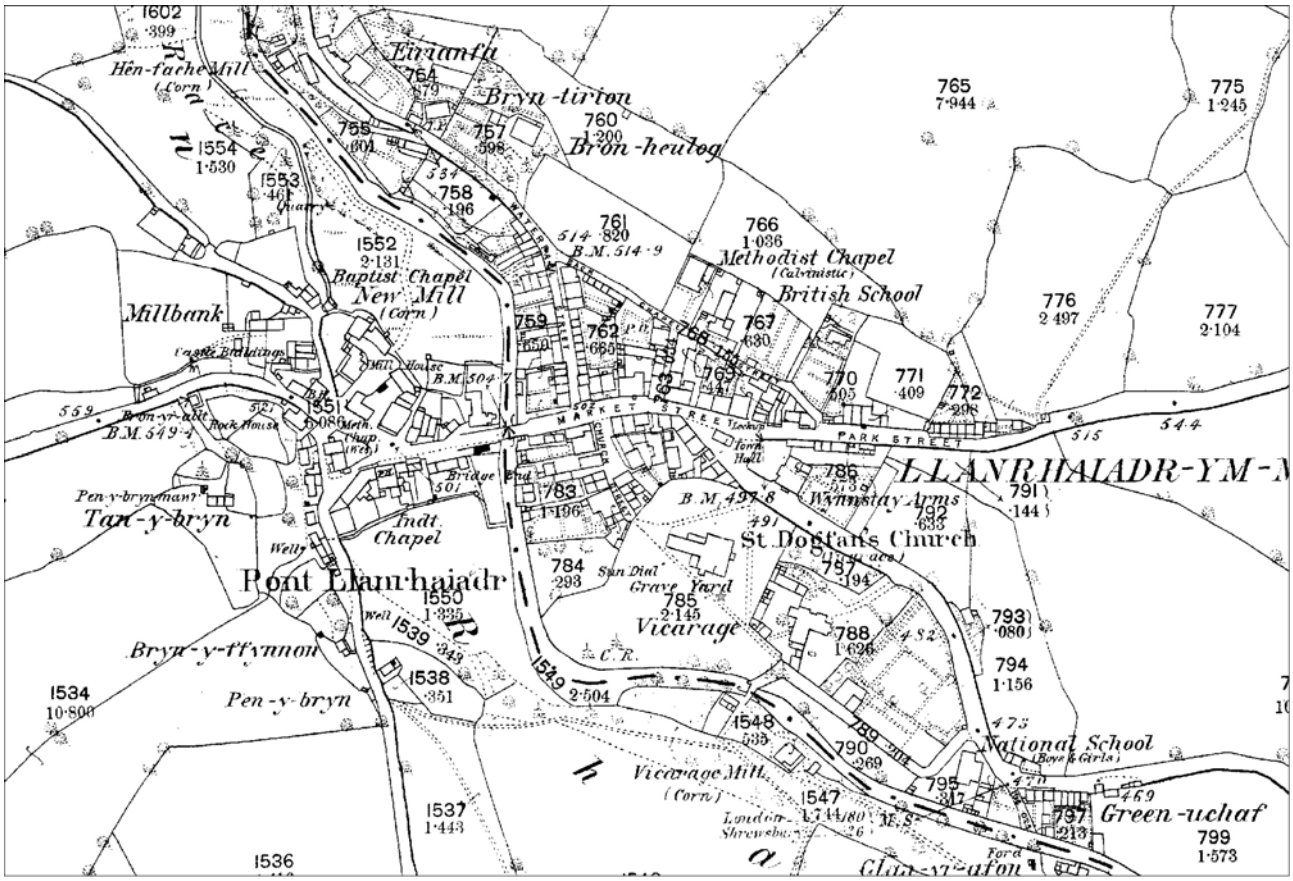
CPAT Report No 1134

Historic settlements in Montgomeryshire



THE CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

CPAT Report No 1134

Historic settlements in Montgomeryshire

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Report for Cadw

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CONTENTS

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

The historic settlements of the former county of Montgomeryshire – an Introduction

Background

Twenty years ago the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust compiled an assessment of the historic settlements of Montgomeryshire, on behalf of Cadw and the then Montgomeryshire District Council. It was one of several such assessments for the local authority areas of eastern Wales and ultimately ten reports were completed between 1992 and 1995, embracing the entire region for which CPAT had and retains a remit.

The imperative that underpinned these surveys was committed to paper for the first time when Brecknock Borough was studied in 1993, being expressed in the following terms:

> It has long been recognised that development within town and village alike [might] disturb or obliterate significant information about the past, but a suitable response to a specific building development or other permanent land use change has usually been instigated, if at all, on an ad hoc basis. A more structured approach to the understanding of historic settlements and the preservation and management of this fragile resource is required. This has been given a greater urgency by the publication in 1991 of the Welsh version of the Planning and Policy Guidance Note: Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16 Wales). This emphasises the responsibilities of Local Planning Authorities in the conservation of the archaeological heritage and confirms that archaeological remains are a material consideration when determining planning applications (Martin and Walters 1993, 3).

Three principal objectives of the study were defined at that time, though they were already implicit in the Montgomeryshire assessment of 1992:

> i) to produce a general picture of historic settlement in the area,
> ii) to identify, in as far as the evidence allows, those areas within the historic settlements that could be termed archaeologically sensitive, in order to assist in the day-to-day and long-term planning processes initiated by the local authority, and
> iii) to define areas of potential archaeological significance where developers might be required to undertake an archaeological evaluation as part of the planning process.

The individual village histories were never intended for publication, but their contents were absorbed into the Sites and Monuments Record (now the Historic Environment Record) where they could be accessed and recycled, usually without any acknowledgement to their source, in others' reports.

There is no need to stress that in the twenty years since that report on Montgomeryshire's towns and villages was circulated to a relatively small number of interested organisations, there have been changes, and we would hope improvements, to our collective perception of the emergence, development and in some instances collapse of historic settlements in the border counties and more specifically in Montgomeryshire.

Firstly, a series of Cadw-funded site-condition studies have appeared which directly or indirectly have had a bearing on settlement studies. The historic churches survey (1995-99), the early medieval ecclesiastical sites survey (2001-04) and even the deserted medieval rural settlement survey (1996-2001) have all played a part in enhancing our understanding of settlement patterns and development in eastern Wales, as have some rather more specific and detailed ground surveys such as those of village earthworks in Brecknock (1993) and Radnorshire (1996), though none unfortunately for Montgomeryshire.

Secondly, there are the results that have accrued from client-funded works on development sites – whether excavation, evaluation, watching brief or building recording – as a result of local authorities implementing PPG16 and, from 2002, the guidelines contained in Planning Policy Wales.

Thirdly, there are recently published studies which have transformed our thinking on certain topics. Most notable in this context are the place-name studies by Hywel Wyn Owen and Richard Morgan (2007), the first volume of the early medieval inscribed stones corpus prepared by Mark Redknap and John Lewis (2007) and Richard Suggett's Houses and History in the March of Wales. Radnorshire 1400-1800 published by the Welsh Royal Commission in 2005. Neither of these last two is directly pertinent to Montgomeryshire but both illustrate the quality of some of the work that has recently been completed or is in progress in the Principality.

Finally though in some ways the least tangible of the inputs is the ever-improving perception and appreciation of settlement development and the patterns that are fostered in east Wales, as a result of accumulated expertise, and the accessing of research from both other regions of Wales and from England. This doesn't normally manifest itself in publications, although the writer's paper, co-authored with Wyn Evans (2009) on clas churches and their landscapes is an exception.

In 2010 CPAT felt that the time had come to re-examine the pictures of its historic settlements, fifteen to twenty years on from when the initial studies were completed. In a general sense, various questions had been raised. Had developer-funding in advance of the potential destruction or damage to the cultural heritage had much of an effect and if so where? Had our knowledge and appreciation of the historic settlements in the region markedly improved in the last fifteen to twenty years? And in a departure from the practice in the early 1990s when the Internet was little more than an unfulfilled dream, could we successfully disseminate that information authoritatively so that it could be accessed digitally to satisfy the increasing number of people who search our website? There are several hundred historic settlements in eastern Wales and it was not possible to examine them all in a single exercise. The former local authority areas of Brecknock Borough and Radnorshire were selected to initiate the programme in 2010-11 and this has been followed with studies of Montgomeryshire and Flintshire in 2011-12. We hope to complete the remaining areas over the next two years.

Methodology and presentation

The 1992 report. A pattern for each report was established in 1992 comprising a report which covered a minimum of one A4 page of text and in some instances, depending on the size and interest of the settlement involved, three or four pages. The report considered, under four sub-headings, the geographic location of the settlement, the known history of its origins and development, the buildings and archaeology that were integral elements of the settlement, and finally a set of recommendations for further work.

Accompanying each settlement study was an Ordnance Survey map-based depiction of the settlement showing scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, known archaeological features and earthworks, areas which it was felt at the time should be preserved in situ, other areas that should be evaluated in advance of development, and a boundary line drawn around the historic settlement as it was then recognised, in other words the perceived historic core of the town or village.

Those early reports also contained as annexes a copy of the descriptive brief for the preparation of the study and another of a draft paper on archaeology and the planning process in Powys

The 2012 report. After various discussions the configuration of both the text layout and the accompanying map have been revised, to take account of changing circumstances and current requirements.

The baseline information – the settlement name, the national gird reference and the primary record number that links the settlement (as well as its individual elements) to the Historic

Environment Record – have necessarily remained the same, although the height above sea level and the prefix PRN have been dropped.

The geographic location has been retained, as has the section on history, now renamed 'history of development'. More change can be seen in the section formerly headed 'buildings and archaeology' which has been altered to 'the heritage to 1750'. This alteration results from two considerations. Firstly, it is becoming increasingly commonplace to refer to the cultural heritage and cultural heritage assets, convenient collective terms that embrace not only below and above-ground archaeology, and buildings, but also historic landscape (and townscape) elements that did not necessarily get the recognition that they warrant in the former terminology. Cultural heritage is seen as a useful shorthand descriptive term for everything that we are concerned with here. Secondly, a decision was taken to end the study at 1750, bringing it into line with Cadw's terminal date for the concurrent scoping programme of medieval and early post-medieval monument scheduling enhancement. 1750 to 1760 is often seen as a starting date for the Industrial Revolution, even if its full 'flowering' did not occur in Wales for another fifty years. Equally importantly, however, it was during the later 18th century and a little beyond that, some settlements saw marked development with a concomitant increase in the number of buildings, and the diminishing significance in the forms of evidence that are significant to the archaeologist. Llandrindod Wells, the leading settlement in old Radnorshire and the home to Powys County Council, offers an instructive example. This is not to downplay the significance of the buildings that date from the later 18th and 19th centuries, nor to infer that settlements that contain large numbers of such structures are not historic, rather it is a commentary on the shift in the nature of the evidence that is available to us.

This report has also tried to adopt a more rigorous approach to the presentation of the data, whether it be on archaeological sites, buildings or the townscape. It would be easy to write protracted descriptions of some buildings such as churches or earthwork complexes, or even in some instances the discoveries from development-led evaluations. The regurgitation of much detail, it was felt, would not necessarily be particularly useful to the general reader, and indeed might act as a deterrent. The inclusion of PRN numbers will allow the researcher or enthusiast to follow up individual leads in the regional Historic Environment Record should they wish, but what is offered here is a concise text covering as many issues as are currently known without over-elaboration on any one of them.

Finally, the section of recommendations has been removed. This, it should be admitted, is in part a pragmatic decision based on the realisation that some of the original recommendations covering standard issues such as the importance of consultation with the archaeological curator, the need for watching briefs and evaluations, and the like were compiled at a time when PPG16 was new, consultation practice was yet to be regularised, and the importance of the cultural heritage resource in our towns and villages had in some areas yet to be appreciated by at least some local authority planners. This situation has changed, and the importance of the cultural heritage is now largely accepted at local government level. It is pragmatic, however, for less satisfactory reasons. In an ideal world the recommendation for Hirnant that the relict earthworks of the churchyard should be surveyed' or 'the in-depth topographical and historical survey of Montgomery' would have been followed up and completed at some point over the last twenty years. That these aims have not been achieved is less a comment on the validity of the recommendation, more on the limited resources that are available for surveying and research: it is unrealistic to assume that this is going to change in the foreseeable future.

There have also been some modifications to the plans that accompany the texts. The depiction of designated archaeological sites (scheduling) and buildings (listing) has been left out, for we are conscious of the fact that it is entirely the prerogative of Cadw and/or the local authority to define these sites in cartographic form, and that the reader requiring information on the extent of a designation should approach the appropriate authority for that information. Furthermore, the number and extent of designated sites within any given settlement will change through time, and assuming that these maps have a currency measured in years, there is the potential for misleading a reader because the situation could have changed.

The definition of the historic core has also been modified, taking more account of existing boundaries in order to lessen any potential contention over whether a particular spot lies inside or outside the historic core as we perceive it. We would stress that the core boundary as defined is not an immutable perimeter, but is simply an estimate and a guide based on an assessment of the existing evidence by the writer as to where earlier settlement may once have existed.
Dropped too is the zonation of areas for evaluation in advance of development. In 1992, defining such areas was a useful guide to planners as to where archaeological intervention was most needed, but there is a potential conflict between the depiction of one or two such areas on a map on the one hand and the definition of the historic core on the other. If for whatever reason, an area within an historic core envelope is not highlighted for evaluation, this could be taken as an indication that the area would not require further assessment in the event of a proposed development. Rather we must work on the assumption that any development within an historic core could be a candidate for an evaluation, depending of course on the nature of the development itself, but that it should be the development control officer at CPAT who makes that decision, based on his own professional judgment.

More contentious perhaps is the decision to omit the identification of blocks of land defined as 'areas for preservation in situ', another facet of the 1992 survey. Where such areas are already statutorily designated within an historic settlement, their preservation is a given and no problem arises. However, in some cases in the past a decision that an area ought to be preserved has been taken on the basis of a rather superficial assessment of its worth, rather than on a detailed analysis of what is there. If, then, at a planning level a field containing earthworks is going to be preserved it needs to be based on rigorously defined evidence that will stand up to objective scrutiny, and this requires a detailed record that is rarely accessible through a report of this nature.

One final aspect to clarify is that the historic core envelope now defines only those areas within which there is the likelihood of settlement, by which we mean dwellings and their curtilages. The setting of any settlement will have been the surrounding landscape that was farmed and utilised from it, and potentially could spread over several square kilometres. Defining its fields, its pastures and its woodlands will be a considerable task, and its success cannot be guaranteed. Vital though it is to an understanding of that settlement, the inclusion of the setting within the historic core cannot be advocated. It requires a different level of zoning.

The original study of Montgomeryshire listed 98 settlements. The current survey covers 60. Omitted are several settlements that reflect only post-1750 developments such as Abermule, Middletown, Pool Quay and Staylittle, and places such as Cefn Coch and Llanbrynmair which have grown up around an inn. Included in the total are four settlements that were never in Montgomeryshire, but are now in Powys: Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr, Llangadwaladr, Llangedwyn and Llansilin; and to these can be added that part of Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant which lies on the north side of the river, formerly a part of Denbighshire, but now united with the south bank in modern Powys. In addition, three places in the historic county of Montgomeryshire with pre-1750 churches have been assessed for the first Time: Penrhos, Penstrowed and Snead.

An overview of Montgomeryshire's historic settlements

The 1992 study provided a thorough assessment of the settlements in what was then the historic county of Montgomeryshire. Attention was paid in the overview to the prevalence of settlements where the term llan was incorporated into the name, and subsequent studies for other counties considered such themes as the difference between dispersed and nucleated settlement, the theories of the late Glanville Jones on nucleated bond settlements, the primacy of sub-circular churchyards, earthwork mottes where settlements were attached, and settlements displaying English (or more correctly Anglo-Norman) influences. It is not proposed to cover the same ground here, but as with previous reports (for Radnorshire and Brecknock Borough) in the present round of assessments, rather to look at the various forms of settlement to identify what patterns emerge.
The categorisation of towns and villages is often difficult and sometimes impossible, based as it is on sparse evidence. Form and shape, or more correctly termed morphology, provides guidance

on planned towns and villages, the presence of older buildings can offer clues as to whether there was some level of nucleation in a settlement in the Tudor era, though rarely before that time. Both of these characteristics provide positive evidence which can be relied on. In contrast, negative evidence used to support a particular contention, may or may not be reliable. There is no immediate way of knowing. For example, we suggest here that Garthbeibio is a 'church settlement', a class of settlement where a historic church is today accompanied solely by some other building such as an inn or farm, or in the recent past appeared in this form. It is an assumption, based on the absence of both observable surface traces and relict features depicted on 19th century maps, as well as the visual similarity with so many other places in Powys, that this form of settlement has always been present at Garthbeibio. But it can be no more than assumption, for only by carefully excavating the entire area around the church could we be certain that it had stood alone in the medieval era.

Overall, the number of settlements where we have positive evidence is heavily outweighed by those underpinned by negative evidence alone. Hence the categorisation below is little more than provisional, and is likely to stay so for the foreseeable future.

Planned settlements

There are six settlements which reveal elements of deliberate planning, and they account for all of Montgomeryshire's historic towns. The emphasis is different from town to town. Newtown and Llanidloes display a classic grid network, although detailed assessment shows some irregularities. It is no coincidence that these are the two planned towns which are thought to have been protected by defences, though in the case of the former, the actual evidence is virtually non-existent. Machynlleth with its T-form is different, as is Welshpool in that its regular cross shape is distorted by the long length of High Street and Broad Street though this may result from an extension from the original core. Montgomery's plan is constrained by its topography while Llanfyllin, the smallest of the group, also shows a regular cross shape.

Llanfyllin	Machynlleth	Newtown
Llanidloes	Montgomery	Welshpool

Nucleated village settlements

Nucleated settlements are well attested in southern Powys, primarily because of the survival of earthworks that point to dwellings and their crofts. In comparison there are relatively few in the northern historic counties of Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire.

Of the five identified below, Llanrhaeadr stands alone, for with a little more subjectivity it might have been fitted into the group of planned towns above. It has a market place and some indications of a planned layout, but has yet to be the subject of a full morphological analysis. For the present it is simply classified here as a nucleated settlement in the Middle Ages and Tudor period. Berriew, Churchstoke and Llansilin share an attribute – in each case close to the church was an open area of common which would perhaps have attracted dwellings around its perimeter in the early post-medieval era, if not before. Guilsfield may also have had its open common, but the evidence is less persuasive.

This is a pattern encountered elsewhere in the United Kingdom, though we should be cautious in comparing them directly with the typical lowland 'greens' that can be seen in East Anglia or Sussex. And in the studies of southern Powys we have encountered similar village phenomena, as at Glasbury and Painscastle in Radnorshire though in both places, there was also a castle which was in existence before the adjacent village developed. This leads on to another category of settlement.

Berriew	Guilsfield	Llansilin
Churchstoke	Llanrhaeadr	

Castle settlements

It can be argued that Hyssington is a castle settlement, the church down on lower ground below the castle, the settlement if any such exists, adjacent to the church. Castle Caereinion might come into this class as well, although the mound in the corner of the churchyard has yet to be convincingly proven to be a castle motte. Most castle settlements could well be classified under other headings, an indication if one were needed that the original impetus for a settlement and the morphology that it exhibits are not mutually exclusive.

Castle Caereinion
Hyssington

Church settlements

In number alone, church settlements top the list of site types. Over 60% of the historic settlements in Montgomeryshire can provisionally be included in the group. 'Church settlement' is a useful collective term, although it is one that doesn't figure in the classic texts on historic settlement. In that some degree of grouping or nucleation might be assumed in the definition of a settlement, the term is indeed virtually a paradox. For, as noted above, the morphology of a church settlement hinges on the fact that the church appears to be isolated by itself or perhaps with no more than a single farm, an inn or a rectory for company. The church, then, is itself the settlement – it is a concept rather than a physical manifestation of what we would consider a settlement to consist of, namely dwellings. Virtually all of these are of medieval origin, but there are two exceptions. Penrhos was formerly a chapel-of-ease built on a common in 1625, while Criggion church came into existence soon after the Restoration of Charles II; it had a predecessor but the location of this earlier church or chapel is not known.

In some instances we can speculate that former dwellings have been abandoned or swept away leaving few if any visible traces. Putative bond settlements of earlier medieval date could be candidates. Demonstrating that this was or wasn't the case is, however, virtually impossible. But some churches almost certainly never attracted more than a solitary dwelling around them, for from medieval times and perhaps even earlier, they served a community which was dispersed in farms and cottages across the parish. Archaeological work may perhaps reveal in years to come that some of those in the list below were accompanied by dwellings in earlier centuries, and this is where developer-funding projects could be critical. For the present in terms of nucleation these places occupy the bottom rung of the ladder.

Aberhafesp
Buttington
Cemmaes
Criggion
Darowen
Forden
Garthbeibio
Hirnant
Llan
Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr
Llandrinio
Llandysilio
Llandyssil
Llanerfyl
Llanfechain
Llanfihangel
Llangadfan
Llangadwaladr
Llangedwyn
Llangurig
Llangynog
Llangynyw
Llanllugan
Llanllwrchaiarn
Llanmerewig
Llanwnnog
Llanwrin
Llanwyddelan
Manafon
Mochdre
Penegoes
Pennant Melangell
Penrhos
Penstrowed
Snead
Trefeglwys
Trelystan

Settlements of uncertain nature

There are some settlements that currently defy categorisation: the evidence that is available to us is insufficient to place them in any of the groups already discussed. It seems improbable that further documentary research or topographic analysis will resolve the problem; only

archaeological excavation will throw any light on the matter. Llandinam seems to have been an important place in the Middle Ages, its church the focus of an significant ecclesiastical centre, yet the nature of any secular settlement here is obscure. Carno has both its church and the earthwork enclosure that was home to the Knights Hospitallers, but the combination does not mean that a dependant community grew up around the complex. Kerry has the superficial appearance of a nucleated settlement of long standing, yet there is nothing to corroborate that this was indeed the case.

Bettws Cedwain	Llandinam	Meifod
Carno	Llanfair Caereinion	Tregynon
Kerry	Llansantffraid	

Aberhafesp

SO 0729 9236
15761

Introduction
Aberhafesp is situated beside the B4568, 4km west of Newtown. The church is an isolated structure, accompanied until recently only by Aberhafesp Hall. New housing developments are now spreading around and to the west of the hall. The church and hall occupy the lower northern slopes of the Severn valley and face each other across the Aberhafesp Brook. The road below follows the edge of a river terrace.

This brief report examines Aberhafesp's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

We have not referenced the sources that have been examined to produce this report, but that information will be available in the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. Numbers in brackets are primary record numbers used in the HER to provide information that is specific to individual sites and features. These can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website (www.archwilio.org.uk).

History of development
The church dedication and its valley-side location suggest that there was an early medieval ecclesiastical foundation established here, but nothing further can be determined about it.

Aberhafesp is first documented as *Aberafh*' in 1254, though as with other references from 1254 and 1291 this was the name given to the church and carries no implications of a settlement. *Aberhauesp* is documented in 1330. The name means the 'mouth of the Hafesp', alluding to the Aberhafesp Brook which runs to the west of the church.

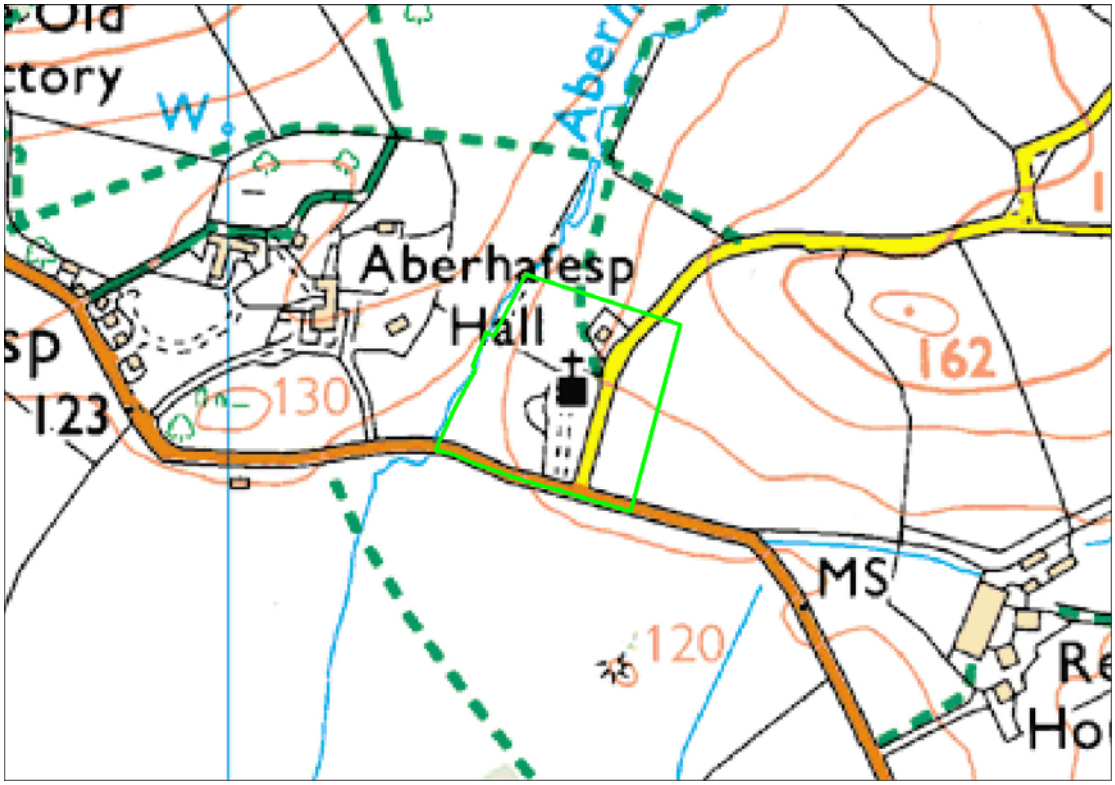
Nothing is known of Aberhafesp's medieval history, but the sparsity of settlement round the church on 19th century maps points to this being a church settlement rather than a nucleated one.

The heritage to 1750
St Gwynog's church (7551) was rebuilt about 1857, though some medieval walling was retained. From the medieval building came the 15th century roof and some 18th-century wall memorials, but most of the furnishings and fittings are contemporary with the new church.

The churchyard (7552) was originally a sub-rectangular enclosure and its former boundary can still be detected south of the church where the burial ground was extended in 1890.

Aberhafesp Hall (20517) is a Grade II listed building constructed around 1675 and is one of the earliest brick buildings in the region. Originally a gentry home, it has now been sub-divided into several flats.

No obvious earthwork traces exist in the vicinity of the church to suggest an earlier nucleated settlement, and there is little to indicate how the landscape here has been modified over the centuries.



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Berriew

SJ 1875 0085
16108

Introduction

Berriew lies between Welshpool and Newtown, about 8km south of the former, at a crossroads where the B4390 intersects the B4385. It has developed where a small river, the Afon Rhiw, leaves its valley and enters the flood plain of the Severn. The historic core of the village occupies a spur of higher ground which from the northern valley flank projects slightly into the valley itself. The southern side of the valley has generally proved too steep for building purposes. Subsequent expansion has infilled the lower ground as far as the Montgomeryshire Canal, and now the village is expanding westwards beside the Rhiw.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Berriew up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

While the traditional view that the area around Berriew was the birthplace of St Bueno has been questioned by modern scholarship, there is more conviction that land here was given to him and that he founded a church on it. This could have been towards the end of the 6th century or the beginning of the 7th century AD.

Certainly the churchyard is now far from curvilinear in its design and its oval shape has certainly been modified over the centuries by the boundary being straightened to facilitate development. In this respect it is similar to other pre-Conquest church foundations such as Corwen in Denbighshire. Even without the Bueno association, it would be identified as an early medieval foundation, and it may even be a mother church, the most important church in the district.

The earliest form of the place-name, *Eberrw*, is much later, appearing for the first time in about 1100 and is topographical referring to the mouth of Afon Rhiw. It was only in the 16th century that it lost the initial 'A' and was written down as *Beriw*.

The nature and appearance of the settlement during the medieval era is unknown, though the church had come under the control of the abbey of Strata Marcella north of Welshpool by 1254.

The Tudor period was one of general prosperity based on the wool trade and it is claimed that there was a market hall beyond the west end of the churchyard until 1875. This though needs

to be confirmed for there is no corroborative evidence that Berriew was sufficiently important to warrant a market. West of Berriew was the large Vaynor Estate which had its origins late in the medieval era, and could have had some effect on the development of the village.

Even by the middle of the 19th century when the Tithe survey was drawn up the village still clustered around the church and had spread westwards only as far as The Elms and The Vicarage.

The heritage to 1750

The church (7587), dedicated inevitably to St Bueno, was built in 1803-4 and then victorianised in 1876, replacing a smaller, medieval, single-chamber building with a west bellcote. The rubble from its demolition may still be detectable as a slight mounded platform beneath the present church. Disappointingly, there are no internal fittings which pre-date the 19th century structure, except for a memorial brass of 1597.

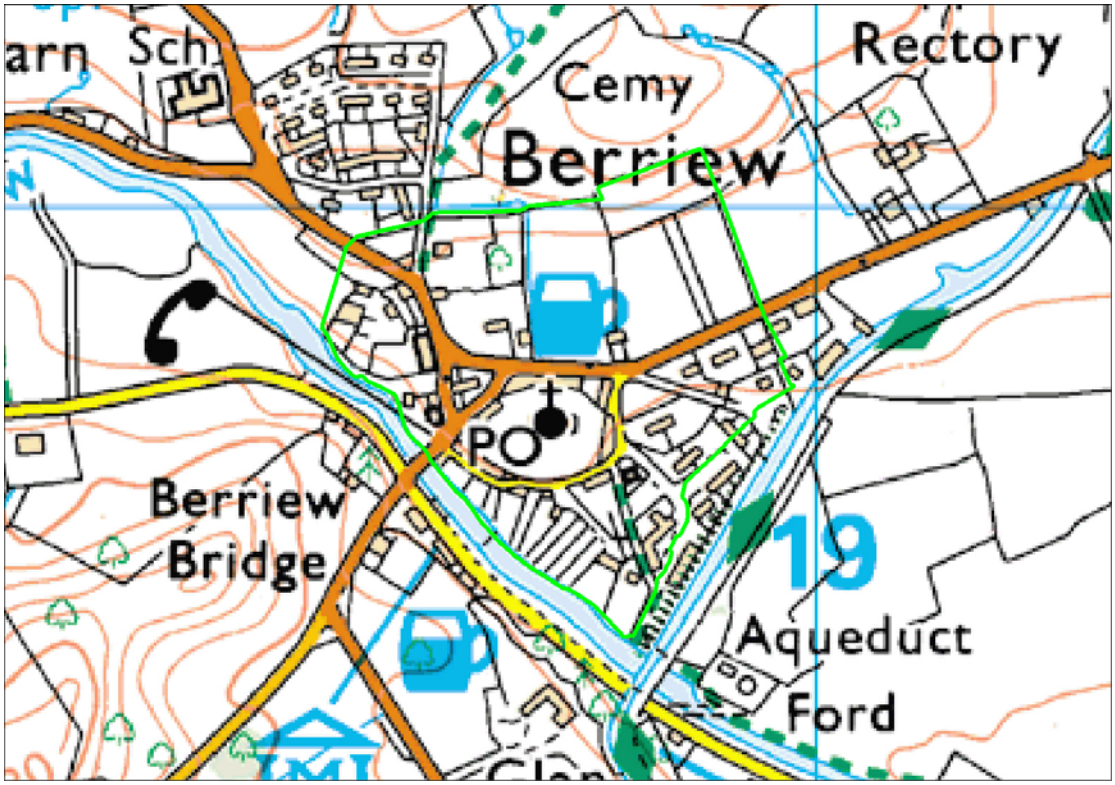
The churchyard (4583) as noted above has undergone changes to its outline, but its oval shape is still evident.

The village displays an important group of timber-framed buildings around the church. Some are of 17th and 18th century origin, but many such as Wittingham's Stores (36246) were either developed or heavily restored by the Vaynor Estate in and around the mid-19th century to create a recognisable estate pattern. The timber-framed Vicarage (31090), however, is dated to 1616. The Farmhouse (32515), another timber-framed building, is attributed to the late 17th or early 18th century The Smithy on Church Terrace (32516) is probably late 17th century though it carries a 1774 inscription, Lychgate Cottage (20253) is of broadly the same date. The row of three houses known as The Sign (36248) may have originated as a single house in the late 17th century. Rhiew House (42354) and no 5 Church Terrace (42357) were both built in the late 17th century, as were nos 1 and 2 (25826) and nos 3 and 4 Church Terrace (42413). A free school also is known to have been established here in 1655, but was rebuilt in 1819, and is to be found on Church Terrace (42412).

Both a corn mill and a fulling mill lay near the core of the village. The latter (37454) was certainly operating as early as 1438 and shared a leat with the corn mill. In decline by the 16th century it seems to have still been operational two centuries later. Its precise location is not certain. The corn mill (8459) was of 17th century date and though it has gone the mill house remains.

Speculatively it can be suggested that the triangle formed by three lanes, just to the north-west of the churchyard, may originally have been an open space, subsequently infilled. Whether this should be seen as a village green or a small market place has yet to be determined, but regarding the latter the reader is referred back to what was written above.

Ridge and furrow cultivation (4476) of unknown date has been recognised on the north side of the B4390 opposite Laburnum House and there are other earthworks in adjacent fields to the east. A relic of earlier land divisions may also survive in the narrow strips running down to the river to the south of the church. Much more certain is that the valley floor of the Severn was widely turned over to open-field agriculture in the Middle Ages. Early maps leave no doubt that this was the case.



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Bettws Cedewain

SO 1227 9683
16349

Introduction
Bettws Cedewain lies on the B4389 in the hills to the west of the Severn valley, about 5km north-east of Newtown. In an area where narrow valleys are the norm, several small streams converging on the Bechan Brook, a tributary of the Severn, have created a broader bowl and it is on an adjacent spur with a shallow valley on its western edge that the church was constructed, overlooking most of the dwellings which have subsequently been constructed at lower levels in the valley. Behind the church the ground rises steeply. Similarly on the far side of the stream, gentle slopes now populated with modern houses give way to increasingly steep hillslopes. The historic centre of Bettws is well-defined, but modern estates are expanding on its periphery to the south and west.

This brief report examines Bettws's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development
The shape of the churchyard, the dedication of the church and its position on higher ground overlooking the sheltered Bechan Brook leave little doubt that this was an early medieval foundation, but as with almost all the churches in Montgomeryshire there is specific information to underpin the argument.

The name *Bettws* is first documented in 1254, with variants such as *Bettus* in 1365/6. *Betws Kydewain* appears in the years between 1534 and 1580. The first element is a borrowing from Old English *bed-hus* meaning an oratory, and seems to have been used primarily for a chapel in Wales. The second element reflects the cantref in which the church was situated.

Nothing of the subsequent history and development of the settlement can be established until the 18th century. In the mid-19th century, houses and a mill were cramped around the church, all of them lying to the north of the stream. Almost all of the housing was to the west of the church, while the hall occupied a privileged position to the east.

The heritage to 1750
St Bueno's church (7678) has a 19th century nave and chancel as a single chamber, appended to a west tower that is almost certainly early 16th century in date. Most of the fittings are also 19th century, but there is a fine brass of 1531, the only pre-Reformation example of its kind in Powys, commemorating the vicar Sir John ap Meredyth who built the tower. Also there are an early church chest and two bells both dated 1630.

The raised churchyard (7679) is distinctively circular, apart from on the north-west where topographical considerations dictated its form, and its outline reveals no modifications over the centuries.

The only other listed building is the Regency vicarage (7682), which was originally a timber-framed structure of the 17th or 18th century, but was burnt down and rebuilt in the 1760s and partially rebuilt again in the early 19th century. Amongst the other timber-framed houses on and just above the valley floor are the Post Office (7685) and a dwelling on Mill Street (7686) both listed as Grade III before that category became obsolete. Little is recorded about them.

The mill (8023) was last used around 1930. Built in 1850, it may have been on the site of one that is referred to in a document of 1496/7. In the mid-19th century it was supplied by a large mill pond (7683) that lay immediately to the west of the churchyard and was fed by a small stream running off the hills.

There is little to suggest that the village was ever any larger than it was in the middle of the 19th century, but a single earthwork platform (7680) was noted adjacent to the road running eastwards towards Welshpool.

The former course of the road from the south, prior to the works of the local turnpike trust, can be seen as a terraced track (7687).

Possible ridge and furrow cultivation has been noted at two places on the south-facing hillside near the church (7681; 7684). As with much of the ridge and furrow in Montgomeryshire, its date cannot be determined with any degree of precision.

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Buttington

SJ 2500 0885
17098

Introduction

Buttington lies beside the main A458(T) road, less than 3km from Welshpool. It now consists of a church, a former vicarage, a public house, a small group of houses, and a business park is now developing beside it.

Little more than 300m from the River Severn, the settlement occupies a spot where the ground sloping down from Long Mountain levels out and projects on to the valley floor, producing a slight elevated location when viewed from the south and west. An ancient ford known as Rhyd-y-groes crossed the Severn just to the west, the same place marking the point where Offa's Dyke met the river.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Buttington up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The first reference to Buttington is a particularly early one, coming in 893 when, according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a Viking army was besieged in a fortification here. Buttington near Welshpool is commonly considered the correct location, although another candidate has been flagged, namely Buttington on the Severn Estuary. Reportedly, in 1039 a battle between Welsh and English forces took place at the ford.

These aside, place-name specialists cite *Butinton* as the earliest reference from 1166-7, with *Butyngton* appearing in 1312. The name appears to mean 'Böta's settlement' which would normally suggest a Saxon origin. An alternative name *Dal-y-bont* meaning end of the bridge is not evidenced until the second half of the 15th century, but a bridge over the River Severn is recorded here in the 13th century.

The origin of the church is not known. An early medieval foundation is not impossible and the hint of curvilinearity in its form and its position on the edge of the flood plain could be taken as corroborative evidence. Against this is a reference in an *Inquisition Post Mortem* of 1304 that it was built on land given by a member of the de la Pole family in the 13th century.

Buttington's church was regarded as a chapel in the 14th century, and apart from sparse references to this, Buttington does not seem to have excited the interest of the chroniclers during the Middle Ages.

In the light of the information below, there is as yet nothing to suggest a nucleated settlement around the church before the 18th century. It was as late as in 1759 that the chapel was separated from its mother church of Welshpool, and a new ecclesiastical parish was created for it.

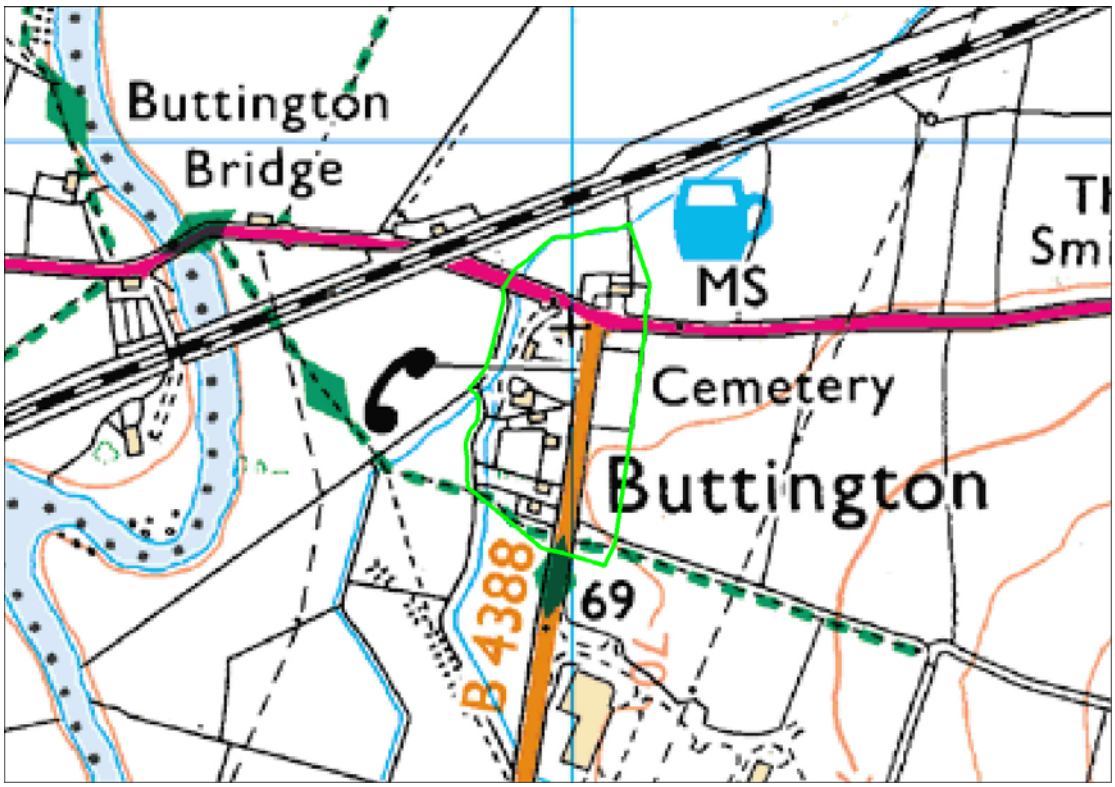
The heritage to 1750

All Saints' Church (30801; Grade I) retains some medieval masonry, perhaps 14th century, and some windows still retain original dressings. The porch is 17th century. Internally there is a 15th century arch-braced roof and some fragments of pre-Reformation stained glass.

The outline of the raised churchyard (7565) has altered since the mid-19th century when it appeared as sub-triangular with curving sides. In 1838, 400 skulls and many long bones were unearthed from three pits in the churchyard (6083). It has always been assumed that these were a legacy of one of the two battles in the vicinity, but recent scientific analysis at the National Museum Wales has revealed that two of the skulls were of much more recent origin.

A rectilinear earthwork (6082) enclosing upwards of 3 hectares, within which most of the present buildings are located, was described in the 19th century, and it has been argued that this was the fortification occupied by the Vikings in 893 though not necessarily constructed by them. No trace of this feature can now be identified and there is no independent evidence to corroborate it: the existence of this earthwork still requires confirmation.

There are two Grade II listed buildings in the settlement, namely The Vicarage (30803) and the Green Dragon (30807) which are of 19th and very early 18th century date respectively, though for the latter the Royal Commission hint at an even earlier date, in the 17th century. The inn, it might be assumed, emerged because of the proximity of the river crossing.



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Caersws

SO 0309 9190
25003

Introduction

Caersws lies on the A470(T) in central Montgomeryshire, just under 8km to the west of Newtown. The village occupies a low-lying spot beside the Severn, a short distance below its confluence with a tributary, the River Carno. Modern housing development extends over a finger-like spur of slightly higher ground protruding south-westwards from the valley slopes, but this is separated from the earlier village by the Manthrig Brook. This village core, likes its predecessor in the Roman period, occupies a gravel terrace just above the flood plain of the river and the presence of a flood defence bank on the west, south and east testifies to the problems inherent in the location.

This brief report examines Caersws's emergence and development up to 1750, and has benefited from most useful discussions with the leading medieval historian, Dr David Stephenson. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The modern village overlies one of the two important Roman military complexes in Montgomeryshire (SAM Mont 001) and a nodal point for several Roman roads. The degree to which the presence of the former fort and its civilian *vicus* influenced the siting of the medieval and late medieval settlement.

The name reputedly means the 'fort of Swys', an otherwise unknown figure but traditionally a queen, Swys Wen (with *gwen* = 'fair'). How much credence we should attach to the tradition we leave you, the reader, to decide. Possibly, someone made use of the fort defences here in the centuries after the Roman withdrawal. But perhaps it is antiquarian invention based on readings of late medieval Welsh bardic poetry.

The earliest reference to the name comes in 1470-1 as *Kairesosse*, and then over the next one hundred years as *Kaersoys* (1478) and *Kaer Sws* (between 1545 and 1553). Such late dates for a town or borough do little to encourage a critical acceptance of its existence.

Samuel Lewis in the first half of the 19th century claimed both a castle and a church at Caersws in earlier times, as this was the residence of the lords of Arwystli. No traces of the castle have ever been recognised in the village, nor is there confirmatory evidence of the church. Lewis is not the most reliable of sources, but were the castle reference to be authentic, one of the two motte-and-bailey castles on the further side of the Severn might be a candidate.

That there is no solid evidence for a medieval church at Caersws and that the settlement lay within the ecclesiastical parish of Llanwnog argues against an early origin. This is reinforced by the location adjacent to the parish boundary. It has been assumed by some authorities that a medieval town was established at Caersws, the regular pattern of streets suggesting a planned borough, yet the date of its establishment is unknown and no foundation charter survives. An origin in the late 12th or early 13th century has been postulated but again this seems unlikely given the absence of documentary references.

Nevertheless, there are some relevant references from later centuries. George Owen of Henllys writing at the end of the 16th century claimed that Caersws had been incorporated (as a market centre) by Lord Tiptoft in the second or third quarter of the 15th century. John Leland in the 1530s noted ‘ yet at poore Cairllews hath bene a Market and Borow privilegid’, and a deed of 1596 refers to a burgage in the town. This all suggests a late beginning and a settlement then that was already in decline in the early 16th century, probably because of the proximity of the better established market at Llanidloes. It was, though, still referred to as a borough throughout the 16th century.

Whether the street pattern is a relic of this late medieval market settlement remains to be determined, though it is difficult to identify a later occasion on which it could have been created. By the middle of the 19th century when Caersws was first mapped there was a scatter of houses along Main Street, Severn Street and one or two on Manthrig Lane. It is a layout more akin to the sporadic survival of tenements from a denser pattern, than of a settlement gradually expanding from a small core, and this strengthens the argument for a regularly laid out market centre late in the Middle Ages.

The heritage to 1750

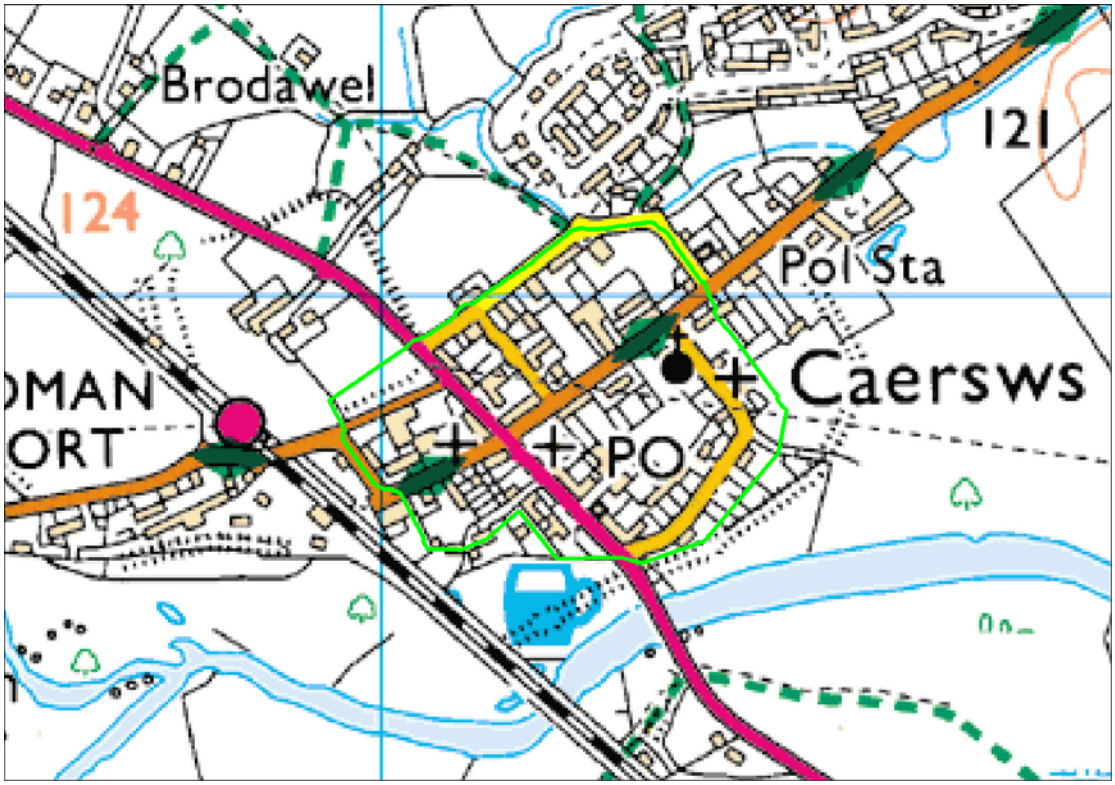
No buildings have been listed within the built up area, but there are two or three half-timbered structures, perhaps of 17th or early 18th century origin, including Bran-Llan (20520), the Buck Hotel and some cottages off Bridge Street. The church of St Mary (7708) was constructed during the 19th century and thus falls outside the remit of this report.

Despite considerable archaeological activity in Caersws over the last twenty years very little information on the medieval settlement has been recovered and artefacts relevant to the period have been almost non-existent. One possible explanation, that there is little correlation between those areas targeted for examination, primarily because of their Roman potential, and the most likely areas of medieval activity along existing street frontages, is not wholly convincing.

The absence of any buildings earlier than the 17th century and the lack of any datable material from excavations that could be attributed to the Middle Ages are sufficient grounds to question whether there was a medieval town here. However, the grid pattern of streets, a feature primarily associated with medieval town planning, cannot be readily explained.

The flood alleviation banks (7709) are generally assumed to be post-medieval though there is no direct evidence that this is the case. The possibility of a medieval precursor is remote but cannot be wholly ruled out.

Traces of possible ridge and furrow cultivation have been noted in a field to the north of Meini-Cochion on the northern periphery of the settlement. Even if the traces are authentic, they may be very difficult to attribute a date to.



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Carno

SN 9632 9648
15638

Introduction
Carno straddles the main arterial A470 between the Montgomeryshire towns of Newtown and Machynlleth, about 16km north-west of the former. It is a settlement of several parts, and had it been like this at the beginning of the medieval era we would undoubtedly be terming it polyfocal. The old village and church sit on the south side of Afon Carno, raised above the valley floor on a gravel terrace. A stream, Afon Cerniog, flowing eastwards to join the main river, creates a wedge of land on which the village was established. A couple of hundred metres up the road towards Machynlleth is another focus that has grown up around a former mill and a house that functioned as a country club. Further out still at the western extremity is what was the Laura Ashley complex, more than a kilometre from the historic centre. New housing is gradually making its mark on the historic part of Carno, and ultimately we may wonder whether the village will become a single unbroken ribbon development along the main road.

This brief report examines Carno's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

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History of development

The position of Carno church beside a river might suggests an early medieval origin but other characteristic traits such as a curvilinear churchyard are missing, and the dedication reveals only the influence of the Hospitallers. Whether there was an earlier dedicatee, one of the saints or holy men, is unknown.

In the late 12th or early 13th century the manor of Carno came into the possession of the Knights Hospitallers, and became a holding or out-station of their border estate of Halston in Shropshire. The earthwork enclosure adjacent to the church and known as Caer Noddfa has been associated with them.

Current thinking derives the village name from the river which was documented as *Nant Carno* in the years between 1143 and 1151. The name may indicate that the river flowed from or through an area of cairns. The earliest reference to Carno is earlier, for a battle occurred here in 950 and was mentioned in annals about 1100. The reference should not, however, be taken to signify a settlement or church – it could simply have referred to a general topographical location.

Its subsequent development is not recorded. Carno, it has been suggested, was a place of pilgrimage, but even if this is true (and the evidence is not persuasive) this could have had

little influence on the scale of settlement. By the early 19th century when the first map appeared, buildings surrounded the churchyard on three sides and a small group clustered together on the south bank of the Cerniog in Frankwell.

The heritage to 1750

The present church of St John the Baptist (7619) was erected in 1863, replacing an earlier building. The mounded platform around the west end of the church probably indicates its rubble. The only fittings that were preserved from the earlier church were three bells cast in the second half of the 17th century.

Inside the church is a cross-inscribed pillar stone (918; SAM Mont146) attributed to the 7th-8th century which was found acting as a gate-post near the Laura Ashley factory in 1960. Its original location is not known: it could have been a marker or perhaps may have been erected in an early medieval cemetery.

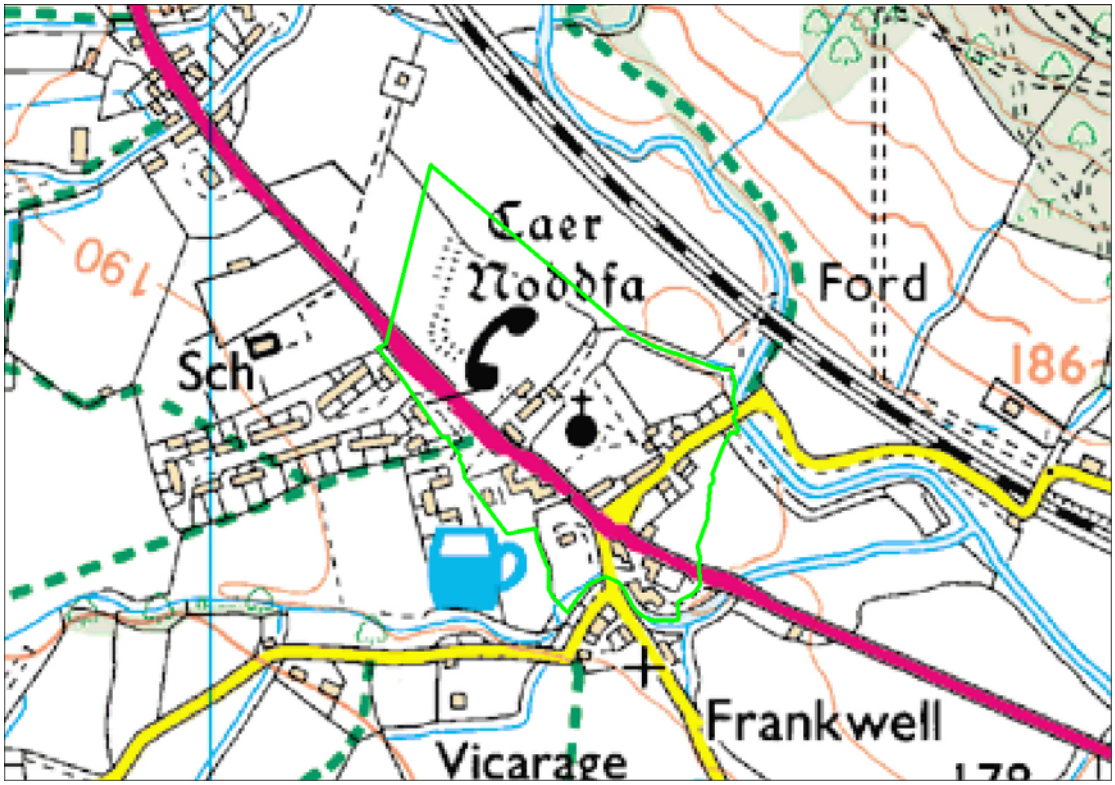
The churchyard is sharply rectangular in its form, giving no hint as to when it was first laid out.

The rectilinear enclosure known as Caer Noddfa (919; SAM Mont052) beside the church is generally thought to be have been used as a *hospitium* (grange) by the Knights Hospitaller, and the name has some antiquity for it was referred to be Edward Lhuyd's correspondent in the 1690s. Whether the earthwork is in fact a military installation of Roman date has yet to be satisfactorily resolved. Excavations in 1964/5 produced only the stone foundations of a building of medieval date.

Although many of the buildings existing in the village appear to be depicted on an 1802 manuscript map, none has been considered sufficiently important to warrant listing, and there are no records of any significantly earlier buildings in the village core.

The layout of the village prior to the improvements of the 18th century turnpike trust which forced through the main road invites speculation. Possibly the main thoroughfare was along Post Office Lane on the north-south axis of the bridges (or fords) across the two rivers.

Ridge and furrow cultivation (7620) overlies Caer Noddfa, its date unknown.



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Castle Caereinion

SJ 1640 0550
15639

Introduction

Castle Caereinion lies on the B4385 some 6km west of Welshpool. The village occupies a flat saddle of ground between relatively steep-sided hills that rise to east and west. Northwards, the ground drops away gently to a valley carrying a small tributary of the Banwy, though both this river and Afon Rhiw to the south are several kilometres distant.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Castle Caereinion up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

Until relatively recently the dwellings grouped around the churchyard represented the core of the village. A major new development, the Maesgarmon estate to the east has now altered the layout of the settlement here.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Recorded as *Castell* in 1254, and as *castellum Kereiniaun* in 1309, the second element refers to the administrative division or commote of Caereinion, but the *Castell* is more of a mystery, and experts have pointed out that early place-names could refer to another castle site elsewhere in the commote.

There is no unequivocal evidence for an early medieval foundation here, yet the dedication is suggestive.

Documentary records state that Madawc, prince of Powys built a castle in Caereinion in 1156. It has been argued, quite understandably, that the mound in the churchyard (see below) is the earthwork castle referred to, yet this remains to be proved, even if Cathcart King, one of the leading experts on castles in his day accepted its authenticity. Records indicate that the castle itself was destroyed in 1167 and it is not clear whether it was subsequently refurbished.

The medieval development of Castle Caereinion is not chronicled, and St Garmon's was not an important ecclesiastical centre, being classed as a chapel in 1254, although it subsequently emerged as the centre of an ecclesiastical parish. Small amounts of medieval pottery were recovered in an evaluation on the east side of the road opposite the church but this material was not associated with any structural features.

An estate map of 1766 reveals that there has been a fundamental alteration in the layout of the village since that date. The only dwellings in the village were cottages on the west side of the churchyard and some of these fronted on to a large, open triangular area, perhaps best interpreted as a green, to the north of the church (and now occupied by School House). The main road through the village ran round the west side of the churchyard and then bifurcated, one branch running eastwards, the present Cwm Lane, the other striking off in a south-westerly direction. The present B4385 around the east side of the churchyard and down to Berriew did not exist in the middle of the 18th century. How much credence we should attach to the surveyor's depiction of a smaller churchyard which would not have incorporated Twmpath Garmon (see below) is unclear. Quillets or strip fields were in evidence in Maes Llan to the west of the church, indicative of medieval open-field farming, and this in turn points to the presence of a medieval community in some form.

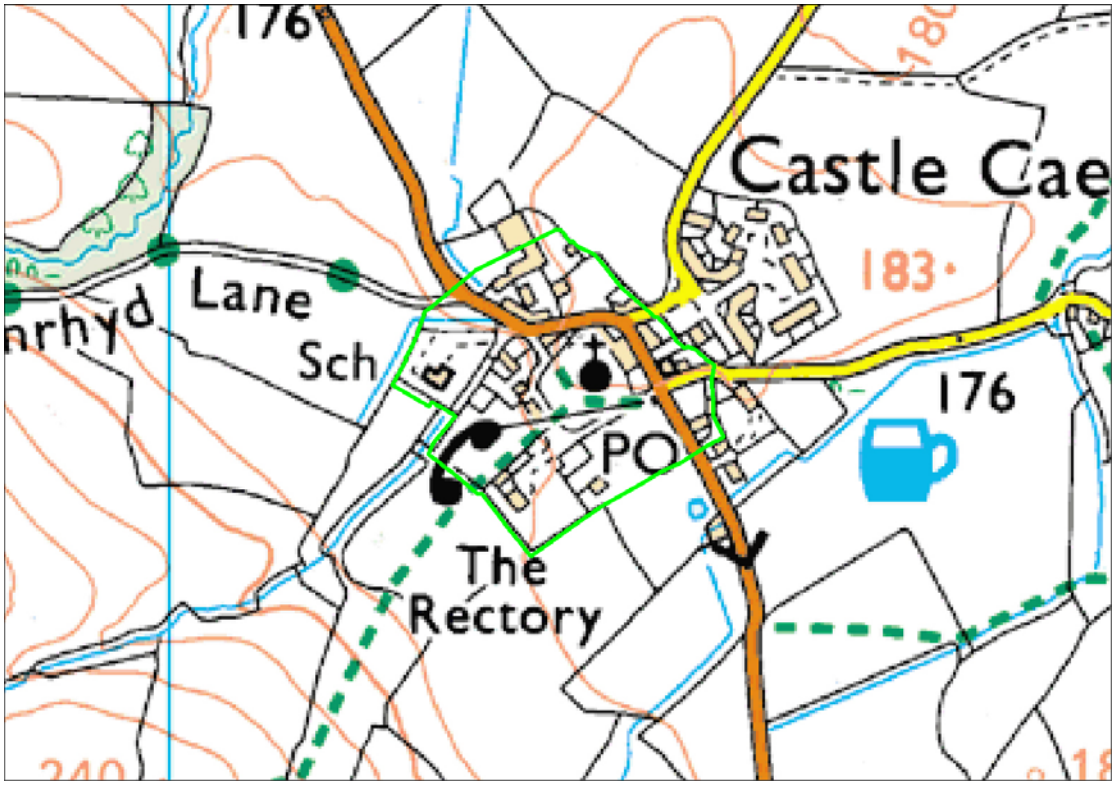
The heritage to 1750

The church of St Garmon (7649) was completely rebuilt in 1866 with additions in 1874. Its predecessor was of 15th century date. Some of the fittings from the earlier church survive, mostly of 18th century date.

The mound (104), in the corner of the churchyard has been classed as a medieval castle mound or motte, and is also known as Twmpath Garmon. It survives in a somewhat mutilated condition. It has been suggested that its accompanying bailey can be detected in the outline of the churchyard perimeter on the north-west and north-east, and less convincingly in the presence four small mounds on the south-west and south-east. On this premise St Garmon's church was originally established within the castle defences, a phenomenon not unknown elsewhere in the UK. However, an alternative interpretation of the tump is as a 'preaching mound' associated with St Garmon (cf Llanfechain in Montgomeryshire; Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog in Wrexham County Borough Council) has also been advanced in the past, and the most recently expressed view by an expert is that the mound does not appear motte-like, a contention strengthened by an evaluation in 2002 which failed to reveal a surrounding ditch. A further suggestion is that it no more than spoil dumped from adjacent road works.

Brookside and Orchard Cottage (7651) to the west of the church have a Grade II listing. It appears that together with Ivy House which is of 18th century date, these buildings are depicted on the 1766 estate map.

Ty'n Llan (7652) has a datestone of 1786, but fabric which is of an earlier century, while Orchard Cottage (7651) is 17th century. The only other listed building of note is the Red Lion Inn (7653), considered to be later 18th century.



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Cemmaes

SH 8398 0624
15642

Introduction
Cemmaes lies in the valley of the Dovey, about 11km north-east of Machynlleth, and on the A470 trunk road linking Newtown and Dolgellau. The village has grown up just to the north of where a small stream, Nant Coegen, enters the Dovey, but on a river terrace well above the valley floor. A very steep scarp drops down from the churchyard edge to the river which here runs close to the eastern edge of the valley. The village is compact with all past development occurring south of the church. This has resulted in fairly complete street frontage development as far as Pont y Cemmaes. The most recent housing has extended the village on to the further side of the stream.

This brief report examines Cemmaes's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

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History of development

The distinctively curvilinear churchyard and the British dedication to a local saint favour an early medieval foundation for the church,

The name is said to derive from *camas* with a plural form *cemais* meaning 'river-bends'. The earliest form of the name, *Kemeys*, was recorded in 1254 in relation to the church. *Cemmaes* made a first appearance in 1836.

Virtually nothing is known of the development of the settlement at Cemmaes, nor indeed whether there was a settlement here in the Middle Ages. As late as 1842, the church was accompanied by perhaps no more than eight houses, while the earliest map to show a part of the village – an estate plan from 1774 – depicts three houses, though others must have existed. Samuel Lewis in 1833 recorded that three annual fairs were held here, implying that it might have been a manorial centre.

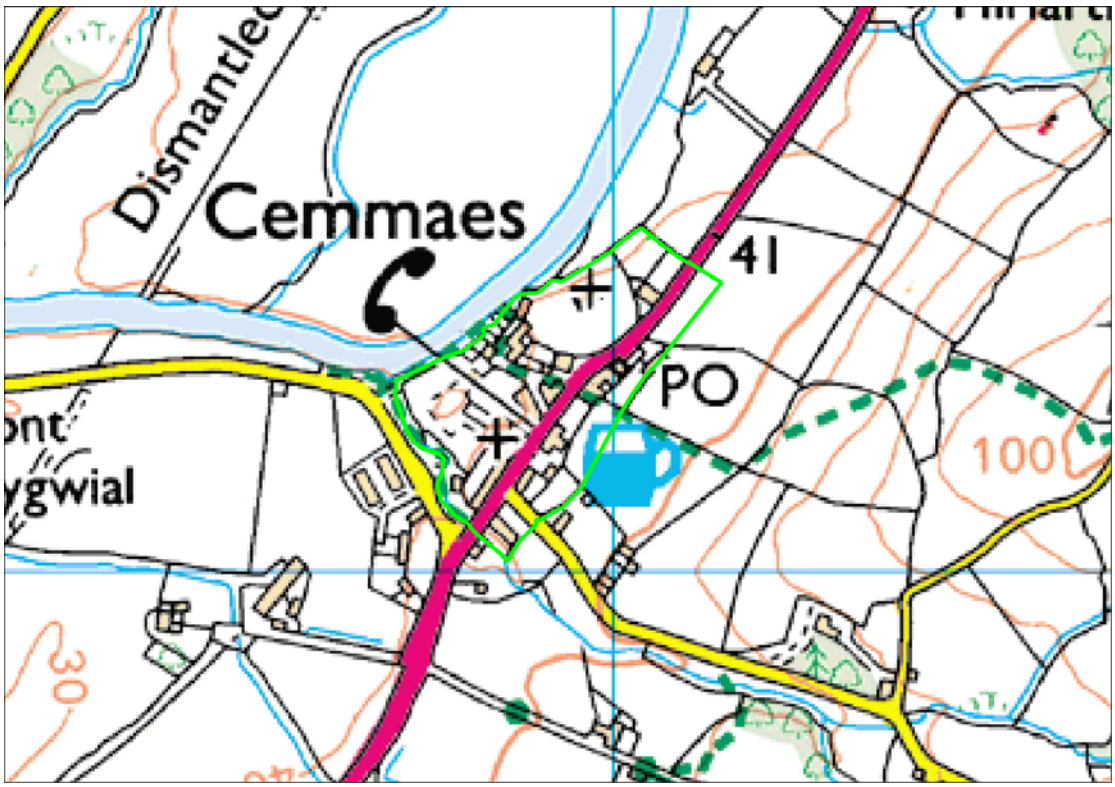
History of development

St Tydecho's church (31087) is a single-chamber edifice with a west bellcote, perhaps datable to the 14th or 15th century, and a porch added in the 18th century. All the windows were replaced in the 19th century and the interior was restored at the beginning of the 20th century. It retains its 15th century arch-braced roof, but apart from a fragment of a 15th century screen and several 18th century wall memorials, none of the internal fittings survived the restorations.

The churchyard (7672) holds a distinctively semi-circular shape as a result of its location on the edge of the river terrace. Unlike many churchyards, its plan does not appear to have been modified at any time since it was laid out, other than perhaps a little encroachment by buildings on its western side.

A putative holy well - Ffynnon Tydecho (118305) - has recently been claimed below the churchyard near the base of the valley scarp. There is, it has to be said, no historical documentation for classing this as a holy well, but a stone-faced basin is still in evidence.

Several houses in the village have 18th century features including a sub-medieval rear-wing at Glan-afon (40315) which could perhaps be even earlier, a back kitchen at Gorffwysfa (7673) and parts of Brithonfa (40093), but it seems that no complete building from an earlier century has survived.



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Churchstoke

SO 2711 9398
15643

Introduction

Churchstoke lies at the junction of two main roads, the A490 and A489, in the extreme east of Montgomeryshire. It is just over 5km to the south-east of Montgomery and one of the few settlements in this part of Wales that lies to the east of Offa's Dyke. The village has grown up on a spur of dry land projecting towards the confluence of two watercourses, the Caebitra and the Camlad, with the church itself on the edge of the shelf above these small rivers. With broad flood plains to the south-west and south-east, the steep-sided valley of the Camlad to the north, and the heights of Corndon and Roundton to the north-east, Churchstoke lies at the interface of several topographical zones.

This brief report examines Churchstoke's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Churchstoke is recorded in the Domesday Book (1086) as *Cirestoc*, the Old English *stoc* here meaning 'place' or just possibly 'settlement'. The Welsh name, recorded at some point between 1447 and 1489 was *yr Ystog* and looks to be a derivation of *stoc*.

On the evidence of the Domesday survey, the manor of Churchstoke was certainly in existence before the Norman Conquest and the church was an early medieval foundation: the morphology of the churchyard corroborates this view.

The development of the village in the Middle Ages is unchronicled, and it is impossible to determine on the evidence that is currently available whether there was a nucleated settlement here. The church became a dependency of nearby Chirbury Priory (in Shropshire) and in earlier centuries lay in the parish of Chirbury.

By 1840 the picture as presented on the tithe map is of the church with an open space, perhaps a village green, immediately to the north and running down as far as the Camlad. The Court House Inn looks as though it may have encroached on part of this open area. Houses were beginning to spread up the road to Lydham and Bishop's Castle, but had not yet reached Churchstoke Hall. On the far side of the Camlad, there were small groups of houses at Green and further west around Coed Cottage. The bridge linking the two banks has been attributed to the late 18th or early 19th century, but may well have replaced an earlier structure. In 1750

it is unlikely that the community would have been very different, though perhaps a bit smaller.

More than most, Churchstoke reveals a mixture of Welsh and English influences resulting from its border location. Its fieldnames, for instance, show a predominance of English terms but with a few Welsh examples.

The heritage to 1750

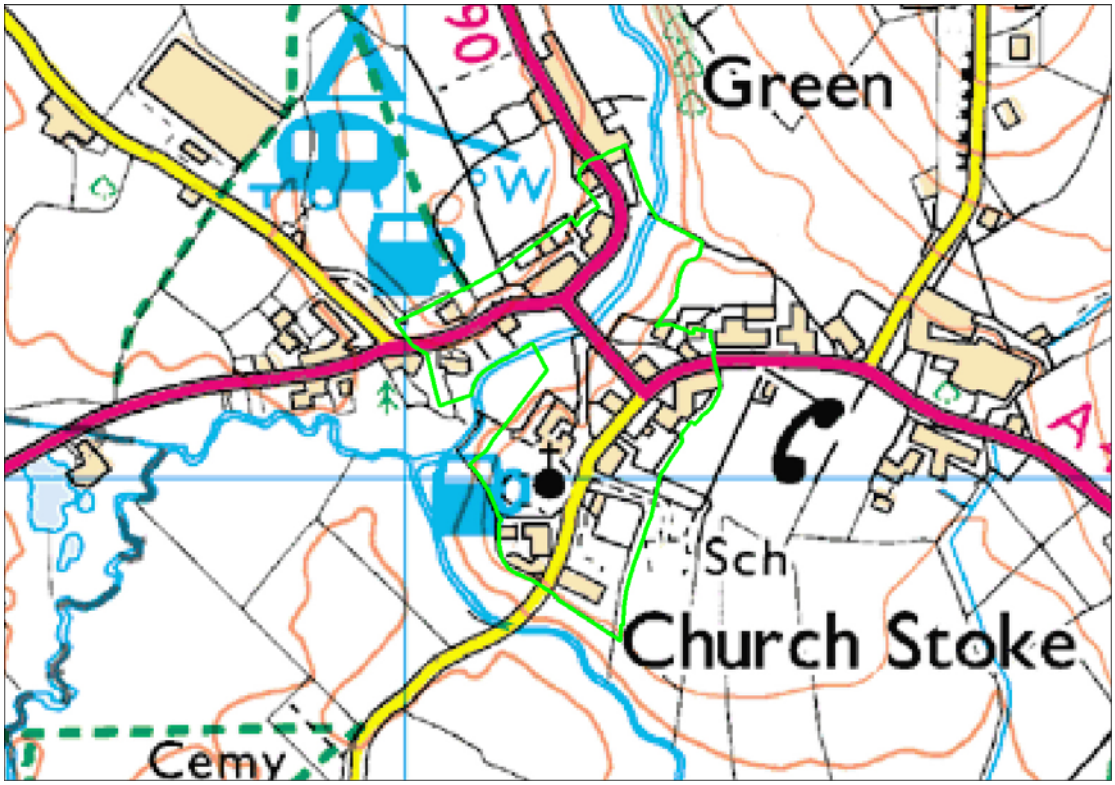
The present church of St Nicholas (7541) was largely built in 1815 and remodelled around 1867, creating a complicated phasing. Only the base of the tower – 13th century in date – survives of the medieval structure that certainly existed here. Inside there is a 14th centuiry font bowl which was found buried in the churchyard, a Jacobean chest and a peal of five church bells from 1721. The other furnishings and fittings are of the 19th century.

The raised churchyard (7542) has a curved outline on the east, while the Tithe map and the natural fall of the ground suggest more curved sides on the north and west respectively than are now apparent.

Only one building predates 1600. Churchstoke Hall (20588) was erected in 1590, has a Grade II listing, but lies away from the village core. Other Grade II buildings are Fir Court (20582) with an inscription of 1685, and a nearby stable block (30467) of 18th century origin, both also away from the core, and the Court House Inn (32559) which has a sub-medieval core but was remodelled in the late 18th or early 19th century. Other listed building studies suggest that a number of houses and other buildings were constructed in the village towards the end of the 18th century.

The subsidiary hamlet of Green presumably took its name from the tract of ground in the valley bottom which also included land on the other side of the river around the Court House Inn and the church. Termed Churchstoke Green in the tithe survey but not a village green in the conventional sense, this was common land and had probably witnessed earlier encroachments including the cottages known as Cambrook and the Willows as well as the Court House.

Ridge and furrow cultivation (4550) has been recognised in the field west of Churchstoke Hall.



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Criggion

SJ 2956 1510
16755

Introduction

Criggion lies on a back lane on the floor of the Severn Valley, 11km north-east of Welshpool. The Breidden Hills tower over this hamlet which occupies flat ground less than one kilometre from the river.

This brief report examines Criggion's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

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History of development

The earliest references to Criggion are in the form of *Kregeon* in 1289 and *Cregeon* in 1305, with *the Cruggyon* in 1503. The name probably derives from Welsh *crug* meaning 'hillock' or 'cairn'. Whether these references are to the chapel, to an area, or to settlement has yet to be ascertained. A *Geoffrey de Crugyon* was ordained a deacon at Alberbury in 1343.

There was a chapel here in the 14th century, the earliest record dating from 1343. It lay in the ecclesiastical parish of Alberbury, and was not elevated to parochial status itself until 1864.

Today, the hamlet consists of no more than the church, the Hall and a few cottages.

The heritage to 1750

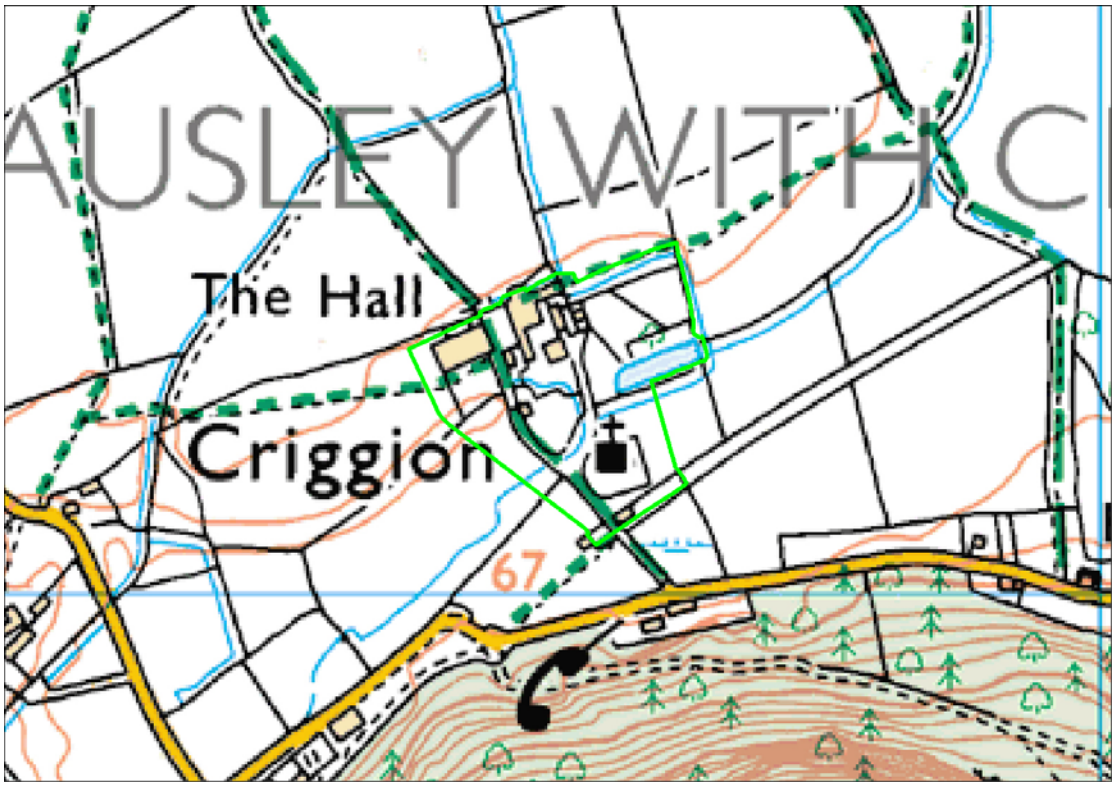
St Michael and All Angel's church (7567) was built in red brick in 1774, to replace the earlier chapel; its stone chancel was added in the mid-19th century. The Alberbury register for 1676 records 'ye first child baptized in ye Chapell [at Criggion] where it now stands', implying a new building in the 17th century, and of the medieval edifice nothing survives and its location is not known. The church contains some 18th-century box pews, a pulpit and an altar rail and a bell of 1682.

The churchyard (7568) is D-shaped, slightly raised and ditched, presumably as a defence against flooding.

The Hall (7569), a Grade II listed building, is a red-brick structure attributed to the 17th century by Cadw, but the 18th century by the Royal Commission.

East of the hall, the pattern of closes and watercourses may disclose the former existence of associated gardens.

There is no evidence of an earlier settlement around the church, and in the circumstances it seems unlikely that this was ever the case.



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Darowen

SH 8298 0180
15652

Introduction

Darowen lies in the hills south of the Dovey valley in western Montgomeryshire. It is some 9km east of Machynlleth. The settlement occupies a saddle with higher ground to east and west and the church perched above the steepest slope which drops to a secluded valley. Very little growth has taken place here during the last one hundred and fifty years - only a single new house had been added to the village in the 1980s for instance.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Darowen up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The shape of the churchyard and the dedication suggest an early medieval foundation, but there is yet no direct evidence to corroborate such an early origin. St Tudyr, an obscure Welsh saint, is said to have been interred here in the 7th century. It is also worth noting that Lewis in the earlier 19th century remarked on the fact that the church lay within the township of Noddva, a term that sometimes referred to an area of sanctuary around an early medieval (and perhaps later) church.

Unusually, the church does not carry the name of a saint. The church name appears in the form Dareweyn in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and refers to 'Owain's oak tree'. Darowen is recorded in 1545.

At the time of the Tithe survey in 1846, the village was not dissimilar in appearance to the present, and there is nothing to suggest the growth of a nucleated settlement in the Middle Ages or after.

The heritage to 1750

St Tudyr's church (7694) was completely rebuilt in 1864 and apart from a brass plate of 1627 there is nothing internally that has been preserved from the earlier church or churches on the site.

The oval churchyard (7695) appears to have remained largely unaltered over the centuries, though a section may have been sliced off the southern edge during road modifications. There is also at least one anomaly in the north wall. Nearly a quarter of the churchyard is overgrown testifying to the changing circumstances of this hill-top village. The church itself rests on a

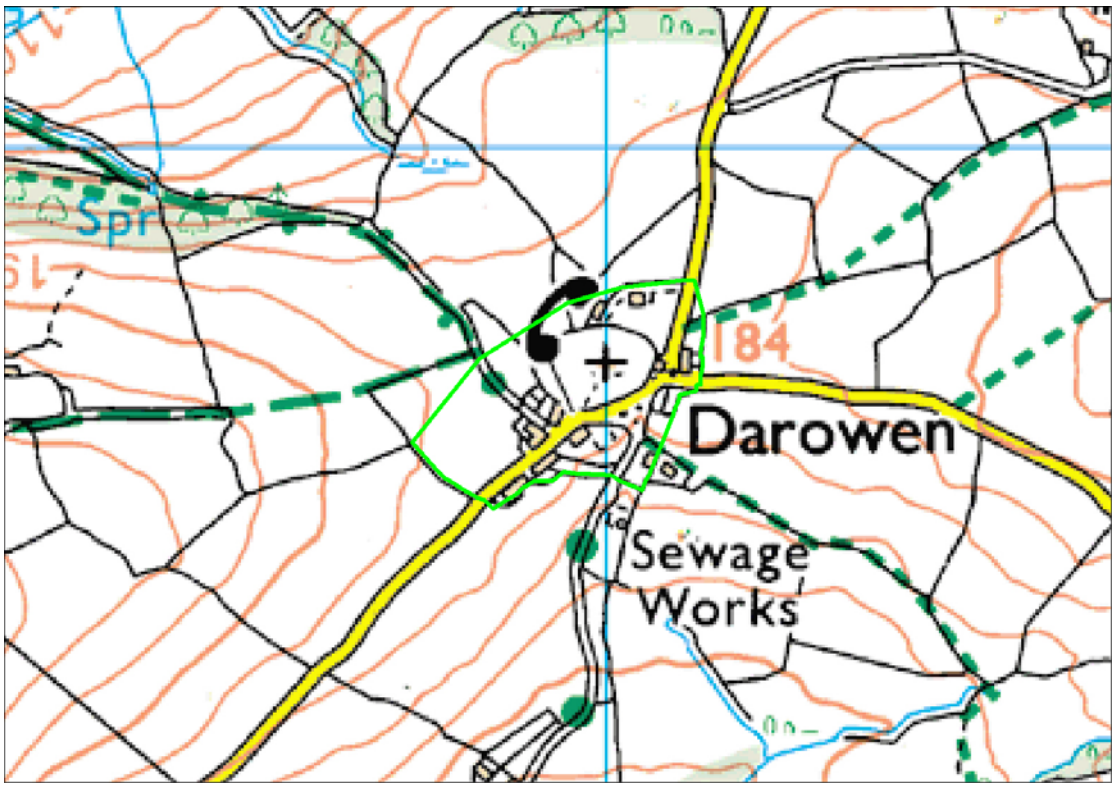
platform, definable on three sides, and though wide, it seems reasonable to interpret this as rubble from the previous church rather than the position of an early churchyard.

Ffynnon Dadur (1725), an alleged holy well though not classified in the published work of Francis Jones, the leading expert on the subject, lies just beyond the northern churchyard wall.

What may be noted are the number of lanes converging on the settlement. There are at least six although at least one serves only a single farm. Immediately to the south of the churchyard is a small triangular 'green' or patch of common land, a feature not uncommon in some upland parishes.

There are no listed buildings or any of significant age in the village. However, the Old Rectory, though a building of the early 19th century, is said to be on a site first used in 1545.

Minor earthworks on the south-west of the village do not appear to be of archaeological interest but do require further examination.



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Forden

SJ 2271 0104
15658

Introduction

Forden lies just off the B4388 road linking Welshpool and Montgomery, some 7 km south of the former. The church and the surrounding dwellings lie on a flattish spur between the twin branches of a stream which run down westwards to the Camlad, itself a tributary of the Severn less than 2 km away. The church is perched on the lip of the more northerly stream.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of the settlement up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Forden is one of those rare places in Wales that features in Domesday Book (1086). There it was distinguished as *Furtune*, incorporating the Old English elements *ford* and *tun*, though because of its position away from any river, experts consider that the first element means 'route' or 'road'. Thus Forden is interpreted as the 'settlement' by a road', the road being of Roman date. Local suggestions about crossing points of the River Severn may be wide of the mark. In 1292 it was *Forton* and in 1570 it appeared in its present form for the first time.

Its appearance in Domesday Book points to the presence of a late Saxon estate here and this has been tentatively linked to Nantcribba, a farm complex about one kilometre to the east on the far side of the B4388 and more importantly also Offa's Dyke. Nantcribba has been seen as a manorial centre with a demesne. But this was referred to as *Wropton alias Nantcribba* in 1596 which in turn has been associated with the *Wrobeton* of 1292 and the *Vrbetvne* of Domesday Book, (and the name of a township). This points to an estate or settlement, separate from Forden.

The church, though outwardly with little to suggest that it had a long history, could conceivably be an early medieval foundation. It is the shape of the churchyard as shown on an estate map of 1783 which hints at this, though the accuracy of the map has not been assessed, and the picture it presents is clearly different from the outline of the churchyard today.

The post-Conquest nature and appearance of Forden remains uncertain through subsequent centuries, but there must be some doubt as to whether a settlement ever grew up around the church. For much of its time it was a chapel attached to the mother church at Chirbury. An estate map of the 1780s shows the church in a circular churchyard on a common, with two or three houses set in their fields as separate but detached enclosures. While it is conceivable

that a nucleated settlement of the Middle Ages might be gradually abandoned and ultimately revert to open common, it is not at all likely.

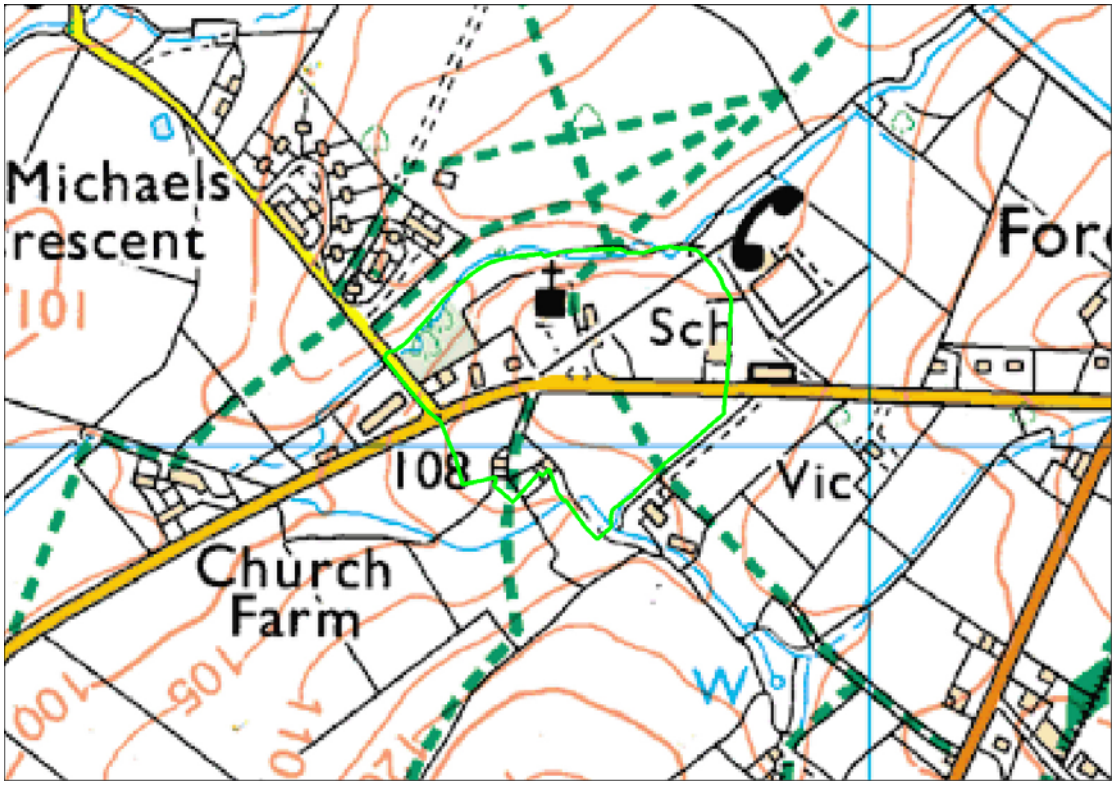
The pattern represented on the late 18th century map, and the later Tithe survey map of 1843 where the church was accompanied only by Church House, a farm called Quabb and one or two post-enclosure cottages, suggests that Forden was generally a dispersed settlement, its individual elements spread intermittently around extensive tracts of common land, and that only in the later 19th century did it take on a nucleated appearance. At present there is nothing to suggest that Forden was anything other than a church settlement.

The heritage to 1750

The church of St Michael (16417) was rebuilt in its entirety in 1867 to the north of the old building. Of its medieval predecessor, nothing remains, nor do any furnishings or fittings. Its churchyard now has a decidedly rectilinear appearance, at odds with its more curvilinear depiction in the eighteenth century.

There are no known buildings of any age in the vicinity of the church and a few sparse earthworks (7589) on the opposite side of the road through the village are of uncertain age and function.

Additionally, there is a wide range of historic sites in the neighbourhood including the Roman fort at Forden Gaer, numerous Iron Age and Romano-British farmsteads showing as cropmarks, several features of different periods at Nantcribba and Offa's Dyke, and a motte on the bank of the Severn at Lower Munlyn, but geographically none of these is directly relevant to the settlement at Forden.



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Garthbeibio

SH 9585 1189
15662

Introduction

Garthbeibio occupies a rocky spur and overlooks the A458 trunk road that traverses the Cambrian Mountains on its route to the coast. 13km north-west of Llanfair Caereinion, it was the religious if not the geographical centre of a large, predominantly upland ecclesiastical parish on the mountain periphery. The church overlooks Afon Banwy at its confluence with Afon Twrch, the spur projecting slightly from the northern side of the valley. A network of tracks and footpaths focus on this spot. Behind the church, the rising ground of Y Fron was common land in the 19th century and, though reduced in area, remains so today.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Garthbeibio up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The past history of Garthbeibio is as obscure as many other church settlements in mid-Wales. It seems likely that the church has always been a focus for the spread of dispersed farmsteads in this hilly part of western Montgomeryshire, and that its origin as an early medieval chapel is betrayed by the dedication, its location on the edge of an important river valley, and the shape of its earlier churchyard.

The name, first recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as Garthbey boau, is derived from 'garth' meaning a hill, promontory or ridge and the personal name of the otherwise obscure Peibio. By 1535 it was referred to as Garthbibio, but Richard Morgan, the leading place-name specialist, has also drawn attention to a papal licence of 1400 granted to penitents for the collection of alms to conserve the parish church of St Thledechus, abbot, in Garthbibio.

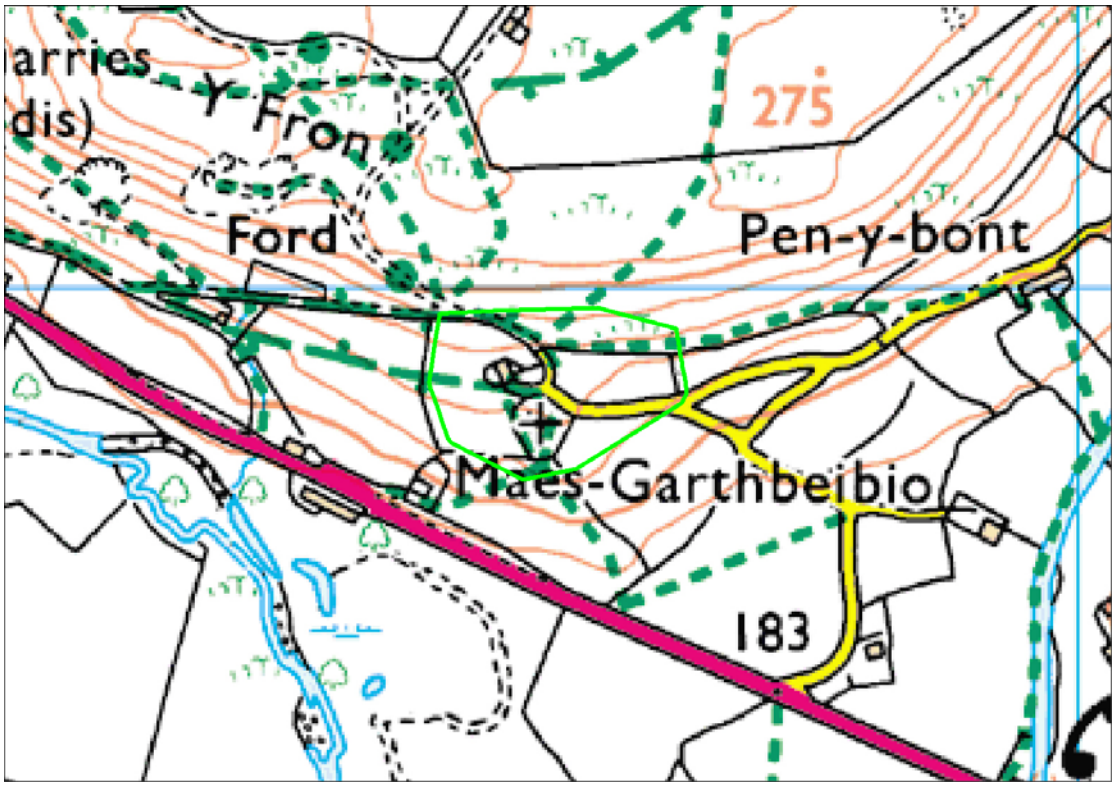
The heritage to 1750

The small single-chambered church, dedicated to St Tydecho, retains some medieval fabric but was partially rebuilt and heavily restored in 1862 (7579). The Perpendicular east window has survived, and internally, there is a 15th century font, though little else of any age.

The churchyard is distinctively polygonal in shape, but a scarp bank within the present enclosure suggests that originally its boundary was rather more curvilinear (7580).
Ty'n-y-llan is the only occupied dwelling in the vicinity of the church, and is a 17th or 18th century vernacular farmhouse. Other buildings such as Maes-Garthbeibio lie at a lower altitude toward the valley floor. Several further buildings (e.g 7581) can be recognised on 19th

century maps though none is necessarily earlier than the post-medieval era. However, there is absolutely no evidence of a nucleated settlement here.

Two holy wells, one known as St Tydecho's Well (1217), the other as Fynnon Ddu (1218) were located within a few hundred metres of the church. A third, Fynnon Rhigos (3883) seems to have existed near Maes-Garthbeibio. Their presence tends to emphasise this as a sacred spot.



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Guilsfield

SJ 2185 1163
15668

Introduction

Guilsfield lies on the B4392, 4km to the north of Welshpool. The village occupies flat ground on the south side of the Guilsfield Brook, a stream which meanders its way along an increasingly broad plain towards the Severn. The church was established where the valley begins to narrow and where the stream has created a visible cutting, and where a ridge of higher ground overlooks the gentle terrain below. Guilsfield has expanded enormously since the Second World War, with new housing developments spreading out on three sides from the historic centre.

This brief report examines Guilsfield's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The dedication of the church and the shape of the churchyard point to an early medieval foundation here. St Aelhaearn was reputedly a follower of St Bueno, a Powysian saint with links to the Berriew area.

The traditional interpretation of Guilsfield, supported by the compilers of the most recent authoritative text on place-names in Wales, is that the name signifies 'Gyldi's field', appearing first as *Guildesfelde* in 1278. The Welsh equivalent is Cegidfa, which as *Kegitua* is earlier, in the 12th century, and also is the name given in the Norwich Taxation of 1254. *Cegid* is hemlock and *fa* is place, but other interpretations have been put on this name.

The development of the settlement through the medieval era is, like so many others, obscure, and any attempt to picture the full pattern of housing before the Georgian period, can be no more than guesswork. However, the survival of one or two houses pre-dating the 17th century (see below) reveals that the settlement was already spreading down some of the lanes that converged on the churchyard, emphasising a growing nucleation. It was in the 18th century that the road through the village received the attention of a turnpike trust and by the middle of the following century, houses clustered around the church and on the north and south sides of the block of land to the west of the churchyard.

The heritage to 1750

The church of St Aelhaiarn (5769; not St Giles, an error on the part of the 18th century antiquary, Thomas Pennant) has a complicated history: a nave of the 14th century, an added west tower, perhaps by 1400, a porch and south aisle of the 15th century, and a north aisle a little later. It has one of the richest medieval church interiors in the county, with an early font and late medieval and Tudor-era roofs.

The churchyard (7675) is effectively rectangular with rounded corners, raised above the surrounding street level. It shows no signs of having been modified during its long history.

For its size, Guilsfield has one of the largest number of listed buildings in Montgomeryshire. White Ash (30798) has been dated to 1521 though remodelled in the 18th century, The Square (30790) is considered to be 16th or early 17th century, and Belan Cottage (30769) is said to have been dated to 1542. Bod-Isa Cottage has late 16th century origins. Then, there are a number of buildings dated from the 17th century, most of them listed, including the timber-framed Yew Tree (30799), Bod-isa (30770), Abercrombie House (30787) and the adjacent Trawscoed Cottage (30791), the King's Head (58383) and the much-altered, timber-framed Oak Inn (30783)

The picture that emerges of Guilsfield is of a well-established small village by the end of the Tudor period, and this could be taken as an indicator that there was already a nucleated settlement here in the late medieval era, although that has yet to be demonstrated.

The pattern of settlement as depicted on the Tithe map and on the earlier but less precise enclosure map suggests that originally two tracks departed the lane girdling the churchyard. One was the predecessor of the present B4392 and it is possible that in the vicinity of The Square and the now levelled Garden Cottage the lane broadened out into an open triangular area, though it would be premature to class this as a green. The other track curved round northwards to cross the Guilsfield Brook by a ford which is still functioning and up to Cae-felin Wood, a modern footpath continuing into the hills to the north where originally the track led to Trawscoed-hen. A lane coming in from the direction of Groes-lwyd to the west is indicated by the positions of Belan Cottage and The Square. For all its modern growth, Guilsfield has witnessed only very limited archaeological activity, a single watching brief off Oak Lane in 1995 failing to find any trace of medieval activity.

A D-shaped moated enclosure (94), its ditch partly infilled, lies to the south of the village. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, this should be viewed as a medieval manorial centre, the home of the local lord.

Traces of ridge and furrow cultivation (7676), between the moat and the village, are visible on aerial photography but have not been verified and could be quite recent in origin. No indications of medieval open-field agriculture have yet been recognised.

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Hirnant

SJ 0504 2295
15704

Introduction

The village of Hirnant lies in the north-west of the county, approximately 10km north-west of Llanfyllin, on the B4396 from Penybontfawr to Abertridwr. In its present form it consists of a few houses grouped around the church. The valley of a stream, the Hirnant, a tributary of the Afon Tanat, provides shelter and the settlement with its southerly aspect is set back against the base of the steep northern valley slope. The stream itself is little more than 60m distant from the churchyard.

This brief report examines Hirnant's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The church's dedication and the shape of the churchyard point to an early medieval genesis. The precise date at which this occurred, however, may never be known, and its subsequent history cannot as yet be determined.

Hirnant, meaning 'long stream' or 'long valley' in English first appears as *Hyrnant* in 1254, and in its modern form in 1377.

The present distribution of dwellings in Hirnant mirrors the layout of a century and a half ago. There is nothing to suggest that in earlier centuries the population of the settlement was any higher.

The heritage to 1750

St Illog's church (7632) consists of a single chamber with a bellcote at the west end. It was largely rebuilt between 1886 and 1892, but it retains its late medieval north wall. A 13th century font was preserved from an earlier building and various of its fittings and furnishings are believed to have come from the old church at Llanwddyn, now beneath Lake Vyrnwy. After being declared redundant, the church was restored through local effort in 1999 and is now used for community events and religious services, being managed by a charitable trust.

The sub-circular churchyard (7631) was modified, probably at the time when the rectory was re-built in the mid-18th century. The difficulties of developing a garden behind the new house led to the construction of a wall across the churchyard, the north-western section then being turned over to domestic use. The original course of the churchyard boundary on the north-east

may also have been modified, with faint earthworks outside the present wall defining a more curvilinear perimeter.

Listed buildings in the vicinity of the church are the rectory (7633) which was built in 1749, and is said to have re-used 16th century beams from an earlier structure; and Ty'n-y-llan (60933) on the south-west side of the churchyard is probably an 18th century rebuilding of an earlier farmhouse. Another farm, Ty Mawr (8364), lay to the north-east of the churchyard, but this appears to have been reduced in size since the 19th century and apparently is no longer occupied.

The configuration of roads and fields reveals a degree of landscape reorganisation over the last two or three centuries. The B4396, south of the Hall (300m south-west of the church), is a relatively recent construction, while a track running past the church on a north-west/south-east axis may once have been of local importance. A quillet, surviving opposite Ty'n-y-llan at the time of the Tithe survey, reflects a different alignment from the present boundaries, but one that is paralleled by a field bank opposite the now demolished Capel Hebron, so an area of strip fields beside the stream is a possibility.

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Hyssington

SO 3137 9450
15706

Introduction

Hyssington occupies a secluded spot below Corndon Hill, in the extreme eastern reaches of Montgomeryshire. It is about 10km to the south-east of Montgomery. The village and church are detached. The latter is placed on a low-lying spur running off Castle Hill which is crowned by the earthworks of a motte and bailey. Four hundred metres to the south, the village has sprung up around the intersection of a lane running from north to south and a trackway which now links only farms. Beyond, the ground drops away southwards to the distant valley of the Camlad.

This brief report examines Hyssington's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The history of the village remains obscure. The archaeological evidence could be taken to indicate that the church was established next to the castle which functioned as an early, post-Conquest manorial centre. The village as seen today gradually evolved at a more convenient nodal point, and probably at a later date than the castle.

The earliest form of the place-name is Husinton in 1227, and there is Hysington in 1535. The name can be broadly interpreted as 'Hussa's farm' and while the tun element is Old English and could signify pre-Conquest beginnings, it is also found as a suffix for sites established after the Conquest. The omission of Hyssington from Domesday Book in 1086, unlike neighbouring Churchstoke, could well be significant, and we should note too the curious church dedication to Etheldreda and ponder on how a 7th century East Anglian abbess came to be commemorated in the Welsh borderland..

The heritage to 1750

The single-chambered church of St Etheldreda (7540) was heavily restored, perhaps even rebuilt, in 1875 – it is impossible to determine whether any medieval fabric survives. It contains a medieval font and an early 17th century pulpit, but little else survived the Victorian restorers.

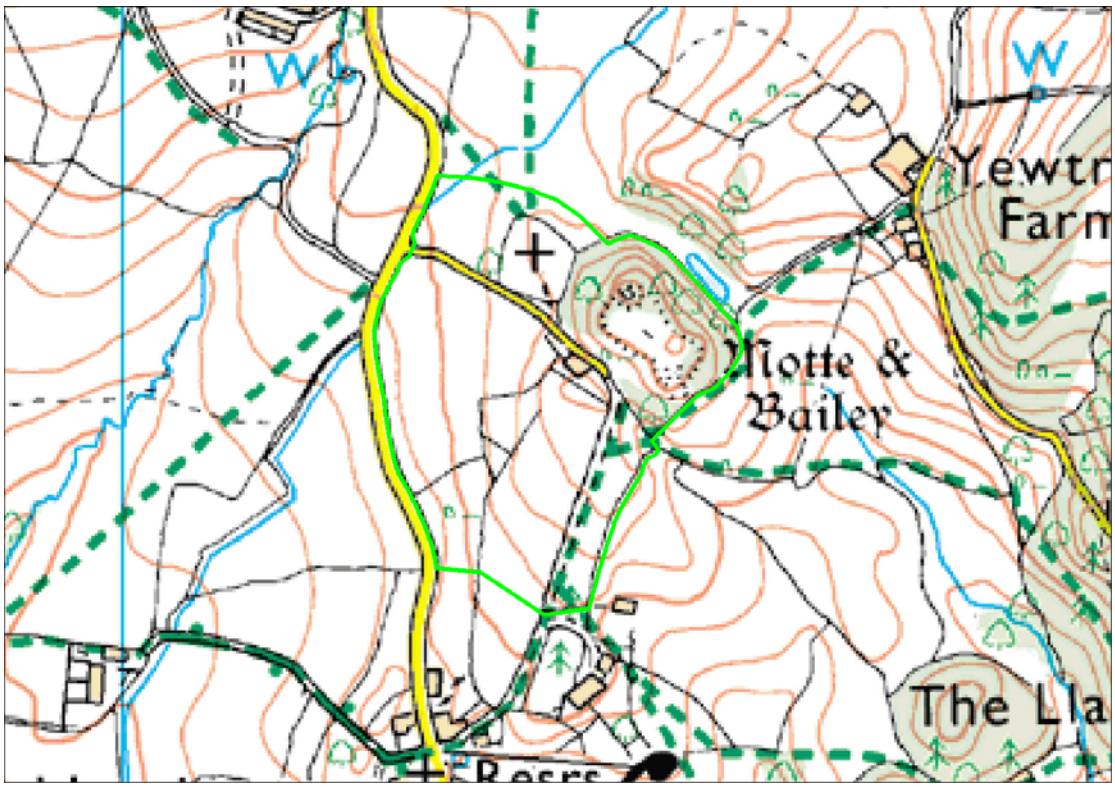
The churchyard is a sub-rectangular enclosure and there is no indication that it has been enlarged at any time.

The motte and bailey on Castle Hill (224) is a well-preserved earthwork conforming to the contours of the summit. Rectangular building foundations and platforms are visible in the bailey, some perhaps post-dating the earthworks, and there are the remains of what may be a stone tower on the motte, though these too could be later than the primary use of the castle. Little information exists as to when the castle was constructed or the duration of its occupation, but it has been claimed as the 'castle of Sned' which was mentioned in documents of the 1230s.

Earthworks (7539) in the field south-west of the church are difficult to interpret, and on present evidence it is not possible to determine whether they result from an earlier, now deserted settlement which logically is where it should be, or have some other, more prosaic explanation. It should be noted, however, that local tradition has it that the village school lay in what is now rough ground just below the west wall of the churchyard, and that Pinfold on the opposite side of the road from the church and castle was originally a pub called 'The Maypole'.

Narrow ridge and furrow (4472) has been noted east of Maypole Bank and to the east of the castle (4556) and further traces of broader ridging may be discernible in the field between Pinfold and the village on the west side of the road. None of this can be dated with any accuracy. A cockpit has also been recorded here (225). The track leading from the church past Maypole Bank may be the original thoroughfare.

The village to the south has a green, perhaps the remnants of a larger area of common land, for the pattern of housing in the second half of the 19th century is outwardly unconventional. There are no buildings of any age recorded in this essentially modern nucleation, except for Brynawel which is thought to be late 18th century in origin, and the timber-framed Hyssington Farm on the south-eastern periphery which is from the early 17th century.



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Kerry

SO 1471 9003
15707

Introduction

Kerry lies on the A489 linking Newtown in Powys with Craven Arms in Shropshire and is some 5km to the east of the former. High above the village, the Kerry Hills sweep down towards the Severn Valley, interrupted only by a valley holding the headwaters of the small River Mule. Kerry occupies a north-facing shelf above the valley, the church sitting on a spur projecting towards the river. Most of the settlement is on level or gently sloping ground, but a motte-and-bailey castle tops an isolated hillock 600m south of the church.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Kerry up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Neither the shape of the churchyard nor the dedication of the church would suggest an early medieval origin for Kerry, yet it is likely that this was the site of the mother church for the district in the pre-Conquest era. It was reputedly founded by Cadwgan in the 8th century. It was later recorded for posterity when it was re-dedicated in 1176 by archdeacon Giraldus Cambrensis who claimed the church for the diocese of St David's and excommunicated the Bishop of St Asaph at the church door.

The earliest reference appears in the late 12th century as Keri, the name of the local commote (district). This was once thought to have the meaning of either the mountain ash or medlar [a small tree similar to the apple], but modern scholarship favours an interpretation of 'the land of Câr'. The church dedication was first recorded in 1246 and in 1281 it was Lanvihangel in commote of Kery, Mihangel being Michael. The Welsh Llanfihangel-yng-Ngheri is still printed on Ordnance Survey maps, but the earliest cited appearance of this is about 1562.

The medieval development of Kerry is unchronicled. The lord of the manor, in this instance the bishop of St Davids, was granted the right to hold a fair in 1290 and this might imply some sort of settlement here, though perhaps significantly there was no equivalent grant of a market at that time. It was also at one time the centre for a local cloth industry. The layout of the settlement as depicted on the mid-19th century Tithe map, and the slightly earlier Ordnance Survey surveyors' drawing of 1817, is of a compact village strung along the main road with what is either a small green or market place in front of the church [still distinguishable as a parking area for the church today and known as The Square].

The heritage to 1750

St Michael's church (7544) is a double-naved structure with a large west tower. The arcade survives from the Norman church here and from the 14th century the tower and the chancel arcade. The rest was rebuilt in 1882-3. Its complicated history is increased by a documented altercation between Giraldus Cambrensis and the bishop of St Asaph in 1176 when the new church was being built, and which was then rededicated, to St Michael. The earlier dedication could have been to a St Gwyr, as inscribed on its bell of around 1410. Inside the roofs are of the 14th or 15th century, there are a late medieval font and piscina and the Victorian screens incorporate fragments of their medieval predecessors.

The polygonal churchyard (7545) has seen changes to its shape in recent times. A low scarp is visible inside the present northern perimeter which links with the boundary of The Nook on the north-east and represents the line of the original enclosure. This implies a rather more curvilinear outline, and speculatively it can be argued that the east side has been shaved back to a straight line.

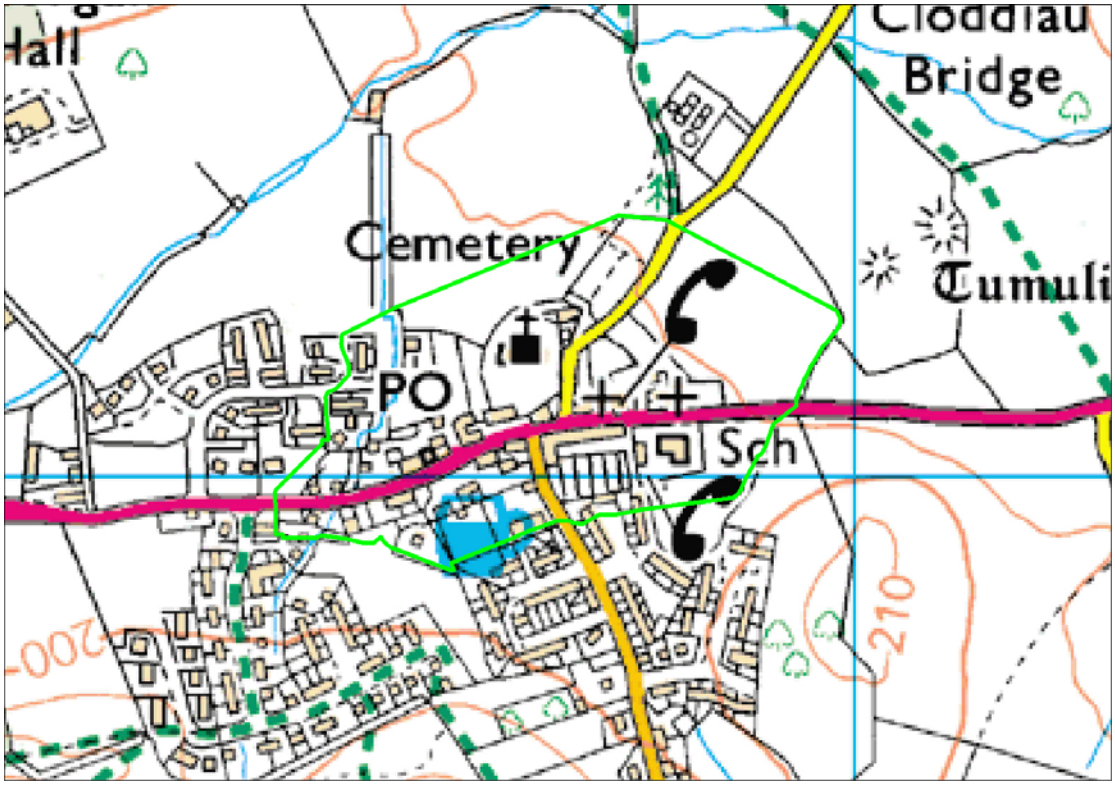
Minor earthworks of uncertain nature, about 130m west of the church, have now been destroyed during housing development.

The church apart, there are no listed buildings of any age in the village. Two Grade II Regency houses, Dolforgan Hall (32592) and The Moat (7714), both lie beyond the periphery. There is thus virtually no guide to how the medieval and Jacobethan settlement at Kerry may have developed over the centuries. On topographical grounds it can be suggested that this was on the south side of the churchyard (as today) and that probably a trackway had run along the valley from east to west for centuries, acting as a focus for settlement. Whether the modern A489 follows the line of that trackway precisely is open to debate.

Distinctive traces of ridge and furrow cultivation are visible on the hill slopes to the south of the village (7546 and 7547).

A generally well-preserved motte and bailey (996; SAM Mg050), set 600m to the south of the church, may have been thrown up as the caput (or chief seat) of the commote of Ceri by Madog ap Idnerth who died around 1140. It has been partially damaged by modern activity.

A large sub-circular enclosure encompasses Kerry. This is probably more likely to be deer-park associated with the castle, though we cannot rule out another premise, that it marks the precinct of the pre-Conquest mother church.



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Llan

SH 8841 0077
16383

Introduction

Llan lies beside the B4518, 2km south-south-west of Llanbrynmair and about 14km to the east of Machynlleth. The church and the older houses surrounding it occupy the summit of a small hill that rises above the valley of Afon Twymyn, a tributary of the Dovey. Modern housing beside the road southwards utilises the most gentle of the hill's slopes.

This brief report examines Llan's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The shape of the churchyard points to an early medieval origin, but the date of the church's foundation and the subsequent history of settlement around it are unknown. What can be said with some certainty is that the dedication to Mary is not the original one, although whether as local tradition would have us believe, it was Cadfan (with a lingering folk memory surviving in nearby Dolgadfan) will perhaps never be established.

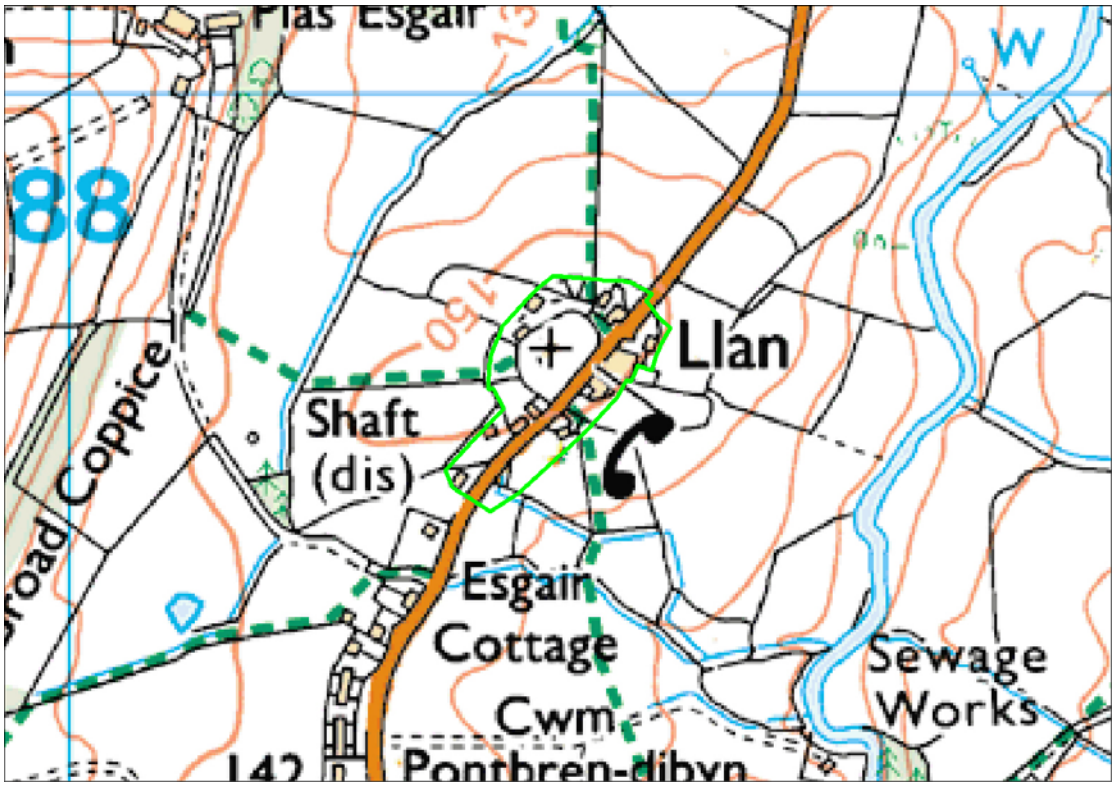
Up to the end of the 19th century this settlement was known as Llanbrynmair, a name then transferred to the village that had developed around the Wynnstay Arms on the turnpike road 2km to the north. Presumably to avoid any confusion, the name of the original settlement was consequently shortened to Llan.

The name can be loosely translated as 'the church at Mair's hill' and first appears as Brenmeyr in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and Brunmeyr in 1293. St Mary the Virgin, Brynmair in Keveilioc appears in a document of 1429, and it was only in 1470/1 that Llambryn mayr was recorded.

The heritage to 1750

St Mary's church (7617) is a single-chamber structure of 15th century (or perhaps earlier) type with an added north transept and 16th century porch and a wooden bell turret. The only earlier feature is a 13th century font, although medieval screen fragments have been incorporated into some of the later wooden furnishings.
The original oval shape of the churchyard (7618) can still be detected, particularly on the south side where the burial ground has been extended to the road in the last one hundred and fifty years.

Opposite the church is a dwelling, formerly perhaps a school, with a date stone of 1856. Almost certainly earlier is Hafod y Llan (8784) on the north-east of the churchyard, though by how much is unclear. There is, however, nothing to suggest that Llan was a nucleated settlement in the Middle Ages or the Tudor era.



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Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr

SJ 1354 2795
105963

Introduction

Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr is a simple church settlement at the end of a lane, only 2km from Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, and a little less than 16km to the west of Oswestry. Formerly in the historic county of Denbighshire it was transferred to modern Powys in 1996, along with several other parishes.

It occupies a remote spot to the north of the Tanat Valley, sheltering on the south side of the hill which has given it its name. It is tucked into the hillside beside a small stream which feeds into Afon Iwrch little more than one kilometre to the south, and most of its few buildings are terraced into the hill slope.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanarmon up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Like many similar church settlements, nothing concrete is known about the origins or development of Llanarmon Mynydd Mawr, which in the past has also been termed Llanarmon-fach according to the St Asaph historian, Archdeacon Thomas.

The church was formerly a chapel of ease to Llanrhaeadr, and is referred to as Capella de Llangarnayaun in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and as Lanarmavn in the Lincoln Taxation of 1291. These may be the earliest dates that the place is referred to in medieval documents, but as no place-name study has been compiled for the historic county of Denbighshire, this remains to be confirmed. In the Patent Rolls of 1394, it was termed the chapel of St German in Mynethmau. Notwithstanding this, Llanarmon was the centre of an ecclesiastical parish, a focus for the surrounding countryside.

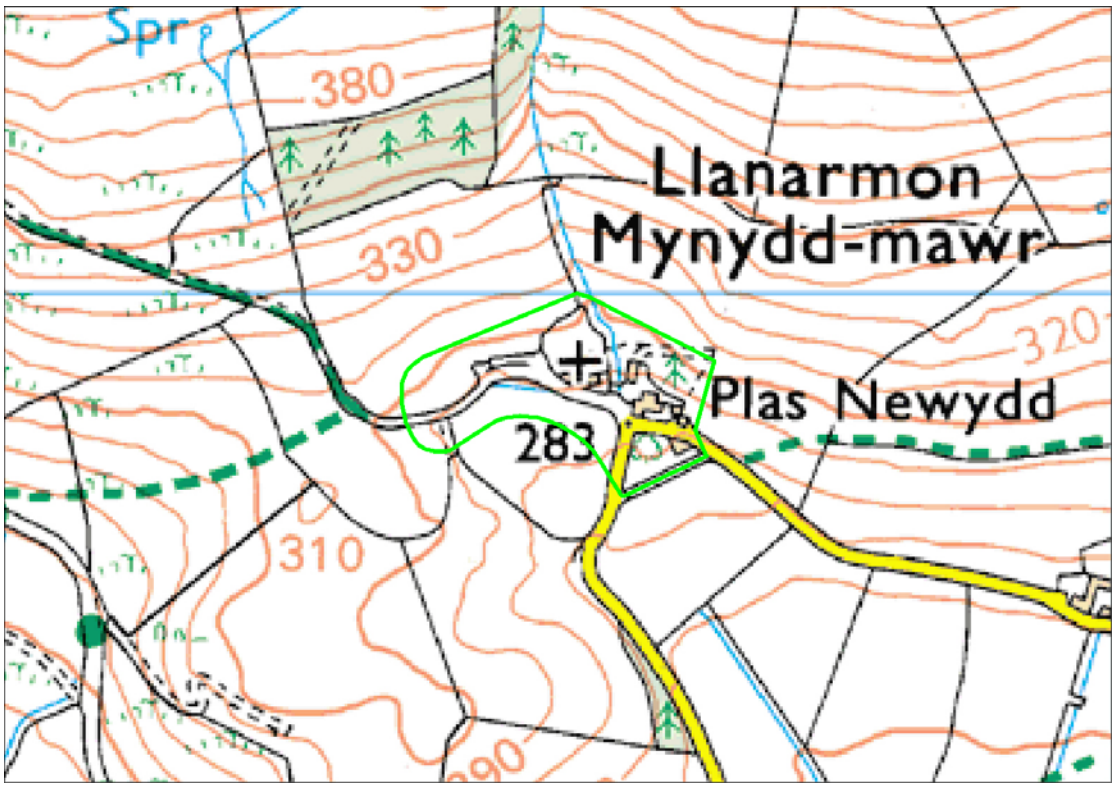
Eighteenth-century maps suggest some relatively recent alterations in the settlement layout. Buildings, which were probably cottages, have disappeared to the west of the church and a farm to the east of the church has been succeeded by farm buildings and the construction of Plas Newydd, which itself post-dates the Tithe survey. There is nothing, however, to suggest that a true nucleated settlement developed around the church.

The heritage to 1750

St Garmon's church (19775) was 'rebuilt or restored beyond recognition' (according to the late Edward Hubbard) in 1886. It is small, single-chambered and has a western bellcote. Inside it is almost as equally devoid of anything pre-dating the Victorian era, the only survivals being the disused bowl of a font, a font cover, and re-cycled altar rails, all of the 18th century.

The present irregular design of the churchyard (19776) owes much to the stream that forms its eastern boundary. A more curvilinear course to the enclosure on the north and west is suggested by the base of a scarp within the churchyard, and the existing south side has a visible curve to it. Collectively this points to a curvilinear form which is probably of early medieval origin.

Now a cul-de-sac location, Llanarmon once lay on one of two contour-following tracks that wound their way around the west side of Mynydd Mawr. This still shows as a broad terrace-way near the church and the location of one building (19777), to the west of the churchyard and shown on a map of the second half of the 18th century, is still discernible.



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Llandinam

SO 0246 8848
15710

Introduction

The village of Llandinam lies beside the River Severn and the A470 trunk road, 9km to the south-west of Newtown. The church occupies a commanding position astride the western end of a pronounced ridge that juts out from the valley side above the river to the west and a dry valley to the east. The village lies in this dry valley, expanding down to the edge of a river terrace, just beyond the western edge of the main road. A more recent expansion of settlement further to the south is now beginning to spread up the valley side.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llandinam up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The origins of the settlement go back to the early medieval era when the foundation of a mother church established it as one of the more important religious sites in the region (965). Its dependent chapelries included Llanidloes and Llanwnog and it had an abbot overseeing a religious community until the 13th century.

The earliest reference to Llandinam comes in about 1207 in a form – Landinan – not so dissimilar to today, and indeed it was only around nine years later that the modern name appears in a document. The meaning is the ‘church near the [little] fort or stronghold', but nothing is known of the latter unless it could be a reference to the great hillfort of Cefn Carnedd on the far side of the Severn. There is a possibility, too, that it was originally Nandynan, a name which was reported in the mid-12th century and that nant was subsequently replaced by llan. Opinion appears to be divided on this, but if correct, the context – a raid by an army from Gwynedd – suggests that Llandinam was a place of some importance

Whether from this we can assume the presence of the mother church attracted settlement around it is unclear, but one might speculate that some form of secular community must have existed here in the Middle Ages. Yet, even after the Reformation, its development cannot be satisfactorily charted and it is only in the mid-19th century that maps provide any sort of picture with a cluster of dwellings in the valley below the church.

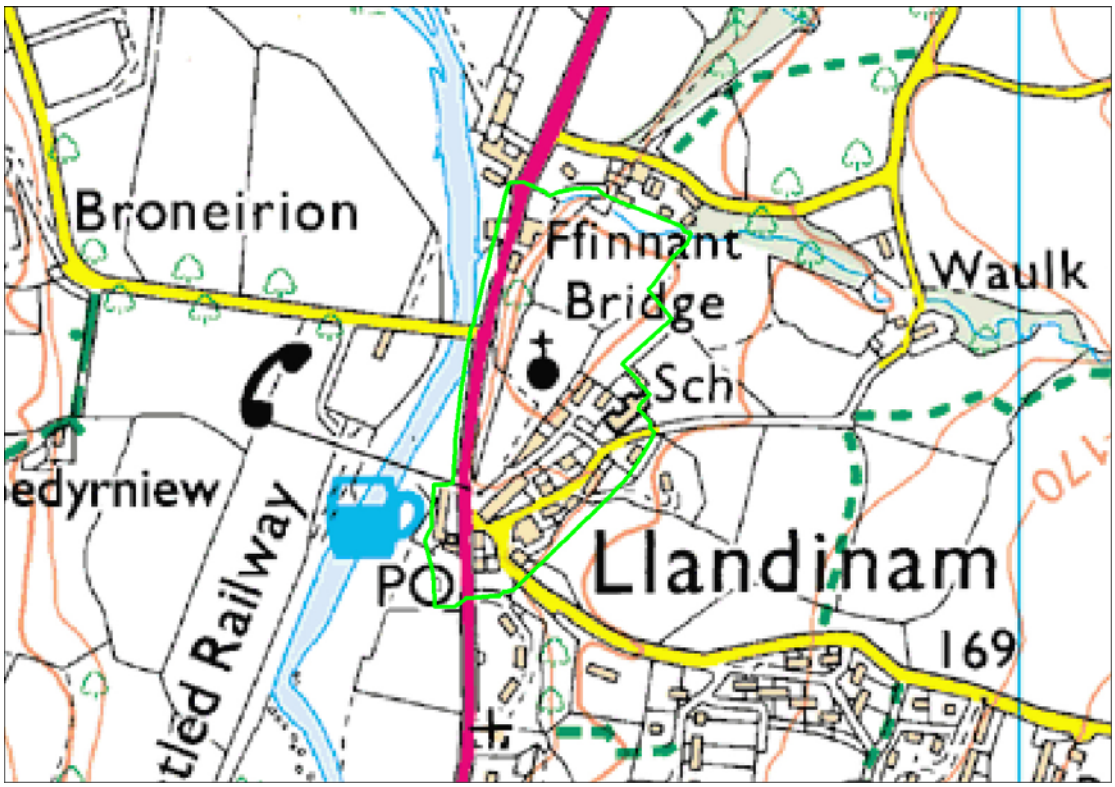
The heritage to 1750

The church of St Llonio has a western tower attributed to the 13th century, but much of the body of the building was rebuilt in 1864/65. Virtually nothing earlier than the 17th century remains inside though other than a Perpendicular font and two old tomb recesses in the sanctuary which should be medieval. Otherwise there are 17th century carved choir stalls which are believed to contain some medieval pew ends, and a wooden reredos that was brought from Trefeglwys church.

There is no evidence for a former circular churchyard, and the graveyard's wedge-shaped form at the end of the 19th century embraced the crest of the ridge on which it was set (and may also explain why the church is oriented closer to north/south than east/west). A substantial bank across the ridge represented the north-eastern boundary of the churchyard until recently. Limited excavation of the bank (6031) during the construction of a new access road in 1985 proved uninformative.

There are no buildings considered to be sufficiently significant to warrant listing in the village, although as an aside, mention should be made of one of the first iron bridges to be built in the county (in 1846), just below the church. Yew Tree Cottages on the lane south of the church are considered to have formed parts of a single sub-medieval, half-timbered house, while Red House a short distance to the west could be mid-18th century.

The mid-19th century pattern of small lanes and dwellings that constitute the core of the village is suggestive of a green, though there is no concrete evidence for it.



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Llandrinio

SJ 2951 1714
15711

Introduction

Llandrinio lies in the valley of the Severn and on the B4393, 12km north-east of Welshpool. The church which is the settlement core is less than 400m from the river, but though the valley floor is generally both broad and flat, there are minor fluctuations in height resulting from alluvial or gravel deposits. It appears that Llandrinio occupies one such raised 'platform', most obviously apparent on the approach from the west and north.

The main road passing through Llandrinio on an east/west axis was a turnpike road and Llandrinio Bridge, dated to 1775, indicates that the road is not a modern development. However, an earlier track undoubtedly existed and a charter of 1309 apparently refers to a ferry (1249) that operated in the vicinity of the later bridge.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llandrinio up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

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History of development

The church was established in the early medieval period, and almost certainly emerged as a mother church for the area. There is circumstantial evidence for a *clas* community here, including an unconfirmed tradition of it being a sanctuary or place of refuge, and the small churchyard was once considerably larger, in keeping with such an important establishment. It is interesting too that in 1526 it was recorded as a place of pilgrimage.

The name refers to the church of St Trinio and is first referenced as *Llantrinew* in the Norwich Taxation of 1254. Subsequent forms of the place-name vary so that in 1309 there is *Llandrunion in Dendour* and in 1385 *Llandrunyo*.

A charter of 1309 granted a weekly market and two annual fairs to the lord of Llandrinio, though what significance this carries regarding the settlement here is unclear. On present evidence it is impossible to determine whether there was ever a nucleated settlement at Llandrinio, and at the end of the 18th century the density of buildings was very much the same as it is today.

The heritage to 1750

The church (6418) has a triple dedication to SS Peter and Paul as well as St Trinio, though it has been suggested that the former were only added at the beginning of the 14th century. It is

now a single-chambered structure and retains some Romanesque architectural features, remnants of what was presumably the first stone building on the site. Much of it was replaced in the later medieval period and the 19th century saw some reconstruction work. There is a Norman font, some 17th century wooden furnishings, a west gallery with painted benefaction boards, and two fragments probably from the same early medieval cross-shaft of late 9th/early 10th century date (6038).

The present churchyard (7570) with its polygonal shape and the church tucked up against the southern edge, does not represent the original layout: both the Tithe Map of 1841 and an earlier estate map of c.1799 indicate a larger and more curvilinear enclosure and the former gives the name of the field on the opposite side of the main road as 'The Old Churchyard'. This appears to be confirmed in a terrier of 1683 which refers to two acres "enclosed heretofore out of the church".

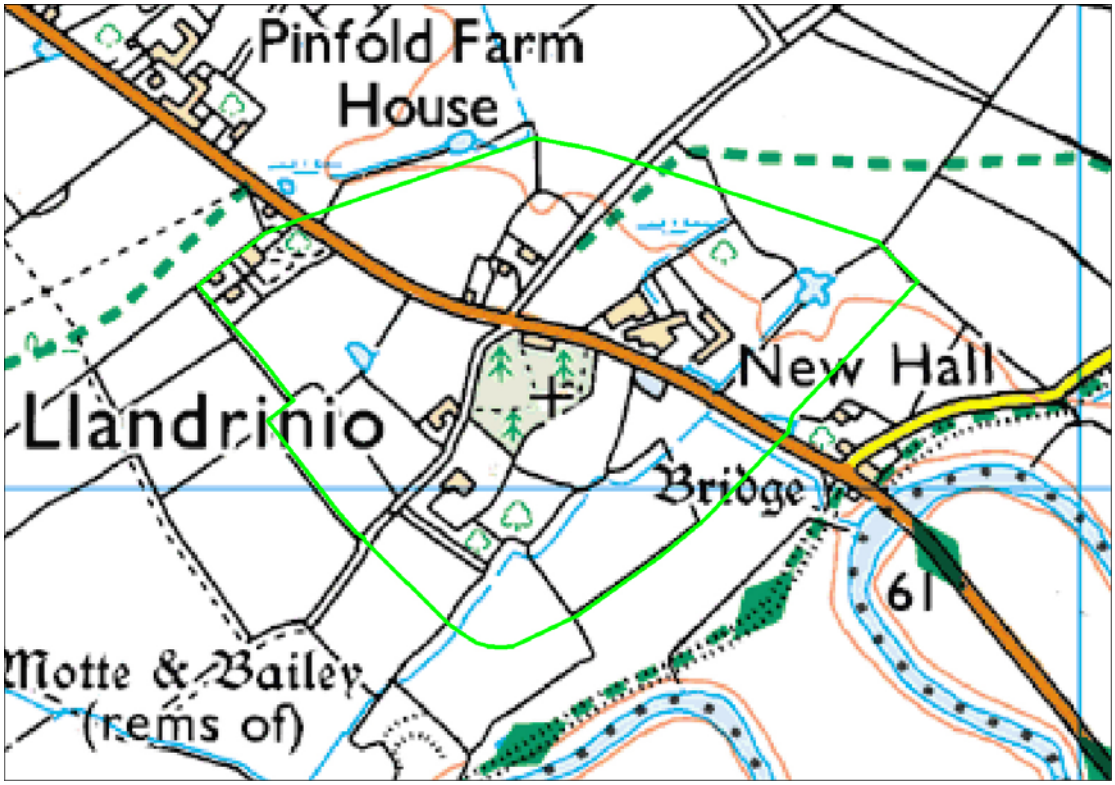
Domen Castell (1243), a small motte and bailey, much disturbed by the construction of the flood embankment beside the river, lies 400m south-west of the church.

Yr Henblas, the former rectory, lies to the south-west of the church and is of 17th century date (7637). A poem of 1430-70 refers to both the parson of Llandrinio and his stone-built parsonage with its moat, bridge and gateway. No trace of the moat remains, although Archdeacon Thomas claimed a surviving section between the house and church at the end of the 19th century.

New Hall (7638) to the north-east of the church and the road may have originated in the late 16th century and its ownership can be traced from 1630 onwards.

Low earthworks, particularly on the west side of the churchyard appear to indicate former enclosures (7571), some of which are depicted on the late 18th century map. A track and perhaps ridge and furrow have also been recognised (7572). The 1799 estate map referred to above, also shows open-field strips to the south-east of the churchyard and the north-east of New Hall, implying medieval cultivation.

Llandrinio Bridge, three-arched and with cutwaters, carries a datestone of 1775. Archdeacon Thomas claimed that in the medieval period there had been a ferry across the Severn at this point, as referred to in the charter of 1309.



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Llandysilio

SJ 2670 1920
15712

Introduction

Llandysilio lies beside the A483 trunk road, almost equidistant from the market towns of Welshpool and Oswestry, and only a short distance from the English border. The confluence of the Severn and the Vyrnwy rivers has created a slightly undulating landscape north of the Breidden Hills where only minor variations in altitude can be the difference between periodic flooding and remaining dry. Llandysilio church is little more than 200m from the Vyrnwy but, perched on the edge of a gravel terrace, it is raised above the flood plain.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llandysilio up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The combination of the 'llan' name with a well-known early medieval saint, and a sub-circular churchyard points irresistibly to an early medieval origin for the church, if not for any settlement around it. Legend has it that St Tysilio was a hermit here for seven years, but that will forever remain unproven.

The earliest mention of the name, Llantessilyau, occurs in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, and is a straightforward reference to the church of St Tysilio. From the end of the 13th century there are then regular references to Llandysilio with minor variations in the name: Llandisiliowe in 1385, and Llandisilio in Dithor in 1568, for example.

The subsequent growth of Llandysilio cannot be charted with complete conviction, but recent work on the Four Crosses bypass which came to within 30-40m of the church did not uncover any evidence of concentrated medieval activity, the inference being that there was no nucleated settlement around the church, for it would almost certainly have been the south side that saw medieval growth.

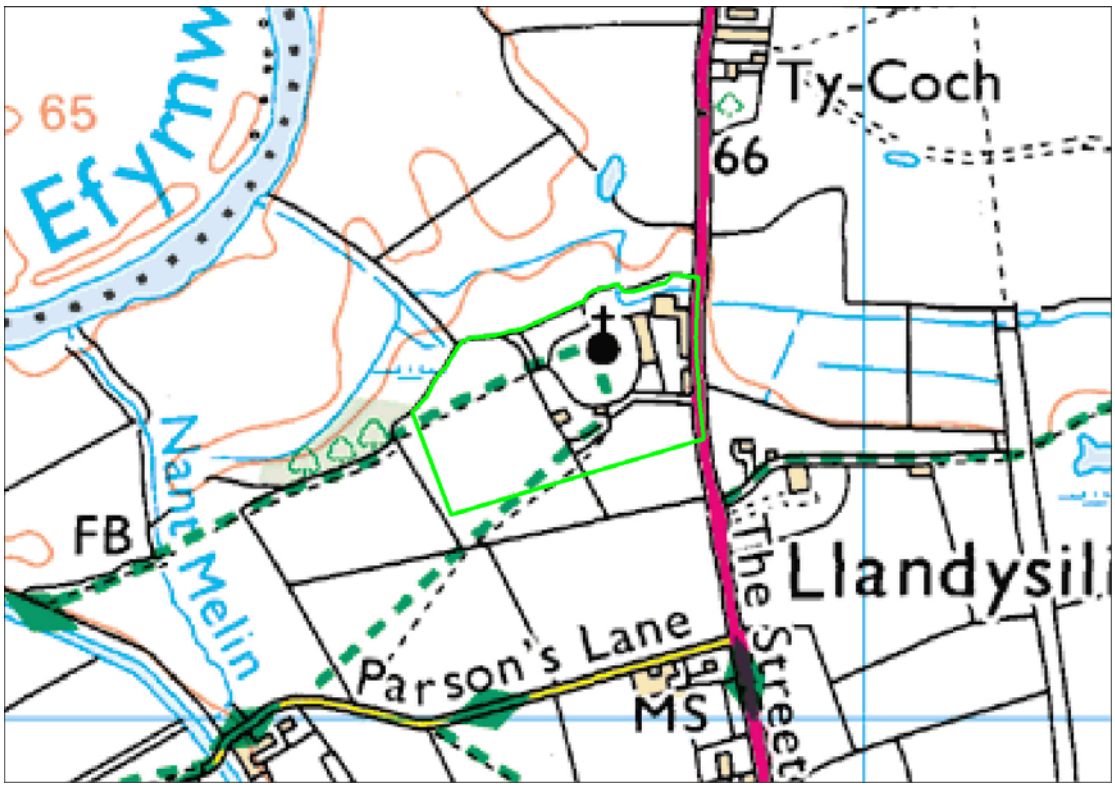
The main trunk road that passes Llandysilio is a creation of the turnpike era in the 18th century, emphasising its relative isolation, and the earliest map from 1747/8 seems to indicate that the only buildings by the church at the time were those in the Church House complex. It is thus probably safe to assume that this was never more than a church settlement.

The heritage to 1750

The church of St Tysilio (7607) was built anew, with contemporary internal fittings in 1867-8. Only a brass of 1674, several later 18th century marble, memorial tablets, a medieval stoup and an early 18th century bell survived the demolition of the earlier church.

The churchyard (7608) has a strongly curvilinear shape, the straight northern side being a result of its conformity to the edge of the gravel terrace on which it was set. It contains another survival of the 19th century rebuilding, a sundial of 1760.

Old Church Cottage (7639), the former National School built in 1896 incorporates in its fenestration three windows, two of them medieval, from the old church. It is grade II listed.



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Llandyssil

SO 1960 9540
15713

Introduction

Llandyssil lies in the hills on the east side of the River Severn, a little under 3km south-west of Montgomery. The modern village occupies a fairly broad flat-bottomed valley containing a stream which feeds into the Severn. On the south and east the valley is hemmed in by steep-sided hills and it is on the lower slopes of the hill to the south-east that the site of the original church is to be found, some 25m above the valley floor, with a dry dingle on its northern edge. Llandyssil has undergone a major phase of expansion in the recent past. The ribbon development along the valley that was a feature of the 19th and early 20th century has been modified by housing schemes around the road junction in the valley and the old church is now enveloped by housing on three sides

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llandyssil up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The name first shows in a document as Llandeshul in 1254, and is a straightforward reference to the church of St Tysul. The district in which it lay is acknowledged in 1392 as Llanndyssul in Keddewayng (Cedewain).

The dedication of the old church and the sub-circularity of its churchyard point to an early medieval foundation, although this remains to be corroborated by forms of evidence.

The subsequent history of the settlement is not known. By the beginning of the 19th century dwellings were spreading along the valley floor with a small green towards the south-eastern end. A new church was constructed in 1863, its location suggesting that it was peripheral to the settlement that already existed. Prior to the recent spurt of house building, the old church represented a building isolated on the hill, and it is now impossible to determine with any certainty whether there was any adjacent settlement in past centuries (though see below).

The heritage to 1750

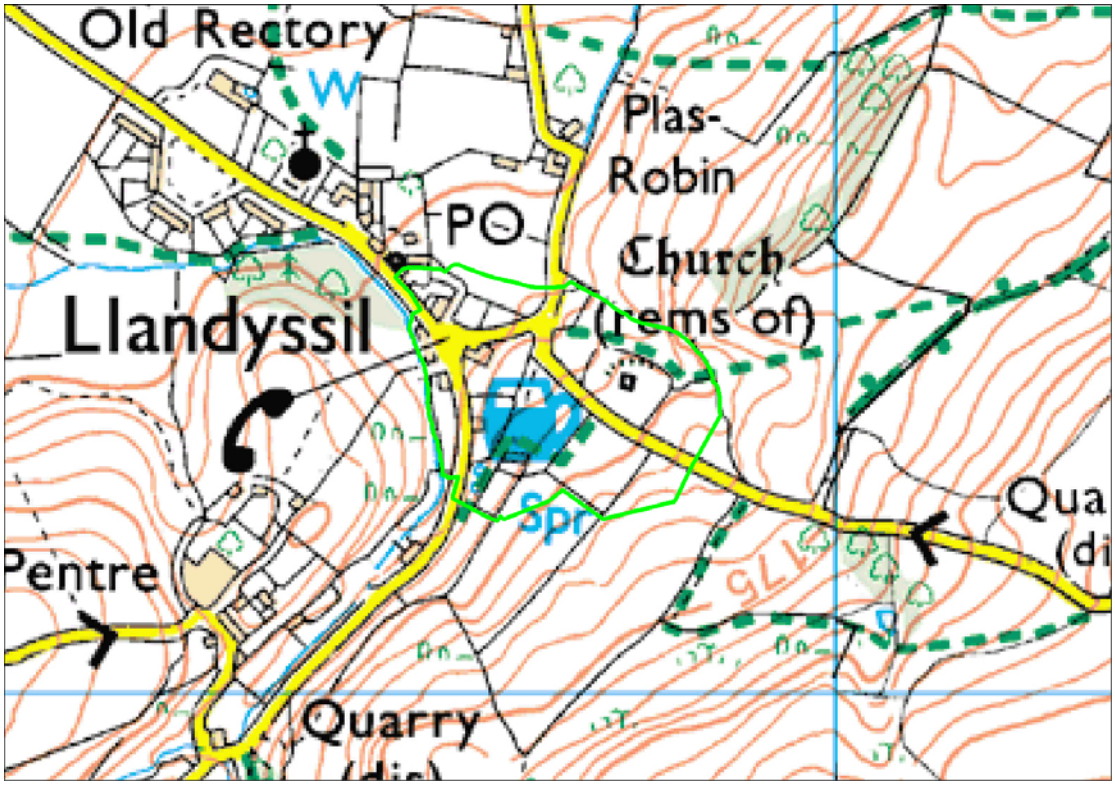
The single-chambered medieval church of St Tyssil (160) was demolished in the 19th century, leaving only a 15th century stone porch with an 18th century doorway in the churchyard. The porch stands on a mound which presumably covers the rubble and debris of former buildings on the site.

The bank of the early churchyard (7600) is still recognisable as a scarp within the much later boundary wall of old St Tyssil's graveyard. Part of that perimeter is still drawn in on modern Ordnance Survey maps.

Phipps Tenement (32623), supposedly two small box-framed almshouses built in 1630 which was converted into a lobby-entry house in the later 17th century lies a little to the north of the village centre and is a Grade II listed building.

The village plan of Llandyssil is difficult to decipher. The open area to the west of The Upper House appears to be a small green or common, and it might have been expected that the earlier houses in the village would have clustered around this. But the only house of any age – Phipps Tenement – lies well away from it. And the lane down from the church which must be of some antiquity heads not directly for the green but is deflected away from it. It is no more than speculation to wonder whether the green was formerly much larger and abutted the stream, and that Upper House which was formerly an inn, and perhaps Bank House as well as Oak Cottages were constructed on it at a late date. The failure to find anything medieval during a watching brief on ground immediately to the east of Upper House in 2000 would support such a view, but could also be explained by other factors.

In the field opposite the old church site are faint traces of earthworks (7601), perhaps the remnants of earlier settlement. Further to the south-west lynchet banks, a holloway and perhaps other earthworks (5034) lie on the hillslope between Pentre farm and the village, but are indicative of agricultural rather than settlement activity.



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Llanerfyl

SJ 0340 0977
15714

Introduction

Llanerfyl lies in the valley of the Banwy where the main A458 trunk road to Dolgellau and Machynlleth crosses the river. It is 8km north-west of Llanfair Caereinion. The church and the settlement that has grown up around it occupy the edge of flattish ground above the Banwy valley, a small dingle to the east effectively creating a spur to the north of the village. Modern housing is gradually spreading over the eastern slope of the valley within the triangle of roads south-west of the church.

This brief report examines Llanerfyl's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The dedication of the church and the sub-circularity of the churchyard point to an early medieval foundation, and these characteristics are reinforced by the very early grave marker that is now in the church.

The name appears first as *Llanurvyl* in 1254 and refers to the church of St Erfyl. Reputedly a daughter of the better known St Padarn, this is apparently the only dedication to her in Wales although another has been claimed in Brittany.

The subsequent development of the settlement is unrecorded. It must have benefited to some extent from the creation of the Welshpool to Machynlleth turnpike road which passed through it in the second half of the 18th century. But subsequently, it appears that before the tithe survey map was compiled in 1850, a new road leading directly from by the churchyard gate down to the bridge across the river was built, together with another from the main road at Caer Ffynnon. It joined to the old road to Talerddig which is now the back lane on which the Methodist chapel sits and this was also the original road to the bridge with a T-junction probably beneath the chapel. This earlier lane has disappeared as has another lane which ran below the churchyard and for an unknown distance along the eastern bank of the river. All this is evident from an estate map in the Powis Castle collection from 1734. What this map also indicates is that there were apparently very few tenements in the vicinity of the church in the mid-18th century, suggesting that this was little more than a church settlement.

The heritage to 1750

St Erfyl's church (7573), a small building with a nave, chancel and bellcote, was rebuilt in 1870, retaining some of the medieval roof trusses but virtually nothing else of the medieval

stone and timberwork. This is more than compensated for, however, by the inscribed grave marker, mentioned above, a shrine and a reliquary both of the 15th century, a font of slightly later date, a 17th century communion table and decorated wooden panels of 1727 from the front of a former gallery.

In the church is a 5th century gravestone (1741), inscribed in Latin, and one of the earliest examples from Wales. It was previously in the churchyard and although it is reasonable to assume that it was directly associated with an early church at Llanerfyl, there is nothing definite that supports this contention.

The churchyard (7574), raised above the adjacent road, has been extended eastwards in recent times, but the former bank of the oval enclosure can still be detected just beyond the eastern side of the church. Its original shape is easily distinguished on the large-scale late 19th century Ordnance Survey maps. Downslope from the churchyard was Fynnon Erfyl (4289), a holy well now difficult to detect on the ground.

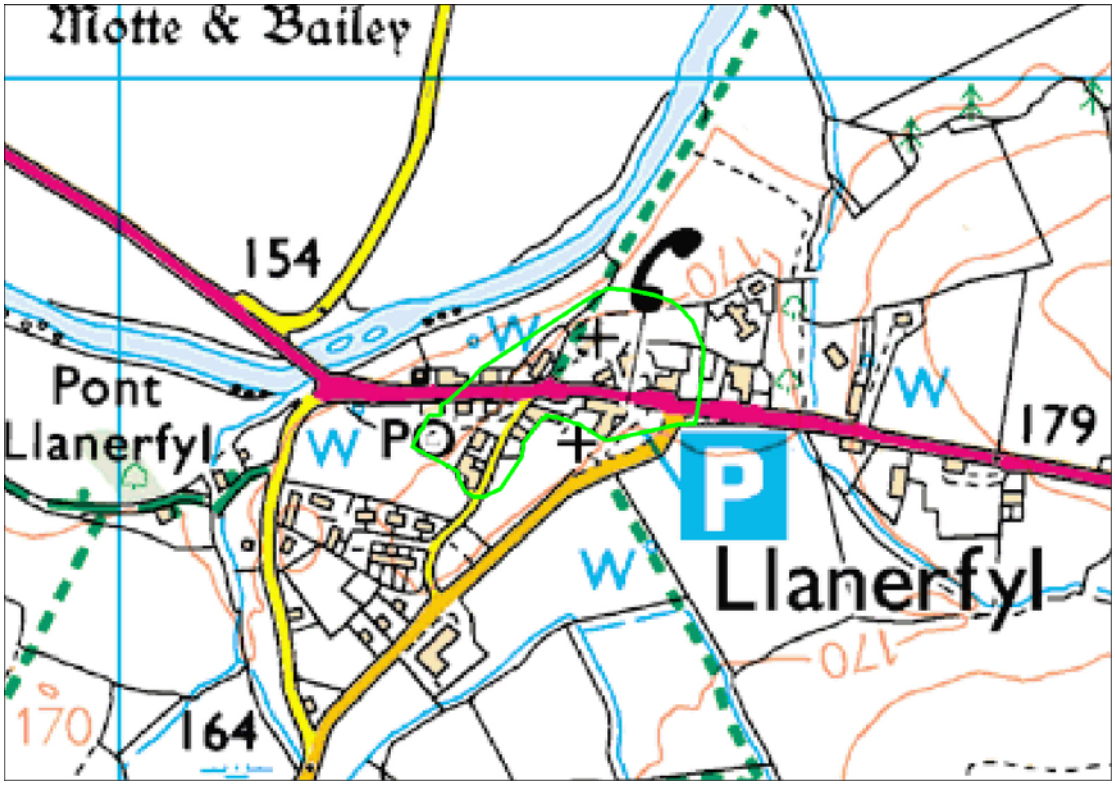
The listed buildings in the village all post-date 1800, the earliest, Caer Fynnon (7642), being of about that date.

A small motte and bailey castle (756) surmounts a natural knoll on the valley floor at Llyssun, just over the river from Llanerfyl, and if Samuel Lewis (1833) is to be believed, there was also a gentry home, probably of medieval date, called Llŷs Wgan near the present farm of Llyssun. The former existence of a large deer park behind Llyssun suggests that there may be some truth to Lewis' story.

In 1966, excavations were undertaken on earthworks (1328) in a field (OS 2266) on the south side of the village, above the river, in the belief that these were of Roman military construction. They proved to be of natural origin.

Other nebulous earthworks (7575) whose significance is uncertain survive in a field opposite the Bethel Chapel.

A cockpit (1744), presumably of post-medieval date, formerly existed close to the modern house called 'Noddfa'.



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Llanfair Caereinion

SO 1038 0642
15714

Introduction

Llanfair Caereinion is situated beside the A458 trunk road through central Montgomeryshire, some 12km to the west of Welshpool. The small market town has developed up on the south side of the River Banwy where a stream runs down to the river from the south. The church occupies a low spur above the river, and the village has grown around this, spreading into the stream valley and in recent times up the steep hillsides that fringe both sides of the Banwy.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanfair Caereinion up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The church is believed to have been founded as a chapelry dependent on the mother church at Meifod. The shape of the churchyard and the riverine location are consistent with an early medieval foundation, while the dedication implies that Mary may have supplanted an early medieval saint, probably after the Norman Conquest and perhaps as late as the mid-13th century after the church was granted to the Cistercian nunnery at Llanllugan in 1239.

Llanfair appears first as Llanveyr in 1254, and as Llanveyr in Kereynon in 1281/2. It signifies the church of St Mary in the commote of Caereinion.

Very little can be established of the town's subsequent history through the Middle Ages. At an early stage it became the centre of an ecclesiastical parish, but unusually it was divided between two townships, the boundary running down Bridge Street. It never achieved borough status, although it emerged as a market centre, servicing the surrounding rural communities.

Probably as a result of the construction of the turnpike road on the north side of the valley in the 18th century, Llanfair bridge was built, with Bridge Street which provided access to it, lying parallel to the small stream entering the Banwy. Whether there was a crossing point of the river in earlier centuries is not known. In the post-medieval era, the stream was dammed to provide a pond (7693) behind the cottages on the west side of the street, for the woollen factory on the river's edge, and this was one of several local industries that developed during the 18th and 19th centuries. The construction of the bridge also opened the way for the expansion of settlement on to the north bank.

The heritage to 1750

The church of St Mary (31089) was completely rebuilt in 1868, utilising the footprint of its predecessor which had been well-described by Sir Stephen Glynne a decade earlier. Only the north aisle, uncovered in an excavation in 1993, seems not to have been rebuilt on the same line. The only diagnostic architectural feature surviving from the earlier, medieval church is the south doorway of 13th century date. Inside are a font of around 1300 and the recumbent effigy of a knight from a century later; some of the roof timbers are of 15th century date, salvaged and re-used by the Victorian builders.

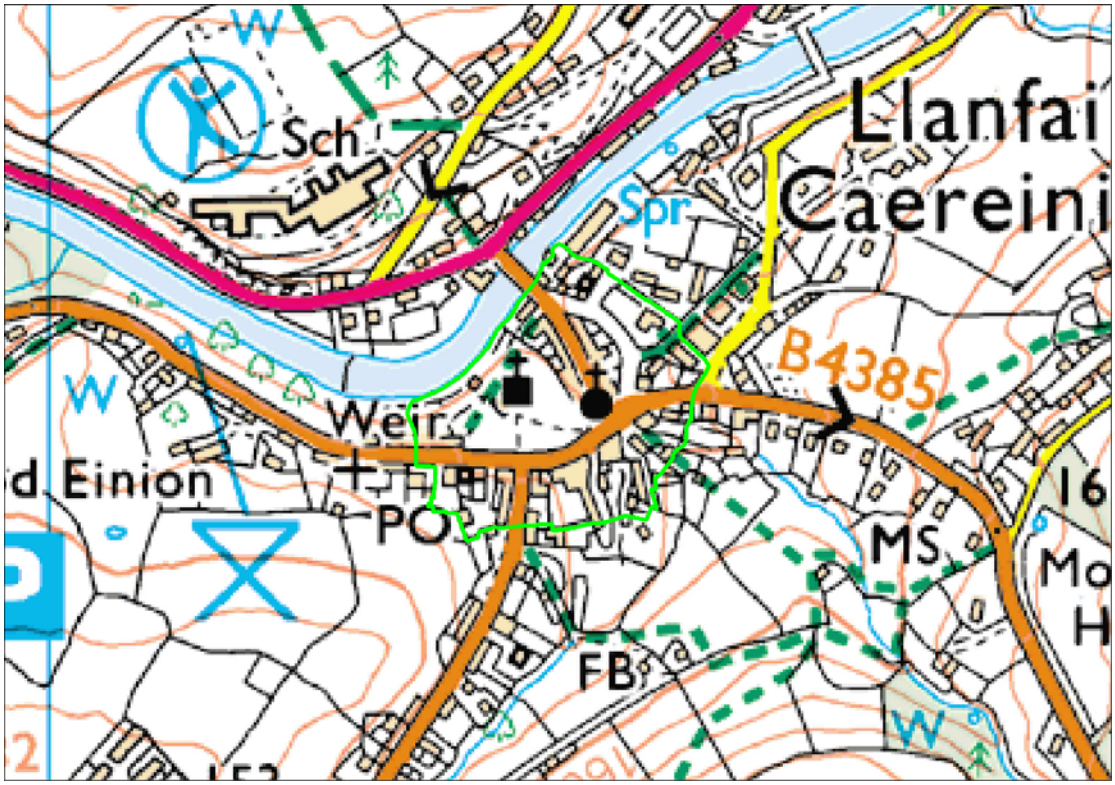
The churchyard (7688) now appears as an irregularly shaped four-sided area. It has clearly been extended downhill on the northern side as the mid-19th century tithe map reveals. More of a speculation is that originally the boundary on the eastern side was Parson's Bank, indicating that a significant portion of the churchyard has been alienated at some point. Together the portions would have combined to create a large semi-circular churchyard, not dissimilar from, though smaller than, Meifod. Against this view, however, is the consequence that a valley would have been included within the churchyard, an altogether rare occurrence.

On the northern slope below the churchyard and reached by a flight of steps is Ffynnon Fair (758), a holy well still believed to possess curative properties at the beginning of the 20th century. This was entirely rebuilt in 1975 and restored in 1990.

The plan of the town indicates some organic growth. The market place is a focus for several roads with the town hall, demolished but then replaced, built in the middle of it in the late 18th century. It seems likely that regardless of the chronology, the settlement clustered around the stream on the south side of the churchyard, and gradually expanded eastwards and westwards from there. The development of housing down Bridge Street is also undated, but focussed on the west side of the street; even in the mid-19th century there were virtually no houses on the east side. There are few signs of the long narrow tenements normally associated with ‘urban’ centres, though might partly be due to the undulating topography.

Given its size, surprisingly few buildings of architectural interest remain in Llanfair, but this may be attributed to a major fire in 1758. Apart from the church the only building listed (grade II) which might pre-date 1750 is the former Wynnstay Arms Hotel (36360) of mid-18th century date.

Ridge and furrow cultivation traces (7692) are visible in the neighbourhood including one survival just to the south of the town.



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Llanfechain

SJ 1887 2042
15716

Introduction

Llanfechain lies beside the B4393 in north-eastern Montgomeryshire. It is about 5km east of Llanfyllin and around 3km to the west of Llansanffraid-ym-Mechain. The village has developed in the broad valley of the River Cain, a tributary of the River Vyrnwy. The church and the village's historic core occupy a gravel terrace position on the south side of the river, while the motte and bailey is placed on a steep-sided spur overlooking it. Modern housing expansion is fundamentally altering the appearance of this village, most dramatically to the south of the church and on the east side of the motte.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanfechain up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.
The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.
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History of development

An early medieval origin can be assumed on the basis of the church dedication and the morphology of the churchyard. The pre-Conquest llys (or court) of the local lord is believed to have lain in the vicinity of Llys farm less than one kilometre to the west where research in the 1990s may have located the physical remains of the enclosure around it.

The name in the form Llanveccheyn is first encountered in 1254 and refers to the church in the cantref of Mechain. What is interesting but not of course unique is that the church's dedication to St Garmon is not reflected in the place-name. This did appear as ll.armon ymechain but as late as c.1566.

After the Norman Conquest, an earthwork castle was a strategically placed above the valley of the Cain to control the area.

Identifying the subsequent development of the settlement is at best speculative. By the middle of the 19th century Llanfechain consisted of dwellings on three sides of the churchyard and small groups of houses running down to Llanfechain Bridge over the River Cain as well as almost all the cottages now grouped together just beyond the bridge. The main road is a product of the turnpike era, probably 18th century, though admitting the possibility that there could have been a medieval predecessor. Nevertheless, the straight lane leading off the road and down to the church is so straight and adopts the alignment of the adjacent fields that it could well be a late addition to the landscape. None of this tells us anything about the appearance of the village in earlier centuries with any certainty, but the main focus of settlement looks to have been from the church northwards.

The heritage to 1750

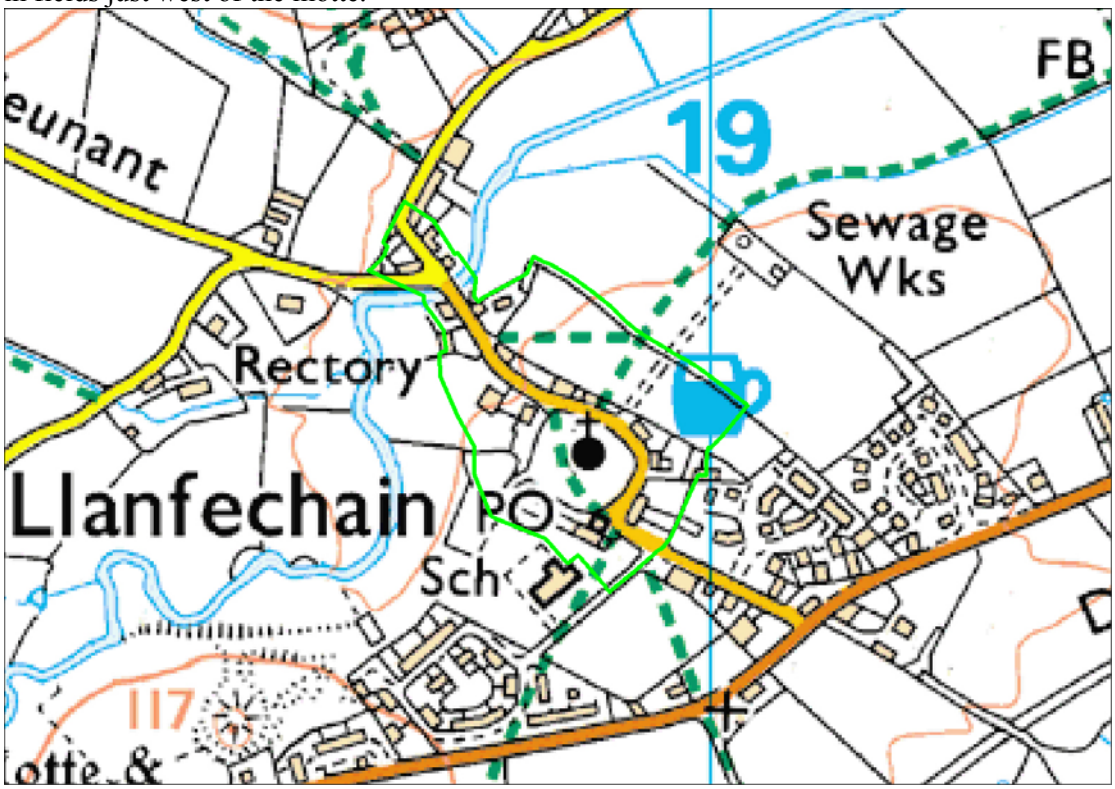
St Garmon's church (7602) is a single-chambered, 12th century structure with surviving Romanesque windows in the east wall and two doorways in the south wall. It has been claimed by Haslam to be 'in some respects the most complete Norman church remaining to Montgomeryshire', though if we are being honest this is rather a hollow plaudit, given the dearth of such buildings in the county. There were some Victorian alterations including the addition of a western bell turret. Inside the roof is of the 15th century, the font from c.1500, the pulpit carries a date of 1636, and at the western end its gallery remains.

The raised churchyard (7603) appears to retain its original sub-circular form. In addition there is a mound (1487) behind the church traditionally interpreted as a preaching mound associated with St Garmon, though just possibly a prehistoric round barrow. The cock-pit which was positioned next to it has now disappeared.

Ty Coch (7698) on the main road opposite the lane leading down to the church and village is a restored 15th century hall-house with 17th century modifications. Plas-yn-dinas Inn (7697), opposite the church, is a Grade II, late 17th century, half-timbered building. An adjacent building is reported to have had crucks which could have been of an earlier date, but these have now gone. Plas Cain beside Llanfechain Bridge is a timber-framed dwelling thought to be from the 17th century. Away from the village core and on the north side of the Cain is the Old Rectory (40607) believed to have had its origins around 1620.

Domen Gastell, a fine motte and bailey earthwork (1486; SAM Mont5) represents a second cultural heritage focus in the village. There is nothing for the present to suggest that the castle and the church were integrated within a single settlement layout.

A holloway (7604), the course of a former track on the south side of the river, runs below the castle in the general direction of the village, and ridge and furrow cultivation (7604) is visible in fields just west of the motte.



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Llanfihangel-yng-ngwynfa

SJ 0800 1680
15717

Introduction

Llanfihangel lies in the hills of central Montgomeryshire, some 7km south-west of Llanfyllin. The church surmounts the crest of a small hill isolated from the main ridge to the east by a shallow valley. The village has expanded along the side of this valley, but modern housing has been confined to the sides of the main road (the B4382) further south.

This brief report examines Llanfihangel's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The name *Llanvihangel* is first recorded in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and *Lamvyhangell in Gwunva* appears in 1375. Translated, this means 'St Michael's church in Gwynfa' which was a district within the cantref of Mechain.

The early history of the settlement and its subsequent development are unknown; the dedication and perhaps the hill-top location might argue for a foundation late in the early medieval period or even perhaps after the Norman Conquest.

By the middle of the 19th century, the settlement consisted of no more than the church, the adjacent farm of Penisarllan and a cluster of cottages, rather smaller even than today.

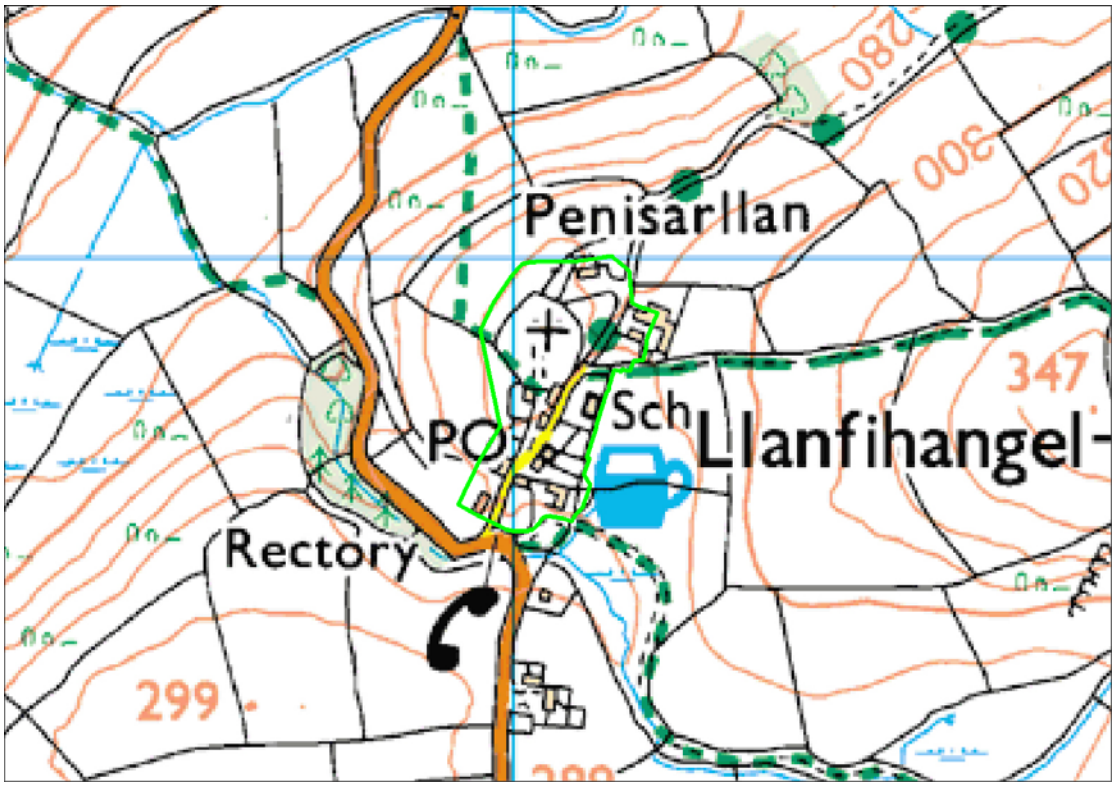
The heritage to 1750

St Michael's is a rarity amongst the churches of Montgomeryshire in that it is placed on a hill top, though the dedication in this respect is highly appropriate. There have been several churches on this spot. The present church (7612) was built in 1862, replacing a church that itself had been erected only in the 16th or 17th century. From the earlier, medieval building, three inscribed memorial stone fragments have been preserved, two being cross incised fragments, the third part of a grave slab to Madog ap Celynin dated to around 1340. Other survivals include a bell of 1638, a simple medieval font and some benefaction boards probably of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The present churchyard incorporates the scarp bank of its diminutive polygonal predecessor (7613), the complete circuit of which can still be established.

At least three holy wells have been associated with the immediate environs of the village (1226, 1689 & 1690) but none can now be accurately located. St Michael's well was reputedly only some 150m from the church and was formerly used for baptisms, yet its position today is not known even though it was visited by the Royal Commission in 1910.

There are no listed buildings here, although the Rectory (7700), a modernised form of what was said to be a 17th century original, was once listed in the now obsolete grade III.



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Llanfyllin

SJ 1431 1934
15718

Introduction

Set in the hills of northern Montgomeryshire, Llanfyllin is the terminus of the A490 from Welshpool which lies some 15km to the south-east. This large village has expanded along the southern edge of the valley through which Afon Cain flows towards its confluence with the Vyrnwy. The shallow valley carved by its tributary, the little Nant Abel, which runs down from the west, proved attractive to the earliest colonisers: the church was founded on a slight rise above it and the settlement developed along the valley and beyond it, the Abel flowing down Brook Street and High Street until it was culverted in the 19th century. The 20th century expansion of Llanfyllin has focused on the road from Welshpool, with housing estates, a large school complex and some industry all set close to it.

This brief report examines Llanfyllin's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The church's early foundation seems assured, the unusual dedication coupled with the curvature of some parts of the churchyard boundary and the location overlooking a small river combining to suggest a pre-Conquest origin. As it was termed a *capella* in the mid-13th century it appears to have been originally dependant on the mother church at Meifod.

The place-name *Llanvelig* first appears in 1254 and as *Llanvyllyn* in the 1291 Taxatio of Pope Nicholas. The name means the 'church of St Mylling', a Welsh version of an obscure Irish saint, Moling, a 7th century Irish monk who, tradition has it, was buried under the altar of the early church. The reason for Moling's appearance here is unknown and there is no corroborative evidence to suggest that the holy man ever visited Wales.

To what extent the church acted as a focus for settlement prior to the late 13th century is not known. But at that time Llanfyllin became a Welsh borough. It was founded in the years between 1293, when a weekly market and annual fair were granted to the Lord of Mechain, and 1295 when he died. Of no great size, it had only 30 burgages, supposedly laid out along Bridge Street, which has been claimed as the main axial road in the town. The town's charter which still survives states that it was to follow the laws and liberties of the Norman town of Breteuil, a standard formula at that date.
How many of Llanfyllin's lanes had medieval dwellings beside them is unknown, but we can be reasonably certain that it remained no more than a small town throughout its history. Nevertheless, John Speed, writing at the beginning of the 17th century, listed it as one of the

principal market towns in Montgomeryshire and this is borne out by the revenues from the market and fairs as documented in 1650 for these were greater than at Llanidloes, Machynlleth and Newtown. The market town specialised in the sale of wool and yarns throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, and received a new charter in 1673.

The earliest map that we have – a copy of an unprovenanced original – dates from around 1725. Taken at face value this suggests that dwellings had spread along the road to Bala at least as far as where Rhiwlas Terrace now is; that on Bridge Street there were unbroken lines of houses down to the Cain, with a few on the other side of that river; that towards Welshpool houses stretched almost as far as the location of the modern council offices; and that Market Street also had continuous housing as far as the Vine Square area. As to whether Narrow Street existed in anything like its present form is unclear, but as noted above, the Abel flowed in an open channel at this time.

The 18th century appears to have been a period of expansion and maps from the end of the century indicate an expanding settlement. Brickworks produced the materials for many of the buildings in the town centre including the church. Maltings and tanneries were located here and in the later 19th century the railway arrived, though this falls outside the scope of this report.

The heritage to 1750

Nothing survives of the medieval church dedicated to St Myllin. It was demolished and a new structure (7614) was built largely in brick soon after 1706. This itself was restored around 1863. Virtually all the fixtures and fittings post-date the construction of this new church.

The present churchyard embraces the unmistakable traces of a small, circular enclosure, undoubtedly the earlier 'llan' (7615).

The street pattern in Llanfyllin merits attention. Soulsby claimed Bridge Street as the main thoroughfare while Haslam believed Narrow Street fulfilled this function, though earlier maps of the town suggest that is very unlikely. The main development in the borough was without doubt along the Shrewsbury to Bala road, with a widening of the road to accommodate the market place to the south-east of the church. Running off the main street at right angles were subsidiary lanes, one (now Bridge Street, but Street Issa/Lower Street in 1817) running off north-eastwards towards a crossing of Afon Cain, 150m below the church, and on towards Llangedwyn and Oswestry; and another, initially very narrow lane or passage, edging the churchyard and turning through a right angle (as Church Street) to meet Bridge Street. On the opposite side, two or perhaps three lead off the market place: Narrow Street, Market Street which before the beginning of the 18th century seems to have been Pig Street, and Brook Street which followed the looping Nant Abel. All are incorporated in a rectangular network, the very regular layout indicating an advanced degree of planning at the time that the borough was founded. Interestingly, the Market Place is off centre from both Bridge Street and Narrow Lane.

A town hall or market hall had occupied the same spot at the bottom of Market Street from at least 1590 when it was first documented (the last structure, of brick, was erected in 1791 and demolished in 1960). The location is now an open space.

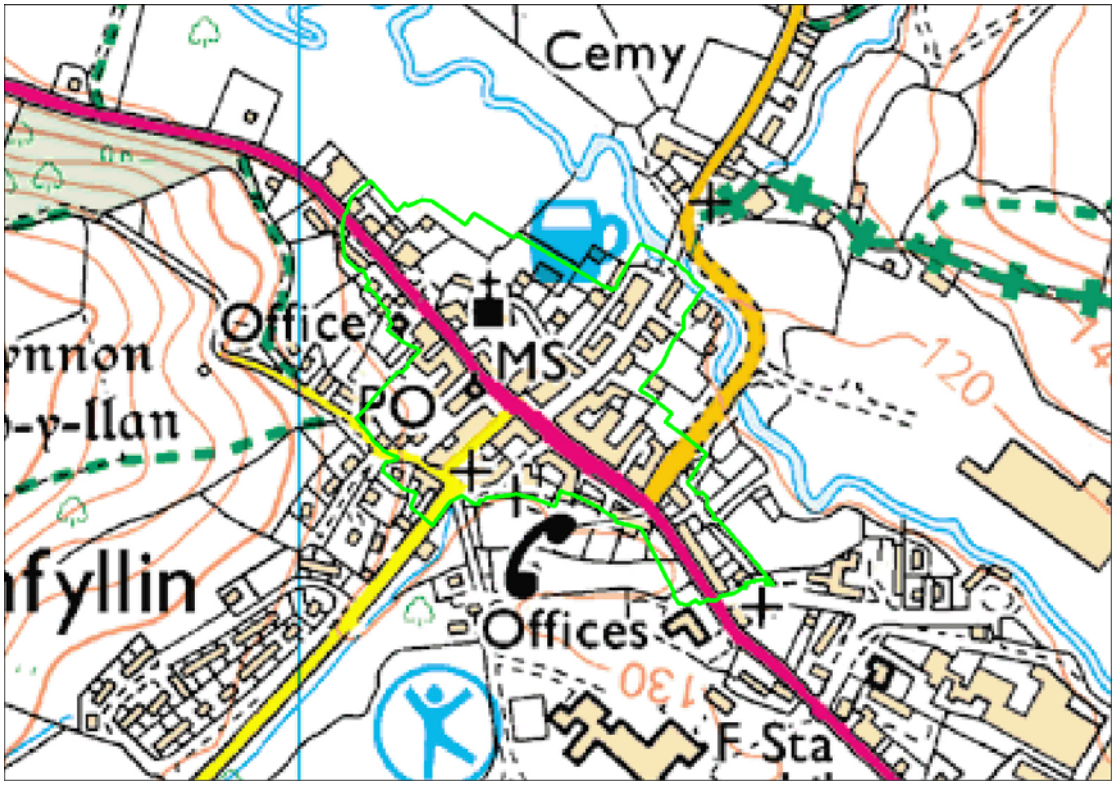
There are few grade II* listed buildings in Llanfyllin. The Manor House (31534) between Narrow Street and Market Street of 1737 is one such. But there are a significant number of grade II buildings, their lower status probably a recognition that many have been remodelled or re-fronted subsequent to their original construction. And their range of dates is perhaps one of the clearest indications of the town's thriving history during the 16th to 18th centuries.

No.38 High Street (31512) is 17th century but was extensively rebuilt in the 19th century, and neighbouring Waterloo House, and also Denbigh House (40438) both have 17th century origins, as does the Cain Valley Hotel (20260). The Bakery on the High Street (40433) is

considered to be mid-18th century as is the Post Office (31503), Rhiwlas Terrace (41076-40181) has a core which could be 17th century, while adjacent Rhiwlas House (31495) has its origins in a 17th century timber-framed house. Lower down the High Street, 4 and 5 Penybryn (40435) opposite the Cross Keys incorporate parts of a 16th century hall-house which was rebuilt in the 17th century and the Cross Keys itself (31517) was also originally a 16th century hall-house, with a gabled front added in the 18th century. Globe House (31516) on the High Street was also an Inn, the Cross Foxes, and was built in the 17th century, while its neighbour, no.48 High Street (the Eagle Café; 31515) also had 17th century origins. On Bridge Street, no. 16 (31489) is a modernised 17th century jettied house, and no.19 (31490), opposite, is from the same century.

Away from the High Street Church View (31493) on Church Street is early 17th century if not earlier. And The Hall (57) on Vine Square is of 16th century date, its open hall re-modelled in about 1599.

The only archaeological work in Llanfyllin in recent years was an evaluation north-east of Church Street and close to the churchyard boundary in 2008. A number of features denoting medieval settlement were revealed by the excavations, including post-holes, a possible floor layer and further uncharacterised layers. Small fragments of daub were found throughout some of the early layers, suggesting that timber-framed structures with wattle infill are likely to have been located nearby in the past.



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Llangadfan

SJ 0108 1033
15719

Introduction

Llangadfan is a settlement of two parts. Cann Office with Pen-y-bont, the more northerly, lies on the A458 trunk road between Welshpool and Dolgellau, while the church occupies the opposite bank of Afon Banwy, the two being linked by means of Pont Llangadfan. Until recently there was little new development in this part of Llangadfan parish, but the situation has changed in recent years with houses being built on ground adjacent to the lane running along the western side of the river.

The village is about 10km north-west of Llanfair Caereinion. Both the church and Cann Office occupy flattish ground with the valley sloping away quite sharply from their respective positions. Pen-y-bont is closer to the river and consequently lower.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llangadfan up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The Breton saint, Cadfan, is said to have had a direct association with this place, establishing a cell here in the first half of the 6th century AD, before becoming the first abbot of Bardsey Island. Certainly, the dedication and the shape of the churchyard are consistent with an early medieval origin.

Llankadvan appears in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, the meaning being the obvious one of 'the church of St Cadfan'. The present form of the name is first encountered in 1291.

Sometime after the Norman Conquest, a motte and bailey castle was thrown up on the opposite side of the river to the church at what is now Cann Office. One authority argued many years ago that the castle was entirely of Welsh build and was still in use in 1277; the latter point is indisputable, the former rather less so.

Any subsequent development in Llangadfan during the medieval era is likely to have been slight. As with so many Montgomeryshire church settlements, it is impossible to determine on the evidence currently available to us whether nucleated group dwellings developed here in the Middle Ages, though it is perhaps unlikely. Cann Office emerged in the early 19th century as a posting station on the turnpike road westwards, though its name crops up in earlier references and it seems to have been in existence in the mid-17th century, though perhaps only

as a farm. Pont Llangadfan which links the two foci is recent: in the mid-19th century the only track southwards from Cann Office led to the now disused corn mill beside the river.

The heritage to 1750

The church of St Cadfan (7576) is a single-chambered building, perhaps basically 15th century on the basis of one surviving Perpendicular window and the timberwork of the roof. It was heavily restored in 1868, and few of the original furnishings and fittings were retained.

The churchyard has been almost doubled in size since the mid-19th century, and the early 19th century lychgate is set in the still visible enclosure bank of the earlier churchyard (7577) which was smaller and sub-circular in shape.

St Cadfan's Well (1230) is a short distance below the church beside the road leading to Pont Llangadfan and is grade II listed. Unlike many of the holy wells in the region this one has an arch over it and there is a descriptive plaque, though at the end of the 18th century it was housed in a well building.

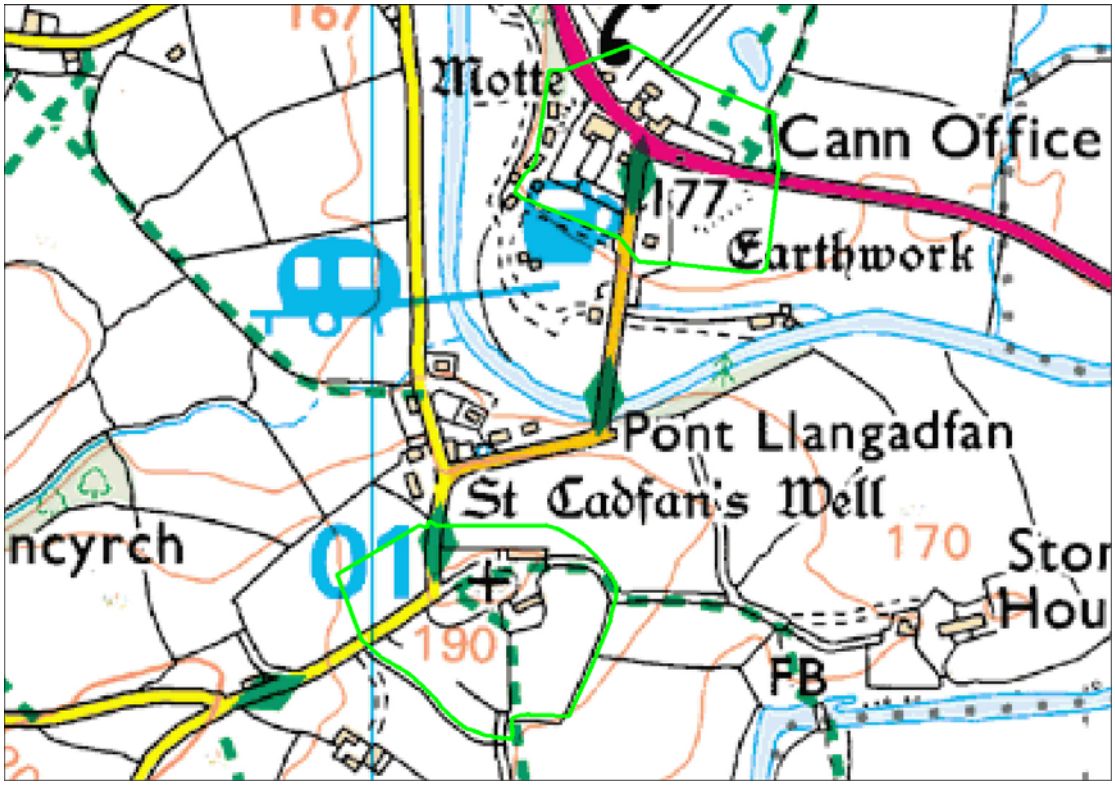
The Cann Office motte and bailey (1228) has suffered considerable degradation since the installation of the hotel. Only half the motte survives and the outline of the atypical rectangular bailey is intermittent.

A rectangular earthwork (6094) lies in a field immediately to the east of Cann Office Hotel. Its origin remains uncertain despite some limited excavation in 1962 which failed to confirm its Roman date but did produce medieval pottery.

The church and well apart, the only listed building is the Cann Office Hotel (7701) which is Grade II.

There are a few insubstantial banks west of the churchyard (7578), but nothing there that could be cited to support the argument for a shrunken village around the church.

The large field north of Rhiwlas (formerly the Rectory) was termed 'Cae hwll y Gaer' in the mid-19th century Tithe apportionment. The 'gaer' element is potentially significant, often relating to a defensive earthwork. Nothing has yet been noted here.



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Llangadwaladr

SJ 1817 3035
105975

Introduction

Llangadwaladr is a remote church settlement established in a deep valley in the eastern Berwyns, 7km north-east of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. Formerly in the historic county of Denbighshire it was transferred to modern Powys in 1996, along with several other parishes.

The church and churchyard are set on what is effectively the valley floor, although raised on a slight terrace above the small stream, Afon Ysgwennant, which flows round their northern side. Hen Graig to the north and Gyrn Moelfre to the south crowd the valley, restricting flat ground to a narrow strip at its base. Eastwards the valley opens out slightly towards the River Morda and the lowlands around Oswestry. The modern settlement comprises only the church and Tyn-llan which was formerly the vicarage.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llangadwaladr up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Nothing is known of the origins and history of Llangadwaladr. However, its dedication and curvilinear churchyard favour an early medieval genesis for the foundation of the church.

In Pope Nicholas' taxation of 1291 it was referred to as *Bettws Badwalardyr*. *Bettws* here means chapel. *Llangydwaladr* appears in 1547.

Formerly a chapelry in the parish of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, it was separated by act of parliament at a late date, being constituted a parish in 1877.

An estate map of c1760 shows Tyn-llan and perhaps one other structure in addition to the church. The Tithe map of the mid-19th century confirms the belief that in the post-medieval era at least, the settlement has taken very much the same form as it does today, and there is nothing to suggest a nucleated community here at any earlier date.

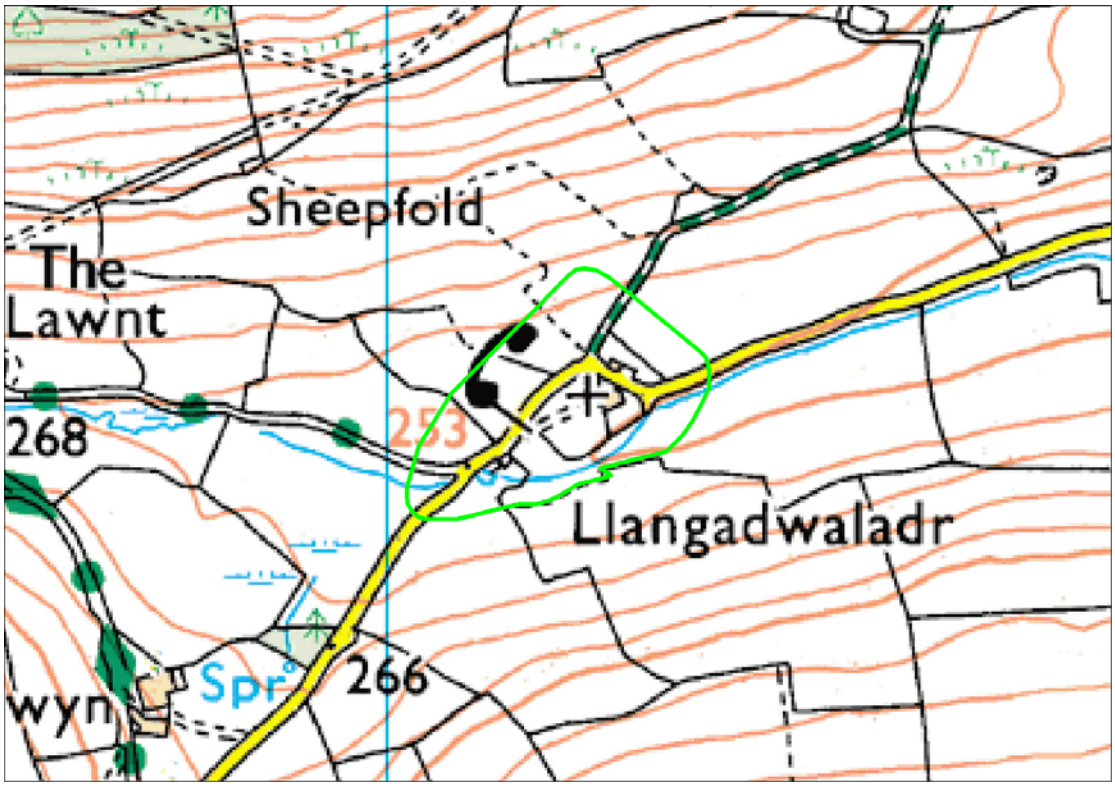
The heritage to 1750

St Cadwaladr's church (101358) is a single-chambered structure, much restored in the 19th century, first in 1840 then in 1883. Some of the medieval wall masonry survives without any diagnostic features, though there is a reset lancet window in the vestry. The arch-braced roof contains some medieval timberwork, but any pre-Reformation fittings have long since gone.

The churchyard (19732) is irregular in shape and raised by more than one metre on the northern side. It has a strong curve on its northern side where a bank can still be detected inside the encompassing wall, but its original course on the west and east is less obvious. Probably the garden of Tyn-llan has been carved from the early yard, for the northern boundary of the former continues the curving boundary of the churchyard. That there is a considerable drop from the churchyard into the garden suggests that this was not a recent division. On the south the churchyard now incorporates a pronounced scarp above the stream which is sinuous and may not necessarily represent the early boundary. Nevertheless, the church builders seem to have selected a particularly elevated part of the river terrace for their construction.

Relict field boundaries, some showing as banks others as lynchets, cover both sides of the valley and form part of the larger network of fields surrounding the village. Ridge and furrow (19733) is visible in one field with uncharacterised, but minor earthworks to the south-west.

No obvious house platforms or sites have been recognised in Llangadwaladr. However, south-west of the churchyard, on the south side of a stream, opposite modern sheepfolds and close to a largely silted pond is a distinctive artificial platform (19734). Its significance is unclear.



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Llangedwyn

SJ 1882 2414
105977

Introduction

Llangedwyn lies on the northern slopes of the Tanat Valley, a little more than 6km to the east of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, with Oswestry 12km to the north-east. The church occupies a spur of the river terrace which here projects towards the Tanat just over 200m to the south. Llangedwyn Hall is set higher up the terrace, sheltering beneath an afforested hill known as The Warren; and the houses that make up the modern settlement of Llangedwyn have been located a short distance to the west of the hall where a minor road forks off the B4396.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llangedwyn up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

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History of development

The early history of the settlement is not documented, but an early medieval origin for the church seems assured, from its dedication and from its curvilinear churchyard perched on the edge of the river valley.

Llangedwyn was formerly a chapelry attached to Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, and this is reflected in the earliest naming where the value of the chapel at *Wangedwyn* was subsumed within that of Llanrhaeadr in Pope Nicholas' Taxation of 1291. In 1354 it was recorded as *Langetwin* and most later forms of the name are only minor variations of the present one.

The hall was introduced into this landscape probably not earlier than the 17th century, while the spread of dwellings to the west is more recent still, post-dating the Tithe assessment in the mid-19th century. An earlier map of the later 18th century appears to show the church, hall and a smithy, and the isolation of church and hall is confirmed by Thomas Badeslade's map of the Llangedwyn demesne in 1741. If there had been a nucleated settlement here, and this currently seems rather unlikely, it will have been removed when the hall was built.

The heritage to 1750

Of the medieval church dedicated to St Cedwyn, only some possible medieval masonry remains in the east and west walls. It was rebuilt in 1869/70 (101363), retaining its Romanesque-style porch which seems to have been added in the 1840s. It underwent further restoration sometime before 1907. There is a 14th century recumbent effigy as well as reused woodwork of 1527, a 17th century pulpit, and a range of 18th century features including memorials, a pillar alms box, a hatchment and benefaction boards internally.

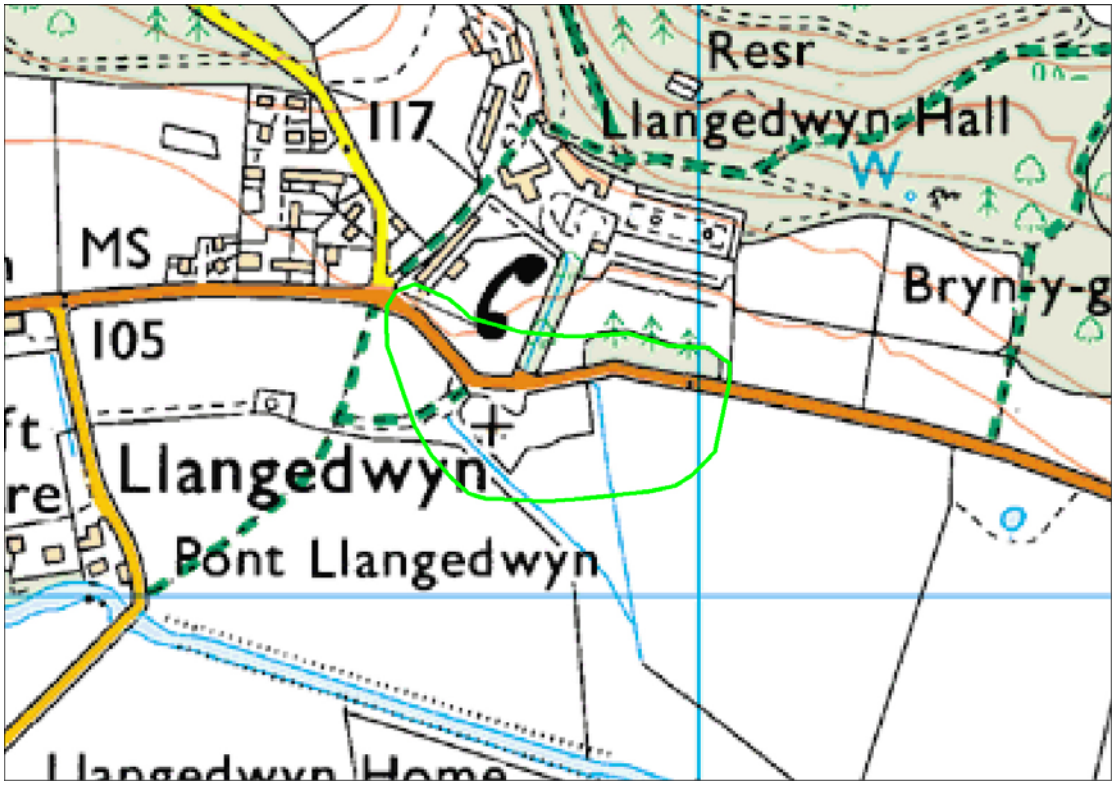
An early medieval cross-incised slab is set against the outer east wall of the chancel (101768).

The shape of the churchyard (19738) has been altered fundamentally. Enlarged on the south and east, and perhaps cut back slightly on the north-east, the original shape appears to have been elliptical with the main axis aligned north-west/south-east along the river terrace scarp. The most obvious traces of its curvilinear form are fossilised on the south-eastern side.

Llangedwyn Hall (105902; Grade II listing), formerly the home of the Williams Wynn family, may have originated in the 17th century, perhaps even a little earlier, but has undergone a complex series of alterations since that time, including some demolition in the 1950s. Most of what survives today dates to around 1718. Its formal gardens - also early 18th century, possibly finished in 1728 - are of significant interest being in their original form. They have been given the non-statutory Grade II* rating in the Cadw/ICOMOS parks and gardens register. The gatepiers and gates (25639) are also probably early 18th century and have a Grade II listing.

The bridge (Grade II listing) across the Tanat, close to Llangedwyn Mill, is late 18th or early 19th century in date, and strictly therefore falls outside the remit of this study.

Natural terraces and scarps occur on the northern slopes of the Tanat Valley in the vicinity of Llangedwyn. These may have been utilised for occupation in the past, but no traces of man-made earthworks now survive near the village.



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Llangurig

SN 9090 7988
15720

Introduction

Llangurig, some 6km south-west of Llanidloes in the extreme south of Montgomeryshire, sits at the junction of the A44(T) with the A470(T) on one of the few through routes in the Cambrian Mountains. The church stands out above the northern edge of the Wye flood plain where the river swings southwards. A backdrop of high, moderately steep hills to the north, incised with small stream valleys, contrasts with the flat plain of the river which is marked by palaeochannels and gravel fans left by the changing course of the river. The village core around the church is only now being extended by housing set into the northern hillside, and more noticeably on flattish ground beside the old A470, which has now been superseded by a bypass.

This brief report examines its emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

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History of development

The earliest version of the place-name is in 1254 as *Llankiric*, a reference to the church of Curig. By 1310 the more recognisable *Llangerig* was in use.

It is, however, generally accepted that there was a mother church with a *clas* community here (1515) in the early medieval period, but its relationship to the comparable establishment at Llandinam on the Severn, which is at no great distance, is unknown. The mother church may have been founded as early as the 6th century. The role of Curig, reputed to have been a bishop at Llanbadarn Fawr, can only be guessed at, but the link with the early medieval saint is strengthened by the presence, on the western edge of the parish, of *Eisteddfa Gurig* (or seat of Curig), a name that goes back into the 15th century. The mother church survived into the 12th century, but from about 1180 it came under the control of the Cistercian house of Strata Florida.

The medieval appearance of Llangurig is unknown. It may have been solely a church serving the farming community dispersed along the valley and adjacent hills, or a small, nucleated settlement could have developed. On the basis of present thinking the former is perhaps more likely.

By the mid-19th century the picture is of only a handful of houses around the church. There is a suggestion of a village ‘green’, in reality a small tract of unenclosed common land immediately to the east of the churchyard which probably shared some of the functions of the

traditional English village green. Earlier links southwards from the settlement may have been limited, for the road to Rhaeadr along the valley was built only in 1830.

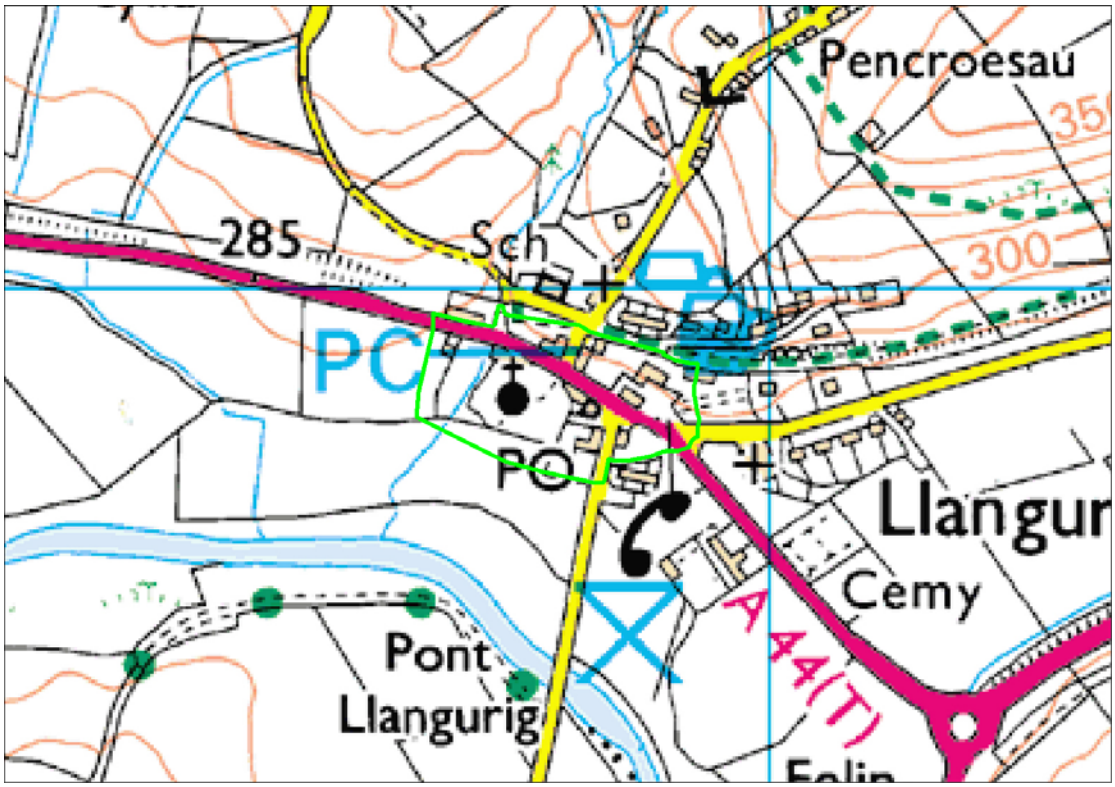
The heritage to 1750

St Curig's church (7536) has a west tower with 15th century features but perhaps an origin three hundred years earlier. The nave is on a slightly different axis and also appears to be 15th century. Restoration occurred in 1877-78.

The irregularly shaped churchyard (7537), partially terraced into the slope and with its church well below the adjacent road, has seen some modification: an earlier line is clearly evident due west of the church. There are thus indications of circularity, but it does not conform to a typical early medieval plan, nor to the larger enclosures sometimes associated with mother churches. A hoard of medieval silver coins was found in a churchyard grave here in about 1753 (1518).

The Blue Bell Inn, situated opposite the church, started as a lobby-entry house, probably in the 17th or 18th century, but was subsequently transformed into an inn.

A field 250m west of the church was termed *Cae Castell* in the Tithe survey, and a similar name has been recorded slightly to the north (3707). There is no obvious explanation for these appellations.



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Llangynyw

SJ 1270 0903
15721

Introduction

Llangynyw (or Llangyniew), 10km to the west of Welshpool, lies on a minor road leading north from the A458(T) between that town and Llanfair Caereinion. The church, accompanied only by the former rectory, is set high into the eastern flank of one of a group of hills edged by Afon Banwy, which at its closest is some 600m away to the west. It is in a reasonably sheltered location and one enjoying an excellent aspect to east and south. Three hundred metres to the south, the old school lies at a T-junction and apart from a new bungalow built between the two places, the overall pattern of settlement is one of dispersed farms.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llangynyw up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

It may be assumed that with its British dedication and the shape of the churchyard, Llangynyw was established as a religious focus in the early medieval period. Other than the fact that it became the centre of an ecclesiastical parish, nothing is known of its later history.
The place is first recorded as *Llangaenia* in the years 1213 to 1215, and as *Llankenwy* in the Norwich Taxation of 1254, while *Llangynewe* appears about 1570. The name of course references the church of St Cynyw, reputedly a 'saint' or holy man who was the uncle of St Beuno.

There is nothing to suggest that a settlement ever developed around Llangynyw. Even at the time of the Tithe survey in the mid-19th century, the church and rectory were isolated. There were, however, several other buildings in the vicinity of the road junction to the south.

The heritage to 1750

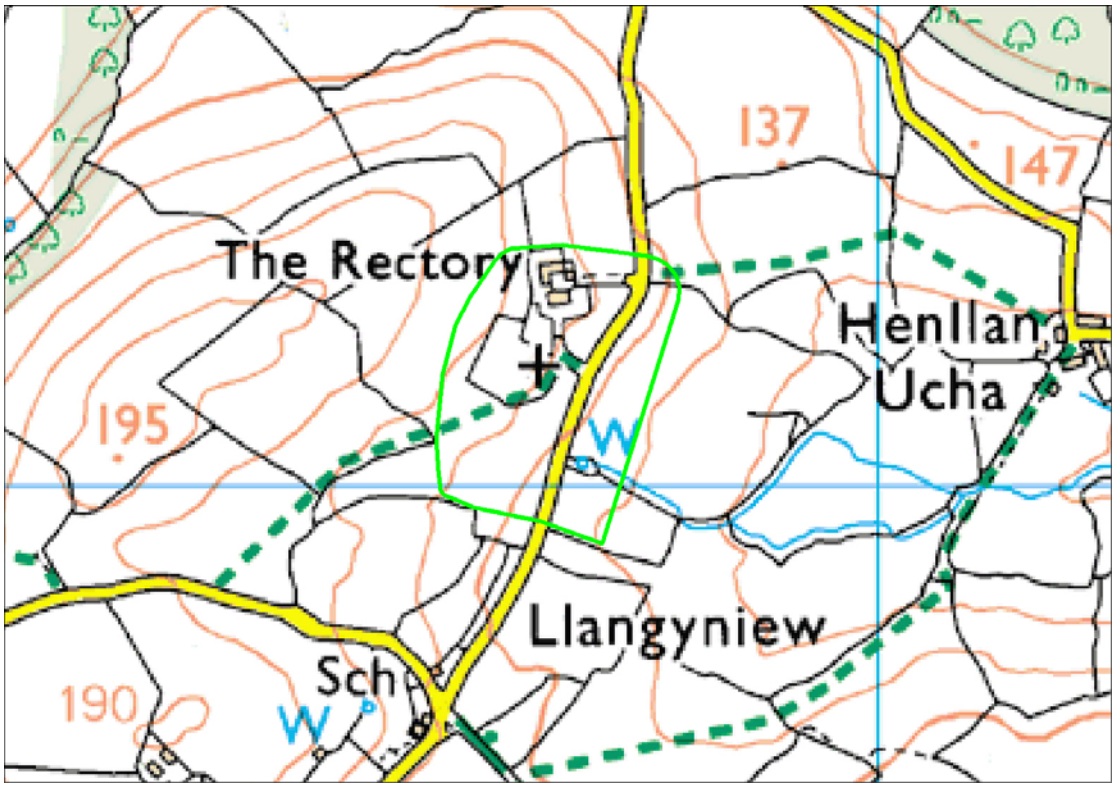
Much of the simple, single-chambered, whitewashed church dedicated to St Cynyw (7647) dates to the 15th century, and this includes its fine timber porch. Internally, too, there are features of that period particularly the screen, together with some 18th and 19th century fittings.
The churchyard, raised by up to a metre on its east side, now exhibits a most irregular shape (7648), but its earlier curvilinear boundary is recognisable on the west and the north.

The church is accompanied only by the Rectory (40883), a Grade II listed building, which is believed to have been built by an incumbent who died in 1729. There is as yet nothing to suggest that there was an earlier house on the site.

There are no incontrovertible signs of former habitation sites around the church. One hundred metres to the south and at a slightly lower altitude adjacent pasture fields contain ground irregularities (4783) beside a well, but the significance of these has yet to be established.

Small tracts of ridge and furrow cultivation have been tentatively identified in several places in the neighbourhood, but their date has not been determined.

Other than a watching brief which was implemented during the excavation of a trench for a power cable across the churchyard in 2008, there has been no archaeological works of any kind in Llangynyw in recent times.



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Llangynog

SJ 053261
15722

Introduction

Llangynog is situated in a remote region of northern Montgomeryshire on the Welshpool to Bala road (the B4391), about 12km north-west of Llanfyllin. The village has grown up at the confluence of Afon Tanat and its tributary the Afon Eirth. Surrounded by steep-sided valleys and overshadowed by the crags of Craig Rhiwarth, the spur between the rivers flattens out as it closes on the valley floor. The church was established on the tip of the spur, no more than 3m above the level of the river.

This brief report examines Llangynog's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The date of foundation of the church and the subsequent emergence of settlement around it are obscure. St Cynog himself was a 'saint' firmly associated with Brecknock, the elder son of Brychan, the eponymous founder of that region. It seems improbable, therefore, that the church was established in person by St Cynog, though some saints are believed to have travelled widely. And it has been pointed out that Doewan (Dogfan), another 'son' of Brychan, is the dedicatee at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant.

Llangynog is first referred to as *Lankenauc* – seemingly a variant of *Kynauc* (Cynog) - in 1254 and in its present name-form as late as the Elizabethan era. The name of course refers to the church of St Cynog.

The growth of the village received some impetus from 1692 when rich veins of lead began to be exploited on Craig Rhiwarth, and from about 1775 when slate quarrying started above the village. It is tempting to think that this industrialisation converted Llangynog from a church settlement to a small village, and the one archaeological evaluation within the settlement, beyond the western edge of the churchyard in 2008, strengthened this content for no medieval material was found.

The heritage to 1750

The single-chamber church of St Cynog (7629) was rebuilt at the end of the 18th century and renovated in 1894. Only a few fragments of reused stone remain from the earlier church, and the only fittings to survive the restoration are a series of slate wall memorials and a couple of pieces of furniture.

The church is set in a small, and distinctively raised sub-circular churchyard (7628), which retains its original shape and has not been enlarged.

The earliest domestic building in the village appears to be the New Inn, opposite the church, which is dated to 1751 (7634). Other buildings such as School Terrace are believed to be later and thus fall outside the scope of this report. A number of occupied houses cluster at the base of the Craig Rhiwarth scarp and in addition the remains of stone-walled enclosures and platforms on both sides of the road past Glan-hafon point to former dwellings from the 18th/19th century industrial expansion (7630), now long abandoned.

Ridge and furrow (4993) of unknown date is recognisable on the side of the spur, just south of Bank House.

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Llanidloes

SH 9545 8451
15723

Introduction

The southern Montgomeryshire town of Llanidloes lies in the upper Severn valley where the A470(T) and B4518 now intersect. The town has expanded over the centuries to fill an unusually broad part of the valley where Afon Clywedog and Afon Dulas debouch into the Severn, and several other small streams run down to the river from the south-east. A terrace on the eastern flank of the river was utilised for settlement and this rises gently eastwards, interrupted by the courses of two of the streams, Lletty Coch-nant and Nant Cwm du, creating a spur location for the settlement. Both the Severn and its tributary the Clywedog were fordable in the vicinity, and two trackways, probably earlier in their origin than the town itself, converge on this spot.

This brief report examines Llanidloes' emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The origin of Llanidloes is obscure but it can be assumed that the church positioned on the bank of the Severn is an early medieval foundation. It is said to have been a daughter church of the mother church or *clas* at Llandinam in the pre-Conquest era. As to whether a settlement grew up around the church in the centuries either side of the Norman Conquest will perhaps never be known, although it has recently been pointed out that the township (*trefi*) boundaries which should be of early date are quite angular in the neighbourhood of the church, as though they were respecting existing property boundaries.
The name simply signifies 'the church of St Idloes' and was first set down in print as *Lanidloes* in 1254. Little is known of the saint and this is the only church dedicated to him.

Although the first borough charter does not seem to have been granted until 1344 when it became self-governing, a town was deliberately established at Llanidloes in the second half of the 13th century. Possibly it may have occupied the site of or was perhaps adjacent to a pre-existing manorial centre that may or may not have had a castle at its centre, although there seems to be not real evidence for this contention. The first mention of the planted town is said to be in 1263, but the leading expert on medieval Llanidloes considers that the town was probably established in 1280, the same year that the Crown granted a weekly market and a twice-yearly fair to the lord of Arwystli, Owain ap Gruffudd. Over the next twenty years its growth was rapid with 13 taxpayers in 1293 and 66 burgesses in 1309. At the same time trade thrived. In 1293 market revenues brought in three times the amount generated from burgage

and other rents, an unusual state of affairs at a time when market revenues in towns were generally lower.

It has been claimed that the town was sufficiently important for defences to be built around it by the end of the 13th century, although the modern evidence of these is circumstantial.

During the later Middle Ages the population perhaps remained fairly static, confined within the medieval limits of the town. Yet, at some stage the suburb of Frankwell emerged on the north side of the river, the name a corruption of the Anglo-Norman term *Frank ville* meaning 'free town'. This expansion is undated, but is likely to have occurred in the Middle Ages.

Llanidloes, along with many other urban settlements suffered during the Glyndŵr rebellion at the beginning of the 15th century and recovered but gradually. Only with the growth of the textile industry at the end of the later 18th century did Llanidloes expand, putting it among the top forty towns in Wales. At this time gardens and open land behind the main streets began to be infilled and groups of small houses, often arranged in courts, added to its distinctive character.

A full history of the town has recently been published by David Stephenson under the title of *Llanidloes: A History* (2010).

The heritage to 1750

St Idloes' Church (1856) has a 14th century tower of a type often found in the Welsh Marches, and an arcade, a hammerbeam roof and a south door, all of 16th century date. The arcade and door were brought from Cwmhir Abbey after the Dissolution. There are a few pre-19th century furnishings including a font, a chest and some funerary attachments from a 16th century tomb, but relatively little survived the restorations of the 19th century.

The churchyard (7556) is rectilinear in its design. Though an enclosure of curvilinear design might have been anticipated here, there is now no evidence of one, except that the earliest large-scale map of Llanidloes depicts a curving boundary around the southern side of the churchyard.

A motte-and-bailey earthwork castle (1538), perhaps the prelude to the development of the new town, is envisaged for the south end of China Street. Its layout has been determined in some detail, and the evidence, though circumstantial, is reasonably convincing. Significant changes in ground height including the possible remains of the ditch on the south side of the community centre, the loop described by Smithfield Street, the local topography and the names Mount Inn and Mount Lane are all suggestive. No traces were recognised during a watching brief in the area of the putative bailey some years ago, and the bailey would appear to have been established at a higher level than the motte. Nor are there any documented references to it.

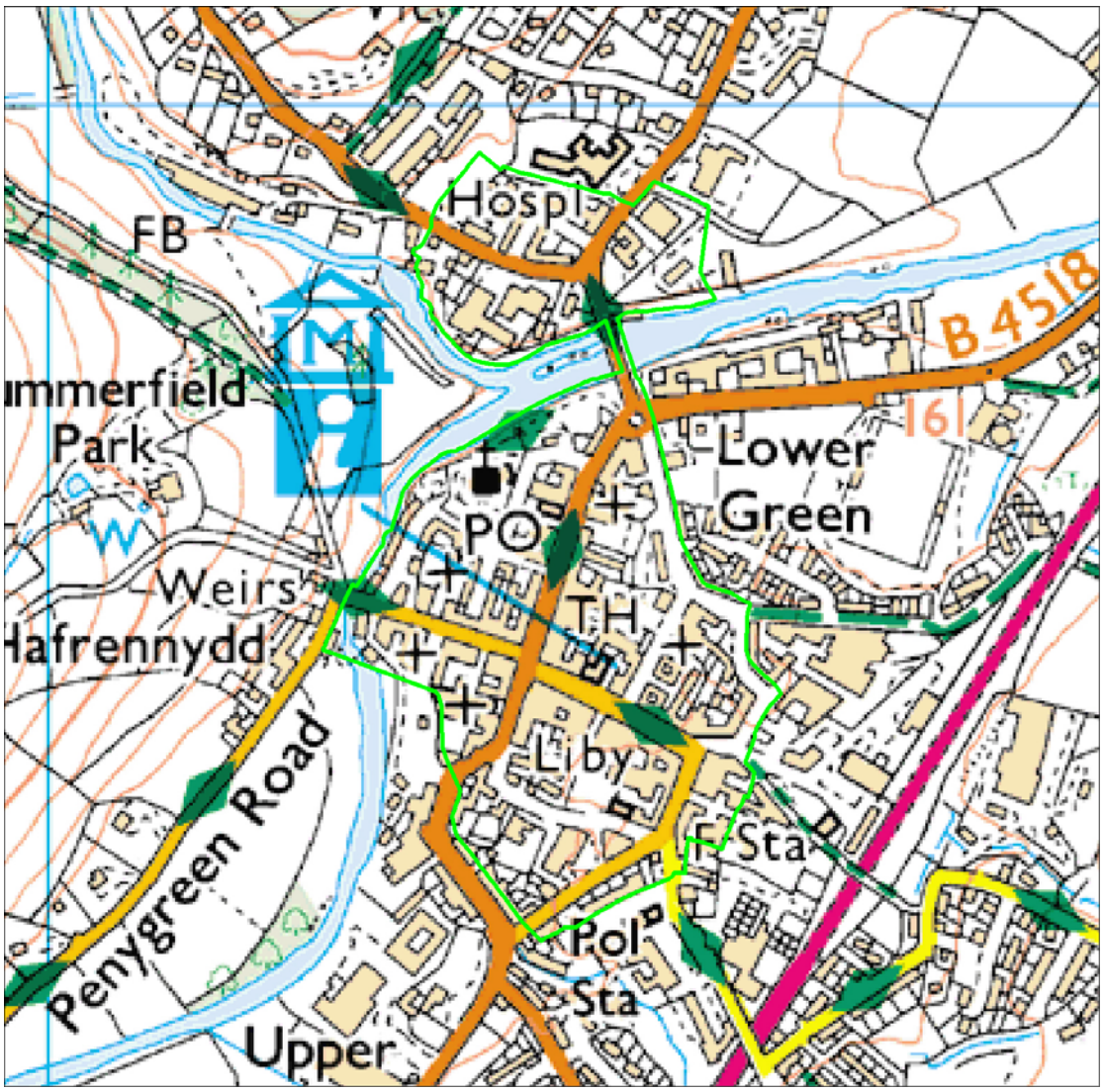
The layout of the town is typical of a planted town, with roads set at right-angles to each other defining rectangular blocks and the main focus being the market cross which was subsequently replaced by the Old Market Hall. At least one medieval street, no longer in existence, has been proposed between Great Oak Street and Mount Street. The church, though linked to the main plan by several small streets, was tucked away in an unimportant part of the plantation, suggesting that it may already have been in existence. Immediately to the south of the town was a common which was still in existence in 1776.

The line of the borough defences (1537) utilising natural scarps in places was defined in detail by O'Neil in the inter-war period. It was assumed that the artificial defences comprised a wooden palisade and, in places, a wide ditch. There were two gateways known by name, High Gate on the west and Severn Porte on the north, and probably a third on the south-east, the site of which is lost, but which may have gone by the name of Cripplegate. But as noted above no substantive evidence of the defences has come to light since O'Neil's work.

Idloes' Well (1539) located on Lower Green, just to the north-east of the town, disappeared during the 20th century, as a result of the provision of piped water in the town, though its approximate position was established by evaluation in 2006. This may have been a holy well, whose origin in this guise could have stretched back to the early medieval era. A second well termed the Kiln Well and esteemed for its curative properties was positioned on the west side of the river close to the Short Bridge. It was identified in 1959 during work near the White House, and has also been claimed as the holy well associated with Idloes.

The Old Market Hall (3570; SAM Mg003), the only half-timbered example of its type in Wales, is thought to have been built around 1600.

A number of buildings within the town are considered to be of 17th century date or at least have their origins in that period. These include 20 & 22 Long Bridge Street (31811 & 40471), 42 & 43 Long Bridge Street (31813 & 31814), 42 High Street (40241) which is reputed to be from the mid part of the century and 44 High Street (40468) which could be from the end of it. The Royal Head (Short Bridge Street) also originated in the 17th century, and a similar date has been attributed to the Mount Inn. The church apart, there is apparently nothing in Llanidloes that pre-dates 1600, and it is apparent that as in Welshpool the older properties are a little away from the centre of the town.



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Llanllugan

SJ 0576 0233
15724

Introduction

Llanllugan lies on a back road in the heart of Montgomeryshire. It is just over 6m south-west of Llanfair Caereinion, and around 12km north-west of Newtown in the Severn valley. The settlement is set on a slight spur overlooking the southern branch of the River Rhiw, a tributary of the Severn, and comprises the church and the adjacent farm of Tynllan, and one hundred metres and more to the south-west and at a slightly lower altitude, a small number of houses which front onto lanes that converge to cross the flood plain of the river.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanllugan up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The shape of the early churchyard, its location above the river and general remoteness, arguably the place-name itself suggest an early medieval foundation, though this remains unproven.

The place-name is recorded as *Llanlugan* in 1239 and in its present form as late as 1562. The standard *llan* prefix to so many place-names that incorporates a saint's name, here accompanies a name that is otherwise unattested. No 'Llugan' is referenced in the Calendar of Welsh Saints, nor is it recognised as a personal name. A link with the name Llorcan Wyddell, alias Gwyddelan, who appears as a dedicatee only a few miles away at Llanwyddelan, has been proposed in the past. Modern experts have yet to be wholly convinced.

The medieval history of Llanllugan is equally obscure, and is complicated by the putative presence of a Cistercian nunnery (1334) which was certainly in existence by about 1217 when a charter granting land both around Llanllugan itself and beyond was drawn up for the local lord of Cydewain. The charter however could be a confirmatory copy of an earlier grant from the period 1170 to 1190. In all probability, Llanllugan was ever a small community: in 1377 there were only an abbess and four nuns, and a chaplain. John Leland on his travels as the king's antiquary, termed it 'a very poor little nunnery' and within a couple of years, in 1536, it was dissolved.

In the middle of the 18th century the village was mapped by a surveyor called Isaac Messeeder as part of a large estate survey. Taken at face value his map would suggest that to the north-west of the church was an expanse of open common, but sadly Messeeder's surveying skills are far from impressive and it would be unwise to place too much emphasis on his record. In

the middle of the 19th century, the village looked much as it does today. Only the new house behind Lower Mill has been added in the last 150 years.

The heritage to 1750

St Mary's church (20107) is a simple, single-chamber building, probably of 15th-century date, though the walls could be older. The fine roof is of similar date, as is an assemblage of stained glass including pieces showing an abbess, recently claimed as one of the most important collections of Cistercian stained glass now available to us. The plain font is attributed to the 13th century.

The present churchyard boundary encapsulates a smaller, near circular enclosure showing as a scarp bank up to one metre high (7621). This should be the early medieval *llan*.

A holy well (1335), supposedly positioned close to the church, can no longer be recognised.

The church is the only listed building here. Tynllan (20229) formerly had a listing in the now obsolete grade III category. However, the Royal Commission's records state that the house is half-timbered and was probably built in the 17th century, and its timber-framed barn has a similar period of origin.

Nothing of the Cistercian nunnery remains, although a carved beam over the fireplace at Gwernfyda, just over 1km to the south-west, is believed to have come from it. Several suggestions as to its location have been made over the years. That the conventual buildings were closer to the Rhiw seems unlikely. A case has been made recently for cloisters and a single range of buildings lying immediately to the north of the church, on the basis of an early blocked doorway in the latter. Attractive an idea though this is, the supporting evidence is flimsy. A third possibility is that Tynllan overlies the site. Thus there has been considerable speculation about the location of the nunnery and virtually nothing in the way of concrete evidence. The field to the east is recorded as *Maes y cwrt ucha* (1759).

Earthworks probably signify that the village was once larger. Just below the west churchyard wall is a platform (7623) on the natural spur, a sunken track (or dry stream bed) runs across the field opposite the church, while the field east of Ebrandy has tracks and perhaps platforms (7622).

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Llanllwchaiarn

SO 1239 9254
15725

Introduction

Llanllwchaiarn lies beside the B4568, some 2km north-east of Newtown. The meandering River Severn, just below Newtown, curves around a spur projecting from the upland slopes. Rock Farm utilises this spur, and the church lies behind it, a small stream creating a shallow valley on the eastern edge of the churchyard. Northwards, the ground rises steadily into the hills. The settlement is currently undergoing rapid change. Opposite the church on the north side of the road to Newtown, a housing estate has sprung up, entirely altering the character of this small historic settlement.

This brief report examines Llanllwchaiarn's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The place-name appears as *Llanlocharen* in 1254 and as *Llanllochaiarn* in 1597. It refers to St Llwchaiarn's church, the dedicatee also appearing on the other side of the Severn at Llanmerewig.

The history of settlement here from early medieval beginnings, as suggested by the dedication, the churchyard morphology and the location beside the river, through to the post-medieval era is unchronicled. In the mid-19th century the church was still relatively isolated, accompanied only by Rock Farm and two houses.

The heritage to 1750

St Llwchaiarn's church (31051) is a brick construction of 1815 which was enlarged in 1864. Little is known of its medieval predecessor. A carved effigy carrying a date of 1630 and some 18th century memorials are virtually all that have survived from the church that was replaced in 1815, but recently it has become the new home of the fine, carved medieval screen that was once in St Mary's at Newtown.

The churchyard (7716) has been enlarged considerably since the mid-19th century. The Tithe map depicts an oval yard and this is still visible on the ground (7716) as a slightly raised area surrounded by a low scarp bank.

The older buildings in the vicinity of Llanllwchaiarn church have a Grade II listing. The church apart, Church House (31053) is a 17th century timber-framed building and was formerly a public house, and its adjacent barn (40391) may be contemporary, although this is not certain. There is some disagreement over the age of Rock House (31054) which is cited as being entirely 19th century (except for the internal staircase) or mid-18th-century according to different experts.

We might care to speculate whether the river was the barrier that at first sight it appears to be. Immediately opposite the church on the other bank is the fine motte and bailey castle of Gro Tump. Is its location purely coincidental? And in the 19th century the vicarage for the incumbent serving the church was also on the south side of the river, a ferry providing transportation, as well as a ford just downstream.

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Llanmerewig

SO 1571 9312
15726

Introduction

Llanmerewig is set in the hills east of the Severn valley, some 5km east-north-east of Newtown. The isolated church and adjacent farm, Church House, occupy a saddle separating two slightly higher crests on a ridge between the Severn and its tributary, the Miwl (Mule). To the south the ground drops away suddenly towards the modern hamlet of Llanmerewig which is developing around a crossroads, 400m away.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanmerewig up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Traditionally, the church was founded by a local holy man, St Llwchaiarn, about 575, who was subsequently buried here. Its circular churchyard is consistent with an early medieval foundation, its position on a ridge is not. It is believed formerly to have been a chapelry within the parish of Llanllwchaiarn, a subservient role that it may have held for several centuries.

The name is an interesting one for in its earliest form – *Lamerewic* appears in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 – it suggests that uncommonly in Wales, the *llan* prefix was eschewed in favour of Welsh *lamm.* One such form might be seen as a scribal error, but the *llam* forms continued to be written down to the end of the 16th century and beyond. The name is thus taken to mean the 'leap of the hind', referring to a legend associated with St Llwchaearn. *Llam* eventually gave way to *llan* in the 17th century, although the earliest occurrence as *Lanmierenwyk* was in 1338.

The subsequent history of the settlement, if one ever existed here, has yet to be recorded (but see below). It is noticeable that modern maps attach the name Llanmerewig to the small settlement, three hundred metres to the south, where modern houses group beside the Old Rectory, itself a timber-framed building of the 17th century. One is inclined to think that perhaps the rector of the time selected a somewhat less exposed location for his home than the one where his church was situated.

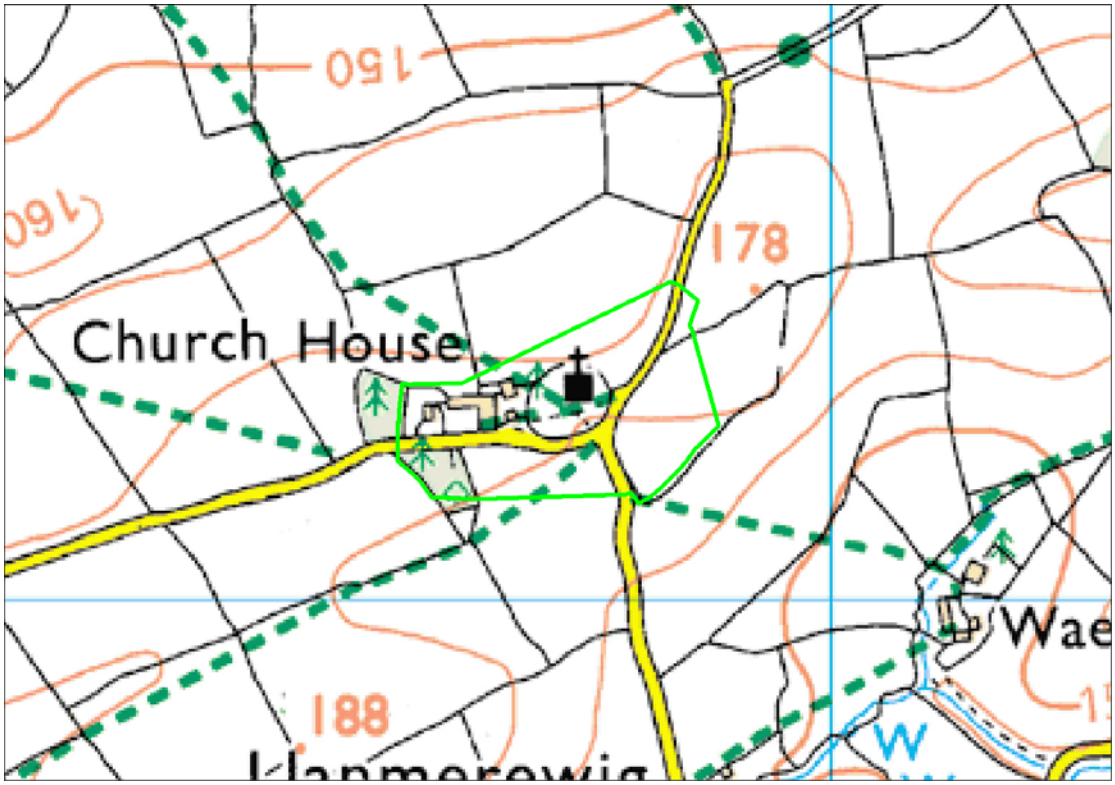
The heritage to 1750

St Llwchaiarn's church (7560) was rebuilt almost in its entirety in the second quarter of the 19th century. Surviving from earlier periods are the arch-braced roof of the 15th century, some reused fragments of the contemporary screen and the damaged medieval font which may be 13th century. But it is questionable whether any medieval fabric remains, perhaps only in the extreme north-east angle. The early 14th century east window of the former structure has been set up against the eastern wall of the churchyard. The 'rich Gothic style' has led to it being listed as Grade II*.

The church sits slightly eccentrically in a sub-circular churchyard (1818). The presence of a distinctive bank around much of the perimeter - now faced in part by a stone wall - has led to the feasible suggestion that this was originally a prehistoric enclosure, reused in the early medieval period. Excavation would be required to prove this theory.

There are no early buildings in the settlement, other than the church. Church House beside the church dates to the earlier 19th century.

Much of the land is down to improved pasture, and there is no surface evidence of earlier settlement activity around the church. However, archaeological evaluation in the polygonally shaped field immediately to the east of the churchyard recently uncovered a significant number of postholes and gullies, and the absence of pottery led the excavators to speculate that the activity represented by the features might be early medieval. Important in terms of the development and perhaps the abandonment of settlement is the proximity of the lane running off to the north which continues as a footpath down into the Severn Valley.



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Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant

SJ 1240 2602
15727

Introduction

The large village of Llanrhaeadr straddles the River Rhaeadr about 7km north of Llanfyllin and 17km north-east of Oswestry, at the place where several minor roads converge on the B4580 which terminates here. In its lower reaches, the Rhaeadr, a tributary of the River Tanat less than 2km away, occupies a shallow valley, but at the place where Llanrhaeadr has developed, the valley sides are steeper, particularly the southern slopes. The church and market place lie on the valley floor north and east of the river, and from this focus the settlement has expanded along the gentle slopes of the valley and less densely on the opposite bank of the river where there is steeper terrain. The settlement form has thus been dictated by the natural topography.

The river passing through the village acted as the county boundary until recent years. Thus in say the 18th century the settlement will have been split between Denbighshire and Montgomeryshire (though this may not have been the case at the time of the Act of Union in 1536, assuming John Speed's county map is correct). The two parts were only reunited with the creation of unitary authorities in 1996.

This brief report examines Llanrhaeadr's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

A mother church, probably with a clas community, was established here in the early medieval period, with its precinct slotted in to a bend on the north side of the river. The ecclesiastical centre of the commote of Mochnant, it may have been founded as early as the 6th century and it has been claimed that it continued until at least 1291, for later medieval records refer to a community of clergy here during Edward I's reign.

Llanracarder the name first appears in 1254 and as Thlanrather in Meuhenhand in 1284. A more intelligible form, Lanraiader en Mochnant is documented between 1344 and 1357. In English the meaning would be 'the church of the waterfall in Mochnant'.

During the medieval period if not earlier, settlement must have developed around it, with what appears to be a market place created just to the north of the church. It has been suggested that this was one of the churches with its village, recorded by Giraldus Cambrensis, that was burnt by an English expedition in 1165, but this can only be speculation. The extent

of that medieval settlement cannot be gauged from current knowledge though it is not likely to have been large. Its development in Tudor and Jacobean times is similarly unrecorded.

A small-scale manuscript map of around 1780 depicts a compact settlement on the north-west side of the churchyard. The 'market triangle' is shown but the network of lanes to the south-west has changed slightly. In particular Church Street is shown as a broader thoroughfare than today, leading to the church gate, and a modem map appears to confirm there has been infilling there.

The spread of houses on to the west and south bank of the river cannot be dated but we may suspect that it was a feature of the post-medieval era. The bridge which is dated to around 1775 (apparently replacing a timber one) and the road south-westwards to Penybontfawr (which though it has the appearance of 18th century turnpike trust work cannot be corroborated as such, and may indeed be much older) may have encouraged the construction of dwellings on this side of the river. There is also some evidence that an attempt may have been made to introduce a separate market on this side of the river somewhat earlier, in the reign of William III at the end of the 17th century, but this came to nothing.

The heritage to 1750

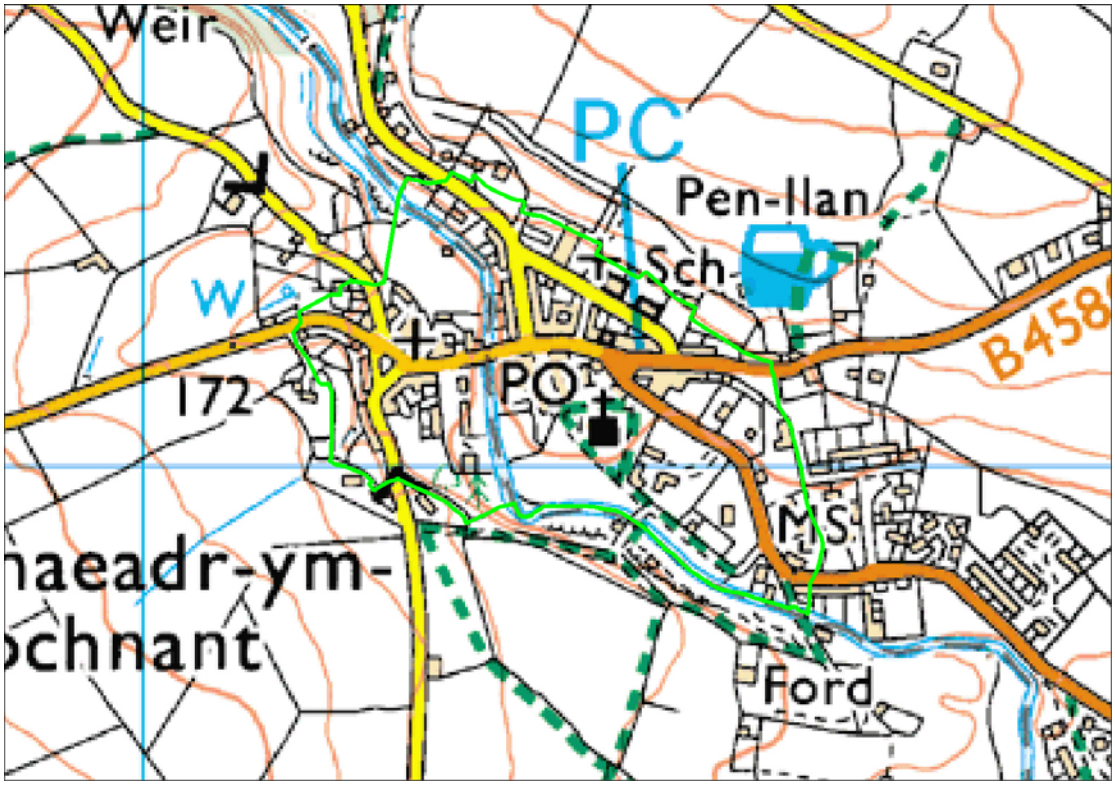
The church (101047) is dedicated to St Dogfan (or St Doewen) and was perhaps built in the 11th or 12th century within the precinct of the mother church. Extended in the 14th or 15th century, it was restored in 1882. It has an aisleless nave but curiously a chancel with aisles, and a west tower. Internally there is a fragment of a 9th or early 10th century cylindrical shaft of Mercian type, an 11th century (or earlier) rectangular cross-slab commemorating Gwgan, son of Elstan (101048), and fragments of a Romanesque shrine. There is also a 17th century font, an 18th century chest and altar table, and re-used pew panels, as well as a good range of 18th century memorials. It is set on a level platform rising above the churchyard on the south and east.

The churchyard (19793) is large and slopes down to the river, but the original enclosure of the mother church is reflected in the even larger elongated enclosure lying between the road and the river, with the churchyard at its western end and the lane to Vicarage-fach on the east.

The open triangle immediately to the north of the churchyard formed the market place. Inside it at the end of the 19th century lay a town hall (demolished in 1901), but this was termed the market hall in the middle of the century. Markets were held here as late as the 19th century and there were also five annual fairs. However, the market itself goes back into the Middle Ages for Edward I granted Roger Mortimer of Chirk the right to hold a weekly market and two annual fairs in Llanrhaeadr in 1284. It can be assumed that the market as a weekly event continued largely uninterrupted into the 19th century, though as a revenue raiser for the lord of the manor there were times when it was not very successful.

West and north of the market place houses are packed in to a reasonably regular gridded layout of small streets. There could be some element of planning here, and though it would be stretching the evidence too far to argue that this was of medieval design, it is not impossible.

No particularly early vernacular buildings have survived in the village. However, Llys Morgan (59462), formerly known as the Old Vicarage though broadly 18th and 19th century in build contains a re-used collar and tie-beam truss of 16th or 17th century date, presumably salvaged from a hall-house which might have been on or close to the site. Timber-farmed Minafon (42555) on Church Street is probably early 17th century in date. Y Bwthyn (42566) on Park Street, is of stone construction, probably from the 18th century, while the timber-framing of its neighbour, Trigfan (42564), could indicate 17th century work.



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Llansanffraid-ym-Mechain

SJ 2208 2032
15728

Introduction

Llansanffraid lies at the intersection of two roads, the A495 and B4393, in north-eastern Montgomeryshire, approximately 13km north of Welshpool. The settlement has grown up at an important river confluence, the River Cain flowing into the Vyrnwy just to the east of the village and south of Llansanffraid Bridge, and in addition Afon Tanat debouches into the main river 2km further on. Llansanffraid straggles along the north edge of the Cain valley with steep hills to the north and west, and the flood plain of the river to the south. At the eastern end of the village, houses have spread to the lip of a steep scarp above the Vyrnwy.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llansanffraid up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The original sub-circular churchyard (below) and its location, as well as the dedication to St Ffraid all point to the establishment of a church or chapel here well before the Norman Conquest in the 11th century. However, precise information on this early phase and the settlement's development in the subsequent medieval centuries is absent.

The meaning of the place-name in English is a straightforward one, 'the church of St Ffraid in Mechain', the last element being the local cantref (district). As *Llansanfret* it first appears in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and as *Llannsanffrayd in Mechayn* in 1390. *Ffraid* is the Welsh version of Brigid (Bridget), and indeed this is encountered in 1425 in the name, *St Bride in Mechein.* Debate continues as to whether the more correct name is Llansanffraid or Llansantffraid, the latter being favoured by the Ordnance Survey. The former is preferred by Welsh place-name specialists and in a recent authoritative publication it was pointed out that the loss of the '*t*' was common when Welsh *sant* was prefixed to a personal name as is the case here.

A late 18th century manuscript map reveals that Llansanffraid was very much smaller than today with a group of houses scattered around the church and this picture is confirmed by the mid-19th century tithe map. Some buildings were beginning to emerge below the church beside the main road running eastwards and others, well spread out, developed along the same road in the vicinity of Llansanffraid Bridge. Most of these were probably of relatively recent construction. A superficial study which needs to be corroborated by more detailed work also suggests that the road pattern was modified, perhaps in the 18th century or a little earlier, with an earlier network of lanes converging close to the churchyard and superseded by the

straighter roads that form the modern transport routes through the village. The main road was formerly the 18th century turnpike road from Shrewsbury to Bala, but at present it is uncertain whether it followed an earlier thoroughfare.

The heritage to 1750

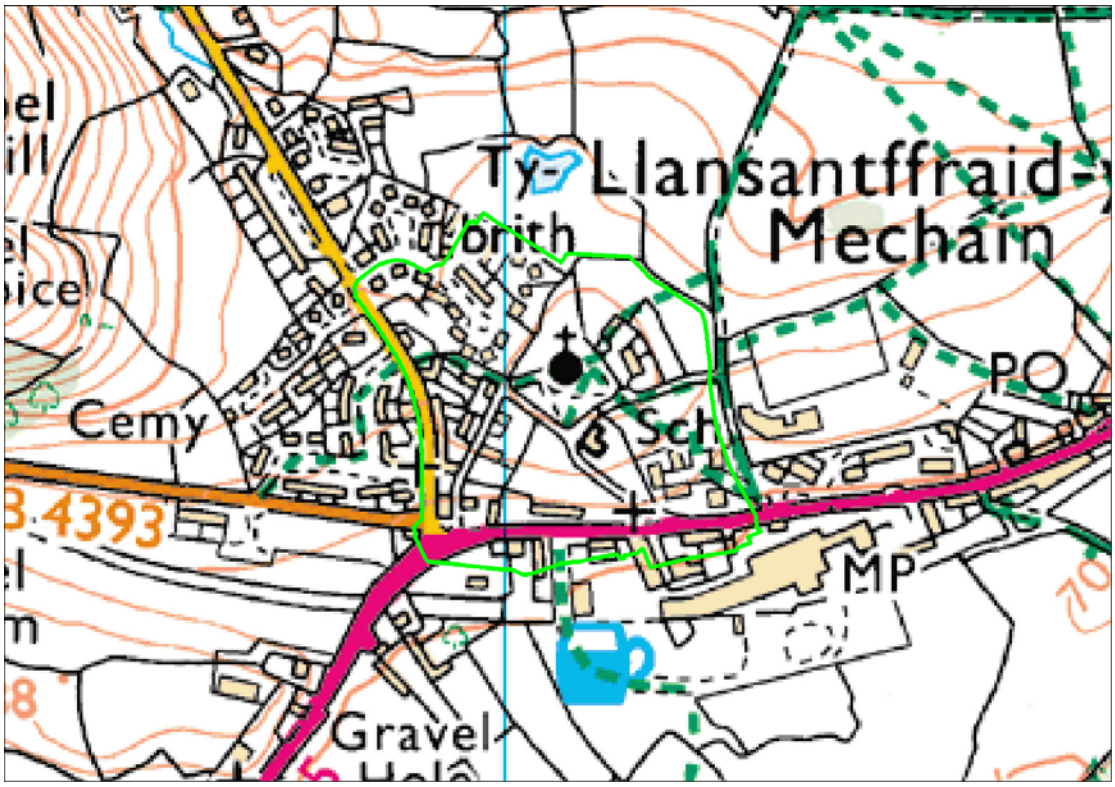
St Ffraid's church (31154) has a complicated structural history which is revealed in its fabric. A small Norman window perhaps signals a 12th century date for part of the nave, then extended in the 14th century. A south porch and a western bell-turret were added in the 17th century and a north transept in the 18th. It is interesting too for its series of dated windows in the south wall. Inside is a medieval font and piscine, wooden furnishings of the 17th and 18th centuries and a few pre-19th century memorials.

The raised churchyard (7605) was apparently rectilinear in outline before it was extended at the beginning of the 20th century, although earlier maps hint at a more curvilinear form.

That the west end of the village around the church was the original focus of settlement is suggested from circumstantial evidence: the primacy of the church in the landscape, the narrow lane leading past the Lion Hotel to the church, alterations to other parts of the layout in that the original track from Bronhyddon to the east cut through what is now the vicarage garden, and the ribbon development along the main road giving every appearance of being late in origin.

There are several listed buildings in Llansantffraid, including the Lion Hotel (7720), Bridge House (7719)), yet they are all either late 18th or early 19th century in date. The exception is Bodwen (7717) on the main road which is considered to be a small, timber-framed farmhouse of around 1600. Together with the unlisted 17th century origin Ty-brith cottage, 250m to the north of the church, and the church itself, these are the only buildings of any great age in the village. Llansantffraid Bridge at the east end of the village is late 18th century in date, replacing one of stone and timber that was swept away by floods in 1778.

Minor earthworks (7718) survive in the field adjacent to the north side of the churchyard. Their significance is uncertain. Some ridge and furrow (74218) of uncertain date has been recognised in a field to the south of Lletty Lane and the main road.



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Llansilin

SJ 2096 2819
105983

Introduction

Llansilin lies close to the county border with Shropshire in the north-eastern corner of Glyndwr District. Oswestry is little more than 8km to the east and Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant a similar distance to the south-west. Formerly the village was in the historic county of Denbighshire but it was transferred to modern Powys in 1996, along with several other parishes.

Llansilin occupies fairly gently rolling countryside, the grain of the land running from west to east on a broad interfluve between tributaries of the River Tanat. Hills rise to the north and west and the aspect is primarily southwards, with the road in this direction following the shallow valley of a stream that rises just to the north of the village and is then apparently culverted through the settlement itself.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llansilin up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

A *clas* or early medieval monastic community (101083), with its church becoming the mother church for the area, existed at Llansilin. This may not have been the primary mother church of the region – that distinction seems to belong to Llanrhaeadr – but may have been carved out as the lord of the *llys* at Sycharth established himself. Llansilin was the ecclesiastical centre of the small commote of Cynllaith, and was served by several priests in the early 13th century. By this time the church may have been dedicated to St Giles (though this is open to question), a saint often associated with afforested areas after the Conquest, but there has now been a reversion to the much older, legitimate dedication of Silin.

The church and any associated settlement may have been one of the settlements in the region which was burnt by an English army in 1165, according to Giraldus Cambrensis. This unproven historical incident apart, Llansilin does not feature much in medieval records and its development during the Middle Ages can only be surmised.

The first written reference to the place seems to be from 1191 when it was referred to as *ecclie silin*. The Norwich Taxation of 1254 has it as *Llansilyn*, Pope Nicholas' taxation of 1291 as *Lansylyn*. The 1296 *Ecclesia Si Egidii de Kynlleith* introduces Giles for which Egidius is a latinised variation.

A manuscript map of the lordship of Chirk from the second half of the 18th century shows the village spreading from the crossroads adjacent to the churchyard, northwards as far as the location of the modern house known as Beech Grove and westwards to Ty'n-llan. The Wynnstay Arms apart, nothing lay to the south. This pattern had changed very little by the time of the Tithe survey nearly a century later.

The heritage to 1750

St Silin's church (101080) reveals a complex development with two naves, mainly 15th century, and some 13th century features including a lancet window and perhaps two doors, survive from a proposed cruciform-shaped church, though the evidence for this design is not convincing. The west tower was erected in 1832, replacing a timber-framed spire. There was a major restoration in 1890. Internally there appear to be no fittings that have survived from before the 17th century, other than a cross-incised altar stone (*mensa*), but there is a good range of 17th and 18th century wooden furnishings, including a west gallery, and an early 18th century Royal Arms of plaster.

A fragmentary churchyard cross shaft (101081) of medieval origin is now surmounted by a sundial of 1717.

The churchyard (19795) is large and sub-oval except on the north where the perimeter has every appearance of having been truncated when the National School was built in 1823. Within the present enclosure a curvilinear scarp is apparent on the south, east and north-east hinting at an earlier and smaller 'llan'.

A well – Fynnon Silin (101085) – lay a little to the west of Ty'n-llan, but the well chamber has been infilled and the site is now lost. It should perhaps be classed as a holy well.

Bronwylfa on the north side of the village is a box-framed timber building encased in stone of 17th century and later date (19712). The church apart, this seems to be the oldest building in the village. There are no other recognisably early buildings, although attention should be drawn to the Old Malt House, dated 1822, lying opposite the churchyard (19796).

In 2004-5, the foundation trenches of a 17th century barn, generally considered to have been a tithe barn, were excavated to the west of the church. The building was certainly standing in the 1630s, and was demolished only in 1910.

The plan of the village is interesting. An estate map of 1772-4 shows a triangle of open land between the churchyard and Ty'n-llan. North from the churchyard is a lane with terraced cottages occupying narrow plots running off at right-angles, those on the east being particularly pronounced. The date at which this pattern emerged is not known, but it is evident from later 18th century maps that this represents the historic core of Llansilin.

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Llanwnog

SO 0222 9383
15730

Introduction

The small settlement of Llanwnog is situated on the B4568, 9km west-north-west of Newtown. It has grown up near the base of the slope rising northwards out of the valley of the River Carno. The main road follows the flat ground, but the churchyard lying upslope from it, rises gently. Until recently most of the dwellings in Llanwnog clustered around the church, but new housing is now extending the village up the hill north-eastwards.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanwnog up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The former shape of the churchyard as it is depicted on the mid 19th century tithe map, the location of the church on the edge of a river valley and its dedication point to an early medieval foundation, but as is usually the case with these small *llan* settlements, there is no material evidence to corroborate the assumption. In its early years it was a daughter church of the *clas* foundation at Llandinam.

Llanwnog, sometimes written with a double 'n', is first recorded as *Linwinnauch* in 1195-6, as *Llanwennauc* in *c.*1216 and *Llanwynnoge* in 1545. The name refers to the church of St Gwnnog, a dedicatee who is also found at Aberhafesp, little more than 5km to the east.

Llanwnog became the centre of an ecclesiastical parish that included Caersws, probably after the Norman Conquest but possibly before, yet nothing is known of its early history or its subsequent development. Similarly its history during the later Middle Ages and early post-medieval era is unknown, and only in the 19th century does it become clearer, with houses grouped around the church (including two buildings now incorporated in the southern half of the churchyard), and the Vicarage and one cottage as outliers.

The heritage to 1750

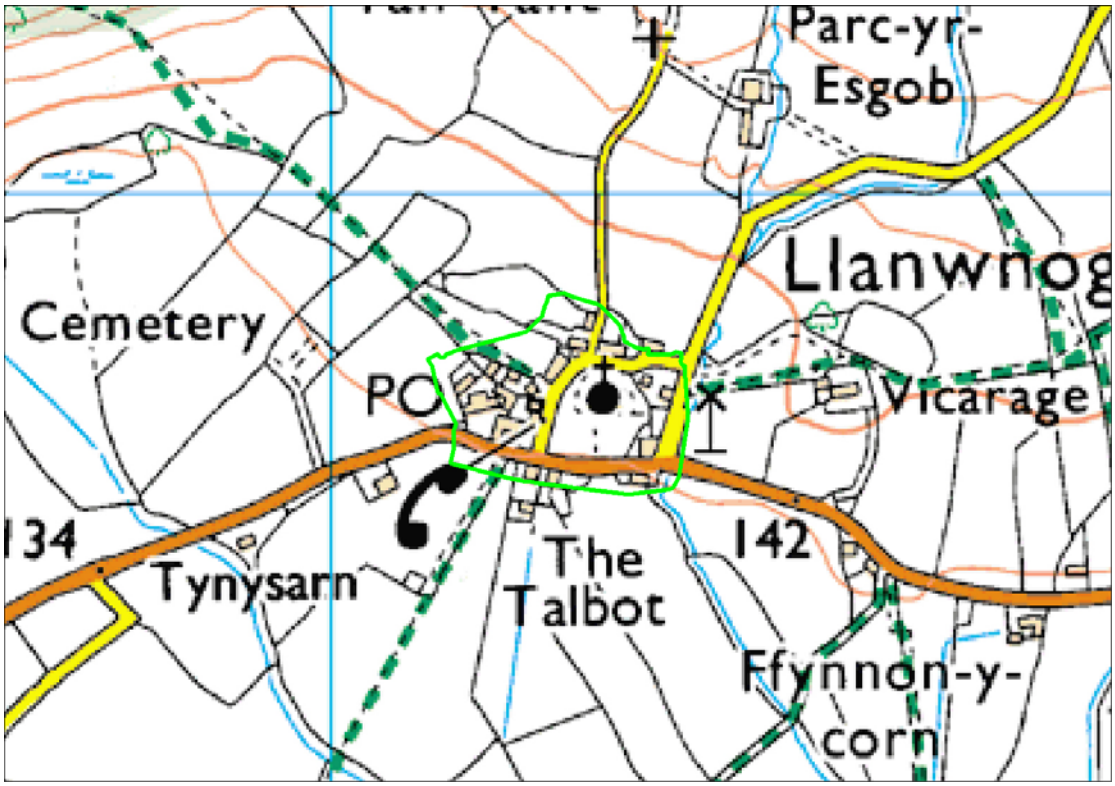
St Gwnnog's church (7553) is a single-chambered building which was heavily restored in 1863 but contains medieval stonework and dressings arguably of reused Roman sandstone (from Caersws) in its walls. Surviving medieval details include the Perpendicular east window, stained glass of *c.*1500 that includes an image of St Gwynnog, a font bowl and a screen and roof loft of about the same date which is claimed to be the best surviving example in Montgomeryshire.

The raised churchyard (7554) has been extended downhill in the last century and a half. The northern side retains its curvilinearity, and the original southern side, slightly curved, is still visible as a high, scarped bank. Yews of a considerable age survive in the churchyard.

There are no obviously pre-Reformation buildings other than the church. Gwyneira (7721) a lobby-entry house on the west side of the churchyard has the date 1664 below a first floor window and is grade II listed.

The road pattern may have undergone only minor modifications in recent centuries. The B4568 following slightly higher ground above the valley of the Severn and then the Carno is almost certainly a medieval and perhaps even an early medieval creation, a valley-edge trackway traceable over long distances, and a good example of a type that is relatively common in eastern Wales. From the north several lanes and footpaths converge on the churchyard, but to the south only a footpath runs southwards towards the river.

No obvious settlement earthworks survive in the vicinity of the church. There are some minor undulations south of the main road, but none is sufficiently distinctive to warrant preservation.



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Llanwrin

SH 7866 0353
15731

Introduction

Llanwrin is set beside the B4404 in the extreme west of Montgomeryshire, 5km north-east of Machynlleth. The road follows the northern edge of the Dovey valley floor, the lip of a gravel terrace being visible just to the south of the road in the vicinity of the village. The church is set a few metres higher than the road and the building itself is terraced into the base of the steep valley slope and much of the churchyard is on a pronounced incline.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanwrin up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Llanwrin first appears in the records in very much its modern form – *Llannwrin* – at some unspecified point in the 12th century. Later forms show rather more variation as in 1578 when it was referred to as *Llaworing*. Its meaning as the church of St Gwrin is straightforward, but curiously in the 12th century source cited above, Ust and Dyfnig are recorded as the saints at *Llannwrin y Nghyfeilioc* (the cantref of Cyfeiliog), and it is to them the church is currently dedicated. It has been suggested that Ust and Dyfnig were the first holy men associated with this place and that Gwrin was of a later generation.

Nothing is known of the settlement's history, and it has yet to be established whether in the Middle Ages there were dwellings around the church or if it was simply an isolated church. The B4404 is probably a turnpike road, but it almost certainly replaced an existing track that followed the edge of the valley. It is possible, too, that there was a nearby ford across the Dovey. This is implied by the footpath running from the village south-eastwards to the river and that this linked to hill tracks coming down from the north which converged on the village.

The earliest map of the village is from the 1760s. Though the picture that it presents is only a partial one, the number of buildings around the churchyard has not altered radically in the intervening 250 years, other than perhaps in the addition of a handful of cottages. In simple terms there has not been a fundamental change to the layout of the village since Georgian times.

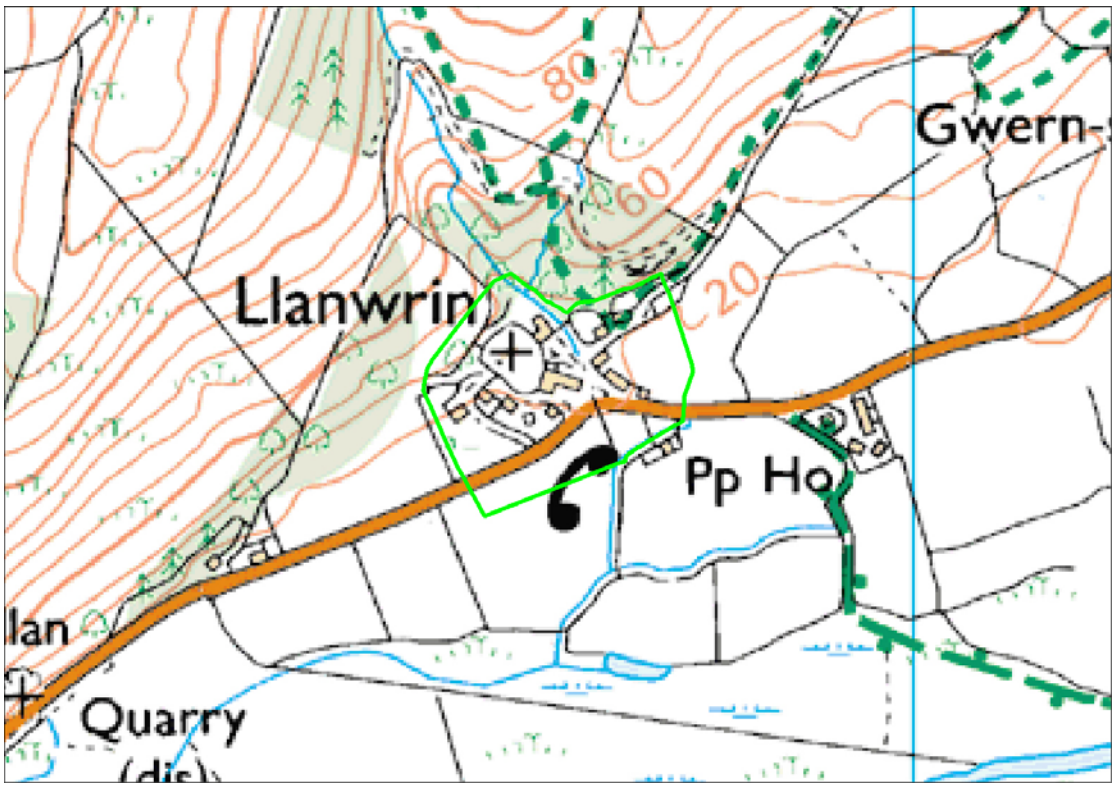
The heritage to 1750

The church of SS Ust and Dyfrig (7658) is a small single-chambered structure of late medieval date which was restored in 1864. It retains some late medieval features including a 15th century screen, a piscina and some stained glass, and the arch-braced roof is also of this period though the timber has been much renewed.

The churchyard in its present irregular form is not wholly convincing as an early medieval foundation, yet it retains a curvilinear appearance on the east and the construction of buildings around its perimeter has probably resulted in the flattening out of some of its sides. An abandoned track around the north-western wall of the churchyard wall implies some modifications to the overall village pattern and possibly even a reduction in the overall size of the churchyard.

The church apart there are no pre-1750 buildings in the settlement. Plaswrin (7660) is a Grade II listed building of late 18th century date, much altered in the earlier 19th century. Ty-uchaf (40310) on the opposite side of the churchyard is 19th century.

Minor earthworks (37009) in the field to the south of Ty-isaf do not appear to be the remnants of former habitations, but would merit further examination.



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Llanwyddelan

SJ 0826 0117
15732

Introduction

Llanwyddelan is set on a by-road in central Montgomeryshire, in the hills to the west of the Severn Valley, about 6km to the south of Llanfair Caereinion and 9km north of Newtown. The church crowns the end of a ridge, the ground rising gently to the south-west but dropping away more sharply eastwards. Afon Rhiw, the nearest river, is nearly one kilometre away. It is an exceptionally small settlement, although the number of houses doubled in the last decades of the 20th century.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanwyddelan up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

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History of development

An early medieval date for the foundation of the church is certain; the dedication, the shape of the churchyard and the pre-Conquest decorated stone (see below) all attest this early origin.

The church of Gwyddelan is first recorded as a chapel, in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 as *Llanoedelan*. Two hundred years later in 1431 reference was made to *St Gwithelan de Llanwythelan in Kedewen.* The saint's name reportedly means the little Irishman, suggesting that he may have been one of the missionaries who crossed to the mainland from Ireland, perhaps in the 6th century.

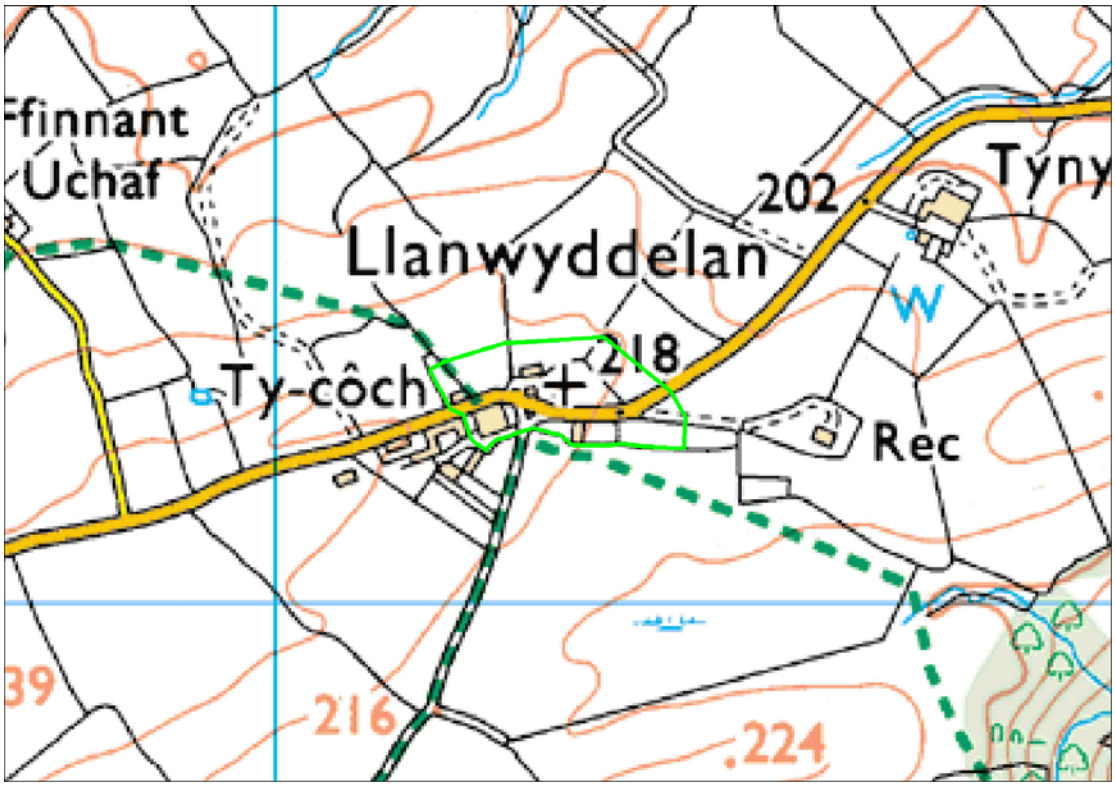
The development of the settlement cannot be determined. Even in the mid-19th century there were only four houses in the village, and at present there is nothing to suggest that the settlement was nucleated or larger in the Middle Ages.

The heritage to 1750

St Gwyddelan's church (7585), a single-chambered structure, was rebuilt in 1865, possibly on the foundations of its predecessor, itself perhaps no earlier than 1641. The medieval font and part of the rood screen survive, and built into an external buttress is a decorated slab of about the 9th century.

The churchyard (7586) has been extended in recent times (in 1938). Originally oval, its earlier boundary can be seen in the south-east sector, commencing at a point where the churchyard retaining wall beside the road gives way to a grassy bank.

There are no other noteworthy buildings within the settlement, nor is there any indication of relict earthworks or other features that might signal earlier activity.



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Llanymynech

SJ 2669 2079
15733

Introduction

Llanymynech sits astride the border with Shropshire, 14km north of Welshpool and on the trunk road, the A483, which links mid-Wales with the north. The settlement lies on a bluff above Afon Efyrnwy. The churchyard is perched on the edge of the scarp and Chapel Lane also follows its sinuous course. Possibly a shallow valley ran between the two for the main road is at a lower level. Northwards, the ground slopes gently upwards towards Pen y Foel while behind rise the quarried crags of Llanymynech Hill.

The boundary between England and Wales follows the eastern edge of the main street, before diverging slightly to take in a very small segment of the churchyard and then cutting across the street tangentially to pick up a stream course. It is not feasible to consider the historic importance of Llanymynech without reference to that part of it in Shropshire, but the comments and recommendations are directed only at that part of the village in Montgomeryshire.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanymynech up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The shape of the churchyard and its location on the edge of a major river valley point to an early medieval foundation, though whether this will ever be corroborated by material evidence is very much in doubt.

As *Llanemeneych* this appears in 1254, with other variants appearing at later dates. With its English translation as 'church of the monks', it has been suggested that there was formerly a monastic cell or oratory here.

Little can be said about its development in the medieval centuries and into the modern era. The initiation of the turnpike road in about 1756 may have had a profound effect on the layout of the settlement and the addition of the canal (to the north) at the end of the 18th century and the railway to the south in the 1860s may also have had some impact. An important question is whether the turnpike road adopted an existing thoroughfare or followed an entirely new line. The unusually straight alignment might point to the latter.
Even in the mid-19th century, there were few houses on the west side of the turnpike road, dwellings congregating on the Shropshire side of the road. Chapel Lane ran from St Bennion's Well and continued around the north side of the churchyard. This looks to be an earlier lane

bisected by the turnpike road, and there are hints of other meandering lanes on the Shropshire side which may have formed the earlier network to the north of the church.

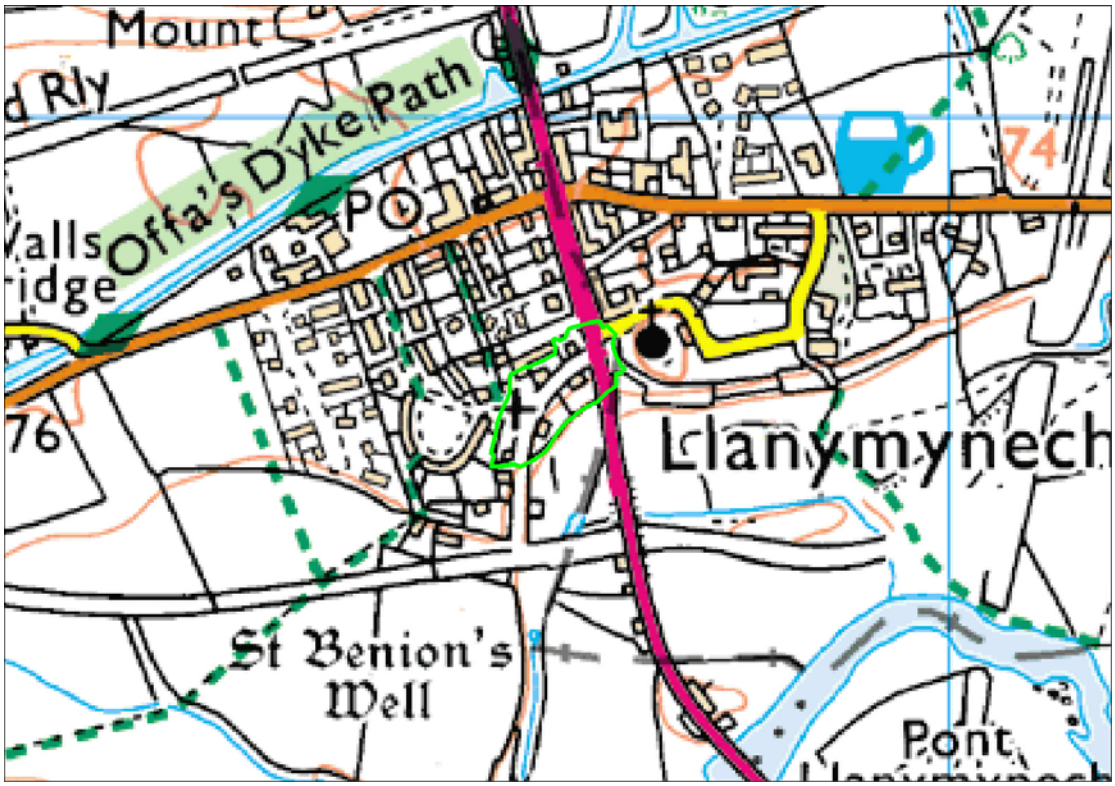
The heritage to 1750

The church of St Agatha, an entirely Victorian rebuild, is wholly in Shropshire. The dedication is an unusual one, for Agatha was a Sicilian saint during the Roman era, and its appearance in the Welsh marches is unexplained, though as Archdeacon Thomas speculated in the 19th century, it could be a rededication stemming from the patronage of a returning crusader.

St Agatha's churchyard (7606) is curvilinear in outline.

St Bennion's Well (29) lies 250m to the south-west of the church and was used for charms as late as 1878.

The only listed buildings on the Welsh side of the border, both grade II, are The Gardd (7722) erected perhaps in the early 17th century, but remodelled, and Ty-croes (32399) at the crossroads where Canal Road crosses the main road is early 18th century in date.



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Machynlleth

SN 7450 0090
15735

Introduction

Machynlleth lies at the junction of two trunk roads, the A487 and A489, on the western periphery of Montgomeryshire. It has developed close to the lowest bridging point of the River Dyfi and was established on slightly raised ground adjacent to where the valley floor broadens out. The town has expanded eastwards along a shallow valley that nurses several small streams. Northwards the isolated crags of Pen yr Allt have inhibited expansion, but in recent times housing developments have started to encroach on rising ground on the south and also towards Afon Dulas on the east. It is now the fourth largest town in Montgomeryshire.

This brief report examines Machynlleth's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The earliest form of the name is *Machenthleith* which was committed to paper sometime between 1201 and 1213. Other later forms such as *Machenloyd* (1254) and *Machynllaith* (1385) all reflect only minor variations. The most recent commentators on Welsh place-names suggest that *mach* should be equated with 'plain' and that *Cynllaith* is a personal name, though nothing is known about such an individual. Any link with the Roman settlement of *Maglona*, for long a favourite antiquarian speculation, has been comprehensively refuted.

The town was founded by the Welsh prince, Owain de la Pole, supposedly late in the 13th century, for in 1291 he was granted the right to hold a weekly market and two annual fairs there, with Machynlleth usefully placed on the trade route between Aberystwyth and Gwynedd. If other mid-Wales towns are any guide, there was probably some settlement already in existence earlier in the century, a contention supported by the earlier place-names cited above. By the end of the 13th century there were 61 tax payers resident in the town.

There is no direct evidence through the survival of its charter that the town ever acquired borough status, but an Elizabethan copy of the mid-14th century charter for Llanidloes includes a list of privileges more likely to relate to Machynlleth than Llanidloes itself, and thus suggesting that its own borough charter has disappeared. The case is strengthened by a will of 1597 referring to tenements as burgages and other evidence secreted in the National Archives.

The layout of the new town was a regular T-shape with an east-west road (Maengwyn Street) meeting a north-south road at a market place. The former was the principal thoroughfare. The

earlier settlement is likely to have been in the vicinity of the church (*cf* Welshpool) and might find some reflection in the alignment of Pen-yr-allt Street which is not in keeping with the rest of the regular planned layout and may, at least in part, already have been in existence.

One of Machynlleth's principal claims to fame is that Owain Glyndŵr called a parliament here in 1404. Though short-lived it has left an indelible mark on Machynlleth's history.

That the town declined in the late medieval period like so many other towns is suggested by the fact that in 1545 there were only 51 tax payers. Nevertheless, John Leland who passed this way in the 1530s classed it as the second town of Montgomeryshire, and with both a market and assizes it was considered amongst the most important twenty-five towns in Wales in the 16th and 17th century. It seems to have had a strong commercial base and as the Dyfi was navigable to within a mile and a half of the town, water-borne transport was of some importance.

The Dyfi was bridged in 1533 (4090) providing easy access to the north and the bridge was apparently the site of a minor Civil War skirmish in 1644 (4323).

When the cattle droving era was in its heyday between the 17th and 19th centuries, Machynlleth emerged as one of the most important collecting centres for stock making the journey to England. A coach link with Shrewsbury was established in 1798 and the railway reached Machynlleth in 1864.

Around 1770 Plas Machynlleth was constructed at the southern end of the town, replacing a house known as Greenfields which carried a datestone of 1653. It construction necessitated the diversion of Heol Pentrerhedyn and presumably the destruction of houses along it to make way for the house and grounds.

Despite the information currently available from early mapping, the local topography and archaeological and architectural work, it would be premature to try to define the extent of the town in any given period. This, however, must remain a long-term aspiration.

The heritage to 1750

There has probably been a church (7669) here before the Normans invaded Wales. Nothing of that early structure survives, however. The present dedication is not to a Welsh saint but to St Peter, which might point to a post-Conquest re-dedication. The west tower has 15th century fabric with later additions; the rest of the building was replaced in 1827 with subsequent modifications in 1866. Inside the font is 15th century but other fittings are largely Victorian.

The original perimeter of the churchyard (7668) can still be recognised on the ground; while its curvilinearity may be exaggerated on the tithe map of 1844, the sub-circular appearance does suggest that there may have been a pre-Conquest foundation here. It has been enlarged on several occasions since.

Owain Glyndŵr's Parliament House, a Grade I listed building (1270), is traditionally the location where he held the 1404 parliament. The building itself is later than the event. Some residual parts of it have been thought to be 15th century in date, and this has now been confirmed on the basis of dendrochronological dating which provided a date of 1470, and limited evaluation in *c.*2004 produced a few sherds of pottery from the 15th or 16th centuries. However, Parliament House as a building was extensively reconstructed at the beginning of the 20th century.

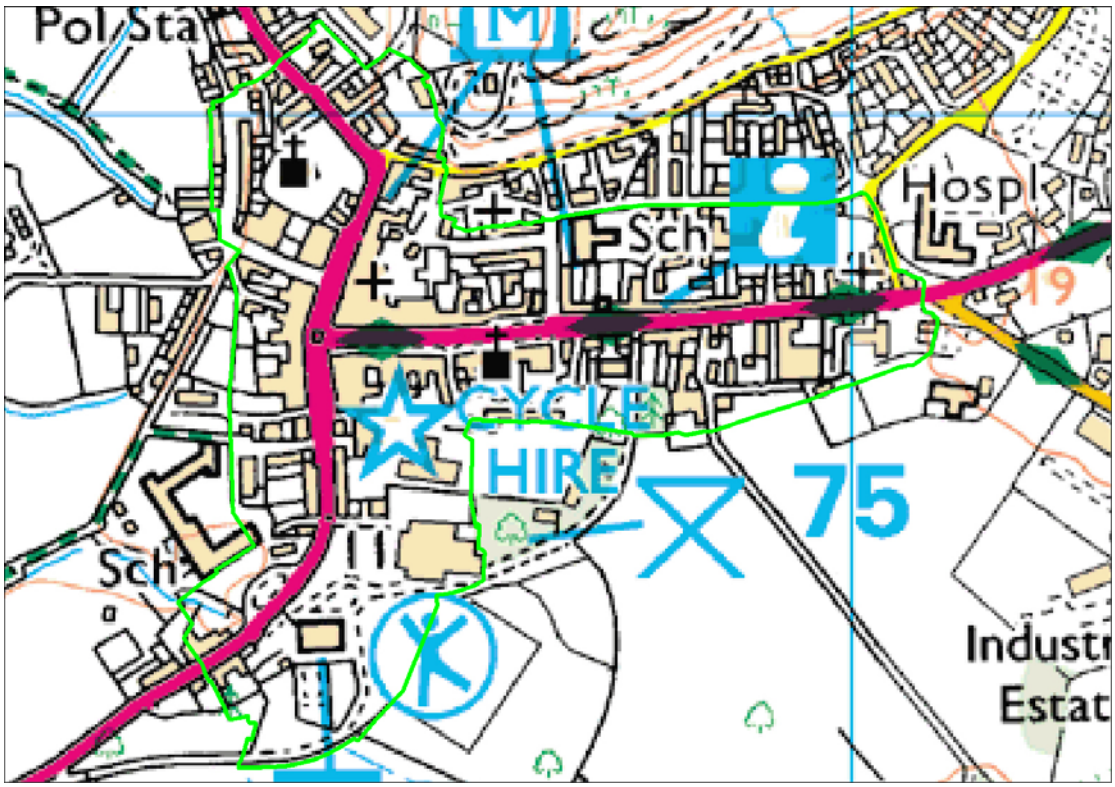
The Court House (20203) is located towards the eastern end of Maengwyn Street and is probably a late medieval half-timbered hall-house which was re-faced in stone in 1628 as shown on the central gable. It has a Grade II* listing. Likewise the Royal House (7670) on Heol Penrallt which has been tree-ring dated to 1559-1561 (with later additions), and first

appears in a document of 1580. Probably from the outset it was designed to have both domestic and commercial functions, and ran lengthwise along a half-burgage plot.

There are some other 17th and 18th century buildings, such as No.8 Heol Pentrehedyn (40484) which is probably earlier 18th century and the White Lion Hotel (31938) on the same street which could be late 17th century. No.33 on Heol Maengwyn (31891) is thought to be of the late 17th or early 18th century, as are others in this line of properties (nos 35 and 37). All carry a Grade II listing. While some of these may suggest a renewed phase of building within the town on either side of 1700, they are relatively few in number. The appearance of the town is essentially Victorian as Richard Haslam noted in the Pevsner guide to Powys in 1979.

The pattern of long narrow tenements leading off the two main streets is still clearly represented on the ground. Beyond this zone, artisans' and workers' dwellings had sprung up by the later 19th century. In 1763, for instance, the site of Brickfield Street below the church was represented by a linear sheet of water, perhaps a mill pond.

The early course of Heol Pentrerhedyn prior to its diversion in about 1770, is depicted on an estate map of 1763. The road ran south from the Market House at the T-junction and had dwellings along both sides. Just to the north of Greenfields (now Plas Machynlleth), an archaeological assessment in the 1990s revealed that the road turned through a right-angle and then some 200m on it broadened out where the town pound was sited. The estate map shows some housing on the north side of the road near the pound. Excavations in advance of the Bro Ddyfi Leisure Centre scheme revealed the plans of three buildings on either side of the street which were demolished in 1845.



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Manafon

SJ 1130 0240
15736

Introduction

Manafon lies on the B4390 in the hills of central Montgomeryshire to the west of the Severn valley. It is about 8km south of Llanfair Caereinion and 11km north of Newtown. Afon Rhiw, a small tributary of the Severn, follows a valley whose floor is never much more than 300m wide. The village of Manafon lies on the valley floor, the church little more than 100m north of the river. Ridging in neighbouring fields signals the channels of earlier watercourses and fluvial deposits, and beyond the valley sides slope steeply upwards. It is a small settlement but there has been recent infilling of the historic core. A large caravan park covers the ground between the church and motte.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Manafon up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Virtually nothing is known of Manafon's origin and development. The church dedication does not automatically herald an early medieval foundation, though some 'Michael dedications' are known to be pre-Conquest. The shape of the earlier churchyard shape is more suggestive, 19th century maps depicting a more curvilinear appearance than is currently apparent.

The name is first documented in 1254 as *Manauon* with *Mannavon* in 1338. The modern spelling first appears early in the reign of Elizabeth, *c.*1566. Expert opinion favours an interpretation of the 'plain associated with Anafon' where the first element is Welsh *ma* meaning 'plain, field or place' and the second a personal name. This is now preferred to *afon* meaning 'river' which was formerly in favour.

For the medieval and post-medieval picture we have only early maps to go, none of which are that much earlier than the turn of the 19th century. However, these maps hint at a very sparse pattern of dwellings. The Bee Hive public house was at the beginning of the 19th century simply known as the Manafon ale-house and at the most there may have been a couple of cottages beside the road, together with Moat Farm on the opposite bank of the Rhiw. There is nothing to suggest that any dwellings were constructed between the two medieval features, the church and the motte.

The heritage to 1750

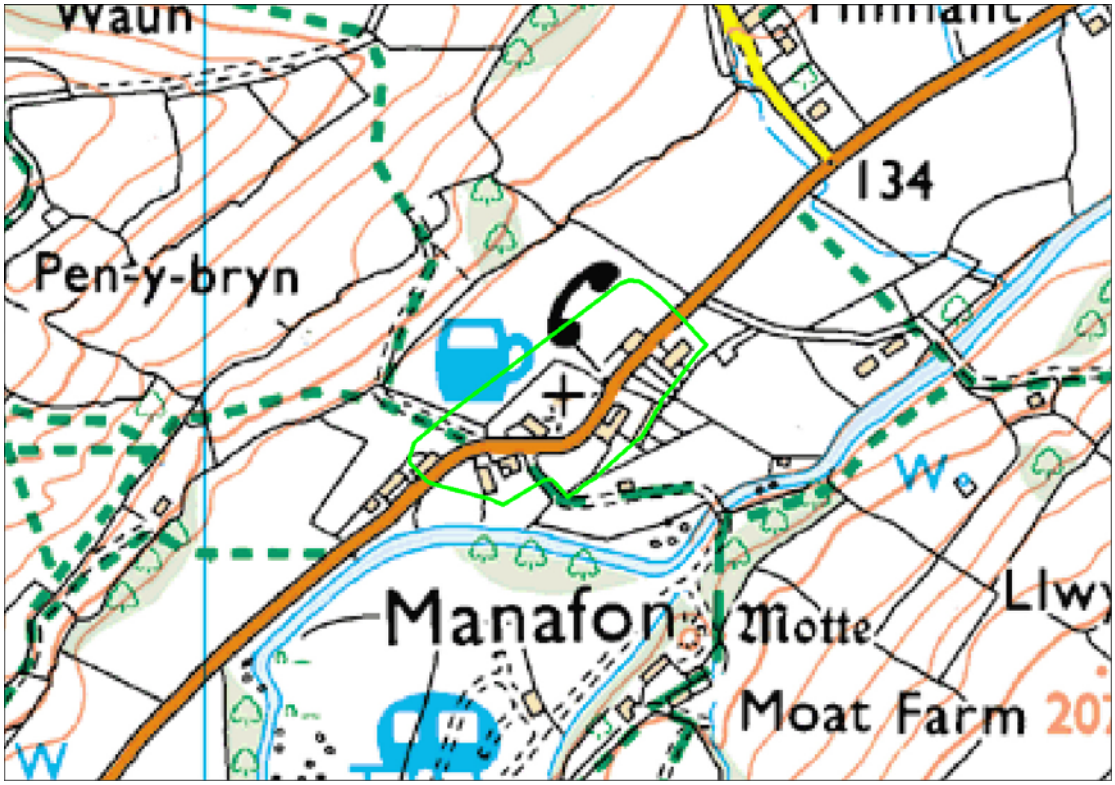
St Michael's church (7582) is a single-chamber building with a timber bell-turret at the west end. The original building is probably 14th or 15th century, but it was heavily restored in the Victorian era. Inside there is a medieval stoup, some fragments of stained glass and a restored 15th century roof, and perhaps most interestingly a cell which is thought to be 14th century and thus the oldest in Montgomeryshire.

The churchyard (7583) as depicted on the tithe map was more curvilinear than today, but none of the remaining boundary gives an impression of age. (7583).

The small motte (108), sculpted from a natural hillock, lies beside a small stream feeding into the Rhiw. Little of the bailey survives above ground and the motte has also suffered from the proximity of Moat Farm. Its history is unknown. A ford across the Rhiw linked Moat Farm to the highway. We may speculate that in earlier centuries it linked the castle and church.

The former rectory (42121) 250m to the east of the church, was built at the end of the 18th century and may have had at least two predecessors, one of them burning down in 1714. The building is at least as interesting because of its occupiers who have included Walter Davies (Walter Mechain) and the poet R. S. Thomas.

Earthworks in the fields around the settlement are primarily natural in origin resulting from fluvial activity, though there are also relict field banks.



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Meifod

SJ 1551 1332
15737

Introduction

Meifod straddles the B4389 which follows the River Vyrnwy as it meanders along the wide U-shaped valley of Dyffryn Meifod in central Montgomeryshire. Llanfair Caereinion lies 9km to the south-west, Welshpool 9km to the south-east. For much of its course the river valley is rather less than one kilometre wide; its palaeochannels, gravel fans and terraces are obvious, particularly from the air. Meifod occupies the valley floor less than 300m from the river, and it was formerly much closer, the churchyard edge appearing to follow the scarp of a gravel terrace. The presence of a flood embankment encircling the village is testimony to the problems of this low-lying location.

The church lies at the heart of the village, and the focus for settlement in past centuries has been along High Street and around the churchyard. This pattern is now changing for modern development has resulted in a substantially larger spread of housing covering the northern edge of the valley floor beyond the primary school, and is now spreading north-eastwards beside the road to Oswestry.

This brief report examines Meifod's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous lines defining the historic cores offer a visual interpretation of the area within which settlement developed in the medieval era, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. These are not immutable boundary lines, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The earliest church is said to have been built here by St Gwyddfarch in *c*.550 and later Meifod became the cult centre of his more famous pupil, St Tysilio. With its large churchyard extending over more than 5 acres, it comes as no surprise that Meifod functioned as a mother-church with a *clas* community in the early medieval period. Traditionally, it was the burial place of the princes of Powys whose seat was at Mathrafal, 3km away, though this view may simply be a back-projection of a practice that occurred in the 12th century.

The name appears first as *Meiuot* in the 12th century and *Meyvod* in the Taxation of 1254. Literally translated as 'middle dwelling', Meifod – and this is one example of several such in Wales – could have been related to the seasonal movement and grazing of stock in much earlier times.

The nature and development of the settlement here through the Middle Ages has yet to be established. It could be argued with equal validity that the church might have occupied a solitary location through the medieval era, or alternatively that people could have gravitated to it, thus creating a nucleated settlement. Either is plausible.

The heritage to 1750

The existing parish church of SS Tysilio and Mary (50460) may be the one recorded as having been consecrated in 1156. This would fit with the surviving Romanesque architecture at the west end of the present building which reveals a relatively complex history. The rest is 14th and 15th century with some rebuilding in the first half of the 19th century. Internal fittings are predominantly post-medieval in date, but there is a fine memorial cross-decorated slab (6049), variously dated to the 9th/10th or 12th century.

The churchyard is semi-circular (7663), its southern edge beside a small stream draining across the valley floor. A scarp bank just within this boundary is certainly a natural terrace but a case can be made for it being the line of an earlier churchyard. Encroachment on the original enclosure has occurred on both the north-east side beside the main road and more significantly on the west, but it is still the largest churchyard in Powys.

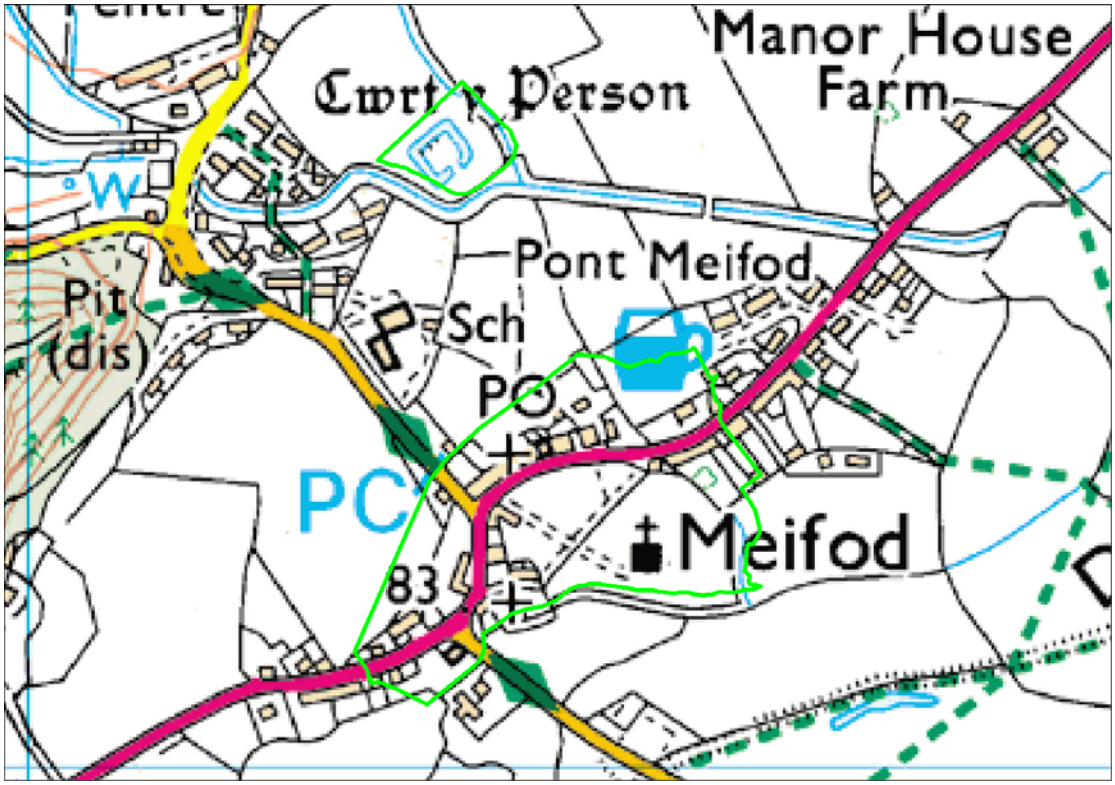
A chapel dedicated to St Gwyddfarch (PAR 50458) is claimed to have lain in the western part of the churchyard and may still have been visible in 1631 when it was referred to in a terrier. Its outline was recorded during the construction of the Congregational Chapel in the 1880s and glazed floor tiles were recovered. References to a church dedicated solely to St Tysilio add to an unresolved question as to how many churches were accommodated in this churchyard. Views differ as to whether there was formerly a separate church of St Tysilio (75) nearby, or whether it was directly replaced by the Norman church of St Mary (50459).

Eighteenth-century maps suggest a broad thoroughfare, now the modern road, around the north and west sides of the churchyard. The maps are not particularly comprehensive in their depictions of buildings, but there do not seem to have been many on the north side until the beginning of the 19th century, and this is borne out by the surviving architecture.

Most buildings in the village – the church excepted – are later than 1825, but the King's Head (7661), a grade II listed building is attributed to the final year of the 18th century. A little beyond the village on the hill slope overlooking the valley is the Old Vicarage (32464), a grade II listed building which was built by the local incumbent in 1720.

A fine moated enclosure, Cwrt y Person (74) lies back from the road and river, and closer to the valley slopes. Low banks, now barely visible, may have defined an outer court. The enclosure is presumably medieval in date, and bears similarities to that at nearby Guilsfield. The name points to it being a moated vicarage.

Traces of ridge and furrow cultivation show up on aerial photographs in several fields around the village, but these require confirmation from fieldwork (7664, 7665 & 7666) and the date of these cultivation marks remains unknown.



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Mochdre

SO 0723 8867
15739

Introduction

Mochdre, although only 5km south-west of Newtown, lies in a remote valley approached by minor lanes. The church and vicarage occupy a shelf on a moderately steep east-facing hillside above Mochdre Brook. Further buildings lie on the valley floor.

This brief report examines Mochdre's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The name is normally translated as 'pig farm', combining the elements *moch* and *tref*. *Mochdref* appears as the earliest form of the name in 1200 with *Moghtre* in 1497.

In the 12th century, the area lay within the Lordship of Kerry, and for a time may have been in Kerry parish. There is no evidence to take Mochdre back before this time. Neither the dedication nor the morphology of the churchyard point to an early medieval foundation, and it is to the 12th century that the first church on the spot has been attributed.

Its subsequent development in the Middle Ages and into more recent times is unchronicled.

The heritage to 1750

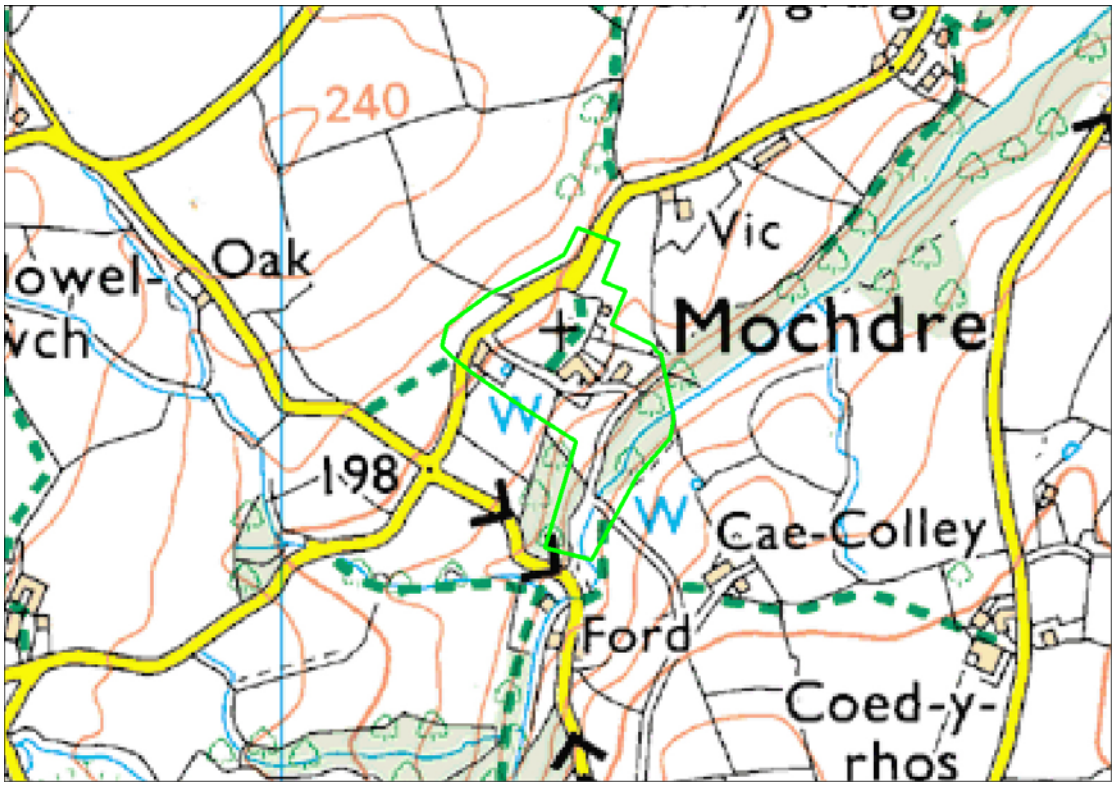
All Saints' Church (7549) was largely rebuilt in 1867 on the foundations of its presumed medieval predecessor. All that was retained from the earlier building was the early 16th century roof, which has seen some modification, and an inscribed bell of *c*.1660. Two 14th century wooden rood figures found during the 19th century restoration are now in the National Museum Wales.

The rectilinear outline of the churchyard (7726) has witnessed minor modifications on the north side, but there is little to indicate that formerly it had any element of curvilinearity.

Houses beside the Mochdre Brook are the survivors of a slightly larger group including a mill (7550) and a Methodist chapel which were distinguishable in the mid and later 19th century. An estate map of 1805 also depicts up to four dwellings (7727) beside the track leading down to the stream, and these should probably be equated with the houses named on modern maps as Church House and Tynwtra, just below the churchyard. None of these point satisfactorily to a nucleated settlement at Mochdre in the Middle Ages or Tudor era.

A network of narrow trackways running both along and across the contours reveal a pattern of communications that undoubtedly stretches back into the medieval era and perhaps earlier (e.g. 8617).

Some traces of ridge and furrow cultivation (4850) have been recorded in the vicinity of Cae-Colley, the farm on the opposite side of the valley.



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Montgomery

SO 0223 9652
15740

Introduction

The town of Montgomery is approximately equidistant from two of the major towns of mid-Wales, Newtown and Welshpool, the former lying about 10km to the west-south-west, while the latter is a similar distance to the north. It is positioned on the north-eastern slope of a range of hills, where they meet an area of undulating lowland bounded on its other sides by the Camlad and Caebitra rivers. The valley of the Severn lies to the west with the river itself a little over 2km to the north-east at its nearest.

The local topography is the key to both the origin and form of Montgomery. The castle occupies a pronounced rocky ledge projecting from the hills immediately to the west and commands both the approach to the important crossing of the Severn at Rhyd Chwima (Rhydwhyman) and more generally the low lands that offer access from the valleys eastwards into England to the valley of the Severn. The layout of the town is dictated by the dry valley below the castle ridge and the parallel spur of ground beyond.

This brief report examines Montgomery's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

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History of development

Known in Welsh as Trefaldwyn, both this and its English counterpart were attached to Hen Domen (or Old Montgomery), the motte and bailey closer to the Severn, and then transferred to the present town of Montgomery in 1223. In Domesday Book the motte was called Castrum Muntgumeri after its lord, Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, whose home on the opposite side of the Channel was Sainte Germain de Montgommeri in Normandy. Gastell baldwin is recorded in c.1170, a reference either to Baldwin de Bollers who was granted possession of Montgomery in the early 12th century, or his grandson, another Baldwin. Trefaldwyn is first recorded in 1440.

Montgomery castle (or perhaps more accurately New Montgomery) was constructed by Henry III as a strategic stronghold on the Welsh border from 1223, its location commended by Mathew Paris, the 13th century monk-cum-chronicler from St Albans, as ideal 'for the erection of an impregnable castle'. The spot was less suitable for the development of a town, however, but the king issued a safe conduct to all who would bring victuals for sale to the castle, promising the liberties enjoyed by the burgesses of Shrewsbury to those who would settle there. Montgomery was thus conceived as a plantation town, created at much the same time as the castle, and it received its charter in 1227, which included provision for the

enclosure of the town with defences (though a murage grant of 1267 with others subsequently up until 1336, suggests that the town may not have been provided with its stone wall until later in the 13th century). By 1224, too, a parish had been carved out of the old Saxon parish of Chirbury to support the new church.

The castle's strategic importance may have declined in the 14th century but it was maintained to a high standard by the Mortimer family, perhaps as a border stronghold. The town, however, thrived and the population of the borough expanded through the 13th and into the 14th century. A weekly market was held in Broad Street and there were four annual fairs. However, its strategic location at a distance from the Severn may have hindered its commercial development. The rise of Newtown and Welshpool, both on the river, created rival market towns in superior locations and in 1279 Welshpool's market and fairs were temporarily removed by royal charter because of the damage they were doing to Montgomery's prosperity.

Not surprisingly, Montgomery went into decline in the late medieval period. The king's antiquary, John Leland, noted the 'great ruines of the [town] waulle' around 1540, remarking that the town had suffered during the Glyndŵr rebellion. Yet the castle retained some significance – in the first half of the 16th century, the President of the Council in Wales and the Marches referred to it as 'the second key of Wales', the first being Ludlow. Large areas of the town, particularly in the northern part, were devoid of buildings in 1610-11 when John Speed published his plan of the town, although it was still ranked as one of the more important settlements in the Principality. This was no doubt partly because the town was accorded the status of county town to the newly created Montgomeryshire in the Act of Union between England and Wales instituted by Henry VIII in 1536. Unlike the other towns of Montgomeryshire it did not develop an industrial base during the post-medieval centuries and as a consequence its growth was stunted.

The heritage to 1750

The castle (169; SAM Mont022) was at times a royal castle and as such is particularly well-documented. It consisted of a massive tower, strong gatehouse and a curtain wall. Substantial masonry remains are still in evidence together with the earthworks of two baileys. A fine guide to the castle was produced by Cadw in 2004.

St Nicholas' church (30519; Grade I Listing) was first mentioned in 1227 and may have been started at much the same time as the castle, initially as a chapel dependent on the priory at nearby Chirbury. It is a large, single-chamber edifice with transepts and a tower off the north transept. The nave is the original early 13th century structure, the transepts added later in the same century. The fine roofs, hammerbeam in the nave and wagon in the chancel, are 15th and 16th century. The internal furnishings are amongst the most interesting in Montgomeryshire and include two screens together, a rood loft, choir stalls with their misericords, the font, two piscinae, and effigies of the 15th and 16th centuries. Tradition has it that many of the wooden carvings were brought from Chirbury priory. Restoration took place in 1816 when the tower was replaced, with further works in 1877-8.

The churchyard is large and rectangular with an interesting range of memorials.

The town defences (170; SAM Mont023) which were in place by the 1250s survive intermittently as earthworks, either as a ditch or scarp on the north, east and south, and more completely on the west as a considerable bank and ditch linked in with the castle defences. An in-depth study was published in 1940, confirming the former existence of a stone wall, although it has been argued that initially there was a wooden palisade which was replaced by the wall in 1279. Buried and overgrown stone foundations remain in a few places, and over 20m was exposed in 1995-7 near Arthur Gate. Towers were constructed at various points along the perimeter and the positions of four gates are known with varying degrees of precision, amongst them Arthur['s] Gate on the north side which was still standing in the early 17th century when Speed surveyed the town, the name a corruption of the area name,

Gorddwr. It is generally considered that these defences had reached their final form by the end of the 13th century. Limited excavations in the grounds of Crogbren have revealed the line of the town ditch in the south-west corner of the town.

The grid pattern of streets which is one of the defining characteristics of the planted town is recognisable only at the southern end of Montgomery in the vicinity of the church and market. Further north the natural landform necessitates a less regular layout. The location also meant that all traffic was filtered into the town from the north or the south. The focus was a wide open area at the centre of the town that formed the market area. Now Broad Street, it extended uphill behind the town hall and beyond the well which, from the prominence given to it on Speed's map of 1606/7, was probably the main water supply in the town. A market hall appears to have lain lengthways along the centre of Broad Street in the early 17th century with, perhaps, a market cross adjacent, but this was perhaps replaced by the town hall in a more imposing position and on a different alignment in 1748. A second open area, larger than what might be considered normal within a town lies in the northern half of the town where the four main through roads meet. Did this have some special function, perhaps as a green where livestock could be corralled, or is it little more than an indication that there was less pressure on space than in the southern half of the town where all the historic maps that are available imply a higher density of population.

The nature of the medieval buildings and their accompanying grounds is poorly understood. Typical of planned towns, long narrow burgage plots are still distinguishable in some parts of the town, notably off Princes Street and Broad Street. And of the range of trades and industries that might have occurred in the town we currently know very little, but there appears to have been a flourishing local pottery industry.

However, excavations on a plot beside Pool Road (5412) in 1984 and 1987 revealed the superimposed plans of two timber houses with a yard behind. Occupation began in the 13th century and seems to have ceased early in the 15th century after which the plot remained empty. Work in Bunner's Yard off Arthur Street in 1991 uncovered a possible building platform, but also a line of stakes which may have formed a division between plots or sub-divided a single plot. An archaeological examination of a plot on Back Lane in 1996 uncovered a yard surface, gullies, a wall and at least two pits, one of which may have been medieval in date. There was however, no convincing evidence of a building. Platforms on a large plot west of Greenfields on the Chirbury Road have been shown to support the foundations of medieval buildings and has been statutorily designated. Several other watching briefs and evaluations throughout the town have produced evidence of medieval and Tudor activity, and are all adding to the emerging picture of Montgomery.

Extra-mural settlement immediately to the south of the walled town has recently been identified, though its date is uncertain. It comprises what appears to be a substantial platform enclosure (7728) and several house platforms (7729) set beside a well-defined holloway. This last-mentioned feature runs above a small valley and there are reasons for believing it may have been the medieval approach to the town from the south, the main gate known as the Ceri Gate being further east than earlier research implied. It is more difficult to determine whether there was any settlement outside the walls elsewhere in the medieval and Tudor periods: Speed, though never the most reliable commentator in this respect, would appear to imply that extra-mural settlement was absent on the northern side of the town.

Montgomery boasts a large number of Grade II listed buildings such as White Croft which date from the 17th and 18th centuries, too many to list individually here. There are however, some buildings from the previous century, though none as yet have been recognised as survivals from the 15th century. The list of 16th century buildings includes public houses such as The Chequers in Broad Street (30501) and the Dragon Hotel (30544) by the town hall, and also a number of private dwellings including nos 9 and 11 Arthur Street, a hall house of 16th century origin (30486; 30487), and Clawdd-y-dre (30536) and a few such as 3-5 Arthur Street (the Old Bell Museum), Bowling Green Cottage (30523) and White House (30494) which are

of late 16th or 17th century origin. All in all, the town perhaps has the richest urban heritage in Montgomeryshire.

Other, later buildings of note include the brick-built Town Hall of 1748 (30541) and the County Gaol of c.1830-32 (20597).

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Newtown

SO 1082 9172
15742

Introduction

Newtown, the largest urban centre in Montgomeryshire, lies in the Severn Valley where the A489 meets the A483 trunk road. With its designation as a 'new town' in the 1960s, the rapid expansion of housing and industrial estates associated with the growing population has had, whether directly or indirectly, an inevitable detrimental effect on Newtown's historic heritage.

Above Welshpool the valley of the Severn narrows to around 500-700m in width, the river meandering from one side of its valley to the other. The historic centre of Newtown developed on level ground in one of the more pronounced loops, and a shallow valley running into the river on the south-east side of the town effectively creates a promontory location though one prone to flooding until the construction of embankments in 1973. As the town developed it spread along the southern side of the valley in both directions and onto the lower slopes of the hills overlooking the river. The need for workers' housing in the 19th century encouraged development of the steep northern slopes on the far side of the river, an area known as Penygloddfa.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Newtown up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

There are no convincing indications in the layout of Newtown that there was already an existing settlement and/or a church when the borough was founded, yet various writers have assumed that there was an earlier settlement here. The riverside location apart, neither the dedication nor the shape of the churchyard point to an early medieval origin. On the other hand the earliest reference to the church (see below) comes more than a century before the presumed plantation and the skewed alignment of Old Church Street could conceivably point to a pre-existing approach to the church when the street plan was designed.

Llanweyr appeared first in 1254, referring to the chapel of St Mary, and continued in use intermittently into the 16th century. With the foundation of the borough, an alternative was introduced, Drenewyth alias Llanvayr in Kedewen being employed in 1395. The latin equivalent *Nova Villa* was recorded in 1295 and *the Newtown* in 1350.

The strategic significance of this location astride a major riverine route into the Welsh hills is suggested by two motte and bailey castles. Gro Tump lies a little more than a kilometre downstream, and its positioning could have been influenced by the existence of an early

church site on the opposite bank of the river (*q.v.* Llanllwrchaiarn). The mound in the grounds of Newtown Hall, just to the west of the borough town, has been claimed as both a very late construction contemporary with the new town and a much earlier castle site established (presumably) soon after the Conquest. There is no supporting evidence either way.

In 1280, Roger Mortimer, one of the great lords in 13th century Wales, was granted the right to hold a weekly market and an annual fair on his newly acquired manor within Cedewain. It seems likely that the borough was established during the next ten years: by 1291 St Mary's had become independent of the more ancient church at Llanllwchaiarn. However, no charter is known and there are no documented references to the town until the second quarter of the 14th century.

The growth of the medieval town is likely to have been steady rather than dramatic. Leland's comments in the 1530s do not herald a town in decline, a contrast to other towns in the central borderlands of Wales. In 1545 there were 55 taxpayers.

It was only in the early 19th century that Newtown really expanded as it developed into the centre of the flannel manufacturing industry in mid-Wales, with at least fifty factories established, having a considerable impact on the spread of settlement in Penygloddfa to the north of the river. Fulling mills, bleaching grounds, a foundry, tanneries and potteries all followed and in 1819 the Montgomeryshire canal was extended to Newtown.

The heritage to 1750

The medieval parish church of St Mary's (1037) lies beside the river and away from the centre of the town. It was abandoned in the 1840s because of flooding, and it is now that rarity in Montgomeryshire, a medieval church ruin. Its remains consist of a west tower, perhaps 13th century with 15th century windows, and the skeleton of the nave, the stonework of which may be in part 14th century. It contains the monument to Robert Owen, the humanitarian manufacturer, who died here in 1858. It was succeeded as the parish church by St David's (31011), a building of the 1840s on New Road, and some furnishings were transferred there from the old church, including the remarkable medieval screen. St David's itself has recently been declared redundant.

Newtown Hall motte (1034) is much mutilated, half the mound having been removed and the bailey (which it is claimed ran almost to the river) landscaped almost completely beyond recognition. It remains to be confirmed that this was a remarkably late example of an earthwork fortification type long superseded elsewhere which was designed to protect the new borough at the end of the 13th century. An attempt was made to refortify it by the Parliamentarians in 1642.

Gro Tump (1035), the motte to the east of Newtown, is in a stronger natural location and in a considerably better state of preservation. It is likely that it was built early during the Anglo-Norman expansion into Wales, perhaps in the late 11th century.

The rectilinear layout of the town (1808) is typical of medieval planned settlements. Broad Street was the main axis with a wooden bridge (replaced in stone in 1827) across the Severn at the northern end, and a series of lanes running off at right angles. A court-house lay in the middle of Broad Street, opposite Turner's Lane, and was replaced by a brick town hall around 1570 which was itself demolished in 1852. The extent to which the side lanes were utilised by tenements can only be ascertained through excavation. Together, the Glansevern Map (1798) and the Tithe Map (1843) reveal significant alterations to the street plan of Newtown: the disappearance of a lane curving from east to west, south of Market Street; the extension of Back Lane north of Wesley Street; the construction of New Road; perhaps the infilling of a wide eastwards extension to High Street; and the creation of Severn Street and Parker's Lane.

There has been speculation about defences around the town in the form of a wall or bank, but there is nothing to substantiate their former existence, and no helpful documentary references. It can be noted, however, that the most recent study of medieval town defences in England and Wales (published in 2005) does class Newtown as a possible location.

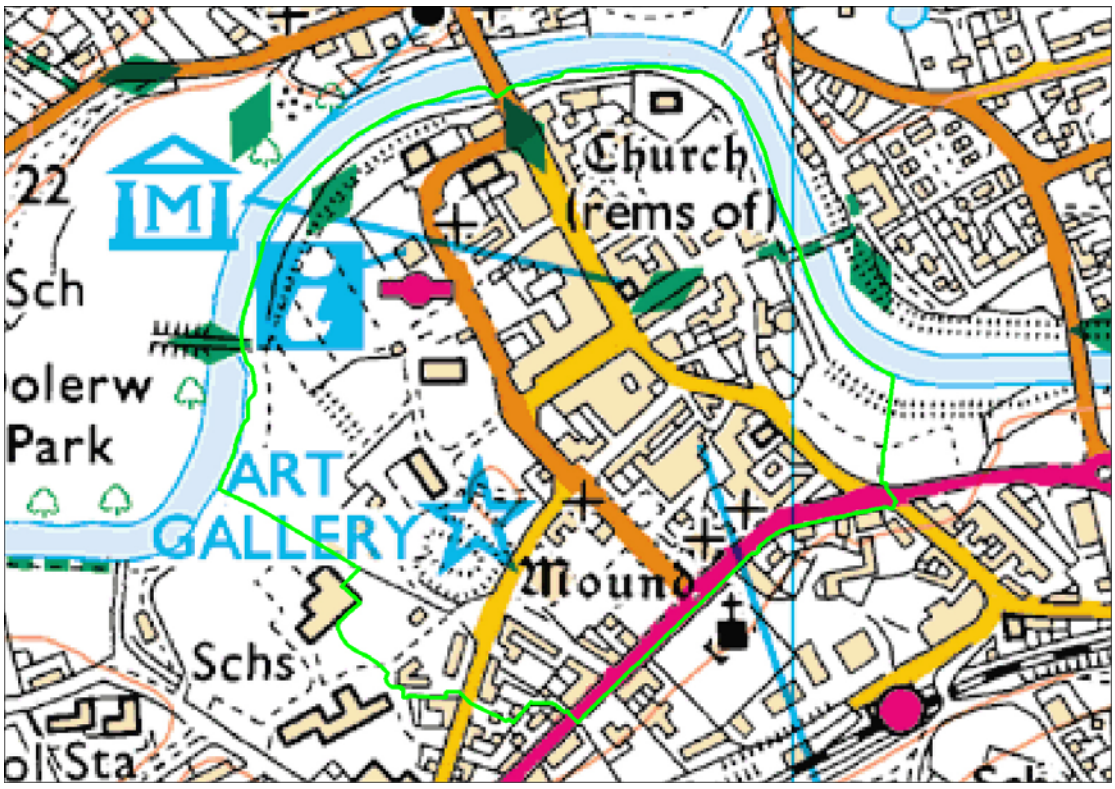
That there are ostensibly so few buildings that pre-date the 18th century is testament to the post-medieval development of Newtown. Those that do survive all appear to be 17th century and are Grade II listed: the formerly timber-farmed Black Boy Hotel (30943), Bank Place (30987) and the Bank Antiques (30988) both in Gas Street, The Buck in High Street (30990), the Silver Birch Restaurant in Parker's Lane (31018), and the much altered No.8 Severn Square (31030) and Transport House (31031) in the same square which is described by Haslam as the one pre-industrial pocket in the town.

Various pieces of developer-led archaeology have been conducted in Newtown over the last twenty years, including both excavation and recording. Notable was the discovery of a medieval corn-drying kiln in a plot off Wesley Street.

Though late in date, attention should be drawn to Penygloddfa where the regular layout of streets began in the 1790s to accommodate the workers from the adjacent factories.

Immediately to the south-west of the borough was an elongated tract of common land, known as The Green or Newtown Green, mapped in 1806 at about the time of its enclosure. Its northern boundary lay immediately south of the Newtown Hall motte and Market Street, its southern boundary a small stream around 100m away. By 1843 the former green was dense with housing. Here was the Lady Well (1801), which provided fresh water until the beginning of the 20th century and has given its name to buildings in the vicinity.

Along the road towards Welshpool was St Giles which no longer survives. This presumably was a chapel, but the Glansevern map of c.1800 suggests a circular enclosure - perhaps a churchyard? - to the east.



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Penegoes

SH 7690 0092
15743

Penegoes lies on the A489(T) in the extreme west of Montgomeryshire, less than 3km from Machynlleth. Afon Crewi, one of several streams feeding into Afon Dulas, itself a tributary of the Dovey, has created a fairly broad and flat valley. Penegoes church is on the level northern side of the valley with the ground sloping down gently to the stream, 200m away. The church represents the focus of what is now a dispersed settlement. Only a single habitation, Llwyn, adjoins it but others lie off the main road at regular intervals to west and east, and new housing is springing up on the lane leading to the bridging point of the stream. Six hundred metres eastwards, the modern village of Penegoes is expanding where the turnpike road and the old drovers' road separate.

This brief report examines Pengoes's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

It can be assumed on the basis of the British dedication of the church and the form of the oval churchyard that this was an early medieval foundation, although as is often the case there is no substantive evidence to back this up. St Cadfarch was reputedly a 6th century saint and a disciple of the more famous St Illtyd.

Penegoes is first recorded as *Pennegoys* in the early 13th century, and as *Penegees* in the Norwich Taxation of 1254. Literally this means 'top of the leg' but in a context such as this can be taken to indicate a long, narrow tract of land with a slight bend like a leg, a description that might fit the valley terrace on which the church sits. Occasionally, the church has been termed *Llangadfarch*, but this appears to be an antiquarian conceit, based on the church's dedication, but without an iota of fact to support it.

Nothing is known of the settlement's history, other than that it became the centre of an ecclesiastical parish. It lay beside the main drovers' route from Machynlleth to the English border, and in the 18th century the road was improved by a turnpike trust, but all this is incidental to the development of Penegoes. The dispersed pattern of holdings along the road in the mid-19th century was similar to today though sparser; but an estate map of a century earlier implies that the church was an isolated structure with only mills in the vicinity.

The heritage to 1750

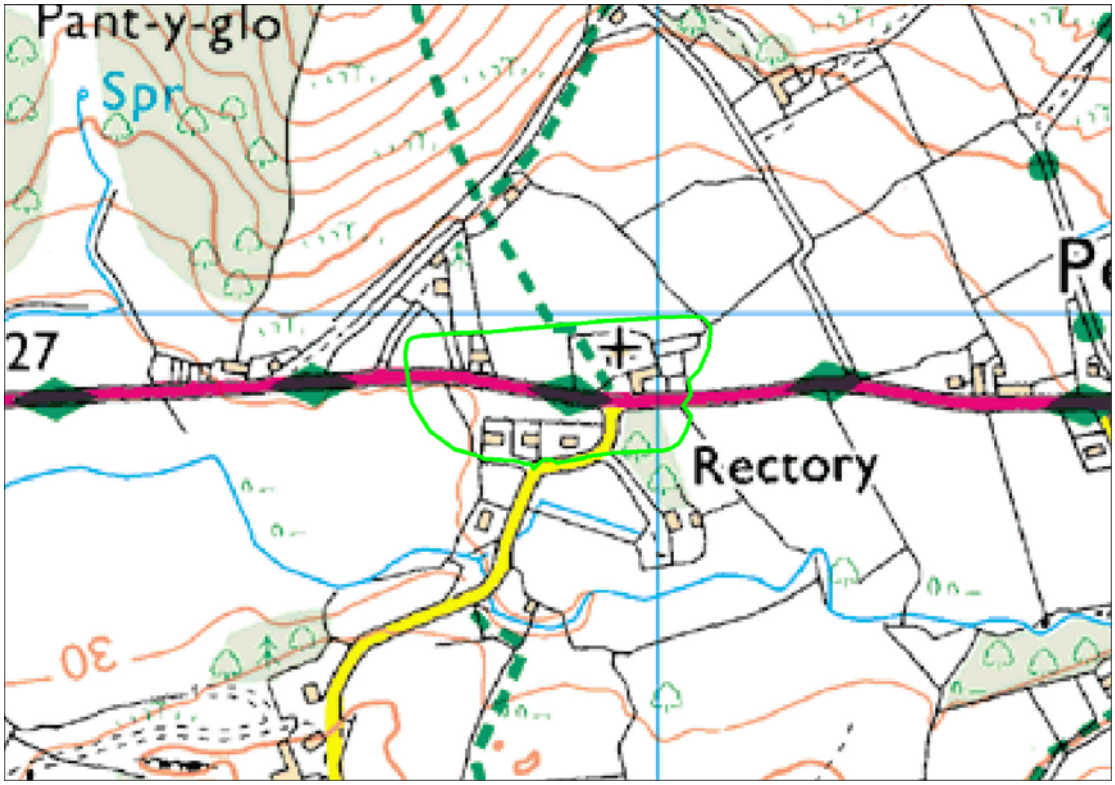
The church is dedicated to an obscure saint, St Cadfarch (7654). The present church was completely rebuilt in 1877, replacing a medieval structure, and few fittings survived the Victorianisation. There is a large stoup (possibly an early font), a bell of 1840 and a couple of pieces of furniture that could be 18th century.

The churchyard adopts an irregular form but has clearly been extended at its west end where the original curvilinear course (7655) can still be detected as a scarp bank amidst the tightly packed graves.

Two adjacent wells on the opposite side of the road to the church are reputed to have had curative properties, as reported by the Royal Commission at the beginning of the 20th century. (Ffynnon Penegoes (5158) is rather anonymous, but Ffynnon Gadfarch (1276) sounds like a more authentic early healing well and was apparently beneficial for rheumatic disorders.

The rectory and its outbuildings are dated to the late 18th or early 19th century and have a Grade II listing (7656). Reputedly they are on the site of an earlier rectory where the landscape painter, Richard Wilson, was born.

Llawr-Penegoes (7657), 250m east of the church, had the now obsolete Grade III listing.



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Pennant Melangell

SJ 0242 2654
15744

Introduction

Pennant Melangell lies in the remote Tanat valley where it cuts into the eastern flank of the Berwyn Mountains, 14km north-west of the nearest accessible small town, Llanfyllin, though Bala on the other side of the mountains is fractionally closer. Consisting now of no more than a church and two houses, Pennant Melangell lies on the valley floor where a stream, Nant Ewyn, enters the River Tanat. Behind the churchyard, the ground rises steeply for nearly 300m to the heights of Pen Cerrig. Former house sites (see below) are restricted to the valley floor and higher up Cwm Nantewyn.

This brief report examines Pennant Melangell's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Traditionally, Melangell, a princess of Irish origin, established a nunnery here in the later 8th century, having been given the land by Brochwel, Prince of Powys. Even if the tradition has a factual basis, it seems improbable that the nunnery survived into the medieval era. Nevertheless, Melangell's shrine became a place of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages, a *cell-y-bedd* surviving at the eastern end of the church.

Pennant is first documented about the year 1160, while *Penant Mellagel* appears in 1291. The first component means 'head of the stream or valley', the second refers to St Melangell.

The church became the centre of an ecclesiastical parish in the Middle Ages, but there is nothing to suggest that it ever became the focal point of a nucleated settlement. The Royal Commission have claimed that this is now a practically deserted village and 'that the foundations of numerous houses lie half-hidden beside the field paths near the church'. This, however, is probably something of an exaggeration.

The heritage to 1750

The church of St Melangell (14) has a complicated architectural history. The mid 12th century building was reconstructed in the 15th century, the nave and chancel were amalgamated into one chamber, and the apse containing the saint's shrine was sealed off from the church. The porch was built in the 18th century, the west tower in the 19th century, replacing an earlier structure. The church contains a 12th century font, an important but fragmentary 15th century rood screen, two 14th century effigies and the shrine which has been claimed as the most

delicate piece of Romanesque sculpture in Powys, and the earliest surviving monument of its type in northern Europe. There are fragmentary medieval wall paintings, a 7th-century chest, Hanoverian Royal Arms, and an 18th century candelabrum.

Pennant Melangell is the best-studied church in Montgomeryshire as a result of excavations and recording in 1989. These were fully published in Montgomeryshire Collections in 1994.

The distinctive circularity of the churchyard (7624) is interrupted on the eastern side, suggesting a modification to the perimeter, although the earlier line cannot now be determined. It still contains the shaft of a possible 14th century churchyard cross, and the lychgate is said to have been built in 1632, but the presence of a preaching mound (6342) first mooted in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* at the end of the 19th century seems very unlikely, though because of its subsequent destruction this cannot be verified.

To the north-west of the churchyard is Old Nant-ewyn cottage which may be of 17th century origin and supposedly pre-dates Nant-ewyn (43171) itself which is thought to be of mid-18th century date.

Two cockpits (15 & 16), one inside the churchyard, the other in the area of the present car park to the east, are shown on late 19th century maps. Only the car park example now survives as a faint earthwork.

The main routeway along Cwm Pennant in past times was on the north side of Afon Tanat and is now a farm track and footpath. At least two house sites, both occupied in 1842, can be positively identified (7626 & 7627) and there are suggestions of others. It is these in all probability that have in the past generated a belief in a shrunken medieval settlement at Pennant (3774). As already noted, there is, however, no tangible evidence of any real nucleation here.

Other structures, not necessarily dwellings, lie in Cwm Nantewyn and at the confluence of the stream with Afon Tanat.

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Penrhos

SJ 2367 1659
120779

Introduction

Penrhos lies on a gentle south-facing hillslope at the point where a small valley carries its water down to the Holywell Brook. The village of Four Crosses is some 4km off to the north-east and Meifod is about 9km to the south-west.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Penrhos up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

No historic core has been defined because it is only the church that has any history to it.

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History of development

Penrhos enters history when a chapel was founded here in 1625, according to tradition on common land belonging to the manor of Deuddwr, with some of the cost being met by the local landowner, Hugh Derwas, of Penrhos Hall, and some by Owen Edwards of Collfryn.

The name is first encountered a few years earlier, in 1610, when *Penros*, meaning moorland hill was recorded, and later, in 1635, this appeared as *Penrhoss* and as *Penrhos* in 1774.

There is no reason to believe that the establishment of the chapel encouraged the growth of a settlement here. Even at the end of the 19th century, the church was accompanied only by a vicarage (now the house known as Bryneglwys and dating to around 1850).

The heritage to 1750

The church has been variously known as Holy Trinity Church, Penrhos Chapel and the New Chapel, and it is the first of these which is currently used. The original building of timber construction was taken down in 1844 and rebuilt in stone, being completed in 1845. There is one mid-18th century memorial in the church, but otherwise nothing of pre-19th century date.

The churchyard is a medium sized polygonal enclosure, retaining some 18th century gravemarkers.

Penstrowed

SO 0695 9155
120780

Introduction

Penstrowed lies in a bend of the upper Severn between Caersws and Newtown and beside the trunk road from the latter to Llanidloes and Aberystwyth. The settlement lodges at the base of the slope running down from the prominent hill, variously termed Cefn Lladron and Penstrowed Hill, which is the cause of the river's looping course.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Penstrowed up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

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History of development

The church at Penstrowed was reputedly founded around 520 by St Gwrhai who, it is claimed, is buried in the churchyard. There is nothing, however, to corroborate such early beginnings. It lay close to the old Roman road from Forden Gaer to Caersws which was less than 100m away.

The earliest form of the place-name comes in the 12th century with *Bennystrywyeyt*, followed by *Penestrewit* in 1254 and minor variations thereafter. *Penstrowde* is referenced in a document of 1559 and the modern spelling of *Penstrowed* in *c.*1570. The most authoritative statement on its meaning invokes the possibility that the name incorporates *ystrywaid* meaning 'trap' linked with *pen*, commonly 'top'. Antiquarian speculation that it could be derived from *Pen y Street*, referring to the Roman road, has been dismissed.

Clearly the church was in existence in the Middle Ages as it appearance in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 attests, but the nature of its accompanying settlement, if any, during the medieval era is unknown.

Even by the middle of the 19th century when the Tithe survey was drawn up the village still clustered around the church and had spread westwards only as far as The Elms and The Vicarage.

The heritage to 1750

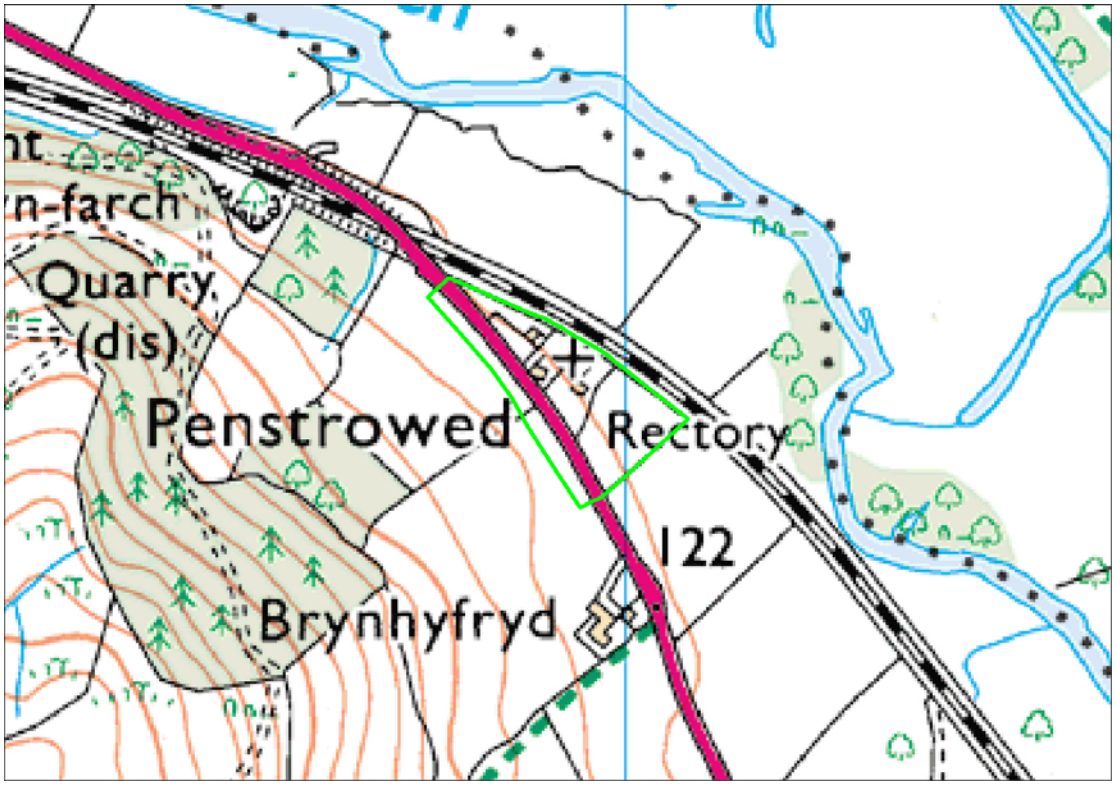
The church (16392), dedicated to St Gwrhai (though the Ordnance Survey have transmuted this to St George), was completely rebuilt in 1863. Of its medieval predecessor, we know

absolutely nothing, and the only furnishing that has survived is a worn stoup, loose at the back of the church.

The churchyard (16393) is small and rectangular. If there was ever a curvilinear graveyard here, all traces of it have gone.

There is nothing to suggest that there has ever been a nucleated settlement here. There are no buildings of any great age, and no recognisable earthworks of former dwellings.

Late medieval and early post-medieval pottery sherds (54982) were recovered during pipeline operations from a field close to the church in 2009.



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Snead

SO 3160 9189
120778

Introduction

Snead lies on gently sloping ground on the north side of the River Camlad, a tributary of the River Severn. The Camlad here forms the county border with Shropshire, so the church at Snead is little more than a stone's throw from England. The A489, the main road from Newtown to Craven Arms hugs the contours passing the settlement at a slightly higher level. The nearest town is Bishop's Castle, 3km to the south.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Snead up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Snead enters documented history as a manor where at the very end of the 12th century the lord of Montgomery founded a priory for Augustinian canons. Within two or three decades they had been moved to Chirbury but retained the manor as part of their landholding.

The chapel at Snead probably came into existence soon after the original foundation, and probably continued to function after the move to Chirbury. There is, however, nothing to suggest that a nucleated settlement developed during the Middle Ages.

The place-name has been recorded in many variant forms. *Sned* is referred to in documents of 1201, 1253 and 1577, *Snethe* appears in 1227, *Snet* in 1231, *Snede* between 1230 and 1240, *Le Snedde* in 1317, and *Sneade* in 1583. In its present form it is recorded in 1649 and as *the Snead* around about 1700. The Old English term *snaed* means 'a piece of land separated from a manor'.

By the 17th century, houses were being constructed along the main road above the church, leaving the church isolated but close to the mill.

The heritage to 1750

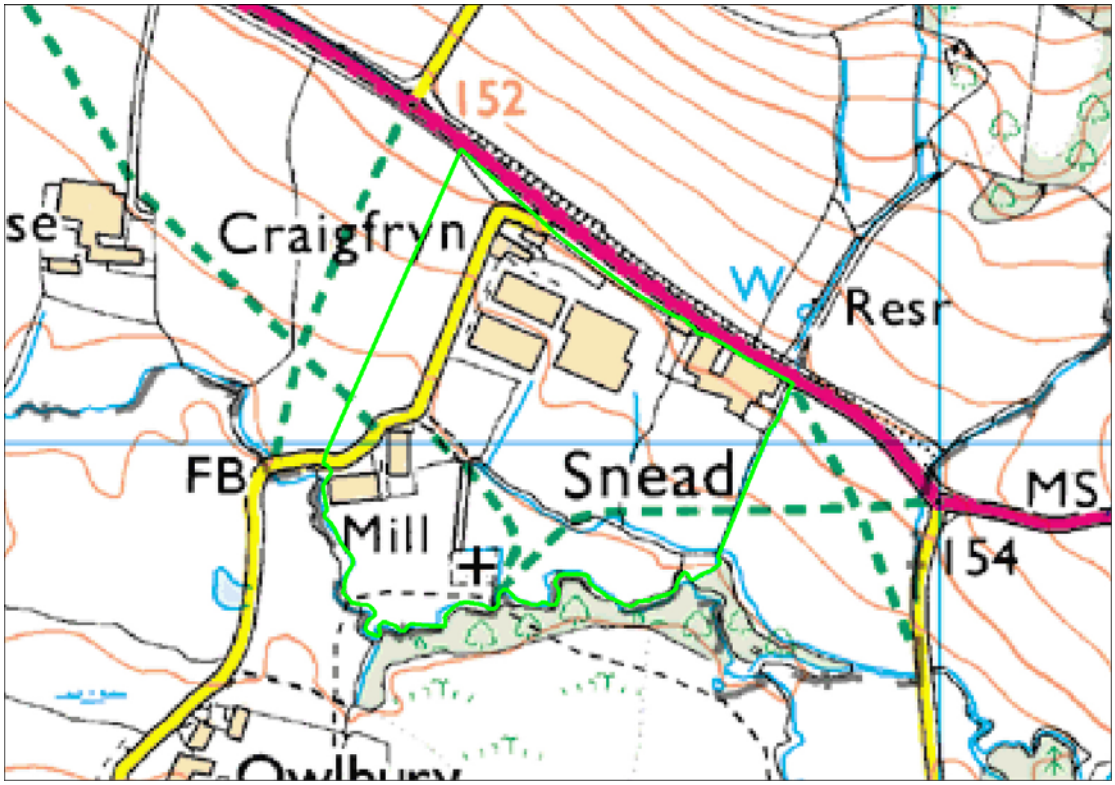
Snead church, dedicated to St Mary the Virgin (16390), is a small, single-chambered building, which retains some medieval walling but was largely rebuilt and restored in 1870 and again in 1998. All its windows were replaced in the Victorian era. It retains a font which could be 12th century in date, and part of a 14th or early 15th century sepulchral slab.

The churchyard is raised and of square design, its graves primarily of 19th century date, though one of 1739 was found during archaeological work in 1998. The church itself appears to be set on a deliberately raised platform.

Snead farmhouse (32545) is a two-storey timber box-framed building, its hall/parlour range of the early to mid 17th century, and the kitchen service range, from later in the century. Snead Stores House (20592) lying immediately to the west of the farm is probably a fragment of what was originally a much larger building, again half-timbered and of box-frame construction, with one room incorporating a Tudor-headed doorway. And Graigfryn House, (20590), 200m to the north-west, is a sub-medieval, half-timbered house, its dormers carrying dates of 1658 and 1740.

The mill at Snead (26749) almost certainly had its origins in the Middle Ages, for immediately after the dissolution of the priory at Chirbury in 1536 there is a reference to the rent of the mill at 'Sned'. Nothing from this earlier period is known to remain, and the present mill is a 19th century brick building.

In 1999, a watching brief during a development, identified a small length of stone foundation (70736), perhaps the north-western corner of a house platform, with fragments of burnt clay and charcoal overlying the stones. The remains can be tentatively attributed to the medieval period.



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Trefeglwys

SN 9704 9061
15756

Introduction

Trefeglwys is located on the B4569, a road linking the larger settlements of Caersws and Llanidloes, some 7km north of the latter. The village occupies the bottom of a south-facing slope above a small river, the Afon Trannon, where its narrow valley broadens into a flood plain. The church is virtually the lowest-lying of the buildings in the village. The historic core lies at the southern end of the modern village, more recent development being further north.

This brief report examines Trefeglwys' emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement might have developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The earliest form of the place-name appears as *Trefeglus* in the period 1143-51 and simply means 'settlement with or containing a church'. Subsequent forms such as *Treff Eglwys* (1291) are no more than minor variants.

Recent research signals a mid-12th century foundation for the church at Trefeglwys. Neither the dedication to St Michael nor the shape of the churchyard would contradict this view. The question has also been raised as to whether there was an earlier cemetery on the site, but there is not a shred of evidence to support such a view.

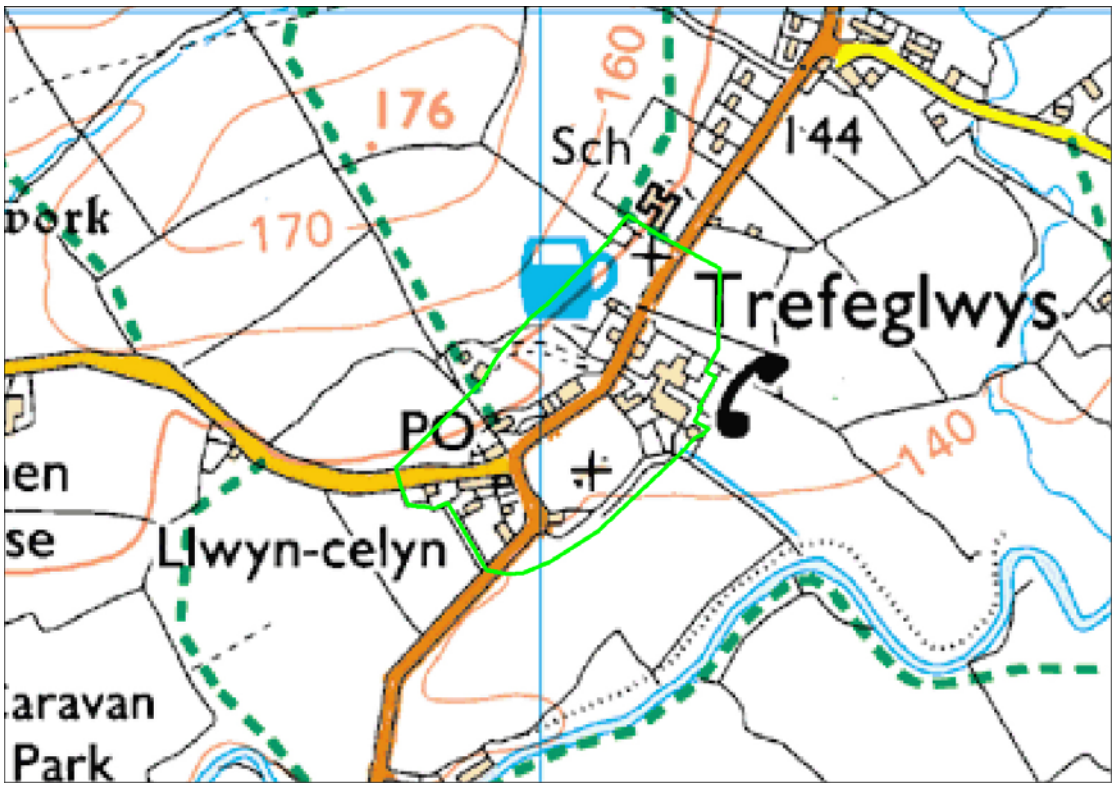
The settlement's medieval history is not recorded. A manuscript map suggests that as late as 1769 there were very few houses here. Only Church Farm, the Red Lion Hotel (or buildings that proceeded them) and two cottages were depicted in addition to the church. Growth must have occurred soon after for by the middle of the 19th century most of the houses now around the church were in existence.

The heritage to 1750

St Michael's Church (7558) was rebuilt in 1864-5. A few of the materials from the earlier church were reused including the timber bell-frame and the bells, one of which is as early as the mid-15th century. Two standing stones (1781), supposedly removed from the churchyard are now in the farmyard of Church Farm. Whether these have any prehistoric significance cannot be ascertained.

The churchyard (7559) is a large sub-rectangular enclosure much of which lies on the valley floor.

The Red Lion Hotel (21217) is described as a sub-medieval house of half-timbered construction. No date has been attributed to it but it does appear to be depicted on the 1769 estate map of Trefeglwys. In contrast the adjacent dwelling of Belle Vue (59304) on the north side of the churchyard is said to have been erected in the 17th century as a timber-framed house and re-fronted around 1800, yet it is not depicted on the map. Together with Church Farm which is also on the estate map, these constitute almost the entire housing stock in Trefeglwys in the later 18th century.



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Tregynon

SO 0959 9872
15757

Introduction

Tregynon is situated in the hills to the west of the Severn valley. It lies beside a through route, the B4389, some 8km south of Llanfair Caereinion. South-east of the village several streams converge on the Bechan Brook in what has the appearance of a bowl in the hills. The church lies on a spur created by the valleys of two of these streams, the southerly being considerably more pronounced than its northern counterpart. The early village appears to have spread eastwards from the church beside the northern stream, but new housing developments have extended the village in all directions except the north, so that the modern village is considerably larger and more spread than its predecessor. The large estate of Gregynog with a history stretching well back into the Middle Ages lies immediately to the south of the village.

This brief report examines Tregynon's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

'Cynon's settlement' is first recorded as *Trefkenon* in 1254 and the modern form, Tregynon, is documented in 1583. The 'tref' element, a little unusually, is linked with the name of an obscure saint (rather than a secular leader) to whom the church is dedicated, but as Ceredigion has Capel Cynon, it is probably authentic rather than a back-formation with the dedication being invented from the place-name.

On the basis of the dedication and perhaps the shape of the churchyard, an early medieval origin may be postulated, but there is nothing to substantiate this assertion. The later, medieval history of Tregynon is equally obscure, though it formed part of the Knights Hospitallers' Halston estate and the church had been acquired by this military monastic order.

The village as shown on 19th century maps comprised the church, Church House Farm and a few cottages strung out along the lane to the east of the churchyard. Dwellings did not extend as far as the present crossroads. The layout earlier in the post-medieval era is likely to have been even more confined and today's main through route – a turnpike road of the 18th century – may not have existed, so that the settlement would have been more isolated than it is now.

The heritage to 1750

St Cynon's church (7732) is a single-chamber building with a bell turret at the west end. It was largely rebuilt in 1787 with further work in 1892, but the medieval roof was retained and could date to the 15th century while the bell turret may retain some 17th century timbers. Virtually all of the internal furnishings and fittings are 19th century, though some 18th century funerary monuments remain. Tregynon's raised churchyard (16434) exhibits curvilinear traces only where the road swings around the wall. Elsewhere it is distinctly angular, indicative probably of later modifications.

The Cottage (18139) beside the churchyard is an early 18th century, half-timbered building with a Grade II listing. This is the only building in the village core, with the exception of the church, that is known to be earlier than 1750.

There are traces of earthworks (7735) on the opposite side of the road to the church, but their nature is unclear. Rising ground to the north of the crossroads (OS field 8081) has the name Castle Hill (4749), but there is now no evidence of a fortification there, and evaluation work in 2002 found no traces.

On the southern edge of the modern village, four hundred metres from the church and close to the Bechan Brook, is a fine moated enclosure (765; scheduled as SAM Mont204), with possible platforms or outworks on its north-east side. While a 13th or 14th century date is likely, its precise function is unclear, although it is likely to have surrounded a dwelling of some status.

Immediately adjacent to the moat is Tithebarn Cottage which reputedly had its origins as a tithe barn. However, the basis for this assertion is unclear, and it has not been possible even to establish whether there was formerly a tithe barn on the spot (1175).

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Trelystan

SJ 2636 0395
15758

Introduction

Trelystan lies on the eastern slopes of Long Mountain, very close to Montgomeryshire's border with Shropshire, and approximately 6km south-east of Welshpool. The church is perched below the crest of the ridge on a remote east-facing spur formed by two small valleys converging on Trelystan Dingle. Isolated, the church is the settlement and the nearest habitation is 400m away.

This brief report examines Trelystan's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

The recorded history of the church goes back to the early 11th century, but with a curvilinear churchyard enclosure still visible within the present boundary, an even earlier foundation date is likely.

Domesday Book (1086) carries a name *Vlestanesmude* which is linked to this place, and later versions such as *Wolstandusmude* (1274) and even *Wolston Mynde alias Wolstandmynde* (1572) carry the name through into post-Reformation times. *Trelistan* first appears in *c.1570*. The two appear together as *Wolstan myne alias Trelustan* in 1697 and as late as 1836 in *Wolston Mynd or Trelystan*. Place-name specialists see the Welsh term *lystan* developing from the Old English name, *Wulfstan*.

Tradition has it that the church is associated with the Welsh prince, Elstan Glodrudd (*c*.1010-1040), and one of the Welsh genealogical pedigrees has him buried at *Chappell Trest Elistan in Caursland*, Caus being the local lordship. However the association between the prince and the place has been dismissed as fanciful by at least one authority.

The church apart, the history of the settlement around it is unknown. Indeed at present there is no evidence whatsoever for any dwellings around it, and this may always have been an isolated church.

The heritage to 1750

All Saints' church (7736) is unique in Montgomeryshire in that it is timber-built. Of 15th century origin, the single-chamber structure was restored in 1856 when it was encased in brick and timber. Internally there is a heavily restored pre-Reformation screen, an early arch-

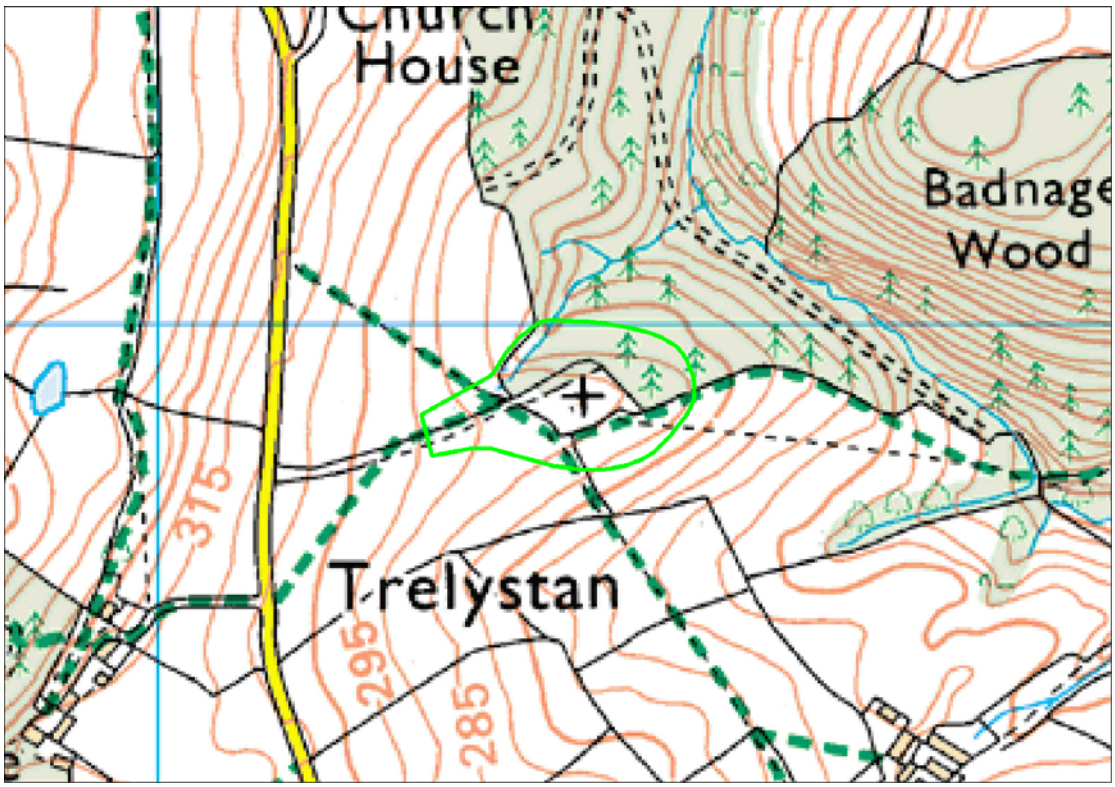
braced roof, altar rails of the 17th century, and a bell of the 15th century. The church appears to be placed on a slight mound, perhaps the remnants of an earlier building.

The sub-rectangular churchyard encompasses a sub-circular enclosure (4500) showing as a very slight bank. It can reasonably be assumed that this is the line of an early *llan.*

No traces of any settlement earthworks have been recognised in the vicinity of the church.

Ridge and furrow cultivation (4470) has been identified in a field 200m to the south of the church, buts its age has not been established.

Early farms where they still exist lie at some distance. The closest, Lower House (32433), is more than 400m to the south-east and is of 18th century construction.



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Welshpool

SJ 2243 0755
15760

Introduction

Welshpool functions as a nodal point on the edge of the Severn Valley with three main roads intersecting here including two trunk roads, the A483 and the A458. Set on the western slopes of the valley above the Severn flood plain at the point where the Nant-y-caws Brook (also known as the Lledan Brook) converges on the river, the historic core of Welshpool is enveloped by 19th and 20th century housing on the west, south and north, and by a lower-lying industrial zone to the east.

This brief report examines Welshpool's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

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History of development

Welshpool is said to have been the location of two churches founded by St Cynfelyn and his brother Llywelyn in the 6th century. The precise position and form of these churches and any accompanying settlement remains unknown, but one of these churches should probably be equated with the 'Old Church' (see below). That being the case, the second could well have been on the site of the present parish church whose spur location hint at early medieval origins.

The parish church lies on the opposite side of the valley of the Lledan Brook from the later borough (see below), from which it can be intuited that it was already in existence when the new town was laid out. Confirmation comes from Bleaze's map of 1629 which has the term 'Welshe towne' printed adjacent to the church, and from this we can contend that the earliest settlement at Welshpool should be in the Salop Road/Mill Lane area, though excavations along Mill Lane in recent years and revealed no traces of early medieval activity and little of medieval date.

The earliest reference is to the settlement is as *yr trallwng* in about the year 1100. The church at Trallūg occurs in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and *y trallwn* appears as late as *c.*1566. *Pole* and *la Pole* are first recorded in 1196 and 1197 respectively, but it was 1478 before *Walshepole* shows in documents and almost another century for *Welshe Poole.* The leading place-name authorities translate Welshpool as 'the muddy pool' and rather than associating it with Llyn Du in Powis Castle Park which has been traditional, they feel it may have been some wet place along the lower course of the Lledan Brook. However, such is the prominence given to 'The Poole' by Bleaze on his map of Welshpool in 1629, that the traditional view is probably correct. Pool is seen as a loose translation of *trallwng*.

The present town of Welshpool resulted from a deliberate policy by Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn, Prince of Powys, to establish a new borough. As such, this was a planned town which owed little to the existing settlement on the other side of the Lledan Brook. The burgesses received a foundation charter in the 1240s and a market was recorded there in 1252. Forty years later there were 106 taxpayers in the town, a total which had risen to 225 by 1322. The new town adopted a basically linear plan, centred on High Street and Broad Street, with some development also along Church Street, Berriew Street and Severn Street.

The Glyndwr rebellion and the general decline apparent in many Welsh border towns in the 15th and 16th centuries, seem to have had a limited effect on Welshpool, to judge from the picture of the town on an estate map of 1629. Leland thought it the best market in Powysland in the 1530s, replacing Montgomery as the regional centre because of its better location, and we could probably assume steady growth through the Tudor and Jacobean periods.

The growth of the flannel industry during the late 18th century added fresh impetus to the development of the town, though it has been argued that it failed to become a predominant urban focus in Wales because of competition from towns higher up the Severn Valley. The construction of the Montgomeryshire Canal at the same time added to its importance, and the railway arrived in 1862.

The heritage to 1750

The church of St Mary (5504) has a complicated architectural history. Its tower is 13th century, except for the 15th or 16th century belfry stage while the rest of the building appears to have been added to or modified from the 14th century to the 19th century. It was then restored in 1856 and 1870 with further work in the 20th century. Inside not a great deal has survived from the medieval era. Its 14th century font is now in the local museum, and an early 16th century triptych has been removed for security reasons. There is a large 17th century communion table, the Royal Arms of Charles II, two chandeliers of 1776, and various monuments and brasses that span the late 16th century through to the 19th century.

The churchyard is a rectangular area on today's map. Bleaze's map of 1629 implies that earlier there was an oval churchyard, but this could be little more than a stylistic device employed by the cartographer for mid-18th century maps show little that supports a different layout.

The 'Old Church' (4438) lay at the junction of Mill Lane with Salop Road. Traditionally associated with Llywelyn's church, the building that was still standing as a ruin in the 18th century was erected as late as 1587, and then badly damaged by fire in 1659. However, Capel Sainte Lleu'n standing south of the present church and Salop Road was referred to in a will of 1545 seemingly confirming that the church of 1587 was a rebuilding. Part of its associated graveyard with seventeen burials was identified during rescue excavations in 1986-7, their radiocarbon dates centering on the 13th-14th centuries. Further work in 1997 revealed the possible position of Capel Llewelyn in a garden at the rear of 37 Salop Road. Mill Lane probably followed the western edge of the graveyard.

Domen Gastell (120; SAM Mont019) is a well-preserved motte, but the bailey has suffered from re-use as a bowling green. It may have been constructed as early as 1111, although the earliest possible documentary reference to it dates from 1196. There has been some suggestion that a settlement developed around the castle, but no firm evidence has yet been found to substantiate what is little more than a hypothesis based on a reference to houses surrounding a castle at Welshpool being levelled for defensive purposes.

The layout of the town is essentially linear with the main axis, Broad Street lying on the southern edge of the Lledan Valley. By 1629, both the town hall and the market house as well as the market cross were located in the centre of this thoroughfare. Several lanes run off Broad Street to north and south with a road intersection (now Berriew Street and Church

Street) at its eastern end. Narrow burgage plots remain clearly defined on Broad Street and Berriew Street, and it is evident from the estate map of 1629 that at that time (and by implication in previous centuries) Broad Street was the main focus. A feature of this urban pattern is the numerous narrow alleys, many of them named, which ran off the main street.

A considerable number of the buildings in the centre of the town have been listed. There is nothing to be gained from cataloguing all of these, but it is worth drawing attention to the earlier buildings from before 1700. Nos 5 and 6 Mount Street (30699 & 30700) are thought to be 16th century timber-framed cottages, and 13 High Street (30663) and the rear wing of 12-13 Broad Street (30627) is believed to be 16th century. The Mermaid (30684), 11 High Street (30670), 19 High Street (30677) and no.38 Mount Street (30707) are attributed to the late 16th century. From around 1600 are 8 and 10 High Street (30667 & 42448), the Talbot Inn (30674). Of early 17th century origin are Oldford Cottage (30711), no.1 Mount Street (30697) and 1 High Street (30661). Amongst the 17th century houses are 34-35 Mount Street (42458), 24-26 High Street (42453), 36 High Street (30689), 5 Hall Street (30654). 5-6 High Street (30664) has been attributed to the late 17th century. It is no coincidence that almost all of these properties lie away from the commercial centre of Welshpool around the crossroads where the demands for refurbishment are always likely to have been greater. In this respect the uncovering from beneath its later veneer of a timber-framed first-floor hall-house lying back from Broad Street in Hopkin's Passage is instructive.

The cock-pit (30708) was probably built in the mid 18th century, possibly as part of the Castle Inn, and remained in use until cock-fighting was made illegal in 1849. It is a rare building type and the only example in Wales to survive on its original site

The agricultural dimension to medieval and early post-medieval Welshpool is largely lost. Open fields once covered a substantial area of lower ground between the town and the Severn and are depicted as such on an estate map of 1663 but these have been almost completely erased by the modern industrial development. Depicted on the map was 'the Ould Field' near the later farm of Henfaes which is probably the earliest area of cultivation. Nevertheless, ridge and furrow cultivation has been recognised in various places, both in Powis Park and in the hills surrounding Welshpool and it may be that some of this is of medieval origin, though perhaps more likely to be later.

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