

THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

WELSH HISTORIC CHURCHES PROJECT

THE HISTORIC CHURCHES OF MONTGOMERYSHIRE



The old church at Llanerfyl, Montgomeryshire

Report prepared for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

by Bob Silvester

CPAT Report No 302

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CHURCH SURVEY

By BOB SILVESTER

January 1999

Report for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments

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WELSH HISTORIC CHURCHES PROJECT

A REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF MONTGOMERYSHIRE

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1 INTRODUCTION

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

The study covers the historic county of Montgomeryshire together with a group of five churches whose communities were transferred to the county at the time of the 1996 local government reorganisation, namely Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr, Llangadwaladr, Llangedwyn, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant and Llansilin which were previously in Denbighshire (and subsequently in Clwyd).

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 Richard Haslam's volume on Powys (1976) 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 described most though not all of the churches in Montgomeryshire, 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 Fred 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 Manafon requiring little more than an hour, a larger church with a complicated structural history and rich fittings such as Montgomery necessitating at least four hours and perhaps more. 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

Fifty-six churches have been included in the survey of Montgomeryshire, and as noted above these were classed as historic on the basis that the church or its predecessor had been in existence in 1800. There are thus some notable exclusions such as Newtown where the old church of St Mary is in ruins, while the parish church of St David was constructed on a new site in 1843. A large majority of the churches considered here always fell within the historic county, but as noted above five churches were moved from Clwyd to Montgomeryshire in 1996.

The full list in alphabetical order is:

Aberhafesp	Llandrinio	Llansilin
Berriew	Llandysilio	Llanwnnog
Bettws Cedewain	Llanerfyl	Llanwrin
Buttington	Llanfair Caereinion	Llanwyddelan
Carno	Llanfechain	Machynlleth
Castle Caereinion	Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa	Manafon
Cemmaes	Llanfyllin	Meifod
Churchstoke	Llangadfan	Mochdre
Criggion	Llangadwaladr	Montgomery
Darowen	Llangedwyn	Penegoes
Forden	Llangurig	Pennant Melangell
Garthbeibio	Llangynog	Penrhos
Guilsfield	Llangynyw	Penstrowed
Hirnant	Llanidloes	Snead
Hyssington	Llanllugan	Trefeglwys
Kerry	Llanllwchaiarn	Tregynon
Llan	Llanmerewig	Trelystan
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Welshpool
Llandinam	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	

Of the total, thirty-nine churches are in the diocese of St Asaph, thirteen are in Bangor diocese and four are in Hereford and thus within the Church of England rather than within its Welsh counterpart.

St Asaph

Aberhafesp	Hirnant	Llanfyllin
Berriew	Kerry	Llangadfan
Bettws Cedewain	Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr	Llangadwaladr
Buttington	Llandrinio	Llangedwyn
Castle Caereinion	Llandysilio	Llangynog
Criggion	Llanerfyl	Llangynyw
Forden	Llanfair Caereinion	Llanllugan
Garthbeibio	Llanfechain	Llanllwchaiarn
Guilsfield	Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa	Llanmerewig

Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Llansilin
Llanwyddelan

Manafon
Meifod
Mochdre
Montgomery

Pennant Melangell
Penrhos
Tregynon
Welshpool

Bangor

Carno
Cemmaes
Darowen
Llan
Llandinam

Llangurig
Llanidloes
Llanwnnog
Llanwrin

Machynlleth
Penegoes
Penstrowed
Trefeglwys

Hereford

Churchstoke
Hyssington

Snead

Trelystan

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 Montgomeryshire we can isolate thirty-six probable early medieval church sites and six possible ones. The evidence for Carno must be treated as equivocal. Two churches - Churchstoke and Trelystan - are recorded in Domesday Book (1086), but generally documentary confirmation of an early establishment is absent.

Probable

Berriew
Bettws Cedewain
Cemmaes
Churchstoke
Darowen
Guilsfield
Hirnant
Kerry
Llan
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr
Llandinam
Llandrinio

Llandysilio
Llanerfyl
Llanfair Caereinion
Llanfechain
Llanfyllin
Llangadfan
Llangadwaladr
Llangedwyn
Llangurig
Llangynog
Llangynyw
Llanllugan

Llanllwchaiarn
Llanmerewig
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Llansilin
Llanwnnog
Llanwrin
Llanwyddelan
Meifod
Pennant Melangell
Tregynon
Trelystan

Possible

Carno

Garthbeibio

Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa

Llanidloes
Machynlleth

Penegoes

Penstrowed

Seven churches, a not inconsiderable number for one county, are believed to have originated as early monastic sites (*classau* or mother churches), on the basis of later documentary references. Kerry was a collegiate establishment in the 13th century, Llandinam had an abbot in that century and Meifod was recognised as a mother church. The exceptions are Llandrinio which is not attested in the literature but where the size of its early enclosure and the presence of several dependent chapelries is suggestive, and Llansilin where the presence of a cruciform church in the Middle Ages - and this has not been demonstrated conclusively - has been evoked as corroborative evidence of a *clas* church.

Kerry
Llandinam
Llandrinio

Llangurig
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant

Llansilin
Meifod

More evidence may be provided by the presence of early medieval inscribed and incised stones. However, it is frequently not possible to assert categorically that a particular stone was originally erected at the site where the church later evolved, and no direct link can be established. The stone in Carno church, for instance, served as a gatepost in the village so the link with the church is a modern one. That at Llanwyddelan was evidently built into the new church structure in Victorian times though it is perhaps reasonable to assume that it was found when the earlier church was demolished. The stone in Llanerfyl church has a longer history of association going back to the late 18thC. Where several stones are found in the same church, or where one is immured in medieval masonry there is a greater likelihood of an early medieval link. Llandrinio probably falls in this category, though the two fragments that are currently visible might come from the same stone, and at Meifod there is a stone incised with crosses in the medieval south wall together with the much better known cross slab which has been variously dated to the pre- and post-Conquest periods. The stones at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant are perhaps the most convincing of all.

Carno
Llandrinio

Llanerfyl
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant

Llanwyddelan
Meifod

4.2 Medieval Ecclesiastical sites

Those churches that originated in the post-Conquest period are not always easy to define. The evidence is strongest where a church was founded in a newly established settlement such as Montgomery, but even then in this type of context difficulties may emerge as at Welshpool where the new foundation lay close to an existing settlement. For the churches in smaller settlements an attribution of a medieval origin is as likely to result from an absence of evidence to suggest anything earlier as at Manafon than from clear indications of a demonstrably medieval date. Exceptional in this respect are Trefeglwys and perhaps Buttington both of which have documented origins in the post-Conquest era.

Aberhafesp
Buttington
Carno
Castle Caereinion

Forden
Hyssington
Manafon
Mochdre

Montgomery
Snead
Trefeglwys
Welshpool

4.3 Post-medieval Ecclesiastical Sites

Only two churches are known to have been built on new (greenfield) sites during the post-medieval centuries. Penrhos was founded as a chapelry in 1625 while Criggion was built in the 1670s, its predecessor having been elsewhere in the area.

Criggion

Penrhos

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, externally at least, Llanllugan comes close. Even those with limited modifications to their medieval structure still tend to display at least some Victorian windows. Listed below are all the churches where medieval fabric and architectural details survive to give the building a largely authentic medieval appearance. Llansilin and Montgomery are included in spite of their 19th-century towers.

Churches with significant medieval survival:

Guilsfield
Llan
Llandrinio

Llanfechain
Llangynyw
Llanllugan

Llansilin
Montgomery

More commonly, reconstruction in the 18th or 19th century has left little more than one or two features and some medieval masonry, or masonry only. Excluded from the last of these are Carno, Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa, Llanwyddelan and Trefeglwys where there is potentially early masonry but probably re-used rather than in situ.

Church with some medieval fabric but no external features:

Hirnant
Hyssington
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr

Llandinam
Llangadfan
Llangedwyn

Llanmerewig(?)
Llanwrin
Snead

Churches with a single surviving medieval feature

Llanfair Caereinion (door)

Churches with medieval fabric and one or two features.

Buttington (windows and roof)
Cemmaes (roof)
Garthbeibio (windows)

Llangadwaladr (window)
Llangurig (windows)
Llanwnnog (window)

Manafon (windows)
Trelystan (timber frame and roof)
Welshpool (window)

The survival of a medieval tower appended to a Victorian church does occur though not as commonly as in the more southerly parts of Powys. Kerry is included in this list though there are internal features in the church itself - the medieval arcades - which distinguish it from wholly Victorian structures.

Medieval tower surviving as an appendage to a Victorian church:

Bettws Cedewain
Churchstoke

Kerry

Machynlleth

5.2 ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

5.2.1 Norman (or Romanesque) Five churches in the area feature architectural remains attributable to this phase, while a case has been made for Pennant Melangell on the grounds of the building sequence and a single round-headed light rather than the architecture (coupled with the famous Romanesque shrine of St Melangell). Arcades survive at Kerry where there is an ornamented capital, at Llandrinio and at Meifod which, however, has been heavily reconstructed. Small, round-headed windows remain at Llandrinio, Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain and Llanfechain, though the integrity of that at Llansantffraid is in doubt. Llanfechain also has two Norman doorways, and the doorway at Pennant Melangell, though truncated, has also been attributed to this period. It is significant that with the exception of Pennant Melangell these are all borderland churches or, in the case of Meifod, of high status.

Kerry
Llandrinio

Llanfechain
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain

Meifod
Pennant Melangell

5.2.2 Early English The earliest phase of Gothic architecture is represented by details in ten churches. Small lancet lights in the tower at Churchstoke and the nave at Pennant Melangell have been used as 13th-century indicators, and the towers at Guilsfield, Llandinam and Welshpool are also listed here though more by way of assumption that through diagnostic architectural features. Much the same has been insinuated for Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant which may have a 13th-century building at its heart. On the other hand Llansilin is thought to have been a 13th-century cruciform structure and still retains a lancet and two doorways, one of which might originally have been Norman, while Montgomery, also cruciform but without a tower above the crossing, has original lancets and a doorway from later in the 13th century. Exceptional survivals are the fine south doorway at Llanfair Caereinion, so complex indeed that almost inevitably its origin is thought by some to have been elsewhere, and the south door and north arcade in Llanidloes which more reasonably are believed to have been salvaged from Cwmhir Abbey.

Churchstoke
Guilsfield
Llandinam
Llanfair Caereinion

Llanidloes
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Llansilin

Montgomery
Pennant Melangell
Welshpool

5.2.3 Decorated This period, variously dated from c.1250 to 1275 through to 1350 or later, is no better represented than its predecessor. Nine churches retain relevant features. There are three churches with notable Decorated details. At Kerry the chancel was added in the earlier 14th century on the evidence of the windows and the arcade extension, and the tower may also be attributed to this time. And windows with reticulated tracery occur both at Welshpool and at Meifod where there is a possibly contemporary doorway. Elsewhere the windows at Buttington, Llandrinio and Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain (where it may be associated with an extension to the chancel) have been attributed to this phase, and the tower at Llanidloes is considered to be from this period though on the basis of only a single corbel, while a capital on the arcade is the only architectural detail at Llansilin. Tregynon completes the list but only because its completely renewed doorway was from this time.

Buttington
Kerry
Llandrinio

Llanidloes
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Llansilin

Meifod
Tregynon
Welshpool

5.2.4 Perpendicular It is likely that a significant number of Montgomeryshire churches underwent some modification during the Perpendicular era (late 14th, 15th and early 16th centuries), though such was the scale of Victorianisation (see below) that only 19 churches now display diagnostic architecture of the period. It is assumed too, though often on ambivalent evidence, that the masonry of some churches (e.g. Cemmaes and Sneed) is of this period. These are not listed below.

More specific lists are provided after the general list.

Bettws Cedewain
Buttington
Garthbeibio
Guilsfield
Kerry
Llan
Llandrinio

Llangadwaladr
Llangurig
Llangynyw
Llanidloes
Llanllugan
Llansilin

Llanwnnog
Manafon
Meifod
Montgomery
Pennant Melangell
Welshpool

Windows Chancel east windows remain in Buttington, Garthbeibio, Kerry, Llangynyw, Llansilin, Llanwnnog, Manafon, Meifod and Montgomery, though those such as Guilsfield where the dressings have been completely replaced are not listed. Rectangular-headed and arch-headed windows are found in only thirteen churches: Garthbeibio, Guilsfield (where there are also, unusually, clerestorey lights), Llan, Llandrinio, Llangadwaladr, Llangurig, Llangynyw, Llanidloes, Llanllugan, Llansilin, Manafon, Meifod and Pennant Melangell. However, there appears to be less in the way of survival of original dressings than in adjacent counties such as Denbighshire, and several churches (e.g. Llan and Llangadwaladr) have windows that have been re-sited.

Buttington
Garthbeibio
Kerry
Llan
Llandrinio
Llangadwaladr

Llangurig
Llangynyw
Llanidloes
Llanllugan
Llansilin

Llanwnnog
Manafon
Meifod
Montgomery
Pennant Melangell

Doorways are uncommon, but appear occasionally in towers (e.g. Bettws Cedewain and Llangurig), and in the nave (e.g. Buttington, Guilsfield and Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain).

Bettws Cedewain
Buttington

Guilsfield
Llangurig

Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain

Towers A small number of towers have been attributed to the 15th or early 16th century. Bettws Cedewain is unusual in that a date probably in the 1520s can be attributed to it on the evidence of a brass inside the church.

Bettws Cedewain
Guilsfield

Llangurig
Meifod

Welshpool

Other features These are restricted to Guilsfield which has both arcades and a porch of this period and Llansilin which also has a porch and an arcade.

Guilsfield

Llansilin

5.2.5 Post-medieval era Fourteen churches exhibit recognisable and sometimes documented alterations for the period from the later 16th through to the beginning of the 19th century. In a small number of cases this amounts to total construction (see above para 4.3) as at Llanfyllin in brick in 1706, Criggion in 1770, Tregynon in 1787 and Llangynog in 1791, though in almost every case the fenestration was then replaced in the Victorian era.

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

Criggion
Llanfyllin

Llangynog

Tregynon

Building or rebuilding, sometimes extensive, sometimes more in the way of modifications or additions, is evidenced at nine churches. More specifically, porches were added or reconstructed at several churches such as Llandrinio in 1729 and Pennant Melangell in 1737. At Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant and Machynlleth it was the tower that was rebuilt.

Cemmaes
Llan
Llandrinio (1729)

Llanfechain
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain

Machynlleth (1745)
Pennant Melangell
Welshpool

New windows have been recorded at only Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain where different windows carry dates of 1619, 1669 and 1703.

New doorways appear at:

Guilsfield (1737)

Llan?

Llangynog (1791)

5.2.6 19th century Church rebuilding was endemic in Montgomeryshire in the Victorian era, and virtually no church escaped the attention of Victorian improvers. In this context Llandrinio and perhaps Llanllugan might be cited as exceptions for the 19th-century changes were largely to their interiors. Complete and total replacement as at Llandysilio, Castle Caereinion and Forden is perhaps less common than might be appreciated from existing reports. Quite frequently original sections of masonry that appeared sound to the architect were incorporated into the new building, as at Garthbeibio. In the case of Llangedwyn the amount of earlier masonry is so small that it is included in the first list. Again some churches were rebuilt but the tower or some other portion of the structure survived intact. At Bettws Cedewain and Llandinam it was the tower that survived but at Llansilin and Montgomery the tower was the major element to be rebuilt. Finally many churches were refenestrated, leaving a medieval (or later) frame with Victorian windows, though again this was often a partial replacement as at Llangynyw.

Complete rebuilds

Berriew
Carno

Castle Caereinion
Churchstoke

Darowen
Forden
Llandysilio

Llanerfyl
Llanfair Caereinion
Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa
Llangedwyn

Llanllwchaiam
Llanmerewig
Llanwyddelan
Mochdre

Penegoes
Penrhos
Penstrowed
Trefeglwys

Partial rebuilds

Aberhafesp
Bettws Cedewain
Garthbeibio
Hirnant
Hyssington
Kerry
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr
Llandinam

Llanfechain
Llangadfan
Llangadwaladr
Llangurig
Llanidloes
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Llansilin
Llanwnnog

Llanwrin
Machynlleth
Meifod
Montgomery
Pennant Melangell
Snead
Tregynon
Trelystan

Refenestration etc

Cemmaes
Criggion
Guilsfield
Llan

Llanfyllin
Llangynog
Llangynyw

Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Manafon
Welshpool

5.2.7 20th century Several churches have seen extensive reconstruction or the addition of new elements to their layout during the present century. Study of these falls outside the project brief, but they are listed here for reference

Aberhafesp
Criggion
Hirnant

Llanidloes
Llanwnnog

Pennant Melangell
Welshpool

6 CHURCH BUILDINGS

6.1 Building Materials

Not surprisingly most churches in Montgomeryshire were 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. Four churches - Buttington, Llangadfan, Llangynyw and Trelystan - have their exteriors completely rendered and/or painted over, and five others have one wall, normally the west face, or an element such as a transept similarly disguised.

Local sedimentary rocks in the form of siltstones, sandstones and shales are frequently encountered. In the Welshpool area dolerite from the quarry at Criggion is found, although as a source this was probably exploited only in the 19th century rather than at an earlier date. Most interesting is the incidence of red sandstone which seems to have been prevalent in the earliest phases of construction (e.g. the 12th and 13th centuries), usually in the form of dressed stone for windows and doors, but also perhaps as building stone. Montgomeryshire churches where this is particularly in evidence are listed below, but those such as Manafon and Welshpool where only the occasional block is apparent have been excluded.

Kerry	Llanllugan	Llanwrin
Llandinam	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Meifod
Llandrinio	Llansilin	Montgomery
Llanfechain		

6.2 Church Plans

The following lists cover only those churches with significant medieval and post-medieval fabric survivals. Victorian churches are not included, even when there is some evidence of limited medieval masonry survival (e.g Garthbeibio and Hirnant) or where a wholly Victorian building is accompanied by a medieval or post-medieval tower. In the latter instances, 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 in calculating the number of cells.

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. Thirteen are listed here and include Llangynog and Tregynon, both of which were rebuilt at the tail end of the 18th century.

Buttington	Llangynyw	Manafon
Cemmaes	Llanllugan	Snead
Llandrinio	Llanwnnog	Tregynon
Llanfechain	Llanwrin	Trelystan
Llangynog		

The double cell church featuring the traditional pattern of nave and chancel of different widths is rare, though it is worth bearing in mind that the picture is strongly influenced by the high degree of Victorianisation in Montgomeryshire. The only medieval churches listed below - Llan and Pennant Melangell - have a second cell formed by a transept and an apse respectively. Criggion is an 18th-century structure.

Criggion	Llan	Pennant Melangell
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6.2.2 *Multi-cellular churches*

Ten multi-cellular churches are listed and without exception these are churches in larger settlements - Llanidloes, Llanfyllin, Montgomery and Welshpool - or in border country - Guilsfield, Kerry and Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. Two churches - Kerry and Llansilin - are double-naved buildings in that the two parallel elements of the church are of the same length though not always of precisely the same width. Kerry, however, is not usually classed as double-naved because its chancel is slightly narrower than its accompanying nave.

Guilsfield	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Meifod
Kerry	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Montgomery
Llanfyllin	Llansilin	Welshpool
Llanidloes		

Aisles are found in most of the multi-cellular churches listed above. Guilsfield, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant with its chancel aisles), Meifod and Welshpool all have two aisles, the rest one.

Guilsfield	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Meifod
Kerry	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Montgomery
Llanfyllin	Llansilin	Welshpool
Llanidloes		

Transepts Llansilin originally had transepts, but the only church with two transepts today is Montgomery and these are usually identified as chapels rather than transepts. These too appear to be the only medieval features of this type. The north transepts at Llanfyllin and Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain (both partly functioning as chapels) are certainly 18th-century, and that at Llan may well be post-Reformation as well.

Llan	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Montgomery
Llanfyllin		

No weeping chancels have been recognised.

6.2.3 Towers

Thirteen Montgomeryshire churches have towers which are wholly or partially medieval in age. Without exception they are at the western ends of their churches.

Most significant perhaps are the towers at Churchstoke which has been attributed to the 13th century, though reduced in height at the beginning of the 19th century, and Llandinam to the same century, Kerry and Llanidloes attributable to the 14th century, Guilsfield and Meifod which are variously dated to the 15th century or earlier, Llangurig also 15th-century, Bettws Cedewain dated to the 1520s, and Welshpool of various dates, perhaps from the 13th century onwards. At Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant and Machynlleth only the lower stages survive, though these are presumed to be medieval.

Criggion and Llanfyllin have 18th-century brick towers.

Bettws Cedewain	Llandinam	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Churchstoke	Llanfyllin	Machynlleth
Criggion	Llangurig	Meifod
Guilsfield	Llanidloes	Welshpool
Kerry		

6.2.4 Bellcotes and bell-turrets

Those churches without towers generally have bellcotes, the vast majority of which are 19th-century in date, even where the church itself is earlier. Llan is an exception, perhaps from the 17th century. There are also occasional bell-turrets as at Buttington (undated), Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain (attributed to 1618) and Tregynon (which may have originated in the 16th century).

Buttington	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Tregynon
Llan		

6.2.5 Porches

Twelve or perhaps thirteen churches have porches surviving from before the 19th century, though this figure

excludes churches such as Bettws Cedewain where the porch is in practice the ground floor of the tower. Medieval porches rarely survive and in the case of Welshpool it is little more than a stretch of walling that remains. But there is a fine two-storied 15th-century porch at Guilsfield, and a rather more modest half-timbered contemporary at Llangynyw. The porch at Llan is claimed as 16th-century, although on no solid evidence, and the masonry of Llanidloes may be of this date, too, though it is likely to be post-Reformation.

Post-medieval porches remain at Buttington, Cemmaes and Pennant Melangell, the first two of which carry dated inscriptions on their timbers, the third a datestone. In addition Llandrinio has been attributed to 1729, and there are the heavily restored 17th-century porches at Llanfechain and Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain, and the very late 18th-century porch at Llangynog.

One or two porches such as Llangadwaladr are inherently undatable, and mention must be made here of the early Victorian porch at Llangedwyn, unusual in Montgomeryshire for its Romanesque-style details.

Buttington (1686)	Llanfechain	Llanidloes
Cemmaes (1742)	Llangadwaladr	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Guilsfield	Llangynog	Pennant Melangell (1737)
Llan	Llangynyw	Welshpool
Llandrinio		

6.2.6 Other elements

Guilsfield has a bier house dated to 1739, and Pennant Melangell an apse though this was entirely rebuilt at the time of the 1989-92 restoration. Other features such as the hearse house at Llan, the apse at Llangadwaladr and the school room at Llanfyllin are all 19th-century.

Guilsfield	Pennant Melangell
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6.3 Internal Architectural Features

6.3.1 Timber roofs and ceilings

Twenty-six churches have roofs surviving from the medieval and immediate post-Reformation periods. Almost without exception these are attributed to the 15th or early 16th century, though occasionally a 14th-century date has been advanced though without any real justification. In some places such as Llanerfyl, Llanfair Caereinion, Llangadwaladr and Llanmerewig the roof is virtually the only structural element to survive the 19th-century restoration. Several churches are known to have earlier roofs disguised by later ceilings. That at Llangadfan is known to have a 15th-century roof, Llandrinio is similar but the roof could be later, perhaps of the 17th or 18th century, while little information can be gleaned about the hidden roofs at Llangynyw and Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant.

Open roofs with arch-braced collars and/or tie beams and frequently with windbraces to the rafters are by far the most common form of structure. More elaborate hammerbeam roofs are found in the town churches of Montgomery and Llanidloes. The highly ornamented timberwork at Llanidloes was reputedly taken from Cwmhir Abbey and the date of 1542 on one of the angel's shields is believed to refer to its transferral. Wagon roofs occasionally appear in chancels as at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, Llansilin, Montgomery and Welshpool, and in a similar vein there is the panelled chancel roof at Guilsfield of 16th-century date and the sanctuary roof in Kerry.

Aberhafesp	Guilsfield	Llandrinio
Buttington	Kerry	Llanerfyl
Cemmaes	Llan	Llanfair Caereinion

Llanfechain	Llanmerewig	Mochdre
Llangadfan	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Montgomery
Llangadwaladr	Llansilin	Pennant Melangell
Llangynyw	Llanwrin	Tregynon
Llanidloes	Manafon	Trelystan
Llanllugan	Meifod	

Later roofs, probably of the 18th century, survive at four churches, while Llandrinio, as has been mentioned in the previous section, may be a fifth.

Criggion	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Llan		

6.3.2 Rood screens, lofts and stairs

Screens remain in six churches. That at Llanwnnog is claimed as the best surviving Montgomeryshire screen while Montgomery is exceptional in having two screens, its own and a second brought from Chirbury Priory.

Llangynyw	Llanwnnog	Montgomery
Llansilin	Llanwrin	Pennant Melangell

Rood lofts. Lofts have survived at Llanwnnog and also at Montgomery, the latter another artefact from Chirbury.

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, and in Montgomeryshire we can recognise fourteen examples of this practice. In places such as Buttington it is the rood beam that was re-used as a tie beam in the roof. In Meifod fragments were used in the later reredos while at Trelystan part of the screen has been re-set, upside down, at the front of the pews. Figures from Mochdre's screen are now in the National Museum in Cardiff.

Buttington	Llanerfyl	Meifod
Cemmaes	Llangurig	Mochdre
Guilfield	Llangynyw	Pennant Melangell
Kerry	Llanllugan	Trelystan
Llan	Llanwyddelan	

Rood stairs remain at three churches while a fourth, at Llangurig, is incomplete.

Guilfield	Llanwnnog	Montgomery
Llangurig		

6.3.3 Galleries

A common feature of 18th-century churches, galleries of pre-19th century date have been retained only at Llandrinio, Llanfyllin and Llansilin. Rather more churches have 19th-century galleries and because of their intrinsic interest they are included below.

Woodwork from some galleries have been retained and these are shown in italics below. Five painted panels from the gallery front of 1727 have been preserved at Llanerfyl, while timber from the former gallery at Llangadfan was used in the chancel roof. A supporting wall remains at Llanwrin and the gallery front survives at Trelystan.

Castle Caereinion (1812/3)	Llanfechain (pre-19th century)	Llansilin (17th century?)
Criggion (1838)	Llanfyllin (1706)	<i>Llanwrin</i>
Garthbeibio (1862)	<i>Llangadfan</i>	Machynlleth (1827)
Llandrinio (1729)	Llangynyw (1842)	<i>Trelystan</i>
<i>Llanerfyl</i>		

6.4 Furnishings and Fittings

6.4.1 Wall paintings

Sadly only two churches have wall paintings remaining. Fragments of both 13th-century and 17th-century paintings survive at Pennant Melangell, and there are traces of uncertain date on some of the arcade arches and window and door embrasures in Meifod. Finally Snead may be mentioned here for there is undated foliate decoration on the plastered roof of the chancel.

Meifod	Pennant Melangell	Snead
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6.4.2 Stained glass

Only five churches retain any of their pre-19th-century stained glass. Llanwrin carries the most including a 15th-century royal badge, while Llanllugan sports a Victorian mosaic of 15th-century glass. Llanwnnog and Manafon have a saint and angels respectively, and a single quarrel can be seen at Llan. The glass at Bettws Cedewain, though 16th century, is attributed to a 19th-century collector.

Bettws Cedewain	Llanllugan	Llanwrin
Llan	Llanwnnog	Manafon

6.4.3 Fonts

The font is certainly the most durable of church fittings in Montgomeryshire and in a few Victorian churches such as Churchstoke is virtually the only medieval furnishing to survive. Thirty-six pre-19th-century fonts have survived, ranging from 12th-century examples to that at Forden which was carved in 1794. The earliest examples are perhaps the most interesting. Llandrinio has a Norman font carved with blank arches, while that at Pennant is also 12th-century, a plain tub with a roll moulding. The font at Guilsfield has projecting heads and the one in Snead church has horn-like projections, a feature that finds some parallels with the broken font in Llanmerewig. That at Buttington is fashioned from an Early English capital. Some of the later medieval examples are undecorated, though Kerry and Llanidloes have carved side panels, and Tudor roses show on Llanerfyl and Llanfechain. In Tregynon and Welshpool, the fonts have been moved to the former rectory garden and the museum respectively. Post-Reformation fonts include those at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant with its date of 1663 and Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr which carries a date of 1717 and was originally a stoup.

Buttington	Guilsfield	Llan
Churchstoke	Hirnant	Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr
Forden	Hyssington	Llandinam
Garthbeibio	Kerry	Llandrinio

Llangurig	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Meifod
Llangynyw	Llansilin	Montgomery
Llanidloes	Llanwnnog	Pennant Melangell
Llanllugan	Llanwrin	Snead
Llanmerewig	Llanwyddelan	Tregynon
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Machynlleth	Welshpool

6.4.4 *Stoups*

Ten churches have stoups though that in Churchstoke could be Victorian. Llanfechain and Llanidloes have stoups inside the church, and the bowls at Penegoes and Penstrowed could equally have been fonts as the Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr bowl was to become. In Llandysilio is a curious 'pedestal stoup' which bears a similarity to a Roman altar.

Churchstoke	Llanfechain	Manafon
Guilsfield	Llangadfan	Penegoes
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr	Llanidloes	Penstrowed
Llandysilio		

6.4.5 *Piscinae*

Piscinae are to be found in nine churches. The piscina in the outer face of the north wall at Llandrinio is taken as evidence of a lost chantry chapel, and there are two in the transepts of Montgomery. The alcoves in which stoups are set are on occasions elaborate: that at Llanwrin has an ogee-headed arch, while a cinquefoiled arch is to be seen at Snead.

Kerry	Llanidloes	Llanwrin
Llan	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Montgomery
Llandrinio	Llanwnnog	Snead

6.4.6 *Altar stones*

Llansilin is the only church known to have a mensa.

6.4.7 *Altar and Communion Tables*

Sixteen churches have pre-19th century tables, including Welshpool which has three. Many are assumed to be either altar or communion tables. Dated examples include Llanfechain and Llanwrin (both 1636), Llanfyllin (1744) and Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant (1749).

Cemmaes	Llanfyllin	Mochdre
Darowen	Llangynog	Penegoes
Llan	Llangynyw	Trelystan
Llandrinio	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Welshpool
Llanerfyl	Llansilin	
Llanfechain	Llanwrin	

6.4.8 Altar rails

Pre-19th century altar rails survive in only seven churches and all are dated to the 17th and 18th centuries. Those in Criggion and Llanwrin, the latter are inscribed and have a date of 1709, have been moved from their original position and re-used in a pew and as a dado by the altar respectively.

Criggion	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Meifod
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr	Llanwrin	Trelystan
Llandrinio		

6.4.9 Pulpits

Most of those recorded here are of 17th or 18th-century date. The pulpit at Llanfechain has the date 1636 and that at Pennant Melangell 1722. The 19th-century pulpit at Kerry incorporates panels from the 15th-century roof, while Llangynyw's date is unknown but could be early 19th century.

Criggion	Llangedwyn	Llansilin
Hyssington	Llangynyw	Meifod
Kerry	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Pennant Melangell
Llanfechain		

6.4.10 Chests

Chests are relatively common in Montgomeryshire churches. Twenty-three churches have been recorded as retaining them, while Castle Caereinion, Meifod and Llanmerewig have two, the last of these including one in iron, and Guilsfield has three. Few of the chests carry dates and those that do (see below) are 18th-century except for that from Pennant Melangell which is inscribed with the date 1671. It has to be assumed that most of the undated examples are also of 17th and 18th-century manufacture and at least three have been attributed to the 19th century. The great dugout chest at Guilsfield could however be much earlier. But dugout chests are rare: those at Llansilin (formerly in Llangadwaladr) and Snead are the only other examples.

Bettws Cedewain	Llanfyllin (1733)	Llanwnnog
Castle Caereinion (1758)	Llangedwyn	Llanwrin
Churchstoke	Llangynyw	Meifod
Guilsfield	Llanidloes	Mochdre
Hirnant	Llanmerewig	Montgomery (1718)
Kerry	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Pennant Melangell (1671)
Llanerfyl	(1706)	Snead
Llanfair Caereinion	Llansilin	Trefeglwys

6.4.11 Seating

Outstanding in Montgomeryshire is the seating in Montgomery itself because of the pre-Reformation stall canopies and nine misericords all brought from Chirbury Priory. Only Llandinam where a few medieval pew ends were modified, probably in the 1860s, has similarly early survivals. Box pews are now rare survivals though many churches have retained pew panels as dados around their walls. Churches where box pews are still in use are Cemmaes, Criggion which probably date from the rebuilding of 1770, and Llansilin where bits of possibly 17th-century date were incorporated into new stalls in the 19th century. Old benches of uncertain date have been preserved at Llan and Penegoes.

Cemmaes	Llandinam	Montgomery
Criggion	Llansilin	Penegoes
Llan		

Chairs often with some carving to their backs are a little more common, placed usually in the chancel or sanctuary. Those at Llandrinio, Llanwrin (two) and perhaps Trelystan have been attributed to the 17th century.

Castle Caereinion	Llangynog	Llanwrin
Llandrinio	Llanmerewig	Penegoes
Llandysilio	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Trelystan

6.4.12 *Other wooden furniture*

Other items of furniture include two cupboards at Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain with dates of 1736 and 1770 and one of 1729 at Montgomery, undated settles at Llangynog and Llansilin, reading desks of 1624 and 1630 at Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain and a poor box of 1664 at Llansilin.

6.4.13 *Benefaction boards*

Benefaction boards remain in 22 churches though quite a number of these are 19th-century in date. Earlier ones are given their dates in the list below. Some churches have several boards: Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa for instance has four, while Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain has six, all 19th-century. Most are in wood but Castle Caereinion (1824), Forden and Kerry (1839) have stone plaques. That at Llanfair Caereinion is in marble.

Castle Caereinion	(18th century)	Llansilin (1740)
Forden (18th century?)	Llanfyllin	Llanwnnog
Kerry	Llangadfan	Machynlleth (one 18th century?)
Llan	Llangedwyn (18th century)	Montgomery
Llandrinio	Llangynog	Pennant Melangell (1779)
Llanfair Caereinion (1742)	Llangynyw (18th century)	Trefeglwys (18th century?)
Llanfechain	Llanllwchaiarn (1742)	Welshpool
Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	

6.4.14 *Other fittings*

Miscellaneous fittings of wood and metal appear in a handful of churches. Fittings include the medieval reliquary in Llanerfyl, and the composite 15th to 17th-century reredos and a grotesque carving, perhaps a ceiling boss, in Llandinam though originally from Trefeglwys. Hirnant has an 18th-century candelabrum and Llanfyllin a chandelier from 1734 and Welshpool two chandeliers from 1776. The helmet and axe in Llanidloes presumably came from a funerary monument and Llanllwchaiarn has a curious carved human figure inscribed with the date 1630.

Hirnant	Llanfyllin	Llanwnnog
Llanerfyl	Llanidloes	Welshpool
Llandinam	Llanllwchaiarn	

6.4.15 Shrines

Pennant Melangell has what is reputed to be the earliest Romanesque shrine in northern Europe, now restored, and there are fragments of another Romanesque shrine at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. A medieval wooden shrine has survived at Llanerfyl.

Llanerfyl	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Pennant Melangell
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6.4.16 Medieval monuments: crosses and effigies

Early medieval monuments housed in churches have been listed above (section 4.1). Churches with medieval funerary monuments are, however, almost as uncommon. Llandinam has two tomb recesses in the chancel, and there are effigies at Llanfair Caereinion, Llangedwyn, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, Montgomery and Pennant Melangell. The last two named both have two, and one of those at Montgomery can be securely dated to 1408 or very soon after. Where dates have been attributed to the others as at Llangedwyn and Pennant Melangell they are 14th century.

Llandinam	Llangedwyn	Montgomery
Llanfair Caereinion	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Pennant Melangell

6.4.17 Medieval monuments: sepulchral slabs

Remarkably the only churches with medieval sepulchral slabs are Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa with three 14th-century examples and Snead which has one attributed to the late 14th century or early 15th century.

Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa	Snead
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6.4.18 Post-Reformation monuments and memorials

Only two churches have monumental sculpture of post-Reformation date. Both the effigies of Arthur Price and his two wives at Berriew and Richard Herbert and his wife at Montgomery date to around 1600.

Berriew	Montgomery
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Post-Reformation wall tablets and memorials (without figure sculpture) are common and 32 of the churches have them. They range from very simple tablets to intricate memorials as with the two examples from early in the 18th century at Aberhafesp. Most are in marble, but occasional wooden memorials have been recorded as at Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain from 1729 and Tregynon from 1709. The earliest recorded is at Llangedwyn commemorating a death in 1607, and there are a number of other 17th-century examples which are picked out below.

Aberhafesp	Llandinam	Llangynyw
Berriew	Llandysilio	Llanidloes
Buttington	Llanfair Caereinion	Llanllwchaïam
Castle Caereinion	Llanfechain	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Cemmaes	Llanfyllin	(1694)
Guilsfield	Llangedwyn (1607)	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Kerry	Llangurig	Llansilin
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr	Llangynog	Llanwnnog (1699)

Llanwrin
Manafon
Meifod (1685)

Montgomery
Pennant Melangell
Penrhos

Snead
Tregynon
Welshpool (1668)

Brasses of pre-19th century date have been recorded in fourteen churches. Of these the oldest and arguably the most interesting is that to the Reverend John ap Meredyth in Bettws Cedewain which is dated to 1531. 17th-century examples remain in Darowen, Guilsfield, Llandysilio and Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain, the first of these inscribed with a self-penned epitaph of 1627.

Bettws Cedewain
Castle Caereinion
Cemmaes
Darowen
Guilsfield

Hirnant
Llandrinio
Llandysilio
Llanfair Caereinion
Llanfechain

Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Llansilin
Welshpool

6.4.19 Hatchments

Only four churches have hatchments and with the exception of Montgomery which is probably of 1801, none can be precisely dated.

Kerry
Llangedwyn

Machynlleth

Montgomery

6.4.20 Bells

Church bells in Montgomeryshire have been the subject of modern research by Eisel (1986). No less than 38 of the churches have pre-19th-century bells and several of these are pre-Reformation in origin (see list below), the oldest reputedly being in Manafon.

Aberhafesp (1450)
Berriew
Bettws Cedewain
Buttington
Carno
Castle Caereinion
Churchstoke
Criggion
Guilsfield
Hirnant
Hyssington
Kerry (c.1410)
Llan

Llandinam (1450)
Llandrinio
Llandysilio
Llanerfyl
Llanfair Caereinion (15th century)
Llanfechain
Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa
Llanfyllin
Llangadfan
Llangurig
Llangynyw
Llanllugan

Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Llanwnnog
Llanwrin
Machynlleth
Manafon (14th century)
Meifod
Mochdre
Montgomery
Penegoes
Snead
Trefeglwys (15th century)
Trelystan

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 covers no less than 39 of the churchyards in

Montgomeryshire or about 70% of those included in this study. It extends from those churchyards such as Llanmerewig, which is so curvilinear that it has been identified as a re-used prehistoric enclosure to those with some degree of curvilinearity such as Hirnant and Llan and to those like Llangadwaladr that give an impression of curvilinearity. Included in the list are those churchyards such as Llanfyllin and Trelystan whose earlier boundaries (see the following section) indicate a curvilinear churchyard. However, the inclusion of Criggion on this list which is an 18th-century foundation, is a demonstration that not all curvilinear churchyards are of early date.

Aberhafesp	Llandysilio	Llanmerewig
Berriew	Llanerfyl	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Bettws Cedewain	Llanfair Caereinion	Llansilin
Cemmaes	Llanfechain	Llanwnnog
Churchstoke	Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa	Llanwrin
Criggion	Llanfyllin	Llanwyddelan
Darowen	Llangadfan	Machynlleth
Garthbeibio	Llangadwaladr	Manafon
Guilsfield	Llangedwyn	Meifod
Hirnant	Llangynog	Penegoes
Llan	Llangynyw	Pennant Melangell
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr	Llanllugan	Tregynon
Llandrinio	Llanllwchaïarn	Trelystan

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 a former perimeter, as at Llanllwchaïarn where there seem to be two enclosures. Elsewhere the original churchyard may have been reduced in size as at Hirnant and Llanfair Caereinion though in both these cases it is not relict earthworks that signal an earlier earthwork but the fossilisation of the earlier line in later features.

Aberhafesp	Llanfyllin	Llanwnnog
Churchstoke	Llangadfan	Llanwyddelan
Garthbeibio	Llangynyw	Machynlleth
Hirnant	Llanllugan	Manafon
Llanfair Caereinion	Llanllwchaïarn	Penegoes
Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Trelystan

7.1.3 Other earthworks

Castle Caereinion has a motte in one corner of the churchyard and the boundary of the yard seems to reflect the bailey earthworks. At Llanfechain is a 'preaching mound' traditionally associated with St Garmon, and this church and also Pennant Melangell formerly had cockpits in their churchyards though these have now all disappeared.

7.2 Churchyard features

7.2.1 Prehistoric and early medieval stones

No Montgomeryshire churchyard has a recorded standing stone, but it should be recalled that the inscribed stone in Llanerfyl church was originally set in the churchyard

7.2.2 Wells

Holy wells are occasionally recorded in or close to churchyards. Llanfair Caereinion is the only churchyard which can be said to have a well within it, but there are five others with wells nearby and Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa also had a well adjacent though the precise location of this has now been forgotten.

Darowen	Llanfair Caereinion
Garthbeibio	Llangadfan
Llanerfyl	Penegoes

7.2.3 Crosses

The churchyard cross as a relic of the medieval environment has largely been erased from Montgomeryshire. Shafts survive at Llansilin and Pennant Melangell, a possible shaft at Llanwrin and what is probably the cross base at Welshpool.

Llansilin	Pennant Melangell	Welshpool
Llanwrin		

7.2.4 Sundials

Twenty-nine churchyards have either complete sundials or the surviving columns from which the dials and their gnomons have been removed. All the dials are recorded regardless of whether they are 19th-century or later. Where dials survive they often carry dates and these are given below - there are nine 18th-century examples and at Llangynyw a rare early 17th-century dial. Two towers - Llanllwchaiarn and Tregynon - have sundials on their towers and there is a scratch dial on the south wall of Llangurig church.

Bettws Cedewain	Llandysilio (1760)	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Carno	Llanerfyl (1848)	(1810)
Castle Caereinion (1764)	Llanfair Caereinion (1755)	Llansilin (1717)
Cemmaes	Llanfechain	Llanwrin
Churchstoke	Llanfyllin	Manafon
Darowen (1761)	Llangadfan	Meifod (1710)
Forden (1777)	Llangurig	Montgomery
Garthbeibio	Llangynyw (1616)	Pennant Melangell
Kerry	Llanidloes	Penrhos
Llan (1754)	Llanllwchaiarn	Tregynon
Llandrinio (1825)	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Welshpool (1743)

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.

No less than forty-nine of the fifty-six churches have gravestones and slabs at least as early as the end of the 18th century (listed below). In places 17th-century markers have survived and the earliest dated examples from this century are given.

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. Berriew, Llanfair Caereinion and Llanfyllin). Some churchyards such as Cemmaes and Llanwrin have exceptional examples.

Aberhafesp	Llandrinio	Llanwnnog
Bettws Cedewain	Llandysilio (1666)	Llanwrin
Buttington	Llanerfyl	Llanwyddelan
Carno (1696)	Llanfechain (1671)	Machynlleth
Castle Caereinion	Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa	Manafon (1689)
Cemmaes	Llangadwaladr	Meifod (1676)
Churchstoke	Llangedwyn	Mochdre
Darowen	Llangynog	Montgomery
Forden	Llangynyw	Penegoes
Garthbeibio	Llanidloes	Pennant Melangell (1619)
Guilsfield	Llanllugan	Penrhos
Hirnant	Llanllwchaïarn	Snead
Hyssington	Llanmerewig	Trefeglwys
Kerry	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	Tregynon
Llan (1676)	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain	Trelystan
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr	(1679)	Welshpool (1667)
Llandinam	Llansilin	

Churchyard clearance: at least nineteen churchyards reveal evidence of past gravemarker clearance. In many cases a proportion of the stones have been retained and have been set around the churchyard wall as at Llanfair Caereinion. More drastic clearance is evinced in some churchyards such as Llanfyllin where virtually no gravemarkers have been left in situ.

Buttington	Llandysilio	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Castle Caereinion	Llanfair Caereinion	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Darowen	Llanfechain	Machynlleth
Hyssington	Llanfyllin	Mochdre
Kerry	Llangadfan	Penrhos
Llandinam	Llanidloes	Penstrowed
Llandrinio		

7.2.6 Lychgates

The only dated, pre-19th-century lychgate is that at Llangurig which is attributed to 1740, but that at Pennant Melangell is said to be late 16th or early 17th century, and it carries a painted verse of this period.

7.2.7 Yews

Mature and ancient yews were recorded in 49 churchyards.

Aberhafesp	Churchstoke	Kerry
Berriew	Darowen	Llan
Bettws Cedewain	Forden	Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr
Buttington	Garthbeibio	Llandinam
Carno	Guilsfield	Llandrinio
Castle Caereinion	Hirnant	Llandysilio
Cemmaes	Hyssington	Llanerfyl

Llanfair Caereinion
Llanfechain
Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa
Llanfyllin
Llangadfan
Llangadwaladr
Llangedwyn
Llangynog
Llangynyw
Llanllwchaiarn

Llanmerewig
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Llansilin
Llanwnnog
Llanwyddelan
Machynlleth
Manafon
Meifod

Mochdre
Montgomery
Penegoes
Pennant Melangell
Penrhos
Snead
Trefeglwys
Trelystan
Welshpool

8 DEDICATIONS

8.1.1 *British Dedications*

Thirty-six churches have dedications to British saints, two of them jointly with English saints: Llandrinio where St Trinio is linked with Ss Peter and Paul, and Meifod where St Tysilio is honoured with St Mary. Only one church, Trelystan, has a known earlier dedication, St Mary preceding All Saints, but it is likely that here there was an even earlier dedication and the same is true for Llanllugan, Llanfair Caereinion and others where rededication probably occurred after the Conquest. Michael dedications appear six times. That at Criggion is necessarily of late date, and Trefeglwys is post-Conquest, but Forden, Kerry, Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa and Manafon may be original late British dedications.

Aberhafesp
Berriew
Bettws Cedewain
Castle Caereinion
Cemmaes
Darowen
Garthbeibio
Guilsfield
Hirnant
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr
Llandinam
Llandrinio

Llandysilio
Llanerfyl
Llanfechain
Llanfyllin
Llangadfan
Llangadwaladr
Llangedwyn
Llangurig
Llangynog
Llangynyw
Llanidloes
Llanllwchaiarn

Llanmerewig
Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant
Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
Llansilin
Llanwnnog
Llanwrin
Llanwyddelan
Meifod
Penegoes
Pennant Melangell
Penstrowed
Tregynon

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.

Berriew*	Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr	Llansilin
Bettws Cedewain	Llandrinio	Llanwnnog
Buttington	Llanerfyl*	Llanwrin
Carno*	Llanfechain	Llanwyddelan*
Castle Caereinion*	Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa	Machynlleth
Cemmaes*	Llangedwyn*	Manafon
Criggion*	Llangurig	Meifod*
Darowen	Llangynog	Mochdre
Forden	Llangynyw*	Montgomery
Garthbeibio*	Llanidloes*	Pennant Melangell
Guildsfield	Llanllugan	Trefeglwys*
Hirnant	Llanllwchaiam	Welshpool
Llan	Llanmerewig	

9.1.3 Underfloor heating

A reasonably large number of churches - 29 - appear not to have or have had underfloor heating, although once again there are some cases where the evidence is equivocal (*).

Berriew	Llandrinio	Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain*
Bettws Cedewain	Llandysilio	Llanwrin
Buttington	Llanerfyl	Machynlleth*
Castle Caereinion*	Llanfair Caereinion	Meifod
Cemmaes*	Llangurig	Montgomery
Churchstoke*	Llangynog	Penegoes
Criggion	Llangynyw	Penstrowed
Guildsfield	Llanidloes	Trefeglwys
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr	Llanmerewig	Welshpool
Llandinam	Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant	

Fifteen churches appear not to be affected by either external drains or internal ducting and there are uncertainties over several of these. Some of the total are largely Victorian buildings and the only five medieval churches in the group are asterisked.

Aberhafesp	Cemmaes	Kerry*
Carno	Churchstoke	Llanfyllin
Castle Caereinion	Hyssington	Llangadfan*

Llangadwaladr
 Llangedwyn
 Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain*

Llansilin*
 Penrhos
 Snead

Tregynon
 Trelystan*

9.1.4 *Underfloor vaults*

Only seven churches are known to have an underfloor vault but others must certainly exist.

Churchstoke
 Darowen
 Llandysilio

Llanidloes
 Llanmerewig

Llansilin
 Tregynon

9.1.5 *Churches with 'lost' elements*

Documentary and fieldwork evidence reveals three medieval churches where a part of the church has been demolished and not replaced: aisles at Kerry and Llandrinio, transepts and a porch at Llansilin and an annexe of some sort at Llanllugan.

Kerry
 Llandrinio

Llanllugan

Llansilin

The only sites where a new Victorian church was constructed on a different site to its predecessor are Forden and Llandysilio.

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 should be stressed that virtually every pre-Victorian 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.

Cemmaes
 Guilsfield
 Kerry
 Llandrinio

Llanidloes
 Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain
 Llansilin

Meifod
 Montgomery
 Snead

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, Guilsfield, Meifod and

particularly Montgomery fall into this category, while of the smaller churches, Llandrinio, Llangynyw, Llansantffraid-ym-Mechain, Llansilin and Pennant Melangell should be included.

9.2.2 *Border Towers*

Several Montgomeryshire churches have timbered bell-stages to their towers, typical of the Welsh borderland: Bettws Cedewain, Churchstoke, Kerry, Llandinam and Llanidloes.

9.2.3 *Church roofs*

There is a high rate of survival of late medieval roofs in Montgomeryshire, even where the churches themselves were rebuilt in the Victorian era (see section 6.3.1).

9.2.4 *Shrines*

Only two shrines survive in anything like their original form but these should be mentioned because of their rarity.

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