

guide to the the tinnerns way

AND NEARBY ANCIENT SITES



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Holy Well of St.Ia



Carn Kenidjack

This brief guide to the Tinnerns Way describes over 20 prehistoric and early Christian sites along its 18 mile (29km) route that traces, as closely as possible, the ancient paths along which tin and copper were transported from the mineral rich area around St Just to sheltered anchorages at St Ives and, once, to Mount's Bay.

For those who feel unable to travel the complete route in one day, the long walk has been broken down into five short walks (4 of which are circular).

Please note that this booklet was last printed in 1994 and there may well be differences 'on the ground' – particularly new fences and gates – also most moorland is now open access land where the public have a 'right to roam'.

This booklet should be used in conjunction with the relevant large scale Ordnance Survey map.

You are free to print out this guide for your own use only.

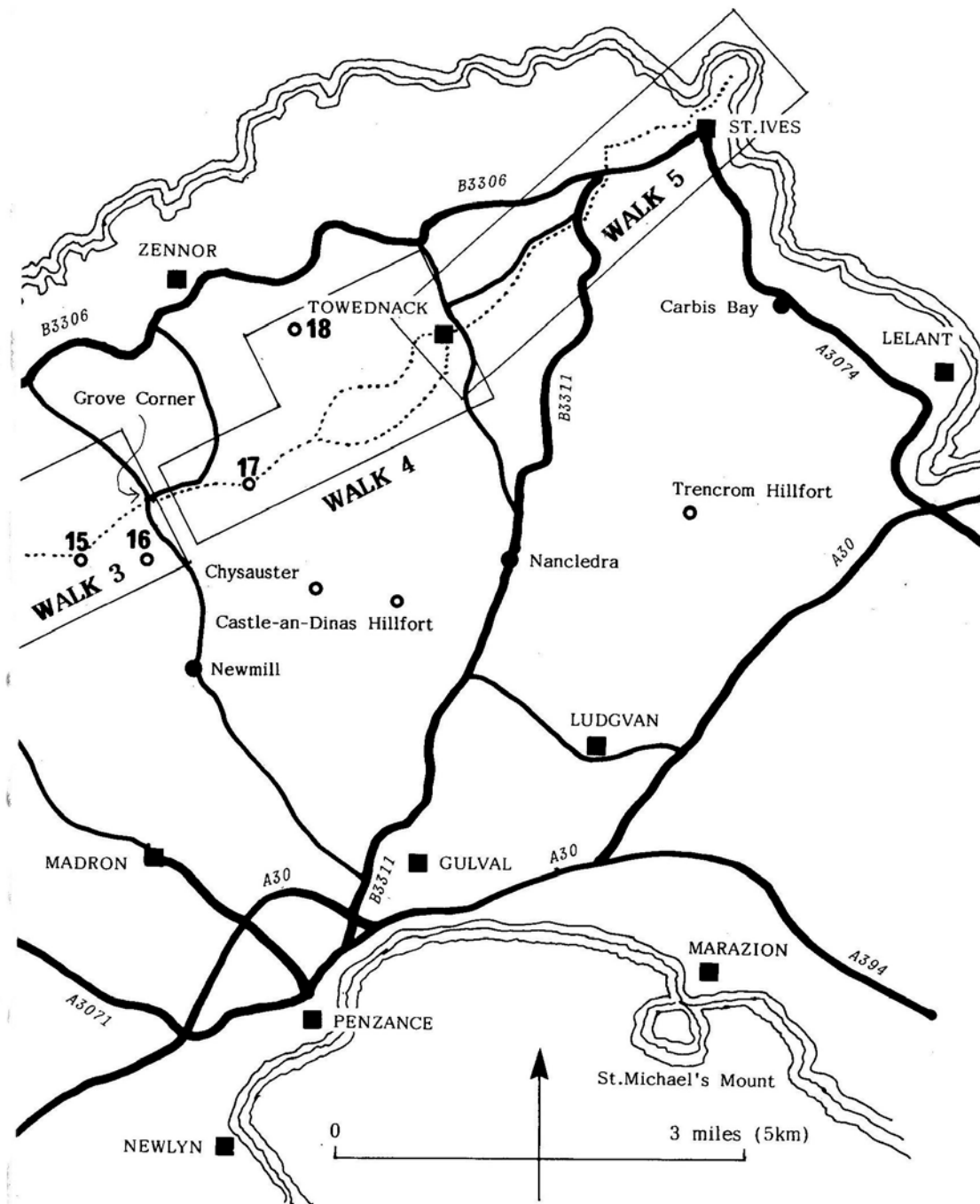
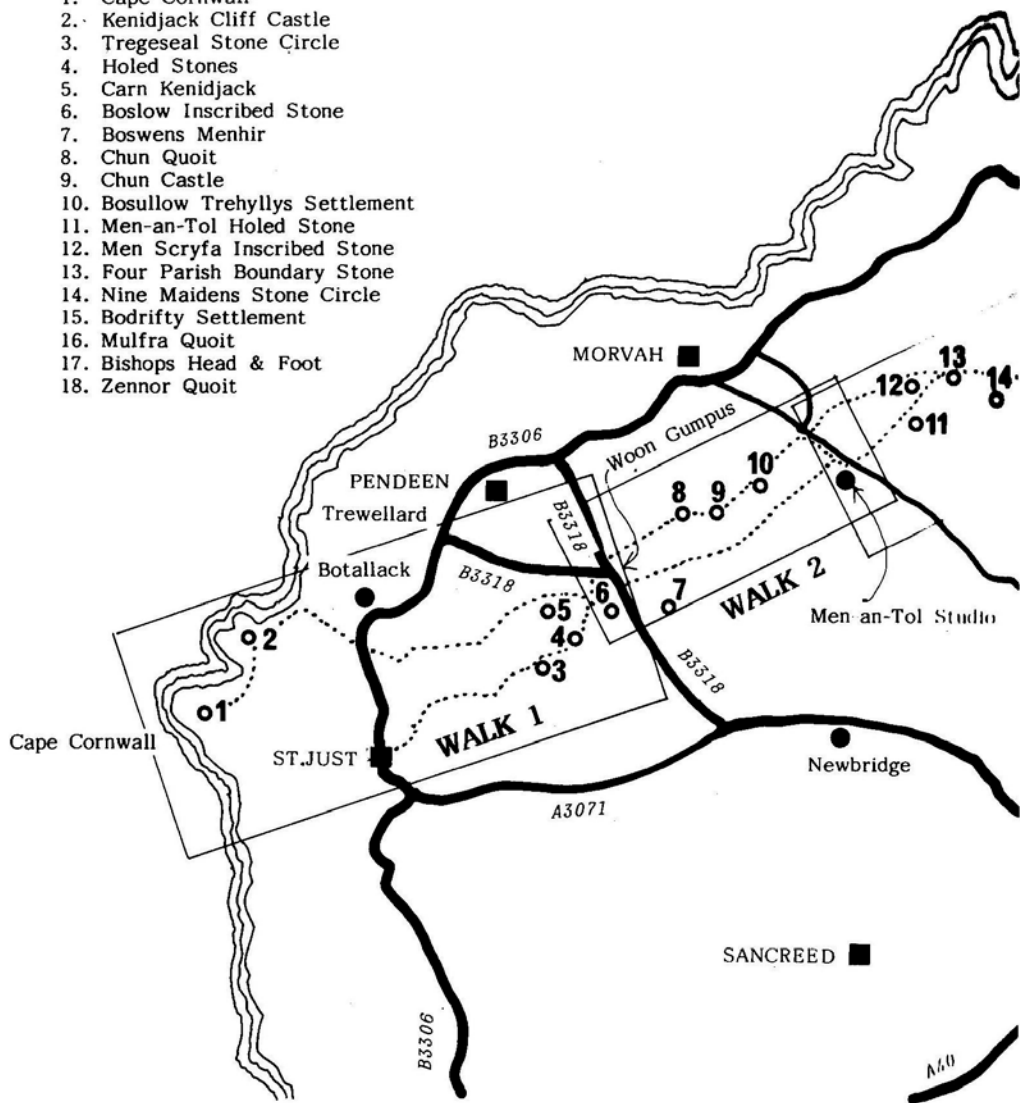
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the tinnerns way

CAPE CORNWALL (ST.JUST) TO ST.IVES

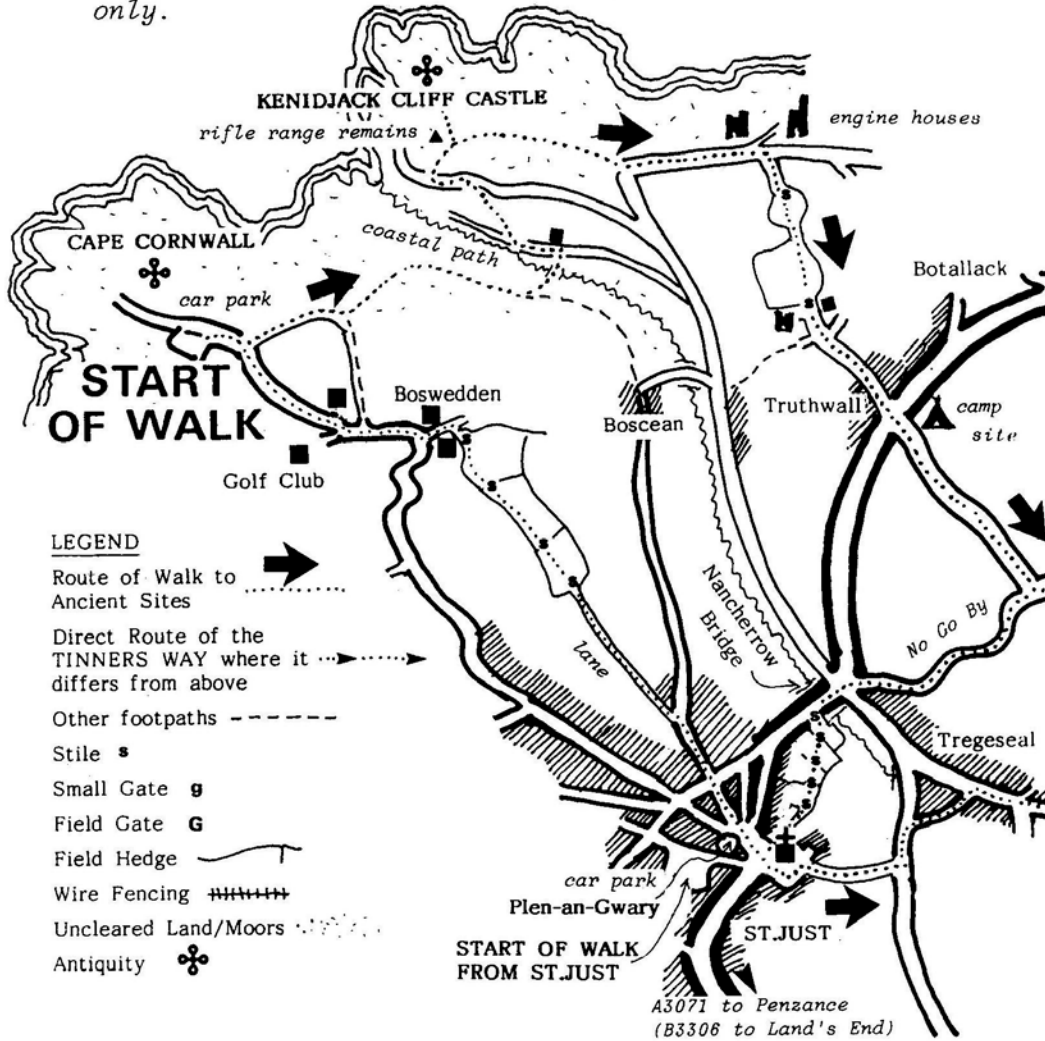
ANCIENT SITES

1. Cape Cornwall
2. Kenidjack Cliff Castle
3. Tregeseal Stone Circle
4. Holed Stones
5. Carn Kenidjack
6. Boslow Inscribed Stone
7. Boswens Menhir
8. Chun Quoit
9. Chun Castle
10. Bosulow Trehyllys Settlement
11. Men-an-Tol Holed Stone
12. Men Scryfa Inscribed Stone
13. Four Parish Boundary Stone
14. Nine Maidens Stone Circle
15. Bodrifty Settlement
16. Mulfra Quoit
17. Bishops Head & Foot
18. Zennor Quoit

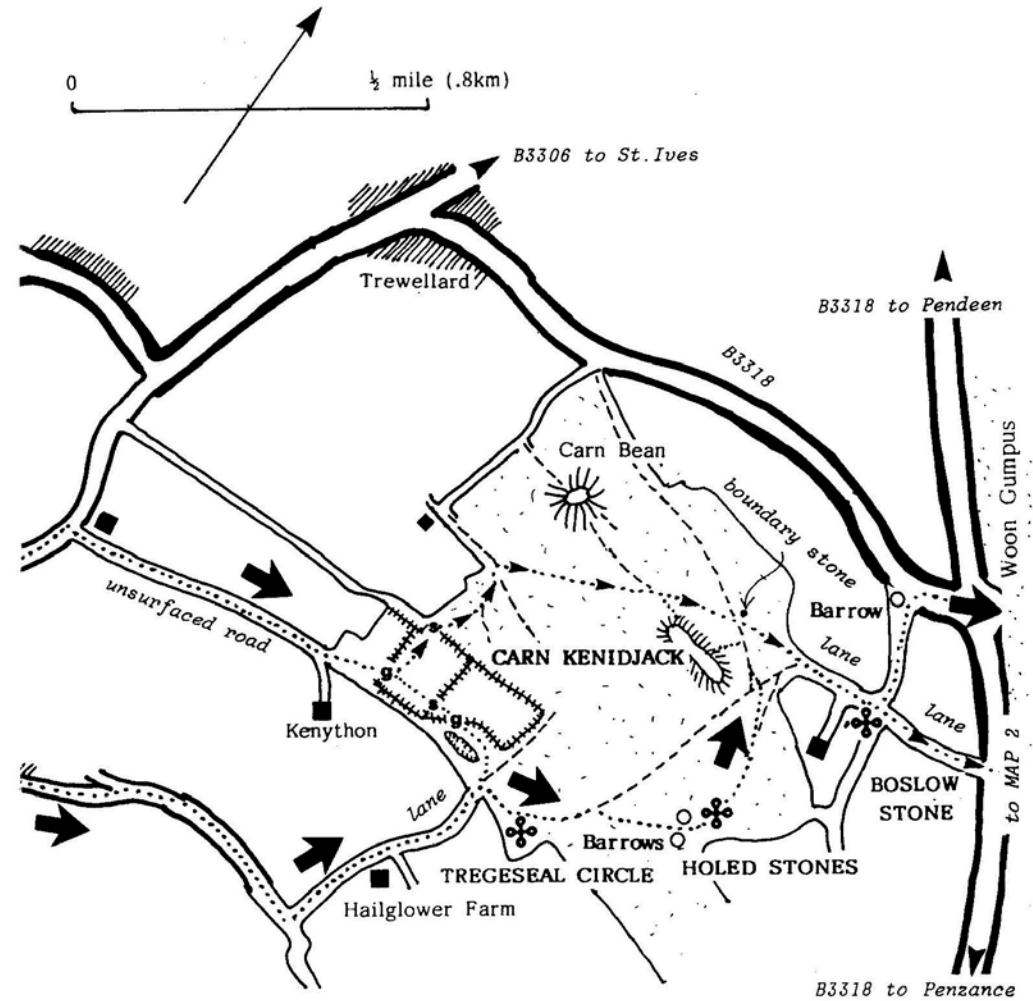


walk one

VISITING MOTORISTS are requested not to drive along the unsurfaced roads and lanes shown on the maps in this guide - most of them are used by residents to gain access to their homes and are public rights of way for walkers only.



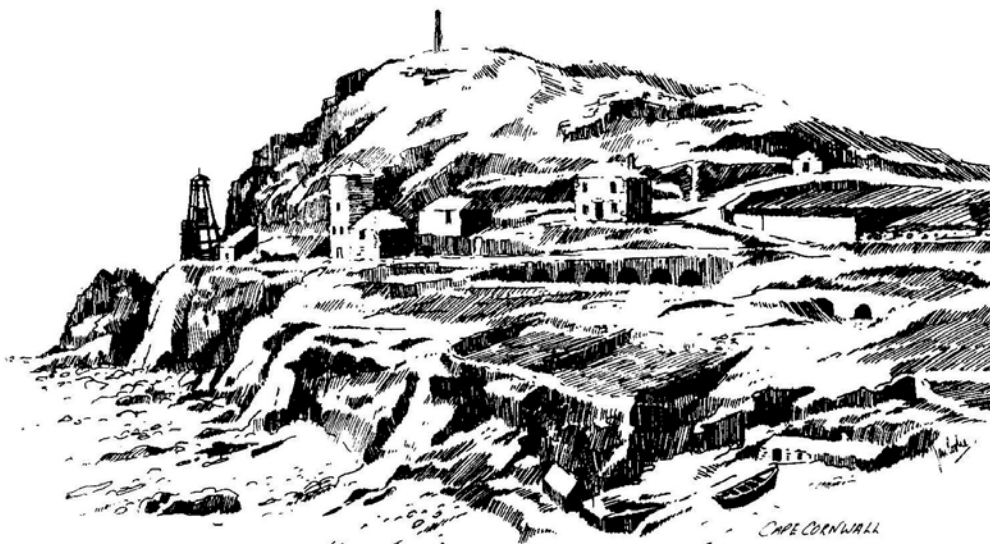
There are two starting points for the first section of the Tinners Way. The first begins from Cape Cornwall but for those without private transport who may wish to avoid the 25 minute walk down to the Cape it is more convenient to begin from the town of St. Just. Both walks later merge on the moors by Carn Kenidjack.



CAPE CORNWALL TO WOON GUMPUS (4½ miles - 7.2km)

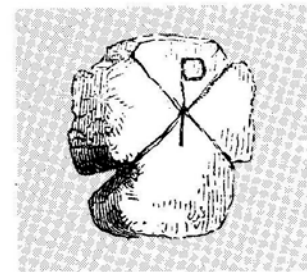
The walk begins at Cape Cornwall, with its distinctive mine stack on the summit, from a large car park above the small boats and fishermen's huts of Priest's Cove - a corruption of Porth East (the cove or harbour of St. Just; 'East' being a localised form of Just). On clear days the Isles of Scilly stand out sharply on the horizon while the two ominous rocks of the Brisons, scene of many shipwrecks, seem to stand guard over the Cape. The sandy beach at Sennen and the cliffs and Longships lighthouse at Land's End can be seen in the distance to the south and far away the Wolf Rock lighthouse keeps its lonely watch.

cape cornwall



Cape Cornwall (from a 19th c. engraving)

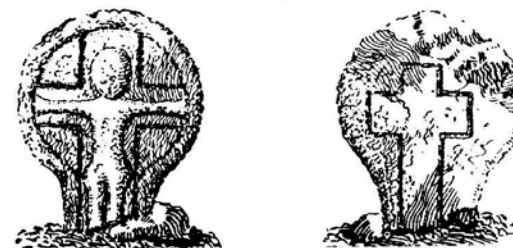
Nothing remains of the former Iron Age defences across the neck of this peninsula but they were still visible up to the mid-19th century before the land was ploughed up. During the Late Bronze-Early Iron Age period (c.500BC) it was the necessity of guarding the valuable mineral wealth of the area that prompted the construction of cliff castles on either side of the cove between the Cape and Kenidjack - the only cove in the peninsula to be so heavily protected. But although the cove provided a terminus for maritime communication, at least in good weather conditions, the 'castles' guarded the



Chi-Rho Crosshead
(Blight 1861)

start of an all-weather network of landward tracks that were protected by a series of hillforts, and enabled the precious metals to be transported to the sheltered trading harbours on the far side of the peninsula whenever they were required.

Several barrows also once stood around the 'neck' where there is a small chapel known as St.Helen's Oratory. This rectangular building was built within a circular wall but today only a few bits of ancient wall remain, other walls being a confused jumble of derelict modern structures. Part of a 15th century stone door-jamb was found built into a nearby hedge and a small cross of unknown age is now cemented onto the top of the chapel wall. Up until the early part of the 17th century the Cape had been known by its Cornish name of 'Kulgyth' or 'The Kilguth' - the meaning of which has so far not been satisfactorily explained. Over a century ago another small cross was discovered in a nearby watercourse - this cross was marked with a 5th/6th century form of Christian 'chi-rho' symbol but was later thrown down a well in St. Just by the Rev.Gorham. In spite of many searches it has never been recovered.



Market Cross St. Just (Langdon 1896)
also thrown down well by Rev.Gorham

The route leaves the car park and follows the coastal path above Porthledden Cove between the Cape and Kenidjack Cliff Castle before plunging down the steep side of the valley with its many mine ruins overgrown with lush vegetation; across a stream; up the other side of the valley to a small ruinous building and the remnants of a rifle range - the headland and Cliff Castle lie directly behind and beyond a wire fence and stile.

Kenidjack cliff castle

Long before it was realised that tin and copper ore could be picked off the ground and made into metal implements, the area around this headland was exploited by the people of the New Stone Age (Neolithic - c.3500-2000BC) for its stone which was particularly suitable for working into various kinds of tools. But by the Iron Age period (c.400BC) when the use of bronze was at its height - and therefore tin and copper were at their most valuable - it became necessary to build a system of ditches and ramparts across the headland as part of an overall system of defence. These can still be clearly seen and are especially impressive on the Botallack side where they reach right down to the very edge of the cliff. Finds in the area include ceremonial axe-heads and pieces of almost pure copper, some of which showed the shape of the mould into which the liquid metal had been poured. There are also traces of hut circles and long-destroyed barrows.

The cliff castle acted as a fortified sanctuary to which the inhabitants could retire in times of attack. In 56BC, during his campaign against the tribe of the Veneti in Brittany, Julius Caesar described his frustration in attempting to subdue such fortifications - every time his troops were on the point of breaching the defences, the defenders scrambled down the cliffs into their boats and moved along the coast to the next cliff-castle where the whole process of attack had to be repeated.

Return to the coastal path and follow this until you arrive at the second of a pair of derelict engine houses - the whole area is littered with the ruins of this once prosperous industrial landscape and the buildings of the Crowns Mine can be seen ahead nestling against the cliff side above the Atlantic Ocean. Just before this second engine house



The Crowns Mine Botallack (Blight 1861)

leave the main track along a lane leading off to the right between fields (ignore the waymark); then via stiles

minor roads and a long unsurfaced track to Kenythen onto the moors. At a small wooden gate set into the new wire fence (there has been considerable destruction of moorland here during the past 3 to 4 years) there is a division of routes.

The DIRECT ROUTE of the Tinnens Way leaves the small wooden gate mentioned above and bears left across the field to a stile by a gate on the far side; keep to the waymarked path across the moors towards and past Carn Kenidjack to join a stony narrow lane between fields; past the Boslow stone; along an often very wet/muddy stretch of lane; over the B3318 to Woon Gumpus (Cornish for Level Downs). The Direct Route continues on Map 2.

The walk towards Tregeseal Stone Circle continues ahead across the field to a stile on the far side; through another gate; alongside the edge of an immense waterfilled hole recently dug out of the moorland, to meet the 'St. Just route' at the end of the lane from Hailglower Farm. Tregeseal Stone Circle stands several hundred yards ahead.



Tregeseal West Stone Circle - now destroyed (Rev. Cotton 1826)

ST. JUST TO WOON GUMPUS (3½ miles - 5.6km)

St. Just, the 'first and last town' in Britain, is served by a bus service from Penzance and is also on the St. Ives to Land's End coastal bus service (summer only). The walk begins from a large car park and bus terminus and passes by the circular enclosure known as the *Plen-an-Gwary* or the 'plain' - a mediaeval amphitheatre used for the performance of miracle plays, athletic competitions and wrestling. As recently as the mid-18th century there were 6 tiers of stone seats (later taken for local building purposes) and the whole site was once surrounded by a ditch. This much mutilated and altered site shows many similarities with ancient ditch and bank enclosures and may possibly have been constructed on the ruins of a prehistoric ritual enclosure having its entrance facing the direction of the rising midsummer sun.

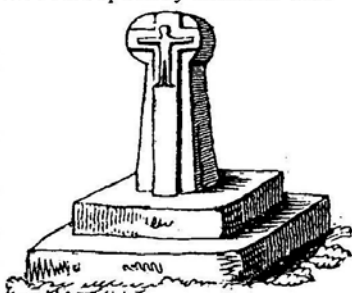
The walk leaves the 'plain' and crosses the main square to the parish church.

st. just

The first known mention of the church was in a tax register of 1291 (Eccles. Sti. Justi) but the traditional ancient name was Lafroudha - the prefix 'lan' relating to a Celtic sacred place. By the late 13th century the original place of worship had most likely become ruinous and a new chancel was dedicated by the Bishop of Exeter on 13th July 1336. The church has been much enlarged and restored since then, although the 14th century tower still stands four-square against the buffeting gales which so frequently assault this wild and beautiful coastline.

There are two ancient crosses in the churchyard. The Market Cross stands just inside the western gate but was formerly situated a few yards outside the churchyard wall. It was from this cross that notices of local events were read out after Sunday service until the cross-shaft was broken during the mid-19th century by drunken miners (according to J.T. Blight) and the figure on it lost part of its legs and feet. The cross was then removed to the vicarage garden for safe keeping but suffered a fate similar to that from Cape Cornwall by being thrown down 'Venton East' (the Holy Well of St. Just) by the infamous vicar - Rev. Gorham. It was retrieved in the 1880's from its muddy resting place and erected in the centre of the new cemetery on the Land's End road about 1896 where it remained until 1965 when it was returned close to its original site!

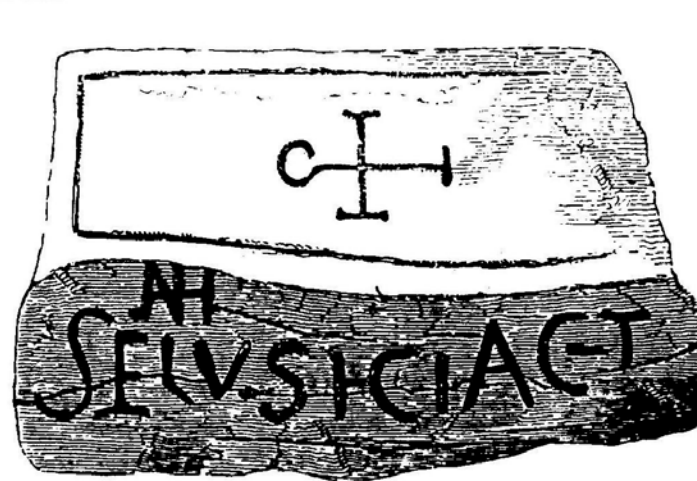
A second ancient cross-head lies on the ground next to the entrance to the south porch. This is known as the 'Grouse Cross' and was apparently



The Market Cross
(Paris 19th c.)

found in a hedge in one of the fields of 'No Go By' where there are several field names recorded in the 1840 Tithe Apportionments as 'Noon an Groas' (loosely translated as 'down of the stone cross'); these fields lie adjacent to the churchway path from Carnyorth and the northern reaches of the parish. The cross was removed in a wheelbarrow to the finder's home at Boswedden but later taken to the backyard of a cottage in Cape Cornwall Street where the owner wished it to be placed on her grave when the time arrived. It was however removed by the vicar in 1968 and placed in its present situation. [There is also a large group of fields straddling the main road between Nancherrow and Botallack which have names of 'Grous' (i.e. stone cross) and this was another churchway from Truthwall and Botallack.]

Two more cross remains can be seen inside the church. There is a cross-shaft decorated with unfinished celtic knotwork and built horizontally into the wall of the north aisle; part of it was cut off in the 1860's as it projected across the window arch. The decorative work is similar in design to part of a cross in St. Neot's churchyard (on the southern edge of Bodmin moor) and also to crosses in Jarrow and Govan in the north of Britain. It is thought that this shaft may have been intended as the original churchyard cross.



The Selus Stone (Blight 1885)



Cross-shaft (Langdon 1896)

One of the most interesting stones is the 5½ foot high inscribed stone known as the 'Selus Stone' which was discovered in 1824 built into the wall by the High Altar, one face of which is decorated with a Chi-Rho cross. The main inscription reads SELUS IC IAC-T (Here lies Selus) and is of a type also typical in Gaul where centuries of Roman occupation had reduced the importance of recording ancestral blood ties normally so essential in establishing the legitimacy of celtic tribal chieftains (see section on Men Scryfa Inscribed Stone). Selus may be the same person as Selyf who is linked in early mediaeval genealogies to Iestyn - both being the (grand)sons of King Gereint who ruled the area north of the River Fal. It is likely that Iestyn (a celtic form of the Latin 'Just' - an early Christian martyr) is the royal

Christian chieftain after whom the parish was dedicated. There are two interesting wall paintings in the church which are the sole survivors of six discovered in the last century during restoration work.

The fortunes and growth of the town have always been directly affected by the profitability of local tin and copper mines and most of the buildings were erected on leasehold land between 1750 and 1900 by poor miners with the population reaching a peak of about 9000 during the 1870's after which the decline in mining led to extensive emigration - the present Co-Op building even being used as a shipping agent's office. No mines are working at the present time and the town now relies on agriculture, service industries and tourism for its survival.



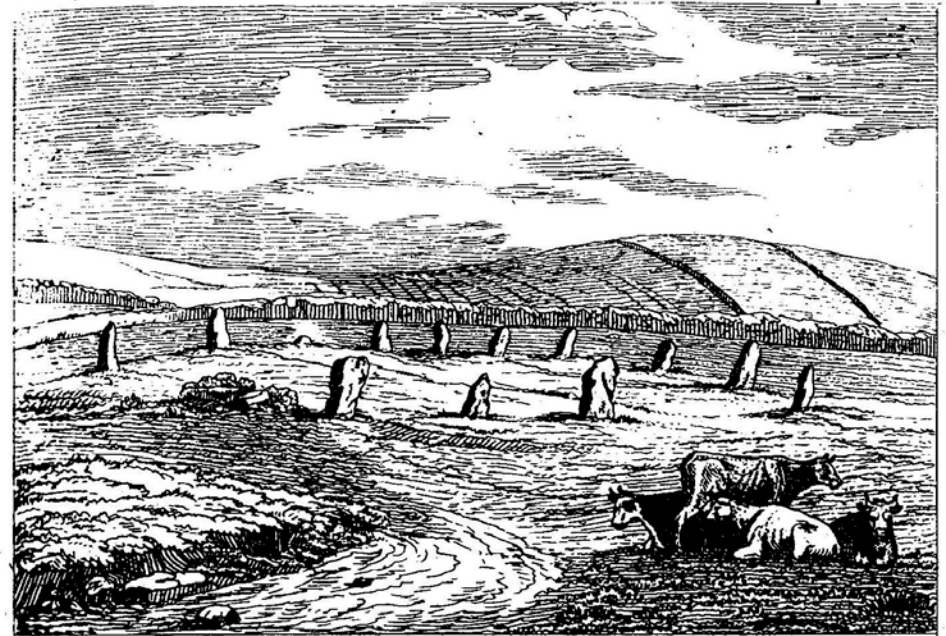
I have described two routes out of the town. The first leaves the Church by the western (Market Cross) gate and follows the churchyard wall past Church Square and along the route of an old churchway path which soon begins to descend the fields to meet the B3306 by Nancherrow bridge. Continue up No Go By hill just to the left side of a former Victorian Toll House, now a gallery and local crafts shop, to join the way from Cape Cornwall at the top of the hill.

The second route leaves the church towards the east; through Venton East Square (named after the Holy Well of St. Just) and down a steep and ancient lane to the road. Locate a footpath leading off to the right by a new housing development. The way now climbs up Tregeseal valley along the road and on past Hailglower Farm; along a narrow and usually very wet lane onto the moors. The Stone Circle lies several hundred yards along the path to the right.

tregeseal stone circle

Only a single stone circle remains out of the pair recorded in 1738 and a possible third circle (detected from crop marks in aerial photographs) may once have existed to the west of the other two. Stone circles are generally dated to between about 2500-1500BC after which their construction seems to have died out. The present circle is the most easterly of the three and in 1738 the central circle had ten of its stones standing with another four lying on the ground, but by 1961, after decades of gradual deterioration, it was finally 'tidied up' (it stood in the cleared field immediately to the west of the existing circle). This site is yet another previously known as the 'Nine Maidens' or 'Merry Maidens' but was much mutilated during the 1860's by the digging of a small 'quarry' on the western side. After this act of vandalism

only ten stones remained upright out of the seventeen noted 100 years earlier - all the stones in the western half of the ring having been removed or fallen. The site was 'restored' at the turn of the century when several stones were erected in the hollow of the ground created by the quarry. As with the Nine Maidens at Boskednan this circle also seems to have a relationship with a nearby rocky outcrop - in this case Carn Kenidjack to the north.



Tregeseal East Stone Circle - restored (Rev. Cotton 1826)

Leave along the main track towards the rocky outline of Carn Kenidjack but watch out for the turning off to the right towards the bracken-covered mounds of two barrows. The Holed Stones lie close to the path past these barrows and the remains of a wire fence.



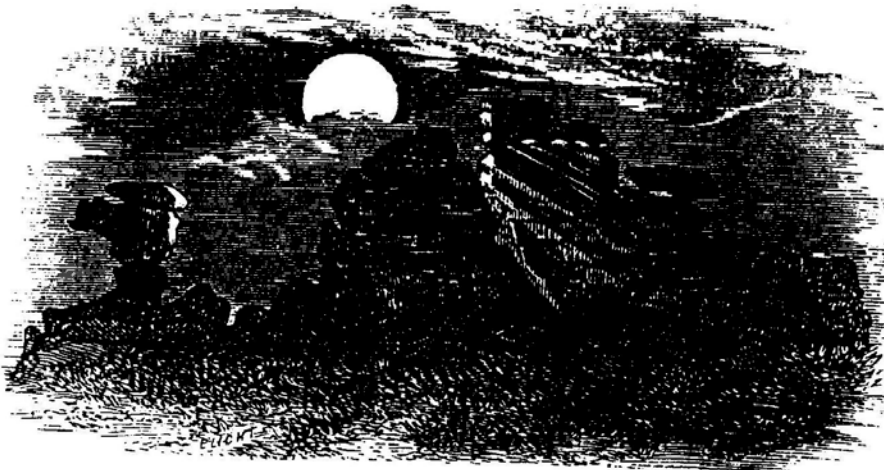
Holed Stones near Carn Kenidjack (Cooke 1990)

holed stones

Three large stones with a small hole through each of them stand in a line on the moors below Carn Kenidjack, with a fourth one broken across the middle lying on the ground by them. A fifth smaller stone, broken in two but recently cemented together, stands a few yards away to the north-west. All these five stones have their holes 'splayed out' on both sides indicating that they were 'beaten through with clumsy instruments' and likely to be ancient, possibly Bronze Age (c.2000-400BC) when there appears to have been a need for ritual holed stones. They all seem to have been lying flat on the ground during the mid-19th century and a sixth small holed stone stands some distance uphill to the north-east, but since the hole was drilled through (it is straight edged rather than splayed out) it is unlikely to be very old. As with the more famous Men-an-Tol these holed stones may have had a function concerned with healing and fertility, although as far as I am aware there are no specific legends connected with this site.

The path now twists its way uphill through the gorse and heather - a riot of brilliant yellow, purples and mauves in late summer - keep a look out for a narrow track leading off left in the direction of the Carn; this soon crosses a major bridleway and continues towards Carn Kenidjack.

CARN KENIDJACK



Carn Kenidjack (Blight 1861)

The 'hooting carn', so called from the noise made by the wind as it rushes about the rocky outcrop, is not a man-made site but the stones of this formation 'reared in fantastic confusion' can be seen from a large number of prehistoric sites and it seems probable that its prominent position and weird

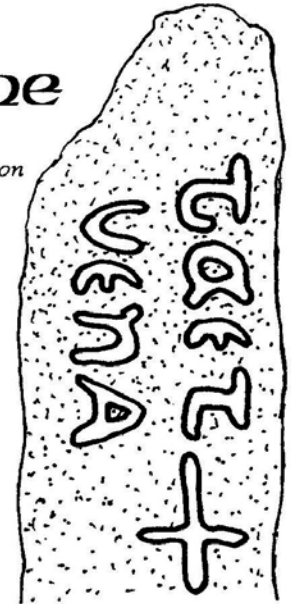
shape gave it especial significance to a society preoccupied with all types of stone. The land surrounding the Carn was well populated at least by the time of the Bronze Age and many remains of barrows, field systems and dwellings lie hidden by the bracken, heather and gorse which cover the moors. Tales abound of the supernatural 'little people' who were especially active about the Carn where midnight combat between demons was held and where the Devil himself was said to hunt for lost souls.

Retrace your steps to the main bridleway mentioned above and follow it to a narrow stoney lane between fields and on to a staggered cross-tracks - the Inscribed Stone lies a few steps down the right-hand turning.

BOSLOW stone

This 4½ foot high stone, previously known as 'Crowze East' or the 'cross of St. Just' stands on the parish boundary between St. Just and Sancreed close to the Tinnens Way and is supposed to have been rediscovered during the summer of 1877. There is a simple cross cut into the southern face and a very worn indistinct inscription on the western face. This was thought to read JAC-TVENA (Hic Jacit Vena - Here lies Vena), a form of Christian memorial commonplace in post-Roman Gaul. An alternative version of the inscription is thought to read TAET(?) + UERA; possibly a personal name.

Inscription after the Victoria County History (1906)



Return to the farm driveway which soon meets the Trewellard road - there are the remains of a Bronze Age Barrow in rough ground over to the left. Turn right to the lay-by (the Walk continues on MAP 2).

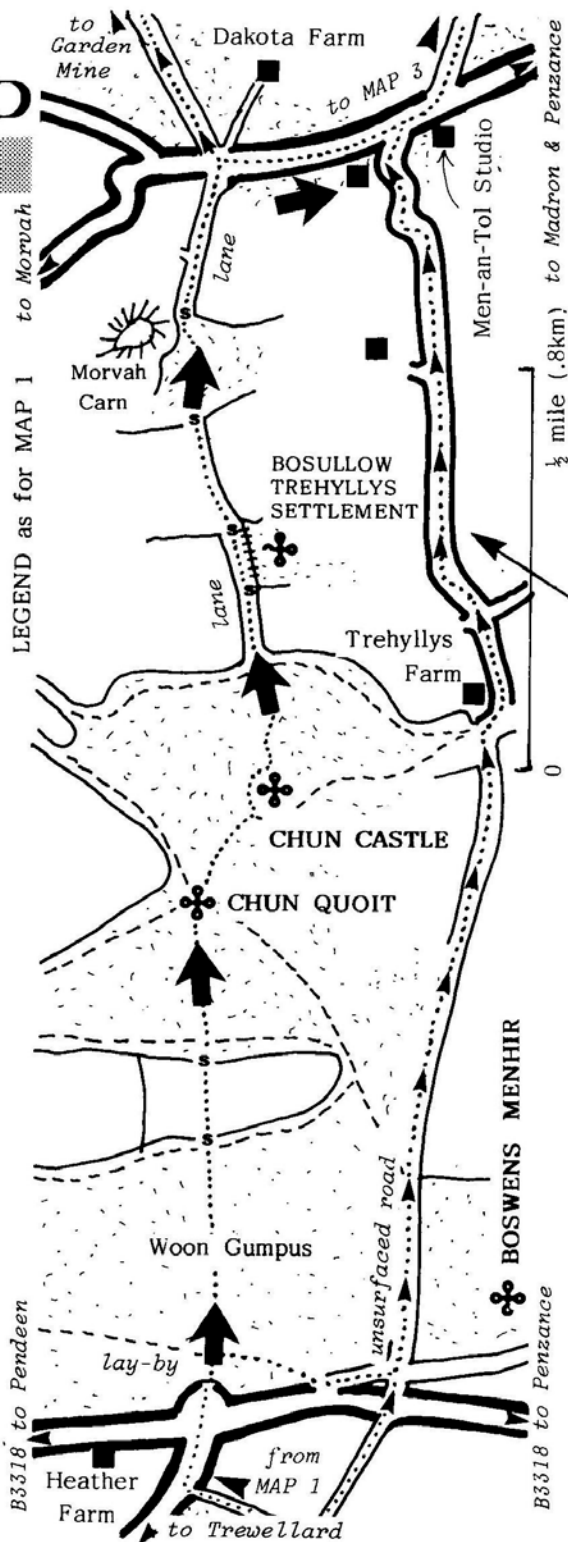
The **CIRCULAR WALK** (8 miles - 12.8km) begins from St. Just car park and bus terminus. Locate Barclays Bank building in the Clock Tower Square and walk along the narrow Boswedden Road to its left. This was the old Churchway from Boswedden to St. Just and goes almost dead straight all the way. At Boswedden continue along the minor road down to the Cape. Pick up the directions for the Tinnens Way from here up to the moors and Carn Kenidjack, then take the second route as described from St. Just but in reverse.

walk two

**WOON GUMPUS TO
MEN-AN-TOL STUDIO**
(2 Miles : 3.2km)

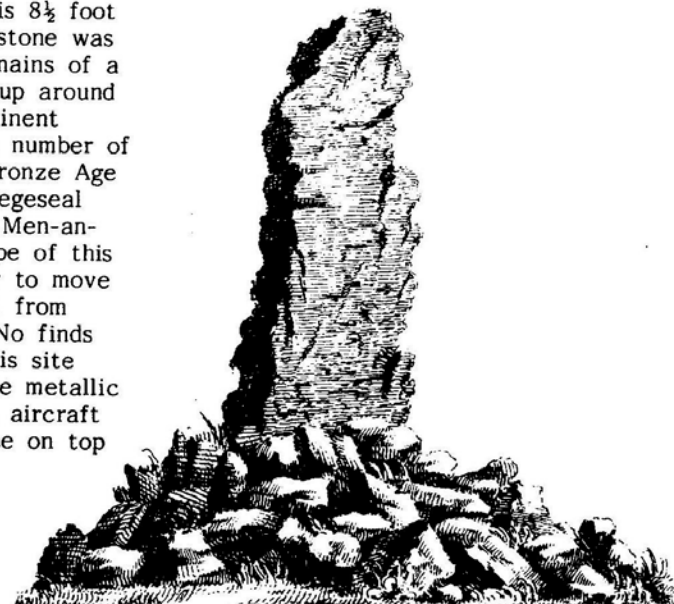
The **DIRECT ROUTE** from the B3318 road at Woon Gumpus continues along an un-surfaced road to Trehylllys Farm and then along a minor road to the Men-an-Tol Studio from where the way continues on Map 3.

This walk section begins from a large lay-by (Grid Ref: 394333) just opposite the Trewellard turn-off from the B3318 road to Pendeen and is on a regular bus route between St. Just and Penzance *via* Pendeen (alight at Heather Farm). The route is straightforward across the moors of Woon Gumpus along a newly created and waymarked path to Chun Quoit which can be seen on the skyline ahead, with Boswens Menhir far over to the right on the slope of the hill below the 'flying saucer'.



Boswens menhir

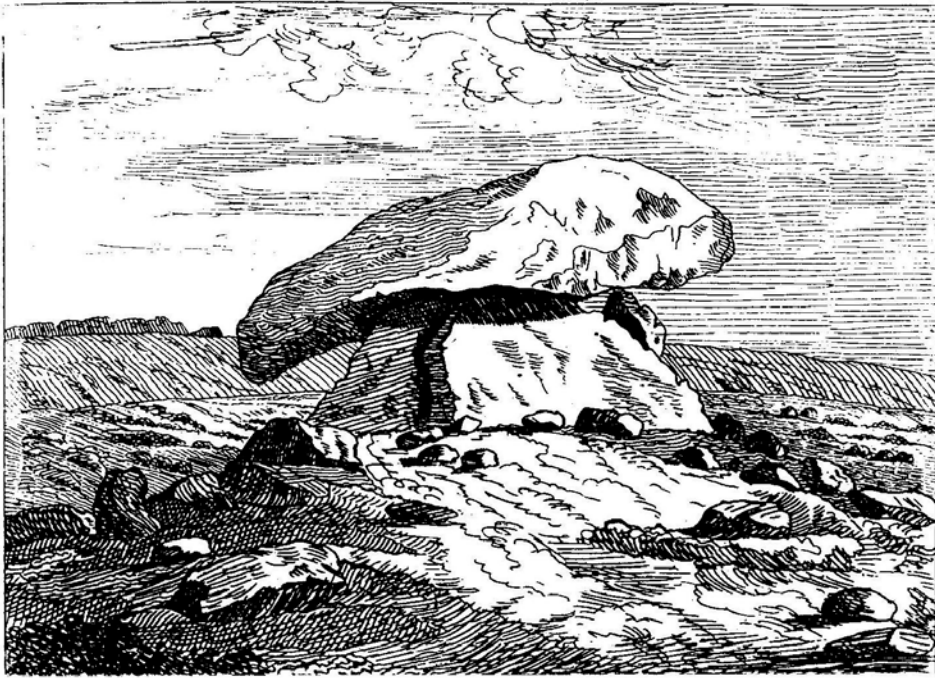
Two centuries ago this 8½ foot high (2.6m) standing stone was surrounded by the remains of a stone barrow heaped up around its base. It is a prominent marker visible from a number of other contemporary Bronze Age sites including the Tregeseal Stone Circle and the Men-an-Tol. The peculiar shape of this stone makes it appear to move as you walk around it from some distance away. No finds have been made at this site which lies close to the metallic 'flying saucer'-shaped aircraft direction-finding device on top of the hill.



Boswens Menhir
(Borlase 1769)

chun quoit

This is the only example left in the Land's End Peninsula of this type of Neolithic ceremonial monument to retain its capstone 'in situ' and is in an excellent state of preservation after withstanding the ravages of both the natural elements and human activity for some 5000 years. Until recently the word 'quoit', which relates to a game in which flat stones are thrown, was used to describe only the horizontal capstones which were popularly believed to be the 'throwing stones' of ancient giants who built the monuments; the whole structure was more appropriately called a 'cromlech' (a curved or circular stone). The word 'chun' is an abbreviation of 'Chy an Woon' - Cornish for 'House on the Downs'. This quoit was once surrounded by a circular barrow of small rocks and stones which reached at least half-way up the supporting stones and may originally have been level with the top of the capstone. This barrow would have been kept in place by a ring of large 'kerb' stones - a few of which can be seen on the eastern side of the monument. The whole structure may have been pierced by a narrow passageway passing through the surrounding barrow to connect the inner chamber of the quoit with the outside world. No significant finds have been made here and certainly nothing to suggest a simple funeral function. It is more likely that it served as a place where the local tribal clan would meet to enact their religious rituals. The midwinter sun sets above the rocky outline of Carn Kenidjack in the south-west.



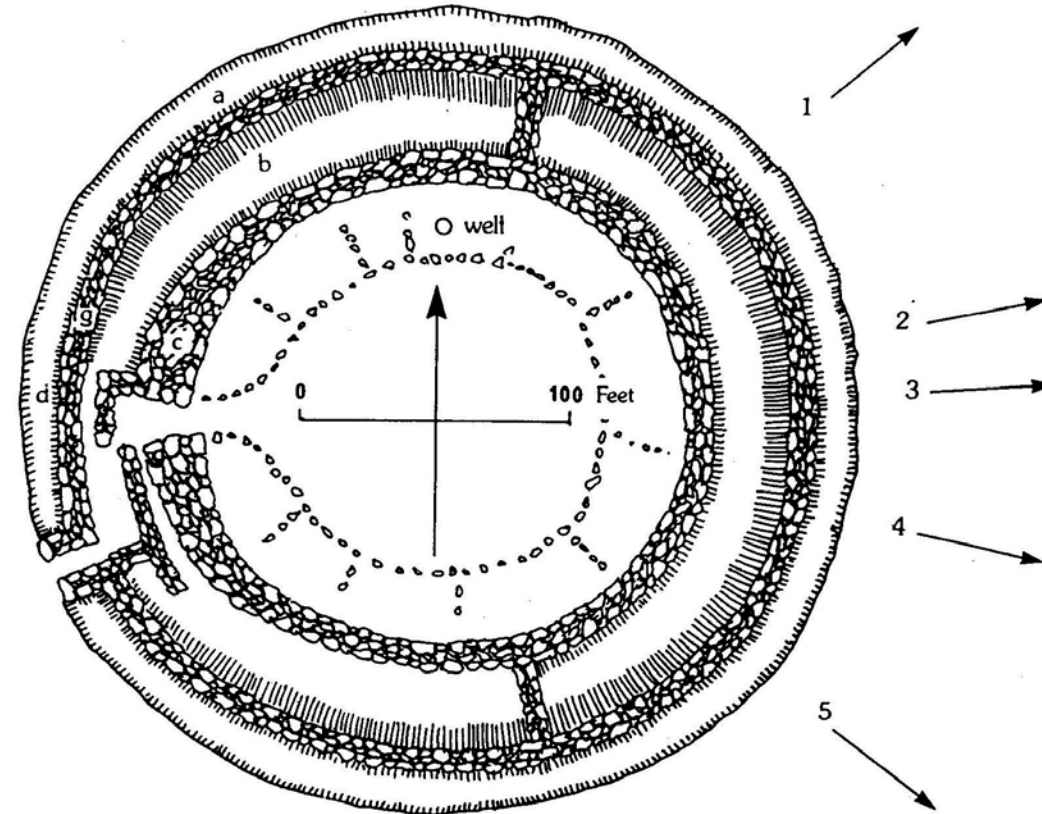
Chun Quoit (Rev. Cotton 1826)

Continue slightly uphill along the path to Chun Castle from where there are great views to the Atlantic on one side and Mounts Bay on the other.

chun castle

This magnificent Iron Age circular hillfort dating from about 300BC and containing a well within its walls, was completely built of dry-stone walling and dominates the surrounding landscape. Its function was to afford protection to the abundant tin and copper workings of the area and to provide a safe storage place for the assembled metal ingots once the ore had been smelted (remnants of smelting equipment with iron and tin slag was discovered within the hillfort). The metals could be held in this virtually impregnable fortress, impossible to attack by surprise except during the not infrequent sea-fogs, until it was time to transport them overland along the ridgeway tracks to the 'ports' of the Hayle Estuary and Mount's Bay.

The 'castle' consists of an internal circular area, where a number of later huts were built, surrounded by two high stone walls each of which was



Plan of Chun Castle after Dr. W. Borlase and Barnwell

- (a) Outer Ditch 20 feet wide (6m).
- (b) Inner Ditch 30 feet wide (9m) but now choked with stones.
- (c) Internal Wall 15 feet thick (4.5m) and originally 15-20 feet high.
- (d) Original Entrance/Exit.
- (e) Outer Stone Wall

SOME OTHER SITES VISIBLE FROM CHUN CASTLE

1. Carn Galva - 2 miles (3.2km)
2. Carn Brea Hillfort - 18 miles (28.8km)
3. Castle-an-Dinas Hillfort - 5 miles (8km)
4. Castle Pencaire Hillfort - 15 miles (24km)
5. Lesingey Iron Age 'Round' - 4 miles (6.4km)
6. Caer Bran Hillfort - 3 miles (4.8km)

fronted by a substantial ditch (now mostly choked with loose stone). The site fell into disuse around the time of Christ and is presumed to have remained unoccupied until about the 5th or 6th century AD at which time the defences were considerably improved and the entrance redesigned into a zig-zag open passageway. The ruinous state of the fort is due to its use as a convenient quarry from which large quantities of the choicest stone were removed to build parts of Penzance and Madron during the last century.



Chun Castle Main Entrance (Cooke 1989)

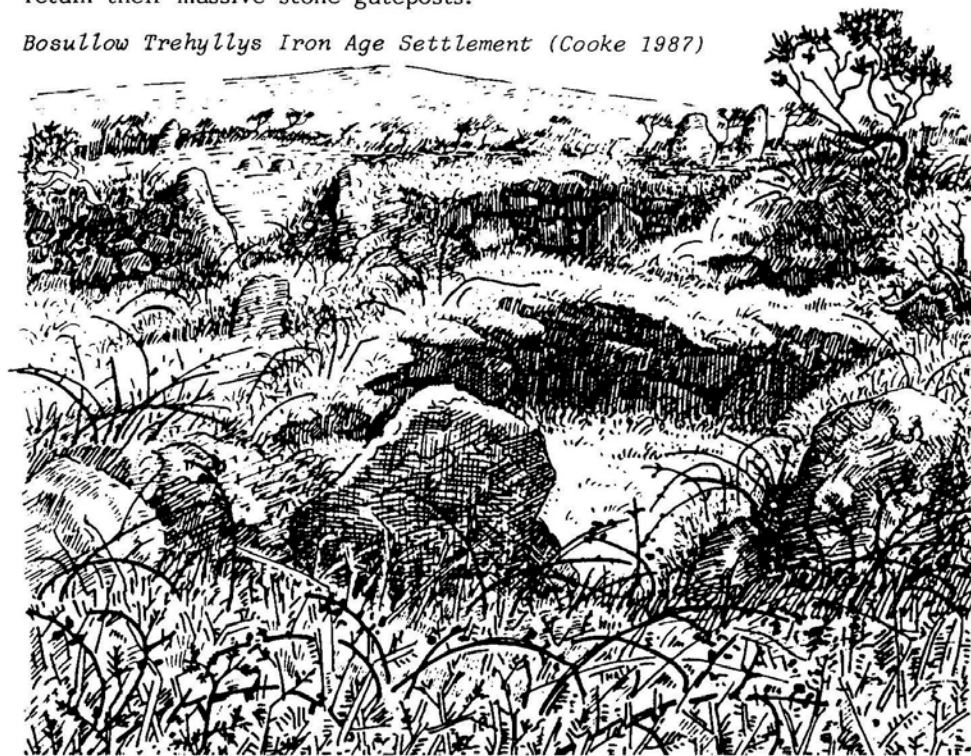
The path follows the line of one of the hillfort ditches on the seaward side - there are a number of yellow arrows painted on the stones - then locate a narrow path, often partially obscured by overgrowing gorse and heather, towards the fields below. In case of difficulty you should 'aim' for the end of an old walled lane leading away from the base of Chun hill in the direction of Morvah Carn and Watch Croft. Continue along this lane and over a new stile at the far end. The remains of the Iron Age Settlements lie in the rough ground to the right and are usually much obscured by bracken during the summer. At the time of writing (winter 1990/91) the village has been wired-off and generations of unrestricted free access denied to the public - a notice on the padlocked gate states "PRIVATE - to prevent damage viewing by appointment only, Penzance 61402".

Bosulow settlement

The remains of 'old Bosulow' were first examined in 1849 at which time there were over thirty enclosures made in a 'rude circular form'. Until the 1930's the settlement had extended across the present footpath into what is today a cultivated field in which there is a stone-lined well - possibly the

original village water supply. Although uncleared, the houses are second only to Chysauster as an example of the courtyard house type of Iron Age settlement, and like other such villages it is situated beneath a fortified hilltop. Some of the houses still have walls up to six feet high and several retain their massive stone gateposts.

Bosulow Trehyllys Iron Age Settlement (Cooke 1987)

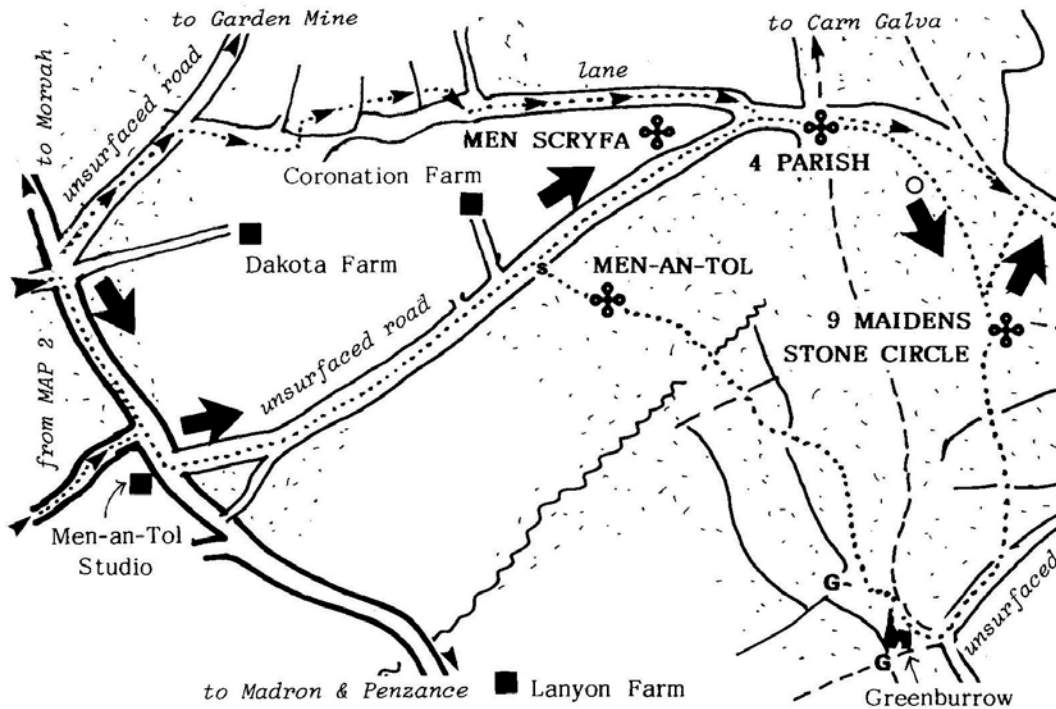


The footpath continues along the parish boundary by the side of field hedges; then uphill over some moorland - the winding path is marked with small arrows but 'aim' to the right of the rocky carn ahead. Eventually you cross another new stile; along a stretch of walled lane to join the minor road opposite Dakota Farm. Turn right downhill to the Men-an-Tol Studio.

The **CIRCULAR WALK** (4 miles : 6.4km) returns via the road signposted 'Chun Castle' by a telephone box close to the Studio; this road ends in the farmyard of Trehyllys Farm and then continues as an unsurfaced track until just before joining the B3318. Turn right and follow a bridleway roughly parallel to the road and back to the starting point at the lay-by.

walk three

There is a **DIRECT ROUTE** continuing on from Walk 2 where the path from the Iron Age Settlement of Bosullow Trehylllys meets the minor road opposite the drive to Dakota Farm. Instead of turning right down to the Men-an-Tol studio walk up the rough driveway signposted to 'Garden Mine Cottage' (a private road but a public footpath). As the track ascends gently towards Watch Croft - the highest point in Penwith at 252 metres - the hamlet of Morvah comes into view in a miniature landscape far below, with the great expanse of the Atlantic Ocean beyond and with its parish church surrounded by a patchwork of irregularly-shaped green fields. About 50 paces before a low stone hedge is reached (where there is a single stone gatepost), locate a very definite cross-track frequently used as a bridleway and turn off to the right across the open moors.

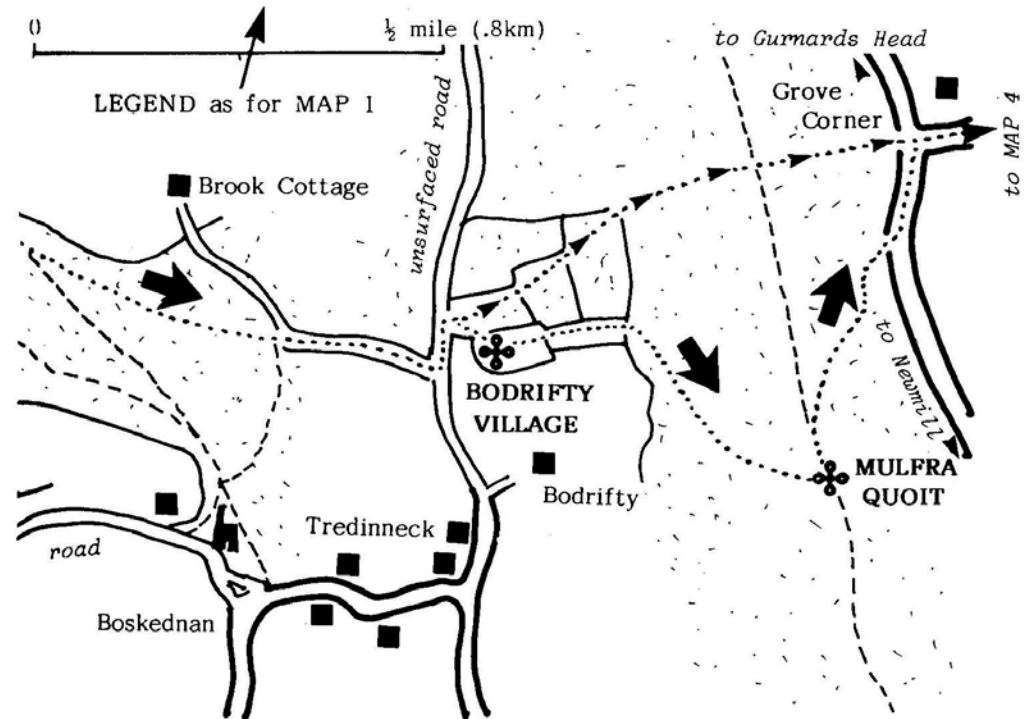


The path eventually swings sharply to the left through a gap in a low hedge; then right; through three more gaps in low hedges to join an ancient walled lane close to Coronation Farm. The route follows this lane to the **FOUR PARISH STONE** (see below).



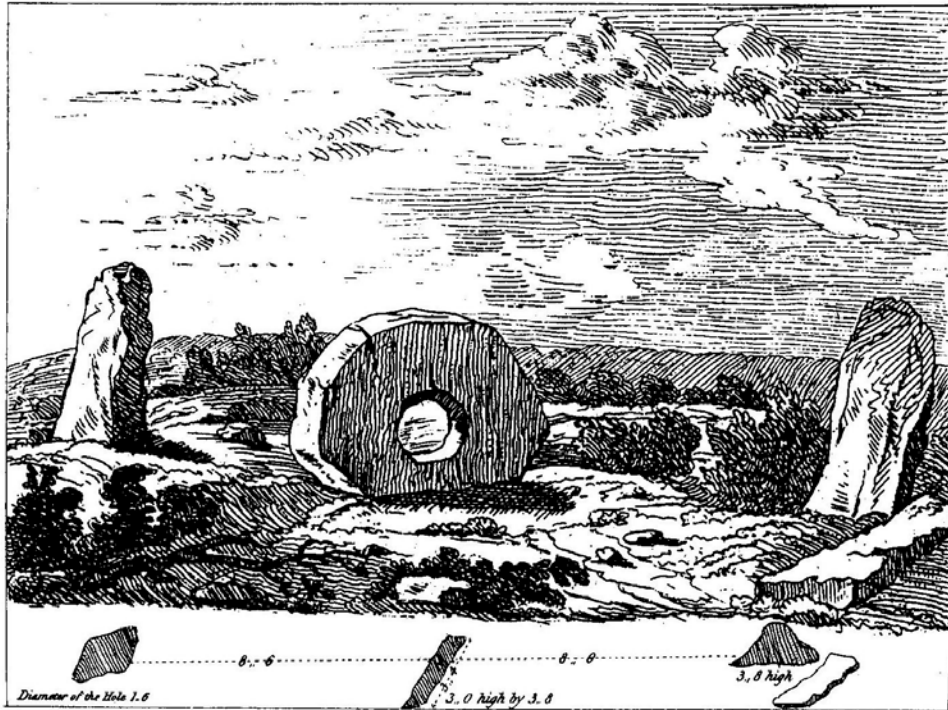
MEN-AN-TOL STUDIO TO GROVE CORNER (4 miles - 6.4km)

The walk begins from the Men-an-Tol Studio at Bosullow where there is ample parking space along the roadside. There is a very infrequent bus service which passes by the Studio (Penzance to St. Just *via* Morvah). Leave the road by the farm lane directly opposite the Studio. The Holed Stone is signposted by a granite stile on the right-hand side of the lane just past some derelict buildings.



men-an-tol

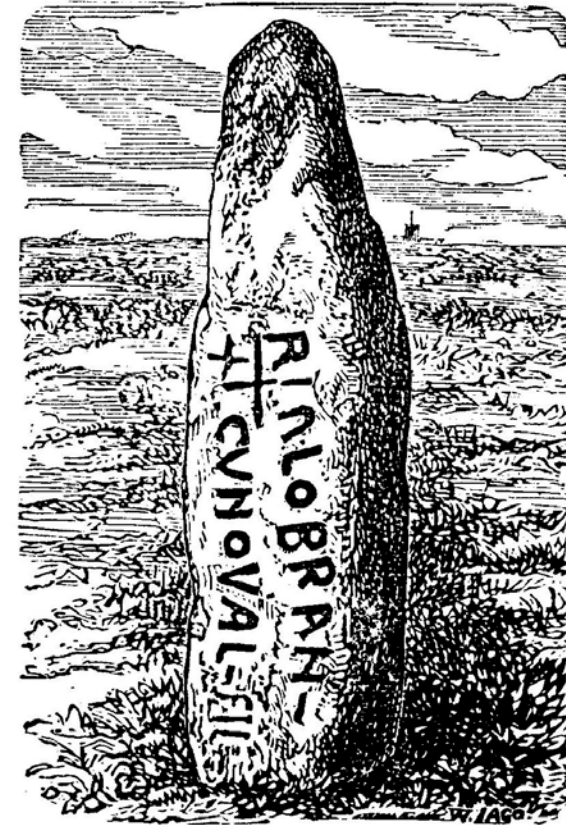
Today this site consists essentially of a circular granite slab pierced by a hole large enough for an adult to crawl through, with an upright standing stone on either side. The monument is usually assigned to the Bronze Age period and it is likely that other stones and/or wooden structures were present at that time. There is a possibility that some of the stones may have been moved during the last 200 years and certainly the holed stone was set in concrete a few years ago. Holed stones have retained the ideas and customs associated with them more tenaciously than any other type of prehistoric site and beliefs are remarkably similar from the Orkneys to the far west of Cornwall. These beliefs revolve around ideas of healing and fertility - benefits being bestowed upon those who pass through the holed stone a certain number of times in an act of ritual rebirth. It was considered (at least during the 18th century) that to be effective such acts should take place 'at certain phases of the moon'.



The Men-an-Tol (Rev. Cotton 1826)

The Inscribed Stone is about five minutes walk further up the main lane and is clearly visible standing in a field over on the left. Although there is no public path the farmer has so far permitted access to this stone.

men scryfa



Men Scryfa (Rev. Iago 1871)

This 6 foot high (1.8m) granite pillar has an inscription on its northern face in two vertical lines with the last word now being below ground level since its re-erection during the 19th century. The inscription reads **RIALOB RANI CUNOVALI FILI** This Latinised form of the local Celtic language dates from the 5th/6th century AD and is supposed to commemorate the death in battle nearby of an Iron Age warrior of royal birth. He was RYALVRAN (the Royal Raven) son of the 'famous leader' or 'glorious prince'. The raven, a bird of carrion with obvious associations of death and the battlefield, was an important symbol of power within the aggressive warrior societies of that time and was also venerated over much of northern Europe as having esoteric links with the powers of the divine sun and moon.

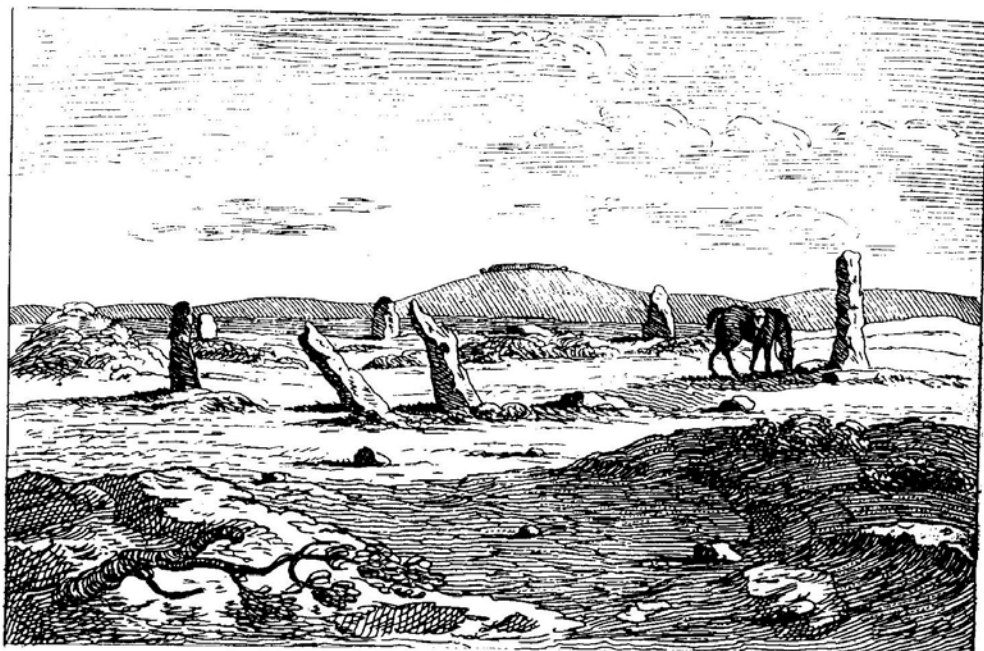
Return to the lane - the route soon begins to cross moorland and after passing another ruined cottage you arrive at a large recumbent stone lying at a junction of paths - this is the Four Parish Boundary Stone.

four parish stone

This stone is a large recumbent slab of rough granite which marks the meeting point of four ancient parishes - Zennor, Gulval, Madron and Morvah. By lying on the stone with arms and legs outstretched it is possible to be in all four parishes at the same moment. The stone is mentioned in a 17th century document describing the bounds of Zennor parish as "Meane Crouse" - - Stone Cross. The Cornish word 'crouse' or 'grouse' translates as an ancient stone cross rather than a simple 'cross-road', and although there is a small insignificant cross cut into one end of the stone (with a drill mark in its centre) there may once have been an erected stone cross at this site.



The DIRECT ROUTE continues ahead to join the way from the Nine Maidens beyond the summit of the hill. For the Stone Circle continue half-right uphill - at the summit you can see the kerb-stone remains of a large Bronze Age barrow - the Nine Maidens stand on open moorland straightahead.



The Nine Maidens Stone Circle (Rev. Cotton 1826)

nine maidens

Only seven stones remain upright out of a probable original total of twenty one or two in this circle which was robbed of many of its stones between about 1760 and 1820. The whole area is littered with old mine workings and remains of dug out barrows, one of which encroaches onto the southern sector of the ring - excavation of this barrow in 1872 revealed large quantities of burnt wood and pieces of an urn dated to between 1500 and 1000BC, thus establishing an earlier date for the construction of the circle.

The stumpy remains of a cut-down former standing stone just to the north-west marks the position of the setting midsummer sun when viewed from the north-east segment of the circle and it has been suggested that there was an intended 'processional route' joining the ring of stones with the natural rocky outcrop of Carn Galva to the north.

The number 'nine' bears no relationship to the quantity of stones but is a 'magic' number associated with the phases of the moon and is linked to many ancient sacred sites and half-remembered pre-Christian rituals. The word 'maidens' may be simply a corruption of the Cornish word for stones - - 'meyn' - (pronounced 'mine') but could just as well relate to the principal groups of people who supposedly used these circles for their ritual activities - the priestesses of the moon (see 'Journey to the Stones').

Retrace your steps towards the cut-down stump of a former standing stone and bear right along a well-worn track. Ignore the many cross-paths until you reach a relatively wide and distinct track fairly close to the field hedge. Bear right along this track which soon forks - keep to the left fork which is much narrower and almost overgrown by gorse and heather. This path winds its way downhill to join the stony driveway to Brook Cottage. Follow this round to a T-junction of unsurfaced roads; through a gate set into a new wire fence. Watch out for a huge round boulder half-buried by the right-hand verge (about 100 yards from the T-junction) - a muddy track leads off here through a low hedge into uncleared ground. The DIRECT ROUTE continues along this main track which is a confused jumble of horse-tracks criss-crossing over each other - keep to the left track whenever in doubt - the route crosses three low hedges then across unenclosed moorland to Grove Corner. There are several ancient parish boundary stones (M = Madron, Z = Zennor, G = Gulval) as well as more modern estate boundary stones strung out across the moors over to the left of the track.

To visit Bodrifty Village - usually well overgrown with bracken during the summer - turn off the main track

soon after leaving the unsurfaced road along a narrow path to the right which arrives at the first of several huts just beyond a low hedge.

BODRIFTY settlement

This village dates from the late Bronze/early Iron Age period (approx. 5th century BC) and is of a quite different type from the Bosullow Trehylls Settlement being constructed in simple circular shapes of varying diameters. It was excavated during the early 1950's when a large quantity of pottery was unearthed. The walls of the smaller huts are made of large moorstones and probably had a conical tent-like roof with the ends of the timbers resting on top of the walls. The larger huts had a double-skinned wall with the cavity filled up with rubble and were provided with internal drains, stone paved walkways and compacted earth floors which showed signs of having been frequently cleaned and relaid. Little rectangular fields, probably planted with corn, surrounded the settlement which was much altered at a later date and encircled by a low non-defensive wall. The whole site seems to have been abandoned towards the end of the Roman period (4th/5th century AD).

*An alternative to the Direct Route winds its way through the bracken covered village remains set in a long narrow enclosure. The way leaves this enclosure through a gap in the low stone hedge at the far end (cross in the centre of this hedge **not** in the corner) and winds its way along the base of Mulfra Hill before bending left towards the summit and Mulfra Quoit.*

MULFRA QUOIT

The five ton capstone of this Neolithic monument is reputed to have fallen in 1752 during a violent thunderstorm (as happened to the capstone of Lanyon Quoit) and now rests on the ground against two of the three remaining upright stones. The site was documented in 1754 at which time it was in the same state as at present apart from the remains of a low surrounding barrow of small stones which has now virtually disappeared. Excavation at that time revealed several layers of coloured 'soils' within the enclosed area of the quoit, which are thought to represent the remnants of a ritual deposit sealed over with layers of clay.

Leave the quoit towards the north-west along the main track which soon divides. Take the right-hand path downhill to the road by Grove Corner.



Mulfra Quoit (Rev. Cotton 1826)

The CIRCULAR WALKS. It is suggested that you make two short circular walks from this section. The first one (3 miles - - 4.8km) leaves the main walk at the Nine Maidens Circle and continues to the engine house of Greenburrow (part of Ding Dong Mine). Leave this prominent landmark along a track on the north-western side but keep to the left as it divides. The path goes towards a gate but divides again. Follow the right-hand path downhill across the moors - it eventually swings sharply left; over a low stone hedge; downhill to a stream (it is easy to get lost here, especially in summer when the bracken almost obscures the way!); through waist high gorse bushes on the far side to the Men-an-Tol.

A **Second CIRCULAR WALK** (2 miles - 3.2km) may be started from Grove Corner along the Direct Tinnars Way (in reverse as described above) to the unsurfaced road, then pick up the directions for Bodrifty and Mulfra Quoit.

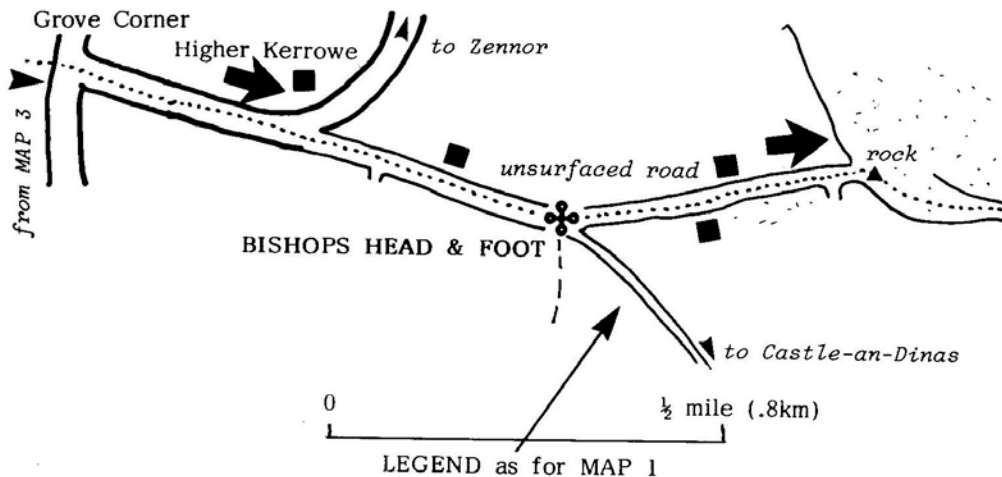
walk four

GROVE CORNER TO TOWEDNACK CHURCH (3½ miles - 5.6km)

From Grove Corner on the Newmill to Gurnards Head road the Tinnars Way follows the Zennor road before continuing ahead along an unsurfaced road by Higher Kerrowe Farm. Some distance up this track there is a major junction by the flat granite slab of the Bishops Head and Foot - the right-hand turning going towards Higher Conquer Farm, Castle-an-Dinas Hillfort and, in earlier times, to Mount s Bay (the last part of this ancient route is now unclear but the seashore can still be reached by following minor roads and paths to Longrock).

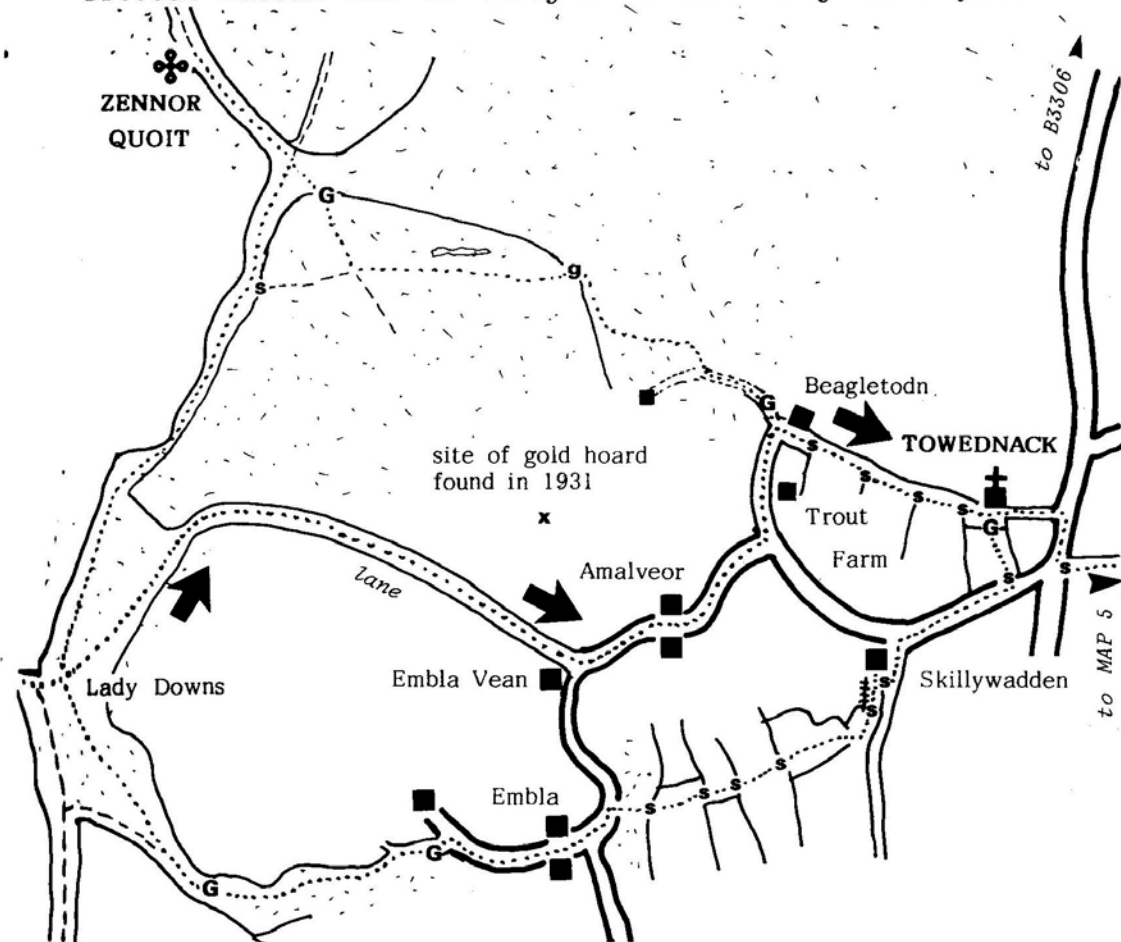
Bishops head & foot

The meeting point of the three parishes of Zennor, Towednack and Gulval is now indicated by a relatively modern rectangular granite slab set into the middle of the lane. This junction was formerly marked by an erect stone cross which was one of the Zennor parish bounds mentioned in 1613 when it was known as the 'Meane Crouse an Espek' (The Stone Cross of the Bishop). Its ecclesiastical link was through the Manor of Lanisley (which almost exactly covered the old parish of Gulval) and is known to have been held by the Bishops of Exeter, whose diocese then covered Cornwall, at least since Domesday times of 1086. Local stories recount that the old cross had been broken up by a neighbouring farmer and a portion of a decorated cross shaft (now lost) was discovered near an ancient well close by the Bishop's Head and Foot.



The road continues uphill between several dwellings before reaching Lady Downs where the way leaves the fields and begins to cross moorland. Ignore any turnings and continue ahead until you soon arrive at a very definite cross-tracks just past the corner of the last field hedge on your left.

The **DIRECT WAY** to Towednack and probably the most authentic route lies straight ahead. The track descends the high ground along a deep sunken way; it was to the north of this section of track that a Bronze Age gold hoard was uncovered in a field hedge in 1931 - it is now in the British Museum and is thought to have originated from



Ireland; replicas can be seen in the County Museum Truro. The track joins a minor road at Embla Vean Farm where it is thought that there was a major division of the prehistoric track which went past Nancledra and Trencrom Hillfort to the Hayle Estuary near Lelant. The 'Tinnars' continues via Amalveor and Beagletodn to Towednack.

The **right-hand** track passes through a more varied and interesting landscape and goes towards Embla across a stretch of moor downhill to an old wooden gate, then left along a grassy path which later joins a stony track before continuing through a field gate and onto a narrow surfaced driveway. After passing through the hamlet of Embla and joining a minor road, watch out for a wooden waymark by the grass verge just before the road bends sharply to the left. Follow the path across some overgrown land to the first stile, after which Towednack Church can soon be seen with the sea forming blue strips between the hills in the distance. The path now crosses fields and stiles to Skillywadden and onto another minor road. Turn right and locate the next stile by a footpath sign. The Church is on the far side of the field.

The **left-hand** turning goes across the moors towards Zennor Quoit and is a fairly extended detour from the direct route. None of the tracks on these moors are shown as public rights of way on the OS maps although they have been used for many years by walkers and horseriders before the recent erection of post and wire fencing. Be aware of any restriction to access. The muddy track crosses moorland between two low widely separated field hedges and after some time the triangular shape of Zennor Quoit can be seen away to the left. The way eventually reaches a cross-track and you should take the left turn to the Quoit.

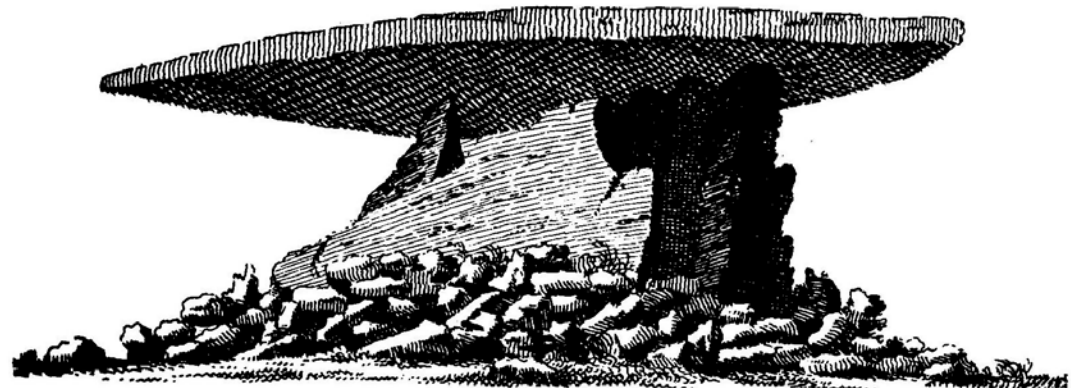
ZENNOR QUOIT

In 1754 the massive capstone of this great monument was still resting on its supporting stones against which were piled the substantial remains of a surrounding barrow. The large granite slabs were positioned in such a way that they created a facade of flanking stones in front of a small antechamber, beyond which a narrow gap at one side of the vast 'door-stone' would give access to an enclosed inner chamber - the whole being covered by the 9½ ton capstone.

Various diggings have unearthed bits of Neolithic and Early Bronze

Age pottery, flint flakes, burnt wood and a small cremation pit was discovered during the 1950's.

The back supporting stone was disturbed, probably by the activities of 'treasure-seekers' and it later developed a severe lean before eventually breaking in half, causing the capstone to slip down to the ground on one end. In 1861 the monument narrowly escaped total destruction by a farmer who had begun to break up some of the stones to make a cattle shelter. Fortunately he was persuaded to stop this act of vandalism by a 'bribe' of five shillings (25p) offered by the vicar of Zennor. The upright remains of the proposed shed lie a few yards to the east and drill-marks are clearly visible in several of the quoit stones.



Zennor Quoit before its collapse (Borlase 1769)

Retrace your steps to the cross-tracks but continue ahead to a wooden gate set into the wire fence. **This area is grazed by sheep and cattle, and dogs should be kept on a lead - Don't forget to close all gates securely behind you.** Cross in direction of the round hilltop of Trink Hill and you soon arrive at another cross-tracks. Turn left towards the side slope of a hill and as the track begins to descend the churchtower of Towednack comes into view. Cross a small wooden gate at the end of this enclosure and bear right along the path which twists its way downhill through bracken-covered ground to exit at a wooden gate by Beagletodn. Now follow the path over stiles and fields to the Church.

The **CIRCULAR WALK** (4 miles : 6.4km). There is no public transport to this area at the moment although it would be feasible to take the summer coastal bus service (St. Ives to Land's End) and alight at the junction of the minor road to Towednack with the B3306 and then to walk to

the Church (about 15 minutes). It is suggested that you start the circular walk from Towednack Church and take the route via Skillywadden and Embla up to Lady Downs, then return via either the Amalveor or Zennor Quoit route. Leave the Church via an old iron gate set between two large granite gateposts and cross the field to a stile in the far corner. The only difficult part of this 'reverse' walk is where you leave the surfaced road after Embla - turn off the stony track immediately before it passes between hedges into an uncleared 'field'.

towednack

The little church is significant for the fact that it is the only one in West Cornwall without pinnacles and to possess a chancel arch - the latter dating from the late 13th/early 14th century. The nave and part of the northern wall are from the Norman period while the squat stumpy tower was added about 1500. Legend recalls how the Devil visited the building site once the tower



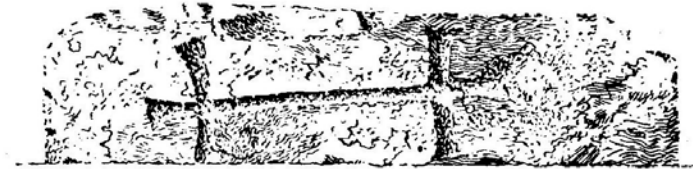
Towednack Church (Blight 1861)

had reached a certain height and kept on knocking down the masonry every night so that eventually the builders gave up in desperation and constructed the battlements as they can be seen today.

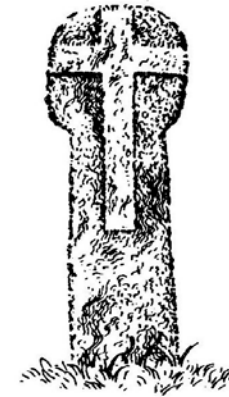
Towednack was dependant on the 'mother church' of Lelant until parochial status was given in the 15th century at the same time as St.Ives.

An ancient altar slab hewn from a solid block of granite with a cross incised at the centre and in the four corners was discovered early this century in a wall on Churchtown Farm and later moved to the church; the five crosses supposedly represent the five wounds of Christ (but see 'Journey to the Stones' for pagan origins and symbolism of 'five'). The altar may be pre-Norman and was probably thrown out at the Reformation which required all altars to be made of wood - was the veneration of stone too close to pagan roots to be tolerated?

Inside the south porch is an incised double-armed cross which may have been a cross-shaft but now serves as a stone bench. The shape of the cross is known from pagan Crete c.2000-1500BC and represented part of an axe-cult concerned with royalty and a goddess priesthood.



Double-armed Cross (Langdon 1896)



Cross outside church porch (Langdon 1896)

There is an ancient wheel-headed cross standing outside the porch. This was discovered about 1880 built into the chimney stack of a derelict cottage at a parish farm of Coldharbour and was then erected in a garden but later removed by the churchwarden to the churchyard.

The roughly circular churchyard; the stone altar slab; and the strange cross in the porch, all suggest pagan or early Christian Celtic origins for this church which once served a community working 22 tin mines throughout the parish, the last of which closed in 1923.

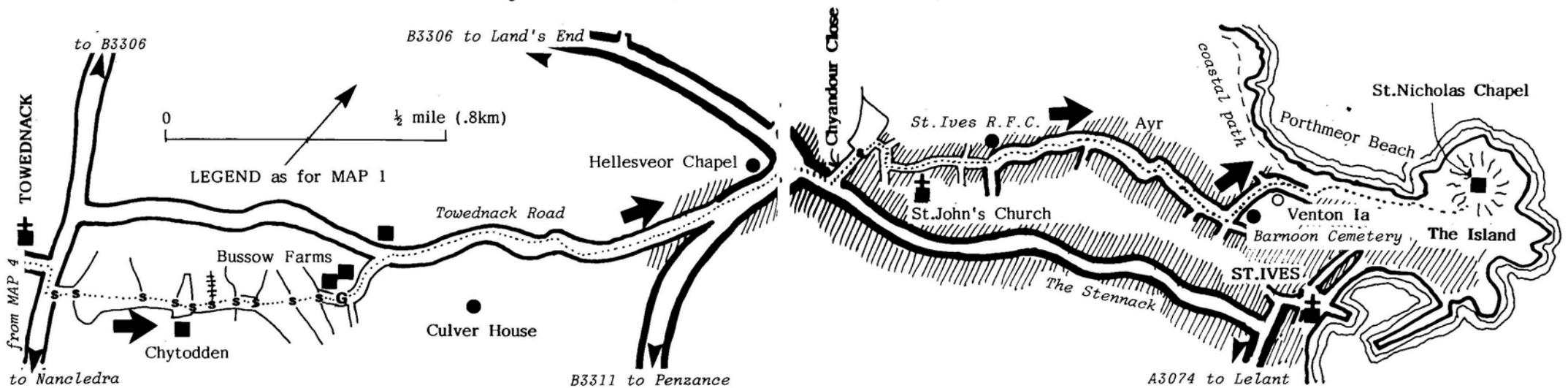
walk five

TOWEDNACK CHURCH TO ST. IVES 'ISLAND' (4 miles - 6.4km)

The first part of this walk goes across fields and granite stiles but then the way is almost entirely on tarmac road through the back streets of St. Ives down to the Island. Leave Towednack Church by the drive and locate the first stile a few yards along the road. The path, much of which is waymarked, crosses fields past Chytodden and on towards the Bussow Farms (there is an alternative route marked from the last stile before Bussow which 'by-passes' the farm but this path only has 'permissive' status). After passing through Bussow Farm the right of way winds up the drive to join a minor road. A short distance down this road, in a valley two fields away to the right, is a 13th century 'culver house' - it has thick granite walls and a domed 'beehive' roof with small holes several feet above ground level to admit the pigeons which were fed on grain and destined for the dining table of the manorial lord. The route now keeps to this road until the junction with the B3311 from Penzance and the B3306 coastal road to Land's End by Hellesveor Chapel.

The direct route into St. Ives for the Parish Church, bus and rail stations is downhill along the main road but

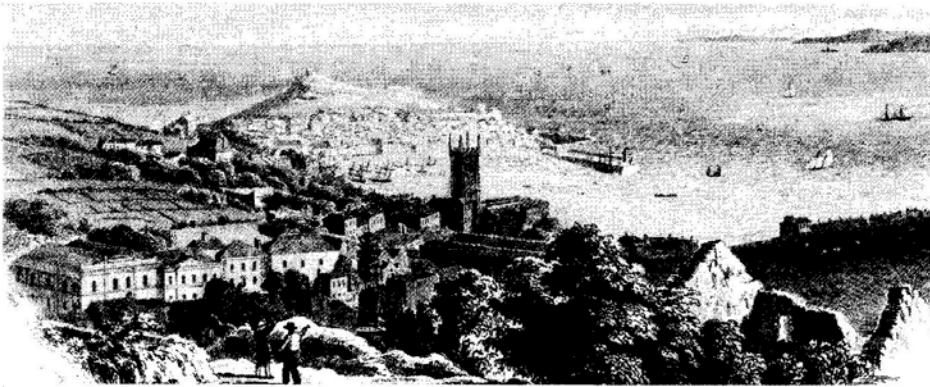
a more interesting way is to leave this road at Chyandour Close about 100 yards from the road junction mentioned above. Walk ahead passing a bungalow estate on your right and into a field beyond - the path soon forks - keep to the right hand along a lane which shortly joins an unsurfaced road. Turn right downhill and then left on a tarmac path which passes St. John's Church. Keep ahead on this path which goes past houses and through housing estates; over St. John's Walk; joining a road by the Rugby Football Ground. Godrevy lighthouse and St. Ives Bay can be glimpsed through the houses towards the east as you follow roads through the built-up district of Ayr. Eventually at Barnoon Cemetery you should turn left down the very steep hill at the bottom of which, on the right, is the former Holy Well of St. Ia - **Venton Ia**. Until 1843 it provided the main water supply for the Downalong district of the town and was held in great reverence, being known as the 'wishing well' where the future might be foretold by dropping crooked brass pins into the water and interpreting their movements. The ancient Well was covered, floored and faced with granite blocks, probably towards the end of the 17th century, when it was also made into two compartments. However by the end of the 19th century it had sadly degenerated into a rubbish tip for



rotten fish and putrid offal from nearby pigsties - happily it has been cleansed since then!

Make your way onto Porthmeor Beach to a flight of granite steps at the far end and up onto the grass-covered Island with the Chapel of St. Nicholas on its summit. The former mediaeval chapel of the patron saint of sailors and children was used as a store by the War Office who demolished it in 1904. It was rebuilt 7 years later and, after further modifications, was reopened in 1971 with a service.

st.ives



In Bronze and Iron Age times some 3000 years ago there was a tidal fortress at Pendinas or Dinas Ia (now called 'The Island') which guarded the entrance to the Hayle Estuary and the sheltered anchorages off present-day Lelant from where ships traded with Ireland and the western coasts of Britain. Frequent storms at Land's End necessitated traders to and from continental Europe often having to make an overland crossing between Mount's Bay and the estuary, and so this narrow neck of land joining West Penwith to the rest of Britain became a meeting point for many different cultures over a long period of time. Dominant influences seem to have been from Ireland and this is shown by finds of typically Irish Bronze Age gold ornaments as well as pottery common to both regions.

This prehistoric link was continued into Christian times when many holy men and women in the company of armed settlers arrived in West Cornwall from Ireland during the 5th century AD. One of these 'saints' was a 'noble woman' called Hya or Ye. An early written 'Life' of this saint was seen and part-published during the reign of Henry VIII prior to its probable destruction after the Reformation. This document described how Saint 'Iva' landed at Pendinas, which "is the peninsula and strong rok wher the toun of S.Ive's stonidith", and, at her request, the local lord then erected a church at Pendinas. Her spiritual (and probably military) impact on the locality was

considerable and churches, chapels and holy wells were dedicated to her as far away as Wendron parish near Helston. It is thought that her remains were deposited in a chapel situated where the parish church now stands. The little fishing hamlet later took the name of Porthia (the harbour of St.Ia) which was to be anglicised in 1593 to St.Ives. There are several chapels and holy wells located in the area as well as a number of ancient crosses, one of which stands close by the church.

This Cross is a beautiful example of 15th century work and was unearthed from the churchyard in 1832 having been pulled down during the Reformation. The eastern side of the cross depicts the Virgin Mary holding the child Jesus; the narrow southern side shows a bishop in an act of giving the blessing (this may represent Saint Uny, the patron saint of the 'mother church' of Lelant); God the Father is shown on the western face as an old bearded and crowned man upholding the arms of the crucifix with two shields in the top two corners; the northern face shows a robed and crowned female figure which may represent Saint Ia herself. The cross was placed on a new base and erected in its present position in 1852.

Up until the 14th century the prime harbour on this stretch of coastline had been at Lelant but the parts of the estuary were becoming silted up due in large measure to deforestation around mining areas upstream from the Hayle Estuary and to the encroachment of vast sand dunes being blown up from the sea. As these anchorages became increasingly hazardous so did the importance grow of previously insignificant St.Ives. Fishing, with all the attendant ancilliary trades, was the main industry in the town but as larger and more storm-worthy ships were by now trading between continental Europe and Ireland the town became a convenient half-way port of call as well as a trading base in its own right. Nevertheless, the harbour and town were always facing a similar fate to Lelant - burial by windblown sand; but it was not until 1801 that a wall was built along the back of Porthmeor Beach to deflect the sand. The success of this venture enabled houses to be built for the first time on all parts of the isthmus to the Island.

Back in the 14th century the people in the then rapidly growing town of St.Ives still had to walk to the church at Lelant for baptism, marriage and burial services, and this hardship - along dangerous, difficult and muddy tracks - occasioned the population to petition successfully for Papal authority to build their own parish church. Work commenced in 1409 and the building, which is substantially what the visitor can see today, was completed 16½ years later. During the building work it was found easier to bring the granite blocks from Zennor by ship as the roads were so atrocious and this method was also used 350 years later during the construction of Smeaton's Pier.

The first quarter of the 19th century found St.Ives at the pinnacle of its prosperity with abundant fishing and successful agriculture, and with all the mines profitably at work. In 1877 the railway from St.Erth was established so linking the town to London and other 'up-country' centres of population and opening up new markets for the lively fishing industry (in 1896 St.Ives ranked as 4th among English ports for the tonnage of fish landed). However as these traditional industries declined towards the end of the century, catering for tourism, helped by the improved communications began to be an attractive alternative way of making a living and a growing artistic community was being attracted to the area - these new developments were to form the foundation of the present holiday town of St.Ives.