

Kit's Cotty House  
Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 33, pp. 248–9  
May 1763

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Mr Urban,

As hitherto no very particular description, or accurate draught, has been made public of that ancient British monument, called Kit's Cotty House, this may not perhaps be disagreeable to your readers. If you are of the same opinion, please to insert it in your next Magazine.

Kit's Cotty House is situated on the brow of a hill, about a mile and half from Aylesford, a quarter of a mile to the right of the great road leading from Rochester to Maidstone, and is composed of four vast stones, of that sort called Kentish Ragg; two are set parallel; a third at the west end, perpendicular to these two, and closing the end; the fourth, which is the largest, is laid transversely over, in the manner of Stonehenge, only this is neither mortised, nor parallel to the horizon, but reclines towards the west in an angle of 9 degrees. Perhaps the east end, now open, was once likewise closed, as at about 70 yards to the N.W. lies another large stone of the same sort and form as those now standing.

The dimensions of the stones are as follows: That on the South side is 8 feet high by 7 feet 6 inches broad, and two feet thick, weighing about eight ton: that on the North, 8 feet by 8, and two feet thick, weighing 8 ton 10 hundred. The end stone is extremely irregular, 5 feet 6 inches high by 5 broad, thickness 14 inches, weight about 2 ton 5 hundred. The transverse, or impost, is likewise pretty irregular: length 11 feet by 8 broad, and 2 thick: weighs 10 ton 7 hundred weight.

This stupendous monument, according to Camden and others, is e-

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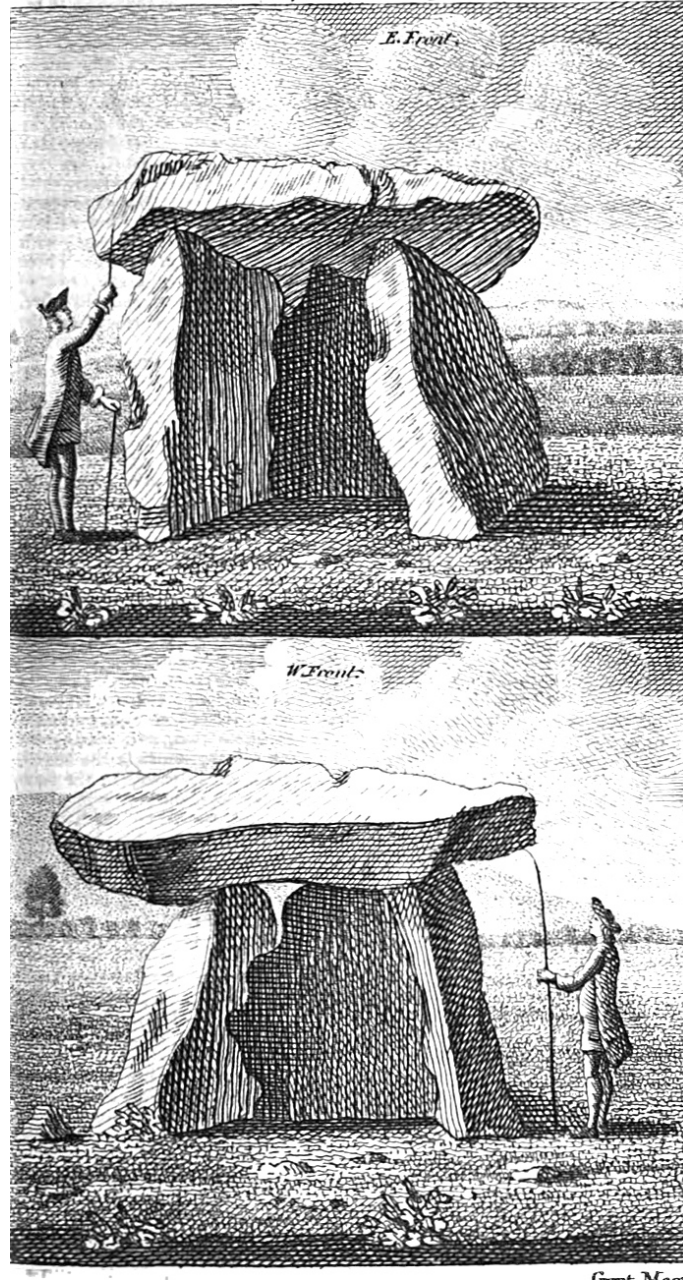
rected over the burial-place of Catigern, brother to Guortimere, or Vortimer, King of the Britains, slain in a battle fought near Aylesford between the Britains and Saxons, in which likewise fell Horsa, the adverse general, who was buried at a place in this neighbourhood, from him now called Horstead.

I have only this to add, that, on  
enquiry, the nearest quarry is at the  
distance of six miles

<This letter was published in the Gentleman's Magazine for May 1763. It is not signed. Contemporary writers who refer to it (Borlase 1769, Pegge 1777) show no sign of knowing who the author was; I do not see any clue. The illustration consists of a pair of views taken from the east and west respectively. The same drawings, differently engraved, were apparently published (or intended to be published) as a print; but the plate was then bought or borrowed by William Borlase, who (having had some additions made to the legend) used it as one of the illustrations for his book about Cornish antiquities (Borlase 1769, pl. 22.) For comparison, a copy of that plate is attached to the end of this file. – C.F. August 2014.>

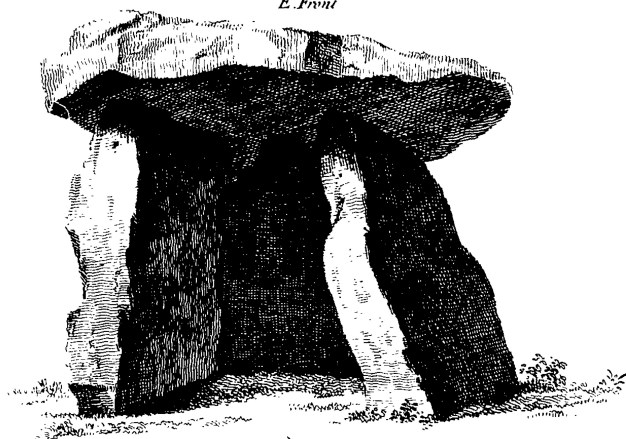
William Borlase, *Antiquities, historical and monumental, of the county of Cornwall*, 2nd edition (London, 1769).

*Two Views of Killy Cotty House?*

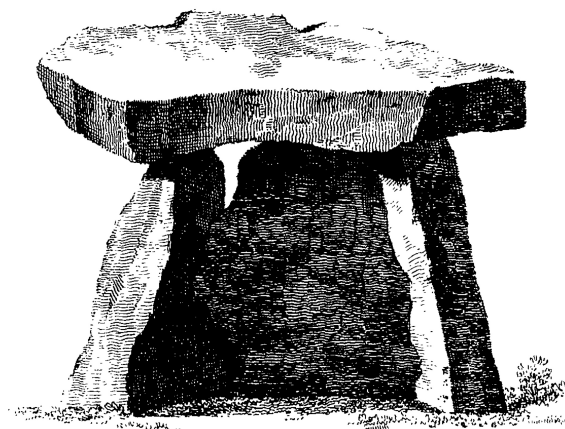


*Two Views of Kitts Cotty House in Kent.* Pl. XLII. p. 222.

*E. Front*



*W. Front*



*Kitts Cotty House stands on the brow of a Hill about 1 Mile & ½ from • Lytesford & ¼ Mile to the right of the great Road from Rochester to • Maidstone & is composed of 1 east Stone, call'd Kentish Rag, The dimensions of the Stones, that on the S. side is "8 f. high by 7 ½ broad & 2 f. thick weight about 8 ton. That on the N. 8 f. by 8 & 2 " thick weight 8 ton 10 hund." the end Stone 5. 6. high by 5 broad thickness 1.4 inch." weight 2 ton 8 ½. The transverse or impost 11 f. long by 8 broad & 2 thick w. 10 ton 7 hund." According to Camden & others it is creded over the burial place of Catigern brother of 'Portimer King of the Britans slain in a battle near Clydesford between the Britans & Saxons. — 53. The nearest Quarry is six Miles distant*

*For this Monument the Author having never seen it the present Edition is indebted to the Genl. Mag. May. 1768 p. 248*  
*It is not by the same Side as the Danish Gravelles, but is evidently of the same construction*