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Submitted by [AngieLake](#) on Tuesday, 16 July 2008. Page Views: 4838

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Site Name: [St Dennis Hill Fort](#) [View this site in the forums](#) [Feedback](#) or [ultramode.txt](#)

## Dennis churchyard

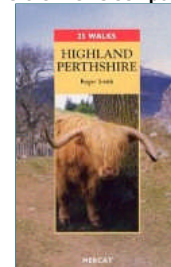
Country: [England](#) County: [Cornwall](#) Type: [Hillfort](#)  
 Nearest Town: [St Austell](#) Nearest Village: [St Dennis](#)  
 Map Ref: [SW951583](#)  
 Latitude: 50.388796N Longitude: 4.883861W  
 Condition: **3** Ambience: **5** Access: **5** Accuracy: **no data**



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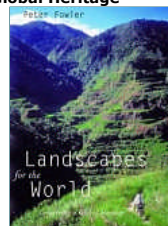


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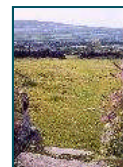
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**St Dennis Hill Fort** submitted by [AngieLake](#)

Hillfort in Cornwall

St Dennis church stands within an ancient dynas (dinas) or fort on a prominent hilltop south of the A30 and Goss Moor. The village of St Dennis, home to many workers in the local industry - china clay - covers the hillside below it to the south and east. Due north is Castle-an-Dinas, well marked from the A30, and sited about the same distance north from that trunk road as St Dennis dinas is south of it.

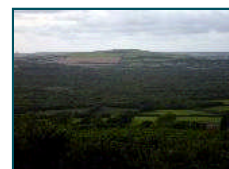
According to Craig Weatherhill in his excellent guide, Cornovia: "St Dennis church (named not after the saint, but the dynas - fort) stands in the centre of this site. This strikingly conical hill was formerly surmounted by two Iron Age ramparts defending an area 113m in diameter. The line of the inner bank, which may have been stone-built, is followed by the churchyard wall. Only faint traces of the outer rampart can be seen, on the north and east sides, about 18m beyond the churchyard wall."

On the Genuki.org.uk website:

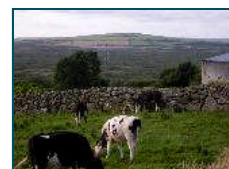
"It is named after St Denys the Martyr, although as the church is on a hill top, the name may be a corruption of the Cornish word Dinas, meaning 'Hill Fort'. Dimilioc represents a smaller hillfort inland 20 miles south of Tintagel now occupied by the parish church of St Dennis - it is within an estate listed as Dimelihoc in the Domesday Book of 1086. In the reign of Henry VIII, St Denys was the only parish in Cornwall with the prefix 'Saint'." There is a farm in the valley to the southwest called Carsella. According to <http://homepages.tesco.net/~k.wasley/Dennis.htm>:

"Carsella: This is also mentioned in the doomsday book as Karsalan. It originated as a fortress, the only other Caer or Kar mentioned being Carworgie in St Columb Major Parish. [to the NW]. Carsella protected the dinas in the south, its most vulnerable point. Charles Henderson found traces of a very ancient village dating back to between 100 BC and 11 AD. Carsella farm house is the oldest house in St Dennis almost 500 years old. The Domesday records that Carsella was a Manor under the same Baron as Domelihoc. The Count of Martair." Before that paragraph, the author gives an excerpt from 'Chronicles of British Kings' by Geoffrey of Gloucester:

"King Arther, (sic) king of the Britons took refuge in the South west from the Angles, a Turkonic (sic) race who invaded Britain during the 5th century. Demelihoc was a secondary fortress of Gorlios, King of Cornwall. We assume Dimelhoc was a dinas of dennis on which the church is built. During the fight with Arther, Gorlios put his wife Igame in his strongest fort, Castle an Dinas, and he commanded Demelihoc hoping that he would survive. He was slain and his wife captured. She afterwards married Uther of round table fame." "Domellick Farm: This is the modern name for the estate of Domelihoc which was recorded in the doomsday book." (Domellick Farm lies a short distance to the west of the hillfort.)



**St Dennis Hill Fort** submitted by [mikeaitch](#)  
View North across Goss Moor to Castle an Dinas. Photo shows how the Iron Age people were able to effectively control the landscape and ancient trade route through Cornwall from the two vantage points.



**St Dennis Hill Fort** submitted by [mikeaitch](#)  
View North to Castle an Dinas from lower slopes of St Denis

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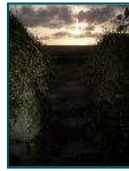
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**St Dennis Hill Fort** submitted by [mikeaitch](#)  
View West through church wall stile



**St Dennis Hill Fort** submitted by [mikeaitch](#)  
View to West

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**St Dennis Hill Fort** submitted by [mikeaitch](#)  
View to South West



**St Dennis Hill Fort** submitted by [mikeaitch](#)  
North Side of St Dennis



**St Dennis Hill Fort** submitted by [AngieLake](#)  
The interior of St Dennis Dinas, or Dynas, meaning Hill fort. Today it is the churchyard of St Dennis church. Here the path leads off to a break in the west side of the rugged wall where two old well-worn steps lead into the area. Craig Weatherall, in his book Cornovia, tells us that the line of the inner bank of the fort, which may have been stone-built, is followed by the current churchyard w

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**Re: St Dennis Hill Fort** (Score: 1)  
by [AngieLake](#) on Monday, 11 May 2009  
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This is an excerpt from the excellent <http://www.oliverscornwall.co.uk/> website:

"St. Dennis  
Driving along the A30, past Goss Moor to the west of Bodmin, if you look south towards china clay country, you will see a hill topped by a tight circle of deciduous trees, a church tower protruding above them. This is St. Dennis church, oddly well north of the village of St. Dennis, one of the largest china clay villages. In July 2008 I had finished a walk from Goss Moor and decided to take a look at the church. A very rural route took me through Tregoss, Enniscsaven, Gothers and Carne to climb the hill to the church. The church itself is of little interest, restored after a recent fire - and locked anyway. What is special about it is that it is said to stand within an iron age hill fort. It is a very strange site. The churchyard is surrounded by a massive stone wall, 10 feet high in places and up to 6 feet wide. Another wall creates a courtyard to its south. Inside the wall the land on the north and west sides is higher than the wall, yet the church is set down in a hollow. Trees completely surround it. Some suggest that the wall follows the course of the hill fort wall. If so, why is the land inside higher? And if it was a hill fort, why so small. Perhaps it was an outlier of Castle-an-Dinas, clearly visible 3 miles to the north. Entertainingly, like St. Juliot church, you can approach the churchyard by a massive stile from the field to the west. Views from the site are superb and panoramic. St. Dennis is signed from the A30 at Indian Queens"

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**Re: St Dennis Hill Fort** (Score: 1)  
by [MikeAitch](#) on Friday, 07 August 2009  
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Nice article Angie, went here last night (photos to follow) was well worth the visit, really helped my understanding of how the Iron Age people controlled the

landscape from St Dennis and Castle an Dinas. I found it quite an atmospheric site, especially as the sun was setting.

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