 Relatively flat area at the north-eastern extremity of Site B; there is no reason why there should not be other buildings or structures here; the south end of this platform is marked by a (modern) scarp up to 0.3m high.

006 A well-marked path leading to

007 a spring, apparently natural, though shown apparently with stone revetment on a Radford plan (1962, fig 3) and described as 'surrounded by placed stones' (Thomas 1993, 45).

008 A less well-marked path, indicated on plan by a break of slope, leads from the spring 007 to the lower terrace of Site C.

009 A rectangular structure with floor sloping steeply from the south to the north-east corner; walls standing to a maximum of 1.1m high. A small attached structure to the west partly incorporating a natural outcrop has walls standing 0.3m high. There is a suggestion of a second structure to the west, accessed from the exterior and also incorporating natural outcrop in its construction. A stump of walling 0.7m square has been added to the survey. This building is shown on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV) but its north and east walls are shown there by double broken lines only.

010 A structure with floor sloping steeply to the north, the west wall revetted into the slope and standing 1m high (Fig 5). Edge-set stones in the north-west corner have been added to plan. The east wall of this building is shown on the interim report plan

(Radford 1935, pl LV). Radford's 1962 version of the plan (fig 3) shows another cell projecting from the west side of this room, below the modern steps.

(009 and 010 are the only structures excavated and restored by Radford that have sloping floors; all the others are relatively level.)

011 Structure with its west wall revetted into the slope (or built hard against natural); the west wall probably runs behind the stone steps (an observation possibly confirmed by Radford's 1962 version of the plan (fig 3)). The structure has three stone sub-divisions but may originally have been L-shaped. The sub-division walls range from 0.3 to 0.5m in height. There is a level interior and the east wall has an external ledge 0.5m high and 0.7m deep. Part of the east wall of this building is shown on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV).

Fig 5: interior of 010 showing the steep slope to the north

012 A small structure with walls standing up to 0.9m high and built into natural outcrop; there is an internal ledge 0.3m high; walling to the east is grass-covered and 0.2m high (no visible stonework). A drawing (MP/TIN 0032) in the Radford archive includes an elevation showing three 'beam holes' in the rock face at the west end of this building (Figs 6 and 7); however, these are natural fissures in the rock, apparently chosen out of many potential candidates because they form a shallow 'gable' or ridge shape; the 'slot' that would form the ridge would be over 2m further west from the apparent end of the building because there is a substantial ledge in the natural rock face.

Figs 6 and 7: archive drawing (MP/TIN 0032) of the elevation of the west end of building 012 and view of the same elevation in 2015

013 Sub-rectangular structure with level interior and walling up to 0.6m high. This building is shown complete on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV), indicating that it was one of the first excavated on Site B.

014 A two-cell structure with the walls of the south cell misaligned and a central block of walling at an oblique angle and standing 0.3m high. The west wall is represented by a scarp 0.4m high. Stonework to the east possibly represents the alignment of an earlier wall. Evidence suggests multiple phases of construction. This building is shown complete on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV), indicating that it was one of the first excavated on Site B.

015 Small single-cell structure terraced into slope; its irregular walls stand to a maximum of 0.7m high; there is a possible niche (?) in the south-west corner. This building is shown complete on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV), indicating that it was one of the first excavated on Site B.

016 A small single-cell structure terraced into the slope; irregular walls standing to a maximum of 0.6m high; it has a slightly sloping interior.

Site C

This site (Frontispiece) was extensively excavated by Radford in the 1930s and again by Glasgow University in the 1990s (Barrowman *et al* 2007; Harry and Morris 1997).

017 Area excavated in the 1990s (Trenches C17, C15, C7); the west and south sides of the trenches are clearly visible as steps (Fig 8). These trenches re-excavated parts of Radford's trenches in this area but the northern extremity of Radford's trench closest to 024 seems to be visible as a very slight depression (not surveyed).

018 Level platform partly trenched by Radford and excavated in the 1990s; the scar of one of Radford's trenches apparently extending beyond the 1990s trench C18 is visible (not surveyed).

019 Level platform; a probable building stance.

020 Level platform or ledge below a rock outcrop just north of the excavated buildings of Site C; this is the location of 1990s trench C05.

Fig 8: Site C, area 017 looking north from the interior of 024; the edge of Trenches C17, C15, C7 cut in the 1990s can be seen running along the slope to the right and then down to the far ranging rod

021 Level platform forming the northern part of the upper terrace of Site C; this was the location of trenches C06, C07 and C19 cut in the 1990s but the outlines of the individual trenches cannot be distinguished.

022 Terraced platform on the lower terrace of Site C, 0.6m high on the down slope side. This was extensively examined by trenches C03, C04, and C08 in the 1990s (Harry

and Morris 1997 – *see* Discussion) and the current appearance of the site relates to those excavations; the outline of trench C03/04 remains partly visible.

023 A short section of turf-covered stone revetment walling, 0.5m in maximum height, abuts a natural outcrop; examined by trench C7/C09.

024 Sub-rectangular building, with reconstructed walls standing to a maximum of 0.9m high; there is a possible internal sub-division but this could relate to the recent excavation. The building has an internal ledge along the east side, 0.35m high and 0.75m deep, and an unusually (?) wide entrance on the south side. This building is shown on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV) but its west wall is depicted there by a broken line only.

025 Sub-rectangular building with two entrances on the west side; the walls stand 0.6m high. This structure would appear to be built up against 024. This building is shown complete on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV).

026 Small structure, with walls 0.4m high, built against 025.

027 Two terraced platforms, the north platform less well defined and at a higher level (0.5m); the south platform is partly embanked on the east side (addition to 1984 survey); scarp standing 0.4m high. There are signs of disturbance/excavation here, including black plastic sheeting showing under the turf, but there is no excavation trench marked here on the 1990s plans (Barrowman *et al* 2007, fig 24; Harry and Morris 1997, fig 5); trench C01, which is *c*8m further north, is also marked by black plastic.

Site D

Site D was excavated by Radford between 1934 and 1938. Thomas has thrown considerable doubt on the accuracy of the MOW reconstruction of this site in particular (1993, 52, 60, 72-3).

028 Sub-rectangular structure as shown on 1984 plan; walls 0.3m high and 0.6m wide (Fig 9). This building is shown complete on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV) but for its north-east corner, indicating that it was one of the first excavated on Site D. This building was, erroneously, interpreted as a 'gun house' (Thomas 1993, 52); as reconstructed it resembles a Bodmin Moor-style shepherd's hut or shieling (Pete Herring pers comm).

Fig 9: building 028

029 A rectangular building with reconstructed walls ranging from 0.3m to 0.7m in height, and 0.8m thick. This building is shown complete on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV), indicating that it was one of the first excavated on Site D.

030 Building terraced into a steep slope at its south end, its walls (presumably reconstructed) standing between 0.4m and 0.7m high. A structure in the south-west corner of the building, measuring1.9m x 2.4m, stands 0.8m high; it is a stone construction with curved corner and central chamber 0.9m in diameter; it is possibly a corn-drying kiln, being broadly similar to others recorded in later medieval buildings in hamlets on Bodmin Moor (e.g. Johnson and Rose 1994, fig 56).

031 Small niche cut into the east-facing rock face (possibly part natural?); opening 0.5m high and 0.4m wide.

032 As depicted on 1984 survey; an L-shaped structure with walls a maximum of 0.6m high; there is possible slight evidence for a continuation of the south wall. There is a stone-built structure (Fig 10) placed centrally against the west wall, 1.8m wide and 0.5m deep, of unknown function (not apparently a hearth); this feature is not shown on Radford's 1962 version of the plan (fig 2) but the south wall is shown as being the same length as the north wall. An additional spread linear scarp running north-south, a maximum of 0.4m high, was supplied in 2015; this is possibly a geological feature but could be of archaeological origin; it is overlain by 032, indicating that it predates it.

Fig 10: interior of building 032 showing the unexplained 're-constructed' structure against the west wall; buildings 029 and 030 lie beyond

033 Sub-rectangular building with walls a maximum of 0.6m high; some of the walls are constructed of edge-set slabs. There is a stone-built feature against the west wall, 1.5m wide and 1.1m deep (comparable to 032). This building is shown on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV), indicating that it was one of the first excavated on Site D; however, its north and west walls are shown there by dotted lines only.

034 A two-cell building divided internally by a stone-built partition; the structure is terraced into the slope at the west end, where it stands 1.2m high; the walls average 0.6m high. A third cell has been added at the east end (down-slope), where the walls stand up to 0.5m high. The central cell of this building is partly shown on the interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV), indicating that it was one of the first excavated on Site D; however, only the north, east and south walls are shown, and there is no indication of the door which now exists in the north side of the re-constructed building.

035 Edge-set stones poking through the turf; eastern extent is now turf-covered.

036 An additional structure or building represented by slight earthwork remains, standing 0.3m high.

037 The 1984 survey shows with a pecked line what appears to be the outline of one of Radford's trenches, D/1, but it is no longer visible on the surface; none of Radford's trenches in this area are now visible.

Site E and the Garden

This area was cleared by Radford in 1934.

038 Low wall footings, 0.25m high, appear to butt the Garden wall; Radford reported that they were below the garden wall and survivors of his post-Roman Site E; it is not clear whether they are 1930s reconstructions or original. The interim report plan (Radford 1935, pl LV) shows only a fragment of the western of these two walls (it also shows an L-shaped wall within the garden, which is no longer visible). These walls are shown extending as sinuous scarps to the north, to join building 116, on the 1984 survey but these scarps are now difficult to trace.

039 Low wall footing, 0.2m high maximum; its relationship to the Garden wall is obscure; it is not clear whether this is reconstruction or original.

040 Scarp not surveyed in 1984, 0.4m high, splitting from long scarp 127; probably resulting from Radford's work on the Garden.

041 The modern path here is hollowed to a depth of about 0.4-0.5m.

The Garden itself is a quadrilateral walled enclosure, fully described and discussed by Peter Rose (1994) following a survey by the then Cornwall Archaeological Unit in 1988.

Site F

This site was cleared by Radford in 1936-1938.

042 The upper building has a maximum reconstructed wall height of 0.8m.

043 The north cell of 042, has a wall height of only 0.35m; this might suggest that this is original and not reconstructed, but this is by no means certain.

044 The lower building has a maximum reconstructed wall height of 1.1m.

045 Revetting wall, 0.35m high.

046 A stub wall, up to 0.9m high, protrudes from the steep slope and extends across the modern path; this was almost certainly exposed by Radford's trench F/1.

Site G

This site was excavated by Radford in 1938.

O47 The rear wall of the excavated/restored building stands 0.8-1.0m high; at least some of this (the large blocks near the base) is presumably original; the side and front

walls are much lower and possibly all reconstructed. The slope to the west could conceal more buildings and the scar of Radford's trench G/1 is visible here (but not surveyed) (Fig 11).

Fig 11: west end of the reconstructed building on Site G; the ranging rods mark the scar of Radford's Tench G/1

Fig 12: two upright slabs of rock at the east end of Site G. Radford's Trench G/4 was at this location

048 Two upright slabs of rock (Fig 12); the maximum height of the larger slab is 1.4m. Radford's trench G/4 was probably cut to examine these slabs.

Site H

Radford cut numerous trenches in this area in 1938; these may account for some of the features mentioned below.

049 A possible building with its east end eroded away or cut by 052; maximum height of scarps 0.5m. It should be noted that the scarps forming this feature are quite sharp and could be the result of Radford's trench H/3, though that appears to be narrower on Wright's plan (Barrowman *et al* 2007, fig 21).

050 Probably a quarry; the scarp at the south end is up to 0.8m high.

051 Possibly a building but more probably a quarry; the scarps, no more than 0.4m high, are amorphous and fade into the natural slopes.

052 A probable building, possibly cutting 049 above it to the south-west; the sharp north end depicted on the 1984 survey is not now apparent, though there is a slight bank here, 0.1m high; the main scarp is up to 0.6m high but merges with the natural slope.

The Tunnel

The 'Tunnel' was cleared out by Radford's workmen but is not apparently included in his lettered sequence of excavation sites.

Cut with metal tools, the Tunnel has an arched profile (Fig 13 *and see* Fig 26). It is 1.7-2.4m wide at the base and 1.5-1.9m high. It has been cut in a series of curves (almost bowl shapes), perhaps to make it appear natural. The ends have fallen in and now only the central section is roofed. Claims have been made for various architectural features (door post slots, beam holes – e.g. Thomas 1993, 46-7, fig 36) but most of these are either unconvincing or are demonstrably natural fissures of the vesicular rock into which the upper part of the Tunnel is cut. Whether it was intended as a tunnel or as a cave roofed in at the upper end is now uncertain (*see* Discussion below).

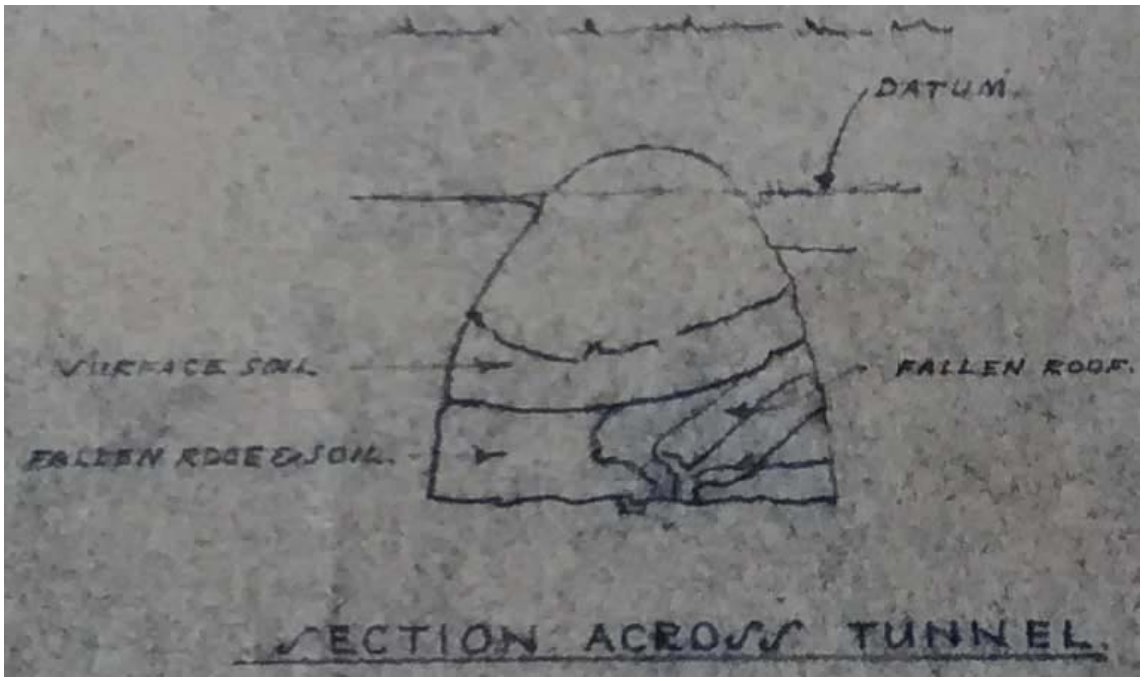

Fig 13: section drawing of the 'Tunnel' while it was being 'cleared' of fallen material by Radford's workmen; this is apparently the only record taken of these unique archaeological deposits before they were destroyed. Historic England Archive MP/TIN 0043.

Unexcavated earthworks, structures and other features

On the slope between Site A and Site F

053 This hollow is probably a quarry rather than a structure. It has a maximum depth of 1.2m.

054 Unbounded platform; this could be a building stance.

055 Similar to 054.

056 Scoop between 054 and 055, 1.2m deep; possibly a quarry.

057 Possible terrace filled with tumbled material.

058 A two-celled building platform with earthworks up to 0.5m high; there is a narrow modern breach in the front wall of the northern cell.

059 A ramp leading down to

060 a possible building stance, eroded.

061 A rectangular hollow against a rock-face, 1.5m high, behind 065; the front scarp is only 0.2m high; a probable building.

062 A rectangular hollow, with a backscarp up to 1.2m deep and front scarp 0.3m deep; a probable building, it seems to cut

063 a platform below a rock face; a probable building platform, its front is cut away by 062.

064 Elongated hollow, its backscarp 0.5m deep, with a vestigial front scarp 0.2m deep; a probable building immediately fronting

065 a sub-rectangular hollow with a backscarp 0.7m deep and front scarp 0.3m deep; a probable building.

066 Trapezoidal hollow, 0.4m deep; a probable building.

067 Rectangular platform cut into the natural slope to a depth of 0.4m; a possible building; the front seems to have been eroded away.

On the slope between Site B and the Iron Gate

068 A small sloping platform defined to the north by stones – possible walling? It is not well defined. The earthworks are a maximum of 0.6m high on the upslope side.

069 An irregular platform, probably natural. (It sits below a substantial rock outcrop.)

070 Similar to 069.

(For terraces above and to the south of the Iron Gate *see* below.)

On the northern slopes

071 A small terraced platform is cut into the steep slope below Site D, with a rear scarp standing 1.4m high; the front appears to be eroded. This is a possible gun emplacement (*see* Discussion).

072 Sloping platform below the northernmost point of the plateau, rock-cut on the south-west side with a rock face standing 0.9m high. The north-west and south-east scarps stand between 0.3 and 0.4m high. This is likely to be a gun emplacement, one of Greville's 'rampirs' (Thomas 1993, 50-1; *see* Discussion).

073 Projecting sub-rectangular rock platform; this is a natural feature but in the approximate position indicated for one of Grenville's 'rampirs' (Thomas 1993, 50-1; *see* Discussion).

074 Spring below the 'Tunnel' on the north-west flank of the Island, lying within a horseshoe-shaped depression; according to Thomas this had 'signs of a built stone surround' (1993, 450) but this was not apparent at the time of survey.

On the western slopes

075 An array of trenches, about 0.3m deep, on a steep west-facing slope (Fig 14); there is no sign of spoil (which was presumably spread downslope); these are probably prospecting trenches from an episode of lead mining (*see* Discussion). The stone symbol shown on the 1984 survey within one trench is a block of granite. (These features were identified by Thomas as a 'vestigial field system' (1993, 45) but this is not convincing.)

Fig 14: mineral prospecting trenches on the western slopes of the Island

On the southern slopes

076 Stone rickle surveyed in 1984; not now visible.

077 Scarp, up to 1.5m high, defines the east end of a large complex; a stone rickle at its foot surveyed in 1984 shows as a minimal bank but is not obviously stony.

078 A small platform scooped 0.7m deep into the steep natural slope; it has exposed bedrock in its back face; possibly a quarry.

079 Shallow scoop, probably a quarry; if it is a building platform it is badly eroded.

080 A substantial platform cut into a steep natural slope with exposed rock face at the back; either a quarry or a building.

081 Slight scoop cut into the steep natural slope; eroded; possibly a quarry.

082 Scoop or platform against a rock face, marked by two upright granite blocks at the front (south) edge (Fig 15), suggesting that this is more than just a quarry; possibly a building or other structure.

Fig 15: two small upright stones mark the front of platform 082, set against an outcrop on the southern slopes of the Island

083 A large rectangular platform immediately below 'King Arthur's Seat', slightly scooped into the natural slope, slightly terraced out; it is marked by scarps 0.7m high to the west and 0.5m high to the east; there is a slight indentation in the south side, as depicted in the 1984 survey. This might be a large building platform or could have been for some other, specialised purpose.

084 Eroded scoop; a possible quarry.

085 A sub-rectangular platform under a rock overhang; two stones are marked at the east edge in the 1984 survey but these now appear to be unremarkable pieces of slate.

086 Two rectangular platforms cut into bedrock and possibly terraced out; probably buildings, though the westernmost is less convincing than the other.

087 Scarp shown on the 1984 survey; not checked.

088 A rather vague scarp, up to 0.5m high, in the natural slope.

089 Scarps shown on the 1984 survey; they now appear as probably natural slopes.

090 A rectangular platform cut up to 0.6m deep into the steep natural slope; a probable building.

091 A rectangular scoop cut into the natural slope to a depth of 0.5m, with a front scarp up to 0.3m high internally; a probable building. Trench 2 of the 2003 excavations was dug into the south-eastern corner of this building (or possibly its neighbour 092); the excavation showed that the wall survived to a total height of 0.4m and there were at least two successive floor levels in the interior; all finds were of post-Roman date, though none were in contexts that could date the building directly (Thorpe 2004). No trace of the excavation trench was noted during survey.

092 An almost square scoop cut 0.5m deep into the natural slope; a probable building forming the west end of complex (093-096) extending along the terrace below the rock outcrop and at the top of steep natural slopes above the cliff.

093 Sub-rectangular platform cut 1.6m deep into the natural slope and with a front scarp up to 0.3m high internally; a probable building.

094 Rectangular platform cut 1.2m deep into slope and with a front scarp 0.2m high internally; a probable building; at the east end a scarp 1.6m high divides it from

095 a series of three hollows, 1.2m, 0.4m and 0.7m deep respectively; probably a three-celled building.

096 A levelled area between buildings 092-095, terraced into the natural slope and defined by a scarp up to 0.4m high; either a large rectangular building or a yard.

On the plateau, northern area

097 Substantial earthwork remains of a large rectangular building terraced into a shallow natural slope, with a scarp 0.6m high; it is defined by a broad bank along the

south side standing 0.5m high. An internal division, represented by a level change 0.3m high, has been added to the 1984 survey. An additional cell to the east is crossed by a modern path and is heavily eroded. This building is often referred to in the literature as a 'hall' (e.g. Thomas 1993, 90-1, fig 69), which could be correct, though its overall dimensions are not significantly greater than those of some other buildings on the site (e.g. 096, 185). As Thomas notes (ibid), it is as likely to be a store building or barn, though it is not unlike a medieval longhouse in dimensions.

098 A small sunken building defined by a scarp 0.3m high; it is terraced into the slope on its west side, where the scarp stands 0.9m high. This feature was re-surveyed as it appears to extend slightly further to the east than suggested by the 1984 survey.

099 A platform at the foot of a rock face; it appears to be terraced but is possibly natural.

100 A sub-rectangular feature defined by a slight bank on the north-west side and scarps standing to a maximum 0.3m high; it is eroded at the west end by a modern path. This is probably a building but is at a noticeably different alignment to other buildings in the area.

101 A very eroded, embanked rectangular structure; a mound in its north-west corner has a central hollow; the mound stands 0.7m high, the spread earthworks of the structure a maximum of 0.4m high. The feature is particularly eroded on the down slope, eastern, side. The mound could represent an internal feature, such as a kiln, or be the result of digging and upcast. This building was surveyed in 1998-9 as a response to footpath erosion (Reynolds 2006, 41, figs 23 and 24).

102 A slight sunken sub-rectangular feature (scarp no more than 0.2m high), probably a building; it is much eroded on its downslope, eastern, side and overlain by a modern path. This building was surveyed in 1998-9 when footpath erosion exposed its southern wall; the shillet wall survived up to a maximum of four courses high (Reynolds 2006, 41, figs 23 and 24).

103 A small, well defined, embanked structure standing to a maximum 0.5m high with bank 1.9m wide; probably a small building.

104 Slight remains of a terraced structure, embanked on the west and south sides (one scarp added to 1984 survey), standing 0.3m high; probably a sub-rectangular building.

Features 101-104 seem to form a discrete cluster of buildings.

105 A sub-rectangular terraced platform, a maximum of 0.6m deep on the south side, occupies a position on outcrop on one of the highest points of the plateau; a possible building.

106 A sub-rectangular terraced platform, 0.6m in maximum elevation; this is a doubtful structure.

107 A platform formed by scarps up to a maximum of 1.0m high and a rock face 2.1m high; this could be a building but it is probably a quarry or a natural feature.

108 A slightly sinuous well-defined trench up to 0.4m deep, with a bank of spoil 0.3m high to the south; the earthworks of this feature are relatively crisp and it seems to cut and overlie scarp 113 – it is almost certainly a prospecting trench.

109 Sub-rectangular hollow, up to 0.4m deep, set within a raised platform; a probable building.

110 This small sub-rectangular platform surveyed in 1984 is not now easily discernible.

111 A partly embanked and scarped platform, the earthworks 0.3-0.5m high, forms a possible building.

112 Small rectangular scarp 0.3m high, forms a possible building; it may be cut by 113.

113 A scarp, up to 0.5m high, possibly cuts 112 and is cut and overlain by 108.

114 A series of scarps and a bank, 0.2-0.3m high, forming possibly two or three rectangular buildings, or buildings and a yard.

115 A substantial sub-rectangular hollow, up to 0.4m deep, is a probable building, forming a group with 109-112 and 114. Some amorphous hollows lie to the south-west in the angle between 115 and

116 a series of scoops, mostly about 0.4m deep, apparently forming a three-celled building. The scarps forming its sides fade to the east and its east end is missing, perhaps overlain by

117 a sub-rectangular hollow, 0.4m deep; this probable building, with 116, lies on a distinctly different alignment to buildings 111-115 to the north and west but shares the alignment of the Garden.

118 A short length of spread bank up to 0.3 or possibly 0.4m high; there are other slight, unsurveyable undulations in this area, which is covered in rough, tussocky grass; there was also some dumped (modern) building material here at the time of survey.

119 Spring; earthworks around the spring consist of the spring hollow itself, up to 1.0m deep and holding a substantial pool of water at the time of survey, and a sub-rectangular scarp to the north and west up to 0.5m high – possibly the remains of a small building encasing the water source.

120 An area below the overhanging rock outcrop, shown on the 1984 survey perhaps because it was considered to be a possible building stance; the rocks are wet from the spring 119 above.

121 A small irregular hole, 0.6m deep, lying within a broader hollow up to 1.6m deep against the southern end of a rock outcrop (Fig 16); there is what could be a band of upcast or spoil to the east, up to 1.4m high; this is possibly a mine shaft (*see* Discussion).

Fig 16: hollow 121 is to the left of the ranging rod at the foot of the outcrop; the upcast lies in the foreground and to the right

122 A spread of earthworks possibly representing a range of buildings; the major scarp forming the back of the range is up to 0.5m high but the smaller scarps sub-dividing the range shown in the 1984 survey are not now clearly visible.

123 This feature was not surveyed in 1984; it comprises a sub-rectangular bank mostly about 0.2m high but up to 0.3m high to the north. It is probably a small building.

124 A length of scarp, not surveyed in 1984, stands up to 0.4m high maximum.

125 Three slight scarps surveyed in 1984 and thought to be probable cultivation terraces (Thomas 1993, 92) are not clearly visible now.

126 A rectangular embanked feature, 0.3m high, on approximately the same alignment as the Garden; a probable building.

127 A long sinuous scarp, varying between 0.3 and 1.2m high, extends from close to the north-west corner of the Garden to a point on the modern path near 172; it is possibly part natural, part formed by cultivation and it was possibly part of a similar scarp to the west, 169.

128 A square or rectangular hollow, 0.3-0.6m deep, attached to the south end of 122; a probable building.

129 A sub-rectangular embanked feature cut up to 0.8m into the natural slope; a probable building linked by 130 to 131.

130 Scarp, up to 0.7m high, possibly forming one side of a yard and fronting 129 and 131.

131 A sub-rectangular hollow, 0.5m deep, a probable building; its back wall may be overlying the front of

132 a rectangular scarp 0.3m high forming a probable building platform, lying behind 131 and possibly overlain by it.

Features 129-132 form another compact group of buildings, though of more than one phase, and are possibly associated with the slight lynchets 125 noted by the 1984 survey, which share their alignment.

133 An elongated rectangular feature, up to 0.3m deep, lies above the back of 122; it is a probable building; there appears to be an extra cell at the north end, not supplied by the 1984 survey, surviving as a very shallow earthwork.

134 A very scrappy scarp, less regular than it appears on the 1984 survey, forms a rough platform at the top of the slope below the 'Tunnel'; it is a possible building.

135 A small rectangular platform cut into the steep slope adjacent to the lower entrance to the 'Tunnel' and opening onto the level path approaching it; it is possibly a building or small structure.

136 Probable quarry.

137 Scarp, 0.3m high, forming a platform in front of a high rock face; it is probably not a building but could be the result of quarrying or natural slippage.

On the plateau, southern area

138 Scarp, 0.4-0.5m high towards the east but only 0.2m high at the west; it lies parallel to scarp 143 and is possibly of agricultural origin.

139 Natural hollow, 0.8m deep.

140 A complex of earthworks lies to the north of Site A, consisting of scarps up to 0.5m high, two hollows 0.3 m deep and a bank, probably overlying the other features, up to 0.7m high; there are apparently two conjoined buildings in an L-shape, disturbed by later paths and possibly overlain by the bank, giving a rather confused appearance on plan; the origin of the bank is uncertain but it may be spoil from Radford's excavations.

141 A low spread of material, possibly spoil, alongside trench 144, is represented by a single scarp 0.3m high.

142 A slight short bank, 0.4m high to the west, 0.3m high to the east; there is a further scarp 0.3m high to the east forming a hollow alongside the bank; the origin of this feature uncertain but it is possibly spoil from Radford's excavations.

143 Scarp up to 0.4m high, cut by 144; it continues the general alignment of the Site A buildings but may be of agricultural origin; it is parallel to 138.

144 Trench, up to 0.4m deep, with slight traces of spoil on its east side – 141 (and possibly on the west too); it cuts through scarp 143; this is probably a mineral prospecting trench.

145 Bank, 0.3-0.4m high; possibly spoil from Radford's excavations.

146 Confused earthworks, possibly a building platform with later disturbance; the large bank forming the south side of the feature, and possibly overlying it, is 0.6m high to the north but only 0.3m high to the south; the other earthworks are about 0.4m high.

147 A small sub-rectangular hollow, only 0.2m deep; a possible building.

148 A slight hollow with a rock-cut back up to 1.2m high; this could be a building or a quarry.

149 A wandering scarp up to 0.4m high. This does not seem to form a recognisable structure but joins to

150 a rectangular feature cut into the slope to a depth of 0.8 m and defined by a bank 0.3m high to the north; a probable building.

151 A sub-rectangular feature cut 1.4m into the slope to the west and south; the north and east sides are formed by a bank and scarp up to about 0.4m high; a probable building.

152 'King Arthur's Seat'; a natural rock formation consisting of a small southward-facing cave in the cliff-top with cup-shaped erosion hollows; similar, if less dramatic, erosion patterns can be seen on similar rock formations around the Island. The erosion hollows here have previously been interpreted as prehistoric cup-marks but are likely to be natural in origin, although it is difficult to say whether some might have been embellished in prehistory or later. 'King Arthur's footprint' (Thomas 1993, 49, 96-8), another possibly modified natural hollow in the bedrock, is about 25m to the east of the cave.

153 A shallow platform, probably a building stance, is overlain by spoil from later trenches 168, including a small oval mound up to 0.4m high.

154 A very slight platform similar to 153, probably a building stance, is also partly overlain by spoil and apparently damaged by the 1983 fire.

155 An apparently new path from the Well to the Chapel cuts through several archaeological features (144, 158, 161); areas of active erosion were mapped.

156 A hollow up to 0.3m deep; this feature appears to be less amorphous than shown on the 1984 survey; the south end is possibly more rectangular and it is a probable building.

157 A platform, slightly less convincing on the ground than it appears on the 1984 plan but still possibly a building; it has been partly disturbed by later trenching 168 – its north side seems to be overlain by a bank of spoil 0.3m high.

158 A well-defined rectangular platform within a bank 0.3m high externally and 0.4m internally; the north corner of this probable building has been cut off by path 155, which is eroding the earthworks.

159 A slight sub-rectangular platform defined by a scarp 0.2-0.3m high; this is a probable building cut by the later trenches of feature 161.

160 A small oval hollow, 0.4m deep; the trenches of feature 161 apparently deviate to avoid it, suggesting that it is earlier.

161 A series of ditches with mound(s) alongside, with a maximum elevation of 0.4m; they cut 159 and appear to deviate around 160 and are therefore relatively late but they are in turn cut by modern path 155; initially we interpreted these as prospecting trenches (similar to 108 and 144) but Radford had suggested that this was a pillow mound with flanking ditches; though it does not look like a pillow mound on plan and Thomas questioned this interpretation (1993, 60), this idea cannot be entirely dismissed. Indeed there could be a combination of features, with the westernmost elements forming a pillow mound and the easternmost ditch and its accompanying bank, 0.2m high, being a prospecting trench cutting into the eastern ditch of the pillow mound. There is documentary evidence for rabbit farming on the Island in the 15th century (Cornwall Record Office (AR/2/719/5); we are grateful to Susan Greaney for pointing out this document).

162 Scarps, 0.3m high, forming a rather amorphous levelled area.

163 A sub-rectangular platform defined by a scarp and bank up to 0.3m high; this is probably a building, attached to the north-west corner of 158 but at a different angle and therefore possibly of a different phase.

164 An irregularly shaped platform defined by a curving bank to the south, up to 0.4m high, and a scarp, 0.3m high, to the north; there is a semi-circular hollow, 0.2m deep, in the east end; this is probably a two-celled building.

165 Scarp, up to 0.5m high, running south from 164 and turning through a right angle; it may define one or more buildings but there is no further evidence.

166 Two sub-oval hollows, the southern one only 0.2m deep and the northern one up to 0.3m deep maximum. These do not appear to be building remains.

167 Scarp, up to 0.3m high, defining a sub-rectangular area; a possible building.

168 An area defined by several trenches up to 0.4m deep, accompanied by slight banks no more than 0.3m high; they cut and overlie building platforms 153, 154 and 157 and several other slight scarps, and are therefore relatively late; they are probably prospecting trenches, like 075 on the western slope of the Island. (It is interesting that Thomas and Fowler noted the similarity of these features, though they interpreted them both as field systems or cultivation plots (1985, 17, 20).)

169 A large scarp, not surveyed in 1984; it is up to 0.6m high and is possibly a natural feature though it could be a lynchet; it may be a continuation of the curving scarp 127 running from the direction of the Garden.

170 A right-angled feature seen in 1984 as a stone rickle, it is apparently turfed over and no longer visible.

171 A former path hollowed to a depth of 0.5m; its western end is now overlain by the fire equipment store.

172 A hollowed platform, up to about 0.4m deep, overlain by the modern path; it may be connected to the more amorphous hollow, up to 0.5m deep, on the north side of the path; together these could be the remains of a substantial building.

173 A platform situated against the end of a rock outcrop, defined by a very slight scarp; a doubtful building. The rickle of stone shown on its north-eastern side in the 1984 survey is no longer visible.

174 A D-shaped structure, rather amorphous, some fragmentary remains of which survive up to 0.3m high maximum; its east end is eroded by the modern path. This feature lies at a bifurcation in hollow way 182.

175 A scoop defined by a back scarp 0.3-0.4m high but cut into the natural slope so apparently much deeper; there is no sign of terracing to the south but it is a possible building.

176 Two sub-rectangular structures depicted as stone rickle on the 1984 survey; these are visible now only because they are cut into the natural slope to a maximum depth of 0.3m; no stone rickle is now visible but these must be considered as probable buildings.

177 At the extreme south-western corner of the plateau, a stone rickle forming a rectangular structure with a scarp forming a diagonal feature, depicted on the 1984 survey, is no longer visible – there is much erosion in this area, down to exposed bedrock.

178 An exposed hearth depicted on the 1984 survey as a red dot is no longer visible; it might survive, partly at least, under the turf but there is much erosion here.

179 An amorphous structure survives to a maximum height of 0.1m, though the scarp extending to the west around 178 is 0.3m high – a possible building.

180 Scarp, 0.2m high.

181 A sub-oval hollow, up to 0.3m deep; the stone rickle depicted in its bottom on the 1984 plan is still visible as a slight scarp 0.1m high; the hollow is connected to the hollow way 182 by a path hollowed 0.3m deep to the west and 0.5m deep to the east.

182 A hollow way extending from near the Well and Rock Basin to the spring (183) at the top of the cliff; at its western end it is shallow, only 0.3-0.4m deep, but well defined; to the east it is up to 0.6m deep but more diffuse and partly eroded by modern use; only its north side is clearly visible here. Its course is partly determined by building 189 but the chronological relationship – whether the hollow way is going round a pre-existing building or has been constricted by a later building – is uncertain.

183 A natural spring; water seeps from rocks at the top of the cliff.

184 A stone rickle depicted on the 1984 survey is no longer visible. This is an area of tussocky grass that has re-generated since the 1983 fire.

185 A large rectangular hollow defined by a scarp 0.3-0.4m deep and a broad bank to the south; the stone rickle shown beyond the south-west end on the 1984 survey is no longer visible; this probable substantial building has possibly been cut by ditch or hollow way 186; its other end might have been formed by 187 but this is unlikely as the two do not line up convincingly.

186 Linear hollow leading north from hollow way 182, 0.1m deep to the west, 0.3m deep to the east; it possibly cuts 185 and 187; at its north end it turns sharply to the west, where it is up to 0.5m deep; this could be either a ditch or a hollowed path.

187 An amorphous hollow, up to 0.2m deep; it is just possible this was originally connected to 185 but cut by 186, though the alignment on 185 is not precise; it is a possible building; the significance of the solid red line extending from the south-west corner of this feature on the 1984 survey is not clear. If 185 and 187 did form one building it would be an exceptionally large one but this seems unlikely.

188 Stone rickle and a chain-and-dot line define a sub-rectangular area on the 1984 survey; no feature is now visible at this location but it must be regarded as a possible building.

189 A sub-rectangular hollow alongside hollow way 182 is defined by a bank up to 0.3m high; this is a probable building. Its chronological relationship to 182 is uncertain.

190 A sub-rectangular area defined by a bank up to 0.3m high; this is a probable building.

191 A sub-rectangular area defined by a stone rickle on the 1984 survey; this is not now visible but must be regarded as a possible building.

192 An amorphous stone rickle, roughly describing a sub-rectangular area, depicted on the 1984 survey, is just visible as an earthwork no more than 0.1m high. Further stony features shown to the west of this feature in 1984 are no longer visible.

193 A rectangular area depicted by stone rickle and scarps on the 1984 survey is now visible as an earthwork no more than 0.1m high; it is a probable building.

194 A rectangular area defined by stone rickle and scarps on the 1984 survey is now visible as an earthwork up to 0.2m high, its southern end defined by exposed stone, as shown in 1984 (Fig 17); this is probably a 2-celled building.

Fig 17: stone rickle defining the southern end of building 194, possibly the same feature as that illustrated by Thomas (1993, fig 61); the building platform can just be distinguished running under the tussocky grass to the north

195 A group of five rectangular and sub-rectangular structures depicted on the 1984 survey as stone rickle with some scarps; these are no longer identifiable but probably represented a group of buildings.

Some other features were supplied by mapping grade GPS: stake holes near the SW of the plateau; areas where footpath erosion is definitely or potentially damaging archaeological features.

Possible stake holes seen by previous researchers were noted at two points on the south-western side of the plateau. One group was recorded by mapping grade GPS (Fig 18 – *see also* Thomas 1993, fig 71). A second group was only noted later and photographed (Fig 19); this is the group shown by Barrowman *et al* (2007, fig 23) where they are described as 'above Site C' though they are actually close to 'King Arthur's Footprint' on the southern edge of the plateau.

Fig 18: stakeholes surveyed near the south-western point of the plateau

Fig 19: stakeholes near 'King Arthur's footprint'

The Well and the rock-cut Basin

The stone-lined Well and rock-cut Basin lie close to each other in the natural linear hollow that crosses the plateau in a west-south-westerly to east-north-easterly direction. The natural springs 119 and 183 also lie at either end of this natural feature,

as noted by Thomas (1993, fig 33). The Well and Basin, which were both holding water at the time of survey, are also close to the Garden. The Well is said to be 5m deep; the Basin is also supposed to be man-made and 'of no great age' (Thomas 1993, 45).

The Iron Gate

The Iron Gate is a natural quay – a rock platform with a vertical drop into deep water. It is protected on the landward side by a 13th-14th-century wall (Thomas 1993, 40-3); proposed gun positions are shown on Grenville's 1583 plan, though no gun platforms are visible. There are two square-plan holes cut into the rock at the outer corners of the quay, probably for timber mooring posts (Figs 20 and 21). Other facilities for working and mooring vessels, probably of a later date, can be seen elsewhere around the Haven (*see* Herring 2016). Thomas proposes an ingenious etymology for the name Iron Gate (1993, 43) but there is nothing inherently unlikely about the idea that the arch in the medieval wall was once filled by an iron gate.

Figs 20 and 21: rock-cut holes for timbers at the outer corners of the Iron Gate quay

Terraces and other features above the Iron Gate

A group of terraces was identified and discussed by Carl Thorpe (2007; 2013) above the Iron Gate: several of these are depicted on the 1984 survey – Thorpe's 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, though in the case of 1, 4, 6 and 8 Thorpe depicts them as much larger features. The others – 2, 3 and 5 – were identified by Thorpe from depth of soil in fence post excavations, cut rock faces, etc. The 1984 survey has not been modified, as those shown by the RCHME remain the only ones visible on the surface but they are

indicated by labels T1 – T10. The north end of T1 is a sloping platform, partly rock-cut or with natural outcrop to the west (above the earthwork), standing to a maximum of 0.7m high. The early path identified by Thorpe, cut by the 1918 cliff fall, was also observed as depicted by Thorpe (2013, figs 2 and 3) (but not resurveyed); Thorpe has argued convincingly that this is a pre-medieval route (ibid, 254).

Upper, Lower and Inner Wards

The Upper, Lower and Inner Wards were briefly checked; nothing of significance was observed except for general hollowing (not surveyed) in the south-east corner of the Lower Ward (196).

Fig 22: medieval hollow way 197 approaching the castle entrance to the right of the Upper Ward; the later hollow way 198 comes in beyond the figures on the left and behind this is the natural mound 200, the top of which seems to have been levelled; the barbican-like mound 199 can just be seen at the end of 197

Earthworks outside the Upper and Lower Wards (Fig 22) were checked in more detail and some – mounds and hollow ways – were supplied in outline with mapping-grade GPS. (The Great Ditch and the external ditch of the Lower Ward were not studied,

however.) The hollow way – 197 – identified by Thomas as the principal medieval approach to the Castle (1993, 24) is cut by a later hollow way (198) and blocked by a stone wall. A crescentic mound (199) looks superficially like a barbican feature but may be at least partly natural – trench T03a of 1999 is visible in the back (west side) of this feature. Another substantial natural mound (200) has been levelled and perhaps had a rectangular building placed on it. This area has been (and was being at the time of survey) considerably disturbed by footpath construction. (For further discussion of the hollow ways in this area and down to the shore *see* Herring 2016.)

DISCUSSION

Tintagel is one of the most enigmatic of all British archaeological sites; it presents mysteries in every period of its existence. There has been much speculation on the question of whether it was a late prehistoric cliff castle: evidence for the defining ramparts and ditches of such a site might have been entirely lost to erosion or they might be represented by the first (dug away) phase of the Great Ditch; however, no Iron Age pottery or other finds have yet been discovered. On the other hand, there are numerous finds of Roman date and a few insubstantial Roman structures have been uncovered; the Roman finds include a small group of coins (AD270-361) in a leather bag deposited in a natural rock fissure near the Great Ditch in the late 4th century, a period of great religious and social upheaval when temples were built within ancient hillforts and Stonehenge suddenly attracted renewed interest. The early post-Roman period is the strangest of all: at a time when most sites are all but invisible archaeologically, Tintagel has quantities of high status imported goods and apparently substantial structures; there are curious features (including burials) of this period in the nearby churchyard as well. The high medieval period is hardly less intriguing: in the 13th century a castle is built in this unstrategic location, of 'no military value or function whatsoever' (Thomas 1993, 17), accompanied by a chapel (but not within the castle), a 'garden', and a unique and apparently pointless 'tunnel'. In the post-medieval period Tintagel was used for military, industrial and touristic purposes, the first two of which at least have hardly been studied.

This discussion will focus on the post-Roman and high medieval periods, the phases of the site's life which are most monumentally visible in terms of earthworks and stone structures, but it will also have something to say about post-medieval use of the site. In conventional dating terms for Tintagel these are Phases II (post-Roman), IV (medieval) and V (post-medieval to modern), the latter sub-divided into Va (military), Vb (industrial) and Vc (modern).

Phase II (post-Roman)

The vast majority of the earthworks on the Island are conventionally attributed to this phase, though this attribution has been questioned, not least by Thomas (1993, 74-5, 89). The problem was the lack of contextual recording of finds from Radford's excavations; none of the rich and abundant post-Roman finds, though they came from

the areas around the exposed buildings, actually dated those structures at all, as pointed out by Burrow (1973, 100).

Thomas's solution to this problem was to propose that the slighter building remains were probably of this date but that the more substantial were later and coeval with the building of the castle in the 13th century (1993, 89, 119). The problem with this scheme is that there is not really a distinct boundary between slight and substantial buildings showing as earthworks or reconstructions on the site; instead, there is a continuum from the vanishingly slight earthworks of small sub-rectangular structures to the substantial earthworks (or reconstructed masonry walls) of large, rectangular buildings. Ken Dark, who visited the site in 1984, noted that the structures exposed by the fire 'were built of soil or shillet containing very few large pieces of slate' and he also mentions 'structures of yellow clay construction' (1985, 8, 10). The more recent work on site indicates that many of the structures are, as previously thought, certainly of post-Roman date (Harry and Morris 1997, 120-1; Barrowman *et al* 2007, 315-16; Thorpe 2004; 2013). The Great Ditch too is now relatively firmly dated to this period (Barrowman *et al* 2007, 314), though examination of its upper end suggests that it was extended here in the 13th century (Herring 2016).

Our understanding of the approximately 120 buildings recorded as earthwork and stone remains on the Island is complicated by the fact that few have been excavated under modern conditions; the 1990s excavations largely re-examined buildings already reconstructed by Radford's workmen in the 1930s but did uncover some new structural evidence from the Lower Terrace (Harry and Morris 1997). It is worth considering the Lower Terrace of Site C (Fig 23) from the point of view of different archaeological approaches. In their report the excavators state that:

> 'The terrace indicated on the RCHME plan … was shown clearly to have existed through the trial trenches. The surface features also shown on the plan were, however, by no means so obvious. Many 'tussocks' and/or ant-hills had to be removed before excavation, and so perhaps the cross-walls indicated on the plan were a conjunction of such features' (ibid, 13-14).

The latter point is worth questioning because the hundreds of other similar slight earthworks recorded on the Island are clearly not conjunctions of tussocks and ant hills (though these 'natural' features are common across the Island). The excavations uncovered structural remains on the terrace, including partly collapsed walls in Phases U2 and W, dated to AD415-535 and AD560-670 (calibrated C14 dates) respectively (ibid, 39-66, 120). These walls form a building cell about 5m wide, which matches the

distances between the three northernmost cross walls shown on the earthwork survey (feature 022). If the cell identified by excavation is the central cell of the RCHME survey, as seems most likely from comparison of the plans, then the earthwork survey even shows correctly the angle of the tumbled wall formed by excavated contexts 25, 26, 128 and 97. However, it is impossible now to verify these suggestions as the evidence has been removed. That the excavators might have been unable to see these surface features is less surprising given that they did not accept the existence of the terrace itself until they had excavated several trenches in it.

The excavators emphasised that the buildings on the Lower Terrace of Site C were 'far from substantial' and that they were lower status or storage buildings, peripheral to the core activity on site (ibid, 121-2). This reflects the contrast between the 'courtyard' arrangement of some buildings on the plateau and the elongated forms on the terraces.

Fig 23: the Lower Terrace of Site C in 2014

Few parallels for the post-Roman buildings at Tintagel are known but a study by David Petts (2015) for English Heritage has brought together the evidence. There are courtyard houses at Mawgan Porth, but of rather later date, and there are rectangular structures on Bodmin Moor similar to some of those at Tintagel. Further afield the headland at Gateholm (Pembrokeshire) has well over 100 rectangular earthwork

structures of Romano-British or early medieval date and there are sites in Brittany with a mix of linear and courtyard arrangements of rectangular buildings. However, none of these sites have produced early medieval imported goods that are found in such abundance at Tintagel.

The 1990s excavations and archival research confirmed that there are serious doubts about how faithfully the 1930s restorations at Tintagel were made, with some walls apparently invented and door positions created, shifted or erased; there is therefore no solid archaeological basis for further reconstruction.

There are a few instances of phasing within the excavated building complexes and some evidence in the earthworks of building platforms inter-cutting but in general most of the buildings on the Island could have been occupied contemporaneously. This implies the possibility of a considerable population. The 1990s excavators concluded that occupation and activity at Tintagel in the early post-Roman period was 'both extensive and remarkable, and was of high status' and that 'it is difficult to envisage Tintagel as anything other than a site of the Dumnonian rulers', though they emphasise that this does not imply year-round residency by this elite group, who will have been as peripatetic as other rulers of the period (Barrowman *et al* 2007, 320, 336). This follows very closely the interpretation put forward by Charles Thomas (1993, 87-8) and echoes how Tintagel seems to have been regarded in the later medieval period.

Phase IV (medieval)

It is now accepted that the castle is wholly or largely the work of Richard, Earl of Cornwall and King of the Romans, younger brother of King Henry III (Padel 1988). The documentary sources for Richard's life are very good in some respects but lacking in others. Historians have tended to take this lack of evidence at face value. Because there is no record of Richard's presence at Tintagel they assume that he never or rarely went there (though there are substantial periods when his whereabouts are unknown). Denholm-Young states baldly that 'in Richard's career there is no hint even of literary interests or patronage' (1947, 155). The archaeological evidence, and closer attention to the historical and literary evidence, suggests otherwise.

Richard went to some trouble to acquire Tintagel in the first place, at an early stage in his career, exchanging the manor of Bossiney (Fig 24) for three apparently more desirable manors (Thomas 1993, 12, 17). He then expended much resource in building a castle at Tintagel of no clear military value. This can only be explained on the grounds

that Tintagel was the seat of previous legendary or semi-legendary rulers of Cornwall – Charles Thomas imagines Richard asking, 'where else, save at Tintagel, would you expect me to reconstruct my seat?' (ibid, 18). He was making a major statement about his new powers over the Cornish people (Page 2000, 24, 25).

Fig 24: the motte of Bossiney Castle, the seat of previous owners of Tintagel

There are certain aspects of this castle, apart from its location, that are puzzling: the chapel, which is not within the castle but inconveniently located on the edge of the Island plateau above it; the walled 'garden', also on the exposed plateau top; the 'tunnel', which has defied all rational explanation (its identification as a 'larder' (Thomas 1993, 47) founders on the question of why no other 13th-century high status residences have similar 'larders').

The location of the castle can be explained if it is accepted that Richard did have some literary interests, at least in so far as local Cornish legends are concerned. The other enigmatic features can be explained in the same way.

Tintagel is now inextricably linked to the Arthurian craze but in medieval literature Tintagel is rather marginal to Arthur's story, being mentioned by Geoffrey of Monmouth only as the place of Arthur's conception; it only later, in the 15th century, became also the place of his birth (Thomas 1993, 26). Other castles, such as Winchester, Windsor and Dunstanburgh, have more deliberate medieval connections to the Arthurian legends (Biddle 2000; Ormrod 2005; Munby *et al* 2007; Oswald *et al* 2006). Far more significant at Tintagel is the story of Tristan and Yseult, a tale with strong Cornish connections (Padel 1981). Henry Jenner made explicit the connection

between Tintagel and the Tristan and Yseult legend a long time ago (1926; *see* also Thomas 1993, 28, 54-5). Large parts of this story, in the earliest versions, are set at Tintagel, which is one of the named courts of King Mark. At the outset of the story it is, incidentally, also the place where Tristan is conceived but Tristan's connection with the place is much more substantial – he repeatedly returns to it throughout his much-travelled life. Although the 12th- and early 13th-century versions of the story, with which Richard and his people would have been familiar, survive only in fragmentary form, they share some features in terms of the physical landscape of the story. There are three physical features which are integral to significant episodes: a garden or orchard; a chapel on a cliff; and an 'underground' element in the form of a grotto, cave or cellar. The most logical explanation for the curious features of medieval Tintagel therefore seems to be that Richard was recreating a theatrical landscape that had to exist to embody physically the legend of Tristan and Yseult.

The matches between the story and the features at Tintagel are not all exact (though in the case of the chapel they are remarkably so) but it has to be remembered that the legend existed in many versions that differed widely in detail and not all of which will have survived. In Beroul's version the garden contained a stream issuing from a spring with adjacent pine tree and grey granite boulder (Fedrick 1970, chapter 2); at Tintagel there seems no possibility that there was ever a spring within the walled garden but there are three springs within a short distance. Rose (1994) has commented on the possible connections between the garden at Tintagel and the story of Tristan and Yseult. On the other hand the description of the chapel given by Beroul bears a remarkable resemblance to the chapel at Tintagel. The chapel is positioned so that its eastern end is directly above a cliff (Fig 25). Tristan, in order to evade his captors, begs to be allowed to pray in the chapel; he points out that there is only one door, so that they may easily guard it to ensure that he does not escape; he then leaps through the east window down the cliff and gets away (ibid, 68).

There is a question over the dating of the chapel, which has generally been thought to be a two-phase structure, built in the 12th and extended in the 13th century (Thomas 1993, 110-12). If this is so, its position was pre-determined before Richard's time. However, the dating evidence for a 12th-century origin is not strong, being based only on a few *ex situ* portable carved stones allegedly found there. Such stones are frequently re-used, as indeed one of these has been recently, in Tintagel parish church. It could be argued that in recreating 'the chapel on the rocks' of Tristan's legendary leap, Richard might deliberately have incorporated archaic architectural details. (In any case the

fragments are not particularly diagnostic and could be of 13th-century date: Michael Carter pers comm via Susan Greaney.)

Fig 25: looking up to the east end of the chapel, which is marked by the modern fence

The underground element of the Tristan and Yseult legend varies considerably between versions. In some Tristan and Yseult, while hiding together in the forest, occupy a grotto or cave. In another Tristan hides in the cellar beneath a forester's house while supposedly in exile. The 'tunnel' at Tintagel (Fig 26) makes a much better romantic lovers' grotto than it does a prosaic but unconvincing 'larder'.

It would be unwise to assume that Richard alone was responsible for the creation of this landscape. He was noted as an admirer of female beauty and married successively three of the most admired women of the age – Isabella Marshal, Sanchia of Provence and Beatrice of Falkenberg – as well as having a Cornish mistress, Joan; one of these ladies might have been an aficionado of the Tristan and Yseult legend and responsible for these works at Tintagel. On the other hand there is one piece of literary evidence which points directly to Richard as the instigator. In one version of the legend, that of Thomas of Britain (*c*1155-60), the story has been subtly altered, probably as a compliment to King Henry II and Queen Eleanor (Hatto 2004a), Richard's formidable grandparents. This and later versions even give Tristan the armorial bearings of the House of Anjou (Hatto 2004b). It is worth noting in this regard that Richard gave the

parish church of Tintagel to Fontevrault, the burial place of his grandfather (Jenner 1926, 193).

Fig 26: the 'Tunnel'

Exactly how these contrived landscape elements were used is, of course, unknown and perhaps unknowable. Were visitors shown these locations as the 'actual' sites of events in the stories? Or were they used as scenes in a promenade drama in which actors played out the episodes of the legend? Either or both seem possible, especially in view of the royal popularity of dressing up 'hastiludes' of the following century (Vale 2005). Certainly, if one wished to push the idea of an enacted scenario further, one could suggest that the marshy area and hollow way towards the south-western edge of the plateau represent the marshy *le Gué Aventuros* – 'the ford at which things are liable to happen' (Padel 1981, 61), the location of another significant dramatic episode where the conniving Yseult has herself carried by Tristan in disguise, in order to deceive King Mark.

(Incidentally, it should be noted that even if future scholarship should reinstate Reginald, Earl of Cornwall in the 12th century, as builder of the castle, there is a ready-made argument for an Arthurian interpretation of his motives (Oswald *et al* 2006, 94).)

Phase Va (military)

The post-medieval military remains at Tintagel are vanishingly slight and can only be interpreted as such in the light of Sir Richard Grenville's survey of 1583 (Thomas 1993, 41, fig 31). On his map Grenville shows two 'rampirs' for guns to defend the landing places against a possible Spanish invader. Thomas interpreted one of the buildings on Site D (028) as one of these gun platforms (ibid, 50-1) and at the time of survey it was labelled as a 'gun house' but the attribution is unacceptable; the structure is too far from the cliff edge, of the wrong form and far too small (*see* Fig 9). A platform just below the cliff top (072) is a much more likely candidate; it looks like a gun platform and it is in the place indicated by Grenville. A natural rock ledge (073) occupies what appears to be the site of Grenville's other 'rampir'; there is no sign that this has been utilised as a gun platform but any evidence could have been lost to erosion. However, a third feature (071) also has the appearance of a possible eroded gun platform and might be well sited to cover the seaward approach to the Iron Gate. Grenville's map also suggests that the Iron Gate should be defended by guns but no platforms are identifiable there. Whether guns were ever placed at Tintagel to Grenville's specification is not known.

Phase Vb (industrial)

Lead was being mined at Tintagel from at least the 19th century. The Wheal Heart Copper & Lead Work obtained a lease for the Island in 1806 to mine for galena and silver but the venture failed. In 1853 a new mining venture was set up under the name King Arthur Consols and an adit was driven in 1870 (Thomas 1993, 27). The entrance to this adit can be seen near Merlin's Cave and early photographs show it with a walkway leading along the cliff face to the mainland (Fig 27). Slate working was also undertaken along this coast in the 19th century (*see* Sharpe 1990 and Sturgess 2004).

However, several of the earthworks on the Island can also be attributed to mining activity. A number of linear cuts have the appearance of prospection trenches (075, 108, 144, 161 and 168), searching for surface signs of mineral veins. These include the

supposed 'field system' identified by Charles Thomas and Etienne Rynne (Thomas 1993, 45) on the west-facing slope of the Island (*see* Fig 14) as well as a number on the plateau. Wherever these features are in relationship with other earthworks they are demonstrably later. Also on the plateau is a small hollow (121) which Thomas identified as a 'caretaker's hut' belonging to Phase II (1993, 92, fig 73). However, careful examination suggests that this might be the head of a mine shaft with a small penumbra of spoil (*see* Fig 16). Whether these remains relate to the 19th-century mining or to unrecorded earlier mining ventures is unknown; they do suggest, however, the possibility that there might be a longer history to mineral extraction at Tintagel – mineral lodes at Tintagel were known by the end of the 16th century (Thomas 1988, 43).

Fig 27: the mine adit to the right with the scar of the walkway passing across the top of Merlin's Cave to the left

A number of structures in the Haven probably also relate to industrial activity and to the loading and unloading of vessels (*see* Herring 2016).

Phase Vc (tourism)

The physical remains of early tourism at Tintagel are most conspicuously marked by King Arthur's Castle Hotel but at the Castle itself consist of a group of structures around the Island or Inner Ward, the most obvious of which is the small shelter just inside the gate, and the wall into which it is set, largely the work of Kinsman (Thomas

1993, 29-31, 122-3). In the 20th century, following Radford's excavations or clearances, substantial parts of the Phase II structures were restored for public appreciation by the Ministry of Works. Unfortunately it is not possible to rely on the accuracy or faithfulness of these restorations (Barrowman *et al* 2007, 13-16). Later the Ministry of Works also did some 'silent' restoration of the medieval masonry (Thomas 1993, 124). Official approaches to tourism at Tintagel have been, and continue to be, controversial (e.g. Orange and Laviolette 2010).

METHODOLOGY

Hard copies of the 1984 survey were taken into the field and annotated. A few additional features were added by taped measurements and others using a handheld mapping-grade Trimble GNSS receiver using Trimble VRS, Ordnance Survey's GNSS correction network (OSNet), giving a stated accuracy of 10cm.

A surviving fragment of quay structure in the Haven (Fig 34) was identified and surveyed with the mapping-grade GNSS receiver. When more features were noted around the Haven, however, this area was investigated as a separate project (Herring 2016).

Two survey markers from one of the previous surveys (1988) were found and photographed in 2015 (Figs 28 and 29): survey point 13 (SX 04902.311 89054.046: 80.14mOD) and survey point 26 (SX 04907.300 89102.800: 82.14mOD).

Figs 28 and 29: survey points 13 and 26 from the 1988 survey marked by iron pins in bedrock

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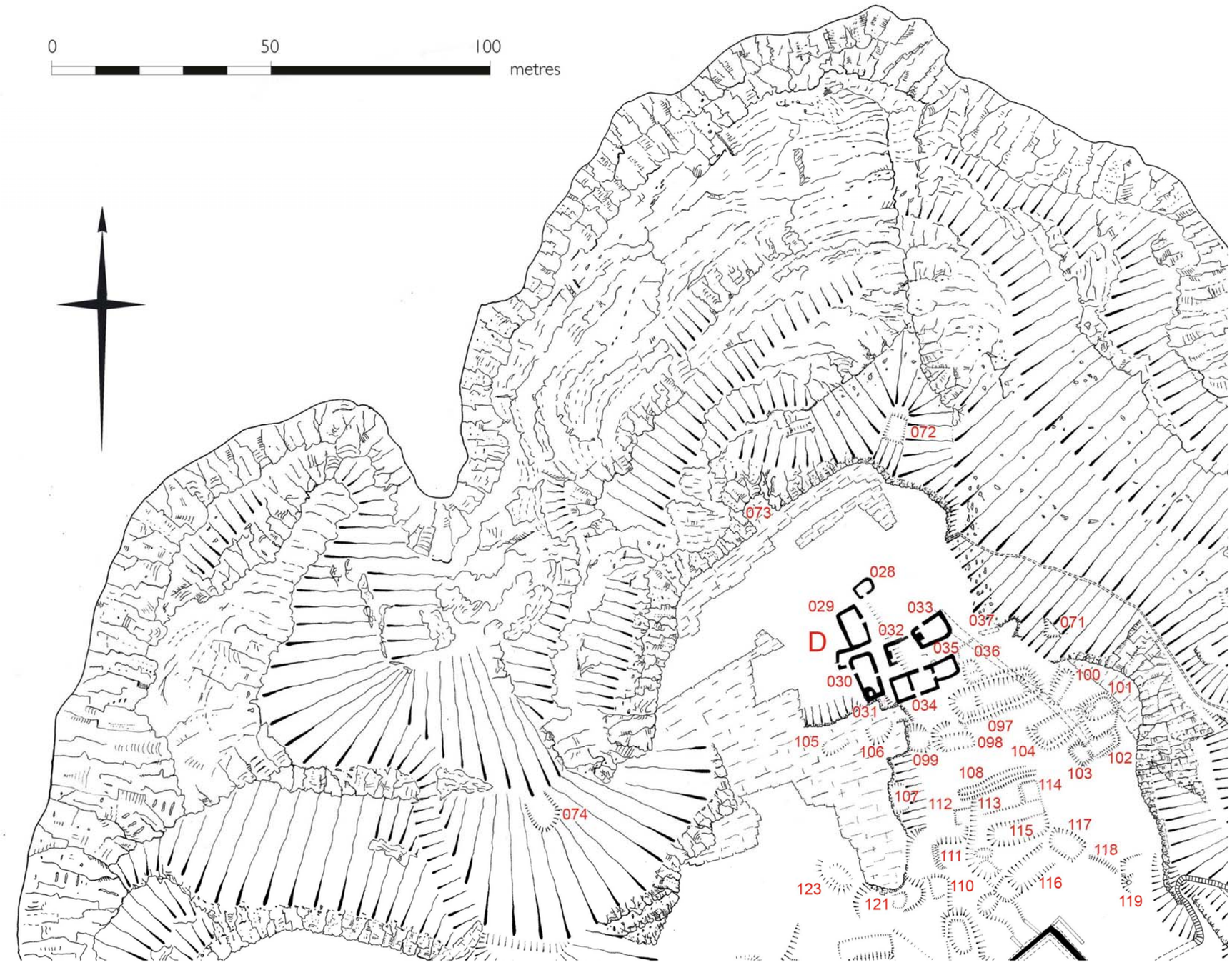

Fig 30: survey plan, NW sheet ©Historic England

Fig 31: survey plan, NE sheet ©Historic England

Fig 32: survey plan, SW sheet ©Historic England

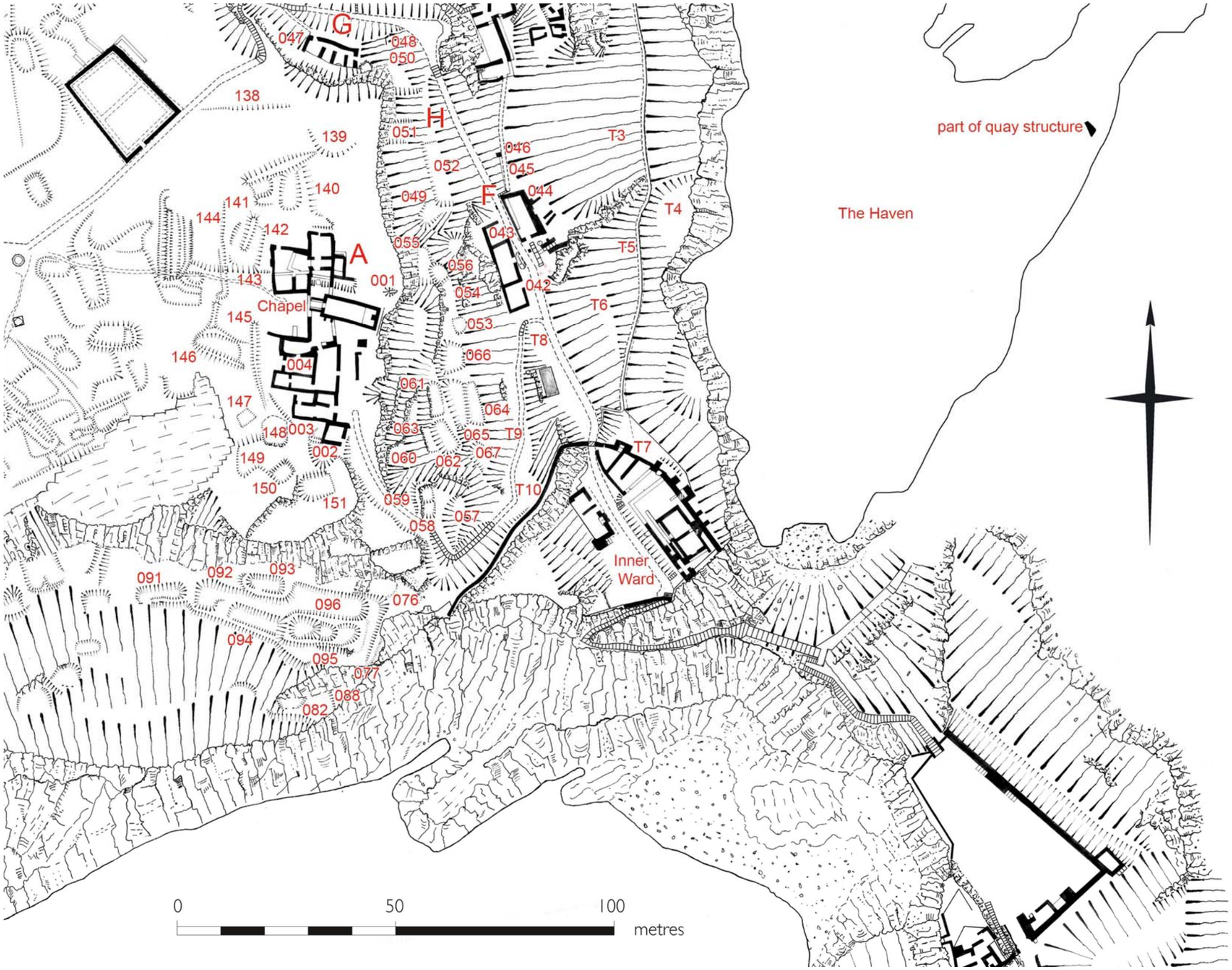

Fig 33: survey plan, SE sheet ©Historic England

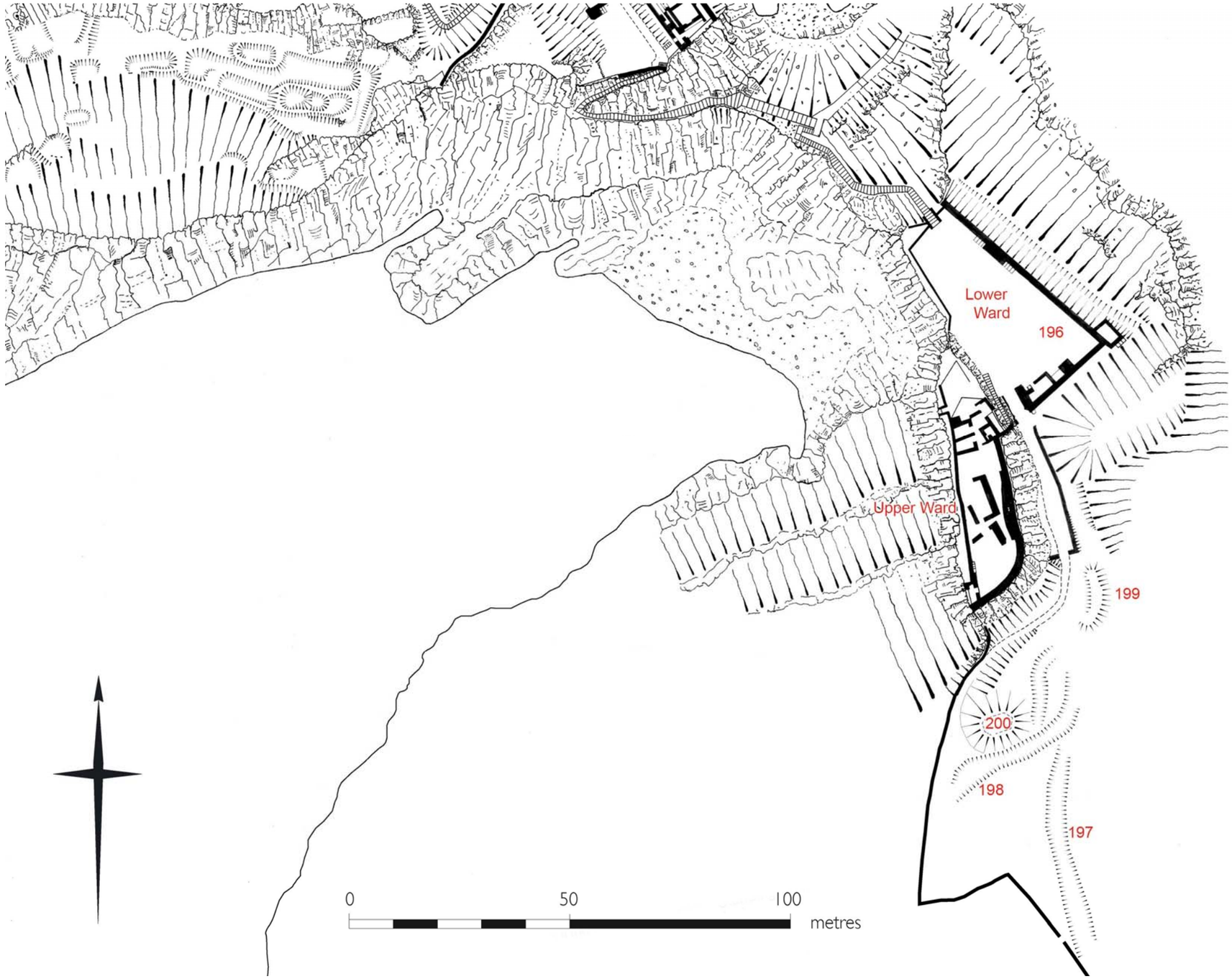

Fig 34: survey plan, mainland sheet ©Historic England

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