

Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru
Royal Commission
on the
Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales



Cwarel Uchaf, Creuddyn Bridge

County: Ceredigion
Community: Llanfihangel Ystrad
NGR: SN 56670 54092
NPRN: 419199
Cadw Listing: 17441, Grade II
Date of Survey: 9th July 2013
Surveyed by: Ross Cook & Geoff Ward
Report Author: Ross Cook
Illustrations: Ross Cook

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Cwarel Uchaf, Creuddyn Bridge, Ceredigion

Summary

Originating in the early 19th century, Cwarel Uchaf represents a rare survival of a once common form of dwelling in Ceredigion, but with an unusual feature in the form of a central gable doorway. Situated on a minor junction between the carriageway and farm track, the cottage is located above the quarry, from which it draws its name. The building was recorded in July 2013 to create a full record of its fabric and structure amidst a project to modernise the property.

Historical Background

Although there is little to suggest an exact date, the Llanfihangel Ystrad tithe map of 1843 displays the cottage at the entrance to Cilerwysg, then spelt Kilerwisk, when it was rented by the Owens family. The form of the property in conjunction with the tithe map indicates a construction date somewhere in the early 19th century. The location and name of the property suggest that it is linked with the quarry that lays directly in front of the cottage as displayed on the Ordnance Survey 25 inch to 1 mile map of 1888 (see appendix Fig. 1); *Cwar – quarry*. Local knowledge tells us that Cwarel Uchaf later became a farm

labourer's cottage then a smallholding, before becoming derelict in the late 20th century. In 2012 Cwarel Uchaf was bought with the intent of renovation, which has been focusing on consolidating the stonework to secure the overall structure before being 'modernised'.

Objective

The objective of the survey is to investigate Uchaf to produce drawn, photographic and written records to help aid our understanding of the Ceredigion Cottage and its development.

Acknowledgements and Methodology

Thank you to the owner of Cwarel Uchaf for allowing the RCAHMW unimpeded access to the cottage to make a full and detailed survey.

Historic Building Record – This comprised of an interior and exterior examination of the dwelling, with photographic, written and measured records being produced:

Measured Survey - A digital metric survey was undertaken by Ross Cook on 9th July 2013 using a Leica TCR407 Power Total Station, TheoLT and AutoCAD. Digital survey data was taken at 1:1 in scale and saved in an AutoCAD DWG format. A measured survey for the section was undertaken by Geoff Ward on the same day, using tape and rule.

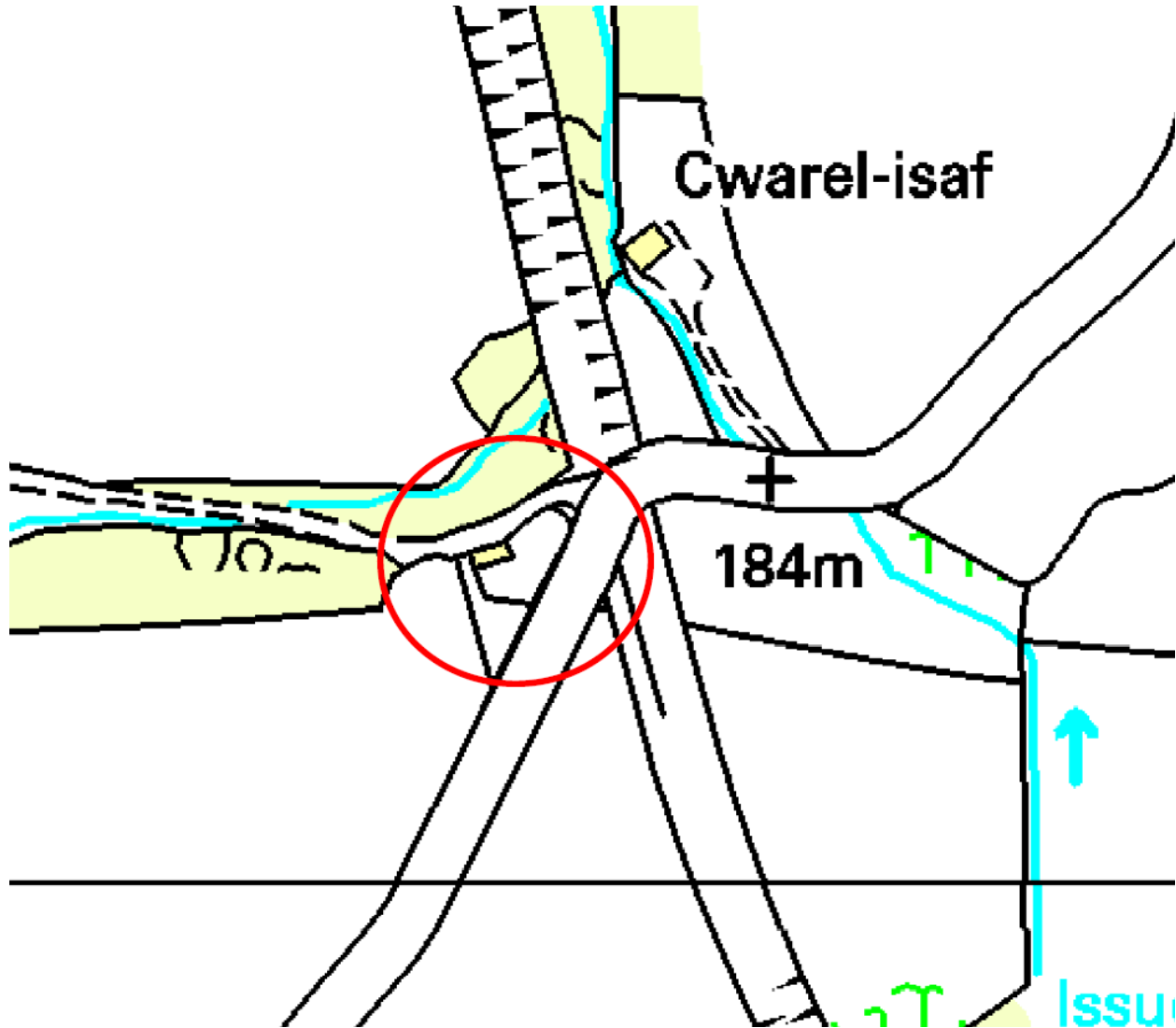
Drawn Record - Plan and section were produced from the survey data using AutoCAD 2011, remaining at a scale of 1:1, but with recommended print scales of; Section 1:50 at A4; Plan 1:100 at A4. Both are saved in an AutoCAD DWG and DXF format for archiving, with .pdf being made available for Coflein.

Photographic Survey – Comprises of a series of high resolution digital exterior and interior photographs taken using a Canon Eos 450D 12.2MP SLR. Photographs includes both general and detailed. All photographs have been submitted for archived with the RCAHMW, detailing view, angle and photographer.

Written Record – The written record has been produced to accompany the Drawn Record and Photographic Survey, to interpret the data and provide an understanding of Cwarel Uchaf through its phases and development.

Site Description

Cwarel Uchaf occupies an isolated site on the junction between the highway and a farm track about 1.5 miles north-east of Creuddyn Bridge and the A482, being centred on SN 56670 54092; see below and Appendix Fig 3. The site sits alongside the former railway line between Lampeter and Aberaeron, and next to the Nant Wysg, a tributary of the Afon Aeron. Cwarel Uchaf is Grade II listed for its regional character and can be found in the RCAHMW database, NPRN 412199. The cottage sits at the top of a site once used as limestone quarry, which gave the cottage its name.



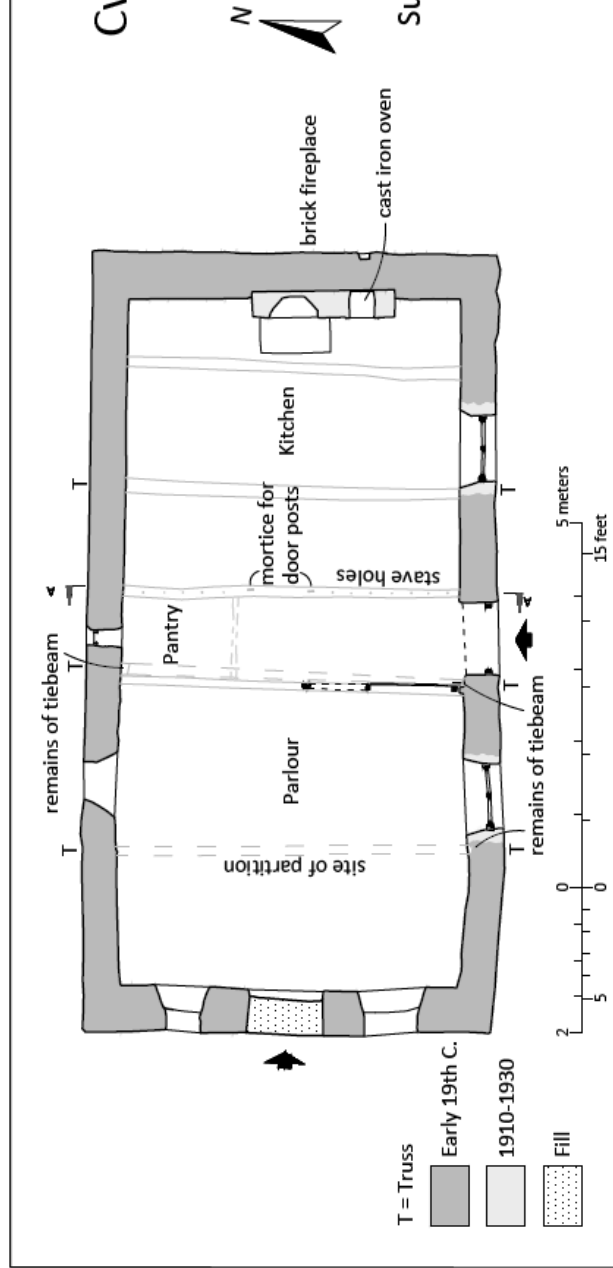
Ordnance Survey Raster Map
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Cwarel Uchaf Cottage, Creuddyn Bridge

Floor Plan
 NPRN: 419199
 NGR: SN 56670 54092
 Survey: Ross Cook, 9th July 2013
 Print Scale 1:100 at A4



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Cwarel Uchaf Cottage, Creuddyn Bridge

Section A-A

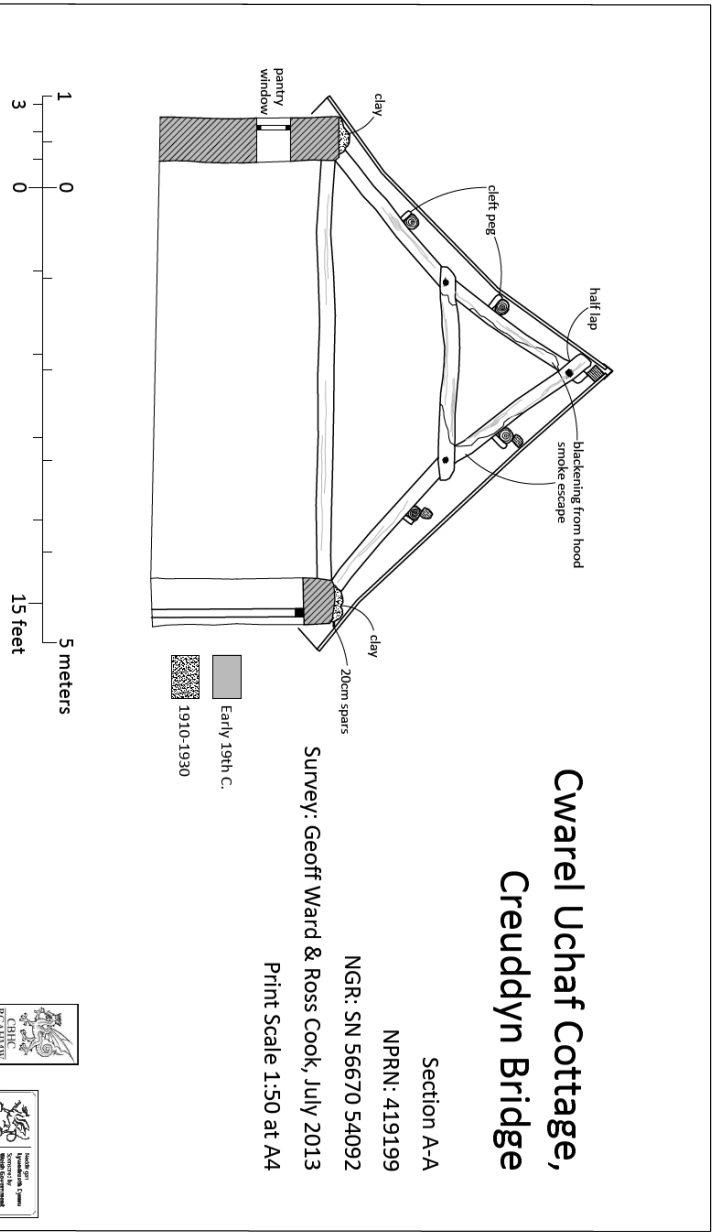
NPRN: 419199

NGR: SN 56670 54092

Survey: Geoff Ward & Ross Cook, July 2013

Print Scale 1:50 at A4

Early 19th C.
1910-1930



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Overview

Cwarel Uchaf comprises two main phases; Phase I, being the initial phase of the cottages construction, of the early 19th century; and Phase II, which saw the modernisation of the cottage in the early 20th century with the addition of the brick fireplace, enlargement of the windows and the possible blocking of the gable doorway.

Exterior

The cottage lays on an east-west alignment with its main elevation fronting onto a farm road to the north. Recently the cottage has been undergoing major consolidation and restoration work to make the cottage habitable once again, which has led to large parts of the exterior being repointed and rendered with lime based mixes.

North Elevation (10.67m) - this holds the main entrance to the centre, with two split casement windows to either side; in its current condition both the windows and doorway have rendered surrounds, which have been historically lime washed. The eaves hang low over the front of the house, affording weathering protection to the lime work. The wall to the west of the entrance shows clear signs of movement, with the uppermost parts of the wall curving outwards; this is of minor concern as has not shown any signs of recent movement and appears to be the result of the historic removal of a former tie beam.



East Gable (5.54m) - has no other features other than the chimney and external soot marks, possibly caused by a bonfire; the gable has a distinct lean, probably caused by minor subsidence. The remains of a wall stand c. 3m east of the this gable, possibly the remains of an outhouse as shown on the Ordnance Survey 25 inch to 1 mile map of 1888; evidence suggests that it is part of a building as the stone is neatly coursed with lime mortar and does not extend beyond c. 1.5m in length.

South Elevation (10.71m) - has a window to the parlour with no frame remaining and a second, much smaller vented window to provide aeration to the pantry, which remains in situ. As with the north elevation the eaves project from the wall.

West Gable (5.55m) - unusually has a central doorway, now blocked, with a window to either side; the doorway is now only just visible due to recent building work covering this. The top of the gable is flat, providing evidence that this end of the building had a half-hipper roof.

The cottage is constructed of roughly coursed limestone with lime mortar and topped with a corrugated iron roof. Evidence remains in the eaves, which shows that Cwarel Uchaf was once thatched.

In 2012 the cottage and plot was sold for reuse as a dwelling; the subsequent work to the property has consolidated the external stonework through repointing and rendering.

Interior

Through the front door, the kitchen is to the right, the pantry straight ahead and the parlour is to the left. The interior displays enough evidence to show that it was once separated into five areas; passage, parlour, kitchen, pantry and an office/stable/store; however, the partition walls have been removed with the recent work to the cottage, with evidence for their location remaining in the concreted floor and on the tiebeams.

Kitchen (2.83 x 4.54m) - houses a stone chimney with red brick breast and fireplace with an inset cast iron bread oven, which reads 'No 11 Cambrian Oven 13'. It has a single double casement 4-light window, which looks out the front of the cottage and a door that links the kitchen to the passage. Remaining on the wall next to the window is a small brass and glass paraffin lamp. A replaced tiebeam spans the room and passes 60cm (2') in front of the chimney breast, a second tiebeam with truss spans between the kitchen and passage. A panelled partition once divided the kitchen from the passage at the tiebeam, but has been removed by recent building works.



Pantry - this was a small area, measuring 1.11 x 1.5m, with a door entering off the kitchen. A small window for ventilation in the rear wall remains in situ with part of its tin mesh remaining intact.

Parlour (4.14 x 4.69m) - originally divided from the passage by a panelled partition, of which part still remains. It has a double casement 4-light window to the front of the cottage and a single window, without frame, to the rear and two differing sized windows in the gable end. The gable end of the parlour has a blocked doorway in the centre. Evidence remains in the wall of a partition that once split this area into two separate rooms; a parlour (2.29 x 4.69m) and an office/cow house/store (1.84 x 4.81m).



Roof (see section) – two roof trusses remain, of a possible three, and are fabricated from hewn oak and pegged together with drawn oak pegs; two back purlins run the length of the cottage. The tops of the remaining trusses and purlins show signs of smoke-blackening. During the course of renovation works the oak underthatch has been removed and burnt, along with the remaining gorse and reed thatch. A number of thatch and thatch pegs remain in the top of the wall, a good indication of the original roofing material.





Periods and Dating

Cwarel Uchaf can be identified as having two phases, the first being the initial construction of the cottage and the second to make alterations, which formed the plan we see today.

Evidence remains in the kitchen to show that a wickerwork fireplace was once in situ where the redbrick now stands; a wooden lintel just under the stack of the chimney alludes to this, as does the tiebeam sitting immediately in front of the current breast, smoke blackening to the trusses provides further evidence for this; the tiebeam having previously supported the wickerwork hood; a common feature within cottages of Ceredigion (Smith 1988: 368-9). It is probable that the replacement of the wickerwork fireplace, blocking of the gable doorway, removal of the office/cow house/store partition wall and widening of the front windows happened within a phase of work in the early 20th century. Half-housing joints on the top of the tiebeam between the passage and kitchen suggest that this area was also floored over to create a crog loft around the same time the brick fireplace was inserted. By the second half of the 20th century the floor was concreted and a corrugated iron roof was installed over the remaining thatch.

Although precise dating is difficult the origins of Cwarel Uchaf probably lay in the early 19th century, with alterations taking place during the early and late 20th century.

Significance

A rare survival of a typical Ceredigion stone built cottage, retaining trusses and evidence of thatch. Further to this, Cwarel Uchaf is an unusual example of this form of dwelling, as the gable end is most

unusual and in scale the cottage is larger than most, possibly because the raw materials to construct it lay just forward of its location.

Bibliography and Sources

Smith, P. 1988. *Houses of the Welsh Countryside*, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. HMSO, United Kingdom

Cadw Listing 17441.

1843 Ceredigion Tithe maps. National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

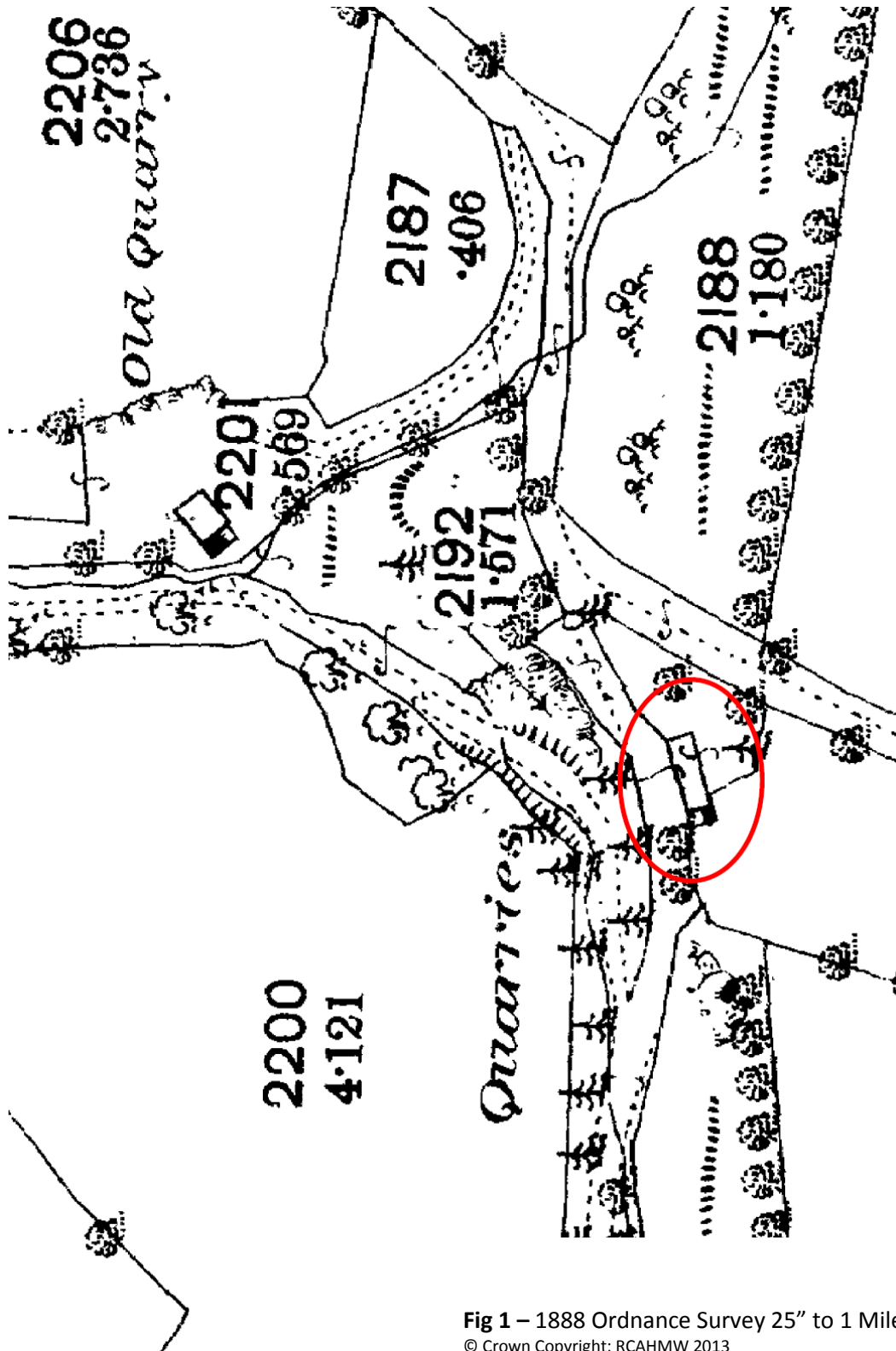


Fig 1 – 1888 Ordnance Survey 25" to 1 Mile Map
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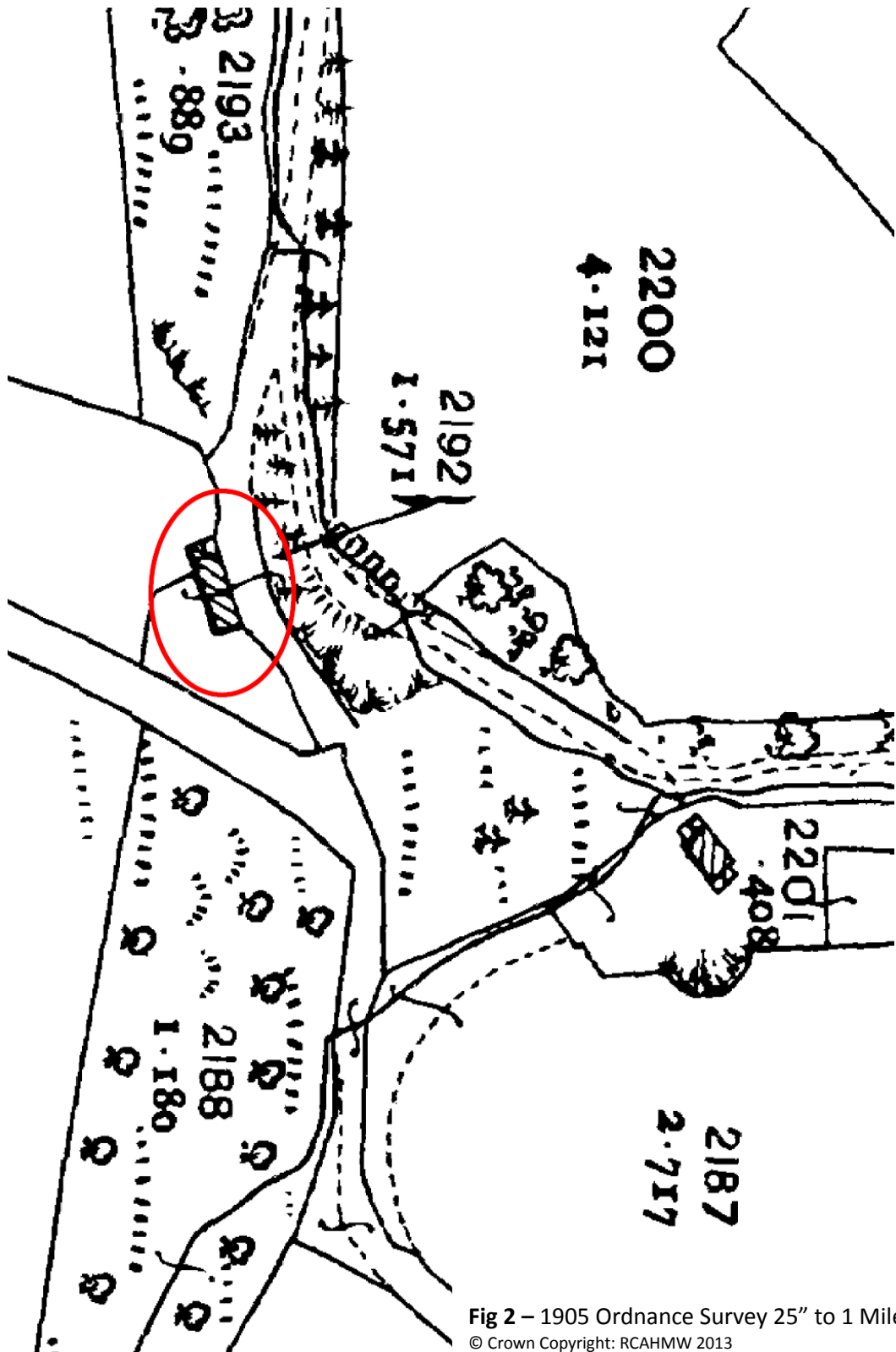


Fig 2 – 1905 Ordnance Survey 25" to 1 Mile Map
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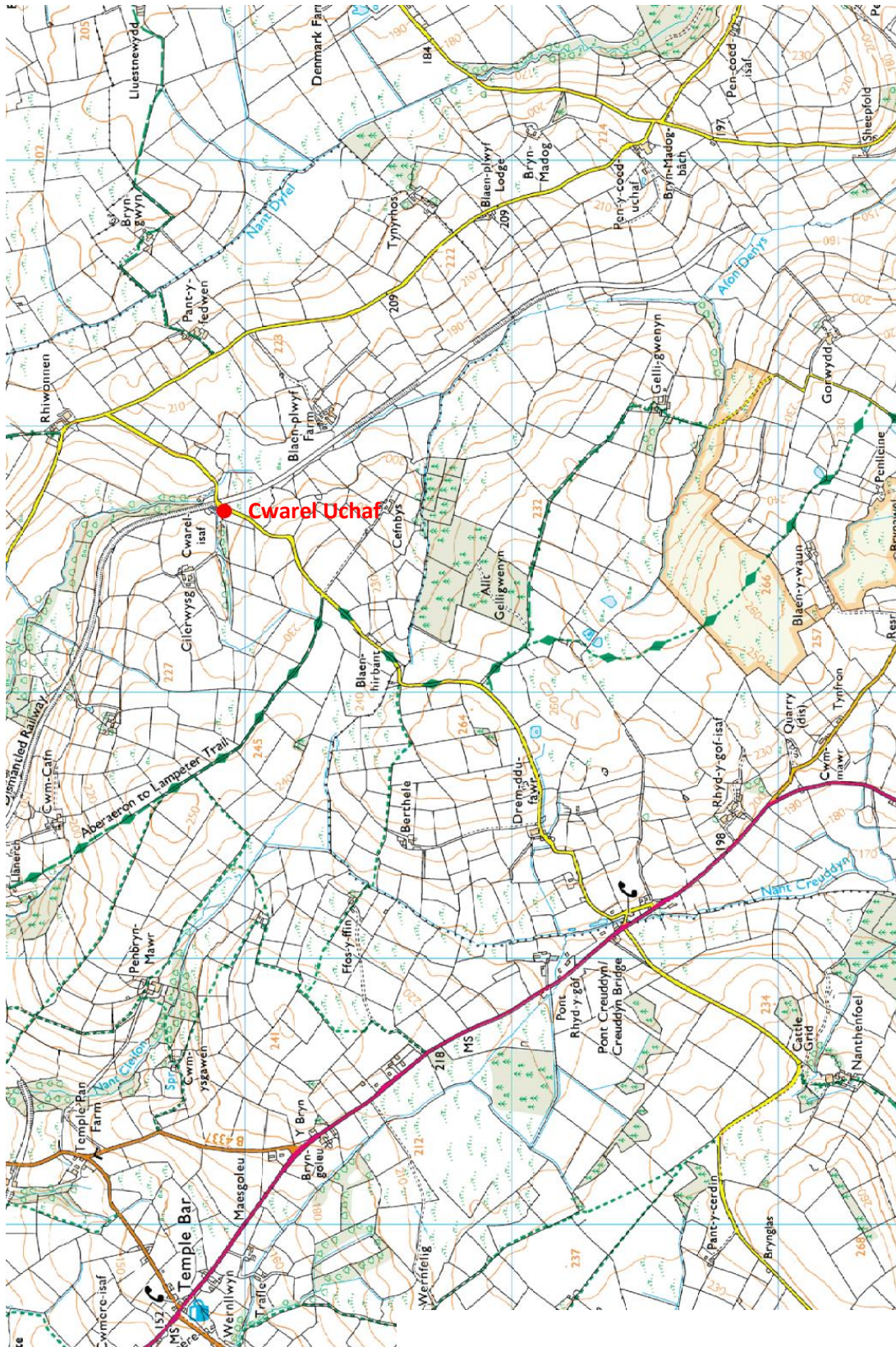


Fig 3 – Modern Ordnance Survey Rasta Map

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