

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

WELSH HISTORIC CHURCHES PROJECT

THE HISTORIC CHURCHES OF EASTERN CONWY



CPAT Report No 311

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CHURCH SURVEY

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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 eastern half of the modern county of Conwy County Borough. 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.

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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Gwytherin	St Winifred
Llanddulas	St Cynbryd
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Llanelian-yn-Rhos	St Elian
Llanfair Talhaiarn	St Mary
Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr	St Michael
Llangernyw	St Digain
Llangwm	St Jerome
Llannefydd	St Mary
Llansannan	St Sannan
Llysfaen	St Cynfran
Pentrefoelas	no known dedication
St George	St George

Abergele

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Michael**PRN** 16350**NGR** SH94547764

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Michael's church lies in the centre of Abergele on flattish ground to the west of the River Gele. The building has twin naves with a west tower; in the fabric there is little to distinguish them, though the tower appears to be of different build. All have Perpendicular features, though most have been renewed or replaced. It is possible but far from proven that the naves are earlier than the tower, one or other of the former perhaps 14thC with Perpendicular remodelling, the latter 16thC. The church retains its medieval roofs, and contains some medieval sepulchral fragments and one 14thC slab, a few fragments of medieval glass, the lower parts of the rood screen and a Perpendicular font stem. Later fittings include a 17thC pulpit, a wooden chest and a good range of monuments. The churchyard is rectangular and raised on the east side, but there is a hint of an earlier curvilinear churchyard around the church.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The tower has several windows replaced in the 19thC as well as having its uppermost storey heightened. Other windows are almost round-headed and should be Perpendicular though they look later.

Both naves and chancels have similar masonry; two windows of Perpendicular style survive in the north wall, and the east windows though partly renewed are also Perpendicular; in the south nave there is perhaps one window with some original Perpendicular tracery; the cyclopean doorways are undatable (pace Thomas who thought them pre-Conquest), but the doorway giving onto the former annex/room on the south side again looks Perpendicular. Roof timbers and arcade are also Perpendicular.

The present porch added in 1879.

HISTORY

Abergele is recorded as a clas church in the early medieval period. Thomas records that the earliest ecclesiastical notice connects Abergele with Elfod (afterwards Archbishop of North Wales); who was said to have been granted some land by Maelgwn Gwynedd in the 8thC. Elfod was the founder of the church, and its dedication to St Michael, although early, was probably not the original one.

The Norwich Taxation of 1254 records "Ecclesia de Abergele cum duabus suis capellis" i.e. those at Bettws and Llangystenyn. The Lincoln Taxation of 1291 records "Ecclesia de Abergeleu cum capella sua scilicet Langustenyn est annexa prebende archidiaconi" as £34 6s 8d. Vicarial tithes were worth £10. The earliest recorded priest was David ap Kynwic who was appointed in 1304.

A blocked south doorway gave access to some form of extension, reputedly pre-dating the Perpendicular remodelling. This may have been a chapel for Edward Lhuyd at the end of the 17thC referred to "a chappel in ye ch.yard". Thomas thought it the remains of a priest's lodging which was required to be built in 1304, but this view has not found general acceptance. Crossley suggested that there might have been an external rood stair here.

The exterior of the church continued to be whitewashed in the 19thC. The vestry was divided off for a day school about 1800 and was used as such until around 1836 when Glynne visited the church.

Restoration occurred in 1858 when the pillars and arches were scraped and cleaned, and the oak principals of the roof repaired.

The tower was raised in 1861, and windows and buttresses added to it.

In 1878-9 the whole church was re-floored, partly because the floor was giving way due to interments. It was re-seated with open benches, the chancel aisle adapted for the choir, the organ erected and a new porch put up. New windows were inserted, and the rear portion screened off for a vestry. The two closed doorways in the north wall and the priest's door in the south were revealed at this time. The architect was Arthur Baker, the cost £2500. A new heating system was installed in 1903.

ARCHITECTURE

Abergele church comprises two naves and chancels of similar length, a tower attached to the west end of the north nave and a porch set almost half way along the south side of the south nave. The church is aligned fractionally south of true west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of shaped limestone blocks showing some coursing. 'B' is predominantly of limestone but also includes occasional blocks of red, brown and grey sandstone.

Roof: the roofs are slated and have plain grey ridge tiles; cross finials.

Drainage: a band of limestone chips around the north, east and part of the south wall and a narrow band of limestone lumps on the south side west of the porch presumably cover drainage gullies.

Exterior

Tower. General. In 'A' with limewash residues, sometimes extensive. At the base is a plinth with an ashlar chamfer which is carried around the three walls and is Victorian; likewise the angle and diagonal buttresses of 1861 with olive coloured sandstone dressings, though they are keyed into the wall faces in places; on the south-east the angle buttress rises above the south nave roof. No string course except above the belfry windows and this is of olive-coloured sandstone that looks late. Uppermost courses from about the level of the belfry window springers and including crenellated parapet were added in 1861, a height of 6' according to Thomas. A flag pole rises from roof. Heating chamber is sunk below ground at the base of tower.

North wall: at ground level is a small, rectangular window of modern design. Next a square-headed, two-light window, the lights with two-centred cusped heads and smaller lights above, and over, a label with lozenge-shaped stops; all dressings in Victorian, olive-coloured sandstone as the buttresses. Above is a small square-headed window, its two lights with near circular heads; the mullion has been replaced but the rest though in olive sandstone shows some weathering and is earlier than the window below. Next a large belfry window with a two-centred arch, complex mouldings, louvre boards and, over the upper half, a clock face. Above is a hoodmould with face stops and a decorative relieving arch. Most of the wall fabric appears relatively homogeneous though there is paler limestone from below the main window to just above the window below and this could be renewed masonry.

East wall: apex of north nave roof rises to a line just above the base of the second window up on the north side. The lowest window on this side is equivalent to the third window on the north, with replaced mullions, almost round-headed lights and sunken spandrels, and a flat head. Belfry window as on the north but no clock face so complex tracery visible.

South wall: at ground level is a doorway with a pointed rather than four-centred arch, though probably Tudor

nevertheless; the much worn jambs are in yellow sandstone as are the large archstones; the latter are framed by slabs of sandstone set on edge which are tilted slightly to give some protection from water run-off for the whole of the doorway projects from the wall by 10-15cm and might be inserted. Above at a height of c.3m is a square, sunken aperture formed by weathered slabs of brown sandstone. Next a flat-headed two-light window of the same type as on the north and east walls at this level; again only the mullions have been obviously replaced. Then a large roundel framed in four blocks of freestone with a label, now showing signs of weathering; the roundel is blocked in different masonry and does not appear to be of any great age. Above is a standard belfry window but the upper half is again covered by a clock face.

West wall: close to ground level is a two-light window with flat head which is in olive-coloured sandstone but compares closely to higher windows on the other sides. Next a Victorian two-light window with traceried heads, a label with projecting stops and all in buff sandstone. Then a flat-headed two-light window, the lights with segmental heads and the dressings probably chamfered; similar to the lowest window on this side, but the dressed stones are thinner. Above is a standard belfry window without a clock face. No evidence that any of the windows, except perhaps for the obvious Victorian ones, are inserted.

North nave and chancel. General. Constructed in 'B', though with some variation in quantity of non-limestone masonry; for instance towards east end of north wall almost wholly of limestone; with heavy pointing in places.

North wall: from west the features are: i) window with four-centred arch with hollow chamfers, three slightly stepped trefoiled lights, hoodmould; all dressings look recent; ii) blocked doorway with segmental arch, cyclopean head and massive jambs all in limestone; present height to soffit about 1.3m; iii) window with two-centred arch, three lights with two-centred heads having cinquefoil tracery, small panels above, chamfered dressings in buff-grey freestone; a relieving arch turned in limestone blocks above; all Victorian and the wall has paler limestone masonry beneath it which may be replacement; iv) window with a four-centred arch, hollow-chamfered dressings, three lights with four-centred heads, weathered hoodmould; an original Perpendicular window which has seen the replacement of its mullions and perhaps the window heads; v) window with four-centred head, four ogee-headed cinquefoiled lights, sub-arches and quatrefoils above, and a hoodmould with plain stops; olive-coloured dressings of Victorian date; vi) blocked doorway with segmental arch, all of massive blocks of dressed limestone but without chamfers; height to soffit again no more than 1.3m; vii) as window i), though Hubbard strangely claimed this as the only non-authentic window on this side; viii) small, modern shed; ix) window similar to vii) but trefoiled heads are original in a buff sandstone; the mullions and jambs in pink sandstone are renewed though some doubt over the jambs; the olive-coloured hoodmould is the most recent of all; xi) diagonal buttress in dressed limestone with olive ashlar for quoins etc.

East wall: wall founded on large blocks of limestone with smaller blocks integrating some sandstone at higher levels, particularly above the Victorian flying buttress which supports the junction between the east walls of the two chancels. The wall is dominated by a large east window with a two-centred arch, above which is an olive-coloured Victorian hoodmould; contains five lights with ogee and round heads and cinquefoil tracery, and sub-arches with panels above; the jambs are in pink sandstone and could be original, the tracery and mullions do not look right yet some of the tracery could be original.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Fabric 'B'; most of the relict limewash now stripped off the west wall. Cell appended to south wall and now defined by two stub walls and a length of walling parallel to the south wall and 7m from it. RCAHMW dismissed this as the 14thC priest's house (see above), but in the absence of any signs of a wide arch into the nave, could not confirm it as a south chapel or chancel.

East wall: the window is very much the same as its counterpart in the north nave, but is easier to examine because the protective grilles cover only the glass, not the stonework (in contrast to the north nave window). Mullions and arch stones have been replaced, some of the tracery looks weathered, but the writer is not wholly convinced that this is original.

South wall: from the east corner the features are: i) diagonal buttress of standard form; ii) three-light window with four-centred arch, the lights with ogee heads and cinquefoil tracery, and panels above; hoodmould with simple stops; this and the mullions are renewed, and the tracery too could be 19thC but there can be no

certainty; pink and buff sandstone dressings throughout; one of only two windows on this side depicted by Lloyd Williams and Underwood in their drawing of 1872; iii) window with two ogee-headed lights and cinquefoil tracery, and a quatrefoil above; hoodmould with simple stops; olive-coloured stonework all Victorian; iv) below ii) the stub of a 2m-wide wall projects for c.1.5m; built in limestone rubble to a height of c.0.5m with render on the well-built inner face and little of the outer facing left; flower bed on top with some modern mortaring; v) window as iii); vi) blocked doorway with pointed, almost four-centred head; dressings of iron-stained grey sandstone showing a slight chamfer; vii) wall stub, higher than iv) at 1.3m but projecting only 0.7m; viii) window with four-centred arch, three lights as the two-light window to the east (v), but with panels above; ix) porch; x) three lancet lights forming a group, their two-centred heads in dressed limestone without chamfers; mullions and sill in buff-olive freestone and the window reminiscent of cyclopean doorways elsewhere in church; shown in Lloyd Williams & Underwood's illustration (1872); xi) two-light window as iii) and v).

West wall: two-centred arched doorway approached by one down-step; doorway has cyclopean head and jambs all in unchamfered grey limestone. Above the arch is a much weathered projecting stone, probably originally a corbel; it appears to have been a head though its features are now not discernible. High up in the gable is a single narrow, round-headed light; its arch stone seems to be of iron-stained sandstone, the jambs probably of concrete.

Porch. General. Modern with wooden studs and panels below and three groups of three glazed windows above on both east and west sides.

South wall: double wooden doors under a cambered tie-beam with carved struts; ornamental barge boards.

Interior

Porch. General. Floor of red tiles with carpet over; wood and glass sides; roof of three bays, the inner trusses with arch-braced collars, the outer ones with arch-braced tie beams and that above the south door to the church carved with the date 1879.

North wall:= south wall of the church; cyclopean doorway with a two-centred arch and no chamfers to the dressed limestone. Rest of wall is heavily pointed.

East and west walls: wooden benches.

Tower. General. Not accessible. Only entrance from churchyard. Salter's plan suggests that the tower stair is built not into the thickness of the wall but occupies the south-east portion of the interior.

North Nave. General. Rear (west) part of this and the south nave partitioned off as vestries. Interior of vestry floored in wood with heating grilles. Floor of nave is tiled in black and red with carpet over; flush wooden block floors under benches. Walls plastered, painted and grooved to give block-like appearance. Roof of 11 bays formed by arch-braced collars with cusping on the principal rafters and the raking struts; the arch braces spring from plain wall posts which have thickened terminals; two tiers of small cusped windbraces. Most of the heating apparatus - radiators and pipework - is above ground.

North wall: slight outwards lean to wall; westernmost window (in vestry) contains medieval glass fragments. Former western door has splayed embrasure and bare masonry; former eastern door is similar and the soffit is pointed. Third window from west has embrasure exhibiting older stonework, unlike those of Victorian date which have ashlar. Wall monuments from 1671 through to 20thC brasses.

East wall: low screen.

South wall: six-bay arcade with four-centred, chamfered arches, complex moulded capitals, and octagonal columns on octagonal bases. The most westerly bay which now separates the two vestries is divided from

the rest by a short section of wall rather than by a pillar, and this bay is thought by Hubbard to be a 19thC feature dating from the main restoration of 1858. Projecting from the wall by this bay is plastered masonry which carries up to eaves level; it does not support a truss and its function remains unknown. Above the second most westerly arch is a block of stone acting as a corbel for the truss above it, the only corbel on either wall. Sharpening marks on the respond at the west end of the nave.

West wall: featureless tower wall.

North Chancel. General. One step up from nave, one further step up to altar. Carpet over tiles, and benches on tiles too. Walls as nave. Roof of four bays similar to nave but arch bracing springs from hammerbeam wall-posts, and no cusping to struts above collars; windbraces in place; brattishing at wall-plate level in the easternmost bay.

North wall: one window which again shows older stonework in its embrasure. Wall supports two memorials of 1783 and 1804 and a large monument to the Hesketh family which incorporates blank arcading and surrounds the window.

East wall: window and one wall monument of 1733.

South wall: two further bays of the arcade; sharpening marks on the easterly respond and on the adjacent pier to the west.

South Nave. General. Tiles with carpet over them as in north nave, and flush wooden block flooring under benches. Walls as north nave. Roof of 11 bays as north nave but terminals of wall-posts are differently finished except for one truss near the east end, and may have been largely replaced; also only the two easternmost trusses have cusped struts and principals, further evidence of renewal. Walls beam(s) were found beneath plaster cover during earlier renovation, but these at a lower level than the present wall posts implying the roof may have been raised.

North wall: arcade.

East wall: screen.

South wall: wall has outwards lean. Main doorway has internal splay of dressed limestone rubble. A large number of 17thC-19thC wall monuments and tablets.

West wall: plain apart from window in gable.

South Chancel. General. One step up from nave, one to sanctuary and one to altar. Floor tiled with some encaustic patterns in choir, but carpet over parts and wooden boards beneath stalls; encaustic tiles throughout sanctuary. Walls as nave. Roof of four bays with hammerbeam wall-posts supporting trusses; brattishing at wall-plate level in easternmost bay.

North wall: two bays of arcade, plus one monument of 1721.

East wall: window and one 20thC memorial.

South wall: two windows; one 18th and two 19thC wall memorials.

West wall: screen.

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Sepulchral slabs: i) 'in floor at south-east corner and partly under a radiator, a late 14thC floriated cross, the

arms branching into lobes' (Hubbard). ii) -vi) Hubbard and Gresham record two early 14thC circular-headed crosses, set in to the wall west of the south door, and part of at least three others, loose in the south nave; these are now all on a shelf in the lobe of the blocked south doorway. vii) Gresham records a fragment of an early 14thC shield and sword slab which was removed to the vicarage garden.

Stained glass: north nave westernmost window has nine late medieval heads set in it, presumably the only survivors of the earlier windows said to have been destroyed during the Civil War.

Rood Screen: extends across both naves for c.11.9m. Its construction is of Welsh type, i.e. with a continuous middle rail rather than with the standards running straight through. Middle rails and head beam are ancient, as are six panels of the wainscot with varyingly patterned squints, the majority of the muntins, the eight standards and all the mullions to about 0.6m of the head beam; none of the tracery is original. Present height of the screen about 3m, the mullions being 1.8m in length. Considerably altered and removed from its original position a little further to the east where it was noted by Lloyd Williams and Underwood. It is reported (in the 1985 Quinquennial review) that the screen carries the date 1511 (first recorded by the RCAHMW) and on the lower part is incised WD 1713. The latter was verified by Crossley but not the former.

Font: panelled stem is Perpendicular; octagonal bowl is dated 1663.

Pulpit: 17thC; 'leaf, flower and fruit patterns in the panels' (Hubbard).

Dugout Chest: iron-bound, originally with three locks. Date unknown but no reason to believe that it is medieval.

Monuments: stone monument to William Anwyl (d.1748) with broken pediment, putto etc; Henry Pugh, vicar [sic] of Abergele (d.1671), found under the pulpit in the 19thC; in stone and marble to John Ellis (d.1783) with pediment and heraldry; also in marble and stone, an obelisk monument to Rev John Lloyd (d.1775) and his wife (d.1804); John Lloyd (d.1733) in stone with pediment and heraldry. In south nave and chancel: to Judith Jones (d.1724) with a broken pediment and heraldry, and a second memorial to the same person further along the south wall; to Edward Thomas (d.1722) and his wife Ann (d.1742); to John Jones (d.1760); to Ellis Jones (d.1708), John Jones (d.1719) et al.; to Hugh Jones (d.1672); to Gwen Lloyd (1668); to Thomas Foulkes (d.1700) et al.; to Peter Edwards (d.1778); to Mary Vaughan (d.1734), a brass; to Judith Foulkes (d.1721); and to Catherine Parry (d.1705), drapery around the inscription, and volutes, gadrooning, urns etc.

Altar table: of oak.

Plate: communion plate includes a cup with cover dated 1601/2, and a paten of 1683/4.

Registers: from 1647.

Double bass: in clergy vestry is instrument in a case bearing the date Nov 1776-99.

Poor box: iron-bound padlocked box by south door.

Bells: see below.

Victorian features include:

Stained glass: 'north nave east window is a brightly coloured window installed by Lloyd Bamford Hesketh, 1857, to commemorate the Lloyds of Gwrych. Grisaille heraldry, and a central tableau of a dashing St Michael, trampling a devil-headed dragon. North nave easternmost window also for Hesketh, and flanked by tablets to commemorate his family, with space left for inscriptions to countless generations. North nave first west from screen by Ward & Hughes, 1891. South nave east by Shrigley & Hunt. South nave easternmost by Maud Sumner, 1958' (Hubbard).

Monuments: 'John Jones Bateman of Pentre Mawr (d.1849), large; willow tree and weeping maiden. Philip

Wythen Bateman (d.1849), kneeling maiden with cross and anchor. Brass in the north nave to Rev. Richard Jackson (d.1847) and Rev. Richard Henry Jackson (d.1867) by John Hardman & Co' (Hubbard).

Bells: of six, two by J.Taylor and Son of Loughborough dated 1887, two of 1844 and one of 1895; the sixth of 1730 and there is a single sanctus bell dated to 1723.

CHURCHYARD

Abergele churchyard is flat, of medium size and is basically rectangular in shape. It is bisected by a public footpath edged by railings, running from north-east to south. An obvious extension has been added beyond the former north-western boundary.

The River Gele flows towards the sea about 150m to the east.

Boundary: the boundary consists of a mortared stone wall. This is internally embanked on the east and south-east and has been subsequently terraced. Beyond the wall the ground drops by at least 1m on the south-east and probably 2m on the north-east, while on the north-west the graveyard extension is nearly 1m lower and is separated from the old churchyard by a retaining wall. Only on the south-west is there little apparent difference between the internal and external levels.

Monuments: the churchyard south of the church has been largely cleared leaving only a few chest and other tombs in place. Many slabs have been used for paving and gravestones have been cleared away to the edges. The earliest graveslab recognised dated to 1733. North of the church the memorials have been left in place, and are uniformly spread though not densely. The earliest is of 1758, but a much worn slab could be of earlier 18thC origin. In the north-western path beyond the footpath graves are more randomly spread and there has been further clearance to the perimeter wall.

Furniture: a sundial east of the path to the lychgate. The dial has St Michael's embossed on it, and with the gnomon could be relatively recent. It is supported on an octagonal pillar on which are carved 'E.J. P.H. 1817 Ch Wds'.

Earthworks etc: foundations of south wall of small annex to south nave survives about 7m from church beside a path.

South of the porch is a faint curving scarp, and to the north of the north nave but discernible only from a distance are the possible traces of something similar. Thus a possibility of a smaller curvilinear churchyard.

Ancillary features: timber lychgate dated to 1887, with twin wooden gates, and decorated barge boards at the front; inscription on a tie-beam truss. Concrete path to porch.

Vegetation: several yews - two on the south, one on the north and one to north-west - but none of any great age. Other bushes, mainly evergreen, around perimeter and that part of the churchyard to the north-west of the footpath has small trees and some undergrowth within it.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 13 and 18 December 1996

Crossley 1946, 7

Endersby 1984: church guide

Faculty: St Asaph 1878 (NLW)

Faculty: St Asaph 1903 (NLW)

Glynne 1884, 257

Gresham 1968, 129; 131; 145; 216

Hubbard 1986, 97

Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pl 37

NMR, Aberystwyth
Neaverson 1953-~~54~~, 3
Quinquennial Review Report: 1993
Ridgway 1997, 30
Salter 1993, 44
Thomas 1913, 188

CONDITION

Generally appears to be satisfactory but paint and plaster are peeling in places, particularly on the internal faces at the west and locally above the arcade.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good to Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Good

Betws yn Rhos

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Michael

PRN 16714

NGR SH90687354

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Michael's church at Betws yn Rhos, also known as Betws Abergele and a little over 3 miles to the south-west of Abergele itself, is a small, Victorian structure with a distinctive west end, not universally lauded. Nothing of the earlier church survives except some re-used masonry and one mural plaque inside. The churchyard was originally sub-circular and its original course can be defined; its graves have seen drastic re-ordering.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Wholly mid-19thC in date, the upper walls faces showing some re-use of earlier materials.

HISTORY

The shape of the churchyard and the location point to an early medieval origin; implicit perhaps is the loss of the original dedication. Betws was originally subject to the mother church of Abergele. It has also been known by the names "Bettws Abegele" and "Bettws Wyrion Wgan".

In the Norwich Taxation of 1254 Betws was one of two chapels recorded under Abergele, though not mentioned by name. It is mentioned in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 with the "rectoria" taxed at £6 13s 4d and the "vicaria" at £4 2s 1d.

The first incumbent, John ap l'eun Vaghn, was recorded in 1508.

The church was rebuilt in 1838 by John Welch at a cost of £756 when its predecessor had become very dilapidated. In 1853 the sittings were rearranged and a new pulpit and desk set up. Thomas states that the old font lay in the churchyard.

ARCHITECTURE

The church at Betws yn Rhos consists of a nave with a small sanctuary appended at the east end and a curious bell-housing at the west end. The present building is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east.

Fabrics: 'A' is of mixed blocks and slabs of limestone, small to medium in size, together with shale and slate, some laminating; range of colours from light grey through brown to dark grey; random coursing. 'B' is of roughly dressed blocks of limestone.

'C' consists of large blocks of limestone, some stained red, with slate and shale; limewash flecks.

Roof: slates, plain clay ridge tiles; cross terminal to the nave.

Drainage: not in evidence for wall bases edged either by concrete or graveslabs.

Exterior

General. Because of its late construction date only an outline description of the church is provided. Diagonal buttresses of dressed limestone at four corners of the building.

North wall: all in 'A'; plinth at base using large blocks of limestone and flat rather than chamfered top; because of ground slope this is at ground level at west end but 0.8m high or so at east end of nave. Five simple lancet windows without dressings, but the arches turned in dressed blocks of limestone and having large sills of limestone.

East wall: plain.

South wall: lower part of wall in 'B', upper parts in 'A', but no plinth. Five windows as north side. Foundation stone set in wall at east end records rebuilding in 1838.

Sanctuary. General. Short. Built across the north-west angle of this and the nave is a small room with pitched roof, its door approached by flight of eight stairs.

East wall: 'A' at higher levels but more like 'B' below, with plinth similar to nave at height of c1.4m. Three linked lancets with limestone ashlar dressings. Beneath the windows is a semi-subterranean doorway presumably to a boiler house, and to north of them a window is a chimney projection.

Bellcote and Porch. General. Narrower than nave. Hubbard describes the 'comical west front, rough and toy-like. The porch is carried up into two octagonal turrets' with corbel tables, capped by spirelets which appear to be covered in concrete and topped one by a weathervane the other a weathercock; linked by a screen wall pierced by an arched bellcote. All this upper part in 'C'.

South wall: peaked arch to main doorway, in limestone.

West wall: two-centred arched window in concrete with wooden lights and tracery; above this a round window in limestone and then a clock face of 1877. 'A' for the lower courses, 'B' above the main window. At each angle, beneath the spirelets a vertical line of three iron ties, presumably taking the weight of the west gallery.

Interior

Porch. General. Flight of stairs to gallery. The only noteworthy feature is a 19thC wooden board showing the layout of pews and names of their owners.

Nave. General. Tiled floor, carpet down aisle; pews raised on wooden boards; Oldfield vault in south-east corner of nave. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of five bays with queen-post trusses, the tie beams supported on wall posts and corbels with bracing.

North wall: four memorials, the earliest 1851.

East wall: marble memorial of 1790 north of chancel arch, plus Oldfield memorial to south of arch.

South wall: one 19thC brass.

West wall: has gallery and above this a Victorian coat-of-arms.

Sanctuary. General. Three steps up from nave. 19thC Commandment boards in Welsh on north and south walls.

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Monument: marble tablet to Gabriel Llwyd (d.1790) and Mary his wife (d.1805).

Plate: cup and paten cover both of 1718/9.

19thC and later fittings include:

Stained glass: 'east window, commemoration date 1844, brightly coloured with pictorial medallions on a geometrical ground' (Hubbard).

Royal Arms: Painted, of Victoria.

Box pews: one set preserved in south-east corner of nave.

Pew board: in porch.

Monument: to John Oldfield (d.1841), deputy lieutenant of county who laid the church foundation stone in 1838; in marble with gold-painted wheatsheaf; by Sanders of London.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is now a truly irregular shape because of extensions on the north side. Originally it was sub-circular but was extended under a faculty of 1870, and again in 1908 and 1955. The slope of the original churchyard was quite pronounced from west to east. It is located on the western edge of a small valley that contains a tributary of the River Dulas. Thus west and north of the churchyard the ground is reasonably level but to the south and east the ground drops away sharply to the stream.

Boundary: a stone wall on the north continues as a retaining wall on the south. Buildings and yards lie to the east and north.

Externally there are considerable drops to the south (by 2m+), and east (2m+ also but exaggerated by levelling for a yard?); on the west it is little higher than the road outside. A scarp about 0.5m high marks the original drop on the north-east. Overall, generally sound evidence of a raised churchyard.

Monuments: churchyard has been subjected to rigorous clearing in the recent past; the small clumps of memorials that do survive seem to have been ordered in the recent past. Otherwise locally concentrated, particularly to the north of the church. Here there are some railed tombs including one of 1788. Slabs used as paving on the south side, including a number of 18thC date and a few even earlier. Church guide claims the oldest is 1661.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: low scarp on north-east represents the old churchyard boundary (see above).

Ancillary features: ornamental main gate is on west in wrought iron. There is a plainer one on the south-west. Tarmac paths, in places giving way to concrete. Store shed in north-west corner.

Vegetation: one yew on west and a couple of yew bushes on the north; a few small trees on the south with the occasional holly tree.

SOURCES

Church guide 1988
CPAT Field Visit: 11 December 1996
Faculty: St Asaph 1870 (NLW)
Faculty: St Asaph 1908 (NLW)
Hubbard 1986, 106
Quinquennial Report 1988
Ridgway 1997, 40
Thomas 1913, 194

CONDITION

No obvious problems detected.

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 to Medium

Cerrigydrudion

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Mary Magdalene**PRN** 16744**NGR** SH95324874

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Mary Magdalen lies at the heart of the small village of Cerrigydrudion, some nine miles to the north-west of Corwen. Some of the surviving masonry may be of 16thC date and a foundation course from an earlier, possibly medieval structure, is apparent, together with a re-used 14thC window. Otherwise the windows are of 19thC date, and considerable restoration must have occurred in 1874. Inside the roof is late medieval, perhaps of 1503, and there is a limited range of fittings: a chest of 1730, a few wall memorials and a benefaction board of 1737. The churchyard is small and polygonal with only the slightest hint of curvilineararity. Memorials are mostly late in date.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The foundation of an earlier building - a nave and perhaps a porch - visible at west end on a fractionally different alignment to the present building: this cannot be dated with any certainty. It is possible too that there is medieval masonry within the core of the building although there is nothing to prove this assertion. A quoin stone with a date of 1657 seems to commemorate a rector rather than a rebuilding. Thomas thought the eastern end of the building including the south transept was of 1503, while Glynne thought it 17thC. As features seen by Thomas are not now visible it is probable that much of east end was rebuilt in 1874; yet the slit windows on the north and south sides must belong to this structure and as Hubbard pointed out, are unlikely to have any association with the rood screen. The (?)14thC window in the vestry is likely to have come from the 1874 restoration of the nave and chancel. To complicate matters the Victorian refenestration appears to be of two phases, represented by different materials for the dressings and of different designs. One of these phases correlates with the rebuilding or more likely the western extension of the nave. Victorian reconstruction of the chancel gable is also evidenced.

Thomas refers to a break in the wall between the [old] nave and chancel, and, internally, the ground beam of the rood screen; also externally a door on the north side and a second commemorative stone to Gabriel Hughes, dated 1639. These features were not observed by the writer, and may have disappeared when the vestry was added.

HISTORY

The date of origin of this small church is not known. Other than its location there is nothing to signal an early medieval beginning, except for the occurrence of an early note in the parish register claiming its foundation by Evan ap Llewelyn in 440 AD.

Thomas notes that it was previously called 'Llanfair Faellen' and points out that this can hardly be the Welsh equivalent of Mary Magdalen, though its real meaning is obscure.

The 1254 Taxatio records 'Ecc'a de Kericdrudion' at a value of 3s while in the later taxatio of Pope Nicholas (1291) it appears as 'Ecc'lia de Kerrye Edrudion' at £1 6s 8d.

There is a record of repair and enlargement in 1503, which would accord with the late medieval roof in the nave, and may have resulted in the enlargement of the chancel and perhaps the addition of the chapel on the south.

The exterior was whitewashed when seen by Glynne in 1865; he recorded the crucifix high up in the east gable, and also a pointed doorway in the north wall.

In 1872 Lloyd Williams and Underwood depicted the south transept with a round-headed east window and a gable roof parallel to that of the nave. This was presumably remodelled in the restoration of 1874, the scale of which is difficult to ascertain, though it appears to have included the rebuilding of the east gable, the re-roofing of the structure, the removal of the gallery, and re-seating throughout. Possibly at this time but more likely at a later date the furnishings mentioned by Thomas - a desk dated to 1684, and the altar table of 1755 - were replaced. There also appear to have been wall paintings whitewashed over. An earlier octagonal font had been removed and was used as water trough beside the A5 at Pont y Glyn (?a few miles to the east).

ARCHITECTURE

Cerrigydrudion church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a south 'transept' (also referred to, and probably more accurately, as the Giler Chapel) at the extreme east end, a south porch and a north vestry. It is oriented almost east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises medium to very large blocks and slabs of grey shale with some quartz, and some grey stone that could be limestone; irregular coursing. Very occasional fragments of limewash. 'B' is of large, regular blocks of grey shale, coursed.

Roof: slates; toothed, red clay, ridge tiles; double bellcote at west end surmounted by a stone Celtic cross.

Drainage: on the south side of nave and the west side of the transept is a trench, 1m wide and 0.3m, with a gravel base and edged with 19thC gravestones; a concrete gully runs around the east and north side. There is nothing obvious on the west side.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation between the two elements.

North wall: east of vestry are two triple lancet windows, the lancets foiled and in sandstone; between them a small chamfered slit window and one jamb stone has what could be 'M' pecked on it. No obvious packing around window. West of vestry is another window with three lancet lights, but this has limestone dressings comparable with windows in south wall. Beneath it a protruding foundation course for a length of no more than 1m after it emerges from beneath vestry. From the window to the north-west corner, the masonry is 'B'. At north-east angle of church is a quoin stone inscribed with: 'ROBERTVS WYNNE HVIVS PAROCHIAE RECTOR 1657'.

East wall: lower part of wall in 'A' though stones not so massive as elsewhere; upper part of gable together with packing around window in 'B'. Window of three foiled lancets in yellow sandstone. Set high up near the apex of the gable is a shallow niche with a cusped arch over; a painted figure of Christ on the cross occupies the niche; age uncertain, but Owen thought it 15thC.

South wall: in 'A'. Two triple lancets, the dressings in limestone; between them a slit window without chamfered dressings. From the east side of the porch, projecting earlier foundations 0.2m or so below ground level, but exposed in drain, gradually converge with line of the wall, disappearing beneath the slit window. West of porch is another triple lancet window in limestone, again with a projecting foundation course beneath it which runs a little further west than its counterpart on the north. West of this window the masonry is 'B'.

West wall: in 'B', slightly battered, and with some projecting base stones those these not part of an earlier structure. High up on wall a corbel table supporting the bellcote which is also in 'B'.

Porch. General. In 'A'-type masonry.

East wall: plain but for a small rectangular window.

South wall: doorway has a deep external reveal, jambs with incipient chamfers and a large lintel which is peaked. Above it a sundial without a gnomon, and much of the inscription flaked off.

West wall: plain. Protruding earlier foundation extending for more than one metre from nave wall.

South Transept. General. In 'A'.

East wall: plain, though incised lines and letters on one slab at height of c.0.5m off ground. Wall appears to be continuous with east wall of chancel.

South wall: one triple lancet window in limestone. Upper part of wall rebuilt.

West wall: plain.

Vestry. General. In 'A'-type masonry that is probably re-used. Chimney rises above wall between nave and vestry.

North wall: round-headed door. Also a double-light window, the lights with ogee heads and cusped tracery with a small cusped panel (containing medieval glass) and sunken spandrels above; however, the window frame chopped off just above the main lights in order to fit it into the wall. Some of jamb stones in pink sandstone, and ogee heads in olive sandstone could be medieval, though obviously re-used in the vestry.

East wall: plain.

West wall: modern doorway with concrete lintel.

Interior

Porch. General. Slab floor, some re-use of graveslabs including one massive early 19thC example. Plain walls, plastered and painted. Roof of close-set scissor trusses.

North wall: simple doorway with chamfered two-centred arch, painted and relatively modern.

East wall: small, rectangular splayed window; stone bench only.

South wall: nothing of note.

West wall: as east wall, but no window.

Nave. General. Black and red tiled floor with carpet over much of it. Benches on either side of aisle and benches at rear together with organ all raised on wooden plinths. Walls plastered and painted. Heating pipes channelled around walls and beside benches. Roof of seven bays with late medieval arch-braced trusses rising from wall plates. All but the most easterly truss have cusped raftering struts and rafters giving angular trefoils and a quatrefoil in each case; the last truss is plain.

North wall: three splayed windows, all with painted dressings and reveals. Several 19thC and 20thC brasses, and over the pulpit at east end a marble memorial of 1711. Adjacent to the vestry door a marble stoup.

East wall: one step up to chancel.

South wall: four splayed windows but only the small rectangular light has painted dressings. Wall has benefaction board of 1737, a 19thC painting, and a couple of modern armorial plaques.

West wall: plain but for ogee-headed recess to take bell pulls.

Chancel. General. Chancel raised by one step, sanctuary by two small steps. Floors have encaustic tiles and carpet. Walls as nave. Roof of two bays, with arch-braced collars and plain raking struts. Chancel arch truss distinguished by its angular wooden corbels; the roof between the trusses panelled over in wood.

North wall: one splayed window, the dressings painted. One marble memorial tablet of 1739.

East wall: large splayed window.

South wall: one painting.

West wall: not present.

South Transept. General. Floor carpeted. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of purlins and close-set rafters. Generally referred to, though for reasons not explained, as the 'Giler Chapel'.

North wall: not present.

East wall: alcove, perhaps a blocked window, but though a chamfered reveal, no sign of dressings. Now houses a cross with altar beneath.

South wall: splayed window, painted. One 17thC graveslab.

West wall: Marble memorial of 1723 and graveslab pinned to the wall of 1664.

Vestry. General. Nothing of interest apart from north window which contains fragment of stained glass of probable late medieval date.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stained glass: small fragment in vestry window. Thomas noted a few fragments in the windows on the north side of the church, presumably prior to restoration; this could be the sole survivor.

Stoup: 18thC marble bowl, but this according to Thomas was the font until replaced by one that commemorates the dead of the First World War.

Chest: inscribed 'I.E. W.E. 17 30' (though Thomas claimed 1715).

Monuments: Grave slabs to Peter Price (d.1660) and Thomas Price (d.1664). 'Marble monument to Margaret Price (d.1723), with Corinthian surround and freely designed embellishment; painted heraldry; long inscription, rudely executed' (Hubbard). Simpler marble tablets to Lewis Anwyl (d.1765); and to Margaret Jones (d.1711)

Benefaction board in stone: dated to 1737.

Plate: cup and paten cover of 1794/5 and a stand paten of 1703/4.

Register: from 1590.

CHURCHYARD

The polygonal churchyard is small, well-kept and was extended by the addition in 1883 of a plot of ground of similar size on its north-west side. It displays a slight slope from east to west. It is situated on the northern edge of the valley of Afon Nug, the ground falling away to south and west, and with the village 'square' immediately to the east, occupies the centre of the small village.

Boundary: consists of a mortared stone wall which on the east has a distinctive basal batter externally.

Monuments: the whole yard is utilised and there is a reasonably even spread with some more dense groups. Evidence of some clearance with slabs and stones used to edge drains, and others propped against the east wall. There are a couple of railed plots of 19thC date, and on the north some obelisks of similar date. Against the east wall is a slab of 1723, but most of the surviving stones are 19thC at earliest.

Furniture: nothing.

Earthworks: the interior is raised by nearly 2m on the east, south and south-west and around 1m on the north-west.

Ancillary features: double iron gates on east side, painted and ornamented, with a lamp on an arch over the top and approached by a flight of four steps. Tarmac path. Dilapidated store shed on north-east and parish hall protrudes into yard on north.

Vegetation: two yews at entrance and three others elsewhere on perimeter, none of any great age. A few deciduous trees on the north side.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 21 January 1997
Crossley 1946, 10
DRO/PD/18/1/30 1963 Plans relating to heating
Faculty: St Asaph 1873 (NLW)
Faculty: St Asaph 1883 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 249
Hubbard 1986, 120
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872 pl 21
Owen 1886, 5
Quinquennial Report 1989
Ridgway 1997, 55
Thomas 1911, 139

CONDITION

Condition is reasonable.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Poor to Medium

Gwytherin

Diocese	St Asaph	Dedication	St Winifred
PRN	16790	NGR	SH87676147
		Previous dedication	St James

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Winifred's church lies at the heart of the small village of Gwytherin in a remote part of Conwy. It has a long history associated with St Winefride, but the present church was built in the later 19thC and, an old chest apart, contains nothing of an earlier date. The churchyard is an irregular shape but is notable for four standing stones in a line, the westernmost of which is an early medieval pillar stone, and some ledgers of the late 17thC/early 18thC.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The church is a totally Victorian structure of 1867-9, though the foundations of the earlier church were used on the north side, and it may have been necessary to resort to earlier material to complete the east gable.

HISTORY

Traditionally a church was established at Gwytherin in the early medieval period and there is a legend that St Winefride became abbess of a convent here. Archdeacon Thomas reported that this was a clas foundation and that the original church had been founded by St Eleri, but when rebuilt it was re-dedicated to St James. A knoll to the south is the site of a chapel to St Winefride (Penbryn Chapel), and recent research by Hulse suggests that the early medieval 'llan' incorporated this knoll as well.

In the 1254 Taxatio appears 'Ecclesia de Gwytherin et Nantglyn' (Nantglyn), but it appeared separately in 1291 at a value of £4 1s 8d.

Subsequently the chapel had its own enclosure but the rural dean's report of 1729 indicates that it was once again integrated with the churchyard of Gwytherin. By this time the chapel had become a ruin.

Glynne in 1852 found a simple church with a roof 'of the usual Welsh construction', but boarded over the sanctuary. Some windows had been replaced in recent times but the east window had two trefoiled lights and a little stained glass, and there was a square-headed window with two obtuse-headed lights on the south side. A report of 1858 mentions two lancet lights at the east end, two wooden chests in one of which was 'a portion of the coffin of St Winifred', the octagonal font, and some large yews. The south door appears to have been cyclopean, there was a round-headed priest's door that had been blocked, and a dormer window to light the gallery.

By the 1860s it had become very dilapidated - photograph in Thomas 1911, 313 - and was rebuilt in 1867-9 by Lloyd Williams & Underwood, a copy of its single-chamber predecessor, at a cost of £750. The two medieval sepulchral slabs were uncovered at this time.

The church was rededicated in 1990 after deconsecration in 1982 and eight years of disuse.

Geophysical prospecting in 1995 failed to pinpoint the chapel site in the field to the south of the church.

ARCHITECTURE

Gwytherin church comprises a nave and chancel as one chamber, a south porch and a north vestry. A small bell turret is set centrally over the nave in line with the porch. The church is oriented due east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' of blocks and slabs of grey shale, small to medium in size and exhibiting some degree of coursing. Quoins of light grey stone that may be limestone. A homogeneous appearance. 'B' is of mixed shale and siltstone with some rounded stone, giving a heterogeneous appearance. Traces of limewash unlike 'A'.

Roof: slates with terracotta ridge tiles, and a cross finial on the chancel. Reconstituted clay tiles on porch. Bell-turret has slated sides and a timber chamber with louvred openings; above is a spirelet.

Drainage: whole building has a 0.5m wide trench around it.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation between nave and chancel. Walls founded on a chamfered plinth of large blocks of limestone.

North wall: beneath the plinth in the drainage trench are large lumps of stone which may be part of the earlier structure. Wall in Fabric 'A'. Three windows, one with a single cusped light, the others paired cusped lancet lights, all in pale yellow freestone, though the jambs of the double lights are in a pink sandstone. Vestry at its east end, possibly added at a later date for the cusped heads of its windows appear to have been cut down suggesting re-use.

East wall: lower part in 'A' but upper part of wall from below window springer level in 'B'. Two-centred window has three cusped lights with a trefoil and other subsidiary lights. Above is a stopped hoodmould in buff yellow freestone and over this a relieving arch in shale blocks.

South wall: 'A' throughout, with standard windows, the outer two, single lancets, the inner two of paired lancets.

West wall: 'A' throughout, though less regular blocks in gable. Three cusped, stepped lights.

Porch. General. All in 'A' and in buff yellow freestone. Plain east and west walls. South wall has a two-centred doorway with chamfered dressings terminating in broach stops; hoodmould with cube stops.

Interior

Porch. General. One step up from churchyard. Tiled floor, walls plastered and whitewashed, simple rafted roof. South door of church has high two-centred arch and chamfered dressings with broach stops.

Nave. General. Tiled floor, no vents, benches raised on wooden boarded floors. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Nave and chancel have roof of five bays with arch-braced trusses and raking struts. Splayed Victorian window embrasures throughout. North wall carries a marble mural tablet of 1848/1861 and the south wall an Incorporated Church Building Society panel of 1910 and an undated benefaction board.

Chancel. General. No chancel as such but two steps up to sanctuary (incorporating a sepulchral slab) and one to altar. Tiled floors and walls and roof as nave. Windows as nave. Another sepulchral slab set in north wall.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Sepulchral slabs: 'one set in the north wall, above the sanctuary step, an early 14thC expanded arm cross. A second of similar date, set in the lower sanctuary step: a floriated cross slab commemorating Llaywarch Cappelanus, (i.e. chaplain), with the representation of a chalice' (Hubbard).

Font: medieval octagonal bowl, diminishing downwards in convex profile, but the stem is Victorian (Based on Hubbard).

Chest: small, dugout, with metal fittings intact.

Benefaction board: in English but undated. A fragment broken off.

Plate: cup of 1619/20.

CHURCHYARD

Gwytherin churchyard is rectilinear, and occupies a spur with the ground dropping to the north and east above the valley of the Cledwen, the church occupying the highest point in the enclosure. On the south side of the church the ground drops down into a natural hollow before rising to another knoll, the site of the former Penbryn chapel. This hollow lies within the churchyard but it is not clear whether this is a later intake - the scarp slope may represent an earlier boundary but could be very largely natural. It is well kept and is still used for burial.

Boundary: fences of no great age delimit the yard on the south-west and south, there is a stone wall on the east and just a stream on the north. Only on the north-west is there a trace of a relict bank in front of the present stone wall.

Monuments: regularly laid out but not dense on the south and west with a few to the east and fewer to the north. There are none in the hollow south of the church. The memorials are in a variable state of preservation - some of the chest tombs have collapsed. The earliest are ledgers to the east of the chancel; one from the 1680s is partly illegible and two others date to 1707.

Furniture: north of the church are four standing stones in a line, two of them first recorded in a visitation of 1710. The westernmost has a Latin inscription commemorating Vinnemaglus, son of Senemaglus, and is dated to the 5thC or early 6thC.

Earthworks: as noted above there is a 1m-high scarp around the south side of the church and its curves slightly as it runs around the east side. This may indicate a former boundary though it could be largely natural. At the east end, too, the church occupies a levelled platform.

Ancillary features: double, wrought iron gates at west entrance with a concrete path to the porch.

Vegetation: four old yews, that to the east of the chancel being the most venerable.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 15 October 1996
Deconsecration decree: St Asaph 1982 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 251
Gresham 1968, 102; 108
Hubbard 1986, 178
Hulse 1994: typescript

Knight, J: typescript
Quinquennial Review 1993
Ridgway 1997, 92
Thomas 1911, 312

CONDITION

Generally satisfactory though some blistering paintwork and occasional cracks.

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: Very Good

Llanddulas

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Cynbryd

PRN 16825

NGR SH90847821

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cynbryd's church at Llanddulas lies towards the eastern edge of the village 2 miles to the west of Abergele. The church is completely Victorian, a medieval building having been rebuilt in 1732 which in turn was succeeded in 1869 by a new structure on a new site. The sole survivors of the earlier buildings are a font and a stoup, together with a plaque commemorating the 1732 rebuilding. The churchyard has been extended on at least two occasions but the original circular yard is still discernible to the south of the present church.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Victorian church which Hubbard described as a building of 'subtlety and sophistication, combining complicated and random-looking elements into a coherent and reposeful whole'.

HISTORY

The dedication and location together with the morphology of the churchyard indicate an early medieval origin.

The proper ecclesiastical name is supposedly 'Langynbryd' from St Cynbryd who founded the church, but the name of the nearby stream, the Dulas, was adopted and in the Norwich Taxation in 1254 it is referred to as 'Ecc'a Llanndulas' and in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 as 'Ecclesia de Llandwlas' at a value of £4.

The parish was originally subject to the mother church at Abergele.

Church rebuilt in 1732, a small and plain structure with a western bell-gable and a south porch. A gallery erected in 1833, and at the same time new pews. A north transept was added in 1841.

In 1867 or soon after the church was declared unfit to be restored and was taken down. It was replaced in 1868/69 by the present building constructed by Street at the expense of Robert Bamford Hesketh of Gwrych. During the excavation of its foundations, several skeletons were found 20 yards to the north of the old church and outside the old churchyard.

ARCHITECTURE

Church at Llanddulas comprises a nave and chancel, a south aisle, a south porch and a vestry on the north side of the chancel. Aisle does not extend as far west as the nave, and in the angle is an octagonal spired bellcote. At its east end the aisle stops short of the chancel end. The building is oriented south-west/north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted, though not for the churchyard.

Fabrics: fabric is uncoursed and irregular limestone rubble; quoins of dressed limestone; plinth and window dressings etc of Cefn sandstones.

Roof: slates with crested red clay roof tiles; cross finials to south porch, both ends of nave and to chancel.

Drainage: no direct evidence of drainage around church but ground on both long sides may be disturbed.

Note: this church was built anew in 1868/9; its medieval predecessor lay some metres to the south. Because of its Victorian origin, the description of the church has been kept to a minimum.

Exterior

Nave. General. Plinth with ashlar chamfer; one string course below windows but not present on west wall. Five cusped lancets and a larger three-light window in north wall with reticulated tracery; two two-light windows with quatrefoils above, in west wall.

Chancel. General. North wall has two two-light cusped windows, the east wall a large three-light window, and the south, a small two-light window.

South Aisle. General. Chamfered plinth; two string courses the lower beneath the windows, the second, on the south side only, acting as a continuous hoodmould; two four-light windows, one two-light window and west of the porch a single light. On the west side a three-light window.

Porch. General. Plain walls, lower string course carried around; simple two-centred entrance.

Vestry: original vestry extended.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor, bare walls, simple arch-braced roof. South doorway to church has two-centred arch and a hoodmould with foliate stops.

Nave. General. Multi-coloured tiled floor with carpet over, grilles down aisle and flush wooden boarding under benches; bare ashlar walls; five-bay roof of arch-braced collars and windbraces, the raking struts and collars cusped.

Chancel arch is two-centred and of two orders; above a hoodmould with foliate stops. Beneath a stone screen with a marble top and ornamental gates. On the south side an arcade of four bays supported on circular columns with two-centred arches and a continuous hoodmould terminating in foliate stops.

Chancel. General. Three steps, staggered, from nave to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar, and at least one grille in the floor. Encaustic tiled floor with carpet; bare walls; nineteen close-set arch-braced collars.

North wall has small, narrow door to vestry, the south wall sedilia and a piscina beneath the window, and two narrow arcade arches to the organ and to the aisle. Also two 20thC brasses.

South Aisle. General. In appearance much the same as the nave but with six bays to the roof; no hoodmould above arcade arches. South and west walls have 20thC brasses.

Vestry. General. Later part separated internally by traceried stone screenwork in two narrow arches.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Fonts: an ancient square bowl of small capacity. Superseded by 'a sentimental but galumphing white angel with a shell that is so comical that it must distract everybody terribly' (Goodhart-Rendel quoted by Hubbard); by Cecil Thomas, 1926.

Piscina: now resting in top of old font, a square bowl with chamfered corners and drain hole.

Stone tablet: now in vestry; plaque with Latin inscription recording the rebuilding of 1732. "Haec aedes penitus collapsa et diruta, communibus impensis re-edificata an'o D'ni MDCCXXXII".

Victorian fittings (on information in Hubbard) include:

Reredos and other fittings: by Street, the reredos with a Crucifixion almost certainly carved by Earp; flamboyant stone panelling either side. Also iron chancel gates and the hinges of the south door.

Five brass coroneae and the fragment of another (originally seven). Three in south aisle, two more elaborate in nave.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is now of a completely irregular shape; its circular origins can be seen in its southern portion more clearly depicted on tithe map, the present church sits in a rectangular extension to the north, and off this a long narrow extension runs towards the river. The site itself is flat and has been created on the west bank of the River Dulas. Generally the churchyard is well-maintained, though vegetation is beginning to swamp older memorials to south-east of church.

Boundary: stone wall on west up to 2.5m high, but on south this is set on top of a bank (the earlier circuit?) and is little more than 0.5m high. East of the church the 19thC extension has a low wall with grave plaques set into it; where it picks up the old churchyard line there is a old stone wall, partially collapsed. Further south it is interrupted and the drive to the former Rectory probably overlies the original circuit.

Monuments: regularly spread to south of Victorian church; earliest seen is one of 1725 against east wall of churchyard.

Furniture: a churchyard cross of 1912 marks the burial plot of the Dundonalds of Gwrych, by Harold Hughes.

Earthworks: 1.5m high bank internally around south side of churchyard; west edge of earlier yard shown by slight bank now covered by graves. No obvious earthworks of earlier church.

Ancillary features: lychgate: stone walls with timber superstructure, dated to 1899 and designed by Harold Hughes; on the south side of yard. Small store shed on north side. Paths of limestone chippings, but concrete in the churchyard extension.

Vegetation: two yews of no great age on former northern edge of churchyard. Deciduous trees at various points to south of church.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 11 December 1996
Faculty 1834: NLW - erection of gallery etc
Faculty 1869: NLW: construction of new church
Faculty 1930: NLW: addition to churchyard
Hubbard 1986, 191
Jones and Rawcliffe 1985
Quinquennial Review 1995
Thomas 1913, 204

CONDITION

A few cracks in the masonry but generally sound.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Very Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Medium

Llandrillo-yn-Rhos

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Trillo

PRN 16834

NGR SH83218064

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Trillo's church lies in the centre of the urban sprawl of Llandrillo and Rhos-on-Sea less than one mile from the coast. It is a double-naved structure with a west tower, the north nave the earlier with a blocked 13thC arcade to a former aisle or chapel, and the south nave and tower both added at a later date; there is however disagreement on the precise sequence and date. Internally the blocked arcade is visible, there is a fine late Perpendicular arcade between the naves, and a fairly simple arch-braced roof to the south nave. Internal fittings of pre-19thC date are few: an early font and a 14thC sepulchral slab are the only medieval survivals. The churchyard has been enlarged on several occasions, but there may be an original sub-oval enclosure here. It contains a good range of 18thC and even earlier churchyard memorials and a 17thC lychgate.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

North nave earlier than tower. Blocked bays in its north wall indicate an aisle (or conceivably a chapel) now gone, and probably a shorter building than is now present; also claims of a blocked doorway in the centre of the western bay adds to the complexity. Arcade attributable to the 13thC, and generally considered to have been cut through an existing wall. Subsequently extended eastwards for a join in the north wall.

South nave and chancel added early in the 16thC. Porch of c.1540. Tower of one build and variously claimed to be 15thC and of 1552. However, belfry windows appear to be 16thC and the parapet stage could be either rebuilt or added, perhaps when turret built in c.1600.

In 1939 C.A.Raleigh Radford postulated a more complex sequence. This is recorded in the NMR and for the sake of completeness it is given in abbreviated form here, though it should be noted that it conflicts with the simpler picture above:

- i) small church of 12thC with nave and narrower chancel; walling survives on north side of present church.
- ii) aisles added, that to south completed, that to north started with insertion of two bays of arcade, but this aisle subsequently abandoned and bays blocked off. Evidence for south aisle provided by abrupt termination of chamfered plinth on west side of south nave, suggesting a pre-existing wall. Phase ii) attributed to the pre-Edwardian conquest period of the 13thC.
- iii) tower added with entrance from nave, and subsequently the south nave. Dated to c.15thC.
- iv) On basis of architectural style, present arcade dated to c.1520, and east and south windows inserted.

HISTORY

Thomas recorded that the church was anciently known as Dynernth, Dinerth or Dinarth and was the mother church of an extensive district. Certainly with its dedication and location it has the hallmarks of an early

medieval foundation, though there is a tradition, doubted by Tucker, that the original church, founded by Trillo in the 6th century, stood in that part of Dinerth which was overwhelmed by the sea.

In 1137 Prince Griffith ap Cynan bequeathed ten shillings to the church of Dinerth. In the 13thC there was some change: it is possible that an aisle was planned on the north as noted above but it has also been suggested that Ednyfed Fychan built a chapel on to the existing church, creating the arcade now blocked in the north wall.

The Norwich Taxation, in 1254, corrupted the name into "Ecc'a de Eiuenth", but the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 has "Eccl'ia de Dynernth" at a value of £23 13s 4d. It was not until 1540 that the name 'Llandrillo' was given to the place.

It has been suggested that at the beginning of the 16th century, the chapel was taken down and the materials used in the construction of the new south nave. A modern brass in the church commemorates this rebuilding in 1518-19 by Sir Hugh Conwy.

In 1540 Hugh Conwy bequeathed fifty shillings for the building of the porch, and the remainder of the five pounds for the building of the chancel, perhaps to be interpreted as a refurbishment?

The tower, said to have been built in the 15thC (Radford) or 1552 (local tradition), was adapted about 1600 to act as a beacon with the addition of a south-west turret, part of a chain of watchtowers which includes those at Abergele and Whitford.

Glynne visited the church in 1850 and apart from commenting on the blocked arcade, he noted a blocked, square-headed window at the west end of the south nave, a plain roof to the north aisle, and a piscina south of the altar.

Restoration in 1857 by H.Kennedy; south nave west window and north nave east window belong to this period. Raleigh Radford, however, though the former was original but renewed. Extent of Kennedy's work not known but it is noticeable that no pre-19thC memorials internally.

Organ chamber added c.1875. Further restoration in 1898.

When the choir vestry was converted from a hearse house and a new doorway constructed through the more westerly of the two blocked arches of the arcade sealed in the north wall, a doorway with limestone dressings was uncovered, the jambs and archstones in the thickness of the wall; its threshold was 18" below the level of the nave where a cobbled floor was encountered. No trace of a rear arch was recorded. Doorway re-set to give access to choir vestry, but its place in the building sequence is unclear.

ARCHITECTURE

Llandrillo is a double-naved church, that on the north narrower than its southern counterpart; a porch near the south-west angle and a west tower. A choir vestry, organ chamber and store were added to the north side during the 19thC.

The building is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here. Conventional directions are used for the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of limestone blocks, some blocks of pink sandstone and a few lumps of dark grey shale including pebble stones. Much of the masonry is small to medium in size, there is some coursing, and thin slabs are used to level up the wall in places on the north side. Limestone is used more frequently towards the base.

'B' is as 'A' but there are rather more long slabs of shale. Some re-use of material is demonstrated by the inclusion of a couple of carved fragments.

'C' is of medium-sized and quite regular limestone blocks showing some coursing and occasional sandstone and shale lumps. Dressed limestone used for quoins.

Roof: slates and grey clay or slate ridge tiles; stone cross finials at the east ends of both naves.

Drainage: concrete lined drain along the south side and some of north side; a tarmac strip against the east side of the north nave may cover a drain but there is nothing along the south nave. Nothing around the tower.

Exterior

Tower. General. Battered base at height of c.1m; tapering sides; moulded string course with waterspouts on north and south faces; battlemented parapet with stepped merlons and a south-west turret. In 'C' but parapet stage has more shale slabs in it, and could be an addition. Turret is also later, having been added in c.1600.

North wall: modern rectangular window cut through batter just above ground level. Belfry window has two round-headed louvred lights with chamfered limestone dressings, except for one block of pink sandstone; whole window renewed.

East wall: belfry window has replaced mullion and the heads to the lights are ogee-shaped; thus all modern except for the limestone jambs. Wall rebuilt possibly from higher part of the window upwards.

South wall: small, round-headed slit window in the batter, but now blocked. At just under half way up the wall are two slit openings, one above the other, lighting the tower stair. Belfry window has round-headed lights, sunken spandrels and a slightly hollowed chamfer: the whole looks original.

West wall: at and below ground level is a modern door approached by a downflight of steps presumably gives access to a boiler room beneath tower. At a height of 2m+ two blocked slit windows, one in the centre of the wall, the other for the tower stair. About half way up the wall face another slit is glazed and has an ogee head: it does not look original. Above a square-headed belfry window as on the south side, all in limestone and probably original. South of it another slit window to the stair.

North Nave and Chancel. General. In 'A' where visible.

North wall: juncture of tower and nave clearly visible with the former's wall face inset slightly and abutting nave. Nave quoins consist of ordinary masonry. Next is the choir vestry and this is built out from the first of two bays of a 13thC arcade sealed in the wall. Parts, but not all, of this bay are visible: an apparently square pier in pink sandstone and a square capital with a chamfer on its underside in similar stone; the two-centred arch turned in a mixture of thinnish slabs of grey shale and pink sandstone, visible only where it is clear of the vestry roof. Next is the second arch sharing the pier already mentioned; some of the dressed stone of the pier has gone on this side but the arch is largely intact. Pier on the east side of this arch is largely hidden by a modern storeroom. Beyond this the wall face is hidden by the extension of the organ chamber and the remainder of the north wall as far as the north-east angle is plain.

East wall: covered in roughcast render. Base of wall may have a projecting foundation course at ground level, but not enough is visible to be certain. It contains a Victorian window with a two-centred arch, three cusped lights with transom and panels above, and a hoodmould with dogs-leg stops; constructed from pale brown freestone, weathering to grey.

No south and west walls.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Where visible in 'B'. Chamfered plinth along east and south walls and part of north.

East wall: wall face has roughcast render. Projecting plinth at base, maximum height of 0.3m and consisting of stone blocks with no chamfer; however because of slope of ground it is not clear whether this runs the full length of wall. Above this at a maximum height of 1m is a second plinth, this with a chamfered top of limestone blocks. The main east window has a four-centred arch, five cusped lights, virtually round-headed

except for the central one which sports an ogee head, single-light sub-arches and panels above and a hollowed hoodmould terminating in block stops, each with a small head in relief. These look original as do the jambs but not the tracery. Freestone is mustard yellow in colour weathering to grey. Between the two gables at the head of the valley the spout for the downpipe is a head of Celtic type in pink sandstone: origin unknown and its authenticity remains to be established.

South wall: largely covered by remnant render and beneath the chancel window roughcast render masks the masonry. Features from east are: i) chancel window with four-centred arch, three lights, the central one round-headed the others two-centred; hoodmould with ornamental stops; ii) a blocked priest's door with a two-centred arch, chamfered jambs finishing in pyramidal stops, and all in pink sandstone with sharp arrises and an unweathered appearance; the blocking is certainly modern; iii) a second window to the same design constructed from a variety of different coloured freestones, probably indicating some renewal though it is difficult to distinguish which; iv) two small decorated fragments of stone reused in the masonry high up on wall face; v) porch and remainder of wall from apex of porch roof covered in roughcast render.

West wall: covered in roughcast render; chamfered plinth stops abruptly beneath window but for no obvious reason. Window in wall has four-centred arch, three lights, cusped with round heads, a transom, and a hoodmould with ornamental stops similar to those on the south windows; the whole is Victorian.

Porch. General. Wall have extensive remnant roughcast render. Masonry is similar in appearance to 'A' but dressed limestone for quoins.

East wall: rough plinth at height of 0.5m. Masonry mainly in limestone. No features.

South wall: archway has two-centred arch turned in limestone, no chamfer. Lamp above.

West wall: roughcast render. Plain.

Vestry. General. Covered in roughcast render.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor; plastered and painted walls; roof of two bays with two visible arch-braced collar trusses, chamfered, and plain purlins.

North wall: doorway in dressed limestone, is round-headed with hollow moulding outside chamfer and pyramid stops. Victorian?

East wall: wall inset at height of c.0.9m to form ledge. Notice boards.

South wall: wood and wire doors into porch.

West wall: as east wall but in south-west angle is 14thC sepulchral slab.

Tower. General. Wooden floor; plastered and painted walls; flat wooden ceiling.

North wall: modern splayed window.

East wall: small two-centred arch, unembellished and without chamfered dressings.

South wall: two-centred limestone doorway to tower stair, but disguised on its north face but a wooden veneer. Behind it a small compartment two steps up from floor of tower.

West wall: plain.

North Nave (Aisle). General. Stone flag floor but with graveslabs of 17thC and 18thC date used towards east end. Large heating vent at west end. Walls plastered and painted, except for dressings of doorway, early piers etc. Roof of close-set scissor trusses and collars, the rafters resting on the wall plate on the north and on stone corbels above the arcade. Victorian roof. North nave is narrower than its southern counterpart. It contains additional seating raised on wooden boarding and towards the east end the organ in its own chamber. At the east end are further, modern benches set at right-angles to the altar and raised on a wooden plinth.

North wall: both of the early arcade bays are defined by slightly sunken areas of the wall face, and the piers and their capitals are also revealed, the central one completely devoid of plaster: pale sandstone dressings with the angles chamfered. The outer piers only partly revealed and the more easterly capital replaced in modern stone. Set in the more westerly bay is a Victorian two-centred archway in dressed limestone giving access to the vestry (though this disguises an earlier, re-used arch). East of the second blocked bay is a slight disconformity in the wall face, perhaps evidence of some rebuilding. Otherwise 19thC and 20thC brass, stone and wooden memorial plaques on wall. Three-quarters of way along wall to east is a further Victorian two-centred archway opening onto the organ chamber; the arch is turned in dressed freestone rather than limestone. Beside this and to the east is a slightly splayed alcove with a flat head; dressings are chamfered but with a number of simple stops; not apparently of any great age, though in 1850 Glynne noted a recess towards the east end of the north nave which he thought might be a former doorway.

East wall: splayed window with Victorian dressings.

South wall: four-bay arcade, four-centred arches, moulded capitals, octagonal piers all in pale pink sandstone. In south-west angle at the level of the arch apices is a triangular wedge of masonry forming a ledge; its purpose is unknown but it was perhaps a support for a gallery?

West wall: devoid of features except for splayed rectangular embrasure which narrows to the two-centred tower doorway at its far end.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Flag floor with one 17thC graveslab partly hidden beneath the pulpit; benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls as north nave. Roof of four bays, one narrower than the others. Principal trusses have arch-braced collars springing from quasi-hammerbeam wallposts on stone corbels, alternating with arch-braced collars rising from wall plates; two tiers of angular windbraces. 16thC. Wagon ceiling in the east half of end bay.

North wall: arcade as north nave but over the three piers are painted stone angels clasping books. These do not correspond with the existing roof and it has been suggested that these angel corbels indicate an intention to erect a more elaborate roof than the present one.

East wall: splayed window with stone reredos beneath.

South wall: splayed windows, the dressings and tracery left unpainted. Priest's door has peaked embrasure, the blocking inset to create an alcove. Splayed and peaked embrasure for main doorway into church. One 19thC brass and another (modern) that commemorates the rebuilding of south aisle; one 19thC marble memorial over the door.

West wall: splayed window with Victorian dressings; some changes in wall face may relate to its predecessor.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 13thC bulbous bowl with a frieze of nailhead, its eight sides separated by vertical ribs; octagonal plinth. Pink sandstone.

Sepulchral slab: said to commemorate Ednyfed, a vicar appointed in 1407, but Gresham pointed out that the style and lettering were of the early 14thC; floriated cross with petaloid pattern, each arm branching into five lobes; in the porch.

Monuments: none of pre-19thC date, though graveslabs of 1675 to 1728 in floor.

Stained glass: fragments from the medieval east window re-set in south nave window and visible at the time of Glynne's visit; a few now reportedly built into vestry window.

Plate: 17thC pewter flagon.

Registers: from 1693.

Victorian and later furnishings include:

Stained glass: 'both east windows of 1873, the southern one, and possibly both by Heaton, Butler & Bayne. One west window by T.F.Curtis of Ward & Hughes, 1902' (Hubbard).

Reredos: 1919.

CHURCHYARD

Llandrillo churchyard is now a large rhomboidal enclosure with the church set on a limestone knoll at its centre; to this has been added a similar sized extension on its west side. Possible evidence within the main enclosure of a smaller sub-oval enclosure with the church near its eastern corner, and with steep slopes down to newer parts of churchyard on the north and east, which contained houses on an 18thC estate map. On faculty evidence churchyard extensions in 1923 and 1940.

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

Boundary: on the north is a stone wall at the base of the slope and this continues on east, in part acting as a retaining wall with iron railings above it. A retaining wall, too, on the south which is necessary because of internal banking. On the west the old yard has a straight revetment wall above the extension.

Monuments: there is little room on the north for any burials, while elsewhere the graves are regimented and well-packed, the exception being at the base of the eastern slope where the memorials are more spread. Immediately east of the chancel are ledgers of 1658, ?1666, 1692 and others that are ivy-covered; at the base of the eastern slope, chest tombs of 1761 and 1789; and on the south side in the vicinity of the lychgate a whole range of 18thC monuments with the earliest from the last decade of the 17thC. Under a 1996 faculty, a group of seven or eight 18thC chest tombs - the Ellis tomb and others - near the lychgate were repaired.

Furniture: south of the church is a sundial with gnomon, 'the gift of Mrs Mary James of Dinerth' and a maker's inscription, which could not be deciphered; it is reported to refer to William Wench of Chester and dated to 1755. Set on a circular column bearing the initials and date 'THOW 1756', with a three-tiered base beneath.

Earthworks: natural scarp slopes on east and north, and around the west and south the ground falls but this may be largely natural, though the curve on the south-east is suggestive.

Ancillary features: on south side, a limestone lychgate dated to 1677 with almost round-headed arches, stone benches against the walls, and iron ties and a buttress (on the west) for stabilisation. It was restored in 1907. Double wooden gates at south-east. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: five mature yews on east and south-east; numbers of fairly small yews near south and south-west sides.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings: Rhos on Sea community, 1994
CPAT Field Visit: 14 March 1997
Faculty: St Asaph 1923 (NLW)
Faculty: St Asaph 1940 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 252
Gresham 1968, 109
Hubbard 1986, 193
Letter 1938: St Asaph Faculty Box (NLW)
NMR Aberystwyth
Quinquennial Review: 1988
Ridgway 1997, 123
Thomas 1913, 210
Tucker 1965

CONDITION

Damp showing on walls in both naves, particularly at the west end. Irregularities in some wall faces suggest former cracks.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Medium to Good

Llanelian-yn-Rhos

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Elian**PRN** 16713**NGR** SH86357643

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Elian's church is situated in the village of Llanelian-yn-Rhos, less than one mile to the south of Colwyn Bay. A double-naved structure, its north nave and perhaps the north chancel are of two phases and could be 13thC or 14thC if not earlier, but the south nave and chancel and the surviving medieval windows are all Perpendicular and the doorways, of which there are several, utilise massive limestone blocks but are inherently undatable. Internally the roofs are late medieval and that over the south sanctuary has surviving paintings. Medieval furnishings and fittings include the lower part of the rood screen, painted panels from the rood loft, a disused font, and a chalice of late 15thC date. There are the usual range of wall monuments, some re-used pew panels of the early 18thC and a benefaction board of the same date. The churchyard is rectilinear and there is now little sign that it was ever curvilinear; it contains graveslabs going back to the middle of the 17thC.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Constructional sequence is not entirely clear. Western half of north nave is considered by Hubbard to be the earliest though its west and north walls are in different masonry; nave then extended eastwards and chancel added. However, could it be that the church was extended westwards thus enlarging the nave? Part of east wall subsequently rebuilt, perhaps when Perpendicular windows added, which implies that masonry shell might be 14thC or 13thC if not earlier - local tradition has it going back to the 9thC.

South nave and chancel added, probably in 15thC, but masonry is again different. Also is the appearance of 'C' in the east wall a sign of masonry re-use or an earlier structure? The latter does seem to be indicated by the differently aligned foundation course near the porch.

The few original windows surviving are Perpendicular, while the cyclopean doorways are not readily datable.

The porch itself could be a 19thC rebuild re-using medieval roof timbers.

HISTORY

The dedication and perhaps the location suggest an early medieval foundation, but there is no circular churchyard and, inevitably, no confirmatory records. It is claimed that the church was established by Eliau Geimlad in the 6th century, though another dedication is said to have been to Eleri. Llandrillo-yn-Rhos appears to have been its mother church.

Thomas noted that the parish was originally known by the name of the township in which the church stands - Bodlenyn. The 1254 Taxation gives the name "Ecc'a de Bechwylemyn" and that of 1291 gives "Eccl'ia de Bodwelennyn" when it was valued at £4 2s 1d. Sometime after 1291 this was superseded by the name of its founder, St Eliau. In the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535 gives "Rectoria de Llan Eliau".

The church had a thatched roof in the 18thC and continued to be whitewashed into the 19thC. Glynn visited in 1854, noting that the west gallery had remnants of the rood loft panelling, that the windows on the

south side were modern and poor, and that there were a few plain bench ends but the building was generally pewed.

Restoration occurred in 1859 when the seating was re-arranged, though there are few details of the other works that occurred at that time. In 1874, the painted ceiling over the chancel was cleaned, and the surviving panels of the rood screen were varnished.

At the time of further restoration in 1903, a drainage trench was dug round the church, the masonry was repaired and repointed, particularly the west wall, the floor was re-paved, the seats were remodelled, and the vestry enlarged.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanelian church is a double-naved building with both elements of precisely the same length. It has a west bellcote over the north nave, and a south porch close to the south-west corner of the south nave.

The church is oriented slightly south-west/north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church, though not for the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises small to large blocks of grey limestone, with very occasional shale blocks; large tooled quoins of limestone, shale and sandstone; randomly coursed; heavy pointing which in places covers remnants of render and/or limewash.

'B' is of small blocks and slabs of dark grey shale with some coursing; lacks limewash traces.

'C' is comparable with 'A' but overall the size of the stone is smaller, there is more dark shale, and less limestone; random coursing.

'D' has medium and larger sandstone blocks predominating but there is some limestone; random coursing; limewash flecks.

'E' is of fairly regular blocks of pale limestone, some with a pinkish tinge; some coursing.

'A' and 'C' probably date from the 15thC, 'E' is 15thC or early 16thC, 'D' is undated but could be post-medieval and 'B' is Victorian.

Roof: slates with grey clay ridge tiles; cross finials, set up in 1931, at all terminals except the west end of the north nave, where there is a bellcote constructed in regular masonry with a single aperture and bell.

Drainage: open drain around south, west and east sides, 0.3m wide and up to 0.5m deep. North of the chancel the drain floor is almost at surface level but it drops as it runs westwards beside the nave.

Exterior

North Nave and Chancel. General. Recorded as one cell for the only external distinction is the inset between a former nave and chancel, not the present one.

North wall: in 'A', with a slight batter to base of wall. From west: i) window of two lancet lights in yellow sandstone, the dressed stone with pecked faces looking Victorian and is packed around with 'B'; ii) blocked doorway of cyclopean form, dressed but unchamfered limestone, peaked head to the arch; both the dressings and the blocking have limewash traces, the latter also having been rendered; blocking is like 'B' but less regular; iii) next an inset to the wall, a matter of 0.15m+ only at base to <0.1m at top; fabric changes to 'C' and wall is vertical; iv) four-light window, round heads to the lights and all in yellow freestone; heads are renewed but jambs with slightly hollowed chamfers, and hollow-chamfered hoodmould terminating in much weathered head stops are original Perpendicular; some packing around window; v) slanting buttress of dressed stone; vi) flat-headed three-light window, the lights cusped, with sunken spandrels above; chamfered, grey limestone dressings; of relatively recent construction and a localised render coat along both vertical edges presumably coating masonry packing; vii) concrete 'bin' at ground level, now disused, but apparently covering the organ blower; viii) short diagonal buttress which could be an

early feature.

East wall: in 'C' though with subtle differences from north wall. East window has four lights which are square-headed and cusped, and sunken spandrels, all in yellow freestone; some renewal including mullions, but some original dressings including pink sandstone jamb stones, and also a hollow-chamfered hoodmould with simple dogs-leg stops. Walling around window appears to have been rebuilt as does the gable, but there may be more than one phase of reconstruction. Original south-east angle of wall, pre-dating the addition of the south nave and chancel, visible as a butt joint.

West wall: wall face is cleaner (i.e. less pointing etc) than that of north wall and can be classed as 'D'. Blocked doorway with two-centred arch; dressed but unchamfered cyclopean limestone jambs though one stone in darker shale; limewash traces. Doorway, however, does not look to be of great antiquity and is perhaps post-medieval. Above is a two-light window in dark yellow freestone, cusped lights and of Victorian date. Much of the wall is original for the quoins at its south-west angle are visible integrated into the west wall of the south nave; above the window the gable has been rebuilt with limestone slabs and blocks of regular shape, though some might be re-used including one block that could be dressed sandstone.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Nave and chancel treated as one cell for no external differentiation.

East wall: bottom of wall in 'C', comparable with that in east wall of north chancel, but most in 'E', from below the base of the east window. This window has a peaked, almost four-centred arch with three, stepped lights that have two-centred heads, cinquefoil tracery, mullions and tracery largely renewed, but the jambs are original and the hoodmould has weathered head-stops. The whole wall is founded on large projecting slabs exposed in the side of the drain.

South wall: in contrast to the east wall no projecting foundation. Stone is a variation of 'E' with a little more shale and overall less uniformity of appearance; much limewash residue. From the east are: i) square-headed window with three cusped lights, sunken spandrels; jambs of cyclopean limestone but window heads and mullions renewed in pale freestone; ii) flat-headed window, the three lights with round heads in tooled grey limestone, relatively recent in date; iii) two-light window but otherwise as ii); iv) porch. Running out from porch wall is a projecting ledge at the base of the south wall of the nave, and below ground level; this converges with the south wall, disappearing from view to the east of iii) and suggestive of an earlier phase.

West wall: in Fabric 'E'. Quoin stones of north nave immured in this wall face to full height. Square-headed window with two cusped lights, the dressings of limestone, and similar to window in north wall of chancel; window set fractionally off centre.

Porch. General. Fabric is a mixture of largish blocks of limestone and shale; limewash remnants.

East wall: plain wall, limestone blocks for lower part of wall.

South wall: contains a broad, round-headed doorway, its arch turned in limestone but not chamfered; constructed in 1935. Above is a featureless lump of sandstone, perhaps once a face corbel or stop which is believed to have been a representation of the patron saint.

West wall: plain; again larger limestone below, smaller shale above.

Interior

Porch. General. Three steps up from exterior. Stone slab floor; walls plastered and whitewashed except on south. Two-bay roof with three arch-braced collar trusses and two tiers of windbraces; some replacement and loss of wind-brace timbers, but much of timberwork looks old.

North wall: two-centred arched doorway, large blocks of dressed limestone for jamb and arch stones, no chamfer; comparable with other external doorways. Adjacent plaque records construction of outer doorway

in 1935.

East wall: stone bench.

South wall: bare wall of rough limestone masonry, conceivably earlier than external facing.

West wall: as east wall plus war memorial plaques.

North Nave. General. Floor of red quarry tiles, carpet over part; flush wooden flooring under benches. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of four full and two half bays (one shared with chancel); arch-braced collar trusses set into north wall where there is an over painted wall plate and supported on south by wooden corbels; two tiers of cusped windbraces. Most of timberwork looks original but replacement of rafters.

Rear of north nave screened off for vestry. Radiators and pipes for heating along walls.

North wall: features from west are: i) splayed window embrasure, painted except for the soffit; ii) panel from rood screen, but no indication of blocked doorway beneath; iii) slab of 1954; iv) inset wall in line with that on outside. Inset wall has distinct internal batter; v) deeply splayed window with only the window dressings not painted; vi) marble memorial of 1717/1743; vii) above vi) is a wooden corbel, much lower than roof corbels and now obsolete; perhaps associated with a former rood loft?

East wall: screen, but only the lowest part and this has radiators screwed to it.

South wall: three bays of five-bay arcade; broad, chamfered, two-centred arches, no capitals, thin, square pillars, chamfered with broach stops, and raised on square bases, some stones of which renewed.

West wall: deeply splayed window embrasure with only soffit not painted. No indication of blocked doorway. Wall reportedly lined, perhaps with brick.

North Chancel. General. One step up from nave; red quarry tiles on floor but graveslabs in centre (1587 to 1749), possibly signalling vault beneath. Walls as nave. Roof of one and a half bays as nave, but over sanctuary, a painted wagon roof, the ribs rising from decorated wall plates with arcading above (re-used from rood screen?). Victorian colouring? Organ fills part of north side.

North wall: splayed window, the dressings and soffit unpainted; wood panelling derived from pews around this and east sides, one carrying a date of 1722. Mural tablet of 1747.

East wall: window and panelling as on north side.

South wall: arcade of two bays, as north nave.

West wall: screen (see above).

South Nave. General. Internal porch. Floor and walls as north nave. Roof similar to north nave; some timber replacement but generally good, though corbels vary in their survival.

North wall: arcade as north nave.

East wall: screen as north nave.

South wall: two splayed windows, benefaction board of 1735 and mural tablet of 1742, plus carved wooden plaque. Thomas also recorded a blocked window on this side which lit the roof loft, though he was not specific as to whether this was an internal or external observation; nothing is visible externally so it must be assumed that what he observed is now covered by plaster.

West wall: splayed window, thick wall, reportedly lined, perhaps with brick.

South Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Carpet over red quarry tiles, but sanctuary has black and white marble tiles. One and a half bays of roof as south nave, and a barrel roof over the sanctuary with painted scenes and figures, now faded, including the Magi, and St Anne with the Virgin.

North wall: arcade.

East wall: splayed window with only the soffit bare; wooden panelling derived from (?18thC) pews forms dado; two marble memorials of 1786 and 1794.

South wall: small deep alcove for?piscina; dado as east side; splayed window; wooden board with Ten Commandments etc in Welsh, over mural tablet of 1705.

West wall: screen.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Fonts: i) 17thC example with quatrefoils on the octagonal bowl. ii) an earlier tub-shaped font with a circular bowl, somewhat battered, at rear of south nave; recovered from a neighbouring farmyard according to Thomas.

Rood screen: 'the lower part, extending across both naves, has been reinstated. Moulded uprights and middle rail, and random squints' (Hubbard). Other fragments used for wall plates in north chancel.

'Against the north wall are nine painted panels from the west parapet of the loft, depicting the Last Judgment, the Ascension, and the legend of St Hubert. They show the cusped pattern of the original framing' (Hubbard). Inscription indicates that these were restored in 1874, but the varnish coating applied at that time has now darkened.

Plate: a pre-Reformation silver chalice reputedly dated to c.1480. Paten of 1707.

Registers: for burial from 1584.

Pews: used for panelling in chancels; one panel in north chancel carries decoration and is inscribed 'P R M 1722'.

Wooden plaque: on south wall, three carved panels reputedly taken from the old pulpit.

Benefaction Board: wood with painted putti; dated to 1735 and inscribed 'Thomas Roberts, Edmund Williams Wardens'.

Monuments: classical tablets include that to John Holland (d.1786) and wife Anne (d.1794) with urn above pediment, by Benjamin Bromfield of Liverpool; to Margaret Holland (d.1717) et al. (up to 1743) in marble with pediment and putto; to Thomas Davies (d.1747); to John Owens (d.1742); marble memorial to Rev David Price (d.1794) with pediment, putto and foliage; to Lowry Jones, Heyrese [sic] (d.1705).

Graveslabs: in north chancel are i) to Hughes family (1587, 1690, 1705 & 1816); ii) fragments of late 17thC or 18thC date; iii) to?Gem (d.1643); and iv) John Williams (d.1749) late surveyor general of the light tax of North Wales.

Plate: chalice of 1490-1510, stand paten of 1706/7.

Bell: dated 1799.

19thC furnishings (on the basis of information from Hubbard) include:

Undated board carrying Ten Commandments etc in Welsh. Pre-1826 on basis of entry in churchwarden's accounts.

Reredos: a Last Supper, carved in 1873 by John Yorke.

Stained glass: west and both east windows by Ballantine & Son, 1862.

CHURCHYARD

Llanelian churchyard is rectilinear in shape and relatively small, an extension to the burial area being added on the north side in 1933. The original churchyard is raised (see below) and shows a gentle slope from west to east on the north side of the church.

It is sited on a broad interfluvial spur that drops towards the sea, the ground rising gently to the west and dropping away to the north-east.

Boundary: rear wall of the public house to the south-west, stone wall on the west up to 1m high, while the rest of the perimeter has a retaining wall of varying height.

Monuments: spread generally throughout the old churchyard, in places locally dense, and showing some re-ordering of both gravestones and ledgers, particularly to the west of the church. The earliest stone - a chest tomb of 1612 to the Holland family - lies to the south-east of the church and there is a ledger tomb of 1653 and a chest tomb of 1683, together with at least two more 17thC gravestones and several of the 18thC.

Furniture: sundial in extreme south-east corner of churchyard. Rectangular base, chamfered rectangular pillar, plain brass plate with gnomon, no inscription. Church records indicate it was purchased in 1722 for 7s 6d.

Earthworks: churchyard is raised above its surroundings: c.1m on west and north, by perhaps 3m on south and 3m-4m on east. No internal earthworks.

Ancillary features: ornate south entrance with a single wrought iron gate on the south; a cobbled path from this to the porch, but elsewhere the paths of concrete. Store shed to north of the church.

Vegetation: two mature but not very large yews on the west side of the church, other small yews on the north and some bushes on the north-east and east. Church records indicate that yews were planted in 1736.

SOURCES

Church guide 1986
CPAT Field Visit: 13 December 1996
Crossley 1946, 26
Faculty 1904: NLW - alterations to church
Faculty 1933: NLW - churchyard extension
Glynne 1884, 100
Hubbard 1986, 202
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pl 49
NMR Aberystwyth
Quinquennial Review 1988
Ridgway 1997, 128
Thomas 1913, 215

CONDITION

Generally sound but some cracks in east wall of north chancel, and plaster etc flaking in south window embrasures.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium to Good

Llanfair Talhaiarn

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Mary

PRN 16847

NGR SH92717013

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church is situated above the small village of Llanfair Talhaiarn lying in the valley of the Elwy, about 5 miles to the south of Abergele. The double-naved church probably has some medieval fabric surviving, but there was considerable rebuilding in the 19thC and all of the windows date from that time, though the south door could be one or two hundred years earlier. Inside only a disused font bowl and a few of the roof timbers date back to the medieval era, but there is a good range of 18thC wall memorials and one unusual feature is a 19thC tank built for adult baptism.

The churchyard is small and polygonal in shape, but there is a hint of curvilinearity on its south side.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A minimum of two medieval phases is suggested by the inset in the south wall, though there is no corroborative evidence. North wall of north nave retains old masonry, presumably of medieval origin, but upper part of the wall has been rebuilt or heightened, probably the latter. East end largely rebuilt in two different fabrics, the one an homogeneous mixture, the other freshly quarried material; the sequence in which these two were used is not entirely clear, particularly in the south chamber. The south wall of the south chamber has been largely replaced, but though the windows are all 19thC it is not clear whether all were replaced at the same time, for two different styles are represented (or indeed whether these are faithful copies of earlier windows in different styles). Hubbard thought the windows were all of one date and replaced 17thC and 18thC examples, the south door perhaps representing a contemporary feature. The porch is Victorian.

HISTORY

Location and to some extent the churchyard morphology point to an early medieval origin, though there is no specific evidence for an earlier dedication to Talhaiarn, reputedly a 5thC saint.

Llanfair Talhaiarn appeared as "Ecc'a de Llanber" in the 1254 Taxation with a value of £4. In the 1291 taxation it was recorded as both "Ecclesia de Lanveyrdalhaern" and "Capella de Lanveyr Dalhaeyn" at £8.

Work on the church is suggested by a date of 1669 carved into a Greek cross that was once visible on the bellcote.

Glynne visited the church in 1856. He described a church 'very late and rude'. There was a six-bay arcade with the four western arches obtuse and misshapen and the other two more pointed with square piers. The windows were either bad and modern or poor, square-headed and of the 17thC.

The church was reportedly re-roofed and repaired in 1839 at a cost of £205 and restored in 1876 for £1400, reputedly to Scott's design. New windows were inserted, the choir and sanctuary were raised, the present arcade constructed, the building was again re-roofed and the seating rearranged. The ground level around

the church was lowered, and the hearse house which was attached to the church was taken down and rebuilt in a more convenient place.

In 1879 a faculty was presented for an extension to the burial ground to the west of the church, though there is no evidence that this was ever presented. A new hearse house was planned in the extreme south-east corner. The choir was re-arranged and a vestry room provided in 1880.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanfair church is a double-naved structure with a porch set about half way along the south side, and a bellcote at the west end of the south nave. It is oriented slightly north of true east.

Fabrics: "A" consists of medium sized, irregular blocks of grey limestone, irregularly coursed. Quoins of larger, slightly more regular blocks.

"B" consists of mixed rubble, irregularly laid, including iron-stained limestone, shale slabs and buff-coloured freestone; also used for window dressings.

"C" is of irregular grey lumps, some being micaceous siltstone or the like together with other stone, small to medium in size, irregularly coursed.

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

Roof: slates, reconstituted clay ridge tiles; stone cross finials at both ends of the north nave, and east end of south nave. Bellcote of dressed stone with weathervane surmounted by fish; one bell dated to 1738.

Drainage: on north side is a slight hollow beside the wall, which towards the west end turns into a grassless strip partly covered by recumbent slabs. East end also has a hollow, the south side a gully. Therefore some evidence of a drain cutting beside the walls.

Exterior

North Nave and Chancel. General. Described as one element because no differentiation other than chancel window.

North wall: in 'A' with foundation course projecting slightly at east corner. Above the windows and in places around them, the masonry is 'B'; as the level of the change is fairly consistently at window top level it suggests either wholesale rebuilding or a heightening of the walls. The windows are square-headed; three in the nave with foiled ogee-headed lights, all to the same pattern, the heads in pinkish sandstone, the chamfered mullions and jambs in buff-coloured freestone. Other features include, from west: i) most westerly window has slabs of the buff sandstone in line above it (set in 'B'); ii) jambs of second window in chamfered limestone, presumably from an earlier window; iii) 'B' masonry incorporates part of a graveslab immediately above the third window; iv) chancel window to same pattern as nave window but of two lights, all the dressings in pink sandstone; v) to east of window iv) part of wall rebuilt in 'B'.

East wall: lower part in 'A', upper part in 'B', but gable top in 'C'. Window, off centre as a result of wall heightening on north, has two-centred arch and two trefoiled lights with Y-tracery; also a simple hoodmould. Victorian design.

West wall: wall face covered with render coat. West door with segmental head of limestone and inscription 'WFH HT WARDENS 1715'. North of this door is a concrete lean-to with a boiler room sunk beneath it.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Treated as one cell as north nave.

East wall: juncture of east walls of two chancels disguised by heavy pointing. East window has two-centred

arch, three lights with foiled ogee-heads and quatrefoil lights above, and a simple hoodmould, all in pink sandstone. Lower part of the wall appears to be not in 'A' but in a variation of 'C'. Above this and around the window is 'B', and the apex of the gable is in 'C'.

South wall: 'A' at base of wall though with some variety in the masonry including long slabs of shale-like material and very large quoins in vicinity of chancel window; this could be the only evidence of an eastwards extension of the south nave and it is not convincing. Masonry in heterogeneous 'B' from about 1.4m upwards (i.e. in line with lower parts of windows). From east the features are: i) square-headed two-light window with two-centred lights that do not conform to the standard pattern elsewhere; ii) three-light window as in north wall and showing signs of insertion; iii) porch; iv) a brick arch set in nave wall almost at ground level - associated with a vault covered by a slab adjacent to the porch wall; v+vi) two three-light windows as north wall. West of the porch there is little 'A', and is mostly 'B' though quoins have been retained.

West wall: thick render cover. A two-centred arched window with simple Y-tracery and a hoodmould, all in pinkish sandstone.

Porch. General. In 'C'-type masonry.

East wall: plain.

South wall: doorway with three-centred head and modern door; above a tie-beam with struts fills the gable.

West wall: plain.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone flag floor; walls plastered and whitewashed; roof of purlins and rafters with one collar truss in addition to the gable truss showing externally.

North wall: round-headed doorway, unchamfered dressings; and a massive door, claimed to be late 17thC, with sanctuary ring, wooden lock and internal bracing.

East wall: plain with wooden topped bench.

West wall: as east wall. In north-west angle on the floor is the broken bowl of the old font. Against the wall is an unprovenanced plaque with the inscription 'RK OR CHURCHWARDENS 1797'.

North Nave. General. Single chamber extends full length of building. West end taken up with organ of 1880 and vestry. Floor carpeted with wooden boarding beneath benches. At west end near door is a vault covered by a slab (info: from churchwarden). Walls plastered and painted. Roof of eight and a half bays with arch-braced collars springing from wall tops, and two tiers of small cusped windbraces; some original timberwork survives in this.

North wall: slight outward lean to wall. Four splayed windows. At least four 19thC memorials plus two of the 18thC, one in a window embrasure. Also a large painting of unknown date.

East wall: one slightly splayed window and a memorial tablet of 1682/1707.

South wall: six-bay arcade with broad, chamfered, two-centred arches, springing from octagonal columns and capitals. In Decorated style but dating from 1876. Two marble mural tablets of 1790 and 1818.

West wall: slightly splayed west doorway. Benefaction board of 1717.

South Nave. General. Flag floor heavily carpetted, but certainly some reused graveslabs; along the front are at six, the earliest legible, of 1633, and there are others of 18thC date at the west end. Benches on wooden boarding. Walls as north nave. Roof of nave and adjacent chancel of eight and a half bays with arch-braced collars springing from wall tops, and two tiers of small cusped windbraces. Very little of the timberwork looks original.

North wall: four-bay arcade, as south wall of north nave; one marble mural tablet of 1792.

East wall: only division from chancel is one step up.

South wall: two splayed windows with a third shared with the chancel. A little to the east of the south door, the wall face is inset by 0.25m, and the rest of the nave and all of the chancel has a narrower wall. Furthermore the wall to the west has more of a outward lean to it: presumably the earliest part of the surviving structure. Late 18thC and 19thC memorial tablets on wall.

West wall: one splayed window and a memorial tablet of 1816.

South Chancel. General. One step up to the chancel, one to the sanctuary and one to the altar. Floor tiles in pattern in chancel, encaustic tiles in sanctuary; choir stalls raised on wooden boarding. For walls and roof see nave.

North wall: arcade as north chancel. Marble mural tablet of 1686.

East wall: splayed window with memorials of 1720 and 1883 on either side.

South wall: sanctuary window has segmental soffit, more pronounced than others. Memorial tablets of 1692 and 1776 (in a window splay), and a brass of 1882.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Fonts: disused bowl, shallow, square, changing to an octagon at the top through cushion-like stops. Original stem has gone and the bowl is now set on two balusters that might once have supported a table tomb. Lying at the base is half of what may be a rotary quern fragment, presumably one of those described by Ellis Davies as having been found while ploughing, and residing outside Gwern y Cilliau until 1926. A second old font is in the porch, the bowl round and tapering towards the base.

Painting: 'King David playing the (Welsh) harp; undated' (Hubbard).

Monuments: (details derived from Hubbard with additions) Mostly to the Wynnes of Garthwin, and all in marble. Robert Wynne (d.1686), an oval tablet. John Wynne (d.1692), large tablet with fruit garlands above and volutes. Robert Wynne and others (1707), pilasters, entablature rising segmentally, volutes, cherub heads and heraldry. John Wynne (1720), sumptuous, with Corinthian columns, an urn in a broken segmental pediment, volutes, cherub heads, and leaf and flower garlands. Mounted separately in the wall above are three heraldic shields. Robert Wynne (d.1771), pedimented tablet and an urn; in differing coloured marbles. Hugh Lloyd (d.1772) and his wife Catherine (d.1775). John Davies (d.1776). Robert Wynne (d.1798) similar to that of his namesake above. Richard Lloyd of Llanybi (d.1792). Elizabeth Wynne (d.1816), by S. & F. Franceys; infant crouching against a draped urn. Elizabeth Fleming (d.1831) by James Hatchard of Pimlico; draped urn and sarcophagus-like tablet. Robert William Wynne (d.1842) by Holmes of Pimlico; Neo-Jacobean, in white marble against a black ground. Also Elizabeth Whittingham (d.1790) and Eleanor Hodges (d.1818), both servants of Robert Wynne.

Benefaction board: wooden, of 1717.

Plate: pewter plate of 1680 and a pewter jug of 1739.

Registers: from 1653.

Victorian features include:

Tank: for adult immersion baptism, constructed in 1849; last used in 1986 (information from churchwarden). In north-west corner under trap-doors.

CHURCHYARD

The original churchyard is small, well-kept and occupies fairly level ground. There are traces of curvilinearity on the south, which are more pronounced on the mid-19thC tithe map. An extension was added on the west side in 1879. The site overlooks the steep-side valley of the River Elwy, and the ground drops away immediately to the river on the north and into a tributary valley on the east.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall acts largely as a retaining wall on all sides.

Monuments: the old churchyard is reasonably full though the monuments are not densely packed. Many are ledgers, and there are a number of chest tombs, several of which are collapsing. A number of 18thC memorials survive, the earliest seen being of 1726.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: the yard interior is raised, not only on the north and east above the valleys, but on the west by about 0.5m and on the south by over one metre.

Ancillary features: simple wrought iron gates on the south, between stone pillars surmounted by balls. Tarmac path to the porch. Store shed at south-west corner.

Vegetation: two yews of moderate age on the south, and elsewhere a few small conifers.

SOURCES

Church guide: 1995
CPAT Field Visit: 12 September 1997
Ellis Davies 1929, 227
Faculty 1875: NLW
Faculty 1879: NLW
Glynne 1884, 101
Hubbard 1986, 209
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pl 24
Quinquennial Review 1989
Thomas 1913, 220

CONDITION

Some problems apparent including cracks in the fabric externally though most seem to have been filled; paint peeling at the west end of the church, and tiles lifting in the chancel.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium (except for monuments)

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Michael

PRN 16347

NGR SH98964842

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Michael's church lies a short distance from the village of Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr, about 10 miles to the south-west of Ruthin. The small and relatively simple building has a long history and on the basis of two blocked windows may have originated as early as the 13thC. It was extended in the 15thC, and restoration occurred in 1853 and at the beginning of the 20thC. Inside there are only a few 17thC and 18thC wooden furnishings and fittings. The churchyard is partially curvilinear but contains nothing of any significance to this study.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave claimed as 13thC on basis of two blocked slit windows. Wider chancel added in 15thC, probably when nave re-roofed. Some rebuilding in late 18thC. West end of nave extended at beginning of 20thC; east wall partly rebuilt though perhaps not as much as originally intended (see below).

The porch has been claimed as 14thC, but Thomas attributed it to the rebuilding of 1853.

HISTORY

The origin of the church is unknown - it could be early medieval and its position beside Afon Alwen and the curvilinearity of the churchyard would support such a belief.

The Norwich Taxation of 1254 refers to 'Ecc'a de lanwihagel' and the Taxation of 1291 has 'Eccl'ia de Lanvihagel' at a value of £4.

Part of the east end of the church was swept away by a flood in 1781 which rose to a height of over 8'. Round-headed windows probably date from its subsequent restoration.

In 1853 the west end and the bellcote were rebuilt, also the east window; the south porch may have been added too. When Glynne visited the site in 1867 he thought it looked like a new church, all the windows modern and a new belfry, and of 'rather poor Gothic work'. There was open seating though this did not appear to be modern.

Restoration of 1901-2 was by Harold Hughes. Church was enlarged slightly to west, though this extension has also been attributed to 1853. Faculty of 1900 allowed for the demolition of the east wall and upper part of the west wall, and top courses of side walls; also new windows were to be introduced in the east and west walls, reflooring, chancel to be raised with steps leading to it, plaster ceiling in chancel to be removed, new panelling around sanctuary and new altar table, and new seating. The restoration, at a cost of £700, was generally in keeping with the existing building.

West gallery restored in recent years, and the drainage trench around the exterior also recent.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanfihangel church has a nave, a slightly wider chancel and a south porch close to the south-west corner of the nave. A bellcote surmounts the west end. It is oriented north-west/south-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here. Conventional directions are retained for the churchyard. Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium-sized blocks and slabs of grey shale, some more regular than others, and randomly coursed; also some large pebble stones, presumably from river. Walls surface is rough, there are traces of render and/or limewash, and in places heavy pointing.

'B' is of regular slabs of slatey shale, coursed.

'C' is as 'A' but large blocks of stone are included. Limewash remnants.

'D' is of slabs of shale.

Roof: slates, ornamental red clay ridge tiles. the nave roof is dated 1900 in patterned slates. Single aperture bellcote with pinnacle finial above it.

Drainage: drainage trench up to 1m wide and filled with gravel around all sides.

Exterior

Nave. North wall: in 'A' except for westernmost 1.5m which is in 'B'. A single round-headed window with two lights and Y-tracery, all in wood except for the sill. Set at the junction of the nave and chancel.

East wall: not present.

South wall: all in 'A'. East of porch are two windows, round-headed, two lights with Y-tracery as on north side. Of two blocked slit windows visible internally, the more easterly can be seen on the outside. Beneath more westerly of the two main windows is a projecting foundation course, its significance uncertain. West of porch the fabric is 'B' containing one broad lancet window, chamfered in grey shale.

West wall: all built in 'B', and the buttress supporting bellcote also in 'B'. High up in this buttress is a rectangular window with two small, cusped lights, all in mustard yellow freestone.

Chancel. General. In 'C'. Chancel marginally wider than nave (c.0.2m or so on both sides); this unusual feature assumed to be an extension, and generally believed to be contemporary with the 15thC or early 16thC arched-braced trusses.

North wall: large blocks of stone protrude at base of wall, probably no more than a foundation course. Slight batter to wall. No windows.

East wall: round-headed window of three lights, intersecting tracery, hoodmould with simple stops, and a relieving arch in shale blocks; dressings in dull buff freestone. Wall from sill level upwards has been rebuilt in masonry more like 'B' and in more regular fashion. Some protruding foundation stones.

South wall: one window in buff freestone, of standard type seen in nave. To east of this is a blocked rectangular window. At eaves level two stone blocks act as corbels to support wall plate.

Porch. East wall: plain wall in 'A'.

South wall: two-centred arch turned in shale edge stones, with jambs in slate exhibiting slight chamfer. Hinges for former gates. Above arch, fabric is 'D'.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone slab floor incorporates old gravestones of 18thC and 19thC. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of rafters and chamfered purlins with one cambered tie beam.

North wall: segmental-headed doorway with deep reveal; dressing re-painted except for one jamb with inscription: 'DAVID WYNNE RECTOR HVIVS PAROCHIAE INDVCTVS AD 1689' cut into two faces of the stone.

East wall: plain but for stone bench built into wall. Resting on this is an Incorporated Church Building Society plaque of 1901.

South wall: plain with no door or gate.

West wall: as east wall but for Owen Jones memorial of 1814; also a commemorative tablet of 1951 in Welsh.

Nave. General. Rear is panelled off beneath gallery. Floor has stone slabs, three at least graveslabs of 18thC date. Walls plastered and painted; gallery above has new timbers supporting it. Floor of church itself is carpeted and the benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted and that on south side has definite outwards lean. Roof of four and a half bays with arch-braced collar trusses and raking struts, flat purlins and two tiers of cusped windbraces. At west end is a gallery which may utilise former altar rails.

North wall: one splayed window close to junction with chancel and at this point the wall narrows in thickness, resulting in a sharp angle beneath the window and a sloping off above it. Two 19thC marble mural tablets.

East wall: step up plus low wall of red sandstone: modern.

South wall: two splayed windows, the dressings unpainted. Between them a splayed niche which must have been a slit window though it is now blocked, and there is a second at a higher level, also blocked, near the east end of the nave wall. Another functioning splayed window provides light for the gallery stairs.

West wall: gallery stairs are modern as in fact is all the timberwork of the gallery itself. In west wall one window with virtually no splay.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Walls as nave. Roof has two bays comparable with those over nave, and a final bay as a wagon roof with chamfered purlins and closely set arched ribbing.

North wall: plain but for two 19thC marble tablets and one of the late 18thC; also a stone plaque reading simply 'LLIF MAWR MEHEFIN 1781'. In the sanctuary wall is a small rectangular alcove.

East wall: splayed window and to the south of it an alcove with a segmental head; its original purpose needs to be clarified.

South wall: wall face outset at junction with nave by about 0.3m; chancel wall has batter but not as pronounced as that of nave. Two marble memorials and a stone one, all of the 19thC.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Bench: inscribed 'Hugh Davies is Bench 1753'; in the sanctuary.

Plank chest: no date. Beneath gallery.

Altar rails: pierced 17thC balusters, re-used in gallery.

Bell: dated to 1594.

Monuments: marble tablet to Elizabeth Williams (d.1794); remaining memorials are of 19thC date.

Memorial: of 'Blwyddyn y Lli Mawr' in 1781 when the church was damaged by flooding.

CHURCHYARD

St Michael's churchyard is small, level and well kept. It lies adjacent to Afon Alwen, its north-eastern side edged by the river, giving the enclosure a D shape.

Most recent burial is 1961.

Boundary: grassy bank surmounted by railings on south and south-west; on the west is a wall, on the north-east a wooden fence above a retaining wall.

Monuments: these are sparse particularly on south and north, with rather more to the south-east and the west. Chest tombs are found on the north-west, none obviously 18thC.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: raised about 0.5m on south and west, 0.8m at east end, and more than one metre above the river on north.

Ancillary features: double iron gates of simple design give the only access, on the south side; tarmac path.

Vegetation: one yew tree in north-west, and another, in a railed plot, towards the eastern corner of the churchyard. Elsewhere holly and pine.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 21 January 1997

Faculty 1900: NLW

Glynne 1884, 254

Hubbard 1986, 212

Quinquennial Report 1989

Thomas 1911, 158

CONDITION

Reasonable.

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

Group value: Medium

Llangernyw

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Digain**PRN** 16869**NGR** SH87526744

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Digain's church lies in a remote part of what was western Clwyd, some 12km to the south-west of Abergele. Without doubt it is an early medieval foundation - the churchyard carries two early pillar stones, though the church itself as seen today is not thought to be earlier than the 13thC. It may have been extended in the late medieval period, acquiring its unusual and distinctive cruciform shape at that time. It contains little of pre-19thC architectural interest apart from a roof which is probably late medieval and an original south doorway, all off the windows having been replaced or renewed. Excepting the Perpendicular font and a number of 17thC graveslabs, there is little to consider in the way of furnishings. The churchyard may once have described an oval shape but its edges have been shaved back and there is a large extension to the east. One of the yews is claimed to be the oldest living tree in Wales.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Llangernyw is unusual in this part of north Wales because of its cruciform shape.

The nave is claimed as 13thC, representing what may have been a single chamber structure. Transepts and chancel are thought to have been added in the later 15thC or even 16thC, but this is on the basis of the east window, authentic in its form but wholly Victorian in its fabric.

Indeed there are no original windows - apart from remnants immured in the east walls of the transepts - and the sequence must remain highly conjectural. Much of the masonry is of uniform appearance though not necessarily of uniform build, and it is conceivable that the upper walls have been reconstructed in several places. Overall the nave may be largely original, the chancel largely rebuilt and the transepts partly rebuilt, perhaps in 1720.

Some restoration by one of the Penson family in 1849. All of the windows and the porch are probably of this date while the south-west vestry was added at the end of the century.

HISTORY

Traditionally the church was founded by Digain, son of Cystenyn Gorneu, a 5thC saint.

It does not appear in the 1254 Taxatio but in that of 1291 'Ecclesia de Llanygernyw' was linked to Tremeirchion and Faenol, with a total value of £16 13s 4d. Little is known of the history of the church in subsequent centuries.

The gallery was removed from the west end of the church in 1845; a drawing of 1833 (in the rectory) shows the gallery lit by a dormer widow but no windows in the west wall. These were added in 1850 as were the buttresses that support the bellcote.

The vestry was built in 1881 and then reconstructed in 1895. In 1904 new heating equipment was installed

and the flag floor was taken up.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangernyw church consists of a nave and chancel of similar widths, north and south transepts, a porch situated half way along the north side of the nave, and a vestry attached to the south-west corner of the nave.

The church is aligned west-north-west/east-south-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church though not the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' is rough rubble, small to medium slabs with some blocks, mixed material including?limestone and quartzite and ranging in colour from off-white to grey and brown, random coursing; rare patches of limewash or render.

'B' is of regular slabs of grey slatey shale, regularly laid, some coursing.

'C' is as 'B' but the slate is less regularly laid.

'A' is probably medieval but recycled in the 19thC - no differentiation could be made at this stage. 'B' is Victorian. 'C' could be 18thC and more specifically from 1720, depending on the weight attached to the scratched date on a lump of stone.

Roof: slates with fleur-de-lys ridge tiles; cross finials to south and north transept gables and above porch.

Drainage: hollows around north and west sides suggest filled trench; gravel strip along east wall also suggestive.

Exterior

Porch. General. 19thC Victorian addition. Fabric 'A' with tooled quoins. Dressed chamfer to plinth at a height of 0.3m.

North wall: two-centred arched entrance with stopped chamfers; cream sandstone dressings with a decorative 'relieving arch' in yellow sandstone; a light over the arch.

East wall: boiler-house lean-to against this side.

West wall: single window with a broad two-centred head in cream freestone; iron grille.

Nave. General. Victorian buttresses on west and south sides, using tooled blocks of shaley slate.

North wall: west of porch there are no features but a very uneven wall surface with heavy pointing; this is all in 'A' and includes one patch consisting only of thin slabs, perhaps infilling. East of the porch thin slabs are absent and the masonry is more blocky though again the fabric is rather heterogeneous. A single two-light window, the lights with foiled ogee-heads in buff-grey freestone, all Victorian; because of the heavy pointing and the roughness of the masonry it is impossible to determine signs of insertion. Heavy limewash traces beneath eaves.

East wall: not present.

South wall: very heavy pointing to the extent that it is almost render. Fabric shows localised variations but generally classed as 'A'; wall face uneven and swells out slightly at base. Two windows; that to west has a two-centred arch, two cusped lights with a quatrefoil above; to the east is a single light with a trefoil above. Both are Victorian in pale freestone, weathering to grey.

West wall: two foiled lancets, one either side of a central buttress, all Victorian. These windows are clearly inserted and a lead strip has been implanted in the wall above them. Otherwise the masonry must be classed as 'A', though again some variety in shape and size of the stonework. At the base a chamfered plinth has been added to a height of 0.5m, faced in Victorian masonry and running around the buttresses. Top of gable rebuilt to accommodate a bellcote, again Victorian.

North Transept. General. Fabric best regarded as 'A' though tooled (?) limestone quoins, heavy pointing, and some limewash residue.

North wall: at the base a foundation projects for 0.1m to a height of 0.3m. Large window of four lights with reticulated tracery, a two-centred arch with head-stopped hoodmould, all Victorian. Base of the wall is in 'A' and could conceivably be rebuilt; the rest in 'C' and fairly homogeneous in appearance, except for the apex of gable above the window which is also in 'A', contemporary perhaps with the introduction of the Victorian window.

East wall: a significant part of this face is masked by ivy. 'A' appears to form the bottom 1.5m and above this is 'C', one stone having a date 1720 scratched on it. South of this wedge of 'C' is a disturbed window; there is a red sandstone dressing lying flat - it could be a lintel still in place but more likely a jambstone turned on its side; next to it, in yellow sandstone, is the inverted head of a late medieval window with double foiled lights, the spandrels infilled with mortar. Thus an earlier window broken up and filled in not with 'C' but with limestone lumps, which suggests that the blocking if not all of the re-setting of the dressings pre-dated the more general rebuilding in 'C'.

South wall: not present.

West wall: in 'A' with heavy pointing; a two-centred arched window with two cusped lights and a quatrefoil light above: a standard Victorian pattern, and some indications of window insertion.

Chancel. North wall: rendered wall face. A square-headed window with a cinquefoil-cusped light in Victorian buff sandstone.

East wall: generally in 'C', though possibly not the base which is all but obscured by gravestones propped against it. Victorian round-headed window containing three round-headed lights with cinquefoil tracery, foiled panels above, and framed by a hoodmould with horizontal stops.

South wall: wall mainly in 'A' though some 'C' spreads round the angle from the east face. The window is a Victorian replacement but there are no signs of insertion and it is possible that the upper part of the wall is rebuilt, though the lower part is probably original.

South Transept. General. Diagonal buttresses at the south corners. Heavy pointing serves to disguise masonry.

East wall: in 'A' though not entirely convincing as original masonry, and there does appear to be some 'C' south of a blocked window; probably original 'A' below the window but rebuilt around it. The window appears as a square head with a lintel made up of limestone and sandstone blocks, mixed sandstone jambs, a blocking of 'A', and two corbel-like projections (re-used stops?) above the lintel, the purpose of which is obscure.

South wall: wall foundation projects as on the north transept, but for virtually the whole length of this wall; the face largely in 'A' including some of the buttress masonry; heavy pointing. A Victorian four-light window as in the north transept, and the keystone of the relieving arch carries the date 1850.

West wall: appears to be all in 'A' and has a substantial protruding foundation. Victorian window the same as the double window in the nave south wall.

Vestry. General. In 'B' and attributable to 1895. Simple lancet light in east wall, a double lancet with transom on the south, and on the west a simple two-centred arched doorway.

Interior

Porch. General. Floor of large flagstones; walls plastered and whitewashed; roof of rafters and scissor trusses.

North wall: iron grille gates.

East wall: wooden seat.

South wall: main entrance to nave is a two-centred arched doorway with stopped chamfers, the same as the porch doorway and definitely Victorian.

West wall: seat as east side plus small window.

Nave. General. Floor of regular stone flags, no obvious graveslabs; benches set on flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of nave and chancel is continuous, 11 bays all with arch-braced collars springing from wall plates; those over chancel have texts in gold letters; two tiers of short windbraces. Age probably late medieval, 15thC or early 16thC. Parkinson (NMR report) has suggested that the layout of the seating which focuses on the crossing may reflect an early post-Reformation situation.

North wall: window embrasure with segmental head, but all Victorian. Long benefaction board of 1748 stretching from north-west corner to doorway.

East wall: modern screen (1938).

South wall: from west: graveslab of 1612 pinned to wall; ii) simple two-centred arched doorway with splayed embrasure (external face in vestry hidden by wooden surround); iii) stoup with deep rectangular bowl with rounded corners and modern chamfered arch to its niche; iv) two splayed windows and two 20thC memorials, one to war dead.

West wall: two window embrasures and the lead strip above them which is visible externally protrudes through to the interior; three graveslabs of 1619, 167? and one indecipherable.

Chancel. General. One step up to sanctuary and one to altar. The crossing contains choir stalls, the pulpit etc. Plain panelling around sanctuary walls probably derived from box pews. Vaults exist under sanctuary according to local informant. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: splayed window to sanctuary with mural tablet of 1893 on a splay.

East wall: splayed window, and a text in gold and black painted on the wall at springer level.

South wall: splayed window to sanctuary.

North Transept. General. Flag floor and wooden boarding under benches and stalls. Walls and roof as nave, but purlins replaced, and the roof timbers generally may be more recent.

North wall: splayed window and three graveslabs pinned to wall, of 1671, 1734 and 1768.

East wall: organ, mural tablet and a Welsh, metal ?prayer board.

South Transept. General. Very much as north transept though choir stalls raised.

East wall: another Welsh ?prayer board plus 19thC brasses.

South wall: splayed window.

West window: splayed window.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stoup: in nave. No date though traditionally attributed to the 14thC.

Font: 'Perpendicular, quatrefoils in circles in squares on the octagonal bowl, and cusped panels on the stem; basal plinth modern' (Hubbard).

Altar rails: flat baluster-shaped, 17thC.

Graveslabs: 17thC slabs around walls including that of Roger Lloyd (d.1619); several in poor condition and others hidden.

Benefaction board: formerly attached to the west gallery; 9 panels. Two appear to be dated to 1748 and carry the inscription 'Contributors to this gallery'.

Registers: intermittent from 1569.

Victorian furnishings and fittings include:

Stained glass: 'south transept window by Ballantine, commemorating Margaret (d.1852), wife of H.R.Sandbach of Hafodunos' (Hubbard).

Monument: 'Samuel Sandbach (d.1851), and his wife Elizabeth (d.1859); portrait medallions in a large pointed frame' (Hubbard). According to Thomas it is 'by Smith, a deputy of Gibson'.

[The poor box of 1691 recorded by Thomas is no longer in evidence].

CHURCHYARD

St Digain's church is set in an elongated churchyard; it was enlarged in 1850 and there was a long extension to the east in 1884, but there is an overall curvilinearity to the core which is somewhat disguised by lengths of straight boundary. The area within the old churchyard is level, but outside the southern boundary the ground falls to a valley, and on the east side, too, the valley influences the ground fall.

Boundary: hedge on west set on a retaining wall about 1m high; the hedge on the north is joined by a retaining wall opposite the transept and there is a drop of over a metre externally - this continues to the north-east corner of the churchyard. On the east is a scarp which is perhaps 1.8m high above the new graveyard, and is largely natural, part of the river terrace. At the south-east corner is a slight curved scarp which could signal the original boundary bank diverging from the river terrace. On the south is a retaining wall at least 1.5m high.

Monuments: these are quite well spread on the north and east though there are several localised concentrations; they continue sporadically on the west (where there are numbers of ledgers) and south. Others are stacked against the east end of the church indicating some re-organisation. There is a chest tomb of 1665 on the south side of the church, and later 18thC ledgers at the east end, but there are documented records of tombstones from 1612 and 1619.

Furniture: immediately to the south of the church are two pillar stones, of the 7thC-9thC, both with crude incised crosses. Owen described these stones and also noted the pair of boulders, still surviving, on either side of a chest tomb, about "20 yards away", which he thought were prehistoric.

Earthworks: scarp on east is old churchyard edge.

Ancillary features: stone lychgate of 1745, with wrought iron gates on the outside, slate-capped benches along the sides and a small rectangular window on the south. Tarmac path to porch..

Vegetation: the 'oldest known tree in Wales', reputedly 4000 years old. Certainly it is a massive specimen and realistically must be medieval. Two bush yews by porch, three yew trees along the old east side, and others around the south and east sides, together with other mature trees.

SOURCES

Church notes

CPAT Field Visit: 12 September 1996

Ethall 1969

Faculty: NLW 1850 (churchyard)

Faculty: NLW 1879 (vestry)

Faculty: NLW 1884 (churchyard)

Hubbard 1986, 217

NMR Aberystwyth

Owen 1886, 118

Quinquennial Review: 1987

Thomas 1911, 320

CONDITION

Church obviously has some problems for masonry is falling out from the base of south wall of nave, and there is a significant problem with cracks in the chancel. Internally there are also cracks, though smaller, and the west end, the south transept and the roof are suffering from damp and peeling paint.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Very Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Very Good

Llangwm

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Jerome

PRN 16874

NGR SH966446

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Jerome's church lies at the centre of this small village in the hills to the south of the A5 corridor, some 3 miles south of Cerrigydrudion. It is now disused and the windows boarded up. The site may first have been established in the early medieval era, but the present church is a simple structure with nave and chancel as one cell, its fabric undatable, its windows 18thC and 19thC. Inside all the fixtures and fittings have been stripped out leaving a few wall memorials heaped on the floor.

The churchyard is sub-rectangular with a few 18thC graves.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nothing in the fabric suggests more than a single phase of construction which might be of mid-18thC date but could equally be earlier; two phases of windows with the round-headed south windows attributable to the works of 1747 (and likewise the chancel arch). The east window dates to the restoration of 1873-4.

HISTORY

There is nothing to indicate the date of the church foundation here but an early medieval origin is quite possible.

The foundation charter of Oswestry Hospital in 1210x1215 refers to it as 'Langum'. The Norwich Taxation of 1254 has 'Ecc'a de Langun' at a value of £2, while 'Ecclia de Llagwm' is recorded in 1291 at £7 13s 4d.

Church rebuilt or remodelled in 1747, and there is a tradition that its predecessor was on the other side of the valley though this has never been substantiated. It reportedly retained the floor beam of the medieval rood screen.

Restoration and refurnishing occurred in 1873-4. A gallery survived at this time as did the old roof, though this could have been no earlier than the mid-18thC.

The church was offered for lease by the Church in Wales in 1982. The writer assumes that no one has taken up the lease.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangwm church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a north porch and a bellcote over the west end of the building.

It is oriented south-west/north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the

church, though not for the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' is a heterogeneous mixture of grey shale (which predominates) and coarse sandstone with some pebble stones as well; colours range from grey through to yellow and brown; very rough appearance; irregular coursing; heavy pointing.

Roof: slates, red clay ridge tiles. Bellcote at west end has a single aperture without a bell, and a stepped roof; it does not rise directly from the gable but is set back slightly on the roof.

Drainage: nothing very obvious but there is a groove along the south side of the building which could signal a drain beneath.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation between nave and chancel. Fabric could be of uniform type - because of the roughness and the pointing it is impossible to be certain. For the same reasons it is not possible to determine whether any windows have been inserted. All windows boarded up.

North wall: three windows, the central one of which is completely boarded and totally invisible. Others both have two-centred arches though in different styles and dressings in pale yellow freestone with slightly hollowed chamfers.

East wall: Victorian Gothic window in mustard-yellow freestone, three lights and hoodmould with foliate stops.

South wall: masonry cleaner at west end where lean-to boiler room has been demolished. Three round-headed windows, the arch stones of the more westerly two in grey stone but with some jambs in mustard-yellow freestone. One jambstone of the central window has a small sundial carved on it. The two more easterly windows have projecting springers.

West wall: wall face is battered to height over 2.5m, and the listed building schedule suggests that the wall above this has been largely rebuilt. Set in this near the south-west angle is a shallow rectangular recess of uncertain purpose. Top of batter defined by rectangular-sectioned string course which terminates at the quoins.

Porch. General. Porch abuts nave.

North wall: round-headed doorway, the arch turned in edge stones; no dressed stone. Above it part of a 14thC heraldic slab.

East wall: plain except for simple slit window.

West wall: plain.

Interior

Porch. General. Slab floor, painted walls, purlin and rafter roof. Purlins have ribs and chamfers and are presumably re-used.

East wall: splayed slit; stone bench beneath.

South wall: round-headed doorway with chamfered dressings in grey limestone; studded door. Above it in the wall is a stone inscribed '1715 HK GI WARDENS'.

West wall: stone bench. Above are two slate Benefaction boards.

[Note: interior of church has been stripped of all its fittings and fixtures apart from some marble memorials left resting on the floor near the north door].

Nave. General. Floor of red quarry tiles; raised plinths for the benches remain; some heating vent grilles down aisle. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of five bays with tie-beam trusses resting on stone corbels, and king- and raking-posts.

North wall: one splayed window and one small rectangular window near chancel arch, its embrasure skewed slightly towards the nave.

East wall: wide, 'basket' arch, springing from capitals on pilasters; 18thC.

South wall: two windows.

West wall: just below the level of the side wall eaves is a projecting course of stones, and above this the wall is slightly inset.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel, one to sanctuary. Tiled floor; walls as nave; vaulted ceiling of twenty panels. One window in each of the three walls.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Sepulchral slab: shield of a heraldic slab of c.1330 set over the north porch.

Benefaction boards: two, both in porch. One has date 1734, the other is undated but refers to the 1747 rebuilding of the church.

Monument: Robert Wynne (d.1757); the elements include three cherub heads against an obelisk; now detached and resting against nave wall. Other monuments in same pile include those to Charles Roberts (d.1828) and John Wynne (d.1836).

Glass: Thomas noted small fragments of medieval "diaper-glass" in the chancel window. It has not been ascertained whether these survive.

Victorian furnishings include:

Stained glass: east window by Ward & Hughes, 1882.

CHURCHYARD

Churchyard is of medium size, sub-rectangular, level and reasonably well-maintained; it is still used for burial. Church and churchyard lie on the valley floor with the Cemig stream passing less than 10m from the churchyard boundary.

Boundary: drystone wall, possibly mortared in places.

Monuments: gravestones throughout the yard, some in rows, tidily placed and sometimes quite dense. North-east and east of the church there are few. 18thC ledgers to the south-east and east of the church but most are too weathered to read.

Furniture: sundial marked on modern OS maps near the north-west entrance has gone. Only the base remains.

Earthworks: churchyard has a very uneven surface suggesting many more graves than are actually marked. There appears to be a slight platform on which the church rests but this is only really visible on the north and west.

The churchyard perimeter is embanked internally but much of this could be due to debris and spoil from grave-digging. There is a little evidence that the churchyard is raised, but by little more than 0.5m at any one point.

Ancillary features: main entrance on north-west has no gate but fences edging a grass path to the porch. Near south corner is a farm gate. Store shed or the equivalent built into churchyard near north corner; external access.

Vegetation: two mature yews to south-west of church within the yard; several other younger examples around the perimeter.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings: draft

CPAT Field Visit: 21 January 1997

Gresham 1968, 155

Hubbard 1986, 224

Thomas 1911, 163

CONDITION

Gradual deterioration.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llanefydd

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Mary**PRN** 16841**NGR** SH98207060

GENERAL SUMMARY

The Perpendicular church of St Nefydd and St Mary lies at the heart of its village about 5 miles south-east of Abergelle. It is double naved with relatively uniform windows throughout, and cyclopean doorways. Inside the roofs remain from the late medieval era. Several 14thC fragments from sepulchral slabs and effigies survive, together with a little stained glass of medieval date. From later centuries are the 17thC font, Hanoverian Arms on plaster and a range of memorials. The churchyard appears to have been curvilinear in its original form but modifications have occurred particularly on the south side. It retains a good range of 17thC and 18thC ledgers.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Though superficially of one build - 15thC on the basis of the windows - the north and south naves have masonry of faintly different appearance and the east and south sides of the latter have a chamfered plinth, while the west side has a projecting foundation, both of which are missing from the north nave. Primacy here cannot be ascertained with certainty but it appears likely that the north nave is earlier. One window - that lighting the north chancel - is atypical and may be of slightly later date.

The porch may be an addition.

HISTORY

The dedication and the churchyard morphology points to an early medieval beginning for Llanefydd. The eponymous 5thC founder is said to have been a grandson of Brychan Brycheiniog.

A local tradition refers to a saint being buried at the back of the churchyard within a circular ditch and with stones on edge around him. Known as Frymder's grave, this was cleared in the 1890s.

In the medieval period it was a chapel subject to the cathedral at St Asaph. In the 1291 Taxatio it appears as 'Ecclesia de Laundid est Capella Cathedral' at a value of £16.

It has been argued that the church acquired its second dedication - to St Mary - at the time that it was extended into a double-naved structure in the 15thC.

The Rural Dean's report in 1729 noted that there was a pew belonging to a member of the gentry adjacent to the north communion table, that the church roof on the north side needed re-slating, that the wainscot above the communion table was in need of repair but that the church was generally in good condition.

The church was whitewashed externally as well as internally at the beginning of the 19thC.

Glynne visited the church in 1855 noting an open bell gable with an aperture for two bells, untouched Perpendicular windows, a plain porch and 'foliated figures cut over the beams'.

Restoration occurred in 1859 when the windows were repaired, the building re-roofed, and the present bellcote was erected replacing an earlier one of 1799, though there is some confusion over the dates and sequence. The cost was £636.

Further restoration in 1908-9 was by Harold Hughes of Bangor. The old vestry (on the west side?) was demolished, the box pews removed, heating added, the chancel renovated and the floor levelled and repaired, at a cost of £1124. There is a reference too at this time to a gallery at the west end of the south aisle which was taken down. Drains were dug around the church and a disused parish room was removed from the churchyard.

By 1966 the roof of church was in very poor condition and it was suggested the building should be demolished. However, it was renovated and reopened in 1972.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanefydd church comprises two equally sized naves with a south porch and a west bellcote above the gable of the south nave.

It is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church, though not for the churchyard. The terms 'north nave' and 'south nave' are used here, though it is recognised that the north nave no longer functions as such.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of medium to large, roughly dressed blocks of limestone showing some coursing; quoins of better dressed stone.

'B' is similar to 'A', but there are occasional grey shale blocks incorporated, and the coursing is less regular.

Roof: slates with grey clay ridge tiles; cross finials in stone at the east end of both cells.

Drainage: a brick-lined gully dug around all sides except the east. Continued around east side of porch but not the west.

Exterior

North Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation between nave and chancel. Fabric 'B'.

North wall: masonry has homogeneous appearance and wall plates are exposed at eaves level. Under the most westerly window for a distance of little more than a couple of metres is a projecting foundation, now beneath ground level but exposed in the drainage gully: its origin is unclear. Three windows; the two lighting the nave have ogee heads each with two four-centred lights with cinquefoil cusping and complex hollow chamfers - the original stone is a greyish-pink sandstone but there has been much replacement including the hoodmoulds with their simple stops. Chancel window has a three-centred arch and three lights with two-centred heads and pronounced cinquefoil cusping; the mouldings and the hoodmould are similar to those in the nave, and most of the dressings have been renewed; signs, too, that this window has been inserted.

East wall: north-east angle has dressed sandstone quoins: it is not clear whether these are replacements. East window has a two-centred arch with five cusped, two-centred lights, a transom at springing level, sub arches and panel tracery; most of the dressings appear original. Above is a hoodmould with original head stops, each of the four on the two east windows is different, though the northern example on this window stands apart in a different coloured sandstone - perhaps a replacement, though weathered.

West wall: weathered quoins at north-west angle also in sandstone. Doorway in this wall face with a two-centred arch and chamfered dressings, but of plain appearance. No indication that this doorway inserted. Rendered chimney projects from wall face.

South Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation between nave and chancel. Fabric 'B'.

East wall: at base of wall is a chamfered plinth to a height of c.0.4m which stops just to south of the valley between the two cells. East window is to the same design as that in north chancel and its dressings are largely original; the head stops to the hoodmould are original but weathered to the point that that on the south could be ballflower rather than a head.

South wall: chamfered plinth continues from east wall. Features from east are: i) three-light window with ogee head and cusping that is less pronounced than counterpart on north side; dressings much renewed. ii) blocked priest's door with two-centred arch, cyclopean unchamfered limestone stonework. iii) ogee-headed three-light window, the lights with round heads and trefoil cusping, probably original; hood mould has been renewed. iv) porch. v) standard ogee-headed window but there are two lights with broad trefoil cusping; mullions renewed, but hoodmould might be original.

West wall: plain. At ground level and below are projecting and battered foundations, stopping abruptly at the valley between the two naves. There is however no convincing indication of which nave is earlier. Double bellcote in well-dressed limestone masonry.

Porch. General. In 'A'; no plinth.

East wall: small rectangular light with chamfered freestone dressings, now blocked. South of this is a weathered sandstone panel with a partly unintelligible Latin inscription, undated.

South wall: simple two-centred archway in unchamfered limestone blocks; wood and wire screen with door. Tie rod plate above arch.

West wall: plain but for another sandstone plaque with Latin inscription referring to Evan Morris (no date).

Interior

Porch. General. Flag floor but no re-use; plastered and painted walls except north wall; simple roof of purlins and rafters.

North wall: two-centred doorway, cyclopean of unchamfered limestone blocks. Door claimed to be the original 15thC door, refaced in 1908.

East wall: plain but for stone bench along wall.

West wall:- as east wall with addition of notice boards.

North Nave. General. Wooden block floor throughout. Walls plastered and painted, including window splays but not dressings. Roof of eight bays across chancel as well (five bays to the nave). All trusses have moulded arch-braced collars and spring from the walls; raking struts and principal rafters are cusped above the collars; two tiers of cusped windbraces. Much of the timber work looks original. Rear of nave is curtained off to form vestry.

North wall: two splayed windows; between these a wooden board with the names of farms and individuals painted on together with a few brass plates, a deteriorating stone benefaction board and the tester from an earlier pulpit. Above the north chancel step are two stone monuments of 1614 and 1618.

East wall: step up to chancel.

South wall: three bays of five-bay arcade with two-centred arches, two orders of which one chamfered the other hollowed, heavy octagonal capitals and octagonal pillars with moulded ribs above the bases; masons

marks on the dressed stone.

West wall: slightly splayed west door now curtained off and not used. Two graveslabs of 1679 and 1680 pinned to wall.

North Chancel. General. Stone slab floor throughout on which are some benches and a subsidiary altar. Walls as nave. Roof as described under nave.

North wall: one splayed window. Several memorials either built into wall, pinned to it or resting against it; these are all 17thC or 18thC and include a brass of 1741.

East wall: splayed east window containing fragments of medieval glass in upper panels; a number of stone and marble memorials ranging from the 17thC to the 20thC and including a marble plaque of 1908 recording three graveslabs to the Foulkes family which were removed during the restoration of that year.

South wall: two bays of the five-bay arcade, that to west with a parclose screen. For the description of arcade see north nave. Respond at east end has some stone replacement in its pillar.

West wall: nothing.

South Nave. General. Two steps down from the porch. Wooden block floor as north nave. Walls plastered and painted as north nave. Roof of eight bays extends across chancel, and in appearance is precisely similar to that in north nave; again much of the timber looks original.

North wall: four bays of arcade (see north nave). At west end a small undated but inscribed stone plaque pinned to wall.

East wall: 20thC screen.

South wall: two splayed windows and a splayed doorway, part of the eastern splay cut away to form an alcove, perhaps for a statuette or a stoup. Royal Arms, two 19thC brass memorial plaques, a couple of framed prints and a brass commemorating the restoration of 1908-9.

West wall: plain.

South Chancel. General. one step up from nave, another two to sanctuary and altar. Stone floors partly covered with carpet. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: two bays of arcade.

East wall: splayed window, the upper panels of the window containing early glass fragments. Wall marks indicate where memorials were formerly set on either side of the window, these now removed to north chancel. 14thC slab pinned to wall north of window.

South wall: deeply splayed alcove of former priest's door left open. Splayed window and sill has two small effigy stones set on it.

West wall: screen.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Sepulchral slabs: i) fragment of an early 14thC four-circle cross head, at east end of north nave. ii) fragment of a decorated heraldic slab, much worn; early 14thC. iii) a fine early 14thC circular-headed cross slab (concentric rings) with sword, at east end of south nave. iv) an inscribed slab to Iorwerth Fychan of the early

14thC recorded by Thomas cannot now be located.

Effigies: i) Edward ab Iorwerth, late 14thC: part of a miniature effigy, now set in the sill of the easternmost south window. ii) a fragment of another small effigy holding a shield, also on sill.

Font: small and octagonal, both the bowl and the stem; dated 1668 with initials I.W. and H.L. CH. WAR.

Pulpit: 18thC fragments, the tester and pilastered back, against the north wall. The south nave also has an arts and crafts pulpit designed by Harold Hughes.

Stained glass: jumbled fragments in the panels of the two east windows which could date to around 1460.

Benefaction Board: in stone, badly flaking and date of erection not recognisable.

Altar table: dated 1636, repaired 1859.

Poor Box: considered to be 18thC, three locks.

Monuments: some 17thC and 18thC tablets including stone memorials and slabs to Alicia Verch Richard (d.1614); Maurice ap John (d.1618); Philip Hughes (d.1679); Peter Hughes (d.1680); Richard Edwards (d.1690); Hugo Foulkes (d.1678); M.W. (d.1682), a stone plaque with painted heraldry; Edward Wynne (d.1739), Edward Jones (d.1766), a stone and marble memorial with painted heraldry; marble memorials to Ellen Lloyd (d.1686); Meredith and Mary Wynne (d.1727 and 1728), with heraldry; a couple of brasses, notably that to William Brown (d.1773).

Church plate: chalice and paten of 1575, flagon of 1783, and another chalice and paten of 1799/1800.

Bells: of 1753 with names of churchwardens, and of 1818.

Royal Arms: of George II, painted on plaster.

Board: with name plates removed from old pews.

CHURCHYARD

Llanefydd churchyard is set on a gentle slope, the ground falling to the north. It is relatively small and its present polygonal shape has a hint of curvilinearity to it, particularly on north-east. A rectangular extension on the south side was added in 1907 with a further extension in 1923.

Boundary: stone revetment wall on east which is extended around north where it is accompanied by a hedge, giving way to an ordinary wall on the west.

Monuments: in the original yard the memorials have been spaced and re-set in rows. Some are of considerable age: rows of ledgers south and east of the chancel include dates of 1667, 1698, 1746 and 1779. Elsewhere there are ledgers of 1671, 1673, 1700 etc. Memorials are regimented, too, on the north side. Slabs used as steps down to west door.

Furniture: west of church is a sundial without a gnomon, inscribed 'Thos. Heath Londini Fecit.'; ornate but no obvious date, though Owen thought he could decipher the date 1756 on it and also claimed two mason's marks on the top of the shaft. This shaft is octagonal with stops to four of the sides. At base is a big square plinth with stopped chamfers at the angles. The base and shaft are part of the former cross which was originally set up outside the east wall of the churchyard, was moved to the vicarage grounds in 1871 and to the churchyard in 1978.

Earthworks: former southern boundary shows a s scarp dipping down into interior of old churchyard. Churchyard is raised, 1m-1.5m on east and about 1m on north. However, little if any drop on west.

Ancillary features: small wooden gates on east, a pair of simple iron gates on west; tarmac path from east, concrete path from west. Small store shed against north-west boundary.

Vegetation: six mature but not ancient yews randomly placed to south of church; a smaller one at south-east corner.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 6 March 1997
Faculty 1907: NLW - churchyard addition
Faculty 1908: NLW - restoration
Faculty 1923: NLW - churchyard addition
Glynne 1884, 102
Gresham 1968, 120; 131; 150; 158; 243
Hubbard 1986, 200
Jones 1995: Church Guide
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pl 1
Owen 1886, 127
Parish Documents: DRO/PD/52/1/27; 1908/9 restoration
Quinquennial Review 1989
Thomas 1911, 43

CONDITION

Generally sound, but some internal cracks showing in plaster (e.g. in south chancel), and west walls revealing some damp.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good to Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium

Llansannan

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Sannan**PRN** 16885**NGR** SH93406590

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Sannan's church lies at the centre of the small village of Llansannan, seven and a half miles south of Abergele. It is a double naved structure but the nature of the masonry and the heavy pointing preclude a clear impression of whether there are structural changes, other than those resulting from the insertion of Victorian windows, and the shell of the building could be medieval or even date from the late 18thC restoration. Certainly no medieval architectural features have survived the 18thC and 19thC restorations. Internally there is nothing medieval, while the post-medieval furnishings and fittings are unexceptional. The churchyard is small, veering towards curvilinearity, but contains few memorials that are obviously pre-19thC.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

It is uncertain whether the structure was wholly rebuilt in the later part of the 18thC, or just modified. The lower wall faces could be 18thC or earlier. One south window is in 18thC style though in Victorian stonework, while dressings from another 18thC window used for packing around a Victorian successor. Otherwise the fenestration is wholly Victorian.

HISTORY

The location, dedication and the churchyard morphology point to an early medieval origin. Needless to say there is no supporting documentary evidence. The church is said to have been founded by an Irish saint, Sannan, a contemporary of St David.

It is first referred to in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecc'a de Llanssannan' at a value of £4, appearing in Pope Nicholas's Taxatio as 'Ecclesia de Llansaman'.

The roodloft was still in position in 1682. There is a report that the building was in a dilapidated state in 1731 and it was either rebuilt or remodelled in 1777-8, the arcade with fluted timber piers.

Glynne visited the church in 1869 and noted that the windows were plain, poor and had rounded heads, there was a doorway at the west end with an obtuse arch which he thought might be original, and a west gallery.

Restored in 1879, possibly by R. Lloyd Williams. The west bellcote, timber porch, windows, boarded ceilings, and timber arcade posts all of this date. Gallery and stairs removed, west door replaced with a new window, old porch taken down, and underground heating installed.

ARCHITECTURE

Llansannan church consists of a double nave and chancel, a west bellcote between the two nave gables, and a south porch about halfway along the south side of the nave.

The church is oriented south-west/north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here; the churchyard is described in conventional terms.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises small to medium slabs, with a few blocks, of grey and grey-brown shale, some laminated; quoins of larger blocks of dressed shale and limestone; limewash residue.

'B' is mixed masonry with small lumps of shale, pink sandstone frequently dressed, and dressed, grey limestone blocks.

Roof: slates, plain red ridge tiles; no finials. Bellcote with single opening, of dressed stone.

Drainage: visible gully on west, 0.4m wide & 0.5m deep. Around the rest of the church indications of an infilled gully.

Exterior

North Nave and Chancel. General. Described as a single cell because no external differentiation. Heavy pointing almost a render coat in places. Note that here and in south nave, all the windows in the end walls are eccentrically placed because of roof design.

North wall: 'A' up to roof level except around windows where 'B', particularly at higher levels where clearly used as packing. Lower down the windows the packing appears to be achieved with limestone blocks which can project for keying into 'A'. Three windows all in buff-yellow freestone, all to the same pattern; two lancet lights, roundel above, the dressings chamfered but no window arch over.

East wall: at very base of wall is a protruding foundation course, partially hidden by vegetation. Is this an earlier feature? Heavy render disguises masonry which is largely 'A', although some sandstone blocks, apparently added randomly. East window has two-centred arch, three lights, the outer ones trefoiled tracery, the central one having an ogee head with cusped tracery, hexafoil lights above and a quatrefoil above that, but all Victorian in the standard fabric of the north wall windows. Acting as a relieving arch are blocks of pink sandstone, immediately above the window arch.

West wall: in 'A' but for a couple of lumps of pink sandstone; heavily pointed but some indication that window inserted. Window has three lights, trefoiled lancets with a hexafoil light above; standard buff-yellow sandstone.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Usual heavy pointing and also some ivy cover. All 'A'.

East wall: one piece of sandstone visible in 'A'. Window with two-centred arch, three trefoiled lights and cusped lights above; in yellow sandstone with pink sandstone relieving arch as north nave window (see above).

South wall: masonry is 'A' but some packing around windows in 'B', and upper part of wall with re-used sandstone also classed as 'B'. From east: i) standard two-light window as on north side, but with much packing in pink sandstone around it; some of the packing stones have grooves on, reminiscent of 18thC window dressings elsewhere; ii) round-headed window but in standard Victorian stonework and with usual 'B' packing; iii) porch; iv) another standard two-light window with 'B' packing.

West wall: single window conforming to standard pattern as seen in north nave; packing in 'B' around.

Porch. General. Low foundation walls in 'A'-type masonry capped with chamfered freestone dressings; open wooden superstructure with two-centred arches for windows and door. Also an open timberwork gable

incorporating a timber cross. The whole is 19thC.

Interior

Porch. General. Slate slab floor, stone and timber walls, simple wooden roof. On the floor a limestone coping stone of relatively recent date.

North wall: Victorian doorway with a two-centred arch, all in buff sandstone - inserted.

North Nave. General. Floor of red and black tiles but at the west end slate slabs include several 18thC graveslabs (1721, 1750, 1752, 1808); benches raised on wooden boarding; carpet down aisle. Roof of seven bays (including east chapel) divided by brattished tie-beams on braces with, over, a wagon roof of 56 panels, all Victorian.

North wall: three splayed windows. Three marble memorials including one of 1773 plus several 19thC metal plaques.

East wall: step up.

South wall: arcade of six bays.

West wall: splayed window.

North Chapel. General. One step up from north nave, in line with most westerly pier of arcade. Carpet on wooden floor, with altar against east wall. Walls and roof as north nave.

North wall: slate mural slab of 1796.

East wall: splayed window; four 17thC and 18thC wall memorials, two of later date, and a Benefaction board.

South wall: one bay of arcade.

Nave. General. Floored in red and black tiles with slate slabs beneath font, and carpet along the aisle; no signs of heating ducts; benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls as north aisle, with radiators and pipes providing heating. Roof comparable with north aisle. West end partitioned off for a raised vestry, and a modern inner porch within nave.

North wall: arcade for which see north aisle.

East wall: steps up from nave to chancel.

South wall: splayed windows; two 19thC and 20thC memorials.

West wall: splayed window only.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel, one to sanctuary, tiled floors with carpets, raised choir stalls. Walls as nave. Roof as nave and north aisle but panels sub-divided.

North wall: arcade.

East wall: splayed window with Commandment boards to either side.

South wall: splayed window; three 19thC and 20thC marble memorials.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: old font with a fluted stone stem and a very small marble bowl. Present font has a metal stem and a marble bowl and is probably 19thC.

Churchwarden's bench with decorated ends: dated 1634.

Chest: inscribed EF IW WARDEN8 [sic] 1683.

Pulpit: 'given in 1894, and formerly in a Liverpool church, supposedly St Luke's, but a century or more older than that building. Late 17thC or early 18thC, and formerly a three-decker. Square, with bolection moulding, rich flower and leaf carving, and stairs with twisted balusters' (Hubbard).

Benefaction board and later Commandment boards inscribed in Welsh. Last recorded benefaction painted onto board rather than engraved.

Monuments: Ridgeway Owen Meyrick (d.1773); draped medallion of a seated maiden beside an urn; ornament around the tablet; John Lloyd (d.1753) and his heirs, erected in the 19thC. The following, all to the Yorkes of Dyffryn Aled, and all by W. Spence: Diana Yorke (d.1805); female figure with cross, against a rocky background. Rev. Brownlow Yorke (d.1813). Pierce Wynne Yorke (d.1837); female figures, including two seated with their backs to an urn. Others include: a slate mural tablet to Jane Lloyd (d.1740) and others; a mural tablet to John Foulkes and family (d.1756); a slate memorial to Henry Rice (d.1796) and his wife, Ann (d.1807); and also in slate to Gwen Rees (d.1837). Behind the altar are stone slabs recessed into the wall to John Roberts (d.169?) and another of 1684.

Plate: from 1786.

Registers: from 1667.

Victorian furnishings include:

Stained glass: 'north nave east window by Jones & Willis. South nave east window by H.Gustave Hiller, 1910' (Hubbard).

CHURCHYARD

Llansannan churchyard is set on the western edge of the Aled valley; it is small, curvilinear in parts, fairly level though there is a faint slope from north-west to south-east, and the church is located in its northern half. It is generally well-maintained though there is some overgrowth to the north of the building. A cemetery has been established on the opposite side of the road to the west.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall on the west, buildings on the south and a retaining wall on the east and north.

Monuments: most of the churchyard is utilised but the stones are not densely packed and the south-west sector is relatively clear. Some monuments are flaking badly, others have been cleared and act as coping stones for the wall. Some ledgers are grass covered and most appear to be 19thC though the earliest seen was of 1779.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: internally an undulating surface but of little obvious significance. Churchyard is raised on the

south (1-1.5m), the east (2m) and the north (1.5m), but some of this is a function of the topography. On the west virtually no ground level difference though there is a small build up of material behind the wall.

Ancillary features: stone lychgate with simple timber roof and modern wooden gates, and tarmac path to porch. On the west an ornate iron gate with a grass path leading from it.

Vegetation: mature but not ancient yews along western and eastern perimeters; a few yew bushes beside path to porch.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit 15 October 1996

Crossley 1946, 39

Faculty: St Asaph 1876 (NLW)

Glynne 1884, 102

Hubbard 1986, 240

Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872 pl 9

Thomas 1911, 52

CONDITION

Building appears to be generally sound; a few cracks are appearing in the walls and some of the tiled floors are uneven.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Llysfaen

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Cynfran**PRN** 16901**NGR** SH89327748

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cynfran's church at Llysfaen is situated less than a mile from the north Wales coast and about 3 miles from Colwyn Bay and Abergele. The twin-naved church has seen considerable restoration. All of its fenestration has been renewed, though the walls themselves are almost certainly medieval, there is a cyclopean south door, and internally there are re-used late medieval roof timbers. Of the medieval fittings only panels from the rood screen have been preserved, the rest probably disappearing during the restoration of 1870. The churchyard is rectilinear with the usual range of memorials going back into the 18thC and the occasional late 17thC example. An earlier, smaller and more circular 'llan' seems likely, fitting in perhaps with the reputed 8thC foundation date for the church.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

No original fenestration, but walls largely original, other than infilling beneath some Victorian windows. North nave original, but whether the north chancel is contemporary or later, as is assumed by Hubbard, has yet to be satisfactorily resolved. South nave added subsequently. South porch is Victorian.

A 13thC date has been attributed to the core of the church, but on no substantive evidence.

HISTORY

The church at Llysfaen was reputedly founded in the 8th century, and there is a holy well - Ffynnon Gynfran - about 100m to the north. Needless to say the early history of the foundation is obscure.

In the Norwich Taxation Llysfaen was recorded as "Ecc'a de Llesvaen", and in the 1291 taxation as "Rectoria di Lisnaen", taxed at £4. The list of rectors goes back to 1357.

Glynne visited in 1851, and discerned an interior similar but inferior to Llanellian. Modern windows had been inserted on the south side while those on the north were flat and not foiled; the two east windows were flattened and had three lights, and contained fragments of ancient glass. Internally there were pews and a west gallery. The exterior was partially whitewashed.

The church underwent drastic restoration by Street in 1870, at a cost of £1950 to which R. Bamford Hesketh of Gwrych Castle was a significant contributor. Porch, bellcote and buttresses were added, all the windows were replaced, and the arched-braced roofs renewed, re-using some old timber. The floor level in the church seems to have been lowered, and a rood screen was made. Various features mentioned by Glynne were removed.

Major restoration took place in 1972.

ARCHITECTURE

Llysfaen church consists of twin naves and chancels of precisely the same size, a west bellcote over the northern nave and a south porch set close to the south-west angle of the south nave.

The church is oriented fractionally south of west but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church, though not for the churchyard. The terms 'north nave' and 'south nave' are used periodically for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of roughly fashioned blocks of limestone, with quoins of slightly better dressed stone; largely random coursing; flecks of limewash adhere to the masonry.

'B' is as 'A' but there are much larger blocks of stone towards the base of the wall, these probably roughly dressed to shape. Limewash flecks.

'C' is of regular blocks of limestone rubble, occasionally coursed. Victorian in origin.

Roof: slates; plain, grey clay ridge tiles; cross finials to south nave, porch and both chancels, and also over a chimney-like projection on the north side. The bellcote has one bell and a metal cross above it.

Drainage: a concrete band, at least 0.5m wide, around all four walls points to a drain beneath.

Exterior

North Nave. General. 'A' though heavy pointing covers the wall faces.

North wall: near the west end is a north door with a two-centred arch, chamfered dressings terminating in bar and broach stops and all in buff-yellow sandstone; looks completely Victorian, but there is no convincing evidence of insertion. To east is a three-light window consisting of foiled lancets, the central one taller than the others, all also in buff-yellow sandstone. Finally the wall is inset and supported by a diagonal buttress of Victorian date - for descriptive purposes here this inset is taken as the division between nave and chancel; internally, however, the division is a little further to the east.

West wall: plain, apart from a central, stepped buttress with ashlar dressings and above this the Victorian bellcote. The top of the gable has more regular 'A' masonry and has probably been rebuilt, together with the replacement of several of the highest quoins.

North Chancel. General. Slightly inset from the nave as noted above. In 'A' but with heavy pointing.

North wall: one two-light window of Victorian date with foiled heads to the lights and a quatrefoil above. One metre to the east of the window is an arc of stones on edge looking very much like a relieving arch; however, there are no other features to suggest a blocked window though the stones beneath it are noticeably bigger than the surrounding masonry. Above this 'feature' is the 'chimney' referred to earlier, its function uncertain. Diagonal buttress at north-east angle.

East wall: east window has a two-centred arch, two cusped lights with a trefoil above all in Victorian sandstone and a decorative relieving arch. Clearly inserted, with slightly different limestone packing around it.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Dealt with as one unit because no external differentiation. In Fabric 'B' but with heavy pointing. Plinth of limestone to height of c.0.3m with a capping of dressed limestone. Lower parts of walls have very slight batter.

East wall: main feature is a three-light window of cusped lancets with the central one larger than those outside it; also a decorative relieving arch; a larger version of a window in the north nave wall. Beneath the window is some masonry infilling, presumably from when the window was replaced. It is not clear whether the upper part of the gable has been rebuilt.

South wall: from east features are: i) diagonal buttress; ii) Victorian three-light window as east window; beneath it Victorian masonry has been patched into the wall; iii) Victorian nave window of three lights with masonry patching around it; iv) Victorian two-light window; v) porch.

West wall: masonry shows that this is clearly later than the north nave wall. Contains a single foiled lancet of Victorian date but no convincing signs of insertion.

Porch. General. South wall contains a two-centred arched doorway with chamfered dressings, all in buff sandstone, and a decorative relieving arch. Plain side walls. Wholly Victorian.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor with one step up into church. Walls of unplastered, regular limestone masonry. Roof of two bays with one braced truss.

North wall: Cyclopean doorway, the stones chamfered with broach stops; the stonework retooled? Above is a medieval head with its tongue hanging out, probably a corbel and in local stone; reputedly the patron saint, and presumably re-set in the wall.

East wall: wooden bench on stone supports,

West wall: stone mural tablet of 1702 and below it a tomb plaque of 1671/1673.

North Nave. General. Floor partly tiled, partly of local limestone, carpet covered; flush wooden boarding under benches. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of five bays; arch-braced trusses springing from Victorian wall plate set into the wall on the north, and on the south side resting on corbels; two tiers of windbraces.

North wall: slightly splayed doorway with peaked head to embrasure. Then a widely splayed window, with all but the dressings of the window plastered and painted. Just to the west of the chancel step the wall face is inset with a chamfer, matching the inset on the outside.

East wall: modern screen.

South wall: arcade of two and a half bays; octagonal pillars with square bases, and two-centred arches that spring directly from the pillars; simple respond at west end.

West wall: plain with no features.

North Chancel. General. One step up from nave. Floor of stone with carpets over. Much of the area is taken up with the vestry, which is also stone floored, and the organ. Walls as nave. Roof of four bays, narrower than those in nave but otherwise no different.

East wall: deeply splayed window.

South wall: one and a half bays of the arcade.

South Nave. General. Stone and tiles with carpet over as north nave, wooden board flooring beneath benches. One heating grille in floor at rear of nave. Walls as north nave. Roof of four and a half bays, and of the same form as the north nave.

North wall: arcade (see above).

East wall: screen.

South wall: two windows with deep splays. Slightly splayed doorway with pointed embrasure. One 20thC brass.

West wall: single lancet window widely splayed. Next the chimney housing projecting from the wall, serving a boiler at the base. Plaques on the wall record the window glass of 1922 and wood panelling in the nave of 1939.

South Chancel. General. One step up from nave, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Tiled floors, with encaustic tiles in sanctuary. Standard roof of two and a half bays.

North wall: parclose screen, utilising old panelling from the medieval screen in the sanctuary.

East wall: splayed window, marble reredos.

South wall: splayed window.

West wall: screen.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Woodwork: pierced wainscot panels and some muntins from the rood screen, behind the north stalls forming a parclose, though visible only from vestry; more on the north of the sanctuary.

Monuments: to William Owen (d.?) and granddaughter Elizabeth (d.167?), and to John Owen (d.1702) and Alice Holland (d.1717); Elizabeth Vaughan (d.1671) and Thomas Vaughan, Rector (d.1673). Both in porch.

Registers: from 1660.

Victorian fittings include, on the basis of Hubbard's report:

Furnishings by Street include a heavy, square font.

William Godwin's encaustic tiles used in chancel.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is rectilinear, though with slight curves to its north and west sides, and of moderate size. Within the yard there is a slight slope down from south to north, a reflection of the general hillslope towards the sea.

The churchyard is generally well-maintained; recent burials take place in an extension on the north side.

Boundary: churchyard surrounded by a stone wall. Mortared on south, drystone on west, a sizeable bank with some trees separating the old churchyard from the extension on the north, and a stone retaining wall on the east.

On the south and west the external ground level is fractionally lower than the interior, but on the north the relict bank is nearly 2m high and there is a similar drop on the east from the churchyard interior to the road. As with many churchyards, the ground appears to have been built up on the downhill side exaggerating its raised appearance, while on the flatter approaches it is only marginally higher.

Monuments: a well-filled graveyard with little space left. 18thC monuments remain on the south and east, and possibly too on the north, though many of the earlier stones are ledgers and badly weathered. South-east of the chancel is a stone of 1675.

Furniture: none. Thomas refers to a sundial with a Welsh inscription (transcribed in his volume) but without a date. This has disappeared.

Earthworks: a scarp bank up to 1m high is discernible on the north-west and north creating a platform around this side of the church. It is possible but not certain that this is an earlier 'llan'. The Tithe map (1839) also shows the boundary on the south side of the churchyard as rounded and closer to the church than today. Tucker mentions the artificial raising of the level of the southern part of the churchyard, which was then the garden of Tynllan, using soil from Raynes quarries.

Ancillary features: double wrought iron gates and a kissing gate near the south-east corner, with a concrete path leading to the porch. Store shed - a former hearse house - in south-west angle of churchyard.

Vegetation: small yews along the north and east sides of the old churchyard, interspersed with other evergreens; a few yews in the interior.

SOURCES

Clwyd SMR
CPAT Field Visit: 11 December 1996
Crossley 1946, 41
Faculty 1870 (NLW): restoration
Glynne 1884, 103
Hubbard 1986, 249
Quinquennial Report: 1987
Quinquennial Report: 1995
Thomas 1913, 224
Tucker 1953, 264

CONDITION

West wall of north nave in poor condition with cracks and damp showing. Occasional cracks in stonework of arcade. Some peeling paintwork in south chancel.

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

Pentrefoelas

Diocese	St Asaph	Dedication	None
PRN	16935	NGR	SH87315158

GENERAL SUMMARY

Pentrefoelas church which is not recorded as having a dedication, is located on the northern edge of its village a few miles to the east of Betws-y-coed. It is a Victorian construction which replaced a building of the 1760s, itself a replacement of a church elsewhere in the village. It has little distinctive architecture, and the only survivals from the 18thC church are two wall memorials and a disused font. The churchyard is rectilinear and contains a couple of late 18thC stones and a sundial from the early part of this century.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Present building completely Victorian except for two late 18thC/early 19thC wall memorials, and an 18thC font.

HISTORY

Originally in parish of Llanefydd on land granted in 1195 to the Abbey of Aberconway and known as Tir yr Abad Isa. In the Middle Ages it was a chapelry of Ysptyt Ifan and was reportedly known by different names including Capel y Fidog and Capel y Foelas. The chapel lay in what is now the school playing field, some 200m south of the bridge (on the opposite side of the A5 and in the parish of Ysptyt), and is marked by a yew tree. Its last lay reader died in 1769.

The medieval chapel was replaced by a church on a new site which was consecrated in 1771, though without a dedication. A south transept added in 1774, and a west gallery at a later date.

In 1857-9 a new church was built by Sir Gilbert Scott, at the expense of Charles Griffith Wynne of Voelas. South transept retained.

Further modifications in 1905 including new window on north side, new reredos etc.

A double Victorian bellcote has been removed in recent years.

ARCHITECTURE

Pentrefoelas church comprises a nave, a narrower chancel, a south transept, a south porch near the south-west angle of the nave, and a vestry off the north side of the chancel. It is oriented precisely east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of squared and dressed shale masonry.

Roof: slates with ridge slates.

Drainage: gully around the whole perimeter of the church.

Note: the church is wholly Victorian.

Exterior.

General. With exception of porch and the south and west walls of the nave which are in 'A', the exterior of church is covered in roughcast render. There is no reason to believe that there is anything other than the same sort of masonry beneath the render.

Architectural features include lancet windows, two-centred arched doorways and angle buttresses; dressings in tooled limestone. East and west walls have a slight batter.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor, roof of scissor trusses. Narrow two-centred arched doorway leads into nave, with broach stops to chamfers.

Nave. General. Floor of red and black tiles with benches on flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted but dressed stone of windows left bare. Three-bay roof plastered and painted, with two king-post tie-beam trusses and curving struts. No fittings of any age.

Chancel. General. Single steps up to chancel, to sanctuary and to altar; red and white stone and marble floor, patterned. Walls as nave. Roof of close-set scissor trusses. 19thC brass on north wall, commemorative stone and brass to Charles Wynne Finch (d.1903) on south wall, and panels with creed etc in Welsh on east wall.

South Transept. General. Contains several 19thC memorials to the Wynne Finches and the 1794 Griffith monument.

Also a Wynne family vault in a crypt below the church, its access from the central aisle near its meeting with the chancel.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Monument: 'John Griffith (d.1794), by Westmacott, presumably the Elder; a maiden, holding a rose, sits in front of a draped urn and clasps its base' (Hubbard).

Font: small round marble bowl on stone stem; superseded by present font, and now in former vestry.

Victorian and later fittings, as described by Hubbard, include:

Chancel fittings: of 1905-6 by Sir Charles Nicholson, including Neo-Jacobean Reredos.

Font: square bowl with central stem and four marble pillars supporting corners of bowl.

Stained glass: east window by F.W.Oliphant. West windows by Clayton & Bell. By Comper, a pair of south lancets, 1912, and a horribly insipid north window opposite, 1935.

Monument: Colonel C.A.Wynne-Finch (d.1903, set up in 1905), as part of Nicholson's chancel scheme;

tablet with strapwork turning curly, executed by R.Davison.

Bells: two on floor at back of nave. One carries date of 1843, the other though inscribed is largely inaccessible though it was made by Warner and Sons of London.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is near rectangular in shape, well maintained and on a very slight slope from east to west. The location is a gentle south-facing hillside above the Merddwr, a tributary of the Conwy, and a short distance to the east of a tributary stream, Nant y Foel.

Boundary: boundary is a low drystone wall, except on the east where it acts as a retaining wall. Built in 1846.

Monuments: these are close-set and regularly laid out to the east of the church, but are less dense to the north and west. Near the south door are two grave markers from 1791, but otherwise the earliest observed were from the 1820s.

Furniture: sundial on a tapering marble pillar commemorating Morris Owen (d.1916); plate and gnomon survive. South of porch.

Earthworks: churchyard surface raised above external ground level on south and more so on west; lower on north and east.

Ancillary features: timber lychgate with tarmac path to porch. Two small wooden gates on north side with dirt path towards church.

Vegetation: coniferous and deciduous trees around perimeter. A number of mature yews on west side of church and one on north.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 21 January 1997
Faculty n.d. (1857?): DRO/PD/85/4/85
Faculty 1905: NLW/ St Asaph Faculty Box
Faculty 1911: DRO/PD/85/4/87
Heald 1973, 266
Hubbard 1986, 258
Quinquennial Report 1987: DRO/PD/85/1/16
Thomas 1911, 348

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: Poor

Group value: Poor

St George

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St George**PRN** 16956**NGR** SH97457570

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St George in the eponymously named village lies close to the north Wales coast less than 5km from Abergele. The church is of Victorian build and contains only a few fittings transferred from its predecessor, which lay about 40m to the north-west and is now discernible only as a platform. The churchyard also contains a fine 19thC mausoleum and a range of graveslabs back to the late 17thC.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Victorian structure in the Perpendicular style.

HISTORY

Thomas recorded that the parish was named after its founder, Sior, but that its earlier name was "Kegidog". A well with curative properties for horses, Fynnon Sior, is in Kinnel Park nearby.

It appears in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as "Ecc'a de Kegidauc", and in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291, as "Eccl'ia de Kegydauc" with a value of £4 2s 6d". In the 16thC Valor Ecclesiasticus it was recorded as "Rectoria de Kegidok" at £10 2s 11d.

Little information exists about the predecessor of the present building. Glynne visited the church in 1840 and again in 1869 and reported that it was double-naved with a late Perpendicular arcade, had a Tudor priest's door, a modern bellcote over the west end of the south nave and ugly new pews, and contained a few monuments to the Carters and others of Kinnel, and to the family of Lord Dinorben, who built for himself the mausoleum on the north side. The church was taken down late in the 19thC and the new one by C.H.M. Mileham at the expense of H. R. Hughes was consecrated in 1893.

ARCHITECTURE

St George's church comprises a nave and chancel in one, a large south porch with a bellcote above, and leading off the chancel a south transept which houses the organ. It was constructed between 1887 and 1894. Lower storey on north side converted to meetings rooms etc in recent years.

The church is oriented south-east/north-west but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here; the churchyard is described in conventional terms.

Fabric: random limestone rubble, some coursing; quoins and dressings in yellow freestone.

Roof: slates with red clay ridge tiles.

Drainage: terraced into the slope.

Exterior

General. Chamfered plinth runs around building, which because of the natural slope is low to the ground on the south side and nearly 4m off the ground on the north. Above this, the walls are covered by roughcast render, the only exceptions being the east wall and the front of the porch and bellcote.

Windows have square heads, labels with dogs-leg stops and two-centred cusped lights; mostly three-light windows but one four-light window beneath. Doorways have flat heads and four-centred arches with complex mouldings.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor, walls plastered and whitewashed, panelled ceiling. Two coats-of-arms, a wooden shield and a stone mural tablet on walls.

Nave. General. Wooden block floor, walls plastered and painted, panelled roof with two ornate tie-beams (one above the chancel screen) with crown posts. Tops of tie beams, wall beams and screen have crenellated decoration. North and south walls have 19thC and 20thC brass and marble memorials. West end has raised and panelled family pew with external entrance, and above this arranged around the walls are a series of six hatchments.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave, two staggered steps to sanctuary, one to altar. Tiled floor, some encaustic; choir stalls on raised wooden boarding. Walls as nave; piscina and sedile set in south side. Wooden reredos on east. Panelled ceiling.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Hatchments: Hughes family, 1815, 1835, 1852 (x 2), 1909, 1911.

Royal Arms: an early Stuart example dated to 1618; in plaster, flanked by Jacobean-looking Ionic pilasters; in the porch. Another painted on wood set above main south door; undated, but post-1801 Hanoverian.

Monuments: to John Parry (d.1699); to Sarah Atkinson (d.1714) with drapery, heraldry, in marble and stone; to John Davies (d.1725) and father William (d.1725) in marble; in poor condition in the store room is a wooden memorial board to Evan Jones and family (d.1704 to 1787).

Also a marble tablet recording six members of the Hughes family buried in the mausoleum in the churchyard, the first from 1814.

Registers: from 1694.

Church plate: chalice of 1677.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is rectilinear and elongated, a result of an original and somewhat irregular core at the west end and a more regular extension containing the new church to the east. The latter is set on a moderate

slope, the former occupying a more level plot.

It is well-maintained and is used for modern burial on the slope below the church.

Boundary: stone wall on north side of new yard, on the east, and along the south where above the new church it is effectively a retaining wall. A wire fence edges the old yard on the north.

Monuments: in the new yard are 20thC memorials on the north and 19thC ones to the west, the south side devoid of any obvious burials. In the old yard are a few scattered stones in situ but many have been cleared to the sides and along a scarp bank surrounding the old church site (see below). Within the levelled area of the old church are ledgers going back to 1680. The NMR contains an undated list of the churchyard slabs, the earliest of which to William Style was dated 1608.

At the north end of old church is the Hughes mausoleum. Built by Thomas Jones, 1836, for W.L.Hughes, first Lord Dinorben. Square with angle buttresses, pinnacles and four gables, and with Jones's characteristically crisp and scholarly Tudor Gothic detail. Contained within a pointed arch is a finely carved coat of arms. Blank Perpendicular windows on the other three sides (Hubbard).

Furniture: the old font, perhaps of 18thC date, remains on its plinth in what was presumably its original position in the old church.

Earthworks: old church site represented by a levelled platform with stone blocks at corners, and south and west of this a scarp bank forming two sides of a rectangle.

Ancillary features: main entrance represented by double iron gates on south side, south-west of church, with further double gates at south-east corner. A single gate at north-east angle and a wooden one in north-west. Tarmac and concrete paths.

Vegetation: a large, old yew a few metres south of old church, and two smaller examples to the west. Small yew bushes edge path to porch of new church. Deciduous and evergreen species south of new church.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 14 March 1997
Faculty 1892: DRO/PD/94/1/17
Glynne 1884, 98
Hubbard 1986, 284
NMR Aberystwyth
Thomas 1913, 227

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 Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good

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