

# Five Cornish treasures found at Kresen Kernow

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A derelict brewery has been transformed into a state-of-the-art archive centre, bringing 850 years of Cornish history under one roof for the first time.

Kresen Kernow in Redruth is now the world's largest collection of manuscripts, books and documents telling the story of Cornwall and celebrating its unique identity. It's been made possible thanks to a £11.7million National Lottery grant and nearly a decade of work.

To celebrate the opening, we're sharing five treasures from the depths of the archives to give you a small taste of what there is to discover.

## **Intricate illustrations**

Garden designer Humphry Repton produced his 'red books' to visualise plans for his clients' gardens and estates. The books contain watercolour paintings with 'before' and 'after' views, cleverly using paper flaps to show the proposed changes.

During his career, Repton produced more than 100 of these books, one of which you can now find at Kresen Kernow. This one was made for the Gregor family at Trewarthenick around 1792-93.



## Detailed dictionaries

This extract is from rector William Borlase's book *Memorandums relating to the Cornish Tongue*. Compiled over several years around 1750, it's an invaluable source for studying the history of the language.

The book contains a Cornish language (Kernewek) dictionary. Borlase published several books on Cornwall and its natural history which are available for viewing in Kresen Kernow's library collection.



## **Magnificent manuscripts**

The complex manuscript pictured above is from 1579 and grants Cornish lands and estates to George Carey. The slippery snakes, letters made of birds, and the strawberry border make it as much a piece of art as a legal document. On the seal, Queen Elizabeth I sits on her throne and overlooks the contract in all her glory.





## **Charming calendars**

This beautiful church calendar dates back to 1462 and is more than two metres long when fully unfolded. After half a millennium, it has become very fragile. Every month, the calendar commemorates a different saint, with decorations of seasonal agricultural tools and farm animals.





## **Marvellous maps**

Can you believe all the writing in this book was done by hand? This detailed map was produced 200 years ago for the Buller family as a survey book for their Tolgus estate. The book records the land they owned, the rent tenants paid, and much more.



Year	Month	Day	Particulars	Debit	Credit	Balance
1784	Jan	1	Balance forward			100.00
		2	Received of John Smith		50.00	150.00
		3	Paid to James Brown	25.00		125.00
		4	Received of Robert Green		75.00	200.00
		5	Paid to Thomas White	100.00		100.00
		6	Received of William Black		150.00	250.00
		7	Paid to Charles Grey	50.00		200.00
		8	Received of Daniel Hill		100.00	300.00
		9	Paid to Edward King	150.00		150.00
		10	Received of George Lee		200.00	350.00
		11	Paid to Henry Clark	100.00		250.00
		12	Received of Isaac Allen		150.00	400.00
		13	Paid to Joseph Young	200.00		200.00
		14	Received of Benjamin Hall		100.00	300.00
		15	Paid to Samuel King	150.00		150.00
		16	Received of Philip Green		250.00	400.00
		17	Paid to Nicholas White	100.00		300.00
		18	Received of Alexander Black		150.00	450.00
		19	Paid to Martin Grey	200.00		250.00
		20	Received of Thomas Hill		100.00	350.00
		21	Paid to Charles King	150.00		200.00
		22	Received of Daniel Lee		200.00	400.00
		23	Paid to Edward Clark	100.00		300.00
		24	Received of George Allen		150.00	450.00
		25	Paid to Henry Young	200.00		250.00
		26	Received of Benjamin Hall		100.00	350.00
		27	Paid to Samuel King	150.00		200.00
		28	Received of Philip Green		250.00	450.00
		29	Paid to Nicholas White	100.00		350.00
		30	Received of Alexander Black		150.00	500.00
		31	Balance forward			500.00



If you look closely you can make out where Kresen Kernow is located today - Little Vauxhall. At the time, it had two tenants, one of them, Benjamin Nicholls who paid £10 and 5 shillings in rent a year.

## **Why not visit?**

The archive hosts its grand opening on Saturday 7 September, and on the following Wednesday hundreds of years of Cornwall's history become fully available for researchers and the public.