

Intertextuality in a Cornish Folktale

The Legend of Pengersick Castle
And the meaning behind the name of the place,
Praa Sands

Lisa Spooner (1704387)

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Supervisor: Dr Jane Cartright
Faculty of Humanities and Performing Arts

Master's Degrees by Examination and Dissertation

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Name..... Lisa Spooner

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the historic and literary context of local folklore surrounding Pengersick Castle at Praa Sands in west Cornwall, with a primary focus on William Bottrell's 1873 'A Legend of Pengersec'. The aim of the research is to identify parallels between the oral-derived 'Legend of Pengersec' (as published by Victorian folklorists William Bottrell and Robert Hunt) and the more formal record of known history (as pieced together from official documents). Analysis reveals clear matches between the two, recalling same events from two very different perspectives: 1) the official history of formal document, and 2) the verbal recall of west Cornwall's rural population, passing through generations as local folklore eventually preserved in written form. Additionally, these local tales contain details not recorded elsewhere, affirming what is already known whilst alluding to secrets lost – including, encoded within Bottrell's rambling prose, insights into the building's abandonment to ruin, and a possible explanation for the meaning behind the name of the place, Praa Sands (hag's or witch's Cove). Furthermore, these location-specific stories encompass aspects of wider-world literature, revealing a complex intertextuality in their evolution, splicing Celtic myth with Middle English Romance verses King Horn and Bevis of Hampton, Arthurian legend and Faustian theme, with main protagonists Pengersec and Marec / Pengersick the Enchanter fitting the classic image of medieval Crusader knight turned Renaissance Alchemist, pitched in conflict with three female nemeses, the Lady Godolphin, the witch of Fraddam, and Venna/Bitha. Raising as many questions as are answered, the conclusions drawn here offer potential for future research.

Contents

Item	Page
Abstract.	3
Acknowledgements.	5
List of illustrative plates.	6
Introduction.	7
Literature Review.	16
Chapter 1) Pengersick and Praa Sands, What's in a name?	25
Chapter 2) Pengersick Castle, associated folklore	36-43
2.i) William Bottrell's main tale, <i>A Legend of Pengersec</i> .	36
2.ii) Robert Hunt's two-part version of same events, <i>How Pengerswick became a sorcerer</i> , and <i>The Lord of Pengerswick an Enchanter</i> .	41
2.iii) Supplementary tale, <i>The Giants of Towednack</i> (Bottrell) / <i>How Tom and the Tinkeard found the tin, and how it led</i> <i>to Morva fair</i> (Hunt).	42
2.iv) Additional tale told by both writers, <i>Pengerswick the</i> <i>Enchanter and the Giant of St. Michael's Mount</i>	42
2.v) Additional tale (Hunt), <i>The Witch of Fraddam and the</i> <i>Enchanter of Pengerswick</i> .	43
2.iv) Additional tale (Hunt), <i>Cudden Point and the Silver Table</i>	43
Chapter 3) Pengersick Castle: known history.	44-54
3.i) Prehistory-early medieval settlement.	44
3.ii) The 'lawless' de Pengersicks.	44
3.iii) The Millitons.	48
3. iv) End of the family line.	49
3.v) The forgotten years.	51
3.vi) Pengersick Castle: Britain's most haunted place?	52
Chapter 4) Historic and literary analysis.	55-62
4.i) The Legend begins.	55
4.ii) Into the East.	55
4.iii) The White Hare, and the Enchanted Sword.	58
4.iv) Pengersick the Enchanter.	60
Chapter 5) Praa Sands: Place Name Meaning: a theory.	63
Conclusion.	70
Bibliography	72
Appendix: 1) Maps: 1.i) Praa Sands location in Britain.	90
1.ii) Praa Sands location in west Cornwall.	90
2) Illustrated poems and proverbs: transcript.	91
3) Pengersick-Milliton-Hals / inheritance-purchase.	94
4) Hals family descent.	95
5) Character profiles.	96

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank those who have supported me to complete this dissertation, building on research originally started in 2002 whilst living at Praa Sands and working as general assistant and tour guide at Pengersick Castle. Pondering the local legends surrounding the place, I published my fledgling theory in a 2003 edition of *The Cornwall Review* (a free advertiser, aimed mainly at tourists). Did anybody ever actually read it? I have no idea, but here the foundation was laid for academic inquiry relegated temporarily aside as life took me in new directions until I returned, eventually, to continue my research; result being this dissertation. The list of people encountered along the way is considerable, but central amongst them has been the late Angela Evans (1918-2008), long-time owner in residence at Pengersick Castle, whose passion for the ‘history and mystery’ of her beloved home ignited my own interest. More recently, my husband Rob Spooner, for supporting me in this ‘now or never’ decision to return to study at postgraduate level, together with UWTSD course leader and dissertation supervisor Jane Cartwright, supporting me throughout. Most significantly, acknowledgement must go to Victorian folklorists William Bottrell and Robert Hunt, without whom the folklore of west Cornwall – including the tales explored here as Pengersick legend – would have been lost.

List of illustrative plates

<i>Plate Number</i>	<i>Page</i>
1) Praa Sands, with Pengersick Castle circled.	8
2) Pengersick Castle.	9
3) The late Angela Evans at Pengersick Castle.	9
4) Pengersick Castle c1535.	10
5) Pengersick Castle, c1734.	10
6) Pengersick Castle, c1880.	10
7) Praa Sands, fossilised peat ridge edging beach.	26
8) St. Michael's Mount.	29
9) Visitors to Pengersick castle, c1880.	35
10) Pengersick Castle, larger buildings complex (conjectural drawing).	49
11) William Borlase's 1738 manuscript, illustrated paintings and proverbs.	50
12) Pengersick Castle, restored with new kitchen extension, c1930.	54
13) Apotropaic marks at Godolphin House.	66
14) Apotropaic marks at Pengersick Castle.	67
15) Praa Sands beach, western end, cave entrance circled.	68

Introduction

*'Many years ago
an elderly gentleman of Gwinear told me the following story,
which he had often heard related by the old folks of that parish and Breage,
about certain ancient occupants of Pengersec;
who dwelt there long before the present castle was built by Milliton, who,
according to their legend,
constructed his stronghold in the time of Henry VII,
out of the ruins of the former castle which stood near the same site ...'.*

*'My friend made a point of telling the story just as it was related by old folks,
and I wrote the greater part of it from his recital.'*

*'It contains, however, too many details of dreadful crimes to please general readers;
and as I think it right to give our old stories unmutilated
– so far as due regard to decorum permits –
I hesitated about publishing it until advised to do so by friends who thought
it would interest antiquarian students'.¹*

Praa Sands is a small hamlet on the south-west Cornish coast, known mainly for its beach and as the location of Pengersick Castle.² Not a true castle in any traditional sense of the word, but the remains of a fortified Tudor manor house built on the site of a much earlier medieval residence, this unimposing yet atmospheric square granite tower is reputed to be one of Britain's most haunted places; gaining particular notoriety in the late-1990s under direction of long-time owner in residence, the late Angela Evans (1918-2008).³ At the time of writing Pengersick Castle operates as events venue and self-catering holiday accommodation under management of the Pengersick Historic and Education Trust.⁴ Here a wide range of paranormal activity has been reported, with more than twenty separately identified ghosts said to haunt

¹ Introductory passage to 'A Legend of Pengersec', in Bottrell, W., *Traditions and Hearthside Stories of west Cornwall, second series* (Penzance: Beare & Son, 1873), p. 251., para.1-3.

² See Plates 1) & 2). Plate 1) Praa Sands with Pengersick Castle circled. Plate 2) Pengersick Castle (both, author's own photographs, 2005). See also Appendix.1.i/ii) location maps.

³ See Plate 3) The late Angela Evans at home at Pengersick Castle (Author's own photograph, 2005). For 'most haunted' citing see Addicoat, I.M., *Ghostly Tales of Cornwall* (2001), pp. 1., lns.1-2.

⁴ The Pengersick Historic and Education Trust was established in 1997 by Mrs. Evans, as charitable organisation, preserving Pengersick Castle for public benefit (restructured in 2011 into a Company Limited by Guarantee). For charity registration and information [online] see 'Pengersick Historic and Education Trust, Charity no. 114362, *Charities Commission: registered charities in England and Wales* <<https://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=1143625&subid=0>> [Accessed: 15/03/2019]. For business details and information [online] see 'Pengersick Historic and Education Trust, Company no. 7610812', *Companies House* <<https://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=1143625&subid=0>> [Accessed: 15/03/2019]. For visitor information [online] see 'homepage', *Pengersick Castle* <<https://www.pengersickcastle.com>> [Accessed: 15/03/2019].

the building and grounds; some tenuously matched to named figures from the known history and others echoing a once-rich and complex local folklore, now largely forgotten but preserved within the wider collection of ‘Cornish Drolls’ recorded by Victorian folklorists in the late-nineteenth century.⁵ Fascinating as this passion for the paranormal may be, it is a distraction, undermining the historic relevance of a building whose story can be traced over eight centuries, and a name that dates back even further, to the prehistoric origins of west Cornwall’s rugged coastline and a location known in Cornish as *Pen Gorsack*.⁶ So while the ghosts are here given due consideration, where relevant, the focus rests firmly on the more worldly reality of people and place, as explored through the unlikely medium of that local folklore. For it is here, in these oral-derived tales, that the known history of Pengersick Castle is affirmed, its forgotten secrets revealed – and, beneath it all, a possible explanation for the meaning behind the name of the place, Praa Sands.⁷



Plate 1) Praa Sands, with Pengersick Castle circled, centre.

⁵ The word *droll* here stems from Cornish *daralla* as a term encompassing traditional tales, folk plays and rhymes told by wandering storytellers, known as ‘droll-tellers’. In Nance, R.M., ‘Foreword’ to Enys, S. L., *Cornish Drolls* (Plymouth: Mayflower Press, 1931), p. 11., para.3.-p. 12., para.1.

⁶ As the much earlier name of the place now known as Praa Sands, and as place name later adopted as family name, ‘Pengersick’ is topographical in origin, rooted in Cornish *Pen Gorsack* meaning head or end of a marshy area. Extinct as a family name by the late fifteenth-century, Pengersick continued as place name into the early eighteenth-century, to be eventually usurped by the onomastic ‘Praa Sands’. In Holmes, J., *1,000 Cornish Place-Names Explained* (Redruth; Dyllansow Truran, 1983), p. 34.

⁷ As onomastic place name, Praa Sands evolved from Cornish *Porth Wragh* meaning witch’s cove. In Padel, O.J. *Cornish Place names* (Penzance, Alison Hodge Publishing., 1988), p. 145.



Plate 2) Pengersick Castle.



Plate 3) the late Angela Evans, at home at Pengersick Castle.

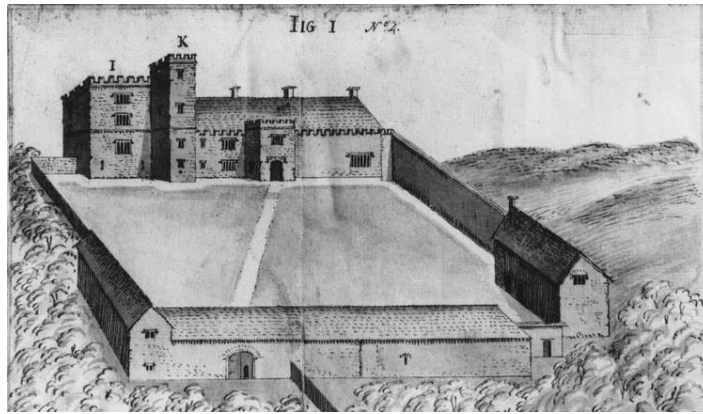


Plate 4) Pengersick Castle, c1535.



Plate 5) Pengersick Castle, c1734.

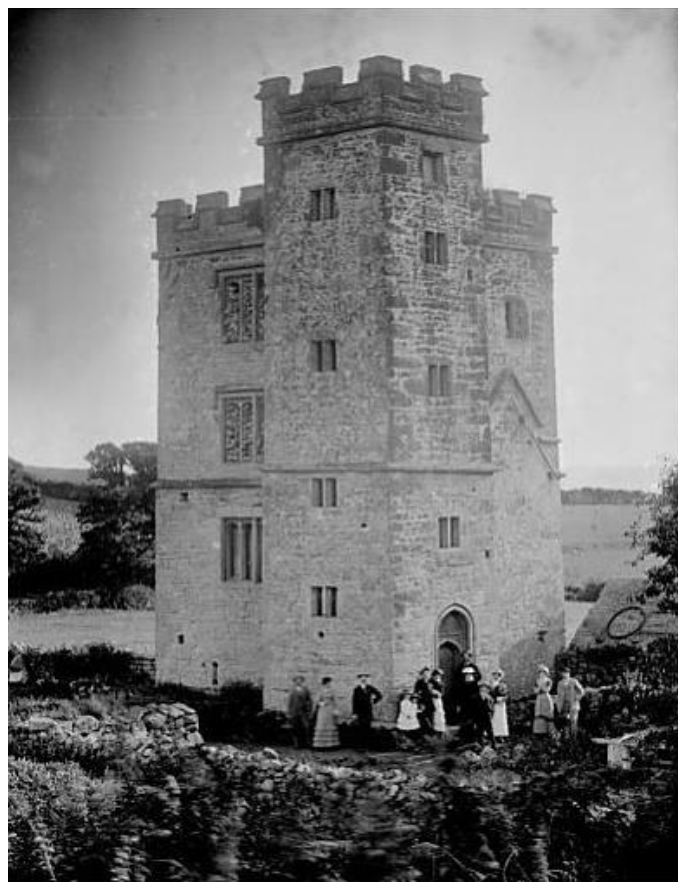


Plate 6) Pengersick Castle, c1880.

Passed on verbally through many generations in spoken Cornish prior to being eventually published in English, the oral-derived tales associated with Pengersick Castle are recorded primarily by Victorian writers William Bottrell and Robert Hunt within their broader assemblage of Cornish folklore, published between 1865-1881.⁸

Whilst considering the wider whole, this dissertation focuses mainly on William Bottrell's 'Legend of Pengersec', as featured in his 1873 *Traditions and Hearthside Stories; second series*.⁹ Entertaining, in parts nonsensical, tragicomic, outrageous, this lengthy narrative centres around two dynamic protagonist, a father and son evolving through the tale as 'Pengersec' ('last lord's father / old lord) and 'Marec' (last lord), better remembered 'the Enchanter'. Accompanying them are an array of tertiary characters, most notably a selection of challenging women. Firstly, an eastern princess whose dying curse signals the downturn of Pengersick family fortunes. Secondly, the Lady Godolphin; wealthy heiress, lustful stepmother, and reputed witch, working with two others as typical trio. These characters with others feature variably throughout the interrelated tales,¹⁰ alluding to distant events bearing little resemblance to the building's official history.¹¹ Built sometime around 1500 as home to a family named Milliton, descendants of the post-Norman 'de Pengersicks', Pengersick Castle was once a centre of power, with the men of this family holding prominent positions including MP and Mayor of Helston, Captain of St. Michael's Mount and High Sherriff of Cornwall – until events took a tragic turn, bringing the direct family line to an abrupt end in 1570-1. Passing through sale to Cornish inventor Nicholas Hals, to be inherited by his son John, the final years of Pengersick Castle as functioning home are shrouded in mystery; at some point abandoned falling

⁸ See Bottrell, W., *Traditions and Hearthside Stories of West Cornwall* (two books by the same name) *first series* (Penzance: W. Cornish, 1870) and *Second Series* (Penzance: Beare & Son., 1873), also *Stories and Folklore of West Cornwall* (Penzance: F. Rodda, 1880). Tales relating to Pengersick Castle appear variably in the two *Traditions* but do not feature in *Stories and Folklore*. See also Hunt, R., (four books by the same name) *Popular Romances of the West of England, or, The Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall; Series One* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1865) and *Series Two* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1865), followed by *First and Second Series in one volume* (London: John Camden, 1871) and *third edition, revised and enlarged* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1881, reprinted in 1908 as *a new impression*). Stories relating to Pengersick Castle feature variably in all four.

⁹ See Bottrell, W., *Traditions and Hearthside Stories; second series*, pp. 251-67.

¹⁰ See Appendix 5) Character profiles.

¹¹ An outline history is given in Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle ... a brief history* (Praa Sands, Cornwall: Out of Town Design and Print, 2004 reprint of 1999 revision of 1995 original), pp. 3-9., and Herring, P., Thorpe, C. and Morley, B., *Pengersick Castle, Breage: An Archaeological & Historical Assessment* (Cornwall, Cornwall County Council, Cornwall Archaeology Unit, 1998), pp. 8-10.

eventually into ruin.¹² Standing derelict, this history was largely forgotten as the building crumbled. Meanwhile the oral-derived tales evolved, to be eventually published in written form in the late-nineteenth century, with the tower by then a popular destination on Cornwall's fledgling tourist trail.¹³ Told in typically rambling Victorian style, these oral-derived tales jumble the genres of folklore, legend, and myth via the prism of contemporary influence; romantic nostalgia meets tabloid thrill; oral tradition rebranded as consumer product. In the century and a half since their initial publication, these stories have endured yet also diminished through successive reinterpretation, reinvention, and reduction, to survive in fragmented form as the ghost stories underpinning modern paranormal fame. Throughout this process, their historic and literary context has gone overlooked. Indeed, it has been stated, with academic confidence, that: 'it is difficult to imagine we will ever be able to extract any underlying historic truths from [these wild and mysterious stories]'.¹⁴

Such dismissal may seem reasonable, given the vague origins of the tales, the rambling style of Victorian edit and subsequent degeneration into modern ghost tale; assumption being that such fables must be rooted more in imagination than fact.

Challenging that assumption this dissertation examines the historic and literary context of local folklore surrounding Pengersick Castle, exploring the parallels between these oral-derived tales and the more formal record of official document; the aim being to verify these oral tales as a valid historic source. A comprehensive range of material is considered. For these stories exist not in isolation but as one of three threads of tradition, evolving interwoven through centuries of retelling yet distinct in their individually identifiable origins, expanding more recently into a fourth branch arising through modern-day reinterpretation and reinvention. These are:

¹² See Plates 4 & 5). Plate 4) Pengersick Castle c1535. Section cropped from William Borlase's 1738 copy (see Plate 11) sourced [online] as 'Pengersick Castle, Praa Sands, drawing', Morrab Library Photographic Archive <<http://photoarchive.morrablibrary.org.uk/items/show/10448>> [Accessed: 19/10/2020]. Plate 5) Pengersick Castle c1734. Wood-engraved print by the Buck Bothers. Sourced [online] as 'Pengersick Castle insc. to Francis Earl and Baron Godolphin Viscount' at *Known by Nunn (A catalogue of Cornish prints 1750-1850)* <<http://www.knownbynunn.org.uk/list-images/entry/6294/>> [Accessed: 01/11/2020].

¹³ See Plate 6) Pengersick Castle c1880, group visit (photographer unknown). Copy made by dissertation author in 2005, from a photograph then held in the Pengersick Castle household archive.

¹⁴ As stated in Herring, P., et al., *Pengersick Castle*, p.18, para.2., lns.4-5.

- The oral-derived local tales, of indeterminate date and provenance, passing verbally in spoken Cornish over an indefinable period of time to be eventually published in written English in the late nineteenth century, by folklorists William Bottrell and Robert Hunt (each producing their own separate versions of same material, variably reworked).
- The pseudo-historic narratives of antiquarian chroniclers, writing in Latin and English between the early-sixteenth to late-eighteenth centuries.
- Themes arising from a collection of seven illustrated poems and proverbs (with words in English) painted directly onto the walls of Pengersick Castle's first-floor room. Date estimated to the late-fifteenth / early-sixteenth century, the originals no longer exist, but their remains were part-copied by Cornish historian William Borlase during a visit to the derelict ruins in 1738.
- Late-twentieth century ghost-story underpinning modern paranormal fame, continuing to evolve through twenty-first century re-adaptation.

These four threads of tradition are documented in a Literature Review outlining their evolutionary interplay over five centuries of written record. Chapter 1) opens with an exploration of Pengersick and Praa Sands place-name development and meaning within the context of Cornish language history, and the role of oral storytelling in that process. Biographical profiles of the two writers, Bottrell and Hunt, are here included, with some consideration of contemporary trends influencing their work.

Chapter 2) presents the associated folklore, summarising six tales as presented by Bottrell and Hunt in their 1865-81 book publications. Firstly (2.i) William Bottrell's primary narrative, 'A Legend of Pengersec'. Bottrell dedicates an entire chapter to this one tale, telling the whole as continuous saga comprising multiple sub-tales. For clarity, the content is here separated into two main threads unfolding within the wider whole; the story of Pengersec and Marec, and the interplay of Lady Godolphin and her two female accomplices as witchcraft trio. This is followed by 2.ii) Robert Hunt's version of same events, told by him in two parts as 'How Pengerswick

became a sorcerer’ and ‘The Lord of Pengerswick an Enchanter’. Next (2.iii), a supplementary tale from both writers, told as substory within separate saga ‘The Giants of Towednack’ (*Bottrell*) or ‘How Tom and the Tinkeard found the tin, and how it led to Morva fair’ (Hunt). Then 2.iv) a further tale told by both, concerning the Enchanter and a giant of St. Michael’s Mount. Finally, two tales from Robert Hunt, (2.iv) ‘The Witch of Fraddam and the Enchanter of Pengerswick’ and (2.v) ‘Cudden Point and the Silver Table’.

Chapter 3) documents Pengersick Castle’s known history, from prehistory to present day. This chapter is divided into subsections, demarcating eras within the wider timespan. Prior to the twentieth-century, insight into Pengersick Castle’s forgotten past relied on anecdotal pseudo-history embellished with Victorian and Edwardian inquiry. Subsequent advances in research methods inform a deeper understanding of the building’s unique backstory, with the 1995 publication of *Pengersick Castle ... a brief history* marking a major turning point as the first concerted effort to collate fragmented detail into chronological narrative.¹⁵ Three years later, the Cornwall Archaeological Unit’s 1998 *Archaeological and Historic Assessment* details the most substantial investigation of the building, to that point.¹⁶ The summary given here draws mainly from these two publications, augmented with additional sources. The Pengersick family history is wide and varied, with multiple generations sharing same name and vocation. Thus, for simplicity, the focus here rests manly on direct line of descent, from post-Norman ‘de Pengersick’ origins to Milliton end.¹⁷ Existing accounts reach a hiatus at this point, skimming forward to the 1734 Buck Brothers depiction of the building in derelict state, leaving a century and a half unaccounted. This omission is here explored in the context of wider world history, aiming to demystify this era of Pengersick Castle as occasional residence of father and son Nicholas and John Hals, before continuing on to the more recent past, from Victorian

¹⁵ See Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*.

¹⁶ See Herring, P., et al., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 8., section 2.0. This work acknowledges reliance on Evans, A. (*Ibid*) as primary source outlining the Pengersick-Milliton family history. The Herring report serves as source reference for subsequent research, including Mossop, M., *Pengersick Castle Glass, Breage, Cornwall: Archaeological Investigation* (Cornwall County Council Historic Environmental Service (Projects), 2004), and Thomas, N., *Pengersick Castle, Praa Sands, Cornwall: Archaeological watching briefs and historic building recording 2011-12* (Cornwall County Council, Cornwall Archaeological Unit; Event Report, 2013).

¹⁷ See Appendix 3) Pengersick-Milliton-Hals / inheritance-purchase.

visitor attraction through twentieth-century restoration as family home, to present day. Here the tower's haunted fame is briefly considered, detailing the range of paranormal activity together with some possible explanations for their manifestation.

Chapter 4) analyses William Bottrell's 1873 'Legend of Pengersec', as primary tale. This chapter is divided into subsections, addressing specific points. Firstly (4.i & 4.ii), the historic roots of the tale's opening stage. Secondly (4.iii & 4.iv), details of story themes and motifs echoing real-world events and wider world literature. Chapter 5) then postulates a theory, as possible explanation for the meaning behind the place name 'Praa Sands', as revealed through analysis of this local legend. The whole is then brought together in conclusion, confirming the associated folklore of Pengersick Castle as a valuable yet largely overlooked historic and literary resource, with a complex intertextuality evolved through centuries of retelling.¹⁸

To summarise, the associated folklore of Pengersick Castle bears little immediate resemblance to the history of the place, as officially documented. Clear parallels emerge when characters and storylines are compared to real people and events from that history, revealing overlaps between folkloric theme and genuine happenings, along with details not recorded elsewhere, hinting at aspects of history omitted from formal record yet remembered here, in local legend. Furthermore, these stories encompass aspects from the wider scope of popular literature; most noticeably the Middle English Romance verses *King Horn* and *Bevis of Hampton* spliced with Arthurian myth and Faustian theme, with the main protagonists *Pengersec* and *Marec / Pengersick the Enchanter* fitting the classic image of medieval Crusader knight turned Renaissance Alchemist. Elements of more localised Celtic myth also feature, with pagan tradition diluted into superstition through Christian overlay, further skewed via the prism of Victorian appetite for Gothic fiction, Sensation novel and tabloid thrill. Thus, these location-specific tales encompass a wide range of genres, reflecting the eras through which they evolved and the personal bias of individual writers, preserving yet also diluting these local tales as a valuable yet largely underappreciated historic and literary resource.

¹⁸ Intertextuality is the name given to inter-and-intracultural dynamics and their operations in a literary context; the cross absorption and transformation of themes and motifs between texts. In Orr, M., *Intertextuality; Debates and Contexts* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), pp. 1 & 21.

Literature Review

The oral-derived legends associated with Pengersick Castle are recorded primarily by Victorian writers William Bottrell and Robert Hunt within their wider collections of Cornish folklore, known as Cornish drolls, published between 1865-1881. Compiled during an era of great socio-economic change, with Cornish culture and language by then in rapid decline, these works comprise the primary body of written material preserving local customs, beliefs and traditions that may otherwise have been lost.¹⁹

Although frequently referenced together as ‘Bottrell and Hunt’, the two produced their works separately, with Robert Hunt commonly cited as the first to do so.²⁰ In reality it was Cornish-born William Bottrell who collated the material direct from source, going on to share his findings freely with established author Robert Hunt, who soon published his own versions as a two-book series in 1865, proving so popular they were reprinted twice, in 1871 and 1881.²¹ William Bottrell meanwhile serialised his originals for local newspaper *The Cornish Telegraph* and contributed features to periodic journals *One and All* and *The Reliquary*,²² going on to publish his own three-book series in 1870, 1873 and 1880.²³

Within this wider collection are a number of tales specifically referencing Pengersick Castle, variably recorded by the two writers in their distinctly different styles. Of them all, the most detailed is William Bottrell’s ‘A Legend of Pengersec’, as told in his 1873 *Traditions and Hearthsides Stories of West Cornwall, Second Series*.²⁴ Unfolding as one long, meandering saga (almost seven and half thousand words of elaborate Victorian prose) Bottrell’s tale charts the lives of two central characters, a father and son by the name of ‘Pengersec’. Of the two, it is the younger who takes centre stage, evolving to be remembered as Pengersick The Enchanter, fabled

¹⁹ In Koch, J.T. (Gen. Ed.) & Minard, A., (Ed.) *The Celts: History, Life and Culture, Volume 1, A-H* (Oxford: ABC-Clio, 2012), p. 351, para.2.

²⁰ *Ibid*

²¹ See Hunt, R., *Popular Romances; first series* (1865), *second series* (1865), *first and second series in one volume* (1871) and *third edition, revised and enlarged* (1881).

²² Cited in Rowe, J. H., ‘William Bottrell and Some of his Characters’ in *Old Cornwall Society* (October 1929), p. 2., para.5.

²³ See Bottrell, W., *Traditions and Hearthsides Stories; first series* (1870), *second series* (1873), and *Stories and Folklore* (1880).

²⁴ In Bottrell, W., *Traditions, second series*, pp. 251-67.

sorcerer, and last lord of Pengersick. Robert Hunt tells a much abbreviated version in his 1865 *Popular Romances of the West of England, second series*, reducing the whole into two much shorter tales, lacking the narrative cohesion of Bottrell's far lengthier saga.²⁵ Both writers tell an additional tale with this last lord / Enchanter as main protagonist,²⁶ and a separate saga in which he features as supporting character in a wider tale.²⁷ Robert Hunt adds a further tale not included in Bottrell's more detailed script,²⁸ and a pseudo-historic anecdote, disjoined from the main script.²⁹

Together these separate yet interrelated stories form a singular narrative falling into two parts, with a textual coherence that is not immediately obvious. It is only by 'joining the dots' between the disjointed tales that their relationship as a whole – and their parallel with history – begins to emerge. The first part is, essentially, a tale of doomed romance amid the turmoil of war, and it begins with a young Cornish Lord who travels east on the quest for adventure and there meets a princess, in classic fairy tale style.³⁰ The difference with this particular tale is that the details can be matched in actual history, and there is no happy ending as he returns a changed man, broken by lost love and the horrors of war. Haunted by trauma he degenerates from young 'Pengersec' into 'old lord' – a miserable shadow of his former self whose remaining years pass in fearful isolation, as story focus shifts to his son; a maverick youth destined to become the last Lord of Pengersick. Just like his father and countless generations previous, he too travels east but here breaks with tradition, finding love and a new vocation before returning eventually to reclaim and rebuild his ancestral home; Pengersick Castle. Here he becomes known as Pengersick the Enchanter, a reclusive yet formidable character whose unusual life and dramatic end form the

²⁵ See Hunt, R., 'How Pengerswick became a sorcerer' and 'The Lord of Pengerswick an Enchanter' in *Popular Romances, second series*, pp. 84-6 & 86-90.

²⁶ See 'The Lord of Pengerswick and the Giant of St. Michael's Mount' in Hunt, R., *Popular Romances, first series*, pp. 29-30., and the same story (untitled) as anecdotal tale within wider saga 'The Giants of Towednack', in Bottrell, W., *Traditions, first series*, p. 36., para.2., lns.4-18.

²⁷ See Bottrell, W., 'The Giants of Towednack' in *Traditions, first series*, pp. 9-46 (whole story), and (Pengersick anecdotes) p. 33., para.3., & p. 37., para.3.-p. 42., para.1. see also Hunt, R., 'How Tom and the Tinkeard found the tin, and how it led to Morva fair' in *Popular Romances, first series*, p. 31., para.3.-p.55., (whole story), and (Pengersick anecdotes) p. 50., para.2.-p. 52., para.1.

²⁸ See 'The Witch of Fraddam and the Enchanter of Pengerswick' in Hunt, R., *Popular Romances, second series* (1865), pp. 90-2.

²⁹ See 'Cudden Point and the Silver Table' in Hunt, R., *Popular Romances, first series* (1865), p. 213.

³⁰ 'Fairy tale' is defined as a familiar story, verifiably old through being passed through generations or striking the reader/listener by its resemblance to other tales. In Warner, M., *Once Upon a Time: A Short History of Fairy Tale* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. xviii.

second part of the tale. Feared for his unearthly powers yet also admired for his good deeds, this last Lord of Pengersick / Enchanter immerses himself in the study of ‘magic’ so powerful it terrifies the locals but can today be explained as medieval and renaissance science. Locked in conflict with three local witches – all women, all bad – he is the archetype antihero, terrorising the neighbourhood with his own black magic yet celebrated for his good works in overthrowing these three female nemeses. Of his many innovations the most miraculous is an ‘elixir of life’ prolonging his existence far beyond normal years – until tragedy strikes and he comes to a gruesome end in a terrible fire, destroying his home and all evidence of his magic and wealth.

These oral-derived tales, passing verbally in native Cornish over an indefinable span of time, differ markedly from the much earlier pseudo-histories of antiquarian chroniclers, writing in Latin and English through the early-sixteenth to late-eighteenth centuries. Most significant amongst these is Cornish historian William Hals (b1655-d1737), whose grandfather Sir Nicholas Hals (d.1636) actually owned and occasionally lived at Pengersick Castle c1584, to be succeeded by his son John (historian William’s uncle).³¹

William Hals is regarded as a notoriously unreliable historian, yet his work came to inform subsequent writers, drawing from his manuscripts as authoritative source.³²

Within a body of works spanning five decades (1685-1737) Hals offers what can be considered the earliest written form of legend associated with Pengersick Castle in his account of ‘one Mr. Millaton’, said to have fled his home in Devon escaping

³¹ Sir Nicholas Hals position as owner and occasional resident at Pengersick Castle is first documented in John Norden’s *Speculum Britanniae/A Topographical and Historical Description of Cornwall 1584* (completed by 1602 but not published until 1728, it was reprinted in 1966 by Frank Graham, Newcastle Upon Tyne). These details are cited (with Norden as source ref.) in Grose, F., *Supplement to The Antiquities Of England And Wales Vol. 8, 1783* (London: S. Hooper, 1786), p. 45., para.5., ln.11., with son John’s activities as heir noted on p. 46., para.1., lns.2-3.

³² William Hals’s academic fallibility is documented in Richard Polwhele’s 1817 *History of Cornwall, Vol IV* (London: Law and Whitaker), p. 203, para.2, lns.8-12. Hals began his Cornish research in 1685, remaining unfinished on his death five decades later. His manuscripts were part-published in 1750 by Exeter-based journalist Andrew Brice, and later served as source inspiration for others including Cornish engineer, politician and sometime president of The Royal Society, Davies Gilbert, whose four-volume edited version of Hals’s history (incorporating additional works by contemporary historian Thomas Tonkin) was published in 1838 as Davies, G., *The Parochial History of Cornwall, founded on the manuscript histories of Mr. Hals and Mr. Tonkin, with additions and various appendices* (London, J.B. Nicholls & Son).

punishment for the crime of murder; acquiring Pengersick Castle through purchase *in the latter end of the reign of Henry VIII [he there] immured himself in a secret chamber of the tower, seeing nobody but his trusty friends, so that he died never being called into question for the offence*'.³³

Although unproven in the 'murder' detail, Hals' skeletal outline does echo the actual history, for the name Milliton is indeed associated with the place, not by sale but through inheritance via the marriage of Pengersick heiress Elizabeth Worth to Devon-born William Milliton c1470.³⁴

This Milliton connection (minus the murderous crime) is previously documented by early-sixteenth-century travel writer John Leland in his 1536-42 *Itinerary*, noting the name as 'Millatun' and the place alternately 'Pergroinswick' and 'Pengarsike', along with details of family descent and anecdotal 'one Henry Force was Lord of it'.³⁵

Here in this fleeting comment Leland references Milliton predecessors the twelfth-fourteenth century 'de Pengersick' family. These two names, Pengersick and Milliton, demarcate two distinct phases of the known family history. At the time of Leland's visit Pengersick Castle was still occupied by the Millitons, remaining in reasonable condition over the next six decades to be noted in Richard Carew's 1602 *Survey of Cornwall* as a 'fayre house in unfruitful soyle'.³⁶

Events hereafter remain unclear, other than the place was by now owned by Sir Nicholas Hals, passing subsequently to his son John, to be at some point abandoned to ruin, as evidenced in the 1734 Buck Brothers print.³⁷ Just four years later in 1738, Cornish antiquarian William Borlase visited Pengersick Castle and whilst there sketched a copy of an original oil-painting then still extant on the oak-panelled

³³ As recorded in Grose, F., *Antiquities*, Vol. 8., p. 45., para.4., lns.4-10.

³⁴ Date cited in Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 4., para.5-6.

³⁵ John Leland's 1534-42 itinerary of travels is collated by Lucy Toulmin-Smith as *The Itinerary of John Leland, in or about the years 1534-1543, parts I-III* (London, George bell & sons, London, 1907). Pengersick features on p. 186., ln.2., (as Pergroinswick), and p. 188., ln.16 (as Pengarsike).

³⁶ Richard Carew's *Survey of Cornwall, And, An Epistle Concerning the Excellencies of the English Tongue* was first published in 1602, reprinted in 1769 (London & Penzance, B. Law & J. Hewitt). Pengersick is referenced on p. 152., para.3.

³⁷ Hals details noted in Grose, F., *Antiquities*, Vol. 8., p. 45., para.5., ln.11., and p. 46., para.1., lns.2-3.

wainscot lining the walls of the first floor tower room, showing the tower in original context as part of a much larger building. Painted alongside was an equivalent depiction of nearby Godolphin House (which Borlase also copied) together with two portraits (one each of a man and woman, noted but not copied) and a collection of seven illustrated proverbs and poems (partly copied; verses with written description but no image of their accompanying illustrations).³⁸ Forming a separate thread of narrative myth quite distinct from Bottrell and Hunts' later published tales, with no direct parallel in the written pseudo-histories, these works merit a research investigation in their own right, and yet have received very little academic attention.³⁹ Bridging history and folklore as physical artifact merging literary theme with pseudo-historic anecdote, these works are something of a mystery; who created them, when, and why? Possible answers can only be surmised, for the originals are long gone, and no written reference to them exists (so far as is known) prior to Borlase's 1738 manuscript. Five decades on from Borlase, these 'diverse verses and moral sentences' are noted by historian Sir Frances Grose in his *Supplement to The Antiquities Of England And Wales, Vol 8, 1783*, published in 1786. Berating predecessors Leland, Hals and Carew for their lack of explanatory detail, Grose repeats William Hals's tale of 'Mr. Milliton' paying particular attention to just one of the seven painted proverbs – that of a donkey laden with gold yet eating a thistle, said to represent the burden of illicit wealth associated with a previous inhabitant – before dismissing the whole as some '*foolish tradition*' arising not from historic reality but out of the illustrated works themselves.⁴⁰

Here, pseudo-history and painted proverb converge to create a basic script (of Pengersick Castle being built by Mr. Milliton on illicit wealth gained at sea) that is

³⁸ See Appendix 2) Transcript of the written verses, with outline notes.

³⁹ Some outline analysis can be found in Herring, P., et al. *Ibid.*, and Tuck, B., *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ In Grose, F., *Antiquities, Vol.8.*, pp. 44-6. In truth, neither the image nor the verse is unique, but a typical representation of *The Image of the Miser* as popularised via 'emblem books' such as the Italian Andrea Alciato's 1531 *Emblemata*, English poet Geoffrey Whitney's 1586 *Choice of Emblems* and Francis Quarles's 1635 *Emblems*. Together with 'jest books', such as John Rastell's 1526 *The Hundred Merry Tales*, and 'conduct books' such as Thomas Elyot's 1531 *Boke named the Govenour*, such works offered entertainment, moral instruction and inspiration for home décor, in their combination of visual image, comic prose and witty verse. In Ousby, I., *The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 297 [emblem books], p. 198 [jest books] and p. 212 [courtesy books].

repeated in varying form over the coming century, in private journals,⁴¹ travel guides,⁴² and history texts.⁴³ Nowhere in any of this are the elaborate details of Bottrell and Hunt's later published narratives included. Indeed, across the whole three centuries of previous published works, the intricacies of Bottrell and Hunt's convoluted tales go un-noted, prior to these two men themselves writing them down. Within a short time of their publications the entire scope of material is being reworked by subsequent authors, merging the three separate threads (oral-derived tale, pseudo-history and themes arising from the poems and proverbs) as single genre. Some reduce the whole to a mere paragraph or less,⁴⁴ while others muddle the detail, simplifying or embellishing with individual bias,⁴⁵ or else repeat the tales near ad verbatim, drawing to an abrupt halt at a point of personal preference.⁴⁶ Academic interest additionally intensifies, through the activities of organisations such as the Folklore Society and, more locally, the Royal Institute of Cornwall and the Penzance

⁴¹ See Maton, W.G., *Observations Relating chiefly to the Natural History, Picturesque Scenery, and Antiquities of the Western Counties of England, Volume 1, made in the years 1794 and 1796* (Salisbury: J. Eastern, 1797), pp. 192-3. Also Warner, R.A., *Tour through Cornwall in the Autumn of 1808* (Bath; Richard Cruttwell, 1809), pp. 214-215, likewise Brett, R.L. (ed), *Barclay Fox's Journal* (London: Bell & Hyman Ltd. 1979), p. 53.

4, and Benson, A. C., *Escape and Other Essays* (London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1915), pp. 127-132.

⁴² See Whitaker, J., *The Ancient Cathedral of Cornwall, Historically Surveyed, Vol 1* (London John Stockdale, 1804), p. 336., and Paris, J.A. (under the pseudonym 'A Physician'), *Guide to the Mount's Bay and Land's End: Comprehending the Topography, Botany, Agriculture, Fisheries, Antiquities, Mining, Mineralogy and Geology of Western Cornwall* (London: W. Phillips, 1824), p. 217. See also Stockdale, F.W.L., *Excursions on the County of Cornwall, comprising a concise Historical and Topographical Delineation of the Principle Towns and Villages, together with Descriptions of the Residences of the Nobility and Gentry, Remains of Antiquity, and Every Other Interesting Object of Curiosity* (London: Simpson & Marshall, 1824), p. 56. Also Redding, C., *An illustrated itinerary of the county of Cornwall* (London: How & Parsons, 1842), pp. 152-3., and Murray, J., *A Handbook for travellers in Devon and Cornwall; eighth edition* (London: William Clowes & Sons, 1872), p. 434.

⁴³ See Lysons, Rev. D. & Lysons, S., *Magna Britannia, Vol 3, Cornwall; being a Topographical Account of the Several Counties of great Britain* (London: T. Caddel & W. Davies, 1814), p. 42., para.3., also Gilbert, C. S., *An historical survey of the county of Cornwall, Vol II* (London: J. Congdon, 1820), pp. 759-760, and Hitchens, F., & Drew, S., *History of Cornwall, vol. II* (Helston: William Penaluna, 1824), pp. 113-5.

⁴⁴ See Dickens, C., 'As the Crow Flies', *All the year Round, Vol 1*(22), (May 1, 1869), pp. 515.,para.2. See Black, A., & Black, C., *Black's Guide to the Duchy of Cornwall* (Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1883), p. 94, also Blight, J.T., *Churches of West Cornwall; with notes of antiquities of the district* (Oxford: Parker and Co. 1885), p. 110.

⁴⁵ See Norway, A.H., *Highways & Byways in Devon & Cornwall* (London, Macmillan & co. 1922 reprint of 1897 original), pp. 287-90, and Baring-Gould, S., *A Book of the West, Vol 2, Cornwall (4th edition)* (London; Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1900), pp. 289-291., also Dawson-Scott, C.A., *Nooks and Corners of Cornwall*. (London, Evelyn Nash, 1911), p. 110-111, and Quiller-Couch, M., *Cornwall's Wonderland* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons., 1914), pp. 13-17 & 157-161.

⁴⁶ See Whitcombe, M.E., *Bygone Days in Devon & Cornwall* (London, Bentley & Son, 1874), pp. 237-239., and also Enys, S. L., *Cornish Drolls*, pp. 61-75.

Natural History and Antiquarian Society.⁴⁷ Creative fiction also now begins to arise, inspired by Pengersick Castle's much mythologised past.⁴⁸

Standing derelict for more than two centuries, long-uninhabited but in use as farm store and smugglers hideout,⁴⁹ the ruins of Pengersick Castle became a popular destination on Cornwall's burgeoning tourist trail, made more easily accessible by improved roads and expanding rail networks.⁵⁰ Journal reports from the Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society (1881) and the Royal Institute of Cornwall (1888) vividly capture the experience.⁵¹ On both occasions the visits take a similar format; meeting at Marazion train station the groups travel by road on horse-drawn bus, visiting designated places of interest throughout the day. At Pengersick Castle they discuss the associated folklore, noting possible historic roots and resemblance to wider world literature, under guidance of Society member the Rev. W.S. Lach-Szyrma, presenting his own research on the subject.⁵²

As reverend of Newlyn church and prolific academic, Lach-Szyrma contributed significantly to the Cornish Revival movement of the early twentieth century, yet his

⁴⁷ The Folklore Society was founded in 1878 and continues to this day. See 'About the Folklore Society', *The Folklore Society* [online] <<https://folklore-society.com/about/>> [Accessed 20/10/2019]. The Royal Institute of Cornwall was founded in 1818 as the Literary and Philosophical Institution, taking its current name in 1821 after receiving royal patronage. See 'About the Museum', *RCM Royal Cornwall Museum* [online] <<https://www.royalcornwallmuseum.org.uk/about-the-museum>> [accessed 20/10/2019]. The Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society was founded in 1839, disbanded in 1872 and reformed in 1880, continuing on to 1961 as the forerunner to present day Cornwall Archaeological Society. See 'History' *The Cornwall Archaeological Society* [online] <<https://cornisharchaeology.org.uk/about-us/history/>> [Accessed: 20/10/2019].

⁴⁸ See Berylcan-Jones, M., *The painting of the Frescoes (Truro: J. Netherton, 1862)*, also Forfar, W.B., *Pengersick Castle: A Cornish Tale of the Olden Time* (Truro: J. Netherton, 1862) and Quiller-Couch, A., 'The Lady of the Ship' (in *Old Fires and Profitable Ghosts: a Book of Stories*, London: Cassell and Company Ltd, 1900), pp. 85-126.

⁴⁹ The tower's use as farm store is noted in W.G. Matons' 1797 *Observations*, pp. 192-3. The use of the upper rooms for 'illicit purpose' is documented in Barclay Fox's 1833 *Journal* (Ed. Brett), p. 53.

⁵⁰ The national rail network's role in Cornwall's early tourist trade is outlined in the opening chapter of St. John Thomas. D., *The Great Way West: the history and romance of the Great Western's route to the west (3rd impression)* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles Ltd., 1985), [pages are un-numbered].

⁵¹ See 'Account of an Excursion to Pengersick Castle', *Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Journal of Transactions: Volume I*, (W. Brendon & Son., Plymouth. 1880-1884), pp. 88-93, also 'The Annual Excursion, 1888' in *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall Volume 9, Part 1* (Truro, Lake and Lake, 1889), pp. 399-401. An earlier visit by the Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society in 1866 makes no mention of the oral-derived legends, focussing instead on the architectural history of the building itself. See 'Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society' in *The Royal Cornwall Gazette* (16 August 1866), p.8.

⁵² See Lach-Szyrma, W.S., *Notes on the Lord of Pengersic*, the author's handwritten manuscript [undated], held at Penlee House Gallery and Museum, Penzance (document ref: PEZPH: 1989.519).

work on Cornish culture, language and folklore is now largely forgotten, primarily perhaps because he left Cornwall in 1896 to live permanently in Essex where he died in 1915, just a few years prior to the first Old Cornwall Society being founded by his friend and collaborator Henry Jenner, in 1920.⁵³ Unique in his recognition of the Pengersick legend's historic and literary value, Lach-Szyrma draws parallels between these Cornish tales and similar stories from his own ancestral Poland and wider Europe, implying a cross-transmission of themes whilst acknowledging the historic roots of main character, fabled Last Lord / Enchanter.⁵⁴

Valid as Lach-Szyrma's theories are, they became lost under general dismissal, with British journalist Charles Lewis Hind in his 1907 *Days in Cornwall* dismissing any notion of underlying truth,⁵⁵ and Archdeacon of Wells Arthur Salmon in his 1910 *The Cornish Coast* concluding similarly, that the stories must be rooted more in rural imagination than historic reality.⁵⁶ Likewise, the Rev. R. Coulthard in his 1913 *Story of an Ancient Parish* concludes that 'it is difficult to collect the sediment of truth at the bottom of the legend',⁵⁷ and a 1923 report from the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society states with confidence that these stories were 'mostly made up by the serio-comic diablerie of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries.'⁵⁸

Despite this consensus of doubt, the stories endured to become such a central feature of the building's identity they were included as promotional information when the tower went up for public auction, in 1922.⁵⁹ Restored as family home, Pengersick Castle passed through several owners over the coming half-century, as the associated folklore continued to circulate, inspiring children's story adaptation and fiction,⁶⁰

⁵³ Lach-Szyrma's life and work is detailed in Gmerek, K., 'Wladyslaw Sommerville Lach-Szyrma and the Cornish revival' in Bloch-Troinar, M., Looby, L., O'Finna, M., Bednarski, A., *New Trails and Beaten Paths in Celtic Studies* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL 2016), pp. 29-40.

⁵⁴ As outlined in Lach-Szyrma, W.S., 'Folk-Lore Traditions of Historical Events' in *The Folk-Lore Record* Vol. 3, No. 2 (1880), pp. 157-168.

⁵⁵ See Hind, L. C., *Days in Cornwall*, (London, Methuan & Co, 1907), p. 201., para.1., lns.9-14.

⁵⁶ See Salmon, A.L., *The Cornish Coast* (London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1910), p. 157., lns.11-18.

⁵⁷ See Coulthard, R. H., *The Story of an Ancient Parish* (Camborne: Camborne Printing and Stationary Co., 1913), p. 123, para.2., lns.1-2.

⁵⁸ See 'Cornish scenes revisited', *The Cornishman*, Wednesday 4th July 1924, p. 2.

⁵⁹ See 'Pengersick Castle, Story of a Cornish Stronghold', *The Western Morning News and Mercury*, Saturday 1st April 1922, p. 4.

⁶⁰ See Manning-Sanders, R., & Briggs, R., 'The Witch of Fraddam' in *Peter and the Piskies: Cornish Folklore and Fairytale* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1958), pp.71-81., also Palmer, G., & Lloyd, N., 'The Witch of Fraddam' and 'How the Giant met his Match' in *A Brew of Witchcraft* (London:

poetry anthology,⁶¹ and local interest.⁶² Throughout all of this, the ghosts of modern-day fame pass un-noted. It is not until 1997 that the first detailed account of paranormal activity at Pengersick Castle appears, with a report from the Ghost Club Society documenting the organisation's first all-night investigation of the building in April of that year.⁶³ Here, the traditional three threads of folklore begin to merge, forming a fourth branch of sensationalist ghost story, matching paranormal entities to named figures from the known history conflated with aspects of the local legend.

The ghosts of Pengersick Castle have since been well-documented.⁶⁴ In the twenty-first century the history and folklore continue to inspire new literary directions, from historic reinterpretation,⁶⁵ adult fantasy fiction,⁶⁶ Cornish language revivalism,⁶⁷ and online podcast,⁶⁸ jumbling fact and fiction increasingly as one.

Odhams Books, 1964), pp. 7-12 & pp. 90-96., and Quayle, E. & Foreman, M., 'The Witch of Fraddam' in *The Little people's Pageant of Cornish Legends* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), pp. 103-8. See also Carlyon, R., *The Dark Lord of Pengersick* (New York, USA: Ace Books, 1985), and West, J.A.C., *Pip of Pengersick: A Smuggler's Tale* (Praa Sands: Harvey Berick Publishing, 2006).

⁶¹ See Tuck, B., *Pengersick Castle* (1984).

⁶² See Bird, S. *Tales of Old Cornwall* (Berkshire, Countryside Books, 1992), pp. 81-4.

⁶³ See Kenward, T. & Snow, R.M., *The Ghosts, Hauntings, Myths and Legends of Pengersick Castle, Praa Sands, Cornwall* (Dorset, T.J. Kenward & R.M. Snow, 1997), republished as Kenward, T., *Pengersick Castle, Praa Sands, Nr. Penzance, Cornwall: part 1, April 4th 1997* (Dorset, T.J. Kenward, 1991). See also Snow, R., 'Experiences at Pengersick Castle' in *The Ghost Club Newsletter* (Autumn 2007), pp. 20-2.

⁶⁴ See Underwood, P., *Ghosts of Cornwall* (Ilkley, Yorkshire: Bossiney Books Ltd, 1998), pp. 67-8., also Neal, A., *Dowsing in Devon and Cornwall* (Launceston, Cornwall: Bossiney Books Ltd, 2001), pp. 15-18, & pp. 45-50., and Addicoat, I. & Buswell, G., *Mysteries of the Cornish Coast: legends, Ghosts and Extraordinary Events from Cornwall's South-West Peninsula*. (Tiverton, Devon: Halsgrove, 2003), pp. 34-5., Addicoat, I.M., p. 1-4., Bird, S., *Haunted Places of Cornwall; on the trail of the paranormal* (Berkshire, Countryside Books, 2006), pp. 59-62., Westwood, J. & Simpson, J., *Haunted England: Penguin Book of Ghosts* (London: Penguin Books Ltd. 2008), pp. 51-2.

⁶⁵ See Mathews, R., *Mysterious Cornwall* (Derby: The Breedon Books Publishing company Ltd, 2008), pp.157-158.

⁶⁶ See Finch, P., 'The Serpent Woman of Pengersick' in *Terror Tales of Cornwall* (New York, USA: Talos [an imprint of Skyhorse Publishing], 2017), pp. 89-91.

⁶⁷ See Ellis, P.B 'The Lord of Pengersick' in *The Mammoth Book of Celtic Myths and Legends* (London: Hatchet UK, 2002), pp.427-50.

⁶⁸ Listen [online] at *Tales of the British Isles* by Greame Cook. (1) 'The Enchanter of Pengersick, Part I, Dastardly Deeds' <<https://soundcloud.com/talesofthebritishisles/21-the-enchanter-of-pengersick-part-1-dastardly-deeds>> [Accessed: 18/12/2019]., (2) 'The Enchanter of Pengersick, part 2, Plots and Schemes' <<https://soundcloud.com/talesofthebritishisles/23-the-enchanter-of-pengersick-part-2-plots-and-schemes>> [Accessed: 10/02/2020]., and (3) 'The Enchanter of Pengersick, part 3, feat: an Enchanter' <<https://soundcloud.com/talesofthebritishisles/24-the-enchanter-of-pengersick-part-3-feat-an-enchanter>> [Accessed: 13/02/2020].

Chapter 1) What's in a Name?

‘Praa Sands’ and ‘Pengersick’ are two names for the same place. Both are English adaptations of original Cornish words, both evolved in direct parallel with wider Cornish culture and language development, and both are encoded with layers of meaning now largely forgotten. Many Cornish place names are old family names, surviving as remnants of a ‘dead’ language that, although unspoken for centuries, lingers very much alive in the local names still in use. Pengersick is one of these, being a topographical place name rooted in Cornish *Pen Gorsack* meaning head (*pen*) of a marshy area (*gorsack*).⁶⁹ In a location defined by sea and sand, it is a name that makes no sense, the obvious question being: where is the marsh?

The answer to this puzzle lies on the beach, where a ridge of rough grey-black rock runs between sand and dunes.⁷⁰ Uninteresting as it may seem, this ‘rock’ is a deep layer of peat, being the fossilised remains of prehistoric trees and vegetation evidencing the previous existence of a forest-edged marsh, separating land and sea. Here then is the ‘gorsack’ from which Pengersick takes its name. Palynological and radiocarbon analysis dates the upper layers of this material to 1000BC, or before, lending historic perspective to a name continuing in use today with Pengersick Castle and nearby road names (Pengersick Lane, Pengersick Parc, Pengersick Estate).⁷¹



Plate 7) Praa Sands beach, fossilised peat ridge ringed yellow.

⁶⁹ In Holmes, J., *1,00 Cornish place-names.*, p. 34. Historically, alternative explanations are given. Richard Carew in his 1602 *Survey* (p. 152., para., 3., ln.1.) suggests Cornish *Penguerez* with supposed meaning ‘a head to head’, while Francis Grose in his *Antiquities, Vol 8* (pp. 45., para.1., lns.5-7) offers two options, as ‘Pen-gers-wick’ meaning the ‘head ward or command, fenced or fortified place’ and ‘Pen-gweras-ike’ denoting ‘creek, cove, or bosom of waters-head’. Neither are correct.

⁷⁰ See Plate 7) Fossilised peat ridge (circled yellow) remains of prehistoric marsh (Author’s own photograph 2005, section edit from Plate 1).

⁷¹ In Ealey, P. (Cornwall RIGS), ‘Praa Sands, A realistic approach to geological conservation of a Cornish quaternary coastal section’, *Geoscience in south-west England, Vol.9* (1999), p. 376., para.10.

Some Cornish place names are a little more complex, not quite so direct and with no obvious meaning in the words. Praa Sands is one of these. ‘Sands’ is self-evident reference to the beach, while ‘Praa’ has no immediate significance, being an English modification of the Cornish *Porth Wragh*, from *porth* meaning ‘cove’ and *Wragh* as Cornish for hag (alternately, witch).⁷² So Praa Sands as onomastic name means hag’s (or witch’s) cove.⁷³

Exactly when this colloquialism came into use is not known. Formal document refers to this place as ‘Pengersick’ well into the 1800’s, with the first written reference to ‘parah’ noted in 1714, the two separate words now merged as one. By 1813 it had simplified further into Pra, evolving through Prah and Prar to the more familiar Praa.⁷⁴ Some confusion occurs in pronunciation. Visitors usually say ‘prar’ (rhyming with far) whilst locals prefer ‘pray’ and the more senior residents insist that these are both wrong; that the correct way is ‘praier’ (rhyming more with ‘prayer’).⁷⁵ Further discrepancy comes with a much earlier reference in 1331 suggesting *Pol-Wragh*; pool rather than cove; while further sources indicate *par* rather than *porth*, which is not Cornish but English for cove, which in Cornish is *Par*.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, there is one part remaining constant, regardless of *porth*, *par*, *pol* and pronunciation, and that is *Wragh* – thehag / witch.

Belief in witchcraft is common throughout the world, from ancient Mesopotamia through Egypt and classical Greece, with more negative connotations arising through patriarchal bias of Christian doctrine,⁷⁷ informing the large-scale witch hunts of the

⁷² In Padel, O.J., pp. 145-6. Here ‘wragh’ is stipulated as meaning ‘hag’. The alternative ‘witch’ is suggested in Holmes, J., *1,000 Cornish place-names*, p. 38.

⁷³ The word ‘hag’ meaning ‘ugly old woman’ is likely rooted in thirteenth-century Old English *hagtesse*, meaning witch, possibly originating in the German *hexe* meaning witch, as detailed in Ayto, J., *Dictionary of Word Origins* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Ltd., 1991), p. 271. The word ‘witch’ appears to be rooted in German *weithen*, meaning ‘consecrate’, and is distantly related to English ‘victim’, etymologically implying a person who has been killed in religious ritual. The associated word ‘wicked’ originates in old English *Wicca* meaning wizard, which is the masculine form of *wicce*, linguistic ancestor of the English ‘witch’. In Ayto, J., *Ibid.*, p. 576.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Personal comment (regarding pronunciation as ‘praier’) from a long-term local resident (name unknown, since deceased), October 2005. Pronunciation as ‘pray’ cited in Padel, O.J., *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ In Brooke, E., *Medicine Women, a pictorial history of women healers* (London: Thorsons, 1997), p. 63., para.1., and Murphy, C., *The Word According to Eve, women and the Bible in ancient times and in our own world*. (London: Penguin, 1998), pp. 12-15.

sixteenth-eighteenth centuries, with vast numbers of women and also men blamed for everything from crop failure to plague and adverse weather, to murder and mishap.⁷⁸ In Cornwall these beliefs held firm, well into the nineteenth-century.⁷⁹ There were generally two kinds of ‘witches’, the good and bad / white and black, with subtle differentiations between ‘wise-woman’ or ‘witch’, ‘sorcerer’, ‘cunning folk’ or (specifically Cornish), ‘pellar’.⁸⁰ The good witch was more often male, feared yet also admired, with the wealthy or more highly educated male practitioner elevated to ‘conjuror’ or ‘wizard’. The bad witch was usually female, old, poor, ugly – as in ‘hag’ – or in some way different, valued for her knowledge of hedgerow medicine, midwifery and healthcare, relied on to administer charms and spells, yet vilified and blamed for events out of control.⁸¹

Who was hag (witch) of Praa Sands?

The answers to this question can be found, unexpectedly, within the history of Praa Sands and Pengersick Castle. Not the official history of formal document, but that same history as remembered in the associated folklore of Pengersick Castle.

Storytelling is a tradition that spans the globe, as a central tenet of human culture and identity.⁸² Stories preserve and communicate human memories, values, and ideas, and can be categorised into three main types as myth, legend, and folktale. Myth and legend have much in common, for both are communal products, usually of unknown authorship, often existing in multiple form. Myths are anonymous stories seeking to explain universal human concerns, such as the origins of the world and the roots of humanity. Recognisable and relatable across cultures, myths generally fall into one of two categories; those arising within pre-agrarian societies reliant on nature as hunter-gatherers, and the more complex mythologies of organised societies no longer reliant on the natural environment, sufficiently evolved to include a hierarchy headed

⁷⁸ In Cawthorne, N., *Witch Hunt, history of a persecution* (London: Arcturus Publishing ltd, 2003)., pp. 22-31.

⁷⁹ In Jones, K.I., *Seven Cornish Witches* Penzance: Oakmagic Press, 1998), 144-8.

⁸⁰ In Davies, O., *Cunning-folk in England and Wales during the eighteenth-nineteenth-centuries*, ‘Rural history, vol. 8, issue 01 (April 1997, pp. 91-107), p.91., para.2-p. 94., para.4.

⁸¹ In Semmens, J., *The Witch of the west* (Plymouth, Jason Semmens, 1994), pp. 6-10.

⁸² These themes are discussed in Henderson, J. L., ‘Ancient myths and modern man’ in Jung, C., *Man and his Symbols*, (London: Pan Books ltd, 1964), pp. 156.

by a privileged intellectual elite, or priesthood. Folktales bridge the two, arising in societies based on agriculture yet intermediate, in complexity between pre-agrarian and evolved hierarchy. Whereas a myth is concerned with the more universal cosmic issues, a folktale is typically concerned with societal-specific issues, will usually convey a particular social message but can also contain echoes of earlier phases of social evolution. A folktale is fundamentally a domesticated myth, serving dual purpose as entertainment and moral instruction. Myth and folklore are traditionally communicated as oral tale; adapted and expanded through repetition. A legend is more typically an original literary story based on a supposedly historic figure or event, commonly incorporating themes from earlier mythical narrative transmitted through oral tradition.⁸³

The three categories of myth, folklore and legend can overlap, and this is very much so with the Pengersick legend as a localised story cycle rooted in oral tradition evolved over an indefinable length of time, made unique by the language in which the tales were originally told; Cornish.

Cornwall lies at the furthest southwest tip of the British Isles; a narrow peninsular jutting into the Atlantic ocean, separated from England by the natural border of the river Tamar yet unusually well-connected by sea to Wales and Ireland, Northern France and from there to the wider Mediterranean, with a unique history and heritage as international hub of travel and trade. Here, Cornish tin and copper have been traded since the Early Bronze Age,⁸⁴ via what was once the main port of St. Michael's Mount.⁸⁵ Just three miles west of Praa Sands, this tiny island offshore at Marazion is believed to be the 'Ictis' cited by first-century Greek-Sicilian geographer Diodorus Siculus ('a collecting point where ingots of tin are brought to be traded with the merchants who carried it over to Gaul'), sourcing much of his information from the earlier journals of Greek navigator, Pytheus, c320 B.C.⁸⁶

⁸³ As discussed in Willis, R., *World Mythology, the Illustrated Guide* (London: Duncan Baird Publishing, 1993), pp.10-16.

⁸⁴ In Herring, P., et al., *Archaeology and landscape at the Land's End, Cornwall* (Cornwall: Cornwall Archaeology unit, 2016), p. 127, para.2.

⁸⁵ See Plate 8) St. Michael's Mount. Photo credit the British Pilgrim's Trust, sourced [online] at 'St. Michael's Way', *The British Pilgrim's Trust* <https://britishpilgrimage.org/portfolio/st-michaels-way/> [Accessed: 21/01/2021]. See also Appendix 1.ii) location map.

⁸⁶ Herring, P., et al., *Ibid.*, p. 189., para.1.



.Plate 8) St. Michael's Mount.

This distant era of Cornish history is steeped in romantic notions of Celtic identity, yet these terms – ‘celt’ and ‘Celtic’ – are in themselves problematic, applied in retrospect by seventeenth-eighteenth century scholars attempting to make sense of the unknown past. Historically, the words originate with the fourth-fifth century Greek plural *keltoid*, referring to barbarian (‘uncivilised’) natives of France and the mixed populations of Spain, implying a subtype of ‘barbarian’ different to those found elsewhere. Contemporary Roman chroniclers including Julius Caesar preferred the term ‘Gaul’, differentiating these Gaulish Celts from those found elsewhere; as did the Greek geographer Strabo, three decades later, with no evidence that subsequent natives of Middle Age Britain (including Cornwall) referred to themselves as ‘Celts’ or claimed common ‘Celtic’ heritage with others.⁸⁷ Instead, archaeology suggests a war-mongering yet artistically inclined, highly sophisticated Iron Age culture, originating in Central Europe and expanding across southern Europe, corresponding to Graeco-Roman accounts.⁸⁸ With no evidence for any genetic marker for Celtic ‘race’, the common factor is shared culture, and within this, language, spreading via travel and trade.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ In Gregor, D.B. *Celtic: A Comparative Study* (New York, The Orleander Press, 1980.), p7.

⁸⁸ The Celts are associated with material artefacts of eight-fifth centuries BC (phase C & D of Halstatt culture) giving way to the wealthier flamboyant La Tene culture of the late fifth-first centuries BC, defined by intricate ‘Celtic’ art. In Ball, M. J., *The Celtic Languages*, (Oxon, Routledge, 1993), p3.

⁸⁹ A 2015 genome analysis of 6,209 people across the UK revealing a ‘rich and detailed pattern of genetic differentiation appertaining to pre-Roman / post-Mesolithic migration into south-eastern England from continental Europe’ indicating a range of genetically differentiated subgroups with no ‘Celtic’ marker. See Leslie, S., Winney, B., et al., ‘The fine-scale genetic structure of the British Population’, *Nature journal*, Mar 19, 2015, Vol.519 (7543), p. 309 [online] at National Library of medicine (Pubmed) <<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25788095/>> [Accessed: 12/01/2020].

This history is particularly well-evidenced in west Penwith, with the greatest concentration of prehistoric monuments than any other part of England.⁹⁰ From village and clifftop castles to hillfort settlements, entrance graves, burial mounds and chambered quoits, through stone circles and standing stones, mineworks and ancient trackways to St. Michael's Mount itself, Cornwall's rich heritage is preserved in monuments dating back to the Stone Age.⁹¹ Numerous artefacts, from worked flints and greenstone axe-heads to moulded tin ingots, Beaker pottery and amphora sherds, to copper, gold and bronze swords, coins, jewellery, and glass beads testify to international trade over thousands of years, exporting Cornish goods out in return for foreign items coming in.⁹²

While the earliest languages in use here can only be guessed at, Cornish as it is known emerged during the British Iron Age and Roman eras as a branch of spoken Brythonic sharing common 'P' Celtic roots with Welsh and Breton, evolving through three main stages under Latin, French, and English influence, declining in use to be declared 'extinct' by the late-eighteenth century.⁹³

The first stage, Old Cornish, developed through 800-1200AD, with sparse examples surviving, as ninth-century *glosses* (margin notes) and a single manuscript c1100, the *Vocabularium Cornicum* (listing common words in Latin with Cornish equivalent).⁹⁴ Middle Cornish from about 1200-1550 is more substantially recorded, with various texts surviving from this time.⁹⁵ The third stage, Late Cornish, from 1550-1800

⁹⁰ See Appendix 1.i) location map. West Penwith indicated with vertical line shading.

⁹¹ Cornwall's ancient monuments are protected and preserved by the Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network (CASPN). See 'Home' *Cornish Ancient Sites Network* [online] <<https://www.cornishancientsites.com>> [Accessed: 01/01/2021].

⁹² In Herring, P., et al., *Archaeology and landscape at the Land's End*, pp. 127-8 (prehistory), pp. 172-3 & 188-9 (Iron-Age & Romano-British), and pp. 213-15 (medieval).

⁹³ The Celtic languages are a group of related languages rooted in the Proto-Celtic (Common Celtic) branch of the wider family of Indo-European languages encompassing several hundred related languages and dialects. Cornish survives as one of the six grouped into two main branches as Goidelic (Gaelic) or 'Q' Celtic, comprising Irish, Manx and Scottish Gaelic, and Brythonic (British) or 'P' Celtic, comprising Welsh, Cornish and Breton. In Hope, M., *Practical Celtic Magic, a working guide to the magical heritage of the Celtic races* (Northamptonshire: Aquarius Press, 1987), p. 15, para.1.), Cornish language history and heritage is outlined Ellis., P.B., *The Story of the Cornish Language* ((Penryn, Cornwall: Tor mark press., 1990).

⁹⁴ In Orme, N., *Cornwall and the Cross* (London: University of London Press; 2007), p. 47., para. 2.

⁹⁵ Significant amongst surviving texts are the Ordinalia cycle of three miracle plays (*Origo Mundi* 'the origin of the world', *Passio Christi* 'the passion of Christ', *Resurrexio Domini* 'Christ's resurrection') dated to the late-fourteenth century, and the slightly later *Beunans Meriasek* 'the life of St. Meriasek' and *Bewnans Ke* 'the life of St. Kea'. In Ousby, I., *The Cambridge Guide to Literature*, p. 634.

marks the Cornish language's decline into disuse under increasing English influence.⁹⁶ Place name variants reflect this shift, with Pengersick usurped by Porth Wragh progressing through Parah, Prah and Prar, to present day Praa. Running parallel to this, the local folktales evolved as oral tale, known collectively as the Cornish 'drolls'. Here the word *droll* stems not from the English meaning dry wit or amusing, but from the Cornish *daralla* as a term encompassing the traditional tales, folk plays and rhymes told by mobile storytellers known as 'droll-tellers'.⁹⁷

Essentially a wandering minstrel, the droll-teller performed where opportunity arose; at seasonal markets and village fayres, even in people's homes (entertainment in exchange for bed and board), weaving popular themes with snippets of local gossip and wider world news, carrying the whole from one place to the next, readapting to local audience.⁹⁸ These stories were repeated amid the routines of daily life, shifting gradually from Cornish to English to be eventually published by Bottrell and Hunt.

William Bottrell was born at Raфра farmhouse in St. Levan near Land's End, where parish registers show him baptised in March 1816. There he passed his early years on the family farm, where his paternal grandmother introduced him to the local folktales which she herself had learned as a girl. Sat at her knee by the kitchen hearth, his imagination became fired with the old tales settling into his subconscious, to re-emerge decades later. Educated at Penzance and Bodmin, he left Cornwall as a young man c1837, living first in France and then Spain, where he lost considerable sums of money in property investments before emigrating to Quebec, working briefly as English master and overseer in a timber business, subsequently relocating to Australia where his wife tragically died, prompting his return to Cornwall, by now in his mid-30s. Taking a small cottage at Hawkes Point near Lelant (between Hayle

⁹⁶ In 1542 the writer and traveller Andrew Borde states that 'in Cornwall there is two speeches; the one is naughty Englysh, and the other Cornish speche', noting how many people in Cornwall spoke no English, knowing only their native Cornish. As cited in Payton, P (Ed), *Cornwall Forever! Kernow Bys Vyken!* (Cornwall, Cornwall Heritage Trust, 2000), p. 135. A half century later, Richard Carew in his 1602 *Survey of Cornwall* notes how the majority of Cornish people by this point no longer spoke Cornish, with most using English yet pretending not to; blocking communication with visitors by stating: '*Meea navidna caw zawsawzneck*' [*I will speak no Saxonage*]. In Jenkin, J.K.H. *Cornwall and its People* (Trowbridge and London, Redwood Press Ltd., 1970), pp. 126-128.

⁹⁷ In Nance, R.M., 'Foreword' in Enys, S. L., *Cornish Drolls* p. 11., para.3.-p. 12., para.1.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12., para.2.-p.3., and in Hunt, R., *Popular Romances, first series*, p. xiv., para.1., ln.25.-p. xviii., para.1., ln.5

and St. Ives) he lived as a recluse, in the company of a black cat, a cow and a pony which were often seen following him down the near-perpendicular cliff as he went about his daily activity, cultivating a surrounding patch of moorland as vegetable garden.⁹⁹ Here his interest was reignited by local tin-miners sharing their own stories which he began to write down, adding new layers to childhood memories.¹⁰⁰

Robert Hunt was born in Devonport, Plymouth in September 1806 son of a naval officer who tragically drowned the following year. Living in London from the age of fourteen, his plans for a medical career were thwarted by poor health causing him to relocate to Cornwall, where his efforts as poet and playwright floundered, leading him to take to a clerical position as secretary to the Royal Cornwall Polytechnical Society in Falmouth, in 1840. There he became involved in scientific research, becoming Professor of Mechanics at London's Government School of Mines and Keeper of Mining records at the Museum of Economic Geography, going on to teach chemistry and natural philosophy. In 1841 he published his *Manual on Photography* as the first English textbook on the subject, followed by many more including his 1848 *Poetry of Science* and 1849 *Panthea; The Spirit of Nature*. Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1852 and Fellow of the Statistical Society in 1855, he was instrumental on founding the Miners Association in 1858, pursuing a multitude of personal and professional interests throughout his life.¹⁰¹

His 1865 *Popular Romances; first series* is prefaced by an introduction waxing lyrical on childhood memories of hazily-recalled tales rendering him both 'terrified and amused',¹⁰² rekindled in adult life 'when ten months were delightfully spent' travelling the wilds of west Cornwall, collating tales subsequently edited for publication.¹⁰³ This same introduction, fourteen pages later acknowledges his reliance on 'numerous contributions' from various others, in particular one 'Mr. W.

⁹⁹ See Appendix 1.i) Map, for Hawkes Point location.

¹⁰⁰ In Jones, K. *Mr. Bottrell's Amazing Tales* (Penzance: Oakmagic Press, 1999), 'Tales of an old Celt' (preface, with no page number).

¹⁰¹ Biographical details from 'Robert Hunt', *Cornwall Artists Index* [online] <<https://cornwallartists.org/cornwall-artists/robert-hunt>> [Accessed: 12/02/2019], and 'Robert Hunt', *Grace's Guide to British Industrial History*, https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Robert_Hunt> [Accessed: 27/01/20210].

¹⁰² In Hunt, R., *Popular Romances; first series*, p. ix., para.1., ln.1.

¹⁰³ In Hunt, R., *Ibid.*, p. viii., para.1., ln.11.

Botterell of Caerwyn, a native of St. Leven, who possesses a greater knowledge of the household stories of the Lands-End than any man living'.¹⁰⁴

Inspired by Hunt's success, Bottrell went on to contribute a regular column in *The Cornish Telegraph*, under pseudonym as 'old Celt', going on to publish his own two-volume *Traditions and Hearthsides Stories* in 1870 and 1873. A stroke prior to completion of his 1880 *Stories and Folklore* left him partially paralysed and reliant on help from others including the rev. Lach-Szyna, whose anonymous *Preface* acknowledges Bottrell's contribution to the study of folklore as literary genre.¹⁰⁵ Suffering a second stroke, Bottrell died in the summer of 1881 aged 65, and was buried at St. Levan, returning in death to his place of birth.¹⁰⁶ Robert Hunt eventually retired in 1873, and died in London in October 1887, aged 80.

Together their combined works preserve the stories, beliefs and customs of a rural culture fast disappearing under encroaching industrialisation. Between 1830-1900 the population of Britain increased by ten percent per decade. At the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign, five British towns had a population exceeding one hundred thousand; by 1891 twenty-three towns could match that count. Many farm labourers moved with their families away from rural hamlets into expanding towns, and many ventured overseas as diaspora gambling on a better life elsewhere.¹⁰⁷ Meanwhile, the completion of Brunel's bridge across the Tamar in 1859 linked the previously remote Cornwall with the wider UK, together with newly expanding roads opening up previously inaccessible locations.

Faraway yet now accessible, British yet seemingly 'foreign', Cornwall held a special appeal for visitors, while the landscape dotted with ancient monuments stirred the hearts and minds of readers keen to visit the locations featured in Bottrell and Hunt's publications. Likewise, organisations such as the Folklore Society, the Royal

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xxii., para.2., lns.13-15.

¹⁰⁵ In Bottrell, W., *Stories and Folklore*, 'preface' (no page number).

¹⁰⁶ Biographical details from the Vingoe family History Website [online] <'William Bottrell', *Vingoe Tripod: The Vingoe Family Website* <<http://vingoe.tripod.com/William%20bottrell.htm>> [Accessed: 02/01/2019].

¹⁰⁷ In Pollard, C.D., with MacMahon, B. (Ed.), *Cornish Drolls*, Joseph Henry Pearce (Ceredigion, Wales: Llanerch Publishers, 1998), pp. 1-7.

Institute of Cornwall, and the Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society, could now physically visit locations previously experienced only abstractly, through lecture or journal article.¹⁰⁸

The term ‘folklore’ was coined in 1864, by antiquarian W.J. Thoms, aiming to elevate the study of ‘popular antiquities’ / ‘popular literature’ as worthy pursuit.¹⁰⁹ In essence the term applied to the quaint customs of ‘other people’ – mainly the poor and uneducated rural masses (‘countrymen’, ‘old wives’ and ‘the folk’) as peripheral outsider, separate from civilised town and city.¹¹⁰ Simultaneous to this, the rise in popular literature created new opportunities for writers, in an era defined by Gothic novel,¹¹¹ Sensation fiction,¹¹² and the ‘Penny Dreadful’,¹¹³ feeding public appetite for tabloid escapade laced with moral sermon. Bottrell and Hunt were not unique in collecting regional folktales at this time, with a multitude of others engaged in similar pursuit across Britain,¹¹⁴ yet they were unique as contemporaries collating same material from their two very different perspectives; Hunt the established academic; Bottrell the more ordinary man-on-the-ground. Both concede to artistic

¹⁰⁸ See Plate 9) Visitors to Pengersick Castle c1880 (photographer unknown. Copy made by dissertation author in 2015, from a photograph then held in the Pengersick Castle household archive).

¹⁰⁹ In Bennet, G., and Roud, S., ‘Death in Folklore: a selective listing from the journal of the Folklore Society’, *Mortality*, Vol 2, No.3 (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis Group, 1997, pp. 221-38), p. 221, Introduction, para.1. [online] <<https://web-a-ebSCOhost-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=766f4f79-086f-4834-ae51-040b49712c42%40sdc-v-ssmgr01&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=9712190522&db=rlh>> [Accessed: 01/10/2019]

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 224., para.2., lns.1-5. This interest arose within the context of romantic nostalgia rooted in seventeenth-century Antiquarianism, evolving as protest against urban industrialisation; Victorian ‘gentlefolk’ reimagining the past to compensate for the ugliness of mechanised sprawl. *Ibid.*, p. 221., Introduction, para.2.

¹¹¹ Gothic novel – the word ‘gothic’ implying ‘wild’, ‘barbaric’ and ‘crude’ – became popular in the as a type of romance novel became popular in the late-eight and early-nineteenth centuries. Usually set in the past (usually medieval in backdrop), most often abroad in some distant last, and usually set in monasteries, castles, dungeons, and mountainous regions, with plots hooked on suspense and mystery, fantasy and the supernatural. In Ousby, I., *Cambridge Guide*, p. 383.,

¹¹² Sensation novel, similar to Gothic, centred around mystery, suspense, and crime. Unlike Gothic, these later works (reaching their peak in 1860) favoured modern setting, and often included criticism of social abuse and inequality. In Ousby, I. *Cambridge Guide*, p. 844.

¹¹³ The Penny Dreadful was a Victorian publishing phenomenon, aimed primarily at the increasingly literate working class, offering cheap, illustrated Gothic and sensation tales for mass consumption. Initially published as ‘Penny Bloods’, telling the daring deeds of adventure, pirates and highwaymen, they were later renamed ‘Penny Dreadfuls’ with focus shifting to mystery and crime. See ‘Penny Dreadfuls’, *Discovering Literature: Romantics & Victorians*, British Library (Flanders, J., 15/05/2014) [online] <<https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/penny-dreadfuls#>> [Accessed: 10/05/18].

¹¹⁴ In Ashton, J., ‘Beyond Survivalism: Regional folklorists in late Victorian England’ in *Folklore*, Vol 108 (1997), p. 19-24.

licence; Hunt confidently dismissing all that he found ‘worthless’,¹¹⁵ and Bottrell citing greater authenticity, presenting all ‘as related by the droll-tellers’.¹¹⁶ Both admit to altering much of language used by those originally sharing the tale, fearing the broad local dialect may pose to great a challenge for readers.¹¹⁷

Undoubtedly, much has been lost in transition from spoken Cornish to written English, with many details further diluted under Victorian edit. Of the seven and half thousand words comprising Bottrell’s main tale, only three survive in Cornish (also a fourth, more accurately rooted in Latin), all as character names reflecting personality and deed.¹¹⁸ Other character names are descriptive in their English form, along with place names and narrative details revealing historic context. Within this wider whole, a single-paragraph sub-tale reveals a possible meaning behind the name of the place, Praa Sands, as the hag’s (or witch’s) cove.



Plate 9) Visitors to Pengersick Castle c1880.

¹¹⁵ In Hunt, R., *Popular Romances; first series*, p. viii, para.1., lns.13-14.

¹¹⁶ In Bottrell, W., *Traditions, first series*, (preface), p. vii., para.2., ln.1.

¹¹⁷ In Bottrell, W., *Ibid.*, p. vii., para.2., and Hunt, R., *Ibid.*, p. xxiii., para.3., lns.2-5.

¹¹⁸ Marec (Bottrell), Arluth (Bottrell), Venna (Bottrell) / Bitha (Hunt). These name meanings are explained in dissertation discussion. Additionally Uter (Bottrell) (Latin ‘of the uterus’. In Martin, E.A., *Minidictionary for Nurses (sixth editions)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 691).

Chapter 2) Pengersick Castle: the associated folklore.

2.i) William Bottrell's 'A Legend of Pengersec'.

Forming a separate chapter in his 1873 *Traditions; second series*, Bottrell's lengthy main saga falls into two parts, comprising various sub-tales interwoven as linear narrative.¹¹⁹ The first part opens in the era of 'old' Pengersick Castle, following 'the last lord's father' ('Pengersec') as he travels overseas to arrive in a faraway eastern land occupied by nomadic invaders at war with various others. There he joins the fight, for fun as much as duty, becoming romantically entangled with a princess (later to be queen) already promised in marriage to a prince, intending the ally their two countries. This alliance is broken through the scandalous birth of a baby that is 'put going' (killed or otherwise disposed of) shortly before Pengersec is due to return home. Heartbroken, the princess initiates a seven-year love-pledge; breaking a gold ring in two, she keeps one half and gives the other to Pengersick, extracting his false promise to return 'soon'.¹²⁰ Returning home he promptly marries '*a fair lady of Hellston*', but soon tires of married life as she fails to produce the requisite male heir. Hearing of new wars he returns east, to find the princess now queen and her people at war with those of the prince whom she would have married, were it not for him. Pengersec leads her troops into battle, princess fighting at his side, aided by the loan of an enchanted sword (previously belonging to her father) imbued with protective powers which in this instance fail, leaving them defeated. In the turmoil he abandons again her to again return home – taking the sword with him.¹²¹

Arriving back he finds that his wife has produced a baby son (later named as Marec), fulfilling his long-held need for an heir.¹²² Meanwhile, the princess survives and escapes to a nearby port, sailing to Cornwall under care of her trusty ship's captain, a merchant familiar with the tin-trading port of St. Michael's Mount.¹²³ Pengersec is horrified when she arrives at his door one stormy night clutching a baby, also his son, born during the sea-crossing – while she is equally shocked to find that he has a wife

¹¹⁹ In Bottrell, W., *Traditions, second series*, pp. 251-67.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 251., para.4.-p. 252., para.4.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 252., para.5.-p. 252., para.7.

¹²² *Ibis.*, p. 252., para.9.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 252., para.8.

and baby son. Dramatic clifftop argument ensues, culminating in her issuing a curse, that he '*shalt no longer flourish; may evil meet thee and bad luck follow thee to the sorrowful end of thy days*'.¹²⁴ Provoked, he pushes her so that she and the baby fall over the cliff, into the sea. Her body is retrieved next morning by her ship's captain; she is dead, but the baby alive, still clasped in her lifeless arms. Her remains are taken to her own country for burial, and the ship's captain goes on to raise the boy as his own.¹²⁵ Choosing a name he settles on 'Arluth', because (as explained further on in the tale) this is what he had heard the princess call Pengersec.¹²⁶

Settling into life as manorial lord, Pengersec comes to depend on the stolen sword for strength and protection, wealth, and status. All changes when the princess returns to haunt him, appearing as a white hare that jumps out from the undergrowth as he rides across Tregonning hill, startling his horse so that he is thrown; losing the sword.¹²⁷ From here he sinks into a miserable existence. Without the sword he is a coward, rarely venturing beyond home for fear of the princess, who continues to haunt him in the form of white hare. So great is his fear, he keeps a priest with him at all times – yet to no avail, for their Christian prayers have no power over the spirit of a Saracen princess, intent on revenge.¹²⁸ Traumatized and alone he descends into despair. He is cruel to his wife so that she also dies, leaving baby Marec to be raised by a local miller and his wife alongside their own son, named as Uter.¹²⁹

Years pass. Pengersec seldom ventures far, living alone with a few old servants who remain, mainly for Marec, who grows into a fine young man, with a special talent for taming wild horses. Accompanying him always is foster-brother Uter. Together they become known for daring deeds, braving stormy seas to help ships in distress.¹³⁰ One night a ship drifts into Pengersick Cove amid a raging storm, and the two sail out to rescue a young sailor from the freezing waves, taking him safely back to Pengersick Castle.¹³¹ There, Uter observes a strong resemblance between this

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 253., para.1.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 253., para.2-3.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 258., para.2., ln.1., and p. 259., para.2., lns.12-16.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 253., para.5-7.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 254., para.1-2.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 254., para.3.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.254., para.4.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 257., para.5.

stranger and Marec.¹³² Next morning, his name is revealed; Arluth, son of an eastern ship's captain, travelling together on regular trade journey.¹³³ The three then set out by horse for Marazion, returning Arluth to his ship (now safely moored).

They have not gone far when a white doe runs out from surrounding bushes, startling Arluth's horse so that it bolts carrying him to Tregonning Hill.¹³⁴ The doe disappears, Arluth dismounts, a bolt of lightning strikes a rock, and out of nowhere a disembodied voice says: '*fear not, Arluth, beloved son of mine, to seize thy forefather's sword and with it win thy kingdom*'.¹³⁵ A white hare then appears, leading Arluth to the rock which splits open to reveal '*a naked sword with sparkling jewels in its hilt, and the blade shone like flame*'.¹³⁶ The ship's captain subsequently reveals the truth; that Arluth and Marec are brothers, and that Arluth is natural heir to his mother's land; urging Arluth to now return to be welcomed as rightful leader bringing '*peace to the distracted country*'.¹³⁷ Arluth readily accepts this turn of events, inviting this new brothers to go with him. Thus, Marec, Uter and Arluth set sail, guided by the ship's captain.¹³⁸ Here, the princess makes one final appearance as a white bird flying alongside as the ships, carrying three brothers to a new life in the faraway east.¹³⁹ Meanwhile events at Pengersick Castle take a turn, as Pengersec rides hurriedly to Marazion, aiming to intercept his son's overseas disappearance; it is too late for Marec has gone, and in despair the old lord turns for home. He has not gone far when a white hare jumps out, startling the horse which then carries him into the sea, so that '*neither the horse nor its rider were evermore seen*'.¹⁴⁰

The second part of Bottrell's tale follows Marec in his transition from manorial lord to fabled Enchanter.¹⁴¹ Arriving in the east, Arluth is duly welcomed as rightful leader of his mother's land.¹⁴² Marec takes the opportunity to go and stay with 'a

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 258., para.3., lins.2-3.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 258., para.2.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 258., para.4-6.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 258., para.7.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 258., para.8.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 259., para.3-5.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 260., para.7.-p. 261., para.2.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 262., para.1.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 261., para.4.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 262-7.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 262., para.3.

people, living nearby ... skilled in magic',¹⁴³ spending some years under tuition of these 'eastern sages', going on to marry a 'beautiful and rich lady ... gifted with many rare accomplishments', while Uter marries 'her favourite damsel'.¹⁴⁴ The ship's captain meanwhile continues his journeying, and in time brings news of old Pengersec's death, upon which Marec (now 'Pengersec') decides to return home.¹⁴⁵ Preparing to leave, he packs 'many magical books and other things ... for the practice of occult sciences' and sets sail with Uter and wives. On the way they visit Arluth, who gifts Marec 'a foal of the choicest stock of his country'.¹⁴⁶ Arriving back in Cornwall, Marec builds a new castle complete with 'two broad and lofty towers ... on the seaward side of his castle', one each for he and his wife.¹⁴⁷ There he equips a room with 'everything requisite for his magic art',¹⁴⁸ being 'so much attached to occult sciences that he devoted nearly all his time to their practice'.¹⁴⁹

At first, the local people are happy to have their young lord returned, but they soon grow suspicious at his strange behaviours. Shut away, he is seldom seen; visitors are prohibited, only his wife and Uter are allowed into his workspace, and castle staff are sworn to secrecy. Inevitably, gossip begins to spread. A fire blazes continuously inside the tower. Burning day and night it often flares out of control, roaring up around the battlements as he 'changed base metals into silver and gold'.¹⁵⁰ If this fire goes out, he rekindles it with 'sparks drawn from the sun, by means of a magic crystal' (alternatively a 'glass') that can also be used to 'see what was being done in distant lands'.¹⁵¹ Loud bangs and strange noises, bright flashes and 'pungent and fiery vapours' fill the air for miles around as he is heard 'conjuring in an unknown tongue', summoning 'unruly spirits' that rage out of control, soaring up and over the battlements to screech away across the night sky. When things go wrong – as they often do – it is his wife who comes to the rescue; quelling the spirits with her own greater powers.¹⁵² Rarely encountered in person, he is often glimpsed from afar,

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 262., para.2.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 262., para.6-8.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 262., para.9.-p. 263., para.2.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 263., para.3-4.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 264., para.4., lns.1-3.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 264., para.4., lns.4-6.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 264., para.7., lns.1-2.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 264., para.7., lns.6-9.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 264., para.8.-p. 265., ln.1.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 265., para.8.

galloping out on his '*handsome black mare, brought from the east*'.¹⁵³ This fiery steed is no ordinary horse, being much taller and sleeker, far stronger and faster than any ordinary farm horse.¹⁵⁴ Of his many mysteries, the most precious is a '*magical Elixir, or water of life, which preserved him, his lady, and others in their youthful vigour*',¹⁵⁵ which he prepares using *rare drugs, spices and other things*' sent to him by Arluth.¹⁵⁶ Both he and his wife take this life-extending elixir, prolonging their existence far beyond normal human limits – until fate takes a hand, bringing their story to an end. Many years pass. Pengersick and his wife live a quiet but happy life, going on to produce a '*numerous family*', sending some to be '*adopted by their uncle Arluth*'.¹⁵⁷ Eventually the lady becomes tired as everyone around them dies, so that she begs him to stop taking the life-enhancing liquor and allow her to do the same. Yet he always has some new discovery, some aspect of his work that excites him, so that he just does not *want* to die yet, if ever. She however stops taking it and soon dies, leaving her husband to continue his work alone.¹⁵⁸ Meanwhile, one of their descendant granddaughters marries a mysterious 'Welsh prince' who visits the Enchanter to learn his magic,¹⁵⁹ in exchange supplying '*a quantity of black stones*' processed to extract '*a sort of liquid fire*'.¹⁶⁰ This one day goes wrong, so that the black liquid burst out of its container and erupts instantly into flames which soon engulf the building, killing the Enchanter and destroying the castle *leaving nothing but the bare walls*'.¹⁶¹

Here Bottrell's meandering tale comes to an end.

Interwoven throughout this primary narrative is the story of three female witches, the Lady Godolphin (wealthy heiress to nearby Godolphin Castle), the Witch of Fraddam and this witch's niece Venna (employed as the lady's maid). Together they enter Bottrell's tale as Marec reaches early adulthood ('aged about twenty'). Old

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 265., para.7., lns.1-2.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 265., para.7., lns.3-5.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 265., para.4., lns.2-4.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 266., para.2., lns.3-5.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 266., para.2., lns.1-5.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 266., para.2., lns.6-15.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 266., para.3.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 266., para.4., lns.1-2.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 266., para.4., lns.3-6.

Pengersec nurtures ambitions to marry his son to this Lady, intent on uniting the two family fortunes. She in turn lusts after Marec, sharing similar aims. Marec himself is not interested, being aware of this lady's repute as 'sorceress' working closely with the other two.¹⁶² Result being, his father goes on to marry her himself.¹⁶³ Unhappy in this union, the lady plots but fails to ensnare Marec's affections with a love potion and to kill old Pengersec with poison, aided by the other two women. Repeatedly, these plans are foiled by castle staff, leading her to resort to desperate lies, fooling Pengersec into believing that son Marec has betrayed him. A jumble of tragicomic melodrama unfolds, including a kidnap plot and heroic rescue triggering Marec's decision to leave Cornwall, bringing dutiful tradition to an end.¹⁶⁴

2.ii) Robert Hunt's version of same events, told in two parts as 'How Pengerswick became a sorcerer' and 'The Lord of Pengerswick an Enchanter'.

Published eight years prior to Bottrell, Robert Hunt presents same events as two short stories told in succession in the 'Sorcery and Witchcraft' section of his 1865 *Popular Romances, second series*.¹⁶⁵ Omitting much of Bottrell's detail (no prince or princess, no war-torn land or magical sword, no foster brother Uter or secret half-brother Arluth; no ghostly curse or wise eastern sages) Hunt opens his first tale with 'the first Pengerswick' aspiring to marry his son to a Godolphin lady, going on to marry her himself and she then plotting to ensnare her stepson's affections by magic and to kill her husband, aided by her two female accomplices, culminating in the failed kidnap attempt. All is covered in two pages, with overseas disappearance and years studying in the east summarised as '*he disappeared from the castle, and for a long period was never heard of*'.¹⁶⁶

Hunt's second tale begins with 'the Lord of Pengerswick' arriving from 'some eastern clime accompanied by an 'outlandish', 'Saracen' lady. Again, the air of secrecy surrounding activities within the tower; strange smells and loud noises, bright flashing lights, unfamiliar words read aloud in as magic rages often out of

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 254., para.5-8.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 255., para.2.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 255., para.3.-p. 257., para.4.

¹⁶⁵ In Hunt, R., *Popular Romances, second series.*, p. 84., para.2.-p. 86., para.1 (How Pengersick became a sorcerer), and p. 86., para.2.-p. 90., para.1 (The Lord of Pengerswick an Enchanter).

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 85., para.4.

control, to be quelled by the eastern wife with her own higher magic, and events coming to a similar end with the arrival of an unfamiliar man – here not Welsh, but a ‘bronzed’ stranger – implicated in the sudden fire destroying castle and contents.¹⁶⁷

2.iii) Supplementary tale within a separate saga, *The Giants of Towednack*’ (Bottrell) or *How Tom and the Tinkeard found the tin, and how it led to Morva fair* (Hunt).

William Bottrell tells this lengthy saga in his 1870 *Traditions, first series*.¹⁶⁸ The event centre around Cornishman Tom (inherits great wealth after killing a local giant) and Englishman Jack (travelling tin-worker). Within this wider tale, the Enchanter features only briefly, in an introductory paragraph noting his reputation as sorcerer,¹⁶⁹ followed by a longer passage detailing his attendance at the annual tin smelter’s fair.¹⁷⁰ Here he causes mayhem, intent on stealing the secrets of tin through trickery and magic. He is thwarted by Jack, outwitting the Enchanter with his own higher powers. Robert Hunt’s version of this ‘giants’ tale is told as three sequential stories in the ‘Romances of the Giants’ section of his 1865 *Popular Romances, first series*.¹⁷¹ The ‘Enchanter versus Jack’ story features as substory within the third of those three tales.¹⁷²

2.iv) Additional tale told by both writers, as *The lord of Pengerswick / Enchanter and the Giant of St. Michael’s Mount*.

Robert Hunt tells this story separately in ‘The Giants’ section of his 1865 *Popular Romances; first series*.¹⁷³ William Bottrell presents the same as mere anecdote within a separate saga in the ‘Legends of the west country giants’ section of his 1870 *Traditions; first series*,¹⁷⁴ repeated as anecdote with in his 1873 main ‘Legend’.¹⁷⁵ Both writers cover the same basic theme; the Lord of Pengerswick / Enchanter using magic to stop a local giant, resident of St. Michael’s Mount, stealing his livestock. Both depict this giant as old, and hungry. Hunt has him a ‘horrid old monster’,

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 86., para.3.-p. 90., para.1.

¹⁶⁸ In Bottrell, W., ‘*Traditions, first series*, pp. 9-46.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 33., para.3.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 37., para.3.-p. 42., para.1.

¹⁷¹ In Hunt, R., *Popular Romances, first series*, p. 31-p.55.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 50., para.2.-p. 52., para.1.

¹⁷³ In Hunt, R., *Popular Romances, first series* (1865), pp. 29-30.

¹⁷⁴ In Bottrell, W., ‘*Traditions, first series*, p. 36., para.2.

¹⁷⁵ In Bottrell., W., *Traditions, second series* (1873), p. 265., para.5.

toothless and one-eyed. Bottrell depicts him as old, deaf, and ‘hard-up for food’ (alternately, a mere ‘some one’ from the Mount). Both have him venturing from Mount to mainland, stealing a live animal from Pengersick land, to be carried off across the cliffs from Praa Sands to Marazion, on to the Mount. Both have the Enchanter resolving the problem with magic; spying the thief through a magic glass he casts a spell causing the offender to become stuck overnight on the large black rock (Hoe Point) at the western end of the beach. Both end the same; the giant returns home, having learned his lesson, and never tries it again.

2.iii) Additional tale, The Witch of Fraddam and the Enchanter of Pengerswick.

This story is told by Robert Hunt, in his 1865 *Popular Romances, second series*.¹⁷⁶ Here, the Witch of Fraddam enlists the help of the Devil, trading her soul in exchange for help attempting (but ultimately failing) to outwit the Enchanter. Luring him to the sea at Kynance Cove, she raises the Devil by magic incantation, and with his guidance prepares a cauldron of poison intended for the Enchanter. Her plan fails, as he turns her own magic against her with the help of his horse, causing her to fall into the cauldron which then transforms into a coffin that tips immediately into the sea – dooming her to float for all eternity on the waves, trapped inside.

2.iv) Additional tale; Cudden Point and the Silver Table.

Robert Hunt tells this pseudo-historic anecdote in the ‘Lost Cities’ section of his 1865 *Popular Romances, first series*.¹⁷⁷ Here a Pengersick lord entertains guests on a luxury boat moored offshore at Cudden point, midway along the coast between Praa Sands and Marazion. The sun is shining, but the weather changes unexpectedly, as a breeze begins to stir and a storm suddenly arrives. When the storm passes, ship and passengers are all gone. For many years after, during certain weather conditions, the sound of voices talking and laughing can be heard from below the sea, along with the rattle of plates and jingle of glasses. At certain times the Lord and his guests can be seen below the waves, as skeletons seated around a huge gleaming silver table.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 90., para.2.-p. 92., para.3.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

Chapter 3) Pengersick Castle, the known history.

3.i) Prehistory- Early Medieval settlement.

Exactly when people first settled here at the head (*pen*) of this coastal marsh (*Gorsack*) is not known. Speculative evidence alludes to human activity in the grounds of Pengersick Castle as far back as the Bronze Age,¹⁷⁸ with a more tangible discovery of worked flints and tin ingots on the beach implying travel and trade here in the late-prehistoric / early-medieval eras.¹⁷⁹ Topographical clues (field systems and natural boundaries such as streams and lane alignments) suggest a small but significant settlement arising by the third-fourth century, as one of several along this stretch of coastline.¹⁸⁰ Again, placenames tell their story, with Pentreath (*pen* ‘top’ and *treth* ‘beach’) uphill above the eastern end of the beach, Hendra (*hen* ‘old’ and *dra* ‘farm’) in a similar position at the western end, and Trevurvas (*tre* ‘farm’ and *vurvus* / *wavas* ‘winter’) further inland.¹⁸¹ *Pen Gorsack* holds prime central position in the natural flat of land, a short distance inland above the beach. Well established by the seventh-eight century, the early hamlet was likely situated approximately 150m east of where the present tower now stands, likely comprising several small family groups together identifying as the people ‘of Pen Gorsack’.¹⁸²

3.ii) The ‘lawless’ de Pengersick family.

The early-high medieval era in Cornwall is marked by the influx of settlers bringing new language, religion, and rule, with Cornwall’s previously tribal leaders giving way to Saxon kings who would themselves acquiesce to Norman control, on William the Conquerors invasion of England in 1066. Although not listed in the earliest available documentary source, the 1086 survey now known as the Domesday Book,

¹⁷⁸ The alleged discovery of several roundhouse hut circles (identified by dowsers in the mid-1990s) became accepted as evidence of prehistoric settlement, despite subsequent archaeological investigations finding ‘no evidence for a Bronze Age hut-circle on the site’. In Johns, C., *Pengersick Castle, Breage, Cornwall: Archaeological Recording, Feb-May* (Cornwall, Cornwall County Council, Cornwall Archaeology Unit, 2001), p.20., section 6.3, para.3., ln.2.

¹⁷⁹ In Johns, C., *Ibid*, p. 12., section 5.3.2.

¹⁸⁰ In Herring, P., et al., *Pengersick Castle*, pp. 11-12., section 2.2.2.

¹⁸¹ In Holmes, J., *1,000 Cornish place-names*, pp. 25., 36., & 48.

¹⁸² In Herring, P., et al., *Pengersick Castle*, pp. 23-24., section 2.

Pen Gorsack likely came under the nearby manor of Rinsey, evolving to become a separate manor in its own right.¹⁸³

A manor was an administrative area governed by a man titled as lord under a system known as knight's service, whereby land was held in exchange for services rather than rent. Dividing his newly-conquered lands into 'hundreds' and each of these into 'manors', William strengthened his hold over new territories by rewarding his most loyal followers; position each as lord of his own manor, in exchange for allegiance. Each manor had to be managed, resident populations kept under control, and a share of profits payed to the king. Yet the primary duty of a lord was a knight – armed soldier – being available for military service, at king's command. While the role brought great wealth and power, it was high risk, necessitating months away from home, travelling long distance over land and sea to fight in brutal battles from which one may or may not return. In time the role became hereditary, passing through primogeniture from father to eldest son. While the job-specifications continued unchanged, terms of employment eventually shifted from knight's service to recruitment by contract, receiving a wage and share of campaign profits instead.¹⁸⁴

This military vocation would define generations of Pengersick men from earliest beginnings to final era of occupancy (early-mid seventeenth-century), from the twelfth-fourteenth century Christian Crusades and subsequent religious wars in the Mediterranean to the Hundred Years War and War of the Roses, Perkin Warbeck's claim to the throne, the Prayer Book Rebellion, Thirty Years war and English Civil war to Cromwell's conquest of Ireland, the Anglo-Spanish war and more.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ The Domesday Book is a statistical survey of England conducted c1086A.D. as census count and economic assessment; who held what and how much it was worth. The Cornwall Domesday is published as Morris., J. (Gen. Ed.), *Domesday Book (Cornwall), Winchester 1086* (Chichester: Philmore & Company Ltd, 1979). Rinsey is listed as a manor within the so well of Winnainton, held by a man named Wulfward on behalf of Robert, Comte de Mortain. *Ibid.*, p. 1/120a.

¹⁸⁴ The brutal reality of life as medieval knight is detailed in Robinson, T., *The Worst jobs in History; two thousand years of miserable employment* (London: Boxtree [an imprint of Pan MacMillan Ltd., 2004), pp. 46-51.

¹⁸⁵ This military connection is noted as defining factor in Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle.*, pp. 3-8.

The first written record of ‘Pengersiiec’ as place name appears in 1199, with an entry in the Feet of Fines detailing inheritance disputes,¹⁸⁶ with first note of place name as family name two decades later, in the Close Rolls for 1221 citing the violent death of a ‘Richard de Pengersioc’. Increasing references over the coming decades imply a steady rise in status and power, with the Cartulary records of St. Michael’s Mount citing a ‘William de Pengersyut’ as witness to a property transaction in 1230 and a ‘Henrico de Pengesyoc’ as witness to quitclaim in 1262, again in relation to property. Midway between them is a separate reference to ‘Alexander’, first know Lord of ‘Pengersyut’, granted rights to the use of water for the establishment of a mill c1250. Although varied in spelling, these are all clearly the same name, yet the relationship between these men is not known; they may have familial links or might simply share the name in association with place.¹⁸⁷

A more definitive lineage begins to emerge towards the end of the thirteenth-century, headed by one Roger Pengersick (possibly a son of William).¹⁸⁸ This Roger in 1281 married Cecily Killigrew and in 1295/6 served as a first Reeve of Helston, cementing the family’s position amongst the rising elite. His name appears in the Stannary roles for Helston in 1305-6, indicating tin as a major source of expanding family wealth.¹⁸⁹ A charter dated 1301 shows Roger’s legacy divided between his two sons following

¹⁸⁶ In the late 12th century a procedure evolved for settling a legal action by an agreement known as a ‘final concord’, later abbreviated to ‘fine’. Originally recorded in duplicate, with the two copies given to each of the parties involved, the procedure was modified in 1195 so that three copies were made on a single sheet of parchment, two side by side with a third copy beneath. Known as the foot (hence, collectively, the ‘feet’ of fines) this third copy was lodged with the court, providing a secure legal record. There are two volumes of *The Feet of Fines for Cornwall*, published in 1914 (vol. I) and 1950 (vol. II). In vol. I, No. 6, on page 4 is printed the document dated ‘at Westminster on Friday next after the feast of St Adelburg in the 1st year of King John’ (15th October 1199). Here, amongst other lands in Cornwall, is noted: ‘Pengersiiec (*Pengersick in Breage*) which Alan [*de Cruple, plaintiff...*] claims to be his reasonable part of the free tenement which was his father Richard’s & his heirs all the right & claim he had in the said land, for ever’. In Rowe, R.H. (ed), *Cornwall Feet of Fines, Vol.1., Richard 1 – Edward III, 1195-1377* (Exeter, the Devon & Cornwall Records Society, 1914). This date (1199) is contradicted in *The Place-names of Cornwall*, an unpublished typescript compiled by J.E.B. Gover in 1948, p. 493., citing the year as 1197, source referenced as ‘F.F.’ (Feet of Fines).

¹⁸⁷ This summary is compiled from Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 3., & p. 16., and Herring, P., et al, *Pengersick Castle*, p. 8., section 2.1., para.1-2.

¹⁸⁸ Roger is also referenced as ‘Robert’. See Toy, S., *The History of Helston* (Oxford: O.U.P., 1936), p. 129., para.2., lns.12-13., also p. 144., para.3 (list entry), & p. 471., para.4., lns.1-3.

¹⁸⁹ In Whetter, J., *Cornwall in the 13th Century* (St. Austell: Lyfrow Trelyspen, 1998), p. 57., para.2., ln.16., & p. 58., para.4., ln.11.

his death; younger of the two, William (notes as ‘merchant by land and sea’) being granted property in Helston by elder brother Henry now as ‘Lord of Pengyrsek’.¹⁹⁰

This Henry was the first of three generations with same name, Henry Pengersick I, II and III, noted as ‘Henry Force’ in Leland’s 1534-43 *Itinerary*.¹⁹¹ Reasons for this moniker are unknown. It may denote personality, physical strength, or military prowess, or might simply refer to fortifications added to the family home – not the present tower but a much earlier house, of which little is known. Date estimated c1200, this earlier house was built on an area of purposely-flattened land, a short distance uphill from where the present tower now stands.¹⁹²

This first Henry followed father Roger into local politics, serving as MP for Helston in 1315 and 1327, at some point (c1300) married Engrina Godolphin, forging an alliance between the two families that would continue through future generations.

The Godolphin family share common history with the Pengersicks, as post-Norman manorial lords first documented c1300, when Alexander ‘de Godolghan’ built a small castle as precursor to present-day Godolphin House, built by descendent John c1475, remodelled by Sir Francis Godolphin in 1635.¹⁹³ The Godolphin fortune was built primarily on tin and copper, funding various business ventures including the famous ‘Godolphin Arabian’ racehorse, bred by Francis Godolphin, c1730s.¹⁹⁴

Henry and Engrina had one daughter (Clarice) and two sons, with eldest son Henry II becoming Lord of Pengersick when Henry I died in 1327, to be succeeded by his own son Henry III in 1343.¹⁹⁵ Here the family acquired a reputation as ‘lawless’,

¹⁹⁰ In Herring, P., et al., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 8., section.2.1., para.3. This charter notes William as ‘merchant by land and sea.’

¹⁹¹ In Toulmin-Smith, L., (ed), *The Itinerary of John Leland*, pp. 188., ln.19.

¹⁹² In Herring, P., et al., *Ibid.*, p. 13, section 2.2.3.

¹⁹³ Owned in full by the National Trust since 2008, Godolphin’s seven centuries of known history is outlined in Wheater, C., ‘Godolphin House, Cornwall’s hidden treasure’, *The National Trust magazine*, Spring 2008, pp. 41-5., also [online] at ‘Godolphin House’, *Historic England* <<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1001443>> [Accessed: 11/8/2020].

¹⁹⁴ See ‘Arabians, Barbs & Turks, *Thoroughbred Bloodlines* [online] <<https://www.bloodlines.net/TB/Bios/GodolphinArabian.htm>> [Accessed: 20/01/2019]. The exact origins of this exceptional breed were unknown, likely of mixed Arab, Turk and Barb heritage. Stud-owner Edward Coke on his death in 1723 bequeathed racehorses and mares to Francis Godolphin and his studs to a Mr. Roger Williams; these were later acquired by Godolphin, at his Newmarket stables.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9., para.1-2.

most notably associated with Henry II's well-documented assault on vicar of Breage David de Lispein and Hailes Abbey monk Brother Thomas, who together came to collect tithes (taxes) c1330. For this Henry was severely punished with the Greater Excommunication, but later absolved through special dispensation of the pope¹⁹⁶

Church and state were fundamentally linked, controlling all areas of life.¹⁹⁷ These were turbulent times, with multiple wars and natural disasters including earthquake, famine, and plague, decimating the population over successive decades; most notably the great pestilence, or Black Death. First known in ninth-century China, the bubonic plague spread steadily from east to west via trade and pilgrim routes, sweeping across Europe from 1347 to reach Britain in 1348, spreading as epidemic throughout Cornwall by early summer 1349.¹⁹⁸ Henry Pengersick III was very likely one of the first local victims (dying as he did, at around that time), followed by numerous others including his son John (now lord) in 1361. Over the coming decades Pengersick Castle and associated wealth passed rapidly from one person to the next, transferring eventually to Henry III's daughter Alice, sole heiress in 1367. Already married, her husband Richard Trewinard is noted as lord of Pengersick on his death a year later. Alice subsequently remarried a much older man, John Beville (noted as John Pengersick). They both died in 1391, leaving their only son John Beville II as sole heir, to be succeeded in 1426 by his son Humphrey (b1408), who himself died c1450 having never married. With no male heir the estate was now divided between Humphrey's two sisters Isabella (living) and Joan (deceased), with Joan's share (on the death of her husband) returning to Isabella in 1469.¹⁹⁹

3.iii) The Millitons.

When Isabella died in 1476 her estate passed to daughter Elizabeth Worthe; already married and living away with husband John Milliton at his family seat in Meavy, Devon. Events at Pengersick during this period are vague, with the original house

¹⁹⁶ In Coulthard, 1913, p. 46., para.1.-p. 47., para.2., and p. 118., para.2.

¹⁹⁷ The spread of Christianity throughout the known world, and its impact on medieval life in Britain, is explored in Hamilton, B., *The Christian World of the Middle Ages* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2003). Local influence of Christianity across Cornwall is detailed in Orme, N., *Cornwall and the Cross* (London: the University of London Press; 2007).

¹⁹⁸ In Zeigler, P., *The Black Death*. (Gloucestershire: Alan Sutton Publishing ltd., 1991), p. 140., para.2., & p. 141., para.2.

¹⁹⁹ In Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 4., para.2-3.

likely unlivd in since the death of John Beville II c1426. Evidently, someone did at some point return, going on to build the new Pengersick Castle as pictured in the 1535 painting; the most likely candidates being Elizabeth and John.²⁰⁰

Located downhill from the earlier house on a naturally flat, more sheltered area of land, this new house was likely built re-using materials from the former, with ambitious layout comprising grand hall with outbuildings including gatehouse and stables, overlooking courtyards and gardens.²⁰¹ Exact date of construction is unclear. Analysis in 1997 by architectural historian, the late Beric Morley (1943-2015) suggests 'at or after 1550', while a more recent reassessment by Historic England pushes this back to 1510. In reality, a house of this size and complexity would take decades to build, added to through successive generations, with the tower perhaps added at a later date to the main construction.²⁰²

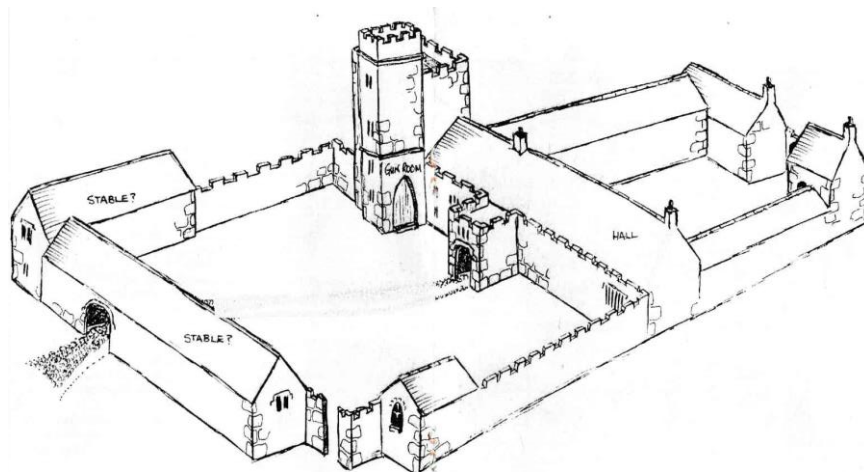


Plate 10) Pengersick Castle, wider buildings complex (conjectural drawing).

3.iv) End of the family line.

Elizabeth and Johns' son, also named John Milliton, was appointed Captain of St. Michael's Mount in 1523, going on to become Justice of the Peace in 1527 and High Sherriff of Cornwall in 1546.²⁰³ His tenancy at St. Michael's Mount was renewed in 1534 to be shared with son William Milliton, who would go on to maintain the lease

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.5., para.7.

²⁰¹ In Herring, P, et al., *Pengersick Castle*, pp. 27-34. See also Plate 10) Pengersick Castle (conjectural drawing), in Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 12-13.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 14., para.3-4.

²⁰³ In Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 5., para.3.

alone following John's death in 1549.²⁰⁴ This first William Milliton married Honor Godolphin c1535, reinforcing the alliance forged two centuries previous by their predecessors Henry and Engrina. It is possible (but not proven) that the oil paintings of the two houses copied by William Borlase (during a visit to the then-derelict ruins, in 1738) mark this event.²⁰⁵ The couple went on to produce seven daughters (one of whom died young) followed eventually by the one son, also named William Milliton, born in 1553.²⁰⁶ Events took a tragic turn with the sudden death and disappearance of father and son in a twist of fate noted in Carew's 1602 *Survey* as William the younger being '*lost in his travails beyond the sea*' shortly after the death of his father.²⁰⁷ A check through burial records clarifies the detail; William the elder being buried nearby at Breage church on 20th March 1570, and William the younger (aged seventeen) buried just fourteen months later on June 1st 1571, at St. Nectan's church in Hartland, Devon.²⁰⁸

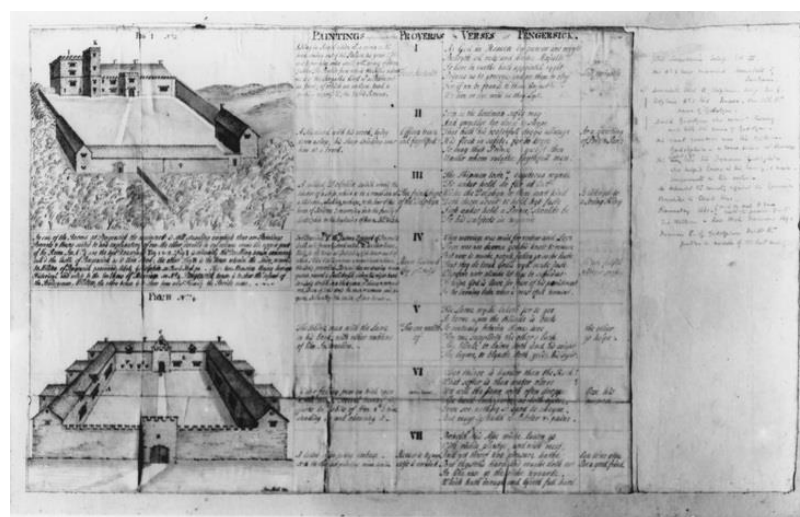


Plate 11) William Borlase's 1748 manuscript.

²⁰⁴ In Le Borde, K. M., *Hunting for Hidden meaning; an analysis of the history, interpretation and presentation of seventeenth century plasterwork at St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall* (a thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of Master of Philosophy, 2011), pp. 19-20.

²⁰⁵ See Plate 11) William Borlase's 1738 manuscript copy of the paintings and proverbs, sourced [online] as 'Pengersick Castle, Praa Sands, drawing', Morrab Library Photographic Archive <<http://photoarchive.morrablibrary.org.uk/items/show/10448>> [Accessed: 19/10/2020].

²⁰⁶ In Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 5., para.2., also Herring, P., et al., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 10, para.2-3.

²⁰⁷ In Carew, R., *Survey*, p. 153., para.3., later cited in Grose's *Antiquities*, Vol.8, p. 45., para.5., with ambiguous wording conflating father and son as one.

²⁰⁸ Burial records in the Breage church archive (supplied by email from warden Trefor Bowen) confirm a 'Willmis Mylynton, armigero' buried at Breage church on 20th July 1570, while *The Book of Hartland* (R.P. Chope., Devon: Devonshire Press, 1940., p. 180) details a 'Milliton, Mr Williellmus' buried at Hartland's St. Nectan's church on June 1st, 1571. This date is alternately recorded as 31st May of the same year (with no source reference) in Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 5., para.7.

3.v) The Forgotten years.

With the direct family line at an end, the remaining wealth was divided between the surviving six sisters, all now married and living elsewhere. Their various shares were steadily sold off, with Pengersick at some point purchased by Nicholas Hals to later pass through inheritance to his son John, who subsequently sold the place on to the Godolphin family.²⁰⁹ This era of Pengersick Castle's history is shrouded in mystery, with the Hals connection generally noted in passing, as if of no consequence. Both the 1995 *Pengersick Castle ... a brief history* and the 1998 *Archaeological and Historic Assessment* skip forward to the Buck Brother's 1734 image of Pengersick Castle as abandoned ruin, leaving a void around Nicholas and John Hals residence.²¹⁰ Clearly there is some oversight here, for the final years of the place as functioning home rest with father and son Nicholas and John Hals, as the last known owners-in-residence prior to the building's demise.

Nicholas Hals' was a Cornish landowner, merchant and inventor, descended from a Devon family of that name (alternately Als / Halse / Halsey / Hales). During the reign of Elizabeth I he bought numerous properties throughout Cornwall (including Pengersick), using each as occasional residence.²¹¹ He was knighted by James I in 1605 and served as Governor of Falmouth's Pendennis Castle from 1608 to his death in 1637. His son John (eldest of four) remains something of an enigma, with the primary reference to his activities at Pengersick being the 'unthrifty' act of cutting down the surrounding trees for sale, in an attempt to boost his ailing finances.²¹² Further clues arise in C.S. Gilbert's 1820 *Historical survey* stating that he 'lived to expend nearly the entire fortune left to him by his father, and died in reduced circumstances',²¹³ with Davies Gilbert's 1838 *Parochial History, volume II* more specifically citing his departure from Cornwall sometime after 1655, 'having spent his whole paternal estate, went beyond the seas, never to be heard of to this day'.²¹⁴

²⁰⁹ In Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 5., para.7., and Herring, P., et al. *Pengersick Castle*, p. 10., para.4.

²¹⁰ In Evans, A., *Ibid.*, p.8., para.1., and Herring, P., et al. *Ibid.*, p. 16., section.2.2.5., para.1.

²¹¹ Nicholas Hal's position as owner occasionally resident at Pengersick is first documented in John Norden's *Speculum Britanniae 1584*, later cited in Grose, F., *Antiquities, Vol.8.*, p. 45., para.5., ln.11.

²¹² In Grose, F., *Ibid.*, p. 46., para.1., lns.2-3.

²¹³ In Gilbert, C.S., *An historical survey.*, para.4., lns.1-2.

²¹⁴ In Gilbert, D., *Parochial History, Vol II* (1838), p. 119, para.3, ln.15.- p. 120., para.1., ln.3. This same passage (p. 120., para.1., lns.3-5) adds that John Hals left a son by his wife Jane Arundel, identified as 'Major Thomas Hals, of Hals Savanna in Clarendon parish and province, Jamaica'.

Even with these details, events at Pengersick Castle during this time are unknown, other than the building's material decline into ruin passing successively through sale, to be owned in full by the Godolphins in 1870,²¹⁵ with the tower by then repurposed as farm store, animal barn and smuggler's hideout,²¹⁶ with a side-line as visitor attraction, being the fabled location of Bottrell and Hunt's recently published tales.

3.vi) Pengersick Castle: Britain's most haunted place?

Dramatic change came in 1922, when the tower and surrounding five acres went up for sale by public auction, to be restored as a family home by new owners George and Elizabeth (Bess) Evans.²¹⁷ Next was the reclusive Miss Revell, living alone from the mid-1930s to her death in the early 1960's. Boarded up for two years, Pengersick Castle sold again via auction in 1966 to be further renovated by new owners the Schofield family, before passing again by sale to the late Angela Evans, final owner in residence from the mid-1970s to her death in 2008.

Mrs. Evans's early years at Pengersick were occupied with research and renovations, welcoming guests as Bed & Breakfast accommodation later expanding to incorporate

This Thomas Hals was an officer in the British Army, granted this estate of land in 1670, as reward for his contribution to England's capture of Jamaica from Spanish rule. See 'Major Thomas Hals, profile and legacies summary 1634-1702', *Legacies of British Slave ownership* [online] <<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146641023>> [Accessed: 10/06/2020]. Here his will states occupation as 'soldier then planter'. Subsequent estate records for Hals Savana in 1754 list 'the hire of enslaved people' as one of many 'crops' produced, along with sugar, rum, and various livestock. See 'Hals Hall, Jamaica, Clarendon, Estate details' *Legacies of British Slave Ownership* [online] <<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/1754>> [Accessed 10/06/2020]. Further details arise via 'Jamaica Family History Search' [online], with two pages from *The Caribbeana* vol .V. showing the Hals family tree; under Major Thomas Hals is noted 'went to J. in 1655 with Venables' ('J' indicates Jamaica, 'Venables' refers to English soldier Robert Venables, who together with English Admiral William Penn led the naval invasion of Jamaica in 1655). This same document notes under John Hals, that he 'went to Ireland and thence to Barbados with his only son (Major Thomas)', additionally detailing subsequent family descent, with three further generations of 'Thomas Hals' ending with a Thomas Richard Hals, died 'in Guernsey, a lunatic' in 1743 (age 20). See 'Hals of Jamaica', *Caribeanna* vol.5., p. 276., <<http://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/Members/bcarib74.htm>> [Accessed: 23/11/2020]. See also Appendix 4) Hals family descent.

²¹⁵ In Herring, P., et al. *Pengersick Castle*, p. 10, para.4.- p. 11., para.1. Here the progression of transference by sale is detailed, referencing various documents from a range of archive sources.

²¹⁶ As noted in Maton, W.G., *Observations* (179), pp. 192-3., and Brett, R.L. (Ed.), Barclay Fox's *Journal* (1833), p. 53., para.2., lns.5-7.

²¹⁷ See Plate 12) Pengersick Castle restored with new kitchen extension (Postcard print, c1930). Mr. Evans kept a diary in 1927, detailing restoration works alongside the minutia of daily life including winemaking and beekeeping. See *George Stephens Evans, Pengersick Castle, Breage, concerned principally with work carried out by himself, his family and employees in restoring and furnishing the castle; also weather, family matters, relations with neighbours, gardening, beekeeping, etc. Daily entries for the year 1927*. Original manuscript held at Kresen Kernow, Ref. no. AD789.

events and Open Days, going on to establish the Pengersick Historic and Education Trust in 1997, intent on preserving her beloved home for posterity.²¹⁸ Paranormal fame arose unexpectedly, as visitors began to report consistent yet inexplicable experiences; taps on shoulders and tugs on clothing; a sudden surge of fear on entering certain parts of the tower, a feeling of being ‘watched’ and the fleeting glimpse of various ‘somebodies’ who turn out to be not physically there.

More than twenty named ghosts have been identified in the tower and surrounding grounds, with much of the activity centred around the first floor room where an array of ‘presences’ have been encountered, including several female spirits, a cat and a ‘demon dog’ said to materialise in the stone fireplace, and an angry male spirit claimed to be that of fifteenth-century John Milliton in assumed guise as Enchanter of legend. Meanwhile, outside in the grounds, the ghost of a monk has been seen, along with a smuggler and the occasional swarthy sailor. Other manifestations are not so clearly seen, but more subtly sensed; footsteps and voices, doors slamming, objects moved, strange smells, fluctuations in room temperature, and the feeling of being watched; sometimes deepening to a sense of actual fear accompanied by physical symptoms of nausea, dizziness and sometimes pain.²¹⁹ Amongst the most widely experienced phenomena are the mysterious light orbs, occasionally seen but more often caught on camera. Alternately interpreted as the manifestation of human or animal spirit, or more simply a speck of dust, an insect, or optical illusion, these orbs are often encountered in the same locations that ghosts are known to appear.²²⁰

Many theories have been postulated, attempting to explain this array of phenomena. Are these ‘ghosts’ really spirits of the dead, suspended in time and space? Or could there be a more worldly explanation? One idea is that such manifestations are atmospheric recording encoded within the granite rock of the tower, ‘replaying’ in much the same way that modern technology captures and replays sounds and images

²¹⁸ See Evans, A., ‘I Live in an Unmodernised Castle’, *The Guardian Weekend*, Jan 21, 2006, p. 85., and ‘Seduced by a garden’s history’, *Journal of the Herb Society*, Vol. 30, No.3, (Aug 2005), p30.

²¹⁹ These phenomena are discussed in Addicoat, I.M., *Ghostly Tales of Cornwall*, pp. 1-4., and Kenward, T. & Snow, R.M., *The Ghosts, Hauntings, Myths and Legends of Pengersick Castle, Praa Sands, Cornwall* (Dorset, T.J. Kenward & R.M. Snow, 1997).

²²⁰ In Wiseman, L., ‘Orbs at Pengersick Castle’ in *Devon Dowsers news and Views*, issue no. 25, (Summer 2006), pp. 9-10.

through audio, photographic, and video equipment. Alternately, such manifestations could be the result of electromagnetic energy in relation to earth energy and ley-lines passing through the castle grounds. Alternatively, it may all be simply the power of human imagination; that visitors see and hear these ‘ghosts’ because they want to.²²¹

Whatever the truth behind their existence, the ghosts of Pengersick Castle for a time became primary focus,²²² culminating in a 2002 featured appearance on Living TV’s *Most Haunted*.²²³ Closing to the public following Mrs. Evans death in 2008, Pengersick Castle underwent extensive repair and renovation to re-open in 2013 under management of a newly restructured Pengersick Historic and Education Trust.²²⁴ At the time of writing in 2020, the ghosts of Pengersick Castle maintain a quieter profile, firmly incorporated into the mythology of the building yet no longer at the forefront of activities, with the building repurposed as self-catering holiday accommodation and events venue, open to visitors now only by prior arrangement.



Plate 12) Pengersick Castle, restored, with new kitchen extension, c1930.

²²¹ These theories explored in Neal, A., *Dowsing*, pp. 15-18, & pp. 45-50.

²²² As documented in Weeks, A., ‘Living in the Past’, *Cornwall Today*, October 1998, pp. 53-5., also Pengelly, N., ‘Pengersick Castle, The most haunted castle in England’, *Cornwall Today*, November 2002, pp. 34-8., and Wilson, C., ‘Pengersick, Spirit of the Past’, *Cornwall Today*, October 2005, pp. 36-41.

²²³ Series 2, Episode 10 of Living TV’s *Most Haunted* (filmed on location at Pengersick Castle in 2002) is available [online] as ‘Evil Demon Ghost Haunts Pengersick Castle: Most Haunted S2 Ep10’ (uploaded 20 Dec 2018) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEN0iWmgKeY>> <Accessed: 24 November 2019> [Accessed 20/01/2020].

²²⁴ See Martin, P. ‘Future Looks Bright for beautiful Pengersick’, *West Briton*, 7th October 2010, p45., and Norbury, L., ‘Thyme and Place’, *Cornwall Today*, August 2013, pp. 115-19.

Chapter 4. A legend of Pengersec: Historic and Literary Analysis.

4.i) The legend begins.

*'The lords of old Pengersick Castle
were all soldiers who rarely lived at home'.²²⁵*

So begins Bottrell's *Legend of Pengersec*, with this clear reference to 'old' Pengersick Castle placing events firmly back in the distant era of Pengersick as medieval manor; this one sentence encapsulating not only the building's material history but the primary vocation of former occupants as manorial lords bound in military duty as knights, travelling for much of the year away from home.

4.ii) Into the east

*'When the last Lords father was about 20,
as there was no fighting going on hereabouts, he betook himself to
outlandish countries, far away in the East,
to a place inhabited by people who were little better than savages ...
they passed their time roving from place to place as they wanted fresh pastures for
their cattle. They lived in tents ...²²⁶*

... These heathen worshippers of Termagaunt ...'.²²⁷

*'Well, Pengersec went to war with these pagans, for or against, we don't know nor
care which, nor did he, so that he was fighting'.²²⁸*

This simple introduction of this first character as the 'last Lords father' affirms the importance of not only him but more specifically his future son, destined to become the last Lord of Pengersick. Not yet born as the story begins, he will later be named as 'Marec' (evolving as 'Pengersec', 'the young lord', 'the last lord', 'Enchanter'). Search the Pengersick family history, and no man of this name is found. Search a Cornish dictionary and symbolic relevance becomes clear, for Marec is a Cornish word meaning knight.²²⁹ Meanwhile his father is named vaguely as 'Pengersec', yet

²²⁵ In Bottrell, W., *Traditions, second series*, p. 251., para.4., lns.1-2.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 251., para.4., lns.2-8.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 252., para.4., lns.9-10.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 253., para.1.

²²⁹ In Williams, R. *Lexicon Cornu-Britannicum: a dictionary of the ancient Celtic language of Cornwall* (Landover, Roderic: London, Trubner & Co. 1865), p. 246. Here, marec (alternately marrec, in Cornish 'marheg') is explained not as a man's name but as a noun meaning 'a horseman, knight, cavalier; hence a soldier in general', with plural forms 'maregion, marragion, marrougion'.

it is he – not his future son – who follows knightly tradition, while Marec himself goes on to pursue an entirely new career. Identifying these characters in history may seem obvious; just look to the end of the direct family line and the two William Millitons, real-life father and son (‘last lord’ and ‘last lord’s father’) – or even later, to Sir Nicholas and John Hals, father and son final owners-in-residence c1584-1655. Such assumption overlooks the point that this opening stage is firmly rooted in the more distant era of ‘old’ Pengersick Castle, predating these men by several centuries. Further clues arise with this war-torn eastern land, these nomadic worshippers of ‘Termagaunt’, and a young Pengersec lord travelling to join the fight. Vague as these details may seem, they place this opening stage firmly in historic context of two primary features of medieval life; Christian pilgrimage and Crusader wars.²³⁰

The Crusades were a series of religious wars, spanning several centuries, rooted in Christian-Muslim conflict dating back to the seventh-century, following Arab invasions of Palestine and eleventh-century possession by Seljuk Turks rendering pilgrim routes impassable, preventing Christian travellers accessing the place most important to them; Jerusalem.²³¹ Seeking resolution Pope Urbane II (head of the Catholic Church) in 1095 gathered a council of churchmen and nobles at Clermont in southwest France, and there proclaimed his intention to free the Holy Land, initiating a series of ‘holy wars’ unfolding over several centuries, remembered as the Christian Crusades.²³² At the forefront of these wars were the knights of St. John, a military order originally founded as charitable hospital run by monks in the heart of Muslim Jerusalem, offering shelter to pilgrims.²³³ As the Crusades gained momentum their

²³⁰ Termagaunt – more usually Termagant or Termagent – was the name given by medieval European Christians to a deity they believed to be worshipped by the ‘pagan’ Muslims of faraway eastern lands. The origins of the word are unclear, other than roots in old French *tervagent* and Italian *triagante* implying triform lunar themes, loosely linked to Muslim crescent moon and star/sun symbolism (In Ayto, J., *Dictionary of Word Origins* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Ltd., 1991), p. 525). The word ‘pagan’ is rooted in Latin *pagus* repurposed as blanket term for pre-Christian and non-Christian religious belief (*Ibid.*, p. 379). Commonly depicted as violently male and warlike, Termagant features in medieval French poems, metrical romances and miracle plays, often accompanied by the otherworldly ‘Baphomet’, a European misnomer for Islamic prophet Mohamed. These words came into use through medieval European pilgrims and Crusader knights returning from the Holy Land (In Butler, A., & Dafoe, *The Knights templar, the secrets of the Cistercian legacy*. London: Constable & Robinson, 2006, p. 201., para.1.)

²³¹ In Paine, M., *The Crusades* (New Jersey, USA: Chartwell Books Inc. 2006), p.27., para.2.

²³² In Riley-Smith, J., *The Crusades; a short history* (London: Athlone Press, 1990), p. 3., para.1.

²³³ In Riley-Smith, J., *Hospitallers, the History of the Order of St. John* London: Hambledon press, 1999), p. 19., para.2.

service extended to include medical treatment, expanding to set up hospitals in Britain.²³⁴ Offshoot organisations evolved, most notably the much-mythologised Knights Templar as a holy order of warrior knights in 1199 establishing themselves as protectors of the pilgrim routes across Europe and the east.²³⁵ Exempt from paying taxes (by Papal decree) the two organisations soon accumulated great wealth, as global superpowers with administrative bases across Britain, Europe and the Mediterranean.²³⁶ While the Hospitallers maintained respectable status, the Templars became defamed through rumours of witchcraft and Devil worship, to be disbanded in 1312 with their wealth subsequently transferred to the Hospitallers.²³⁷

In Cornwall the Templars based themselves amid the wilds of Bodmin moor, in 1220 building a church dedicated to St. Catherine, founding the village of Temple.²³⁸ Famed Templars include Richard, Earl of Cornwall (b.1206-d.1272),²³⁹ taking the cross in 1236 to lead a small band of knights on Crusade in 1240-42.²⁴⁰ The Crusades themselves came to an eventual end, but their underlying religious conflict continued as the Ottoman Turks (Seljuk successors) fought to gain control of the entire Mediterranean, with battles raging on well into the sixteenth century.²⁴¹

Here then are the origins of local legend, with a medieval Pengersick lord travelling east as pilgrim and knight. Equating these details with person or place is difficult, and for the purpose of this dissertation unnecessary. It is enough to acknowledge this foundation of historic reality underpinning the opening stage of this local legend.

²³⁴ In Miller, D. Rev., *The History of Helston Parish Church 1201-2001* (Helston: Brewers, 2001), p.5., para.3. Unexpected links to the Pengersick family arise with the first Henry Pengersick in 1301 donating a parcel of his own land for the expansion of this hospital's premises in Helston. In Whetter, J., *Cornwall in the 13th Century* (St. Austell: Lyfrow Trelyspen. 1998), p. 179.

²³⁵ In Butler, A., & Dafoe, *The Knights Templar, the secrets of the Cistercian legacy* (London: Constable & Robinson, 2006), p. 201., para.1.

²³⁶ From 1291 the Hospitallers claimed Cyprus as island headquarters, before relocating to Rhodes in 1310, from there to Malta in 1530. In Riley-Smith, J., *Hospitallers*, p. 102-108.

²³⁷ In Butler, A., & Dafoe, *Ibid.*, pp. 195-205.

²³⁸ As detailed in the Temple Association's 1835 pamphlet, *History of Temple Church* (reprinted in 1905, again in 2002 with foreword by Derek Carrick, then priest in charge at Temple Church).

²³⁹ As younger brother of King Henry III, Richard was made Earl of Cornwall in 1225.

²⁴⁰ Cited in 'Richard, English claimant to the Holy Roman Empire, *Britannica* (02/01/2021) [online] <<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Richard>> [Accessed: 24/01/2021].

²⁴¹ In Riley-Smith, J., *Ibid.*, pp. 89-97.

4.iii) The White Hare, and the Enchanted Sword.

*‘Whilst there, however, he fell in love with a beautiful princess
of the people who dwelt in towns.’²⁴²*

This part of the story echoes popular tales King Horn and Bevis of Hampton. Both originate outside of Cornwall; both are rooted in Anglo-Norman story tradition; both feature themes of illicit romance tested through a seven-year separation, as in the Pengersick legend.²⁴³ Her appearance as white hare echoes a Celtic theme of white creature as omen of change or potender of doom, and the belief that a woman wronged in love may return to haunt the man who has let her down, most commonly in the form of a white hare.²⁴⁴ While the specifics of doomed romance, wife abuse and murder may be difficult to substantiate, Pengersec’s decline under curse of the princess may allude to genuine events in history; the Black Death. Just like the princess, this terrifying disease originated in the faraway ‘east’ sweeping steadily across Europe to arrive in Cornwall, with devastating consequence. As foreign ‘other’ instigating disastrous downturn, it may be this that is remembered here, as the curse of an eastern princess; mysteriously terrifying foreign force.

Conversely, a white creature can equally be a symbol of peace,²⁴⁵ and this also features in the Pengersick legend, with her later appearance as white doe and white

²⁴² In Bottrell, W., *Traditions, second series*, p. 252., para.2.

²⁴³ *King Horn* is a Middle English verse, believed to have been written in about 1225 in the South Midlands, echoing Anglo-Norman source but very clearly rooted in Old English storytelling, recalling the life of a man named Horn, son of the King of England. As a child he is set adrift by pirates who have killed his father, to be subsequently raised by another king (Aylmer of Westnesse) whose daughter (named Rymenhild) falls in love with him (Horn). A clandestine affair ensues, until they are betrayed, slandered, and Horn is consequently exiled, going on to avenge his father’s death, living abroad for seven years. Meanwhile, Rymenhild is forcibly betrothed to King Mody but does not forget her lover Horn, who then attends the wedding disguised as a beggar, making himself known to Rymenhild through puns and tokens. Horn then kills Mody, denounces and kills the slanderer, regains his kingdom, and marries Rymenhild. In Ousby, I., *Cambridge Guide*, p. 513.

Bevis of Hampton is a verse romance in tail-rhyme stanzas and octosyllabic couplets, probably written in Southampton around the year 1300. The same story exists in several European languages; the Middle English version originating from an Anglo-Norman version. Bevis – or Sir Bevois – is taken by pirates and sold as a slave to the Saracen King of Armenia, following the murder of his father by his mother’s lover. He gains favour at court and the king’s daughter Josian falls in love with him, as a result of this renouncing her faith. Her father objects, and plots to have Bevis imprisoned. Josian is then forced to marry but somehow preserves her virginity and is subsequently rescued by Bevis after he escapes from prison, seven years later. In Ousby, I., *Ibid.*, p. 81.

²⁴⁴ In Alexander, M., *The Sutton Companion to British Folklore, Myths & Legends* (Gloucestershire: Sutton publishing Ltd. 2002), pp.123-4. Also Mathews, J., and Mathews, C., *British & Irish Mythology* (London: Diamond Books, 1995), p. 91-2., and Ross, A., *Folklore of Wales* (Stroud: Tempus Publishing ltd., 2001), p. 144-8.

²⁴⁵ In Mathews & Mathews, *Ibid.*, p.92., para. 2.

bird leading Arluth to his destiny as rightful king. This theme of destiny lost and reclaimed through the power of a sword shares evident parallels with the more widely known Arthurian legends, widely popularised throughout the twelfth-fifteen centuries, as composite tales spreading throughout Europe and Britain.²⁴⁶ Most obviously, the names Arluth / Arthur holding similar connotations of strength and leadership.²⁴⁷ Further parallels unfold in narrative content. Both have same destiny to fulfil. Both are born in secret as the product of illicit romance; Arluth as secret child of Cornish lord Pengersec and a princess betrothed to a prince; Arthur as secret child of Uther, King of Britain, born to Igraine, wife of duke Gorloise. Pengersec romances the Princess and goes to battle against her prince, just as Uther romances Igraine and goes to war against Gorloise. Both are taken as babies to be raised in secret, unaware of their true parentage, to be guided towards their destiny by an elderly man as guardian of secrets to be revealed, when the time is right. Both learn of their true destiny via a sword pulled from a stone; Arthur retrieving the fabled Excalibur; Arluth led to discover the ‘enchanted sword’ entombed within a rock.

Interwoven with these literary themes, clear matches to history continue. Firstly, Pengersec and his Helston wife, reminiscent of Roger Pengersick and Cecily Killigrew c1281. Next, the second marriage to Lady Godolphin, matched twice in Henry Pengersick I and Engrina Godolphin c1300 and their descendants William Milliton and Honor Godolphin, c1535. Likewise, Marec’s birth as long-awaited son and heir, echoing real-life William Milliton the younger, only son of William and Honor. Similarly, the death and overseas disappearance of Pengersec and Marec, echoing the real-life fates of the two William Millitons (1570-1) and their successors, Nicholas and John Hals (1637-55). Yet it is here that history and legend part company, with official records declaring the direct family line ‘extinct’ with the two William Millitons, but the legend, in contrast, continuing events on, with Marec venturing overseas in pursuit of new vocation, to return in new guise as ‘Enchanter’.

²⁴⁶ In Ousby, I., *Ibid.*, pp. 35-7.

²⁴⁷ ‘Arthur’ rooted in Celtic *artos viros* meaning ‘bear man’ and Irish *art* meaning ‘stone’, and Cornish ‘Arluth’ meaning lord (in .

4.iv) Pengersick the Enchanter.

*The lord of Pengersec was soon renowned in all the west
as a most powerful sorcerer.*²⁴⁸

The intricate details of this pivotal point (Marec's time studying overseas, the location of Arluth's land and that of the 'wise sages') require deeper analysis beyond the scope of this dissertation, yet his return to Pengersick building a new house of same name clearly echoes the real-life arrival of the first John Milliton,²⁴⁹ tallying also with Grose's pseudo-historic 'Mr. Milliton', and real-life Nicholas Hals as new owner-in-residence c1584s. These matches hint at events otherwise unrecorded, with Marec as 'Enchanter' reflecting a popular historic and literary theme; the Alchemist.

The image of mysterious male engrossed in secret works arousing public suspicion is a popular literary motif, as featured in Christopher Marlowe's 'Tragical History of Dr. Faustus' reworking themes first printed in a 1587 German chapbook, the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* by Johann Spies (alternately *Faustbuch*, printed in Frankfurt, translated into English by P.F. Gent in 1592 as the *Historie of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus*), inspired by a real person; German astrologer, Alchemist and magician Johann George Faust (c1480 / 1466-c1541).²⁵⁰

The persona of Alchemist is rooted in an era that historians today refer to as the twelfth-century Renaissance, as a period of intensely accelerated intellectual, social, creative, and technological growth triggering huge changes in politics, economics, and culture, as precursor to the Renaissance. Central to this process was the global transmission of ideas and knowledge from east to west via travel, trade, and Christian Crusade, triggering the growth of universities and cathedral schools enabling the dissemination and assimilation of new concepts in religion, science and philosophy,

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 265., para.5., lns.1-2.

²⁴⁹ John Milliton is assumed to have come to live at Pengersick, with wife Elizabeth Worthe sometime after their marriage c1470, rebuilding the new Pengersick replacing previous house of same name.

²⁵⁰ The underlying theme is of a pact with the devil. Bored with his usual scientific study, Faustus turns to magic, invoking the aid of the Devil who sends his agent Mephistophilis in the form of an ugly beast (Faustus commands Mephistophilis to change shape, taking on the less offensive form of a friar). Faustus then strikes a bargain with the Devil; twenty four years of life, with Mephistophilis to do his bidding, in exchange for which the Devil will at the end of that time take his soul. The contract gives Faust everything he asks for, aside from answers to certain questions (for example: who made this world?) but ends with the inevitable horror of Faustus in his last hour of life, contemplating the terrors that await him, followed by a gruesome death and descent into hell. In Ousby, I., *Ibid.*, p. 262.

usurping established societal norms. In time, independently minded men with sufficient means began to set themselves up in private laboratories, laying the foundations of modern science.²⁵¹ Twelfth-century Alchemist Albertus Magnus (1193-1280) listed personal qualities essential to the genuine Alchemist, including many reminiscent of Pengersick's legendary Enchanter:

- He should be discreet and silent, revealing to no one the result of his operations.
- He should reside in an isolated house, in an isolated position.
- He should have patience, diligence, and perseverance.
- He should perform according to fixed rules.
- He should be sufficiently rich to bear the expense of his art.²⁵²

Fundamentally, the 'Alchemist' was an early scientist, with much of the Enchanter's alleged 'magic' explainable in this context. The magic crystal (alternately a 'glass') with its powers of magnification; some form of telescope. The strange noises and unfamiliar smells, bright flashes, and 'fiery vapours' accompanying the 'unruly spirits' flying up and away over the tower; chemical experiment including the production and use of fireworks. His 'spell books'; rare and precious Latin and Arab translation texts and instruction manuals. The life enhancing 'elixir', brewed with ingredients sent from abroad; herbal medical and nutritional supplement. And the fateful 'black liquid' distilled from unfamiliar 'black stones' causing the all-encompassing fire; coal tar (a highly flammable, thick and viscous black liquid distilled from coal burned at extremely high temperatures). Anecdotes arising in the Giants / Tom tale present Enchanter as classic magician figure; wild hair, flowing beard, flashing eyes, and hooded robes, complete with metal head band inset with 'seven precious stones, representing the planets',²⁵³ pentagram necklace and 'conjuring stick',²⁵⁴ causing mayhem creating clouds of intoxicating vapour,²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ In Martin, S. M., *Alchemy & Alchemists* (Hertfordshire: Pocket Essentials, 2006), pp. 53-76.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁵³ In Bottrell, W., *Traditions, first series*, p. 37., para.5.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39., para.1.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38., para.3.

whilst mixing ‘*magic powders*’ into the men’s drinks, leading them to hallucinate before falling into deep stupor.²⁵⁶ Likewise, the ‘Demon’ horse (gifted to Marec by Arluth, featured later as Enchanter’s familiar companion) is matched in history with the famous Godolphin Arabian, bred by Francis Godolphin from the mid-1730s.

The Pengersick legend’s parallel with Faustian theme is noted in 1880 by *Penzance Natural History and Antiquarian Society* member, the rev. W.S. Lach-Szyrna,²⁵⁷ later presented to visitors at Pengersick Castle,²⁵⁸ postulating John Milliton as most likely inspiration for ‘Enchanter’.²⁵⁹ Yet the final details, of ultimate destruction by fire through experiment gone wrong, fit more accurately the era of Nicholas and John Hals as final owners-in-residence, offering insights into the building’s subsequent derelict state, as portrayed in the Buck Brothers 1734 engraved print. Whilst little is known of John Hals as last known resident, his father Nicholas Hals was himself an inventor, extremely wealthy, highly educated, and well-connected, active in the era of secret societies of learned men later forming the ‘Invisible College’ of ‘natural philosophers’ founded in 1660, as precursor to the Royal Society of London for Improving natural Knowledge established in 1663, now the Royal Society.²⁶⁰ Founding members included Christopher Wren, Robert Boyle, John Wilkins, and diarist John Evelyn, who was himself closely connected to the Godolphin family.²⁶¹ Fundamental to activities was the pursuit of learning through experimental observation, as the foundation of modern scientific method. Perhaps it is this that is recalled in the Pengersick legend, in the figure of ‘Enchanter’, devoted to his work, meeting his terrible end in an experiment gone wrong.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35., para.5.

²⁵⁷ See Lach-Szyrna, W.S., ‘Folk-Lore Traditions of Historical Events’ in *The Folk-lore record*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1880), pp. 157-168 (Taylor & Francis, Ltd.).

²⁵⁸ Lach-Szyrna’s handwritten notes, prepared ahead of these talks, are held at Penlee House and Gallery in Penzance, as ‘Lach-Szyrna, W.S., Notes on the Lord of Pengersic’ (PEZPH: 1989.519).

²⁵⁹ As further detailed in Lach-Szyrna, ‘Would not go back to the netherworld’, *Cornish Notes & Queries (first Series)*, (Elliot Stock, 1906), pp.196-7.

²⁶⁰ See ‘History of the Royal Society’, The Royal Society [online] <https://royalsociety.org/about-us/history/> [Accessed: 20/03.2018].

²⁶¹ John Evelyn (1620-1706) was an English writer, gardener, and diarist, developing a special friendship with Margaret Blagge, wife of Sydney, first Earl of Godolphin (father of Francis, of Godolphin Arabian fame). His diary, documenting events from 1640-1706, was published in 1818 (see Bedoyer, G., (Ed) *The Diary of John Evelyn*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). He wrote a (highly sentimental) memoir documenting Margaret Blagg’s (see).

Chapter 6) Praa Sands: Place Name meaning: A Theory.

A possible explanation for the meaning behind the place name Praa Sands – hags or witch’s cove – can be found in the Pengersick legend. For here there are three female witches; the Lady Godolphin, the witch of Fraddam, and her niece Venna; all potential candidates as the woman behind this local place name. But which witch?

First contender is the witch of Fraddam. Entering the narrative as Lady Godolphin’s accomplice, she is mentioned a mere three times in Bottrell’s lengthy saga.²⁶² Robert Hunt offers greater detail in his separate tale, ‘Pengerswick the Enchanter and the Witch of Fraddam’.²⁶³ Here, she meets her end at the hands of the Enchanter – not at Praa Sands but at Kynance Cove on the Lizard Peninsula, twenty miles away.²⁶⁴

Next option is this witch of Fraddam’s niece Venna / Bitha.²⁶⁵ Her demise is recorded by both Bottrell and Hunt. Both locate events at St. Hilary, ten miles inland north-west of Praa sands.²⁶⁶ Hunt has her suffering the bad effects of her own poisons,²⁶⁷ while Bottrell sees her deliberately killed by villagers as punishment for her bad magic; rumoured to prolong her own life by sucking the life force from small children and animals, she is feared and despised by neighbours, who one day take it upon themselves to trap her inside her own home, nailing the doors and blocking the chimney so that she chokes from the fumes of her own hearth-fire.²⁶⁸

This leaves Lady Godolphin as most likely candidate. Wealthy heiress, married to the morose old Pengersec, she devotes much time and effort in repeatedly-failed attempts to entrap stepson Marec’s affections and kill her husband, casting spells and brewing love-potions and poisons with her two female companions before resorting to desperate lies and malicious deception. Bottrell and Hunt each give a separate account of her eventual end, citing events specifically in the vicinity of Pengersick.

²⁶² In Bottrell, W., *Ibid.*, p. 254., para.7., also p. 255., para.3, and p. 256., para.6.

²⁶³ In Hunt, R., *Popular Romances, second series*, pp. 90-92.

²⁶⁴ See Appendix 1.ii) Map, Kynance Cove location.

²⁶⁵ Venna (Bottrell) and Bitha (Hunt) are two Cornish words; *Ven* a noun meaning ‘woman’, ‘stone’, ‘strong’, or the verb ‘to be’, and *bith* (*byth*) meaning ‘ever’ or ‘always’, implying constant presence.

²⁶⁶ See Appendix 1.ii) Map, St. Hilary location.

²⁶⁷ In Hunt, R., *Ibid.*, p.86., para.2.

²⁶⁸ In Bottrell, W., *Traditions, second series*, pp. 266., para.5.-267., para.1. .

Bottrell has her locked in a dungeon at the midpoint of his legend, as punishment for her plans to dispose of stepson Marec.²⁶⁹ Subsequently released by ‘her people’ she becomes covered with serpent-like scales, assumed to be from the effects of her own poisons, and because of this is ‘*shut up, as a loathsome object in a darkened room of Godolphin*’.²⁷⁰ There she remains until Marec returns from overseas, but soon after this ‘*fretted herself to death*’, and her ghost returns immediately to haunt Pengersick Castle, hovering around rooms that were once hers; continuing to do so even after Marec (now Lord) has that part of the building demolished.²⁷¹ Desperate to be rid of her, it is here that he first applies his newly acquired magic skills, when:

‘... by his enchantment, he confined her to the hole in the headland,
west of Pengersec Cove, called the How,
and compelled her to assume the form of an uncommonly large adder,
in which shape she is still occasionally seen there,
if what people of that neighbourhood say, be true’.²⁷²

Here, this Lady Godolphin is revealed as most likely candidate for the woman behind this local place name; banished by magic to this headland ‘hole’ on the beach later renamed as hags (or witch’s) cove.²⁷³ Robert Hunt tells this tale similarly yet differently, placing her as ‘*shut up her chamber*’ at the time of her stepson’s return, disfigured with serpent-like scales assumed to be caused by her own poisons, attributing her death to suicide (casting herself into the sea) with no mention of any return to haunt Pengersick Castle; no exorcism by magic; no ‘hole in the headland’.²⁷⁴ Despite these differences, both writers state the same key detail; of a Godolphin lady as widow and stepmother, shut away in a darkened room of Godolphin house due to her snake-skin disfigurement, dying shortly after her stepson’s return from his travels abroad. Both implicate the nearby beach (hag’s / witch’s cove) as her end location.

What, exactly, is to be made of this particular tale?

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 261., para.3., lns.11-13.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 261., para.5.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 264., para.5.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 264., para.6.

²⁷³ This theory was originally postulated by dissertation author (under previous name) in 2003. See Wiseman, L., ‘Praa Sands’ in *The Cornwall Review*, May 2003, p11.

²⁷⁴ In Hunt, R., *Popular Romances, second series*, p.86., para.1.

Again, there are plausible explanations, again linking the oral-derived legend to the reality of historically documented events, with two potential matches for this ‘Lady Godolphin’ in Engrina Godolphin (wife of Henry Pengersick I) and their descendant Honor Godolphin (wife of William Milliton, c1534). Confirming either of these women as ‘witch may be difficult, yet the scaly skin suffered by their namesake character can be explained in real-life terms as the symptoms of leprosy (Hansen’s disease), a bacterial disease causing physical impairment and facial disfigurement including thickened, scaly skin.²⁷⁵ Now controlled by modern medicines, leprosy became a regular feature of medieval life, as endemic illness impacting all levels of society throughout the eleventh-fourteenth centuries.²⁷⁶ Thought to be brought over by returning pilgrims and Crusader knights,²⁷⁷ the cause and treatment of leprosy were misunderstood, with the only explanation at the time being ‘God’ leading to fear, prejudice, and association of moral sin.²⁷⁸ Containing the spread by separating sufferers away was the only solution; one such place being the Hospital of St. John in Helston. Originally founded by the lords of Killigrew at Menaclidgy, relocated to the Helston site c1250,²⁷⁹ this hospital has an unexpected link to Pengersick Castle, with the first Henry Pengersick in 1303 donating a parcel of his own Helston lands for the expansion of this hospital.²⁸⁰ This Henry was the son of Roger Pengersick and Cecily Killigrew, of that very same hospital-founding family.²⁸¹

Despite this clear parallel, and whilst the serpent-like skin can be equally explained in real-life terms, this Lady Godolphin character’s repute as a witch is not so easily verified. Tenuous links do, however, arise via an unexpected source, in the material structure of the two family homes, Godolphin House and Pengersick Castle.

²⁷⁵ The symptoms of leprosy are explained, with photographic illustration, in an information leaflet ‘Never Forgotten, Never Forsaken’ published by *The Leprosy Commission* (2003).

²⁷⁶ The socio-economic and cultural impact of leprosy is explored in ‘The Time of Leprosy: 11th to 14th century’, *Historic England* [Online] <<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/disability-history/1050-1485/time-of-leprosy/>> [Accessed: 05/03/2019].

²⁷⁷ In Clay, M.R., *The Medieval hospitals of England* (London: Methuen & Co., 1909), p. 36., para.2.

²⁷⁸ In Loudon, I., *Western Medicine: an illustrated guide* (London, Oxford University Press, 1997), p184.

²⁷⁹ In Miller, D. Rev., *The History of Helston Parish Church 1201-2001* (Helston: Brewers, 2001), p.5., para.3. Here the founding member is specifically named as layman Henry fitz-William (then lord of Killigrew in St. Tudy), most probably in 1220.

²⁸⁰ In Whetter, J., *Cornwall in the 13th Century* (St. Austell: Lyfrow Trelyspen. 1998), p. 179.

²⁸¹ In Evans, A., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 3., para.4.

First, Godolphin House, where, tucked away behind the fireplace of the first-floor drawing room is a tiny windowless room now used as storage space. An enclosed dark room, matching that described in the legend. Here, etched onto the walls are a number of geometric circular symbols recognisable as apotropaic marks, including the classic ‘daisy wheel’ and spiral shapes.²⁸² Apotropaic marks are frequently found in historic buildings. Usually inscribed into woodwork near entrance points such as doorways, windows and fireplaces, aiming to protect against witches and evil spirits, such marks remained in common use from early-medieval to nineteenth-century.²⁸³



Plate 13) Apotropaic ‘daisy wheel’ witch mark at Godolphin House.

Similarly at Pengersick Castle, where two ‘W’ shapes are carved into the outside lintel of the upper window.²⁸⁴ Archaeological assessment in 1997 assumes these marks to be name initials, postulating previous residents the two William Millitons or their predecessor William Worth as likely candidate,²⁸⁵ going on to negate this theory

²⁸² See Plate 13) Apotropaic ‘daisy wheel’ at Godolphin House (author’s own photographs, 2015).

²⁸³ See ‘What are Witch’s Marks?, *Historic England* [online] <<https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/features/discovering-witches-marks/what-are-witches-marks/>> [Accessed: 01/12/2019].

²⁸⁴ See Plate 14.i) dissertation author’s own photograph (2015), and Plate 14.ii) two ‘W’ marks carved into the stone lintel of Pengersick Castle’s upper window. In Morley, B., *Pengersick Castle Praa Sands, Cornwall: a report on its architectural significance* (Beric Morley, Bedfordshire, 1997), p. 20.

²⁸⁵ In Morley, *Ibid.*, p. 13., para.2., lns.5-8.

through conclusion of dates assessment, necessitating ‘some other explanation’.²⁸⁶ Not addressed in this assessment is the fact, that this explanation can be found in the style of the letters themselves. Formed not as single-sweeping ‘W’ but as double/overlapping ‘V’ creating the ‘W’ these assumed ‘name initials’ are typical of another style of apotropaic mark, being the Marian symbol of either ‘M’ for Mary or ‘VV’ meaning ‘virgin of virgins’, also used as protection against witchcraft.²⁸⁷



Plate 14i/ii) The two ‘W’ marks carved into the upper stone window lintel of Pengersick Castle.

Returning to Bottrell’s tale, the ‘uncommonly large black adder’ (this witch’s shapeshifting ghost) can also be explained, both in real-life and as folklore motif. Disease in traditional belief systems is commonly attributed to supernatural effects, often characterised as worm or serpent alternately presented as dragon.²⁸⁸ Folk traditions across the world celebrate the defeat of a serpent by a male hero – as is the theme here, with male Enchanter defeating female witch.²⁸⁹ Adders are common on the Cornish coast; usually grey with a distinctive zigzag streak they can also more rarely be black.²⁹⁰ It may be that an usually large, dark specimen was at some point seen in the vicinity, and, in the process of local gossip, became conflated with this witch and her serpent-like skin. There is, however, an alternative explanation behind this tale of Lady Godolphin as ghostly witch banished to this hole in the

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, *Ibid.*, p.13., para.2., lns.8-15., and p. 14., para.5., lns.4-5.

²⁸⁷ See ‘Protection marks’, *Apotropaicos* [online] <<http://www.apotropaicos.co.uk/protection-marks.html>> [Accessed: 20/11/2019].

²⁸⁸ In Alexander, M., *The Sutton Companion to British Folklore*, p. 325 (worm, alternately wyrm), and Mathews, J., and Mathews, C., *British & Irish Mythology* (London: Diamond Books, 1995), p., 63 (dragon), and p. 164 (worm).

²⁸⁹ In Alexander, M., *Ibid.*, pp. 253-4., and Mathews & Mathews., *Ibid.*, p. 81.

²⁹⁰ See ‘Adder’ *Cornwall Wildlife Trust* [Online] <<https://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/wildlife-explorer/reptiles/adder>> [Accessed: 01/10/2019].

headland (rumoured to be still seen in the late-1800s) and for this a further exploration of Praa Sands beach is required, heading right to the far western end, where a ‘hole in the headland’ can indeed be found, in the form of a small cave accessible only when the tide is out.²⁹¹ Innocuous as it may appear, this cave marks the entrance to a tunnel leading up from the beach, tracking over a mile underground to emerge in the grounds of Pengersick Castle. Now blocked, largely collapsed and in parts deliberately filled in, this tunnel was reputedly used to transport contraband goods up from the beach to be hidden in the derelict tower of Pengersick, during Cornwall’s much fabled ‘golden age’ of smuggling and wrecking.²⁹²



Plate 15) Praa Sands beach, western end, with ‘hole in headland’ cave circled.

Smuggling (the illegal transport and sale of goods, to avoid the payment of tax) and wrecking (removal of goods from wrecked ships, for personal use or private sale) are integral to Cornwall’s history, as caricatured in the image of seventeenth-eighteenth century smuggler concealing barrels of brandy under false floors hidden beneath the day’s pilchard-catch, to be stowed in trap-doored cellars and remote church towers awaiting distribution inland, under cover of night. Long before this, smuggling as organised activity dates back to the thirteenth-century, with the surreptitious export of essential commodities such as wool and animal hides (smuggling items *out* of, rather than into the country) in rebellion against a newly established National Customs System.²⁹³ Wrecking arose as natural side-hustle, taking advantage of the

²⁹¹ See plate 15) Praa Sands beach, eastern end, with cave entrance circled. (Dissertation author’s own photograph, 2003).

²⁹² This ‘subterranean passage’ as smuggler’s refuge is referenced by W.B. Forfar in the preface to his 1862 novel *Pengersick Castle: A Cornish Tale*, p. v.. Cornwall’s smuggling history and heritage is detailed in Hamilton Jenkins, A.K., *Cornwall and its People; being a new impression of the composite work including Cornwall Seafarers*, 1932, *Cornwall and the Cornish*, 1933, *Cornish Homes and Customs*, 1934 (Newton Abbot: David & Charles Ltd. 1945), pp. 2-42., also in Hippisley-Coxe, A. D., *A Book About Smuggling in the West Country 1700-1850* (Padstow: Tabb House, 1984), pp. 1-12.

²⁹³ In Hippisley-Coxe, A. D. *IA Book About Smuggling* (1984), p. 1., para.1.

numerous ships laden with valuable cargo, crashing in various states of destruction onto beaches and rocks of Cornwall's hazardous coastline.²⁹⁴ Landowning merchants were at the centre of both activities, exploiting wealth and status to organise, fund and manage activities; avoiding punishment whilst making a tax-free profit. The Pengersicks and Millions were no exception, with Henry Pengersick I and brother William (1301 'merchant by land and sea') convicted of carrying goods away from a wreck in 1328 and 1331 (together with Henry and third brother Hervey), and again in 1335. Three centuries later, descendent John Million continued this habit as one of three prominent gentry charged with removing goods from the wreck of Portuguese carrack, the St. Anthony, grounded on the beach at Gunwalloe during a storm on the night of fifteenth January 1527.²⁹⁵ Two centuries later, the derelict tower became childhood training ground for eighteenth-century smuggling dynasty, the Carter brothers of nearby Prussia Cove.²⁹⁶ While these names stand out as particularly significant, smuggling and wrecking employed entire communities, from boatbuilders and fishermen to basket-weavers and barrel-makers, carters, farmers and all of their wives, and children, even clergy-men and, most significantly, the mining and drilling expertise of miners, creating tunnels such as this one here at Praa Sands.

With this in mind, it is possible that these stories – at least, in part - were deliberately fabricated as a means of keeping inquisitive outsiders away from the western end of the beach and Pengersick Castle itself, thus protecting illicit activities within.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁴ Cornwall's wrecking history is details in Pearce, C.J., *Cornish Wrecking 1700-1860: reality and popular myth* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell press [an imprint of Boydell Press], 2010).

²⁹⁵ See Appendix 1.i) Map, Gunwalloe location. The St. Anthony belonged to King John III of Portugal and carried a cargo worth at the time an estimated £18,000. A long process of litigation followed under direction of Henry VIII, but the goods were never fully returned, with all three men (Milliton, Godolphin, St. Aubin) renovating their family homes on the proceeds. In Hamilton Jenkins, A.K., *Cornwall and its People*, p. 46, and Pearce, C.J., *Cornish Wrecking*, p. 55., para.3.-p. p. 56, para., 1. The wreck site itself was discovered in 1981. See Randall, T., 'A Castle and a Carrack' in *Nautical Archaeology* (2005.3), pp. 7-8. For wreck site location see 'St. Anthony' Wrecks, UK Diving [online] <<http://www.ukdiving.co.uk/wrecks/wreck.php?id=318>> [Accessed 20/05/2020].

²⁹⁶ In Noall, C., *Smuggling in Cornwall* (Truro: Bradford Barton, 1971), p. 42., para.2.-p. 46., para.2., also Carter, H., *Autobiography of a Cornish Smuggler, 1749-1809* (Truro: Cornwall, D. Bradford Barton, 1971) (Harry Carter's account of his own life, first published 1894), .

²⁹⁷ As noted in Addicoat, I. & Buswell, G., pp.34-5.

Conclusion

Analysis of the oral-derived tales relating to Pengersick Castle, as preserved by Victorian folklorists William Bottrell and Robert Hunt, reveals a complex intertextuality evolved through centuries of retelling prior to their being eventually written down. Of a total six, only one is here analysed in detail; William Bottrell's primary narrative, his 1873 'A Legend of Pengersec'.²⁹⁸ Story content is wide and varied, and for the purpose of this dissertation has been edited into two main threads; the story of father and son Pengersec and Marec, and that of Lady Godolphin and her two female accomplices as witchcraft trio. Separated for analysis, these two threads encompass Pengersick Castle's entire history, revealing overlaps between folkloric theme and genuine happenings, along with details not recorded elsewhere, hinting at aspects of history omitted from formal record yet remembered here, in local legend. Furthermore, these stories encompass aspects from wider-world literature; Middle English Romance verses King Horn and Bevis of Hampton, Arthurian myth and Faustian theme, with the main protagonists Pengersec and Marec / Pengersick the Enchanter fitting the classic image of medieval Crusader knight turned Renaissance Alchemist. Elements of Celtic myth also feature, overlaid with Victorian edit.

The history of Pengersick Castle, as formally documented, is primarily a story of men. The military accomplishments, political climb, and financial hustle of titled landowners exploiting personal privilege as knighted lords, with warfare as ultimate accolade. Women feature merely as chattel transferring wealth and status from one important man to the next, as daughters, wives, and mothers documented only in relation to men, via the sparse details of birth, marriage, motherhood, and death. The associated folklore of Pengersick Castle, on first impression, appears the same. Here again are the stories of men; young adventurer Pengersec, journeying east on pilgrim quest to join the Crusades; his son Marec, last lord of Pengersick, rejecting tradition in pursuit of new vocation as maverick Enchanter. Likewise, the less obvious heroes; foster-brother Uter the ever-faithful companion, and half-brother Arluth, rightful king bringing peace to a long-troubled land – overseen by the trusty Ship's Captain, as confidante and guide. Women feature in the stories as mere accessory or problem to be solved; the princess and Helston wife; both are freely used, abused,

²⁹⁸ In Bottrell, W., *Traditions, second series*, pp. 251-67.

and discarded by Pengersec as the birthing vessels of Arluth and Marec. Similarly the Lady Godolphin and her accomplices, the witch of Fraddam and niece Venna / Bitha. Derided as conspiratorial witches, their female powers are ‘evil’ whilst male Enchanter is respected and admired – yet both parties practice similar ‘magic’, harnessing the medical power of plants concocting ‘potions and poisons’ (female witchcraft) and ‘elixir’ (Enchanter’s sorcery). These themes reflect long-established patriarchal bias, rooted in religious doctrine. Reinterpreted under feminist perspective, these female characters become powerful in their own right. The princess, as political bargaining tool, is left destitute through her ill-fated romance with Pengersec; not merely rejected but physically disposed of; and yet, rather than simply fade, leaving her abuser unpunished, she returns as avenging ghost, causing his downfall whilst guiding their son to his destiny. The Helston lady does not fare so well; insignificant as wife and mother, she conveniently dies when no longer needed. Superseding them all, is the Lady Godolphin, navigating societal constraints to maintain personal power in collaboration with like-minded female friends. Similarly traded as marriage chattel, she acquiesces to financial security in exchange for relative freedom, maintaining personal power; succumbing eventually to her male nemesis as the witch at the heart of local place name, Praa Sands.

Beneath all of this is the Enchanter himself, and the mystery of Pengersick Castle’s abandonment to ruin. While the Pengersick legend clearly encompasses the entire Pengersick-Milliton history from post-Norman beginnings to sixteenth-century end, it is final owners-in-residence Nicholas and John Hals who offer answers here. This dissertation makes opens only a tiny window into this forgotten era of Pengersick Castle’s past, serving as pointer towards future research. The 1998 archaeological report acknowledges the need for ‘further archaeological research [to] help resolve certain historical problems’ and ‘continued historical research into the family history [including] the period after the Millitons became extinct’.²⁹⁹ This same report dismisses the local legends as potential resource.³⁰⁰ Yet is here, in these ‘wild and mysterious stories’ that the known history of Pengersick is confirmed, and its forgotten secrets revealed.

²⁹⁹ In Herring, P., et al., *Pengersick Castle*, p. 20, 3.0, para.3., ln1., and para.4., lns.2-3.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.18, para.2., lns.4-5., ‘It is difficult to imagine we will ever be able to extract any underlying historic truths from [these wild and mysterious stories]’.

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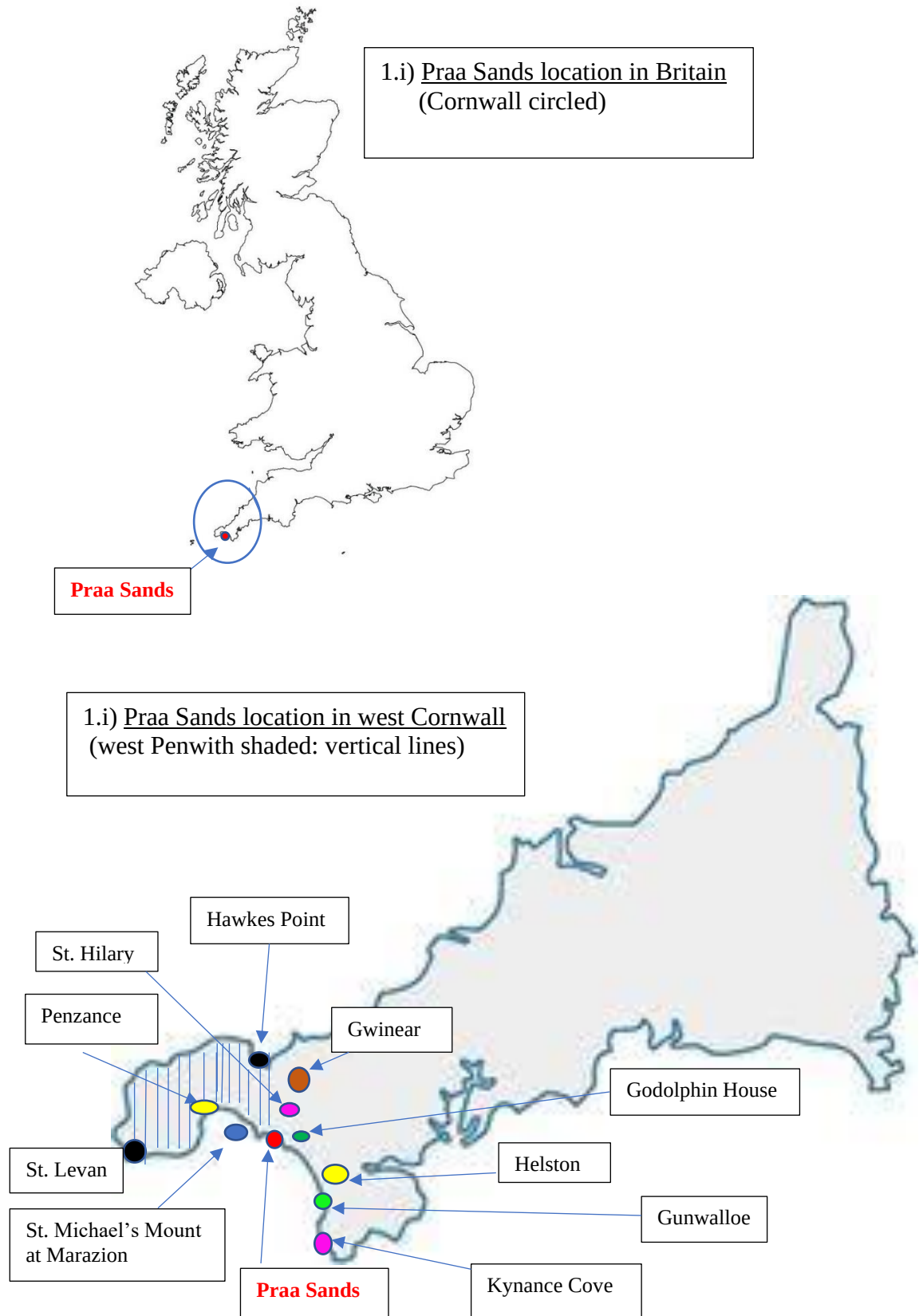
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Appendix 1.i/ii) Maps. Praa Sands and related locations.



1)

Proverb: *Feare authority / Live uprightly* (Advocating loyalty to the king).

Painting: A king dressed in rich clothing coming from a palace, preceded by soldiers carrying a variety of spears. The arched entrance portico from which the king proceeds, with a carved head in the centre held up by female caryatide pillars.

Poem:
*As God in heaven by power and right
Beareth all rule and divine majesty,
So here in earth has appointed right
Prices us to govern and we to obey.
For if we be found to them unjust
We live or die even as they wish.*

2)

Proverb: *Officers true and faithful / Ease the minds of Prince and Parliament* (The happiness of a kingdom is achieved by loyal ministers faithful to their king).

Painting: Shepherd with crook, lying down to sleep whilst sheep drink from a brook.

Poem:
*Even as the shepherd softly may,
And quietly, lie down to sleep
That his watchful dog always
His flock safely for to keep;
So may the prince rest easy then
Under whom serveth faithful men.*

3)

Proverb: *The friendship of the Dolphin / is likened to a Loving king* (perhaps a reference to the relationship between the two families, Milliton and Godolphin).

Painting: Gilded dolphin entwined around an anchor; in the distance a ship sailing through rough ocean.

Poem:
*The sailor tossed with bois'rous wind
Do cast their anchors down at last,
Which the dolphin, to them most kind,
Does clasp about hold it fast,
Such anchor-hold a prince should be
To his subjects in misery.*

³⁰¹ Compiled from Herring, P., et al. *Pengersick Castle.*, p. 29, para.6.-p. 30., para.4., & App.4.

4)

Proverb: *Man to God thy Promise / See you fulfil without miss.*

Painting: A gentleman giving his right hand to a lady dressed in black queen of scot's gown with red sleeves and petticoat.

Poem:
*When marriage was made for virtue and love
There was no divorce God's knot to remove,
But now are many people fallen to lust
That they do break God's most just.
Wherefore unto all such let this be sufficient
To keep God's law for fear of His punishment.
In the burning lake where there is most awful torment.*

5)

Proverb: *The one needeth of / The other's Help* (People need to help each other).

Painting: a blind man carrying a lame man on his back.

Poem:
*The lame who cannot move or go
Is borne upon he blond man's back,
So mutually between the two
One supplies what the other lacks.
The blond t lame does lend his might,
The lame to blind does give his sight.*

6)

Proverb: this side noted as '*catera desunt*' ie. Missing / *gose his purpose* (He who succeeds never forgets his purpose).

Painting: Water falling from a height onto rock below, several people dressed in Tudor fashion stood by watching.

Poem:
*What thing is harder than rock?
What softer is than water clear?
Yet will the same with constant drop
The hard rock pierce as does appear.
Even so, nothing so hard to attain
But may be had with labour and pain.*

7)

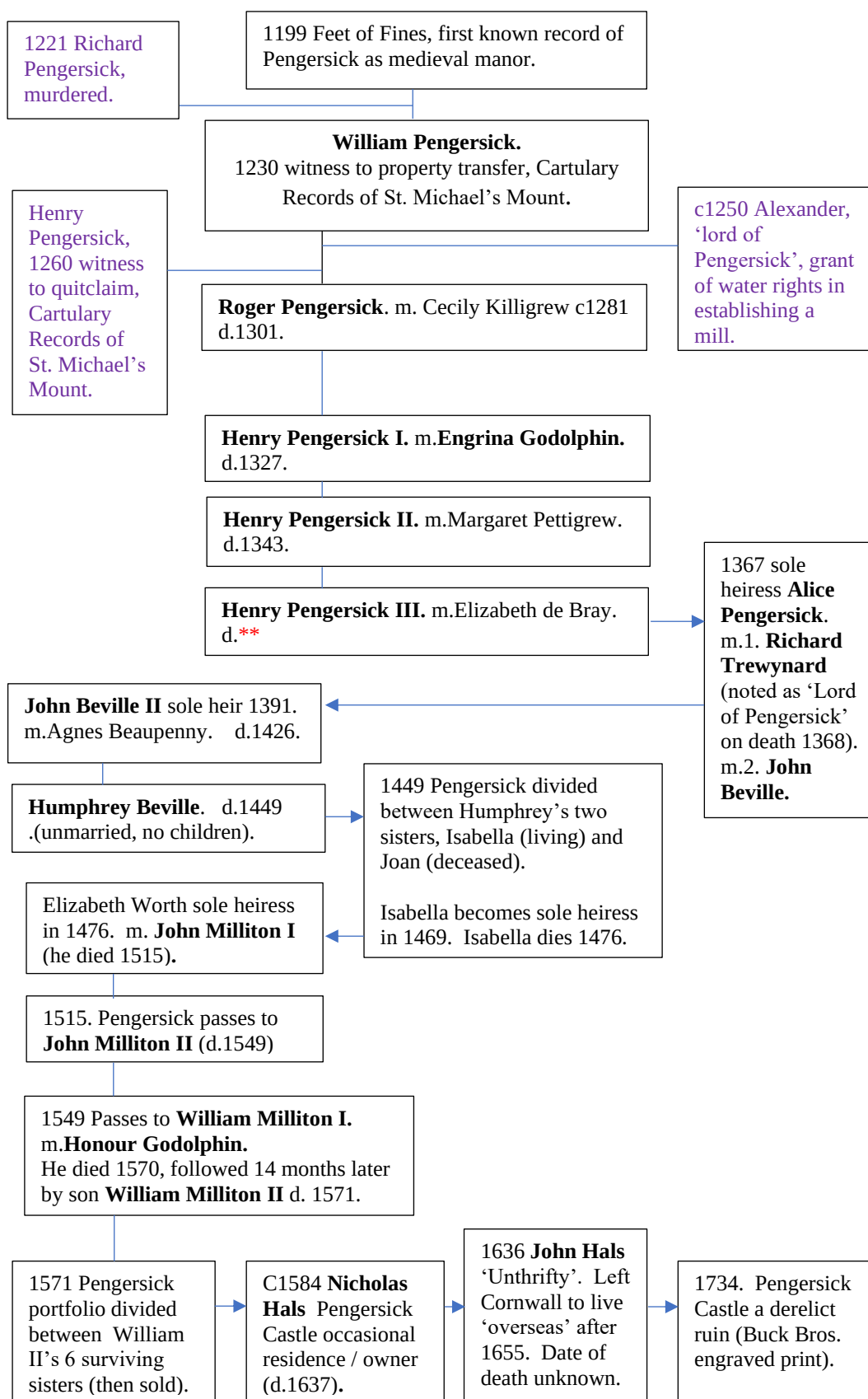
Proverb: *He that to himself is unkind / Can to no other be a good friend* (The nature of a miser).

Painting: an ass (donkey) laden with plenty yet eating the poor grass and thistles of the field.

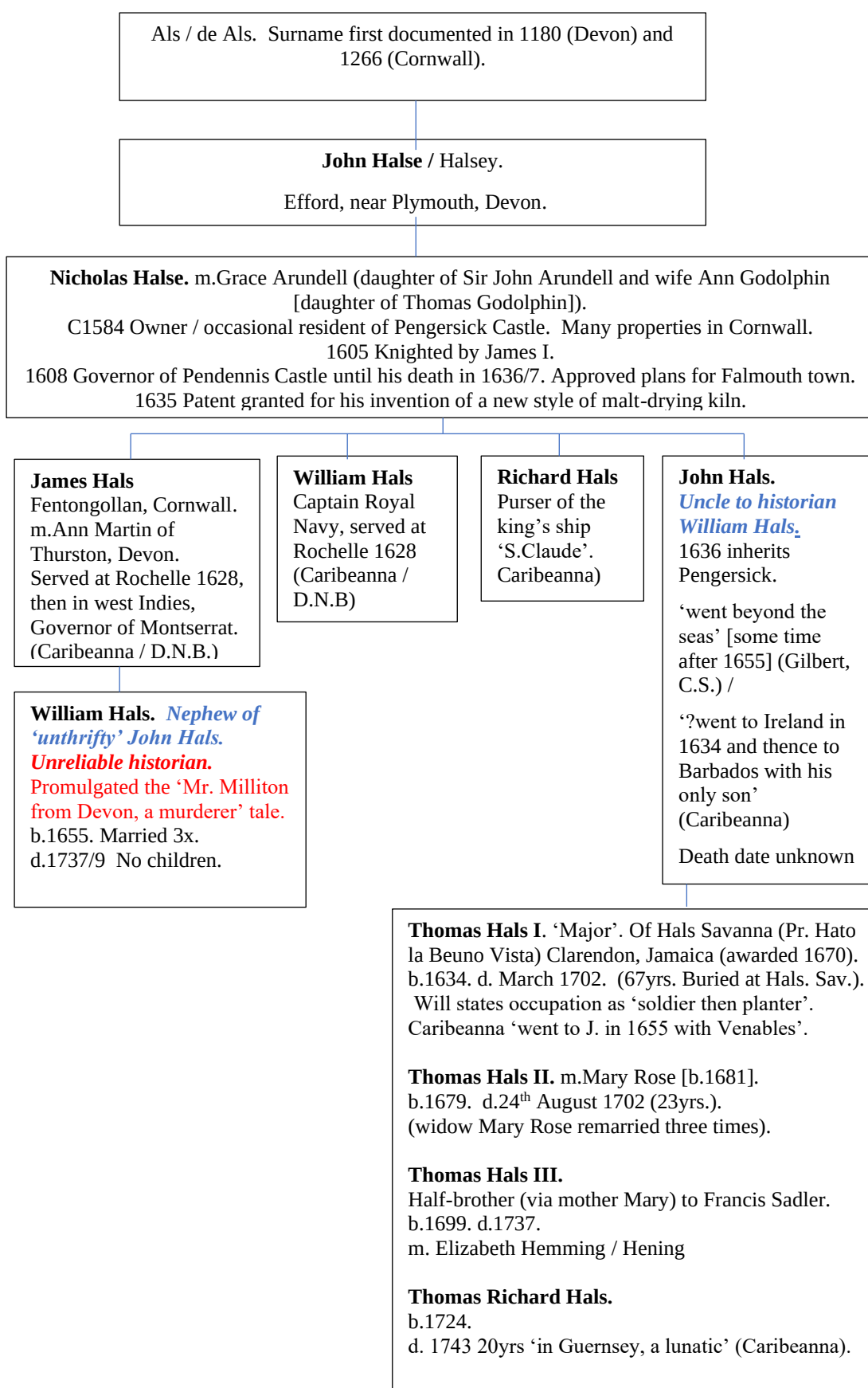
Poem:

*Behold the ass which is laden is
With riches plenty, and with meat,
And yet from it no pleasure has
But thistles hard and rough to eat.
In like cases is the wealthy man
Who does live as meanly as he can.*

Appendix 3) Pengersick-Milliton-Hals / inheritance-sale-demise 1199-1734.



Appendix 4) Hals family descent



Pengersec / last lord's father / old lord. Opens Bottrell's tale, as penultimate hereditary lord. Name changes reflect shifts in circumstance. Travels east overseas, fights in various wars, juggles illicit romance and dutiful marriage; ultimately causing the deaths of both women. Steals the princess's enchanted sword (property of her father), misusing and later losing its powers. Initially courageous, he declines into a lesser version of his previous unstoppable self through a curse imposed by the princess. Features in Hunt's version as 'the first Pengerswick', with none of Bottrell's elaborate story detail.

Marec/ last lord / Enchanter. Son of Pengersec, destined to be the last lord. Name changes reflect shifts in circumstance. Raised by foster-parents, goes on to reject inherited duty, pursuing an entirely new vocation studying magic in the east before returning to reclaim his ancestral home; becoming known as Enchanter, practitioner of magic both good and bad. Lives an unusually long life. Dies in a fire destroying his home and all in it. Named by Hunt only as 'Lord of Pengerswick' / 'Enchanter'.

Marec's wife. 'Saracen'. Equally skilled in magic, often putting right his mistakes. Uter marries her maid. The four arrive together from the east.
Helston Lady. Wife of Pengersec. Mother of Marec. Dies as a result of her husband's 'cruel treatment'. Absent from Hunt's version.

Easter Princess. Destined to be queen. Betrothed to a prince. Loses everything through her relationship with Pengersec. Dies at his hands after giving birth to a secret son (Arluth). Returns to haunt Pengersick as a white hare, doe, and bird, avenging her own death whilst guiding her son to his destiny as rightful leader of her land.

Arluth. Secret son of Pengersec and the princess. Raised in secret, unaware of his own true identity, later to be revealed through the discovery of her sword (long lost, retrieved from inside a rock). Absent from Hunt's versions.

Ship's Captain. Merchant seaman, travelling between Cornwall and the east. Raises Arluth in secret, revealing his true identity when the time is right. Guides Arluth and Marec to achieve the destinies.

Uter. Foster-brother, faithful servant, magician's assistant. Omitted by Hunt.

Lady Godolphin. Wealthy heiress, renowned witch, working with two others as classic female trio. Aspires to marry Marec; settles instead for his elderly father. Plots against both with magic. Her end fate is delivered by Enchanter's magic.

Witch of Fraddam. Accomplice to Lady Godolphin. Meets her end at the hands of Marec as Enchanter.

Venna (Bitha). The Witch of Fraddam's niece, youngest in trio.

Welsh Prince / Dark Stranger. Implicated (by both writers) in the fire that destroys Pengersick Castle, bringing the Enchanter and his magic to an end.