

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

WELSH HISTORIC CHURCHES PROJECT

THE HISTORIC CHURCHES OF BRECONSHIRE

CHURCH SURVEY



St David's Church, Llandewi'r Cwm

CPAT Report No 308

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Report for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

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Introduction

This report offers a detailed description of every historic church still used as a place of worship in the old county of Breconshire. In this context 'historic' is taken to mean apply to any church which pre-dates the beginning of the 19th century, or a Victorian church which occupies an earlier site. Excluded are those churches which were built on greenfield sites in the 19th century, and also Brecon Cathedral.

Each church description follows a standardised format. The diocese in which the church is situated, its dedication and where known any earlier dedication, the PRN or Primary Record Number which is attributed to it in the regional Sites and Monuments Record held in Welshpool, and an eight-figure Grid Reference, are all given at the beginning of the description.

General and architectural **summaries** of the church follow, the latter indicating in outline the main building phases of the church, as far as these can be discerned from the architectural details and the fabric.

The **history** of the church is an outline only, drawing on readily available sources of information. Where the history has been thoroughly researched by earlier writers, the story will be much fuller than for the rather more numerous buildings where little documentary examination has taken place.

The **architecture** of the church is considered in detail except where the building is wholly Victorian when only a summary description is provided. The description of each church follows the same pattern: the exterior starting on the north side of the church and moving clockwise around the building, with a discussion of each compartment of the building starting again with the north side, followed by the east, south and west sides where applicable. The interior is then treated in the same way.

Furnishings and fittings are described briefly. The list of those that are of pre-19th century date should be reasonably comprehensive, but that of 19th-century and later features is selective.

The more significant features of the **churchyard** are described including an indication of the earliest monuments and any churchyard furniture, and any earthworks which suggest the enlargement or contraction of the enclosure.

The **sources** used in the compilation of the report are listed and a bibliography is provided at the end of the volume. The following abbreviations are used:

CPAT - Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, Welshpool

NLW - National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

NMR - National Monument Record (held at Aberystwyth by the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales)

SMR - Sites and Monuments Record

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Aberyscir

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Cynidr and Mary

PRN 16704

NGR SO00032967

GENERAL SUMMARY

Aberyscir church is dedicated to St Mary and St Cynidr and occupies a sub-triangular churchyard, 5km to the west of Brecon. The church has little of architectural merit, having been rebuilt in the Victorian era, and there are few fittings that fall within the scope of this project.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Some of the medieval fabric may survive in the base of the north wall and at the south-east corner, and the main north door is certainly medieval, but almost all of the building is a Victorian rebuild.

HISTORY

The origin of the church is unknown, but an early medieval beginning seems quite plausible.

The Saint Davids' Episcopal Register records 'Abbeskeir' in 1400, and in the Valor Ecclesiasticus 'Abrysker' was valued at £3 6s 1d, a low figure in the mid 16thC.

In the early 19thC it was recorded as having nothing more than an earth floor, and Jones termed it 'a miserable little building with a shed at one end'. Its reconstruction was undertaken by C.Buckeridge in 1860.

The vestry was added in 1884.

ARCHITECTURE

Aberyscir church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a porch and vestry both attached to the north side, and a bellcote at the west end of the nave. The building has a south-west/north-east orientation, but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is of regular blocks and slabs of grey and pink sandstone, showing some coursing; dressings in similar material.

'B' is similar to 'A' but masonry is rougher, less regular.

'A' is Victorian masonry, 'B' could be either re-used masonry or original undisturbed medieval stonework.

Roofs: steep slated roof, continuous over nave and chancel; porch has red clay tiles and cross finial.

Drainage: no drainage cut obvious.

Exterior

Porch. General. Victorian in Fabric A, a pointed archway with stopped-chamfers providing access.

Nave and chancel. General. Fabric A; very occasional traces of plaster on south side.

North wall: base slightly battered and bottom 1m or so is in 'B'. Three Victorian windows of standard type (see south wall).

East wall: a slight batter at base, but 'A' throughout though heavy ivy cover. Victorian window of three lights with hoodmoulding and relieving arch. Four late 18thC and early 19thC mural tablets pinned to wall, three of them broken.

South wall: possible earlier foundation shows at south-east corner, but this is quickly covered by rising ground level further west. Chancel has small trefoiled light and priest's door with two-centred arch, stopped-chamfers and a relieving arch over: both Victorian. Nave has three windows each with two trefoiled lights in grey sandstone.

West wall: all in Fabric 'A'. Bellcote foundation projects and has battered base and ashlar quoins. Bellcote is substantial structure with two bells, an integral part of the overall design. Window in wall beneath.

Vestry. General. Later than nave having been added in 1884, with subterranean boiler room approached by door in west wall.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone flagged floor, simple collar roof, plastered walls, stone benches on the sides and an octagonal stoup set out from west wall. Giving access to nave is broad low doorway, with a two-centred arch and chamfers with simple V-stops it could be as early as the 13thC but Haslam suggested it was 15thC. Whichever, it is the only medieval architectural feature surviving in the church.

Nave and Chancel. General. Flagged floor, including one worn graveslab in nave except for tiled strip at west end; wooden boards beneath benches. Chancel floor is carpeted with three steps up to sanctuary. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Nave roof is barrel vaulted; the chancel has wagon roof, painted blue; a main arch-braced truss painted red and springing from corbels, replaces chancel arch. Old timber used in this roof according to Dawson.

West wall of nave has foliate cross slab set against it, and adjacent to it a fireplace with a chamfered arch over.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stoup: octagonal; medieval.

Monuments: "large tapering slab incised with a foliate cross and inscribed round the border; c.1500?" (Haslam).

Graveslab: in nave floor near pulpit, possibly as early as 1638 but difficult to read and could be late 18thC.

Mural slabs on external east wall of chancel: to Elizabeth Jones (d.1783) and husband John (d.1784); flaked inscription, the deceased dying in 1787; to Thomas Jones (d.1787); and finally to Mary Probert (d.1804).

Church plate: chalice dates to 1726.

CHURCHYARD

Aberyscir churchyard is sub-triangular in form and lies back from the tip of a spur isolated by the confluence of the Rivers Ysgir and Usk; on its north side is a shallow dry valley.

The ground enclosed in the churchyard is relatively flat except at the east end where it starts to tip toward the Ysgir.

Churchyard is well-maintained and is still used for burials - most recently in 1991.

Boundary: On north-east side a stone revetment wall on the sloping ground gives way to a scarp bank which may disguise a continuation of the wall. At north-west corner in vicinity of entrance is a well made stone wall, with little evidence in this quarter that the interior is raised. Stone wall continues on south and here some evidence of lower ground level externally, though in part this could be due to natural slope.

Monuments: these are relatively dense on the south and west, the older monuments going back to the 1770s on the south, though most are of the 19thC. Those on the north are predominantly 20thC. Many show the usual degree of weathering and some are broken or tipped over.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: north of the church a faint platform is detectable, curving underneath eastern end of nave. If not natural its purpose is unclear.

Ancillary features: double iron gates, small and ornate on the north-west, with a small old-fashioned street lamp just inside. Tarmac path leads to porch.

Vegetation: two mature yews by path; conifers and deciduous trees around boundary.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 September 1995
Dawson 1909, 1
Haslam 1979, 280
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Appears to be in reasonable condition, though paint blistering on south wall.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Alltmawr

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Mauritius**PRN** 16705**NGR** SO07344687

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mauritius' church, one of the smallest in Wales, is sited on the west bank of the River Wye, 5km south of Builth Wells. It has limited architectural interest for its windows are 18thC and much of the fabric was replaced in the 19thC. There is a medieval font and some of the post-medieval pews are retained at the back of the church.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Plan outline could be early as 13thC. Original walling survives on north and west sides of nave, and east wall of chancel; the date however remains uncertain, and conceivably this masonry could be as late as the 18thC windows that are placed in it. The south wall of the nave together with the north and south walls of the chancel, and probably most of the porch are 19thC.

HISTORY

Nothing is known of the early history of the church. An early medieval origin might be suspected.

No medieval references have been encountered, and it is likely to have been a dependent chapel rather than a church.

Structurally there was some refurbishment in the 18thC and again at the end of the 19thC when the chancel was modified.

ARCHITECTURE

St Mauritius' Church comprises a nave, hexagonal chancel, porch and west bellcote. The church is aligned fractionally south of west.

Fabrics: 'A' small to medium slabs of fine-grained sedimentary rock (perhaps a siltstone?), grey in colour though with occasional red sandstone lumps incorporated; some coursing; remnants of limewash left. 'B' as 'A' but more blocks of stone and also large, roughly dressed quoins in grey shaly sandstone. 'C' of thicker, more regular slabs of sedimentary rock, grey to dark grey.

Roof: shale slabs and ceramic roof tiles, except for vestry which has wooden shingles. No finials.

Bellcote above west gable with two opposing apertures, dressed stone; a single bell. 19thC.

Drainage: church is terraced into slope to depth of 0.6m at west end and shale slabs at base of the terrace would indicate some drainage function. A trench is visible, too, on south around porch and perhaps around

chancel.

Exterior

Nave. North wall: Fabric A; wall leans inwards slightly; basal courses to height of c.0.7m are rougher than rest of wall face and lack any limewash, perhaps a result of formerly being covered by soil? Two rectangular wooden windows with wooden lintels; that to west has one light, the more easterly two; lights have segmental heads.

East wall: chancel roof only c.0.2m lower so very little is visible.

South wall: no obvious limewash until the top 0.4m of the wall. The masonry has a fresher appearance with brown siltstone slabs and occasional red sandstone; this could be a result of less weathering or alternately because of rebuilding. In this context the base of the wall to a height of 0.3m is a projecting plinth which could perhaps be an earlier survival. One window with a four-centred arch and Y-tracery in wood, and rough stone utilised for jambs of embrasure. Set into wall and partly behind the porch roof is a timber which looks like the lintel of a blocked window for which there is no other evidence.

West wall: all 'A' except perhaps for extreme south-west angle which could be rebuilt; limewash remnants visible. Wooden rectangular window with two lights having segmental heads and a re-used wooden lintel. Wall is quite rough, and it is possible that this window has been inserted.

Vestry. General. Abuts north walls of both nave and chancel. In rough Fabric A; wooden window in west wall, door and window in east wall.

Chancel. General. In Fabric B on north and south, with some evidence of limewash on north side. Previously, there had been a standard rectangular chancel, but at the end of 19thC, the north and south walls were removed and were replaced by tangential walls that linked to the central part of the east wall to form a smaller chancel.

North wall: one lancet window with chamfered dressings in pink sandstone.

East wall: Fabric A with higher parts incorporating window in Fabric C; lancet window as on north side. Base of wall has projecting plinth.

South wall: standard lancet window and no plinth.

Porch. East and west walls: both plain, but former has a projecting foundation course.

South wall: wide four-centred archway turned in unchamfered blocks; in red sandstone and grey shaly sandstone. Probably of no great age. No gate.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor. Pitched ceiling is plastered.

North wall: wooden two-centred arched doorway. Remainder of wall is panelled, in part with old pews and perhaps other re-used timber.

East and west walls: wooden seats and, above this, panelling consisting of old pews.

Nave. General. Flagged floor, carpeted over; no obvious heating grilles. Plastered walls. Roof of three bays has tie beams, king posts and raking struts, and collars, but plastered over at collar level; many of the timbers have stop-chamfered edges - thought to be late 18thC/early 19thC.

North wall: two splayed windows; old pews used to panel wall faces.

East wall: divide with chancel distinguished only by tie beam without king post and struts.

South wall: as north wall, but a single window and one 20thC brass.

West wall: one splayed window and a 19thC mural tablet.

Chancel. General. One step up from nave; flagged floor with carpet over; sanctuary is a raised wooden plinth. Plastered walls. Roof is plastered over but shows purlins and rafters.

North wall: splayed window; simple passage to vestry.

South wall: splayed window; blocked recess looks as though it could have functioned as a priest's door, but nothing externally to suggest it was so used.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: circular bowl on octagonal stem, probably 13thC. Brought from Aberedw, Radnorshire.

Box Pews: 18thC, at rear of the church.

Pulpit: 18thC.

CHURCHYARD

Alltmawr churchyard is small and irregularly D-shaped. Internally it slopes gently from west to east, and is set on a natural shelf above the valley floor of the River Wye, 200m to the east.

Its curvilinear perimeter on the north-east is not matched elsewhere, but there is a strong possibility that modifications have occurred to both the west and south-east sides, though these are now irrecoverable because of building and landscaping respectively.

The churchyard is well-maintained and still used for burial.

Boundary: an ivy covered stone wall defines the boundary on the south and this continues round the south-east, and the north-east where it is of double thickness. There is a high stone wall on the north, and buildings fronted by a small fence on the west. A slight scarp bank in front of the more northerly building could represent the earlier boundary. Around the eastern side of the churchyard, the external ground level is about a metre lower. Though this points to a raised interior, some of the height difference may be due to the local topography.

Monuments: not dense, but appearing in reasonable numbers; unmarked graves on south and modern burials to the east. The earliest marked graves have flat slabs of 1737/1756 and 1768.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: there is an ungated entrance east of the church, a small ornamental gate giving access

from Chapel House on the north, and the main entrance, also ungated, on the south-west. Grass paths.

Vegetation: one large yew tree in the south-west corner.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 23 March 1996

Dawson 1909, 3

Haslam 1979, 281

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Some damp as shown by blistering in nave window embrasures, on the west wall, and on the ceiling; otherwise okay.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Very Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor

Battle

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Cynog

PRN 16707

NGR SO00853185

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cynog's church lies close to the lip of the Ysgir valley about 3km north-west of Brecon. The church is a simple structure rebuilt in 1880 with virtually nothing of earlier date apart from its roof. The rectangular churchyard disguises a sub-circular predecessor.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The church was completely rebuilt in 1880, though the late medieval roof was re-erected.

HISTORY

The dedication, location and morphology of the earlier enclosure point to an early medieval origin.

Early references to Battle, even late medieval ones, are very rare. Nothing appears in the 13thC taxation returns, but the Valor Ecclesiasticus refers to 'Capella de Batell' in 1535.

The early 19thC chapel is depicted in Jeston Humprey's copy of Jones' 'History of Brecknockshire' (c.1820), at least one three-light window having reticulated tracery.

Glynne visited the whitewashed church in 1865, noting the lack of division between nave and chancel, the presence of a west bellcote, a Perpendicular east window of three lights, and a poor Perpendicular window of two lights in the north wall of the chancel. The remaining windows were modern. Internally there was a wagon roof, the north doorway had a pointed arch and nearby was a large square stoup.

The church was entirely rebuilt by J. Bacon Fowler of Brecon in 1880, though the specification for the works implies a much more limited level of repair, with replacement of the old pews and paving, demolition of the old bell-turret and the construction of a vestry.

ARCHITECTURE

Battle is a small church consisting of a nave and chancel in one, a north porch, a south vestry and a bell turret towards the west of the nave. It is aligned fractionally south of due west.

Fabric: small to medium slabs, with some blocks, of grey-brown sandstone, weathering to grey; the weathering may disguise a greater range of masonry; dressed blocks for quoins; some coursing.

Roofs: slates; ceramic ridge tiles, ornamented over chancel; finial, probably incomplete, over west end of nave.

Drainage: concrete and tile gully, generally at least 0.3m wide and 0.3m deep on all sides except east and around porch.

Note: as this church was entirely rebuilt in the late 19thC the following is only a summary description.

Exterior

General. Base of each wall battered to height of c.0.4m. West wall completely rendered with no windows or other features. Remaining walls of bare stone.

Rectangular wooden bell-turret, with two rectangular openings containing ogee-headed tracery on each side.

Windows on north and south consist of groups of two and three round-headed lights with sunken spandrels, all reasonably fresh in appearance, and in light sandstone. East window of three ogee-headed lights with cinquefoil tracery and cusped panels above, all under a two-centred arch with hoodmoulding.

Porch. General. Ashlar pillars support outer wooden two-centred archway; decorated barge boards. Plain side walls set on chamfered plinth at 0.3m.

Vestry. General. Conforms to rest of building though south window comprises pair of trefoil-headed lights.

Interior

General. Floors tiled but carpeted over; flush wooden boarding for benches; chancel approached by two steps, the sanctuary by one. Walls plastered and whitewashed (in yellow). Wagon-roof of sixty panels over nave and chancel with moulded ribs and purlins and plastered interspaces, this the only surviving medieval feature, from c.1500.

Splayed windows, the dressing bare, and wooden lintels on inner parts of the soffits. Hexagonal stoup on north wall just inside door; brasses and mural tablets on south wall and marble mural tablets on west wall. All these are of late date (i.e. 19thC), though some pre-date the rebuilding of 1880.

Porch. General. Tiled floor; plain unplastered walls; roof of collars and collar purlins. Main doorway to church has two-centred arch with stopped chamfers on the jambs; in reddish-grey sandstone but all Victorian.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stoup: plain, in grey sandstone; hexagonal and could be of any date.

Monuments: earliest monument in church is to Henry Mitchell of Battle (d.1782) and his daughter-in-law (d.1814), by Millward of Hay.

CHURCHYARD

The present churchyard is roughly rectangular with the church erected close to its southern edge. That this form, which was certainly in existence in 1847, bears little relationship to the original enclosure is suggested by a bank and scarp both within and outside the present churchyard wall (see below). There is thus every reason to believe that originally the church lay more centrally within a sub-circular enclosure.

The ground within the present churchyard falls gently from north to south though the church itself is on relatively flat ground. A short distance to the south the ground falls away steeply to the valley of the Ysgir

and a dry tributary valley.

It is well maintained and is used for modern burials.

The present boundary is provided by a stone wall, drystone in places, mortared in others. West of the main north entrance, this is set on a low bank, elsewhere it is on level ground. In general there is little obvious evidence of a raised interior though on the south the ground level appears to be 0.5m higher internally.

Monuments: dense in places on the north, with modern burials in the north-west, and just a few graves to the south of the church. East of the chancel are two 18thC graveslabs, the legible one of 1782. Most of the gravestones and tomb chests are, however, probably 19thC though weathering and lichen are effective disguises.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: west and north-west of the church are traces of a broad low bank up to 6m wide, and it is probably a continuation of this bank that underlies the boundary wall on the north side. South of the present churchyard in the gardens of Bryn yr Haf and Y Dderwen a continuation running along the valley lip, has been postulated though the evidence is faint. Overall there is reasonable evidence for a sub-circular enclosure about 60m across.

Ancillary features: double iron gates on north, with ornamental lamp holder (but no lamp) arching over. Tarmac path to porch.

Vegetation: two sizeable yew trees to the west and north-east of the church; otherwise bushes and a few small trees around the periphery.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 March 1996
Faculty 1880: NLW/SD/F/31
Glynne 1886, 270
Haslam 1979, 281
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR

CONDITION

One crack in external west face and some minor paint blistering inside.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Poor to Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor

Bettws Penpont

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication No known dedication

PRN 16934

NGR SN97292852

GENERAL SUMMARY

Bettws Penpont church has no known dedication. It lies in the valley of the Usk 7km west of Brecon. A medieval chapel on this site is a possibility but the present building is almost entirely a Scott creation of the 1860s and contains virtually nothing that pre-dates his edifice.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Rebuilt in 1864, incorporating a little of an earlier tower.

HISTORY

On the basis of a statement in a law suit of 1738 which claimed that 'the chapel had belonged to Castell Einon Sais or some religious house' it has been suggested - though not convincingly - that the chapel was founded in the 12thC or 13thC.

It formerly went under the name of Bettws or Capel Bettws, and the first identifiable church on the site was a chapel of ease to Llanspyddid, erected by the Williams family, owners of the nearby house of Penpont. Its erection is not dated but by 1738 it was ruinous. A new chapel was built in 1789 and this probably included a tower with a bee-hive top similar to that on the old church at Llansantffraid-juxta-Usk. It was at this time too that the churchyard was walled.

In 1864 the chapel was rebuilt in Early English style by Sir George Gilbert Scott. It was given the status of parish church in 1880.

ARCHITECTURE

Bettws Penpont church comprises a nave and chancel in one, the latter having an apsidal east end, a round tower at the west end, an organ chamber off the south side of the chancel, and a vestry off the south side of the tower. It is oriented south-west/north-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is used here.

Fabrics: 'A' is of shaped blocks and slabs of sandstone, mostly grey but some red, randomly coursed; freestone dressings.

'B' is similar but the blocks are not so regular; heavy pointing. Possibly re-used material.

'C' is similar to 'B' but grey sandstone throughout.

Roofs: reconstituted clay tiles.

Drainage: stone drain along north and south sides.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Fabric 'A' throughout. Main doorway on north side. Wholly Victorian.

Tower. General. Circular with conical roof. In Fabrics 'B' and 'C', the windows all with sandstone dressings dating from 1864. Most of tower is in 'B', but on the north side the first 4m-5m is in 'C' and this appears to be the sole survival from the 18thC chapel. The earlier tower seems to have had a greater diameter than its successor, so to accommodate the curve of the 18thC masonry a wing wall was built out from the nave. The west and south sides of the tower are completely Victorian.

Interior

General. All floors of flagstones, partly carpet-covered. Griffiths noted the re-use of a graveslab of 1762. Walls completely whitewashed, except for window dressings. Nave has scissor-beam roof, the chancel a hemicyclical wood-ribbed vault. Tower forms a narrow west apse and serves as a baptistry.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Plate: flagon (1717) and chalice and patten (1738).

Otherwise 19thC fittings include:

Stained glass: "five east lancets by Hardman; nave south window by Burlison & Grylls; west window of 1892" (Haslam).

Organ: by Flight & Robson, 1804; reputed to have come from the Royal Pavilion in Brighton about 1865.

Memorials: to Penry Williams, Lord Lieutenant of Breconshire, 1836-47; Prebendary Garnons Williams and Herbert Williams, vicars of Brecon.

Hatchments: two, on north and south sides of tower. One is mid-19thC, the other is undated.

Register: from 1813.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard occupies level ground, a little above the valley floor of the River Usk which flows past the site a short distance to the north, and to the west of the churchyard a small stream originating on Mynydd Illtyd runs northwards to join the river. Its shape has an irregular D-shaped outline.

It is reasonably well-maintained and is still used for burial.

Boundary: on the south is a stone wall defining the perimeter beside the main road. This is transformed on the east into a low bank with a stone facing, the external ground level higher than the churchyard interior. Another stretch of wall about 1m high is visible on the north but this gives way to a scarp bank surmounted by yew trees opposite Penpont House and in this form the boundary continues around the west.

Monuments: these lie in a fairly dense crescent around the north side of the church, and there are a few scattered around the south side. East of the chancel there are memorials of 1767 and 1785, with perhaps a few other early, but now illegible examples.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none of any significance.

Vegetation: large numbers of yews, some seemingly quite ancient.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 September 1995

Dawson 1909, 9

Haslam 1979, 367

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys County Council leaflet: 1978

CONDITION

Not recorded.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor

Brecon

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Mary

PRN 16720

NGR SO04522852

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church which acquired parochial status only in 1923 is a fine church situated in the heart of Brecon. The great tower dates to the earlier part of the 16thC but the rest of the building, with aisles coupled to nave and chancel, is earlier, generally early 14thC through to late 15thC, and a couple of the aisle piers go back to previous centuries. Regrettably the varied and interesting architectural detail is not matched by contemporary internal features, and its former status as an urban chapel means that there was no churchyard.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower is as first built though some of fenestration has replacement dressings; little of the nave externally is visible and some of that is replaced in the 19thC. Internally it reveals a more complex development starting with what is thought to have been a short aisled church of the mid-12thC, the sole evidence of which is a single surviving pier. A second pier opposite is also circular but of a different design and is attributed to the early 13thC. Finally an octagonal pier at the west end of the south arcade is dated to the early 14thC.

The north aisle is said to have been rebuilt in the earlier 14thC, and there is one unrestored Decorated window in the north wall; most of the western end is a Victorian rebuild.

The chancel appears to have been lengthened in the later 15thC; the Perpendicular window at the east end and the butt joint in the south wall confirm this.

The south aisle on the basis of its Y-tracery windows dates to the early 14thC, but again on the basis of a single pier in the south arcade it should be a rebuild. A blocked doorway is visible half way along this side. There appears to be some rebuilding at the west end of the south wall: though conceivably this is no more than a contemporaneous masonry change, it is possible that it is contemporary with the erection of the south porch, perhaps in the late 15thC. However, the masonry phasing of the south aisle and porch is not properly resolved.

HISTORY

St Mary's was erected as a chapel of ease within the town walls, probably late in the 12thC. It was enlarged in the 14thC and a new tower was added around 1510-20 by Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, at a cost of £2,000, its style reflecting this patronage.

The Taxatio of 1254 refers to 'Ecclesia de Brechonia' and its successor in 1291 rated it at £20 in value.

About 1690 that part of the south aisle near the south door was partitioned off to form a room for the Ecclesiastical Consistory Church of the Archdeaconry of Brecon.

There have been a series of restorations starting with the fabric in 1831 and continuing in 1856, with the

renewal of the arcades in yellow stone and perhaps some dressings, by T. H. Wyatt, who may also have been responsible for the scissor truss roofs.

Glynne when he visited the church in 1847 found a north porch, the interior encumbered with pews and the west gallery protruding into the nave. The northy side had houses close against it, and consequently there were few windows.

In 1928 W.D. Caroe replaced the reredos, stalls, and organ case, and finally, in 1949, the screen.

St Mary's became a parish church in 1923.

ARCHITECTURE

St Mary's comprises a nave and chancel of similar width, a south aisle comparable in length with the nave and choir combined, a shorter north aisle, a west tower against the west end of the nave, a small south porch and a vestry against the east end of the north aisle. The church is oriented fractionally north of grid west.

Fabrics: 'A' of medium and large blocks of red sandstone, regularly coursed, with occasional grey sandstone incorporated.

'B' is of random blocks and slabs of multi-coloured sandstones, some soot blackened; little obvious coursing; dressings of pink and grey sandstone.

'C' is of small slabs of red and grey sandstone, regular coursed.

'D' is of slightly irregular blocks and slabs of grey, red and buff sandstone, small to medium in size and randomly coursed.

'E' is of regular blocks and slabs of frequently buff sandstone.

'F' is similar to 'D' but the masonry, predominantly grey and red sandstone, is less well-coursed, more randomly set.

'B' is medieval, and 'D' is considered to have been used in both the 14thC and 15thC with re-use in the 19thC; 'F' may be late 15thC; 'A' is early 16thC; 'C' is Victorian.

Roofs: in red and grey reconstituted clay tiles with plain ridge tiles and no finials, except for a cross finial to the chancel.

Drainage: impossible to determine because largely edged by tarmac.

Exterior

Tower. General. The finest tower in Powys with its red battlements and carved waterspouts visible all over the town (Haslam). Fabric A. Several string-courses: i) above basal plinth at height of c.1.0m; ii) hollow-moulded at top of second stage; iii) at top of third stage; iv) at top of fourth stage with gargoyles, and battlemented parapet above. Diagonal stepped buttresses at two western angles, integral in that the string-courses run around them, and rising to just below the highest string-course; and on south and west sides there is a chamfered plinth at ground level in addition to that already noted. An octagonal turret rises above the north-east corner and is topped by a weathercock.

North wall: wall face shows some patching with flatter blocks of stones in third stage. At ground level, a narrow, two-centred arched doorway without dressings, and a simple wooden door. In the third stage is a large two-centred arched window with three ogee-headed lights having cusped tracery, four panels above and minor lights as well - the whole is blocked in red sandstone to the bottom of the ogee-heads; the arch is in dressed stone but not the jambs. Fourth stage has a similar window illuminating belfry, but some replacement of the tracery elements; there are no louvre boards but instead a 'grille of ornamental stonework'. Two gargoyles.

Small quatrefoil lights for stair turret: two in second stage in north face, and one in the north-east face; two in both of the third and fourth stages again in the north-east face. The last stage of the turret is inset with its own string-course above and two gargoyles just below its battlements.

East wall: apex of nave rises to just above top of second stage. The third stage has a standard, partially blocked, window with some tracery replacement, and the string-course rises over this as a hoodmoulding. The fourth stage has a clock face, and above it a standard window some of which may be replaced. Two gargoyles.

South wall: as north wall for all windows, but it can be noted that the stone edging the windows is well dressed, and the tracery appears very fresh; together with some of the coping stones on the buttress, much appears to have been replaced.

West wall: dominated by an inserted Victorian window in the Perpendicular style in cream-coloured sandstone, having five ogee-headed lights with cinquefoil tracery, panels, a hoodmoulding with decorated stops and a big relieving arch. Haslam sees this as an original window much refurbished. A standard window in the third stage, greyish sandstone in the arch indicating replacement, and likewise some replacement in the standard belfry window above. Two gargoyles.

Nave. General. Disguised almost totally by the aisles, only a small part of the north wall is visible at the west end where it abuts the tower turret.

North wall: most of visible wall is in 'B'. There are quoins at what would be the north-west angle, now butting against the stair turret but two quoin stones actually act as ties with the turret. Close to the angle with the north aisle is a vertical line of chamfered dressings which can only be the jambs of a blocked window. Beyond this up to the north aisle the masonry is 'C'.

North aisle. North wall: west end is in Fabric C though the masonry is a little more regular and has more blocks; set in this is a Victorian door in buff sandstone and having complex mouldings, the inner order with stops; relieving arch and lamp over; heavily sooted, a result of a building backing up against it in the last century, though Dawson recorded a north porch at the beginning of the century. This is now the main entrance to the church. East of the doorway is a clear break with 'C' giving way to Fabric 'D'; almost immediately there is a plinth at ground level, some 2m long and about 0.4m high; its significance is uncertain, and other than this the base of 'D' is faintly battered. Set in the rest of the wall are five windows, the second blocked though perfectly visible on the outside. The first window is in buff sandstone and has a two-centred arch over two lights with cusped tracery and a quatrefoil above; wholly Victorian. The second window is blocked in material not dissimilar to 'D', but many jambs in grey sandstone survive. Beyond this point the 'D' masonry is less clean and more weathered but is undoubtedly 'D'. The third window is similar to the first but has a trefoil rather than a quatrefoil above the lights, and the chamfered dressings are original and unrestored. The fourth and fifth windows are both Victorian replacements, similar in form but shorter than the first window. The masonry around these windows is sootier; otherwise it is similar and suggests that the insertion of new windows was accompanied by the re-use of existing stonework. The top courses in the wall throughout its length are in Fabric 'E' suggesting that the roof has been raised at sometime, logically after the Victorian insertion for at the west end it lies above 'C' as well.

West wall: in 'C'. There is a two-light window with broad cusps and three trefoils above, all in weathered pale sandstone; the tracery is particularly weathered, the chamfered jambs less so. Notwithstanding this, it must be a Victorian (or perhaps slightly earlier?) replacement.

East wall: the Victorian vestry abutting this wall effectively disguises it.

Chancel. General. Fabric 'D' though some largish blocks, and in the east wall a mixture of red and grey sandstone.

North wall: battered base though part protrudes more than the rest for no obvious reason. A two-centred window with two lights having cinquefoil tracery, all replaced, but the chamfered jambs and mullion are

original.

East wall: battered to 1.2m. A large Perpendicular window with a two-centred arch, five lights with cinquefoil heads, a transom and four panels above; some of the jamb- and arch-stones are original but the tracery has been replaced, not necessarily all at the same time.

South wall: this is gently battered. A two-centred arched window with two lights that have cinquefoil heads and a diamond light in the tympanum; the tracery has been renewed but most of the jambstones and perhaps the mullion are original. At the extreme west end, close against the south aisle angle, is a butt joint, stopping just below the eaves; little is visible but there could be quoin stones on the west side of the butt joint, and this appears to bear out the contention that the chancel has been enlarged.

South aisle. General. Fabric D; base battered to maximum height of c.1.1m. Considered to be early 14thC.

East wall: wall abuts quoins of chancel south wall (see above). Fabric D at lower levels but at higher levels more irregular and flakey akin to Fabric B. Door at north end of wall. Two-centred arched window has three stepped lights with cusped heads; these and the mullions have been renewed in light yellow stone, but the moulded jamb and the archstones are original. Window not centrally placed in wall.

South wall: In Fabric D with selected stones for quoins. A complex wall. From east: i) window with two-centred arch and Y-tracery, the two lights with trefoiled heads; mullion and tracery above it renewed in yellow sandstone, and some jambs appear to be renewed also, but the arch is original and much weathered; ii) larger window with three stepped lights with plain heads, the mullions and springers replaced, as are some jambs; but again the two-centred head is original; iii) third window is two-centred with Y-tracery, two plain lights and a diamond light above, the mullion renewed in red sandstone, part of the arch replaced in buff sandstone, and the sill, too, replaced; the rest original; iv) between third and fourth windows is a blocked doorway, its arch broad and probably two-centred, but the edge picked out only by a change in stone except lower down where jamb-like stones are visible; v) fourth window is the same as third with some replacement of dressings: the mullion in yellow and some patching to the west jamb; vi) west of fourth window is an irregular joint, 'D' giving way to 'F'; the south porch appears to be set against this although it is conceivable that the aisle wall behind the porch is still 'D'; above the porch is a square-headed window with two trefoil-headed lights, most of the dressings being renewed; vii) immediately to the west of the porch is a near-vertical strip of infilled masonry reaching to the full height of the wall; its significance is not clear. Could it relate to a chimney?; vii) beyond this the masonry reverts to 'F' and contains a sixth window, with a two-centred arch, Y-tracery, two lights with trefoil heads and an irregular quatrefoil light above; most of the jambs are original, the rest largely renewed. The lower part of the wall is in 'D' and above this the juncture rises towards the south-west angle.

West wall: considered to be in Fabric D. At base of wall is a boiler room which is below ground level and is approached by brick steps; there is a chimney at the apex of the roof and an infilled channel leads across the wall face to it. The wall face also exhibits the diagonal scar of a pitched roof line from a building now gone, its apex at the south end of the aisle wall. Above this is a window of two trefoiled lights, all the dressings original except for the mullion.

South porch. General. Abuts south aisle and on the evidence of its roof may be late 15thC. Fabric is probably 'F'.

East wall: plain. A crack just behind the quoins at the south-east angle hints at some rebuilding.

South wall: two-centred archway with stopped chamfers; some renewal of arch stones.

West wall: fresh fabric rather like the infill running down the aisle wall just to the west (see above).

Interior

Tower. General. Tiled floor with carpets. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Ceiled above the level of the west window, but there are springers for a vault which has been dismantled.

North wall: four-centred arched doorway to stair turret, complex stopped mouldings. Benefaction board hangs on wall.

East wall: tower arch (see below under nave).

South wall: benefaction board on wall.

West wall: splayed window embrasure, mostly plastered.

Nave. General. Floor tiles in aisle, benches raised on boarded plinths; rear of nave behind benches covered with carpet. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of close-set scissor trusses with intersecting collar beams.

North wall: primarily a five-bay arcade, leaning slightly outwards, with some though not all the dressed stone exposed - the fifth bay actually opens off the choir. At the west end is a section of plain wall, covered with old photographs and a list of incumbents since 1403. Then the west respond of the arcade which is rectangular, of yellow sandstone, chamfered and with foliate decoration. Next a circular pier with moulded capital. Then a circular pier with a broad scalloped capital supporting a square abacus, the only remnant of the mid-12thC aisled church; the arches springing from the pier are low and pointed and thus probably not contemporary; between them is a shallow round-headed niche fashioned from rough masonry. The next two piers are in yellow sandstone and finally a chamfered respond.

East wall: no division between nave and chancel.

South wall: a short stretch of plain wall at west end and the western respond has two panels containing trefoil-headed blank lights set into it. Then an arcade of seven bays, the last two in the chancel. All the piers have been renewed (and most of the arch stones replaced) except for the third from the west end and even this has a 19thC capital; but it is opposite the 12thC pier in the north arcade, though taller and more slender. The first pier is octagonal though set on a square base, and is considered to be of early 14thC date; it carries an inscription commemorating the establishment of St Mary's as a parish church in 1923.

West wall: high tower arch with complex 16thC mouldings.

North aisle. General. Main door into church in north wall and the three steps down into the church indicate how much the external ground level has been raised up. Floor carpeted. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof as nave. East end occupied by organ, and divided from rest of aisle by a four-centred blind arch of Victorian date.

North wall: tablets with Lord's Prayer (signed by Stanton of London), plus 20thC brasses.

East wall: not inspected.

South wall: arcade. Three corbels for earlier lean-to roof remain above the arches.

West wall: splayed window and beneath are a foliate slab and a Victorian stoup on a column.

Chancel. General. Floor of polished stone slabs; one step up to the sanctuary which is carpeted, one to the altar. Choir stalls on wooden block flooring, raised at rear. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: splayed window; two 19thC brasses.

East wall: splayed window.

South wall: modern parclose screen across one of arcade bays (see nave above). Piscina in triangular-headed niche, drain blocked and shelf inserted.

West wall: none.

South aisle. General. Floor around altar as chancel, the rest carpeted. Walls and roof as nave. West end partitioned off as toilets etc.

North wall: arcade with most of visible stonework replaced.

East wall: splayed window and to south of it a re-set corbel which provides a base for a wooden statuette.

South wall: most of lower wall face panelled with woodwork from old pews. At east end is a piscina with a two-centred arched niche, indicating that the south aisle formerly had its own altar.

West wall: nothing significant except for unexplained disconformity near apex.

South porch. General. Slab floor. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of two bays with three arch-braced trusses and trefoil-cut principals; two tiers of quatrefoil windbraces. Attributed to the late 15thC.

North wall: two-centred arch with stopped chamfers all in grey sandstone; original but unweathered.

East wall: stone bench set into wall. Flaking cross slab set upright above bench.

South wall: wooden door with small dog door set in it.

West wall: bench set into wall.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stoup: "the base is a cluster of shafts and the bowl a half-octagon decorated with ogival arches and pinnacles carried on four corbel-figures. Early 15thC?" (Haslam).

Altar: "on the west pilaster of the south arcade is a shallow slab with two blank trefoiled panels from a reredos. Late 14thC?" (Haslam).

Monuments: "a coffin lid with a raised foliate cross; foliage too on the shaft, all very stylised; and six arrows. 14thC or 15thC. In north aisle. Another in south porch, this incised with a cross. 14thC?" (Haslam).

Registers: from 1635.

Of 19thC date are:

Font and pulpit: "attributable to Wyatt, particularly the latter, which stands on eight colonnettes of coloured marble" (Haslam).

Stained glass: "east window of 1856 by Charles Gibbs; bright and mainly decorative" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

The yard attached to St Mary's consists only of a small plot on the north side of the church which is railed off from the street. It contains a memorial cross to the war dead within a well-maintained grass patch. Until the

late 19thC the yard was occupied by houses.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 22 November 1995

Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 56

Dawson 1909, 23

Glynne 1887, 276

Haslam 1979, 296

CONDITION

Some damp showing up as blistered paintwork in the west window, on the south wall and over the south arcade in the chancel. There are cracks around the south aisle door and elsewhere, and externally the sandstone dressings are flaking on the east wall of the chancel.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Poor

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Poor

Bronllys

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Mary

PRN 16721

NGR SO14383489

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Mary at Bronllys, 12km to the north-east of Brecon, has a medieval structure, perhaps of 14thC date, at its core but was considerably reconstructed during the 19thC. It is unusual however for its detached bell-tower. Internally the church retains its original font and a 16thC rood screen, but otherwise has been largely Victorianised. The churchyard is rectangular but could contain the fossilised outline of a curvilinear predecessor.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The layout of the church conforms to a plan that could be 12thC or 13thC.

Nave rebuilt on east and south sides and some of west; all the windows are Victorian, whether inserted or erected when the walls were rebuilt.

Chancel also largely rebuilt on all three sides; original masonry only in lower part of north wall and a little of the south wall. Windows again all Victorian. Priest's door thought to be 14thC, one of the few authentic pieces of diagnostic stonework.

Porch rebuilt presumably in the Victorian period, but retains late medieval roof and entrance, 15thC or perhaps earlier 16thC.

Haslam has dismissed comments on the tower in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* that it was 'the erection of a nineteenth century humourist', but there have been other suggestions that it was rebuilt in the 18thC. Yet there is no obvious reason to disregard the weathered ogee-headed windows which ought to be 14thC.

HISTORY

There is nothing to signal an early medieval origin for the church here and indeed it is generally assumed that the first church was built by the Clifford family as a new 12thC foundation, following the building of Bronllys Castle. However, the possibility of an earlier churchyard with a curvilinear boundary cannot be wholly ignored.

The church and much of its land were subsequently given to the Cluniac Priory at Clifford in Herefordshire, and were still held by them at the Dissolution. In 1291 it was referred to as 'Ecclesia de Brentles' at the relatively high value of £13 6s 8d, but in 1535 'Bronlles' was worth only £4 15s 11d.

Both nave and chancel were rebuilt in 1887 by Nicholson and Sons, and the roofs and fittings replaced in pitch pine. The bell-tower was restored in 1938-39, and further changes including the shifting of the screen to the west end were made by G.G.Pace in 1969.

ARCHITECTURE

Bronllys church comprises a nave, a narrower chancel, a north porch set centrally on the side of the nave, and a detached bell tower. It is aligned on an east-north-east/west-south-west axis, but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium, irregular lumps and slabs of primarily grey and brown sandstone, though some other colours are also represented, and there are occasional coarser sandstones and 'waterworn stones'; some larger blocks at ground level; the masonry is randomly coursed and there are limewash remnants in places.

'B' is of small lumps of sandstone, grey and red in colour, irregularly coursed.

'C' is of small to medium slabs and blocks of sandstone, with a range of colours: cream, grey, brown and red; regularly coursed.

'D' comprises long slabs of grey and buff-grey sandstone, ranging in size from small to large, irregularly coursed; large blocks used for quoins, some slabs also.

'A' and 'D' are medieval. 'B' and 'C' are Victorian fabrics.

Roofs: reconstituted clay tiles, toothed ridge tiles, and a finial only at the end of the chancel. The bell tower has a low pyramidal roof with similar tiles, and a weathercock above.

Drainage: there is no obvious drainage trench, although in places a hollowing of the ground surface along the wall edges may indicate sub-surface drains.

Exterior

Porch. General. Stone foundation walls with chamfered tops, timber superstructure. In Fabric B with dressed sandstone for quoins and chamfer. The side walls are Victorian but not the gable and entrance.

East wall: plain; undated benefaction board pinned to it.

South wall: broad arch, the same width as the porch. The camber arch formed by arch-bracing that springs from wooden uprights. The gable above is infilled with a tie beam, king post and struts all visible.

West wall: plain.

Nave. General. Fabric A. Buttresses and windows are all Victorian. Lean-to, perhaps a boiler house, against west wall.

North wall: three windows all of different designs. From west: i) round-headed lancet; ii) trefoiled lancet with integral relieving arch; iii) lighting choir is a two-light window with a two-centred arch, the lights with trefoil heads and a trefoil above; also a hoodmoulding with human-headed stops. All three windows clearly inserted with the surrounding masonry slightly sunken compared with the wall face. Possibly the stonework beneath the eaves is of the same build. Interestingly the replacement masonry around the windows has more residual limewash than the rest of the wall.

East wall: on the north side of the chancel, a chamfered plinth continues around the east wall from the step in the angle buttress, and above this is a hollowed string course. The fabric is re-cycled 'A' with limewash traces, and there is no certainly original masonry in this wall. On the south side of the chancel, the wall is all rebuilt in 'C'.

South wall: in 'C' throughout with the windows as on the north side but no sign of insertion.

West wall:- fabric is probably 'A', but it is heavily pointed and lichen covered. The west window consists of a pair of tall lancets with complex moulding, and the hoodmould follows the line of the individual window heads. Around the window the wall is rebuilt and the masonry bulges slightly. The apex of the gable is

slightly concave and shows cleaner masonry, suggesting that it may have been restored even more recently.

Chancel. General. Fabric A, with later rebuilding in 'C'.

North wall: Lower part of wall in 'A', while the upper part is a variation in 'A' - partially re-cycled masonry? - with some smaller material, and also a more weathered appearance. It seems quite likely that the upper part of the wall including the window is rebuilt. Priest's door of 14thC date, with two-centred arch, the whole in red sandstone and original; a single window with a trefoil-headed lancet and a hoodmould with human-headed stops; angle buttress.

East wall: wall is wholly in 'C' with frequent coursing, a chamfered plinth and, at a higher level, a hollowed string course running off the step in the angle buttresses. There is a Victorian three-light window with stepped trefoil-headed lights under a two-centred arch and the usual stopped hoodmould.

South wall: most of the wall is in 'C' but the westernmost 1.5m rises to eaves level in original 'A'. One window as north wall.

Tower. General. Detached, standing a few metres to the north-east of the chancel. Based on a stepped plinth, a single step at the lowest level and two steps above. Above c.6m is a second stage, simply inset without a string-course. First stage in 'D', bottom 2m of second stage in 'A', the remainder in 'D', though the number of blocks of stone included in 'D' varies.

North wall: first stage in 'D' though with some blocks incorporated; it has a slit window with chamfered dressings, probably in the main original. Belfry lit by two louvred lights with ogee heads, though part of one head and the upper part of the mullion have gone.

East wall: slit window in first stage, perhaps with some of the chamfered dressings renewed. Slit window with original dressings in lower part of second stage, and above it a belfry window with an iron band supporting the lower part of the mullion.

South wall: standard belfry window with original, weathered dressings.

West wall: camber-headed doorway at ground level is a complete, modern rebuild. Second stage has standard slit window with original dressings; the belfry windows are in poor condition, the ogee heads have gone and the whole is held together by a modern wooden frame.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor, bare walls of 'C', which in view of the location may indicate that this masonry is simply a contemporary variation of 'B'. Roof of two bays with an arch-braced collar to the central truss, and against the nave wall a tie beam with raking struts; one row of trefoiled windbraces. It is unclear how much of the timber has been replaced but basically this is a 16thC roof.

East wall: stone bench with flag seating along wall.

South wall: two-centred arch with grey sandstone dressings and broach stops to the chamfers - all Victorian and set in contemporary 'C' masonry.

West wall: as east wall.

Nave. General. Stone flags for floor with carpet over most of the exposed surfaces; no obvious grilles; wooden block floors under benches. Walls plastered and whitewashed, though dressings and embrasures just whitewashed. Victorian roof of close-set scissor braces. Step up at eastern end of nave into choir, the

area around the stalls tiled. Utilising the old screen, the western end of the nave is panelled off for a vestry, one step up and its floor of wooden blocks.

North wall: deeply splayed windows; doorway not splayed and has a triangular head to the reveal. Modern stoup beside the door.

East wall: a narrow, high two-centred Victorian chancel arch with floriate decoration. Beside it a simple rectangular doorway, with stopped chamfers, giving onto stairs to the former rood loft.

South wall: deeply splayed windows.

West wall: plain but for splayed window.

Chancel. General. Three steps up, staggered, to altar. Carpeted and tiled aisle and altar surround; re-used graveslabs, the earliest of 1666 through to 1779, on both sides of the aisle. Walls as nave. Painted wagon roof over altar, but elsewhere, braced collars.

North wall: priest's door has triangular-headed embrasure, presumably original, with graveslab for the floor.

East wall: nothing of significance.

South wall: splayed window with sedile beneath and piscina adjacent: the recess and its decoration is Victorian, but the bowl with traces of limewash, has scalloped sides and should be earlier.

West wall: nothing of significance.

Tower. General. Ground floor has flags covered by carpet; bare walls; wooden ceiling and joists at height of c.4m. First floor has wooden floor, and putlog holes in all walls at same level, three in south and north walls, two in west and east walls; also longitudinal timbers, containing mortice holes and running the full length of the south and north walls, just below the present joists, and probably representing an earlier floor support. The third floor has six bells on a solid frame; the belfry windows have cambered arches of edge stones to the reveals, and above each is a re-used timber with mortice joints to relieve the weight on the window.

North wall: deep basal splay to embrasure, the masonry having heavy pointing. Marble mural tablet leans against wall.

East wall: similar to north side.

South wall: no window. A small rectangular recess of unknown purpose, its lintel carved with bellringers' initials.

West wall: faintly splayed reveal to doorway, with camber-headed arch matching the windows.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: bulbous, with four projections, circular stepped base and small square stem; could be 12thC or 13thC.

Screen: "big 16thC Tudor screen with buttressed posts and three bays of foliage-carved spandrels (one spandrel has a 'green man' - a human head sprouting leaves from the mouth); it now stands at the west end of church" (Haslam). Has been moved since Crossley and Ridgway recorded it in 1947 (full details in their article).

Pulpit: of c.1700. Originally in Llandefaillog Tre'r Graig.

Bells: 1721 x 4; 1874 and 1939.

Graveslabs: set in chancel floor; the earliest is to William Williams of Trevithel, Gentleman (d.1666).

Church plate: chalice from 1757.

Registers: from 1759.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is rectangular, and is level in the west part of the yard but drops off gently eastwards. To the south-east the ground falls away to Afon Llynfi, and both church and settlement lie on the northern lip of the valley edge.

The churchyard is well-maintained and is used for modern burial.

Boundary: a stone wall defines the churchyard, free-standing on the north-west but acting more as a retaining wall on the south-east where earth has been banked up behind it and the level of the road outside is perhaps one metre lower.

Monuments: these are spread evenly throughout the yard except to the north of the church. There are a few localised concentrations. Virtually no 18thC graves are recognisable even on the south side of the church. Stacked against the south-west corner of the nave are some mural tablets which were removed from the church in about 1968. One accessible example dates to 1740.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: a slight scarp appears to curve round from opposite the school on the south-west side, passing beyond the south-east angle of the chancel and curving towards the vicarage. The possibility that this is an earlier curvilinear church enclosure cannot be ignored. There is the hint of a second outer scarp further to the east, but this is less convincing.

Ancillary features: stone lychgate with wooden superstructure and gates at the north-east entrance, together with a metal kissing gate. A small wooden gate gives access to the vicarage on the north-west and both are served by tarmac paths.

Vegetation: several yews of which the two north of the church (and close to the putative earlier boundary) could be the oldest, while those near the lychgate and against the south-east boundary are younger.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1995

CPAT Field Visit: 6 June 1996

Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 59

Haslam 1979, 302

Martin and Walters 1993, 29

Owens 1994: Church Guide

CONDITION

Some damp patches including the west wall of the nave and in the chancel where there are also minor cracks. A large chunk of plaster has been removed from the south wall opposite the main entrance, presumably again because of damp. Otherwise it appears to be satisfactory.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium to Good

Builth Wells

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Mary

PRN 16675

NGR SO03965103

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church at Builth Wells lies close to the River Wye in a large rectilinear churchyard. Most of the building was constructed in the later 19thC, leaving only the medieval tower, though the site of the medieval church lies to the east of its Victorian successor. There are some internal features of interest, but few for a church of this size.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The tower is the only part of the building with a medieval origin. It is thought to date from c.1300, but appears to have been heightened subsequently. The rest of the edifice dates from 1873-5.

HISTORY

St Mary's church is traditionally ascribed to the Normans although there is no direct evidence for this. While there would certainly have been a church in Builth during the Norman period its exact site is not known, and the religious needs of the early town may have been met by the castle chapel which is recorded as being served by monks from Brecon well into the 13thC.

A separate church certainly existed by 1283, when it is recorded as being in dispute with the castle chapel over the numbers of services held at each site.

The church does not feature in either 13thC Taxatio, but in the St Davids' Episcopal Register for 1513, it is termed 'Llanfair', while the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 records 'Ecclesia de Bouelt' with a value of £8.

The medieval church was rebuilt in 1793, leaving the medieval tower. In turn it was replaced with the present building by John Norton in 1873-5. The 18thC nave was left standing during the construction, hence the reason why the tower, conventionally erected at the west end of a church, is now at the east.

Fenton at the beginning of the 19thC saw few graves in the churchyard and most of those were on the south side of the church.

ARCHITECTURE

Builth Wells church consists of a nave and chancel, a south aisle with the south porch near its south-west corner, an east tower attached to the east end of the south aisle and a vestry-cum-organ chamber on the north side of the chancel. The church is oriented fractionally north of grid west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of blocks of sandstone, yellow brown through to grey in colour, randomly coursed. 'B' is formed of irregular lumps of grey sandstone, uncoursed.

'C' is of red and grey sandstone in somewhat irregular blocks, and occasionally slabs, randomly coursed.

'A' and 'B' are 19thC, 'C' is medieval.

Roofs: reconstituted clay tiles on all roofs, plain ridge tiles on nave and vestry, ornamented ones on chancel. Cross finials on most gable ends.

Drainage: tarmac or cement plinths on north and west and flower-beds on south effectively disguise any drainage gullies if they exist.

Exterior

Nave. General. Plinth in Fabric 'B', with chamfer to maximum height of c.1.0m; rest of walls in 'A'. Stepped buttresses. Windows each consisting of three stepped trefoil-headed lancets under a two-centred arch with a stopped hoodmoulding (four on north side); west end has two two-light windows with roundels above the trefoiled lancets, and a single large roundel in the gable.

Vestry. General. Plinthed with fabrics as nave. Windows either single trefoiled lancets or plain lancets, though one slit window in east wall. Also on east side are steps down to subterranean boiler-room.

Chancel. General. Plinthed with standard fabrics. East window of four lights with trefoiled-heads, quatrefoils and other smaller lights above, all under a two-centred arch. A quatrefoil light is set high up in gable.

Tower. General. Thought to date from c.1300. Base battered to c.1.0m, topped by moulded string-course. A second string-course much damaged is set high up just beneath battlemented parapet. All the walls in Fabric 'C', but the batter is of more regular blocks, and the stage below the parapet and including belfry windows has a greater preponderance of grey stone. This is best seen on the west where a fairly clear disconformity is visible and where the quoins also change, and less clearly on east. The tower has a central weathervane and a flagpole at the north-east corner.

North wall: little of this is visible because of chancel roof etc. Stair turret projects slightly at north-east corner.

East wall: No batter at base. Traces of plaster adhere to wall, particularly at lower levels. Large doorway with two-centred arch, inserted; above this is the infilled arch of entrance to earlier nave in red sandstone. Certainly one but possibly two earlier roof lines have been etched onto wall face. Under the upper string-course is a louvred belfry window, two-centred arch with chamfered dressings in red and grey freestone -?arch stones appear to be in different material.

South wall: about half way up wall face is small, glazed window with voussoirs forming segmental head; no chamfers and stone is not standard material for the wall suggesting an insertion though pre-dating the 19thC rebuilding. Belfry window is of standard form with chamfered jambs, but in addition a stopped label.

West wall: standard belfry window.

South aisle. General. Similar in appearance to nave with three comparable windows in south wall. West wall has a single trefoiled lancet.

Porch. General. Entrance through a large trefoil-headed door, with a pair of trefoiled lights in a rectangular frame above, lighting the first floor. Access to this by a projecting polygonal turret at north-east angle which is capped by a conical roof with weathervane. Small lights in side walls.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor, and flat ceiling. Benefaction board above two-centred arched doorway in north wall. Knight's effigy against west wall, with fine grave slab of 1696 pinned to wall above it.

Nave. General. Completely carpeted floors apart from boards under benches. Bare walls in golden yellow ashlar. Nave roof of four bays with arched-braced double collars supported on wall posts and corbels, and intermediate collar trusses. East wall has high two-centred chancel arch with complex mouldings. Otherwise a range of decorations of no great age around walls.

Chancel. General. One step to chancel, two to sanctuary. Tiled with carpets. 20thC brasses and other tablets.

Tower. Not accessible.

South aisle. General. Four-bay roof of scissor trusses supported on wall posts and corbels. Vestry partitioned off at east end, blocking access to tower. 20thC brasses on south wall.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 14thC; broach stops at the base.

Monuments: "a worn recumbent effigy, much weathered, in the porch (formerly in chancel of old church): John Lloyd (d.1585); in military dress, his head on a helmet" (Haslam); graveslab also in porch to Jane Lloyd (d.1696).

Plate: chalice of 1681.

Register: from 1682.

19thC fittings include:

Stained Glass: "east window by Kempe, 1877. West window from 1945. South window by Heaton, Butler & Bayne" (Haslam).

Bells: six of which four from 1811.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is large, polygonal in shape and virtually level though the ground rises slightly on south side of church. Town and church both lie on the valley floor of the River Wye, which is less than 200m away.

It is well-maintained and continues to be used for burial.

The boundary consists of a stone wall on all sides, except the west where there are buildings and a hedge or fence. On the south the ground level externally is up to 1m below the churchyard level, and on the north 0.5m.

Monuments: the whole churchyard is utilised though density of stones varies. 19thC and much weathered later 18thC gravestones are propped up against east wall of yard, and chest tomb lids have been pushed up to this wall as well, though these are largely covered by vegetation.

Furniture: street light along paths.

Earthworks: ground to south of tower rises irregularly - demolition material from old church?

Ancillary features: two small metal gates and kissing gate at south-west corner; in south-east corner large double ornamental gates and a kissing gate; similar at north-east corner but less ornamental; single kissing gate in north-west. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: some yews scattered through yard with a few other species. None appears to be of any great age.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1991

Church notes

CPAT Field Visit: 5 March 1996

Dawson 1909, 7

Haslam 1979, 304

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

CONDITION

Church appears to be in reasonable condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19C structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Very Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Good

Cantref

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Mary

PRN 16734

NGR SO05642546

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church lies in the small village of Cantref some 3km to the south-east of Brecon. The church is a 19thC structure but the tower is earlier, thought to be around 1600 in date. It contains little of pre-Victorian origin, the only medieval furnishing being a font of perhaps 12thC date. It is set in a rectilinear churchyard containing a fairly standard collection of memorials.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower claimed to be very early 17thC: architecturally it is undiagnostic but is certainly earlier than the nave. The latter together with the chancel and porch were built in 1829 and renovated in 1867, the only trace of the earlier church being a projecting foundation course at the east end.

HISTORY

Nothing is known of the origin and early history of the church.

The Episcopal Register of St Davids refers to the church at Cantref in 1402, but there are no references in the Taxatio of the 13thC. The Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 valued 'Cantreff' at £9 9s 7d.

The church was rebuilt in 1829, and altered in 1867 by C. Buckeridge.

ARCHITECTURE

Cantref church consists of a west tower, a nave and chancel in one, and a north porch near the north-west angle of the nave. The church is aligned on an east-north-east/west-south-west axis, but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of regularly cut blocks and slabs of red and grey sandstone, small to medium in size, irregularly coursed.

'B' is a variation on 'A', but is mainly tabular sandstone, predominantly maroon-red in colour.

Roofs: sandstone tiles with ceramic ridge tiles. Tower has modern slates.

Drainage: no evidence of drains running beside church walls.

Exterior

Porch. General. Fabric 'A'. Set on chamfered plinth.

North wall: two-centred arch, stopped chamfers, hoodmoulding, all in sandstone.

East and west walls: plain.

Nave and chancel. General. Treated as one unit externally. All in Fabric 'A'; chamfered plinth at c.0.3m (cf porch), but because of natural ground slope it is stepped down at the nave/chancel interface; ashlar quoins.

North wall: two single-light windows and two double-light windows all in yellow sandstone, and consisting of trefoiled lancets. One stepped buttress marking the nave/chancel divide; a second small buttress marks the north-west corner of the nave where it meets the tower.

East wall: the fabric contains some irregularities which might denote re-used masonry, and at the base of the wall below the chamfered plinth is a flat plinth projecting 0.2m with a maximum height of 0.3m; it is on the same alignment and is likely to be a relic of the earlier church. One three-light window, again trefoiled lancets and a hoodmoulding, with a relieving arch over.

South wall: similar to north wall but an extra two-light window at the west end opposite the porch. Also at the west end the wall face of the nave runs on for a short distance in front of the tower wall face. This is a Victorian feature matching the buttress on the north side, but it does appear to encapsulate an earlier buttress at a lower level.

Tower. General. Fabric 'B', crudely pointed in a dull grey mortar so that it appears more like a coat of plaster across the wall faces. Plinth at base at a height of c.0.5m topped by an angular string-course. Uppermost courses of tower may have been rebuilt. Pyramidal roof. Thought to date from c.1600.

North wall: low, shallow buttress at north-east corner as mentioned above (under nave). Rectangular slit window at ground floor level above plinth, chamfered and with a projecting hood over the top. A second similar slit window is set at a higher level (perhaps c.4-5m), and above this a broader louvred window of two lights for the belfry stage, lacking a projecting hood, and the jambs showing considerable difference in weathering.

East wall: nave roof rises to just below belfry level; two-light louvred window for belfry with replacement mullion.

South wall: windows as north wall, except for belfry which has a single light, the lintel terminating in stop-like blocks.

West wall: lower windows as north wall; belfry window also similar but has a flat, projecting stone hood; one jamb replaced.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor. Simple roof with collars.

East and west walls:- plain.

South wall: two-centred arch, stopped chamfers, sandstone dressings. 19thC.

Nave and chancel. General. Tiled floors, largely carpet covered; wooden boards beneath seating. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of five bays with arch-braced trusses springing from corbels and having cusped scissor struts above. Chancel arch consists of cast iron pillars against the outer walls with floriate capitals supporting a main truss. 19thC wall brasses in chancel.

South wall: slab in a window embrasure records the rebuilding of 1829.

West wall: broad but low two-centred arched doorway with heavy sandstone jambs and dressings gives access to the tower.

Tower. General. Flagged floor with at least five grave slabs re-used. South and north wall faces inset to take joists at first floor level. Walls whitewashed. Deeply splayed windows.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: "circular and tapering, on a cylindrical base; 12thC but probably recut" (Haslam).

Grave slabs: in tower floor. two of 1704 and 1762, three others not legible. In porch fragments of a gravestone to Anne (d.1725) and the Rev. John Powell (d.1743).

Register: from 1724.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is pentagonal in shape, the church lying near to its centre. A short distance to the south-east is Afon Cynrig and the churchyard is set on the edge of its valley. It is well maintained and still used for burial.

Boundary: On the north side above the road the slight internal embankment is fronted by a revetment wall and there is an external drop of perhaps 1.5m. To the north-west the wall continues but the external drop is no more than 0.5m, and on the south-west and south-east the wall is in a poor state of repair and is reinforced by a wire fence; again the drop is little more than 0.5m. On this basis Cantref cannot be called a raised churchyard, the drop on the north probably resulting from the erosion of the adjacent roadway.

Monuments: these are well spread on the north side, with late 18thC graves on both sides of the path to the porch (Griffiths of RCAHMS counted 12 in all). There is little obvious burial on the south, west and east sides of the church.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: a gently scarped platform is visible around the east end of the church.

Ancillary features: metal gates give entry from the north with a tarmac path to the porch. There are also small wooden gates on the north-west and north-east sides.

Vegetation: an avenue of yews lead to the church from the main gate and several others are dotted around, one on the previously mentioned scarp to the east of the church.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 16 August 1995

Dawson 1909, 41

Haslam 1979, 307

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Plaster falling away internally and considerable damp on south side of nave and north-west corner. Externally roof tiles are missing and ivy covering parts of north and west walls.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19C structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19C fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor

Capel-y-ffin

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Mary

PRN 32446

NGR SO25493151

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church at Capel-y-ffin ('the chapel on the boundary') is a small rectangular structure, little more than 8m long internally. It shelters in the Vale of Ewyas about 6 miles south of Hay-on-Wye, its date of origin is unknown though the present structure is 18thC, and it contains a probable medieval font and some 18thC wooden furnishings.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Simple structure said to date from 1762 with a porch added in 1817.

HISTORY

The chapel was built in 1762, replacing an earlier chapel of which nothing remains. However, there are gravestones of the earlier 18thC and the churchyard cross as reminders of an earlier chapel-of-ease, and it is conceivable that the font was an original fitting and not an import from elsewhere.

The porch was added in 1817.

In 1908 Capel-y-ffin was described as "still a chapel-of-ease...a small building of stone with a turret and one bell...surrounded by some fine yews".

ARCHITECTURE

The chapel consists of a single cell with a central south porch. It is aligned south-west/north-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabric: rubble masonry, dressed stones for jambs, but the whole is whitewashed.

Roofs: shale slab tiles with reconstituted clay ridge tiles.

Drainage: no evidence of drainage trenches.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. North wall: single small rectangular window with wooden frame and stone lintel.

East wall: two-centred arched window, no jambs, wooden frame, seven lights, slight evidence of a relieving

arch.

South wall: east of the porch is a rectangular window of four lights in a wooden frame with a wooden lintel. Either side of this is a mural tablet (1736 to the east, 1776 to the west). West of the porch is a small rectangular window divided into six panes in a wooden frame with a wooden lintel.

West wall: plain wall. Above it is a timber bellcote, all four sides weather-boarded, the upper part outset, and capped by a pyramidal roof with shale tiles and lead flashing.

Porch. East and west walls: plain.

South wall: doorway has a segmental arch of unpainted stone and under this a wooden frame with two wooden gates. Over the doorway is a square stone plaque carrying the date 1817.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor; walls plastered and whitewashed; roof ceiled.

North wall: rectangular doorway with 18thC oak plank door painted red, as is the frame; cross above with wooden inscription.

East and west walls: stone slab bench.

Nave and chancel. General. Floor carpeted. Walls plastered and whitewashed; all windows slightly splayed. Roof has two low collars visible, bolted to principal rafters, but otherwise ceiled. Late 18thC gallery against north and west walls served by stairs running up from south-west corner, and supported on stout chamfered posts.

East wall: window glass has an inscription referring to 1991 restoration.

South wall: brass of 1897.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: probably medieval; bowl is octagonal, tapering below a vertical rim; stem almost circular and of similar antiquity. Large chunk of bowl broken off.

Bells: two, one of 1716, the other 1895, though this is reputedly a recast medieval bell.

Pulpit: octagonal, plain oak panels; an inscription dated 1780 records its erection by 'W.Bridgwater, D.Walker Churchwardens; R.Varrey erector'.

Altar rails: 18thC.

Settles: 18thC, one with a date of 1783, though it also has a cross in a circle and the date 1894 incised.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is of irregular form with two fairly straight sides on the north and east and a slightly more curving boundary on the other sides. It is sited on gently sloping ground, a spur between the valleys of Afon Honddu on the north-east and Nant Bwch on the south.

The graveyard is well maintained and is still used for burial.

Boundary: a well-made drystone wall capped with flat slabs.

Monuments: all lie to the south and west of the church. They are well spread but reasonably frequent, and the earliest date back to the 1730s.

Furniture: irregular rectangular shaft of a medieval churchyard cross. Set in a boulder in recent times.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: single wooden gate gives entry from south-west with tarmac path to porch. Vertical slab stiles in north-west corner and on east side.

Vegetation: seven large yews and one smaller one together with a couple of larger deciduous trees, mainly around the southern perimeter.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings: 1995

Church Guide 1982

CPAT Field Visit: 24 November 1995

Dawson 1909, 55

Haslam 1979, 307

Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 108

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

In good condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Very Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very poor

Group value: Poor

Cathedine

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Michael

PRN 15846

NGR SO14372518

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Michael's church at Cathedine occupies a rectangular churchyard on a hill slope at the southern end of Llangorse Lake, some 11km to the east of Brecon. The church was almost entirely rebuilt in the second half of the 19thC, but some stonework from the earlier structure may survive. Its only medieval furnishing is a plain font.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The church was rebuilt at two different periods in the second half of the 19thC, but perhaps not entirely: the west wall and the jambs of the south door could be from its predecessor.

HISTORY

The origin of the church is not known. On present evidence it is unlikely to be an early medieval foundation.

The Episcopal Register of St Davids lists it as 'Blaneueny' in 1401, while the Valor Ecclesiasticus refers to 'Kethoddyn' in 1535.

In c.1810 the church consisted of a nave and chancel, and an unroofed "tower", containing three bells, to the west. The windows were narrow elongated squares; the floor was indifferently flagged and on the north side was a structure called "the old chapel" which was used as a lumber room.

Glynne visited Cathedine in 1855, noting a "kind of tower at the west end, not rising higher than the nave", and having a saddle roof. Close to the west end of the nave a chapel had been added at right-angles. The building had been whitewashed externally. The east window had two lights and was poor Perpendicular, there was only one window in the north wall, and three of doubtful integrity on the south. The churchyard contained some fine yews.

The north tower and a new chancel were erected by E.H.Martineau in 1868, and the nave was largely rebuilt by S.W.Williams in 1894. The specification for this second phase of work required the old loft to be taken down at the west end, the old walls of the nave, transept and porch to be demolished, small lancet windows to be removed, rainwater drains to be dug to a depth of 2', a heating chamber to be excavated and tiled floors to be laid.

ARCHITECTURE

Cathedine church consists of a nave, a slightly narrower chancel, a south porch near the south-west corner of the nave, and a tower with spire attached to the north side of the chancel. The orientation of the church is almost exactly east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of regular slabs and a few blocks of red sandstone, mostly small in size and deliberately randomly coursed. Larger blocks used for quoins. Buff coloured sandstone used for dressings.

Roofs: slates with terracotta ridge tiles.

Drainage: around the east side of the church is a drainage trench, fading out at the stair turret built into the north-west corner of the tower.

Exterior

Cathedine church was completely rebuilt in Early Gothic Revival style late in the Victorian period and for that reason the following description is an outline only. It is terraced into the slope, markedly affecting the chancel and to a lesser extent the tower.

Tower. General. On chamfered plinth; it has a small, broach spire surmounted by a finial. A pentagonal stair turret projects from the north side. Belfry windows are double lancets with louvre boards of massive slate slabs, and relieving arches over. Entrance on east side of tower has a Caernarvon arch, also with a relieving arch. On the west face of the tower is a drip-course for another structural element, the only sign that it was ever built being a stub wall extending for a short distance beside the turret.

Nave and chancel. General. Majority of windows are simple single lancets, the exception being the east window of three lights which has ornate Gothic tracery and relieving arch. Porch door has a hoodmoulding with plain stops. The exception to the overall appearance is the ivy-covered west wall. This is battered for the first 0.5m (in contrast to the other walls), the masonry is less regular and is also less well pointed. Conceivably it could be an earlier wall or perhaps is rebuilt using older materials. Standard Victorian window.

Interior

Porch. General. The south door to the church has a modern turned arch in grey sandstone, but the jambs are of single blocks of red sandstone with simple stops - these must surely be earlier and could be in situ.

Nave and chancel. General. Simple tiled floor with heating vent grilles down the aisle of the nave. Walls plastered and whitewashed apart from some dressings. Barrel roof. Several mural tablets with those on west wall of 1774 and 1797.

Chancel approached by two steps up, and another to sanctuary. Chancel floor tiled. Walls as nave. Roof of three bays with vertical struts above arch-braced collars springing from corbels.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 13thC, circular.

Monuments: in the nave are mural tablets to Howell Powell (d.1774) and Ann Williams (d.1797).

19thC furnishings include:

Stained glass: "east window, mostly patterned, c.1868. South sanctuary window by Mayer and Co., Munich" (Haslam).

Register: from 1813.

CHURCHYARD

Cathedine churchyard is set on a west facing slope, its long axis in contrast to that of the church from north to south. The church itself is terraced deeply into the slope.

A small modern extension to the graveyard has been added in the south-east corner but otherwise there is no indication that the present rectilinear enclosure has been modified in any way over the centuries.

It is reasonably well kept and is used for modern burial.

Boundary: a stone wall forms the perimeter; on the west, downhill side the external ground level is 1m or more lower, while on the east, uphill side the reverse is true with the wall acting as an internal retaining wall.

Monuments: these are spread throughout much of the yard except on the north where tracts of ground are still open; graves are quite tightly packed on the south while 20thC ones are concentrated on the north. Later 18thC gravestones have been cleared and now lean against the north wall of the nave, and there are other possible examples in a comparable position against the south wall.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: a scarp up to 2m high where the boundary ran on the south-east side, prior to the enlargement of the churchyard.

Ancillary features: a single metal gate at the top (east end) of the churchyard, and a roughly tarmac path leads from this to the porch. A grass path continues westwards to a vertical stone stile that leads into a field below the church.

Vegetation: the ancient yews on the south edge of the churchyard, the central one badly shattered; otherwise there are mature pines and other trees.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 17 August 1995
Dawson 1909, 49
Faculty 1894: NLW/SD/F/105
Glynne 1886, 275
Haslam 1979, 309
Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 61 & 64.

CONDITION

Minor signs of deterioration include some damp showing in the west window, plaster flaking in the chancel and some shingles falling off the roof of the spire.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor

Crickadarn

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Mary**PRN** 16682**NGR** SO08944222

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Mary and its small surrounding settlement lies in the hills to the west of the Wye Valley some 10km south of Builth Wells. It is a small well-maintained church, the earliest features of which may be 13thC, with 15th and 16thC additions, and several later phases of restoration. Internally there is a good range of monuments but little else of significance. Its churchyard small and sub-circular with many gravestones.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Fabric differences between north wall of nave/chancel on the one hand and south and east walls on the other would suggest that the former with simple lancets is earlier (perhaps 13thC) with a 15thC (or even early 16thC) rebuild of the south and east walls, retaining earlier doorways. The porch was erected at the same time or soon after and the tower was added, on the basis of relatively slight evidence, in the 16thC, the west wall of the nave being cut away to take it. Recent work is visible along top of north wall.

HISTORY

There are few if any early references to Crickadarn, but the churchyard shape might favour an early medieval origin.

A 15thC manual of daily offices for the church is now in Hereford Cathedral Library.

Around 1810 the church was not ceiled and the seats were irregular. There were three bells in the steeple. The architecture was described as "vile". The front of the oak rood loft still remained.

In 1865 Glynne found a church with all but the tower whitewashed externally, low walls that leaned outwards, and a dark interior though fitted with new seats, and a chest acting as the altar. The wooden porch seems to have met with his approval, and he noted a single box pew with the date 1666, a mural monument of 1649, and a beam over the chancel entrance which was presumably the remains of the screen.

The large rood screen and loft, similar to that at Llanfilo, fell into a bad state of repair during late 18thC and was removed in the latter half of the 19thC, its gradual deterioration chronicled by Crossley and Ridgway from earlier sources.

The church was restored in 1867 and 1895 when new windows were added.

In 1914, a faculty suggests that Sir Clough Williams-Ellis reconstructed the sanctuary, repaired the internal roof and porch, rebuilt the south wall of the nave to match the old, re-using existing stone where sound, rebuilt the tower arch wall with sufficient thickness to accommodate the old turret doorway, and provided at the west an oval vestry window, a balcony, and the fireplace. Two bells were also recast. The link with Williams-Ellis is strengthened by the fact that two years previously he had remodelled Llangoed Hall nearby.

ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of nave and chancel in one with a west tower and south porch. It is oriented north-east/south-west, but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of grey, laminated shale slabs and a few blocks, regularly coursed. Heavy pointing in places. Sandstone dressings and quoins.

'B' consists of mixture of shale, sandstone and other sedimentary rocks, some micaceous, mainly in block form and irregularly coursed.

'C' is predominantly of grey mudstone or some other fine-grained sedimentary rock, including slabs of considerable length; occasional lumps of red sandstone; weathered sandstone/mudstone quoins.

'D' small lumps of sandstone and mudstone, heavily pointed, and restricted to wall tops.

Fabric C is probably medieval, B could be re-used medieval masonry, A is perhaps of 16thC origin, and D is Victorian.

Roofs: all have shale slates with stone ridge tiles but no finials.

Drainage: gully on north and south sides of nave and chancel but not tower; nothing on east.

Exterior

Tower. General. Thought to be 16thC but on limited evidence. Fabric A with all dressings in grey sandstone. Set into slope so 1m+ difference between east and west ends. Plinth with ashlar coping, string-course of moulded sandstone at top of 1st stage with further string-courses above 2nd, 3rd and belfry stages. The last has simple waterspouts. Belfry stage inset slightly.

North wall: stair turret in north-east corner lit by slit windows with chamfered dressings at 1st and 3rd stages. Main wall of tower plain except for belfry window with its two four-centred, louvred lights, the heads fashioned from a single stone; arch stones replaced? Projecting stone, perhaps broken, just below battlements.

East wall: apex of nave roof cuts through string course above 2nd stage. Otherwise as north wall.

South wall: rectangular window in 1st stage, slit in 2nd, usual double light in belfry, possibly with arch replaced or just less eroded than on north.

West wall: slit windows with chamfered dressings at 1st and 2nd stages; standard louvred lights in arched window in belfry, the arch perhaps replaced.

Nave and Chancel. General. Partly 13thC.

North wall: Fabric C except for top 0.5m or so which is Fabric D. In north-west corner Fabric D drops lower, and c.2m from this corner there is a disconformity in the appearance of the masonry - the fabric, however, though more irregular remains the same. Wall slopes inward giving impression of batter, particularly in central section. Two lancet windows, one single and one double, with leaded lights, but only red sandstone heads look original; cavetto mouldings.

East wall: weathered surface which may be Fabric B containing many large blocks; apex and northern slope of gable rebuilt in Fabric D; some repointing at southern edge but unclear whether reconstruction here. Perpendicular window with four-centred arch contains three lights and panel tracery in yellow sandstone; tracery replacement in at least two places. Four mural slabs attached to wall, one of 1781, two 19thC and one with face completely flaked away.

South wall: Fabric B; two flat-headed Perpendicular windows with ogee-headed lights in yellow sandstone; between is a blocked priest's door with chamfered dressings for arch but not obvious for jambs; past

restoration work on doorway, particularly the arch.

West wall: probably Fabric C, though differential weathering and different pointing; both its north and south faces appear to abut the walls of the tower.

Porch. General. Very good 15thC porch of the Wye valley type (cf. Aberedw on opposite side of valley). Fabric B with sandstone quoins.

East and west walls: plain.

South wall: of larger blocks to support gable, and possibly some replacement. Original wooden entrance arch.

Interior

Porch. General. Roof elaborate; two main trusses with quatrefoils and trefoils, the outer one also arch-braced, and a trefoiled, arched truss between them; two tiers of foiled windbraces, though some fragments lost. Floor of large slate slabs, raised one step above churchyard. Walls of bare stone. Porch later than nave doorway, the arch of which is partially hidden by roof truss.

North wall: doorway into church with two-centred arch, with stopped chamfers, showing some replacement of dressings, the originals in red sandstone, the replacements in grey.

East wall: stone-slabbed bench with alcove above.

South wall: woodwork.

West wall: also has bench, one slab of which is part of 1796 gravestone re-used; rough stoup from sandstone boulder set into core of wall above it.

Tower. General. Accessible only for ground floor which has barrel-vaulted ceiling; western two-thirds screened off and acts as vestry; plastered walls. Eastern end beyond screen unplastered.

North wall: plain except for tower turret doorway in north-east corner: four-centred Tudor arch with stopped chamfers leading to newel stair.

East wall: tower arch (see nave west wall below).

South wall: deeply splayed window, stepped down from slit to embrasure base.

West wall: deeply splayed window, as south wall; wooden Donations Board of 1712 against wall.

Nave. General. Roof ceiled and whitewashed; towards west end one truss visible with collar and principals, but painted over; at the nave/chancel divide a chamfered tie beam, collar and diagonal struts, where formerly the rood screen, the beam seemingly the only remnant of it that survives. Floor flagged, and incorporates a number of re-used grave slabs of 18thC and early 19thC date. Benches set on wooden block floor. Walls of nave and chancel plastered and whitewashed, also the majority of dressings for windows.

North wall: panelled to height of benches; one splayed window with wooden lintel, and stepped down to deepen embrasure; chimney with fireplace set diagonally across north-west corner; wall painting just to west of window; eight wall tablets arranged along wall.

East wall: chancel divide as noted above.

South wall: panelling as north wall; from east, a priest's door with two-centred arch, the reveal plastered

except for the head, to provide an alcove which contains a heating pipe and inspection plate; single, splayed window, the dressings and embrasure arch unplastered, the latter turned in edge stones; segmental arch to main doorway turned in edge stones, the reveal of bare stone, and showing clear evidence of stone replacement to apex of external door arch; ten wall tablets of late 18thC-early 19thC spaced along wall.

West wall: large tower arch, four-centred, with unpainted freestone dressings; above is an early 20thC gallery accessed by a doorway with flattish three-centred arch with chamfered dressings, the apex of the arch hidden by the nave ceiling.

Chancel. General. Roof and floor as in nave, with grave slabs used in latter. Floor at same level as nave, but steps up to sanctuary and altar.

North wall: window has splayed embrasure, segmental arch, and has been whitewashed but for sill.

East window: segmental arch, the embrasure of bare stone.

South wall: window has segmental arch, the dressings and sill unpainted; aumbry-like alcove to east of window; Grave slab of 1649 beneath window.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 14thC/15thC; plain, octagonal bowl on circular stem, and large, more recent base.

Altar: of re-used wood, one piece carrying date 1666, and presumably from the box pew seen by Glynne.

Wall painting: coat of arms on north wall, now set in frame with plaster surround.

Monuments: an extensive range of wall tablets and re-used grave slabs retained in the church. Earliest slab is that to William ap David Lloyd (d.1607), stated by Haslam as having a fleur-de-lys cross, a coat of arms, and lettering round the margins, set in floor in front of altar. This was not seen during present survey, though there is a memorial to Lewis Lloyd (d.1649) and his wife, incorporating a coat of arms, which is set in the chancel. The inscription states that he died in 1640, but in fact he was sheriff of Breconshire in 1643. It seems likely that a stone cutter employed to renew the tombstone mistook 1646 or 1649 for 1640.

Otherwise about 18 wall tablets, carefully set around the walls, and at least 11 re-used grave slabs were recorded, the vast majority from the last quarter of the 18thC through the first quarter of the 19thC. Many of these by Games of Talgarth and other named stone masons.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard lies just above a small stream running some 35m to the south-west through a broad but shallow valley. The church itself occupies what appears to be a small knoll or spur, of no great height, projecting slightly into the valley. Only to the east is the ground fairly level.

Across the valley to the south-west are the earthworks of a medieval castle.

Churchyard is sub-oval in shape with two curving sides on north and south and two straight ones which it is tempting to see as truncated though no substantive surviving evidence for such a view. It is of small size (maximum diameter 45m) and raised in that ground falls both within and outside, except on the flattish east side where interior raised by up to 0.5m.

Boundary shows some variation: at east 'corner' in vicinity of main gate, well-made mortared stone wall with flat coping stones, but wall on rest of east and some of north more roughly constructed of drystone masonry with coping stones on edge, overgrown in parts and the ground level higher internally than externally. Gap

in north wall gives on to small dilapidated shed. North-west sector opens onto rectangular graveyard extension (formerly OS plot 9224) and earlier boundary reduced to 1m-high scarp bank. Boundary curves around at west corner (contra modern OS plan) and wall here more of a revetment because of external drop. Former path into south-west corner of churchyard now largely blocked by two gravestones. On south, revetment wall with external drop of perhaps maximum 1.8m and internal drop of 0.2m.

Churchyard well maintained but most recent burials in extension to north-west.

Monuments: well-ordered and quite tightly packed, particularly around south and west sides. Some go back to third quarter of 18thC (1760, 1775), but earlier examples tending to weather and flake. Fewer obvious graves on north. Generally a good range worthy of record.

Furniture: none noted, apart from 1995 memorial seat on north side of path leading to porch.

Earthworks: none noted, other than natural spur.

Ancillary Features: single wooden gate on east side with stone stile adjacent, served by stone slab path to porch. New extension on north-west served by double ornamental metal gates.

Vegetation: three old yews on north side with two less mature examples on west.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 17 October 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 60
Glynne 1887, 287
Haslam 1979, 311
Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 16 & 18
NMR, Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Generally sound and well cared for. Some mould on vestry walls.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Crickhowell

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Edmund

PRN 16753

NGR SO21651843

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Edmund's church is set in a large rectangular churchyard within the town on the north bank of the River Usk. Built at the beginning of the 14thC as a cruciform church, it retains some architectural features of that date but has also seen considerable restoration and the destruction and rebuilding of its later aisles. The range of medieval internal features is limited but it contains a remarkable range of monuments in the chancel.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Original early 14thC design was cruciform building. Of this building all elements survive, but some restoration has occurred, less in the chancel than elsewhere. Nave arcades and aisles added at later date - James suggested the 15thC - but are not symmetrical or identical. Broach spire thought to have been added in post-medieval era. Original aisles demolished in 18thC; those standing are of early 19thC date though windows replaced in 1897, all in Decorated style.

HISTORY

Crickhowell church was constructed in the Decorated style by Lady Sibyl Pauncefote prior to 1303 when the parish created. James suggested c.1280-1300.

During medieval period the transepts may have acted as chantry chapels, but possibly they were guild chapels for Theophilus Jones refers to the emblems of the Cordwainers' and Drapers' Guilds.

At the time of the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1535 'Crukehowell' was rated at £10 1s 11d (cf the mother church of Llangattock with a value four times greater).

The two side aisles were taken down in 1765 and the materials disposed of.

The church in 1809 was reported to be cruciform, with chancel, nave, two transepts and a shingled spire which contained five bells in the centre. "Modern" improvements had deprived the nave of all distinguishing marks of antiquity. The side aisles, when standing, had the emblems of different trading companies carved in wood; with them was effaced the only memorial of the former commercial greatness of Crickhowell. In 1806 the church was decently ceiled with lath and plaster, and was paved.

The aisles were replaced in 1828 and 1835; and a west porch added in 1832/33. Glynne in 1836 described a 'large and rather handsome' church in good condition, though "many ugly modern Gothic windows had been inserted". The central tower had a tall, shingled spire and was supported on four large pointed arches. The font was early, a circular bowl on a shaft of similar form.

Restoration occurred in 1868 by J L Pearson when new seats were added, the monument to Sir John Herbert was moved into a recess on left side of the altar, and the masonry of the tower was renewed.

In 1890, gardens were purchased for £600 to extend the cemetery.

The roofs were replaced in 1897, and a 1908 description of the church states that the new side aisles, "in the worst style of the period", were re-roofed with proper ecclesiastical ceilings, the walls stripped of plaster and new windows inserted. Part of the rood loft, functioning as a belfry survived until at least 1909.

Further repairs were conducted in 1934, 1963, 1973, 1986 and 1994.

ARCHITECTURE

Crickhowell church is one of the larger churches in Powys and has the following elements: west porch, nave, north and south aisles, north and south transepts to the east of their respective aisles, a tower over the crossing, chancel with north vestry and south porch opening off chancel.

It has a true east/west alignment.

Fabrics: 'A' is coursed red sandstone blocks of regular shape.

'B' is of irregular red, grey and brown slabs and blocks of sandstone, randomly coursed, generally heavily pointed, and at least one brick fragment inserted.

'C' is medium sized and rather uniform blocks of red and grey sandstone, with some regular coursing.

'D' is of grey and red slabs of sandstone, small in size and randomly coursed.

Fabrics 'A' and 'C' and 'D' are 19thC. 'B' is medieval.

Roofs: tiled roofs, crested ridge tiles, cross finials on most gable ends. Spire has shingles emplaced in 1963, after storm ripped off copper sheeting.

Drainage: little clear evidence of deliberate drainage trenches around walls.

Exterior

West Porch. General. 19thC addition in Fabric 'A', built 1832, rebuilt 1974. West doorway has two-centred arch turned in red sandstone, but without proper dressed stone. Either side of door is a small niche. North wall has a simple hole in it to act as window, the south wall is plain but ivy-covered. Small angle buttresses support the north-west and south-west corners.

Nave. In Fabric 'B', but consistent appearance of grey sandstone beneath eaves implies that nave has had roof raised by 0.5m+. Angle buttresses and ivy disguise junctions of nave and aisle walls.

West wall: much eroded string-course at level of window base. Decorated (14thC) west window has two-centred arch with recent hoodmould but probably original stops; three stepped lights with trefoil heads, and separate trefoil lights above, the dressings replaced; Griffiths of RCAHMW thought that the tracery looked 18thC. Two stepped angle buttresses of weathered red sandstone, presumably original (though Cadw listing report suggests that they were added when the aisles demolished, perhaps utilising rubble. Contrast buttresses of adjacent aisles).

North aisle. General. Fabric 'C'. Quoins in dressed grey sandstone. Existing windows all 19thC Geometrical.

North wall: one stepped buttress functioning as chimney housing with chimney pot above. Three two-light windows, the lights with trefoil heads under two-centred arches with hoodmouldings. Terminals of wooden beams visible. Some evidence of earlier blocked windows with present windows inserted below and to east of their predecessors which may have been larger.

East wall: plain. Abuts north transept wall.

West wall: all Fabric 'C' but smaller stonework at higher levels, and perhaps some re-use of stone. One two-centred arched window with two trefoil-headed lights and quatrefoil above. Similar to north wall windows but longer. String-course below window.

North transept. General. Fabric 'B' in the main, but also both 'C' and 'D'.

North wall: Remnants of render on surface and some ivy covering. One two-light Geometrical window, simple two-centre headed lights with quatrefoil above under two-centred arch; hoodmoulding in brown sandstone; tracery and much of window appears to be original. Infilling above window to gable apex in Fabric 'D'. Small patch of Fabric 'C' against aisle east wall.

Vestry. General. Separate unit inside church, but externally its north wall is continuation of north transept north wall and its east wall is now hidden by a new vestry built in the last few years.

North wall: Fabric 'B' as transept. Simple lancet window with chamfered moulding, in red sandstone; lancet head replaced and 19thC hoodmoulding, the rest original.

Chancel. General. Largely Fabric 'B' but some exceptions.

North wall: wall contains one original trefoiled lancet window with chamfered red sandstone dressings and standard hood-moulding and voussoir relieving arch over. Tomb recess protrudes from wall, constructed of regular red sandstone masonry (Fabric 'A') about 1868.

East wall: long window of three lights with intersecting tracery replaced in yellow sandstone while red sandstone dressings could be original; standard hoodmoulding and relieving arch. Lower part of wall in Fabric 'B', but at higher levels, Fabric 'D' in which is set (or re-set) a glazed, slit window with weathered chamfered dressings (original). Interrupted and broken string-course may have been largely decorative.

South wall: most of wall in Fabric 'B', but in 'D' from window-top level upwards. Also one patch of large dressed red sandstone blocks centrally placed near base of wall remains unexplained. Two trefoiled lancets: that to east is complete Victorian replacement though hoodmoulding is in red rather than brown sandstone. That to west is largely original though it has a brown sandstone hoodmoulding. Both have relieving arches with edge stone voussoirs.

South vestry. General. Formerly a Victorian priest's porch converted to vestry use in 1973; acutely pointed double cusped window set in blocked former doorway of south wall; blocked Y-tracery window on east side. The whole built in red sandstone and only the blocking materials are in mixed coloured sandstone.

South transept. all in Fabric 'B'. No north and west walls.

East wall: abutted by vestry and otherwise plain.

South wall: contains one Geometrical window with two-centred arch over simple two-centred lights with quatrefoil above; hoodmoulding in buff sandstone; a few red sandstone jambstones may be original, the rest replaced. Red sandstone quoins at south-east corner; upper part of gable rebuilt in what looks like Fabric 'C'.

South aisle. General. Masonry is Fabric 'C' or a variant, and is coupled with red sandstone quoins. Windows all 19thC Geometrical. No north wall and only a relatively small plain area of east wall.

South wall: wall contains three two-light windows, with quatrefoils under two-centred arches and hoodmouldings. Red sandstone masonry around the windows may be decorative trait to set off windows against the grey masonry background. Tie-beam terminals visible in wall face.

West wall: fabric looks more like 'B' than 'C'. One two-light window as south wall, and string-course as north aisle. Angle buttress.

Tower. General. Central tower with corbel table supporting a parapet and waterspouts set into those corbels at the angles. Above, an octagonal broach spire surmounted by weathervane. Tower appears to be in Fabric 'B' with grey quoins.

North wall: louvred, cusped light under two-centred arched window in grey sandstone, largely original. Clock face immediately above window is a feature of the 1860 restoration.

East wall: window as north side but has relieving arch over.

South wall: as north side but has relieving arch; also clock face. Lower down and just above the apex of the transept roof is a glazed slit window with chamfered dressings.

West wall: as north window but relieving arch over.

Interior

General. all internal walls of bare stone, unplastered.

Porch. General. Flagged floor, ribbed ceiling. North wall has small window, the south wall, an undated wall plaque about degrees of marriage. East wall, a two-centred, stopped-chamfered doorway in red sandstone. Corbel suggests that original porch was a lean-to.

Nave. General. Tiled floor contains heating vents; carpets over. East end of nave raised as platform for liturgical purposes. Victorian ribbed wagon roof. Walls in Fabric 'B'?

North wall: arcade of three bays with octagonal piers and moulded capitals supporting two-centred arches, with relieving arches over; easternmost arch much wider than others. Two 19thC mural tablets at extreme western end.

East wall: two-centred arch to crossing, relieving arch over, no responds.

South wall: three-bay arcade as north side with octagonal piers, but of different pattern and arches wider.

West wall: splayed window embrasure with sloping sill, no obvious variation in fabric. Three 20thC memorials, two of brass, one of marble.

North aisle. General. Victorian build; tiled floor with grilles above heating voids. Western end raised up on wooden platform, but stone step up. Laterally ribbed ceiling with tie beams.

North wall: deeply splayed windows. Some evidence of blocking to east of most easterly window. Several 19thC marble and brass memorials, and one of 1789.

East wall: two-centred archway with simple stopped chamfers leads into north transept; not centred in wall, it looks of relatively modern build and is said to have been added in 1883.

South wall: arcade (see north wall of nave); a disconformity in masonry at a level with apices of relieving

arches, but most easterly arch higher and top of relieving arch has disappeared: so wall rebuilt or heightened here. At west end just beyond arcade respond, wall is out set, and presumably represents original external wall of nave prior to introduction of aisles. Mural tablets of 1806 and 1808.

West wall: splayed window with modern ashlar in embrasure. Four mural tablets of 1732, 1739, 1760/1770 & 1776.

North transept. General. Known as the Gwernvale Transept. Largely filled by the organ and remainder not accessible. Flooring of wood and concrete approached by two steps up from north aisle. Ribbed ceiling.

Vestry. General. Completely refurbished in 1994, two steps up with carpeted floor, plastered walls and first floor room.

Tower crossing. General. Heating vent grilles in floor. Choir stalls raised up on either side. Wooden rib vaulted ceiling. Each wall has a two-centred arch, the responds with double chamfered mouldings, but no capitals. South wall has Perpendicular-style screen by Caroe.

Chancel. General. Two widely spaced steps up within chancel, three more steps altar. Floor of Victorian encaustic tiles, but also some heating grilles; Victorian panelled roof of four bays with arch-braces springing from wooden corbels.

North wall: three tomb recesses. From west to east: i) recess with early 14thC keeled mouldings and a hood; slab set into it to Rachel and Lewis James (d.1750 and d.1775) together with that of John Ash of Somerset (d.1727); above and slightly to right is single lancet with replaced trefoil head, flat sill and inner relieving arch of voussoirs, blocked externally by vestry; adjacent brass plaque states that the window was erected in 1886 or soon after; ii) recess with double order of late 14thC wavy mouldings, the inner resting on colonnettes; effigy of Lady Sybil Pauncefoot, and, above three 19thC marble mural tablets; iii) recess made in 1865 with stilted arch and foliated stops to the hood, containing monument of 1690 to the Herberts; recess contains 18thC wall tablets set into sides, including Rococo example of 1776. Over this recess a small lancet window (see exterior description) with ashlar dressings and relieving arch.

East wall: splayed east window with arch though not jambs internally moulded; plaques with Lord's Prayer and Exodus XX; brass and safe to north of altar; fine memorial wall tablet bearing Rumsey arms to south.

South wall: from east: i) piscina; ii) sedile with cusped head; iii) recess with quarter-round mouldings; effigy of Sir Grimbald Pauncefoot; iv) recess of similar design to last with tomb slab of Henry Rumsey (d.1619) plus three small 18thC slabs set in base. Four 19thC marble memorial tablets above. Both windows - above the piscina and above the second recess - have internal ashlar dressings and relieving arches. Vestry doorway is triangular headed with internal ashlar dressings. According to James, it probably led in medieval times to a priest's chamber over the south transept. Next to the door in the chancel is a trefoiled lancet with an asymmetric splay, resulting from the later addition of the adjacent door; it too has internal ashlar dressings.

West wall: arch is plastered over.

South porch. Not accessible, but contains an old doorway to south transept.

South transept. General. Known as the Rumsey Chapel. Carpeted floor raised two steps above south aisle. Roof as north transept.

North wall: standard tower arch with relieving arch above.

East wall: plain, covered by reredos.

South wall: single window with internal hollow-chamfered arch. Five 19thC marble tablets and two 20thC brasses.

West wall: screen.

South aisle. General. Floor and roof as north aisle.

North wall: wall raised as south wall of north aisle, though less obviously. Also same pattern of thicker wall at west end, emphasising later arcading.

East wall: off-centre arch (as result of narrower transept); its dressings look recent and it is said to have been inserted in 1883. Wall face exhibits signs of aisle being rebuilt.

South wall: All windows have internal dressings similar to south transept arch. Perpendicular (14thC) double-cusped niche with pinnacles, re-set in wall to east of most easterly window. One 19thC marble tablet.

West wall: window with standard internal dressings. One 19thC brass and one 20thC wall tablet.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: bowl dated 1668 with 19thC additions; in south aisle.

Monuments: "i) in a south chancel recess, Sir Grimbald Pauncefoot (d.1287), from first quarter of the 14thC; cross-legged recumbent effigy with the legs and right arm mutilated, in a chain mail helmet; his shield charged with three lionels. Commemorative tiles of 1926 above. ii) in the north recess opposite, Lady Sybil Pauncefoot (d.1326), a recumbent effigy lacking the hands, in long folded robe. The head is naturalistic and fairly well preserved. iii) Sir John and Lady Joan Herbert (from c.1690). Alabaster figures, she lying in front on a cushion, he in armour, confidently leaning on his left arm, looking out. His achievement of arms above. On the right of the tomb small kneeling figures of Elizabeth and William LeHunt d.1694 and 1703" (Haslam). Recess also holds three mural tablets to Alice Herbert (d.1707) and Mary (no date), to Sibil Herbert (d.1770) and husband Edward (d.1793) and John Herbert (d.1776). In north aisle mural tablets to: Elizabeth Williams (d.1732), Margaret Prosser (d.1760) and her son William (d.1770), Jane Rumsey (d.1731) by T. Brute, Watkin Rumsey (d.1766) and his wife Ann (d.1781), Jane Pogfon (d.1789); and in the south aisle to Edy Rumsey (d.1735), various Burfield children (four died between 1756 and 1769), and Thomas Burfield (d.1715), his wife Mary (d.1769) and son and daughter-in-law.

Bells: eight bells of 1708, 1719, 1772 1803, three of 1934 and one pre-dating 1540. All but the last are inscribed.

19thC and later furnishings recorded by Haslam include:

Reredos: in Lady Chapel, a fine Crucifixion designed by W. D. Caroe, c.1934. He also designed the screen closing this chapel.

Reredos: main reredos, in Caen stone of 1894 by Nicholson of Hereford depicts 'Last Supper' beneath ornate canopies in stone.

Stained Glass: east window of the 1890s; west window of c.1870 in colour; south transept window by C. A. Gibbs, London.

CHURCHYARD

St Edmund's church occupies a long rectilinear churchyard that has been extended southwards from its original rectangle and is now bounded by three streets and a footpath. This is set on ground that slopes down towards the River Usk to the south, but also has a more gentle slope from east to west where a tributary, the Cwmbeth Brook runs southwards.

The original churchyard has railings on the south side and a mortared stone wall on the three remaining sides. On the west there is a 2m difference in internal and external ground levels due partly to the natural slope, partly to deliberate levelling within the churchyard; on the other sides the difference is negligible. The stone wall continues around the southern extension.

Monuments: the original churchyard is reasonably full though gravestones are not tightly packed. Most are of the 19thC and 20thC, though there are a few 18thC examples just outside the western porch. East of the chancel some weathered slabs may be 18thC.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: none noted.

Ancillary features: Modern lychgate of sandstone blocks at south-east corner of original churchyard; otherwise iron gates throughout and tarmac paths.

Vegetation: a few immature yew trees on south and west sides.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings in Crickhowell
CPAT Field Visit: 25 October 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 61
Faculty 1868: NLW/SD/F/133
Faculty 1894: NLW/SD/F/134
Glynne 1886, 278
Haslam 1979, 312
James 1995
Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 119 & 140
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Some external cracks in external south wall of south aisle and east wall of south transept. Generally appears to be sound.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Poor

Cwmdu

Diocese	Swansea and Brecon	Dedication	The Archangel Michael
PRN	16757	NGR	SO18052385

GENERAL SUMMARY

Cwmdu church, dedicated to St Michael and known sometimes as Llanfihangel Cwmdu, occupies a spur overlooking Rhiangoll valley as it cuts through the Black Mountains, just before it opens out to the vale of the River Usk. Historical references date its origin to the mid 11thC, though the present structure had its origins no earlier than 15thC.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Though of several dates, the different elements of Cwmdu church reveal limited variation in fabric type and are impossible to distinguish. The tower has been attributed to the earlier 15thC but its base could be earlier. The core of the building, with its much restored Perpendicular windows, thought to be contemporary and dated by Haslam to 1430s, was largely rebuilt in 1830. The exception is the north side of nave, demonstrably rebuilt when north aisle demolished in 1907. Masonry of this rebuild is similar to 15thC/19thC stonework elsewhere in structure suggesting considerable re-use of earlier materials. Added on are two porches thought to be 15thC and 19thC, and the organ chamber of the 20thC.

HISTORY

Liber Landavensis refers to its consecration by Herwald in c.1060, together with the churches at Partrishow and Llanbedr.

The earliest named incumbent is ascribed to 1234. No reference has been found to it in either of the 13thC Taxatios, but the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 records 'Comerduy' at a value of £9 13s 1d.

Theophilus Jones in the early 19thC reported it to be in a ruinous state.

In 1831-33 church was extensively rebuilt using wherever possible existing stonework; the detailed 1830 Specification suggests that, the tower apart, the whole building was demolished; rebuilding at a cost of £2,000 was due to the determination of the incumbent, Thomas Price (known also by his bardic name Carnhuanawc; an antiquary, and Celtic and Welsh historian). The 'new' church was smaller than its predecessor and incorporated a gallery.

Further rebuilding in 1907 by Caroe with Hunt and Baldwin, when north aisle was removed, and roof of nave was replaced and lowered. Photograph of church prior to 1907 in Dawson.

Renovation work in 1987/89 including replacement of dressings in cream-coloured sandstone, and inscription etched in glass of south aisle window notes cost of £19,116.

ARCHITECTURE

Cwmdu church consists of nave and chancel, with a west tower attached, an organ chamber on the north side of chancel, a south aisle and two porches on the south. Windows are in Perpendicular style and Haslam dates building closely to 1430s. Church is aligned east-north-east/west-south-west but for purposes of this description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small and medium slabs of red and grey sandstone with some blocks, irregularly coursed, and grey sandstone quoins. 'B' is not dissimilar to 'A' but has predominance of medium-sized slabs, at least some re-used; a few large blocks incorporated and quoins tend to have tooled rilling.

Roofs: slated roofs with ceramic ridge tiles.

Drainage: drainage gully round north side recently dug out; on east, trench lined by external wall and up to 0.5m deep; and indications of drainage works on other sides also.

Exterior

Tower. General. Uniformly Fabric 'A'. Attributed to earlier 15thC by Haslam but earlier writers suggested it was 14thC or earlier. Basal, stepped plinth to maximum height of c.1.7m (on south), the first two steps with chamfers, the top one more like a moulded string course; possible that this plinth could be of earlier build than rest of tower. 1st and 2nd stages of tower both topped with simple string courses, the belfry stage topped by a more elaborate moulded course with waterspouts, though these occur only on north and south sides. Battlemented top, and tower turret raised higher in north-east corner. Each string-course marks a slight inset of tower walls. Masonry in tower shows distinctive zoning with, for instance, bands of large grey sandstone blocks in parts of 1st stage and again in 2nd stage.

North wall: at least six putlog holes in masonry of 1st stage; also one louvred, slit window with hollowed chamfer to dressings, the top stone perhaps replaced. A further slit high up in 2nd stage, similar to that below but predominantly in gold-coloured sandstone. Belfry lit by two, louvred, trefoil-headed lights, with Y-tracery, all under a two-centred arch; the mullion and tracery may be replaced. Wall also incorporates tower stair, which is lit by chamfered slits, two in 1st stage, two in 2nd stage, but none higher; dressings of those in 2nd stage look fresher and could be replacements, in a gold coloured sandstone.

East wall: apex of nave roof reaches to just above 1st stage string-course. Another, earlier, roof line suggested by a higher gable edge line on face of wall, yet string-course not interrupted by it, implying that it post-dates tower construction. Arnatt indicates that this marked line of roof of 1830 construction. Windows in 2nd and belfry stages as on north side, but impossible to determine how many of dressing stones replaced.

South wall: ten putlog holes in 1st stage; one slit window with replacement dressings top and bottom in red sandstone, but grey hollow-moulded chamfers of rest of slit original; a second slit window in this stage may have had top replaced. 2nd stage slit and belfry windows as on north side, but impossible to determine degree of replacement, though yellow tracery stonework likely to be.

West wall: eight putlog holes in 1st stage; a four-centred arched doorway at ground level, with hollow and wave chamfered dressings, the jambs original, but the arch head in differently coloured stone and less weathered. Slit windows at top of 1st and 2nd stages, and belfry window as on north, but again degree of replacement difficult to gauge.

Nave. General. Fabric 'B'. Only wall face of any magnitude is on north - known to have been constructed in early 20thC when north aisle demolished. Large windows shifted from north aisle.

North wall: three high windows, of Perpendicular style, each of three lights with cusped heads under two-centred arches; the most westerly has some original tracery and a more sharply peaked arch, but most of the dressings in these windows renewed. Two substantial buttresses with chimney projecting through nave roof behind more westerly.

West wall: small part, only, visible, and largely taken up with quoins of north-west corner; it appears that tower face may have been cut back to accommodate quoins.

Organ chamber. General. Of early 20thC build, though east wall of demolished north aisle originally reached as far as east wall of chamber, and its foundations visible in drainage trench; mural tablet of 1818 on east wall.

Chancel. General. Fabric B. Foundations of earlier chancel visible in foundation trench around north-east angle.

North wall: no fenestration; mural tablet of 1810.

East wall: large five-light, Perpendicular, window; lights have cusped heads with cusped panels above, and two-centred arch over; some tracery original, but otherwise much replacement of dressings. Possibly masonry just below roof line replaced or merely repointed. Two mural tablets pegged to wall, two others resting against it - one is completely weathered, the others date from 1740, 1778 and?1787.

South wall: masonry appears to abut south aisle wall. One window, with two cusp-headed lights under two-centred arch; most of tracery original but rest looks more recent. Two indecipherable mural tablets, one pegged and the other set into wall below window.

South aisle. General. Inclusion of blocks suggests fabric is closer to 'A' as used in tower. Flat roof.

East wall: one two-light window, similar to that in adjacent, south wall of chancel, but longer; original dressings except for mullion. Angle buttress, considered to be 19thC.

South wall: set on projecting foundation course as far as and including both central buttress and small, east porch; the buttress, with early medieval inscribed stone set in it, is certainly 19thC so the probability is that whole wall reconstructed in last century. Two windows of different forms. That to east has five lights with standard tracery, but no panels above and a square head to window frame with label over top; much of stonework replaced at two different times; its size suggests it may originally have been located elsewhere. More westerly window of standard form consisting of two-centred arch over three lights with standard tracery; some tracery and jambs original.

West wall: one two-light window of standard form, the mullion replaced, the rest original. Below window the whole wall face set out to accommodate internal recess (see below), and this incorporates 19thC angle buttress indicating that it too is in part of recent origin. However, that part of outset wall closest to tower is in similar fabric ('A') to tower and could thus be original.

East porch. General. Built a short distance west of south-east corner of south aisle; reputedly of 16thC date, but 1830 Specification implies that it was a new construction at that time.

East wall: contains square window embrasure with four roundel lights, the stonework of the lights more weathered than the embrasure dressings.

South wall: four-centred arch with stopped wave chamfers; locked iron gate; all of archway could be original but south wall of large, tooled sandstone blocks could be rebuilt.

West wall: as east wall but new stonework for roundels.

West porch. General: main porch, built almost at south-west angle of south aisle; appears to be in Fabric B. Dated to 15thC, but completely rebuilt in 1830.

East wall: small two-light window with round heads; dressings largely replaced.

South wall: entrance arch is two-centred, with stopped, grooved chamfers but much replacement of dressings; wall partly rebuilt with larger blocks of sandstone except near gable apex.

West wall: possibly largely rebuilt as it appears to abut Victorian angle buttress; window as on east side, the red sandstone heads perhaps original though could be replacements.

Interior

General. Plastered and whitewashed. Some evidence in various windows (south aisle, nave?) that external dressings reversed during restoration and weathered faces now inside.

West porch. General. Porch not centred on south door of church but offset to east. Roof is wagon-ceiled; flagged floor incorporates at least two and possibly more grave slabs.

North wall: contains south door of church, a four-centred arch with wave chamfer and stops; mixture of coloured sandstone and some jambs may be replacements; thought by Haslam to be earlier than windows in body of church.

East wall: stone bench against wall, and above it, tomb slab of 1658 pinned to wall.

South wall: porch arch internally chamfered. West wall:- as east wall; grave slab of 1767 pinned opposite that of 1658.

Tower. General. Ceiled with sandstone slabs set on edge, giving barrel vault with holes for bell ropes. Concrete floor.

North wall: tower turret doorway in north-east corner standing out from wall face; four-centred arch almost triangular topped, stopped chamfer only on west side of doorway; door itself of some age. Near to north-west corner, chimney piece projects slightly from wall.

East wall: pointed tower arch.

South wall: deeply splayed slit window.

West wall: reveal of west doorway; disconformity in masonry above the reveal suggests that originally there was a higher internal arch, subsequently reduced in size.

Nave. General. Red tiles (Victorian) cover floor, but carpetted over in aisle; polished wooden floor beneath benches. Roof has seven bays with simple corbels supporting arch-braced collars. Walls are narrow and the roof high.

North wall: shallow-splayed windows; chimney piece survives to roof level to east of most westerly window. Wall displays slight irregularities beneath plaster at level of tracery in windows.

East wall: no conventional chancel arch; instead arch over sanctuary further to east.

South wall: arcade of two full bays with third shared with chancel, tall and of 15thC date; octagonal pillars and capitals, except for west respond, and all in orange-red sandstone that looks like replacement stonework; some of arch stones in similar stone, while respond arch stones showing signs of decay; pillar bases appear original.

West wall: fine, four-centred tower arch with complex moulded stopped chamfers; 16thC. Adjacent on north is chamfered slit window lighting the vice. Above tower arch at level of nave eaves is doorway with wooden

door set in four-centred chamfered arch. Just below present roof, converging lines indicate at least one and possibly two earlier roof lines.

Chancel. General. Chancel proper is short (equivalent to sanctuary only), a feature of the orthodoxy of the 1830s. What follows applies to the "choir" as well. Big two-centred chancel arch, the capitals akin to those of arcades; a 19thC construction using materials from one of arcade arches. Roof is continuation of nave with two and a half bays over the "choir"; sanctuary has ribbed wagon roof. Floor of tiles and wood as in nave; sanctuary has carpet over tiles.

North wall: two-centred arch in red and yellow sandstone gives on to organ chamber; in sanctuary 19thC marble plaques to several generations of Williams family.

East wall: narrow wall with splayed window and, on either side marble tablets of 1836 with Lord's Prayer and Exodus quotations.

South wall: deeper than east wall?

Organ chamber. General. Wooden floor. Roof is flat version of sanctuary roof. No features of interest.

South aisle. General. East end is partitioned off for vestry. Roof is simple flat ribbed ceiling, comparable in style to sanctuary. Vestry has raised wooden floor, the rest of aisle has wooden floor under seating with tile surrounds.

North wall: = south arcade of nave. Solid wall in vestry carries one mural tablet of 1837.

East wall: narrow wall; high window with internal tracery painted.

South wall: priest's door has four-centred arched reveal. 19thC coat-of-arms on wall between the windows.

West wall: contains one splayed window and beneath it a tomb recess with peaked arch and stopped chamfers with wave moulding, now utilised by font - no indication of earlier usage and appears to have been constructed specifically for font in 1830.

East porch. General. Restricted access. Wagon ceiling as west porch, but pointed. Floor flagged, incorporating some grave slabs. Early medieval cross-incised slab rests against outer iron gate.

North wall: priest's door into south aisle; two-centred arch, no chamfers but voussoirs; simple niches dating to 1830 restoration on both sides of doorway, and said to incorporate earlier window heads.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Pillar stone: in Priest's porch, formerly in churchyard after its discovery being re-used as window sill; has a Maltese cross incised in the 7thC-9thC, and later 12thC/13thC cross with a Latin burial inscription across Maltese cross.

Pillar Stone: late 6thC-early 7thC stone set in south buttress, having been moved from a field some distance away in 1830; incised with Latin inscription (CATACVS HIC IACIT/FILIVS TEGERNACVS) and Ogam script.

Font: modern bowl, but quatrefoil-sectioned stem could be medieval.

Screen: dado, mullions, traceries and head-beam with running ornament (late 15thC) integrated with 19thC woodwork around the sanctuary, probably in 1830. Not enough survives to establish its original form.

Altar rail: also re-used from screen?

Monuments: in church porch, graveslabs of Anne David (d.1767) and Thomas Smith (d.1658); on external east wall of chancel mural slabs to David Watkins (d.?1787), Jenny Watkins (d.1749) and a third weathered memorial of 1778.

Church plate: silver cup inscribed 'John Watkins churchwarden Cwmdee 1759'.

Bells: six bells, by Evan Evans of Chepstow, 1719, all bearing different inscriptions.

Registers date from 1734.

Royal Arms: in stone, by J. Jones, Crickhowell. Haslam suggests early 19thC, Arnatt argues for later 19thC origin.

CHURCHYARD

Cwmdu churchyard is reasonably large and sub-rectangular in shape. It is set on the eastern side of a small river, the Rhiangoll, on a low spur between the river valley on north-west and a shallow, dry valley to south.

The churchyard is tidy and well-maintained, in part because of wholesale clearance of gravestones from south side of church. Perimeter is overgrown with bushes and other vegetation.

The boundary consists of a mortared retaining wall on south side of yard with a drop of no more than 0.2m internally; from the south-east corner the external drop becomes progressively less and opposite the church there is no difference in height inside and outside the yard, though material has been piled up against the inner face. On the north there is again a drop beyond the wall of around 2m. The wall generally sound but in parts of north side it is in a bad state of repair. On west side the wall again acts as revetment with a 2m drop beyond.

Monuments: majority of surviving grave markers are on north side of church and date to 19thC, including Thomas Price's own tomb; one or two only beside the approach path south of church, the rest removed in 1981/82 and either stacked or dumped around the boundary, and now largely concealed by the vegetation; amongst these are certainly some of later 18thC origin. Some older gravestones, the oldest dating to 1662, said to be leaning against eastern churchyard wall.

Furniture: a churchyard cross consisting of steps, base, and part of shaft, is topped by more recent octagonal stone to carry sundial.

Earthworks: none of any significance.

Ancillary Features: main entrance on south has stone pillars supporting ornate ironwork lampholder. Stile formed by stone on edge, immediately to east. Tarmac path leads to porch only. Subsidiary access in middle of east side by standard farm gate.

Vegetation: yews, many of fairly small girth, around perimeter of churchyard with a couple beside path to porch.

SOURCES

Annatt: Church Guide - n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 25 October 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 70
Dawson 1909, 192

Faculty, 1830: NLW/SD/F/140
Haslam 1979, 315

CONDITION

Generally sound condition, reflecting fact that much money spent on renovation in last ten years.

Internally some flaking of sandstone dressings on west bay of arcade, and in places - north and west walls of nave, east window of south aisle - plaster and/or whitewash flaking or bubbling, because of damp.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Medium

Defynnog

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Cynog**PRN** 16764**NGR** SN92542793

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cynog's church lies on the northern side of Defynnog village about 12km miles west of Brecon. The church undoubtedly has a long history though whether the reputed 'Celtic window' is an authentic pre-Conquest feature cannot be ascertained. The tower and the body of the church are late medieval though of different builds, and internally there is an interesting range of furnishings including an early medieval inscribed stone and a font and stoup both of early date. The churchyard is large and irregular.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The tower is attributable to the late 15thC on the basis of details such as round- and camber-headed windows, gargoyles, and battlements; little change except for some replacement of window dressings.

Nave may contain a section of walling on north side which belongs to the earliest church, though whether it is 'Celtic' remains a moot point. Two of the windows are late Perpendicular but several later windows have been inserted and the upper part of the western end of the south wall has been reconstructed.

Chancel and north chapel are of the same build, with some reconstruction of north-west corner of north chapel and probably the replacement of a doorway in the north wall with one in the west. On the south wall of the chancel a fabric break at its juncture with the nave indicates that the former was built on to an existing structure.

On the basis of the windows the body of the church is usually ascribed to c.1500, but it is evident that the chancel has been extended eastwards. Are both the rebuilding and the extension likely to have occurred close together in the early 16thC, or is it possible that the nave is earlier and that Perpendicular windows have been inserted into it? There is also a belief amongst earlier writers that the north chapel (or north aisle as it was often referred to) was later in date than the chancel, although this cannot be verified from surface observations.

Porch could be original, though the RCAHMW placed it as late as the 18thC.

HISTORY

An early medieval origin for the church seems reasonably plausible on the basis of its dedication and its siting. Pre-Conquest features may include the font, stoup, the incised stone and the architecture of the north wall of the nave though it must be stated that for a variety of reasons none of these can categorically be used as confirmatory evidence for an early church.

Nevertheless it is generally understood that this was a mother church for the region, and its importance is demonstrated by the fact that the 'Ecclesia de Devennoc' was valued at the high level of £8 18s 9d in the Taxatio of 1254, and £17 6s 8d in that of 1291.

It seems likely that the church saw some restoration in the 18thC or early 19thC though no records of this work have been identified. Certainly the south windows west of the porch would seem to be of this date.

Glynne visited the church in 1855, noting that it was "above par" for the region in both size and condition. The plan was described and the Perpendicular windows except for those on the north side had escaped mutilation. The tower was massive, with a south-east turret. The roofs of nave and aisle were coved and panelled, the western end of the nave was partitioned off by a gallery.

The church underwent some restoration in 1888. This included the removal of the gallery, gallery stairs and pews, the replacement of three windows in the north chapel and nave, the rebuilding of part of the south wall and the walling over the arcade, re-roofing of the building, new concrete and tile floors etc.

Further more minor alterations occurred in 1905 including work on the partitions at the west end of the nave.

ARCHITECTURE

Defynnog church comprises a nave and chancel in one, a north chapel extending eastwards in line with the end of the chancel, a south porch central to the nave, a west tower, and a small modern structure, perhaps a boiler house, in the angle formed by the nave and the north chapel. The church is oriented fractionally south of grid west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of squared blocks and slabs of red and grey sandstone with occasional vesicular lumps, small and medium in size, rarely larger, irregularly coursed.

'B' contains more red sandstone than 'A', and in places the coursing is more regular.

'C' has predominantly squared blocks of sandstone, both red and grey in colour.

Roofs: slates with lead along ridge crest.

Drainage: drainage trenches along both sides of the nave, and the north and east sides of the north chapel. A metalled path runs along the east side of the building.

Exterior

Porch . General. Fabric 'A', though sides particularly in smaller rubble than the nave walls.

East and west walls: plain; large mural slab of 1837 set against former.

South wall: two-centred arch with chamfered sandstone dressings; 15thC according to Haslam. Gable has ornamental wooden bargeboard of recent origin. Iron gates.

Tower. General. In Fabric 'C'. Battered base topped by string-course; second stage also defined by rectangular sectioned string-course; belfry stage has a third string-course at top and above this is battlemented parapet. The tower supports a small pyramidal spire with a weathervane, and has a stair turret at the south-east angle.

North wall: some zoning of stonework visible in second stage; tower wall abuts nave wall except for one large block which bonds in. Two-light, louvred belfry window; gargoyle projects from string-course above.

East wall: nave roof rises to top of second stage; belfry window has round-headed twin lights, louvred. Stair turret at south-east angle is lit by two slits in the same stage. Water spout on top string-course.

South wall: belfry stage has two windows, the lower a single round-headed light with chamfered sandstone dressings and, above, twin round-headed lights, faint markings in the spandrel, and sockets for the louvre boards. Stair turret on south-east is battered to a higher level; upper two string-courses continue around the

turret; one slit window below middle string-course, and a second in the west face of the turret. Highest string-course has one gargoyle.

West wall: round-headed windows at bottom and top of second stage, the former larger than the latter; a standard twin-light window lights belfry; two gargoyles on top string-course.

Nave. General. Essentially Fabric 'A' throughout, though some variation.

North wall: slightly battered at base. From east i) above the boiler house, a three-light Perpendicular window, completely replaced; ii) high up on wall is a square wooden-framed two-light window with a wooden lintel, post-medieval; iii) the blocked, so-called 'Celtic window' with its two jambs and a lintel which narrows over the aperture and far overlaps the jambs; it is fixed in a section of wall about 3m long which is inset from the main wall face at its base but bulges at a higher level and is flush with the rest of the wall; iv) immediately to the west of this section of walling is a small buttress-like protrusion though it extends no more than 0.1m from the wall face - its significance is unclear.

South wall: east of the porch are two Perpendicular three-light windows, the dressings entirely replaced on that to the west, the other less so; Haslam describes the tracery in these windows, as elsewhere on the south and north, as unusual with an almost round-headed frame with two mullions, the outer pair of lights with a single cusp at impost level, the inner with a trefoil head but otherwise plain. Occasional traces of limewash adhere to the masonry on this part of wall. West of the porch are two two-centred arched windows with wooden mullions and Y-tracery, voussoirs for the arch and rough stonework for the jambs; late insertions possibly at the time when the school room was partitioned off. South-west angle of nave abuts tower; there are no quoins strengthening the view that the tower is slightly earlier than the nave. However, it is also likely that the upper part of the wall, west of the porch, is rebuilt. At eaves level the roof drops by c.0.1m and the upper wall face is inset by the same distance.

North chapel. General. Limewash remnants.

North wall: Fabric is similar to 'A', but irregularities in wall face hint at some reconstruction perhaps re-using existing stone. Two Perpendicular-style windows but that to west is certainly Victorian, and that to east may be, though it is in red sandstone. In addition a jamb stone at ground level towards the western end of the wall face could be the sole in situ survivor of a north door, and this reinforces the belief that the western end of this wall has been reconstructed.

East wall: Fabric 'B'; four-light window with panel tracery under two-centred arch, hollow chamfers.

West wall: standard Perpendicular window of three lights, the dressings largely original. Adjacent is a Victorian two-centred arched doorway, the slightly battered base of the wall broken through for its insertion, and the wall face above the door, and to the north of the window is probably all rebuilt, with distinctive slabs of sandstone and heavy pointing.

Chancel. General. Fabric 'B'. Masonry retains intermittent limewash traces.

East wall: no butt joint with north chapel: they are of same build. Window as east window of north chapel, in red sandstone; patched up but largely original.

South wall: one three-light Perpendicular window with a broad two-centred head, comparable with windows in nave; some replacement of sandstone dressings, particularly the mullions; brackets for hinged shutters. West of the window is a priest's door with two steps down to it, and half a step up to the threshold stone; it has an obtuse two-centred arch and chamfered dressings of mixed colours, showing little sign of wear; the masonry surround to this door stands out from the general Fabric 'B' and has been rebuilt. West of the priest's door is a change from Fabric 'B' to Fabric 'A'; this is not a butt joint more a dovetailing of the masonry; one ashlar quoin stone has been re-used.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone flag floor; plastered walls except that on north which is bare; plastered ceiling showing only the purlins.

North wall: two-centred arch with chamfered dressings in red sandstone looks original, but jambstones in grey sandstone on either side may be replacements.

East wall: stoup set in wall.

West wall: plain but early medieval stone rests against it.

Tower. General. Flag floor. It should be noted that the lintel of the door to the bellringers' chamber has a decorated ring cross carved on it.

East wall: tall tower arch blocked off.

South wall: small, two-centred doorway to tower turret.

West wall: deeply splayed window.

Nave. General. Western half of nave has a broad vestibule opening off from porch with plaster board panelling to east and a wall to west behind which is the school room.

School room has polished wooden floor and flat ceiling. North wall supports an undated benefaction board, a blocked fireplace (coinciding with the slight protrusion in external wall face to the west of the 'Celtic' window), and a mural tablet of 1758. Windows in south wall have surviving wooden shutters. West wall contains the large pointed archway to the tower, not chamfered; now blocked leaving only a small entrance.

Vestibule has stone flagged floor and false ceiling; modern furniture and an old fashioned school desk.

Nave. General (cont.). Floor of Victorian tiles with one large grille for underfloor heating; wooden block floors beneath benches. Plastered and whitewashed walls, but exposed dressings for windows and arcade. Nave and chancel ceiling in one: barrel-ceiling with close-set moulded ribs.

North wall: one splayed window beneath which is a mural tablet and war memorial plaques. One and a half bays of Perpendicular arcade to north chapel.

South wall: splayed windows; large numbers of 19thC mural tablets.

West wall: plain.

North chapel. General. Floor of flags which include in the sanctuary three complete grave slabs of 1637, 1724 and the third not legible, and another 14 or 15 whole or in part flooring an 'aisle' beside the arcade. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Ceiling as in nave and chancel.

North wall: splayed windows; two 18thC mural tablets and one of the 19thC.

East wall: splayed east window; two 18thC mural tablets.

South wall: arcade. One 18thC mural tablet over arcade pillar and another on east respond.

West wall: splayed window.

Chancel. General. Floor tiled throughout; one step up from nave and two more to sanctuary. Walls and ceiling as nave.

North wall: one and a half bays of arcade. The eastern respond is of slightly different design to the other pillars and the western respond and Haslam felt it might be earlier. Three 17thC and 18thC mural tablets in north-east corner and a 19thC tablet over the arcade pillar to the west.

East wall: splayed window. Ten Commandments painted on wall.

South wall: splayed window but not doorway.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Pillar Stone: "formerly immured at the south-west corner of the base of the tower, but now standing in porch; original site not known. Inscribed RUGNIATIO [FI]LI VENDONI, and with Ogams. At the top is a Celtic circled cross and a St Andrew's cross design. The inscription must be 5thC or 6thC, the crosses 7thC-9thC" (Haslam).

Early medieval stone: with ring cross (see tower interior).

Stoup: "pre-Norman? Square, with raised panels on three sides" (Haslam).

Font: "early 11thC? Base is square, rising to a flanged circle from which four fleurs-de-lys run back into its corners; two round stones with a ring-moulding between them form the shaft; the bowl is deeply undercut and decorated on the sides with a band of billets and a band of crosses and spaces; on the rim is the only example of Runic writing in Wales, presumably an indication of Viking activity? A further inscription in Lombardic letters, repeating the Runic, reads: SIWURD + GWLMER" (Haslam).

Monuments: including those to Evan David (d.1761), with a simple Last Judgement; Howell Powell (d.1758) and his wife, Sarah (d.1761); Mary Powel (d.1739) and Sarah Protheroe (d.1744); Lewis and Howel Powell (d.1758 & 1762); Gwenllan Hallard (d.1692); Bridget Debettott (d.1738); Anne Hooton (d.1746); Thomas Probert (d.1744); Jenkin Watkin (d.1767) and his wife Margaret (d.1781); and Watkin Price (d.1772) and his daughter Anne (d.1777).

Bells: six, two of 1686, one of 1739.

Pulpit: 18thC.

Register: from 1695.

19thC and 20thC furnishings include:

Reredos: carved oak, 1907.

Stained Glass: "chancel south window by Mayer & Co., Munich. The two east windows appear to be by the same maker" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

St Cynog's church is sited in a sloping churchyard of irregular rectilinear form. The slope is more marked to the south of the church than to the north, a result of the location on ground that is beginning to drop towards a tributary of the River Senni. The river itself lies little more than 100m to the west and the western edge of the churchyard is perched on the lip of its river terrace.

If Defynnog church did originally occupy a curvilinear enclosure there are no convincing signs of it today. A small extension to the extreme south of the yard is documented in the last century, and it is just conceivable that the scarp bank to the south of the church (see below) functioned as a boundary at some point in the past.

The churchyard is well maintained and is currently used for burial.

Boundary: south-west of the church the boundary is defined by a mortared stone wall with an immediate external drop of around 0.8m more than the internal drop, separated by a narrow ledge before the fall into the river valley. Between the church and the vicarage to the west a low internal bank and a hedge replace the wall, but on the north side the wall commences again, the difference in height becoming less marked as one moves eastwards. On the east the perimeter is edged by houses and again the interior is raised to the extent that some of the cottage windows are on a level with the churchyard. The wall continues on the south-east and there is no real external drop.

Monuments: these are well spread throughout the churchyard and are locally dense, particularly on the north side. Late 18thC and many 19thC graves are prevalent to the north of the north chapel and also to the south of the chancel.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: a scarp bank in excess of one metre high and quite pronounced curves round from beneath the tower to opposite the chancel.

Ancillary features: an ornate lychgate with transoms and tracery across the arches dates to 1903, and offers the main access from the south. The north-west corner has a single painted metal gate, the north-east corner has double cast iron gates and there is a further gate on the east side. All are served by tarmac paths.

Vegetation: four large yews including one on the scarp bank noted above lie in an arc around the church.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 15 August 1995

Dawson 1909, 62

Faculty 1887: NLW/SD/F/142

Faculty 1905: NLW/SD/F/143

Glynne 1886, 273

Haslam 1979, 316

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Generally satisfactory though some damp and woodworm visible in the schoolroom.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium

Garthbrengy

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication David

PRN 31225

NGR SO04623351

GENERAL SUMMARY

St David's church is located to the east of Afon Honddu, 5km to the north of Brecon. The building is a mixture of medieval masonry and 17thC and 19thC reconstructions - the latter included the removal of a north aisle. Internally, there is a reasonably typical group of fittings: a medieval stoup and font and 18thC and 19thC memorials. The churchyard is interesting for its clear indication of expansion at some point prior to the 1840s.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower claimed as 17thC, presumably on the basis of the belfry windows though conceivably this stage has been rebuilt. Nave walls largely rebuilt in Victorian era, though windows on north from earlier, 15thC north aisle. Chancel in part original but windows replaced, and no clear evidence of date. There is a claim, however, that parts of the building may date from the 12thC.

HISTORY

The origin of the church is obscure, but the former enclosure fossilised within the present churchyard could point to an early medieval origin.

In the 1291 Taxatio it is recorded as 'Ecclesia de Karpngy' with a value of £3 6s 8d. A similar value was attached to 'Carchpreguy Ecclia Prebendalis' in the Valor Ecclesiasticus more than two centuries later. Main restoration of the church was in 1834 by William Jones with reports of further works in 1874 and 1901. Theophilus Jones in 1809 noted the rood-loft steps in position, but these have now gone.

ARCHITECTURE

Garthbrengy church comprises a nave and chancel in one, a west tower, a south porch near the south-west angle of the nave, and a heating chamber against the north wall of the tower. It is aligned almost exactly west to east.

Fabrics: 'A' of small and medium slabs of weathered grey sandstone, some coursing; larger better dressed slabs for quoins; occasional lumps of red and yellow sandstone incorporated in the masonry.

'B' medium sized, somewhat irregular blocks of sandstone in mixed colours (grey, red and brown); some coursing.

'C' small to medium sandstone, mixed colours, irregular slabs and blocks, not regularly set.

'D' regular blocks of grey, red and brown sandstone; some coursing.

Fabric 'B' is medieval, 'A' is considered to be 17thC, 'C' is probably medieval masonry re-used in the Victorian period, and 'D' is new Victorian.

Roofs: slates with ceramic ridge tiles, no finials.

Drainage: little obvious evidence of a drainage trench around the walls.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric A throughout. Battered base to height of c.1.2m. No string-courses. Jambs of belfry windows have occasional socket holes which occur inconsistently; purpose unclear, but possibly indicative of re-use? Tower capped by flattish pyramidal roof with base for weathervane in place.

North wall: one slit window about half-way up wall, no dressings, but stone louvre boards. Belfry window has louvred round-headed light with chamfered, yellow freestone dressings. Lean-to boiler room at base.

East wall: apex of nave reaches to just below belfry window, but lies to one side of it, indicating that the two elements of the building are not in line. Belfry window as on north.

South wall: at ground level is an inserted rectangular window with two rectangular glazed lights, reddish-brown dressings and metal window frames cemented in. Standard slit window half-way up, and belfry window as on north though no obvious socket(s) in jambs. In tower/nave re-entrant, in line with the nave eaves is a stone slab projecting like a fragmentary string-course: purpose obscure. Finally it may be noted that at belfry level there is subtle change in masonry which could conceivably indicate a rebuild.

West wall: one rectangular slit at ground level, just above the batter, with reddish-brown sandstone chamfered dressings; Victorian with faint traces of insertion. Standard slit and belfry windows at higher levels.

Nave. North wall: formerly the open arcade of the demolished north aisle. Fabric C, with occasional variations in the masonry, smaller stones being used, noticeably around some windows; limewash remnants on stones. Three rectangular windows, all of two lights with cinquefoil tracery under two-centred arched heads; chamfered dressings, each window slightly different in appearance. Much replacement of dressed stone and most easterly window has best survival of original stonework. These windows were originally in outer wall of north aisle. Two Victorian buttresses. Iron-grilled vents near ground level.

South wall: wall rebuilt in Fabric D. Two rectangular windows with cinquefoiled tracery in lights; olive-grey sandstone, all Victorian.

West wall: small area of wall face visible. Large rectangular block projects from wall at base, perhaps a remnant of an earlier buttress or other structural feature. In places original walling survives, but most of wall rebuilt.

Chancel. General. South wall of chancel on fractionally different alignment from that of nave; a similar phenomenon is not noticeable on the north wall.

North wall: in Fabric B. One window, a trefoiled lancet with complex mouldings of Victorian date. A large chunk of wall rebuilt around it, though the remnants of limewash on the infill masonry, as well as the masonry itself, reveal re-use.

East wall: much weathered masonry, probably Fabric B. Four-centred arch contains three stepped lights with two-centred heads and cusped tracery; red sandstone dressings, some of which could be original?

South wall: in Fabric B, but window as on north side of chancel and inserted with infilling of 'D'.

Porch. General. Fabric D type. South wall has round-headed archway with chamfered dressings, all in

Victorian grey and red sandstone. There is no gate or door, but a light over the top.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor and one step up to south door. Plastered walls. Rafter and collar roof of no great age.

North wall: two-centred arch for main church door, chamfered with bar and broach stops; dressings painted, but possibly Victorian.

East wall: stoup, in good condition.

Nave. General. Flagged floor (except for one graveslab of 1730 which might be re-used), with carpets over vents and down aisle; raised wooden flooring under benches. Plastered and painted walls, but dressings unpainted. Roof of multiple scissor trusses across both nave and chancel, presumably Victorian.

North wall: encompassed in the wall is a low, three-bay arcade, a remnant of the former north aisle, which extends into chancel; four-centred Perpendicular arches of two chamfered orders spring from octagonal piers. 20thC brasses on wall.

East wall: no wall; instead a screen of 1912 set on a low foundation wall, with two steps up to chancel.

South wall: wall leans outwards slightly; splayed windows and slightly splayed door embrasure with flattish two-centred arch over. Four 19thC mural slabs.

West wall: surface irregular but nothing of obvious significance. Narrow doorway with two-centred arch and chamfered dressings to tower. Four mural tablets, one of 1782, the remainder 19thC.

Chancel. General. Flagged floor with two centrally placed graveslabs (one of 1725, the other perhaps 1829), covered by carpet; Victorian encaustic tiles in sanctuary, which is one step from chancel, and another to altar. Some of choir stalls raised on wooden plinths, others on the flags. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: slight outward lean and one deeply splayed window.

East wall: window splayed but dressings do not look ancient.

South wall: unlike the external face, the wall is in line with that of nave. One 19thC mural tablet.

Tower. General. One step up from nave, the threshold flagged but remainder of floor has wooden boards with carpet over. Plastered walls. Flat wooden ceiling at height of about 5m.

North wall: wooden board indicates that church rebuilt in 1833/34 with assistance from Incorporated Society for Promoting the Enlargement of Churches.

East wall: flat-headed reveal, but nothing to suggest it is of any age.

South wall: recess in wall from ground level to top of the window, but of no age.

West wall: one splayed window.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stoup: 12thC; supposedly four-lobed, though only one visible; set well into wall within square-headed recess.

Font: octagonal, perhaps 15thC, on modern stem.

Monuments: John Jones (d.1835) and others, by S. M. Sarne; Richard and Joan Watkins (d.1780 and 1782).

Graveslabs: in nave floor to Thomas Gwyn (d.1730); in chancel floor to Anne Gwyn (d.1725).

Registers: from 1732.

CHURCHYARD

The church is set in a medium-sized, faintly curvilinear churchyard which has been extended on all sides but was originally about 50m in diameter (see below). Internally the ground is reasonably level, though it does start to fall away to the south of the church. Church and churchyard are positioned on a gently sloping hillside to the east of the Honddu, though to the north the slope is imperceptible and the location appears more like a hill top.

The present circuit is defined by a stone retaining wall reinforced by a hedge, and in some places, notably on the north, there is evidence of internal banking. The external ground level is consistently lower than the interior, varying from several metres on the west where the churchyard towers above the road to less than 0.5m on the east.

Monuments: these are restricted to the south side with none on the west and north. Locally dense; some are leaning, quite a few others have flaking faces. The earliest that was noted dated from 1797.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: the original line of the sub-circular enclosure bank is clearly visible on both the north and south sides. There is a low scarp bank of c.0.7m with several yews on it on the north, resulting in a raised platform around the church; on the south this continues intermittently, again surmounted by yew trees. Clear evidence of an earlier 'llan' around the church.

Ancillary features: small double iron gates and a concrete path provide the main access from the south. There is a small iron gate on the east approached by a grass path, and a farm gate at the north-west corner. A wire fence to the west of the main path and another running eastwards from the north-east corner of the chancel to the boundary cordon off the 'active' part of the graveyard, presumably to allow sheep to graze across the remainder.

Vegetation: numerous yews, many quite mature. As noted above most are set on the former 'llan' bank.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 March 1996
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 61
Dawson 1909, 74
Haslam 1979, 319
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR

CONDITION

Some cracking noticeably on north, west and and south faces of tower. Internally cracks on the west wall of the nave have been plastered over, but there is blistering paint on this wall.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Gwenddwr

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Dubricius**PRN** 16788**NGR** SO06484326

GENERAL SUMMARY

A small rather unimpressive church dedicated to St Dubricius, and largely rebuilt in 1886, with few furnishings and fittings of pre-19thC date. Its small rectilinear churchyard may be the shrunken remnant of a much larger oval enclosure related to the 6thC monastic foundation reputed to have been established here.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Some of the earlier, medieval church survives, notably as Fabric B in lower stages of tower, porch, and probably western part of nave. Rest rebuilt using mixture of old and new masonry, though this is at variance with 1878 faculty specification which implies south wall and part of east are original. Most windows have been replaced with Victorian imitations, but two in chancel retain original dressings. Both doors on south side retain original features, but priest's door may have been reset. Overall, surviving architectural features suggest that the church goes back to the 14thC, and that some alterations perhaps only to the chancel and porch were made in the 15thC.

HISTORY

Gwenddwr is supposed to have emerged in the 6thC AD as a monastic establishment. Jones claimed that St Dubricius had a seminary named after him on the banks of the Wye.

The Cistercian Abbey Dore (Herefordshire) had a grange here in the 14thC, though its precise site is not known.

The church does not feature in the 13thC Taxatio or in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535, perhaps because of its subsidiarity to Dore, but the St Davids' Episcopal Register for 1513 refers to 'Gwenthur'.

Theophilus Jones in the early 19thC recorded the church as having a heavy and clumsy steeple, the nearby publican's roof was in better repair than that of church, the porch was very low, there was an uneven earth floor, the seats were decayed and irregular, and the chancel indifferently flagged. An inscription on the south wall recorded "this church was beautified and adorned by the church wardens in 1790". Jones also reported that after 1801 the parishioners had spent some money on improving the building, without specifying what had been done.

In 1876 a fire destroyed much of the church, and it was restored at a cost of £890 in 1886. The specification for the work, dated 1878, required that: the north wall of the nave and chancel and a portion of east wall be taken down to foundations, and rebuilt with hammer-dressed stone with random walling to correspond to earlier walls; original windows should be reused; dressings replaced where necessary; ground on the south side of church was to be removed to the depth of the internal floor level; the floor in nave was to be raised 14"; pews and stalls replaced; and tower repaired with new window on south.

ARCHITECTURE

Nave and chancel in one, with west tower and south porch. Note that church is oriented west-north-west/east-south-east, but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of blocks of mixed sandstone, some irregularly shaped, and some shale; colours range from red through to yellow and grey. Irregularly coursed and heavily pointed, generally clean appearance; large ashlar quoins. Possibly old stone mixed with newer material, or on basis of faculty specification, new masonry matching old?

'B' consists of slabs and blocks of dark shale, irregularly coursed.

Roofs: recent on both tower and on body of church, using reconstituted clay tiles with ceramic ridge tiles over recent timber.

Drainage: narrow gully, c.0.15m wide on both north and south.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric B except where otherwise stated. Battered base for first 0.7m, the lowest stone courses projecting more. Flattish pyramidal roof. Three stages on basis of windows. No string-courses, weather vane or other embellishments.

North wall: Fabric B to about top of second stage, above this more sandstone mixed in, a Fabric A variation. Two simple and separate rectangular louvred windows at belfry level.

East wall: apex of nave roof virtually touches eaves of tower roof. Visible wall is plain and could be Fabric A.

South wall: Fabric B below, A above. First stage has window with shouldered-arch, completely Victorian, simple slit in 2nd stage, and belfry window as north wall.

West wall: plain with pronounced bulge in masonry at second stage level.

Nave. General. Wall lower on south than on north because of ground slope; both slightly battered.

North wall: Fabric A, with more modern masonry at higher level, and more uniform ashlar quoins also. At north-west corner, foundation course stonework projects for distance of nearly 2m along wall face - earlier foundation? Three broad lancet windows, with chamfered dressings, entirely Victorian.

South wall: Fabric A but more weathered than on north; three Victorian windows as on north.

West wall: on south side lowest courses project and appear to pre-date tower masonry; on north side wall in Fabric B, tower appears to abut nave, and foundation course projects.

Chancel. General. No external separation from nave.

North wall: in Fabric A, with tooled quoins of recent date at north-east corner. Two lancet windows; more westerly has replacement dressings in yellow sandstone except for sill, in contrast to red sandstone of nave, but otherwise the four-centred chamfered arch in red sandstone set in square-headed frame is original. To east is smaller lancet with two-centred arch with hollow chamfers, probably all Victorian replacement.

East wall: ?Fabric A but weathered. East window has three stepped lights with trefoil heads, Victorian, comparable with north nave windows, though 15thC in form.

South wall: Fabric A. Lighting the sanctuary is flat-headed window with complex mouldings, the two lights

having cinquefoil heads with circular depressions in the spandrels (though Griffiths of RCAHMS thought them unfinished): mullion replaced and perhaps sill, but tracery original and perhaps some of jamb stones. Blocked priest's door, 14thC, with two-centred arch, chamfered dressings with much abraded stop on one jamb in red sandstone but many of dressing stones in yellow or buff sandstone, possibly indicating replacement; threshold stone now 0.4m above ground level.

Porch. East wall: Fabric A, no features.

South wall: heavy ashlar dressings provide pillar supports for truss, crudely carved with central quatrefoil and what pass for trefoils (but see also porch interior).

West wall: possibly Fabric B, and at its base the nave wall appears to be later.

Interior

Porch. General. Floor of two colour Victorian tiles. 15thC roof (cf Crickadam), with two quatrefoil and trefoil trusses and an arched one between, and pairs of trefoiled wind-braces. Inner truss better carved than outer. Bare walls partly in Fabric B.

North wall: two-centred, stopped-chamfered arched doorway in red sandstone; head replaced in cream sandstone, but otherwise claimed as 14thC. 19thC door.

East wall: Fabric A(?), stone slab bench against wall.

South wall: stone pillar supporting gable truss.

West wall: as east wall, but in Fabric B.

Tower. Not accessible.

Nave. General. Floor of black and red Victorian tiles with carpet over; benches raised slightly on wooden planked floors. Roof has ugly scissor trusses. Walls all plastered and whitewashed except for dressings of windows. Windows throughout have iron grilles.

North wall: splayed window embrasures with peaked rere-arches and slightly sloping sills.

South wall: doorway reveal has peaked top, windows as on north.

West wall: irregularities in wall surface at c.3.5m+ point to rebuilding; at ground level shouldered arch to tower comparable with tower window on south side, Victorian.

Chancel. General. One step above nave, and two further steps to altar. Floored with Victorian encaustic tiles. Roof as nave.

North wall: as nave, though more easterly of two windows has minor repairs to it, possibly suggesting that not complete Victorian replacement.

East wall: nothing of note.

South wall: tracery of main window has modern backing.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: a small, octagonal bowl of medieval date; the stem and base replaced.

Monument: "a floreated cross to a member of the Gunter family d.1580(?)" (Haslam). Not seen during field visit but could be in vestry.

Bells: two by Evans of Chepstow, 1700; a third by Rudhall, 1797.

Parish register back to 1760.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard lies some 60m south of Nant Gwenddwr, the fairly steep valley slope interrupted by a gently sloping shelf on which the church squats. Possibly the ground level within churchyard has been levelled through use, though still slight drop from south to north; church certainly terraced into slope.

Churchyard is rectilinear in shape, the only curve to boundary being on south side. No evidence on earlier maps of any modifications. Maximum dimensions of 53m east/west by 36m north/south. Possibly this represents a substantial reduction in former size. Curvilinear boundary on south is continued by adjoining property boundaries, and line can be extended to an almost complete oval circuit of about 150m diameter, incorporating stream. Larger enclosure might be in keeping with traditional 6thC monastic foundation. But it occupies an extremely steep slope and the present church is in an unusually eccentric position within it.

Boundary consists on west and south of stone wall capped in concrete with wire fence set on it and hedge inside; on east stone wall continues with hedge above, an external drop of perhaps 1m not matched internally where 0.2m. An outside revetment wall and hedge on south, ground drops away for several metres; internally slightly embanked.

Churchyard well maintained and has won prizes in recent years. Recent burials.

Monuments: reasonably dense on south where table and box tombs of mid-18thC, with late 18thC gravestones in south-east corner. 19thC graves around north side, but ground relatively clear in north-west corner. Earliest inscription noted: 1754.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: none noted.

Ancillary Features: three-quarter size wooden gate and kissing gate also in wood provide main access from east; modern gate in north-west corner. Both served by tarmac paths.

Vegetation: numerous yew trees, none very ancient, around whole perimeter except north.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 19 October 1995

Faculty of 1878: NLW/SD/F/181

Haslam 1979, 323

Jones 1994,

Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 13-15

Powys SMR

Williams 1990, 43

CONDITION

Generally in reasonable condition though minor cracks in east wall of chancel and north wall of tower; and flaking whitewash on west and south walls of nave. Of most concern is bulging fabric in west wall of tower though this is not recent, having been noted by Griffiths in 1967.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Hay-on-Wye

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** St Mary**PRN** 16794**NGR** SO22584214

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church lies on the western side of the town of Hay, immediately to the south of the River Wye. The church may have been founded early in the 12thC, but only the tower of the medieval structure remains, the rest having been rebuilt in the 19thC. It contains some interesting Victorian features including its gallery and an elaborate pulpit, but from the middle ages only a worn effigy has survived. The churchyard is triangular in shape and perhaps fossilises an earlier and smaller yard of similar design.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower is 15thC, but its battlemented top is 19thC. The nave and chancel are completely 19thC, though of two different periods.

HISTORY

The early history of this church is obscure. There is nothing substantive to indicate an early medieval origin, its location apart.

At an early date it was appropriated to Brecon Priory and was dedicated to St Mary sometime between 1115 and 1135.

It is recorded as 'Ecclesia de Haya' at the time of the 1254 Taxatio, when it was worth £7 2s 2d, and nearly double at £14 less than forty years later in the 1291 Taxatio.

In 1684 Dineley sketched a nave and smaller chancel, both buttressed, a half-timbered porch and a west tower with a pyramidal roof; drawings of two grave slabs and the font were also included. The building collapsed about 1700, leaving only tower, although Dawson has it that this catastrophe related to another church dedicated to St John, and sited elsewhere in Hay.

It was rebuilt by Edward Haycock the elder in 1833-34 in Late Georgian Gothic style, and the chancel was enlarged in 1866, possibly by T. Nicholson the architect of Hereford. A Faculty application of 1873 covered the re-flooring of the nave in wood and tiles, and the introduction of new seating, and a further application of 1906 was necessitated for four new windows on the south side.

ARCHITECTURE

Hay church comprises a broad nave, a chancel with organ chamber to the north and vestry to the south which together are only fractionally less wide than the nave, an apse at the east end, a tower set centrally at the west end of the nave, and a south porch. Tucked into the northern angle between the tower and the nave is a lean-to stone building. It is oriented a little to the south of true west.

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Fabrics: 'A' consists of grey sandstone blocks and slabs, irregularly coursed. Ashlar quoins some in brown sandstone.

'B' is of blocks of grey and grey-red sandstone, irregularly coursed. At higher levels in the walls 'B' becomes more heterogeneous, suggesting some re-use of material.

'C' well-fashioned blocks and slabs of sandstone.

Roofs: of slate; ornate octagonal finial to nave end.

Drainage: because of the vegetation it is impossible to determine whether any drainage gullies have been dug beside the walls.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric 'A'. 15thC. Battered base to height of c.1.2m topped by moulded string course (first stage). A second, corbelled, string course of rectangular section lies just below the projecting, battlemented parapet (third stage). Low pyramidal roof, and flagpole in south-east corner. The whole tower cleaned and re-pointed recently. The corbel table and the battlements look as though they might be later than the main tower structure.

North wall: louvred lancet with grey sandstone dressings showing some renewal, low down in second stage. At the top of the stage a louvred two-light belfry window, the lights with ogee-heads and a collar between the mullions and the heads; some original dressings but the mullion is certainly replaced. At the north-east angle is a heavy buttress with ashlar masonry.

East wall: nave roof apex reaches just to belfry window which is set slightly higher than its counterpart on the north side. This is a louvred lancet with some renewal of the dressings.

South wall: as north side with buttress at south-east angle, which conceivably could have been built after the nave. Two small lancet windows low down in the second stage, the upper one has original dressings and like that in the north wall is louvred. The louvred belfry window has two lights with a two-centred arch over, the arch heads and the upper mullions replaced.

West wall: low in the second stage are two four-centred lights revealing much replacement, particularly of the jambs. Above is a single louvred lancet. The louvred belfry window has a broad, almost triangular head with original dressings - in appearance rather different from the other belfry windows.

Nave. General. Fabric B, but re-used material at higher levels in wall faces. Plinthead at c.0.5m, diagonal buttresses at angles. North wall has six large lancet windows with wooden frames and voussoirs in arch over each; between the windows, five stepped buttresses. South wall is similar but five windows rather than six, stone jambs, and stopped hoodmoulds; five buttresses plus those at angles. Above the porch is a squared recess, containing a much weathered coat-of-arms. West wall also has lancets, that to the north of the tower without a hoodmould, that to the south with one.

Chancel. General. What is visible of main part of chancel is in 'B' and has diagonal buttresses. The eastern apse is in 'C' and has a battered base and lancet windows with hoodmoulds; on the evidence of the window decoration the vestry and organ chamber were added at the same time though the stonework is rougher than that of the apse; these also display paired ogee-headed windows, and there is a round-arched doorway to the vestry. North wall of organ chamber has early Georgian monument to Richard Wellington (d.1732), and the listed building report refers to an adjacent, recessed tablet to other members of the Wellington family from the 1760s.

Porch. General. In rough Fabric C, comparable with vestry etc. Chamfered plinth at c.0.3m, with string course above, copying tower. But the whole is solidly Victorian.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor; walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of cusped rafters. Elaborate doorway to church.

Tower. General. Ground floor has wooden boards and is utilised as a kitchen, for heating etc; ceiling incorporates old wooden beams. Gravestone to Elizabeth Gwynn of 1702 set against south wall.

Nave. General. Flooring of wooden boards, except for heating grilles edged by encaustic tiles down north and south aisles but not central aisle; stone flags at front between benches and chancel, and also at rear in south-west corner. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Ceiled roof showing exposed tie beams supported on corbels and short braces. Large gallery with Gothic timber front over west and north ends, supported on cast-iron columns; area beneath gallery at west end is open and devoid of seats. East end has tripartite stone screen with cylindrical pillars, dog-tooth ornament and foliate capitals. 17thC graveslab pinned against north wall under gallery. Alabaster pulpit of 1865.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave; marble floors; walls as nave; boarded roof with three trusses having trefoils; the ribbed boarded roof of the apse is carried on corbels with foliate carving.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Monuments: a broken effigy, much damaged, lies against back (west) wall of nave; perhaps 14thC, and probably the one referred to as being outside by Dawson. With it is a small 18thC memorial stone, and a small round-headed cross-inscribed stone slab of uncertain date.

Bell: of 1740 by Evans of Chepstow.

Register: from 1689.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is triangular and of medium size, a steep drop to the River Wye immediately to the north, and a shallower drop to the Login Brook just beyond the boundary on the east. And on the west is a dry gully partly within the churchyard, so the church itself occupies a gently sloping spur above the river. It is overgrown with brambles and grass but is still used for burial.

Boundary: the west side has a hedge set atop a low scarp bank, and is in places reinforced by a wire fence. The drop on the north-east has a retaining wall, while the south side has a mortared stone wall separating the churchyard from the street.

Monuments: most of the churchyard now has a reasonable spread of monuments, though generally these are not dense. There are slabs and stones of the 18thC and 19thC but the vegetation makes it difficult to read them easily. The Cadw Schedule notes that there are a number of fine early 19thC memorials, and several Roman sarcophagi-type monuments. The 18thC graves are scattered and no obvious focus can be recognised.

Furniture: a sundial in poor condition close to the south wall. The Cadw Schedule records that there was an octagonal lead dial with the inscription 'Parish of Hay 1826, Joseph Huil(?) fecit Birmingham'. This and the accompanying gnomon have now gone.

Earthworks: north of the church and defining two sides of a triangle is a scarp bank rising to a maximum

height of 2m at the northern apex, but fading to nothing close to the north-east corner of the church. At least one gravestone of 1780 lies outside the bank, and the most likely interpretation is that it denotes an earlier, and smaller, churchyard.

Ancillary features: double wrought iron gates on the south side provide the main entrance, and there are similar gates in the south-east corner. Tarmac paths lead to the porch, but elsewhere there are grass paths, and around the north side of the church, graveslabs have been used.

Vegetation: yews are common. On the scarp bank there are several larger examples, while smaller ones grow beside the west and south-east boundaries. Four have been planted around a memorial to the south of the tower.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1988
CPAT Field Visit: 23 October 1995
Dawson 1909, 78
Dineley 1684, 139
Faculty 1873: NLW/SD/F/195
Faculty 1906: NLW/SD/F/196
Haslam 1979, 323
Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 98 & 103

CONDITION

The tower both internally and externally shows cracks and reportedly there is evidence that it is sinking. Some of the 19thC stonework is flaking, there is damp showing in the north nave windows, where also some of the wooden frames are rotting.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Poor to Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Llanafan Fawr

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Afan

PRN 16804

NGR SN96915578

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Afan's church at Llanafan Fawr lies some miles to the south-west of Builth Wells. Part of the medieval church survives but there has been considerable rebuilding in the 18thC and 19thC. It contains several interesting features, most notably several early medieval stone fragments and a pillar stone. The churchyard is massive and would originally have been nearly circular.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The tower rebuilt in 1765, but earlier base used for foundation, and older slit windows incorporated into new structure.

North and east walls of nave and chancel retained at time of restoration in 1887, but new windows inserted, old chancel demolished, new chancel formed in east end of existing nave, though latter lengthened by c.1.5m. The south wall completely rebuilt. Porch taken down and rebuilt in 1887.

HISTORY

The churchyard morphology together with the dedication to St Afan denote an early medieval beginning for the site and this is perhaps reinforced by the number of decorated stones from the early medieval period within the church, even though their original context is not known.

The churchyard may have been enlarged in the early medieval period.

It is thought to have been the mother church for the area.

In the Taxatio of 1291 'Ecclesia de Lavanan' is recorded as having the relatively high value of £13 6s 8d. In the Valor of 1535 it appears as 'Llanavon Vaure'.

The tower was rebuilt in 1765. The church guide also records a stone on the north side of the tower inscribed: 'This church was rebuilt at the expense of this Parish AD 1814. Thos Pritchard, Wm Jones, Churchwardens, John Davies, Undertaker'. Little is known about the scale of this rebuilding. Glynn in 1869 noted that all ancient architectural features had disappeared, and the interior bare and cold. By 1887 the church was in an almost ruinous condition. The tower was renovated, the chancel demolished and the church rebuilt on a smaller scale by S. W. Williams.

ARCHITECTURE

The church at Llanafan Fawr consists of a nave and chancel in one, a south porch set half way along the side of the nave, and a west tower. It is oriented almost exactly east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' is a mixture of multi-coloured blocks, slabs and lumps of mixed stone including sandstone, conglomerate, waterworn pebbles etc; set irregularly and no coursing; a small number of stones have limewash remnants.

'B' consists blocks of stone, more weathered than 'A', all medium sized and showing some coursing; colour uncertain because all are weathered to uniform grey.

'C' is of blocks of stone of different types, randomly coursed. Perhaps less colourful than 'A'.

Roofs: slates with ornamental ridge tiles; cross finials to chancel and porch but the former broken.

Drainage: a grass-free zone all around the wall base suggests drainage around the church.

Exterior

Tower. General. Battered base to height of c.0.7m with a flat slab string-course above. This lowest stage of tower in 'B' in contrast to rest of tower in 'A', and therefore perhaps earlier than the rest of the tower which can be attributed to 1765 (see below). A second string-course above the belfry windows and below the battlemented parapet. A stair turret rises above north-west angle, yet no windows to light stair.

North wall: belfry lit by pair of four-centred louvred lights with yellow freestone dressings; relieving arch over.

East wall: nave apex rises to just beneath belfry level. No belfry window and instead a slit window at a slightly lower level with chamfered dressings that look original. Above this is a distinct line of slabs creating horizontal zoning across this wall face.

South wall: two-centred arched window for ground floor, a trefoil-headed light with stopped hoodmoulding; in buff sandstone and part of 1886 restoration. Above this is an inscription reading 'This steeple was erected at ye expense of ye Parishioners by Thos. Thomas Undertaker M Morgan Gwilliam John Jones Churchwardens 1765'. Next a slit window comparable with that on the east side, and above this a sundial, its face flaking but the gnomon in position - no obvious inscription. This at a height of around 6m. Standard belfry window with relieving arch over.

West wall: one slit window, slightly lower than that in south wall. Standard belfry window.

Nave and Chancel. General. No external division between the two components.

North wall: masonry classed as 'C' but similar to that of tower which is classed as 'A'. Two windows (both lighting nave) consist of pairs of trefoil-headed lancets with stopped hoodmouldings, all in buff sandstone. These are clearly inserted, and much of the rest of the wall face has heavy mortar finish with extensive traces of render. This is also missing from the north-west angle (presumably re-built), an irregular zone behind a modern downpipe to the east of the more easterly window (coincides with former stove and chimney added in 1887) and the north-east angle (coincides with a butt joint and reveals the extension of this wall by c.1.5m in 1887).

East wall: probably Fabric C. Three stepped trefoil-headed lancets with continuous hoodmoulding. Some stones with remnants of limewash. Three mural slabs of 1791, 1795/1813 and 1807) at ground level.

South wall: four standard Victorian windows as in north wall though with varying number of lights: from east, one, two, three and, to the west of the porch, two lights; no relieving arches. No signs of window insertion and no butt joint near east end suggests that wall was completely rebuilt using older materials.

West wall: as south wall in its appearance.

Porch. East and west walls: plain, in Fabric 'C'.

South wall: two-centred arched doorway with stopped chamfers in Victorian buff sandstone. But quoinwork in roughly dressed masonry contrasts with the quoins elsewhere on the body of the church.

Interior

Porch. General. Red tiled floor, unplastered walls incorporating some early medieval fragments; simple rafted roof. One step up into nave. Nothing to suggest the porch is of any age.

Nave. General. Tiled floor with chairs on flush wooden block flooring; heating vents down aisle. Plastered walls not painted. Roof of nine bays of arch-braced ornamented collars resting on corbels extends into chancel. The nave/chancel division is defined by a truss supported on lower-set corbels with wall posts in stone.

North wall: shallow wall leaning slightly outwards. One mural tablet of 1791.

South wall: shallow wall; Victorian door embrasure.

West wall: a slightly irregular wall face but nothing of interest.

Chancel. General. Tiled floor with carpet over. Two steps up to chancel from nave, one to sanctuary and one to altar. Choir stalls on flush wooden floors. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: blocked chimney with Victorian two-centred arch over alcove for stove: just behind pulpit. Five mural tablets of 1567, 1783, 1784, 1804 and 1932.

East wall: nothing of note.

South wall: three mural tablets of 1843, 1864 and 1907.

Tower. General. One step lower than nave. Tiled floor; walls either plastered or covered with wooden panelling; ceiled at c.4m.

North wall: Incorporated Church Building Society plaque recording grant for 1886 rebuilding. Photo of church prior to its restoration.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Incised stones: three probable early medieval fragments with pecked decoration, carefully built into east wall of porch; probably 7thC-9thC.

Pillar stone: with a circled cross, 7thC-9thC; rests on its side in the sanctuary.

Font: small, 13thC; also a larger and highly ornate Victorian one.

Stoup: simple shallow rectangular bowl with converging sides.

Monuments: mural tablets inside the church to: Thomas Huet (d.1567); Elizabeth Jones (d.1791); the children of John Price (d.1778, 1781 and 1784); Gwenn Proce (d.1783).

Bells: five all of 1768 and inscribed.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is exceptionally large and although now reduced was clearly once a sub-circular enclosure in excess of 130m across. On the west and south it has been squared off in modern times. To the west the original boundary has been lost though road improvement, though its former line is perhaps reflected in the alignment of the Red Lion Inn. On the south a minor road has cut through the churchyard, but the line of the original enclosing bank and ditch is visible as an earthwork in the field to the south.

It is set towards the end of a ridge for while the ground is relatively level to the west, the ground drops gently away to the north and, a short distance beyond the churchyard, to the east as well.

The churchyard is extremely well kept and is used for modern burial.

The churchyard boundary takes various forms, a reflection of the changing position of the boundary. On the south is a drystone wall, embanked behind, but with an external ground level little more than 0.3m below the churchyard. On the south-east the yard is fenced and the front of the earlier bank can be detected beyond it. On the north the perimeter bank carries a fence but throughout the east and north sides the ground level is never much more than 0.5m lower externally. Only on the west above the main road does the drop become more emphatic, and here of course the original boundary has been lost. However, there is a modern grassy bank and a hedge forming the perimeter.

Monuments: there are localised concentrations of monuments but generally graves and their memorials are well spread across the south side. There are also a few to the east of the old chancel but none on the west and north. 18thC memorials do survive, both upright gravestones and tomb chests; the earliest noted was from 1768.

The modern large-scale OS map marks the location of St Afan's tomb to the south of the south-east angle of the present chancel. This is a substantial altar tomb topped by a slab inscribed in Lombardic script and said to date to the 14thC. At the beginning of the century it was recorded as standing 7ft high and being surrounded by a drystone wall. This appears to indicate an upright slab and that the present tomb is a more recent development.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: the church stands eccentrically on a raised oval platform some 50m in diameter which may be the remains of an earlier smaller churchyard or even a contemporary inner enclosure; on the south this shows as a faint scarp no more than 0.4m high, on the north and west it is much clearer. The position of the former chancel is discernible as a raised rectangular platform. In the outer part of the yard there are faint traces of what appears to be radial ridging - its origin and significance remain unclear.

Ancillary features: the main entrance is in the south-west where double metal gates open onto a gravel path leading to the porch. South-eastwards a grass path leads to a small wooden gate, there is a stile opposite the Inn, and a metal field gate is set close to the north-west angle.

Vegetation: a large yew grows at the east end of the former chancel, and there are others, less mature, around the south side, together with some pines.

SOURCES

Church Guide n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 26 March 1996
Dawson 1909, 110
Faculty 1887: NLW/SD/F/228
Glynne 1887, 279
Haslam 1979, 326
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR

CONDITION

Some minor cracking in external south wall of chancel; damp patches internally, particularly on east wall and blistering on west wall.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Good

Llanafan Fechan

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Afan

PRN 16805

NGR SN97295034

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Afan's church at Llanafan Fechan, now usually called Llanfechan, lies about 7km to the west of Builth Wells. The church has little pre-Victorian significance having been rebuilt in the later 19thC and, the font apart, nothing of medieval date in the way of furnishings and fittings. The churchyard was originally sub-circular and the church itself occupies an artificial mound.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Whole structure rebuilt in 1866, perhaps using older masonry in places.

HISTORY

The church dedication and the morphology of the churchyard may indicate an early medieval beginning, but there is little documented history to this remote church.

It does not appear in the 13thC Taxatio, but the St David's Episcopal Register contains a reference to 'Nanavan' in 1407 which is thought to apply to this building. It appears to have been a chapel dependent on Llanafan Fawr, but by the early 20thC was attached to Llanganten. The church was rebuilt in 1866 by C. Buckeridge.

ARCHITECTURE

The church at Llanafan Fechan (otherwise known as Llanfechan) consists of a nave and chancel in one, a vestry off the chancel and a south porch near the south-west corner of the nave. The church is oriented north-east/south-west, but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabric: regular blocks and slabs of grey and red slightly shaly sandstone, small to medium in size; quoins are dressed blocks of same material.

Roofs: slates, ceramic ridge tiles, cross finials at end of chancel and on porch.

Bellcote of standard form in dressed stone, opposed trefoil-headed apertures, and a single bell.

Drainage: narrow trench around all of the church with downpipes debouching into it.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Wall bases have chamfered plinth to height of c.0.4m.

North wall: possibly there may be earlier masonry built into this wall, but generally Victorian fabric. However, heavy lichen disguises any fabric changes. Four windows in all, having single-trefoil-headed lights, except for one double-light window in nave; dressings of pinkish grey sandstone.

East wall: two-centred arched window with three-stepped lights having trefoil heads, and a hoodmoulding - the standard form for the building. One mural tablet of 1779.

South wall: four standard windows, again all single lights except for a double light in the nave opposite that in north wall. Dressings in yellow sandstone. Buttress marks the division between nave and chancel.

West wall: centre of wall is thickened to carry bellcote. Into this thicker wall is set a trefoil-headed lancet with a relieving arch over.

Porch. General. Standard fabric. Entrance via a two-centred arched doorway with broach stops to the chamfers; a light over the arch.

Vestry. General. Probably an addition to the chancel. Fabric appears to be dark fine-grained sandstone with occasional anomalies such as quartzite. East window is simple lancet; quoins are of standard type.

Interior

Porch. General. Red and black tiles for floor; plain, unplastered walls; roof of collars and rafters.

North wall: doorway with two-centred arch, broach stops to chamfers, and hoodmoulding.

Nave. General. Tiled floor, flush wooden flooring with hardboard over it beneath the benches. Plastered and whitewashed (or pink washed) walls. Roof of five bays with arch-braced trusses on corbels, king struts, and several close set collars between each truss. Roof runs across nave and chancel, the only difference being that the wooden panelling behind the nave rafters is whitewashed.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel, two to sanctuary; floor of patterned tiles. Caernarvon-arched doorway to vestry.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 14thC, octagonal, with broach stops on the base; whitewashed.

Monuments: mural tablet on outside east wall to Samuel Evans (d.1779) in Latin.

Plate: 18thC chalice and paten.

CHURCHYARD

St Afan's church occupies a sub-rectangular raised churchyard, though there is more than a hint of curvilinearity to two of the sides. The ground is fairly level internally, but for a slight slope to the south of the building (and see below for the mound). Externally, there is a drop into a valley on the north but otherwise the location is a gently undulating ridge.

It is well-kept though somewhat overgrown to the east of the chancel, and is used for modern burials.

Boundary: on the south there is a substantial retaining wall, with a drop of 1.8m to the road; this continues round to the south-east, but is then replaced, opposite the farmhouse, by a scarp bank, perhaps 0.7m high with a fence on top. The fence together with bushes continue around the north side, where the external ground level is about 0.5m lower. Dense vegetation edges the churchyard on the west.

Monuments: these lie to the south, west and east of the church but not in any great numbers. The older ones, including a few very worn late 18thC stones, are to the east and south-east.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: the church is perched on a mound, at least one metre high on the west, and some 25m in diameter. Traceable on the north and east, it coalesces with the general slope on the south. There are traces, too, of the earlier course of the 'llan' just outside the present northern perimeter, but nothing in the former garden to the west, which looks to have truncated the original line.

Ancillary features: small, double metal gates and an adjacent latched gate give access to the church from the east side via a concrete path.

Vegetation: one reasonably mature yew tree to the east of the chancel, and a second one by the path, a short distance to the south.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 21 March 1996

Dawson 1909, 111

Haslam 1979, 326

Powys SMR

CONDITION

Some cracks in north wall, flaking paint and damp spots; otherwise in reasonable condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Very Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Medium

Llanbedr Ystrad Yw

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Peter

PRN 16813

NGR SO23972040

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Peter's church at Llanbedr is in the Perpendicular style, probably of the late 15thC or early 16thC, though the tower could be earlier. Renovation in the 19thC focused on the windows on the north side of the church and on the chancel arch. Internally there is a good range of monuments and re-used graveslabs, but the only medieval furnishings and fittings are the font and perhaps the wall painting above the chancel arch. The churchyard is triangular, but there is at least a possibility that this is an early medieval foundation, notwithstanding a reference to a church being consecrated here around 1060.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower may be earliest discernible element, perhaps 14thC, though there is no confirmatory architectural detail.

Despite what has been written by Haslam amongst others there is no structural indication that the present nave is Norman. Both nave and chancel are probably earlier than the aisle and chapel which have been attributed to the late 15thC or early 16thC; all the windows, however, are Perpendicular, though of various forms. It is claimed that the nave was widened to the north by the 16thC, and that the east windows are later 16thC in date.

South porch on evidence of main entrance is 16thC.

HISTORY

Llanbedr is in the old commote of Ystrad Yw, and is sometimes alluded to with the suffix to distinguish it from villages of the same name.

There is little to suggest that this is an early medieval foundation, yet despite the fact that the Liber Landavensis recorded the consecration of a church here in 1060 it is conceivable that the site goes back to a much earlier time.

The Taxatio of 1254 refers to 'Stradewy' at a value of only 2s 8d, but in 1291 'Ecclesia de Lanpetr' was valued at £6 13s 4d.

During the 18thC and into the 19thC, the village of Llanbedr was the home of the Brutes, a family of stonemasons noted for their ornate and lavishly-coloured wall memorials.

In 1785 shutters were made to protect the east windows because the game of fives was played in the churchyard.

The church was re-roofed and paved in 1790, with further work on the floors and the seating prior to 1831.

In 1864 Sir Stephen Glynne visited the church and describes the exterior as whitewashed, except for the

tower. In appearance it was much as today and on the north side 'the windows [were] bad and modern'. There are documented restorations in 1868, and in 1883 by F. R. Wilson of Alnwick. A further restoration occurred in 1897 when J.L. Pearson rebuilt the chancel arch and put new windows in the north wall of the nave. According to the Specification, the floors were to be lowered and the surplus earth spread over the churchyard, a wall between the tower and the nave removed, as was a fireplace in the north-west corner of the tower.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanbedr consists of a nave and chancel, a south aisle and chapel which extends as far east as the chancel, a west tower abutting the west end of the nave and a south porch giving access into the south aisle. The church is oriented north-east/south-west but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to large blocks and slabs of red sandstone with some grey sandstone, all randomly coursed; grey sandstone quoins.

'B' is of slabs and some blocks of red, grey and some brown sandstone, irregularly coursed; largely masked by remnant whitewash, and conceivably little different from 'A'.

Roofs: sandstone tiles and plain ceramic ridge tiles.

Drainage: a deep, broad trench around the north side, excepting the tower. Nothing on south and east.

Exterior

Tower. General. Double plinth chamfered at maximum of 0.4m (though buried by higher ground level on north side) and 1.2m. String course at top of second stage; string-course at top of third, belfry stage; overhanging battlemented parapet. Tower stair built into north-east angle and turret rises above the parapet.

North wall: second stage has three putlog holes and one glazed slit window with chamfered dressings in cream coloured sandstone except for lintel in red sandstone. A similar window lights the tower stair but its head looks recent. Near the base of the third stage are two slit windows side by side, the smaller one for the stair. In the third stage is a two-light belfry window with a four-centred arch and the louvred lights having trefoil heads; stonework looks mostly original. Second stage has traces of limewash.

East wall: apex of nave roof rises to middle of third stage. Belfry window as in north wall though two-centred arch; some variation in colour of dressings suggests replacement.

South wall: nine putlog holes in second stage and a glazed slit window with newish dressings; third stage has glazed slit window with original dressings. Standard belfry window with two-centred arch and again colour variation in dressings, particularly for mullion and some tracery. Limewash survivals specifically on second stage. Wall is abutted by that of south aisle.

West wall: five putlog holes in second stage, and a broad, barred rectangular window with chamfered dressings that look recent. Third stage has a single slit window low down. Belfry window as on north side, almost four-centred, and the springers on top of the mullion in different coloured sandstone. Below the second-stage window is a large slab like a lintel - does this indicate a blocked west door? If so the chamfered plinth has been cleverly inserted and it seems more feasible that the 'lintel' stone is simply an anomaly in the masonry.

Nave. General. Fabric B. Wall face is battered to height of 1.1m though most of this is visible in the drainage trench, and it is perhaps only 0.2m above the current ground level.

North wall: wall face retains considerable amounts of limewash, and inserted into this are two square-headed Victorian windows each with three cusp-headed lights with small quatrefoils above, all in deep red sandstone.

East wall: this is heavily plastered with pink limewash over. It is possible though not certain that the chancel abuts the nave on this side.

West wall: plain; abuts tower wall.

Chancel. General. Appears to be Fabric B, but extensive limewash remnants as nave. A broken tombstone and several tiles in drain on north side.

North wall: two windows, both wholly replaced and the stonework around these new insertions is clear of limewash. That to west is square headed with two lights which have plain four-centred heads and in deep red sandstone, though different from those in nave. That in sanctuary is a single light and is set lower in the wall, but is otherwise the same as the double-light window just to west.

East wall: remnant limewash. Square-headed window with a label that has worn stops; three lights with four-centred heads in yellow sandstone and sunken spandrels above; otherwise the dressings are in red sandstone. Socket holes for metal grille. Window is not central but set slightly to the south.

South chapel and south aisle. General. No external differentiation between these two elements. Fabric akin to 'A' in that mainly red sandstone with large grey sandstone quoins, though masonry may be more regular than 'A'.

East wall: remnant limewash. Window as in east wall of chancel; the mullions replaced and one of the heads; some patching in yellow cement to match tracery. Holes in some of the dressed stones to take metal grille (likewise in chancel window).

South wall: fabric is 'A', matching that in tower inasmuch as mainly red sandstone with large grey sandstone quoins, particularly at south-east corner; whole is partially disguised by heavy pointing in brick-like pattern. From east: i) square-headed window with stopped label; three lights with cinquefoil heads but otherwise as east window; in red sandstone except for replacement heads in yellow; ii) mural tablet of 1792; iii) priest's door with four-centred head, complex mouldings with stops and around the edge of the mouldings some evidence of incised decoration, now much weathered; stonework largely original; iv) mural tablets of 1808 and 1804; v) above the 1804 memorial and set high in the wall is a square-headed window with two lights that have the standard four-centred heads; jambs and the sill in grey sandstone, the rest in red. It is not clear how much of the dressed stone is original. This window is set above the divide between the chapel and the south aisle; vi) mural tablet of 1828; vii) square-headed window having a label with decorated stops; four lights with cinquefoil tracery beneath ogee heads and decorated spandrels; original dressings include label, some jambstones, parts of the mullions and the sill; viii) porch.

West wall: heavily limewashed. An unusual single-light window with grey sandstone jambs and a red sandstone ogee head. The arch stone is incised with curling tendrils; a label with ball-headed stops, hardly long enough for the window. In this form not all of it can be original.

Porch. General. Fabric A; side walls battered to height of c.0.6m; abuts south aisle wall.

East wall: slit window with chamfered dressings.

South wall: entrance has angular-headed arch and complex mouldings with stops, all in yellow sandstone; the arch appears to be original. Large ashlar quoins at south-east angle but not the south-west.

West wall: as east wall but no slit window.

Interior

Porch. General. Sandstone flags. Walls pointed but not plastered. Roof of two tie-beam trusses with collars above, and an intermediate arch-braced truss; large purlins.

North wall: broad angular-headed doorway with complex mouldings and stops; the head in yellow sandstone, the jambs in red sandstone; whether this is simply decorative or indicates renewal is not clear. Upright dressings built into wall outside the arch suggest an earlier, wider doorway which bears a closer relationship to the batter of the aisle wall. Door itself is thought to date to the early 18thC on the basis of the inscription 'H.E.1716' on the lock on the inside of the door.

East wall: one small splayed window; wooden topped bench along wall.

South wall: one principal truss incorporated in wall. Archway has internal chamfer and is all in yellow sandstone.

West wall: plain with bench.

Tower. General. Flagged floor includes many graveslabs but is carpet covered; three that are visible range from 1706 to 1769. Walls heavily pointed. Flat ceiling.

North wall: deeply splayed slit window with relieving arch of edge stones over. In north-east angle, triangular-headed doorway with stopped chamfers leads to tower stair. Psalm board mortared to wall above doorway.

East wall: tower arch, two-centred and slightly off centre for on north side the outer moulding continues to ground level as a chamfered jamb while on the south both mouldings fade into wall.

South wall: splayed window as in north wall.

West wall: as north wall but window larger.

Nave. General. Stone flags on floor including some graveslabs at west end (of 1703 x 2, 1743, 1755, etc); one heating grille towards tower end; benches on flush wooden block flooring. Walls heavily pointed but not plastered. Roof of seven bays with ribbed tie beams set into ribbed wall plates, and collars, above which the roof is ceiled. Roof thought to be of late 16thC date.

North wall: close to north-west corner, the wall has an anomaly which could be a blocked feature or alternatively indicate that something was formerly set against the wall. Two windows have the upper parts of their reveals infilled with masonry indicative of modifications at the time of their renewal. Four 19thC/20thC marble wall tablets.

East wall: off-centre round-headed chancel arch of Victorian date, though no obvious masonry changes; a wall painting above it.

South wall: four-bay arcade with two-centred arches resting on octagonal piers and moulded capitals, all exhibiting a slight outwards lean. The stonework is original except for some renewal in that pier adjacent to the chancel arch. Above each of the remaining piers a mural tablet: from the east 1787/1775, 1803 & 1789.

West wall: at extreme southern end there is a butt joint where the nave walling runs up against the quoins of the existing tower. Tower arch occupies most of wall. Above it and slightly to one side is a blocked doorway with a four-centred arch and stopped chamfers. It is pierced by a small chamfered slit window, restored in 1897. North of the tower arch is a small glazed slit window lighting the tower stair.

Chancel. General. Tiled floor with one step up to chancel from nave and two up to sanctuary; choir stalls on wooden boarding. Walls as nave. Roof of two full and two half bays, the trusses as in the nave, though slightly lower.

North wall: windows have Victorian splays, and between is a 19thC marble mural tablet; it is claimed that to the north of the altar was re-opened and enlarged at the time of the 1897 restoration.

East wall: splayed window with sloping sill and wooden lintel. A large rounded boulder is set into wall behind and to south of altar for no obvious reason.

South wall: two bays of the arcade are a continuation of that in nave though the arches are broader; the bay to the east has a respond, that to west fades into the west wall of the chancel. Parclose screens across the bays set up in 1976.

West wall: nothing of significance.

South chapel. General. Tiled floor which is one step up from the south aisle and is covered with matting. Bare walls. Wagon roof resting on ribbed wall plates and having plain bosses - it is continuous with the roof of the south aisle and has 126 panels in all.

North wall: two bays of arcade as described above under chancel.

East wall: splayed window with sloping sill, cambered head to reveal; it also has large internal dressings.

South wall: ogee-headed niche for non-existent piscina, claimed as 15thC. Adjacent a large, splayed window embrasure with large dressed stones for the arch of the reveal. A triangular-headed reveal to the priest's doorway, the arch chamfered but not the sides which are not composed of dressed stone.

West wall: modern screen separates it from the south aisle.

South aisle. General. Floor of quarried flags, and it is only at the rear, towards the tower, that grave slabs have been re-used; wooden block flooring under seats. Bare walls. For roof see south chapel.

North wall: arcade. An anomaly here is that the respond at the east end has chamfer which is stopped at a height of c.1.2m off the floor.

East wall: see west wall of south chapel.

South wall: two splayed windows with considerable survival of stonework. One 19thC marble mural tablet and two stone examples of 1724 and 1799. South door has triangular-headed reveal, chamfered sides and slightly splayed sides.

West wall: splayed window with wooden lintel for the reveal. Stone in wall at height of c.2.2m has sharpening marks on it.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: "goblet-shaped and with large stops on the base; c.1500" (Haslam).

Wall paintings: "diaper fresco with knots, etc., as a background to a large cross above the chancel arch, discovered when Pearson stripped the walls" (Haslam). Late 15thC.

Monuments: Thomas Brute (d.1724), son of the stonemason of the same name; Jane Williams (d.1799); Ann Rogers (d.1792); John Powell (d.1808) and Elizabeth Price (d.1804), both by J.Brute.

Church plate: chalice of 1632.

Bells: five, of 1714 (recast in 1887), 1736, 1746, 1751, and 1800, though Dawson gives different dates.

Registers: from 1675.

CHURCHYARD

Llanbedr churchyard is rectangular, perched above the steep-sided valley of the Gwyrne Fechan. Internally it drops gently from west to east, mainly in the eastern half of the yard.

It is still used for burial and is generally in a good state of maintenance.

Boundary: a stone wall defines the churchyard through most of the perimeter, except in the vicinity of Llanbedr House on the north, where the presence of a wire fence points to some modifications to the boundary. Generally, the external ground level is lower than that inside, and not surprisingly the difference is most apparent on the east side. It does appear to be an authentic example of a raised churchyard.

Monuments: these are fairly regularly laid out in rows on the south side, are packed in places and generally 19thC. They also spread around the east and west sides but there are few on the north, except for very recent burials in the north-western corner of the churchyard. Some 18thC gravestones are set just to the south of the chancel, the earliest noted being of 1766.

Furniture: a former churchyard cross, the triple stepped base of which survives. Now surmounted by a small column which was once surmounted by a sundial.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: on the south the main entrance is through a stone and timber lychgate with two small wooden gates.

Vegetation: several old yews on the east and north, and other vegetation around the boundary.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 26 October 1996
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 61
Dawson 1909, 112
Faculty 1896: NLW/SD/F/247
Glynne 1886, 279
Haslam 1979, 327
Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 113
NMR Aberyswyth
Reed n.d.: Church Guide

CONDITION

A large crack internally over the main south door, with further cracks in the chancel and in the south chapel. Damp is showing externally on north wall of nave, and internally in the tower.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Llanddetty

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Tetti

PRN 16818

NGR SO12812024

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Tetta's church at Llandetty is set beside the River Usk 12km south-east of Brecon. A simple structure, it has little in the way of diagnostic features that pre-date the 15thC, though conceivably the masonry shell could be 13thC. Internally there is a 9thC pillar stone and a medieval font, but nothing else of pre-Reformation date. The churchyard is curvilinear, and this together with the dedication points to an early medieval establishment.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Masonry shows little differentiation, except where there are irregularities above window level on the north side. This apart, if there has been significant rebuilding it is not apparent. West door could be 13thC or earlier, and the plan of the building could be 13thC, but all the windows are late Perpendicular.

HISTORY

While the original location of the pillar stone cannot be established with certainty, the dedication to an obscure British saint, the riverside location, and the churchyard morphology point to an early medieval beginning.

Its history, generally, is obscure, but in the Taxatio of 1291 it was recorded as 'Ecclesia de Landetten' at a value of £4 6s 8d. Interestingly, at the time of the Valor Ecclesiasticus (1535) its value had leapt to £17 10s 7d, considerably higher than some neighbouring churches.

Glynne on a visit in 1864 noted the large south porch and the completely whitewashed exterior, attributing the whole building to the Perpendicular period, though the windows on the north side appeared to be later insertions. The interior was pewed.

Restoration occurred in 1878 and the ceiling was replaced in 1934.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanddetty church comprises a nave and chancel as a single cell, and a south porch towards the west end of the nave, and a west bellcote. It is aligned south-east/north-west but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabric: this consists of slabs and blocks of dark red sandstone, with some boulders of varying size, irregularly coursed, with larger foundation stones; roughly dressed quoins.

Roofs: stone tiles, with simple semi-circular terracotta ridge tiles.

Victorian bellcote at west end with stepped sides, two apertures containing bells, with hoodmould and stops on east side only.

Drainage: cambered gully, overgrown in places; not really obvious on north side.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Treated as one because of lack of differentiation externally.

North wall: heavily pointed. Base of wall slightly battered and wall face occasionally irregular, particularly above windows. Three windows, from west: i) two-light window with chamfered dressings, the sill early but the rest Victorian; ii) window with two trefoil-headed lights, chamfered dressings with two varieties of yellow sandstone that are Victorian or later, imitating windows on south; iii) rectangular window in red sandstone, two lights with simple, flattish two-centred lights showing some weathering.

East wall: battered base; fabric appears to be standard, but heavily pointed and well-weathered. Perpendicular east window has three lights with cusped heads and panel tracery above; the window itself has a two-centred arch and has chamfered dressings in original red sandstone.

South wall: again heavily pointed. Three windows and two doors. From east: i) square-headed window of two lights with trefoil heads, and jambs that have hollow chamfered mouldings and stops; in red sandstone; ii) Tudor priest's door with low four-centred arch and double hollow chamfers, all in red sandstone; the old door has been rebuilt and reinforced; iii) window as i) but tracery more weathered; iv) porch; v) window as i) and iii) but weathered and some of the tracery patched.

West wall: face is irregular with hint of a batter and traces of limewash. Blank wall face except for a blocked doorway with large jambstones of grey sandstone, alternating between long and short in size and rising to ?springer level. The infill cannot be differentiated from 'A', and it is not possible to distinguish the shape of the arch.

Porch. General.

East wall: irregular wall face with rough surface; appearance of masonry suggests front (south) wall may be replaced. One slit window with a metal grille mortared into position.

South wall: wall appears to be of standard fabric though the masonry is perhaps more regular, and the quoins are of large regular blocks. At the south-east angle a flat slab projects at ground level. Entrance via two-centred arch turned in voussoirs which could have been reconstructed; metal-grilled porch doors.

West wall: as east wall.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor, some certainly re-used 18thC graveslabs though not all are legible. Walls plastered. Roof of simple collars and rafters, with some of the timber re-used.

North wall: Tudor doorway with four-centred arch, and old wooden door with vertical moulded battens and nail-studded panels.

East wall: stone bench with wooden seat; slit window broadly splayed.

West wall: as east wall.

Nave. General. Flagged floor covered with carpet, but at least one stone exposed near pulpit is graveslab of 1679, and RCAHMW records that much if not all of nave paved with slabs of 18thC date; benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered. Wagon roof of 144 panels with ribbed braces and purlins runs full length of the church and is a reproduction of 1934. West end is partitioned off to provide vestry.

North wall: wall face slopes outwards above window level, matching change in external face; splayed windows; wall painting of coat-of-arms with framed description by Parkinson of RCAHMW adjacent; two 19thC brasses.

South wall: splayed windows; 19thC and 20thC brass and marble plaques.

West wall: at a height of about 3m, wall face outset, presumably for earlier roof or gallery support.

Chancel. General. One step up from nave to chancel, another to sanctuary. Carpet covered floor, though wooden boards under stalls; RCAHMW records that there are three 17thC graveslabs set in the sanctuary floor. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: 19thC and 20thC marble tablets.

East wall: splayed window; sunken round-headed recesses either side of window presumably originally carried painted boards.

South wall: priest's door sealed off - pillar stone freestanding in its alcove.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Pillar stone: "9thC, and 1.2m high. Inscription reads GUADAN SACERDOS/ FECIT CRUX P(RO) AN(IMA) NI(N) ID ET ANI(MA) GURHI/GUADAN. Incised on each side is linear ornament and three crosses (one of which is ringed)" (Haslam).

Font: "octagonal, with cushion stops at the base; Early English" (Haslam).
Royal Arms: Painting on the north wall, Hanoverian.

Chest: fine ?Jacobean example seen by RCAHMW in 1969. Not now in church?

Registers: from 1736

Victorian fittings include:

Stained Glass: "east window perhaps by Comper" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard comprises a semi-oval area abutting the Usk, though a relatively modern extension has taken in the ground between this original core and the road that passes about 40m to the south of the church. Most of the original churchyard is relatively flat although the ground rises gently along the southern perimeter, and drops away on the north side of the church.

It is reasonably well maintained but burials are restricted to the extension on the south.

Boundary: of variable form. On the east is a stone wall, around the north-east corner and on the north nothing but a bramble hedge above the drop to the river, though later this is reinforced by a fence, the west also has a stone wall, but where the churchyard has been enlarged the wall has been removed and there is

now only a scarp bank disguising the foundations. There is no evidence to suggest a raised yard.

Monuments: these are evenly spread in the southern and western parts of the old churchyard, but marked graves are absent on the north. A reasonable number of 18thC monuments survive, particularly beside the path to the lychgate, and as ledgers to the east of the chancel (1697 and 1729).

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none other than the old southern perimeter (above).

Ancillary features: old entrance is south-east of church in form of stone and timber lychgate, now used infrequently, nor was it at the time Mrs Dawson wrote. Main entrance now from south-west through modern double iron gate. Tarmac and grass paths.

Vegetation: four yews, including three older ones between lychgate and east end of church.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 18 August 1995

Dawson 1909, 95

Glynne 1886, 280

Haslam 1979, 328

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Crack in external west wall near north-west angle but filled in. Minor cracks in plaster internally. Generally appears to be sound.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Llanddew

Diocese	Swansea and Brecon	Dedication	David
PRN	16819	NGR	SO05483074
		Previous dedication	Holy Trinity?

GENERAL SUMMARY

St.David's Church at Llanddew is a large cruciform stone structure with a central tower, lying 2km to the north-east of Brecon. It is considered to be a 'clas' foundation, but the earliest parts of the structure date from the 13thC. There have been subsequent rebuildings in the 17thC and 19thC. Medieval survivals include two stoups, a font and two carved lintels, as well as a stone with a ring-cross which may be pre-Conquest. The churchyard may originally have been curvilinear but its form has been modified in later centuries.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave supposed to be earliest part of church; this could be true for the south wall excepting the window insertions, but the west wall is a complete Victorian rebuild and it is possible that a substantial part of the featureless north wall was treated likewise in the 19thC.

North transept has portions rebuilt, namely the upper part of the north wall and some of the west, but the remainder should be 13thC on the basis of the single lancet window in the east wall.

For both chancel and south transept, it is difficult to determine the degree of rebuilding, and while the 13thC date is not in doubt most of the window dressings are considerably more recent. The porch, too, is 19thC.

HISTORY

Llanddew was an early medieval clas foundation. There is also a tradition that Eluned, a daughter of Brecon, fled to this church about 500 AD.

The Bishop of St Davids established a palace here in the 12thC, and Giraldus Cambrensis, as archdeacon of Brecon, had a residence at Llanddew in the late 12thC.

Its appearance in the 1291 Taxatio as 'Ecclesia de Llandon' at a value of £8 implies a more wealthy establishment than the average.

The central tower was rebuilt in 1629 as attested by a plaque in the west wall of the chancel, and was restored in c.1780, the date of the roof. It is claimed that the nave was also refurbished in the 1620s.

Damage to the church may have occurred in a fire early in the 19thC.

In 1865 Glynne recorded a small whitewashed cruciform church in a 'truely deplorable' condition. The nave alone was used for services, the unpaved north transept was dilapidated and the south transept was walled off for a school, which no longer operated because of a lack of funds. The chancel was Early English in design, vaulted in stone, with lancet windows in the sides and a triplet with hood mouldings in the east wall; the priest's door had a trefoil head and a good hoodmould. The rest of the church might also be Early

English but its diagnostic features had been obliterated, the nave having modern windows, though the north side was windowless. The tower was low and clumsy, with square belfry windows and a tiled, pointed roof. It stood on four plain semi-circular arches. There was a plain south porch. Inside were pews and there was a shabby chest for an altar. The east wall of the chancel had a small square recess and there was a 'rude' pointed piscina. The font in the chancel with its large circular bowl on a quadrangular stem with chamfered angles was not used.

By 1875 only the nave was in use, the other parts of the building being closed off, because of their state of disrepair. Restoration occurred in 1884 when the chancel and south transept were refurbished, new roofs were put in place in the chancel and transepts, and there was some new flooring; and in 1900 the nave had new lancets, a new roof, and the walls were stripped. A number of fragmentary post-medieval wall paintings of texts were uncovered in the chancel during the works but these have since been destroyed.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanddew church is a massive cruciform structure with short transepts and a longer nave and chancel. There is a tower over the crossing and a south porch towards the south-west angle of the nave. It is aligned east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises slabs and a few blocks of predominantly grey and red sandstone, most of them small to medium in size but a few large. Better dressed stones selected for quoins.

'B' is of small rather haphazardly laid lumps of red, brown and grey sandstone.

'C' is of predominantly grey sandstone (though some red) masonry, irregular in appearance and in coursing, small to medium in size and less uniform than 'A'.

Roofs: shale tiles, ornamental terracotta ridge tiles; stone cross finials to nave, north transept and chancel but a metal cross above the porch.

Drainage: stone chipping around wall base of building indicates an underlying drain.

Exterior

Nave. General. Supposedly the earliest part of the building. However, the evidence might point to the north wall abutting the north transept, though reverse is true for the south wall.

North wall: in Fabric 'A' with a strong batter to height of 1.5m and then a general slope inwards; no windows. Highest quoins at north-west corner (the last 0.8m) replaced to support Victorian kneelers; limewash traces near north-east corner.

South wall: mainly Fabric 'A' with a faint batter at base. West of the first lancet the junction with the Victorian west wall is visible. Further east plaster/render remnants can be seen on 'A'. Three lancet windows, all Victorian, but a good job made of the insertions.

West wall: fabric is largely 'A' but almost certainly re-used, the whole having been rebuilt with the possible exception of the foundation at the north-west corner. Three lancet windows all with modern dressings.

North transept. General. Base battered to maximum height of over 2m on north, dropping to about 1m near the south-west angle. Basically Fabric 'A' throughout, though occasional anomalies visible.

North wall: batter in Fabric 'A' but higher up on either side of the window (though not perhaps as far as the wall angles) the masonry is in 'B'. Lancet window with grey sandstone dressings - Victorian.

East wall: fabric akin to 'A', and batter not as pronounced as on north side. A single, small, narrow lancet now used as an electricity cable inlet is 13thC; some jambstones replaced but others could be original.

West wall: in Fabric 'A' but close to angle with nave the upper part of the wall appears to have been replaced. One Victorian lancet window, the inserted masonry around it just visible.

Tower. General. Pyramidal roof to tower which was rebuilt in 1623 and restored in 18thC; with weathercock. It is not centrally placed but stands a little south of the east/west axis.

North wall: masonry of Fabric 'A' with quoins some of which are dressed, others poorly so. Rectangular, louvred, belfry window with wooden lintel and projecting stone sill. Apex of north transept roof to within one metre of the window and above the meeting place is a stone drip-course with lead flashing beneath.

East wall: chancel roof higher than that of north transept, and belfry window, though of exactly the same form as on the north, is commensurately smaller.

South wall: as north wall in all aspects.

West wall: as east wall but to south and below belfry level is a small, glazed slit window without dressings.

Chancel. General. Low batter on all sides, rising to no more than 0.5m. Fabric 'C'.

North wall: some reconstruction adjacent to north transept wall where a narrow vertical band of masonry is slightly inset. Three Victorian lancets though just possible that the most easterly window has one or two original jambstones.

East wall: Three lancet windows with continuous hoodmould arching over each individually. The smaller, outer lancets have new yellow stone heads, but the jambs of all of them are flaking and weathering, and conceivably some might be earlier. Fabric above the hoodmould is more weathered and lichenised and this runs down almost to the bottom of the corners where there are dressed yellow freestone quoins of Victorian date. It thus appears that the upper part of the wall has been reconstructed using original weathered masonry.

South wall: weathered 'C'. Three lancets; the jambs eroding on the most easterly and in grey sandstone with a yellow sandstone head; the other two have red sandstone dressings but none are convincingly original. Trefoil-headed priest's door in Decorated style, and while the yellow sandstone head is undoubtedly relatively new some of the jambs could be original, and likewise the hoodmould in the form of a two-centred arch with worn extremities.

South transept. General. Battered to height of 1.6m on south side, 1.3m on west. Fabric 'C'.

East wall: appears to be 'C' though perhaps 'B' in places. Large two-centred arch turned in edge slabs with carefully selected jambstones; this must be Victorian or later

South wall: heavy repointing above eaves level; dressed quoins. Victorian lancet in flaking grey sandstone.

West wall: one Victorian lancet.

Porch. General. Abuts nave and was constructed in the 19thC.

East wall: plain. Appears to be an 'A'-type fabric.

South wall: two-centred archway employing large voussoirs; no dressed quoins. Gable projects with collar showing externally.

West wall: plain.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor; bare walls; Victorian roof of collars and rafters, replacing earlier roof for which a ledge is still visible on the south wall of the nave. Resting on the ground against the east and west walls are the carved lintels from an earlier church (see below).

North wall: doorway to church has modern segmental arch and large jambstones of red sandstone which are probably original.

East and west walls: plain.

South wall: reveal of doorway turned in edge stones at outer face.

Nave. General. Floored with red tiles, benches raised on wooden boarding, and the aisle carpet-covered with several grilles over the heating duct. Walls bare of plaster. Roof has two tie beams with king posts supporting a collar purlin and collar beams above.

North wall: nothing of note.

East wall: plain, off-centre, round-headed arch turned in edge stones; jambstones not chamfered. Wall battered at base and north wall of nave appears to butt against it.

South wall: uniformly splayed windows, each having a two-centred internal arch turned in edge stones. One corbel at a height of c.3m beside most easterly window might have supported a loft or gallery.

West wall: windows as south wall.

Crossing: One step up from nave. Tiled floor; bare walls. Ceiled in wood just above the apex of the arches; the ceiling rest on eleven corbels, not of uniform design.

North wall: two-centred arch, smaller than its counterparts in the east and west walls, leads into north transept; its soffit is turned in edge stones.

East wall: round-headed arch in edge stones.

South wall: round-headed arch with a keystone and the arch turned in blocks with similar jambs; the arch is only one block deep. Two mural tablets of 1814 and 1823 in south-east corner.

West wall: round-headed arch as on east side.

North transept. General. Now used as a vestry. Tiled floor; walls plastered and whitewashed. Older roof than that in nave with a tie beam and collar against the north wall and two tiers of triangular windbraces.

North wall: splayed window but nothing of note.

East wall: the small lancet is backed on the inside by a large two-centred alcove for an altar. In south-east corner is a squint into the chancel.

South wall: wall has battered base. A gallery approached by a ladder is supported on corbels and gives access via a rectangular doorway to the tower.

West wall: splayed window but nothing of note.

Chancel. General. One step up from crossing, a further two steps up to sanctuary and one to altar. Tiled floor with encaustic tiles in sanctuary; choir stalls on raised wooden platforms. Walls plastered and whitewashed, except for internal jambs and sills of windows. Roof of four bays, the same form as the nave.

North wall: three splayed windows; squint at north-west angle. Corbel to east of central window, again at a height of c.3.0m, and either for a rood screen or a statuette.

East wall: splayed windows.

South wall: splayed windows, Victorian piscina with two-centred arched recess and a flat base. A corbel matches that on the north wall. 17thC graveslab fragment leans against south wall of chancel near priest's door.

West wall: round-headed arch. Plaque of 1629 set into wall face just to north of it, reads: 'This steeple was newly erected and made in Apriel Anno Dom. 1629. William Havard and William Griffith Gent then churchwardens'. Two coats-of-arms of the churchwardens also set into wall.

South transept. General. Used as a separate chapel with an altar against the south wall, and in the 19thC as a schoolroom. Tiled floor; walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of braced collars; that against the north wall could be original, the rest are replaced.

North wall: wall face shows disconformity at eaves level which could indicate rebuilding; squint in north-east corner and redundant stoup placed in it.

East wall: doorway of no age. Monument of 1855 near south-east corner.

South wall: splayed window; monument of 1833.

West wall: splayed window; two monuments, that of 1848 above that of 1864.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Carved stones: two lintels in the porch (cf those at Llanfillo); carved with bands of lozenges and patterns of triangles, and one has a Maltese cross at one end.

Font: a shallow, lead-lined circular bowl, set on an octagonal stem with four faces rising to stops that act as bowl rests. Undated but probably early, though the base is 19thC.

Stone: with a ring-cross; 11thC?. In vestry.

Stoups: "two, one bulbous, 12thC/13thC, the other a late 12thC capital for a four-shafted pier, with cable-mouldings etc" (Haslam); the latter also in vestry.

Pews: brought from Llangattock in 1979.

Organ brought from St Saviour's church in Birmingham in 1981.

CHURCHYARD

Llanddew has an irregular churchyard, best described as a polygonal D-shape; the only hint of curvilinearity is around the east side, though this does hint at an earlier oval enclosure. To the south of the church the ground is level, but on the north side it drops away, and this reflects the general siting which is on the southern edge of a dry valley.

The enclosure is well maintained and is used for current burials.

Boundary: buildings fringe the churchyard on the south, and there is a drystone wall on the west and further short stretches of wall on either side of the eastern entrance. On the north a garden hedge gives way to a hedged drop to the road. The churchyard area is raised on the north and east sides and there is internal banking on the west and south though the former may not be of any great age.

Monuments: these are spread out around the south and east sides of the church with a few on the west. Most are 19thC and 20thC and there are only a couple of 18thC examples to the east of the chancel.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: there are minor earthworks on the south side which cannot be characterised and might even be derived from the construction of the adjacent house, though this does seem unlikely. A low scarp just inside the east entrance reveals the original course of the churchyard perimeter.

Ancillary features: stone and timber lychgate at the east, a small wooden gate into field on west side of the churchyard, and a farm gate at the north-west corner.

Vegetation: there are two yews, one each on the east and west sides, and pines along the west side.

SOURCES

Church guide n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 22 November 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 62
Dawson 1909, 90
Faculty 1883: NLW/SD/F/295
Glynne 1886, 270
Haslam 1979, 329
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Generally sound though some cracks as in the south-west angle of the north transept, and the east wall of the south transept, and the Victorian window dressings are beginning to flake.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Poor

Llanddewi'r Cwm

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication David

PRN 16823

NGR SO03494863

GENERAL SUMMARY

Llanddewi'r Cwm's church is not surprisingly dedicated to St David and sits above a shallow valley a little more than 2km to the south of Builth Wells. It is undistinguished architecturally with three Early English lancets in the chancel, and a tower which is presumably medieval in origin. Internally the only medieval furnishing is a font. The churchyard is interesting for its preservation of an earlier circuit within the present enceinte.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower is undistinguished architecturally and no date can be attributed to it.

Nave has little to date it as all windows have been replaced but if the replacements were copies of originals, the Y-tracery might suggest the beginning of the 14thC.

Chancel has Early English lancets, that on south perhaps in its original location, those on north re-set with at least one perhaps not in its original position.

Porch is 19thC.

HISTORY

Location and morphology point to an early medieval origin.

The church is mentioned in the Taxatio of 1254 as 'Landewycum' and valued at £1 6s 8d. In that of 1291 it appeared as 'Ecclesia de Londewycom & Lanveyr', an association with what was probably St Mary's church at Builth. There was an earlier reference to the period 1176x1198 when the church was given by the Bishop of St Davids to the church of St John and the monks of Brecon.

In 1847 it was restored by Joshua Daniels, and later restorations have also been claimed. Certainly a faculty was applied for in 1912, to replace window dressings, re-slate roofs, cut drainage trenches around the nave, work on the flooring internally, etc.

ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave, chancel, a west tower and a north porch close to the north-west angle of the nave. It is oriented a few degrees south of west.

Fabrics: 'A' is small to medium shale and siltstone slabs, mainly grey and grey-brown in colour, and occasional sandstone lumps used primarily at lower levels in wall facing and as quoin material; shale slabs

for quoins higher up.

'B' is of regular dark grey shale (and occasionally some brown) in slabs and blocks, randomly coursed.

'C' is of small to medium slabs of brown to grey siltstone, random coursing; despite heavy pointing it is a distinctive fabric.

'D' is similar to 'B' but the slabs show a smoother cleavage, suggesting a finer grained material. Note too that 'D' is less weathered than 'C'.

'E' is of medium-sized blocks of grey stone.

'A' and 'C' are thought to be original medieval fabrics; 'B' and 'D' are probably Victorian; 'E' is Victorian or even later.

Roofs: new slates on nave, older ones on chancel; reconstituted clay ridge tiles; cross finial on chancel only. Tower has slated pyramidal roof with lead flashing.

Drainage: around the tower is a sunken strip, 0.4m-0.7m wide, and filled with rubble into which downpipes disappear. Concrete-lined shallow gullies on north and south of nave and chancel.

Exterior

Tower. General. Low pyramidal roof lacking weathervane or the like.

North wall: In Fabric A. Wall has bulges and cracks. In 1st stage at eye level, a triangular-headed window of grey shale blocks with an external if shallow splay, the trefoil-headed light in sandy-coloured sandstone; 19thC. East of this window is a patch of walling defined by a near vertical mortar line and rising to c.2m; the butt end of a large timber is exposed in the wall at this height; some of the fabric in cleaner grey shale enhances impression that this patch might be later infill, though its purpose remain uncertain. Belfry window is flat-headed and contains two louvred lights; these have unchamfered dressings and unconventional foiled heads.

East wall: apex of nave roof almost to tower eaves level. The top 0.5m could be rebuilt: newer pointing, less weathered and perhaps more regular fabric.

South wall: lichen covering disguises fabric, but almost certainly 'A'. However, at about 5m the south-west angle complete with its quoins is inset slightly, meaning that a vertical band as high as the eaves is not flush with the main south wall face: clear evidence of rebuilding.

West wall: like south, no windows and weathered masonry, but probably 'A'. Further evidence that south-west angle rebuilt, and poor bonding between the original masonry and this rebuild has left a distinctive vertical crack.

Porch. General. In Fabric B. Walls set on low chamfered plinths; stepped buttresses at north corners.

North wall: high gable over two-centred arch, voussoirs in grey shale, stopped chamfers; two wooden gates.

East and west walls: plain.

Nave. General.

North wall: in Fabric B. Wall has basal plinth at c.0.8m; five buttresses, all in regular masonry. Three two-centred arched windows each with two lights, Y-tracery, all in sandy coloured freestone; hoodmould with ornamental stops; wholly Victorian.

East wall: nave about 1.0-1.5m higher than chancel. What is visible appears to be in Fabric B.

South wall: as north wall but two windows of the standard type, though lacking hoodmould. Dawson claimed

that this wall sported marks indicating an earlier entrance.

West wall: on north side this butts against tower face; relationship not determined on south side.

Chancel. North wall: much of wall is in Fabric C. However, more westerly window is set in an intrusive patch of 'D'; and eastern end including more easterly window also in 'D'. Both windows are lancets with grey and red freestone dressings, the red perhaps weathering to grey; occasional replacement stones; but despite a broadly similar appearance the chamfers of the two windows are different, that to east being simpler, and that to west having traces of plaster, missing from the other. Beside the more westerly window is a mural tablet of 1834. Top strip of this wall (<1m) is in Fabric E, and that part of the wall that butts against the nave has also been replaced in either 'D' or 'E', probably the former.

East wall: most of wall is in 'D' but upper part of gable and perhaps the infilling around the window is 'E'. East window has a broad two-centred arch with three stepped lancets and trefoils above them, and a red sandstone hoodmould. Two mural tablets of 1767 and 1826/1856.

South wall: partially ivy covered, creating problems of fabric identification. One lancet window comparable with the more westerly on the north wall, and this could be set in Fabric C and thus original. To the west is a priest's door, approached by one step; pointed head, worn stops to the chamfers in pink sandstone; probably original but some of dressings in exceptionally good condition.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor. Boarded roof. East and west walls have wooden benches against them. South wall has round-arched doorway with stopped chamfers, wholly Victorian.

Tower. General. Floor of concrete with carpet over. Low wooden ceiling. Tower arch reveal lined in brick. Nothing of interest on walls.

Nave. General. Flagged floor with matting down aisle; no vents. Flush wooden boarding beneath benches. Walls plastered and whitewashed with a slight outwards lean. Four-bay roof with arch-braced collars springing from corbels, with king-struts above.

North wall: nothing of interest.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch with complex mouldings, in pink sandstone equivalent to the east window.

South wall: window dressings on this side, and one on north side appear to be more worn/weathered internally than externally.

West wall: simple two-centred arch to tower. Wall stepped in at height of c.3m. This and what can best be compared to an internal buttress in the north-west angle must be relics of the earlier nave.

Chancel. General. Chancel level with nave and one step up to sanctuary only. Flagged floor includes four graveslabs of 1767 (x 2), 1788 and 1799. Walls plastered and whitewashed, and window dressing except for those of east window are painted. Open wagon roof over the chancel with moulded ribs over the altar.

North wall: one mural tablet of 1826.

South wall: Priest's door has wooden frame internally. One marble mural tablet of 1849.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: "square, with chamfered edges, on a round stem and base. 12thC/13thC" (Haslam).

Monuments: graveslabs in the chancel floor include: a daughter of Edward Price of Llangwm (d.1767); Thomas Price of Llanddewi (d.1788) and Thomas Price of Dodlinwydd (d.1767) and his children.

Church plate: earliest from 1669.

Registers: earliest from 1714.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is sub-rectangular but this is a misleading guide to its original form, for there is evidence of a smaller, more circular enclosure fossilised within the present graveyard (see below). It occupies the lip of the small valley carrying Nant Gwyn to its meeting with the Duhonw a few hundred metres to the north-east. Additionally there are smaller dry valleys to the east and west. And the ground level within the churchyard reflects this location with the ground dropping away from the church on the west, south and east.

The churchyard is reasonably well-maintained and is still used for burial.

Boundary: now consists of a stone wall, in places rebuilt and well-mortared. Around the north and east the interior is raised but generally no more than 0.5m, and by the north-east corner there is a suggestion that the present stone wall may have had a predecessor. On the north there is some internal embanking and on the west the ground level externally may be 1m or more though this could be largely a result of the natural land fall. On the south-east the drop is closer to 2m.

Monuments: these are well spread throughout the yard, although there is clear ground on the north, and also on the west beyond what is assumed to be the earlier circuit. Localised densities exist particularly on the south. 19thC monuments predominate and include some gravestones leant against the wall in the north-east quadrant. The earliest one recorded was of 1792 against the wall near the north entrance.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: a scarp bank is discernible on the west, south and east, with a height of up to 1m on the south. There is also the possibility of a relict ditch beyond the scarp on the north-west side of the church. This suggests a sub-circular enclosure.

Ancillary features: a farm gate offers subsidiary access on the eastern side, but the main entrance is provided by double iron gates on the north, with an iron arch to support a light over the top. Concrete path to the church porch.

Vegetation: one yew tree of some age is set on the outer edge of the relict scarp in the south-east quadrant.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 7 March 1996
Dawson 1909, 88
Faculty 1912: NLW/SD/F/303
Haslam 1979, 330
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

The church is in a poor state of repair and appears to have a number of structural cracks in the tower, some of which have been patched recently. Internally too there are minor cracks in the west wall. General signs of deterioration include the flaking of the dressings of the Victorian windows in the north nave, the drainage gully beside south wall of church choked with debris, etc.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Medium

Llanddulas

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication None

PRN 16839

NGR SN87984129

GENERAL SUMMARY

Llanddulas church, lacking any known dedication, is a small whitewashed building about 19km south-west of Builth Wells. It is said to have been built in the 18thC and restored in the 19thC, and nothing of its predecessor(s) is known. Apart from some 18thC memorials there are no features of pre-19thC interest internally. The church lies in the southern sector of its polygonal churchyard which may add credence to the view that the present structure was erected on a new site.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A small plain church with wooden windows, probably 18thC.

HISTORY

It is not known whether there was a medieval or even an early medieval church on or near this spot; its location is suggestive, but there is nothing to support such a contention, and Theophilus Jones at the beginning of the 19thC claimed that the situation of the old church was not known. Dawson's view was that this was solely a mortuary chapel built at the beginning of the 18thC. To her it was known as Ty'r Abat while Jones offered a range of names including 'Tyr Abot, otherwise Newchurch, otherwise Llanddulas'.

A plaque within the church records the building of 'Capella nova de Tir Abbat' in 1716. It was supposedly altered in 1871.

ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave and chancel as a single cell without any external differentiation, and a west porch. It is oriented fractionally north of east.

Fabric: 'A' consists of small and medium slabs and a few blocks of stone, irregularly coursed. But exposed over only a small area of the east wall with the rest of the external wall faces plastered and whitewashed.

Roofs: slate with reconstituted clay ridge tiles; no finials.

Drainage: a drainage trench with a maximum width of 0.5m and of unknown depth around the whole building.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. External walls are plastered and whitewashed.

North wall: plain but for two rectangular wooden-framed windows with near segmental heads turned in edge stones; each contains two two-centred headed lights; jambs of selected stone, rather than freestone dressings.

East wall: wall face recently stripped of plaster but painted over with whitewash. Rectangular wooden-framed window with slightly peaked head but otherwise exactly as windows in north wall.

South wall: wall is slightly bowed. Two windows as on north though heads barely curved.

West wall: porch against wall. High up in gable end is a rectangular window with louvre-boards, presumably the equivalent of the bell turret.

Porch. General. Plain walls on north and south. High and acute two-centred archway without chamfers in west face.

Interior

Porch. General. Concrete floor, walls whitewashed; steeply pitched ceiling showing two purlins.

North and south walls: plain.

East wall: wooden door frame with segmental head matching external windows.

West wall: inner arch to main porch doorway turned in brick; a wooden gate with metal grilling covers the whole entry.

Nave. General. One step up from porch. Tiled floor with carpet down the aisle; benches and other furnishings on flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed. The roof of nave and chancel is continuous with eight bays; trusses have braced collars with king and raking struts above. Griffiths of RCAHMW noted that the roof timbers looked old but were in fact no earlier than the 19thC.

North wall: two splayed windows and a disconformity between them which is probably the position of the original north door, now plastered over. An irregularity in the wall face also, where the braced trusses meet the wall - could the wall have been heightened, and if so how early is the lower part of the wall? One graveslab of 1773 against wall.

South wall: two windows; no disconformity compared with north wall.

West wall: wall face is uneven, but nothing of obvious significance.

Chancel. General. One step up into chancel cum sanctuary. Floor tiled. East wall painted yellow but otherwise as nave. Roof is continuation of nave as noted above.

North wall: irregularity at wall post level continues from nave. One mural slab of 1726.

East wall: splayed window. Two large marble mural tablets of 1734 and of the 19thC with two upright graveslabs of 1787 and 1777 below.

South wall: one upright graveslab of 1819.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Monuments: to Sackville Gwynne of Glanbran (d.1734), who built the church, and to Catherine Sackville Gwynne (d.1787).

Graveslabs: in the church to David Davies (d.1773); and to Henry Gwynne (d.1777).

Plate: chalice of 1727-8.

CHURCHYARD

The church was set within what might be classed as a circular churchyard, though on early editions of the Ordnance Survey map at least it was shown as more polygonal than circular. Now the churchyard has been expanded on the south and east, reaching almost to the river.

Church and churchyard are on flat ground occupying a terrace within 30m of the infant River Dulas. A second, higher terrace supports the village to the west.

Boundary: a wire fence on the south and east, a mortared wall on the north, and only on the north-west is there a hint of a curving bank. There is also some internal banking on the north side.

Monuments: some to the north of the church and a few by the south-east angle, but all sparsely spread. All are 19thC and nothing earlier was recognised.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: the former churchyard boundary on the south side shows as a scarp bank, up to 0.5m high, and on the east rises to about 1m and incorporates tree stumps and two surviving deciduous trees; this is probably the natural terrace.

Ancillary features: main entrance is via a modern wooden latched gate on the west, with the approach to the church along a grass path. There is also an old metal gate on the north side, now little used, but the main access in the 19thC.

Vegetation: there are two yews of no great age immediately to the north-east of the church, some conifers on the south and west boundaries, and two deciduous trees on the old eastern boundary.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 May 1996

Dawson 1909, 231

Haslam 1979, 374

Jones and Bailey 1909, ii, 211

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Externally the church appears to be reasonably sound with only the occasional minor crack. Internally it is in poor condition with blistering paint, damp patches, plaster falling from the ceiling, and a hint of some substantial cracks in the east wall.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor

Llandefaelog Fach

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Maelog

PRN 31233

NGR SO03403240

GENERAL SUMMARY

Dedicated to St Maelog the church occupies a bench on west side of River Honddu some 3km to the north of Brecon. It is almost certainly an early medieval foundation, but apart from the 16thC tower the building is completely Victorian, though with an interesting range of contemporary fittings. Earlier features include a 10thC/11thC stone, a 13thC font and a good group of 17thC/18thC grave-slabs and memorials. A unique feature for Breconshire is a large mausoleum in the churchyard.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower is considered 16thC though shows few diagnostic features. Rest of church is a 19thC rebuild.

HISTORY

Various topographical features suggest an early medieval origin. The significance of the early Christian stones in this context is difficult to assess because their provenance is unknown.

The church was registered as 'Ecclesia de Landevayloc' in the 1291 Taxatio at a value of £8.

It was rebuilt in 1831 by Maund of Brecon, and again in 1856 by W.G. & E.Habershon.

ARCHITECTURE

Church consists of west tower, nave and chancel in one, north vestry attached to chancel, and south porch. Church is oriented west-north-west/east-south-east, but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' of red and grey sandstone in blocks and slabs, small to medium in size, regularly coursed. Occasional long slabs. Better stones selected as quoins, but few large dressed stones in evidence. 'B' of regular blocks of grey and red sandstone, regularly coursed, heavy pointing, tooled quoins, particularly in buttresses. Yellow/buff sandstone for dressings.

Roofs: slates, with mock slate ridge tiles; cross finial on chancel.

Drainage: no obvious drainage trench on north or south, while on west a tarmac path runs up to wall face.

Exterior

Tower. General. 16thC, in Fabric 'A'. Faintly battered on west and south, but otherwise walls are plain with no string-courses, no battlements etc. It is capped with a low pyramidal roof and has a ornamental device that might once have supported a weathervane.

North wall: single louvred slit window without dressings, below belfry level. Belfry window, also louvred, is rectangular with large chamfered jambs; tucked in immediately below eaves.

East wall: apex of nave rises above level of the slit window on north; otherwise as north wall, though some jamb replacement in belfry window.

South wall: blocked round-headed doorway with voussoirs, slightly irregular shape and intermittent jamb stones beneath. To east of the doorway foundation course of tower diverges from current wall line for about 1m, pointing to earlier construction. Wall above contains two slits, the lower blocked internally, the upper louvred as elsewhere; and above is a standard belfry window, though impossible to ascertain whether any replacement.

West wall: dominated by large Victorian window of two ogee-headed lights with cusped tracery, a quatrefoil above, all under a two-centred arch (all in buff sandstone), and a relieving arch above that. Slit window above is level with those in other walls but has unchamfered freestone dressings. Standard belfry window.

Nave. General. Fabric 'B'. Building has chamfered plinth up to 1m above ground level, but less to west because of the general rise in the ground from east to west. Windows with two-centred arches, cusped lights, and relieving arches over; angle buttresses at corners, though some difference in masonry used; chimney above north-east corner. Nave at least 1.5m higher than chancel.

Chancel. General. Walls in Fabric 'B'. Standard plinth. Main east window of three stepped lights with stopped hoodmould, all in Victorian yellow sandstone. Diagonal buttresses. Two single-light windows on south.

Vestry. General. Masonry of 'B' type. Plinth and also string-course at c.2.0m. Simple lancet windows and door on west side, all in Victorian sandstone.

Porch. General. Fabric 'B'. Lancet windows and two-centred arched doorway, all in red sandstone.

Interior

Porch. Victorian.

Tower. General. Tiled floor; wooden ceiling. Walls plastered to ceiling level, and stepped in at around 3m on north, west and south sides.

North wall: 17thC and 18thC grave slabs around wall.

East wall: 10thC slab against north reveal of tower arch.

South wall: 17thC and 18thC grave slabs around wall.

West wall: Deeply splayed window with brass of 1902 on north splay.

Nave. General. Floor of Victorian tiles; carpet down centre aisle covers heating vents; benches raised on wooden plinths. Roof of close-set scissor trusses. Masonry infilling north-west and south-west angles may have something to do with earlier tower?

North wall: splayed windows; mosaic frieze around wall above bench level. Two 18thC marble monuments and a 20thC brass.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch with complex moulding, and a metal screen under. Victorian plaques on either side of arch.

South wall: splayed windows; 20thC plaque.

West wall: two-centred tower arch of 19thC date. Above this a diagonal disconformity under surface coating may indicate earlier roof line on tower wall.

Chancel. General. Mosaic floors in chancel and sanctuary, with single steps up to chancel, to sanctuary and to altar; wagon roof of twenty panels with decorative bosses; carved choir stalls. Aumbry in north wall, sedile in south wall below sanctuary window.

Vestry. General. Tiled floor, brick walls, scissor-truss roof. Largely occupied by organ.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: circular, funnelling to cylindrical stem; 13thC, but perhaps re-tooled. Base modern.

Cross slab: "about 8' high, tapering downwards. At the top a Latin cross with four knotted ends. Below, a section with a relief of a large frontal figure holding a club (?) and a dagger, surrounded by knotwork. Then an inscription '+ BRIAMAIL FLOU' in a cable-moulded panel. At the base, a compartment of plaitwork. Late 10thC" (Haslam). Formerly under a yew tree in the churchyard.

A second stone inscribed "CATVC" has disappeared but is reputed to have been incorporated into the wall between the nave and chancel during the 19thC restoration.

Monuments: tower contains about 11 grave slabs on edge and cemented into floor; two have foliate crosses, two have coats-of-arms, some are badly abraded; legible examples range in date from 1637 to 1776. Also in tower mural tablets of Margaret Jones (d.1795) and Abigail and David Davies (d.1769 and 1786). On north wall of nave: William Prytherch (d.1776), erected 1793; Pennoyre Watkins (d.1792) and Sarah Watkins(d.1818), with a Gothic surround.

Chest: parish chest with new lid, but rest original; front has compass-inscribed arcs as (?)decoration.

Stoup: octagonal and incised with lines; cracked and with one face missing.

Bells: six in all, of which two cast by Robert Hindley of Gloucester between 1450-1500; two more cast in 1718, perhaps by a local founder; and last two are late 19thC.

Victorian features include:

Reredos: "alabaster, carved with the Deposition, Entombment, and Resurrection" (Haslam).

Choir stalls: carved.

Screen: ironwork.

Pulpit: with an alabaster figure.

Lectern: brass; "the bookrest is a pelican in her piety; on a twisted column" (Haslam).

Stained glass: east window by Ward.

CHURCHYARD

Llandefaelog churchyard has an elongated shape, curvilinear on north and more rectilinear to south. This is due to an extension to the churchyard, the earlier course being picked out by scarp to south of church (see below).

Ground within yard slopes from north to south, and because of proximity of River Honddu, no more than 20m to east of church, there is also a slope towards river though church itself occupies a shelf which in part is natural.

Boundary: consists of stone wall which on road side is mortared but on north is drystone. This continues above river, swings around south-east corner where mausoleum is set against it, and then runs on to road. On west internal ground level is below that outside but elsewhere the churchyard is raised, by from 0.5m on north to well over 1m on south.

Monuments: well packed throughout churchyard, although densely so only in localised groups. Immediately to south of church are gravestones of 1768 and 1775. In the south-east corner the churchyard accommodates the mausoleum of the Penoyre estate. Enclosed by a substantial wall built in Egyptianate style and dated 1816, it comprises a low square building with a single door on the west and a grill covered window on the east, containing a number of vandalized lead coffins.

Furniture: modern churchyard cross towards south-east corner.

Earthworks: scarp bank, c.1m high, runs in front of south side of church, following a fairly straight line: this is likely to be an earlier boundary. However, further south a different course is suggested by a curving line of yews though this assumes the complete obliteration of the bank between them. On north side of church evidence of embanked boundary just inside stone wall.

Ancillary features: lychgate on west, built by F.R.Kempson in 1897, with double metal gates under. In north-west corner a single iron gate between stone piers. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: a series of spindly yews on north and south.

SOURCES

Church Notes
CPAT Field Visit: 25 November 1995
Haslam 1979, 330
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR

CONDITION

Reasonable condition now. A few years ago about £20,000 spent on underpinning and repairing cracks resulting from subsidence at east end. Some cracks now in west wall of tower, under south window of nave etc. Plaster flaking off in tower.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Llandefaelog Tre'r-graig

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Maelog

PRN 16826

NGR SO12632989

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Maelog's church lies about three miles south-west of Talgarth in the old county of Breconshire. It is a simple structure with a doorway and several windows that may be pre-Reformation, as well as early masonry surviving in the walls. There is a Norman font and a good range of memorials and graveslabs in the building. However, it is now disused and its condition is deteriorating. Griffiths of RCAHMW classed it as an unexpectedly interesting little church.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The walls of the nave and chancel are probably largely original and the simple lancet on the north side could indicate a 13thC date. However, there has certainly been some rebuilding (e.g. the east wall), and the insertion of windows in the 16thC, the 18thC and the 19thC. The re-use of earlier masonry makes it difficult to date the surviving portions.

The porch has probably been rebuilt, re-using earlier materials.

HISTORY

The origins of the church are unknown, but an early medieval beginning is a strong possibility. It is certainly likely that a church stood here in the Norman period if the font can be taken as evidence.

The present building may date from the 13thC, but this dating is dependent on a small lancet in north wall. There were certainly some modifications in the 16thC (see the south chancel window).

It appears to have functioned during the Middle Ages and later as a chapel attached to Llanfilo. The Episcopal Register of St Davids refers to it as 'Llandevaylok' in 1400 and the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 records 'Llandevaylok Tref Grayg'.

By the beginning of the 18thC the church was in poor condition and it was rebuilt in 1710, a tablet in the chancel stating that the Reverend Gregory Parry rebuilt the church at his own expense, having found it in ruins.

Later works include the addition of the east window, and the replacement of the roof, and there is a record that in 1885 the old church was again in ruins.

During this century, perhaps in the 1950s, the church was abandoned for religious use.

ARCHITECTURE

Llandefaelog church consists of a nave and chancel in one with a south porch near the south-west corner and a bellcote over the west end. The church is oriented fractionally north of west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small through to large blocks of grey and iron-stained sandstone, irregularly coursed; well-dressed blocks for quoins, sometimes in red sandstone.

'B' is of small to medium-sized slabs of grey sandstone.

Roofs: slates with ornamental ceramic ridge tiles, and ceramic cross finials over the end of the chancel and the porch.

The bellcote has wooden boarded sides with louvred openings above; slates on the roof and a cross on top.

Drainage: no convincing evidence, though on both the north and south sides there is a band which could define a completely filled trench.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. These form a single unit and are not distinguishable externally. It is suggested that this cell may be 13thC.

North wall: Fabric 'A' predominates and there are intermittent traces of limewash. A number of features which from the west are: i) a small slit window, its chamfers disguised by cement covering; ii) a rectangular wooden window (formerly red painted) with two round-headed lights, a wooden lintel and a stone sill. This is presumably inserted but there are no obvious tell-tale signs. East of this window are patches of 'B', indicative of either rebuilding or patching; iii) a small lancet window, narrow and also concreted in. It is set in Fabric 'A' and lights the chancel; iv) east angle cracking away from north wall.

East wall: in Fabric 'A' and though there are occasional limewash traces, it lacks the roughness of the north wall. Probably rebuilt in old masonry? At ground level for no more than 1m from the south-east angle, a foundation course protrudes for about 0.15m. East window has three trefoiled lights and is clearly Victorian (or later).

South wall: in Fabric A; massive red sandstone quoins for south-west angle. East of the porch, the upper part of the wall has very regular pointing that ignores the shape and size of the individual blocks. Then from west to east: i) mural tablet of 1848; ii) rectangular wooden window similar to that on north with two lights; iii) mural tablet of 1855; iv) lighting the chancel, a rectangular window of two ogee-headed lights with cusped tracery, and complex chamfers. Traces of limewash adhering to the tracery which could be original but the other dressings may have been replaced; 16thC, though it has been attributed a more precise date of c.1540.

West wall: plain and heavily pointed; the surface is rough and there is no obvious indication of rebuilding except perhaps for the top of the gable.

Porch. General. In Fabric 'A' with heavy pointing.

East and west walls: both carry small, unglazed, roughly chamfered lancets.

South wall: a broad four-centred Perpendicular doorway, its head barely pointed, with chamfered jambs terminating in bar stops. Above this is a datestone of 1710. There is no gate or door to this outer entrance.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor, with one step up to nave; unplastered walls; high rafter and collar roof of no great age.

North wall: south door of church has segmental arch of edge stones, no dressed jambs, and a red painted, wooden door frame; a studded wooden door.

East wall: splayed window embrasure with wooden lintel. Stone bench set into wall; one of the flagged seats is part of a 17thC graveslab.

West wall: as east side but no obvious use of graveslabs.

Nave. General. Tiled floor at west end and down aisle; elsewhere, flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of multiple scissor trusses from 1901.

North wall: deeply splayed window embrasures with sloping sills, the wooden frames of the windows themselves painted white; two mural tablets of 1780 and 1781, and a graveslab of 1781.

South wall: splayed window embrasures as on north; rectangular door embrasure; mural tablets of 1777 and 1779, and a 17thC graveslab.

West wall: plain; five graveslabs set upright against it: 1633, 1645, 1636, 1617, and 174?.

Chancel. General. One set up to chancel from nave, one up to sanctuary and one to altar. Tiled floors throughout; choir stalls raised on wooden plinths. Walls as in nave. Roof also as nave except that collars added to the trusses; no differentiation over the nave/chancel divide.

North wall: window dressings unpainted; mural tablets of 1774 and 1790.

East wall: Victorian window. Mural tablet of 1844.

South wall: window as north wall; mural tablets of 1785 and 1833.

FURNITURE and FITTINGS

Font: Norman; circular bowl, tapering downwards, whitewashed.

Coffin lid: early 14thC, fragment with a foliate quatrefoiled cross.

Monuments: against the west wall are grave slabs to William Howell (d.1633); Anne Parry (d.1645); Blanch Parry (d.1636); Johan ? (d.1617), all slabs with ornate quatrefoiled crosses and heraldry. Last in the west wall group is in Latin, dated 174?. On north wall of nave mural tablets to John Gould (d.1780) and Meredith Thomas (d.1781). On the south wall mural tablets to John Morris (d.1777) and William Williams (d.1779), and another 17thC graveslab in south-west corner. The north chancel wall has mural tablets to Thomas Jones (d.1790) and a commemorative stone to the Reverend Gregory Parry, erected 1774 recalling the rebuilding of the church - a putto with the circled serpent for eternity and an urn and marble pyramid; all on a sarcophagus. On the east wall, Thomas Morris (d.1844); and on the south wall to the Reverend Gregory Parry (d.1785), a plaster oval of a lady garlanding an urn, between Rococo and neo-classical; and to Mary Morris (d.1833).

[Note: Pulpit of c.1700, taken to St Mary, Bronllys]

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is polygonal in shape, though there must be some doubt as to whether this was its original shape. There is no trace of an earlier circuit within the yard, but in the field to the south-west there appears

to be a curvilinear bank which merits further attention.

The ground level within the present yard is flat, except for a faint slope east of the chancel. Its position on the west bank of Afon Llynfi is fairly typical, with a steep drop down to the river no more than a couple of metres away from the wall on the south-east and east sides. Elsewhere the ground is reasonably flat.

The churchyard is no longer used, trees have fallen over, and the only reason why the whole area is not overgrown is that it is accessible to sheep from an adjacent field.

Boundary: consists of a drystone wall, now in a poor state of repair and reinforced by a wire fence. On the north facing the road it is better condition, and here too there is a trace of a bank beneath the wall. The interior is raised slightly; this is more noticeable on the south-west and north, but the external drop is no more than 0.5m.

Monuments: There are a few to the south of the chancel but they are all 19thC. The most recent burials date from the 1920s.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none within the churchyard.

Ancillary features: the main access is now a vertical slab stile in the north angle; there is also a wide wooden gate on the north-western side but this is evidently rarely used.

Vegetation: a number of mature yews and some old trees of other species ring the church just inside the perimeter boundary.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 March 1996
Dawson 1909, 123
Haslam 1979, 331
Jones and Bailey 1930, iv, 4
NMR Aberyswyth

CONDITION

The church is in a poor condition: slates are slipping off, downpipes are broken, and there are cracks in some walls. The porch is used by sheep and the interior of the church is dark and has been abandoned for religious purposes.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Poor

Llandefalle

Diocese	Swansea and Brecon	Dedication	Matthew
PRN	16827	NGR	SO10733549
		Previous dedication	Maelog

GENERAL SUMMARY

Llandefalle Church, some 5km to the north-east of Brecon, was originally dedicated to St Maelog but now to St Matthew. The present building probably originated in the late 13thC or early 14thC, but much of it is 15thC, and there appears to have been little if any Victorian restoration. It contains a fine rood screen (dating from about 1500), a 13thC font and fragmentary wall paintings, as well as a good range of 18thC wall monuments. The churchyard retains a degree of curvilinearity on the north and encloses a well within its perimeter.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Parts of the present church are believed to date from c.1300, and comprise the most westerly window on the north side of the nave and surviving masonry of the nave's west wall; it is possible too that other parts including perhaps the lower part of the tower could be this early, while some of the masonry in the south aisle appears to conform with the early fabric but could be re-used. The rest is Perpendicular or later: most of the windows are of the 14th/15thC, contemporary with the arcade between the nave and aisle, and the porch has a possibly 16thC doorway. Questions remain about the chancel; it is supposedly broadly contemporary with the nave and south aisle but why the different type of masonry? More work is necessary to elucidate the constructional sequence at Llandefalle.

The upper part of the tower is said to have been built (or rebuilt) c.1661, and windows of local design were added to south chancel wall about 1700.

The east window replaced in the 19thC, perhaps with part of the east wall of the chancel.

HISTORY

An early medieval origin for Llandefalle seems probable in view of the earlier dedication and the churchyard morphology.

Its early history is however obscure. At one time it was a possession of Clifford Priory in Herefordshire and in the Taxatio of 1291 it is recorded as 'Ecclesia de Landevathleir' with the relatively high value of £13 6s 8d, an indication perhaps of its importance in the area.

At the beginning of the 19thC Theophilus Jones referred to the survival of part of the rood loft which was converted to a gallery but then taken down.

Until 1904, the westernmost bay of the nave was partitioned off and used as a schoolroom, the north part of churchyard being used as a playground.

No Victorian restoration is known but in 1908 it was reported that there had been an appeal for funds about four years previously to put the building in proper repair. The architect's description of that time mentions

the seats being square pews - it was intended to replace these and maybe use the old ones as panelling around the church; the small two-light window over the chancel arch, then blocked, would be opened again. The windows had fallen into decay and needed immediate attention. By 1908 the church had been restored. The whole of the nave had been re-floored and re-seated, and both nave and chancel re-roofed. Dawson's (1909) description clearly refers to the church before its restoration.

ARCHITECTURE

Llandefalle church comprises a nave, a chancel which is slightly narrower than the nave, a west tower, a south aisle the same length as the nave, and a porch off the aisle. The church is oriented east-north-east/west-south-west, but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: Fabric 'A' of roughly coursed, small to medium shale slabs, some of larger proportions, with occasional blocks of sandstone, both red and (iron-stained) brown.

Fabric 'B' as 'A' but large shale slabs.

Fabric 'C' of coursed sandstone with some shale.

Fabric 'D' of large regular blocks of shale with some sandstone, not dissimilar to Fabric B.

Fabric 'E' similar to 'A' but lumps of stone less coursed. All external surfaces have exposed stonework with no more than slightly obtrusive pointing.

Fabric 'F': well coursed shale slabs only.

Fabric 'A' is medieval and earlier than 'C', perhaps c.1300. Fabrics 'B', 'E' and 'F' (?) are late medieval; Fabric 'C' could also be late medieval though conceivably earlier; Fabric 'D' is thought to be second half of 17thC.

Roofs: reconstituted clay tiles, but tower roof is stone tiled. Terracotta ridge tiles.

Drainage: drainage trench visible; but not on south side of chancel.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric 'C' at lower levels with sandstone quoins; upper stages in Fabric 'D'. Battered at base for c.1.2m; first string-course is two-thirds of the way up the tower, with the stage above inset; next string-course with water-spouts at base of belfry stage; pyramidal roof with weather vane. Lower part of tower Perpendicular, dating to 15thC/16thC, though Griffiths (RCAHMW) queried whether it could be Norman; two upper stages are later, perhaps c.1661 according to Haslam though no obvious reason why this date has been selected.

North wall: horizontal groove c.2.0m off the ground reveals former lean-to, and for the first 3m the tower incorporates an earlier wall, its masonry appearing to be butted against but bonding with the earlier wall which is in Fabric 'A'. Second stage has glazed lancet window, its dressings replaced; third stage has two broken water-spouts and two separate simple rectangular belfry windows with louvre boards; crumbling cornerstones at 3rd stage level.

East wall: window in second stage replaced; standard belfry window and new pointing to this stage.

South wall: small lancet in first stage at ground floor level, sandstone dressings with the arch in a single stone; higher up is an inserted relatively modern lancet; upper stages have windows comparable with north and east sides, and two water-spouts.

West wall: in first stage at ground floor level a slit window without ashlar surround; in second stage an original single-light window with a four-centred arch; belfry stage as north wall, with one water-spout.

Nave. General. Fabric 'E'.

North wall: from west: i) a four-centred arched doorway at west end, chamfered dressings, a relieving arch in pseudo-voussoirs, graffiti of 188? on one jamb stone; ii) a two-light window with two-centred arch, trefoiled heads to the lights with lozenge above, sandstone dressings, central mullion renewed, thought to be of c.1300; iii) a three-light window also with a two-centred arch, but the lights with cinquefoil heads, panel tracery, complex jamb mouldings and one mullion replaced; iv) a similar three-light window near the east end of the wall, all original dressings; v) stair well for rood loft projects with one small, simple lancet, original. All the main windows once had shutters: hinges survive as does one S-shaped shutter catch.

East wall: chancel roof lower than nave, allowing space for a pair of small but quite wide lights with pointed arches under a flat head.

South wall: not present because of south aisle.

West wall: appears to be of 'Fabric A' and inset at eaves level; considered to be part of church of c.1300.

Chancel. General. All Fabric 'F', except where stated.

North wall: one blocked window of unexceptional design, centrally located.

East wall: fabric change with 'F' at bottom of southern side giving way to masonry similar to Fabric 'A' at top of northern part; a four-light window, panel tracery, under a two-centred arch, all the dressings are replaced and perhaps too is the wall; two mural tablets pinned to wall, both of 1767.

South wall: two three-light windows with broad flattish four-centred heads in large rectangular frames and complex mouldings, probably 17thC; priest's door has chamfered sandstone jambs, a four-centred arch and a relatively modern door; one memorial tablet of 1767.

South Aisle. General. Primarily Fabric 'A' (perhaps re-used?) with Fabric 'B' for highest 1.5m of south wall; better coursed than usual on west wall; sloping roof in one with south roof of nave.

East wall: one three-light window with complex panel tracery, replaced mullions, and complex moulded jambs; join between masonry of nave and south aisle visible from distance, much of the corner south of window rebuilt.

South wall: east of porch are two three-light windows with panel tracery, original jambs with complex concave mouldings, but mullions and tracery (comparable with that in nave windows of north side) replaced; these are set high in the wall with the apices only 0.7m below eaves level; east end of wall rebuilt from just below east edge of more easterly window to corner, new section slightly inset and on fractionally different alignment. Two mural tablets on wall, one of 1789. West of the porch is a three-light window with elaborate panel tracery and similar jambs to other windows in this wall; jambs and tracery original but cleaned, mullions replaced; relieving slab above window; this window is closer to ground level than the others in the south aisle.

West wall: the plain, external face of the earlier nave is visible as a fabric change close to tower; the wall supports one mid-19thC memorial slab and two projecting square-sectioned blocks, c.1.8m from ground and 0.8m apart, of unknown function.

Porch. General. Fabric 'A' but containing a little sandstone.

East wall: no windows, but memorial slab of c.1832.

South wall: original two-centred arch with complex mouldings, thought to be 16thC; light over; memorial of 1777 to east.

West wall: no windows.

Interior

Porch. General. Three steps lead up into porch. Flagged floor with one step up to church door; plastered walls; arched-braced roof, the braces alternately moulded and unmoulded, and probably collars above, but panelling disguises these, and nail holes suggest that panelling may once have been lower.

North wall: two-centred arched doorway of the 14thC with two roll-mouldings in plane with each other on the underside of the arch, and above it is a small rectangular recess; thought to be re-erected. Adjacent a stoup with an hexagonal bowl set in a niche with a two-centred arch and hollow chamfered sandstone dressings.

East wall: stone bench with flagstone seat; World War I memorial plaque above it.

West wall: stone bench as east wall with mural tablet of 1792 above.

Tower. General. Not accessible.

Nave. General. Rear of church divided off by a beam and curtains to provide a vestry, and until 1904 this functioned as the village school. Victorian tiled floor but wooden boarding under benches and stone flags at rear including occasional re-set memorial slab; also a few grilles over vents at the west end. A curious feature at the front is the two steps up to the screen and the one step down into the chancel beyond. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Wagon roof of 78 panels but also three tie beams supported on short wall posts.

North wall: door in extreme north-west corner approached by three steps. Deeply splayed windows. A shallow four-centred arch with stopped chamfers provides access to the rood loft stairs; a small niche above the doorway. Two wall paintings: that to east near the screen is of floral design, the other probably depicts St Christopher (or possibly St George).

East wall: massive two-centred chancel arch, chamfered dressings; screen; above is a small splayed window of two lights, providing light for the upper doorway to the former rood loft.

South wall: double-chamfered arcade of four bays on octagonal piers with moulded capitals; floral wall painting plus inscription over one bay.

West wall: in extreme south-west corner the wall face of the nave gives way to the tower wall: a vertical joint is visible with the former inset. Two-centred arched doorway to tower, chamfers with broach-stops, and two steps up into tower. Small slit window high up on tower wall.

Chancel. General. Flagged floor includes several graveslabs of 17thC and 19thC date in the sanctuary; plastered and whitewashed walls; wagon roof of 80 panels is lower than that of nave.

North wall: ten mural tablets ranging from 1739 to 1842.

East wall: splayed window. Mural tablet of 1840.

South wall: windows have wooden lintels in embrasures. 18thC benefaction board on wall.

South aisle. General. Floor and walls as nave, though at west end one slab has illegible inscription and another is undated, and also two grilles over heating vents; two steps up to altar. Roof is plain, plastered and relatively flat.

South wall: piscina; the peaked head over the recess perhaps re-used from elsewhere. One 19thC mural

tablet.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Screen: "of c.1500; five tracery lights either side of the (restored) central doorway, all of the same pattern - crossed diagonals with circled quatrefoils. Above is a vine-trail extended between two fantastic beasts" (Haslam). For full description see Crossley and Ridgway.

Font: 13thC; round and squat, on a modern masonry base.

Wall paintings: a fairly large series of fragmentary paintings, likely to be medieval though those that show as inscriptions are probably post-Reformation.

Altar rails: "with the gates higher than the rest but all with spiral balusters; c.1660" (Haslam).

Stained glass: a few 15thC fragments in the east window of the aisle.

Bells: reportedly there are three bells of 1665 and one of 1666.

Monuments: mural tablets inside the church include those to Thomas Williams (d.1739) and Benjamin Williams (d.1742), both with fanciful lettering by T.Brute; Philip Price (d.1776), Philip James (d.1753), Thomas Williams (d.1779) and Roderick Gwynne (d.1780), both by Powel of Talgarth; David Williams (d.1792); Thomas Williams (d.1790); John Griffin (d.1784).

Graves: slab of 1609 in chancel; also one to a daughter of the Bishop of St Davids into which are set two marble plaques commemorating the Vaughan sons who died in 1694.

Benefaction board: 18thC.

Register: from 1793.

Communion plate: 1618 according to Dawson.

CHURCHYARD

Llandefalle churchyard is medium sized and irregular in shape. Its north-western boundary is strongly curvilinear with an overgrown trackway curving around the outside, but the south-eastern side is rectilinear and looks very much like an extension. That said it is not possible to define an earlier perimeter to the south of the church.

It is sited on a moderately sloping hillside which drops to a small stream about 100m to the south of the church. The ground level north of the church is flatter than that to the south which descends in a series of an artificially enhanced terraces.

It is well kept, although to the north of the church where there are no burials it has been invaded by bracken; it is still used for burial.

Boundary: on the east this is formed by a stone wall with, internally, a bank up to 0.5m but otherwise little change in height between the inner and outer ground levels. The wall continues round to the north with a holloway beyond, and on the west side near the gate the ground outside the wall is about 1.5m below the churchyard level. South of this the buildings of the Old Rectory determine the perimeter but on the south the stone wall probably resumes though it is obscured by vegetation, becoming visible only towards the south-east corner. Just to the north of this there is a 2m+ drop to the lane running past the churchyard.

Monuments: these are numerous and reasonably dense on the south and east sides of the church, but there

are virtually none on the west and north sides. There is a slab of 1695 by the south-east corner of the chancel and 18thC monuments on and near the south walls of the church.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: a well lies within the churchyard to the north of the church though it is largely overgrown. A bank up to 4m wide and 1.25m high curves round to the north and north-west of the church, and with it is a ditch c.2.75m wide and 0.5m deep, which carries the stream emanating from the well. Though possibly associated with an earlier enclosure, the bank is more likely to be a feature related solely to the well, notwithstanding two old yews growing on the bank.

Ancillary features: a relatively modern stone lychgate with timber superstructure provides access on the east side, together with an adjacent kissing gate. On the west are double iron gates with a vertical stone stile and another similar stile is set in the north-east sector. Concrete paths serve the first two entrances.

Vegetation: about half a dozen yews grow in the churchyard.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visits: 13 July 1995 and 18 August 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 62
Dawson 1909, 81
Haslam 1979, 332
Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 24 & 31-32
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR

CONDITION

Some external cracks in the masonry, as above the most westerly window in south aisle. Also damp showing at rear of church with blistering paint etc. Otherwise the church appears in good condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good to Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Good

Llandeilo'r Fan

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Teilo**PRN** 16831**NGR** SN89633465

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Teilo's church lies in remote country on the southern fringe of Mynydd Eppynt 16km north-west of Brecon. It is a simple structure with a nave and chancel in one, and a small bell turret; the windows are Victorian and there is little diagnostic architectural detail, apart from a blocked priest's door. Inside, the 16thC roof, a font, stoup and part of the late medieval screen remain, as well as a fine early 17thC grave slab and a number of 19thC wall monuments. The churchyard may once have been sub-circular and subsequent modifications have straightened out some of the boundary.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

No date has been attributed to the fabric of this church. A blocked round-headed priest's doorway could conceivably take this back into the 12thC, though the evidence is hardly convincing. Also there is the anomaly of the gables on both sides, but this must be a Victorian embellishment. Griffiths of RCAHMW was certain that the church had been almost entirely rebuilt, and Dawson too claimed it was rebuilt 'almost from the foundation in 1875', though the late medieval roof was preserved.

Certainly, all of the windows are Victorian, and of a standard design that probably does not mirror what was there before. Yet, some though not all seem to show signs of insertion.

HISTORY

Nothing is known of the early history of St Teilo's church, though the circumstantial evidence for an early medieval origin appears relatively strong.

It does not appear in either of the 13thC Taxatios, or in the Valor of 1535. However there is a reference in the St David's Episcopal Register in 1513 to 'Llandeylo Gornagh' which is believed to be an earlier name for Llandeilo'r Fan.

The church was supposedly much restored in 1873, though little information has been gleaned on the work.

ARCHITECTURE

Llandeilo'r Fan church consists of a nave and chancel as a single cell with a bell turret at the west end. It is oriented a little to the north of west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of slabs of grey and dark red sandstone, together with a few lumps; this masonry is randomly coursed, and there are ashlar quoins.

'B' is of regular-coursed fine-grained tabular sandstone, with machine cut ashlar quoins.

Roof: slates showing some replacement, scalloped terracotta ridge tiles, and cross finials at gable ends.

Drainage: slab-lined trench up to 0.3m deep runs around the whole building, and is channeled beneath the buttresses at the west end.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Described as a single unit because of lack of external differentiation. Base of walls battered slightly and exposed in drain. All In Fabric A unless otherwise stated.

North wall: irregular appearance, tending to lean outwards near top of wall; traces of limewashed plaster at higher levels. Four windows, all having two-centred arches: two two-light windows, the lights with cusped heads, a larger example of the same with a quatrefoil light above, and finally a single light to illuminate the chancel. The largest window has a gable over the top, the vertical face of the dormer flush with the north wall, which shows signs of disturbance with newer and more randomly coursed masonry than 'A' around it, and exposed timber terminals projecting from the wall face. All the windows have yellow sandstone dressings of Victorian origin. The large window and the chancel window further east both have iron grilles.

East wall: 'A' but with some large blocks incorporated; plaster traces on gable. Window has a two-centred arch, three stepped lights, with smaller lights above, and a plain hoodmould, all in yellow sandstone. Window is Victorian, but wall could be largely original.

South wall: uniform masonry, except at west end, where about 4m from the angle, there is a clear change marking where the west wall has been built on. Windows as the north side in all respects; the main south door has moulded dressings, a hoodmould with heavy stops and a pointed 'Gothic' arch. Towards the east end is a blocked priest's door, round-headed, poor voussoirs, dressed sandstone jambs, and the base of the doorway apparently 0.3m above the present ground level. Griffiths of RCAHMW thought this was entirely modern and 'almost a Victorian fantasy'.

West wall: though some evidence that west wall has been rebuilt (see above), the masonry is still classed as 'A'. A single lancet in yellow sandstone with an iron grille in front. Also two buttresses in Fabric B, with string courses at the top of their battered bases; stepped heads. Above eaves level, the gable has been heavily repointed.

Bell turret. General. It has a pyramid roof, and this plus the vertical sides are all slated, so completely enclosed. Fractionally overhangs the west end.

Interior

Nave. General. Tiled floor and no obvious heating vents, though carpet covered down the aisle; wooden boards under benches. Walls plastered and whitewashed except for dressings. 16thC roof across nave and chancel, of 13 bays with braced collars, and king posts with trefoil heads in the openings between the struts. At the west end, Victorian panelling divides off the vestry.

North wall: splayed windows; two 19thC mural tablets.

East wall: simple screen, unornamented.

South wall: splayed windows; a small stoup close to the door, and a graveslab of 1614 against the wall and behind the font.

West wall: splayed window; wall otherwise plain except for a board recording a grant from Incorporated Church Building Society in 1873.

Chancel. General. Up one step from the nave with further steps to sanctuary and altar; floor of Victorian encaustic tiles, though partly carpetted. Walls as nave. For roof see nave.

North wall: two 19thC mural tablets.

East wall: aumbry to the north of the altar, shallow recess to the south of it; two 19thC mural tablets.

South wall: five monuments, all 19thC.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Screen: plain dado, posts, and head beam survive. Crossley and Ridgway noted a text on the beam.

Font: octagonal, in red sandstone; 14thC.

Stoup: five-sided, whitewashed.

Monuments: to Revd Richard David (d.1614); Edward Jones (d.1820), by Henry Westmacott; to David Lloyd (d.1865), in Gothic style by Williams and Sons of Brecon.

CHURCHYARD

Curvilinear on its southern side where it adjoins a small stream, Nant Eithrin, Llandeilo churchyard has straighter sides on the north and east. This dichotomy is altered little by the addition of a rectilinear extension to the northern side earlier in the century, yet it seems likely that encroachment by road and crofts modified the original boundary and that once the enclosure was more circular. It is perched on the edge of a river terrace and the interior is relatively level.

The extension is used for current burials and the graveyard is somewhat overgrown though not excessively.

Boundary: a low stone wall, which fronts an earthen bank nearly 1m high in places, defines the west, the east and some of the southern sides; it seems likely that the bank is a relic of an earlier earthwork boundary, and that around the southern perimeter the churchyard is raised above the surrounding ground. On the south-west is the stream and here there is no boundary as such. North of the church a wall divides private properties from the graveyard, and a scarp bank separates the old churchyard from its new extension.

Monuments: these are spread throughout the churchyard and are particularly dense to the west and north-west of the church. No pre-19thC monuments were recognised but many to the east of the chancel are now illegible.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: boundary scarp as noted above. On the south a low scarp curves around a few metres inside the present boundary and certainly represents the natural stream terrace. Whether it could also have been an earlier perimeter is impossible to ascertain.

Ancillary features: a modern lychgate on the east, its rubble walls abutting the churchyard wall, has a single broad wooden gate, but there is also a disused stone stile just to the north. Concrete paths.

Vegetation: five yews, two or three of which are set on the natural terrace to the south of the church.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 15 August 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 65
Dawson 1909, 102
Haslam 1979, 333
NMR, Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Appears to be satisfactory, although there is slight cracking at the contact between the west and south walls.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llanelieu

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Ellyw

PRN 16843

NGR SO18503418

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Ellyw's church, a small and relatively simple structure in a large irregular churchyard, is set in a remote spot some 3km to the east of Talgarth. Internally it is significant for its rood screen remains, wall paintings and wall monuments.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Core of building may be 13thC, there are indications of 15thC/16thC work, particularly the west window, and the east end may have been rebuilt in modern times. The porch too has been moved and rebuilt, though at earlier date. Absence of variation in the masonry makes closer analysis impossible.

HISTORY

There are few early references, but the siting, dedication and churchyard point to an early medieval origin.

No Taxatio records have been noted but the Episcopal Registers of St Davids have 'Llaneliw' in 1482.

The present building may have been erected in 13thC with subsequent modifications in the 15thC and/or 16thC.

The church escaped harmful 19thC restoration completely, but Glynne found it in a poor state of repair in 1869, particularly the roof. Its external walls were whitewashed. He noted a dilapidated wooden belfry at the west end and described the screen in unusual detail, commending too the lack of modernisation. Narrow single-light square-headed windows, now gone, were in the east wall and one in the south, and another with a pointed head. Inside were "some rude old open benches.

There were early 20thC repairs to the roof, bellcote, porch, etc., by Baldwin of Brecon in 1905, though Crossley and Ridgway were critical of the work, referring to the removal of church furniture, the obliteration of some mural decoration, as well as the loss of important details relating to the screen.

In 1909 the church was described as "a quaint structure with little pretension to architectural merit".

Further restoration was undertaken in 1981 by the Friends of Friendless Churches.

ARCHITECTURE

A small church consisting of a single cell, divided internally, with south porch and west bellcote. The church is oriented north-east/south-west, but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium blocks and slabs of sandstone, mixed in colour (red, brown, grey and white), irregularly shaped and randomly coursed.

'B' has a similar mix but the masonry is more regular in shape.

External traces of a limewashed finish remain, but now the masonry is just heavily pointed. The interior of the church is plastered and whitewashed, but the porch internally has flaking limewash coating.

Roofs: slates, with simple ceramic ridge tiles and no finials.

Drainage: concrete lined drain on west side and around south-west corner as far as porch, while on south a deep (c.1m) vertically-sided trench, necessitated by ground slope, is taken down only to original ground level. Ground soft around north side but here and on east no obvious drainage, other than two downpipes on former.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Bellcote at west end has pitched roof, lower slated sides and, above, double, louvred openings on all sides. Appears to have been renovated recently, but is thought to have been constructed in 1905.

North wall: Fabric A, with irregular surface, and heavy wooden wall plates visible. Grey sandstone slabs used for quoins at north-west corner, but not north-east. Two glazed lights, simple slits; that to east slightly splayed, small stones used for jambs, a larger block of sandstone for lintel of more westerly window. At north-east end, a foundation course of masonry projects, but this rapidly disappears beneath the grass further to the west and its extent and explanation are unresolved.

East wall: heavily pointed and more weathered than north side, but appears to be Fabric B, though possibly upper parts of wall rebuilt(?). Quoins of dressed sandstone blocks, suggesting rebuild. Completely replaced two-light window with foiled heads under segmental arch all in red sandstone; a relieving arch over. Two early 18thC tomb slabs lean against wall near south-east corner.

South wall: heavily pointed but largely Fabric A. Features from east are: i) recent window with ogee-headed light; ii) priest's door with jambs in grey sandstone and two-centred arch in red sandstone (replaced?), showing a continuous quarter-round chamfer, attributable to the 13thC. Jambs continue to bottom of drainage trench, giving a high (c.2.5m) and narrow doorway, wider at the top than at bottom; iii) a totally replaced, square-headed window in red sandstone; iv) a blocked doorway with a segmental arch, and grey sandstone blocks showing only for part of east jamb, with ordinary slabs below. West side of doorway hidden by porch. A relieving arch over. This is the earlier south door; v) porch; vi) sundial high up on nave wall.

West wall: in Fabric A, undressed quoins, with battered base to height of c.0.6m; largely original, Late Perpendicular square-headed window with two lights, having rather poor, foiled two-centred heads, and a relieving arch over.

Porch. General. Roughly constructed in a variation of Fabric A, where red and grey slabs of sandstone predominate; it abuts nave and its side walls lean outwards.

East and west walls: side walls featureless, but two early medieval slabs set against west wall.

South wall: two-centred, almost round-headed, arch with voussoirs of edge stones; two low wooden gates close off entrance.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor. Simple pitched ceiling with ribbing.

North wall: wooden segmental arch, stopped chamfers on the wooden jambs. Heavy wooden door hinged, unusually, on right. Haslam claims doorway is later than the door; the latter, though remade, is considered to be of c.1600 and appears to belong to the blocked doorway just to east. Wall above door still plastered.

East wall: stone bench with wooden seat along wall.

West wall: as east wall.

Nave. General. One step down into nave interior. New flagged floor, flush with wooden block floor beneath benches. Late medieval roof of three bays, and two half-bays over rood 'verandah'. Main trusses have tie beams and collars, interspersed with simple collars, while the half-bays have arch-braced collars linked by collar purlins; one tier of cinquefoiled wind-braces; trusses are set into wall; at least one collar has been replaced.

North wall: single deeply splayed window with arched embrasure. Marble wall tablets and fragmentary wall paintings grace wall.

East wall: screen for which see below.

South wall: two windows, the embrasures with two-centred arches but the splays of different shapes, and the door embrasure slightly splayed, with internal stopped chamfers on jambs. Niche just to west side of door, perhaps for a stoup. Wall tablets and one fragmentary wall painting to east of door; wall above and to west of door recently(?) rendered, but not whitewashed.

West wall: widely splayed window and above it, the wall is inset to support the tie-beam of truss. Walls paintings in window embrasure and beside it.

Chancel. General. Flagged floor with re-use of graveslabs. Chancel one step above nave, and sanctuary is a further step above the chancel. Roof has tie beams behind screen and against east wall, and between them two bays defined by three collar trusses, the collars originally supported by raking struts now gone and therefore (?) tie-beams below, the principals of the central truss set on wooden corbels; diagonal wind-braces. Timbers show considerable renewal.

North wall: one window, splayed and round headed, possibly 13thC. Marble wall tablets of 19thC date on wall, with wall-painting traces behind.

East wall: splayed window of no great age; ledge above supports tie beam; piscina beside altar with two-centred arched niche.

South wall: arched window embrasure, and beneath it a niche, perhaps an aumbry. Blocked priest's doorway is tall, and splayed also but only on west; now occupied by two memorial stones.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Screen: "parts of elaborate 14thC screen still in situ. A 'verandah' of posts with sunk quadrant mouldings and solid spandrels, the central opening narrower than the lateral ones, supports the joists for a loft; lateral opening to south reduced to half width with new upright support in order to accommodate pulpit. Originally, too, there was wainscoting between the posts and the screen wainscot, to enclose the side altars. Over the loft the roof trusses are arch-braced, apparently to form a ciborium. Behind the 'verandah' is the rood beam, and boarding, pierced by squints, from the floor of the loft up to the former ceiling. This tympanum and the front of the screen are painted purplish-red with white roses; the partition with a white cross also" (Haslam). Full details in Crossley and Ridgway.

Piscina: small, not dated, in the sanctuary.

Font: "a slender goblet shape, perhaps 16thC or 17thC" (Haslam). Oak cover, perhaps 17thC.

Altar rails: mid or late 17thC.

Benches: mainly 19thC, but two with carved finials of 17thC or 18thC.

Pulpit: square, on a stone plinth. Early 18thC.

Chest: c.2m long, of uncertain age; against north wall of chancel.

Monuments: three slabs with sunk raised lettering to i) Richard Aubrey (d.1610); ii) Thomas Awbrey (d.1669); iii) William Aubrey (d.1716), though this is outside, on the east wall. William Davies (d.1786), with colouring, by Hughes of Llanvillo. Various 19thC wall tablets on north and south sides of nave and chancel. North wall of nave: tablets of 1778/79, 1759 and, in window embrasure, one recording three deaths between 1748-1769. South wall of nave: tablet recording family deaths from 1728-1772 and below another tablet of 1777. North wall of chancel: 1773 donation tablet in window embrasure. South wall of chancel: in priest's doorway, one tablet of 1818 and below it the Awbrey slab of 1669 (see above), adjacent is tablet of 1782/83. Seven graveslabs of 18thC, and one of 1640 in floor of sanctuary. One further tablet of 1725 against external east wall of chancel. Several 19thC marble tablets.

Wall paintings: i) Royal Arms, 18thC?, a fragment painted on the north wall. Seven other fragments, revealed more recently, and left exposed on nave walls and chancel walls. On north side from west: i) text in framed border; ii) text in framed border; iii) coat of arms as noted above; iv) text and decoration. On south wall: text. On west wall from south side: i) faint, uninterpreted traces and ii) text, both in window embrasure; and iii) remnants of the Garden of Eden temptation(?), probably late medieval. On north wall of chancel, faint traces behind wall tablets.

Bells: church guide claims that 'the north bell was cast between 1180 and 1200 AD, the south bell more than a century later. Both bells retain medieval clappers.'. These claims have not been substantiated.

Sundial: on south wall. No gnomon. Bears the inscription '1686. P.P. Warden'.

CHURCHYARD

Llanelieu churchyard is large, with some degree of curvilinearity to its north side; its shape, however, is irregular and does not warrant the term circular (pace Haslam).

It is set in the meander of a small stream which edges it on north and east; to south and west it is bounded by a sunken lane, which to the west in particular is several metres below the graveyard level. Internally, the ground drops gently from south to north and as a consequence the church has been terraced into the slope on its south side.

Generally it is tidy with sheep-grazed grass over much of the area, although nettles have invaded ground round church itself; bushes and trees are limited to the perimeter.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall for a short distance on either side of the main north-west gate, and again on the south and south-east where the wall becomes progressively dilapidated and in places more a revetment to the churchyard. Elsewhere a modern wire fence lies inside an intermittent boundary of trees and other vegetation.

Monuments: gravestones concentrated around south side of church in a restricted area; many are illegible but clearly of the 18thC-19thC. Few of the 20thC though most recent is 1988. Large areas of churchyard are without any obvious burials and there are no signs of gravestone tidying.

Furniture: "against the west wall of porch are two early medieval pillar stones. i) incised with a cross in a circle and four small rings in the angles; ii) has a cross ringed with three circles. Both are 7thC-9thC" (Haslam).

Also an erect stone shaft, c.1m high by 0.1m+ square, set on 0.8m-square stone base. Has 'I.W. 1718' incised on one face. Probably originally a sundial shaft rather than cross shaft.

Earthworks: hollowed path from north-west corner gate to church porch represents part of footpath shown on Ordnance Survey map. No continuation south of church. South of church is scarped platform, with irregular edge, possibly created by deposition of soil during terracing for church.

Ancillary Features: main entrance is metal kissing gate at north-west corner with grass track (see above) leading to porch. Double wooden gates are located at highest point of churchyard near south-west corner. Stile or the like at south-east terminal of footpath not checked.

Vegetation: no yews or other trees within churchyard, though many deciduous specimens around perimeter.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings for Talgarth Community: 1995

Church guide: no date

CPAT Field Visit: 27 October 1995

Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 66

Dawson 1909, 114

Glynne 1887, 280

Haslam 1979, 333

Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 74-75

NMR, Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

Silvester and Dorling 1993, 37

CONDITION

Porch is in poor condition superficially, with flaking limewash, woodwormed seats and some cracks.

Body of church appears satisfactory, though dust and dirt from opening to bellcote covers floor. New rendering and recent whitewash coating suggests continuing attention.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Very Good

Llanfaes

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication David

PRN 16846

NGR SO03792830

GENERAL SUMMARY

St David's church lies in a western suburb of Brecon, less than 1km from the town centre. The church itself is a mixture of Victorian and earlier 20thC build and retains virtually nothing of its pre-19thC predecessor, the only medieval being a font. The churchyard is rectilinear.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The building dates entirely to 1859 and 1923-25, and there is no evidence of re-used materials, though Griffiths of RCAHMW claimed some re-used stone in the tower.

HISTORY

The church is recorded as 'Ecclesia de Lanmays' in the 1291 Taxatio at a value of £12, but by 1535 when its name appeared in its modern form its value had slumped to £5 15s 6d.

A sketch of c.1700 by Hugh Thomas (a copy in south aisle) shows a squat, possibly late medieval tower with a battered base, a nave and chancel in one with an east window of three lancets, and a north porch.

A new church was erected, reputedly next to the site of the medieval one, by J.Clayton in 1859, but was almost entirely replaced in 1923-5. Surviving features from the Victorian edifice include the tower and spire and the aisle windows, which belonged to the nave before the enlargement, while the west window in the north aisle was formerly at the east end. A school room was added in 1878.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanfaes church comprises a nave with north and south aisles, a chancel, a west tower and octagonal spire with weathervane, a choir vestry in the angle between the south aisle and the tower which from outside appears more like a house, the main vestry on the south side of the chancel and opposite on the north side of the chancel a similar cell with a hexagonal stair turret, and a north porch.

Fabrics: 'A' of shaped slabs and blocks of red and grey sandstone with ashlar dressings and quoins. 'B' is similar to 'A' but with yellow sandstone dressings.

Roofs: slates, except for spire which has stone slab tiles.

Note: because of its late date only a cursory description is offered here.

Exterior

See above.

Interior

General. Porch has tiled floor; wooden block flooring in nave and aisles; nave has one grating for underfloor heating. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Nave roof of arch-braced collars with raking struts cusped to give quatrefoils.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: the only medieval survival in church; recut.

Memorials: grave slab next to new font in north aisle to Rev. Hugh Jones and family (d.1799; 1785; 1763 and 1832). Memorial tablet of 1799 to the same minister on east wall of tower, and one to Rev Morris (d.1846) adjacent.

Register: from 1730.

Victorian and later fittings include:

Stained glass: "north aisle west window, three lights with Decorated tracery and filled with Clayton and Bell glass of c.1859. North aisle east window by Morris & Co., c.1935" (Haslam).

Rood: 1940, painted figures.

Font: "sixteen-sided bowl of 1945 carved with an ark, symbols of the Evangelists, etc" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

Llanfaes churchyard is almost rectangular and extends across level ground on the valley floor of the River Usk which runs less than 300m to the north. It has been enlarged on at least one occasion but there is no evidence of an earlier, curvilinear enclosure.

It is well-kept though ivy is overgrowing some monuments on the north side of the church, and it is used for current burial.

Boundary: a well-built stone wall with coping stones, probably Victorian or even later in date, encompasses the whole churchyard.

Monuments: some older slabs of which the oldest appears to be from 1752 are set vertically against the south wall of the chancel and the adjacent churchyard wall. 19thC graves occupy the northern part of the churchyard and are fairly evenly and densely spread. South of the church the graves are spread more widely.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: the ground undulates to the north-west of the tower, and the church itself is set on a slight platform, perhaps a residue of debris from an earlier building.

Ancillary features: Victorian lychgate. Metalled paths.

Vegetation: some yews though not of any great age around the perimeter of the northern half of the yard. A few other trees further south.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 September 1995

Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 68

Dawson 1909, 171

Faculty 1878: NLW/SD/F/51

Haslam 1979, 335

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

The church is general satisfactory. There is some damp in the north aisle, and an appeal is currently in progress for the tower which has been damaged by water.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Very Poor

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Medium to Good

Llanfeugan

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Meugan**PRN** 16851**NGR** SO08672454

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Meugan's church (with variant spellings) lies on a spur between two small streams that feed into the River Usk a few kilometres south-east of Brecon. The church itself has a complex architectural history, the earliest elements dating from the 13thC, and more detailed analysis is required to resolve its structural development. It contains a significant but not exceptional range of medieval and earlier post-medieval furnishings and fittings.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

One of the more complex sequences of development amongst the small churches of Breconshire, with much of dating sequence based on the windows.

Haslam argues for an historically attested 13thC Early English church, consisting of a nave and chancel extending a little to east of where north aisle terminates. In 14thC, nave perhaps rebuilt, with reconstructed chancel, north aisle with arcade added (on basis of cusped Y-tracery windows), and lancets from old north wall of nave and north door moved to aisle.

One alternative argument would see north aisle as earliest element - a view articulated during the restoration of 1891 - with the nave added in 14thC. Haslam also articulates the theory that much of what he terms 'rustic work' could date from after the Glyndwr troubles. Dawson claimed a 15thC date for the north aisle.

In the 15thC or even the 16thC, new windows and doors on south side of church; complete rebuilding towards east end, or alternatively an extension at this time. Tower added.

In 1891 north and east walls of chancel rebuilt, Victorian windows, perhaps modelled on originals. More recent repointing.

Note: there are unresolved queries regarding the church at Llanfeugan: why is westernmost bay of the arcade of different design and what is the significance of re-used dressings in its build. Why does tower plinth appear to pre-date south nave wall?

It must also be noted that there is a useful discussion in Jones and Bailey (1930) which is given here. They conjectured that in the early 13thC, a stone church was erected, consisting of nave and a chancel extending somewhat to the east of the point where the north aisle joins the nave, and that in the early part of the 15thC the west wall of the nave was taken down and the present massive tower was built. However when tiles were stripped from the nave, the wall of the tower showed clear traces of an older nave roof at a lower level and a lower pitch. A window was inserted between the south porch and the tower to correspond with the windows in the tower. In the latter part of the 15thC the chancel was probably extended further east; the small plain 13thC windows were removed and replaced by four square-headed, cinquefoil, cusped windows; the rood screen was erected at the entrance to the former chancel (which was exactly half way the tower arch and the present east wall). A portion of the north wall was taken down, and the present north aisle erected; the 13thC windows and doorway were put here, with the timbers of the north wall placed on it. These timbers had been manifestly shortened - the ends having perished - and the span of the aisle was regulated by their length. When the windows in the north aisle were cleared and the stopping removed, two of them "proved to

be of very composite character". The window high up on the east wall consisted of portions of two, if not three separate windows. Portions of the stone steps leading to the rood-loft from the outside were still visible in the south wall. In 1813 the rood-loft was in position. In 1890 old inhabitants of the parish remembered hearing of a gallery once stretching across the nave.

HISTORY

The location and dedication point to an early medieval origin for the first church at Llanfeugan, some sources positing a 7thC foundation.

It is claimed that Ralph de Mortimer of Pencelli Castle built a church on the old site around 1272. And the Taxatio of 1291 records it as 'Ecclesia de Lanbylien', attributing to it the relatively high value of £13 6s 8d.

The building has gone through series of reconstruction phases. Earliest architectural traces are 13thC, perhaps contemporary with Mortimer's involvement. Major modifications occurred in 14thC and 15thC.

The rood loft was taken out during alterations around 1813/14. External stone steps leading to the roof loft were still visible but the external doorway was replaced by a window at this time. A gallery was constructed in the north aisle, and the arch leading to the tower was filled with lath and plaster leaving only a doorway.

The church was restored by S. W. Williams in 1891. It was found that sand had been conveyed into the church, raising the floor level of the north aisle some 20 inches above the original level. Removal of the lath and plaster from the tower arch revealed the remnants of the medieval screen, and the demolition of the gallery uncovered re-used parts of the rood loft, notably moulded oak beams. Together with the late medieval choir stalls and benches the beams were dumped in the churchyard. Fifty-five years on Crossley and Ridgway noted that the beams were still left to rot in the churchyard.

ARCHITECTURE

General

Llanfeugan church consists of a west tower, a nave and chancel in one, a north aisle, and a south porch. The church is aligned west-south-west/east-north-east, but for the purposes of this description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: 'A' of small to medium, fairly regular slabs of grey sandstone, weathered, intermittently coursed, with larger pieces used as quoins.

'B' is similar to 'A' but larger number of lumps of sandstone giving more irregular appearance.

'C' is small and medium slabs of grey and red sandstone, rather random in appearance though some coursing.

'D' is of small to medium, more regularly cleaved slabs and lumps of sandstone.

Fabrics 'A', 'B' and 'C' are medieval, although some later rebuilding re-using the old material is indistinguishable. 'D' is Victorian or later.

Roofs: all roofs have reconstituted clay tiles which weather from red to grey, and semi-circular ridge tiles.

Drainage: No obvious drainage trench on south side, but on north side of chancel and north and west sides of tower is drain formed of stones on edge; this probably continues round north aisle but too much overgrowth for certainty.

Exterior

Tower. General. Set on stepped chamfered plinth in Fabric 'B', topped by a rounded string-course; above this all Fabric 'A'. Next stage has chamfered string-course; top of the third (belfry) stage defined by a further

stringcourse with lead flashing and waterspouts, with battlemented parapet above.

North wall: halfway up the second stage is small slit window to light newel stair in north-east angle of tower. East of the slit is what appears to be the fragment of another string-course, stopping short of window. Third stage contains central slit and above it louvred double-light window, trefoil heads to lights under four-centred arch; the mullion replaced in red sandstone, while the tracery is in yellow sandstone and might be original. West wall of north aisle abuts north tower wall. No waterspout.

East wall: apex of nave roof up to middle of second stage, with slit window just above. Standard two-light belfry window in third stage, central mullion and some tracery replaced in red sandstone. Weathercock rises above battlements at south-east angle.

South wall: at top of first stage is a simple slit window with unweathered chamfered dressings and string-course rising over it to act as a label. Second stage has two similar slits not quite aligned, and the stringcourse at top of stage again rises over it as a label. Next standard belfry window with four-centred arch and hollow chamfering of jambs, containing two trefoil-headed two-centred arched lights with louvre boards - the tracery is in red sandstone and may be replaced. A straight butt joint between nave and tower, the tower having obvious quoins.

West wall: as south wall with three slit windows in first two stages, though aligned vertically. Belfry window as on south side, with signs of tracery replacement in red sandstone. In addition to water-spouts at angles, two further lead spouts on wall itself at a slightly higher level.

North aisle. General. Thought to date from 14thC, though Dawson claimed 15thC and reported that in her day it was still known as Eglwys Newydd. Each wall face has a slightly battered base. Generally Fabric 'C', although in places slightly larger blocks and some less weathered, perhaps heralding localised rebuilding? Render traces particularly on north wall.

North wall: from east: i) one two-light window with cusped Y-tracery under a two-centred arched head with chamfered dressings; much restored in grey, yellow, pink and red sandstone, but difficult to tell what is original; ii) a simple double lancet window, the jambs and mullions of different coloured sandstone, again betraying some replacement; iii) near the north-west corner, simple two-centred arched doorway of 13thC or 14thC date, with stopped chamfers; the jambs in original red sandstone, the head of the arch in yellow might be replaced; doorway now blocked. Some rebuilding of wall suspected but difficult to define precise position(s).

East wall: dominated by a two-light window, the lights with trefoil heads set in a flat-topped embrasure with chamfered dressings; a mixture of red and yellow sandstone, the latter primarily for the tracery. Holes (presumably for bars) in north jambstones.

South wall: not present.

West wall: plain wall, much weathered, but probably Fabric 'C'.

Nave. General. Some evidence of rebuilding. Only south wall visible externally.

South wall: from east: i) four-centred arched Tudor doorway with stopped chamfers, the red sandstone dressings much weathered. Door itself has heavy ornate hinges; ii) west of door is a masonry join running full height of wall: the fabric appears much the same on both sides, but some change in weathering of stone. Newer section to east on slightly different alignment; iii) a Victorian replacement three-light window comparable with those in chancel; iv) a fourth three-light window, this one with original dressings. Both of these windows show fabric changes directly above, partly revealed by absence of render patches, though this is most noticeable above the Victorian replacement; v) porch; vi) west of porch is a two-light Y-tracery window with cinquefoil tracery, the spandrel containing an irregular quatrefoil light, all under a two-centred arch in grey sandstone with complex moulding. Above this and just below the eaves, the masonry is less weathered and projects, suggesting rebuilding.

Chancel. North wall:- contains one two-light flat-headed window with cinquefoil tracery in lights. All Victorian

with yellow sandstone for tracery and red for other dressings. Whole wall rebuilt in Fabric 'D' and limewashed.

East wall: perhaps Fabric 'A'-type but ivy and other vegetation prohibit examination. Decorated east window with three-lights and Y-tracery, the lights with cusped heads. But largely replaced in the Victorian restoration in yellow sandstone with a relieving arch over. Indeed, whole wall may have been rebuilt.

South wall: this wall is continuous with that of nave, though no external indication of the division. South-east corner has heavy quoins, and a short length of south wall was probably rebuilt with the east wall. Only features in chancel section are adjacent square-headed windows. Both have three lights with cinquefoil tracery under shallow peaked arches, complex jamb mouldings and hollow-moulded mullions. Red sandstone used for dressings but more westerly window has one lintel stone replaced in yellow-grey sandstone and one mullion stone in bright red sandstone. Two windows linked by a common sill stone.

Porch. General. In weathered Fabric 'C'. Roof apex just above nave eaves. Walls appear to butt against nave wall.

East and west wall: plain, but ivy growth over.

South wall: two-centred doorway. Some jambs of well dressed freestone, others look as though better lumps were simply selected.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor, but no graveslabs. Roof of two bays, one brace with collar and tie beam. Walls not plastered though some evidence that north wall was originally.

North wall: two-centred arch but with curving asymmetrical head! Heavy double doors with ornate hinges.

East and west walls: stone benches with wooden seats.

South wall: wooden lintel to reveal, but behind voussoir arch.

Tower. General. Flagged floor, including one graveslab of 1764. Whitewashed walls. It reportedly has priest's room on first floor.

North wall: narrow, four-centred arched doorway to tower stair in north-east corner.

East wall: tower arch raised on chamfered plinth.

South wall: splayed window; mural tablet of 1762.

West wall: splayed window only.

North aisle. General. Floor of flagstones including re-used graveslabs; wooden floor under benches; carpet at east end. Dawson claims that floor of aisle and of nave raised some 20" with sand, presumably at the time of 1891 restoration. Modern roof of scissor trusses on angular braces. Walls of bare stone.

North wall: blocked door with internal jambs showing. Two splayed windows, the more easterly clearly showing some tracery replacement.

East wall: splayed window; could be some replaced tracery.

South wall: blocked holes, formerly for corbels, above arcade.

West wall: plain.

Nave. floor as in north aisle, with flags including re-used gravestones, wooden boarding under benches, carpet down centre and at least two grilles over heating vents. Wagon roof of 250 ribbed panels, no earlier than 15thC. Bare walls.

North wall: arcade of four bays of low arches with single chamfers, the arches turned in edge-set slabs; the two central capitals of the three east bays are rudimentary: five diminishing squares of stone. Their short pillars are in ashlar and are octagonal but the top and bottom stones are dressed to a square. East respond has a similar capital and continuous chamfers. Then a change. The fourth, most westerly bay has a continuous chamfer and a pillar of dressed stone, without capitals; three of the stones in the pillar have holes as though to take the rods for window grilles (cf east window of north aisle) - therefore certainly re-used; and three of the basal stones have stops to chamfers but one does not. The west respond is a rubble pier with a thin responding capital. At the extreme west end of the arcade wall (the last 30cm) there is a faint change in both the alignment and the finish of the masonry indicative of a wall earlier than the arcade, i.e. the original north wall of nave. Above each pier and just to east of east respond is a blocked hole, the socket for a corbel that supported an earlier roof.

East wall: screen.

South wall: arches of window embrasures turned in long slabs on edge, those of the Victorian window are shorter than their medieval equivalents. Two door embrasures have their arches also turned in long slabs. Just to east of main door is a simple stoup in a rectangular alcove formed by four slabs on edge. The masonry change visible externally is not paralleled internally but is perhaps disguised by width of window splay.

West wall: at base of wall is the battered plinth of the tower wall, and on south is a chamfered plinth stone disappears into nave wall suggesting tower is earlier. On the same principle, to the north the remnant of the pre-arcade wall is earlier than the chamfered plinth. Tower arch has two-centred head with chamfered voussoirs and stops on the springers.

Chancel. General. Four steps up to chancel from nave, one step up to sanctuary. Chancel floor flagged with graveslabs, carpet in sanctuary. Roof as nave.

North wall: splayed window; mural tablet of 1753.

East wall: window embrasure turned in short edge stones (Victorian); mural tablet of 1683/1701.

South wall: two splayed windows.

West wall: screen.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: octagonal bowl on a circular base, late 13thC.

Stoup: just inside south door.

Stalls: of c.1700; and the small benches may be 17thC. Panelling against south wall of nave the remnants of old pews.

Pulpit and altar rails: incorporate 17thC work.

Screen: a section of the former screen is exhibited in the north aisle and consists of a two-centred doorway, buttresses, and a painted moulded head-beam; white roses still show and red and blue also employed.

Different authorities attribute it to the 14thC or 15thC; Crossley and Ridgway comparing it with Llanelieu and Merthyr Cynog argue for a late 14thC date. Rescued during restoration of 1891 when acting as blocking in tower arch. Crossley and Ridgway claimed too that painted ribs and joists were stored in the tower.

Monuments: Lewis Gunter (d.1683), with curly serpents at the sides; Thomas Jones (d.1753); John William (d.1762); Revd Walter Williams (d.1866), Gothic. Some ornate slabs of c.1700 in the chancel.

Graveslabs: considerable re-use as flags throughout church. >25 noted, ranging from 1718 to 1801.

Church plate: chalice and paten from 1547.

Registers: from 1747.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard of St Meugan's is an irregular quadrilateral in shape, long and relatively narrow resulting from its location on a spur formed by a steep sided valley on north and a less pronounced tributary valley on south. Dawson suggested one reason for the depth of valley to north was that stone was quarried from it for the church building. There is no convincing evidence of an early curvilinear 'llan' and indeed no convincing length of curved boundary anywhere along its perimeter. Within the churchyard the ground is relatively level, although there is a slope on the south side.

The yard is overgrown and neglected in places.

Boundary: consists of a stone wall/revetment on the south, the outer ground level up to one metre below the interior, though slope position may account for some of this drop. Wall continues around west and north and east, and again ground level externally is lower, though varies from 0.3m to nearly 1.0m, and on east to 1.5m.

Monuments: spread reasonably consistently throughout churchyard, the only gaps being in the north-east and north-west parts of yard. Certainly late 18thC monuments are present - one of 1792 recognised - but no comprehensive search undertaken.

Furniture: base and shaft of churchyard cross in south-east corner near gate. Shaft has irregular octagonal cross-section, and is c.2.8m and 0.8m diameter.

Earthworks: none. However, there are reports of a cockpit represented by a small hollow in north-west part of churchyard, now hardly discernible.

Ancillary features: churchyard served by small modern double wooden gates in south-east corner, beside which is vertical stone stile. Another stile, disused, on north side, and a further one at west end of churchyard near Ty'r Eglwys.

Handball court of uncertain origin utilised west wall of tower and its string-course, certainly in 18thC if not later.

Vegetation: up to a dozen yews, including particularly old ones in north-east corner of churchyard. Most set close to boundary and therefore possibility that those to west of church might define an earlier and otherwise unrecognisable perimeter.

SOURCECS

CPAT Field Visit: 18 August 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 68
Dawson 1909, 178

Haslam 1979, 337
Jones, 1930, Vol 4, 30
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR

CONDITION

Church in reasonable condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Good to Very Good

Group value: Medium

Llanfihangel Brynpabuan

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Michael and All Angels

PRN 16406

NGR SN98405664

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Michael's church lies on a spur about two miles to the south-west of Newbridge-on-Wye in the northern part of the old county of Breconshire. The church itself is architecturally unexceptional, with considerable Victorian restoration, and only a stoup and a font of its medieval fittings. The churchyard is polygonal and equally unexceptional.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Fenestration except for ground level window on south is all Victorian. It is impossible to determine whether these have been inserted into an otherwise largely medieval structure or whether the walls are at least partly rebuilt - the quoins seem to imply that some rebuilding has occurred.

Porch has original roof, but doorways are Victorian and again much of this cell could have been rebuilt.

HISTORY

There is no satisfactory information on when this church was founded.

It does not appear to be recorded in either of the 13thC Taxatios or in the 16thC Valor Ecclesiasticus.

The windows were inserted and other repairs were undertaken by C. Buckeridge in 1868.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanfihangel church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a south porch near the south-west corner of the nave, and a north vestry off the chancel. The church is aligned south-west/north-east, but for the purposes of this description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabric: irregular blocks of grey, fine-grained sedimentary rock some with quartzite veins, and occasional conglomerate blocks; also some brown and red stone; irregularly coursed. Quoins of dressed buff-yellow sandstone.

Roofs: slates, ceramic ridge tiles, and cross finials on all gable ends.

Drainage: traces of a drain around all sides except the west and around the vestry.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation between these elements. Haslam suggests core of building could be 13thC.

North wall: wall bulges slightly. Two windows to west of vestry, one lighting the chancel to east. All are Victorian trefoil-headed lancets, chamfered dressings in grey-brown sandstone. Equivocal signs of insertion of nave windows.

East wall: wall battered to height of 1.2m, and along part of the wall base is a plinth projecting for c.0.1m, its significance unclear. Victorian east window has two-centred arch with stopped hoodmoulding, three lights, and a relieving arch. There are no convincing signs that this window has been inserted but the roughness of the masonry is such that an insertion might not be discernible.

South wall: chancel wall battered as on east side; partly ivy covered. Nave also has batter with irregular masonry showing, but higher up the blocks are more regular than on north side, and this perhaps indicates more careful selection. Three standard Victorian windows and the most westerly does show signs of having been inserted. In addition there is a small window almost at ground level, its base about 1m off the floor. This has its original cusped head and probably its original jambs. By analogy with Llanfillo this could be a leper's or hermit's window.

West wall: irregular wall face with slight bulging; slight batter which is more noticeable towards north end; here, too, foundation stones project but stop abruptly at quoinstones suggesting that these are later. The quoins themselves are in yellow freestone, as is the Victorian two-light window. This has a two-centred arch, trefoiled lights, hoodmoulding with stops and relieving arch. Above this high in gable is a blocked rectangular embrasure with dressings of no great age: Griffiths of RCAHMW thought this might have been a niche for a crucifix. It is likely that part of this wall has been rebuilt.

Vestry. General. Masonry and quoins are comparable with those in nave; trefoiled lancets in north and east walls. Church bell hangs from iron bar running diagonally from vestry wall to chancel wall.

Porch. South wall has high two-centred arch in pink sandstone, chamfers with broach stops, stopped hoodmoulding and relieving arch. Standard quoins at angles.

East and west walls: plain, the latter partly covered in ivy.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor, unplastered walls. Roof has main truss with arch-braced collar, and there are ribbed purlins, the whole possibly early 16thC.

North wall: two-centred arch in pink sandstone, broach stops to chamfers, hoodmoulding with stops; cf outer doorway.

East and west walls: stone benches with wooden plank seats; otherwise plain.

Nave. General. Black and red tiled floor; carpet along aisle and into chancel, but no vents; flush wooden boarding under benches. Plastered walls. Uninterrupted seven-bay roof extends into chancel (three bays); arch-braced collars with raking struts above; panelled wall plates; early 16thC.

North wall: leans outwards and particularly thick (1m+); two splayed windows; one modern marble mural tablet commemorating 16thC and 19thC individuals.

South wall: walls lean outwards; one window; stoup with corbel set in wall above it.

Chancel. General. One step up from nave to chancel, one to sanctuary, a third to altar. Tiled floors, partly carpet covered; choir stalls on wooden boarding. Walls as in nave. For roof see nave.

North wall: Caernarvonarched doorway to vestry with broach stops to chamfers. Splayed window with quatrefoiled piscina cut in sill.

East wall: disconformity in wall face just below window springer level could indicate structural change.

South wall: three windows, the small ground level window having an asymmetrical splay away from the altar.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stoup: "circular, set into south wall of nave; a corbel carved with a head of uncertain date set above it" (Haslam).

Font: circular bowl and stem, possibly 13thC, but recut.

CHURCHYARD

Contrary to Haslam's contention the churchyard at Llanfihangel is not circular, but an irregular polygon with one side - the south-east - faintly curved. There is no convincing evidence for modification of this circuit except on the south-east (see below), though in appearance it looks as though the south-west side has been cut back, and recently the west corner has been truncated.

The ground within the churchyard is flattish, though there is a gentle slope down in the northern sector. Its situation is best described as a spur with the ground falling away gently in all directions except the west.

The churchyard is used for modern burial but is not well maintained with brackens and brambles in several places.

Boundary: the form of the boundary varies: on the south-west it consists of a stony bank with a hedge on top; on the north there is a bank with bushes on top and this continues around the north-east side where the inner slope to the bank becomes pronounced, around the east and around the south. A hedge or wire fence surmounts the bank. On the north and south there is some indication that the interior of the churchyard is slightly raised.

Monuments: these are concentrated to the south and south-west of the church but they are sparse and predominantly 19thC and 20thC.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: inside the south-eastern perimeter of the churchyard is a low scarp. There is at least a possibility that this is the original boundary and that the hollow beyond is an accompanying ditch.

Ancillary features: double wooden gates provide the main access from the south-west. There is however a grass path leading to the south-east, and a disused gateway.

Vegetation: bushes, small trees and pines edge the perimeter. Cypressess line both paths, and a more mature example lies beyond the east end of the chancel.

SOURCES

Church Guide n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 26 March 1996
Dawson 1909, 106
Haslam 1979, 339
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

General signs of deterioration include ivy growing up walls, minor cracking (though these repaired), plaster falling off internally, loose floor tiles and blistering paint.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llanfihangel Nant Bran

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Michael

PRN 16854

NGR SN94443427

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Michael's church at Llanfihangel lies some 12km to north-west of Brecon on the southern edge of Mynydd Eppynt. Architecturally the tower is the only interesting feature with re-used Perpendicular tracery in the belfry windows and a tower doorway which is the sole in situ survivor of the medieval church - the rest was removed prior to the reconstruction of 1882. Apart from a few 18thC mural tablets there is nothing pre-dating the 19thC inside.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Date of tower not certain, but probably 16thC on basis of Tudor doorway to tower stair; the Perpendicular tracery of the belfry windows is re-used. Certainly tower post-dates earlier nave for stair turret butts on to a surviving fragment of the earlier nave wall and the doorway leading from tower into nave appears to have functioned as main access to the church originally. Whether tower is all of one build is impossible to determine.

Nave and chancel reconstructed in large part in 1882.

HISTORY

Nothing is known of the early history of St Michael's church and it is not clear whether there was an early medieval foundation here.

It does not feature in the 13thC Taxatio nor in the 1535 Valor Ecclesiasticus and this implies that it was a dependent chapelry.

When Sir Stephen Glynne visited the church, perhaps sometime in the 1860s, he commented on its lamentable appearance. It was "a rude building, always devoid of architectural grace, and is in a state of neglect and dilapidation which will soon render it untenable." A west tower accompanied an undivided nave and chancel, whitewashed on the outside. Most of the windows were modern but the east window was a square-headed Perpendicular feature with two lights, and the chancel window on the south had two trefoiled lights. Plain, pointed doorways led through a poor, south porch. The tower was low, massive and rough, with a square turret on the south-east, and window slits except for the belfry openings which were square-headed two-light openings. The tower had no floors, being open to the roof, and was approached from the nave by a pointed arch. The roof was supported on cusped timbers but was full of holes. There was a gallery at the west end, enclosed like a room, the floor of the church was only partially paved, the seating open benches. A priest's door gave on to the south side of the chancel and there was a small square opening in the same side near the altar and also a piscina. The altar was enclosed by rails and entered by a high arched "doorway". The font had an octagonal bowl.

The building was restored and partially rebuilt in 1882 by J. L. Pearson.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanfihangel church comprises a west tower, a nave with a south porch near the south-west angle, and a chancel. It is aligned almost exactly east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of slabs and blocks of red, and more rarely grey, sandstone in varying sizes, reasonably well coursed; larger blocks of the same material dressed for quoins.

'B' is also of red and grey sandstone in blocks and slabs but they are frequently more regular in form than the stonework of 'A', but also more randomly coursed.

Roofs: tower has stone slates with ceramic ridge tiles; nave and chancel have reconstituted clay tiles with toothed ridge tiles, the porch similar but with plain ridge tiles. No finials.

Drainage: grassed over gully on north, 0.6m wide by 0.3m deep. Nothing comparable on south.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric 'A', with in places large squared blocks forming distinctive courses in the stonework. Plinth chamfered off at c.0.6m, rounded string-course at c.1.2m. The uninterrupted tapering wall rise to eaves level where there is a squat pyramidal roof surmounted by a weathervane and weathercock.

North wall: plain wall face until louvred belfry window which has a head of two lights with two-centred heads, sunken panels in the spandrel above, jambs of ordinary masonry, but no mullion. The window arch is also two-centred, and though there is no obvious hoodmoulding there is one stop in the form of a rather crude face. As the whole of this window head is not flush with the wall surface but protrudes, it is almost certainly an example of re-use. North-east angle has stepped buttress, but the upper part - perhaps the top 3m - has been removed and the top of the remaining masonry capped. There is an additional complication in that the lower part, up to the first step, is the angle of the earlier nave and its masonry merges with that of the nave's north wall, but above the step the nave has been heightened and quoins have been incorporated.

East wall: nave apex reaches to c.2m below belfry window which is flat-headed, has chamfered dressings and two almost segmental-headed lights, and is glazed rather than louvred.

South wall: two slit windows, both glazed and chamfered, one at ground level, the other in the position of a belfry window. Projecting stair turret at south-east angle; has one small slit window, chamfered and glazed, approximately half way up the south wall of the turret. Plinth and string-course continue round the turret indicating that it is an integral part of the structure. Incorporated into the turret masonry and standing slightly proud of it, is the earlier nave wall, comparable with the buttress on the north side. There is clear evidence that turret built against it. This earlier wall terminates about 0.6m below present level of the nave eaves, and there is a distinct but irregular joint with the masonry of the present nave.

West wall: standard appearance. Slit at ground level as on south side. Three-fifths of way up, another slit, though broader. Belfry window blocked off but similar to that on north with sunken spandrel panels, though more worn.

Nave and chancel. General. Two elements indistinguishable externally. All Fabric 'B'. Buff-yellow sandstone used for fenestration throughout.

North wall: Victorian windows of uniform appearance. All double lancets with diamond lights over - though quatrefoil light in chancel - and two-centred arches with stopped hoodmouldings. Some replacement of dressings already necessary. Sanctuary window less elaborate, with double trefoil-headed lancets under individual two-centred arches. Drainage trench around wall has exposed lower courses of masonry which have white plaster traces; these are not in evidence on wall face above and may suggest that Victorian wall utilises earlier foundations.

East wall: Fabric 'B', the masonry with heavy lichen growth. East window has three stepped lights with

trefoils above outer ones, a two-centred arch, hoodmoulding and relieving arch above. Gravestones of 1761 and 1783 lean against wall.

South wall: matches north wall in that similar fabric and three main windows; a sanctuary window of similar form to its northern counterpart also, and though this is in red sandstone it is probably not any older (though Dawson claimed these were the only old stones surviving from the earlier church). Slabs of 1787 and 1792 resting against wall near porch.

Porch. General. Fabric 'B' with large quoins.

East wall: plain wall with slabs of 1796 and 1816 leaning against it.

South wall: doorway has two-centred arch, unchamfered jambs and a stopped hoodmoulding. To east of doorway, a slab of 1844 set into the concrete of the pathway.

West wall: plain. Three slabs against wall, one of 1811, the other two too weathered to read.

Interior

Porch. General. Floor of red and black tiles; unplastered walls; two bays to roof with three arch-braced trusses, trefoils above collars, and intermediate collar trusses.

North wall: two-centred arched doorway, decorative hoodmoulding with stops, stopped chamfers on jambs. The arch in red sandstone springs from plain capitals and is clearly Victorian, but the lower jamb stones on the east and perhaps those on the west are earlier.

East and west walls: plain.

Tower. General. Floor of standard black and red tiles on same level as nave floor. Bare walls. Wooden ceiling at about 3m.

North wall: plain.

East wall: two-centred arch with stopped chamfers, perhaps indicative of an entrance prior to construction of tower; large, blackened jambstones. Interesting too that the tower side of the door, which appears to be Victorian, is studded as though it were an external door.

South wall: Tudor arch with broach-stopped chamfers gives access to tower stair. Slit window has wide splay.

West wall: wide-splayed slit.

Nave. General. Red and black tiled floor without carpet; benches on flush wooden boarding. At front of nave on south side is organ, beneath which is a large trap-door - heating or a vault? Walls plastered and whitewashed. Victorian roof is continuous with that of chancel, having four bays (plus three in chancel); the main trusses have arch-braced collars with trefoils above, while one intermediate truss has a tie-beam, and another forms the nave/chancel divide.

North wall: deeply splayed windows; one 19thC mural tablet.

East wall: Victorian screen with broad segmental arch and traceried lights on either side.

South wall: as north wall but two mural tablets.

West wall: plain, but for broad, almost flat-headed arch with splayed embrasure leading into tower. At the rear of the embrasure and acting as a stop to the Victorian door is a two-centred, unchamfered arch in grey sandstone; the doorway is not central to the main nave axis, and the embrasure in front of it is skewed. Five mural tablets on wall, two of 1781 and 1799, the remainder 19thC.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel from nave, one to sanctuary, and two to altar. Carpet overlies tiles in central aisle; back row of choir stalls raised on wooden plinth. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: deeply splayed windows.

East wall: as north wall. Stone reredos. Mural tablet of 1810 in Latin.

South wall: two splayed windows, that in sanctuary has sedilia below.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Mural tablets: eight in all, covering the period 1781-1830, the earliest to Thomas Morgan (d.1781) and his wife Elizabeth (d.1806).

Font: ?Victorian.

Stained Glass: east window of 1914.

CHURCHYARD

Church and sub-rectangular churchyard occupy flattish ground with a very slight slope from north to south. South of the enclosure the ground drops immediately to Nant Bran, a location which implies a river terrace at a point where the river bends. Buggy but flat ground lies to the east and the land drops away to a smaller stream to the west.

The churchyard is well-kept and is still in use.

Boundary: around the southern perimeter is a low drystone wall with a post and wire fence above it. Houses and gardens edge the yard on the north-east and the wall continues on the north, above the road, and on the west. Significant differences in height between the interior and exterior around the whole perimeter reveal a raised churchyard.

Monuments: there are localised concentrations but in general the marked graves are not tightly packed. 18thC and 19thC memorials lie to the south, 19thC and 20thC ones to the north. The oldest stone is dated to 1640 (Morgan David ap Hopkin), but this aside there are a number of late 18thC examples. A full list is provided in the church.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: there is some internal banking around the perimeter, particularly around the north-east quadrant but otherwise nothing.

Ancillary features: main entrance in north-east where there are small ornamental iron gates, and a concrete path leads to the church. In the north-west is a pillared gateway and inside this are five steps up into the churchyard, such is the change in height. Finally there is a vertical stone slab stile in the south-west.

Vegetation: three mature yews on the south side of the church.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 25 November 1996

Dawson 1909, 186

Glynne 1886, 271

Haslam 1979, 339

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Generally in reasonable condition though some paint blistering in chancel windows.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Very Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Poor

Llanfihangel Talyllyn

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Michael

PRN 16857

NGR SO11422840

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Michael and All Angels is located in the centre of Llanfihangel Talyllyn village some 7km to the east of Brecon. Parts of the church, particularly the chancel and perhaps sections of the nave, were rebuilt in 1870, but the tower and porch appear to be 15thC, and the foundations of the nave even earlier. There is a Norman font in the church and a monolithic stone in the porch. The churchyard may once have been curvilinear.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The tower is Perpendicular with little in the way of later modifications, and the porch too appears to be 15thC. The nave is probably earlier, though whether 14thC or earlier cannot be determined. Notwithstanding this hypothesis it is likely that sections of the nave were rebuilt at the time of restoration, though precise definition of these is not possible. The chancel is wholly Victorian.

HISTORY

The location of the churchyard and its putative curvilinearity suggest though do not prove the foundation's early medieval origin.

It does not feature in the Taxatio of the 13thC; but later records do refer to it: the St David's Episcopal Register for 1486 terms it 'Sci Michaelis juxta mara', and the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 has 'Llanvihangell Tallellyn'. But even in general terms its later history is poorly documented.

About 1809 the church was described by Theophilus Jones as a whitened sepulchre, with an uneven earth floor. "The pulpit is a small sheep pen, the seats decayed and irregular, the windows are long narrow apertures". Not far from the door was a carved fragment of the front of the oak rood loft. In the churchyard was the foot or socket of a stone cross.

It was restored in the 1870s and the rest of the rood loft or screen disappeared; in 1896 a tiled pavement was substituted for some of the old stone flooring.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanfihangel church comprises a nave, a slightly narrower chancel, with a vestry on its north side, a south porch off the nave, and a west tower. It is aligned north-east/south-west but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' is of grey and red sandstone with small to medium-sized well-shaped blocks; larger blocks usually in red sandstone used for quoins; stonework shows some coursing.

'B' is of grey, red and orange sandstone, fairly fresh in appearance, and again large red sandstone quoins. 'C' is of regularly shaped red and grey sandstone blocks, randomly coursed.

Roofs: all roofs have stone tiles with semi-cylindrical terracotta ridge tiles. Cross finials are employed on the nave, chancel and porch gables.

Drainage: not in evidence.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric 'A'. Perpendicular period. Double chamfered plinth, one at current ground level, the other at c.0.6m; there is also a rounded string-course at 1.2m. A second string-course, more angular in section, lies below the belfry stage, and a third string-course is set beneath the battlemented parapet. Stair turret built into south-east angle.

North wall: about 2m off ground in the second stage is a slit window with chamfered dressings; a second smaller slit window is located just beneath the second string-course. Belfry is lit by a four-centred arched window with two trefoil-headed louvred lights with sandstone dressings. Two waterspouts project from highest string-course. The whole wall face appears to have been cleaned.

East wall: nave roof rises to string-course above second stage. Standard belfry window but mullion and tracery replaced; no waterspouts above.

South wall: slit window in second stage as standard, but in addition, another smaller but similar example illuminates the stair turret in the south-east angle. A second centrally placed slit window, similar to that for the turret, is set just beneath the string-course at the top of the second stage. The belfry window is of standard pattern but has had its mullion replaced. Two waterspouts project from the top string-course.

West wall: similar to the south wall though no stair window or waterspouts; belfry window has had central tracery and one mullion stone replaced.

Nave. General. Fabric 'B' but heavily pointed. Walls slightly battered at base. On north side it appears that lower part of the wall is earlier than tower, the upper part later.

North wall: there are subtle variations in this wall that suggest some rebuilding but they are impossible to define with precision; some limewash fragments remain. Three Victorian windows, one one-light and two two-light with cusped heads.

East wall: very little visible.

South wall: same fabric as north wall but not as fresh in appearance, and a rather uneven surface; some ivy cover. Two Victorian windows in same style as north wall, one with a single light and one with two. Again it is possible that rebuilding has occurred during the 19thC restoration, not least because it is impossible to recognise where the windows have been inserted.

West wall: impossible to determine any relationship with the tower.

Chancel. General. Roof about 0.6m lower than nave. Fabric 'C'.

North wall: wall mostly covered by vestry which is in similar fabric.

East wall: three-light window with foiled lights above, all under a two-centred arch; hoodmoulding with human head stops; two buttresses, and a string-course which runs above these and below the window. All totally Victorian in design.

South wall: one trefoil-headed lancet, with holes for shutter.

Porch. General. Fabric 'A' but mainly small slabs. Pointing and vegetation mask the interfaces of nave and porch. Believed to date to around AD 1500.

East wall: completely covered by ivy.

South wall: round-headed doorway with chamfered sandstone dressings, and above it an empty niche with a triangular head.

West wall: one small squat glazed rectangular window with chamfered dressings, comparable with slit windows in tower.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor. Unplastered walls. Roof has three arch-braced collars; cusped decoration above central truss and faces carved on soffits of both arch braces.

North wall: Fabric 'B' with two-centred arched doorway, chamfered dressings with stops near ground level; lower section inset slightly from wall face because of wall batter. Victorian door.

East wall: one small splayed window; stone bench.

West wall: as east side but 'Pagan' pillar stone in corner with notice that church replaced a pagan temple.

Tower. General. Two steps up from nave; flagged floor, includes one large rectangular slab though lacking any marks. Walls whitewashed and each has putlog holes. Wooden ceiling.

South wall: stair turret approached by one step and set partly within the tower rather than wholly in the wall. Doorway with chamfer on one side only.

West wall: mural tablets of 1785, 1768 and 1820.

Nave. General. Tiled floor with carpet over, but a 17thC grave slab beneath pulpit; wooden flooring beneath benches. Walls bare with no plaster. Roof of 28 close-set scissor braces intersecting with collars, and crenellated wall plates, all Victorian.

North wall: splayed windows; ghost of chimney flue on wall face; two mural tablets, of 17?? and 19thC date.

East wall: chancel arch of Victorian masonry, with ornate capitals.

South wall: splayed window; doorway reveal has slightly pointed arch, turned in slabs on edge.

West wall: obtusely pointed arch leads to tower, with chamfered sandstone dressings. Above it and disappearing behind the roof beams is a blocked window with chamfered jambs, the top invisible. Beside it are two small corbel-like projections of uncertain function. Appearance of masonry suggests that the tower wall is later than the main nave walls.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave. Tiled floors with carpet over. Unplastered walls. Roof of arch-braced collar trusses, and collar and side purlins; crenellated wall plates. All Victorian, as are the stonework and the fittings throughout.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Pillar Stone: in the porch. It is a roughly cylindrical stone, some 1.5m high by 0.5m diameter with a 0.1m square socket in the 'top'. Its origin and purpose are obscure, though it is considered to be some form of early medieval monument, perhaps an unusual form of cross shaft. It stood in the churchyard until 1921.

Font: "Norman; circular, carved as a bowl with a cable-moulding near the rim, then a widening stem with rings of flat and roll-mouldings" (Haslam).

Monuments: behind pulpit in nave is a floriate cross slab without an inscription, and by the font is a graveslab of 1706. Mural tablet to William Watkins' five children who died from 1768 onwards.

Bells: four, two of 1678, one of 1740 but the earliest is reputedly a pre-Reformation Angelus Bell (14thC?) with the inscription 'Ave Maria Ora Pro Nobis'.

Register: from 1776.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard has a tendency towards curvilinearity more in its rounded corners than in the straight sides. It is set on a slope, most noticeable to the east of the church where the ground drops to the Tawel Brook.

It looks as though the churchyard has been encroached on to the west and south, while the river terrace edge which runs from north-west to south-east across the yard to the east of the church might conceivably have formed a boundary in earlier times.

The churchyard is well kept and is still used for burial.

Boundary: along the southern side a stone wall and buildings revet the yard, and in places the external ground level is 1m or more below the graveyard level. Much the same happens to the east (above the track beside the stream), and on the north and north-west, and on the west where the drop externally is as much as 1.5m. Also on the west there is some internal embanking which might indicate a former perimeter.

Monuments: these are spread widely and quite densely throughout the yard except in the north-west sector and beyond the terrace on the east. Gravestones south-east of the nave date back to the last two decades of the 18thC.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: only the stream terrace on the east side.

Ancillary features: gates to the south-east and south-west of the church with tarmac paths.

Vegetation: several small yews all in the western half of yard.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 16 August 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 71
Dawson 1909, 164
Haslam 1979, 339
Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 57-59
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR

CONDITION

Cracks in masonry of porch, but generally satisfactory.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Llanfilo

Diocese	Swansea and Brecon	Dedication	Bilo
PRN	16858	NGR	SO11893326
		Previous dedication	Milburga

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Bilo's church "rivals Partrishow and Llanellieu in its beauty, peace and holiness" (Griffiths). This small church a few miles to the north-east of Brecon is a medieval structure, a successor to a Norman edifice, with a late 19thC tower. It contains a wealth of medieval and later fittings and is set in a sub-circular churchyard which in turn lies in a village that preserves more than the normal range of medieval relict earthworks.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave walls are medieval, perhaps 13thC though only on the basis of a small lancet window; much replacement of masonry probably in early 20thC. Rood stair housing could be a medieval addition. Chancel largely original though not windows or door. Absence of datable details, and the more diagnostic windows in chancel and nave are 17thC/18thC. Porch, with one original wall and two others rebuilt, is thought to be 15thC.

Tower and spire rebuilt in 1881, reportedly in imitation of its predecessor.

Llanfilo is claimed to be Norman, but there is nothing in situ to suggest that the present building goes back that far, though the ornamental lintels do reveal a Norman predecessor. Nor is there anything substantive to support Haslam's contention that the nave was subsequently extended and the chancel added, though the extraordinary thickness of the nave/chancel wall could be significant.

HISTORY

The church is dedicated to St Bilo (Beilo), the daughter of Brychan and a local saint. Formerly the dedication had been to St Milburga, the Abbess of Wenlock (daughter of Merwald a 7thC king of Mercia), and although this was used until quite recently it appears to have been in error, as the dedication to Beilo is clearly recorded in 13thC and 14thC documents.

The morphology of the churchyard together with the dedication point to an early medieval origin.

The Episcopal Register of St Davids refers to 'Lambillowe' in 1400, while the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 refers to 'Llanvillo' and its value of £6 14s 9d, a little above the local average.

The chancel and perhaps other parts were restored or partly rebuilt in c.1710. The west end was partitioned off as a school room in the early 19thC, and in the early 20thC was used as a vestry.

Glynne in 1861 noted its nave and chancel divided by a rude semi-circular arch, the rood loft and screen, a 'remarkable low and coarse tower which looks as if it were never finished' and 'is entirely devoid of architectural character' with only one slit opening and no original door, and a closed off Norman doorway on the north side with a semi-circular archway and an ornamented lintel. There was the trace of a lancet

window on the north side, but a new window had been introduced on the same side. Internally a "rude semicircular arch separated the nave from the chancel".

It was extensively restored by W. D. Caroe in 1913 and other works occurred up to 1951. A plaque in the church records restoration by Caroe and Martin in 1982.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanfilo consists of a west tower, a nave with a centrally placed south porch and a chancel. The orientation is fractionally south of grid west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of slabs of yellowish-green sandstone weathered to grey, generally coursed; ashlar quoins are in the same material, and the appearance is one of consistency.

'B' is of red with some grey sandstone in irregularly fashioned small slabs, together with some medium sized blocks, irregular coursing and extensive remains of a render coating.

'C' is of weathered red sandstone slabs, small, and more regular in appearance than 'B'. Some medium sized blocks used at the angles.

'D' is similar to 'A' but quoins and dressings are in red sandstone, as are some of the slabs.

'E' has points of similarity with both 'B' and 'D'; some grey and red blocks of sandstone at lower levels, but at higher levels frequent thin slabs; render remnants.

'B' and 'E' are presumed to be medieval, 'A' is new masonry of Victorian origin and 'D' is presumed to be 20thC; 'C' could also be 20thC. A village guide suggests that at the beginning of the 20thC the church was whitewashed externally every year.

Roofs: shale slabs throughout, except for slates on tower; simple plain ridge tiles; no cross finials.

Drainage: deep concrete lined drainage trench around south side (0.6m wide x 0.6m deep maximum); on north a faint depression suggests a possible grassed over trench, continuing around sides of tower. Nothing obvious on east. Note that west end of trench on south terminates at sub-surface stone wall - unexplained.

Exterior

Tower. General. A squat, uninspiring tower in 'A'. Rebuild of 1881. Base battered to maximum height of 1.1m. Broach spire surmounted by weathercock.

North wall: featureless but for two rectangular chamfered windows with wooden louvres, tucked under eaves.

East wall: apex of nave fractionally below tower eaves. Belfry window on either side of this.

South wall: as north wall.

West wall: as north wall except for addition of single trefoiled lancet of Victorian origin.

Nave. North wall:- from west: i) north-west angle replaced in Fabric 'A'; ii) stretch of wall in 'B' and above this projecting from the roof is a chimney in red sandstone, perhaps re-used material (Fabric 'C'); possibly some masonry may also have been replaced in wall face below chimney; iii) a buttress in Fabric 'D'; iv) east of the buttress the lower wall is in 'B' but the upper is in 'D' surrounding a rectangular window with hollow mouldings, containing four round-headed lights with sunken spandrels, all in red sandstone and all 19thC/20thC; v) further east is a blocked rectangular door. It has unchamfered jambs and the upper ones are in Victorian red sandstone, though the lower ones could be original or at least re-used; there are threshold stones at the base and the lintel is one of the two decorated slabs at Llanfilo. The blocking has three angular recesses in it and the whole, at least in its present form, appears to be 19thC and was

certainly there at the beginning of the 20thC, though there is no clear evidence of insertion into the 'B' masonry; vi) the rest of the north wall projects outwards to form the housing for the rood stair; in Fabric 'E'; there is one recent window with a wooden lintel and selected slabs for jambs, clearly inserted. Overall there are signs of the wall bulging beneath the main four-light window, while the rood stair extension is relatively vertical.

East wall: rises 1.5m-2m above chancel; no render and is presumed to be in Fabric 'B', though stone of mixed colours. At base of south-east angle is a large, projecting block of red sandstone, presumably a wall support; quoins in red sandstone to only three-fifths of wall height - might this indicate subsequent rebuilding or heightening?

South wall: wall is heavily rendered but presumed to be Fabric 'B'. East of porch is an inserted rectangular wooden window of three lights; signs of insertion to west and below; designed to light the pulpit and dated by Haslam to c.1680. Below this and set into the wall almost at ground level is the head of a small Early English lancet window, which Griffiths of RCAHMW thought was a leper's or hermit's window. Just beside porch there has been some modification for the appearance of the masonry without render suggests something has been removed. Much render remains to the west of the porch; two windows, the more easterly has two round-headed lights, hollow mouldings, a hoodmoulding with square stops; perhaps only the grey jambstones are original though some of the dressings in brown sandstone have render or limewash traces. To the west is a rectangular wooden window with three lights, a relieving arch above, Victorian insertion surrounded by 'D'. South-west angle of wall in Fabric 'A'.

West wall: where visible this has been replaced in 'A'.

Chancel. General. North wall bulges slightly.

North wall: Wall may be in 'B' but limewash and perhaps render effect camouflage. No obvious signs of rebuilding. No windows; one piece of chamfered ashlar -?re-used. Another chimney originally set in angle with nave, leading to some reconstruction in 'D'; also a section of the eaves has been cut back and there is a plaster mark on the nave wall indicative of the former stack.

East wall: set on projecting foundation plinth (max. 0.4m high by 0.3m deep) which is not an earlier feature. Main east window is rectangular with three round-headed lights, additional lights in the spandrels, a hoodmoulding, all in red sandstone and thought to date to c.1913. The lower wall is in 'B' with thick limewash remnants, 'D' surrounds the window, while the gable is probably rebuilt using original stone but without limewash, a disconformity in line with the top of the window strengthening this view.

South wall: in 'B'. A sanctuary window with wooden lintel now blocked with old masonry and covered by mural tablets. To the west is a priest's entrance, rectangular with a wooden lintel, no jambstones, a heavy wooden door, a modern threshold stone, and in front a gravestone bridging the drainage trench. Finally there is a rectangular window in grey sandstone with two round-headed lights and sunken spandrels, which could be entirely original; attributed to late 17thC or early 18thC.

Porch. General. Original element considered to be 15thC.

East wall: clean fabric with little render, either 'B' or 'D'. Slit window without dressings.

South wall: rebuilt in 'D'. Gable displays an arch-braced collar, the first truss of the porch's wagon roof.

West wall: heavily rendered and could be in 'B'. One broader slit window with external chamfer.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor; unplastered walls; 15thC roof of six arch-braced collars, three of which are grooved, and three transverse ribs, all grooved. Some woodwork replacement.

North wall: main doorway, broad and low, with two-centred arch, chamfers with eroded stops. Formerly whitewashed. Maltese cross and wheel cross (consecration crosses) engraved on opposite springers. Door itself is early, with outer boards bearing the date 1767. Bench along wall with flag seating.

East wall: splayed window and to the north of it, a simple rectangular recess. The second of the decorated lintels rebuilt into this wall.

West wall: formerly whitewashed. Deeply splayed window is original. Bench as on east.

Tower. General. Flagged floor; walls whitewashed, and safes built into them, but nothing of interest; timber ceiling at c.4.0m.

Nave. General. Two steps down from porch. Flagged floor incorporating occasional graveslab (one of 1770), flush wooden block flooring under benches and pews. One step up towards rear of nave and another into tower, with floor sloping down into chancel. Walls plastered and whitewashed, except for west wall which has simply been whitewashed. 15thC wagon roof of 54 ribbed panels and one massive tie beam over step towards rear of nave.

North wall: wall leans outwards; deeply splayed Victorian window in red sandstone with wooden lintel; stove recess towards west end with irregularities above it in wall face. Door to rood stair is simple unchamfered rectangular aperture. Eight mural tablets, four of the 18thC with the earliest 1769.

East wall: disguised by rood loft and not accessible. There does however appear to be a semi-circular mark which would warrant closer examination. One mural tablet of 1792.

South wall: pulpit window has virtually no splay; main doorway, a segmental-headed embrasure; two windows to the west have stepped sills. Four mural tablets of 1759, 1776, 1800 and 1808.

West wall: tower arch has a sharp two-centred archway with broach stops to the chamfers, all in Victorian grey freestone in a contemporary wall of 1881. Inscription board in Welsh to north of arch.

Chancel. General. Flagged floor with one memorial slab to rector (1952) and, in sanctuary, three older graveslabs of 1624, 1709 and 1817, two of them at least to the Vaughan family. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Low coved plaster ceiling.

North wall: eight mural tablets, to of 1732, the rest of the 19thC.

East wall: Victorian window in red sandstone. Two mural tablets of 1779 and 1803.

South wall: simple rectangular opening for priest's door. Six mural tablets, of 1766, 1774, 1789 and three 19thC examples.

West wall: thickness of this wall as shown by depth of the wall reveal is considerable.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stone altars: "two stone mensae or altar-slabs were found in the floor [of the chancel], one of which from c.1200, is under the rood loft" (Haslam), its original position. The other, on a Jacobean table, forms the present high altar.

Lintels: two lintels of c.1100, one in the north wall of the nave, the other in the porch. "The former is carved with two rows of, as it were, flat dogtooth with a border of diamonds, the latter with a chequer of diamonds and a dot and bar motif" (Haslam). But contra Haslam they are not in their original positions.

Font: "probably Norman. A boulder with a two-ring moulding at the rim" (Haslam).

Screen: early 16thC. "Six lights and a doorway, has ogees and two quatrefoils (the Herefordshire pattern) in the tracery. The head-beam is carved with vine-trails coming from the dragon's mouth at the north. Cresting above. Then the flat-ribbed coving of the Welsh screens, deeper on the west side and with vine and rose bosses. The west parapet has new drop-cresting, two bands of running ornament, and at the top, trefoils and a trail of pomegranates. Between is a panelled front divided now by six triangular pilasters (four renewed), with Perpendicular carving and foliate capitals and bases, which may have supported the rood figures above the parapet. The relief figures between them are, from the north, St Peter, St James the Great, the Virgin and Child, St Luke, and St Paul. They and the central canopy were carved by Nathaniel Hitch, between 1926 and 1930. The Rood on the east nave wall above is also his work. It was dedicated in 1925, together with the enlarged Altar Table. Rood loft above reached by a north mural stair" (Haslam).

Pews: six of 1630 in the nave. Also part of the Havard pew with date 1684.

Pulpit: unvarnished, of 1680.

Altar Rails: of c.1630.

Chancel chair: of 1630 but presented to church in 1926.

Chest: in chancel, rough quality, remains of old locks.

Boxes: in chancel behind rood screen; one a bible box, the other could be the poor box with carved front and date of 1681 mentioned by Griffiths (RCAHMW).

Woodwork: carved board attached to wall in chancel arch wall reveal on north side.

Angelus Bell: early 15thC, on floor in the chancel; supposedly cast at Worcester between 1380 and 1400)

Monuments: coffin lid carved with a cross and fleur-de-lys border, late 13thC. Mural tablets within church to children of David Williams (d.1769, 1774 & 1779); William and Catherine Price (d. 1791 & 1793); Anne Havard (d.1792); Alice Jones (d.1782); Thomas Vaughan (d.1792); Margaret Williams (d.1759); Charles Vaughan (d.1776) and others; daughters of Rev. Thomas James (d.1731 and 1732) by T. Brute; Henry Powell (d.1731/2) by T. Brute; James Parry (erected 1779); Joshua Havard (d.1766); Elizabeth Vaughan (d.1794); Margaret Williams (d.1789).

Bells: three; one of 1682, another of 1709, the third undated.

Plate: chalice of 1701.

Register: from 1680.

CHURCHYARD

The church is set eccentrically within a roughly oval churchyard some 50m by 75m. Its eastern side has probably been shaved back, but most of the perimeter other than the north-east corner may be original. It occupies a relatively level shelf on a north-west facing slope, but the ground within the churchyard does slope gently from west to east.

It is relatively well-maintained and is used for modern burial.

Boundary: a stone wall surrounds most of the churchyard, sometimes acting as a revetment, though on the north it is ruined and has been reinforced by a wire fence. Around the curving south and west sides there is evidence of an earlier bank to which the wall was added. It is also raised, the external ground level being consistently lower, by as much as 2m or more above the road on the south.

Monuments: these are widely spread but not dense on the south, west and east. The earliest identified was of 1755, and other 18thC examples are located across the southern sector.

Furniture: Haslam claims the base of the medieval preaching cross to the south of the church. This was not identified in March 1996, unless it is to be equated with the stone block that supports the octagonal shaft, grooved head stone, undated bronze plate and gnomon of a sundial which does lie to the south of the church. Ivy covered and tilting badly.

Earthworks: none other than the internal bank around the perimeter.

Ancillary features: stone lychgate on the east side claimed to have built c.1700, and repaired after first world war; double wooden gates; wooden kissing gate adjacent. Single and double wooden gates on west side of churchyard. Tarmac path.

Vegetation: three yews of some age around south perimeter.

SOURCES

Church guide 1973
CPAT Field Visit: 29 March 1996
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 72
Dawson 1909, 195
Glynne 1886, 277
Haslam 1979, 340
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR
Price 1983

CONDITION

The church is in good condition, though it is said that the east end may be shifting slightly.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Good

Llanfrynach

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Brynach

PRN 16859

NGR SO07522579

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Brynach's church is situated in the centre of Llanfrynach village some 4km from Brecon. It is a Victorian structure attached to a medieval tower and contains only a few items of interest, namely the only survivor of three early medieval stones found during the rebuilding of 1885 and a medieval font. The churchyard is large for a village church and may once have been more curvilinear than it now appears.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower is attributed to 14thC, though it is as likely to be 15thC, but rest of the building dates from 1885.

HISTORY

An early medieval foundation here seems likely, though the dedication and the three reputedly sculptured stones apart there is no evidence to collaborate such a view.

The 1291 Taxatio records 'Ecclesia de Lambarnach' at the unexceptional value of £4 6s 8d.

The nave and chancel were replaced by a local builder, William Jones, in the Decorated style in 1885. The rood loft which functioned as a gallery according to Theophilus Jones was removed at this time and of three early medieval stones found at the time only one can now be located.

In 1864 the tower wall was broken through to create space for a set of pews for the de Winton family. A west window was created at the same time. The vestry was added in 1892, the tower was re-roofed in 1905, and internally the font was re-dressed in 1892.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanfrynach comprises a nave with a slightly narrower chancel, a west tower of the same width as the nave, a north vestry with a boiler room underneath, and a south porch towards the south-west corner of the nave. It is aligned north-east/south-west but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of greyish red sandstone, though with some variations in colour, in both blocks and slabs, irregularly coursed and with ashlar quoins.

'B' is of more regular blocks and slabs, less weathered, and randomly coursed. All this stone looks new and there are buff-yellow sandstone dressings.

Roof: reconstituted clay tiles. Cross finials on chancel and porch.

Drainage: there are no obvious signs other than downpipes into raised drain holes against the walls. It is

possible that any trench around the wall has now grassed over.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric A. Wall faces are heavily pointed, obscuring the masonry. Certain features are consistent to all faces: there is a chamfered plinth at a height of 1m, a string-course in rounded section at 1.5m, a string-course defines the top of the second stage about two-thirds of the way up the tower, and a third with hollow moulding at the top of the belfry stage; above this is a battlemented parapet, which Griffiths of RCAHMW thought was modern. The whole tower is usually attributed to the 14thC.

North wall: at base of second stage is a trefoil-headed lancet of buff sandstone with a relieving arch over, completely Victorian, inserted. This stage also shows some possible plaster remnants. Belfry is lit by a four-centred arched window, the two lights having cusped tracery and louvre boards; some of the dressings renewed.

East wall: nave apex reaches to just below the second stage string-course. Third stage has standard belfry window but not possible to determine whether any of the dressings renewed. Two waterspouts on the string-course above.

South wall: second stage has an inserted Victorian window as in north wall. At the top of this stage there is also a slit window with unchamfered jambs and a lintel that is splayed on the underside. This slit is blocked up as is part of the standard belfry window in the third stage.

West wall: the second stage carries a large two-light window of Victorian date, and above it is a slit window with undercut lintel as on the south side. The standard belfry window has some renewed tracery, and there are two waterspouts on the string-course above.

Nave. General. Fabric 'B'. Plinth with chamfer at height of between 0.3m-0.6m. Windows of regular form and all have relieving arches in 'B'.

North wall: two two-light windows. Buttress overlies junction of nave and tower.

South wall: three two-light windows, having quatrefoils above, hoodmouldings with ballflower stops; two buttresses, one at south-east angle, the other overlapping tower wall as on the north.

Chancel. General. Similar to nave in terms of fabric, plinth, windows etc. The roof is lower by almost one metre.

North wall: almost completely disguised by vestry.

East wall: three-light window with cusped tracery, hoodmoulding with weathered human-headed stops, relieving arch; two diagonal buttresses at corners.

South wall: one two-light window with trefoiled heads, hoodmoulding with ballflower stops, relieving arch.

Vestry. General. Boiler house beneath with flight of steps leading down to it. Door plus windows are square-headed and the latter have lights with mock Caernarvon arches. Blocked window in east wall.

Porch. General. Fabric 'B'.

East wall: one trefoiled window with a 'decorative' relieving arch; buttress at south-east angle.

South wall: high-pitched gable end. Two-centred arched doorway with complex mouldings and a

hoodmoulding with ballflower stops. Old gravestones leant against wall.

West wall: as east wall.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone flags for floor, plastered walls; roof of rafters with collars.

North wall: Gothic arched doorway with complex moulding and ballflower stops to the hoodmoulding. Plain wooden door.

East wall: small splayed window with stone bench beneath.

West wall: as east wall.

Tower. General. Floor is reached by two steps up from nave. Wooden floor with pews set on it. Plastered walls.

North wall: nothing significant.

East wall: high two-centred arch, chamfered on both faces but only above springing points. Early medieval stone (see below) attached to northern reveal.

South and west walls: nothing of significance.

Nave. General. Tiles, some decorated, and raised wooden floors under seats; no grilles or obvious heating ducts. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of spaced scissor-trusses with collars.

North wall: splayed windows, two-centred arched doorway of Victorian form to vestry. Three mural tablets, one of 1763/1785, the other two 19thC.

East wall: high two-centred arch with stops and responds. Galvanised steel plaques bear Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments.

South wall: splayed windows. Two mural tablets of 19thC and 20thC.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel and two to altar. Tiled floor with carpets over. Roof as nave but no scissor trusses.

North wall: has organ against it and two 19thC mural tablets.

East wall: galvanised reredos painted with 'Art Nouveau' angels on either side of altar.

South wall: 20thC mural tablet.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: octagonal bowl, 14thC; possibly recut.

Slab: "a tall slab, dated by Nash-Williams to the 10thC-11thC. A figure with arms raised above (a Crucifixion?), then knot interlace, and at the very top as well as near the bottom Maltese crosses" (Haslam). This is one of three sculptured stones found in the church foundations in 1885, and is the only one to survive.

Memorial tablet: to John Phillips (d.1763) and his wife Rebecca (d.1785).

Of 19thC date:

Stained glass: "east window by Hardman's of Birmingham, c.1859; an emotive and strongly coloured Crucifixion. West window, stylistically similar, c.1864. Two south sanctuary windows by Warrington & Sons, 1863" (Haslam).

Monuments: Charlotte de Winton (d.1826); an obelisk draped in a shroud, in which a putto hides his face and on which is the inscription; by I.E.Thomas, London. Richard de Winton (d.1841), also by I. E. Thomas. With a portrait medallion and military symbolism.

CHURCHYARD

Llanfrynach churchyard is exceptionally large and flat. Its present shape is sub-square and there is no evidence to indicate an earlier fossilised boundary.

It is overgrown on the east and north sides where there are fewer burial, but the areas of more recent burials are better maintained.

Boundary: the perimeter is defined by a stone wall, replaced by breeze block walling at the north-west angle.

Monuments: their spread is irregular. The area north-west of the church is currently in use, there is a single row east of the chancel, 19thC groups to the south of the church, and further graveslabs have been cleared and are now set against the east and much of the north wall of the churchyard.

Furniture: a churchyard cross, but of the 20thC, having been copied from one at Merthyr Mawr, Glamorgan, in 1910.

Earthworks: church is set on a slight platform, visible at the eastern end and around part of the north side. The earlier bank of the churchyard can be seen running about 2m outside the present eastern perimeter wall.

Ancillary features: small, double iron gates at the western corner, similar gates with the addition of a kissing gate on the south, both served by tarmac paths. On the south-east opposite the pub is a stone stile and on the north-east access from Ty-mawr was provided by a mock crenellated gateway; both of these served by grass paths. The rectory was linked to the church by a vertical stone stile in the north wall.

Vegetation: there are a number of large pines and deciduous trees on the north side of the churchyard and yews form both sides of an avenue running from the porch to the south gate with a few more by the grass path leading eastwards.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 16 August 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 73
Dawson 1909, 142
Haslam 1979, 341
NMR Aberyswyth

CONDITION

Externally it appears sound, but internally damp is getting into the tower.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llangammarch Wells

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Cadmarch

PRN 16862

NGR SN93504730

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cammarch's church occupies a spur above the River Irfon, about 11km south-west of Builth Wells. The original foundation was probably an early medieval one but the present church is a completely new edifice of the early 20thC, built on a new site. It contains nothing from its medieval predecessor other than the old font bowl and an early medieval stone built into the porch.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

New church built in 1915-16, perhaps with some re-use of earlier masonry.

HISTORY

The dedication and position point to an early medieval foundation, but other than the inscribed stone whose original location is not known, there is no confirmatory evidence.

The 1291 Taxatio refers to 'Ecclesia de Langamarth' and quotes the relatively high value of £13 6s 8d, which appears to provide a reflection of the importance of the church in earlier centuries.

Theophilus Evans, one of the great Welsh prose writers of the 18thC was vicar here from 1738 to 1763, and his grandson, Theophilus Jones, was buried here.

By the early 19thC only the nave of the church remained, and by 1840 it was recorded as being in a ruinous state. A new church was erected around 1850 in Victorian Gothic, and according to Dawson had nothing of interest. In 1851 Glynne classed it as "a mean church situated on an abrupt eminence". The arcade of the former north aisle with its octagonal piers could be seen incorporated into the north wall.

It in turn was demolished to be replaced by another church on a new site by W. D. Caroe in 1915-16, with a tower being added in 1927. The 1915 Specification required that the whole church be taken down and the foundations grubbed out, but that selected masonry and quoins be stored for re-use.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangammarch Wells church comprises a low nave and chancel, a south porch and a north vestry, all built on a new site in the churchyard in 1915-16, with a west tower added in 1927. Haslam's comment, worth stating in full, is that "although not altogether satisfactory as a whole, the church represents an interesting phase of style. The basis is an intelligent use of the traditional plan-type. The historical references are to the local Perpendicular, but the treatment is Arts-and-Crafts. The structural framework is rough (though carefully pointed) masonry, which results in some lack of intensity and sense of finish - deliberate, presumably, in the arcade for the unbuilt north aisle. As always with Caroe, the detail of the fittings is of high quality".

The rubble masonry of the nave and chancel retains traces of a render coat, suggesting that some at least has been re-used.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Early medieval stone: above the south porch doorway, "7thC-9thC, carved with a circled cross, part of a figure, and a spiral ornament" (Haslam). Formerly set into the west wall of the earlier church.

Font: the octagonal bowl of a 15thC font, with a new font beside it.

Monuments: to Theophilus Jones (d.1812), author of the 'History of Breconshire'; Joseph Richards (d.1841) in local Gothic.

Registers: from 1763.

CHURCHYARD

The situation is an impressive one, a spur formed by the confluence of the River Lrfon and its tributary, the Cammarch, with steep slopes down to the valley floors. The earlier church lay close to the tip of the spur, its modern successor is further north, and the churchyard itself is elongated following the natural contours.

The churchyard is well maintained and is still used for burial.

Boundary: now a mixture of forms: nothing apart from the natural scarp and a few bushes on the north-west; metal railings low down the scarp on the south-east and on the south-west where the railings are on top of a wall; buildings on the north-east.

Monuments: these are dense to the south and south-east of the present church, but there are none to the north-west of the church, and not surprisingly the scarp around the eastern edge has been avoided. One 18thC grave (1765) was recognised south-east of the old church site and there may be others.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: the spur has a well-defined scarped edge but there is no sign that it was ever artificially embanked. A faint platform covered by graves marks the site of the earlier church.

Ancillary features: double iron gates at the north-east and small iron gates with a wrought iron arch and lamp on the south. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: conifers around edge of the spur.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 May 1996
Dawson 1909, 144
Faculty 1915: NLW/SD/F/345
Glynne 1887, 281
Haslam 1979, 343
Smith n.d.

CONDITION

Not recorded.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Very Poor

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good

Llanganten

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Cannen**PRN** 16863**NGR** SO00955176

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cennen's church at Llanganten lies beside the River Chwefri, some 2km west of Builth Wells. The church retains some medieval fabric, but there was considerable rebuilding and refenestration towards the end of the 19thC. The font is the only medieval fitting to have survived. The churchyard is an irregular shape and contains little of obvious interest.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Medieval(?) walls of nave survive, but Victorian windows and some rebuilding, and Dawson claimed that the roof had been raised. Of the chancel the north wall, east wall, and south-east angle are rebuilt, though there is an alternate possibility, as they are thicker, that they have been re-faced. South wall of chancel largely original. Porch probably Victorian using older materials.

HISTORY

The dedication and location of Llanganten church point to an early medieval beginning. The 1291 Taxatio records 'Ecclesia de Langanten' at the relatively low value of £4 6s 8d.

There is probably a medieval core to the present church but it was partially rebuilt in 1882 by Lewis Powell of Hereford. Glynné when he visited it in 1869 thought that the dedication might be to St Catherine. He believed the walls might be ancient but not the windows, except perhaps for the single narrow slit window with square top in the east wall.

ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel, a south porch near the south-west angle of the nave, and a vestry designed as a lean-to against the west wall of the nave. Its alignment is south-west/north-east, but for descriptive purposes, 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabric: 'A' consists of randomly coursed slabs and blocks of grey, red and brown sandstone, some of it shaly, and including waterworn pebbles and quartzite; irregular appearance; numerous flecks of limewash. 'B' consists of more regular blocks of red and grey sandstone, some slabs; some coursing and an altogether more regular appearance than 'A'; limewash flecks are much less frequent. 'C' consists of grey and red sandstone blocks only, small to medium in size, and showing some coursing.

'A' is probably medieval, 'B' and 'C' Victorian.

Roofs: slates; toothed ceramic ridge tiles, except for porch; cross finials to nave and chancel.

Bellcote of well-dressed stone, opposing apertures, one bell; cross on top.

Drainage: nothing on north; possibly a rubble-choked gully around south, but disguised by brambles etc.

Exterior

Nave. North wall: 'A' masonry, except where two simple lancets in pale freestone have been inserted, the masonry above them being 'B'. Quoins at north-west angle of red sandstone. Wall face between two windows has green mould covering which contrasts with fresher appearance of masonry elsewhere on this wall - reason? North-east corner of nave looks as though it has been truncated to allow insertion of chancel wall, any gaps being plugged with smaller stones.

East wall: nave about 1m higher than chancel; the kneelers and coping stones are Victorian, but the nature of the fabric cannot be ascertained.

South wall:- masonry of much of the wall is 'A', limewashed and lichen. But cleaner fabric with some limewash fragments but no lichen lies over the windows and along the upper part of the wall, suggesting that this has been rebuilt re-using some 'A' masonry. Two sets of paired lancets, obviously inserted.

West wall: mostly hidden by vestry, the rest with a render coating. Bellcote above.

Chancel. North wall: in 'B'; and out of line with north wall of nave. One window of two trefoiled lights in standard pale freestone.

East wall: probably 'B'. Three-stepped lights with trefoil heads.

South wall: in standard fabric 'A', but some variation in that medium to large blocks selected for the base of the south wall; the south-east angle is in 'B'. One double-light window of standard form with trefoil heads to the lights; clearly inserted into wall.

Porch. General. A variant of 'A' in that more blocks than slabs.

East and west walls: plain; limewash residue.

South wall: re-used 'A'? Two-centred arched doorway with stopped chamfers, pale Victorian freestone.

Vestry. General. Lean-to against west wall of nave. Fabric 'C'. Window on north side of same design and date as north nave windows; likewise the paired lancets on the west and the two-centred arched doorway on the south. Typically Victorian.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor; plastered walls; rafter and purlin roof.

North wall: two-centred arch in buff sandstone, stopped chamfers.

East and west walls: stone benches with wooden seats.

South wall: small wooden gates into porch.

Nave. General. Tiled floor with carpet down the aisle; benches raised on wooden boarding. Plastered and

whitewashed walls. Four-bay roof with collars, king and raking struts and ornamented wall plates.

North wall: two slightly splayed windows.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch, the innermost part of the arch of different coloured blocks of stone; hoodmoulding, stopped chamfers.

South wall: as north wall.

West wall: plain but for vestry door which has slightly peaked head.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, another to sanctuary. Floor of black, red and yellow tiles. Walls as in nave. Lower roof than nave and of two wider bays than nave, but otherwise the same except that collars have extra arched supports.

North wall: splayed window; 20thC mural tablet and one of the Price memorials (see below).

East wall: plain apart from slightly splayed window.

South wall: as north wall but late 19thC mural tablet and the other Price memorial.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 12thC, circular bowl sporting four angular projections, and circular stem. Modern base.

Monuments: Posthuma Price (d.1712) and Rees Price (d.1712); a local, armorial pair of painted stone slabs resting against north and south walls of sanctuary.

CHURCHYARD

The church is sited eccentrically within a medium-sized sub-rectilinear churchyard, two sides of which are dictated by adjacent watercourses. It seems unlikely that its present form is a close reflection of its original shape, but the evidence for an earlier enclosure is at best ambivalent (see below).

The interior is flat for it perches on the lip of the terrace of the River Chwefru, at the point where a small tributary debouches into the river. The drop from the north wall of the church to the stream is immediate.

Boundary: the form of the boundary varies. On the north above the stream are bushes and a wire fence; on the south-west is a low bank, slightly irregular in its alignment, with a hedge on top; and on the south-east is an impenetrable hedge. The ground level outside the churchyard is fractionally lower around the south side.

Monuments: all of the yard has burials, quite well spread and with few densely packed spots. Many of the stones are lichen covered and unreadable, but there is a table tomb of 1729 against the south chancel wall, and some others of later 18thC date.

Furniture: none seen.

Earthworks: a low broad scarp, <0.2m follows a slightly curving course immediately to the south of the church, and the church itself therefore appears to be raised on a faint platform. There is also another faint bank to the south-west of the church but much closer to the present boundary. Neither is particularly convincing, though the former is perhaps the more likely to define an earlier 'llan'.

Ancillary features: a farm gate at the south angle is the main entrance; a small latched gate by the east end of the church gives access to the valley below; and there is a wooden stile at the west end; the former gate

to the vicarage has been hedged across. Grass paths.

Vegetation: one mature yew grows to the south-west of the church and there is a bushy yew beside the path to the gate.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 21 March 1996

Dawson 1909, 143

Glynne 1887, 280

Haslam 1979, 310

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Reasonable condition though some damp marks and blistering at west end.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llangasty Tal-y-Llyn

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Gastyn**PRN** 16865**NGR** SO13312613

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Gastyn's church, some 9km to the east of Brecon, occupies level ground within a polygonal enclosure, no more than 100m from the southern edge of Llangorse Lake. It is largely of 19thC build though the tower is earlier. Only three of the bells and portions of the 16thC screen survived the restoration.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Whole structure raised anew with fresh masonry in middle of 19thC. The only exception is the tower, the lower stages of which could be medieval though a date of c.1670 is attributed to it in the church guide.

HISTORY

An early medieval origin is likely, based on the church's location, recent archaeological work on the churchyard, and the unique dedication to St Gastyn. He was reputedly the tutor of the better known saint, Cynog.

The church is recorded as 'Llangastey' in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 when it was worth relatively small amount of £4 18s 7d.

It has been claimed that the church was rebuilt in the mid-16thC, though on what basis is unclear, and that the tower was added about 1670.

By the early 19thC the church was in poor repair and was described in 1838 as 'a dark, ancient and decaying edifice'. It was rebuilt by the architect J.L. Pearson for Robert Raikes who had come into contact with the Tractarians at Oxford in the 1830s (Raikes' building programme included the neighbouring school and the rectory). Church begun in 1848, and part of tower incorporated and faced with new stone. Furnishing was still in progress in 1856.

Wall stencil and 'diaper' work re-painted in 1970.

ARCHITECTURE

Church consists of west tower, narrower than contiguous nave and slightly eccentric to its axis; narrower chancel to east with organ chamber and vestry opening off chancel to south and north respectively; south porch off nave. Church is aligned north-east/south-west but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabric: 'A' predominantly red sandstone slabs with partial coursing; buff coloured sandstone dressings. Some walls, particularly those of nave, appear to have been recently cleaned.

Roofs: stone tiles, grey ceramic ridge tiles and cross finials.

Drainage: flagstones around all outer wall faces except organ chamber may cover drainage trench.

Exterior

Tower. General. Base of tower has plinth with sandstone chamfer at c.0.6m off ground with string-course at c.1.4m (first stage); further string-courses define second and third stages; plain parapet. Stair turret set in north wall and rises above tower roof. All windows are Victorian except for slits lighting stair turret which are all of different sizes and all have (?re-used) red sandstone dressings.

North wall: one lancet at top of second stage and two slit windows with chamfered dressings for stair turret (see above). Gargoyle just below top of third stage.

East wall: plain wall but for string-courses, and two slit windows and a quatrefoil light which illuminate stair turret in north-east angle.

South wall: one lancet window at top of second stage; centre of third stage has one large louvred two-light window with quatrefoil above, all under two-centred arch with hoodmoulding with decorated stops and relieving arch. Obvious ashlar quoins from third stage upwards.

West wall: as south wall but large lancet window at bottom of second stage.

Nave, chancel and other units. General. All parts in Fabric 'A', and of Victorian build in Early English Style. Windows: single and paired lancets, apart from triple lancets for east window. Dawson claimed that old stones incorporated in jambs of south door.

Interior

General. Completely Victorian interior. Fine roof with angular arch-bracing springing from corbels, and scissor trusses. East window has lights set in recesses with slender marble pillars. Marble altar steps, encaustic tiles for chancel floor, painted and gilded walls with frieze of texts and painted roof timbers; wrought iron screen for organ chamber.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Chancel screen: "incorporates pieces of the early 16thC screen, carved in the solid, with exotic canopied panels" (Haslam). "A good example of the unintelligent use of medieval material, jumbled together without knowledge or understanding" (Crossley and Ridgway).

Bells: four in all: two of 1674, one of 1714, and one of 1878.

Victorian fittings include:

Stained glass: "east window probably by Wailes, dated 1849 and west window of similar date" (Haslam). But 1847 according to church guide.

Stoup: hexagonal with carving to imitate encompassing iron band; Victorian; in porch.

Organ: purchased and installed in 1850. RCAHMW in 1974 questioned whether screen fragments were also incorporated in organ case.

CHURCHYARD

Llangasty churchyard is polygonal and relatively small. The only hint of curvilinearity is in north-west corner, but recent geophysical survey hints at a curvilinear ditch just outside east side. Churchyard lies on level ground about 50m from southern edge of Llangorse Lake.

It is well-maintained and used for current burials.

Boundary: consists of a stone wall around the whole perimeter; the internal ground is generally higher than outside, but the difference varies from virtually nothing to nearly one metre in north-west corner.

Monuments: generally well spread and not particularly dense; only to the south-west of the church and in the north-western quadrant of churchyard are gravestones absent. 18thC stones - the earliest 1729 - immediately to south-east of chancel. Some stones lean against south wall of churchyard, mostly 19thC but one of 1768.

Furniture: modern churchyard cross, north of tower.

Earthworks: churchyard has slightly undulating ground surface and there is a faint drop to east of chancel, but nothing of obvious significance.

Ancillary features: single entrance from south-west covered by Victorian lychgate. Gravel paths lead to porch and past west end of church. Stone hut tucked away in north angle of churchyard has date 1986.

Vegetation: immature yews (except for one) along south side of churchyard; two older yews against north wall of churchyard.

REFERENCES

Church Guide: n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 17 August 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 74
Dawson 1909, 128
Haslam 1979, 343
NMR, Aberystwyth
Powys SMR
Redknap 1993

CONDITION

Church in good condition except for one or two minor plaster blisters.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llangattock

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Cattwg**PRN** 16866**NGR** SO21101788

GENERAL SUMMARY

Saint Catwg's church at Llangattock lies in the valley of the Usk little more than one kilometre to the south of Crickhowell. The building comprising a nave and chancel with a north aisle and chapel of equal length is 13thC/14thC though all of the windows have been replaced, and parts of the walls rebuilt. At the west end is a fine tower, 16thC in date, though a much earlier origin has been claimed. There are few internal features of any age, but a fine collection of 18thC memorials in the tower, as well as the village stocks and whipping post in the north aisle. The churchyard was perhaps once more curvilinear than it now appears.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave has been claimed as 13thC, presumably on the basis of a single lancet west of the porch, though none of its dressings are original; nor is it certain that any of the masonry goes back that far.

North aisle could be 14thC though there is the possibility that much of the walling has been reconstructed and certainly its windows are Victorian replacements.

It has been claimed that both the north chapel and the chancel are of the same date as the north aisle, and this receives some confirmation from the internal arcade. Again the windows are wholly renewed, though the square-headed windows of the chancel do appear to suggest that the originals were inserted in the 16thC.

Tower generally of one build and attributable to 16thC (Haslam) though Griffith of RCAHMW thought the lower part was 14thC and the upper part 15thC. A 12thC predecessor has also been claimed, though on what basis is unclear.

Porches are 19thC additions, pace the church guide which claims the main porch is Tudor and the priest's porch was only repaired in 1843.

HISTORY

An early medieval origin seems certain: the dedication, location and morphology of the churchyard all point in this direction.

In 1291 the Taxatio records 'Ecclesia de Lancadok' with a value of £20, a wealthy establishment and probably one that had been a mother church in the early medieval era.

Various phases of building and rebuilding occurred during the Middle Ages and after. Restorations are documented in 1719, when six bells were hung in the tower, in 1785 when it was re-roofed, and in 1806 when its ceilings, pavements and seats were replaced. In 1843 with the chancel in disrepair further works took place including new windows and a gallery and organ at the west end.

Glynne visited the church, perhaps in the 1860s; the church was much as it appears today, but whitewashed

except for the tower, though its battlements were so coated. His report carries no reference to the priest's porch.

The restoration of 1886 saw the removal of the box pews and the gallery, the lowering of the nave floor by 21", a new (main) porch replacing the existing one, the removal of a side chapel known as the Pew Chapel, a new font, etc. As the church guide points out there have been several other alterations during the 20thC with major repairs since 1979.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangattock comprises a nave and chancel, the latter slightly narrower than the former, a north aisle with a north chapel attached to its east end, and together these are of the same length as the nave and chancel, a west tower attached to the west end of the nave, and two porches, one near the south-west angle of the nave, and the second providing access to the priest's door which is almost centrally located in the south wall of the chancel. In addition, a new church hall has been accommodated in the angle formed by the tower and north aisle. The church is aligned east-north-east/west-south-west but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' is a mixture of grey and predominantly red sandstone slabs, small to medium in size, coursed but not uniformly; large quoins of red sandstone.

'B' is of mixed red, grey, yellow and buff sandstone, in irregular blocks and slabs, some random coursing; large red sandstone quoins.

'C' is of blocks and a few slabs of regularly shaped and predominantly yellow grey and buff sandstone.

'D' is of regular blocks of red sandstone, with cream-coloured dressings.

Roofs: reconstituted clay tiles. Broken cross finial on north chapel, cross finials on chancel and main porch.

Drainage: no convincing signs of drainage gullies.

Exterior

Tower. General. Claimed as 16thC, partly on basis of its west window. Not quite aligned with the nave. Stepped plinth with a lower chamfered moulding at c.0.7m, and the upper a more elaborately moulded string course at 1.3m. Further string courses, generally weathered and broken, above second, third and fourth (belfry) stages; the last of these has a waterspout on each side (two on the north side), and above it is a battlemented parapet. All the dressings are in red sandstone, but there is some difference in the masonry; though all of 'A'; the third stage is predominantly grey, while the fourth stage has more red sandstone - is this decorative, does it indicate a different supply of material, or could it have a chronological implication?

North wall: new church hall covers wall to middle of second stage. Belfry stage has small slit window with chamfered dressings at its base. Above this is the square-headed belfry window with two four-centred arched lights, weathered chamfered dressings, and louvre boards. In the north-east angle is the stair turret serving the tower; the string courses carry around it, and there is one slit window in the second stage; a weathervane is set on top of the turret which projects above the tower.

East wall: apex of nave roof to just below string course topping second stage; above the present roof, the mark of an earlier roof line with a steeper pitch is visible. Third stage has elongated chamfered slit, and the belfry stage has the main window as in the north wall. Stair turret projects above nave roof and has slit windows comparable with that on the north side, in the third and fourth stages.

South wall: bottom of third stage has a much weathered, chamfered, slit window. Belfry window standard and much weathered.

West wall: in second stage a large two-centred arched window having three lights with cusped heads and broad panels above; only the jambstones and the archstones are original, the rest renewed; and there is a

relieving arch over the top. Standard slit windows in the third and fourth stages, and the belfry window also, as in the other walls.

North aisle. General. Roof pitched separately from that of nave. Fabric 'B' for the walls.

North wall: two three-light windows with moulded dressings, cinquefoil heads and panels though of different styles. That to west is all in red sandstone, but the dressings are not worn and could be renewed, and it has a relieving arch over. The east window is in yellow sandstone and is a complete replacement; it is also larger than its counterpart to the west, has a hoodmould but no relieving arch. The top 1m or so of the wall is in 'C' suggesting that the roof has been raised. Much of the wall is in 'B'; but there are subtle variations in appearance, and it is conceivable that only the central portion between the two windows is original. To the west that portion holding the red sandstone window looks fresher, and that part of the wall to the east with the yellow sandstone window also looks slightly different, though this is a subjective view which is not assisted by the presence of vegetation against the wall. It should also be noted that beneath the east window is a platform of masonry, perhaps for a boiler house or some other structure. Whether it blocked the east window or even preceded it cannot be ascertained. A Victorian buttress provides the division between the north aisle and the north chapel.

East wall: roof has a different pitch to that of north chapel, the latter being sharper.

West wall: the new church hall effectively disguises the relationship between the north aisle and the tower; the window in this wall was reportedly Victorian.

North chapel. General. Perhaps a pre-Reformation Chantry chapel. Sides are battered to a height of around 1m. All in Fabric 'B'.

North wall: partially covered by now defunct ivy. Possible break in the fabric two-thirds of the way to the east, but could be no more than repaired crack and certainly there is no change in the fabric. One square-headed window with three cusped lights; the dressings are all replaced though the harmony of the red sandstone is broken by the inclusion of some light brown dressed stone; this is in same style as the more westerly window of north aisle. At the north-east corner is an angle buttress and above it is a beast's head kneeler, all Victorian.

East wall: weathered fabric 'B'. The window has three lights with cinquefoil cusping, panels, a hoodmould and is similar to the more easterly of the north aisle windows, though there are also head-stops to the hoodmould and a relieving arch; some signs that window inserted into wall.

Chancel. General. Fabric 'B'. Wall base battered to height of c.0.5m.

East wall: window is same as that in east wall of north chapel in all respects, and there are some signs of insertion particularly on its north side; also signs that the wall was limewashed prior to the insertion. Buttress at junction of chancel and north chapel disguises any relationship between the two cells. Beast's head kneeler at south-east angle and another for the spout taking the run off from the gully between the chancel and the north chapel.

South wall: in Fabric 'B' but top part of wall for the last 0.4m may be in Fabric 'C', though this might simply be a result of less weathering. Two three-light windows matching those in north chapel, though the labels with their head-stops above them are in brown sandstone; the window to the east has a mixture of colours in its dressed stones while that to the west is more uniform in appearance. Flat slabs laid over each as novel relieving 'arches'. The priest's porch is set between the two windows.

Priest's porch. General. Wholly Victorian. Grey sandstone masonry; bottom of wall is plinched. The south door has a two-centred arch with complex mouldings and stops; plain side walls.

Nave. General. Three buttresses on south wall in grey Victorian sandstone.

South wall: cleaned fabric looks rather like 'C'. Quoins where visible are of grey sandstone, and the nave appears to abut the east wall of the tower. Two three-light windows, similar to west window in north aisle; no hoodmouldings or relieving arches. West of the main porch is a broad lancet in grey sandstone, clearly a modern insertion. Some if not all of this wall is rebuilt.

Main porch. General. Fabric 'D'. Wholly Victorian.

East and west walls: square-headed windows, the ogee-headed lights with cinquefoil cusping.

South wall: ornate ogee-headed arched entrance with floral ornament; ornate iron gates.

Interior

Main porch. General. Red tiled floor, bare walls and a simple modern roof showing only rafters.

North wall: fine 16thC four-centred arched doorway with complex mouldings in red-grey sandstone. An earlier porch roofline visible on the masonry above the doorway.

East and west walls: plain apart from the small, splayed windows.

Tower. General. Up one step from nave. Carpet over floor; walls plastered and whitewashed; wooden ceiling.

North wall: four-centred arch doorway to tower stair, stopped chamfers. Wall otherwise plain but sporting eight mural tablets of which two are covered by wooden casing.

East wall: fine two-centred tower arch with complex moulding.

South wall: plain with ten mural tablets.

West wall: deeply splayed window with sill much lower than window; three mural tablets.

North aisle. General. Tiled floor, benches raised on wooden block flooring, and at east end two steps up to platform. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Ribbed ceiling, perhaps 15thC. Arcade on south is of 14thC.

North wall: two splayed windows with four 19thC marble mural tablets between. Stocks and whipping post against wall at west end.

East wall: two-centred arch with stopped chamfers gives access to north chapel.

South wall: three bays of arcade with octagonal pillars and capitals, again with stopped chamfers; one mural tablet of 1800 above the second pillar from the west end. At the west end the wall exhibits a blocked doorway at a height of c.3.0m -?a gallery entrance.

West wall: new door to church hall with a splayed window above. Stair turret projects into south-west angle and is supposedly later than the aisle.

North chapel. Floor of wooden blocks. Walls as north aisle. Roof of four bays with simple principals, arch-braced collars and curving struts carved to trefoils. Organ fills much of west part of chapel; locked vestry to east.

North wall: one splayed window; a range of mural tablets; two of 1723 and 1807 are accessible, at least three others of late 18thC or 19thC date are in the vestry.

East wall: one splayed window and one mural tablet.

South wall: two bays of the main arcade.

Nave. General. Floor as north aisle including the platform at the east end; walls and roof also as north aisle.

North wall: blocked doorway high up in wall at west end (see north aisle). West of it and running no more than 0.15m from the tower arch is a butt joint for almost the full height of what is visible of the wall - it is clearly related to the inserted tower stair turret. Mural tablet of 1788 over first pier. Between the springer of the third arch of the arcade and the springer of the chancel arch is a re-set corbel, possibly a griffin's head.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch springing from the second arcade pier from the east.

South wall: deeply splayed windows. 19thC brasses and marble mural tablets with one of 1795 near south door.

West wall: Tudor tower arch.

Chancel. General. Standard tiled floor with some encaustic tiles; carpet in sanctuary and down chancel aisle. One step up to sanctuary. Walls as nave. Roof is Victorian with four bays; heavy corbels supporting arch-braced cross beams with trefoils alternating with curving struts.

North wall: two arcade arches, the second springing as far as the east wall; first bay is panelled with the organ behind, the second has a glass front to the vestry.

East wall: splayed window, modern reredos.

South wall: two splayed windows, a simple shallow recess with a curved head for the priest's door. Aumbry in corner. Eleven 19thC and 20thC marble mural tablets plus two brasses of similar date.

Priest's porch. General. Flagstones for floor; bare walls; roof of collars and rafters.

North wall: the arch of the doorway to the chancel is turned in edge stones and is surely a late rebuild.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Monuments: Richard Harcourt (d.1723), early Georgian. Anna Williams (d.1772); Mary Phillips (d.1788); Frances Barrow (d.1795). On the tower walls a fine group of later 18thC Rococo stones with coloured raised ornament, made by local masons. On the south, William and Alice Morgan (d.1746 and 1750), with coloured 'tulip' border; Mary Moses (d.1777) by A. Brute; Thomas Williams (d.1780) by T. Jones; Mary Herbert (d.1782), with cherubs; Henry Watkins (d.1800), by J. Brute; Margaret Saunders (d.1785), by A. Brute; William Lewis (d.1782), with elegantly curled fronds, by T. Jones; Jennet Cunvin (d.1775), by A. Brute. On the north wall a tablet to Anne Lewis (d.1773), a midwife, by J. Brute; Evan Williams (d.1816); Sarah Davies (d.1788); John Jones (d.1786); Jane Price (d.1769); Howell James (d.1775) by T. Jones. On the west wall: Margaret Barry (d.1801); John Williams (d.1809); and John Williams (d.1815).

Plate: chalice of 1661.

Bells: eight of which five are dated 1719.

Victorian features include:

Village stocks and whipping post: in the north aisle, the former constructed in 1850.

Font: octagonal, 19thC.

Stained Glass: "Nave east window and north aisle window are early windows by Clayton & Bell, c.1866 and 1860. Chancel windows of 1886 and 1888" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is now an irregular D-shape, the straight-sided northern perimeter a contrast to the curvature on the east and suggestive of a truncated boundary.

The ground within the yard is flat, not surprising in view of the fact that the churchyard boundary lies up against the bank of Nant Onnau at its southern corner. It is a valley floor location and changes in the relief are minimal.

It is well maintained and still used for burial.

Boundary: bounded by buildings on the west, the churchyard is contained within a stone wall for the rest of its circuit. There is a distinctive inner bank around the west side and north-west corner, surely a relic of the former enclosure, and on the south-east the wall sits astride the bank which has a gully outside it. External and internal ground levels are fairly similar throughout.

Monuments: these are regularly spread throughout the yard, except for the extreme south corner; locally they are quite dense. East and south of the church are 18thC memorials, and there are others scattered apparently quite randomly elsewhere in the yard.

Furniture: socket and shaft of churchyard cross outside the priest's porch.

Earthworks: as noted above there is an earlier perimeter bank on the west side, up to 1m high and with 19thC graves dug into it. A similar bank on the north side contains cinder and ash and is presumably material cleared out from the church boiler. Just beyond the east end of the church the ground drops by 0.3m or so: there is no obvious explanation for this scarp.

Ancillary features: on the south-west is a lychgate of grey sandstone with iron gates and a kissing gate. Iron railings set on low stone walls edge the tarmac path through the churchyard. At the north-east end is a further set of iron gates.

Vegetation: two fairly mature yews on east side of churchyard, otherwise a few deciduous trees.

SOURCES

Church guide 1991
CPAT Field Visit: 24 October 1995
Dawson 1909, 163
Faculty 1886: NLW/SD/F/350
Glynne 1886, 279
Haslam 1979, 345
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Damp is affecting the plaster along the south side of the nave and is particularly bad in one of the window embrasures. Cracks have been filled in the east end of the chancel and in the north chapel. These aspects apart, the condition appears to be satisfactory.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Good

Llangenny

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Cenu**PRN** 16868**NGR** SO24011815

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Ceneu's church at Llangenny (Llangenau) lies on the bank of the Grwyne Fawr 2km east of Crickhowell in eastern Breconshire. Most of the structure is late 15thC/early 16thC, though part is almost certainly earlier. It has an interesting structural history, but there are few contemporary internal fittings. The churchyard, now an irregular polygonal, was originally a small curvilinear 'llan'.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The present north aisle was originally the nave and is almost certainly pre-15thC. A chancel (now the north chapel) may have been contemporary or was added subsequently. The nave was originally wider - see its corner immured in the west wall of the present nave - and the chancel was narrower and symmetrically placed until it was widened when the present nave and chancel were constructed on the south side in the late 15thC/early 16thC. Nave arcade of this date. Perpendicular windows were inserted into the original nave at this time, and probably the porch added as well. Roofs of all the main cells raised at some unspecified date.

HISTORY

An early medieval origin for this church site seems assured.

The 1291 Taxatio reference to "Ecclesia de Stratden'ad" appears to relate to Llangenny, with a particularly high value of £20.

At some point in the past the south aisle was converted into the nave and chancel. This may have occurred at the time of the Victorian restoration, but in view of the fact that the taller east window is in the present chancel it is perhaps more likely that the 15thC/16thC enlargement resulted in the creation of a new nave and chancel, and that the putative south aisle never functioned as such.

In 1809 the church was described as having a low shed on the western end, under which were two little bells. The southern aisle was thought evidently of later construction than the northern, "but both are dark and gloomy". The first was described as 'vaulted like that at Llanbedr, and the other barn-roofed, except above the chancel where it is flat'. The seats were decayed and irregular, and the floor only indifferently paved.

A 1909 account mentions restorations of the church in 1864 and in 1894. The 1864 restoration by C. Buckeridge was described by Glynne, who visited the church in that year, as a judicious restoration, with due attention to preserving its original character.

An 1891 faculty, presumably for the restoration of 1894, focused on the rebuilding of the north and west walls of the north chapel, and the construction of a new bellcote.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangenny church consists of a nave and chancel in one with a south porch near the south-west corner of the nave, a north aisle and a slightly narrower chapel to the east, and a vestry off this chapel. It should be remembered that the present north aisle and chapel were the original nave and chancel respectively. The church is aligned almost exactly east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium slabs (and a few blocks) of grey and red sandstone, irregularly coursed; dressed blocks of the same material dressed for quoins.

Roofs: all have reconstituted clay tiles, decorated ridge tiles (except on vestry), with a single cross finial on chancel end.

Bellcote at west end of north aisle in Victorian buff sandstone houses two bells, and has a cross on its apex.

Drainage: a brick-lined gully, c.0.5m deep on north and west sides of north aisle.

Exterior

North Aisle. General. Fabric A with render remnants showing. Heating chamber just outside west wall?

North wall: base battered to height of 0.6m, and rougher foundation courses of wall exposed by the drainage trench. Wall has heavy raised 'pointing' giving rectangular 'brick'-like effect, regardless of the stone. North-west angle reconstructed to take chimney, the top of which projects from the roof. Above the most westerly window is a vertical butt joint in the masonry -- this could be simply rebuilding or perhaps the infilling of an earlier embrasure. Three windows from west: i) a single light in a square-headed window with a small hoodmoulding, the light cinquefoil-headed, hollow chamfers and hoodmoulding, all original except for the last; ii) three-light square-headed window, the lights with ogee heads and cinquefoil tracery beneath, all the dressings replaced in red sandstone, except for the top, one jamb and one mullion stone; iii) single light window as the first, but tracery poorer; part of the hoodmoulding looks older, while the chamfered jambs have been replaced in buff sandstone.

East wall: about 1m higher than chapel, but latter not in alignment for its apex is to the south of that of the north aisle.

South wall: none.

West wall: in Fabric 'A' but some larger blocks towards base, and a few render remnants. Wall face shows various features. A break line in the masonry, more evident on the south side of the gable than on the north reveals that the roof has been raised in the past. A lower gable line may indicate that at one time there was another cell attached to this wall - one explanation would be a porch but there is no trace of a blocked entrance in the wall, though there is a horizontal dripcourse above it; alternatively it could have been the shed for the bells which was mentioned at the beginning of the 19thC. There is however a small blocked slit window at a low level. The former south-west wall angle of an earlier structure, which can be associated with the slightly lower roof line, is still discernible immured in the west wall of the present nave, its carefully dressed quoins clearly visible.

Vestry. General. Modern doors and windows.

North Chapel. General. Relationship with north aisle cannot be ascertained. Fabric 'A' variation with a few larger blocks, and only rare render flecks.

North wall: battered to height of c.1.6m; the north-east angle has large yellow freestone quoins. Rectangular window carrying two peak-headed lights with small lights in the spandrels; except for one jamb stone, all the dressings replaced in red sandstone as in north aisle.

East wall: roof raised at some point in past. East window has three ogee-headed lights with cinquefoil tracery in a rectangular window with complex moulding; most of window has been replaced, but the top of the window frame, the sill and one jamb stone are probably original. Disconformity south of window from ground to a height of c.2m indicates original width of this cell, subsequently widened when present chancel added.

Chancel. East wall:- battered base but partially disguised by remembrance area with stones slabs and lead flashing. Again some evidence that roof raised by perhaps 0.3m. South-east angle has projecting foundation stone and then large quoins except for the highest 2m. East window with two-centred arch, three lights with cinquefoil tracery, and further smaller traceried lights above; considerable replacement, but some of arch and tracery dressings are original.

South wall: masonry is variation on 'A' with rather more red sandstone, regularly shaped. Also much regular 'pointing' as north wall of north aisle. Batter at base of wall becomes less pronounced to west, a result of the rising ground level. From the east end: i) rectangular window of three lights with ogee heads and cinquefoil tracery, complex mouldings, and label with flat-headed stops; most of dressings replaced. ii) two steps up to priest's door which has a four-centred Tudor arch, complex mouldings, stopped chamfers; some of jambs probably original, arch in a single block of grey freestone, less convincing; modern studded door. iii) a second window with two lights in rectangular window frame, the lights with cinquefoil tracery, the window having a label with stops; jambs and mullions in replacement grey sandstone, the heads in original red sandstone; part of label also replaced but stops original.

Nave. General. Much render survival.

South wall: from east: a small window, part original, now blocked, designed to light the rood loft; a four-light window similar in design to those in south chancel wall, again much replacement of dressings though some of the traceried heads are original; porch.

West wall: Fabric 'A' but larger than normal number of large red sandstone slabs in it. The south-west corner of the original nave visible in the wall face (see above); also distinctive lines in the fabric of the gable where the roof has been raised. One two-light window, the lights with trefoil heads and a quatrefoil above, all under a two-centred arch with a stopped hoodmoulding and a relieving arch; the whole window totally replaced in yellow sandstone.

Porch. General. Perpendicular style. Variation in Fabric 'A' with inclusion of medium to large blocks of red sandstone. Some of masonry disguised by render and by heavy pointing.

East and west walls: narrow chamfered slit window in each wall.

South wall: doorway has semi-circular head, complex mouldings with shallow stops and rests on polygonal bases; much weathered and all in original red sandstone, but set slightly off-centre in wall face.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor, those directly in front of south door having traces of inscriptions and one date of 1692? Plastered walls. Late 15thC or perhaps early 16thC wagon roof of 24 ribbed panels; three tie-beam trusses and cusped struts.

North wall: four-centred Tudor doorway, complex moulding with complex stops; mainly original red sandstone, though the head in orange sandstone must be a replacement.

East wall: stoup; splayed window; stone bench with flag seating.

West wall: as east wall but for stoup.

Nave. General. Tiled floor, but covered with carpet down the aisle; benches on raised wooden plinths. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Perpendicular wagon roof continuous with chancel - in all 108 ribbed panels and moulded wall plates.

North wall: arcade of three bays (with two more in chancel), octagonal piers the most westerly of which is a monolith; two-centred arches and moulded capitals. 19thC mural tablet above one pier.

East wall: no division from chancel except a single step.

South wall: one deeply splayed window with stained glass; main door has peaked embrasure, and there is a step down into nave at doorway. The door itself is heavy and early. Above it is a Victorian wall painting depicting a scroll with a verse from Psalms. One 19thC mural tablet and three 20thC brasses.

West wall: splayed window plus two marble tablets of 19thC and 20thC date.

North Aisle. General. Floor as nave, but heating vents down centre and into north chapel. Roof has six ribbed tie beams and a flat ceiling. Organ takes up south-west corner and disguises some of wall surface.

North wall: three splayed windows; one marble mural tablet of 1796 and two of the 19thC; a rectangular niche below the most easterly one.

East wall: wall is dominated by a plain, unchamfered, two-centred arch leading to chapel; on either side of it are squints with asymmetric splays, into chapel; north of the more northerly squint and higher up the wall face is a shallow rectangular recess - purpose uncertain, but church notes suggest it held the picture of a saint and that there was an altar under each squint. Mural tablet of 1688.

South wall: arcade; most easterly arch springs from a corbel set at higher level than capital of respond.

West wall: splayed embrasure of small rectangular window, centrally placed and low down on wall face; now blocked externally. Adjacent a 19thC marble mural tablet.

North Chapel. one step up from north aisle and another to the sanctuary. Floor of wooden blocks and partially carpet covered; choir stalls raised on wooden plinths; sanctuary paved largely with graveslabs (at least eleven ranging from 1685 to 1787). Low-pitched Tudor ceiling.

North wall: splayed window; modern doorway to vestry; psalm scroll above war memorial brass.

East wall: splayed window; 19thC mural tablet.

South wall: two arcade arches supported on a pier and two responds, the east bay with a parclose screen.

West wall: arch; 19thC mural tablet.

Chancel. General. One step up from nave, floor carpeted and choir stalls raised; one up to sanctuary which has encaustic tiles on floor. Altar raised. For roof see nave.

North wall: arcade; one 19thC mural tablet.

East window: splayed window embrasure, stained glass.

South wall: two splayed windows both with stained glass; priest's doorway has slightly pitched soffit which, unlike sides, is chamfered. Piscina. One mural tablet of 1675 and one more plus a brass of the 19thC.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 12thC; circular bowl with a rope moulding beneath; new base.

Stoup: octagonal, carved from a sandstone boulder.

Piscina: ogee-headed niche, chamfered, whitewashed.

Chest: in north chapel.

Monuments: Lewis Morgan (d.1688), with an open pediment; George Herbert (d.1796); John Morgan (d.1675).

Graveslabs: in North Chapel to Maud Morgan (d.1685); Matthew Price (d.1777); Margaret and John Jones (d.? and 1756); George Windam (d.1787) and sons; Margaret Herbert (d.1727) and husband Morgan (d.1731); John Morgan (d.1731); Anne Lewis (d.1708); and Elizabeth Davies (d.1750).

CHURCHYARD

Although the circular churchyard depicted on the Tithe Map may be stylistic, and it is evident from the earthwork evidence (see below) that the original church sat in a small curvilinear enclosure, and that this has been extended to the north and west.

Most of churchyard is reasonably level though there is a gradual slope from west to east, and a more marked slope in the west extension. It is located on the west bank of a fast-flowing stream, the Grwyne Fawr, and there is a drop of perhaps 6m immediately below the east churchyard wall.

Boundary: consists of a mortared stone wall, in places up to 2m high. On the east there is a low bank inside the wall, possibly the remnants of the earlier enceinte.

Monuments: most of the churchyard is full, but the graves are quite well spaced, though there are few to the east and north-east of the church. 20thC graves to the north-west, 19thC with a few earlier to the south.

Furniture: sundial to south of nave. Three-step plinth, ornate pillar and plain gnomon and dial; the original (?17th) sundial stolen eight years ago.

Earthworks: old enclosure distinguishable as a faint bank or scarp on the south-west side running round to the north. Nowhere it is more than 0.5m high.

Ancillary features: stone-walled lychgate with timber superstructure and a roof of collars and struts bears the inscription 'at the charge of Anthony Morgan 1639', though Glynne in 1864 thought the lychgate new. This is at south end of churchyard and a tarmac path leads to church and to vestry. The only other gate is a modern one set in north wall and giving access to store shed.

Vegetation: several yews, most of them on or close to the earlier boundary bank.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 24 November 1995
Dawson 1909, 146
Faculty 1891: NLW/SD/F/364
Glynne 1886, 280
Haslam 1979, 347
Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 146 & 148
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Occasional damp patch but otherwise in reasonable condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Good

Llangors

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Paulinus**PRN** 16871**NGR** SO13502762

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Paulinus at Llangorse, some 9km east of Brecon, is a late Perpendicular edifice much reconstructed in 1874. It has a few surviving late medieval and Tudor features, including a fine tower, but internally lacks any early fittings other than a font, and a clutch of early medieval memorial stones. These together with the former curvilinear churchyard should establish the site as an early medieval foundation.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The tower masonry appears homogeneous and is thought to be 15thC. Nave north wall largely rebuilt. South aisle may have had upper part of south wall rebuilt, and there is ambivalent evidence that it has been extended eastwards in the late medieval period. Chancel also wholly rebuilt in 1874 though it is not clear whether that part that now forms the sanctuary is a replacement or a new feature of the Victorian restoration. There is some evidence for the latter, implying that the medieval church was a double aisled structure.

HISTORY

The location beside a stream and the curvilinear churchyard points to an early medieval foundation. There is a reference to an early medieval monastery at Llangors which is thought to have functioned from the 7thC until no later than the Norman Conquest but its precise location is not known and it cannot be assumed that it preceded St Paulinus' church on this spot.

In 1152 the Prior of Brecon nominated a priest to serve the church at Llangorse.

The 13thC Taxatio term it 'Ecclesia de Mara', a reference to the nearby lake, but by the time of the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1535 it was known as 'Llangarse'.

Up to the Reformation it was supposedly dedicated to St Mary and St Paulinus.

Glynne visited the church in 1855, describing the church much as it is today, except that the body of the building was whitewashed. The east window of the chancel was an old one, and the belfry windows were Perpendicular, each with two traceried lights.

The restoration of 1874 by T. Nicholson cost £1033; when the old chancel arch was taken down, an early inscribed stone was discovered; and in 1881 a sepulchral stone was discovered about two metres from the east wall of the south aisle, when opening a grave. It is also said that sometime earlier in the 19thC a 'disaster' led to the roof timbers of the nave being replaced in pine.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangors church comprises a nave and chancel, the latter slightly narrower though only on the north side, a south aisle which extends as far east as the chancel sanctuary, and a west tower. It is oriented west-north-west/east-south-east but for the purposes of this description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of medium sized slabs, with a few blocks, of dark red sandstone; larger stones used for quoins.

'B' is of small and occasionally medium slabs in dark red and grey sandstone, in places quite well coursed.

'C' is of both small and medium slabs of stone in variegated colours though red and grey predominate; irregular coursing set off by pink mortar (for pointing?).

'D' mixture of small and medium slabs and blocks of reddish sandstone.

'E' is of small and medium slabs and blocks of predominantly grey-green sandstone.

'A', 'B', and 'D' are late 15thC or a little later, though in the nave 'B' was re-used in the 19thC. 'C' and 'E' are presumed to be Victorian.

Roofs: slates with yellow ceramic toothed ridge tiles. Chancel has a cross finial.

Drainage: possibly a trench has been dug around the north side, though this is far from certain.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric 'A'. Basal plinth, inset and chamfered at 1.0m and topped by a rounded string-course at c.1.3m. The second stage terminates in a more angular string-course which rises as a hoodmoulding over windows. The third stage has a similar string-course and the belfry stage likewise, accompanied by waterspouts. Above this is the battlemented parapet. The tower stair is built into the north-east angle.

North wall: slit window with chamfered dressings in yellowish-grey sandstone, at top of second stage, but not centrally placed; two small glazed slits with similarly coloured dressings light the stair, and the third stage also has one of these. Third stage also has a slightly smaller slit centrally placed just below the string-course. Belfry stage has a two-light window under a two-centred arch, the louvred lights with cusped heads and hollow-chamfered mouldings; the mullion may have been replaced. The string-course above has two waterspouts.

East wall: apex of nave roof almost reaches to third string-course. There is, however, an adjacent slit window which is probably off-centre. Belfry window comparable with that on north side but some replacement of dressings.

South wall: second stage contains two slit windows, one at the bottom the other at the top; a further, smaller slit window in the third stage and a standard belfry window without any obvious replacement of the dressings; two waterspouts on the top string-course.

West wall: similar to south wall, except that some dressings in belfry window may have been replaced.

Nave. General. There is a possibility that the nave abuts the tower, for though the tower string-courses stop abruptly, it does appear to have ashlar quoins, and the masonry of the nave at the corner appears rougher, as though of separate build. On the hand there is also a 'bonding-line' about 0.3m eastwards along the nave wall.

North wall: there are changes in the masonry at the extreme west end (see above), the extreme east end and the bottom courses of the wall for its full length; all can be classed as 'B' but that around the edges is less regular, and presumably original, the rest is almost certainly rebuilt using original stone; this could have been in 1874 but conceivably could have been earlier. Two two-light windows with cusped heads, trefoiled to west and cinquefoiled to east; these are crudely produced and in yellow sandstone, but the jambs and mullions are largely in red sandstone. Of the nave and chancel these are the only architectural features to

survive the restoration, albeit considerably renewed.

Chancel. entirely Victorian in Fabric 'C', with distinctive ashlar at corners. Attached to north wall is a sunken boiler room, its entrance via a Caernarvon arch. The axis of the sanctuary is skewed to the rest of the church; this is deliberate and known as a 'weeping sanctuary'.

North wall: a single light window with a cinquefoil head in yellowish-grey sandstone.

East wall: a three-light window with Y-tracery and cusping in yellow sandstone. Wall face repointed but pink mortar visible in places.

South wall: a single light window as in north wall.

South aisle. General. In Fabric 'D', similar to but slightly less regular than the 'A' masonry of the tower. Wall battered to height of c.0.5m. Note the possibility that aisle has been extended eastwards (see below).

East wall: this could be in 'D' but the stonework is weathered and there is heavy pointing. One three-light window with a two-centred arch, the lights with cinquefoil heads and panel tracery above, hollow mouldings, mainly red sandstone dressings but some yellow.

South wall: from east the features are: i) a three-light window matching that in east wall, even down to the yellow sandstone dressings; it has been suggested that this was the original east window in the chancel, reset at the restoration, but Glynne drew attention to it in this position in 1855; ii) a priest's door with Tudor arch, the chamfers having stops, and some yellow sandstone in the arch; iii) a square-headed window of two lights with cinquefoil heads; iv) below iii) is a scratch sundial; v) another window similar to iii); both of the square-headed windows were once shuttered for each has holes in the jambs and iii) has a hook in situ; vi) an early Tudor door with rounded and hollow chamfers but single stops; mainly in red sandstone. The degree of tracery replacement is difficult to determine. Haslam argued that most if not all of the tracery dates to the 1840s. In fact it is likely that some medieval tracery does survive, but it is noticeable too that the upper part of the wall face is in Fabric 'E', and this dips down above each window suggesting some degree of reconstruction. The rest of the wall is in 'D' though the west end has similarities to 'B'. West of the priest's door is a subtle line in the masonry which matches a faint alteration in the roof line directly above. It is possible that this marks an extension of the south aisle.

West wall: Fabric 'D'? One square-headed window with two lights with what are probably original cinquefoil heads, chamfered dressings, the whole now covered by a perspex sheet.

Interior

Tower. General. Flagstones on floor. Ceiling barrel vaulted in stone.

North wall: doorway to tower stair, pointed head, chamfered mouldings.

East wall: tower arch chamfered from springer level. ?Tudor.

Nave. General. Flagged floor though tiled at the front; wooden floors, fractionally sunken, under benches. Graveslabs of 1763 and 1795 used as flooring between arches of arcade. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of close set, braced collars with scissor struts; 19thC.

North wall: deeply splayed window embrasures but dressings look to be original.

East wall: Victorian chancel arch, bare dressings.

South wall: three-bay arcade with large two-centred arches springing from octagonal pillars and hollow-

moulded capitals.

West wall: tower arch is two-centred, chamfered from springers, and now largely panelled off; to the north of the arch is a chamfered slit, lighting the tower stair; was this originally an external window and thus further evidence that the present nave is later than the tower? Above the tower arch is a door with chamfered dressings and a low pointed arch; there are signs that the masonry around it is disturbed, suggesting perhaps that it has been inserted: access to a former gallery?

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave. Tiled floors apart from the wooden boarding beneath the choir stalls. Late medieval wagon roof is a reasonable fit but distorted (cf aisle roof), and the faintly skewed alignment of the sanctuary means that part of the last brace is hidden within the east wall masonry.

North and east walls: nothing of significance.

South wall: sedile, piscina and, above the latter, an aumbry, all Victorian. West of the only window the wall protrudes slightly; this is in line with the east wall of the south aisle and strengthens the hypothesis that prior to 1874 the east wall of the chancel was in line with that of the aisle. Further west is a further bay of the arcade, giving on to what is now the organ chamber.

South aisle. General. Flagged floor with graveslabs re-used in it at both east and west ends. Those at the east end are the earliest - 17thC - and certainly run under the organ platform. At the west end are three of 1760, 1762 and 1777. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Fine wagon roof of alternate ribbed and plain braces, but without plaster infill; presumably of the late 15thC.

South wall: the reveal and inside arch of the priest's door is entirely Victorian, as are all the window splays.

West wall: splayed window, beneath which are the early medieval stones.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Early medieval stones: three fragments in the church, now piled up at west end of south aisle; "i) incised with a Latin ring-cross, 7thC-9thC, and inscribed + GURCI BLEDRUS; ii) incised with a foliate cross(?), 10thC or early 11thC; iii) an 11thC/12thC stone with a Latin burial inscription, HIC IACET (S)I(U)LERD (F)ILIUS/VULMER" (Haslam).

Font: octagonal bowl, carved on the underside; from around 1300?

Church plate: chalice inscribed with a date of 1661.

Monuments: internal mural tablets to: Catherine Philips (d.1763); Catherine James (d.1795); Rachel Hall (d.1762); Morgan Morgan (d.1777) and ? Davies (d.1762). Externally, the east wall supports memorials to: Thomas Powell (d.1779); Jane Parry (d.?) and her daughter Mary (d.1783); Hannah Tekell (d.1777); Walter Watkins (d.1787); and William Williams (d.1785)

Bells: six of 1725, though two were recast in 1887. Frame dated to 1721.

Register: from 1688.

Organ: of 1764, originally made for St John's Cardiff and installed here in 1894..

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is now a medium-sized, largely rectilinear enclosure, with a visible curve only on the east.

That it was somewhat larger and more curvilinear at an earlier stage in its history is suggested by the topography, the Castle Inn and old school having encroached on it to the south, and the modern road having truncated a small segment of it on the west. It is situated against a small stream, Nant Cwy, and this position creates a relatively flat churchyard, though with a slight rise on the south where the valley starts to rise.

The churchyard is well maintained and is still used for burial.

Boundary: stone walls bound the churchyard on the east and west while on the south, the development of buildings and yards has resulted in a mixture of brick walls, hedges and fences. On the north is the stream, separated either by a retaining wall or a hedge. An internal bank, possibly a predecessor of the wall can be discerned on part of the east side, and on this side too the churchyard appears to be raised above the external ground level.

Monuments: these are evenly spread across most of the area, though densest to the south and east of the church. Some 18thC examples can still be recognised.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: small double wooden gates on the west side represent the main entrance, but there is also a small gate on the east leading to what was the vicarage. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: a few yews on the south side, plus some pines.

SOURCES

Church notes: n.d.

CPAT Field Visit: 17 August 1995

Dawson 1909, 118

Glynne 1886, 276

Haslam 1979, 348

Jones and Bailey 1911, 65

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Some damp patches above the arcade, on the inside of the chancel arch and high up on the east wall. Some cracks in external faces of chancel and in east window. Otherwise appears to be reasonably satisfactory.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Llangynidr

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Cynidr and Mary**PRN** 16877**NGR** SO15551941

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church at Llangynidr is dedicated to St Mary and St Cynidr and lies about 6km to the west of Crickhowell, on the opposite side of the Rive Usk. The structure was completely rebuilt after a fire in 1928 and only a broken font and a few other fixtures survive from the earlier building. The churchyard was probably once sub-circular.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Totally rebuilt in 1928. Old stone re-used, but upper wall faces of nave (and chancel?) have new masonry.

HISTORY

It is likely in view of its dedication, churchyard morphology and location to have originated in the early medieval era, though nothing from this period has survived.

In the 1291 Taxatio Llangynidr is recorded as 'Ecclesia de Kened'ad' with a value of £5 6s 8d, appearing as 'Llangeneder' in the 1535 Valor.

Dawson records that at the beginning of the 19thC the church was in a dilapidated condition, but was then rebuilt. Though in a good state of repair in 1909, Dawson found there was nothing worth writing about.

The church was rebuilt after it was almost totally destroyed by fire in 1928.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangynidr church consists of a nave with a west bellcote, a slightly narrower chancel, a north vestry and organ chamber, which together are as long as the chancel, and a small west porch. It is aligned north-east/south-west but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' is a mixture of red and grey sandstone generally in small blocks and slabs though a few are larger, regularly shaped and randomly coursed; quoins of similar material are dressed.

Roofs: porch has stone slabs and a cross finial, nave and chancel have grey slates, ornate cross finials to both but that of the chancel is broken.

Bellcote over west end with two openings and two bells.

Drainage: nothing obvious.

Exterior

Porch. General. Fabric 'A'. Low roof overhanging side walls. West wall has a modern two-centred arch in red sandstone with a light above.

Nave. General. All walls slightly battered, that on north to height of c.1.0m.

North wall: in Fabric 'A' but an increasing number of red sandstone blocks towards the eaves, and masonry also includes fresher, yellow sandstone. Two windows one with a single light, the other with two; all lights have ogee heads and cusped tracery, all modern dressings.

East wall: nave no more than 1m higher than chancel, and little of the wall face is visible.

South wall: wall face shows same gradation in stone colour and weathering as north wall; windows as north wall also, though the more westerly is in buff sandstone. East of this window is a blocked doorway with a two-centred arch, all in red sandstone, with few signs of weathering. Blocking material is same as surrounding wall. This is obviously the position of the earlier south door and it appears that the original archway has been replicated.

West wall: Fabric A. Above porch is a round window in two-colour sandstone with a relieving arch over. A string-course divides the gable end from the bellcote above.

Chancel. North wall:- not visible because of vestry and organ chamber; roof of vestry is extension of chancel roof though with a different pitch.

East wall: Fabric 'A'. East window has two cusped lights and a quatrefoil above; a relieving arch.

South wall: wall in Fabric 'A' and battered to a height of 2m. As with nave walls there is a small change in the appearance of the masonry. Two two-light windows similar to those in nave, the sanctuary window smaller than its choir counterpart.

Vestry. General. Added on to building.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor with mats over; bare walls; simple wooden roof with collars and rafters.

North and south walls: small three-light windows in red sandstone, with benches beneath.

East wall: entrance to church provided by unchamfered two-centred arch in red sandstone.

West wall: two-centred arch in red sandstone, with heavy double doors.

Nave. General. Wooden block floor overlain by carpet. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Roof has four bays, the braced principal rafters supporting double collars with queen posts and raking struts below and king struts above.

North wall: deeply splayed windows; tomb slab of 1666 pinned to wall near north-west corner.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch painted grey, supported on heavily moulded capitals above responds.

South wall: windows deeply splayed and small stoup set in wall close to position of former south door.

West wall: deep reveal for door with two-centred head.

Chancel. General. Floor carpetted throughout except for choir stalls raised on wooden block platforms. One step up from nave to chancel and another up to sanctuary. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of three bays with arch-braced collars and arching struts above.

Walls have deeply splayed windows. No features of any antiquity.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: broken, thought to be 13thC.

Stoup: simple bowl set in rectangular niche; whitewashed.

Graveslab: to Richard Nicholas, son of the rector (d.1666).

Stone plaque: ?medieval or later. Similar in appearance to encaustic tile, recovered from church after 1928 fire, and now set in glass display case on south wall of nave. Depicts coat of arms, and akin to one 'above entrance to Aberhoylve Farm, Llangynidr'.

Church plate: includes a silver cup of 1671.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is set on fairly level ground, with an almost imperceptible drop from north to south. It is set back from a small stream which runs about 100m to the south-east of the church, and the surrounding ground undulates gently opening into the Usk Valley on the north.

Possibly the churchyard was originally circular but has been modified in recent times leaving only the curving eastern boundary. No traces of the earlier course are apparent in the heavily used graveyard.

It is generally well kept, though overgrown on the north-east and west sides, and is still used for burial.

Boundary: on the east is a bank with a 'cosmetic' stone retaining wall; the bank with an internal drop of perhaps 0.4m, and an external one of 1.0m, is the clearest evidence of a raised circular churchyard. On the west is a stone wall revealing little difference in the ground heights on either side of it, and this continues on south, revealing at least one blocked gap as well as the main lychgated entrance. On the north are buildings and a yard.

Monuments: the churchyard is densely packed with graves; mid to late 18thC grave markers are scattered around the east and south sides, and interspersed with numerous 19thC monuments, and there are a number of late 18thC ledgers close to the church wall. North of the church are only 19thC and 20thC memorials.

Furniture: the base of a cross consisting of a regular block of stone about 1m square with chamfered corners and a square-sectioned central socket. Reportedly not in its original position, and now just to the south of the nave.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: 19thC lychgate, with timber superstructure on stone walls, contains wooden gates. Another entrance lies in the north corner of the churchyard and both are served by tarmac paths.

Vegetation: A few yews are scattered around the north side of the yard. None are of great size though that beside the path close to the porch is bound with an iron hoop. Also some deciduous and evergreen bushes.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 24 October 1995

Dawson 1909, 131

Haslam 1979, 349

Powys SMR

CONDITION

Damp is showing in a few places and there is discoloration of the chancel ceiling. Otherwise satisfactory.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good

Llanhamlach

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Peter and Illtyd

PRN 16879

NGR SO08962644

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Illtyd and St Peter at Llanhamlach lies on the eastern side of the River Usk, 5km downstream from Brecon. The tower is attributed to the 14thC or 15thC, but the rest of the building was comprehensively restored in 1887, though a 15thC date has also been given to the porch. An early medieval inscribed stone, a 14thC effigy and a 15thC font are preserved within the church, and the churchyard with its hint of curvilinearity could take the site back to early medieval beginnings.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower probably 15thC or a little earlier; the church guide puts a Norman date on the lower stages though without convincing evidence to support the contention. The nave and chancel were restored in the later 19thC, though the extent of the restoration and rebuilding is unclear either from fieldwork or the contemporary architect's specification. The porch is a 19thC rebuild incorporating an earlier, 15thC doorway.

HISTORY

The British dedication, the location and the partial curvilinearity of the churchyard suggest an early medieval origin for Llanhamlach.

The church is now dedicated to two saints but it has been argued that the dedication to St Peter was added in the early Norman era by the endowment of the family of Sir John Walbeoffe who accompanied Bernard de Neufmarche in his conquest of this area at the end of the 11thC.

In the 1291 Taxatio Llanhamlach is referred to as 'Ecclesia de Lanhamelagh' at a value of £4 6s 8d, while its current name is given in the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1535.

The bells were installed in 1829.

The nave was completely rebuilt in 1804, and Glynne in 1855 commented on the fact that all but the tower and north porch had been replaced, the windows "of the poorest modern Gothic".

A further restoration in Decorated style was completed by S. W. Williams in 1887. This involved the excavation of the church floor to a depth of 12", window replacement and taking down unspecified amounts of the standing building.

Subsequent work includes the erection of the Reredos at the beginning of this century, and more recently the restoration of the Victorian wall paintings in the chancel.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanhamlach church comprises a nave and chancel in one, a west tower and a north porch at the north-west corner of the nave. The church is oriented fractionally south of true east.

Fabrics: 'A' is of grey and red sandstone in small and medium sized blocks and slabs; dressed stones for quoins; heavy pointing; irregular coursing.

'B' also consists of grey and red sandstone though the masonry is weathered to a more homogeneous tone; slabs predominate and show frequent coursing; large ashlar quoins.

Roofs: stone tiles but occasional slate replacements; semi-cylindrical terracotta ridge tiles.

Drainage: possibly there is a drainage trench along the north side though not very clear.

Exterior

Porch. General. Fabric 'A'.

North wall: two-centred arch with chamfered sandstone dressings, possibly original, and Griffiths (NMR) queried whether it might have been the original church door.

East and west walls: plain.

Nave and chancel. General. Externally indistinguishable apart from buttresses at juncture on both sides. Fabric 'A'.

North wall: three square-headed Victorian windows in red sandstone dressings; all are three-light with quatrefoils above, and labels over. One buttress.

East wall: one Victorian window of three lights with cinquefoil heads and panel tracery; human-headed stops to the hoodmoulding

South wall: as north wall, but there are considerable patches of limewash at lower levels and there is a disconformity in the fabric near the south-east corner to a height of nearly 2m. A chimney protrudes above the central buttress.

Tower. General. Fabric 'B'; Perpendicular style. Chamfered plinth at height of 1.2m; string-course at c.1.6m, a further string-course with plain waterspouts just below the battlemented parapet.

North wall: one chamfered slit window just above the lower string-course and two further examples higher up, not quite vertically aligned but regularly spaced; immediately above the third is the louvred belfry window, a rectangular window with two lights having ogee heads and cusped tracery, and moulded dressings, probably all original.

West wall: two chamfered slits and a belfry window, all similar to north side. Low down (but now covered by ivy) is reportedly a block of stone with what is thought to be pre-Conquest decoration.

South wall: one chamfered slit and a standard belfry window.

East wall: nave apex reaches to about half the height of the tower. Belfry window is of standard form.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor; plastered walls; simple roof of Victorian build (?).

East wall: three grave slabs of 1598, 1664 and? bracketed to wall.

South wall: Gothic arched doorway to nave in red sandstone with hoodmoulding and head-stops.

West wall: three 17thC graveslabs bracketed to wall, the only legible one of 1680.

Nave. General. Tiled floor, some matting, and at least two grilles over sub-floor heating vents down aisle; benches on wooden block flooring. Plastered walls. Roof of three full and two half bays; hammer beams on ornamented corbels, arch-braced collars with trefoils above.

North wall: nothing of significance.

South wall: early medieval stone against wall.

West wall: low Tudor doorway with stopped chamfers.

Chancel. General. Floor is tiled but carpet covered. Walls plastered. Roof of wood panels with braces.

North wall: incorporated into wall is an arched recess holding the medieval effigy (see below).

South wall: aumbry.

Tower. General. Flagged entrance and wooden floor one step above it. Splayed windows. Wooden ceiling to first floor.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Early medieval stone: the Moridic Stone. "A 10thC-11thC pillar stone which has lost at least several inches of its top. Inscribed on the right side (I)OHANNIS,/MORIDIC SUR(R)EXIT. HUNC LAPIDEM, in letters and language of the period before the Norman invasion. The other side is decorated with knots. The face is carved with a Latin cross with forked ends. Beneath the arms on the left is a small male figure, on the right a larger female figure, both with raised hands. These are, naturally, identified as St John and the Virgin Mary. The rest of the surface is filled in with various knot patterns. The treatment is linear and childlike" (Haslam).

Font: octagonal bowl and stem but not base; Perpendicular design.

Monuments: "recumbent stone effigy of Jane, wife of Sir Humphrey Stanley, wearing a cloth bound under her chin; datable to c.1325. The lettering on the slab and pillar was cut in the 17thC" (Haslam). Dawson (1909) was informed that there had been an effigy of a man as well, but this was broken and discarded presumably during the 19thC.

Graveslabs in the porch include those to Elisabeth Awbrey (d.1664), Sibill Williams (d.1680), and John and Margaret Walbeoff (no date).

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is D-shaped with curvilinear sides on the south and east and straight ones on the north and west: there is, however, no indication that the last two have been straightened out in the past. The ground within the church is level, and outside it, the only change in level is on the south-west where within 30m the ground falls drops down to the River Usk. The site is thus on the edge of a major river valley.

The churchyard is still used for burial; it is overgrown in places.

Boundary: the enclosure is defined by a stone wall; around the north-east corner and the north and west sides there is internal embanking but little change in ground levels internally and externally. However, at the south-west corner, even allowing for the internal embanking the external drop becomes marked, near 2m, and this continues though less dramatically to the road on the south and south-east. The continuous embanking within the perimeter wall appears to define the earlier boundary of the churchyard.

Monuments: these are spread over virtually the whole churchyard, but are densest to the north of the porch and to the east of the chancel. The earliest are inevitably those graveslabs in the porch; the earliest recognised in the churchyard is of 1769 just to the south of the south-east corner of the chancel, but many of the monuments are covered by vegetation, their inscriptions inaccessible.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: small timber lychgate with single wooden gate at north-east corner, and a small iron gate through the southern perimeter, both served by tarmac paths.

Vegetation: four old yews, perhaps significantly just inside the eastern and southern perimeter.

SOURCES

Church guide n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 17 August 1995
Dawson 1909, 133
Faculty 1887: NLW/SD/F/394
Glynne 1886, 277
Haslam 1979, 349
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Damp discoloration is affecting some parts of the interior, namely the south-west corner of the nave, the north-east corner of the chancel and the chancel arch. There is some cracking near the east window, and general signs of deterioration include uneven tiles in floor, moss on the roof and ivy encroachment on the walls.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llanigon

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Eigon**PRN** 16881**NGR** SO21383992

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Eigon's church is about 3km south-west of Hay-on-Wye, lying back from the valley of the Wye. It retains medieval fabric, perhaps from the 13thC, but only one original window and has been the focus of restoration work on several occasions, the most recent as a result of the Second World War. A curiosity is the bell chamber over the porch. Apart from its font it retains no medieval fittings. The churchyard is partially circular and is likely to have an early medieval origin.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave earlier than chancel. If its Victorian replacement windows are accurate reflections of what was there previously the paired lancets could indicate a 13thC date. Original east window reportedly moved to west wall in 19thC restoration, but as this window is itself not that old, we must assume it was replaced earlier in the 19thC.

Chancel and porch are 14thC though only south sanctuary window with Y-tracery is original; north window in chancel is thought to be 16thC/17thC, which suggests some modifications. Porch raised in 1670.

Restored in 1857: chancel east end largely rebuilt; chancel arch replaced. Vestry added.

Restoration after bombing in 1941, but its extent is impossible to gauge.

HISTORY

The dedication, the morphology and the location favour an early medieval origin for Llanigon church. Needless to say nothing survives from that period.

It is claimed that prior to 1135 it was the principle church in the Hay region.

In the Taxatio of 1254 Llanigon was referred to as 'Ecclesia Sancti Eguini' and valued at £4 8s 10d; the later Taxatio of 1291 termed it 'Ecclesia de Laneygan'.

There is a record that it was once dedicated to St Nicholas. Given the Taxatio records this is likely to have been a short-lived post-medieval re-dedication (or perhaps an error).

In 1805 the walls of the nave were described as 'bedaubed with caricatures of death and time, a wretched imitation of the King's arms and "many a holy text strewed around", instead of which a little white lime would have been more ornamental'. The seats were generally irregular and decayed, the window near the pulpit was, as usual, to the clergyman's back. The chancel was ceiled.

The church was restored about 1857, and the east window was erected by the parishioners. Around 1887 a stone was discovered, covered with rubbish, when the churchyard was being put into a better state. It was

thought to be a memorial to a 13thC priest, the cross having floriated ends in fleur-de-lys pattern, like others of that date.

In 1909 Dawson reported that the whole of the interior was cased in brick.

A brass in the church indicates that the church suffered extensive damage from a German bomb in 1941 and required considerable restoration.

ARCHITECTURE

The church at Llanigon consists of a nave and chancel, a south porch with a small stone lean-to on its east side, and a north vestry with boiler house underneath. The church is oriented south-west/north-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for this description.

Fabrics: 'A' of small to medium slabs with some blocks, of red and grey sandstone, but a mix of different sandstones, some coarse, some fine-grained; randomly coursed. Large grey ashlar quoins.

'B' of medium-sized sandstone blocks, regularly shaped, irregularly coursed.

'C' small through to large, grey and red sandstone blocks, the larger towards the base; randomly coursed, but relatively regularly laid.

'D' weathered slabs of sandstone, small to medium in size.

'A' and 'C' are original but latter may also be re-used in places? 'B' is Victorian; 'D' from 1670.

Roofs: generally reconstituted clay tiles with ceramic ridge tiles, but chancel has slates; cross finials.

Drainage: not obvious.

Exterior

Nave. General. Battered base to about 0.8m. Victorian buttresses on north wall only. Ivy and other vegetation covers some of wall faces. Arguably of c.1300 and Haslam further claims that present west window was originally the east window.

North wall: Fabric 'A', with fresh appearance, where not disguised by vegetation. Three two-light windows, two-centred arches, chamfered dressings: all inserted, though difficult to determine precise edges of insertions. It is also claimed (by Dawson) that there was a small doorway opposite the main south door, which was blocked at the time of the Victorian restoration. This was not seen during the field visit.

East wall: nave up to 2m higher at apex than chancel, but less at eaves because of steeper pitch of nave roof. Continuation of battered base indicates that chancel added to nave.

South wall: Fabric 'A' with standard quoins; patchy pointing and render. Two replaced windows as on north side. Butt end of roof tie-beam visible near south-west angle. Porch appears to butt against wall.

West wall: probably Fabric 'A' but render on gable end and earlier plaster at lower levels. West window has three stepped lights with cavetto mouldings; grey sandstone. Must be Victorian, yet it is claimed that this was formerly the east window in the chancel which was moved in 1857.

Vestry. General. In Fabric 'B'. Chamfered plinth. Two-centred arched doorway with flight of steps up to it on east; steps down to boiler room on same side. Two-light window on north comparable with nave windows.

Chancel. General. Fabric 'C'. Base battered to height of 1m, and chamfered string-course in red sandstone above this.

North wall: string-course terminates about 1.2m along this wall, almost exactly above where at ground level foundation plinth projects from batter. Traces of limewash on wall face. Single round-headed window in grey sandstone: perhaps 16thC/17thC, though local historians see it as the sole indicator of a Norman church, albeit re-dressed at the time of the Victorian restoration.

East wall: Fabric 'C'; red sandstone quoins and string-course. Wall above this was probably wholly reconstructed using new materials lower down and re-using old masonry at higher levels. Large window with Y-tracery: Victorian. Three mural slabs attached to wall: one of 1775, the others too badly weathered to read.

South wall: Fabric 'C'; some plaster remains, and much ivy. Quoins replaced from height of c.1.5m. String-course for about 2m, then stops. Two-light window with Y-tracery and cusping, a two-centred arch over, all in red sandstone though mullion and some jambstones replaced; relieving arch of edge slabs, though this might not be original. A priest's door and a small blocked window adjacent to it, both disguised by the ivy. West wall: not present.

Porch. General. Earliest porch thought to be 14thC. Unusually it has bell-chamber (of 1670) above it, but an unsubstantiated local tradition has it that this was formerly the priest's living quarters. Stone lean-to against east side, apparently a coal shed erected in 1849 when old stone staircase to bell chamber was closed.

East wall: Fabric D. Slit window high up, and to south a much larger opening to illuminate bell chamber, with sandstone slabs for louvres and a timber lintel. At height of c.1.2m and close to south-east angle is a putlog-like socket, matched by one in west wall; a local belief that these housed a wooden beam that could be used to reinforce the original door.

South wall: large dressed red sandstone slabs form front, probably a 'C' variant, but with something akin to 'A' above. Two-centred archway containing 19thC latticed wooden gates has unusual stopped-chamfered and half-round mouldings on plain capitals; perhaps some replacement of dressings? Porch then raised and probably widened: earlier gable line visible and masonry of 'D' type above, with three broad slit windows represents bell-stage added in 1670. Gable-end rafters covered with pegged sandstone slates but these now falling off.

West wall: large rectangular louvred lights illuminate belfry, the louvre boards of sandstone. Lower parts of wall in 'C', the upper part in 'D'.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor. Walls plastered and limewashed. Substantial wooden staging supports bells visible through the open timberwork, and this is propped up by four large corner pillars which are later additions. Roof has arch-braced collar trusses, some truncated, of two types; all are re-used medieval timbers.

North wall: two-centred archway with stopped-chamfers, all dressings in grey sandstone, apparently all replacements of 13thC original.

East wall: wooden bench against wall. Socket for beam (see exterior).

South wall: arch internally stop-chamfered.

West wall: as east wall.

Nave. General. Victorian tiled floor with central heating grille down aisle which runs the full length from west window to edge of sanctuary. Numbered box pews raised on wooden plinths. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Barrel ceiling, plastered and whitewashed, but one arch-braced truss visible at west end.

North wall: deeply splayed windows.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch in grey sandstone. Dates from the restoration of 1857.

South wall: as north wall plus arched reveal for main south door.

West wall: wall unplastered. One 19thC mural tablet.

Chancel. General. Victorian encaustic tiles in sanctuary which is raised one step above rest of building. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Crude roof of three bays with two principal rafter trusses reinforced by scissor braces beneath; purlins supported on rough corbels on west wall.

North wall: splayed window with flat sill.

East wall: wall is stepped in above the west window, suggesting not only that roof raised, but probably that internally some of original east wall in position. Four tablets with Lord's Prayer placed on wall in 1853.

South wall: mid-19thC commemorative plaque only.

West wall: chancel arch only.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: "old font (in the porch) is 13thC, circular, with three lines incised at the rim" (Haslam).

Mortar?: in porch opposite old font and of similar size. Found in field and brought to Ty-mawr (the adjacent farm) in 1883.

Bells: three of 1670.

Plate: chalice of 1637.

Register: from 1712.

Altar Rails: 18thC.

Victorian fittings include:

Barrel organ: of uncertain date though pre-dates the 1857 restoration; at west end of nave.

Stained Glass: "east window by J.Bell, 1856" (Haslam).

Box pews: 19thC.

CHURCHYARD

The enclosure is now D-shaped with straight sides on the south-west and south-east, and a curve to the northern edge. It is clear that the parish hall has encroached on the original enclosure near the west corner, and one may suspect that the boundary has been modified on the south though there is no corroborative evidence for this assumption. The southern part of the churchyard is higher than the church, reflecting the natural slope.

The churchyard occupies a spur location with a steep drop down to the valley of the Cilonw Brook on the north-east and a gentler descent to a tributary on the north-west.

It is overgrown in places, particularly on the south, and is still used for modern burial.

Boundary: a continuous stone wall forms the boundary, except around the parish hall which is enclosed by railings. On the north-east the wall acts as a revetment above a stockyard, and on the north-west the natural slope has undoubtedly exaggerated the 1m height difference between the internal and external ground levels. On the south-west the ground level outside the wall is perhaps 0.7m below that inside, indicating that the churchyard is raised to a limited extent.

Monuments: most of the churchyard is covered by graves and their markers. These are regularly laid out on the south but not dense. There are a number of visible mid-18thC monuments, and two mid-17thC examples have recently been uncovered, recorded and covered over again by the Breconshire Family History Group. On the north side, the graves are predominantly 19thC. As usual flaking and general weathering is taking a toll.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none obvious.

Ancillary features: near the southern corner is the main entrance with a lychgate, stone walls supporting a timber superstructure, and an inscription recording its restoration in 1976. Adjacent is a vertical slab stile. Kissing gates are set in the south-west and north-east sides, and all the tracks are grassy paths.

Vegetation: four yews around the southern boundary of the churchyard and some deciduous and coniferous bushes within the yard.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1995

Church notes

CPAT Field Visit: 23 October 1995

Dawson 1909, 139

Haslam 1979, 350

Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 106

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

General signs of deterioration including damp, cracks at apex of east gable externally and around chancel windows internally, and vegetation growing up north wall.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Llanlleonfel

Diocese	Swansea and Brecon	Dedication	No known dedication
PRN	32166	NGR	SN93874993

GENERAL SUMMARY

Llanlleonfel church which appears not to have a dedication is situated on the edge of the Dulas valley about 10km west of Builth Wells. A simple structure, it was completely rebuilt in the 1870s and, apart from an early medieval pillar stone and three 18thC memorials to the Gwynne family, contains nothing of interest. Its churchyard may once have been circular but not now.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Wholly rebuilt in 1876. Dawson claimed that [curiously] only the mullions from the previous church were salvaged and re-used.

HISTORY

Possibly this is an early medieval foundation though the evidence is far from conclusive.

It does not appear in the medieval Taxatios but is recorded as 'Llanlloenvell' in the Episcopal Register for St Davids in 1513.

It has been suggested that an earlier church dated from the 16thC and was progressively restored by the Gwynne family from about 1712, being used by them until the end of the 18thC. But Sir Stephen Glynne in 1867 and Francis Kilvert in 1873 both recorded that the church was ruinous, "...a most deplorable object" (Glynne) and "...the only occupants being several white owls" (Kilvert). Glynne did record it as an undivided nave and chancel, a debased wooden screen of three-arched compartments, and a wooden bellcote over the west end, but with "literally no architectural feature deserving the name". The windows were modern with wooden mullions. The porch had been destroyed.

It was rebuilt in 1876 by R. J. Withers, with a bell turret over the centre of the church, but this was later moved to the west end.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanlleonfel church comprises a nave and chancel in one, a south porch and a north vestry. It is oriented east /west.

Fabric: dressed blocks of dark shale, of medium and larger size; irregularly coursed; same material for quoins; buff-yellow sandstone for all dressings. Victorian masonry.

Roofs: slates with toothed ceramic ridge tiles; cross finial at east end of chancel.

Bellcote with two apertures under Caernarvon arches. Weathercock above.

Drainage: nothing obvious.

Note - this church was completely rebuilt in 1876. For this reason the following description is an outline only.

Exterior

Nave . General. Basal plinth with freestone chamfer. Single lancets, two on north, two on south and two longer ones on west. Stepped buttress about half way along south side.

Chancel . General. A double chamfered plinth. No windows on north, but two standard lancets on south, while on east three stepped and separate lancets.

Porch. General. Two-centred arched doorway. Side walls have roundel lights containing trefoils.

Vestry. General. Double chamfer as the chancel. Pair of rectangular lights in north wall. Chimney over vestry roof.

Interior

Porch. General. Three steps up into porch. Red and black tiles on floor. Walls bare; stone benches along sides. Roof of close-set arch-braced collars. Main church door has two-centred arch.

Nave. General. Tiled floor, even under benches, with carpet down centre and metal grilles beneath it. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Roof of close-set arch-braced collars and raking struts. Two-centred chancel arch having capitals and complex mouldings. West wall has three Gwynne slabs, the armorial details recently repainted?

Chancel. General. Tiled floor embellished with a few encaustic tiles; rear choir stalls and organ raised on wooden plinths. Walls and roof as nave. North wall has plain, narrow, two-centred arched doorway to vestry, east wall a painted reredos and south wall an aumbry and sedile.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Pillar stone: "inscribed with a metrical epitaph: I(N) (S)IN(D)ONE MUTIIORUERT RUALLAUNQ SEPULCRIS + IUDICII ADV(E)NTUM SPECTA(N)T I(N) PACE TREM(EN)DUM. 7thC-9thC?" (Haslam). Originally in the churchyard, and there is a 1940's claim of a second stone standing eight feet from the first. The validity of the claim cannot be established.

Bell: of 1716, now on the floor beneath the west window.

Monuments: three matching 18thC tablets to the Gwynne family of Garth: of 1708, 1786 and the third not dated though Glynne claimed it to be 1712.

Plate: chalice and paten of 1730.

Registers: only from 1838.

Victorian fittings include:

Stained glass: east window of three lancets, 1889.

CHURCHYARD

The medium-sized churchyard is polygonal though it gives the overall impression of having once been sub-circular. However, there are no obvious earthworks to signal expansion or contraction. It is sited on the western edge of a shallow river valley, the ground within the churchyard sloping down very gently from west to east.

It is well-maintained in places and is still used for burial.

Boundary: this takes the form of a stony bank, frequently surmounted by a hedge or wire fence. On the north the bank appears to be accompanied by a shallow internal ditch and on the east and south the internal ground level is a little higher than the external level.

Monuments: these are well spread around the south side, with occasional local densities, but there are none to the north of the church. No memorials from the 18thC survive.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: church gives the impression of being set on a slight mound, particularly noticeable at the east and west ends, though the former may represent an attempt to provide a level platform for the building.

Ancillary features: main entrance is farm gate on north-east. There are also stiles on the west and east. Grass paths only.

Vegetation: large trees - mixed pine and deciduous species - around the perimeter. There is one mature yew on a mound to the south of the porch, and about five other, smaller examples inside the northern and eastern perimeters.

SOURCES

Church guide n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 14 May 1996
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 75
Dawson 1909, 145
Haslam 1979, 353
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

The building appears to be sound though there are signs of floor subsidence in the chancel.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llansantffraed juxta Usk

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Bridget

PRN 16886

NGR SO12242349

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Ffraed (Bride) lies in a sub-rectangular churchyard on east side of River Usk, some 9km to the south-east of Brecon. The date of its foundation is unknown and the present building is wholly Victorian. A few medieval fittings survived the rebuilding and there is an interesting group of post-medieval memorials.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Complete rebuild in uniform masonry with Gothic details in 1884/85; only one earlier window head retained; position of new church very slightly different from that of the old, and a description of latter given in Williams 1887.

HISTORY

Church is dedicated to St Bride, and Dawson speculated that the first church was founded here in early medieval period. The location though not the churchyard morphology is consistent with such a view.

The Taxation of 1254 contains a reference to 'Ecclesia de Sancta Brigida' at the relatively low value of £1, while the 1535 Valor refers to it as 'Llanseyntfrede'.

The predecessor of the present church had medieval and earlier 17thC features, and a curious 'bee-hive' bell-turret, though Theophilus Jones at the beginning of the 19thC claimed that the church had been rebuilt in 1690. In a detailed discussion Williams described the building as consisting of a nave, north aisle and chancel, and a south porch that had a pointed arch to the doorway of uncertain date. The bell-turret had circular openings and a peculiar string course, and was considered to be 18thC. The priest's door was round-headed but undatable. The interior sloped upwards towards the chancel. There was a four-bay arcade, the arches with semi-circular heads set on massive piers, and the chancel arch was similar. Williams argued that a north aisle and chancel were added in the early 16thC, and further alterations were made around 1626.

The building, which by the later 19thC was ruinous and too unsafe for use, was replaced by Stephen Williams, the Rhayader architect. He claimed late Norman/Early English dressed stone and architectural fragments, including an Early English lancet in the north wall, as well as three square-headed Perpendicular windows. One, window head, carrying a date of 1626, was saved from the south wall of the nave and placed in the vestry, and an old stoup was retained in the porch. A series of monuments and graveslabs were also transferred.

It was totally rebuilt in Gothic style by Williams in 1884-5. Stone from the earlier building could be used for specific purposes as detailed in the Specification.

ARCHITECTURE

Church consists of nave, chancel, north (Buckland) chapel, south chapel with adjacent octagonal tower and spire, and south porch. Brick lean-to on west side of north chapel acts as boiler house, with chimney above. Apart from the lean-to all elements belong to the rebuild of 1884/5.

Church is aligned north-east/south-west but for the purposes of this description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabric: 'A' of rectangular slabs and blocks of reddish-grey sandstone, small to medium in size, randomly coursed; red sandstone dressings.

Roof: red ceramic tiles with comparable ridge tiles, large coping stones on gables, cross finials to nave, chapels and porch. Corbel table supports metal guttering with downpipes. Spire topped by cross.

Drainage: gully visible around south side, while eastwards towards chancel the whole church is terraced into hillside to depth of 1.5m and more.

Exterior

Walls all in Fabric 'A', chancel slightly lower than nave; chamfered plinth towards wall base; nave has single-light windows (except for west window), beneath hoodmouldings with ballflower-like stops; elsewhere two- and three-light windows, the hoodmouldings with human-heads stops; angle buttresses at west end of nave (one containing foundation stone of 1884), diagonal buttresses on chapels and east end of chancel.

Interior

Nave has tiled floor with heating vents, and flush wooden block flooring under benches. Four steps up to chancel, the floor similar but carpeted; one step up to sanctuary. Vents also in north chapel, where marble memorials against the walls. South chapel has gravestones back to at least 1598 as floor flags (some hidden by organ).

Nave has arched-braced roof on corbels, with collars; 6 bays in all. Wagon roof in chancel.

Walls of bare red sandstone blocks, set off by white corbels, and white, Early English style foliage capitals on the chancel arch.

Organ and vestry occupy south chapel, with access through adjacent tower as well as from chancel.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: "late 13thC, octagonal with curved undersurfaces and cushion stops at base" (Haslam).

Stoup: hexagonal and weathered; in porch.

Monuments: survivals of older church, those in north chapel: Games Jones (d.1681), with a segmental pediment and an epitaph attributed to Henry Vaughan; Margaret Jones (d.1695), on a fictive cloth with putti and garlands and formal frame; Thomas Jones (d.1713), in surround of flowers, fruit, and putti (no architecture). In chancel: Edmund Jones (d.1683), inscribed on convex slab, in an open-pedimented aedicule; Thynne Howe Gwynne (d.1826), the inscription apparently inserted in an early 18thC Corinthian tabernacle. In base of tower: Anne Heday (d.1654); Thomas Watkins (d.1780); and Meredith Arthur (d.1805). Against reveal of tower doorway: David Watkins (d.1618); undated (17thC?) slab in Welsh.

Gravestones: in floor of south chapel/organ chamber - gravestones of 1598 to David Howel, 1633 and two of 1696, and at least two others inaccessible. Williams claimed there were seven in all, six were detailed by Jones, but the seventh had been displaced since his time.

Churchyard memorials: Henry Vaughan, whose brother was rector here, buried in churchyard in 1695; large Grecian sarcophagus to Col. Gwynne Holford, erected in 1847.

Worked stone: two fragments of octagonal stem from a cross shaft or the like, on either side of porch.

Worked stone: in tower room, the top of a flat-headed window incorporating pair of round-headed lights, and carrying initials plus date of 1626; subsequently utilised as a double recess.

Registers: from 1701?

CHURCHYARD

Llansantffraed churchyard is broadly sub-rectangular but there is a slight curve to its south-east side, and an 1817 map hints at a rather more curvilinear enclosure. It is set on a slope just above the valley bottom with the River Usk little more than 100m to south-west. Church itself is terraced into this slope.

Churchyard is tidy and well-maintained, and is still used for burials.

Boundary: consists of a mortared stone wall on south-east, the ground level internally slightly lower than that outside. On north-east is a revetment wall with internal banked slope into churchyard and a line of conifers, and outside a wire fence. Mortared stone wall picks up on north-west where internal ground level perhaps maximum of 0.3m higher than outside. On south-west is a high revetment wall, the churchyard level raised above the adjacent road by at least 2.5m.

Monuments: stones are well spread with some concentrations of graves on south-east and north-west sides, but few in the north-east quadrant. Earlier stones cleared and leant against south-east perimeter wall, but these are now largely covered by vegetation; a particular grouping of cleared slabs, some broken, in east corner range from 1775 to 1912. Here too is Henry Vaughan's slab. East of the north chapel is an underground 'mausoleum' constructed for a Holford.

Furniture: none though note the shaft fragments outside the porch (above).

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: at north-west corner a modern wooden swing gate provides main access to churchyard, while at south corner are double wooden gates supported on pillars: both have tarmac paths leading to church. Near north corner is a small metal swing gate.

Vegetation: several large yew trees on west side of church, smaller ones along south-eastern perimeter of churchyard. Conifers along north-east edge and occasional one elsewhere.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 24 October 1995

Dawson 1909, 155

Faculty 1885: NLW/SD/F/420

Haslam 1979, 354

NMR Aberystwyth

Williams 1887

CONDITION

Externally it appears sound. Internally, damp beginning to have a marked effect: some sandstone blocks have flaking faces in nave, but particularly at floor level in north chapel.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Poor?

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor

Llanspyddid

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Cattwg

PRN 16891

NGR SO01192818

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cadog's church is a small, simple structure on the southern edge of the Usk Valley some 3km west of Brecon. Medieval fabric survives, and together with remnants of the original fenestration, may date to the early 14thC. The church contains a medieval font and piscina as well as a fine range of 18thC memorials. The churchyard was originally larger, perhaps D-shaped; it has an early medieval cross-inscribed pillar stone set up in it to the south of the church.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave and chancel walls appear to be partially rebuilt, notably at east end of north wall and upper courses of south wall; east wall appears uniform and may be wholly reconstructed or perhaps just the upper part. West wall has inserted window but some original masonry. Totally re-roofed.

Two or perhaps three of the windows retain some medieval dressings; north doorway is original; porch is exceptional for its facade.

HISTORY

The dedication, location and morphology of the churchyard indicate that this is an early medieval foundation, a view perhaps reinforced by the pillar stone in the churchyard

As with so many churches in rural Powys little of its subsequent history and development is known. It is recorded as 'Ecclesia de Landespetit' in the Taxatio of 1291 and as 'Llanspythyt' in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535.

In 1880 C.Buckeridge re-roofed and partially rebuilt the church, giving it "a regular and boring interior" (Haslam) and a west bellcote. The Specification for the work required existing masonry to be re-used and excavation beneath the floor to a depth of two feet.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanspyddid church comprises a nave and chancel in one, a bellcote over the west end, a porch on the north side of the nave near the north-west angle and a vestry on the south side at the south-west corner. The church is oriented south-west/north-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for this description.

Fabrics: 'A' is of red and grey sandstone, mainly tabular, randomly coursed.

'B' is of regular red-brown sandstone slabs and some blocks, with well-dressed quoins.

'A' is medieval fabric, but some at least re-cycled in Victorian rebuilding; 'B' is Victorian at the earliest.

Roofs: concrete aggregate tiles.

Drainage: some evidence on north side for a drain, particularly in the vicinity of the porch.

Exterior

Porch. General. Fabric A, though sandstone appears more tabular than in nave. Porch walls abut nave wall; drip course on nave wall over porch apex.

North wall: doorway has wooden arch provided by an arch-braced collar and supported by timber uprights, one replaced in stone for bottom 1m. 16thC carved barge boards front the gable and there is a fine ornamental head at apex.

East and west walls: plain.

Nave and chancel. General. Described here as a single unit, as no distinction externally. Thought to be 14thC in origin.

North wall: three two-light windows, two illuminating the nave, the other the chancel; all have elongated cusped heads and Y-tracery. From west i) a modern lean-to stone shed abutting both nave wall and west side of porch; ii) porch; iii) window with original, red sandstone jambs but grey springers, mullion and tracery; iv) window all in grey sandstone, largely replaced dressings. Stone around this window is clearly different, and indicates rebuilding - there is a clear fabric change just to the east; east of this juncture the fabric is still identifiable as 'A' but is more tabular and cleaner. There is thus a possibility that the wall has been taken down and rebuilt; v) window predominantly in red sandstone, largely replaced, the jambs not flush with the masonry of the wall; vi) dressed stone for quoins includes a projecting quoin of Victorian date at eaves level to support gable end timber.

East wall: all one build in Fabric A. Heavy three-light Victorian window in yellow sandstone, and no clear signs that it has been inserted into an existing wall. Two illegible 18thC mural tablets pinned to wall.

South wall: fabric is 'A' throughout, but the coursing is more regular than on the north side, and the upper part of the wall is cleaner than the lower part, probably indicating a rebuild. Three windows which from east are: i) two-light window in chancel, cusped heads, under a pointed, almost four-centred arch, in original pinkish sandstone; ii + iii) both windows with Y-tracery similar to most westerly window on north side but in Victorian creamy yellow freestone; taller than chancel window. One visible junction in masonry between windows ii) and iii), the significance unclear; iv) two mural tablets of 1782 and 1792 pinned to wall; v) vestry.

West wall: large three-light window with trefoil above, wholly Victorian; relieving arch over; signs that window inserted. Beneath the window coarse plastering and an irregular surface indicates infilling for an unspecified reason. Bellcote above gable. One quoin at north-west angle has unconvincing decoration of slashed lines and circular depressions. Broken 17thC graveslab with floriate cross against wall.

Vestry. General. Fabric 'B'. Window on east, door on west. Abuts nave wall.

Interior

Porch. General. Floor of black and red tiles. Undistinguished 19thC roof of collars, purlins and rafters.

East and west walls: low stone seats on stone plinths.

South wall: two-centred arched doorway, grey sandstone dressings with stopped chamfers (though one

missing); modern wire and timber door in front of older internal door.

Nave. General. Concrete floor with heating grilles, wooden boards under benches. All walls, except for dressings, plastered and whitewashed in two colours. Roof has intermittent tie beams with scissor trusses piercing collars; presumably Victorian.

North wall: faintly splayed doorway reveal; roughened stonework of more westerly window confirms that some original dressings survive in contrast to the other nave window. North-west corner has large number of mural tablets mounted in rows, about a dozen in all and predominantly 18thC.

East wall: nothing of significance.

South wall: Victorian windows, 19thC/20thC vestry doorway with 18thC mural tablet over; 20thC brasses.

West wall: lower part of wall covered by tomb slabs, predominantly 18thC.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, one within choir and a third to sanctuary. Floors of plain and encaustic tiles with some carpet. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of arch-braced collars with carved corbels. Three rows of foiled windbraces: quatrefoils sandwiched between trefoils; assumed to be Victorian.

North wall: erosion scars on window jambs does suggest that these dressings may be original.

East wall: 'Holy, Holy, Holy' painted over main window.

South wall: early piscina adjacent to altar.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stoup or Piscina: "late Norman, with dogtooth round the square rim" (Haslam).

Font: 13thC bowl, the rest is modern.

Pulpit: "the sounding board over the pulpit is made from vine-trails and part of the coving from the late 15thC screen" (Haslam).

Chest: ?18thC; against south wall of nave.

Monuments: marble sarcophagus to John Pearce (d.1856), by John Evan Thomas. Carved with arms, torches, etc. Major group of 18thC mural tablets and grave slabs on west wall, and on north wall as far as north door. These include: Richard Williams (d.1700); Penry Williams of Penpont (d.1743); Sarah Williams (d.1798); Anna Williams (d.1754); Rebecca Williams (d.1720); Llewelyn Williams (d.1801) and relatives; Morgan Prosser (d.1705); William Thomas (d.1746); William John (d.1777); Henry Williams (d.1768); Griffiths Rees (d.1752); William Williams (d.1807); and at least one 17thC slab. In the vestry are memorials to John Thomas (d.1755); Howell Webb (d.1772); Thomas Price (d.1778); Margaret Jones (d.1768); and John Jones (d.1772).

Registers: from 1699.

Victorian fittings include:

Stained glass: west window by Charles Gibbs, c.1856.

Screen: carries date of 1926.

CHURCHYARD

The ground level within the churchyard slopes gradually from south to north, but the main drop, down to the River Usk, is 50m to the north on the far side of the main road. With the ground rising behind the church and village, Llanspyddid occupies a natural shelf on the south side of the valley.

The churchyard has been truncated at some point in the past. Probably originally double the size and broadly D-shaped, its western portion has reverted to secular use but the earlier boundary was detected during an evaluation of the adjacent plot in 1994.

The boundary consists of a stone wall on the north side which continues on the west, and also on the south and east where material is mounded up inside it. With a consistently lower ground level outside than inside, the churchyard can be described as raised.

Monuments: these are unevenly spread throughout the yard with only a few localised areas on the north lacking obvious graves. Most are 19thC and 20thC, but there are some late 18thC examples immediately to the north of the nave and chancel.

Furniture: to the south of the church is a small upright stone with carvings of two circled crosses, one with four small circles placed round it. An inscription noted by Lhwyl in 1698 is no longer visible; c.0.9m high by 0.4m by 0.2m; 7thC-9thC. Said to mark the grave of Aulach, father of Brychan. Dawson claimed that it was originally double its present height but was cut down at the time of the 1880 restoration.

Earthworks: nothing other than the internal embanking on the east and south sides. This also continues on the west side despite the fact that this must be a later boundary.

Ancillary features: a small, modern double gate provides the main access from the north, with steps leading up to the path. There is also a wooden 'field' gate on the south side.

Vegetation: yews - about eight - around the perimeter including the west though not the north side. Those seen by Dawson shading the path have gone.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 September 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 76
Dawson 1909, 190
Faculty 1879: NLW/SD/F/425
Haslam 1979, 354
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR

CONDITION

Generally okay though some peeling paint in the nave.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Good

Llanwrthwl

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Gwrthwl**PRN** 16894**NGR** SN97576373

GENERAL SUMMARY

Saint Gwrthwl's Church at Llanwrthwl, some 4km south of Rhayader in western Radnorshire, is a simple two-celled structure which was completely replaced in the 19thC. It contains a Romanesque font but nothing else of particular interest. Its churchyard, once sub-circular, houses a large standing slab of rock which could conceivably be prehistoric.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Completely rebuilt in 1875.

HISTORY

The dedication, location and morphology of the churchyard indicate an early medieval origin for the foundation. This conjecture apart nothing can be established of its early history.

The 1291 Taxatio carries a reference to 'Ecclesia de Lanuchul' at a value of £5 6s 8d, while the 1535 Valor refers to 'Llanvthull'.

The rebuilding of the structure was undertaken by J.G.Finch Noyes in 1875. Little is known of its predecessor. Though the 1875 specification stipulates that stone from the old church should be re-used there is no sign externally that this instruction was put into effect.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanwrthwl church comprises a nave and narrower chancel, a south porch, and a vestry on the north side of the chancel. It is aligned almost precisely east to west.

Fabric: squared, blocks and slabs of a grey, granular stone, perhaps a coarse sandstone; random coursing. Buff sandstone for dressings.

Roofs: slates with ornamental, terracotta ridge tiles (except on porch); cross finials to nave, chancel and porch.

Drainage: a hint of a drainage trench around the southern wall, ambivalent evidence on north and west and tarmac on east.

Note: the whole building was rebuilt in the Victorian era. For that reason the following description is a brief

summary only.

Exterior

General. Chancel narrower and lower than nave; angle buttresses at corners and along north side of nave; low chamfered plinth around whole building, and additional decorative string-course on west front. Walls of bare stone except on west which is completely whitewashed, and has two linked buttresses, centrally placed, and probably represent the remains of a bellcote support. The vestry and porch are integral parts of the plan and used the same stone as the body of the church; there is a boiler room beneath the vestry.

Windows are single or paired lancets, including three in both the west and south walls of the nave, four in the north wall, and two in the south wall of the chancel. The east window consists of three trefoiled lights under a two-centred arch with a hoodmoulding that has plain stops.

Interior

General. One step up into porch which has a tiled floor, a roof of scissor struts, a tall two-centred arched doorway, and walls faced in yellow sandstone.

Nave is one step up from porch. It is completely carpeted while the chancel and sanctuary, one and two steps up respectively, have encaustic tiles. Walls plastered and whitewashed, except for the bare west wall of the nave. Roofs have close-set scissor trusses. There is a large chancel arch supported on round pillars. The whole structure is open, airy and totally Victorian, with 20thC brasses on the north wall of the nave.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: circular bowl with four projecting heads, circular shaft and massive base; 11thC/12thC. There is a local tradition that this was brought from Cwmhir Abbey at the Dissolution.

Piscina: now inaccessible in the vestry but may be a survival of the pre-Victorian church.

Victorian furnishings include:

Stained glass: "east window of 1874. West window by Leonard Walker, 1936, depicting St Paul. Almost abstract" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

The present churchyard is small and irregular in shape, but the slightly rounded perimeter in the north-east sector is the remnant of an even smaller but probably sub-circular enclosure, the low scarp of which is still apparent on the west and south sides. The River Wye flows less than 150m to the east and the church and its accompanying settlement lie on the valley floor.

Generally, the churchyard is level and is raised above the surrounding ground by up to one metre. It is well-kept and still used for burial.

Boundary: the perimeter of the extensions on the south and west are distinguished by a rough unmortared wall and iron railings respectively. On the east there is a retaining wall and some internal embanking, and this continues on the north until the external road gives way to a garden plot.

Monuments: these are spread throughout most of the churchyard, the densest groupings being on the north side of the church. Modern burials lie to the south-west, while there are a few 18thC gravestones to the south of the church, the earliest being from 1769. Three early 19thC memorials are propped up against the boundary wall near the gate.

Furniture: a large block of stone, sometimes classed as a standing stone is set by the south porch. Just outside the vestry door on the north side of the church is a bell beneath a canopy: it carries the date 1878 and was cast by J.Taylor and Co.

Earthworks: a low scarp bank little more than 0.3m high runs across the west side of the yard and curves back along the south side just within the railings.

Ancillary features: a single ornamental iron gate is the main entrance in the south-east corner, and there are adjacent projecting steps over the wall. A tarmac path leads to the porch.

Vegetation: two mature yews grow on what is presumed to be the old boundary to the west of the church.

SOURCES

Church notes. n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 27 February 1996
Faculty 1875: NLW/SD/F/440
Haslam 1979, 355
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

A few signs of damp on internal south and east walls of chancel, but generally in a good condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good

Llanwrtyd

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication David

PRN 16895

NGR SN86364778

GENERAL SUMMARY

St David's Church occupies an isolated position above the River Irfon some 5km from Llanwrtyd Wells. At the heart of the present structure may be 14thC or perhaps 15thC masonry but much of the structure could be 16thC, and there has been subsequent rebuilding and renewal. Its rood screen and loft have gone but the mural stair survives, and there is a medieval font and an early medieval pillar stone. The churchyard is partially curvilinear, and an early medieval foundation on this spot seems very likely.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

It is difficult to phase the building because of the irregularity and homogeneity of the masonry.

Nave may originally have been 14thC, perhaps partially rebuilt and extended westwards in 16thC, and its major windows also 16thC, though much renewed.

Small chancel with virtually no diagnostic features. Claimed to be 16thC, but has probably seen considerable rebuilding.

HISTORY

The early history and subsequent development of this remote church are unrecorded and there is no mention of it in the 13thC Taxatio or the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535. However, the location and churchyard morphology do suggest an early medieval foundation.

William Williams Pantycelyn, the famous hymn writer, was the curate here in 1740-42.

The church was restored by C. Buckeridge in 1862, and Glynne when he visited it in 1867 found it "nicely restored and in good condition".

It remained the parish church until St James was built in Llanwrtyd Wells in 1896.

Further work was done on it in 1935. Roof repairs in 1969 revealed the rood loft stairs.

ARCHITECTURE

A small church with a nave and west bellcote, a comparatively small chancel and a south porch. The church is oriented almost exactly east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of irregular blocks and slabs of grey and brown rubble ranging from coarse sandstone through to (?) mudstone, shale and large worn pebbles, random coursing; larger blocks for quoins, some of them dressed.

'B' of small to large blocks of fine sandstone, little more than a variation of 'A'.

Roofs: slates with reconstituted clay ridge tiles; metal cross finials to porch and east end of nave, and a larger one in stone on chancel.

Bellcote is rectangular with a concrete capping, not slated; one bell with openings on east and west.

Drainage: a slight depression around south side of nave is suggestive though not conclusive, and there is nothing obvious elsewhere, but for a brick and slab opening by the west porch wall.

Exterior

Nave. General. Fabric A. Chimney rises through the roof on the north side.

North wall: base of wall battered to height of c.0.7m at north-west corner, c.1.2m at north-east; wall face exhibits remnant limewash traces as well as heavy pointing. Three windows, all rectangular with labels. From west i) three lights with trefoil tracery and ogee heads in brown sandstone weathering to grey, Victorian; ii) as i) but with two lights and the tracery slightly different, same sandstone and level of weathering; iii) window of three lights with four-centred almost segmental heads and sunken spandrels; mullions replaced but the heads, jambs and perhaps the label, all in red sandstone are probably original. No obvious signs of insertion for any of the windows.

East wall: 1.2m higher than chancel. Plain, heavy pointing and some remnant limewash.

South wall: battered to 1.5m at south-east corner, the masonry cleaner and less weathered than on the north. Features from west: i) blocked window or doorway, lacking dressings but having simple stone jambs, no head; ii) mural tablet of 1783 partly over i); iii) a blocked window, certainly shown on some plans and there is one vertical slab that could be a jamb, yet not wholly convincing; iv) standard Victorian three-light window with trefoiled tracery, ogee heads all in a rectangular frame with a label over. There is no convincing sign of insertion and it is conceivable that the whole wall has been rebuilt here - certainly the batter at the base of the wall fades to almost nothing; v) square-headed window with two lights having four-centred heads and a label over. Only the mullion has been replaced, and the wall batter is again obvious; vi) wall projects for rood stair housing, no batter, and large blocks for quoins but no masonry change; vii) small slit window illuminates stair, selected blocks for jambs; viii) mural tablet of 1787; ix) blocked slit window with grey sandstone jambs which could perhaps even have been a small lancet though there is too much mortar to be certain; very close to the rood stair housing and could be of earlier date?

West wall: battered to a maximum height of 0.6m. Plain but for a wide, blocked doorway with a four-centred arch, and chamfered dressings; no convincing signs of insertion or rebuilding.

Chancel. General. Standard 'A' fabric with inclusion of some larger blocks, particularly in north and south walls.

Plinth at base, generally up to 0.5m. Not precisely aligned with nave.

North wall: plain wall with less limewash remnants than nave, and has outward lean. Disconformity at north-east angle with masonry at corner not flush with rest of wall, suggesting east end is rebuilt.

East wall: heavily pointed and with an inward lean. Victorian window of three lights with roundel above smaller, central one, a two-centred arch and, above it, a relieving arch. Possibly the whole wall rebuilt. Three 19thC grave slabs pinned against wall.

South wall: plain, with no plinth and a hint of a batter only towards the west end. Possibly considerable rebuilding. One mural slab of 1839.

Porch. General. Fabric 'B' in places, but could be no more than a variation in 'A'. Thought by Griffiths of

RCAHMS to be of 19thC build, but re-using an earlier outer doorway.

East wall: plain, heavy pointing.

South wall: probably Fabric 'A'. Round-headed doorway with stopped chamfers on both sides. No gate or door.

West wall: plain.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor, unplastered walls, and modern roof of collared rafters.

North wall: one step up to Victorian doorway with two-centred arch, rounded chamfers with broach stops and grey freestone dressings. Limewash on wall with thick coat behind roof collar. Slight disconformity in wall face at level of arch springers; wall above slopes in slightly and might be rebuilt.

East wall: slate slab bench with date 1961.

South wall: doorway has internal chamfer to jambs with stops that are not convincingly original; some replacement? Wooden beam built into wall above doorway, its purpose uncertain.

West wall: as east wall.

Nave. General. Tiled floor with concrete under the rear benches and flush wooden boarding under the front ones; two steps up to a raised dais at rear of nave. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Roof of seven bays with arch-braced collar trusses.

North wall: wall has outward lean; deeply splayed windows.

East wall: off-centre round-headed chancel arch with shallow chamfers. Early 19thC marble mural tablet to north of arch.

South wall: deeply splayed windows and door. Access to rood stair is a simple rectangular doorway, its large blocks painted not plastered, and now curtained off. In line with the two steps up to the dais is a slightly projecting plaster jamb rising to a height of c.2m and paralleled by a similar feature on the north wall. Almost certainly the rear of the nave was panelled off in the past to provide a school room or the like.

West wall: rectangular recess in wall, in line with but largely above the position of west door.

Chancel. General. One step up to tiled floor of chancel, one to sanctuary and one to altar. Walls as nave. Two-bay roof, lower than but otherwise similar to the nave. Internally chancel gives a greater sense of being out of alignment than on the exterior.

North wall: plain.

East wall: splayed window; mural slab of 1826 to south of it.

South wall: plain.

West wall: wall face is plain but it is inset at different heights on either side of chancel arch, indicative of some rebuilding.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Pillar stone: a stone incised with a circled cross divided horizontally; 7thC-9thC; found at a cottage at Llawdre in 1897 and brought to the church in 1903.

Font: octagonal bowl (recut) 14thC-15thC; modern base and stem.

Plate: chalice of 1559.

Monuments: nothing predating the 19thC internally. Outside are mural tablets to Margaret Jones (d.1783) and Mary Davies (d.1787).

Wooden lintel: with mortice slots and peg holes, and carved with 'T.M. 1698 W.I 1848'; lies at back of nave and taken from porch in 1935.

CHURCHYARD

Church and churchyard are set towards the bottom of a fairly steep slope just above the valley floor of the River Irfon. Its location has necessitated some artificial terracing.

Strongly curvilinear on the west and south-west, the rest of the perimeter which defines a rectilinear area, is of late 19thC/early 20thC origin. The earlier churchyard, however, also had straight boundaries on the north and east (see below).

It is well maintained and used for current burials.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall distinguishes the surviving part of the earlier enclosure, with hedges etc for the extension. There is some slight internal embanking on the south side, and overall there is little to suggest a raised churchyard.

Monuments: memorials are moderately dense throughout the churchyard, including the extension, but the lowest ground on the east has not been utilised. A number of railed plots of 19thC date lie to the north of the church, and to the south there may be some later 18thC flat tombs but their inscriptions are largely illegible.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: to the north of the church is a scarp bank up to 1m high marking the former boundary. This swings round to the south and can be discerned along the east side, though its line does not appear to match exactly that shown on the 1st edition OS map.

Ancillary features: main entrance on south consists of a wooden kissing gate and a single metal gate. On the west double wooden gates give access to the extension. Roughly tarmac path.

Vegetation: no yews.

SOURCES

Church guide 1992
CPAT Field Visit: 14 May 1996
Dawson 1909, 149
Glynne 1887, 282
Haslam 1979, 356
Martin and Walters 1993, 97
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Generally satisfactory, though some unevenness in the floors of both nave and chancel.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium

Llanynis

Diocese	Swansea and Brecon	Dedication	David
PRN	16896	NGR	SN99845087
		Previous dedication	Llyr

GENERAL SUMMARY

St David's church lies in an isolated position beside the River Irfon a few kilometres to the west of Builth Wells. The church has supposedly seen reconstruction at several times in the past and it is now impossible to determine whether there is any medieval masonry in place. Only the font can be confidently attributed to this era. The churchyard has been enlarged and the original enclosure was a typical, small curvilinear 'llan'.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Little evidence of phasing for this building and the whitewashed exterior only serves to hinder the assessment. Uneven appearance of chancel walls might suggest that they could be original medieval and that the nave has been rebuilt, but this is pure speculation. Windows all 18thC and 19thC, and impossible to determine whether the Y-tracery is in anyway representative of what was here in the Middle Ages.

HISTORY

The location, the original shape of the church yard and the former dedication to St Llyr all point to an early medieval origin, though needless to say there is no documentary evidence to support this.

Local tradition has it that Llewelyn attended mass here before he was killed at nearby Cilmeri in 1282.

The St Davids' Episcopal Register contains an entry for Llanynys in 1400, and the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1535 records a value of £7 0s 7d for the church.

There are records of the building being repaired or even extensively rebuilt in 1687, again in c.1778, and in 1894. This last restoration may have seen the removal of what was classed as a fine oak screen. A clearance and renovation scheme in the early 1970s, apparently saved the church from permanent closure, but may have removed earthwork remains of the earlier churchyard.

ARCHITECTURE

The church has a nave, chancel, south porch and west bellcote. It is aligned almost exactly east to west.

Fabric: impossible to ascertain whether the rough looking masonry is homogeneous - though no obvious differences - as whole of exterior has been whitewashed. This whitewash has been removed from north-west corner of the nave to reveal slabs of red and red-grey sandstone with occasional shale, some coursed; red sandstone also used for quoins though not consistently.

Roofs: slate with simple ceramic ridge tiles and no finials.

Drainage: drainage gully probably dug on south where depression runs beside wall; no evidence on north where some debris piled against wall, though there are downpipes and drain covers, nor on east.

Exterior

Nave. General. Above western gable is a rectangular bell-turret, with arched openings on all sides, rectangular slated pyramidal roof and a modern cross on top.

North wall: two two-centred arched windows, the arches turned in brick, wooden window frames, two double lancet windows with Y-tracery all in wood; that to west may have been inserted into wall face.

South wall: wall faintly bowed; two windows, the most easterly as those on north, the other has Y-tracery in stone and cusped lights, but again the arch is turned in brick. Presumed to be Victorian. Both windows have stained glass.

West wall: plain.

Chancel. General. Roof has slightly flatter pitch and is fractionally lower than nave. South wall leans outwards, north has terrible bulge in it, and east is extremely uneven; all this in contrast to more regular wall faces of nave.

North wall: no windows.

East wall: one small double-light window with Y-tracery, all in buff-coloured freestone and lacking brick surround of other windows; Griffiths of RCAHMW considered that original surround survived. Possibly inserted. Disconformity near south-east angle implies some rebuilding and perhaps too at north-east angle.

South wall: one standard window in wood.

Porch. East wall: projecting stones just above ground level, but these terminate 0.5m from south-east angle and could be foundation of an earlier and shorter porch.

South wall: two-centred arch, probably turned in brick; lacks chamfers. Low metal gate across entrance.

West wall: plain.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Roof plastered but shows curving, ribbed tie-beams.

North wall: =south wall of nave. Round-headed doorway in wooden frame.

East wall: stone bench with wooden seat.

West wall: as east wall.

Nave. General. Red and white tiles for floor; no heating vents and no carpets. Benches raised on wooden boarding. Low flat ceiling with trap-door access to roof above. Plastered and whitewashed walls, slightly splayed windows. Back of nave partitioned off for very narrow vestry.

North wall: wall leans outwards slightly. Three mural tablets of 1808/1812, 1852/1862 and 1847.

East wall: no chancel arch, the only division with the chancel effected by a single step up, and a lower ceiling level for chancel.

South wall: leans slightly outwards. One mural tablet of 1830.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, one to sanctuary; simple tiled floor. Plastered and whitewashed walls, slightly splayed windows; low, plastered ceiling.

North wall: wall leans outwards.

South wall: wall leans outwards.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: small, octagonal bowl on octagonal stem, four sides having half-pyramidal stops; 14thC.

Chest: small chest in poor condition; in vestry.

Chair: with date of 1610, seen in sanctuary in 1969, not since.

Altar Rails: 17thC.

19thC fittings include:

Stained Glass: in south window of around 1867.

Monuments: none pre-dates the 19thC, the earliest being to Watkin Bevan (d.1808) and Elizabeth, his wife (d.1812) by Price of Builth.

Register: from 1731.

CHURCHYARD

Llanynis churchyard is sub-rectangular, but the church itself is set in the extreme eastern portion and the curving boundary on this side reflects an earlier, smaller and much more curvilinear enclosure, some 45-50m across, in which the church would have been centrally set.

The ground within the yard is relatively level as might be anticipated from its position right beside the River Irfon and on its valley floor.

The churchyard is well-maintained and is still used for burial, though very few of recent years.

Boundary: composite. The north side is simply the river valley edge, a drop of perhaps 4m to the river, with a few trees along this edge. A hedge bounds the yard on the west, and on the south where it is reinforced by a wire fence; there is no sign of the yard being raised in this area. East of the main gate on the south, the hedge is set on a bank which has a curve to it, more apparent on ground than on map. This can be followed through on the east, and towards north-east corner the bank is at least 0.5m high.

Monuments: these are few and occupy limited areas to south-west of porch, and the south-east of the chancel. Three slabs of late 18thC or early 19thC lean, vegetation covered, against the bank on the east side; and against the chancel are set a number of gravestones, the earliest one of which is from 1782. Most of the monuments are 19thC and 20thC in origin.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: on west side of church is a slight scarp 0.3m high which fades out to north and south. Nevertheless, this eastern area appears to be raised even where the scarp itself is imperceptible, and together with the bank beneath the modern boundary on south and east, forms a curvilinear enclosure.

The church is approached across open fields by a raised causeway.

Ancillary features: main entrance are simple double wooden gates on south, a grass path leading to the porch. Stiles for a riverside footpath are set in the extreme north-west and north-east corners.

Vegetation: a few deciduous trees and bushes, mainly on north side.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 7 March 1996

Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 76

Haslam 1979, 356

Powys SMR

CONDITION

Church is in relatively poor condition. The north walls, particularly that of the chancel, are of concern. And the north-west angle has a bad crack suggesting a problem for the gable. Internal cracks are visible too, noticeably in chancel. Internal blistering of walls noticeable at west end and in the south window reveals, and chunks of plaster have fallen off north wall.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium?

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llan-y-Wern

Diocese	Swansea and Brecon	Dedication	St Mary the Virgin
PRN	16803	NGR	SO10202868
		Previous dedication	Cynidr

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Mary is a simple single-celled building, conventionally attributed to the 14thC but perhaps several centuries later; it has seen some restoration and yet there is little sign of Victorianisation. Its bare stone flagged interior retains only a font from the medieval era, but there is a collection of 18thC memorials. The surrounding churchyard is small and partly curvilinear.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A 14thC date is favoured for the nave and chancel, based on the single Decorated window in the chancel. The authenticity of this is however in doubt though of course it may copy an original window. Certainly much of the original walling has gone - it has been replaced in slightly more regular masonry, but where it survives there are three square-headed windows and a comparable priest's door, and these are likely to be 17thC or even later. The porch too could be relatively recent. However, there is little to suggest any significant 19thC restoration.

HISTORY

Traditionally the first foundation here was in the 6thC and was dedicated to St Cynidr, the present dedication only appearing in the 12thC. The shape of the churchyard reinforces the concept of an early date.

The church was formerly a chapel of St John's Priory, Brecon, and presumably because of this it does not feature in any of the main documentary sources of the 13thC and 16thC.

ARCHITECTURE

Llan-y-wern is a simple structure with the nave and chancel as a single cell, though the chancel roof is lower, and a west porch. It is aligned north-north-east/south-south-west but for purposes of this record 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of a varied assemblage of blocks and slabs of sandstone of different colours; there is little coursing, but the masonry is heavily pointed; larger slabs tend to be used for quoins. On the north and east sides the fabric seems looser, perhaps because the pointing is poorer.

'B' is of more regular blocks, the wall surface flatter; this fabric appears more weathered than 'A'.

'C': slabs of sandstone predominate; heavy white pointing.

Roofs: all slates, but banded in different colours.

Drainage: an infilled trench, 0.3m wide on south side.

Exterior

Porch. General. In a variation of Fabric 'A' with poorly mortared slabs.

North wall: narrow slit window, slightly splayed internally.

South wall: as north wall but window dressings look more worn.

West wall: entrance has segmental-headed arch of voussoirs, with large freestone blocks for jambs; the doorway is inset slightly from the wall face. Limewash remnants on the masonry.

Nave. General. Wall bases of nave and chancel battered slightly. Above the west end is a bell turret with a pyramidal roof and sides hung with vertical slates.

North wall: wall bulges and supported by two wonderfully crude buttresses. Most of the wall is in Fabric 'B' and incorporates the only window on this side - a small rectangular embrasure - towards the west end. The north-west angle may be in 'A', the walling behind the more westerly buttress certainly is, while a large patch of 'C' dominates the upper part of the wall at the eastern end and runs behind the more easterly buttress which is adjacent to the juncture of the nave and chancel.

South wall: mostly Fabric 'A', but patches of original walling in 'B' which are less even and more weathered, though in terms of the type of stone there is not much difference. Limewash fragments adhere to the masonry of 'A' at the east end. Features from west are: i) a square-headed window with chamfered jambs and lintel, set in 'A'; ii) modern two-light rectangular window of similar design to the previous one, in 'B'; iii) above the window is a mural tablet to William Watkins (d.1728); iv) a blocked rectangular doorway with lintel in position, set in 'A'.

West wall: heavily pointed with some limewash remnants. Porch covers a reasonable amount of the wall face, and its apex blocks a window; voussoirs of this are visible and it could possibly be round-headed. The sill and the blocking are visible inside the porch.

Chancel. North wall: most of the wall including the single window is in original 'B' but the angle is in 'A', and limewash fragments adhere to it. There is also perhaps a butt joint though partially bonded, next to and partly disguised by the nave buttress - this could suggest that the chancel has been added to the nave but nothing similar occurs on the south wall face. Window has a square head and two lights; sandstone dressings.

East wall: a Victorian window of two lights with trefoil heads; freestone dressings. This has been poorly inserted, seemingly into the later 'A' masonry, and its surrounding stone is set in distinctive pink mortar; it also lies fractionally back from the rather uneven wall face. The original stonework ('B') was poorly pointed to the extent that it looks almost drystone built.

South wall: the lower part of the wall is original, but it is not clear whether the window - a single trefoil-headed lancet under an ogee arch which does not look convincingly authentic - is set in rebuilt 'A'; the amount of limewash around the window would, however, tend to favour such a view.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor. Walls whitewashed. Roof of collars and in the case of the truss next to the church door, a tie beam, but probably of no great age.

North and south walls: stone benches along sides.

East wall: doorway has faintly pointed arch, almost round-headed, and like outer doorway of porch there are voussoirs and large freestone blocks for the jambs. Lintel of window in west wall is just visible.

West wall: reveal is slightly splayed and inner side of soffit has wooden lintel.

Nave. General. Flag floor but pews raised on wooden boards; walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of closely set scissor trusses, presumably 19thC.

North wall: one splayed window and five mural tablets, all of 18thC date.

South wall: two splayed windows and one 19thC mural tablet.

West wall: window above door shows as blocked rectangular aperture. Stoup set in wall just to south of door.

Chancel. General. A small chancel separated from nave only by first of two steps up to altar and the beam over the divide is painted madder. Six graveslabs all of 17thC date pave the floor around the altar, though the only one with a legible date is of 1617. Walls as in nave, the roof a four-bay wagon roof with moulded ribs of c.1500.

North wall: splayed window and mural tablet of 1785/1797.

East wall: splayed window.

South wall: splayed window and mural tablets of 1777 and 1801.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: circular bowl; 13thC.

Monuments: Margaret Price (d.1786); Margaret Price (d.1777); Mary Winter (d.1784); Charles Havard (d.1774); Thomas Price (d.1801), Thomas Powell (d.1794), John Williams (d.1797), Morgan Jenkins (d.1785) and Thomas Williams (d.1828), all by Hughes. Some worn 17thC slabs.

Pews: now cleaned but originally painted. Date uncertain -?18thC.

Register: from 1800.

CHURCHYARD

The church lies in a small, D-shaped enclosure, the name of the settlement denoting that it is a particularly damp spot, with a stream or gully bordering it on all sides except the south-west. It is well maintained and still used for burial.

Boundary: this consists of both a hedge and a stone wall, the former continuous, the latter not in evidence on the north-west and perhaps reduced to a low bank on the south-east. The churchyard appears to be raised, except perhaps on the south-east, but it is not possible to achieve a clear picture of how much higher the internal ground level is.

Monuments: these are sparse and lie to the south-west and south-east of the church. There are no pre-19thC gravestones.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: the church is raised up on a slight platform which is visible on all sides except the south-west.

Ancillary features: main entrance is on the north-west side through a timber lychgate with a stone-tiled roof. Opposite this on the south-east are two small iron gates and a kissing gate. A tarmac path links the two.

Vegetation: one yew in the south corner.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 16 August 1995

Dawson 1909, 169

Haslam 1979, 357

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Some damp shows in the interior and paint is peeling in the porch. Occasional cracks in chancel particularly at the junction of the east wall and the ceiling.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llyswen

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Gwendoline**PRN** 16902**NGR** SO13333801

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Gwendoline's church lies close to the Wye a few kilometres to the north-east of Brecon. The church was totally rebuilt in 1863, and apart from the font, a few re-used graveslabs and a single bell there is nothing inside which survived the Victorianisation. The churchyard, however, is small and circular and coupled with the dedication it is likely that Llyswen was founded in the early medieval era.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

New building of 1863.

HISTORY

An early medieval date for this foundation seems likely on the basis of the dedication, the almost circular churchyard and the siting near the river. Theophilus Jones claimed that the site was given to the See of Llandaff in c.560 AD. Its subsequent history and development, however, remain largely unwritten.

It does not appear in either Taxatio, but the record in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 referred to it by its modern name and valued it at the comparatively low rate of £3 14s 7d.

The predecessor of the present church, as depicted on an old sketch now housed in the tower, had a nave and smaller chancel, a west bellcote and a south porch. There was a square-headed window in the nave, a two-centred arched window with two lights in the east wall of the chancel and one window in the south wall of the chancel which could conceivably be round-headed though this seems unlikely. A watercolour of the interior depicts a two-centred chancel arch, cusped tracery in the nave window and a ceiled roof with at least one tie beam.

In 1863 the church was built anew by Charles Buckeridge, a pupil of Scott, though it appears that some old masonry was re-used, particularly on the north side. Haslam claimed that the retention of the original Norman plan accounted for the slight axial discrepancies in the Victorian buildings.

Roof restored in 1964.

ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave and slightly narrower chancel, a west tower and a south porch. It is oriented slightly north of true east.

Fabric: blocks and a few slabs of grey sandstone with occasional red sandstone intrusions; random coursing. Quoins invariably of good dressed freestone.

Roofs: reconstituted clay tiles, plain ridge tiles, stone finials to nave and chancel and a metal one on the porch. Tower has stone tiles.

Drainage: no clear evidence.

Note: as the church is a Victorian rebuild, the following description is a summary.

Exterior

Tower. General. Uniform fabric though masonry rougher at lower levels. Chamfered plinth at base and this continues around whole building including the buttresses. Windows, whether standard lancets or the two-light example in the west wall, have relieving arches; string-course also functions as a hoodmoulding. Clock face over window on west wall. Low pyramid roof with weathervane and cock.

Nave. General. Wall has better finished stone at lower levels on north side and red sandstone predominates. Victorian double-light windows with quatrefoils or cinquefoils above, all under two-centred arches.

Chancel. General. North wall has slabs of red sandstone at lower levels (cf nave north wall), but at higher levels the fabric is more heterogeneous with a greater mixture of colours and shaped sandstone blocks. East wall similar to lower part of north wall, while on south less regular masonry appears at higher levels. Lancet windows on the north and south, and three stepped lights under a round-headed arch in the east wall. On south side a priest's door under a two-centred arch with stopped chamfers and a hoodmoulding.

Porch. General. Timber superstructure on chamfered masonry plinth. Open front.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor; benches on east and west. North wall contains two-centred arched doorway with chamfered moulding - Victorian. Open roof with collars.

Nave. General. Flagged floor, uneven aisle with carpet over, and benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed, and a two-centred chamfered arch to the tower. Interior of both nave and chancel largely unornamented. Roof of scissor trusses.

Chancel. General. Chancel one step up from nave, sanctuary a further step up, and two more to altar. Tiled floor, choir stalls raised on wooden plinths, but encaustic tiles in sanctuary. Walls as nave. Unceiled wagon roof reveals collars above.

Tower. General. Flagged floor incorporates old graveslabs: two of 1675 and 1784, a third illegible. Gallery in first stage.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: round bowl on cylindrical stem; 11thC-12thC.

Bell: dated 1666.

Plate: chalice and paten of 1624.

Of Victorian and later date:

Stained glass: "four sensitive and beautifully executed small windows in the chancel. By Carl Edwards, c.1946 to 1973" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is small and more circular than most; it occupies level ground on the valley floor with the River Wye little more than 100m to the north. It is raised, most noticeably on the south and south-east and to some extent on the west, though there is little change in height on the north.

It is well maintained but modern burials take place in the cemetery on the south side of the road.

Boundary: defined by a revetment wall, in part mortared especially near the west gate, but largely drystone.

Monuments: south of the church these are evenly spaced and quite dense, and some stones have been removed to the perimeter. Graves on the north are almost as dense, and overall there are few open areas. A reasonable number of later 18thC memorials remain though many are badly weathered; the earliest that was recognised was of 1738 and there are others from the 1760s.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: main entrance on west where there is a single broad iron gate and an adjacent kissing gate. On east is a wooden bar stile approached by five steps and both are served by tarmac paths within the churchyard. A blocked gap in the northern perimeter has brick terminals and may be related to a former shed that shows on OS Maps.

Vegetation: mixed trees and bushes, mostly around perimeter. There are two yews - neither of any great age - within the yard, but two more outside the northern wall may indicate that the boundary has been pulled inwards along this stretch.

SOURCES

Church notes: n.d.

CPAT Field Visit: 16 November 1995

Dowson 1979, 151

Haslam 1979, 357

CONDITION

Damp is appearing on west wall of nave, and particularly over the east window in the chancel. Cracks show in the nave walls and above the priest's door in the chancel.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Medium

Llywel

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** David**PRN** 16903**NGR** SN86943005

GENERAL SUMMARY

St David's church at Llywel lies in a small valley converging on the Usk valley about 18km to the west of Brecon. Though part of the tower may be earlier, the building is considered to be largely late 15thC and is of simple plan. Internally there is an early medieval stone and the cast of another, a significantly early font and the village stocks.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The tower could be basically 14thC with 15thC alterations on the basis of its plainness and a blocked east window. Most of building claimed to be Late Perpendicular of about the 1480s. However some evidence that chancel added on, and mixture of windows in nave suggests extra fenestration inserted.

Little sign of any Victorian rebuilding except perhaps on north nave wall.

HISTORY

An early medieval origin for Llywel is a possibility; the early Christian stones have no bearing on the argument, but the putative pre-Norman font is suggestive.

The name of the settlement is supposedly that of a founding 5thC saint, a disciple of Teilo, but prior to its acquisition about 1203 by the Chapter of St David who gave it the current dedication, it was reputedly dedicated to three saints - David, Darn (Paternus) and Teilo - and known as (Llan)Trisant.

Church was burnt down towards the end of the 12th century according to Giraldus Cambrensis.

In the Taxatio of 1291 it was registered as 'Ecc' de Luel' with the remarkably high value of £14. Major rebuilding took place in the late 15thC, but the tower may indicate a building phase in the previous century.

Ceiling plastered in 1812. Some restoration by Scott in 1869, included removal of rood loft, and the tower was restored in 1877. Plaster panels in ceiling replaced in 1987. An account prior to 1930 mentions that there was at one time a priest's doorway into the chancel from the north, and that the church contained an oak chest dated 1674.

ARCHITECTURE

Llywel church consists of a nave, a slightly narrower chancel, a tower attached to west end of nave, and a porch set almost mid way along south wall of nave. The alignment is precisely east/west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of medium to large blocks (and a few slabs) of red and occasionally grey sandstone, irregularly coursed with dressed blocks for quoins.
'B' of small to medium slabs, and a few blocks, of weathered red sandstone, irregularly coursed; frequent intrusive pink pointing.

Roofs: slates with red terracotta roof tiles but no finials.

Drainage: no obvious drainage trench and only concrete gullies on sides of porch; tower run off led away in conduit into churchyard.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric A. Basal stage has substantial batter to height of c.2.5m with top formed by weathered string-course. No further break until battlemented parapet, defined by moulded string-course with gargoyles. Embattled stair-turret rises above tower on south-east. Flag pole on top of tower.

North wall: batter shows differential weathering to rest of face. One dressed stone with arcing groove on it built into wall at height of c.5m: re-used? High up in second stage is slit window with unchamfered red sandstone dressings. Above this is a belfry window, flat-headed with two two-centred lights without tracery but louvred. One much weathered gargoyle.

East wall: apex of nave a little more than half way up tower wall. Slit window as on north side but set fractionally lower. Belfry window here has moulded flat top and limited decoration in spandrel.

South wall: less than half way up second stage is flat-headed window containing trefoil-headed light with cavetto moulding and louvre boards. Belfry light as on east though jambs and mullions probably replaced; one gargoyle. South-east corner has stair-turret projecting from this face. The basal string-course is not carried round this turret, unlike two others, one the gargoyle string-course that carries around the whole tower, the other lower down and on the turret alone. One small slit window set in south wall of turret, three in west face all in second stage; the middle one is exceptional in that chamfered dressings and one jamb could be re-used from elsewhere (?a later insertion).

West wall: recessed into the splayed base of the tower is a two-centred arched doorway, with hollow chamfers, all in red sandstone and all original; it holds double doors which are also of some age. To south of door is rectangular alcove with a stoup set in it. Above door three corbels support the string-course and there is a relieving arch above. Low down in second stage is a single, ogee-headed light within a grey sandstone, flat-headed window. Then standard belfry window as on east and south, and two fine gargoyles.

Nave. General. Fabric 'B', the nave perhaps 1m higher than chancel.

North wall: weathered masonry except above each window where there is an infill of fresher stone; also possibility that fresher masonry at west end including quoined angle could indicate rebuilding. Wall slightly battered for first 1m or so; two air vents at ground level; and at least 14 put-log holes of which two are blocked. Three windows, from west: i) rectangular embrasure of Tudor date, chamfered dressings, two four-centred lights with decorated spandrels, mullions certainly replaced, possibly some of other dressings; ii) Late Perpendicular two-centred arch with complex mouldings containing three lights with cusped tracery and cusped heart-shaped panels above; mullions and a couple of jamb stones replaced; iii) similar to ii) but mullions and most of tracery in main lights replaced. To east of this window the wall is out-set to accommodate rood loft stair; it has good quoins, two put-log holes in the east face, remnants of plaster on north face, and is bonded into main wall on west.

East wall: only small amount of masonry visible and some covered by lead.

South wall: large quoins of tower turret appear to abut the few quoins of nave's south-west corner, indicating former is later in date. Two air vents. Windows exactly as north side, with some replacement in the middle (mullion) and more westerly (mullions and all tracery) windows. Above porch roof, fabric shows a band of disturbance and skewed stonework suggesting higher porch line or removal of drip course.

West wall: abuts wall of tower.

Chancel. General. Chancel fractionally out of line with nave. Fabric 'B'; no batter in contrast to nave.

North wall: one air vent at ground level. One two-centred arched window of three lights with cusped tracery and two broad panels above; mullions and much of tracery replaced.

East wall: wall face badly obscured by heavy pointing. East window has two-centred arched window, four lights with ogee heads, cusped tracery and, above, panels with cinquefoil heads, all largely original dressings. Seven mural slabs pinned to wall, of: 1774, 1779, 1796, 1813, 1817, 1828 & 1835.

South wall: abuts east wall of nave; one air vent; one window exactly as north side with mullions and most of tracery replaced. Also a priest's door with four-centred arch, stopped chamfers and all original dressings. Mural tablet of 1743.

Porch. General. Fabric 'B'. Sides battered for about 1m or so, and appears to butt against nave.

East and west walls: plain.

South wall: two-centred arch, fine, complex mouldings set on chamfered bases, all original. No gate or door but light above the arch.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor. Roof of four moulded arch-braced collars alternating with three plain, unfolded ones. Walls not plastered.

North wall: Four-centred arch with complex mouldings and stops, all in red sandstone; heavy studded door thought to be original 15thC fitting. Projecting and damaged stoup to east of door.

East wall: stone bench with flagged seat.

South wall: complex moulding internally to doorway giving hexagonal responds.

Tower. General. Floor of wooden boards covered in carpet.

North wall: plain. Stocks set against it, and old font in north-west corner.

East wall: opening on to nave.

South wall: two-centred doorway to tower stair; stopped-chamfers and all dressings in red sandstone. Mural tablet of 1761/1783 and framed Tithe Map.

West wall: simple rectangular embrasure for west door. Broken and unintelligible mural tablet.

Nave. General. Flagged floor, largely carpet covered, but no certain evidence of underfloor heating - instead piping along back of seats. Benches raised on wooden boarding. East end around pulpit is tiled. West end under boards. Wagon roof of 128 full panels and 32 half panels with plaster infill. All walls in nave and chancel plastered as are window embrasures except for dressed stonework.

North wall: deeply splayed windows; triangular-headed arched doorway with stopped-chamfers all in red sandstone gives access to rood stairway built within an oblong chamber against the north wall. High up on

wall is four-centred arched doorway to former rood loft; chamfered sandstone. Doors themselves of recent date. 19thC marble mural tablet.

East wall: broad two-centred arch with screen of 1925 by Harry Hems.

South wall: deeply splayed windows and segmental headed embrasure for main south door; four 19thC marble tablets.

West wall: no conventional arch to tower, just a two-centred arched ceiling; in the entrance are three bays of the screen that was removed in 1869. High up on wall face is a window with chamfered jambs, its head invisible behind the nave ceiling; a wooden door or other form of blocking in place.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, one to sanctuary and one to altar. Victorian floor of red and black tiles. Raised choir stalls. Vault under chancel with former entrance outside beneath stone. Wagon roof of 120 panels.

North wall: one deeply splayed window. Four 19thC marble tablets plus monument of 1600 to Sybil Morgan.

East wall: behind altar are decorated tile settings which spread up wall and into basal splay of east window.

South wall: splayed window, and the priest's doorway, a simple alcove. Beneath window a shallow tomb recess with a Tudor arch and chamfered sandstone dressings. Mural tablet of 1684.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Pillar Stone (Aberhydfder Stone): c.1.7m tall; the name TARICORO in Ogam. 5thC.

Llywfi Stone: "plaster replica of a find at Capel llud in neighbouring parish, now in the British Museum; c.1.8m high, tapering downwards. Incised on one side in the 8thC or later with pictographs or linear symbols in four panels, including a saltire, two figures, and bishop with a staff. Decoration most resembles pre-Christian art in Brittany. The introduction of figures does not, according to Canon J. Jones-Davies, suggest a Celtic origin. On the other side is a burial inscription, probably primary, of c.AD500: (M)ACCU TRENI + SALICIDUNI. The cross between the words may have been added in the 7thC. The name is repeated in Ogam" (Haslam).

Font: 11/12thC (and may be pre-Norman), circular tapering bowl, cylindrical stem and square base; disused, in the tower. Found in churchyard in 1896.

Screen: part re-used at entrance to tower: "tall round-headed openings with vines etc. carved in the spandrels; the arches descend onto crocketed pinnacles, characteristically 16thC in their detail and subordinate position" (Haslam).

Monuments: Sibil Morgan (d.1600), slab with lettering only, resting on 19thC support; Edward Jeffreys (d.1684); Lewis Powell (d.1867), with Gothic decoration; other 19thC memorials on nave wall; Howell Bevan of Llywel (d.1761).

Vestry table: claimed to be former altar of 17thC date.

Stocks: made in 1798, and placed under the tower.

Town Crier's bell: inscribed "The Town of Llywel and Borough of Brecon" but undated; in case on south wall of nave.

Victorian fittings include:

Stained Glass: "east window by Cox & Sons, c.1872" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

Llywel churchyard is of medium size and somewhat irregular shape. Curvilinear on the south and south-west, its north and east sides are much straighter and hint at expansion to north of church, though there are no earthworks to confirm this; an alternative view might see the early churchyard truncated on the east.

It occupies level ground beside a small stream that ultimately feeds into the River Usk. To the north the ground rises steadily to Eppynt.

Boundary:- consists on north of well-built mortared stone wall with coping stones, probably refurbished recently. Coinciding with the concave course of the wall on the south side is a sudden enbanking of material internally, and around south-west and south the interior is raised perhaps 0.5-1.0m above external levels. The disparity increases on the east where the wall acts as a revetment and the external level is nearly 2m lower.

Monuments: graves are spread widely throughout the yard except in the north-west corner. Well laid out on north where primarily 19thC and 20thC, less orderly but denser on south with some back to the 18thC. Earliest gravestone of 1740 and several others from second half of 18thC close to south side of church.

Furniture: none seen.

Earthworks: other than internal banking seen on south, the only feature is a gentle scarp running east/west across the northern side of churchyard. Its origin is uncertain.

Ancillary features: utilitarian double gate of iron on north side with grass track leading to modern burial areas. In south-west a single ornate iron gate with a concrete path leading to the church and to south-east side where small double iron gates.

Parish hall set within the churchyard on the north side.

Vegetation: three large, mature yews, one on north two to south of church. A few deciduous trees within the perimeter.

SOURCES

Church Guide n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 20 November 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 76
Dawson 1909, 173
Haslam 1979, 359
Jones and Bailey 1930, iv, 99, 107-108
NMR Aberywyth
Silvester and Dorling 1993, 66
Thorpe 1978, 79

CONDITION

Condition of church appears generally satisfactory. There are minor cracks and some peeling whitewash on north side of nave, while dampness has created mould on main south door.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Poor to Medium

Lower Chapel

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Michael

PRN 16385

NGR SO02793584

GENERAL SUMMARY

Small church dedicated to St Michael and also known as Llanfihangel Fechan, set in sub-rectangular churchyard on the east bank of the Honddu, 7km north of Brecon. It was apparently established at the end of the 18thC, and consequently contains nothing of earlier date.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The extent of 1863 rebuilding is not documented, but fabric differences between nave and chancel might indicate two builds; possibly the nave, with later fenestration, is the original, late 18thC structure.

HISTORY

Founded c.1790 with no evidence of an earlier structure on the site, the church is dedicated to St Michael, hence its alternative name of Llanfihangel Fechan. Rebuilt in 1863-4 by Thomas Nicholson, and the sanctuary 'beautified' in 1880.

ARCHITECTURE

Church consists of nave with east bellcote, south porch, north vestry, south 'transept' (termed by Dawson, a side chapel), and small semicircular sanctuary. It is aligned south-west/north-east, but 'ecclesiastical north' used throughout this report.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small, occasionally medium, slabs and blocks of brown and grey sandstone, of regular appearance, though irregularly coursed and used widely throughout building. 'B' is similar but less regularity in part because masonry is less standardised.

Roofs: shale slabs throughout, with toothed, ceramic ridge tiles, and cross finials at west end of nave, chancel apex and gable end of porch

Drainage: no convincing evidence around wall perimeter.

Exterior

General. Fabric 'B' used for nave, Fabric 'A' for chancel, for vestry and probably for the porch. All dressings of yellow sandstone, including those of the buttresses which appear only against vestry and south 'transept'. Windows either of lancet type (e.g. vestry) or trefoil-headed lights (nave, south 'transept', east window of chancel).

Chancel has battered base terminating at string-course below window level; also zig-zag ornamentation below eaves. Nave shows faint batter to west end and has rough string course of projecting slabs just below eaves level on north and south.

Bellcote, containing two bells, in dressed stone at east end of nave. Brick chimney with cowl rises above wall separating nave from south 'transept'.

Porch has round-headed doorway, voussoirs of edge stones and no quoins.

Interior

Porch. Flagged floor, plastered walls, side benches in stone built into west and east walls, ceiled. Doorway has two-centred arch with broach stops to chamfers. One step up into body of church.

Nave. Flagged floor but partially covered by matting, with benches raised on wooden flooring; heating grill opposite door. Flat, ceiled roof of 24 panels divided by ribs. Splayed windows with stained glass in large south window. Two 19thC marble mural tablets on south wall.

Chancel. One step up to choir, two into chancel proper, and one more to altar. Floor tiled, some encaustic tiles. Hipped roof on converging rafters.

Vestry. Contains slate plaque of 1824/1834.

South 'transept'. Contains benches and bell-pulls. Also monument of 1796.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

All fittings of c.1880, except for the following:

Stained Glass: south window, 1906.

Monuments: to Charles Powell (d.1796), by H. Wood of Bristol; and to Roger Watkins (d.1858). Several others of 19thC date.

Registers: from 1819.

CHURCHYARD

A small sub-rectangular churchyard with curvilinear east side, set on level ground and back from river terrace edge of Afon Honddu which lies about 100m to west.

Churchyard reasonably well kept and contains burials into 1980s.

Boundary: consists on south of wall, mortared in places, with concrete capping; metal railings along west side; a stone wall with coping of flat slabs on north; and on the east a higher wall in better condition, though

mixture of drystone and mortared. Little variation in height between ground levels externally and internally.

Monuments: regularly laid out but not dense on south, most recent ones on west, nothing on north side. Nothing obviously pre-19thC and most belong to second half of that century. Some slabs cleared away to around northern edge of yard. Earliest recognised slab of 1827, south of chancel but in 1969 Griffiths of RCAHMW noted a stone of 1796 against the wall of the vestry.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: internally nothing but between present perimeter and river terrace edge there is additional scarp bank and on south something rather similar, suggesting a platform pre-dating the present churchyard.

Ancillary features: on the east side are narrow, ornate double metal gates supported on stone pillars with an ornamental lamp bracket over the top. Concrete path leads from this entrance to porch.

Vegetation: two yews in west corners of churchyard, and a few small deciduous bushes elsewhere around perimeter.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 21 November 1995

Dawson 1909, 147

Haslam 1979, 360

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Reasonable, though some peeling paint in window embrasures and elsewhere.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Poor

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor

Maesmynis

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** David**PRN** 16906**NGR** SO02814976

GENERAL SUMMARY

St David's church at Maesmynis occupies a ridge just over 4km south-west of Builth Wells. The church itself was completely rebuilt in the Victorian period, a single mural slab being the only survival from the earlier church, internally. It occupies a rectangular churchyard housing a few 18thC monuments.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Victorian with modern refurbishment.

HISTORY

Nothing at Maesmynis points to an early medieval origin for the church. In 1291 it appeared in Pope Nicholas' Taxatio as 'Ecclesia de Maesmenus', coupled with 'Lan' (=?Llanynis or Llangynog) at a value of £5, and as 'Maesmynnys' in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 at £7 1s 3d.

Theophilus Jones records a building in a delapidated state at the beginning of the 19thC, but one with a particularly interesting decorated roof, now gone. By the later part of the century it was a ruin and in 1878 the whole edifice was rebuilt.

The sanctuary was refurbished in 1963 (using materials from nearby Llangynog Church).

ARCHITECTURE

Maesmynis church consists of a nave, chancel, a north porch near the north-west corner of nave, and a west bell-turret directly over the gable end. It is aligned west-south-west/east-north-east, but 'ecclesiastical east' is used throughout this report.

Fabric: grey shale blocks and slabs showing some coursing. Window and door dressings in yellow sandstone, as are quoins. Uniform masonry of 1878.

Roofs: reconstituted clay tiles with simple ridge tiles.

Drainage: 0.4m wide concrete capping around whole building suggests drainage, though contents of downpipes are channelled across it.

Exterior

General. All cells of this building have battered base to c.0.8m. Windows are trefoiled lancets, generally

single, but three stepped lancets at east end. Porch has two-centred archway and double wooden gates; a plaque above the arch records the rebuilding of 1878.

Propped against east wall of chancel are three mural tablets, one of the 18thC, two of the 19thC. Against the north wall of the chancel near the north-east angle is a grave slab of 1738 and above it a painted armorial plaque.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor, roof of simple collars and rafters. Plastered and whitewashed walls. One wooden bench. Six mural tablets around walls of which the most northerly on east wall is of 18thC.

Main building. General. Floors carpetted throughout. Benches raised on wooden plinths. One step to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Nave and chancel roofs have scissor trusses with intersecting collars.

Sanctuary "brightly refurbished in 1963 by George Pace and Ronald Sims. East window (Christ in a vesica of cherubs' wings) and the five painted reredos panels (Crucifixion, Annunciation, and Nativity), by Henry Harvey, were designed as a correlating group" (Haslam).

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Monuments: mural slab in porch to Charles Price (d.1758) and his granddaughter (d.1761), with armorial crest above; grave slab of David Price (d.1738) against external north wall of chancel.

Register: from 1684.

CHURCHYARD

The church is centrally placed in what was a rectangular churchyard, until an irregular extension was added to the north-east during the present century. It is ridge sited, with gentle drops to valleys on the north and south and ultimately on the west, this foreshadowed by a slight slope in the churchyard at the east end.

The churchyard is tidy, with grass being allowed to grow over early graveslabs, and is used for modern burial.

Boundary: the original boundary may have been formed from a low rubble wall or perhaps just a bank. This certainly shows as a low bank where the churchyard has been extended on the north side, and there is evidence here that interior raised by perhaps 0.7m. West of main entrance, boundary is a wooden fence and hedge, probably indicating that original line erased to allow parking space beside the road. On the west the hedge appears to sit astride a bank, still visible externally, and this bank is more pronounced on the south and east. Throughout, the external ground level is lower though generally by no more than 0.5m.

Monuments: well spread throughout the churchyard except on the west side where there are few. It is this side that has many of the surviving 18thC monuments, though the earliest - of 1768 - is to the north of the church.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: old boundary bank on north side (see above). The tithe survey of 1842 shows the north-eastern boundary as curvilinear but there is no convincing ground evidence of this.

Ancillary features: lychgate on north in same style as church, though the style of dressings is different. Its inscription is now partly illegible but it is known to have been constructed in 1903. A metal farm gate gives access from the south-west corner, and small double wooden gates lead into the new extension at the north-east. A tarmac path to the porch.

Vegetation: one yew tree of some age on north, and nearby a holly tree. Occasional pines on the west and east.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 7 March 1996

Dawson 1909, 204

Haslam 1979, 361

Powys SMR

CONDITION

Not recorded.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor

Merthyr Cynog

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Cynog**PRN** 16909**NGR** SN98483745

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cynog's church sits on an interfluvial ridge some 10km to the north-west of Brecon. The relatively simple building is an interesting mix of medieval masonry and 19thC restoration and has a long history back into the early medieval era when it probably functioned as a mother church. It contains some significant fittings, notably a 14thC screen. The churchyard is large and sub-circular, a fine example of a medieval 'llan'.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave is largely original except where window insertions, and could be 12thC or 13thC, though on very little substantive evidence; and Haslam has argued that the south doorway in the nave is 14thC. We should note in passing that there is evidence to suggest that the south wall of nave was rebuilt in the 19thC.

Chancel added to nave and on basis of trefoiled north lancets this could be a 14thC development; east and south wall of chancel rebuilt wholly in 19thC.

Size of tower has suggested to some that it is Norman; what can be said is that the uppermost stage has either been rebuilt or added, and that there are Tudor details notably a 16thC doorway. Main arch-braced roof is also 16thC.

HISTORY

By tradition this is the burial-place of St Cynog, the son of Brychan, who established a settlement here before 500 A.D.

It was reputedly a clas church in the early medieval period.

In the 1291 Taxatio it was termed 'Ecclesia de Merthir' and had the remarkably high value of £30, implying a church of exceptional status.

It was restored in 1860-1 by C. Buckeridge, and Glynne on his visit in 1865 complimented the restoration. He remarked on the partial rebuilding, the low tower, strongly built, almost of military character, with slit openings and no buttresses or external doorway; the parapet rested on a corbel table. Nave and chancel were undivided except for the restored rood screen. An arched piscina was set to the south of the altar, there was a stone stoup near the south door, and new open benches in the nave.

ARCHITECTURE

Merthyr Cynog church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a west tower and a south porch giving access to the nave near its south-west corner. The church is oriented a little south of grid west, and 'ecclesiastical

east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' of red-brown and grey sandstone slabs, with increasing number of sandstone blocks at higher levels; large dressed sandstone blocks for quoins.

'B' is of randomly set blocks and slabs of red sandstone.

'C' is of weathered blocks of sandstone, originally red but now weathered to grey and lichen covered; some coursing.

'D' is similar to 'C' but of smaller blocks.

'E' shows a greater mixture of blocks and slabs with some rounded lumps, randomly set, and a mixture of colours from olive to red though the latter predominates.

'F' is of regular blocks of dark red sandstone.

'A', 'C' and 'E' medieval. 'D' and 'F' Victorian. 'B' is infill.

Roofs: slates, ceramic ridge tiles; metal cross finial at east end of chancel, concrete one minus its top on the gable of porch.

Drainage: trench along both north and south sides; not obvious on east and nothing on west side of tower.

Exterior

Tower. General. Broad and low tower, with thick walls; Haslam has queried whether it might even be Norman. Walls have chamfered plinth to 0.5m (1st stage), and a corbel table below battlemented parapet (3rd stage). Waterspouts in the form of pipes at the north-west corner and on south side. Low slated pyramidal roof with weathervane and weathercock above. Some evidence of rebuilding, for disconformities on south and west faces. A square north-east stair-turret rises to two thirds of the tower's height.

North wall: Fabric A. Two original slit windows with chamfered dressings in main, 2nd stage; these are not centrally placed because of presence of stair-turret at north-east corner. Just below the corbel table and centrally placed is a louvred slit without dressings to illuminate the belfry. The stair-turret has two small slits with chamfered dressings and stops just below belfry window level. With its large quoins and the chamfered plinth continuing around its base it is certainly an integral part of the original design. North wall rebuilt from top of stair-turret upwards.

East wall: apex of nave roof reaches to approximately same height as top of stair-turret. Belfry window as on north side, and below it is a rectangular window with lintel and protruding sill but no dressings; this immediately above nave apex.

South wall: two slit windows as on north side, but centrally placed; standard belfry window. Top half of wall rebuilt for upper part has more irregular masonry blocks and rougher quoins, whilst lower quoins are pulling away from masonry of wall face, but this stops at the rebuild.

West wall: standard belfry window. Fabric change half way up, and below this disconformity the wall face is bulging and cracking.

Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation between the two elements so they are considered together in this description. Most of wall face on north shows traces of residual plaster.

North wall: a complex wall showing some rebuilding. The two most westerly windows (lighting nave) have trefoiled heads to their double lights, chamfered dressings in yellow sandstone and are Victorian inserts. Further east and lighting the chancel are two single trefoil-headed windows with chamfered dressings in original red sandstone; one has a jamb with a supporting iron band, but the window head is in less convincing grey-brown sandstone. The other, to the east, has one jambstone and at least half its arched head replaced. Most of the westerly part of the wall is in Fabric C and the wall displays a slight batter to a height of c.0.4m; traces of pink render appear to be earlier than the remnant white plaster over Fabric C. Against the tower is a large infilled patch of Fabric B with small slabs plugging the vertical gap between the nave and tower; its date is not certain. Around and above the two Victorian windows the masonry is Fabric

D.

East of the more easterly Victorian window, and possibly in line with the internal nave/chancel divide - though Haslam considers it is just to the west of the screen - is a butt joint to a height of c.1.7m; this has freestone quoins at the end of what may be the nave wall, and the batter at the base of the wall terminates here too. Why the butt joint cannot be traced at higher levels on the wall is unclear. Much of the remaining wall including that around the chancel's trefoiled lights is in Fabric E, but the junction with the masonry of the nave is in part obscured by mould growing on the wall face. At the extreme north-east corner Fabric E gives way to Fabric F, the contact edge between the two being more obvious lower down on the wall face.

East wall: all Fabric F. Chamfered base to 1.2m. Victorian window of three stepped lights with trefoiled heads, all under a two-centred arch formed by a string-course. About 14 mural slabs are pinned or leaning against the wall, the earliest from the late 18thC, through to the middle of the 19thC.

South wall: battered for whole length. At east end wall composed of Fabric F, though the uniformity of the masonry is broken by the inclusion of the occasional irregular boulder. Sanctuary window of two lights in grey and red sandstone, comparable with the Victorian windows on north side of nave. Beside it a mural tablet of 1759/1760. Then a priest's door with yellow sandstone dressings, stopped chamfers, hoodmoulding, and relieving arch in edge stones. This completely Victorian replacement is approached by two steps. The last chancel window is also Victorian, a single light in grey sandstone. About 1.5m west of this window and not quite in line with the butt joint on the north side, there is a masonry change with Fabric F giving way to Fabric C. A short distance west of this is the possible position of an earlier priest's door, but what looks like a lintel stone may be fortuitous and is not wholly convincing. The two windows east of the porch are both in yellow sandstone and comparable with the Victorian windows on the north side; but there is no surface evidence of their insertion. Could the whole wall have been rebuilt using older masonry? Certainly the base of the wall is battered and there are traces of white plaster and pink render. Between the windows are two mural tablets of 1777 and 1835. To the west of the porch, which itself butts against the nave wall, is a single standard Victorian window in yellow sandstone.

West wall: coat of render disguises everything.

Porch. East wall: Fabric closest to C, and a large boulder is built into wall.

South wall: Fabric F. A new round-headed arch with stopped chamfers all in grey sandstone, though more eroded red sandstone jambs on east. Padlocked iron gates; light over arch.

West wall: Fabric C.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor; walls particularly the north, formerly plastered and whitewashed; modern roof with collars and rafters.

North wall: two-centred arch with stopped chamfers and massive jambstones in dark red sandstone: an original doorway. Note too that the batter on the nave wall is gentler here than elsewhere, reinforcing the argument that much of this wall has been rebuilt.

East wall: plain. Stone bench with slab seats.

West wall: as east wall.

Tower. General. Flagged floor without any graveslabs. Wooden ceiling at about 6m. Unplastered walls, once limewashed, now very dirty. Used for storage.

North wall: splayed window with soffit of edge stones. Tudor doorway with stopped chamfers leads to stair

turret.

East wall: doorway has slightly splayed reveal, with soffit of edge stones. Three putlog holes at c.3.5m, presumably for floor joists, with a ledge 0.4m above.

South wall: window as on north side. Ledge as on east but higher.

West wall: putlog holes and ledge as on east side.

Nave. General. Floor flagged with metal grille down centre of aisle. Benches on flush boarding. All walls including dressings are plastered and whitewashed (in yellow). Roof of twelve and a half bays includes chancel; arch-braced collar trusses with four simple collars between each; principal trusses supported on corbels projecting beyond wall plates. Impossible to ascertain how much of this timberwork is original.

North wall: leans outwards. Deeply splayed windows but otherwise plain.

East wall: divided from chancel by screen.

South wall: as north wall but not such an exaggerated lean. Stoup set in wall beside door. Door itself is heavy and may be of early date, while doorway has internal chamfers, crudely stopped.

West wall: broad two-centred arched doorway to tower.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Floor in choir of stone slabs with four graveslabs incorporated (one of the 17thC, 3 of the 18thC); stalls on wooden plinths. Sanctuary tiled in red and black, and encaustic tiles round altar; partially carpet covered. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof as nave.

North wall: two windows, otherwise plain.

East wall: window, otherwise plain.

South wall: windows plus segmental-headed door embrasure, and small arched niche for piscina.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stoup: 12thC; round sided with flat base.

Font: circular, lead-lined bowl on circular stem; perhaps 12thC/13thC.

Screen: 14thC, comparable with Llanellieu and Llanfeugan. "Massive plain timbers; a two-centred, buttressed central archway and broad openings either side; traces of paint" (Haslam). Full details in Crossley and Ridgway.

Piscina: formerly in a different position and traditionally part of another stoup (Griffiths in NMR report).

Monuments: at least 17 mural slabs pinned on or leaning against east wall of chancel, the earliest being to Llewelin Williams (d.1738) and his wife Mary (d.1760) and the most recent of c.1850. Four graveslabs in chancel start with Roger Vaughan of Methyr (d. first decade of 17thC), with outline of knight and lady; Henry Williams (d.1717), David Pritchard (d.1732) and David Pritchard (d.1752).

Bells: two are placed close to the font: one cracked and broken and is one of the two reportedly dated to 1686, the other with the date 1776.

CHURCHYARD

Merthyr Cynog church has developed on a saddle of the ridge between two branches of the River Ysgir. It occupies a large and relatively flat sub-circular enclosure, which does however drop away on the west and south-west. The interior is raised on all sides except the north.

It is relatively well-maintained though overgrown on the east and continues to be used for burial.

Boundary: consists of a stone retaining wall, with material banked up internally to a height of 0.5m on the south. Both this bank which could be an early feature and the wall continue for the whole perimeter, the former varying in height. On the south-west the external drop must be nearly 4m.

A section through the churchyard wall in 1992 revealed underlying features and layers of charcoal and burnt bone. A section through the bank on the north side where a field gate gives access has now got a vegetation cover.

Monuments: these are frequent but quite well spread on the south side and go back to the earlier 18thC. Recent burials focus on the south-west quadrant, and on the east there is certainly 19thC and may be 18thC burials but the dense vegetation makes identification difficult. The north side of the yard is devoid of gravestones.

Furniture: just south of the porch beside the path is the socket stone for a sundial, now removed.

Earthworks: only the earlier churchyard bank around the perimeter. However, there is a hint of a scarp bank on the west and south-west closer to the present boundary than to the church. Its significance and indeed its integrity are unclear.

Ancillary features: on the south are small double iron gates supported on new stone pillars with four steps up into churchyard. On the west is a single iron gate from the former vicarage. On the north there is also a small metal gate and a few metres to the south is a field gate. Concrete paths from the west, south and north; elsewhere grass paths.

Vegetation: yews around south side, some pines close to the south edge, and mature trees of mixed type on the west.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 21 November 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 77
Dawson 1909, 207
Glynne 1886, 272
Haslam 1979, 362
NMR Aberystwyth
Powys SMR

CONDITION

There are signs of general deterioration: the steps to the priest's door are falling away from the wall, there are cracks (partially repaired) in the north wall, and internally peeling paint and plaster on the south nave wall.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Good

Partrishow

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Ishow**PRN** 16931**NGR** SO27892243

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Ishow's church occupies a remote spot 8km north of Abergavenny. To the usual nave, which may be Norman, and its accompanying 16thC chancel, has been added an eglwys-y-bedd with 13thC and 14thC features. The church contains an excellent range of furnishings and fittings including a superb screen and rood loft of c.1500, a font with an inscription of c.1055, two earlier altar slabs and a large number of 18thC mural slabs. The churchyard has been extended but was originally very small, and retains a medieval churchyard cross.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave has been claimed as Norman, presumably on the basis that the eglwys-y-bedd, of putative 13thC date, abuts it; but its windows are Late Perpendicular (?16thC), as is the south door.

The chancel is of a different build to the nave and therefore may be wholly 16thC as defined by the windows, particularly that in east wall.

The porch is considered to be 15thC.

The eglwys-y-bedd appears to have seen considerable rebuilding. Assuming the west lancet is original, the core of it could be 13thC.

HISTORY

There is documentary evidence to indicate that Partrishow was established in the mid-11thC, though whether there was already a building here remains undetermined. It was apparently called Methur Issui, a corruption of Merthyr Ishaw, and together with the mother church of Llanbedr, was committed to the pastoral care of one Matgueith. An inscription on the font dates it to the time of Herwald, who was consecrated Bishop of Llandaff in 1056, when Cynhyllyn (Gennyllyn Voel), the son and heir of Rhys Goch, was lord of Ystradyw, as well as prince of Powis. It has been argued that the font was coeval with the dedication of the church (c.1060).

During the medieval period Partrishow (Patricio) continued to be held with Llanbedr, and this probably explains its absence from the 13thC Taxatio or the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1535. However it does appear in the St Davids' Episcopal Register for 1512 as a chapel annexed (to Llanbedr) in Ewyas deanery.

In 1864 Sir Stephen Glynne noted that the whole of the exterior was whitewashed. A small window at the west end of the nave was mutilated and closed, the chancel had an ugly modern ceiling encroaching on the arch. He thought the western chapel was co-eval with the church. A plain pointed doorway entered it on the south. The screen was described, together with the two altars beneath it, and the western chapel had a solid east wall had a third original stone altar against it. In the wall north of this he described a pointed trefoiled niche and two stone steps. On the south was a single-light window, and on the west an obtuse-headed small

window, closed. There was a curious wooden poor-box and the interior was flagged and dark.

Partrishow avoided Victorian restoration and its conservation was undertaken by W. D. Caroe in 1908-9, with further work on the churchyard in 1919.

ARCHITECTURE

Partrishow comprises a nave with a west bellcote, a slightly narrower chancel, a south porch, and at the west end an eglwys-y-bedd with its own entrance. The church is oriented fractionally south of east.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small through to medium large slabs of grey and red sandstone, irregularly coursed; large dressed blocks for the quoins.

'B' is as 'A' but the masonry includes a larger number of blocks mixed with the slabs; occasionally coursed. Quoins are not as well dressed as in 'A'.

Roofs: large sandstone tiles with ridge tiles of similar material. Bellcote and porch have stone cross finials.

Drainage: trench around north side and concrete lined gully on west; nothing obvious on east and south.

Exterior

Nave. General. Fabric 'A', with windows of 16thC date. Nave and chancel both have a slab-topped ledge, 0.5m max in height and c.0.5m deep running along the south wall - presumed to be a relatively modern feature for seating though Glynnne referred to it in 1864, stating that there were parallels in the neighbourhood; in front of it graveslabs have been laid as a path.

North wall: extensive traces of render remain on upper part of wall. Foundation courses project forwards and appear irregular compared with wall face, perhaps due to them being hidden until revealed by drain construction. No windows. Rood stair housing projects by c.1m, has a slight batter at the base of the wall, and has same type of quoins and same render remnants as main wall. High up, its lintel hidden by wooden boarding across the eaves, is a small rectangular window with chamfered dressings, presumably original, and an iron grille. Nothing to suggest that the stair housing butts against the nave.

East wall: nave is just over 1m higher than chancel. There is a possibility that part of the east wall has been rebuilt. The east wall of the rood stair housing projects out from the main face of the wall by <0.3m, while at the south-east angle the wall also projects, though this time by not much more than 0.1m, beyond the gable.

South wall: wall has exaggerated batter to a height of about 1m at west end and this continues round onto the west side. There are no obvious signs of rebuilding or insertion though the nature of the masonry might preclude such signs. Features from west are: i) a two-light window, the lights with round heads, the mullion and east jamb replaced in grey sandstone; the large jamb on the west and the head are original although the former appears very similar in size and colour to the quoins used in the nave, and could conceivably be re-used; ii) porch; iii) square-headed window with three lights that have round heads, hollow chamfers, sunken spandrels above the lights and a label. How much is original is difficult to determine but the arrises on some of the dressings look unweathered, and the mullions and jambs do not fit precisely with the weathered sill; iv) a rood loft light comprising a small, rectangular, chamfered window with red sandstone dressings, except for the sill in grey; again sharp arrises but probably original.

West wall: remnants of render on wall; drip-course of diagonal overlapping slabs set into wall above roof of the eglwys-y-bedd, probably recent. In northern part of wall is a small square window with hollow chamfered dressings, the jambs once rendered; the top protected by a projecting slab, now lead covered. Above this window the wall looks to be slightly inset. At the apex of the gable the walling extends up to form the side of the bellcote with two arched recesses for the bells; some of the dressings look worn but most are more recent. Behind this facade (i.e. to the east) which does house the bells is a wooden turret with louvred sides.

Chancel. General. Fabric 'B'; render remnants. Windows again 16thC. No batter to the walls; that on south is bowed slightly.

North wall: render remnants and some modern concrete render just below eaves. No windows. No obvious relationship with nave except at foundation level where it appears that nave wall has been chopped away to take chancel - the alternate explanation that the chancel is earlier seems inherently unlikely.

East wall: A square-headed two-light window not quite centrally placed. The lights have two-centred heads, with sunken spandrels above, hollow and roll mouldings, a label with worn, decorated stops; the mullion and most of the jambs are replaced in grey sandstone. One mural tablet of 1797/1805 to the south of the window.

South wall: two rectangular windows with chamfered dressings of mixed sandstone, not all of which may be original. Priest's door approached by two steps; it has a four-centred arch and chamfers, with a bar stop on the east jamb only.

Porch. General. Butts against the nave. Remnant render on east and west walls.

East wall: simple slit window, chamfered dressings. Two gravestones of 1821 and 1854 lean against it.

South wall: bottom of wall face battered. Large, almost rounded, two-centred arch, chamfered with broach stops; reveals have two holes apiece for hinges. Some of the arch stones in red sandstone, probably original, but the rest in grey are more suspect.

West wall: as east wall with small window.

Eglwys-y-bedd. General. Largely in 'A'. Walls slightly battered; chimney with coping at west end.

North wall: plain. Upper part of wall is rougher than lower section, and is probably rebuilt.

South wall: cleaned but not all render removed. There is also a noticeable change in the appearance of the masonry near the south-west angle, and it is conceivable that there has been further rebuilding of this face. A wide two-centred arched doorway with chamfered dressings; arch surely replaced. A single window east of the door with an ogee-headed trefoiled light in buff-yellow sandstone: it does not appear to be of any great age.

West wall: weathered masonry with render in patches. Generally 'A', but more blocks in lower courses. A 13thC lancet with chamfered dressings in grey sandstone. The wall face is very uneven and some at least could be rebuilt.

Interior

Porch. General. Approached by two steps up. Flagged floor. Bare walls. Roof of two bays with simple collars and rafters.

North wall: four-centred arch in red sandstone, chamfered with elongated broach stops; jambs in grey-brown sandstone. Batter of external wall face cut back to accommodate doorway. Door iron-studded and vertically ribbed, of some age.

East wall: small splayed window. Stone slab bench. Stoup consists of simple circular bowl in a recess which has a two-centred head.

West wall: splayed window; stone slab bench.

Nave. General. Stone slabs under font and in front of screen where there are also several graveslabs utilised. Wooden block flooring under seats. Walls are plastered and whitewashed. Panelled wagon roof, ceiled - 60 panels - with moulded ribs and plain, pegged bosses; ribbed wall plates; late 15thC.

North wall: three wall paintings. From west: i) a fragmentary text; ii) opposite the main door, a faint coat-of-arms with an inscription on either side; iii) rood stair doorway with four-centred arch and simple triangular stops to the chamfers; iv) a mural tablet of 1757; v) a fragmentary inscription.

East wall: largely hidden by screen and rood loft; two-centred arch springing from responds with ribbed capitals; attributable to the late 15thC. Plaster above the arch has marks which may be the remains of Royal Arms painting. Two early altars set in front of screen.

South wall: from east: i) small splayed window high up; wall painting of text; iii) splayed window embrasure with wooden lintel; iv) main text; v) door reveal with worn four-centred arch, the dressings more worn internally than externally; vi) small text over door; vii) mural tablet of 1791; viii) splayed window, with most of the reveal plastered and whitewashed; ix) mural tablet of 1767 over window. Also two 20thC mural tablets.

West wall: splayed window to eglwys-y-bedd, partly whitewashed, segmental head, flat sill. High up in the northern part of the wall a splayed window with sloping sill. Below it the wall painting of a skeleton.

Chancel. General. No change in level from nave to chancel but one step up to sanctuary and another to altar. Flagged floor with many 18thC graveslabs; wooden block flooring under choir stalls. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Modern ceiling of three battlemented tie beams and panelling, put in by Caroe.

North wall: unevenly plastered. Six mural tablets of (from west) 1775, 1797, 1804, 1751, 1793 and 1778, and at extreme east end a wall painting of text. Behind the 1797 mural tablet, the remains of a plaster frame in relief.

East wall: deeply splayed window with two mural tablets of 1744 (to north) and of 1788 (to south).

South wall: two splayed windows with wooden lintels to reveals. Segmental head to door reveal. Four mural tablets from east: 1800, 1792 and beneath it 1766, and 1793.

West wall: tie beam across chancel arch.

Eglwys-y-bedd. General. Flagged floor includes two graveslabs the inscriptions on which are almost illegible, though one of 1787. The altar is placed off-centre to the right, over the grave of Issui and is approached by one step. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof has ten arch-braced trusses with pegged collars and is attributed to the 14thC.

North wall: plain.

East wall: at a height of c.4m the wall face is inset implying either rebuilding or possibly the location of a roof collar though this seems unlikely. Chamfered and glazed window to nave. Near the north-east angle a niche with a modern statue.

South wall: splayed window with stone lintel. Door has simple flat-headed reveal.

West wall: window is very badly skewed, suggesting it is of some considerable age.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: "dates from c.1055. Design is aesthetically a good solution; a simple cylinder, the broad rim carved

with two rolls terminating in leaves, and inside this the inscription **MENHIR ME FECIT I(N) TE(M)PORE GENILLIN** in Hiberno-Saxon minuscules. The leaf is of the Winchester manuscript type, a form which appears in carving in other counties" (Haslam).

Screen and rood loft: "surviving with little alteration and datable to the end of the 15thC, but without colour. The central door has a shallow triangular head; on either side are four narrow openings with cusped lancet tracery, and at the ends two wider bays (above the altars) with intersected-diagonal traceries. The underside of the loft is a restored rib-and-boss flat coving. On the lower bressumer three bands of running ornament, including one of water-leaf and one of vines with splendid dragons either end, on the upper, bands of a geometrical motif and cresting. The parapet itself is of muntins with panels of Late Perpendicular tracery patterning which strengthens the screen's shimmery character" (Haslam). Full details in Crossley and Ridgway.

Altars: two stone altars, a cross incised in each corner.

Altar rails: "with fret-cut balusters; are of c.1640" (Haslam).

Pulpit: mid 17thC.

Paintings: "on the walls are a Doom Figure (as a skeleton), a perished Royal Arms, and several panels of texts" (Haslam).

Chest: with lock and ring handle. Against west wall of nave.

Bells: two of 1708.

Registers: from 1718.

Monuments: fourteen memorials dated between 1757 and 1804, their raised ornament, usually with floral borders, strongly coloured and gilded. They are probably the work of the Brute family, though only a few are signed. William Sanders (d.1757) and Thomas Lewis (d.1744) and family, both by T. Brute; Anne Griffiths (d.1804), and William Price (d.1793) by J. Brute; John Powell (d.1788) and William Powell (d.1766) by A. Brute. Others to Howell Powell (d.1775); Blanch Powell (d.1797); Anne Powell (d.1751); Thomas Lewis (d.1793); Moses Williams (d.1778); Rowland Powell (d.1800); Ann Williams (d.1792); John Jones (d.1791); Martha Wark (d.1767).

CHURCHYARD

Church and churchyard are sited on a natural shelf on a remote and steep south-facing hillside; the shelf has been extended by terracing the church into the north slope.

The churchyard has been enlarged in the last hundred years. Previously, it was a very small enclosure with a curvilinear west side; now it is considerably more elongated stretching as far as the lane.

It is overgrown but is used for modern burial.

Boundary: drystone wall on south and east, and a wire fence around the rest; the original boundary on the north remains discernible as a derelict stone wall and on the west as a scarp bank (see below).

Monuments: there are occasional graves beside the path through the new yard, but the majority of memorials are densely packed to the south of the church. Earliest noted is 1764, but they are mostly 19thC.

Furniture: churchyard cross perhaps of c.1300, except for the lantern by Caroe. Three steps up to square base which has chamfered angles interrupted by rounded stops. Octagonal stem with elongated broach stops at base.

Earthworks: original boundary shows to west of church as scarp bank and to north-west as an internal scarp.

Ancillary features: west of the church is a small stone building, previously outside the small churchyard, and presumably to be equated with the stable for the parson's horse by the lychgate, mentioned by Haslam. Stone lychgate erected in memory of R.B.Gabb (d.1919) at west end of enlarged churchyard. A stone slab path leads to porch and then to gate at east end.

Vegetation: one old yew within yard to north of nave; otherwise deciduous species.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 27 June 1996
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 79
Dawson 1909, 214
Glynne 1887, 282; 1902, 98
Haslam 1979, 362
Jones and Bailey 1911, iii, 111
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

The church is in good condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Good

Talachddu

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Mary**PRN** 16958**NGR** SO08183316

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church is a typically simple building of nave, chancel and porch, lying little more than three miles to the north-east of Brecon. It has been suggested that the building may date back to the 14thC, but all of the windows have been replaced, the doorways are no earlier than the 15thC, and it is impossible to determine whether any of the existing masonry survives from the medieval era. The font and roofs apart, there is nothing of medieval date inside.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Other medieval survivals, notably the porch roof and main south door to church, and it is conceivable that the whole of porch might be original, though Griffiths of RCAHMW thought the south door had been re-set.

Parts of the nave and chancel could be medieval, and perhaps as early as the 14thC, namely the north wall and part of the south of the former, and the lower part of the east wall and much of the south of the latter. However, conceivably some sections could be rebuilt using earlier masonry. Also surviving late medieval roofs.

HISTORY

The origins of the church are obscure.

Talachddu does not feature in the 13thC Taxatios, but the Episcopal Register of St Davids does refer to 'Talaughduy' in 1400. The list of incumbents begins with John Linderwode at this time.

Theophilus Jones recorded that part of the rood loft had been converted into a gallery, on the front of which was a marble memorial to Jenkin Lewis (d.1738).

Glynne visited the church in 1861, noting the chancel and nave, a south porch and a wooden cage for the bell at the west end. Most of the windows were poor, late and square-headed. The outside walls were whitewashed, the porch had a good arched timber roof, the interior choked with pews and the pulpit adjacent to the altar. Part of the west end served as a school.

Restoration occurred in 1862 (or 1864 or 1856 - there is no agreement among the sources) and almost certainly involved considerable rebuilding. Conducted by Thomas Nicholson, who inserted the chancel arch and substituted a wooden belfry for the former west tower.

ARCHITECTURE

St Mary's church consists of a nave and narrower chancel, a belfry over the west end of the nave, a south

porch attached to the nave, and a vestry and boiler-house on the north side of the chancel. The church is oriented south-west/north-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for this description.

Fabrics: 'A'; is of small to medium blocks (and a few slabs) of sandstone, gritstone and the like, grey though to brown and red, some regularly shaped, some irregular; traces of limewash on one or two stones; random coursing. Dressed ashlar quoins.

'B' consists of regular blocks and slabs of grey, pink and red sandstone and siltstone, some coursing.

'C' is a mixture of slabs and blocks in grey, brown and red sandstone etc, fresh looking, irregular coursing. Occasional traces of render.

'A' and 'C' may be re-used masonry from the earlier building, but equally could be original, particularly the latter. B is new Victorian masonry.

Roofs: modern concrete aggregate tiles throughout; simple ridge tiles; cross finials towards end of chancel and near gable of porch.

Drainage: unturfed strip around virtually the whole building suggests drainage trench.

Exterior

Nave. General. Supports wooden belfry with four louvred openings on each face with small spire above and cross on top.

North wall: mainly Fabric A, though the masonry has a more regular appearance towards the east end; two two-light rectangular windows, the lights with four-centred heads, all Victorian, but perhaps imitating a 16thC predecessor.

East wall: nave rises about 0.6m above chancel. Fabric 'A'. On the south the chancel wall abuts this wall of nave.

South wall: east of the porch wall in Fabric 'A' but to west it is in Fabric 'B'. One window in same style as those in north wall, and all in pink and grey sandstone.

West wall: in Fabric 'B'. West window has two trefoil-headed lights with a trefoil above, and a hoodmoulding over the arch; yellow freestone dressings weathered to grey.

Chancel. General. On north side a derelict sunken boiler-room with vestry adjacent.

North wall: no wall visible.

East wall: partially ivy covered. Lower part of wall in 'C' might be original and traces of limewash residue apparent. However, upper part of wall face in similar masonry and this is more likely to be rebuilt. It incorporates a typical Victorian window with a two-centred arch, three trefoiled lights, a multifoil roundel above, and a hoodmoulding.

South wall: generally in 'C'. Wall plate visible at eaves level. One window with two-centred arch, cusped tracery to the single light, in grey and red sandstone; has the appearance of having been inserted.

Porch. General. In Fabric 'A'.

East and west walls: plain.

South wall: main entrance has two-centred arch, stopped chamfers all in red sandstone; much of this supposedly 15thC doorway appears to be replacement but the worn stop on the west side could be original.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor; roughly plastered walls; roof of four ribbed arch-braced trusses with three plain intermediate ones, considered to be an original 15thC/16thC feature.

North wall: four-centred arched, Tudor doorway with stopped chamfers, all in red sandstone. Appears to be largely original.

East and west walls: stone benches with flagged seats.

Nave. General. Flagged floor with at least two re-used graveslabs at west end (dating to 1706 and 1730); heating vents down centre covered by carpet; benches raised on low plinths. Walls plastered and painted pink. 15thC wagon roof of 42 ribbed panels, the ceiling between whitewashed; those at west end are double size to allow for belfry support which consists of a substantial frame with two main uprights and wooden arches to walls.

North wall: two deeply splayed windows; three mural tablets of 1752, 1797 and 1825.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch, hoodmoulding with human-headed stops, all in Victorian grey sandstone.

South wall: one splayed window, a triangular-headed embrasure for the door, and four mural tablets of 1766, 1788, 1805 and 1808.

West wall: nothing of significance.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel from nave, one to sanctuary and one to altar. Tiled floors. Walls as in nave, roof likewise but of 24 ribbed panels.

North wall: upper part of wall leans outwards. Two-centred arched doorway in grey sandstone to vestry; one 19thC brass and a 19thC marble mural tablet.

East wall: nothing of significance.

South wall: wall has outward lean as on north. One 19thC mural tablet.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: "triple-clustered column with a shallow bowl; last quarter of the 13thC" (Haslam).

Chest: decorated, Elizabethan(?); beside the altar.

Monuments: mural tablets to Howell Powell (d.1797); Jenkin and Mary Lewis (d.1738 and 1752); Thomas Williams (d.1788); and Walter Williams (d.1766).

Register: from 1601.

CHURCHYARD

The church occupies a raised churchyard, with a hint of curvilinearity to it; despite the fact that it has been extended slightly in the east corner and has been cut back on the south-west, the term circular cannot be

legitimately appended to it. It covers reasonably level ground, but on both the north and east the ground falls away gently beyond its boundary.

Boundary: the perimeter is defined by a mortared retaining wall on all sides, and for the whole perimeter the external ground level is lower, in places particularly the south, considerably so.

Monuments: the north side of the churchyard is free of graves, but elsewhere the gravestones are quite well spread though never densely packed. South of the church is the slab recording William Bevan (d.1734) and there are also some late 18thC memorials. The most recent burial is 1992.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: on the south side there is a scarp bank inside the present boundary, and a slight curve to this near the east corner suggests that it is an earlier perimeter.

Ancillary features: the main entrance is a single ornamental iron gate with an arch over; adjacent to it is a vertical slab stile. A subsidiary entrance exists near the east corner.

Vegetation: upwards of ten yews are set around the whole perimeter except the west. On that side are a number of pines, and within the yard itself are a few large deciduous trees.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 29 March 1996
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 82
Dawson 1909, 221
Glynne 1887, 285
Haslam 1979, 371
Jones and Bailey 1930, iv, 13 & 14
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Some minor problems are evident with small cracks in the east wall of the nave and south wall of chancel showing internally, and paint peeling off the ceiling.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Poor to Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Talgarth

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Gwendoline

PRN 16959

NGR SO15733382

GENERAL SUMMARY

A large church dedicated to St Gwendoline, sited at highest end of the town. It is set eccentrically in a sub-rectilinear churchyard and may have originated as 'clas' church, though the basis for this conjecture is restricted to architectural criteria.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Tower is 15thC, while the body of the church dates from around 1400 but some re-use of earlier fenestration.

The nave and chancel (with a new aisle) were apparently rebuilt c. 1400 with a four-bay nave arcade and a single-bay chancel arcade, though some of the fenestration of c.1300 was re-used. Presumably the south transept was removed at this time.

Bottom part of north nave wall may be original (e.g. late 13thC/early 14thC?), upper part rebuilt, either in early 15thC or later when doorway put in place. Victorian rebuilding also on north side of nave, and north transept. More recent reconstruction work on west side of north transept for its conversion to meeting room. Chancel and south aisle presumed to be early 15thC, but east wall of former partially reconstructed. Porch also 15thC.

HISTORY

The church is dedicated to St Gwendoline (as also at Llyswen), a (grand)daughter of Brychan, and reputedly buried here. An early medieval origin remains unproven, though the 'clas' identification is relevant here (see below).

Between 1093 and 1095 Bernard de Neufmarche granted the church to Brecon Priory.

In the Taxatio of 1254 it was referred to as 'Ecclesia de Talgarth'.

The earliest discernible building plan suggests a 13thC cruciform church on basis of surviving north transept. This in turn might indicate the former existence of an early medieval 'clas' foundation for which there is no other evidence.

In 1851 Glynne stated that the church tower had "a battlement absurdly whitewashed", the nave also whitewashed, and the transept had been entirely modernized and was used as a school. A low arch upon square piers, apparently original, opened from it into the chancel. Remains of a rood screen survived in the chancel and part of the corner of the rood loft could still be seen. The north transept was used as a school until 1873, and subsequently adapted as a vestry.

The church was extensively restored at cost of £2000 in 1873 by Thomas Nicholson. The tower was

renovated in 1898.

ARCHITECTURE

Church consists of nave and chancel in one, west tower attached to nave, a north transept attached to nave and chancel, a vestry on east side of transept, and a south aisle with a south porch attached. The building is aligned east/west.

Fabrics: 'A' of primarily red sandstone slabs, small to large, irregularly coursed. Quoins of grey and red sandstone.

'B' of grey sandstone slabs with some red, small to medium in size, some blocks, irregularly coursed.

'C' of small, roughly laid slabs of red and grey sandstone.

'D' of grey and red slabs better laid than 'C' but with more colour heterogeneity than 'B'.

'E' consists of medium sized blocks of grey, red and brown sandstone.

'A' and 'D' are medieval, 'B' is medieval or 16thC, 'C' is Victorian and 'E' is 19thC or probably 20thC.

Roofs: slates with simple ceramic ridge tiles, and cross finials at east end of chancel and of south aisle, and on porch.

Drainage: slab-lined gully, estimated at up to 0.7m deep, around whole of body of church except tower and north transept where signs of infilled drain.

Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric A. Consistent features are: double, chamfered plinth to a height of c.1.0m; simple string-courses at top of 1st and 2nd stages; a complex moulded string course above 3rd, belfry stage; and battlemented parapet above. Window dressings generally in yellow sandstone. Tower surmounted by weathervane and excessive weathercock. Tower stair built into north wall. Of 15thC build.

North wall: slit low down in 1st stage, hollow chamfered dressings, weathered below, but replaced higher up; towards north-east corner a second slit to light stair, with flat chamfer, probably indicating some replacement; at top of 1st stage in centre another chamfered slit with string-course acting as label. 2nd stage has standard slit but dressings in red sandstone apart from one replacement jamb in cream sandstone. Belfry has two-light window with foiled ogee-heads in Y-tracery, louvre boards and the arch almost four-centred.

East wall: apex of nave roof reaches to just above 1st stage string course. 2nd stage slit as on north wall but some jamb replacement. Belfry window as on north side, its yellow dressings apparently original.

South side: fenestration as on north side, and two waterspouts. Part way up 1st stage, quoin stones indicate a sudden inset of tower wall at south-east angle, the change matched by presence of large blocks of off-white sandstone in coursing of south face. Gap between inset quoinstones and nave wall filled with masonry to nave eaves level. Similar inset discernible on north face of tower. Conceivably, tower has been rebuilt from this point upwards, but more likely that inset was designed to accommodate pre-existing overhang of former roof of nave.

West wall: standard fenestration as north wall, all in yellow sandstone, with slits all having hollow chamfers; degree of replacement impossible to gauge. Two waterspouts.

Nave. General. Only one wall - on north - visible externally. Thought to have been rebuilt c.1400.

North wall: mixture of fabrics with lowest courses in 'D', most of wall incorporating upper part of doorway and central window in 'B', and inserts at both ends in 'C'. Buttress at west end in 'A'-type fabric; three

windows all of consistent appearance, with two lights with cinquefoil heads and Y-tracery and chamfered dressings under two-centred arch; outer two windows in olive-green sandstone are Victorian or later and are set in the inserted Fabric C; the central window in pink sandstone shows some replacement of arch and tracery and even remaining dressings may not be original. Between central and westerly window is a blocked late 16thC doorway in yellow sandstone with complex moulded chamfers and a flattish triangular arch with decoration: one knot visible in the spandrel below flat-topped head of doorway. Beneath this doorway are steps down to boiler room.

North transept. General. All sides show signs of having been plastered in past.

North wall: in Fabric 'B' with weathered grey sandstone quoins; upper part of this gable end, above eaves level, has been rebuilt in coarser fashion. Simple lancet window with chamfered dressings in cream sandstone. High up the wall, a blocked slit window, the blocking perhaps fairly recent. Chimney at apex.

East wall: largely disguised by vestry and by curious angled wall which defines diagonal passage way (see below) from transept to chancel; that part of transept wall that is visible above the angled wall looks rebuilt.

South wall: joins nave/chancel.

West wall: text-book sections of 'B' walling remain, while upper parts in Fabric 'C'. Additionally, remnants of two blocked doors, with some jamb stones in position; now modern rectangular wooden windows with large wooden lintels have been inserted, the masonry in the blocked doorways and above one of the windows being classed as Fabric 'E'. South end of wall has been rebuilt adjacent to nave - the rebuild appears to be later than the basal (Fabric 'D') walling of nave, but earlier than the Victorian rebuild (Fabric 'C'), though in similar masonry.

Vestry. General. Small unit abutting northern half of east side of north transept. Reportedly built in 19thC. Has a wide wooden window on east, a blocked brick doorway on south, and a simple wooden door on north.

Walkway. General. Runs diagonally from east side of north transept to north side of chancel. Its masonry appears to be of reasonably well-laid Fabric 'D', and traces of plaster remain. Its north end abuts transept wall.

Chancel. General. Base of wall slightly battered.

North wall: Fabric 'D', exhibiting irregular surface, with traces of plaster remaining. One two-light window with cinquefoil head, complex moulded chamfers and a flat-headed window frame; dressings reveal a mixture of sandstones, and it is impossible to say how much is original.

East wall: a Victorian three-light window with panel tracery in a two-centred arch with hood moulding over - Perpendicular style; its insertion lines can just be seen suggesting most of top of gable rebuilt in 19thC.

South wall: short length only because of adjoining south aisle. One cinquefoiled window in rectangular, chamfered frame, though ogee head of the light is different from window in north wall; some of dressings are original. Wall possibly rebuilt?

South aisle. General. Thought to have been added c.1400 when nave rebuilt, though some re-use of Y-tracery fenestration from south wall of nave. Three external walls; the south aisle is almost as long as nave and chancel combined, its west wall aligned with that of nave. No obvious difference between south aisle and chancel in masonry terms: all Fabric 'D' with random coursing and occasional residual plaster traces.

East wall: fine 15thC window of three lights with cinquefoil tracery, with six panels above, all under two-centred arch; generally dressings in yellow sandstone comparable with belfry windows. Mural tablet of 1779 set on wall.

South wall: features from east end are: i) three-light window with complex moulded chamfer and cinquefoil tracery, set in square-headed frame; original yellow sandstone but one jamb and perhaps sill replaced; comparable with window in north wall of chancel though that has simpler moulding; ii) priest's door with stopped chamfers, four-centred arch, with original dressings; door itself more recent and has ornate hinges; iii) second window as first but has red sandstone jambs; iv) buttress; v) two-light window with multi-foil tracery, a mixture of red and yellow but difficult to determine what has been replaced; vi) window of two lights with multi-foil heads, Y-tracery under two-centred arch, pink and red sandstone dressings, the former probably replacements, and the window with its Gothic arch looks out of place; vii) porch. The last two windows appear to have had the masonry above them re-set.

West wall: Fabric 'D' with grey sandstone quoins at south-west corner; wall contains window of three, stepped lights with foiled heads under a four-centred arch; yellow sandstone dressings with some red sandstone; wall base appears to abut tower, but phasing higher up not clear.

Porch. General. Masonry is Fabric 'D', but regularity of masonry higher up south wall suggests either rebuilt or raised. Abuts south aisle and considered by Haslam to be Perpendicular addition.

East wall: contains one simple slit window, its headstone replaced. Broken grave slabs leant against wall.

South wall: fine four-centred arch, with stopped, double roll-mouldings; red sandstone jambs and light yellow arch stones. Archway blocked by double iron gates; notice board on gable.

West wall: slit window as on east.

Interior

Generally plastered and whitewashed throughout, the exceptions being the porch, the ground floor of the tower and many of the window, door and arcade dressings.

Porch. General. On same level as external churchyard. Flagged floor; roof of five arch-braced collars of modern date resting on decorated wall plates.

North wall: main doorway to church is broad, with a four-centred arch, the stopped, moulded chamfers in brown sandstone. Victorian double doors with ornamental hinges as on priest's door. Ribbed stoup under four-centred arched niche to east of doorway, thought by Haslam to be earlier than porch itself. 1873 Incorporated Church Building Society notice above door, also a blocked recess for a statuette.

East wall: largely covered by noticeboard with, beneath, a stone bench with slab seat.

South wall: internally chamfered two-centred arch, but replacement jambs not chamfered.

West wall: small splayed window with stone bench below.

Tower. General. Now used as a vestry. Ceiling arched in stone with holes for bell ropes. Tiled floor with heating grill.

North wall: deeply splayed window with sloping sill; small doorway to tower stair has chamfered dressings and a triangular head.

East wall: two-centred tower arch constructed of large blocks of off-yellow sandstone, a stopped chamfer for outer moulding, the inner one fading into wall; glazed door in wooden frame closes off vestry; grave slab of 1631 on south side of reveal, and mural slabs of 1782 and of uncertain date on east wall.

South wall: window as on north wall; eight mural tablets ranging from 1727 to 1810 and one not dated.

West wall: window as north wall with one tablet, undated and in Welsh, resting in embrasure.

Nave. General. Tiled floor with carpet over; wooden planked floor under benches. 19thC roof has braced collars, similar to that in south aisle but with double collars, wooden panelling above rafters and ornamented wall plates; three large twisted metal rods act as tie bars just below eaves level. Rebuilt around 1400 incorporating four-bay arcade (in nave) together with single-bay chancel arcade.

North wall: wall leans outwards, a deliberate batter. Windows treated consistently with grey sandstone dressings, all splayed. No indication of blocked door visible externally. Transept partly blocked by inserted wall which incorporates large crudely turned segmental chancel arch with chamfered slab capitals now mostly blocked by organ - every appearance of being a more recent modification.

East wall: dominated by a two-centred wooden arch on heavy decorated corbels, inserted in restoration of 1873.

South wall: arcade of four bays (with one more in chancel), double chamfered, two-centred arches resting on moulded capitals and octagonal piers; arch on east fades into wall, that at west end is a respond.

West wall: tower arch is two-centred with its springing points higher and less convincing than those of arcade, and wave mouldings with curious stops. Above is a four-centred chamfered doorway, now blocked, to former gallery.

North transept. General. Organ sunk at least 0.6m below floor level. Wooden board floor surrounds organ. Panelled partition divides this organ 'chamber' from meeting room occupying northern half of transept. Meeting room has painted walls.

North wall: angular splay to window.

East wall: beside organ a large flattish arch turned in slabs and supported on a square pier as on south side of chancel, with a capital simpler than but modelled on those of arcade, gives access to passage to chancel. Further north a simple doorway into vestry.

West wall: at southern end, a blocked square-headed aperture represents earlier doorway into transept. Two new windows (as outside) have recesses beneath them to ground level.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave into chancel with two more to altar. Floor tiled, carpet covered; choir stalls raised on wooden platforms. Wagon roof of twenty-four panels with decorated bosses and decorated wall plates - all Victorian.

North wall: large arch in dark grey sandstone gives onto diagonal passage (is this connected with the broad squint referred to by Haslam and earlier by Dawson?; the history of this feature is obscure!); its supporting pillar mirrors that on the opposite side of the chancel but it is in different masonry and is clearly Victorian. Chancel wall slopes outwards as nave, and contains deeply splayed window.

East wall: modern reredos.

South wall: splayed window, its internal dressings as those in nave. Most easterly bay of arcade gives onto south aisle, but its arch is broader than its counterparts in nave, and has a respond to east and a large square chamfered pillar to west; the chamfers have stops though at least one broken off; the capital has been replaced as have two stones in the pillar immediately below it.

South aisle. General. Victorian tiled floor with benches set on flush wooden boarding; at least one heating grill near south door. Roof has arch-braced collars, ornamented wall plates, and panelling above rafters. At

east end, two steps up to an altar. In earlier times the east end was divided off as the Francis Chapel.

North wall: arcade (see above).

East wall: splayed window with standard finish; rectangular recess (aumbry) in wall, north of window, marble mural tablet of 1790 to south.

South wall: wall leans outwards; splayed windows finished in standard form; priest's door has segmental head and grey sandstone used for stonework of internal reveal. Ten mural tablets at eastern end, on either side of priest's door, ranging from 1675 to 1863. Inner porch of wooden panelling disguises main south door.

West wall: standard finish to splayed window.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Cross slab: "late 13thC cross slab, the cross with carved foliage in a quatrefoil round it, and fronds also branching from the stem, all in high relief" (Haslam). Laid flat near priest's door in south aisle, previously (in 19thC) under a yew tree in the churchyard.

Screen: at the west end fragments of vine-trail from the church's original screen, apparently purchased by the vicar at a sale in parish in 1900x1907.

Writing desk: of unknown age, in north transept.

Stone: early 17thC in Welsh warning sinners of judgment to come. In tower.

Monuments: in the tower to Jane Jones (d.1782), Edward Winter of Tredustan (d.1737), Ursula Tamplin of Hereford (d.1780), one inaccessible of 1727, several of early 19thC date, and in the doorway reveal, to William Vaughan cruelly murdered' at Abergavenny in 1631, a slab lettered round the margins in the medieval fashion.

In south aisle marble tablet to Rev. John Jones (d.1790), John Price (d.1800), William Vaughan of Dol (d.1774) on a shaped armorial bracket; slate tablet to Howell Harris of Trevecka, the religious reformer, by Games of Talgarth (d.1773), to Joseph Harris (d.1761) and Thomas Harris (d.1782), mathematician and businessman respectively, by Paty; and a limestone tablet to Rebecca Gunter of Trefecca (d.1673); also five other 19thC monuments of stone or marble.

Hatchment: member of Gwynne family of Trefecca Fawr, in nave.

Bells: all six are inscribed (see Dawson for details). Cast by Rudhall in 1724, rehung 1905 when one re-cast.

Registers: from 1695.

Victorian fittings include:

Glass: in east window dated 1897.

Organ: brought from Worcester in 1883.

CHURCHYARD

Talgarth has a large churchyard of irregular rectilinear shape. It is established on relatively level ground at the head of this small town, the ground sloping away to the River Ennig on the west; Church Street edges

the churchyard on the south and beyond this the ground falls away sharply into a tributary valley, while to the north the ground also falls away though more gently. The position is thus effectively an interfluvial spur.

The churchyard is generally tidy and well-maintained, shows no sign of having been extended in the past, and is still used for burials.

Boundary: stone wall forms boundary for whole yard. Above Church Street on south the internal drop is around 0.5m, the external drop about 1.5m or more; on the east, there is no difference in ground levels, the wall being c.1.3m high, but on this side from opposite the church and then around the north and west perimeter, the churchyard is again raised with height differentials of about 1.0m.

Monuments: these are well spread and reasonably dense throughout the churchyard. On the north side, gravestones are predominantly of 20thC date; elsewhere most are 19thC and 20thC, but there are a scatter of 18thC examples, not only immediately to the south of the church but throughout the rest of yard as well. The earliest noted was of 1730 leaning against churchyard wall near south-east corner. Also of note is the chest tomb of Howell Harris (d.1730), father of Howell Harris, the preacher and reformer.

Furniture: octagonal sandstone shaft supports undated sundial without gnomon - certainly pre-dates 1909. Situated beside path less than 20m to south of porch.

Earthworks: southern part of churchyard raised, and some banking beneath mature yew trees just to north of Church Street boundary, but the significance of this cannot be ascertained.

Ancillary Features: church served by tarmac paths with iron gates at all entrances. Main entrance at south-west corner has double ornamental gates, a kissing gate at south-east corner, and a third gate immediately west of church. Standard farm gate gives access to burial areas from north-west corner. Wooden shed set in angle formed by north transept and chancel.

Vegetation: mature yews (6) form horseshoe shape south of church. one or two other, smaller trees.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings: Talgarth Community 1995
Church Guide book: nd
CPAT Field Visit: 27 October 1995
Crossley and Ridgway 1952, 82
Dawson 1909, 227
Glynne 1887, 285
Haslam 1979, 371
Jones and Bailey 1911 iii, 51ff
NMR Aberywyth

CONDITION

Church is currently in reasonable condition. Minor cracks appearing in north wall of nave and east end of chancel, damp is causing plaster blistering and mould internally at west end of nave, and vegetation is growing out of the masonry towards top of the tower.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Trallong

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** David**PRN** 16963**NGR** SN96612958

GENERAL SUMMARY

St David's church at Trallong sits on the northern lip of the Usk Valley, 8km to the west of Brecon. The church is a single-celled structure, the core of which is certainly medieval though there was also considerable rebuilding in the Victorian era. Some of the windows are refurbished Perpendicular survivals as is the priest's door. Internally there is little of early date except for the font and an early medieval inscribed stone. The churchyard appears to have been sub-circular in the beginning but has been enlarged subsequently.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave and chancel partly rebuilt but in materials that make it difficult to distinguish the phasing. An extreme view is that only the lower part of the more westerly half of the north wall is original. With the east and south walls it is impossible to determine how much has been rebuilt, but perhaps the whole of the east end has been reconstructed, and this is in line with a report of 1861 which noted that it had been rebuilt on its ancient foundations. Porch is Victorian.

HISTORY

The morphology of the churchyard and its location go a long way to conveying an early medieval origin for the site. In this context the early medieval inscribed stone could be significant, though its significance depends on where it was originally erected.

The church at 'Trallonge' appears in the St David's Episcopal Register in 1513, though the manor of the same name is referred to more than three hundred years earlier by Giraldus Cambrensis. According to Rees the parish was known as Trallwng Cynfyn in the late 12thC.

Glynne's description of 1855 evokes a whitewashed building, its windows with trefoiled lights, and generally in a poor state of repair. The interior was dark and the western end partitioned off for a school room.

The new roof, windows and timber porch were constructed by C. Buckeridge in 1861 at the instigation of the Revd Gilbert Harries. This reputedly saved the building from demolition. It was during the restoration that the Ogam stone was found serving as a lintel for one of the windows. In 1885 the roof was raised and slates replaced the stone tiles.

ARCHITECTURE

Trallong church is a single-cell building with no external differentiation between nave and chancel, a west bellcote and a north porch. It is aligned slightly north of grid west.

Fabric: small to medium blocks and slabs of grey and maroon sandstone, irregularly coursed; larger blocks for foundations, intermittently set; quoins roughly dressed; pink mortar pointing.

Roofs: slates with reconstituted clay ridge tiles on porch and (?)concrete ones on nave; metal cross finial on chancel end.

Bellcote is modern addition with unweathered masonry, yellow sandstone dressings and a single bell.

Drainage: concrete-lined gully around all sides, about 0.3m below adjacent ground level.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Single cell. Walls battered slightly to height of around 1m-1.5m.

North wall: some variation in masonry appearance indicates rebuilding; traces of limewash on wall face. About 1.3m from west end, an irregular edge is visible, the stonework to the east being similar in composition but a little less weathered. This break continues behind the porch and as far east as the first window. About one metre east of this window is a disconformity in the masonry surface though the fabric is no different. It is possible but far from certain that the whole wall east of this point is rebuilt. Three windows on this side which from west are: i) two-light with cusped tracery under two-centred heads, all in Victorian yellow sandstone and no signs of insertion; ii) a single two-centre headed window with cusped tracery also in yellow sandstone, lighting chancel; iii) a single foiled light but lacking the two-centred head; some of the dressings could be original though not the head. Haslam attributes this to the Decorated period. Three mural slabs of 1792, 1819 and 1804 just to west of porch; one of 1787/1800 west of the sanctuary window, and two others, of 183/1796 and 1810 to the east of it.

East wall: weathered masonry is of uniform appearance. The east window is a typical Victorian product of three stepped lights with cusped tracery, two circular lights above the outer ones and a two-centred arch over with hoodmoulding and relieving arch. No sign that this window has been inserted into wall so could the whole have been rebuilt? Six mural tablets, the earliest 1794.

South wall: fabric appears consistent along wall length. From the east, the sanctuary is lit by a two-centred arched window, its two lights having cusped heads; the jambs may be original but the rest has been replaced. Then a blocked priest's door, the jambs with stopped chamfers, and the arch with a rounded head, reputedly 16thC. Next a rectangular window with three trefoiled lights in buff sandstone; all the dressings are replaced and there are no signs of insertion; originally 16thC? Finally another three-light window, each light with rather poor trefoiled tracery under a round head; all in grey sandstone; similar to the most easterly window in this wall, but appears to be older.

West wall: standard fabric with occasional flecks of plaster adhering to it. West window has two-centred arch, two lights with trefoil heads and a cinquefoil light above; the arch is defined by the hoodmoulding and there is a relieving arch above it. Again a Victorian feature but no signs of insertion.

Porch. General. Wooden superstructure on chamfered, stone plinth.

North wall: wooden, trefoil-headed arch over open doorway; above this the gable contains an arch-braced scissor truss.

East and west walls: decorated wooden panelling.

Interior

Porch. General. Lagged floor. Roof has rafters and collars.

East and west walls: wooden benches supported in part by offset stone walls.

South wall: main doorway with two-centred arch, stopped chamfers and distinctive sandstone jambs: a replacement.

Nave. General. Flagged floor; two small grilles indicate underfloor heating ducts; benches on flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed, as are the window embrasures and dressings. Roof of collars with scissor struts above. Above the vestry is a metal straining rod between the walls.

North wall: deeply splayed window; door embrasure has segmental head, and to west of doorway is the early medieval stone set upright, together with a rectangular decorated stone. Benefaction board adjacent.

East wall: no division between nave and chancel other than chancel step.

South wall: two deeply splayed windows as on north side; fireplace in south-west angle.

West wall: one splayed window.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel from nave, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Floor of black and red tiles in chancel with addition of yellow tiles in sanctuary. Rear choir stalls on wooden plinths. Carpet in aisle. Walls plastered and whitewashed, as are the window embrasures and dressings. Roof as nave but wooden panelling as backing rather than white plaster.

North wall: two splayed windows.

East wall: one splayed window.

South wall: one splayed window with sedile beneath; one mid-19thC marble mural tablet.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Inscribed Stone: "early medieval, found during the 1861 renovation serving as a lintel in a window. It is 1.6m tall and the broad end was originally bedded c.0.4m into the ground. The Latin inscription reads CUNOCENNI FILIU(S) CUNOCENI HIC IACIT; the Ogam on the side of the stone give a similar meaning. Nash-Williams dated these inscriptions to the 5thC-early 6thC. The Latin ring-cross, however, was cut on the previously buried end in the 7thC-9thC" (Haslam).

Decorated stone: set next to early medieval stone in nave; a Romanesque voussoir (J. Knight: pers. comm.).

Font: 13thC but recut; cylindrical bowl funnelling down to chamfered cylindrical stem.

Registers: from 1752.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is strongly curvilinear on the north but rectilinear on the remaining sides. Its appearance is indicative of an early circular 'llan' but there are no relict earthworks to confirm the hypothesis. It is set on what may be a slight natural shelf above the pronounced valley of the Usk. The churchyard itself drops steadily from north to south and the church is terraced into the hillside. Beyond the churchyard perimeter the ground falls steeply to the valley floor on the south, while to the north it rises to the southern slopes of the Mynydd Eppynt range.

It is reasonably well maintained and is still used for burial.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall acts as a retaining barrier around the north and north-west sides, the external drop being more than 2m in places. On the west south and east sides it continues, usually acting as a revetment above the natural slopes below, and is not always in such good condition. Trallong can be classed as a raised churchyard, though on the north at least some of this may be due to the earlier hollowing of the road that swings around its perimeter.

Monuments: these are fairly well packed on the north side and are mainly 19thC though some are earlier, reaching back to at least 1751. Unusually there are no burials to the east of the chancel, and only modern burials to the south of the church.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: small, double, iron gates give access to churchyard on west and north-east, and the tarmac paths are sunk below the surrounding graveyard level.

Vegetation: one small yew to the north-west of the church, and a large deciduous tree north-east of the chancel.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 23 November 1995
Dawson 1909, 230
Glynne 1887, 286
Haslam 1979, 374
NMR Aberystwyth
Rees 1961

CONDITION

Narrow cracks in external wall faces but otherwise appears to be sound.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Poor to Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Tretower

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication St John the Evangelist

PRN 16967

NGR SO18612128

GENERAL SUMMARY

Tretower church is situated in the village of the same name, some 4km north-west of Crickhowell. It is a Victorian building with the only fitting surviving from the medieval building, a disused stoup or piscina, discarded outside the nave.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

New structure of 1876/77.

HISTORY

The church was reputedly dedicated to St Michael originally and was probably a chapel attached to Tretower Castle.

The earlier building on the spot was very similar to the present building in as far as can be gauged from an old postcard in the church, with lancet windows, a south porch and light-coloured dressings, the only difference being that the bellcote was over the west end. The overall impression is of a structure that was of no great age.

The church fell into disrepair around 1870 and was completely rebuilt in 1876-7 by J.L.Pearson at the time when he was estate architect to the Baileys of Glanusk.

ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave with narrower chancel, a vestry and organ chamber on the north side of the chancel, a south porch, and a double bellcote over the chancel arch. It is aligned almost precisely east to west.

Fabric: generally small, regularly fashioned slabs of red sandstone, well-coursed and consistent in appearance. Quoins and dressings in buff-yellow sandstone.

Roofs: reconstituted clay tiles, cross finials at west end of nave, east end of chancel, and over porch.

Drainage: trench around vestry on north side.

Note that church was completely rebuilt in Early English style in the later 19thC and the following description is consequently an outline only.

Exterior

General. Fenestration of paired or single lancets. Main south door with two-centred arch. String-course runs round building below window level.

Interior

General. Plastered and whitewashed throughout (light blue for walls, white for dressings). Red and black tiled floor visible in places but extensively carpetted, particularly in the chancel over stone flags; wooden boarded floor beneath benches. Vestry has tiled and wooden floor.

Roof of nave has five bays with arch-braced trusses springing from wall plates and collars; trefoiled windbraces below first row of purlins. Chancel roof is a single bay with collars and scissor struts.

Nave walls have deeply splayed windows, and a string-course below window level on all sides but the east. Chancel has sedilia in south-east corner and an aumbry on the north.

There is nothing within the church that pre-dates the rebuilding.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Basin: a tri-lobed sandstone bowl with a bung hole, the fourth side perhaps broken off? Too large for a piscina, perhaps a stoup? But medieval, and perhaps the sole surviving piece from the earlier building. On the ground outside the north wall of the church.

Stained glass: three east lancets dated 1906.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard comprises a small area walled off around the south side of the church with a path around the west and part of the north.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall to a height of c.1.2m.

Monuments: a generally sparse spread on the south side, but all late 19thC and 20thC, with recent burials in the graveyard on the opposite side of the road to the south.

Ancillary features: metal gates on the south and a wooden latch gate on the north.

Vegetation: one yew tree in the south-east corner.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 25 October 1995
Dawson 1909, 234
Haslam 1979, 379
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Generally sound though some flaking plaster in the vestry.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor

Upper Chapel

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication No known dedication

PRN 20106

NGR SO00724058

GENERAL SUMMARY

Also known as Capel Dyffryn Honddu, Upper Chapel some 10km to the south of Builth Wells, lacks a dedication. It has been rebuilt perhaps in the 18thC or early 19thC and nothing is known of its predecessor. It contains no features of medieval origin and its churchyard is only partially curvilinear.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Rebuilt in uniform masonry with simple windows at a date which has not been registered. Could be 18thC and certainly before the general phase of Victorianisation.

HISTORY

Nothing is known of the earlier history of this chapel. One suspects it may have originated as a chapel of ease, perhaps in the Middle Ages, but there is nothing to corroborate such a theory. No medieval references have been encountered and there are few details even in the post-medieval era.

Dawson recorded that the register was commenced in 1826 and the communion plate was dated 1889. There was a schoolroom at the south-west angle in the 19thC.

ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a small single-cell structure with no external differentiation between nave and chancel. There is a south porch set almost centrally on the south side, and a bellcote at the west end. It is oriented west-north-west/east-south-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted in this report.

Fabric: medium sized blocks and some slabs of red and grey sandstone, irregularly coursed; ashlar quoins.

Roof: slates with lead covering along ridge. Stone bellcote at west end with one bell under a pitched roof.

Drainage: concrete-lined gullies on all sides but the west, and extending round east and west sides of porch. There are downpipes on the west so conceivably a sub-surface gully.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. North wall: two single light windows, effectively broad lancets, dressed stone jambs and arch, not chamfered. Remnants of plaster.

East wall: window has two lights and Y-tracery, but its stonework the same as the windows on the north side.

South wall: two windows as north wall. Plaster remnants.

West wall: no windows but plaster remnants; formerly ivy covered.

Porch. General. Standard masonry. Plaster remnants on all three sides.

South wall: narrow two-centred arch with dressed arch stones but quoins rather than jambs. Wooden gable with lamp set in it.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor; walls plastered and whitewashed; arched ceiling, also whitewashed. North wall has a two-centred arched doorway, comparable in materials to windows.

Nave. General. Austere interior. Flagged floor with benches set on flush boarding. Plain walls with narrowly splayed window embrasures and windows themselves in wooden frames with some stained glass; ceiling has a triangular pitch with no timber visible.

Chancel. General. On same level as nave, but for the fact that raised on wooden boards; one step up to sanctuary. Walls and roof as nave. East window holds more stained glass.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

None of pre-19thC date.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard lies on a very slight slope, just perceptible internally, for its position and that of the accompanying settlement is a spur location above the confluence of the Honddu and a tributary. It is raised on the east and south sides above the road but not on the north or west sides, and is in part curvilinear.

The churchyard is well kept and still used for burial.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall on the south and east, and a pletched hedge on the north and west.

Monuments: generally sparse and these almost entirely 20thC.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: about 10m west and north of the perimeter hedge is a low scarp suggestive either of a former boundary or more likely perhaps a track around the enclosure which is depicted on the Tithe survey. The boundary here has a curve to it and in this respect the 1st edition OS map is more accurate than its modern successor.

Ancillary features: single unadorned iron gate give access to churchyard from east. Concrete path to porch.

Vegetation: several quite substantial yews and a couple smaller examples scattered around the churchyard, some just inside the perimeter.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 21 November 1995

Dawson 1909, 235

Martin and Walters 1993, 123

NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Minor cracks in the east gable end and some of the dressed stone in the north windows is flaking. Otherwise satisfactory.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Very Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Ystradfellte

Diocese Swansea and Brecon**Dedication** Mary**PRN** 16978**NGR** SN93061344

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church lies in the valley of the Mellte where it cuts through the less dramatic southern dip slope of the Brecon Beacons. The church may have an early origin, but most of its architecture is no earlier than the 16thC, though parts of the structure could be earlier. Altogether it is undistinguished architecturally. Internally it is the 16thC font and the range of 18thC mural tablets that are of interest. The churchyard has a somewhat anonymous shape.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave of uncertain date, but contains two blocked doorways of medieval date. Chancel of same width but added onto nave in 16thC. Nave partially rebuilt in 19thC and all windows replaced except for one on south side which is 17thC/18thC. This window represents the model for Victorian insertions.

HISTORY

The origin of the church is unknown; an early medieval beginning is a possibility, but there is no substantive evidence to support this theory.

The church guide has the delightful but totally unsubstantiated statement that the much of the present church was built by Cistercian monks at the end of the 12thC.

No record of Ystradfellte appears to exist in the 13thC Taxatio or the 16thC Valor Ecclesiasticus.

The present church is thought to be 16thC on the basis of the absence of pre-1500 details. However, it has also been suggested that the irregular chancel arch might have been broken through an earlier east wall which could still be in place, and other parts of the nave could also be earlier.

Jones, in 1809, records that the church then consisted of a nave and chancel only, the roof was unceiled, the floor uneven, windows frequently broken, seats decayed, the light but indifferent, and at the west end was a tower in which there was one bell.

Glynne's account of 1855 describes the body of the church as whitewashed, but not the tower, and the "usual deficiency of good architecture". The belfry windows were plain rectangles. Internally the chancel arch was a rude, pointed one, and on the south side of the chancel was a square-headed, two-light window of Perpendicular character, and to the north a lancet of doubtful age. The east window appeared to be Decorated and of two lights with a diamond above them. Other windows had been modernised. The interior was gloomy and contained pews. The south porch had been removed.

One restoration occurred in 1870, another in 1882 when pews installed, and the reredos and altar were added around 1900.

In 1970, a new tower door was put in place; in 1971, the sanctuary floor was dug up and re-laid, the chancel redecorated and the lychgate restored.

ARCHITECTURE

Ystradfellte church consists of a nave and chancel in one, though the roof line of the latter is lower, and a west tower. It is oriented slightly north of true east.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium slabs and blocks of brown and grey sandstone, some cleaving cleanly others with rougher surfaces, and a few larger ones incorporated; all are irregularly coursed; better dressed blocks as quoins.

'B' consists of small to medium slabs and lumps of red sandstone, intermittently visible because plastered over in past; masonry appears to be somewhat haphazardly laid.

'C' appears similar to 'B' but more regular and no plaster cover disguises it.

'A' and 'B' are original late medieval fabrics, 'C' is Victorian.

Roofs: body of church covered with slates, the chancel re-slatted more recently than the nave, except for some replacement on south side of nave; toothed ridge tiles to nave, more ornamental ones to chancel; no finials.

Drainage: on north side downpipes lead to partially buried horizontal pipe suggesting some excavation beside walls; nothing obvious on east and south, but old cast iron drainpipes on latter could indicate totally infilled/overgrown drainage gully.

Exterior

Tower. General. In Fabric 'A'. Battered base to height of 2m where string-course of slabs. Second stage has tapering walls up to corbel table which supports overhanging battlemented parapet considered to be of modern date. Above is a pyramid roof with weathercock and vane.

North wall: string-course at base of 2nd stage broken; just below corbel table is rectangular window lacking proper jambstones but with large lintel and broken louvre boards; aperture above corbel table feeds water into plastic downpipe.

East wall: apex of nave abuts tower wall about half way up 2nd stage. Immediately above is slit window with large unchamfered blocks for jambs. Above this is a belfry window as on north side, but half-louvred. There is differential grime on the masonry surface of this wall, but for no obvious reason.

South wall: about 3m from ground, a small square window, unglazed, no proper jambs. Belfry window as north side, but intact louvre boards.

West wall: string-course interrupted and modified for insertion of west door, not centrally placed in wall. Doorway has two-centred arch, stopped chamfers, the stops stepped. Of grey sandstone and of Victorian date; above doorway is a lamp. At height of c.4.5m is a small rectangular louvred window, and half way up 2nd stage and off-centre is even smaller rectangular window with broken louvre boards. Standard belfry window above. None of the windows have proper jambstones but all have lintels.

Nave. General. Fabric 'B' is original. Residual plaster effectively disguises some wall faces.

North wall: Fabric 'B', except for masonry in 'C' over tops of, and in two cases below, windows. Three two-light windows with round heads and chamfered dressings in mixture of red and grey sandstone, all Victorian and all inserted. Between the two more westerly windows is a blocked doorway, with a two-centred arch formed of stones on edge and blocks for jambstones. It is largely plastered over and quite low, the underside of the arch being c.1.6m above ground level. Blocking clearly pre-dates Victorian restoration and

the wall plastering.

East wall: chancel about 0.5m lower than the nave but exposed part of nave gable has protective cover of vertical slates.

South wall: much plaster survives, but appears to be all of one build. Two double-light windows with round heads, inserted as on north side (absence of plaster), but a third, the most easterly, has red sandstone jambs, the arches are plastered, and one window has spandrel, suggesting 17thC or 18thC date. Filled in doorway, presumably the predecessor of the west entrance.

West wall: on north side of tower the wall may be partly rebuilt in roughly dressed masonry, plaster covered, but impossible to determine chronological relationship with tower. South of the tower the masonry is rough with surface irregularities but a rebuild less likely and the chronological relationship with tower is not clear.

Chancel. General. Heavily plastered. On south side chancel has fractionally different alignment from nave (?deliberate).

North wall: wall battered inwards slightly to full height, in contrast to verticality of nave; join with nave disguised by plaster. One two-centred arched window with chamfered dressings, plastered over, but of no great age.

East wall: largely plastered though some flaking off at higher levels; insufficient to recognise fabric changes. One Victorian two-centred arched window in grey sandstone with a diamond light above, all inserted into existing wall.

South wall: the join with nave plastered over, but has the appearance of being added on. One two-light, late Perpendicular window, the lights with cusped heads set in rectangular frame, decorated spandrels, chamfered dressings, all in red sandstone and all original; grooves for shutters. However the whole window stands out from the wall face and could be re-set.

Interior

Tower. General. Flagged floor. Ceiled at level below apex of tower arch, and supported by three large beams supported on corbels; one is missing, one is of red sandstone, the others whitewashed, as are all visible wall faces.

North wall: grave slabs of 1691 and 1812 lean against wall.

East wall: tower arch, may have a segmental head but top obscured by massive floor joist; no jambs. Much of the arch is now blocked in and has been succeeded by a smaller two-centred arched doorway with stopped-chamfers; presumably Victorian and comparable with the outer door.

South wall: plain.

West wall: splayed window embrasure with edge stones forming soffit.

Nave. General. North-west corner partitioned off for locked vestry. Flagged floors covered by carpet down aisle. No obvious heating grilles and warmth provided by boiler at west end of nave, and piping running length of nave just below eaves; installed after 1931. Roof of close-set arch-braced collars giving wagon-roof effect with moulded ribs creating 150 panels, but with the timberwork left open. Griffiths (RCAHMS) thought that the roof timbers did not look older than the 19thC. Walls whitewashed as are all embrasures including dressings.

North wall: deeply splayed windows; rood loft doorway and a second at loft level: both are plain rectangular openings with relatively modern doors, and the stairs are still accessible. Mural tablets of 1751 and 1761 in

most easterly window embrasure, and one of 1837 near rood loft doorways.

East wall: a large and rather irregular two-centred chancel arch, with no chamfer. Heavy plaster obscures nature of jambs. Mural tablet of 1817.

South wall: deeply splayed windows. Mural tablet of 1785.

West wall: plain, but for segmental headed archway to tower. Small (?modern) doorway to south presumably gives access to upper levels of tower.

Chancel. General. Step up to chancel and another up to sanctuary. Floor of black and red tiles, partly carpeted. Choir stalls raised on wooden plinths. Roof as in nave, with 60 panels, but timbers original (Griffiths).

North wall: splayed window.

East wall: splayed window with reredos around it. Mural tablet of 1824, and benefaction tablet of 1733.

South wall: splayed window, the present (?Victorian) soffit set lower than the cusped heads of the window. Range of wall tablets from 1779, 1794, 1812 & 1814.

West wall: large, rather irregular two-centred arch. Mural tablet of 1793.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: "Octagonal, with bands cut round each face and round the rim; rectangular plinth; ?16th" (Haslam), but could be later.

Monuments: grave slab of William Jones of Hepste with coat-of-arms (d.1691); mural tablets to Howell Howell (d.1761); Margaret Morgan (d.1751); Lewis Jenkins (d.1785); Thomas Jones (d.1779); Margaret Jones (d.1793); and Edward Walters (d.1824), a shaped slab with colouring.

Registers: from 1754.

Victorian fittings include:

Reredos: "carved oak surround to the east window" (Haslam).

Glass: "east window dates from 1891" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

Ystradfellte churchyard forms an irregular polygon and occupies flat ground on the edge of the river terrace to the west of Afon Mellte, at a point where a tributary valley slips down from the hills to the west. This is reflected in the fact that the ground to the north of the enclosure immediately rises to a higher terrace.

The churchyard is overgrown on the south, better maintained to the north and west. Modern burials are accommodated in an extension lying on slightly lower ground to the east.

Boundary: consists of a stone wall, internally banked on the west and south-west where the external ground level is >0.5m below the interior. On the east the extension is separated by a scarp at least 2m high. On the north is a drystone wall which because of its slope siting has an internal level of around 1m and an external level of considerably less. North of the lychgate the stone wall is surmounted by iron railings.

Monuments: the churchyard is fairly densely packed, but, because of overgrowth, is difficult of access. On the south, most monuments are of 19thC and 20thC date but there are some of the 18thC, though many are weathering badly. On the north 19thC and later monuments proliferate.

Furniture: none recognised.

Earthworks: none of any note.

Ancillary Features: a stone lychgate of the 19thC, but without gate, forms the main entrance on the west. An iron kissing gate lies a little to the north. Another metal gate gives access to the village hall on the south. Both are linked by paths to the church entrance.

Vegetation: half a dozen yews of reasonable size ring the perimeter, the largest, split, lying on the north.

SOURCES

Church guide (by H.Martin) n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 23 November 1995
Dawson 1909, 237
Glynne 1886, 274
Jones and Bailey 1930, iv, 74
NMR Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Some damp, showing as peeling paint on north and west walls of nave; some minor cracks on west wall of nave. General problems shown by vegetation growing out of cracks high up on tower.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium

Ystradgynlais

Diocese Swansea and Brecon

Dedication Cynog

PRN 16979

NGR SN78701007

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cynog's church is located on the east side of the River Tawe and is now surrounded by modern housing. The present building in Victorian Gothic was constructed in 1861, replacing a reputedly Norman church, which lay 50m to the north and whose position on a raised platform is marked by an obelisk. Only a few monuments and two early medieval stones were preserved during the demolition of the earlier structure. This may have occupied a sub-circular churchyard but the present yard has been enlarged considerably during the last two hundred years.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church completely built in 1861 on new site.

HISTORY

The location and dedication of the church suggests an early medieval origin, which may be reinforced by the inscribed stones set in the chancel wall and taken from the old church.

No reference to Ystradgynlais has been found in either Taxatio, but in the Valor Ecclesiasticus it appears as 'Estradguillos' and was worth £9 10s 7d.

Jones, in 1809, recorded that the church dedication was to St Mary, but he had no doubt that the patron saint was Gwnlen or Gunleus.

The previous church, reputed to be of Norman date, stood on a raised platform some 50m to the north of the present building. It is claimed that its foundations are still visible, though this could not be substantiated in 1995, and the whole area is now covered by graves. Theophilus Jones noted that the old church was 'low, dark and too small for the parish'. It was 63' long and 23' wide and had a gallery built in 1743 placed across the middle of the nave.

The present church was built by Benjamin Ferrey between 1858 when the specification was drawn up and 1861. Haslam points out that it is such an odd building that it might have been largely built by the Reverend Thomas Walters, and indeed Jones (in 1930) recorded that the vicar was his own architect. Stone from the old church was supposed to be re-used, but there is no evidence of this in the external faces of the present building. A north-west tower was planned but never built. Vestry and organ chamber were added in 1933.

ARCHITECTURE

A large Victorian building consisting of nave and chancel, north and south aisles, north porch at west end of north aisle and a vestry at east end, and an organ chamber at east end of south aisle. Bellcote over west

end of nave. The church is oriented south-west/north-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for this description.

Fabric: consistently of blocks of grey granular sandstone, randomly coursed. All the dressings have been painted white to produce a contrasting pattern.

Interior General. Haslam describes interior as large, bright and ungainly. Stone arcades separating nave from aisles are set on spindly paired iron colonnettes with carved capitals. Clerestory of paired circular trefoiled windows. Scissor truss roofs with big cusped bracing. Wooden block floor with underfloor heating vents. Three steps up from nave to chancel, two steps up to sanctuary.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Inscribed stones: parts of two early medieval stones set into the external south wall of chancel above the steps down to boiler room. 6thC stone inscribed HIC IACIT and 5thC/6thC stone inscribed ADIVNE. One of these, at least, was found in the foundations of the earlier church demolished in c.1860.

Monuments: on north wall of chancel: Morgan Awbrey (d.1648), and memorial by D. Thomas to his grandchildren, erected in 1784; also three 19thC memorials. In north aisle memorial to Elias Jeffreys (d.1776), an uninscribed early 18thC tablet with columns and an open pediment, and a tablet of 1854. In south aisle, John Morgan (d.1770) and his wife Margaret (d.1792), plus memorials of 1870 and 1925.

Bell: resting on porch floor; unintelligible inscription.

Hatchments: two of unknown date attached to chancel rafters, facing each other.

Register: earliest from 1721.

Victorian and later fittings include:

Stained glass: 2 aisle windows c.1920-1960, with maker's monograms and rebuses" (Haslam).

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is large and of irregular form, having been enlarged on several occasions during the last two hundred years (cf 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map 1:2500). Contrary to some reports the angular northern part of the present churchyard is unlikely to represent the perimeter of the medieval churchyard - there has certainly been some modification on the northern side in the last one hundred years.

The churchyard is located on the eastern side of River Tawe, set back a very short distance from the edge of the river terrace, which manifests itself by a sudden drop outside the churchyard wall into vicarage garden. There is a slight drop in the slope from north to south, and the site of the old church is on level ground at the highest point in the modern churchyard.

Churchyard is well-kept.

Boundary: is a mortared stone wall with concrete coping. In places a slight build up of soil etc behind wall, but generally the external ground level only a little greater than internal level. Exception is on west where external drop is more than a metre and possibly closer to two metres lower than inner level.

Monuments: most graves are 19thC, and to south of the present church they are tightly packed into churchyard extension. Notable are a number of cast iron memorials, one dating to 1866. North of the present church graves are sparser and some patches of ground are apparently devoid of burials. Between

old and new churches a good range of 18thC stones - the earliest seen was of 1735 - but all are lying flat and many are broken off towards base, as a result of deliberate policy of overturning gravestones some years ago.

Furniture: sundial complete with gnomon, the dial inscribed 'Thos Keats' but no date, set on an iron pillar to north-west of present church. Also an obelisk with an inscription occupies the location of chancel of the old church.

Earthworks: a scarped platform, up to 0.7m high, and clearly evident on south, while on the east it fades as it runs northwards; not visible on west. Perhaps about 40m x 40m, and representing the location of the old church and, just conceivably, the earliest churchyard. Also visible to the south and west of the present church is a pre-late 19thC boundary showing as a scarp which has been cut back to allow graves to be inserted.

Ancillary Features: modern stone lychgate with metal gates in north angle of churchyard; further entrances in north-west corner and in south. Tarmac paths including complete circuit around Victorian church.

Vegetation: several yew trees to north of present church and one to south. Conifers around edge of graveyard extension south of church.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 23 November 1995
Dawson 1909, 238
Faculty 1858: NLW/SD/687
Haslam 1979, 387
Hughes 1961
Jones and Bailey 1930, iv, 82 & 90
NMR, Aberystwyth

CONDITION

Not noted.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Very Poor

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good

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