Dry Tree in Chiaroscuro:

_The fractured archive of a Second World War radar station_

Submitted by Benjamin David Oldcorn, to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Geography in August 2010.

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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.
Abstract

The word ‘chiaroscuro’ is defined as ‘the treatment of light and shade in a work of art’ (Oxford English Dictionary). It is employed in this context to highlight the light and shadow that characterises the former radar station RAF Dry Tree at Goonhilly, Cornwall. More generally it is also employed to demonstrate the tensions that manifest themselves at Dry Tree and similar sites. The material remains of the recent past are becoming the focus for official and unofficial heritage producers and consumers alike. How we respond to and manage these sites is becoming increasingly important. Through the use of oral histories, traditional typology and experiential investigation this thesis will endeavour to examine one site – RAF Dry Tree - and begin to suggest ways in which we might approach and manage such sites in the future, both as researchers and heritage practitioners.
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# Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACH</td>
<td>Advance Chain Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMRE</td>
<td>Air Ministry Research Establishment</td>
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<tr>
<td>BT</td>
<td>British Telecom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Cornwall County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH</td>
<td>Chain Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHL</td>
<td>Chain Home Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPO</td>
<td>General Post Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>HES</td>
<td>Historic Environment Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICH</td>
<td>Intermediate Chain Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>PBX</td>
<td>Private Branch Exchange</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAF</td>
<td>Royal Air Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDF</td>
<td>Radio Direction Finding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rx</td>
<td>Receiver</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRE</td>
<td>Telecommunications Research Establishment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tx</td>
<td>Transmitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAAF</td>
<td>Women’s Auxiliary Air Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAAFA</td>
<td>Women’s Auxiliary Air Force Association</td>
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</table>
I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

(Ozymandias, Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1818)
Ordnance Survey map indicating the location of the research site – adjacent to the southwest border of the Goonhilly Satellite Earth Station. Detailed maps, site plans and aerial photographs can be found in Chapter 5.