
**A SURVEY OF PREHISTORIC FUNERARY AND RITUAL
SITES IN ANGLESEY, 2002-3**

**PUBLICATION REPORT FOR THE TRANSACTIONS OF
THE ANGLESEY ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY 2004**

GAT Project No. G1629

GAT Report No. 494

Prepared for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

by George Smith

September 2003



**Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Gwynedd
Gwynedd Archaeological Trust**

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Introduction

All the known prehistoric funerary and ritual sites in Anglesey were visited in 2002-3 as part of a larger project encompassing the whole of Wales, being carried out by the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts with funding by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments. This report provides a summary of the results, of which a full report is held at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (Smith 2003). The project developed from work originally carried out in the Upper Severn Valley by Dr Alex Gibson for the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (Gibson 1998). This distilled the results of extensive aerial photographic survey and research excavation work in that area which had demonstrated the existence of numerous, and sometimes complex, previously unknown early monuments (Gibson 1999). Apart from showing the value of these monuments it showed that many of them were at risk from plough damage.

Prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments include some of the best known archaeological features in the present landscape of Anglesey, partly because many of them are built of impressive stones and partly because of the mystery that surrounds them, sometimes incorporated in folk tales such as the chambered tomb of Barclodiad y Gawres or the barrow of Bedd Branwen.

Large numbers of these monuments survive, frequently because they were respected in subsequent periods. They were often incorporated in later field boundaries, for instance mentioned as boundary features in land charters, or became the focus for cemeteries in the Early Medieval period. Their fascination is demonstrated by the attention given to them by antiquarians in the 18th and 19th centuries. Their excavations resulted in private and museum collections of artefacts that played a large part in the development of typologies of artefacts such as 'funerary urns', bronze weapons and ornaments, which in turn provided the foundation for modern archaeological studies. Present study is less focused on artefacts and more devoted to social explanation, context and dating. To some extent this has meant that research has been directed more towards settlement and industry. However, with the benefit of scientific techniques burial monuments have a great deal to offer, even when excavated by early antiquaries. Such excavation was usually confined to a small area at the centre of each barrow or cairn, so secondary burials often still survive. Previously excavated cremation burials preserved in museums may also now be dated thanks to improvements in radiocarbon techniques. In addition, the mounds often protect an area of ancient land surface with high value for environmental study. It has been estimated, for instance, that in the Upper Severn Valley the 315 known barrows protect, altogether about 2.5ha (6 acres) of prehistoric surface (Gibson 1998).

Project objectives

There are about 900 recorded prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments within the area covered by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, that is West Conwy, Anglesey, Caernarfon and Meirionnydd. They form one of the largest single classes of monument in the Sites and Monuments Record, comprising about 9% of the total. Anglesey has benefited from previous surveys by the Royal Commission (RCAHMW 1937) and by the excavations and publications by Frances Lynch (1991) but a new survey was needed to provide comparable data across the whole of Wales. The fieldwork was carried out by the author and David Hopewell. Thanks for data inputting go to Pamela Hughes and for creation of the illustrations to Kate Geary. Thanks are also due to Frances Lynch and David Longley for helpful comments on the text and to all the landowners who readily gave permission to walk over their land.

Archaeological background

Anglesey is smaller in total area than the other administrative areas of north-west Wales. However, the other areas include large proportions of upland, of relatively poor agricultural capability while Anglesey is all lowland with good soils and comprises the largest area of better quality farming land in north-west Wales. It also benefits from a mild maritime climate with a long growing season. It would have been attractive for early settlement for its good soils and for its undulating topography and long coastline that would have provided good drainage and a variety of habitats for exploitation. Its earliest predominant cultural orientation was to the sea and the west, reflected to some extent in the types of funerary monuments and styles of artefact.

The good climate and soils of Anglesey have meant continuous intensive cultivation and this has led to much clearance of ancient sites during 18th and 19th century improvements. Many sites still survive despite this clearance but it must be remembered that what now remains is biased heavily towards large megalithic remains and we can expect that many simple earthen burial mounds have gone altogether, or survive only as sub-soil features. Settlement remains are even rarer although the presence of funerary and ritual monuments of both Neolithic and Bronze Age date shows that they must have existed. The funerary and ritual monuments described below are therefore mostly isolated fragments of a poorly understood, wider landscape.

Anglesey has a long history of antiquarian interest, including tours, descriptions and excavations. This partly reflects a much greater intensity of prehistoric activity and partly a more intensive land-use, resulting in more frequent chance discoveries. The island was also on a well-used route to Ireland but perhaps most significantly contained a number of large and wealthy estates whose owners were able to indulge an interest in antiquity. Some were actively involved, with a genuine academic interest and the most important of these was the Hon. W.O. Stanley who carried out several excavations and produced articles in the second half of the 19th century. Others were simply happy to have archaeological monuments as interesting landscape features, nevertheless helping to preserve them from destruction. Unfortunately, while this happened with monuments within landscaped areas, such as around Plas Newydd or Presaddfed, many other monuments were destroyed during agricultural improvements of estate farmland. The earliest accounts of an antiquarian nature were those by Rowlands (1723) and Pennant (1783) in the 18th century and Skinner (1802) in the early 19th century, some of whom provided useful descriptions or even drawings of monuments that were later destroyed or partly cleared. Rowlands was a local vicar at Llanidan, south-east Anglesey, an area where was to be found the greatest

concentration of cromlechs. The interest in Anglesey was to a large extent fuelled by the presence of numbers of these impressive megalithic monuments and the connotations of 'Druidic' activities. Some of the more impressive monuments were even visited by antiquaries from further afield, such as John Aubrey. There are records of some monuments by local antiquaries in Camden's *Britannia* and lists of cromlechs were published by Thomas (1799) and Bingley (1814). Several guidebooks were produced in the 19th century and an extensive local history was produced by Llwyd (1833).

The first field trip of the Cambrian Archaeological Association took place in 1847, shortly followed by publication of the society's academic journal, *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, the earliest volumes of which included lists of antiquities on Anglesey by the Rev H. Longueville-Jones (1846, 1855) and Stanley and Way (1868). The earliest excavations on Anglesey took at Din Lligwy and Pant y Saer chambered tombs (Williams 1867 and 1875). Stanley also carried out a series of excavations at both settlement and funerary sites. His fine published excavation plans demonstrate an exacting standard of excavation or at least recording, as exemplified by his work at the round barrows and settlement at Porth Dafarch, Anglesey (Stanley 1876).

Interest in Anglesey continued in the 20th century with large scale excavations at several of the best known monuments, including some barrows as well as chambered tombs. E. Neil Baynes excavated Lligwy chambered tomb and the round barrows at Ty'n-y-pwll, Llanddyfnan (1909a and b) and published an important survey of chambered tombs and standing stones, both extant and lost (Baynes 1910-11). Harold Hughes excavated at Merddyn Gwyn barrow, Pentraeth (1908), Lindsay-Scott excavated Pant y Saer chambered tomb (1933) and Hemp at Bryn Celli Ddu (1930) and Bryn yr Hen Bobl (1935). The Royal Commission also carried out its survey at this time, largely in the hands of Wilfred Hemp. In more recent years, Powell and Daniel (1956) excavated at Barclodiad y Gawres. Christopher Houlder (1957) at Trwyn Du, a small coastal cairn, Frances Lynch excavated at the possible chambered tomb at Benllech (1966), the barrows of Treiorwerth and Bedd Branwen (1971) and the chambered tomb of Din Dryfol (Smith and Lynch 1987) and Christopher Smith at the chambered tomb of Trefignath (*ibid*). Richard White carried out investigations of some possible large barrows in Malltraeth Marsh in 1969, finding them to be probably post-medieval boundary markers (GAT SMR). Sian White excavated a cremation cemetery at Capel Eithin, Gaerwen, which produced an important assemblage of pottery (White and Smith 1999) and a number of cremation burials were discovered prior to the construction of the new A55 road across Anglesey in 1999 (Maynard *et al* 1999).

The Survey

The present survey provides an up to date summary of these monuments in Anglesey (Table 1), intended to be useful for research, for local interest and for the future care of the sites themselves. The categories used were kept deliberately broad so that overall synthesis and comparisons can be made for the whole of Wales, to be included in a final publication. Only in the case of the most numerous category, that of round barrows were some sub-types used. The survey has updated descriptions and interpretation where necessary and provided assessments of condition, threats and monument value. In a few cases monuments have been re-interpreted as natural features or of other site type or period. It has also considered site setting, orientation, aspect and

altitude, which, together with the distribution, allow some general interpretation of the monuments. The results have allowed the Gwynedd SMR to be updated.

Table 1 Summary list of prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments in Anglesey

Monument type	Unscheduled sites	Scheduled ancient monuments	Total
Carved stone	1	0	1
Chambered tomb	2	14	16
Chambered tomb?/site of	32	3	35
Cist/cist?/site of	5	0	5
Cremation/cremation cemetery	4	1	5
Henge?	0	1	1
Ring ditch (crop mark)	1	0	1
Round barrow	12	9	21
Round barrow?/site of	18	0	18
Standing stone	10	20	30
Standing stone?/ site of	34	0	34
Standing stone setting	2	2	4
Stone circle/stone circle?	2	1	3
	Totals	123	51
Non-site/Natural feature	8	-	8
Site of other type or period	17	-	17

The best known monuments, and the earliest, are the Neolithic chambered tombs of which all the accepted examples are protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Of the 51 recorded tombs, 20 are extant if not intact and 7 are possibly natural or have other origins. Of the remainder, 6 are sites of fairly certain but destroyed tombs and the rest include some doubtful or natural features, records of destroyed features or just place name evidence. One other, at Benllech has been re-classified as a probable post-medieval construction (Lynch 1966 and 1991). The extant monuments are of a variety of forms, five have been classified by Lynch (1969) as Passage graves, three as 'Long graves', two as odd variant forms and the remainder as unclassified or too ruined to classify. The list here includes the 3m tall standing stone at Y Werthyr, Amlwch, which was part of a chambered tomb: '... there was another stone of the same size, some distance from it, and a huge flat stone extending from one to the other. The old country people stood in awe of it, and considered it an act of sacrilege when Mr. Williams destroyed the top stone and one of the pillars.' (Rhys 1882).

Several of these have been excavated. Pant y Saer and Lligwy had antiquarian excavations while there have been more recent excavations at Pant y Saer, Ty Newydd, Barclodiad y Gawres, Din Dryfol, Bryn Celli Ddu, Bryn yr Hen Bobl and Trefignath. These all produced considerable quantities of finds, with Early Neolithic

pottery from Trefignath, Din Dryfol, Bryn yr Hen Bobl and Pant y Saer as well as Beaker or Early Bronze Age pottery from Ty Newydd, Barclodiad y Gawres, Bryn yr Hen Bobl, Pant y Saer and Henblas.

The large number of chambered tombs, extant or destroyed, on Anglesey indicates a high settlement density, related to the relatively favourable topography, soils and climate and a concentration can be seen on the best land along the south-east ridge (Fig. 1). This contrasts strongly with the thin scatter of tombs through the rest of Gwynedd. It should be noted, however, that a proportion of the sites recorded by antiquarians and now listed as 'possible or site of' may well have been just natural features (see Lynch 1969, 305-8). Nevertheless a considerable population must be envisaged and several of the tombs are very major constructions, the mound of Bryn yr Hen Bobl, for instance, being about 30m diameter and 5m high (Fig. 2). The latter and Trefignath were both shown to have been built over areas of settlement activity. Bryn yr Hen Bobl is presently being re-assessed (Leivers *et al* 2001), but earlier excavations produced Middle Neolithic pottery from the underlying surface (Hemp 1935) while Trefignath produced a radiocarbon date of 3100 +/- 70 BC (uncalibrated) from the settlement surface (Smith and Lynch 1987). A recent project to investigate the landscape and look for possible associated settlement around Bryn Celli Ddu and Bryn yr Hen Bobl demonstrated the presence of a widespread light scatter of worked flint but no significant concentrations (Edmonds and Thomas 1990).

The variety of forms of tomb suggests a mix of population groups or cultural influences and there are similarities with other tombs around the Irish Sea. Lynch has pointed out the surprising absence of examples of true portal dolmens, which are characteristic of West Gwynedd, Meirionnydd and the Conwy Valley, possibly because these are an earlier style than the tombs known on Anglesey.

Two tombs on Anglesey have stones with complex artwork and the presence of such art is exceptionally rare and important. Five stones making up the chamber at Barclodiad y Gawres have lightly pecked but strong and neatly executed designs of spirals, lozenges and chevrons on their faces, forming a unique coherent design of 'panels'. At Bryn Celli Ddu a slab was found decorated in a loosely executed pecked design of wavy lines. The decoration was on both faces and the top and so the stone may originally have been a free-standing upright, belonging to a small henge over which the mound of the chambered tomb was built and which was then buried as part of a re-dedication or foundation ceremony (Lynch 1991, 96-7). In addition to these, the Ty Newydd tomb has five cup-marks on top of the capstone, but no design seems to have been intended. There is also an isolated example of a cup and concentric ring-marked stone from near Llanerchymedd. It is a boulder or fragment of bedrock, moved from its original position, which is unknown, although it has been shown, geologically, to be from the Llanerchymedd area (Lynch and Jenkins 1974).

The setting of the tombs on Anglesey is rarely prominent, because of the low-lying relief although several are on the top or side of low hills. However, there are often dramatic views of the mountains to the east, as is the case at Bryn yr Hen Bobl, even though the site lies in a natural bowl (Fig. 2). Surrounding tree cover might have restricted views anyway, and at Trefignath, pollen analysis suggested that the tomb had been built in a clearing in woodland. It lies close to the head of a former small estuary, now peat-filled, on the eastern, lee side of the island, which may have been an important landing place. Barclodiad y Gawres is also in a coastal setting

and again, the adjoining bay of Porth Tre Castell may have been a landing place. The tomb has a dramatic outlook over the sea, but the entrance is from the north, the landward side. In north-west Wales as a whole the distribution of tombs is biased towards the coast. In Anglesey most are oriented to the east to north-east direction (Fig. 3). Of those where an entrance cannot be identified, five have an east-west and one a probably north-south orientation.

Considering the number of tombs or sites of tombs that are known on Anglesey then ceremonial sites could also be expected, particularly in south-east Anglesey. Such a complex is present not far away on the mainland at Llandygai, Bangor, where there are two henges and a cursus but surprisingly tombs are almost absent from this area. The only example of a large henge on Anglesey is that of Castell Bryn Gwyn, Brynsiencyn (Fig. 4), which has produced Late Neolithic pottery and worked flints but cannot be certainly identified as a henge because it was re-used and modified as a defended settlement in the 1st century A.D. (Wainwright 1962). It also had a ditch outside the bank not inside as is typical of a henge. However, there is some evidence that it had the typical henge arrangement of two opposed entrances, here approximately at east and west. These would align on the sites of two possible former major stone circles of which there are 18th and 19th century descriptions. This conjunction of features was first noted by Lynch (1991, 151). At Bryn Gwyn, 300m to the west of Castell Bryn Gwyn, only two huge standing stones survive, one 4m high, the other 3m high. Rowlands (1723) recorded a circle of 8 or 9 stones were mostly cleared when the present field boundaries were laid out prior to 1841 (Baynes 1910-11, 62-50). The RCAHMW recorded a ditch within a bank of about 225yds dia. around the site of the stone circle at Bryn Gwyn but these feature have not been located since (RCAHMW 1937, xlviiii) and field walking after ploughing of the field produced no finds. 200-300m to the east of Castell Bryn Gwyn at Tre (or Tre'r) Dryw Bach ('Settlement of the wren or seer'), there was a setting of smaller stones, up to about 1m high, illustrated by Stukeley (1776) and Williams (1871) who recorded it as of oval plan, 130yds by 70yds. However, no visible trace of it remains today. On the same farm have been found an Early Bronze Age stone axe-hammer and a Middle Bronze Age bronze knife or dagger (both now lost). The evidence is tentative but it is possible that there was a major Neolithic and perhaps later ritual landscape here. The henge monuments and cursus at Llandygai were discovered by aerial photography and this might also be productive on Anglesey and particularly at Castell Bryn Gwyn and the area around it, supported by geophysical survey.

Only two other features have been interpreted as possible henges. The first is a relatively small diameter ditch enclosing a circle of stones, over which the Bryn Celli Ddu chambered tomb was built. The second, by the Menai Straits is only a place name, Meini Gwynion, interpreted as possibly meaning a circle of stones (Baynes 1910-11, 77).

Of the 64 standing stones, 21 are known only from old records, 8 are of uncertain classification with 7 of them possibly rubbing stones and one, newly discovered, with gate hinge holes but possibly originally a standing stone incorporated into a field boundary. The 20 scheduled sites therefore make up over 50% of the known extant stones. They include some very impressive stones, the largest being the north stone at Pen yr Orsedd, Llanfairynghornwy, which is 5.1m tall. The south stone there is the second tallest at 3.9m, followed by that at Bodewryd, Rhosybol at 3.75m tall. There were originally three stones at Pen yr Orsedd and the local tradition is

that the third was taken down and used as a lintel in a new cowshed but that the cows all became ill (Baynes 1910-11, 67). The three stones were set some distance apart and this is difficult to interpret. There is a similar situation at Cremlyn, Llansadwrn where two large stones stand in adjoining fields. One of these stones was excavated before re-erection after it fell and a flint scraper and flakes were found (Lynch 1980), surprisingly the only recorded finds from any Anglesey standing stone. The Cremlyn stones lie approximately to the north and south of each other, as was the case with another pair of stones at Tir Gwyn, near Nefyn, Gwynedd.

An unusual group of six relatively small stones lie close to Hafotty, Llansadwrn. They stand within improved farmland and might be expected to have been cleared away so possibly were boundary markers of medieval or later date. One other, Ponc y Garreg Hir, Bodafon was described by Baynes (1910-11) but was only recently rediscovered after thinning of forestry (Fig.5). Another large, newly recorded stone at Gadlys, Llansadwrn appears to be a 19th century fake antiquity, set in a locally prominent position but has two quarry drill holes and was clearly quarried specially for the purpose. Other standing stones continue to be erected today, for example one near Cemaes (Lynch pers. com.), and it is important to record these lest in future they are thought to be ancient.

Unusual natural stones were sometimes regarded with as much respect as genuine standing stones, included in local folklore and may have been similarly regarded in prehistory. On Anglesey there are at least four such stones, all large glacial erratic boulders. They are Maen Arthur, Mynydd Mechell, Maen y Goges (Stone of the cook), near the Alaw Valley, Maen Bras, Trearddur and Carreg Leidr (Stone of the thief), Llandyfrydog. Standing stones themselves were also included in folklore as demonstrated by the names attached to some of them, including Maen y Gored or Goron (Stone of the fish weir or crown), Llech Golman (Stone of Colman), Maen Addwyn (Stone of Addwyn or Gentle stone), Maen Llechgynfarwy (Stone of Saint Cynfarwy) and Maen Eryr (Stone of the eagle).

The function of standing stones generally is still debated. Several excavated examples have produced Early Bronze Age burials close to them, but these could have been later additions. In Meirionnydd two linear groups lie alongside and are clearly related to major upland trackways (Bowen and Gresham 1967). However, if they marked the route it was probably in more of a ceremonial than a functional way because both trackways lead towards or through groups of burial cairns. In Anglesey the standing stones are quite evenly distributed except for their general absence from the south-west, which may be ascribed to the rather poorer land there, with stretches of marsh and sandy commons and therefore more sparsely settled (Fig. 1). The stones are found in all types of setting (Table 3), 17 of 46 were in locally prominent positions on low hills or ridges, but the remainder were in unobtrusive settings in valleys, on hill slopes or plateau. There is no obvious indication that stones form part of any pattern of ancient routes but the landscape of similar, cultivated lowland has an even scatter of modern settlement with a similar diverse pattern of routes, prior to post-medieval development, and the same might have been the case in the second millennium BC, as suggested by the even distribution of round barrows, contrasting with the uneven distribution of Neolithic chambered tombs. The distribution of standing stones may therefore be related broadly to the pattern of land-use and settlement and the stones may have served as boundary or ownership markers.

Most stones are slabs rather than ‘pillars’ and so can be regarded as having ‘faces’ and so would have been set up with deliberation as to direction. They could be set so that the best face was visible from a settlement or route or the long axis might indicate a direction. Taking just the main compass alignments of the faces, there is a bias to a north-west to south-east orientation, which may prove to be significant when the data from the whole of Wales is compared (Table 4). There are few examples of possible association between standing stones and other monuments. One proven example was the standing stone at the centre of the Bedd Branwen burial mound. The mound had been built around the standing stone, which was associated with Beaker sherds (Lynch 1991, 152). There may also have been a standing stone at the centre of the stone circle that preceded the Bryn Celli Ddu chambered tomb. Another standing stone, at Llanddyfnan, Pentraeth stands at the west end of a line of round barrows and may have been an element of a ‘cemetery complex’.

Table 3 Siting of standing stones

Siting	Anglesey	West Gwynedd
Summit	8	3
Ridge/ Promontory	9	7
Valley floor	3	1
Coastal fringe	2	
Col	1	
Plateau	17	4
Hill slope	6	9

Table 4 Standing stone orientation

Orientation	Anglesey	West Gwynedd
NE-SW	7	1
E-W	8	5
NW-SE	12	6
N-S	5	6

Groups of standing stones have been considered as a separate monument type, stone settings, although here they are miscellaneous collection. The Penrhos Feilw stones are a closely matched pair of pillar-like stones, about 3m high, standing on a very slight rise on a level area. This setting would be ideal as site for a stone circle that was said to have once surrounded the stone pair, ‘removed by tenants to build the outhouses, fences and to form gate-posts’ (Stanley and Way 1876, 10). It was reported that ‘tradition says that a large coffin was found between them, composed of several flat stones, and enclosing remains of bones, with spear-heads and arrow-heads...’ (Note by Stanley quoted by Baynes, 1910-11, 67). However, recent geophysical survey produced no evidence of a surrounding circle (Bradford 1990). At Llanfechell is a group of three stones of

similar size, about 2m high, facing approximately the same orientation and approximately equidistant, about 3m apart. They are set on the summit of a low hill and are visible from a long way around. Two of the stones look as though they may have been trimmed by battering to produce their tall, narrow rectangular shape. The lack of antiquarian references, finds or local traditions relating to them apart from a mention by Baynes (1910-11, 67-8), the peculiarity of the setting and the manufactured nature of the stones suggest that this may be a 19th century creation. Another oddity is the group of three small orthostatic slabs called Y Tair Naid Abernodwydd (The Three Leaps of Abernodwydd) at Pentraeth. The stones are set in a line across a small stream, approximately east-west and parallel to the nearby road. The spring they lie alongside leads into the River Nodwydd and it has been suggested that the river's name may derive from that of the Celtic god Nodens and that the stone setting may belong to a Celtic water rite (Benwell 2002). There is one other possible stone setting called the Meini Moelion (Bald-headed stones), Holyhead Mountain, no longer visible and known only from an antiquarian reference describing them as a group of 'erect rounded stones' near which were found in 1830 ... 'Various early weapons' (Longueville-Jones 1855, 24).

Bronze Age burials take various forms, either as inhumations or cremations. The most numerous are those in burial mounds or cairns although, when excavated, even these often prove to be of complex construction, re-use and modification. Some cremation burials were in 'flat' cemeteries (i.e. not marked by a mound), either in stone-lined cists, in urns in pits or simply in pits. Five cist burials are recorded but all are old chance finds of which the cists are now lost, as well as the finds from them, apart from some of the rich finds from a site at Pen-y-Bonc, near Holyhead, which included two urns, two bronze armlets, a jet necklace and a V-bored jet button (Lynch 1991, 157-9). In the other cists, besides bones, one at Rhosbeirio, Llanfechell produced a Beaker and another cist was inserted in the chambered tomb at Pant y Saer, again possibly associated with a Beaker. An urned cremation was also inserted close to the natural group of stones at Henblas, Llangristiolus (Baynes 1911, 40). There are also six records of finds of cremation burials in flat cemeteries. One at Capel Eithin, Gaerwen was excavated in 1980-81 (White and Smith 1999) producing Early Bronze Age urns in a range of styles as well two later burials in plain, bucket-shaped urns dating within the first millennium BC (Lynch 1990, 196-201, 351-8 and Longworth, in White and Smith 1999, 76-90). Recently part of another such cemetery has been excavated at Cefn Cwmwd, Rhostrehwfa in advance of the construction of the new A55 road. This produced burials with Early Bronze Age urns, a faience bead and an unusual shale or lignite cone-shaped object, possibly a lip or ear stud (Roberts *et al* 2001, 4). The finds elsewhere were all chance finds in the 19th century. It appears that all these sites were 'flat' cemeteries with no trace of covering mounds. However, at both Capel Eithin and Cae Meini (known also as Cae Mickney) the urns were tightly grouped, suggesting some kind of a delimited monument or that individual burials were marked in some way allowing later burials to be placed in relation to earlier ones.

Being unmarked above ground these cist and cremation burials have all been discovered purely by chance and so many more may have existed. At Capel Eithin the cemetery lay on the brow of a low but locally prominent ridge, close to a cairn of uncertain date and function but which sealed pits with Late Neolithic and Early Bronze age pottery, including charcoal-filled pits, possibly remnants of funerary activity. Burials were often inserted in

or around pre-existing monuments but where they exist in the open, even when discovered the pits and urns are typically truncated by ploughing and the surface traces of accompanying activity are destroyed.

Table 5: Round Barrows, summary by sub-type and comparison with other areas

Sub-type	Anglesey	West Gwynedd	North Gwynedd	Meirionnydd
Simple cairn	14	43	130	170
Mound	21	6	22	8
Kerbed cairn	1	1	25	7
Ring cairn	2	3	10	16
Platform cairn	1	0	0	6
Structured cairn	0	1	4	5
No data (not located, destroyed etc)	0	0	11	0
Total	39	54	202	212

Round barrows comprise a number of sub-types, including earthen mounds and several varieties of stone cairn (Table 5). The lowland of Anglesey has a light but fairly even scatter of round barrows (Fig. 6), dominated by simple earth mounds although there are some cairns on the higher areas, such as Holyhead Mountain, Mynydd Bodafon and Mynydd Llwydiarth. There are relatively few surviving barrows, compared to the numerous cairns in the uplands of the mainland although many must have been levelled during intensive farming. Some of these may still exist as ring ditches and these might eventually be located by aerial photography. However, the soil conditions here are rarely suitable for crop marks.

Thirteen barrows are known only from old records and three may be just natural features. The rest are generally rather poorly preserved, as is to be expected in a well-used agricultural landscape. The mounds are mainly over 20m diameter while the cairns are typically rather smaller, between 5-9m diameter. The preferred locations for the barrows are fairly prominent positions on low summits, ridges or promontories with only a few on the coastal fringe or on plateau. Only two, Bedd Branwen and Cors-y-Bol are in valley-floor situations and both are rather unusual examples, being ring cairns and lying quite close to each other on the fringes of the River Alaw.

Table 6 Summary of artefacts from round barrows, Anglesey (PRN = SMR record no.)

Map	PRN	Site name	Artifacts
SH28SW	1772	Tumulus, Porth Dafarch (Trearddur)	Cist, bones

SH28SW	1773	Tumulus, Porth Dafarch (Trearddur)	Cist, quartz pebbles, female inhumation, 2 Beakers, 2 flints (one a flaked knife) and secondary (?) small plain Collared urn.
SH28SW	1774	Tumulus, Porth Dafarch (Trearddur)	Cremations, urns, cists without urns
SH36NE	3003	Tumulus, Trwyn Du (Aberffraw)	Polished Mynydd Rhiw stone axe frag. (pre-barrow)
SH37SW	3038	Tumulus (Rems. of), N. of Barclodiad y Gawres (Aberffraw)	Potsherd (prob. Beaker)
SH38SE	2084	Treiorwerth Tumulus (Presaddfed)	a. 6 urns, b. 2 urns c. 1 urn. d. flints. e. jet? bead
SH38SE	2088	Tumulus, Bedd Branwen (Llanddeusant)	a. 12 urns. b. bronze awl. c. amber beads, d. jet bead. e. bone bead. f. 2 bone pommels, g. stone hone. h. flints. i. human bone.
SH47NW	2145	Tumulus - Site of, Cerrig Ddewi (Llanddyfnan)	Urn, pygmy cup
SH57NW	4355	Barrow - Ty'n-y-Pwll (Llanddyfnan)	Crouched human burial, serrated flint blade
SH57NW	4356	Barrow - Ty'n-y-Pwll (Llanddyfnan)	7 urns, (3 lost) = cremations, 1 inhumation, bronze knife, 2 bronze chisels
SH57NW	5576	Tumulus - Site of, Ty'n Coed (Pentraeth) (a.k.a. <i>Merddyn Gwyn</i>)	Inhumation, Beaker, riveted bronze dagger, V-perforated jet button.
SH57SW	2708	Cairn – S.S.W. of Bryn Celli Ddu (Llandaniel Fab)	Cremation human bone, flint and chert worked flakes
SH68SW	2558	Tumulus – Site of, Flagstaff Quarry (Penmon)	Cremation, 2 MBA incense cups, bone pin

Despite the small number of barrows, they have proved to be quite rich in finds, probably reflecting the good quality of the land and the prosperity of the past population. The finds from antiquarian and recent excavations has been fully described by Lynch (1991) so are only summarised here (Table 6). There are records of 19th century excavations at Porth Dafarch, near Holyhead (Stanley 1876) and at Penmon, near Beaumaris (Owen 1889). Excavations also took place in the early 20th century at two barrows at Ty'n y pwll (Llanddyfnan) (Baynes 1909b), Merddyn Gwyn (Pentraeth) (Hughes 1908) and at Llandaniel Fab, near Gaerwen (Newall 1931). Recent excavations have taken place at Trwyn Du (Aberffraw) (Houlder 1957, White 1978), near

Barclodiad y Gawres (Aberffraw) (Powell and Daniel 1956), and at Treiorwerth (Presaddfed) and Bedd Branwen (Llanddeusant) (Lynch 1971).

There is a relatively small amount of firm dating, artefactual and environmental evidence from all the known prehistoric funerary and ritual monuments on Anglesey. The present survey did not investigate individual sites, or search for new sites although a few were discovered in the course of the work. It demonstrated a continuing threat of erosion, mainly from cultivation and stock grazing. Future work must apply itself to better recording by detailed survey, to conservation measures and to improvement of public access and information, where appropriate. Research is also needed to fill out the present sketchy picture of these periods by further excavation on all types of site, particularly to provide dating evidence and investigate the activities that must have taken place around monuments but which have left no visible structural evidence. The SMR continues to be enhanced and is keen to hear of any new information, sites or finds. It is a resource that is open for public consultation and can be contacted by letter or phone at Craig Beuno, Garth Road, Bangor, LL57 2RT, Tel. 01248-352535. Details of current projects and other information can also be found on the web site at www.heneb.co.uk.

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Fig. 1 The distribution of Neolithic funerary and ritual monuments in Anglesey

Fig. 2 The chambered tomb Bryn yr Hen Bobl, Llanedwen. View from the north-west

Fig. 3 The orientation of Neolithic chambered tombs and long mounds on Anglesey

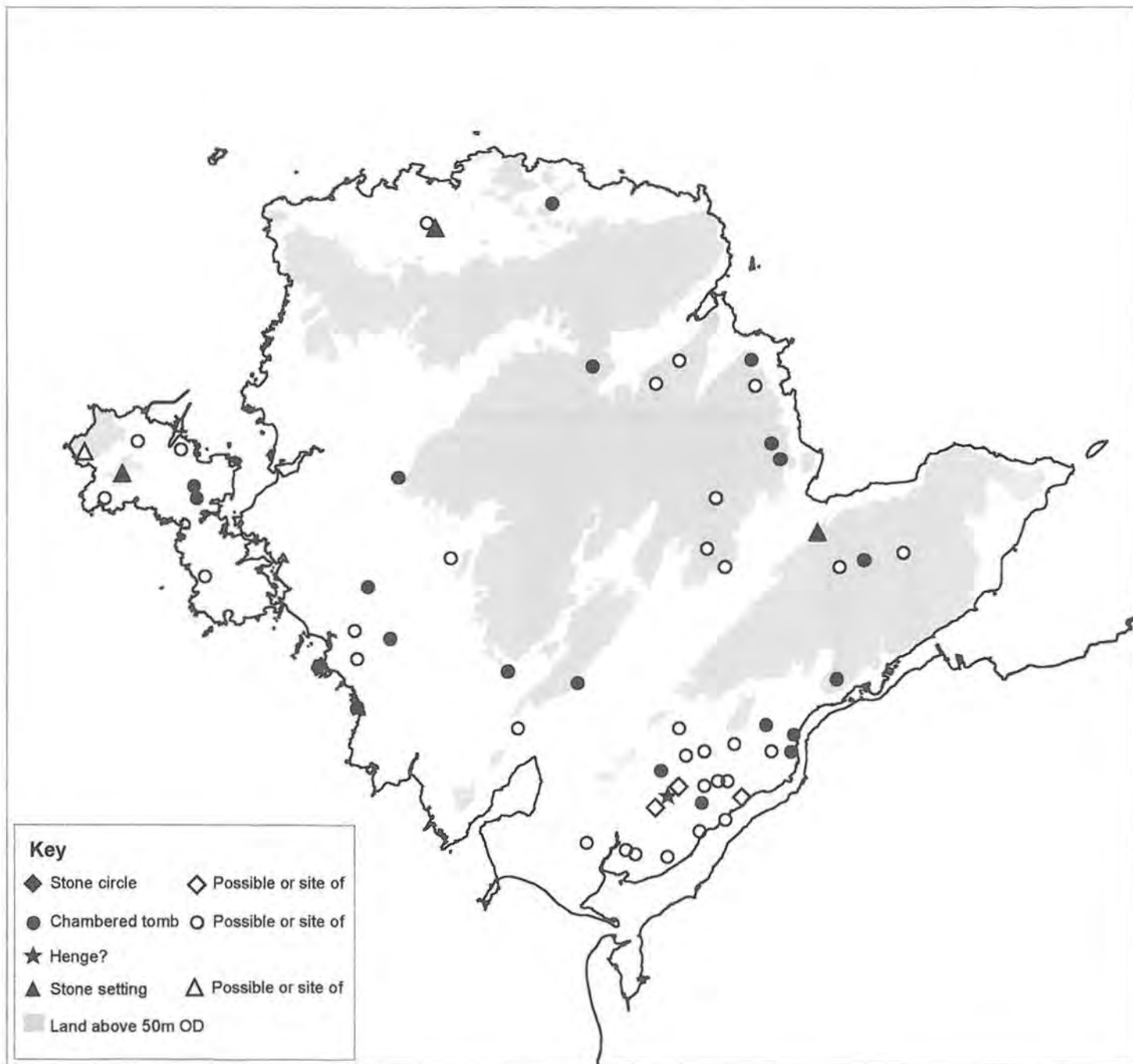
Fig. 4 The possible Neolithic ceremonial landscape at Castell Bryn Gwyn, Brynsiencyn. Based on OS 1:10,000 scale map. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100020895.

Fig. 5 The standing stone Ponc y Garreg Hir, Bodafon. 1m scale. View from the south-east

Fig. 6 The distribution of Bronze Age funerary and ritual monuments in Anglesey

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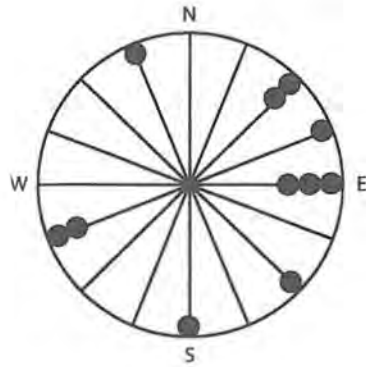
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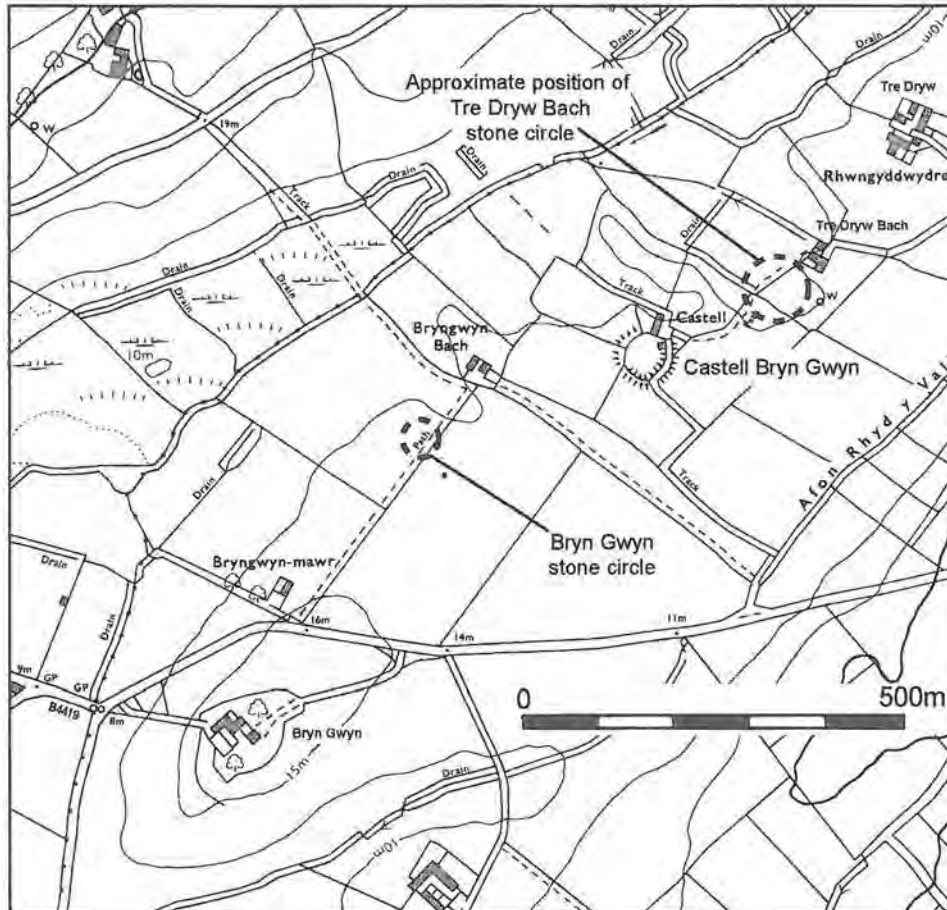
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Fig. 2 The chambered tomb Bryn yr Hen Bobl, Llanedwen. View from the north-west



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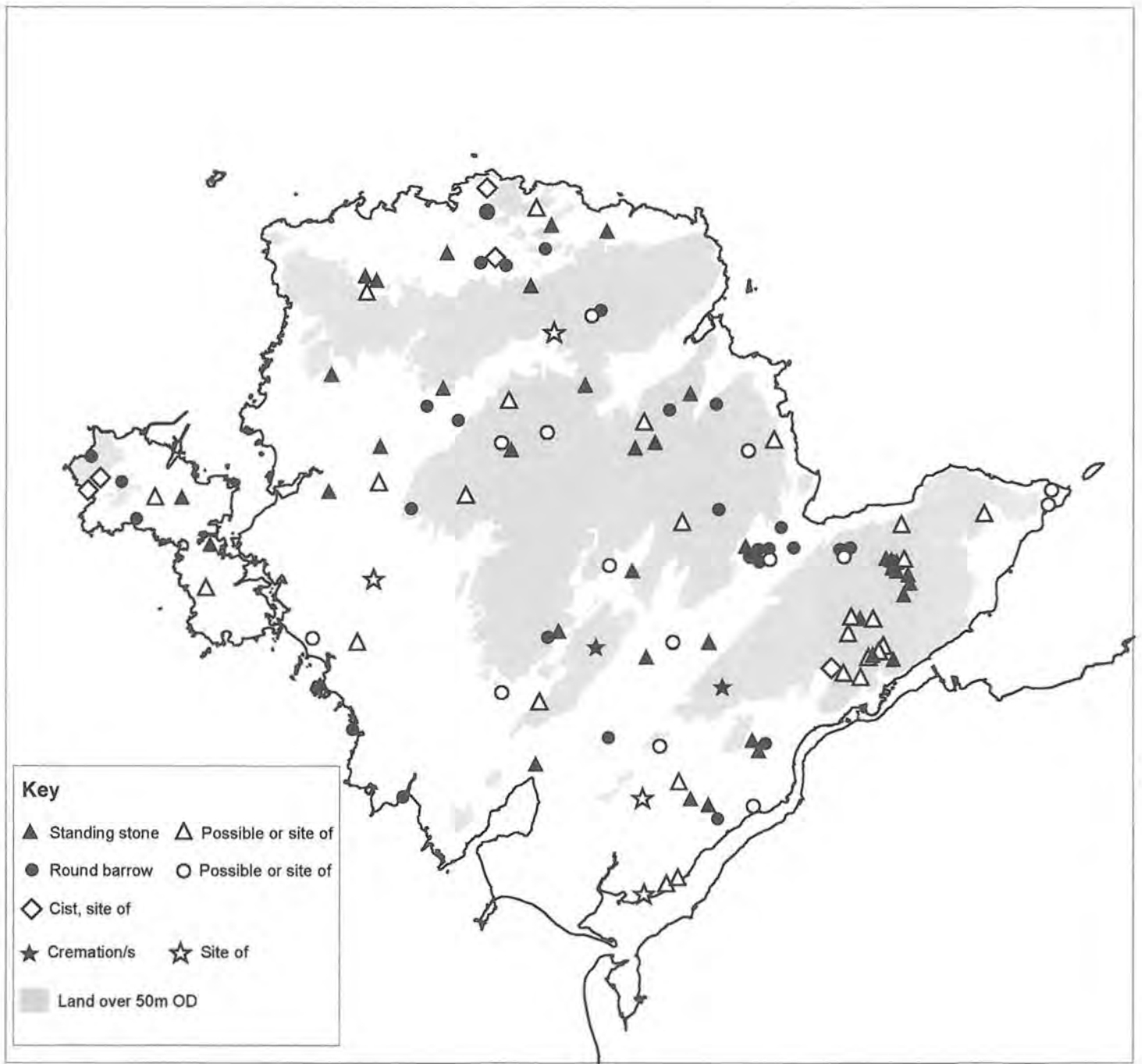
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Fig. 4 The possible Neolithic ceremonial landscape at Castell Bryn Gwyn
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Fig. 6 The distribution of Bronze Age funerary and ritual monuments in Anglesey

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