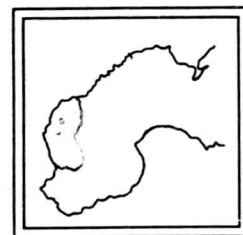
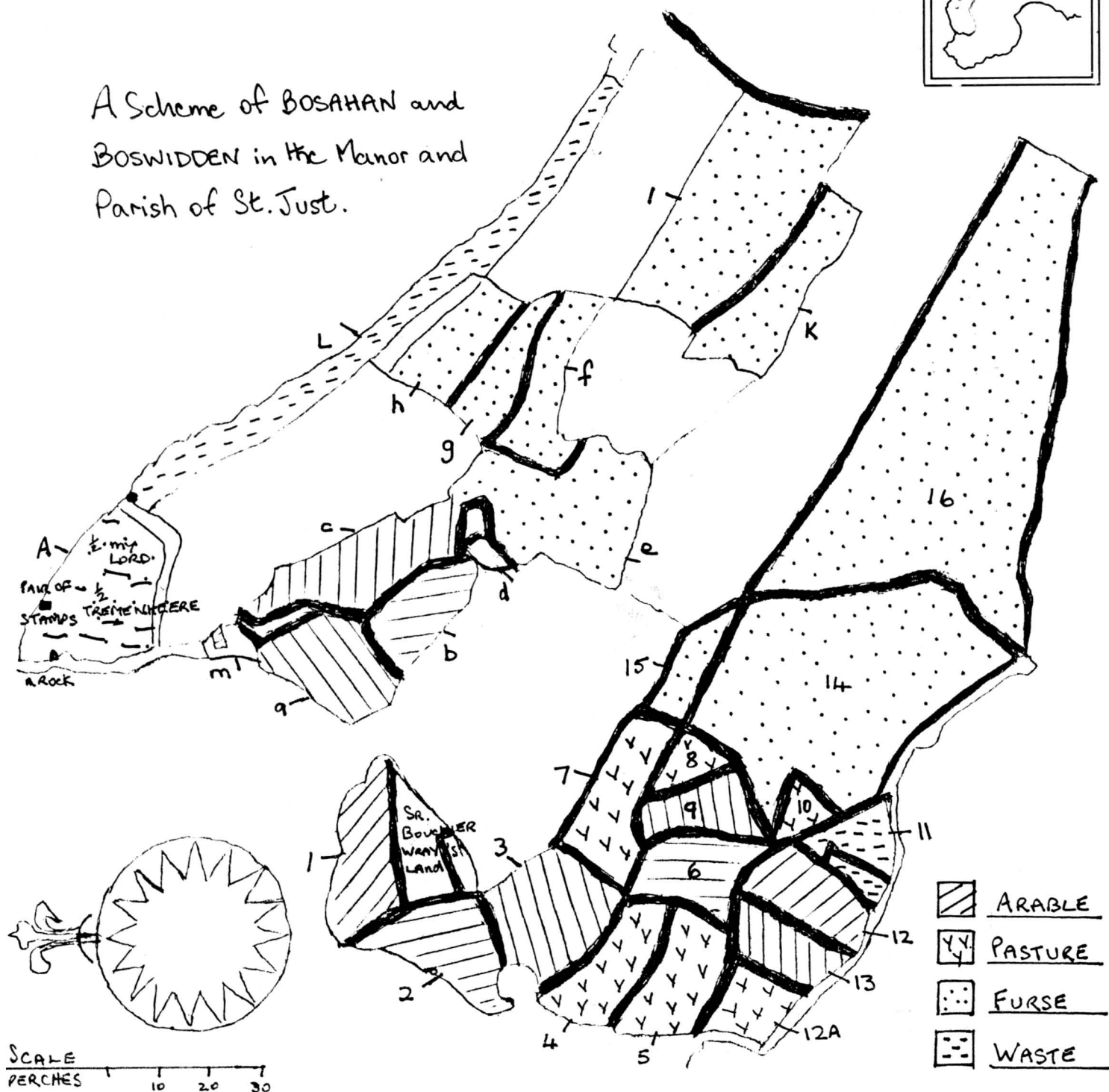


BOSCEAN AND BOSWEDDEN



A Scheme of BOSAHAN and BOSWIDDEN in the Manor and Parish of St. Just.

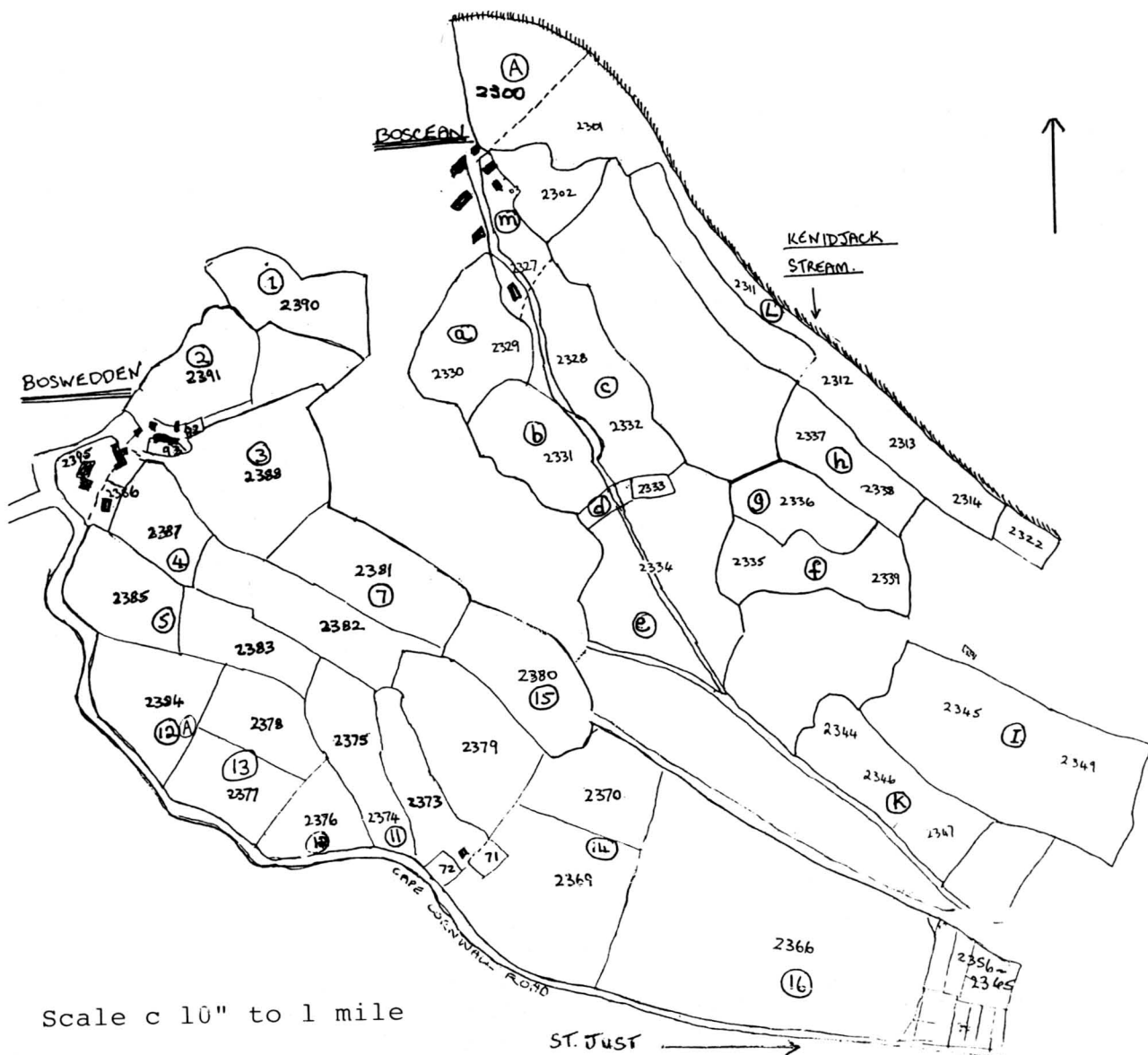


THE LANHYDROCK MAP

The lands at Boscean and Boswedden once formed part of the ancient Manor of St Just and Penzance which was owned by the Robartes family in the 1690s. They lie on the three hundred foot plateau to the west of St Just Church Town. However, those fields at Boscean which border the Kenidjack Valley slope steeply to the little stream running through the valley as it winds its way to the sea just half-a-mile distant. The total acreage involved in the Robartes holdings is a little over 37 acres at Boscean and almost 60 acres at Boswedden. The Robartes family, however, as in several other of the tenements in the area, only held a partial share of these two properties. The share was one ninth of Boswedden and one sixth of Boscean and a half share in the stamping mill there.¹ These two parcels of land are separated only by a strip of fields which appears to have been owned by the Boscawen family for several centuries. The land here is mainly pasture, with a rab sub-soil.

The name Boscean has been interpreted by P.A.S.Pool in his book "The Place Names of West Perwith" as meaning dwelling in a dry place (Bos = dwelling, seghen = dry place), whilst Boswedden means dwelling in a weedy place (when = weeds). These place names have had various spellings throughout the centuries, i.e. Bosahan, Bossehan, Bosehan and Boswidden, Boswen etc.

Ancient granite hedges mark the field boundaries which, at Boscean, have come down to us mainly unchanged, except for the encroachment of a new road and the division of one or two larger areas into smaller fields. The usual wild flowers of campion, foxglove, stone-crop etc, together with the familiar nettle and bramble have made their home in the stone crevices here. The field boundaries at Boswedden are of a later date and are quite magnificent in structure, comprising 8 or 9 parallel courses of ironstone, all of similar size and shape. They rise to a height of 6 feet or more, and are turf-covered, with the base being 5 to 6 feet in width. It is thought the stones in the walls were taken from the nearby Wheal Cuning tin mine and, because of their arsenic content, they remain white and weed-free. In a map of 1778, when much of the land formed part of the estate of the late Mrs Elizabeth Ustick, the original field boundaries at Boswedden were still in place but changes were made after this date when numerous boundaries were removed and realigned, and the new hedging built in the vicinity of the Wheal Cuning tin mine. The wealthy Boyns tin-mining family purchased the tenement of Boswedden in 1777 for £200 it is disclosed in private family papers and no doubt it is this family who was responsible for the superb field walls we see today. The tenement of Boswedden which lies in the circular area between fields nos 2 & 3 on the Lanhydrock map appears not to have been owned by the Robartes in 1696.



1841 TITHE MAP

8 The numbers and letters on the Lanhydrock Map are also shown. Realigned are 6 = 2382/3; 8 = 2382; 9 = 2382/75?; 10 = 2379

The following table shows a comparison between the field boundaries of the 1690s together with their acreages and the 1841 tithe map boundaries. It has been difficult to pin-point these areas exactly as several fields have lost their 1690s identity and boundaries have been completely realigned or removed. It will be noted also that the early field names bear little resemblance to the 1841 field names and probably fell into disuse as the Cornish language declined. The abbreviations in the Table referring to “Type”, namely “AR, FU, PA, WA & GA” refer to the acreage of ARable, FUrse, PASTure, WASTE land and GARDen.

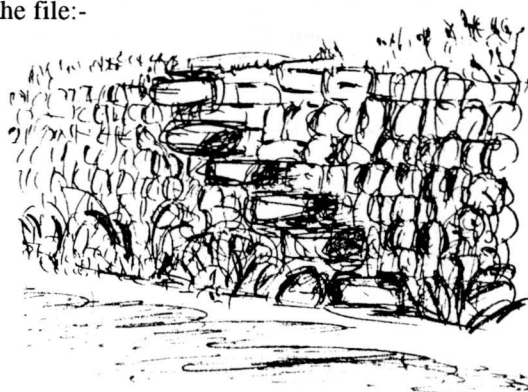
BOSCEAN				1696		1841		BOSMEDDEN				1696		1841	
Field Name	A.R.P	Type	No.	Field Name	A.R.P	Field Names	A.R.P.	Type	No.	Field Names	A.R.P.				
a Homefield	2.3.23	AR	-	2326 Homestead	19	1 North Chipack	2.1.04	AR	AR	2390 Plefeet	2.0.04				
				WA 2327 Waste	3.08	2 S. Chipack Stitch	2.1.14	AR	AR	2391 Shelter Tn.Fld	1.3.00				
				AR 2329 South Field	3.09	3 Churchway Field	3.0.12	AR	AR	2388 Town Roadway Fld	3.2.20				
				AR 2330 South Field	1.15	4 Park an Borne	1.3.32	PA	AR	2387 Town Field	1.2.04				
b Homefield	1.2.24	AR	AR	2331 Hr.Churchway	2.2.09					2386 House etc	28				
c Homefield	3.1.19	AR	AR	2328 Town Field	1.2.28					2395 Bos. Town Place	3.15				
				AR 2332 Hr Arish	1.1.06	5 Middle Field	2.1.00	PA	AR	2385 Town Field	2.0.20				
d 2 Quillets	1.32	AR	AR	2333 Plot	31	6 Park an Bean	1.3.00	AR	AR	2382 Long Field	2.1.33				
e Goen Carne	4.1.11	FU	PA	2334 Noon Kelynack	5.0.24					AR 2383 Nicholas Mid.Fld	1.1.28				
f Gwellon Deares	2.0.06	FU	AR	2335 Huel Down	1.0.24	12A				AR 2384 Great Field	2.3.08				
				AR 2339 Huel Down	1.1.30	7 North Field	2.3.00	PA	AR	2381 Mid Churchway	2.1.32				
g Gwellon Deares	1.2.34	FU	AR	2336 Part of Down	1.1.16	8 Churchway Field	2.12	PA	AR	part of 2382					
h Gwellon Deares	2.2.09	FU	PA	2337 Part of Croft	1.0.08	9 Churchway Field	1.2.33	AR	AR	pt of 2383					
				PA 2338 Croft	1.0.08	10 Little Croft	2.00	PA	AR	2379 pt Bay of Biscay	3.0.16				
i Croft	6.3.01	FU	PA	2345 Croft	3.2.16	11 House & Barn	1.1.09	WA	WA	2373 Waste	1.1.24				
				AR 2349 Croft	2.2.32					WA 2372 Waste	16				
k Croft	2.3.07	FU	AR	2344 Part of Croft	1.1.25					WA 2371 Cot.Houses	24				
				AR 2346 Part of Croft	1.1.25					AR 2374 Little Field	2.28				
l Long Moor	4.0.27	WA?	AR	2347 Part of Croft	1.0.00	12 Park Pilloes	1.3.02	AR	AR	2375 Casleys Croft	1.0.24				
				WA 2311 Boscean Moor	1.0.36					AR 2376 Pt South Field	1.1.26				
				AR 2312 Moor	2.32	13 South Field	2.3.30	AR	AR	2377 South Field	1.3.04				
				AR 2313 "	2.23					AR 2378 Higher Field	1.1.32				
				AR 2314 "	1.36	14 The Crofts	11.2.12	FU	AR	2369 Great Croft	4.2.16				
				AR 2322 Plot	1.08					AR 2370 Little Croft	1.3.24				
m House/Garden	2.27	GA	GA	2303 Homestead	1.00	15 Churchway Croft	1.3.11	FU	AR	2380 Hr Churchway	2.1.02				
A Ganiter Common	3.3.15	WA?	WA	2301 The Rose	2.0.13	16 Goen Crose	21.1.10	FU	PA	2366 Little Croft	11.2.28				
				WA 2300 The Rose	2.0.07					WA 2367 Waste	21				
										2368 House etc	1.32				
										WA 2356 Waste	24				
										2357-65 Plots	3.3.15				
TOTAL	37.0.35			TOTAL	36.3.08	TOTAL	59.3.22			TOTAL	57.1.28				
1696				1841		1696				1841					
Arable acres	8.1.18			Arable acres	19.1.29	Arable acres	15.2.33			Arable acres	38.2.01				
Furze	20.0.28			Pasture	10.3.16	Pasture	8.0.04			Pasture	11.2.28				
Waste	8.2.29			Waste etc	6.2.03	Waste	34.2.39			Waste	1.3.29				
						Waste	1.1.09			Other	5.1.10				

(NB Two areas on the 1690s map have been designated No 12. One of these has been renamed 12A.)

One of the usual crop rotations practised in Cornwall in the 1690s was: first year wheat (or rye), 2nd - 4th years barley with oats or peas in the final year. Then the land was rested for 6 to 7 years for pasture. Sea sand and seaweed were often added to the soil to correct acidity. "Farmers were said to plough, till and harrow their lands as often as they have occasion, as well with horses as with oxen".² The last time working oxen were said to have been used locally was in 1878 at Sancreed, a neighbouring parish. Wheel scuffers were first introduced in St Just about 1840, and chain harrows not until 1858-60. Before this a bush harrow, made with blackthorn bushes, was used locally.³

Only 870 acres in the parish total of 7391 acres were ploughable in St Just according to the 1841 tithe file for the area. The following interesting facts are also revealed from the tithe file:-

Acreage of commons	3,750
Number of cows	400
Number of bullocks	100
Number of horses	330
Number of sheep	530
Acres of pasture including seeds	1,630
Average rent of pasture per acre	50s
Average rent of common per acre	3s
Average rent of arable per acre	30s
The total valuation for the area produced	£844.10.0d.



An even earlier valuable record of tithe collecting and farm production has survived for St Just for the period 1588-96 when William Drake, the vicar, started his account book, and wrote in it the amount of various tithes collected from his parishioners, their names and tenements, owners etc together with the type of tithe paid, thus providing us with a fascinating glimpse into the past. The book, known as the St Just Easter Book, is owned by the Penzance Library. For example, the tithes received for the year 1590 included these items:- 26 calves selling at 3s 4d each; 12 pigs selling at 4s.4d each; 102 lambs at 12d/.13d each. 321 fleeces were recorded (71 black, the rest white) and 196 cheeses and 240 pounds of butter produced £2.13s.4d in tithes. Hemp was produced from 28 tenements in the area and honey from 25 tenements. Fish "from the rock" were also mentioned. It was customary for the tithe offerings to be brought to the church and left there in accordance with "the laudable customs" laid down time out of mind. It was laid down that tithe geese and pigs were to be brought to the church yard bound with some cord and the vicar or his deputy were to be warned. Tithe leeks and onions were to be brought into the church by the "Vann Stone" and a house was to be provided by the Vicar or his deputy in the Church town on St Mark's day for receiving the tithe lambs, calves and kids. Offerings of 4d were made by married couples and 2d for single adults.

In 1589 Thomas William and his family were living at Boscean (called Bossehan) and he paid 4d for himself and his wife. He also paid a tithe on "Cliff" fish. His children, John, Thomas, Jane and Jone each paid 1d. His neighbour George Fisher paid 4d for himself and his wife, and sons William and John paid 1d each. An agricultural labourer's wage was set at 8d a day in the mid 1660s but was probably far less than this in West Penwith.³

BOSWEDDEN

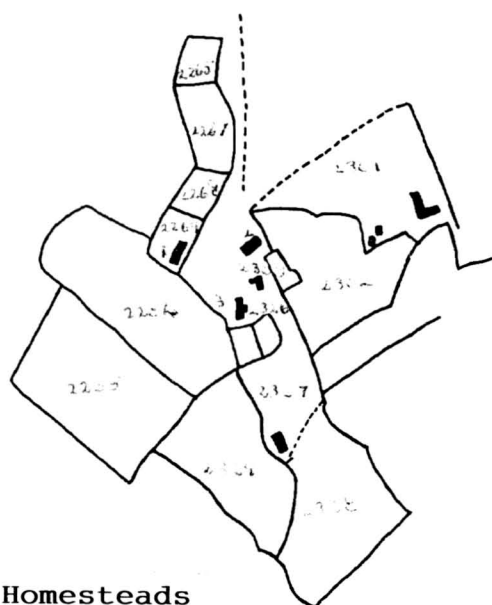


Documentary evidence throws an interesting light on the complexity of the holdings which made up Boscean and Boswedden. In the Cornwall Feet of Fines (no 390) dated 3.11.1302 agreement was reached between Thomas Blundel and Beryngera his wife and William de Roscaswal (Boscaswell?) plaintiffs and Roger de Boswen, tenant, as to 1 messuage and 1 acre of land in Boswen-by-Boseghan in St Just parish. By the late seventeenth century, when the Robartes only owned a small share of the lands at both Boscean and Boswedden, other families were involved and documents exist from the seventeenth century which do not refer to the Robartes. For example in 1649 lands at Brea Vean, Boswedden and Boscean were included in a marriage settlement between Richard Ustick and Cissey Edwards⁴ and in 1667 Catherine Ustick, widow, took out a lease on 3 lives for 1/6th part with a 1/2 part in the stamping mills of Boscean at a rent of 3s 6d.⁵ Several leases followed in 1697, 1708 and 1746 when the stamping mills were leased to John Hicks on 3 lives for the same rent of 3s.6d.¹ Boscean then features in a mortgage agreement dated 1690 settled on the three lives of Malathia Angwin, Margery his wife and Henry his son.⁶ By about 1800 the Scobell family owned a large share of Boscean which was then in the occupation of Hugh Woolcock, for which he paid a rent of £7.⁷ In 1820 1/3rd part of Boscean was mentioned in the will of William Ellis of Westminster, plus a 6/9th part of Higher Boswedden occupied by Nicholas and John Beyns with 3 messuages nearby.⁸ By 1866 a sett of Boscean mine owned by F.W.H.Granville and others was granted to S and H.C.York for a term of 21 years.⁹

Returning to the land at Boswedden, Mathew Gwennop was a tenant there in 1696.¹⁰ His will was proved in 1714 and from this we can see that he was a prosperous tinner as well as being a farmer and he leased or owned other land besides Boswedden.¹¹ Thomas Grenfell, another tinner, held a lease at the beginning of the eighteenth century. On his death early in 1727 an inventory was taken of his goods and chattels.¹² Included in his chattel leases were several which referred to a half and a third of a half of the tenement of Higher Boswedden "some determinable on the death of one life and others on the deaths of several ancient persons". In spite of what would seem to be an insecure holding because of the age of the lives this chattel estate was valued at the high sum of £165. He also held a chattel estate in a half and one third of a half of a small piece of cliff called Parke an Chappell, determined on the death of 3 old lives which was worth only £2. Thomas Grenfell was not only a tinne but he was also a farmer and from the list of his animals and corn we can obtain some idea of the type of farming which was being carried on at Boswedden only thirty years after the map was drawn for the Lanhedrock Atlas. His corn consisted of 4 acres of barley and half an acre of oats in the ground which "was tilled about a month before his death" (ie in January). This corn was valued at £4.10s. His animals consisted of 3 cows, 2 heifers, 3 small nags and an old mare, 24 small sheep and lambs and a small swine worth together £16.5s.6d. and his husbandry implements including a saddle and bridle came to 17s 6d. The principal room in his house was the hall which contained a deal table frame and form, an old cupboard, a small "case of shelves", an old wooden chair and 2 benches, 8 pewter dishes, 11 pewter plates and a pewter flagon, a chamber pot and some candlesticks worth in all £2.6s 6d. His kitchen which was separate from the hall was reasonably well equipped the most spectacular object being a brass pan containing about 20 gallons. The furniture and bedding in his one bedchamber over the hall was more valuable and included as well as feather beds, blankets etc 2 bedsteads, an oval table an old chest and some old cane chairs. His linen and earthenware were mentioned separately. In all the inventory amounted to £227.2s which is a large amount for this period in Cornwall.

In 1745 James Tonkin renewed the Robartes lease for 99 years on the three lives of Thomas and James Grenfell aged 11 and 6, and Grace Tonkin aged 5, for a rent of 2s 7d on a ninth part of 15 fields.¹³ When he died in 1751 he was described as a yeoman and was also, as can be seen from the terms of the will, very prosperous for he was able to leave his grandchildren considerable sums of money including £80 to grandson Thomas which he was to have when he was 23. Another grandson, James Tonkin, was left the house "where Richard Boyens now lives on a yearly rent being part of the tenement of Higher Boswedden in St Just and which I hold at lease from the executors of Charles Streater Ellis,

BOSCEAN 1841



Lady Vere Hunt, Thomas Robyns of Penzance surgeon and William Ustick of Leah gent by virtue of several leases thereof by them granted.”¹⁴ We have here therefore the names of the several owners of Boswedden in the middle of the eighteenth century. In 1713 John Ustick of St Just had left “his Estate in Bosehan, Bosehan Mill & Stamping Mill” to his son John in his will, and, when Susannah the sole heiress of the Usticks of Leah married John Scobell in 1802, the estate came with her, as a Scobell schedule of freehold land of about that time states that a Land Tax of 10d was paid out of Boscean with 2s 11 1/2d paid out of Boswedden.¹⁵

The tithe map of 1841 shows that Boscean was owned by the Hon A.M. Agar, John Scobell, Nicholas and George Grenfell, and William Carzise, with various tenements/land leased to Thomas Woolcock, Michael Davy, Henry Taylor, Thomas Hill and Thomas Rowe. In 1950, Boscean was purchased by Mr Ivan Rowe, who carries on mixed farming there today growing potatoes, corn etc and maintaining a dairy herd of approximately 70 animals. In latter years, several fields in this area were bought by other individuals. Boswedden in 1841 was owned by the Hon A.M. Agar, John Scobell and John Boyns, the latter occupying the tenement. The Boyns family continued to prosper at Boswedden until the early 1900s when their family fortune was lost following a long Court battle over a right of way on the property.

The census of 1841 discloses that 43 families lived at Boscean and Boswedden comprising 222 people of which 113 were male and 109 female, the eldest being Thomas Taylor, who was aged 88 years, and the youngest Zephorah Olds being 2 months of age. The occupations of the various families were numerous and consisted of 3 yeomen, 5 mine agents, 2 farmers, 1 accountant, 2 engineers, 1 butcher, 1 husbandman, 2 blacksmiths, 1 carpenter, 1 sawyer, 1 engine man, 3 millers, 1 lighthouse keeper, 4 independents, 2 agricultural labourers, 2 day labourers (both female) and 4 servants. However the majority of these families were employed in the local tin mines which accounted for 22 tin miners, 3 copper miners and 3 tin dressers. All the members of the families were said to have been born in Cornwall, and good sound Cornish surnames are recorded such as Ellis, George, Osborne, Casley, Matthews, Wearne, Oates, Rowe, Merryfield, Wallis, Thomas, Bottrell, Trembath, Davey, Veal, Nichols, Tregear, Nankervis etc.

The old seventeenth century farmhouse at Boscean is still standing although it has been extensively altered in recent years by the present owner, Mr Scott Marshall, who has established a successful pottery business there. He purchased the building from Mr James Rowe in 1961 and the upper floor has been raised and the barn attached converted into a dwelling house. The outline of an earlier barn can still be seen on the north-facing wall of the farmhouse. The old original fireplace in the kitchen still incorporates the large granite slabs placed there almost 300 years ago on either side of the chimney. The flu was circular and enormous and probably extended beyond the exterior wall of the building - as can be seen in several old properties in this area, for example at Nancherrow. When the old kitchen was modernised and the large flagstoned floor removed, the Marshalls were told by the builders to look out for a small circular object which might be buried underneath. They found a small bone marble buried in the exact centre of the floor. It was apparently a custom of old to bury a round object such as a coin or marble to prevent evil spirits from entering the house.



Tin mining has played a very important role in the history of this area. The Lanhydrock Map shows that tin mining was well established at Boscean at that time, for a pair of stamps is shown in the area marked as Caniter Common which was half-owned by the Robartes family, and half by the Tremeneere family of Penzance. Indeed, in 1585, John Norden in his “Description of Cornwall” states that Boscean was already the site of a tin works; whilst at Bosswen (Boswedden) John, the son of Edward Vean, paid a tithe on 10 gallons of tin and a “pottle” of tin in 1592.¹⁶ Also, in 1522, the Tinnars’ muster roll for the St Just area included James Bossighan with his sling, plus a son, John James, and his bag.

Included in the 1825 sale of Boscean mine were certain tenements comprising a dwellinghouse, outhouses, 5 acres of meadowland and 3 1/2 acres of crofts known as the Golden tenement held on a 7 year lease from 1823 at a

rent of £19. There were also 2 stamping mills known as Here Stamps (tenant : John Tregear) held by lease for 99 years, plus a dwellinghouse, tenement and 12 acres of arable pasture and furze land called Taylors Tenement held by lease for 99 years.¹⁷ Boscean Mine contained a rich quality ore and records 2,400 tons of black tin being produced in some years between 1837-65. The mine employed 89 men and boys in 1837 increasing to 100 by 1841. In 1872 the labour force was 210. It was sold in 1872 and incorporated into Wheal Cuning united.¹⁷

The Golden tenement developed into the Goldings Mine, and in 1867 it was reluctantly ceded to the neighbouring Wheal Owles Mine at a value of £600 following a mistaken case of "trespass" which was only verified ten years later after the Wheal Owles disaster.

At Boswedden in 1783 a Tin Bounds agreement was granted to William Bennetts when 2 men were permitted to work with dues to be paid of 1/15th. By 1822 Boswedden and Castle Mine was developed for a considerable distance under the sea, but by 1860 the mine suffered continued losses and, despite opening up new areas in the 1870s when it was worked under Wheal Cuning United, the mine continued to make a loss and mining was suspended in 1876.¹⁷

Today some modern housing has been built along Cape Cornwall Road, and the St Just Comprehensive school built in the late 1960s occupies the area nearest the town centre. However, the rural nature of the Lanhedrock Map is mostly intact as the school playing fields and the St Just cricket field adjoining, together with the new golf course nearby provide large open fields, much as in the past.

1. CRO CL734/41

2. James Whetter *Cornwall in the Seventeenth Century* Padstow 1974

3. Manuscript by Henry Thomas, *Cornish Bard* St Just/Pendeen Old Cornwall Society

4. CRO X506/28

5. Lanhedrock Estate Book, lease dated 1667 at Lanhedrock

6. CRO WH5980 Angwin settlement

7. CRO SA/93 Schedule of Land c 1800

8. CRO X573/82 Will of Wm.Ellis of Westminster

9. CRO SA/75

10. RIC HJ/13/3

11. CRO will Mathew Gwennop 1714

12. CRO will Thomas Grenfell 1727

13. CRO CL734/42

14. CRO will James Tonkin 1751

15. CRO SA/93

16. St Just Easter Book The Penzance Library

17. *St Just Mining District* C.Noall

1908 OS MAP SHOWING BOSORNE & BOSWEDDEN Scale 6" to 1 mile

