

**THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST**

**WELSH HISTORIC CHURCHES PROJECT**

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



*The old church at Cyffylliog, Denbighshire*

Report prepared for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

by Bob Silvester

**CPAT Report No 276**

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**CHURCH SURVEY**

**By BOB SILVESTER**

**May 1998**

**Report for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments**

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# WELSH HISTORIC CHURCHES PROJECT

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This report offers a summary and overview of the desk-top analysis and fieldwork on churches in Denbighshire and the Vale of Clwyd which were undertaken as part of the Cadw-funded Welsh Historic Churches Project during 1996 and 1997, with additional information incorporated subsequently.

The study covers the modern county of Denbighshire together with some additions. Seven Vale of Clwyd churches that were originally in Flintshire, but have now been transferred to Denbighshire as a result of the 1996 boundary changes, are included - Bodfari, Cwm, Dyserth, Meliden, Rhuddlan, St Asaph and Tremeirchion - as are Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog and Glyn Cieriog, both of which were in Denbighshire prior to the 1974 reorganisation but are now in Wrexham County Borough. Two others - Abergele and St George - which are now in eastern Conwy are better considered here with the churches of the Vale of Clwyd. Five other churches - Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr, Llangadwaladr, Llangedwyn, Llanrhaedr-ym-Mochnant and Llansilin - which were in Denbighshire (and subsequently in Clwyd) but were transferred to Powys in 1996, will be considered in the Montgomeryshire overview. Forty churches are assessed here after these changes are taken into account.

The scope of the project as defined by Cadw in their Project Brief of February 1995 was a survey of all pre-19th century churches vested in the Church in Wales but excluding nineteenth-century Anglican churches on greenfield sites, nonconformist chapels, Roman Catholic churches, cemeteries and monastic houses. To this list, cathedrals were added at a later date. Churches rebuilt in the 19th century were to be examined for the survival of earlier fabric and form. An overall aim was to achieve complete coverage of historic Welsh churches within a few years.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

The twin approach of desk-top analysis and fieldwork has created a body of evidence for each church which should allow the determination of the background history, the major visible constructional phases, the extent of surviving stonework of medieval and post-medieval origin, and the fixture and fittings that pre-date the 19th century.

The desk-top analysis utilised published sources, most notably Edward Hubbard's volume on Clwyd (1986) in the *Buildings of Wales* series which provided the authoritative base for the initial work, the early 20th-century *History of the Diocese of St Asaph* by Archdeacon Thomas which appeared in a three-volume second edition between 1908 and 1913, and the national and regional archaeological journals which in the past have published such valuable papers as Sir Stephen Glynne's 19th-century notes on churches throughout Wales, and Crossley's descriptions of church screens. For unpublished documentary information, the National Library was used. Its collection of 19th and 20th-century church faculties and some parish records provide the major source of data, together with further information held in the Diocesan Office at St Asaph. The Royal Commission's records housed in the NMR were also consulted, as was the relevant SMR.

Fieldwork involved a single trip to each church and churchyard, the duration of the time spent on site dictated by the complexity of the church, a small, simple church such as Cyffyllog requiring little more than an hour, a larger church with a complicated structural history and rich fittings such as Llanrhaeadr-ym-Nghinmeirch necessitating at least four hours and perhaps more; in a few cases a second visit was made to check on particular details. Pro forma sheets were used for recording the architectural and archaeological details of each cell of the building, both externally and internally, the fittings of pre-19th-century date, and various attributes of the churchyard. Those churches that were entirely rebuilt during the Victorian era were recorded in outline detail. An existing plan of the church was used for annotated notes, but if no such plan was available as was often the case, a sketch was prepared. Photography, both colour slides and monochrome prints, was taken where appropriate.

The results from fieldwork and the desk-top study were integrated in a database. Free-text memo fields were used to produce prose descriptions of the history, architecture, furnishings and fittings, churchyard, bibliographic references, and brief general and architectural summaries, which could then be output as individual church reports. Other non-memo fields in the database carried other information collected during the study. The individual church reports have or will be printed and circulated separately. The archive comprising the original sheets and any secondary documentation collected during the survey, together with the photography, is retained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust at Welshpool.



The present overview was, of necessity, compiled after the individual church reports, and relied on a new and subsidiary database that held data on the significant attributes of each church.

### 3 THE RESOURCE

Forty-one churches have been included in the survey of Denbighshire. As noted above these were classed as historic on the basis that the church or its predecessor had been in existence in 1800. All are in the diocese of St Asaph.

The full list in alphabetical order is:

Abergele	Henllan	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch
Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog	Llanrhudd
Bodfari	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llantysilio
Bryneglwys	Llandegla	Llanychan
Carrog	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion	Llanynys
Clocaenog	Llandyrnog	Meliden
Corwen	Llanelidan	Nantglyn
Cwm	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Rhuddlan
Cyffylliog	Llanfarchell	Ruthin
Derwen	Llanferres	St Asaph
Dyserth	Llanfwrog	St George
Efenechtyd	Llangollen	Tremeirchion
Glyn Ceiriog	Llangwyfan	Trevor
Gwyddelwern	Llangynhafal	

### 4 CHURCH SITES: ORIGINS

#### 4.1 Pre-Norman Ecclesiastical Sites

The identification of those churches whose origins, in whatever form, lie in the early medieval era depends largely on a combination of circumstantial evidence: the curvilinearity of churchyards (see section 7.1.1), dedications to British (i.e. Celtic) saints (see section 8.1.1) and specific topographic locations (see Edwards and Lane 1992, 3ff). Individually none of these criteria may be significant, but collectively they assist in the determination of pre-Conquest (i.e. pre-1066) foundations. In addition the churches of Dyserth, Meliden and Rhuddlan are mentioned in Domesday Book (1086) and should be included on that basis. However, in Rhuddlan the church was established on a new site in the late 13th century, its early medieval predecessor being located elsewhere in the town, and for that reason it is not listed below. In all there are 29 churches where the evidence for an early medieval origin is reasonably convincing, and another eight where it is equivocal.

#### *Probable*

Corwen	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion	Llangynhafal
Dyserth	Llandyrnog	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch
Efenechtyd	Llanelidan	Llanrhudd
Gwyddelwern	Llanfarchell	Llantysilio
Henllan	Llanferres	Llanychan
Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog	Llanfwrog	Llanynys
Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llangollen	Meliden
Llandegla	Llangwyfan	St Asaph

#### *Possible*

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Bryneglwys	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd
Bodfari	Glyn Ceiriog	Nantglyn

There is a small number of churches which are believed to have originated as early monastic sites (*classau* or mother churches), on the basis of place-names or later documentary references. All except Abergele appear in the list above. The documented evidence is stronger for Abergele, Corwen, Llanynys and St Asaph than for Llanarmon-yn-Ial. The appearance of a cruciform church in the Middle Ages has been proposed as corroborative evidence of a clas church, but only Corwen meets this criterion.

Abergele  
Corwen

Llanarmon-yn-Ial  
Llanynys

St Asaph

More evidence may be provided by the presence of early medieval inscribed and incised stones. While it is not possible to assert categorically that a particular stone was originally erected at the site where the church later evolved, it can reasonably be assumed in some cases, as where several stones are found in the same church, or where one is immured in medieval masonry. The two churches listed here are both clas foundations: at the beginning of the century Corwen could claim three fragments, but now only one remains in the church. St Asaph has a single stone, the early medieval integrity of which remains unproven. Again Rhuddlan must be excluded from the list. In its porch are three fragments which supposedly come from two different crosses, stylistically of late 10th-century/early 11th-century date. These were found in a wall near the vicarage and presumably relate to the earlier church in the town (see above).

Corwen

St Asaph

## 4.2 Medieval Ecclesiastical sites

Those churches that originated in the post-Conquest period are not always easy to define. For a church founded in a newly established or re-established settlement such as Ruthin and Rhuddlan respectively there can be no doubt. For the churches in smaller settlements it is primarily that they reveal nothing to suggest an early medieval foundation rather than the fact that they are demonstrably medieval in origin.

Clocaenog  
Cwm  
Cyffylliog

Derwen  
Glyn Ceiriog  
Rhuddlan

Ruthin

## 4.3 Post-medieval Ecclesiastical Sites

Only two churches are known to have been built on new (greenfield) sites during the post-medieval centuries. Carrog was built on a new site in 1611 after its predecessor was swept away by the floodwaters of the Dee. Trevor chapel (near Llangollen) was constructed as a private chapel in c.1717, though there is an unsubstantiated tradition of a medieval chapel there.

Carrog

Trevor

# 5 MEDIEVAL AND LATER CHURCHES

## 5.1 SURVIVAL

No church in the area has fabric which can be attributed to the pre-Conquest era, and medieval survival is as might be expected variable. Not a single church in the region has remained completely unaltered since the medieval period, though Llanfarchell near Denbigh appears to have seen relatively little change to its Perpendicular form. Three others - Derwen, Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd and Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch - have had only limited modifications to their medieval structure. But for the reconstruction work of 1768 Llanynys would be included here. Listed below are all the churches where medieval fabric and architectural details survive to the extent that the building does appear to be largely an authentic medieval edifice. In rare instances, however, reconstruction in the 18th or 19th century has left



little more than one or two features and some medieval masonry. The survival of a medieval tower appended to a Victorian church does occur though rarely compared with Powys. Bofari appears to be the only authentic example, for Glyn Ceiriog which is cited as a medieval tower appears to be of contemporary build with the 18th-century nave. Gwyddelwern is unusual in that the nave has survived from the medieval era but the chancel and porch/tower were replaced in the Victorian era.

#### Churches with significant medieval survival

Abergele	Llandyrnog	Llanrhudd
Bryneglwys	Llanelidan	Llantysilio
Clocaenog	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Llanynys
Corwen	Llanfarchell	Meliden
Cwm	Llanfwrog	Rhuddlan
Derwen	Llangollen	Ruthin
Dyserth	Llangwyfan	St Asaph
Efenechtyd	Llangynhafal	Tremeirchion
Gwyddelwern	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch	

#### Church with medieval fabric but no external features

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Nantglyn
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#### Churches with a single surviving medieval feature

Llanychan (roof)

#### Churches with one or two features and some medieval fabric

Cyffylliog (fabric and window)	Henllan (fabric, door and tower)
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#### Medieval tower surviving as an appendage to a Victorian church

Bodfari

## 5.2 ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

**5.2.1 Norman (or Romanesque)** Architecture of this period is now completely absent from Denbighshire and the Vale of Clwyd.

**5.2.2 Early English** The earliest Gothic phase is represented by architectural details in 9 churches, and two of these must be treated with some caution. Rhuddlan appears to have lancet windows which are generally consigned to the earliest phase of construction at the very end of the 13th century, but it is evident that in the 19th century Sir George Gilbert Scott adopted the lancet style for his restoration and there is no lancet window that survives with original dressings. That said a pre-Restoration sketch does show lancets in the west wall, but this cannot disguise the fact that as a style the lancet would have been somewhat old-fashioned by the time Rhuddlan came to be built. The other church is Trevor, a post-medieval structure which has a shafted window built into its vestry - this must have come from Valle Crucis Abbey, a few miles to the west. Lancet windows also feature at Corwen and St Asaph; though the former in the chancel have been renewed a statement by Thomas, the St Asaph diocese historian, implies that they were common throughout the church in the 18th century, and this would tie in with the early, cruciform shape of the building. Simple two-centred doorways survive at Dyserth and Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch, the latter curiously set into the east wall of the building, but these cannot be unequivocally attributed to the 13th century. Much more certain are the rather similar doorways with grouped shafts in two orders at Llanynys and Llangollen. Finally Efenechtyd is



one of those churches where the body of the church has been considered to be 13th century, though without any diagnostic details to provide corroboration. It has not been included below.

Corwen	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch	Rhuddlan
Dyserth	Llanynys	St Asaph
Llangollen	Meliden	Trevor

**5.2.3 Decorated** This period, variously dated from c.1250 to 1275 through to 1350 or later, is represented at 11 churches. As with the preceding period, doors provide the most common guide to buildings erected in the Decorated style. Fine examples with mouldings of various types remain at Henllan, Llanelidan, Llanfarchell, Llanfwrog and Llangwyfan, with less diagnostically distinguished examples at Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch (the south door), Rhuddlan, Ruthin and Tremeirchion. There are decorated windows at Cyffylliog, Efenechtyd, Llanelidan (which like the associated doorway, has a hoodmould with head stops) and Ruthin. 14th-century tower arches and columns also remain at Ruthin.

Again there are several churches including Abergele, Corwen, Cwm and Derwen where a 14th-century date has been attributed to the building, or in the case of Corwen, the tower, though on no solid evidence. Ecclesiastical 'dead-reckoning' has also been invoked for some churches in the past, but these have not been listed below.

Cyffylliog	Llanfarchell	Rhuddlan
Efenechtyd	Llanfwrog	Ruthin
Henllan	Llangwyfan	Tremeirchion
Llanelidan	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch	

**5.2.4 Perpendicular** The majority of churches in Denbighshire and the Vale of Clwyd underwent some modification during the Perpendicular period which lasted from the later 14th century through to the early 16th century (see the list below). There is also, not surprisingly, a higher incidence of surviving masonry that can be attributed to this period, with churches such as Llanfarchell exhibiting complete buildings, largely undisturbed by subsequent changes. The more specific lists below reveal that the more elaborate Perpendicular architecture - complex-moulded doorways, arcades, and some windows - are found in the Vale of Clwyd where there were wealthier communities.

Abergele	Henllan	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch
Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llanrhudd
Bodfari	Llandyrnog	Llantysilio
Bryneglwys	Llanelidan	Llanynys
Clocaenog	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Meliden
Cwm	Llanfarchell	Rhuddlan
Derwen	Llanfwrog	St Asaph
Dyserth	Llangollen	Tremeirchion
Gwyddelwern	Llangynhafal	

*Windows* Rectangular-headed and arch-headed windows are common, and there is a high survival of original dressings. The Vale of Clwyd also exhibits a number of exceptional chancel windows, amongst which Abergele, Llandyrnog, Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch, Llanynys and St Asaph are outstanding.

Abergele	Llandyrnog	Llanrhudd
Bodfari	Llanelidan	Llanynys
Bryneglwys	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Meliden
Clocaenog	Llanfarchell	Rhuddlan
Cwm	Llangollen	Ruthin
Derwen	Llangwyfan	St Asaph
Dyserth	Llangynhafal	Tremeirchion
Gwyddelwern	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch	

*Doorways* in massive limestone blocks, generally termed Cyclopean doorways, are usually attributed to this period on the basis of association as at Abergele (where there are three), Bettws Gwerfil Goch, Derwen (blocked), Gwyddelwern

and Llanfarchell. Good examples of complex Perpendicular doorways remain at Llanrhudd (with its four-centred arch and hoodmould with head-stops), Llanynys (where the door itself is probably contemporary) and (St Asaph with its complex mouldings). Surviving examples are to be found at:

Abergele	Gwyddelwern	Llanrhudd
Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Llanynys
Clocaenog	Llanfarchell	St Asaph
Cwm	Llangollen	
Derwen	Llangynhafal	

*Towers* Although a handful of towers - Corwen, Llanfwrog and Ruthin - have been attributed to the 14th century (and sometimes, unreliably, to an even earlier time) the majority of surviving medieval towers are generally dated to the 15th or 16th centuries, usually on the basis of their window designs. In appearance they are fairly plain when compared with elaborate towers further east such as Gresford and Wrexham.

Abergele	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Rhuddlan
Bodfari	Llanfarchell	
Henllan	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch	

*Arcades* Internally, arcades where they survive with their original stonework are almost certainly of 15th or 16th-century date, the only obvious exception being the 14th-century arcade at Ruthin.

Abergele	Llanfwrog	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch
Llanelidan	Llangollen	Rhuddlan
Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Llangynhafal	St Asaph
Llanfarchell		

**5.2.5 Post-medieval era** Some twenty-five churches exhibit recognisable and sometimes documented alterations for the period from the later 16th through to the beginning of the 19th century (Henllan, very much a Georgian structure is included here, but was actually built in 1806-8); porches and bellcotes have not been included. In a few instances completely new buildings were erected such as the chapel at Trevor, or the church at Llanferres where it is not clear whether the earliest masonry is of 1650 or 1774. In several others there were significant changes to existing buildings - a north chapel was added at Llantysilio, the tower at Llangollen and the south nave was rebuilt at Llanynys. Nantglyn was partially rebuilt in 1777, but it is not possible to determine the extent of the work. Doorways and particularly windows are fairly common, usually identifiable by their round heads, though there are also square-headed windows. A number of windows carry dates and no less than four have 1626 on them, with two - at Llanelidan and Llanychan - also having the initials, R T, presumably those of the mason. Internally wooden arcades replaced stone predecessors at Llanarmon-yn-Ial and Llanynys, but that at Bryneglwys, separating the nave from the Yale Chapel, is in part at least an Elizabethan feature.

New churches of the period that have survived in part or in toto are:

Carrog (1611)	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion (1776)	Trevor (1717)
Glyn Ceiriog (18thC)	Llanferres (1774)	

Building or rebuilding, sometimes extensive, sometimes more in the way of modifications or additions, is known to have occurred at several churches:

Corwen (1777)	Llantysilio (1718)	Nantglyn (1777)
Llanarmon-yn-Ial (1736)	Llanynys (1768)	Ruthin (1722)
Llangollen		Tremeirchion (1726)

Windows have been recorded at the following churches (with those in brackets carrying a dated inscription):

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Cwm	Glyn Ceiriog
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Henllan	Llanferres	Llanychan (1626, 1713)
Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llangwyfan (1684)	Llanynys
Llanelidan (1618 and 1626)	Llangynhafal	Tremeirchion
Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd (1626)	Llanrhudd (1626)	
Llanfarchell	Llantysilio	

Doors at:

Carrog	Llanelidan	St Asaph
Glyn Ceiriog	Llangollen	Trevor
Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llangynhafal	

Wooden arcades are a feature of three churches:

Bryneglwys (1575)	Llanarmon-yn-Ial (1733)	Llanynys (1768)
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**5.2.6 19th/20th-century** Only three churches were completely rebuilt in the Victorian era, with the resultant loss of all the medieval details, though usually a few fittings survived the 'modernisation'. Of the three St George occupies a new site adjacent to where the old church was, but in the other two cases it is likely that the new building superseded the old on the same spot. A few others saw partial rebuilding. In Bodfari only the tower of the earlier structure survived, at Gwyddelwern it was the nave, while at Llandrillo and Llanferres 18th-century buildings were partially reconstructed.

#### *Complete rebuilds*

Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog	Llandegla	St George
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#### *Partial rebuilds*

Bodfari	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion
Gwyddelwern	Llanferres

## **6 CHURCH BUILDINGS**

### **6.1 Building Materials**

It is not surprising that most churches in an area, particularly where there are few pretensions to grandiosity, will be constructed of local materials. During the survey an attempt was made to classify the masonry used in each church, though this was a subjective assessment without the benefit of geological training. However it is the one area of Clwyd and Powys where the churches have been the subject of a geological assessment (Neaverson 1953-4). Three churches - Llandyrnog, Llangwyfan and Llangynhafal - have been externally rendered, prohibiting fabric analysis, though Neaverson suggests that soft sandstone is a major component in all three. The exterior of Nantglyn is partially covered by slates, and Bettws Gwerfil Goch, has its west end whitewashed.

The two most common forms of stone are sandstone and limestone. Red sandstone, perhaps from the Permian deposits on the lower slopes of the Clwydians or in the Vale itself, seems to have been prevalent in the earlier phases of construction as at the churches of Llanynys and St Asaph. In the case of the latter Neaverson suggested that it might have come from a source on the banks of the Clwyd a mile from the town. Carboniferous limestone, accessible on the western side of the Vale and on the eastern side of the Clwydians was also used during the Middle Ages (e.g. Llanfarchell), but was in common use in post-medieval times. The 18th-century rebuilding at Llanynys and the whole of Llanferres are in limestone. West of the Vale and in the hills north and south of the Dee the churches are of shale, siltstone and slate, again reflections of local building materials. Occasionally, pebblestones seem to indicate the utilisation of surface deposits as at Bettws Gwerfil Goch and Llantysilio. Only one church - Llanelidan - shows extensive use of ashlar masonry.



## 6.2 Church Plans

The following lists cover only those churches with medieval fabric survivals. Victorian churches are not included, and where a wholly Victorian building is accompanied by a medieval or post-medieval tower, relevant details are included only in the tower section. For the purposes of sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 porches and towers are not taken into account.

### 6.2.1 Single and double cell churches

Simple single cell churches where nave and chancel are undifferentiated externally, and are divided only by a screen, a step or a change in roof structure are fairly few in number. Of the fourteen listed here, several are in the hills where smaller village churches might be anticipated (e.g. Bettws Gwerfil Goch, Efenechtyd, Cyffylliog and Nantglyn), but at least five can be classified as Vale churches (Cwm, Llangwyfan, Llanrhudd, Llanychan and Meliden).

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Efenechtyd	Llanychan
Clocaenog	Glyn Ceiriog	Nantglyn
Cwm	Henllan	Meliden
Cyffylliog	Llangwyfan	Trevor
Derwen	Llanrhudd	

The double cell church with the supposedly traditional pattern of nave and chancel of different widths is rare, and half of those listed below (\*) are included only because the second cell is formed by a chapel or transept and not by the width differential of nave and chancel.

Bryneglwys*	Gwyddelwern	Llantysilio*
Carrog	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion	Tremeirchion*

### 6.2.2 Multi-cellular churches

There are seventeen multi-cellular churches excluding Bryneglwys, Llantysilio and Tremeirchion. Double-naved churches are a well-known ecclesiastical feature of the Vale of Clwyd, the two elements of the church being of exactly the same length though not always precisely the same width (e.g. Llanarmon-yn-Ial). That they are not universal can be established from the lists above, but nevertheless there are a significant number (\*). Llangollen was formerly a double-naved structure but was enlarged in the 19th century, while Rhuddlan only became double-naved, in the strictest sense of the term, at the beginning of the 19th century.

Abergele*	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd*	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch*
Corwen	Llanfarchell*	Llanynys*
Dyserth	Llanferres	Rhuddlan*
Llanarmon-yn-Ial*	Llanfwrog*	Ruthin*
Llandyrnog*	Llangollen	St Asaph*
Llanelidan*	Llangynhafal*	

*Aisles* are found in all the churches listed above with the exception of Llanferres. In most cases one of the naves is effectively an aisle though there may be a chapel at the east end (see below) or in some churches a vestry. Llangollen has two aisles, the result of 19th-century re-modelling. There is no discernible trend in whether the north or south nave accommodates the main altar and sanctuary; at present there are six north aisles and seven south aisles, but Scott's decision to move the main altar at Rhuddlan to the north aisle in 1868-70 but not be the only such move in recent centuries.

*Transepts* Corwen is the only church which can claim transepts in that it was originally a cruciform building, though its south transept was demolished in 1871. Dyserth, Llanferres, Llantysilio and Tremeirchion all have single transepts (all on the north side except for the 19th-century example at Llanferres), but those at Dyserth and Tremeirchion are also 19th century and the one Llantysilio dates from 1718.

*Chapels* are found in at least seven churches, and most in their present form seem to be 19th century or modern.

*Weeping chancel.* Only one has been recognised, at Dyserth.

### 6.2.3 Towers

Fifteen churches are listed below as having towers. Two are 19th century (Gwyddelwern and Llanferres), while three are from the previous century (Glyn Ceiriog, Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion and Llangollen). The rest appear to be pre-Reformation, at least in their earliest phases of development, though the chronology is often vague. Corwen, Llanfwrog and Ruthin are considered to be 14th century but while the dating of the last two is secure, that of Corwen is largely supposition. On the other hand there may be churches where the lower stages are of this date but there are no diagnostic architectural features to confirm it: Bodfari is an example. The remaining churches are attributable to the 15th or 16th centuries, and the only one to which a more specific date might be attributed is at Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, mentioned in a will of 1535/6, though this might not refer to its initial construction.

Almost all the towers are set at the west ends of their churches, the exceptions being Ruthin which is now over the east end, though originally above the nave/chancel crossing), the 19th-century south tower at Gwyddelwern, and the detached tower of Henllan.

Only two churches - Gwyddelwern and Ruthin have spires and both of these are 19th-century; the only Denbighshire gargoyles are found on the former. Every church tower has its stairs built into the thickness of its wall.

Abergele	Henllan	Llanfwrog
Bodfari	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion	Llangollen
Corwen	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch
Glyn Ceiriog	Llanfarchell	Rhuddlan
Gwyddelwern	Llanferres	Ruthin

### 6.2.4 Bellcotes and belfries

Those churches without towers have bellcotes (21 in all), the only exception being Trevor which has neither. The majority are 19th-century in date. Confirmed exceptions are the bellcote at Derwen which is dated to 1688 and that at Llangynhafal which is also attributed to the 17th century; others such as Clocaenog, Llanrhudd and Tremeirchion are likely to be pre-19th century. Several including Llangwyfan and Llanynys cannot be dated on the available evidence.

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Dyserth	Llanrhudd
Bryneglwys	Efenechtyd	Llantysilio
Carrog	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llanychan
Clocaenog	Llandyrnog	Llanynys
Cwm	Llanelidan	Meliden
Cyffylliog	Llangwyfan	St Asaph
Derwen	Llangynhafal	Tremeirchion

### 6.2.5 Porches

Thirteen churches have porches surviving from before the 19th century. Medieval examples are, however, rare. Efenechtyd might be medieval or immediately post-Reformation and certainly its roof is so; Llanelidan incorporates medieval timbers though the walls are probably rebuilt; and Llanrhudd could be 15th century and presents a similar case to Efenechtyd. Post-Reformation porches include the impressive example at Llanynys (1544), Bettws Gwerfil Goch (1606 though much restored), Carrog (1611), Llangwyfan (1714) Llanarmon-yn-Ial (1736) and Corwen (1777). The lop-sided porch at Derwen and possibly the porch at Llanfarchell are attributed to the 17th century, Cwm is perhaps 18th century, and Tremeirchion is clearly post-Reformation but pre-Victorian.

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Cwm	Llanarmon-yn-Ial
Carrog	Derwen	Llanelidan
Corwen	Efenechtyd	Llanfarchell



Llangwyfan  
Llanrhudd

Llanynys  
Tremeirchion

### 6.2.6 Other elements

Other features that should be mentioned under this heading are the external cell on the south side of Abergele, perhaps a chapel but now only showing as foundations, and the Victorian mausoleum attached to the north side of Rhuddlan (see also section 7.2.5). The capel-y-bedd at Llangollen was demolished in 1749.

## 6.3 Internal Architectural Features

### 6.3.1 Timber roofs and ceilings

Roofs surviving from the medieval and immediate post-Reformation era represent one of the richest elements of the churches in Denbighshire. Twenty-nine examples are cited below and excluded from the list is Llangwyfan where the present ceiling could hide early timberwork.

Open roofs with arch-braced collars and/or tie beams and usually with windbraces are common; several fine hammerbeam examples remain. Some of the roofs are elaborate with fine ornamentation, often painted. Gwyddelwern, Llanfarchell, Llangynhafal, Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch, Llanynys, Ruthin and St Asaph are notable in this respect. Wagon roofs, once more common in the chancels of Denbighshire remain in seven churches: Cyffylliog, Gwyddelwern (over the altar), Llanelidan (part of the chancel), Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd, Llangollen, Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch and Llantysilio. That at Llanfihangel is outstanding. Almost without exception these roofs are attributed to the 15th or 16th century, with the only possible exception being at Meliden where a 14th-century date has been given to the close-set trusses. Firm dates can be given to Dyserth (1579) and St Asaph (1524), the second of these on the basis of an inscription in a window.

Abergele	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llantysilio
Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Llandyrnog	Llanychan
Bryneglwys	Llanelidan	Llanynys
Clocaenog	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Meliden
Corwen	Llanfarchell	Nantglyn
Cyffylliog	Llanfwrog	Rhuddlan
Derwen	Llangollen	Ruthin
Dyserth	Llangynhafal	St Asaph
Efenechtyd	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch	Tremeirchion
Gwyddelwern	Llanrhudd	

Later, but pre-19th-century, roofs survive at four churches, though there is uncertainty about the date of that at Llanferres.

Carrog	Llanferres
Corwen	Trevor

### 6.3.2 Rood screens, lofts and stairs

*Screens* remain in only four churches. That at Abergele has an inscribed date of 1511.

Abergele	Derwen
Clocaenog	Llanrhudd

*Rood lofts.* Derwen has the only surviving loft.



*Fragments.* The removal and destruction of rood screens and lofts was a feature of the post-Reformation era and continued into the Victorian period. Carvings and timber were on occasions saved and incorporated into other furniture and fittings. Thus at Llanelidan some fragments were built into chancel furnishings and a carved beam was utilised in the vestry partition. At Bettws Gwerfil Goch painted panels in the reredos are thought to have come from the front of the rood loft, but commentators before Crossley thought they were derived from an earlier reredos.

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Gwyddelwern	Llanfarchell
Cyffylliog	Llanelidan	Llanfwrog
Efenechtyd	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Tremeirchion?

*Rood stairs* remain only at Derwen and this is by far the most complete example of a rood furnishing in Denbighshire.

### 6.3.3 Galleries

A common feature of 18th-century churches, galleries of pre-19th century date have been retained only at Llanrhudd and Glyn Ceiriog, dating from 1721 and c.1790, respectively. Woodwork from the gallery of 1693 has been preserved at Llanfwrog.

## 6.4 Furnishings and Fittings

### 6.4.1 Wall paintings

Wall paintings survive in only a small number of churches. Medieval survivals are extremely rare (\*), and outstanding is the elaborate 15th-century St Christopher mural at Llanynys found in 1967. The remaining five (six if one includes a later text at Llanynys) are post-medieval and are generally in a fragmentary and often unintelligible state. Those at Bettws Gwerfil Goch were painted directly on to the wall, while those at Llangwyfan, possibly from a late 17th/early 18th-century Royal Arms only came to light in 1997.

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Llangwyfan	Rhuddlan
Efenechtyd	Llanrhudd	
Gwyddelwern*	Llanynys*	

### 6.4.2 Stained glass

Fourteen churches retain pre-19th-century stained glass. The Jesse windows of Dyserth and Llanrhacadr-yng-Nghinmeirch are particularly striking, the latter a composite structure with the Jesse element from 1530, but other glass from 1450. Other impressive windows are those of Llandyrnog (re-arranged in the 19th century) and the smaller figured windows at Llantysilio and Tremeirchion. Tremeirchion also has early 17th-century portrait panels, presumably of secular origin, while Trevor's stained glass probably came from Llangollen church.

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Llanelidan	Llantysilio
Clocaenog	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Llanynys
Cwm	Llanfarchell	Tremeirchion
Dyserth	Llanrhacadr-yng-Nghinmeirch	Trevor
Llandyrnog	Llanrhudd	

### 6.4.3 Fonts

The font is the most durable of fittings and on occasions one of the few to have survived the wholesale Victorianisation of a church (e.g. Llandegla). A total of 27 pre-19th century examples have been recorded in Denbighshire churches. The earliest are the 12th-century fonts at Corwen, Meliden, and perhaps St Asaph and Cwm. Post-Reformation fonts appear at Carrog(?), Derwen (1665), Llanarmon-yn-Ial (1734), Llanfarchell (1640), Llanferres (1684), Llangwyfan (18th century), Llanrhacadr-yng-Nghinmeirch (17th century) and Ruthin (17th century but buried in a vault). The

most enigmatic is the wooden tub at Efenechtyd which cannot be dated on stylistic grounds. The tendency in the 19th century to re-tool medieval fonts is evidenced at Bodfari and Dyserth.

Abergele	Efenechtyd	Llangwyfan
Bodfari	Gwyddelwern	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch
Carrog	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llanrhudd
Clocaenog	Llandegla	Llantysilio
Corwen	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion	Llanynys
Cwm	Llanelidan	Meliden
Cyffylliog	Llanfarchell	Ruthin
Derwen	Llanferres	St Asaph
Dyserth	Llanfwrog	Tremeirchion

#### 6.4.4 *Stoups*

Stoups are found in nine churches, but with the exception of the damaged example at Derwen, none seems to be in its original position. Those at Bryneglwys and Efenechtyd were recovered from the churchyard, that at Bodfari may have been immured in the porch until the time of the Victorian rebuilding, while those at Llangollen and Tremeirchion are now loose in the church. At Bettws Gwerfil Goch, also listed below, there is a ledge in the porch that may once have supported such a receptacle.

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Derwen	St Asaph
Bodfari	Efenechtyd	Tremeirchion
Bryneglwys	Llangollen	
Cwm	Ruthin	

#### 6.4.5 *Piscinae*

There is a low survival rate in medieval piscinae, although there are several 19th-century examples not listed here which could conceivably have been replacements for earlier fittings. That at St Asaph is a double piscina while that at Rhuddlan is in the former nave and demonstrates the enlargement of the building at a later date.

Henllan	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	St Asaph
Llanelidan	Rhuddlan	

#### 6.4.6 *Altar Tables*

Thirteen churches have pre-19th century tables, many of which are assumed to be altar tables, though few serve as such today. Exceptions are Bodfari, Llanrhudd and Llanynys, the last two with legs in the form of lions bearing shields. As with many wooden furnishings those that can be dated are from the 17th and 18th centuries and a number carry precise dates (see below). Llanfarchell has two, one of which was brought from St Hilary's in Denbigh.

Abergele	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llanrhudd
Bodfari	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion	Llanynys (1637)
Gwyddelwern (1752)	Llanfarchell (1617 & 1623)	Ruthin (1621)
Henllan	Llanfwrog (1712)	
Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog	Llangollen (1636)	

#### 6.4.7 *Altar rails*

Pre-19th century altar rails survive in only seven churches. These are all dated to the 17th and 18th centuries, and the only exception to the pattern is at Clocaenog where the traceried panels are thought to be re-used from the rood loft parapet.



Clocaenog  
Glyn Ceiriog  
Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog

Llanelidan  
Llanfarchell  
Llangynhafal

Llanychan

#### 6.4.8 Pulpits

Pulpits of the 17th and 18th centuries remain in twelve churches, and those with inscribed dates are shown below. Some are highly ornamented (e.g. Bodfari), others retain associated fittings as at Llanfarchell where there is a panelled back drop and tester. The pulpit at Gwyddelwern is 19th-century but incorporates woodwork from the medieval rood loft.

Abergele  
Bettws Gwerfil Goch (1741)  
Bodfari (1635)  
Bryneglwys

Clocaenog (1695)  
Efenechtyd  
Gwyddelwern  
Llanelidan

Llanfarchell (1683)  
Llangwyfan  
Llangynhafal (1636)  
Llanynys

#### 6.4.9 Chests

Chests are prevalent in Denbighshire churches. Twenty-five churches are recorded as having them, some (e.g. Cyffylliog and Llanfair DC) have two, while Llanarmon-yn-Ial has three. Those that are datable are of 17th and 18th-century manufacture, and there are none that can be specifically attributed to earlier centuries. Occasionally a chest may carry quite heavy decoration, one of the chests at Llanarmon-yn-Ial is gilded, and that at Llangollen doubles as a seat and has carved arm rests. Most are in a reasonable state but that at Derwen has been banished to an outbuilding and this is likely to be detrimental to its long-term condition.

Abergele  
Bettws Gwerfil Goch (1731)  
Bodfari  
Clocaenog  
Corwen  
Cwm  
Cyffylliog (1687)  
Derwen  
Gwyddelwern

Llanarmon-yn-Ial  
Llandegla  
Llandyrnog  
Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd  
Llanfarchell (1676)  
Llanferres  
Llangollen (1748)  
Llangwyfan  
Llangynhafal

Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch  
Llanynys (1687)  
Meliden (1697)  
Rhuddlan (1710)  
Ruthin  
St Asaph  
Tremeirchion (1740)

#### 6.4.10 Seating

Pre-Reformation seating is invoked only by four poppy-head bench ends in Ruthin and a 15th-century misericord at Meliden. Box pews are now rare survivals though their panels are quite frequently used as dados. Two 19th-century interiors have box pews (Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog and Trevor), but pre-19th century examples are restricted to Llanelidan (bearing dates of 1760 and 1769), Llangynhafal, and possibly Llangwyfan though the date of these last remains uncertain. The stalls at Llanynys contain reused woodwork from earlier pews with dates of 1670, 1713 and 1721. A four-seater bench at Llanferres with brass plaques on its back is probably 18th-century, and there are chairs at Llangynhafal (1707 and 1736), Llanynys (?17th century), and undated but probably pre-19th century examples at Dyserth, Llandyrnog and Meliden.

Bettws Gwerfil Goch  
Bodfari  
Bryneglwys  
Dyserth  
Gwyddelwern

Llandyrnog  
Llanelidan  
Llanferres  
Llangwyfan  
Llangynhafal

Llanynys  
Meliden  
Ruthin



#### 6.4.11 *Other furniture*

Other items of furniture include cupboards at Bettws Gwerfil Goch and Llangynhafal, the latter dated to 1684; reading desks at Llangwyfan, Llanychan, the former probably of the 18th century, the latter dated to 1730, and carved panels at Gwyddelwern and Trevor, the former from the 16th century, the latter undated but re-used in a Victorian desk; and perhaps best of all the rare wooden eagle lectern which is thought to be 15th- or 16th-century, at Llantysilio.

#### 6.4.12 *Benefaction boards*

Benefaction boards remain in 18 churches though a number of these are 19th-century in date. Earlier ones are dated in the list below. Some churches have several boards: Llanfwrog for instance has four, while Llannynys has two, both dated. And while most are in wood, Henllan has two stone plaques.

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Henllan (18thC)	Llangollen
Bodfari	Llanarmon-yn-Ial (1777)	Llangynhafal (18thC)
Bryneglwys	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd (1792)	Llanrhudd
Clocaenog (1778)	Llanfarchell (1720)	Llantysilio (1753)
Efenechtyd (1787)	Llanferres	Llannynys (1734 & 1787)
Gwyddelwern (18thC)	Llanfwrog (18thC)	Nantglyn

#### 6.4.13 *Other fittings*

Miscellaneous fittings of wood and metal appear in a handful of churches. Two spectacular 15th or 16th-century brass chandeliers hang in the neighbouring churches of Llanarmon-yn-Ial and Llandegla, Henllan has a pair of brass chandeliers bequeathed to the church in 1788 and Llanfarchell has one of 1753. Wooden examples are retained at Bettws Gwerfil Goch (18th century), Clocaenog (1725) and Llannynys (one of 1749 and the other reputedly late 16th century). Llangynhafal and Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch both have carvings of pelicans that originally were set above the reredos; the former is still in position, the latter has been moved. Both are believed to date from the 18th century. Poor boxes are preserved at Abergele, Llandyrnog (dated to 1687) and Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch (where the box is on a pillar attached to the chest), and at Llanfarchell is a wooden plaque of 1754 inciting the reader to 'Remember the poor'. Llannynys has a pair of dog tongs in the church, while those belonging to Cyffylliog have been passed to the cathedral of St Asaph for safe keeping.

#### 6.4.14 *Medieval monuments: crosses and effigies*

Early medieval monuments housed in churches have been listed above (section 4.1). Of the churches listed below Abergele has fragments of two round-headed crosses and Llannynys has the unusual 14th-century sepulchral cross which used to be in the churchyard. The remaining churches have effigies. Ecclesiastics are found at Llanarmon-yn-Ial, Llandyrnog (fragments), Rhuddlan (three), Ruthin and Tremeirchion, all from the 14th century, and one at Corwen from the 15th century. Lay individuals are to be seen at Llanarmon-yn-Ial, Llanferres, Ruthin and Tremeirchion, again all from the 14th century.

Abergele	Llandyrnog	Rhuddlan
Corwen	Llanferres	Ruthin
Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llannynys	Tremeirchion

#### 6.4.15 *Medieval monuments: sepulchral slabs*

Twelve churches have either complete or fragmentary sepulchral slabs, mostly of 14th-century date. Several have more than one such slab: Cwm, Dyserth, Rhuddlan and Tremeirchion have three each, Llanferres two. A doorway at Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd is blocked with fragments as well as having an example inside the church, and a window at Llantysilio has dressings made from decorated blocks.

Abergele	Dyserth	Llanferres
Bryneglwys	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llantysilio
Cwm	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Llannynys

#### 6.4.16 *Post-Reformation monuments and memorials*

Few churches have monumental sculpture but the five listed below are each of interest in their own way. Llanfarchell has several including the fine late 16th-century Salisbury memorial with alabaster effigies and the kneeling figure of the antiquary, Humphrey Llwyd, of broadly similar date. Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch contains the imposing Baroque monument to Maurice Jones who died in 1702.

Llanarmon-yn-Ial  
Llanfarchell

Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch  
Llanrhudd

Ruthin

*Post-Reformation wall tablets and memorials* (without figure sculpture) are common and 31 of the churches have them. They range from very simple tablets to intricate memorials. Most are in marble, but some stone examples and occasional wooden memorials have been recorded. The earliest is at Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd from 1582 and there are also a number of 17th-century examples which are picked out below.

Abergele  
Bodfari  
Bryneglwys  
Carrog  
Clocfenog  
Corwen  
Cwm  
Cyffylliog  
Derwen  
Efenechtyd  
Gwyddelwern

Henllan (1697)  
Llanarmon-yn-Ial  
Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion  
Llandyrnog  
Llanelidan (1676)  
Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd (1582)  
Llanfarchell (1692)  
Llanferres (1687)  
Llanfwrog  
Llangollen (1683)  
Llangynhafal (1682)

Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch  
Llanrhudd  
Llantysilio  
Llanymochan  
Rhuddlan (1676)  
Ruthin (1636)  
St Asaph (1680)  
St George (1699)  
Tremeirchion

*Brasses* of pre-19th century date have been recorded in fourteen churches. These range from the Elizabethan era to the second half of the 18th century, though there are only two 17th-century examples at Llangollen (1663) and St Asaph (1695). The outstanding example is the Myddleton brass (c.1575) in Llanfarchell.

Bettws Gwerfil Goch  
Bryneglwys  
Corwen  
Efenechtyd  
Glyn Ceiriog

Henllan  
Llanarmon-yn-Ial  
Llanfarchell  
Llanferres  
Llangollen

Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch  
Ruthin  
St Asaph  
Tremeirchion

#### 6.4.17 *Bells*

Information on bells has been collected from a variety of sources, but has not generally been verified by fieldwork because of access and safety issues. Pre-19th century bells are recorded for fourteen churches, but none appears to be pre-Reformation. Nor are there any 16th-century examples. The earliest are the three from Bodfari (1636), one at Llanfair DC (1631) and two at Llanfwrog (1624 & 1627).

Abergele  
Bettws Gwerfil Goch  
Bodfari  
Corwen  
Gwyddelwern

Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion  
Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd  
Llanfarchell  
Llanfwrog  
Llangynhafal

Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch  
Llanynys  
Meliden  
Tremeirchion



## 7 CHURCHYARDS

### 7.1.1 Shape

Churchyard shape has been referred to above (section 4.1) as an element in determining the likely early medieval origins of a particular church site. The list that follows ranges from those churchyards such as Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion which is almost perfectly curvilinear, through those with some degree of curvilinearity such as Llanychan and Llanarmon-yn-Ial to those like St Asaph that give an overall impression of curvilinearity despite the fact that the boundary itself adopts a series of relatively straight alignments.

Corwen	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llanynys
Efenechtyd	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion	Meliden
Gwyddelwern	Llanfwrog	St Asaph
Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog	Llanychan	

### 7.1.2 Relict boundaries

Some churchyards exhibit traces of earlier boundaries, usually in the form of relict banks. In one or two places it is possible to detect much of the former perimeter, as at Llandegla where the earlier, curvilinear enclosure was superseded by a rectangular one, but more commonly the expansion of the churchyard has led to the fossilisation of one section of the perimeter, e.g. Llanfwrog. Elsewhere the original churchyard may have been reduced in size. This is certainly the case at Llanarmon-yn-Ial and may be true, too, for Gwyddelwern.

Dyserth	Llandyrnog	Llanfwrog
Gwyddelwern	Llanelidan	Llangynhafal
Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llanfarchell	Meliden
Llandegla	Llanferres	Nantglyn

## 7.2 Churchyard features

### 7.2.1 Prehistoric and early medieval stones

No Denbighshire churchyard has a recorded standing stone, but mention should be made of 'Carreg i Big yn y fach rewlyd', a monolith built into the north porch wall at Corwen. It can probably be assumed that the stone was moved in order to utilise it, but whether from another part of the churchyard is not known.

### 7.2.2 Wells

Holy wells are occasionally recorded in or close to churchyards, the closest in Denbighshire seemingly being at Llandegla where the well is 200m to the south of the church and Cwm where it was in the adjacent vicarage garden.

### 7.2.3 Crosses

Twelve churches retain medieval churchyard crosses, or parts of them. Outstanding is the complete cross at Derwen in State Guardianship and the cross shafts at Corwen and Llanrhudd, both of them scheduled ancient monuments, the former 12th-century, the latter perhaps 15th-century. The Dyserth cross, now housed in the church, could be earlier than the Corwen cross, though Nash-Williams put it as late as the 12th or 13th-century. Dyserth also houses a cross base and it is not clear whether this is integral with the shaft. Plain cross shafts survive in a number of churchyards and these are asterisked below, as does the base at Rhuddlan. However, some shafts appear to have been re-used (usually for sundials) and it is not always possible to confirm the origin, as at Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion.

Corwen	Cwm	Derwen
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Dyserth  
Henllan\*  
Llanarmon-yn-Ial\*

Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion\*  
Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd\*  
Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch\*

Llanrhudd  
Rhuddlan\*  
Tremeirchion\*

#### 7.2.4 Sundials

Eighteen churchyards have either complete sundials or the surviving columns from which the dials and gnomons have been removed. Excluded from this figure are the modern examples at Llangollen (1988) Rhuddlan (1990) and that at Corwen which dates to 1992 though replaced an earlier, 1715 sundial. Where dials survive they often carry dates and these are given below. In rare instances it is the shaft that is inscribed, as at Abergele, or even the steps as at Gwyddelwern.

The only sundial engraved on a church wall is that at Llanrhudd.

Abergele (1817)  
Bodfari (1794)  
Carrog (1768)  
Clocaenog (1753)  
Derwen  
Dyserth  
Gwyddelwern (1760)

Llanarmon-yn-Ial  
Llandegla  
Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion  
Llandyrnog (1749)  
Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd (1800?)  
Llanferres  
Llanfwrog (1806)

Llanrhudd (1736)  
Meliden (1794)  
Rhuddlan  
St Asaph  
Tremeirchion (1748)

#### 7.2.5 Gravestones

Gravemarkers in the churchyards of the region were not examined sufficiently closely to obtain a clear picture of the patterns of burial and monument survival, but an attempt was made to distinguish the earliest legible gravestone or slab. Almost certainly the details could be refined by consultation of existing churchyard records prepared by the local family history group.

Thirty-six of the churches in Denbighshire have gravestones and slabs at least as early as the 18th century (listed below). In places 17th-century markers and (at Llanynys) a 16th-century marker have survived. Where the memorial sequence starts in the 19th century there is usually unequivocal evidence of graveyard clearance during the last thirty to forty years (e.g. Glyn Ceiriog, Llanarmon-yn-Ial and Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd). Some churchyards such as Bodfari have unusually good rates of survival, while others have exceptional monuments such as the hooded tomb at Dyserth and Cwm and a canopied tomb at Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion.

Abergele  
Bettws Gwerfil Goch  
Bodfari (1610)  
Bryneglwys  
Carrog  
Clocaenog  
Corwen (1654)  
Cwm (1606)  
Cyffylliog  
Derwen  
Dyserth (1668)  
Efenechtyd  
Gwyddelwern

Henllan (1661)  
Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog  
Llandegla  
Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion  
Llandyrnog (1670)  
Llanelidan  
Llanfarchell (1680)  
Llanferres  
Llanfwrog (1628)  
Llangollen  
Llangwyfan  
Llangynhafal

Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch (1639)  
Llanrhudd (1689)  
Llantysilio (1696)  
Llanynchan (1671)  
Llanynys (1584)  
Meliden (1699)  
Nantglyn (1650)  
Rhuddlan (1685)  
St Asaph (1602)  
St George (1608)  
Tremeirchion (1613)

*Mausolea*: these have been recorded in only three churches - Henllan, Rhuddlan and St George - and all are of Victorian date. Other, smaller, less elaborate examples from the 19th century may have been missed.

*Churchyard clearance*: at least twelve churchyards reveal evidence of past gravemarker clearance. In many cases a proportion of the stones have been retained for paving or have been set around the churchyard wall as at Corwen and Henllan respectively. More drastic clearance is evinced in some churchyards: at Llanarmon-yn-Ial it is reported that gravemarkers were used to reinforce the bank of a nearby stream.

Abergele	Henllan	Llanferres
Corwen	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Rhuddlan
Derwen	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Ruthin
Glyn Ceiriog	Llanfarchell	St Asaph

### 7.2.6 *Lychgates*

The only dated, pre-19th-century lychgate is that at Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd which was erected in 1708. There are a number, however, which might be earlier than the 19th century although no date can be attributed to them; the most convincing is Tremeirchion. Church House at Derwen started as a lychgate and had an upper room for a school which was subsequently converted.

Derwen	Llanelidan	Tremeirchion
Efenechtyd	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	
Llandyrnog	Llanfarchell	

### 7.2.7 *Yews*

Mature and ancient yews were recorded in 30 churchyards.

Bodfari	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llanrhudd
Bryneglwys	Llandegla	Llantysilio
Carrog	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion	Llanychan
Clocaenog	Llanelidan	Llanynys
Cwm	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd	Nantglyn
Cyffylliog	Llanfarchell	Rhuddlan
Dyserth	Llanferres	St Asaph
Efenechtyd	Llangwyfan	St George
Gwyddelwern	Llangynhafal	Tremeirchion
Henllan	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch	Trevor

## 8 DEDICATIONS

### 8.1.1 *British Dedications*

Twenty-eight churches have dedications to British saints or to founders/missionaries who were broadly contemporaries of the early saints (e.g. Marcellus at Llanfarchell). Excluded is Efenechtyd where the dedication to St Michael could conceivably be of early medieval date. Three churches - Corwen, Cwm and St Asaph - have joint dedications to British saints, but there are no joint British and English dedications. For three churches there are some indications of an earlier dedication. St Mary's at Bettws Gwerfil Goch may have previously been dedicated to St Elian, St Trillo's at Clocaenog to St Medwida and St Bridget's at Dyserth to St Cwyfan.

Bryneglwys	Llanarmon-yn-Ial	Llangynhafal
Carrog	Llandegla	Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch
Clocaenog	Llandrillo yn Edeyrnion	Llanrhudd
Corwen	Llandyrnog	Llantysilio
Cwm	Llanelidan	Llanychan
Dyserth	Llanfarchell	Llanynys
Glyn Ceiriog	Llanferres	Meliden
Gwyddelwern	Llanfwrog	St Asaph
Henllan	Llangollen	
Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog	Llangwyfan	



## 9 POTENTIAL & INTEREST

### 9.1 Archaeological Potential

#### 9.1.1 *Survival of deposits*

Establishing the degree of survival of the sub-surface deposits that are, or were, an inevitable component of the total archaeology of every historic church is, in the absence of full excavation, an impossible task. Externally the lowering of the ground surface and the digging of drainage trenches around the church footings can have a detrimental effect on vital stratigraphy relating to the building and later renovation and maintenance of the structure. Inside the church, the excavation of vaults, the insertion of burials beneath the floor, the lowering of floor levels, the introduction of heating systems involving boiler houses and sub-surface ducts, and any restoration work that necessitated disturbance below ground level, will all have been damaging archaeologically.

Some of these activities are more easy to recognise than others. Underfloor heating usually leaves visible signs, even if the scale of work cannot be gauged. On the other hand the deliberate raising or lowering of the ground level within a church may be very difficult to assess, and even mention of such work in a faculty petition is no guarantee that it was actually carried out.

#### 9.1.2 *External drainage*

Many churches now have drainage trenches around their footings. The following list covers only nine churches (including Victorian rebuilds) where there is no *visible* evidence of such excavations, though with those churches that are asterisked there is some uncertainty as to whether drains do in fact exist.

Bodfari*	Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog	Llangwyfan
Carrog	Llanferres*	Rhuddlan
Dyserth	Llangollen	St Asaph*

#### 9.1.3 *Underfloor heating*

A reasonably large number of churches - 26 - appear not to have or have had underfloor heating, although once again there are some cases where the evidence is equivocal (\*).

Bettws Gwerfil Goch	Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog	Llanrhacadr-yng-Nghinmeirch*
Bodfari	Llandegla*	Llanrhudd
Clocaenog	Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd*	Llanynys
Cwm*	Llanfarchell	Meliden
Cyffylliog	Llanferres	Rhuddlan*
Derwen	Llanfwrog	St Asaph*
Dyserth	Llangollen	Tremeirchion
Efenechtyd	Llangwyfan	Trevor
Glyn Ceiriog	Llangynhafal	

Only eight churches appear not to be affected by either external drains or internal ducting and several of these are wholly or largely Victorian buildings. Five medieval churches are asterisked.

Bodfari	Llanferres	Rhuddlan*
Dyserth*	Llangollen*	St Asaph*
Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog	Llangwyfan*	

#### 9.1.4 *Underfloor vaults*

Only Rhuddlan is known to have an underfloor vault but others must certainly exist.

### 9.1.5 Churches with 'lost' elements

Documentary and fieldwork evidence reveals three sites where a part of the church has been demolished and not replaced. At Abergele, a cell on the south side of the church, perhaps a chapel, has disappeared though some walling remains, Corwen has lost its south transept and Ruthin its chancel.

The only site where a new Victorian church was constructed on a different site to its predecessor is St George.

### 9.1.6 Church complexity

Most churches in the region display visible characteristics and anomalies which can be satisfactorily interpreted in terms of the building's development, even though it has to be appreciated that virtually every church will have undergone changes and modifications in the past which have left no visible signature. There are, however, a small number of churches where the complexities of the sequence could not be resolved during the current programme of work.

Corwen  
Llanelidan

Llanfarchell  
Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch

Rhuddlan  
St Asaph

## 9.2 Archaeological and architectural interest

Based on the lists given in sections 4, 5 and 6 certain facets and features stand out as being of particular interest in the churches of the region, and every effort should be made to ensure their continued survival. Some of these are long recognised and well known such as the remaining medieval screens in the two counties, others have emerged as this overview progressed. Brief comments are given below.

### 9.2.1 Overall interest

It is perhaps invidious to single out some churches for special mention, but there is a handful which to the writer are outstanding for their architecture and their fittings. Of the larger churches, Llanfarchell, Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch, Llanynys and perhaps Llanelidan fall into this category, while of the smaller churches, Efenechtyd and Llanrhudd should be included.

### 9.2.2 Perpendicular churches

Denbighshire contains some fine Perpendicular churches (section 5.2.4). The Vale of Clwyd is recognised for its double-naved churches of this period (section 6.2.2), and there are other architectural features of the period which are also impressive such as the east windows and moulded doorways.

### 9.2.3 Church roofs

There is a high rate of survival amongst late medieval roofs in Denbighshire, and some are particularly rich and impressive (see section 6.3.1).

### 9.2.4 Wall paintings and stained glass

Wall paintings must be mentioned (see section 6.4.1) if only because of the great St Christopher in Llanynys. The stained glass in several churches is outstanding (see section 6.4.2)



### **9.2.5 *Wooden fittings***

Denbighshire churches retain a rich legacy of 17th-century and 18th-century fittings with a few of earlier date. In particular we can pick out altar tables (6.4.6), chests (6.4.9) and occasional pews (6.4.10). Individual items such as the Llantysilio lectern and the pelicans at Llanrhaeadr and Llangynhafal (sections 6.4.11 and 6.4.13) add to the variety.

### **9.2.6 *Medieval sepulchral slabs***

Although not common these survive in enough churches (particularly in northern Denbighshire) to make them worthy of attention (6.4.15).

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