

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

WELSH HISTORIC CHURCHES PROJECT

**THE HISTORIC CHURCHES OF DENBIGHSHIRE
AND THE VALE OF CLWYD**



CPAT Report No 312

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CHURCH SURVEY

St Mwrog's Church, Llanfwrog

CPAT Report No 312

Introduction

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

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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Rhuddlan	St Mary
Ruthin	St Peter
St Asaph	Ss Kentigern and Asa
Tremeirchion	Corpus Christi
Trevor	no known dedication

Bettws Gwerfil Goch

Diocese	St Asaph	Dedication	St Mary
PRN	16701	NGR	SJ03234658
		Previous dedication	?St Elian

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church at Bettws Gwerfil Goch is a small structure which may have been established in the 12thC though there are traditions of an earlier foundation dedicated to St Elian. It shows some evidence of enlargement internally, as well as considerable signs of rebuilding about 1882. Medieval furnishings and fittings are restricted to woodwork probably derived from the rood screen, but there are also 18thC woodwork, traces of post-medieval wall paintings, and an early 18thC brass. The churchyard is rectangular and retains a few 18thC grave markers.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Earliest walls survive to varying height though their date is uncertain - traditionally 16thC. All windows except the round-headed window at the west end of the south side are Victorian. Upper part of west wall rebuilt in 1981. Externally, nave and chancel could be of one build, but internally buttress-like features at nave/chancel divide suggest that the building was extended in the medieval period; possibly the inclusion of larger blocks of masonry might signal this extension at east end but would require, too, the rebuilding of the south wall. Original porch dated to 1606, but restored in Victorian era.

HISTORY

The chapel incorporates the name of Gwerfyl, daughter of Cynan, lord of Meirionydd (d.1173), and she herself is thought to have died around 1200.

Present dedication is to St Mary but Thomas claimed that the original dedication was to St Elian, on the basis of a number of nearby place names. The implication is that an earlier, possibly early medieval, church was rebuilt by Gwerfyl or her husband but there is no evidence to corroborate this sequence.

It appears in the Norwich taxation of 1254 as 'Ecc'a de betos' and in the 1291 Taxatio of Pope Nicholas as 'Ecclia de Bettus Guervyl'.

The church prior to 1879 was a single cell with a south porch; it had a simple west bellcote, round-headed windows of 18thC date - though Glynne in 1849 referred to a Perpendicular east window and a north doorway with the date 1695 over it.

Another 19thC report claimed the north doorway was round-headed, and that adjacent was a flight of steps to a doorway leading to the gallery.

The church was restored by John Douglas of Chester in 1882 at a cost of £1100. The north door and stair were removed, a vestry added with chimney, box pews taken out, windows replaced, floors relaid, wall trenches dug, buttress added on south side, a heating chamber excavated to a depth of 18", plaster removed from walls, a new screen erected, and a new bellcote and lychgate added.

The Victorian bellcote with spire taken down after 1985 quinquennial review.

ARCHITECTURE

Bettws church comprises a nave and chancel in one, a south porch and a north vestry of the chancel.

The church is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here. Accurate orientations are used in the description of the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises grey and iron-stained slabs of shale, some of it laminating like slate; quoins in similar material but larger and better dressed; occasional pebble stones; most of stone is medium-sized but occasionally larger inclusions; random coursing; flecks of limewash still adhere to stonework. 'B' consists of more uniform slabs of stone than 'A' with few if any pebbles; some coursing.

Roof: slates with stone ridge tiles; stone cross finial at east end.

Drainage: some suggestion of a drainage trench along part of south side, but nothing evident on north; tarmac around west side, concrete on east.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Considered as one because there is no external differentiation.

North wall: in 'A'. Features from west are: i) 19thC or later square-headed window in pale yellow freestone of two lights with cusped ogee heads; decorative relieving arch in edge stones and the 'tympanum' beneath filled with similar stone; indications that window inserted. ii) square-headed window with two wide ogee-headed lights, the dressings as i). iii) most of walling above the two windows rebuilt in 'B' and close to the vestry the whole wall face appears to have been replaced in this material; it is possible too that within this a second rebuild associated with the chimney that rises above the vestry. iv) vestry. v) east of vestry the chancel stonework has larger blocks of shale, a variation on 'A'.

East wall: base of wall in the larger shale masonry seen on the north side, giving way to 'A' below the window. The east window has a four-centred arch, three lights with ogee heads, and panels above, all in pale yellow freestone; above a hoodmould with head stops. Window wholly Victorian and infilling around it in 'B', and possibly the whole gable rebuilt from springer level.

South wall: in the larger variation of 'A' and the fabric altogether cleaner, less weathered. Features from east are: i) window as most westerly window on north side and having the same infilled 'tympanum'; upper part of wall above this probably rebuilt. ii) buttress in rough masonry (at nave/chancel divide) though with Victorian coping stones. iii) window as i) but longer; section of wall from buttress to porch has heavy concrete pointing in contrast to chancel wall. iv) porch. v) small round-headed light, the arch turned in edge stones; probably 18thC but the only pre-Victorian window to survive. vi) south-west angle beyond this reconstructed in rougher masonry.

West wall: wall whitewashed; at base a projecting foundation course on a slightly different alignment. Wall to a height of c.2m has some coursing. Upper part of wall and the gable rebuilt in 1981, and contains one rectangular window with chamfered dressings in dark yellow freestone.

Porch. East wall: in 'A', though some irregular blocks. A small window with a single light, a smaller version of window ii) in north wall of nave.

South wall: metal gates beneath segmental-headed archway on wooden wall posts which are set against the terminals of the side walls. Above is a tie beam (the base of which is the arch) and raking struts, faintly cusped. Welsh inscription on beam from Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. Victorian in date,

comparable with lychgate truss.

West wall: rests on projecting basal foundation; lower part of wall original, upper part including window, comparable to that in east wall, rebuilt.

Vestry. General. In 'B'. North wall has a small window similar to window ii) in north wall of nave and, above it, a small slit window. East wall incorporates a three-centred arched doorway, the dressings of standard freestone and with a slight chamfer. The west wall is plain but has a chimney rising above it.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone slab floor but with a line of tiles, some encaustic down centre. Bare walls. Roof of simple purlins and rafters, though the former are older and chamfered; two trusses, that at the entrance more recent than that over nave doorway which has a tie-beam carrying a date of 1606, together with some graffiti initials which are presumably more recent.

North wall: threshold one step up; massive, cyclopean doorway with four-centred arch and single jamb stones in tooled shale, chamfered with simple stops.

East wall: stone bench along wall; splayed window with stained glass, Victorian.

West wall: as east wall, but also a projecting slab in north-west corner a little above the bench level, a support perhaps for a stoup. Above is the standard wooden plaque of the Incorporated Society for Churches and Buildings dated to 1879.

Nave. General. Floor of small tiles partly covered by matting and carpet; benches set on flush wooden blocks. Walls bare. Roof of four and a half bays with arch-braced collars springing from wall beams and having cusped raking struts and the upper parts of the principal rafters also cusped. The most easterly truss just to the west of the screen has a ribbed and moulded soffit, the others plain chamfered. On soffits of all arch braces are foliate bosses in the centre and different carvings on the sides, some with heads, one a serpent, another foliate. Some of these have gone and there has been some replacement of the timber, but basically a late medieval roof.

North wall: internally battered to eaves level; two splayed windows; at east end where screen set across the chancel, the wall projects inwards like a buttress although in reverse, effectively a near vertical face for a maximum distance of 0.3m at top (matched by similar feature on south side); this could have been to facilitate the construction of the rood loft given the wall batter but it could also be the stub of an earlier east wall. Hanging on the wall are plans from the faculty drawings of 1879.

East wall: screen of late 19thC date.

South wall: battered wall as on north side. Doorway does not have a splay but has segmental head. Two splayed windows, that on the west with a stepped splay to the base. Immediately to east of the doorway is a change in the masonry which tends to suggest that something may have been filled in, but the evidence is not clear-cut.

West wall: at a height of just over 2m wall is inset, perhaps to act as support for west gallery. At one point set into the upper part of the wall is a semi-circular stone plate like the base of a wall memorial - if so the memorial itself has gone.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to the chancel, one to the sanctuary one to the altar. Floor has tiles, encaustic ones in the sanctuary. Bare walls but with a batter that is not so marked as the nave. Roof of two and a half-bays, the first truss also moulded as the adjacent one in the nave but the remaining two plain because there is evidence that they once carried barrel vaulting over the altar. The last two bays also have panelling above the wall beams; the panels in the more westerly bay are plain, but those above the

sanctuary have decoration including animal carving - perhaps derived from the rood screen, because they would have been invisible when the barrel vaulting was in place.

North wall: a large semi-circular arch gives access to the vestry which is masked by curtains; arch must be 19thC. To the east a small rectangular recess acts as a credence.

East wall: splayed window. One 19thC brass.

South wall: one splayed window with seat below it. One brass of 18thC date in wooden surround. Traces of wall paintings on bare stone, at least one word visible as well as patches of colour.

Vestry. General. Wooden floor with carpet, bare walls, plain roof of purlins and rafters. Fireplace in west wall. Benefaction board over arch on south side.

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Woodwork: panels in chancel above wall plates on either side of altar; one in poor condition shows pelican pecking its breast, the other a serpent with a coiled tail. Former head beam of rood screen.

Wall painting: on the stonework of south side of chancel; colours include yellow ochre, umber and black, with one distinguishable word 'Amen'. Rural Deans report of 1730 mentioned inscriptions and a depiction of Moses and Aaron on the church walls.

Choir stall: carved woodwork built into it.

Reredos: late medieval panel with carved figures of Christ, the Virgin and John and the tools of the passion: hammer, crown of thorns etc; possibly dating from the 1492 restoration and a part of the parapet of the rood loft. However, commentators earlier than Crossley suggested it might have originated as a reredos.

Benefaction board: small, simple and carrying names of vicar and churchwardens and dates 1811 and 1835.

Chest: with seat built into it. Carries inscription 'W.I. D.I. 1731'.

Cupboard: undated, in vestry.

Wooden candelabra: perhaps 18thC. A second metal candelabra, currently not hung has date of 1838.

Plate: chalice of 1759/60.

Pulpit: carries date of 1741, the gift of David Jones and his wife.

Memorial: brass to John Maesmor O Faesmor Esq (d.1704)

Bell: inscribed, now resting by the pulpit.

[Stained glass: Thomas noted a few fragments which were probably lost at the time of the Victorian restoration].

CHURCHYARD

Bettws churchyard is small, raised and rectangular, the only hint of curvilinearity being at the west corner. Well maintained. Located on a spur with the ground falling away to Afon Alwen on the south-west and a tributary stream on the south-east.

Boundary: hedge on a retaining wall on the north-east, a retaining wall too on the south-east and on the south-west. Buildings on the north-west.

Monuments: variable density of monuments throughout the yard. Chest tombs to the west of church are quite densely packed; one railed tomb north of vestry. Some 18thC stones survive but these are sparse and mainly in poor condition. The earliest, of 1723, is set in concrete near the vestry door.

Furniture: none observed.

Earthworks: surface undulates but nothing of significance. Some internal embanking behind perimeter wall in places. Churchyard raised - to a maximum of c.2m on south-east - on all sides except perhaps for north-west.

Ancillary features: small lychgate with stone walls and timber roof on north-east, Welsh inscription. Second entrance on south-west with simple iron gate and seven steps up into interior of yard. Concrete and tarmac paths.

Vegetation: a few bushes, the last yews felled in the 1970s.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 18 February 1997

Crossley 1945, 157

Faculty 1879: NLW/SA/FO1 & Merionydd R.O. GAS/Z/PE/24/27 & 28

Glynne 1884, 268

NMR Records

Quinquennial Review 1985

Ridgway 1997, 39

Thomas 1911, 136

Williams 1994

CONDITION

Floor tiles lifting, damp west wall, problem with coping stones at east end. No major problems observed.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Poor to Medium

Bodfari

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Stephen**PRN** 16719**NGR** SJ09257012

SUMMARY

The church of St Stephen lies in the centre of the small settlement of Bodfari on the edge of the Vale of Clwyd, about three miles to the north-east of Denbigh. Traditionally the first foundation was in the early medieval period, but today its late medieval tower is accompanied by a rebuilt nave and chancel from 1864-5. Inside are a 16thC font, an altar and pulpit both from 1635, the Mostyn monument of 1671 and a ring of three bells cast in 1636. The churchyard is rectangular and contains memorials going back to the early years of the 17thC.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Western tower in late Perpendicular style, though its lower stages may be rather earlier. The nave and chancel however were totally rebuilt in 1864-5.

HISTORY

There is a tradition that the first church on the site was founded in the 7thC by Deifar or Diar, whose well was located c.100m south of the church. But the first record is in a charter of 1093, when William de Punterleya (Pounderling) gave the monks of St. Werburgh's Abbey, Chester, the church and manor of 'Batavari'.

The church is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecc'a de Bottewara' at a value of 30s, and in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 as 'Ecclesia de Bottervaum' at £4 6s 8d.

The tower was constructed in the 15th or perhaps the early 16thC. Between c.1535-1600, an aisle was added on the south side to replace a chapel of ease - Capel Hwlkyn.

In 1592, the great bell was recast by Thomas Orrell, bellfounder from Wigan. The lesser bell was recast in 1596 by Thomas Ffrier, who is also recorded as recasting the great bell in 1597. These castings appear to have taken place in the churchyard and suggest that the great bell was recast twice. All the bells were recast some 40 years later as present inscriptions verify.

In 1715 records report the flagging of the church, and carrying the pulpit and rails from Llaweny; in 1733 repairs were undertaken to the churchyard.

Repairs to the church in 1734-42 included plastering the church and steeple and repairing the interior, which involved propping up the pillars. Repairs were made to the roof of the church in 1745 and the church wall in 1764. Lime was purchased to whitewash the exterior walls in 1767, a lock was repaired on the church chest and repairs were made to the frame in the steeple.

Between 1827-34, the church roof was repaired and repointed and the interior was completely limewashed. Glynne's 1839 report on the church recalls coarse and plain architecture, a cross at east gable, windows with contracted arches on square heads, and a three-light east window with stained glass. The building at

this time consisted of an undivided nave and chancel with a south aisle and six-bay timber arcade, though Glynne suggested that the south aisle had been rebuilt at some time. He specifically referred to the 17thC pulpit and the font.

Despite repairs, a report on the dilapidated fabric of the church in 1862 opined that it was beyond repair. A new church built by Wyatt in 1865 is presumed to follow the old plan. A chancel arch was constructed over the screen (itself later removed in 1928-9), and the chancel was raised four steps above the nave and tiled.

ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a west tower, a nave, chancel and south aisle with a south porch, and a vestry at the eastern end of the aisle. The church is oriented north-north-east/south-south-west but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium blocks and slabs of limestone; very occasional lumps of ?siltstone; irregular coursing; dressed limestone quoins. Some limewash residue. Walls in this fabric tend to have extremely heavy mortar pointing.

'B' is of large, randomly laid blocks of limestone; not coursed.

'C' is of squared, small to medium blocks of quarry-cut limestone with pecked limestone quoins and yellow sandstone dressings.

'D' is primarily of grey (?)siltstone blocks with some limestone; irregular coursing.

'A' is certainly medieval but whether 13thC, 14thC or 15thC is not known. 'D' is 15thC or possibly early 16thC. 'B' is undated. 'C' is of 1864-5.

Roofs: slates with blue ridge tiles. Cross finial at east end of chancel.

Drainage: cast iron guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Slabs around the north wall could disguise a drain, but there is no convincing signs of a drain elsewhere.

Exterior

Tower. General. The lower wall faces are in 'A', the upper faces from a level about in line with sills of the belfry windows are in 'D', suggesting that the top of the tower has been rebuilt or perhaps more likely, heightened. The base of the wall has been strengthened by the addition of masonry splays, effectively wedge-shaped buttresses in 'B', up to c.3.5m high. It is assumed but not proven that the splays were not original features, but they certainly pre-date the 19thC restoration. The upper courses of the west face and all of the north wall show signs of remnant limewash. The tower is of at least three storeys with a continuous square-sectioned string course below the parapet; a flagpole at the south-west corner.

North wall: small square-headed slit window to first floor with pale sandstone dressings, much worn. Belfry window consisting of two rather coarse two-centred, louvred lights; worn, buff coloured sandstone dressings that look original, except for the mullion. A waterspout projects from the string course near the north-west angle.

East wall: the division between 'A' and 'D' is much clearer on this face. Belfry window as north wall, and again the mullion has been renewed. The parapet contains a round-headed aperture with chamfered dressings which was the former opening for the Sanctus Bell.

South wall: slit window as north side, with rough sandstone dressings. Belfry window as north side, but the lights have trefoiled, round heads. Waterspout near south-west angle.

West wall: the original west entrance appears to have been blocked and in its place a round-headed window with two trefoil-headed lights and a quatrefoil above, though different sandstones have been used. Beneath the sill is blocking material in 'C'. Higher up is a small slit window with pale sandstone dressings, but topped

by a small chamfered, foiled head in red sandstone and above this a clock face of 1912. Standard belfry window with foiled heads as south side; some renewal including jambstones.

Nave. General. In 'C', with quoins of the same fabric. Windows are square-headed with labels and limestone relieving arches above.

North wall: in this wall alternating two-light and three-light windows with cinquefoil tracery; the most easterly of the four (with three lights) has tracery of a slightly different form from the others; two ordinary buttresses.

Chancel. General. In 'C' but narrower and lower structure than the nave; the vestry abuts the south wall. Also a plinth about 0.5m above ground level. North window as nave with two cinquefoiled lights, while the east window is Perpendicular-style with three cinquefoiled two-centred lights with panel tracery above set in two-centred arch with a hoodmould terminating in simple stops; relieving arch in limestone.

Vestry. General. Two-centred doorway in south wall, foiled lights in square-headed windows in the south and east walls, the latter with a dormer gable above.

South Aisle. General. In 'C' with lean-to roof against the nave.

South wall: windows as north wall of nave. One buttress at the juncture of the aisle and vestry; two standard windows to the east of the porch, one of two lights, one of three; one two-light window to the west of porch.

West wall: one two-light window with adjacent buttress.

Porch. General. In 'C' with a low plinth at the base of the wall. On the south an entrance with a two-centred archway and a hoodmould and head-stops below a limestone relieving arch. Single quatrefoil lights in the east and west walls.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone flagged floor, plastered and painted walls, and a ceiling of rafters and collars.

North wall: wall face is painted blue; south doorway to church has a two-centred arch with stopped chamfers. Two steps up to nave.

East and west walls: quatrefoil lights under pointed arches. Benches along the sides and an Incorporated Society for Buildings and Churches' plaque of 1863 on the east wall.

Tower. General. Ground floor in use as boiler room with modern boiler set in pit along south wall, but formerly this was an entrance porch and the outline of an earlier door with jambs, leading into nave, is visible. Stone flagged floor, c.1m below level of present nave, includes some early grave slabs. Plastered walls, vaulted ceiling.

West wall: reveal a four-centred arched reveal, c.1.3m deep.

A ladder leads to the clock chamber, its boarded floor patched with cement. An old, part spiral timber staircase leads up to the belfry with a rough timber floor and exposed stonework. A ladder leads to roof.

Nave. General. Stone flagged floor, carpetted throughout; benches on raised planked floors; walls plastered; roof of nine trusses, arch-braced collar trusses with king and arcing struts, springing from moulded corbels, alternating with similar trusses that spring from the wall plates; through purlins and rafters.

North wall: splayed windows; one marble memorial tablet of 1671 and a brass of 1910.

East wall: a two-centered chancel arch of two orders, the inner rising from short columns on foliate corbels; hoodmould with foliate stops.

South wall: arcade of four two-centred arches mounted on three circular stone piers with east and west responds; continuous hoodmould with head stops above the piers.

West wall: peaked arch and soffit to tower. Three marble memorials of 1810, 1813 and 1837.

Chancel. General. Four steps up from nave to chancel, with two steps up to the sanctuary; encaustic tiled floor, notably in the sanctuary, and planks below longitudinal benches in the chancel. Wagon roof of 24 panels, the wall plates with quatrefoil friezes.

North wall: nothing to note.

East wall: painted blue; rich mosaic reredos; decalogue boards on either side of east window.

South wall: organ set under two-centred arch which opens also onto the vestry.

South Aisle. General. Very much the same as the nave with stone flagged floor, carpeted aisle, and all walls plastered and painted. Roof of four bays defined by principal rafters supported by sloping struts off stone corbels above the arcade; between these are close-set rafters and one through purlin.

North wall: arcade as nave.

South wall: splayed windows; benefactions board and a board recording past rectors, either side of the south door.

Vestry. General. Enlarged in 1952 when its screen was moved further west; the floor level was lowered at that time to that of the nave and aisle.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: octagonal bowl with quatrefoil panels, and octagonal stem and base. A date of 1574 has been attributed to the bowl though the reason for this is not evident. The stem and base are 19thC, but the earlier base is on the floor by the pulpit.

Stoup: found in south wall of porch as early church was being taken down in 1864. Pre-Reformation.

Altar: 1635, with carved melon-bulb legs.

Pulpit: painted inscription "H.P.E. I.P. Wardens 1635". Elaborate woodcarving, with strapwork, etc. and panels representing Virtues. Reportedly brought from Llewenny, the seat of the Salusburys, in 1715.

Chest: plank-built churchwarden's chest, iron banded with three locks.

Monuments: marble memorial with armorial head to John Mostyn (d.1671); inscription in Latin.

Plate: includes a cup of 1570, a paten of 1725 and several 19thC pieces.

Bells: three bells all dated to 1636 and cast by William or Thomas Cilbury at Wellington, Salop. Inscriptions in Roman capitals with border designs.

Registers: from 1571.

19thC and later fittings include:

Benefactions board: to west side of the south door, records charities from 1654 to 1857.

Decalogue boards to either side of east window.

Stained Glass: 'east window by Clayton and Bell, with a commemoration date of 1866. South aisle west and nave easternmost on north side by Burlison and Grylls, 1909' (Hubbard).

Altar chairs: Glastonbury altar chairs from 1865 but their carved back panels depicting the Crucifixion are old and inserted according to Thomas.

Monuments: white marble on black slate with Grecian urn to Thomas Eyton (d.1813); white marble to Thomas Eyton of Plas y Cemaes (d.1837) and other members of the family up to 1874, by H W Wilkins, Pentonville; white marble on black slate to Anne Hughes (d.1810), and others, draped urn and foliated consoles, by Wright of Chester. In the chancel is a white marble plaque on black slate with a truncated column on the top, to Rev Edward Hughes (d.1850), by J Branson, Liverpool.

Brass memorial plates removed during the 1864 restoration, were discovered nailed to the underside of the large oak chest and date from 1740 to the 1850s.

CHURCHYARD

Possibly there was a sub-oval enclosure here but the only hint of this is the curvilinearity of the south-west end shown on the tithe map. It is now sub-rectangular, tapering towards the south-west, and reflecting an extension on the north-east in 1898 with an additional strip of land included along the north-western boundary. Well-kept, but closed for burials in 1958.

Stone walled boundary consisting of a revetment wall though along the south-east and south-west it also rises internally. Repaired over several centuries; in 1847 all stiles were removed from the churchyard walls and the gaps filled, apart from the link with the old rectory, where a gate was placed (though this has now been removed).

Monuments: a large number of 18thC and some 17thC examples. A stone in Latin to Robert Jones (d.1610), south-west of the porch, is the earliest, though later re-used for the bottom section records deaths between 1764-1804. Other early stones include Humphrey Hughes (d.1678), south of the vestry, David Edwards of Llewellyn Green (d.1698) and Margaret Price (d.1705).

Furniture: a sundial with the inscription '1794 Edwd. and Charles Jones, Churchwardens. R. Griffith, Denbigh, Fecit'. It is now broken. One part is set in the ground by the porch, the rest is supposedly inside the church.

Earthworks: church is set on a natural spur so that the ground falls away on all sides except the north-east. This explains the drop of over 6m on the south-east and the south-west. On the north-west a 2m drop evens out to less than 0.5m. A steep bank, 3m or so high, on the north-east defines the pre-1898 extent of the churchyard.

Ancillary features: lychgate of 19thC date with open timberwork frame on dwarf stone walls. Twenty-seven steps lead up through this into the churchyard. A hearse house remains against the north-west boundary: in 1898, its south-east side was removed to allow a path to the new burial ground. Tarmac paths all round the church.

Vegetation: yews and firs line south-eastern boundary. Bush yews on the north-west side.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 31 October 1996 and 19 April 1998
Clwyd SMR
Faculty: St Asaph 1898 (NLW): churchyard extension
Faculty: St Asaph 1952 (NLW): vestry extension
Glynne 1884, 84
Hubbard 1986, 327
NMR Aberystwyth
Quinquennial Review
Roberts 1978
Thomas 1911, 2

CONDITION

Main body of the church in good state of repair. Tower masonry in good condition, but sandstone is weathering.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Bryneglwys

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Tysilio**PRN** 16725**NGR** SJ14484736

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Tysilio at Bryneglwys occupies a slight knoll above the small village that extends to the south of it, 8km north-east of Corwen. The church itself is considered to be Perpendicular with a further cell, the so-called Yale Chapel, added in the reign of Elizabeth. Subsequently much rebuilding occurred. Internally it has an interesting range of 17thC patterned panels built into the present chancel furniture, and a 14thC sepulchral slab, but little else. Mention should also be made of the wooden columns that divide the chancel from the Yale Chapel. The churchyard is raised and polygonal in shape.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The body of the church retains much of its original west wall and the lower part of the north wall, but some of the south wall and much of the east have been rebuilt, with the large east window re-set. The Yale Chapel has the look of a Victorian rebuild using new stone with only a small portion - at the base of the east wall - original. But the picture is not wholly clear and from the masonry alone the reconstructions of the nave and chancel on the one hand and the Yale chapel on the other would appear to be of different dates, unless the former was fashioned from re-used masonry in contrast to the Yale Chapel.

HISTORY

Nothing is known of the early history of Bryneglwys church. A note in the church proposes that the first building on the spot, of turf and wattle, was erected in 575. There is no substantive evidence for such an assertion.

Between 1247 and 1254, the tithes of the church were granted to Valle Crucis Abbey and in 1291 it was recorded in the Taxatio as 'Ecclia de Bryne Eglwys' with the relatively low value of £3 6s 8d. The Valor Ecclesiasticus return in 1535 recorded it under Valle Crucis as 'Capella de Breneglois'.

The present building is thought to be 15thC or early 16thC, with Elizabeth I's privy councillor, de lal, building the Yale chapel in 1575.

A faculty was granted in 1730 for the repair of the church and churchyard, and a mize was issued in the same year. What was involved is not known.

Glynne visited the whitewashed church in 1853 and noted the Perpendicular style, the large porch, some rude, open benches in the nave, the altar hemmed in by pews, and the font let into the wall like a stoup.

Restoration by Arthur Baker occurred in 1875, comprising the repair of roof and walls, rebuilding the bellcote, taking down the gallery, re-seating the nave, putting up panelling in the chancel, altering existing windows and adding one new one, and building a new vestry. The Yale Chapel underwent similar renovation and reconstruction.

Owen noted the presence of the steps and base of the churchyard cross in 1878 a short distance south-west of the porch. By 1886 these had disappeared.

ARCHITECTURE

Bryneglwys church comprises a nave and chancel in one, a separate chapel to the south of the chancel, a south porch in the angle of the nave and chapel, and a vestry beyond the north-west corner of the nave. The church is oriented north-east/south-west but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' is of irregular blocks and slabs of buff-grey and grey rubble, perhaps shale, and some more rounded blocks, some of which may be limestone; randomly coursed and partially masked by very heavy pointing; traces of limewash.

'B' has smooth-faced slabs of iron-stained shale or siltstone, with blocks of grey limestone in key places around windows etc; coursing, pointing and limewash as 'A'.

'C' is akin to 'A' but there is a predominance of grey limestone blocks, of relatively regular appearance.

'A' appears to be original; 'B' and 'C' indicative of a rebuilding.

Roof: slates with reconstituted clay ridge tiles. Wooden finial to porch, elaborate stone cross finials to Yale Chapel and chancel. At west end a bellcote with a single opening and bell.

Drainage: a gully filled with chippings, up to 0.4m wide, on the north and a similar feature outside the south (Yale) chapel. Tarmac paths on the west and east.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. The two elements treated as one because there is no external differentiation. The grey limestone of 'B' is strategically placed near new windows. West end hidden by vestry, and adjacent to this but below ground level is a boiler house. Perpendicular.

North wall: 'A' rises to a height of c.1.3m, the bottom of the windows; above this is 'B'. From the west: i) square-headed window with hollow chamfers, three lights, some of dressings may be original; iron pins for hinged shutters; ii) square-headed window with two lights that have trefoiled ogee heads and a quatrefoil above; all in yellow sandstone, completely Victorian; iii) a similar window of three lights which illuminates the chancel. Immediately to the east of the window there is a disconformity in the masonry down to ground level - the wall face protrudes slightly and 'A' gives way to 'B'. At the north-east angle the quoins are large dressed blocks of limestone.

East wall: most of this wall appears to have been rebuilt in 'B' but below the main east window and angling gently upwards to form a wedge to the south is 'A', predominantly of rounded blocks and boulders. At the base of the wall a foundation course projects but this gradually disappears beneath the tarmac as it runs northwards. The fine Perpendicular window thus appears to be re-set. It has a two-centred arch, three lights with trefoil heads, and panels above; chamfered dressings in yellow sandstone, the mullions replaced but the rest original.

South wall: most of the south side is disguised by the Yale Chapel and further westwards the porch masks much of the wall face. West of the porch is a square-headed window with two lights and chamfered dressings, similar to the three-light window almost opposite in the north wall; part of the mullion has been renewed; pins for shutter hinges. The masonry around the window is probably 'A' but above the porch the presence of grey limestone reveals a variety of 'B'.

West wall: much of this is in 'A' with rougher quoins at the south-west angle and a wall face that is irregular with swelling in places; heavy pink pointing. At the north-west angle the quoins have been replaced with limestone blocks as at the north-east corner. To a height of c.0.6m the base of the wall projects almost as a

plinth. The bellcote is set into the top of the gable with dressed stone surrounds.

South (Yale) Chapel. General. Of Elizabethan date.

East wall: at the base of the wall is a continuation of the masonry ('A') visible in the east wall of the chancel, disappearing at the south-east angle. The rest of the wall face is in 'C' and the quoins at the south-east angle are the limestone blocks familiar in the vestry and on the north side of the church. The window is square-headed, has three lights with cusped, two-centred heads. The dressings are in yellow sandstone and though the mullions have been renewed the rest appears to be original.

South wall: all in 'C'. Two square-headed windows, both in yellow sandstone. That to the east is original (except for one mullion stone), with two lights that have almost round heads over the cusping. The similarity of their design to the east window in the chancel suggests they may have been re-set when the original south wall was taken down to accommodate the Yale Chapel. There are iron pins for shutters. The window to the west is a Victorian copy.

West wall: in 'C', with one long narrow trefoiled lancet - Victorian.

Vestry. General. Fabric incorporates limestone blocks as a variety of 'B' and well-dressed quoins (cf the north-west and north-east angles of the church itself). Chimney built into north wall. Two-light square-headed window in west wall, and a two-centred arched doorway in east wall. The whole is Victorian.

Porch. General. The fabric is a variety of 'C' with limestone predominating. On the west is a small two-light wooden window and on the south is a similar three-light example and also a modern doorway featuring an arch-braced cambered tie beam with struts above, and decorative barge boards.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor; bare walls, and a 19thC or later timber roof of rafters and purlins; one roof truss set into the external gable (see above), a second above the south door of the church.

North wall: a simple two-centred arched doorway lacking chamfers to the dressings, and all in buff-yellow sandstone which could be Victorian or perhaps earlier. On that part of the south wall of the nave that is visible, there are limewash remnants, and the bottom 1.5m could be original walling; the upper part may be rebuilt. Attached to the wall is a brass of 1758/1740.

East wall: Victorian doorway to Yale Chapel.

Nave. General. Nave floor is one step down from porch. It has a tiled floor with only one obvious heating grille, near the main door, and heating is now provided by pipes and radiators along the walls. Carpet covers much of the floor, and the benches are raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed. The roof has three complete bays and one half bay; the main trusses have arch-braced collars with raking struts, and that above the chancel steps has plaster infill above the collar. There is evidence on the underside of the collars that the roof was once ceiled over.

North wall: splayed window embrasures fitted with secondary glazing. Victorian two-centred arched doorway to the locked vestry. One mural tablet of 1758.

East wall: chancel steps only.

South wall: the embrasure of the two-centred arched doorway could be largely original though the basal jamb stones appear to have been renewed. The wall carries one 20thC brass, an Incorporated Church Building Society plaque of 1873, a wooden board recording extracts from Flora Yates' will (1882) and

another which could be a Welsh version of it.

West wall: the wall is plain, but is probably faced with regular blocks of stone which show as ghosts beneath the plaster.

Chancel. General. One step up from the nave, one within the chancel and one to the sanctuary. Floors have encaustic tiles, and there are raised choir stalls. The walls are as in the nave. A wagon roof with 48 ribbed panels and floriate bosses at the intersections -- attributed by RCAHMW to the 19thC.

North wall: one splayed window. A coat of arms on a board and a marble monument of 1760/1793.

East wall: splayed window, the dressed stone of the embrasure painted to match the colour of the window dressings themselves.

South wall: an 'arcade' gives onto the Yale Chapel and is supported by two wooden pillars resting on square stone blocks. The pillar to the west is original, that to the east is better finished and later in date; the former is slightly faceted and has an octagonal wooden base and an octagonal capital all carved from a single timber.

South (Yale) Chapel. General. Tiled floor with benches resting on wooden boarding. Walls as nave. Roof of three bays with arch-braced collars but the tops of the collars and the raking struts are cusped; only one of the trusses certainly original. Windows have secondary glazing, other than those with stained glass.

North wall: see south wall of chancel.

East wall: one splayed window. Two marble monuments, one of 1867, the other commemorating members of the same family from 1789 to 1821.

South wall: two splayed windows.

West wall: doorway to porch.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Sepulchral Slab: 'early 14thC, commemorating Tangwystyl, daughter of Ieuan ap Maredudd. Inscription runs along the base and on a central label. Leaf trails either side of the label' (Hubbard). In the churchyard at the time of Glynne's visit in 1853, but she is said to have been buried at Valle Crucis and the coffin lid was brought from there.

Stoup: three sides of a rectangular bowl, much weathered. A note above states that it was dug up in the churchyard and believed to be part of the stoup that was cleared out when the gallery was removed. Now resting in the north-west angle of the porch.

Pulpit: '17C. Panels with patterns of flowers, fruit, etc' (Hubbard).

Stalls: '17thC fragments including a panel dating to 1615 are worked into the Jacobean-style stalls that date to Baker's restoration of 1875-76' (Hubbard).

Monuments: a brass in the porch to David Jones (d.1758) and his wife Margaret (d.1740); marble monuments to William Vaughan Pughe (d.1758); and David Thelwell (d.1760) and his wife Mary (d.1793) erected by their son, Watkin.

Coat of Arms: of George III, on wooden board.

Plate: stand paten of 1694/5 and an undated cup.

Bell: of 1735.

Victorian fittings include:

Font: of 1876 according to a plaque on the floor. There is no indication that this incorporates an earlier font (pace Hubbard).

Benefaction boards: of 1882.

CHURCHYARD

Bryneglwys churchyard describes an irregular polygon on top of a slight knoll. The ground within drops gently from south to north, but outside the boundary the ground falls away in all directions. It is well-maintained and is still used for burial.

Boundary: the churchyard is enclosed by a mortared wall of slate slabs, though there is a hint of an earlier bank, externally on the west side. It is raised inasmuch as there is an external drop on all sides, ranging from about 0.5m on the west to over 2.5m on the north. Some, though not all, of this fall can be accounted for by the topographical location.

Monuments: these spread over most of the churchyard though they are less dense on the south side where the older stones are encountered. Quite a number of 18thC monuments survive, though there is considerable weathering, particularly of ledgers. The earliest stone noted was of 1740.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: an extension to the churchyard on the northern side is known from 1901, but there is very little trace of this on the ground. Pennant claimed that the church was built within an old camp but there is no substantive evidence for this belief.

Ancillary features: the only entrance is provided by a pair of ornamental wrought iron gates with a lamp over, on the south side. A tarmac path leads to the porch and around the east and west sides of the building.

Vegetation: there are three yews on the south side of the church, all mature specimens, and conifers along the east and west boundaries with one further yew on the east boundary to the north-east of the chancel.

SOURCES

Clywd SMR
CPAT AP 1995, 95-004-0019 to 0022; 0031 to 0033
CPAT Field Visit: 5 September 1996
Faculty: St Asaph 1875 (NLW)
Faculty: St Asaph 1901 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 257
Gresham 1968, 140
Hubbard 1986, 111
Mize for Repair: 1730 (DRO/DD/DM/115/1)
NMR Aberystwyth
Owen 1886, 3
Quinquennial Report: 1988
Quinquennial Report: 1994
Ridgway 1997, 45
Thomas 1911, 268

CONDITION

Externally the church appears in a satisfactory condition. Internally it appears to be sound though there is some paint peeling in both the chancel and the Yale Chapel.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Poor to Medium

Carrog

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Bridget**PRN** 16738**NGR** SJ11124357

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Bridget's church is situated at the western end of the small settlement at Carrog, less than 2 miles east of Corwen. The original church was destroyed by flooding and the present structure on a new site was erected in 1611, but of this only the north wall of the nave and the side walls of the porch remain, together with the roof timbers. Much of the nave was rebuilt in 1852 and the chancel completely in 1867. The only internal fixture of any age is the font which conceivably could have been rescued from the earlier church. The churchyard is an oblong shape set on a spur between the Dee terrace and a tributary valley. It may have been extended eastwards at some point, and contains a few memorials from the later 18thC and a fragmentary sundial of 1768.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Side walls of porch and north wall of nave are original and presumably date to 1611. The rest has been rebuilt though possibly at two different times in the 19thC: the nave perhaps in 1852 and the chancel in 1867, though an earlier phase of chancel is perhaps represented in lowest courses of north wall. All the windows are Victorian but one in the south wall of the nave may have been a completely new introduction after the wall was constructed.

HISTORY

Now renamed Carrog, the church and parish were earlier known as Llansantffraid Glyn Dyfrdwy.

The original church was recorded in the Norwich Taxation as 'Ecca de lansanfreyt' at a value of 13s 4d, and in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 as 'Ecclia de Lansantfreyd' at £2.

The earlier church, supposedly sited on the bank of the River Dee, was swept away in the early 17thC, and the present church was built on a virgin spot, higher up, in 1611.

Restored in 1852, when open seating replaced the box pews, a gallery on the north side was removed, a vestry and bellcote added, and some of the window dressings were replaced. At this time too, perhaps, the south wall of the nave rebuilt.

Further restoration - in 1867 - led to the removal of the west gallery and the rebuilding of the chancel. A new pulpit was introduced.

The vestry was added in 1911.

ARCHITECTURE

St Bridget's church comprises a nave, a narrower chancel, a vestry attached to the north-west corner of the nave and a south porch. The vestry has been extended to include a church room built in 1911, and there is also a brick-built boiler room against the west end. The building is oriented almost exactly east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of regular, medium to large slabs of shaley slate, grey or grey-brown in colour and coursed. Traces of limewash are visible.

'B' is also of slate slabs but incorporates boulder stones and shows some coursing. Traces of limewash visible.

'C' is of thinner slabs of slate with some coursing.

Roof: slate, fleur-de-lys ridge tiles; stone cross finials to nave, porch and chancel; a gabled, double bellcote at the west end.

Drainage: grave slabs and concrete slabs along north side might conceivably disguise a drain though this is perhaps unlikely. Otherwise nothing.

Exterior

Nave. North wall: in 'B'. Two square-headed windows with double two-centred arched lights; that to west has trefoil tracery, that to east cinquefoil tracery; the lintel stones are slightly different. Both windows in yellow sandstone, that to the east more obviously inserted. Angle buttress clearly an addition to the wall.

South wall: In 'A'. Three windows; that to the east has a two-centred arch, a hoodmould with ornamental stops, three cusped lights, a transom and cusped panels above; to the west is a two-light window with cinquefoil tracery and panels above, the arch and hoodmould the same as the more easterly window though the stops are different. Patches of infilled distinctive grey slate beside the window reveal that it was probably a later insertion. West of the porch is a square-headed window, its single light with an ogee head and cusping.

West wall: wall face rendered. Two single lancets in yellow freestone and, above them, the bellcote.

Chancel. General. String course which on north side is about 1.1m from ground level; diagonal buttresses at east corners.

North wall: most of the wall is in 'A' but the lowest 0.6m or so has grey blocks of rubble of uniform appearance. It is not clear whether this is a variation of the standard masonry elsewhere or the remnant of an earlier phase in the life of the chancel; the latter is perhaps more likely. A single square-headed, two-light window, the lights with cusped heads and all in pale yellow sandstone.

East wall: all in 'A'. Victorian east window has three lights, reticulated tracery and a hoodmould with foliate stops.

South wall: all in 'A'. Two two-light windows of the same appearance as the north side.

Porch. East wall: in 'B'.

South wall: Fabric 'A' apart from some minor infilling. Two-centred arched doorway with stopped chamfers, a hoodmould with decorated stops, and all in buff-yellow freestone; quoins at wall angles in the same freestone. Light over doorway.

West wall: as east wall.

Vestry. General. Earliest portion of vestry is in 'C'; rebuilt in 1911.

Interior

Porch. General. Victorian floor tiles; plain walls plastered and painted; simple purlin and rafter roof but one substantial arched tie-beam directly resting on the wall top and supporting principal rafters to form a truss - 17thC?

North wall: doorway has segmental head and no chamfers. A large iron studded wooden door, probably original, of the 17thC.

East and west walls: wooden-topped stone benches.

Nave. General. Tiled floor, some encaustic; carpet down aisle covers grilles; benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of seven bays with chamfered arch-braced collar trusses and raking struts, early 17thC.

North wall: rectangular splayed windows, a stone plaque beneath one of them noting that windows dedicated to Charles Lloyd who died in 1848. North doorway (leading to vestry) has segmental head and metal studded door. Wall memorials all of 20thC.

East wall: broad two-centred chancel arch, chamfered dressings, hoodmould with decorated stops; 19thC and comparable with chancel windows. Low stone screen.

South wall: three splayed windows, the central one with an inscription on the sill dedicating it to Julia Lloyd who died in 1841, matching those opposite and reinforcing the possibility that the window was inserted, although the glass itself was moved from the chancel. Marble mural tablet of 1798.

West wall: two splayed lancet windows.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Tiles throughout, though rear choir stalls raised on wooden boarding; encaustic tiles in sanctuary. Standard walls but with internal string-course over windows and along east wall. Roof of three bays with fine arch-braced collars and three cusped struts, and two sets of windbraces forming X patterns.

North wall: one 20thC memorial.

South wall: piscina with sedile beneath window; all 19thC. 19thC and 20thC wall monuments.

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Font: round tub-like font, girth grooves near top and bottom; short stem and square base, both of which could be later. Lead lined. 17thC or perhaps earlier; salvaged from the medieval church?

Monument: to Elizabeth Roberts (d.1798) by Carline and Linell of Shrewsbury.

Bells: two, one of them from 1802.

CHURCHYARD

Carrog churchyard is long and irregular, its sides straight with little evidence of curvilinearity. There is no sign that it has been extended. It is overgrown on the north side but better maintained on the south and east. It is spur-sited with the River Dee in its valley to the south and a tributary to the west running down a deeply incised valley; there is a near vertical drop beyond the western end of the church.

Boundary: on the south is a mortared retaining wall, rising internally by up to 0.5m, but considerably more externally, and further east this acquires iron railings on top. On the north side is an ivy-covered dry-stone wall, while on the west are trees and bushes and it is not clear whether there is a specific boundary on this side.

Monuments: these are closely set on the south and east, there are a few to the west, and sparse burials to the north. Most are in reasonable condition though a few show signs of splitting. The oldest are on the south side, going back to the later 18thC with the earliest noted being of 1776. There are, however, also some late 18thC examples on the north side.

Furniture: near the northern perimeter is a sundial on a rectangular pedestal with a chamfered top, Nearly half the dial has been broken away but the inscription survives: "Meredith Hughes Fecit 1768".

Earthworks: it is conceivable that the churchyard has been extended eastwards for there is a slight scarp running northwards from where the railings begin on the south side, and externally the churchyard wall on the north has more boulders on it in its western length.

Ancillary features: double, wrought iron, ornamental gates on east, while a subsidiary entrance on the south has no gate. Tarmac paths to the porch and church rooms.

Vegetation: three yew trees, one of them quite mature, on south side, and two yew bushes on north; all of them lie around the boundary.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1995

CPAT AP: 95-004-0010/0012; 95-005-0019/21; 0025; 95-C-0114/0115; 0117/0118

CPAT Field Visit: 17 October 1996

Faculty 1867 (GAS/Z/PE/26/9): new chancel

Faculty 1911 (NLW): vestry

Quinquennial Report 1985

Quinquennial Report 1993

Thomas 1911, 167

CONDITION

Some signs of poor condition including numerous broken ridge tiles but generally satisfactory outside. Internally some minor cracks in the nave and peeling paint on both the south and north walls.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Clocaenog

Diocese	St Asaph	Dedication	St Trillo
PRN	16749	NGR	SJ08195423
		Previous dedication	St Medwida

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Trillo's church lies on the edge of the small village of Clocaenog, some 6km south-west of Ruthin. Possibly an early medieval foundation, the church exhibits few pre-Reformation features, though it is possible though undemonstrable that some sections of the walls may go back to the medieval period. The east window once carried a date of 1538, and the north doorway should also be 15thC/16thC. It retains a fine rood screen, a 15thC font, some 16thC glass and a range of post-medieval fittings; a fragment of sculpture built into the bellcote could be 12thC or 13thC. The churchyard is rectangular and contains an 18thC sundial and a typical range of grave memorials.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Whether the renewed Decorated window on the north side of the chancel reflects an original feature cannot be ascertained, though in 1882 it was claimed to be a new window. Nor can the degree to which the outside walls have been rebuilt, for there is a lack of differentiation between old and new masonry, but the 1882 faculty does suggest that much if not all of the south wall was rebuilt. The east window, probably largely renewed, can be attributed to the 16thC on the basis of style and a lost inscription of 1538.

The south porch was added in 1882.

HISTORY

The dedication of Clocaenog church is to St Trillo, but there is little else to suggest that this is an early medieval foundation. However, an alternative argument has been promoted that the patron was actually St Medwida (or variations on the name; to Thomas it was St Foddyd), a daughter of St Idloes, and in support of this idea, recourse has been made to a will of a Bangor cleric who in 1530 directed that his body be buried 'in ecclesia de Sancte Medwide Virginis'. This church has been equated with Clocaenog, which was in the diocese of Bangor until 1589.

History however is generally quiet about this small rural church. In the 1254 Taxatio the church appears as 'Ecclesia de Colocaynauc' at a value of 13s 4d, but it is not recorded in that of 1291.

Glynne visited it in 1855 and described a building in late Perpendicular style, with square-headed windows on the south side and new pews.

Restoration occurred in 1856/7 by Kennedy and again by Perkin & Bulmer of Leeds in 1882. Details of the earlier work are sparse, but the faculty for the second restoration required the rebuilding of the south wall, the addition of a new porch, two new windows on the north side, renewal of existing windows, replastering of the interior, and the repointing of the whole of the exterior. During the work two wall paintings were uncovered on the east wall and a coat of arms incorporating a lion on the north wall. None was preserved.

Further work occurred in 1892 for initials and the date were cut into the plaster bed of roof, second bay from the east.

ARCHITECTURE

Clocaenog church comprises a nave and chancel as a single cell and a south porch; there is a bellcote at the west end. The church is oriented south-west to north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church, though not for the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to large blocks of grey and grey-brown sedimentary rock, occasionally with quartz inclusions; larger blocks towards the wall bases; some blocks laminating; irregularly coursed; occasional patches of limewash or render.

Roof: slate roofs, plain grey clay, ridge tiles, but toothed ridge tiles for porch; stump of finial at east end of chancel.

Disproportionately large bellcote with single aperture for one bell, capped with stone slabs with a weathercock above. Of interest is the round-headed arch on the outside (west) face; the stone (or stones) have raised foliated decoration, somewhat worn, indicating re-use; this could possibly be a shrine fragment of the 12thC or 13thC (Dr N Edwards: pers comm). The east side of aperture appears to have a similar arched stone (?or the same), crudely fashioned into a round head but lacking any decoration.

Drainage: drain disguised by 0.8m-wide layer of stone chippings, sunken around all sides, and edged in concrete slabs.

Exterior

Nave. General. Nave and chancel treated as one cell with no external differentiation. Masonry partially obscured by heavy pointing, but seemingly 'A' throughout. All windows in mustard yellow freestone, of Victorian date, unless otherwise stated.

North wall: in 'A'; at higher levels the stone is a little smaller and could conceivably be a rebuild, though no junction is discernible. From the west: i) flat-topped frameless window with two two-centred arched lights that have cusped heads; ii) north doorway in red sandstone with a four-centred arch and chamfered dressings -?original; iii) window as i); iv) 2m east of iii) but at a lower level is a blocked iron pipe, projecting slightly from wall face, presumably relating to a former boiler; v) lighting the chancel, a window with two-centred arch, two cusped lights and a quatrefoil above, Decorated in style.

East wall: on this side only, a chamfered plinth at a height of c.1m, the chamfer in red sandstone and showing as a rather uneven line. Above is a five-light two-centred arched Perpendicular window with cinquefoil tracery to the main lights, a transom at springing level, two two-light sub-arches, panel tracery and cusping, complex moulding and a hoodmould above. Recorded as once having been inscribed with the date 1538; this has now gone but there is an entry in the church register to this effect. Jambs and sill in pink sandstone, the rest in yellow, none of which looks very worn; mullions certainly renewed and much of the other dressed stone may have been. The wall itself could be largely original.

South wall: absence of heavy pointing highlights the mixed stonework in this wall which could be original but is perhaps more likely to be rebuilt in view of the 19thC faculty requirements. Some flecks of render or limewash remain. Features from east are: i) a square-headed three light window, the lights having round heads; ii) + iii) standard two-light windows as north nave.

West wall: plain wall face with large stones underpinning and projecting beyond the base; massive quoins bond this and the south wall together. No obvious rebuilding.

Porch. General. Added in 1882. Dwarf foundation walls topped by chamfered freestone, supporting a timber superstructure; six glazed windows on either side. Broad south entrance has upright timbers carrying an arch-braced tie-beam with, above, raking struts and wooden panelling.

Interior

Porch. General. Slate slab floor; roof of close-set collared rafters. Porch is not set symmetrically to the main south door of the church, itself a Victorian feature, but no obvious reason for this anomaly.

Nave. General. Floor largely carpetted; benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Late medieval roof (16thC?) extending across nave and chancel has nine bays, all with arch-braced collars and raking struts, and all cusped to give one quatrefoil and two trefoils; two tiers of cusped windbraces.

North wall: wall tapers outwards slightly. Splayed windows of Victorian freestone; splayed reveal and segmental head to north door, with three steps down into nave; one wooden mural tablet of 1705.

East wall: screen.

South wall: two splayed windows, no obvious taper to wall, no features.

West wall: set centrally in the wall, a projecting 'buttress' carries bellrope, and there is a doorway at the base. Above this is a coat-of-arms and an undated Incorporated Church Building Society plaque. On wall face to north of this projection are two benefaction boards in English and Welsh of 1778.

Chancel. General. One step up to sanctuary, another to altar. Carpet over floors, choir stalls raised on wooden boarding. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: window embrasure is in red sandstone, has a two-centred, shouldered arch to the reveal and could be original. Three marble mural tablets, one of 1796, the others more recent.

East wall: the wall is thinner than those to north and south, and just above eaves level it is inset to create a ledge; this reportedly may be a means of counteracting external bulge in the wall.

South wall: splayed window with Victorian dressings.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Rood Screen: of standard Welsh type, 7.7m long, 'with continuous middle rails between the end standards; set out in twelve divisions, five bays on either side of a wider central doorway. Heavily moulded uprights and bressumer, and two stages of trail on the west and one on the east. Traceried heads to the openings, and pierced tracery in the wainscot panelling' (Hubbard). No sign of structural vice or rood stair. On the chancel side of the northern half is an inscription "W:B:S: BW: 1672".

Font: octagonal bowl, stem and plinth, with some roll moulding on stem; probably 15thC.

Stained glass: fragments in the top panels of the east window tracery are presumably of 1538.

Altar rails: 'pierced traceried panels must be from the rood loft parapet' (Hubbard).

Pulpit: dated 1695, with initials 'W.R.' and 'I.H.'.

Chandelier: of wood, dated 1725 with initials 'S T K R'.

Dugout chest: built into the wall, just to south of north door. Referred to in a terrier of 1801.

Monument: 'Evan Lloyd ap Rice and others, with a latest commemoration date of 1705; painted on wood with border of skulls and cross bones' (Hubbard). Rev. Thomas Roberts (d.1796), in marble by J. Turner of Chester. Stacked against west wall of nave, and largely inaccessible are eleven stone mural tablets; those that are visible are of 18thC date.

Benefaction boards: in English and Welsh of 1778.

Hatchment: undated, on north wall of nave above ap Rice memorial.

Plate: credence paten of 1724/5.

Registers: from 1672.

19thC features include:

Royal Arms: post-1801 Hanoverian; a painted panel on west wall.

Stained glass: easternmost window on south by Holland of Warwick, with a commemoration date of 1865.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is small and slopes from west to east. It is well maintained, and recent burials take place in an extension to the west. The shape of the churchyard is decidedly rectangular and there is no evidence whatsoever that this was originally a circular churchyard.

Boundary: a stone retaining wall on the south; the former boundary on the west is now a scarp bank within the present graveyard; on the north is a low drystone wall with a hedge on top, and on the east is a vertical drop of up to 3m to yards and the backs of houses.

Monuments: these are spread over most of the yard, though generally are not tightly packed. Many of the earlier monuments are badly weathered though it is clear that 18thC examples do exist to the south and east of the church. In addition there are graves on the north side going back to 1743. There are several railed chest tombs of 19thC date, and a few ledgers to the east of the church. The earliest memorial recognised was that of 1743.

Furniture: sundial with octagonal base, tapering pillar, a plate bearing the inscription 'Joyce Ruthin Sulp. 1753', and a gnomon still in position. In the south-east corner of the churchyard with a war memorial adjacent.

Earthworks: it is impossible to determine whether the churchyard is raised. There is a substantial drop to the south but this could be a result of the erosion of the trackway edging the churchyard; and on the east the natural scarp has been cut back to allow cottages to be built.

Ancillary features: lychgate of concrete blocks, a slated roof and concrete finial to which Hubbard curiously attributed a date of 1691; a single wooden gate. Tarmac path to church porch and to new burial ground to west. A small metal gate gives access in the north-east corner of the churchyard but is served only by a grass path.

Vegetation: one massive yew to the south-west of the church, a second, smaller one to the north, and a bush yew beside the path from the lychgate.

SOURCES

Archaeologia Cambrensis 1882, 237
CPAT Field Visit: 20 August 1996
Crossley 1946, 10
Faculty: St Asaph 1882 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 104
Hubbard 1986, 131
NMR Aberystwyth
Quinquennial Review 1984
Ridgway 1997, 60
Thomas 1911, 69

CONDITION

Limited signs of damp internally and some minor cracking. Otherwise satisfactory.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Corwen

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** Ss Mael and Sulien**PRN** 100816**NGR** SJ07904340

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of Ss Mael and Sulien lies at the centre of the small town of Corwen in the valley of the Dee some 9 miles west of Llangollen. Without doubt it was founded in the early medieval period and became a mother church for the area. The medieval structure had a west tower and transepts but the south transept was demolished when an aisle was built in the 19thC, and both the tower and the body of the church have seen considerable reconstruction, though at least it survived a 1765 plan to erect a completely new church. The main roof is late 17thC, and significant fittings include an early font, a 14thC priest's effigy and a pillar stone used as a door lintel. A monolith of putative prehistoric date is built into the porch wall and there is the shaft of a fine 12thC cross in the churchyard. The churchyard itself is surrounded by buildings and its shape has almost certainly been modified over the centuries. It contains a good range of grave memorials, many dating back to the 18thC.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Original date of the tower is uncertain but claimed to be 14thC. It reveals some rebuilding at belfry level, most noticeably on the west side.

Nave and chancel in similar fabric and largely original, though date uncertain for no guidance from architectural features; claimed to be 12thC-13thC. All windows are of Victorian date except perhaps in tower and the lancets in the east wall of chancel. The latter could be renovated originals and Thomas claimed that in 1729 such narrow lancets had existed throughout the church. Nave was extended westwards, presumably in medieval era and before tower built, perhaps using stone from former west wall. It should be noted that Webb claimed a small window high up in the east wall of tower (i.e. the west wall of nave) which would have let in light before tower built.

The north transept is complicated. It may have been added on to existing nave, but the sequence is difficult to unravel.

HISTORY

The dedication is to two 6thC saints, although earlier authorities - Edward Lhuyd, Thomas Pennant - refer to Sulien alone. The churchyard shape and location as well as the dedication suggest an early medieval genesis.

The earliest documented reference to Corwen is in 1222 when the Shrewsbury Cartulary referred to 16 clerics here. This tends to confirm that in the early medieval era there was a clas community at Corwen which functioned as a mother church to the area.

The 1254 Norwich Taxation refers to 'Ecc'a de Coruaen' with a value of £2 13s 4d, while in 1291 its several portions totalled £28.

The Rural Dean's report of 1730 noted that Corwen was "a very large church with little light". His report also indicates that the transepts were each lit by four lancets, "astonishing and monstrous"; that the church was roughly paved, and that the Creed, Lord's Prayer etc were written on the walls but it was too dark to read them. The vicar only rose "from his stupor for a lucrative funeral or wedding". Plans to build a new church in 1765 failed through a lack of funds.

In 1777 renovations included the new porch, new windows as replacements for existing lancets, a plaster ceiling (on which the date was incised) and the repair of the north transept. New bells were added at this time.

Sir Stephen Glynne visited the church in 1824 and again in 1849 recording a plain cruciform church with a west tower and north porch, and the exterior whitewashed. The tower had plain battlements and slit windows, but modernised belfry windows. The three lancets in the east wall received special mention, as did the font, the sepulchral slab, Iorweth's effigy and slab, and 'a curious chest made of a solid piece of wood'.

In 1871 the south aisle with a new arcade was added by Benjamin Ferrey, but the south transept was removed. At this time too, the lancets in the east wall were unblocked, but other windows were replaced, the roof repaired, the north porch repaired, a new stone arch inserted for the north transept, the pews were removed, the altar moved to a different location and the chancel fitted with encaustic tiles. Restoration cost £2500.

West vestry erected in 1898.

Tower restored in 1907; this involved the top stage from below the string course, re-setting of old window dressings on new sills and the insertion of new louvres. Inside the tower there was new flooring, new dressings to the entrance from the nave and a new door. At this time too, graves found beneath the tower when the heating chamber excavated.

The church was hit by lightning in 1984, resulting in a new ceiling for the chancel.

ARCHITECTURE

Corwen church comprises a long nave and chancel, a south aisle shorter than the nave, a west tower attached to the nave, a north transept, a north porch near the north-west angle of the nave, and two vestries on the south side, one in the angle formed by the south aisle and the tower, the other in the angle of the south aisle and the chancel.

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

Fabrics: 'A' comprises rubble masonry, small to large medium blocks with some slabs; random coursing; better dressed blocks for quoins; limewash traces. Stone thought to be shale and in a variety of colours: grey, buff, pink etc; also some quartz.

'B' is very similar to 'A' but rubble is generally smaller.

'C' consists of long slabs of grey, slaty shale, with irregular coursing, and limewash remnants.

'D' is of shale with some lumps of granular sedimentary rock and also large blocks of quartz; random coursing.

'E' is of irregular blocks of grey shale, uncoursed; some limewash remnants. Similar to 'A'.

'F' is as 'E' but more variable colours to stone. In places sooty deposits on the stone which also has more extensive limewash residues than elsewhere.

'G' small lumps and slabs of shale and slate, grey and brown in colour; not coursed; heavy rendering makes identification difficult.

'A' is medieval, 'F' could be original medieval (13thC?), but also reused in nave, and 'E' used for extension of nave at some stage in medieval period. 'B' almost certainly from 1907, 'C' probably of 1777, but 'D' could be earlier. 'G' of unknown date.

Roof: slates, red clay ridge tiles; cross finials to porch, north transept, chancel and west vestry.

Drainage: concrete-edged drainage gully along south aisle. A gully, too, along parts of north side and side walls of transept and porch; in places drain cover provided by old graveslabs.

Exterior

Tower. General. In 'A'. Concrete chamfer to plinth at base level (0.1m+). First stage of tower rises uninterrupted to string course above belfry windows; battlemented parapet.

North wall: five steps up to square-headed doorway; lintel carries inscription "This tower was restored AD 1907", together with names of vicar and churchwardens. Above this a slit window, off-set because of clock face, with surround of smaller rubble, and a small slab as a lintel. Above and slightly to west is large clock face set in circular surround of bricks - from 1907 or perhaps earlier? Next a louvred, belfry window with a triangular-headed arch formed by slabs of shale on edge and projecting to form hoodmould; two lights, also triangular-headed, with the heads formed of longitudinally cleaved slates, but at springer level a slight downturn to give curve of a proto-ogee head and with a lozenge-shaped light above; no jambs; window is broad in relation to height and design if not materials may be from 1907.

East wall: nave roof rises to well over half way up first stage. Standard belfry window partially surrounded by 'B'; this and the stone of the parapet is rather darker than rest of wall face: an indication of the 1907 rebuilding?

South wall: lower wall face disguised by west vestry. Half way up an off-centre slit, comparable with that on north. Standard belfry window with some 'B' around it.

West wall: at ground level a standard slit window. Standard, too, is the belfry window, though this does have a deliberate curve to one of the arch stones mimicking an ogee. Much of stone at belfry level is 'B' extending down to 3m or more below window.

Porch. General. Reportedly dates to 1777. Heavily pointed in places. Fabric 'C'.

North wall: two-centred arched doorway in yellow sandstone with small pillars rising from pyramidal stops and carried over the arch as ribbing. Though in 'C' masonry, it is more irregular above archway and is evidence of insertion of this doorway, as too are the sandstone kneelers; thought to have been undertaken during restoration of 1871. Ornamental iron gates have date 1891 on them.

East wall: plain. 'C' only at north-east angle, otherwise 'D' incorporating a monolith (perhaps prehistoric) known as 'Carreg i Big yn y fach rewlyd' (the pointed stone in the icy nook); one stone in 'D' has graffiti initials though set upside down.

West wall: in 'C'. Tie rod set through front (north) wall holds the two together.

Nave. General. Wall face pointed very heavily to about two-thirds of its height.

North wall: west of the porch masonry is 'E' with 'F' above; trefoiled light with two-centred head, all in Victorian buff-yellow sandstone and showing signs of insertion. East of porch there is variable pointing and heavy render-like cover hinders identification. Quoins built into wall above east edge of porch indicate a straight joint and suggest that all the wall to the west is an extension. Wall east of quoins looks like 'F' or at least a variety of it. In this section one Victorian two-light window, the lights with trefoil heads and a quatrefoil above, a two-centred arch and a head-stopped hoodmould; a few signs of insertion.

South wall: hidden by south aisle.

North Transept. North wall: base battered to maximum height of 1.2m, then vertical wall face for further metre, finally the rest of the wall inset above this. All in 'C'. Windows both in buff-yellow Victorian sandstone. Main one has three lights with roundels above, all under a two-centred arch with curious geometric stops. In gable is a slit window.

East wall: heavy pointing. Mainly 'G' though some large slabs below; appears to butt against nave wall. One Victorian lancet window in buff-yellow sandstone.

West wall: at north-west angle walling is 'C' but this rapidly gives way to 'F' at base of wall and 'G' over the rest; heavily rendered wall face. Window as on east side, inserted through render.

Chancel. North wall: wall face east of transept is probably 'F' all over, but confused by two different types of pointing above and below window sill level. Ordnance Survey map shows some sort of feature here, now gone, and this may account for a shale lump with a socket in it set into the wall near the transept. Two two-light windows, each with foiled lancets and a roundel above, a two-centred arch and a hoodmould with foliate stops, all in yellow sandstone.

East wall: faint batter to wall which is all in 'F'. Three lancets, all unchamfered, but frames inset like modern windows; edge stones as voussoirs. These are 13thC in origin but have been completely renewed. In the gable is a roundel within which is a trefoil window; the gable heavily pointed could be rebuilt.

South wall: presumed to be in 'F', though some rebuilding at south-east angle. Two windows as north side, that to the west showing more signs of insertion than the easterly one. In front of this wall is the east vestry with its own porch beneath the westerly window.

South Aisle. General. Lean-to against south wall of nave. Slope of roof line all but continuous with that of nave.

South wall: this has some 'C' mixed with large medium-sized blocks, quite well shaped. Four sets of triple lancets in buff sandstone. Vestry butts against quoins of this wall at west end. Commemorative slab set in west wall of aisle and reset when vestry built for it records 'This corner stone was laid by the Hon[or]able C.H.Wynn August 22nd 1871. Removed by him June 25th 1898'.

East Vestry. General. Gabled with paired lancet windows.

West Vestry. General. Fabric of grey slatey shale blocks more regular than that of south aisle. Window in south wall has round mini-columns comparable with those of north doorway to porch. Marble slab over west door has date of 1898.

Interior

Porch. General. Floor tiled in red and black; walls plain, plastered and painted; roof of simple, close-set, collared trusses.

East wall: wooden bench along wall.

South wall: segmental-headed doorway with stopped chamfers, all in pale sandstone and of no great age. Plaque recording grant of £30 from Incorporated Society for Building and Churches in 1870.

West wall: as east wall.

Tower. General. Four steps up from nave. Not accessible.

Nave. General. One step up from porch. Red and black tiled floor with carpet over it in many places; heating grilles along walls; benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of six bays, one truss dated to 1687 and the whole likely to be 17thC, though repaired in 19thC. Some variation in the trusses: tie-beams resting on wooden corbels, queen-post collars, struts, and considerable cusped decoration. Between the transept arches is a supplementary, foiled collar truss.

North wall: splayed window; broad two-centred arch in buff sandstone, of Victorian date, into north transept. Five 19thC and 20thC memorials, one of 1780.

East wall: chancel arch, broad, two-centred of two orders, springing from large foliate corbels set into side walls: Victorian of c.1871.

South wall: four-bay arcade, the last on the east filled by the organ. Plain two-centred arches with capitals of similar appearance to the corbels of the chancel arch, and cylindrical piers - Victorian, of c.1871.

West wall: high two-centred arch to tower, chamfered, but the dressings date from 1907 restoration. Nine memorial tablets, mainly in marble. Three of the 18thC, the rest 19thC and early 20thC.

North Transept. General. Used as a small side chapel from 1931, and prior to 1845 it functioned as a school. Wooden block floor with altar raised on a small dais; standard wall finish. Roof of three bays with arch-braced collars and raking struts; two tiers of cusped windbraces. Late medieval? A couple of 20thC memorials on walls.

South wall: highly decorated screen of 1931.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Floor as nave with carpet over; encaustic tiles in sanctuary; choir stalls raised on wooden boarding. Walls as nave. Wagon roof with one truss on corbels; 36 panels replaced in 1984 after fire.

North wall: splayed windows. Priest's effigy of?15thC, in a relatively modern alcove with chamfered segmental arch. 19thC and 20thC memorials.

South wall: splayed windows; 19thC memorial.

South Aisle. General. Tiled floor. Standard wall finish. Simple lean-to roof of rafters and three arch-braced half trusses rising from corbels.

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Pillar stone: roughly quadrangular, but broken in three pieces; coarsely cut linear Latin cross, of 7th-9thC; utilised as lintel of south door of vestry. Fragments of two others with plaitwork and interlace were propped in a corner of the church at the beginning of the century but have now disappeared. One is illustrated by Owen (1886, 21).

Font: circular bowl with gently tapering stem on three basal steps. Bowl decorated with round and cable bands. Considered to be 12thC; restored in 19thC.

Effigy: of a priest in low relief, Iorwerth of Corwen, c.1340-1350.

Chest: carved from a single block of wood retaining metal fittings including double locks.

Monuments: wooden memorial to Gwen Hughes (d.1810); to Mary Roberts (d.1789) and John Roberts

(d.1835), wood within frame; to Maria Lloyd (d.1780), in marble, putto with urn bearing medallion portrait of deceased, heraldry, by Vander Hagen of Salop; to John Jones (d.1797); to Rev John Jones (d.1770) and brother Edward (d.1788), a brass in wooden frame; To Edward Evans (d.1816) and others, in wood; To Henry Parry (d.1774) and his sister, Margaret (d.1800); to Roger Jones (d.1790) and wife Elizabeth (d.1788).

Bells: three, two of 1777, one of 1840.

Plate: cup, paten cover, credence paten, alms dish and flagon all of 1724/5.

Clock: by Joyce of Whitchurch dated 1878.

[Crossley notes that the Powysland Museum in Welshpool contained a carved wooden fragment from Corwen church].

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is now heptagonal, and though one suspects its sides have been cut back there is no evidence at all that it was originally curvilinear. A small stream runs past its north-western boundary but the downwards slope within the churchyard is towards the east and north-east, the churchyard being located on the lower southern slopes of the Dee Valley. The churchyard is well-maintained and is still used for burial, on the eastern side of the north transept.

Boundary: buildings back against the churchyard on most sides except the south-east; on the west is a drystone wall up to 1.9m high and the ground is internally banked against it; on the south-east is a mortared wall but blocked embrasures indicate that buildings formerly filled part of the yard here. On the north-west there is a low wall between the yard and the stream.

Monuments: marked graves are common to the east, south and west of the church, less dense to the north; much of the south-eastern sector near the perimeter is also clear. Re-organisation has occurred: some are propped against the perimeter wall, slabs have been used for paving and edging in places, and there is a uniformity of layout elsewhere. A large number of 18thC gravestones and ledgers survive, the earliest seen being of 1715 to the east of the church, although a record made at the beginning of the century noted two of 1654 on the south side of the church, as well quite a number from the period 1670-1690 to the south-east. The listed building schedule notes that it as an exceptionally rich set of monuments.

Furniture: cross shaft and base, the shaft 2.2m high and 0.3m square, the base 1.6m in diameter and 0.3m deep; top of shaft has 'capital' with interlace ornament; on east face a small Latin cross in relief; generally attributed to the 12thC; immediately to south-west of church. Triple-stepped plinth near lychgate on north side has sundial with gnomon dated 1992. It replaced a carved wooden pillar that supported a sundial with a date of 1715.

Earthworks: it is difficult to determine whether any part of the yard is raised: no evidence of such on the east and south-east. The church itself is set on a slight platform, for the ground rises quite steeply and there may be some deliberate terracing. The only sign of the former south transept is a slight dip in the ground.

Ancillary features: lychgate has timber superstructure on stone foundation walls; no inscription, but it is known to have been built in 1886. Small metal swivel gate on west, a pair of iron gates on east. Tarmac path from lychgate to porch; grave slabs provide path around north side to east gate.

Corwen College, consisting of six small houses on the south side of the churchyard, was rebuilt in 1750 under the will of William Eyton of Plas Isa, Corwen (dated 1710), and repaired in 1938; a plaque faces the church.

Vegetation: one immature yew to the west of the tower; a large oak in the south-east, some pines on south and near tower.

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Cwm

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Mael & St Sulien**PRN** 16756**NGR** SJ06627746

SUMMARY

The church of St Mael and St Sulien at Cwm, a little more than two miles to the north-east of St Asaph, is a small single chambered structure set within a rectangular churchyard. It retains rubblestone walls which might be of 14thC or perhaps 15thC date, and has a Perpendicular east window and contemporary and later windows elsewhere. Inside is a square font of 12thC/13thC date, fragments of late medieval glass and parts of several 14thC sepulchral slabs and part of a medieval cross with carved crucifixions on the sides. The churchyard includes a hooded tomb of 17thC date.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Single chambered church with no structural divisions, apart from differing floor levels, and no obviously significant changes in the masonry. The shell of the building is claimed as 14thC, though there is no substantive evidence for this early date unless it is the west window on the south side. There is a Perpendicular east window suggesting the 15thC/16thC and other windows as well as the two doors of broadly the same date. Other windows date from the later 16th-17thC and 18thC. The porch might be 18thC though it contains nothing that is diagnostic. The interior was not restored until the beginning of the 20thC.

HISTORY

The church is dedicated to two 6thC saints, but it has been suggested that the earliest foundation stood on the hill above, and known as 'yr hen Eglwys'.

It is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecc'a de Cum' with a value of 30s, and in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 with a value of £9.

The earliest masonry in the present structure is believed to date from the following century, but the windows suggest other, later phases of work.

Glynne visited in 1839 and erroneously believed it to be dedicated to St Valacian, following Browne Willis. At this time the church was completely whitewashed, and was 'plain and neglected', the architecture late Perpendicular with square-headed windows in the main. There were open seats in a rotten state, an 'ugly wooden screen across the chancel'

In the mid-19thC, the oak roof was replaced by one of deal; at some point also the chancel screen was removed. The western gallery and pews, introduced in 1843, were removed in 1881 and replaced by open seats.

The church was restored in 1901 by Harold Hughes. During the extensive restoration work, black-painted words were discovered on the old wall surfaces; they covered a white background with an orange border. Part of the Lord's Prayer was uncovered on the north side of the east altar. These have gone, as have the

fragments of the rood screen that Thomas saw on the west wall.

A new lectern, reading desk, altar and choir seating were introduced in the 1930s.

In 1946 a new north vestry was added and in addition a boiler house and coke store at the north-west corner. The internal screen that formed the previous vestry was removed and 15 new pews inserted.

In 1954, a new organ gallery was built at the west end. Further 20thC additions included oak altar rails, pulpit and new west door in heavy oak.

In 1971, the plasterwork was removed from the porch walls and the stonework repointed.

ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a north vestry and south porch, with a bellcote over the west end of the nave. It is oriented south-west to north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here, though the churchyard is described in conventional terms.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of medium to large-sized blocks of limestone rubble, randomly coursed, with particularly large blocks, about 1m square, as quoins and also in the west wall; also some grey shale slabs and blocks and occasional pebblestones; sparse limewash residue, but heavy mortar pointing which may mask subtle differences in the masonry.

'B' is of irregular, quarried limestone with yellow sandstone dressings.

'C' small to medium blocks of limestone with grey shale in greater quantities than in 'A'.

'A' and 'C' could be 14thC, 'B' is of 1946-7.

Roofs: slates with red ceramic ridge tiles; now no finials - that at the east end may have been broken off.

Drainage: cast iron guttering and downspouts discharge into channels, from 0.1m to 0.6m deep at the east end: along the north, east and south walls, and on two sides of the porch.

Exterior

General. The church follows the slope of the ground rising from west to east. It is more apparent internally where the three floor levels equate with the chancel, nave and baptistry, and the west door is ten steps below the sanctuary.

Nave and chancel. General. Described together as no external differentiation. All the masonry is 'A'.

North wall: all in 'A' except that 'C' forms the basal courses to the north wall of the chancel to a height of about 0.3m above present ground level. This could be no more than the contemporary foundation, but conceivably it might be an earlier wall survival. From the west: i) vestry. ii) square-headed window with three segmental-headed lights, sunken spandrels, hollowed chamfers to the jambs, all in olive-coloured freestone without any signs of replacement. Probably 17thC. There are indications that it has been inserted into the wall. iii) a similar window in the chancel except that there are four lights; red sandstone has been used for the mullions and one of the light heads and part of another have been renewed in similar stone. This window also has a label with simple stops. It has been suggested that until the insertion of these windows the north wall lacked any apertures and this is a moot point.

East wall: masonry disguised by heavy pointing. A Perpendicular window in with a four-centred arch and deeply hollowed chamfers; five stepped two-centred lights with cinquefoil tracery; hoodmould with simple stops, and a hollowed soffit. Original olive-yellow sandstone dressings remain particularly in the light heads, but there are renewed mullions in pink sandstone.

South wall: all in 'A' with no evidence of 'C'; quoins of large rectangular blocks of limestone and long slabs of olive-yellow sandstone. From the west: i) square-headed Perpendicular window with two trefoiled lights but lacking a frame; sunken spandrels, chamfered jambs; some renewal including the mullion and half of one of the heads in darker sandstone. ii) south porch. iii) a round-headed Georgian window with projecting keystone and capitals, all in olive sandstone; the window is flush with the wall face and a 1769 datestone is set in the wall above the keystone. iv) a deeply recessed Perpendicular square-headed window with two cinquefoiled lights and a label with plain stops, very much comparable with the window in the east wall; the original greyish sandstone repaired with red for some of the dressings, including the mullion.

West wall: strengthened by a thickening of the wall, an extra c.0.4m deep, rising to two-thirds of the height of the wall (visible also 'in section' in the south wall by the nature of the quoins and the range of masonry), and then battered off to the original wall face. And at the base of each corner, projecting plinths provide extra support. The thickened wall is in 'A', though with additional stone types. Two-centred doorway with differentially worn, moulded dressings in both pink and grey freestone, and a hoodmould with hollowed soffit; all original. Approached by five steps.

Bellcote: Turret in regular blocks of freestone and capped with sandstone contains two bells hung in round-headed apertures; rusticated roof.

North Vestry. General. An addition in 'B' to the north wall. 1947 datestone in north gable apex. Doors on east and west, three windows on north, all square-headed.

South Porch. General. Constructed in 'A'-type masonry although almost certainly later in date than the body of the church; perhaps an 18thC addition. Entrance on the south via a round-headed arch with long stone voussoirs, rustic in appearance. The south wall has a faintly splayed base.

Interior

South Porch. General. Flagstone floor, unplastered walls, roof of exposed rafters and purlins.

North wall: two-centred chamfered doorway to nave, with complex filleted mouldings, and a hoodmould with hollowed soffit and half-round stops; the west one carries sharpening marks. The top of the arch is in light pink sandstone and the lower jambs in grey. This might suggest that the latter are older, but the hoodmould in pink sandstone looks to be original. A heavy, iron studded, oak door with beaten wrought iron hinges and a key c.0.3m long, weighing a pound.

East and west walls: stone benches now plastered and boarded.

Nave. General. Flagged floor to the baptistry at the west end includes weatherworn gravestones including one of 1719. There are three steps down to the west door and two up into the nave. The nave aisle is carpetted and there are raised woodblock floors under the benches. Plastered and painted walls, but some dressed stonework is exposed. Roof is continuous across nave and chancel, 17 narrow bays formed by 18 arch-braced collar trusses with raking struts, the trusses springing from the wall plates; exposed rafters and purlins. The whole is modern.

The south-west corner of the nave has been partitioned off and is now used as a store room. A gallery at the west end houses the organ.

North wall: window embrasure has modern red sandstone lintels. A modern vestry arch is located under the west gallery. Two medieval sepulchral slabs and the fragments of a third are pinned to the wall.

East wall: divide between nave and chancel by three steps only.

South wall: segmental arch to the reveal of the south door; weathered grey sandstone stoup in a round-headed niche on the east side of the doorway.

West wall: round-headed splayed reveal in red sandstone, 1.5m deep, to west door. Above this is the modern organ gallery, with panelled front, supported on four wooden uprights.

Chancel. General. Tiled floor in the sanctuary but some grave slabs in the chancel floor. Walls as nave. Roof is a continuation of the nave and as such is described above.

North wall: a high angular pointed arch with a hoodmould over a recess formerly for a tomb; the recess is now plastered over leaving the dressings of the arch exposed; flower heads decorate the chamfered edge of the soffit; 14thC. Hubbard thought the stones were re-used, accounting for its curious shape, but Thomas stated that its tomb was of 'Tangwystl, the wife of Llewelyn ap Meilir' which had originally been in the chancel but at the time that he wrote in the late 19thC had been moved into the churchyard. One 18thC marble memorial.

East wall: Perpendicular east window contains fragments of medieval stained glass. 20thC altar and fittings.

South wall: only a window embrasure with unpainted dressings.

West wall: gallery (see above).

Vestry. General. Wooden floor, carpetted over; plastered walls and rafted ceiling.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: the bowl is square but with four unequal sides, and the inside is also square, on a hexagonal stem and square base of more recent date. The bowl has been claimed as 12thC/13thC.

Stoup: round bowl with faceted underside; some damage.

Chest: iron bound oak plank chest with three locks, 17thC.

Stained glass: late medieval fragments in the east window, consisting of a central panel of mixed stained glass formerly in various windows in the church. The 120 coloured fragments include the sun, parts of a chalice, the top of a crosier, hands clasped in prayer and several heads.

Sculpture: portion of a cross head with virtually identical Crucifixions on either side, but now showing the torso only. Sited behind the font on a small stone shelf, and perhaps from the churchyard cross. Medieval.

Sepulchral slabs: several broken slabs placed on the north wall near font. Descriptions based on Gresham and Hubbard are:

- i) early 14thC four-circle cross slab with open-ended (penannular) circles back-to-back.
- ii) late 14thC foliated cross slab. Maltese cross and a pattern of lobed leaves on one side of the shaft and an inscription on the other, with some fleur-de-lys decoration.
- iii) base of a late 14thC cross slab commemorating Hywel ap H... ap Maredudd. Inscription up the middle with lobed leaf patterns on one side and a sword on the other.

Gravestones: several post-Reformation examples now placed in the church:

- i) Leonilus ap Hugh sepultus 1636
- iii Margaret Roger the wyffe of Robert Griffith d.1620, and Roger Williams of Plas yn Combe (d.1662).
- iii) William Edwards of Comb (d.1719).

Monument: an 18thC classical marble tablet with heraldry and broken pediment to Dr Humphrey Parry of

Pwllhaloge (d.1744).

Plate: includes a chalice from 1639 which was given to the church in 1647. An old pewter pot and oblong plate of the same period.

Registers: from 1727.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Pulpit: from 1964, replacing one of 1952 from Christ Church, Welshpool (of 1881).

Altar rails: installed 1958 to replace rotting Jacobean rails.

Bells: two new ones purchased in 1947 to replace the single bell.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard at Cwm is a relatively small rectangular enclosure which was extended eastwards at a later date. The ground slopes from east to west.

Boundary: a stone wall which forms a revetment to the churchyard on the south-west, but stands to 1.5m on the south-east and north-east and about 1m on the north-west.

Monuments: a few marked graves surround the church, with a preponderance of ledgers and grave slabs laid flat. More recent burials accommodated in the north-eastern extension and cremations in the south-east corner of the old churchyard. Earliest dated monument noted was of 1606. There is also the canopied tomb of Grace Williams, wife of John Griffith of Bersham, interred in 1642. This is reportedly 'the most elaborate of the Welsh hooded tombs. Its base has two by one open arched bays, with fluted columns, decorated spandrels and strapwork frieze; an open semi-circular canopy enriched with volutes and, under the soffit, an angel and skull and shields' (Hubbard).

Furniture: none seen.

Earthworks: a low scarp bank on the north-east side denotes the extent of the original churchyard. On the south-west the churchyard is raised about 1.5m above the road.

Ancillary features: the south-western boundary contains two entrances - a pair of iron gates with an over arch set in weathered sandstone pillars at the west corner and a single gate at the south corner. Tarmac paths.

Well: St. Mael and St. Sulien's holy well is located in the vicarage garden, its covering bearing a date of 1772. The trough from the old well is set into the front boundary wall of the vicarage.

Vegetation: several yews on north side of chancel but their age is uncertain. A 1791 records state that there were six ash, one sycamore, two firs and one old yew tree in the churchyard.

SOURCES

Arch Cam 1904, 213
CPAT Field 5 October 1996 & 19 June 1998
Clwyd SMR
Faculty: St Asaph 1946 (NLW): new vestry
Glynne 1884, 85
Gresham 1968, 118; 212; 222

Hubbard 1986, 340
Jones 1992, 178
Neaverson 1954, 10
NMR Aberystwyth
Quinquennial Review 1988
Thomas 1908, 396

CONDITION

Church in good state of repair. Well-kept churchyard.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Cyffylliog

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Mary**PRN** 16640**NGR** SJ05905783

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church lies above the village of Cyffylliog (frequently Gyffyliog) in the hills about 3 miles to the west of Ruthin. It is a simple structure with an undifferentiated nave and chancel, and little of architectural distinction, apart from an east window with Decorated tracery, and others which though now totally renewed may have originated in the late 13thC-14thC. The font and re-used fragments of the rood screen are all that survive from the medieval era. The churchyard is small and rectangular with a fairly typical range of gravestones and slabs from the earlier part of the 18thC onwards.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A simple cell for which no phasing can be distinguished because of the coarseness of the masonry. With the possible exception of that in the east wall all the windows have been renewed or replaced. The east window is of the Decorated period in its original design, and Hubbard saw hints of the Decorated style in a couple of the south windows. The south door and porch were destroyed at the time of the restoration. Now a west porch of early 20thC date.

HISTORY

Cyffylliog is said to have been built by Griffith Goch of Bachymbyd and Pentre Coch near Ruthin at the end of the 12thC. It was a chapel of ease to Llanynys until 1873.

Prior to the 17thC there was a wooden belfry with a heavy timber frame, but a plain stone gable was substituted for this.

In 1856 the chancel was raised and re-flagged.

The church was almost completely rebuilt in 1876 by A. Baker, and during its restoration it lost its south doorway and porch, and all its old windows and roofs. The west gallery, fronted with the eastern parapet of the former rood loft, was thrown out and the screen destroyed. An anonymous report in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* noted that two layers of wall paintings were uncovered, separated by a layer of plaster on both the north and south walls, and there were vague references to figures. However, because the building was unroofed, rain led to the collapse of the plaster.

Further works in 1904 included the addition of the easternmost north window and the west porch with its vestries, and the restoration of the font.

ARCHITECTURE

Cyffylliog church comprises a single chamber with a bellcote over the west end and a porch added to the

west end. There is also a lean-to at the north-west corner. The church is oriented south-west to north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here. The churchyard is described in conventional terms.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to large-medium blocks of fine-grained sedimentary rock, grey in colour; some blocks are rounded; smaller stones in the interstices; random coursing; small flecks of limewash residue. 'B' is of regular blocks of limestone but randomly coursed.

Roof: slates with simple grey clay roof tiles; broken stone finial at end of chancel. Bellcote with single aperture at west end, of dressed limestone and red sandstone with pitched roof, dated 1874.

Drainage: drainage trenches up to 0.5m wide and filled with stone chips on north and south but not east or west.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation. Fabric 'A' and heavy pointing.

North wall: crude walling with numerous rounded stones; so rough that it is impossible to determine whether windows are inserted or contemporary. Wall foundations protrude in drainage trench but presumed to be of same build as wall face, and north-east corner underpinned by two larger blocks. Quoins at this corner in weathered sandstone, except for those at top and at bottom which have been replaced; those at north-west angle are also more recent. At north-west angle a lean-to in breeze blocks.

Three windows, all of different design but all in mustard yellow sandstone of Victorian date. From west: i) two lights with cusped ogee heads; ii) three lights with cusped four-centred heads, and panels above, all under a segmental arch; iii) (in chancel), a two-centred arch, with two cusped two-centred lights, with a panel above.

East wall: minor differences in the fabric to the north wall but nothing of obvious significance. All quoins at south-east angle are replaced, and conceivable that some of this wall rebuilt. East window all in red sandstone, three cusped lights with intersecting tracery; jambs and arch weathered, but mullions replaced, tracery possibly so, essentially a Decorated feature, but it is unclear how much survives from the 14thC..

South wall: impossible to determine how much rebuilding: certainly both angles, perhaps around the most westerly window where there are signs of masonry change, and there is no sign of the south doorway that existed in the 19thC. From west: i) window as most westerly window on north side; ii) as i) but in red sandstone; little weathering and not original; may have had a grille across it for small sockets in west jamb and mullion; iii) as opposite window on north side but in red sandstone; unweathered and not original.

West wall: largely hidden by porch, and the rest is plastered and painted. There is a report of an earlier feature here as a roof line is visible on the west face of the church within the roof space of the porch.

Porch. General. All in 'B' with mustard-yellow freestone for windows and two-centred arched doorway. Victorian build.

Interior

Porch. General. Of Victorian date. A through passage with rooms on both sides, one a vestry.

Nave. General. Carpet over tiles, and wooden boards under benches. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of nine bays has braced collars.

North wall: two splayed windows; two 19thC marble mural tablets.

South wall: two splayed windows; three mural tablets, one of 1752, another of 1756.

West wall: wall is plain; the doorway has segmental head to its reveal.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel, two to sanctuary. Floor of encaustic tiles. Choir stalls raised on wooden boarding. Walls as nave. Roof has a Perpendicular wagon ceiling, boarded and ribbed, with the main members including the purlins traceried and with mask corbels and vine trail at the cornice; at entrance to chancel is a hammerbeam truss with angels of mid-19thC date,

North wall: splayed window; one late 19thC marble mural tablet.

East wall: splayed window, the embrasure in its present form is 19thC.

South wall: splayed window.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: octagonal bowl on octagonal stem, all in red sandstone; probably 14thC, but retooled and altered in 1904.

Rood screen: until 1876 lower part of the rood screen remained in situ, and a portion of the loft was incorporated in a west gallery. These were dismantled and partly discarded in the restoration, but four tracery heads were incorporated into stalls and the head of the screen doorway into the altar rails; in both cases similar pieces were made to match. The pulpit and adjoining screen reproduce mouldings from the rood screen, and eight pierced traceried panels from the loft are incorporated. Other medieval details preserved in the new chancel roof, including a wall-plate with vine leaves (Based on Hubbard and Crossley).

Chests: two, one a dugout; the other inscribed 'EP WI IR 1687 WARDENS'.

Monuments: to Jane Wynne (d.1752) in stone with inset marble plaque; to Robert Hughes (d.1756) and others; to Rev William Williams (d.1900) who "restored this church in 1874".

Dog-tongs: now in the Chapter Library at St Asaph.

Plate: cup of 1670/1 and a 19thC paten.

[Wall Painting: Crowning of the Virgin, discovered in the restoration of 1876 but not preserved (see above)].

CHURCHYARD

Cyffylliog has a small rectilinear churchyard set on the edge of the river terrace above Afon Clywedog. The churchyard itself is relatively level, but beyond the ground rises almost immediately to the west. There is a modern extension to the north-west, although the original boundary on this side is still in place; it is well maintained and it is the extension that is currently used for burials.

Boundary: on the south-west is a mortared stone wall, with some embanking inside which may in part reflect an earlier perimeter. Wall continues on south-east, on north-east where it acts as a retaining wall, and on the north-west.

Monuments: these are well packed on the north-west where predominantly 19thC. An even spread if less dense on south-east and north-east where there are some 18thC gravestones. Earliest near the lychgate, of

1728 and 1740.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: churchyard is raised on north-east by nearly 1.5m and on north-west by about 0.5m, but on south-east little difference internally and externally.

Ancillary features: stone lychgate on south with simple wooden roof and two wooden gates; near the western angle are small, double wrought iron gates, and there is also a gap in the north-west wall giving access to the new burial yard. Tarmac paths. Near the lychgate is a stone-built hearse house now used for storage, carrying an inscription which indicates it was given by Edward Owen in 1823.

Vegetation: five quite massive yews, all but one on the perimeter.

SOURCES

Anon 1876
CPAT Field Visit: 20 August 1996
Crossley 1946, 3 & 23
DRO/PD/37/1/50 1902 rough sketch plan of church
Faculty 1903: NLW - vestry
Hubbard 1986, 142
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pl 20
Quinquennial Review 1987
Ridgway 1997, 92
Thomas 1911, 77

CONDITION

In reasonable condition, though considerable problems with bats.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Derwen

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Mary**PRN** 100767**NGR** SJ07035072

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mary's church lies in the hills some 6 miles to the south-west of Ruthin. Its origins are unknown and the first record of it is in 1254. The present church consisting of a single cell has a medieval core, probably pre-dating the east window, the fine roof, rood screen and churchyard cross, all of which are probably 15thC or earlier 16thC. Some of the church was perhaps rebuilt around this time, and there may have been subsequent undocumented repairs prior to the restoration of 1857. The churchyard is small, rectangular and contains the normal range of 18thC and later memorials as well as an undated sundial and the great churchyard cross.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The sequence of fabrics at Derwen is not clear. 'B' seems to be the earliest, surviving over much of the south side, part of the west and in small areas to the east and north; it can be attributed to some unknown time in the medieval period. 'D' is a rebuild, conceivably at the time when the east window was put in the later 15thC or early 16thC. 'A' is later and could be as recent as the Victorian restoration. 'C's place in the sequence remains unestablished. Most of the windows have been replaced but the east window and the south sanctuary window give some idea of the medieval fenestration. Also on the north side there are traces of a blocked window, perhaps matched by the doorway in the east face of the rood stair projection.

The porch all in 'E' and of one build, is said to have been built in the 17thC.

HISTORY

The date of origin of Derwen church is not known. Currently there is little to suggest that it was an early medieval foundation.

It is first recorded as 'Ecclesia de Dermey' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 at a value of 13s 4d. In the later 1291 Taxation it was worth £4 0s 10d.

Stephen Glynne visited the site in 1849. His notes refer to a now lost, north doorway with an arch, perhaps 13thC, in red sandstone, the west bellcote carrying the date 1688, a west gallery, and nave windows which, even at that date, were already modern insertions. The rood screen was described in some detail and the loft at that time was used as a pew with internal stairs along the north wall. The 'modern' font did not impress him, but he was impressed by the churchyard cross. The exterior of the church was whitewashed.

Restoration occurred in 1857 under Kennedy at a cost of c.£750. The projecting housing for the rood-loft stairs dates from this time, when the internal stair was removed. Buttresses were added.

Until 1861 it was in the diocese of Bangor when it was transferred to St Davids. It is now in St Asaph.

Further general alterations and the provision of heating apparatus were covered by a faculty of 1924.

ARCHITECTURE

Derwen church comprises a nave and chancel as a single cell and a south porch set towards the west end of the nave.

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

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium blocks of sandstone and shaley sandstone, grey to brown in colour and irregularly coursed; quoins of similar material, but fractionally better dressed; remnant limewash traces. 'B' is of medium to large blocks of the same sort of stone as 'A', randomly coursed; remnant limewash traces.

'C' consists of slabs of laminated stone, reasonably homogenous in appearance; irregularly coursed; remnant limewash traces.

'D' is similar to 'A' and could perhaps be grouped with it.

'E' is of long, medium large laminated slabs of shale showing some coursing; remnant limewash traces.

Roof: slates, clay roof tiles; cross finial in stone at east end of chancel. A double bellcote at the west end, on which Glynne saw the date 1688, with a weathervane on top.

Drainage: around the south is a 0.8m wide concrete and gravel filled zone, and this continues along part of the east as a footpath. On the north is a cutting resulting from the church being terraced into a natural slope and this continues around the west side as far as the bellcote buttress.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Treated as one because largely indistinguishable on the exterior.

North wall: western part of wall in 'A', resting on a projecting plinth of masonry near the north-west corner, though much of this may originally have been below ground level. Most westerly window is Victorian in yellow sandstone: a cusped ogee-headed light in a square-headed frame. Below this window the upper part of the plinth disappears. Immediately to the east of the window the wall is built in larger masonry, classed here as 'B', and within a metre or so of the window is a buttress - again of Victorian construction? - which appears to cover an aperture defined by long vertical edge stones, and blocked in part with red sandstone. Next and also set in 'B' is a square-headed three-light window, directly comparable with the one-light window to the west, except that it has a hoodmould with stops. Immediately to the east the fabric in the upper part of the wall changes to 'C'; the three-light window could have been inset into this masonry, just as it was inset into 'B'. The top of the wall face, above 'C' is set back a little, suggesting a rebuild, probably when the Victorian windows were added: the masonry of this rebuild is akin to clean 'A'.

Next is the gabled projection housing the rood screen stair, apparently dating to the mid-19thC; its west face is disguised by a chimney, but on the north the fabric is akin to 'A', but lacks the limewash remnants, contains occasional brick lumps, and is heavily pointed. This face has two windows: below is a simple chamfered slit, while immediately above it a flat-headed cusped 'lancet'; both are in Victorian yellow sandstone. In the east face of the projection is a blocked doorway with the jambs as single long slabs (cf the blocked aperture further to the west), and a cyclopean lintel giving a triangular head.

East of this is the chancel wall. First a two-light window, square-headed and similar to those in the nave, though the lights have two-centred heads with cinquefoil tracery. Next a buttress and then two contiguous lancet lights, formerly shuttered; these are in yellow sandstone, slightly weathered, but not convincing as anything earlier than Victorian, although Hubbard thought they might reflect an original Perpendicular feature; above is a 'relieving arch' in the masonry, the arch so flat that it is best termed segmental. The fabric on this side of the chancel is difficult to categorise, but it is classed as 'D'. Above the windows the wall face is slightly inset as in the nave, as a result of rebuilding.

East wall: angle buttresses, and the wall is dominated by a fine Perpendicular east window; some of the mullions may have been renewed but generally original dressings in pink sandstone. It has a two-centred

arch, five lights with a transom at springing level, two-light sub-arches, cusping and panel tracery, a hoodmould, and next to this but not integral are stone heads of different designs; these do not function now as stops but may once have been stops or perhaps corbels, subsequently added to the window. The fabric is again difficult: large blocks on the south side could be classed as 'B', but much of the wall is in 'D' and this is clearly later. At the base of the wall is a chamfered plinth and this seems to disguise a battered base.

South wall: in 'B', the large blocks towards the base giving way to smaller blocks at higher levels. From the east the windows and other features are: i) a two-centred arched window with three lights and intersecting tracery, much renewed, though the jambs could be earlier; in red sandstone but as Hubbard pointed out perhaps not reliable as a chronological indicator; ii) a three-light Victorian window with a two-centred arch, having complex cusped tracery and a hoodmould; iii) a buttress; iv) a two-light Victorian window in yellow sandstone with a further variety of complex tracery and a distinctive relieving arch. The base of the wall here projects slightly but can hardly be termed a plinth; v) porch; vi) a single-light Victorian window with a square head in yellow sandstone and a further variety of tracery. Here the wall tapers in towards the top.

West wall: this side is dominated by a large stepped and battered buttress that supports the bellcote, itself reportedly dated to 1688. South of this the wall is in 'B', while the buttress, though having massive blocks, is in slightly different material. North of the buttress the wall face reverts to 'A', and there is evidence of a supporting plinth at the base.

Porch. General. In Fabric 'E'. Both side walls have an exaggerated outwards lean. A 17thC date has been claimed but no obvious support for such a date.

East wall: plain.

South wall: side wall terminals support a relatively modern tie beam truss with vertical struts, the central one carrying a lamp.

West wall: plain.

Interior

Porch. General. Large slate flags for floor, two steps up from path. Bare walls. A simple purlin and rafter roof with two trusses, one tie beam (already described) and one collar, of no great age. Side walls clearly butt against nave.

North wall: main church doorway with a narrow two-centred arch, and chamfered dressings in red sandstone, but does not appear to be medieval; basal stones at bottom of each jamb are in buff coloured sandstone, though also individual plinth stones in line with the projecting base seen on outside south wall. Early studded door with fleur-de-lys hinge-ends.

East wall: narrow stone bench. Shallow, circular stoup set into wall.

West wall: bench as east side.

Nave. General. Stone slab floor, much of it covered by carpet; at rear, wooden block flooring lifts font, and there is a small vestry in the south-west angle. Walls plastered and painted. Late medieval roof of eight bays includes chancel; arch-braced collars and raking struts, all cusped; two tiers of cusped windbraces.

North wall: slight outwards lean; plain but for window apertures, and segmental-headed aperture for entrance to rood loft stairs which superseded an internal flight of stairs in 1857. On the north face of this entrance is a two-centred arch with hoodmould and also a stopped chamfer. While the latter is Victorian it appears more likely that the entrance was originally an external north door to the church. One mural tablet of 1755.

East wall: screen and loft.

South wall: wall has slight outwards lean. Door embrasure slightly splayed and has segmental head.

West wall: internal buttress for bellcote containing alcove with bell-rope hanging down. North of this the wall is slightly inset at a height of c.2.5m, but for no obvious purpose.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Wooden block floor but boards under choir stalls; encaustic tiles in sanctuary. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: two mural tablets of 1744 and 1847. Two 20thC brasses.

East wall: shallow wall thickness.

South wall: two early 19thC marble memorials.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: dated 1665, with a plain octagonal bowl, stem and base; font cover replaced 1993.

Stoup: in porch, cut down.

Rood screen: retains its loft which is c.2.5m wide; the screen itself is 7.3m long and 4.3m high including the loft parapet. It is of rectangular construction, in the usual Welsh manner, with a continuous middle rail between the end standards; set out in 12 bays, five on either side of the wider, central doorway. The divisions of the intermediate mullions do not coincide with those of the wainscot panels below. Heavily moulded uprights, pierced traceried panels of differing pattern, and varied open traceried heads to the openings. The loft parapets are also open, with traceried heads. Flat soffits (i.e. no vaulting), panelled and ribbed, with bosses. Vine-trail bressumers and, on the E, cresting. The socket for the rood remains (Based on Hubbard with details from Crossley).

Monuments: Elizabeth Price (d.1755) and her daughter Elizabeth (d.1773), in marble; Catherine Williams (d.1744), a stone mural tablet recently repainted; Thomas Williams of Henlleys (d.1847) and his son Robert (d.1845) in marble; Rev. Robert Roberts (d.1828), marble by J.Wright of Chester; Alice Wynne and John Wynne (both d.1835), marble.

Chest: now deteriorating on ground floor of Church House.

Plate: stand paten of 1691/2, cup of 1751/2, cup and flagon of 1761/2.

[A letter of 1934 copied in the NMR refers to a communion table from the church which had the date 1697 and the initials 'J. L.'. It was bought from a shop in Llangollen about 1934 and subsequently given to Shrewsbury School].

Victorian features include:

Stained glass: second window from east on south side, designed by H.E.Wooldridge and made by James Powell & Sons, 1869.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is small, rectangular though with a hint of curvilinearity on the south-east and south-west. It is set on a gentle slope, the ground dropping from north to south, but the village core as a whole occupies

what is essentially a shelf on a steeper hillside. It is reasonably well-maintained but is a little overgrown in summer.

Boundary: surrounded by a mortared stone wall, which acts as a retaining wall for some of the perimeter.

Monuments: monuments fill the whole churchyard, relatively densely in places. There are some 18thC ledgers and gravestones to the south of the church, and further examples to the east, where the earliest - of 1728 - was noted. It is reported that the churchyard was partially cleared about 30 years ago.

Furniture: important medieval cross to the south of the church; mid to late 15thC in date (in State Guardianship). No top to the cross. Sculpture on the head in niches under cusped and crocketed canopies, the east and west ones double. On the east, the Coronation of the Virgin, on the west the Crucifixion, on the north the Virgin and child, and on the south an angel (?St Michael) with scales. Sculpture, much worn, on the chamfered corners of the shaft and in a band at the neck. Double stepped plinth (Based on Hubbard).

A sundial close to south-west perimeter, stone pillar; brass plate and gnomon but no inscription.

Earthworks: raised churchyard with drops of 1.5m-2m around the south and east sides, and perhaps 0.5m on the north.

Ancillary features: Church House to south of porch and abutting the churchyard wall; above the ground floor door an inscription with the date 1905. Formerly a lychgate. Upper room once used as a school, and gateway walled up when more accommodation needed (1905); the ground floor now used for storage, and includes the parish chest.

Wrought iron, single ornamental gates to east and west; the tarmac path linking the two leads past the porch. Gravel path around north side. Small store in north corner of churchyard.

Vegetation: two yews on south, neither of any size.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 5 September 1996
Crossley 1946, 13
Faculty: St Asaph 1924 (NLW)
Faculty 1958: DRO/PD/25/1/21
Glynne 1884, 169
Hubbard 1886, 155
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872 pls 26-29
NMR Aberystwyth
Owen 1886, 34
Quinquennial Review 1987
Quinquennial Review 1996
Ridgway 1997, 69
Thomas 1911, 71

CONDITION

Reasonably satisfactory though some damp showing as blistered paint on the west and east walls and on panels of the roof, and also a few minor cracks showing.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Very Good

Dyserth

Diocese	St Asaph	Dedication	St Bridget
PRN	16772	NGR	SJ05617939
		Previous dedication	St Cwyfan

SUMMARY

The church, dedicated to St Bridget, is constructed in local limestone and occupies a central position within the village at the base of the Clwydians. It is likely that there was an early medieval foundation here and it is referred to in the Domesday Survey of 1086. The present structure dates from the 13thC (on the evidence of a window and doorway), though on the basis of the masonry, the chancel may well be later. It now has windows of the 16thC and 17thC. The building including the interior was largely restored in the 19thC by Gilbert Scott. Inside are a later 16thC arch-braced roof, a damaged churchyard cross of early date and the socket stone perhaps from another cross, several 14th-15thC coffin lids, and an exceptional stained glass window of 15thC/16thC origin. The large but irregularly shaped churchyard includes a good collection of 17thC chest, table and hooded tombs.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The core of the church, including the lower wall levels, is considered to be 13thC on the basis of a window and doorway in the south wall, though in passing we should note Glynne's reference to a Norman west doorway. The east window is probably 16thC and there is a further window of 1636 in the chancel; it is possible that the chancel itself was added in the 15th/16thC. The addition would also explain the unusual configuration of the roofs. The church was restored by Scott in Early English style in 1873-5. when the upper parts of the walls were rebuilt, a west doorway was inserted and the north transept, vestry and south porch were also added.

HISTORY

The location and a former dedication to St Cwyfan suggest an early medieval origin. The date at which the present dedication - to St Bridget (St Ffraid) - was instituted is not known.

The manor of Dyserth and its church, were recorded in Domesday Book (1086) as 'Dissard - ibi in domini ecclesia cum presbitero'. In 1093, the church was bestowed on the monks of St Werburgh's at Chester by William Meschinus.

It appears in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecc'a de Disserth' at a value of £4. In the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 it was 'Ecclesia de Deyserth cum capella sua de Rywlyfnwyd' at £10. The earliest structural remains of the church come from this century.

The 17thC saw some restoration work at the east end, as revealed by the 1636 Conway window, though the scale of this work cannot be gauged with any certainty.

Glynne's note of 1839 on the church was brief. 'The church [was] even smaller than Meliden, and [had] neither aisles nor distinction of chancel'. The west doorway appeared to be Norman with very plain shafts. Mention was made of the stained glass in the east window and the churchyard cross, at that time in situ.

The building was restored in 1875 by Sir George Gilbert Scott, though a plaque on the north wall states that it was almost wholly rebuilt. Certainly Scott rebuilt parts of the west, south and north walls, took down the old porch replacing it with a new one, added a north transept and a north aisle off the chancel for the organ and vestry. He removed the pews and west gallery, replacing the former with open benches; a new pulpit and prayer desk were introduced. Graves on the north side were filled in by Scott prior to the construction of the new transept and organ chamber.

ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and slightly narrower chancel, a north transept and north aisle, a south porch, and a bellcote over the west end of the nave. The church is oriented fractionally south of grid west, and for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is used.

Fabrics: 'A' is mainly of small to medium blocks of limestone rubble with occasional random infills of red and yellow sandstone, and rare inclusions of other material such as pebble stones; irregular coursing.

'B' is more regularly cut limestone with fine-grained yellow sandstone dressings; some coursing.

'C' is of dressed blocks of limestone, regularly coursed.

'D' is of sandstone with a little limestone; irregular coursing, but less randomly laid than 'A'.

'A' is believed to be of 13thC date, 'D' is perhaps 15thC; 'B' and 'C' are 19thC.

Roofs: blue slates with ornamental red ceramic ridge tiles; stone cross finials at east end, over the porch, and over the north transept.

Drainage: 19thC cast iron guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways, but no conclusive evidence of a drainage trench around the church.

Exterior

Nave. North wall: heavy mortar obscures masonry. 'A' for about the bottom metre, 'B' above, where the wall was rebuilt in the 19thC. One window of 19thC paired lancets under continuous hoodmould. Eastern end of the wall hidden by north transept. At the west corner is an angle buttress also in 'A', with a distinctively splayed base, topped by a sort of string course with a hollow moulding in weathered pink sandstone beneath. This looks to be original but soon merges with the 19thC stonework.

South wall: west of the porch, the wall is entirely in fabric 'B', though some sandstone is visible in the basal courses. Angle buttress with stepped base has been claimed as 19thC, but it has limewash residue and might be earlier, though perhaps more likely to incorporate re-used stone. East of the porch fabric 'D' visible as basal layers in the wall with fabric 'B' above. Here there is a single trefoiled, round-headed light with a shallow chamfer; the basal jambs and the head are weathered and could be original, the remaining jambstones have been renewed. To the east is a pair of 19thC lancets with continuous hoodmould. Large angle buttress at south-west corner, probably 19thC; one ordinary buttress east of the porch at the nave/chancel juncture retains some original red sandstone dressings, but its coping stones have been replaced; the buttress might be medieval.

West wall: constructed mainly in fabric 'A' with double plinth at the base; some original quoins, some replaced. Upper courses of gable from window head level is in fabric 'B' from the 1875 restoration, though some sandstone mixed in. Inserted into the wall at this time was a doorway with a four-centred, moulded arch with ring shafts and decoration in late Norman style. Above this are twin lancets with hoodmoulds and above these a circular aperture containing a single quatrefoil light, all by Scott.

Massive buttresses, c.1.5m wide x 2m deep, at the angles, distinctive because of their split-level heads, but perhaps secondary to the wall itself; the north buttress has more liberal use of red sandstone, including a much weathered string course at c.2m and red capstones, and splays out widely below the string course. The south buttress, constructed mainly of limestone, forms an angle buttress with the 19thC south wall

buttress; it has a plinthed top but lacks the hollowed string course.

Set slightly back from the gable end is a stepped bellcote in 'B' with yellow sandstone dressings; a gabled top, and a single aperture with hoodmoulds to both faces, containing one bell.

North transept. General. In fabric 'B'. Stepped angle buttresses at north-east and north-west corners with splayed sandstone bases. Two lancets with a quatrefoil above in the north wall.

Chancel. General. North wall completely disguised by north aisle. Massive angle buttresses at the east end which might be 17thC.

East wall: in fabric 'D', mainly red and yellow sandstone and only occasional limestone. Angle buttress at north-east corner pre-dates the vestry. East window occupies most of the wall and has a very broad, two-centred arch over five cinquefoiled lights, three ogee-headed and the outer two two-centred, two sub-arches and panel tracery; slim hoodmould and very weathered head stops. Mullions, sill and some of the tracery renewed, but other sections of the tracery and the deeply hollowed jambstones are original.

South wall: slight batter to wall; basal layers of the wall are fabric 'D' to a height of about 0.5m, but better coursed than in east wall. The remainder of the wall in fabric 'C', apparently rebuilt. A square-headed window with sunken spandrels over four round-headed lights, and an inscription on the lintel reading 'Sr John Conway Kng 1636' must be re-set. Angle buttress at east end could be of similar date.

North Aisle (Vestry). General. In 'B' with angle buttress at north-east corner, a doorway with a two-centred arch and hoodmould, and a single trefoil-headed light, both in the north wall; The latter has a 13thC head comparable with that in the south nave wall but is completely renewed. For the east wall, a low boiler house against it, and a single trefoil-headed light.

Boiler house at the north-east corner of the church with a below ground entrance along the east wall via steps down. From 1873/85.

South porch. General. Rebuilt in 1873/75 in fabric 'A' with pale sandstone dressings. East and west walls have circular apertures containing quatrefoils, and hoodmoulds above. The south entrance is formed by a pair of crack forming a two-centred arch with a tie beam above, and the gable has open studs; decorative bargeboards and a pair of iron gates.

Interior

South Porch. General. Stone flagged floor, plastered walls, though the window dressings are exposed. Roof of two bays divided by arch-braced collar truss.

North wall: contains nave south door. The early, two-centred arch in yellow sandstone (13thC) is masked by a wide door; only the 19thC hoodmould is fully visible.

East and west walls: sandstone benches.

Nave. General. Flagstone floors include gravestones, but a carpeted central aisle, and raised timber floors under benches. Plastered and painted walls with dressed stonework exposed and deeply splayed window embrasures. Roof of four arch-braced collar trusses with raking struts, forming four bays (no truss at the west end), three through purlins to each side; three tiers of short cusped windbraces, and the whole slightly-skewed to the alignment of the nave itself; the trusses rise from the wall plates. The third bay eastwards has a framework for an opening at the apex, now plastered, but formerly perhaps for a bell. The second truss from the west has a carved and gilded Tudor rose on the soffit of the collar and the inscription 'ERIS 1579

dH WH', also gilded. The fourth truss has moulded arch bracing and is a hammerbeam truss supported on stone corbels from which project angels with folded wings; this dates from Scott's restoration.

North wall: at the east end it was opened up in 1873 by a wide two-centred arch of two orders with octagonal columns and capitals, and a hoodmould and head stops, giving access to the north transept. Otherwise a war memorial and one splayed window.

South wall: the doorway has a round-headed reveal and both sets of jambstones on the inner face are inscribed I - VIII to indicate their relative position; some of the arch stones also appear to be numbered. As uninscribed and clearly more recent jambstones have been inserted just below the arch it is evident that the reveal has been heightened and probably even rebuilt. The window to the east of the doorway has early stonework in the reveal, while beneath the most easterly window is a late 14thC sepulchral slab, accompanied by a late 19thC descriptive tablet above it.

West wall: a segmental arch to the reveal of the west doorway, with 19thC quoins.

North Transept. General. Raised timber platform over flagstone floor, plastered walls and a simple ceiling with braced collars and rafters; used as a schoolroom and curtained off from main body of church. The east wall has a two-centred archway with hoodmould and head stops to the vestry.

Chancel. General. A weeping chancel, angled slightly to the north. One step up from the nave, one to the sanctuary, one to the altar. Chancel floor partly tiled, a stepped sanctuary with encaustic tiles. Walls as nave, but slightly inset and also higher. Roof of three arch-braced collar trusses forming two bays, and is slightly lower than that of nave; no struts, two through purlins and two tiers of cusped windbraces; original timberwork and perhaps originally a wagon roof. Westernmost truss of the chancel and the easternmost nave truss are separated by less than 0.5m.

North wall: access to north aisle (vestry) by an arch similar in date but of different design to that leading from nave to transept.

East wall: east window has hollow chamfers to the reveal. Top of the window hidden behind a truss.

South wall: 1636 Conway window set in a square-headed recess with sloping sill. One 20thC brass records members of the Hughes family buried in the churchyard, and there is also a 20thC marble memorial.

North Aisle (Vestry). General. One step up from north transept. Stone slab floor, with one grille; plastered and painted walls; simple plastered ceiling with braced collars and rafters. A disused fireplace in the south-east corner.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: plain, octagonal bowl with an octagonal splayed base, completely retooled. This records its restoration in 1863: 'Restauravit J W Hardman, MA MDCCCLXIII'.

Stained glass: a wonderful east window. 'An inscription of 1450 has been recorded in the east window. Possibly of this date are the twelve Apostles in the tracery lights, each with a clause of the Creed on an arched scroll. The remainder, with a Jesse Tree in the main lights, resulted from a bequest in the 1530s. First and fifth and second and fourth lights respectively are from the same cartoons, but not reversed. Figures in groups of three, the outer ones emerging from flowers. Jesse himself is missing, the lower lights being jumbled fragments. Virgin and Child at the top of the middle light' (Hubbard). Thus it is presumed to be an amalgamation of two earlier windows: the symbols and verses of the Creed given by Archdeacon Tubley in 1450; the lower lights of the Jesse window showing the genealogy of Our Lord, a gift of Archdeacon Piers Conwy (1508-1531).

Sepulchral slabs: i) in the nave floor by the chancel steps part of an early 14thC circular-headed cross slab; a flower at the base of the shaft; now covered by the lectern. ii) In nave a slab with foliate crosses of c.1400. Prior to 1871, it is said to have covered the grave in the chancel of two brothers who lived at the time of Henry IV. Two foliated crosses and two separate inscriptions. 'Hic lacet Robert F' Ryn F' Bled F' Mad' though Gresham read this as a daughter, reinforced by the carving of a brooch. The second inscription is much worn and only 'X Hic lacet' can be read. A 19thC tablet above the stone records the details and it is claimed that the inscriptions refer to the sons of Kynferig, son of Bleddyn, son of Madoc, who were imprisoned in Rhuddlan Castle in 1396. The heads differ in design, and there is a pattern of lobed leaves up both sides. Slab 1.2m high and c.0.8m wide tapering to 0.5m. iii) + iv) two 17thC slabs in the chancel floor memorialising Edward Parry, son of Bishop Parry, and William Mostyn. These are not currently visible. v) by the font is another slab with a sword-shaped cross of simple design.

Churchyard cross: brought into the church and now sited on a concrete base at the south-west corner of the nave. Broken 'wheel head with cusped trefoils between the arms, which project only slightly. Central raised bosses, that at the back moulded. Crudely ornamented - spiral, double-bead and three-cord triple-bead plait etc. Nash-Williams dated the work as late as 12th or 13thC, citing the cusped wheel head and the degenerate character of the decoration as indicating this to be one of the last Welsh crosses, and one which suggests debased hybridity between a true wheel cross and the ring-headed Anglo-Viking type. Cross c.2m high' (Hubbard). NMR suggest a 9th-10thC date and the name 'Croes Einion'.

Also a cross base, with rectangular socket, is of similar date and style to the cross according to Hubbard, though this has not been confirmed. Of roughly D-shaped cross-section with tapering sides, the visible sides have four panels of ornament separated by raised ribs. Located near font.

Chair: carved faces. Donated in 1968; at west end of church.

Registers: from 1624.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings:

Pulpit: octagonal with castellated frieze and Tudor rose design over square-headed panels.

CHURCHYARD

An original polygonal enclosure was extended eastwards in 1871, with a later extension to the south which was consecrated in 1916. It is sited at the base of the Clwydians, but well above the floor of the Vale of Clwyd. A small stream drops off the hills to the east and swings round the west side of the churchyard. It is fairly well maintained.

Boundary: a stone wall boundary on all sides.

Monuments: randomly placed burials on all sides. There are a large number of 17th and 18thC burials on the south side of the church, and to the south-east is a group of eight 17thC chests and table tombs, two of them of hooded type, located under a large yew tree. The more complete of these, from 1676, has a base with open arches and architectural features, and on the underside of the hood, a carved angel. The other is slightly earlier. A brass plate on the south wall of the chancel records the burial beneath canopied tombs of the ancient family of Hughes of Llewellyd, descendants of Prince Cadwalladr. Other early monuments include the low table tomb of William Lloyd (d.1691) and that of John Hughes of Tre Castell (d.1668). West of the group is a large chest enclosed by iron railings bearing the date, 1772, and a 1676 slab is located on the south side of chancel.

Furniture: a sundial by Gould of Liverpool, which reputedly bore a heraldic shield. Weathered, square, chamfered stem on a square base but now lacking the dial and gnomon.

Earthworks: the extent of the pre-1871 churchyard is delineated by a low scarp bank as well as by a paved path on the south side of the church, and there is the hint of a curving scarp bank, surmounted by old yews

to the south-east of the church. Churchyard is raised by about 0.3m on the south, 0.2m or so on the south-east and c.0.6m on west.

Ancillary features: the western entrance is formed by a short bridge over the leat and a single wrought iron gate leading in from the west, and there are a pair of wrought iron gates set in weathered sandstone pillars on the north. Well laid stone slab paths all round.

Vegetation: yews of no great age located around the boundary of the original enclosure, and also line the north path leading to the west door. Six aged yews are located on the east side of the old churchyard; a mix of yews and firs on west sides.

SOURCES

Archaeologia Cambrensis 1884, 86-7
Archaeologia Cambrensis 1975, 99
Church guide n.d.
Clwyd SMR
CPAT Field Visit: 2 October 1996 & 7 April 1998
Faculty St Asaph 1871 (NLW): churchyard extension
Faculty St Asaph 1873 (NLW): restoration
Faculty St Asaph 1916 (NLW): churchyard extension
Glynne 1884, 86
Gresham 1968, 131; 207
Hubbard 1986, 343
NMR Aberystwyth
Quinquennial Review 1984
Thomas 1908, 400

CONDITION

Church in good state of repair, apart from general weathering of sandstone.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Efenechtyd

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Michael

PRN 16774

NGR SJ11165577

GENERAL SUMMARY

Of simple plan, the small church of St Michael lies just above the floor of a valley some 2km to the south of Ruthin. The only external feature of architectural distinction to survive the Victorian restoration is a Decorated east window, but sufficient has survived of the shell of the building suggest at least two phases, the earliest of which might be 13thC. Inside there is an unusual late medieval roof, a wooden font, a stone stoup and remnants of the screen. Post-medieval fittings include a 17thC pulpit, a wall-painting in Welsh and several wall memorials, one in wood. The churchyard is small and clearly was once sub-circular.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

There is no doubt that the chancel was added to an earlier cell, and as the east window is Decorated and thus 14thC, the nave could be 13thC. However, it is possible too that it is not in its original location. The other windows are replaced and thus of no help. On the evidence the nave could be 13thC, but what of the shorter plinth on south side? - its origin and purpose remain obscure. Certainly some rebuilding on the north, the angles at the east end, and possibly the whole of the west wall. The porch could be medieval - certainly its roof is so.

HISTORY

The origin of the church is unknown though it was reputedly founded by St Saeran - the location and morphology of the churchyard point to an early medieval origin, as too perhaps does the 'lost' stone with interlace decoration from the churchyard wall.

The Norwich Taxation of 1254 records 'Ecc'a de Wenechdit' at a value of 10s, but there is no reference in the Taxatio of Pope Nicholas in 1291.

Glynne visited the church 'of a rude and coarse architecture' prior to its restoration, and noted the Decorated east window and the wooden font. The rood loft was still in existence in 1872 though perhaps in 1714 it had been removed to the west end of the church, widened and used as a singers' gallery. Other alterations are said to have been undertaken in 1714.

Restoration was completed by Arthur Baker in 1873 at a cost of £500; to him are due the removal of the gallery and the construction of the north and south windows, the west doorway and the bellcote.

ARCHITECTURE

Efenechtyd church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a bell-turret over the west end and a west porch. The church is oriented a little to the south of west and for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church, though not for the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises small to medium blocks and slabs of red and buff coloured rubble including red sandstone and some fine-grained sedimentary material (?mudstone), yet relatively homogeneous; irregular coursing.

'B;' is similar to 'A' but has better dressed, squared blocks, effectively little more than a variation on 'A'.

Roof: slates with concrete ridge tiles; stone cross finial at east end. Bellcote at west end has dressed stone throughout; a single aperture with a cusped head for the bell and a stone cross above it.

Drainage: a hollow runs beside the wall on the south but is not entirely convincing. More in evidence on the north where up to 0.5m wide. Nothing on west and east.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Assessed as one cell for no visible distinction on north side and only a very slight inset on south.

North wall: one window only, at junction of nave and chancel. This is flat-headed and has two lights with trefoiled ogee heads, all in off-yellow freestone. Wall itself, originating in 'A', appears to represent several phases. At west end, some rebuilding in 'B': stones at the angle are more regularly set and not quite flush with the general wall face, but the appearance is confused by an intrusive mortar line suggestive of a crack between the old and new. A second change visible around the window; the masonry beneath is inset by a few centimetres and though less obvious at higher levels, it appears as though the whole section was rebuilt (in 'A') when the window was replaced. A little to the east of the window the wall again is fractionally inset; the new masonry is very similar to 'A' but some of the individual stones could be a little smaller with a consequently greater range of stone size apparent; the western edge of this matches the more obvious break between nave and chancel on the south. Finally the north-east angle may also have been replaced in 'B', the new masonry not being precisely flush with the old.

East wall: impossible to determine how much of the wall has been rebuilt. Differential cleaning and the raking out of pointing produces a misleading picture, though possibly both angles have been replaced. It is possible, too, that the window is re-set for there is a patch of very regular masonry beneath the window which looks like a deliberate infill, perhaps for a larger window, or perhaps even for the re-setting of the present window at a higher level. Yet sill and mullions are renewed, and it could conceivably be that masonry beneath window renewed at the same time. Rest of window in deep red sandstone, two lights with cusped tracery ending in broad ogee heads and a cusped quatrefoil above, all under a two-centred arch; original and 14thC?

South wall: two two-light windows of Victorian pattern as seen in north wall. Three-fifths of way along wall from the west corner the wall is inset and the angle shows a slight batter; given the randomness of much of the masonry in this structure this does appear to be an original corner with selected stones used for quoins. Masonry of the chancel reveals same variation as north wall, and again there are hints that extreme south-east angle of the chancel has been rebuilt. One curiosity is presence of a plinth projecting for 0.1m at base of nave wall; this is not present beneath the chancel, but nor does it continue as far as the south-east corner of the nave.

West wall: conceivably the whole wall has been rebuilt. Certainly a new doorway constructed (see porch interior) and the single trefoiled lancet window above it shows no sign of insertion. Some squared blocks of red sandstone built into wall face could be re-used dressings, though there is insufficient variation to classify the masonry as a different fabric.

Porch. General. Walls constructed in 'B'-like masonry; abuts nave and not bonded in.

North and south walls: plain.

West wall: open fronted; barge boards with cusping and central projecting pinion; behind this is a cambered

tie beam with diagonal struts above; the tie beam is supported on half-length wooden uprights resting on low walls.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor. Walls plastered and whitewashed, but foundation walls which double as high benches left unplastered. Roof has a single bay with two cambered tie-beam trusses, chamfered purlins and cusped windbraces. Inner truss is supported on wall posts which themselves are chamfered with stops; all original except for rafters and ridge purlins.

North and south walls: plain.

East wall: four-centred arched doorway with complex mouldings and an engraved date of 1873. The door itself is older, with original latch, hinges and knocker shaped as a spur.

Nave. General. Tiles at rear and under font, carpet down aisle may hide more; flush wooden boards under benches. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Roof of eight narrow bays with the arched-braced collar trusses supported on hammerbeam 'corbels' alternating with single common rafters; all of the collars have rectangular slots on their undersides, indicating a former collar purlin; ordinary purlins and intermediate rafters have been replaced (in 1873), but most of the timberwork is original. Wooden panelled vestry raised on wooden boarding in north-west corner.

North wall: one splayed window. Attached to the wall: a wooden mural tablet of 1810, one stone mural tablet and a benefaction board.

East wall: screen which dog-legs around pulpit.

South wall: splayed window; stone mural tablet of 1737.

West wall: nothing to note.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave to chancel, one more to sanctuary and altar. Floor with some encaustic tiles partly covered by carpet. Walls as nave; old pew panels used to line north and south walls of sanctuary. Roof of five bays with trusses similar to nave but lacking 'corbel' supports; signs of a former barrel vault over chancel.

North wall: two marble mural tablets and a brass of the 18thC plus a wall painting; one 20thC brass.

East wall: on evidence of window embrasure, wall is thinner than north and south walls.

South wall: one 19thC marble memorial.

West wall: screen.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 'a rare wooden tub, hollowed out of a single block of oak and lined with lead; really circular, but the circumference is worked into fourteen facets; diminishing downwards in profile, and at the base is a band of large beads or knobs' (Hubbard). Never reliably dated.

Stoup or font: stone bowl with four lobe-like projections, like a mortar. Set on a rectangular plinth just inside west door, after reputedly being discovered in churchyard.

Low screen: from parts of the late medieval rood screen. Deep beam, with cusped arcading and multi-tier brattishing, formerly used in the construction of the west gallery, but retained in modified form when gallery removed. Of the original 4.6m only 3.45m remains (Based on Hubbard with details from Crossley).

Pulpit: incorporates 17thC panelling.

Prayer Book: of 1664 in Welsh; presented to church in 1938.

'Maen camp': rounded stone used locally in games and feats of strength; now rests at back of church near font.

Benefaction Board: in Welsh and signed by churchwardens in 1787; wood.

Monuments: to Catherine Parry (d.1737); marble memorial to John Gaulter (d.1789) in Latin, by J.Nelson; to Jacob Conway (d.1718) with heraldry; to Anne and Margaret Price (d.1799 and 1805) in slate; to Catherine Lloyd d.1810, in wood.

Wall painting: fragment of a Welsh inscription, part of the Ten Commandments.

Registers: from 1688.

Plate: dish of 1629/30, cup of 1654/5, alms dish of 1676/7, another cup and a paten of 1698/9.

[Stone decorated with interlace and coiled pattern, found in church wall during restoration of 1873, and possibly transferred to Rectory garden. Present location not known.]

CHURCHYARD

Efenechtyd churchyard is small, irregularly curvilinear, well-maintained and generally level, though there is a slight rise on the south side. It occupies a spot a little above the valley floor.

Boundary: defined by a stone wall which is largely mortared. But house forms part of southern boundary and drystone wall continues it on this side. Hedge inside wall on east. Walls probably follows an earlier bank, except on south where the original line must have been within the Old Rectory garden.

Monuments: spread fairly evenly throughout the yard, locally close-set but never dense. West of the porch near the gate are chest tombs of 1768, 1775 etc, and one grave near the south-east corner of the chancel from 1781. 20thC burials to the north of the church.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: none except for material banked up against inside of south wall. Interior of churchyard is raised, with a 1m+ external drop on the north-west and east and 0.5m on north.

Ancillary features: stone lychgate with wooden gates and roof, all undated. Small garden gate on south gives access to the Old Rectory, and another gate to road on east side. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: four yew trees around the west, north and east boundaries plus a few other trees.

SOURCES

CPAT AP: 95-006-0014
CPAT Field Visit: 12 August 1996
Crossley 1946, 14
Fletcher and Williams 1986

Glynne 1884, 170
Hubbard 1986, 157
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872 pl 30
Owen 1886, 52
Quinquennial Report 1988
Ridgway 1997, 74
Thomas 1911, 75

CONDITION

Satisfactory.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

Gwyddelwern

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Bueno**PRN** 16789**NGR** SJ07464668

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Bueno's church lies on the western edge of the village of Gwyddelwern about 2 miles to the north of Corwen, a site which was probably first used in the early medieval era. Its Victorian tower and rebuilt chancel tend to overshadow the late medieval nave with its surviving Perpendicular windows. Inside is a late medieval roof, a medieval font, some possible fragments of the medieval screen, and 18thC pew panels. The churchyard is now D-shaped and its gravestones have seen radical re-arrangement; originally, perhaps, there was a larger oval 'llan' enclosure.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave has surviving medieval masonry with two windows that are late 15thC or more likely 16thC (see below) on north side, and three more on south side; the west side has an inserted Victorian doorway. In the absence of any signs to the contrary it has to be assumed that the masonry and the windows are contemporary.

Chancel rebuilt leaving only plinth and priest's door from its medieval predecessor. Red sandstone plinth of chancel clearly different from nave plinth and suggests that the medieval chancel was of a different date from nave. If the Victorian windows are any guide the chancel could have dated from around 1300, though Thomas claimed that there were Early English windows until 1880.

Porch and tower are Victorian, built in 1880.

HISTORY

The siting, dedication and the curvilinearity of the churchyard provide strong circumstantial evidence for an early medieval foundation here. Nothing, however, is known of the early church.

The Norwich Taxation of 1254 records 'Ecclesia de Gwidelwern' with a value of £2; in 1291 'Ecclesia de Gwydelwern' had risen to £13.

In 1538 the induction of a new vicar referred to the church newly erected. Thomas thought this could refer to either the church as a whole or just the chancel. It seems applicable, however, to the nave (see below).

Prior to refurbishment, Glynne in 1849 recorded that the church had a chancel separate from the nave, a belfry with two flattened trefoiled openings for the bells, and a plain south porch, with internally a west gallery that carried an inscription of 1634. The nave windows had three lights with trefoiled heads, and the transomed east window with its five lights had old fragments of stained glass. The chancel walls leant outwards and there was a priest's door on the south. The roof was late medieval, comparable with that at Derwen. Some of the roodloft panelling was incorporated into the western gallery, there was Jacobean wood carving amongst the pews, and the walls were covered with coffin plates.

Substantial rebuilding occurred in 1880, undertaken by Kennedy of Bangor at a cost of around £2600. It included the addition of a tower over a new porch, and the rebuilding of chancel.

ARCHITECTURE

Gwyddelwern church comprises a nave, a slightly narrower chancel and, abutting the south side of the nave, a porch with a tower and spire over it.

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

Fabrics: 'A' is of slabs and blocks of grey and grey-brown slaty shale with very occasional boulder stones incorporated; small slabs used to fill interstices; irregular coursing; quoins of roughly dressed blocks; occasional limewash remnants.

'B' is of small blocks of grey shale, showing some coursing.

'C' medium sized, thick slabs of grey shale, regular in appearance, some coursing.

'D' some shale but blocks of pink sandstone predominate.

'A' is medieval; 'B', 'C' and 'D' are Victorian.

Roof: slates with plain reconstituted clay ridge tiles. Stone cross finial to chancel.

Drainage: a gravel band about 1m wide on north and west, and up to 2.5m wide on the south and east (though not around the tower), beneath which it is assumed there is a drainage trench.

Exterior

Tower. General. Attached to south side of nave, and wholly Victorian in build. Above the porch is a tower with a broach spire of heavily pointed stone with blind (or blocked) windows in four faces and clock faces on south and east, and surmounted by a metal cross; all dressings in yellow freestone; pentagonal stair turret on west side; angle buttresses.

Nave. General. Victorian roof supported by corbel table in yellow sandstone. South wall has an obvious outward lean which is not matched on the north side.

North wall: chamfered plinth to height of c.1m, the chamfer of tooled shale; the plinth has more regular blocks of stone than the wall above, but both are classed as 'A'. From the west the features are: i) Victorian window in yellow sandstone, with three, stepped, trefoiled lights, hollow mouldings, a four-centred arch and a stopped hoodmould; possibly an accurate representation of the Perpendicular window that it replaced; equivocal signs of insertion, for much of the area around this window and ii) is pointed with a distinctive variegated mortar which fades out underneath iii) and above ii); ii) a blocked doorway with cyclopean jambs which are chamfered in line with the wall plinth; a four-centred arch fashioned from a single block of grey shaly slate; iii) square-headed window, two lights with two-centred, trefoiled heads, sunken spandrels; all in original pink sandstone with traces of limewash; bottom of the mullion perhaps replaced, but sill of shaley slate probably original; iv) three-light window with trefoil cusping, the head of the central light different from those outside it; set in what is almost a three-centred arch with an integral hoodmould; hollow chamfered dressings in pink sandstone are original with only the mullions and sill replaced.

East wall: what little is visible is in 'A', but the chamfer does not continue round this side, and south of the chancel, the short stretch of the east wall has been rebuilt.

South wall: mainly in 'A' though differential pointing and the masonry is less weathered. Chamfered plinth as north side. From the east: i) metal tie-rod with bracket fitted at angle; ii) window with a four-centred arch and integral hoodmould, three lights with two-centred, trefoiled heads, the central one again slightly different in

form than the others; pink sandstone but mullions, sill and a small part of the hoodmould replaced in yellow freestone; iii) three light window as ii) but squatter, perhaps even deliberately lowered at some stage; same degree of dressing replacement as ii); iv) porch; v) window as iii) on north side, though round heads to lights, and a replaced mullion.

West wall: in 'A' with wall battered to a height of around 2.3m, but this is faceted back to take west door. Two-centred arched doorway in yellow freestone, all Victorian. Masonry around doorway is 'B', rising to just above batter level, and indicating that new facing stones put in place when doorway constructed. Rest of the wall, then, is in 'A' but it is well laid: could it be rebuilt?

Chancel. General. Roof line about 0.5m lower than nave.

North wall: double chamfered plinth in 'D', the lowest chamfer at ground level; wall above upper plinth in 'C', but top of wall has some re-used 'A' and this angles down towards the chamfer in the north-west corner and must have been rebuilt. Two Victorian windows with two lights, Y-tracery and chamfered dressings, but one is in yellow freestone, one in pink with a mullion replaced in yellow.

East wall: double plinth which appears to be in 'A', but rest of wall in 'C'. East window has two-centred arch over five lights with cinquefoil tracery, transom and panels; in yellow sandstone and completely Victorian.

South wall: double chamfered plinth in 'D', with rest of wall in re-cycled 'A'. Two windows as on north side, and again the sanctuary window is in pink freestone with yellow sandstone repairs. Close to nave is a narrow priest's door, blocked in 'C'; the lower jambs with stopped chamfers are worn and original, the upper ones more recent. The two-centred arch is much weathered, but could conceivably be replacement. Either way the doorway has been retained from the earlier chancel and built around.

Interior

Porch. General. Under tower, Victorian. Stone slab floor; unplastered walls with buff-yellow freestone dressings; modern roof.

South wall: wooden plaque recording the 1993 restoration of the spire at a cost of £47,000.

West wall: foundation stone of 1880 for the tower.

Nave. General. Walls lean outwards. West end partitioned off with open panels to create vestry etc. Patterned floor tiles, with carpet down aisle and over part of west end; heating grilles; only the front benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of six and a half bays with ribbed arch-braced collars springing from wall plates and cusped raking struts; two tiers of small cusped windbraces. On the underside of the arch-braces are carvings: one of an angel, two animals and two floral, but nothing on the sixth, the most westerly. Late medieval, probably 15thC or later.

North wall: splayed windows. Two marble memorials, one of 1753, the other of 1839, a 19thC painting of a vicar, and an incumbent list commencing in 1535.

East wall: wide four-centred chancel arch in buff-yellow freestone, and it has one order of marble pillars with freestone capitals. 19thC rood screen, and a tie-rod inserted in 1981.

South wall: splayed windows plus benefaction board.

West wall: segmental-headed door embrasure, and at roof level a collar has been plastered over and any arch-bracing removed. Two 19thC photos hang on wall.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, two to sanctuary and one to altar. Encaustic tiles on floor, carpet

down the centre; choir stalls raised on wooden boarding. Walls painted light blue. Roof of two bays with arch-braced collar trusses without struts, and two floral motifs on the underside of the more westerly truss; wind braces as in the nave; wall plates decorated but worn. The second truss has cusped rafters and collar and is panelled over, marking the start of a wagon roof over the altar; decorated purlins and heavily decorated wall plates.

North wall: two windows, that to east inset in the wall, the inset continuing down to ground level. West of it and affixed to wall is a pew end with 'T.H. 1743'.

South wall: Victorian aumbry. Two pew ends on wall, one of 1705, the other inscribed but undated.

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Font: octagonal bowl and stem in one, grooved and ridged; previously painted; could be 15thC?

Stained glass: medieval fragments formerly in the east window, moved to the porch, but some at least now in north wall of chancel.

Screen: 19thC, but parts of the late medieval screen, including six tracery heads incorporated in it near base.

Pulpit: 19thC, but pinnacled buttresses at its corners taken from the rood loft parapet which had earlier served as the front of the west gallery.

Chest: roughly fashioned, retaining hinges and other fittings; no date; in vestry.

Table: dated 1752, in vestry.

Monuments: marble memorial to William Humphreys (d.1718), his wife and sons; heraldry and winged angel's head; erected in 1753. Mural tablet to Rev. Edward Roberts (d.1839).

Pews: decorated and inscribed pew sides include ones with: 'T.H. 1743'; 'HMM MDCCV', and in the reredos a carved panel with birds and animals of (?) Jacobean date. On the south wall an inscribed panel of 16thC date: 'Cronogr. Dirigatur oratio nostra quasi incensum in visv' patris gratie Sedes impens' Ro. Davies structa in vsvm parochie Gwyddelwern', taken from a desk. See also Owen 1886, 81.

Benefaction board: wooden, no date but probably 18thC.

Bells: both rest in sanctuary. One inscribed 'John Jones John Griffiths Ino Jones Cch Wds 1755'; the other 'CW ELL DIL IE 1662 IWS'. Next to the latter a small bell with no date.

Plate: flagon and salver of 1738/9.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is D-shaped, level, very well kept and is still used for burial. It is set on the edge of the valley floor with the valley edge rising a short distance to the east.

It is probable that the churchyard has been reduced in size though there is no confirmatory cartographic evidence. Both the north and west sides are straight contrasting with the curving perimeter elsewhere, and if this curve was projected westwards an oval enclosure of double the size would result. In the pasture to the west of the churchyard there is a hint of a very low curving scarp. Further work is necessary to confirm that this is indeed the earlier boundary, but Owen drew attention to a different boundary line late in the 19thC.

Boundary: a well constructed, mortared stone wall with flat coping slabs around the whole churchyard. The

external ground level is generally lower, between 0.3m-0.5m and only on the east is there no external drop.

Monuments: monuments are dense in places with neatly aligned gravestones - indicative of complete re-organisation - and only in a few places (e.g. at the west end of the church) are marked burials sparse. Memorials are predominantly upright and there are virtually no chest tombs: these appear to have been dismantled and laid flat immediately to the south of the church. Earliest gravestone noted from 1738, and many others of 18thC date.

Furniture: south-west of the church is a pillar for a sundial, square with chamfered edges, a plinth of two steps; the bottom one carries the inscription 'RP GT WR WAR 1760'.

Earthworks: ground within the churchyard undulates slightly but nothing of significance. Around the east side there is some internal banking to the churchyard wall.

Ancillary features: double metal gates and a kissing gate at the north-east, a small iron gate at the south-west; tarmac paths link these gates with the porch.

Vegetation: one yew tree of moderate age south-east of the church, and one or two other bushes within the churchyard.

SOURCES

CPAT Air photos: 95-004-0018, 0026, 0028/0030, 95-C-0123/0125

CPAT Field Visit: 17 October 1996

Crossley 1945, 158

Faculty: St Asaph 1879 (NLW)

Glynne 1884, 270

Owen 1886, 72

Quinquennial Review 1985

Quinquennial Review 1993

Ridgway 1997, 89

Thomas 1911, 153

CONDITION

Some damp in porch and in west doorway, patched cracks in nave, but generally satisfactory.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Medium

Henllan

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Sadwrn**PRN** 100581**NGR** SJ02236817

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Sadwrn's church lies on the western edge of the village of Henllan, less than 2 miles from Denbigh. The church walls may be medieval - a Decorated door remains on the north - but there were both Georgian and Victorian restorations which have completely altered its character. Only the detached bell-tower has survived from the late medieval period relatively untouched. Few fittings of the medieval era have been retained: a piscina is the only one recorded. There is a 17thC altar table, 18thC chandeliers and benefaction boards, and a few memorials from the late 17thC onwards. The churchyard is a quadrilateral shape and has been extended in the last one hundred years; it contains 19thC mausolea, a limited range of old memorials, the bowl of the medieval font and the shaft of the churchyard cross.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Walls of building could be early, possibly 15thC and perhaps even earlier in view of the Decorated north doorway. In 1805/06 the walls were heightened and new windows added.

Some refenestration occurred in 1878-9; and the porch is of this date.

The tower is thought to be Perpendicular, though the windows and perhaps the battlemented top have been renewed.

HISTORY

Dedication and location may indicate an early medieval origin. It is thought to have been the centre of a much larger parish at an earlier date.

It was not referred to in 1254 but in the 1291 Taxatio it is the 'Ecclesia de Helan', a chapelry attached to the cathedral of St Asaph, and having a value of £16.10s.

Prior to the restoration at the beginning of the 19thC, the church had a south porch and two dormer windows on the south side of the nave. It was remodelled in 1806-8 at a cost of £964 in the shape of a parallelogram, the walls were heightened using old material, perhaps to accommodate the gallery at the west end. New windows. New box pews added around this time. Tower was repaired in 1844.

Glynne visited the church in 1855 and noted that walls rebuilt, the windows were 'vile modern Gothic' except for the east window that included some medieval glass, there was a modern roof and 'hideous pews'. The trefoiled piscina and the original north door were recorded.

In 1878-9, Lloyd Williams reseated the building, removed a west gallery and its stairs, demarcated a chancel, removed plaster from the ceiling, added new heating apparatus with sub-floor venting and a new altar, removed the west doorway, provided a new south porch and new west windows with a buttress between, took down part of the east wall and renewed the east window. He may also have exposed the

rubble walling inside.

Church was re-roofed in 1986.

ARCHITECTURE

Henllan church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a north vestry and south porch, and more than 20m to the east a detached bell tower. The church is oriented a little to the south of west but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church, though not for the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small and medium blocks and slabs of limestone, heavily pointed but showing some coursing. On south side red and grey sandstone, and some shale incorporated.

'B' a mixture of limestone and dressed sandstone of mustard yellow colour, some coursing.

Roof: slates, lead along ridge tops; stone cross finials to nave, chancel and porch.

Drainage: church terraced into hillside on north and surrounded by stone-edged gully up to 1.5m deep. Nothing obvious on other sides.

Exterior

Tower. General. Detached structure set atop a limestone outcrop. Built wholly in limestone though a few quoins in sandstone. Battered base, waterspouts project diagonally from angles, battlemented parapet. Flag pole in south-west corner.

North wall: louvred belfry window with twin lancets, slightly hollowed chamfers, all in grey stone presumably limestone, but arrises are sharp and dressings could have been renewed. Certainly a lower, earlier sill has been left in situ.

East wall: main door approached by flight of steps, its two-centred head in mustard yellow and olive green freestone, much weathered but some jamb renewal. A relieving arch in the same freestone. Wooden door with iron grille. Belfry window as north wall and there are several slabs of sandstone below its sill suggesting packing.

South wall: window as north wall with an earlier sandstone sill visible. Some subtle changes in masonry above window level suggest changes to highest level of tower.

West wall: standard window with a relieving arch.

Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation.

North wall: in 'A'. Bottom half of wall has yellow sandstone quoins, the upper half limestone, and from their juncture at west angle one of the more obvious horizontal courses of masonry runs along the north wall, indicative of new building. Further east, the lower limestone has more lichen than that above, the division at about the springer line of the windows, but its relevance is uncertain. Three two-centred windows in mustard yellow freestone, each with two cusped lights and Y-tracery; raised ridges on outer faces of dressings decidedly Georgian. Relieving arches of limestone slabs on edge. A fourth window of similar type to west of vestry, accompanied by a rectangular window with stained glass of modern appearance. Also at west end is a much weathered plaque set in the wall, its decoration or inscription now unintelligible.

East wall: lighter limestone corresponds exactly with sandstone quoins. Gable partly rebuilt in 'B'. Two-centred east window with five cinquefoiled lights, sub-arches and panels, and a hoodmould with head-stops, all in pale sandstone. Wholly Victorian. Beside this at sill level, a recess with cusped arch hold a modern heraldic plaque: in 1881 it was recorded that a slab with heraldry commemorating Agnes Peake (d.1618)

was attached to east wall.

South wall: less difference in the appearance of the limestone than on the north and east. East of the porch are three standard windows. West of the porch, blocks of sandstone incorporated into fabric at ground level, and here too a Victorian window with two-centred arch, Y-tracery and two cusped lights, with dressings in the same freestone as the east window; also a hoodmould with head-stops. Just to east of porch a chimney projects from the roof.

West wall: in 'A'. On either side of a central stepped buttress is a two-centred window with two lights, chamfered dressings and a hoodmould that is continuous over top of buttress and has the usual Victorian head-stops and relieving arches.

Porch. General. Wholly Victorian with limestone similar to that in body of church though dressed blocks for quoins. East and west walls plain. South wall has a two-centred doorway with two orders of chamfered dressings, a standard hoodmould with head-stops, and over this a lamp; iron gates at the entrance. The top of gable has a sunken trefoil and balls set in their own niches. Boiler house under porch, approached by flight of steps.

Interior

Tower. General. Not accessible.

Porch. General. One step up from exterior. Tiled floor; bare walls; simple collar and rafter roof.

North wall: two-centred arched doorway in pale freestone with hollow chamfers, probably Victorian; relieving arch over.

East wall: wooden bench and noticeboards.

West wall: as east wall.

Nave. General. Tiled floor with carpets over; heating grilles down aisle, at east end of nave and probably elsewhere; benches on flush wooden boarding. Bare walls of uniform limestone masonry; dados to height of c.0.6m; heating pipes run around walls. Wagon roof of Victorian date disguises arch-braced trusses.

North wall: three splayed windows; shouldered arch on inner wall face leads to vestry, but outer part of splay has two-centred arch, the original north doorway. 20thC plaques and one early 19thC marble memorial.

East wall: low stone screen wall and two steps to chancel.

South wall: three splayed windows, and doorway not splayed but with segmental relieving arch above it. Several 20thC plaques and a 19thC marble tablet over a late 19thC brass.

West wall: two splayed windows. One 17thC and several 18thC memorials.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Encaustic tiled floor with carpet over central aisle; wooden boarding under choir stalls. Bare walls. Wagon roof continues from nave but decorated with trefoils and closer set ribs. Organ on south side behind choir stalls.

North wall: one splayed window and two 19thC marble memorials.

East wall: splayed, Victorian east window, with Victorian reredos beneath.

South wall: one splayed window only; piscina with ogee-headed arch, probably medieval.

West wall: nothing of interest.

Vestry. General. Carpetted floor, plastered walls, flat ceiling.

North wall: nothing of interest.

East wall: nothing of interest.

South wall: two-centred arch to doorway with wave-moulded chamfer on outside; no stops; in pink and cream sandstone, formerly whitewashed.

West wall: two benefaction boards, one hidden by wardrobe.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Piscina: with ogee-headed arched recess.

Altar table: 'Jacobean; melon-bulb legs and a pendant in the centre of the front' (Hubbard). Now in south-east corner of the sanctuary.

Chandeliers: pair of nine-branch brass examples, bequeathed 1788.

Monuments: in marble - Pearce family dated 1697; Hugh Peake (d.1767); John Jones (d.1778), small figure on an obelisk, side volutes, cherub heads, erected in 1780; Margaret Jones (d.1791); Thomas Peake (d.1811); Richard Augustus Griffith (d.1831) by W.Spence, clasped hands above a draped urn. Stone plaque with heraldry to Hugh Peake (d.1697). Brass to Elizabeth Jones (d.1758).

Benefaction Boards: one in stone records gifts of 1730 and 1743; the other has the earliest benefaction as 1668 but the rest of the board is hidden; it too is in stone.

Bells; two, re-cast from three in 1856.

Plate: paten of 1661/2, cup of 1680, the rest 19thC.

Victorian and later furnishings include:

Panelling: 'at the west end some Waterhouse Panelling from Eaton Hall' (Hubbard).

Stained glass: 'east window of 1878. On the north side, the second from the east, a window by Whitefriars, 1935, commemorating George V's Jubilee. At the west end of the north wall a small window with mid-19thC heraldic glass designed by Charles Winston, the pioneer student of medieval glass, and made by Ward & Nixon. Two windows at east end of south side by Miller, with commemoration dates of 1863 and 1855' (Hubbard).

CHURCHYARD

The quadrilateral churchyard is set on a pronounced slope from north to south, overlooking Afon Meirchion. Recent burials have taken place in a strip added to the south-west side of the yard in 1889. There is no obvious sign of an earlier and smaller churchyard.

Boundary: on the north is a stone wall with a house intruding at north-west corner. A revetment wall on the

south-west divides the old churchyard from the new, and on the south-east is a drystone wall.

Monuments: dominated by two pyramid-topped mausolea east of the chancel. North of the church many slabs have been cleared to the boundary wall; immediately east of the church older slabs used for paving include one from 1720, and there is a chest tomb of 1661. Ledgers have been re-organised on the west side, while to the south-east more gravestones set against the churchyard wall, and groups to the south of the church are sparse and localised.

Furniture: medieval font near porch, set on plinth in 1989. Also near porch is the octagonal shaft of a churchyard cross, more than 2m high. In the 18thC this was outside the churchyard gate, and in the 19thC it was reportedly used as a support to the west gallery in the church until that feature's removal in 1878-9.

Earthworks: ground terraced below church, and the slope makes it impossible to determine height of internal ground level above the exterior. A drop of several metres from the old churchyard to the new extension, and at least a 2m drop on south-east side.

Ancillary features: east lychgate constructed in 1935, that on the south is even more recent. Pair of small wooden gates through north wall. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: three old yews in line on south side; mature deciduous trees elsewhere.

SOURCES

Bye-gones: July 1881
CPAT Field Visit: 6 March 1997
Crossley 1946, 25
Faculty 1805: NLW/SA/FB/2
Faculty 1877: NLW - restoration of church
Faculty 1889: NLW - addition to churchyard
Faculty 1959: NLW - addition to churchyard
Glynne 1884, 99
Hubbard 1986, 179
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pl 4
NMR Aberystwyth
Neaverson 1953-54, 6
Owen 1886, 87
Quinquennial Review 1984
Quinquennial Review 1993
Ridgway 1997, 100
Thomas 1911, 30

CONDITION

Restored and in good condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium to Good

Llanarmon-yn-Ial

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Garmon

PRN 16808

NGR SJ19075616

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Garmon's church is a double-naved structure that occupies a central spot in the village of Llanarmon-yn-Ial, 4 miles south-east of Ruthin. The church underwent considerable rebuilding in the 1730s, and possibly at other times; possibly only the west end of the north nave is medieval in date. Inside, the main features of interest are two medieval effigies and the Llwyd memorial of 1639, together with the late medieval roofs. The churchyard is sub-rectangular, but the southern extremity has been truncated in the past. It contains few monuments since it was drastically cleared in the 1960s, but does contain a sundial that utilises the base of the old churchyard cross.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The building sequence is difficult to determine. One possibility is that the west wall of the north nave is largely original, and the survival of its quoins immured in the west face indicates the cell was earlier than the south nave which butts against it. Thus it is likely that the original medieval building was enlarged by the addition of a southern nave, late in the medieval period. In the absence of diagnostic architectural features it can only be assumed that like most other double-nave churches this was a 15thC design.

North wall and north-west angle rebuilt, perhaps in 1736, though the equivocal signs of insertion might possibly indicate that the wall masonry is earlier than the windows. East end of the church extended at an unknown date, but probably in 1736 using some new material but also re-using older masonry. South wall rebuilt at the same time as north wall. West wall of south nave rebuilt, perhaps in 1736, perhaps at a later date.

An alternative would be to see the north and south walls as original though with inserted windows, the east end extended in the 18thC, and the west end on the north side rebuilt. This however fails to take account of the surviving south-west corner immured in the later wall of the south nave.

HISTORY

In the early medieval period Llanarmon was a clas church.

It was recorded as 'Ecclesia de Sancto Germano' at a value of £2 in the Taxatio of 1254 and as 'Ecclia de Lanarmavn', valued at £14 1s 8d, in 1291. The church was, however, damaged in the wars of the late 13thC and there is a record of compensation being paid in 1284.

The rural dean's report for 1709 indicated that ostensibly the church was in good repair. However, it was largely rebuilt in 1736 - articles of agreement still survive for 1733 which perhaps relate to this work. The stone arcade was replaced in timber by Edward Whetnall, a Wrexham carpenter, but the late medieval roofs were retained. Of this date also are the round-headed windows, south porch and south doorway.

A gallery was added at the west end of the south nave in 1759 and then extended in 1781. The porch was

reportedly enlarged in 1774 to take a new hearse.

Glynne visited the church sometime in the mid-19thC, and considered that all the walls had been rebuilt though on the earlier foundations, the windows replaced, and the original roofs re-used.

Restoration occurred in 1870 by Douglas at a cost of c.£700; at this time some Gothic windows were added and the bracing to the colonnade; the box pews were removed, and probably the gallery too.

Further restoration occurred in 1906, in the late 1920s, when a heating chamber was constructed beneath what was then the vestry, and in the 1970s.

ARCHITECTURE

The church is double-naved though the north nave and chancel is slightly wider than the south nave which now functions as an aisle. There is a south porch and a west bellcote over the north nave.

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

Fabrics: 'A' consists of grey limestone blocks, roughly dressed and irregularly coursed; massive slabs are used for foundation courses and as quoins at west end of north nave.

'B' has masonry which is slightly rougher and less regular than 'A'; the stone is generally smaller and there are occasional 'foreign' inclusions such as lumps of yellow sandstone; some of the material is obviously packing.

'C' is similar to 'A' but the limestone is fractionally lighter and more uniform in colour; in addition pink and yellow sandstone blocks incorporated.

'D' also limestone with some sandstone; considerable render survival; possibly the same fabric as 'C'.

Roof: slates, grey clay ridge tiles of simple design; stone cross finial at east end of north nave; dressed stone antefixes to ends of south nave. Ball finial to porch. Porch has sandstone ridge tiles.

Bellcote has double aperture for two bells and is constructed of dressed limestone with ashlar quoins.

Drainage: concrete soakaway gully around whole church including porch. A trench beneath?

Exterior

North Nave. General. Chancel divide marked by buttress.

North wall: from west: i) sloping buttress rising to c.1.6m at north-west angle, appearing to act as a reinforcing batter; ii) round-headed window in buff-yellow freestone, no chamfers, projecting keystone, imposts and rim of sill. Around the window could be 'B' but not easy to define for no clear demarcation, though curious gold lichen stain appears to be restricted to it; iii) another window as ii) but no convincing evidence of insertion; iv) window as ii) with very limited signs of insertion; v) buttress in dressed limestone and probably relatively recent in date.

East and South walls: not present.

West wall: wall face obscured by heavy snail pointing which has spread over some of the masonry to form a render-like coat. Also an earlier render coat, discernible on 'C' but less obviously on 'A'. Juncture of the two fabrics visible as a colour change to north of west door. This is round-headed, of two chamfered orders and with much-weathered 'arrowhead' stops in pink and buff-yellow sandstone. But the arrises are sharp and most of the dressed stonework could be renewed, the exception perhaps the stones at the base of the doorway. Above door is an ornate lampholder. Gable topped by bellcote in better dressed limestone; at its base is a small rectangular slit window with only the sill and lintel chamfered. For southern corner of this

cell see west wall of south nave below.

North Chancel. North wall: continuation of north nave wall in 'A'. One window with paired, cusped lights in pale yellow freestone. Evidence of packing, including possible re-used dressed stonework, around window and heavy mortar specific to that packing. Final 2m of north wall rebuilt or, on the evidence of the straight butt joint, extended in Fabric 'D', some of which is re-used masonry.

East wall: mainly in 'D'; east window of three stepped lights with decorative relieving arch; the lights have two-centred arches with cusping, and roundels above the two outer lights. More regular masonry in the gable indicates rebuilding presumably at the time that this window inserted

South Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation between the two cells.

East wall: masonry not adequately characterised; possibly 'D'. Window is 18thC, a larger version of the round-headed windows on north side of church, and no indication that inserted.

South wall: because of the pointing characterisation of the masonry is difficult at east end. Between south-east corner and first window is i) a projecting chimney stack in dressed limestone. Beyond i) the fabric is 'A', there is little relict render and ii) a standard 18thC round-headed window; iii) next, in what is the nave, a blocked doorway, some of the blocking in squared sandstone, some with render traces; the dressed stone of the doorway has gone but the 'ghost' outline points to a round-headed opening; iv) another standard window with perhaps some packing beneath it; v) the porch which clearly abuts the nave wall; vi) another 18thC round-headed window. Both of these nave windows had shutters at some time.

West wall: sealed within this wall and just to the south of downpipe that drains the valley between the two roofs is the corner of the north nave, quoins in pink and yellow freestone showing beneath the heavy pointing. Difficult to characterise the masonry but may be 'C'-type. A single chamfered lancet in pale yellow freestone; no sign of insertion.

Porch. General. In dressed limestone like 'C' but no render residue.

East and west walls: plain.

South wall: round-headed doorway, the dressings in yellow sandstone; similar to windows for projecting keystone but not imposts. Light above the archway.

Interior

Porch. General. Slate flag floor; walls plastered and painted; roof plastered but two purlins exposed.

North wall: standard 18thC round-headed doorway and pilaster jambs; heavy nailed door has decorative hinges. Rest of wall plastered.

East wall: stone bench with worn sandstone seating. Incorporated Church Building Society board recording grant of £75 towards repairs in 1916.

South wall: nothing of significance.

West wall: bench as east wall.

Nave. General. Stone slab floor, no obvious graveslabs, but carpet over some of it including the aisle; benches on flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of six bays with arch-braced collar trusses and raking struts; trusses spring from wall top on north and, on the south, from corbels set at an

angle; two tiers of cusped windbraces.

North wall: three splayed windows; brass of 1731, together with 20thC memorials.

East wall: step separates this from chancel.

South wall: three and a half bays of five-bay timber arcade, with octagonal pillars and circular capitals, and braced with cusped struts. Of "unsophisticated but engaging character" (Hubbard). One mural tablet of 1835 at the extreme west end and beneath it a niche containing the statuette of a saint.

West wall: Four mural tablets of 18thC date: 1723, 1753, 1782 and 1799.

Chancel. General. One step up from nave. Floor with carpet, and walls as nave. Roof has one bay as the nave and two bays without struts but with the principal purlin and the side purlins retaining a little bit of brattishing; the indications are that originally there was a wagon roof.

North wall: one splayed window and one 19thC brass.

East wall: splayed main window.

South wall: one and a half bays of timber colonnade as nave.

West wall: step down to nave.

South nave. General. West end partitioned off for vestry. Slab floor but no obvious sign of re-use, apart from a memorial slab to a vicar (d.1781), under the vestry partition. Flush wooden boards under seating. Radiators with pipes now provide heating but there is a heating grille just inside the south door. Roof has five full bays, with a quarter bay at the west end and a three-quarter bay at the east. Of similar form with its struts and windbraces to north nave, but out of alignment with the nave itself.

North wall: arcade as south wall of north nave. Memorials of 1759 to 1818 and 1743 to 1761, one above the other, on wall in vestry.

East wall: step up in line with division between north nave and chancel.

South wall: splayed window (with another in vestry); three memorial tablets of 1700, 1723 and 1810 (in vestry); and a coat-of-arms east of south door.

West wall: splayed window embrasure, otherwise nothing of interest.

South 'Chapel'. General. Floor of stone slabs and wooden boarding. Roof of two and three-quarter bays, the trusses as in the nave except for that against the east wall which has no struts. Organ and two effigies on chests occupy this part.

North wall: arcade as south wall of north chancel.

East wall: splayed window.

South wall: one splayed window and the ghost of another round-headed window of the same height, in line with the external chimney; its western side is cut by the alcove for the Llwyd monument of 1639.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Effigies: i) worn effigy of an ecclesiastic. Early 14thC. At its head is a separate stone with three worn but

contorted faces - it is not clear whether this is associated with the effigy. Set on a modern plinth. A mid-19thC report in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* reveals that this was formerly set in the external south wall of the south aisle. ii) effigy of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn ab Ynyr, of Bodidris, c.1320; in mail surcoat with sword etc, said to have come from Valle Crucis, but no reason to countenance such a view. In excellent condition with paint traces still adhering. The plinth of different shape and size, probably not originally associated; it has on one side a pattern of trefoiled arcading enclosing painted shields (based on Hubbard, but full description in Gresham).

Chandelier: 'brass, pre-Reformation of 15thC or early 16thC, and a rare and wonderful treasure. Three tiers of six branches, with stylized foliated ornament on curving stems; enshrined in the centre is a canopied figure of the Virgin. Reputedly from Valle Crucis Abbey, but possibly of Flemish workmanship, and brought from the Low Countries by a member of the family from Bodidris, near Llandegla' (Hubbard). Full description in Pritchard (n.d.).

Chests: one of plank type, with iron bands and four locks, in south nave; another also plank built with iron fittings at west end of north nave.

Chest: against south wall is a gilded chest with foliate ornamentation; date unknown.

Table: old square table of oak - in vestry.

Font: small marble baluster font on stone plinth. Inscribed 'Rhodd Edward Thelwall o' Llanbeder. 1734'.

Monument: 'Efan Llwyd, of Bodidris, (d.1639), triple-arched mural monument; inside, or so it appears, is a reclining effigy, though only the legs and bust are visible, the central arch being a solid panel. This carries a Welsh inscription; heraldry and figures at top corners' (Hubbard). To Sir Evan Lloyd (d.1700) set up by his wife Margaret, incorporating foliate decoration and heraldry. It refers to a monument set up by his grandfather under the east window of the south aisle, now gone; to Jane Davies (d.1723) in stone, with putti, furled curtain etc; to David Jones (d.1723) and others, in marble; to Hugh Pennant (d.1731), a brass with heraldry; to Evan Jones (d.1743) in stone and marble; to Rev Simon Evans (d.1753), in slate; to Evan Davies (d.1759) and granddaughter, on wood; to Rev John Venables (d.1782) and wife, Jane (d.1776), in marble; small brass set in floor to a vicar (d.1781); to Elizabeth Williams (d.1799) and husband John (d.1801) in stone and with an urn.

Royal arms: large panel, painted by David Davies, 1740, on south wall.

Old schoolroom on south side of churchyard contains:

Benefaction Board for school house dated 1777, in English.

Exodus and Ten Commandments in Welsh.

Plate: cup of 1677, flagon of 1716/7, credence paten of 1696/7.

Victorian furnishings include:

Pulpit: attributable to Douglas.

CHURCHYARD

Llanarmon has a medium-sized churchyard, now sub-square in form with rounded corners, with the church itself centrally placed. It is evident that the southern segment has been detached for the construction of Tan-yr-ysgol and its garden - when this is taken into account the churchyard appears more curvilinear. It is set on the edge of the Alun valley, the southern side of the churchyard dropping away towards the river. It is well maintained.

Boundary: a stone retaining wall on the west with material slightly embanked behind it, and an external drop of over 1m. Wall continues around the north where the external drop is smaller, but this increases to nearly 1.5m on the east. A hedge on top of a low wall divides the present churchyard from the garden of Tan-yr-ysgol.

Monuments: sparse graves on the south though some grassed over; more to the west including modern ones, and a further group to the north-east of the church. Sporadic graves on the east. The churchyard was cleared of many stones in the 1960s and some were used to revet the bank of a stream nearer Llandegla.

Furniture: south-west of the church is part of the shaft of a churchyard cross, converted to take a sundial in 1774. Octagonal column is around 1m high with much eroded broach stops at the base. The plate has gone, but even in the 19thC Owen had difficulty in deciphering its inscription and claimed it was 'unused and useless'.

Earthworks: church sits on a sub-square platform, traceable for almost the full circuit, and defined by a gentle scarp bank, which might be of natural origin, on the south side of the church.

Ancillary features: tarmac paths, wrought iron gate on the west, large ornate double gates on the north with a single gate adjacent, and a smaller iron gate in the south-east. Adjacent to the main entrance on the north is a hearse house.

Vegetation: one mature yew west of the church, deciduous trees around west and north boundary, and others of smaller size beside path coming in from north.

SOURCES

Archaeologia Cambrensis 1859, 202-207
Articles of Agreement 1733: DRO/PD/43/1/36
CPAT Field Visit: 14 January 1997
Faculty: St Asaph 1927 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 258
Gresham 1968, 167; 182
Hubbard 1986, 186
Neaverson 1953-54, 12
Owen 1886, 89
Pritchard n.d.
Quinquennial Review 1988
Quinquennial Review 1996
Ridgway 1997, 111

CONDITION

Externally there are masonry cracks on the south side, and the dressed stone of the 18thC windows is flaking. Internally the west wall of the north nave is also flaking badly, and there is some evidence of subsidence for the altar base is beginning to tip.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Medium

Llandegla

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Tecla

PRN 16828

NGR SJ19595244

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Tecla's church lies at the northern end of Llandegla village, a little more than 5 miles south-east of Ruthin. Undoubtedly an early medieval foundation, its medieval church has been swept away to be replaced by a wholly Victorian building of simple plan and design. It retains a medieval font, a plank chest and, most remarkably, a late medieval chandelier. The present churchyard is rectangular with a few 18thC graves still marked, but an earlier enclosure can still be discerned around the western side of the church.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Whole structure of a single build from second half of 19thC. Possibly the only trace of its predecessor is projecting plinth at east end.

HISTORY

The location and perhaps the churchyard earthworks validate an early medieval origin. Thomas noted that the dedication is to a Roman saint, but that the date of the annual festival did not correspond and thus it might originally have had a different dedication.

In 1273 it was regarded as a chapelry of Llangollen, and thus belonged to Valle Crucis Abbey. In 1291 in Pope Nicholas' Taxation it was recorded as 'Ecclia de Landegla' at a value of £5 6s 8d.

Medieval church believed to have been a single-cell building, and slightly smaller than the present building, with a western doorway that had carved capitals.

A plan of proposed alterations survives from 1808, but it is unclear whether these were carried out.

Glynne visited church in the mid-19thC, though no date is given; he recorded a 'small, mean church' the nave and chancel as a single cell and a south porch. There was 'scarcely any original feature inside or out'. Windows were round-headed, the roof barn-like and open, the chancel plastered and whitewashed, there were benches not pews, the pulpit had carving on it, and there was a west gallery.

Church rebuilt in Decorated style, at the expense of Margaret, Lady Willoughby de Broke in 1866, almost certainly by John Gibson.

ARCHITECTURE

Llandegla church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a porch located near the south-west corner of the nave, a vestry on the north side of the chancel, and a west bellcote.

The building is oriented slightly north of east.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises regular blocks and slabs of micaceous pink sandstone, generally of medium size and well dressed; quoins of the same material. Rarely a block of yellow freestone incorporated into the masonry.

Roof: slates, grey clay ridge tiles of simple form, metal cross finial at east end. Bellcote at west end is of 'A', but upper parts in yellow ashlar masonry; stepped sides and a single aperture.

Drainage: drainage trench likely around most of the building perimeter, but showing as either a concrete surface gully or, in places, as a concreted drain.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Described here as a single cell as no external distinction between the two elements. All in 'A'. Vestry and lean-to boiler room or storage shed on north side.

North wall: three windows (all to nave) with two-centred arches, two foiled ogee-headed lights with smaller cusped lights above, hoodmoulds with foliate stops; chamfered dressings in buff-yellow freestone, and decorative relieving arches in standard masonry. Vestry with a chimney in 'A' projecting from nave roof above it. East of vestry the wall is plain with no fenestration.

East wall: large east window with two-centred arch, three trefoiled round-headed lights and cusped lights with reticulated tracery above; hoodmould with foliate stops; relieving arch in 'A'. High up in gable a small trefoil light. At base of wall beneath the window is a discontinuous projecting plinth capped in concrete, its origin uncertain.

South wall: three windows (two to nave and one to chancel) in same style as those in north wall.

West wall: west window much the same as that in east wall, but lights have ogee rather than round heads, and there is a roundel set with three trefoil lights above the main lights. Small trefoil light just below.

Vestry. General. All in 'A'. East wall has doorway with shouldered arch, north wall a small rectangular window with two lights. Both in chamfered yellow freestone.

Porch. General. In 'A' with angle buttresses on south side and pilaster buttresses against the nave wall. Hollow-chamfered plinth at 0.4m, a string course at c.1.1m. All these in yellow freestone. Doorway has two-centred arch, chamfered dressings and a hoodmould with foliate stops. A small trefoil light above the doorway.

Interior

Porch. General. Black and red tiled floor; plastered and painted walls; simple raftered roof. Doorway to nave has two-centred arch and chamfered dressings in olive-coloured freestone.

Nave. General. Interior of simple design. Floor completely covered with carpet, benches raised on wooden boarding; heating provided by radiators and above-ground piping. Walls plastered and painted, and a wooden 'rail' runs around walls at height of c.1.3m. Roof of five bays including chancel: arch-braced collar trusses rest on decorative corbels, and further arch bracing above each collar supports principals, and trefoils cut out at the apices.

North wall: splayed windows and simple two-centred arched doorway to vestry; two 20thC brasses.

South wall: two splayed windows and doorway. One 20thC brass.

West wall: plain but for splayed west window.

Chancel. General. Three steps up to altar with altar rails on second step. For walls and roof see nave.

North wall: lower part of wall occupied by a blind, four-centred arch with quarter-round mouldings; set in a rectangular frame with sunken spandrels; painted and presumably Victorian like the rest.

East wall: both the window and the wall beneath it are inset so the altar is set back.

Vestry. General. Nothing of interest.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: Perpendicular; octagonal bowl and stem on square base, bowl has roll mouldings and unusual patterns carved in the panels.

Chandelier: 'late medieval brass chandelier (cf Llanarmon-yn-Ial). This is the simpler of the two, with only two tiers of branches, one of eight, one of four, but also having Perpendicular ornament (fruit and foliage) on curving stems; surmounted by a figure of the Virgin, not canopied; beast head with a ring below' (Hubbard). Traditionally brought from Valle Crucis Abbey at the Dissolution, but like that at Llanarmon it may instead have been brought back from the Low Countries by a member of the family from Bodidris,.

Plank chest: painted black, iron fittings.

Plate: porringer of 1783/4.

Victorian furnishings include:

Stained glass: 'east window by Francis Eginton originally installed in St Asaph Cathedral in 1800 (or 1806), characteristic of its period in style and technique. Three pictorial lights with eleven containing the arms of the bishop and the nobility and gentry who paid for it; the figurative lights were transferred to Llandegla in 1864' (Hubbard).

CHURCHYARD

Llandegla churchyard is square, of medium size, well-maintained, and flat, except on the west side where it drops away outside the old boundary (see below). There is a modern extension (1956) on the north, and modern burials are largely restricted to this area. It is located a few metres back from the edge of a river terrace, the River Alyn passing to the west of the site.

Boundary: surrounded by a stone wall, effectively a retaining wall on all sides but the west.

Monuments: relatively sparse around the church itself, but much closer set and regularly laid out in the extreme western part of the churchyard outside the old 'llan' (see below). A few 18thC ledgers south of the church, the only legible one of 1786.

Furniture: sundial south of church; octagonal sandstone pillar on round base, but plate was stolen several years ago (info: the verger).

Earthworks: a scarped platform, roughly square but perhaps with rounded corners, visible to the west and south of the church and for a shorter distance on the north; 0.5m+ high on west represents an earlier circuit;

churchyard is level on east side.

Present churchyard is raised by c.1.3m on north and similar sorts of height on south and east; only on west is there is no significant difference between internal and external levels.

Ancillary features: double, ornamental iron gates on south and a single one on east. Tarmac and concrete paths around the church.

Vegetation: a mature yew south of chancel and yew bushes beside the path with one near the north-east corner. Several pines around perimeter.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 15 January 1997

Evans 1995, 12

Glynne 1884, 260

Hubbard 1986, 192

Neaverson 1953-54, 12

Plan 1808: DRO/PD/44/1/25

Pritchard n.d.

Ridgway 1997, 122

Thomas 1911, 88

CONDITION

Externally it appears sound, internally some traces of damp.

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: Medium to Good

Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Trillo

PRN 16833

NGR SJ03433707

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Trillo's church lies in the centre of Llandrillo village about 5 miles south-west of Corwen. The present church with its west tower dates from 1875 and incorporates fabric of its 1776 predecessor, but nothing from an earlier date. Internally it has little of interest, although the 13thC Blaen-y-cwm stone has been placed here for safety and there is a medieval font bowl as well as a few 18th furnishings and fittings.

The churchyard is near circular and raised, but has been cut back to accommodate cottages on the north-western side. It contains a sundial and an interesting range of 18thC graveslabs.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A new church was built in 1776 but only lower walls and lower part of tower survive. The rest was rebuilt in 1875/77.

HISTORY

Undoubtedly an early medieval foundation on the basis of its dedication, churchyard and siting.

The Taxatio of 1254 refers to 'Ecc'a de Lantreullo' at a value of £2 and the 1291 Taxatio to 'Eccl'ia de Landerillo' at £12.

Of the medieval building little is known. A visitation of 1749 referred to a rood screen and loft, which included a band of carved work with dragons, lions, interlacings and roses.

Church was rebuilt in 1776 with a nave and chancel in one and a west tower which provided the main entrance. Details given in the 1875 faculty indicate that it was a low building 90 feet long by 22 feet wide, and the tower about 10 feet square.

Further work took place in 1852 when it was renovated and re-seated, and alterations made to the screen.

Glynne visited the church in 1865. Apart from the 18thC features, he recorded a Perpendicular window at the east end but thought it had recently been put in, the lower part of the screen with 'curious panelling', pierced by small round holes and intersecting arches. A gallery or loft at the west end of the church contained late Perpendicular panelling and pierced tracery with a cornice of animals and foliage. There were also some old open seats with armorial shields.

In 1875 because of decay the church was rebuilt by Pountney Smith of Shrewsbury at a cost of £3166. The nave was largely replaced as were all the windows, and a new porch, chancel and vestry were added. The tower was renovated and modified, with a new arch into the church and the west door blocked off. Most of the fittings were replaced, though the nave seats were partly constructed from old materials. The churchyard wall was completely rebuilt at the same time. The new church was consecrated in 1877.

ARCHITECTURE

Llandrillo church comprises a nave and a slightly narrower chancel, a north porch, a west tower and as an adjunct to the south side of the chancel, a vestry and organ chamber.

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

Fabrics: 'A' consists of medium to large shaley slate, some coursing; sparse remnant limewash.

'B' is of regularly shaped slabs of shale, predominantly grey in colour; coursed; dressings in pink or yellow sandstone, the latter used for quoins.

'C' is of regularly shaped blocks of dressed sandstone.

'A' is 18thC, 'B' and 'C' 19thC.

Roof: slates, reconstituted clay ridge tiles; no finials.

Drainage: drains around the whole building.

Exterior

Tower. General. Chamfered plinth at a height of c.0.5m+ and set on projecting slabs of slate at ground level (visible on north and west sides). Above the first stage, which is in 'A', is an overhanging broach roof and above this an octagonal second stage which is in 'B' but may also have some re-used stone in it. This is battlemented and its string course has gargoyles. Finally an octagonal spire in 'C', lit on four sides by two quatrefoil lights with stopped hoodmoulds and surmounted by a cross.

North wall: plain, but for later (Victorian) stair turret in 'B', projecting at north-east angle. The second stage has a Victorian belfry window of a trefoiled, louvred light, with a quatrefoil above, and a hoodmould with head-stops.

East wall: nave roof rises to base of belfry window.

South wall: the first stage has two slit windows, the lower with its large jamb stones is blocked, the upper which lights the ringing chamber lacks vertical jamb stones and could be more recent. Standard belfry window.

West wall: blocked doorway at base of tower, opposite original churchyard entrance; lintel or arch has been removed, and two-centred arched window with two trefoiled lights inserted with a surrounding blocking in 'B'. Standard belfry window.

Nave. General. Wall base in 'A' though shows some variety in the stonework and has been heavily pointed.

North wall: 'A' to window sill level (i.e. c.1.3m), 'B' above; two three-light windows with two-centred arches, hoodmoulds with head-stops and relieving arches. Four buttresses.

East wall: not present.

South wall: 'A' rises to variable height: at east end it has been almost entirely removed, but further west to just above sill level. Rest of wall in 'B' but probably more re-use of old stone, for some residual limewash. Three standard windows.

West wall: not present.

Chancel. General. Wall plinth to 0.5m high maximum, probably of old material re-used with Victorian freestone chamfer, for continues at base of vestry east wall. Above the plinth all in 'B'.

North wall: a standard window of two lights and a single trefoiled light for the sanctuary; both have standard hoodmoulds and relieving arches.

East wall: east window with two-centred arch and three lights, and a hexafoil light above.

South wall: obscured by vestry and organ chamber.

Vestry. General. Wholly Victorian.

Porch. General. Stone foundation walls in 'B' with timber superstructure. Against the west wall is a lump of slate with a large hole (for a boss?) and an inscription: "This church was rebuilt in the year 1776, John Evans, Griffith Jones Church Wardens".

Interior

Porch. General. Open fronted; floor of black and red tiles; walls of bare stone and timber. Roof of two bays with collar trusses and two tiers of cusped windbraces.

South wall: Victorian two-centred arched doorway in red and pink sandstone, ballflower ornament, hoodmould with head-stops.

Tower. General. Tiled floor, some carpet; walls plastered and painted; ceiled in wood above the level of the west window.

Nave. General. One step up from porch. Tiled floor with some carpet including the aisle where heating grilles in evidence. Benches raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of six bays with arch-braced collars resting on stone corbels, king-post and raking struts, the later cusped; two tiers of windbraces.

North wall: doorway with splayed reveal and segmental head, three splayed window apertures, one 19thC marble mural tablet.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch of two orders, the inner springing from wall columns.

South wall: three splayed windows and late 19thC marble mural tablet.

West wall: tower arch is two-centred and has hoodmould with head-stops, chamfered dressings, all in Victorian pink sandstone.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Tiled floor including some encaustic, particularly in the sanctuary; rear choir stalls raised on wooden plinths. Walls as nave and roof of two bays also as nave but trusses lack raking struts. Stained glass in all windows.

North wall: splayed windows; aumbry below sanctuary window. A brass records the erection of the window and also the presence of a vault beneath the chancel for the Lloyd family of Hendwr.

East wall: splayed window only.

South wall: large two-centred arch to organ chamber, the organ filling the bay. Two sedilia in sanctuary.

Organ Chamber. General. Wooden boards for floor; standard walls; roof of simple purlins and rafters. West wall has two mural tablets of 1774 and 1788.

Vestry. General. Marble mural tablet of 1847.

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Inscribed stone: large rectangular block brought from Blaen-y-cwm at the head of Cwm Pennant to the south of Llandrillo in c.1959 and dated to the 13thC or slightly earlier.

Font: old octagonal bowl, lead lined, stem has gone but base survives.

Portable altar: now converted into table and thought to date from the late 17thC.

Inscription: set into front bench on south side in an almost invisible location beneath the shelf is an inscribed piece of wood: "Margred Morgan 1732".

Monuments: stone memorial to John Jones (d.1788) and others, in Welsh with broken pediment above, and painted putto on supporting plaque beneath; marble memorial to Giwn Lloyd of Hendwr (d.1774) and others.

Bells: of 1755, 1771 and 1877 x 2; all recast in 1951.

Plate: could be late 16thC.

Registers: from 1686.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is small, near-circular, well-kept but closed for burial in 1899. It is also relatively level and clearly raised (see below). It is set on the western edge of the river terrace above Afon Ceidiog in the centre of Llandrillo village.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall, acting as a retaining wall on the south and parts of the east and west. Constructed in 1877, and possibly at this time the stone benches which ran round the inside of the wall "for the parishioners to sit upon before prayers" were removed. Buildings and yards edge the enclosure on the north-west.

Monuments: marked graves fill the yard and are dense in places; some are in poor condition or have collapsed, and on the west side some stones have been cleared to the churchyard wall. A good range of 18thC gravestones, many of them ledgers on low chest tombs. Earliest dated examples seen are from 1747 and 1752. Canopied tomb against south wall of church, that of Richard Wynne of Garth Gynnon.

Furniture: sundial, south of tower near churchyard boundary. No gnomon and no recognisable inscription. Plate set on a rectangular pillar with an iron band around the top. Is this an old cross-shaft re-used?

Earthworks: on the west and north raised by 1m, on the south-west by over 1m, on the east by upwards of 3m and on the south-east it could be 4m higher than the external ground levels.

Ancillary features: double, ornamental wrought iron gates on north with a gravel path leading to the porch. Tarmac path incorporating graveslabs around the tower and on to the south. Here a small iron gate, now chained off.

Vegetation: very large yew south of vestry, now split. Another smaller one to the west-north-west of the tower, and a few yew bushes also.

SOURCES

Account of 1877 Restoration: GAS/ZM/1105/2 (Dolgellau)
Anon 1878
CPAT Field Visit: October 1996
Faculty: St Asaph 1875 (NLW)
Faculty: St Asaph 1959 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 271
Quinquennial Review 1985
Ridgway 1997, 122
Thomas 1913, 100

CONDITION

Generally okay but minor damp patches and there is also a large crack in the west wall of the nave (east wall of tower).

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Good

Llandyrnog

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Teyrnog**PRN** 16838**NGR** SJ10786510

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Teyrnog's church lies in the centre of the village of Llandyrnog, about 3 miles to the east of Denbigh. It is a double-naved structure which in its present form is certainly late medieval, any structural development being effectively masked by a ubiquitous coat of render. Perpendicular windows survive on the south side while others particularly the east windows have been totally renewed. Inside the late medieval roofs have been restored and there is the head from a priest's effigy, but it is the fragments of stained glass of c.1500 that stand out. Post-medieval fittings include a parish chest, a poor box dated to 1687, and a fairly typical range of 18thC and 19thC wall memorials. The churchyard has been extended but the original sub-oval perimeter of the earlier 'llan' can still be determined, despite modifications in the last century and a half. The memorials within the churchyard range back to the late 17thC, and there is a sundial of 1749.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Because of the external render nothing can be said of the sequence of construction. There are, however, foundation courses at the east end of the north side, and the east wall of the north chancel which could be instructive. Windows are mainly replaced, though Hubbard felt they might be faithful reproductions; the exceptions are two Perpendicular windows on the south in different styles. Without doubt, however, the church in its present form, is of the Perpendicular period.

HISTORY

The dedication and churchyard morphology point to an early medieval origin for the church, but there is no confirmatory documentary evidence. Tradition has it that it was founded by Teyrnog, a 6thC saint.

The Norwich Taxation of 1254 is the first reference to the church, as 'Landemant', when it was worth 20s. In Pope Nicholas' taxation nearly forty years later it was recorded as 'Ecclia de Llant'nank' and rated at £5. The first record of a rector was not until 1535.

Glynne visited Llandyrnog in 1847, remarking on the Perpendicular windows especially that at the east end of the chancel, together with the stained glass therein. The font was small and bad, there was a west gallery and modern ceilings. The arcade comprised four clumsy pointed arches with octagonal piers and the western bay was lower and smaller than the others

A description of 1872 indicates that the building was rough cast on the outside and had pews internally - and a ground plan of the pewholders survives from c.1850 and shows pews in the south nave right up to the east wall - the roof (or roofs) were ceiled, and even then the west door was no longer in use. The west gallery had been removed some years previously and a raised platform erected in the south aisle for the singers.

Lloyd Williams and Underwood's plan (1872) shows both a porch and another cell adjoining the north side of the church at the north-west and north-east corners respectively, and a vestry at the south-west corner. The vestry on the south side which itself had been formed from the old south porch, was replaced by a new

porch at the time of the 1876 restoration and the porch demolished, with the north doorway being filled in.

In 1876-8 the church was restored by W.E.Nesfield at a cost of nearly £3000. 'Pink pebbledash and sandstone dressings give a Late Victorian impression, and to Nesfield is owed the Gothic double bellcote (replacing a simpler one), the west window of the south nave, and the timber-framed porch which displays his favourite decorative roundels ('pies') in a couple of brackets, and similar circular sunflower patterns in the plaster panels' (Hubbard). Portions of the walls were taken down and rebuilt as was the arcade. It was re-roofed and a new west window inserted. Wall paintings of texts were destroyed during restoration though one was preserved by the clerk of works, but has since lost.

Part of the churchyard was removed in 1931 to widen the main road to the west, and the churchyard wall was rebuilt. It appears that at least 3m of churchyard was lost with at least 17 graves.

ARCHITECTURE

Llandymnog church comprises a double nave and chancel, the southern nave now functioning as an aisle. There is a bellcote at the west end of the north nave, and a porch near the south-west corner of the south nave.

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

Fabrics: all external walls have been rendered and pebbledashed and consequently no record can be made for the masonry.

Roof: slate roofs with grey clay ridge tiles; cross finials at east end of north nave and on porch. Chimney projects from south chancel roof above subterranean boiler house below and to one side of most easterly window.

Drainage: trench filled with chippings along north, east, and south side as far west as porch; rest of south side has flower bed, and there is tarmac at base of west wall.

Exterior

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

North wall: three windows, wholly Victorian and all of the same design, though that to the chancel is smaller: three lights with cusped ogee heads, a square head to the window itself, and a label with simple stops; the dressings and labels all in pinkish freestone, though the jambs do have some red sandstone, but there is no sign that any of this is earlier. Single buttress, close to the nave/chancel divide, also in pink sandstone. Beneath the chancel and extending beneath the buttress (though apparently not much further) is a foundation course projecting 0.1m, the chippings in the drainage trench just below it.

East wall: wall dominated by a large five-light window with a two-centred arch and a hoodmould with head-stops; the lights have cinquefoil heads, beneath a transom with panels above; hollow chamfers to jambs and arch; all in creamy buff sandstone and all Victorian. At the base of wall is a plinth of red sandstone, again just above ground level; the sandstone is worn and must be original.

West wall: two-centred arched doorway in pink and red sandstone with quarter-round chamfers. Above this a square-headed two-light window, the lights with two-centred heads and cinquefoil cusping; pink and buff dressings; no label. Finally, a double bellcote in pink sandstone, with quarter-round dressings; above the apertures is a niche with a cusped head, but empty; bellcote surmounted by weathervane.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Victorian coping stones and kneelers to both east gables.

East wall: window with two-centred arch, simple hoodmould, three lights with two-centred heads and cinquefoil cusping, the mullions carrying through to the top of the window, sub-dividing the panels above the lights; all in pink sandstone.

South wall: towards the west end the wall has a pronounced outwards lean. From the east are: i) square-headed, three-light window, the lights almost round-headed with trefoil cusping; label; the jambs in red and pink sandstone. A window similar to but not the same as those of the north side; ii) a broad four-centred arched window of three lights; these are two-centred with trefoil cusping; the pink and cream coloured dressings used for the window heads could be original, but the mullions probably replaced. 16thC; iii) another four-centred arched window, broad in relation to its height; three plain lights, the central one two-centred, the others four-centred; pink and buff freestone. Probably later than window to east; iv) porch..

West wall: five light window with cinquefoil tracery in round heads, the mullions continuing to top, and panels include two quatrefoils; two-centred head to window with simple hoodmould; standard pink sandstone.

Porch. General. Of Victorian build replacing a vestry which in turn had been formed from an earlier south porch. Plastered foundation walls with pink sandstone dressings, and timber superstructure with decorated panels on three sides. Wooden square-headed windows of three lights with cusped heads. On south side, a large timber-framed doorway with a four-centred arch, carved jambs and a hefty wooden door.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor; plastered and whitewashed walls. Roof has two re-used trusses (one perhaps from the old north porch), the inner an arch-braced collar with cusped rafters and collar, the outer a tie beam with raking struts, again all cusped; purlins look original, and pronounced wooden pegs.

North wall: two-centred arched doorway in pink sandstone; chamfers with fancy stops; simple hoodmould. Wall sports an Incorporated Society for Building and Churches' plaque of 1876.

East wall: wooden bench with window above.

West wall: as east wall.

North Nave. General. Floor has slabs, some re-used for date of 1634 visible in one place; however carpet over most of floor; heating grilles; benches on flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed, and displaying a marked outwards lean. Roof of six bays with simple, chamfered, arch-braced collar trusses springing from ribbed wall plates; trusses of uniform appearance; two tiers of cusped wind braces.

North wall: two splayed windows with only the dressings unpainted; two 18thC and one 19thC marble wall memorials; two 19thC brasses; five 20thC memorials.

East wall: two steps up to chancel.

South wall: three bays of five-bay arcade, octagonal columns, complex moulded capitals, all in pink sandstone revealing a complete rebuild.

West wall: slightly splayed doorway embrasure with two-centred arch. Two memorials of 1722 and 1782/86.

North Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel from nave, one to sanctuary and one to altar. Carpeted floor in chancel and encaustic tiles in sanctuary; choir stalls on flush wooden boarding. Walls as nave. Roof of four bays but closer-set trusses than in nave, with three rather than six rafters between.

North wall: splayed window; three 19thC memorials; head of priest's effigy on floor beneath window.

East wall: splayed window with medieval stained glass.

South wall: two bays of arcade as north nave.

South Nave. General. Slab floor, but carpet covered in aisle so impossible to determine how many are re-used graveslabs. Heating grilles also in evidence. Around font at west end other slabs with datable examples from 1589, 1665 and 1763. Benches on flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of eight bays including chancel (now vestry), all arch-braced collars springing from ribbed wall plates; two tiers of cusped wind-braces.

North wall: arcade (see north nave).

East wall: no differentiation but further east panelled screen separates vestry from nave.

South wall: two splayed windows, that to east has lighter coloured dressings that appear earlier than the standard in this church; a brass beneath the more westerly window records the erection of the window to three sons who died in 1847, 1849 and 1879, though it is not clear whether this is the whole window or just the glass. Elsewhere on the wall a hatchment and four 19thC memorials.

West wall: splayed window with brass of 1877 below, and one marble memorial.

South Chancel. General. Eastern half occupied by vestry approached by two steps; wooden board floor. Walls and roof as described under south nave.

North wall: organ + two bays of arcade

East wall: splayed window. Photographs and painting.

South wall: sink has replaced chimney and boiler.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Effigy: fragments of a priestly effigy in the sanctuary, notably the head, perhaps early 14thC.

Stained glass: 'in the north nave east window work of c.1500, restored and rearranged by Kempe. In the main lights, some canopy work and remains of a Seven Sacraments window, with central Crucifixion, the Eucharist and Extreme Unction in the second light, and (more complete) Ordination and Marriage in the fourth. Also parts from an Apostles window, with two figures in the first light and two in the fifth, each with their clause of the Creed. Ox of St Luke in the fifth. Canopy work in the tracery, and the Coronation of the Virgin in the two centre panels of the top row with a nimbed bishop to the left. Below, female saints and, in the two centre panels, the Annunciation' (Hubbard).

Hatchment: painted and now behind glass.

Painting: of Bishop William Roberts of Bangor who died in 1665; painting found in a farmhouse in Llangynhafal in the 19thC.

Monuments: mural tablets in marble except where stated: to John Ashpoole (d.1716) and his wife Frances (d.1692) with drapes, putto and heraldry; to John Ashpoole (d.1722) and his wife, Jane (d.1719) with putto and heraldry; to Henry Powell (d.1749), in marble with broken pediment and heraldry; to Richard Edmunds (d.1815) et al by J.Wright of Chester; to Edward Madocks (d.1754) and his wife, Jane (d.1758) in Latin; to Richard Edmunds (d.1782) and Catherine, his wife (d.1768) with a simple pediment, in stone; to Anne Lloyd (d.1770) and father, Robert (d.1792) in Welsh on wood.

Chest: dugout, with decorated iron fitting, one lock and two clasps.

Poor box: iron bound box with date 1687 and 'Remember the poor', painted on one side, inscribed on another.

Priest's chair: decorated back and sides, no date, but Thomas records an altar chair with the Ashpool arms dated to 1712.

Plate: cup of c.1570, and flagon and stand paten dated to 1746/7.

Victorian furnishings by Nesfield (on information derived from Hubbard) include:

Font, pulpit, lectern and also the stalls, strong and simple in their framing and moulding, and with sun-flower pies in poppyheads. Best of all a sanctuary bench, with incised 17thC-style patterns in some panels and artfully random pies in others. Like other items it is dated 1877.

Tiles: including embossed ones in a dado behind the altar.

Fine ironwork on doors.

CHURCHYARD

Llandyrnog churchyard has a curious polygonal shape which is largely a modern development. The slightly less regular line of an earlier perimeter can be discerned on the north and north-east (see below), while the curving west and north-west sides were shaved back prior to 1931 to facilitate traffic movement on the road. There is also a rectangular extension on the east side. The churchyard is reasonably level though there may be a slight drop from east to west. It is still used for burial and is reasonably well maintained.

Boundary: south-west of the church, the churchyard is edged by a retaining wall rising to about 1.7m; on the south-east is a rough masonry wall; on the north-east the extension is edged by a low stone retaining wall; and on the north-west is a stone wall with a drop to the road beyond.

Monuments: reasonably uniform distribution in the yard, though never dense. Many slate slabs flaking. There is a good range of monuments going back to the 17thC and even on the north side of the church there are tombs of the early 18thC, e.g. 1708. South of the church is a table tomb of 1670, and to the west a chest tomb of 1682.

Furniture: short distance to the south-west of the building is a sundial inscribed "Ratcliff: Holywell Lat: 53 1749". It is placed on a small rectangular-sectioned pillar with chamfered edges, which is weathering badly.

Earthworks: on the north-east is a low scarp bank up to 0.4m with a yew and a pine on it; this swings round and continues on the north as a more pronounced scarp a few metres inside the present perimeter. Together with the surviving, if modified, south-east and south-west sides they define a smaller raised churchyard with a tendency to curvilinearity.

Ancillary features: lychgate at north-west corner with limestone rubble walls and a timber roof; no date. At south-west is a simple iron gate approached by a flight of eight steps from the road. Another small gate on the north-east side gives access to a new graveyard on the opposite side of a track. Tarmac paths to porch and between to the gates on the west, slabs and flags in front of the porch.

Vegetation: yews, none of any great age, around edge of original churchyard, together with occasional pine. One yew in northern strip between scarp bank and perimeter wall.

SOURCES

CPAT AP 95-006-0032; 95-C-0157/0159
CPAT Field Visit: 26 November 1996
Faculty: St Asaph 1876 (NLW)
Faculty: St Asaph 1931 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 172
Gresham 1968, 165
Hubbard 1986, 195
Lloyd Williams and Underhill 1872, pl 21
NMR Aberystwyth
Neaverson 1953-54, 9
Plan c.1850: DRO/PD/47/1/38
Quinquennial 1995
Ridgway 1997, 126
Thomas 1911, 35

CONDITION

Appears to be in good condition, though some water seeping through above arcade at west end.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Good

Llanelidan

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Elidan**PRN** 16842**NGR** SJ10995054

GENERAL SUMMARY

Llanelidan lies in the hills at the southern end of the Vale of Clwyd, with Ruthin a few miles to the north. St Elidan's church is a characteristic Vale of Clwyd church with a double nave, but with a more recent westward vestry extension. Its earliest architectural details date from the late 13thC, but the second nave was added in the late 15thC/early 16thC with distinctive Perpendicular windows, and two further, individually dated, windows in the early 17thC. Internal features of note include re-used material from the rood screen, a 15thC font, some 15thC stained glass, and a Jacobean pulpit. The original form of the churchyard has been erased and it is now a raised rectangular area with a spread of gravestones from the 18thC onwards.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Porch: possibly the walls completely rebuilt, though much of the timberwork looks original.

Vestry: seemingly a Victorian addition though two different fabrics ('A' and 'C') represented which could conceivably indicate that it was extended at an earlier date (?17thC) for some unknown purpose, and the side walls rebuilt in the 19thC.

North nave and chancel: western part of north wall rebuilt in 19thC. Rest of the wall probably original and later 13thC on the basis of one window and the main door; a Perpendicular east window inserted, probably in the later 15thC, and in the north wall a window in Perpendicular style added in the early 17thC.

South aisle added, probably in the later 15thC, with one south window inserted in the early 17thC; the west end had a Tudor doorway blocked and some Victorian rebuilding.

In summary nave and presumably chancel built in late 13thC; south aisle added in late 15thC/early 16thC; vestry added in 19thC, with possibility of an earlier predecessor.

HISTORY

The dedication and the location suggest an early medieval origin, though there is no direct evidence to confirm this supposition.

In the Norwich Taxation of 1254 it appears as 'Ecclesia de Lanelidan' with a value of £2. By 1291 'Llanelydan' had risen to £8.

The Royal Commission volume on Denbighshire reported that the church was extended and partly rebuilt in 1460 with windows of this date in the east walls. The northern part of the church was supposedly lengthened in the early 17thC. The source of this information has not been traced.

Restoration took place in 1890 and included a new roof, the repair of the bellcote, the windows and doors, a new buttress at the north-east angle and a new chimney. Inside new steps and tiled floors were added, the

church was re-seated and a new screen was introduced inside the main door,

Further work was undertaken in 1938 when the pews were re-arranged, the stone flooring was replaced with wooden blocks, and a new heating chamber was excavated at the west end of the church. Pipes and radiators were added. The faculty petition also referred to a vault in the south-east corner of the chancel and it was decided that the inscribed slabs from beside the vault should be re-set beneath the wooden flooring.

More restoration is reported in the mid-1960s when the floor of the building was lowered to its original level.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanelidan church comprises a nave and chancel of equal width, with a western vestry extension over which is a bellcote. A south aisle of similar dimensions to the nave and chancel creates a typical 'double-nave' church. On the north side the main porch is placed half way along the nave side.

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

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium blocks of grey sedimentary stone, fairly regular in shape (though this is exaggerated by snail pointing), but irregularly coursed.

'B' is similar, but some of the grey stone is clearly limestone, the rubble is less regular in shape and more randomly laid; some red sandstone is also in evidence.

'C' has regular blocks of grey stone together with small slabs of black or grey stone laminated in section, which in places predominates.

'D' consists of large, relatively regular blocks of pink sandstone, together with some grey limestone blocks; occasional smaller and more irregular stones used as infill; irregularly coursed.

'E' has small to large blocks of grey and buff-grey stone, some certainly limestone; some of the stones appear more worn than others; this rubble is jumbled and shows little regularity.

'B' is late 13thC/early 14thC; 'D' is late 15thC/early 16thC; 'A' and 'E' are contemporary and of 19thC date; 'C' might be earlier though almost certainly of post-medieval origin.

Roof: slates with terracotta ridge tiles; stone bellcote with two openings, at west end; cross finials at east end of both the chancel and the south aisle. Slightly disconformity in roof line where new section added to west end of nave.

Drainage: a brick and stone-lined trench runs along the south wall, continuing on east side of south aisle. No obvious trace around remainder of building but gardens on the west and parts of the north could overlie a covered drain.

Exterior

Porch. General. Fabric does not conform to any one of the fabrics listed above; the closest is 'E', but this has a predominance of large irregular blocks of red sandstone.

North wall: main entrance has a two-centred arch defined by massive timber uprights and an arch-braced tie-beam, partly supported on the terminals of large wallplates. Gable is open above the tie beam. Original timberwork.

East wall: 19thC light with flattened ogee head, conceivably inserted into wall?

West wall: as east wall but the window does not appear to be inserted.

Vestry. General. Added on to the church at a late date.

North wall: at the west angle, Fabric C for the first 1.5m, giving way to 'A'. Set in this is a rectangular three-light window, the lights with ogee heads, in Victorian (?1890) red sandstone. Beyond, the vestry gives way to the nave but without a change in the masonry.

South wall: largely in 'E' though at extreme south-west angle there is a change to 'A'. Wall contains a rectangular window with four ogee-headed lights comparable with the window in the north wall. Adjacent is a flat-headed door with a decorated lintel, all in the distinctive dark pink sandstone used for the dressings of this late addition.

West wall: primarily of 'C' though at the base of the wall are irregular blocks of grey stone reminiscent of 'B'. Just below eaves level the masonry changes from 'C' to a variation of 'A' and is carried up the bellcote. There is also a change at the south angle where 'C' gives way to 'A'. Two large buttresses support the wall, stopping at about the level of the masonry change.

Nave. General. Externally no differentiation from the vestry to the west and the chancel to the east.

North wall: initially in 'A', but about 1.1m west of the porch the masonry changes to 'B' (though the juncture is not clearly definable) and a basal plinth, chamfered in red sandstone at a height of c.0.3m appears. This fabric continues beyond where the nave gives way to the chancel. Built into the 'A' walling is a Victorian ogee-headed arched window with a hoodmould, and two trefoiled ogee-headed lights. Incorporated in the 'B' masonry is the main north door (see Porch interior, below), and a three-light window to the east of the porch. This window has a segmental head, with a cavetto hoodmould over it; the three stepped lights have cinquefoil cusping and the spandrels above carry the initials R.P. and the date 1618. The dressings are largely in yellow sandstone, but red sandstone has been used for some of the arch stones and the spandrels; no sign of any stone replacement, and no evidence that the window has been inserted. Hinges for shutters are still in evidence, and above the window and set in the wall is a tablet with 'HOLIANT IDDVW'.

Chancel. General. No differentiation from nave externally.

North wall: chancel succeeds nave immediately to east of 1618 window (see above). Two metres to east of window the chamfered plinth undergoes a slight change in appearance but there is no other evidence that the chancel may have been an addition, and the fabric is 'B' throughout. Sanctuary illuminated by a two-centred arched window with two cusped lights and Y-tracery, Decorated and of the late 13thC/early 14thC. The contemporary hoodmould has one stop broken off but the other is a distinctive and fine 'primitive' head; dressings are predominantly in pink sandstone, though the mullion in yellow may be replaced; hinges for shutters. A late angle buttress supports the north-east corner.

East wall: at the north-east angle the single plinth visible on the north changes to a double chamfered plinth. Above this is Fabric B, but to the south of the east window 'C' gives way to 'D', an extension of the south aisle masonry, and in the gable there are some Victorian ashlar blocks below the coping. The Perpendicular east window has five lights with cusping and panel tracery, all under a slightly angular four-centred arch with a hoodmould; all in yellow sandstone with a little renewal of the dressings only.

South Aisle. General. Subterranean boiler room at west end with a flight of steps down to it beside the wall.

East wall: chamfered plinth continues but only upper chamfer visible. Lower part of wall in 'D' but upper part has smaller mixed masonry akin to 'B'. Perpendicular east window similar to chancel window with same slightly angular arch and hoodmould but only four lights, the two middle ones with transoms; cusping follows the line of the arch. Dressings in yellow sandstone.

South wall: 'D' at lower levels, the blocks reasonably well dressed; as with the east wall the stonework is smaller and in variegated colour higher up the wall face; the quoins are of dressed pink sandstone; no chamfered plinth, only foundation stones projecting into the drainage gully. Three windows; the outer ones

have heads that are almost triangular-headed rather than four-centred, hoodmoulds, three lights with cusped heads, and hollow mouldings. These are later 15thC/16thC in line with the east windows. In between is a square-headed window with three trefoil-headed lights and the inscription R T 1626, but no hoodmould; there are some signs that this window has been inserted into the wall face.

West wall: fabric 'D' at lower levels and in this a blocked Tudor doorway with a massive lintel stone. Above this is a Victorian three-light window with a two-centred head and a hoodmould with simple stops, and the gable above this has been rebuilt in an 'A'-type fabric and a chimney added on to the north of the apex.

Interior

Porch. General. Modern tiled floor one step up from the exterior. Walls painted but faces probably of breeze blocks. Roof of two bays, the outer trusses with arch-braced tie-beams (see porch exterior), the central one an arch-braced collar. The inner tie-beam truss, which hides, in part, the hoodmould of the north door, is supported on vertical uprights which stand out from the wall face. One tier of cusped windbraces. Some timber renewal but basically an original late medieval roof.

East wall: wooden-seated stone bench with window above.

South wall: 13thC, two-centred arched doorway with chamfered dressings in pink sandstone, one of the jambstones with sharpening marks, and the bases chamfered out to meet the chamfered plinth that runs along the base of the north wall. Above the arch, a hoodmould with face stops equivalent to that on the chancel window.

West wall: as east wall.

Vestry. General. Wooden block floor, walls plastered and whitewashed, and a flat, insulated ceiling.

North wall: splayed window; panelling from pews along wall.

East wall: partition between vestry and nave incorporates rood loft beam decorated with animals and angel (see below); painting of church interior (1937).

South wall: panelling from pews along wall.

West wall: plain.

Nave. General. Internal porch which is raised on two steps above general level of nave; lower step extends westwards and supports font. Wooden block flooring throughout. Heating provided by wall radiators. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Nave roof of four and a half bays with arch-braced collars and raking struts, the bracing resting on stubby wall posts on the north and on plain corbels on the south; one tier of slightly arched windbraces.

North wall: from west: i) splayed window; ii) modern painting of the blessed Edward Jones; iii) porch; iv) splayed window. Against wall is dado derived from plain pews.

South wall: arcade of five bays, of which three are in the nave and the other two in the chancel; two-centred arches of two orders, octagonal piers on chamfered bases, with ribbing at base of capital and again above the base.

West wall: partition to vestry with organ pipes above. Incorporated into the partition are two decorated beams or panels with some evidence of decoration renewal.

Chancel. General. From nave one step up into chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar; wooden block flooring with carpet over. Walls as nave. Roof of two half bays, the second defined by a plain collar with

raking struts and plaster infill with the rest of the chancel having a four-centred wagon roof resting on stone corbels, the horizontal members brattished and traceried and having vine trails etc.

North wall: plain apart from one splayed window and panelling from old pews along wall face.

East wall: main splayed window. Built into wall to north of window is a small architectural fragment. South of the window is a piscina in a deep recess under an ogee-headed arch.

South wall: two bays of arcade.

South Aisle. General. Wooden block floor as nave, but one step into former chancel area. Walls as nave. Roof of four and a half bays and similar to nave, but timbers are cusped above collars, and the arch-bracing springs directly from the walls. Two tiers of small cusped wind braces. Over the chancel is a wagon roof but this is plainer and has a slightly different pitch to that in main chancel, the roof following the curve of the arched braces.

North wall: arcade.

East wall: splayed window. Two marble memorials of 1676 and 1802/1825 etc.

South wall: three splayed windows; marble memorials and plaques of 1694/1698, 1914, 1987, 1775/1842, and, towards the west end, Commandment Boards.

West wall: splayed window.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 'low and spreading, with roll mouldings. Probably 15thC' (Hubbard). Note that a small (?)Victorian font lies discarded outside beside one of the buttresses of the west wall.

Piscina: under ogee-headed arch. 15thC/16thC?

Architectural fragment: set in east wall of chancel; a face at its base, medieval, perhaps 13thC, but purpose and origin unknown.

Rood screen: fragments. Two beams, one with quatrefoil, the other traceried, now in a vestry screen at the west end, together with carvings of a crown between two beasts, and an angel. Other fragments incorporated in chancel furnishings (see below).

Stained glass: 'late 15thC or early 16thC pieces, including patterned quarries in the tracery of the east window of the chancel and Emblems of the Passion in its main lights. More in the east window of the south aisle, and the Ox of St Luke with other fragments, in the vestry screen' (Hubbard).

Reredos: Made up of Jacobean work.

Box pews: 'with dates of 1760 and 1769. Rearranged by Gronwy R.Griffith, c.1938, along south side of south aisle' (Hubbard).

Pulpit: 'Jacobean, with its own carved panels and a couple of beasts, and also with fragments of the Rood Screen, applied by Griffith. Including reeded uprights, vine trail, traceried panels etc.; these had previously been incorporated in a clerk's desk' (Hubbard).

Altar rails: 'late 17thC turned rails round two sides of the altar' (Hubbard).

Gothic Commandment Boards inscribed in Welsh.

Monuments: Humphrey Jones (d.1676), with Corinthian columns, wreathed volutes, gadrooning, cherub heads, drapery and urns; the volutes form a pediment; Eubule Thelwall (d.1694), architectural surround, gadrooned base, poor lettering; added tablet, with drapery and simulated folds, to wife Mary (d.1698); Richard Kenrick (d.1820), neo-Classical, with sarcophagus; Lt George Vivyan Naylor-Leyland, killed in action in 1914, signed by Gaffin - classical, overlaid with trophies.

Plate: cup and paten of 1631/2.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard at Llanelidan is now a long rectangle extending up a gradual uphill slope, having been doubled in size in the 19thC. The original enclosure lay at the western end at the base of the hillslope directly above the valley floor through which runs Afon y Maes. Of this first enclosure little of its original form has survived. for though the churchyard is clearly raised on the west it is now defined by a series of straight alignments, and the former course on the south-east is little more than a faint scarp with only a hint of curvilinearity; the plan accompanying the 1883 faculty suggests more of a curve directly to the south of the church.

Boundary: on the west is a strong retaining wall, the ground level internally being in excess of 2.5m above the road running to the village. Similarly on the south the retaining wall is 2m high, and continues though in somewhat different form as the boundary of the extension, the ground levels either side evening out rapidly. On the north, there is a drop of 1m beyond the stone wall.

Monuments: these are well spread in the older part of the churchyard, reaching back to the mid 18thC; because of the eccentric position of the church there is rather more space to the north of it than to the south and all of the old stones are on the north, though there are a couple of later 18thC ledgers to the east of the chancel. The earliest stone recognised was of 1759. Memorials are closer set in the extension.

Furniture: only a war memorial outside the west end of the nave. Churchyard cross removed at the beginning of the 19thC; some parts used in the construction of the schoolroom.

Earthworks: former boundary on south-east shows as a slight scarp, south of south-east angle of south aisle but rapidly fades out.

Ancillary features: timber lychgate with double wooden gates on north; simple wooden gate due south of church, and a further wooden gate further east, adjacent to a store shed. Tarmac paths around the church.

Vegetation: a number of yews, some quite mature, though none of any great age; these are set to the north and east of the church, apparently quite randomly.

SOURCES

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 CPAT Air photos: 95-004-0023/24, 95-005-0035/36, 95-006-0002/5, 95-C-0131/132
 CPAT Field Visit: 12 August 1996
 Crossley 1946, 27
 Faculty St Asaph 1883 (NLW) & DRO/PD/54/1/33
 Faculty St Asaph 1889
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 Hubbard 1886, 203
 Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pl 23
 Owen 1886, 100
 Quinquennial Review 1987
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 Ridgway 1997, 130

RCAHMW 1914, 98

CONDITION

Church appears to be generally sound, though some stonework cracks at the base of one of the arcade piers. Some paint peeling in the vestry.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Poor

Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Cynfarch and St Mary**PRN** 100878**NGR** SJ13455548

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Cynfarch and St Mary lies in the centre of Llanfair village, less than 2 miles south of Ruthin. It is double-naved with a west tower and as far as can be ascertained is a wholly Perpendicular structure, which was restored in the 1870s. It retains fragments of its medieval rood screen, a 15thC sepulchral slab and some very early 16thC stained glass, as well as reconstructed late medieval arch-braced roofs. Fragments of other sepulchral slabs have been built into the blocking of a north doorway. The church is set in a rectangular churchyard from which most of the monuments have been cleared.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church as now visible appears to be wholly Perpendicular, of the 15thC. The tower and north nave are broadly contemporary although different masonry types were used in their build. All the windows are in the Perpendicular style, but one on the south carries the date 1626, and in some cases it is impossible to determine which dressings of a particular window have been renewed. Upper parts of some walls of the church were built when the roofs were raised in 1870-2, and the porch too was rebuilt at this time.

HISTORY

Apart from one element of the twin dedication there is nothing to suggest that this church was established in the early medieval period. However, tradition has it that it was founded by St Cynfarch, and that the dedication to St Mary was added at a time when it was rebuilt.

The Norwich Taxation of 1254 refers to 'Ecc'a de Lanwyer' at a value of £3 6s 8d. In the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 it appears as 'Llanvayr' with a value of £16.

The exterior was whitewashed when seen by Glynne on his visit in 1849; he found a church 'in much better order than most churches of North Wales'. He offered a basic description, details of the Perpendicular windows, and noted that 'the roof had been entirely modernised within with incongruous plastering'. Much medieval glass survived at this time, some dated to 1503. An obtuse-headed niche on the south side of the altar lacked a piscina, there were a Jacobean altar and pulpit, and traces of the screen against the north wall.

The church was transferred from the diocese of Bangor to that of St Asaph in 1859.

It was restored by J.D.Sedding in 1871-2 at a cost of £2300. The south porch was rebuilt, the plaster ceiling was removed and the arched-braced roofs were reconstructed, the upper portion of the east wall of the chancel and that of the south aisle were rebuilt, and the east windows repaired, a new west window in the south aisle was inserted as a copy of the old one though set at a higher level than its predecessor, the walls were raised one foot in height, box pews and a gallery at west end of south aisle were removed, and a new font and pulpit introduced.

The churchyard was extended in 1879 and again in 1910-11, and the lychgate restored in 1938.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanfair church consists of a double nave, a west tower attached to the north nave, and a south porch.

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

Fabrics: 'A' consists of medium-sized blocks of red sandstone and grey limestone, regularly coursed; sandstone used for quoins; limewash remnants.

'B' is similar to 'A' but the blocks of rubble are generally small to medium in size with larger, sometimes irregular blocks used low down in the wall; also some small slabs of a laminated stone and occasional pebble stones.

'C' as 'B' but lacking the limestone component.

'A' and 'B' are late medieval, 'C' probably re-used in Victorian period. Also 'A'-type masonry is Victorian.

Roof: slates, red clay ridge tiles, and cross finials to east end of chancel and south aisle.

Drainage: gravel band, indicative of a drain trench, up to 1m wide around all sides of church except where tarmac is present.

Exterior

Tower. General. In 'A'. Chamfered plinth at base reaching maximum height of 0.3m on north. Then first stage which terminates in a string course with hollow moulding. Second (belfry) stage has less pronounced string course. Finally shallow battlemented parapet, inset slightly. Dressed sandstone for diagonal buttresses which occur at all corners, supporting the first stage; that on south-east rises above south aisle roof. Dressed sandstone too for the basal courses on the west and south. String courses worn and broken.

North wall: chamfered slit window in line with tops of buttresses; 2m above this a small slit-like gap which may be result of stone loss. Belfry window has no frame but three louvred lights with four-centred arches, all in red sandstone; the grey stone mullions are probably renewed. Four putlog holes visible in upper part of wall face.

East wall: nave apex rises fractionally above buttress tops. Standard belfry window.

South wall: similar to north side with one unglazed slit window and standard belfry window. On extreme east two small chamfered slits light tower stair, one about 3m from the ground, the other in line with the buttress top.

West wall: plinth only just visible because of ground slope. First stage has a west window with a four-centred arch, under which three stepped lancet lights; inset so external splayed reveal. All original? Standard belfry window.

North Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation between nave and chancel. In 'B' but 'C' used for rebuilding and renovation in Victorian era. Chamfered plinth to chancel and east part of nave.

North wall: features from west are: i) north door with four-centred arch all in red sandstone; blocked tidily with limestone blocks below six fragments of early sepulchral slabs from a minimum of three slabs, one of which had a four-circle cross, Hubbard attributed these to the early 14thC; ii) window with four-centred arch, hoodmould, three stepped lights with trefoiled heads, chamfered jambs in pink and red sandstone; the

tracery, hoodmould and mullions renewed in yellow sandstone; iii) window with peaked arch that is not quite four-centred, but otherwise as previous window. All in original red sandstone except for half of the arch with its integral hoodmould, the mullions and the trefoiled heads of the lights; replacement trefoils better carved than those of ii); iv) as previous windows, but only the jambs survive in red sandstone, the rest renewed, and even some of sill. A large part of the more westerly section of this wall replaced in 'C'; the junction with 'B' runs from a little over halfway up the side of the north door, under window ii) but over window iii); walling around iv) does not appear to have rebuilt.

East wall: mainly 'B' but upper part of gable in 'A'-type masonry. East window has segmental head, five lights that have ogee heads and cinquefoil tracery, with panel tracery and cusping; hoodmould has heads as stops; one a grotesque is sharp, the other is worn and might conceivably be original, though everything is in yellow freestone. Angle buttress has 19thC dressings.

South Nave and Chancel. General. 'B' but uppermost courses in 'A'-type masonry.

East wall: buttress and quoins at angles are in dressed stone, Victorian. East window has four-centred arch and four lights, with transoms and trefoiled panels above; the two middle lights, are stepped up and brattished. Only the jambs, part of the sill and the transom are original. Gable rebuilt above window.

South wall: chamfered plinth visible at west end but not east. Lower part of wall in 'B', upper part rebuilt in 'C'. Features from east are: i) window with four-centred arch, almost segmental; four lights with cusped ogee heads and panels above; complex mouldings; hoodmould with simple stops; all in yellow sandstone with date of 1626 incised on a jamb stone, though generally unweathered with sharp arrises. ii) window with four-centred arch, almost peaked, and similar to window in east wall; again four lights and transoms which, in the two middle lights, are stepped up and brattished; jambs in red sandstone, rest in yellow; west of this window 'B' gives way to 'C' at springer level. iii) porch. iv) window with four-centred arch, three lights with trefoil heads, hoodmould with stops; all in light yellow freestone, a total renewal.

West wall: window with four-centred arch, five lights with ogee heads and cinquefoil tracery; all in light yellow freestone indicative of renewal. Gable rebuilt.

Porch. General. Stone foundation walls, timber superstructure with rectangular glazed lights. Segmental-headed arch for double wooden doors with painted statuette of St Mary above.

Interior

Porch. General. Red tiled floor; plastered walls; pegged purlin and rafter roof.

North wall: Victorian doorway with peaked arch, decorated spandrels, complex moulding, and a stopped label, all in pale sandstone.

East and west walls: benches.

Tower. General. Red tiled floor with carpet over. Walls whitewashed but not plastered. Ceiled at a level just above west window.

North wall: large Benefaction Board above mural tablets of 1775 and 1750.

East wall: original tower arch partly blocked by modern wall with a door and a window above it. Over this the original two-centred arch in red sandstone is still visible, the arch fading into the walls on either side.

South wall: in the south-east corner small doorway to tower stairs, with four-centred arch with rib and hollow mouldings but no stops on jambs. Benefaction Board of 1792.

West wall: splayed window embrasure, original.

North Nave. General. Red tiled floor with carpet from south door and down aisle; flush wooden boarding under benches. Walls plastered and painted, and heating pipes run along them. Roof of six and a half bays with arch-braced collars, cusped struts and principals, and resting on ribbed wall plates; two tiers of cusped windbraces. Final bay shared with chancel. Rear bay curtained off as vestry.

North wall: splayed windows; organ against wall towards west end; 19thC and 20thC mural tablets and memorials, six in all.

East wall: screen.

South wall: four bays of six-bay arcade; slender octagonal piers, ribbed capitals and two-centred arches, all of one build in pink sandstone.

West wall: plain apart from the tower arch and its blocking.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel from nave, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Tiled floors, some encaustic; choir stalls on raised wooden boards. Walls as nave. Roof of one and a half bays; the complete bay is longer than standard and has a wagon roof with decorated wall plates and purlins, and the principal truss at the west end has painted angels on the arch-brace terminals.

North wall: splayed window; one 20thC marble memorial.

East wall: splayed window; Victorian reredos.

South wall: two bays of arcade; capital of the respond is set slightly lower than those of the piers. Victorian piscina with ogee-headed arch and cinquefoil cusping.

South Aisle. General. Tiled floor with carpet over. Walls as nave. Roof as nave with six and a half bays.

North wall: arcade as nave.

South wall: two splayed windows; one marble wall memorial of 1748 and several 19thC monuments.

West wall: splayed window; mural tablet of 1582.

South Chapel. General. This end raised up with three steps as in the chancel; altar beneath east window. Consecrated as memorial chapel in 1947.

North wall: arcade.

East wall: splayed window.

South wall: small piscina-like recess with four-centred arched head; original and no more than 0.5m off floor. Four 19thC memorial tablets.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Sepulchral slab: i) early 15thC, commemorating Dafydd ap Madog; heraldic shield with inscription; diagonal sword and a pattern of leaves etc. ii) fragments built into the north wall include a damaged four-circle cross head of early 14thC.

Rood screen: remnants in the south nave are the wainscot, with traceried panels, and, much renewed, the middle rail, with horizontal reeding arranged like brattishing.

Stained glass: Second window from east on south has fragments, including Crucifixion, Apostles with clauses of the Creed, canopy work, and also part of a date which may be inferred as 1503 (and is recorded as such by Glynne in 1849). Westernmost window on south has ancient quarries in the side lights. All of this glass had been in the east window of the north nave until the restoration of 1872 when it was carefully removed.

Chests: huge, iron-bound chest, three locks; thought to be earlier 17thC. A second chest of simple design. The Quinquennial Review of 1988 recorded a cupboard or chest dated to 1664 (not seen in 1996).

Benefaction Board: one with dates of 1756 and 1834, and a second of 1792; both in tower.

Monuments: to Margaret Jones (d.1775); to Thomas Edwards (d.1750) and his wife Elizabeth (d.1750); Rev Henry Price (d.1748); Thomas Abrice (d.1582).

Bells: four, of 1631, 1684, 1740 and 1843.

Victorian furnishings include:

Font (replacing an octagonal one of 1663 which was transferred to the Jesus Chapel in the same parish in 1872), reredos, stalls, pulpit and lectern all by Sedding. They have Perpendicular tracery, but are simple in character, with large areas of plain wood. North screen also by Sedding.

Encaustic tiles by Godwin in the sanctuary.

Stained glass: westernmost on south has middle light by Christopher Whall, 1893. North aisle, east end by Westlake, 1872. Easternmost on south by Kempe, with commemoration date of 1890.

Monuments: Lewis monument, with commemoration dates of 1820 and 1845 by W.Spence of Liverpool; draped urn. John Hughes (d.1830), by Solomon Gibson; curious design, Grecian in detail, with the elements including a sarcophagus poised in front. Rev John Jones (d.1848) by C.Lewis of Cheltenham.

Organ: 1895, rebuilt 1986.

CHURCHYARD

Llanfair has a rectangular churchyard with recent extensions (dating from 1879 and 1910/11) on the north-east which are used for current burials. The original churchyard is set on a gentle slope dropping down to the north-east.

Boundary: stone walls on all sides except where churchyard abuts buildings; that on the north-west is a retaining wall.

Monuments: most of the churchyard has been cleared of monuments. A few in the east corner including chest tombs, all of the 19thC. A considerable number cleared to the north-west edge where they are covered by vegetation. Again most of these appear to be 19thC.

Furniture: cross base with three steps and part of what was the shaft of a churchyard cross, chamfered with stops. Probably 15thC, though it bears the date 1800 and this may refer to the sundial set on it which bears the inscription 'E.Tavo Chester Fect'.

Earthworks: churchyard raised: 1m+ on the north-west and north-east but virtually nothing on south-west.

Ancillary features: timber-framed lychgate on stone foundation walls. Under the roof is inscription 'HEB

DDUW HEB DDIM' and date 1708; externally 'EP = IR. IP IE:.' + '1708'. Restored 1938. Also wrought iron ornamental gates with gilded crosses on south-west, and a modern field gate at west angle. Tarmac paths.

Vestry house, on south-east side of churchyard is of three bays. Doorway, with Gothic glazing in its fanlight between two storeys of windows. A plaque reads 'Jonathan Beever, Esq, John Evans, John Roberts, John Wynne, Churchwardens MDCCCXXXI Na werth y nef, erben thyg y byd'.

Vegetation: several mature yews to south and east of church. Others smaller ones along north-west boundary.

SOURCES

Church notes: n.d.

CPAT AP 1995, 95-004-0029

CPAT Field Visit: 12 August 1996

Crossley 1946, 29

DRO/PD/55/1/24: Restoration specification 1871

Glynne 1884, 173

Gresham 1968, 122; 145

Hubbard 1986, 206

Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pl 7

NLW/St Asaph papers: churchyard extension 1879

Neaverson 1953-54, 10

Owen 1886, 106

Quinquennial Review 1988

Quinquennial Review 1995

Thomas 1911, 95

CONDITION

Externally some ridge tiles missing and some window dressings badly weathered. Internally considerable damp in tower and some on north wall of nave and elsewhere. Otherwise generally sound.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

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

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Good

Llanfarchell

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Marcellus**PRN** 16767**NGR** SJ07146623

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Marcella's church is set on the western edge of a terrace above the floor of Clwyd vale, less than one mile from Denbigh for which it was the parish church throughout the medieval period. It is a good example of the local double-naved form and its masonry reveals a sequence of development from perhaps the 14thC onwards; while most features are Perpendicular, there is a blocked west doorway of earlier date. Of late-medieval date inside is the arcade and the fine roofs to both naves. There is, however, a surprising absence of medieval furnishings and fittings with only a few fragments of medieval glass remaining, but there is 17thC woodwork and stonework and an excellent range of wall monuments including that to the antiquary Humphrey Llwyd. The modern churchyard bears little relation to the smaller enclosure of the 18thC, and graves and their markers have been cleared from the south side.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Earliest surviving part of the building is the west end of the south nave, with a west doorway which could be 14thC, and some contemporary masonry in south and west walls. This earlier structure was about half the length of the present south nave and chancel, and was extended eastwards probably in the 15thC. Subsequently a north nave and chancel was added using different masonry and incorporating more elaborate windows than on the south side. At the same time, or soon after, the west tower was added and perhaps the south porch. Later work included a west window in the tower and by inference the north door, and the heightening of the roof on the north side.

HISTORY

Llanfarchell (otherwise Whitchurch or Eglwyswen, though the former is of post-Reformation origin) was the parish church of Denbigh. Its siting and perhaps its dedication proclaim an early medieval origin. St Marchell is claimed as a saint of the 6thC.

It has been suggested that the Guild of Taylors had a chantry on the south side with access through the now blocked priest's door; the shears carved in the roof have been cited as further evidence.

It was supplanted as parish church by St Hilarys in Denbigh and from 1828 only burial services were held here.

In 1908 it was restored by H.Fowler of Durham; pews were removed, plaster cleared, the screen restored, monuments cleaned, window masonry repaired as was the tower, and timberwork renewed.

ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of two naves, a south porch and a west tower which is attached to the north nave. The

building is oriented south-west/north-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium slabs and blocks of very fine-grained sedimentary rock (?perhaps a very fine sandstone), grey and olive through to brown and orange (which predominates) in colour; rarely a lump of limestone or a rounded pebble stone; however in places in lower wall face, rather more limestone; some coursing.

'B' is as 'A' but a greater mixture of slabs and blocks, and some red sandstone blocks, the whole less well laid than 'A'; also occasional large blocks.

'C' is a mixture of pink (with some olive) sandstone and grey limestone; medium-sized blocks with smaller material higher up the wall face. Quoins where they survive of olive sandstone.

'D' is a heterogeneous mix of limestone, grey-green, red and yellow sandstone, and some rounded lumps of stone in addition to the quarried material. Quoins of red sandstone. Some coursing.

'E' is of limestone slabs, all grey, with occasional blocks of freestone built in. Render traces remain.

Roof: slated; simple unornamented grey clay ridge tiles; cross finial at east end of north nave. Sanctus bell of?Victorian date, over west end of south nave.

Drainage: a trench 0.3m-0.4m wide and 0.3m deep runs along north side. This becomes 1m wide on west and 0.7m wide on the west side of south nave and porch. It is visible as a hollow for a part of the south side, east of the porch, but is grassed over and fades. Nothing visible on east.

Exterior

Tower. General. 'A' throughout but masonry above bellchamber windows suggests some variation (see below) and possible rebuilding or heightening. Chamfered plinth now at ground level; diagonal buttresses on west side, faced in dressed limestone and with plinth continuing round them; undivided wall faces until square-sectioned string course just below battlemented parapet. Masonry rendered in past and much of this remains in situ. Bellchamber windows attributed to Perpendicular period.

North wall: some two-fifths of way up wall is a small simple slit window. Bellchamber lit by pair of two-centred arched, louvred lights; brown freestone for arches and mullions, ?limestone for jambs. Directly above window is a small waterspout with another, larger one close to the north-west angle. Above bellchamber window and splaying outwards to form a V pattern is masonry largely clear of render and lacking surface mortar in the interstices, giving a looser appearance.

East wall: bellchamber window as north side though less weathered (as is most of masonry); immediately below it a simple slit window. All masonry above bellchamber window could be rebuilt.

South wall: slit window matches that on north side and another, higher up, matches that on east. Bellchamber window is square-headed with lights that have ogee heads under two-centred arches, and sunken spandrels; in pinkish-brown freestone that appears original. Two waterspouts as north side. Rebuilt above waterspout line?

West wall: at a height of c.2m a square-headed west window with two lights which are round-headed, and these plus the jambs which are almost cyclopean in appearance, are in weathering olive-coloured sandstone; mullion renewed; label with simple stops, and above this a segmental relieving arch. Window surely a later insertion though the sill has the weathered carving of a head, medieval in appearance. This is re-used and could have originally ornamented a lintel. No slit windows. Bellchamber window is as on south but has a segmental relieving arch of edge slabs. Some of wall face to north of this window may be rebuilt.

North Nave and Chancel. General. No external differentiation between nave and chancel. Quoins of dressed limestone. Masonry obscured, particularly on north wall, by different render coats.

North wall: in 'A' but some evidence of selection in that more blocks at lower levels with coursed slabs higher up wall face; the uppermost 1m (at west end) to about 0.7m or so (at east end) is rebuilt or more likely raised in 'B'. Features from west are: i) triangular-headed doorway with cyclopean arch in the same

stone as west window of tower; stone is weathering and some jambstones have been replaced on the west side. ii) a two-light window with two-centred arches and cinquefoil tracery, once painted white; window inset into wall and has deeply hollowed chamfers; label with two much worn head-stops; all in pinkish-brown sandstone apart from renewed mullion. iii) four-centred arched window with a relieving arch of edge stones above it. Three broad lights, with either two-centred arches (outer ones) or a four-centred arch (central one) and cinquefoil tracery; paint traces across many dressings; one half of the sill is deeply grooved as though from sharpening. No hoodmould. Ivy spreading over some of wall to east of the window.

East wall: dominated by five-light Perpendicular window with two-centred arch, hoodmould with floral stops; lights have cusped tracery under ogee or two-centred heads, and there are cusped panels above. The jambs, in pinkish-brown sandstone with paint traces, are original, and likewise some of the panel tracery; otherwise there appears to be much renewal, though the presence of a grille in front of the window makes it difficult to determine the extent. Much of the wall face is in 'A', but immediately below the window is a zone of limestone. Gable above window is cleaner with less render and probably partially rebuilt. Roof also raised on north side resulting in a band of 'B' and an east window which is off-centre.

West wall: in 'A'. No discernible relationship with the tower.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Nave and chancel not differentiated externally.

East wall: east window not identical with that in north chancel, and set slightly higher in the wall face. It has a four-centred arch, a Victorian hoodmould with floral stops, differing in detail to that in north chancel. Lights are longer, while the tracery and panels are very similar, though the latter are smaller; more original dressings than north chancel window, but again grille-covered. The fabric is 'C', with weathered quoins. Just visible at ground level in the south-east corner is a chamfered plinth in pink sandstone, but it rapidly disappears under the turf further north. No visible abutment with the east wall of the north nave!

South wall: wall in 'C', the plinth seen at the base of the east wall, visible here too but only for a short distance. From east the features are: i) four-centred window with three plain lights, the two outer ones with four-centred heads but the central one almost round-headed; hollow chamfers, paint residue, hoodmould with foliate stops, showing some renewal. A few dressings also renewed. ii) narrow priest's door, one step up from ground level; round-headed, hollow chamfered, with grey and yellow sandstone dressings; paint traces on the dressings but also on the limestone blocking the door. iii) window similar to ii) but hoodmould has one foliate stop and one with a fleur-de-lys; one mullion completely replaced. iv) as three but largely renewed though some jamb stones might be original but in different freestone to the other two windows; hoodmould has Victorian stops. v) immediately adjacent to window is a butt joint, the lower part of the wall (but only for a short distance) is in 'D', the upper part in 'C'. vi) rectangular window of two lights in olive and maroon sandstone. Set into 'C' walling and probably Victorian or later. vii) porch. viii) wall plain to west of porch but a small patch of 'D' visible near ground level.

West wall: prominent in this wall is a blocked, broad, two-centred arched doorway in red sandstone, perhaps with a quarter-round moulding, the whole set in 'D'; jambs are continuous on south side but have survived intermittently on north and extend at least 0.3m below current ground level. Above the doorway the masonry is 'C' and the first couple of metres of this is heavily pointed. At the apex a gable line sloping to the tower wall has been subsequently filled in to produce a horizontal top, and may be related to the chimney, presumably of Victorian or later date, that rears above the gable end. At south-west angle quoins have been renewed to a height of c.2.5m.

Porch. General. In 'E'.

East wall: plain; slightly projecting basal foundation below present ground level.

South wall: round-headed doorway with quarter-round moulding to dressings; in olive grey freestone. Plaque above door is very worn, but carries inscription in which the numbers '22' are still prominent.

West wall: small rectangular window with two-centred arched light, sunken spandrels, all in grey freestone; probably re-used. As on east side there is a projecting foundation.

Interior

Porch. General. Flagstone floor without re-use. Walls plastered and painted. Simple roof of purlins and rafters though former have mortice holes that indicate re-use.

North wall: broad rather formless doorway to church, the reveal with an irregular segmental head and faintly splayed sides. No indication of medieval architecture.

East wall: stone bench against wall. Above it a plaque commemorating the restoration of 1980-81.

South wall: nothing of note.

West wall: stone bench and above it a splayed window and an old photograph of the church.

Tower. General. Locked and inaccessible, though it is clear that walls are plastered and painted and that it has a flat wooden ceiling with joists at a height of perhaps 5m.

North Nave. General. Floor paved with old graveslabs at rear and down the aisle, but partly carpetted. Individual chairs set on flush wooden blocks. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of six bays; the hammerbeams rise from corbels that are plain blocks of stone on the north but have painted angels and the like beneath the posts on the south. The date of the painting is not certain. The intermediate arch-braced trusses rise from wall plates and have fine carvings including a dragon, figures etc. One has the mitred head of Chicheley, sinecured rector from 1391 and later archbishop of Canterbury; another with a crowned female head may represent Margaret, Countess of Derby from the 15thC. Additionally the stone wall plate on the south side has decorative motifs also painted, again too fresh to be original. Organ in north-west corner.

North wall: curtained reveal to north door, which is slightly splayed and has triangular top. Splayed Perpendicular window. Three hatchments of unknown date; two tablets recording donations of land for graveyard extensions. Five marble memorial tablets ranging from 1717 to 1858.

East wall: wooden screen dated to 1909 on evidence of brass plaque on adjacent wall.

South wall: three bays of five-bay arcade; four-centred arches with octagonal capitals, pillars and bases. Hubbard noted the mouldings are of greater refinement than is usual for the region.

West wall: southern half occupied by tower arch which is two-centred and has two orders springing from wall. Arch is recessed and this indicates a greater thickness of wall above and to the side. Two undated hatchments and two marble memorials, an undated example and one of 1781 largely hidden by the organ.

North Chancel. General. No change in height from nave to chancel; one step to sanctuary, two to altar. Chancel has stone flags of which at least three are graveslabs, the earliest 1604. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of four bays comparable with nave; the only difference is that the intermediate arch-braced truss over the altar has no carved figures at its terminals; the decorative stone elements on the south side continue though as animals, dragons etc. rather than the foliage of the nave.

North wall: one splayed Perpendicular window; the fine Myddleton brass of 1575, Humphrey Llwyd's memorial of 1568 and a marble memorial set up in 1802.

East wall: dominated by window with modern reredos above altar. To north of this is a painted heraldic plaque of unknown age and origin. To the south there is a slight thickening of the wall to a height of c.2m as far as the window edge. Though not immediately intelligible this could be reflect the corner of the original south chancel before its northern counterpart was added.

South wall: two bays of arcade and a parclose screen of similar date to other furnishings in the chancel.

West wall: modern screen (see above).

South Nave. General. Floor as north nave with graveslabs used right up to east end of nave; chairs on wooden blocks; one step down from the porch but replaced by a ramp. Walls as north nave. Roof as north nave with six bays; the decoration and style is comparable, the only obvious difference is that both walls have hollowed stone wall plates with decorative embellishments along the full length. The carving of cloth shears is said to refer to a tailors' company.

North wall: arcade as north nave.

East wall: screen, a continuation of that separating the north nave and chancel.

South wall: two splayed windows, the reveals of which do not given any real indication of any age. One hatchment in poor condition; a late 17thC wooden memorial plaque; and three marble memorial tablets. Hanging on the wall to the west of the door are five brass collecting trays.

West wall: centrally set is a large triangular headed alcove which obviously indicates the position of the early west door; the alcove contains a marble plaque of 1776 and fragments of two memorial slabs, one of 1655. Above are three hatchments and to one side a large Benefaction Board dating to 1720. On the other (south) side a small, square deep niche of unknown function.

South Chancel. General. Flagged floor with several graveslabs in situ, the earliest of 1671 and two with inset brasses of later date. Altar table of 1623 raised on plinth. Walls and roof as nave. Dominated by the Salusbury monument in the centre of the floor.

North wall: arcade as north chancel.

East wall: splayed east window. Marble memorial of 1693.

South wall: two splayed windows; marble wall memorial of 1715.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stained glass: small, medieval fragments in the east window of the north nave, and also in the porch.

Screens: 'by C. Hodgson Fowler, who restored the church in 1908. Parts of the medieval rood screen are incorporated into these new screens, the doorway of the north screen and the flanking tracery heads being old' (Hubbard). Thomas noted that the parclose screen also incorporated parts of the old screen.

Font: dated 1640. Plain with octagonal bowl on slim octagonal stem that has broach stops.

Altar tables: 'one of 1623 with melon-bulb legs and small-scale strapwork. Signed on the underside by David Rogeres. Another, from St Hilary's, of 1617' (Hubbard). This is inscribed 'NON INCONITO DEO' but is not on view; possibly in the vestry.

Pulpit: with tester and panelled backdrop; inscribed ' R.P. H.B. WARDENS 1683'.

Altar rails: 17thC, turned balusters; the rail itself, with vine trail, is from the rood screen.

Chandelier: 'by John Thomas of Chester, 1753; two six-branch tiers and a dove' (Hubbard).

Hatchments: five in the north nave, four in south nave. None carries a date as far as can be ascertained.

Parkinson (RCAHMW) attributed them to the Heaton family in the 18thC and 19thC.

Benefaction board: large with considerable detail; painted, 1720. Thomas states that this was brought from St Hilary's in Denbigh. Also two wooden boards/tablets recording gifts of land by H.R.Hughes of Kinmel Park for the extension of the churchyard in 1858 and again in 1889.

Wooden plaque: inscribed 'Remember the Poor 1754'.

Chest: inscribed ' T W D D WARDENS 1676'.

Pews: old panels used for reredos in south chancel.

Bell: large bell in south-east corner of south chancel; dated to 1683 with Welsh inscription; brought from St Hilary's in Denbigh.

Monuments: (Details from Hubbard with additions). In the north nave: Robert Salusbury (d.1774) and other members of his family (set up in 1802), elegant with simple urn. Humphrey Llwyd, antiquary, (d.1568), a Corinthian aedicule, with ball finial and heraldry in the tympanum; Renaissance ornament, particularly in the frieze; kneeling figure in relief, within a classical architectural setting; marble in a stone frame. Very fine brass to Richard Myddelton, Governor of Denbigh Castle (d.1575) and wife Jane (d.1565); they kneel, facing each other across desks, with their nine sons and seven daughters. Thomas Shaw (d.1717), segmental canopy, panelled pilaster strips, and drapery over the tablet, heraldry. Richard Heaton (d.1791), by the elder Westmacott; draped urn, the drapery extending down the sides of the tablet; and another to his wife, Sarah (d.1814), also with a draped urn, by S & T. Franceys of Liverpool; to Richard Clough (d.1784) and relatives who died in the 18thC, by W.Spence of Liverpool; to Thomas Edwards (no date but 19thC), with female figure and bust of deceased; and to Rev Robert Myddleton (d.1781).

In the south nave: Sir John Salusbury of Llewenni (d.1578) and his wife Joan; erected by her in 1588, and executed by one Donbins; alabaster; tomb-chest and two recumbent effigies, he in armour. Against the tomb-chest and facing outward are nine sons and four daughters, two of the latter swaddled babes. Except for putti bearing heraldry, all is of excellent workmanship. Some colouring. Mary Drihurst (d.1692), drapery and a big cherub head. Jeanette Octavia Ward (d.1913), by Albert Toft, 1915; recumbent figure in relief, and angels with a wreath. Cotton monument: Hester (d.1710), daughter of Sir Thomas Salusbury, and her husband Sir Robert Cotton (d.1712), and attributed by Mrs Esdaile to the workshop of Edward Stanton; spiral Corinthian columns and a segmental canopy; heraldry and urns above, volutes and leafage either side, and cherub heads below; a wooden plaque to Anne Lloyd (d.1686); to Anne Stodart (d.1768), in marble.

Graveslabs: used for flooring naves: a reasonable number in good condition. Earliest seen is of 1583 with several 17thC examples.

Copper collecting trays: five, one dated 1841.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is rectilinear with a sizeable extension on its west side, but a smaller churchyard surrounding the church, which was eccentrically placed within it, is evidenced by a manuscript map of c.1811. This was extended to the north at this date and a further plot was added on the west side in 1858. A 20thC extension lies still further west. The present churchyard is reasonably well maintained and burials are largely accommodated in the extension.

A river terrace on the western side of the Vale of Clwyd is the setting for the church which lies back from the terrace edge by about 20-30m.

Boundary: the churchyard is surrounded by a mortared stone wall which on the south acts as a retaining wall, the inner height about 0.4m, the external fall about 1.8m. Similarly on the east there is an immediate

fall of about 1m, and a further drop to the track that runs beside the churchyard.

Monuments: south of the church the ground has been largely cleared but some slabs have been laid to edge the path to the porch. On the west the stones are mainly ledgers, some going back to the late 18thC. The small area east of the church is paved with ledgers, the earliest of 1680. North and further west, the churchyard is reasonably full with monuments regularly spaced though not excessively dense.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: the course of the pre-19thC churchyard boundary is just discernible but only with the help of the manuscript map. On the south-west there is a scarp about 0.3m followed by a path, and on the west this increases to about 0.6m with tree stumps and disturbed ground on top. Immediately north of the church the ground is raised by at least 0.5m but the pre-19thC boundary cannot be discerned clearly here; there is simply a meandering scarp.

Ancillary features: stone and timber lychgate with a separate kissing gate adjacent on the south-west. Just to the north-east of the church is a simple gap through the churchyard wall. The lychgate is linked to the porch by a tarmac path.

Vegetation: two old yews lie to the west and south of the church, and further less mature yews edge the southern boundary of the 1858 extension to the west; and there are also yews as well as other trees in the 1811 extension to the north.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 17 January 1997

Crossley 1946, 11

Faculty 1858 (NLW): churchyard extension

Faculty 1889 (NLW): churchyard extension Faculty 1955 (NLW): churchyard extension

Hubbard 1986, 152

Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pls 5, 6 & 8

Manuscript plan, 1811: DRO/PD/24/1/58

NMR: Aberystwyth

Neaverson 1953-54, 8

Quinquennial Report: 1987

Thomas 1911, 14

CONDITION

Generally sound though some paint peeling on rear wall of south nave.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium

Llanferres

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Berres**PRN** 16849**NGR** SJ18816055

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Berres church in Llanferres, between Mold and Ruthin, is perhaps an early medieval foundation, but the present structure is probably 18th with Victorian fenestration. In form it is different from the typical Denbighshire church due to its west tower and south transept. Sepulchral slab fragments and a weathered effigy survive from the Middle Ages, there is a 17thC font, 17thC and 18thC memorials and a fine chest. The churchyard is raised but has seen some modifications to its shape over the last three hundred years; few 18thC gravestones have survived.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave and chancel are the earliest, perhaps from a rebuild of 1774 or perhaps 1650, conceivably earlier. East window, reduced in length could well be 17thC, but could have been re-set. Victorian windows were inserted leaving ghosts of the earlier windows probably from 1774. South transept is later and abuts nave; likewise the tower though the west wall of nave cut away to accommodate this; vestry also 19thC.

HISTORY

Church is dedicated to St Berres (with variations such as Brice or Britius), who according to Thomas Pennant was a disciple of St Martin the Hungarian.

The location, the churchyard morphology and presumably the dedication imply an early medieval beginning but the first record of a church here is in 1291 when the Taxatio of Pope Nicholas referred to 'Ecclia de Lanverreys' with a value of £6 3s 4d.

17thC alterations, perhaps only to the east wall are indicated by a datestone of 1650 in the east gable. The rood beam was taken down in 1728. Plans and estimates for rebuilding were drawn up in 1768 and there are further references to rebuilding in 1774 (though Thomas following Pennant has 1772), probably the work of a Chester architect, Joseph Turner. The account book survives indicating a cost of £352.

In 1843 another Chester architect, Thomas Jones, added the south transept, west tower, and perhaps two galleries.

In 1891-2 John Douglas of Chester stripped internal render, removed the two galleries and put in new floors, new fittings including a new screen; glass in the east window was removed, divided into two, and inserted in the west windows. The cost was £1250.

ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel as a single cell, a south transept, a west tower and a porch near

the north-west angle of the nave. It is oriented almost exactly east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises regular, medium-sized roughly finished blocks of limestone, both grey and red, together with a few larger, more irregular blocks; some coursing; quoins of same material. Heavily pointed. 'B' is of small to medium blocks, fairly regularly coursed; some of the stone is darker than 'A'. 'C' consists of regular blocks of grey limestone, coursed.

Roof: slates, grey clay ridge tiles; cross finials at east end and on transept gable.

Drainage: hint of a gully on north side, tarmac around west end, nothing obvious on south and east.

Exterior

Tower. General. In 'C'. Nave west wall cut away to accommodate tower. Three stages. Bottom stage lit by single lancet lights while west wall has the main entrance, a four-centred doorway, turned in limestone blocks and chamfered. Above this is a two-light window of the standard form found throughout the church (see nave: below). Second stage also square but the tops of the angles are chamfered in broach fashion; small quatrefoil light in each side. Finally, an octagonal top stage lit by square-headed windows with cusped lights. Weathervane.

Nave and Chancel. General. In 'A'. Basal chamfered plinth to maximum height of 0.4m at south-east corner where a double plinth shows, but elsewhere lower plinth below present ground level.

North wall: two four-centred arched windows each with two broad cusped lights and hoodmoulds with simple dog's-leg stops, all in light brown freestone.

East wall: a very broad, depressed, three-centred east window with five cusped lights, hollow chamfered, hoodmould with simple stops as north windows. Clear signs of modification, the present window replacing a larger one, for 1.5m of limestone infilling below; some packing, too, around top. Above the main window a small single cusped light with standard hoodmould and stops, its tracery in better condition than the main window below it. Towards apex of gable a stone plaque with S: T D 1650. Indications that upper part of gable rebuilt, and this might explain changes in the quoins at high level.

South wall: double chamfered plinth visible on this side. East of transept one standard window as north side. West of transept another, similar.

West wall: on either side of the tower, a small cusped light with a hoodmould.

South Transept. General. Abuts nave. Fabric is a variation on 'A' with much less iron-stained limestone except in plinth. West and east sides have standard two-light windows, the south wall a three-light window of the same design with a three-centred head and a standard hoodmould; relieving arch in limestone blocks. Diamond-shaped, slatted, light in the gable face above.

Vestry. General. In 'B'. Plain rectangular door on west side, slight chamfer. In north wall a two-light window with four-centred arch and standard hoodmould, but the tracery more worn than elsewhere, and the dressings of different stone to the rest of the building.

Interior

Porch. General. Internal porch located beneath tower. Flag floor; bare walls; wooden ceiling just above apex of two splayed windows in north and south walls.

Tower. General. Ground floor recorded above. First floor used as storage room and for access to bell rope, reached by stairs and gallery. Nothing to note.

Nave. General. Wooden block floor with similar blocks flush beneath benches. Flags at rear beneath and around font, other re-used graveslabs flooring area at front of nave. Walls bare but with dado formed from old pew panels on north and south sides. Five-bay roof with moulded tie-beams resting on short wall posts set on stone corbels and reinforced by angle braces; above the tie-beams is a flat wooden ceiling with purlin supports.

North wall: from west a simple archway to vestry with edge stones for the arch and lacking any dressings for the jambs. Above and to east of this is the surviving stonework of a blocked window, not as well formed as the internal arch of the adjacent Victorian window. One splayed Victorian window and above it a trace of the top of an earlier window (larger or at least higher than that to west). Wall supports several photographs, a wooden prayer board in Welsh, and three memorials, two 19thC examples in marble and one a 20thC brass.

East wall: Victorian screen.

South wall: about half of this removed to give access to south transept. Otherwise one splayed window, two wooden boards each with the Ten Commandments, that to the west earlier in date and signed and dated by E.Davies. Also a small brass in the corner.

West wall: doorway to porch has segmental arch and to the south a benefaction board. Above these is a gallery supported on corbels from the side walls, with a flight of stairs in the north-west corner. The two small windows in the west wall light the gallery, are splayed and have internal relieving arches.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Tiled floors including encaustic tiles in sanctuary, flush wooden block floors beneath choir stalls. Bare walls. Roof of two bays similar to those in nave but the braces are decorated and the ceiling is divided into panels by cross-pieces. Both the crenellated wooden wall plates and the sloping panels immediately above it are painted, the plates with texts. Truss over chancel step also inscribed.

North wall: standard Victorian splayed window, again with evidence of an earlier fractionally larger window above it. Marble memorial to east of 1844.

East wall: large splayed window but with ornate reredos beneath.

South wall: splayed window which again is a replacement as can be seen from infilling above it. In the south-east corner a marble memorial of 1687.

South Transept. General. Wooden block flooring as nave except at east end where the re-used slabs in the nave continue across the transept; bare walls with pew panels along south and west sides; and roof of two bays also as nave. A small altar at east end and otherwise filled with benches.

North wall: none.

East wall: splayed window similar to those in nave but lacking any sign of a predecessor; above and to the north of the window is a buttress-like affair resting on corbels and rising to roof level; its function needs to be ascertained.

South wall: splayed window; clamped to wall two medieval slabs and a fine graveslab of 1660.

West wall: splayed window only.

Vestry. not accessible.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Sepulchral slabs: i) slab with shield and a diagonal sword behind, late 13thC. ii) fragment of an early 14thC four-circle cross slab resting on top of it. These and effigy recorded below were discovered during the restoration of 1892.

Effigy: i) male figure in low relief; mutilated, with lion at feet and inscription at the head; late 14thC.

Font: octagonal bowl with quatrefoils for decoration, and octagonal stem; dated 1684 and with churchwardens initials.

Chest: a dugout; iron bound with two locks and handle ring.

Bench: four-seater, its high back with twenty brass plaques, two of them commemorating the dead, the earliest in the centre to Edward Jones (d.1709).

Monuments: (based on Hubbard with additions). John Meredith, rector (d.1660), inscribed with Welsh pedigree and crest. Edward Jones (d.1685) and wife Jane (d.1711), cartouche with draperies and, at the base, flowers and a putto. Brass in wooden frame to Judith Griffith (d.1738) erected by her grandson.

Decalogue Boards: two of them, the earlier by 'E. Davies, painter 1788'. Both in Welsh.

Benefaction Board: wooden dated 1820.

Prayer board: in Welsh and undated but almost certainly 19thC.

CHURCHYARD

Churchyard is now an irregular rectilinear form due to an extension on west side. Former western boundary still discernible as a curving earthwork (see below). East side also known to have been cut back in the past to allow widening of the road. Within the yard the ground drops gently from west to east and a short distance to the east there is a steeper drop into the valley of the River Alyn.

It is well-maintained and there are a few recent burials on the north side of the church, though the old churchyard was officially closed for burial in 1910 when the extension was opened.

Boundary: retaining wall on east side, a drystone wall on the north, currently being rebuilt in places, buildings on the south, and on the west a short drop with a vertical wall face into the extension.

Monuments: fairly sparse and those in place are mainly ledgers and chest tombs. Gravestones, all 19thC, cleared to the south-east edge of the yard. Earliest observed stones of 1790 and 1795. Thomas noted in the churchyard 'a beautiful early coffin lid ornamented with a floriated cross and bearing a shield with the Warren arms'. No longer in evidence.

Furniture: west of tower is a sundial with an uninscribed plate and no gnomon; set on tapering baluster pedestal of concrete fixed in a round base.

Earthworks: churchyard slightly raised: 0.6m on east, 0.3m on north, 0.5-0.7m on west. On south is an external drop but impossible to determine whether this is due to subsequent modification.

Ancillary features: double iron gates on east with tarmac path to porch. Gap on south leads into public house carpark, also a tarmac path and adjacent to it is a new stone store shed, classed as hearse house in listed buildings schedule. A further tarmac path to iron gate near north-west corner.

Vegetation: a couple of yews along north edge, others on east, south and west; all mature specimens but not of great age.

SOURCES

Account Book 1774: DRO/PD/57/1/36
Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings
CPAT Field Visit: 4 March 1997
Crossley 1946, 30
Faculty 1901: DRO/PD/57/1/41
Gresham 1968, 120; 134; 243
Hubbard 1986, 211
Neaverson 1953-54, 12
Quinquennial Report 1988
Thomas 1911, 400

CONDITION

In reasonable condition.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Llanfwrog

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Mwrog**PRN** 16951**NGR** SJ11365783

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Mwrog's church occupies an eminence projecting into a valley less than one mile south of Ruthin. It is a double-naved structure which has undergone major modifications, its present nave and chancel being a 15thC addition to a church of unknown date which was largely rebuilt in the 19thC, though at its west end the tower, probably of 14thC date, was retained. Few fittings of medieval date survived the restoration, although the nave and chancel roof appears to be original. The remnants of a sub-circular churchyard are still apparent and this holds a number of interesting early memorials.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

West door thought to be 14thC, the only datable feature of the tower, for the belfry windows are all replacements though of Decorated style, and the upper storey may be largely a rebuild.

North aisle rebuilt in its entirety in 1869, except for lowest courses of east end. However this was probably the original position of the nave and chancel, and the southern nave was added in the 15thC.

Porch is a 19thC rebuild but its roof incorporates earlier timberwork. All the windows are from the 19thC restoration and according to Hubbard include Perpendicular tracery of a type alien to the region.

Arcade is perhaps reconstructed, the wide arches suggesting to Hubbard that it was originally of four bays, but what is now visible is a post-Reformation feature of uncertain date. The view is strengthened by the fact that the west respond appears to be a truncated pier.

HISTORY

The location and dedication of the church together with the morphology of the churchyard signal an early medieval origin. A 7thC date has been suggested on the basis that this was when Mwrog was active.

In the Norwich Taxatio of 1254, the church 'de Lammitant' was valued at 13s 4d, while the later Taxatio of 1291 recorded it as "Lanmurrock" with a value of £4 0s 10d.

Glynne, at a date unrecorded, found a whitewashed church with late Perpendicular windows, barn-like roofs except for the chancel, and an arcade which appeared to be of Norman character though he doubted whether that was in fact the case.

J. D. Sedding of Bristol restored the church in 1869-70 at a cost of £1300. The north aisle was rebuilt, windows were renewed, the chancel restored and separated from the nave by a low screen modelled on its predecessor, the box pews and a gallery at the west end were removed, and the nave roof was repaired and raised by 18", and the base of the tower converted into a vestry. The tower was restored separately in 1906 at a cost of £100.

ARCHITECTURE

The church at Llanfwrog is a double-naved structure, the nave and chancel on the south with a north aisle forming the second cell. Attached to the latter is a west tower, and there is also a south porch. It is oriented south-west/north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here. Conventional directions are retained for the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of medium to large lumps of grey limestone, with smaller slabs of red sandstone, and occasional lumps of grey shale mixed in; irregularly coursed. Large limestone dressed for quoins. 'B' consists of relatively regular blocks of grey limestone with very occasional slabs of red sandstone. Randomly coursed but of regular appearance.

Roof: slates, toothed terracotta ridge tiles; metal cross finial to porch, stone one to chancel.

Drainage: trench less than one metre wide around north, south and east with concrete edging and a fill of stone chips.

Exterior

Tower. General. In Fabric 'A'. Broad and squat, no batter; a string course just below the parapet, square-sectioned and with waterspouts; the stair built into the north-west angle. Saddleback roof rises above tower and there is a flagpole in south-east corner. The tower alignment is skewed slightly to that of the church itself.

North wall: standard fabric although at one level a course of red sandstone slabs runs for half the length of the wall. Belfry window has a two-centred arch with a hoodmould over, two cusped lights with a quatrefoil above, all in Victorian mustard-coloured freestone. In the north-west angle are four small lights vertically aligned to light the tower stair: those at the top and bottom have limestone jambs, the intermediate ones in red sandstone are more worn and with wider apertures. Between the middle two and closer to the angle is a horizontal recess, perhaps reflecting no more than a dislodged stone.

East wall: apex of north aisle roof rises to around half way up tower face. Standard belfry window, and upper stage of tower from window base upwards may be rebuilt for the limestone is lighter, more regular and the stones more closely set.

South wall: fractionally below half height is a broad, squat window, unglazed, with red sandstone jambs, so worn that it is not clear whether they were originally chamfered. Standard belfry window. Above and to one side is a waterspout and beneath this a projecting stone, perhaps a more primitive predecessor. Faint indication that the uppermost part of the wallface has been rebuilt.

West wall: at ground level a broad, slightly asymmetrical two-centred arched west doorway, the jambs in pale red sandstone with wave mouldings, the arch much weathered and most of the hoodmould gone; all original. At a higher level is a standard belfry window and a projecting stone waterspout. Stonework at belfry level appears more regular.

North aisle. General. Fabric 'B'. Chamfered plinth to height of c.0.4m max., the chamfer in dressed stone. Juncture of north aisle and tower gives no indication of primacy.

North wall: all new (i.e. 19thC) masonry with no sign of any rebuilding. Three two-light windows, the lights with trefoil heads under two-centred arches, and all in mustard coloured sandstone.

East wall: at the base of the wall is a stepped foundation to a height of 0.3m and projecting outwards for 0.4m; this does not continue under the chancel. Lowest courses of the wall may thus be medieval but above these to a height of around 3.5m the masonry is a variation on 'A' with a predominance of red sandstone. Then, to the apex of the gable, the masonry is an untidy variation on 'B'. Thus most of the wall rebuilt but with medieval stone re-used at lower levels. Square-headed east window of Victorian stone has three

trefoiled lights under round heads, and the spandrels filled with smaller lights; simple hoodmould.

Nave and chancel. General. Described as a single cell because no external differentiation.

East wall: lower part of wall to base of window is of large blocks of limestone with some courses of red and grey sandstone and shale, a variation on 'A'. Above this red sandstone predominates, and then from just below the eaves level of the south wall, small to medium blocks of limestone, i.e. 'B'. More of this appears below the window indicating the extent of rebuilding. The window itself is Victorian with three lights and panel lights above, under a triangular-headed arch and hoodmould.

South wall: in Fabric 'A' that consists of massive blocks of limestone, though the topmost courses are Victorian replacements in 'B', together with the freestone coping. Features from east are: i) a square-headed window with three lights having two-centred arches and cusped heads, all in recent red sandstone. Signs of insertion below and to one side of window. ii) two light window similar to i) but original for the dressings are much worn and there are no sign of insertion. iii) porch. iv) wall to west of porch also original, tapering inwards towards top.

West wall: massive blocks of 'A' below with 'B' around and above window. Another Victorian variation with two trefoiled lights having ogee heads and four quatrefoils above, under a square head.

Porch. General. Victorian. Dwarf walls in 'B' with freestone chamfer. Above is a wooden superstructure faced with small vertical slates. The east and west sides each have four small wooden windows. The south entrance extends across the full width, wall posts resting on the dwarf walls support a tie beam, collar and intermediate struts, the gap between the struts panelled with a small circular light.

Interior

Porch. General. Outer metal gates locked and porch not accessible. Floor of stone flags; wooden sides, roof of two bays, with variation in the principal trusses. The central one is cambered with arch-bracing, that next to church door has a decorated tie beam which does not appear to be particularly old, the outer one described above. Purlins, rafters and one tier of windbraces. Some of the timberwork is certainly original.

North wall: two-centred arch to church doorway in red sandstone which has a fresh appearance and is presumed to be Victorian replacement.

Tower. General. Entered through west door. Carpetted; walls plastered and whitewashed; ceiled at height of about 5m, just above the apex of the tower arch. North-west corner partitioned off for storage, bell ropes etc.

North wall: simple two-centred chamfered archway to tower. Above this an undated 'instruction board' to almsmen and women of 'Llanvorock'. Chimney also projects from the centre of this wall.

East wall: tower arch of four orders, the innermost chamfered, fading into side walls, all in red sandstone. Infilled with glass and wood panelling.

South wall: covered by four benefaction boards and three mural tablets.

West wall: recess of west doorway with window embrasure above; two framed 19thC drawings of the church.

North aisle. General. Tiled floor; plastered and whitewashed walls. Roof of five and a half bays, the trusses of braced collars rising from wooden wall posts on the south and the wall plate on the north; possibly some re-used timber but the roof as a whole of the 19thC? At east end a modern screen in line with the

nave/chancel division separates the aisle from its eastern extension (see below).

North wall: wall panelled below window level; two splayed windows with Victorian dressings; two marble mural tablets.

East wall: screen.

South wall: two bays of arcade in red sandstone, the arches of two chamfered orders and the piers of four clustered shafts each with a square cap chamfered to an octagon; the piers are set on splayed bases with rounded mouldings. The western bay terminates in a respond which appears to have been a complete pier deliberately truncated.

West wall: tower arch as recorded above. Above this but off centre is a small blocked aperture, probably a window, suggesting that the north aisle roof may once have been lower.

North aisle extension. General. Floor and walls as north aisle, but a barrel roof with some ornamentation, lower than the north aisle roof. This part of the church now provides further accommodation for the congregation, with seats facing the altar in the chancel at right-angles.

North wall: one splayed window with modern dressings.

East wall: to south of Victorian east window is a shallow and curving alcove with a segmental head which runs behind the respond of the arcade. It now holds an octagonal font though its original purpose is not clear. Above it a mural tablet of 1776.

South wall: one bay of the arcade with a true respond at the eastern end, unlike its counterpart at the west end.

West wall: screen.

Nave. General. Floor and walls as north aisle. Roof of seven bays includes chancel: arch-braced collars resting on simple wooden wall posts, and two tiers of arcing windbraces, largely original and probably 15thC.

North wall: arcade as described above.

East wall: 20thC screen.

South wall: inner porch has heating vents, and organ in south-west corner. One splayed window with Victorian dressings, and a marble mural tablet of 1838.

West wall: splayed window and mural tablet of 1746.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave, with further steps to the sanctuary and to the altar. Carpetted floor, though choir stalls on stone. Roof included with nave.

North wall: arcade as described above.

East wall: 19thC window.

South wall: one splayed window, Victorian; piscina and sedile also Victorian.

West wall: screen.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: disused octagonal font, splayed inwards towards the base, lead-lined bowl, presumably late medieval.

Rood screen: short lengths of the middle rail and uprights are incorporated in the panelling in the easternmost bay of the arcade.

Table: inscribed PIEI 1712 DIER, the former altar table.

Monuments: (based on Hubbard with additions) Memorial to Edward Jones, gent (d.1746). Stone mural tablets to Mary Jones (d.1754) and to Robert Griffiths (d.1764). The Hughes monument, to Thomas Hughes master of Ruthin School (d.1776) but a last commemoration date of 1799; a simple Grecian tablet signed by (the elder?) R. Westmacott. Wooden wall tablet with broken pediment to Mary Ann Williams (d.1815). Jane Hughes (d.1829) by John Wright of Chester; sarcophagus-like Grecian tablet in marble. Stone tablet to Robert Smart (d.1801) and others.

Benefaction boards: i) in wood with dates of benefactions from 1669 to 1739. ii) includes date of 1783. iii) too high to be readable. iv) in Welsh with one date of 1739. All on south wall of tower.

Gallery: woodwork from the 1693 gallery is preserved in the vestry beneath the tower.

Bells: four of which three are dated to 1624, 1627 and 1691.

Plate: chalice of 1576 plus vessels of 19thC and 20thC date.

Victorian furnishings include:

Stained glass: 'north and south-easternmost windows by Lavers & Barraud, contemporary with the 1869-70 restoration. North nave east window of 1907 looks like work by Burlison & Grylls' (Hubbard).

CHURCHYARD

Llanfwrog churchyard has an irregular shape. Its original curvilinear perimeter is retained on the south, but on the south-west it has been extended at some time in the past and on the north-west and north-east the present straight boundaries almost certainly reflect minor modifications with the original line a little further out at the north corner. It is set on the edge of a river terrace at a point where the valley edges round a slight spur and as such is in a prominent position. The interior is relatively level, though there is a slight slope from east to west.

It is reasonably well-maintained if a little overgrown in places.

Boundary: on the north side a buttressed stone wall surmounted by railings rises above the valley and continues round to the west. From the lychgate around the south side there is a stone retaining wall up to 4m high above the road, and on the east buildings below churchyard level.

Monuments: nowhere are these dense, and they are generally sparse on the south side. A few indicate ongoing burial in the yard though the majority of modern interments are in the cemetery on the opposite side of the road. There are a fair number of 18thC examples including a group of ledgers south of the tower; on the north side of the chancel a broken ledger of 1628, and against the south wall of the churchyard near the lychgate a stone in Latin of 1640

Furniture: sundial of 1806 by George Davies of Holywell on round plinth and column, to the north-west of the tower.

Earthworks: eye of faith can detect a slight bank where the original boundary angled back to the west of the tower.

Ancillary features: hearse house in the south-west corner, stone built with a Welsh inscription and a date of 1835. Lychgate with timber superstructure on stone walls, the principal truss on the church side having an arch-braced tie beam with raking struts, while the other two principals lack the bracing; also one tier of windbraces, and the whole looks early. At the east end of the churchyard is a second, smaller lychgate of broadly similar design though lacking the early trusses; the external tie beam carries an undated inscription in Welsh. Could be 19thC. Tarmac paths to church porch and west door.

Vegetation: three yews to west of church, not of great age.

SOURCES

Church guide 1985

CPAT AP: 1995, 95-006-0017/0021; 95-C-0145/0149

CPAT Field Visit: 20 August 1996

Crossley 1946, 30

Glynne 1884, 174

Hubbard 1986, 213

Neaverson 1953-54, 9

Thomas 1911, 101

CONDITION

Generally sound, though some damp in chancel.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium to Good

Llangollen

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Collen**PRN** 16870**NGR** SJ21644199

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Collen's church, possibly founded as early as the 6thC or 7thC, lies in the centre of the town of Llangollen on the southern bank of the Dee. There is a surviving Early English doorway, but at the heart of the structure is a twin-naved Perpendicular church. A tower was added in the mid-18thC, and the building substantially enlarged in 1864-7. Some pre-19thC architectural features have survived - a couple of late medieval windows, the north aisle arcade, and a 14thC tomb recess - and some later wooden furnishings, but the great treasures of the church are the two late medieval roofs. The church occupies an irregularly shaped churchyard, clearly truncated in its present form, which contains a fairly typical range of monuments.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Earliest observable structure is a double-naved building of the Perpendicular period, on the basis of two surviving windows and perhaps the simple north doorway, though the Early English doorway on the south points to an earlier building. Hubbard thought there might have been a pre-Perpendicular double nave. The tower was added in the early 18thC and the building was enlarged to almost double size by the addition of a chancel, south aisle vestry and organ chamber in the later 19thC.

Externally the only medieval masonry is the outer wall of the north aisle with two original Perpendicular windows. The west and (?)east walls have been refaced and a new window inserted in the former. All the remaining external elements of the building are Victorian with the exception of the tower which appears to be of one build in the mid 18thC, though there are Victorian embellishments to its west and south sides.

HISTORY

In its position above the Dee, there can be little doubt that St Collen's church was established in the early medieval period; the event is generally attributed to the 6th or 7thC.

After the foundation of Valle Crucis Abbey in 1200, Llangollen was appropriated to the new monastery. A dispute of 1274 signalled the former importance of the church for it was recorded that Wrexham, Ruabon, Chirk, Llansantffraid and Llandegla were all dependant chapels.

In the Norwich Taxation of 1254 it was referred to as 'Ecclesia de Llancallen' and in the 1291 Taxatio as 'Llangollen' when it was worth in all £36 10s.

Surviving architecture points to a stone church of 13thC date, with further changes in the 15thC or early 16thC. Bardic stanzas refer to a serious fire in the church during this later period and presumably the present roofs, if not the twin naves, were a result of the subsequent renovation.

The church had a wooden tower of unknown date, containing three bells and a clock, but a Rural Dean's report in 1749 suggested this should be replaced. It appears, too, that there was a chapel-y-bedd for the

report reads: 'There is a building adjoining the tower, westward, called "The Old Church" in which the titular St Collen lies: which is likewise much decayed and, being of no further use, is proposed to be taken down and the materials to be used in building the [new] tower which is to be done in lime and stone, the expense being computed at £160".

About the same time a gallery was added at the west end of the church with seats for about one hundred people.

That the tower survived the 19thC restoration appears to have been due solely to cost implications. The builder remarked that it would 'require considerable outlay to make [it] worthy of the new work'.

Glynne visited the church prior to restoration and recorded two windows with Decorated tracery, one at the west end of the north aisle. Part of the rood screen survived at the time, as did some carved bench ends.

The building was fundamentally remodelled by S. Pountney Smith in 1864-7 at a cost of £3097: sections of wall were taken down, the south aisle, chancel and chancel aisles were added. Pews and the west gallery were removed and new seating was added. The tower was opened up and a west doorway was created

In 1876 a sacristy was added at the north-west corner of the north aisle, and this is now the choir vestry.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangollen church consists of a nave and chancel; north and south aisles of equal length (though the western end of the south aisle has been partitioned off to form an internal porch), and attached to these are short chancel aisles housing the organ on the south and a longer vicar's vestry on the north; a west tower abutting the end of the nave; and a north porch now converted into the choir vestry. A boiler house underlies the church at the west end.

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

Fabrics: 'A' is of irregular and variably sized and coloured blocks and slabs of slate, shale and fine-grained sedimentary rock, randomly coursed; also occasional re-used dressed freestone and some pebble stones; limewash residues.

'B' is of dressed blocks of pale sandstone, irregularly coursed; ashlar for quoins and buttress faces.

'C' is of blocks and slabs of grey and brown slaty shale, some coursing; quoins of dressed yellow sandstone, and occasional blocks of sandstone incorporated into the masonry; rare limewash remnants.

'A' is medieval, 'C' is mid-18thC and 'B' is Victorian.

Roof: slate roofs with plain reconstituted clay ridge tiles. Cross terminals to chancel, both vestries, and to west end of north aisle.

Drainage: down-pipes, and slight hollowing beside the north walls which could be due to presence of a drainage trench though this is far from certain; tarmac and flower beds on the west, and flat graveslabs on the south give no clues.

Exterior

Tower. General. Known to have been constructed in the mid-18thC. Fabric C, though some walls, notably the south and west, show masonry zoning. Chamfered plinth at a height of c.1m. Then in four stages with horizontal courses of freestone blocks providing platforms for successive, and fractionally smaller stages above. Fourth course has plain projecting blocks at angles, like gargoyles, though no indication that they function as waterspouts. Above is a plain parapet with curious jar-like finials at corners.

North wall: round-headed doorway at ground level with freestone dressings, the keystone and the springers set proud of the remaining arch stones, and a groove around the inner edge of the outside face of the arch; studded door. Second stage also contains a doorway (?why), freestone dressings, alternate jamb and arch stones standing proud; sill projects and is supported on corbels; wooden doors. Stage three sports a clock face, partially supported by corbels (from an earlier sill?) and with a broken pediment over the top, Stage four has a belfry window with wooden frame and louvre, but a stone surround similar to that in the second stage.

East wall: standard belfry window.

South wall: Victorian two-light window with cusped tracery and hoodmould in first stage. Third stage has a clock face with the date 1853, but no corbelled sill or pediment. Standard belfry window.

West wall: built out from the wall face is a Victorian Gothic doorway, with complex mouldings, and a hoodmould with head-stops. Standard belfry window.

Nave. General. Other than the roof no external elements are visible.

North Aisle. General. Formerly the north nave of a twin-naved church.

North wall: Fabric A. Three windows; two have two lights with two-centred heads and cusped tracery, panels above and two-centred arches - authentic and original Perpendicular. Between is inserted a late Victorian three-light window with fancy tracery under a two-centred arch that has a hoodmould. Stepped buttress at north-east angle in 'B'.

East wall: rises about 0.6m above north-east vestry, but nothing to note.

West wall: wall is faced in 'B' and rests on a chamfered plinth to a maximum height of 0.4m. A Victorian two-centred arched window with two lights and a hoodmould with head-stops.

North-west Vestry. General. Supposedly a former north porch, although modern commentators think it was built anew in 1876 in Early English style. Faced in Fabric B, with chamfered plinth at base to a maximum height of 0.4m.

North wall: pair of Victorian lancet windows set back into the wall face, under complex moulded arches supported on small columns with capitals; two string courses, the upper one deflected to form a hoodmould, the lower one integrating the window sill.

East wall: plain, with a chimney rising up the side and bearing a stone inscribed W.G. D.D. 1876 (the initials of the patron William Griffiths). Two architectural fragments, probably from a Romanesque shrine, built into the wall.

West wall: four inset lancet windows, the details as the north wall.

North-east Vestry. General. Totally Victorian; all in 'B'.

North wall: wall built up from a chamfered plinth to height of 0.4m; buttress at north-east angle; doorway with shouldered arch; two-light window with cusped tracery and a two-centred arch with hoodmould and head-stops.

East wall: Victorian three-light window of standard form.

Chancel. General. All in 'B'.

East wall: Victorian five-light window in Perpendicular style; diagonal buttresses.

South wall: a single two-light window.

Organ chamber. General. In 'B'. Shouldered-arch doorway on south together with a two-light window; a two-light window in the east wall.

South Aisle. General. In 'B', with a chamfered plinth at c.0.4m. Entirely a Victorian construction.

East wall: one small window.

South wall: three Victorian windows, each of slightly different design; main entrance to church towards west end has a two-centred arched doorway with complex mouldings, set proud of the wall face; five buttresses.

Interior

Porch. General. Partitioned west end of south aisle. Black and red tiled floor; walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof: see south aisle.

North wall: fine Early English doorway, retained in situ when south aisle constructed; groups of shafts in two rectangularly arranged orders; corner shafts keeled, and four-centred arch mouldings continue the same profile; elementary foliated caps similar to early 13thC ones at Valle Crucis (Hubbard); decoration rather weathered and one stone of the capital on the west side has been replaced by an undecorated block.

East wall: partition.

South wall: slightly splayed doorway embrasure, Victorian stonework.

West wall: north-west angle has buttress-like projection rising the full height of the wall; a survival of the medieval nave?

Tower. General. Floor of standard tiles (see above); walls roughly plastered and whitewashed; wooden ceiling at height of c.6m.

North wall: stair turret set in this wall which is thickened across the north-west angle. One brass of 1890.

East wall: round-headed tower arch of two orders, springing from wall.

South wall: splayed window embrasure (Victorian).

West wall: main doorway (Victorian), not splayed.

North Aisle. General. Wooden block floor with benches raised on wooden boarding; standard wall finish, with heating pipes running down the side; roof of six bays on hammerbeam trusses, with intermediate collar trusses for which the principals rise from wall plates; carvings on underside of trusses, particularly the intermediate ones.

North wall: north doorway with four-centred arch to soffit, the door itself with broad horizontal and vertical ribs is of considerable age, and has a peephole: it has been suggested that it could date to before 1625 when 'rights of sanctuary' ceased. Three windows: the central one has a splay and a plaque beneath it records its erection in 1897; the other two have virtually no splay and are original. At the east end is a 14thC tomb recess, probably in situ; heavily moulded with a cinquefoiled inner arch, and a group of short shafts

with fleurons in their caps; crocketed gable and end pinnacles. The wall also supports two benefaction boards, five memorials and monuments (1683, 1711, 1795, 1810 and 1846), a hatchment and a painting of the Madonna and child.

East wall: large Victorian two-centred arch of two orders gives access to vestry.

South wall: four-bay arcade of broad four-centred arches, octagonal pillars with moulded capitals and large bases; a respond at the west end, and at the east beyond the last bay, a small Victorian half-arch, supposedly of the 1860s.

West wall: splayed window.

North-west Vestry. General. Formerly the sacristy. Carpeted floor; walls with standard finish; roof of two bays with one arch-braced collar truss with a king strut, resting on corbels; all the timberwork is painted blue.

South wall: a two-centred arched doorway with chamfered dressings but no stops. For the door itself see above.

North-east Vestry. General. Two steps up from north aisle. Carpet over tiled floor which has some heating grilles; roof of close-set collars and scissor trusses. East end divided off by stone partition to provide an inner vestry. All Victorian architecture, the arcade bay giving on to the chancel, an imitation of the Perpendicular north aisle bays. The east window supposedly reproduces the former Perpendicular east window.

Nave. General. Wooden block flooring at front and rear, carpet down aisle; numbered benches raised on wooden boarding. Fine hammerbeam roof of six bays, similar to but more elaborate than that in north aisle. Hubbard describes it thus: hammerbeam trusses (which hardly function as such) alternate with principals which have collars but no arched-bracing. Much carving: bosses, angels, cusping above the hammerbeams. Cornice of trail motif, and linenfold frieze. Masks, beasts and figures, and both secular and sacred subjects at the feet of the alternate trusses. The two easternmost hammerbeam bays (over the earlier chancel) are very elaborately treated. Many of their members are enriched, and at collar level is an exquisite panelled ceiling of filigree Celtic intricacy. The nave roof is said, most improbably, to have come from Valle Crucis. Curious wall-post brackets do suggest the possibility of some post-Reformation re-assembly, but there is no other evidence of importation apparent, and nave and aisle roofs seem to belong together (fuller descriptions appear in the listed building report and elsewhere).

North wall: arcade. Three close-set corbels project over the second pier, for which no obvious explanation. The only fitting is a marble mural tablet of 1851.

East wall: iron screen, plus large Victorian chancel arch.

South wall: a three-bay arcade of Victorian date, imitating its medieval counterpart in the north aisle, plus a much smaller infilling bay at the east end. Early English south door is simpler on inside with only one moulded order, and a two-centred arch.

West wall: round-headed tower arch.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave, one more to sanctuary and one to altar. Floor incorporates encaustic tiles but carpet over much of chancel; raised choir stalls. Wagon roof of 24 ribbed panels, painted blue.

North wall: Victorian, two-bay arcade, the more a blind arch with a credence.

South wall: splayed window with sedilia and piscina beneath. One bay of arcade filled with organ and two small windows above.

South Aisle. General. Wooden block floor, raised benches. Roof of three bays plus a half bay over the inner porch; Victorian hammerbeam trusses supported on stone corbels.

North wall: arcade.

East wall: two-centred arch completely blocked by organ.

South wall: wall supports wooden war memorial plaque and Ladies of Llangollen memorial (1937).

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Shrine fragments: from a Romanesque shrine; built into external east wall of north-west vestry.

Chest: doubles as a seat and has carved arm rests; inscribed 'Mr J.H. E.J. E.D. Church:Wd: 1748'. In tower.

Stoup: hexagonal and slightly worn; rests on ledge in 14thC tomb recess in north aisle.

Bench: inscribed 'Common Seates for all the freeholders of the parifh'; in the tower. No date.

Table: decorated and with inscription: 'JESVS 1636'; in north aisle.

Hatchment: in poor condition and of unknown date, though there is a date of 1794 on the back of it; formerly in the north aisle, but now (March 1998) taken down for restoration.

Monuments: (based on Hubbard with additions). Brass to Margaret Trevor (d.1663), by Silvanus Crue. Wooden painted memorial to William Trevor (d.1683). Marble monument to Susanna Price (d.1795, erected 1796), by Joseph Turner; urn on a corbelled-out casket. Anne Price (d.1711) plus later relatives. Thomas Parry (d.1789, erected 1810). Edward Wynne (d.1777), elaborate marble memorial.

Registers: from 1587

19thC and later fittings include:

Font: 'gigantic and exuberant' (Hubbard), in Caen stone.

Benefaction boards: bequests from 1697-1837, the boards dating to 1853.

Royal Arms: post-1801 Hanoverian; painted panel (classed in listed building schedule as another hatchment).

Reredos: '1876-8, carved by Earp, and given by R.B.Hesketh of Gwrych' (Hubbard).

Screen: between nave and chancel; iron, 1902.

Stained glass: 'in the porch a light of 1833, still in pictorial transparency style. North aisle east window of 1849; Hubbard notes that according to Thomas it is by Rowland of Warwick, presumably meaning Holland. East window by Done & Davies, 1867. The Baker memorial window in the south aisle, with a commemoration date of 1875, by Alexander Gibbs' (Hubbard).

Monuments: 'to Lady Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby, the Ladies of Llangollen. Dating to 1937, erected at the expense of Dr Mary Gordon, feminist, disciple of Jung, and author of a biographical novel about the Ladies. Relief portraits, for which the donor and the sculptor, Violet Labouchere, were the models' (Hubbard).

Bells: eight of 1887.

CHURCHYARD

Llangollen churchyard is a polygonal enclosure with the church tucked so far into the extreme eastern corner to the extent that it is not possible to walk around the complete circuit. It is a reasonable assumption that not only has there been some minor encroachment on the west side where the buildings of the Hand Hotel appear to impinge on the shallow arc of the original boundary, but also that chunks of a larger enclosure have been cut away on the south and perhaps the east as well.

The present churchyard is well maintained and relatively level, though the ground drops away gently on the north side of the church towards the Dee. Ignoring the topographical modifications imposed by the development of Llangollen, it appears that the church was established on the edge of the river valley.

Boundary: on the north it is a well-made, mortared retaining wall (now a listed structure) which below the chancel is around 3m high, but this gives way to a stub wall surmounted by railings around the east side of the chancel. Elsewhere buildings and low walls form the churchyard boundary, but on the south side there are railings and a hedge. The churchyard shows signs of being raised on the north and east, but on the south the ground either side of the boundary is level, another sign perhaps that the perimeter on this side has been moved in the last few hundred years.

Monuments: marked graves are spread throughout the churchyard though not very densely. There are a few very late 18thC monuments on the north side and a stone of 1737 is pinned to the north wall of the north aisle. Chest tombs are quite common on the west and there has also been some clearing of stones back to the wall edge. Further 18thC examples lie to the south of the church, the earliest noted being 1769.

Furniture: modern sundial and gnomon (1988) set on a waisted stone pillar which stands on an earlier three-step circular base.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: a modern lychgate on the south opposite the main entrance, unattractive wrought iron gates on the west and iron gates supported on octagonal iron piers at the south-west. Tarmac paths, but a brick path from the lychgate.

Vegetation: five yew trees of no great age scattered around the south and west sides; other deciduous and coniferous trees throughout the churchyard.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings: Llangollen 1989

CPAT air photo: 1995,95-002-0007/0009;95-005-0008/0011; 95-C-0040/0041

CPAT Field Visit: 29 October 1996

Crossley 1946, 31

Faculty: NLW/SA/FB/3: 1863

Ffoulkes-Jones 1980

Glynne 1884, 188

Hubbard 1986, 219.

Quinquennial Review: 1986

Quinquennial Review: 1994

Radford 1959, 93

Thomas 1911, 282

CONDITION

Externally it appears to be reasonably sound though a few Victorian dressings are flaking. On the inside a few cracks have been plastered over, and there is some peeling paint and some damp marks in the north aisle, but less elsewhere.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Llangwyfan

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Cwyfan

PRN 16837

NGR SJ12046629

GENERAL SUMMARY

The small church of St Cwyfan lies some 5 miles to the east of Denbigh. It is a single-cell structure, its external faces completely rendered. One of its windows may be 15thC and there are others of 17thC and 18thC origin, together with a porch of early 18thC date, the building having escaped Victorianisation. This is evident too from the box pews inside, though no medieval fittings have survived. The churchyard is small and rectangular with an interesting range of 18thC monuments.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Very little can be said of this church; one window on the south side is probably 15thC, its northern counterpart might be, and the south door could even be earlier, possibly 14thC. Some other windows are probably 17thC on the basis of an incised date. The age of the masonry shell remains unknown, but the porch appears to date from 1714.

HISTORY

The dedication to St Cwyfan and the location suggest an early medieval foundation, but there is no evidence to collaborate this assumption.

The first reference - to 'Ecc'a de Langeifin' - is in the Norwich taxation of 1254, when it was valued at 10s. It does appear in the Lincoln Taxation - Thomas thought it was probably included with Llandymnog - but in 1535 it appeared as 'Llan Goyffen'.

The windows indicate work in 1684 and also probably in the 18thC. A print of 1793 shows a building much as it appears today including the two-centred arched window in the west wall, a near square bellcote and the porch with its plaque and port-hole windows.

A photograph from the early part of the 20thC shows two slit windows above the two-centred arched window in the west wall pointing to some 19thC modifications which included the vestry on the north side, and according to Thomas the removal of a gallery to allow space for the choir.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangwyfan is a small single-celled structure with a south porch and a north vestry both located at the west end of the church, and a bellcote above the west gable. It is oriented south-west/north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here. Conventional directions are retained for the churchyard.

Fabrics: no information available as the whole exterior is rendered.

Roof: slate roofs, plain grey clay ridge tiles; cross finials to chancel and porch.

Bellcote of dressed limestone with a flat slab for the top; a single bell with a large metal wheel; bellframe rebuilt in last few years.

Drainage: a depression beside the wall on the south could be an indicator, but this is less convincing on the north and there is nothing on the east and west.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Considered as one because no external differentiation.

North wall: nave is lit by a single two-light window in buff-yellow sandstone, with a square head that carries the inscription '1684 I M'; the lights have segmental heads, but are otherwise plain; hinges for shutters. Chancel window in same freestone, also flat-headed with a single round-headed light that has undistinguished cusping and hollowed spandrels; shutter hinges have been removed leaving sockets. Between the two windows is an unexplained thickening of the wall, reaching to about half its height, about 1.6m long and 0.1m wide. Its eastern end has a render-covered brick buttress leaning against it, indicative of a problem in this part of the north wall. Further west beneath the nave window is a similar thickening of the wall near ground level, which is presumably the remaining portion of an earlier nave wall.

East wall: wall dominated by a square-headed window which has two, two-centred arched lights with both panels and filled spandrels above; in gold-coloured freestone, with one mullion stone renewed; not a conventional Gothic window. Olive freestone for the hoodmould and two head-stops, one more weathered than the other; these may be earlier than the window itself but their date remains uncertain.

South wall: wall face beneath the render is somewhat irregular, and there is a slight batter to base, particularly of chancel. Chancel lit by single light with cinquefoil cusping, but jambs and even part of tracery have render coat, suggesting that the dressings may not be in good condition. Perhaps an original window. One hinge in place. To west a two-light window comparable with that on north side, though segmental heads of lights have weaker arcs; sockets for hinges.

West wall: a two-centred arched doorway now contains a window and has done from at least the late 18thC; double ribbed mouldings all in grey sandstone with traces of limewash. Above a circular window.

Vestry. General. This and the partially subterranean boiler house are both rendered. No features of interest.

Porch. General. Exterior rendered.

East wall: oval window fashioned from single block of pink sandstone.

South wall: a broad round-headed arch to the doorway turned in blocks of pink sandstone which are dressed but not chamfered; some of the jambs are badly weathered. Above it a plaque in buff-brown sandstone reading 'CADWALADER EDWARDS THO: ap HUGH CHURCH WARDENS Ao Dni 1714. Double wooden doors.

West wall: window as in east wall but from two blocks of sandstone.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone slab floor, plastered and painted walls, simple roof showing three purlins.

North wall: doorway in red sandstone with two-centred arch and a reverse wave-moulded chamfer which may have ended in stops though these are now completely weathered away. Consecration cross and graffiti on jambstones, together with numerous sharpening grooves.

East wall: small rectangular splayed embrasure for window, the splay asymmetric. Wooden-topped bench along wall.

South wall: stone of arch and jambs exposed.

West wall: window and bench as on east side.

Nave. General. Porch and nave floors at same level. Stone slab floor but no obvious re-use; carpet down centre. Churchwarden reports that cavity runs the length of the nave beneath the pews: one stone tipping into it; function uncertain. Box pews raised on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted, with timber dado on north, south and west sides to height of over one metre. Radiators and pipes against walls. Ceiling vaulted over and painted.

North wall: wall has pronounced outward batter. Splayed window has bare stonework and on the inner face wooden pilaster jambs and arch painted brown, with gold painted wooden blocks projecting as springers and keystone. Also several metal brackets for lamps (no longer in use). A painting of Christ and the Cross brought from Glyn Arthur c.1925. Doorway to vestry has embrasure carved out of the wall.

East wall: a step up into chancel is the only division.

South wall: like the north wall this has a pronounced batter. Doorway slightly splayed and has a segmental soffit. Window has same 18thC embellishment as that on north side. Near the door a modern mosaic scene of Christ, and on the east side of the window a painting of the Virgin and Child. Lamp brackets.

West wall: window renovated after doorway exposed in restoration of 1940. Embrasure faced in limestone and presumably a feature of the doorway, though the segmental head of the soffit may be part of the modification.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, another to sanctuary. Chancel has stone slabs including a grave slab of 1642, centrally placed. Sanctuary has 20thC tiles. Walls and roof as nave, and no division between the two cells.

North wall: single window with 18thC wooden finish as nave.

East wall: splayed window, 19thC stained glass.

South wall: one window, its dressings painted over and the internal face of the splay finished in Georgian style as nave windows.

Vestry. General. Nothing of interest, though original stocks stored here.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Box pews: eight on north side, seven on south, where the front one is double; no dates or plaques.

Floor slab: to Catherine Heaton (d.1642).

Plate: paten of 1723, the rest 19thC.

Pulpit, chest and reading desk: fairly plain and could be of 18thC date.

Font: 'baluster, its bowl decorated with biblical scenes and angel heads' (Hubbard). Claimed as 18thC.

Wall paintings: fragmentary paintings discovered on north wall during renovation work in 1997; possibly from Royal Arms of late 17thC/early 18thC. Uncertain at the time of writing whether these will be left exposed.

Victorian features include:

Stained glass: 'east window by Alexander Gibbs with a commemoration date of 1853' (Hubbard).

CHURCHYARD

Llangwyfan churchyard is small, seemingly rectangular, and set on a little spur projecting eastwards towards the Vale of Clwyd, a stream running past the enclosure on the north side. Internally there is a slight slope from east to west.

The yard is well maintained and still used for burial.

Boundary: a drystone wall acts as a retaining wall on the south-west and south-east with a wire fence on top and an external drop of 0.5m+. On north-west is a drop of nearly 2m, slightly embanked internally with a hedge and fence on top. Drystone wall above track on north-east, again some internal embanking and a drop of more than one metre to the track.

Monuments: a fairly uniform spread throughout the yard with frequent chest tombs to the south-west and south and upright stones to the south-west. Modern graves on the north-west side of the church and numbers of 18thC memorials though many too lichen covered to read. Chest tombs of 1741 and 1759 identified.

Furniture: modern stocks set outside the east gate.

Earthworks: none other than the slight internal embanking, and the generally raised interior.

Ancillary features: single metal gate near east corner with tarmac path to porch; stile at north corner.

Vegetation: several mature but not ancient yew trees around perimeter, particularly at the corners; a few other trees within the yard.

SOURCES

CPAT AP 95-006-0033/34; 95-C-0160/161
CPAT Field Visits: 26 November 1996 & 20 February 1997
DRO/DD/DM/944/19
Hubbard 1986, 225
Ingleby 1793: Sketch of church
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pl 9.
Neaverson 1953-54, 9
Quinquennial Review 1995
Thomas 1911, 39

CONDITION

Very bad crack in north wall, other less dramatic cracks in the walls, ceiling and around windows. Some damp marks around windows. Considerable problems.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good?

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Medium

Llangynhafal

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Cynhafal**PRN** 16875**NGR** SJ13306340

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cynhafal's church accompanied only by a farm, lies on the lower western slopes of the Clwydians, 5 miles from Denbigh. A small double-naved church typical of the Vale of Clwyd, its external walls are rendered allowing little insight into its structural development in the medieval period. It certainly reached its present form in the Perpendicular period and several windows, though heavily renewed, together with the south door and a figure set into its reveal, date to this time. There is evidence of renovation in 1669 and in the 18thC, and restoration in 1869-70 and 1884. It retains its late medieval roofs and a medieval font, a fine range of 17thC and 18thC wooden fittings, and a fairly typical set of 18thC and 19thC wall memorials. The churchyard was originally sub-oval and its original eastern perimeter is still discernible as a low earthwork; interesting 18thC graveslabs survive in situ.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

No adequate structural sequence can be developed because of the external render. However, it appears that the axes of the two naves are fractionally different, suggesting at least two phases of construction. Perpendicular features, particularly the fenestration, stand out as might be expected, though it is not certain that any of the dressings are wholly original. In addition, windows in the north nave reveal some modifications in the 18thC, and a plaque in the west wall commemorates some renovation of uncertain character in 1669.

Porch added in the second half of the 19thC.

HISTORY

The dedication, location and churchyard morphology point to an early medieval origin for Llangynhafal church; this is the only dedication to St Cynhafal in Wales, who was supposedly a 7thC saint. However, there is no documentary evidence to support such an early foundation date.

The first reference to the church is the Norwich Taxation of 1254 when 'Ecc'a de Langelhanal' was worth 13s 4d. In the 1291 Taxation 'Llanganhavall' was worth £4 6s 8d. The earliest recorded rector was Thomas Plumer in 1390.

Repairs to the bellcote and west gable are evidenced by carved dates of 1669 and 1671, though only the plaque with the former is visible. Thomas also claimed that the earliest pews dated to this period (1666 and 1678) but these are no longer extant.

The screen between the north nave and chancel was taken down in 1726, the upper part 'put around the Communion Table', the lower part left in place.

Until 1859 the church was in the diocese of Bangor.

It was still whitewashed when seen by Glynne in 1864. He thought it little altered and with good Perpendicular work. The windows were described in some detail, the arcade had flat Tudor arches, and the hammerbeam roofs impressed him. Old stained glass was noted in the south windows.

Restoration took place in 1869-70 at a cost of c.£200 and included the removal of the old box pews, the stripping of plaster from the arcade, the repair of the roofs, and the construction of a new south porch to replace that of 1671. Thomas noted too that the medieval stained glass fragments seen by Glynne had been removed from some south windows to enable memorial windows to be put in place, this seemingly happening in the later 19thC. Fragments had subsequently been discovered in digging the rectory garden.

Until 1884 the altar was in the north chancel and the main entrance was via the west door. At that date the church was re-floored and re-roofed, at an overall cost of £1200.

Further repairs at the west end in 1969-75 included renovation of the roof timbers.

ARCHITECTURE

Llangynhafal church is double-naved with equally sized north and south cells. Its porch is set close to the south-west angle, and there is a bellcote at the west end of the south nave.

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

Fabrics: 'A' comprises roughly shaped blocks of limestone, randomly coursed; better dressed blocks are used for quoins.

Roof: slates and grey clay ridge tiles; no finials. Diminishing rectangular bellcote, in limestone, at the west end of south nave; a single aperture; Thomas inferred that a date of 1671 on the belfry referred to repairs.

Drainage: hollows on the north and south and less certainly on other sides may indicate drainage trenches around the building.

Exterior

North Nave and Chancel. General. Rendered wall faces. Boiler room with chimney; and store shed abut north wall.

North wall: a single segmental-headed window in off-yellow sandstone dressings; three lights, the central one with an ogee head, the others round-headed; sunken spandrels; thought to be 18thC.

East wall: east window in yellow freestone, wholly a Victorian or later renewal. It has a two-centred arch, four lights also with two-centred heads, sub-arches and panel tracery, hollow chamfers and a simple hoodmould. At top of hoodmould is a carved head in pink sandstone that could be earlier though it is not much worn and appears to be integral with the hoodmould and thus of no great age.

West wall: wall face has a more irregular appearance than the west wall of south nave, and its axis fractionally different. Round-headed window in off-yellow sandstone, again 18thC.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Rendered wall faces.

East wall: east window has a four-centred arch; five cusped, ogee-headed lights with cusped panels above; no hoodmould; all in buff-yellow freestone and having a more uniform appearance than the east window of the north nave. It is unclear whether the dressings are original or wholly renewed.

South wall: wall has three four-light, four-centred arched windows, that in the sanctuary slightly smaller than those to west. Lights with trefoil cusping, tracery and jambs in red sandstone, but mullions in modern grey freestone; however, there is some doubt as to whether the tracery is original for some arrises are sharp, though others are weathered.

West wall: plain, except for a sandstone plaque inscribed 'R.W. R.A.P.R. CHVRCHWARDENS 1669' set just beneath bellcote.

Porch. General. Built in 'A' with on the south a four-centred arched Victorian doorway with grooved chamfers and broach stops. East and west walls are plain. Dates from a restoration of 1869-70.

Interior

Porch. General. Black and red tiles on floor; rendered walls; roof has numerous, simple collar trusses.

North wall: rectangular doorway in red sandstone with label above; splayed external reveal hollowed with fillets; on the left in a deep hollow is a small carving of an ecclesiastic, rather worn - it has been suggested that this is a representation of St Peter which dates to the late 14thC though as an integral part of the doorway it is more likely to be 15thC; other carvings may have been removed for Thomas claimed that there were animal figures in relief. The soffit of the doorway is four-centred.

East and west walls: wooden benches.

North Nave. General. Black and red tiles; benches on wooden block flooring; heating pipes and radiators along wall. Floor has slight incline from west to east. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof continuous with chancel and consists of five bays with hammerbeams on wooden wall posts supporting arch-braced collar trusses, the collars and raking struts cusped, the hammerbeams originally sporting angels; intermediate trusses are similar but slightly smaller with curved collars their arch braces springing from the wall tops and the terminals ending in masks which appear to have been recently painted; moulded purlins and rafters; and above the wallplates friezes of cusped and traceried panels. One angel, originally from a hammerbeam, set in north wall over chancel step.

Vestry takes up north-west corner of nave.

North wall: upper part of north wall towards west end has distinctive outwards lean. Four marble memorials ranging in date from 1799 to 1892.

East wall: distinguished only by a single step.

South wall: three bays of five-bay arcade; arches four-centred with octagonal pillars, capitals and bases, all in red sandstone. Most westerly bay is broader than the rest.

West wall: slightly splayed window, its reveal carried down to ground level as a recess which contains a segmental arch and a wooden doorway; a blocked 18thC or earlier doorway, no trace of which can be detected externally.

North Chancel. General. Two steps, staggered; wooden block flooring for first, black and red tiles for second. For roof see above. Now used for Sunday School.

North wall: splayed window and memorials ranging from 1632 to 1886.

East wall: splayed window with reveal in red sandstone; wall memorials of 1682 and 1778.

South wall: two bays of arcade.

South Nave. General. Floor as north nave but with carpet down the aisle; heating as north nave; walls as north nave. Roof of five bays is of less elaborate form than that in the north nave and chancel, with simple arch-braced collars, the latter straight rather than arched; friezes on both sides with a cornice of elongated tracery. Two angels remain on north side, one on south; of the masks on the intermediate collar trusses, two are missing from the north side, one from the south. The last truss built into west wall is in poor condition and is supported on five corbels. Roof also contains a wooden pulley block, supposedly used to hoist 'The Starre' at Christmas time, a custom going back beyond 1729 when it was mentioned in the vestry minutes.

North wall: arcade; an angel from one of the hammerbeams is attached to a pillar at the nave/chancel divide.

East wall: step only.

South wall: shallow splayed window with Victorian stained glass. Benefaction Board and two 19thC memorials.

West wall: plain with two 19thC paintings hanging on it.

South Chancel. General. Two staggered steps in chancel and a further step to altar. Carpetted but tiles beneath include encaustic ones around altar. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: arcade.

East wall: splayed window, the red sandstone reveal relatively modern.

South wall: splayed windows; two 19thC memorials.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Above the reredos is a Pelican in her Piety, said to have been installed in 1690 though Hubbard thought it more likely to be 18thC. Reredos itself incorporates part of a screen which reportedly carries the date 1636, and also old box pews.

Pulpit: 'said to be of 1636 though no date is visible; arched panels, and carved ones which include a lion, cockatrice, pelican and crocodile' (Hubbard). Thomas recorded a desk of the same date, but this does not now appear to be in the church.

Plank Chest: iron fittings and working lock; at west end of south nave.

Cupboard: decorated and inscribed 'A.H. 1684'; at west end of north nave; also termed a Cwpwrdd Deuddarn.

Altar rails: 'fluted columnar rails, 18thC, round three sides of the altar' (Hubbard).

Chairs: inscribed 'Plas R.D. 1707 draw' and 'Plas draw. DD 1736' in north-east and south-east corners of north chancel.

Box pew: 17thC, with open arcading and turned balusters; triple seat; inscribed 'Plas-draw' and 'R.D. Llanbedr'. It also carries a brass plaque recording John Jones (d.1760), his father John (d.1767) and mother Mary (d.1788). A second pew is plainer and is now used for storage.

Benefaction Board: 18thC, in Welsh.

Graveslabs: set vertically on north wall. Elizabeth Lloyd of Ruabon (d.1632); Dorothy Wynn (d.1758); John Wynne (d.1654).

Monuments: (all marble unless stated); to Sarah Williams (d.1799) with urn resting on chest, by Carline and Linell of Shrewsbury; Peter Wynne, vicar [sic] of Llanfair (d.1682) in stone; to John Hughes (d.1778) and family.

Plate: Communion cup of 1615; paten of 1733; and candlesticks, paten and alms dish of 1782. But Thomas claimed the Communion cup was of c.1570 and there was a paten cover of 1615.

Bell: of 1773 by Thomas Rudhall of Gloucester.

Victorian furnishings and fittings include:

Font: plain and octagonal; probably Victorian.

Reredos: of 1902, but incorporating old wood (see above).

Lectern: a fine brass furnishing. Commemoration date 1882.

Monuments: (based on Hubbard with additions). Several Neo-Classical tablets. The Jones monument by J. Blayney of Chester, the latest commemoration date, 1836; Rev John Jones (d.1830), also by Blayney; Thomas Davies (d.1829), by Edmund Ashcroft of Liverpool; a draped urn.

CHURCHYARD

Llangynhafal churchyard is now of irregular shape as a result of an eastwards extension, but was originally more curvilinear in form. Internally it slopes gently from east to west, while its position, on the lower slopes of the Clwydian Hills, is spur-sited with a small stream to the north.

It is well-maintained and still used for burial.

Boundary: on the south a roughly mortared retaining wall above the road; on the east the modern boundary is a hedge; while on the north is a hedge above a dry-stone wall.

Monuments: reasonably uniform distribution throughout the yard, close-set but not dense. Chest tombs are frequent, and some ledgers are disappearing beneath grass. A good range of 18thC slabs and stones, the earliest noted of 1724 (south-west of the church), with one of 1735 to the north-west.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: churchyard is raised perhaps 3m above the lane on the north, but this is effectively a sunken track and the difference from the ground level on the far side of the lane is perhaps no more than 1m. A similar situation to the north where lane had sunk about 1.5m below churchyard level, but ground level beyond is not a great deal lower. Original perimeter on east is discernible as a low bank.

Ancillary features: single iron gate at south-east, and a similar one approached by flight of ten steps at west end; tarmac path.

Vegetation: several yews of moderate size on south, and one small yew bush on north.

SOURCES

Church notes: n.d.

CPAT AP 1995: 95-006-0027/0028/0029; 95-C-0153/0154/0155
CPAT Field Visit: 13 November 1996
Crossley 1946, 31
Faculty: St Asaph 1879 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 175
Hubbard 1986, 225
NMR Aberystwyth
Neaverson 1953-54, 9
Quinquennial Review: 1988
Thomas 1911, 105

CONDITION

Externally the north-west angle has created problems in the past. It has been repaired, but cracks are still visible. Further cracks visible in render on north side and also near south-west corner. Porch is pulling away from nave wall.

Internally the church appears sound.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good?

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Medium

Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Dyfnog

PRN 16884

NGR SJ08166337

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Dyfnog's church is set on the south side of the small village of Llanrhaiadr, about 5km south-east of Denbigh. Like many churches in the Vale of Clwyd it has a double nave and in addition has a west tower. Overall the structural history is far from clear. Its fenestration is particularly varied, though mainly Perpendicular, and the north nave contains the remarkable Jesse window dating from 1533. Late medieval roofs survive inside, together with an interesting range of monuments, a great oak chest and an 18thC carved pelican. The churchyard may originally have had a more curvilinear appearance than today and its earliest gravestone dates from 1639.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Almost all the architectural detail is Perpendicular or later.

North nave: eastern section of north wall perhaps rebuilt in 19thC, as evidenced by a change in the wall's alignment and by the masonry. Victorian windows, if copies, would point to originals in the Decorated style. East wall on the basis of the blocked and partially removed doorway is 13thC or 14thC.

South nave - could be all of one build though possibly some reconstruction at west end. South wall in particular has a surprising mixture of windows, and internally the flat-headed window at east end of south side shows signs of insertion. Furthermore the chancel has been re-designed and is now shorter than its predecessor on the basis of the surviving length of its wagon roof; this however is presumably a post-medieval development.

Tower appears to have had its west wall rebuilt but this change is visible internally not externally. Other rebuilding may include the parapet.

Porch appears to be reconstructed, though possibly a faithful copy of the original; the original roof timbers were retained.

Probable that north nave is the earlier and that, most unusually, it had a doorway in the east wall. South aisle added in 15thC or possibly the early 16thC. The tower is presumably late medieval too.

HISTORY

The dedication and perhaps the location point to an early medieval origin; locally it is reputed to be a 6thC foundation, and there is a holy well, Ffynnon Dyfnog, a short distance to the west.

The church is referred to as 'Ecc'a de Lanrayadyr' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 at a value of £3 6s 8d, but is not named specifically in the later Taxatio of Pope Nicholas (1291).

Sir Stephen Glynne visited the church in 1847, noting that the building was whitewashed, the western

gallery contained a finger organ, the arcade had obtuse, ugly arches, and the porch curious niches and panelling.

The church was restored by Arthur Baker in 1879-80 at a time when the roof had decayed, the floors were uneven and the arcade and several windows in poor condition. These problems were resolved by Baker: the fabric was completely repaired, the pews replaced with open seats, some other fittings such as pulpit were repaired and the churchyard wall renovated. Baker also moved the Maurice Jones memorial from the north wall of the north aisle to its present position near the south-west corner of the church, and he probably got rid of the west gallery which had utilised parts of the medieval rood loft. The Y-traceried windows in the north wall date either from this time or from very shortly after. The cost of the 1879-80 restoration was £2774.

Further restoration occurred in 1986-89, when walls were unpinned, some rebuilding occurred and new floors laid with wood on concrete. In 1988 several graves were recorded during trenching operations, either running beneath or cut by the west wall of the north nave.

ARCHITECTURE

The church is a double-naved structure with a west tower appended to the south nave, and a north porch almost centrally placed against the main wall of the north nave.

It is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is used; the churchyard is described in conventional terms.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises a mixture of blocks and some slabs of red and grey sandstone, limestone, perhaps with some shale; irregular coursing.

'B' has more red sandstone than 'A' as well as grey shale, but smaller and more varied lumps of stone.

'C' has a predominance of limestone roughly coursed with limestone quoins; a small amount of red sandstone.

'D' is similar to 'A' but the sandstone is frequently pink in hue rather than red.

Roof: slated roofs, with plain ridge tiles which may be stone or concrete; certainly the latter on the porch. Stone cross finials on north nave and also at east end of south nave (the chancel). Flag pole on tower roof.

Drainage: gravel-filled trench along north side (though not the porch), the south and the east. Tarmac on west side though a brick-lined gully around the sides of the tower. West of the porch, metal plates against wall presumably cover subterranean boiler room.

Exterior

Tower. General. Base of tower battered to a height of c.1m on north and rather more on south and west; on the west too are large projecting stones at the base of the batter, but on the south it has been concreted over. Only a string course above the belfry windows and then the battlemented parapet. Walls in 'C', though more sandstone in parapet than elsewhere, and the string course too is in red sandstone. Few diagnostic features to date the tower, but a belief that it is 13thC and the oldest part of the church cannot be substantiated.

North wall: rectangular window at ground floor level with chamfered yellow freestone dressings (19thC or 20thC). Belfry illuminated by two two-centred cusped windows in olive yellow freestone; sill and some jambstones are in pink sandstone and appear to be replaced, the rest less certainly so; stones on edge above the window create crude relieving arch; clock face over the window. No sign of an external joint in the masonry to match the internal joint that seems to indicate a rebuilt west wall.

East wall: visible above the south nave roof. A single belfry window with a two-centred, cusped head, and

with slightly hollowed chamfer to the dressings.

South wall: belfry window as on north side but weathering may give false impression that some dressings have been renewed; relieving arch as on north.

West wall: doorway with two-centred arch and ribbed chamfer, possibly the only pre-Perpendicular feature; hoodmould does not look original but has weathered head stops; edge stones form relieving arch. Above the doorway is a small rectangular window, weathered but of no great age. Standard belfry window with relieving arch but sill, jambs and mullions renewed. Three tie rods high up on north side of this wall.

North Nave and Chancel. General. No differentiation externally.

North wall: wall has chamfered block plinth at base and is largely in 'A'; but the top 0.4m or so of the wall is in 'B' and this drops to 0.7m around first window. Features from west end are: i) wall angle has limestone quoins at lowest levels but red sandstone above, the latter probably not original; projecting basal stones at corner. ii) four-centred window, mainly in red sandstone, with three two-centred lights and filled spandrels, the heads in pink sandstone conceivably original, but most jambs, the mullion stones, and the sill have all been renewed. iii) second window has a two-centred arch, two narrow, cusped lights with Y-tracery and an irregular cusped panel above, and a hoodmould with curled stops; Decorated style but wholly Victorian and no obvious evidence that it had a predecessor. iv) porch. v) a pair of windows which mirror the cusped lights of iii). vi) a single cusped light as those to the west. Wall exhibits some changes east of porch: the chamfered plinth has dressed sandstone, probably of Victorian origin, there are blocks of olive-yellow sandstone around the windows which are clearly 19thC if not later, and east of the last window is a large patch of sandstone masonry out of place in this wall - it coincides with a very slight change in the alignment of the wall. Difficult to see the joints but conceivably much of the wall face has been rebuilt at this end.

East wall: appears to be in 'A' but newly pointed; plinth at height of c.0.8m is Victorian addition. Dominated by a large four-centred window with five ogee-headed lights that have cinquefoil tracery and, above, sub-arches, panels and quatrefoils; in pink and buff sandstone with the mullions and perhaps the tracery replaced, though the jambs appear original. Above is a hollow-chamfered hoodmould with head stops. All including the hoodmould itself could be Victorian or later. On south side of the window is a blocked doorway, the hollow-chamfered jambstones but not the arch visible (cf interior).

West wall: in 'A', incorporating some very large blocks, but the gable is in 'B' and a tie rod and S-plate near apex; the wall is original, and a flat-topped plinth survives at a height of c.0.5m. The window is Victorian with a four-centred arch and three lancet lights and a hoodmould with head stops. It is off centre and infilling masonry can be seen around it.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Alignment of this nave as seen in its face is slightly different from its northern counterpart. Chamfered plinth of Victorian date is continued from north nave. Fabric 'D'.

East wall: plinth to c.1.2m and runs around diagonal buttress at south-east angle. Window similar to that in north nave: a two-centred arch, five lights with sub-arches, panels etc, and a hoodmould with head stops, both weathered, one more so than the other, but both probably Victorian. But the lights have round heads and there is also a transom at springing level. Mullions, tracery and hoodmould in Victorian freestone. Even the sill renewed and only the north jamb and part of the south in original red sandstone.

South wall: features from east are: i) south-east corner and small part of this wall above the buttress rebuilt with a preponderance of limestone blocks. ii) rectangular window with two-centred arched lights, cinquefoil tracery and big hollowed jambs; the label has weathered stops in the form of human heads with arms beneath. All in light pinkish-brown sandstone that appears original. iii) single, small, cusped light high up in wall to illuminate the roodloft; slight external splay, no chamfer; olive freestone mainly original. iv) broad window with four-centred arch; four cusped lights with two-centred heads; deep hollowed chamfer on jambs; tracery in mustard yellow freestone, the jambs in pink sandstone; not clear how much renewed, possibly both the tracery and the mullions. v) angle buttress. vi) window with four-centred arch, three stepped lights with simple round heads, jambs in worn red sandstone, but splayed rather than chamfered; window heads renewed in olive freestone; signs of infilling in Fabric 'B' above window. vii) plinth stops at south-west angle

where it meets the battered base of the west wall which is carried round the angle.

West wall: battered base to c.0.8m One rectangular window with chamfered dressings, a modern insertion. Conceivable that upper part of this wall entirely rebuilt. North of the tower the batter is just visible and there is a similar window. Relationship with north nave is no clearer at this end than at the east end, though there are hints in the masonry that north nave is earlier.

Porch. General. Timber-framed superstructure set on a low, chamfered stone plinth of Victorian sandstone though this is visible only on the east side.

East wall: above the stone foundation wall is wooden panelling containing eight open lights with tracery of five different designs; none of this is broken and it appears to be in too good a condition to be original.

South wall: arched opening to porch, the highest point on the soffit has a flower as decoration. Above this is the ornamented tie beam with a blank face, the mouth of which has lobed 'tongues' extending. Crenellated top to beam, and above it in the gable a niche with canopy work that has been renewed. Barge boards have similar patterns to side lights and are equally unconvincing as original work.

West wall: as east wall and again with five tracery patterns.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor, wooden walls; two-bay roof, the innermost truss has an arch-braced tie-beam with crenellated top, and cusped rafters and raking struts, the centre truss has an arch-braced moulded collar and the outer one an arch-braced tie-beam (see external description).

East wall: crenellated wallplate above the open panels; wooden bench against wall.

South wall: two-centred doorway of two orders with stopped chamfers, mainly in red sandstone, but grey sandstone in east jamb; sharpening marks on jambs.

West wall: as east wall.

North Nave. General. Floor of polished wooden blocks, except at front (east end) where a series of 18thC graveslabs underlie position of what would have been the altar. Walls of bare stone, radiators and pipes around them. Roof of nine bays, the five to the east wider than the four to the west, and the most westerly of the latter narrower than its three counterparts. The four western bays have arch-braced trusses with cusped raking struts above the collars and plain terminals resting on plain wallplates; also two tiers of cusped windbraces and broad flat purlins. The easterly bays have hammerbeam arch-braced trusses alternating with ordinary arch-braced trusses, but both with cusped raking struts. Some of the hammerbeams retain angels at their terminals. Above the wall plates are cusped and traceried panels. Carved bosses at intersections of moulded purlins and ribs. Hubbard suggests that western section is a later replacement. Rear of nave curtained off for vestry.

North wall: from west end: i) in corner at floor level is a rectangle of masonry left exposed when the rest of the floor has been covered in wood blocks; its purpose is unclear. ii) a slight disconformity in the masonry close to the corner suggests a change but this is not born out by the exterior and in fact may be exaggerated by a former crack now filled with pink mortar. iii) Next a three-light splayed window some, but not all of the splay stones in relatively recent pink sandstone; another possible change in the masonry below this window seems unlikely; beneath it, too, two 19thC brasses. iv) a splayed window, again the internal dressings for the splay in recent pink sandstone; indications of infilling after insertion around top of arch; between it and the door another 19thC brass. v) doorway with a two-centred arch, chamfered head, but not jambs; some stones at least original. vi) two wall memorials of the 1720s and 1812 and, below, a brass of 1766. vii) double, splayed window clearly inserted and with recent pink sandstone dressings. viii) three 19thC marble memorials, one above the other. ix) single splayed window with standard dressings; few if any signs of

insertion. x) arched recess to same broad design as windows but having a decorative 'relieving arch' of shale edge stones; outer dressings are modern but deeper into alcove the arch has older blocks of sandstone shaping it. xi) wall memorial recording restoration of adjacent Jesse Window.

East wall: dominated by Jesse Window. On its south side this has partially removed the arch and northern jamb of an almost round-headed doorway, now blocked; jambs largely of sandstone, its arch turned in edge stones that include a few slabs of shale. Above this door two marble memorial tablets, and higher up on the wall is a possible masonry change.

South wall: consists of a four-bay arcade with broad two-centred arches of two orders in pink sandstone springing from the octagonal capitals of similarly shaped columns. At east end the respond is however rectangular and only the top part of it and its rectangular capital are in dressed sandstone. Lower down it is formed of ordinary masonry. Above the respond is a clear change in the masonry with the wall above the first arch slightly inset and the masonry containing somewhat smaller material. Attached to the respond is the carving of the pelican (see below). Over the first column is a marble tablet of 1756. At west end the respond is faced entirely in dressed pink sandstone and just below the roof level there appears to be a disconformity in the masonry forming an almost horizontal course.

West wall: splayed window, some of the dressed stone perhaps replaced.

South Nave. General. Floor of polished wooden blocks the benches on similar blocks flush with the rest of the floor. Walls bare, and heating as in north aisle. Roof of six bays over nave and part of chancel. Arch-braced trusses with cusping above collars rest on alternate hammerbeam trusses with angel terminals and on small wooden corbel heads that are set out from the wall plates; those above the arcade appear to be carved out of the bases of the arch bracing. Above the arcade two of the angels and some of the heads have gone. Traceried panels above the wallplates. Rear of the nave is taken up by the organ together with a passage beneath it leading into the tower.

North wall: arcade. At extreme west end again possibly some evidence of rebuilding just below roof level.

East wall: distinguished only by one step up into choir.

South wall: a group of six marble wall memorials from the very end of the 18thC through the 19thC, together with one 20thC brass. To west is a splayed window with pink sandstone dressings of some age, and finally the imposing monument to Maurice Jones who died in 1702.

West wall: mostly disguised by organ which was erected in memory of a Leicestershire gentleman who died in 1894. Under the altar is the entrance to the tower which is a crudely turned two-centred arch formed of edge stones, the jambs tapering slightly towards the floor and formed of ordinary masonry. Two small rectangular lights about half way up the wall on either side of the organ are relatively recent and may have concrete lintels; that on the north appears to have a small balcony beneath it, and both perhaps designed to light a west gallery.

South Chancel. General. Floor as nave but one step higher and a further step to sanctuary. Walls as nave and the nave roof is continuous over the more westerly half of chancel roof. Over sanctuary there are two bays with a fine, heavily decorated wagon roof, the three main trusses springing from corbels supporting angels, and highly decorated purlins, moulded ribs and traceried panels.

North wall: arcade.

East wall: splayed window with clear glass except for edges; has an internal hollow chamfer.

South wall: from east a flat-headed window, splayed with evidence of insertion above it. Next a wall memorial of 1724 and one of the late 19thC, and above the latter a small window with a rectangular splay which presumably lit the rood; one of the hammerbeam trusses obscures part of the window. Finally another splayed window but no signs of insertion.

Tower. General. One step up from nave leads into a narrow chamber no wider than the doorway that leads into it. Flag floor contains at least one graveslab. Bare walls. Arched ceiling in stone with round hole giving view up tower towards bells.

North wall: splayed window with concrete lintel and sill. About 0.8m from west end there is a change in the masonry with a distinct butt joint.

South wall: no window but a butt joint as on the north side.

West wall: two-centred arched doorway the arch turned in flat slabs rather than on edge.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: probably 17thC; superseded by a modern font in 1880 but reinstated in 1950 when the 19thC font went to Arddleen.

Wooden plaque: carved with two creatures with feathered tails etc either side of heraldic shield; bears date of 1597.

Carved pelican: of 1762, formerly above the altar.

Stained glass: 'in the north nave east window is some of the finest glass in Wales, a complete Jesse window dated 1533 at the foot of the fifth light. It is said to have been hidden during the Civil War and put back in 1661. The curving stems form subdivisions and frame the Virgin and Child at the head of the centre light within a vesica. Full-length figures in the centre light. Those in the side lights (for some of which the same cartoons were used, reversed) emerge from flowers. Renaissance spirit is heralded in luxuriant flowers and foliage. In the tracery are four prophets, and also some patchwork, with fragments from other windows' (Hubbard).

'North nave west window, fragments (including a date of 1508), partly of an Annunciation; found at a farmhouse in the parish c.1843-51, and possibly from the south nave east window' (Hubbard).

Chest: massive dugout, badly decayed base; iron bands and three locks. Pillar poorbox attached to the top of the chest. Chest reputed to have been used for the storage of the stained glass of the Jesse window during the Civil War.

Monuments: (based on Hubbard with additions). Maurice Jones of Llanrhaeadr Hall (d.1702), attributable to Robert Wynne; large and Baroque; reclining bewigged effigy, and curtains draped from an arch, all between a pair of Corinthian columns; much higher is a segmentally-curving canopy surmounted by urns; gadrooning, heraldry, volutes etc., and four good-sized putti. John Lloyd (d.1723; monument erected 1724) in marble with drapery, heraldry and putti. Edward Lloyd (d.172?) in stone with skull and cross-bones and foliage. Watkins Edwards Wynne (d.1796); severely Neo-Classical; weeping female recessed in an oval. Brass of 1766.

Bells: of 1802 and 1729.

Plate: cup of 1669, another cup, flagon and two patens of 1723.

Victorian and later furnishings include:

Typical Baker furnishings, including Neo-Jacobean stalls.

Reredos. By C. M. O.Scott, 1930.

CHURCHYARD

The present, well maintained, churchyard is rectilinear and the shape alone points to it having been extended westwards, this reinforced by the alignment changes visible on the ground, though there is no surface evidence of a relict boundary. A new graveyard was consecrated on the opposite side of the road in 1866, but in addition on the extreme east a slightly curving boundary was pushed back to the road edge in 1880. A new graveyard has now been established on the opposite side of the road running through the village. Within the churchyard the ground slopes slightly from west to east. A small stream edges the churchyard on the south.

Boundary: stone wall rises above churchyard on all sides except south where instead there is a retaining wall forming the edge of the stream.

Monuments: monuments are scattered throughout the churchyard but are not at all dense. On the north side are chest tombs and a few gravestones, but most here and on the west side are 19thC. There is however some evidence, particularly on the east, that ledgers are grassed over. Here too are the earliest stones: a small gravestone of 1639, and a graveslab of 1642 with heraldry, set on later supporters.

Furniture: modern cross shaft on stepped foundation, in north-east corner.

Mention should be made of the almshouses dating from 1729, lying outside the western boundary of the churchyard.

Earthworks: some evidence that churchyard raised on east and north, around 0.5m though more pronounced towards north-east corner. External ground level noticeably higher on west side.

Ancillary features: lychgate with timber superstructure on limestone foundation walls on north side; ornate with arch-braced tie beams, cusped struts, and decorated barge boards similar to those on porch. Further gates and entrances in middle of east side, and north-west and south-west corners and in centre of west sides. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: four mature but not ancient yews on west side; two large conifers in north-east corner.

SOURCES

Archaeology in Wales 1988, 70
Bye-gones, June 1881
CPAT Field Visit: 20 February 1997
Davies 1972: church guide
Faculty 1866 St Asaph (NLW) - addition to churchyard
Faculty 1878 St Asaph (NLW) - restoration of church
Faculty 1880 St Asaph (NLW) - addition to churchyard
Glynne 1884, 176
Hubbard 1986, 230
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pls 2 & 3
NMR Aberystwyth
Neaverson 1953-54, 9
Quinquennial Review 1993
Thomas 1911, 44

CONDITION

Good.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Medium

Llanrhudd

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Meugan

PRN 102594

NGR SJ14005776

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Meugan's church at Llanrhudd lies about 1.5km to the east of Ruthin and was formerly the mother church for that town. Possibly an early medieval foundation, it has nothing obviously earlier than the 15thC. The walls of the building may be of this date and there is one surviving Perpendicular window on the north side, but the majority of windows have been renewed or replaced; the south door and the porch should also be 15thC/16thC. Inside is a late medieval rood screen and some glass fragments, a 17thC altar table and a good range of wall memorials. The rectangular churchyard contains at least one fine late 17thC graveslab, and the shaft of a medieval cross; whether this was the yard's original shape remains to be determined.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Llanrhudd despite its simple plan presents more of a problem than some churches, because there are subtle variations in the fabric which may or may not be significant.

Arguably the structure as visible is largely of one build - Perpendicular period? - with windows renewed or inserted at different times. One, now blocked, in the chancel north wall is tilting and may be largely original; perhaps 15thC. Next to it a traceried four-light window is dated 1626, though renewed; Hubbard considered it 'unusually elaborate for 17thC work in the Vale of Clwyd but similar to the east windows of some double-naved churches, and [thus] may not be in situ'. On the south two windows that could be 17thC or perhaps could be original Perpendicular with deliberate use of two freestone colours.

Porch is late medieval on the basis of the roof timbers, with a south door to the church matching it.

HISTORY

The origin of St Meugan's church is obscure, though it seems to have been assumed that the dedication reveals an early medieval origin. The name Llanrhudd, however, appears to mean the 'church of red sandstone' and this implies that the present building was constructed after the name was bestowed.

Little is known of its early history, other than the fact that it was the mother church of Ruthin. It was termed as 'Ecclesia de Lanruth' with a value of 13s 4d in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and in Pope Nicholas' taxation of 1291 with a value of £5.

It suffered during the wars of the later 13thC and compensation was paid by the Crown to the church for damage done.

Thomas believed that Llanrhudd was included with Ruthin in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535, an indication of how their roles had changed.

In 1746 a mize was issued for the repair of the church and churchyard.

Glynne visited the church in 1844, approving the windows and the rood screen, and noting some ancient pews and the open roof, its timbers 'rudely carved'.

Restoration occurred in 1852, but few details are available about the work involved. Further restoration occurred in 1970.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanrhudd church comprises a nave and chancel as a single cell with a south porch about half way along the south side of the building. It is oriented almost precisely east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of irregular blocks of grey limestone, small to large-medium in size, and some blocks of red sandstone which frequently appear to have been fashioned into regular blocks (?re-used); the sandstone tends to appear at lower levels in the wall face; there are also very occasional fragments of brick, though these could have been inserted; random coursing and occasional limewash residues.

'B' is similar to 'A' but much of the stone appears smaller, and less regular, and limestone predominates; in places a distinctive light purple freestone is evidenced; limewash or render fragments are frequent in places.

'C' some small to medium lumps of limestone, but mainly slabs of grey shale plus occasional sandstone lumps; random coursing; quoins are mixed but they include some re-used sandstone; limewash traces.

Roof: slates with plain grey ridge tiles (red ridge tiles on porch). Cross finial at east end of chancel; bellcote at west end of nave.

Drainage: on the north side is a 0.5m deep x 1m wide trench, on the south a partially filled gully on either side of the porch; nothing obvious on east, and tarmac and grass on west side.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Nave and chancel dealt with as one because no external differentiation.

North wall: five buttresses of dressed limestone blocks with sandstone coping stones abut wall face, breaking it up into 'bays'. At the base of the wall and within the drainage trench (and thus below present ground level) is projecting masonry. Towards the east end this is regular enough to be a plinth but further west it is more irregular and disappears between the two most westerly buttresses. The possibility that this represents the foundation of an earlier and shorter church cannot be dismissed. From the west: i) the first window has a two-centred arch, three lights with cinquefoil heads and panel tracery above, a hoodmould with head-stops; all in buff-yellow freestone of Victorian date (1852?). Can be seen to be inserted with 'B' masonry around it, and this runs down to ground level. ii) next is a large two-centred arched window in buff-yellow freestone with four ogee-headed foiled lights, panels above and deeply hollowed chamfers; a date of 1626 is incised on one springer. It appears to be inserted into the wall but the signs are much less obvious than around the first window. iii) in the chancel wall is a blocked window; flat-headed with two lights, cusped, ogee heads and a curious mixture of dressings: one sill and the bottom of the mullion in red sandstone, much worn; the remainder of the mullion and the heads of the lights in buff sandstone; the jambs are single long slabs of pale grey freestone with limewash traces; and a second sill stone in a different grey freestone. How much of all this is original cannot be ascertained. Blocking material is predominantly limestone. East of this window the masonry contains more red sandstone fragments and also several fragments of brick. While there is no convincing evidence that this end has been rebuilt, it remains a faint possibility.

East wall: contains a window with a two-centred arch, four lights with cinquefoil heads and panels above, and a simple hoodmould, all in dark red sandstone; above is a decorative relieving arch in buff-yellow sandstone; wholly Victorian and of 1852? Window is clearly inserted and much of the gable appears to have been rebuilt in a variety of 'B'. The lower parts of the wall are in 'A' but as with the north wall there are considerable quantities of red sandstone, particularly near the north-east angle, as well as the occasional brick fragment.

South wall: generally in 'A', but some sections look closer to 'B'. From the east the features are: i) a four-centred arch with three lights with cinquefoil tracery. The upper jambs, the tracery and the mullions are all in the yellow buff sandstone that could be of 17thC origin, and the deeply hollowed mouldings might support such a view; lower jamb stones in (?)Victorian red sandstone. There is little indication that this window has been inserted. ii) sundial inscribed 'Dd Jones Rt Rouland Wardens 1736'; in sandstone and in reasonably good condition. iii) square-headed window with two two-centred arched lights with cinquefoil tracery, a mixture of red and buff-yellow dressings; the label has foliate stops and looks Victorian, but the mouldings could be 17thC or even earlier. iv) porch. v) a flat-headed two-light window, the lights almost round-headed but without cusping; the mullion and sill have been replaced, some of the jambs are in the same grey freestone used in the blocked north window, while the heads in deep red sandstone are already flaking. Above the window is what could be almost classed as a lintel of slabs. No signs of insertion.

West wall: appears to be in 'A', but at eaves level there is an almost continuous band of red sandstone and above this the masonry is predominantly limestone. West doorway of dull red freestone, a two-centred arch with stopped chamfers and almost certainly Victorian, but it houses a large studded door which should be earlier. Above the door is a two-light window with almost round heads, a modern insertion in pinkish sandstone.

Bellcote above, with two bells, and is a mix of limestone and sandstone with dressing slabs overarchng the apertures which are of different sizes, not obviously Victorian.

Porch. General. In Fabric 'C'. Largely featureless.

East wall: plain but there could formerly have been a small slit window formed from ill-matched stones; it appears to correspond with an alcove internally.

South wall: end walls which are made up largely of quoin stones support a tie beam truss with cusped struts above, and a decorated boss on the underside. Late medieval.

West wall: as east wall but no real sign of window opening.

Interior

Porch. General. Now used for storage, the main entrance to the church being at the west end. Slate slab floor, two of which are graveslabs, one of 1724. Rendered walls. Roof of two principal trusses; the inner one has tenon slots on the underside of the tie beam (for earlier wall-posts?), plus decorative ornament at the centre of the underside immediately above the apex of the doorway; purlins, rafters and windbraces; late medieval.

North wall: a peaked four-centred arched doorway of 15thC or later date in red sandstone; chamfered dressings and a hoodmould with much worn head-stops; formerly painted and a Welsh inscription on the arch but this has almost completely gone. The bottom two jambstones on the west side are rounded and not chamfered - these are surely re-used, perhaps bases or capitals from earlier arches; those on the east are too worn for meaningful consideration.

East wall: small alcove with splayed sides, formerly a window. Wooden bench on limestone rubble supports.

South wall: wooden-framed wire gates.

West wall: as east wall.

Nave. General. Coloured quarry tile floor down aisle, wooden block floor around font and elsewhere, and also under the box pews; immediately in front of the chancel is a brass of 1807 set into the floor. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof is continuous over nave and chancel; seven bays with arch-braced collars

springing from just above wall-plates; all the trusses have rafters and raking struts with cusping, and the third from the west has two sets of struts, though one member is definitely a replacement (or a reinforcement); two tiers of cusped windbraces. The last two bays, over the chancel, are distinguished by having foliate decoration on the purlins. At the west end is a gallery dated 1721, with turned balusters; now used only for storage, with a vestry beneath it on the north side.

North wall: from the west are i) a splayed window with 19thC dressings to the embrasure and stained glass of 1859; ii) three mural tablets of 1782 (stone), 1708 and 1765 (both marble); iii) a 19thC window with only the soffit stones unpainted; its east splay is set inwards in order not to interfere with the screen.

East wall: screen.

South wall: two windows, that to east with exposed dressings, that to west painted over. South door has a splayed embrasure with a four-centred arch like the outer face. A range of mural tablets and memorials, but only one (of 1797) is pre-19thC.

West wall: splayed doorway. At gallery level two Benefaction Boards, that to the south dated to 1852.

Chancel. General. One step up from nave to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Woodblock floor, the choir stalls simple benches on flush flooring; wooden boarding around the altar, some carpet. Walls and roof as described under nave.

North wall: four wall memorials of 1686, 1664, 1653 and 1586 (west to east), that of 1653 in an alcove which presumably is the blocked remains of the north chancel window.

East wall: splayed window and two wall memorials of 1829 and 1812 to the north of it.

South wall: splayed window. In the south-east angle two memorials of 1729 and 1670 at right-angles and near the screen further memorials of 1784/85 and 1777.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: plain, octagonal bowl and stem; new cover.

Altar table: 17thC; legs are beasts, reputedly lions which hold shields.

Rood screen: 'of Welsh type, i.e. framed entirely rectangularly, and with continuous middle rails. Open traceried heads, and tracery in wainscot panels, some of it pierced; top beam with trail enrichment' (Hubbard). Middle beam has carvings of a dragon, a head and flowers.

Stained glass: 'late 15thC or early 16thC quarries in second window from east on south' (Hubbard).

Monuments: (based on Hubbard with additions). Mostly to the Thelwalls of Bathafarn. John Thelwall (d.1586) and wife Jane (d.1585); they kneel at a desk, facing each other, in a recess flanked by Corinthian columns; on a frieze below kneel ten sons and four daughters, all named and some holding skulls. Ambrose Thelwall (d.1653); a bust, coloured, in a niche; he wears a ruff; below is a tablet with volutes and fruit garlands. John Thelwall (d.1664); drapery above and either side; heraldry and two cherub heads. John Thelwall (d.1686); in the form of a banner, with drapery above and either side, and the tablet itself with simulated folds and a fringe. Thomas Roberts (d.1708); cartouche; heraldry and cherub heads. In the south-east corner of the chancel, two Thelwall tablets at right angles, in massive surrounds; broken pediments containing heraldry, and a cherub head where they meet; painted inscriptions in which dates of 1670-1729 are legible. Euble Roberts (d.1765) plus wife and children; painted on marble. Price monument: draped urn of 1777. John Price (d.1782), a stone tablet. Jane (d.1784) and Maurice Jones (d.1785). Roger Jones (d.1797). Jemima Clough (d.1812), by Sir Richard Westmacott; Grecian tablet with inverted torches. Stanley John Weyman (d.1928), the author, who lived at Llanrhudd Hall.

19thC fittings include:

Benefaction boards: one undated, the other of 1852.

Stained glass: 'two vesical medallions in the east window by Clayton & Bell' (Hubbard).

CHURCHYARD

Llanrhudd churchyard is rectangular and virtually flat though there is a very slight slope from west to east as the ground starts to fall to the shallow valley of Dwr Ial. Extensions to the churchyard have been added on the south and west, probably around 1914 and 1948.

The churchyard is well maintained and there are recent burials (1994) in the core area just to the south of the porch.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall acting partially as a retaining wall lines the churchyard on the north, and there is another retaining wall on the east; on the west and south holly edges are set on low stone walls

Monuments: these are concentrated but not densely set in the yard. Some of the slate stones are cracking badly, and some ledgers are almost entirely grass covered. A fine slab on a chest tomb (later?) commemorates Grace Parry (d.1689) and her husband Simon (d.1692) and was the earliest external monument seen by the writer. There was also a table tomb of 1719 south-west of the church, and a good collection of 18thC gravestones within the yard.

Furniture: churchyard cross shaft south of porch, with a chamfered octagonal plinth and with a square head for cross socket (a scheduled ancient monument - De188). On each of the chamfered corners of the shaft is a tablet flower and mask head, much worn; and about 1.7m above the stops each chamfer has a small crudely incised face and beneath it a flower symbol. Owen recorded that on the east side of the shaft were the letters E I and the date 1677 (or 1672).

Earthworks: churchyard is raised by 1m or more on the north and 1.5m or so on the east. On the other sides external and internal levels vary by only slightly.

Ancillary features: double wrought iron gates on the north-west, gaps in the boundary give access to the extension on the south. Tarmac paths to the porch and to this extension.

Vegetation: several yews including an arc of older trees around the west and north, and a row of younger ones along the eastern edge.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 8 November 1996
Crossley 1946, 32
Glynne 1884, 179
Hubbard 1986, 233
Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pls 22
Mize for repair, 1746: DRO/DD/DM/115/3
NMR Aberystwyth
Owen 1886, 131
Quinquennial Report 1989
Quinquennial Report 1996
Randall 1984, 4
Thomas 1911, 116

CONDITION

Reasonable.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium

Llantysilio

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Tysilio**PRN** 16893**NGR** SJ19404355

GENERAL SUMMARY

St Tysilio's church lies adjacent to Llantysilio Hall, but at a distance from any nucleated settlement, on the north bank of the River Dee, 4km to the north-west of Llangollen. It is essentially a single-cell late medieval structure, with surviving masonry of that period and some windows of 15thC or 16thC date. A north transept was added in the early 18thC and there was some reconstruction and addition in the Victorian era. Internally, medieval survivals include a font, a small amount of stained glass, and perhaps the lectern. The churchyard, polygonal in shape, is packed with gravemarkers, the earliest from the end of the 17thC.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The nave and chancel shows several phases of rebuilding; the basic medieval shell survives and the presence of three different fabrics ('C', 'D' and 'E') seems to indicate not so much different phases of work, as an eclectic approach to construction using whatever stone was available including re-used ashlar blocks; on the basis of two or three of the windows this work should be 15thC or a little later. Victorian masonry ('B') shows around windows in the north wall, and almost certainly contemporary are the inserted west window and the raised roof. At some stage the west end of the north side was built or rebuilt in 'A', but the lack of diagnostic features makes it impossible to phase this work. One window was replaced in 1580.

North transept added in 1718 in Fabric F, enlarged in 1869 in 'B'.

HISTORY

The church's location and dedication point to an early medieval foundation, but there is nothing of substance to confirm this view. There is also a tradition that the stone building of which parts remain, dated from 1180, but again there is nothing to corroborate this view.

In the Taxatio of 1254 it is recorded as 'capellandum de Lantesilieu', while Pope Nicholas' Taxatio of 1291 terms it 'Ecclesia de Landesilieu' at a value of £6. In 1535 it was again referred to as a chapel.

A north chapel was added in 1718 to accommodate worshippers from the township of Maesrychain.

Glynne visited the church prior to its restoration and noted the 'awkward' gallery which contained 'portions of ancient carvings...and vine-leaf cornices'. Square-headed windows held mediocre Perpendicular tracery, and on the north side was a small obtuse window but he was doubtful as to whether it was Norman. There was also the head of an ancient effigy near the churchyard gate.

The church was restored in 1869: work included the construction of a vestry on the north side, some rebuilding of the west end, and the construction of a north window using fragments of early sepulchral slabs; the church was re-seated, the floor replaced, galleries on the south and west walls removed, the chancel was screened from the nave, and the south porch was reconstructed. The sanctuary restored in 1919.

window with square-headed lights, chamfered dressings and date of 1580 carved immediately above the lights; though one jamb is in pink sandstone, contrasting with the yellow colour of the rest, the dressings are probably original; around the window the pointing contrasts with the adjacent wall presumably indicating the fact that it has been inserted; v) another window similar to ii) but probably a Victorian replacement. The masonry of this wall is relatively uniform in appearance and is classed as 'D', with larger stones towards the base, more marked on this side than on the north; several dressed blocks of sandstone incorporated in the masonry, mostly high up under the eaves.

West wall: most of the wall is original, a combination of 'E' below and 'C' above; as at the east end the gable is raised with 'B' masonry and ties have been inserted. A three-light Victorian window with a two-centred arch and a hoodmould with face stops has been inserted, and a vertical band of 'B' spreads down from the base of the window to ground level, suggesting that a west doorway was blocked up during the last century.

North Transept. General. Added to chancel in 1718, and rebuilt and enlarged in the restoration of 1869. Chimney protrudes, east of the gable end.

North wall: Victorian two-light window, the lights with ogee heads under a two-centred arch and a hoodmould with head-stops. Most of walling in 'F', with distinctive white pointing, but around the window the masonry is 'B'.

East wall: all in 'B', indicating an enlargement of the original transept.

West wall: mainly in 'F', but close to nave wall is a two-light window of Victorian date and the masonry between this and the angle is 'B'. Attached to the wall is a porch in 'B' with yellow sandstone dressings and quoins.

Porch. General.

East wall: in 'F' except for the quoins (see below) and infilling of 'B' around the small square-headed window with the ogee light.

South wall: in 'B'; the quoins are chamfered with bar stops at both top and bottom, and are clearly Victorian. The simple, two-centred arched doorway has hollow chamfers and may have been re-set in the new wall.

West wall: as east wall.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone slab floor; walls thinly plastered and painted; simple purlin and rafter roof.

North wall: two-centred arched doorway in buff-yellow freestone - Victorian.

East wall: Victorian splayed window; bench beneath.

South wall: doorway; the soffit consists of a wooden lintel.

West wall: as east wall.

Nave. General. Floor of patterned tiles with grilles running beside the sides of the benches for the length of the aisle, but now redundant; carpet cover between the grilles. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Five-bay roof with arch-braced collars and cusped, raking struts, except for that in the extreme west over west window where the struts are solid and unadorned; two tiers of small cusped wind-braces; late medieval.

North wall: wall has slight outwards lean; two splayed windows and the small single light window has a

round-headed embrasure which is effectively bisected by the screen dividing nave from chancel. Marble mural tablet of 1722 and two 20thC brasses.

East wall: modern wooden screen.

South wall: outward lean to wall; splayed windows. Two 19thC brasses including that commemorating Robert Browning, and a major 19thC marble memorial.

West wall: splayed window, and the wall face beneath it inset, further evidence of a former west doorway. Also a benefaction board of 1753, a marble and stone memorial of 1721, and a 20thC brass.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to chancel, one to sanctuary and one to altar; marble floor. Walls as nave. Roof of two bays, the first a continuation of the nave, the second panelled to form a wagon roof over the altar; it follows the curve of the braces, and has quatrefoil tracery on the horizontals, brattishing, and moulded ribs.

North wall: open arch to vestry with early 20thC brass on the reveal; next to it an open Victorian Gothic window looking onto the organ.

East wall: splayed window

South wall: splayed window; one brass recording the restoration of the sanctuary in 1919.

North Transept. General. One step up from the chancel, but little to note. One 19thC marble mural tablet on the north wall.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

(Descriptions derived from Hubbard with additions)

Sepulchral slabs: fragments of floriated cross slabs of later 13thC date and a cross raguly of 14thC date used as dressings in north window.

Font: stem with cusped panels and the octagonal bowl with quatrefoils containing shields, flowers etc; lead lined. Perpendicular.

Lectern: a rare oak eagle, considered (by Hubbard and others) to be of early date (?15th/16thC). New base.

Stained glass: in the single-light north window two 15thC figures, one of them St James the Great.

Monuments: Elizabeth Jones (d.1721), cherub heads, heraldry, volutes, drapery and gadrooning; Henry Roberts (d.1722), with heraldry between broken pediment, and a winged angel head.

Benefaction board: in wood, set in 1753.

Victorian and later:

Pulpit and chancel fittings, including the flooring and screen: by R. T. Beckett, with work being done both before and after the First World War.

Stained glass: east window. Brightly coloured, with strong Aesthetic Movement influence. Commemoration date 1890.

Monument: Lady Martin, the actress Helen Faucit (d.1898). She is depicted seated; masks of comedy and

tragedy and a portrait medallion of Shakespeare; a copy by J.Hughes of work by J.H.Foley, exhibited at the Academy in 1856.

CHURCHYARD

Churchyard is polygonal, of medium size and set into a south-facing slope, with the River Dee little more than 100m away to the south. Extensions to the north and west have doubled its size but there is no convincing evidence of an earlier curvilinear enclosure.

It is well kept and still use for burial.

Boundary: on east, south and west sides are mortared walls, all of them low dwarf walls, and on the west now representing a minor division between the older churchyard and its western extension. On north is a more substantial wall, acting as a retaining wall. Walls refurbished in 1980s.

Monuments: churchyard is full, and in places, particularly on the south, packed; there is some space to the east of the church. Chest and table tombs are common to the south of the church. The oldest identified graveslabs are some used as paving around the east end of the church: the earliest is 1696 and others are from the 1760s.

Furniture: nothing recognised.

Earthworks: the churchyard is terraced, the church itself occupying a major platform and some of the graves on smaller terraces.

Ancillary features: stone and timber lychgate in north-east corner with concrete steps and paths.

Vegetation: two yews, one of some considerable age, on west. Just inside perimeter wall on north five other mature yews.

SOURCES

CPAT Air photo: 1995, 95-004-0003/0005, 95-005-0012/0013, 0015/0016; 95-C-0106, 0109 & 0110
CPAT Field Visit: 23 October 1996
Crossley 1946, 26
Faculty: St Asaph 1868 (NLW)
Faculty: St Asaph 1918 (NLW)
Glynne 1884, 187
Gresham 1968, 86; 158
Hubbard 1986, 197
Quinquennial Review n.d. (1980s)
Thomas 1911, 279

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Quinquennial Review n.d. (1980s)

Thomas 1911, 279

CONDITION

Occasional small cracks in internal walls, and some paint peeling at the base of internal walls; a more significant crack in the north-east corner of the chancel. Cracks appearing in panels above nave roof.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Poor to Medium

Llanychan

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Ychan**PRN** 16876**NGR** SJ11436213

GENERAL SUMMARY

The small church of St Ychan lies in the centre of the Vale of Clwyd about 8km to the south-east of Denbigh. Consisting of a single cell with a porch, it is almost certainly an early medieval foundation, but has little even of medieval date. The walls are largely rebuilds of recent centuries and none of the windows and doors retain pre-Reformation stonework. Decorative timberwork from a late medieval roof, re-used in the reredos and a prayer desk, represents the only medieval survivals, but there are interesting monuments and church plate of post-medieval date. The churchyard is small and curvilinear, with most of its original boundary surviving.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

North and east walls are probably Victorian rebuilds, the latter with a re-set window of the early 18thC. The south wall might be earlier for there is a window of 1626 set in it, yet this too was rebuilt according to Thomas. The west wall has features which from the appearance of the dressings might be 18thC or perhaps a little earlier.

HISTORY

An early medieval origin is likely on the basis of the dedication, the location and the churchyard morphology. (H)ychan is claimed to have been one of the relatives of Brychan Brycheiniog.

However, virtually nothing of the early history is known. The first reference to the church is in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 where it is referred to as 'Ecclesia de Laneban' with a value of 10s. In the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535, it is named as 'Llan Hichen'.

Glynne visited the church in 1864. He noted the modern windows on the north side, and the late Perpendicular east window which he thought had been tampered with. The west door had an obtuse arch with a continuous moulding and hood (contra observations below), and the roof appeared to be original. He remarked too that the church was in an improved condition as though there had been some restoration. An annotation to Glynne's report states that at the east end of the church was a stone inscribed 'Here under the first stone in this holy ground, lyeth the body of Elizabeth vch Robert who died 21st Jan. 1670'.

The building was restored in 1877-8 by Arthur Baker and paid for by John Taber at a cost of £700. Baker seems to have changed the disposition of the windows, but in rebuilding the south wall he re-set a three-light one dated 1626. The faculty petition sought to repair the ancient windows but replace 'the modern windows with new ones of a more ornamental and substantial character'. The roof was repaired and a new timber-framed porch was built. A gable roof and a new bell were added to the bell turret, the old pews and other fittings were cleaned and repaired, and the heating apparatus was altered to suit the changed level of the floor.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanychan church consists of a nave and chancel as a single chamber, a south porch and a vestry at the north-west corner of the nave. The church 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 of limestone blocks, coursed, medium in size, with patches of render on the stone. 'B' is as 'A' but the rubble includes some though not a great many rounded pebble stones, and there is some slight variation in the appearance of the limestone; less render residue.

Roof: slates, grey stone ridge tiles; a wooden finial at the east end, and a wooden spike over the porch gable; the west end has a bellcote with a single bell, and there is another octagonal housing half way along the roof apex which might hold another bell?

Drainage: a 0.4m-wide gravel band along the north and south sides probably indicates the presence of a drain; there is nothing comparable to the east and west.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. There is a slight slope to the ground from east to west and the masonry courses follow that slope

North wall: in 'A'. Lighting the nave is a flat-headed window of three lights with cusped ogee heads in buff sandstone. The chancel has a two-light window which is otherwise the same. Neither shows any signs of insertion.

East wall: a basal plinth up to 0.2m high but lacking any chamfer shows at bottom of the wall. Above this the fabric is 'A', though near the apex of the gable are a few rounded pebble stones making it more like 'B'. The east window is round-headed, has three lights with cusped ogee heads and cusped sub-arches, and a hoodmould of thin slabs of limestone with rudimentary stops. On the arch is incised 'M.I. 1713 P.M.' Possibly all of the tracery and the lower jambs have been renewed, and the window itself may have been rebuilt into a later wall.

South wall: in 'B'. From the east, the windows are: i) square-headed window of two lights with cusped ogee heads, all in red sandstone: Victorian; ii) a square-headed three-light window, the lights with rather coarse cusped heads and sunken spandrels all in buff-yellow sandstone; the top jambstones carry the inscriptions 'R.T.' and '1626'. West of the porch is a two-light window similar to that on the north side of the nave, and not showing any signs of insertion.

West wall: in 'A' with a batter to a height of c.0.6m. Doorway, perhaps 18thC, is round-headed in buff-yellow freestone with slightly worn filleting, pace Hubbard who classed it as four-centred Perpendicular; it sports an iron-studded door. Above is a rectangular window of two lights with hollow chamfers all in buff-yellow freestone. The bellcote has ashlar masonry and looks Victorian.

Porch. General. A wooden structure with glass-filled panels on the side. The south front has an arch-braced tie-beam and king-post entrance with plaster infill, and carved barge boards.

Vestry. General. Stone-built vestry and a subterranean boilerhouse on the north side, the latter approached by a descending flight of four steps. The vestry is in 'A', though this is not so well coursed as the body of the church; there are render and limewash traces, and the dressings are in the same freestone as the body of the church.

Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor; wood and glass sides with wooden benches; two-bay roof with three arch-braced tie-beams, that on the outside described above; the outer ones have king posts, the central one a consecration cross on the apex of the soffit; purlins and one tier of cusped windbraces but all Victorian.

North wall: a narrow two-centred arched doorway with chamfers terminating in arrowhead stops; in red sandstone and showing very little wear - Victorian.

Nave. General. Floor of red, brown and black tiles; grilles in floor beside pews for underfloor heating, but also pipes along walls; pews raised up on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof of nave and chancel of six and a half bays with arch-braced collars (except for the most westerly which lacks the braces), springing from crenellated wall plates, and raking struts; the underside of each arch brace has at its centre a painted, decorated wooden boss, with four different designs in all -?recently painted; two tiers of cusped windbraces. Design of roof is late medieval, but not all of it is necessarily that early?

North wall: one splayed window and a marble memorial of 1675.

East wall: Victorian panelling.

South wall: two splayed windows and one slate memorial of 1987.

West wall: organ on both sides of the door. The embrasure is not splayed and is not precisely symmetrical; splayed window above.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, one to sanctuary, one to altar. Encaustic tiles. Walls as nave, and roof described above, though two trusses do not have raking struts.

North wall: splayed window, one 20thC brass, and one marble memorial of 1725.

East wall: splayed window with datestone of 1925.

South wall: splayed window; marble memorial of 1743.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Woodwork: Crossley determined that the plates decorated with cusping and tracery, and worked into the Reredos of 1846 and reading desk of 1730, came from the purlins of a former wagon ceiling over the sanctuary. In addition the reredos has a painted board with putti and a verse from Corinthians derived from another fitting.

Reading desk: has carvings 'R. 17' and 'T 30' on opposite sides.

Altar rails: columnar, 18thC.

Commandment boards: these are mentioned by Hubbard, but they were removed from the church some years ago and destroyed.

Monuments: 'some classical tablets of the second quarter of the 18thC, all with poor lettering' (Hubbard). Richard Jones, Chancellor of the diocese of Bangor (d.1730), with heraldry, putto; Maurice Jones, canon of St Asaph (d.1725) with columns, urns and heraldry; Dorothy Jones (d.1743) and brother Robert (d.1745) with pediment and heraldry.

Pews: ten have brass name plaques referring to a farm or house. Date uncertain.

Chalice and paten of 1614; another set of 1707; both sets inscribed.

Registers: from 1696.

Victorian and later furnishings include:

Stained glass: 'east window and its stained glass are of 1925, the gift of (Sir) Crosland Graham of Clwyd Hall and his first wife, as a thanks offering; glass, by J.Dudley Forsyth, includes a portrayal of the donors, nimbed, and their son. Second window from east on the north by Kempe; commemoration date of 1891' (Hubbard).

Font: octagonal, baluster type in marble.

Lectern: brass of 1899.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is small and curvilinear, and occupies ground that slopes very gently from west to east, on the edge of a natural terrace rising above the floor of the broad Vale of Clwyd.

There are no indications that it has been extended, though there were proposals for some alterations to its boundary fence in 1874. It is well maintained, and is still used for burial.

Boundary: on the south-east is a hedge, much of it now gone, above a scarp and a wire fence; on the south-west the scarp bank is inside the fence and hedge; on the north-west there is a scarp down to a ditch, a fence, trees and an intermittent hedge towards the top of the scarp; the boundary on the north-east varies between a hedge, a stone wall and a wooden fence and appears relatively modern.

Monuments: well spread throughout the churchyard and not particularly dense. Ledgers predominate to the west of the church. Some monuments are flaking, others are ivy covered, and the ledgers in particular are difficult to read. Chest tomb of 1671 in Latin to east of porch; early 18thC ledgers to south-west of porch.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: churchyard is raised with drops on all sides but the north-east; on the south-east the drop is no more than 0.5m, but on the south-west it is closer to 2m.

Ancillary features: there is no gate at the entrance to the churchyard itself, rather double wooden gates and an iron kissing gate at the head of the path leading to the churchyard from the road. A tarmac path leads across the churchyard to the porch.

Vegetation: two yews to the south of the church, one to the east and several to the north; none of any great age but all mature. Also several mature pines and deciduous trees.

SOURCES

CPAT AP: 95-006-0022/25; 95-C-0150/151

CPAT Field Visit: 13 November 1996

Crossley 1946, 40

DRO/PD/68/1/24: 1874 (churchyard)

Faculty: NLW 1878

Glynne 1884, 177

Hubbard 1986, 226

Neaverson 1953-54, 9

Quinquennial Report: 1988

Thomas 1911, 108

CONDITION

Appears to be generally satisfactory, though the plasterwork of the roof is a little stained and some is peeling.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

Llanynys

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Saeran**PRN** 16897**NGR** SJ10326267

GENERAL SUMMARY

The church of St Saeran together with the small settlement around it occupies a slightly elevated tract of drier soil on the valley floor of the Vale of Clwyd, some 5km north-west of Ruthin. The site has a long history having been established perhaps as early as the 6thC, and functioning subsequently as a mother church for the area. The present building is double-naved, its core of the 13thC with major additions in the 15th or perhaps the early 16thC, and considerable rebuilding in 1768. Perpendicular windows and a fine south door and doorway survive, as does a worn 13thC west door, while the porch with its original timberwork is dated to 1544. Internally, there are important fixtures and fittings including three medieval monuments of different forms, a fine wall painting of St Christopher, a Perpendicular font and fragments of 16thC stained glass, together with much 17thC and 18thC woodwork.

The churchyard has a somewhat irregular configuration, but is probably the residue of a much larger oval enclosure. It contains one gravestone of 1584, but otherwise little of particular interest.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

North nave is of two phases having been extended eastwards: thus the western half should be the earliest surviving part of the present building. Possibly when it was extended in the 15thC new windows were inserted in the north wall to provide three matching windows (Hubbard's view) - this does not explain why only two of the three had to be renewed in the Victorian era, yet it would appear to be born out by Jones's statement that the two westernmost windows were rebuilt to the exact pattern of the old ones.

East wall is 15thC, but it is not clear whether this has been raised. West wall is an original 13thC feature with surviving doorway, but some patching (some of it perhaps as recent as 1968), and the gable certainly has been raised. There is difficulty in distinguishing 'B' and 'D', and it is conceivable that the original building was heightened when the 15thC enlargement took place. On the other hand if the heightening was later it would explain why the east window is not centrally placed, and at the moment a later date seems more feasible.

South nave rebuilt in 1768 with distinctive windows on south and east; that on the east subsequently replaced in the Victorian restoration. Only western part of south nave left untouched, and this is certainly Perpendicular on the evidence of the south door.

Porch of 1544, with most of the timbers surviving.

Extensive evidence that church was formerly limewashed, and indeed the church guide reveals that plaster had been stripped from the west face only recently.

In summary a small 13thC church, enlarged in Late Perpendicular style by an extension eastwards and the addition of an equally long southern nave, the two separated by an arcade of five bays. A substantial part of the southern nave rebuilt in 1768, and perhaps at this time the surviving walls of the medieval structure heightened.

HISTORY

Llanynys was reputedly founded in the 6thC as a monastery; subsequently it housed a clas community as a document of 1402 makes clear. At some point in the past it was known as Llanfor - the Great Church, and Thomas recorded the tradition that it was founded by St Mor, and only subsequently dedicated to St Saeran who was buried there.

The Norwich Taxation of 1254 records it as 'Ecc'a de Lanenys' with a value of £6 13s 4d. In 1291 the Lincoln Taxation, 'Llanynys' was valued at £16.

The church was damaged during the English invasion of 1282 and compensation of £21 was paid.

In 1768 a Royal Brief for the complete rebuilding of the church was circulated; clearly the estimated cost of £1517 could not be raised and some at least of the medieval structure survived.

When he visited the church in 1864, Glynne found that the west end had been partitioned off and partly used as a vestry, because the church was thought to be too large. The south windows were modern insertions, and the east window in the south aisle had been renewed. He also claimed that the church had earlier been dedicated to St Mor, founder of Llanfor.

Some restoration work occurred in 1868: a screen was erected dividing the building in two and the flooring to the east was raised. Further work took place in 1883: the seating was removed, the floor of the north nave was excavated, the chancel screen was reconstructed, and the church 'was [put] in thorough repair'.

During restoration work around the west door in 1968, three niches were found in the thickness of the wall, to the north of the west door. Each was lined with flat stones and contained a human skull, perhaps relics which were venerated and subsequently walled up. In 1968, too, the 1868 screen was removed, and a chapel was created in the south aisle; two windows in the north wall were replaced, as was a mullion in the east window and the label over the old west door. The timber of the porch was repaired.

ARCHITECTURE

Llanynys is a typical Vale of Clwyd double-naved church, with a south porch and a bellcote at the western end of the south nave. The northern part contains the main nave and chancel, its southern counterpart contains additional seating and its 'chancel' partitioned off to create a small chapel.

The church is oriented south-west/north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church, though not for the churchyard. Though not ecclesiologically accurate the terms 'north nave' and 'south nave' are used periodically for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises blocks of red sandstone, frequently squared off, with occasionally less regular blocks of grey limestone; also included are frequent rounded boulder stones up to 0.3m in diameter, and occasionally grey laminated stone; some of this masonry is coursed, and the quoins are of red sandstone; limewash remnants. Sandstone perhaps from quarry at Hirwaen, two miles to the north.

'B' consists of less weathered sandstone, usually regular red sandstone blocks, and further east some olive-coloured blocks; rarely, small brick fragments are observable.

'C' is primarily of grey Carboniferous limestone (probably quarried near Rhewl), some coursing; limewash coating remnants observable.

'D' is largely of red sandstone blocks, very similar to and probably contemporary with 'B'.

'E' of mixed rubble, sandstone and limestone.

Roof: slates with dark terracotta ridge tiles; no finials, except for wooden one above porch.

Drainage: a grass-filled hollow, 0.5m wide, runs along both the north and south walls, and broadens to 1m wide on part of the west side, the remainder being tarmaced. There is no obvious trace of a drainage gully

against the east wall.

Exterior

(North) Nave and Chancel. General. There is no external differentiation between the nave and chancel and they are considered together here.

North wall: Western half of wall consists of 'A' with the top 0.7m of the wall face showing distinctly as a band of 'E' with different quoins. Of the quoins in red sandstone at the north-west angle, two have vertical grooves which might indicate a former use, and one has a socket on its west-facing side. Set into this wall are two three-light windows; the windows themselves have four-centred arches and hoodmoulds; the lights have segmental heads with broad panels above. Both are Victorian and the masonry around them shows clearly that they have been inserted. The more easterly of these two windows appears to have been inserted across a change in the masonry of the north wall with 'A' giving way to 'B'. The precise position of the change is not clear; no quoins survive, and the most obvious edge, just to the east of the window, could be a result of the insertion. Possibly, an apparent alteration in the fabric below the central light of the window is a better guide.

The eastern length of the north wall is all in 'B'; it does appear, however, that the band of 'E' continues, though it is more difficult to distinguish than above 'A'. The wall contains a single window which is set higher than its two counterparts in the nave, but is otherwise similar. It has a four-centred head and a hoodmould with incipient stops, hollow-chamfered dressings, the three lights have ogee heads with cusped tracery, and there are six panels above. All the tracery and the mullions are in buff sandstone, Victorian or later; but the jambs and the arch are in reddish-grey freestone with much residual limewash and must be original. Quoins at the north-east angle are largely of tooled limestone, with a couple of sandstone ones high up.

East wall: in 'B'. A large Perpendicular east window which is off-centre to the present apex of the chancel. The window has a four-centred head with a much weathered hoodmould. It contains five lights, the central three with ogee heads and cinquefoil tracery and the outer ones with round heads and a variation on the cusping; there are cusped panels above, with the central three panels further divided by a transom. Red sandstone was used for the arch, reddish grey sandstone for the jambs, and grey for the tracery; the mullions have been replaced and lack the limewash remnants of the other dressings.

West wall: the only architectural feature in the west wall is a doorway, now no longer used. This is Early English, having two orders of grouped shafts, with fillets, continued up into the arch, but with caps, probably once foliated, intervening (Hubbard compares it to Llangollen). Several arch stones of the inner order have been renewed and the hoodmould is a Victorian replacement. Above and to the south of this doorway is Fabric 'A,' but the wall face between the doorway and the corner appears to be rebuilt in Fabric 'C'. However it should be noted that sandstone from this wall face was removed in 1968 because of its advanced state of erosion, and some of the variation in the masonry of the wall may result from this work. Above, the top of the gable has the band of 'E' clearly visible, indicating the heightening of the wall. Leaning against the wall next to the door is a graveslab of 1584 in Latin, found during work in the grounds of the adjacent inn some years ago.

(South) Nave and Chapel. General. The south nave is dealt with here as one unit: externally there is no differentiation between what is effectively the south aisle and chapel.

East wall: there is a distinct break between Fabric B of the chancel to the north and Fabric C of the south nave, leaving both a ragged edge and the south nave wall inset very slightly. The four-centred arched window has a hoodmould with incipient stops, three cusped lights with cusped panels above and is entirely Victorian, in buff yellow sandstone. Beneath it, acting as a foundation, is a row of pink sandstone blocks derived from the previous window and similar blocks form an outer edging to the present window arch. Above the window a mixture of limestone and sandstone incorporating fragments of dressed stone some with incised lines (see south wall below) reveals that the gable was rebuilt when the new window was put in place.

South wall: much of the south wall is in 'C' and can be attributed to the rebuilding of 1768. Three windows, all in pink sandstone with round heads, projecting keystones and imposts, and in the absence of chamfers, an incised line around the edge. The window lighting the chancel is shorter than the other two because the lower part has been blocked in. Priest's door between the two more easterly window also in pink sandstone with a four-centred head and slight chamfer but certainly of 1768. Just to east of porch 'C' gives way to the red sandstone of 'D', the juncture clear. For main doorway in this wall, see porch (below). West of the porch the band of 'E' along the top of the wall indicates heightening as on the north side of the building.

West wall: in 'D' but stone less weathered than on south. Above is a double bellcote, separated from gable by a string course.

Porch. General. Dwarf walls in stone, the masonry similar to 'C'. Above this a timber superstructure with wooden mullions giving eight openings on each side.

South wall: arch-braced tie-beam supported on wooden uprights, the early timbers probably encased by later timber veneer. Gable is panelled and has ornamental bargeboards but of no great age.

Interior

Porch. General. Floor has a few large slate slabs but is mainly of concrete. Wooden benches along side walls. Roof of two bays. Three trusses: the external one described above; the central one has a collar; the third is a substantial arch-braced tie-beam truss with cusped struts and rafters above. Ribbed purlins and rafters. On the tie beam is an appended inscription 'ANNO D.M.Q.X.L.III' (= 1544), though some of the wooden letters it is composed of have gone or are broken.

North wall: Perpendicular four-centred doorway with hoodmould and stops, and complex mouldings; all original. So is the studded door itself, said to date to around 1490-1500; has applied mouldings forming four vertical panels, their heads cusped and traceried; graffiti carved on the door. Inside the church is a display case holding the medieval lock taken from the door.

West wall: two dressed stones, one certainly of c.1768 on floor beside bench.

Nave (North Nave). General. Rear of nave has flagstones, one a graveslab of 1780; it contains such features as the tombchest and the medieval sepulchral cross; then two steps up to the main part of the nave with its seating. Floor of encaustic tiles with matting over. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof continuous with chancel, 10 bays with arch-braced collar trusses: alternate trusses have hammerbeams, some with shafted wall posts, though these have been removed over the arcade; the ordinary arch-braced trusses have painted heads carved on their terminals, though two are missing on the north wall; moulded purlins. Of carved angels also for decoration, only the wing of one survives. Trusses, purlins, and large intermediate rafters are moulded.

North wall: two splayed windows; two wall paintings. That of St Christopher monopolises the north wall, but a second painting on a board lies to the east (see below). Three 19thC and 20thC marble mural tablets.

South wall: originally a Perpendicular arcade of four bays (five including that in chancel), but only the responds and some bases remain. In c.1768 these were replaced by fluted square columns of oak, seven in all, supporting the upper wall, now levelled off to the horizontal.

West wall: plain, but for the sealed west doorway, which is not now accessible; its reveal apparently contains socket holes for a bar. At eaves level, the wall is inset, perhaps for a former tie-beam?

Chancel (North Nave). General. Two steps up to the chancel from nave, two more to sanctuary; encaustic tiled floor; walls and roof as described for nave.

North wall: one splayed window and one 19thC memorial brass.

East wall: slightly splayed window.

South wall: the most easterly bay of arcade is panelled. The chamfered respond - all that is left of the Perpendicular arcade - rises as high as the present horizontal top of the 1768 arcade. Does this imply that the earlier arcade was of considerable height, or was the chamfered respond extended upwards in the 18thC redesign?

South Aisle (South Nave). General. Slate flags cover rear of aisle; then, as with the nave, two steps up to main part which is floored largely in old graveslabs (1644-1773); benches on north side of central aisle only, with empty lamp brackets above them. Walls plastered and whitewashed. Roof similar to that in nave and chancel with seven bays, carved heads on the north side but not the south, and the wall post removed.

North wall: arcade.

East wall: modern timber and board partition.

South wall: wall has slight outwards lean. From west features are: i) Benefaction board; ii) main doorway with above it the painted inscription: R HVGES / JOHN EVANS / 1677; iii) Benefaction board; iv) hatchment over worn mural tablet; v) splayed window; vi) 1661 coat-of-arms with beneath the chest of 1687; vii) splayed window.

West wall: plain.

South Chapel (South Nave). General. On same level as south aisle. Floor of stone slabs covered with matting; modern seats; altar raised on dais. Walls as nave; three-bay roof as south aisle but no carved heads.

North wall: modern partition.

East wall: splayed window and four marble mural tablets of 19thC and 20thC date.

South wall: splayed window, two marble mural tablets (19thC and 20thC), and a hatchment.

West wall: modern partition.

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

(Descriptions based on Hubbard with additions)

Monuments: i) mutilated effigy of a priest, early 14thC, his head canopied. Placed on a tomb-chest with 16thC or 17thC fragments incorporated. Church claims that it represents Bishop Ap Richard (1238-1267). ii) part of a heraldic sepulchral slab with shield and sword, much worn, forms the threshold of the priest's door; early 14thC. iii) a rare sepulchral cross, mid-14thC, removed from the churchyard in 1961, and built into the churchyard wall in the 19thC. Hexagonal slab, on a short stem, representing the Crucifixion on one side and a bishop, presumed by some to be St Saeran, on the other.

Font: Perpendicular, octagonal bowl with quatrefoils; inset panels on the octagonal stem, but this and the base in a different coloured sandstone and may be more recent than the bowl.

Wall painting: a St Christopher, in the usual position opposite the south door, discovered in 1967. Pre-dates the Perpendicular remodelling, and considered by Mrs Eve Baker to be of the first third of the 15thC. Windmill and swimming fish, and patterned with the monogram of the Virgin. The saint's staff is shown as already bearing leaves. The work had been covered by a 17thC painting, with a text in Welsh - this has

been preserved and is now placed adjacent to the main mural. Notes accompanying papers on the 1967/68 restoration suggest that other post-Reformation murals may have been visible in the 19thC.

Altar tables: high altar with lions bearing shields, dated 1637. Another 17thC table in the nave.

Chairs: on either side of the altar and in 17thC style.

Reused woodwork: from pews etc. It includes work with 17thC and early 18thC dates in the stalls (1670, 1713 & 1721). Also some of 1613 in the sanctuary panelling, together with panels of 1570 illustrating fables and bestiaries, and thought to have come from Bachymbyd Fawr when that house was pulled down in 1666.

Pulpit: post-Jacobean according to Hubbard, but by Jones and Glynne put a little earlier; square-within-square panels; others arched, with little baluster motifs.

Stained glass: fragments of 16thC glass claimed in the tracery of the east window of the north chancel.

Chandeliers: according to Hubbard, two of wood, one with a painted inscription of 1749 bearing the name Revd Mr Rutter; the second in the south chapel was not observed in 1996 but is reportedly of the late 16thC. Also a secular 19thC brass one, from Rug in western Denbighshire.

Panelled chest: inscribed R.W. I.D. WARDENS 1687.

Royal Arms: painted on canvas and dated 1661.

Benefaction boards: that to east of main door has a terminus post quem of 1734; that to west is dated 1787 and is a Welsh translation of the first.

Plate: chalice of 1735, paten of 1722.

Dog tongs: wooden, in case (for fuller description see Owen 1886).

Bells: two dated 1681 and 1684, in bellcote.

Victorian furnishings and fittings include:

Stained glass in the east window of the south nave by Wailes, 1855.

Monuments: Rev. William Williams Edwards (d.1829), by W.Spence of Liverpool. Female figure beside an urn on a pedestal; mural tablet to Dorothy Lloyd (date has flaked off).

Hatchments: two to the Reverend Edwards and his wife from the first half of the 19thC.

CHURCHYARD

The form of Llanynys churchyard is best described, in colloquial terms, as pear-shaped with the top removed. It is level and generally raised above the land surrounding it, in places by little more than 0.5m but on the east side by nearly 2m. Church and village occupy an 'island' of low relief rising above the floor of the Vale of Clwyd.

The churchyard is still used for burial, but is overgrown in places.

Boundary: a drystone wall encompasses most of the churchyard, replaced only where a 2m-high wall divides off the old vicarage and its yard, and where the inn intrudes on the west.

Monuments: these are located throughout the churchyard but are not densely packed. There is a good range with a reasonable number going back into the 18thC. The earliest recorded, other than the Latin slab of

1584 noted above, was a chest tomb of 1696, but the church guide refers to an example of 1684.

Furniture: none obvious.

Earthworks: none obvious.

Ancillary features: iron gates offer main access to the west of the church, with a tarmac path leading to the porch; a grass path led to the former vicarage.

Vegetation: a few yew bushes around the edge of the churchyard, as well as other trees and bushes. A mature yew south-west of the church, and a large pine near the west door.

SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 28 August 1996
Evans 1986, 71
Faculty St Asaph 1883 (NLW) - restoration
Glynne 1884, 178
Gresham 1968, 148; 167
Hubbard 1986, 246
Jones, L.P. 1988
Lloyd Williams and Underhill 1872. pls 11 & 21
NMR Aberystwyth
Neaverson 1953-54, 9
Owen 1886, 133
Quinquennial Report: 1987
Quinquennial Report: 1995
Restoration papers 1967-8 (DRO/PD/78/1/30)
Thomas 1911, 110

CONDITION

Appears to be in reasonable condition though a pool of rainwater in the south chapel reveals a leaking roof.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Medium to Good

Meliden

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Melyd**PRN** 16938**NGR** SJ06288109

SUMMARY

The single-chambered church of St Melyd, less than 3km from the north coast, is referred to in Domesday Book and has a reputedly 13thC core which was extended eastwards in the 15thC. Internal restoration took place in 1884 when the south porch was also added. Internally there is a 14thC arch-braced roof over the nave, two Early English doorways, a font of about the later 12thC, a 15thC misericord, a bell of 1700 and part of a 14thC sepulchral slab. The building is sited within a raised sub-circular churchyard containing marked graves from the 18thC.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The medieval fabric may date to 13thC with original doorways surviving, though such an early date remains unproven. A 15th/16thC eastwards extension is supported by minor changes in the masonry, and the variable masonry in the east wall suggests a fair amount of reconstruction. The west wall too appears to have been rebuilt at some indeterminate time. Restoration work in 1884 included general repairs to the fabric of the church and interior furnishing.

HISTORY

An early church is referred to here in Domesday Book, and the dedication, morphology of the churchyard and perhaps the location all favour an early medieval foundation. It is the only dedication to St. Melyd in Wales.

The church is not mentioned in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, but appears as 'capella de Aldmelyden' in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 at a value of £7 6s 8d. The core of the present building is thought to date from this century.

The building appears to have been extended eastwards, probably in the 15thC or early 16thC.

An 18thC sketch by Moses Griffiths shows the church on a raised mound with a flight of steps leading up to the east end. The bellcote was for two bells and had a different design to the present feature.

Glynne visited the church in 1839. His description varies little from that of today and he noted 'a great want of ancient features' and thought it 'very modern in appearance'.

It is also known that the pre-restoration church had a west gallery, and a rood screen which was sited to the west of the present vestry arch. Both were probably removed in the 18thC.

By the 1880s the church was said to be small, miserable and dilapidated, plastered all over externally, and with a ruinous bell-turret. Restoration work took place in 1884 to the design of Arthur Baker of Kensington, London, and was undertaken by A. Torkingham of Rhyl at a cost of £1,100. Included were general repairs to the fabric of the church, removal of interior plasterwork, restoration of the east window, insertion of a new

west window and north side window, relaying the floor, reseating with pitch pine benches, renewing the chancel stalls and raising the chancel and flooring it with encaustic tiles, introducing an oak lectern and building a vestry on the north side of the chancel, a new porch to replace the early stone one, and a lychgate.

The restoration work revealed many early features of the church. Baker's report recorded that a few dressings (jamb and archstones) of the original 13thC west window were located, that the beams of the rood loft survived, and he also claimed that the walls of the original church did not extend beyond the priest's door (now gone), and that the east end was rebuilt in the 15thC. Two sepulchral slabs ornamented with crosses and swords were discovered and the old font was uncovered when the old north door was opened up. Removal of whitewash revealed wall decorations and paintings of a 16thC century Welsh text, though these were destroyed by the removal of the plaster.

In 1934 the old stone font was re-introduced into the church and the octagonal font of 1686 was stored in the vestry until it was transferred to Kinnel Bay Church in 1969.

In 1959 oil fired central heating was introduced. The earlier, coke fired heating chamber was located at the south-east corner of the old vestry and the underfloor heating ran beneath a large iron grille inside the south doorway. The ducting is now filled with rubble.

Several alterations were made to the earlier vestry in the 1970s, but it eventually became necessary to build a new vestry in 1995.

ARCHITECTURE

Meliden church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a south porch, north vestry and a bellcote over the west end of the nave. It is oriented south-west/north-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church, though not for the churchyard.

There are the remnants of rendering and/or limewash over the older masonry; some has fallen away to reveal the stonework, but there are places where the masonry is still disguised.

Fabrics: 'A' - consists of limestone and some pink, yellow and olive sandstone of irregular shape and size, and other occasional inclusions such as a pebble stone; randomly coursed, heavily mortared and rendered in the past. Olive sandstone quoins, some in long slabs.

'B' is of slabs and squared blocks of limestone and olive sandstone with olive sandstone quoins; purchased after the demolition of a local chapel.

'C' is of slabs and blocks of limestone, some roughly dressed.

'D' is similar to 'A' in that a mixture of limestone and variably coloured sandstone, with both blocks and slabs that are relatively regular, and range in size from small to large; some coursing.

'E' is of small to medium, fairly regular blocks of limestone; some long slabs of olive sandstone; irregular coursing.

'A' is perhaps 13thC; 'D' is probably 15thC or early 16thC; 'C' is probably 19thC; 'E' is probably post-Reformation as is 'B' though it is re-used in a modern extension.

Roof: slates over main chamber (from 1996), and simple, reconstituted, clay ridge tiles. Stone cross finial at east end of chancel, and a wooden one over the porch.

Drainage: a 0.7m wide trench on the south side east of the porch, also extends half way along the east side. Concrete path against north and west sides.

Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation.

North wall: in 'A' as far as the modern vestry at the east end, with large blocks of stone at the base of the wall; slight inward lean at the top of the wall. From the west: i) plain two-centred doorway with wide chamfered dressings of mixed red and yellow sandstone; those jambstones in pink sandstone are probably original but there has been some renewal including the archstones. The threshold of the doorway is formed by an old coffin lid (though this is not evident from modern observation alone) and the doorway itself is now blocked by three massive slabs of sandstone. ii) a short square-headed 19thC window in yellow sandstone above the blocked doorway contains a trefoil-headed light; faint signs of insertion. iii) a square-headed window with three round-headed lights and sunken spandrels, all in olive sandstone; date uncertain but could perhaps be 17thC, though it shows limited weathering; beneath it there may have been some infilling as if a larger window had been replaced. iv) a four-centred window over a pair of trefoil-headed lights; in mustard yellow sandstone and of the 19thC; some signs of insertion. vi) reported change in the masonry from this point eastwards, supposedly indicating the 15thC addition, though this is not now visible. vi) vestry. vii) a large north-east corner buttress slants up from ground level to the eaves; in 'C', but now heavily repointed with reddish mortar as part of 1995 reconstruction. There is a clear butt joint with the east wall of the church, and at a height of about 0.6m on its east side is a segmental arch of brick, presumably the former entrance, now blocked, to a heating chamber; 19thC.

East wall: in 'D' which is a variation on 'A' and attributed to the 15thC, though it is far from certain that it is all of one build. Certainly above the window the gable is predominantly of mustard yellow sandstone and is surely rebuilt, while there is more limestone around the window itself; the quoins at the south-east corner also change, the basal ones in orange sandstone, but from c.2m in olive sandstone; at the north-east they are all in olive sandstone, some of them long slabs. A small basal plinth of large linear blocks of sandstone, c.0.1m high, is visible at the south end in the trench but not at the north where no trench has been excavated; instead there are indications that here the foundations protrude further. This might conceivably be linked to the putative subterranean boiler house further north, but may be further evidence of reconstruction to this wall. East window has a wide four-centred arch with original hoodmould in olive sandstone and weathered head-stops, over five four-centred lights and panel tracery which Hubbard felt was not authentic; the jambs have deeply hollowed chamfers in dull pink sandstone and are original, as are some though not all of the arch stones; the tracery is completely renewed.

South wall: some exposed stonework in 'A', but an increased amount of olive sandstone beneath the most easterly window is best classed as 'D'. However, at the west end predominantly limestone and probably rebuilt at the same time as the west wall. From the west: i) a four-centred window with two two-centred lights, inserted at west end during the 1884 restoration. ii) porch. iii) a four-centred arch over three stepped round-headed lights, with hollowed chamfers, a slim hoodmould with simple stops, a renewed mullion and a massive sill; 16thC and contemporary with the east window. iv) a square-headed window with sunken spandrels over a pair of wide, two-centred lights; the top of the window including the heads is from a single stone; weathered label; renewed jambs, sill and mullion. 16thC if not later.

West wall: in 'E', representing a rebuild, though possibly the masonry at the base of the north-west corner survived from the earlier church; slightly battered at base. A pair of 19thC lancets inserted during the 1884 restoration, and a hexafoil window above; between the lancets is more yellow sandstone and this could indicate further rebuilding at the time of the restoration.

Bellcote of 19thC date in yellow ashlar; gabled top and Celtic cross finial over two trefoil-headed apertures, but only a single bell.

Vestry. General. From 1995, replacing a half-timbered structure of 1884. In 'B', with rectangular windows and a half-timbered gable to the north side.

South Porch. General. Timber-framed porch largely restored as part of the 1884 work. The side walls of heavily mortared rough limestone have long rectangular windows with plain leaded lights set into timber frames. The south front is faced in regular blocks of olive sandstone with a half-timbered gable of studs and plaster. The square-headed timber entrance has fluted chamfers to jambs that arch up to give a flat head to the doorway, and there is a tie beam over.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone flagged floor, wooden-topped benches on stone plinths with panelled backs on the east and west; panelled ceiling with one rather slim, braced tie-beam and carved struts, all of 19thC date.

North wall: unrendered wall face with a two-centred doorway, chamfered dressings with broach stops, and sharpening marks on some jambstones. The bottom jambs in pink sandstone and the arch stones (in tooled limestone?) are probably renewed, but the rest is original.

Nave. General. Stone flagged floor including some graveslabs of the 18thC and later but the aisle is now carpeted; flush woodblock floor under the benches. Walls with battered sides have exposed stonework, all the earlier plasterwork having been removed during the 1884 restoration. Nave has a roof of close-set arch-braced collars, the principals springing from crenellated wall plates; seventeen trusses in all but excluding a more ornate one over the nave/chancel divide; rafters and purlins were used in the original design but these were removed during the 1884 restoration; the principals date to the 14thC, though with some replacement; the ceiling is planked above - this and the wall plates are 19thC.

North wall: wall has a batter at the base. At the west end the blocked north doorway reveal has a flat two-centred arch with stone voussoirs for the head: now used for bookshelves. Window embrasures have timber soffits. The three-light window once lit the earlier pulpit which appears to have been a triple-decker, accessed from steps set into the north wall below the window, but now used as a sill. Two 20thC memorials, one to the war dead.

East wall: separated from chancel by a step and 'a sort of hammerbeam arch' in the roof (Hubbard) from 1884.

South wall: splayed window embrasures. A shallow two-centred head to the splayed reveal of the south doorway, now set below a wooden canopy; the large studded, panelled door is refaced on the exterior, but the ironwork and inner timber is all original. The 16thC window to east of door has a reveal with dressed stone facings, contrasting with the pecked stone used to face the later window reveals. In between this window and the door are some large blocks of masonry set into the wall which are reminiscent of jambs; however, it is not possible to distinguish an earlier window here. The only fittings are two World War I memorials.

West wall: splayed embrasures. A disconformity in the stonework of the gable suggests that the pitch of the roof may have been altered perhaps in the 19thC.

Chancel. General. Two staggered steps up from nave (from the restoration in 1884) with further steps to the sanctuary. Tiled floor with carpets, and the choir stalls raised on wooden block flooring. Walls as nave. Panelled wagon roof, again in 1884, and this is set at the level of the apex of the east window.

North wall: a broad four-centred arch of 19thC date opens to the organ recess and there is a panelled door to the modern vestry.

East wall: slightly splayed window, the reveal showing original pink sandstone dressings.

Sanctuary south wall: square-headed window embrasure with original sandstone dressings. Below this window the masonry protrudes slightly and to the east appears to be of a different build.

Vestry. General. Of 1995.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: 'a worn octagonal stone bowl with eight panels, each containing a chamfered pointed arch. Crude roll mouldings delineate panels and arches, and along the top is a series of stepped recesses' (Hubbard). Bowl is set on a modern stem and base. Found during the restoration of 1884 near the blocked north door. Hubbard dated it to the late 12thC/early 13thC. Now fitted with a modern cover.

Sepulchral slab: i) part of an early 14thC four-circle cross slab, now mounted on a stand in the south porch. ii) a circular-headed cross slab of early 14thC date was recorded in 1884 but cannot now be located. iii) a floriated cross also seen in 1884 but no longer traceable.

Misericord: of triangular design, re-set in a later stall next to pulpit. 15thC.

Chair: in sanctuary. Date uncertain.

Two newel posts built into the front choir stalls on the south side. Date uncertain

Pulpit: see below.

Chest: with iron bands and hinges and carved with 'Wardens TP TI 1697'. In sanctuary.

Bell: incised '+ Meliden + 1700 + OT + IR'.

Registers: from 1620.

Victorian and later furnishings and fittings include:

Wooden furnishings by Baker in 17thC style include the pulpit and stalls. Note, however that the pulpit contains a Jacobean panel from an old box pew.

Lectern: an 1891 brass eagle.

Stained glass: in the east window, a Transfiguration scene of 1892; in the sanctuary on the south, richly coloured glass of 1864 and 1888; in the south nave glass by T.F. Curtis of Ward & Hughes from 1899; and in the west wall lancets, Mary and the old priest Simon, from 1899.

Registers: now kept in a cast iron safe set into the west wall and incised 'Meliden Register Chest 1813' on a brass plate.

CHURCHYARD

A small curvilinear churchyard, enlarged on the north side in 1862. Well maintained.

Boundary: mortared stone wall on all sides, forming a revetment on the south-east against the roadside. The wall was left in situ when the graveyard extended to the north-west and shows as a revetted bank.

Monuments: the south side has a large number of early burials - 18thC sandstone slabs, now mixed with modern cremations and 19thC chest tombs. Graves are densely packed and randomly placed. One small sandstone slab with "R.M" and skull and crossbones, just to the south of the nave. A ledger of 1699 with decorative border just to the east of the lychgate; early graves on the west side include one of 1735.

Furniture: Square plinth for a sundial inscribed 'T.D. I.I. Ch[wardens] 1794', but no gnomon. Located in south-east corner of churchyard. A 20thC memorial, north of the vestry, also had a sundial, but this too has had its gnomon broken off.

Earthworks: raised churchyard, by 2m on the west and east, almost the same on the north and south.

Ancillary features: entrance near southern corner through a timber framed lychgate of 1884. Paths of stone

slabs and concrete.

Vegetation: stumps of five trees (?yews) along roadside, felled in 1966; two new yews planted along this boundary. 19thC yew next to the lychgate on south side. Mix of oak and beech trees on west side.

SOURCES

[Arch Cam 1885, 206]

CPAT Field Visit 6 August 1996 & 7 April 1998

Ciwyd SMR

Faculty St Asaph 1862 (NLW): churchyard extension

Faculty St Asaph 1884 (NLW): restoration

Faculty St Asaph 1934 (NLW): font substitution

Glynne 1884, 317

Gresham 1968, 120; 127; 210

Hubbard 1986, 388

Neaverson 1954, 6

NMR Aberystwyth

Quinquennial Reviews

Thomas 1908, 406

CONDITION

Church generally in good state of repair, apart from north-east corner where a crack is visible on the interior from the roof-line downwards to the reredos; it is presumably a long-term problem. The very wide and deep exterior buttress is supporting the wall at this corner, where the below ground boiler house was once situated. Roof has just been re-slatted. Modern vestry was added in 1995 and the bellcote restored and the bell-frame renewed.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium to Good

Nantglyn

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St James

PRN 16917

NGR SJ00416213

GENERAL SUMMARY

St James' church at Nantglyn is a simple structure lying in the centre of a remote village, some 4 miles to the south-west of Denbigh. Heavily restored in 1862, the only survivals are the roof timbers, a few earlier 19thC memorials, and perhaps the walls.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church drastically restored in 19thC though roof timbers from the medieval building were retained, and it seems probable that north wall and perhaps west and south, which are both now slate-hung, are original. However, the absence of any diagnostic features means that it is impossible to say whether this is medieval or of later 18thC date (see below). East end extended, probably in the 19thC.

HISTORY

The location and churchyard morphology might suggest an early medieval origin. There are, however, fairly well-established but confused references to an early chapel dedicated to St Mordeyn on the farm known as Clasmor a little more than 250m to the east, and Thomas believed this was the predecessor of the present church.

The Norwich Taxatio of 1254 refers to 'Ecc'a de Gvythrein et Nantclym' at a value of £2 13s 4d, while in the Lincoln Taxatio of 1291 the value of 'Eccl'ia de Nanclyn' was £4.

The report by the Rural Dean in 1729 indicated the church was in very poor condition, and in 1777 it was partially rebuilt, though the extent of the work is not known.

Alterations were made to the gallery in 1849-50.

The church was drastically restored by Lloyd Williams & Underwood in 1862. Vestry and bellcote added. Further renovation occurred in 1869.

Glynne noted an 'obtuse-arched' west doorway in 1870, though this is no longer visible, and remarked on the fact that the church had been completely renovated leaving nothing original. In 1875 the west gallery was pulled down, a west window inserted, and the west and south walls hung with slates. In 1879 the bellcote was rebuilt.

ARCHITECTURE

Nantglyn church consists of a single chamber for the nave and chancel, a south porch, and a vestry attached to the north-west corner of the nave.

It is aligned fractionally north of due east.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of slabs of grey shaley slate, blocks of shale, and some pebble stones; colours range from grey through to brown; random coursing; rough finish with stone projecting; frequent limewash and render residue visible.

'B' primarily of slabs of grey shaley slate up to 1m+ long; regularly laid; occasional traces of limewash.

Roof: slates, ornamental grey clay ridge tiles; metal finial at east end. A bellcote with single aperture at west end, of stepped design, in limestone and with stone cross on top.

Drainage: traces of a hollow on the north side could indicate drainage, and a gravel strip perhaps disguising drain along part of south.

Exterior

Nave. North wall: in 'A' for most of length with four cusped lancets of 19thC origin, all in grey limestone; occasional indications that these were inserted, and at the west end adjacent to the vestry is a blocked window, its large slate sill immured, and some regular stones for jambs; its blocking also has less limewash residue. East of the fourth window and virtually in line with the sanctuary inside the masonry is largely covered by a concrete pointing cum render, but not enough to disguise that this part of wall is in 'B'.

East wall: plinth to height of 0.3m. This and the wall face is in 'B'. Window of three stepped cusped lights as on north side but larger; evidence of packing around window, but may be a function of the otherwise large masonry blocks.

South wall: faced in vertical slates except for bottom 0.3m. Three windows to east of porch, one to west, all as on north side.

West wall: also slate hung. A big roundel window containing four quatrefoils in concrete.

Vestry. General. Built in long slabs of grey slate. Two-light rectangular window in grey limestone on east side.

Porch. General. In 'B' with plinth at height of c.0.4m; dressed limestone for quoins, archway etc. East and west walls have small cusped lights. Entrance on south has two-centred archway, chamfered dressings with broach stops, and a hoodmould with head-stops; wholly Victorian.

Interior

Porch. General. Floor tiled in black and red; walls plastered and painted; simple roof of purlins and rafters.

North wall: doorway matches outer porch entrance with two-centred arch in grey limestone.

East and west walls: small windows and wooden benches.

Nave. General. One step up from porch. Tiled floor with carpets down aisle; heating grille just inside south door but no others visible; benches raised on wooden boarding, and font on a flagstone plinth. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of six bays including chancel; principal trusses have arch-braced collars with plain raking struts; trusses rise from wall plates, but for the last bay at west end the plates are plastered over; much of the timberwork appears to be original.

North wall: four splayed windows of identical appearance, the dressings painted over. Near vestry door is a corbel at height of just over 2m, a relic of the former west gallery. Ghosts of the stairs can also be seen on the wall a little to the east. In north-west corner dog tongs are mounted on the wall, and further to the east between the windows are three marble memorials of the 19thC and 20thC.

East wall: sanctuary step only.

South wall: splayed windows as north wall but with stained glass; a memorial brass beneath one of them gives date of 1872. Doorway embrasure with two-centred head. Corbel matches that on north wall.

West wall: rectangular window, splayed with segmental head to embrasure. Three brasses of 19thC and 20thC, and a safe set into wall.

Chancel. General. Sanctuary only. One step up from nave. Floor has carpet over encaustic tiles; walls and roof as nave, but most easterly bay is only three-quarter size.

North wall: plain.

East wall: splayed windows with stained glass; reredos has encaustic tiles.

South wall: plain.

Vestry. General. One step down from nave; carpeted floor; plastered and painted walls; flat ceiling. Benefaction board on west and leaning against it an inscribed stone, supposedly of Roman date.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Dog tongs: not dated; on north wall.

Benefaction board: in slate; probably 19thC but not dated.

Inscribed stone: brought from elsewhere in the parish. Has the inscription: 'LIVIVC(?) HOC FECIT XX VV' and at the base a perforation thought to indicate its later use as a gate or fence post. Claimed to be a Roman milestone but specialist advice suggests this is most unlikely.

Plate: paten of 1791 and chalice of 1784.

Victorian fittings include:

Monuments: those in church are all 19thC or later.

Stained glass: 'in east window by O'Connor, 1861. Four south windows by Alexander Gibbs, the westernmost 1895, the others 1872' (Hubbard).

CHURCHYARD

Churchyard is small and polygonal and has been enlarged at least twice, initially on the south in 1862 and later on the west. The original shape determined from the faculty plan of 1862 was roughly rectangular with rounded corners. The north and south sides of the yard are the highest with a saddle in the middle; the church is on the north side, which is probably a natural spur projecting towards the stream.

It is a well-maintained yard and modern burials are set in the new strip taken in on the west.

Boundary: mortared stone wall on west and south, retaining wall on the north, and houses or a drystone wall and fence on the east.

Monuments: graves spread evenly and occasionally densely. A predominance of ledgers and chest tombs, many of the former covered with vegetation, and some of the latter in a bad state of repair. Probably a number of later 18thC ledgers, though the only ones which were intelligible were of 1776, 1790 and 1797. There is however an exception: a ledger of 1650 south of the chancel.

Furniture: none seen.

Earthworks: yard is raised on north and east but this is largely a result of the natural spur location.

Ancillary features: entrance on east via simple pair of iron gates and gravel path

Vegetation: two ancient yews south of church, one smaller one to east and conifers and pines around the edge of the yard.

SOURCES

Church guide (by E.P.Williams): no date.

CPAT Field Visit: 17 January 1997

Faculty 1862: DRO/PD/84/1/13

Glynne 1884, 103

Hubbard 1986, 256

Thomas 1911, 58

CONDITION

Some damp showing on walls internally; glass slipping in one of the east windows. No other obvious problems.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Rhuddlan

Diocese St Asaph

Dedication St Mary

PRN 16943

NGR SJ02137819

SUMMARY

St Mary's Church is located on the north-western edge of Rhuddlan, immediately above the River Clwyd. Founded on a new site at the end of the 13thC, it developed into a double-naved building, with both the north aisle (now the nave and chancel) and the west tower added late in the medieval period, and the Conwy Mausoleum built on to the north side in 1820. The interior was largely restored by Gilbert Scott in 1868 but retains its late medieval roofs and a 15thC arcade, and houses several medieval effigies and sepulchral slabs, a few pre-19thC monuments and a chest of 1710. The sub-rectangular churchyard contains the medieval base of the churchyard cross and a 17thC sundial as well as several late 17thC chest tombs.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Initially a single-chamber church dating to around 1300, though the exact date remains uncertain. On the evidence of a piscina and some of the external masonry, the chancel was a later addition to the original structure. A further enlargement, perhaps in the 15thC, involved the addition of a north aisle in Perpendicular style, and a west tower. This created a double nave-type structure, although as the chancel was slightly narrower than the nave, it was not a true double-naved building until the east end was reconstructed in 1812.

The early 14thC walls of the south aisle remain on the west and part of the south side; the west wall lancets in the south aisle and the re-sited north door are usually attributed to the 14thC also. At least one old engraving confirms the integrity of the west wall lancets but these have now been totally renewed, and it should also be recognised that the lancet style (which was later copied by Gilbert Scott) was surprisingly old-fashioned for a structure of around 1300. There is some evidence to indicate that the roof of the original nave was raised. The date of this operation is not known but it could have been in the medieval era.

The north wall of the nave and chancel is 15thC, together with the east wall, but both contain a mix of fabrics that might indicate re-use of stonework taken from the original north wall of the church: stylistically the east wall window ought to be earlier, perhaps from the first half of the 14thC, though it cannot be confirmed that what is there now is a precise renewal of the original. The arcade also dates to this period, but its varying form indicates it may be of two phases, and this has further implications for the constructional sequence of the church; the respond at the east end is a remnant of the earlier north wall.

The west tower was built around 1500. It was supported on the original 15thC walls of the north aisle.

Restoration took place in 1812 and again in 1868-70. To the former can be attributed the rebuilding of the early chancel, while during the latter many of the early windows were replaced. A mausoleum was added to the north side in 1820.

In summary, a small single cell church of c.1300 was extended eastwards by the addition of a narrower chancel; the original roof of the nave was also raised but neither event is dated. A north aisle was added in the 15thC and the nave was narrowed, but variations in the arcading suggests this may not have been a single-phase event. Around 1500 a west tower was built above the end of the north aisle. In 1812 the

chancel was rebuilt to the same width as the nave, and, probably in 1868, the north aisle was converted into the nave and chancel, and replacement lancet windows were inserted.

HISTORY

The present church was constructed around 1300, after Edward I had appropriated six and a half acres of church property in the old borough of Rhuddlan to build his new castle; it is assumed that the earlier church lay within this parcel of land. A church had been recorded in Domesday Book, and pre-Conquest cross fragments found near the vicarage imply a foundation here by the early 11thC. It is this church that was recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 at a value of £5, but the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 with a value of £10 13s 4d must refer to the benefice of the new building. A precise date of 1301 for its construction has entered the literature but the logic behind this may be flawed.

At the time of the acquisition of the church land by Edward, the transferral of the Diocesan Cathedral from St Asaph to Rhuddlan was under consideration, and the ecclesiastical status of Rhuddlan is ill-defined for this period. By 1284 the idea had been abandoned and by 1296 Rhuddlan was reduced to a chapelry to St Asaph, with services conducted in the early 14thC by visiting monks. A resident vicar may not have been installed until David Conway of Bodrhyddan Hall in 1528, son of an influential landowner.

The enlargement of the church presumably occurred after and perhaps as a consequence of the damage inflicted on the church during the Glyndwr revolt in the early 15thC.

Some 17thC restoration work included the north and south wall windows being replaced by round-headed ones, though one Gothic window was retained high up in the north wall, perhaps to light a three-decker pulpit. The wall paintings also date to this period.

A sketch of 1782 by Moses Griffith shows that the chancel at the time (on the south side) was lower and narrower than the nave. In 1812, the south wall of this chancel was demolished; it was replaced by a new wall in alignment with the south wall of the former nave, and the roof was raised to form an authentic double-naved church; the east wall may also have been rebuilt and the east window re-sited. About this time three sepulchral monuments from the former priory buildings at Plas-newydd, Rhuddlan, were introduced into the church.

In 1820 the Bodrhyddan Mausoleum was added on to the north side of the church by William Davies Shipley of Bodrhyddan, Dean of St Asaph. Its south doorway bears a 17thC inscription to Sir John Conway and his wife who were buried in a vault accessed by the doorway; the vault was probably succeeded by the mausoleum.

Glynne, visiting the church in 1829, detailed the church very much as it is today, though he referred to the triple window at the west end and avoided the use of the term lancet. The west window in the tower was walled up. Various internal fittings and furnishings were mentioned and, rarely for Glynne, some of the post-medieval memorials.

A reference in 1858 to the enlargement of the church probably refers only to seating, for major restoration work was carried out by Sir George Gilbert Scott at a cost of £2,000 between 1868 and 1870, and was probably at this time that the main nave and chancel was transferred to the northern side of the church. Works included turning the old vestry into a baptistry, inserting new windows and replacing the old triple-decker pulpit. The chancel was raised by one step and the nave (the present south aisle) was lowered by three steps below the south-west entrance door. During the lowering of the floor, one stone coffin slab was found and this is now sited at the west end of the building. Nave pews were replaced by open oak seating and the round-headed windows were replaced by Gothic ones. The tower arch was opened up and the ground floor made into a vestry.

The organ was a gift of 1895 and heating was installed 1899.

Further restoration work took place in 1975, including repairs to the roof and windows. A kitchen and cloakroom accommodation were added on the north side in 1981.

ARCHITECTURE

Rhuddlan church is effectively a double-naved structure consisting of a nave and chancel, a south aisle, a tower over the west end of the nave, and a south porch, north vestry and a mausoleum off the chancel. The church is oriented a little north of due west.

Most of the wall faces retain considerable amounts of render which effectively disguises the masonry and makes it difficult to determine the degree of coursing etc.

Fabrics:- 'A' is of rubblestone, primarily limestone slabs with occasional sandstone blocks, olive and brown in colour; irregularly coursed? Similar stone (sometimes referred to as 'A'-type was used (or re-used) at later dates.

'B' is dominated by slabs and blocks of olive sandstone, including tabular material up to 2m long; also some limestone and red and pink sandstone.

'C' is of large blocks of fine grained sandstone ashlar.

'D' is of limestone blocks.

'E' consists of blocks of limestone and pink and pale yellow sandstone.

'F' is of mixed sandstone and limestone, primarily small to medium blocks and slabs.

'G' is of slabs of olive sandstone.

'F' is from c.1300; 'G' could be medieval; 'A' is from c.1500 but also could be 15thC and from 1812; 'B' is probably from 1812, as is 'E' though this is almost certainly re-used material; 'C' is from 1820 and 'D' is from 1981;

Roofs: slates, with plain, grey ceramic ridge tiles. Cross finials at the east end of the chancel and at both ends of the south aisle.

Drainage: earlier guttering and downpipes lead to soakaways. No convincing evidence of a drainage trench around the foundations.

Note: the original nave and chancel on the south side of the church became a south aisle, probably at the time of the 1868 restoration, and the north aisle was converted into the new nave and chancel. In the historical sections above references to the nave and chancel are to the original design, but the descriptive sections below adopt modern usage.

Exterior

Tower. General. Square battlemented north-west tower with broad merlons, rising above west end of the nave, and attributed to c.1500; undifferentiated wall faces except for a string course just below the battlements which are slightly inset. In 'A', with quoins of yellow sandstone at lower levels and of limestone higher up the tower. Walls show patches of rendering. Low pyramidal roof surmounted by a weathervane.

North wall: lower part disguised by vestry block; a blocked doorway with a Tudor-style flat head was discovered in the wall in 1968. Belfry window has a pair of louvred trefoil-headed lights, but the dressings have been completely renewed.

East wall: nave roof line rises to just below the belfry window, but the coping of an earlier roof is visible in weathered yellow sandstone, about 0.5m above. Standard belfry aperture with renewed window dressings, and a clock face above it.

South wall: standard belfry aperture only.

West wall: incorporates the earlier west wall of the north nave in 'F' - its edge can be distinguished as a gable line in the masonry; 'A' above. Long triple lancets in yellow sandstone, not quite centred in the wall face; these must be a Scott embellishment, though some of the jambstones are weathered; at a higher level is a standard belfry window its dressings renewed in the 19thC. The north-west corner of the building is supported by a low diagonal buttress, with a basal plinth at a height of 0.2m; some of its dressed stone has

been replaced but it is basically contemporary with the construction of the tower. Near the south-west corner is an angle buttress rising to above the belfry aperture; its lower section with a double basal plinth was the original buttress at the corner of the 14thC nave, subsequently heightened when the tower was built, but still retaining some original facing slabs.

Against the bottom of the west wall is a modern, stone-built shed.

Nave and chancel. General. The two elements are undifferentiated externally.

North wall: limestone of 'A' or 'A'-type at lower levels, but higher up the stone is more mixed, probably 'F' or 'F'-type. The west end is hidden by the modern cloakroom extension, and this includes the 13thC north door which was re-set in this wall when the north aisle was built. From the cloakroom eastwards the features are: i) integral 15thC buttress with large blocks of sandstone for dressings. ii) 1868 paired lancets. iii) window with a two-centred arch over two trefoil-headed lights with Y-tracery; quasi-Decorated style by Scott, the heads all in 19thC yellow sandstone, but the jambs etc from an earlier, presumably medieval, window. iv) integral 15thC buttress. v) paired lancets of 1868. vi) a three-light, square-headed window lighting the chancel, but it now looks out onto the back of the mausoleum. Its date is uncertain but it is presumably post-medieval. vii) mausoleum. viii) a four-centred window with three, stepped, trefoil-headed lights, the mullions replaced but the tracery perhaps original.

East wall: at the base of the wall is a low, chamfered plinth with no more than one course of pink sandstone visible. As with the north wall, limestone of 'A'-type forms the lower courses, while more mixed masonry, perhaps of 'F', is found higher up. The east window has five foiled, two-centred lights with four intersecting ogee sub-arches in reticulated style below a large two-centred arch with hoodmould and square stops; the stonework is totally renewed. Hubbard felt that this window pre-dated the Perpendicular extension in which it was set, but dismissed the idea that it was the original east window in the south aisle. In the wall to the south of the window is a blocked trefoil-headed light, with original dressings in pale sandstone; its purpose is uncertain. A small niche in 19thC yellow sandstone is set high in the gable above the main window.

Kitchen/Cloakrooms. General. At the west end of the north wall, built in 1981. In fabric 'D' with a rough finish and built on basal layers of blue brick. Three lancet windows in the north wall, two lights in the east wall, and a door in the west wall.

Mausoleum. General. In 'C', with diagonal, stepped buttresses at the corners and central angle buttresses. No exterior entrance. Moulded plinth c.0.3m above ground level and a cornice below the roof line. The structure is surrounded by a low stone wall which was once railed. Low pyramidal roof.

South Aisle. East wall: a basal plinth of one course of pink sandstone visible above the tarmac path. The render masks several fabrics. At the base is 'E', and above this is 'B', and then a mix of limestone and sandstone. Most of this wall from the plinth upwards is believed to have been rebuilt in the early 19thC. Window of three stepped lancets, in style Early English but completely renewed, even if re-sited from the earliest church here, as has been suggested. At the apex of the gable is a niche containing the very weathered upper part of the figure of a priest; the lower portion is inside the church at the west end.

South wall: in 'E' for the bottom 1m or so and over the priest's door, which suggests that this was an insertion of 1868 and the removed stone was then used as packing around the new doorway. Above 'E' is 'A'-type masonry though again from 1812, and running as far west as the central buttress; the wall is battered at the base. Features from the east are: i) one or two quoins at the south-east corner are in red sandstone at the base and yellow sandstone higher up, where there are also two projecting quoin stones whose purpose is unclear. ii) paired lancets of 1868. iii) a two-centred priest's doorway with a Latin text above it, also solidly 19thC. iv) a second pair of 1868 lancets. v) beneath the window is a subterranean boiler room with an east-facing door. vi) a 19thC stepped buttress masking the juncture of the 19thC and 13thC fabrics, but above it the wall face exhibits three quoins which could well be original quoins from the first nave. vii) west of the buttress the wall is plinthed at a height of 0.4m. viii) broad, squat lancet window of uncertain date but probably from the last two hundred years. ix) standard, paired lancets of 1868. x) porch. xi) immediately to the west of the porch there is the suggestion of a blocked feature perhaps a doorway

(though this of course conflicts with what appears to be the main opening in the porch); the infill is of more regular sandstone with no traces of render or heavy mortar, also suggesting an opening, and the chamfer below is in grey rather than pink sandstone. xii) a single 1868 lancet, a newly created window by Scott, comparable in appearance though not in the stonework to viii). It is probable that the wall has been raised at some point (in line with what happened on the west side, for which see below), but because of the render coating this cannot be distinguished.

West wall: plinth, dropping from nearly 1.0m high at the south-west corner to 0.5m at the north end of the wall. Much of the wall is in 'F', but just above the head of the window is a gable line, indicating a shallow-roofed structure, rather lower than the roof line of the north nave sealed in the tower wall. Above 'F' is 'G' and then 'A'-type masonry. Triple lancets, but with all the dressings renewed, are off-centre to the roof as it now exists, but central to the earlier, lower roof line. At the south-west angle is a buttress with a stepped basal plinth, 1.3m above ground level, and splayed slightly on its south and west sides.

South Porch. General. Reconstructed by Gilbert Scott, but in 'A'. 15thC side walls are heavily mortared.

East wall: two round-headed 19thC yellow sandstone apertures containing quatrefoil lights, with voussoirs in the same fabric.

South wall: segmental-headed doorway formed by the arch bracing for the tie beam contains a pair of heavy oak panelled doors with traceried heads. The queen-post truss above is infilled with plaster and there are scalloped bargeboards. All presumably 19thC.

West wall: slightly splayed at base, but otherwise as east wall.

Interior

Porch. General. Divided into inner and outer areas by a partition. Stone flagged floor on which are three decorated stone fragments brought from the vicarage (see below); plastered walls; ceiling plastered above exposed rafters and purlins. Wooden benches below quatrefoil lights on east and west sides.

North wall: contains main doorway into church, a two-centred arch of two orders; the inner is chamfered and of 19thC date, but the outer appears largely original even though the whole is painted over.

Tower. General. Interior floor at two levels. Walls are limewashed at ground floor level. Above a heavy oak floor supported on east and west stone corbels. Access to upper chamber by iron rung ladder and trap-door, but a disused, heavy wooden ladder (of 15thC date?) still in situ.

East wall: a high two-centred arch of two, chamfered orders. South of this is a 'buttress' protruding from the wall - in fact the stub of the early north wall of the nave which was a little further north than the present line of the arcade.

West wall: high pointed arch to splayed embrasure.

Nave. General. Stone flagged floor with carpet in central aisle; flush planked floor under benches. Walls plastered and painted with the only exposed stonework the 13th/14thC door in the north wall and the dressings of the arcade. The roof is continuous across the nave and chancel. It consists of ten complete bays and a portion of an eleventh at the west end, with ten hammerbeam trusses, with arch-braced collars and raking struts, supported by wooden corbels, except for one stone corbel on the south side; exposed rafters and through purlins and a plastered ceiling above.

North wall: six shallow steps up to the north door, a 13th/14thC two-centred arch in yellow and pink chamfered sandstone. Blocked up until the building of the kitchen extension in 1981. (On the outer side, now in the kitchen extension, the arch has a hoodmould and weathered head stops). Three window

embrasures are splayed and have slightly peaked arches, the dressings all painted. Two patches of wall paintings, either side of the most westerly window. Further east a framed painting of the Resurrection.

East wall: divided from the chancel only by two steps.

South wall: an arcade of five and a half bays with six chamfered arches (running the length of the nave and chancel) supported on five octagonal stone piers with moulded capitals, and an east respond. Though of similar style the three easternmost arches are taller than the west ones and in a pinker stone while the third from the east is asymmetrical in elevation, perhaps revealing the location of the rood screen. The westernmost arch is cut short beyond the apex, where the tower has been inserted. Eleven stone corbels which supported an earlier roof are now painted over but protrude into the nave above the arcade; one supports a hammerbeam. The wall face above the corbels is rougher and slightly inset.

West wall: a two-centred chamfered arch to the tower is now fitted with a panelled partition incorporating a door. Three medieval sepulchral slabs are set against the wall to the south of the arch. High above the arch is a horizontal disconformity in the stonework, its significance uncertain.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from the nave, two to the sanctuary and three to the altar. Raised in 1868. Encaustic tiled floors with longitudinal choir stalls on raised planking. Walls and roof described under nave (above).

North wall: a four-centred soffit to the window embrasure lighting the chancel. Then a four-centred arch over the blocked entry to the Conwy Mausoleum; the arch is carved 'Sr Jo Conwy, kngt, 1637'. Finally a peaked soffit over the 15thC window embrasure in the sanctuary. Beside this is the early 14thC Freney slab with its incised effigy. Also one 19thC marble memorial, two 20thC brasses including one placed in the blocked mausoleum doorway, and a 20thC slate memorial.

East wall: painted red with the window embrasure in white. Concealed by the altar is a shallow, rectangular niche with a horizontal slab, face down, above it; this has incised tool marks. The niche is now difficult of access and its purpose is unknown.

South wall: arcade and respond as described above. One tablet of 1825 in the sanctuary.

South Aisle. General. Formerly the nave of the early church. Three steps down from the porch. Stone flagged floor as nave, but includes some small grave markers of 19thC date near the west end. The west end itself is converted to a baptistry with carpetted floor and central font. At the east end of what would have been the original nave is the organ with adjacent longitudinal choir stalls, and beyond this a chapel. Walls as nave. Roof for the whole length of the aisle/chapel is of twelve bays and is supported by a similar number of arch-braced collar trusses; some replacement of timber. No truss at the eastern end of the roof, and that at the west end is not braced. Trusses spring from chamfered wall plates on the south side and hammerbeam corbels above the arcade, though there are also obsolete stone corbels on the north wall of the chapel.

North wall: contains two weathered 14thC effigies in the baptistry, one complete, the other the lower half of the body.

East wall: two steps up to the organ platform.

South wall: from the west: i) wall painting. ii) south doorway with splayed reveal which has 19thC dressings. iii) wall painting with stone plaque of 1724 beneath. iv) splayed window. v) memorial of 1707. vi) wall painting. vii) stone memorial of 1738. viii) splayed window with piscina beneath; this has a two-centred arch, part hidden by a war memorial.

West wall: segmental-headed red sandstone reveal to window. About half way up the window the wall face is inset by about 0.3m.

South Chapel. General. On a level with the organ platform. Tiled floor around the altar, but otherwise both slabs and wooden flooring. Walls as nave. Roof described above under aisle.

North wall: large Gothic Bodrhyddan memorial of 19thC date.

East wall: painted red as the chancel, but the arch of the window embrasure in white. East wall thickens below the head of the arch and has a slightly inwards batter. One stone memorial of 1676.

South wall: window and priest's door embrasures all 19thC. Marble memorial of 1848.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Cross fragments: from different crosses but both with interlace ornament; stylistically late 10thC/early 11thC. Found during the demolition of a wall near the vicarage in 1936; three fragments, now in the south porch.

Sepulchral slabs: three incised slabs placed at the west end of the nave. i) a foliated cross c.1250-80, with curling leaves in a circle with moulded edge; probably a coffin lid; found buried in the original nave when the floor was lowered. ii) and iii) two early 14thC four-circle cross slabs, around carved heads, one with a sword; originally at the entrance to one of the south doors, but brought into the church in 1857.

Effigies: i) lower part of a priest in vestments, sited on south side of tower wall; early 14thC. ii) full figure of a vested priest with hands cut away; ?early 14thC. iii) an upright sandstone slab (broken in two) portraying the mutilated effigy of an archbishop with the head on a cushion and feet on an animal; weathered incised carving with an inscription in French around the border. Probably the early 14thC tomb of William de Freney, Archbishop of Rages (Edessa), who died c.1290; sited on north wall of chancel where Bodrhyddan monument once stood. All three were brought to the church by Dean Shipley from the Dominican Friary site at Abbey Farm.

Wall Paintings: five patches of 17thC Welsh texts; two on the north wall, three on the south, those on the south more complete; all have elaborately decorated borders to the panels and are in Roman script with occasional Gothic lettering; texts probably derive from the Welsh Bible.

Monuments: mostly simple memorial slabs, the only ornamented one is the 19thC Shipley monument in the chancel. In the south chapel to Thomas Jones (d.1676). In the south aisle, to Janet Jones (d.1707), the wife of John Price of Crikain; a stone tablet to Edward Williams (d.1738); and a small square stone tablet inscribed 'WP 1724'.

Chests: plank chest inscribed 'I.Price, W.Anwyd, W.Wms, H.Lloyd. Wardens. 1710' on the lid; iron hinges. A second chest with a heavily carved front panel is located in front of the first; this is not dated but might be 18thC.

Plate: includes a 1720 flagon, and 1660 chalice.

Registers: from 1681.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Monuments: to Conway and Shipley families of Bodrhyddan Hall; a large, tripartite monument with painted heraldry at the base, erected by Dean Shipley, presumably in 1820, at the same time as the mausoleum; by Carline of Shrewsbury, on the north wall of the south chapel. Monument with urn to William Davies Shipley (d.1836), on the north wall of the chancel.

Pulpit: octagonal, in Talacre stone, with red sandstone panels inlaid with marble.

Font: of grey sandstone and brought from St. Mary's Church, Llanrwst. The wooden cover with ironwork

from 1907. A disused octagonal font bowl occupies floor space in the south chancel; if it is medieval it has been heavily re-tooled.

Lectern: a brass eagle.

Stained glass: south aisle east window, a memorial to William Shipley Conway (d.1869), representing the 'works of mercy'. The chancel east window represents the Lord's Supper, Ascension etc., a memorial to Richard Conway. The centre light of the easternmost nave window by A.J. Davies of the Bromsgrove Guild, 1919, as is the chancel north wall window.

Bells: renewed in 1902 when two new bells were added to make a peal of six. All cast by Carrs of Smethwick.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is sub-rectangular, rising above the north bank of the River Clwyd, though the natural scarp of the river terrace is also included on the south-west side of the church. It was extended in 1858, and again in 1939 and 1947. It is well maintained.

Boundary: except for an extension in the north corner which is hedged, a limestone boundary wall encloses the churchyard on all sides; restored in 1986. On the south it is a revetment with buttresses.

Monuments: ranging from the 17thC to the 20thC. Early 19thC slabs re-sited around the north-west churchyard walls. A chest tomb dated 1685 is located in the angle created by the chancel and mausoleum on the north side of the church - it has a weathered inscription running around the margin and a shield; mounted on base of strapwork panels with fluted shafts. On the south-east side of the church near the churchyard cross are a pair of chest tombs with guilloche friezes around the margins and weathered inscriptions date from c.1680-1700; these probably relate to members of the Conwy family. Both have arcaded panels on the long sides and fluted columns; shields on the short sides.

Furniture: the plain, square, fluted stem of a sundial in yellow sandstone, c.1m high mounted on a square base located to the south-east of the church. A damaged gnomon bears the date 1670 and the inscription 'Let others tell of storms and showers, I'll only count the sunny hours'.

A 19thC memorial cross is set on the original base of the churchyard cross. It has been suggested that the plinth of the sundial is in fact the original shaft of the old cross which was discovered in the churchyard in 1906, but its appearance tends to undermine this belief.

Ancillary features: lychgate by Scott forms east entrance. Tarmac path to south porch, and along east side; grass paths elsewhere.

Vegetation: several old yews around the perimeter; stumps of three yews along east drive.

SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1994
CPAT Field Visit: 6 August 1996 & 7 April 1998
Clwyd SMR
Glynne 1884, 87
Gresham 1968, 71; 116; 161; 165
Hubbard 1986, 425
James 1991
Morgan 1978, 268d
Nash Williams 1950, 127
NMR Aberywyth

Quinnell and Blockley 1994, 4
Quinquennial Report 1994
Soulsby 1983, 230
Thomas 1908, 412

CONDITION

Church in good state of repair apart from general weathering of fabrics and plaster peeling on the interior.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Good to Very Good

Group value: Medium to Good

Ruthin

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Peter**PRN** 16952**NGR** SJ12355838

GENERAL SUMMARY

The large church of St Peter's was established in the early 14thC at the northern end of the new borough at Ruthin; its collegiate phase came to an end at the Dissolution, but as a parish church it went through various phases of modification and change. Parts of the early 14thC walling survive, but the medieval chancel was demolished in 1663, and the later 14thC south nave was completely rebuilt in the 18thC and 19thC with the exception of the internal arcade. There is a fine range of monuments, a couple of mutilated medieval effigies and a little woodwork of medieval and early post-medieval date. The churchyard is irregular and contains little that is significant to this study.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Surviving from the first church of c.1310-1315 are the tower arches and columns of early 14thC Decorated type, with worn dressings and capitals; possibly a small window on the north side, and the north doorway facing into the gardens of the Old Cloisters.

The chancel was reputedly built at the same time in 1310, but if so why are its few surviving wall stubs in limestone when the nave appears to have been wholly in sandstone?

South nave first built in second half of 14thC; apart from the arcade, only the chamfered base at the east end appears to survive, externally. Remainder of the shell is 18thC and 19thC.

The old chancel was removed (in 1663). Later in 1722 the west walls of the naves were rebuilt, and at some point (?1722 or later) the south and east walls of the nave and chancel were rebuilt, the latter from the top of the chamfer upwards, with quoins set into the wall face against the old masonry. The south nave was then raised in 1810. New windows were put in place in the mid-19thC.

HISTORY

At the time of the conquest of Wales by Edward I in 1282, Reginald de Grey completed the construction of Ruthin Castle, created a chartered borough and in 1286 built the 'Capella St Petri' for the inhabitants of the town. This was dependent on the parish church of Llanrhudd.

The Taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1291 recorded a church and flourishing collegiate establishment at Ruthin with the startling value of £74.

In 1310 John de Grey built a collegiate parish church, separating it from Llanrhudd, and housing seven priests who at some stage, perhaps from the beginning perhaps later, belonged to the Augustinian order of Bonhommes. This presumably replaced the chapel built in 1286 and consisted of an aisleless nave, chancel, and central tower. College buildings lay to the north of the church.

A south aisle was added in the latter half of the 14thC, creating a double-naved structure. It extended as far

east as the east tower arch of the earlier part, and necessitated the creation of the arcade inside the building.

Building damaged during the Glyndwr revolt at the beginning of the 15thC.

Roof of north aisle thought to have been constructed between 1485 and 1508 on the basis of the heraldry. That in the south nave considered to be later 16thC.

The establishment was suppressed, not with the houses of secular clergy, but at the dissolution of the lesser monasteries in 1536. Subsequently, the church seems to have been used for burial and chaplains and curates appointed to serve it and Llanrhudd. In c.1589 the church and college lands were purchased by Dean Goodman who refounded the Christ's Hospital almshouses.

The original chancel was demolished in 1663, perhaps as a result of general deterioration. Materials from it were used to build the town hall, itself demolished in 1863. The tomb of Lord Grey was probably removed at this time from its position below the tower.

Repairs to the church were authorised by the Crown in 1714 but it is not known whether any money was raised for those repairs. Work was undertaken in 1720-21 at the expense of the Myddletons of Chirk Castle, and in 1722 the west end was rebuilt by the Watkin Williams Wynn family; it has also been suggested that the south side was rebuilt around this time. In 1754 it was recorded that the steeple and part of the church were becoming ruinous and dangerous.

In 1810 the north and south naves were raised in height, reputedly to match the level of the chancel. In 1811 a west gallery was constructed in the north nave, and a further gallery in the north nave was added in 1823. A vestry east of the tower was erected in 1824 but demolished in 1859.

Glynne visited in 1856 and provided an analysis of the plan. He remarked on the fine roof of the north aisle but also recognised that there was some coarse and more modern work with an inscription recording 'J.F., Churchwarden, 1731; D.D. Painter; E.O., Carpenter'. New Decorated windows had been inserted in the south wall.

Much which was done in the 18thC and early 19thC was obliterated in two separate restorations by R.K.Penson between 1854 and 1859, though at the east end, the stage of the tower above the blocked east arch is 18thC. Penson rebuilt the higher belfry storey, and added the broach spire. The steep roofs, the south porch, the round window at the west end and Decorated-style windows are by him, and includes tracery in the chancel window, which he reopened; the galleries and box pews were removed, the chancel refurbished.

ARCHITECTURE

The church at Ruthin is a double-naved church consisting of a nave and chancel of equal width on the south, a second cell of similar width and length now forming a north aisle, an organ chamber and storage area, and a vestry at the east end, above which is the tower. Against the south face is a small porch.

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

Fabrics: 'A' consists of dressed limestone blocks of medium size; some coursing; quoins of mustard yellow sandstone.

'B' is similar to 'A' but the faces of the stones are pecked, giving a rougher appearance.

'C' is medium sized, regularly coursed blocks of dressed sandstone.

'D' is similar to 'C' but the blocks are better dressed and more regular, and have pecked faces; the colour of the sandstone appears to be slightly lighter.

'E' of well-dressed red sandstone, more regular than 'C', but of the same colour, mixed with limestone

blocks; limestone for some of window dressings.

'F' is of small to medium, rather rough blocks of limestone, regularly coursed.

'A' is of 1722; 'E' is 18thC; 'B' is from 1810; 'D' is modern; 'C' is medieval, early 14thC, while 'F' is also probably medieval but of uncertain date.

Roof: slates with plain, grey ridge tiles, except for the porch which has red ridge tiles. No finials.

Drainage: a concrete and brick-lined drainage trench on the west and south sides, to a depth of 0.3m. Nothing visible on the east and north.

Exterior

North Aisle and base of Tower. General. Externally there is no differentiation between these two elements.

North wall: at the east end of the building, the lower part of the wall in 'C' with occasional stone replacement in 'D'. Base of wall is largely hidden by a raised flower bed which disguises a chamfered basal plinth; this plinth is of rough limestone rubble with occasional slates incorporated, the plinth of tooled sandstone. At about 2m off the ground is a string course, probably Victorian in origin, and 2m or so above this 'C' gives way to 'B'. This stretch of the north wall is about 10m long and is then interrupted by a house known as the Old Cloisters which abuts it. Close to the house wall the 'C' masonry rises higher than elsewhere to within 2m of the wall-top. Features from the east are: i) the stub of a wall projecting at right-angles, constructed in 'A' but with sandstone in the core; ii) a two-centred arched doorway all in red sandstone, the string course arcing over as a hoodmould. Chamfered dressings do not look to be of any great age and probably the whole doorway has been renewed, though Hubbard considered that there had always been a doorway here. Approached from car park by six steps. Just to the east of the door is a corbel-like projection, just below the level of the string course which, perhaps significantly, does not continue to the east of the doorway, though there is a much eroded slate slab projecting slightly and at the right level, perhaps the sole remnant of an earlier string course; iii) set into 'A' to the west of the door is a Perpendicular four-centred arched window in buff sandstone, four lights with cusped ogee-heads and panels above. There is some mullion renewal but the rest could be original though obviously re-set; iv) immediately to the west is a square-headed window with an incomplete label, two cusped two-centred arched lights with a vertical iron rod down each, and the lights themselves blocked in sandstone rubble. Buff coloured sandstone used for everything including the label; again the window is probably original, and is thought to be a Decorated feature from the first church; in any case it is re-set for around it are small infilling lumps of limestone and even a lump of brick.

To the west of the Old Cloisters, the wall face is predominantly of 'A' with occasional blocks of sandstone; there is heavy smudge pointing and some stonework has been replaced in modern ashlar; this includes a single course running for virtually the whole length of the wall, about 1m below eaves level. At the base of the wall the chamfered plinth looks to be all limestone and much of the actual chamfer has been replaced in ashlar. Almost overlapped by the west wall of the Old Cloisters is a doorway with a two-centred arch in worn red sandstone, and a second course of sandstone blocks following the curve of the arch and perhaps acting as a relieving arch; an old heavily studded doorway. The doorway is about 1m off the ground and there is no indication of the chamfered plinth below it. West of the door is a two-centred arched window with two cusped lights and a hoodmould, all in Victorian red sandstone.

East wall: wall is built of 'F' and set into this is a high four-centred arch of two orders with foliate capitals and a hoodmould with head-stops; wholly in Victorian red sandstone. It is blocked in 'B' and in this is a two-light two-centred arched window with foliate stops to the hoodmould. Projecting from the north-east angle of the wall is the truncated wall of the former chancel, also in 'F'; some sandstone shows, probably the remnants of a window surround. On the outer side of this wall is a projecting corbel.

West wall: in 'A' (and dating to 1722) to eaves level but the gable above this and around the window is in 'B'. The window has a two-centred arch, four lights, reticulated tracery and a hoodmould with foliate stops; all in deep red sandstone and of [Victorian date]; above it a relieving arch. A circular window is set high in the gable. Set into the wall almost directly below the valley between the two west gables is a laminating panel of freestone, its purpose unclear but its former inscription probably commemorated the rebuilding of 1722.

Concealing the base of the wall is a boiler room and storage shed.

Nave and Chancel. General. Treated as one because no external differentiation between the two cells.

East wall: at the base of this wall is a worn chamfer which must be the survivor of an earlier wall. Above this the wall is of 'A' to eaves level with the gable in 'B'. Set in this is a four-light window with a two-centred arch of standard Victorian form, set in an infilling of 'B'. North of this are large sandstone quoins of 18thC date built into the wall face, beyond which the masonry changes to 'F', and a core of rubble incorporating sandstone lumps indicates the position of the south chancel wall.

South wall: in 'A' with a chamfered plinth and above this at the base of the window sills a string course of dressed blocks. One window to the west of the porch, four to the east; these have two-centred arches, three lights and reticulated tracery of varying types, hoodmoulds with badly weathering stops, all in deep red sandstone, all Victorian, and all inset into an earlier wall for the surrounding infill of smaller masonry is clearly evident. Stonework beneath eaves level is extremely sooty for the whole length of the wall.

West wall: chamfered plinth to height of c.1m. Masonry as west wall of north aisle, with 'A' up to eaves level and 'B' for gable. A two-centred arched window of three lights with a hexafoil light above, and in Hubbard's view earlier in style than its counterpart in the north nave, and could even be work of 1310 re-set; hoodmould and relieving arch as in north aisle; deep red sandstone; but contrary to Hubbard, all of the window is Victorian.

Porch. General. Of Victorian build in 'B' with sandstone dressings; flamboyant ogee-headed doorway with foliate stops to the hoodmould and small capitals on the two orders of small pillars.

Tower. General. 1st stage above the former crossing is in 'E'; then a stepped chamfer to the 2nd stage, and finally a spire which is a variation of a broach spire with small dormer windows at the cardinal points, and smaller ones, higher up, on the other four faces. Weathercock on top.

North wall: first stage has a two-centred arched window with louvre boards in stone, a stopped hoodmould, and the whole is inset into the wall face with a corbel table over the top forming a 'lintel'. A clock face over the window.

East wall: in the 1st stage is a small lancet with an angular head. Otherwise a standard belfry window with a clock face over the top.

South wall: standard belfry window but under this is a large bronze plate, presumably blocking off a window or recess.

West wall: difficult to see, but 1st stage presumed to be the same as the other faces, and the 2nd and spire stages as standard.

Interior

Porch. General. Stone slab floor, scissor truss roof, all Victorian. West wall carries a wooden plaque recording the Incorporated Society for Buildings and Churches' grant in 1853.

Nave. General. Aisle and cross passage has carpet, wood block flooring elsewhere, and one heating grille in front of chancel step; pews raised on wooden platforms. Walls plastered and painted. Late Perpendicular roof of four bays with camberbeams and all the members moulded; 96 panels, each sub-divided into four, but these are plain unlike north aisle; richly carved and painted bosses, but without the variety of the north aisle. The camberbeams are supported on wall posts resting on plain stone corbels. The intervening ribbed beams -three per bay - are also supported on smaller wall posts and corbels above the arcade, but

disappear into the wall on the south side.

North wall: arcade of four bays; two-centred arches with hoodmoulds and head-stops (see north aisle description). In extreme north-west corner is a niche - presumably for a stoup - with chamfered sandstone dressings and a cinquefoil head, which is half blocked by the west wall; late 14thC?

South wall: three splayed windows and a plain doorway of Victorian build. A few 19thC monuments.

West wall: in south-west angle is a flat-headed Perpendicular doorway with ribbed chamfers and much weathered (?) heads in the spandrels. The plan suggests this gave on to a mural chamber. Above and also across the angle is a corbel table supporting the last wall post.

North Aisle. General. The last bay of the aisle is partitioned off to form the organ chamber and a store. Floor of aisle carpetted, the pews as in nave, covering most of the aisle. Walls as nave. Elaborate late Perpendicular roof (late 15thC/early 16thC) of five bays separated by the principal camberbeams which as in the nave are supported on wall posts resting on plain stone corbels; again the intervening ribbed beams are also supported on smaller wall posts and corbels above the arcade. There are 120 large panels, each sub-divided into four small panels. 408 of these are carved with traceried circles, and with arms, badges, and inscriptions; families represented include the Stanleys. The most westerly large panels - 18 in all - are painted rather than carved, and it is believed that this was done perhaps by a local painter in the early 18thC (see section on history above).

North wall: two splayed windows, the more easterly in the organ chamber/store. Numerous monuments, and an alcove with a memorial panel (1918) and a brass of 1877 marks an original north door. In the extreme north-east corner there is a considerable thickening of the wall which now supports a wall post of the last truss, but must originally have had a different function. Does this indicate rebuilding?

East wall: a large two-centred tower arch, of two orders, and a hoodmould with stops in the form of heads; worn capitals; now filled in with a wooden panelled screen etc. Earlier 14thC.

South wall: five-bay arcade, hexagonal piers with notches in the diagonals, capitals having the characteristically Decorated scroll mould; hoodmoulds and head-stops which serve to link adjacent hoodmoulds; the most westerly has a foliate stop rather than a head. On the reveal of the west respond is a sunken stone panel with a much worn inscription to Symon Thelwell (d.1586).

Arcade wall has a slight outward lean, and there is also a slightly disconformity in the wall face just above the line of the corbels. The most easterly bay is blocked by the organ and is hardly visible, but as with the north-east corner there seems to be a wall thickening in the angle, though this does not rise to ceiling height and is of uncertain origin. Behind the organ is a piscina, which, though of 19thC date, had a medieval predecessor.

West wall: splayed window with relatively modern dressings. Possible disconformity in wall face in line with springers of window and perhaps equivalent to change in external masonry.

Tower. General. Ground floor now used as vestry. Wooden board floor at same level as north aisle. Bare walls except where arches panelled over; sandstone masonry to arch springer level, then limestone. Ceiled just above apex of arch and supported on both corbels and RSGs. Tower arches of early 14thC, and in pink or red sandstone.

North wall: two-centred arch of two orders, the inner one springing from much worn capitals, the outer from the wall reveal. Hoodmould with somewhat worn head-stops, that on the east shared with the eastern arch. The arch is blocked off and within this but off-centre is a plain, segmental arched doorway, with some limestone blocking as low as the top of the arch.

East wall: tower arch, two-centred, with two orders, so strongly articulated as almost to be separate arches (Hubbard); filleted shafts with foliated capitals, slightly worn; shared hood-stops to hoodmoulds. Blocked off and a slightly splayed two-light window set in it.

South wall: tower arch as north side with very worn capitals. In the blocked recess is set a deep, two-centred arched doorway, with chamfered mouldings; this too has been blocked, the blocking containing some limestone. Above the arch is a rectangular doorway, blocked in rough grey limestone. To the west is the tower stair doorway, a low two-centred arch, chamfered dressings without stops and all in red sandstone.

West wall: tower arch as east wall with very worn foliate capitals.

Chancel. General. One step up to chancel, two to sanctuary, three to altar; stone floors with carpet over; choir stalls raised. Walls as nave. Roof is a continuation of that in nave but painted blue. However, the bays are narrower with 18 panels rather than 24 to each bay and the camber beams have more decoration, and there is a little more variation in the bosses. Painted decoration dates from the restoration of 1965-6.

North wall: one bay of the arcade filled with the organ. Several elaborate marble memorials.

East wall: splayed window and two memorials.

South wall: two splayed windows, triple sedilia; four 17thC and 18thC memorials.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

(Descriptions taken from Hubbard with additions)

Effigies: i) fragment of the effigy of a priest, early 14thC. ii) the headless effigy of a lady, her hands in prayer, a lion at her feet, fragmentary Lombardic inscription, late 14thC, both leaning against walls in the vestry.

Chest: plank built, plain, iron fittings, three locks; 17thC?

Altar table: turned baluster legs and a guilloche pattern to the top rail; dated 1621 at the back.

Bench ends: four, drooping poppyheads, and also some tracery but in different styles, incorporated in seats in the sanctuary. Two others now used as sedilia in Cefn church, and more in the warden's house at Ruthin.

Plate: 16thC cup, paten cover of 1591, another cup and paten cover of 1597, a flagon of 1725, and others.

Registers: from 1592.

Monuments: in the chancel: Gabriel Goodman, Dean of Westminster, (d.1601), crudely carved bust, coloured, set in an arched niche, with heraldry above. John Parry, heraldic tablet of 1636. Gabriel Goodman (d.1673) and Roger Mostyn (d.1712), attributable to the Ruthin sculptor, Robert Wynne; two panels, with a Corinthian column either side, and another, twisted, in the middle, cherub heads, gadrooning, swags etc., and an urn and heraldry above. Thomas Roberts (d.1713), draperies, cherub heads, and urns and heraldry above. John Wynn (d.1725), not large, but rather grand, and of good quality, side volutes, cherub heads, heraldry at the top; it commemorates the brother of Robert Wynne, to whom it can be attributed. Mary Hughes (d.1798), by Joseph Turner, an elegant urn against an obelisk. The Hughes and Newcome monument, with its last commemoration date of 1803, by Sir Richard Westmacott, a plain tablet and inscription. Rev. Edward Jones (d.1811) and his wife Mary (d.1823), by Franceys & Spence, a symbolical scene and female figure. Joseph Ablett (d.1848), by J.H.Foley, a circular panel, with relief of a kneeling, weeping maiden; set in a tall, diminishing tablet. Also a heraldry panel to John Parry of Llanbedr (d.1636).

In the north aisle: Dr John Williams (d.1621), a marble tablet set in a stone surround, with heraldry; above is a recess with a three-centred arch, now occupied by a painting. Thomas Lloyd (d.1726). John Wynne (d.1655) and his wife Martha (d.1694), a cartouche. Embulus Jones (d.1735) and his mother, Mary (d.1747). Grace and Mary Parry (d.1699 and 1701) plus Hugh Wynne (d.1676) and others. Thomas Foulkes (d.1712) and his wife (d.1713). William Jones (d.1728).

Brasses in the north aisle: Edward Goodman, father of the Dean (d.1560), figure and inscription mounted in isolation. Another, also to Edward Goodman together with wife Ciselye (d.1583) and three sons and five daughters, all kneeling. Archdeacon Richard Newcome (d.1857), by J. Hardman & Co.

Victorian fittings include:

Font: ornate, Perpendicular in style but dating from the 1850s restoration; the earlier, 17thC, font is buried in a vault below.

Piscina: for the parochial altar is to west of the west tower arch and hidden by the organ.

Stained glass: east window by Wailes, 1855; the north aisle western-most window, 1855, designed by Bouvier, and also quarries in five south windows, c.1854-5, all by James Powell & Sons.

Plaque: in bog oak and bone depicting Llanrhudd church made by William Roberts and presented to the rector, Rev. E.H.Davies, when he left Ruthin in 1864.

Bells: six of 1843, two of 1889; also a small 'fire bell' with an inscription of 1733.

CHURCHYARD

St Peter's lies not within its churchyard, but on the northern edge of an irregular enclosure. On the west side is an iron railed enclosure containing a few selected graves; to the south is part of the yard entered by the gates of 1727 (see below), but largely devoid of visible graves; and on the east are further graves in ground that slopes gently down towards Christ's Hospital. It is reported that the churchyard was closed in 1919/20. North of the church is a carpark, the Old Cloisters and its garden, and it is not evident whether any of these 'secular' areas were ever incorporated in the original churchyard.

The churchyard towers over Prior Street running around its western side, an indicator of the natural slope down to the River Clwyd but also the fact that the churchyard has been deliberately levelled up.

Boundary: on the west the boundary is a retaining wall varying between 2m and 3m high, the height of the churchyard above the road along this side. There are buildings to the south, a limestone wall to the south-east, buildings and walls on the east and a further wall on the north-east.

Monuments: to the west and south-west of the church, in a railed off area monuments are well spread and consist almost exclusively of table and chest tombs; these appear to be 19thC, but some worn examples could be later 18thC. On the south are sparse graves, usually marked by ledgers and in some instances clearly removed from their original positions. Similarly to the east there are flat slabs with one chest tomb, the majority 19thC.

Furniture: flag pole near south gate, with a lamp just to the south-east. In front of the almshouses to the east of the church is a sundial of 1990, commemorating the 400th anniversary of the founding of Christ's Hospital.

Earthworks: nothing of significance.

Ancillary features: the main churchyard gates constructed from 1720 and erected in 1727 by Robert Davies of Wrexham and paid for by the Myddletons of Chirk; restored in 1928; main gates between two-dimensional piers and smaller side gates, the work above them building up to the central overthrow; much scrollwork. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: a few deciduous trees on the south side of the church. Yews on the east and south but mainly small.

SOURCES

Archaeologia Cambrensis 1859, 143
CPAT Field Visit: 08 November 1996
Crossley 1946, 41
Glynne 1884, 180
Gresham 1968, 165; 238
Hubbard 1986, 273
Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 203
Lloyd Williams and Underhill 1872. pls 47-48 & 50
NMR, Aberystwyth
Neaverson 1953-54, 9
Quinquennial Report 1989
Quinquennial Report 1995
Randall 1984
Soulsby 1983, 233
Thomas 1911, 117

CONDITION

Generally satisfactory, but peeling paintwork internally, particularly at the west end.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Poor to Medium

St Asaph

Diocese St Asaph**Dedication** St Kentigern & St Asa**PRN** 16955**NGR** SJ03697431

SUMMARY

The church of St Kentigern and St Asa lies close to the River Clwyd in the heart of the small cathedral town of St Asaph. It was originally built in the 13thC if the lancet window in the south wall is a reliable guide, but its Perpendicular style betrays the fact that the south nave was reconstructed on the earlier foundations in 1524, and its northern nave was added at some subsequent point in the 16thC. Sir George Gilbert Scott erected the porch, bellcote and vestry during his 1872 restoration. Inside are a 16thC hammerbeam roof with an embossed boarded ceiling over the south nave and a plainer one over the north aisle, a Romanesque font, and 17th-18thC monuments to the Lloyd family. The churchyard may originally have been sub-circular though its shape has been modified; considerable clearance of its gravestones took place in the 1970s.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Double-naved church generally in the Perpendicular style. Original nave and chancel on the south side constructed in sandstone in the 13thC, and a single lancet survives from this structure together with some walling; it appears too that at this early stage there was a north aisle or nave for there are early pillar bases. Church thought to have been reconstructed on the old foundations in 1524 when new windows were incorporated and the structure was reroofed with the present hammerbeams. North aisle added in limestone at some unrecorded point later in the 16thC; this, too, has a hammerbeam roof. At some stage the wall tops were either rebuilt or heightened, and the west end of the nave was rebuilt.

South porch, bellcote and north vestry added by Scott during the 1872 restoration, but the south doorway itself must be earlier, and there are records of an earlier porch.

HISTORY

St Kentigern (Cyndeyrn) reputedly founded the church about 560, and the churchyard form and its location beside the Clwyd serve to confirm the early medieval foundation. From later documentary sources it is evident that St Asaph was the clas or mother church for the district. It seems likely that the dedication to St Asa was added in the middle of the 12thC.

The church was recorded with the cathedral in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, but appears in a separate record in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 with a value of £7 13s 4d. From this century too comes the earliest fabric in the church.

The south nave was rebuilt in 1524, this date on the basis of an inscription on the chancel window, recorded in 1614, that stated 'opus vitreum et lapidum factum fuit et finitum AD 1524'. It is assumed that the hammerbeam roofs also date from this time.

In 1629-30, the south porch fell down in storms and was rebuilt, and in 1687 a new south doorway was inserted.

A new gallery was erected in 1829.

Glynne seems to have visited St Asaph at some unspecified date in the middle of the 19thC and again in 1872 at the time of restoration. Describing the Perpendicular building in terms that can be recognised at present, he also referred to a very plain south porch, a 'plain and barn-like roof' to the north aisle, and northern and western galleries the latter holding the organ formerly in the cathedral. The east window of the chancel was too large and Glynne thought he detected alterations to it, the lancet in the south wall he thought perhaps original; several other windows were described.

Restoration work by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1872 included the removal of the north aisle gallery, the old pews, and a three-decker pulpit on the south wall between the south door and the roodlight. The building was re-pewed with open oak seats, the organ was transferred to the north aisle, the chancel paved with encaustic tiles and a new openwork carved pulpit introduced. A new south porch and new north vestry were erected.

In 1901, the organ from Llanrhaiadr was installed, and that that had been transferred from the cathedral in 1830 was given to Llanynys.

Some minor restoration work took place in 1911.

The font was re-sited in its original position near south door in 1954, and the holy water stoup was removed from outside the west door and placed in the church in 1973.

The 1872 vestry was converted to modern kitchen premises including toilet facilities in 1992.

ARCHITECTURE

The church is a double naved structure with a south porch, a north vestry and a bellcote over the west end of the south nave. Its main axis is oriented fractionally north of grid west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of medium to large blocks of red sandstone, coursed; some remnant limewash.

'B' is of small to large blocks of shaped limestone; occasionally small lumps of other material including brick, possibly used at a later date to fill in the interstices; irregular coursing; some remnant limewash.

'C' is of small to medium-sized blocks of regular, quarried limestone with very occasional small blocks of buff sandstone; irregular coursing; fine grained yellow sandstone dressings.

'D' consists of small to medium blocks of red, orange, buff and olive sandstone, regular coursing; may be occasional re-used blocks. Quoins of red, yellow and grey sandstone.

'E' is a mixture of small and medium sized blocks of sandstone of different colours, and some limestone, effectively a cross between 'A' and 'D'; most though not all of the blocks are regularly fashioned, with regularly fashioned limestone quoins.

'F' consists of small to medium, often irregular lumps of limestone, with occasional sandstone inclusions, rather randomly coursed, though heavy pointing confuses its appearance, and it is not certain that it should be treated as a separate fabric type.

'A' is from the 13thC, 'D' is of 1524, 'B' is 16thC, 'E' is post-Reformation but pre-19thC, 'F' is contemporary or later than 'E', and 'C' dates to the restoration of 1872.

Roofs: slates with plain ridge tiles; stone cross finials on all gables except the west end of the south nave (occupied by bellcote) and the vestry. Wave moulded parapets with moulded kneelers are 1872 additions; mason's marks appear as carved roundels with inner rays carved on all kneelers and at least one quoin.

Drainage: guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways on the south side. Concrete drainage channel runs along the base of the north wall from the boiler house, and along the east and south walls as far as the porch.

Exterior

North Aisle. General. No external differentiation between north aisle and north chapel.

North wall: in 'B' to about three-quarter height, but the uppermost 1m or so is in 'E'. Features from west are: i) a red and yellow sandstone arch appears to be the blocked doorway to the former west gallery; blocking material of rubble and some dressed sandstone. Entrance appears to be cut through both 'B' and 'E'. ii) vestry. iii) two-light window with four-centred head and a hoodmould in yellow-grey sandstone which shows some replacement though the head or mask stops could be original - however that on the west has either been chopped away or sealed during the construction of the chimney of the vestry; the lights have cinquefoiled, two-centred heads; weathered dressings of pink sandstone with deeply hollowed chamfers to the jambs; iron fittings for shutters; all the stonework is original except for the mullions and some patching to the sill. iv) at the base of the wall is the roof of the subterranean boiler house in brick, accessible via steps running down beside the wall. The walling beside the steps indicates that the sub-surface courses of the north aisle wall are of massive blocks of limestone which are dressed and do not look to be simply foundation slabs. v) a four-centred arched window lights the chancel; it has a hoodmould with mask stops, three four-centred lights containing cinquefoil tracery, and sunken spandrels above; the dressings in pink sandstone are weathered, with deeply hollowed chamfers to the sides; mullions replaced, and perhaps also the hoodmould though not the stops? Iron fittings for shutters.

East wall: the heavily mortared fabric is weathered and discoloured. Whether the bottom courses are in 'B' cannot be ascertained, but 'E' rises to within c.1.5m of the gable apex where it is replaced by 'F'. The east window has hollowed chamfers, a two-centred arch with an original hoodmould and mask stops, four two-centred lights with cinquefoil tracery, a transom, two sub-arches and panel tracery, also foiled. Two of the main mullions have been renewed but much of the stonework is original.

West wall: lower part of wall in 'B', with larger blocks of limestone forming a slightly battered base; upper part of wall in 'F'. On the south side and underneath the aisle roof is the juncture with the masonry of the south nave, a sign that the latter was earlier. The window has a four-centred arch over three two-centred lights with cinquefoil tracery, and a hoodmould with animal stops; some original sandstone dressings notably the yellow and grey sandstone of the chamfered jambs, the stops and perhaps the hoodmould, but the mullions and the tracery have been renewed.

Vestry. General. From 1872 in fabric 'C'; short angle buttresses in yellow sandstone at north corners; a sandstone chimney rising above the north wall of the aisle, a four-centred doorway in the west wall, and foiled, ogee-headed windows in the north and east walls, the former also having a blocked slit window high up in the gable. Relieving arch over the three-light north window.

South Nave and Chancel. General. Not differentiated externally. South wall basal courses (up to window sill level, at about 1.3m) appear to be the foundations of the earlier church, in 'A' and are battered. Curiously the visible courses at the very bottom are in mixed grey and buff sandstone on both the south and east walls - it has been suggested that these are an inserted, later feature to assist drainage; above 1.3m the wall is in 'D', while the last 0.5m at the top of the wall is in 'B'-type limestone.

East wall: dominated by a large east window but the surrounding masonry is very mixed. There is 'A' in the lower courses though no batter, while around the window itself is mixed stone with some 'D' appearing on the north side. Above the window the mortar is particularly heavy and it might be 'E' or 'F'. The window is four-centred, with five stepped lights that have ogee heads and cinquefoil tracery, individual transoms and panel tracery above; the hollowed chamfers are original, but not the mullions and perhaps not the tracery, while the hoodmould has simple stops and could also be renewed. At the north end of this wall which is actually beyond the valley and thus strictly speaking in the east wall of the north aisle is a butt joint in sandstone to a height of around 3m; the south angle of the east wall has limestone quoins up to c.1m below the eaves. Could the sandstone quoins thus be the original 13thC quoins, the limestone from the early 16thC rebuilding? There are some signs of infilling around the window suggesting it has been inserted into an earlier wall. A quoin high up at the south-east corner has the re-used part of an early stone carved on its east face.

South wall: in 'A' and 'D'. From west the features are: i) large four-centred window arches with four ogee-

headed lights with cinquefoil tracery and panel tracery above. Some of the jambstones and possibly the hoodmould are original, but the tracery is perhaps replaced as are the other dressings. ii) single lancet in red sandstone; the sill has been renewed but the rest could be 13thC. iii) porch. iv) a second four-light window in pink and buff sandstone as i); it is difficult to determine how much of this is original; in appearance it is very uniform and the arrises are sharp; the degree of masonry disturbance around the window indicates at least some renewal.

West wall: shows several fabrics with 'A' and then 'D', but from the base of the window upwards there is more limestone which may indicate some rebuilding in 'B'. At the bottom is a doorway with a four-centred arch and a hoodmould without stops; the jambs have complex mouldings, and the whole is in original pink and yellow sandstone. Above is a four-centred window with three foiled ogee-headed lights with panel tracery over the central light and quatrefoils above the outer ones; hoodmould with simple stops; in weathered red sandstone, though renewal of the mullions, some of the tracery, and perhaps the hoodmould.

South gable rises to a gabled bellcote in yellow sandstone with a single aperture and a cross finial. From 1872.

Porch. General. In 'C' from 1872, with blocks of quarry cut limestone, though upper parts of side walls in red and yellow sandstone. Stepped angle buttresses, small square-headed windows with foiled lights and labels with simple stops in the east and west walls, and a two-centred doorway with chamfered dressings and a hoodmould; closed off by a pair of iron gates on the south side.

Interior

Porch. General. Now used for storage. Stone floor of regular paving slabs. Stone benches against the east and west sides. Roof of three arch-braced collar trusses, with purlins and two tiers of foiled windbraces, and rafters and a boarded ceiling above.

North wall: heavy, studded doorway with '1687 R R R I S I E I' set out in smaller studs. This doorway is set in a heavy moulded frame which projects from the wall and hides the stonework.

North Aisle. General. This is wider than the southern nave and chancel. A stone flagged floor, largely carpetted, while the organ is sited on a raised planked floor at the west end; at the east end is a baptistry, raised one step above the aisle and carpetted over. Furnished with loose chairs. Walls plastered and painted except for window dressings. Hammerbeam roof of ten bays with eleven arch-braced collar trusses and cusped, curved struts. Hammerbeams have heart-shaped terminals.

North wall: segmental arch over door to vestry at west end, approached by two steps; two deeply splayed windows; one marble memorial of 1698, another of 1795/8 and a third of the 19thC together with a brass also of the 19thC.

East wall: splayed east window; one marble memorial of 1843.

South wall: five-bay arcade, with two-centred chamfered arches of two orders, supported on slender octagonal piers with keeled shafts and hollowed concave corners; matching moulded capitals and octagonal bases. Three stone corbels, earlier than the present roof design, protrude above the arcade; two of these are rectangular and spaced far enough apart to have been roof supports, but the third has a dished top and is no more than 0.4m from one of the rectangular corbels, suggesting a different function.

West wall: nothing to note, other than an 1845 memorial, perhaps of wood but probably of stone.

Nave. General. Stone flagged floor, carpetted central aisle; raised planked floors under two rows of benches. Walls plastered and painted; splayed window embrasures. The nave and chancel have a

continuous hammerbeam roof of ten bays with eleven heavily moulded, stop-chamfered arch-braced collars, with cusped struts and principals creating one quatrefoil and two trefoils above each collar; the hammerbeams on the north side all have heart-shaped terminals, except for one with an angel; on the south are alternate hammerbeams with heart-shaped terminals and ordinary arch braces which spring from the wall plates but are distinguished by carved heads at the junctions (excepting one plain example over the most westerly window); two stone corbels are utilised. Four tiers of purlins supporting a boarded ceiling with carved bosses at the intersections of the purlins and moulded rafters. Hubbard implied that the hammerbeams were so slight that they were more decorative than functional.

The rood loft, which was removed in 1872, was sited above one of the central bays; the two large stone corbels supported it and it was lit by the deeply splayed lancet window, though these relics are rather far west of where the roodscreen might have been expected.

North wall: three and a half bays of the arcade as described under the north aisle (above). One marble memorial of 1802/1811.

East wall: a step only.

South wall: south door has an usually high reveal with a two-centred soffit, slightly splayed. The lancet window appears to have a double chamfer to its head, internally. Royal arms over south door. Marble memorials of 1732 and 1717, and a brass of 1695/6.

West wall: inside the west door is an inner panelled porch with a castellated parapet. 19thC font immediately to the north of it. Two 19thC marble memorials.

Chancel. General. One step up from the nave, two to the sanctuary, one to the altar. 19thC tiled floor, some encaustic; longitudinal choir stalls on raised planked floors; walls and roof described under nave (above).

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

East wall: 19thC reredos.

South wall: double piscina in Decorated style to east of window; in pink sandstone, with simple two-centred heads, but the base covered over in wood. Marble memorial of 1680/1715, another of 1711, and a stone one of 1750.

Vestry. General. Stepped up from the north aisle. Carpetted floor, plastered walls, pitch pine roof. Disused fireplace in south-east corner.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: Romanesque bowl, square with projecting and expanding ribs at corners, and raised panels on sides; on a modern metal stand.

Architectural fragment: carved slab with circular pattern built into the quoins at south-east corner of chancel.

Chest: churchwarden's chest with iron bands and three clasp locks.

Grave slabs: to Thomas Foulkes (d.1672). [Reported by earlier commentators, but not seen during current visits].

Monuments: to John Lloyd (d.1680) and family, a large round-headed marble monument, with urns, putto, garlands etc. A draped tablet to Thomas Humphries of Bodelwyddan (d.1698); the tablet supported by four winged cherubs, heraldry and a garland above it. To Thomas Lloyd (d.1711), his wife and children; a red-

painted hatchment incorporated as the head of a white marble memorial that has a draped cartouche. A second small hatchment over a black slate tablet is indecipherable. To Pierce Foulkes (d.1717) and family, in Latin, a marble tablet with heraldry, putti and urns. To William Lloyd (d.1732), Richard Lloyd (d.1736) and Robert Lloyd (d.1777), a tripartite monument in marble and black slate. To Anne Lloyd (d.1750) in ?slate; a small stone with heraldry above it. To Anne, wife of Bromfield Ffoulkes of Gwerneigrôn (d.1795) and Bromfield Ffoulkes (d.1798).

Royal Arms: painted on a panel, Hanoverian, pre 1801. Located over the south door.

Plate: includes a chalice and cover of 1621, another chalice of 1622, a salver of 1721, and an alms-dish and flagon of 1737.

Registers: from 1593.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Carved timber reredos, traceried choir stalls, octagonal carved pulpit on stone base, all from the restoration of 1872.

Stained glass: easternmost on south side by Kempe and Tower, dating to 1912; another by H Hughes, 1877.

Monuments: a small marble tablet to Sarah Kelly (d.1856) in sanctuary.

Brass: to Thomas Ffoulkes (d.1810), buried at Liverpool.

CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is small and polygonal, though one suspects that formerly it was more curvilinear. Certainly a segment on the south was surrendered for road widening in 1960. Well kept; closed for burials in 1871.

Boundary: enclosed by a stone wall constructed in 1815. On the south side the wall is topped by iron railings and may relate to the changes of 1960 noted above, but the 1987 Listed Building Schedule attributes the railings to 1815.

Monuments: it retains a number of 17thC-19thC gravestones now re-sited around the perimeter and paths. The earliest slab is to Sion Tudyr, bard of Wygfair (d.1602). Also a pitched chest to Robert Jones (d.1794). East of the chancel are some ledgers of early 18thC date. Much of the area was cleared of marked graves and levelled in 1973, leaving virtually none in situ.

Furniture: a sundial, south-west of the nave. Tapering circular stem c.1.2m high on a square base, but the plate and gnomon have gone, and part of the stem has flaked away. Claimed as possibly 16thC in the 1987 Listed Building Schedule but unlikely to be that early.

Earthworks: ground level beyond the boundary to the south is now well above the churchyard and there is a drop of at least 1m into the interior. On the west the yard is raised by about 1m, and there appears to be a similar drop outside the north side.

Ancillary features: a pair of iron gates form the south-east corner entrance, with eight steps down into the interior; also a single iron gate in the north-west corner. Tarmac paths around the south side of the church.

Vegetation: nine mature yews, the largest located in the south-west corner. Mix of 19thC bushes and ornamental trees, some conifers and some bush yews.

SOURCES

Archaeologia Cambrensis, 1945, 196.
Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings for St Asaph 1987
CPAT Field Visit: 16 August 1996 & 17 April 1998
Clwyd SMR
Faculty St Asaph 1829 (NLW): gallery construction
Faculty St Asaph 1871 (NLW): churchyard closure
Faculty St Asaph 1871 (NLW): church restoration
Faculty St Asaph 1888 (NLW): church alterations
Faculty St Asaph 1960 (NLW): churchyard loss
Faculty St Asaph 1862 (NLW): churchyard clearance
Glynne 1884, 85
Hubbard 1986, 441
NMR Aberystwyth
Quinquennial Review 1994
Thomas 1908, 383

CONDITION

Generally good. Plaster peeling off west wall of north aisle interior. South side bulging. General weathering of sandstones.

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 to Good

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium to Good

Tremeirchion

Diocese	St Asaph	Dedication	Corpus Christi
PRN	16966	NGR	SJ08287308
		Previous dedication	Holy Trinity

SUMMARY

The church of Corpus Christi is situated in the small village of Tremeirchion, about three miles to the east of St Asaph. The church is first recorded in the 1291 Taxation, and the building itself is a single chambered structure which has been claimed as 14thC. However there has been some reconstruction, perhaps in 1726 and a north transept was added in the 19thC. Inside is a late medieval arch-braced roof, two medieval effigies, several fragments of sepulchral stones which may date to the 14thC, and a Perpendicular font; the south windows contain fragments of 15C and 17thC glass. The churchyard, until its enlargement in the early 20thC was small and broadly polygonal.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Single chambered church, the stonework of which has been attributed to the 14thC on the evidence of the south and west doors; one surviving medieval window to the west of the porch may be Perpendicular, though its arch looks 18thC. Much of the south wall was probably rebuilt in 1726, and it is conceivable that some of the west wall was also rebuilt at this time. Restorations at various times in the 19thC, and again in 1913. Some windows were replaced by grouped lancets, probably in 1858/1859. The date of the porch is uncertain but it could be as early as the 17thC.

HISTORY

This is reputedly the only medieval church in Britain dedicated to Corpus Christi. Browne Willis suggested its original dedication was to the Holy Trinity with a possible rededication in the 16thC.

It has been proposed as the site of a cell founded in the 6thC by one of the followers of St Beuno. St Beuno's well is located c.500m from the site, but there is little substantive to indicate an early medieval foundation.

The manor of Tremeirchion was recorded in Domesday Book in 1086. The church was not mentioned in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, but appears first in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 as the chapel of 'Dymeychyaw', appropriated to the cathedral at St Asaph.

Little is known of the medieval church other than what can be gleaned from the surviving architecture.

In 1774 Dr Johnson visited the church and wrote that 'the church at Dymeirchion is in a dismal condition, the seats all tumbling about, the Altar rail falling, the vessels for the consecrated elements only pewter, the cloth upon the table in a thousand holes, and the floor strewn with rushes'. There were also painted Welsh texts on the walls.

Dormer windows which still survive lit a gallery at the west end. In 1809 an organ was placed in this minstrels/singers gallery which was fronted by Benefaction boards.

In 1858/59 the two-light east window which contained 14thC stained glass was replaced with the present one. The remains of the early window were positioned in the vestry. The north transept was built in 1864 to increase the accommodation for the congregation.

Glynne visited the church soon after the transept was added. His description of the fenestration included a possible Decorated window north of the altar. 'The interior had rather a modern appearance, and the roof [had] a modern ceiling of bad appearance, the original roof being removed. There [were] texts in illuminated characters on zinc on the walls'. He mentioned the two effigies in the church, and also several of the sepulchral slabs now in the church but then in the churchyard.

Reseating and restoration work in 1874 included taking down the west gallery, removing the organ and placing it in the north transept. The west end door was walled up on the inside and made secure, and general repairs and improvements were made.

Further restoration work took place in 1913, when the church was closed and services were held in the schoolroom. The 1913 alterations included the removal of a chimney, which rose above the angle between the north wall of the nave and the west wall of the transept, and the interior stove that it was connected to, the removal of the font from mid-way along the south wall to inside the south door, some alterations to the seating arrangements and the construction of a boiler house adjoining the east wall of the north transept. Plans were to the design of Harold Hughes, the Diocesan Architect.

The early font, now in use again, had been replaced in 1879 by a new marble one. The position of this new font can be traced by the marks worn into the flagged floor near the south door. The octagonal pedestal base of the 19thC font now lies in the churchyard near the north-west corner and the font itself was passed on to a church in Cirencester in 1970.

ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a north transept, a south porch, and over the west end of the nave a bellcote. The church 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 of heavily mortared, small to medium blocks of medium grained limestone and grey and buff coloured pebblestones. Quoins in dressed limestone and sandstone at all corners. Remnants of limewash. 'B' comprises small to large blocks of limestone with some grey and beige slabs of fine-grained sandstone; limestone quoins at the north-east and north-west corners.

'C' is primarily of grey and brown-stained sandstone with occasional blocks of limestone; random coursing; some limewash residue.

'D' is of blocks and slabs of grey and iron-stained siltstone (or similar); random coursing.

'A' is supposedly 14thC, 'C' is undated but is almost certainly post-Reformation and might be 18thC, 'D' is also undated and 'B' is from 1864.

Roofs: slates with plain stone ridge tiles. Cross finials on the bellcote (damaged), the gable end of the north transept and the east end of the chancel.

Drainage: hollowed along the south side, and a stone surface gutter along the west wall. Nothing visible elsewhere other than downpipes.

Exterior

Nave. General. All in Fabric 'A'.

North wall: two large buttresses in 'C', measuring c.2m deep and 1m+ wide and about 1.5m high, sloping up to the height of the nave roof with the slate cappings, a continuation of the nave/chancel roof; constructed

entirely in medium blocks of limestone. Between them a square-headed window. This is small, has a chamfered frame in olive-green sandstone and contains three square-headed lights, the most easterly of which is blocked; its jamb on the east side is disguised by the buttress; the window is domestic in style and Hubbard thought it might be 17thC. East of the more easterly buttress are paired 19thC lancets in yellow-grey sandstone. In the roof a dormer window that formerly lit the west gallery; paired, wooden, foiled lights with a cinquefoil above.

South wall: features from the west are i) a round-headed unchamfered two-light window; the arch looks 18thC but the lights are in Perpendicular style with trefoiled, round heads of coarse appearance, and sunken spandrels above. The mullion and sill have been renewed, as have the eastern jambstones. ii) a dormer window showing a distinct tilt. An exterior staircase to the gallery together with its associated doorway have been removed from the angle between the south wall and the west wall of the porch. iii) porch. Between iii) and iv) is a disconformity in the wall. To the west the wall has a tendency to bulge at the top while to the east it is plumb or slightly battered inwards; the result is that at the top the wall is inset by perhaps 0.1m, at the base there is no visible change, but the material to the east looks to be of 'B' type though with some iron-stained limestone. Overall this suggests that the eastern section has been rebuilt. Furthermore from the porch eastwards there is a projecting plinth at the base of the wall to a height of about 0.4m; a little beyond the disconformity noted above the material of the plinth becomes rougher. iv) a 19thC set of paired lancets. v) a stone set in the wall is carved 'W. Prd R.W. Ward 1726', probably an indication of when the south wall was rebuilt. vi) a further set of paired lancets as iv). Wall continues for the chancel without any differentiation

West wall: the wall is probably in fabric 'A' though there are a few blocks of sandstone as well as pebblestones, and it is conceivable that the upper part above the doorway is reconstructed. A disconformity at the northern end of this wall suggests that the angle may have rebuilt, but as the west door is slightly off centre it is also possible that the north wall has now been repositioned through rebuilding or thickening. The west doorway has a two-centred arch and jambs in buff and yellow sandstone, some perhaps renewed; attributed to the 14thC; door itself is studded and old. The doorway is now unused, and is blocked off internally.

Bellcote above the west gable, its single aperture with a two-centred arch and slabs of beige-coloured sandstone. The date of this is uncertain but probably pre-19thC.

North Transept. General. Constructed in 1864 in 'B'. The north wall has three stepped lancets in beige sandstone and the west and east walls have single foiled two-centred lights in similar stone.

Chancel. General. All in Fabric 'A'. Note there is no external division between the nave and chancel on the south side.

North wall: visible to the east of the north transept and contains 19thC paired lancets of slender form, clearly inserted into the wall. Two buttresses: the more westerly is the shorter of the two and in 'B'; that at the east angle is in 'C' and is comparable to those on the north side of the nave. Its east side bulges badly.

East wall: the base of the wall (to a height of 0.3m) projects slightly. The fabric looks like 'B' rather than 'A', but the east window of three stepped lancets in standard sandstone under a four-centred limestone relieving arch is inserted. The original may have been 0.4m longer for the masonry beneath the window shows a filling of sandstone blocks.

South wall: the plinth is a continuation of that on the nave, but it stops about 0.6m short of the end of the wall, for no obvious reason. Window comprises a set of paired lancets comparable with those in the nave.

Porch. General. In 'D'.

East wall: plain.

South wall: above the open front is a pegged, four-centred timber arch from 1980 forming the entrance, with

a tie beam above, and then an open, stud gable; the wall posts supporting the arch are set inside the stone side walls and rest on the ends of the porch's stone benches.

West wall: plain except for a weathered, carved stone from a medieval sepulchral slab at the south angle.

Interior

South Porch. General. Below ground level with one step down from the path. A floor of slate slabs and exposed stone walls. A roof with one moulded arch-braced collar with wooden pegs, a short distance away from the nave wall; otherwise a single bay; exposed rafters and the purlins have windbraces - this appears original but it is reported that it was rebuilt with old oak in 1967. Timber wall plates sealed in the stonework on the east, west and north walls indicate that the walls have been built up in a later phase of development. On the north side this is because the roof of the porch rises higher than the eaves of the nave.

North wall: south doorway of church has a two-centred arch with chamfered jambs and pyramid stops. Original stonework survives (except for one arch stone) and is attributed to the 14thC. Heavy, oak, vertically planked and studded door with wrought ironwork. Timber wall plate sealed in masonry (as described above) and then a small rectangular alcove intended for a statue.

East and west walls: flagstone benches mounted on stone plinths; the west bench utilises a medieval sepulchral slab, split laterally.

Nave. General. One step down from the porch. Stone flagged floor includes gravestones, not visible below the carpets; raised planked floor under benches. Floor slopes gently down from west to east. Batter to north and south walls - all walls plastered and painted; no stonework exposed apart from the dressed stones of the windows and a single incised sandstone block exposed within the westernmost window aperture on the south side. The tops of the side walls have panelling running along their length. Roof is late medieval with six bays formed by five arch-braced trusses with plain struts; exposed rafters and through purlins with two tiers of curved windbraces. Two surviving dormers lit a gallery, and the second truss from the west lacks bracing and has mortice slots that related to the gallery structure.

North wall: splayed window embrasures only, with a broad gap to the north transept at the east end.

East wall: no differentiation other than a change in the roof timberwork.

South wall: square headed, splayed reveal to south door has a lintel formed by a coffin lid bearing an incised cross flanked by sword and axe. One 20thC memorial. The westernmost window has a sepulchral slab fragment built into the reveal.

West wall: plastered, and the west door blocked off. Two hatchments.

North Transept. General. An addition of 1864. Carpetted central aisle and two rows of benches on raised planked floor. Plastered walls and a ceiling with two exposed purlins, and a massive tie-beam (or wallplate?) bridging the full width entrance to the nave.

North wall: stepped lancets with rich coloured stained glass from 1865. Medieval effigy on the window sill with an associated stone plaque set into the wall beneath it.

East and west walls: window embrasures with two-centred soffits.

Chancel. General. One step up to sanctuary. Walls as nave. Seven arch-braced collar trusses, much narrower than the nave arch braces, once supported a wagon ceiling; three through purlins. Wall plates recessed by about 0.5m.

North wall: has a canopied tomb in 14thC Decorated style containing the effigy of a priest. Also a brass of 1713, two marble memorials, one of the 19thC and one of the 20thC, a 20thC brass, and a wooden board, also 20thC.

East wall: a modern reredos.

South wall: windows very deeply splayed. Stone monument of 1721, a metal plaque of 1879 and a brass of 1900.

FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

(Descriptions from Hubbard with additions)

Sepulchral slabs: various fragments of 13th and 14thC slabs: i) small block with leaf patterns set in the reveal of the westernmost south window; late 14thC. ii) in the external west wall of the porch, an early 14thC fragment of a floriated-cross slab; iii) four loose fragments in the porch of the later 13thC, the remains of the Hunydd Stone which was broken up in 1864, when some of the fragments were incorporated into the churchyard wall near the south-west gates; these were later moved to the porch. The stone bore a Latin inscription translated as 'Here lies Hunydd wife of Carwed son of Hywel whose soul may it rest in peace'. iv) part of a late 13thC interlaced cross slab, used in the west bench of the porch.

Effigies: i) in the north transept the effigy of a knight, which lay on the floor near the west door until the transept was built. Traditionally thought to be Sir Robert Pounderling, Governor of Dyserth Castle, who died c.1300; the cross-legged Crusader is grasping a sword, and his head is on a cushion. Pennant in 1781 refers to this effigy being set on a mutilated tomb

ii) in the chancel north wall is the effigy of Dafydd ap Hywel ap Madog (Dafydd Ddu Hiraddug), Vicar of Tremeirchion and Canon of St Asaph in the late 14thC. The inscription reads 'Hic:Jacet:David:F:K:Ovel:F:Madoc'. It is set in a canopied tomb on the north side of the altar, a position of honour. The front of the tomb is divided into seven panels, each containing a shield depicting various instruments of passion, Fleur de Lys, Crown, chevrons etc. The crown of the heavily moulded arch above the cinquefoiled canopy has a male and female figure presumed to be the parents of Dafydd. Within the canopy, the tonsured and vested effigy of the priest, his head on a cushion and his feet on a lion, is located lying on a tomb-chest; both canopy and tomb-chest are dotted with a small floral motif. iii) the 14thC effigy of an unnamed priest is now at St Bueno's College.

Font: Perpendicular in style; an octagonal bowl, stem and base, with foiled sunken panels on the stem, and coving between the stem and bowl; two of the faces on the bowl have raised ridges. Fitted with a modern oak cover.

Stoup: a cylindrical bowl of grey sandstone.

Stained glass: i) 15thC glass includes tabernacle work, a nimbed cleric, and the head of St Anne. These are set in inner panels protected by ordinary glass in the more westerly window on the south side. ii) another south window contains a few early quarries, and early 17thC portrait panels of James I, John Williams (Keeper of the Great Seal, Bishop of Lincoln and Archbishop of York) and Charles I. The portraits were fixed in a window at Tremeirchion vicarage (though this does not seem to have been their original home) and were moved to their present location in 1955.

Chest: large carved oak churchwardens' chest with iron bands. Carved "R.I. P.E. Wardens 1740".

Monuments: memorial to Catherine Davies (d.1721) in stone, painted black with gold lettering.

Brass: 18thC brass decorated with skull; a Latin inscription to Sir Thomas Salusbury of Bachegraig (d.1713) and his wife Lucy (d.1746).

Hatchments: two of the Salusbury family, one in an extremely poor condition.

Bell: cast in Wigan in 1778. There is also a hand bell on the north window ledge.

Bible: illustrated edition in case near to pulpit. Published in Oxford in 1717, re-bound in 1846 and repaired in 1916.

Registers: from 1590.

19th and 20thC furnishings and fittings include:

Altar cross (1896), rails (1897), lectern (1930), pulpit and reading desk (1937). The present organ is a 20thC gift, not the one that was sited in the gallery.

Stained glass: 19thC restoration windows are the east window by Oliphant with central Ascension theme, and the north and south by Ballantine & Son. The north transept window also by Ballantine depicts the Adoration of the Magi.

Monuments: a marble tablet to John Roberts, former rector, (d.1829), by W.Spence of Liverpool; a white marble tablet to Hester Lynch Piozzi (d.1821), nee Salisbury. The vault in which she was buried in 1821 lay on the north side of the church until the north transept was built over it.

Collecting box: inscribed 'Tremeirchion 1850'.

CHURCHYARD

An original polygonal enclosure with the church almost centrally placed and small extensions on the north-east and perhaps the south-west sides. The first recorded extension was in 1864 with later ones in 1910 and 1931. Very well-kept.

Boundary: stone wall about c.1.2m high around old churchyard, with the Old School House (constructed 1835) on the south, though it should be noted that this has a mounting block provided by the churchwardens and carrying a date of 1774; a hedge to the new north-east extension.

Monuments: mix of sandstone slabs, chests, crosses and table tombs with modern burials in the eastern extension. 17thC and 18thC graves laid flat near the south-west corner of the church, the earliest seen being a 1631 slab.

Attached to the churchyard wall near the south-west entrance is a weathered coffin lid, c.1m long, incised with a round-headed Calvary Cross with possibly a worn head within the circle.

Furniture: opposite the porch is a sundial said to have been created in 1748 from the shaft of the 14thC churchyard cross. The square stem is carved S M Nantgwillim 1748 and church registers for June 1748 refer to "Item: to remove the Old Cross and convert the same to a Dial Post, and purchase a good dial for the same". The dial and gnomon have gone. The head of the cross was sold in 1862 for £5 and presented to St Beuno's College, the proceeds being used to purchase lamps for the church.

Earthworks: raised on the north-west by 0.5m, on the west by 0.2m, but not on the south-east though here there is a curve to the churchyard wall. A slight bank remains on the north-east where the churchyard was extended.

Ancillary features: lychgate, in stone with slate roof and stone coping. The roof has two trusses, that on the church side being a slightly arched tie beam which with the purlins and some of the rafters could be original - perhaps 17thC or 18thC? Tarmac path leads to the porch and bifurcates with branches to north-west, north-east and south-west. A second entrance in the south-west corner entrance leads in through a pair of iron gates with an arch over, set in sandstone pillars carved 'E.D., R.H., Churchwarden 1731'.

Vegetation: 12 large yews encircle the churchyard, the largest and oldest to either side of the south-western path. Four clipped 19thC yews alongside the south-west and south path.

SOURCES

Church guide n.d.
CPAT Field Visit 30 May 1996 + 17 April 1998
Clwyd SMR
Faculty St Asaph 1874 (NLW): church alterations
Faculty St Asaph 1910 (NLW): churchyard extension
Faculty St Asaph 1943 (NLW): churchyard extension
Glynne 1884, 88
Gresham 1968, 82; 84; 111; 174; 219; 224
Hubbard 1986, 448
NLW, St. Asaph Parish Files F/5.10.1874
NMR Aberystwyth
Quinquennial Report 1989
Thomas 1908, 422

CONDITION

The church is structurally sound and well-maintained. Well-kept churchyard.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium

Trevor

Diocese	St Asaph	Dedication	None
PRN	16968	NGR	SJ25804221

GENERAL SUMMARY

Trevor church which seems not to have a dedication is situated in the grounds of Trevor Hall about 4km to the east of Llangollen. The building was constructed in c.1717, but consecrated only in 1772. Of simple design, it has few architectural embellishments and its windows are Victorian or later. Inside there is little of 18thC date, but fragments of fittings from elsewhere, including stained glass and window mouldings have been re-used. There is no churchyard.

ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Single cell building with little distinction in the masonry; windows in the long walls probably inserted in 1841, that in east wall as recently as 1930.

Some use of fittings from elsewhere, and this certainly includes a complex window moulding in the vestry.

HISTORY

A private chapel for the Lloyds of Trevor Hall was built here in c.1717 according to Thomas (Lewis says 1742), though it has been claimed that there was a medieval chapel at Trevor which was served from Valle Crucis. The basis for this tradition is not known, though in the 15thC Bishop John Trevor lived at the hall and reputedly used the chapel.

The building was not consecrated until 1772, when John Lloyd made provision for an endowment under an indenture. It then served as a chapel of ease for the townships of Trevor Ucha and Trevor Isa.

Box pews and a gallery were added in 1841. The later traceried windows are also likely to be of 1841, replacing the original round-headed windows.

ARCHITECTURE

Trevor church is a single-cell structure to which a vestry has been attached. It is aligned south-east/north-west but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises small to medium, irregularly shaped blocks of grey stone (?limestone); little coursing; some limewash remnants, and heavy pointing to the extent that there is almost a render coating.

Roof: reconstituted clay tiles with plain ridge tiles; ball finial to chancel; bellcote with single opening at west end, in dressed stone. Vestry has slate roof.

Drainage: downpipes. Now no obvious drainage trench, but the 1984 Quinquennial Report refers to drainage

gullies on the north and south.

Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Nave and chancel show no external differentiation. Building has a basal plinth without chamfer, which varies in height from c.0.3m at west end to 1.2m+ at the east end.

North wall: one window of two cusped lights under a two-centred arch, the dressings chamfered and in buff sandstone; Victorian.

East wall: east window has three lights with cusped tracery under a two-centred arch; buff-pink freestone dressings that look modern.

South wall: two windows largely identical, both with two cusped lights under two-centred arches; buff-yellow dressings. No signs of insertion but heavy pointing on upper parts of wall face. Likely to be of 1841.

West wall: round-headed doorway in dressed sandstone, chamfered; hoodmould with simple stops; plain wooden door. Above the door a lamp and an inscription panel decorated with an incised ogee-headed arch; the inscription reads: This chapel was consecrated the 8th August 1772 John Lloyd Esq.

Vestry. General. All in 'A' except for a vertical zone of bricks at the north end of the east wall.

East wall: wooden window of two lights set in a complex triple shafted stone window frame which has clearly been brought to Trevor from elsewhere (presumably Valle Crucis).

Interior

Nave and Sanctuary. General. Two steps down from exterior, while sanctuary is one step higher than nave. No chancel as such. Aisle and sanctuary are carpeted, and pews raised up on wooden boarding; walls plastered and whitewashed, with heating pipes running alongside the pews. Roof of six bays with wall posts, but a barrel roof plastered and painted blue over the sanctuary.

North wall: wall has outward lean. One slightly splayed window; one hatchment in sanctuary.

East wall: glass and probably the east window itself of 1930; one mural tablet of 1814.

South wall: wall has outward lean. Two windows without splays, one hatchment and a 20thC brass.

West wall: plain.

FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Stained glass: imported medieval fragments in the small top panels of the north and two south windows. Local tradition has it that these came from Valle Crucis Abbey, but Thomas, more reasonably suggests they were brought from Llangollen church.

Pulpit: heavily decorated. Though it looks Jacobean, it was carved at a later date by a craftsman from Ruabon.

Box pews: include a large one south of the altar for the Trevor Hall family. Racks for hats above pews on north side, and above the Trevor Hall pew.

Reading desk: two front panels of intricate tracery, damaged in places, and almost certainly re-used.

Chandelier: two-tier, with dove and wrought-iron suspension.

Hatchments: two, undated.

Plate: Communion cup of 1772, paten of 1809.

19thC furnishings include:

Monument: marble mural tablet to Rice Thomas (d.1814).

CHURCHYARD

Trevor church has no churchyard as such. It lies in the gently sloping grounds of Trevor Hall. There are however three yews, one on each of the north, west and south sides.

SOURCES

Church guide n.d.
CPAT Field Visit: 29 October 1996
Hubbard 1986, 291
Indenture 1772 (DRO/NTD/1075)
NMR, Aberystwyth
Quinquennial Report 1984
Quinquennial Report 1993
Thomas 1911, 304

CONDITION

Cracks and damp marks are visible internally, particularly on the end walls; and big patches of paint have peeled off the ceiling.

ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Very Poor

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