

**THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST**

**WELSH HISTORIC CHURCHES PROJECT**

**THE HISTORIC CHURCHES OF  
MONTGOMERYSHIRE**



**CPAT Report No 310**

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MONTGOMERYSHIRE**

**CHURCH SURVEY**

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**February 1999**

**Report for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments**

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## Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CPAT - Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, Welshpool

NLW - National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

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

SMR - Sites and Monuments Record

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Llanarmon Mynydd-mawr	St Garmon
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Meifod	SsTysilio and Mary
Mochdre	All Saints
Montgomery	St Nicholas
Penegoes	St Cadfarch
Pennant Melangell	St Melangell
Penrhos	Holy Trinity
Penstrowed	St Gwrhai
Snead	St Mary the Virgin

Trefeglwys  
Tregynon  
Trelystan  
Welshpool

St Michael  
St Cynon  
St Mary  
St Mary



# Aberhafesp

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Gwynnog**PRN** 16688**NGR** SO07299236

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## SUMMARY

The present church stands within a raised sub-circular enclosure, later extended to the south, and overlooking the Severn Valley. The building is largely 19thC but encapsulates medieval walling, on the north, south and perhaps the west sides of the nave. The 15thC nave roof has been retained and there are a few pre-Victorian wall monuments including a pair of fine early 18thC examples, but most of the furnishings and fittings date from after the restoration of 1857.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The earlier single chambered church was extensively renovated in 1857, when the early nave appears to have been clad on the south side with new stone; the north and west walls may have been retained. The nave has retained its 15thC roof though in modified form.

The chancel and south porch are 19thC, and the tower too was rebuilt during this restoration according to contemporary records, though there is a tradition, seemingly unfounded, that the lower stage of medieval date was retained.

## HISTORY

The church is dedicated to St Gwynnog, who reputedly had to flee the country from the wrath of the Welsh Princes, taking refuge in Brittany where he died in AD 580. There is however no convincing evidence that this was an early medieval foundation.

It is first recorded as 'Capella de Aberhafh' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and 'Ecclesia de Aberhafesb' in the 1291 Lincoln Taxation. During this period it was a chapel subject to the mother church at Llandinam.

The pre-restoration church was a single chamber with south porch and a western tower rising to two storeys and surmounted by a pyramidal roof. There was a gallery at the west end, which was probably accessed from the blocked first floor doorway in the tower. Documentary evidence refers to a church school in the gallery in 1826, but a later school was built on church land in 1838.

In 1855 Sir Stephen Glynne visited Aberhafesp. He recorded a short tower which was lower than the nave roof, and was surmounted by a wooden belfry. There were late, square-headed windows, but a plain Norman window on the north side of the chancel and a single lancet in the east wall. The modern south porch was of brick.

The present church exterior is the result of 19thC restoration work. The main structural alterations took place in 1857, when in addition to considerable rebuilding, a new gallery was added at the west end (according to Thomas) and pews introduced. Glynne also commented that in 1860 new windows were inserted and a new tower added, but the roof was left untouched.



Further alterations occurred in 1866 when the gallery was taken down, pew doors were removed etc. Repair work in 1877 included the re-paving of the chancel, the provision of a new pulpit and reading desk etc.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and narrower chancel, a small west tower, a south porch, a north vestry off the chancel and a new church room annexed to the north side of the nave. The building is oriented almost exactly west to east.

Fabric 'A' consists of small to medium blocks of medium grained greyish sandstone and shale, randomly coursed, with dressings of the same material.

'B' consists of a mix of small and medium slabs and blocks of fine-grained sedimentary stone, grey and iron-stained; irregular coursing.

'A' dates to the restoration of 1857; 'B' could be medieval.

Roofs: slate tiles and black ceramic ridge tiles; no finials.

Drainage: the church is built into a slight slope which has led to some terracing on the north side and the emergence of a gutter. Elsewhere there is little sign of a drainage trench around the building.

### Exterior

Totally constructed in fabric 'A'. Except in the tower, the 1857 windows are trefoil-headed lights with trefoil tracery above, set in square-headed apertures. Only the chancel east window has a hoodmould and stops.

**Western Tower. General.** On the surface this is wholly from 1857. A basal stone plinth is continuous on all faces c.0.4m above ground level; continuous string courses above the first and second floor window levels; and topped by a battlemented parapet. Diagonal stepped buttresses at all corners. All lights are diamond-lead, except for louvred apertures to belfry.

**North wall** - single lancet to the second stage, a quatrefoil in a round window for the third stage, and trefoiled, louvred lights set under a two-centred arch for belfry.

**South wall:** first stage contained a broad four-centred arched window with two four-centred lights, a lancet window as the north side, above which is a clock face of 1857 and then a standard belfry window.

**West wall:** access to ground floor through a two-centred arched doorway with chamfered jambs terminating in pyramid stops. Upper windows and clock as south side.

### Nave. General.

**North wall:** a pair of trefoiled lights in a square-headed window to the east of the modern 20thC churchroom annex, set within a short length of wall that is in 'B'. It is not possible to determine whether the window has been inserted. Two two-light windows of similar design are retained in the north wall and now look into the churchroom extension.

**South wall:** 1857 stonework in 'A' acts as cladding to original 15thC south wall; chamfered plinth at c.1m, slightly battered. Diagonal buttresses at wall ends and a central stepped buttress, with Victorian windows to either side: three trefoil-headed lights set in square-headed apertures, but in a different style to those of the north wall. In the porch is a two-centred doorway with chamfered jambs and pyramid stops.

**West wall:** diagonal buttresses at both west corners. Single lancet light in wall to south of tower.

Chancel. General. Of 1857 in 'A', with chamfered plinth at a height of c.0.4m. Slightly narrower than nave. Vestry disguises most of north wall.

North wall: a worn, incised, sandstone block is inserted in wall and a second sandstone block is located several courses below it. The incised block has a two-centred arch inscribed on it, and appears to be a blind lancet head with an inner groove of similar form within it, and the lower stone a sill.

East wall: diagonal buttresses at corners. Three trefoil-headed lights with panel tracery above, set in two-centred arch; hoodmould with foliate stops.

South wall: single foiled lancet light.

South Porch. General. Roof gabled to south, sandstone coping stones and kneelers.

East and west walls: chamfered plinths at c.0.4m; no apertures.

South wall: small diagonal buttresses at angles. Two-centred entrance arch with trefoil in gable above.

Vestry. General. Slate roof, gabled to north, sandstone coping stones and kneelers.

North wall: diagonal buttresses at angles. Pair of trefoiled lights in two-centred arched aperture.

East and west walls: no features, but the west wall appears to have a wide chimney breast, though no chimney.

Churchroom. General. Modern meetings room from 1989 with cloakroom and kitchen attached to north wall of nave, incorporating two of the 1857 nave windows. Built in grey brick with slate roof, gabled to east and west. Two skylight windows in its slate roof face north.

## Interior

Porch. General. Open porch has yellow, black and red tiled floor, a single wooden bench to either side, resting on sandstone corbels. Exposed interior stonework. Six scissor braces to the roof which is boarded above.

Tower. General. Accessed from the west end of the nave. Fenestration as exterior.

Ground floor: stone slabbed floor, plastered walls. Stone stairway leads up the north side to first floor which has a planked floor and exposed stonework. At this level is a blocked entrance doorway to the former gallery in the east wall, and also a dis-used bell on a stand. Fixed wooden open stair gives access to second floor, planked floor, exposed stonework. Fixed wooden stairs to belfry.

Nave. General. Red, yellow and black tiled floor, the result of 19thC restoration; unevenness to the floor at the west end where the flooring slopes down by around 0.1m. A central aisle separates two rows of benches, installed in 1877, on raised tongue and groove flooring. Plastered walls; the particularly deeply splayed recesses in the south wall and the inward splay suggest that this incorporates the original medieval wall. The south wall windows are more worn than their northern counterparts. Could they be original windows turned round and reset? A 15thC eight-bay roof with six arch-braced collar and three scissor-braced trusses, and one tier of foiled windbraces below a tier of quatrefoiled ones. The slightly arched scissor trusses are cusped as are their associated principals. Presumed to be original timberwork, they spring from the walls well below wallplate level. At regular intervals in three places (the third, sixth and ninth trusses from the west) they rest



on or seem to incorporate wooden corbels which have flat faces and are surely the butt ends of sawn-off tie beams, which in turn confirm the presence of the original walls, about 1m lower than the present ones.

North wall: wall faintly battered. Two stained glass memorial windows now look on to the new churchroom, and a third stained glass two-light window to the exterior. Two 19thC marble memorials and one 20thC brass; high up on the wall above the pulpit is a coat-of-arms, probably in metal and of unknown date.

East wall: 19thC chancel arch with fluted chamfers and pyramid stops. Wall memorial of 1701.

South wall: three window embrasures, and another to the doorway. Three 18thC marble memorials.

West wall: fine, wooden poker-work panelling of 1893 surrounds the heavy planked tower entrance door in a segmental-headed recess; the central section of the wall face behind is inset from floor to ceiling, suggesting a tower arch which may in turn point to the survival of the medieval wall.

Chancel. General. Separated from nave by chancel arch and one step up. Victorian encaustic tiles for floor. Walls as nave. 19thC roof of exposed rafters and through purlins. Chancel and sanctuary stepped up from nave floor level.

North wall: two-centred arched doorway to vestry, again showing chamfered jambs with pyramid stops. 19thC wall memorial.

East wall: stained glass three-light traceried window.

South wall: single leaded light. 19thC marble wall tablet.

Vestry. interior unseen.

Churchroom. modern 20thC addition, plastered walls and ceilings. Carpeted floors.

#### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Monuments: fine marble memorials to Meredith Morgan (d.1701), with painted heraldic shield above drapery and putto below dedication; and to Matthew Morgan (d.1705), with columns to the side, a shield above and cherubs below, erected in 1712. Other marble memorials to Frances Morgan (d.1710) with twisted columns and vases with cherubs below; and to Abigail Waring (d.1753).

Bells: of the three two are 19thC and 20thC, but the third inscribed 'Sancte Nicolae Ora Pro Nobis' was originally cast in 1450 in Worcester. A fourth bell located on the first floor of the tower, is disused and cracked, and inscribed 'Sancta Mecahele Ora Pro Nobis'.

Plate: paten of 1784/5, communion cup of 1800/01.

Registers: from 1578.

Victorian and later fittings include:

Font: 19thC octagonal stone bowl on square base with 1927 wooden cover.

Altar cross, candlesticks, altar desk and two alms dishes date to 1899. Chalice, paten, flagon and alms dish were 1857 restoration gifts. (In 1816, the church had been broken into and early silverware dating to 1576 had been stolen).

West wall pokerwork panelling: 'New Testament scenes done in pokerwork in an attractive Arts and Crafts fashion by Mr E.B. Proctor, of the Hall, in 1893' (Haslam). Panelled wooden screen with fleur-de-lys frieze above has Bible scenes.

Monuments: marble to Thomas Davies (d.1854) by Hewitt (Salop); marble on slate to Louisa Proctor (d.1857) and Henry Proctor (d.1857); marble tablet on grey slate to Richard Davies (d.1864).

Stained glass: east window is 'a Raphaelesque composition of Christ taking leave of his Mother, in a 16thC Italian landscape. "Painted glass, with hardly any leading to disturb the picture. By Baillie of London, 1857' (Haslam).

## CHURCHYARD

Original raised sub-circular enclosure, now has a rectangular extension of 1890 to the south. The extent of the original enclosure is defined by a steep fall on the south side. The graveyard is well kept on the south side but very overgrown on the north side among the old tombs and railed family graves.

Boundary: the 19thC railed boundary remains on the west side; a hedged boundary to the road and lane on south and east; and a fence and hedged boundary to the north.

Monuments: the more recent burials are on the lower terraces of the churchyard. Chest tombs are located all around the church. Earliest burials include a gravestone of 1719 to the south-east of the church and a worn sandstone slab on a raised brick plinth on the south side of the church with dates of 1725 and 1757. Two large family railed graves are located on the north side of the church, one of which belongs to the Proctor family of Aberhafesp Hall, the benefactors of the church restoration. One of these has recently had its memorials removed.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: embanked on the north side and also on the south side where a scarp bank denotes the extent of the original enclosure. Raised, too, on the east.

Ancillary features: the main south entrance is through a pair of wrought iron gates and a side gate set in the roadside wall. A central tarmac path leads up to the south porch. East of the church is a simple wooden gate with a tarmac path leading from it. The disused former churchyard entrance, prior to the extension, was located in the north-east corner.

Vegetation: several large yew trees, the oldest being on the south-west side and claimed to be over 800 years old. Several 19thC yews.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings: 1997  
CPAT Field Visit: 21 November 1995 and 12 March 1998  
Eisel 1986, 169  
Glynne 1884, 90  
Haslam 1979, 73  
NLW St Asaph Parish Records  
NMR, Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 32  
Thomas 1908, 507



## CONDITION

Church in good state of repair.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

# Berriew

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Beuno**PRN** 16709**NGR** SJ18780082

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## GENERAL SUMMARY

St Beuno's church is sited within a large sub-oval enclosure in the centre of the village on the north bank of the Afon Rhiw, about 5 miles south-west of Welshpool. The present church dates to 1802, though it underwent a major phase of rebuilding and restoration in 1875. Of its medieval predecessor nothing survives and the only pre-19thC furnishings are three late 16thC/early 17thC effigies from a tomb.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Present structure is an 1875 enlargement in Gothic style of an original 1802 nave and three-storey square tower.

## HISTORY

Reputedly a prince of Powys gave the township of Aberriw to St Beuno to establish a church, and his early home is supposed to have been at Berriew. He later settled at Clynnog Fawr near Caernarvon, and was buried in AD 642. This association together with the location and morphology of the churchyard are clear indicators of an early medieval origin.

The church is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, and the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 refers to 'Ecclesia de Aberyw' at a value of £20 6s 8d. It was one of the churches appropriated to Strata Marcella, and on the basis of a sketch of 1798 in 'The Gentleman's Magazine', appears to have been a single chambered structure with a north aisle and traditional Montgomeryshire timber belfry.

A ground plan in the present vestry shows the seating arrangements of 1799 and a large tomb, c.2m square, located at east end of the then north chancel aisle. Three large recumbent effigies in white marble, presumed to be of late 16thC or early 17thC date lay on the tomb; they have survived but the tomb itself was destroyed during the 1802 rebuilding.

The church built in 1802 had a large nave with round-headed windows, north, south and west galleries, and a pinnacled tower. The main entrance was under the west tower leading in to a baptistry. A new circular font replaced the old red sandstone font, which was given to Dolanog Church. The present font dates to 1875.

Faculties were submitted for the restoration of the church in 1858 and 1874 but the work does not appear to have been carried out until 1875. Then restoration by Edward Haycock of Shrewsbury amounted to a complete rebuilding of the main body of the church leaving very little evidence of the earlier nave, although the round-headed arch over the tower recess survives from the earlier nave. North and south aisles were added with their arcades, and new arches gave access to existing small rooms at the west end of the aisles. The west tower door was replaced by a window, a porch added to the north side, and the south room at the west end converted into a south porch; windows were renewed in early Gothic style; a vestry and organ chamber were added on the north side of the chancel; galleries were removed and the pitch altered when the new roof was built; buttresses were added along with the string courses and capping to the tower; the



church was reseated. The total cost was £3500.

## ARCHITECTURE

Berriew church comprises a three-storey western tower with small rooms to the north and south (described below as the north-west and south-west corner rooms), a large nave with side aisles, a chancel narrower than the nave and an adjoining northern vestry. The church is oriented east/west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium blocks of greyish/yellow fine grained sandstone with irregular coursing, Ashlar quoins and worn red sandstone dressings.

Note: the 1802 church was constructed in red brickwork but any remaining brick is now faced with stone.

Roofs: slates with red clay ridge tiles; red slates for roof of tower; cross finials to nave, chancel and porch.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and castellated cast iron cisterns above downspouts lead to soakaways. Slab edging around the whole building, though overgrown on north, may cover drainage trench.

Note: the building is a 19thC structure and as a consequence the following report is an outline only.

### Exterior

General: an ashlar plinth, c.10cm and one block of stone high, is continuous around the church.

Tower. General. A large square three-stage tower surmounted by a wide pyramidal roof with a wrought iron weathervane. Two string courses divide the tower into three stages. The tower protrudes slightly to the west of the north-west and south-west rooms and has large ashlar quoins at the north-west and south-west corners.

North wall: the north room slopes off this wall. A round aperture in second stage. The belfry window has a two-centred arch with hoodmould containing a pair of trefoil-headed louvred lights and open tracery above.

East wall: abuts nave. Standard belfry aperture only.

South wall: lower part of wall disguised by south-west room. The second stage has an open aperture. Above a belfry window as other walls.

West wall: a blocked entrance doorway superseded by a two-centred arched window with hoodmould and vine leaf stops; above this is a large trefoil-headed window. Second stage has a blue clock face with gold Roman numerals. Belfry aperture as other walls.

North-west Corner Room. General. Two trefoil-headed windows on west with a separate quatrefoil light above; and paired lancets with a quatrefoil above in two-centred arch on the north; corner buttress shared with the porch.

North porch. General. Open porch adjoins north aisle. Short clasping buttresses at north-east and north-west corners. In the north side a two-centred entrance arch with slim hoodmould and worn vine leaf stops set below narrow slit in gable apex. Paired rectangular lights in side walls.

Nave. General. East wall visible only above the chancel roofline, and on the south side of chancel.

North and South aisles. General. Windows have two or three lights with early Gothic tracery, the dressings in pale freestone. String course runs over windows as hoodmould. Angle buttresses, one on the south wall forming a chimney which rises above the roofline.

Vestry. General. Under same roof as chancel. Pair of two-centred lights with a cinquefoil light above each in the east wall and a shouldered arched doorway and three-light window in the north wall.

Chancel. General. Narrower and lower than the nave. Stone plinth rises to c.0.4m above ground level on the south side and has ashlar capstones. Angle buttresses at east end. String courses - two on south, three on east - are stepped over windows to form hoodmoulds. Complex three-light window in east wall, and a three-light window and a separate single light in the south wall.

South-west room. General. A second porch with clasping buttresses at corners. A pair of shouldered arched lights under a two-centred arch in west wall.

### Interior

Porch. General. 19thC tiled floor, exposed stonework and ceiling plastered above rafters and three tie beams; benches along side walls. South doorway has two-centred moulded arch with hoodmould and vine-leaf stops.

Tower. General. Ground floor converted into a small chapel separated from the nave by a large two-centred arch in red and white freestone with hoodmould and head stops. Narrow aisle separates two rows of benches on a modern raised floor. Plastered wall and ceiling. Several marble monuments including the 19thC Glansevern memorial on the north wall, three 19thC tablets on the south wall, and one on the west.

South Room (= south porch). General. Planked floor. Plastered walls and ceiling. External entrance in south wall and access from south aisle through a two-centred arch which is narrower and lower than the central arch to the tower. Access to belfry is from a staircase that runs up the north wall.

North Room. General. 19thC mixed tiled floor. Plastered walls and a ceiling which slopes to north. Used for storage. Access from north aisle by pair of double doors set in arch comparable with that in south room.

Nave. General. 19thC tiled floor, with heating grilles, though these are now filled in. Walls plastered except for dressed stonework, and painted blue above the chancel arch. Roof of four bays formed by straight-brace collars, springing from cusped wall posts, and above these are king struts piercing sub-collars. Roof plastered above exposed rafters and through purlins. Separated from aisles by four-bay arcades in red and white freestone, with central octagonal stone pillars flanked by circular pillars; continuous hoodmoulds with vine-leaf stops over arcades. Above the chancel arch, the wall is painted blue with gold fleurs-de-llys. In west wall above the tower arch is a blocked round-headed window, the alcove now containing a painting of the Madonna and Child.

North and south aisles - General. Sloping roofs; struts supported by stone corbels on nave walls above the arcading. 16thC effigies at the east end of north aisle. East wall of south aisle carries a tablet of 1796/1814 and the Brithdir Hall Vault brass (see below), the south wall a 19thC brass.

Chancel. General. Separated from nave by plain two-centred arch in white freestone, above a two-step entrance with low stone wall to either side. 19thC tiled floor, longitudinal choir stalls. All walls plastered. Two



steps to the sanctuary with encaustic tiles. Stained glass in chancel. 19thC Owen monument on the south wall; aumbry in north wall of sanctuary, as is a square-headed doorway to the vestry, and a two-centred arch to the organ chamber. A sedile in the south below the window.

Organ chamber. General. Separated from north aisle by a two-centred arch

## FURNISHING and FITTINGS

Effigies: three recumbent marble effigies from a tomb in the pre-19thC church, representing Arthur Price of Vaynor (d.1597) and his two wives. '[Price] is in Elizabethan armour with helmet and gauntlets; the ladies have ruffs and headcloths. Four figures of [their] children are in the Powysland Museum, Welshpool' (Haslam). Late 16thC or early 17thC. A full description can be found in Lloyd 1972.

Plate: paten or alms dish of 1798/9; communion cup of 1801/2

Bells: eight of which two are dated 1706 and 1766, the remainder 19thC and 20thC.

Registers: from 1596.

Victorian and later furnishings and fittings, as described by Haslam, include:

Reredos: carved with Apostles and saints below ogee canopies, designed by F. Kempson with figures by T. Earp; from 1896.

Lectern: carved eagle by Rattee & Kett.

Organ: of 1923.

Monuments: to William Owen of Glansevern (d.1837), white marble on grey slate, by E.H. Baily; Glansevern monument (1719-1829), a large white marble memorial on grey slate; Rev. Edward Jones (d.1806). Ambrose Gethyn (d.1805), by T. King of Bath. Margaret Lloyd Jones (d.1862) and buried in the Brithdir Vault; Thomas Jones of Lower Garthmyl (d.1796) and his wife Mary (d.1814). A brass memorial plate records burials in the Brithdir Hall Vault from 1838 to 1871.

Stained glass: east window by Hardman c.1859. Bold colours representing the Transfiguration with side panels of the Good Samaritan and Christ blessing little children; west window of 1907 by Powell; south aisle, east window also 1907 by Heaton, Butler and Bayne.

## CHURCHYARD

Large sub-oval enclosure on raised but relatively level ground above the north bank of Afon Rhiw. The churchyard is extremely well kept but was closed for burials in 1891, when a new burial ground was consecrated.

Boundary: stone revetment wall forms the southern boundary; on the north the boundary is demarcated by the backs of half-timbered houses including the Lion Hotel plus intervening tenement walls. The Old School House adjoins the churchyard on the east side and a row of five cottages bounds the west side towards the river.

Monuments: scattered burials; many unmarked graves presumably grassed over, and the south side is relatively clear of stone suggesting the clearance of markers. Churchyard contains a wide variety of chest and table tombs, crosses, pillars and pitched cross slabs, which are rather more classically designed than those in most Montgomeryshire churchyards. Mainly 19thC sandstone slabs, some slate. Cremations on

north side.

Furniture: a glacial boulder located on the north side of the west path marks the meeting point of the three townships of Berriew, Cil and Lower Vaynor.

Earthworks: the whole churchyard is raised by nearly 2m on south, and is also raised on the other sides though less dramatically.

Ancillary features: main entrance is through the lychgate, erected in 1919 and set in the stone wall to the west. Single gates are located on the north, east and south-east sides and concrete paths lead around the church.

Vegetation: several old yews near the south-east gate, south-west corner and south-east corner. Two on the western boundary near the river and one on the north side of the church. Irish yews line the south-east entrance path to the south porch. West path lined by an avenue of 10 tall lime trees.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings: 1995  
CPAT Field Visit 29 November 1996 and 18 February 1998  
Berriew Church Notes n.d.  
Eisel 1986, 172  
Faculty: St Asaph 1858 (NLW)  
Faculty: St Asaph 1874 (NLW)  
Faculty: St Asaph 1944 (NLW)  
Haslam 1979, 76  
Lloyd 1972  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 35  
Thomas 1913, 128  
Williams 1990, 59

## CONDITION

Good condition all round. Only the red sandstone is showing signs of weathering, particularly on north porch.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Medium



## Bettws Cedewain

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**Diocese** St Asaph

**Dedication** Beuno

**PRN** 16711

**NGR** SO12279683

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### SUMMARY

St Beuno's church occupies a prominent position overlooking the village of Bettws Cedewain on the northern edge of the small valley that carries the Bechan Brook to the Severn, about 9 miles to the south-west of Welshpool. It is a single-chambered structure with a western tower, set in a near-circular churchyard. The tower was rebuilt in the early 16thC, the nave and chancel in the second half of the 19thC. The building contains the important brass of Rev John ap Meredyth, the only pre-Reformation brass in Powys, a chest, a bier and a small amount of pre-Reformation stained glass. Little else survived the 19thC restoration.

### ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church retains a 16thC tower and a two-stage timber belfry. The rest of the building dates to 1868, though the extra thickness of the north wall might suggest that the medieval masonry was retained on this side.

### HISTORY

The ancient church was reputedly founded by St Beuno in 6thC, and certainly its location and churchyard form indicate an early medieval origin.

With the rectory and vicarage it was recorded as 'Eccli'a de Bethus' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and as 'Ecclesia de Bethys' with a value of £5 in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291. Between 1254 and 1272 it became one of the appropriated churches of Strata Marcella, and remained so up to the Dissolution.

Some rebuilding supposedly took place in the 14thC.

The building of the present tower can be dated fairly accurately to the 1520s. The brass to Sir John ap Meredyth in the church, dated in his lifetime, 1531, states: 'Pray for the soul of Rev John ap Meredith of Powys, formerly vicar of this church of Bettws; in whose time the tower was built; and at different periods bells were bought and many other good works done in the said church'.

Some reconstruction probably occurred in the 18thC for Thomas mentions that the windows were rounded. There were pews in both nave and chancel, but much of the carved wood work had gone by the mid-19thC.

The early school was held in the tower until the schoolroom was built on church ground in 1852.

The nave was rebuilt in 1868 by W.E. Nesfield, in the Perpendicular style of the old church, at a cost of £1102. In addition to the general rebuilding of nave and chancel described below, underfloor heating apparatus was added and the western arch of the tower was opened up. Fragments of the screen were reputedly distributed around the village.



## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave and chancel as a single unit, a west tower and a north porch cum vestry. It is oriented slightly north of true west, but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small and medium sized greyish-brown sedimentary stone blocks of mixed grain and fairly regular shape. Possibly some of this material is re-used. Apertures have dressed yellow sandstone, and the body of the church is finished with sandstone quoins.

'B' is of small through to large, fine-grained grey sandstone blocks; irregularly coursed. Worn sandstone dressings.

'B' is 16thC; 'A' is 19thC.

Roofs: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles. Cross finial to chancel.

Drainage: trench around south and east sides, nothing obvious on north, and it is impossible to determine whether any disturbance around the tower.

### Exterior

Tower. General. A single phase of building, historically documented to the c.1520s in fabric 'B', although there are signs on the wall faces of banding with different sized stone. Quoins are of the same fabric. The tower has angle buttresses on all corners. Buttresses rise to two-thirds of the tower height with dressed stone cappings and are slightly battered. There is a two-stage wooden belfry consisting of vertical studs and louver boards beneath the slated pyramidal roof which is surmounted by a weathervane.

North wall: double plinched, the lower plinth at 0.3m, the upper at 1.3m, and both continue around the angle buttress. A single rectangular round-headed slit aperture at second-floor level.

East wall: slit aperture at second-floor level.

South wall: a single plinth only, at 1m. Blocked rectangular slit window at second-floor level.

West wall: an original, two-centred arched doorway dressed with worn pinkish sandstone, weathered to grey; the complex outer mouldings of the arch are interrupted on the sides but reappear lower down, only for the moulded jambstones to stop completely at the top of the lowest stone plinth c.0.3m off the ground. A second plinth with a chamfered top (not a continuation of those on the north and south sides), is set at first-floor level between the apex of the doorway and the base of the window. Next a three-light window, with a faintly peaked top; lights have cusped heads, hoodmould with very worn human head-stops, and a relieving arch set in herringbone fashion. A single slit rectangular window as in the north wall.

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation. Constructed in fabric 'A' and all 19thC, though the thickness of the north wall might indicate the survival of a medieval masonry core. There is a projecting basal course (at a maximum of height of around 0.3m) on the south side of the chancel - this is of smaller stone and may be a foundation course, which in the nave is buried below ground level.

North wall: plinth c.0.7m high. Two two-centred windows containing two round-headed lights with cinquefoil tracery and small foiled lights above, a hoodmould and circular stops. No windows to chancel. Brick arch of an early boiler house visible at ground level; the present access via a pair of trap doors by west wall of porch/vestry.

East wall: plinth at 0.3m; diagonal buttresses at corners. Four-centred window has five lights with cusped heads, two sub-arches and intersecting panelled tracery above.

South wall: plinth visible in chancel but disappears in nave as ground rises; two angle buttresses. The 'A' masonry also incorporates some larger, re-used slabs of grey sandstone at foundation level in the nave

wall; one may have some incised lettering. Nave lit by two four-centred windows containing three round-headed lights with cinquefoil tracery and panel tracery; hoodmoulds and circular stops. Chancel has two two-centred arched windows containing two lights with cinquefoil heads and small foiled lights above; standard hoodmoulds, and also decorative relieving arches of stone voussoirs.

Vestry. General. Fabric 'A', but of smaller stone than in the body of the church. North wall has single three-light horizontal window, the east wall, a single heavy plank door with wrought iron fittings set in two-centred arch doorway with hoodmould and circular stops. Chimney adjoins north-west corner along nave.

## Interior

Tower. General. Tower forms main entrance porch to church, with two sets of doors in the thickness of the wall. Flagged floor; bare stone walls. High wooden ceiling with exposed beams. In the tower the wooden bell-frame is thought to be contemporary with the build of the tower itself.

North wall: solid planked bench, resting on stone ledge, with decorative panelling derived from former pews behind; these were retained from the pre-restoration building. Wooden stairway of a considerable age leads up to tower and belfry from first-floor level but access to this is by ladder only.

East wall: divided from nave by decorated wooden screen of 19thC date.

South wall: wooden seats with old pew panelling as on the north side, but for only part of the length.

West wall: entrance doorway, panelling to either side.

Nave. General. Victorian tiled floor. Raised flooring under benches to either side of central aisle. Under floor heating ducts run the length of both sides of the aisle, which is carpeted. Plastered and painted walls. 19thC roof to nave and chancel; nine bays with arch-braced collar trusses, raking struts and additional short collars above; the bracing rests on block corbels, probably of wood but painted; two rows of quatrefoil windbraces with wood panelling behind; wooden pegs in the purlins.

North wall: splayed windows and one 19thC mural tablet.

East wall: no differentiation between nave and chancel except for the steps, which have inscriptions on the risers.

South wall: splayed windows incorporate some 16thC glass. Two 19thC memorial tablets. Chest in south-west corner.

West wall: dominated by a high, relatively narrow tower arch, the angles not chamfered but angular insets with pyramidal stops (cf Aberhafesp). Brass of 1531 to south; 1775 bier against the north. Also north of the chancel arch is an open aperture, an early entrance to the tower stair, angled through the wall.

Chancel. General. Four steps up from nave; flooring as nave, one step to sanctuary. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: piped organ; aumbry recess with a memorial inscription on metal on its back face.

East wall: splayed stained glass window flanked by two stone tablets carrying the Decalogue, and with decorated stone panelling below. Panelled marble reredos of c.1871 below window.

South wall: piscina from c.1893; 19thC memorial tablet.



Porch/vestry. General. Victorian tiled floor with heating grilles, plastered walls and ceiling. Fire grate against west wall..

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Brass: to Rev. John ap Meredyth, with the date 1531; 'the tonsured figure in mass vestments holding a chalice and wafer' (Haslam). The only pre-Reformation brass in Powys, now re-set on a marble tablet in the north-west corner of the nave, but originally in a block of wood in the floor.

Stained glass: in the south nave windows. Some of the stained glass results from the 19thC Lord Sudeley's patronage of the church. Decorative glass from his continental collection could be Flemish or German, and of varying dates. Nativity and Crucifixion of c.16thC date. Thomas thought they came from Glastonbury Abbey and Somerset churches.

Chest: large oak chest located at south-west corner of nave below the 1531 brass. Could be medieval.

Bier: dated 1775, and inscribed T.E., R.L.I.C.W.

Church plate: two 1706 patens and a cup of 1779/80

Bells: ring of three bells include two pre-19thC examples inscribed: 'God Save His Church Our King and Realme 1630' and 'Soli Deo Immortalia Set Gloria 1630/WT MT Wardens'.

Church registers date to 1660.

19thC furnishings and fittings (based on Haslam) include:

Stained glass: in east window by William Wailes, c.1868.

Font: 'heptagonal stone font, with cusped circles on the sides, designed on the old font' (Haslam); located in the south-west corner of nave.

Reredos: Caen stone, with stone panels to either side. White figures in alcoves with coloured marble background. c.1871.

Pulpit: heavy construction of marble and freestone; located south-east corner of nave; brought from Hawarden Church and erected in 1952.

Monument: to Rev J. Pryce (d.1836) by J. Smith, Liverpool, on south side of nave.

## CHURCHYARD

Medium-sized, distinctively curvilinear enclosure, sloping to south, and set on edge of valley of the Bechan Brook. Still used for burial.

Boundary: hedged boundary for most of perimeter, but the back of the New Inn forms the boundary on the south-west and there is a revetment wall forming the south-east boundary where the enclosure abuts a garden.

Monuments: early worn gravestones are located on the east and south sides of the chancel: four stones laid flat alongside the south wall include dates 1771 and 1780; a group of three gravestones also on the south side of the nave date to 1756, 1758 and 1760; east of the chancel are stones of 1767 and the 1790s. In general the earlier burials are on the south and east side of the graveyard, the more recent 1980s-1990s burials located on the northern side.

Furniture: sundial with gnomon on a sandstone plinth of four clustered shafts, the dial inscribed 'Tho Wright London' and 'John Harris Esq'; no date. Located alongside south path.

Earthworks: raised by about 1m on the east and north-west, but perhaps 3m on the west, and on the south the drop into the valley must be closer to 10m.

Ancillary features: lychgate on south-east; pair of wooden gates hinged on dressed stone plinths; roof of two king-post trusses, the roadside tie beam bears the inscription 'Thy Will Be Done' on a dedication plate. Also a west entrance through a single gate, and a second entrance on the east with modern double gates. Tarmac paths. The church room on the north side of the graveyard has a datestone of 1852.

Vegetation: group of four yew bushes on northern edge of the graveyard, and the stumps of two others south of them. A single older yew tree located near east end of church.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1997  
CPAT Field Visit: 12 November 1995 and 12 March 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 183  
Eisel 1986, 174  
Faculty: St Asaph 1952 (NLW)  
Guy, Rev J R: pers. comm.  
Haslam 1979, 80  
NLW St Asaph Parish Records  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 37  
Thomas 1913, 510  
Williams 1990, 61



## CONDITION

Minor cracking on internal arch of tower. North-west corner of nave stripped of plaster because of damp. Otherwise good.

## 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 to Good

# Buttington

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<b>Diocese</b>	St Asaph	<b>Dedication</b>	All Saints
<b>PRN</b>	5478	<b>NGR</b>	SJ24980884

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## SUMMARY

All Saints is a small, single-chambered church set in a diminutive raised churchyard close to the River Severn and Offas Dyke. The present whitewashed structure perhaps dates from the 14thC or 15thC on the basis of a couple of Decorated windows in the sanctuary and the simple south doorway. It also retains its 15thC arch-braced roof, a Perpendicular east window, some fragments of 15th-16thC glass, and a porch of 1686. Inside is a font carved from an Early English capital.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Small single chambered church completely pebbledashed; no early stonework is exposed, and thus the date of the masonry shell remains unknown but it could be as early as the 14thC. The restoration-period windows of 1876 copied the original sanctuary ones of 14thC date, though only one of the latter appears to retain original dressings. Similarly the 15thC Perpendicular window shows at least some renewal, as does the south doorway.

## HISTORY

The origin of this church is unknown. There is a hint of curvilinearity to the churchyard, and the location on the edge of the flood plain of the Severn is suggestive of an early medieval origin, but an Inquisition Post Mortem of 1304 refers to it being built on land given by a member of the de la Pole family in the 13thC.

There has certainly been a church on the present site from at least 1265, when it was part of the Manor of Strata Marcella. Later it was classed as a chapelry of Welshpool but was separated from the mother church in 1759.

The present building may date from the 14thC on the basis of the sanctuary windows, though the roof is a little later. The font (fashioned from a capital of c.1220) was reputedly brought from Strata Marcella Abbey nearby.

The church, originally in the Diocese of Hereford, became part of St Asaph in 1849.

Several 19thC restorations occurred, including the 1838 insertion of new box pews and the 1840 plastering and rough-casting of the church. Considerable restoration work took place in 1875-6, when the vestry was added, the gallery removed, oak choir stalls were introduced and the box pews were replaced by open pine pews. The pulpit was moved to the north side and the east window was inserted with stained glass. The overall cost was £653.

A vicarage was built south of the church in 1836, enlarged in 1867-8 and the school was built in 1838.

The porch underwent restoration in 1990.



## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave and chancel as a single unit, a bell turret towards the west end of the nave, a north vestry and a south porch. It is oriented south-west/north-east, but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabric: reportedly constructed in local rubblestone, but the whole structure now heavily pebbledashed and whitewashed (except by the south door).

Roof: slate roof over nave and chancel with notched red ceramic ridge tiles; slate, too, for the porch and vestry. Wooden cross finial at east end. The square, weather-boarded western bell-turret has wood-slatted sides with small rectangular louvred apertures on all but the west side, a pyramidal slate roof and lead flashing, topped with weathercock and vane.

Drainage: guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways; hardcore against all walls presumably masks a drainage trench around church.

### Exterior

Nave/chancel. General. Treated as a single chamber because no external differentiation; all the walls are battered to a height of around 1m, and this may well be indicative of a single build.

North wall: nave has a broad 19thC two-light window with a two-centred arch over the trefoiled lights and a quatrefoil above. Sanctuary lit by a similar window with chamfered jambs, the inner slightly hollowed; the dressings are a little worn and this could be an original Decorated window, although it is not entirely convincing. 1875 vestry and 1970s boiler house abut the wall.

East wall: Perpendicular window of three lights with cinquefoil heads, and four panelled lights with trefoiled heads; the tracery could be original but perhaps not the mullions?

South wall: fenestration parallels that on the north side; but no original windows.

West wall: west window has two lights with trefoil heads and a quatrefoil in the tracery above. Wholly Victorian.

South Porch. General. Open timber frame with pierced balusters for window mullions in the side walls. Broad south entrance with a tie beam supported on arch bracing and inscribed "TG II W 1686".

Vestry. General. Built as part of the 1875 restoration on the north side of the church, and with a 1970s Boiler Room adjoining its west wall.

### Interior

Porch. General. Mixed 19thC red, yellow and black tiled floor. Wooden planked seats along the sides are supported on brick plinths with the unglazed window openings above. Roof supported on two tie beams, one incorporated into the outer face (see above) and a second arch-braced example with a painted triangle for decoration at its centre, against the south wall of the church, partially hiding the top of the doorway arch. Exposed rafters and through purlins.

North wall: south entrance of church, red sandstone, two-centred arch, deeply chamfered dressings and the jambs with sharpening marks; perhaps 15thC if not earlier, but both arch stones have been renewed; a pair of heavy planked doors with wrought iron fittings. Some rubblestone visible on either side of the doorway with traces of render.

Nave. General. One step down from the porch. Mixed tiled floor, carpeted central aisle with grilles beneath, raised planked floor below benches. Walls, slightly battered, plastered and painted, with deeply splayed window apertures. 15thC roof of chamfered arch-braced collars and foiled struts forming eight bays (including chancel), with three tiers of foiled windbraces, and three through purlins on each side. Arch braces spring from moulded wall plates. The western end has an uneven, lowered, plastered ceiling below the bell-turret, effectively a ninth bay; a trap door gives access to the bell. Separating the nave and chancel is a queen-post tie-beam truss with foiled struts, a collar that has a long mortice hole on its soffit, and a strut rising from the collar. The tie beam has a cusped top edge on the chancel side, reinforcing the view that this was part of the rood screen. A curtained partition around the south-west corner defines a small chapel.

North wall: one splayed window; three memorials of which two are very late 18thC.

East wall: one step, and the tie beam only.

South wall: splayed window, door reveal with segmental head and one 19thC marble memorial.

West wall: window contains pieces of pre-Reformation stained glass; a brass of 1753 fixed to wall.

Chancel. General. One step up from nave, and one up to altar. Floor, walls and roof as nave but the easternmost roof truss separates a blank bay without windbraces over the sanctuary.

North wall: splayed window, vestry door set in shouldered arch, and one 19thC and one 20thC memorial.

East wall: stained glass window of 1874 above a heavy oak-panelled reredos.

South wall: splayed window, dado in chancel but not sanctuary. Mostly obscured by the organ.

#### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: fashioned from an Early English capital of c.1220, with three tiers of curling foliage; set on a square, chamfered base, itself on a square plinth. Thought to have come from Strata Marcella Abbey where according to Haslam it may have been the top of a pier supporting the vault of the aisled chapter house.

Screen: rood beam survives (see above).

Stained glass: a 15thC Crucifixion scene and two saints but jumbled with modern glass, and a complete 16thC shield, that of the Sutton family. Possibly removed from the original east window in 1874, and now in the west window.

Monuments: Brass on wood located on west wall to Elizabeth Brown of Garreg (d.1753) and her mother (d.1777). Marble memorials reputedly by I.Nelson, Salop to Sarah Jones (d.1798) and to David Jones (d.1788) and family.

Plate: includes 1717/8 cup, and a paten of 1752.

Bell: single bell is inscribed: 'William Porter Richard Griffiths War[dens]/ God Save the King 1662'. By Thomas Clibury II.

Victorian and later fittings include:

Most of the interior fittings, installed during the 1875 restoration, including pine pews and octagonal carved deal pulpit, brass desk, harmonium, oak altar and moulded altar rails, sanctuary chairs and an oak lectern.



Organ: installed 1885, made by Peter Conacher & Co. Huddersfield

Curtained chapel in south-west corner contains an altar and a reredos carved by Rev. R. J. Roberts, Vicar 1879-1886. The side panels were carved and fitted by Thomas William Jones, Trewern in 1925-29.

Monument: to Francis Allen (d.1852) by Dodson, Salop.

## CHURCHYARD

Small raised churchyard, the north-west side distinctively curved, on the east side of the River Severn and just above flood level, just over a mile to the north-east of Welshpool. It was encroached on in 1838 when the school was constructed in the south-west corner. During the work around 400 skulls together with other bones were discovered, presumed to be burials from the pre-Conquest Battle of Buttington.

Boundary: the present churchyard is surrounded by a stone revetment wall, while a line of re-sited memorial slabs form the southern boundary with the adjoining property.

Monuments: a few marked graves; some isolated chest tombs, crosses and 19thC slabs; the 'wall' of slabs along the south include stones of 1785 and 1795. The churchyard was closed for burials and a new cemetery consecrated in 1882 on the opposite of the road to the church. Roadworks led to the removal and relocation of some stones in 1967, and further clearance took place in 1970.

Earthworks: raised by c.1.6m on the west side, 0.6m on the north, 0.8m on the east, but nothing on the south.

Furniture: red granite war memorial pillar located on square plinth near the south door; nothing of earlier date.

Ancillary features: two pairs of wrought iron gates form the north-east and south-east entrances with tarmac paths leading to the south porch and around to the west side where there is a school room in the south-west corner.

Vegetation: four old yews located to the south-west of the church; the largest, immediately to the west of the church, is reputedly about 1200 years old.

## SOURCES

Brown 1998

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings, 1995

Church Leaflet 1988

CPAT Field Visit: 18 November 1995 and 12 March 1998

Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 184

Eisel 1986, 174

Faculty: St Asaph 1875 (NLW)

Faculty: St Asaph 1969 (NLW)

Faculty: St Asaph 1970 (NLW)

Faculty: St Asaph 1990 (NLW)

Haslam 1979, 83

Herefordshire Diocesan Records. 1838 Plan (Herefordshire Record Office)

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

Ridgway 1997, 47

Thomas 1913, 135

Williams 1990, 59

## CONDITION

Good condition generally. Some dampness showing around north window at the chancel end.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good?

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium



# Carno

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**Diocese** Bangor

**Dedication** John the Baptist

**PRN** 16736

**NGR** SN96329648

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## SUMMARY

The church of St John the Baptist lies in the centre of Carno village, on the north bank of the river of the same name, just under 10 miles west of Newtown. The building itself was erected in 1867, replacing what was probably a medieval structure associated with the Knights Hospitallers and their adjacent grange of Caer Noddfa. Virtually nothing other than the bells survived the Victorian rebuilding, though an early medieval inscribed stone, found in the village, now resides in the church. The churchyard is large and rectilinear containing monuments from the end of the 17thC onwards.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church totally rebuilt in 1867 in Gothic style. The masonry may include some re-used material on the north side of the church.

## HISTORY

The location of the site might support an early medieval origin and the presence of the early inscribed stone could be suggestive though there seems to be no direct association with the church site. Overall the evidence for an early medieval foundation is equivocal.

The Knights Hospitallers established a grange here in the early 13thC if not earlier, and this is probably to be identified with the earthwork of Caer Noddfa, adjacent to the church. Whether they took over an existing church and re-dedicated it to John the Baptist remains unknown. However, it became a place of sanctuary in the Middle Ages.

The medieval church was recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecclesia de Carno que est Hospitalarium' at a value of 13s 4d, but is not mentioned in Pope Nicholas's Taxation of 1291.

A schedule for re-seating the church dates to 1631, when the church may have consisted of a nave and chancel with a south chapel.

In 1812, the single-chamber church was recorded as 20yds long by 9yds wide, with a tall steeple containing three bells, sited in an almost square churchyard. The churchyard was partly surrounded by a stone wall and had three yew trees. A later record, from the time of the Victorian rebuilding, referred to a barn-like interior, a descent of several steps into the interior which was whitewashed, and a three-decker pulpit, square pews, a singers' gallery and window frames which were smaller than the present ones and made of oak. A large almost square tower resided at the west end of the church. There was apparently little of significance inside.

The present church was built in 1867 by Poundley and Walker (though Haslam claims 1863), and a plan of 1890 records a single chamber as 75' 6" long; the tower adjoins the porch with the vestry added on the north side. A section through the tower and porch illustrates the west elevation of a slim three-storey tower with battlements and corner pinnacles but appears to have been only a projected design.



The church underwent renovation and redecoration in 1894, and in 1899 a faculty was submitted for permission to raise the tower and board the ceiling; the tower was apparently not visible from the north at this time. The buttresses were added in the late 19thC. Some restoration occurred in 1909.

More recent restoration work was undertaken in 1957, 1977 and in 1989-1990, when the church was said to be in a very poor state of repair. The work of 1977 included the removal of the top of the spire but this was rebuilt in 1990.

## ARCHITECTURE

The present building consists of a single-chamber nave and chancel, with a small tower abutting the west side of the south porch, and a north vestry; all the result of the 19thC rebuilding. It is oriented south-west/north-east, but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is mainly medium-sized quarry-cut grey sedimentary stone, with fairly regular coursing and large stone quoins in the same fabric.

'B' is of small to medium blocks of the same material, a much poorer cut stone with very irregular coursing; possibly there is some re-use here.

'C' consists of squared blocks and slabs of grey sedimentary stone together with some pebblestones and rare occurrences of red sandstone; some regular coursing. Again possibly re-use of earlier masonry.

Yellow sandstone dressings throughout.

'A' and 'C' used on the south side of the church, 'B' on the north side.

Roofs: reslated in 1989-90. Nave and chancel under continuous gabled roof with grey, toothed, ceramic ridge tiles along the nave and raised quatrefoiled ironwork over the chancel; cross finial to chancel. Black ceramic tiles used for porch. Tower has a two-tier slated spire.

Drainage: modern guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. The ground has been cleared around the walls to avoid dampness.

Note: the church is a completely Victorian rebuild, and as a consequence only a brief description is provided here.

## Exterior

**Tower. General.** Adjoins west wall of the porch; in fabric 'A' with large stone quoins. Narrow, square tower, battered at base on south and west sides. Single two-centred window at ground floor level on west side only; belfry windows on south and west have two-centred arches over louvred openings. A decorative stone frieze divides the second stage from the timber clock tower and the tall pyramidal spirelet.

**Nave and chancel. General.** No external differentiation between nave and chancel. 'A' and 'C' in south wall, a variation on 'C' in the east wall, and 'B' in north wall. Two-centred doorway on south side within porch. Four windows on south and five on north, alternating single lights with quatrefoils above and double lights with hexafoils, the hoodmoulds with simple stops, and the use of pink and buff-yellow sandstone dressings for decorative purposes. The east wall has a large two-centred window with a hoodmould and head stops over a pair of two-centred sub-arches containing paired lancets with quatrefoils above and a central hexafoil light. At the western end of the north wall is a straight vertical line in the masonry like a butt joint, and rising for nearly 2m. However, it is difficult to identify a context in which such a joint might have appeared. West wall is pebbledashed with only the stone quoins visible, and holds three circular lights under a two-centred arch. Irregularly designed and placed buttresses - two on the south against the chancel, two more against east wall, one against north wall of nave.



South porch. General. Adjoins the east wall of the tower. Open porch with a two-centred arched opening with hoodmould, and a recessed, trefoil-headed arch. Small two-centred window with recessed lights in east wall.

North vestry. General. A single light in the north wall, a square-headed doorway set into the east wall and ordinary windows with brick frames in the west wall.

### Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor, plastered walls with a single wooden bench along the east wall. An entrance door to the tower in its west wall and the south door to the nave in the north wall. Both have chamfered dressings and pyramid stops, the south doorway also having bar stops. Scissor-braced roof.

Tower. General. Ground floor room has a concrete floor, whitewashed walls, wooden tongue and groove ceiling with a trap door providing ladder access to upper storeys. Bells rung from ground floor.

Nave. General. One step up from porch. Tiled floor, carpeted down the aisle and elsewhere, separates two rows of benches with raised plank flooring below. Plastered and painted walls, with splayed window apertures; two 20thC brasses on the north wall and an early medieval stone against the south wall, with nearby a plaque of 1990 recording the gift of spire and clock as a memorial to Laura Ashley. The east wall is defined by a low stone wall screen on either side of a two-stepped entrance to the chancel. The roof of six big scissor trusses with diagonal bracing, each truss resting on wall posts supported on stone corbels. That over the nave/chancel division has arch bracing and the soffit is decorated by twelve pierced quatrefoils. The space between the arch bracing and the scissors has a panel pierced by a cinquefoil. The wall posts are supported on elaborately carved corbels.

Chancel. General. One step up to the sanctuary, another to the altar. Floor of encaustic tiles and carpets, the walls as the nave. Further scissor-braced trusses over the chancel, that in the middle without wall posts. The north wall sports one 19thC memorial and a high arched entrance to the vestry, its door painted. The south wall has sedilia set into the wall as arched recesses, one 20thC brass and 19thC stained glass.

### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Early medieval stone: incised with an irregular circled cross, it was discovered in use as a gatepost on a house in Carno in the 1960s. Of gritstone, standing to c.1.5m high, tapering from 0.4m wide at the base to 0.3m; about 0.15m deep with gate hanger holes still prominent. A circle c.0.28m in diameter inscribed at the top and an inner cross with intersections. Attributed to around the 7th-8thC.

Bells: three. One inscribed 'Gloria in Excelsis 1665', the second 'Evan Jones Evan Howell Churchwarden', the third 'Tenor X Hugh X Gibbs X Hugh X Reece X Wardens XXX 1677'. The first two probably cast at Wellington by Thomas Clibury II in 1665, the tenor bell by Thomas Roberts of Shrewsbury. Retained in the original 17thC frame.

Church plate: includes 1676 Chalice; the rest of 19thC and 20thC date.

Parish registers date from 1630.

Victorian and later fittings (based on Haslam with additions) include:

19thC restoration gifts: octagonal wooden pulpit, brass eagle lectern, octagonal stone font sited on a square base with painted wooden coned cover.

Stained glass: modern stained glass including several gifts by the Adams family of Plas Llyssyn, one dated to 1861.

Monuments: 19thC marble tablet on grey slate to William Henry Adams, Chief Justice of Hong Kong (d.1865), by Maddock of Shrewsbury.

## CHURCHYARD

The large level rectilinear churchyard is situated on the valley floor of Afon Carno, and the ground within it slopes only very gently. It was extended on its north-east side in 1926. It is well-maintained.

Boundary: a stone wall forms the south-western boundary with the Carno-Caersws road and there is a walled boundary too on the north-west side. The south-eastern boundary is formed by adjoining cottages and a house called Ty-mawr, which once had a doorway opening directly onto the churchyard. On the north-east is the extension, now fenced.

Monuments: there are a few early graves; a 1674 gravestone was noted in the stable at Ty-mawr in the late 19thC, a 1696 stone is sited to the south of the church, a fine but weathered 1769 chest tomb with winged putto on the south side, and four worn sandstone grave markers located near the south-east corner of the church, dating to the 1720s and now mounted in a low stone wall. Otherwise mainly 19thC slate slabs, some chest tombs and pillars, and laid out very regularly to the extent that there must have been some re-siting.

Earthworks: raised by around 0.5m on the north side, but generally little evidence that the churchyard as a whole is raised up.

Furniture: Octagonal stone pillar of a sundial, minus the plate and gnomon, located between Ty-mawr and the church porch.

Ancillary features: main south-west entrance is through a pair of wrought iron gates set in tall decorative cast iron pillars. A path leads up to the south porch and continues eastwards to a single wrought iron gate adjoining the churchroom at the south-east corner; the path branches east off the chancel towards the new burial ground.

Vegetation: an old yew against the north-west boundary and a second north-east of the churchyard. Irish yews are sited outside the south porch and several holly trees are located around the churchyard.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 10 November 1996 and 18 September 1998

Davies 1903-4

Eisel 1986, 175

Faculty: Bangor 1890 (NLW)

Haslam 1979, 87

Lunt 1926, 191

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

Putnam 1972

Quinquennial Reports 1985 and 1990

Silvester 1997, 74

Spurgeon 1961

Williams 1990, 60



## CONDITION

Church in good condition.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good

# Castle Caereinion

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<b>Diocese</b>	St Asaph	<b>Dedication</b>	Garmon
<b>PRN</b>	16739	<b>NGR</b>	SJ16310548

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## SUMMARY

The church of St Garmon in the centre of Castle Caereinion is entirely the result of rebuilding in 1866. It contains a chest dated to 1758, a pair of chairs, a fine Royal Arms, a brass of 1700 and two 17thC bells. A large mound in the north corner of the rectangular churchyard is believed to have been a motte and traces of embanking around the churchyard edge could reflect the bailey.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The church was completely rebuilt in 1866 and a tower with a spire and a porch were added in 1874.

## HISTORY

The dedication might suggest an early medieval origin, but there is nothing to confirm this belief, and the current view is that the church resulted from the development of the castle which was built in 1156.

The church was recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Cap'lla de Castell' with a value of £1 6s 8d, and in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 as 'Ecclia de Castell' at £6 13s 4d.

There seems to have been a single-chambered church of the early 15thC on the site. The chancel was refurbished in 1691, but many of the furnishings were stolen six years later. The rural dean's reports of 1729 and 1748 commended the church, though in 1736 the west end of the church had fallen down and had to be rebuilt on a new foundation. By 1791 there were problems with the floor because of the burials beneath it, and the roof was damaged in 1799. The church was partly rebuilt in 1812-13 at a cost of £600, when one of the gables, the south wall and the roof were renewed; at this time, too, the building was re-pewed, a new window inserted in the east wall, and a new gallery erected. Fuller details gleaned from the 18thC churchwardens' accounts are recounted in Brown 1997.

A school was held in the church until 1812, when a school-house was built; the red brick building outside the north gates is the new school built in 1852.

The church was rebuilt by E.E. Wyatt in 1866 in Early English style. To it a tower and spire with a porch on the ground floor were added by Thomas Batt in 1874.

## ARCHITECTURE

The building consists of a nave and slightly narrower chancel, a west tower and south vestry representing total rebuilding in the second half of the 19thC. It is oriented south-west/north-east, but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.



Fabric 'A': quarry-cut, fine-grained, greenish-grey shaley sandstone, random coursing, with buff-yellow sandstone dressings. Used for the body of the church and the tower. Breeze blocks used for the modern boiler house adjoining the vestry.

Roofs: slates with ceramic ridge tiles. Chancel roofline is lower than the nave and has decorative ironwork along the ridge. No finials.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Gravel band along the north side, tarmac paths on the east and south but no clear evidence of a trench along the walls.

Note: Because Castle Caereinion is a 19thC construction, the following is an outline description only.

## Exterior

The fenestration consists of either single wide lancets or two-light windows, which have paired lancets with round lights above. All apertures set flush with the walls and have voussoirs for the relieving arches except where stated.

**Tower. General.** At the west end of the nave is a square three-stage tower with a broach spire surmounted by a weathervane. In the angle formed by its north side and the west end of the nave is a square stair tower rising to a five-sided, coned roof at second-floor level; it has a window slit on the north side and another together with a shoulder-arched exterior doorway facing west. Angle buttresses at west corners of tower, a chamfered plinth at a height of c.0.3m and a continuous string course on all sides immediately above buttress level, this delineating the belfry floor level. Lancet lights to the ground floor on the north and south sides, but a two-centred doorway with fluted chamfers and hoodmould on the west. All but the east wall have clock faces at second floor level and in addition the west wall has a pair of trefoil-headed lights with separate relieving arches. Belfry apertures on all sides but the east; each have paired louvred lancets with roundels above under a two-centred arch with a hoodmould and a relieving arch.

**Nave. General.** Four buttresses form three bays on north side, and three buttresses on the south side forming three bays, with the vestry at the east end. Each bay contains a frameless window of the sort noted above, except at the east end of the nave on its north side where there is a standard window with a trefoiled head and no relieving arch. In the east wall is a below-ground entrance to a former boiler room.

**Chancel. General.** Narrower and lower than the nave. The chancel itself is lit by small trefoil-headed lights in the north wall and south walls, and a two-centred arched window with three stepped trefoiled lights and small roundels in the east wall. A chimney rises above the south side of the roof.

**Vestry. General.** A pair of shouldered lights in the south wall and a high doorway with a two-centred arch in the west wall.

## Interior

**Tower. general.** Entrance porch on ground floor. 19thC tiled floor; interior walls are brick, whitewashed; wooden planked ceiling, the frame of which is supported on stone corbels.

**North wall:** deeply splayed aperture to lancet window, and one 19thC marble memorial.

**East wall:** has a broad two-centred doorway with fluted chamfers, leading to the nave. Also one 19thC marble memorial and another of 1763.

**South wall:** aperture as north wall. Incorporated Society for Building and Churches plaque which is undated.

Two stone Benefaction tablets.

West wall: the two-centred reveal of the west doorway is turned in brick.

Nave. General. One step up from the porch. 19thC tiled floors and some carpetting; benches on raised planking. Plastered and painted walls; no dados but instead horizontal ribs run along the north and south sides at a similar height. The roof of six arch-braced collar and scissor trusses with some cusping. These spring from short wall posts set on stone corbels.

East wall: a two-centred chancel arch of two orders, the inner rising from corbel posts on the wall sides. One 19thC brass.

West end: a gallery at the west end is supported by four square, chamfered uprights, and its panelled front is pierced by trefoils. Access to the gallery is from the exterior staircase turret. At gallery level, a large, almost segmental arch in the west wall is panelled off, and on this the Royal Arms.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from the nave, one to the sanctuary, one to the altar. Floor and walls as nave, though there are encaustic tiles in the sanctuary. The roof has a coved wood-panelled ceiling - 35 panels in all - painted blue with gold stars.

North wall: has a two-centred arch to organ recess. One 20thC marble memorial.

East wall: Decalogue boards to either side of the altar, and a panelled alabaster reredos.

South wall: a two-centred arch to the vestry. One 19thC marble memorial and two 20thC brasses.

Vestry. General. Concrete floor, plastered and painted walls, and a simple raftered roof.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Chest: churchwardens' carved oak chest inscribed 'W.I. R.R. Ch.Wds. 1758'. Located in tower porch.

Chest: carved front and sides; no date but perhaps 18thC.

Chairs: two chairs with decorated backs: undated but possibly 19thC with earlier backs.

Monuments: marble memorial to Rev John Mostyn and family from 1763.

Royal Arms: fine painted Royal Arms. Not dated.

Brass: with heraldry to John Jones (d.1700), together with his parents, Margaret (d.1701) and John (d.1728). At west end of nave.

Bells: of the three, two are 17thC, cast in Wellington by William and Thomas Clibury. The inscriptions run: 'God Save His Church 1628' and 'Gloria Excelsis Deo 1637'

Plate: cup of 1701-2; tankard of 1722-3, and two patens of 1721-2.

Registers: from 1689.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Font: octagonal stone with decorated side panels on a square plinth with wooden cover.



Benefaction tablets: two in stone recording benefactions from 1692. Dated 1824.

Pulpit: octagonal wooden pulpit on stone plinth.

Stained glass: of various dates. In the south wall of the nave 'interlaces with a roundel of the Ascension, probably by David Evans, c. 1840' (Haslam).

## CHURCHYARD

A medium-sized sub-square enclosure with rounded corners on two sides. Some internal embanking for much of the perimeter, and the enclosure is supposed to be the bailey associated with the castle mound in the north corner. The churchyard is very well kept.

Boundary: stone wall on all sides.

Monuments: an even distribution of graves on all sides, mainly 19thC memorials with considerable variation in style. South of the tower a modern memorial incorporates twelve 18thC sandstone slabs, some broken, dating between 1738 and 1768. There have been changes to the layout: in 1967 and again in 1988 some grave markers were laid flat and others were re-sited.

Furniture: sundial with gnomon and a small plate, c.0.15m square inscribed 'Ino James Wm Pugh Wardens 1764' and made by O. Ratcliffe, Pool, on a square slab resting on a baluster pedestal on a stepped base. This sundial was restored and remounted on the plinth outside the west door as a memorial to the Gwynne family.

A second sundial is located within a kerbed grave to the north side of the church: a slim circular pedestal is surmounted by a small gnomon, on a sandstone base, and the plate is inscribed 'Time and Tide wait for no man'.

Earthworks: a large grassy mound in the north-east corner is known as 'Twmpath Garmon', and this has led to its identification as a preaching mound, associated with St Garmon. An alternative view which seems reasonable is that it was the motte built in 1156 by Madoc ap Mareddud. As noted above the churchyard enclosure is the suggested site of the bailey, and there are clear signs of embankment particularly on the north-east side. The churchyard is raised though generally by no more than 0.5m.

Ancillary features: main entrance on north-west through pair of wrought iron gates with an adjacent metal kissing gate. There are single gates in east and south corners and a stiled entrance in the south-west wall. Concrete and gravel paths.

Vegetation: ring of five large yew trees, four on raised mounds, located around the southern and western boundary. Yews of lesser girth on east boundary and a 19thC yew on the north side of the graveyard.

## SOURCES

Brown 1997, 1  
CPAT Field Visit: 28 February 1996 and 22 September 1998  
Eisel 1986, 175  
Faculty: St Asaph 1873 (NLW)  
Faculty: St Asaph 1967 (NLW)  
Faculty: St Asaph 1979 (NLW)  
Haslam 1979, 89  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 52

Thomas 1913, 140  
Williams 1990, 59



## CONDITION

Church in a reasonable state of repair, but floor tiles are uneven and some lifting, and plaster is peeling on the north wall.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Very Good

# Cemmaes

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**Diocese** Bangor**Dedication** Tydecho**PRN** 32576**NGR** SH83980624

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## SUMMARY

St Tydecho's church in Cemmaes, some 6 miles to the north-east of Machynlleth, is a late medieval, single-chambered church with a western bellcote. The whole building was heavily restored in the 19thC and the interior in 1902. It retains its 15thC arch-braced roof, putative 15thC walls and a porch of the 18thC, but very few pre-19thC fittings. It is situated in a large churchyard on level ground on the south bank of the River Dovey.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A simple late medieval church, with 19thC square-headed windows set in the north and south walls. The south wall has been heightened at some stage leading to a degree of asymmetry, perhaps in the 18thC when there are indications of a round-headed window and door being inserted. The porch is probably dated by inscription of 1742, but the interior is largely the result of 1902 restoration work.

## HISTORY

The dedication, location and churchyard morphology all point to an early medieval foundation.

The church is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 under the diocese of St Asaph. As 'Kemeys' it was grouped with Llan(brynmair) at a combined value of £1 6s 8d. In 1291 Pope Nicholas' Taxation valued it individually at £4.

There were some 18thC modifications to the building - the south porch was built (or rebuilt in 1742), the gallery added (and this according to Lewis had 'fine carvings of flowers', presumably from the rood screen, for which see below), and perhaps at least one round-headed window inserted.

In 1856 Glynne noted that under the west gallery was part of the rood screen with a cornice of vine leaves.

The church was restored at some unknown date in the later 19thC, when the gallery of 1742 was removed, and further work, on the interior, took place in 1902.

## ARCHITECTURE

A single-chamber church with a bellcote rising above the west gable, a south porch and a north-east vestry. The church is aligned south-west to north-east but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is mainly small to medium sized blocks and slabs of grey and light brown sandstone and shale together with pebblestones; irregular coursing.



Fabric 'B' is more homogeneous in appearance with dark sandstone blocks and some pebblestones; irregular coursing.

Fabric 'C' is of quarry-cut sedimentary rock, appearing in the south porch and the blocked north door.

Fabric 'D' is of thin slabs of slate, quite well laid and partially coursed.

Fabric 'E' consists of large, square blocks of stone, with some coursing.

Fabric 'A' is visible in the north, east and south walls with irregular pointing and may date to the 15thC, 'B' to the 19thC rebuilding, 'C' is used in the south porch and the lychgate and may be 18thC. 'D' and 'E' are of uncertain date.

Roofs: slate with black ceramic ridge tiles. Stone cross finial at east end.

Drainage: north and south wall guttering leads to soakaways. A drainage trench is visible along the east wall and part of the south wall.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation between the two elements. The roof slopes lower on the north side, this being visible more readily at the east gable than the west.

North wall: in fabric 'A'. At the west end the jambs (in long and short work) and a lintel stone of a blocked square-headed doorway, c.1m wide. The blocking of the door is in 'A', the stonework of the door itself can be classed as 'C'. This doorway may have been inserted in the 18thC when the west gallery was added. Then two inserted 19thC lancet windows in buff yellow freestone, and fabric 'B' patching around the apertures. Three metres to the east of the first of these is a butt joint, but the presence of brick in the build of the wall and the chimney sprouting from the roof above indicate that this is a late feature. Below the easternmost lancet is a subterranean boiler house, its concrete-capped roof about 0.3m above the present ground level. Immediately adjacent is the vestry and beyond this at the north-east corner Fabric 'A' has been replaced by 'D'.

East wall: in fabric 'A'. Asymmetric gable end is obvious, the north wall c.1m lower than its southern counterpart. (The reason for this becomes obvious internally where it is clear that the south wall has been heightened - see section on the nave roof). The north-east corner including the quoins is in 'D' and at foundation level is a projecting course of large stones, which continue only for a short distance southwards. The south-east angle and its quoins also appear to be in 'D'. An inserted 19thC two-centred window with three trefoil-headed lights and two quatrefoils above. Two rows of yellow brick headers arch over the window top as a sort of relieving arch.

South wall: in fabric 'A' with 'B' patching around the three inserted lancet windows to the east of the porch. At a height of around 3m the wall is inset and the remaining 1.2m to the eaves is of a later build (though in 'A'-like material), conceivably at the time the round-headed window was inserted (see below). At the east end some 'D', perhaps mixed with re-used 'A' masonry. The central lancet appears to have replaced an earlier round-headed window set directly below the eaves, for the stone voussoired arch of the earlier window is still visible above the lancet, though it is a puzzle as to why only one such blocked 18thC window is visible along this wall. Above the west side of the porch roof is a blocked square aperture which presumably lit the gallery.

West wall: cement render on the wall face above a basal plinth which shows two courses of heavily mortared blocks about 0.5m high and 0.35m wide in fabric 'A', and clearly integral with the wall itself. West window in 19thC yellow sandstone, with a pointed arch over two cinquefoil-headed lights and a quatrefoil above. The gable has renewed slate coping stones and rises to the bellcote constructed in material equivalent to fabric 'B'. The single bell hangs beneath a two-centred arch, and the straight-sided turret has a gabled head surmounted by a wrought iron weathervane.

Vestry. General. Adjoins the north wall of the chancel and appears to have been built in three stages, in fabric 'B', so all 19thC or later. A small stone-built cell was extended to the west in stone, leaving the quoins



of the earliest cell immured. Finally there was a further extension to the west in red brick, perhaps for storage. Modern door in square-headed aperture in north wall together with two wide lancets. And in the west wall a wooden door with a concrete lintel over.

**South Porch. General.** The open porch appears to be faced in fabric 'C', and a date of 1742 inside (see below) presumably refers to this build. The south wall has a round-headed entrance arch of voussoirs, now fitted with a pair of modern wrought iron gates. No apertures in the east and west walls which are in 'E'.

### Interior

**Porch. General.** One step down from the exterior. A 19thC red and black tiled floor; interior walls plastered and painted; ceiling plastered above exposed rafters and chamfered purlins, but above the nave door is a tie beam with queen post truss on which is engraved '1742. V.I.'.

**North wall:** the south doorway to the nave may originally have had a two-centred arch but it is now flat-topped. There are no chamfers on the dressings

**East and west wall:** wooden planked benches on stone plinths.

**Nave. General.** A product of the 1902 restoration work. Tiled floors are completely carpetted, and raised planked flooring under two rows of box pews; also a raised planked floor to a baptistry at the west end. Walls plastered and painted, and the window embrasures have internal dressings with chamfers that terminate with pyramid stops at the top. 15thC roof with seven arch-braced collar trusses forming eight bays over the nave and chancel, and the three most easterly trusses have large cusping above the collars, with raking struts springing from the collars. On the north side, the trusses spring from the wall top, and the principals are flush with the ceiling behind (though there is a slight gap in the chancel). On the south side, however, the trusses emerge from the wall which then rises for a further 0.6m, leaving a large gap between the principals and the ceiling. Subsidiary principals have been inserted to support the roof, clear evidence of the heightening of the wall on the south.

**North wall:** deeply splayed windows with diamond-leaded lights. A sawn-off beam, c.0.15m square and now painted over, is a remnant of the gallery support at the west end. At the east end a brass of 1773 and a wall tablet of 1813.

**South wall:** splayed window apertures; the more easterly lancet has modern stained glass. Panelled entrance doors in a square-headed aperture. One wall monument of 1729.

**West wall:** west window has modern stained glass.

**Chancel. General.** One step up from the nave, and one step up to the sanctuary. Floor, wall and roof details as the nave.

**North wall:** organ set in a recess which is open to the vestry. Two-centred vestry doorway east of the organ. One 19thC marble memorial and brass and wooden plaques of the 20thC.

**East wall:** stained glass window above the altar. Band of carved vine leaf cornice from the medieval rood screen set along the sill of the window.

**South wall:** wall monuments of 1744 and 1878.

**Vestry. General.** Wooden planked floor, plastered walls and ceiling sloping to north.



## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Screen: a fragment of the vine-leaf cornice of the 15thC screen is fixed behind the altar at sill level. It includes the figure of an angel.

Monuments: i) to Roger Mostyn (d.1744) and his wife, Elizabeth, 'a strong relief with two flowing oil-cruses and an asymmetrical shield above the entablature' (Haslam) and a putto; ii) a stone tablet to Anne Morris (d.1729), black-painted with embossed lettering. iii) brass tablet with etched design of winged hourglass and death's head, to brothers John and Rice Hughes (d.1767 and 1773).

Table: altar table but only the legs remain, the top having been renewed; 17thC or perhaps 18thC.

Victorian and later fittings include:

Font: octagonal stone font on octagonal plinth with octagonal wooden cover carved '1868 gift of Fanny Davies, Rectory, Cemmaes'.

Stained glass: 'east window depicts garish Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, dated 1864, and in south wall stained glass of St Melangell, monogrammed ML, 1905, marked by an Art Nouveau brass tablet' (Haslam). West window glass is a memorial to John Hughes, rector from 1827 to 1856 by Ward and Hughes, 1889.

Monuments: marble on slate to Jane Owen of Maesgwyn (d.1855); marble tablet to Thomas Walter Evans (d.1878); and memorial tablet to Catherine Hughes (d.1813).

Bell: dated 1823.

Reredos: panelling of 1914.

## CHURCHYARD

A large semi-circular churchyard sited on level ground, against the lip of the Dovey valley. Probably some encroachment by buildings at west corner, but otherwise largely unchanged since medieval (?and earlier) times.

Boundary: a stone wall on all sides, except on the north where there is a high scarp, representing the river terrace of the River Dovey, with a wall at its base.

Monuments: fairly even distribution of marked graves on south, east and west sides; no burials on the north side of the nave and burials to north of the vestry are grassed over. Mainly slate slabs of 19thC date, but there are also a number of 18thC chest tombs. Also a slab of 1758 near the west wall, one of 1720 by the south-east corner of the church, a low chest tomb with extra large lettering on its slate top but no date, and a fine table tomb with moulded legs and inscriptions on the side to John and Catherine Carr (d.1705 and 1731) to the east of the chancel.

Furniture: Sundial located to south of porch - a slim chamfered sandstone plinth with a plate inscribed 'James Evans, Salop' on a wooden base.

In front of the 1720 grave is an embedded boulder with a small hole through it. The hole is smooth and the stone may have been associated with some sort of medieval game.

Earthworks: the churchyard has slight internal banking on the south side. Generally it is raised only a little: perhaps 0.5m on the east and less than this further round to the south.

Ancillary features: main entrance to south of church through a stone lychgate, dating to the 19thC

restoration; tarmac path leads up to south porch.

Vegetation: four older yews located off the south side of the church; three younger yews along the south wall. The yew near the lychgate has the greatest girth.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 23 May 1996 and 22 September 1998

Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 184

Eisel 1986, 176

Haslam 1979, 92

Lewis 1833

Lunt 1926, 471

NMR Aberystwyth

Parish Records, Bangor Diocese 1909: B/F/103 (NLW)

Powys SMR

Quinquennial Reports 1988 and 1993



## CONDITION

Main body of church in good state of repair apart from the west wall which is peeling badly. The south wall exterior stonework is cracked at the west end from top to bottom. Plaster also peeling badly in the porch.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Very Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Medium to Good

# Churchstoke

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<b>Diocese</b>	Hereford	<b>Dedication</b>	Nicholas
<b>PRN</b>	16746	<b>NGR</b>	SO27119398
		<b>Previous dedication</b>	Mary

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## SUMMARY

The large parish church of St Nicholas in Churchstoke, lies about 8 miles south-south-east of Welshpool and very close to the English border. What can be seen now is largely the result of 19thC rebuilding, but it retains its 13thC tower with a later timber belfry. From the period prior to the 19thC, only a font, a stoup and a chest have survived up to three phases of restoration and reconstruction. The church is situated in a raised sub-circular churchyard which has been extended in recent times.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A 13thC square western tower, reduced in height in 1812, with a typical Montgomeryshire-style timber-framed belfry and a pyramidal slate roof. The main body of the church with its large high pitched roof dates to the second half of the 19thC, though the sequence of construction is not completely clear.

## HISTORY

The morphology of the churchyard and its location immediately above the Camlad suggest an early medieval origin.

The name 'Churchstoke' appears in Domesday Book and suggests a village built around a church. A further Domesday entry for nearby Chirbury refers to two churches: one St Michaels and all Angels at Chirbury, the other at Churchstoke, which at that time was part of Chirbury Parish.

The medieval church probably functioned as a chapel affiliated to Chirbury which was run by the Augustinian Monks. It has been argued that they built the present tower in a defensive style typical of the Montgomeryshire border.

The tower was used as a place of refuge during 14thC feuds and later Civil War battles. Parliamentary soldiers attacked Royalists, who were planning to camp overnight at Churchstoke in Spring 1646. The Royalists took refuge in the church; in the ensuing battle the Parliamentarians set fire to the church door forcing the Royalists to surrender. Only a few signs of musket shots remain after the 1812 restoration, notably on the soffit of the upper storey round-headed window tower north wall window.

In 1751, permission was granted to take down the south wall of the church and erect a new aisle 25' by 10' with a door into the churchyard. The measurements indicate that the old church was a much smaller structure than its 19thC successor.

The church underwent several periods of restoration. The 1812 restoration by Joseph Bromfield of Shrewsbury involved taking the old church down and building a new nave using stone from Churchstoke Hall and Churchstoke Quarries. It was roofed with slate from Comdon. The new church included a schoolroom and galleries, and had a seating capacity of 565. The present pulpit was sited against the north wall. The present iron columns, made in Coalbrookdale, presumably carried the galleries. They now support



the lowered roofline. The tower's wooden belfry and the spire above it were added in 1815.

The phasing of the Victorian restoration is rather unclear. It is stated in the listed building schedule that the church was remodelled around 1867 in the late Decorated style: the chancel was supposedly added along with the north and south transepts and south porch, the nave windows were replaced and the interior was re-ordered. But the present writers have not encountered any supporting documentation for this phase of work, although there is in the church a copy of a sketch of the building, of putative 19thC date, which shows windows of simpler Gothic design than the present ones and a south porch off the chancel.

Concrete evidence for rebuilding and restoration work comes with a faculty of 1881, when it was planned that the schoolroom and galleries should be removed along with the old box pews. The interior was then laid out in its present form. The exterior buttresses were added and the ground level was lowered around the church. And it was at this time, not earlier, that the nave windows were added, the north and south walls of the chancel were rebuilt, and a new south porch added.

Re-dedication presumably took place in 1881, St Nicholas replacing St Mary. The church clock was installed to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1887.

Restoration work on the tower in 1950 included repairs to the stonework, renewal of the woodwork and lead flashing and repointing at the base of the spire. Further repairs to the tower, buttresses and guttering took place in 1979.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises nave and aisles under a continuous roofline, a chancel which is narrower than the nave, and the vestry and organ chambers forming short north and south transepts. The picture is completed by a south porch and a west tower. The building is oriented fractionally south of west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of medium blocks of grey and grey-brown sandstone and siltstone with occasional red sandstone and other inclusions; sandstone dressings; totally random coursing. Used for the body of the church.

'B' consists of small to medium slabs and blocks of grey sandstone and siltstone with quoins of the same fabric; of more regular appearance than 'A'. Restricted to the church tower.

Roofs: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles. Cross finials on the porch and south transept, and the remnant of one at the east end of the chancel.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. No convincing evidence of drainage trench.

## Exterior

Tower. General. Square three-stage western tower, the sides slightly battered for around 4m or more. The tower rises to around 10m high and is surmounted by a slightly inset wooden belfry, its timber cladding replaced in c.1982; square-headed louvred apertures on three sides and a clock face on the north face. Above this is an octagonal spire with louvred lights in its sides and surmounted by a ball-finial and weathercock.

North wall: partly ivy-covered. A small flat-headed aperture with worn red sandstone dressings is just visible beneath ivy cover at ground floor level behind the 19thC headstones placed against the wall. The third-floor ringing chamber is illuminated by a small lancet light, almost round-headed with red sandstone dressings, though not as worn as might be expected and probably not original. Four tie-rod plates.

East wall: nave roof is carried up to belfry level.

South wall: the ground floor has a two-centred doorway, its dressings with hollow chamfers and holding a

square-headed slatted door with a traceried panel in wood and glass above, wholly a late 19thC feature. Standard lancet light to third floor with weathered stonework, and four iron tie-rod plates showing in upper part of wall

West wall: lancet light to tower stair, centrally placed and at second-floor level. It has worn chamfered dressings but the head has been renewed in grey freestone.

Nave and aisles. General. Main body of the church under one roof. Fabric is 'A'. On the north, three stepped buttresses with a diagonal buttress at the north-west corner form four bays each with a Perpendicular-style window of three lights with cinquefoiled ogee-heads and elaborate panel tracery under a two-centred arch that has a hoodmould with simple stops. A similar design appears on the south wall, but two buttresses form three bays with three identical windows, and west of the porch some ivy cover. Plain west wall.

North transept/vestry. General. Protrudes slightly north off north aisle. Continuous string course from chancel at c.2.5m above ground level; diagonal buttresses; three-light window with stepped cinquefoil-headed lights in Y-tracery in north wall; narrow, two-centred arched doorway in square-headed door frame with decoration in its spandrels in the east wall. Below ground boiler house on west side.

Chancel. General. Continuous plinth at 0.5m above ground level and a continuous moulded string course at c.2.5m; diagonal buttresses at the east corners; and a variety of windows - a two-centred window with two foiled lights and a quatrefoil in the north wall; a two-centred east window with three trefoil-headed lights and complicated tracery with a hoodmould and foliate stops, and two single trefoil-headed windows with trefoils above in the south wall.

South transept/organ chamber. General. Continuous stone plinth at c.0.7m above ground level and a string course at c.2.5m; diagonal buttresses at corners; two single trefoil-headed lights with hoodmoulds in the south wall with above them a central round window featuring a traceried 'Star of David', and hoodmould with floriated stops.

South Porch. General. Double plinth to a height of c.0.9m, string course at c.1.8m; gargoyles at the corners; parapet and pedimented gable on the south. Square-headed apertures containing cinquefoiled ogee-headed lights in the east and west walls, and in the south wall a two-centred entrance arch with hollow-chamfered jambs, and above this a highly decorative ogee-arched niche with pinnacles.

## Interior

Porch. General. 19thC tiled floor, plastered walls and ceiling above exposed rafters. East and west walls have deeply splayed apertures.

Tower. General. Stone flagged floor with carpet over, plastered walls and ceiling. Used for storage and bellringing.

North wall: small splayed aperture, blocked, and now hidden by a wall-cupboard. Also an old slate clock face hanging on wall (early 19thC?).

East wall: two-centred arched doorway; slightly splayed reveal.

South wall: doorway with a splayed reveal.

West wall: staircase behind wood-panelling leads up to the second and third stages.



[The listed building schedule reports that the internal window heads in the third stage have been truncated, suggesting that the tower was originally higher].

Nave, north and south aisles. General. The nave and aisles have herringbone woodblock floors with plain tongue and groove planking below the benches. Tiled floor from 1967 below the stone font at the west end of the north aisle, and one metal grille (for a heating vent?) at the east end of the north aisle. Wainscoting has been placed around the modern childrens' corner, but all other walls are plastered. At east end of north aisle is a two-centred arch of two orders, panelled off with access to a vestry. At the east end of the south aisle is the organ and a second vestry.

North and south aisles divided from the nave by arcades of six bays surmounted by a frieze of timber arcading (see below). Each arcade is raised on a stone corbel on the west wall, five metal columns, and terminates in a corbel on the chancel arch; the columns have octagonal stone bases, hollow Coalbrookdale iron columns and square decorative capitals. The columns originally supported galleries in the aisles, but these were removed at the time of the 1881 restoration.

Nave of six bays under a roof consisting of seven tie-beam trusses, supported on short arch braces, with plain king and raking struts intersecting with cusped struts, and the tie-beams having crenellated tops; the wallposts drop over a wallplate with a frieze of two-centred arches c.1m high; exposed rafters and purlins. The frieze design is echoed in the spandrels of the wooden arcading. The aisle ceilings are sloping and each consists of two rows of 12 square raised ribbed frames containing tongue and groove panelling.

Walls: splayed apertures for windows. At the east end the chancel arch of two orders has Corinthian capitals rising from octagonal plinths between the side arches, with plain capitals under a hoodmould with foliated stops; chancel screen of three open cinquefoil-headed panels to either side of a central doorway, plain panels beneath a frieze of crosses and a large central cross over the doorway. In the west wall a two-centred doorway with complex mouldings and a hoodmould gives access to the tower. Above and to the south is a disconformity in the wall suggesting the former entrance to the gallery. At the west end of the south aisle is a modern internal porch of large glass panels. 19thC memorials on the north and south walls and 20thC brasses on the west wall.

Chancel. General. One step to the chancel from the nave, and further steps to the sanctuary and altar. Encaustic tiles throughout chancel and sanctuary. North and south walls have double arches to the transepts with parclose screens. South wall of chancel contains a piscina beneath a cinquefoil-headed arch linked to a triple sedilia, with a continuous hoodmould and foliate stops; also three 19thC brasses.

Chancel roof of three arched principles springing from wooden wallplates with stone corbels, the arched ceiling panelled with raised ribs giving a total of 30 panels.

North transept/vestry. General. Separated from main body of church by double arch from chancel and single arch from north aisle; tiled floor, plastered walls and ceiling; fireplace in north-west corner.

South transept/organ chamber. General. Separated from main body of church by double arch from chancel and single arch from south aisle.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: bowl and part of the stem only, in grey sandstone; 14thC. Found buried in the churchyard near the path leading down to the old river crossing in 1956. Now sited at rear of nave.

Chest: Jacobean carved chest located at the west end of the nave.



Bells: five, all by Abraham Ruddall II, dated to 1721. Inscribed as follows: i) 'Lawrence Lewis Vicar A R 1721'; ii) 'FR : Gwilt : FR : Gwilt Tho : Powell Ch : Wardens / Tho : Shuker DA : Lewis Assistants 1721'. iii) 'God Save the Church & King A R 1721'; iv) 'ABR Rudhall of Gloucester Founder 1721'; v) 'Prosperity to this Parish A R 1721'. The bell frame is old.

Registers: from 1558.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Pulpit: of c.1812.

Chancel Screen: c.1870, carved on one side only.

Stoup: plain bowl on octagonal sandstone plinth now located in corner of south aisle; considered to be Victorian.

Monuments: i) to George Mountford of Pentreheylin (d.1719) and various members of the same family to 1858, white marble on grey slate, probably erected 1856, by Carline, Salop. ii) marble memorial to Thomas Browne (d.1811), a neo-Classical relief of an urn being garlanded by mourning lady; by H.Wood of Bristol. iii) to William Dunne (d.1810), with heraldry, by J and T Carline of Shrewsbury. Further monuments in locked vestry at east end of south aisle.

Brass plate in floor in front of chancel step records burial in a vault below of William Davies of Brompton Hall (d.1806).

## CHURCHYARD

An irregularly shaped churchyard which in its original eastern half is broadly curvilinear and raised, located at a high point in the village, overlooking the valley of the Camlad to the west. At the west end of the church the ground drops steeply away to meadows and the Camlad: this is a graveyard extension which was consecrated in 1868. The graveyard around the church is well kept and only overgrown on the north-west side.

Augering during restoration work on the tower suggested that the old ground surface was originally c.1.3m below that of the present ground level around the tower. It has been claimed that the ground level was presumably built up before the 13thC when the tower was constructed. An old track runs downhill from the tower to the now disused graveyard extension to the north-west, but the track may have been an earlier route from a river crossing.

Boundary: the stone wall on the east side of the churchyard was rebuilt in 1812 when the ground was cut back: the raised grass verge on the roadside may have been the earlier perimeter. The revetment wall continues around the rest of the perimeter, but there are iron railings on the north-west.

Monuments: even distribution of burials on all sides. Mainly of 19thC date, including chest tombs, crosses, pitched cross slabs, slate and stone slabs. A slab of 1776 placed by south wall of church, and a memorial of 1781 on the north side but the earliest grave noted was a sandstone slab to Sarah (d.1749) and Hugh Pugh (d.1768). Modern cremations placed on south side of church.

Furniture: sundial without gnomon located on south side of church near the entrance porch; a tapering square-sectioned pillar on a pedestal base.

Earthworks: signs of an earlier enclosure around the north and west sides of the church, while there is a raised internal bank (up to 0.8m) on the east side.

Ancillary features: two pairs of wooden gates form south-east and north-east entrances. Tarmac paths lead all round the church.



Vegetation: yew trees on all sides of no great age, but three older yews close to the church itself.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings for Churchstoke Community: 1996

Church notes (by W.T.Bryan) n.d.

Churchstoke W.I. Churchyard Survey 1991

CPAT Field Visit: 8 December 1995 and 1 May 1998

Eisel 1986, 178

Haslam 1979, 93

Faculty: Hereford 1881 (HRO)

Faculty: Hereford 1950 (HRO)

Faculty: Hereford 1979 (HRO)

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

## CONDITION

Good condition apart from the roof on the north and south aisles where rain is leaking in.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium to Good



# Criggion

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Michael and All Angels**PRN** 16677**NGR** SJ29561510

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## SUMMARY

St Michael's church at Criggion, about 6 miles to the north-east of Welshpool, has an 18thC red-brick nave and western tower, with a stone-built chancel added in the following century. It retains a few fittings of the 18thC, but nothing earlier. The church is set within a D-shaped churchyard defined by a surrounding ditch, but appears to contain no monuments earlier than the 19thC.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church entirely constructed in red brick in 1770, originally with round-headed Georgian style windows in keeping with a building of that date. In the nave these were later replaced with Gothic-style windows to compliment the mid-19thC chancel.

## HISTORY

The ecclesiastical parish of Criggion was known formerly as an 'ancient chapelry', but there is no information on any predecessors of the present building. It is claimed that the earliest church records go back to 1343, though these do not relate to the present site.

In 1686, the Bishop of Hereford's register recorded the granting of a license to Thomas Price, the curate of Criggion, but prior to this the Alberbury register records a baptism on January 26th 1676, of 'ye first child baptized in ye Chappell [at Criggion] where it now stands'. The present church bell dates to 1682 and was presumably in this early chapel, whose site is unknown, although a field in the parish is known as 'Chapel Field'.

Criggion is recorded in the Bishop's registers in 1767, when Thomas Eyton, the last Squire of Criggion, undertook to build a new church on his own land at his own expense, and promised that he and his family would maintain it. The new church, in red brick, was consecrated in 1770.

By 1838, the church, not 70 years old, was in a very poor state of repair and the churchyard was so ill-defined that it was marked out and consecrated anew. The church itself was restored, the exterior was painted, a stone font placed in the tower, replacing an 'ordinary basin', a gallery was inserted, and the clock was installed on the tower. In 1842, the vestry was added.

There is no faculty record of a chancel being added to the 18thC church. This appears to have been done at some point in the mid-19thC (and the listed building schedule gives a date of 1848, though this has not been verified), and the round-headed nave windows were replaced by pointed headed ones.

Until 1864, Criggion was a chapel-of-ease to the mother church at Alberbury. It was transferred from the Diocese of Hereford to that of St Asaph in 1920.

The heating system in the church was changed in 1962. The pyramidal roof on the tower was reconstructed

to a new design in 1969 replacing a battlemented parapet, and the ridge of the nave was also repaired, and the nave roof ceiling was plastered and painted.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and narrower chancel, a west tower with the entrance beneath, and a north vestry with a lean-to boiler-house. The church is oriented south-west to north-east but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises local red brick with red sandstone dressings.

'B' is locally quarried greenish-grey Criggion igneous rock (dolerite), again with red sandstone dressings.

'A' is of 1770. 'B' is believed to be mid-19thC.

Roofs: slates with dark clay ridge tiles; sandstone cross finials to nave and chancel.

Drainage: north and south sides have guttering, and cast iron downspouts lead to soakaways. A drainage trench is a possibility although there is little visible evidence.

### Exterior

**Tower.** General. Undifferentiated three-stage tower in 'A', the quoins slightly proud of the wall faces; pyramidal slate roof surmounted by spirelet. Ground floor functions as western entrance to church.

North wall: a single round-headed louvred window to belfry in third stage; projecting springers and keystone.

East wall: window as north side.

South wall: belfry window as on north side. A clock face just below it.

West wall: heavy planked entrance door with wrought iron fittings set in a round-headed doorway which has a projecting keystone and springers. Above this is a circular window of six lights illuminating the gallery, and above two further windows, the higher one a standard louvred belfry window, the lower also round-headed, but slightly larger and glazed.

**Nave.** General. Constructed in fabric 'A', the quoins standing proud as on the tower.

North wall: low stone plinth at c.0.2m above ground level. From the west: i) a small square window with a wooden frame, high up in the wall to light the gallery; ii) a single-light window, with two-centred arch, red sandstone dressings; iii) a two-light two-centred window, the lights foiled with a quatrefoil above, and a hoodmould with block stops.

East wall: gable end visible above lower, chancel roof.

South wall: two two-centred arched windows with plain red sandstone dressings as north wall. Two modern memorial tablets to members of the Vickers family, owners of the Criggion estates during the 19thC renovations, inset into the wall at a low level.

**Chancel.** General. A 19thC addition in fabric 'B' with sandstone dressings. Walls and angle buttresses are battered to a height of c.0.3m.

North wall: two stepped buttresses with red sandstone capping. Single lancet window to the sanctuary with hoodmould; worn red sandstone dressings. Large blocks of red sandstone form a band along the length of



the chancel at hoodmould level. Boiler house chimney protrudes through the roof. The chimney and the wall below it have been recently patched, and signs of the 1962 change in the heating system are visible.

East wall: a stepped buttress to either side of three, stepped lancet lights with hoodmould and foliate stops; relieving arches of voussoirs in alternate sandstone and dolerite. A red sandstone string course runs at sill level. Two large sandstone blocks are located above the window at the apex.

South wall: two stepped buttresses. Red sandstone blocks form a course as on the north wall. Single lancet to east, double lights to west, a continuous hoodmould linking the two windows with terminal foliate stops.

Vestry and boiler house. General. Annexed to north wall, and both brick built. The low stone plinth along the north wall of the nave continues along the west and north wall of the vestry. The north wall has a single round-headed window with half-round mouldings and the doorway in its west wall is likewise round-headed with engaged shafts and cushion capitals - a classic Norman-style doorway. The boiler room door utilises worn red sandstone dressings, suggestive of re-use, and on its north side is a further round-headed doorway with engaged shafts and cushion capitals, all in red sandstone that is weathering badly.

## Interior

Tower. General. Ground floor is porch with red tiled floor, plastered walls, and the font. Its east wall has the entrance doors to the nave, and the south wall has the entrance to the gallery via a narrow dog-leg stairway.

Gallery. General. Wooden floors, plastered walls and ceiling, with an entrance hatch to the belfry. From the first floor of the tower, a two-centred arch gives access to the gallery which overhangs the nave, and is stepped down beneath plain, rather rustic, benches.

Nave. General. Tiled floor, carpetted down the aisle, underfloor heating grilles, and raised boarding under the box pews; plastered walls with exposed dressings; three-bay roof divided by two king-post tie-beam trusses with raking struts, and double purlins.

North wall: windows have internal hoodmoulds and head-stops. Sounding board of the pulpit affixed to wall. Vestry door at chancel end. War memorial brass.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch of red and yellow sandstone archstones, yellow sandstone Corinthian capitals and engaged shafts. There are red sandstone hoodmoulds with foliated stops on both the chancel and nave sides. One 19thC marble memorial tablet.

South wall: windows have hoodmoulds and pilaster shafts with foliate stops.

West wall: entrance door with gallery above. Gallery is supported on two thin wooden columns and wall brackets. Its front has decorated openwork panels.

Chancel. General. Three steps lead up from nave, and one to the sanctuary and another to the altar. Tiles carpetted over in chancel, exposed encaustic tiles in sanctuary. Walls as nave. Roof of eleven close-set arch-braced collars.

North wall: single splayed lancet, with alternating yellow and red sandstone dressings at the head. Two heating grilles set in the wall. One 19thC marble memorial tablet and a 19thC cope in a glass case.

East wall: three-light window with internal shafts, hoodmould and foliated stops. Sandstone moulding below window runs full width of wall. Reredos of mouldings in relief forming continuous round-headed arches and columns; painted over.

South wall: splayed single lancet, with sedile below, and two splayed two-light windows, both with alternating yellow and red dressings, and a continuous hoodmould terminating in foliated stops. The piscina has similar dressings to its two-centred head.

Vestry. General. Tiled floor, plastered walls and ceiling.

## FURNISHING and FITTINGS

Box pews: two rows of 18thC box pews, either side of the central aisle, eight on the south, seven on the north; and two large family pews to either side close to the chancel.

Altar rail: original 18thC rail now utilised in front pew on north side.

Pulpit: decorated tester, reputedly 17thC, and the backboard on the north wall originally covered a three-decker pulpit. The present octagonal pulpit, probably 18thC, is now free standing, located on a plinth within a pew. Tester restored in 19thC, perhaps by Thomas Nicholson.

Bell: dated 1682 and inscribed 'Thomas Roberts of Shrewsbury'.

19thC furnishings and fittings:

Font: octagonal stone font, with brass bowl, located in entrance porch. Replaced in 1841.

Stained glass: mainly late 19thC and 20thC.

## CHURCHYARD

The church occupies a raised, D-shaped enclosure, surrounded by a ditch which presumably reflects its location on the floor of the Severn floodplain.

Boundary: consists of the aforementioned ditch, with a stone wall forming a revetment to its inner face. Inside this, on the east and parts of the south and north, is a low hedge.

Monuments: a mix of 19thC and 20thC graves, fairly regularly placed on the south side of church. Rows of chest tombs date to the late 19thC/early 20thC. The earliest recorded gravemarker is of 1843, a large slab south of entrance gates.

Furniture: none noticed.

Earthworks: interior raised by about 0.5m on the north and a little less on the east and south.

Ancillary features: pair of oak entrance gates (1948 memorial gift) set in a stone wall form a splayed entrance. Tarmac path leads up to west entrance door.

Vegetation: yew trees surround the site and there are broad-leaved species by the path.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1994  
CPAT Field Visit: 5 December 1995 and 5 March 1998  
Eisel 1986, 177



Haslam 1979, 95  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Roberts 1972

## CONDITION

Church generally in good condition.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Good

Archaeological potential: Poor

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium



# Darowen

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**Diocese** Bangor

**Dedication** Tudur

**PRN** 32601

**NGR** SH83000181

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## SUMMARY

St Tudur's church in the small village of Darowen, a little more than 5 miles to the east of Machynlleth, was completely rebuilt in c.1862-1864. There can be little doubt that there was an early medieval foundation here, but nothing survives of this or its medieval successor. The only pre-19thC fitting is a brass of 1627, and there is an altar table, perhaps of the 18thC. The moderately sized churchyard is sub-oval in shape, and contains a sundial of 1761, but few if any pre-19thC gravemarkers.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Present church built in Early English style in c.1862-1864.

## HISTORY

St Tudur, a 7thC saint, is reputed to have founded the church at Darowen and to have been buried there. Certainly both the dedication and the churchyard morphology point to an early medieval origin.

It is recorded as 'Ecclesia de Dareweyn' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 at a value of £1 6s 8d.

A sketch of the old church in the 'Montgomeryshire Collections' reveals a single chamber with a western bell-turret, square-headed windows to the nave, a dormer window probably illuminating the rood loft or stairs, a small pointed Gothic window in the chancel, a single lancet window in the west wall, and a large porch with a square-headed doorway. It is believed to have stood from the early 14thC. Due to its dangerous and dilapidated state, it was taken down and the present structure was built in c.1862-1864, on almost the same site, to the design of J.W. Poundley and D. Walker, architects of Liverpool.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave and narrower chancel, with a bellcote raised over the chancel arch, a south porch and a lean-to north vestry. It is oriented fractionally north of due west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium slabs of greyish sandstone and shale, irregularly coursed; selected blocks used for quoins; buff-yellow sandstone dressings.

'A' is from 1862-4 and is used for the whole building.

Roofs: slates and black ceramic ridge tiles. A wrought iron cross finial from the east end now lies alongside the south wall of the nave. Another remains above the gable end of the porch.

Drainage: modern guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. A concrete band 0.4m wide around the

body of the church presumably covers a drainage trench.

Note: the church was completely rebuilt in the 19thC and for that reason only a summary description is given below.

## Exterior

Nave. General. In 'A'. Windows have two-centred arches with either single or double trefoiled lights, two on the south side, both single and foiled, four alternating double and single foiled lights on the north side. Sloping buttresses at eastern angles of the nave, and another, completely rendered, mid way along the north side. The west wall is pebbledashed, and incorporates a rose window with four quatrefoil lights.

A stepped bellcote rises above the east gable of the nave; it has rendered faces, some freestone dressings, and a single bell hangs in the aperture.

Chancel. General. Narrower, and with a lower roof line than the nave; all in 'A'. The east wall has a window with a two-centred arch, and three trefoiled lights with a cinquefoil above; chamfered dressings and a decorative relieving arch over. The south wall has a window which is inset with two broad lancet lights and a round light above; the arch is framed by stone voussoirs as on the east side.

Porch. General. Two steps up to the open porch. Single lights in the east and west walls. The south wall has a two-centred arch with stone voussoirs, and recessed within this is an inner arch turned in sandstone and with stopped chamfers. There are sloping buttresses at the angles.

Vestry. General. A later extension. A lean-to roof against the chancel. In local stone with blue brick dressings. A rectangular wooden-framed window in the north wall, and a modern door set in a near square-headed aperture on the east.

## Interior

Porch. General. Two steps up from the exterior. Open porch interior has a stone flagged floor, plastered and painted walls, and a boarded ceiling above the roof of six scissor trusses.

North wall: the south doorway to the church is two-centred, the jamb chamfers with pyramid stops at the bottom and fancy stops at the top. The arch is completely painted over. One step up to the nave.

Nave. General. Stone flagged floor; carpetted central aisle separating two rows of benches on raised tongue and groove flooring; no obvious grilles. Plastered and painted walls, no exposed stonework and the windows with splayed embrasures. Roof of four bays with three scissor trusses rising on short wall posts from stone corbels, now painted yellow; the central one has arch bracing.

North wall: one 20thC marble memorial.

East wall: a broad, chamfered, two-centred chancel arch with pyramid stops to the chamfers.

West wall: recess for the west window. Beneath this level are two 19thC marble tablets, one of which refers to a vault beneath.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave, one to the sanctuary, one to the altar. Red and black tiled floor, the central aisle carpetted over, and raised tongue and groove below longitudinal choir stalls. Walls as



nave. The wagon roof of the chancel is much lower than the nave roof and is of polished boards, undivided by ribs except at the apex.

North wall: a studded vestry door in a triangular arched doorway. Also a brass of 1627 and a commemorative board of 1830.

South wall: one 20thC marble memorial.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Monument: a brass plate removed from the south end of the old church, and dated 1627; it is engraved 'Jesus be my Jesus', and is the epitaph of Theodore Morgan, which he wrote before he died. It is followed by nine rhyming couplets. Mounted on a wooden board of more recent design.

Altar table: heavily decorated. 18thC or perhaps earlier.

Plate: includes a silver chalice of 1575, and an undated pewter paten and flagon.

Registers: from 1633.

Most furnishings and fittings date to the 19thC and include:

Board: Lord's Prayer, canvas in wooden frame in Welsh; of 1830; inscribed 'Rev. Thomas Richards, Vicar. Edward Whittington, Hugh Hughes, churchwardens'.

Font: square with chamfered corners and decorated faces, resting on a 'capital'-like top to the stem.

Chairs: two, with ornate carved backs and legs.

Bell: no inscription band; cast by Warner & Sons, London.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is a medium sized sub-oval enclosure, fairly well maintained in the area of burials, but overgrown in places, particularly on the west side.

Boundary: a stone revetment wall around the southern boundary with the road. Hedged and fenced boundaries to fields on the north-west. There is also a revetment wall to the rectory on the north. To the west a hedge and a low stone wall.

Monuments: mainly large slate slabs of 19thC date; some chest tombs and railed, family graves. Graves are well spaced but unevenly placed, the oldest marked ones on the east side. The oldest seen was of 1780. That there are more marked graves on the north than the south suggests a degree of clearance, not otherwise evidenced.

Furniture: sundial located near the south-west corner of the church, the gnomon broken off: re-erected on a square stone plinth in 1915. The brass plate records the Rev.R.Griffiths, Vicar, and Abraham Jones and Humphrey Jones, Churchwardens in 1761. The maker was Webster, Salop.

Earthworks: a slight platform, little more than 0.5m high, raises the church above the rest of the churchyard on the north, south and particularly the west side. The churchyard as a whole is raised by around 1m on the north and south, and about 0.3m on the west.

Ancillary features: a pair of wrought iron entrance gates set in stone pillars give access to the path leading

to the south porch. A grassed-over path formerly led north to the old rectory, and at the end of this is a modern farm gate in the churchyard wall.

Vegetation: earliest yews are located on the south-east side, one in particular appearing ancient. The 19thC trees in the churchyard were planted by Rev. Thomas Richards to replace the old yews that were withering.

Well: Ffynnon Dadur - an alleged holy well is located outside the churchyard but is not referred to in Jones's 'Holy Wells of Wales'.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit 17 November 1995 and 18 September 1998

Eisel 1986, 177

Haslam 1979, 98

Lunt 1926, 471

Morgan 1870

NLW Bangor Parish Records

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

Quinquennial Reports 1987 and 1992



## CONDITION

Large patches of damp and plaster peeling on interior west wall and around all apertures. Dampness showing on bases of all walls, particularly in chancel and around chancel arch. Generally in poor condition, with at the time of the visit, rain dripping through the roof.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Very Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good

# Forden

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Michael**PRN** 16418**NGR** SJ22720111

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## SUMMARY

The church of St Michael lies in the dispersed settlement of Forden about 4 miles south of Welshpool. The present building was constructed in 1867 to replace a small medieval single-chamber church which remained standing and in use while the present church was being erected a short distance to the south. Nothing of the earlier building survives above ground, and the only pre-19thC furnishing to survive is a font bowl of 1794. The irregularly-shaped churchyard retains some 18thC gravemarkers.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A 19thC church, built in Decorated style to the design of Thomas Nicholson of Hereford in 1867.

## HISTORY

The early church at Forden was a chapel attached to the church at Chirbury. There is nothing here to suggest an early medieval origin.

Forden chapel was not included in the 13thC Taxations, but does appear in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535.

In 1830 a transept was added to the north side and this incorporated a gallery. A sketch of the old church appears in 'Montgomeryshire Collections', and shows a wooden belfry with a pyramidal roof and a weathercock.

By the middle of the 19thC the old church was deemed to be in a dangerous state and a faculty was granted in 1864 to take it down and build a new church. The foundation stone was laid in 1865 and the building was consecrated in 1867. The architect was Thomas Nicholson of Hereford. During the work the old church was left standing and continued to be used for services.

New heating apparatus was installed in 1917.

## ARCHITECTURE

The present structure consists of a nave with north and south aisles, a chancel, a northern vestry with a boiler room beneath, an organ chamber also on the north, and a western tower attached to the south-west corner of the south aisle. The church is aligned south-west to north-east but for the purposes of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabric: entirely of medium-sized blocks of yellow-grey Minera limestone, with Red Grinshill sandstone dressings. Fairly regularly coursing.



Roofs: slates, notched ceramic ridge tiles, sandstone coping and cross finials.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Chippings around the south tower, part of the south side of the nave, and perhaps the south wall of the chancel hint at the presence of a wall trench.

Note: as the church is wholly 19thC the following description is no more than a summary. A near contemporary description is given in Vize 1883.

## Exterior

General. A basal plinth with red sandstone capping runs all round the church and tower at a height of c.0.5m.

Tower. General. Three-stage tower with pyramidal slated roof surmounted by weathervane. Plinth and three sandstone string courses, the uppermost of which creates a continuous hoodmould over the belfry windows. Stepped angle buttresses. On the west side, a square staircase turret, which becomes octagonal at a higher level, projects from the wall, rising to first floor height; slit windows. South wall contains a two-centred entrance arch in Early English style with ringed shafts and floriated capitals, and the louvred belfry windows have two-centred arches over paired lancet lights with quatrefoils in Y-tracery.

Nave and aisles. General. Stepped buttresses. Two decorative horizontal bands of red sandstone, the lower one continuous, too, around the chancel, the upper one intermittent. Paired lancets with round tracery lights, usually with hoodmoulds and floriate stops. At the east end of the south and north walls are dormers, beneath which are windows with three cusped lights and hexafoil tracery, and hoodmoulds with head stops. Single trefoil-headed lights in the east walls.

Chancel. General. Angle buttresses; windows as nave except for the east window which contains three trefoil-headed lights with three equal sized rose multifoils above in plate tracery, and a hoodmould with head stops. At the base of the wall is a foundation stone with the date 1865. On the south side a priest's door to either side of which are two-centred windows containing two trefoil-headed lights with trefoils above. A brick chimney stack rises through the north side of the chancel roof.

## Interior

Tower. General. Ground floor forms the porch. Tiled floor, deeply splayed apertures, planked ceiling. Pointed arched doorway to nave, and a shouldered arch to the tower staircase against the west wall. Stone benches along the east and west walls, and resting on each one is a wooden gravemarker.

Nave and aisles. General. Tiled floor with raised wooden flooring under the benches. An arcade of four bays on each side of the nave, with two-centred arches supported on columns with octagonal capitals carved with crocketed foliage in Early English style. Chancel arch of red and white stone with a narrow pointed head springing from short greenish-black marble ring shafts with carved capitals sitting on head corbels. Nave has a scissor-braced roof with dog tooth friezes on the wallplates; aisle roofs slope down to north and south with exposed rafters. One 19thC marble memorial on the east wall of the south aisle, and one of the 20thC on its south wall.

Chancel. General. Encaustic tiled floor. Longitudinal oak choir stalls. Stepped entrance from nave and five steps lead up to the sanctuary. Credence bracket on north wall, a sedile below south window in the sanctuary, and the Decalogue on boards on either side of the altar. A four-bay roof formed by four arch-braced scissor trusses with intermediate, ordinary scissor trusses; exposed purlins and battlemented

wallplates.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: the older font is located at the west end of the north aisle; it is an oval veined marble bowl on an octagonal stone pedestal, a gift of Richard Edmunds in 1794.

Plate: cup of 1761-2, alms plate of 1764-5, flagon of 1768-9.

Registers: from 1598.

Benefaction tablet: in stone recording a bequest of 1692. In 1883 this stone was in the vestry and may still be there. This could not be confirmed during the field visits.

Victorian furnishings and fittings (based on Haslam) include:

Reredos: in Bath stone, by Nicholson in 1879.

Stained glass: the chancel has a pre-Raphaelite style east window with St Michael, the Adoration, and Raphael by William Morris and Co., 1873, from cartoons by Burne-Jones (based on Haslam).

Pulpit: in stone - sports a decorated arcade of trefoiled arches on pillars and diapered in the spandrels.

Font: circular stone bowl in the same style as the pulpit.

Monuments: the porch contains the only remaining memorial tablet from the old church, a marble tablet to Captain Robert Campbell (d.1832) and Colonel Hugh Morrison (d.1859) by Dodson of Shrewsbury, plus two 19thC brasses all on the west wall. In addition the porch also contains two wooden gravemarkers: one is almost illegible but is certainly to Richard Davies (d.1820), the other to his wife Ann (also d.1820). In 1883 these markers were nailed to a yew tree in the churchyard.

Bells: six, all 19thC.

## CHURCHYARD

The irregularly-shaped enclosure has been enlarged on the west in the last one hundred years; previously it was sub-rectangular, though there is a vague hint of curvilinearity on its south side. However, a new burial ground was consecrated in the 1920s on the south side of the main road opposite the church. The ground in the old churchyard slopes away on the north and west sides towards a brook. It is reasonably well-kept on the south and west sides around the church, but older graves are overgrown on the perimeters.

Boundary: hedged boundary on all sides. Slight scarp on the north side where the old boundary was removed.

Monuments: mainly chest tombs, railed graves, some crosses and large slabs of generally 19thC date; earlier slate and stone slabs of the period 1812-1820s are located near the south boundary hedge beneath the older yew trees. The earliest slabs noted are on the south side of the church, dating to 1765 and 1795. There are reputedly 634 unmarked graves in the churchyard dating from 1795 onwards before the House of Industry at Forden consecrated its own burial ground in 1818.

Furniture: sandstone sundial located on the west side of the south path. A circular bowl with a leaf pattern carved around it, a circular stem and a square plinth now standing on a circular base. The dial and gnomon were a 1777 gift of the Churchwardens, made by Richard Harper of Salop and inscribed 'I Steal Upon You'.

Earthworks: the original west boundary pre-dating the churchyard extension on the north-west side can still



be traced. The churchyard is not raised. The site of the earlier church was to the south of the present one - there are undulations here and it is assumed that the foundations of the old church still lie below ground.

Ancillary features: pair of wrought iron gates form the main entrance from the south and a tarmac path leads up to the tower door. A grassed-over path leads around the church and out to the western burial ground. A disused double gate and a single gate are located in the north-east corner and this was formerly the old entrance to the church.

Vegetation: the oldest yew trees are located on the south side of church: three on the roadside hedge boundary and two near the south-west corner of tower. An old yew on the west side of the south path blew down in the 1970s and several Irish yews were planted to take its place.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1998  
CPAT Field Visit: 5 February 1995 and 18 February 1998  
Eisel 1986, 177  
Faculty: St. Asaph 1920 (NLW)  
Haslam 1979, 102  
HRO Church Records: 1864 - papers relating to demolition.  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 81  
Vize 1883

## CONDITION

Church in good state of repair externally and internally.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Very Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good



# Garthbeibio

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Tydecho**PRN** 16368**NGR** SH98551189

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## SUMMARY

Almost certainly an early medieval foundation, St Tydecho's church about 15 miles to the west of Welshpool is a single-chambered structure heavily restored in 1862, though medieval fabric remains in the south and west walls. Its Perpendicular east window has survived, as has one other late medieval window on the south side, and internally the medieval font remains. It is set within a small polygonal enclosure on a knoll overlooking the Banwy valley.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The building has a west wall and short sections of the south and north walls all of medieval date; the rest was rebuilt in 1862. The Perpendicular east window was re-inserted at that time, as was another, broadly contemporary window lighting the sanctuary on the south side.

## HISTORY

The location and dedication together point to an early medieval foundation, traditionally founded by Tydecho in the 6thC. St Tydecho's Well was once somewhere in the field to the west of the church, but there is now no trace of it.

The church is referred to as 'Capella de Garthbeiboau' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, and as the chapelry of 'Garthbeybyau' attached to Llanymawddwy in the 1291 Lincoln Taxation AD 1291; its value was subsumed within that of the mother church. Between 1291 and 1535 it became a separate benefice.

The church was largely rebuilt in 1862, but a sketch, reproduced in 1873, shows the pre-restoration church. It was whitewashed and appears to have been longer at the east end than the present building, though this may be artistic licence. It had a north-west entrance porch and a dormer lit the gallery, also on the north side. A simple bellcote rose from the west end. In 1873 too, there were 'some curious stone carvings now in the possession of the rector' (Edwards). What these were are and where they are now is not known.

Glynne visited Garthbeibio in 1869 and found a narrow church 'much resembling Llangadfan and Manafon, and, like them, considerably renovated'. The walls appeared to have been raised, a new roof put in place, the east window was exactly the same as in the two churches mentioned above, there were new square-headed windows in the south wall, and he could detect no evidence that originally there had been windows in the north wall. A new bellcote had been added.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel as a single chamber with a bellcote over the west end, a south porch and a north vestry. It is oriented a little north of due west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to large blocks of greyish, fine grained, sandstone, with some very large elongated blocks particularly in the west wall; also some quartz in the south wall: randomly coursed and now heavily pointed; limewash residue.

'B' is of small to medium-sized blocks of grey grainy shale, but in places re-use of earlier material; irregularly coursed; and heavily pointed.

'C' is the same as fabric 'B' but cut with a bull-nose finish to the rectangular blocks; some coursing.

'A' is medieval, 'B' and 'C' are from 1862.

Roofs: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles with fleur-de-lys ornamentation, some broken; a sandstone cross finial at the east end.

Drainage: modern plastic guttering on north and south walls lead to soakaways. A gravel band on all sides could mask drainage trench besides the walls.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. A single chamber under a continuous roof line with no external differentiation. The 19thC windows are all painted over.

North wall: west end in 'A', but rebuilt in 'B' from the site of an old doorway near the west corner, eastwards. From the west: i) position of old doorway. ii) a square-headed, two-light window, the lights with cusped, round heads. iii) as ii) but three lights. iv) as ii). v) vestry. All windows in wood.

East wall: built in 'C' with a chamfered plinth at about 0.5m; though at the level of the springers in the east window 'C' changes to 'B'. Perpendicular window re-inserted during restoration. Two-centred arch over three trefoil-headed lights below a transom and panel tracery above, all in grey sandstone; the tracery and panel lights could be original but the mullions and the chamfered jambs and arch have all been renewed. At the apex of the gable is an 1862 datestone with a voussoir surround.

South wall: in fabric 'A', either original or reused; but rebuilt in 'B' above a height of 1m-1.5m. From west: i) wall to the west of the porch is almost certainly medieval but is buttressed in large blocks of sandstone, probably from the time of the restoration. ii) porch. iii) a single trefoiled light of 1862 in wood, though with a slate sill. iv) standard three-light window from 1862 in wood with slate sill. v) the sanctuary window is a simple Perpendicular feature, in grey sandstone and was reset in 1862. Its square frame has two trefoiled round-headed lights with sunken spandrels, and presumably acted as a model for the restoration windows; light heads are worn and original but frame and mullions renewed.

West wall: in fabric 'A' (with occasional pebblestones), with a flat-topped plinth at 0.4m. Above the gable is a bellcote in 'B' from 1862. The bellcote is stepped, rising to a triangular head and has a square-headed opening for a single bell; topped by a weathervane.

Vestry. General. In 'B'. Adjoins north wall at the east end. Single cusped light in wood in north wall and a square-headed doorway in the east wall. A red brick shed abuts the west side.

South Porch. General. Constructed in 'B' in 1862. Two-centred entrance arch of stone voussoirs on the south, the jambs of selected blocks of ordinary stone. The west wall is plain, and on the east is a small two-centred aperture, now boarded over. The arch is rustic created from stone and concrete.

## Interior

Porch. General. One step up from the exterior. Red tiled floor with central stone slabs; plastered walls with



wooden benches on the east and west, and a niche, formerly the window embrasure, on the east side; plastered ceiling above exposed rafters.

Nave. General. Largely the result of the 1862 restoration. Carpeted floors; raised planked floors under benches. Walls plastered and painted except for the west wall which has full-length tongue and groove panelling; deeply splayed windows, their dressings painted over. Roof from 1862 has four bays formed by three arch-braced collar trusses, with king struts and decorative ball ornament at the highest point of the soffit of each truss; exposed rafters and through purlins. A fourth truss against the lowered chancel ceiling.

North wall: at the west end, in line with the front of the gallery, the north wall abruptly becomes narrower and continues in this form as far east as the chancel. Further east a white marble war memorial tablet erected in 1922.

East wall: the division between nave and chancel is marked by steps and a change in the roof style.

South wall: on the west side of the south doorway, the wall narrows in line with the similar indent in the north wall, and is indicative of a different phase of building.

West end: a gallery with a boarded front, approached by steps leading up from the north side. A clock is inset in the front panelling.

Chancel. General. One step up from the nave, one to the sanctuary. Walls as nave, but inset at the juncture with the nave, so the chancel walls are thicker by perhaps 0.3m - the significance of this is not clear unless it indicates that there is a medieval wall at its core. Plastered ceiling, and a boss with a painted flower motif, centrally placed; exposed purlins. The east window has a shallow chamfer to the inner arch of its aperture, and above it is a painted text in Welsh.

Vestry. General. Tiled floor, plastered walls and ceiling.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: octagonal stone font on a square base with stopped chamfers at the angles. The lip of the bowl has an inscription reading 'Iddynt Gadewch i Blant Bychan Ddyfod Attae II A G N A Waherddwch'. Probably of 15thC date.

Plate: 1779 flagon and a 1731 cup. Note that a pewter plate is placed on a bench by the pulpit.

Registers: from 1710.

Bell: perhaps from 1662 or 1665 but recast in 1862.

Sundial: sundial and gnomon, the former inscribed 'R Webster: Salop'. Undated. Now loose in the vestry.

Almost all the furnishings and fittings date from the 1862 restoration or later.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is a distinctively polygonal enclosure bounded by a road on the north and by open fields elsewhere. There is a steep drop down to the Banwy Valley on the south side. An earlier line, slightly more curvilinear is visible inside the present churchyard (see below). It is reasonably well kept.

Boundary: drystone wall, probably dating from the 1862 restoration.

Monuments: mainly 19thC-20thC slate slabs; a few crosses and modern burials on the lower terraces. A fairly even distribution of graves, some unmarked, but virtually no marked burials on the east side of the church. Two broken slabs of 18thC date have been placed by the north gate; a sandstone slab in situ, to the south of the church, bears a Welsh inscription to Hugh Edwards (d.1775); a low chest tomb of 1780 is on the north side of the church; and beneath a yew to the south-east of the chancel is a horizontal slab carrying the date 1716. A worn slate slab leans against the east wall of the south porch and bears a 1788 date though little else can be deciphered.

Furniture: none seen. (But see sundial inside the vestry - above)

Earthworks: the church is sited on a terrace and the burial ground slopes away to the south. Internally the churchyard boundary is banked up inside the northern wall. A scarp on the west side of the church (up to 1m), on the south and the east (up to 2m) suggests an earlier enclosure boundary.

Ancillary features: red sandstone pillars support a pair of wrought iron gates forming the main entrance on the north, with a gravel path edged by a pair of 19thC yews leads to the south porch; this gravel path is continuous around the church. A grass path leads directly south from the porch downhill through the churchyard to a single wooden gate in the stone wall on the south side.

Vegetation: several old yews. The west wall bounded by mixed deciduous trees and evergreens; 19thC clipped yews alongside the paths. Four older yews near the south-east side of the church with a railed grave beneath them, and two more on the north side.

Wells: two holy wells, St. Tydecho's and Ffynnon Ddu, were located near the churchyard.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visits: 20 March 1996 and 20 July 1998

Edwards 1873

Eisel 1986, 178

Glynne 1885, 37

Haslam 1979, 102

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

Ridgway 1997, 82

St. Asaph Parish Records (NLW)

Thomas 1908, 467



## CONDITION

Relatively good condition apart from the wooden window frames. The plaster is peeling off the south interior wall of the nave and off the east and west interior walls of the porch.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

# Guilsfield

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<b>Diocese</b>	St Asaph	<b>Dedication</b>	Aelhaiarn
<b>PRN</b>	16786	<b>NGR</b>	SJ21921165
		<b>Previous dedication</b>	All Saints

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## SUMMARY

The church of St Aelhaiarn in Guilsfield, less than 3 miles to the north of Welshpool, is a large medieval structure, with aisles, a two-storey porch and clerestory windows. Much of what is now visible is generally thought to be of 15thC origin, though it has been argued that there is an earlier core, 14thC if not before. Medieval doors and windows survive and inside there is a 15thC arch-braced roof, and in the chancel a Tudor panelled ceiling. The font is early, perhaps even 12thC, and there are fragments of the medieval rood screen and a fine chest, together with a good range of wall memorials of 18thC and 19thC origin. It is set in a level curvilinear churchyard.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Originally there was a long, single-chambered church of unknown date, though in its final form it is likely to have been 14thC. To this was added the large western tower with corner buttresses and spiral stone staircase, supposedly in the early 15thC but conceivably a little earlier. It has also been argued that an earlier tower was simply re-cased in new masonry. The south aisle and porch are 15thC, although the stonework suggests that the lower portion of the porch may be earlier, contemporary perhaps with the tower. The north aisle is supposed to be a little later than its southern counterpart and the roof of the nave was heightened to permit the introduction of clerestory windows, perhaps in the early 16thC. Also the chancel is believed to have been extended eastwards in the 15thC, though this view, too, cannot be substantiated. Overall, a Perpendicular building, though there is a doorway of 1737 in the north aisle. In passing it should be noted that the Cadw schedule attributes most elements to the 14thC rather than the 15thC. The interior of the church was restored in 1877-9.

## HISTORY

The dedication to St Aelhaiarn, a late 6thC saint, the morphology of the churchyard and to some degree the siting, indicate an early medieval foundation here.

It is claimed, though on no good evidence, that a stone church was in existence here by the 12thC.

The church was recorded as 'Cap'lla de Kegidua', a chapel dependent on Llandrinio, in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, with a value of £2. But by the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 'Ecclia de Beygidia (Kegydia)' appears to have become independent, with a value of £20.

Later, in the late 14thC, the church was annexed to a mother church at Meifod. And sometime in this century or later it seems to have been re-dedicated to All Saints.

On the basis of the architecture the 15thC and 16thC saw considerable changes to the structure.

18thC modifications include a shed adjoining the porch which was added in 1739 to house the village hearse and an oak door in the west wall of the north aisle dating to 1737.



A model of the church before the Victorian restoration (located at the back of the church) shows the exterior, with seven dormers to light a south aisle gallery, and a west gallery as well.

Glynne visited Guilsfield in 1858. He found a late Perpendicular structure, and mentioned the possibility that there were internal indications of an earlier building but thought these dubious. The east window was late Perpendicular but the tracery had been altered and mutilated. The nave was wide and there was no division between it and the chancel. Portions of the lower part of the rood screen remained, there were several old pews with wood carvings of the 17thC and some screen work that once enclosed a chapel at the east end of the south aisle. There were pews of all shapes and sizes, and galleries, the insertion of which Glynne thought had necessitated the raising of both aisle roofs. The roofs were described in some detail, as was the porch and Richard Jones's yew (see section on Churchyard below). He finished: 'the interior much needs cleaning, and has at present the most absurd appearance'.

The interior of the church was considerably altered in the 1879 restoration by G.E. Street at a cost of £6000. The old pews were replaced by oak benches, the west end gallery and the gallery along the full length of the south aisle (both accessed by doors from the first floor of the south porch) were removed and the doors blocked up. The dormer windows, seven in number, which may have been 17thC, were removed from the roof of the south aisle, and the south aisle was reroofed at a lower pitch. The chancel and aisle floors were tiled; old plaster was removed and the interior was completely replastered. The font was restored and moved to the west end near the porch. The floor of the church was relaid. The chancel east window was completely restored and a new east window was placed in the south aisle. The screen was repaired and sedilia and a credence table made. Some of the monuments within the church were re-sited and heating was installed. The tower was also altered and the battlements restored.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel, a tower attached to the west end of the nave though not central to it, a two-storey south porch with a bier house on its west side, and north and south aisles. The church is aligned north-east to south-west, but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted for the church though not for the churchyard.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium blocks of mixed sandstone and more finely grained freestone, grey, pink and some mustard yellow, with mixed red and yellow sandstone dressings; some coursing.

'B' is of small to medium blocks of regular, pale red sandstone, roughly coursed.

'C' is of small to medium blocks of mustard yellow sandstone, with occasional red and grey sandstone; irregular coursing.

'D' is not dissimilar to 'C' but has rather more regular blocks of the mustard yellow sandstone, mixed with regular blocks of grey sandstone that exhibit pecked faces; some coursing.

'E' is similar to 'A', but the stonework is smaller and there is more red sandstone, the occasional pebblestone and also some lumps of very coarse-grained sandstone.

'F' consists of blocks of grey-green shaley sandstone; irregular coursing.

The 1877-9 restoration work was completed with the same local materials.

'A' is used for the 15thC tower, 'C' and 'E' are also from the 15thC; 'B' and 'D' are 19thC, 'F' is 18thC.

Roofs: slates and red crested ridge tiles from the 1879 restoration. A sandstone cross finial on the chancel gable, another above the porch.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts with decorated cisterns lead to soakaways. Sandstone slabs have been laid on the ground around the main body of the church on the north, east and south, along the line of drains; flower beds around the tower.

## Exterior



**Tower. General.** Square western tower claimed to be of c.12thC build, subsequently re-cased in masonry, raised and crenellated, with corner pinnacles, at the beginning of the 15thC - the earlier work cannot be confirmed. Slightly battered at base, with integral stepped, diagonal buttresses at north-west and south-west corners. Plain walls without divisions until just below the battlements, then a worn sandstone string course, hollowed on the underside, which has the remains of gargoyles on each corner, and more recent waterspouts just above its line; the parapet in 'B'. Tower is surmounted by an octagonal spire.

**North wall:** belfry window with a flat four-centred head and a pair of louvred lights with trefoiled two-centred heads and open foiled tracery above, in original grey freestone. North-east angle of tower accommodates staircase, and this required a slight projection in the wall as high as the base of the belfry window; proper quoin stones to this projection on the west corner, and on the east corner above nave roof level. Four small, very worn red sandstone staircase apertures comprise a slit window to the ground floor, a quatrefoil in a sandstone square, above, and two further irregularly-shaped lights at high levels, the lower also fashioned from a solid block.

**East wall:** bellchamber window largely hidden by apex of nave roof, but probably as north side.

**South wall:** sandstone-capped plinth at c.0.5m around this and the west side, and taking in the intervening buttress. At about first floor level, a small window with a two-centred head in worn red sandstone, its keystone protruding as a mask. Above this a slate clock inscribed 'Be Dilligent, Night Cometh' and dating to 1820. It partially masks a trefoiled, almost round-headed light set in a rectangular window frame with sunken spandrels; this has its original stonework. Bellchamber window as north side.

**West wall:** plinth as described for south wall. A single slit with a two-centred head in original grey sandstone illuminates the ground floor. Belfry window as north side, though its small top light has been blocked off in wood.

**North aisle. General.** In 'E', with some limewash residue occasionally.

**North wall:** three square-headed windows with three trefoiled two-centred lights, the dressings mainly original, though some obvious replacement particularly to the heads; 15thC perhaps, but more likely to be early 16thC on the basis of the similarity with the clerestory windows.

**East wall:** a three-light window similar to, but slightly larger than, the windows in the north wall, except for the canted head of the frame which allows the mullions to be carried up to create small subsidiary lights and blocked spandrels; original except for one archstone, though the jambs look extraordinarily fresh.

**South wall:** not present.

**West wall:** basket-headed (or three-centred) doorway with hollow-chamfered dressings within a segmental-headed recess contains a heavy planked door that bears a studded inscription 'RP HP CW 1737'; the jambs have mason's marks on them.

Adjacent is a 20thC lean-to covering stairs leading down to a subterranean boiler room. The room and stairs probably date to the 19thC restoration, when a 'heating chamber' was added; further modifications to the heating system were made in 1909 and 1950.

**Nave. General.** High-pitched roof which is continuous across the chancel. Masonry is 'C'.

**North wall:** the clerestory fenestration consists of four square-headed windows each having three lights with trefoiled two-centred heads and sunken spandrels, paralleling those in the nave aisle. The fourth window lights the chancel. All of them reveal a fair amount of renewal, particularly the heads and mullions and even the occasional jambstone.

**South wall:** the masonry looks to be 'C' but eastwards it is mixed in with what could be 'E'. Three windows as the north clerestory. Tracery heads and lintels are renewed, and perhaps too the mullions, though at an earlier date.



No east and west walls.

Chancel. General. In 'E'.

North wall: no features other than a downpipe

East wall: the east window has a two-centred arch with five cinquefoiled, two-centred lights, a transom, two sub-arches and 23 panel lights. Perpendicular, but completely renewed at the time of the 1877 restoration. The gable was raised in the early 16thC and this is reflected in a chamfered plinth which runs at the level of the window transom and a little lower than the base of the clerestory windows, and is also obvious in the less regular quoins in the upper part of the wall. This lower part is in 'E', the upper part rebuilt in 'D'.

South wall: a Perpendicular window, very similar to those in the belfry, lights the sanctuary (though this is inexplicably given a 14thC date in the Cadw schedule). Pair of cinquefoiled, two-centred lights with tracery above, set in a two-centred arch of red sandstone which has probably been renewed. From existing records this is an insertion, perhaps originally the east window of the south aisle before the 1877 restoration.

South aisle. General. In 'E'.

East wall: four-centred window of three cinquefoiled lights with panels above. Inserted at the time of the 1877 restoration.

South wall: varied fenestration. Immediately to the east of the porch is a single trefoil-headed light of 19thC date. Next a square-headed window with three trefoiled lights with one renewed head/lintel stone; and finally a square-headed window holding two trefoiled lights separated by a broad mullion that has two foiled recesses in it. Probably 15thC (or even 14thC), but shortened to fit into this wall - note the truncated lower recess. Original dressings except for one replaced lintel stone.

West wall: abuts porch.

South Porch. General. Two storied structure. The lower part is in 'A', but then a zone of 'C', and then mixed 'C' and 'E'.

East wall: no features; in 'E'.

South wall: a broad two-centred entrance arch, with octagonal engaged capitals, one renewed, and the inner door jambs with wave mouldings that are echoed in the aisles; a second outer order in worn pink sandstone matches the quoins at the south corners of the wall which rise only as high as the springers of the doorway, before being superseded by grey sandstone. This indicates that the masonry together with its associated quoins, and the jambs of the doorway are earlier than the rest of the porch. A pair of iron gates in an ironwork screen. Above is a first floor window with a square head and two lights, paralleling the easternmost window in the south wall of the south aisle: two trefoiled panels (or recesses) in the mullions; but all but the sill and a few jambs have been replaced.

West wall: high up in the wall above the line of the sloping roof of the bier house is the head of a basket arch; its role is uncertain but it may have been an early doorway, accessed from an outside stairway, which was blocked up when the bier house was constructed in 1739. Its similarity to the west door in the north aisle suggests it may have had a particularly short life.

Bier House. General. In 'F'. Adjoins the west wall of the porch and north wall of the tower. Square-headed double doorway, all in wood, and adjacent to porch entrance. A pair of wooden planked doors, with a datestone above inscribed 'Thomas Foulkes, Hugh Morris Jones, Wardens 1739'.

West wall contains a rectangular window of the 20thC.



## Interior

Porch. General. Red and black 19thC tiled floor, plastered walls. A single bench along the west side. Renewed wooden ceiling.

North wall: = south wall of the nave. Two-centred arched doorway of 15thC date, with plain and hollow-chamfered mouldings; a heavy panelled, studded oak door with inset, wrought iron fleur-de-lys hinges, considered to be 15thC by Haslam and rehung in 1879. Part of the worn bowl of a stoup, nearly half of which has been broken off, is set in a square-headed recess with hollow mouldings which contains a small trefoiled arch, to the east of door; the back of the recess has a damaged trefoiled arch. Inserted in the wall above the door are four 18thC inscribed square stones, commemorating church wardens: 'I.I., I.K., CW 1736', 'L.O., W.D., CW 1750', 'E.F., H.P., CW 1753' and 'L.I., T.D., CW 1759'. The model of the pre-restoration church suggests that similar stones were located above the south aisle windows when the roof line was higher. On the model the 1750 stone is shown above the outer door of the porch.

East wall: 17thC access stairway to the first floor, with turned balusters. Large oak chest against wall.

South wall: entrance arch has sharpening grooves on the interior jambs.

1st floor. General. Formerly a schoolroom. Planked flooring and plastered walls above a dado of round headed arches, presumably from old pews. Three arch-braced trusses, and exposed rafters and windbraces, though some of the timberwork looks relatively modern. The room has been restored and there is no evidence of the earlier access to the galleries.

Tower. General. Ground floor used as a vestry. Tiled floor; plastered walls above oak panelled dado, probably from old pews; wood panelled ceiling.

North wall: low round-headed entrance arch to a spiral staircase.

East wall: worn red and yellow sandstone arch with sharpening marks on jambs; modern oak door to nave.

South wall: plain. A churchwardens' chest of 1821 set against south wall.

West wall: deeply splayed embrasure to slit window.

Nave. General. Continuous with chancel and divided only by the rood screen. The floor of 19thC tiles with raised wooden boarding under benches; heating vent grilles at rear. Plastered walls. The piers of the two arcades are not aligned nor of identical design. The original roof of the 15thC building remains over the nave, although with replacement timbers including the decorated wall plates with open foiled panels above which were renewed in 1877. Four cambered tie beams (including that against the end of the overlapping chancel roof) with arch-braced collars and struts, displaying cusping on the collars, struts and principals, alternating with ordinary arch-braced collars. Together these effectively create seven bays including one that can be seen above the extended chancel roof, and intermediate trusses in the three western bays. There are also three tiers of quatrefoil windbraces. The chancel roof which is lower (see below) extends under the last nave bay. In the 19thC there was a tradition that this roof had been brought from the abbey of Strata Marcella.

North wall: a three-bay arcade. Piers have wave mouldings. Resting on the impost of one pier - the second to the east - is what might be a head corbel in pale yellow sandstone to match the pier dressings, though it looks more like a hoodmould stop; and beyond the respond at the east end is a short section of wall which encloses the stairway to the rood loft.

East wall: screen and one step up from nave to chancel.



South wall: at the west end is the splayed entrance doorway from the south porch. Then a two-bay arcade, apparently on the line of the earlier south wall of the church. The piers are to the same design as those on the north side, though they are not quite in line; there is also a head corbel to match the one of the north side though this is in red sandstone. Also at west end, memorials of 1742, 1772 and 1854.

West wall: splayed two-centred archway with hollow mouldings to tower. Four memorials, one of 1772, the others 19thC.

North aisle. General. The east end is given over to an organ chamber, separated by a wooden screen of 1879. Floor and walls as the nave, with a heating grille in the centre of the aisle. Lean-to roof of eight bays, supported by wall posts and cusped bracing set on plain corbels on the arcade columns, and on the north wall by short wall posts on stone corbels except where the trusses are directly over windows; two tiers of short, plain windbraces. How much of this is original timber is open to question.

North wall: memorials of 1748 and 1760, a brass of 1678, two 19thC marble tablets and two 19thC and one 20thC brass.

South wall: four-centred Tudor doorway to the roodloft stair, and four steep steps still visible.

West wall: a shouldered reveal to the 18thC door.

Chancel. General. One step up from the nave, and four further steps to the sanctuary. The original Tudor panelled ceiling over the chancel and the most easterly bay of the nave, is supported by four camber beams comparable with those in nave; ribbed ceiling of 240 panels and 312 bosses at intersections which are decorated with circles, quatrefoils and trefoils and painted red and white; decorated cornices.

North wall: a single-bay extension to arcade with parclose screen. Three 19thC marble memorials and a 20thC brass on the sanctuary wall. The doorway to the roodloft stair now blocked by the end of the screen.

East wall: window with stained glass.

South wall: arcade extension as on the north side, though not in line with it. In the sanctuary, a 19thC piscina and a credence in a double alcove.

West wall: screen.

South aisle. General. Overall more decorative than the north aisle. In 1928, a Lady Chapel was created at the east end by the introduction of a dividing screen and a single step up. Floor and walls as nave, with heating grille in floor at west end; two steps up to the altar. Lean-to roof as in north aisle; seven bays, but some of the bosses have carved human and animal heads at the intersections of trusses and purlins, and there are cusped windbraces.

East wall: dado.

South wall: dado. A 19thC marble tablet, and a 20thC marble memorial; and in the Lady Chapel, a war memorial.

West wall: one 19thC memorial.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Details based on Haslam with additions.

Font: octagonal, lead lined, bowl on circular stem and large square chamfered base; two human and two

beasts' heads projecting from the bowl sides. On the underside of the bowl are symbolic motifs including a cross and an anchor. Perhaps of 13thC date but could be earlier.

Chancel screen: square-framed screen of two bays with a broad central opening and a heavy overhanging cornice. Unrestrained wheel and ogee tracery, all from Street's 1879 restoration, except for two linenfold panels.

Parclose screens: to north and south aisles. 15thC screens, though largely by Street, but including some old heads with various wheel motifs in the traceries on the north screen where there are two bays to either side of a central doorway. South aisle screen again incorporates old work, of a standard that suggests the original screen was of exceptional design. For details see Crossley and Ridgway.

Chests: i) large, c.2m long, carved out of a solid log, bound with iron, located on the east side of porch. ii) a second chest in the north aisle is ornamented, and was presented to the church in 1929, but is probably pre-19thC.

Monuments: to John Owen (d.1772) and Thomas Lloyd (also d.1772), a white marble tablet with putti at the base and a broken pediment by J. Nelson, Salop. To Brochwel Griffiths (d.1742), in white marble, by John Nelson. To Rev. James Egerton (d. 1754), and his wife (d.1733), by John Nelson, Salop, a large white memorial tablet, with heraldry etc. To William Lloyd (d.1748) and to Thomas Lloyd (d.1760), both marble tablets in the north aisle. On the north wall of the chancel to William Edwards, Gent (d.1780) his wife Ann (d.1789), and a son (d.1798).

Brass: to Elizabeth and David Whittingham (d.1678).

Bells: four bells, two by Thomas Rudhall of 1781 and 1782; two of 1966.

Plate: includes cup of 1631/2, a credence paten of 1715/16, two flagons of 1773/4.

Registers: from 1573.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Chests: churchwardens' chest of 1821, inscribed 'Thomas Jones, John Davies, Churchwardens'. In the vestry.

Reredos: light oak reredos, extends full width of east wall. Statues of four Prophets on the left and four Church Fathers on the right and linenfold panelling.

Altar: 1879 oak. Carved with frontal reliefs including a pelican and a phoenix, on steps of Minton tiles.

Altar rails: plain oak on wrought iron supports.

Pulpit: of 1879; stone octagonal base supporting wooden pulpit with oak figures of the four Evangelists designed by Street.

Seating: traceried pew ends and choir stalls by Street..

Corner cupboard: heavily decorated, in north-west corner of the nave; undated.

Lady Chapel oak panelling, reredos, and other furnishings date to 1920s.

Monuments: 19thC marble memorials include those to i) Captain Devereux (d.1910), in marble by Gawthorp and Sons, London; ii) R Mytton (d.1801) with a lady clutching a cross, by G. Lewis, Cheltenham; iii) Mary Mytton (d.1837), marble by T.Tyley, Bristol. iv) the Rev. Richard Mytton (d.1828), white marble, painted heraldry and the relief of a lady kneeling, book in hand, beside an urn, and a weeping willow, by C. Smith, London. v) Devereux Mytton (d.1841), by G. Lewis. Sc. Cheltenham. vi) William Edwards (d.1780), his wife Anne (d.1789) and their sons and daughters, by Carline and Linell. vii) Harriet Adair (d.1851), by Joseph



Smith, Colquitt St, Liverpool. viii) Thomas Beck (d.1848) by Lewis of Cheltenham.

Stained glass: that in the chancel east window, depicts nativity, baptism, crucifixion and ascension of Jesus, 1891, made by Heaton, Butler and Bayne. In the south wall, richly coloured stained glass representing the Good Shepherd.

## CHURCHYARD

A rectangular enclosure with distinctively rounded corners, fairly level, and well-maintained.

Boundary: stone wall, with roads on all sides.

Monuments: mainly 18th and 19thC graves, evenly distributed, and including a good range of 18thC slabs. The earliest grave beneath one of the oldest yew trees alongside the south entrance path: this table tomb records the death of Richard Jones, (d.1707 aged 90), who had planted the yew with his father. The slab is inscribed 'Momento Mori' on one side and 'Ut hora sic vita' on the other with a skull and cross-bones. Others graves from 1716, 1721 and 1721 to east and south-east of the chancel. The vaulted tomb of the Trevor family is located on the north side of the burial ground. The churchyard was closed for burials in 1906, although there are some recent cremation tablets on the north side.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: the whole churchyard is raised, 1m and perhaps more in places.

Ancillary features: a pair of wrought iron gates form the main south entrance, a single south-west gate and a pair of wrought iron gates on the north side all lead up to the south porch via paths laid with chippings, and in the case of the main approach from the south with slabs as well. A path, too, to the 1737 north doorway and the boiler room stairs.

Vegetation: about 22 mature yews, almost all around the perimeter of the churchyard, the oldest around the south side. A record refers to yews being planted in the reign of William and Mary 1689-1702, and the evidence of the grave inscription is referred to above which might indicate a mid-17thC date.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1995  
 Church guide n.d.  
 CPAT Field Visit 28 February 1995 and 12 March 1998  
 Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 184  
 Eisel 1986, 178  
 Faculty St Asaph 1877 (NLW): restoration  
 Faculty St Asaph 1966 (NLW): repair etc  
 Glynne 1885, 37  
 Haslam 1979, 105  
 Lloyd 1979, 16  
 NMR Aberystwyth  
 Powys SMR  
 Ramage 1871  
 Ridgway 1997, 86  
 Thomas, 1913, 144  
 Williams 1990, 59

## CONDITION

In generally good condition. Patches of old discoloured plaster on the north sides of the chancel and south aisle are probably the result of repair work or removal of monuments rather than damp.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Medium



# Hirnant

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Illog**PRN** 16414**NGR** SJ05042295

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## SUMMARY

St Illog's church is located in the remote village of Hirnant in western Montgomeryshire, about 15 miles north-west of Welshpool. A single-chambered structure, it retains medieval fabric on the north side, but the rest was rebuilt in 1886-92, and the west end including the bellcote had to be rebuilt again in 1996. Inside are a medieval font but other fittings have been removed for safety during current renovation work. The churchyard was originally sub-circular but has been truncated, probably in the mid 18thC.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A single-chambered church, the north wall retaining masonry which is probably medieval, while the south and east walls and all the fenestration are from 1886-1892. The west end was rebuilt in 1996.

## HISTORY

The dedication (to St Illog, a 7thC Welsh saint), the location, and the morphology of the early churchyard all point to an early medieval foundation.

A church at Hirnant was first recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecc'a de Hyrnant' with a value of 10s. In Pope Nicholas's Taxation of 1291, the name remains the same, but the value was £4 6s 8d.

Glynne visited Hirnant in 1869, recording 'a small narrow church arranged as usual; not rebuilt, but thoroughly uninteresting, and devoid of character'. There were no windows on the north side, and those on the south and east were all modern. There was an original roof, partly ceiled though some of the old timbers were visible. A further source (1880) refers to a gallery at the west end with a school room beneath it. The timberwork was covered by a plastered ceiling and was reported to be in a good state of preservation. A sketch of the same period shows segmental-headed windows on the south side and a south doorway of rather similar design, but no porch.

However, the old church was taken down and a new church rebuilt on the site between 1889 and 1892, under the direction of Laurence Booth of Manchester. The 1889 faculty for rebuilding indicated that the church was too dilapidated to repair. Material from the old church at Llanwddyn had been purchased and it was intended to erect it at Hirnant as soon as possible. The new church was consecrated in 1892.

The medieval north wall was retained during the rebuilding. The medieval font appears to have been thrown out at some point and was being used as a flower container in the adjoining rectory garden, from which it was later rescued. It has been suggested that the stone dressings, principals and spars of the roof together with the pulpit and altar rails came from Llanwddyn.

The church was closed and declared redundant in October 1994, due to the small congregation, high running costs and the dangerous state of the west wall. Various grants and the pledge of work by the local community resulted in the beginning of a programme of rebuilding and refurbishment which continues at

the time of writing. Plans included the rebuilding of the west wall with 19thC material, the strengthening of this wall with breeze blocks, the reslating of the roof, the replastering of the interior walls and a general upgrading of the interior to include toilet and kitchen facilities. It was hoped the church would also be used as a community centre to affray costs.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a single chamber with a west bellcote. The church is aligned north-east to south-west but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is a mix of mainly small to medium sized blocks of shale and sandstone, with some blocks of quartz; irregularly coursed.

'B' is a grey, medium-grained, quarry-cut stone (?dolerite) in regular blocks and slabs, showing more regular coursing.

'A' is of putative medieval date, 'B' is from the restoration of the late 19thC.

Roofs: slates with reconstituted clay ridge tiles. Stone cross finial at east end.

Drainage: a gully on the west but no obvious trench on the north or south sides.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Considered together as no external differentiation.

North wall: in fabric 'A', except for the extreme east end where the corner is rebuilt in 'B'. Two inserted restoration windows, a single trefoiled two-centred light in a square-headed frame at the east end and a similar window but with two lights, further to the west; both have 19thC sandstone dressings, but the single light is in buff-yellow freestone, the other in grey.

East wall: gable end in 'B', with yellow sandstone quoins at south angle. The two-centred east window has three, stepped, trefoiled, two-centred lights, smaller lights above, and a relieving arch in stone voussoirs around the apex of the window.

South wall: two square-headed windows, both with two lights, comparable with those on the north side; yellow and grey sandstone dressings, all 19thC, but the yellow is probably renewed stonework. A south entrance doorway with a broad two-centred arch of two orders with chamfered dressings: again 19thC.

West wall: datestone of 1996. Stone similar to 'B'. One Victorian window with a square-headed frame, a foiled, two-centred light, in buff sandstone, off centre in the wall. The bellcote above has ashlar dressings and a two-centred aperture for a single bell.

## Interior

Nave. General. Continuous nave and chancel under one roof. Red tiled floor with wooden planks beneath the benches which are currently not in place. Walls plastered above a plain dado derived from the old pews. Roof of six arch-braced collar trusses, springing from wallplates, with cusped struts; five full bays with half bays at the east and west ends; through rafters and purlins; wholly 19thC.

The walls are devoid of fittings, except for a safe of 1814 set into the north wall.

Chancel. General. A step up from nave to chancel, one step up to the sanctuary, one to the altar. Floor of



encaustic tiles with woodblock under the choir stalls. Walls (including the dado) and the roof as in the nave.

North wall: alcove for aumbry.

East wall: the window aperture is not splayed.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: a plain, circular, unlined sandstone bowl on a truncated stem. Perhaps 13thC. There is also a 19thC font with an inscription.

Chest: churchwardens' chest, undated (not seen).

Monuments: brasses to Lewis Jones (d.1754), in a classical wooden frame; and to Rev. John Humphreys (d.1796). Not seen.

Candelabrum: six-branch brass candelabrum of 18thC date. Not seen.

Plate: includes a silver chalice of 1718 and a pewter paten.

Bell: a single bell, inscribed 'Edward Davies Andrew Morris 1686', presumably the churchwardens of the time.

Registers: from 1566.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Aumbry: triangular-headed aperture, with chamfered edges, in the north wall of the chancel; in yellow sandstone of the 19thC.

Chairs: two of 1892.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is now an irregular shape, in part because the wall on the north side was inserted, probably in 1749, and the enclosure originally continued beyond it. Together with the slight earthworks of the former boundary outside the present north-east wall, this implies that there was originally a more circular enclosure. It slopes down from north to south with the church terraced slightly into the slope. It is well maintained.

Boundaries: surrounded by a stone wall, probably rebuilt at the time of the 1889-92 restoration work, except for that on the north-west which may be mid-18thC. On the south-east the back of Church Cottage acts as the boundary.

Monuments: fairly densely distributed on all sides; mostly slate slabs. The earliest dates - from 1768 and 1770 - are on slabs laid flat near the south wall, and there are several other 18thC examples.

Furniture: none seen.

Earthworks: former boundary bank just outside the north-east wall. The interior is raised though not by much: perhaps 0.5m on the west and east and 0.3m on the south.

Ancillary features: main gate on the south-east side, a grassed over gravel path leading up to the south door; single gate to the old rectory in the north-west boundary.

Vegetation: yews and firs on the south-west boundary include two old yews on the west. Also one yew to the east and deciduous trees on the south.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit 3 February 1996 and 25 September 1998  
Eisel 1986, 178  
Evans 1880  
Faculty St Asaph 1889 (NLW); rebuilding  
Glynne 1885, 39  
Haslam 1979, 112  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 102  
Thomas 1911, 218



## CONDITION

In the process of restoration.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Medium

# Hyssington

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**Diocese** Hereford**Dedication** Etheldreda**PRN** 16799**NGR** SO31359457

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## SUMMARY

St Etheldreda's church in Hyssington lies in the extreme east of the old county of Montgomeryshire, about 10 miles to the south-east of Welshpool. It is a single-chambered church, very heavily restored in the 19thC, and it is impossible to determine whether any of its medieval fabric survives. Internally nothing other than a medieval font and a Jacobean pulpit have been retained. It is set in a drystone-walled rectangular churchyard, adjacent to a motte and bailey known as Castle Hill.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

It is impossible to determine whether the lower walls of the church are of medieval build or have been completely rebuilt - there are certainly some changes in the masonry but their significance is elusive. Rebuilding in 1875 was in simple Gothic. There are hints, particularly in the alignments of the nave and chancel, that the latter may have been added on as an extension on the east. This carries the implication that some of the earlier structure was retained. The interior was completely refurbished.

## HISTORY

The dedication to St Etheldreda, the daughter of a 7thC king of East Anglia, is the only one of its kind in Wales. This, however, is not to suggest that Hyssington had an early medieval origin. On present evidence it is more likely to have originated after the Norman Conquest.

The church was recorded as the 'capella de Hyfynton' in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 with a value of £5.

It has been suggested that the core of the present church is 13thC but this remains to be proved. It is known that the church was largely rebuilt in 1875, but few details of the work are available, and the relevant faculty papers have not been located.

In 1951 some work was done on the west window.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a single chamber with a double bellcote at the west end and a vestry on the north side of the chancel. It is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east, but 'ecclesiastical east' is used for the church, though not for the churchyard.

Fabric: 'A' comprises small to medium blocks of greyish sandstone with dressings in the same fabric, some coursing.

'B' is of small to medium blocks and slabs of dark sandstone and shale, with some light grey sandstone; shows as a more mixed fabric than 'A', and may indicate re-use.



'C' comprises blocks and slabs of grey stone (?dolerite-type) and sandstone, some in irregular triangular blocks; irregular coursing.

All of these fabrics could be 19thC, perhaps showing different levels of re-use.

Roofs: slates with cusped ridge tiles over nave and chancel; vestry with red tiles. Cross finial at the east end and a double western bellcote.

Drainage: 19thC guttering leads to soakaways. No obvious drainage trench.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Undifferentiated nave and chancel, described here as one. Chamfered plinth at c.0.5m above ground level, and a string course, c.1.5m above ground level, around the chancel. Although there appear to be different fabrics on display, it is impossible to determine whether any of these have a chronological significance.

North wall: two 20thC lean-to corrugated sheds against the nave wall, and a vestry adjoins the north wall of the chancel. Wall plinched at 0.4m but seemingly homogeneous fabric above and below it. Window of paired, foiled, ogee-headed lights in yellow freestone, without an arch. A single light of similar form illuminates the sanctuary.

East wall: lower part of wall in 'A', the upper part in 'B'. A three-light Geometric window, with a two-centred arch and a hoodmould with headstops.

South wall: at the west end of the wall is a two-centred doorway with stopped, fluted chamfers and a hoodmould and headstops; a stepped entrance directly into the nave. Two standard two-light windows to the nave and two single-light windows in the chancel. A single buttress, stepped and stone capped, is set at the juncture of nave and chancel, the string course running as far as the buttress. All of the wall face appears to be in 'A', but below the plinth larger and less regular blocks of stone are included in the fabric.

West wall: in 'C' with a plinth at c.0.4m. Two square-headed lights in stone replaced the original tracery of the west window, which had become worn and unstable, in 1951. The lights are set below the old two-centred arch with hoodmould and head stops, and the tympanum has been filled with stone.

The double bellcote is faced in both dressed stone and rubble. Two apertures with foiled ogee heads

Vestry. General. In 'A'. Plinched at c.0.3m. Simple two-centred entrance doorway with stopped chamfers in the east wall; and a single cinquefoiled, ogee-headed window in the west wall.

## Interior

Nave. General. Stone flagged floor with flush wooden planking below benches (which were installed as late as 1936 to replace loose chairs), and carpet down the central aisle. Walls plastered and painted. 19thC scissor-braced roof with 15 trusses springing from wall plates, and herringbone panels behind; plain wallplates. Deeply splayed window embrasures. Virtually no fittings on the walls.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from the nave, two more to the sanctuary and two to the altar. 19thC tiles, though a wooden floor below choir stalls. Walls and window embrasures as nave, but the walls appear to be on a fractionally different alignment from those of the nave. Ten close-set arched-braced collar trusses provide an open wagon roof over the chancel; crenellated wallplates.

North wall: credence shelf at window sill level supported on stone brackets which are decorated with 19thC

Tudor roses; to the west is a two-centred arched doorway to the vestry, with cushion stops to the chamfers.

East wall: continuous internal string course below sill level.

South wall: piscina in ogee-arched recess, and sedile formed below the window embrasure on this side. One 19thC marble memorial.

Vestry. General. Two steps down to a tiled floor; plastered walls, and sloping tongue and groove wooden ceiling. Incorporated Society for Building and Churches Board records a rebuilding grant of 1875.

#### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: plain octagonal stone font on raised octagonal plinth, the bowl lead lined. 14thC.

Pulpit: octagonal pulpit with decorated panels; Jacobean.

Bells: two bells, one inscribed '...W..RD..1594', the other with 'Ethelreda ora Pro Nobis' , recast in 1876.

19thC fittings and furnishings include:

Monument: marble memorial to John Probert (d.1816) and his wife, Ann (d.1847).

Lectern: carved with grapes and vine leaves. A World War I memorial.

#### CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is a sub-rectangular enclosure occupying a low-lying spur running off Castle Hill. There are no obvious signs that it has been enlarged at any time. It is still used for burial.

Boundary: drystone walls form a revetment to the churchyard on all sides except on the south-east where the wall rises above the slope.

Monuments: mainly 18thC/19thC gravestones; some recent burials and some railed graves. An even distribution of graves, and the churchyard was tidied up considerably several years ago. Chest tombs are located below the south-east yew tree. The earliest gravestone noted is from 1713, just to the south of the nave, and there is a small but interesting number of 18thC monuments.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: church is set on a slight platform, most noticeable at the west end of the building where it extends for several metres. The churchyard is raised by between 0.5-1m on all sides but the south-east, and on the south-west it is also banked internally.

Ancillary features: a single wrought iron gate at the south-east entrance, and a tarmac path leads up to the south door.

Vegetation: three ancient yews on the south side of church, with mature deciduous and coniferous species elsewhere.

#### SOURCES



CPAT Field Visit 8 December 1995 and 1 May 1998  
Eisel 1986, 178  
Haslam 1979, 112  
Herefordshire Parish Records, 1951 (HRO) - church repairs  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
RCAHMW 1911, 50

## CONDITION

Good all round. Patches of damp on north wall have been treated; a few damp patches remain on west wall. The church boundary wall on northern perimeter is currently being repaired (1995).

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Very Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium



## Kerry

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<b>Diocese</b>	St Asaph	<b>Dedication</b>	Michael and All Angels
<b>PRN</b>	16413	<b>NGR</b>	SO14729010
		<b>Previous dedication</b>	?Gwyr

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## SUMMARY

St Michael's church in Kerry, about 3 miles to the south-east of Newtown, is a double-naved structure with a large west tower. Of the original Norman church only the arcade survives, and from the 14thC is the chancel arcade and the tower which is in typical Montgomeryshire style with a timber-framed belfry. The main body of the church was rebuilt in 1882-3. Inside there are 14thC or 15thC roofs, a bell of around 1410, a Perpendicular font, together with an 18thC chest and a few monuments of the same century. The churchyard, a polygonal enclosure with a trace of curvilinearity, is set on high ground overlooking the valley of the River Mule. It contains the plinth for a sundial and a few pre-19thC monuments.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The earliest stone building was probably that of 1176. The nave north arcade survives from that time, and there are traces of a south arcade, implying aisles on both sides of the nave, perhaps fairly narrow. The Norman chancel probably occupied the last bay of the present nave.

A new chancel was added in the 14thC, on the basis of its northern arcade which also indicates that it had its own new north aisle. A two-storey tower with a timber-framed belfry in typical Montgomeryshire style was also added during this century on the evidence of the shouldered arches.

The date at which the narrow north aisle of the Norman church was replaced by a structure as wide as the adjacent 14thC aisle attached to the chancel, remains uncertain. Jerman saw it as a later 14thC/early 15thC modification, and also thought that the old chancel wall on the north side of the nave was broken through at this time.

Elements of 16thC walling have been claimed at the west end of the north nave, and perhaps the tower buttresses are from this time, though an 18thC date has also been suggested. The restored east window of the north aisle was re-sited in the vestry in the 19thC.

The body of the church was rebuilt in 1882-3.

## HISTORY

The location of the site as well as tradition indicates that Kerry was an early medieval foundation, and it is conceivable that its later collegiate status (see below) indicates a clas (or mother church) establishment. It was reportedly within the old diocese of St Davids for 400 years but in 1176, at a time when a new church was built on the site, it was the subject of an altercation between Giraldus Cambrensis, Archdeacon of Brecon, and the bishop of St Asaph who planned to take it into his own diocese. The confrontation is documented by Giraldus, and there is an 1818 commemorative plaque of the event on the west wall of the north aisle.

The rededication in 1176, presumably to St Michael, raises the question of an earlier dedication. Thomas



pointed out that the bell with the inscription to 'Sante Egevire' (= Gwyr) might give an indication. The new church in 1176 was of stone, the only trace today being the remnants of the nave arcades. With its north and south aisles and perhaps a small chancel occupying what is now the east end of the nave, it was a building of some size and presumably importance.

In 1246 Henry de Bretun was presented to the living of 'Sancti Michaelis de Kery', and at this time it was a collegiate establishment. The church was recorded as 'Eccl'ia de Kery' in the 1291 Lincoln Taxatio with a value of £20.

The tower was built in the 14thC, and a new chancel was also added during the 14thC; again only the arcade remains. Rebuilding of the north nave took place, perhaps in the 15thC.

It has been suggested that the south aisle was demolished in the 17thC - there are records of a window on the south side of the church bearing the date 1613. A gallery existed by 1635, but this was enlarged in 1754 and lit by a dormer window. A second gallery was added at the east end of the north aisle about 1761. The buttresses on the tower may also date to this 18thC restoration work.

Minor repair work was carried out intermittently during the 18thC according to the church records, when the church was falling into disrepair. A detailed inventory of the church furnishings in 1765 is transcribed in Thomas.

The church was integrated into the diocese of St Asaph in 1849. In 1853, a report by T. H. Wyatt stated that the structure was in an unsatisfactory condition and should be pulled down, but no action other than some repairs to the tower was taken at that time.

The faculty for the restoration of the church in 1882 noted that it was in a dilapidated condition and required rebuilding. Soil around the church 'and within the walls' required removal, and monuments were sited inconveniently for worship; seats were uncomfortable and badly arranged. All the walls were to be rebuilt except for the tower and the west end of the church. The church was to be reseated, refloored with wood under the benches, and the chancel screens were to be of new wood. The work was carried out in 1883 under the direction of G.E. Street and the contractor was Edward Davies of Newtown. The rebuilt portions were of Llanymynech stone with Grinshill dressings. The medieval nave roof was under-pinned and left in situ, the north aisle roof was repaired and replaced and the chancel roof was completely renewed but the canopy which covered the sanctuary was repaired and replaced. The total cost was about £3777.

Considerable restoration work was undertaken on the tower in 1924: the stair turret was in danger of collapse, the walls needed repointing and the masonry repairing. The oak timber framing was also repaired and the roof was reslated and louvres were inserted in the top windows.

More recent work included the 1960 removal of a coke-fired boiler and the installation of an electric heating system.

Further restoration work in 1993/94 was necessitated by storm damage: some of the oak timbers were replaced by steel girders and the slate roof was repaired.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church might be termed as a double-naved structure though it is not usually classed as such. It consists of a nave, a slightly narrower chancel, a north aisle which is of similar length to the nave and chancel but has now had its eastern end converted to a vestry and an organ chamber, a south porch, and a tower attached to the west end of the nave. It is oriented

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium linear blocks of grey and brown sandstone with some light grey mudstone and red sandstone. Larger blocks are used near the base of the tower; some coursing. Red sandstone dressings.

'B' consists of regularly shaped blocks of medium-grained limestone from Llanymynech Quarries; some coursing. Grinshill stone dressings.



'C' consists of mainly medium-sized slabs and blocks of medium grained sandstone, grey in colour, though also some in red.

'A' is 14thC (for the tower) and 16thC (for the north aisle), 'B' dates to the restoration of 1883, 'C' pre-dates the restoration but its age has not been established.

Roofs: slates, red ceramic, hipped, ridge tiles, cross finials of different designs at the east end of chancel and vestry. Nave and north aisle roof lines higher than the chancel and vestry roof lines.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Flat stone slabs along the south side of the building could cover a drain; there is an open cut against the tower and on the west side of the porch, but evidence for a trench around the rest of the church is equivocal.

## Exterior

Tower. General. In 'A' with some zoning of the masonry. A broad square tower which rises to a two-stage slatted timber bell-turret with a pyramidal slate roof surmounted by a weathervane dating to 1718. Largely untouched by the 19thC restoration. At a high level (except on the north where it is absent) is a solitary square-sectioned string course. On the north-east is a stair-turret which abuts the west wall of the north aisle and appears to be integral with the tower itself.

A variety of buttresses support the tower. That at the south-east overlaps with the nave's south wall. It is stepped and in 'C' and has quarry-cut red sandstone quoins and large linear blocks of red sandstone for capstones; it is mounted on a plinth which is visible at ground level on the west side of the buttress, rising to c.0.2m above ground on the opposite side. At the south-west is a diagonal buttress, also in 'C', with much use of red sandstone, but no plinth. Both of these buttresses rise to half-way up the tower. Clasp buttresses of slimmer design at the north-west corner.

North wall: a single slit window with worn red sandstone chamfered dressings at ground floor level. Higher up, the string course begins close to the north-west corner. Three rectangular lights with wooden frames and louver boards immediately below the slatted belfry.

The stair turret is in fabric 'A', and has red sandstone quoins at its north-east corner. Its lean-to roof meets the north wall of the tower just below the louvered lights of the belfry. Its north wall has a red sandstone pilaster buttress to a height of c.1.5m; there is one window slit at a high level, and a small square opening immediately below the roof line, but neither has sandstone dressings. The west wall has two slit windows, the lower in worn red sandstone with chamfered jambs, the higher one simply utilising regular blocks of 'A' but with a single yellow sandstone block forming the lintel; this is perhaps an addition. Near the top the west wall is inset, the masonry contains more red sandstone and could be reconstructed.

East wall: two tie-rod plates, a small rectangular light with grey freestone dressings and finally the three standard louvered openings as on the north side.

South wall: ground floor has a small slit window with worn red sandstone, chamfered dressings; affixed to the wall beside it is a memorial slab of 1835 in yellow sandstone. First floor has a two-centred window in red and grey sandstone with two ogee-headed lights; the foiled tracery is broken and the dressings are heavily weathered, while the foiled quatrefoil light above has been filled in. Just below the string course is a second pair of ogee-headed lights, these without an arch and the mullion and perhaps the jambs renewed. Finally, three standard louvered apertures at the top of the wall.

West wall: a small slit window in pink sandstone (though with few signs of weathering) at ground-floor level. High up, below the string course, is a small square opening in grey sandstone as on the south side, and there are two iron tie-rod plates just below this. Finally three standard belfry lights.

North aisle. General. All in 'B'. Divided from the organ chamber/vestry by a simple buttress and by a change in the roof line, the aisle itself being higher.



North wall: all features in their present form are 19thC. From the west end: i) a two-centred doorway with red sandstone voussoirs; heavy planked door with wrought iron fittings. It seems that there was a medieval predecessor. ii) a two-centred window with three foiled lights and Y-tracery. iii) two-centred window with a central round-headed lancet light flanked by longer foiled lights, and above a cinquefoil light. iv) small buttress below change in roof line.

West wall: in 'A'. Plain, but a low stepped buttress supports the wall and rests against the north wall of the tower stair turret.

Vestry/organ chamber. General. Of Victorian date. The same north wall alignment as the north aisle, and also entirely in 'B'.

North wall: features from west are: i) and ii) two-centred windows with two lights that have foiled ogee heads and a central quatrefoil above. iii) buttress, similar to that at the junction with the north aisle further west. iv) a two-centred window containing two foiled, ogee lights with a quatrefoil above, and has fluted chamfers to the jambs. It has red sandstone dressings, the arrises are generally sharp and probably largely renewed. Indeed it is conceivable that nothing of the original window survives, yet it is a survivor from the 14thC church and was the model for the windows elsewhere.

East wall: east window has three foiled lights under a two-centred arch, intersecting Y-tracery; some of the dressings have already had to be renewed.

Chancel. General. Lower and narrower than nave to west. All in 'B'. All fenestration is 19thC.

East wall: Perpendicular east window has a two-centred arch, three cinquefoiled, two-centred lights with foiled panel tracery above; in grey sandstone. A rather different window from those elsewhere in the church, and it is conceivable that the tracery of the lights might be original, though the stone seems to be the same as renewed stonework elsewhere in the window and there can be little doubt that the mullions and the frame are relatively modern.

South wall: from the east the features are: i) two-centred window over two cinquefoiled lights with a small foiled tracery light. ii) two-centred arch to priest's door; the jambs have half-round shaft mouldings, but are not convincingly original; there is a renewed hoodmould and original head stops. The whole heavily restored in the 19thC. iii) + iv) windows with two-centred arches with foiled panel lights of different designs.

Nave. General. All in 'B'. All fenestration is 19thC.

South wall: features from east are: i) two-centred window with two trefoiled two-centred lights and an irregular cinquefoil tracery light above. ii) base of a circular Norman column from the south arcade re-sited in an alcove at the base of the south wall during the 1883 restoration. iii) window with two-centred arch with three foiled lights with quatrefoil tracery lights above. iv) a second column base below. v) a third column base in the angle formed by the nave and the porch. vi) south porch.

South Porch. General. In 'B' but some red sandstone incorporated. East and west walls are plain without features. The south entrance consists of a three-centred wooden arch raised on wooden half-columns topped by capitals, and flanked by traceried open panels. Weatherboarding for the gable disguises two large raking struts, and there are decorated barge boards. The entrance was closed by wrought iron gates in 1992.

## Interior

Porch. General. Open porch has tiled floors, plastered walls with long sandstone slabs forming benches



along east and west walls. The roof of two bays with a central collar truss and above the nave door a tie beam with arch bracing and raking struts, similar to the outer truss. On it is inscribed 'Rebuilt AD 1176 Restored 1883'.

North wall: south door to nave. Two-centred arch of red sandstone, with a quarter-round moulding to the chamfer and a plain hoodmould; the stops and arrises are sharp and the hoodmould is certainly renewed.

Tower. General. The only entrance to the tower is through an arch about 1.4m deep at the west end of the nave. Ground floor of tower is adapted for use as a meeting room. The floor has been raised slightly above its original level and is now carpeted. Walls whitewashed with deeply splayed embrasures and steep sloping sills to the slit windows on the north, south and west sides. Flat ceiling with heavy wooden joists. The internal faces of the window embrasures are shouldered.

North wall: inner surround of the window has a jamb from a re-used part of a 12thC lintel with diaper work; left unwhitewashed.

East wall: two-centred arch to nave has long stone voussoirs.

West wall: two stone monuments of 1778/1779 and 1784/1793.

North aisle. General. Floor and walls as nave. 14thC or 15thC roof of arch-braced collars with quatrefoils between the raking struts; eight trusses form seven bays, with two tiers of cusped windbraces. Since 1976 the east end of the aisle has been set aside as a chapel on raised flooring, backing onto the organ, while the west end is now a baptistry and children's corner.

North wall: two splayed windows and a two-centred reveal to the north door. Two hatchments.

East wall: formed by the organ.

South wall: arcade as described for the north wall of nave, although the dressings of the second, outer order of the most easterly arch is not chamfered.

West wall: high, narrow, two-centred arch to tower stair, with pyramid stops to the chamfers. Eleven monuments of stone, brass and marble around the west end, though three are actually on the south wall.

Vestry/organ chamber. General. The most westerly part is given over to an altar on a dais, then the organ, next an outer vestry and at the east end, partitioned off by a panelled screen with a locked, wrought-iron gate is the main vestry. Walls plastered; floor carpeted; one heating grille. Roof of seven arch-braced collar trusses with quatrefoils between the struts. Little more than 0.1m separates the most westerly truss of this roof from the most easterly truss of the north aisle, indicating strongly that these two parts of the church were constructed at different times. The walls are lower than the north aisle and the trusses spring from stone corbels on the south arcade side and castellated wallplates on the north wall.

North wall: two 19thC window embrasures and at the east end the embrasure of the 14thC window.

East wall: splayed window embrasure and three 19thC marble memorials.

South wall: four-bay arcade (see below). Set in the eastern respond is a 14thC piscina in pink sandstone.

Nave. General. From the porch two steps down into the main body of church, largely the result of the 1883 restoration. Tiled floor with flush woodblock under the benches; walls plastered and painted. 14thC or 15thC roof retained from the earlier church; five bays formed by five arch-braced collars with short raking struts, though one has in addition a tie beam (the third from the west); except for the tie-beam truss which rests on the wall beams, the trusses spring from short wall posts; those at the east end have carved wooden corbels while the extreme westerly truss has wooden corbels that give a pseudo-hammerbeam effect; the cornices



have trefoiled panels and are probably of 19thC date; three rows of cusped windbraces with exposed rafters and purlins, most of which have rib mouldings.

North wall: four-bay arcade in pinkish sandstone, a survival of the Norman church; three circular pillars with east and west responds; the columns themselves and the inner orders of the arches have been left free of plaster. The western respond is plastered over except for the moulded capital with its dog-tooth ornament; the third pier eastwards was originally a respond with a capital on one side only though this is not immediately obvious, and the stonework of the whole pillar is out of alignment. The present eastern respond is actually the octagonal pillar of the chancel arcade added in the 14thC; at its base is some re-used 12thC carved stone, possibly from a window but perhaps more likely from something like a font stem. The round-headed arches are of two orders; the inner arch is of chamfered sandstone blocks, though the chamfers with their pyramid stops were probably introduced in the 14thC; the outer is plastered over without evidence of any dressings.

East wall: screen and two steps up to chancel.

South wall: two splayed windows and a slightly splayed, two-centred reveal to the south door.

West wall: two-centred doorway to the tower, effectively of two orders, and the outer with broach stops to the chamfers. Six marble wall monuments, all of the 19thC.

Chancel. General. Narrower than nave, as is shown by the slight inset in the north wall and the much deeper one in the south wall opposite it, where the 19thC screen crosses. Chancel finished as nave, but has encaustic tiles made by Godwins of Hereford. Two staggered steps from the nave and two steps to the sanctuary. The wagon roof over the chancel was replaced in 1883 and comprises 18 close-set arch-braced trusses springing from wallplates fronted by trefoil-headed panels. Over the sanctuary is a restored medieval canopy with moulded arch braces and four purlins, and bosses that have been recently re-gilded.

North wall: four-bay arcade of 14thC date: three octagonal piers in pinkish sandstone, with an east respond and a fourth, larger octagonal pillar which forms the 'respond' to the nave arcade; the octagonal piers support four round-headed arches of two orders (presumably copies of their Norman counterparts to the west rather than pointed arches in the current Gothic style) with different patterns of moulded capitals. two rows of ball-flower ornament around the capital of the central pier. A continuous hoodmould in pink sandstone is of the 19thC. Parclose screen in front of the arcade.

East wall: stone reredos below a stained glass window.

South wall: 14thC piscina set in red sandstone recessed into wall with 19thC trefoil-headed arch over, together with a hoodmould. Sedilia below sanctuary window. Priest's door has a two-centred head to its reveal.

## FURNISHING and FITTINGS

Details from Haslam with additions.

Piscina: bowl has a moulded projection at the front, and was attributed by Haslam to the 14thC, though its alcove is Victorian.

Font: octagonal, stone, of late Perpendicular date with inset decorated panels that include depictions of the Instruments of Christ's Passion. A wooden cover was added in 1883.

Screen: Crossley and Ridgway following Thomas note that the new 19thC screens incorporate fragments of earlier woodwork.

Chest: a planked churchwardens' chest. It has been suggested that this is of 1759 though it does not carry a date.



Pulpit: of 1883, but incorporating four tracery panels from the 15thC screen.

Church Plate: includes cup of 1633/4.

Hatchments: two with the Herbert Coat of Arms. Not dated.

Monuments: sited on the west walls of the nave and north aisle. Marble on grey slate in neo-classical style to William Broome (d.1786), wife Mary (d.1780) and two sons, by B Davies. To Richardson (d.1788) with a marble pedestal and figures on a marble sarcophagus. A slate tablet to the Rev. John Catlyn (d.1717), with smiling, winged putto. A weatherworn sandstone tablet, formerly sited on the exterior east wall of the north aisle but brought into the church in 1883, to Joseph Buckley (d.1739) and wife Jane (d.1738), with heraldry above the inscription. In the tower are an oval sandstone tablet to Thomas Powell (d.1778) and his wife Jane (d.1779); and also a stone memorial to Isaac Jones (d.1793) and other members of his family.

Bells: three. One cast in Worcester about 1410 is inscribed 'Sancte Egevre Ora Pro Nobis'. The tenor bell was cast by Thomas Roberts of Shrewsbury in 1678, and the third cast in Gloucester in 1728. The original medieval bell-frame survives with additions of the 17thC.

Registers: from 1602.

Clocks: the internal mechanism of a locally made clock of c.1740-50 has recently been restored.

Victorian and later fittings include:

Altar table, altar rails, choir stalls, benches etc from 1883.

Screens: chancel screen of five bays with a central doorway; an overhanging cornice of 17 panels with dentilation; contemporary parclose screen between chancel and vestry.

Benefaction board: in stone and dating from 1839.

Lectern: of 1883, with a Welsh Bible of 1690 chained to it.

Interior ironwork: includes a wrought iron gate to the vestry by Barfords of Maidenhead.

Organ: installed 1890, made by Harrison and Harrison, Durham.

Stained glass: east window by Kempe, 1871. All glazing by John Davies of Shrewsbury - diamond leaded lights with plain and coloured glass.

Amongst 19thC monuments are: a marble tablet to John Herbert of Dolforgan Hall (d.1807) and others by C. Lewis of Cheltenham. A white marble slab with an angel crudely incised to John Herbert (d.1821), by Boobyer of Bath. Another marble memorial to Rev E Davies (d.1838) by T Bedford of Oxford Street. Commemorative marble plaque to Giraldus Cambrensis erected in 1818, by Mainwaring of Carmarthen.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is a polygonal enclosure that incorporates an extension of 1884, occupying fairly level ground on the south side of the Mule Valley. It was closed for burials in 1919.

Boundary: takes a variety of forms. There are stone walls on the east and south, interspersed with the backs of buildings. On the north is a railed boundary.

Memorials: mainly 19th/20thC slate and stone slabs, fairly evenly distributed on all sides. Some railed graves, chests, crosses and pillars. Early weathered sandstone slabs are laid flat outside the south wall of the chancel, and several re-sited slabs lean against adjoining property on the west side of the south path.

The earliest memorials seem to date from the late 18thC, and there is a metal gravemarker of 1783 at the east end of the chancel. Some work was undertaken in the churchyard in 1962, when a faculty was submitted for the removal of kerbstones, and chains and railings surrounding graves.

Furniture: south of the nave are the remains of a sundial consisting of a slim, fluted octagonal stem and plinth over 1m high; there is no plate or gnomon. A sundial is recorded in the 1765 inventory for the church.

Earthworks: a curving scarp bank on the north side marks the extent of the pre-1884 churchyard. The churchyard is raised on the west by between 1m and 4m, on the north, and by c1.5m on the east. It is, however, level on the south.

Ancillary features: main south entrance through a pair of wooden gates (1976) set in a short stretch of wall on the south side. A broad tarmac path leads up to south porch and around the church on all sides. Also a farm gate on the east side.

Vegetation: several yews of considerable age. The yew with the widest girth is located on the south-west side of the churchyard. Others near the north-west corner of the church and at the east end of the chancel.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1996  
CPAT Field Visit 20 December 1995 and 1 May 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 189  
Eisel 1986, 179  
Faculty St Asaph 1882 (NLW): restoration  
Faculty St Asaph 1882 (NLW): churchyard extension  
Haslam 1979, 112  
Jerman 1976  
Morris 1891  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 109  
Salter 1991, 13  
Thomas 1908, 516



## CONDITION

Church in excellent state of repair. Plaster peeling on the interior walls of the south porch.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium to Good

# Llan

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**Diocese** Bangor**Dedication** Mary**PRN** 16383**NGR** SH88410077

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## SUMMARY

St Mary's church in the centre of Llan is a single-chambered church which dates back to the 15thC if not earlier. There is an early bell turret supported by four oak uprights, a 16thC south porch and a north transept of unknown date. Inside is a 13thC font, a small fragment of medieval glass, and some post-medieval woodwork. The churchyard is a raised circular enclosure with an 18thC sundial and graveslabs going back to the previous century.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The core of the church is thought to be 14th or 15thC, though there is nothing to confirm the earlier date, and there are indications that the nave walls may have been heightened or rebuilt. The one surviving window is 15thC but it is now re-sited in the north transept and lacks the top of its original square-topped frame. The south porch is claimed to have been added in the 16thC, though without much confirmatory evidence, and indeed the entrance might suggest it is 18thC. Nor is the date of the north transept known: it may not be of a single build yet its north wall could be of 1688. The western bell-turret, retains its original oak uprights and may have been erected in the 17thC, although it is much repaired.

## HISTORY

The church was traditionally founded in the 6thC, but its original dedication is unknown and it is thought to have been rededicated to St Mary in the 12thC.

It is first recorded in the 1254 Taxation, when 'Brenmeyr' was grouped with Cemmaes at a value of £1 6s 8d. It was recorded as 'Ecclesia de Brynmeyr' in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291.

There is no evidence to suggest when the north transept was built (though the Quinquennial Review speculates that it is 19thC) or indeed partitioned off for use as a schoolroom. An alternative date of 1688 has been postulated for changes to the transept, though again on what evidence is not known.

In 1748, the west gable end of the church was rebuilt and the porch repaired. The wagon ceiling was erected at this time for the vestry minutes refer to a local carpenter being employed to erect (or rebuild) new trusses. The transept was re-roofed and repaired in 1775, and was ceiled in 1790.

In 1812, the schoolroom was re-flagged and plastered, and a new window was made opposite the door. An 1847 report refers to 41 girls and 36 boys being taught in the church school, the schoolroom being boarded off from the church itself. A new school and master's house were built across the road on glebe land in 1856. The school partition was removed in 1860 and the north transept opened up, with only a small part kept as a vestry.

The roof was repaired and reslated in 1854.



An earlier western gallery was accessible from the first floor of the belfry; the doorway is still visible but the gallery was removed in 1860. The 1860 restoration also included replacing old pews with open seating, removing the wagon ceiling and exposing oak timberwork, renewing or inserting windows except for one in the north transept, re-erecting the old font on a new base, replastering the interior, re-pointing the outer walls and completing various small repairs.

About this time the church passed from the Diocese of St Asaph to that of Bangor.

A faculty survives for restoration work in 1901, and further works took place in 1993.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel as a single chamber, a north transept and south porch and a bell turret over the western end of the nave. The church is oriented north-east to south-west but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium blocks of grey and brown local sedimentary rock (perhaps shales and/or siltstone) with occasional larger stones; irregular coursing; limewash residue particularly on the south side. 'B' is in similar stone to 'A', but reasonably regular blocks and some longer slabs; regular quoins and regular coursing.

'A' is medieval and is considered to be 14th/15thC, though there is some rebuilding in similar material. 'B' is from 1748.

Roof: slates with worn red ridge tiles; cross finial set back slightly from east end. Pyramidal slate roof on bell turret with red ridge tiles has been recently renewed. Note also that the transept roof is higher than that of the chancel.

Drainage: renewed guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. There appears to be a gully around the north side including the transept, and on the south side east of the porch. A gravel path edges the west side.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Considered as one because there is no external differentiation. All in fabric 'A'. There is a continuous string course around both the nave and chancel at a height varying from c.0.5m to 1m. Below the string course the walls are slightly wider and slightly battered.

North wall: beneath the bell turret is an unsplayed doorway with a segmental arch. Double doors give access to the old bier house, which is probably of 19thC date and contemporary with the interior vestry that was constructed below the bell-turret at that time. East of the bier house entrance is a square-headed but frameless three-light window with trefoiled, two-centred heads and sunken spandrels, probably a 19thC restoration window. On the east side of the transept the top of the chancel wall leans outwards considerably at the top.

East wall: projecting plinth at the base of the wall. A two-centred east window of Victorian date with three stepped lancets, all flush to the wall face. The top of the wall has been rebuilt to permit the insertion of the window: the masonry is of type 'A' but the stones are somewhat smaller than elsewhere.

South wall: the stonework above the string course at the east end of the chancel is more regularly coursed than in the nave further west, and it is also possible that the upper courses of the wall have been reconstructed at some point. East of the porch are three square-headed windows all with two, two-centred foiled lights, and small triangular foiled lights above. The two lighting the nave are in grey freestone with no original dressings surviving. No light to the sanctuary while the window to the chancel, though perhaps in an original position, is almost wholly renewed. The trefoiled heads are in worn red sandstone, perhaps original, but the sill and mullions and part of the west side are in yellow sandstone and the east side is a reddish



sandstone. West of the porch the wall again leans outwards. The plinth stops about 2m short of the south-west corner, and its disappearance presumably relates to the rebuilding of the west end of the church in 1748.

West wall: contains large blocks at the base, and is in 'B', appearing slightly battered. Set in the wall is a square-headed window with foiled two-centred lights; Victorian in buff-yellow freestone.

The western bell turret rises above the west wall. Half-timbered on the north, east and south sides, it has two louvred apertures on each of these, and a clock face on the south side. On the west it has a gambrel roof, re-slatted in 1994. The turret is surmounted by a pyramidal roof with a new wrought-iron weathervane.

North transept. General. In 'A', though its stonework is slightly more regularly coursed than in the nave and chancel. Its roof line is slightly higher than the adjoining nave roof.

North wall: possibly to be identified as 'B'. A re-sited Perpendicular window of three trefoiled lights, with open spandrels above, all now set in a splayed aperture with a coarse two-centred, almost segmental, arch formed of edge stones. The original flat-headed top has gone, and there is considerable renewal of the dressings including the central light head and possibly much more as well.

East wall: the wall has an irregular appearance and is 'A'-type masonry. There is a two-centred arch to the door and a three-light window, the lights with trefoiled heads; both are Victorian.

West wall: the overall appearance is confused by heavy pointing, and the classification of the masonry is uncertain, although it appears that the north-west angle has been renewed or rebuilt. The wall shows a distinctive bulge. One standard square-headed window with three foiled lights which has clearly been inserted. It is similar in appearance to that in the north wall but not precisely the same.

South porch. General. In 'B'-type masonry, though this is more regular in the south wall than in the east and west ones.

East and west walls: plain walls, no windows.

South wall: semi-circular entrance arch with stone voussoirs, and jambs of selected stone; a pair of wrought iron gates, approached by two steps of large flags.

## Interior

Porch. General. Red tiled floor with the homogeneous stonework of the side walls bare but showing signs of past limewash. Exposed rafters and purlins to the roof, the latter with stopped chamfers.

North wall: the south entrance of the church consists of a two-centred arch, with chamfered dressings, deep fluting and pyramid stops. This is all in pale Victorian freestone and is probably inserted. There are traces of early render around the doorway, and the stub of a beam for the former gallery protrudes above the arch.

East and west walls: wooden benches on stone plinths against the side walls.

South wall: the south doorway has a round-headed arch with stone voussoirs similar to that in the south entrance of the porch. Limewash residue in evidence.

Nave. General. Woodblock flooring on a continuous level in the nave. All walls are plastered and painted, and the side walls display a slight batter. Roof formed by four king-post tie-beam trusses to the east and three collar trusses with king struts at the west end. The collar trusses spring from the wall plates, the most westerly is immured in the west wall, and the most easterly has arch bracing, while the central one has a collar that is reinforced by additional timberwork. The tie beams of the king-post trusses are chamfered and



set high into the wall but below the wall plates. Exposed rafters and through purlins, the lowest of the purlins just below the wall plates; close-set rafters, and the whole looks rather crude. It seems likely that these two elements are of different date, the king-posts perhaps relating to the rebuilding of 1748, the collar trusses of late medieval date. The west end of the nave is partitioned off, immediately west of the south entrance, for the ground-floor access to the bell turret, a vestry and the bier house.

Ground floor beneath the bell turret. General. Separated from the nave west end by oak panelling with an entrance door towards its south end. Behind the partition, a dog-leg staircase leads up to the turret and a second door leads directly into the old ground floor vestry.

Four massive oak uprights with chamfered edges form the frame of the bell turret and are carried on timber spreaders, although repaired at several points in the past; an additional timber upright was inserted in 1994. Two of the uprights are now set on concrete plinths in the bier house and two are located in the old vestry.

Vestry. General. Floor raised by two steps above nave level. Walls plastered above a dado which appears to consist of old pew panels.

Bier house. General. Stone flagged floor; wooden planked ceiling formed by the tower floor. Tongue and groove panelled partition to vestry. Exposed stonework of the early church interior on other walls is now whitewashed.

Bell turret: first floor: heavy planked floor. Planked panelling to nave, with some exposed lath and plaster panels on its east wall. Also in the east wall is an entrance door to the old western gallery (removed in 1860), now blocked. Exposed stonework and much of the original timber framing remains. Heavy cross-braces and chamfered oak uprights continuing up through the floor and the planked ceiling which forms the floor of the belfry. Fixed ladder in north-east corner provides access to belfry.

Belfry: planked floor, slatted walls and roof. Timber framing supports three bells.

North wall: window embrasure has a square-headed aperture. Decalogue boards to either side of the window. At the east end of the nave and the west end of the chancel is a break in the wall with squared-off butts. This is now filled by a modern (1980s) wooden partition with a wooden door to the north transept. Originally it would presumably have been open, though in later times it was boarded off for the schoolroom. A one and half-bay arcade spans the gap, and there is a twelve-sided oak column with faceted abacus and braces to the tie beam above, with a further abacus immediately below the tie beam. Another wooden pier, five sided, acts as a respond against the eastern abutment. This too has a faceted abacus or collar, but it is much less pronounced. The beam supported on these piers acts in turn as a support to three of the tie beams for the roof.

East wall: two steps up to chancel.

South wall: south doorway has a splayed, square-headed reveal. Two window embrasures have square-headed, deeply splayed, apertures. Two 19thC marble memorial.

West wall: oak panelling below a plastered wall; four bays or five if the plastered partition with a doorway at the south end is included. This two-centred arched doorway provides access to tower. The central panel is set between decorated uprights indicating a central doorway and there is a timber two-centred arch, a sort of tympanum above. The remaining uprights have chamfered edges with stops. Boards attached to the panels include one of the Incorporated Society for Building and Churches, a 20thC plaque recording the safe-keeping of the Middle Temple archives here during the war, and a Welsh benefaction board of 1883. A collar beam is exposed on the west wall, where the earlier gallery was sited, and a small rectangular window looks in from the tower.

North Transept. General. To north of both nave and chancel. Square room used as a vestry/meetings room. Carpet over (?)original stone-flagged floor, whitewashed walls, battered on the east and west, and a modern ceiling inserted below what is said to be a roof of queen-post construction with massive tie beams.



North wall: contains one Perpendicular window embrasure, slightly splayed, supposedly reset in 1688 when the north transept is said to have been rebuilt.

East wall: one deeply-splayed window aperture and a splayed square-headed doorway embrasure, about 1m above floor level and accessed by wooden steps.

West wall: deeply splayed window with a sill bearing the inscription, now whitewashed, 'Ecclesiam de Brynmair Tribvto Parochiali Collatitii Sqve Pecvniis Reparandam Cvravit IG Kirkham AM Rector. AD MDCCCLX. T Jones, H Hughes S.C.'.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave, one to the sanctuary and two more to the altar. Throughout a woodblock floor renewed to the original plan in 1993.

North wall: two 20thC marble memorials and a niche with a triangular head, presumably an aumbry, and probably of modern origin. In the 19thC it was termed a piscina, one of two in the chancel.

East wall: deeply splayed two-centred embrasure for the window. Just below springer level the wall is inset by perhaps 0.2m, in line with the tie beams and presumably reflecting the position of a former beam. However, to the north of the window this ledge is interrupted by stonework that rises to form a small, solid, two-centred arch. One 20thC slate memorial.

South wall: slight changes in the thickness of the wall above and to the west of the window imply some degree of rebuilding and in fact this continues above the nave windows as well. A niche for a piscina with a rather crude four-centred head; there is a crude drain hole which is probably no longer functional and stone voussoirs forming an arch. Both this and the aumbry in the north wall are set very low down, indicating the degree to which the chancel floor was raised in the 19thC. Two 19thC marble memorials, and a 20thC brass plaque within the window embrasure.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: circular stone lead-lined bowl, perhaps re-tooled, on an octagonal stem and a plinth of more recent date. 13thC. Octagonal wooden cover with brass Latin cross of modern date.

Screen: Crossley and Ridgway noted various remnants including a beam at the west end that divides the vestry from the nave, an alms box support, a piece of carving on the pulpit and another fragment, with traces of original colour, at the vicarage.

Stained glass: in the north transept north window is one quarrel, reputedly all that remains of the stained glass in the north chancel which was broken during the Civil War of the 17thC.

Chairs: two carved oak Jacobean chairs in the sanctuary.

Altar: wooden table with some decoration on the legs; no date but almost certainly pre-19thC.

Bells: inscribed: three inscribed: i) 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo 1665'; ii) 'God Save this Church over King and Realm 1665'; iii) 'Prosperity to this Parish Church A.R.1759'.

Pews: heavy timber benches - three at the rear of the church, two in the transept and one in the vestry. Date uncertain, but could be pre-19thC.

Furnishings and fittings of the 19thC include:

Pews: inserted in 1860 or later.



Decalogue boards: two large wooden boards with the Ten Commandments in Welsh, gold lettering on dark blue background. On the north wall of the nave. Date uncertain; they could be 19thC, yet the round-headed top and pilaster piers might indicate they are later 18thC.

Benefaction board: of 1883.

Octagonal oak panelled pulpit, carved by Daniel Wintringham Stable of Plas Llwyn Owen, a Word War I memorial.

Altar rails: by Thomas Hughes, Llanberis, 1939.

Mainly 19thC monuments: several to Stable family of Plas Llwyn Owen. One stone memorial to Anne Browne Russell (d.1831) by R. Brown, 58 Russell St, London, a large cream-coloured stone gateway.

Stained glass: in a north wall window is glass of 1860, inscribed as a memorial to Agnes Matilda Kirkham and Thomas Hilary Kirkham by D.Evans & Sons, Salop. In the east window glass of 1906, and in the south window of the chancel of c.1925.

## CHURCHYARD

The church is sited on a slight knoll and the ground slopes away on all sides. The churchyard is sub-circular occupying a central position in the old village of Llan (formerly Llanbrynmair). There is a modern extension to the churchyard on the west side.

Boundary: a stone revetment wall forms the boundary, up to 2m high, on the roadside to the east. Iron railings around the western extension.

Monuments: an even distribution of graves on all sides. Most of the graves are 18th and 19thC, many inscribed in Welsh. The earliest graves noted was of 1766 on the south-east side of church, but beside the entrance path is a broken slab of 1676, and another of late 17thC date lies against the north wall of the church.

Furniture: sundial with a worn, octagonal sandstone pillar on an asymmetric base; the brass plate is inscribed 'Samuel Roberts, Llanvair, 1754'.

Earthworks: the original boundary of the church on the south side is visible inside the present wall. This is up to 3.5m above the present road level. On the west a relict revetted wall survives to a height of nearly 1.5m. On the south-west there is a drop of several metres to the properties edging the churchyard.

Ancillary features: lychgate constructed in stone with semi-circular arches; a datestone of 1847 may signify the restoration of the gate. Approached by thirteen steps, and on the south side of the lychgate, is a run of ten steps leading to a gap in the wall. The lychgate timbers were recently damaged by fire on the church side. A gravel path from the main road leads up to the south porch and around to the transept door, and there is another path leading westwards to the churchyard extension. In the west side is a modern wooden gate.

Vegetation: two ancient yews trees to the south of the church with late 18th to mid-19thC graves and broken slabs beneath them. A mature yew to the west.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 22 November 1995 and 18 September 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 189  
Faculty 1901: Bangor Records (NLW)  
Haslam 1979, 119

Lunt 1926, 471  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Quinquennial Reports 1985 and 1991  
Williams 1886



## CONDITION

Considerable dampness in the tower basement. Tower roof repaired 1995. Damp on north wall.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Good

# Llanarmon Mynydd-mawr

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**Diocese** St Asaph

**Dedication** St Garmon

**PRN** 19775

**NGR** SJ13542795

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## GENERAL SUMMARY

St Garmon's church is set in a remote location a mile and a half north-east of what was its mother church at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. Heavy Victorian restoration has left a structure whose architectural features are all 19thC, though it is conceivable that the walls themselves may be earlier. Inside, the church is equally devoid of anything pre-dating the 19thC except for a disused font bowl, a font cover and re-cycled altar rails, all from the 18thC. The churchyard, however, is largely unaltered, its D-shaped form abutting a stream, with the earliest memorials from the late 18thC.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Nave and chancel retain no early features, all the windows and doors being Victorian. Masonry changes in the east wall hint at the possibility that some of the walls are older but this can not be demonstrated unequivocally; on the evidence of a faculty petition the south wall may well have been rebuilt. The porch and vestry are 19thC features.

## HISTORY

The dedication and location, and arguably the churchyard morphology point to an early medieval origin.

It was a chapel attached to Llanrhaiadr and as such was subsumed in the Taxatio entries for that church in 1254 and 1291. There is, however, a reference to Madoc, the curate of 'Lla'irmon' in 1317.

The church was restored in 1885/6 by W.H.Spaul of Oswestry at a cost of £630. The decayed roof, west gallery and stairs, and the window frames were removed, the south wall and porch pulled down. The bellcote, broad cusped lancets and the Decorated east window, together with heating apparatus and a new vestry, were added, and the floors replaced.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a single cell for the nave and chancel, a south porch and a vestry at the north-east corner. Above the west gable is a bellcote.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small and medium blocks and slabs of shale, grey and brown in colour, with occasional blocks of quartz and also some medium-sized pebblestones. Slabs used for levelling courses in walls; selected stones used for quoins.

'B' is dominated by small slabs of grey and brown shale, with occasional medium-sized slabs; some coursing.

Roof: slates, red clay ridge tiles; metal cross finial on the porch and another decorated metal finial on the



chancel.

Drainage: the church is terraced into a hillslope creating a flat-bottomed gully around its north and west sides which may have a drainage function; on the east there is evidence of a back-filled trench beside the wall. The presence of old graveslabs suggests that there is nothing on south.

## Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. Not differentiated externally. Walls taper inwards slightly as they rise.

North wall: in 'A'. The only features are two cusped lancet lights in pale freestone, both Victorian. No convincing signs that these have been inserted.

East wall: lower part in 'A', but around window in 'B'. A relatively small east window with a two-centred arch, three lancet lights, and sub-arches edging a cusped rounded light at the apex; all in pale freestone with an ashlar relieving arch.

South wall: in 'A'. Three standard cusped lancets; no signs of insertion.

West wall: in 'A', irregularities at apex of gable suggest that this may have been reconstructed, though there is also more recent re-pointing here. Two cusped lancets; below these a windlass for the bell, but the cord broken. Bellcote has a single aperture, ashlar and stone facing, and a gabled top.

Vestry. General. Built in masonry akin to 'A', though there appears to be less variation in the size of the stone. A simple lancet light in north wall in same general style as the nave windows, a plain west wall and a flat-headed doorway with stopped chamfers on its jambs on the east.

Porch. General. Fabric akin to 'A' but sides appear less weathered than nave, suggesting they are of later build. Basal plinth with chamfered freestone coping.

East and west walls: plain.

South wall: two-centred archway in standard freestone with simple stops to the chamfers. Lamp above the arch, no doors or gates.

## Interior

Porch. General. Two steps up from the churchyard. Floor of ornamental tiles; plastered and painted walls; roof of close-set rafters and a ridge purlin, all 19thC.

North wall: a two-centred arch to doorway which matches the outer porch entrance, though smaller. One step up from the porch.

East and west walls: plain, though a free-standing bench against the west wall.

Nave. General. Floor of decorated tiles with wide heating grilles down aisle; benches on flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted. Roof to both the nave and chancel is of four bays with arch-braced collar trusses resting on stone corbels, arcing struts, and plain rafters and purlins. The chancel bay has no special treatment and there is nothing to suggest that any of the timberwork is earlier than the 19thC.

North wall: plain but for two splayed window embrasures, the more easterly above the nave/chancel divide.

East wall: two steps up to chancel.

South wall: two standard splayed window embrasures, and a doorway embrasure.

West wall: two splayed window embrasures, and beneath these a small alcove with a door for the broken bell pull. Towards the top of the wall a slight disconformity in the wall face which may match that on the exterior, reinforcing the view that there is a rebuild here.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to the chancel, one to the sanctuary. Encaustic tiles on floor, walls and roof as nave.

North wall: shared window with nave, and two-centred doorway with stopped chamfers leading to vestry.

East wall: splayed east window. Curtains rather than reredos.

South wall: one window and an aumbry in the sanctuary.

Vestry. General. Decorated tile floor, plain walls and rafted roof. Attached to these in the north-west corner is a benefaction board and in the north-west angle a disused font bowl.

#### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: Victorian but its cover dated to 1723, and inscribed with the initials R. I and W.T.

Font bowl (but formerly a stoup): inscribed M I: R M: 1717: D M Mason. Built into vestry wall.

Altar rails: turned rails of 18thC date, but the ones on either side of the altar are of iron.

Monuments: slate mural tablet of 1800 now discarded and broken, against south exterior of nave.

Plate: cup and paten of 1770/1.

Victorian fittings include:

Benefaction board: of wood and dated 1879.

#### CHURCHYARD

Llanarmon church occupies the lower part of a D-shaped enclosure on a south-facing slope and abutting a sharp-sided stream valley. There is no evidence for an earlier perimeter. It is well-maintained and is still used for burial.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall acts as a revetment to the churchyard on the south, in places reinforced by a hedge. On the east a fence with occasional trees and bushes separates the yard from the stream. The present boundary on the north-west and west is a fence and in places a hedge, but below these is a pronounced scarp tipping into the churchyard and this has a distinctive curvilinear appearance.

Monuments: gravestones on all sides, and on the east and west these are reasonably dense and rather haphazardly placed; on the north there is more space and more order to the stones, the majority of which are 19thC and 20thC. Some memorials on the south side go back to the late 18thC. The earliest seen during fieldwork was a child's gravestone of 1788 leaning against the south wall of the nave.



Furniture: none observed.

Earthworks: the churchyard is raised on the south and west, and on the east is several metres above the stream. But on the north, there is a pronounced drop into the churchyard.

Ancillary features: paired iron gates on the south-west; gravel path to porch.

Vegetation: five yews are set into the scarp bank on the east side, and there are two others on the east side, that immediately to the east of the church being the oldest.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 1 May 1997  
Faculty 1885: NLW - restoration  
Hubbard 1986, 185  
Quinquennial Review 1987  
Ridgway 1997, 110  
Thomas 1911, 220

## CONDITION

Generally the condition of this church appears to be good, though there are a few floor tiles rising in the nave.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium



# Llandinam

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**Diocese** Bangor

**Dedication** Llonio

**PRN** 16832

**NGR** SO02648860

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## SUMMARY

St Llonio's church occupies a spur sheltering the village of Llandinam, 5 miles to the south-west of Newtown. Originally a clas structure, its western tower topped by a pyramidal slate roof over a timber belfry is believed to date from the 13thC. Much of the body of the church was rebuilt at the time of the 19thC restoration, though the north wall of the chancel is original. The church contains a 17thC wooden reredos, two old tomb recesses in the sanctuary, a damaged Perpendicular font and some 17thC carved choir stalls. The triangular form of the churchyard is dictated by the elongated shape of the spur.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The square western tower with its timber belfry is in typical Marches style and is considered to be 13thC, though the top stage has been rebuilt and new fenestration inserted. The main body of the church was rebuilt in 1864-5, leaving only the north wall of the chancel. New windows in square-headed frames were inserted throughout the church at the time of the restoration.

## HISTORY

It is claimed that the church dates back to AD 520, and became a clas establishment that still had an abbot until late in the 13thC. It was the mother church of both Llanidloes and Llanwnnog.

It is recorded as 'Ecclesia de Landinam' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 with a value of £1 6s 8d.

Not a great deal of information on the pre-19thC church can be gleaned. The 18thC church had a nave and aisle roofed in one pitch, with a wooden arcade between the two, and a gallery. There are several models of the pre-restoration building in the church.

St Llonio's was restored 1864-5 by George Edmund Street. Most of the walls were rebuilt, presumably on the old foundations. The north wall of the chancel was retained, perhaps because it contained a double tomb recess, and the faculty plan (now displayed in the church) suggests that originally the whole north wall was to be retained. All the windows were replaced in neo-Gothic style; the south arcade and the chancel arch were also built anew. Street renewed the timber bell-stage with its steep pyramid roof, and retained a few furnishings from the old church.

The tower and its belfry were reinforced in 1982.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel of similar width; a south aisle with eastern vestry, the east wall of the latter in alignment with the chancel east wall; a broad squat tower at the west end of the nave; and, in

the angle of the tower and south aisle, a south porch. The church is oriented north-north-east/ south-south-west, but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises small to medium blocks and slabs of fine grained sandstone, grey, buff and red in colour, and also some pebblestones; random coursing. Occasional limewash residues.

'B' is of small to medium blocks of medium grained, greyish, quarry-cut sandstone with some coursing. 19thC dressings are in buff-yellow sandstone.

'A' is usually thought to be 13thC, 'B' is from the restoration of 1864-5.

Roofs: slates with decorative red ceramic ridge tiles, except to the porch which are plain black ridge tiles. Cross finials at the nave and chancel ends, at both ends of the south aisle, and on the porch.

Drainage: guttering and downspouts lead to modern drainage. No obvious drainage trench.

## Exterior

Tower. General. Broad squat tower in fabric 'A', with north-western stair-turret in the same fabric projecting for little more than 0.3m like a clasping buttress. The timber-framed belfry has a top tier of wooden two-centred arched apertures open to the bells, with weatherboarding below. South and west faces have nine louvred arches, the east and west have ten. Pyramidal slate roof surmounted by a weathercock.

North wall: stepped buttress in 'B' with unweathered red sandstone quoins, at east end adjoining the nave. A square-headed, slit aperture lights ringing chamber, its chamfered dressings in buff-yellow freestone, and the upper part of the wall from window level is in slightly more regular 'A' masonry; the quoins at the north-east angle have been replaced, and it appears that the top stage of the tower has been rebuilt.

East wall: visible only above the nave roofline, the apex of which reaches almost to the timber belfry.

South wall: abutted by south porch which has a drip moulding above its roof. The south wall has two rectangular slit apertures similar to that in the north wall, and both Victorian. The top stage shows similar evidence for rebuilding as on the north side. A diagonal buttress at south-west angle, showing some re-use of stone, but late in date.

West wall: a pair of Victorian trefoiled lights set in two-centred arches light the ground floor, but are off-centre in the wall face and are clearly inserted. The top stage rebuilt, the stone with less limewash than lower down.

The stair turret is also in 'A', but has been heavily pointed; the quoins are not wholly convincing as original stonework, particularly those at the south-west and north-east angles but this could be due to differential weathering and cleaning. There is a continuous basal plinth at a maximum height of 0.3m above ground level. The turret rises to just below the level of the wooden slatted belfry and has a sloping roof of yellow sandstone slabs; red sandstone quoins at the corners. A single round-headed slit window, glazed, is located two-thirds of the way up the west face and has much worn dressings.

Nave. General. In fabric 'B', and only one wall visible.

North wall: a stepped buttress in better dressed stone is located at the nave/chancel divide, and the roof above is divided by coping. Two restoration period square-headed windows with three trefoiled lights and three small trefoil lights above.

Chancel - General. In 'B', but with 'A' in the north wall.

North wall: the whole wall is in 'A' except at the extreme east end where rebuilt in 'B' around the buttress. Some of the red sandstone is dressed and one dressed block sports a hole presumably for pinning. Some of



the quoin stones from the north-east corner may have been re-used for rebuilding the wall just below the eaves line. A basal plinth from 0.3-0.6m above ground level, topped by weathered, chamfered blocks. A standard, though shorter, three-light window inserted into the medieval wall at the time of the restoration, with packing in 'B'. A stepped, diagonal buttress at the north-east corner also in 'B', as is its counterpart at the west end of the chancel. This second buttress effectively disguises the join between masonry 'A' and 'B'.

East wall: the east window has a two-centred arch with three two-centred traceried lights and above a multifoiled roundel with trefoils to either side; all in buff-yellow sandstone. Above is a relieving arch of stone voussoirs.

Vestry. General. In 'B' with pale freestone quoins.

East wall: adjoins chancel. Window with two-centred arch with three foiled lights with intersecting Y-tracery, and a relieving arch of voussoirs, all totally Victorian; slightly smaller than its counterpart in the chancel.

South wall: priest's door with a trefoil-headed arch and relieving arch of voussoirs above. To the west is a standard square-headed window of three lights. A stepped buttress marks the vestry/south aisle divide, and there is a projecting gable.

South aisle. General. In 'B'.

South wall: three 19thC windows with two-centred arches and trefoiled lights, and relieving arches of voussoirs, though the design of the most easterly window differs from its companions.

West wall: visible above the south porch roofline is a round light containing three multifoil lights.

South porch. General. Plinth, with chamfered top, at 0.6m on the west side and at 0.9m on the west wall. The west wall also has a string course at c.1.5m which continues on the south side but only as far as the south door. The south wall has an open, two-centred entrance arch of two orders with hoodmould and relieving arch, flanked by two short open lancets.

## Interior

Porch. General. 19thC tiled floor; plastered and painted walls with exposed dressed stone; scissor-braced roof of nine trusses springing from wall plates.

North wall: two-centred, red sandstone arch with hollow chamfers and a distinctively asymmetric appearance; some of the dressings might be original though the arrises are sharp. Gives access to the tower.

East and west walls: stone benches on plinths along walls. East wall also contains Victorian doorway to south aisle.

Tower. General. Consists of a ground floor baptistry, first floor ringing chamber and a timber framed belfry. The ground floor has a 19thC tiled floor, with two fonts mounted on a central plinth; plastered and painted walls, with exposed stonework around the apertures. Heavy planked ceiling of solid oak joists on stone corbels in each wall.

North wall: modern concrete stairs lead to doorway in north-west corner which has an asymmetric round-headed arch, all in chamfered pink sandstone. Four 19thC marble monuments.

East wall: high two-centred tower arch of three orders in pink sandstone; entrance to nave.

South wall: high, almost pointed, moulded arch with engaged shafts, square, chamfered capitals and a 1m-deep reveal to the external door. The high arch is recessed to a second triangular-headed arch in the thickness of the wall which has sharp arrises and looks late in date; this in turn is recessed to the exterior asymmetric doorway arch. The red sandstone arch is presumably the old nave doorway inserted into the higher arched doorway of the tower during the 19thC restoration. A wall monument of 1668 is located directly above the apex of the interior arch.

West wall: deeply splayed window with two-centred arch, the sloping stone sill exposed.

Ringling chamber has whitewashed walls and deeply splayed round-arched apertures to the north and south lights. The entrance to the chamber is in the north-west corner and has red sandstone shafts. An open wooden stair leads to a trap door through the belfry floor, which rests on stone corbels.

Nave. General. Two steps up from the baptistry in tower. Central aisle, carpet covered, separates two rows of benches; heating grilles in evidence; flush wooden planked floors below benches. Walls plastered and painted, except for the dressed stone; nave and chancel under a roof of close-set arch-braced collar trusses with shorter collars near the apex supporting a collar purlin; the trusses spring from the wall plates and offer what is almost a wagon roof effect: of Victorian date.

North wall: brass war memorial and also a small brass of 1928.

East wall: two-centred chancel arch of two orders springing from corbels with capitals; hoodmould over.

South wall: four-bay arcade of two-centred arches supported on a central octagonal pillar, two flanking, lobed pillars, and plain east and west responds; the three pillars have matching capitals.

West wall: two-centred tower arch (see above). Incorporated Church Building Society plaque recording grant of £25 in 1864.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from the nave. Tiled floors, some encaustic, with raised wooden flooring under the choir stalls; two steps to the sanctuary, one to the altar. Set into the chancel floor are five small memorial tablets to members of the Davies family and carrying dates of 1668 to 1783, though the tablets themselves are more recent. Walls as nave. Ceiling has a wagon roof with moulded ribs and twenty-five panels.

North wall: stained glass window of restoration date above a pair of red sandstone, arched sepulchral recesses, c.0.3-0.4m deep. The western recess has an arch of two orders and a slightly hollowed chamfer to the dressings; it is half hidden by the choir stalls; the eastern arch, also of two orders with a two-centred arch and slight hollow chamfers, has a hoodmould with different stops - the east is a round abstract design and carved and the west is dog-tooth ornament; both are worn. A wall tablet on the back of the west recess records deaths from 1813 through to 1857. A stone corner shelf in the north-east angle on a head-corbel: it may have supported a statue.

South wall: a piscina under a trefoil-headed arch, a sedile in a square-headed recess, and a Victorian two-centred arch of two orders to the organ chamber.

South aisle. General. Tile floor; walls as nave; roof of similar design to that in the nave.

North wall: arcade as described above.

East wall: two-centred arch to east organ chamber; the arch contains a wood panelled screen from 1927.

South wall: three windows. 20thC brass.



West wall: two-centred arch recessed to south porch; round window aperture above.

Organ chamber. General. One step up from the arch. Organ sited in arch on south side of chancel with the room behind it (to the south) used for storage. East of this is the vestry which is partitioned off, and there is a 15thC/17thC triptych to the south side of the two-centred entrance arch into the vestry.

Vestry. Not accessible.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Information from Haslam with additions.

Reredos: three wooden panels depicting the Temptation in the centre and the symbols of the Evangelists. Various dated to the 15thC or 16thC (the central panel) and the 17thC (the outer panels). On the east wall of the organ chamber, but originally from Trefeglwys church.

Seating: medieval pew ends which, as described by Haslam, are cut to a curly silhouette, and the small ledges modified to give deeper seats; in the choir. The choir stalls also contain some 17thC panels.

Grotesque carving: wooden, c.16thC is kept in the vestry and was not seen during field visits. Presumed to be a ceiling boss of three conjoined faces sharing four eyes, also brought from Trefeglwys church at the time of its restoration.

Font: i) octagonal but very worn to an irregular, near round form, and thought to be Perpendicular; modern cover. The base is of different style, square with chamfered angles that end in pyramid stops, and it appears to have been part of a column placed against a wall, as only three sides have the chamfered plinth, the fourth side is vertical. Next to it is a Victorian font.

Monuments: marble and slate memorial to Edward Davies of Maesmawr Hall (d.1668) and others to 1787; urn and painted heraldry.

Gravestones: several broken slabs randomly placed in baptistry include: Owen Davies (d.1707), Margaret Davies (d.1727), John Davies (d.1727), Mary Davies (d.1727) and Thomas Davies (d.1727).

Bells: of the six four are 19thC, one was cast in Worcester c.1450, and is inscribed 'Sancta Maria Ora Pro Nobis', and the sixth by Thomas Stone is inscribed '1640 T S'.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Stained glass: east window by Clayton and Bell, 1857.

Monuments: marble memorials to George Meares (d.1849) by Js Wills and Son, London; to Thomas Kinsey of Maesmawr (d.1849) by Sanders of London; and to Jessie Meares (d.1869) by J. Vaughan of Oswestry.

Models: several models of the old church located on a table in the south aisle.

Sundial: octagonal slate sundial inscribed 'R.Powell T.E.Kinsey C.W. 1856', and now in south aisle.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is a long triangular area sloping gently south-westwards towards the end of the spur, with a considerable drop to the valley of the Severn on the west. There is a modern extension on the north-east

side.

**Boundary:** the old churchyard is hedged above a stone revetment wall on the north-west side, and a new stone wall continues around the south-east corner to the entrance and adjoining lychgate. North of this a hedge divides the yard from adjoining properties with an external drop of many metres. The modern burial ground at the north-east has a fenced boundary.

**Monuments:** a churchyard survey undertaken by the W.I. in the early 1980s recorded 1006 graves. In 1985 considerable clearance work was undertaken: loose kerbs were removed and the churchyard was levelled though few graves were left unmarked. The lower burial ground to the south-west contains a large number of roughly carved 18thC stones, many of which are broken. The earliest noted are Charles Hughes (d.1771) and his wife (d.1776), and Thomas Pryse (d.1777) and H.W. (d.1779). However, several are only carved with initials and a date; and one of 1712 appears to be the earliest, although inside the church is a fragmentary slab of 1707 which might originally have been outside.

A large railed family grave north-west of the church includes that of the industrialist David Davies (d.1890) and other chest tombs. Two unusual cobblestone graves are located on the south side in the lower burial ground.

**Earthworks:** a line of sycamores above a grassy bank forms the division of the old churchyard on the north-east side. A watching brief when a new entrance was cut through the bank revealed apparently clean clay deposits overlain by modern dumping. In the south-western part of the churchyard is a 1.0m scarp drop, perhaps an earlier boundary, and the oak mentioned below is set on this. Finally there is a scarp immediately to the south-west of the church which represents the edge of the platform on which the church is located.

**Ancillary features:** modern lychgate at south-east entrance. Tarmac paths, but a gravel path leads west from the church to a single wooden gate in the north-west boundary.

**Vegetation:** an ancient yew tree claimed to be around 800 years old in the centre of the burial ground to the south-west of the church. South-west of the yew is a large oak tree. Another large yew to the north-west of the church. Several Irish yews on the west side.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1996  
CPAT Field Visits: 6 February 1996 and 4 June 1998  
Eisel 1986, 180  
Haslam 1979, 120  
Llandinam Churchyard Survey  
Lunt 1926, 190  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Quinquennial Reports 1986 and 1991



## CONDITION

Church in good state of repair both externally and internally.

## 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

# Llandrinio

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Trinio, Peter, Paul**PRN** 16836**NGR** SJ29501705

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## SUMMARY

The church with a triple dedication to Ss Trinio, Peter and Paul, lies in the Severn Valley a little more than 6 miles to the north-east of Welshpool. It is a single-chambered structure, retaining architectural features from the Norman period through to the 20thC. Internally it has a couple of fragments from one or more early medieval slabs, a Norman font, a limited amount of 17thC woodwork and a west gallery with painted benefaction boards. It is sited in a large and irregular churchyard, probably part of an earlier and even larger sanctuary.

## ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

The following is one sequence based on existing knowledge, but other interpretations may be possible.

A small church with a complicated history, elucidated (in part) by Archdeacon Thomas. A very small building is thought to have been enlarged during the Norman period when the old nave, itself Norman, was converted into a chancel and a new nave added to the west. Thomas thought an earlier chancel, further east, was demolished at this time but there seems to be no substantive evidence to back this claim.

To this phase of alteration belong the priest's door, the south entrance door and the font. An aisle was erected on the north side, and a part of its arcade is immured in the present north wall.

Part of the Norman north aisle is thought to have been converted to a Chantry Chapel at a later date on the evidence of the piscina sited in the external face of the north wall at the chancel end.

In the 15thC, the north aisle was taken down and the arcade removed, except for the arch at the west end. The nave north wall was rebuilt, blocking in the arch, and the west end may have been shortened. The window at the east end of the south wall was inserted at this time, and some of the south wall of the nave may have been rebuilt. It has been suggested that the Decorated east window from the north aisle was moved to the chancel at this time, replacing an earlier window. Again this is conjectural.

The porch is thought to have been added in 1729 and perhaps some of the south wall was rebuilt at this time.

The upper part of the north wall of the nave was rebuilt in the 19thC, and a similar date can be posited for the west wall.

## HISTORY

The church was supposedly founded by St Trinio in the 6thC. It is clear that the present large churchyard is part of an earlier, larger sanctuary though its bounds have not been traced. The possibility that it was a clas foundation should not be overlooked.



Llandrinio appears in both the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecca de Llantneio' at a value of £2, with dependent chapelries at Llandysilio, Guilsfield and Welshpool; and in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 as 'Ecclia de Landrineaw' at £9.

In the 14thC, King Edward II granted the village a three-day fair on the feast of St Peter and Paul and from that time the church became known as St Trinio, St Peter and St Paul.

A gallery and porch were added in 1729, and it was possibly at this time that the rood loft was removed.

The present belfry was built in 1829, when the gallery was enlarged and pews replaced open benches. The south side was reslated with Llangynog slates in 1849 and the present square-headed foliated windows date to 1859.

The date of Glynne's visit is not recorded. He mentioned the lost north aisle, the Norman doorway to the nave, various windows that still survive, a square recess on the north side of the altar, and the Norman font (which was illustrated in his record).

In 1870 or 1871 open seating replaced the pews and a dado was inserted along the north and south walls. The sanctuary and area around the font were tiled in 1891, and old wood was made into a reredos.

Further restoration and decoration took place in 1920s, with more work in 1978-9, when the interior was replastered and the outside of the church repaired.

## ARCHITECTURE

Single-chambered church with the nave and chancel fractionally out of line, a south porch with a lean-to boiler house, and a western bell turret. The church is oriented west-south-west to east-north-east, but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here. Conventional directions are used for the churchyard.

Fabric: 'A' is of medium to large blocks of red and yellow sandstone, interspersed with similarly-sized blocks of grey dolerite; fairly regular coursing, heavy pointing and some limewash residue.

'B' is very worn red sandstone, usually appearing in the make-up of other fabrics.

'C' is of regular blocks of sandstone, medium to large in size, and the quoins well dressed.

'D' consists of medium-sized blocks of red sandstone, some shaped, some with limewash residues.

'E' is of small to medium lumps of dolerite, irregularly laid; much limewash; very heavy pointing.

'F' is of mixed blocks of grey limestone and some sandstone; random coursing.

'G' is of grey dolerite in irregular blocks with a limewash residue.

'H' is a variation on 'A', with small to medium lumps of dolerite and sandstone, limewash and perhaps some coursing.

'F' is probably 12thC Norman, as is the stonework classed as 'B'. 'A', 'H', and perhaps 'G' might be 15thC, though there is a possibility that 'H' might be much earlier, 'E' seems to be 18thC, 'C' has been claimed as Norman by Salter but looks post-medieval and is probably 19thC and 'D' is 19thC.

Roofs: slates with dark clay ridge tiles; cross finial at east gable end.

Bell turret rises from west gable end: it has a pyramidal slate roof and a cross finial.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. A band of chippings around three sides of the church indicates a trench, and there is tarmac on the west side, and on the south side as far east as the porch.

## Exterior



**Nave.** General. Distinguished from the chancel by slight changes in the positions of the wall faces. The north and south sides have a concrete capping at the base of each wall.

**North wall:** wall in 'A' with traces of former limewash, presumably dating to the 15thC rebuilding after the removal of the north aisle. Two 1859 windows with square heads, containing three trefoil-headed lights, modelled on the south window to the chancel; patching around the windows in 'D'. West of the windows is a single very worn sandstone round-headed arch of Norman date with the projecting square, chamfered capitals and round shafts surviving. The appearance of the western capital indicates it was a respond; that on the east has a curious corbel-like projection on the underside. Arch blocked in 'G'.

**South wall:** eastern part of the wall in 'H' and of 15thC date, but the western end as far east as the first buttress is in 'E'. From the west are: i) a buttress sloping uniformly to the top of the wall; date uncertain, but incorporates red brick and may thus be 19thC. ii) two inserted, flat-headed windows with brick surrounds, of 20thC date. iii) the porch with some evidence of disturbance in the wall face above it. iv) a three-light window of 1859, patched round with 'D' as on the north side. v) a worn, somewhat irregular buttress, not capped or dressed; probably pre-19thC date, but not certainly. It probably disguises the masonry change from 'E' to 'H'. vi) another window similar to iv). vii) beneath vi) is a blocked doorway with red sandstone jambs, the arch removed by the insertion of the window; sharpening marks on several jambstones; blocking also in sandstone. viii) red sandstone quoins of the nave rise to a height of 1.6m, two of them dressed to an angle in order to fit in to the pre-existing chancel wall.

**West wall:** is in fabric 'C' with a chamfered plinth to a height of c.0.7m; probably rebuilt in the 19thC. It is supported by two 19thC stepped buttresses with sandstone cappings. Centrally there is a small slit now blocked with mixed stone.

The bell turret of 1829 rises above the west gable, its stonework different from that of the west wall. Its west face has a louvred, brick window, with a two-centred arch, its north and south faces have two-centred, louvred lights set in wooden panelling, plastered and painted. The east face has wooden painted panelling.

**Chancel.** General. North wall slightly outset from nave, its southern counterpart inset.

**North wall:** concrete casing at base of wall, and the rest of the wall face shows exceptionally heavy pointing, but appears to be in 'F' to a height of around 2m, and then perhaps 'H'. Red sandstone quoins define the original chancel, at its juncture with the present nave. Three features in the wall. From the west: i) a yellow sandstone piscina with a central drain hole from which radiate broad grooves, in a niche which has a trefoiled window head over it. ii) a projecting stone of uncertain function. iii) a round-headed slit window with worn red sandstone dressings. This looks authentic but could be re-set.

**East wall:** in 'F' beneath the window, while 'G' (or conceivably 'E') around it. Two diagonal buttresses with heavy yellow sandstone capping, clearly additions to the wall though of uncertain date. The present east window has been reinserted within the framework of an earlier window, which itself incorporates re-used stonework for there is the inverted head of a small round-headed window on the south side. Thomas argued this was a former chancel arch, but this seems highly unlikely. The present window has a two-centred arch over three ogee-headed lights with reticulated tracery, of very worn red and yellow sandstone; some renewal, particularly the mullions and perhaps the arch in places.

**South wall:** lower part of the wall in 'F', upper part probably in 'H'. Both the nave and chancel walls are considerably bowed in the middle part of the south wall. The easternmost square-headed window with three trefoiled lights is Perpendicular but much of the dressed stone has been renewed; the head is formed of a single red sandstone lintel; limewash residues on some of the mullions and other dressings. To the west is an inserted window of 1859, comparable with those in the nave.

**South porch.** General. 18thC build in fabric 'E', on the basis of an inscription, but the association is not watertight.

**East wall:** against this is the boiler room annex, of brick and stone construction.



South wall: sandstone two-centred archway to porch, with massive red sandstone dressings, and a slight chamfer to the arch. 'E' mainly above the arch.

West wall: two cast iron tie-rod plates.

#### Interior

Porch. General. Tiles, plastered and painted walls, simple rafted ceiling.

North wall: = south wall of church. Round-headed doorway in red sandstone of two orders, the inner chamfered; square capitals and a hoodmould. Its remarkable condition suggests that apart from a few jambstones, this may be totally renewed.

East wall: early medieval/1729 stone pinned to wall (see below).

Nave and chancel. General. Stone flagged floor, carpetted over, with heating grille and encaustic tiles around the font. Raised plank flooring under benches; heating pipes run either side of the pews. Plastered walls above dados. Plaster ceiling above collar level, but a single tie beam is visible midway along the nave and another with a braced collar truss springing from carved wall posts is near the juncture with the sanctuary; the latter looks late, perhaps 17thC or 18thC. Vestry formed by partitioning off the south-west corner of the nave in the 20thC. Access to gallery via dog-leg staircase along the north side of the west wall.

North wall: slight batter to the wall. In the gallery the wall surface is recessed by 0.1m, about in line with the arcade pier outside - the significance of this is unclear. Further east two splayed windows, that to west with 1925 stained glass. 1918 memorial tablet to Archdeacon Thomas, east of the windows, and a brass of 1748. An incised stone, now painted over but still visible is located at the juncture of the nave and chancel. Wall face is inset where the nave gives way to the old chancel.

East wall: Single step up to sanctuary, with a truss as described above.

South wall: strongly battered wall. Three splayed 1859 windows, east of the entrance door. West of the doorway are 20thC windows lighting the font and vestry area. The doorway itself has painted dressings which still show a chamfer, and there is a round-headed soffit.

West wall: largely hidden by vestry on south side and panelling for staircase on north side.

Gallery: supported by a low tie beam, and projects well into nave, almost as far east as the south doorway. It has a planked floor, bench seating, plastered walls and a low plastered ceiling. The front has nine panels of which seven are painted with details of benefactions. Hatch in roof gives access to belfry, via iron rung ladder.

Sanctuary. General. Encaustic tiles on floor. Walls as nave. The roof bay over the sanctuary is slightly higher than the nave.

North wall: narrow, deeply splayed Norman window.

East wall: wood panelled reredos below splayed three-light window with stained glass.

South wall: wall battered as in nave. Splayed 15thC window.

#### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Early medieval slabs: i) two pieces of a shaped, rectangular slab, possibly a sculpture cross-slab of 9thC or early 10thC date. One piece has lost its main faces, having been reused for an inscription of 1729, which reads 'ROBART RICHARDS RICHARD EDWARDS 1729'. The un-defaced areas bear vertical bands of angular key pattern and four-cord double-beaded plait carved in medium relief. Now located in the porch. ii) a piece of indeterminate size appears to bear the same angular key pattern as i) and is built into the inner face of the north wall of the church.

Font: 'deep circular stone carved with blank arches and columns linked again at the bottom. The arches have linked hoods and the columns ring/annular capitals' (Haslam). On a short stem. Norman.

Piscina: in external wall on north, with trefoiled window head over it.

Table: small carved table in sanctuary. No date.

Reading desk: Jacobean in style but of 1898; it incorporates a re-used rail bearing the inscription 'M I D 1689'.

Altar rails: 17thC 'turned balusters alternating with pegs' (Haslam).

Chair: a 17thC armed chair in sanctuary.

Reredos: made in 1891, but incorporating some 17thC carvings in the centre.

Monument: 1748 brass to William Evans, in frame.

Plate: includes flagon of 1658/9, cup of 1684/5, alms plate of 1683/4 and stand paten of 1733/4.

Bell: inscribed 'Re RG C Ward 1661 God Save the King'.

Registers: from 1662.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Pulpit and reading desk: of heavily ornamented 17thC style, but dating from 1898, and matching the reredos.

Benefaction boards: on front panels of gallery. Nine in all, one stating that the gallery was erected and the steeple rebuilt in 1829. A group of seven seem to be of 1819, while the outer two are of 1829.

## CHURCHYARD

There is some documentary evidence of an earlier, larger churchyard: 2 acres of glebeland were alienated from the churchyard sometime prior to 1683, and according to Thomas the enclosure may have spread over 5 acres, extending on to the other side of the main road. 19thC maps certainly suggest a more curvilinear boundary on the west side than is now evident - the present form is large and distinctly polygonal. It occupies flat ground and is a short distance to the west of the River Severn. It is well maintained.

Boundary: iron railings form the south and south-east boundaries, stone walls to the roadside and a modern fence to the lane on the west. None of these are redolent of an early boundary. The former school, built in 1827, forms part of the north boundary.

Memorials: unmarked graves have been grassed over, particularly on the north and west sides; several slabs laid flat are located in the cut grass on the west side. An early slab dated 1733 leans against the south chancel wall. A single chest tomb on the south side dates to 1835; several chest tombs and memorial crosses on the west side, and also modern burials and a place set aside for cremations to the north-west of the church.



Furniture: sundial on a sandstone fluted tapering shaft and a stepped square plinth located outside the south porch. Brass plate and gnomon engraved 'donation by Ed. Williams and Ed. Vaughan, Churchwardens, 1825'.

Earthworks: churchyard is raised slightly on the east by 0.3m and the west by 0.5m. West of the church the churchyard rises quite noticeably: it is not clear whether this is natural or man-made, but a faint scarp on its south side could conceivably be the early 'llan' perimeter.

Ancillary features: lychgate of 1905, commemorating the reign of Victoria. Iron gate on west. Main entrance path to south door from lychgate is of tarmac. Elsewhere the paths are grass.

Vegetation: beech and fir trees on the present south and west boundaries. Mature yew trees on the north and west sides of the church form a semi-circle.

## SOURCES

Cadw Listed Building Schedule 1994

Church notes

CPAT Field Visit 23 October 1995 and 5 March 1998

Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 191

Eisel 1986, 181

Glynne 1885, 40

Haslam 1979, 123

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

Ridgway 1997, 124

Salter 1991, 14

St Asaph Parish Records (NLW)

Silvester 1992, 78

Thomas 1894

Thomas 1913, 153

## CONDITION

Church in excellent state of repair, both the exterior and interior.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Good to Very Good

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Medium to Good



# Llandysilio

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**Diocese** St Asaph

**Dedication** Tysilio

**PRN** 16410

**NGR** SJ26771931

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## SUMMARY

St Tysilio's church occupies an isolated position on level ground immediately above the Vyrnwy Valley, and is set back a short distance from the A483 Welshpool to Oswestry Road, one mile south of Llanymynech. The present church was built in 1867 on the site of its predecessor within a sub-circular churchyard. The only pre-19thC fittings and furnishings are a stoup, a brass of 1674, a few 18thC wall tablets and a sundial of 1760 in the churchyard.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The present church was built in Decorated Gothic in 1867.

## HISTORY

Tradition has it that the church was founded by Tysilio in the early 7thC. Certainly the dedication, the churchyard morphology and the location above the Vyrnwy floodplain strongly signal an early medieval foundation.

Llandysilio was listed as 'Capella de Llandesilyau', a chapelry attached to Llandrinio in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 with a value of 13s 4d. By 1291, it was listed in the Lincoln Taxation as an independent establishment, 'Ecclia de Landisyliau' valued at £4 6s 8d.

A sketch pre-dating 1833 shows a belfry with pyramidal top towards the west end of the nave, low walls to the nave, dwarf angle buttresses at the west end, a dormer window in the south roof, a chancel smaller than the nave, and a large timber porch with a gable end that incorporated a lintel and raking struts.

The church underwent some changes in the 18thC (see Thomas), and in 1833 further work included the removal of the old belfry and its replacement by a west tower, the reconstruction of the gallery and other works. A drawing survives to give some impression of the structure, and reveals a curious change in the height of the nave in line with the south porch. On the basis of windows re-used in Old Church Cottage, it contained square-headed windows, at least one with three round-headed lights, (and another of four lights shows in the sketch), but also a two-centred window with trefoiled lights and a quatrefoil above in the chancel. Thomas also refers to a pedestalled stoup, two early Decorated windows and a modern triple lancet.

The date of Sir Stephen Glynne's visit is unrecorded but it was before the rebuilding recorded below. The modern west tower was mentioned, and also a rather long chancel. The nave roof was at two different levels, a mixture of windows including both Decorated and Perpendicular, a priest's door, and a south porch which appeared to be 16thC. The pulpit and desk were in the chancel and the font appeared 'to be Norman, octagonal in form, with a kind of scalloped ornament on each face, at the base a moulded band'.

Such was the church's ruinous condition a few decades later that it was demolished; a petition was

presented in 1863, and a new church built to the plans of G.E. Street in 1867 at a cost of £2400, in a style which marks the transition from Early English to Decorated (A full description is given in Pryce 1900). During the demolition a Norman capital was found in the wall; this is now lost. There was also some clearance of gravestones from the churchyard at this time.

The new church was reportedly built a few metres to the north of the old site and material from the old church was used to build up the ground on the north side. This however is at odds with a statement in 1900 that the new church was built 'almost on the same foundations'.

## ARCHITECTURE

Llandysilio church comprises a nave with a north aisle, a chancel, organ chamber, vestry and open timber south porch. Adjoining the west end of the north aisle is a circular turret surmounted by a conical top. The building is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east, but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A', small to medium, squared blocks of greenish-grey dolerite (Criggion stone), irregular coursing. Dressings in buff-coloured freestone.

'B' is of rubblestone and brownish-red sandstone, visible at the wall base on parts of the south, east and west walls below a slate course.

'A' is 19thC, as is 'B' on the basis of its appearance beneath the buttresses.

Roofs: slates with scalloped red ceramic ridge tiles, and cross finials at both ends of the nave and east end of the chancel.

Drainage: original cast iron downspouts lead to soakaways, and there is a 0.3m-wide hollow beside the wall on all sides.

Note: as the whole building dates from 1867, the following record is no more than a summary. The masonry is 'A' throughout.

### Exterior

**Tower.** General. Circular bell tower against west wall of north aisle. Three string courses; shoulder-arched door on north side. Four slit windows to the tower stair. Belfry is ashlar-faced and is encircled by eight, open, cusped lancet lights and above these a continuous moulding. The conical roof has a weathercock.

**North aisle.** General. Continuous string course beneath the windows. A single stepped buttress on the north side and also two pairs of cusped lancets and a triple set at the east end together with a single lancet to the vestry. Elongated paired lancets with cusped heads at the west end; a relieving arch.

**Nave.** General. String course as north aisle. All windows have relieving arches of voussoirs immediately above the freestone. The south wall contains a single lancet west of the entrance porch, a two-centred doorway (in the porch) which has a hoodmould with foliate stops, and east of the porch, two three-light windows of different designs the lights with cusped tracery under two-centred arches with hoodmoulds; and two buttresses. The west wall has two pairs of long lancets with a roundel above, all under two-centred arches.

**Chancel.** General. Slightly narrower than the nave and has a lower roof line. String course as above. North wall has a single foiled lancet and a half-buttress, the east wall, a window of three stepped lights with cusped tracery under a two-centred arch with hoodmould and foliate stops, and the south wall, two pairs of



double lancet lights, that to the west with cusped lights and the only window without a relieving arch and a hoodmould, that to the east with hoodmould and 'lion' stops, and a half buttress near the south-east corner. One of the windows has incised 'AMDG 1868' around the quatrefoil above the main lights.

Vestry. General. Continuation of north aisle. Steps lead down to the boiler room.

Porch. General. On the south is an open timber-framed porch supported on stone plinths. Entrance arch has a cusped head.

## Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor; arch-braced roof with collars, forming five narrow bays.

Tower. General. Not accessible. It is presumed that the spiral staircase winds around a central newel post, the curves of the staircase protruding at two points in the nave and the north aisle.

Nave. General. 19thC tiles, carpetted over. Heating grilles along aisle and at back. All walls plastered (or replastered) about 7 years ago, leaving only the dressed stone exposed; splayed windows; arcade on north side of four two-centred arches on round piers with moulded capitals. Brass of 1674 and two 19thC brasses on the west wall, and a 20thC marble memorial on the north wall. Nave of six bays with arch-braced trusses with cusped heads, exposed rafters and through purlins.

North aisle. General. Similar to nave in that tiles on floor with heating vent grille along the aisle, plastered walls, but the roof has close-set scissor-braces with collars. A 1799 memorial tablet, two others of the 19thC and an early 19thC brass all on the north wall; a two-centred cusped arch to the vestry. Marble memorials on the west wall include that to Thomas Lloyd, and one of 1782 on the south wall.

Chancel. General. Two steps up to the chancel from nave with further staggered steps to the altar. 19thC encaustic tiles and heating vent grilles. Walls as nave; two-centred arched doorway to vestry with a credence in the sanctuary; east window has hoodmould with foliate stops above a Caen stone reredos; the south wall has a sedile and a piscina in a double cusped arched recess. Three-bay roof of four arch-braced collar trusses with decorated trefoils above the collars. Double piscina and sedilia on south.

Vestry. General. 19thC tiled floor, walls plastered and a sloping plastered ceiling with exposed rafters.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Details from Haslam with additions.

Stoup: worn grey sandstone bowl on a rectangular-section pedestal, c.0.8m; drain hole angles out through one side; supposedly a stoup; now located on the south side of sanctuary.

Monuments: to i) Thomas Lloyd (d.1739) and members of his family to 1773, with heraldry. ii) the Lloyd family, surmounted by heraldry, and recording deaths from 1775 to 1792. iii) Francis Lloyd (d.1799). iv) an indecipherable monument with draped urn, but of 1782. All marble.

Brass: to Mary Eyton of Rhysnant (d.1674), 'the plate engraved with heroic couplets, and with classical decoration by Sylvanus Crue of Wrexham' (Haslam).

Bell: inscribed 'Tho: Davies & Roger Garland Churchwardens AR 1729'.

Chair: highly decorated, no date.

Registers: from 1662.

Victorian fittings and furnishings (with information derived from Haslam) include:

Reredos: Caen stone by T Earp; a central 'Rouge Royal' marble slab with flanking arcaded panels.

Pulpit: circular with six Gothic panels; Bath stone.

Font: octagonal with foliated arches. Bath stone.

Lectern in wrought iron and the altar table and rails, candelabra, stalls, etc., are all to Street's designs.

Monuments: include Francis Lloyd (d.1814).

Stained glass: i) Christ walking on the sea, 1879, by Powell of Blackfriars. ii) in the west wall small panels of prophets and saints by Clayton and Bell, 1868.

## CHURCHYARD

The original sub-circular churchyard was extended to the north-west in 1951. It is well maintained.

Boundary: a stone revetment wall maintains original boundary.

Monuments: yard is levelled off to the south of the church and cleared of earlier gravemarkers. Several highly decorated 19thC and 20thC chest tombs; two on the south side, seven on the east side of the church. The earliest graves, some re-sited, are also located on the east side of the church: slabs, dating from 1666, 1724 and 1754 and recording the deaths of the Clopton and Penrhyn families of Llandysilio, are laid flat within a stone kerb, which may cover a vault. One such vault, exposed to about 2m below ground level, collapsed several years ago. The hole exposed four tombs in the vault which ran under the church.

Furniture: sundial with gnomon dated 1760 located alongside the entrance path. Made by John Evans of Shrewsbury and there are much weathered initials in the sandstone just below the rim.

Earthworks: considerable work undertaken at the time of the 1867 restoration: the north side of the churchyard, which sloped steeply away to the outer wall, was raised by infilling with stone from the old church. The churchyard now appears raised by 0.3m on south-east, 1.5m or so on east and north, and 0.2m on west.

Ancillary features: wrought-iron entrance gates set in concrete pillars on the south side of churchyard with a tarmac path directly to the porch and others off to the west.

On the south-west of the churchyard is Old School House (now Old Church Cottage), built in 1896, which utilises three of the original church windows. The lancets in the east wall are renewed, but the windows in the north and south walls are original.

Vegetation: twelve mature yew trees just inside the original circular enclosure and one more by the west path. Several are probably c.200-300 years old.

## SOURCES



Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1993  
CPAT Field Visit 23 October 1995 and 5 March 1998  
Eisel 1986, 181  
Faculty St Asaph 1867 (NLW): restoration  
Faculty St Asaph 1951 (NLW): churchyard extension  
Glynne 1885, 41  
Haslam 1979, 125  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Pryce 1900  
Thomas 1913, 160

## CONDITION

Generally good condition throughout. Some dampness showing on north wall of nave, where pews have been removed for insertion of a small altar. Damp patches above window on west side of nave.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Very Good



# Llanerfyl

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Erfyl**PRN** 16409**NGR** SJ03400977

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## GENERAL SUMMARY

St Erfyl's church, about 12 miles to the west of Welshpool, is a typically small village church with a nave, chancel and western bellcote, all built in 1870, though without doubt it is an early medieval foundation. Externally it has little remarkable, but inside there is an early medieval inscribed stone, formerly in the churchyard, a late medieval roof, a wooden shrine and a reliquary both from the 15thC, a medieval font and wooden panels dating to 1727 from the old gallery front. The church is set within a sub-oval enclosure, now enlarged, and this contains ancient yews.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The church was completely rebuilt in 1870.

## HISTORY

The early church, dedicated to St Erfyl, a daughter of St Padarn, was reputedly built in the late 6th or early 7thC. Certainly its curvilinear churchyard and riverside location support an early medieval attribution.

Llanerfyl was recorded as 'Capella de Llanuruy' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and in Pope Nicholas' taxation of 1291 with a value of £4 11s 8d.

The roodloft was taken down in 1675, but the 'door' in the screen was left in place. Some of the wood was used to make seats.

Glynne, in 1850, noted the nave and 'undistinguished' chancel, a wooden belfry at the west end and a south porch. There were Perpendicular windows and one square-headed example appeared to be original. There was a dormer window on the south side, perhaps of the 17thC. He described the shrine in the following terms: 'At the east end of the church, near the south angle, [was] a rather elegant double niche of Third Pointed character. Each arch [was] cinquefoiled, and the whole surmounted by an embattled cornice with small pinnacles. The niche [was] very long. The central piece [was] detached'. The churchyard had a fine yew. Thomas at a slightly later date noted the west gallery and the plaster ceiling which hid the medieval roof. A sketch of the old church was reproduced in Edwards 1883.

The old church was taken down in February 1870 and the present structure built by September of the same year to the design of Edward Haycock of Shrewsbury at a cost of £1600. The arch-braced roof timbers of the earlier church were cleaned and replaced. The medieval shrine formerly in the east wall of the old church was built into a recess in the new vestry and was cut down to fit it. It has since been removed and stands in the sanctuary together with the reliquary.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and slightly narrower chancel, a vestry on the north side of the chancel and a south porch; a bellcote rises from the west gable of the nave. The church is orientated north-east/south-west, but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for the purposes of description.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium blocks of fine-grained greyish sandstone, regularly shaped and quarry-cut; randomly coursed. Red sandstone dressings to the doors, windows and buttresses.

Roofs: slates with black ceramic, ribbed, ridge tiles; cross finials over the nave, chancel, vestry and porch.

Drainage: 19thC cast-iron downspouts and decorated cisterns on the south wall and renewed guttering and downspouts on the north side lead to soakaways. A gravel band along the south, east and perhaps the north side may disguise a drainage trench.

Note: in view of the fact that this is a wholly 19thC structure, only an outline description is provided here.

## Exterior

Nave. General. Fenestration set flush with walls. Stepped buttresses with red sandstone dressings.

North wall: four windows without window frames, and two buttresses. The windows from west to east have two, three, one and two two-centred lights, with cinquefoil tracery. The lights generally round-headed but the single light has a triangular head. However, exceptionally the most easterly window has a square head, with trefoiled, two-centred lights, the top of the window including the tracery in grey sandstone. A corrugated tin lean-to boiler house against the nave wall, and adjacent to the vestry.

South wall: also four windows, one to the west of the porch. Two are two-light with cinquefoil tracery, and the inner two have three cinquefoiled lights with a short central light and a quatrefoil above. Two buttresses, one at the east end of the nave.

West wall: the central bellcote is supported on a broad buttress protruding 0.5m from the wall. It has a basal plinth at 0.4m, with a moulded sandstone string course terminating in foliate stops and running across the buttress and parts of the wall at a height of c.3.5m. Above this in the buttress is a narrow lancet, and above this the buttress is stepped in twice.

The bellcote has a string course just above the apex of the nave roof. The apertures on the east and west for the single bell have two-centred arches with cinquefoil tracery, continuous hoodmoulds, and small quatrefoils in rounded apertures above. The gabled top is surmounted by a cross finial.

Chancel. General. A lower and narrower roof line than the nave.

North wall: a single window, the light with a trefoiled, three-centred arch. A buttress at the north-east corner.

East wall: the two-centred east window has three lights, the central one trefoiled, the two flanking ones with elongated cinquefoiled heads and small tracery lights above. There is a continuous string course just below sill level and another over the window which then dog-legs across the east wall face to the corners. At the corners are clasping buttresses but those on the east face are short, rising only as high as the first string course. A red sandstone datestone set in the wall below the window has lost virtually all its inscription.

South wall: one two-light window and a single light to the sanctuary. The pair of lights have cinquefoil tracery in triangular-headed arches and a quatrefoil above, set in a two-centred arch with a hoodmould. The sanctuary window has a two-centred arch and elongated cusped tracery. Between the two is a short buttress, and a moulded string course with a vine leaf stop at its west end runs under the sill of the paired lights, around the buttress and above the single light window. At the south-east corner is part of the clasping buttress referred to above.



North Vestry. General. Entrance in north wall with an angular arch and there is a two-light window in the east wall, the lights with trefoiled heads.

South Porch. General. Open porch. Basal plinth at c.0.4m. Two-centred entrance arch with moulded jambs and hoodmould with vine leaf stops in the south wall. Three small blind quatrefoils in red sandstone in the gable. In the east and west walls are two square apertures containing quatrefoil lights.

#### Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor. Benches on stone plinths set into the east and west walls, the alcoves carried up to shouldered, flat-topped heads, and holding the small quatrefoil lights (see above). Ceiling plastered above exposed rafters and collar trusses.

North wall: a two-centred arch to the church, with deeply hollowed chamfers terminating in pyramid stops; all in 19thC red sandstone.

East wall: an Incorporated Society for Building and Churches plaque of 1869.

Nave. General. Tiled floor with raised plank flooring under the benches and also under the organ. Walls plastered and painted; splayed window apertures, the dressings painted over in pink. Roof of five arch-braced collar trusses with cusped, raking struts, springing from wall plates, and creating five and a half bays; two tiers of cusped windbraces. The easternmost bay on its south side has been panelled over the organ. A late medieval roof repaired and re-inserted in the 19thC.

North wall: two 20thC memorials, one of slate, the other marble.

East wall: a two-centred chancel arch, painted in pink; of two orders, the inner emerging from the wall face, the outer with stopped chamfers.

West wall: A single lancet window with a deep splay, and a bell rope in front of it. Below the window is an early medieval memorial stone fixed to the wall.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from the nave to the chancel, two to the sanctuary and one to the altar. Floor as nave, though encaustic tiles in the sanctuary. Walls as nave although the credence shelf remains one of the few items unpainted; reredos with tiles by Maw; stained glass in all the windows. Roof of 16 slim arch braces springing from plain wall plates.

North wall: has a credence east of the vestry door, the latter beneath a trefoil-headed arch with a stone tympanum. The painted panels of 1727 from the former gallery front are hung on the wall immediately below the wall plate.

East wall: window has a hoodmould with head stops; tiled reredos beneath. To either side of the altar are the medieval reliquary and shrine (see below).

South wall: window deepened to form a sedile. Also a decorated pew panel against the wall and a 20thC brass plaque referring to the dedication of the stained glass windows.

Vestry. General. 19thC tiled floor, plastered and painted walls; plastered ceiling above sloping, exposed rafters. A blocked fireplace in the south-west angle.

#### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Information based on descriptions from Haslam, with additions.

Inscribed stone: an early medieval gravestone; a weatherworn glacial boulder; c.1.75m high by 0.5m wide and 0.25m deep. Latin inscription is rough and irregular and originally read: HIC IN TVMVLO IACIT ROSTEECE FILIA PATERNINI A(n)NI(s) XIII IN PA(ce). Thought to be late 5thC or early 6thC. First recorded in the Gentleman's Magazine in 1791 when it was standing beneath the large yew which split in the storms of the winter of 1914-15. The rector then moved the stone inside for safety.

Font: octagonal stone bowl, with Tudor flowers carved on the facets on the under side. Late Perpendicular, but repaired.

Screen: carved fragment in the Powysland Museum. Crossley and Ridgway noted, too, a small perforated panel in a chairback which may have come from the screen.

Shrine: wooden; c.2m high x 0.85m wide x 0.4m deep; it consists of two narrow apertures (for statues) with septifoil heads, traceried spandrels, and a battlemented top with pinnacles; joined by oak pegs. Late 15thC. The shrine was originally in a recess in the east wall, and was then plastered into the west wall of the vestry in 1870 or 1871, though the rear pinnacles had to be sawn off to accommodate it.

Reliquary: 'shaped like a little chapel, with one and two-light trefoiled windows and roughly made with cut-out gables. Mid to late 15thC' (Haslam). Also damaged in 1871 when it was to ornament the shrine noted above.

Communion table: 17thC oak table with carved legs.

Wooden furnishings: the 19thC chancel seats, octagonal pulpit with carved open panels, the reading desk and the carved lectern were reputedly fashioned from oak from the old church. Attributed date is c.late 16thC - early 17thC.

Pew panel: ornamented and plain panels, with the inscription 'K.I. 1706'.

Chest: churchwardens' plank-built chest; carved front panel; three locks; no date.

Cupboard: limited decoration on front panels. No date. In vestry.

Wooden panels: five painted panels dated 1727 from the former gallery front are painted in oil with texts and illustrations of Christ's Baptism and Crucifixion, Moses, St Paul, and the War in Heaven. Inscribed 'Morris Watkin John Richard Church Wardens 1727'.

Single bell, partly decipherable as '1693 God Save His Church', re-hung in the bell turret above the new gable.

Registers: from 1626.

Church plate: includes cup of 1633/4.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Stained glass: west window by Done and Davies of Shrewsbury, represents the Good Shepherd.

Organ: by Peter Conacher, Huddersfield. Renovated 1966 and a blower installed.

## CHURCHYARD

The original churchyard is sub-oval in shape but it was extended eastwards in the 1930s. It is set on the



edge of the scarp above the valley of the Banwy. It is reasonably well maintained on the south side but overgrown and hummocky on the north side.

Boundary: a stone revetment wall on all sides but the east, between about 1m and 2m high. The 1930s extension is edged with fir trees.

Monuments: mainly 19thC and 20thC slate slabs closely packed on all sides; many inscriptions in Welsh; few 18thC memorials. The earliest slab seen was from 1780, to the south-east of the chancel. Two small sandstone slabs with cusped heads lean against a sandstone slab on the north side of the church, and are inscribed 'S.M' and 'P.M' - they may be early grave markers. The early medieval inscribed stone was originally set under the large south yew and a stone marks the location. Scattered modern burials in the eastern extension.

Furniture: a sundial with a square plate and gnomon set on a tall slim octagonal plinth. It carries the inscriptions '1847, L Richards, Rector', and 'L Richards Donor 1848'. South-west of the church.

Earthworks: a line of yew trees above a scarp on the east side of the churchyard delineates the original enclosure. The churchyard is raised, about 0.5m on south-east through to 2m on the west and north.

Ancillary features: the main entrance on the south-west is through a lychgate, with an open timber frame on low stone walls; the roof of decorated arch-braced trusses and bargeboards. The inscription on the front reads 'T.V.S. T.L.L. C.W. A.D. 1843'. There is a stepped entrance and a pair of wrought iron gates. Tarmac path leads up to south porch, and a second path leads to a single gate in the south-east wall, giving access to the former vicarage.

Vegetation: several very old yews. The oldest yew is located near the south porch has split into four trunks and its branches have curled and spread out widely. A low stone revetment wall encircles the yew; a stone pillar supports its western trunk and a wooden prop supports the east side. Further old yews on the south side near the single gate, and others on the east side.

Well: St Erfyl's well was located about 400m to the north-west of the church; the well was arched and water flowed through a spout.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1996  
CPAT Field Visit: 28 February 1996 and 20 July 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 191  
Edwards 1883  
Eisel 1986, 182  
Faculty St. Asaph (NLW)  
Glynne 1885, 41  
Haslam 1979, 127  
Knight, J: pers. comm.  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 134  
Thomas 1908, 469  
Thomas 1918

## CONDITION

Exterior sandstone is badly eroded. The interior west wall of the nave is damp; plaster flaking badly. Otherwise good. Church is dark due to the over-shadowing by large yew trees.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good



# Llanfair Caereinion

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Mary**PRN** 32637**NGR** SJ10390646

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## SUMMARY

St Mary's church in the heart of Llanfair Caereinion was completely rebuilt in 1868 to the plan of the earlier church. Amongst the features that survived the Victorianisation are some of the 15thC roof timbers, a fine south doorway of the early 13thC, a 13thC font and a recumbent medieval effigy. The church occupies a large churchyard on raised ground above the River Banwy and just to the north-west of the church is St Mary's Well.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The church was completely rebuilt in 1868, though the south doorway from the early 13thC church was retained.

## HISTORY

The first record of the church of St Mary dates from 1239 when a portion of it was granted by the Bishop of St Asaph to the Cistercian nunnery at Llanllugan. However its riverside location and large curvilinear churchyard point to an early medieval foundation and it was reputedly founded from the clas at Meifod.

The church was recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecclesia de Llanveyr' with a value of 20s, and under the same name in the Lincoln Taxation in 1291 at £17.

Glynne visited the church in 1858. It was large but 'much out of condition'. There was an undivided nave and chancel, an Elizabethan south porch and a western bell tower of stone below and timber above. Inside the porch was a very good Early English doorway of two orders with clustered shafts and foliated capitals which he illustrated. There was a north aisle which extended to the east end but not quite to the west, and this was divided from the nave by timbers which he felt did not warrant the term arcade. Most of the windows were modern, though there were also some square-headed ones which might have been medieval. There were remnants of the screen including a carved beam across the aisle, two brasses of 1712, a gallery at the west end dated to 1725, and a damaged octagonal font. Part of the floor was still of bare earth. A photograph taken prior to the demolition of the old building also shows the square-headed windows with trefoiled lights, as well as a dormer window lighting the gallery, a flight of external steps leading to a door to the gallery, and a two-stage bell tower with pyramidal roof and pinnacles at the corners and apex.

The old church was demolished in 1866-7 due to its poor state of repair. A later report (from 1883) indicates that 'the walls showed that they had been patched up at different times, without skill or architectural taste; for ancient carved stones were thrown into the masonry in several places as common stone'.

The new church, built to the design of Edward Haycock of Shrewsbury at a cost of £1900, was consecrated in 1868, following closely to the ground plan of the earlier structure, except for the north aisle. The citation stated that it was 'proposed to take down and build on the same site but more commodious' and also 'to take in new ground on the north side not covered by the present structure'; this new ground presumably referred

to a chancel extension since the present chancel is more to the north than the east. The old wooden steeple in characteristic Montgomeryshire style and the south doorway of the old church with carved sandstone capitals in Early English style were retained when the rest of the church was demolished and the oak roof was refitted.

The old bell tower was retained until 1887 when the present stone tower was constructed by A.E. Lloyd Oswell.

Trial excavations in 1993 located the walls of the original north aisle.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a continuous nave and chancel with a north aisle incorporating a vestry, a south porch and a square western tower. It is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purposes of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium blocks of fine grained, quarry-cut sandstone, greyish-buff in colour and irregularly coursed. Dressings in pink and yellow sandstone.

Roofs: slates, black ceramic ridge tiles, and cross finials at the east end of the chancel and over the porch.

Drainage: renewed 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. No obvious drainage trenches.

Note: as the church is a wholly 19thC structure, only an outline description is provided here.

### Exterior

**Tower. General.** Square western tower surmounted by low pyramidal slate roof and a weathervane. Plinth with pink sandstone coping at c.0.8m above ground level; then four string courses, the highest and most elaborate immediately below the battlemented parapet. Diagonal stepped buttresses at the north-west and south-west corners, and straight buttresses at the south-east and north-east corners integrated with the walls of the nave; all rise to belfry level. A staircase turret integrated with the south-west buttress, rising to the middle of the third stage; there is a doorway at the base of the turret and two small square-headed slits facing west, three to the south.

**North wall:** three single-light windows, all with trefoiled heads but of slightly different form, and relieving arches over the lower two; and a belfry window consisting of two foiled, louvred lights and a quatrefoil under a two-centred arch with a hoodmould.

**East wall:** the nave roof rises to near the top of the second stage; a standard belfry window.

**South wall:** above the plinth is a further string course not present on the other faces. The ground floor has a window with a two-centred arch, two lancet lights with a quatrefoil above, and a hoodmould with plain block stops; then a single trefoiled light, a clock face by Benson of London, and finally a standard belfry window. A brass plate on this wall records the refitting of the old bells and the addition of three new bells in 1946.

**West wall:** a single trefoiled light in the third storey and a standard belfry window above.

**North aisle. General.** The masonry, though 'A', is not quite as regular as that in the tower, as a clear division in the west wall shows. The west wall is featureless, the north wall has pairs of foiled, two-centred windows. A third window now forms the entrance to the church room built in 1993.

**Vestry. General.** Adjoins chancel north wall and is an integral part of the north aisle. The north wall has a shoulder-arched doorway and two windows comparable with those further west in the north aisle, as well as



a low angle buttress at the north-east corner. The east wall is set slightly back from the east wall of the chancel and has a basal plinth. In the east wall a two-centred window with a pair of foiled, angular lights and a trefoil and quatrefoil above. Voussoirs in red, grey and buff stone form a relieving arch.

Churchroom. General. Constructed in 1993 on the north-west side of the church. Pebbledashed walls and architectural features with pink sandstone dressings.

Nave and chancel. General. Treated as one as no external differentiation.

East wall: basal plinth with round-moulded coping at 0.3m. Two moulded string courses, the lowest at 0.7m; a third at window springer level insets the wall face. The main east window has a two-centred arch and three lights, the central one trefoiled, those flanking it cinquefoiled, and above is a hexafoil rose. Alternate pink and grey voussoirs form a relieving arch. Small quatrefoil light in apex of gable. A gabled angle buttress at the south-east corner.

South wall: a red sandstone plinth initially at c.0.8m above ground level runs from the tower around the south porch and along the south wall; at the most easterly buttress it stops and is replaced by the lowest of the round-moulded string courses visible on the east wall. Six windows in all; four to the nave including one west of the porch have two-centred pink sandstone arches over pairs of trefoiled lights with open tracery of varying form above, and hoodmoulds and head stops; each has alternating voussoirs in its relieving arch. Two single trefoil-headed lights separated by a buttress which is one of four on this wall, illuminate the chancel, and a band of red sandstone runs between these two windows. Two moulded string courses are continuations of those on the east wall, and a third of different design also acts as a continuous hoodmould over the three nave windows.

Porch - General. In the south wall is a two-centred entrance arch of two orders with a hoodmould and head stops; the inner order is recessed with a two-centred trefoil-headed arch and a relieving arch of red and grey stone voussoirs. Low buttresses at the south-west and south-east corners. East and west walls each have two small trefoiled lights.

## Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor, walls plastered and painted with all stonework exposed. Short wooden benches set in red sandstone. Shouldered arches to recesses on the east and west sides. Ceiling painted blue above the exposed rafters.

North wall: south doorway to the church has 'two orders of triple shafts, the outer with a filleted middle shaft and rings above cushion bases. Capitals carved with rings and inverted fleurs-de-lys with bands passing from shaft to shaft under billets. Above square thin abaci the order is continued as roll-mouldings to a pointed [two-centred] arch. The capitals are transitional from Norman to Early English' (Haslam). Almost all of the stonework is original and in excellent condition.

Tower. General. Ground floor has a stone floor, plastered walls, and a wooden ceiling with a hatch to the ringing chamber. Now used as a vestry and not normally accessible.

Nave. One step up from the porch and then an internal porch. 19thC tiled floor with benches on raised planked floor; the north side benches continue through to the north aisle; carpet down the central aisle towards the chancel and there are heating grilles at the front. Walls plastered and painted with dressed stonework exposed. Nave and chancel have a continuous roof line of 15thC construction; nine arch-braced collar trusses with foiled raking struts form eight bays; some of the early trusses have small carvings at the centres of their soffits. Exposed rafters and through purlins with ceiling painted blue; plain wall plates. Some of the arch braces of the 15thC church were replaced during the 1868 rebuilding.

North wall: divided from north aisle by four bays of the five-bay arcade. Four round pillars on circular bases which are painted, as are the moulded capitals; two-centred arches with continuous hoodmould and floriated stop at the west respond.

East wall: two steps up with a low stone chancel wall to either side.

South wall: two eastern windows contain stained glass. An old photo and a sketch of the earlier church hanging on the wall.

West wall: abuts tower. A large, high, two-centred Victorian arch to the tower, now filled by a wood panelled screen and a central doorway; panels incorporate coloured glass and a continuous castellated frieze; the pinkish sandstone of the arch is exposed. The west wall of the nave is painted a yellow ochre colour, and has two marble memorials of 1744 and 1813 attached to it.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from the nave and two further steps to the sanctuary and one to the altar. Partly floored with encaustic tiles in the sanctuary. Longitudinal choir stalls. For walls and roof see nave.

North wall: fifth bay of the arcade divides the chancel from the organ chamber, and has a hoodmould with floriated stops. In the sanctuary, an aumbry set in a double trefoil-headed recess in wood. Effigy set on the floor on the north side of sanctuary.

East wall: east window has an internal hoodmould and foliated stops, and the arch has alternating red and white stone blocks. Reredos is oak panelled with a decorative frieze.

South wall: sedile below easternmost window is lined with oak; the piscina is set in a cinquefoil-headed aperture in wood.

West wall: see nave above.

North aisle. General. Floor and walls as nave; a sloping, lean-to roof is supported on wall posts and angled struts rising from four stone corbels above the arcade; through purlins and exposed rafters, and the ceiling is painted blue. The north-east corner is set aside as a chapel with an altar on raised flooring.

North wall: three windows light the aisle, while a fourth window has been superseded by the entrance to the 1993 churchroom. One marble tablet of 1772.

West wall: monuments of 1767, 1790 and 1797.

Organ chamber. General. At east end of north aisle. Plastered walls and wooden floor. Pipe organ presented to church in 1895, and set in easternmost bay of the arcade.

East wall: Caernarvon-arched doorway leads to vestry. Two 19thC memorial tablets.

Vestry. General. At the extreme east end of the north aisle and separated from the sanctuary by a wall.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Details derived from Haslam with additions.

Effigy: recumbent stone effigy, of c.1400, presumed to be Dafydd ap Gruffydd Fychan of Brynglas, a knight in armour complete with battle helmet. The detail of the armour is well preserved and an inscription on the sword belt around the figure has been deciphered as 'Hic jacet Davit ap Gruff....'.



Font: large octagonal stone font on a tapering circular plinth, now set on a stone base near the south door; modern oak cover. Considered to be 13thC. Chisel marks on it are attributed to its removal from the church during the Commonwealth Period (1649-1660). It was subsequently used as an animal trough at the public house across the road.

Plate: includes cups of 1612/3 and 1734/5.

Chest: 1738 oak churchwarden's chest [presumed to be in the vestry].

Monuments: i) white marble on grey slate, to Evan Gwyn (d.1767) and his wife Mary (d.1785), the slate painted behind the white marble; and an urn. ii) a small tablet to Gwen Griffith Jones (d.1772) and her daughter. iii) white marble tablet to Morgan Evans of Berth fawr (d.1744) and his wife Catherine (d.1777), with urn and painted heraldry. iv) a marble tablet to Jane Hassall (d.1778), a second child of same name (d.1781) and Thomas Hassall (d.1786). v) a small white marble tablet on grey slate to John Williams (d.1786) at the age of 10, and his parents Mary (d.1829) and John (d.1836). vi) white marble on grey slate to David Davis (d.1790), by Nelson, Salop; inscribed 'He directed that Six-pence should be given to every Poor Person attending his Funeral, at which one thousand and thirty were present, and received Sixpence each'. vii) small white marble tablet to Thomas Baker, vicar of Llanfair (d.1797).

Brasses: i) to Bridget Ions (d.1737). ii) a small brass plate set in a seat to James Felton (d.1738) and John Felton (d.1736), engraved by Ed. Pugh of Oswestry. Presumed to be in vestry.

Benefaction board: in marble, on east wall of vestry, and carries the date 1742.

Bells: of six, one carries the inscription 'Sancte Petre Ora Pro Nobis' and is thought to be of 15thC though it was recast in 1914, and a second in inscribed 'Gloria In Excelsis Deo M.E.I.T. CW 1658'. A third is said to be from 1776 and the remainder are from 1946.

Register: from 1608.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Pulpit: carved octagonal stone pulpit inlaid with marble panels adjoins the easternmost nave window on the south wall.

Stained glass: south window by Clayton & Bell depicting the Twelve Apostles, c.1868; east window of 1879 by Ward & Hughes of Soho Square showing The Ascension and The Angel and Women at the Tomb.

Monuments: white marble tablet on grey slate to Maurice Lloyd of Garthllwyd (d.1813), by J. Carline, Salop.

## CHURCHYARD

A large well-kept churchyard on raised ground above the River Banwy on its west side, and occupying a town centre position. There is an extension from 1902 on the north-west side which contains a holy well.

Boundary: a hedge on the north-west side above the river, and on the west there is also a hedge and property boundaries. A stone revetment wall on the south side, partly rebuilt in 1868; from the south-east corner along the east side there are adjoining properties, whether buildings or tenement boundaries.

Monuments: considerable clearance work in the 1970s, and the headstones were lined up in ranks on the east, south and west sides of the church; slate slabs laid flat line the south entrance path and date from 1812 to the -1890s, but one gravemarker of 1800 was noted. Steps lead up to the raised burial ground west of the lychgate and the path is lined with re-sited 19th and early 20thC slabs. The burials on the slope to the north-west of the church are the only ones apparently undisturbed.

Furniture: an old sundial, one of only three made by Samuel Robert, a local clockmaker, has been recently remounted. The worn inscription reads 'S. Roberts, Llanfair' with a 1755 date, and the plate is set on a tapering square white marble plinth. An inscription in Welsh and English is to the memory of Rev. Richard Jones of Llanfair who died in 1868. Located near the south porch.

Earthworks: interior of the churchyard is raised.

Ancillary features: stone and timber lychgate from 1903, restored in 1977. A large, modern iron gate with an adjoining single gate allow access from the south-west corner, and another entrance in the south-east corner is via a wrought iron gate. A stepped entrance at the north corner. Concrete paths including one to St Mary's Well.

Well: St Mary's Well is sited at the bottom of a flight of concrete step leading towards the river. The well has been claimed as pre-Christian and was resorted to as a cure for various disorders. Formerly a pump drew water for domestic use, but the well was disused by 1909. It was restored in 1990 and set in a small enclosed stone walled garden with stone seating. The rectangular well has a stepped entrance.

Vegetation: three older yew trees south-east of the church and one below the chancel; a clipped yew south of the tower and an Irish yew near lychgate.

## SOURCES

Church Notes. n.d.  
CPAT Field Visit: 21 February 1995 and 30 July 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 192  
Eisel 1986, 182  
Faculty ST Asaph (NLW) 1867: demolition and rebuilding  
Faculty ST Asaph (NLW) 1867: churchyard extension  
Glynne 1885, 42  
Gresham 1968, 202  
Haslam 1979, 127  
Hughes 1883  
Lunt 1926, 469  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 135  
Williams 1990, 45



## CONDITION

Church in excellent state of repair

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good

# Llanfechain

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Garmon**PRN** 16408**NGR** SJ18892043

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## SUMMARY

St Garmon's church sits in the centre of Llanfechain about 8 miles to the north of Welshpool. A single-chambered church with a 19thC bell turret at the west end, the core of the building is 12thC and it retains Norman windows in the east wall and two round-headed doorways on the south side. Inside there is a 15thC arched-braced roof. It is sited within a raised circular churchyard that also contains a 'preaching mound' and a sundial.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A small church with Norman architectural features dated to the mid-12thC, though partly renewed. Much of the masonry shell is probably original, though the west wall has been reconstructed, and there are hints of localised rebuilding elsewhere. There are also unexplained anomalies internally at the west end. The east wall has retained three small windows at the expense of the customary large, east window; two of these at least are original. There are also two Norman doorways, the main south door and a priest's door. The remaining fenestration is 19thC, as is the bell turret. The porch is 17thC, restored in the 19thC.

## HISTORY

The dedication, location and morphology all point to an early medieval foundation. St Garmon was reputedly a 9thC saint, and his 'preaching mound', Twmpath Garmon, remains on the north side of the church, and a holy well, Ffynnon Garmon, lies to the south-east of the village.

The earliest reference to a church on this site is in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, where 'Capella de Llanvechthyn' was valued at £1. In the later Lincoln Taxation of 1291 'Ecclia de Llannetheyn' was valued at £6.

Surviving features attest changes during the later medieval and early post-medieval era: the present roof was inserted in the 15thC, the south porch was added in the 17thC, and at some date a vestry was annexed to the old west wall. Thomas refers, too, to a blocked south window that lit the rood loft, and an aumbry or piscina associated with the rood altar - these disappeared in one of the 19thC restorations.

Glynne went to Llanfechain in 1855. The south porch had vine-leaf decoration, the walls of the building leaned outwards, the north wall of the chancel had a small square-headed window, and mention was also made of the piscina, the roof, the Jacobean altar table, the pulpit, a dug-out chest, and a pew with the date 1649.

Some work took place in 1852 at a cost of £100, but more significant changes occurred in the 1859 restoration under the aegis of R.K. Penson. The old vestry was replaced by one against the north wall, the gallery was restored but to a smaller scale, the west gable was rebuilt losing a small round-headed Norman window of similar type to those in the east wall, a dormer window above the porch was removed, round-headed windows were inserted in the nave and chancel, and a shingled spire was constructed on the belfry. The interior was tiled, the pulpit and reading desk were re-sited and the font was placed on a raised pedestal.



near the south door. A source of 1872 refers to the removal of the north chancel window which had tracery that was supposedly brought from the abbey of Strata Marcella. The cost was £416.

Further restoration occurred in 1883 when Douglas and Fordham of Chester stripped the inside of plaster, removed the ceiling to expose the roof trusses, laid woodblock floors, and replaced the pews with open seats. A wagon roof was inserted in the chancel and the church was re-roofed with red tiles. Douglas also appears to have altered the structure of the spire, and it was probably at this time that the piscina, referred to by Glynne and in 1872 as 'perfect' though 'concealed' was removed.

The bells were rehung in 1920.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a single chamber, with a north vestry near the west corner, and a south porch opposite it. A bell turret with its spire is located near the west end of the nave. The church is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium blocks of grey and brown shale, irregularly shaped, and with random coursing. Heavy pointing and traces of limewash.

'B' is of regular blocks of a greyish-green stone, probably Criggion dolerite; random coursing.

'A' is 12thC. 'B' is of 1859.

Roofs: slates with red ceramic ridge tiles; metal cross finials to chancel end and porch.

The 19thC bell turret has three tiers, with the north and south faces having pairs of small six-paned apertures. Above these at the base of the broach spire are clock faces, the clock a gift of 1885. Slated spire topped by a weathercock.

Drainage: a trench edged by gravestones on the south and south-west and filled with gravel chippings around all sides of the church.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Dealt with as one unit because of the lack of external differentiation. The early walls are battered and of considerable thickness.

North wall: in 'A'; a projecting foundation course at the north-west corner. Two pairs of nave windows each comprising two round-headed lights of pale freestone, without a frame, the dressings chamfered with stops, all in pale sandstone; relieving arches of shale slabs. Also a single round-headed recessed window to the chancel - all were inserted in 1859. Some masonry replacement visible over the more easterly pair only. Quoins at the north-east corner of the building in eroded red and pink sandstone to a height of c.1.7m; above replacement in less weathered grey and red sandstone, though still traces of limewash on these higher quoins. Set in the roof is a dormer window for the pulpit, having two rectangular windows with leaded lights.

East wall: in 'A'. It has three narrow slit windows, the two lower ones with round heads, that above with a flat head; the chamfered dressings are in sandstone that has weathered to grey, and may be original, though a couple of jambstones in red are less convincing; the top slit does not have chamfered dressings. Two short angle buttresses, presumably 19thC additions, in a grey stone that looks almost like limestone; red sandstone coping stones.

South wall: partly in 'A', but around inserted windows the masonry is 'B', and towards the east end, and also west of the porch, there are occasional inclusions of sandstone; the quoins at south-east corner are badly eroded at low levels, those higher up in better condition, though this cannot be taken as an indication that



they have been renewed. Nevertheless the south-eastern corner has been rebuilt for the top 0.4m of the wall for a length of about 2m. Furthermore the stonework at the east end of the wall is clear of limewash, but from i) as far as iv) considerable residual limewash on the stonework - but it is not evident whether this simply indicates differential cleaning of the stonework during later re-pointing. Features from the east: i) a pair of round-headed lights to the chancel with both inner and outer relieving arches. ii) a priest's doorway, with a round-headed arch and simple chamfered dressings, and a semicircular hoodmould. Except for two stones the jambs are original, but most if not all of the arch has been replaced. Conceivably, the hoodmould has been added at a later date. A tie-rod plate is in place just above the doorway and it is possible that there has been some reconstruction here. iii) traces of a butt joint in the masonry where a window might be anticipated, but only one vertical joint and the evidence is equivocal. iv) three-light restoration window of standard form. v) a large buttress. vi) south porch. Within this is the south doorway - a Norman round-headed arch in pink and buff sandstone with 'rounded jambs and a roll-moulding on the arch, flat, chamfered capitals but no bases, sharpening grooves on the jambs, the whole original. Chamfered dripmould and stops' (Haslam); a heavy planked door with wrought iron fittings. vii) two-light, round-headed window below the gallery, of standard form.

West wall: in fabric 'B', completely rebuilt in 1859. Two stepped buttresses with yellow sandstone cappings; and at a higher level a wheel window of six leaded lights and a central roundel, all in red sandstone.

South porch. General. The east and west walls have open timber framing, each with two panels of four round-headed arches, set on low stone plinths. The south entrance arch shows an arch-braced tie-beam construction, with curving struts and a collar, but the panels above the tie-beam are filled in, as are the narrower panels between the doorway and the wall posts. A pair of short wooden entrance gates.

Vestry. General. In 'B'. Round-headed windows; the east wall has an abutting chimney, and concrete steps lead down to boiler house below ground level.

#### Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor; panelling below open timberwork on the sides; roof of three tie-beams with substantial arch bracing particularly to the two inner ones, and a collar above the central tie-beam. Plastered ceiling above one tier of cusped windbraces.

Nave. General. Tiled floors, partly carpet-covered; flush woodblock flooring beneath benches and at the west end of the nave, below the gallery; one grille over a void that carries heating pipes across the south entrance. Walls bare of plaster. Nave roof of 15thC construction with chamfered arch-braced collar trusses resting on plain wall plates, and foiled raking struts; two tiers of cusped wind-braces. The truss over the nave/chancel divide has plaster infill between the struts. Six bays but the three western bays are different. That at the west end has been widened at the expense of its neighbour to accommodate the housing of the bell turret; bays two and three have only one tier of cusped windbraces, no raking struts to the trusses and the wall beams are set a little higher than their counterparts further east. There is no compulsive evidence that this western end of the church was added at a later date or rebuilt, yet there are unexplained anomalies, notably distinctive blocks of sandstone high up in both the south and north walls immediately below the change in the wall beams.

North wall: faint batter to the wall. Wood panelling below the gallery at the west end and a round-headed entrance arch to the vestry. Splayed windows. Two 19thC and one 20thC brass.

East wall: modern screen.

South wall: wall face has a marked batter. Slightly splayed Norman doorway with sandstone jambs and a segmental head to the reveal. Two marble memorial tablets to the west of it. Two splayed window embrasures, and at the east end is a small recess with two stones forming an irregular pointed head, and a flat slab for the base. Is this simply a niche? The priest's doorway has sandstone dressings to the reveal,



some with sharpening grooves.

West wall: dog-leg staircase leads up to gallery. This has a tiered wooden floor, but no seating, and a front of wooden panels with round-headed arches, those on either side of the benefaction boards being open. The gallery is supported on a beam set in the north and south walls and two central vertical posts with arch bracing. Brass plaques on the wall below the stairs.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from the nave, one to the sanctuary, one to the altar; tiled floors, some encaustic. Walls as chancel. Red sandstone blocks are built into the walls, mostly at one level (in line with the springers of the lower east windows); a line of six in the south wall is particularly distinctive, but they do not form a continuous zone and their significance is not clear. Wagon ceiling with blind traceried panels, from 1883.

North wall: a single splayed window, the embrasure with sandstone jambs indicative of an original opening, though the sill is replaced. A memorial to the east of it.

East wall: 1890 carved oak reredos below the three windows. The two lower windows have sandstone dressings but the top one has quoins of shale to the reveal, thus strengthening the contention that it is later than the other two.

South wall: splayed window with red sandstone dressings to the sides of the reveal but the arch and soffit have a mixture of masonry that includes brick; the sloping splay has also been added at a late date. A marble memorial tablet of 1862 above the choir stalls.

Vestry. Interior unseen.

## FURNISHING and FITTINGS

Information based on descriptions from Haslam, with additions.

Stoup: located inside the nave by the priest's door.

Font: octagonal stone font from around the early 16thC. Worn bowl with slightly sloping sides has Tudor roses in quatrefoils; tapering stem has trefoiled panels, but both the lower half of the stem and the base have been replaced. There is a wooden pointed cone cover, the sides rising to a neck surmounted by decorated finials. The cover is suspended from the ceiling by a heavy chain, which includes a large eagle.

Pulpit: heavy octagonal Jacobean pulpit with door; carved panels with round-headed arches below frieze. The inscription includes 'ANO 1636', and another panel has 'R.P. R.M. wardens'. Octagonal oak sounding board above. Lit by a dormer window.

Table: Jacobean communion table, carved on three sides.

Memorials: three small brasses on wooden panelling below the gallery to Rev. Stephen Evans, Pentre (d.1820), Anne Kynaston (d.1744) and Rev. Thomas Humphreys, rector of the parish (d.1718). Marble tablet in classical style, erected by William Mostyn of Bryngwyn in memory of his wife, worn inscriptions, but of 1725; on north wall of chancel.

Bells: three, inscribed i) Robert Owen Churchwarden A R 1730; ii) Roger Trevor Esqr & Robt Davies Ch-Wardens A R 1737; iii) In memory of/ Emma Beachcroft/ 1920 Carrs made me. The two 18thC bells were tuned and rehung in iron framing in April 1921 at a cost of £100.

Plate: paten of 1682/3, paten cover of 1698/9, flagon of 1691/2, cups of 1698/9 and 1751/2.

Registers: from 1603.

Victorian furnishings and fittings include:

Screen: carved oak screen of 1883, designed by Douglas, with a wide ogee doorway and three equal compartments to either side having heads of varied tracery. Central Calvary cross and Tudor cresting to either side.

Reredos: of 1890, designed by Douglas and carved by Griffiths of Chester. Depicts Crucifixion.

Benefaction boards: that on the gallery south wall records 1851 donations to the poor. The gallery front has two panels, painted, with dates from 1715-1871.

Decalogue boards: of painted wood, on west wall

Chair: of carved oak, in sanctuary, inscribed 'M W 1856'.

Stained glass: generally 19thC gifts from the families of Bryngwyn and Bodynfoel, benefactors of the church.

Memorials: several of 19thC and 20thC date, including a marble tablet to Thomas Evans of Glanbrogan (d.1826), by J and J Carline, Shrewsbury.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is sub-circular with no evidence of having been extended at any time. It is well-kept on the south side, where unmarked graves and slabs have been laid flat and grassed over.

Boundaries: a stone wall acts as a retaining barrier, and only to the east of the church does it rise above the internal banking.

Monuments: it has been suggested that there were no burials on the north and north-west sides of the church up to and beyond the early 19thC; the area was apparently in use as a common playing ground. 19thC slabs lie to the west of the porch and the nave. Late 18thC to mid-19thC slate slabs lean against the west boundary wall. The earliest stone is of 1671 under a yew on the west side of the church.

Furniture: 18thC sundial with sandstone baluster pillar and a square plinth stands on a raised circular base with graduated steps, on the west side of the path leading south-eastwards. The dial, now gone, was dated to 1770.

Earthworks: a raised but very spread mound on the north side of the church is reputedly St Garmon's preaching mound, 'Twmpath Garmon'. The mound is considerably overgrown and has graves dug in it. There are 19thC records of two cockpits here: one immediately to the east of the mound, the other outside the south-west gate.

The churchyard is raised, about 1m on the east, up to 3m on the north where there is also an inner embankment, and 0.6m or so on the south, but is virtually level on the west.

Ancillary features: main entrance is through a timber lych gate supported on stone walls, with a kissing gate adjacent. The concrete floor has a slate cross set in it, and there are benches to either side. Other entrances close to north and west corners. New gravel paths lead to the south door from these entrances. A public footpath crosses the churchyard north of the church.

Vegetation: several large yew trees surround the south-west and south-east perimeter of the churchyard; other smaller ones on the north-eastern edge. An Irish yew is sited near St Garmon's mound. Well-cut rhododendron bushes line the south path.



## SOURCES

Anon 1872  
CPAT Field Visit 9 November 1995 and 4 March 1998  
Eisel 1986, 183  
Faculty St Asaph 1883 (NLW)  
Glynne 1885, 44  
Haslam 1979, 129  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Parish Records St Asaph (NLW)  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 139  
Silvester 1992, 88  
Thomas 1911, 221

## CONDITION

Good condition throughout. Well-kept and well-used church.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Very Good



# Llanfihangel-yng-Ngwynfa

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**Diocese** St Asaph

**Dedication** Michael

**PRN** 16407

**NGR** SJ08021695

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## SUMMARY

St Michael's church in the small village of Llanfihangel-yng-Ngwynfa, some 11 miles to the north-west of Welshpool, stands on high ground, within a polygonal churchyard. The present church was built in 1862, and few of the fittings from earlier times have been retained: a bell, the font and some benefaction boards appear to be the sole survivals, other than three inscribed stones of 14thC date set into the walls of the vestry.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church rebuilt in 1862/3 in Gothic style; some re-use of old masonry on the north side.

## HISTORY

The date of the foundation of Llanfihangel is uncertain, though dedications to Michael are often attributed to the later centuries of the early medieval period.

The church is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Capella de Llanvihangel' at a value of 13s 4d and in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 as 'Ecclia de Lanvyhangel' at £5.

A new church was built on the site in the 16thC or 17thC and a chancel added in 1723. This building had the chancel wider than the nave, a belfry protruded through the latter and there was a southern porch and a dormer window in the nave roof. A dog-leg staircase led up to the belfry from the west end of the nave. Pews to either side of the central aisle ran up to the sanctuary, and the pulpit and reading desk were against the east wall of the chancel.

In 1862, the old church was demolished, the vicar at the time noting that the walls of the nave were constructed of weatherworn stones while the chancel was of quarried stone. A new church was built in its stead at a cost of £1081, and consecrated in 1864. A canopied pew with the date of 1577 was removed to Wynnstay at this time.

The building was declared unsafe in 1987 and closed for services. Extensive restoration took place and the church was re-opened in 1990.

St Michael's Well, known to have been sited in the village some 150m from the church, was formerly used for baptisms. Its precise location is now unclear.

## ARCHITECTURE

The present church consists of a nave, a slightly narrower chancel, a south porch and north vestry, both

towards the west end of the building, and a bell turret above the west gable. The building is oriented almost exactly west to east.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium linear blocks of local grey and brown shale, (some of it closer to sandstone), with quoins of similar material. Apertures have sandstone dressings.

'B' contains more irregular lumps of shale and includes at least one block of red sandstone. Almost certainly re-used stone from the earlier church.

Roofs: slates with grey, reconstituted clay ridge tiles; metal cross finial to chancel end, stone cross to nave end.

The bell turret rises directly from the gable end; two-tiered with a saddleback roof; small apertures with sandstone dressings.

Drainage: guttering and downspouts (fairly recently renewed) lead to soakaways. Stone chippings, c.0.8m wide, have been placed around all walls of the church, suggesting a surrounding drainage trench.

## Exterior

Nave. General. Stone capped plinth at 0.5m around all walls; angle buttresses at corners; paired lancets in north and south walls (and a single lancet to the west of the porch), those on the south, east of the porch, having hoodmoulds with human-head stops. In the west wall a single lancet in a square-headed aperture, and higher up at the apex of the gable a narrow, louvred, shoulder-arched window.

Chancel. General. Lower roof line than nave. Plinth at about 1m above ground level around all walls; angle buttresses at east corners. Single standard lancets with hoodmoulds and stops in north and south walls, and in the east wall, a two-centred window with three plain lancet lights and a hoodmould with head stops.

Porch. General. Side walls are plain, and the south wall has a two-centred entrance, chamfered with pyramid stops, a hoodmould with head stops, and above a datestone with 1863.

Vestry. General. 1923 addition. Datestone in north wall.

## Interior

South porch. General. Tiled floor, benches along the sides; six close-set scissor trusses with exposed planked ceiling.

Nave. General. West end is partitioned off and provides access to the bell turret. 19thC tiled floors but carpetted in centre aisle; benches raised on plank flooring. Walls plastered leaving exposed dressings; fenestration set in semi-circular-headed splayed embrasures. Eight arch-braced scissor trusses form five full bays and two half bays, with exposed rafters and purlins; the trusses spring from short wall posts and the wall plates. A narrow two-centred chancel arch in red sandstone on the east, while on the partition panelling at the west end are four Benefaction boards. High up in the west wall behind a truss is a small two-centred window with chamfered dressings.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from the nave, one to the sanctuary, one to the altar. Tiled floor; plastered walls, splayed apertures and a tiled reredos; roof of three bays separated by two scissor trusses with cusped panels above, unlike the plain nave trusses, and springing from stubby wall posts.



Vestry. General. Tiled floor, plastered walls and ceiling above exposed rafters. Incorporated in the walls are three carved medieval stones, unplastered. In 1722 these had been used as a sill and jambstones in the sill of a south window - the inscriptions published by RCAHMW in 1911 are no longer fully decipherable

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Carved stones: three of these are set into the vestry walls. i) north of the doorway, the head of a four-circle cross, early 14thC. ii) slab with a cross raguly and sword of c.1340, and an inscription in Lombardic capitals running around the margin reading 'X HIC IACET MAD(OC) AP KELYNNINE' (Madog ap Celynin, ancestor to the Vaughans of Llwydiarth). iii) carved stone in north wall, part of a 14thC cross raguly.

Benefactions boards: located on the partition wall at the west end of nave, listing bequests. Four in all of which one is placed too high to read, another is undated, a third records benefactions to the poor of the parish between 1684 and 1720 and the fourth includes the date 1852. It has been suggested that the boards may have formed the front panels of the gallery in the earlier church.

Font: octagonal bowl with recessed panels, on an octagonal stem and base; sandstone. Medieval? Modern wooden cover.

Plate: includes stand paten of 1693/4, a cup of 1731/2 and a flagon of the same date.

Bell: inscribed 'IP EW CW H V 1638', the initials of the churchwardens.

19thC furnishings include:

Organ: pre-1860s organ originally from Dark Lane Chapel, Dawley. Restored, a gift to the church in the 1970s.

## CHURCHYARD

The original polygonal churchyard was extended on the north-west side in 1914, to create a slightly larger but similarly shaped enclosure, sitting on a low summit from which the ground slopes away in all directions. It is overgrown on the north and east sides, though elsewhere is well maintained.

Boundary: walls on the east, south and south-west sides, largely acting as retaining walls because the ground falls away. Hedge boundary to the north and north-west, a sign of the 1914 extension.

Monuments: graves on all sides; mainly slate slabs of 19thC date, and also several chest tombs. The grave of Ann Griffiths (1776-1805), a famous Welsh Hymn writer, is located on the west side of the entrance path. The red granite pillar that marks the grave stands on a square plinth surrounded by low railings. The earliest gravemarker that was seen was of 1747, but there are a number of much weathered (?18thC) chest tombs.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: the bank of the earlier churchyard is still visible as a scarp up to 1m high on the west and north of the church.

Ancillary features: a pair of 19thC wrought iron gates set in stone pillars form the sole entrance, on the south. A tarmac path leads to the south door of the church.

Vegetation: four pairs of yew trees form an entrance arch over the south path. A single yew is located east of the entrance path on the sloping burial ground.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit 27 October 1995 and 4 March 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 192  
Eisel 1986, 183  
Faculty St Asaph 1914 (NLW)  
Gresham 1968, 125; 156; 158  
Haslam 1979, 131  
Jones 1992, 198 (holy wells)  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 144  
RCAHMW 1911, 93  
Thomas 1911, 227



## CONDITION

The 1923 vestry annex is particularly damp. The carved stone on the wall that adjoins the nave is now green with mould. The bell turret is very damp at ground level. Both these rooms have poor air circulation and are little used.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Medium

# Llanfyllin

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Myllin**PRN** 16860**NGR** SJ14171956

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## SUMMARY

St Myllin's church in Llanfyllin, a small town just over 8 miles north-west of Welshpool, is a brick-built structure of 1706, extended in 1826 for a girls' schoolroom, and showing some restoration from the mid-19thC. Its fenestration includes both Georgian and Romanesque styles. Inside there are 18thC fittings including a gallery, chandelier, chest, table and font but nothing of earlier date. There is evidence of a raised sub-circular churchyard, subsequently extended, but the majority of gravemarkers have been removed, leaving only a few together with a sundial.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Primarily a Georgian building of 1706 with restoration work of c.1857 when the nave and chancel windows were replaced.

## HISTORY

St Myllin, a corruption of St. Moling, is believed to have been a 7thC Irish monk. The dedication is unique, but tradition says he was buried under the altar of the early church. The location and churchyard morphology as well as the dedication point firmly to an early medieval foundation, though no traces of such an early date remain.

The earliest church references are in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 where it is cited as 'Capella de Llanvelig' at a value of 20s, and in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 where it was worth £8 1s 8d.

In 1706 the present church superseded a substantial earlier building which had a wooden belfry; its long nave was a little narrower than the chancel, there was a west door, its screen had already been removed. The new building in Georgian style had box pews including some on either side of the sanctuary.

A schoolroom was added on the north side in 1826, and the organ was purchased in 1854.

In the years between 1857 and 1867, renovations to the plans of Walter Scott, an architect of Birkenhead, included the addition the 'Romanesque' chancel arches, the emplacement of new window surrounds, the adaption of the schoolroom to an organ chamber and Lady Chapel, and their separation from the nave by Norman-style arches.

The boiler house was added to the north wall of the nave in 1897. It has also been said that the the masonry on the east wall and the dressings to the east windows were repaired in the same year, the woodblock flooring was inserted, the pews removed, the west gallery re-seated, the wainscoting around the walls lowered and the altar rails renewed.



## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a west tower, and a north annex which started as a schoolroom but was subsequently converted to a Lady Chapel, organ room, and vestry. The church is aligned east-north-east to west-south-west but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here. The term schoolroom is also used for descriptive purposes though it no longer functions as such.

Fabric: 'A' is of red Llanfyllin brick with freestone dressings.

'B' is a slightly darker red brick with yellow brick dentilation.

'C' is of grey blocks of rubblestone, perhaps shale or dolerite.

'A' basically of 1706, 'B' of 1826 (and also for 20thC cloakroom extension), while 'C' was used at both dates.

Roofs: all slates, and plain, dark clay ridge tiles. Hipped roof to chancel, the others are gabled.

Drainage: 19thC downspouts, painted blue, lead to soakaways. Tarmac on south and west, and elsewhere no evidence of a trench.

### Exterior

Tower. General. In 'A' with foundations in 'C'; a sandstone-capped plinth round the tower at a height of c.1.5m; clasping pilaster buttresses; two brick string courses separate the stages, including one above belfry level; a battlemented top stage; pinnacles at the corners.

North wall: round-headed ground floor window with brick voussoirs, boarded up; a slit window in upper wall face, and above it the round-headed louvred window to the bellchamber; also four slit windows to the tower stair at the extreme east end of the wall.

East wall: belfry window as north wall

South wall: round-headed windows with brick voussoir arches on ground and first floors; next a clock face, dating to 1864; belfry window as north wall.

West wall: entrance door approached by two steps, a segmental head turned in bricks; standard belfry window.

Nave and Chancel. General. Described here together as a continuous chamber with no external differentiation. Church is built on stone foundations ('C') though these are intermittently visible. Sandstone-capped plinth runs round the body of the church, as on the tower, at 1.5m. Windows have dressings all in pale sandstone. Crenellated wall tops with sandstone pinnacles at angles.

North wall: single round-headed window to west of vestry, moulded half-capitals, chamfered dressings with inverted broach stops, brick voussoirs for relieving arch immediately over the arch. East of schoolroom (vestry), a window was re-sited to the east at the time of the 1826 development and a modern fire door has been inserted beneath it. A second, similar window, lighting the chancel, lies immediately to the east. Both of similar form to that west of the vestry.

East wall: two round-headed windows, Norman-style, slightly recessed into the wall, spaced apart on the wall face; and the same as those in north wall; from c.1857.

South wall: five round-headed windows, the single lights also round-headed with nailhead decoration on arches in Romanesque style, half-round shafts and capitals with projecting imposts. At the west end of the nave beyond the last of these main windows is a rectangular entrance doorway in stone with a pedimented head and moulded jambs; this houses a pair of painted, panelled doors approached by two steps; the old sandstone was removed in 1960 and a faithful reproduction inserted leaving the original inscription on the lintel below the pediment: 'Domus mea Domus Orationis'. A slab set in the wall above the doorway records 'Stephen Evans Oliver Buckley, church wardens, 1729'. A second doorway, this one blocked in brick, is set between the two easternmost windows; it has a similar pedimented head and moulded jambs in very worn



sandstone; an inscription on the pediment originally read 'Soli Deo Gloria MDC'. It appears as 'Chancel door' on a 1720 plan of the church, and was probably blocked as part of 1857 renovations.

West wall: no features, though the wall is visible to either side of tower.

Vestry. General. An 1826 extension in 'B' to the north wall of church, originally built as a girls' schoolroom; the ground slopes away in this direction and the stone foundations (fabric 'C') to the walls are visible to a maximum height of 2.5m above ground level.

North, east and west walls: two round-headed Georgian windows to each face, wooden frames with intersecting tracery in the heads; a third window in the east wall has been bricked in. The north wall displays a central chimney breast between the two windows; and against the west wall is a later cloakroom extension. A boiler house was built in 1897, possibly the doorway set in the wall beneath the more northerly of the two windows on the west side leads to this.

### Interior

Tower. General. Interior not accessible. It is reported that the ground floor is used for storage, the first floor is a ringing chamber and its west wall has a frame with ropes and ratchets for the Ellacombe chiming apparatus of the clock, fitted in 1906; the second floor has the clock fittings and carillon rope boxes; the third floor is the bell chamber.

Nave - General. Stone-flagged floors with raised woodblock flooring under the benches; one heating vent grille at the front. Walls plastered and painted pink, above the wainscotting which was derived from old box pews at the 1897 renovation; ceiling coved, plastered and painted in two colours. All windows have stained glass with the exception of those in the nave north wall.

North wall: a single window embrasure to the west of the double arcade leading to the Lady Chapel and organ chamber. Arcade has two round-headed arches, mouldings include bands of nailhead; a central circular pier with a crocket capital; and plain half capitals to the responds; hoodmould over both arches with a central head-stop. Beyond is a single window embrasure which was shortened to accommodate a fire door below in 1989. Marble memorial tablet of 1768 beneath the gallery and another of the 20thC to the east.

East wall: a large central chancel arch flanked by lower, narrower arches in Romanesque style with chevron and cable detail, and capitals with foliage and ferns - St Myllin traditionally came from Ferns in Ireland.

South wall: internal entrance porch at west end with a pair of oak panelled doors. Wall has four of the round-headed windows and a War Memorial tablet.

West wall: the 18thC west gallery with four rows of benches overhangs the nave and interior entrance porch. Dog-leg stairs to the gallery are located in the north-west corner. The gallery itself has a panelled front holding benefactions boards. Marble memorial tablet of 1769/1788 on the wall at the back of the gallery.

Chancel. General. In its present form it dates from the 1857 restoration. One step up from the nave and two to the altar. Floor of red and black tiles with some mosaic cubes; walls and ceiling as nave, although the sanctuary has panelled 18thC dark oak wainscotting similar to that in the nave, but brought from the Old Rectory when it was demolished in 1957.

North wall: a marble memorial tablet of 1918 to the east of the window.

East wall: two round-headed lights with stained glass of 1854 and 1857 on either side of the altar.



South wall: a marble memorial tablet of 1903/1923 to east of window.

Lady Chapel/Vestry (Schoolroom). General. 1826 addition. For the Lady Chapel and the organ chamber the floors, walls and ceiling are as the nave. The vestry beyond has carpeted floors, walls plastered above wood panelling, and a plastered ceiling. There is also a central north fireplace and it is fitted with kitchen equipment.

## FURNISHING and FITTINGS

Details from Haslam with additions.

Font: in stone, with octagonal bowl, square bevelled stem on square plinth, of the 18thC. A 20thC cover in the form of an octagonal oak cone with finial.

Communion table: in oak with twisted legs; inscribed 'I. C. II Wardens 1744' on drawer front.

Chest: plank construction, lid with strap hinges; oak panelled front bears inscription 'H D Warden 1733'. Located near south door.

Benefaction boards: six panels on the front of the gallery, extending across the full width of the nave; these record donations to the poor and for local education dating between 1689 and 1720, and details of amounts - in total £1,030 - raised to build the new church.

Chandelier: Brass and wrought iron, suspended from the ceiling by twisted wrought iron rods. Horizontal bars form a cross with fleur-de-lys terminals. The finial is brass below a gilded dove, feathered with open wings. Base is a brass ball with two tiers of candelabra. Inscription reads 'Ex Dono Thos Richards A.M: hujus Ecclesia Rectoris Anno Domini 1734' (Details derived from NADFAS).

Memorials: include a white marble tablet with black border to George Robinson of Brithdir, an Attorney, (d.1769) and Mary Robinson (d.1788). An off-white marble tablet on a dark veined marble surround to Thomas Griffiths (d.1768).

Bells: six cast by Abraham Rudhall of Gloucester and inserted in the belfry in 1714; the bellframe was made by W.White and refitted in 1902 by Messrs Chas. Carr Ltd., Birmingham. All the bells carry the date 1714.

Plate: cup of 1598/99, flagon of 1699/1700 and paten of 1704/5.

Registers: from 1654.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Pulpit (two-decker), reading desk, and altar rails from 1897. The 'Norman' arched panels on the pulpit and desk mirror the altar rails.

Reredos: in wood, from 1901.

Benches: in nave and in Lady Chapel -these have white enamelled metal number plates with black numerals.

Stained glass: mainly dating to 19thC. The east chancel windows contain roundels by Clutterbuck, 1857, the north chancel window by Heaton, Butler and Bayne, 1903, and the south chancel window by Smith and Taylor, 1859. One of the nave south windows by Alexander Gibbs, 1839 (based on details in Haslam 1979).

13 handbells are located in a glass-fronted case on the west wall below the gallery.

## CHURCHYARD

There are traces of an earlier, sub-circular raised enclosure at Llanfyllin which was extended southwards with newly consecrated ground in 1842, 1863, 1877 and 1892, creating a more rectilinear enclosure. The current churchyard is very well maintained.

**Boundaries:** stone revetment walls form the boundaries on the north-west, north-east and south-west sides. The south-east side is not so steep around the perimeter because of the later extensions.

**Monuments:** there are few remaining marked graves. Slate slabs lean against the south boundary wall, and a single 19thC chest tomb remains close to the south-west corner of the church, two more on the west side of the vestry. No pre-19thC grave markers were observed. Considerable work was undertaken in 1965 on the enclosed churchyard including the removal of broken headstones, laying flat and re-siting some stones, and the removal of some kerbstones and iron rails around some graves. In 1972, the churchyard was nearly cleared of memorials. Burials now take place in the community graveyard.

**Furniture:** an 18thC sundial with baluster pillar stands on a circular base and square plinth with graduated steps beneath, outside the south door. The gnomon is no longer in situ. A wrought iron lampstand on an octagonal sandstone plinth is located outside the south door.

**Earthworks:** an early boundary bank, showing as a gentle scarp up to nearly 2m high is apparent around the southern and eastern sides of the church (see above). The level of the churchyard is raised, substantially above the grounds to the north-west and north-east, and by around 1m on the south-west.

**Ancillary features:** a half-timbered lychgate was erected on the west roadside entrance in 1925. A Field gate in the east corner. Tarmac paths, but steps into the churchyard from the church are formed of old gravestones.

**Vegetation:** several yew trees, the oldest of which are located on the south side on the edge of the old boundary scarp. Irish yews stand just within the western wall.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1993  
CPAT Field Visit 9 November 1995 and 5 March 1998  
Eisel 1986, 183  
Faculty St. Asaph 1960 (NLW): doorway restoration  
Haslam 1979, 131  
Hogg 1870  
NADFAS Survey 1995  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Parish Records in NLW 1706: plan of old church  
Powys SMR  
Ridgway 1997, 149  
Thomas 1911, 230



## CONDITION

Good condition throughout.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium to Good

# Llangadfan

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Cadfan**PRN** 16678**NGR** SJ01111034

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## SUMMARY

St Cadfan's church, 14 miles to the west of Welshpool, is a small single-chambered structure perhaps dating from the 15thC on the evidence of its roof and Perpendicular east window, but restored in 1868. Few furnishings and fittings survived the restoration other than a stoup. It is set within a small, raised circular churchyard.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Walls have been claimed as 15thC; though completely rendered the irregularities in the faces and a disconformity in alignment on the north side do suggest that they are of some considerable age. However, around the south door there has been some rebuilding, and the porch, vestry and bell turret are all 19thC.

## HISTORY

The church is believed to have been founded by St Cadfan, a Breton missionary who became the first abbot of the monastery on Bardsey Island in c.604. Certainly this dedication together with the churchyard morphology and perhaps its siting indicate an early medieval origin.

It is recorded as 'Capella de Llangaduan' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and in the Lincoln Taxation of AD 1291 as 'Ecclia de Llangadfan' with a total value of £6 10s.

The medieval church was restored in 1867-8 at a cost of £500. The Perpendicular east window was retained and the roof was ceiled, hiding what are reputedly 15thC arch-braced timbers with cusped struts and windbraces. Woodwork from the old gallery which was taken down, was used in the chancel roof.

Glynne visited the church in 1869 just after it had been renovated. He noted the east window, similar to that at Manafon, the newly installed chancel arch, new windows which were rather too large, and the general neatness of the building.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave and chancel as a single chamber, a south porch, a north vestry, and a western bell turret over the nave. It is oriented almost exactly east to west.

Fabrics: these cannot be determined because the whole exterior has been heavily rendered and none of the stonework is visible. The exception is the 19thC masonry used for the porch, the vestry and the bell turret which consists of squared blocks of greyish shaley siltstone (or similar); irregularly coursed.

Roofs: slate tiles with black ceramic ridge tiles. Cross finial to chancel.



The bell turret rises above the west end of the nave. Plinthed on the north and south sides about 0.5m above roof level through two courses of masonry laid proud of wall face. North and south sides each have a pair of peaked arches with louvre boards, the west wall a single, two-centred, chamfered arch also louvred; two tie rods through each side. Gabled roof to east and west.

Drainage: there are no obvious gullies though it is conceivable that there may be one along the north side.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation between the two elements. No exposed stonework.

North wall: three windows from the 1868 restoration, two to the nave, one to the chancel; each has a two-centred arch with two trefoiled two-centred lights of grey freestone; and continuous hoodmoulds ending in head stops and having a central stop as well. East of the chancel window, there is a disconformity at the base of the wall - to the east the wall is faintly battered and appears to be on a fractionally different alignment to that further west.

East wall: window in Perpendicular panelled style; consists of three trefoiled, two-centred lights, a transom, and four panel tracery lights and smaller lights, all under a two-centred arch; in grey freestone, some possibly original, but certainly some renewal and patching; a window difficult to decipher. Several slabs lean against the base of the wall.

South wall: west of the porch is a two-light window of similar design to those in the north wall. East of the porch is another two-light window and, lighting the chancel, a single trefoiled light with a standard hoodmould. The windows are thus of a consistent design.

West wall: gable end without any features. The bell turret is set on a corbel-table.

Vestry. General. 1867 addition to the north wall at its east end; unrendered and in 'A' masonry. Base of the wall has a plinth at c.0.5m on all sides and continues around the stepped buttresses at the north-east and north-west corners. Set into the west wall is a modern slate memorial slab in Welsh to William Jones (1726-1795). Doorway with pointed arch composed of stone voussoirs and chamfered jambs with broach stops in the east wall, and in the north wall paired windows with shouldered arches and a hoodmould with head stops. Above these a small slit aperture in the gable.

South Porch. General. Open-fronted porch built in 1868 in 'A'; unrendered. Plain side walls and in the south wall a two-centred doorway with stopped chamfers; similar in design to the vestry door.

## Interior

Porch. General. Red and black tiled floor; unplastered walls show masonry and single plank benches against the east and west walls. Planked ceiling above collar braces.

North wall. = South wall of church. The doorway has a pointed arch in blue brick, and chamfered stone jambs, all 19thC. The surrounding stonework is unrendered and is of regular appearance, almost certainly from the 1868 restoration, though there are signs of insertion to the west of the doorway.

Nave. General. Floored with red and black tiles, with matting down the aisles but no obvious grilles; benches on raised planking. Walls plastered and painted. Nave is ceiled over, again in 1868, and with the moulded cornice, is painted. It is known to disguise a timber roof of presumed 15thC construction with five or six cusped trusses with windbraces.

North wall: three splayed window embrasures, but no disconformities to match those on the outside.

East wall: a wide, four-centred chancel arch, resting on short wall posts with capitals.

South wall: splayed window embrasures; a stoup consisting of a shallow bowl in grey sandstone, very worn, set in the wall on the east side of the south door.

West wall: a masonry projection protruding about 1m into the nave acts as a ringing space, and is accessible through a 19thC doorway with pointed arch and chamfered jambs. There is a small opening also with a pointed head and chamfered jambs, above the doorway, and a small rectangular light in its north wall. The interior of this turret is clad in a bluish-red brick. A benefactions board hangs on the wall to the north.

Chancel - two steps up to the chancel and one to the sanctuary; encaustic tiled floor in the sanctuary but a wooden floor beneath the altar. Walls as nave. Ceiling of 15 panels with ribs and carved cornices; the ceiling contains carved oak salvaged from the front of the old gallery.

North wall: two-centred arch doorway to vestry.

East wall: window embrasure, the dressings painted over.

Vestry. General. Tiled floor; plastered walls and ceiling.

#### FURNITURE and FITTINGS

Stoup: damaged; sited in south wall of the nave.

Plate: includes Communion flagon with Latin inscription and a date of 1767; a silver chalice of 1730, a silver paten of 1647 and a paten of 1750. Also a large pewter flagon.

Bell inscribed: 'God Save His Church, 1658'. Cast by Thomas Clibury of Wellington.

Registers: from 1673.

19thC fittings and furnishings include:

Benefactions board: painted wood, its condition deteriorating; records gifts to the poor from 1687 to 1802.

Font: circular sandstone font, with decorated bowl, stone shafts and carved caps and square base. The earlier font is reputed to be in Welshpool Museum.

Pulpit: square-fronted wooden panelled pulpit with four treads and a door; desks and lectern of similar 19thC date.

Chest: carved sides; undated but presumed to be 19thC; in the vestry.

Stained Glass: 20thC memorial windows in the sanctuary, and in two of the north nave windows.

Organ: inserted in 1938.

Wooden hand bier: leans against south wall.



## CHURCHYARD

The original raised sub-circular churchyard enclosure was extended westwards in 1910.

Boundary: a stone wall acts as a revetment around the whole yard except on the west where the churchyard has been extended.

Monuments: some clearance and levelling in 1979. Remaining monuments are primarily slate slabs of 19thC date. The earliest noted was a much broken chest tomb slab of 1802.

Earthworks: a curving bank west of the church, and up to 1m high, denotes the extent of the earlier churchyard boundary, and incorporates the lychgate. The churchyard is raised by up to 1.5m on the north, east and south.

Furniture: a carved wooden baluster pedestal with a much damaged circular top is now located under a yew tree near the south wall - probably the support for a sundial?

Ancillary features: a stone lychgate of early 19thC date has rounded arches with long stone voussoirs in its west and east walls, and plain north and south walls; slate roof with red ridge tiles and a wooden finial. The interior has a cobblestone floor, a timber roof with exposed rafters and purlins, and wooden benches on stone plinths along the north and south walls. The main entrance to the church is through a pair of wrought iron gates set in stone pillars in the north-west wall, all part of the 1910 extension; a gravel path leads via the lychgate to the south porch. Stone steps in the south wall led to Tyn-Ilan, once a public house. A graveslab of 1803 now lies across the top of the steps.

Vegetation: three mature yews to the south of the church; several younger yews around the boundary. The sycamores and ashes that line the west boundary are said to date from 1732.

Well: St. Cadfan's Well sited under an arch by the roadway, about 100m to the north of the church.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 22 February 1996 and 29 July 1998

Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 192

Edwards 1869

Eisel 1986, 184

Faculty St Asaph 1910 (NLW): addition to churchyard

Faculty St Asaph 1979 (NLW): removal of churchyard stones and levelling

Glynne 1885, 45

Haslam 1979, 136

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

Thomas 1908, 478

## CONDITION

The church was replastered and painted on the interior a few years ago, but dampness is apparent particularly at the west end: the west wall and the west end of the north and south walls are peeling badly.

On the exterior, the west wall can be seen to be caving inwards in the area of the bell-turret. Future plans are to take down the entire west wall and rebuild (1996).

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium to Good



# Llangadwaladr

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** St Cadwaladr**PRN** 105975**NGR** SJ182303

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## GENERAL SUMMARY

The small, isolated, single-chambered church of St Cadwaladr lies remote in the hills, 7 miles to the west of Oswestry. It was heavily restored in 1883 and virtually nothing other than some of the nave and chancel walls remain of the earlier building, though a small window was re-set in the vestry. Internally the only features predating the restoration are the timber roof and a mural tablet of the early 19thC. The churchyard lies on the north side of a valley, and its curvilinearity is obvious even though its form has been modified.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Parts of the masonry shell could be medieval, but the only features to survive are a re-set medieval window in the vestry and the nave roof which may be 15thC.

## HISTORY

Dedication, location and churchyard morphology point to an early medieval origin. However, nothing is known of the church's early history.

The Taxatio of Pope Nicholas in 1291 refers to 'Bettws Kadwaladr' as a chapel to its mother church at Llanrhaiadr.

The rural dean in his report of 1749 described it as 'a small lightsome place; the chancel large and spacious in proportion to the church'.

Restoration occurred in 1840 at a cost of £300. Further and more drastic work in 1883 by Spaul included the removal of the gallery at the west end, construction of the apse and vestry, new windows in the north wall and alterations of those on south side, the raising of the chancel floor, and alterations to the seating.

Llangadwaladr was constituted a parish in 1877.

The west wall was rebuilt in 1915.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a polygonal apse, a south porch and a north vestry; a bellcote is set above the west end. 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 medium-sized, irregular blocks of mudstone, shale, quartz etc, variously coloured and randomly coursed.

'B' is as 'A' but this is mixed with thin shale slabs.

'C' consists of slabs with a few blocks of mainly brown shale; some coursing.

Roof: slate, grey clay ridge tiles, and a simple finial at the east end of the nave. The bellcote at the west end is of dressed stone and ashlar; single bell and cusped openings to apertures.

Drainage: nothing obvious.

## Exterior

Nave and Chancel. General. A lean-to vestry in the north-west corner.

North wall: eastern portion of wall is in 'A', set on a protruding foundation course which extends round the diagonal buttress in rough masonry at the north-east angle (though it has a dressed coping stone, probably of more recent date). Western part of the visible wall is in 'B' with no obvious projecting foundation. Two windows, both broad cusped lancets in pale freestone, the eastern one shorter than its counterpart to the west. Hubbard refers, too, to a blocked north doorway. This is no longer visible.

East wall: projecting foundation course carried round the east side and probably in 'A' masonry though little of it is visible. Leaning against southern part of this wall are two damaged slate gravestones of 1760 and 1769.

South wall: in 'A', but heavily pointed; sporadic signs of projecting foundation. Two standard windows, comparable with those in the north wall.

West wall: wall face rendered. Two standard windows.

Apse. General. Polygonal apse in 'C'. Three of the faces have standard cusped lancets. A datestone of 1883 below the east wall window.

Porch. General. In 'B'-type fabric. East and west walls are plain; the south wall has a simple arched entrance with jambs of undressed stone and the arch in chamfered freestone. No door or gate.

Vestry. General. In 'C'. North and east walls are plain; west wall is rendered but contains a window with a worn trefoiled head - an original medieval window re-sited, though the jambs are perhaps more recent.

## Interior

Porch. General. Patterned tiled floor; plastered and painted walls; roof of rafters and a ridge purlin (modern).

Nave. General. Patterned tiled floor with benches on flush wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of three bays with arch-braced collar trusses rising from wall plates; the westernmost truss against the west wall is a queen post truss above a tie-beam; one tier of cusped windbraces.

North wall: one deeply splayed window emphasising the thickness of the walls of the church, and a square-headed door to the vestry.

East wall: steps to chancel.

South wall: deeply splayed window and square-headed doorway from porch, faintly splayed.



West wall: two splayed windows with a wall cupboard between; font against this wall.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave. Encaustic tiles with carpet along aisle, and flush wooden boards under benches. Walls as nave. Roof of one bay with close-set scissor trusses.

North wall: one splayed window.

East wall: two-centred arch to apse in buff freestone, the same as the windows.

South wall: one splayed window.

Apse. General. One step up from chancel. Encaustic tiles on floor; walls as chancel, rafters form the roof.

Vestry. General. Floor as nave; walls plastered and painted; roof of lean-to rafters. West window (see above) and an early 19thC wall tablet on south wall.

#### FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Monument: in the vestry is a stone wall tablet to Rev. John Evans, minister of parish who died in 1806 and his wife Elizabeth (d.1817).

Plate: communion cup of 1637/38; and a communion cup, a paten and paten cover of 1723/24.

Victorian fittings include:

Encaustic tiles by Spaul, in 1883.

Font: octagonal and also of 1883.

#### CHURCHYARD

Llangadwaladr churchyard is an irregular shape, with an element of curvilinearity on its north side. Set above a small stream running on its south side, the effective edge of the churchyard is the lip of the terrace scarp, well inside the boundary shown on the map. In all likelihood this could have formed part of an earlier circuit, and it is possible, too, that the curtilage of Tyn-Ilan just to the east formed part of the earlier enclosure. The present churchyard is well maintained and is still used for burial.

Boundary: a retaining wall on north which runs round on west side as an ordinary wall. On the south there is a fence and on the east a hedge and fence separates the churchyard from Tyn-Ilan.

Monuments: 20thC burials on north, 19thC ones to west; ground to east and immediately to west of church is clear of memorials and only a few to south. Nothing pre-dates the 19thC apart from those noted above leaning against east wall of church.

Furniture: none.

Earthworks: raised on north where there is a gentle bank inside the wall and a drop of more than one metre to external level. Smaller drop on north. Natural scarp on south, and a drop into grounds of Tyn-Ilan on east.

Ancillary features: single iron gate on north, double iron gates of simple date on west, and an iron gate from

Tyn-Ilan. Tarmac paths except to Tyn-Ilan which is a slightly sunken grassy track.

Vegetation: a series of very old yews west of the church, though no evidence that they represent an earlier boundary line.

#### SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 22 April 1997

Faculty 1882: NLW

Faculty 1915: NLW

Hubbard 1986, 213

Quinquennial Review 1988

Ridgway 1997, 154

Thomas 1913, 15



## CONDITION

Cracks externally in south wall of chancel and east wall of vestry; further cracks internally in porch and south wall of chancel. Tiled floor lifting in places, particularly in porch and vestry.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Very Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium

# Llangedwyn

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** St Cedwyn**PRN** 101363**NGR** SJ18822414

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## GENERAL SUMMARY

St Cedwyn's at Llangedwyn, 7 miles south-west of Oswestry, is a small Victorian church that incorporates earlier, possibly medieval, masonry in its west and east walls, and also retains a Romanesque-style porch of earlier 19thC date. Associated with the Williams-Wynn family at Llangedwyn Hall, it sports several memorials, a hatchment and a weathervane that reveal this link. Additionally, a 14thC effigy of a priest, a font, a pulpit, a wooden almsbox and several wall tablets all survived the restoration of 1869. The churchyard is now irregularly shaped but was originally elliptical, and it contains an early upright gravestone incised with a cross in a circle.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Except for the porch which has Romanesque features in terracotta from an early Victorian building, almost the whole church was rebuilt in 1869-70. Earlier masonry, perhaps of medieval date, remains in the east and west walls, and the east wall may also have some earlier Victorian masonry, although this could be no more than material re-used at the time of the 1869 restoration.

## HISTORY

The dedication, location and churchyard morphology strongly suggest an early medieval foundation of which nothing now survives.

In the medieval era it was a chapelry to Llanrhaiadr-ym-Mochnant and its value was assessed under the mother church in the two 13thC Taxatios.

The medieval chapel was either replaced or renovated in 1527 according to an inscription on a wallplate noted by Thomas.

The Rural Dean's report of 1749 indicated that the roodloft had been converted into a gallery for the Williams-Wynn family. This was removed at the time of the rebuilding in 1869/70.

The earlier church was a simple building with a small nave, and a timber steeple at the west end. A west porch may have been added in the 1840s, perhaps by Thomas Penson.

The church was rebuilt in 1869-70 by Benjamin Ferrey under the patronage of Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn, but the earlier Victorian west porch was retained.

The church was restored by H. L. North sometime before 1907, and dormer windows were added above the nave/chancel division.



## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave and chancel, a south aisle with a vestry at its east end, a west porch and a west bellcote.

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

Fabrics: 'A' consists of grey shale slabs showing some degree of coursing; some of the stone appears fresh, some more weathered with limewash residue adhering; occasional lumps of sandstone. Quoins of dressed sandstone blocks. Heavy pointing.

'B' comprises blocks and lumps of dark shale, and red and yellow sandstone, randomly coursed and giving a much more irregular appearance than 'A'.

'C' is of thin slabs and blocks of dark shale with some (?re-used) sandstone and occasional lumps of brick.

'B' could be medieval, 'C' could conceivably represent early Victorian masonry but may simply be earlier material re-used in the later restoration, and 'A' certainly dates to the later Victorian restoration.

Roof: the body of the church has slates with ornamental ridge tiles that are probably of fired clay; the porch has plain ridge tiles and a stone cross finial. Wooden dormers are set over the nave/chancel divide.

The west bellcote is partly in ashlar with a single aperture for one bell. Hoodmoulds with head stops over the arches on west and east. Above is a weathervane with an eagle.

Drainage: ground hollowed along edge of northern wall so perhaps a drainage gully there; gravel paths on the south and west disguise anything beneath, although downpipes do channel water below ground. Nothing obvious on the east.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation between the nave and chancel.

North wall: in 'A' with more re-used stone at lower levels; also two horizontal bands of dressed sandstone blocks along complete length of wall. Three Gothic windows with two lights and a quatrefoil above, in pale sandstone; hoodmoulds with head stops, all different. Two buttresses with ornamented coping stones.

East wall: basal plinth to a height of c.0.3m, its chamfered top in weathered sandstone. Above this and beneath the east window the masonry is 'B', a probable medieval survival. East window of three, stepped, lancet lights under a two-centred arch and a hoodmould with foliate stops, and above this a relieving arch of dressed freestone. Masonry surrounding this is 'C', but although it is likely that the east window was inserted into this, the insertion is not visible. The wall angles and the edges of the gable are in 'A'.

South wall: where visible this is in 'A'. One standard window lights the chancel.

West wall: more weathered than the other sides. Original walling in 'B' survives, together with sandstone quoins at south-west angle now immured in the wall. Above this the wall is rebuilt in 'A'?

South Aisle. General. Masonry is 'A', although occasional lumps of brick.

East wall: rendered above line of vestry roof.

South wall: three windows, two with paired lancet lights, one triple. A single horizontal band of dressed freestone comparable with north wall of nave.

West wall: in 'A' but considerable amounts of re-used stone. No features.

Vestry. General. In 'A'. South side has square-headed doorway, the east side a window in similar style.

Porch. General. Roughcast render on the wall faces, pilaster buttresses at the four corners.

North wall: blind arcaded window in Romanesque style.

South wall: Romanesque-style doorway in terracotta and brick, with eaves courses in same material.

West wall: pair Romanesque-style windows.

#### Interior

Porch. General. Flagged floor; painted brick walls; rafter and purlin roof.

Nave. General. Tiled floor with carpet along the aisle, and raised seating; no obvious heating vents but beneath the carpet is at least one boarded void. Walls plastered and painted. Three-bay roof with bracing springing from wall corbels to support collars; windbraces.

North wall: 19thC/20thC wall memorials.

East wall: nothing other than a step up to the chancel.

South wall: three-bay arcade with two-centred arches resting on round piers with moulded capitals.

West wall: simple entrance from porch. Several wall tablets, but only one (of 1738?) of pre-19thC origin.

Chancel. General. One step up from the nave, two more to the sanctuary, and one to the altar. Carpetted, but encaustic tiles in the sanctuary. Walls as nave. Arched roof of 24 panels with carved bosses. Inscribed woodwork of 1527 is re-used in the chancel cornice.

East wall: wall memorials of 1718 and 1961.

South wall: wall memorial of 1617 plus 19thC brass.

South Aisle. General. As nave but with a simple raftered roof, with braces springing from corbels above the piers.

East wall: wall memorials of 1722 and 1832.

West wall: wall memorials of 1779, 1813 and 1844.

#### FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

Based on Hubbard with additions.

Effigy: recumbent figure of a priest, with missal; early 14thC.

Font bowl: plain and octagonal; in the porch.

Pulpit: '17thC with incised diamond pattern' (Hubbard).



Chest: 'panelled front with Jacobean ornament' (Hubbard).

Wooden pillar almsbox: of 1741, in porch.

Monuments: all in marble. i) Katherin Vaughan (d.1607) with heraldry, putto, and incomplete inscription. ii) Edward Vaughan (d.1718) and wife Mary (d.1722); Corinthian surround, open segmental pediment and garlands meeting above an urn, and three cherub heads; erected by their daughters. iii) John Wynne (d.1722), with cherub heads and a cartouche in folds. iv) Rev Richard Maurice (d.1738?). v) Margaret Dorsett (d.1779) and husband Francis (also d.1779) by J. Nelson, Salop. Classical tablets on the west wall include those to vi) Richard Maurice (d.1802), by John Carline II of Shrewsbury; a fulsome inscription on a wreath, and a book and grisly ornament at the foot. To Jane Bonnor (d.1830), by William Spence of Liverpool, a conventional weeping maiden and draped urn.

Benefaction boards: two 18thC boards signed by the churchwardens; in the vestry.

Hatchment: presumably to a member of the Wynn family, but undated. In the porch.

Plate: cup of 1694, flagon of 1754 and undated paten.

Victorian and later fittings and furnishings include:

Stained glass: 'east window of 1853; bright colours and geometrical patterns predominate. Second window from west on the north side is of 1884 by Ward and Hughes, with angels and a podgy and sullen little girl' (Hubbard).

War memorial: 'of wood and copper, with Art Nouveau detail, in the porch. Designed by J.H.B. Bonnor (1875-1916)' (Hubbard).

Font: stone bowl on marble columns; 1875.

Altar rails: 'in memory of J.H.B. Bonnor, posthumously erected to his design' (Hubbard).

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard at Llangedwyn is now an irregular 'butterfly' shape, due to extensions on both the south in 1870 and the east (in 1905 and later). Originally, it may have had an elliptical form but the outline has been modified through time, and the best traces of its curvilinear nature are fossilised on the south-eastern side. It occupies flat ground on the edge of the northern terrace of the River Tanat, though well back from the river, at a place where a small stream runs off the hill to the north. It is well maintained and interments continue in the north-western sector of the original churchyard.

Boundary: surrounded by a mortared stone wall which acts as a retaining wall on the west above the stream (c.1m lower), and continues round the southern churchyard extension. Part of the eastern extension(s) is also walled, the rest fenced. The north-east side too has a wall and here there is virtually no difference between the inner and outer ground levels.

Monuments: stones are well spaced on the north and west, and more closely packed on the south and in the extensions. Slate memorials of the 19thC predominate, but there is a table tomb of 1734 to the east of the chancel and several illegible ledgers immediately below the east window.

Furniture: a ring cross slab of medieval date outside the east wall of the chancel.

Earthworks: a low, spread bank, 0.3m high, surmounted by three yews, represents the former boundary on the east, and to the south of the church is a natural scarp nearly 2m high which almost certainly functioned as the earliest boundary on this side.

Ancillary features: a single iron gate at the north-east, simple double gates on the north; gravel paths.

Vegetation: yew bushes of no great age on the south, older ones though not ancient on the earlier eastern boundary.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 12 December 1997  
Crossley 1946, 31  
Faculty 1870 (NLW): churchyard extension  
Gresham 1968, 169  
Hubbard 1986, 214  
Quinquennial Report 1989  
Thomas 1911, 235



## CONDITION

Generally satisfactory though some peeling paintwork, and cracks appearing in the west wall.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium to Good

# Llangurig

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**Diocese** Bangor

**Dedication** Curig

**PRN** 16873

**NGR** SN90787991

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## SUMMARY

St Curig's church originated as an early medieval clas (or mother church) in the hills beside the River Wye, about 5 miles to the south-west of Llanidloes. It was largely re-built in the 19thC by Scott, though the 15thC tower was retained. Some original tracery remains in re-sited windows in the body of the church, including Perpendicular windows in the north aisle and chancel, and a composite window in the south wall. There is a 19thC copy of the medieval rood screen and a medieval font, one of the few furnishings to survive the 19thC rebuilding.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The main body of the church was rebuilt in Early English Style in 1877-78 and the interior is largely the result of 19thC restoration work. Some of the 15thC nave wall survives internally and the south-east corner of the church may also be original medieval masonry. Medieval window tracery is retained in the north and south walls. The tower has been attributed to the middle of the 14thC, though it has been suggested by Haslam that its core might be as early as the 12thC on the basis of the slight misalignment with the nave. The spire and castellation are 19thC additions.

## HISTORY

Llangurig is the site of a clas, reputedly founded by St Curig who died in 550.

Sometime after 1164, it came into the possession of the Cistercian abbey of Strata Florida in Cardiganshire. A date of 1180 is offered by the Quinquennial Report, though on what evidence is uncertain.

In 1254 the Norwich Taxation recorded that 'Ecclesia de Lankiric que est monachorum Cisterciensis ordinis' was valued at £1 6s 8d. Later, in 1295, there is a record in the Papal Registers of a priest named Goronue officiating at Llangurig.

The form of the medieval building is imperfectly known. The present tower dates to c.1350, but the nave axis is slightly off-set from that of the tower and it has been suggested that the early tower was refaced in the 15thC. It has been claimed that a north aisle was added and the church was extended to the east, also in the 15thC.

A rood screen and loft were added in the late 15thC.

During the 16thC, the font was removed from the church but replaced in 1660 and re-sited in the centre of the nave. An inscription inside the bowl probably records the first person to be baptised after it was re-sited.

In 1700, three new bells were hung and the old ones recast.

The lychgate was erected in 1740. In 1780 or thereabouts, the north wall of the church collapsed and was



rebuilt, not on the old foundations but to a narrower form. Repairs were carried out on the 'bel clock' in 1798.

In 1836 the rood loft was removed and the church re-seated. Parker's drawing of the rood screen reveals its sophistication. Bits of the screen were subsequently removed and nothing of it was left by 1852.

Glynne visited Llangurig sometime in the mid 19thC. He stated that the 'whole [building] both within and without is very rude and rough'. Stone steps led to the rood loft and the fact that he referred to a large portion of the rood screen remaining suggests his visit was before 1852. In 1869 Hamer described the pre-restoration building.

The present church results from the 1877-78 restoration work by Sir George Gilbert Scott and Arthur Baker on behalf of J.Y.C. Lloyd of Clochfaen Hall. The work included reconstructing the roof in the style of the original medieval roof, fragments of which had been discovered in the tower; a copy was made of the old rood screen, which had been recorded by Parker prior to its removal; a new chancel arcade, organ, new seating and ten stained glass windows were inserted. The porch and south wall were rebuilt. The tower was castellated and the broach spire added. The east window and the vestry window on the north side retained their original tracery, and it was argued that these might have come from either Strata Florida or Cwmhir Abbey.

In 1984 work was carried out to save the tower from collapse and to cover the spire with sheet copper. The bells were rehung. The church roof was re-slatted and the lychgate repaired.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a large western tower, a nave, a narrower chancel with a lower roof line, a narrow north aisle, its eastern portion forming a vestry and extending as far east as the chancel end, and a south porch. The building is aligned east-north-east to west-south-west but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: 'A' : small to medium-sized irregular blocks of grey sedimentary stone, perhaps a mud- or siltstone, some more regular slabs and blocks, occasional pebblestones and very occasional quartz blocks; irregularly coursed; selected stone for the quoins.

'B' is similar to 'A' in its masonry but of regular slabs, small, occasionally medium in size.

'C' consists of small through to large blocks and slabs of brown and grey stone; some very long slabs over 1m in length and these show signs of lamination through weathering; irregularly coursed. This masonry type shows some variation in its appearance.

Roof: slates with ornamental red ceramic ridge tiles; cross finials at nave and chancel ends and on porch.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts with original cast-iron cisterns lead to soakaways. Cobblestones have been laid at the base of the south wall, probably covering a drain. On the north the church has been terraced into the natural slope. Gravel around the walls of the tower.

## Exterior

Tower. General. A large, square tower, in 'C' up to belfry string course level. Features common to all faces include a basal plinth, c.0.5m high, below which the walls are battered; and a string course, continuous around all the wall faces and the corner buttresses at a height of c.1.5m. At higher levels there is a tendency to use long linear slabs to create the impression of a pseudo string course which then carries around the buttresses as chamfered steps. Integral, stepped diagonal buttresses with worn greyish capstones at the north-west and south-west corners rise to the base of the belfry; angle buttresses at the north-east and south-east corners rise to the battlements; the latter were raised above the level of the belfry windows in 1877. Towards the top of the tower is a corbelled string course of ashlar blocks and a battlemented parapet. The masonry above this string course, and in places a little below it, is of 'B' type. Rising above the tower is a broach spire on a square base, with a weathervane above; the base is lit by rectangular, louvred windows



which now have an outer protection of glass.

North wall: a protruding rectangular stair turret, which is of the same build as the tower, is built out from the north-east angle for c.1m, is individually battlemented and rises above the general level of the battlements on the tower; it is lit by four square-headed slit apertures which decrease in size as they ascend; these are formed of selected stone and show no freestone dressings. The belfry window has three trefoil-headed lights with panel tracery above, all in buff-yellow freestone; this is set beneath a segmental arch of voussoirs, and as with the rest of the frame, of selected stone not dressed freestone; all from the 1878 restoration.

East wall: nave roof abuts the tower and this wall shows only a belfry aperture, comparable with that in the north wall. There is some evidence for zoning of the masonry, though this is not at the same level as that in the north or west walls. Traces of a pseudo string course. The 1877 string course beneath the parapet dog-legs up to the parapet rather than going around the stair turret.

South wall: square-headed slit aperture about 3m below the standard belfry window. A row of three to four large rectangular slabs form the pseudo string course at around 6m-7m above ground level and might be related to the change in stages internally.

West wall: some zoning in the masonry at a high level. A wide segmental-headed aperture in selected stone contains a recessed doorway with a chamfered two-centred arch but plain jambs; this is presumed to be an original feature with surviving dressings. The first-floor window in Perpendicular style again has an aperture with a segmental head and a recessed window in worn sandstone: three trefoil-headed lights and panel tracery, much damaged; 15thC.

North Aisle. General. Rebuilt in 1750 (though narrower than before) and again during the 19thC restoration. The present north, east and west walls are of 19thC date.

North wall: in Fabric 'A'. The easternmost section of what appears to be the aisle is in fact the vestry, though there is no external differentiation. Features from the west are: i) recessed window with a fairly recent yellow sandstone frame containing two trefoil-headed lights and a relieving arch of voussoirs. ii), iii) and iv) windows all from the Victorian restoration with two-centred arches beneath semi-dormers with fleur-de-lys finials; the apertures contain three cinquefoil-headed lights with sub-arches and panel tracery of varying designs. v) a square-headed frame has a doorway with a two-centred arch. Steps up to the vestry. vi) Perpendicular window of 15thC date. A worn reddish-pink sandstone two-centred window contains three cinquefoil-headed lights with sub-arches and panel tracery; some of the original stonework survives including tracery; stone voussoirs in a relieving arch. This was the original east window of the north aisle, re-sited in the 19thC.

East wall: plain; and flush with the wall of the chancel.

West wall: on the south this abuts the tower staircase. A shouldered-arch doorway gives access to a small room with one window ((i) in the north wall above) which is inaccessible from the interior. Stone quoins at the north-west angle suggest this part of the north aisle is a more recent addition.

Nave. South wall: rebuilt at the west end where it abuts the tower. That part of the wall from the porch through to the chancel is best classed as 'B'. Features from the west end are: i) a white marble memorial tablet set into the wall recording Rev. John Evans, vicar from 1852 to 1876. ii) a two-light window, the lights of differing designs; the west light has a two-centred head and the east light a round head, with both lights in worn reddish-pink sandstone and set flush with the wall; the round-headed light is set in a square-headed frame and the peaked light in a round head; that to the east has sunken spandrels; the heads are original but the jambs may be renewed. It has been suggested that this is a 13thC window retrieved from one of the Cistercian abbeys in the region, but there is no obvious reason to prefer this interpretation to one that sees a composite feature, probably of 19thC design, using windows from the earlier church. iii) porch. iv) + v) two windows from the Victorian restoration, of standard form but with varying tracery (as seen in the north aisle). vi) a block of stone at a height of c.3m with incised marks, perhaps a scratch dial.

Chancel. General. Lower than nave by c.0.5m and largely rebuilt in 'A' in the 19thC.



East wall: east window has a recessed two-centred arch with three trefoiled, two-centred lights and unusual panel tracery; some renewal of dressings, particularly the arch stones and the mullions, but otherwise 15thC; relieving arch of voussoirs.

South wall: two pairs of trefoiled, two-centred lights set in square-headed frames within segmental-headed recesses directly under the roof line. At the south-east corner is a disconformity in the masonry with quoins standing proud on this face and some visible variation on the east wall. Blocks of laminated stone suggest this might be earlier, a corner left from the previous church, and this view is strengthened by the fractional change in alignment of the east wall beyond this point.

South Porch. General. In 'B' with a sloping battered plinth at c.0.5m on the east and west sides. On the south the open porch is now closed off by a pair of vertically planked, modern doors with wrought iron fittings; the entrance way is of two orders with the inner order comprising a two-centred, moulded arch resting on half-round pillars and capitals.

East and west walls: grey-yellow sandstone frames contain quatrefoils with leaded lights.

## Interior

Porch. General. Red and black tiled floor; grille. Plastered walls. Ceiling plastered above two arch-braced collar trusses with raking struts; a castellated frieze runs along each wallplate; exposed rafters and purlins with one tier of windbraces.

North wall: two-centred arch with complex mouldings and a hoodmould with floriated stops; completely 19thC.

East and west walls: stone benches against east and west walls and, above, splayed round-headed apertures to quatrefoil lights.

South wall: two-centred moulded arch.

Tower. General. Red and black tiled floor, and in the centre a stone plaque recording that the spire, tower and roof were restored in 1983/85; all stonework is exposed except for the west wall which is plastered; the ceiling below the belfry is whitewashed and there is a central opening for the bell ropes. Parts of the old bell-frame remain in the tower.

North wall: a narrow stone staircase off the north-east corner of the tower provides access to the belfry; a four-centred Tudor arch to the doorway, almost cyclopean in appearance because of the size of the stone.

East wall: a high, two-centred arch forms an open entrance to the nave, revealing the tower wall as c.1.3m thick.

West wall: large recess with segmental head for west door.

Nave. General. Red tiled floors and raised planked floors below the benches; heating grilles along aisle and beside south door. Except at the west end the walls are plastered and painted. Roof of three hammerbeam trusses springing from stone corbels and supporting a wagon roof of 42 panels - those at the west end are half-size where they abut the tower. Angels protrude off the arched beams and the horizontal ribs are decorated, as are the cornices. The whole is Victorian.

North wall: separated from the north aisle by a rather plain arcade of three wide, four-centred arches supported on two square stone pillars of reportedly 15thC date; the dressings are not chamfered. The responds are also considered to be 15thC, as is the surviving section of the north wall. But the arcade

stonework is plastered and painted and there is now nothing to suggest a medieval date.

East wall: a high four-centred arch with chamfers, and much like the arcade arches. Under this is a screen which consists of four panels to either side of the central, peaked arch over the aisle.

South wall: segmental sandstone arch to the splayed reveal of the doorway; two splayed window embrasures; and one 19thC brass.

West wall: three steps up to the tower. The wall is dominated by a high, two-centred arch formed of large voussoir edge stones. The misalignment of tower and nave is clear here.

North aisle. Floor and walls as nave, though no obvious grilles in the former. The roof is a sloping wooden ceiling with heavy rafters and purlins and two braces supported on stone corbels off the north wall.

North wall: three dormers with narrow window ledges, not splayed.

East wall: a four-centred arch, a miniature version of the arcade arches, with a slatted screen to the organ chamber.

South wall: triple arcade to nave (see above).

West wall: plain.

Organ chamber. General. At the east end of the north aisle and effectively an extension of it. Access from the narrower, western arch of the triple arcade in the chancel. A modern wooden screen below a two-centred arch divides the chamber from the north aisle.

Vestry. General. East of the organ chamber and effectively an extension of the north aisle. Wooden floor with chimney breast in north-east corner. Plastered walls and ceiling. Wainscotting on north wall below window. Wooden panelling separates vestry from organ chamber on west side.

Chancel. General. A stepped entrance from nave and a stepped sanctuary with an encaustic tiled floor. Three-bay hammerbeam roof with arch-braced trusses, heavy rafters and purlins. Three hammerbeams spring from stone corbels with large carved wooden angels holding shields and supporting three arch-braced collar trusses with cusped raking struts; cusped windbraces. The eastern hammerbeam is set against the east wall.

North wall: the vestry and organ chamber are separated from the chancel by an arcade in white stone, with four-centred arches resting on moulded octagonal capitals, two orders to the arches, and a continuous hoodmould that terminates in floriated stops, while the central two, in the form of a shield and a head, double as corbels. The westernmost bay, giving on to the organ chamber, is much smaller than the other two, which contain a wooden screen that separates the vestry from the chancel, and is constructed in 15thC style. One 20thC marble memorial. In the north-west corner an aperture shows the position of the rood loft stair, the underside of two treads being visible. The loft itself was removed in 1836.

East wall: a wooden reredos on a stone plinth below the east window.

South wall: a credence in white stone is set below the eastern window of the south wall. Eight brass memorial tablets dating from the late 19thC to the early 20thC are placed on the wall between the two windows, with a modern embroidered hanging beneath.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS



Details from Haslam with additions.

Font: 14thC or 15thC octagonal stone font in Perpendicular style with paired, blind, trefoiled panels on each face. The font stands on a short shaft. The font was thrown out of the church during the 16thC, re-instated in 1660, and on the inside of the bowl is incised 'MIL 1661'. It remained in a badly damaged state until the rim was reconstructed in 1878.

[Screen: nothing remains but using Parker's drawings Crossley and Ridgway were able to suggest a reconstruction].

Memorial slabs: three loose stones located on nave floor by south door are inscribed 'E.D.', 'D.R.' and 'Luke aged 77 years, 1793'.

Register: from 1683.

Church plate: includes chalice and paten dated to 1734.

Bells: three dated to 1700 inscribed: i) 'Thomas: Ingram ; Vicar: I:O:A:H:C:W:R:P: 1700'; ii) 'John Owen Adam hatfield C:W:R:P:F'; iii) 'God Save His Church John Owen Adam Hatfield CW 1700'. Bells were recast by Richard Phillips at an unspecified date.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Screen: constructed in 1878 from drawings made in 1828 by Rev. John Parker of the late 15thC screen, which was dismantled in 1836. It has ten bays of foliated and traceried heads and a geometrical doorhead. As a conscious attempt at reconstruction it can be compared with fragments of the original at Glansevern, Berriew, and a piece of foliage trail set in the cornice here.

Chancel furnishings and fittings: in the Bodley style and presumed to be by Arthur Baker.

Pulpit: carved oak on stone stem with five stone treads.

Chandeliers: three wrought-iron chandeliers in the nave.

Stained glass: ten faded stained glass windows by Burlison and Grylls, inserted in 1878. The subjects include the life of St Curig, and Lloyd family heraldry (based on Haslam). The two easternmost windows in the north aisle have brass plates underneath explaining the modern dedication in Latin script.

## CHURCHYARD

The D-shaped churchyard, on the north bank of the River Wye, shows elements of curvilinearity on its north side. The ground drops from north to south, with the northern edge of the enclosure considerably higher than the church itself, and a stream runs around the western edge of the yard. The grave yard is well-kept and the vegetation well trimmed.

Boundary: rubblestone wall on all sides. It is surmounted by railings on the north side, and around the south and west, where the ground falls away to the river and a stream respectively, it forms a revetment.

Monuments: mainly 19thC slate slabs, some chest tombs, railed graves and crosses, though there may be a few 18thC gravemarkers which were not identified during the survey. Graves are closely distributed on all sides of the church, and a new municipal cemetery is now located on the north-east side of the village.

Furniture: a small sundial is located near the north side of the lychgate, a 1938 gift in memory of Thomas Hamer.

Ancillary features: the northern lychgate has curving tie-beams supported on stone walls c.2m high, and

there is a central truss with raking struts; purlins and windbraces too. The tie-beam facing the road has a carved date of 1740 with names and initials of churchwardens: 'G.O' and 'S.H' with a 'W' over, refer to George David and Solomon Hamer. 'D.G' and 'I.O' with a 'C' over might indicate the carpenters. A gravel path from the north roadside entrance to the south porch and around the tower to the north aisle door. A small gate on the side near the river led to a lost footbridge over the Wye.

Earthworks: the interior of the churchyard is perhaps 2m higher than the ground level to the south and west.

Vegetation: several yew trees of no great age are established within the churchyard. A line of yews are located along the western boundary, one off the south-east corner and one by the south porch. Four yews on the roadside boundary. An Irish yew stands alongside the chancel east wall by a railed grave.

Finds: a coin hoard reputedly found in a grave in the churchyard in c.1753. No precise details are recorded but the coins were supposedly either of Henry I or from John to Henry III.

## SOURCES

Church guide n.d.

CPAT Field Visit 20 January 1996 and 31 July 1998

Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 192

Eisel 1986, 184

Faculty Bangor 1977 (NLW):

Fenn 1979

Lunt 1926, 191

Hamer 1869

Haslam 1979, 136

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

Quinquennial Report 1989

Williams 1990, 59



## CONDITION

Main body of church in good condition. The tower is in need of repair: the ceiling is very damp and whitewash is peeling badly. Similar problems of damp on the east side of the chancel arch.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium to Good

# Llangynog

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Cynog**PRN** 16482**NGR** SJ05302610

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## SUMMARY

St Cynog's is a small, single-chambered church which was rebuilt in 1791-2 and restored in 1894. The furnishings and fittings are all 19thC, and virtually the only things to survive the restoration are a series of slate grave slabs of late 18thC/early 19thC date and a few pieces of furniture. The church stands in a small, raised sub-circular churchyard in the centre of the village.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Small single-chambered church of late 18thC build with 19thC restoration work. The only Georgian survivals are the south doorway, and the ghost of a blocked priest's door.

## HISTORY

The dedication, location and churchyard morphology point to an early medieval foundation here.

The church is first mentioned as 'Ecc'a de Lankenant' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 with a value of £1 6s 8d. In Pope Nicholas' Taxation of 1291 it appears as 'Ecclia de Langenank' at £3 6s 8d.

Virtually nothing is known about its history and development until the end of the 18thC. A new church was erected in 1791 in Georgian style with round-headed doors and windows.

(Note: Eisel's claim that the church was rebuilt in 1855 appears to be an error).

Extensive alterations occurred in 1894 with plans and specifications by William Spaul of Oswestry. The faculty refers to complete re-roofing with new timber, the removal of the west gallery, pews, benches, pulpit and reading desk and the complete refitting of the interior; one pew was converted into a sedile. The faculty also included the removal of all floors and their replacement with tiles. Materials were to be reused or disposed of, and a new heating chamber was to adjoin a new vestry. The porch was to be reconstructed, the east window renewed and the north and south walls were to have three new windows, replacements for the earlier wooden framed windows. The bellcote was reconstructed above the west wall. Steps and soil at the entrance to the graveyard were to be removed and an incline formed.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave and chancel in one, a vestry on the north-east side and a south porch. There is also a western bellcote. It is oriented almost precisely east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of mainly medium-sized blocks of greyish sandstone, dark grey shale with occasional slate slabs, blocks of quartz and possibly pebblestones; long slabs for quoins; all irregularly coursed and



some evidence of limewash residue.

'A' is generally assumed to represent late 18thC masonry but its sheer heterogeneity might suggest some degree of re-use of earlier stone from the medieval building.

Roofs: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles. A cross finial at the east end has broken off.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. A drainage trench is obvious on the north and west.

## Exterior

General. Nave and chancel considered as one because no external differentiation. All in 'A'.

North wall: slightly battered at base. Two particularly large blocks of stone at the north-west corner and about half way along the wall are built into the wall face at ground level. Features from the west are: i) window with two-centred arch and a pair of septifoiled, two-centred lights with a small dog-tooth tracery light above; hoodmould with simple stops; all in buff-yellow sandstone and of Victorian date, set high in the wall so that the head is virtually under the eaves. ii) a second window directly above the boiler house has been blocked in, although the outline is still recognisable. iii) vestry with lean-to boiler house on west.

East wall: two-centred arch with three septifoiled, two-centred lights and above a large multifoil light with lesser lights to the sides.

South wall: features from west are: i) two-light Victorian window of similar form to that in the north wall. ii) porch. iii) window as i). iv) midway along the wall, there is a joint in the stonework where the earlier, priest's door was located; the dressed stones for the jambs are just visible and the high voussoired arch curves eastwards before being interrupted by v). v) window as i).

West wall: plain with no apertures.

Triangular-topped bellcote in dressed stone contains a single bell set in an aperture with a cusped four-centred head with a two-centred hoodmould over; from 1894.

Vestry. General. In 'A', though this is more regularly laid and the stone is more uniform in appearance. Dwarf diagonal buttresses at the north-east and north-west corners. The north wall has a square-headed window with a pair of foiled lights; grave slabs of 1841 and 1855 rest against the wall. Doorway with a shouldered arch in the east wall; graveslabs of 1849 and 1846 lean against the wall. West wall has a lean-to boiler room, and rising above this and against the north wall of the church is a chimney.

Porch. General. Dwarf buttresses to either side of the south two-centred doorway with chamfered outer jambs and engaged pillars with capitals recessed to support the inner arch; hoodmould. All in yellow sandstone and of Victorian date.

## Interior

Porch. General. Open front, red tiled floor with grey brick surround, plastered and painted walls, and timber roof with exposed rafters forming simple trusses.

North wall: a high, 18thC, round-headed arch over the door to the nave; recessed by 0.5m, and completely plastered and painted over.

Nave. General. Red tiled floor; benches on flush wooden boarding to either side of the central aisle; no obvious grilles. All walls plastered and painted beige, while the dressed stonework is painted a deeper beige; splayed embrasures are set under rather flat, two-centred arches and have flat sills. 19thC roof of five bays extends across chancel. Four arch-braced collar trusses with king and raking struts; the principal trusses spring from the wall tops and the bracing is further supported on stone capitals; exposed rafters and through purlins.

North wall: one window; one 19thC and one 20thC brass plaque.

East wall: a low, modern wooden screen, c.0.7m high, divides the nave and chancel. A principal truss directly above.

South wall: a small brass records 1881 restoration bequest.

West wall: plain, though in line with the upper level of the eaves in the north and south walls, is a horizontal ridge, its nature uncertain.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from the nave and steps to sanctuary. Floor has encaustic tiles, with rather more in the sanctuary; carpet down the aisle and heating grilles beside the choir stalls.

North wall: opened up in 1894 to form a two-centred arch to a harmonium chamber recess which contains the entrance door to the vestry. Above the vestry door is a stone memorial of 1806.

East wall: above the window the wall is inset. The structural significance of this remains uncertain, unless it is related to a raising of the roof.

South wall: one window embrasure.

Vestry. General. Tiled floor, plastered walls, and wooden ceiling. Slate memorial tablets from 1784 to 1851, located on all walls, presumably removed from the main body of the church during the 1893-4 restoration work.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Chair: no date but with initials R R carved on back. South side of chancel beside altar rails.

Settle: plain, but for a brass plaque inscribed 'Llanafon'. On a low dais in the alcove beneath the arch in the north wall of the chancel.

Monuments: i) to John Humphreys (d.1784) and his brother Edward (d.1790), with putto; in slate.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Table: simple, with chamfered legs. Possibly earlier than the 19thC.

Monuments: all in slate and all except the first are in the vestry. i) black slate slab with ogee arch and broken, scrolled pediment to Elizabeth Griffiths (d.1806), wife of the rector. ii) triangular headed monument to Jane Roberts (d.1802) and Robert Roberts (d.1812). iii) to Edward Tanat (d.1808). iv) to Mary Clark (d.1807). v) to Elizabeth Jones (d.1829). vi) to Robert Jones (d.1831). vii) to Robert Roberts (d.1836). viii) to Jane Tannatt (d.1851) by R. Roberts.

Slate plaque: bearing part of the Lord's Prayer in Welsh; with painted putto over.

Benefaction board: slate with gilt paint; north wall of vestry; no date.



Commemorative plaque: small slate slab to WWW Bart, in vestry.

Font: a square stone font with wooden cover stands on a star-shaped base near south door.

Bell, probably dated to 185?, but may have been recast. Rudhalls supplied a bell to the church prior to 1804.

## CHURCHYARD

A small, raised, sub-circular churchyard. No extension.

Boundary: a high revetment wall up to c.2m high on the south, east and north sides; on the north-west side an ordinary wall rises about 1m above adjacent properties.

Monuments: locally quarried slate slabs closely set around the church, the oldest graves from the late 18thC. A slab of 1769 is laid flat near the south wall and there is a chest tomb of 1789 nearby.

Earthworks: raised interior to the churchyard on all sides except the west.

Furniture: none, but note a tablet inset into the wall adjoining the inn car park which records 'Elusen ac Ysgol-dy 1791'. The almshouse and school of 1791 were traditionally the resting place for pilgrims en route to Pennant Melangell.

Ancillary features: a steep flight of steps leads up from the road on the south side through a pair of iron gates with an over arch. Gravel path leads up to the south porch.

Vegetation: a single yew of considerable date located in south-west corner of churchyard.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 23 March 1996 and 4 September 1998

Eisel 1986, 185

Faculty St Asaph 1893 (NLW): restoration

Haslam 1979, 139

NMR Aberystwyth

Powys SMR

Thomas 1911, 238

## CONDITION

East wall cracking from the kneelers on the north side upwards into the gable. Otherwise generally good.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor to Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium



# Llangynyw

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Cynyw**PRN** 16405 **NGR** SJ12710909**Previous dedication** All Saints

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## SUMMARY

A small, whitewashed single-chambered church of 15thC date, sited within what was once a curvilinear churchyard. It retains a 15thC timber porch with wooden seats and cobbled floor, several much renewed 15thC windows and much of the contemporary rood screen. There is also a late medieval font and 18thC furnishings and fittings including an altar table and benefaction board.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

15thC rubblestone walls, rendered and painted white. No exposed stonework, but a Perpendicular east window and medieval, trefoil-headed lights in the south walls. The porch is also considered to be 15thC.

## HISTORY

The church is dedicated to St Cynyw, a 6thC saint, although Thomas suggested that at some stage in the past its dedication was to All Saints.

It was recorded as 'Capella de Llankenwy' with a value of 5s in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and appeared as 'Ecclesia de Llangenwyk' at £4 in Pope Nicholas' taxation of 1291.

The present church is thought to have been built sometime between 1450 and 1500 AD. The present porch, screen, font, south door and some of the windows date to this period.

Several alterations were made to the interior in the 19thC. John Parker drew the rood loft and screen in 1839, but the former was dismantled later in the 19thC. Parker's drawings also show pews up to the sanctuary and a pulpit and desk against the south wall.

Accommodation was increased in 1842 and the gallery was almost certainly added at this time.

The interior was re-arranged in 1858; the chancel was raised one step above the nave and the small north vestry was added. The pulpit was moved to the north-east corner of the nave and the church re-seated. The old box pews were used for dados and a new belfry was constructed.

Electricity and heating apparatus were installed in 1936 and further improved in 1955.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave and chancel as a single unit, a north vestry and a south porch. There is a bellcote at the west end. The building is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: the masonry is not discernible because the whole of the exterior is covered in a cement render.

Roofs: slates with plain, black ceramic ridge tiles. No finials.

Drainage: modern guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. The possibility of a gully along the south and west sides cannot be dismissed, while the deep terracing on the north may also conceal a drain.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. No differentiation between the elements.

North wall: features from the west are: i) a single Victorian trefoil-headed light without a frame. ii) and iii) square-headed, Victorian windows containing two round-headed lights with trefoiled tracery in buff-yellow freestone, weathering to grey; sunken spandrels. The heads of the lights in the more easterly window are in more weathered sandstone but still Victorian. iv) vestry at the extreme north-east corner.

East wall: Perpendicular window in worn grey sandstone, having a two-centred arch and three trefoiled, round-headed lights with foiled panel tracery above a transom; this is assumed to be largely original. A pink sandstone memorial set in the wall near the south corner records Henry Foulkes, a former rector from 1729 to 1745, and his family.

South wall: west of the porch is a square-headed window with two trefoiled, two-centred lights in worn grey sandstone and showing limewash residue; 15thC. To the east of the south porch are two windows. First a square-headed window with three trefoiled lights and two small tracery eyelets, in buff-yellow sandstone and dating from the 19thC restoration. Next a square-headed window lighting the chancel with two trefoiled, two-centred lights in worn grey sandstone, showing some limewash traces; 15thC, but some limited renewal to the mullion.

West wall: a central multifoiled light set in a curvilinear-edged triangular aperture of buff-yellow sandstone.

The bellcote has a pitched roof surmounted by a wrought iron weathervane. The aperture for the single bell has a two-centred arch with chamfered dressings in buff-yellow sandstone.

Vestry. General. Adjoins north-east corner of the church. The north wall has a single lancet in buff-yellow sandstone. The other walls are plain.

Porch. General. 15thC timber-framed open porch, standing on a stone plinth which rises to a maximum of c.0.2m above ground level. Much of the original timber remains.

East and west walls: timber frames with two rows of closed oak panels with wooden pegs.

South wall: open entrance with a rounded wooden arch formed by a moulded tie-beam supported by curved braces off large corner posts, and above, short raking struts. Carved bargeboards are an addition to this ancient feature, and there is an overhanging wrought iron lantern.

## Interior

Porch. General. Cobbled floor. Arch-braced roof with three trusses including that visible on the outside. The inner two are renewed although the central one imitates that outside; heavy through purlins and rafters, and a lower tier of cusped windbraces in the outer bay; considerable replacement of timberwork throughout.

North wall: Perpendicular south doorway into the church; two-centred arch of two orders, both chamfered,



though the inner is slightly hollowed; sharpening marks on one jamb stone; the arch stones may have been replaced. Supports for the innermost roof truss disguise the wall into which the door is set. Two steps up into the nave.

East and west walls: oak benches, that to the west resting on a stone riser, that to the east on a large block of timber.

Nave. General. Continuous nave and chancel. The nave has a central aisle with red and black 19thC tiles; carpet down the aisle and heating grilles beneath this. Under the benches is patched, wooden flooring, flush with the aisle on the north side but raised above it on the south. The oak benches have carved heads. Walls plastered and painted; and a plastered coved ceiling above both the nave and chancel, which is raised at the west end over the gallery. A single tie-beam is exposed against the west wall.

North wall: dado along wall to a height of c.1m; windows set in segmental-headed recesses with sloping sills. Painted fleur-de-lys frieze runs the full length of the church above window level. One marble memorial of 1797.

East wall: three-bay screen surmounted by four pinnacles; north and south bays extend across the width of the benches and the shorter third bay spans the aisle.

South wall: dado, windows and frieze as north wall, though two of the dado panels bear a scalloped pattern. Square-headed reveal to main door.

West wall: an alcove contains the font, and a dog-leg staircase in the south-west angle leads up to the gallery which is supported by two wooden piers spanning the centre aisle with a pierced tracery head (derived from the rood screen) between them. The tiered gallery, probably of 1842, has a 12-panelled front somewhat similar to the plain dados along the north and south walls

Chancel. General. One step up from the nave and one step to the sanctuary. Completely carpetted. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: this has a wooden return of the screen on which is 'Te Deum Laudamus' above the entrance to the open vestry and organ.

East wall: the window carries 20thC stained glass and to either side are paintings: to the north a Nativity in memory of Thomas Richards, Rector between 1826-1856 and on the south a Resurrection to M. Myrddin Jones, Rector between 1856-1862. 'A.D. Majorem Dei Gloriam' in a painted blue scroll above the window.

Vestry/Organ Recess. General. The organ is set into a recess to the vestry which was opened up as part of the 19thC restoration work. Wooden planked floor, slightly raised; plastered walls and ceiling. Cast iron grate in north-west corner.

East wall: Benefactions board.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Details from Haslam with additions.

Font: octagonal stone lined bowl in Perpendicular style; tapering underfaces have carved trees and foliage; the lip has '1687 R.H.' inscribed on it though this is clearly not primary; the base appears to be later and is painted white. It is set into an alcove in the west wall of the church and only five of the eight faces are visible.

Rood screen: two bays to either side of an heraldic entrance, supported by two wooden posts rising from the

floor of the central aisle and wall plates on the north and south walls, the supporting pillars here having been cut off below the tracery. In the entrance, lions support a shield and foliated circles with winged dragons are carved in the spandrels. Crossley dated the tracery to the third quarter of the 15thC, but the pomegranate pattern on the east side of the head-beam to 1500. The beam and central arch remain, and ten narrower tracery heads with the muntins cut off just below. They are of five patterns, two of Herefordshire type (one is of 19thC iron). The central tracery has a triangular motif and drop-crested similar to work at Llanwnnog and at Llandefalle.

The tracery head now between the gallery piers belonged to the former west doorway of the screen; it has a shield with dragons.

Pews: pre-19thC pew panels used for dados. Plain except for one decorated example immediately west of the south doorway, and another on the same side beneath the gallery.

Table: carved legs and decorated front and sides; no date but probably 18thC.

Monuments: white marble and stone tablet to the Rev. David Evans, rector of Llanymynech (d.1787), pediment and fronds; by John Nelson of Shrewsbury. Externally to Henry Ffoulkes, his wife Elizabeth and also to David and Rebecca Lewis.

Benefactions board: records gifts dating from 1697 to 1778; cherub heads in the top corners. Canvas in a wooden frame. 18thC.

Registers: from 1584.

Plate: 1587 silver cup, a pewter flagon, three patens and a 1614 silver Communion cup.

Bell: inscribed '...AR 1734...Away Make No De....7247. Recast by Gillett & Johnson/ Croydon'. This Rudhall bell was recast by Johnsons in 1954.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Stained glass: 1909 memorial to Rev. David Lewis in the east window. Glass in the south window a memorial to Rev. Samuel Reed (d.1906).

Chest: iron box chest dates from c.1840-50s and has 'Coalbrookdale' embossed in capitals on the lid. In vestry.

Reredos: from 1909 in carved oak. Seven trefoil headed panels with side panels. 'In Piam Memoriam Cynyw Santi Fundatoris' carved over altar; south side painted panel has Christ with two kneeling angels and 'Samuel Reed R.D. 1895-1906' carved on it; north side has a similar painting of Christ and angels with 'Evan Jenkins A.M. 1862-1877'.

Pulpit: octagonal base with plain six-side panelled front; pre-1858 restoration.

Organ: by Walker and Sons, London. Fitted with electric blower in 1966.

Wall paintings: on east wall.

## CHURCHYARD

This medium-sized churchyard comprises an originally curvilinear enclosure with a later rectangular extension of 1925 at a higher level on the west.

Boundary: a stone wall revetment on the south and south-east side, and a hedge and old railings on the north-east against the grounds of the old rectory; the western portion of the churchyard has a railed



boundary.

Monuments: a mix of slabs, crosses and chests of mainly 18thC and 19thC date, with more recent burials in the northern extension. The earliest graves are to the south-east of the church; many are grassed-over and some are re-sited. A 1768 slab is laid flat near the porch, two slabs of 1799 lie under the yew in the south-east corner and a small worn slab of 1790 is under the yew in the south-west. Four chest tombs and one slab are sited directly below the east window of the church; one carries the date 1727, another 1736.

Furniture: sundial, complete with plate and gnomon, on a modern baluster-shaped stem on a circular plinth and base. The plate bears the date 1616 and has a central 'sun face' with 'Sunny Tyme Only' inscribed and Roman numerals.

Earthworks: churchyard is raised by up to 1.2m on east and south-east, and less elsewhere. The old churchyard boundary on the north shows as a scarp dropping into the old churchyard.

Ancillary features: a pair of iron gates set in the east wall form the entrance to the churchyard. A gravel path to the south porch and continues west to a single gate at the south-west corner where the stone wall meets the more recent railed boundary.

Vegetation: seven yew trees of considerable age form a ring around the early enclosure.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit 29 March 1996 and 29 July 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 194  
Eisel 1986, 185  
Haslam 1979, 138  
Faculty St. Asaph 1925 (NLW): churchyard extension  
Nadfas Survey: NA/GEN/93/109C  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Thomas 1908, 481

## CONDITION

Church in good state of repair both externally and internally.

## 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



# Llanidloes

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**Diocese** Bangor

**Dedication** Idloes

**PRN** 16880

**NGR** SN95398468

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## SUMMARY

St Idloes' church is assumed to be of early medieval origin and is set on the south bank of the River Severn within the later planned town of Llanidloes. It is a medieval structure with a typical Marches tower and two-stage timber belfry, probably of 14thC origin. The body of the church was constructed around the same date but there was considerable rebuilding in the 16thC when both architectural features including the arcade and the south door and also a fine hammerbeam roof were imported from the former Cistercian monastery at Cwmhir. The church was restored at the end of the 19thC. It retains a limited number of pre-19thC furnishings including a 14thC font, a chest and some fittings from a 16thC tomb.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

On the basis of one corbel it is suggested that the tower dates to the 14thC, and an unsupported statement in the church guide attributes a date range of 1350 to 1400 to it. A later, Perpendicular, window and door were inserted into its west wall, and at some point the top of the stone section has been rebuilt. Salter attributes a similar date to much of the south wall of the nave. This may be medieval but it is not certainly 14thC.

The five-bay arcade, the hammerbeam roof, the south door and perhaps the east window tracery all reputedly came from Cwmhir Abbey after its dissolution in 1536. A date of 1542 is to be seen on one of the shields on the roof and it has been assumed that some of the church was rebuilt at that time, presumably to accommodate this new roof and arcade. The north aisle was added and probably the porch, and part of the south wall by the main door could also date to this build; the former east window was re-set in the east wall of the aisle. Salter implies that the chancel was extended eastwards at this time but Haslam's analysis of the arcade (see below) indicates that the extension was already in place. The hammerbeam roof was erected in the nave at a level c.3m higher than old one.

Some reconstruction occurred at the time of the 1816 restoration. The extent of this is uncertain but it has been claimed that the south wall was rebuilt, and the north also looks to have been partially constructed.

The east end of the church was redesigned by Street during his restoration of 1882. Again the extent of the rebuilding is difficult to gauge.

## HISTORY

The church, dedicated to St Idloes, an early 7thC saint, is almost certain to have been an early medieval foundation, even though the surrounding settlement appears to be a medieval plantation. It was a dependency of the mother church at Llandinam. Unsurprisingly, no evidence of the early church survives.

The church is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'capella de Lanidloes' with a value of 13s 4d.

The tower is thought to have been built sometime between 1350 and 1440. Much of the church is claimed to



have been rebuilt around 1542 when the roof, the arcade and some window tracery were brought from Cwmhir Abbey. The nave was heightened by around 3m to take the hammerbeam roof, and the north aisle was added.

There are non-specific references to considerable repairs at the beginning of the 18thC.

Considerable restoration work also took place at several times during the 19thC. In 1816 box-pews were erected, the rood screen was removed along with the old altar rails, oak pulpit and carved seats. Wall paintings on the north aisle were removed, and it is possible that new windows were inserted in the south wall. It has also been suggested that the south and east walls were taken down and rebuilt at this time.

Two galleries, one above the other, were removed from the west wall in 1846 and a single gallery was erected to house the organ.

In 1880-2 the church was restored to the design of G.E. Street. The west gallery was removed and the organ sited in the east bay of the north aisle. A small priest's doorway in the south wall of the chancel and the window over the south porch were blocked up. The east wall appears to have been rebuilt and the buttresses added. New windows were inserted and the interior re-seated. The aisle roof may have been raised at this time.

The reredos and the oak panelling were inserted in the chancel in 1900. In 1956 a Lady Chapel was added.

A new church room was annexed to the north-west corner of the church in 1982.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a large western tower, a nave and chancel, a shorter, north aisle and a south porch. There is also a new church room from 1982. The church is aligned east-north-east to west-south-west but for the purposes of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' : medium to large blocks and some small slabs of local brown and grey, fine-grained sedimentary stone, perhaps a siltstone or mudstone; some coursing.

'B' is similar to 'A', but incorporates smaller stone; some coursing.

'C' comprises a mixture of grey and brown shale, some with quartz veins, brown sandstone, and some pebblestones; larger stones used towards wall base; irregular coursing.

'D' consists of medium-sized slabs of shale/slate, some lumps of quartz, and some pebblestones.

'E' is akin to 'A', but the masonry is more regular with squarer blocks and slabs of dark grey and brown sedimentary rock; irregular coursing.

'F' consists of brown and dark grey slabs and blocks, small to large in size and somewhat irregular in appearance, some quartz and pebblestones and occasional lumps of red sandstone; random coursing.

'A' is thought to be 14thC, and 'F' is also perhaps medieval though whether 14thC remains uncertain; 'D' may be 16thC; 'C' is undated - it could be as early as the 16thC, but it is possibly more likely to be early 19thC; 'B' is almost certainly later 19thC, as is 'E'.

Roofs: slates with red, toothed, ceramic ridge tiles; cross finials at the east end of the church and over the porch.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. No clear evidence of a drainage trench around the church but the possibility of something on the south side.

## Exterior

Tower. General. A low and rather squat, square western tower, of typical Welsh border style, with pyramidal roof over a stepped, two-tier wooden-boarded belfry with two square, louvred apertures in each side. Above



the tower is a weathervane. In fabric 'A' with random, large, greyish, fine-grained freestone blocks for quoins. Walls around 2m thick and battered at the base which is topped by a square-sectioned string course at a height of about 2m. Also a string course close to the tower top, and evidence of rebuilding (see below)

North wall: a new church hall adjoins this wall at ground floor level. Red brick patching on the north-west corner above first-floor level. (The stonework of the north wall of the tower is visible within the corridor that leads from the north aisle to the new church hall). A square, louvred light perhaps lighting the ringing chamber. There is also a broken string course with a hollowed soffit, but this stops about 2m away from the north-west angle, indicating some rebuilding of part of the tower top. The tower staircase protrudes from the north-east corner, abuts the north aisle and rises to the full height of the tower. On the north side there is one slit window and a string course, above which the masonry tapers to merge with the tower wall face at eaves level. All in 'A'.

East wall: the nave roof rises to the eaves of the tower roof. A fragmentary string course is visible towards the south side, but does not continue as far as the angle. Toward the north end a disconformity suggests further rebuilding.

South wall: high up is a louvred aperture as in the north wall. A continuation of the east wall string course occurs just below the aperture, but is interrupted towards the south-east corner. It is clear that the south-east corner has been rebuilt in 'B' for a joint in the masonry can be detected at the angle from about 2m below the string course, and runs diagonally up towards the centre of the wall. Indeed, it is likely that the whole wall face above the string course has been rebuilt and this probably holds true for the other wall faces as well. There is a further anomaly in this wall for from a height of about 3m, there is a blocking of small stones between the quoins of the tower and the nave wall. This seems to indicate that the bottom 3m of the tower projected further east than at a higher level, but this is not matched at the south-west angle, although the wall continues to taper inwards. Regardless of this, it is clear that the nave abuts the earlier tower structure at this point.

West wall: west entrance consists of a low, broad, four-centred Perpendicular doorway with chamfered jambs terminating in worn stops - this is wholly original although different stone was used for the arch and the jambs. The string course above the batter rises to form a label over this doorway, and over the label is a relieving arch of voussoirs. The window to the first floor has a two-centred arch, hollow chamfers, and two cinquefoil-headed lights with panelled tracery above; it shows signs of insertion and is of yellow Victorian freestone - there are no original dressings; a relieving arch of stone voussoirs follows the curve of the window. Above this the masonry is 'B', illustrating how the window was renewed. The upper string course is again interrupted.

North aisle. General. In 'C', but there are changes in the appearance and size of this fabric and it is possible that the upper part of the wall was rebuilt when the Victorian windows were emplaced.

North wall: divided into five bays by four stepped buttresses of 19thC date. The central bay has a below-ground entrance to the boiler room and an octagonal stone chimney that rises above the roof; the boiler room is lit by a below-ground, square-framed, two-light window, the lights with cinquefoil tracery, and entered by a doorway with a segmental head; all Victorian. In the north aisle wall are four windows of 1881 with square-headed yellow sandstone frames, flush to the wall and three trefoil-headed lights; but the two more westerly windows have panel tracery, the two to the east have longer lights; all four windows have relieving arches of stone voussoirs. The easternmost bay has a square-headed yellow sandstone frame for an ogee-headed doorway to the vestry. Then a fifth window to the east of the doorway with three ogee-headed lights, the outer ones asymmetrical; panel tracery above and a relieving arch. Finally, there is a sandstone headstone of 1821 mounted on the wall, while slate headstones are propped up against the wall throughout its length.

East wall: a single window with three plain, two-centred lights and panel tracery in patched worn red and yellow sandstone; some original pale yellow dressings but some of the mullions and arch stones have been renewed. This is an original window and it has been claimed that this window was probably the original east wall of the old chancel until 1542 when it was moved to make way for the Cwmhir Abbey window. The base of the window is set on a wedge of masonry classed here as 'D', for which there is a clear edge on the north



and a less evident one on the south. Above this and around the window is 'C'. Several slabs lean against the wall.

West wall: plain without apertures, in 'C'.

Nave. General. In 'F'.

South wall: in 'F' and possibly largely original, though whether 14thC as has been suggested cannot be ascertained. Two 19thC stepped buttresses form three bays, the most easterly of which is then extended to form the chancel. Two windows are set in four-centred, almost round-headed apertures with casement mouldings and three cusped lights, with relieving arches of stone voussoirs immediately above; the more westerly window appears to be inserted. West end is blocked off by the south porch. Above this the outline of a window, now blocked in more regular stonework, which lit the gallery.

Chancel. General. In 'E' with yellow sandstone quoins at the north-east and south-east corners, probably entirely the result of Street's restoration.

North wall: a single window with two cinquefoil-headed lights and panel tracery; relieving arch above; 19thC. Several grave slabs lean against the wall.

East wall: large 19thC east window, reportedly a copy of its predecessor. The five-light window consists of two tiers of five cinquefoiled lights divided by a transom, two sub-arches and panel tracery; the frame is in yellow sandstone recessed under a two-centred arch with a relieving arch of stone voussoirs above. Six memorial slabs dating from 1831 to 1873 are built into the east wall and were probably moved when the chancel was rebuilt.

South wall: this wall is slightly inset from the line of the nave wall to the west, although it should be stressed that this break does not conform with the present internal division between nave and chancel. The wall appears to be in 'E'. At the west end is a single window which has a two-centred arch with three cinquefoiled ogee-headed lights and panel tracery, all in pale yellow sandstone and of 19thC date. Memorial slabs affixed to the wall.

South Porch. General. Masonry is closest to 'F'. Open south porch with a low basal plinth of concrete about 0.1m above ground level.

East and west walls: large stone quoins at the south corners; walls without windows.

South wall: two-centred entrance arch is completely concreted over.

Church room. General. From 1982; a square stone-built structure with pyramidal slate roof joined to the north aisle by a hallway which is built up against the north wall of the tower and west wall of the north aisle.

## Interior

Porch. General. Floor of slabs within a border of red and black tiles. Walls plastered but not painted, leaving only the stonework of the nave doorway visible. Roof of seven close-set, arch-braced collar trusses of more recent date than the porch itself which may be 16thC.

North wall: the main church doorway is of three orders with jambs and filleted shafts, the outer two with Corinthian capitals in Early English style (early 13thC?). It was reputedly brought from Cwmhir Abbey. Some of the dressings have been renewed including the whole of the arch itself except perhaps for one stone in the innermost order.



East wall: a deep and wide water stoup is set into a simple square-headed recess. All but the bowl is completely plastered over.

Tower. General. Modern slab floor with a tile surround; exposed masonry with deeply splayed apertures. Open to belfry level where there is a rib-vaulted ceiling with random slate infill, and in its centre an opening for raising the bells. Four simple, tapering corbels support the stone vaulting; three are worn but the fourth displays deep scrolled moulding of 14thC style.

North wall: tower staircase built into the north-east corner; the doorway with a segmental arch.

East wall: a plain, high, two-centred arch opens to the nave. Large stone voussoirs form the arch.

West wall: splayed reveal to doorway with segmental head. Modern blocks for the soffit of the window embrasure above the doorway. South of the doorway is a flaking slate memorial tablet, perhaps of 1708. North of it a marble and slate memorial of 1811.

North aisle. General. Stone slabs to floor with borders of red and black tiles; heating grilles. Walls rendered but not painted. A sloping ceiling: the principal rafters forming five bays are supported on cusped braces off the north wall and arching braces off the arcade wall; intermediate rafters and through purlins. A Lady Chapel was constructed at the east end of the north aisle in 1956 by the insertion of a screen on the east and south sides. The organ is sited between the Lady Chapel and the vestry in the eastern bay of the arcade; a slate slab at this juncture is inscribed 'Entrance to the Family Vault of T.E.Marsh 1837'.

North wall: splayed windows and two 19thC and 20thC memorials.

South wall: a five-bay arcade with two-centred arches of six orders, in Early English style, brought to the church from Cwmhir Abbey after 1536. Haslam's detailed assessment is repeated here. 'The arcade was set up from the east where the (then unbuttressed) respond has leaned out. The line is slightly wide of the earlier north wall, and the fifth (westernmost) arch had to be rebuilt narrower than the others, to fit with the tower. One wonders why the spacing was not measured first. The base height of the piers are uneven; the last two to the east are higher than the rest, which indicates the position of the former raised sanctuary. [Alternatively this might reveal that the Cwmhir Abbey piers were shorter and had to be built up, particularly as the respond exhibits even more exposed base than the pier to the west. R J Silvester]. This splendidly solemn arcade is part of the fourteen-bay aisled nave of the Cistercian church at Abbey Cwmhir some 10 miles south-west across the hills. There is no doubt that the material was carted away after the Dissolution and re-erected in slightly jumbled order at Llandiloes. The Grinshill stone piers are formed of eight groups of three shafts each, the middle one filleted - twenty-four in all - applied on square piers set diagonally (cf Strata Marcella). The responds have one triplet only and four larger shafts like those of the south doorway. Arches with roll mouldings to the nave, but chamfers only to the aisle, where the outer step is defective all along. [In fact the most westerly bay does have mouldings on the arcade side. R J S]. The system is that one filleted and one plain roll rise from each cluster of pier shafts, except on the longitudinal angles, where three rolls rise, all filleted.

The stiff-leaf carvings of the round capitals - one to each triplet of shafts - are instructive examples of the development of this quintessential Early English decoration. The masons for the reconstruction clearly did not distinguish between the six or more patterns at their disposal..... Of the earliest type (c.1190?) seem to be two, almost variants of the water-leaf form, on the third pier from the east. On this same pier, three capitals show the genesis of stiff-leaf: bunches of four shapes, basically the 12thC trumpets, are at the very point of metamorphosis when from the left a hesitant spray of leaflets pops out. If this type is of c.1200, then so perhaps are the two sorts of fleur-de-lys designs. These are of flowers, one to a shaft, either beneath a band with a wavy line, or with their tops extended like a crenellation. Examples occur muddled together on all the piers. On the third pier from the east again (south-east side) is another indecisive kind, two capitals with wavy patterns meshed behind stalks. That leaves the true stiff-leaf, richly curled on the east respond, in two rows on the first pier, with more on the fourth pier and on the west respond, where the heads droop and are most deeply undercut. The evolution from Transitional to the fully achieved style probably implies nearly a generation in time; Cwmhir's nave would therefore appear to be building by c.1190 and still in progress c.1215'. Note the good collection of masons' marks on the stonework.



In the south-west angle is a masonry projection up to the level of the capital. This now acts as a rest for the 16thC helmet (see below), but is actually the remnant of the thicker earlier wall.

West wall: plain, but for the new doorway to the church room.

Vestry: occupies east end of north aisle but is not accessible.

Nave. General. Central aisle has stone slabs with tiles along the edges; heating grilles; flush woodblock flooring under the benches. Walls as north aisle. The hammerbeam roof, reputedly from Cwmhir Abbey is divided into 19 bays and extends over the nave and chancel. The hammerbeams with carved spandrel-pieces are mounted on stone corbels (four of which, at the west end, are carved with foliage); the base of each bracket is carved with various grotesque heads and figures such as an archer drawing his bow and a bird of prey. Carved, gilded angels are attached to the hammerbeams. The angels are an addition to the roof and hold shields of various shapes; they were probably added to the roof when it was inserted in the church; some of the shields are blank but a few are inscribed including 'ANO DNI 1542' and 'RESTITUTA 1882'. The hammerbeams support curved ribs and principals, forming a sort of tunnel-vault. The framing is all delicately moulded. The corbels are odd masonry bits including stiff-leaf from Cwmhir (Haslam). Above the collars are curved raking struts. The three east bays of the roof were added by G.E. Street during the 1882 restoration, and the last four collar trusses have simpler struts. The roof was repaired by Street when many of the timbers were replaced.

North wall: plain apart from the arcade.

East wall: no division from the chancel apart from one step up.

South wall: there is a shallow reveal to the south door but on either side the wall is thickened by perhaps 0.25m for a length of around 2m - the most obvious explanation is that this is associated with the insertion of the Cwmhir doorway in the 16thC. Two 20thC brasses.

West wall: two-centred arch to the tower with exposed dressings. Axe pinned to wall (see below).

Chancel. General. Step up from the nave; floor carpetted; carved longitudinal choir stalls on tiered wooden flooring; four steps to the sanctuary and altar; the floor of encaustic tiles, but also a slate slab recording the Evans family from 1810 to 1845. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: one bay of the arcade. One 19thC marble memorial.

South wall: 19thC piscina under a pair of trefoiled arches and sedilia under a pair of cinquefoil arches. One 19thC memorial.

West wall: one 19thC memorial.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: octagonal stone bowl dating perhaps from the 14thC; the panels are carved with quatrefoils, except on one face where there is a flower head; the underfaces have cusped arches and shields. Modern stem and base. It stood in the western bay of the arcade in 1831, was replaced by a wooden font in 1846 and was brought back into the ground floor of the tower in 1882; from 1968 it has been sited in the north aisle.

Chest: plain oak chest, located next to the font. No date.

Helmet: of early 16thC date, now located in the south-west corner of the north aisle. Haslam suggests a funeral helmet belonging to a member of the Lloyd family of Berthllwyd, whose tomb was in the chancel



where the helmet was formerly placed.

Axe: a long handled axe of similar date to the helmet; in the south-west corner of the nave.

Memorials: flaking slate tablet to Isaac Lloyd, with Latin description, possibly died 1708.

Registers: from 1615.

19thC and 20thC furnishings and fittings include:

Organ: from 1846.

Reredos: flamboyant panelling made in 1900 to designs by A. E. Street.

Monuments: i) marble and slate to David Lloyd, Gent (d.1811). ii) marble with heraldry to Thomas Evans (d.1845) by W. Cook of Birmingham. iii) marble on slate to John Marsh (d.1862) by Dodson, Salop. iv) marble to Charles Cole (d.1821) and others up to 1869 by Sanders of New Road, Fitzroy Square, London.

Stained glass: information from Haslam 1976. East window by Clayton and Bell, 1882, portrays the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension. South window, the True Vine, from 1933, to the original designs by Clayton and Bell. North aisle windows: two by Burlison and Grylls, two by Geoffrey Webb and two by Messrs Lavers and Westlake (1885-1891).

Bells: of the eight, one is dated to 1824, two more to 1969, and the remaining ones have inscriptions but no dates. It is known that three of the original bells were recast in 1824 and three new bells modelled on them by Thomas Mears. The bells were recast and rehung in 1909 and again in 1969 when two new bells were added.

## CHURCHYARD

The present churchyard is of an irregular rectilinear shape and it is not possible to establish the original form, although it is known to have been extended to the south-west in 1846. Some of the churchyard is flat but the church itself is set close to the river terrace, and immediately to the north of the building the ground falls away to the river. Parts of the churchyard was formerly paved with river pebbles, a practice that reputedly was formerly common in Montgomeryshire. The cobbling was destroyed or covered in 1944 during work in the churchyard. The churchyard is well kept.

Boundary: the yard is bounded on the south-west and south-east sides by a rubblestone wall with the addition of a trimmed hedge to the former. There is a stone wall on the west and also on the north where there is also a hedge. The walls were repaired in 1971.

Monuments: mainly 19thC slate gravestones, with a few chest tombs. Burials are evenly distributed but entirely on the south side. Successive work in the churchyard and rebuilding of the church has led to many of the slabs being re-sited. Some are built into the church walls, some lean up against the walls and the east wall of the churchyard has slabs of 19thC date against its entire length. The earliest memorials noted are from 1742 and 1759 (against the east wall of the north aisle) and 1758 (north wall of chancel).

Furniture: an octagonal, worn yellow sandstone sundial plinth is located under an Irish yew tree near the south-east gates. Plate and gnomon made by W and S Jones, London, reportedly in 1836.

A small bowl, like a stoup, supported on a ribbed baluster stem, all in sandstone, is sited near the south porch.

Earthworks: the churchyard is raised by between 0.4m and 1.4m on the east and between 0.5m and 1m on the south.

Ancillary features: the main south entrance is formed by a pair of wrought iron gates set in stone pillars with an overarch. A small single gate in the north-east corner of the churchyard is the Cripplegate leading to the 'Severn Porte', the river gate of the old medieval town. The west entrance has been widened and a new pillar and section of the wall was built onto the north side when the churchroom was constructed in 1982. The area around the churchroom and the tower is now concreted. Tarmac paths lead to the south porch and all around the church. The modern extension has paths all around it.

Vegetation: five Irish yews on south side of church. A single older yew, though of no great age, stands near the south-east gate. Some deciduous trees.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1989  
Church guide n.d.  
CPAT Field Visit: 31 January 1996 and 24 July 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 197  
Eisel 1986, 185  
Faculty Bangor 1881 (NLW): restoration  
Haslam 1979, 139  
Lunt 1926, 191  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Quinquennial Reports 1984 and 1989



## CONDITION

Church in excellent condition.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor to Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Good

# Llanllugan

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Mary**PRN** 32541**NGR** SJ05780234

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## SUMMARY

St Mary's church is a small single-chambered structure which is considered to be of late 14thC or 15thC date, with the east window certainly of the 15thC. Inside is a fine late medieval roof, a medieval font and stoop and some 15thC stained glass. The churchyard may once have been curvilinear, and nearby was a Cistercian nunnery, though its precise location has been the source of speculation.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

In 15thC Perpendicular style though the south windows are thought to be late 14thC. An annex of unknown form on the north side, now gone, was served by a now blocked doorway.

The date of the porch is uncertain but is probably 19thC.

## HISTORY

The location and the churchyard morphology imply an early medieval origin, and traditionally the church was founded in the 6thC by Llorcan Wyddel. The dedication, too, may originally have been to Llorcan, that to St Mary being a result of the proximity of the post-Conquest nunnery.

The Cistercian nunnery was founded prior to 1188 and continued to the Dissolution. Its founder was Maredudd ap Robert, Lord of Cedewain, and it became a daughter house of Strata Marcella. Its site is uncertain, but a meadow by the River Rhiw is one site that has been suggested. However, it has also been mooted that the nunnery was adjacent to the church, though this remains unproven. It was presumably a very small community, with only an abbess and four nuns recorded in 1377.

'Llanllugan' church is referred to in ecclesiastical records of 1239 and as the 'Abbey of Llanllugan' in Pope Nicholas' Taxation of 1291.

It has been suggested that the chancel was originally longer but was reduced in length in the 15thC when a new east wall was inserted. This rests on two assumptions: that this was indeed the church of the nunnery and that the abrupt ending of the roof at the east end indicates that it was shortened, sometime after its construction. Both hypotheses are open to question.

Glynne visited the church in 1867 and found 'a rustic church still unaltered'. He noted the Perpendicular windows, the priest's door and the fragments of medieval stained glass. The roof was coved and panelled, and there were 'very rude open seats and a few pews'.

The 1874 citation for restoring the church, which was reported as being in a dilapidated state with a decayed roof and poor accommodation, included re-roofing, reseating and generally repairing the church. The gallery was removed at this time.



A day school was held in the church in the 19thC.

By 1964 the building was in poor condition, and between then and 1993 when the roof was repaired - constructional details were recorded by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust at that date - and an extended programme of restoration occurred, including the removal of a small bell turret.

## ARCHITECTURE

A single-chambered church with a south porch. The building is oriented fractionally south of due west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium blocks of irregularly coursed fine grained grey sandstone, occasional blocks of red sandstone and some quite large pebblestones; random coursing; quoins of selected stone. Signs of past limewash and now heavily re-pointed.

Roof: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles. Modern wrought iron finial to porch.

Drainage: loose stones and chippings around all sides point to a drainage trench.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. A single undifferentiated nave and chancel, all in Fabric 'A'.

North wall: the wall is devoid of features except for a blocked doorway towards the east end of the church which, it has been suggested, was an entry to the cloisters or the nuns' domestic quarters, though this is not convincing. The doorway was two-centred, its jambs and arch formed of selected blocks of stone and the arch stones on edge. Inserted into the blocking is an unweathered square-headed window with a single, trefoiled, round-headed light; the dressings patched in red and grey sandstone; this is a 19thC insertion. To the west of this blocked door, four stones protrude from the wall to a height of c.0.6m above ground level, and there is some indication that others may have been located above them. These are seen as the remnants of the wall of an annex of unknown form.

East wall: the Perpendicular window is two-centred with three cinquefoil, two-centred lights with panel tracery of narrow trefoiled lights above. Most of the dressings are original and include odd blocks of red sandstone.

South wall: from the west i) a low window in grey sandstone set flush with the wall, its form similar to that in the north wall with two lights that have trefoiled two-centred heads; its grey sandstone is weathered and is probably original. ii) porch; iii) a window similar to i) but broader; also original although one jambstone in red sandstone stands out as being different. iv) blocked priest's doorway with arch from a single block of stone, though this may be a replacement while the jambs in much worn pink sandstone appear original; sharpening marks. The arch, in grey sandstone, is four-centred and could be a 15thC replacement of an earlier arch. v) a window as iii) but with a low triangular head to the frame; two pink sandstone jambstones could be re-used.

West wall: a plain wall, with an overhanging wooden bellcote supported off the wall by two wall posts with arched struts. It contains a single bell and there is a weathervane above.

Porch. General. Open south porch in fabric 'A'.

South wall: a two-centred arch of stone voussoirs and unchamfered stonework gives access to the porch. Overhanging light.

East and west walls: plain.

### Interior

Porch. General. Red and black tiled floor of 19thC date. Plastered and whitewashed walls. Roof supported by eight slim scissor-beam trusses springing from wall plates; exposed rafters and through purlins.

East and west walls: wooden benches on stone plinths on both sides.

North wall: nave doorway with a two-centred arch and jambs with hollow chamfers; lower part of the doorway in red sandstone, the arch itself in yellow, and although one archstone is clearly replaced it is difficult to determine whether the rest is original; sharpening marks on some of the red sandstone jambstones. Heavy planked door with wrought iron fittings, and one step up into the nave.

Nave. General. Red and black 19thC tiled floor, and the red tiles stamped with small shields; the central aisle carpetted; benches on raised planked floors. Walls plastered and painted except for west wall which has exposed stone and is plastered only above the exposed tie beam; window embrasures are deeply splayed under square-headed apertures. Six-bay roof of 15thC-style extends over both the nave and chancel (two bays); seven moulded, arch-braced collar trusses with cusped raking struts, and two tiers of cusped windbraces; four of these have tie-beams as well and three of these are supported on short stubby wall posts while one is supported on the wall plates; exposed rafters and through purlins. The easternmost beam has been cut away to admit the raised east window at the 1873 restoration - only the upper arch brace and the cusped struts remain.

Two partitions at the west end of the nave provide a small vestry and store room.

North wall: one splayed window, a late 19thC marble memorial, and a wooden Incorporated Society of Buildings and Churches plaque for 1873.

East wall: separated only by a moulded tie beam (said to be the rood beam), and one step up to the chancel.

South wall: splayed window embrasures and a square-headed recess for the south door.

West wall: plain.

Chancel. General. A single step up from the nave; two steps up to the sanctuary. Encaustic tiled floor in the sanctuary, and in the chancel a planked floor under longitudinal choir stalls on the north side, tiled on south. Walls and roof as described under nave.

North wall: two churchwarden plaques of 1704 and 1904.

East wall: wood-farmed Decalogue boards either side of the east window.

### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: deep, but small, circular, unlined bowl on a more recent octagonal plinth and a square base that could be original; near the south door. 13thC.

Screen: Thomas claimed that the rood beam was utilised as a tie-beam.

Stained glass: the east window was assembled in 1891 using some c.15thC glass that shows a Crucifixion scene, the royal arms and an abbe. Some glass carries part of a date, believed to be 1453.

Bell: inscribed '....1686 Benjamin....', but originally it may have been 'Llanllugan Church bell 1686, Benjamin Stone, Roger Gittins, Churchwardens'.



Plaques: a painted wooden churchwardens' plaque of 1704, with the names of Thomas Bains and Gavin Evans.

Decalogue boards: parchment, possibly as early as the 17thC; now in new wooden frames after being restored in 1990.

Church plate: includes 1730 silver cup and pewter paten.

Registers: from 1603.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Octagonal oak pulpit, altar rails and reader's desk.

Monuments: white marble tablet on grey slate - William Lord of Fron Goch Hall (d.1891).

## CHURCHYARD

Polygonal enclosure, originally more curvilinear in form. Part of the graveyard, presumably the west side, was only consecrated in 1981. It is well kept.

Boundary: revetment wall on the south-east and south-west sides; a wall on the north-west and a straight boundary wall on the north-east side with Tynllan Farm. This is clearly not original.

Monuments: well-spaced graves on the south side; mainly 19thC slate slabs and some modern burials; Lewis Morris, Montgomeryshire revivalist, was buried in the churchyard in 1792 (unlocated). A small headstone of 1787 is the earliest seen. No burials visible on the north or east sides.

Earthworks: south of the church is a scarp up to 0.6m high. With a curve to it this is probably the original churchyard boundary. Its line continues outside the present boundary near the west gate. There is an inner embankment on the north side against the churchyard wall which could be significant.

Note too that there is a slight platform beside the north wall of the church - significant in the light of the proposed annex.

Ancillary features: western entrance through a pair of iron gates with an adjoining kissing gate; concrete path leads up to south porch. A grass track leads east to a single gate to Tynllan.

Vegetation: an older yew tree near the south-west corner has been cut down and a yew in the south-east corner is no longer growing. Two fir trees in the north-east boundary and isolated bushes.

## SOURCES

Church guide 1996  
CPAT Field Visit 21 February 1996 and 30 July 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 197  
Eisel 1986, 186  
Faculty St Asaph 1874 (NLW): restoration  
Faculty St Asaph 1981 (NLW): churchyard consecration  
Glynne 1884, 91  
Haslam 1979, 146  
Morgan 1985  
NMR Aberystwyth  
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Thomas 1908, 484  
Williams 1990, 45



## CONDITION

Good condition.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium to Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Good

# Llanllwchaiarn

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**Diocese** St Asaph

**Dedication** Llwchaiarn

**PRN** 16883

**NGR** SO12399254

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## SUMMARY

St Llŵchaiarn's church on the northern side of the River Severn, less than one mile from Newtown, is a red brick structure which was built in 1815 and enlarged in 1864. Inside there are a few 18thC monuments and a carved effigy of 1630, but relatively little has survived from the predecessor of the present building. The large churchyard encapsulates two earlier phases of enclosure, but little in the way of early gravemarkers.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Red brick church built in 1815 in Georgian style on the site of an earlier church; there were further renovations and an eastern chancel and vestry were added in 1864 in Gothic style.

## HISTORY

The dedication, the form of the churchyard and its proximity to the river indicate beyond reasonable doubt that this is an early medieval foundation.

The church is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecc'a de Llanlocharen' with a value of £1 6s 8d. In 1263 part of it was appropriated to the Cistercian nunnery at Llanllugan, and in 1291 the combined value was £4 6s 8d.

The earlier stone church consisted of a nave with a south entrance door, a wider chancel, and a western bell turret; the interior was fitted with box pews and there was a central pulpit on the north wall.

The present church was built in brick on the old site in 1815 at a cost of £1200.

Further restoration work, which included the eastern extension of the chancel and vestry and the insertion of the bench seating, was completed by R.J.Withers in 1865 at a cost of £460. The original east wall of the church was cut through and the plain yellow sandstone chancel arch erected; the stonework was designed and executed by Edward Jones of Newtown. At the same time, the nave roof was raised and under aisle heating was installed. The organ was removed from the gallery and placed in a niche in the chancel north wall.

In 1869 the round-headed windows with the exception of those in the tower were replaced with some of Gothic design. Further work took place in 1902.

In 1946, the organ was re-sited in the gallery. At the same time the bells were recast and some reconstruction took place in the belfry, when a steel headstock was inserted.

## ARCHITECTURE



The church consists of a nave and slightly narrower chancel, a west tower and a south vestry. It is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purposes of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of red brick, in English garden wall bond with brick quoins. The 1864 extension is in fractionally lighter coloured brick with Flemish bond and has sandstone quoins and dressings. 'B' is of sandstone and is used for the basal plinth around the tower and the nave, the top course of well-dressed blocks. Blue brick is used for the basal plinth of the chancel and vestry.

Roofs: slates with plain grey ceramic ridge tiles. Cross finial to chancel.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts. Sandstone drain around tower, but otherwise no evidence of a trench.

Note: because of the date of the church, the following description is a summary one.

### Exterior

Western Tower. General. Square three-storey tower with one sandstone string course and a concave overhanging parapet with sandstone corner pinnacles; the tower corners have brick quoins standing proud of the wall faces. Low pyramidal slate roof with a decorative wrought iron weathervane.

North wall: at first-floor level above the string course is a round window with brick surround. The belfry level has a louvred round-headed aperture with brick surround and a sandstone sill.

East wall: belfry window as north side.

South wall: the round window of the north side is replaced by a sundial, but the markings have faded from its wooden face. Belfry window as north side.

West wall: access to the ground floor through a basket-headed doorway with brick voussoirs to the arch, wooden doors and a boarded fanlight above. An 1815 sandstone datestone and wrought iron light above the doorway, and a wooden notice board to its north side. A round window as the north side at first-floor level. Belfry window as north side.

Nave. General. Four sandstone two-light windows with hoodmoulds and stops in both the north and south walls, introduced in 1869 into existing apertures (there are no signs of insertion); all the windows have two-centred arches and two lights with varying forms of tracery all in freestone, but following the same pattern on both the north and south walls; brick relieving arches following the curve of the window heads. No features in the short lengths of the west and east walls that are visible.

Chancel. General. Narrower and lower than the nave, plinthed at c.0.4m. Stepped angle buttresses in brick at the east end of the chancel. East wall has a two-centred window with three foiled, ogee-headed lights, sub-arches and foiled tracery, and a hoodmould with block stops. The north wall has a two-centred window with two lights, plainer than its nave counterparts and without a hoodmould; the south wall is without windows but does have the vestry against it.

Vestry. General. Its plinth is continuous with that of the chancel. Diagonal brick buttresses at the north corners. A simple two-centred arched doorway on the east, a plain two-centred window with two foiled lights and a small foiled light above on the south, and a low brick-built shed with sloping roof against the west side.

## Interior

**Tower.** General. The western door leads directly into the ground floor entrance porch with a red-tiled floor, plastered walls above wainscotting, and a plastered ceiling. The east wall has a recess with a pair of panelled doors to the nave and a benefaction board together with a board about free church seats, the north wall a wooden tablet recording vicars from 1377. In the south wall is a door giving access to the gallery staircase. One slate memorial of 1791 is also on the east wall.

On the first floor is the ringing chamber lit by two round windows, and a pair of panelled doors in the east wall to the gallery. Steps up the north wall lead to the bellchamber.

**Nave.** General. Red and black tiled floors, carpetted down the aisle, raised tongue and groove below benches. Plastered walls; and the splayed window embrasures are also plastered. Roof of five bays formed by four king-post, tie-beam trusses, supported on cusped arch-braces springing from decorated stone corbels.

North wall: one marble memorial of 1774 to 1788, and another of 1833.

East wall: a two-centred arch of two orders with engaged columns and capitals, and a painted, scrolled inscription 'Blessed are the pure in Heart for they shall see God'. 20thC memorials on either side.

South wall: two 19thC marble memorials.

West wall: a gallery supported on four octagonal oak columns and with a wood-panelled front. It is tiered and houses the organ and loose chairs.

**Chancel.** General. Single step from nave up to chancel, two steps to the sanctuary. Encaustic tiles on floor, raised benches, plastered walls above wainscotting. Plastered ceiling with exposed rafters and through purlins.

East wall: reredos with Gothic tracery and re-used panelling from Welshpool Church, erected in 1892 as recorded on a brass plate.

**Vestry.** General. Two steps down, carpet over stone floor, plastered walls, with re-used wainscotting on part of the west wall; plastered ceiling above exposed rafters. South window sill has an 1864 brass dedication tablet concerned with the building of the vestry. 19thC painting of church on west wall.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Effigy: carved human figure inscribed 1630; hanging in the vestry.

Monuments: marble memorial to Sarah Baxter of Sibden castle, Shropshire (d.1774), Anna Maria Baxter (d.1777) and John Baxter (d.1788), draped cartouche with two putti on the apron, and may be by Nelson of Salop. Slate slab to Francis, son of Rev. Samuel and Ann Drake (d.1791).

Benefaction board: of 1742.

Plate: includes 1724 silver flagon, 1683 and 1863 chalices, 1683 and 1724 silver patens, a 15thC brass alms-dish and a pewter flagon.

Registers: from 1658.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:



Bells: three, all inscribed 'John Rudhall fecit J82J'.

Monuments: i) a marble tablet to Frederick Branstrom, Solicitor (d.1833). ii) a large marble tablet to George Robert Wythen Baxter (d.1854). iii) a white marble tablet to members of the Jones family by J. Carline, records Rev. John Jones (d.1808), Matthew Jones (d.1813) and William Jones (d.1818).

Restoration features include the lectern, the octagonal, oak panelled pulpit on a square stone plinth, and the octagonal stone font with eight quatrefoiled panels, sited on a raised tiled platform.

Stained glass: from Haslam 1979. In the south wall by Morris and Co. c.1870, depicting figures of St Stephen and St Peter; in the north wall a memorial window by C.A. Gibbs of 1874; and the east window and that on the north side of the chancel by N. O'Connor, from 1868.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is large and irregular in shape, confined by roads on the north and east and the former canal on the south. It occupies fairly flat ground to the north of the Severn. In the 19thC there was a sub-oval enclosure of 1.39ac, which was extended southwards in 1902, but there was an earlier boundary of unknown date immediately to the east of the church.

Boundary: a hedged boundary to north and east, a fence on the south-west; both reflect the fact that this is a relatively modern boundary.

Monuments: mainly 19th/20thC graves, fairly evenly distributed but few graves on the east side of the church. The earliest gravestone noted is of 1759, one of a number of upright stones which were probably by the same mason.

Earthworks: the line of the pre-1902 enclosure is visible as a scarp bank, but inside this forming an oval is another scarp bank, probably the original 'llan' enclosure which shows as a slightly elevated area. On the east side of the church there are few burials in the later intake. The church itself is raised slightly on a mound, noticeable on the east, less so on the north.

Ancillary features: a tarmac path leads to the west door from the northern lychgate which was erected in 1923. There is a stone slab path from the south-east, and another tarmac path on the north-east leading from double gates and a kissing gate.

Vegetation: mature yews are sited along the north entrance path from the lychgate. Numerous 19thC Irish yews are located on the north and south sides of the church. Some pines on north side.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1988  
 CPAT Field Visit 7 December 1995 and 12 March 1998  
 Eisel 1986, 186  
 Faculty St Asaph 1902 (NLW): churchyard extension  
 Haslam 1979, 146  
 NMR Aberystwyth  
 Powys SMR  
 Thomas 1908, 529  
 Williams 1990, 45

## CONDITION

Good condition throughout.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Medium to Good



# Llanmerewig

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Llwchaiarn**PRN** 16404**NGR** SO15769318

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## SUMMARY

St Llwchaiarn's church lies on a ridge some 3 miles to the north-east of Newtown. It is a small single-chambered building with a diminutive west tower and a south porch, all of which appear to date from 1833 through to the 1840s, with some restoration in 1891. Inside the original, a late medieval arch-braced roof survives, there is an early font or stoup and a fragment of the medieval screen. The building is sited in a raised circular churchyard which has been claimed as a prehistoric enclosure.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A simple 13thC-style church dating from 1833-45; the walls were apparently completely rebuilt, except perhaps at the extreme north-east angle where the masonry may be from the original medieval church.

## HISTORY

The church is reputed to have been founded by a St Merewig in the later 6thC, but there is no other record of this saint, and the alternative tradition that St Llwchaiarn from Bangor-on-Dee was responsible for its foundation about this time, is more plausible. Certainly the dedication and the churchyard shape point to an early medieval origin.

The church was listed as 'Capella de Lamerewic' in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, a chapelry to the church at Llanllwchaiarn, and valued at only 5s. By 1291 'Lamewily' had become a parochial church with a value of £2.

Archdeacon Thomas believed that it was a place of pilgrimage in the 16thC, with a shrine or effigy, or perhaps a painted window to St Llwchaiarn.

John Parker (1798-1860) was rector in 1827-44, and influenced the restoration with his admiration for the Gothic style. A water colour by Parker shows the church in 1829 with a western bell turret, a small south porch, and a whitewashed exterior.

The church underwent two 19thC restorations. The first, done in piecemeal fashion, was during Parkers' incumbency. High pews had been installed in 1821 (though these were removed in 1861 and replaced with open oak benches). In 1833, the walls were rebuilt and a gallery was erected at the west end of the church, partly of oak and partly cast-iron; buttresses were added in 1836; a vestry built in 1837; in 1838-9, the tower was constructed and an addition made to gallery; and the south porch was ornamented and a large trefoiled, outer doorway added in 1840. The roof was ceiled with panelling and bosses and the east window made by David Evans in 1837. In 1842, a tall ornate octagonal chimney was erected in the south wall for a fireplace which has now been removed; part of this chimney is now sited over the north vestry and parts of it are used as plant holders outside the south porch; and in the same year, while part of the old screen was left in situ, other parts were re-used for altar rails, a pulpit, a desk and the front of the gallery. The ceiling and walls were plastered and painted. Finally, in 1843 a painted window was added to the south wall and the nave

oak floor laid, and two years later the chancel was planked with oak. In 1848 a wall had been built around the churchyard and dwarf yew trees and cedars planted.

In 1858 Glynne found 'a small church, originally mean and unpretending, but now altered and ornamented in a very questionable manner, though at some expense and with the best intentions'. The earlier walls were 'rude and plain; that on the north little altered, and [it] has bad, mean windows. On the south is a plain double-window of two obtuse-headed lights. One window is a mere slit'.

A second restoration occurred in 1892, at the expense of Mr Whitley Owen of Fronfraith Hall. Work was carried out by W.H. Spaul. The wagon ceiling was removed exposing the fine oak roof, the church was re-slatted and the interior was tiled. The east wall and part of the north wall were rebuilt. The present east window was inserted as a copy of the original, which was re-erected against the churchyard wall to the east of the church. The gallery was removed and parts of it re-used as a screen, and Parker's pulpit also went. An organ replaced the harmonium.

In passing it may be noted that on the north side of the church wall, there was a rusty chain for fastening cattle which were auctioned after church services. The chain has disappeared but the links remain.

## ARCHITECTURE

A single-chamber church with a south porch, a tall slim western tower adjoining the west wall of the nave, and a north vestry off the chancel. It is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium-sized blocks of fine grained, greyish sandstone and mudstone with quoins of the same selected material, and occasional inclusions such as brick pebblestones and lumps of quartz; possibly some re-used material; randomly coursed and contemporary dressings are in yellow sandstone.

'B' is of small and irregular lumps of dark sandstone, some pebblestones; random coursing.

Roofs: slates with plain red ceramic ridge tiles. Decorated finials to the chancel, the porch, the diagonal buttresses at the east end, and the south dormer, and a cross over the east gable of the tower.

Drainage: north and south wall guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Signs of a narrow trench around the building.

## Exterior

Tower. General. A tall slim west tower showing Gothic influence. Constructed in fabric 'A' and bearing two datestones: '1838' mid-way up the south face, and '1839' on the dressed sandstone corbel-table, signifying its completion. Slightly battered walls to about one-third height. Plain walls for about two-thirds of its height, then a moulded string course with foliate decoration at the angles. The saddleback roof is supported on a highly decorated corbel-table, and has a cross rising above its eastern apex.

North wall: eight stone steps lead up to a segmental-headed doorway, about 1.5m above ground level. Stone wall adjoins east side of the tower, creating a storage area between the steps and the west wall of the nave. The belfry has a pair of louvred lancets.

East wall: the belfry window has a two-centred arch with hoodmould and decorative stops; it contains a recessed pair of trefoiled lights with a circular aperture above. In the gable above is a chamfered rectangular slit.

South wall: just under half way up the wall face is a rectangular slit window with the datestone above it. Belfry window as on the north.



West wall: slit window as south wall, and higher up a belfry window and rectangular slit as in the east wall.

Nave and chancel . General. Not differentiated externally. All in 'A', except at the north-east corner; the stonework is more regular at higher elevations.

North wall: two stepped buttresses divide the nave into three bays to the west side of the vestry. Two four-centred windows with two trefoil-headed lights and small panel lights above, and further east a two-centred arch with a single light. East of the vestry the wall is in 'B' and has a slightly protruding base.

East wall: a vault against the wall. Diagonal stepped buttresses in better dressed stone at the angles rising to triangular capstones with finials. The east window of 1892 has a pointed red sandstone arch, with a triangular, moulded, hoodmould above, and contains two trefoiled lights with a small tracery light above.

South wall: two ordinary buttresses divide the south wall into three bays to the east of the porch. From the east: i) paired lancet lights. ii) buttress. iii) a single lancet light. iv) buttress. v) a semi-dormer window with a pair of trefoiled, round-headed lights with an ornate hoodmould above; the date AD 1843 is incised above the hoodmould and there is an almond-shaped light flanked by knot patterns all below the gable apex of the dormer. v) the porch. vi) a single lancet window.

West wall: plain, both to the north and south of the tower. Some residual limewash may indicate re-used stone.

Vestry. General. The north wall has a central chimney stack protruding from the wall, rising to a highly decorated yellow sandstone chimney which has been re-sited after its removal from the south wall; the chimney has ringed shafts and dog-tooth mouldings between. The west wall is plain, the east has a shoulder-arched doorway and a pair of wide lancets set in a square-headed aperture.

Porch. General. Walls in a coarse 'A' fabric with some limewash residue. Ornate entrance with pinnacles rising above the angles: the trefoil-headed opening is set within a round-headed outer arch with dog-tooth mouldings, and a hoodmould which has attached fleur-de-lys carvings is interspersed with the inscription 'Keep thy foot when thou goest into the House of the Lord'. An 1840 date is inscribed in the gable below a large foliate boss.

## Interior

Porch. General. One step up from the outside path; open fronted; red tiled floor; carved oak bench against the east side only. Roof of rafters and chamfered purlins. The north wall (= south wall of nave) contains a simple two-centred doorway with chamfered yellow sandstone dressings.

Nave. General. One step up from porch. Red tiled floor with flush planking under benches. Wainscotting on north and south walls, which are unplastered. Low roof of 14th/15thC date, and consisting of 22 closely-set, arch-braced collar trusses sprung from north and south wallplates; wooden pegs. Diagonal braces at east end of nave look much more recent.

North wall: organ set in north-west corner in 1927; pulpit at the east end lit by a single-light window; grey slate War Memorial slab between the two two-light windows, and a modern, carved wooden plaque above it.

East wall: screen.

South wall: flat, pointed arch over the south door, and a stepped sill to the dormer window. One 20thC memorial.

West wall: adjoins tower. The masonry appears to be rough and irregular and could be early; a beam is

immured in the wall at the level of the north and south wall eaves.

Chancel. General. Separated from nave by screen, with two steps up from the nave and further steps to the sanctuary and the altar. Mosaic floor with wooden floors under the longitudinal choir stalls. Roof as described under nave with a further ten arch-braced collars.

North wall: the only features are the vestry archway with half-round jamb mouldings and a pointed head, and adjacent an alcove, much broader than the single window set in it - no explanation can be offered for the feature. An irregularity in the north-west corner matches the masonry change on the exterior.

East wall: splayed window with stained glass.

South wall: a small, rectangular recess as an aumbry, low down in the sanctuary wall; flat slabs to top and bottom. Also an early font bowl placed on window ledge in sanctuary. The large, 19thC, Lloyd family wall monument between the chancel windows.

Vestry. General. Tiled floor, unplastered stonework, and wooden ceiling with exposed rafters. Doors and windows as described elsewhere.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Font: disused, round bowl with raised rib around rim, broken at back; of four original projections, that at the front is a rounded handle-like protrusion which remains intact, that opposite has been lost, and the others are slightly raised panels; perhaps of 13thC date. Resembles the Snead font with its horned handles. Recovered and placed in the church in 1834 by the Rev. John Parker, as described on a wooden plaque placed above it.

Screen: a fragment of the 15thC screen is said by Haslam (perhaps following a statement by Thomas) to be re-used in its 19thC successor. Crossley makes no mention of the survival, though it is not clear whether he actually visited Llanmerewig. The present writers were not able to confirm its presence.

Registers: from 1661.

Plate: includes cups dated 1788 and 1731, and a 1731 silver plate and pewter paten.

Chest: plain wooden chest, undated.

Chairs: pair, highly decorated, with high backs; undated.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Font: 19thC circular stone font with ringed shafts on an octagonal base. Fitted with wooden pinnacled coned cover.

Pulpit: in oak, decorated with iron.

Stained glass: east window signed by Ballantine and Gardiner of Edinburgh, 1892 (from Haslam).

Monuments: Chancel south wall - white and black marble tablet records the vault burial in the chancel of John Lloyd (d.1829), his children (d.1809 and 1827) and his wife Anne (d.1855), by W. Spence, Liverpool. The vault is immediately outside the east window.

Chest: of iron, inscribed 'Coalbrookdale. Register Chest. Llanmarewic Parish'. 1813. In vestry.



## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is one of the more circular examples in Montgomeryshire and is distinctively raised. Indeed the RCAHMW considered it to a re-used prehistoric hill-top enclosure. It is well maintained and still used for burial.

**Boundary:** stone wall on the south and east side, datable to 1840, but on the west an earlier rubblestone wall is visible below the hedge; a fence forms the north side and it does appear that there has been some modification to the boundary on this side.

**Monuments:** scattered gravestones and markers on all sides; the churchyard has not been levelled and unmarked graves show as hummocks, though there are open areas south of the church. There is a 1706 burial near the south wall, and the next earliest is of 1775. The Jones family memorial was removed from the interior of the church and placed in the graveyard during the 1892 restoration. Adjoining the east wall of the church is a vault with a brick wall plinth c.0.6m high, enclosing seven slate slabs, none of them inscribed.

**Furniture:** two worn, octagonal, yellow sandstone blocks are located outside the south porch. The shafts, of differing height, are now used as bulb planters but were originally part of Parker's ornate chimney, the remainder of which is still sited above the vestry.

The old Decorated east window has been set against the boundary wall on the north-east side and encased in masonry; it is in worn and discoloured red sandstone and consists of a pair of two-centred arches, one clearly foiled, set below a triangular head which contains a small foiled light.

**Earthworks:** an earthen bank c.3.5m wide and 0.7m high is built up against the inside of the stone boundary wall. Generally the churchyard is raised, about 0.5m on the east, 0.7m on the north-east and up to 1m on the north. However, there is little if any rise on the west and any drop on the south is likely to be distorted by the sunken road on this side. The church itself appears to be set on a slight platform of its own at the west end.

**Ancillary features:** a pair of iron gates set in large stone pillars form the main south entrance with a tarmac path leading to the south porch; adjacent is a stile with a date of 1842. A second stone stile set in the wall on the east side bears a 1848 datestone and a path leads to the south porch and continues west to a pair of modern iron gates set in a short length of wall.

**Vegetation:** a ring of eight yews set just within the boundary on the east, north and west; 19thC yews and rhododendron bushes line the south path.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings for Llandyssil Community: 1997  
 CPAT Field Visit 3 March 1996 and 1 May 1998  
 Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 197  
 Eisel 1986, 186  
 Faculty St Asaph 1891(NLW): restoration  
 Gibbings and Jones 1935  
 Glynne 1884, 92  
 Haslam 1979, 148  
 Lloyd n.d.  
 NMR Aberystwyth  
 Powys SMR  
 RCAHMW 1911, 122  
 Thomas 1908, 533

## CONDITION

Church in good state of repair, although a large vertical crack in the external face of west wall.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Good



# Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant

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**Diocese** St Asaph

**Dedication** St Dogfan

**PRN** 101047

**NGR** SJ12402602

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## GENERAL SUMMARY

St Dogfan's church lies on the southern edge of Llanrhaeadr village, next to the Tanat river. It originated as a clas foundation, and some fragments including a fine sepulchral slab survive from the early medieval era. The present building has an undated early core, and one possibly Decorated window may signal its enlargement in the 14thC. The upper parts of the west tower are 18thC and most of the windows are Victorian Perpendicular. Inside are a few fragments of a Romanesque shrine, some 18thC furniture and a good range of memorials. The irregularly shaped churchyard has seen past clearance and retains few older memorials.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Originally a long single chamber of uncertain date. Subsequently, the chancel was extended eastwards and two three-bay chancel aisles were added. This could be of the 14thC for Hubbard thought that the east window of the north aisle, though straight-headed, could be Decorated. The arcade piers were rebuilt in the 19thC, except perhaps for the westernmost one on the south side.

The west tower is 18thC except for its battered base which is of unknown date.

Some evidence of rebuilding on the north and perhaps the west side of the north aisle, and perhaps too on the south side of nave.

North porch added in 19thC.

## HISTORY

The site is known to have had an early medieval clas church, and was the mother church for most of the commote of Mochnant.

In the Norwich Taxatio of 1254 it is recorded as 'Ecclesia de Llanraeader' with a value of £2 13s 4d, but in the later Taxatio of 1291 its value is grouped with those of its dependent chapelries.

In the early 19thC the only remnants of the rood screen were integrated into two bench ends in the chancel.

Glynne's record of the church dates to 1850. The side aisles at the time were used as a school and a hearse house. He recorded the variation in the appearance of the arcade arches, and also the three east windows, and saw too in the north wall of the aisle a plain Norman window.

Restoration reportedly occurred in the 1850s though there is little information about this phase of activity. In 1872 Lloyd Williams and Underwood considered that all the windows except that in the east wall of the north aisle had been spoilt in a restoration.

Further restoration - the addition of the north porch, the replacement of the south windows of the south aisle, re-roofing of the north aisle, remodelling of the chancel and raising its floor, restoration of the vestry and the addition of some heating equipment beneath it, removal of the pews, the hearse house and the west gallery - was completed by W.H. Spaul between 1879 and 1882 at a cost of £1778.

A new organ and heating system were installed in 1906.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church has a long, narrow nave and chancel in one, an attached west tower, short north and south chancel aisles, with a vestry attached to the west end of the south aisle, and a north porch. It is oriented west-north-west/east-south-east but for descriptive purposes 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is of large blocks of grey shale, somewhat roughly laid giving an uneven surface, some coursing. 'B' of small to medium blocks and lumps of shale; quoins of pink sandstone ashlar. Uniform appearance. 'C' of variegated shale slabs and lumps, and occasional pebblestones, some coursing. Quoins of grey and buff sandstone.

'D' is similar to 'C', but with many more pebblestones.

'E' is of regular squared blocks of grey-brown shale, of uniform appearance. Quoins of dressed freestone.

'F' is of regular blocks of iron-stained shale, with better dressed stone for quoins. No re-used material.

Roof: slates and grey clay ridge tiles of simple design. Stone cross finials to east ends of the aisles and the chancel.

Drainage: nothing obvious.

## Exterior

Tower. General. Battered base rising to above 3m with a chamfered top in weathered red sandstone. Above, a single stage rising to just below parapet level. Next a string course of projecting slabs with the parapet stage inset. Plain parapet, pyramid pinnacles. Plinth in 'A', the rest in 'B'.

North wall: main feature is the belfry window, the jambs of dressed stone, but blocked by clock face. Below this is a small square wooden, louvred window. Close to the eastern corner is a series of four slit windows lighting the tower stair, all but the top one have worn, pale sandstone jambs with shale lintels, the jambs surely re-used. Top stage has waterspout near the north-west angle.

East wall: nave roof rises to just over half the height of the tower. Belfry window has unchamfered jambs of pale freestone, and a cambered lintel. Inside a louvred wooden frame. The whole looks 18thC.

South wall: the basal plinth contains a foiled lancet, Victorian or later. Some of the plinth's chamfer has been renewed. Next a rectangular window with sunken wooden frame, louvred; jambs of selected shale; lintel has inverted graffiti 'B' incised on it. Belfry window as on east with dressed cambered lintel. Waterspout near south-west angle.

West wall: square-headed doorway with double wave chamfer and plain stops. Standard belfry window.

Nave. General. In 'C'. Only western part visible because of aisles.

North wall: two square-headed windows each with two cusped lights, transoms and panels, all in buff-coloured freestone; intermittent signs that the windows have been inserted or their dressings replaced.

South wall: one window as on north side. Possibly some of the wall around the window has been rebuilt.



West wall: cut away for insertion of the upper part of the tower, though not for the base.

North Aisle. General. In Fabric 'C'. Roof of aisle raised at some point to bring it to a level with the chancel.

North wall: in 'C', though the north-west angle and a little of the adjacent wall face has more regular masonry indicative of rebuilding; the quoins here are of well-dressed freestone, but that at the bottom of the wall is a re-used architectural fragment. One square-headed window with three cusped, ogee-headed lights in buff-yellow freestone. A second window to the east is similar but has only two lights. A fair amount of the wall taken down to insert these Victorian windows.

East wall: a square-headed window with wave chamfers, three cusped ogee-headed lights, the mullions replaced, the heads too unweathered to be original but the jambs original. Above is a faintly curved relieving arch of thin slabs on edge. The gable appears to have been raised by c.0.5m, though the masonry change is more obvious on south side than on north, and it may be noted that the window is set lower than the others in the east face of the church, seemingly confirming that the aisle was once lower.

West wall: one square-headed window with a single ogee-headed light, comparable with those on the north side. Victorian renewal or replacement.

North Porch. General. In 'E'. On a chamfered plinth, 0.5m high.

North wall: two-centred arch resting on engaged pillars with decorative mouldings, and outside these, deeply hollowed chamfers. Hoodmould with foliate stops. All in Victorian buff-yellow freestone.

East and west walls: plain.

Chancel. General. In Fabric 'D'. Only the east wall is visible.

East wall: east window has a two-centred arch, four cusped lights with sub-arches and panels above, and a hoodmould with simple stops. All in pale freestone of Victorian date.

South Aisle. General. In Fabric 'D'. Only two walls visible.

East wall: east window has a two-centred arch with three foiled, two-centred lights and panels above, one pair with a transom. Victorian.

South wall: lower part of wall in 'D' but from window sill level it is rebuilt in a variety of 'C', not dissimilar to the north wall of the north aisle, but with some older material mixed in. Three windows, the outer two are single foiled lights, the central one has two lights under a two-centred arch and has a hoodmould with simple stops.

Vestry. General. Added on to west end of south aisle, in Fabric 'F'.

South wall: window similar to the single lights in the south wall of the south aisle but smaller. Below is a sub-surface heating chamber.

West wall: in the centre of wall is a projecting chimney. To the north of it, a square-headed doorway with a chamfered two-centred arch.

## Interior

North Porch. General. Tiled floor, one step up from churchyard. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of close-

set rafters and a ridge purlin.

North wall: entrance with wire mesh gates.

East and west walls: plain with wooden benches along the wall faces.

South wall: two-centred arch, in standard Victorian freestone, chamfered with broach stops.

Tower. General. One step above the nave; red tiled floor; walls plastered and painted, though boarded off for storage on north, and dado of old pew panels along south side; wooden board ceiling.

North wall: simple, rectangular-headed doorway to tower stair, set in a 19thC or later partition wall.

East wall: wooden panelling with doors to nave.

South wall: old pew panels along wall face as a dado; above is a splayed window.

West wall: slightly splayed embrasure of west door with segmental arch over.

Nave. General. Tiled floor down central aisle, a heating vent grille inserted at one point, though pipes running down sides of nave suggest that the heating system has since been updated. Walls plastered and painted, but at the east end of the nave these give way to the first bays of double three-bay arcades. Plastered barrel ceiling, painted blue. Hubbard pointed out that it was remarkable that this survived Victorian restoration, especially as it concealed medieval timbers. In line with the respond of the first bay is a painted arch brace resting on corbels. Though chamfered it is not obvious that this is timber.

Arcading is of one design and extends along both sides from the nave with one bay into the chancel which has two. For convenience described here. All the arches are two-centred with chamfers interrupted by pyramid stops. These are set on square capitals with brattishing above square pillars with chamfered angles. The second pillar on both sides is of different appearance from the first pillar and the respond in that the chamfers are deeper and have pyramid stops as against the mixture of pyramid and simple broach stops on the other pillars. The exception to this is the most westerly bay on the south side. Here the dressings of the arch are in a slightly different stone, and this is much more obvious with the brattished capital; the overall height of the arch is also lower than all its counterparts. While there is every reason to think that the five arches are Victorian remodellings, it remains possible that this isolated example is original.

North wall: two splayed windows, the dressings Victorian and not painted. Bay of arcade at east end.

East wall: two steps up to the chancel with a low stone screen on either side; no chancel arch.

South wall: solitary splayed window embrasure as north side.

West wall: wooden doorway to tower set in panelled facade which rises to within one metre of ceiling, providing windows into nave from first floor of tower.

Chancel. General. Two steps up from nave, one to sanctuary, one to altar; encaustic tiles. Wooden boarding beneath choir stalls. Wall arcades as described above. More westerly half of the chancel sees the continuation of the barrel ceiling but the eastern half has a Perpendicular wagon roof with ribbed panels and crow's-foot bosses.

North wall: two bays of the arcade and a brass of 1899 commemorating William Morgan.

East wall: splayed window with reredos showing Last Supper and dated to 1925.

South wall: two bays of arcade.



North Chapel. General. Tiled floor as nave with benches on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of five bays with braced collars resting on wooden corbels, cusped struts and principals. Victorian.

North wall: two splayed windows.

East wall: square-headed window, the heads of the three lights look original; embrasure not splayed; stained glass of 1954.

South wall: arcade of three bays.

West wall: splayed window.

South Chapel. General. Tiled floor as nave, with one heating vent grille; benches on wooden boarding. Walls plastered and painted. Roof is modern barrel vault of 32 ribbed panels. Eastern part of aisle given over to organ, display boards etc.

North wall: three-bay arcade; against the western pier is a fine, early medieval sepulchral slab.

East wall: splayed window.

South wall: three splayed windows and a marble memorial of 1807. On the sill of the middle window are three fragments of a Romanesque shrine.

West wall: covered by mural tablets and brasses, 15 in all. Also doorway to vestry and an undated painting of the church.

## FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

(Based on details in Hubbard with additions)

Sepulchral slab: variously attributed to the 9thC or 10thC (Hubbard) or the mid-11thC (notice in church). Wheel cross of Celtic type, with fragments of a Latin inscription, interpreted as CO(Corg)OM FILIU(S) EDELSTAN. Spiral ornament in the upper spandrels. Plait pattern left of the shaft, and fret on the right side. Found in the fabric of the church during restoration work in the 1850s.

Sculptural fragments: i) part of a cylindrical shaft, either 9thC or 10thC, with angular fret. ii) fragments of a Romanesque shrine: three on window sill in the south aisle, though they are of at least two different types of freestone.

[Part of a small effigy of a praying woman, late 14thC. Recorded by Hubbard but not seen during church visit in 1997].

Font: octagonal bowl and stem, the latter claimed to be earlier than the 17thC bowl. The latter has three panels with inscriptions in bas-relief: i) 'I A'; ii) '1663' above 'R I' above 'V'; iii) 'H T'.

Chest: in north aisle; carved including panel with 'W F H 1706'. Bequeathed to the church in 1952 (from Bryn Morda near Oswestry).

Altar table: dated 1749 and has wardens' initials.

Chair: highly carved, in sanctuary. Not dated.

Pews: panels in tower used as dado, include two with painted heraldry; 18thC?

Monuments: i) Sydney Bynner (d.1694), crude architectural frame, winged cherub head and skull and cross

bones. ii) Catherine Langford (d.1706) and Richard Langford (d.1732), marble with heraldry and winged cherub heads. iii) Mary Edds (d.1714), a plain slab. iv) Edward Maurice (d.1740) and his wife (d.1744), a brass set up in 1755. v) Charles Clarke (d.1755) and others, a wooden tablet. vi) Rowland Charles (d.1767). vii) William Roberts (d.1784), a marble memorial with urn and heraldry. viii) ? Whittington (d.1788), a marble tablet. ix) John Hughes (d.1791) and others, a wooden tablet with winged cherub head. x) Rev Thomas Lloyd (d.1792), a brass plaque. Several others not intelligible.

Bells: three of 1741.

Plate: cup of 1693, flagon of 1761, and patens of 1751/2 and 1765.

Victorian fittings include:

Encaustic tiles on raised chancel floor by Spaul.

## CHURCHYARD

Llanrhaeadr churchyard covers an irregular area that appears to be the result of one or more accretions. Apart from a hint of curvilinearity to the north-west of the church the form is irregularly rectilinear. It extends across ground that slopes gently from west to east, but there is also a drop to the River Tanat which skirts the south side of the churchyard.

Boundary: a mortared stone wall on the west and north-east, drystone on the north-east, and a high property wall on the east. On the south is a retaining wall rising some 3m high above the river.

Monuments: well spread on all sides and fairly uniformly distributed though there are some gaps on the west and south. Stones have been cleared to the churchyard edge on the east, and on the north-west where some are laid flat as paving. There are few obvious 18thC monuments, the earliest seen being 1792.

Furniture: a sundial south-west of the nave consists of a modern concrete pillar but the top is smashed and the dial and gnomon have gone.

Earthworks: a river terrace runs north-west to south-east across the churchyard to the south of the church. A second scarp running east to west converges on the first and might also be natural.

The church occupies a slightly raised platform, most noticeable on the east side of the church.

Ancillary features: modern lychgate on the north side, small paired iron gates on the west, and a single iron gate on the south-east. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: one mature yew west of the church, and a few others of smaller size around the perimeter.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit : 1 May 1997

Crossley 1946, 32

Faculty: St Asaph 1879 (NLW) restoration of church

Faculty: St Asaph 1905 (NLW) new heating and organ

Faculty: St Asaph 1952 (NLW): introduction of oak chest

Glynne 1884, 189

Gresham 1968, 241

Hubbard 1986, 228

Lloyd Williams and Underwood 1872, pls 43 & 44

Quinquennial Report 1989



Thomas 1911, 240

## CONDITION

Reasonable though some damp showing on internal wall faces, occasional cracks notably along top of the south wall of nave.

## 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 to Medium

Group value: Medium to Good



# Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain

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**Diocese** St Asaph

**Dedication** Ffraid

**PRN** 16890

**NGR** SJ22502040

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## SUMMARY

The church of St Ffraid lies on the northern edge of the village of Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain about 8 miles to the north of Welshpool. At its core supposedly lies a 12thC building, extended in the 14thC. A south porch and western bell-turret were added in the 17thC and a north transept in the 18thC. It is a complex building revealing various stages of reconstruction, and is interesting for the series of dated windows in the south wall. Inside is a medieval font and piscina, 17thC and 18thC wooden furnishings, and a few pre-19thC monuments. It stands in a sub-rectangular churchyard that has been extended in the last hundred years and this retains an early 19thC sundial and several interesting grave markers.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The conventional view as expressed by Haslam and others is that, on the basis of a single window in the north wall, a single-chamber church originating in the Norman period was extended eastwards probably in the early 14thC. Against this is the evidence of a quoin line which seems to indicate that the eastern part of the nave and the chancel are the earlier and that the western half of the nave is added on.

The sequence is however unclear. The survival of Norman masonry is unproven, though the blocky sandstone of the chancel could be that early, and the tidiness of the zoned masonry in the south wall of the chancel could indicate this is the earliest of all. The small Norman window in the north wall does not appear to be in its original position, and may even be reconstructed. The blocked priest's doorway could be an original south doorway which would then give an alternative date of the 13thC or 14thC for the east end.

The present south doorway, in its present form almost round-headed, is not convincingly Norman, but nor is it of the 14thC or 15thC. Its eccentricity and slightly skewed reveal suggests it might be reset.

The west window of the nave is of early 14thC origin, but until the late 19thC it was in the east wall.

Later modifications are more tangible: in the 17thC and 18thC new windows were inserted into the south wall, the bell turret was erected, probably around 1618, and during this century the long porch was constructed. A gallery may have been added after the Restoration, hence the dormer window dated to 1669. A north transept was added in 1727 when the rood loft together with its supporting pillars was taken down to provide timber for the transept. Earlier, on the evidence of a quoinstone, some work was done at the west end in 1704. The west wall was re-faced, probably at the time of restoration in 1891-3, and at the same time the east window was moved to the west wall. Other work at this time included the restoration of the spire.

One possible sequence for the medieval period is:

- i) earliest part of the structure is the east end of the building with zoned masonry.
- ii) church extended westwards with new quoins at the south-west angle, the original west wall taken down and its stone re-used in haphazard fashion in the south wall, a new south doorway put in place, and perhaps a new east window. Therefore early 14thC
- iii) church extended westwards, another south door added, but probably re-used and re-set eccentrically.



Conceivably this could be a 17thC addition to the building.

iv) the small north window re-set, possibly as late as the 18thC when the building of the north transept will have led to demolition of parts of the north chancel wall.

## HISTORY

The church's dedication to St Ffraid (otherwise known as St Bride or St Bridget), together with its location on the edge of the Cain valley, point to an early medieval foundation, though there is no surviving trace of any early structure. A small Norman window indicates the age of the first building survivals.

The church is first recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Cap'lla de Llansanfret' at a value of £2, and appears again in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 as 'Ecc'lia de Lansanfreit' at £12.

Much damage to the building occurred at the beginning of the 15thC during the Glyndwr rebellion.

Some alterations took place in the 17thC. The south porch was added and the priest's door blocked up. The south wall windows were inserted at this time, possibly around 1618: the bells date from this period and a 1618 beam was found in the bell turret during 19thC alterations.

In 1727, a north transept was added in Georgian style, the vestry minutes recording the removal of the north wall. The roodloft and screen seem to have been moved at this time.

A new gallery was erected in 1830 and some restoration took place in 1866.

Glynne visited Llansantffraid in 1858. He noted the basic details and the fact that the church had been partly modernised, including 'several bad windows'. The half piscina in the chancel was recorded as were some of the dated 17thC windows, and also pews of 1624 and 1630.

Considerable repairs and restoration work were carried out in 1893, to the design of John Oldrid Scott of London. The former east window was moved to the west wall of the nave which was rebuilt (or at least refaced) at this time, galleries were removed from the nave and north transept, the chancel was re-roofed and refurnished, new seats replaced the pews, and the floors were relaid in woodblocks. The framework of the bell turret was repaired and the spire was covered in oak shingles; the porch was also repaired.

There have been recent restoration works.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a single main chamber with a short north aisle and north transept, a vestry on the north side of the chancel, and a south porch. A bell-turret with broach spire rises above the west end of the nave. The church is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: 'A' comprises small to medium blocks and thinnish slabs of grey shale with occasional pink and mustard yellow sandstone; random coursing except for sandstone. Red sandstone quoins.

'B' consists of small slabs and lumps of black and grey shale; uncoursed.

'C' is a mix of small blocks, used for infilling around windows.

'D' is irregularly cut red sandstone with blocks of grey shale, though the former is the more distinctive; yellow sandstone dressings.

'E' is of medium-sized blocks of distinctive brown sandstone, sometimes quite well shaped.

'F' is of small blocks of limestone.

'G' is of medium to large blocks of shaped grey (?) sandstone with some slabs of limestone and some re-used material including red sandstone with some limewash residue, and even two lumps of brick.

'H' is of regular blocks of stone, perhaps limestone, but larger than 'F'.



'A' is undated, but perhaps later medieval, 'B' and 'E' are early; possibly even Norman. 'C' seems to be 17thC and 18thC. 'D' and 'G' are 19thC, more specifically 1891-3. 'F' and 'H' are undated, although a date in the 17thC/18thC is possible.

Note: the 1727 north transept is completely rendered over.

Roofs: slates with red ceramic ridge tiles; these are more highly decorated above the chancel. A wrought iron cross finial is located on the ridge a little to the west of the nave/chancel juncture. There is a stone cross finial at the east end of the chancel.

Drainage: highly decorated cast-iron cisterns, guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Along the south side of the church the ground has been cleared and dug-out around the walls, revealing the foundations, so almost certainly a trench on the south and also on the east, perhaps too on the north side of the north chapel/transept.

## Exterior

Bell turret. General. Western bell turret protrudes from the nave roof. It is believed to have been constructed during the early 17thC, on the basis of the bells' dates. A square shingled turret rises to an octagonal broach spire with a weathervane.

North face: turret has three louvred apertures with trefoiled heads set in rectangular wooden frame.

East and west faces: plain except for wooden frieze with trefoils at top of the turret stage.

South face: clock face.

Nave. General. Although there is no differentiation between the nave and chancel externally, except for the change in the ridge tiles on the roof, the end of the nave can be gauged from the eastern edge of the pulpit that lights the window. A second change, this time in the height of the roof is visible in line with the quoinstones immured in the south wall.

North wall: in 'A', but considerably patched with worn sandstone, particularly at higher levels, and this might indicate that there has been some rebuilding of the higher levels, for the lower parts of the walls are largely of shale alone (as seen in that part of the wall now hidden in the boiler house). A 19thC diagonal buttress to the north-west wall corner pre-dates the restoration, appearing on an earlier engraving. Next a wooden lintel immured in the wall but there is no evidence of a blocked embrasure. No sign of the blocked window which is depicted on Salter's plan. Then a single round-headed window supposedly of the 12thC - this is in red sandstone, but the jambs are in slightly different stone from the head and, showing little wear for such an old feature, are probably not original. Underneath the window is the modern boiler house.

South wall: a patchwork of different stone, not all of it intelligible. Features from the west are: i) masonry in 'A' with a foundation course (to c.0.1m), projecting slightly at the base which is largely buried further to the east; higher up there is more sandstone in the masonry, some certainly shaped and some lumps might be re-used dressings. Thus the upper part of the wall rebuilt (perhaps in the 17thC?). Church noticeboard. ii) porch. iii) east of the porch the mixed masonry continues with 'A' at the base and more heterogeneous stonework above; an irregular zone of red sandstone, more obvious than on the west side of the porch can be seen as a band below a dormer window. This window has four rectangular leaded lights in an oak frame sited above and to the east of the porch; 'E T O 1669' is carved on it. iv) a square-headed window with three foiled, round-headed lights with raised mouldings; small blank shields in the central spandrels; the lights are recessed and have a dated inscription immediately above: 'John Edwards Anno Domini 1619'; a second, Latin inscription runs around the head of the window immediately below the label. It cannot be shown that this window is inserted, so the wall may be of this date. v) original red sandstone quoins of the early church visible as a continuous line in the upper part of wall, and intermittently to ground level. East of this divide are three or perhaps four fabrics; at the base of the wall is 'B', much more obvious and distinctively zoned in the chancel. But in the eastern part of the nave 'B' is still visible, though there is some 'E' mixed with it. 'E'



forms a second band above the shale and up to window sill level; again it is much more distinctively zoned in the chancel. Above this is 'A'. vi) window with rectangular stone frame containing two segmental-headed lights with smaller lights above; inscribed 'John Davies 1703 Thomas Morris' on the sill; this appears to have been inserted into the 'A'. vii) a two-centred arch of a blocked doorway; sandstone dressings, chamfered with broach stops which are just visible about 0.2m below ground level. The blocking is interesting for it mimics the zoning of the wall on either side though there is a subtle difference in the appearance of the masonry that was used. viii) a single light with a cusped head, set in square-headed frame. ix) a two-light window comparable with vi) and presumably of 1703, though with a renewed sill.

West wall: in fabric 'G', with large quoins in light-grey sandstone. Contains a re-inserted three-light window with intersecting tracery, in a two-centred arch with a slim hoodmould and corbel-like stops, but the grey freestone is unweathered and has sharp arrises, and is almost certainly totally renewed; stone voussoirs form a decorative relieving arch; transferred from the east end of the church in 1893. Above it is a rose window in red sandstone and of 19thC date. The width of this wall suggests that the original wall was clad externally in the 19thC. However, it should be noted that the topmost quoin at the north-west angle bears the initials J P and C W with the date 1704.

North chapel. General. On the north side of the nave. 19thC addition on west side of 18thC transept. In fabric 'D', North wall contains windows with two and three trefoiled lights with reticulated tracery in red sandstone with hoodmoulds and voussoir arches. West wall has a two-light window, as does the north wall.

North transept. General. Georgian-style addition of 1727, heavily rendered with signs of modern replastering; exposed yellow sandstone quoins to east and west angles.

North wall: semi-circular headed arch with projecting keystone, capitals, and sill, the last supported on corbels. Below this is a square-headed doorway, the lintel having a central projection like the keystone above; a heavy studded door in a timber frame.

East and west walls: plain.

Vestry. General. 19thC addition to the north-east corner of church in fabric 'D'. Set back fractionally from the line of the chancel east wall. Long trefoiled light in the north wall and two lights in the east wall.

Chancel. General. East and south walls only. The only division between nave and chancel is provided by a downpipe and subtle changes in the masonry.

East wall: a remarkable mix of fabrics. 'B' is just visible towards the base, then rising up to window sill level is 'E' incorporating a couple of large blocks of red sandstone. Next a band of 'F' and then some 'A'-type material. Then another band of limestone ('H'). Finally, blocks of grey and grey-black shale with iron staining form the apex of the gable and also a band dropping down beneath both roof edges; this is almost certainly Victorian and may indicate some rebuilding. The east window is also Victorian, of three foiled lights with intersecting tracery in and above the lights, all in red sandstone; hoodmould with corbel-like stops, and a voussoir relieving arch. Put in place in 1893. Victorian sandstone quoins at angles.

South wall: 'B' forms a distinctive foundation about 0.4m high, much of which would have been buried before the drainage trench was dug. Above this is a clear zone of 'E' up to a height of around 2m. The sanctuary is lit by a single light with a foiled, ogee head, 19thC. East of this is a patch of limestone blocks, 'F', with patching in an 'A'-type material above it, suggestive of rebuilding. To the west of the sanctuary window is a square-headed window of four lights which are identical to the window of 1619 in the south wall of the nave.

Porch. General. 17thC oak-framed porch which has seen extensive restoration. The open timberwork superstructure with fretwork balusters is supported on shale dwarf walls with red sandstone dressings, and these must be 19thC. On the south is an arch-braced, two-centred arched entrance way with cusped barge



boards above

## Interior

**Porch. General.** Stone slabbed floor of early gravestones, one of 1816, but most too worn to be legible. Roof of three arch-braced tie-beam trusses, including that at the front of the porch (above); fluted mouldings on the two inner ones and raking struts above the peaked tie-beam of the middle truss; through purlins. Some original timbers remain, amongst them the inner two arch-braced trusses.

**North wall:** a doorway that is almost round-headed, not pointed, but is not symmetrical; the chamfer has sharp arrises but no stops, the sides narrow towards the floor. It does not give the impression of being an authentic early doorway. Haslam puts a 15thC date on the wooden door itself.

**Nave. General.** Floor of black and red Victorian tiles, partly carpetted; woodblock floors beneath benches, some heating grilles. Walls plastered and painted, and plain pew panels form a dado around the west end; higher panelling beside the seats. Roof in three sections. At the west end below the bell turret the ceiling is lowered and has tongue and groove panelling, supported by a single tie beam with short arch braces from stone corbels, formerly for the gallery. Over the western half of the nave and corresponding with the slightly lower roof line externally, there is a panelled ceiling of three large square bays, with exposed ribs, decorated bosses, and wallplates. Finally, the eastern part of the nave which is slightly higher is ceiled with fifteen panels of irregular size, decorated bosses and moulded cornices. The change from one level to another is marked by a braced collar truss bearing a painted inscription. Despite the difference in level, the nave ceiling is all of one design and presumably of one date, which could be 18thC on the basis of similarities with the north transept ceiling.

**North wall:** a red sandstone arcade of three bays, on the line of the pre-18thC north wall, separates the nave from the north chapel and transept. Two-centred arches of two orders resting on moulded capitals and octagonal pillars. Four benefaction boards are sited beneath the bell turret. One 19thC marble memorial and a brass of 1770.

**East wall:** one step up to the chancel, the Victorian screen and a change in the appearance of the ceiling separate the nave from the chancel.

**South wall:** the wall is slightly battered and the alignment of the western end is faintly differently from the more easterly part. At the west end the dormer window would have lit the gallery which was removed in 1893. The embrasure for the south door is almost round-headed with large blocks of stone for the soffit, but the whole is eccentric to the doorway itself. The blocked priest's door has a slightly splayed reveal with a segmental head, and the quoins are painted over. Some memorials: three stone tablets of 1784, 1798 and 1812, a brass of 1800; several marble tablets of the 19thC, and two benefaction boards of 1876 and 1879.

**West wall:** windows only.

**North chapel. General.** Tiled floor, with woodblocks under seats; walls plastered above the dado of pew panels. Ceiling of wooden panels with moulded ribs and decorated bosses. South wall consists of two bays of the arcade. West wall contains a large heating grille.

**North Transept. General.** Tiled floor; walls plastered above dado in places. Benches continue from the nave. A panelled wooden screen divides the aisle leading to the north entrance from an area to the east now used for storage. Ceiling is plastered with fifteen panels of chamfered ribs and bosses. North wall has Georgian entrance. West wall has two arches to the north chapel dating from the 1893 restoration. Memorial tablets of 1712 and 1801 on west wall. On the east wall, a stone tablet of 1796, a wooden panel of 1729 and three later marble memorials.



Vestry. General. Of 19thC date. Contains the organ, and there is a fireplace in the north-east corner. Woodblock floor; plastered walls; vaulted ceiling with exposed ribs and wallplates. Wooden memorial of 1756 on west wall.

North wall: stone sill of window has partial inscription 'Obiit 1847'; the remainder of the sill is plastered.

West wall: wooden memorial board of 1756/1768.

Chancel. General. One step up from nave, one to sanctuary, and one to altar. Floors of black and white marble date from 1893. Walls plastered above plain panelled wainscoting. Vaulted ceiling of twenty decorated panels, subdivided; crenellated wallplates with blind trefoiled panels to the cornice. 19thC if not later.

North wall: two-bay arcade to vestry and north transept. Two brasses, one of 1696, the other of 1803; four marble tablets, one of 1760, one illegible, the others 19thC.

South wall: half of a foiled piscina arch, probably 14thC, in the sanctuary. Four 19thC marble memorials (though one is blank and another illegible) and a fifth of 1798.

West wall: screen to nave dating from 1893 restoration.

## FURNISHING and FITTINGS

Font: a deep circular bowl with a plain rim and a groove just below it, lead lined, stands on a round stem with octagonal plinth; 13thC. Wooden cover from 1893.

Piscina: half of a double piscina with foiled arch, one bowl visible, the other partly hidden; in the south wall of sanctuary.

Cupboards: i) oak cupboard with 'WWW Esq 1736' inscribed on panelled door. ii) Oak wall cupboard located in vestry, carved 'John Bill, Robert Owen, Churchwardens 1770'

Altar rails: carved; dated to the 18thC. Oak gates were fitted to the original rails in 1969.

Reading desks: oak, one carved with 'R.G.1624', the other with '1630 R.L.' on their front panels.

Pew panelling: dado around chancel includes inscriptions: 'E.R 1706' and 'M I LL 1710'.

Pulpit: octagonal and decorated; with sounding board. 17thC.

Monuments: i) engraved brass in wooden frame to Rev. Griffith Lloyd, vicar, (d.1696) with Latin inscription. ii) stone tablet to Jane Lloyd (d.1712). iii) a large wooden panel to Captain R.K. (d.1729). iv) Ann, wife of Reverend Griffith Evans (d.1760). v) A wood memorial with skull and crossbones above the inscription to Thomas and Mary Atkis (d.1756 and 1768). vi) a brass in a wooden frame to Ellena Parry (d.1770). vii) Francis Dorset, Glascoed (d.1778). viii) a marble, neo-classical style memorial to John Dickin (d.1784) and his son, Thomas (d.1855) by L and T Fisher, Huddersfield. ix) stone tablet to Edward Williams (d.1788) x) John Edmunds (d.1796) and Lloyd Jones (d.1801). xi) marble tablet to John Bill (d.1798). xii) a brass to Eleanor Parry (d.1800).

Plate: cups of 1720 and 1722, patens of 1720 and 1733 (though hallmarked 1698).

Bells: two of 1618, both recast, and a third of 1718 by Ruddhall of York.

Register: from 1582.



Victorian furnishings and fittings include:

Screen: 'varied tracery lights and an English fan-ribbed canopy' (Haslam).

Lectern: carved eagle, 1891.

Benefaction boards: located on the north wall, opposite south entrance door. Four boards record charitable donations of 1850, 1860 (x2) and 1871. An 1892 board of the Incorporated Society for Buildings and Churches records a donation towards enlarging and restoring the church. Near the south entrance door boards of 1876 and 1879.

Organ: panelled, hand-pumped organ, though now connected to an electric pump; located in the vestry alcove north of chancel.

Stained glass: includes window by C.E. Moore of London in memory of Rev. Thomas Henry Lloyd (1845-1934), vicar at the time of the 1892 restoration. 1847 stained glass by David Evans, depicting the Raising of Lazarus. Stained glass memorial gift (1921) from a former Prime Minister of Australia in south wall of chancel.

Candelabrum: brass, of 1808.

Monuments: include i) white marble on black stone, in neo-classical style to Sarah Dickens (d.1857) by L and T Fisher, Huddersfield. ii) Hannah Worthington (d.1800) marble, by John Nelson, Shrewsbury. iii) Mary Edmunds (d.1830) by Regnart of Camden Town. iv) Robert Perrott (d.1843) by Harrison of Chester.

## CHURCHYARD

The sub-rectangular churchyard, was extended to the north in 1903 and again in the 1970s. It is well-maintained and there are modern cremations just to the east of the chancel.

Boundary: a stone revetment wall follows the original boundary on the south and west sides; a modern wooden fence on the north-west with modern housing beyond; and an iron railed boundary to the vicarage on the north-east.

Monuments: memorials throughout the churchyard though work in the 1970s included the removal of some and also the railings enclosing older graves. Gravemarkers have also been removed from the immediate south side of the church within the last century. The earliest slab noted is of 1679. Two carved stones, perhaps late 17thC or 18thC grave markers, are now free-standing against the north wall of the church; one shows a skull and cross bones surmounted by a Latin memorial inscription, the second has a rectangle enclosing an hour glass with a spade underneath.

Furniture: sundial of 1810 with brass gnomon, on a baluster pillar with a square plinth on a circular base; opposite the south porch among 18thC memorials.

Earthworks: raised churchyard. There is a scarp bank, 1m or more high to the north-west of the church marking the original extent of the churchyard before the extensions. There is another scarp along the south-east, perhaps also an earlier boundary, and a considerable drop to the south-west.

Ancillary features: the original entrance appears to be the single gate at the south corner, where the oldest yew tree is sited. A pair of modern iron gates now forms the main west entrance, set between two Irish yews. Tarmac paths lead to the south porch and the later north entrance. A stone-built grave-diggers' hut, now covered in ivy, is sited alongside the north path to the graveyard extension.

Vegetation: mature yew trees are located around the original churchyard perimeter, particularly on the south and south-west sides. Broad-leaved species around the south-east perimeter.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1988  
CPAT Field Visit 8 November 1995 and 4 March 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 197  
Eisel 1986, 186  
Glynne 1885, 46  
Haslam 1979, 149  
Jones 1871  
NLW St. Asaph Parish Records  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Salter 1991, 18  
Thomas 1911, 247



## CONDITION

Dampness worst on north walls. North aisle particularly damp, but has been patched up; re-rendered on the outside recently. Plaster is peeling badly around all apertures in the north chapel. Repointing recently on the vestry north wall.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Medium to Good

# Llansilin

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<b>Diocese</b>	St Asaph	<b>Dedication</b>	St Silin
<b>PRN</b>	101080	<b>NGR</b>	SJ20962819
		<b>Previous dedication</b>	St Giles

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## GENERAL SUMMARY

Llansilin is a double-naved church dedicated to St Silin, and originally a clas foundation. Remains of a 13thC cruciform building are still visible, and the complicated sequence evidenced by masonry changes has been unravelled by Raleigh Radford. Most of the architectural features are Perpendicular, but there are two blocked doorways of earlier date and a 13thC lancet. Its tower is much later, constructed in 1832. Perhaps the only medieval fittings are an early cross-incised altar stone and some of the roof beams, but there is a good range of 17thC and 18thC wooden furnishings including a dug-out chest, a pillar poorbox, an altar table, a font cover, as well as the west gallery. The early 18thC plaster Royal Arms, and several interesting memorials should also be mentioned. The churchyard is large and sub-oval, perhaps with an earlier or inner circuit still discernible. There is a sundial of 1717 and a few 18thC ledgers.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A complicated church which has the Perpendicular as its dominant style but with earlier features.

North aisle shows some differences in masonry between its west wall and those on the north and east. The former has an earlier doorway, thought to be Early English, the latter pair a batter which is not present in the chancel to the south. The windows are Perpendicular though much renewed.

The south nave and chancel show several phases of walling in the south front. That at the extreme east is obviously the earliest, that next to it has a re-set lancet, the only pre-Perpendicular window in this south cell. The rest of the wall could be 15thC, but the angles appear to have been rebuilt, as does the gable at the east end.

The tower dates to 1832.

In 1966 C.A.R. Radford defined a sequence which in simplified form is as follows:

i) cruciform church of first quarter of the 13thC, the date in keeping with clas status. Surviving features include fragments of a doorway and the wall in which it was set, namely the present west wall of the north aisle; a now blocked doorway reconstructed in the south wall; a lancet now re-set in the south wall; the western respond of the arcade between aisle and nave, and a fragment of the capital on the east respond.

Radford adduced that the west wall of the north aisle was originally the west wall of the 13thC nave, and that the extreme east of the south wall was part of the south transept of a cruciform church. The south transept originally extended further east, the original chancel lay some metres further east, the north transept and north wall have disappeared completely, the present north wall is on the line of the north arcade of the cruciform church and the present arcade is on the line of the south arcade.

ii) chapel added in the angle between the south transept and south aisle of the cruciform church. Evidenced by masonry change, and by chamfered inset of its west wall. Date of addition is uncertain but might bear some relationship to the decorated capital of the eastern respond of the present arcade which is thought to



be early 14thC.

iii) church laid waste probably in time of Owain Glyndwr at the beginning of 15thC. Remodelled in Perpendicular style. Much of east and north of church levelled and new double-naved structure constructed using some old masonry and some earlier architectural features. Building completed soon after 1500.

iv) tower added in 19thC.

While there is little to fault in this sequence, some aspects still need to be explained. The putative cruciform church was a much larger structure than the present building, with its eastern arm projecting well beyond the present east wall. However, a few metres east of the present chancel, the ground drops away noticeably - the absence of any sign of a building platform, and the fact that the chancel would have been constructed on a slope yet has left no signs is surprising. Secondly, the north aisle has a battered base and its east wall has a different alignment to that of the chancel. Both features suggest that the two naves were not built at the same time (contra Radford). Thirdly, the re-use of only a short section of the south wall of the south transept (though to almost its full height) is surprising. Why was the east wall not utilised? Fourthly, the proposed round-headed archway subsequently converted to a Gothic arch in the south wall implies Norman architectural detail, but this merits no comment in Radford's analysis.

## HISTORY

Llansilin is known to have been a clas establishment in the early medieval era. The foundation charter of St John's Hospital at Oswestry which is attributed to the period 1210-1215 refers to the clergy of Llansilin, confirming its collegiate status.

In the Taxatio of 1254 it is referred to as 'Ecclesia de Llansilyn' with a value of £3 6s 8d, while in its 1291 successor it is 'Ecclia de Lanfylyn' with a value of £20 6s 8d, the chief church in the commote of Cynllaith.

In keeping with its mother church status, Raleigh Radford posited an early 13thC cruciform church, with aisled nave, comparable with the somewhat earlier example at Tywyn, Meirioneth.

In the past the north chancel was dedicated to St Silin, but this was superseded by the Lady Chapel on the south as the main chancel. However, there are indications, too, that during the Middle Ages the church was re-dedicated to St Giles.

During the Civil War in 1646 initial attempts were made to fortify the church; the east window is said to have been destroyed at this time together with an image of St Silin in the chancel and figures on the rood loft.

The south porch was added in 1771, the gallery repaired in 1777-1778.

In 1813 it is recorded that the Lord's Prayer was painted on the walls of the chancel over the pews.

A tower was built at the west end in 1832, replacing a timber-framed spire that had burned down in 1813.

Glynne visited Llansilin in 1853. His notes indicate that the building was Perpendicular except for the one lancet in the south wall. At the time there was still a west gallery and pews.

The south porch taken down in 1864, the south doorway restored and a window inserted above it; north window perhaps added at this time?

Restoration in 1890 at a cost of £1700 was by Arthur Baker and included repairs to walls necessitating underpinning, the windows including raising the east window sill in the chancel by two feet, and the doors; church re-floored and re-seated. The plaster ceiling was taken down exposing the 15thC arched-braced roof of the south nave, and the wagon ceiling at its east end; a fragment of the carved rood beam also came to light. Drainage works were also undertaken.



## ARCHITECTURE

Llansilin church comprises a nave and chancel, a north aisle of similar length but narrower, and a west tower attached to the nave. It is oriented fractionally south of west.

Fabrics: 'A' is of multi-coloured masonry (buff, grey, brown etc) including small and medium-sized lumps of sandstone of different degrees of coarseness, shale, occasional lumps of quartz and slabs of slate; many rounded pebblestones; uncoursed.

'B' of pink and brown blocks and slabs of sandstone; some slabs used in levelling courses; more uniform than 'A'.

'C' of regular blocks of pinkish shaley sandstone; regular coursing.

'D' of blocks of varied coloured sandstone, less regular in appearance than 'C'.

'E' is of irregular shale and sandstone lumps of variegated colour, medium and occasionally smaller sized stone with little coursing.

'F' is of thin slabs of iron-stained shale plus blocks and rounded lumps of grey, brown and buff shale and sandstone; one slab of limestone.

Roof: slates with red clay ridge tiles. Stone cross finials at east end of chancel and at ends of aisle.

Drainage: concrete drain around north side including tower. Nothing obvious on other sides.

### Exterior

Tower. General. In 'D'. Chamfered plinth on north and south side, not west; angle buttresses that give way to diagonal buttresses in second stage. This second stage is inset from a chamfer rather than a string course. Battlemented parapet with string course below and ornamented pinnacles at the corners. Weathercock on roof.

North wall: plain, two-centred, louved window for belfry.

East wall: in 'D', but perhaps recently cleaned and re-pointed; plain and uncrenellated parapet. Standard belfry window.

South wall: as north side but high up in the first stage are two projecting corbels, not now supporting anything.

West wall: two-centred doorway, the hoodmould with head-stops; outer, 18thC decorative iron gates in front of the wooden doors. Above the doorway a two-centred window with simple hoodmould. Second stage of tower has a clock face, the clock by Thomas Benjamin and Co. dated 1848. Then a string course and finally a standard belfry window.

North Aisle. General. In 'A' and 'B', with the base slightly battered. Remnant plaster on the walls.

North wall: battered base below the current ground level but revealed in drainage trench; bottom 1m or so including batter in 'B', the rest of wall in 'A'. Also at north-west angle are protruding foundation stones beneath batter - most in evidence at the angle itself but extending for 4m+ eastwards. From the west end: i) quoins at the north-west angle in dressed pink sandstone. ii) two-light Victorian window, cusped lancet lights and continuous hoodmould with foliate stops, the dressings of yellow freestone; perhaps added in 1864. A few signs of being inset. iii) rectangular window of two, two-centred cinquefoiled lights with sunken spandrels, hollow chamfers to jambs, in grey and sandy yellow freestone. None of this is entirely convincing as medieval stonework, except perhaps for a couple of jamb stones, and an earlier sill, slightly narrower, is left in situ beneath. iv) lean-to with chimney, slit windows of bricks, and wide doors on the east with a re-used wooden lintel.

East wall: as north wall, with the batter in 'B', and 'A' above; batter stops abruptly before aisle gives way to chancel. Two-centred window with three cinquefoiled lights and panels above, hollow chamfers but no



hoodmould; mullions replaced, but rest may be original though not particularly weathered.

West wall: the masonry does not appear to be exactly as that in the north wall with more blocks and some coursing, and no recognisable distinction between lowest masonry and that above; but classed as 'A'. Blocked doorway with pinkish sandstone dressings for the jambs, not unlike the nearby quoins; base of doorway higher than present ground level. The arch has been removed during the insertion of a rectangular window in grey and buff sandstone which has two, two-centred lights with trefoil tracery: original. Above the window is a block of sandstone with worn decoration.

Nave and Chancel. General. Not differentiated externally. There are indications that the roof has been raised; originally it was the same height as the north aisle.

East wall: on a fractionally different alignment to east wall of north aisle. Dominated by large east window with two-centred arch with simple hoodmould; four cusped lights with transom, sub-arches and panels above. The freestone dressings do not look original. Masonry to south and above window is 'E' with only sparse remnants of plaster, but to the north the plaster is much more in evidence, suggesting that there may have been rebuilding and cleaning, perhaps at the time that the window was renewed; south-east angle rebuilt with chamfered concrete foundation at base. This is carried on as unchamfered concrete along the whole length of the chancel east wall. High up, in gable, the wall is inset also suggesting rebuilding, and clear indications, too, that the roof raised by 0.5m or so.

South wall: reveals a complex of features including five windows, a blocked doorway and at least four constructional phases. Features from the east end are: i) south-east angle with some stonework of modern appearance, mixed with older material. ii) a short length of wall to a butt joint. Quoins at its western extremity show it to be earlier than the adjacent walling to west; quoins of pink, grey and buff sandstone. Masonry is similar to 'A' but with some slightly larger blocks. Evidence of heightening about 0.5m below eaves. Set in this wall is a rectangular window with two, two-centred cusped lights, sunken spandrels: a Perpendicular window in grey freestone except for its renewed mullion. iii) the next stretch of wall is in 'F' with some courses giving a zoned effect to the wall face; quoins of well-dressed grey sandstone. At its juncture with the next section of walling, there is an inset at window sill level, but this appears only on what would have been the west face of the cell whose south face is incorporated into the south wall of present structure. In the wall one lancet window with slightly hollowed chamfers, grey dressings. Note that this window is not central to this section of the wall and is thought to be reset. iv) a section of walling in what is probably 'A'. First comes a rectangular window with two, two-centred, cinquefoiled lights; the spandrels have lights in them and only the occasional jamb stone looks original. Next a blocked two-centred doorway of two orders with 'heavy fully-engaged column(s) worked on the angle' (Raleigh Radford), all in brown sandstone - inconsistencies in the setting of some of the archstones demonstrate that this was not its original form and Raleigh Radford argued that it was formerly a wider, round-headed arch. Above this is a rectangular three-light window with foiled ogees, entirely renewed, perhaps even a new build. v) to the west of the door by c.0.5m is what may be a butt joint running as high as the window top. Conversely this could mark the edge of the porch erected in 1771. vi) new section of walling is in 'A' but with some larger blocks and more rounded stones than iv). In this a rectangular window, the two lights with round heads, and angular chamfers to the jambs and lintel; some replacement of the dressings. vii) possible rebuilding of the south-west angle, a vertical joint line visible on the south wall and linking with a horizontal masonry change below the eaves.

## Interior

Porch. General. Set beneath the tower. Floor of stone slabs; walls plastered and painted; flat ceiling with joists painted over.

North wall: flight of stone stairs to the west gallery; otherwise plain.

East wall: simple two-centred arch with chamfered jambs.

South wall: notice boards and bench.



**North Aisle. General.** Stone flag floors, mainly new but at least three graveslabs used at west end of aisle and several others in front of vestry partition (see below); benches on wooden block flooring, flush with aisle stones on south side, raised on north side. In line with the third column the east end is partitioned off with a low screen and curtains to form a vestry and organ chamber; this has wooden block floor. Walls plastered and painted but dressed stone of windows and arcade is bare; heating pipes and radiators along north wall. Roof of seven bays with arch-braced collar trusses springing from walls (though a wall plate is visible beneath the paint of the north wall), with cusped raking struts and rafters. The three western trusses are different: the westernmost is a cambered tie-beam with large raking struts all set into the wall; the next two lack struts and cusping. Furthermore, while the bays generally have two tiers of cusped windbraces and two sets of purlins, the western two bays have only a single tier of larger windbraces and a single purlin. Easternmost bay has three heavily ornamented purlins (one a ridge purlin) which presumably once supported a wagon roof over the altar.

**North wall:** two splayed windows, and near east end a grating in the wall now hidden behind a cupboard; its purpose unknown. Several 18thC and later memorials, plaster coat-of-arms and a fine benefaction board, recently restored.

**East wall:** splayed window with stained glass of 19thC date.

**South wall:** four-bay Perpendicular arcade with thick octagonal pillars and capitals, on bases of similar size. Broad two-centred arches of two orders, but many of the voussoirs are thought to have been re-used from higher, narrower arches. The western respond rests on large irregular basal foundation stone; the others appear to be similar. The western respond has decorated capital with roughly carved stiff-leaf foliage. The capital of the most easterly pillar is decorated with fleurons. Eastern respond has a fragment of its original capital with stiff-leaf foliage decoration.

**West wall:** splayed window only.

**Nave. General.** Flagged floors, with one graveslab near the font, but no others noticed. Benches on flush wooden block flooring, except for a few at rear which are raised. Walls as the north aisle. Roof of four bays, higher and wider but generally similar to those in north aisle; note mortice holes in the southern arch bracing of the three most westerly trusses. At the western end a gallery is supported on chamfered and stopped wooden columns, and at its north and south ends pillars with cusped raking supports.

**North wall:** three bays of the arcade as noted in north aisle.

**East wall:** step up to chancel and also large tie-beam set forward of chancel.

**South wall:** wall face has outward lean almost as far east as the chancel step where the face is stepped in from window sill level upwards, and becomes near vertical; matches the similar offset externally. Three splayed windows and a simple cambered reveal to the embrasure of former south doorway; two 19thC marble memorials.

**West wall:** gallery. Above this but currently inaccessible is a commandments board with painted figures.

**Chancel. General.** One step up from nave, two steps to sanctuary and altar. Floor tiled with regular encaustic patterns, and carpet over; at least one vault beneath floor. Walls as nave. Roof has three chamfered tie-beams the westernmost one higher than the others and representing the rood beam which supported the rood. From each, vertical cusped struts run up to support a highly ornate wagon ceiling with purlins decorated with bands of vine trail, and cusped and traceried panels; original. At the east end the purlins are supported on two long wall posts which run down on either side of the east window.

**North wall:** two bays of the arcade as described under north aisle, plus a marble memorial of 1810. In the sanctuary pew panelling around wall, and this runs round the east wall as a backdrop to altar.

**East wall:** large stained glass window, the embrasure splayed.



South wall: two splayed windows, the sill of that lighting the sanctuary a massive worked block of stone which is reported to be the old altar slab discovered in 1890. Also a 18thC memorial and a 20thC brass.

## FURNISHINGS AND FITTINGS

(Descriptions derived from Hubbard with additions)

Reredos: incorporates carved woodwork, part of a 15thC wallplate from the north wall of the chancel.

Font: probably 17thC with spired cover which is also 17thC.

Mensa: stone slab incised with three small crosses, found in chancel floor at time of the 1890 restoration and now functioning as sill in south sanctuary window.

Altar table: Carolean, heavy, one end is uncarved, showing it was to have been aligned east/west, with its end against the east wall.

Commandments: painted on canvas, now at the back of the gallery but formerly a reredos, and combining, as was common in the 17thC and 18thC, the Decalogue with figures of Moses and Aaron.

Benefaction board: west end of north wall of north aisle. A quaint painting of 1740; painted wood to look like marble; full length angels either side of a statement of legacies, together with winged cherub heads above. Recently restored.

Dug-out chest: iron fittings, from Llangadwaladr.

Pillar poorbox: with date 1664.

Chair: heavily decorated, in sanctuary.

West gallery: 16thC or 17thC, its balustrade by Baker, for he removed an 18thC panelled front to make a screen.

Screen: at east end of the north nave, made from 18thC panelled front of gallery

Stalls and pews: also 19thC by Baker, in his Aesthetic Movement interpretation of Jacobean, with some old pieces utilised in the stall backs. Lots of little turned finials. One set of box pews preserved in north aisle, reputedly in their original position.

Settle: ornately carved in front of the box pews; undated.

Pulpit: with 18thC tester.

Royal Arms of Queen Anne, in plaster, white only. Encroached upon by the Foulkes monument.

Monuments: i) Sir William Williams (d.1700), with urns, heraldry and putti, partly painted. ii) David Maurice (d.1719), pedimented and decorated with foliage and fruit; heraldry above; over it a wooden canopy. iii) Pryce Morris (d.1779) and others, a simple marble memorial. iv) Foulkes monument; its earliest commemoration date from 1761, but crudely painted.

Wooden plaques: one has four brass memorial plaques including those to Richard Foulkes (d.1789) and John Lloyd (d.1770) and two 19thC examples; composite. A second has brass plaques from pews, 15 in all and six of which carry a date of 1782, one of 1785. In the same frame, two wood plaques one of which is in Welsh the other recording the churchwardens Roger Jennings and John Jones, 1716-1717.

Plate: copper flagon (pre-1806); large silver cup of 1720, a smaller cup and paten of 1785, plus others not

dated.

19thC fittings and furnishings include:

Chandelier: two-tier, and of great sumptuousness, dated 1824; in chancel. But a wooden predecessor hangs in the gallery.

Stained glass: South nave east window by James Powell and Sons, 1866. Evangelists designed by H. Casolani and the Ascension in the tracery by E.J. Poynter.

Monuments: i) Thomas Davies (d.1810), by S. and F. Franceys. ii) Edward Thomas, mercer of Oswestry (d.1810), and others, of painted wood.

(Thomas records that part of the carved rood beam was discovered in the restoration of 1890. Crossley could find no trace of it).

## CHURCHYARD

Llansilin churchyard is a large sub-oval enclosure. It has clearly been encroached upon on the north side by the former National School building of 1823 and its associated plot. There is also a possibility of an earlier, smaller enclosure, eccentric to the present yard (see below: Earthworks). The ground drops gently from north to south and also beyond the church falls away to the east.

It is well kept and is used for contemporary burial.

Boundary: mortared stone wall on west and south, and on south-east and east a retaining wall. On north is the encroachment and then a stone wall and on the north-west, the stone wall lies inside a hedge; and it is beyond this, perhaps the original line(?), that there is a drop (see below).

Monuments: fairly well packed on south and south-west, less dense to north; some including modern burials to east yet the outer part of the eastern sector is apparently devoid of marked burials. There are early 18thC ledgers (or perhaps earlier) near east wall of chancel but many of these are too worn to be clearly legible.

Furniture: sundial with square plate, worn inscription indicating the gift of John Lloyd in 1717, and gnomon; set on pillar with chamfered edges and stops at the base, the surviving part of the medieval churchyard cross.

Earthworks: raised on most sides with drops to the outer ground surface ranging from c.0.4m on the south-west to around 1.5m on south. Surrounding the church is a curvilinear scarp bank much less than 1m high on the south, east and north-east, probably an earlier boundary.

Ancillary features: double and single iron gates on the west; double iron gates at north-west corner. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: ancient yews around east and north sides, about ten in all. Pines, conifers and deciduous trees throughout the churchyard.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 22 April 1997

Crossley 1946, 39

Faculty 1889 St Asaph (NLW) -- restoration of church

Glynne 1884, 190

Hubbard 1986, 241



Jones 1990  
Lloyd Williams and Underhill 1872. pl 46  
NMR Aberyswyth  
Quinquennial Review 1987  
Radford 1966  
Thomas 1913, 17

## CONDITION

Minor damp traces, particularly at the west end of south wall of north aisle.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Very Good

Architectural potential: Good

Group value: Good



# Llanwnnog

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**Diocese** Bangor**Dedication** Gwynnog**PRN** 16403**NGR** SO02239382

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## SUMMARY

St Gwynnog's church is a single-chambered structure, variously considered to be of 13thC or 15thC date and restored in 1863. It contains the best example of a 15thC or 16thC rood screen and loft in Montgomeryshire, a medieval font bowl and one 17thC memorial, though little else pre-dating the restoration. The church is set in a raised enclosure which was originally curvilinear before being enlarged in the 19thC.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

It has been claimed that the walls of the church are 13thC and that the building was extended eastwards in the 15thC. Certainly the east window is 15thC but there is no firm evidence of a 13thC structure or of an extension, though it does seem reasonable to assume that some of the walling is medieval. Some red sandstone dressings are believed to have been brought from the Roman settlement at Caersws, but this too is unproven.

The western part of the north wall and probably the east end of the south wall have been rebuilt, though when it is impossible to determine. The church was restored in 1862/3 in Perpendicular style, and it is possible that the rebuilding forms part of that episode. Similarly the top of the south wall has been replaced. This too could be 19thC work.

The west wall was rebuilt in 1982 using old material.

## HISTORY

The church is claimed to have been founded in the 6thC, a daughter church of Llandinam. Certainly the dedication and the previously curvilinear churchyard suggest an early medieval origin.

The church is recorded in Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'capella de Lanwennic' with a value of 13s 4d.

There is evidence of rebuilding in the 15th century.

Prior to a restoration in the Victorian era, the church had a dormer above the south porch, and different windows.

Glynne in 1855 singled out the rood loft and screen for comment as well as the stairs leading to the former. On a subsequent visit in 1866 he referred to the new roof, and the survival of the roof loft, complete though rather rickety.

Considerable renovation and restoration occurred in 1860 under the guidance of R. K. Penson. The roof was renewed, with some re-use of Perpendicular bosses over the chancel, new windows were inserted and a western spirelet on a bell turret was erected over the west end of the nave.

A major reconstruction of the west wall and bell turret took place in 1982. The west wall was taken down, a new turret constructed and the wall rebuilt with old rubblestone. The earlier west window was not replaced and instead a central buttress added.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a continuous nave and chancel, a south porch and a north vestry. A timber bell turret with a spirelet rises above the western end of the building. It is oriented almost exactly from east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium blocks of red and grey sandstone, slabs of shale and occasional small to large pebblestones; irregular coursing; some limewash residue. Blocks of dressed red sandstone are said to have been brought from the Roman settlement at Caersws.

'B' is of mainly medium-sized blocks and slabs of greyish quarry-cut stone; regular coursing and quoins in the same fabric; yellow sandstone dressings.

'C' is similar to 'B', but incorporates some red sandstone and pebblestones.

'D' consists of blocks of grey shaley stone, little weathered and of fresh appearance; occasional red sandstone.

'E' is of small and medium slabs and lumps of stone, occasional blocks of (re-used?) red sandstone and even some brick; irregularly coursed.

'A' was used for the medieval building. 'B' and 'C' are of 19thC date, and 'D' and 'E' are undated but are probably relatively recent in origin.

Roofs: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles, plain over the nave, ribbed over the chancel; stone cross finials at east end of church and over porch; and a wrought iron cross finial delineates the change from nave to chancel.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. There are signs of a trench along the south side and probably the north as well.

## Exterior

Bell turret. General. Square, wooden slatted, bell-turret and surmounted by a broach spire with a weathervane. On all the sides the top slats are open and there is a row of small open trefoils above.

Nave and chancel. General. No differentiation between nave and chancel except for a roof finial. In 'E' and 'A'.

North wall: the west angle of the wall was rebuilt in 1982 as part of the reconstruction of the bell turret and west wall, but the general interpretation of the wall is confused by differential pointing. To the west of the central window the masonry is mixed and much of the stone is relatively small, with little trace of limewash ('E'). This is a rebuild and its association with the central window (see below) may be significant. To the east of the window there are more blocks of sandstone with two rather obvious courses of the stone forming deliberate banding ('A'). Three restoration windows. To the west are two, low, two-centred windows, each with two ogee-headed lights and a small, irregularly foil light above; in yellow sandstone with a relieving arch of sandstone voussoirs over; the more easterly window shows signs of insertion but only on its east side. Further east is a square-headed window of two square-headed lights which illuminates the stairs to the rood loft: it has clearly been inserted into the wall. East of this is the vestry.

East wall: probably in 'A', although only sporadic sandstone. Two courses of red sandstone form a basal plinth, though this is less apparent towards the northern end of the wall. The east window, narrow for its height, has a two-centred arch, and three cinquefoiled, two-centred lights with panel tracery above. Most of the tracery looks original but the chamfered jambs as well as the mullions look to be renewed. Perpendicular



period, 15thC or 16thC. No hoodmould but worn heads set in the wall where the stops would have been, and a third head is set above the peak of the arch. Near the southern corner a small ledge projects from the wall and on this is placed a fragment of a gravemarker.

South wall: in 'A' but the top of wall from window-springer level upwards rebuilt in 'D', and at the east end of the wall and again near the porch some reconstruction has occurred in 'E'. Three restoration windows with two-centred arches, each containing three stepped, foiled lights; relieving arches composed of red sandstone voussoirs. On the west side of the porch is a narrow two-centred arched doorway in mustard yellow sandstone, the jambs chamfered with small bar stops; grey stone voussoirs; internally blocked since the 1980s work on the tower. A round sandstone aperture containing a quatrefoil is set above the doorway, and also has a relieving arch of voussoirs.

West wall: rebuilt in 1982 or 1984 with a central stepped buttress rising towards the gable. The masonry is a variation of 'A', with some sandstone blocks of less regular form than elsewhere. Original masonry re-used and the wall heavily pointed. The early red sandstone quoins have been re-set at the corners.

Vestry. General. 19thC addition in fabric 'B' for the north wall, but in 'C' for the west and east sides. Two single ogee-headed lights in pale sandstone in the north wall with stone voussoirs forming the arches; a doorway with a shouldered arch in the east wall and a square stone chimney with a sandstone stack rises above the west wall.

Porch. General. Open-fronted porch constructed in 'C'. A sandstone plinth, 0.6m high, and angle buttresses at the corners. South wall has a two-centred entrance arch with a relieving arch of voussoirs. East and west walls each have two shouldered lights in square-headed apertures.

#### Interior

Porch. General. Two steps up from exterior. Patterned tile floors. Walls are bare but heavily repointed, and a wooden bench along the west wall. Plastered ceiling above exposed rafters and purlins.

North wall: has south door to church with a two-centred moulded arch in red sandstone which has a faintly ogival top to the arch; a hoodmould with square stops. Wholly Victorian.

East and west walls: small window embrasures.

Nave. General. West end has a raised wooden platform extending the full width of the nave. The central aisle tiled with carpet down the aisle; and raised planked floors under the benches. Walls are plastered and painted, except for the window dressings. Roof of six arch-braced collar trusses with raking struts; six bays and the easternmost post adjoins the barrel vaulted ceiling of the chancel; plain wall plates on the north and south sides; exposed rafters and three rows of through purlins which form two narrow tiers and one wider tier with quatrefoil windbraces. Victorian renewal.

North wall: slight outward lean to wall. Three restoration windows, the most easterly set into the alcove that carries the stair of thirteen oak treads up to the rood loft. The steps were uncovered in the 19thC restoration, and are contemporary with the screen and loft. Five 19thC and 20thC memorial tablets on the wall, together with a 20thC war memorial.

East wall: late medieval rood screen and loft form the division between nave and chancel. The loft is used for storage. A low slabbed floor c.0.15m below the level of the aisle fronts the screen on the nave side.

South wall: two window apertures, and the reveal of the south doorway with its segmental head. One 19thC monument and an Incorporated Society for Building and Churches plaque. At the extreme west end of the wall the reveal of the small external doorway is angled through the wall.



West wall: contains a long low cupboard.

Belfry at the west end of the nave is supported on four oak uprights with stopped chamfers at the angles; cross-braces to its second stage on the north and south sides, and this frame rises to a lowered wooden ceiling at roof collar level; there is also an integral tie-beam set into the north and south walls which gives extra support. Access to the bells is by a ladder and a small hatch in this ceiling. Wholly Victorian. The old font has a central position below the belfry.

Chancel. General. One step up to the chancel, two to the sanctuary and one to the altar. Encaustic tiled floors, and raised planked flooring under longitudinal choir stalls. Walls as nave. Barrel-vaulted ceiling with a diamond frieze on the wallplates on the north and south sides. Ceiling is planked behind the exposed ribs and there are carved Perpendicular bosses at the intersections taken from the earlier roof.

North wall: two-centred sandstone arch and stepped entrance to vestry. Monument of 1816.

East wall: east window with worn red sandstone dressings for the embrasure which have been painted over; memorials to either side of 1699 and 1864. Wall bulges inwards severely on the south side and the large marble memorial tablet here appears precarious.

South wall: piscina consists of a shallow bowl with drain hole, in a deep recess under a two-centred arch of red sandstone; some of the arch stones have been renewed. A coat of arms is set on the wall above.

Vestry. General. Short section of encaustic tiling immediately inside the entrance, the remainder planked. Plastered walls. Ceiling painted blue with two exposed rafters.

South wall: benefaction board.

West wall: new boiler.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stained glass: fragments of early glass, including a depiction of St Gwynnog in vestments with episcopal mitre, survive from the 15thC east window, and are now in nave north window.

Screen and loft: dates to c.1500. Haslam states 'ten lights above a low panelled dado, but tracery only in the five to the north. Low triangular tracery in the doorhead. Small motifs are repeated without much overall design. A full-width cornice of running ornament issues partly from a Wyvern's mouth. The loft, supported by four beams at bressummer and parapet level, is reached by solid oak steps in the nave north wall. Formerly there was a pair of posts east and west side of the doorway, each with tracery heads between. The east coving is rib-and-boss surmounted by oak-twig trails and fleur-de-lys cresting. Parapet of Perpendicular traceries and more running ornament. The west side is much richer - rib-and-boss coving filled with panels of interlace and circle motifs. The bressummer has vine-trails again issuing from a Wyvern's mouth, and there are bits of cresting and drop-cresting at the north end. The parapet might have consisted of niches and statues as at Llananno, but the existing work is restoration by David Walker, 1873'. A full description can be found in Crossley and Ridgway.

Font: octagonal stone font bowl with tapering faces underneath and a raised rib around the perimeter, just above where the stem must have started; plain panels. Not dated but probably late medieval. Placed below belfry with the Victorian font a short distance away.

Pulpit: octagonal, of carved oak, on a wooden plinth with a hinged door and two wooden treads, sited on the south-east side of nave. Door and two rear panels are plain. Front panels are richly carved on two upper tiers and plain on the lowest tier.



Coat of arms: hexagonal plaque, uninscribed and not dated. Formally on the northern side of the east window.

Monuments: i) large white marble tablet to Matthew Pryce (d.1699), broken pediment and symbols of mortality (cherubs, skulls and hourglass); painted heraldry.

Chest: plain chest perhaps 18thC or 19thC. On the east side of the screen, south of the aisle.

Trough: small, rectangular with a slightly rounded lip, in red sandstone; no drain hole; date and function uncertain. On window ledge in most easterly embrasure on south side of nave.

Plate: chalice and paten of 1707.

Bells: one inscribed 'Dan. Owens & Matthew...A R 1724'. The others of 1862.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Lectern, oak reading desk and other gifts.

Stained glass: east window by Evans Brothers of Shrewsbury, around 1863.

Monuments: i) white marble on grey slate to Andrew Davies of Plas Newydd (d.1816) and wife Elizabeth (d.1777), a 19thC memorial. ii) a small white marble on grey slate to Edward Matthews (d.1827) and wife Mary (d.1817) by J and J Carline of Salop. iii) marble to George Baxter (d.1841) and buried in Cathedral Close, Hereford by ?Bethen of Hereford. iv) marble to David Hamer (d.1833) by R Milnes, Oswestry.

Organ: freestanding, in case, by Flight and Robson, St. Martin's Lane, presented in 1855 but probably rather earlier. Overhauled in the 1960s.

## CHURCHYARD

The irregularly shaped, raised, churchyard was originally more curvilinear but was extended on the south side in the 19thC. The 1840s Tithe Map shows the church in a sub-oval enclosure with a road on the south side.

The churchyard is overgrown and has been deliberately left in this state as a haven for wildlife.

Boundary: a wall forms a revetment to the raised churchyard on the north, west and south sides, and an upstanding barrier on the south-east; it is further surmounted by a hedge on the west side and also on the south side, which corresponds to the 19thC extension. An eastern boundary hedge and sheets of corrugated iron at the north-east corner separate the church from adjoining property. The old school of the late 19thC lies immediately to the south-east.

Monuments: mainly sandstone and slate slabs, some railed graves and chest tombs. Crosses and more recent burials in the southern extension include the grave of the Welsh poet John Ceiriog Hughes (1832-1887) on the south-west side of the burial ground, located by a signpost sited by the south entrance gates. 18th and 19thC graves are very overgrown; collapsed chests and slabs and broken stones close to the east side of the church. The earliest grave noted is on the south side of the east path and dated to 1779. Two loose stones placed on top of a chest tomb by the chancel are carved '1755' (part of a slab) and 'J E 1823' (perhaps a churchwarden's stone; a third loose stone carved 'M S I 1666' is placed on the stone shelf which protrudes from the east wall of the church.

Earthworks: line of the original churchyard enclosure on the south side is visible as a scarp between 1.5m and 2m high with a slight curve to it. Elsewhere the enclosure is raised by 1m on the north and east and more than one metre on the west.

Ancillary features: main, south entrance is through a pair of wrought iron gates in concrete pillars, and a wide tarmac path leads up to the south porch. The gravel paths around the church are frequently mossed over; a path leads out to a single gate in the east hedge and a path leads north to a stepped entrance in the revetment wall.

Vegetation: several old yews, some of considerable age, are sited around the churchyard; three on the north side, one in the south-east corner, two in the south-west corner and one near the west wall. Two yews of narrower girth are located off the south porch and three along the north revetment wall. The two yews to either side of the east path are of considerable age, and there are deciduous trees on either side of the south path.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1997  
CPAT Field Visits: 13 February 1996 and 20 July 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 198  
Eisel 1986, 188  
Haslam 1979, 151  
Lunt 1926, 191  
Powys SMR  
Quinquennial Reports 1988 and 1993



## CONDITION

Church in good condition apart from the chancel east wall which bows badly on the inside. The large 1699 memorial clings to the wall and looks very precarious. The wall is damp and plaster is peeling badly. Similar problems on the north wall of the nave.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium to Good

# Llanwrin

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<b>Diocese</b>	Bangor	<b>Dedication</b>	Gwrin
<b>PRN</b>	15842	<b>NGR</b>	SH78660353
		<b>Previous dedication</b>	Ust and Dyfrig

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## SUMMARY

St Gwrin's church in the small settlement of Llanwrin, three miles to the north-east of Machynlleth, is a single-chambered structure of late medieval date, and retains a 14thC piscina, and from the 15thC a largely renewed arch-braced roof, a screen, some stained glass and a font. There is also 17thC woodwork including an altar table. The church was restored in 1864. It is sited within a circular stone-walled churchyard on the north bank of the River Dovey.

## ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

A simple church, perhaps with walls of late medieval date (14thC or 15thC?), but with some rebuilding - in the 19thC? - particularly at the east end. 19thC restoration windows. The porch appears to have been rebuilt at the time of this restoration.

## HISTORY

Tradition has it that it was originally dedicated to Ss Ust and Dyfrig, two saints who came over from Brittany in 516. Later they were replaced by St Gwrin. Certainly the dedication, the churchyard morphology and the location together point to an early medieval foundation.

It is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecclesia de Llanuril' at a value of 13s 4d.

Nothing is known of its history during the medieval era, although it is assumed that the walls may be of 14thC or 15thC date.

A west gallery was added in the mid-17thC and removed in 1864.

Glynne visited Llanwrin in 1852 and noted the 'rather plain' Perpendicular screen.

The church was restored by Benjamin Ferrey in 1864.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a single chamber with a south porch and a bellcote over the west end. It is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is of linear blocks of buff, grey and brown shale and sandstone, grey-black shale, pebblestones and occasional quartz rubble; also some lumps of red sandstone which may be re-cycled; relatively heterogeneous masonry. Heavy pointing prevents a clear picture of the degree of coursing. 'B' is of more regularly fashioned slabs of local stone, buff or iron-stained; irregular coursing.



'C' is similar to 'A', but contains slabs of yellowish sandstone/shale.

'A' is believed to be medieval, perhaps 14thC or 15thC; 'B' is Victorian, as perhaps is 'C'.

Roofs: slates with recently renewed lead flashing on the ridge of the roof. Cross finials to the chancel and south porch.

Drainage: north and south wall guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. A deep gully on the north where the church is terraced into the slope, and a gully, too, on the west.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Described together as no external differentiation. Largely fabric 'A', with some 'C'.

North wall: in 'A' at the western end, but the most easterly bay is in 'C'. Three buttresses with dressed facing stones, separate the wall into four bays and all but the most easterly bay contains a window. Three two-light restoration windows with square-headed apertures containing two trefoiled, two-centred lights, all Victorian.

East wall: base of wall in 'A', but from springer level upwards in 'C'. The east window in Perpendicular style but wholly renewed or replaced in the Victorian restoration; it has a two-centred arch with a hoodmould that has simple stops, over two rows of five trefoiled, two-centred lights separated by a transom; two sub-arches and panel tracery above. Resting against the wall are five memorial slabs ranging from 1703(?) to 1843, four of them 18thC.

South wall: in 'A' but there are places as between v) and vi) and around viii) (see below) where rebuilding in 'C'. A plinth with a faintly cambered top rises to about 1m and continues along the south side only as far as the doorway (i) - its significance is unclear. Features in the wall from the west are i) a two-centred arched doorway with chamfered jambs ending in bar and broach stops, and a single heavy planked door, the entrance to the area below the old gallery. ii) a single, broad, trefoil-headed light set in a square-headed frame. iii) the porch. iv) Victorian window of form seen in the north wall. v) buttress. vi) window as iv). vii) buttress as v). viii) window similar to but slightly different in detail from vi). ix) a slate slab of 1728 inserted into the wall below viii) and a further slate slab laid flat against the wall dating from 1744.

West wall: battered at base, and there is also an irregular concrete basal plinth to a height of 0.3m. The whole wall is rendered. One window with a two-centred arch over two trefoiled lights with a quatrefoil tracery light above.

Above the gable is a stepped bellcote in 'B' with sandstone dressings, rising in three tiers; a shouldered arch to the aperture; a single bell; and a cross at the gable apex.

Porch. General. In 'B', though some localised use of pebblestones in the south face. Plinth with chamfered dressings for coping at a height of 0.4m and this continues around the diagonal buttresses.

East wall: plain but for a single narrow Victorian lancet.

South wall: short diagonal buttresses at the corners. Open entrance way through a broad, two-centred arch of Victorian date, the jambs chamfered with bar and broach stops, and the arch of two orders, all in pink sandstone.

West wall: as east wall.

## Interior

Porch. General. One step up to a slate slabbed floor. The bare east and west walls are clearly of 'B' and have bench seats set in the splayed apertures below the lancet lights; and above the arch in the south wall is an 1864 restoration commemorative tablet. Roof of six arch-braced collars of Victorian design.

North wall: pointed arch, chamfered dressings with fancy stops. A pair of heavy studded doors. One step up to the nave.

Nave. General. Slate slabbed floor with raised planked floors under the rows of benches; heating vents beneath the carpets. Walls plastered and all the restoration windows are set in deeply splayed peaked apertures with only the dressings exposed. Roof of arch-braced construction: nine arch-braced collar trusses forming eight bays across the nave (six) and chancel (two), with the trusses at the extremities against their respective walls; the bracing rests on pseudo-hammerbeams rising from stone corbels, and there are three tiers of cusped windbraces. The writer feels that most of this roof has been renewed.

North wall: window embrasures as noted above. Three flat wooden wall posts support oil lamps. One 20thC slate memorial.

East wall: division with the chancel formed by a screen, and above it a truss which is in no way different from the other roof trusses.

South wall: window embrasures as noted above, and the embrasures for both the south door and that at the west end of the church which is no longer used. Three oil lamps as on the north side.

West wall: a low stone wall (about 2m high) originally supported the mid-17thC west gallery. This wall is plastered over, capped with a cornice pierced with twenty-four and a half trefoils and surmounted by a parapet. A central peaked opening with sandstone dressings leads to the west end which now functions as an open vestry. Both the doorway and the cornice are Victorian. An undated Incorporated Society for Building and Churches plaque hangs on the wall. The main west wall has a large high deeply splayed two-centred arch to the west window. A slate slab of 1781 is affixed to the west wall below the window.

Chancel. One step up to the chancel with a 19thC tiled floor and further steps to the sanctuary and to the altar. Walls and roof as described under nave.

North wall: has an alcove with a segmental head set behind the choir stalls; it is plastered and is approximately 0.7m wide by 0.5m high and 0.35m deep. A second, square aperture to the east of it exposes the core of the wall and it has been suggested that this is where the old altar rails may have been keyed into the wall. One 19thC brass on a marble plaque.

East wall: wainscotting to either side of the altar is believed to be the old wooden altar rails, the interstices filled with old pew panels. The carved panels bear the words of Psalm 26, v.6 in Welsh and on the south side of the altar carry the date 1709 and 'M R' and 'M D'. East window set in round-headed deeply splayed arch.

South wall: 14thC piscina, its arch with a cusped ogee head, and the alcove going deep into the wall, and exposing the stonework at the core of the wall, suggesting that there has been some modification. There is a shallow bowl without a drain hole, and the whole feature is set low in the wall. The wall supports a large marble monument of 1742.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Based on Haslam with additions.

Piscina: in sandstone and set under an ogee-headed arch; 14thC.

Font: large octagonal stone font on an octagonal stem; plain without decoration. The bowl lined around the



rim in lead. Perpendicular style.

Screen: low Perpendicular screen with seven bays to either side of a central doorway that has modern tracery by Ferrey resting on ringed shafts. Fourteen bays of cinquefoiled-ogee traceried lights are medieval; the base and sill with later additions. 15thC. Full details in Crossley and Ridgway.

Carvings: on the east side of the screen at the north end are two carved inscriptions along the sill: 1) 'Glan Diwlas seat and grave 1703'; 2) 'E.D.M. 1725 Here is the grave of Llwnn Gwern'.

Stained glass: in the east window, glass which is datable to the reign of Edward IV (1461-1483) by the inclusion of his badge. In the panel tracery are the Virgin and Child enthroned and two acolytes; in the five lights above the transom, Christ crucified, between four saints. Some of the glass in the borders is renewed.

Altar table: carved oak table with bulbous legs and ornamental flanges. It carries a date of 1636, and is now used as a side table in the sanctuary.

Chairs: two, possibly also 17thC; both ornamental but of different styles.

Monuments: to i) William and Margaret Pughe of Mathafan, erected by their daughter Ann in 1742; in marble with an urn garlanded with flowers set in a broken pediment and a putto. ii) William Pugh (d.1719) and his wife Margaret (d.1714). iii) slate memorial to David Pugh Evans (d.1781) and other members of his family (in poor condition).

Panel: of wood engraved with Psalm 266 and dated to 1709, but damaged (see above - east wall of chancel).

Chest: simple box type, perhaps 18thC. In vestry.

Church plate: includes a large silver chalice dated 1714-15 inscribed 'The Communion Cup of Llanwrin'; silver paten of the same date.

Bell: inscribed '1748 The Gift of Edward Williams...'

Registers: from 1703.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Pulpit: octagonal and carved; two gaslight holders.

Lecterns: two, both old, with gas holders. No date and could conceivably be earlier than the 19thC.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is irregular in shape but has a distinctive curvilinear appearance. It lies at the heart of the small village of Llanwrin. The ground within it slopes steeply from north to south and it is possible that some of its south-western side has been lost. It is well-maintained.

Boundary: stone wall on all sides, sometimes acting as a retaining wall as on the south-west. On the south-east the wall is internally buttressed.

Monuments: even distribution on all sides, and some regimentation of memorials in rows. Mainly slate slabs; a few chest tombs, railed graves or crosses. Slabs of late 18th and 19thC date, but there is a ledger of 1744 against the south wall, and south of the church is a fine chest tomb with a guilloche border from 1701. There is another good chest tomb of 1770.

Furniture: a slim square sandstone pillar with a square slate slab surmounted by a gnomon and inscribed 'I

stand amyddst ye flowres to tell ye passinge of ye houres' from two Englishmen of Llanwrin 1950'. Its pillar is very worn suggesting re-use. Could it have part of a churchyard cross? Outside the churchyard on land fronting an adjoining property is a sandstone baluster pillar which probably supported an earlier sundial.

Earthworks: the churchyard is nearly 2m higher than the external ground level on the south-west, on the south-east about 1.3m, and again about 2m on the north-east.

Ancillary features: the main east entrance is through a pair of wrought iron gates set in a pointed arch; a tarmac path leads up to the south porch and continues west to a single gate in a two-centred arch in the south-west wall.

Vegetation: the oldest yew is a trunk with off shoots beyond the east end of the church. There is also a 19thC yew in the centre of the south part of the churchyard.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 17 March 1996 and 18 September 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 201  
Eisel 1986, 188  
Haslam 1979, 153  
Lunt 1926, 471  
NLW Bangor Parish Records  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Quinquennial Reports 1988 and 1993



## CONDITION

Church in good state of repair.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor to Medium

Group value: Medium

# Llanwyddelan

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**Diocese** St Asaph

**Dedication** Gwyddelan

**PRN** 16379

**NGR** SJ08420118

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## SUMMARY

St Gwyddelan's church lies in the small settlement of Llanwyddelan, about 6 miles to the north of Newtown. The single-chamber church was completely rebuilt in 1865 and only the medieval font and part of the screen have been retained. Built into an outside buttress is an early medieval stone of around the 9thC. The churchyard was originally an oval enclosure set on a raised knoll.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church completely rebuilt in 1865.

## HISTORY

The church is dedicated to St Gwyddelan, a 6thC/7thC convert of St Beuno, who supposedly provided land for a hermitage at Llanwyddelan. The dedication together with the churchyard shape and the decorated medieval stone are sufficient to indicate an early medieval origin.

The church is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Capella de Llanoedelan', and as 'Ecclesia de Llanwydean' in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291 when it was worth £5.

There are records of the medieval church being greatly altered or even rebuilt in 1641. Little information can be gleaned on these earlier structures.

The present church was built in 1865, possibly by J W Poundley and D Walker, at a total cost of some £720.

## ARCHITECTURE

The present church consists of a nave and chancel as a single chamber with a bell turret over the west end, and a south porch. The church is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabrics: 'A' : regular, small to medium blocks of grey sandstone, with occasional larger stones, some coursing; buff-yellow sandstone for dressings.

'B' includes material of 'A' type but also blocks and lumps of brown and red sandstone and some quartz, irregularly coursed. Probably selective re-use of masonry from the earlier church.

Roofs: slates with grey ceramic ridge tiles. Cross finials over the chancel and porch.

Drainage: Modern guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Possibly a narrow trench around the outside?



Note: an outline description only is provided of this 19thC building.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation between the elements. North and south walls of 1865 probably built on the earlier foundations. Fabric is completely 'A' except for parts of the north wall and the lower part of the east wall.

North wall: three broad lancets separated by buttresses, those at the corners diagonal, the other two standard buttresses, though they incorporate red sandstone dressings and yellow capstones.

East wall: three, stepped lancet lights, sharing a common sill but without an arched aperture. The south-east diagonal buttress incorporates a carved early medieval stone, just above ground level.

South wall: three broad lancets separated by two buttresses as on the north side. South porch towards the west end.

West wall: the whole wall face covered in slates. Above this is a three-stage bell turret: square base with slated sides, a wooden superstructure with panels containing three louvred openings with cusped heads on the south side only, and a pyramidal roof, topped by a weathervane.

Boiler room: in red brick, abuts west wall; entrance steps lead below ground level. Presumably dates to the installation of 1936.

Porch. General. All in 'A'. Small lancet lights in the east and west walls, and in the south wall a simple two-centred arch with stopped chamfers. Above the doorway is a datestone of 1865 set in a trefoil. Diagonal buttresses to either side of the entrance.

## Interior

Porch. General. Red and black Victorian tiled floor; side walls plastered above panelled-back benches. Roof of six scissor-braced trusses. North wall has the main doorway with a two-centred arch and filleted and stopped chamfers in standard buff-yellow sandstone.

Nave. General. Red and black Victorian tiled floor with carpet down the aisle; raised wooden boarding below the benches. No evidence of underfloor heating but one void covered by a metal grille ducts a heating pipe across the entrance. Walls plastered and painted, and all apertures splayed; central heating radiators on north and south walls from the 1970s). Roof of four arcing scissor-braced trusses forming five bays, with exposed rafters and through purlins; the trusses spring from corbels below the wallplates. The westernmost bay has diagonal braces beneath the purlins giving additional support below the bell turret.

North wall: 20thC memorial brass tablet between two lancets; dado below window level.

South wall: dado as north wall. Two-centred arch to the reveal of the south doorway.

West wall: plastered. No features.

Chancel. General. Not differentiated from the nave by steps, but the roof truss rests on more elaborate corbels.

Sanctuary. General. One step up from nave. The east wall has a panelled reredos in oak.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Decorated stone: early medieval slab of around the 9thC, purposefully placed in the south-east buttress in the 19thC.

Font: plain octagonal bowl which tapers down to octagonal stem and plinth; 15thC.

Screen: a portion of the screen (of 15thC or early 16thC date) fixed to the front of the choir stalls.

Registers: from 1664.

Plate: 1789 silver cup.

All other furnishings and fittings appear to be 19thC.

## CHURCHYARD

Originally a small oval enclosure on top of a knoll, it was extended to the south-east in 1938. It is well maintained and modern burials are set in the extension.

Boundary: revetment wall in stone to the old churchyard, though a grass bank surmounted by a hedge in places; and a modern fence to the southern boundary in the extension.

Monuments: burials are fairly well spaced, with modern graves laid uniformly in the south-east extension. Older graves located on south side of church, the earliest dates recorded being 1783 and 1794. A few chest tombs, two with iron railings.

Furniture: none recorded.

Earthworks: the earlier course of the churchyard is visible as a scarp bank up to 2m high on the south and east sides of the church. The whole churchyard is raised with a 1m drop on the north-west above a car park, 1.5m on the north and nearly 2m on the south above the sunken lane.

Ancillary features: lychgate from 1937 at the south-east entrance. At the south-west a pair of wrought iron gates set in the stone wall in 1946; inscribed arch over the top. Tarmac paths lead to south porch from both gates. Also a single wooden entrance gate and path leads from parking area and church hall on the north-west.

Vegetation: two yew trees, the oldest located near chest tombs on the west, the other to the south-east.

## SOURCES

CPAT Site Visit 17 October 1995 and 4 June 1998  
Eisel 1986, 188  
Faculty St Asaph 1938 (NLW): churchyard extension  
Faculty St Asaph 1936 (NLW): heating  
Haslam 1979, 154  
Morgan Evans 1994, 340  
Powys SMR  
Thomas 1908, 487



## CONDITION

Flakes of plaster peeling off window sills in nave and chancel and around entrance doorway.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Medium to Good

# Machynlleth

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**Diocese** Bangor**Dedication** Peter**PRN** 16904**NGR** SH74530095

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## SUMMARY

St Peter's church sited on the north-western fringe of Machynlleth on a spur overlooking the floodplain of the River Dyfi, is a large rectangular building which is the result of a 19thC rebuilding of the body of the church, attached to a tower, much of which is 15thC and 18thC. Apart from three 18thC bells the only fitting of any antiquity is the 15thC font. The church lies within what was originally a circular enclosure.

## ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

The base of the tower is generally held to be 15thC with the rest of it from 1745 and battlements that were added in the early 19thC. The nave and chancel were rebuilt in Gothic style in the 19thC.

## HISTORY

Machynlleth is reputedly the site of an early church established in the 6thC by St Cybi, a native of Cornwall. The location on the edge of the Dovey floodplain and the curvilinearity of the churchyard go some way to reinforcing this belief in an early medieval beginning.

The medieval church is mentioned in the 1254 Norwich Taxation as 'Ecclesia de Machenleyd' at a value of 6s 8d, and at some point in the Middle Ages it seems certain that the original British dedication was dropped in favour of that to St Peter.

The pre-restoration church was cruciform in plan, with north and south aisles and considerable decorated timberwork. The supposedly 15thC tower was largely rebuilt in 1745 when three new bells were installed.

Fenton in 1810 recorded that the chancel was divided from the nave by an ornamental screen, and that the old stalls had misericords. There was also fine carved woodwork over the porch.

The present church is the result of considerable rebuilding and enlargement in 1827 to the design of Edward Haycock of Shrewsbury. A new nave was built on to the existing tower, which itself was heightened with the addition of a crenellated parapet and finials.

Further alterations were initiated in 1864-6 by J.W. Poundley and D. Walker, who were responsible for reorganising the chancel and for the removal of the north and south galleries.

In 1894-5 considerable restoration work was largely funded by the Marchioness of Londonderry of Plas Machynlleth. The alterations included the extension of the chancel into what had been the nave and the construction of arches to the chancel, organ chamber and Lady Chapel; two new windows were inserted in the west wall; older windows were modified by the addition of cusped tracery, both the organ and the choir seating were moved to the east end and new choir stalls and pews were introduced, and there was a new decorated ceiling. The aisles were given marble floors. The lower part of the tower was transformed into a baptistery and the 15thC font placed on a new base. Buttresses were also added to strengthen the walls.



The porch was restored in 1902.

A new flat roof was added to the tower in 1982, and the inside face of the east wall was rebuilt after collapsing.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a large aisleless nave, an eastern chancel with a Lady Chapel to the south and an organ chamber to the north, a large south porch and opposite it on the north side of the church a two-storey vestry. The church is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabric: 'A' is of mid to large slabs of laminated grey shale/slate, irregularly coursed. 'B' is of large rectangular blocks and slabs of shale/slate, grey and light brown in colour, and including some particularly long slabs of laminated shale.

'C' is similar to 'B' but lacks the long slabs and includes more blocks.

'B' is of 15thC date but was also used in the 18thC. 'A' and 'C' are 19thC.

Roofs: slates with decorative ceramic ridge tiles. A large cross finial to the chancel, and ornamental pinnacles on both the porch and the vestry opposite.

Drainage: 19thC guttering leads to soakaways. Around the tower a gully has been dug out to a depth of at least 0.4m, and concrete laid in the base. No obvious gullies on the south, east or north.

## Exterior

Tower. General. In 'B', with 'C' for the top courses of masonry above the belfry windows, and 'A' for the battlements. A square, four-stage, western tower, with decorative corner pinnacles and a string course below the battlements. The tower is battered at the base to a height of c.1.8m, topped by flattish slabs. It is composed of large stone with roughly fashioned quoins. The walls then rises uninterrupted with a slight taper, and the quoins are of dressed yellow-grey sandstone. All the windows are turned in voussoir slabs of local stone. The battered base is viewed as 15thC, the main stages as 18thC and the battlements from 1827.

North wall: a slit window with a foiled, ogee head in worn yellow sandstone lights the ground floor, and is certainly inserted. The round-headed louvred belfry aperture is in keeping with 18thC date. Above this is a small square aperture. A drainage spout projects from just above the string course. The change from 'B' to 'C' is marked by a distinctive zone, less than 0.5m high, of small slabs of stone.

East wall: no belfry window.

South wall: at ground floor level is a single rectangular slit window with an ogee head as in the north wall - again this is an insertion. In the second stage is a doorway with a segmental arch, reached by stone steps. Above the doorway level and near the south-east angle of the tower is a small, square aperture lighting the tower stair. A quoin at the south-west angle bearing the date 1745, 0.4m above the top of the battered base, marks the rebuild of much of the tower. The third stage has a louvred window with segmental head, and there is another small rectangular light near the south-east angle at the same level as this window. The fourth stage has the standard round-headed belfry window and above this a similar zone of masonry as the north wall. From this projects a flat slab, perhaps the support for a spout in which case this might mark the original roof level. Above this a zone of 'C' and the battlements in 'A'.

West wall: a rectangular slit window in the first stage with brick infill around it. Then a standard belfry window.

Nave and chancel. General. The wide nave and chancel cannot be differentiated externally and are under a continuous roofline. All in 'A', though heavier pointing on the north side. There is a continuous stone plinth around the church and its buttresses to a maximum height of around 0.5m; and at eaves level is a continuous string course with a concave soffit. Windows of Victorian date are of a consistent appearance, but there has been considerable renewal of dressings in recent years.

North wall: one window to west of the vestry and five to the east of it, in bays defined by four ordinary buttresses and a diagonal buttress at the north-east corner. Restoration-period windows have rectangular frames, three cinquefoiled lights and labels in yellow sandstone which form part of a continuous hoodmould. The second and fourth bays have stone dormers with small blind windows in them, and at the apices are pinnacles, with small blind slits.

East wall: east window of 1866 has five lights with cusped tracery, sub arches, and cinquefoil and multifoil lights above. Over this is a hoodmould with foliate stops. The stone surrounding the window has been tooled down to create a recessed zone around the arch. Finally high in the gable is a circular window with a grille.

South wall: buttresses, windows and dormers as the north side, with five windows to the east of the porch and one to the west.

West wall: cusped two-light restoration windows to the north and south of the tower with two-centred arches, two-centred, cinquefoiled lights, and trefoils and irregular quatrefoils above. Diagonal buttresses at the angles. Battlemented parapet to the gable end.

South Porch. General. Two-stage porch in 'A'.

East and west walls: plain.

South wall: has a high four-centred (Tudor) arch with an imitation timber portcullis, and a label in poor condition. Above this is a blind, square window and a string course, and finally a blind slit in the apex of the gable, similar in design to the dormers of the nave. Diagonal buttresses at the angles.

Northern Vestry. General. Two-storey annex off the north wall. Continuous plinth as around the nave and chancel, and a string course at the eaves.

North wall: square-headed window comparable with those in the nave, and above this is a smaller window of similar design but the lights have four-centred heads. A string course at eaves level and then in the gable a small blind niche with a two-centred head. Diagonal buttresses at the angles.

East and west walls;- plain.

## Interior

Porch. General. The large open porch has a flag floor, plastered walls and a vaulted ceiling with four plastered panels separated by moulded ribs.

North wall: two-centred arch to the main south doorway of the church, and slightly convex mouldings to the jambs. Above the doorway are three wooden benefaction boards of different dates and lettered by different hands.

East wall: a wooden bench beside the wall.

West wall: a marble tablet on slate commemorates the 1902 restoration of the porch.



**Tower.** General. Basement accessed from the nave. A circular baptistry was created in the bottom of the tower in 1894 and the external ogee-headed slits must date to this time. A black and white marble floor. The walls of rough shale contain deeply splayed recesses with both outer and inner chamfered arches to the slit windows on the north, west and south sides. A flat plastered ceiling.

**Nave.** General. Very much the result of 19thC restoration work, when the galleries along the north and south sides were removed creating the present large open nave. Black and white marble floors with flush woodblock floors below the benches. Walls plastered and painted. A boarded, panelled ceiling from 1894 has stencilled Welsh script in Gothic lettering on the coved northern and southern sides. The roof is divided into two large, unequal bays by a tie-beam division just to the east of the south entrance, and the panels are picked out by the highly painted, moulded ribs.

**North wall:** four restoration windows of which three are stained glass memorial windows to the Londonderry family. Two-centred archway with a hoodmould to the vestry. Above this, at first floor level, is an open arcade of four-centred arches and a wooden balustrade with trefoiled openings. Five 19thC marble memorials, two of the 20thC and one 20thC brass.

**East wall:** a triple arcade of two-centred arches divides the nave from the chancel, Lady Chapel and organ chamber. The higher chancel arch has a hoodmould, the lower arches to the north and south are recessed. The north side arch has inserted wooden panelling that encloses the organ chamber.

**South wall:** embrasures to the six restoration windows and the south door. Three 19thC marble memorials, two 19thC brasses, one 20thC brass and one wooden plaque, also of the 20thC.

**West wall:** four steps lead down through a deep recess to the baptistry (see below), and there is a high two-centred arch, its tympanum panelled and painted. In the western side of the reveal is a doorway with a 'basket' arch giving access to the tower stair. To either side of the entrance to the baptistry are windows from 1894 and there are also one 19thC and two 20thC brasses.

**Vestry.** General. Located off the north side of the church opposite the main south door. Carpetted floor; plastered and painted walls and a flat ceiling. The first-floor gallery contained the Londonderry family pews until the 1894 restoration and has a blue-painted, vaulted ceiling with red and yellow ribs. It is now used as choir vestry.

**Chancel.** General. One step up from the nave, one to the sanctuary and one to the altar. The ceiling is more elaborately decorated than that of the nave, but the Welsh script seen in the nave continues into this portion of the church, even across the organ casing.

**North wall:** a parclose screen divides the organ chamber from the chancel.

**East wall:** the five-light 1866 restoration window with stained glass by Clayton and Bell above a decorated reredos with Gothic painted panels listing the Ten Commandments to either side of the Lords Prayer and Creed.

**South wall:** a parclose screen divides the Lady Chapel from the chancel.

**Lady Chapel.** General. Dedicated to the memory of the Marchioness of Londonderry in 1933. Includes an elaborate marble and stone memorial of 1850.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Information derived from Haslam with additions.

Font: octagonal, lead-lined bowl resting on a sort of 'capital' consisting of engaged ribbed pillars and then an octagonal plinth; 15thC.

Bells: three of 1745, the remaining five of 19thC and 20thC date.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Benefaction boards: three of different dates. One may be of 18thC date, the second carries dates down to 1857 and the third refers to the rebuilding work of 1827. All wooden with black frames. In the porch.

Hatchment: formerly in the gallery above the vestry; mid-19th century.

Folding screen: with twelve glass-covered paintings, in the gallery above the vestry; mid-19th century.

Organ: from 1876.

Pulpit: octagonal wooden pulpit of 1906.

Monuments: generally 19thC marble tablets. Large Gothic memorial with ogee canopy and pinnacles to Sir John Edwards (d.1850), by Samuel Manning, London. Marble memorial to Mary Breese (d.1866) by Dodson of Shrewsbury.

Stained glass: from 1883 by Clayton and Bell of London; and from 1886 by Ward and Hughes, London.

## CHURCHYARD

Originally a sub-circular enclosure, the churchyard has been enlarged on several occasions. Tenements have infringed slightly on the north-western side, and in 1873 the north-eastern corner was extended outwards.

Boundary: a 19thC stone wall remains largely intact on all sides.

Monuments: graves are close set and are generally well kept. There are a large number of chest tombs, generally of slate, some table tombs on slate plinths and some raised on bricks. There is evidence of clearance with stones placed around the south wall. A chest tomb of 1762 was the oldest marked grave seen but one of 1740 has been claimed.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: the churchyard rises high above the surrounding ground on the south-west. On the north and south it is about 0.6m higher than outside, but on the east there is little if any rise. The earlier enclosure boundary on the east and north-east is discernible as a 0.4m scarp and also as the edge of a path.

Ancillary features: a pair of modern iron gates form the entrance at the south-east corner and a broad concrete path leads from this to the south porch. A grass path leads around the church and to a pair of 19thC wrought iron gates, set in stone pillars, in the north-east wall which are no longer used as a main entrance. Matching railings surmount the wall along the roadside.

Vegetation: the oldest yew tree is near the south-east corner of the church; and a pair of yews form an arch near the north-east gates. There are several Irish yews, holly trees and beech trees.

## SOURCES



CPAT Field Visit 2 November 1995 and 22 September 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 204  
Davies 1982  
Eisel 1986, 188  
Faculty 1895 Bangor (NLW)  
Faculty 1906 Bangor (NLW)  
Haslam 1979, 155  
Lunt 1926, 471  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Quinquennial Reports 1985, 1990 and 1995

## CONDITION

Tower baptistry very damp. Nave west wall and north aisle organ chamber show considerable damp. Otherwise good.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium



# Manafon

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Michael**PRN** 16907**NGR** SJ11300247

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## SUMMARY

St Michael's church at Manafon, about 8 miles to the south-west of Welshpool, is a simple, single-cell structure with a timbered belfry and south porch. The walls almost certainly date back to the 15thC if not earlier and the 15thC roof remains. But apart from a Perpendicular east window and two re-set lights in the vestry, all the fenestration is Victorian, dating to a restoration of 1859, with further works in 1898 when the interior was re-ordered. Little of pre-19thC date survives inside: a stoup and some stained glass, to which should be added an early bell. The church lies in an extended churchyard, formerly sub-rectangular though with hints of curvilinearity, on the valley floor close to the River Rhiw.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Plain, single-chambered church in 15thC (or earlier) fabric, though there are occasional signs that there may have been some rebuilding; the east window and two re-set vestry windows survive from the medieval era, the rest inserted about 1859 and an interior largely dating to the 1898 restoration.

## HISTORY

The location apart there is nothing to indicate an early medieval foundation at Manafon, though it remains a possibility.

The church was recorded as 'Ecclesia de Manaon' with a value of 13s 4d in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and in Pope Nicholas's Taxation of 1291 it had a value of £7 6s 8d. However, history is generally quiet about the church throughout the Middle Ages and, indeed, through the post-Reformation centuries.

The building was restored in 1859 when the windows were replaced and a vestry added. Prior to this there had been a five-light dormer window on the south side as shown in a pencil sketch of the mid-19thC (referred to in the listed building schedule).

In 1869 Glynne wrote that 'this church has been so completely renovated, as scarcely to retain any ancient features'. Portions of the walls were old and the roof was an original construction, there was a south porch and a modern timber belfry. The Perpendicular east window was clearly original but the other windows were new. The interior was well arranged with open seats.

Further work was undertaken in 1898 by John Douglas of Chester. The faculty of the previous year listed proposed alterations, including the building of a new heating chamber on the north side of the vestry, taking up the existing church floors and relaying them with concrete and woodblock, raising the chancel floor and repaving it with tiles, removing plaster from the walls before repairing, cleaning and pointing, re-seating the building, placing a new oak screen to define the nave and chancel, providing a new pulpit, lectern, oak seats and prayer desks in the chancel, adding altar rails, table and hangings, new sedilia and a credence, lighting the church by suspended Hesperon lamps, and generally repairing the roof, gables and walls. A new lych gate was also to be erected. During the restoration work the medieval stoup was rediscovered, and parts of

the late medieval screen, then at the west end of the church, were removed.

Internally, the west wall underwent considerable repair in 1992.

## ARCHITECTURE

Manafon consists of a nave and chancel as a single cell with a timber belfry at the west end, a south porch and a vestry on the north. The building is aligned south-west to north-east, but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' is of small to medium blocks, some tabular, of fine grained, greyish shale and sandstone(?), some iron stained; also some pebblestones, and rarely a block of red sandstone; irregular coursing; larger blocks used in the foundations, particularly at the west end; limewash residue. The quoins are frequently long slabs, though some dressed sandstone blocks were used at west end.

'B' is as 'A' but the stonework appears more jumbled with very little coursing and there is less tabular stone.

'C' is a more regularly cut grey shale, used for parts of the vestry and the stepped buttresses.

'A' is 15thC (or possibly earlier), but similar material - 'B' - may have been used (or re-used) to reconstruct the east gable and the wall tops, probably as late as the 19thC.

Roofs: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles; sandstone coping, kneelers and celtic cross finial at east gable end.

Rising from the nave roof at the west end is a square slatted timber belfry, painted white, surmounted by a pyramidal slate roof and weathercock. The north and south faces of the belfry have louvred, two-centred arched apertures.

Drainage: cast-iron guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Gravel chippings laid on all sides, though less obvious on east, probably disguising a trench.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation so the two elements are treated as one for description. Constructed in fabric 'A', with some 'B'.

North wall: the vestry is at west end followed by three square-headed windows of two rounded trefoiled lights, dating to 1859. Occasional signs that there may have been some rebuilding, particularly between the two more westerly windows, and at higher levels in the wall. The eastern angle may have been rebuilt - there is a subtle change in the evenness of the wall face.

East wall: most of the wall face is in 'A' but the upper part of gable rebuilt in 'B', and the north and south angle buttresses are in 'C'. A two-centred window with three foiled, two-centred lights, a transom and four sub-lights above; of mixed red and grey sandstone, some weathered and original including much of the tracery, but some jamb and archstone replacement; and a Victorian hoodmould and simple stops. Wire grille protects the window. Beneath it can be seen some disconformity in the stonework, and a local report suggests that the east window was raised in the 19thC.

South wall: in 'A' with some intermittent courses of slabs at lower levels, but again there is evidence that some localised rebuilding high up on the wall in 'B'. Three standard windows as on the north side, although the central one has three rather than two lights; a distinct vertical line in the stonework just to the east of the central window stops in line with its sill and probably marks its insertion line. Next the porch, and finally a single light window of standard design. Around this there are irregularities and it is probable that the wall around the window has been rebuilt in 'B'.

West wall: gable end. Large blocks of stone form the basal layers, some at the north-west corner protruding



at foundation level. Assessment of the wall face is confused by snail pointing and lichen cover.

**Vestry.** General. Attached to north wall of nave, it is an addition of 1859. Its east and west walls each contain a square-headed window with a trefoiled, two-centred light and sunken spandrels in worn sandstone, red in the east wall, grey in the west wall; the dressings of the former are less worn than the latter, and there is a suspicion that only the latter is original. Certainly the west window is re-set in its present location.

Boiler house slopes off the north wall of the vestry and a chimney rises between the two.

**South porch.** General. Constructed in fabric 'A'-type masonry in 1859, though the stones are predominantly small. Single open lancets in the side walls, and a two-centred entrance arch of dressed shale in the south wall. No door or gate.

### Interior

**Porch.** General. Tiled floor, plastered walls with wooden benches and splayed window apertures, and the ceiling plastered above short collar beams, exposed rafters and through purlins. The north wall has a Victorian pointed entrance arch with chamfered sandstone dressings; a single heavy planked door with wrought iron fittings.

**Vestry.** General. Woodblock floor, plastered ceiling. Small iron grate in the north wall. East and west windows contain fragments of early coloured glass in the top foil. In view of the uncertainty about the authenticity of the east window it is worth noting that its internal chamfers are flat, those of the west window are slightly hollowed.

**Nave.** General. Red tiled floor, with benches on flush woodblock flooring. Bare walls, exposed in 1898. The two end walls are in random masonry and appear original, but the two side walls (in both the nave and chancel) are of more regular stonework and this suggests the walls were re-faced either in 1898 or at an earlier date. The 15thC roof (to both nave and chancel) of eight open bays formed by nine arch-braced collar trusses with raking struts; two tiers of cusped windbraces, and a planked ceiling behind the rafters. The arch braces spring from wall plates, and there are carved cornices in the chancel, though these are of 19thC date. Central heating pipes run behind the plates.

The west end of the nave has a lowered (1992) tongue and groove ceiling forming a final bay. A triple wooden arcade is set below it consisting of wide two-centred arches on either side of a narrower arch with carved spandrels. Two oak uprights rise to support the belfry, together with two wall posts on the north and south walls. Above the arches there is a principal truss and the face above is plastered in.

**North wall:** three splayed window apertures with stepped sills and oak lintels between red sandstone kneeler-shaped blocks; at the west end is the entrance door to the Victorian vestry. Two 20thC brasses.

**East wall:** two steps up to chancel, and a Victorian chancel screen.

**South wall:** a stoup set in the wall to the east side of main doorway. Three- and two-light window apertures as in the north wall. Two 20thC marble memorials.

**West wall:** The ends of four sawn-off beams that once supported the gallery are visible in the stonework. Dado panelling probably from box pews, along the wall. 19thC marble tablet.

**Chancel.** General. One step up from the nave, with encaustic tiles in the chancel and the stepped sanctuary, but woodblock under the longitudinal benches. Walls and roof as nave, except for dado panelling derived from box pews against the east wall and running down the sides, and carved modern wallplates. Stained glass in windows on south and east. 19thC brass on east wall.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Based on Haslam with additions.

Stoup: damaged round bowl; located during 1898 restoration, now set in modern recess in south wall to the east of the south door.

Stained glass: vestry windows contain two angel heads, of the 15thC.

Reredos: carved oak reredos by Hems of Exeter incorporates a lower inserted panel (from an earlier reredos?) inscribed 'Laudate Dominum R.P. V.P. Anno Domini 1608'. Erected in the church as a memorial to Rev.T.J.Williams in 1900.

Reading desk: incorporates carved panels, perhaps of 17thC date.

Monuments: in the sanctuary a memorial tablet to the churchwardens of 1773 on the reverse of a gravestone to Dorothy Evans (d.1721), now encased in glass. A slate wall memorial to Edward Davies, rector (d.1793), set into dado in east wall of sanctuary.

Bell: believed to date from the 14thC and thus perhaps the oldest bell in Montgomeryshire. The bell frame too is early.

Plate: 19thC except for a silver cup of 1732.

Registers: from 1597.

Victorian furnishings and fittings include:

Font: 19thC, circular with modern wooden cover.

Screen: 'one narrow and two wide bays either side of the broad central opening, [with Perpendicular style] ogee tracery and cresting, but rather un-Welsh in its lack of varying patterns' (Haslam).

Other furnishings by Douglas include choir stalls and pews, an octagonal oak pulpit on a stone plinth, an eagle lectern, and the altar rails.

Stained glass: east window by Arthur O'Connor c.1859.

## CHURCHYARD

The original sub-rectangular enclosure on level ground close to the River Rhiw was extended in 1923 by the consecration of additional burial space to the west. It is a well-kept churchyard, maintained by the parishioners.

Boundary: stone wall on south-east side with the road; the western boundary formed by the Church in Wales school and also a hedged boundary also on the west which continues to the north-west where there are open fields.

Monuments: well-spaced on all sides of the church with modern burials in the western extension. Mainly 19thC slate slabs, some crosses, a few chest tombs and cremations. Sandstone slabs near the south wall of the church date to 1762, 1767 and 1770. Fewer marked graves on the south side. The oldest sandstone slab noted, now placed on a red-brick plinth near the east wall, records Jane Higgins, wife of the rector of Manafon, who died in 1689, and the rector himself in 1702. Oldest chest tombs located under yews on



eastern boundary.

Furniture: sundial now sited on a wooden plinth close to the south porch; gnomon inscription appears to be 'H. Rider, W'pool. ? Harris, ? Evans, Churchwardens'.

Earthworks: ground is banked up against retaining wall on the south side, but less than 0.5m.

Ancillary features: half-timbered lychgate was erected at the time of the 1898 restoration, and forms the main, south-west entrance. Three tie beams support a hipped slate roof with a cross mid-way along its length. Central tie-beam is inscribed in Welsh on the church side and the English on the roadside. Concrete paths lead in from the south-west lychgate entrance and the single gate in the south-east corner.

Vegetation: several yews of considerable girth are located on the south sides; the oldest two are on the west side of the lych gate and north side of the east gate. Very large fir by the roadside boundary. Other yews in the churchyard could be 19thC.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings for Manafon: 1997  
CPAT Site Visits: 21 February 1996 and 18 February 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 204  
Eisel 1986, 189  
Faculty 1897 St Asaph (NLW)  
Faculty 1923 St Asaph (NLW)  
Glynne 1884, 93  
Haslam 1979, 157  
Lunt 1926, 469  
Powys SMR  
Thomas 1908, 489

## CONDITION

Church in excellent state of repair. Considerably restoration work took place in 1992, when the west wall was completely repointed and repaired.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Medium to Good



# Meifod

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<b>Diocese</b>	St Asaph	<b>Dedication</b>	Tysilio and Mary
<b>PRN</b>	75	<b>NGR</b>	SJ15531318

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## GENERAL SUMMARY

Meifod lies in the valley of the Vymwy in central Montgomeryshire, nearly 6 miles north-west of Welshpool. The site originated as an early medieval clas with unsubstantiated links to the early princes of Powys. There remain traces of a Romanesque successor as well as what may be a 12th-century tombstone, but much of the present structure is of 14th/15thC date with some Victorian restoration. It is set in a large semi-circular churchyard, now encroached on by secular buildings, and it contained, outside its present perimeter, a medieval chapel site.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The church was originally Romanesque and probably of cruciform plan; the western end of a 12thC aisled church survives in part in nave. On the basis of the tower arch it has been argued that prior to the 14thC, the transepts and central tower had fallen into disuse and been demolished.

The Romanesque church replaced by a church of different plan, without a north aisle, but with a south aisle alongside the chancel, their east walls aligned. The main doorway and two windows and doorway of the south aisle are 14thC. The tower is of 15thC date on basis of all external detail, though conceivably the upper part of the tower was rebuilt and the stair turret added to an earlier structure at this date. There was some window replacement - east window in chancel - at this time.

The north aisle existed as a lean-to in 1795, and a small section of its east wall survives. It had a wooden arcade in 1837, and was rebuilt by Benjamin Ferrey in 1871-2. During this work the Romanesque arches were found in the south nave wall.

## HISTORY

Three dedications are recorded within the original churchyard: a chapel to St Gwyddfarch; and churches to St Tysilio and St Mary. The earliest church is said to have been built here by St Gwyddfarch, son of Amalarus of Brittany, in c.AD 550; the site became a cult centre of his pupil, St Tysilio. Meifod developed as mother church with a clas community in the early medieval period -from here churches at Llanfair Caereinion, Guilsfield, Welshpool and Alberbury (Salop) were founded. Traditionally, it was the burial place of the princes of Powys (their court supposedly functioned at Mathrafal, 3km to south-west), but this is only reliably authenticated for the 12thC.

St Mary's Church is stated (in the Brut y Tywysogion) to have been consecrated in 1156 after its construction by Madoc ap Meredydd, Prince of Powys, though it may have been started as a result of a bequest by Gruffydd ap Cynon in 1137. Subsequently, it belonged to Strata Marcella Abbey. Possibly there was a dedication change from St Tysilio to St Mary perhaps in the 12thC, but it has also been argued that two churches existed in the churchyard with distinct dedications, the original one of cruciform shape.

Cynddilu, a 12thC poet, in his 'Song of St Tysilio' referred to the beauty of Meifod and the magnificence of



its church and priests. A relic, related to a miracle wrought by St Credifael, disappeared at the Reformation but is referred to in records of Court of Augmentations.

The 1254 Taxatio refers to 'Ecclesia de Meyvod' with a value of £2 13s 4d and that of 1291 to 'Ecclesia de Meynot' at £15 6s 8d. And in 1265 Meifod was acknowledged as a mother church.

In 1631 a terrier recorded that two older churches were 'being occupied as houses and gardens'. In 1701 the compiler of another terrier wrote 'I myself have seen ruins of two others'. The chapel of St Gwyddfarch was certainly one of those visible in 1631. Its outline and glazed floor tiles were recovered when the Congregational Chapel was built in 1881x83. Part of an adjacent plot is reportedly still called Gwyddfarch's cemetery, and 17thC terriers claimed it had a small churchyard.

Glynne visited Meifod in 1855, noting that the north aisle was a modern addition. He remarked on the two Decorated windows in the south aisle and the Perpendicular window in the east wall of the chancel, and described the arcades in some detail. There was a west gallery with vine-leaf cornices.

Restoration in 1871 led to the removal of a gallery with 20 benches over the west end of nave. A marble tomb in the south aisle and box pews were removed, as was the ceiling, revealing original timbers. The Norman arch in the north wall of the nave was found at this time, and the wooden piers supporting the north arcade were replaced by stone columns. Thomas has a reference to foundations being discovered, though he is vague on the location and date of the discovery. The north aisle was enlarged.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel as one unit, a west tower, and north and south aisles. It is aligned south-west/north-east, but 'ecclesiastical east' is used throughout this report.

Fabrics: 'A' is largely of brown and grey shale of random size with occasional pebblestones, re-used red sandstone and ashlar quoins. Relative quantities of the constituents vary. Limewash residue.

'B' is of large, squared quarried blocks of shale (or perhaps dolerite), coursed, with quoins of the same material; smaller stone in west gable end.

'C' is sandstone, surviving only in early arches and some of these replaced.

'D' is similar to 'A' but also includes slabs of a black sedimentary rock that tends to laminate; the stone is small to medium in size.

Roofs: slated; plain grey ceramic ridge tiles. Cross finials to nave only.

Drainage: no convincing evidence of a continuous drain around external wall faces, though there is perhaps the hint of a trench along the north side.

## Exterior

Tower. General. Fabric 'A'. Battered base with a concave, ashlar capping, 1m above ground level; another string-course, with impressive gargoyles, below crenellated parapet. Pyramidal slate roof with weathercock. There is a possibility that the upper walls of the tower and the protruding stair turret at the south-west angle represent a secondary phase of development.

North wall: in an apparently uniform fabric but at a height of 6m-7m (at the same height as the eaves of the north aisle) there appears to be some variation with more medium-sized blocks of stone and more coursing. The significance of this (if any) is not clear, and there is no change in the quoins at the north-west angle, while the absence of quoinstones for the first 5m at the north-east corner is consistent with the tower being built against an earlier wall, in this case the remnants of the Norman structure. At belfry level is a two-centred window with two louvred lights that have trefoiled, two-centred heads at belfry level; above these a quatrefoil. The heads appear to be original but some of the chamfered jambstones may be renewed. A clock face below the window; a war memorial plaque is set into the wall at ground-floor level.



East wall: standard two-light window at belfry level, the heads of the lights original but some uncertainty about the jambs.

South wall: this does not have a masonry change comparable with the north wall but there is a greater degree of coursing, giving the effect of a tighter fabric. A lancet with chamfered jambs low in the wall and at belfry level a standard window with largely original dressings. Protruding stair turret at angle (see below).

West wall: windows in the belfry and a second stage as the south wall; also a square-headed, two-light ground floor window with depressed spandrels, chamfered dressings and traces of limewash. All the dressings look original. It has a relieving arch of red sandstone and grey shale voussoirs. Protruding stair turret at south-west angle is rather like a clasping buttress. It lacks the battered base of the tower but contains much re-used red sandstone. It has three simple slit windows.

Nave. General. Fabric 'A'. Externally, only a small part of the nave is visible, on the south.

South wall: west end visible adjacent to tower; one and a half round-headed arches and one cylindrical pier immured in wall, partly in red sandstone. There are suspicions that not much of this is original, but is reconstructed (or rebuilt?), with some of the arch defined by shale voussoirs. Red sandstone quoins feature at the south-west angle of the wall, but only for the lower part of the wall. A Victorian lancet window to the east of the arches. The main doorway into the church is 14thC or 15thC with an original two-centred arch of two orders, both chamfered though the inner one hollowed.

North aisle. General. Fabric 'B', but some of the smaller stonework shows traces of limewash and this may be re-used material; a pitched lean-to roof. Victorian construction.

North wall: three, two-centred, two-light windows, the lights with trefoiled heads and a trefoil above; hoodmoulds with head stops that show some variation from window to window. Four stepped buttresses (contra guidebook plan), and an arched doorway into the vestry, now blocked. This has an arch of alternate red and buff sandstone voussoirs, grey sandstone for the jambs which are chamfered with bar stops, and a hoodmould with stops.

East wall: though primarily in 'B' (with irregular lumps of the stone, not the regular material seen elsewhere), the bottom 1m of the southern two-thirds of this wall is different and could be a variation on 'A', and probably original. Furthermore it is outset from the line of the east wall of the chancel. Intermittent butt joint with nave. A two-centred window with three trefoiled lights and three quatrefoil lights above, wholly Victorian.

West wall: no windows. There is a butt joint with some sandstone at the extreme south end of wall. This might represent the corner of the Norman building but if so it is not clear how it ties in with contemporary features on the inside.

Chancel. General. Fabric 'A' or at least 'A'-type for it is weathered and lichen covered in places.

East wall: the only complete visible wall. North-east corner marked by quoins, the south-east corner tied in with the east wall of south aisle, but a ?junction visible in places. Three-light, Perpendicular window in east wall: a two-centred arch with cinquefoil tracery, five trefoiled panel lights, and most of the dressings are original. There is an unexplained linear anomaly in the stonework above the window.

South Aisle. General. A variation on Fabric 'A', but varying bands of different stone used, particularly on east wall; formerly limewashed. The south wall in 'D'.

East wall: three-light window in Decorated style with reticulated tracery, the model for the east window in the north aisle. This one, however, is in red sandstone and some of the tracery could be original, though some has clearly been replaced. Ashlar quoins at south-east corner. Clear evidence that the gable end has been



raised by about 0.4m, and possible, too, that the gable from the apex of the window arch has been rebuilt.

South wall: in fabric 'D'. Three, two-light windows, the most easterly could be original, though not wholly convincing: tall and with cusped Y-tracery and a quatrefoil above. The other windows are Victorian inserts, similar in design to those in the north aisle north wall; the more easterly of the two shows signs of insertion. An original doorway, of the 14thC (but the listed building report claims it as a 17thC priest's door); of two orders, the archstones renewed but the jambs in pink and grey sandstone are original and disappear below the external ground surface level; voussoir slabs form a relieving arch. Four buttresses (contra guidebook plan), of Victorian date. A slab of rock in the wall face is inscribed with small crosses in circles (4 or 5) and other incisions, and is set in the extreme east end of wall at height of c.3m; it is considered to be early medieval. Sandstone tomb slab of ?1676 against wall.

West wall: most of this wall has been rebuilt except for the 2m immediately below the window which is a three-light Victorian feature with a two-centred arch, three two-centred, trefoiled lights and broad panel lights above. Fragment of a decorated stone, perhaps from a graveslab, built into wall to south of window at height of c.3m.

### Interior

Tower. General. Stone slab floor. Walls plastered and whitewashed except for stonework of window embrasures and the archway. Tower built into the last nave bay, and on its east big half piers (from responds of earlier crossing arches?) are re-used for the tower arch, though the moulded capitals are in pale yellow sandstone and chamfered and like the arch itself are in Decorated style. Stone-vaulted ceiling.

West wall: window is off centre. Stair turret door at south-west angle has sandstone jambs in worn red sandstone and an ogee-headed arch.

Nave. General. Tiled floor except at west end where stone slabs (only one obviously a gravestone, from 1723), while the benches are raised on wooden planking. Cast iron heating vents in floor. Walls plastered and whitewashed, except for stonework of the arches and window embrasures. A fifteen-bay roof extending over chancel and nave, divided by arch-braced collar trusses with raking struts; plain wallplates and two tiers of cusped windbraces of 15thC date, but much restored.

North wall: the west end has a free-standing arcade of one and a half Romanesque arches (in Fabric 'C'), comparable but not corresponding to those in external south wall; pier and the respond to the east have chamfered capitals; the plain base of the pier is 0.3m below present floor level, and is now covered by wooden boards. Round arches of two orders; renewal (in the 1871/72 restoration?) of the springers and all the arch stones and one capital. Also the whole of the eastern respond is rebuilt for there is only one piece of original red sandstone. East of this the wall is considered to be a surviving remnant of the 12thC church; it supports a memorial of 1685. Further east the Victorian arcade in buff-coloured freestone is narrower and inset at both east and west ends; its four bays (extending into the chancel) have steep and deeply moulded arches of three orders on cylindrical columns.

East wall: no division between nave and chancel.

South wall: arcade of three, broad, two-centred arches of two orders, perhaps broken through an earlier wall. The western arch springs from a respond which then merges into the wall. The eastern side of this arch also finishes in a respond for there is a short stretch of wall punctured by a simple gap with a two-centred head (supposedly either the original south entrance before the addition of the south aisle, or perhaps more reasonably a priest's entrance). Beyond is the second bay springing, on the far side, from an octagonal pier with a moulded octagonal capital and collar, but set on a square plinth. None of the responds has a capital. Traces of (?medieval) painting on arches, with more towards the east end in the chancel bay. West of the arcade the main south doorway has a reveal in red sandstone, yet of irregular appearance: part of one angle is chamfered while some other jambs have a curved profile, suggesting that the whole doorway may have been refashioned. One 19thC marble memorial on the wall above the 'priest's door', one stone tablet of 1780 further west and below it the coffin plate of Gwalter Mechain.



West wall: as east wall of tower. Relationship of tower arch to Romanesque half bay in north wall is not clearly defined, and butt joint in external west face of north aisle confuses the picture. Near the south-west corner a stone plaque of 1737 leans against the wall.

North aisle. General. Tiled floor except at east end where there is a raised wooden floor for organ and the now removed benches. Walls plastered and whitewashed, except for stonework of arches and window embrasures. Internal wall on west separates aisle from a vestry raised above the general level of the church which also functions as a kitchen. Raised wooden dais at east end. Roof of five bays with collars, king and raking struts; through purlins.

North wall: splayed window embrasures, one late 19thC brass and a 20thC marble memorial.

East wall: splayed window and one 19thC marble tablet.

South wall: arcade as above.

West wall: internal division as noted above; plain.

Chancel. General. Arcades continue from nave, and the sanctuary occupies the eastern bay. Three steps up to altar. Victorian tiles. Roof as nave but the four most easterly trusses have no struts and the fifth, which is near the nave/chancel divide, has upright struts and a subsidiary collar.

East wall: splayed window embrasure and beneath it a carved wooden reredos.

South aisle. General. Tiled floor, partially extended with new tiles after removal of all the benches. Heating vents. Walls as nave and chancel. Ten-bay roof with arch-braced collar trusses, raking struts and two tiers of windbraces, all of 15thC date, and similar to that in nave.

North wall: arcade. Traces of black paint in most easterly arch.

East wall: window dressings show traces of red and black paint. One 19thC marble memorial and a 20thC brass.

South wall: doorway higher internally than externally. Painted decoration on soffit. Window to east has exposed dressings but these do not resolve the problem of date (see exterior description). One marble memorial of 1787 together with one of 19thC date, and 20thC stone and brass memorials.

West wall: splayed window and beneath it the carved cross slab of 9th/10th or 12thC date.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Based on Haslam with additions.

Cross slab: in the south aisle, 'a tapering cross slab which Dr Nash-Williams compared to some C8 Merovingian sculptured grave-lids in the Poitiers district. Elements of diverse origin are not assimilated into a coherent design. At the top is Christ crucified and a Maltese cross in a circle. Below is a Latin cross encircled with knot-work. Unfamiliar motifs like the circled chi-rho and foliate border have been translated here into a crucifix ring-cross of Irish type, and the Celtic plaits and Viking knots and animals of the local Celto-Norse tradition. To Dr Nash-Williams the introduction of Viking features suggested a C9-10 date; to Dr C A Raleigh Radford, however, conjectures that it was in fact the tombstone of one of the princes of Powys, perhaps Madoc ap Mereudd (d.1160)' (Haslam).

Font: octagonal bowl on an inverted funnel-shaped stem, one of the eight panels with initials (RDV);

Perpendicular or perhaps as late as the 17thC, for Thomas claimed that it carried the date 1660. Modern base.

Reredos: oak frieze carved with vines, which according to Crossley and Ridgway came from a wallplate of the medieval roof. At the base of the reredos are fragments of arcading from a screen in the Dee Valley tradition.

Pews: some 17thC decorated pew panels re-used in the division for the vestry.

Altar rails: of twisted-baluster type probably from later in the 17thC.

Pulpit: octagonal shape, 18thC; against the north arcade.

Chests: i) planked, 2m long. ii) planked, c.13m long. Both plain and undated.

Monuments: i) Meriel Williams (d.1685), convex slab between black marble columns with white responds, scrolly volutes and urn above. ii) Humphreys (d.1780), in stone with a decorated plaster surround. iii) Jenkin Parry (d.1787) and Martha, his wife (d.1793), with tapering balusters supporting plinth with urn.

Bells: three of 1679, 1698 and 1760.

Registers: from 1597.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Organ Case: 19thC.

Stained glass: all 19thC. East window(s) by H. Hughes; south aisle east by David Evans, Salop, c.1856; 6 panels of heraldic glass with arms of Welsh border families, hanging in aisles, by David Evans in 1838; other windows by Ward and Hughes.

Monuments: i) C. Ellis (d.1814) by J. Carline, Shrewsbury. ii) Jane Briggs (d.1816) by E. Spethon, Liverpool. iii) Janet Haldane (d.1843) by Lewis of Cheltenham. iv) Charlotte Mytton (d.1859) by T. Gaffin of Regent Street, London.

## CHURCHYARD

A large, semi-circular enclosure abutting stream on south, originally covering 2.2ha (5.44ac; contra other reports which claim it to be considerably larger). Flat, but slightly above the valley floor. Encroachments in north-east quadrant (Brook Cottages) and particularly on west where houses, chapel and yard adjacent to Church Walk all occupy earlier churchyard.

Boundary: stone wall around most of western, northern and eastern perimeter, disappearing in the vicinity of the scarped river terrace (see below) on east and west. Stone wall in reasonably good condition on north, where local report suggests it was taken down and rebuilt (in the same place?) during modern road improvements, but in poorer state of repair on east.

Monuments: tombs reasonably dense to south and east of a raised track cutting diagonally across churchyard; none to north and west. Few if any below the river terrace scarp. One gravemarker resting against the south wall of the church is dated 1676, and there are some 18thC chest tombs, though the inscriptions are generally worn. A skull and crossbones slab is set at the east end of the church.

Furniture: brass sundial on stone baluster pedestal, south of tower: inscribed 'Fran. Cleaton fecit 1710'.

Earthworks: the scarp bank just within the southern boundary is a natural river terrace, but it may have functioned as earlier boundary. Church sits on a low mound visible particularly on east and north, less so on



west, and merges with river terrace on south. Raised track across churchyard from north-east to south-west. Reportedly kept dry during floods but original purpose not clear.

Ancillary features: stone stiles in north-east and south-west, iron gates on north. Possible demolished structure at south end of east churchyard wall - disturbed concrete plinth only. Also former school/hall, now used by builder for storage, within north-west sector.

Vegetation: some yew trees, mainly in southern half and at east end of the church. One mature example. Also a mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees, again on the south side.

#### Sources

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings, 1995  
Church Guide 1984  
CPAT Field Visit: 2 May 1995 and 29 July 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 204  
Glynne 1885, 47  
Haslam 1979, 159  
NADFAS Report (held in NMR)  
Silvester 1992, 129  
Thomas 1908, 492

## CONDITION

In reasonable condition.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium to Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium to Good

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium to Good

Group value: Good



# Mochdre

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** All Saints**PRN** 16912**NGR** SO07238867

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## SUMMARY

All Saints church in the small settlement of Mochdre, 3 miles south-west of Newton, was rebuilt in 1867. It retains its 15thC roof though with modifications, but almost all of the fittings are 19thC. It occupies an irregularly shaped churchyard sited above the valley of the Mochdre Brook.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The church was rebuilt in the second half of the 19thC.

## HISTORY

It has been suggested that a church was established on this site in the 12thC. It was appropriated in 1287 by Bishop Beck of St Davids and at the time of the 1291 Taxation was worth £3 6s 8d.

The 18thC church had a stone flagged floor and a singing gallery. In 1789, it was agreed to build a new gallery to join the existing old one.

In 1862 the parish was transferred from the Diocese of St Davids to St Asaph.

By 1849, the building had deteriorated badly and it was completely rebuilt on the old foundations. Work commenced in 1864 at a cost of £1204, to the design of E. Haycock the younger of Shrewsbury. A local landowner donated the glass in the east window and the carved angels and roof bosses, the altar and chairs. It re-opened in 1867.

## ARCHITECTURE

Mochdre is a single-chambered church with a western bellcote, a south porch and a north vestry. It is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purposes of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabric: 'A' consists of small to medium blocks of grey and greenish-grey shale with irregular coursing and quoins of the same material but dressed; buff-yellow sandstone dressings. There are some variations in this masonry, particularly at the west end.

Roofs: slates, with lead rather than ridge tiles. Cross finials on the gable end of the chancel, on the porch and on the top of the bellcote.

Bellcote with two-centred arched apertures, string course and other embellishments; protective louvres fitted to the west side and top part of east side of the turret in 1953.

Drainage: 19thC guttering, castellated cisterns and downspouts lead to soakaways. Evidence of a drainage trench filled with chippings around the western end of the church.

## Exterior

General. Continuous nave and chancel under an uninterrupted roof line with a bellcote at west end

North wall: two three-light windows with square-headed frames and the lights with cusped heads; two stepped buttresses with pink sandstone dressings. All to the west of the vestry; east of it the wall is featureless.

East wall: square-sectioned string course at c.1.7m above ground level; below this the wall is battered. East window tracery in buff-coloured freestone matches nave west window; the two-centred arch has a hoodmould with foliate stops and there are alternating fabric 'A' and red sandstone voussoirs to the relieving arch. Finally a decorative band of sandstone blocks is incorporated into the masonry above the window. A railed grave abuts the wall.

South wall: west of the porch is a single cusped light set in a two-centred arch with a hoodmould and square stops, all in standard buff-yellow sandstone, and a relieving arch of voussoirs. East of the porch are two square-headed windows, each with three cusped lights. Lighting the sanctuary is a square-headed window in worn red sandstone, the lights slightly recessed with two-centred, trefoiled heads. This is not an original window, but appears to be of a different origin from the remaining fenestration. Two stepped buttresses with a mixture of yellow and pink sandstone dressings.

West wall: a three-light Perpendicular-style window, cinquefoil heads to the lights with panels and a cinquefoil-traceried roundel all under a two-centred arch with a hoodmould terminating in head stops; a relieving arch in stone voussoirs. Stepped buttresses, battered at the base, to either side of window.

Vestry. General. Adjoins north wall at west end of the chancel. In 'A' but with pink sandstone quoins. Shouldered arch to the doorway in north wall, in buff-yellow sandstone; two shouldered lights in a square-headed frame in the east wall. A chimney with yellow sandstone quoins and a blue brick head rises from the nave roof adjacent to the vestry. Against the west wall is a breeze block shed with corrugated roof.

South Porch. General. Stone porch with two-centred entrance arch of two orders, the outer one with fluted jambs but both terminating in pyramid stops, and a hoodmould with foliate stops. Short stepped clasping buttresses to either side. The east and west walls have pairs of small cusped lights in square-headed frames, of the standard pattern.

## Interior

Porch. General. Tiled floor; plastered walls with exposed dressings, with wooden benches along the east and west sides. Three collar trusses to the roof and a large carved wooden angel on the collar above the nave door. North wall contains a two-centred doorway with keeled shafts giving access to the church.

Nave. General. Continuous nave and chancel. Red and black tiled floor with slightly raised wooden boarding beneath the benches, and carpeting in the aisle. Plastered and painted walls with only the sandstone dressings exposed; heating pipes run along the north and south walls above the splayed windows. Over the nave and chancel is a hammerbeam roof of seven bays with eight arch-braced collar trusses rising from the hammerbeams, and cusped raking struts; the hammerbeams have chubby carved projecting angels; the hammerbeams are mounted on short ornamented wall posts which rest on stone head-corbels. Three tiers of quatrefoil windbraces, between heavily moulded purlins and ribs; moulded cornices and wallplates. The roof is of 15thC date, but the hammerbeams themselves, the carved bosses



and the carved angels are 1864-7 additions, and it is difficult to judge how much of the remaining timberwork has been replaced.

North wall: nothing to note.

East wall: nothing to note.

South wall: nothing to note.

West wall: one marble memorial of 1812. Above the window is a large corbelled plinth, an internal support for the bellcote.

Chancel. General. One step up from the nave, one to the sanctuary, one to the altar. Floor carpetted, with some tiles; walls as nave. Roof as nave - two and a half bays - but the intersections are enriched with bosses

North wall: shouldered entrance arch to the vestry; organ against the wall.

East and south walls: nothing to note.

Vestry. General. Wooden floor covered with linoleum. Fireplace in south-west corner. Plastered and painted walls. Roof of five close-set trusses with exposed rafters.

#### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Based on Haslam with additions.

Figures: two carved oak figures identified as medieval rood figures of Christ and the Virgin Mary, were found on the top of a wallplate during 1867. The Christ figure is c.19" high and the Virgin Mary, showing signs of white, gold and vermillion paint, c.15" high and on a plinth. Rare survivors of the Reformation. The figures were presented to the Powysland Club in 1873, and removed to the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, in 1954 for restoration, where they are now on display.

Bell: inscribed '....D Savd His C...', probably 'God saved His Church'. Probably cast by Thomas Clibury II c.1660.

Plate: 1684 inscribed pewter paten and flagon.

Register: from 1682.

Chest: carved front panels, undated but certainly pre-19thC; just inside the south door.

Table: plain but with carved baluster legs, undated.

Reredos: probably constructed from old pews.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Monuments: white marble tablet on grey slate to Richard Ruffe (d.1812) and family, by T Gaffin, London.

Font: octagonal in pink sandstone: panels of Tudor roses within quatrefoils on all sides. Octagonal stem has trefoiled arches on all faces. Sited on octagonal stone plinth near south door. 20thC wooden coned cover.

Stained glass: in west window by Wailes; the east window by Clayton and Bell (information from Haslam).

## CHURCHYARD

A well-kept medium-sized and somewhat irregularly shaped churchyard on a hillside that slopes moderately down from north-west to south-east.

Boundary: hedged on all sides except the south-east where there is a property revetment wall.

Monuments: well-spaced monuments around the church, with recent burials in the western extension. Cleared 18thC slabs, the earliest of which seems to be of 1760, lean up against the south side of the church. Some late 18thC ledgers to south of church.

Furniture: none seen.

Earthworks: none.

Ancillary features: the main entrance is via a pair of wrought iron gates and a stile leading in from the north-east side and there is a further pair of gates on the south-west side to a lane. Tarmac paths lead all around the church.

Vegetation: several old yews located on the south-east side, the largest by the porch. 19thC yews located along the paths and at the north entrance gates. Conifers in the south boundary, and two large ones to the east of the church.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1996  
CPAT Field Visit 21 November 1995 and 4 June 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 205  
Eisel 1986, 190  
Haslam 1979, 163  
Lloyd 1953-4  
Powys SMR  
Thomas 1908, 537



## CONDITION

Church exterior in good state of repair; re-pointing and work on the bellcote has recently taken place. The interior plasterwork is suffering from dampness on all walls; particularly bad areas on west wall of nave.

## 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

# Montgomery

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Nicholas**PRN** 16914**NGR** SO22359652

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## SUMMARY

St Nicholas's church is a large building founded early in the 13thC on a low hill in the eastern part of the town. Much of the original structure survives, but a four-storey tower was added in 1816 and a south porch in 1868. Inside it retains a 15thC/16thC hammerbeam roof over the west end of the nave and a 16thC wagon roof over the eastern end, though the chancel roof is part of the 19thC restoration works. The 15thC rood screen was brought from Chirbury Priory together with the roodloft and the stalls with their misericords after the Dissolution. Other medieval furnishings to have survived include the font and two piscinae. The south transept contains a canopied tomb dated 1601 and two recumbent effigies. The churchyard is large and rectangular with an interesting range of memorials.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Early 13thC medieval church with late 13thC transepts added on, though at different times for the north transept is in similar stone to the nave, but the south transept is in rather different material. An extended chancel (though the evidence for this extension is tenuous) and a south door inserted; several original lancet windows in red sandstone remain, though set at different heights in the wall faces.

A four-storey battlemented tower with massive corner buttresses was built in 1816 adjoining the north aisle, to replace an earlier structure. Porch added in 1868, and a north vestry, also Victorian but earlier.

## HISTORY

The church at Montgomery was a product of the foundation of the town itself in 1223. The first mention of the building is in 1227 and throughout the Middle Ages it functioned as a chapelry to the neighbouring priory of Chirbury.

The early 13thC church was a single-chambered structure, the nave and chancel together having dimensions of 77' x 26' (23.5m x 7.9m). Transepts were appended soon after, the Lymore Chapel on the south added sometime in the late 13thC, though it can only have acquired this name after the mid-17thC, the north (Brockton) transept more specifically around 1275, reputedly for the prior's tenants on his Court Calmore manor, which by the early 17thC seems to have had a separate dedication to St Laurence. It is possible, too, that the chancel was extended in the late 13thC.

Restoration work was carried out in 1543 when money was spent on a steeple, and it was probably at this time that the chancel screen was erected for the total cost was £155.

Further repairs to the steeple and the bells were recorded in 1655. The earlier tower was lower and wider than the present one, probably of two storeys with a low crenellated parapet without pinnacles and a plain string course below the parapet. Each of the walls probably contained a two-light aperture with quatrefoil head.



A door in the north wall of the nave was blocked up in 1762.

The early tower was taken down in 1816 and the present tower built at the north end of the north transept. A benefaction board records its erection at a cost of £1700, by Lord Clive, the third Earl of Powys. The plasterwork in the north transept ceiling may also date to this period.

A vestry was added between 1840 and 1850.

Major restoration work took place in 1868 under G. Beadnell. This included restoration of the west window, re-pointing and colouring of the walls, and the replacement of the chancel ceiling. The old porch was removed and a new one designed using an oak purlin from the wagon roof in the nave.

G. E. Street prepared a report on the church in 1875, in which he recommended that the north arcade be recreated and the chancel roofed according to whatever was found to have been the medieval intention. The work was done by Edward Haycock the Younger in 1877-8, when the north transept arcade was inserted in place of the existing iron pillars, existing galleries were taken out, the floor level at the west end of the church was lowered and the stone floor replaced by tiles, the old two-decker pulpit and box pews were replaced, the small doorway in the east wall of the south transept was reconstructed, and the west window renewed.

Further repairs were undertaken in 1893 and 1914.

Formerly in the diocese of Hereford, Montgomery was transferred to St Asaph in the early 20thC.

Major restoration work in 1969-70 under the direction of Anthony Catwin, included treatment to woodwork in the tower, and insertion of the new ceiling in the chancel.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel in one, north and south transepts, which are chapels rather than true transepts, a north tower, a south porch and a vestry on the north side of the chancel. The building is oriented south-west/north-east, but for descriptive purposes, 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted in the report.

Fabrics: 'A' of small to medium blocks of random red sandstone but mainly shale with grey and grey-green predominating; occasional fragments of brick inserted; irregularly coursed and weatherworn; red sandstone dressings; traces of limewash residue.

'B' is of large, roughly shaped blocks of grey/grey-green shale, coursed. Yellow ashlar for buttresses and dressings.

'C' consists of large blocks of grey, quarry-cut sandstone, regularly coursed; yellow sandstone dressings.

'D' is of grey and buff-grey shale, some quite regular blocks, some coursing; only one red sandstone block.

'E' is similar to 'D' but the masonry is rougher; medium-sized blocks.

'A' is original 13thC; 'E' may be 16thC, 'B' is from 1816; 'C' from 1840-1850, and 'D' is undated.

Roofs: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles, but red ridge tiles on the porch. Stone cross finials at the west end of nave, on the transepts and the porch (wooden), and a wrought iron finial at chancel end.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to modern drainage indicated by a manhole on the east side of the tower. There is evidence of a trench around the south side of the porch, and along the north side of the nave is a slightly sunken concrete drain which continues round the west side of the north transept. Nothing obvious around the tower or the east end of the church.

## Exterior

Nave. General. In 'A'. On the north side a render coat to the base of this wall and the west wall of the north



transept.

North wall: top part of wall rebuilt for about 0.4m. Render course at base to a height of c.0.2m. To the west of the north transept are two small, early 13thC lancets with original dressings to either side of a blocked two-centred arched doorway with quarter-round jambs; sandstone dressings original; also 13thC. Diagonal buttress in 'A' at north-west corner constructed in grey shale with red sandstone dressings; the date is uncertain but Salter attributed it to the 16thC. West of the north transept is another short stretch of wall. It displays some evidence of patching with tabular stone, perhaps even a former window; and there is a corbel-like projection in the angle with the transept, about 3m+ off the ground.

South wall: features from the west are: i) a small, early 13thC lancet to west of porch. ii) south doorway, within the south porch. 'Of late 13thC date, with an inner order of filleted attached shafts continued to the apex within a pair of engaged shafts, with ring-moulded capitals between rolls' (Haslam); a worn, medieval sandstone head above the apex of the arch; some repair and modification in the 19thC, particularly on the west side, including the lowest dressings which were inserted when the floor was lowered in 1877, but mostly original. iii) on the east side of the porch, a two-centred window incorporating a pair of cinquefoil-headed lights and a hexafoil rose head all in pale yellow sandstone with hoodmould and floriated stops - this is 19thC, but probably in the position of an earlier window which shows in a drawing of 1793. The top of wall with more slabs than elsewhere may have been raised or rebuilt.

West wall: in 'A' but the stone looks grimy; large five-light Perpendicular window with panel tracery, completely renewed in pale yellow sandstone in 1868. West gable was raised slightly at the same time in 1868, when the masonry of the window was restored; top quoins in 19thC or later stone. North-west corner rebuilt to take the diagonal buttress.

North transept (= Brockton transept). General. Built about 1275. Constructed in fabric 'A'.

East wall: a broad, heavy stepped buttress with sandstone coping, possibly 19thC for the stonework looks to be the same as the organ chamber and vestry. A wide single-light window with a curious rounded head and thin stone voussoirs splaying out as a sort of relieving arch, comparable to those in the west wall; probably of medieval origin, but altered.

West wall: top part of wall probably rebuilt (0.4m). Buttress and window as east side, and iron hinges on the south side of the window suggest a former shutter. The window is broad and may have been modified with the loss of its tracery; a jambstone has the initials W A scratched on it; above is a relieving arch of edge slabs. Also a blocked medieval doorway, with a two-centred red sandstone arch rising to about 1.7m above current ground level and c.1.5m wide; the north side is partially hidden behind the buttress, and its base is also disguised by the render coat along the wall footings. Above the arch are relieving slabs set at an angle to the rest of the masonry. It has been suggested that the earlier tower may have been the same width as the transept and this blocked archway was the original tower doorway, but the argument is not convincing.

Tower. General. In 'B'. Dates to 1816. Square four-stage tower on north side of the north transept, its stair in the south-east corner. Diagonal stepped buttresses at the corners rise to a level in line with the tops of the belfry windows, and those on the south side are extended to meet the side walls of the north transept. A basal plinth, c.0.3m above ground level, is continuous around the tower and the buttresses and three string courses divide the tower into four stages. Battlemented at the top with corner pinnacles, and surmounted by weathervane.

North wall: first stage contains a high, pointed, moulded doorway with intersecting tracery above a pair of heavy planked doors; second stage, a two-centred window with louvred light; the third stage, a clockface with small flanking lancets; the fourth (belfry) stage, a two-centred window containing two ogee-headed louvred lights.

East wall: second and fourth stages as north wall; the third stage has the two lancets, one blocked, the other louvred.

South wall: rising above the north transept, the third stage lancets and fourth stage belfry window are



visible.

West wall: as east wall except for a clock face with the date 1816 on it between the two lancets.

Chancel. General. Fabric 'A'.

North wall: disguised by vestry, though some of the masonry is visible above its roof-line.

East wall: basal plinth at 0.2m; stonework heavily pointed. Large Perpendicular window with hoodmould and head-stops; a transom separates two rows of seven main lights with trefoiled heads, and there are sub-arches and panel tracery above. The tracery was renewed in 1859., but the jambs and some of the arch stones are original. Below the window are two blocked vertical slits, c.0.8m high, with shale dressings, equidistant from the corners of the wall; red sandstone used for the blocking. Lloyd suggested they may have originally provided ventilation and light to a chanel house beneath the chancel.

South wall: from the west the features are: i) against the east wall of the south transept is a bulge in the wall marking the position of the roodloft staircase from the early 16thC, in 'E'; ii) a line of red sandstone jambs, with some signs of a chamfer, and these run fractionally behind the masonry of the staircase; iii) a second line of jambstones, the two of them supporting what is best described as a wooden lintel with rebuilt masonry above. The jambs stop in the upper part of the wall but the blocking between the two (in 'D') seems to descend to ground level. This is presumably the remains of a very broad window removed to make way for the loft stairs, the beam inserted to take the weight during the rebuilding; yet the blocking material is not the same as that used for the staircase wall, and there is no room for an arch unless the wall height has been reduced! iv) a small inserted lancet - 19thC. v) a wider lancet in 19thC yellow sandstone with a hoodmould. Inserted at the present chancel/sanctuary divide.

Vestry and organ chamber. General. Adjoining the north wall of the chancel. In large blocks of fabric 'C'. 19thC fenestration. Boiler house below ground.

South transept (= Lymore Chapel). General. Constructed in fabric 'A' with red sandstone quoins, but the masonry appears fresher and the buff and orange (iron-stained) tabular shale indicates a variation on 'A'; some red sandstone but more in south wall than east wall. Slight basal plinth on south wall, 0.1-0.2m above ground level.

East wall: a single wide lancet, from which tracery was removed in the 19thC according to Haslam; and to the north of it a shoulder-arched doorway of c.1875, replacing an earlier, original doorway.

South wall: a slight batter at base. A tall, narrow 13thC lancet, rising into the gable in the centre of the wall and a smaller, earlier 13thC lancet below and to the east of it; the latter possibly moved from the nave wall when the transept built. Both have original pink sandstone dressings, and show rebates for shutters.

West wall: battered at base to height of 0.4m. A single wide lancet centrally placed, which has lost its tracery like its counterpart in the east wall, and has its arch stones renewed; and to the south a small and very short medieval trefoil-headed window in pale sandstone.

South porch. General. Constructed in 1868, replacing a two-storey stone porch. Open, timber-framed structure supported on two courses of stonework similar to fabric 'C'. Two-centred wooden archway on south, the arch acting as bracing for a peaked collar with cusped struts above. Side walls have timber panels with trefoil heads.

## Interior

Porch. General. Stone flagged floor; benches along both side walls. Roof supported by a single peaked



collar truss with cusped raking struts and the ceiling plastered above exposed rafters. South doorway to church described above under nave entry.

Nave. General. 19thC tiled floor; flush wooden planks under benches; heating grilles in main aisles and elsewhere, though the system was superseded by radiators. Plastered walls with deeply splayed windows, the stonework exposed in the embrasures. Roof of two parts. The western end has a late 15thC/early 16thC hammerbeam roof with six cusped, arch-braced collar trusses forming five bays, and four tiers of quatrefoil windbraces with moulded purlins and rafters; the wallplates are decorated with blind, ogee-traceried panels; the hammerbeams spring from wooden wallposts on the north and south walls. The eastern part of the nave as far as the east side of the screen, is probably 16thC, and consists of a wagon roof divided into 80 square plastered panels defined by moulded ribs with coloured bosses at the intersections. In the 19thC it was confirmed that the arch-braced roof does not continue above the wagon roof.

North wall: two-centred arched soffit over recess to blocked doorway now contains central heating radiator and a memorial of 1787/1804. Three other 19thC marble memorials on wall plus a brass wall memorial. North transept divided from nave by double-bay arcade with circular central pier and two-centred arches, the mouldings on its capital and on the matching responds slightly different from those on the south transept; in red sandstone dating from 1877-8.

East wall: divided from chancel by 15thC rood screen and loft.

South wall: high, two-centred arch and soffit to south doorway embrasure. One 19thC marble memorial by Carline, a 20thC marble memorial, three 20thC brasses and a plaque commemorating the 1969/70 restoration at a cost of £10,000. Two-bay arcade gives access to south transept, the pier is circular and the capitals of the responds and the pier have fillet mouldings showing some degree of variation; the arches are two-centred in red sandstone.

West wall: deeply splayed window. Two 19thC memorials.

North Transept. General. Tiles with carpet over; heating grilles. Plastered walls and coved plaster ceiling. Now used as a Sunday school.

North wall: early 19thC entrance to tower, having a simple two-centred arch and glazed lights in the tympanum above the door; 19thC benefaction boards either side of tower door plus a large board commemorating the erection of the tower in 1816 above it. Also one 19thC mural tablet.

East wall: red sandstone piscina, with a shallow basin and drain hole, in a moulded frame with a two-centred arch; in the wall near the arcade. Two 19thC memorials.

West wall: 'segmental-pointed rere-arch and the jambs of the west window enriched with a filleted shaft' (Haslam). Marble memorial of 1790, and another of 1865.

Tower. General. Ground floor now contains cloakrooms and modern toilet facilities. Tiled floor, plastered wall and domed ceiling visible to height of 1st floor. Pointed arch over pair of panelled doors with glass tympanum provide interior access to tower off north transept. Benefaction board on east wall includes dates of 1747 and 1752.

Chancel. General. On same level as nave. Encaustic tiles, heating grilles, and longitudinal choir stalls on raised planked floors to either side of the central aisle; one step up to sanctuary, two to altar. Round-armed seats at the rear of the screen and along adjacent walls (eleven along the south, eight on the north). Plastered walls. Modern ceiling of three arch-braced collars with king struts forming four bays; the long arch braces spring from stone corbels on both sides, except where the trusses coincide with window apertures.

North wall: organ set in chamber off wall and vestry access through a doorway on the east of the organ chamber recess. Marble wall tablet of 1762/1819 and another of 1875.



East wall: window contains stained glass from 1921, and the reredos below is constructed in red sandstone with marble, and has mosaic figures; of 1884.

South wall: heavy planked door set in a small two-centred arch in the south wall with chamfered but painted dressings; now blocked by seating - it provided access to the roodloft and the rectangular planked door above the loft is still in situ. Royal arms painted on board. Memorials of 1762/1819 and 1769/1803.

Vestry. General. Planked floors; plastered walls and ceiling.

South Transept (=Lymore Chapel). General. 19thC tiled floor, heating grille, two steps up to stone flagstones under the effigies on the south side. 17thC roof, restored in the 19thC (probably 1886), designed as a three-sided ceiling with sloping sides consisting on each side of 15 white side panels and a flat top of ten formed in two rows separated by black ribs. Panels are plastered and have decorated bosses consisting of gold stars. Oak beam exposed above arcading, but supporting the upper part of the transept wall, and supported on large timber corbels and braced wallposts.

East wall: plastered recess to exterior door; red sandstone piscina - medieval.

South wall: traces of wall paintings to west of window embrasure.

West wall: hatchment perhaps of 1801, and a 20thC memorial.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Information derived from Haslam with additions.

Font: a waisted cylinder with a band at its narrowest circumference; 13thC. Located near the south entrance.

Piscinae: one in each of the north and south transepts, the former in a moulded frame, the latter a rectangular sandstone bowl with faceted sides on a sandstone corbel; both medieval.

Effigies: two medieval recumbent alabaster effigies of men in armour in the Lymore Chapel, restored between 1814 and 1830; the earlier effigy probably that of Sir Edmund Mortimer, who died in 1408. On stylistic grounds, Haslam placed the second at around 1500. Both from table tombs that have gone.

Screen: 15thC with later wainscoting made from old pew panels. In fact two screens integrated to form one. 'The one facing west and made for the church has five openings with large cinquefoiled heads on either side of a central doorway with arched and ogee tracery. [The oak panels at the base are renewed.] The rood loft above would have been reached by the stair in the south chancel wall. The existing loft, however, belongs to the other screen, which faces east; and all this... was brought from the priory of Chirbury after the Dissolution. This Perpendicular monastic screen is also of five bays a side, originally closed by panels. The posts are decorated with buttresses and pinnacles. The rood front is pierced by ogee tracery and foliated finials, as are the fine returning stall canopies on the north side. The parapet of the rood is backed by planks perforated with little window openings. All this is late 15thC. The space between the screens formed two pews, and Jacobean gates with little balusters were placed in the way through to the choir' (Haslam). For fuller descriptions see Crossley and Ridgway 1947 and Lloyd 1979.

Misericords: nine in all, including an eagle, a priest, a duel, a lost soul taken to hell, and other narrative scenes. Also from Chirbury.

Tomb: in the Lymore Chapel is the canopied tomb in alabaster and freestone of Richard Herbert (d.1596), dated 1600 and probably to the design of Walter Hancock of Much Wenlock; it bears the recumbent effigies of Richard Herbert in armour and his wife, Magdalen (d.1627, buried in Chelsea) in an embroidered dress. Behind them are the kneeling figures of their eight children, paired in arcades. 'The tomb has a ribbed cross-



vault on semicircular arches, with figures of Vanity and Time painted in the spandrels of the big front arch. An entablature above with a painted heraldic frieze breaks forward over four slim Composite columns set diagonally away from the corners, and at these corners supports squat finials. Superstructure of superb strapwork and scrolls and a luxuriant central achievement with the Herbert arms' (Haslam). Beneath is a the effigy of a cadaver.

Wall painting: on south wall of Lymore Chapel are traces of a painting, much damaged. Medieval.

Chest: long chest with an inscription that includes the date 1718.

Cupboard: ornately carved, carrying inscription '17 ML 29'. West wall of north transept.

Brass plates: five, dated to 1767-1781, attached to a board; on north wall of tower.

Royal arms: of 1726; oil paint on board.

Monuments: marble tablets to i) William Davies (d.1800) and Mary (d.1790); ii) William Lloyd (d.1769) and his wife Mary (d.1803); iii) Jane Pugh (d.1762) and Margaret Pugh (d.1819); iv) Jane Powell (d.1819) by T. Doriman of Regents St, London; v) Jane Davies (d.1835) and William Davies (d.1837) by B. Baker of Liverpool; vi) Matthew Jones (d.1865) and Mary his wife (d.1866) by Dodson of Shrewsbury.

Bells: of six bells in the tower four have dates of 1724 in their inscriptions, a fifth is of 1814 and the last is undated.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Hatchment: on the west wall of the transept near the tomb is a hatchment with the Herbert coat of arms, probably of 1801.

Benefaction boards: three sited in the north transept since 1877, the fourth in ground floor off tower. Benefactions recorded are the erection of the tower in 1816, a wonderful board with heraldry; a second board, on the west wall, has dates ranging from 1631-1838; the third refers to the Herberts but has no date. For that in the tower see section above.

Prayer board: large painted board, partly hidden, on south wall of tower.

Pulpit: octagonal with carved figures in niches: designed by G.E.Street.

Reredos: from 1892 in 'Caen stone and alabaster, designed by R.C. Carpenter as a frame for the bottom of the east window; the four alabaster figures are by T. Earp and the mosaic figures in the side panels portray Evangelists and Prophets by Clayton & Bell' (Haslam).

Monuments: marble, neo-classical memorial to Mary Weaver (d.1825) by Carline, Salop. A number of other 19thC marble memorials throughout the church.

Stained Glass: east window by Thomas Baillie of London, 1861, depicting Crucifixion, Ascension with the Evangelists and Ss Peter and Paul in the tracery lights. Chancel south window, c.1850. West window of 1902, depicting St Tyssil, bottom right, holding a model of old Llandyssil church; designed by Charles Hean and executed by G.L.Merchant. Stained glass by William Morris and Co. inserted 1926 in south nave window.

Piped organ: restored 1953 and again on 1989.

## CHURCHYARD

Long rectangular churchyard, occupying flattish ground within the town walls, though there is a gentle drop



from south to north; no obvious sign of an extension. It has been suggested, though on what basis is unclear, that the plots to the west of the churchyard were sold off in the early 19thC and were formerly part of an earlier and larger enclosure. Well-maintained with modern burials and cremations located on the north side.

Boundary: a revetment wall on the north, east and south sides where it forms a boundary with roads. The stone wall varies from 1.25m to 2.2m in height. The western boundary, with the biggest drop, is now hedged to adjoining properties.

Monuments: mix of sandstone and slate slabs, chest tombs and crosses; fairly evenly distributed on all sides of the church. Several 18th to mid-19thC headstones and tombs of interest in varying styles which include chest tombs with urns such as that located in the south-east corner, in memory of Charles Gardiner Humphreys, solicitor (d.1803) and his wife. The earliest grave noted of 1760.

Furniture: octagonal fluted sundial located near the south porch; minus its plate and gnomon.

Ancillary features: the main entrance formed by a pair of wrought iron gates with an overarch and a light set in yellow sandstone pillars in the south wall; sunken path to the church door. North entrance has a pair of wrought iron gates and the path leads to the tower north door. Tarmac paths around the church.

Vegetation: several mature yews located on all sides of the churchyard; the largest near the south porch. Other trees of various species around the perimeter.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 8 February 1996 and 18 February 1998

Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 205

Eisel 1986, 190

Haslam 1979, 163

Lloyd 1979

Lloyd 1984

Powys SMR

Salter 1991, 21

## CONDITION

Good condition externally and internally.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Good

Value of documentary evidence: Medium to Good

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium



# Penegoes

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**Diocese** Bangor

**Dedication** Cadfarch

**PRN** 16395

**NGR** SH76840093

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## SUMMARY

St Cadfarch's church is a wholly 19thC structure though as an establishment it was almost certainly founded in the early medieval era. Nothing pre-dating the Victorian rebuilding survives, other than a stoup and a bell, and possibly a couple of items of furniture. It stands in an irregular enclosure than originally showed some degree of curvilinearity.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Completely rebuilt in 1877 (or 1863 according to the Quinquennial Report).

## HISTORY

The dedication and possibly the location point to an early medieval foundation. The name Penegoes means head of Egeos, a British saint whose head is said to be buried under oak trees near the church.

It is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecclesia de Penegees' at a value of 6s 8d.

The earlier church was replaced in 1877 (or 1863) to the design of John Pritchard.

The tower over the chancel was taken down in about 1939.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and narrower chancel under a continuous roofline, a 'sort of crossing' with a gabled roof to the south, a square bell tower on the north, and a vestry joined to the chancel. The building is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east, but for descriptive purposes, 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted in the report.

Fabrics: 'A' is of rectangular, sawn, grey slate blocks, coursed.

Roof: slates with plain ceramic ridge tiles. A cross finial over the porch only, but two broken finials rest against the walls of the porch.

Drainage: 19thC guttering rests on stone corbels, and downspouts, some renewed, lead to soakaways. No obvious drainage trench.

Note: Penegoes is a wholly Victorian structure and thus the following description offers only an outline.

## Exterior

**Nave.** General. Continuous plinth at c.1m above ground level, with projecting coving. All apertures have buff-yellow sandstone dressings, and there are relieving arches of slate voussoirs to all apertures. Corbel table beneath the eaves of both nave and chancel.

**North wall:** part overgrown with ivy; boiler house with below-ground entrance, and high chimney stack. West of the boiler house are paired trefoiled lights each with a trefoil above; over these is a continuous hoodmould with decorative stops, and there are relieving arches as described above. A standard light to the east of the boiler house chimney.

**South wall:** two sets of standard, paired, trefoiled lights to the east of the porch; a continuous hoodmould links these pairs.

**West wall:** dominated by a twelve-light wheel window with a central quatrefoil; relieving arch over, and then a hoodmould which arches over the top of the window. Two longitudinal slits in the gable.

**Bell-tower.** General. Projects from the north wall of the nave and is partly ivy covered. Bell chamber has a small, louvred aperture on the north face above a single square-headed slit staircase window. In the west wall are a pair of square-headed louvred slit windows. A sandstone parapet on stone corbels supports the pyramidal roof.

**Chancel.** General. Plinth continues only on the south wall of the chancel.

**North wall:** on this side it is aligned with the bell tower wall and is thus further out than the nave wall. It contains a square-headed doorway, and one pair of standard lights but with plain stops to the hoodmould.

**East wall:** a two-centred window has three, stepped, trefoiled lights with tracery above in the east wall. Two rectangular slits in the gable comparable with the west wall. An ordinary buttress supports the juncture of the chancel wall with that of the vestry.

**South wall:** a single trefoiled light but without stops to the hoodmould.

**South gable:** south wall contains a two-centred window with two trefoil-headed lights with a quatrefoil above, complex mouldings to the dressings, a hoodmould and relieving arch. The stone plinth is stepped up to sill level. Two longitudinal slits in apex and a dormer roof.

**Vestry.** General. Adjoins the north wall of the chancel, its exterior covered in ivy. The east wall has a single trefoiled light but lacks both the trefoil and the hoodmould stops of the other church windows, and the buttress as mentioned above. The north wall contains a square-headed entrance door and a pair of standard lights.

**South Porch.** General. Continuation of plinth. The south wall contains a two-centred doorway with stopped chamfers to the jambs and also engaged pillars with mouldings for the arch. The jambs rise from the plinth that runs round the building.

## Interior

**Porch.** General. An open archway at the front; red and black tiled floor; stone benches against the walls, and an arch-braced collar truss roof; there are three principal trusses and two intermediate trusses without bracing; the collars are moulded. In the north wall the entrance to the church is provided by a doorway with a large trefoiled head and over this a peaked hoodmould with a fleur-de-lys at the apex. A separate wooden-



framed gate with wire netting is immediately outside the main church door.

**Nave.** General. One step up from the porch, and with an internal wooden porch. Red and black tiled floor, flush wooden boarding under benches; carpeting disguises heating grilles. The unplastered walls of yellow brick incorporate red and black diapering, the splayed apertures have relieving arches and where there are paired lights, small ringed columns in black stone separate the apertures. Roof of twenty-one, close-set, arch-braced collars giving the false impression of a wagon ceiling; five are principals with moulded woodwork, and small decorative shields at the juncture of truss and wallplate.

**North wall:** One 20thC marble memorial, and a modern commemorative marble plaque to Richard Wilson (see also churchyard below).

**East wall:** a two-centred arch of two orders, the inner order rising from short engaged columns. This divides the nave from what might be classed as the choir. The wall above has fancy brick work, and tie plates are visible to either side of the arch.

**South wall:** two 20thC memorials, one of stone, the other marble..

**West wall:** engaged pillars in place of internal jambs to the west window aperture.

**Choir.** General. One step up from nave. Described here as a 'choir' because it has the appearance of a crossing with recesses to the north and south. That to the north holds the organ, and behind it is access to the vestry; that to the south used for choir stalls. Red and black tiles, some encaustic; walls as nave; flat roof formed by 9 wooden panels with moulded ribs. East arch similar to that dividing nave from choir. Tie rods join east and west walls on both north and south sides.

**Chancel and sanctuary.** General. Two steps up from choir and two more to altar. Bare walls as nave with diaper work. Separated from choir by two-centred sandstone arch; roof of four arch-braced collar trusses creating three bays, and two tiers of cusped windbraces.

**Vestry.** Concrete floor; bare walls; sloping wooden ceiling with ivy growing through it. An Incorporated Society for Building and Churches plaque refers to the rebuilding of 1884.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Based on Haslam with additions.

**Stoup:** large octagonal bowl; medieval, located against nave west wall. Possibly an early font rather than a stoup?

**Chair:** heavily ornamented but undated; in sanctuary.

**Benches:** two old benches in the vestry, and another in the sanctuary are undated. They could be 19thC or earlier.

**Table:** carved altar table with decorated flanges and moulded legs. Possibly 18thC if not earlier. In vestry.

**Bell:** inscribed 'Come away make no delay A.R. 1740'. A curious wheel on the bell-frame is solid and of four quarters.

19th and 20thC century furnishings and fittings include:

Organ: Grecian organ of c.1800.

Font: large octagonal bowl with decorated panels.

Reredos: carved stone from 1902.

Benefaction board: from 1883 in the vestry.

Monuments: i) marble memorial to Rev Thomas Lewis (d.1836) by J Carline, Salop. ii) modern marble memorial to Richard Wilson (1713-1782).

Stained glass: east window by Heaton, Butler and Bayne.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is of irregular shape, but appears to have been extended westwards at some point, the rectilinear form at that end, a giveaway. Some of it is level but the ground slopes away south to the road and a sudden dip to the east hints at an earlier oval shaped enclosure. The graveyard is overgrown.

Boundary: stone wall overgrown with ivy and holly bushes, and on the south-east acts mainly as a retaining wall.

Monuments: 19th and 20thC burials surround the church, including the north side. There are also several table tombs and ledgers of 18thC date on the south side, the earliest seen of 1761.

Earthworks: the churchyard is raised by 0.5m on the south, less than 1m on the north and east, but 3m-4m on the south-east above the adjacent farm. Within the churchyard is a scarp bank perhaps 0.6m which marks the old western perimeter of the yard.

Furniture: a slab set in the exterior face of the wall to the west of the gates records the birth of the Welsh artist Richard Wilson in the parish in 1713; his father was Rector of Penegoes. The slab and the modern entrance dates from 1970.

Ancillary features: on the south modern entrance gates and an adjoining slate stile give on to a tarmac path leading to the porch.

Vegetation: several old yews surround the churchyard, including several against the north all. There is a massive specimen at the south-east corner. Rhododendron bushes, probably from the 19thC.

Well: on the south side of the road opposite the church, a well known as St Cadfarch's Well, is said to have healing properties. The stone-lined well has been recently restored.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit 20 November 1995 and 18 September 1998

Eisel 1986, 191

Faculty Bangor (NLW)

Haslam 1979, 179

Lunt 1926, 471

Powys SMR

Quinquennial Reports 1986 and 1992



## CONDITION

The church is particularly damp on the north sides; the vestry west wall is completely green, and has ivy growing through the roof, but the roof has been reslated recently on the north side of the east end. Elsewhere, however, it is in poor condition.

## 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

## Pennant Melangell

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Melangell**PRN** 19470**NGR** SJ02422654

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### SUMMARY

St Melangell's church is a simple single-chamber structure with an eastern apse and western tower at the head of the Tanat Valley where, according to legend a nunnery was possibly founded in the late 8thC. The body of the church is medieval, with a 19thC tower and 18thC porch. It contains many objects of interest including a 12thC font, a 15thC rood screen with carvings of the legend of St Melangell, and the restored shrine to St Melangell, which is reputedly the earliest surviving Romanesque shrine in Northern Europe. It is without doubt the most thoroughly studied church in Montgomeryshire, and much further information can be gleaned from Montgomeryshire Collections for 1994.

### ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Main body of the church is probably originally of 12thC build, with many periods of rebuilding work including the 1876-7 restoration when the new tower was constructed. Subsequent restoration work in 1958 and rebuilding of the Cell-y-bedd to 12thC style during a thorough restoration of 1989-92.

12thC stonework survives at the south-east corner of the nave (between the porch and the narrower chancel), in the north wall west of the 19thC window, and the south doorway with in situ walling to either side of it is also thought to be 12thC.

15th to mid-17thC building work appears in the west wall of the nave, north wall of the chancel and parts of south wall of the nave around the chancel/nave divide and the east side of the porch.

Late 17th to 19thC rebuilding work shows in the south wall and the north-east corner of the chancel. The porch probably dates to 1737.

19thC stonework is visible where the windows were inserted in the north and south walls during the 1876-7 restoration and also throughout the tower.

### HISTORY

The church is dedicated to St Melangell, an early female saint possibly of the 8thC, who reputedly founded a nunnery on the site. Certainly the dedication, location and the morphology of the churchyard all point to an early medieval origin, and this has been confirmed by recent archaeological excavation.

It has been suggested that the church and shrine were perhaps built in stone on the earlier site by Rhirid Flaidd, who died in 1189. Excavation has revealed an earlier graveyard (and adjacent Bronze Age burials), together with some surviving elements of the 12thC structure and the font and shrine. This early church was constructed with water-worn local stone originally bonded with a weak mix of sandy clay with little or no lime. Sandstone dressings were used for the window and door openings. The eastern apse was constructed to house a prominent grave, reputedly that of Melangell. The apse was retained after the entrance from the chancel was blocked up, and was entered through a new door cut through the north wall of the apse though



this too was subsequently blocked. It eventually fell into disrepair and was replaced in 1751 by a square schoolroom and vestry.

The first written record of the church is in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, where, as 'Ecclesia de Pennant', it was valued at £1 6s 8d. Subsequently in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291, the combined value of the rectory and a vicarage was £14 3s 4d.

By the 13thC, the east wall of the chancel and the archway leading into the apse were decorated with wall paintings.

The church and shrine of St Melangell became a centre of pilgrimage and this was well established by the 15thC. Considerable rebuilding took place during that century. The arch-braced roof trusses with cusped struts in the nave, the three-light window with trefoiled heads later reset in the south wall and the rood screen all date to this period.

St Melangell's shrine was presumably demolished during the Reformation. Parts of the shrine were built into the lychgate and in the west and south walls of the church, which were restored before the end of the 17thC. Other fragments were later utilised in the south porch and the south side of the chancel.

The church appears to have been plastered in the late 16thC, when inscribed texts were painted on the north wall of the nave. The inscriptions were added to the east wall of the chancel and the lychgate by the mid-17thC.

At some point, perhaps in the 15thC, a new tower with a newel stair at its south-east corner and a timber belfry was added in typical Montgomeryshire style.

The north wall of the chancel bears a 1635 datestone with the initials 'T V W P' on the reverse side. The eastern end of the north wall appears to have been rebuilt at this date and the north-east corner repaired subsequently. A vertical break in the fabric midway along this wall suggests it was built in two stages. The dividing line ties in with the original position of the rood screen.

18thC restoration work is fairly well-documented in the vestry books. Work on the gallery in the 1720s suggests that the rood loft was removed from the screen, and the balustrade reused as the upper element of a partition across the west end of the nave. In 1720 a window was put into the north wall; this was opened up for a larger window in 1876-7. 1721 accounts refer to the making of a gallery window; this was probably the small window to the west of the porch, blocked up during the 1876-7 restoration. Restoration in the interior included the ceiling of the roof in 1730.

The north wall was used for ball games until the late 18thC/early 19thC and windows were presumably kept to a minimum.

Before the 1876-7 restoration work, the only other windows appear to have been the 15thC square-headed three-light window in the chancel south wall, the 1721 small gallery window west of the porch, and a larger window east of the porch replaced in 1876-7.

The 18thC porch bears a 1737 datestone with the names of Edward Madocks and David Thomas, churchwardens in that year. The south door may also have been replaced at this time; certainly the wooden lock is inscribed 'Given by E Madocks Esq 1737'. The wooden gates on the outer opening of the porch are inscribed 'S O' and 'E M' and bear the date 1763. The south wall of the chancel incorporates a stone inscribed 'E M D T' and was presumably built in the period, 1737-8. The wall included a priest's door to which a porch was later added. The door was replaced by a window during the 1876-7 restoration.

In 1751 the Cell-y-bedd was built, replacing the earlier apse. The fabric was new apart from a short stretch of walling on the north side which incorporated the blocked doorway. The large unhewn slate slab, traditionally marking the grave of St Melangell, was set in a cobbled floor above a stone-edged grave. The building was used as a vestry room until the 1830s and also as a schoolroom until the restoration of 1876-7.

Glynne visited Pennant in 1848 and noted the 'curious wooden gallery at the west end', briefly describing the carved woodwork.



Major restoration work took place in 1876-7, including the total rebuilding of the tower in similar style to the old one but taller and slightly larger in plan. A new window for the pulpit replaced the priest's door and new windows were inserted east and west of the porch with another in the north wall. The interior was refitted; open pitch pine benches replaced the old oak pews, the removal of the ceiling revealed 15thC timbers and several old wall paintings were uncovered but not preserved. The rood screen was left in its original place and the oak carving of St Melangell was placed in front of the west gallery. The 1791 reredos was replaced by a replica painted on wooden boards in 1886 and the north, east and south walls were decorated with stencil designs. Mural tablets were removed from the church, though some were subsequently replaced. The architect was Benjamin Lay of Welshpool.

Further restoration took place in 1958; the Cell-y-bedd was repaired and strengthened and excavations, prior to the new concrete floor being laid, revealed the foundations of an earlier apse and the large grave slab set in the cobbled floor with a stone-edged grave beneath it. The shrine was reconstructed and re-sited in the Cell-y-bedd. Minor restoration work took place in the interior.

Despite 1958 repairs, the church deteriorated and a major restoration programme was subsequently carried out from 1989. Plans included the re-ordering of the nave and chancel and rebuilding of the Cell-y-bedd in 12thC style.

Excavations by CPAT at this time included removal of ground build-up on the north side of church revealing graves, some of which underlay the church foundations; some were capped with quartz pebbles. There was evidence of seven building phases. Fragments of the 12thC wall were located north-west of the nave and eastern apse. The Cell-y-bedd was recorded and demolished. A doorway was revealed in the chancel wall and six or seven medieval floor layers were recorded in the apse. The large stone-covered grave, impossible to relate stratigraphically to the apse was assumed to be the grave of St Melangell. A second stone-covered grave was identified below the apse footings.

A programme of thorough restoration followed the excavation programme. New foundations were laid for the apse and the structure was built with three new sandstone lancets. The original opening from the chancel to the apse was made stable with a new sandstone arch and a completely rebuilt north jamb. The interior of the church was replastered in places and limewashed and a completely new concrete base was laid down throughout the nave, chancel and tower. The chancel ceiling was reconstructed to the design of the original. Concrete floors were laid throughout the building with new slate slabs for walkways and in the chancel. The screen was moved to the west to a position beneath the easternmost surviving 15thC roof truss and set on a low plinth. The beam and the traceried balustrade from the west gallery were moved in one piece and set between the walls in front of the chancel screen. Moving the gallery revealed the dressings of a 12thC lancet in the north wall. A new floor was laid in the loft. The shrine was rebuilt in the centre of the chancel using original fragments of carved stone. The 18thC altar rails were altered to facilitate access around the shrine. 19thC pews were fixed on new platforms, and the 18thC pulpit repaired. The 12thC font was re-sited near south door and set on a new stone plinth and 18thC panelling presumably from box pews was refixed in the nave. The small door set in the arch to the tower was removed and the ground floor of the tower refitted as a shop area. A new first floor was constructed for display purposes, with access by a new staircase on the north side. Finally the building was re-roofed.

The south side of the church was repointed in 1994.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel in one, an eastern apse, and at the west end a tower. The building is oriented slightly north of true east.

Fabrics: 'A' is of waterworn pebblestones, small to medium in size and irregularly coursed.

'B' is of medium to large grey and red slabs of sedimentary rock, often showing laminations; irregular coursing.

'C' is of slabs and some blocks of grey shale with occasional pebblestones, the size ranging from small to large; irregular coursing; the stone work cleaned but still showing some traces of limewash residue.



'D' is of irregularly sized grey shale with some pebblestones; well-dressed quoins; some coursing.

'E' is a modern version of 'A', i.e. pebblestones.

'F' is of large blocks of laminating (?)shale, with occasional pebblestones.

'A' is of the 12thC though subsequent restorations used similar material. 'B' is of 15thC to mid-17thC date.

'C' dates to the period from the late 17thC to the 19thC, and 'F' from 1737. 'D' dates to the restoration of 1876-7. 'E' is from 1989.

Roofs: slates with stone ridge tiles and the base of a cross finial at the east end. Black ceramic ridge tiles to the porch.

Drainage: modern guttering and downspouts. A trench is known to have been dug alongside the north wall in 1989, and two drainage trenches and sumps were dug in the churchyard to the north of the church.

## Exterior

Tower. General. Square two-storey tower constructed in the 19thC in 'D'; pyramidal roof is topped by a squat timber belfry with three louvred apertures on each side and an iron weathervane. There is a continuous basal plinth with a slate top about 0.05m above ground level. No external entrance.

North wall: no apertures; the stonework appears to be largely of one build with stone at the base perhaps reflecting differential weathering or cleaning.

East wall: apex of nave roof reaches almost to eaves level; no apertures.

South wall: at ground floor level is a square-headed slit window with sandstone dressings, and there is another in the second stage. Both have chamfered dressings of 19thC date. In the angle between the tower and nave is what is best described as a dwarf 'pyramidal buttress'.

West wall: the quoins at the base of the wall for 2-2.5m are different from those higher in the wall. Could this be indicative of some degree of masonry survival from the earlier tower? No apertures.

Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation. The north and south walls of the church are misaligned.

North wall: the masonry is 'A' at the west end and contains a small, single light with a round head and chamfered dressings: an original 12thC feature. Further east a new stretch of wall, outset by c.0.1m is in 'B' and is considered to be 17thC. High up in the wall near the juncture is a slab bearing the letters 'T V W P'. Heavy foundation slabs protrude at ground level, but beneath the chancel these give way to a battered base to be replaced at the north-east corner by a projecting foundation plinth. Lighting the east end of the nave is an 1876 restoration window of two trefoil-headed lights set in a square-headed frame. About 1.6m west of the north-east angle is a disconformity in the masonry, the wall beyond being set on a fractionally different alignment, though the whole face is classified as 'B'.

East wall (of the chancel): short sections of wall visible to either side of the apse. Large quoins at south-east corner, but no features. Masonry type uncertain.

South wall: in 'C'. Features from the east are: i) chancel wall has a plinth with coping of pinkish sandstone at a height of 0.3m above ground level and continuing as far west as v) below. ii) 15thC square-framed window with three trefoiled, two-centred lights in worn buff sandstone; repaired and re-set in 18thC 'C' masonry. iii) a two-light 1876-7 restoration window, square-headed in yellow-buff sandstone inserted into the 18thC wall in place of an earlier priest's door. A worn sandstone head is set in the wall above the 19thC window. iv) high up in the wall is a sandstone plaque with 'E M D T' inscribed on it. v) wall outset slightly marking the corner of an earlier building vi) a restoration-period window as iii) set in a stretch of walling in 'B'. vii) porch with evidence of masonry changes above it. viii) a further two-light window from 1876-7, this set in 'A'.



West wall: adjoins 19thC tower and only short lengths of it visible to north and south of the tower. In 'B' and mainly of late 16th to early 17thC build on 12thC foundations.

Apse. General. Constructed in 1989-92 restoration in 'E', local rounded rubblestone bonded with a lime mortar to match the 12thC build as closely as possible. Contains three modern round-headed windows in 12thC style.

South Porch. General. In fabric 'F'. Open porch with a datestone reading 'Edward Madocks. David Thomas 1737'.

East wall: the original small window in the wall was blocked in the 19thC.

South wall: has a round-headed entrance arch with freestone voussoirs and large quoins; original wooden gates. 1790 and 1876 slate slabs lean against the east wall.

West wall: as east wall.

## Interior

Porch. General. Red and black tiled floor; whitewashed walls with rough wooden benches to either side supported on low stone plinths, and a panelled and painted ceiling.

North wall: contains the south doorway to the church, round-headed with chamfered jambs and abaci, and a chamfered arch with simple pyramidal stops, and a chamfered hoodmould that fades into wall on the west side. The wall to the east of the arch is thicker than that to the west and the eastern jamb rises from the thickness of this wall, creating a small plinth on the outer side of the doorway; all the stonework is whitewashed.

Tower. General. One step up from the nave, the ground floor now converted into a shop. Modern slate slabbed floor. Modern wood panelled walls with original stonework visible above. Single slit window in south wall. Door on north side leads to modern dog-leg staircase to first floor display room.

First floor room: all stonework exposed but whitewashed and a single rectangular slit in the south wall and a small rectangular light high up in the east wall that looks into the church. Four east/west beams support the belfry; the inner two are supported on stone corbels, the outer two built into the side walls rest partly on timbers cutting across the corner angles; two north/south timbers appear to have been cut away leaving the stubs in the walls. Ceiling is plastered above. On the north wall a panel from 1886 with the Ten Commandments, Creed and Lord's Prayer in Welsh, previously forming the reredos above the altar. Access to the belfry via ladder and loft door.

Nave. General. New red and black tiles laid in aisles and reused coloured mosaic tiles around the font by the south door; raised planked floors under the benches. Plain panelled dado on north and south walls, but pew panels reused on the south wall to the west of the doorway. Above the walls are plastered and painted. 15thC roof with four trusses forming four bays, rising from the wall tops; moulded arch-braced collar trusses with cusped raking struts and exposed rafters and through purlins. A modern figure of Christ is attached to the most easterly truss above the rood loft.

North wall: features from the west are i) Henry Hughes memorial of 1733; ii) splayed window embrasure, round headed, the aperture dressings painted over, those of the window left bare; iii) wall inset for c.0.1m and the more easterly shows more of a batter; iv) datestone inscribed 'TVWP 1635' and left unpainted; vi) memorial stone of 1727.

East wall: rood screen and loft, now reconstructed, with modern wooden panelling rising up above the



screen and behind the truss and figure of Christ.

South wall: a slight batter to the wall; the south-west angle is filled in (where there was a chimney in the former vestry) and this supports the 'giant's rib' (see below). Two splayed window embrasures, the south doorway and a Benefactions board of 1779 sited above the font and to the west of the doorway.

West wall: a rudely constructed round-headed arch to tower with slabs on edge as voussoirs and also as quoins, though dressed stone at lower levels suggests the reconstruction of an earlier arch; late 16th-early 17thC. Above the arch is an 18thC Royal Arms.

Chancel. General. One step up from the nave. Stone flagged floor, plastered walls and a wagon ceiling consisting of large plastered panels with moulded oak ribs; beneath this are two tie-beams with raking struts forming three bays; each bay contains two rows of six panels; the wagon ceiling is modern but the tie-beam trusses are earlier though certainly post-medieval. In the centre of the room is the reconstructed Romanesque shrine with an altar in front of it.

North wall: neo-classical monument of 1746. Stone effigy of early 14thC origin against wall.

East wall: giving access to the apse is a round-headed inner archway of modern dressed stone set into an outer archway of slabs set on edge. Fragment of wall paintings to south of the arch.

South wall: Stone effigy of late 14thC against wall.

West wall: screen as noted above, and above this a large, conserved wall painting of the Creed etc, removed from the original east wall of the chancel during the 1989-92 restoration.

Apse. General. Two steps down from the chancel. A large and rough grave slab laid flat and to one side with a new cobbled surface laid around. Walls plastered and painted with three deeply splayed round-headed embrasures. Coved ceiling.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Note: full details are to be found in 'Montgomeryshire Collections' for 1994.

Font: plain tapering tub of sandstone with flat moulded bands at top and base and a filleted roll-moulding around the centre; set on a modern stone base. Attributed to the second half of the 12thC.

Rood Screen: of late 15thC date. 'In the dado, a row of six arches pierced with cinquefoils; segmental central arch with rough tracery and drop-cresting, and the eight side openings ogee-headed and richly foliated. Those on the north are dissimilar, those on the south all ogees. .... the parapet of the loft [included] a frieze ... carved with pretty Newtown-type foliage trails, and - quite exceptionally - with figures representing Brochwel, the huntsman blowing his horn (it stuck to his lips), Melangell with a crozier, the hare and some hounds' (Haslam). During the 1989-92 restoration, the surviving parts of the screen and the rood loft balcony were reunited about 3m to the west of their former position, and the screen repaired. For a full pre-restoration description see Crossley and Ridgway.

Romanesque shrine: 'a rare survival, and easily the most delicate piece of Romanesque architectural design and sculpture in Powys. It has been dated as early as 1160-70, and is of reddish sandstone. A relic chest the size of a coffin is raised on arches supported by four little columns and two half-columns with responds, and roofed with steeply pitched gables. Its west end is structurally joined to an altar of dressed stones, and the whole stands on a low plinth with a roll-moulding. Enough fragments were found immured in the church and lychgate walls for a reconstruction in 1958 by R. B. Heaton. The bases of the columns and of the capitals are ringed, and the latter's tops are cable-moulded. The cushion capitals are shallowly carved on the south with volutes, some interlacing, and one with fleurs-de-lys between. The south pilaster and the one old capital on the north have broad sinuous leaf forms. The twisted foliage is more exuberant again on the



spandrels of the arches, where it is arranged freely, and on the gables from which it projects as curious little leafed crockets. The face of the east gable is enriched with lyre-shapes ending in spirals, arranged in rows. These motifs appear to be very ancient, perhaps deriving from metalwork decoration. The west gable has a chevron pattern. The roof itself is of ashlar (Haslam). A further reconstruction of the shrine was completed in the 1989-92 and this is fully described by Britnell and Watson in 'Montgomeryshire Collections' for 1994.

Effigies: two recumbent effigies now sited on new bases on the north and south side of the chancel. Brought into the church during the 1876-7 restoration. i) Madog ab Iorwerth, c.1315: a young man dressed in a surcoat, his sword partly drawn, with the inscription '(HIC) CET MADDOC...' round the shield. ii) effigy, possibly of St Melangell, late 14thC: she wears the square head-dress of that period and a folded gown, round the waist of which two hares appear to be peeping. That suggested the identification. Both effigies have suffered from exposure to the weather' (Haslam).

Wall paintings: fragments from the medieval and 16-17thC. A painted panel recording the Creed, Ten Commandments and Lord's Prayer, all in Welsh and dating from 1791 was formerly above the altar and now on the west side of the chancel.

Monuments: i) slate memorial in wooden frame to ? dated 1727 and signed 'R Evans fecit'; ii) slate tablet to Henry Hughes (d.1733). ii) neo-classical marble monument with heraldry and putto to Henry Thomas (d.1746), John Thomas (d.1720) and others of the same family.

Chest: decorated panelled front. The side bears the inscription 'G I R P 1671', and appears to have been purchased for the church in 1815.

Pulpit: plain and panelled; inscription reads 'Evan Roberts 1722'.

Candelabrum: corona candelabrum in turned wood, inscribed 'Robert James CW 1733 Robert Jones'.

Royal Arms: Hanoverian and possibly George I (1714-27). Restored in 1992, and formerly on the north wall of the chancel.

Benefaction board: wooden with the names of the churchwardens from 1779; repainted in 1919.

Altar rails: 18thC or perhaps early 19thC date.

Church plate: includes 1729 flagon, 1740 chalice, 1738-9 silver Communion Cup.

Register: from 1680.

A curious relic, a whale bone, known as the 'giant's rib' - possibly the remains of a harp frame, located in the south-west corner of the nave.

19thC and later fittings and furnishings include:

Copy of the 1791 Ten Commandments painting, dated 1886, and formerly above the altar.

Bell: inscribed 'Loughborough Foundry' and dating to 1918. Two bells had been purchased from Gloucester in 1754.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard, sloping gently down from north to south, is roughly circular and lies within about 20 metres of Nant Ewyn.

Boundary: formed by a rough stone wall.



**Monuments:** there are no marked burials in the northern sector of the churchyard where the ground rises uphill, though excavations in 1989 revealed unmarked graves on this side. A detailed survey of the graves made in 1986 showed memorials from the 17th to the 20th century. The earliest marked grave date from 1619 and are located south and east of the chancel.

**Furniture:** the chamfered shaft of a medieval cross has broach stops at its base, and was used as the base for a sundial, though the gnomon has now been ripped off. The brass plate though inscribed is not obviously signed or dated, though there are graffiti on it. It is located amongst the graves on the south side of the church.

**Earthworks:** the church itself is set on a slight terrace, with the ground dropping away to the south. This might be a natural river terrace. The site of an earlier cockpit may be represented by a hollow depression to the north of the yew planted in 1978 (see below). A second cockpit was sited where there is now a parking area outside the lychgate.

**Ancillary features:** access to the churchyard via a lychgate and stile to the south-east with a gravel path to the church porch. The lychgate is probably late 16th/early 17thC, and the roof of purlins and rafters contains original timbers. It has monolithic stones supporting the corbelled arches on both sides, internal stone seats built into the side walls, and traces of a probably contemporary verse dating from the period 1550-1650 painted on the inner, south-east facing wall above the arch. Fragments of the shrine were removed from the lychgate in 1958. There is also a gate on the west side of the churchyard and the path to it was formerly known as Llwybr y Corph (corpse path).

**Vegetation:** six yews of considerable age encircle the church. The five trees on the south, east and west sides have girths of up to 4m and several are sited on raised mounds, perhaps resulting from clearance when grave digging. A low mound suggests the site of another yew in the north-western sector. The yew tree to the north of the church was planted in 1978 to commemorate the 1876-7 restoration work.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 3 March 1996 and 4 September 1998  
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Eisel 1986, 191  
Faculty: St Asaph (NLW): 1875  
Gresham 1968, 176; 244  
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Montgomeryshire Collections 1994  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR

## CONDITION

Church in good state of repair due to recent renovations.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Good

Value of documentary evidence: Good

Archaeological potential:

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Good



# Penrhos

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<b>Diocese</b>	St Asaph	<b>Dedication</b>	Holy Trinity
<b>PRN</b>	15856	<b>NGR</b>	SJ23671659

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## SUMMARY

Holy Trinity, Penrhos, lies about 6 miles to the north of Welshpool. Founded as a chapel of ease in 1625, the church was completely rebuilt in 1845, and the only fitting to survive is an 18thC memorial. The churchyard is flat and polygonal in shape.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Entirely rebuilt in 1845 in Early English style.

## HISTORY

A chapelry was founded at Penrhos in 1625. The first structure was built on the common waste, partly at the expense of Hugh Derwas of Penrhos Hall. A memorial of 1753 in the church records the building of this chapel of ease by Hugh Derwas and its dedication to the Holy Trinity.

The 17thC building was wooden-framed with a south porch and a western bell turret with a pyramidal roof rising above the nave. It was a chapelry attached to Llandrinio and was also known as Deytheur School parish church.

In 1844, the patron, William Ormsby Gore, undertook to pay £500 for taking down and effectively rebuilding the chapel at Penrhos. The new church was built to the design of Sidney Smirke of London and was opened in 1845.

The parochial history is dealt with fully by Roger Brown (1996).

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and slightly narrower chancel, a south porch, a towerlet off the north-west corner of the nave, and a north vestry. It is oriented west-south-west/east-north-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

**Fabric:** the single fabric is buff-coloured brick, regularly coursed, with yellow sandstone dressings.

**Roofs:** slates, ceramic ridge tiles and a cross finial at the east end of the chancel. Stone tiles on the tower.

**Drainage:** guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. No visible evidence of a drainage trench around the church.

**Note:** this 19thC building is described only in outline.

## Exterior

**Tower.** An octagonal towerlet, with a basal plinth at 0.5m, and a string course at a higher level continuing that of the west wall of the nave; a doorway on the west with a headstone dated 1845, three slit windows to the stair, and a tiered belfry with eight pointed-arch openings. This is surmounted by an octagonal roof.

**Nave.** General. A plinth at c.0.5m and a stringcourse below window level, though this is interrupted by the buttresses. Lancet windows, slightly recessed and of uniform appearance except where stated: they have ringed terracotta shafts, arches of rounded bricks and freestone sills. The north wall has three stepped buttresses and four single lancets, and there is a vestry annex at the eastern end; the south wall, three stepped buttresses, diagonal buttresses at both ends, and three single lancets; and the west wall has two lancets with a continuous hoodmould, complete with three head stops, and in the gable above these is a trefoil light in a large roundel.

**Chancel.** General. Narrower than the nave, but with a similar string course and plinth. The lancet windows have hoodmoulds and head-stops, except on the north side. The north wall has one ordinary buttress and an angle buttress at the north-east corner. Between is a pair of lancets. The east wall has the angle buttresses and a three-light window of stepped lancets with the hoodmould having four head stops. The south wall has a single buttress and two pairs of lancets.

**South porch.** General. A two-centred entrance archway on the south with a hoodmould and head stops. Plain east and west walls.

**Vestry.** General. Adjoining the north wall of church and part of the original build. Plinth as nave and chancel, a north wall with a pair of lancets, an east wall with a shouldered-arch doorway. Against the west wall is a lean-to boiler house in rough red brick, not part of 1845 church.

## Interior

**Porch.** General. Open porch. Tiled floor, benches along the sides, and a panelled roof. The south doorway of the church has a high two-centred arch.

**Tower.** General. Open to the belfry, the spiral staircase having been removed, though the joists are still visible in the walls. Red brick interior, and a stone slabbed floor. A pointed arch to the nave is bricked up.

**Nave.** General. Tiled floor, carpeted aisle, raised, boarded floors under benches. Plastered and painted walls, apertures narrowly splayed. Three arch-braced collar trusses with king posts and arcing struts, the braces springing from wall posts on wooden corbels; four bays with plastered ceiling above.

**North wall:** three lancets with diamond-leaded lights; two others behind the organ in the north-west corner, including one to the tower, are blocked.

**East wall:** has a high, two-centred arch with mouldings but no capitals; painted a deep blue. To the south of it a memorial tablet of 1817.

**South wall:** two-centred arch to the reveal of doorway.

**West wall:** has 19thC stained glass in the lancets.



Chancel. General. The same level as the nave but two steps up to the sanctuary. Tiled floor as nave, but sanctuary has some encaustic tiles in addition; raised boarding under choir stalls. Walls plastered and painted pale blue. Two arch-braced collar trusses with king posts, rising from wall posts on wooden corbels; three bays with plastered ceiling above.

North wall: vestry entrance through two-centred arch. Paired lancets with leaded lights, and two 19thC wall memorials.

East window: stained glass memorial windows inserted in 1900.

South wall: Two sets of paired lancets with leaded lights. One memorial of 1753.

Vestry. General. Red tiled floor, plastered walls and ceiling. Leaded lights in paired lancets.

### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Monument: to Elizabeth Lyster (d.1753), a descendant of Hugh Derwas of Penrhos. Grey marble tablet with pediment, and below it a separate heraldry plaque.

Registers: from 1695.

Plate: includes cup inscribed 'Ex dono J.L. DHE 1616' and a 1733 paten.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Wooden furnishings: carved oak lectern, oak reader's desk, communion rails, oak altar on a stone plinth, and two rows of high-backed oak benches (numbered).

Pulpit: in Bath stone, octagonal, on stone plinth with decorated panels of lancets with cinquefoil heads. Dated to 1878, replacing a three-decker from the 17thC chapel.

Font: stone, octagonal on a stone plinth. Modern wooden cover with alternating plain and latin cross panels.

Organ: originally installed in Bethel Chapel, Mount St., Welshpool. Made by Peter Connacher, Huddersfield.

Monuments: i) to Margaret Owen (d.1816), a white marble tablet with classical relief by J. Carline, Salop. ii) to John Owen of Penrhos Hall (d. 1823), classical marble tablet with heraldry by R. Milnes. iii) to Prudence Ryder (d.1817), housekeeper to John Owen, in stone. iv) brass memorial (d.1880) to the Rev. Samuel Whittaker.

### CHURCHYARD

A medium-sized polygonal enclosure, with the road curving around the north and west sides. A well kept graveyard.

Boundaries: fenced and hedged to the roadside boundary on north-west, and there is also a drainage ditch running along the west side of the churchyard. An old stone wall remains on the east and south sides, acting as a revetment wall on the south side.

Monuments: modern burials are located in the small graveyard extension on the east side. 19th and 20thC unmarked graves and stones laid flat are now grassed over in the main graveyard. The marked graves are well-spaced. A reasonable number of stones have been cleared to the southern boundary where they lean

against the wall. The earliest recorded was 1747 and there are a number of other 18thC examples, including an interesting group of sandstone markers probably by a single mason. Also a pair of stones with 'Memento Mori' and skull and cross bones, and '... Sic Vita' and hour glass (cf Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain).

Furniture: the pillar of a former sundial, no longer with its plate and gnomon, is located outside the south porch.

Earthworks: churchyard is raised by about 0.4m on the south, south-west and east.

Ancillary features: lychgate at northern entrance erected in 1921; an open timber porch, constructed on stone plinths. On the north-west, a single wooden gate set within dressed sandstone posts appears to be the original entrance. Tarmac paths.

Vegetation: three yews located to the south-west side of the church, near early and mid-19thC graves, and others around the western edge. Fir and beech trees on north-west roadsides.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1994  
CPAT Field Visit: 9 September 1995 and 5 March 1998  
Brown 1996  
Eisel 1986, 192  
Haslam 1979, 183  
Powys SMR  
St Asaph Parish Records (NLW)



## CONDITION

Chancel arch and chancel north wall have been freshly replastered around the vestry entrance, due to dampness. Damp patches on the west wall of nave and behind the organ on the north wall of the nave.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Medium

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium

# Penstrowed

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**Diocese** Bangor

**Dedication** Gwrhai

**PRN** 16392

**NGR** SO06959155

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## SUMMARY

St George's church, about two miles west of Newtown, is a small structure on the southern edge of the Severn valley which was completely rebuilt in 1863. The only fittings that certainly pre-date this work are a memorial of 1821 and a dis-used stoup. It is set in a small, rectangular churchyard, supposedly the site of a 6thC church.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A wholly Victorian church built in 1863.

## HISTORY

The church was reputedly founded around 520 by St Gwrhai who is said to be buried in the churchyard. The Ordnance Survey have transformed this to St George.

In the Norwich Taxation of 1254 'Ecclesia de Penestrewit' was valued at 5s.

Nothing appears to be recorded about the structure(s) that were here prior to the Victorian era.

The church was entirely rebuilt in 1863 though few details of the works are available.

## ARCHITECTURE

This small church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a south porch, north vestry and a western bellcote. It is oriented north-west/south-east but 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here for descriptive purposes.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of medium-sized blocks of quarry-cut, grey sedimentary rock, perhaps a siltstone, irregularly coursed; buff yellow sandstone dressings.

Roofs: slates, black ceramic ridge tiles; a now lost finial to the chancel.

Drainage: 19thC guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. No obvious drainage trench.

Note: as this is a wholly 19thC construction, the description below is a summary one only.

## Exterior



Nave and chancel. General. No external differentiation. All in fabric 'A', with sandstone quoins at the corners.

North wall: from the west end: i) a square-headed aperture containing three cusped, two-centred lights. ii) a central stepped buttress. iii) a window with a two-centred arch, two ogee-headed lights and tracery above. iv) the vestry.

East wall: there is a red sandstone basal plinth with chamfered top which is also continuous around the south wall. East window has a two-centred arch over three cusped lights with Y-tracery; hoodmould with vine leaf stops; wire mesh protection over the window.

South wall: basal plinth of red sandstone blocks. Two square-headed windows each containing three cusped two-centred lights and small lights in the spandrels. Between them a stepped buttress.

West wall: two-centred arch to the window with three cusped, two-centred lights and a central cinquefoil above. A stepped bellcote rises above the west gable, and contains apertures with two-centred arches on the east and west and hoodmoulds above; a single bell.

Vestry. General. Stone plinth c.0.3m high around the whole vestry; in the north wall is a splayed, two-centred arch over two cusped, two-centred lights with a small tracery light above.

Porch. General. Chamfered plinth is continuous from the nave. South entrance has a two-centred arch with hoodmould and leaf stops, and jambs that are chamfered with pyramid stops; above in the apex of the gable is a blind opening with a trefoil; a light over the arch. No windows in the side walls. Diagonal buttresses at the south-west and south-east corners.

## Interior

Porch. General. Red and black tiled floor; whitewashed walls with wooden benches to either side; plastered ceiling above exposed rafters and purlins. North wall (= south wall of the nave) contains the main doorway to the church with a moulded two-centred arch in red sandstone. There is no sign of wear and it is presumed to be 19thC, though elaborate and utilising a different type of stone from that of the windows.

Nave. General. Red and black tiled floor, carpet down the aisle and grilles above heating vents; raised planked floor supports benches. Walls plastered and painted blue, the masonry of the splayed window embrasures painted cream. Roof of five bays over the nave and chancel, formed by six arching scissor trusses springing from stone corbels carved with figures; ceiling is plastered above exposed rafters and purlins. At the west end is a raised wooden floor behind a wooden screen, all of 19thC origin.

North wall: one 19thC marble and one 20thC brass, together with a wooden First World War memorial.

South wall: marble memorial of 1821 and one modern brass.

West wall: window embrasure.

Chancel. General. No differentiation between the nave and chancel, while the sanctuary is raised by a single step; encaustic tiled floor; wooden flooring under the longitudinal choir stalls in chancel. Walls and roof as nave.

North wall: the two-centred arch to vestry has chamfered dressings.

East wall: window with painted inscription above. Decalogue boards to either side.

Vestry. General. Wooden floor, plastered walls and ceiling. Contains bellows for the organ.

### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Stoup: worn octagonal stone with shallow bowl in the top; no drain hole. On the floor at the rear of the church.

Plate: Elizabethan chalice and paten cover dating to 1575; no longer kept in church.

Register: from 1628.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Screen: at the west end consists of two panels to either side of two swing doors below a two-centred arch; the upper side panels are open squares with carved spandrels and the lower panels consist of round-headed arches; five arches to either side of the doors which themselves are arches. All 19thC.

Decalogue boards: two painted metal boards in wooden frames.

Stained glass: east window has stained glass as a memorial with painted lettering around the arch above. The west window in memory of one of the Herbert family (d.1840).

Monuments: i) white marble tablet on grey slate, with heraldry, to George Arthur Herbert (d.1821) by W. Cook, Birmingham. ii) to Rev John Herbert (d.1876), stone on marble by King of Bath.

Bell: inscribed '...Nig Prosperity...This Place...A..', presumably 'Bring prosperity to this place AR'. Undated.

### CHURCHYARD

A small rectangular churchyard set back off the main Newtown to Llanidloes road. Well maintained. A church hall is constructed in an extension at the north-west end.

Boundary: a stone wall on the south-west and south-east sides; a hedged boundary on the north-west and north-east.

Monuments: clearance in the 1970s, when many headstones were removed and placed along the inside of the south wall. There is a fairly even distribution of graves off the north and west sides, mainly 19thC slabs, some crosses and modern burials. Scattered chest tombs and family graves off the east side, including a chest tomb of 1805. Two large family graves adjoin the south wall.

Furniture: none noted.

Ancillary features: a pair of modern wrought iron gates with a single gate adjoining them provides access in the west corner; a gravel path leads to the south porch. A grass path leads to a small entrance gate in the south-east boundary for the former rectory.

Vegetation: line of three Irish yews south of the church; two stumps of older yews remain close to the south wall.

### SOURCES



CPAT Field Visit 31: January 1996 and 24 July 1998

Eisel 1986, 192

Haslam 1979, 183

Lunt 1926, 191

Powys SMR

Quinquennial Reports 1985 and 1990

## CONDITION

Church in good state of repair.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium to Good

Architectural potential: Very Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium



# Snead

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**Diocese** Hereford**Dedication** Mary the Virgin**PRN** 16390**NGR** SO31609189

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## SUMMARY

St Mary the Virgin is located in the small settlement of Snead, about 11 miles to the south-east of Welshpool and no more than a stone's throw from the English border. It is a small single-chambered building that appears to retain some medieval walling, though there was restoration and rebuilding in 1870 when the windows were replaced and the west wall reconstructed. Internally, there is a remarkable 12thC font and a 14thC/15thC sepulchral slab. The church is situated in an almost square raised churchyard beside the River Camlad.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church probably retains some medieval masonry in the east and south walls, but the fenestration is wholly 19thC, though in some cases perhaps faithful renewals. The voussoired north and south doorway embrasures at the west end of the nave are perhaps from the earlier church, though the arches themselves are completely renewed. The west wall is completely 19thC.

## HISTORY

Snead is the smallest parish in Montgomeryshire and belonged to the Manor of Chirbury in the 12thC. About 1190 Robert de Buthlers, Lord of Montgomery, founded a priory for Augustinian Canons at Snead, but this was removed to Chirbury at a date variously put at c.1195 and c.1227. In 1281 Edward I granted a licence for the canons to move back to Snead, but it appears that they remained at Chirbury until the Dissolution.

The foundation date of the church is not known, but a post-Conquest date seems certain. Its subsequent history and development are unknown.

The church was restored in 1870 by the Rev. Frederick Pardoe.

Further extensive restoration took place in 1998 and salvage recording was undertaken by Archaeological Investigations Ltd of Hereford.

## ARCHITECTURE

Snead is a single-chamber church, consisting of a short nave and disproportionately long chancel under a continuous roof line with a bellcote at the west end, and a vestry on the north side of the chancel. It is oriented almost exactly east to west.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of blocks and slabs of grey and greenish/grey sedimentary rock (perhaps a shale), rough but fairly homogeneous; irregular coursing. Dressings are in brown and olive-yellow sandstone. 'B' is a mix of slabs and blocks, some of irregular shape, of sedimentary stone (both sandstone and shale?),

generally weathered to grey.

'C' is of tidily cut slabs of grey shale, some coursing.

'B' and 'C' could be medieval, 'A' is Victorian.

Roofs: tiles with red ceramic, toothed ridge tiles. Cross finial at east end of chancel, and another on top of the bellcote.

Drainage: no obvious drainage trench around the building.

## Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Considered here as a single unit as there is no external differentiation. A heavy, rounded string course is continuous at a height of 1m on the north and west sides, continuing around the buttresses and the vestry. Beneath this the wall is battered. Two stepped buttresses against the west wall, two more on the long walls close to the west corners; all are in 'A' with dressings in pink sandstone, the bases with pronounced batters, but those to the west wall are considerably more sturdy than those elsewhere.

North wall: fabric 'A' with basal batter and string course. From the west the features are: i) buttress as described above. ii) two-centred arched doorway in greenish-yellow sandstone; hoodmould. 19thC dressings but perhaps the location of an early door? The batter stops short of the doorway on both sides but the string course runs up to the down curving hoodmould. iii) lighting the chancel is a two-centred window with a pair of cinquefoiled lights and a quatrefoil above; the hoodmould has a primitive head stop to the west (in similar stone), but nothing to the east, but there is another head, a little larger, above the apex of the window. While the window is solidly 19thC in its materials, the head stops are somewhat worn and certainly out of character with the head stops elsewhere on the building: they could be medieval. iv) vestry.

East wall: in fabric 'B', possibly incorporating some dressed blocks; and the base of the wall without a batter. East window has a two-centred arch, two cinquefoiled, ogee-headed lights and a quatrefoil tracery light above, and a hoodmould with simple stops, all renewed. There may have been a sandstone carved head above the peak of the arch as on the north wall, but this has eroded away.

South wall: constructed in heterogeneous masonry - some of this can be classed as 'B' and the basal courses are in 'C', but it is difficult to make any sense of the sequence. Features from east are: i) set high in the wall of the sanctuary a single cinquefoiled light in a two-centred arch, the dressings totally renewed in olive-yellow sandstone, but conceivably the position of an original window. ii) adjacent to but lower than i) are four courses of stone work protruding from the wall; their purpose is unclear - it has been suggested that they might be key stones of a lost extension to the south, or the remnants of a flying buttress, neither of which seems wholly convincing. iii) mid-way along the wall is a corbelled sill with four courses of protruding stonework above it; purpose unclear. iv) immediately above it are two dressed stones, perhaps window jambs though not necessarily in their original position and it is difficult to see how iii) and iv) might be associated. v) a two-centred window in brown sandstone comparable with that on north side; the hoodmould has Victorian head stops. vi) at the west end is a doorway with a two-centred arch in mixed brown and olive-yellow sandstone, of Victorian date, replacing an earlier entrance. vii) buttress as described above.

West wall: all in fabric 'A'. A two-light window similar to those in the north and south walls; hoodmould with head stops. Dressings of window in brown sandstone with more recent grey sandstone for the heads. Buttresses to either side of the window (see above).

Above the gable is a stepped bellcote in fabric 'A', with two string courses beneath. Two apertures with cinquefoiled tops and a quatrefoil above are set in a two-centred arch; the wood framing for the bells is visible, but the bells themselves are in the church.

Vestry. General. Adjoins the north wall of the chancel. Entirely in fabric 'A'. Brown sandstone used for the



cusped lights in the east and west walls.

### Interior

**Nave.** General. Flagged floor with raised planks under two rows of benches. Walls unplastered with all stonework exposed. This is uninformative about the sequence of development, though the base of the north wall does appear to be in 'C'. Deeply splayed window apertures. Seven arch-braced collar trusses creating six bays (including chancel); four intermediate collar trusses in each bay, and exposed rafters and through purlins with bosses at collar/purlin intersections. It appears to be wholly of Victorian date.

**North wall:** slightly peaked arch over recess for north-west doorway with slabs for voussoirs. The reveal is slightly splayed but only on west side.

**East wall:** 19thC screen and two steps up to chancel.

**South wall:** peaked arch to south door similar in its voussoirs to its northern counterpart, but the reveal not splayed.

**West wall:** a 19thC clock affixed to wall north of the window.

**Chancel.** General. Two steps up from nave, two staggered steps to the sanctuary, one to the altar. 19thC encaustic tiled floor. Walls as nave. Roof described above, with the addition of stencilled foliage decoration on some of the plaster between the rafters. The date of this decoration is uncertain.

**North wall:** a brass plate records the 1870 restoration work in memory of Emma Pardoe, wife of the vicar. Two-centred arched doorway to vestry. An aumbrey with cinquefoil tracery to the niche, probably copying the piscina opposite.

**East wall:** the dressings of the window reveal appear to be earlier than those of the Victorian windows in the nave.

**South wall:** has a piscina set under a cinquefoiled arch, which could be the re-used head of a window, though the edges do not appear particularly weathered. One 20thC marble memorial. Dressings of the window reveal similar to those in the east wall.

**Vestry.** General. Stone flagged floor. Sloping roof with exposed rafters and purlins and lath and plasterwork visible above. Entrance from the chancel through peaked arch. Affixed to south wall is a 1747 memorial tablet.

### FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

**Font:** the circular font has two horned, handle-like projections and four lobes around the bowl, and around the stem four pillars with kings' heads carved at their tops. Haslam suggests a 12thC date. On a modern circular base.

**Sepulchral slab:** upper part of a slab with an incised floriate head within a circle. Attributed to the late 14thC/early 15thC. In the vestry beneath the chest.

**Chest:** undated, dug-out chest now in the vestry.

**Memorial:** stone tablet to Thomas Pritchard, rector (d.1747), in Latin.

**Bells:** now at west end of church by the font. One inscribed '...Henry Speak....Hwarden 1697', the other

'...Henry Speake Church....en 1697..' Both the work of Ellis Hughes of Shrewsbury.

Registers: from 1616.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Octagonal carved oak pulpit, reading desk and screen all 19thC, and of similar material.

Screen: of three panels to either side of a central doorway with 'IHS' above. All panels contain trefoil-headed tracery with quatrefoils in the spandrels. Fleur-de-lys over cornice with Tudor rose detail.

Monuments: small brass to Samuel Simmons (d.1845) and other members of the same family. Also two 20thC brasses, and one wall tablet.

## CHURCHYARD

A square churchyard raised above the fields on all sides, and approached by a path.

Boundary: churchyard is surrounded by a rubblestone revetment wall, and a ditch on the north and east sides.

Memorials: isolated graves on all sides, mainly of 19thC date. The earliest gravestone to John Edmund (d.1739) was found during the 1998 archaeological salvage work.

Furniture: nothing noted.

Earthworks: the churchyard is raised by 1m or so on the north, south and east, and less on the west where there is internal banking in the churchyard. The salvage work in 1998 revealed that the levelled ground on which the church stands had been deliberately raised to create a platform.

Ancillary features: a north entrance consists of a pair of wrought iron gates supported on stone pillars. Grass path leads from north gates to the south door.

Vegetation: several yew trees, of no great age, but a mature yew at the east end of the church.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings for Churchstoke Community: 1996

Church guide n.d.

CPAT Field Visit: 5 February 1996 and 4 June 1998

Eisel 1986, 193

Hadcock and Knowles 1971, 143

Haslam 1979, 197

Hereford Parish Records

Powys SMR

RCAHMW 1911, 170

Williams 1998 (Archaeological Salvage Report)



## CONDITION

Restoration work in 1998 has improved the condition considerably, though there are still some external cracks.

## 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: Medium

Group value: Poor

# Trefeglwys

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**Diocese** Bangor

**Dedication** Michael

**PRN** 16964

**NGR** SN97049061

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## SUMMARY

St Michael's church in Trefeglwys, 9 miles to the west of Newtown, was founded in the 12thC but the present building dates only from 1863-5. The timber bell frame and supports (perhaps of the 17thC) were retained from the earlier church, as was a 15thC bell. But otherwise none of the early furnishings and fittings have been preserved. The building is set in a large, low-lying, sub-rectangular churchyard, with memorials from the late 18thC.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

A Victorian rebuilding in 1863-5, though some earlier masonry re-used.

## HISTORY

The church was founded by Bleddrws in the second quarter of the 12thC, when it was referred to as a 'monasterium', perhaps indicating some monastic link. It has been suggested that an earlier cemetery perhaps existed on the site prior to the foundation of the church and that the churchyard was enlarged to enhance the status of the new church.

It was subsequently granted to the Augustinian Abbey of Haughmond, probably just before 1150.

The church is recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as 'Ecclesia de Treveglos' at a value of 13s 4d.

The church was rebuilt on the foundations of the old church by Poundley and Walker in 1864-5. The Perpendicular east window was retained, as were the old (reputedly 17thC) oak posts that support the turret.

Considerable work at the west end of the church was required in 1932. The west wall was presumably rebuilt at this time and the bell-turret was much renewed.

Further restoration took place in 1970.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a nave with a bell turret over the western end, a narrower chancel and a north-western porch. It is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purpose of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted.

Fabric 'A' consists of medium-sized blocks of quarry-cut grey sedimentary rock, perhaps a siltstone, some with quartz veins; irregular coursing; large blocks selected for quoins. Red and yellow sandstone dressings for architectural features.



'B' is similar to 'A' but in less regular masonry with some large pebblestones and some smaller, irregular lumps of stone as well as very infrequent lumps of red sandstone; occasional traces of limewash; irregular coursing.

'A' and 'B' are both restoration-period fabrics, but the latter incorporates re-used stone.

Roofs: slates, black ceramic toothed ridge tiles, and a metal cross finial to the east end of nave. Broken finial to chancel.

Drainage: Modern guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Hints of a gully on the north and south sides of the building.

Note: the church was completely rebuilt in the 19thC, what follows is thus a summary description.

## Exterior

Bell turret. General. Square wooden turret rises from the nave roof at the west end. Four louvred apertures with unconventional cusped heads on each side; pyramidal slate roof topped by a metal cross.

Porch. General. Completely of stone with a high, sharply angled roof line. Two-centred sandstone arch on large Corinthian shafts and capitals; the outer order to the arch formed of alternating red and yellow sandstone voussoirs. Small, cusped, two-centred windows in the side walls. Angle buttresses with some decoration at north-west and north-east corners.

Nave. General. All in 'A'.

North wall: in 'A', but the north-west angle could be rebuilt. Four windows, alternating single and paired two-centred lights with plate tracery above. Each set under a two-centred arch of alternating red and yellow sandstone dressings. Two buttresses, one at the extreme east end of the nave which is more elaborately decorated, the other to the west of two of the windows. West of the porch is a single-light window.

South wall: in 'B'. The fenestration as the north wall with alternating paired and single lights. Three stepped buttresses.

West wall: gable end is completely slated (reportedly around 1987) and there is a concrete basal plinth. In 1932 the wall was reportedly rebuilt with a lancet window in it. Previously there had been a circular window.

Chancel. General. North wall in 'A', the east and south walls in 'B'. Fractionally narrower and lower than the nave. Also a more decorative finish.

North wall: two windows set below dormers which have grotesque gargoyles protruding from the base at either side. Both windows have a single cusped light with a quatrefoil in plate tracery above it; ringed shafts (termed nook shafts by Haslam) have small capitals supporting the two-centred arch of alternating red and yellow sandstone voussoirs.

East wall: largely in 'B'. Victorian window in Perpendicular style; a two-centred arch with three cinquefoiled, two-centred lights and panel tracery above; there is a hoodmould with head stops, and above this a relieving arch of voussoirs in pink sandstone.

South wall: fenestration and dormers as on the north side but the gargoyles are replaced by plain large sandstone blocks which support the guttering.

## Interior

Porch. General. Two steps up from the path. Red and black tiled floor. Walls plastered and painted with wooden benches to either side. Ceiling plastered above the six scissor trusses. In the south wall a plain two-centred arch, also painted, with chamfers terminating in arrow stops.

West end. General. North door of the church leads into a 'hallway' with plastered walls and a red and black tiled floor. A brick wall, now plastered, forms a division with the nave to the east, and plaster board divides the vestry at the south end from this hallway. Access to the base of the bell turret through a large door on the west side of the hallway. A pair of double doors in a square-headed wooden frame lead east into the nave. On the south wall above the entrance to the vestry is a wooden Benefaction board.

Four large oak upright timbers support the bell-turret frame which is variously claimed to be medieval or 17thC in date.

Storage room. Formerly a school room and is now used for bell ringing and for storage. Carpeted floor; whitewashed walls on west and north with a brick fireplace in west wall; massive timber joists to the ceiling. Two massive upright timbers support the bell turret, both with chamfered edges. One slab - a gravemarker for Mary Jones (d.1844) rests against the south wall. A chest against the north wall.

Vestry. General. In the south-west corner of the church. It has a modern tiled floor, plastered walls and a lowered timber ceiling. The remaining two timber bell-turret supports are here but one of them is a replacement. On a window sill an Incorporated Church Building Society plaque recording grants in 1863 and 1932.

Nave. General. Red and black tiles, with central aisle carpeted and heating vent grilles beneath; a raised wooden floor supports benches. Walls plastered and painted. Roof of four arch-braced collar trusses with king and arcing struts; intermediate trusses with collars and king struts; rafters and through purlins.

North wall: one memorial of 1809/1811.

East wall: a two-centred chancel arch, with ringed shafts and 'capitals carved with oak leaves, ears of corn, and two doves by Griffiths of Chester' (Haslam), the doves painted blue. The carvings on this arch are the only decorative features in an otherwise very plain church.

South wall: one memorial of 1816 to 1837.

West wall: a two-centred arch in the rear partition gives access to the vestry.

Chancel. General. Narrower than the nave, accessed by two steps. Stepped sanctuary and one to the altar. 19thC tiled floor including encaustic tiles in the sanctuary, and longitudinal choir stalls. Walls plastered and painted. The roof has three bays formed by three arch-braced collar trusses with king struts reaching to shorter collars above. There is a fourth plain truss with a single collar against the west wall.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Chest: plain, undated.

Register: from 1623.

Bells: of the three bells one is of 1827, a second dating from 1660, with two rows of decoration, was cast by Thomas Clibury II of Wellington, and the third is inscribed 'Sancta Mikel Ora Pro nobis' and is believed to be



a mid-15thC Worcester bell by Richard le Belytere.

19thC furnishings and fittings include:

Benefactions board: wooden, undated but perhaps 18thC or early 19thC.

Monuments: i) Valentine Ashton (d.1816), of stone in a wooden frame. ii) Richard Evans (d.1819) in marble on stone, and signed D K. iii) Henry Humphreys (d.1824). iv) Evan Woosnam (d.1837) by J Carline, Salop, marble in an ornamental stone frame. v) Nicholas Bennett (d.1847).

## CHURCHYARD

Trefeglwys churchyard is a large sub-rectangular enclosure of about 1.6 acres (0.65 hectares). The ground slopes down in the northern half of the churchyard but the church is sited on level ground on the south side of the yard. It is on the valley floor and a fluctuating water table creates problems for the church building.

Boundary: a stone wall on the north-west and south-west sides where the yard is edged by the road. On the south-east, north-east and part of the south-west it is hedged. On the south side it is embanked internally.

Monuments: all the burials are located on the north and west sides, where there is an even distribution of mainly 19thC graves; mainly slabs, some chests and railed graves and pillars. The earliest seen, near the west entrance, was a chest tomb to John Jones (d.1769) by T. Williams, and there are a few other late 18thC memorials. Modern burials are located on the west side. There is no evidence to suggest that there were ever any burials to the south and east of the church.

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: the church is set astride a very low platform, visible from most sides except the south. The external ground level is higher than the churchyard on the south-west and north-west.

Ancillary features: a pair of wrought iron gates are placed in from the north corner and a single gate is set in the west corner. Tarmac paths lead up to the north porch. A modern metal farm gate forms a recent entrance in the south-west corner with a new gravel path to the north porch.

Vegetation: five mature yew trees are sited around the north-west and south-west boundaries and a single mature yew is located outside the north porch.

## SOURCES

CPAT Field Visit: 31 January 1996 and 24 July 1998

Eisel 1986, 193

Haslam 1979, 198

Lunt 1926, 191

NMR Aberystwyth

Parish Records (NLW) 1932: restoration

Powys SMR

Pryce 1993, 33

Quinquennial Reports of 1990 and 1994

## CONDITION

Church exterior in good condition all round. Nave interior south wall shows signs of damp, particularly around the central windows where plaster is peeling.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Very Poor

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium



# Tregynon

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**Diocese** St Asaph

**Dedication** Cynon

**PRN** 32492

**NGR** SO09599872

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## SUMMARY

St Cynon's church, nearly 10 miles south-west of Welshpool, is a single-chambered structure which was largely rebuilt at the end of the 18thC, though there is a completely renewed 14thC south doorway and the roof retains its 15thC style as well as some of its timberwork. A timber bell turret at the western end contains original timbers that may be 17thC. Internally, little of pre-19thC date, other than a couple of memorials, survived the rebuilding and the subsequent restoration in 1893. The church occupies a raised curvilinear churchyard and this together with the dedication indicates an early medieval foundation.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The present building is believed to date from 1787 with additions from 1893. It has been suggested that the simple plan is basically of the 13thC. There is no structural detail which can definitely be attributed to this date, though the completely renewed south doorway is thought to have originated in the 14thC. And if there is any surviving masonry of the period it is not recognisable. The fabric, however, is not straightforward and might be complicated by re-use in the 18thC. The bell turret was perhaps added in the 17thC.

## HISTORY

The church is dedicated to St Cynon, a 6thC missionary from Brittany, and this suggests an early medieval foundation, a view strengthened by the morphology of the churchyard and possibly the location.

At the end of the 12thC or early in the 13thC, Tregynon was given by a local Welsh lord to the Knights Hospitallers. A moiety of the church was recorded as being in their possession in the Norwich Taxation of 1254. The entry reads: 'medietas ecclesie de Tref-kenon; alia medietas ad Hospicium'. By the time of the Lincoln Taxation in 1291 the whole church of 'Treskeno' had been appropriated to the Hospitallers. In the Valor Ecclesiasticus in 1535 it was known as 'Trigumon'.

After the Reformation, the advowson passed to the local lords of the manor at Gregynog, the Blayney family. The last, Arthur Blayney, remodelled the church before he died in 1795. His tomb is on the north side of the churchyard and the weathervane on the bell turret is inscribed 'A B 1787'.

The 18thC church had a western gallery erected in 1771; at the same time a vestry was created in the ground floor of the tower and the old rood loft was removed. A barrel-vaulted ceiling was inserted disguising the medieval roof timbers.

It was suggested by Owen that during restoration work in 1787, the walls were largely rebuilt. Certainly new windows with wooden frames were introduced, and at some stage a small enclosed brick-built porch was added.

Further restoration occurred in around 1893 under the guidance of the local estate agent, William Scott Owen. The roof was repaired and re-slatted, and this included the introduction of windbraces and panelling.

The old pews were removed, the floors concreted and tiled replacing flag stones; new windows in Perpendicular style were introduced in the south and east walls, and the stained glass in the latter was made by Clayton and Bell in 1875 for Street's church at Helperthorpe, East Riding (though Thomas claims it was for Sledmere in the same county) and brought to Tregynon by Lord Sudeley in the 1880s. The original south doorway was uncovered and restored, and a fragment of a post-medieval painted text was uncovered but not retained. All the woodwork was prepared by Henry Corfield. The appearance of the single-chambered structure is largely the result of this restoration. Owen also posited on the basis of his observations at this time that the church had been extended westwards in the medieval period. He cited as evidence the plainer roof trusses at the east end of the church which represented the older church, and he noted too that there was a juncture in the masonry revealed when the plaster was stripped from the walls which matched the change in the roof style.

An organ chamber extension was built on to the north wall in c.1898.

The pyramidal tower was re-roofed about 1990.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a nave and chancel in one, a south porch and a western bell turret. It is oriented slightly north of true east.

Fabrics: 'A' is of medium-sized, irregular blocks of grey and brown sandstone, and occasional pebblestones; random coursing; some indications of either render or limewash; very occasional use of red sandstone for quoins.

'B' is of dressed, medium-sized, grey sandstone blocks.

'A' is thought to date to the 1787 rebuilding. 'B' is from 1893 and was used for the porch, stepped buttresses and the east wall.

Roofs: slates, red ceramic ridge tiles and a cross finial on the east gable of the chancel and also on the porch.

Drainage: guttering and downspouts lead to soakaways. Original 'Coalbrookdale' cast iron downspouts to either side of the south entrance porch. Possible traces of a trench along the north side.

## Exterior

Bell Turret. General. Rises above the west end of the nave, and consists of a two-tiered turret, with weatherboarding below the louvred openings; on the south face is a single, wooden, ogee-headed window with cinquefoil tracery above a large rectangular wooden sundial with Roman numerals. Above is a pyramidal roof with a weathervane inscribed 'AB 1787'.

Nave and chancel. General. In fabric 'A' with signs of earlier limewash, but very heavy pointing as well.

North wall: no windows. A single buttress towards the east end of the nave has red sandstone coping stones, and a second buttress near the east end of the chancel wall. Against the wall is a boiler house from the 1940s, its entrance at ground level. A chimney encased in concrete runs up the north wall. Further east the organ chamber extension from the late 19thC occupies most of the wall.

East wall: has a basal splay at the south-east corner to a height of 0.3m, but then fades out further north; there are also worn red quoinstones in this corner. At a height of 2m the wall is inset by 0.1m, and the fabric changes though slightly. Conceivably, the upper part which contains the large east window was rebuilt in 1893. The window has a four-centred arch, hollow chamfers, five, stepped, ogee-headed lights and panel tracery; over it a relieving arch of voussoirs.



South wall: features from the west are: i) memorial stone to Rev. Morgan Richards (d.1786) and others; ii) a datestone in grey sandstone inscribed '\*T\*S 1693\*' located 1.2m above ground level. iii) a single square-headed 19thC window in red sandstone with a cinquefoil-traceried, two-centred light and a label; iv) porch. v) three square-headed windows each with three traceried lights, but otherwise comparable in form and material to iii). vi) east of the porch are four standard buttresses, one of which may mark the junction of nave and chancel. The masonry in this wall is fairly homogeneous but at the west end there are more red sandstone lumps than elsewhere, and it is just possible that some of these and perhaps the 1693 datestone are the infilling of an aperture, partly behind the Richards memorial.

West wall: of 18thC build with worn sandstone quoins. There is also a basal plinth no more than 0.1m wide and 0.1m high, but this does not run as far as either corner. Two unusually large yellow sandstone blocks have been set in the masonry at window level suggesting perhaps replacements for joists. A low plinth protrudes above the level of the modern path, towards the south end. There is a central rectangular window with three lights set in a frame, all of wood - this must be 18thC. Several courses above it is a relieving arch, though the two are not quite symmetrical to each other.

Porch. General. Low stone walls in fabric 'B' topped by chamfered pink sandstone, with an open wooden superstructure. The south entrance has a wooden battlemented tie beam with the inscription 'Enter Ye in at the Strait Gate', and a king post above.

#### Interior

Porch. General. Concrete floor. Other than the king-post truss, the roof comprises just exposed rafters and through purlins.

North wall: = south wall of nave. Contains a two-centred doorway with a roll moulding and stops; all of the dressings are renewed.

Vestry. General. West end of the nave is partitioned off to form the vestry, a modification it seems of the 18thC. Floor is raised by one step and tiled. Limewashed walls, but only the eastern one is plastered. Two bays of the 15thC roof for which see below under nave, though here the windbraces (restricted to the bottom half-tier) and purlins are unstained.

The frame for the bell turret rises from the ground floor- there are massive cross-braced oak uprights with chamfered edges, set in timber sills mounted on stone plinths, on the north, south and west sides. The stonework shows signs of concrete patching and the cross-bracing has earlier lap joints, suggesting that the tower has been moved at some point. Some bracing may also have been removed from the eastern side of the frame. On the north side an open staircase leads from the first floor only, and the bell itself is fixed to a timber wheel and an oak frame of medieval date which has king posts and main braces.

North wall: no features.

East wall: two of the oak uprights for the tower integrated with tongue and groove panelling to form a partition with the nave. Set in this is a two-centred arched doorway to the nave.

South wall: no features.

West wall: window embrasure at first floor level has segmental head.

Nave. General. 19thC tiled floor, some encaustic, with flush wooden flooring under benches. Heating grille in central aisle. All walls plastered and painted above the level of the dado panelling; fenestration has widely splayed apertures with exposed red sandstone jambs. Roof of eight bays extending across nave and chancel is of 15thC design: there are arched-braced collar trusses, the five more westerly ones with raking

struts; one and a half tiers of cusped windbraces, which were mostly renewed and also stained in 1893; moulded cornices and shields at the termination of each arch brace on the level of the wall plate.

North wall: plaster above dado. Two memorials, one the 1796 Blayney memorial, the other of 1812.

East wall: the only division is a single step.

South wall: plaster above dado. At the south door reveal the dressed stone used at the edges is relatively rough in contrast to those edging the arch of the reveal; some might be early.

West wall: wood panelling, plastered over, separates nave from the vestry. The large Blayney memorial is to the north side of door.

Chancel. General. One step up from nave, two staggered steps to the sanctuary, and one to the altar. Floor, walls and roof as described under the nave, but more encaustic tiles.

North wall: organ set in recess. One 20thC brass memorial.

East wall: painted, stencil-patterned walls including alternating Crown and IHS, and floral motifs around the reredos. 'King of Kings, Lord of Lords' inscription.

South wall: piscina under cusped arch.

## FURNISHING and FITTINGS

Details based on Haslam with additions.

Monuments: (i) large monument all in wood; an oval tablet surrounded by painted putti, and set between marbled pilasters and an entablature with urns and heraldry, to members of the Blayney family of Gregynog, including David Blayney (d.1709). (ii) marble memorial to Arthur Blayney (d.1795) by J. Bacon, London in 1796, decorated with scrolls, cornucopiae, and a seated mourning lady, in profile, with, on her lap, a little nest containing a pelican in her piety. Above this an urn. Formerly on the east wall of the chancel. iii) stone tablet, on the outside wall, to Rev Morgan Richards (d.1786) and family, with urn.

Church plate: 1731 pewter flagon, silver chalices from 1770 and 1847 and a paten also from 1847.

Register: from 1664.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Reredos: alabaster statuettes under canopies, a 1901 donation by Lady Joicey.

Stained glass: (information derived from Haslam) east window by Clayton and Bell, the glass from Lord Sudeley's house at Toddington, Gloucester between 1891 and 1893; depicts saints and Twelve Apostles with their emblems. Chancel south window inserted in 1922 and designed by Leonard Walker, c. 1921, a memorial to William Scott Owen of Cefn Gwyddfod.

Monuments: 1812 marble memorial to Thomas Colley (d.1812), with urn.

Font: octagonal stone font. The original font, according to Thomas, had been adapted as a kitchen sink, but was then transferred to the rectory garden. It is believed to still be there.

Bell: recast of 1795 by John Warner and Sons, London 1877.



## CHURCHYARD

The raised churchyard, perhaps originally sub-oval, is located on the edge of the valley of the Bechan Brook. It now has a very obvious extension to the north-west which is used for modern burials. The church is set on flattish ground but the graveyard itself slopes gently to south and east. It is well-maintained.

Boundary: to the south and south-east there is a revetment wall above the road, surmounted by a hedge. On the west the boundary wall, c.1.4m high, is a very early example of the experimental use of concrete from the 1870-80s. A hedge bounds the northern perimeter, changing to a fence immediately to the north of the church.

Monuments: mainly 19thC graves. A 1777 gravestone to the south-east of the chancel and two 1762 graves beneath the yews on the south side. Early memorials on the north side include the tomb of Arthur Blaney (d.1795).

Furniture: none noted.

Earthworks: some minor earthworks, and undulations to the west of the church. A very faint scarp indicates the earlier line of the churchyard boundary on the north-west side.

Ancillary features: an entrance on the south-west is provided by a pair of wrought iron gates set in the boundary wall with an arch and lamp above. The south-east entrance has a single gate, arch and lamp; steps up to the churchyard. Concrete paths to south porch.

Vegetation: several yew trees, mostly immature. Beech trees on northern boundary. A 1791 terrier refers to eleven fir and four yews planted in the churchyard.

## SOURCES

Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1997  
CPAT Field Visit: 12 October 1995 and 4 June 1998  
Eisel 1986, 194  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1893: restoration  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1901: reredos  
Guy, J.R. (n.d.) Tregynon Church: notes for visitors  
Haslam 1979, 200  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Owen 1897-8  
Powys SMR  
Thomas 1908, 549

## CONDITION

Dampness on nave north wall only.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Good

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Very Poor

Value of documentary evidence: Poor

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Poor

Group value: Poor to Medium



# Trelystan

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**Diocese** Hereford**Dedication** Mary**PRN** 16965**NGR** SJ26360395

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## SUMMARY

St Mary's church, in an isolated location on the south end of Long Mountain about 3 miles to the south-east of Welshpool, is a single-chambered building and the only early, completely timber-built church in Wales. The recorded history of the church goes back to the early 11thC, but the first use of the site is thought to be even earlier. The original 15thC timber frame survives, although repaired and now encased in 19thC brick and timber, and it retains its 15thC arch-braced roof. Its rectilinear churchyard may have had a curvilinear predecessor.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Church is encased in 19thC heavy timber studded framing with brickwork now painted white, giving a black and white appearance. The frame stands on a stone plinth and the 19thC windows and door are all of timber, but the structure of the original church reportedly remains intact.

Much of the interior is also a result of the 1856 restoration.

## HISTORY

The recorded history of the site goes back to Edelstan the Renowned who died in 1010 and was buried in 'Chappel Trest Elestan'. In Domesday Book it appears as 'Ulestanesmunde' in the Hundred of 'Witenrau'. The name underwent many changes but was eventually mapped as Treleston in 1577.

It has been suggested, though on what authority is unclear, that the church was acquired by the Cistercian monastery of Strata Marcella in the 13thC. That the adjoining land known as Monks Field was acquired in 1229 seems not to be in doubt. It is assumed that an early wattle and daub structure was replaced by a timber-frame building in the 15thC.

From medieval times it fell within the Diocese of Hereford, and functioned as a chapelry of Worthen in Shropshire. However, in 1873 it was separated from Woorthen by which time the new parish of Leighton had also been carved from it.

The pre-restoration church of the early 19thC (dedicated to St Mary) appears to have been completely plastered internally and probably limewashed. The east end of the outer wall was of post-and-panel construction with boarding set between the studs and rails. The west end had close studded, timber framing with wattle and daub infill. The west end of the south side was underbuilt in rubble masonry before 1856. At that date there was considerable restoration and some rebuilding. The original timber frame was encased in heavy timber-studded framing with brick infilling. Some of the old timber was re-used including that now visible in the vestry and the porch, both of which were built in 1856. The overall cost was £390.

Further repairs were undertaken in 1906.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church consists of a single chamber, the nave and chancel in one, with a timber bell-turret rising above the nave at the west end. There is also a south-west porch and a north-east vestry. It is aligned north-east to south-west, but for the purposes of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Roof: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles. A skylight is located in the north side of the roof above the position of the pulpit. The porch has a wooden fleur-de-lys finial.

The square wooden bell turret has a slatted lower stage and a second stage consisting of two square-headed louvred apertures in each face. There is a pyramidal slate roof surmounted by a wrought iron weathervane.

Drainage: modern plastic guttering and downspouts leading to soakaways. No obvious drainage trench.

### Exterior

Nave and chancel. General. Continuous nave and chancel, undifferentiated externally. The frame stands on a low, chamfered sandstone plinth of 19thC date which is packed with shale and red brick on the north side, particularly below the vestry. 19thC windows are set in wooden tracery, and all have diamond leaded lights unless stated. Each bay consists of two tiers of timber framing, the panels filled with brick and whitewashed over.

North wall: seven bays to the west of the vestry, one to the east; for the nave there are three pairs of lights - each with a light set to either side of an oak stud; the lights are trefoil-headed and set under a shouldered arch, with stopped-chamfers to the jambs. A single light of similar form lights the sanctuary to the east of the vestry.

East wall: Five bays at the base. A three-light window of 1856 set in a two-centred wooden frame with smaller lights above. Three horizontal bars are spaced over the main lights, and the window is now covered in protective plastic sheeting. A small trefoil light in a triangular frame is set high up in the gable.

South wall: two bays to the west of the porch include one standard window and six bays to the east include three of similar form.

West wall: five bays at the base, the brickwork visible beneath the whitewash. A central square-headed window with three lights; and above this a small trefoil light as in the east wall, though this lit the former gallery. Bench mark inscribed on a brick, two courses up.

Vestry. General. 1856 addition at east end of the north wall.

Porch. General. 1856 addition at the west end of the south wall. Timber frame is mounted on two tiers of sandstone at the gable end. Side walls have cross apertures formed by spacing of the bricks. Entrance on the south side has an arch-braced tie-beam lintel, and above this is a large trefoil formed by cusping on the tie beam and principals.

### Interior

Porch. General. Open porch has red and black tiled floor edged with brick at the entrance. The east and west sides have roughly made benches, and there is an 1856 restoration plate on the south wall beside the doorway. Planked ceiling above exposed rafters and a ridge purlin.

East wall: wood panelling with two small square lights. A brass war memorial.



South wall: the door to the nave is set in a square-headed wooden recess with a two-centred archway within it. A painted wooden text is set over the doorway.

West wall: as the east wall.

Nave. General. Stone flagged floor with raised benches on wooden planking; the timber walls are panelled, using former box pews as a dado on the north and south walls, and the pews and the panelling are topped by moulded cornices. The roof is of 15thC construction, although repaired; four bays are formed by chamfered, arched-braced collar trusses with pyramid stops, resting on pseudo-hammerbeams, in fact tie-beams that have been cut down and the edges chamfered. Alternating with the principal trusses are more simple arch-braced collars. Iron tie rods have replaced the tie-beams. Exposed rafters and purlins, with two tiers of trefoiled windbraces. The truss at the west end defines the position of the former gallery, which was originally reached by a ladder stair set in the north-west corner. Four modern chamfered uprights support what is now the bell turret. Behind these the ceiling slopes downwards broken only by the window aperture above. The front of the bell turret, formerly the gallery, has close-set studs, plastered between, with a large thick beam for the top rail.

North wall: of the three windows, the central one has re-used carved panels showing wheat stems and trailing vine leaves surrounding it. There is a 20thC brass memorial plaque under the easternmost window. The panelling to the east of this window becomes irregular, and a slight change in its alignment suggests changes in the wall behind it.

East wall: the nave is separated from the chancel by the pulpit and a screen fragment (see below) on top of the front of a bench. The principal truss also shows minor differences with a less substantial tie-beam.

South wall: three standard window embrasures. Towards the east end some of the panelling has slipped, revealing plaster behind. Further west another wooden plaque (compare over the entrance in the porch) in the form of a cross with inscription, is set above the font. The most westerly window is partly under the bell turret.

West wall: panelling only, part from the window.

Chancel. General. Chancel floor is the same level as the nave and the stone flagging includes ten memorial slabs from 1691 to 1776. The altar is raised and enclosed by rails with turned balusters and a moulded handrail. Panelling as the nave, as is the roof.

North wall: a simple rectangular doorway to the vestry.

East wall: a wooden reredos with carved decoration and an inscription along the top. Decalogue boards in metal (zinc?) on wood to either side of the altar. A modern statuette of the virgin beneath the more northerly one.

South wall: one window and a slate memorial of 1850.

Vestry. General. One step up from the chancel. A red and black tiled floor. There is wood panelling on the north wall with three small square windows, and on the east wall cupboards constructed from old box pews. The south wall displays the original timber wall of the church (the only place where it is visible) with both horizontal and vertical timbers. The roof has rafters and a ridge purlin with plaster between.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Screen: a pre-Reformation oak screen. Heavily repaired and now 'a hopeless tangle' (Crossley and Ridgway), the surviving elements of the screen are set on top of the front of the first bench on the south

side, though in the 19thC it formed the reredos. Five lights have five different ogee tracery heads, though inserted upside down, most noticeably with the arch heads. Crossley observed that these semicircular heads and boarding at the base are characteristic of the Dee Valley and resemble the screen at Pennant Melangell. Traditionally this came from Chirbury Priory, but no reason why it should have been for anywhere other than Trelystan.

Altar rails: turned rails - of 17thC date.

Table: it has square moulded legs and chamfered edges; and is 17thC; located in chancel. An 1856 Bible placed on it.

Carved panelling: arcaded border and carved trailing vines and wheat stems. Now around the central window of the north wall, but perhaps originally from a reredos. 17thC.

Chair: carved; not dated but conceivably 17thC. A gift to the church in 1928.

Graveslabs: ten in the chancel floor, nine of which are legible, and ranging from 1691 to 1776.

Bell: inscribed 'Sancta Maria Ora Pro Nobis' and dated to around 15thC.

Registers: from 1660.

19thC and later furnishings and fittings include:

Font: octagonal stone bowl with carved motifs on each facet. In red sandstone but a granite neck and stem. From 1856, and set on a wooden platform behind the south door.

Box: mid-19thC cast iron box has "Coalbrookdale" moulded in Roman capitals on the right hand side of the lid. The panelled box has two handles at each end and a front lid with lock and key.

Pulpit: octagonal shape with seven blind panels on a hexagonal plinth and ascending treads. From 1856.

Reading desk: of 1884.

Altar: modern oak altar: moved from Middletown Church in the 1970s.

Barrel organ: in Gothic style casing. Made by S. Parsons of London in 1827 to represent a full size church organ. Also an 1892 Harmonium by Estay Organ Co. Brattleboro. Vermont.

Stained Glass: East window contains modern Munich painted glass, perhaps by David Evans. The rich coloured glass depicts the Agony in the Garden.

## CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is a small almost rectangular enclosure which looks to have been extended to the north-east and perhaps to the south-west. Reached by a track across fields.

Boundary: fences on the north and east, hedges to the south and west.

Monuments: the older monuments are all sandstone, with modern marble slabs nearer the perimeter. A number have fallen, are broken or are cracked. Two railed graves near the west wall of the church, one containing two chests - to Thomas Pugh of Leighton (d.1834) and his wife Anne (d.1840), both in a poor state of repair. Some late 18thC slabs close to the south porch but otherwise mainly early 19thC graves onwards. The earliest gravestone noted was of 1759.

Furniture: none.



**Earthworks:** the original churchyard boundary is defined by a low circular bank c.1m high at the most, within the present churchyard on the north-west and north-east sides; a faintly curved stretch of the present south-eastern boundary may also incorporate its line, and there are traces, too, to the west of the church, and on the south where the hedge is set on a low rise with a drop of c.0.3m+ into the field beyond. The church itself seems to sit on a very slight mound.

**Ancillary features:** a pair of double gates inserted into the modern fence near the west corner, disused wrought iron gates in the south-western hedge line and a single gate in the south-east corner. Also a wooden church room and outside toilet facilities in the west corner. Various grass paths around the church.

**Vegetation:** six yews of considerable age encircle the west side of the church; the largest being by the south porch. Two yews located along with a holly tree near the south-east gate and a third yew felled.

## SOURCES

Archaeology in Wales 1986, 56  
Cadw Schedule of Listed Buildings 1998  
CPAT Field Visit 19 March 1996 and 18 February 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 221  
Eisel 1986, 194  
Haslam 1979, 204  
Hereford Parish Documents  
Mulroy n.d.  
NADFAS Survey  
NMR, Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Williams 1990, 60

## CONDITION

Church in excellent state of repair.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium?

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Poor to Medium

Archaeological potential: Good

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium to Good



# Welshpool

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**Diocese** St Asaph**Dedication** Mary**PRN** 16973**NGR** SJ22580763

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## SUMMARY

The large parish church of St Mary occupies naturally steep sloping ground overlooking the town of Welshpool. It consists of a 13thC tower with nave, north and south aisles, a chancel and organ chamber together representing several building phases from the 14thC to 19thC. Among other furnishings it has a large ornamented communion table, a 17thC Royal Arms, a late 16thC wall monument and several later brasses and marble memorials. The churchyard has chest tombs from the 17thC and an 18thC sundial.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

Large church of medieval character mainly constructed in local stone and red sandstone. The present church results from several phases of rebuilding from the 13thC onwards. There is a four-stage tower showing several phases of construction: the lower stages have been claimed as 13thC, the belfry stage and windows were perhaps added in the 15thC or 16thC; the crenellated top came in the 19thC.

The original 13thC nave wall was on the line of the present south arcade: portions of this early wall form the column bases at the west and east ends. And a supposedly 13thC window is now re-sited in the organ chamber.

The lack of symmetry to the chancel and nave remains to be satisfactorily explained. The chancel has been dated to the earlier 14thC (on the basis of the window tracery) and its north and south walls survive. The west wall of the porch may be of this period but could be a century later, when it is argued, the south aisle and perhaps the porch were added.

The present north and south aisles are of the 18thC but are fitted with large 19thC windows.

## HISTORY

Traditionally the church was founded in the 6thC by St Cynfelyn, and later re-dedicated to St Mary.

However, it has recently been suggested (in Brown 1998) that the earliest documentary record in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, refers to the nearby chapel of St Llywelyn, a chapelry linked to Llandrinio, and that the new church of St Mary was linked to the establishment of the planned settlement of Welshpool around the middle of the 13thC. By 1291 it had become a parish church.

The present church dates back to the 13thC with subsequent phases of rebuilding. This early church appears to have been a simple rectangle with a west tower. In the early 14thC a new chancel was added to the old nave, but on an asymmetric alignment.

It has been suggested that a major phase of rebuilding was initiated as a result of the destruction wrought during the Glyndwr rebellion in 1401. Works, attributed to the 1440s by Brown, may have included the addition of a south aisle and a south porch with a first floor room over. A guild chapel (the Trinity Chapel)



existed in the south aisle during the 16thC. The arcades are of 16thC date, and possibly even post-Reformation in origin. Indeed, it seems that the north aisle may have come into being at this time. A date of c.1500 has also been attributed to the raising of the tower.

Some work of uncertain nature may have occurred in 1610, for recent work on the south aisle roof found a re-used inscription of that date. In 1665 the church was damaged by fire, as was much of the town.

In 1588 a gallery had been added at the east end of the nave, incorporating part of the existing rood loft, and an organ was placed in it. The organ was destroyed in 1644 by Puritan forces, but the gallery was still in situ in 1737 when it 'was alleged that a great number of the very common sort of people sit in it (under the pretence of psalm singing) who run up and down there; some of them spitting upon the people's heads below'.

In 1772 a vault was created beneath the chancel for the Earl of Powys; the crown of this vault was lowered in 1839. In a ten-year period between 1769 and 1779 thirteen burials were recorded in the chancel.

Between 1774 and 1777 the nave and aisles were rebuilt. A schoolroom was accommodated in the upper part of the porch, round-headed windows and plastered ceilings were introduced, a new gallery built at the east end of the nave, the tower repaired and a new door constructed (on the north side?). The total cost may have been more than £1500.

Several new works took place during the 19thC. A western gallery was built for an organ in 1813 and galleries were built in the north and south aisles in 1821-2. The south aisle had a staircase entrance from the porch and the singer's gallery at the east end was removed. About 1825 the tower was battlemented and re-roofed with a pyramidal slate roof, and the bells were recast.

In 1846 pews in the chancel were replaced with benches; and the present parish clock was an 1849 gift.

Restoration work by Thomas Billing took place in 1856: the present chancel arch was erected and a pulpit window inserted. The original 13thC east window in the chancel was moved to the north side of the building when the east wall of the chancel was rebuilt and a larger east window added; the tower battlements were removed and a new, high pitched roof constructed; stone flags replaced slate ones; brass altar rails replaced wooden ones; and a form of hot water heating was installed.

A further restoration in 1870-71 by G E Street included the removal of the flat ceiling in the nave and its replacement with a pitch pine roof with richly arcaded trusses. The rafters and principals were cased and the remaining timberwork remodelled, but the gallery ceilings were left untouched. However, the west gallery in the nave was removed. The floor was lowered to the level of the old church and new bases were provided for all arcade piers as a result of lowering the floor. The north wall was underbuilt, a new arcade was added to the west end, and the nave and chancel laid with encaustic tiles. A low screen divided the chancel from the nave, a triple sedilia, piscina and credence table were inserted in the south wall of the chancel and an alabaster and marble reredos with Caen stone wings inlaid with tiles, a gift of the Countess of Powys, was added. The chancel was fitted with carved oak benches, and decorated headings on the choir stalls and a new pulpit and font introduced.

At this time, too, the internal porch wall was removed and a new entrance with massive stone steps was built. The 18thC round-headed windows were replaced with large two-centred arched windows with stained glass on the south side, and a few years later those on the north side was similarly changed.

The organ was sited in a new organ chamber on the north side of the chancel to which a double arcade was added. The restoration work took twelve months, during which a number of monuments were removed from the church. The cost was £4155.

20thC restoration work included replacing the masonry in some of the windows and the insertion of stained glass in 1919, the removal of the north aisle gallery in 1926 and the south aisle gallery in 1946. A new chimney was added to the northern vestry in 1925, when a new boiler was installed. In 1924 fire had damaged the roof of the organ chamber, and also the main timbers of the chancel roof. The church roof was repaired and reslated in 1937.



Restoration work on the tower and the bells was undertaken between 1957 and 1967. The tower was leaning badly to the south-west and cracks were appearing in the stonework. The plinth on the west side of the tower and the short buttresses presumably date to this period. The complete renewal of the dressings of the south aisle windows also took place during this time.

## ARCHITECTURE

The church comprises a west tower, a nave with off-centre chancel, north and south aisles, a south porch and an organ chamber off the north side of the chancel. The church is aligned north-east to south-west but for the purposes of description 'ecclesiastical east' is adopted here.

Fabrics: 'A' consists of small to medium blocks of brown, orange and grey shale mixed with occasional blocks of red sandstone; dressings and quoins of red sandstone; irregular coursing.

'B' is of medium, squared blocks of greenish-grey local quarry-cut stone, probably dolerite from Criggion, with dressings of the same material.

'C' is a mixture of blocks and slabs of brown, buff and grey shaley stone, some pink sandstone; quoins of dressed grey-green sedimentary stone; irregular coursing; some limewash residue.

'D' of small to medium blocks and slabs of grey sedimentary stone (perhaps shale), with occasional sandstone blocks; irregular coursing. Differentiated from 'A' primarily by colour.

'E' is of squared blocks of brown and grey sedimentary stone.

'F' consists of brown and pink sandstone.

'G' consists of blocks of irregular grey and some brown shale with some coursing; associated with worn sandstone quoins displaying sharpening marks.

'A' is of the 13thC and 14thC; 'D' and 'F' are undated but perhaps late medieval; 'C' is 18thC; 'B' is of the 19thC and 'E' probably represents Victorian re-use.

Roofs: slates with black ceramic ridge tiles. Cross finial to the chancel.

Drainage: guttering and downspouts, where visible, lead directly underground below the modern paths. There is a deep cutting around the north side of the church and the organ chamber, and it is reported that recent groundwork has been carried out all around the church.

## Exterior

Tower. General. Large, square, three-stage tower. The base of the tower is plinthed with a sharply sloping chamfer, rising to a height of c.0.4m, and is an obviously modern addition. However, the lower stages of the tower are of original (?) 13thC build, in fabric 'A', though there are modern red sandstone quoins except at the south-east angle. Then various masonry types - 'D', some 'F' and 'E' - up to the 19thC battlements in 'B', with a projecting string course beneath them, heavily moulded to create a cavetto soffit. Finally, a low pyramidal slate roof, which is not visible behind the battlements, a weathervane and a flag pole in the south-west corner.

North wall: in the lowest stage is a round-headed 19thC doorway, the arch turned in pink sandstone voussoirs. The second stage contains a single, wide, trefoiled light with a two-centred arch, and the third, belfry, stage has a pair of louvred, cusped ogee-headed lights and open tracery beneath a two-centred arch in Victorian pink sandstone. A modern string course on this wall alone separates the ringing chamber and belfry. Two tie-rod plates.

East wall: adjoins nave. Belfry window as north wall and the wall exhibits the same pattern of 'D', 'E' and 'B' masonry.

South wall: the first stage contains a square-headed slit window with dressings only slightly worn. The second stage has a single trefoil-headed light as in the north wall. Above this is a clock with a black face and gold Roman numerals and then a standard belfry window. Again a sequence of 'D', 'E' and 'B' but above



the foiled window is a band of 'F', suggesting another zone of construction. The clock is set in 'E', and beneath it a wedge of more 'E' intrudes into the 'F' zone. A tie rod plate is visible near the south-west angle.

West wall: low clasping buttresses at the north-west and south-west corners. In the first stage is a buff-yellow sandstone four-centred window containing a pair of four centred lights; all the dressings are modern. Above is a square-headed slit window. The next stage has a standard, single trefoiled light in a two-centred arch. Above this the clock and belfry window are as the south wall. The masonry sequence is as in the south wall.

Nave. General. The main body of church is formed by a nave with north and south aisles.

West wall: a short section in 'C' is visible between the tower and the north aisle, similar in appearance to the tower but there is a greater range of colour to the stone. The gable part of the wall is in 'E'. A long window in buff-grey freestone contains a single elongated, cusped light which must be inserted.

East wall: completely slated where it is visible above the chancel roof line. A short length of this wall also exists to the south of the chancel though externally it appears as part of the south aisle wall. It contains one window which is a Victorian feature, imitating those in the chancel (see below). The hoodmould has a Victorian head stop, but on its south side only, for on the north side the dressings of the window abut the wall of the chancel.

North aisle. General. In 'C', with bits of dressed red sandstone, re-used (one piece between the second and third windows on the north side appears to be fluted).

North wall: three large, two-centred windows each with three ogee-headed lights and reticulated tracery, with hoodmoulds (copying the earlier 14thC chancel windows), inserted in 1870/1, replacing the earlier round-headed openings. The sandstone frames have been repaired and patched. Each aperture contains three cusped lights with tracery above. At the east end near the organ chamber annex, a wall about 3m high and 0.3m wide, topped by coping stones, protrudes; built of good dressed blocks of grey stone. It is mostly below ground level (though exposed in the deep trench along the north side of the church) and encloses an alcove that holds the tomb and effigy of the Earl of Powys.

West wall: a square-headed doorway in mustard-yellow sandstone with sunken spandrels over a four-centred arch doorway with chamfered jambs; moulded label with out-turned stops, either 19thC or later.

Organ chamber. In 'B', from 1884.

North wall: plinched and capped with chamfered freestone dressings but on this side only. A supposedly 13thC window was re-sited in 1884: in worn red sandstone it contains three stepped lancets with two roundels under a two-centred arch, and the hoodmould with a concave soffit has very worn head stops. But it is difficult to determine how much of the window is original: the tracery heads, the head stops and some of the jambs might be contenders. A chimney stack rises from the north-east corner, above the roof.

East wall: plain.

West wall: there are brick-edged apertures in the wall, undoubtedly relating to the heating system.

Chancel. General. Narrower and higher than the nave. Originally a 14thC addition to the nave, the present structure consists of north and south walls from this time and an east wall constructed during the Victorian restoration of 1856. Stepped buttresses reaching to just below the eaves are located at the eastern corners.

North wall: in 'A'. A stone projection is located below the window and drops well below ground level - it forms an alcove on the inside for a tomb and effigy. The window in this wall has a two-centred arch in worn red sandstone and contains three cusped, ogee-headed lights with reticulated tracery above, and a hoodmould with



worn head stops. Of 14thC date but again it is difficult to determine how much is original; signs of insertion suggest considerable renewal. A plain string course runs above the window.

East wall: rebuilt in 1856 in 'C' on the 14thC foundations. A 1667 headstone is propped against the wall. The large 19thC east window has five lights, three with ogee heads, the others two-centred, and reticulated tracery, all under a two-centred arch with a hoodmould and damaged stops, and a relieving arch of grey and pink stone voussoirs. There is also a string course, buttresses just below sill level and, in the gable, a small quatrefoil.

South wall: most of the wall is in 'A', but there appears to be some masonry change in the upper part of the more easterly bay. An embossed string course runs the length of the chancel south wall below eaves level. A moulded string course, with gilded motifs projecting at regular intervals, runs the length of the chancel, and above this the stonework is 'C'. There are similar windows to those in the north wall, also 14thC, to either side of a stepped buttress which was added midway along the chancel wall during the 19thC restoration work. Again it is difficult to determine what if anything of the original window remains - some of the tracery and the head stops perhaps? But considerable renewal is suggested by the packing beneath the more westerly window. To the west of the buttress is a priest's door with a two-centred arch in Victorian buff sandstone with a relieving arch of alternating colours, a hoodmould with worn stops of foliate form, and approached by two steps. The only original features might be the stops?

South aisle. General. In 'C'.

East wall: of the 18thC. The only light is a single window high up in the wall, its two-centred arch containing two trefoiled, ogee-headed lights. It is a reduced version of the windows in the chancel and is wholly Victorian in buff-yellow freestone.

South wall: three large, two-centred, 19thC windows as in the north aisle, but renewed in the 1960s; the tracery is slightly different in each window. Arches have hoodmoulds without stops. At the east end of the wall five steps lead up to a two-centred arched doorway.

West wall: shared with porch and abuts the tower. No apertures. A stone plinth, c.0.5m high and equally as wide, runs the length of the wall and is capped with large flat sandstone blocks. In its upper courses the wall is in 'C', but lower down it is in 'G' which could be a survival of the original porch - a patch of flat slabs separates these two masonry types.

South Porch. General. In 'C'. Now part of the south aisle, but extending about 1m further south than the aisle wall. Probably originally a two-storey porch from the 14thC.

South wall: a splayed stepped entrance leads up to the broad, two-centred entrance arch which is of two orders in red sandstone; a hoodmould and relieving arch of voussoirs. A pair of heavy planked doors with wrought iron fittings now fronted by a pair of wrought iron gates. The doorway was fashioned in 1856 to the design of the old doorway. The two-centred window above the entrance contains a pair of trefoiled, ogee-headed lights with small tracery lights above; a hoodmould. The window is similar in its size and its lights to the east wall window, but has different tracery lights.

## Interior

Tower. General. Entrance from the west end of the nave but not generally accessible. Tiled floor with heating grilles, plastered and painted walls and a flat ceiling with exposed joists. A dog-leg staircase behind a panelled facade now leads up from the west end of the north aisle to provide access to the ringing chamber above.

North wall: a round-headed alcove represents the former doorway.

East wall: a two-centred tower arch with chamfered jambs but of 19thC date.



Nave. General. Floor of 19thC encaustic and other tiles with grilles, loosely carpetted over. Walls are plastered and painted with only the dressed stone of the windows, the chancel arch and the arcading exposed. The roof consists of eight bays formed by nine embattled tie-beams, king-post and queen-post trusses with cusped struts, though the one against the east wall lacks the ornate detail of the others. Coving decorated with painted crosses runs along both sides at wall-plate level.

North wall: an arcade of the 16thC in pink sandstone with five four-centred arches which have moulded piers and embattled capitals. The westernmost bay was constructed to the same design as part of the 1870 restoration, while the remaining bays are the original late medieval features.

East wall: a two-centred chancel arch of three orders, the innermost with engaged wall posts and decorative capitals; there is also a hoodmould. In Victorian grey freestone. To the south of the arch a 19thC (or later) two-centred window with a splayed embrasure.

South wall: an arcade as the north wall.

West wall: wainscoting to either side of the wide, pointed arch to the tower, in red sandstone with three orders, the inner two springing from the reveal, and chamfered dressings. The arch is blocked off by wood panelling with a central doorway to the tower. Above the arch a highly painted 17thC Royal Arms. Also on this wall, a brass of 1779 and a 19thC marble memorial.

North aisle. Floor and walls as nave. The plastered ceiling is flat with coving on all sides. Wood panelling encloses a children's corner at the west end.

North wall: one brass of 1766, a War memorial, four 19thC and 20thC brasses and one 19thC marble. Also the tomb of the 3rd Earl of Powis (d.1891) in a recess.

East wall: a high two-centred arched entrance to the organ chamber has wood panelling with a central doorway. One 19thC marble.

Chancel. General. Narrower than the nave and off-set to the north. Four steps up from the nave through the chancel arch and a low stone screen with diaper carving. Four steps to the sanctuary. Encaustic tiles in the floor and plastered and painted walls. Roof is ceiled with four bays of wood panelling formed by five tie-beams which with the three main purlins and moulded ribs form square panels with embossed and coloured shields and motifs: 128 panels in total. Tradition has it that this came from Strata Marcella, but this perhaps is unlikely. The shields and bosses were restored in 1937?. The organ was placed in a recess in the two-centred arch on the north side of the chancel, part of the vestry, in 1959 after its restoration.

North wall: marble plaque of 1668 and a modern stone plaque to William Morgan. Tomb recess for the 2nd Earl of Powis.

South wall: piscina and?ambry below paired trefoil-headed arches and also a triple sedilia below three trefoil-headed arches with alabaster ring shafts. Further to the west, the priest's door in the south wall of the chancel is blocked on the inside and remains as a recessed arch. Three 19thC stone memorials and three 20thC brasses.

South aisle. Floor with grilles, walls and roof as north aisle. Wood panelling forms small interior porches around both south doors. Access to the first floor room in the porch was probably along the west wall of the present south aisle where the benefactions boards now hang (see below).

North wall: arcade as above.

East wall: five 19thC and 20thC brasses.

South wall: at the west end the lower part of the wall is thicker, creating a flat ledge at a height of c.4m. This



could be to do with the gallery and/or stairs, but equally may be a result of the survival of the early walls of the porch. Brasses of 1693, 1697, 1756, 1772 and 1789, and three 19thC marble memorials. Also one benefaction board.

West wall: the lower part of the wall is thicker and has a chamfered top at c.4m. The upper part of wall covered with benefaction boards, a series of 23 panels altogether, and also a panel with the Royal Arms of 1775. Early drawings of the church from 1860s and 1920s.

## FURNISHINGS and FITTINGS

Based on Haslam with additions.

Fonts: the base of a 14thC font was found below the present Victorian example and is now in Welshpool Museum. A font with a large octagonal basin of Early English carved foliage pattern was reportedly buried in the churchyard outside the south porch.

Triptych: Flemish, of c.1510, formerly sited above the small nave altar. Now removed for security reasons.

Tables: a large communion table with decorated flanges and carved legs, but ornamented on three sides; possibly from the 1630s though perhaps later; located in the vestry. A small table, undated, serves as the small nave altar. And a third, side table, also ornamented; might be 18thC.

Royal Arms: Royal Arms of Charles II, now located on the west wall, the gift of Richard Edmunds.

Chandeliers: two of brass, above the central aisle of the nave, were given in 1776 by Viscount Hereford,

Chest: possibly donated in 1781 by Richard Maddox, Jun.

Royal Arms: i) panel, not dated. ii) panel incorporated into benefaction boards and dated to 1775.

Benefaction boards: 23 painted panels on west wall of south aisle from the 17thC through to the 19thC. Also one on the south wall carries a date of 1855 but could have originated earlier.

Monuments: i) to Sir Edward Herbert (d.1594 and erected in 1597), a painted stone wall monument with a pair of shallow arches formerly containing the figures of Sir Edward and his wife kneeling and facing each other, but now containing coats-of-arms; two detached columns, scrolls above them, and gadrooning and strapwork below the inscription. ii) marble plaque to William Langford (d.1668) iii) stone slab to Elizabeth Traunter (d.1692) and Thomas Traunter of Poole (d.1727). iv) marble tablet to Morris Powell (d.1721) and members of his family, with drapery.

Brasses: i) to the Revd S. Davies (d.1693); ii) to the Revd W. Wynne (d.1697); iii) to T. Lloyd (d.1756); iv) to T. Evans (d.1766), in a small metal Rococo frame; v) to John Humphreys (d.1772); vi) to C Rocke (d.1779), probably a coffin plate; vii) to T. Empson (d.1789).

Plate: includes a 1662 gold communion plate, a paten of 1715, an alms dish of 1773, a large flagon of 1793, and some 19thC plate.

19th century restoration furnishings and fittings include:

Font: in limestone, octagonal on a circular base and pillars reproducing an Early English pattern.

Reredos: in alabaster, Caen stone and marble, by T. Earp.

Pulpit: octagonal stone pulpit with carved gothic designs on all faces, from 1877.

Stained glass: chancel window by William Wailes from 1862. In 1876 two windows in the north wall,



restored by Street, were given stained glass by Wailes.

**Monuments:** i) recumbent alabaster effigy of Edward James Herbert, 2nd Earl of Powis (d.1848). The figure lies on a carved chest in Garter robes, two angels at the head and an elephant at the feet, his hands clasped in prayer. It is set in a Caen stone alcove on the north side of chancel. Designed by Scott and made by Edward Richardson with brasses by Waller. ii) effigy of Edward James Herbert, 3rd Earl of Powis (d.1891) is set in an alcove under the north window which bears the Herbert memorial arms. He is buried in the Powis vault under the chancel. The tomb designed by Sir G. G. Scott and modelled on the earlier effigy; the stone arch carved by J. B. Philip. iii) marble to Edward Jones (d.1839) by Fisher of Huddersfield. iv) marble tablet to Charles Rocke (d.1779) and daughter, Elizabeth (d.1835) by M Williams, Forden. v) marble to Thomas Parry (d.1824), probably from a round 1855, by Dodson, Shrewsbury. vi) to Capt. Richard Piercy (d.1845) by Lewis of Cheltenham.

**Coffin plates:** eight recording members of the Herbert family from 1762 to 1880. Others to the Pugh family of Llanerchydol, from 1789 to 1881, also buried in a vault.

**Bells:** eight, all of 19thC and 20thC. Originally cast by Thomas Meares II of Whitechapel, London by 1824. Meares inscribed them with rhyming couplets. One of the bells was recast in 1868 but the verse was not replaced on it. In 1890, the bells were rehung on the 1824 frame; the sixth bell was recast and the inscription put on the seventh bell. The ringing chamber was once accessed by an outside wooden staircase, removed earlier in the century.

## CHURCHYARD

A large sloping churchyard on high ground overlooking the town, the slope from the new burial ground on the north side towards Church Street, where it is c.8m above road level. Very well kept. Considerable ground work has been carried out on the churchyard in recent years, including clearance (in c.1967). The burial ground has been relaid and stepped and new paths constructed with old gravestones or laid with concrete. The highest level is the graveyard extension beyond the low stone wall and line of yews which mark the extent of the early boundary. A new burial ground was consecrated in 1834 and an addition was made to the graveyard on Red Bank road in 1902.

**Boundary:** the churchyard has stone revetment walls around much of its perimeter, and is demarcated on the south side (Church Street) by a high, buttressed revetment wall, constructed, so it seems, in the early 19thC.

**Monuments:** the upper level of the original graveyard has been mainly cleared of early graves; it contains a few marked burials to either side of a central path made up of early to mid-19thC large sandstone gravestones. The stepped lower level contains a large number of chest tombs, which have been made secure with concrete bases recently. On the south side of the nave, two worn 17thC sandstone chest tombs have skeletons carved on the sides, and an old headstone of 1667 has been re-sited against the chancel east wall.

**Furniture:** a baluster-shaped red sandstone sundial pedestal on a square base is set opposite the south porch; the plate is inscribed 1743, a gift of the churchwardens and made by Benjamin Radcliff of Welshpool, a clockmaker. The base of the sundial appears to be part of the churchyard cross which was in existence in 1608. The sundial itself appears in the parish records in 1764, when a dial was sold and replaced by a new one. A later record refers to Richard Edmunds, who gave the royal arms in 1803, donating a dial plate for the pedestal south of the church.

A stone, adjacent to the sundial, is a large rough-cut glacial boulder, presumed to be from Strata Marcella Abbey, where, reputedly, it was part of the Abbot's throne.

**Earthworks:** the ground rises in a series of terraces behind the church.

**Ancillary features:** Several entrances; two stepped entrances lead up from Church Street on the south side, one approaching the nave south door and one entering the churchyard at the chancel end. A sloping west



entrance from Union Street has a cobbled surface leading up to a pair of wrought iron gates set in new stone posts and continuing towards the tower. The surface has 'E M 1846' set in the cobbles. The south paths have been recently tarmaced. At the west side of the church, a concrete area has been recently laid to form a turning circle for vehicles. A gravel drive leads uphill along the west side of the graveyard; the west side of the drive is lined with yew trees of no great age and the east side is formed by a revetment wall of large re-sited sandstone gravestones dating to the early to mid-19thC, which form a boundary with the burial ground. This drive continues around the perimeter of the old burial ground rising to the upper levels of the original graveyard before dropping downhill and northwards to Red Bank. On the upper level of the burial ground, the drive is lined on both sides by yew trees, which continue over to Red Bank on the east side.

Vegetation: Older yew trees surrounding the paths on all sides of the church are numerous, although none appear to be more than a couple of centuries old.

## SOURCES

Brown 1998  
CPAT Field Visit: 26 January 1996 and 25 September 1998  
Crossley and Ridgway 1947, 222  
Eisel 1986, 195  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1834  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1834  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1869  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1902  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1919  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1926  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1927  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1946  
Faculty St Asaph (NLW) 1967  
Haslam 1979, 207  
Millard 1936  
NMR Aberystwyth  
Powys SMR  
Thomas 1893, 175

## CONDITION

Church in good state of repair.

## ASSESSMENT RATINGS

Survival of pre-19thC structure: Medium

Survival of pre-19thC fittings: Medium

Value of documentary evidence: Medium to Good

Archaeological potential: Medium

Architectural potential: Medium

Group value: Medium



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