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**THE
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ANTIQUARIAN ASSOCIATION*

MILLENNIUM ISSUE



Edited by: DAVID H. WILLIAMS

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The cover illustration, drawn by Mr. J.M. Lewis, M.A., F.S.A., is of the Cwmyoy Crucifix.

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THE MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARY

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2000.

EDITORIAL

Being the new Millennium (at least by popular reckoning) this issue of the *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* is larger than of late, and the Association is grateful for grants in aid of publication made by the Welsh Act Funds of Monmouthshire County Council, and of Blaenau Gwent and Newport County Boroughs. We are also indebted for kind grants in respect of particular articles, acknowledged at the conclusion of the contributions concerned. In this journal, I have endeavoured to publish a map shewing the Church in Medieval Gwent. As one day, I would hope to produce this as a wall-map, I would be grateful if readers would draw my attention to inevitable errors and omissions.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the opening, by the Association, of the Caerleon Museum, now the Roman Legionary Museum. Several events are being organised to celebrate this anniversary, and the papers given at a day conference in Caerleon in the autumn will form the bulk of next year's issue of the *Antiquary*.

Next year (2001) is the 40th anniversary of the first issue of this revived journal under the editorship of Mr. Cefni Barnett. Another cause for celebration, and for remembrance with gratitude of those who have gone before us. Perhaps (if funds allow) it would be a suitable point in our history to have an *Index* published for Vols. I-XVI (1961-2000).

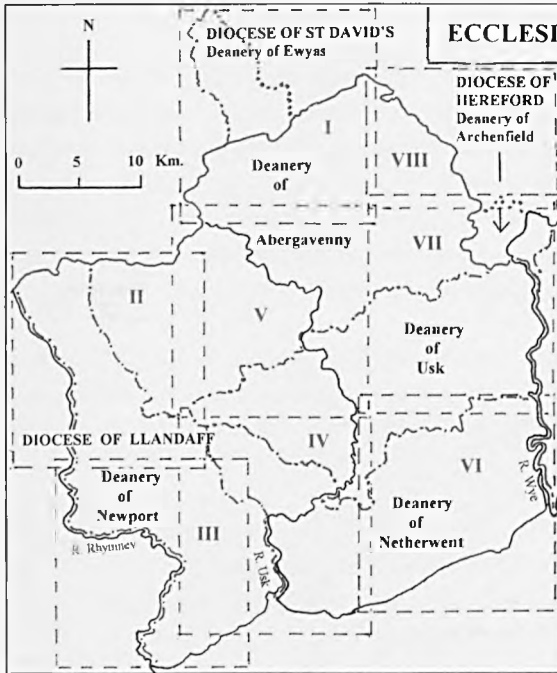
I have myself had the privilege of editing the journal since 1990, and feel that it is now time to hand over the reins. In this we are fortunate that Mrs. Annette Burton, formerly Glamorgan Archivist and one-time Editor of the *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, but a native of Monmouthshire and settled here in retirement, will be succeeding me. She has assisted already, very substantially, in reading the proofs of the several contributions to this number of our journal. I wish her well in this new endeavour. In retiring from the Editorship, I express my appreciation of the support always given to me over the last ten years by both our Chairmen and our Secretary.

I became a 'man from Monmouthshire' – as one of my geography lecturers at Cambridge addressed me many years ago – because about 1881 my great-grandfather moved, on account of his employment, from Briton Ferry (where at the age of 14 he was a 'post-boy' in the Neath Tin Works) first to Crumlin and then to the outskirts of Cwmbran. Later, my grandfather moved to Newport, where both my father and I were born. At Bassaleg School, I grew to love the study of geology, geography and history. Without car or bicycle, but with the help of bus and local train, and much walking, one climbed the Sugar Loaf – for the view, or Twm Barlwm – to see the tumulus. One took an especial delight in the oldest (Silurian) rocks of the county, outcropping as they do in the Usk Inlier. Then there were the country churches – and many a tower to climb! One such visited was Kemeys Inferior, the subject of a major contribution to this present journal. With that background, it has given me great happiness to have been your Editor.

D.H.W.

THE CHURCH IN MEDIEVAL GWENT (MAPS)

By DAVID H. WILLIAMS.



ECCLESIASTICAL MAP OF MEDIEVAL GWENT.

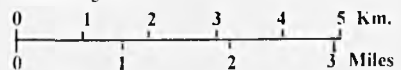
David H. Williams

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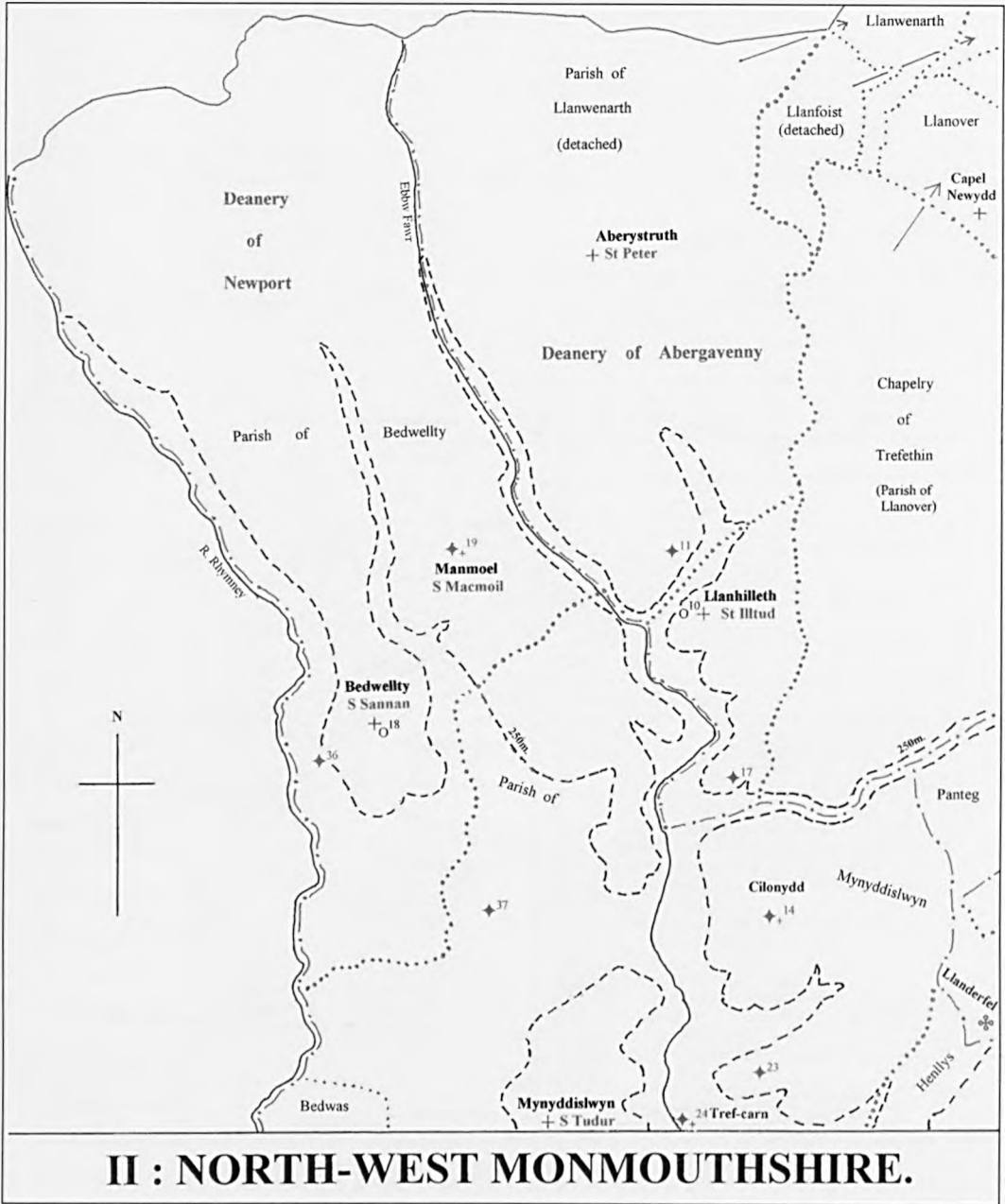
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- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| + Church/Chapel | |
| ✚ Major Celtic Site. | |
| ⊕ Augustinian Canons. | |
| ⊕ Augustinian (cell) | |
| ⊕ Austin Friars. | |
| ⊕ Benedictine Priory | |
| ⊕ Cistercian Abbey | |
| ⊕ Cistercian (cell) | |
| ⊕ Cistercian (grange, <i>See Key</i>) | — Diocesan Boundary |
| ⊕ Early Hermitage. | — Deanery Boundary |
| ⊕ Hospital (<i>See Key</i>). | — Parish/Chapelry Boundary |
| ⊕ Chantry (External) | — 250 m Generalised Contour |
| ⊕ Episcopal Manor Chapel. | ○ Holy Well (<i>See Key</i>). |
| ⊕ Castle Chapel. | ⊕ Wayside Cross (<i>See Key</i>). |

Scale throughout:

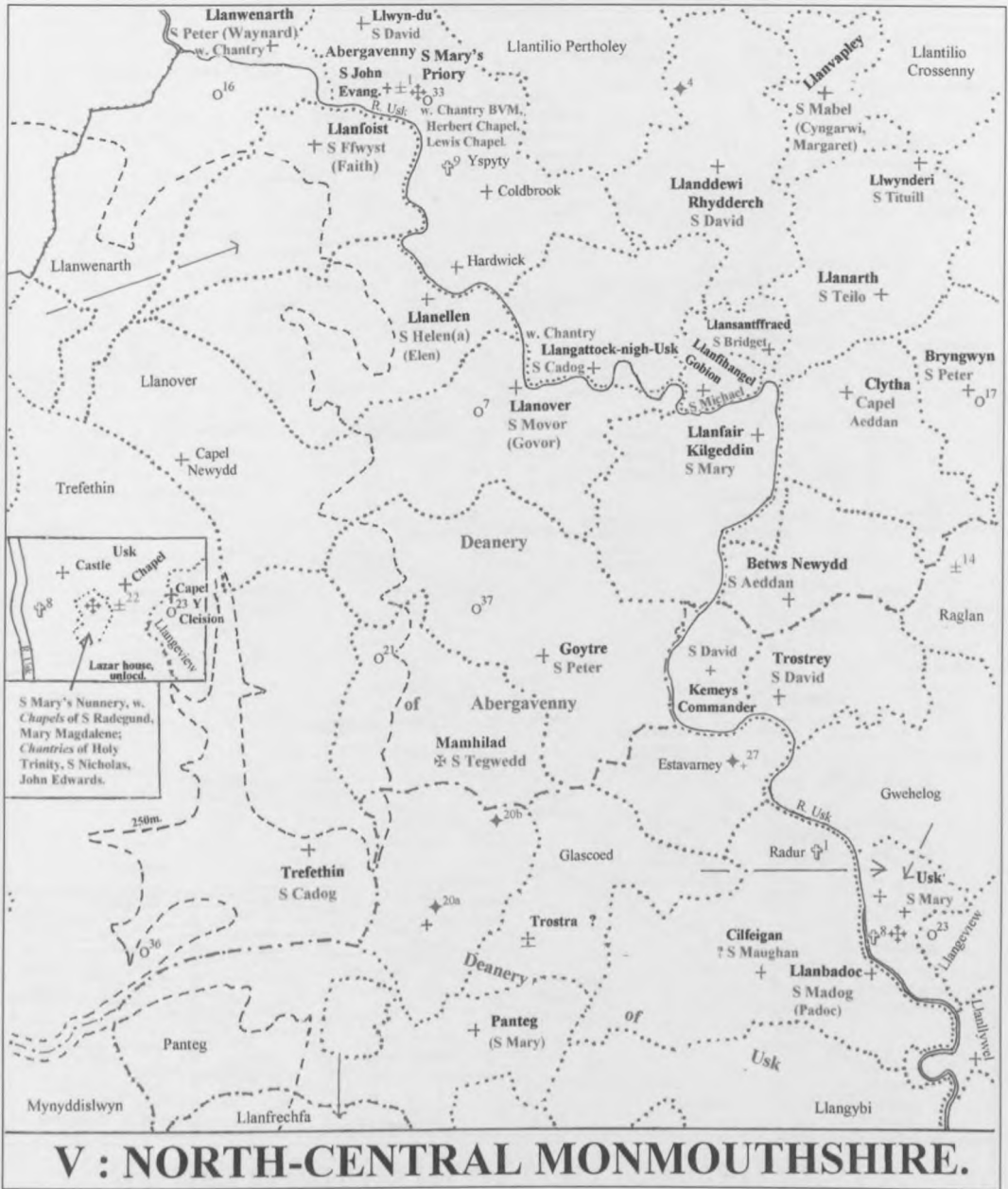


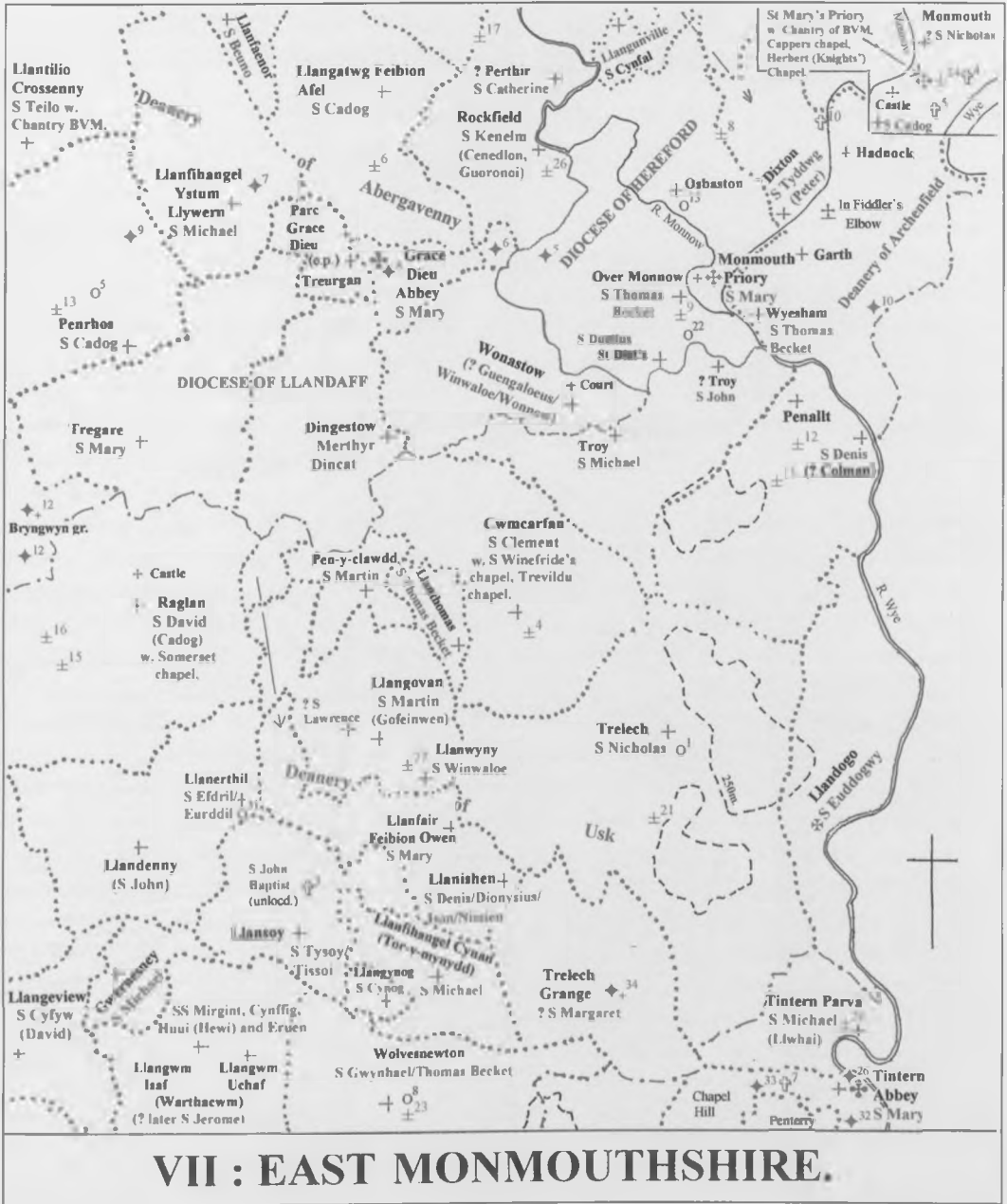




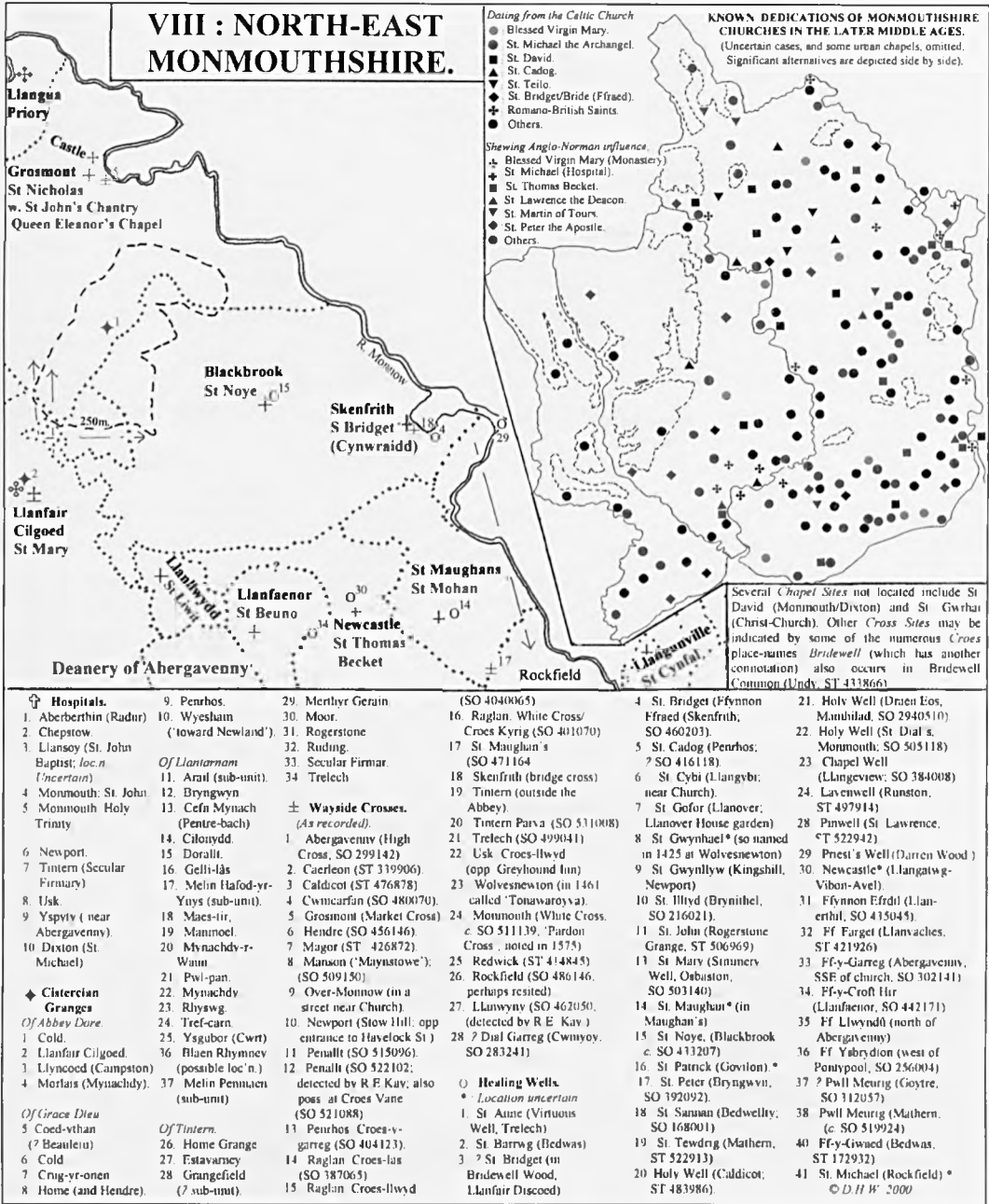


III : SOUTH-WEST MONMOUTHSHIRE.





VII : EAST MONMOUTHSHIRE.



THE MEDIEVAL WOODEN CRUCIFIX FIGURE FROM KEMEYS INFERIOR, AND ITS CHURCH.

By MARK REDKNAP.

With a contribution by Penny Hill.

Introduction.

In about 1850, the remains of a carved wooden figure of Christ were discovered in the church of St Michael (later All Saints), Kemeys Inferior, about 4 km. to the east of Caerleon (Fig.1). Before the Reformation, such figures were standard in the large number of churches which dotted the landscape – for the 13th century, estimated at no fewer than 8,000 in England and about 950 parishes in Wales (Morris 1989, 147). The Kemeys Christ is the most complete example of only a handful of fragments to survive in England and Wales, inviting a detailed comparative study of the wooden figures from Mochdre, Montgomeryshire.

According to the original accounts, the fragments from Kemeys Inferior were found in 'the blocked up rood-staircase in the church...together with skulls and bones' during repairs and alterations to the church (Figs. 7, 12). The legs had 'long since decayed, but the head and body perfect and well-carved' (MCAA 1894, 6; Bloxam 1886, 282-91). After its discovery, it remained in the possession of the Revd W.C. Risley of Deddington, and was first exhibited at the Annual Meeting of the Cambrian Archaeological Association at Newport in 1885, when antiquary and civil engineer, Stephen W. Williams, spoke of the character of craftsmanship of the period. The report alludes to it as a 'crucifix found with two hundred skulls at the church of Kemeys Inferior' (Anon. 1885, 360). The figure was presented by the Revd Risley's son, C. Holford Risley, to the Museum of Antiquities, Caerleon, in about 1886 (Anon. 1885-6, 86). In the *Catalogue of Exhibits in Caerleon Museum* published by the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Society, its find-spot was inaccurately described as 'found under the floor' of the church (1909, 9). According to the parish registers, it was noted for 1921 that: 'The rood figure of Christ now in the Museum at Caerleon was taken from this church. It was discovered during the restoration of the Church, in the passage to the Rood-loft about the year 1850' (NLW, CPD 484). In 1930, it was transferred by the Monmouthshire and Caerleon Antiquarian Association to the National Museum of Wales, where it has been on permanent display (NMW 32.212; Fig.1; Plate 1).¹

Work reported in the churchwarden's accounts may relate to the discovery of the figure. There were substantial repairs in 1844 and 1855. Between 4 December 1850 and 21 January 1851, 'a new 14 inch Hot Air Stove bought from Hawkins and Webb, ironmongers of Newport', was installed in the church, as well as iron piping for the flue. For 22 September, there is record of part payment for new seating and repair of the church.

-
1. The Caerleon Museum and its collections were handed over to the National Museum of Wales. The Museum was renamed the Legionary Museum, Caerleon, and items other than those relating to the Roman fortress were removed.
 2. The rector during this period was Francis Burford Leonard, M.A. (1846-86; NLW, Welsh Church Comm. M 30, 107).



Plate 1: the Kemeys Inferior crucifix figure. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).



*Plate 2: the figure of Christ from Mochdre, Montgomeryshire.
(Copyright: National Museum of Wales).*



Plate 3: the head of the Kemeys Inferior crucifix. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).



Plate 4: the head of the Kemeys Inferior crucifix, under ultra-violet light. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).



Plate 5: Detail of pigment surviving on the loin-cloth (right hand side). (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).



Plate 6: Detail of pigment surviving on the loin-cloth (right hand side), under ultra-violet light. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).



Plate 7: Kemeys Inferior Church in the 1950s. (By kind permission of C. Barber, F.R.G.S.).

The reference in several accounts to skulls and bones being found with the figure, presumably in the blocked-up rood staircase, is of interest. It seems likely, however, that the total of 200 skulls reported in 1885 may be inflated, and is reminiscent of charnel deposits. By way of comparison, human thigh bones were discovered walled up in pillar cavities in St Cewydd's church, Steynton, Pembrokeshire, during restoration work in 1882 (RCAHMW 1925, 390).³ If bones were found associated with the Kemeys Christ, they may have been translated from elsewhere in or around the church as a result of earlier church alterations or grave digging.

The Figure (Plates , 3-6; Figs. 2-5).

The remains of the figure of Christ comprise a torso and head (in one piece; height 712mm.), both arms and the right foot (length 186mm.). The left arm (which is not original) is complete except for fingers which have broken off, and the thumb (length to shoulder 317mm.); the right arm is missing the finger ends on the hand, which have broken off (length to shoulder 315mm.). The tenon which survives on the upper part of the right arm is incomplete (length 13mm.); the end is still lodged within the mortise in the torso. The tenon on the left arm is 35mm. long. The remainder of both legs are missing. The wood for body, foot and arms has been identified as oak (*Quercus sp.*; Tony Tipper, pers. comm.). No evidence has been found for a plugged circular hole in the top of the head of the type which indicates that the figure was mounted on pegs during manufacture, to assist the carving process (Williamson 1988, 15). The carving was sealed with gesso, which formed a base for paint.

The head has long hair, and is encircled with a torse to represent the crown of thorns (Figs 2, 3; Plate 3). The face, which is thin and drawn, is only slightly inclined towards the right shoulder. The beard retains traces of waves or curls on the right side of the face, and the loin-cloth is wide, falling into deep folds on left and right sides. A mass of the hair and beard on the left side of the face has decayed, giving the face today an exaggerated elongated appearance. There is a spear wound carved below the right pectoral, and the ribs are given some emphasis in a slightly stylised manner.

The loin-cloth, which falls to just above the knee, is modelled with deep U-shaped folds in front, gathered and tucked under a waistband, to fall vertically with pleated folds on both sides. The right side is also modelled with large V-shaped folds; the left side shows no folds – either taut cloth or bare leg. The position of the right knee and upper shin suggests that its foot was originally fastened in front of the left leg, rather than by its side, and this is supported by the projected line of the left thigh. The underside of the surviving right foot is carefully modelled, rather than flat (Fig. 5).

3. Contrary to opinion in the 1890s, there is no evidence that they were those of Viking warriors.

The figure was originally fastened to the cross by five treenails, one through each hand, one through the feet and one through the top of each shoulder. Only the holes through the shoulders survive, giving the false impression that the arms may once have been inclined more vertically. The drilled holes through the foot and shoulders have a diameter of 15mm., while those through the hands have a diameter of only 0.9mm. This suggests that the arms were not load-bearing, and that



Fig. 1: the Kemeys Inferior Christ, as mounted prior to re-examination. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).

most of the weight of the figure was supported by the treenails which passed through the shoulders and feet.

The back is hollowed to a maximum depth of 65mm. (Fig. 3). This reduced any tendency of the carving to split and fracture, and also reduced its weight. When complete, the figure would have measured about 940mm. in height.

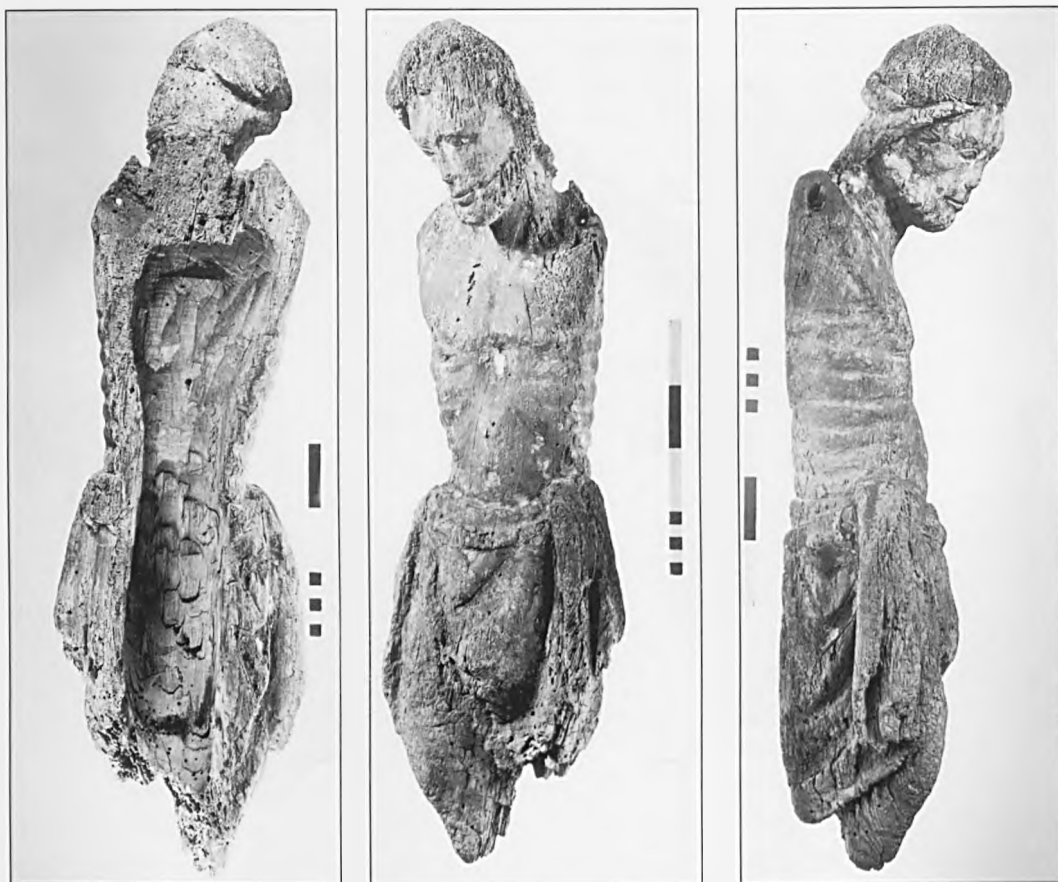
In 1989, the figure underwent examination followed by a programme of cleaning and remounting, during which it could be studied in detail. The figure was very dirty, and there was evidence for past damage by common woodworm (*Anobium punctatum*), in particular on the left side of the head and on the left arm. There has also been considerable damage by death-watch beetle (*Xestobium rufovillosum*) prior to the figure's discovery, especially in these areas and around the base of the loincloth/leg stubs. At some point prior to its recovery, the lower part of the body was probably subjected to continuous damp conditions, causing erosion and cross-grain cracking. This suggestion is supported by fine silt found at its lower end (J. Henderson, archive report), and may explain the loss of much of the legs.



*Fig. 2: the Kemeys Inferior Christ, showing adjusted relative positions of foot and body.
(Copyright: National Museum of Wales).*

It has long been thought that the figure has been repainted; the report on its exhibition to the Society of Antiquaries (London) in 1886 mentions that it ‘has been repeatedly whitewashed, the last coat being deeply tinged with madder pink’ (Anon. 1885-6, 86). Recent visual examination of the surviving paint on the figure has revealed evidence for polychromy and that the figure, like other examples of medieval sculpture, has been subject to over-painting. The original pigment surface lies on a layer of gesso, except on the arms, where pigment has in places been applied directly over the wood.

The original painted surface survives only over a small area of the figure, and is principally reddish pink, representing flesh tones,⁴ with traces of black surviving on the hair-line and beard.

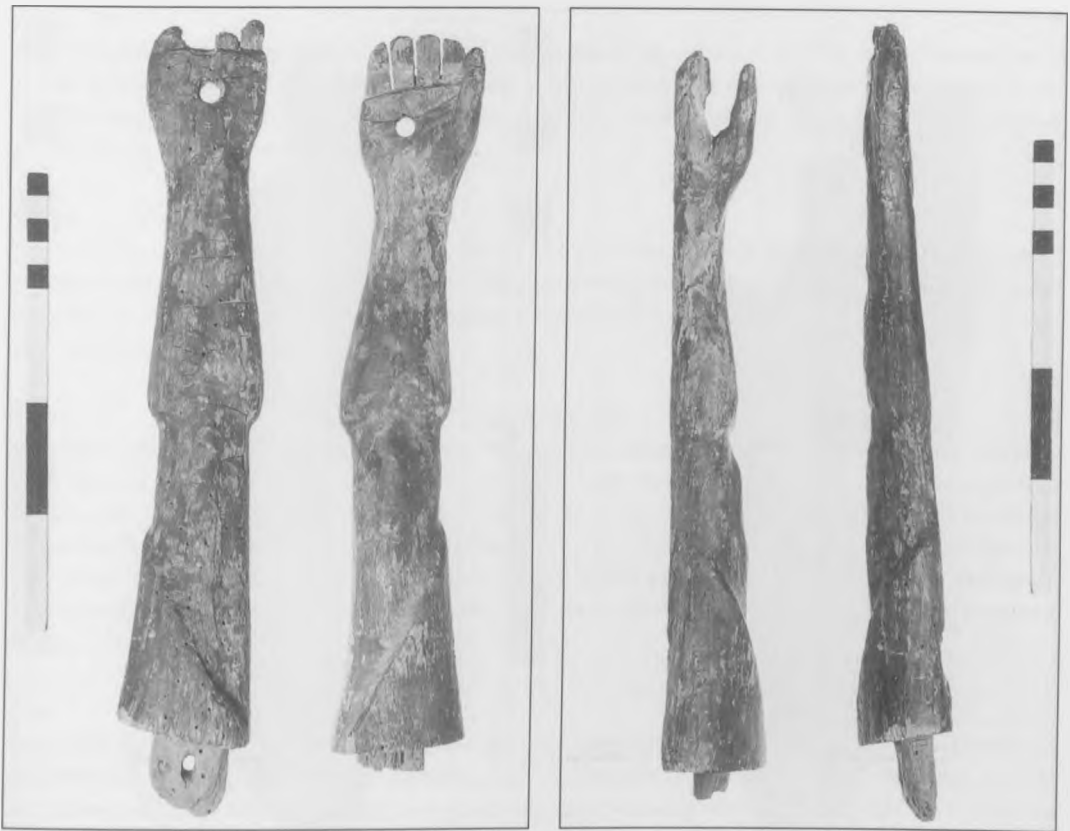


*Fig. 3: the Kemeys Inferior Christ: head, body and loin-cloth (back, front, right-hand side).
(Copyright: National Museum of Wales).*

Some features were picked out in a darker shade, evident on the left eyebrow and possibly the right eye. The loin-cloth retains evidence for a bright red pigment and, in places, gilding (Plates 5, 6). White pigment appears to have been applied over the red pigment on the face. Little pigment remains on the arms compared to the rest of the torso; on the right arm there is a second layer of pigment, which may be contemporary with the replacement of the left arm (see below).

During the cleaning of the figure, it became clear that a detailed analytical investigation of the remaining pigments together with those on the two wooden figures from Mochdre, Montgomeryshire would resolve a number of uncertainties regarding the original appearance of this sculpture from Wales. In 1999 it was possible to start work on the Kemeys figure, focusing in particular on the compositional analysis of pigments and gesso, evidence for primary and subsequent colour schemes, differences between Kemeys torso and later arms.

4. Possibly red lead/Venetian red.



*Fig. 4: the arms of the Kemeys Inferior Christ (outer = left arm; inner = right arm).
(Copyright: National Museum of Wales).*

Examination of the pigments and gesso.

By Penny Hill.

Visually it appears that very little of the decorated surface of the figure has survived, but on closer examination fragments of paint can be found, especially within the carved crevices of the sculpture. The grounds and paint layers are fragile and have a rather tenuous hold on the desiccated wood, which makes examination and sampling difficult. The following findings are based on observation alone. Further analysis will be undertaken, in conjunction with a comparative study of the figures from Mochdre, in order to identify individual pigments.

Several techniques were employed to identify the extent of preservation and pinpoint the areas of interest for sampling. With the aid of Fumio Yokoshima, research student in the Department of Art, NMGW, the figure was first X-rayed and then examined under ultra violet (UV) and infra red (IR) light. Extensive microscopic examination then followed in order to try and develop a paint layer sequence. Very small samples were taken and their cross-sections examined under visible and UV light.

From the visual examination, a number of observations can be made. There appear to be at least three distinct layers or colour sequences (numbered simply as 1, 2 and 3, with No.1 being the



Fig. 5: the right foot of the Kemeys Inferior Christ, showing fracture at ankle and traces of gesso/pigment. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).

earliest). The beginning of a new sequence is marked by the presence of a ground; one particular material containing quite large fragments of charcoal was distinctive and formed a good starting point. The paint layers associated with the grounds were recorded and gradually a pattern of sequences began to emerge. For examination purposes the figure was split into sections, and a sequence of ground and paint layers established for each section. On completion of the examination, the individual sequences were linked to establish the colour scheme for the whole body.

Grounds.

Observed under UV light the cross-sections of the middle sequence (No. 2) revealed that the white ground was composed of two layers. This may indicate the use of two types of gesso, a combination employed by Italian panel painters. The coarser and thicker *gesso grosso* served as an undercoat for the finely crystalline *gesso sottile* which provided the smooth surface for painting. This two layered ground suggests the use of gypsum rather than calcite. In sequence No. 2, a coarse grey ground containing fragments of charcoal lies below the gesso. Its purpose was to reduce undercuts and smooth out deep grooves.

Loin-cloth.

Five different types of red have been observed on the loin-cloth (Plates 5, 6). The bright orange red of sequence two is contemporary with a blue pigment which suggests that two colours were employed at one time. In the second, and possibly the first sequence, there is evidence of gilding. In cross-section a pigmented ground always accompanies the gold.

Chest.

The skin tone in the second sequence is composed of two pigments, which in cross-section appear as a small amount of red evenly dispersed within a white. This layer was placed directly on top of the two-part gesso described above. The skin tone in the third sequence is created from two distinct paint layers; white or pale pink overlying a darker pink.

Arms.

Very little pigment remains on the arms, and only the final paint layer sequence can be observed. On both arms black pigment can be seen in and around the nail holes through the palm of the hands, along with a granular orange paint, presumably representing blood. From the pigments alone it is not possible to confirm that the left arm is a later replacement; our only guide at this point is the style and the obvious difference in quality of the carving (see below). Owing to the continuous smooth surface of the wood on the hand of the left arm, it appears unlikely that it ever had a carved thumb. There are no dowel holes for the attachment of a separate thumb.

Foot.

Paint sequences Nos. 2 and 3 are present on the one remaining foot. An interesting red, not yet observed on any other part of the figure, was found overlying sequence No. 2. Dark, blood red under visible light, but pale and fluorescent under UV, the pigment was widely dispersed within a medium, which may have given the paint a more glossy appearance.

Head.

On the face, like the arms, there is very little evidence of earlier paint layers. In the final sequence carbon black has been used for the beard, hair and the outline of the eyes. The cross-sections indicate that the face was over-painted or retouched in this same colour scheme at least one more time (Sequence No. 3). There is evidence of gilding on the hair. It is unknown to which sequence this belongs, but in cross-section a pigmented ground is present similar to that found on the loin-cloth. The crown of thorns was, at one point, green. Which sequence this occurred in is unknown, but the presence of a white ground over the top suggests one of the earlier ones.

Summary.

In the final sequence the colours seem to be far more subdued, lacking the gold, blues and bright reds of the earlier layers. Sequences 2 and 3 are well represented on the foot, loin-cloth, waist and chest area. The arms were disappointing in their lack of paint and only appear to exhibit the last sequence of paint; more samples are required to ascertain whether links with earlier sequences can be established. Isolated findings on the crown, lips and chest wound, are difficult to fit into the sequence from observation alone. Minor alterations and repairs to the figure also cause problems, as these can disrupt the sequences and cause confusion. Evidence from the cross-sections indicate that this may have occurred at least once.

Original appearance.

It is clear that, in contrast to its present condition, the Kemeys Christ originally had a vivid and rich polychrome appearance, popular throughout the medieval period. Great care was taken in decorating the figure, so that at one stage it would have glowed and gleamed with gold leaf. After carving, the oak was sized, gaps and imperfections being filled with gesso (no evidence has been found for a filler under the gesso). As in the case of Scandinavian crucifixes, the figure appears to have undergone modifications intended either as refurbishments or changes to bring it up to date. At least three layers of painting have been detected, though the dating of each is problematic. The secondary colour scheme appears to have included gilding on the hair,⁵ gold, red and blue on the loin-cloth (Plates 5, 6), dark brown/black beard, eyebrows and eye lashes (Plate 3), green crown of thorns, and flesh tones in pale pink, with red emphasising the wounds. Stunning polychrome work of this type would have been customary for such important sculpture, and is also found on religious works of art manufactured in other materials, such as ivory (Gaborit-Chopin 1997). Gilding has also been noted on the hair and loin-cloth of the wooden figure of Christ from Cartmel Fell, Lancashire (Behrens 1982, 131).

At least three sequences to the colour scheme can be suggested at this stage of the analysis, with the following pigments:

Primary scheme (No.1): red loin-cloth and wound; green crown.

Secondary scheme (No.2): gilding on loin-cloth and hair.

Tertiary scheme (No.3): black hair.

The front of the face and arms appear to lack the earlier face layers, perhaps as a result of damage whilst hidden during the initial stages of the Reformation.

Though shown with a wound in his right side (and usually dead: John 19³⁴), the Kemeys Christ is portrayed with his eyes still open: Christ the Saviour, *ad vivum* rather than dying or dead. Depicted with the crown of thorns, the stance and expression on the figure suggest compassion rather than distress (Lloyd 1954, 113).⁶ The hollowing of the back of the figure to reduce the tendency to split is commonly found on wooden sculpture. A good example from Ireland is the statue of St Molaise from Teach Molaise, Co. Sligo (O'Farrell 1987, 207), thought to be 12th century.

The suggestion that the arms, which have been considered to be of different appearance and workmanship to the rest of the figure, are later additions is only partly confirmed by the comparison of their forms, which differ from each other, and to some degree from that of the torso. The right arm is finely carved, with fingernail detail on the surviving thumb and well executed musculature

5. This recalls the description by Siôn Cent of 'a painter of images with his brush painting many images and a host of Saints with the colours of the stars', and Dafydd ab Ieuan ap Rhys's description of the Virgin's golden tresses (Williams 1976, 449). From the 15th century Brecon's Golden Rood, *crog Aberhonddu*, provided the popular name for the parish church (RCAHMW 1994, 14).

6. In some figures, Christ is depicted turning his head to Mary the Virgin at the moment of death, on the point of crying out ELOI ELOI LAMA SABACHTHANI (Mark 15³⁴; 'My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?'), a type of crucified Christ more common in later iconography (van Os 1994, 141). Christ's side was pierced with a spear *after* he had died (John 19³⁴), but the wound was represented in the *ad vivum* Christ: for example, the Crucifixion on the Antwerp-Baltimore polyptych (c.1400; van Os 1994, Plate 43c).

in keeping with the style of the torso and foot. In contrast, the left arm appears to be a poor copy, with flat relief, lacking the depth of modelling for musculature (Fig. 4). The hand is crudely shaped, and lacks a thumb. The right arm has the stub of the tenon surviving, while the remainder is in the mortise, secured by a wooden peg inserted from the rear. The left arm tenon is complete, but insect damage has caused the loss of the back of the shoulder and half the mortise. A dark pigment inside the hole through hands and feet probably comes from black paint on the pegs which could have been shaped in the form of nails, that through the foot having a sub-rounded cross-section. Close inspection of the mortise and tenon joints indicates that the arms were re-attached at their original angle. The surviving foot appears to display mechanical fracture at the ankle rather than woodworm and decay (though these certainly played a part in the loss of the legs; Fig. 5). Had the legs been damaged early in the Reformation, it is hard to see why they were not repaired under the postulated Marian restoration (see below).

Function.

The Kemeys Christ is of exceptional importance, in view of the rarity of such figures now in the British Isles. It is clearly the figure of Christ from a wooden crucifix, a type of wooden sculpture once common throughout the land, gracing thousands of churches. Apart from the Romanesque fragments from South Cerney, only two other polychrome wooden crucifix figures from Britain are known, from Mochdre, Montgomeryshire (14th century; Plate 2) and St Anthony's Chapel, Cartmel Fell in Lancashire (late 15th century; Behrens 1982).

The two most common places in a church for such crucifixes were at the altar or placed at the junction of chancel and nave, supported on a rood beam, which with the rood screen often supported a rood loft, or a ledge above the chancel arch (though other positions are known). The early accounts of its discovery drew the conclusion that the Kemeys Christ originated from a Rood, based on the fact that the church once possessed a rood screen and loft, and that the figure had been concealed in the rood loft stair. Could the figure have belonged to an altar-cross? An earlier painted wooden figure of Christ from the church of Fresvik-Leikanger, Sogn, Norway, is about 77cm. tall, and has been described as a small rood figure or altar cross (Stratford 1987, 231-32). The fact that the figure is crowned, '*Christ triumphant*', supports the suggestion that it formed part of an altar cross. In style and posture, with horizontally disposed arms, it is earlier than Kemeys (c.1230-45: Stratford 1987, 231-32). The Kemeys figure is larger, having an estimated original length of about 94cm.: perhaps at the upper limit in terms of size for an altar cross but favouring a setting on or near the junction of nave and chancel. In such a location, it would have presented an eye-catching focus which, enhanced by its cross, would have been in proportion with the modest size of the building. However, the absence of the cross itself and any rood beam mortises⁷ makes certainty about the arrangement for the Kemeys crucifix impossible.

In contrast, the 14th-century figure of Christ from Mochdre, with which it is often compared, was much smaller than the Kemeys figure (original height estimated to be about 58 cm.).⁸ The Mochdre crucifix would therefore have been on the small size for a rood beam (though not impossible,

7. At Cullompton, Devon, the Rood, which retains mortises, was supplemented by a carved Golgotha of skulls and bones.

8. The measurements from the top of the head to the knee are 60 cm. for Kemeys and 39 cm. for Mochdre.

particularly as the size of the cross is unknown). Alternatively, it could have been placed elsewhere within the church (such as the altar). Rood beams, screens and lofts are considered to be separate developments. The beam is earliest; screens are thought to have been introduced into churches from the 14th century (earlier in greater churches); some lofts appear in the 14th century, and rood loft stairs were added from the 15th century (Peters 1996, 69). In Wales alone, traces of at least 300 rood screens have been recorded, most dating from the 15th century (Crossley & Ridgway 1944-59), and all medieval churches would have possessed a rood figure or painting.⁹

The rood or cross with the figure of Christ on it was an important focus of teaching and devotion in the medieval church. The Great Rood, a carved and painted crucifix, would have been flanked by the figures of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St John the Baptist, but on rare occasions the four Evangelists replaced St Mary and John, or they were supplemented by additional figures. For example, in 1244, the bailiffs of Woodstock were ordered to make images of the Crucified Christ, the Virgin Mary and St John the Evangelist, and two angels in the form of cherubim and seraphim in the King's Chapel (Brieger 1942, 93). The figure of Christ on the now lost 15th-century rood loft at Brecon was flanked by the thieves, St John and the Virgin Mary, and the symbols of the five Evangelists (RCAHMW 1994, 14). The famous late 15th century screen at St Fiacre-du-Fouët in Brittany supports the two thieves either side of Christ. Arrangements during the 13th century are illustrated by the Triumphal Cross groups in Halberstadt Cathedral (c.1220) and the church (now Schlosskirche) of the former Augustinian monastery at Wechselburg in Saxony (c.1235). The Halberstadt Christ is shown dead on a cross with trefoil ends, flanked by the Virgin Mary, St John, and two cherubim standing on the fiery wheels of God's throne (Geese 1998, 334-45). The Wechselburg Christ is of the new 'three-nail' form with legs crossed, fixed by a single nail, and open eyes. The figure, which also has a cross with trefoil ends (within which angels support the horizontal arms), is flanked by the Virgin Mary and St John (Geese 1998, 336).

The purpose of the rood was to emphasise the concepts of Christ as Saviour and his all-encompassing supremacy, or Christ in agony. The image of the crucified Christ as the suffering Redeemer of Mankind, would have dominated the church interior, and some roods provided inspiration for religious verse.¹⁰ The rood poems, such as the *awdl* by ab Ieuan ap Llywelyn Fychan (d.1532) to the rood at Rhuddlan (Williams 1976, 478 note 4), those of Gruffudd ap Maredudd ap Dafydd (fl.1352-82) to the rood at Chester and the *cywydd* of Gruffudd Llwyd (fl.1380-1410) to the rood at Welshpool, confirm the powerful influence of these carved representations in Wales (Williams 1976, 110). Some of the more famous roods themselves, rather than the symbolic sacrifice they portrayed, became the most important subjects of worship (as at churches like Llangynydd, Brecon, and Tremeirchion; Williams 1976, 479).

Date.

The figure has, hitherto, been attributed to the 14th century (e.g. Anon 1885-6, 86), but the arguments for this date have never been set out in detail, and the poor survival of such sculpture in England and Wales has limited discussion.

9. Many were destroyed or defaced during the Reformation, Commonwealth, and Victorian restoration work.
10. The image also appeared on stained glass and frescoes such as the Marian cross at Llanelieu, Breconshire, as well as on preaching crosses in churchyards. Fonts at Wrexham (Denbighshire), Bangor Is-coed (Flintshire) and Ceri (Montgomeryshire) bear the Instruments of the Passion (Gray, in prep.a).

The date of the figure relies on stylistic comparison with other sculpture. It possesses a certain naturalism, and lacks the rigidity of earlier Romanesque sculpture. This type of Christ, established in the mid 13th century, became popular during the 14th century, and in general there was a tendency towards elegance and grace from the middle of the century. On stylistic grounds, the Kemeys figure probably dates from the late 13th century (Dr Paul Williamson *in litt.*) Many features, such as the form of the head, the straight vertical stance, the refined modelling of the body, and the drapery style of the knee-length loin-cloth, which rises above the right knee and then falls to the shin compares, as far as one can judge, with crucifix figures of the late 13th century.¹¹ Similar modelling and drapery can be seen on an ivory figure from a large altar crucifix (length 24.3mm.), thought to be English and late 13th century, in the collections of the V&A Museum (Stratford 1987, Nos 310, 328-29). The rarity of such figures in the British Isles makes direct comparison here impossible, and it is necessary to look at those wooden crucifix figures which survive on the Continent, in particular Scandinavia. Stylistic comparisons can be made with the crucifix figures in Skokloster and Ununge, both in Uppland, Sweden (Andersson 1966, figs. 37-38). The Kemeys and Skokloster figures share long and vertically placed torsos, heads which are only slightly bowed, knee-length loin-cloths which rise over right knee, crossed legs, and similar disposition of hands. The modelling of the heads are similar, that from Ununge also having open eyes.¹²

The only comparable wooden figure from Wales, the later Christ from Mochdre, Montgomeryshire (Lloyd 1954, 114; see Plate 2), displays a number of differences, such as the head, hanging down almost touching the chest, the closed eyes and slightly parted lips, a bold and intense, expressive style of carving with deep relief for the rib-cage (unlike the subtle realism of the Kemeys figure) and the stance with raised knees. It probably dates to the mid or third quarter of the 14th century (Thomas 1903, 95-6; Crossley & Ridgway 1946-7, 205).¹³ Significant differences also exist between the Kemeys figure and the wooden figure from Carmel Fell, Lancashire. The head, trunk and legs of the latter survive, but the arms and feet are gone, the latter burnt away (it was claimed) when the figure was used as a poker for the vestry fire (Ferguson 1887, 127). Unlike the Kemeys figure, its arms would have extended horizontally from the shoulders and not obliquely upwards, in earlier style. It was exhibited in 1882 at the Carlisle meeting of the Royal Archaeological Institute (Bloxam 1886, 287). The painted head (and a foot) from a wooden crucifix figure from All Hallows, South Cerney in Gloucestershire, discovered in the church in 1913, has a very stylised appearance typical of Romanesque sculpture (dated c.1130; Zarnecki 1984, Nos. 115, 160).

There is no reason to suggest continental manufacture for the Kemeys Christ, which was probably made in England or Wales. It was often customary to copy local figural sculpture, and in late medieval Wales almost every county had at least one school of woodcarvers engaged in the production of screens and lofts for a district (Williams 1976, 442).

11. For other crucifix figures in Europe, see Schneider Berrenberg 1977 and Brieger 1942; Dr Paul Williamson, *in litt.*

12. Unlike later 14th-century crucifix figures such as that from Lieto church, Finland (now in Turku City Historical Museum, Finland; Racz 1962, Plate 91), and that from St Olaf's church, Tenhola, Finland (Racz 1962, plate 197). A 14th-century rood in the Collegiale St. Martin in Colmar (Mulhouse, France), which has a (presumably late) gilded loin-cloth and lacks crown of thorns, has a different stance.

13. Dr Paul Williamson, *in litt.*

Provenance and Context.

Clues to reconstructing a physical, social, religious and political context for the crucifix, lie in the architecture of the church. Of this building, which is situated in secluded woods on the east bank of the Usk (*Afon Wysg*) about 160m. north-west of Kemeys House between the present A449 road and the river (ST 381 927; Fig. 6), only the wall stubs now remain. Surprisingly, there has been no detailed description of the figure's find-spot, and very little has been published about the 'lost' church. The location of the church on a slope a few yards from a steep escarpment appears startling today, but reflects to some degree changes in the river course and erosion. The site would have been chosen initially for its suitability and immediate requirements, most probably for a timber precursor of the later stone church.

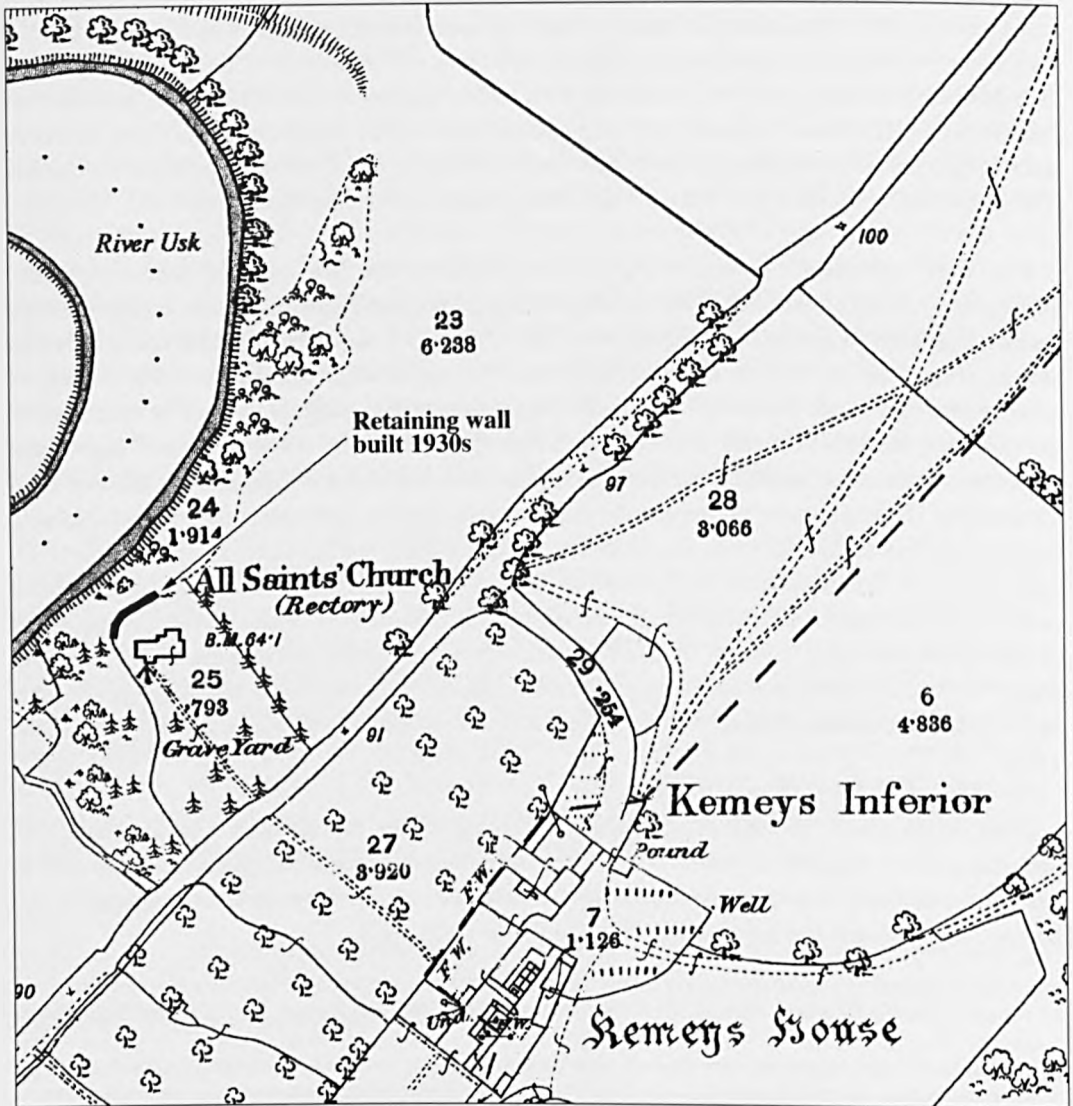


Fig. 6: location of Kemeys Inferior Church.
(Based on the 1882 6" O.S. Map: slightly reduced in scale here).

The existence of a pre-Norman monastery at Kemeys Inferior on the evidence of entries in the Llandaff Charters – *abbas ecclesie sancti micaelis* (Evans 1893, 221) and *Ilan mihacgel* (*ibid*, 261) – has been discussed elsewhere (Davies 1978, 136; Brook 1985-8, 78).¹⁴ According to *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae (auctoritate P. Nicholai IV)*, p. 278, *Clammays* (Kemeys) was given a value of £5-0-0 c.1291.¹⁵ In the 14th century, the advowson belonged to the de Clares, Earls of Gloucester and Hertford and Lords of Usk (Bradney 1993, 182). In 1314, it was ordered to be delivered to Matilda de Clare, wife of Gilbert de Clare (worth yearly 5 marks; *Cal. Close Rolls*, Edw. III, 1313-18, p.137). In 1322, the advowson was conveyed by Hugh le Despenser to Elizabeth, wife of John de Burgh. One Gervase ap Ieuan is noted as parson of Cammeys in the diocese of Llandaff in 1389 (*Cal. Patent Rolls*, Ric. II, 1388-92, p.34; Bradney 1993, 184). The advowson later came into the hands of the Kemeys family. Christopher ap Thomas was parson in 1535, when the living was worth £6l.10s.5d. (*Valor Eccl.*), and in 1544 (Bradney 1993, 184).

In its final form, the church had a chancel with an internal length of 5.92m. and a nave with an internal length of 8.05m., a south porch and a chapel with separate gable roof, entered on the north side of the chancel through a wide flat arch (Fig. 7). A bellcote, which was rebuilt in 1868, stood on the western gable, having one bell dated 1688 (Wright 1938, 70). The chancel and nave were separated by an arch of Sutton stone dressings, with chamfered corners with plain lower stops. The lower courses of the walls were of drystone construction, faced with split rubble sandstone blocks (presumably around a rubble core). Some of the upper courses have modern pointing, while medieval plaster rendering survives in the south-east corner of the nave. All window tracery has been removed, but two lower courses of Sutton stone mouldings for the original south door of the nave remain. This door appears to have been remodelled at a later date. The roof of the nave and porch were covered in heavy stone shingles (the church was retiled in 1868), the chancel and chapel in blue slates (Monroe 1959). The churchwarden's accounts record substantial work on the roof in 1840, which may have been in connection with a rebuilding of the west end of the nave and porch, which both have external batters not evident elsewhere.

Internally, the roof of the chancel had a plaster ribbed barrel vault, which cut off the upper part of the chancel window, suggesting that it was a secondary addition (Craster 1959). The ceiling over the nave is also reported to have had a coffered plaster barrel vault (*ibid.*), a type of roof predominant in Monmouthshire (see Figs 15, 16). According to the parish register, in 1921 'the fragments of the Pre- Reformation Churchyard Cross are stored in the Nave' (NLW, CPD 484). The square base of the cross may now be seen in the churchyard at Tredunnoch, at one end of a row of re-erected tombstones from Kemeys Inferior, to the west of the church tower (Fig. 15). One stone here commemorates burials which were disinterred from Kemeys Inferior and translated to Tredunnoch.

Two watercolour views of the exterior of the church (one in a volume of watercolours entitled *Gwentiana* in the Society of Antiquaries, London, perhaps dated c.1845; the other in the National Library of Wales; Fig. 11) appear to show a number of late medieval features, such as a Perpendicular

14. The earliest mention of Kemeys is in the Book of Llandaff; a charter refers to king Ffermfael in his court at Cemais c.755 and it appears to have been a royal residence (Evans 1893, 198b, 199b; Davies 1978, 108).

15. It is not always clear whether Kemeys Inferior or Kemeys Commander is being referred to.

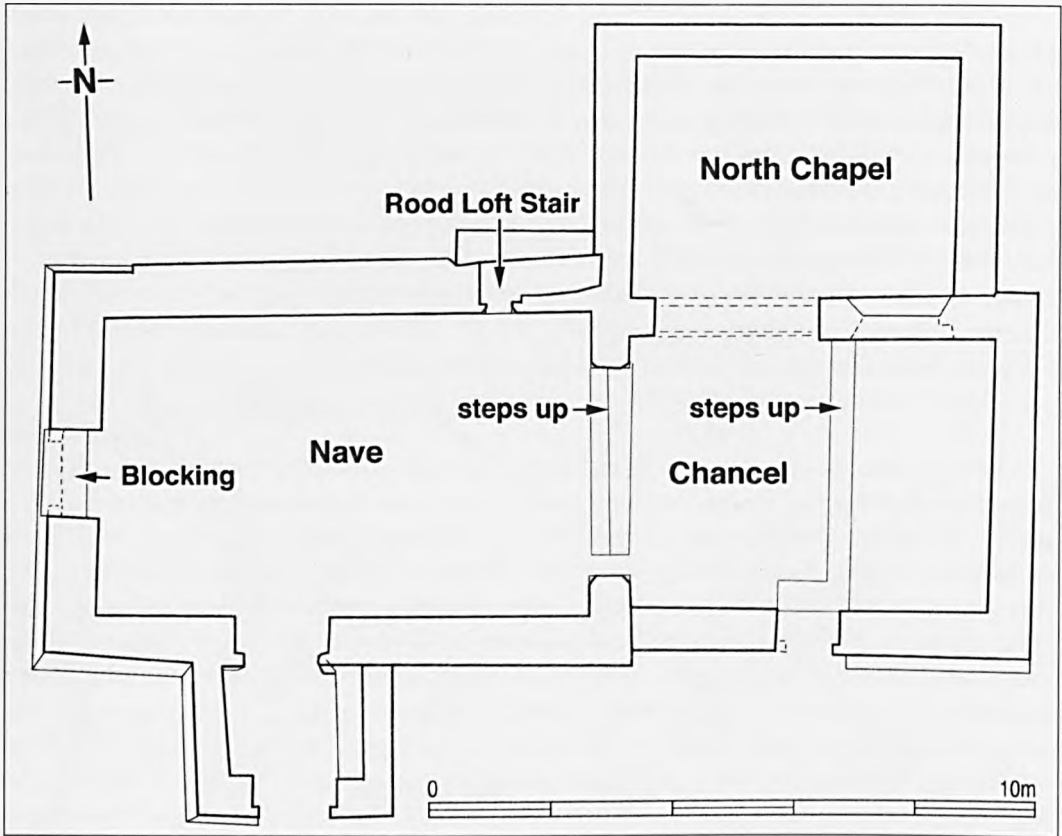


Fig. 7: plan of Kemeys Inferior Church, showing the position of the rood loft stair. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).

window at the east end of the chancel, and a three-light window under moulded hood returned at the ends on the south wall of the nave. There appears to be a similar three-light window with moulded hood in the east wall of the chapel. Photographs taken shortly before the church was demolished, show nave and chancel windows *in situ* (Guy & Smith 1979; Fig. 12, Plate 7). It is not clear from the watercolour whether this was a perpendicular cinquefoil light, though there is a suggestion that it differs from the window in the south wall of the nave. The chapel also had two-light windows with moulded hoods returned at the ends in the north and west walls (Craster 1959 and sketch by Richard Kay; NMR, R.E. Kay Deposit, Series II, Vol. I (1948) 34; see Figs 13, 14). The east chancel window and south nave window were saved in the early 1960s and rebuilt at Kemeys House, being incorporated into a garden wall and house wall respectively (where they remain; Figs 16a, 16b). The south nave window has three lights (each 0.32m. wide), with chamfered sunken spandrels and moulded hood. The returns are decorated with rose motifs, and the window is probably late 15th or early 16th century in date. The chancel window, measuring 2.42 m. in height, is Perpendicular with cusped panels, and 15th century in date.

A round-headed door in the south wall of the chancel was the 'Priest's door', the painting of whose ironwork was amongst recommended items of work in 1895 (NLW, LL/D/207). The 1840s



Fig. 8: the base of the rood loft stair at Kemeys Inferior church, viewed from the nave. (The unlocking of the door in the 1850s revealed the hidden crucifix figure). (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).



Fig. 9: the rood loft stair, Kemeys Inferior church. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).



Fig. 10: the entrance to the late medieval rood loft stair at Tredunnoch church. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales)

late 15th or early 16th century (as well as a priest's door) (Fig. 7). At a much later date, an attempt was made to buttress the south wall of the chancel by the addition of an outer skin (Monroe 1959).

A chapel was added to the north side of the chancel, most probably in the 15th century: the most common form of chantry chapels in parish churches was an aisle built on one side of the chancel or nave, though these are not as common in Wales as in England. Side chapels do occur frequently, for devotion and burial. Craster (1959) described this addition as a chantry chapel; it appears to

watercolours show a plain pointed arch, rather than a moulded hood. There was an additional west doorway below the bell turret at the west end, described of round-headed Norman type (Davis & Lloyd-Fern 1990, 26), though as a pointed arch in the sketch by Richard Kay (NMR, REK Deposit, Series II, Vol. I (1948), 34; Fig. 14).

Examination of the surviving structure is now hampered by tree cover and vegetation, stone capping and in places a certain amount of rebuilding of the wall stubs in the 1960s, which have concealed certain constructional details (Fig. 16). Nevertheless, a number of structural relationships and alterations are hinted at, on the basis of an observation of the visible fabric. The style of the chancel arch base suggests that both it and the chancel walls, which abut the earlier nave in the final plan, may have been modified in the 14th century. The initial form of the chancel may have been square,¹⁶ and following its extension, subsequent modifications included the Perpendicular window(s) in the

16. Only further site investigation will establish whether this is indicated by the steps which rise in front of the altar (0.5m., over foundations?) or the late repairs to the collapsing south-east side of the chancel (weak extension?). At Llanelen on the Gower, a sequence of early ecclesiastical activity has been identified, represented by i. a small timber chapel, ii. a small stone church with rectangular nave (internally 5.7m. x 4.1m.) and square chancel (internally 2.7m. x 2.7m.), thought to have been built before c.1214 (Schlesinger & Walls 1996, 114-15).

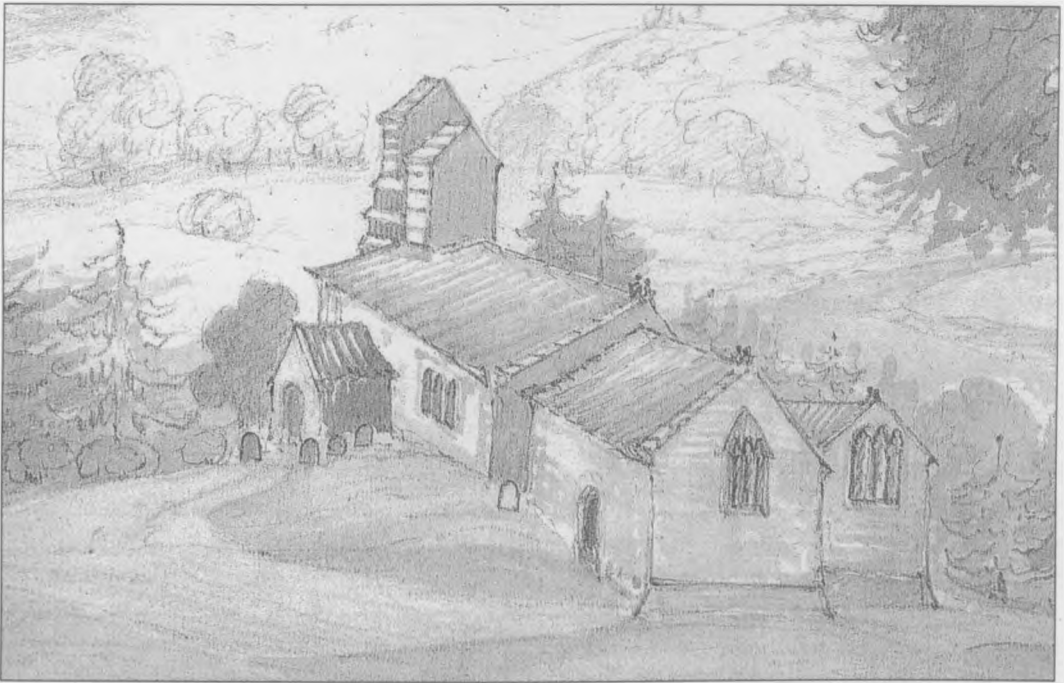
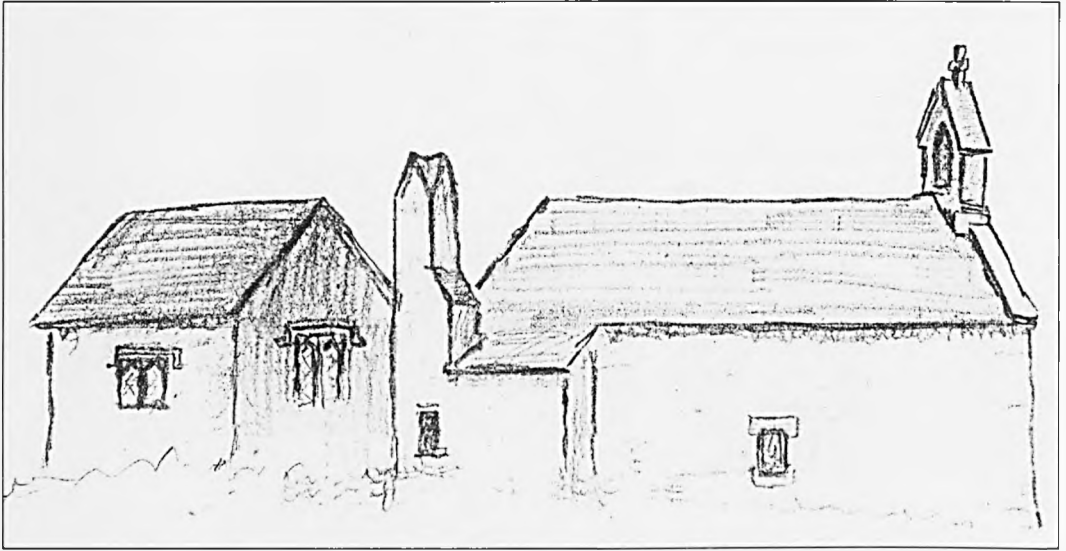


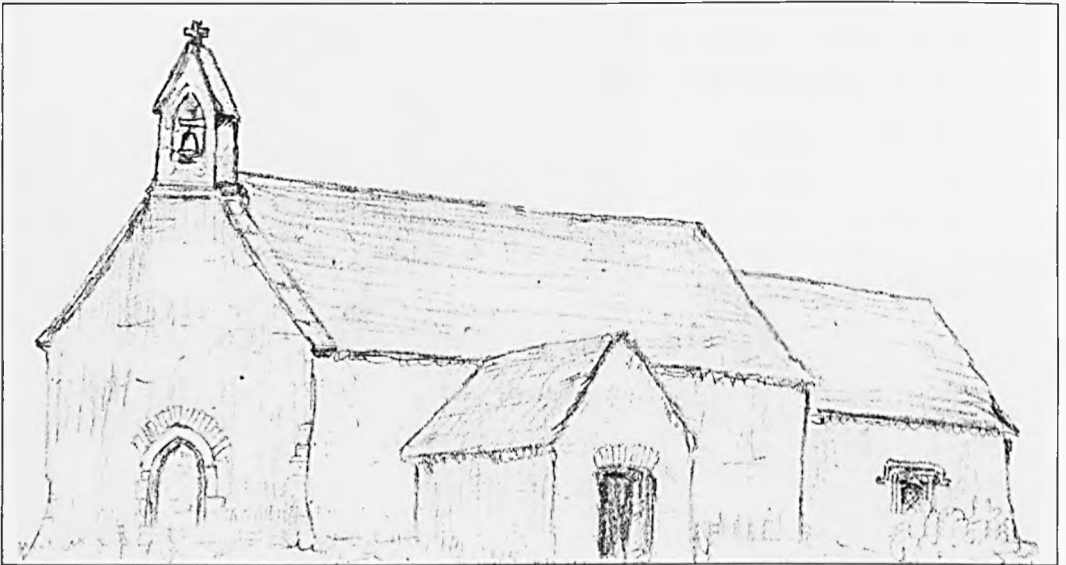
Fig. 11: view of Kemeys Inferior church from a water-colour of probably c. 1845. The river Usk meanders on the right. (Copyright: National Library of Wales).



Fig. 12: photograph of Kemeys Inferior church, taken in the 1950s. (By kind permission of C. Barber, F.R.G.S.)



*Fig. 13: Kemeys Inferior church; north aspect. (Drawn in 1948 by R.E. Kay).
(RCAHMW: R.E. Kay Collection in the National Monuments Record of Wales).*



*Fig. 14: Kemeys Inferior church; south aspect. (Drawn in 1948 by R.E. Kay).
(RCAHMW: R.E. Kay Collection in the National Monuments Record of Wales).*



Fig. 15: the base of the churchyard cross from Kemeys Inferior, now in Tredunnoch churchyard. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).

have been known later as the 'north chapel' (NLW, LL/D/206), and by Bradney as 'an aisle on the north side belonging to the manor' (1993, 182).

Subsequently a rood stair was added, which appears to have cut into the western wall of the chapel. A sketch of the north aspect of the church by Richard Kay shows a small single rectangular window lighting the rood stairway (with another in the north wall of nave), and above it, what looks like either a tall pinnacle or chimney for the boiler fitted in the 19th century (NMR, R.E. Kay Deposit, Series II, vol. I (1948), 34; see Fig.14). The remains of the cap-stone for this feature, which has a round-lobed quatrefoil cut into each gabled face, now lies to the south of the stair. The chapel has a long east-west axis and a *sedilia*

alcove on the south side of the altar, apparently constructed within a blocked opening of uncertain date, perhaps a north window in the chancel.¹⁷ This explains the unusual east-west axis for the chapel gable, which elsewhere can be north-south. Craster was of the opinion that the windows and doorway on the south side of the chancel were of early 16th century date, and are presumably late insertions (*idem*, 1959).

The bottom of the door to the rood stair is about 0.45m. above the nave floor, and has sandstone chamfered mouldings with diagonal tooling and traces of limewash (Figs. 7, 8). Internally, three [?/] 19th-century steps rise from the nave to the chancel, and two steps in the chancel rise up to altar and priest's door (Fig. 7). The nave/chancel steps abut the north pier but stop short of the south pier of the chancel arch, which has two shallow rectangular mortises, perhaps associated with arrangements for a late medieval screen or later fittings (Fig. 18).

The floor levels drop dramatically from east to west: the lower chancel area is -0.583m. below the floor the east end; the floor in the centre of the nave -1.04m. below the east end, and west door floor -1.179m. below. A fragment from the lower portion of a Roman tombstone, now in the Roman Legionary Museum, Caerleon, was found before 1862 lying face downwards, where it had been re-used as a support for the font. It is likely that this stone may have come from the cemetery at Bulmore, 2.5 km. to the south-west (Lee 1845, 39 Pl.XXVI 2; *ibid.* 1862, 18 Pl.VII 3. Cat. no.48; Collingwood & Wright 1965, RIB Cat. No. 367).

According to the churchwarden's accounts, in 1827 the church was whitewashed using lime and brushes, at a cost of 9s. 0d. (NLW, Parochial Records, Diocese of Monmouth, Kemeys Inferior 1,

17. In view of the height, it appears unlikely that this feature is a blocked recess in the north wall of the chancel for an Easter Sepulchre, or for a monument.



Fig. 16a: surviving tracery from the south wall of the nave of Kemeys Inferior Church, now reset in a south-west facing wall of Kemeys House. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).

Churchwarden's Accounts, 1823-1943). In 1837, the accounts record one day's work by a churchwarden and a boy in whitewashing the church (though it is not clear whether this is inside or out). Whitewashing took place inside the church in 1842, and was repeated several times in later years, and traces of this remain inside the nave. The Society of Antiquaries' watercolour dating to the 1840s appears to show a nave and aisle in a lighter tone than the bare stone chancel, suggesting that the whitewashing may have been partial (Fig. 11).¹⁸

Riverbank erosion and subsidence was a continual problem, affecting the church fabric. According to the *Western Mail* (14 March 1932) under the headline: 'Little old church in peril. May topple into river', only five feet separated the church from the riverbank. In May of the same year, heavy rain resulted in subsidence of the river bank, so that it was only 18" from the west wall of the church (*Western Mail*, 9 May 1932), and this slippage is evident in a survey of the same year. According to the Diocesan Decree dated 14 September 1959, the building was 'in a dangerous state and condition and no longer safe for Divine Service'. The church was demolished in 1960-62, for it was considered dangerous: now commemorated by a plaque on the stub of the chancel wall. Much of the stone was used in the construction of the new east end of Newport (St Woolos) Cathedral (1960-62).

18. Often by the rector or owner of the benefice.



Fig. 16b: surviving tracery from the east end of the chancel, reset in the grounds of Kemeys House. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).

were justified so long as they were not worshipped, but such was the strength of the custom of honouring roods, that there were always some who 'wyll hold on styl to put of their cappes unto them orels to lowre and make curtesy to them' (Duffy 1992, 386). In 1536, under Henry VIII, clergy were instructed not to set forth or extol visual imagery for teaching, and in 1538 injunctions were used by the archbishop's commissary as a basis for a campaign to remove images.²⁰ Edward VI succeeded his father in 1547, and encouraged by Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, he banished idols and images from churches. Chantryes were dissolved and their endowments and valuables confiscated. Curates were told to take down all images which were *foci* of pilgrimage and idolatry, and, in December 1547, not only images but also crucifixes were being removed. In 1548,

On the basis of the above observations, a conjectural (and simplified) sequence of development for the surviving church fabric may be proposed:

Phase I. Pre-Norman timber church?

Phase II. 12th/13th century: small church, perhaps two-celled with square chancel.

Phase III. 14th century: enlargement of chancel (Fig.7).

Phase IV. 15th century: addition of chapel on north side of chancel.

Phase V. Late 15th/early 16th century: construction of rood loft stair.

Phase VI. Addition of porch – possibly post-Reformation.

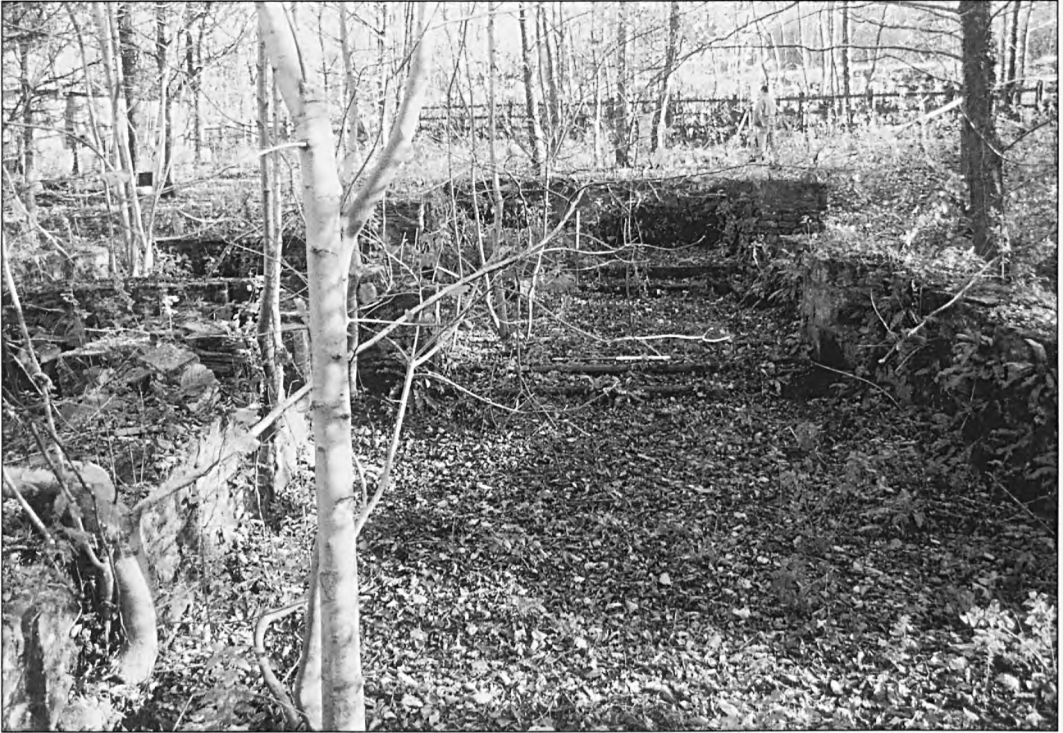
Phase VII. 19th century +: repair work to church. Buttressing of south wall of chancel.

Removal and return of Images.

The background to the loss of rood figures in Britain has been covered elsewhere. One influential work during the Reformation, *Das einigerlei Bild* by Martin Bucer of Strasbourg,¹⁹ accepted that images

19. Bucer accepted Thomas Cranmer's offer of appointment as royal professor at Cambridge University, and with Peter Martyr Vermigli, fought for the adoption of a fully Protestant theology.

20. In Wales, shrines were transferred from monastic ownership and leased to landowners (Gray, in prep.b).



*Fig. 17: general view of the remains of Kemeys Inferior church, looking east. November 1999.
(Copyright: National Museum of Wales).*

the Privy Council ordered the total destruction of all holy images and pictures, and, in 1550, an Act was passed against books and images, demanding the defacing or destruction of any images of stone, timber, alabaster, or earth, graven, carved or painted, or face fines or imprisonment. An illustration of the type of outward public action which would have broken the limbs of crucifix figures is provided by Archbishop Cranmer's brother, who removed the lights and robes adorning a rood in St Andrew's church, Canterbury, and violently broke its arms and legs (Duffy 1992, 435).

Over in the west in 1548, the Great Rood at St Ewen's Church in Bristol was broken down, the workmen being paid 10d. for *'takeinge down the tabernacles with the Images'* and 1s.4d. for *'takeinge down the Rode and the reste of the Images'* (Bettey 1979a, 9). At All Saints, Bristol, following the 1550 'Act against Superstitious Books and Images', the churchwardens paid 4s.4d. for *'Whit lymynge where the Rode lofte stode and for stoping the holis [holes] and for brekyng downe the naltars [altars] and for paving where they stood'* (Bettey 1979a, 11; Bettey 1979b, 64). In Ludlow, images of Jesus, St George, St Margaret, St Katherine, and St Anne were torn down (Bettey 1979b, 63).

The removal of many such images and rood-breaking left a sense of outrage and violation in many communities, and some took it upon themselves to hide images, rather than see them *'cut in pieces'*.



Fig. 18: mortises on the south pier of the chancel arch of Kemeys Inferior. (Copyright: National Museum of Wales).

In Wales, disobedience to these policies were widespread but stopped short of outward resistance. At St David's, the reforming bishop, William Barlow, confiscated miraculous tapers which had reputations of burning without wasting at Haverfordwest (probably the Dominican friary) and Cardigan (the Benedictine priory; Williams 1997, 125), and had forcibly removed the relics which had been set out in the Cathedral (Duffy 1992, 404).²¹ In 1553, Mary succeeded Edward, and Catholic practices were revived until 1558, as reflected in the churchwarden's accounts. At St Mary-on-the-Hill, Chester, money was paid '*for the making of the Rode*', and '*for gilding the Rode*' (Earwaker 1888, 144). Similarly, the churchwarden's account for Holy Trinity, Chester, in the year 1553, records '*for payntinge & gylldynge of the Rowde 4s*' and, in 1559, '*Payd to Rafe sonne Greff. making the Roode & mending the Mary & John xijs.*', '*Payd to Rich. Leche for payntinge the Roode & the Mary & John 14s.*' (Beresford 1951, 114, 123). The rood loft was taken down in 1566 (*ibid.* 124). At St. Mary's, Swansea, there was little overt opposition to the religious

changes demanded by the commissioners in 1559 under the Act of Uniformity settlement following Elizabeth's succession in 1558. The smith had taken down the rood, and lime was brought from Oystermouth to make good the surfaces (Walker 1974, 102). However, the situation in Swansea may have been unusual, as Catholic features appear to have survived in many Welsh churches well into Elizabeth's reign (Williams 1997, 223). For example, as late as 1583, Bishop Middleton of St David's felt in necessary to publish sets of critical injunctions banning images, altars and roodlofts (Williams 1997, 285).

Conclusion.

The figure from Kemeys has been shown to retain evidence for its now largely lost colour scheme, and provides a clear illustration of the practice of preserving (and restoring) images of the crucified Christ. Some suggestions have been given of the possible form of the church during the medieval period, and the most likely location of the crucifix at the junction of nave and chancel, initially on

21. In 1547, he preached at St Paul's Cross in London, exhibiting an image of our Lady (which the clergy of St Paul's had tried to hide) and a jointed Easter Sepulchre figure of Christ, which were broken after the sermon (Aston 1993, 282).

a rood beam or ledge. At least fifteen churches in Monmouthshire have been noted retaining fragments of woodwork connected with later screens and lofts (Crossley & Ridgway 1959, 17). Screens dividing off the chancel survive at Bettws Newydd, Kemeys Commander, Llangwm Uchaf, Redwick, Trostrey, and Usk Priory, while many retain evidence in the form of rood stairs (as at Tredunnoch; Fig. 10). The former presence of a loft at Kemeys Inferior church is indicated today by the stubs of the rood loft stair, and it appears probable that this is a late 15th/early 16th century addition to a previous arrangement. Whether the sequence at Kemeys prior to this included a 14th century screen or loft (with ladder access) is not known. The rood stair would have been blocked up when the loft/screen was removed, and in view of the prominent location of Kemeys Inferior beside the main road connecting Monmouth to Newport and South Wales, this may have been early in Elizabeth I's reign, unless delayed by recusant sympathies.

Some idea of the appearance of the Kemeys screen/loft may be given by that surviving in the church at Bettws Newydd, Monmouthshire, which is of slightly smaller size, though having an architecturally undivided nave and chancel, and a later west tower. Its screen, which is of Welsh type with rectangular tracery heads, has a balustraded and intricately carved loft dating to the 15th century. The church of All Saints, Kemeys Commander, also has the remains of a screen which had a loft and tympanum similar to those at Bettws Newydd. Few of the screens which survive are of English craftsmanship, though the location of Kemeys Inferior places it within easy reach of influence from the Gloucester-Hereford styles. One of the earliest screens in Wales to survive may be that at St. Ellyw's church, Llanellieu near Talgarth (Breconshire), with loft and wooden tympanum dating to the 14th century (Haslam 1979, 333-34). The beam which carried the crucifix is some 4ft. 7in. (1.40m.) above the loft floor (Crossley & Ridgway 1952, 68). In the case of Kemeys Inferior, with its chancel arch, the portion of arch above the screen may have been boarded in, obscuring the arch from the nave, as at Gwernesney. Here, the rood figure(s) may have been placed against such a timber background.²² It has previously been suggested that the loss of the legs of the Kemeys figure may also be the result of similar deliberate mutilation during the reign of Henry VIII or Edward VI, and that the arms were fitted during the revival of Queen Mary to replace the damaged originals (Bloxam 1886).

We do not know when the figure was finally removed from the church, but concealment under Elizabeth or during the Commonwealth remain possibilities. Many roods which managed to survive the 16th-century reforms were later destroyed during the iconoclasm of the 1640s Interregnum. A number of reasons can be suggested for the concealment. If the crucifix had been damaged during an official tearing down, churchwardens or parishioners may have preferred to rescue the image from confiscation by walling up or hiding the parts within the church (as illustrated by the figures from Mochdre, found concealed on top of a wall-plate (Lloyd 1954), to destruction by fire. Many people were reported to have had images concealed and hidden away, walled into niches or concealed under floorboards or in roofs, ready to be put back again if times changed. The state of religious flux is

22. An interesting depiction of the crucifixion on a panel which would have been fixed to a Rood parapet at Bettws Gwerful Goch, near Corwen (Merioneth), is carved with three figures: on one side of the central figure of Christ stands Mary, in a veiled head-dress, with nimbus over head; on the other side of Christ, John, one hand to head. In another panel are carved the Instruments of the Passion, which also appear as the so-called *Arma Christi* as quasi-heraldic objects: pincers, thorns and nails; in the other, hammer, reed with the sponge, and spear (Bond 1908, 101; Dr A.J. Parkinson, in litt.).

well illustrated during Mary's reign, when churches were rapidly re-equipped with rood-screens and figures at great cost. This decision was only to be reversed on Elizabeth's accession, with her subsequent decision to restore her father's religious legislation. A similar process could be observed during the Interregnum, when powerful symbolic tokens of loyalty to the Crown such as Royal Arms, an anathema to republican sensibilities, were ordered to be removed from public places. Some were defaced or destroyed, but many were stored and eventually re-erected (particularly in churches).²³ Most were removed from churches following the succession of Mary, exceptions being those at Westerham (Kent) and Rushbrooke (Suffolk). Pre-Commonwealth ones include Puddletown church, Dorset and one on boards of the heir apparent dated 1611, in Sherbourne Abbey, Dorset.

In the light of the above observations on the figure and the church, it is possible to suggest a reconstructed history for the figure:

- It appears to date from the late 13th century and was set up in the church, perhaps at the junction of chancel and nave (on a ledge or beam).
- As a venerated figure, it was repainted at least twice – one occasion may have been its incorporation into a rood loft in the late 15th or early 16th century (if not earlier).
- At some point one arm was damaged – perhaps when it is taken down in the 1540s, or at an earlier date.
- The damaged arm was replaced with a poor copy of the right arm, and both arms and face were repainted – perhaps during 1550s (if not earlier) when rood lofts were re-furbished.
- It was pulled down once more and the right leg was broken at the ankle – perhaps under Elizabeth I or at some other time. The rood loft was presumably removed (and screen), and the remains of the figure were walled up in the rood stair where it was later found.

Historical sources describe the post-Reformation survival of other wooden figures in Wales. The vicar of Mold (Flintshire) gave orders for the destruction of a curious image found in 1768 when the old church tower was taken down, thought to be: '*A relic of the Catholic superstition of the former inhabitants*' (Bloxam 1886, 289). According to Thomas Dineley, writing in the late 17th century, at 'Llanrwyst' (Llanrwst) church: '*Over the Timber Arch of the Chancell, neer the Rood Loft, lieth hid the ancient figure of the Crucifixion as bigg as the life. This, I suppose, is shewn to none but the curious, and rarely to them*' (Dineley c.1684, 7; Bond 1908, 101). This account reflects the local reverence for such a figure, shown only to the trustworthy. About 1735, it was recorded that: '*Llanrwst... church dd to S. Rwst or Crwst whose festival is ye day after St Andrew. A wooden image of the. St. in ye Rood loft*'. There is also the tradition that the large pre-Reformation wooden figure of Christ in the posture of the Bound Rood, known as the Mostyn Christ and now in Bangor Cathedral, Caernarfonshire, came from Llanrwst church, though an origin on the Rood loft has been dismissed as unlikely by Hemp (Maddoc 1735, MS.Z; cited by Hemp 1943, 232). Attempts have been made to associate the figure with a bound figure of Christ at Rhuddlan priory (Roberts 1965, 236-42; Edwards 1992, 62).²⁴ During the 16th century, some churches sold off church

23. All but a few date from after 1534, when Henry VIII assumed the title of Supreme Head on Earth of the Church of England.

24. Wooden figures to survive include Derfel Gadarn's stag or horse, in the church at Llandderfel, Merionethshire. The large figure of St Derfel (Derfel Gadarn/ the Warrior), which was taken from the church after strong local opposition, was burnt simultaneously with the Observant Franciscan John Forest, who had been confessor to Queen Catherine of Aragon, after a sermon preached by John Latimer. The event was devised to demolish two beliefs in one fire – support for papal authority and trust in the miraculous powers of images (Aston 1993, 276).

treasures, and it is possible that the tradition recorded by Fenton that '*Parishioners of Harding [Hawarden] are called Jews because they were very forward at the beginning of the Reformation, in so much that they sold the golden rood for money*' (Fisher 1917, 352) may have a historical basis.

The Kemeys Christ is a rare survival of a pre-Reformation devotional figure once common in the British Isles. This powerful image of Christ's suffering would have been seen, prayed to, and formed a purposeful part of everyday life. The conclusion of the wider programme of research will, it is hoped, contribute to a better understanding of spirituality and Gothic religious art in medieval Wales.

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RICHARD E. KAY : A TRIBUTE.

Mr Richard Kay, who died in 1995, was a prominent member of the Woolhope Field Club, and a seasoned observer and prodigious recorder, for almost sixty years, of historic sites, working in earlier years in association with the Revd Porter. To your Editor Mr Kay was, on several occasions, of the greatest assistance. Two years before he died, Mr Kay deposited his thirty-nine field note-books (stretching in date from 1936 to 1993 and containing much Welsh and Monmouthshire material) at the Ancient Monuments Record, Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales, Aberystwyth. Two of his church drawings appear in the foregoing article by Dr Mark Redknapp. Sandwiched between Dr. Redknapp's account of the Kemeys Inferior crucifix and that of Mr. Lewis regarding the Cwmyoy cross, this seems a suitable point to pay tribute to Mr Kay by also reproducing here (by permission of the Ancient Monuments Record) his plan locating a hitherto unrecorded cross-base (near Llanwyny) which his eagle eye spotted, as well as his drawing of that cross base and of another, Croes-y-Garreg, in the parish of Penrhos. (*R.E. Kay Notebooks, Series 3, Vol. 4, pp. 108, 388*).

D.H.W.

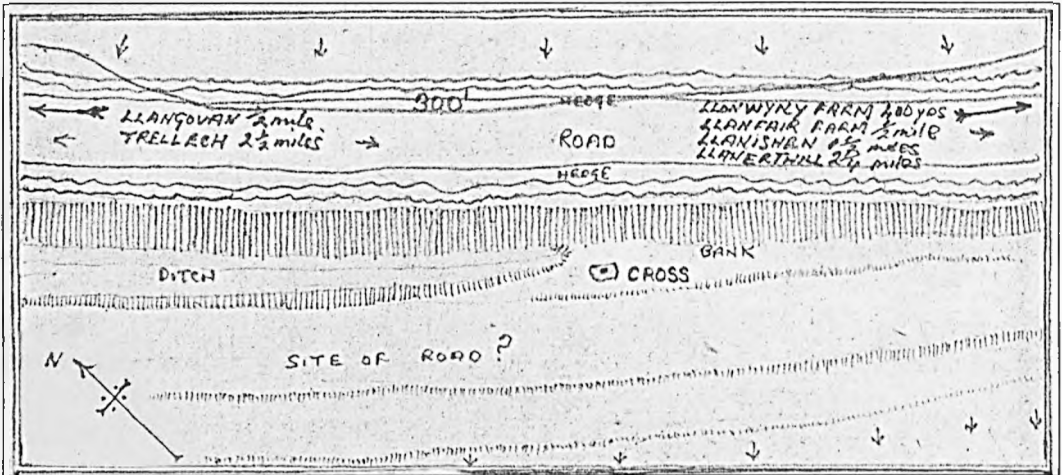


Fig. 1: The site of Llanwyny Cross (c. SO 462050).

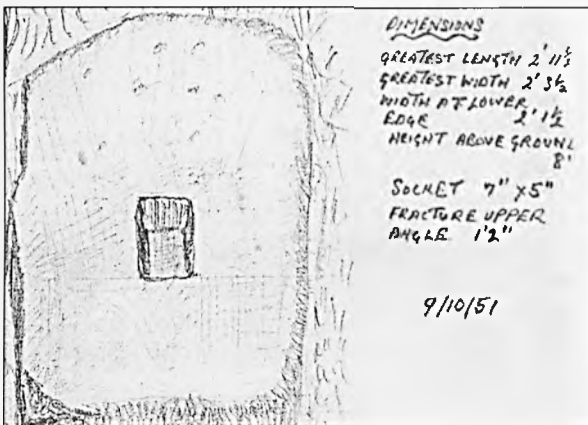


Fig. 2: Llanwyny cross base.

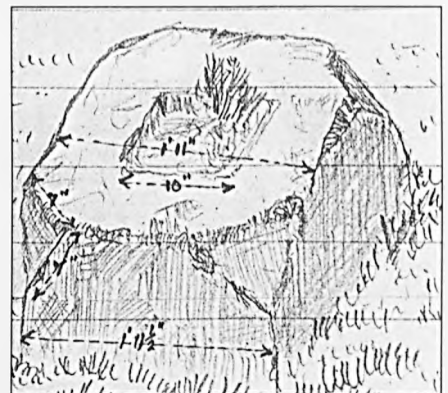


Fig. 3: Croes-y-Garreg cross base. (NGR: SO 404123).

NOTES ON THE ECCLESIASTICAL MAP OF GWENT.

It is no easy task to produce a map shewing the ecclesiastical make-up of medieval Monmouthshire, not least because place-names change misleadingly, as, most notably, in the case of: ‘Llan’ (a sacred enclosure). Sometimes, it has been corrupted from ‘Glan’ (a valley side). A case in point is Llanarthen in the parish of Marshfield. Was this an early church site, as some commentators suggest, or is the mid-19th century tithe map nearer the mark in calling it ‘Glanarthen’? Nonetheless, the exercise is a fruitful one for the Map plots numerous places of worship, which (as E.T. Davies reminded us) fell into abeyance only in early modern times.

The study of parish boundaries is particularly relevant to the physical geographer. Frequently, rivers and streams marked parish limits, but, here and there, and at several places in the Usk valley, where a river has changed course – often in flood-time, the old parish boundary is now away from the river but traces for us the former river bed. This is particularly true, for short stretches, in the parishes of Llangatwg-nigh-Usk, Llangua, Llanybi and Kemeys Inferior.

One problem is that church dedications have, in some instances, changed more than once. The coming of the Normans saw an infusion of new dedications – as to the Holy Trinity, St Lawrence and St Thomas – which, sometimes, were substituted for Celtic saints’ names. Certain medieval dedications have been replaced in modern times by bland attributions, like ‘All Saints’. Nevertheless, the Map tells us something of the antiquity of the Church in Gwent.

The study of medieval deeds and wills can be extremely profitable. NLW, Badminton (Group I) 817 (of 1540) tells of: ‘Land, in the parish of Llansoy, called *Ero irtherwyn okele aforth*, upon which has been built an hospice in honour of St John the Baptist’, - but there is no trace or even memory of it today. Deeds I, 517 (of 1411), 1023 (of 1409) and 1024 (of 1425) refer to the parish of Wolvesnewton by its ancient name of Llanwynnell, and to the church and well of St Gwynhael there.

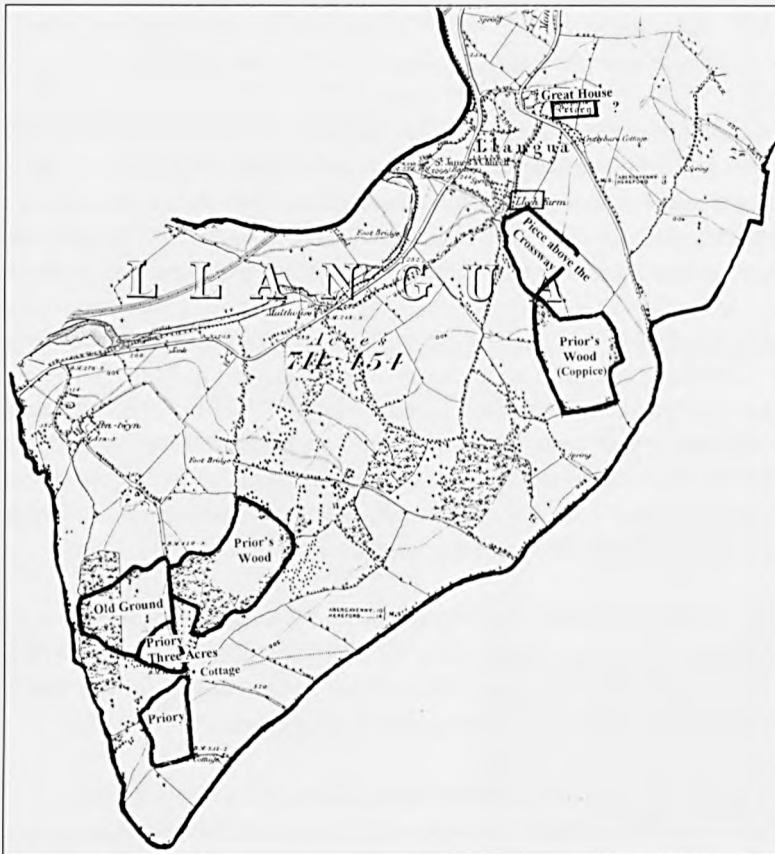
Does the reference [Deed I, 1802 of 1429] which notes St Nicholas Street as: ‘Lying without the Monks’ Gate at Monmouth’, indicate a church there dedicated to him. Perhaps it is not to be equated with the: ‘Old chapel in Osbaston’, mentioned in 1575 (PRO, C 66/1125, m. 17). That deed also tells of: ‘The free chapel in the parish of Christchurch, close to the footbridge of the town of Caerleon’. The recently published volume of *Monmouthshire Wills* (pp. 193-94; see Map Bibliography) cites, in 1597, a church of St James, with a shop adjoining, in Abergavenny. Might this be a scribal error for the more frequently quoted parish church of St. John?

William Coxe, visiting Chepstow in 1798, saw there: ‘The remains of several chapels’, and Ivor Waters attempted to locate some of them. One (St Anne’s) is plainly marked on NLW, Badminton Plans Vol. 1, No. 1 (of 1763). That plan also reminds us that Bridge St. was formerly called St. Ann’s St., and that St Ann’s Street was previously St Ewen Street.

Let us not forget the hermits. 18th century mapping also recorded: ‘Hermitage Land’, in the bend of Fiddler’s Elbow, near Monmouth. And who was: ‘Brother Elembert of Mount Languarde’, cited a little before 1176 in a charter to Usk nunnery?

Mr Geoffrey Mein may well be correct when he correlates 'Languarde' with Llangua Priory, despite the distance of the latter from Usk nunnery (*Gwent Local History* 78 [Spring 1995] 8). But where was Llangua Priory? Fr Frederick Hockey, in his excellent account of the priory (*Jnl. Historical Society of the Church in Wales*, XXVII: 32 [1990] 8-13) did not refer to its site. Sir Joseph Bradney (*History of Monmouthshire* I: Pt. 1 [1904] 91), in a tradition that goes back to William Coxe [1798], noted that no remains existed, and that: 'It stood near the Great House, which appears to have been built out of the materials of the monastic building'. C.J.O. Evans (*Monmouthshire* [1953] 333) goes further, and says that: 'The lane leading to the house is still called Monks' Walk'. Could it, though, be that the precursor of the late 18th century Great House was the residence of a monastic Steward or of the major tenant to whom the charterhouse of Sheen demised the manor, sometime after 1414 when it came into its hands at its own foundation. Benedictine life here must have ceased by the early 15th century, but a group of field names suggest another possible location, in the south of Llangua parish, for the original cell of Black Monks. Alas, aerial photography (kindly arranged for me to see by Mr Medwyn Parry of RCAHMW) shew no visible foundations here, nor is the topography helpful. Incidentally, 'The Piece above the Crossway', may refer back to the 'Cross Llwydd' noted here (in 1861) as an *alias* for a holding called Tyn y Bwlch (*NLW MS 1329, f.26*).

D.H.W.



(Based upon the 1882 O.S. 6" Map, and the parochial tithe map)

THE CWMYOY CRUCIFIX.

By J.M. LEWIS.

There appears to have been no contemporary published account of the discovery of the stone crucifix now standing in the nave of St Martin's parish church, Cwmyoy (SO 298 233). In a paper published in 1967 the late Irene Radcliffe, drawing on local tradition traceable to the finder, recounts that it was dug up in 1861 just outside the churchyard wall by Mr Meredith of Cwmyoy Farm and (the vicar at the time considering that it had been desecrated) placed in the garden near the farmhouse (Radcliffe 1967). That was its location when it was noted and sketched c.1893 (Mitchell 1893). In 1935 it was removed to the church, where for the next thirty-two years it remained leaning against the wall inside the tower. In 1967 it went missing and it was only through the energy, enterprise and good fortune of Miss Radcliffe that it was traced to a London dealer and recovered. It is now set securely in a concrete block on the north side of the nave opposite the door.

The cross, shaped from a single block of local sandstone, is of plain, Latin form (*Fig.1*). It stands to a height of 141cm. above the floor, and measures 45.5cm. across its arms, by 17cm. deep; the shaft widens slightly from 17.5cm. at the top to 19cm. at the base, and the arms are 17cm. wide. When its whole length was available for measurement it was described as being 'about 4ft 6ins' [137cm.], so that the height given above may be regarded as close to the correct one. The front edges are chamfered, the back plain and undecorated.

The front bears an image of Christ carved in low relief, the modelling reaching a maximum depth of 2cm. above the general plane. The arms are outstretched, the feet turned inward, the head erect and with open eyes staring ahead; lightly scored vertical lines on the chin suggest a beard. Above the head are three crosses, juxtaposed and with the two outer arms extending slightly beyond the width of the head. Above the crosses, from the upright of one outer cross to the other, is an arched or domed line, indicating that the crown represented is not a simple circlet but of the hooped or bowed variety.

Although a brave attempt has been made to represent the folds of the loincloth, the stiffness of the figure and the rudimentary character of the face bear the marks of inexperience, so that there can be no doubt that the work is local in character. There has been some damage to the right arm (perhaps done at the time of manufacture), the right side of the face and the top of the crown, but the details of the figure are all reasonably intelligible.

No attempt seems to have been made to represent nails in either hands or feet, and this, together with the posture of the head, the open eyes and the presence of the crown, indicate that this – in spite of the arrangement of the feet, which seem to have been derived from a crucifixion model – is not a crucifixion figure, but a representation of Christ triumphant or 'as King'.

The most unusual feature of the work is the form of the crown. Crowned figures of Christ on the cross are not in themselves unusual from the 12th century onwards: there are carved wooden examples from southern Germany (*cf.* Schiller 1972, Nos. 465, 467) and well-known English examples in metal, including the recently discovered 'Monmouth crucifix' (*cf.* Stratford 1984, Nos.

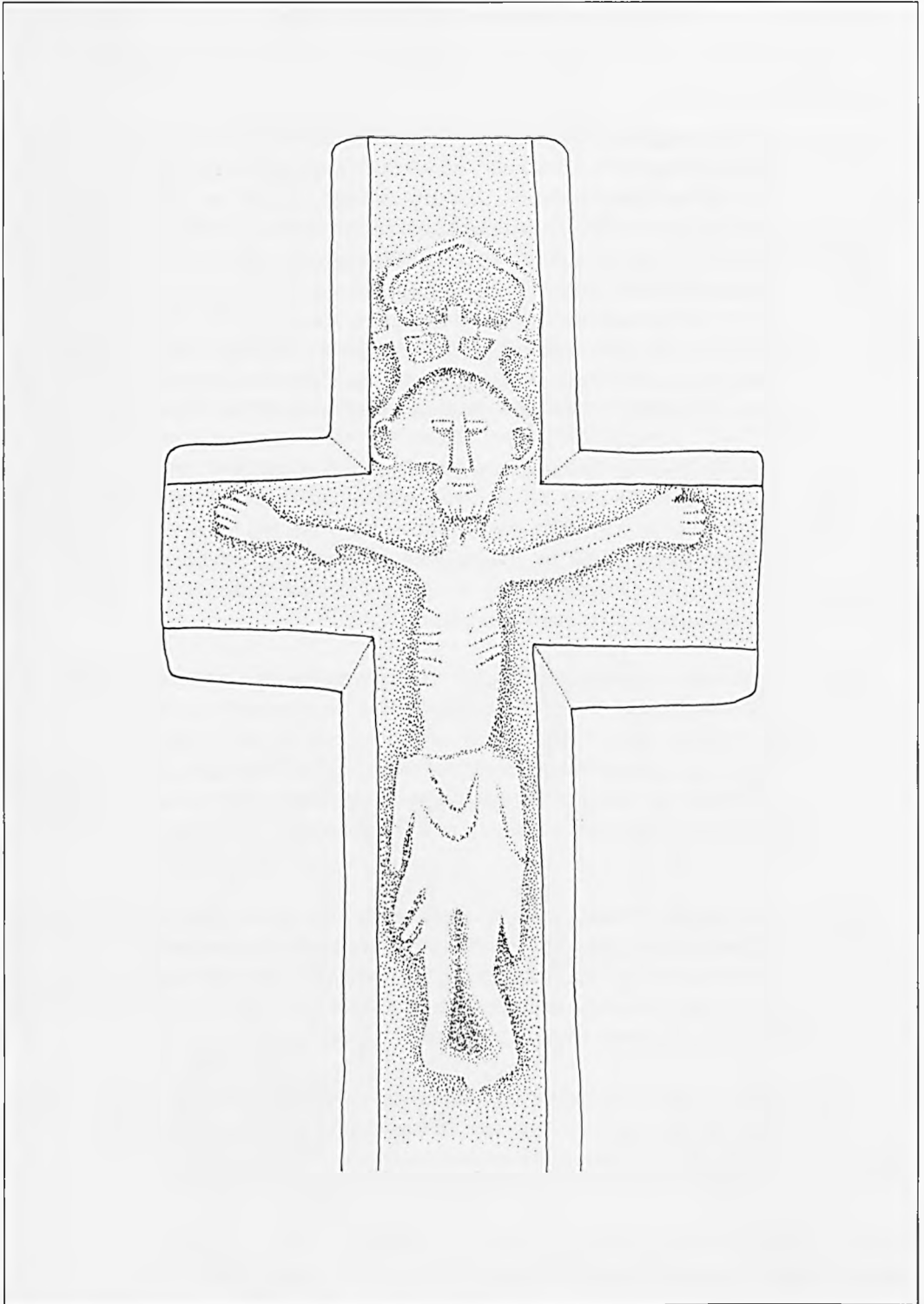


Fig.1: The Cwmyoy crucifix. Scale 1:5.

236-7, 241). In these examples, however, the crowns are circlets adorned with fleurs-de-lys following the contemporary royal fashion. The hooped crown depicted here is an 'imperial' crown of the type worn by Holy Roman emperors from at least the 11th century (*cf.* Neubecker 1977, 170), here no doubt used to signify spiritual authority.

Although a cross envisaged as being behind the head of a figure, only its top and the ends of its arms appearing within the nimbus, is commonly depicted, complete crosses adorning the head or decorating crowns have proved difficult to parallel. In the 8th-9th century Irish/Northern English *Book of Kells*, the nimbus above the head of the Virgin contains three small crosses disposed at the cardinal points, where the cross-ends might be expected to fall in more conventional examples (Sullivan 1914, fol.7v); and in the same work a figure, thought to be one of the Evangelists rather than Christ himself, has a single cross (without a nimbus) above the head (Sullivan 1914, fol.32v). Prof. Zarnecki (in a letter to the late David Baxendall, 19 Jan. 1988, in the possession of Mrs Mary Evans, Llanfihangel Crucorney) cited two further examples, both Italian: one from a 10th-11th century relief at Aquileia, in which a figure of Christ has three complete crosses within a nimbus as in the *Book of Kells* example; the other a north Italian stone crucifix (copied from a metal prototype), in which there is a single cross poised above the head (Quintavalle 1981, 238). Dr Katherine Watson (in a letter to the author, 10 Aug. 1999) has cited two Catalonian Christ-figures wearing circlets decorated with crosses: the Serdinya crucifix (Durliat 1956, pl. 21) and the Cruillas majestas (*Ars Hispaniae* VI, Fig. 294).

The Cwmyoy craftsman must surely, however, have been working from models nearer home, though what these might have been it is impossible to conjecture. Cwmyoy, however, it should be remembered, was under the control of, and in the same parish as Llanthony Priory (Bradney 1906), so that in spite of its remote location a variety of sources, manuscripts included, may have been available at hand. It might even be possible to argue that the crosses adorning the crown at Cwmyoy are fortuitous, being merely simplified forms of the more usual fleurs-de-lys, the nearest approximations that an unskilled carver could manage.

The date is problematical. The chamfered edges suggest that it must be post-Conquest, while the crude, pear-shaped head would not be out of place in the 12th century. The arrangement of the feet, however, turned inward with a suggestion that they are crossed, rather than each extending straight downwards, suggest that it is unlikely to be earlier than *c.* 1200 (*cf.* Schiller 1972, No. 466). This seems to indicate the earliest acceptable date. The 'imperial' form of crown did not appear in English regalia until the mid-15th century (*cf.* Neubecker 1977), but there is no necessity, in view of the possibility of MS sources, to link its occurrence at Cwmyoy with this. Taking into account the remoteness of the area and the rudimentary workmanship, thirteenth century or later is probably as close as one can safely venture.

Although it has been suggested that it might have been set externally on a gable-end (Mitchell 1893), or have stood as a calvary somewhere *en route* between Llanfihangel Crucorney and Llanthony (Radcliffe 1967), the most reasonable explanation is that it was the original rood-figure inside the church, fixed against the wall above the chancel arch to signal the division between nave and chancel.

Its original position is no longer obvious. There is evidence that the arrangements at the east end of the nave were altered in the 16th century by the addition of a rood-screen and loft: a false timber lintel was inserted in the south-east window to support a beam whose sawn-off end is still visible on the central axis of the window opening; (presumably at the same time) a loft-stair was added externally at the north-west corner of the chancel, with an entrance through its north wall (Parkinson 1990). Its exit through the east wall of the nave is masked by recent rendering, which also conceals any vestiges of former arrangements that might have survived above the chancel arch. It is reasonable, however, to suppose that these changes may have involved the replacement of the stone crucifix by a timber one (such as has survived from Kemeys Inferior), for its weight and material would have made it difficult to fix to a rood-beam, while furthermore its plain back suggests that it was meant to be fixed against a wall.

Thus, it might well have been replaced at this time, perhaps to be discarded straightaway, or more probably to be relegated to a less important position until its final removal from the church during the reforms of Edward VI or under the Commonwealth. Its find-spot, near the church but outside the churchyard wall, would accord well with this scenario.

Acknowledgements.

In addition to the assistance acknowledged in the text, thanks are due to RCAHM Wales for providing unpublished material. Comments by Dr Mark Evans and Dr Paul Williamson have also proved helpful.

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GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY AT GRACE DIEU ABBEY.

By NEIL PHILLIPS and MIKE HAMILTON.

Introduction.

As this report is intended for immediate publication in *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, it ignores the usual report format.

Report.

A resistivity geophysical survey and contour survey was conducted at Grace Dieu Abbey (SO 452132), on the 2nd February 2000. The exact location of Grace Dieu Abbey is open to debate because of the lack of upstanding remains (Williams 1976, 67-68). Small-scale excavations in 1970-1, although inconclusive, did suggest that the area surveyed was likely to be the correct location (Williams 1971). The 1970-71 trenches are still visible immediately south of a tree-covered ridge.

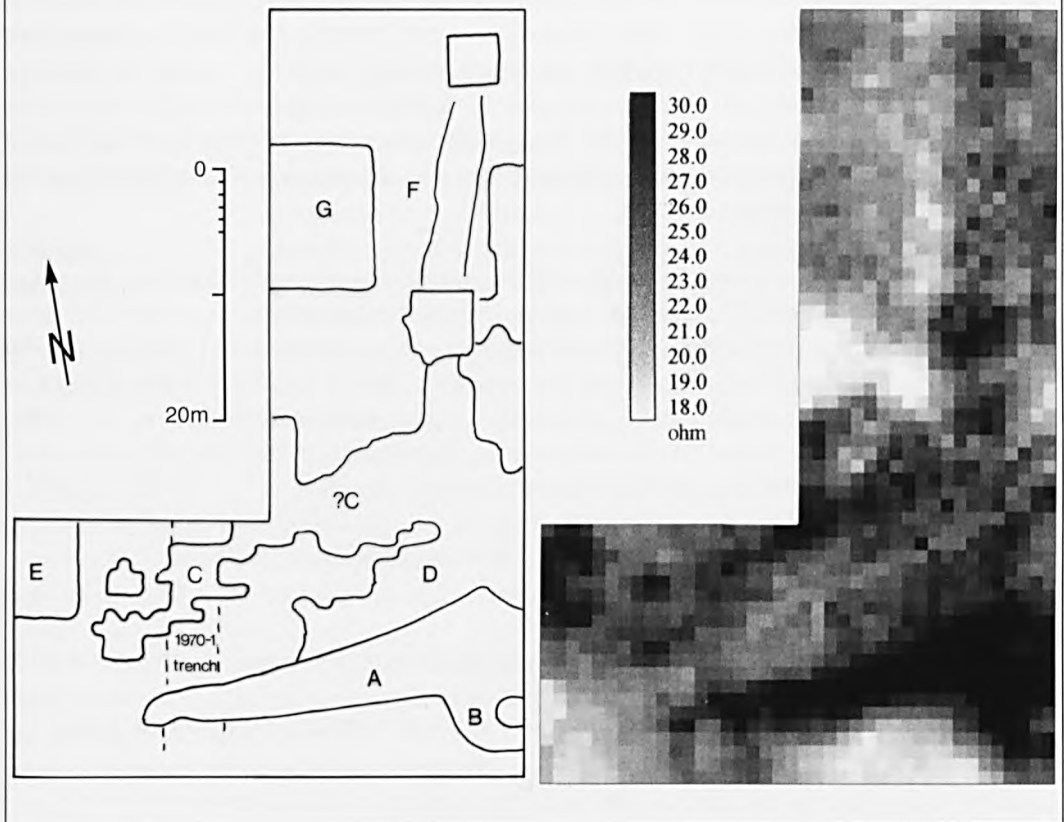
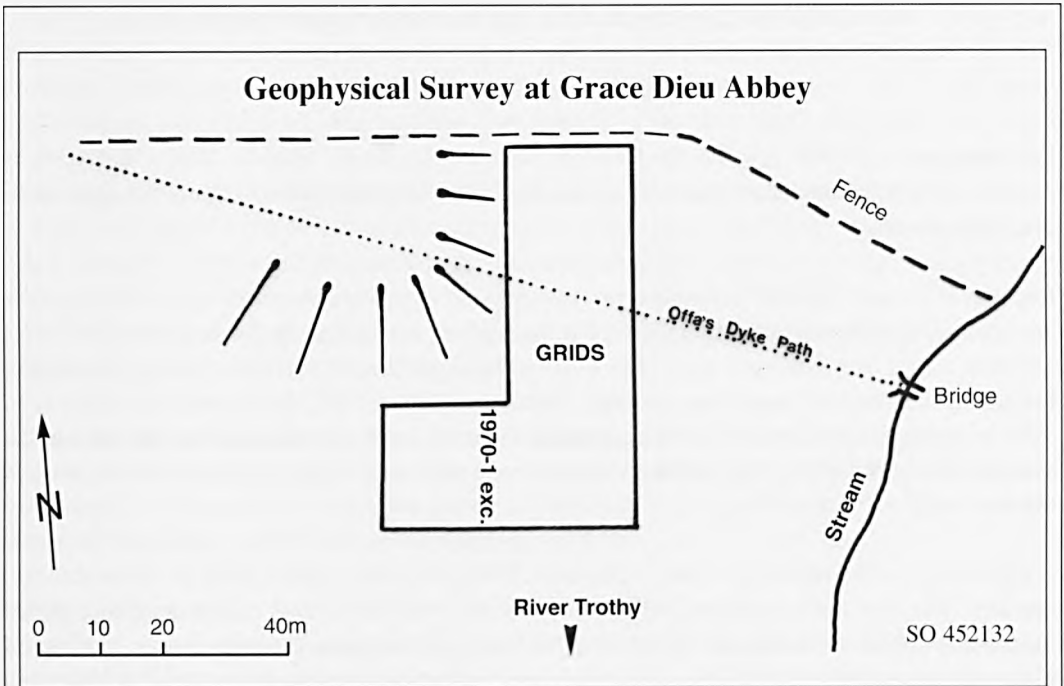
The survey was conducted using a Geoscan RM15 resistivity meter with a standard 0.5m. spacing. Readings were conducted with a sampling and traverse interval of 1m., resulting in 400 readings per 20m. grid. All the data was processed using Geoscan Geoplot 2 and 3 software. Geoscan grids and a contour survey (not published) were surveyed with a Topcon GTS-212.

It is worth noting that the survey was not conducted under the most advantageous of conditions. The site, nominally under grass, was extremely wet and muddy with considerable surface disturbance from cattle. The wet nature, of the ground, would have led to the need for drainage measures to be introduced. Such drainage measures, when modern, have undoubtedly disturbed the archaeology. The need to conduct a contour survey of the area within the limited day light, led to only four Geoscan grids (0.16 ha) being completed. However, these problems noted, the survey did reveal clear evidence of archaeology.

A – This feature runs west to east for a surveyed distance of approximately 30 metres. Beginning just to the west of the 1970-71 excavation trenches, it broadens towards the east where it extends beyond the survey area. This is certainly the substantial (possible medieval) wall mentioned for the southern portion of the 1970-71 excavation. The increased width of the anomaly is to the east, is suggestive, of a possible rubble spread. Alternately, perhaps there are two features on slightly different alignments; one headed due east and the other slightly south of east. The 1971-excavation report does refer to a less substantial structure in the southern trench.

B – Curving wall adjoining A to the south. The low resistance area encompassed by B and A, if contemporary, suggests a rounded structure.

C – This anomaly is fairly unclear and may be interpreted equally as either: one feature running north-easterly for 17m and then turning towards the east for another 15m., or else as two different features. In the latter interpretation, the main 1970-71 excavation trench would have crossed the western portion of C, and so, the 17th/18th century residence described in the excavation report could be represented by the anomaly. Slides of the excavation (obtained from D.H. Williams)



suggest this building was orientated north-south, which is consistent with the geophysical results. The eastern part of C is clearly parallel with part of A and there is a suggestion of connecting wall lines (D).

D – Area of high resistance, probably cut by a drainage channel running ENE-WSW. This is probably an area of rubble, although there is a suggestion of wall lines connecting A and the eastern part of C.

E – This fairly regular, high resistance area, is suggestive of a probable, rubble or stone floor. It is a right angle of a feature that extends north and west, beyond the surveyed area.

F – In this area, a marked difference, in resistance levels is revealed. A clear boundary, on a NNE axis can be seen, with the area to the west much lower in terms of resistance than the area to the east. There is nothing from the contours to suggest this anomaly is a product of soil creep, whereas the boundary is too regular to be accounted for by geology. As the anomaly spans two grids, there can be no suggestion of error as a product of the geophysical technique. Interpretation, therefore, suggests that the western area is more open and lacks continuous structures, whereas, the east has the edge of a substantial building or buildings. This eastern area itself consists of a series of features, roughly in a line, heading NNE. In part, they seem to consist of square areas (5 x 5m or 4 x 4m) on a linear anomaly. These square areas are probably flagged floors or piers. The western area has one clear regular anomaly, probably a structure (G), which unfortunately extends beyond the grid.

G – Probable rectangular structure, possibly with dividing walls.

The conclusions of the site can be summarised thus:

- a). The survey located the remains of stone buildings and/or paths. Some of these may be on different alignments, suggesting multi-phase occupation.
- b). The survey shows that the site clearly extends to the east, with the suggestion (the implication of E) of major structures in that direction. There is visible evidence in the field to suggest the existence of earthworks in that direction.
- c). The site is clearly large with the suggestion of structures running down the whole 60m. of the eastern side of the surveyed area. Further visible earthworks extend from the south and SE of the surveyed area.
- d). Clearly the site needs a more comprehensive coverage (probably an area of 100 x 100m.), and only then would the plan of the abbey resolve itself. However, this will only be practical in drier conditions. Such a survey should also take in the area to the north of the modern fence.

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Acknowledgements.

This survey was instigated by David Williams. This survey was conducted by M. A. Hamilton and Neil Phillips. Permission was kindly granted by the landowner, Frank Sutton. The National Assembly of Wales, *via* Cadw and Sian Rees, provided consent for work on this scheduled site. All the equipment used is the property of the SCARAB research centre of the University of Wales College, Newport. Maddy Gray, Ray Howell and Newport Reference Library provided additional assistance, and Anne Leaver prepared the plan.

*The Editor thanks Mr Phillips and Dr Hamilton for undertaking this survey, at his request, in very difficult conditions. It is of especial interest to your Editor, as the first Cistercian-orientated article he wrote dealt with the history of Grace Dieu Abbey, and appeared, under Cefni Barnett's editorship, in *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* thirty-five years ago (Vol. I: Part 4; 1964).*

The Editor appends here two photographs of wall structures excavated in 1970-71:



ST. MARY'S PRIORY CHURCH, USK: SOME RECENT WORK AND SOME NEW THEORIES.

By A.G. MEIN.

Introductory Summary.

It is now a full twenty years since the publication in this Journal of the detailed consideration by our present Editor of the extant records of the Priory of St. Mary, Usk,¹ and for the next decade or so nothing could be added about the structure of the Priory buildings or the life of the Benedictine Sisters who lived there. However, in the past few years, archaeological work by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, by the writer and by others, together with observation and documentary research by the writer, has established the position of the east end of the monastic church and of the monastic burial ground immediately to its east,² as also the dimensions of its north transept and its relation to the Roman fortress defences.³ There has also been the publication of the results of earlier excavations by members of the Association within the area formerly occupied by the east end of the priory church.⁴ This area is now used for the interment of cremated remains and is known as the Garden of Rest. Even more recently, excavations preparatory to the extension northwards of the vestry in 1985,⁵ followed by a watching brief by the writer,⁶ were preceded in 1994 by the appearance immediately outside the west porch of St. Mary's of a memorial stone to Usk's Catholic martyr, Fr David Lewis, albeit in the wrong place.⁷

As a result of this activity the writer suggests that we should reconsider the age of the Priory gatehouse (*Plate 1*), and that we can identify the former whereabouts of the lost Chapel of St. Radegund as being one of the buildings shown on *Plate 2*, while also suggesting the events which led to its dedication. Further, we can add St. Mary's to the list of churches and castles upon which considerable repair work was carried out in the 15th century by one of the Raglan Herberts, and can identify a previous patron of similar work. The opportunity can also be taken to bring to light again some of the published research about St. Mary's by the late Canon E.T. Davies.⁸

The Lay-Out and Fabric of the Monastic Church.

Work by Neil Maylan in 1987 confirmed that the east end of the monastic church had lain below the present wall between the Garden of Rest and the recent extension to the parish burial ground

Abbreviations:

AW: *Archaeology in Wales*.

Monm. Antiq.: *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*.

1. Williams D.H., 'Usk Nunnery', *Monm. Antiq.* IV (1980) 44-45.
2. Maylan, C.N., 'Excavations at St. Mary's Priory, Usk, 1987', *Monm. Antiq.* IX (1993) 29-42.
3. Mein A.G. in *Archaeology in Wales* 34 (1994) 57, 72.
4. Mein A.G., 'Usk Priory: An Unrecorded Excavation', *Monm. Antiq.* IX (1993) 43-45.
5. Williams D.N. and Boucher A., 'St. Mary's Priory, Usk: Excavation of 1998', *Monm. Antiq.* XVI (2000) *infra*. I am grateful for being able to watch and comment on the work while in progress, and for having sight of the interim report before publication in this journal.
6. Mein A.G., *AW* 38 (1998) 122, 139.
7. Mein A.G., *AW* 34 (1994) 81.
8. Davies E.T., *Monmouthshire Schools and Education to 1870* (Newport, 1957).

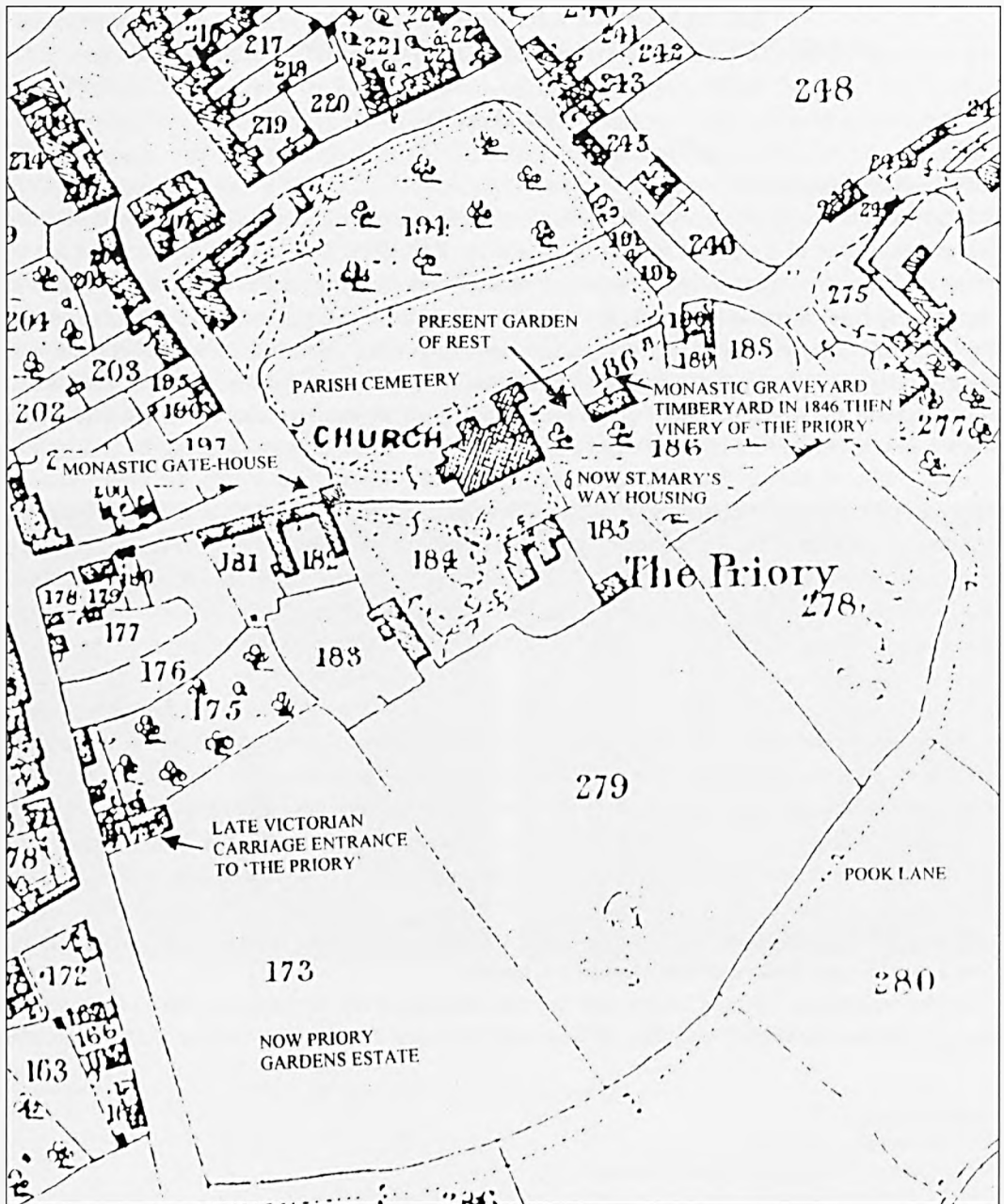


Fig. 1: Portion of the Tithe Map for the Parish of Usk (1846). (National Library of Wales).

and showed that the extension area had been a burial ground under the control of the Priory until the dissolution. The increasing density of burials the nearer one got to the west side of the excavated area clearly indicated the proximity, on the other side of the present wall, of the high altar of the Priory and the desire of those being buried there to lie as close as possible to the focus of prayer of the house. The 1987 excavations also showed that the defences of the Roman fortress did not extend

into that area and that their north-eastern corner must therefore lie below the Garden of Rest, the ditch turning southwards to pass below the chancel or choir of the Priory and then out below the present St. Mary's Way and so southwards. For the whereabouts of these features see the reproduction of part of the Usk Tithe Map of 1846 (*Fig. 1*).

A recent examination by the writer shows that the only two subsidence cracks in the stone wall between the south side of the Garden of Rest and the turning bay at the end of St. Mary's Way are 4.8 m. apart, almost exactly the width suggested by Manning for the fortress ditch. If these two cracks represent the inner and the outer edges of the east ditch of the fortress, as seems almost certain, one can now plot its inner edge as lying 12.2m. east of the east face of the tower of St. Mary's with the inner edge of the north-east corner of the ditch lying very close to the north wall of the chancel. The overall east to west length of the monastic chancel we now know to have been 22.1m. so that the subsidence effects of the Roman ditch would have caused serious stress to a considerable portion of the centre of the east end of the Priory church.

It is not merely the ditch which would have induced subsidence effects in the walls and floor of the chancel, for the building was constructed across the line of the eastern rampart of the fortress, while in addition there would have been an angle turret of earth and timber within the curve of the north-east corner. The stress points set up by the differential compaction between built-upon and undisturbed land surface involved in a cross section through the turret, the rampart, the berm and the inner edge of the fortress ditch, must have numbered at least three in addition to the more dramatic stresses induced over the whole width of the east ditch. The floor of the chancel was probably laid with stone slabs and embellished in places with decorative tiles. Disturbed by at least one burial, as shown by the skeletal remains recovered by Rudge Humphries and Isca Bowen, the subsidence effects on what was no doubt designed to be an impressive floor must have been both distressing and dangerous for the Sisters in their daily offices. As we shall see, it now seems certain that the floor, or at least that portion comprising decorative tiles, was relaid twice.

Whether the ditch would also have passed under any part of the chapter house and any other adjacent buildings we are unlikely to know until some part of the Priory property is re-developed, for the line of the Roman ditch runs below the turning bay road and then across St. Mary's Way, below the two garages to the south and thus out into the garden of the end house in the row. Perhaps more by chance than by judgement that house is well east of the outer edge of the ditch while the continuing deplorable state of disrepair of the stables of 'The Priory', which should overlie the Roman eastern rampart and any road immediately to its rear, is due to recent neglect rather than to subsidence.

The construction of the north transept, of the chancel and choir of the monastic church and the siting of the priory gate-house, all of them over the line of the Roman defences, was to guarantee their progressive structural failure on a massive scale. As the cause of the trouble must have remained a mystery to the Sisters and their advisers their repairs could never be adequate to prevent the damage recurring. The frequency of its reappearance would have depended on the weight of the particular part of the building and upon how well the previous repairs, if any, had been carried out, but it is worth noting that the gate-house has been repaired, by simple re-pointing of the roof to ground-level fractures, twice in the twenty-six years that the writer has been living nearby and is again badly affected at the time of writing in 1999.

Work in 1994 by the writer and his late wife, when the widening of a cable trench to the vestry exposed the internal junction of the east and the north walls of the north transept, not only established its overall internal length from the north face of the tower as having been 13.71m. (45 ft.) but also showed that the transept had suffered a major structural failure. The north wall had had to be rebuilt at some time following the damage and the new walling had been butt-jointed to the east wall, which at that time had not required repair. Probing showed that the north wall had been positioned just within the outer edge of the fortress ditch, a fact subsequently demonstrated by a series of bore holes drilled on the advice of the writer prior to the design of the now completed northwards extension of the vestry. The approximate line and the dimensions of the ditch on this northern side of the 1st century fortress had been established by Manning's 1973 excavations at a point below the present vehicular entrance to the rebuilt Usk Almshouses, just a few metres west of the gate-house.⁹ The ditch had been 2.3m. (7ft. 7in.) deep with an estimated width of 4.5m. (14ft. 10in.). This work also confirmed that the soft ground encountered in 1970 in the laying of the new main sewer straight through the archway of the gate-house, had been the fill of the fortress ditch.

It seems likely that the north-east corner of the north transept had suffered a massive fracture due to what is technically known as 'draw' induced in the east wall by its subsidence into the subjacent ditch, and it is likely that the same had happened at its north-western corner due to damage to what is now the east wall of the north aisle of the parish church. While patched at various unrecorded times, damage is again visible here and should be a matter of concern to the church authorities. Unfortunately, the recent excavations by Archaeological Investigations Ltd. did not require the exposure of the north-west corner of the transept, so that any suggestion that the whole of the end wall collapsed one disastrous day must remain unproven, however probable.

By that time, whenever it was, not only the transept but also the whole eastern end of the monastic church must also have been badly in need of repair. Unfortunately, the dire straits into which the affairs of the Sisters had sunk by the time of Archbishop Peckham's Visitation in 1284, were blamed by him, or so it has always been assumed, on financial mismanagement. By that time the buildings had been standing for over a hundred years, quite long enough for subsidence damage to become obvious, so it is entirely possible that the 'most desolate state' of the nunnery, as Peckham put it, may have been due to the place looking dilapidated and uncared for. An alternative is that the Sisters had been 'ripped off' in truly modern fashion by a local builder whose assistance they had sought to repair the place. Perhaps Peckham's two 'provident and discrete' nuns who were to 'make all disbursements' were suggested by him to prevent further exploitation of the unworldly residents.¹⁰ Members of the Association may remember what happened when their predecessors engaged a dishonest Caerleon builder to erect their Roman Museum.¹¹

There is now convincing evidence to suggest that, some years before Adam of Usk came to the rescue financially in 1404, considerable floor repair work had been done for the Sisters, perhaps in the chancel, for the excavations on the site of the vestry extension in 1998 recovered four decorated

9. Manning W.H., Report on the Excavations at Usk, 1965-76; The Fortress Excavations 1968-71 (Cardiff, 1981), 101 & Figs 1 and 34b.

10. Williams D.H. 1980, *op. cit.* 44.

11. Knight J.K., 'The Caerleon Museum and the Association', *Monm. Antiq.* XII (1997) 2.

and dateable floor tiles. Of the four, three were of Droitwich ware, one being decorated with a fleur-de-lys, a second with a pattern which is not described in the report but which formed one part of a nine-tile pattern, while the third bore the arms of the Mortimer family, best described in non-heraldic terms as being of a shield upon a shield (*Fig. 2*).¹² John Lewis, in his recent majestic study, has defined the period of the Droitwich tile industry, his Group 20, and says that: 'The industry is thought to have begun in c.1340'. He cites the pavement of the 'Singing School' of c.1377 or later at Worcester Cathedral and the somewhat later tiles from Keynsham Abbey, near Bristol, as: 'The most important assemblages so far as Welsh material is concerned'. He considers that tiles dated by him to 1430-1450 'probably belong to the end of the industry's production'.¹³ An unexpected connection between St. Mary's and Keynsham Abbey is that they shared patrons for nearly a century, for as Barbara Lowe points out: 'The great de Clare family were hereditary patrons of Keynsham Abbey for 97 years'.¹⁴

Lewis's catalogue of Droitwich, Group 20 tiles, include several items of interest in connection with St. Mary's. The first is his design 262, of which there are three examples of parts of a sixteen-tile design, one found in Manning's excavations on Usk's cattle market site and another, unprovenanced but from the Caerleon Museum Collection, which as John Lewis tells me: "I suspect might have come from Usk".¹⁵ These he would date to the period '1377 or later', while his design 281 is a tile with a rather charming curly tailed, up-winged dragon, the find-spot being very probably Usk Priory itself, and dated to the later period of 1430-1450. As will be seen, these two dates are of significance in the present context.

Any consideration of when the Mortimer design tile might have been used in repair work in the Priory requires an outline of the period of that family's holding of the Lordship of Usk. It starts with the marriage in 1368 of the seventeen-year old Edmund Mortimer, 3rd Earl of March, to Philippa, daughter of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, a younger son of Edward III, and Elizabeth de Burgh (*d.*1363), the heiress of Ulster but not to be confused with Philippa's more famous great-grandmother, the Elizabeth de Burgh (*d.*1360) who inherited the Usk Lordship in 1317 on the partition of the de Clare lands following the death of her brother Gilbert V de Clare at Bannockburn. Much praised by the chroniclers for his generosity to the religious houses on his estates, on Lionel's death that same year, 1368, and Edmund's grant of livery of his estates by the king, within a matter of months, the young Mortimer had become both Earl of Ulster and Earl of March. Edmund of Usk held the Lordship until his death in 1381, and is recorded in Cockayne's *Complete Peerage* as being patron, and therefore presumably a benefactor, of the Augustinian friars at Clare, Suffolk, rebuilt and extended some years before by his wife's great-grandmother.¹⁶ In particular, he was generous to Wigmore Abbey, the chief foundation of his Mortimer ancestors.¹⁷

The apparently close personal relationship between the 3rd Earl's family and the prioress of Usk is suggested by the prioress becoming godmother to Edmund's son and heir, Roger, on his birth in

12. Williams and Boucher, *infra*.

13. Lewis J.M. *The Medieval Tiles of Wales* (National Museum, Cardiff; 1999) 44-45 *et seq.*

14. Lowe B.J., *Medieval Floor Tiles of Keynsham Abbey* (Keynsham, 1978) 96.

15. Lewis to Mein, *per. lit.* 20-10-1999.

16. Ward J.C., *English Noblewomen in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1992) 153.

17. Dugdale, W., *Monasticon Anglicanum* (London, 1846 edn.) VI, 352-54.

Usk Castle in 1374.¹⁸ It would have been entirely in character for Edmund to have lavished money on Usk Priory if needed, for he had rebuilt Wigmore from its foundations virtually to roof level by the time of his death.¹⁹ It is he who we can thank for being the patron of the chronicler, priest and lawyer, Adam of Usk (1352-1430). As Adam put it: 'He presented me to a studentship in laws at Oxford, with a fitting endowment'.²⁰ Edmund died in the Dominican Friary of Cork two days after Christmas 1381, apparently of pneumonia after falling in the local river.²¹

Roger, 4th Earl of March, took possession of his estates on his coming of age in 1393, having been in the custody of the Earl of Kent during his infancy, only to be killed five years later, aged twenty-four, fighting in Ireland.²² As a native of Usk, Adam may have been instrumental in persuading his patron's son to grant the town its second charter, which Roger sealed on 26th July 1397 '*apud castrum nostrum de Uske*', our only record of his presence in the town and castle. Indeed, he spent most of his time in Ireland and is an unlikely candidate for any extensive work on Usk Priory for, despite being very popular as a handsome and dashing young man and, from 1385, the declared heir presumptive to Richard II's throne, his morals were loose and: 'He was too negligent of divine things'.²³

After Roger's death his widow, Eleanor, held the lordship or at least Usk Castle and lands in the vicinity, including the manor of Trostrey, as dower. She seems to have held jointly with her husband's uncle, Sir Edmund Mortimer, until his defeat by Glyn Dŵr at the battle of Pilleth in June 1402, and his subsequent abandonment of the cause of the new king, Henry IV (1399-1413), for that of Welsh independence. Eleanor seems to have been left undisturbed on her Usk lands until her death in 1405.²⁴ However, her sons Edmund and Roger were less fortunate, being taken from her care and imprisoned in Windsor, Glyn Dŵr having announced his intention of making Edmund king. After an unsuccessful but clearly exciting rescue attempt in 1405, and their recapture, the boys remained in custody, Edmund until the death of Henry IV. From 1405/6 Edmund's estates were held by the Crown appointee, Richard, Lord Grey of Codnor, who seems to have been living in Usk Castle. He was certainly there when Sir John Greyndour arrived, fresh from his victory over Glyn Dŵr's forces on 11th March 1405 at Grosmont, and the pair sallied forth with the castle garrison to defeat the Welsh camped up the hill around Pwll Melyn a few days later.²⁵

The children's guardian and jailor was from 1409 Henry, Prince of Wales, later to be Henry V, and it was about this time that the younger brother, Roger, died.²⁶ On his accession in 1413, the new

18. Compare with the lessening personal relationships between the later de Clares and their priories: Ward J.C., 'Fashions in Monastic Endowment', *Jnl. Ecclesiastical Hist.* 32: No. 4 (Oct. 1981) 427-51.

19. Ward J.C. 1992, *op. cit.* 79, 94.

20. Thompson E. M. (edit.), *Chronicon Adae de Usk* (2nd edn; London, 1904) 168.

21. *Dict. National Biography* (Compact Edn., 1975) 1016-18.

22. Davies R.R., *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr* (Oxford, 1995) 38, 41, 107-08, Table 2.

23. *Monasticon*, *op. cit.* VI, 354.

24. *Cal. Close Rolls, Richard II, 1396-99*, 458.

25. See my: *Norman Usk: The Birth of a Town* (Usk, 1986) 48-50, 109. I now refile from identifying 'the Yellow Pool' as the railway reservoir, although this is certainly where Isca Bowen and J.E. Lloyd found the bones of some of the fallen. The hilltop pool by Castle Farm, 500 m. north of the castle, is normally quite definitely yellow in colour, presumably due to the iron-rich clay on which it lies, so this must have been the focus of their last night's camp by the Welsh forces.

26. *Dict. National Biog. op. cit.* 1021.

king, against the advice of many of his courtiers, released his estates to Edmund as 5th Earl. He was rewarded by Edmund's unflinching loyalty until his death of the plague in 1425, being buried in the Augustinian friary at Clare and leaving a widow, Anna, but no children.²⁷ His only recorded activity, so far as Usk is concerned, was the grant of the confirmatory and apparently third charter to the town in 1416, sealed when he was in London,²⁸ but he, like his grandfather the 3rd Earl, was a benefactor to the religious. Thus, in 1415, he converted the former Benedictine priory of Stoke by Clare, an alien cell of the abbey of Bec – and itself a de Clare remodelling in 1090, and within Clare castle itself, of a former Anglo-Saxon college of secular canons – into a new college of secular canons.²⁹

It seems probable, from the evidence of the Mortimer floor tile, that the first dateable repair work to St. Mary's could have been carried out at the expense of the Mortimer family at some time during either of the two periods 1368-1381 or 1398-1402, the year Usk was burned by Glyn Dŵr. Of these two periods the earlier, during the lordship of the generous-minded Edmund, 3rd Earl of March, seems by far the most likely, for the latter was a very disturbed time and in addition, by 1400, Adam of Usk was apparently feeling so unwell as to be prompted to give presents to St. Mary's as part of his 'preparations for death...'. He recovered, however, from whatever was worrying him and survived for another twenty-nine years. He continues: 'Further, I have in view, if God grant it, to adorn the said Church with more worthy repair, to the glory of the Blessed Virgin.' As Robert Rickards points out in the first serious study of St. Mary's, we do not know whether Adam actually carried out repairs, but we can, I feel, imply from his words that they would have been additional to some 'worthy repair' carried out recently at someone else's expense.³⁰

By the time of Edmund, the 5th Earl from 1413, the fortunes of the Sisters would have been on a much better footing as a result of the Papal indulgence, and should perhaps have been adequate at least for running repairs. Certainly no repeat request was made for Papal help by way of a second grant of indulgence, as was not infrequently the case with monasteries in need of extensive repairs. Thus the Dominican priory of Athenry, east of Galway city, badly damaged by an accidental fire, was granted three indulgences in the period 1400 to 1425.³¹ The extent of this work of repair to Usk Priory is likely to remain unknown to us, other than that it included the relaying of some of the floors, and that it did not include the rebuilding of the gate-house..

Unfortunately, Adam, in his record of the events of 1404, makes no mention either of structural damage to the buildings or of any estimated cost of repairs, but he may have deemed it expedient to blame the unruly Welsh for the state of affairs at the Priory rather than the more mundane matter of high running costs. Certainly, we have no direct evidence that Owain's men damaged the nunnery, although there is certainly both documentary and indirect evidence to support Adam's report of the devastation wrought on the town of Usk and to the castle. Remembering that one of their leaders was the abbot of the Cistercian Abbey of Llantarnam, it does seem rather unlikely that

27. Mein A.G., 'St. David's Church, Trostrey', *Gwent Local History Jnl.* 78 (Spring 1995) 13-14.

28. Bradney J.A., *A History of Monmouthshire* (London) III (1921) 14-16.

29. Ward J.C. 1981, *op. cit.* for the convoluted history of these priories.

30. Rickards, R., *The Church and Priory of St. Mary, Usk* (London, 1904) 13-14.

31. Rynne, E., 'Athenry', in Simms A. and Andrews J.H. (edit.) *More Irish Country Towns* (Dublin, 1995) 113.

they would have ravaged the home of the Benedictine Sisters, albeit that they were not necessarily Welsh, unlike the abbot. On the other hand, in far-off Rome the Pontiff, whose help he was seeking, would have heard of Owain's bid for independence, perhaps from Adam himself for, as Adam records: 'These things I heard of in Rome', when describing in lurid language the damage to Usk and other towns and the casualties among the local inhabitants.

Whatever the cause of the damage evident by 1404, there is perhaps a hint of the Sisters' domestic quarters being virtually uninhabitable for Adam pleaded to the Holy Father that their poverty would force them 'to beg for food and clothing, straying through the country or to stay in the private houses of friends'.³² This seems to be an example of Adam overstating his case, for the Sisters, as Adam tells us, were recruited from 'none but virgins of noble birth', so that serious personal poverty was an unlikely condition. Perhaps rather more it is an indication of the bad state of repair of the monastic living quarters.

The Significance of the North Porch.

One of the more enigmatic architectural features of St. Mary's today is the north porch for, while there is no record of the benefactor who had it built or of the date of his generosity, it was almost certainly the work of one of the Raglan Castle Herberts for the family's badge of a drawbridge appears over the door. Architecturally a date of c.1460 seems to have been accepted, which would suggest that it was the work of the immensely wealthy and powerful blackguard William Herbert, Yorkist supporter in the Wars of the Roses, and builder of considerable additions to Raglan Castle.

William Herbert was, among his many appointments, the king's Constable of Usk Castle, his father, William ap Thomas, having been Steward of the royal lordship of Usk since 1431. The father, the progenitor of the house of Herbert, is perhaps best remembered locally for having kept the prior of Goldcliff in chains in Usk Castle for some time until he agreed to give up the post in favour of a Herbert nominee.³³ Ap Thomas carried out repair work on the castle keep, 'presumably' as Knight puts it 'after structural failure', he and his retainers possibly living there after the work was finished. After his father's death in 1445 the son, as Knight has shown, carried out even more repairs and improvements to the castle and, after William Herbert became a baron in 1462, it was recorded of him by his 17th century kinsman, Sir Thomas Herbert of Tintern, that he 'was at great charge in repairing several Castles within his jurisdiction'.³⁴

Usk was then still the administrative centre of the lordship, and St. Mary's the major monastic establishment at its centre. If the building of the porch can be dated to any time in that century it seems most likely that it was built as a minor but nevertheless rather pretentious embellishment of the parish church, and possibly also as a commemoration of the donor's elevation to the peerage in 1462. Was this yet another of the buildings which saw repair work at the 'great charge' of Sir William? It seems unlikely that Herbert would have commissioned the erection of the new porch and doorway if the monastic part of the building complex was then in a sorry state. Granted the

32. *Chron. Ade de Usk, op. cit.* 268-69.

33. Williams D.H., 'Goldcliff Priory', *Monm. Antiq.* III: Pt. 1 (1970-71) 47.

34. Knight J.K., 'Usk Castle and its Affinities', in Apted M.R. *et al.* (edit.) *Ancient Monuments and their Interpretation* (London, 1977) 149-50.

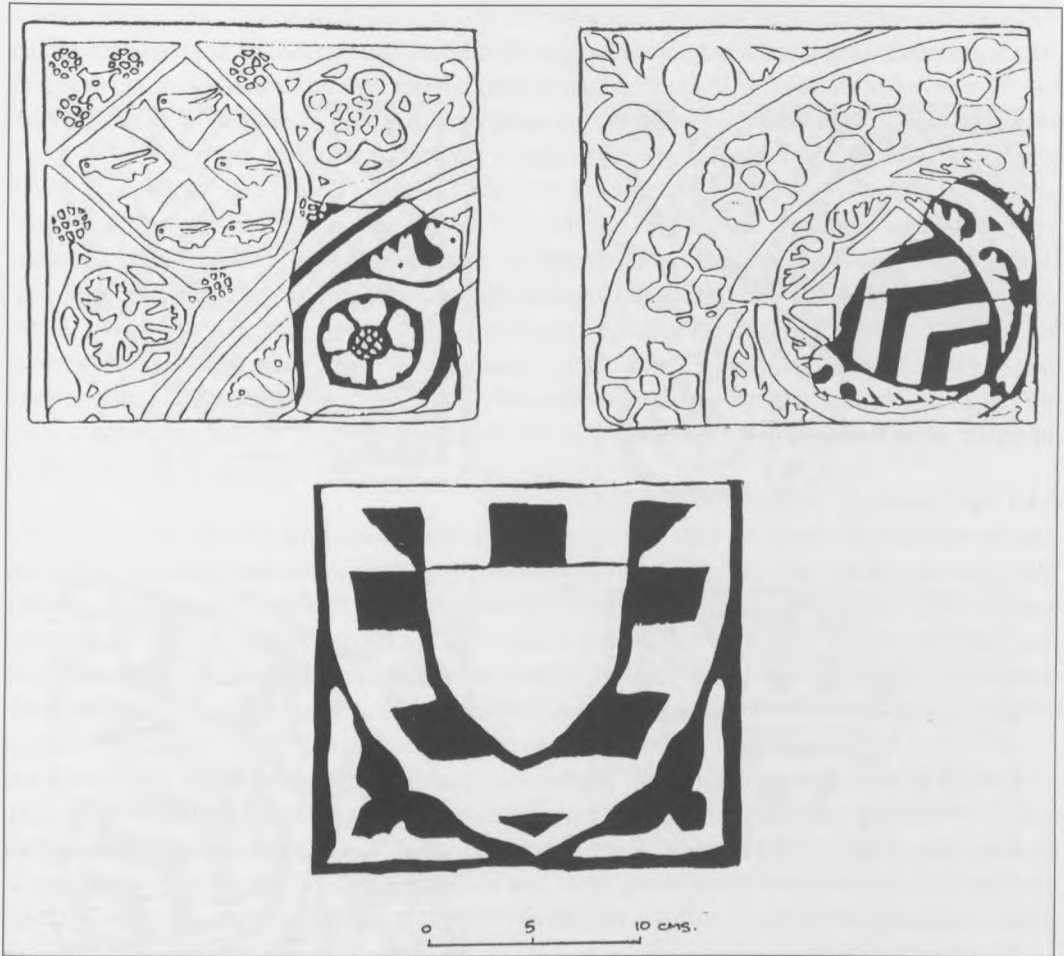


Fig. 2: Tiles depicting the white rosette, the arms of de Clare and the arms of Mortimer.

Lordship of Raglan on its creation out of Usk Lordship in 1465, he was created Earl of Pembroke in 1468 only to be executed by Warwick the Kingmaker after losing the battle of Edgecote, near Banbury, the following year.

The demotion of the political and military importance of Usk and the transfer of real local power to Raglan Castle,³⁵ where it was to remain until 1649, clearly saw a transfer of interest on the part of the Herberts and their successors away from St. Mary's, a fact reflected in the paucity of monuments in what is now Usk's parish church compared with that of Raglan and in particular with the priory church of Abergavenny which houses the fine double tomb of the earl's father and mother. A date for the building of the north door and porch, and possibly of general repairs to the claustral buildings, is therefore likely to have been after 1445 and must have been before 1469, with a preferred bracket of 1462 to 1465.

35. Bradney J.A. *op. cit.* II: Pt. 1 (*Hundred of Raglan*; 1992 reprint) 8 (for bounds of the new lordship).

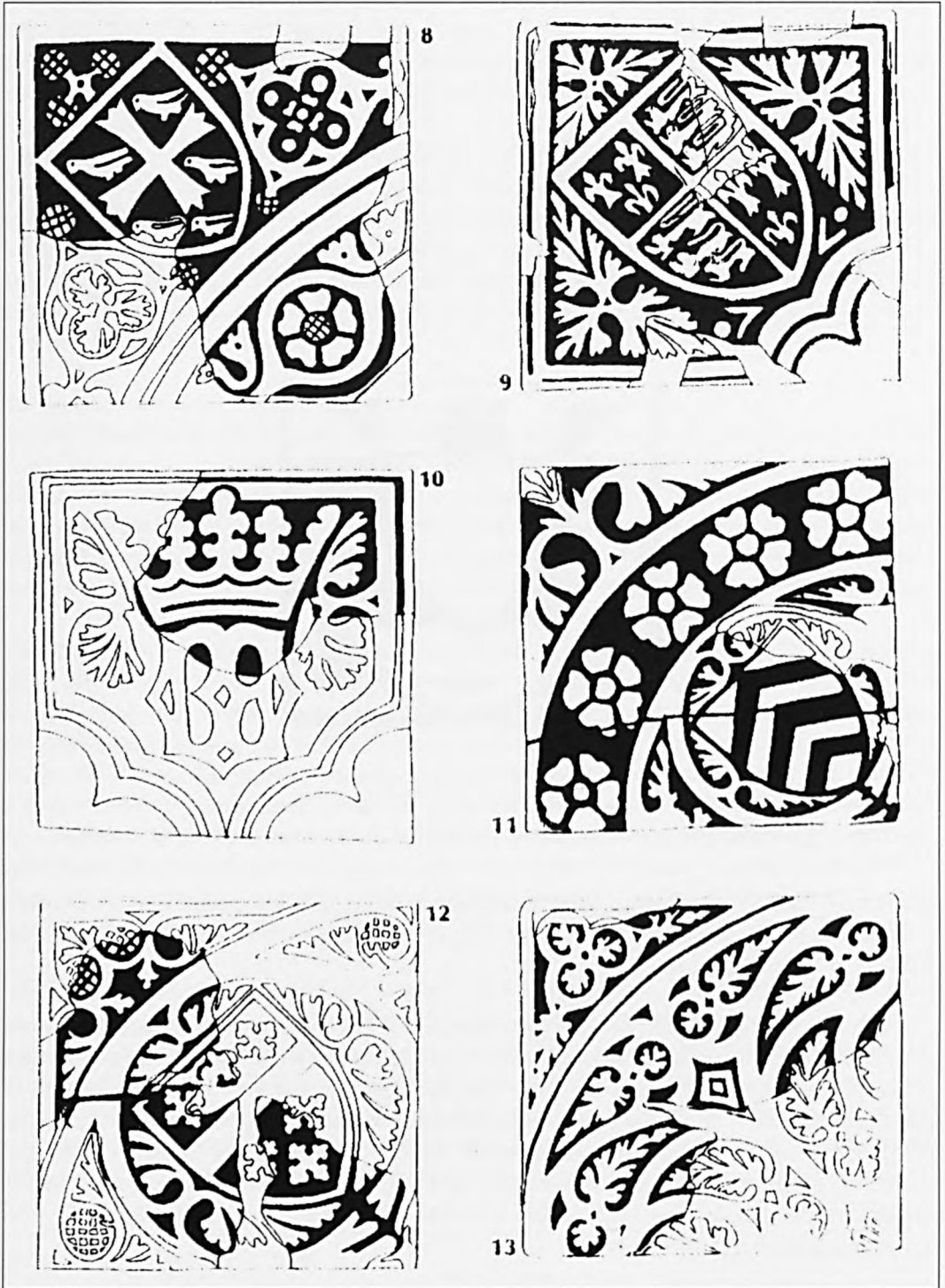


Fig. 3: Raglan Castle tiles: the Great Malvern series – Sebok designs (8-13).

Two chance finds by the writer, taken with at least one of the tiles recovered by Andy Boucher and his colleagues in 1997/8, are persuasive evidence that those possible general repairs by the earl included repairs and embellishments to the chancel of the Priory. The writer's finds comprise the fragments of two monastic floor tiles which, along with Boucher's Mortimer tile, are illustrated in *Fig.2*, drawn by Patricia Stevens. Not previously published, that bearing the de Clare arms (U/85/38) was recovered in 1985 by the writer from the sewer trench between the old Town Hall, now the British Legion Club, and No. 41 Old Market Street, Usk and was included in his unpublished report to the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust of his watching brief of the relaying of the larger part of the town's sewage system. The second fragment (U/90/1), decorated with a white rose, was recovered from the gardens of Ty Brith, Priory Street, during similar work in 1990. Found five years and three hundred yards apart, the coincidence of their being recognisably complementary parts of a pavement almost certainly installed in Usk Priory by the earl is remarkable, and for this information and for his advice and assistance on the subject, I am greatly indebted to Mr. John Lewis.

How they got to their find spots need not detain us, but they were presumably part of the demolition material later used as hard-core in disparate works in the town. Such a use need not cause surprise for this was also the fate of a number of the fine 14th and 15th century tiles torn up from the floor of St. Mary's, Monmouth, and used in the repair of that town's roads when the old parish church was rebuilt in 1732.³⁶ That the original position of these two Usk tiles was in the chancel of St. Mary's Priory, Usk, can be suggested with some confidence, quoting in support John Lewis' words about the original placement of the tiles from the earl's contemporary or near contemporary work on his chapel at Raglan Castle. Lewis says: 'Although the use of these tiles was not exclusively ecclesiastical, outside court circles it appears to have been almost entirely so'.³⁷ The particular significance of the tile bearing the arms of the de Clare family is that it was Richard 'Strongbow' of that ilk who founded St. Mary's and, at the same time, commissioned the layout and building of the new town of Usk, very probably during the first few years of the period December 1154 to May 1170.³⁸

Certainly there is no house or other building in Usk town of sufficient importance to have been likely to contain such floor decoration, with the possible exception of the fine hall house now comprising the two dwellings, 'The Nook' and 'The Old Maltsters' in New Market Street, and there would be no reason for the founder of the Priory to be commemorated in any decorative flooring in that house. The importance of this property was recognised by Mr. Peter Smith, then the Secretary of the Royal Commission in Aberystwyth, after his attention had been drawn to it by the writer. My subsequent research has failed to identify an early owner of that property, which must surely date to the 15th century, but I am now minded to suggest that its scale and quality was such that it is difficult to think of a family wealthy enough to have erected and occupied it other than a member of the Herbert family, just possibly William ap Thomas, the Steward of the lordship? This

36. Clarke S. *et al.*, 'A Malvernian Floor Tile Kiln at Monmouth', *Medieval Ceramics* 16 (1992). See also the illustrated brochure available in the church: *The Medieval Tiles in St. Mary's, Monmouth*.

37. Lewis J.M., 'The chapel at Raglan Castle and its paving-tiles', in Kenyon J.R. and Avent R. (edit.), *Castles in Wales and the Marches* (Cardiff, 1987).

38. Mein A.G., *Norman Usk, op. cit.* 39-41.

suggestion need not conflict with Jeremy Knight's views about the occupancy of the castle keep by William and his retainers, for William and his lady may have moved there after the completion of the repair work to the keep of the castle.

Returning to a consideration of the two monastic tiles, duplicates of their designs are illustrated in John Lewis' 1987 article on Raglan Castle as numbers 11 and 8 on his Fig.26., reproduced here with his kind permission and that of the University of Wales Press as *Fig.3*. In his most recent and major work on the subject,³⁹ Lewis identifies both tiles as Sebroke designs of the Great Malvern series, and they appear as Group 21 fabric and as Nos. 304, the white rose motif, and as 319, bearing the de Clare arms, in his catalogue. What is so persuasive as to who was responsible for the work on St.Mary's, is the fact that the tiles with the design based on the de Clare arms found by Lewis in Raglan and by the present writer in Usk, were without doubt stamped out using the same wooden block or die. It is possible to say this with confidence because both exhibit the identical fault – the crack which had developed in the lower right hand side of the wood of the die. The resulting fault in the de Clare tiles can be seen clearly going right across the lower half of the tile in *Fig. 3*, and in the corresponding position in the Usk de Clare tile in *Fig. 2*.

The fourth of the tile fragments recovered in the 1997/8 excavations on the site of the new vestry marches conveniently in date with the two found by the writer, for it was a corner of another Great Malvern tile, in that case with a design of foliage and again as used in the Abbot Sebroke pavement in Gloucester Cathedral. It therefore almost certainly formed part, with the other two tiles, of the refurbishment of the Priory church by William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke.

The Priory Gate-House.

The building which has always been regarded as being the sole obvious remnant of the town's medieval monastery is in itself something of a mystery. What we have today is certainly not a 12th century structure, as can be seen from Anne Leaver's drawing (*Plate 1*). This shows the apparently late 15th or early 16th century square-headed windows noted by Roland Morant in his study of monastic gate-houses, a welcome work on a previously neglected subject. He notes the lack of cusps in the heads of the window lights and suggests that the building is of the 16th century.⁴⁰ He arrives at this date because of the plain semicircular archways and the revival of that Romanesque style in that century but clearly feels (*p.135*) that Usk is among those less easy to date to the short period in that century before the dissolution, in Usk's case only thirty-five years, for its closure came on 29th August 1536.

Prioress Ellen Williams and her companions must have been aware of the impending end to their way of life for some time before that and certainly by September 1534, for this was when they were required formally to acknowledge the Royal Supremacy and when the monastic estates throughout the country were being valued. The financial state of the Priory had clearly recovered in the century since Adam of Usk came to their help with the five-year right to sell indulgences, whereby one is forgiven a stated number of days in purgatory,⁴¹ for the funds were adequate to permit the grant of

39.Lewis J.M. 1999, *op. cit.* 8-9, 48-56, 152-57, 261-62.

40.Morant R.W. *The Monastic Gatehouse* (Lewes, 1995) 167, 212, Pl. 4.

41.Indulgences can still be gained today, but the spirit differs: *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum* (Vatican website: www.vatican.va).

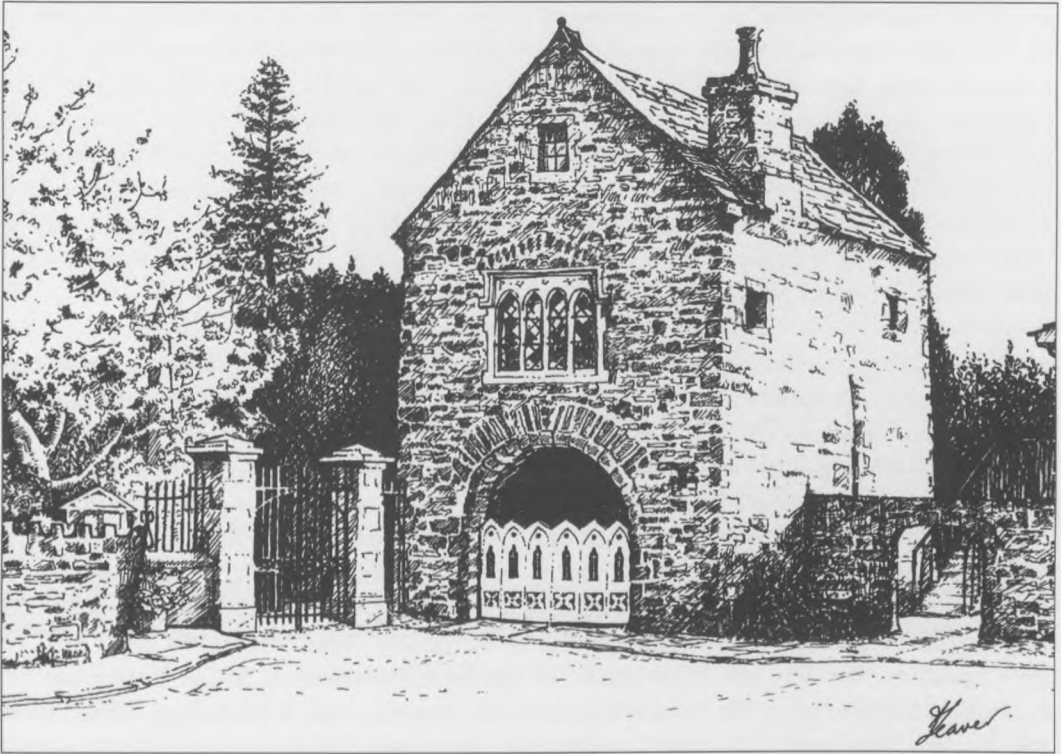


Plate 1: Usk Gate-house (Anne Leaver).

a very considerable pension, and one for which they were unlikely legally to have been liable, to the widow of the Steward of their Manor of Usk Priory, a separate manor within the Manor of Usk. This was William Herbert of Troy, yet another member of that numerous and influential family, and surely himself not an impoverished man on his death shortly after 1517.⁴²

A likely date for the almost complete rebuilding of the gate-house would on balance appear to be towards the end of the previous century, if the building as we see it today is anything like as old as it purports to be, and is not a much later mock-Tudor rebuild as the entrance to the post-dissolution dwelling-house, 'The Priory'. In turn this was replaced for vehicular traffic by the Victorian entrance off Maryport Street, still known as 'The Lodge', which lasted until the land to the rear was sold for the houses of Priory Gardens.

One point of interest about the gate-house is the existence of a blocked doorway visible on the outside of its eastern wall, towards its southern or rear end, probably the postern gate referred to by Rickards.⁴³ It has a Tudor style head and would have given access into the gatekeeper's lodge, a necessary adjunct of any monastic gateway. From here he would have been able to inspect potential callers and decide whether to admit them to the monastic enclosure. The door, the inside of which

42. Williams D.H. 1980, *op. cit.* 45.

43....Rickards R. 1904, *op. cit.* 20.

is visible in the back left hand side of the hall of the gate-house, is diagonally opposite the stairs to the two upper floors, the stairs being built into the thickness of the western wall and lit by the two windows shown, front right, in Anne Leaver's drawing. The two floors above the gate hall were presumably the lodgings of the gatekeeper and were still occupied as a flat until some twenty years ago. The various repairs to the building over the years have removed any scars of the walls of the lodge from the outer face of the east wall, but one can at least suggest its dimensions as having been about eight feet wide from east to west, as indicated by a break in the line of the boundary wall of 'The Priory' to the east of the gate-house, while the buttress to the south-eastern corner of the gate-house could be a remnant of its back wall.

The vertical scar shown by Anne Leaver on the western face of the building is not easy to explain as its length is only that shown, and it does not reach the ground within the entrance yard of the recently rebuilt almshouses. Seemingly an original feature of that wall, the explanation could be that it represented the commencement of the north wall of a building of some height, with a pitched roof and a doorway the arch of which sprang from the bottom of the scar. We have no means of knowing what this building might have been but there are two possibilities, neither of them borne out it must be said by any folk memory, street name or documentary evidence. The first is that it could have been a stable for visitors' horses and the second that it was another example of a chapel associated with a monastic gate-house, a subject dealt with by our present Editor in his recent major work on the Cistercians. The only gate-house chapel remaining in the county is that at Tintern and the excavations by members of the Association some seventeen years ago at Llantarnam Abbey, while revealing the 'great gate' of the abbey, produced no indisputable evidence of such a feature. David Williams explains that 'The primary function of gate-house chapels was undoubtedly to serve those who could not enter the precincts' in the case of male houses, female visitors, while here in Usk it would have been male lay visitors who would rarely have been admitted to the Sisters' precinct.⁴⁴

St. Radegund's Chapel.

One of the facts established by Maylan's excavations was the absence of St. Radegund's Chapel from within the old monastic graveyard to the east of the Priory, for the only buildings in that area were the monastic ossuary and the remains of the recently demolished vehicle repair garage.

We know from Adam of Usk that in 1404 St. Radegund's Chapel was a separate building *infra cepta monasterii* – 'within the enclosure of the monastery', so, if it was not in the area to the east of the church, where was it? No trace of any medieval building was encountered in the building of the houses in what is now St. Mary's Way, an area south of the old graveyard and within the curtilage of the nunnery.⁴⁵ Similarly, field work by the writer and his late wife in the fields to the south of 'The Priory', when the property was owned by Mr David Peterson, revealed no trace of the chapel having lain adjacent to the former Pook Lane, the now lost street which ran round the outside of the monastic boundary wall on its eastern and southern sides, nor any sign of a secondary gateway to the monastery. Yet again, for St. Radegund's Chapel to have been the possible chapel attached to and west of the gate-house appears out of the question, as this would not have been within the monastic enclosure, fronting as it would onto what is now Church Street.

44. Williams D.H., *The Cistercians in the Early Middle Ages* (Leominster, 1998) 202-04.

45. Personal conversations with Mr Peter Rennie of Usk, and Mr Hughes, the builder of the estate.

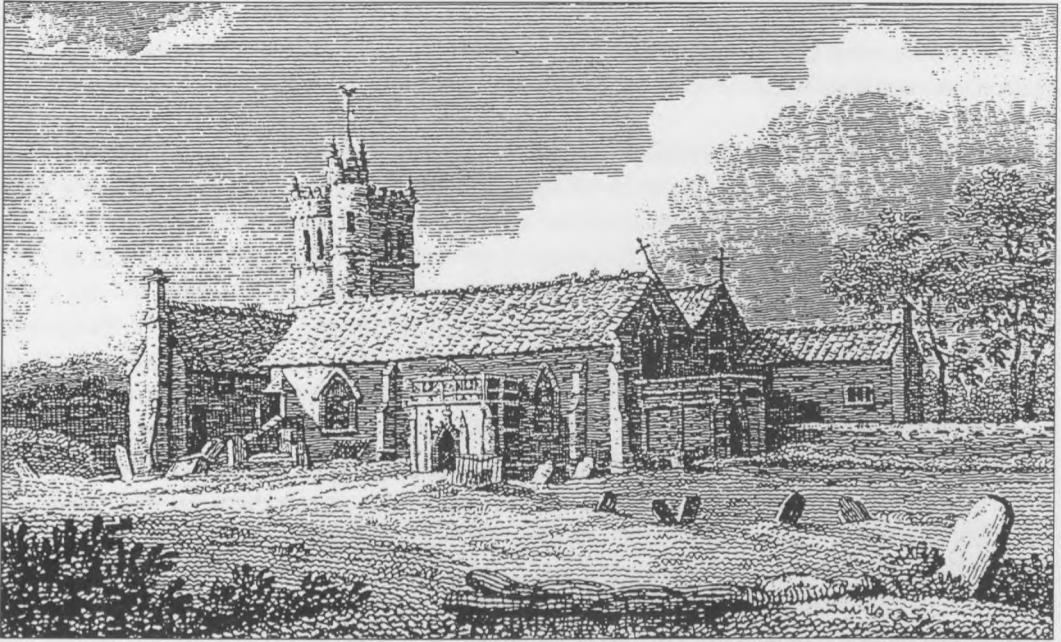


Plate 2: St. Mary's Church in 1799.

Controlled accessibility within the monastic area to a separate building within the permanent care of the Sisters would indicate that the chapel was not an original feature of the complex, but a later addition. Adam certainly gives the impression that the veneration of the saint had been a long term feature of the Priory by 1402, for he says of it in seeking help from the Pope: 'And seeing that within the walls of the same monastery there is built a certain chapel in honour of St. Radegund, virgin nun, once queen of France, whereunto the men of that country bear great reverence, and which they oft-times, and specially at the feasts of Easter and Whitsuntide, are wont to visit; now therefore, preyeth your Holiness ...'. Quite why it was the men rather than the women, as she was surely a particular object of female veneration, who made pilgrimage, presumably from Wales rather than from France, on those festivals is not clear for her feast day was and is August 13th, a day still kept at Jesus College, Cambridge. (By the end of the 15th century a failing nunnery of St. Radegund, it was suppressed by Bishop Alcock of Ely, and its buildings and assets put to the founding of the new college).⁴⁶

Much less popular, and therefore with far fewer dedications to her in Britain than in France, where many are still to be found in the old Aquitaine and much further to the south-west, there seems no clear *floruit* for dedications to her on this side of the Channel and we have no record of the date of the dedication of this chapel to her here in Usk. We know, however, that her original personal foundation, shortly after 550, was of the nunnery of the Holy Cross at Poitiers, where she lived until her death in 587 at the age of seventy. This was thirty-seven years after she had left her husband King Chlotar I, 'a man of shocking character' and whose foibles she had 'endured with

46. Knowles, D.M., *Bare Ruined Choirs* (Cambridge, 1976) 55.

exemplary patience for ten years till his murder of her brother c.550 when she left him'.⁴⁷ So is there any possible connection between Poitiers and Usk which might explain the building of a new chapel here, and if so when?

The writer is able to offer a possible answer to both of these questions as a result of discussions with Jeremy Knight and Jennifer Ward. I would suggest that our chapel to Radegund may have been founded as a result of the gift to the Sisters of a relic of the saint brought from Poitiers to Usk following the juvenile marriage of Gilbert, later to be 'The Red', de Clare (1243-1295), and the young Alicia de la Marche. Gilbert was only ten years old when he was married to Alicia, the daughter of Hugh le Brun of Lusignan, count de la Marche. Hugh's great estates in Poitou and elsewhere were centred on the castle of Lusignan, only fifteen miles south-west of Poitiers on the road to La Rochelle, and this marriage was only one of a number of alliances over the years between the sons and daughters of the counts de la Marche and the heiresses and heirs of the English baronage.⁴⁸ The marriage eventually produced two daughters, Isabella born in 1263 and Joan, born some time between 1264 and 1271, but it became unhappy, perhaps due to the lack of a male heir, and ended in divorce in 1285. Gilbert, by then a powerful and troublesome marcher lord had been granted seisin of his Glamorgan estates by Henry III in 1263 but, for good political reasons, not of the militarily important Lordship of Usk, those lands and much else of the de Clare estates having, to his great annoyance, been granted to his widowed mother Matilda.⁴⁹ Gilbert did not acquire Usk until after his mother's death in 1289, and by then had married Joan of Acre, second daughter to Edward I, who had given him as an heir the Gilbert V de Clare who was to die, aged twenty-three, at Bannockburn as the last of the de Clare lords of Usk.

While therefore Alicia never lived in Usk Castle it was one of the several homes of her mother-in-law⁵⁰ who, estranged by litigation from her son, may have offered her daughter-in-law sympathy over her unhappy marriage, while the Sisters at St. Mary's offered spiritual consolation. Certainly she must have been aware of the existence of the haven offered by the monastery, and it seems more than a coincidence that we have here a very unhappy member of a powerful Poitou family and a shrine dedicated to a saint of Poitiers who had suffered a similar marital indignity. I would suggest that the chapel to St. Radegund came into being at Alicia's prompting and expense towards the end of her marriage to Gilbert, say between 1271 and 1285.

In passing it can be noted that her chapel was not the only feature of St. Mary's which seems to have attracted the devout visitor, for Professor Glanmor Williams reminds us that there were wall paintings of sufficient note to be referred to in a will,⁵¹ while the image of St. Mary Magdalene 'was also a prime attraction'.⁵² There flows from the evidence produced by Canon Davies another piece of information as to the internal layout of the monastic church. This is that the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene cannot have been in the north transept. While the position of the original doorway out into the cloisters through the

47. Attwater D., *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints* (2nd edn., Harmondsworth, 1983) 295.

48. Powicke M., *The Oxford History of England; The Thirteenth Century* (Oxford; 1962) 89.

49. Mein A.G. *Norman Usk, op. cit.* 86. for the litigation between Gilbert and his mother following the division of the Clare lands.

50. These included the original Troy House near Monmouth, Holme Castle, Tewkesbury and Clare itself.

51. Williams G., *The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation* (2nd. edn; Cardiff, 1976) 449.

52. *Ibid.* 491-92.

south wall of the monastic nave can still be seen just to the west of today's pulpit, there is no other trace of any structural break in that wall. If the chapel was not somewhere along that wall one can perhaps suggest that it lay in the now destroyed south transept, possibly alongside the night stair.

Can we now identify the whereabouts of the separate building dedicated to St. Radegund? I would suggest that we have been looking at its re-used structure ever since Sir Richard Colt Hoare drew his picture of St. Mary's in 1799 (*Plate 2*), and that it is the rectangular building projecting from the west end of the nave. Demolished when the nave was extended in the Victorian rebuilding of the church, it had clearly gone through some changes since the dissolution. Thus while it remains behind the garden wall of 'The Priory' and therefore in a position where it would have been 'within the walls of the monastery', it has a chimney on its western end, a possibly Tudor square-headed three light window and a doorway from which there is seemingly no access through the boundary wall into the town cemetery. Those using this door would therefore, if they had been members of the public, have had to gain access via the monastic gate-house.

Its size is striking, for while it is only half the width of the monastic nave Colt Hoare shows it, allowing for artistic license, to have been a good third of its length. Its position, as an addition to the conventual buildings, can be seen as being in an area immediately to the north-west of the north-western corner of the cloisters and perhaps abutting onto the north end of the range of buildings, such as the kitchens or the infirmary, which would have lain along the western side of the cloisters.

The last references which we have to St. Radegund's Chapel are those in two deeds of 1549, both in the National Library of Wales. The first is a grant of 10th April 1549 by Edward VI to Thomas Marsh of London and Roger Williams of Usk 'of the churches belonging to Usk Priory and the chapels of St. Radegund and St. Mary Magdalene in the parish of Usk'. The second deed, of 25th May the same year, is a quit claim by Marsh of his interests to Williams who thus became the sole owner of the right to appoint the priests to those churches and to the two chapels.⁵³ From this it is clear that the veneration of the saint was still current in 1549, despite the intensity of the Protestant reforming movement under the boy king Edward and his advisers. This had, only two years previously, led to the closure of the religious guilds and the seizure by the Crown of the assets of all chantries, including no doubt those at St. Mary's, Usk, possibly four in number and the property of two of which soon came into the hands of the same Roger Williams.⁵⁴

While such veneration seems by the deeds to have been expected to continue indefinitely, clearly this was not to be the case, but when it ceased we cannot say. It may have survived the end of Edward's short reign and the accession of Mary in 1553 with the resulting Catholic restoration, but is unlikely to have survived long into the reign of Elizabeth. Whenever the chapel ceased to hear prayers to the French saint, it is likely to have been during the lifetime of Williams, who survived nearly thirty years of that long and interesting reign, dying in 1585. By 1552, he had sold the dwelling-house, from 1588 known as 'The Priory', to his brother-in-law William ap John ap Jevan,⁵⁵

53.NLW, Llangibby Castle Deeds B. 1848, B. 1324.

54.Bradney J.A. *op. cit.* III (1921) 98; Gray M., 'The Chantries and Shrines of Monmouthshire', *Jnl. Welsh Ecclesiastical Hist.* 8 (1991) 31-32. Dr. Gray refers to the Trinity Chantry, the John Edwards Chantry, and the finding of a priest to say the 'morrow-mass' in Usk Church.

55.Bradney J.A. *op. cit.* III (1921) 50.

but presumably retained the right of appointment. William ap John, great-grandfather of one of Usk's most interesting but least known characters, the Parliamentary Committee-man William Jones of 'The Priory' (*d.*1657),⁵⁶ was dead within three years, the property passing to his wife. All that we can be sure of is that St. Radegund's Chapel had ceased to be of any local interest by the time of the will of Roger Williams, for no more mention of it is made there or in subsequent family wills.

These 16th century transactions would not have included as part of 'The Priory' grounds the long, windowed and chimneyed building which I am suggesting had been the chapel of St. Radegund, for we know that part of it was later used as the ossuary for the parish cemetery, a fact recorded for us by Rickards in his description of the alterations of 1844.⁵⁷ He says: 'A school-house was erected on the site of the north transept, where the vestry now stands, and remained there until 1830, and a bone-house stood at the west end of the Church about midway between that and the Priory gate-house. This building, as well as the school-house, appears in Sir Richard Hoare's illustrations before alluded to.' The school-house referred to is the rebuilt and altered north transept which – as can be seen from *Plate 2* – was of two storeys, presumably with the school-room on the upper floor and the vestry below, the former reached *via* stairs to a door, the scar of which is still visible.

It seems very unlikely that the 'bone-house' occupied the whole of what I am suggesting was the former chapel, and it is possible that the western end, with window and chimney, could have been a separate part of the school, perhaps to deal with the educational expansion during the Civil War and the Commonwealth.⁵⁸ Whatever use was made of the west end of the bone-house, for a school-room or not, it had been finally demolished by 1811 as there are two grave slabs of that date immediately west of the present west end of the nave, the length of which is many feet shorter than the building shown by Colt Hoare.

Conclusion.

It is hoped that the above facts, the speculations and the theories, some of them quite novel, will be accepted as a line of thought which has developed over the years as one in the series of studies of St. Mary's which has included work by a number of people who clearly became as fascinated by Usk's rather fine parish church as is the writer. Without the help and encouragement of several friends including Jeremy Knight, Jennifer Ward, Andy Boucher, our Editor, the Rev Dr David Williams, Mark Redknapp, John Lewis, Jan Barrow, Anne Leaver and Pat Stevens, the Rev Rendle Davies, Vicar of Usk from 1963 and now regrettably just retired, and of my late wife Patricia, little would have been achieved.

Editor's Note: An expansion of Mr. Mein's thoughts on late-medieval/early-modern education in Usk will appear in a subsequent issue of this journal.

56. The subject of a forthcoming article by myself.

57. Rickards R. 1904, *op. cit.* 31.

58. Davies E.T., *Monmouthshire Schools and Education to 1870* (Newport, 1957).

ST. MARY'S PRIORY, USK: AN EXCAVATION IN 1998.

By ANDY BOUCHER and DAVID WILLIAMS.

Introduction.

In September 1998 an archaeological excavation was carried out in advance of the construction of a new vestry. The east half of the site lies within a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Mm 155). The project was jointly funded by CADW and the Parochial Church Council of St. Mary's, Usk. Historically, the site lies in the north-west corner of Usk (*Burrium*) Roman fort (Manning 1981), and within the area of the north transept of the Benedictine Priory of St. Mary founded, before his death in 1135, by Richard de Clare, Earl of Hertford and Lord of Usk.

Historical and Archaeological background.

Roman.

The site lies in the north-east corner of the Roman fort on the line of the defensive ditch just to the west of where the ditch turns southwards. The results of previous excavations show that the Roman defences comprised a c.2m. deep ditch and associated bank. Excavations on the eastern defences to the south of the site (Manning 1981, section E001 p. 89) show 1m. of later deposits above the ditch.

Medieval.

Earl Richard's son, Gilbert, continued the development of the establishment of the priory that his father, who died in 1152, had begun. Richard Strongbow, 2nd Earl of Pembroke (*d.*1176) granted an important charter to the Priory, and this was confirmed (in 1330) by Elizabeth de Burgh, 'Countess of the Marches'. Other significant benefactors, in their capacity as Lord of Usk, included Edmund Mortimer (5th Earl of March, *d.*1424) and his nephew, Richard Plantagenet (Duke of York, *d.*1460). All five were prayed for as 'founders', and alms were given in their memory each 'Shrove Thursday' – meaning here Maundy Thursday (Williams 1980, 44). For the later history of the house *vis-à-vis* relations with the patrons, the effects of the Glyn Dwr Revolt, the construction of the Chapel of St. Rade Gund, and the post-medieval emergence of a school, see the preceding article written by Mr. A.G. Mein. The architectural and archaeological consequences of all four factors will become obvious later in this report.

Archaeological work supports the assumption that the church was cruciform shaped and consisted of a nave, choir, transept and a central tower. Excavations and observations in 1987 identified an earlier robbed-out wall on the line of the boundary between the Garden of Rest and the Duke's Yard. This wall ran north-south for 9.5m. and lay in the right position for the east end of the presbytery. This would make the latter 22.6m. in length the same as the original nave (Maylan 1993). The work also identified 73 burials believed to date from between the 13th and 16th centuries A.D. Excavations in 1964, within the Garden of Rest, identified the north and south walls of the chancel (Mein 1993). A watching brief carried out in 1994 by A.G. Mein located the presence of the north-east corner of the Priory's north transept 6.15m. north of the existing vestry. The east wall had a chamfered base and measured 1.22m. in thickness. The north wall had deeper foundations than the east wall possibly reflecting the fact that it was built on the lip of the Roman ditch and may have needed to be rebuilt (Mein 1994).

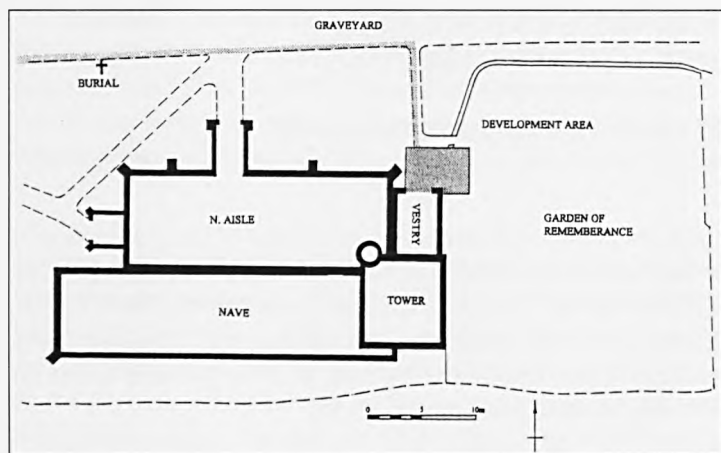


Fig. 1: Trench location as indicated by the shaded area (after Bartosch and Stokes DRWG No. 2047/16).

four pile caps were also excavated in the western half of the excavation, and these measured 0.50m³ (with a base at 16.56m. OD). A watching brief was conducted on the line of a service trench running parallel with the north face of the church. The Ordnance Datum located on the west porch of the church was used (19.10m. OD).

The human burials uncovered during the course of the excavation were examined *in situ* by Dr L. Wilkinson.

The Excavation.

Period 1 – Roman.

The excavations were not deep enough to penetrate into Roman deposits. At the base of the excavated trench outside the north transept was the upper fill of the Roman ditch (046), a light red-brown silty clay containing some early medieval pottery (1250-1450 A.D.). The profile of the ditch was identified from engineer's bore holes along the west side of the site. The position of the ditch based on the results of these is shown in Figure 2.

Period 2 – Medieval. (Figure 2).

The east wall of the north transept of the Priory church was founded on the upper silt of the Roman ditch. It measured 1.2m. in width with 0.66m. of its height surviving. Three small patches of cobbles (030, 031 and 035) on either side of this wall are probably all that remains of the surfaces associated with the priory wall. A small patch of lime mortar (034) butted up against 035. Associated with these was a 0.26m. thick layer of medium sized, mainly angular, stones in a clay/loam soil (024) in the northern part of the excavation to the east of the transept wall. The fragments of pottery and tile recovered from this context date from between c.1100 A.D. and c.1550 A.D.

Period 3 – Burials. (Figure 3).

Nineteen burials were excavated. Only 13 of these could be identified (Table 1). All the burials were aligned west-east. On stratigraphic grounds, they date from between the 12th century and 16th century A.D. Underneath these burials, in three of the excavations for the pile caps, the lower limbs of four

Method of Excavation.

The trench measured 6.6m. by 4.1m. (Fig 1: see Maylan 1993, for location in Usk). It was required as part of the Scheduled Monument Consent that excavations on the east side of the transept wall were to be to a depth of 1.20m. below ground level (16.83m. OD). The other half of the site to the west of the the wall was excavated to the to the depth required for the construction of the floor slab (17.06m. OD). The sites of

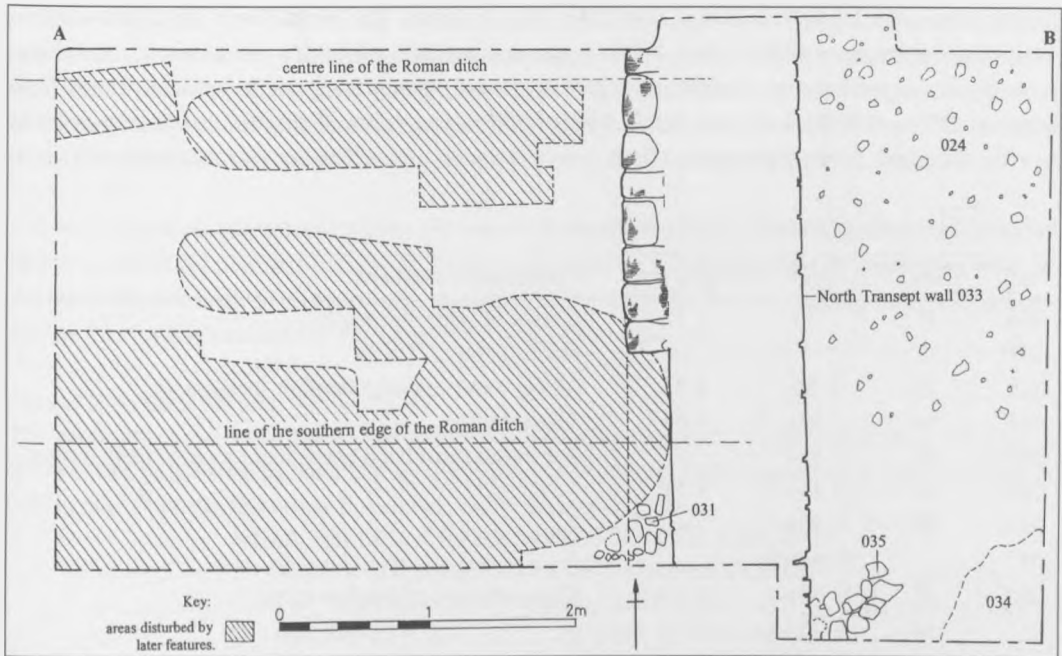


Fig. 2: Features from the medieval Priory showing the line of the Roman ditch beneath them.
(Based on bore-holes at the west end of the site).

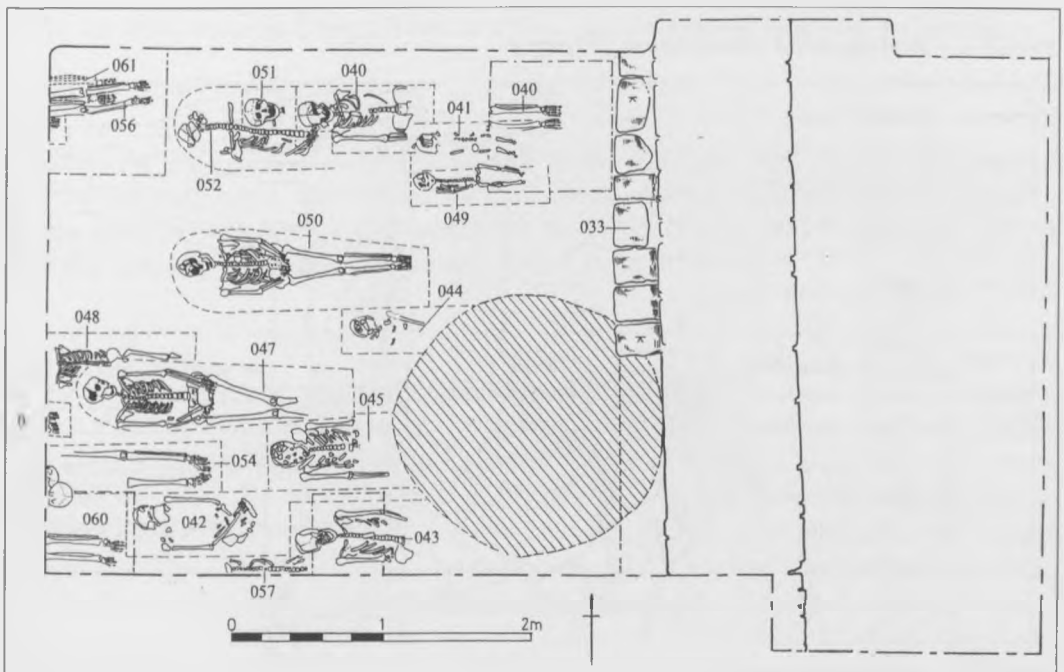


Fig. 3: Burials which probably date from the period 1540-1621.

further inhumations were uncovered (040, 056, 061 and 060). The burials were identified within a band of silt at the base of the trench (032). It was not possible to identify grave cuts in most cases, probably due to the number of intercutting graves present. Pottery from this layer mainly dated from between 1150 and 1640 A.D., two sherds were of 18th century date. It appears that this deposit was heavily disturbed. Better provenanced finds from the burials give a date between 1540 and 1680 A.D.

Table 1: Summary of Burials. (Dr L. Wilkinson)

No.	Sex.	Age.	Height (m.)	Pathology/comment.
040	F	35	1.72	Caries of premolar teeth.
041	–	1	–	Fragmentary.
042	M	35	1.77	Molar tooth exposes dentine throughout.
043	M	50+	1.68	Slight build.
044	F	45+	–	All molars had been shed, their sockets healed over.
045	–	45+	1.71	–
048	F	50+	–	–
049	–	8 months	–	–
050	F	50+	1.59	Osteoarthritis of lumbar spine.
051	M	45+	–	–
052	M	23	–	Congenital – absent upper third molars.
053	–	6	–	–
054	M	Adult	1.71	–

Period 4. – Post-medieval school-house. (Figure 4).

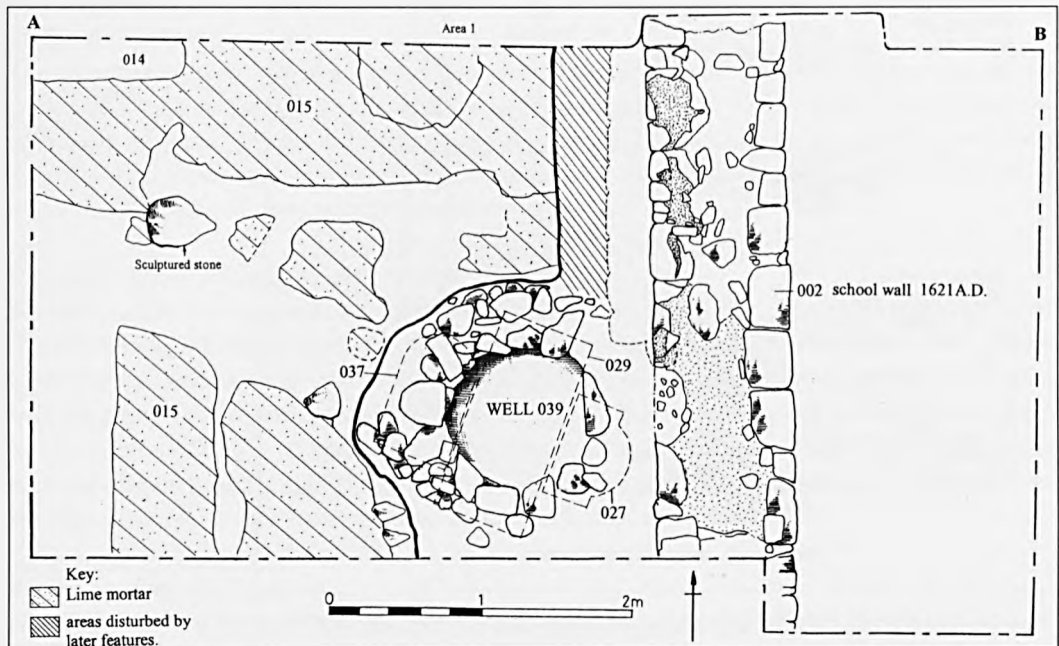


Fig. 4: Features from the period of use as a school (1621-1836).

A later wall (002) was built on the remains of the north transept wall. The east face of this wall continued flush with the east face of the north transept wall, but the west face had been stepped in by 0.26m. A c.30mm. thick, lime mortar floor (015/016) extended over most of the area to the west of the wall and within the school-house. At the north end of this surface was an 80mm. thick dump (026) of yellow-brown mortar.

A well had been constructed within the school building and was built from uncut stone with no visible evidence of a bonding material. Its internal diameter was 0.88m. and its depth was 3.6m. to the top of the latest silt fill. The average thickness of the wall was 0.43m., making the total diameter 1.64m. No further excavation was carried out within the well.

Period 5 – 19th Century.

The three grave slabs had been used to cap the well. The first (027) measured 0.68m. x 0.45m. x 0.07m., and had a shaped head but no inscription. The second (029) measured 1.35m. x 0.62m. x 0.07m. and bore the following inscription on its underside:

**NEAR THIS PLACE ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS
OF Mr ROGER EDWARDS OF LANGWM UCHA
IN THIS COUNTY WHO DIED 1621
HIS BENEFICENT ACTS TO THIS TOWN AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD ARE RECORDED ON HIS
MONUMENT IN USK CHURCH
THIS TOMB WAS REBUILT IN 1823**

The last (037) measured 0.8m. x 0.49m. x 0.05m., and had a curved head with the inscription:

**E T
1732**

Sealing the grave stones was a layer of dark brown gritty soil (028) with an abundance of charcoal and small stones, above which was a red-brown silty clay loam (014) which is known to be later than 1700 A.D. from the finds which were recovered. This lay below two deposits (003 and 004) that contained pottery dating to between 1350 A.D. and 1750 A.D.

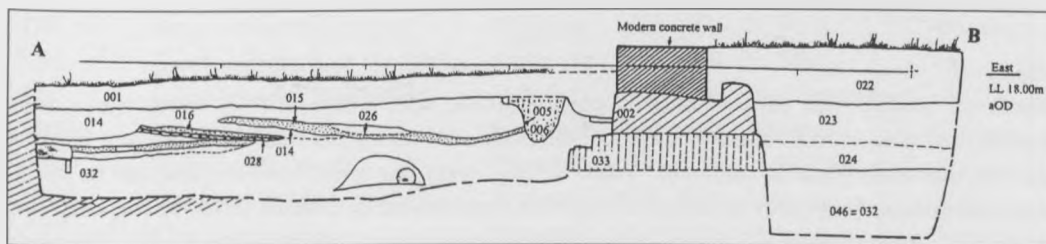


Fig. 5: Northern section of the site.

The articulated remains of a 16-month old infant burial were recovered from a small grave near the east wall of the north transept. These were confused by the insertion of an electric cable at this point but were probably 19th century in date.



Plate 1: Corbel from Wall 002.

The latest phase of wall formed the boundary for the Garden of Rest. It used the two earlier phases of wall for a foundation and measured 0.9m. in width. It was constructed in uncut stone and bonded with a pink-brown lime mortar. The stone size varied but the largest was c.0.3m³. A small statue on a plinth depicting an angel holding a shield was retrieved from this section of wall. (*Plate 1*).

Medieval and later Ceramic finds. By Alan Vince

Introduction.

Forty sherds of pottery, 29 fragments of ridge tile and two floor tiles were present. The ceramic finds indicate activity from the 12th or 13th century through to the early modern period. Of particular note are the floor tiles, one of which is from a source in south Worcestershire and the other has been confirmed by petrological analysis to be a product of the Great Malvern tiler, but from a previously unknown die. A sherd of 17th century Italian Marbled slipware is also of note, since these vessels tend to be found on high status sites (*e.g.* Goodrich Castle).

Medieval.

Medieval pottery was present in four contexts, 024, 032, 046 and 047. Eight wares were represented within the collection (*Table 2*). One is possibly an import from south-western England and the remainder local to south-east Wales, although only one ware, from Penhow, can be tied to a precise source. Fragments of medieval ridge tile were present in contexts 024, 032 and 046. Two main wares were present, a highly micaceous fabric known from Chepstow (Vince 1991, Chepstow Dc.) which was presumed to be locally produced, and sand tempered fabrics similar to those from Chepstow, thought to have been obtained from South Glamorgan, perhaps Cardiff (Vince 1991, Chepstow Ea-e.).

Fragments of four floor tiles were found. Three were of Droitwich-type ware, a sand tempered type decorated with thinly applied slip and of later 14th and 15th century date. These came from contexts 003

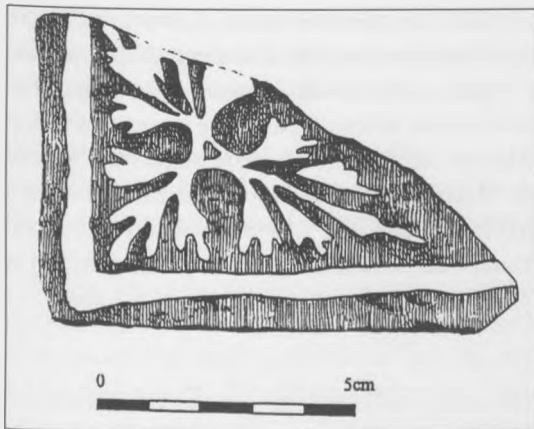


Fig. 6: A fragment of a Great Malvern floor tile.

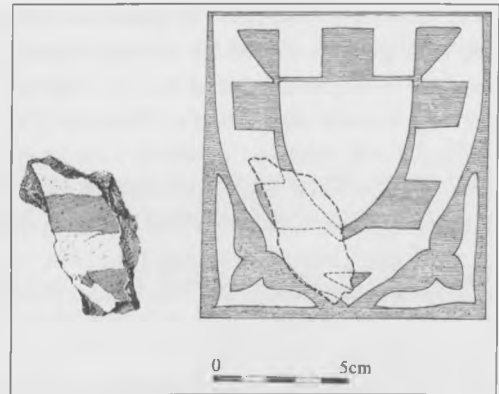


Fig. 7. A tile bearing the arms of the Mortimer family.

and 032 and can all be paralleled with examples found elsewhere in the Severn Valley and South Wales. One is from a single tile pattern, a fleur-de-lys (AGV design 828), a second is from a nine-tile pattern (AGV design 801) and the third is a heraldic shield similar, but probably not identical, to one recorded

Table 2: Ceramic fabrics from the site.

Name.	Full Name.	Period.	Dates.	Area.	Source.
MISC NW.	Misc wheel thrown with sparse inclusions.	nk.		nk.	nk.
A8.	Forest of Dean sandstone-tempered ware.	Medieval.	1100-1350.	Forest of Dean	nk.
PENHOW.	Penhow ware/Chepstow Penhow Fabric HA.	Medieval.	1150-1350.	Southern Gwent.	
A7B.	Hereford Fabric A7B.	Medieval.	1230-1550.	Welsh borders.	Various.
CHHK.	Chepstow Fabric HK.	Medieval.	1250-1450.	Southern Gwent	nk.
CHNK.	Chepstow Fabric NK.	Medieval.	1250-1450.	nk.	nk.
GLAM.	Glamorgan-type ware.	Medieval.	1250-1450.	S. Glamorgan.	nk.
DROIT.	Droitwich-type floor tiles.	Medieval.	1350-1450.	S. Worcs.	Droitwich
GM.	Great Malvern floor tile fabric.	Medieval.	1450-1500.	S. Worcs.	nk.
B5.	Late Malvern Chase glazed.	Post-med.	1530-1640.	Worcestershire.	nk.
FREC.	Frechen stoneware.	Post-med.	1530-1680.	Rhineland.	Cologne.
A7D.	Welsh borders ware.	Post-med.	1550-1750.	Welsh borders.	Various.
NIMS.	North Italian Marbled slipware.	Post-med.	1550-1650.	Italy.	Pisa.
CTP.	Clay tobacco pipe.	Post-med.	1600-1920.	Various.	Various.
SWSG.	Staffordshire White saltglazed stoneware.	Post-med.	1700-1770.	Staffordshire.	Various.
TPW.	Transfer-printed ware.	Modern.	1770-1900.	Staffordshire.	Various.
BRIS.	Bristol stoneware.	Modern.	1780-1950.	Bristol.	Bristol.
NCBW.	19th-Century Buff ware.	Modern.	1800-1900.	Staffordshire.	Various.
RGF.	Roman Greyware.	Roman.	40-1400.	nk.	nk.

from Keynsham Abbey and identified as the arms of one of the Mortimer family (Lowe 1978, No.52 AGV design 777). The fourth tile, from context 025, is from the Great Malvern tiliary, which operated from the 1450's to the end of the 15th century. The design, a corner with stylised foliage, is probably part of a four-tile design used at Gloucester Cathedral in Abbot Sebroke's pavement between 1455 and 1457. Several "daughter" industries were set up by Malvern tilers, including one at Monmouth, but this Usk piece includes large fragments of granite rock together with a quartz sanded base which are identifying characteristics of Great Malvern products (*Fig. 6*; Vince 1977, 259-62). The die is also found at the White Lion in Bristol and Little Malvern Priory, both on tiles made at Great Malvern, and is also recorded at Monmouth. The latter examples however, were produced in Monmouth itself.

Post-medieval.

From the four sherds of Post-medieval date only one was potentially locally-made (Hereford A7D) and one came from Malvern Chase (Hereford B5). The other two were imports; a body sherd of Frechen stoneware, too small for its form and therefore precise date, to be determined; and a sherd of North Italian Marbled slipware bowl (Hurst *et al* 1986, 33-37). A single fragment of a Malvern Chase ridge tile was found, in the lighter coloured fabric which first occurred in the mid 16th century (Hereford B5). These sherds indicate either a high status for this site in the later 16th and early 17th centuries, or may be a reflection of increased access to trade throughout South Wales at this time. Most excavated 16th and 17th century sites in South Wales have produced a high frequency of imported and non-local wares, but these sites are almost always high status settlements or ports (such as Chepstow, and Carew and Coity Castles).

Discussion.

With the exception of a small sherd of possible Romano-British greyware from context 004, the earliest pottery type present is the sandstone-sand tempered cooking pots (Fabric A8 also known locally as Trostrey Ware; Mein *per. com.*). Sherds of this type occur in early 12th century deposits in Chepstow, but were still used in the later medieval period, perhaps continuing in use into the early 14th century. The other medieval wares are likely to be of 13th or 14th century date, although in some cases production continued into the later medieval period. Whether this material represents a single 13th-14th century phase of activity or a sequence spanning several centuries cannot be determined. There are no distinctive types present, which only occur, in late medieval deposits and therefore no evidence for pottery being present between the late 14th and early 16th centuries. However, the floor tiles are all of this date, showing that the church floors were being relaid or repaired in the late 14th-15th centuries, and again in the late 15th century.

The Post-medieval pottery occurs as single sherds rather than assemblages but does indicate activity in the later 16th or, more likely, early to mid-17th centuries. There is a gap, with no sherds of late 17th/early 18th century date, and the one sherd of SWSG present is of a vessel decorated with scratch-blue (i.e. incised design, emphasised by the use of cobalt-rich paint). This decoration was used in the mid to late 18th century and such vessels tend to have been kept as heirlooms and could therefore have been discarded in the 19th century.

Source.

Most of the tile and pottery comes from either local sources or from south Worcestershire (the Malvern Chase, Great Malvern and Droitwich areas). The lack of finds from Bristol or its

hinterland (such as South Somerset or Wiltshire) is quite interesting, and a contrast with both Chepstow and Monmouth. Imports and unprovenanced vessels are rare (CHNK and NIMS) but are as likely to have reached Usk directly.

Discussion of the Excavation Results.

The silts which were located in the base of the excavation outside the north transept are the later fill of the Roman ditch and pre-date the construction of the north transept of the priory.

During the early medieval period the church and priory were founded on the site. The most obvious feature associated with this period is the wall of the medieval north transept. The presence of this confirms Mein's observation that the north transept ran continuously from the tower for 6.15m. to the north. The deposits below the wall (032/046) contained pottery dating to A.D. 1100 at the earliest, which would fit in with a foundation date earlier in the 12th century rather than later.

The remains of cobbled surfaces (lying at a height of *c.* 17.5m. OD) were identified to either side of this earlier wall with the surface inside the building having been almost completely removed by later burials. It is likely that these were priory surfaces at the time of the dissolution. Pottery and tile recovered from these would support this conclusion.

The evidence from the pottery and tile itself is interesting. Firstly there is little evidence for pottery from this part of the site between the late 14th century and early 16th century. The tile on the other hand indicates that floors were being laid or relaid in the 14th-15th century, and again in the late 15th century. The 14th-15th century tiles coincide with the letter of 1404 A.D. from Adam of Usk to Pope Boniface IX requesting the construction of St. Rade Gund's Chapel following the Glyn Dŵr uprising. It is not possible to say whether these tiles were laid in this chapel, but it is interesting to note the Mortimer emblem on one of the fragments. The date of the tile fits in with the Lordship of Usk coming under the Mortimer accession in 1368 and the strong links between this family and Adam of Usk who made the above petition.

The second period attributed to the laying of tiles, the late 15th century, ties in with the 15th century embellishments noted by Rickards including the porches, screens and new windows (1904, 29). One interesting find from the later rebuilding of the north transept wall for the school house was a statue, cut from limestone, which is possibly of 15th/16th century date on stylistic grounds (Richard Stone *pers com.*). Evans (1997) identifies the fact that the earlier Norman work is all red sandstone including the dressings whilst the ornamental detail from the 15th century and dressed ashlar is limestone. On this basis the statue may be 15th century in date.

Deposit 024 formed a band of collapsed masonry with mortar fragments, which butted the original north transept wall (033). The finds recovered from amongst this debris date to between A.D. 1100 and A.D. 1550. This tends to suggest a demolition date for both the transept and chancel in the latter half of the 16th century, possibly just after the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536. Mein (1994) states that: 'There does not seem to have been complete collapse of the north Transept, for there was no fallen roofing or other material within the corner of the building, even though there was some outside to the east.' A similar lack of roofing material was observed during the current excavation, but it is more likely that any fallen debris within the north transept would have been cleared prior to the construction of the school.

It can be argued that the burials, which were located within the north transept, date to a period of just under a century between A.D. 1544 and 1621. They were in two distinct depth bands, although cut into the same deposit, tending to suggest that the site was used over a reasonably long time. On stratigraphic grounds the burials lie in a date window between the 12th and the 16th centuries. It is unlikely that the graves predate the north transept because the walls of the building did not cut any of them, and no graves were located in the area to the east of the wall. The presence of adults of both sexes and children combined with the fact that burials cut one another suggests that these were parishioners buried in graves that were only temporarily marked at the best. The pottery recovered from various grave fills provides a *terminus post quem* between 1530-1680 A.D. from a piece of French stoneware. Earlier pottery in the grave fills probably derived from deposits disturbed during the digging of the graves. It can be assumed that burials in this area would not have continued after the foundation of the school in 1621.

It is known that following the dissolution, the parish reclaimed its church. The selling off of the burial ground to the east (Duke's Yard) in 1544 would have reduced the area of burial ground available to the parish. At this time it is likely that the ruins of the north transept were incorporated into the parish burial ground and these burials possibly date from between the selling of Duke's Yard and the construction of the school on the site.

The north transept was re-used as part of the foundation for the school founded by Roger Edwards in 1621. Stratigraphically there was some debate about the relationship between the well and what was obviously the mortar floor of the school. Initially it was thought that the mortar floor sealed the well, However, it was also noticeable that large chunks of the floor had slipped and subsided in such a way as to overlie one another. Remembering that the entire sequence of deposits lies above the Roman ditch, which is settling beneath them, then it is likely that the stratigraphy has become displaced. This would explain how the mortar floor came to partly overlie the capping stone above the well which was dated 1823. It is likely that the upper portion of the well was removed, and the grave slabs inserted. This well cuts the underlying burials which suggests that it was constructed post-1612, and the overlying grave slabs give a *terminus post quem* for its closure, of 1823. It is known however that most of the wells within the confines of Usk were closed down in the 1840s due to an outbreak of cholera, and it would appear likely that this well was closed at the same time.

Referring back to the slab to Roger Edwards, it is interesting that a similar slab was noted by Bradney on the wall of the church but that his transcription contained different dates with 1624 being the year of Edwards' death. It is perhaps important to recap on a story that Bradney quotes. Apparently Roger Edwards' sons were impatient fellows, and rather than waiting for their inheritance decided to speed things up by cutting the straps of their father's saddle. This plot was uncovered and Roger Edwards endowed his money to the school as a means of disinheriting his sons. This might have been a fair sum, as it also includes an endowment for the schoolmaster. The find of a sherd of high status 17th century Italian Marbled slipware might relate to the same event.

The date for the closure of the school is most likely to be 1836 and the abandoned structure may well have housed livestock for a period after this, which might explain the subsequent damage to the school floor.

The new vestry building was constructed post 1845 (after the writing school was demolished), and presumably at this time the drainage system was installed. This involved water from the down pipes and sink within the vestry being fed into the well by a glazed ceramic pipe; this is still in use to the present day draining into the well.

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THE TINTERN ABBEY CHRONICLES.

By JULIAN HARRISON.

The literary heritage of Tintern Abbey is today largely unrecognized, since the vast majority of that monastery's books have disappeared without trace. Tintern did once have a substantial manuscript collection, to judge by the book chamber in the south-east corner of its central claustral complex, between the chapter house and north transept of the church.¹ However, only one extant manuscript can now be positively attributed to that house, namely a 13th-century Bible purchased on behalf of the National Library of Wales in 1988 (where it is now MS. 22631C).² Contemporary evidence suggests, moreover, that this Bible would not have been kept in the book chamber, but was more likely stored in a cupboard inside the church, where it was easily accessible to the sacrist and other officers of that abbey.³ The books used by the monks of Tintern, and any works which they may have themselves composed, are consequently lost to sight, with one significant exception.

During the 13th and 14th centuries, one or more chronicles were demonstrably maintained at Tintern Abbey, in which were recorded events of local, national and international importance. A number of Cistercian convents kept comparable works at this period, among them Margam and Neath in Glamorgan, and Dore across the border in Herefordshire.⁴ In Tintern's case, the original manuscripts of its chronicles have long since vanished. It is fortunate, therefore, that three seemingly independent witnesses to a chronicling tradition at Tintern Abbey have survived, as follows:

- (1) A continuation composed at Tintern, which was appended to a copy of *Flores Historiarum* from the Benedictine abbey of Holme St. Benets (Norfolk) (London, British Library, MS. Royal 14 C.vi, fos 10r-259r);
- (2) Extracts from a Tintern chronicle transcribed by William Worcestre, who visited that house in 1478 (in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 210);
- (3) A 16th-century transcript of a Tintern chronicle by Thomas Talbot, member of the Society of Antiquaries during the reign of Elizabeth I (London, British Library, MS. Cotton Vespasian D.xvii, fos 60r-61v).

Another text frequently described as a Tintern chronicle has also been identified, though the work in question is actually a genealogy, with some historical commentary, of the patrons of this monastery. This genealogical text is described in *Appendix A*. The three witnesses to the chronicle proper will here be discussed in succession.

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1. Robinson, D.M., *Tintern Abbey* (Cadw; Cardiff, 3rd ed., 1995) 54-55.
 2. Huws, D., 'The Tintern Abbey Bible', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* VI (1990) 47-54; Woudhuysen, H.R., 'Manuscripts at auction: January 1988 to December 1988', *English Manuscript Studies 1100-1700*, 2 (1990) 303-17 (pp. 305-06).
 3. Bell, D.N., 'The books of Meaux Abbey', *Analecta Cisterciensia*, 40 (1984) 25-83 (p. 30).
 4. These chronicles have been published respectively *apud Annales Monastici*, ed. Luard, H.R. (5 vols, Rolls Series; London, 1864-69) I, 1-40 [*Annals of Margam*]; 'Chronicle of the thirteenth century: MS. Exchequer Domesday', *Archæologia Cambrensis*, 3rd series, 8 (1862) 272-83 [*Annals of Neath*]; and *Monumenta Germaniæ Historica*, Scriptores, XXVII (Hanover, 1885) 514-31 [*Annals of Dore*].

(1). The Tintern Continuation of *Flores Historiarum*.

The most substantial witness to chronicling activity at Tintern Abbey comprises the continuation to BL Royal 14 C.vi, a copy of the so-called 'Westminster' *Flores Historiarum*.⁵ *Flores Historiarum* itself has a complicated textual history. The original chronicle (from the Creation to 1249) was compiled at St. Albans under the supervision of Matthew Paris (*d. circa* 1259), its oldest surviving copy (Manchester, Chetham's Library, MS. 6712) having been transferred to Westminster Abbey after additional notices had been entered for the period 1250-65.⁶ It should consequently be noted that this work has sometimes been attributed to a fictitious 'Matthew of Westminster'. Further continuations were later appended to *Flores Historiarum*, the first of which (to 1307) is extant in two distinct versions, now ascribed to 'Westminster' and 'Merton' respectively.⁷ BL Royal 14 C.vi is a representative of the 'Westminster' *Flores*, but has three distinguishing features: it originally extended to the year 1304 rather than 1307, before being continued to 1323; lengthy portions of its text have been silently omitted; while it contains a number of additions relating to the abbey of Holme St. Benets, implying that it was customized for that house.⁸ Some of the prefatory material in this manuscript has been transmitted (in identical order) with a 14th-century copy of the 'Westminster' *Flores* from Norwich Cathedral (in London, British Library, MS. Cotton Claudius E.viii).

The portion of *Flores Historiarum* in BL Royal 14 C.vi spanning the years 1305 to 1323 (fos 254r.-259r.), which was transcribed in one hand and in one scribal stint, makes frequent reference to Wales, and contains four notices which anchor its composition at Tintern: in 1305, Hugh de Wyke became abbot of that house; in 1307, the charters and liberties of Tintern received royal confirmation; Abbot Hugh died in 1320; and he was succeeded in that office by Walter of Hereford.⁹ It might therefore be assumed that the chronicle to 1304 was produced at Holme St. Benets, before being removed to Wales during the first quarter of the 14th century.¹⁰ On the other hand, physical evidence suggests that the whole manuscript should be assigned to a single scriptorium. It will be proposed here that the book in question was transcribed at Holme St. Benets alone, but incorporates source material derivative of the Cistercian convent at Tintern.

Two features of this manuscript demonstrate continuity between both parts of the chronicle.¹¹ First, the decoration applied to this work is consistent throughout, with a distinctive form of initial 'A', painted in blue and trimmed in red, being common to the entire text.¹² This decoration need not

5. This manuscript forms the basis for the text of *Flores Historiarum*, ed. Luard, H.R. (3 vols, Rolls Series; London, 1890) III, 328-48.

6. Vaughan, R., *Matthew Paris* (Cambridge, rev. ed., 1979) 92-109.

7. Gransden, A., 'The continuations of the *Flores Historiarum* from 1265 to 1327', in her *Legends, Traditions and History in Medieval England* (London, 1992) 245-65, 332-33 (especially pp. 245-49).

8. A pencil note to this book (fo 9v) by Sir Frederic Madden (1801-73), erstwhile head of the Manuscript Department at the British Museum, states: 'This copy of the *Flores Historiarum* (ascribed generally to Matthew of Westminster) was written at St. Bennet Hulm, in Norfolk, and has additions of the deaths of the abbots & other particulars relating to that monastery'.

9. *Flores Historiarum*, ed. Luard, III. 328-29, 343-44.

10. *Ibid.*, I, xxii-xxiv.

11. A full description of this book is supplied apud Warner G.F. & Gilson J.P., *Catalogue of Royal and King's MSS. in the British Museum*, 4 vols (London, 1921) II, 134-35.

12. These initials occur at the beginning of each annual ('*Anno domini...*'). It might also be noted that some twenty-six portraits of the kings of England are to be found in this chronicle (marking their respective coronations), and who are typically depicted as being cross-eyed!

nis nuntiis: gratificans et pro
labore suis et nominans: letos
dimisit ad propria et iocundos.

Anno dñi. m. ccc. quinto. Do-
minus rex anglie ordinavit illis
die quod vocat Grailestou et
siliie sup hoc iusticiarios ordinaui
Et fecerit apud Gloucestre circa
purificacionem be marie. anno. x.
quarto pda reg.

Eodem anno in-
cepit forte gelu tduo añ natale
dñi et continuauit se usq; ad festu
sa bntencij mris. ita uidelicet quod
glacies uident excede spissitudinē
duoz pedu. Item eode anno de
Clemens pp coronatus ē apud
Lyons sup Ronam. Eodem anno
dñs Antonius de teco epe dunelm-
lus fcs ē pñartha ierosolimitanis
a dño pp pda. Item eode anno dñs
Hugo de Wyke fcs ē altus tuncue

Anno dñi. m. ccc. vi. vij. idus
decembz apud framelngshū
castrii obut Rogerus Bigoth co-
mes Norfolchie et mariscalcus anglie
cuius ait pñerit dñs et in die ductū
fuit corpus eius apud theford in
Norfolchie et ibi positū fuit in quada
ueta capella in humatu usq; in
nonas Junij illo anno accidente
fena. vij. Et tunc ibidē illo die fū
corp⁹ eius latus honorifice reconditū
et humatu. Item eode anno
obit Johanna de Acres conuul-
sa Gloucestre et sepulta fuit tduo
post sepulturā comitis pda apud
Clare. Eodem anno die sabbati
in p septimana. xl. totata fuit
Alicia de heriaud comitissa Norf-
et mar anglie apud Barcolū. Itē
scylina dñi reg. E. de eius castis
et tenuit. comes mag. vij. idus
decembz. Et me quod dñs

Edwardus rex optinuit scylinam
totā domini et libertatē strogull tam
fraz abbis qñ alioz p. xv. sept et ij.
dies ante ihermacon libertatē abbis
et post mortē comitis pda et ē.

Anno dñi. m. ccc. vij. Incipient
die iudei: Anunciacionis domini
te confirmata fuit libertas abbis et con-
uentus ecclie de Gmēna apud Karle-
olum pda. uidelicet septē et decem
carte ad sectā fratris Edwardi. Itē
eodem anno decimo die Junij apfa-
to dño Rege alie quinq; carte confirma-
bant london. Rege in ptibi Karle-
ol. existente et hoc specialē pceptē.
Et ille decimus dies Junij accidit
in uigil scti Barnabe apul. Et eode
die fē Edwardus pda: recep confirmacionē
Regiam de pfa. v. cartis.

Et post ea computatis tibi: ebdomadi-
bi et quinq; diebi: illuſtis ac nobil-
iur Edwardus rex anglie manū ē
ingressus carnis inuile. Et die
trilladnus scti Thome mris apud
Borgh in sabulo a Karleolo distans
tibi: longis die sui clausit extremū.
Et succūmē familia sua qñ numerus
ē custodit usq; ad aduentū dñi ed-
wardi filii sui et principis Wallie in
telie p quindena integra. Et tunc
p aduentū sui cito ductū fuit cor-
pus pfa. reg. usus Valthū ubiq;
cū deuenit: honorifice iughe iugē
fiebant circa eā et mille pro eodem
cordie in magno numero celebra-
tur usq; tū fin scti Lucie euangelice
Et tū ductū sine portatu fuit dñm
corp⁹ usus london. Et p nocte req-
euit corp⁹ uenabile pfa. reg. in
cūa scti tntat. Scā nocte scēa
scti Pauli. Et tū uenabile dñm
corp⁹ uenit apud Westm. ubi sicut ho-
nestissime iugul iugē fiebant tū

Obit reg
Edwardi

have been added before 1323, when the chronicle terminates. Secondly, a single scribe seems to have been responsible for copying the whole of BL Royal 14 C.vi. A change of ink does occur where the Tintern section begins (fo 254r), and the handwriting of this final portion does become wayward towards its end, but the scribe clearly remains the same.¹³ In other words, BL Royal 14 C.vi did not change ownership at this juncture. One further implication is that the scribe in question was active as late as 1323. It might similarly be argued that this chronicle's home was Holme St. Benets, on the basis of mediaeval annotations to its pages. Next to the obit of Ralph, Abbot of Holme St. Benets (1187-1210), a 14th-century scribe has added in the margin (fo 183r): '*Obiit Radulphus abbas huius loci*' ('Ralph, abbot of this place, died').¹⁴ Perhaps more significantly, an annotation in a 15th-century hand (fo 150r) beside a reference to Ealdred, Archbishop of York (1061-69), remarks: '*Hoc eodem anno [1061] capella sancte Marie de Walsingham per benevalacione illius facta est*' ('In this same year the chapel of St. Mary at Walsingham was founded through his benevolence'). Walsingham (Norfolk) is located thirty miles north-west of Holme St. Benets. The 15th-century annotator of this manuscript showed interest in the history of Norfolk, and so it might reasonably be suggested that he was resident in that county. By extension, the book in question probably never left Holme St. Benets.

BL Royal 14 C. vi, nonetheless, shows affinity with Tintern Abbey. The subject-matter of this chronicle's final section is wide-ranging, describing (among other topics) the machinations of English politics, conflict between Christians and Saracens in the Holy Land, the condemnation of the Knights Templar, and outbreaks of famine. More significantly, it demonstrates local knowledge of South-East Wales, focussing in particular on the Lordship of Strigoil (Chepstow).¹⁵ This work relates that when Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, died at Framlingham Castle in 1306, King Edward I obtained seisin of Strigoil, including that of the lands of an unnamed abbey (identifiable as Tintern) for fifteen weeks and two days until that monastery's liberties were confirmed; the same lordship was presented in 1311 to Thomas of Brotherton, Edward I's oldest son by Queen Margaret of France (and Edward II's half-brother); and it again passed to Hugh Despenser the Younger (*d.*1326) in 1323, this being the chronicle's final notice.¹⁶ The chronicler similarly recorded a miserable harvest in 1316 as a result of heavy rainfall earlier that year, it being stated that a quarter of grain sold for 16 *solidi* in the Lordship of Strigoil, a quarter of wheat for 12 *solidi* and a quarter of oats for 5 *solidi*.¹⁷ Another poor harvest the next year culminated in human mortality unprecedented for a century.¹⁸ The price of grain was then said to have risen from 17 *solidi* after the feast of St. Michael (29 September) to 20 *solidi* about the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (24 June), and again to 25 *solidi* about Lammas Day (1 August), with a quarter of wheat fetching 18 *solidi* and that of oats 7 *solidi*: these figures presumably apply to the Lordship of Strigoil. It should be noted that a typical Cistercian community relied on this produce both for its own sustenance (the

13. This 'Tintern' portion must also be at least one stage removed from the original, since it was copied in a single stint (as opposed to having been continually updated at the end of each year).

14. Knowles D., Brooke C.N.L., & London V.C.M., *The Heads of Religious Houses: England and Wales 940-1216* (Cambridge, 1972) 68.

15. There is an excellent summary of this subject by Wood, J.G., *A Short History of Tintern Abbey and the Lordship of Strigoil: principally based upon documentary evidence* (London, 1904).

16. *Flores Historiarum*, ed. Luard, III, 329, 334, 348.

17. *Ibid.* 340.

18. *Ibid.* 341.

Cistercian diet precluded the eating of meat) and for feeding its livestock over the winter months. Tintern Abbey was itself heavily engaged in pastoral farming, and regularly contracted to sell its wool to markets in mainland Europe.¹⁹

The chronicle in question likewise refers to events and people in Gwent and the surrounding region. One of the Templars examined for heresy by the archbishop of Canterbury in 1311 was named as Thomas, master and preceptor of the house at Garway (Herefordshire) near Grosmont;²⁰ John, son of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester (*d.* 1314), was born at Cardiff on 3 April 1312, but died that same year; the army recruited by Edward II in 1312 included one hundred captains (*'arcitenentes'*) from the Forest of Dean; on 5 July 1315, the king granted a seven-year toll for repairing the walls of Monmouth; and, in 1319, an outbreak of murrain spread from Scotland to England, finally reaching the Welsh Marches about the feast of All Saints (1 November).²¹

Two men receive especial treatment in this portion of the text. At Caerphilly, Llywelyn Bren rose up against royal authority on 23 January 1316, sparking general insurgence among the Welsh. After surrendering himself into the king's peace on 18 March of that year, Llywelyn, his wife and two sons, were sent to the Tower of London to await judgement. Finally, Llywelyn Bren was returned to Cardiff in 1318, where he was convicted of treason and suffered accordingly: he was drawn behind horses and hanged, his intestines burned and scattered in the wind, and his limbs severed and sent throughout Glamorgan as a warning to other malefactors.²² Similar attention is devoted in this part of the chronicle to Hugh Despenser the Younger, brother-in-law to Gilbert de Clare. When Gilbert's patrimony was divided in 1317, Hugh seized for himself Newport and the rightful portion of Hugh de Audley; in 1320, King Edward handed Swansea Castle and the whole of Gower into Hugh's keeping; and the following year civil war was precipitated when Despenser's castles at Newport and Cardiff were captured by his opponents.²³ The contempt felt for Hugh's family by the chronicler is undisguised: *'in magnam superbiam sunt elati'* ('they were puffed up with great arrogance').²⁴

It is not always possible to determine where historical works of this sort were composed, since some chroniclers refrained from mentioning events in their own locality, concentrating instead on matters of international and national importance. It may nonetheless be asserted that the author of this continuation of *Flores Historiarum* was a monk of Tintern Abbey, on the grounds that he demonstrated familiarity with that monastery's affairs. The first direct reference to Tintern in BL Royal 14 C.vi records the elevation of Hugh de Wyke to the abbatial office at that house, *sub anno* 1305, couched in very simple terms.²⁵

19. Williams D.H., 'Tintern Abbey: its economic history', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* II (1965) 1-32 (pp. 9-10). A general context is supplied by *idem*, *The Welsh Cistercians*, 2 vols (Caldey Island, Tenby, 1984), II, 284-308.

20. For a summary of Garway's history and architecture, see Rees W., *A History of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in Wales and on the Welsh Border, Including an Account of the Templars* (Cardiff, 1947), 51-57.

21. *Flores Historiarum*, ed. Luard, III, 333-37, 339, 343.

22. *Ibid.* 339-40, 343. For these events, see further Griffiths R.A., 'The revolt of Llywelyn Bren', *Glamorgan Historian*, 2 (1965), 186-96.

23. *Flores Historiarum*, ed. Luard, III, 342, 344-48.

24. *Ibid.* 348.

25. *Ibid.* 328.

Item eodem anno dominus Hugo de Wyke factus est abbas Tinternie.

(‘Also in the same year lord Hugh de Wyke was made abbot of Tintern.’)

Hugh’s demise is also recorded in the annal for 1320, together with the election of his successor, Walter of Hereford.²⁶ It should be noted that this chronicler commenced his year at the Annunciation (25 March) as opposed to the now more familiar 1 January.²⁷

In uigilia sancti Martini, circa mediam noctem, Londoniis, dominus Hugo de Wyke, abbas Tinternie, diem suum clausit extremum, et sepultus est apud Stratforde extra Londonias, cum ipso tunc existentibus fratre Waltero de Hereforde, tunc celerario dicte domus, et fratre Gilberto Yuor de foresta de Dene, tunc seruitore suo. Item eodem anno, nono die Februarii, uidelicet die sancti Theliay episcopi, electus est in abbatem de Tinternia dompnus Walterus de Hereforde et constitutus presentibus abbatibus de Dora, de Wauerleya, de Regali Loco et de Kyngeswode, et priore Elemosine, cum uno socio, uidelicet nomine fratre Willelmo.

(‘Lord Hugh de Wyke, abbot of Tintern, died at London on the vigil of the feast of St. Martin [10 November 1320], about the middle of the night, and was buried at Stratford [Langthorne Abbey] outside London, being with him at that time brother Walter of Hereford, then cellarer of the said house, and brother Gilbert Yfor of the Forest of Dean, then his servant. Also in the same year, on 9 February [1321], namely the feast of St. Teilo the bishop, lord Walter of Hereford was elected to and established in the abbatial office at Tintern in the presence of the abbots of Dore, Waverley, Rewley and Kingswood, and of the prior of L’Aumône together with a single companion, by the name of brother William.’)

Walter’s promotion to the abbacy of Tintern clearly received the endorsement of his superiors, among them the abbots of Waverley (the senior Cistercian house in England) and Kingswood (daughter house of Tintern), together with the prior of L’Aumône, representing Tintern’s mother house. (It is not clear whether the prior or his companion was named William.) It would nonetheless seem that the abbot-elect’s legitimacy was called into question: Adam Orleton, Bishop of Hereford (1317-27), was required to verify that Walter had been born within lawful wedlock, being the son of Henry Penk and his wife, Margery, natives of the parish of St. Martin in the city of Hereford.²⁸

The remaining notice of Tintern in this chronicle records the confirmation of its charters by King Edward I in 1307.²⁹

Incipiente, die uidelicet Annunciacionis Dominice, confirmata fuit libertas abbatis et conuentus ecclesie de Tinterna apud Karleolum predictum, uidelicet septem et decem carte ad sectam fratris Edwardi. Item eodem anno, decimo die Iunii, a prefato domino rege alie quinque carte confirmabantur Londoniis, rege in partibus Karleoli existente et hoc specialiter precipiente. Et ille decimus dies Iunii accidit in uigilia sancti Barnabe Apostoli. Et eodem die frater Edwardus predictus recepit confirmationem regiam de prefatis .v. cartis.

26. *Ibid.* 343-44.

27. For this practice, see Poole R.L., ‘The beginning of the year in the Middle Ages’, in his *Studies in Chronology and History* (Oxford, 1934) 1-27, and Cheney C.R., ed., *Handbook of Dates for Students of English History* (London, corr. repr., 1981) 4-5.

28. *Registrum Ade de Orleton, Episcopi Herefordensis, A.D. MCCCXVII-MCCCXXVII*, ed. Bannister A.T., The Canterbury and York Society V (London, 1907-08) 185-86; Williams, *The Welsh Cistercians I*, 153; *idem*, *The Cistercians in the Early Middle Ages* (Leominster, 1998) 56, 71.

29. *Flores Historiarum*, ed. Luard, III. 329.

(‘At the beginning of this year, namely on the feast of the Annunciation [25 March], the liberty of the abbot and convent of the church of Tintern was confirmed at Carlisle, namely seventeen charters at the suit of brother Edward. Again in the same year, another five charters were confirmed at London by the lord king on 10 June, the king being in the region of Carlisle and receiving this specially in advance. And that happened on 10 June, on the vigil of the feast of St. Barnabas the Apostle. And on the same day the aforementioned brother Edward received royal confirmation of these five charters.’)

Allusion had already been made to this process in the preceding annal, which states that the king had temporarily appropriated an unnamed abbey’s lands when he acquired seisin of the Lordship of Strigoil. This provides a context for the restoration of Tintern’s liberties. The same confirmation is also noted in the royal archives, as well as in a 16th-century transcription of the relevant documents (London, British Library, MS. Arundel 19).³⁰ The first two charters in this last named collection (fos 1r-12r, 12r-21v) are dated at Carlisle, 20 March 1307, with a third (fos 22r-29v) having been issued at Carlisle on 10 June 1307. It would therefore seem likely that this particular entry in the continuation of *Flores Historiarum* was composed at Tintern: it holds no significance for any other religious house.

Although authorship of this chronicle’s final portion can be attributed to a Cistercian monk, its place of transcription was most probably Holme St. Benets. It remains to explain how source material derivative of Tintern Abbey came to be copied by a scribe in Norfolk. Cultural contact between individual religious houses was not an unusual phenomenon during the Middle Ages, nor was it unknown for mediaeval chroniclers to exchange information; but the convents of Tintern and Holme St. Benets seemingly had little in common, since they lay almost two hundred miles apart and, moreover, belonged to different monastic affiliations. Members of the communities in question must have nevertheless been in regular contact, as a result of the grant to Tintern by Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, of a manor at Acle (Norfolk) in 1302.³¹

Present-day Acle (*NGR*: TG 400 105), equidistant between Norwich and Great Yarmouth, lies merely three miles south-south-east of the site of Holme St. Benets (TG 383 157), both being served by the River Bure.³² The supervision of a Cistercian manor so far from its own abbey, and so close to the estates of another monastery, undoubtedly required careful diplomacy. It is even recorded that John Morris, cellarer of Tintern, travelled to Acle during the summer of 1411/12 in order to inspect that property (National Library of Wales, Badminton Manorial 1575); certain of his predecessors presumably made that same journey.³³ It might therefore be surmised that at some stage during the first half of the 14th century a monk of Tintern loaned the chronicle of his house to Holme St. Benets for copying.³⁴ The hastily-written script of the last few pages of BL Royal 14

30. *Calendar of the Charter Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office*, 6 vols (London, 1903-27) III, A.D. 1300-1326, 88-89, 96-100, 103-06; *Catalogue of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, new series, I ([London,] 1834, Part I. *The Arundel Manuscripts*, 5-6; Davis G.R.C., *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain: A Short Catalogue* (London, 1958) 111.

31. Williams D.H., *White Monks in Gwent and the Border* (Pontypool, 1976) 137-38; *idem*, *Atlas of Cistercian Lands in Wales* (Cardiff, 1990) 63.

32. Ordnance Survey, Landranger Series, sheet 134 (Southampton, 1997).

33. Williams, ‘Tintern Abbey: its economic history’, 8.

34. For other chronicles associated with Holme St. Benets, see *Chronica Johannis de Oxenedes*, ed. Ellis, H., Rolls Series (London, 1859); *Memorials of St. Edmund’s Abbey*, ed. Arnold T., 3 vols, Rolls Series (London, 1890-96) III, vii-xv, 1-73; and Gransden A., ‘The *Cronica Buriensis* and the abbey of St Benet of Hulme’, in her *Legends, Traditions and History in Medieval England*, 239-44.

C.vi likewise implies that it was transcribed under pressure, perhaps because the exemplar had soon to be returned to its owner. The continuation to this copy of *Flores Historiarum* may therefore be cited as evidence for cultural exchange between the abbeys of Holme St. Benets and Tintern.

(2). William Worcestre and Tintern.

William Worcestre may justifiably be described as one of the earliest English antiquarian scholars.³⁵ Previously secretary to Sir John Fastolf (*d.*1459), himself a potential model for Shakespeare's Falstaff, Worcestre spent much of his final years travelling on horseback throughout the West Country and East Anglia, and indulging his fascination for architecture, topography and natural history. The notebook of his various journeys has survived (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 210), which contains important evidence for the existence of a Tintern chronicle.³⁶

William Worcestre visited Tintern Abbey in the late summer of 1478.³⁷ According to his notes, he left his native city of Bristol on Thursday, 3 September, going by water to (?)Avonmouth and then riding to Aust Cliff, where he spent the first night. Leaving there the next day, he went by water to Chepstow, arriving in time for dinner, and then continued to Tintern. He subsequently passed the whole of that Saturday and Sunday at this monastery (5-6 September), departing on the Monday morning for Chepstow. Having crossed the Severn estuary, Worcestre returned via Aust Cliff to Westbury on Trym, where he heard divine service on Tuesday, 8 September, reaching Bristol that same afternoon.

Worcestre's notebook records a number of historical and architectural details pertaining to Tintern.³⁸ This entry commences with extracts from an obituary calendar, headed in his own hand: *'De obitibus Fundatorum et de genere propinque eorum Ecclesie sancte Marie Tynternie ut in antiquo kalendario Austclyff inueni registratum'* ('Obits of the founders of the church of St Mary, Tintern, and of their close kinsmen, as I found registered in an ancient calendar at Aust Cliff'). There then follows the names of twelve tenants of Acle in the time of Roger Bigod, together with assessments of that manor's income. Next, Worcestre reported measurements of the monastic buildings at Tintern, including those of the church, the cloister and chapter house, and the infirmary with its separate chapel.³⁹ Finally, he transcribed a series of Latin memoranda for a handful of years between 1148 and 1288, some of which refer to events at Tintern itself. These memoranda were potentially copied from a chronicle in possession of the monks of Tintern Abbey, the original manuscript of which is untraced.

35. *The Dictionary of National Biography*, XXI, 912-14; *William Worcestre: Itineraries*, ed. and trans. Harvey J.H. (Oxford, 1969), ix-xviii.

36. James M.R., *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College Cambridge*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1912) 500-07; *William Worcestre: Itineraries*, ed. and trans. Harvey, xviii-xxii. Worcestre's commonplace book (London, British Library, MS. Cotton Julius F.vii) makes no reference to Tintern.

37. *William Worcestre: Itineraries*, ed. and trans. Harvey, 36-37.

38. *Ibid.* 54-63.

39. For the architectural history of this house, see Robinson, *Tintern Abbey*, 27-68, and Coppack G. *et al.*, 'A gazetteer of the Cistercian abbeys in Britain', in Robinson D. ed., *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain: Far from the Concourse of Men* (London, 1998) 63-205 (pp. 186-91). I am extremely grateful to Dr David Robinson for his comments on the relationship of Worcestre's testimony to the surviving remains at Tintern.

The first Tintern document cited by William Worcestre was clearly some form of calendar, which noted the day and month when each benefactor or monk of that house died, so that these anniversaries were commemorated at the appropriate time. Most Cistercian convents undoubtedly maintained obituary calendars, a notable surviving example being that from the nunnery of Wintney (Hampshire) (London, British Library, MS. Cotton Claudius D.iii, fos 140v-162v). As Thomas Talbot also preceded his transcript with a list of Tintern obits, Worcestre's testimony is reproduced here.⁴⁰ Those names marked with an asterisk recur in Talbot's list.

6 January	Earl Gilbert
8 February	Count Robert of Artois
11 March	Isabella, countess of Pembroke
27 March	Richard I, king of England
29 March	*Matilda, countess Warenne.
10 March	*Walter [fitzRichard], founder of Tintern Abbey.
15 April	*Richard, earl Marshal.
20 April	Earl Richard [Strongbow]
3 June	Countess Sybil, mother of William, earl of Pembroke
27 June	*Geoffrey [corr. Gilbert] Marshal, earl of Pembroke
12 July	Margaret, countess of Blois
13 July	Ralph Bloeth junior
14 July	Philip [II], king of France
6 November	Louis [VIII], king of France
19 November	Countess Elizabeth
28 November	Blanche [of Castile], queen of France
5 December	Margaret, countess of Flanders
23 December	Berenger and the countess, his sister
24 December	Anselm Marshal
29 December	*Matilda de Clare, countess of Gloucester and Hereford
7 December	*Roger Bigod, earl Marshal, who built the church of Tintern
24 August	*Thomas of Brotherton, Marshal of England

Most of these obits occur in chronological sequence, indicating that William Worcestre scanned the calendar's pages for entries of interest. It is likewise improbable that these were the only names to be found in this document, as comparison with Talbot's transcript demonstrates. The latest name in Worcestre's list is that of Roger Bigod (*d.*1306), which suggests that the monks of Tintern continued to update their calendar until at least the first decade of the 14th century. This entry for Earl Roger furthermore states: '*...obiit die 7^o Decembris super litteram E ut in Kalendario Ecclesie Religiosorum Tynternie*' ('...he died on 7 December, on the dominical letter E [a Wednesday], as in the calendar of the monks' church at Tintern').⁴¹ In other words, Worcestre compared the copy he transcribed at Aust Cliff with a similar calendar (perhaps the original book) kept at Tintern.

After noting the names of the tenants of Acle, and describing with great precision the dimensions of certain buildings at Tintern Abbey, William Worcestre turned his attention to a brief series of

40. *William Worcestre: Itineraries*, ed. and trans. Harvey, 54-55.

41. On the use of dominical letters in the ecclesiastical calendar, see Cheney G.R. ed., *Handbook of Dates for Students of English History* (London, 1970) 6-9.

historical memoranda. The notices in question are typical of those in many mediaeval chronicles, implying that they were copied from some similar text. This testimony to chronicling activity at Tintern is therefore invaluable, even though Worcestre's method of reporting was highly idiosyncratic. It seems probable that in the original chronicle these historical entries were listed in chronological order; but in Worcestre's transcript the first memorandum refers to the death of King Henry II of England in 1189, followed in sequence by notices for the years 1200, 1175, 1148, 1287-88, 1242 and 1246.⁴²

Worcestre's transcription:

1189. *Pridie Nonas Jullij obiit Henricus Rex secundus Anglie et sepultus est in Normannia. Henricus Rex dedit maritagium Isabelle filie Ricardi Strangbow Willelmo Marescallo primo et sic factus est comes tocius Pembrochie et dominus tocius hereditatis.*
1200. *Abbatia de Voto in Hibernia. Willelmus Marescallus fundauit*
1175. *Ricardus Comes de Strangbow obiit*
1148. *Gilbertus. Gilbertus Strongbow obiit*
1287. *Hokk Aprilis Conuentus Ecclesie Beate Marie de Tynterna jntravit dictam Ecclesiam ad celebrandum in noua ecclesia. Et quinto nonas Octobris in anno sequenti conuentus intrauit in choro et prima missa celebrata fuit ad magnum altare.*
1242. *Gilbertus Marescallus obiit et sepultus est apud novum Templum London .5^o. kalend. Jullij et obiit in quodam Torneamento apud Warewyk et eodem anno Walterus quartus filius Willelmi Marescalli successit in hereditatem antecessorum suorum et factus est comes Pembrochie.*
1246. *Et obiit anno Christi .1246. videlicet .5^o. kalend. Decembris apud Castrum Godrici.*
1246. *Ancelinus quintus frater obiit et apud Tynternam sepultus decimo kalend. Januarij.*

Translation:

1189. On 6 July died Henry II, King of England, and he was buried in Normandy. King Henry gave the marriage of Isabella, daughter of Richard Strongbow, to William Marshal the first, and thus he became earl of all Pembroke and lord of the whole inheritance.
1200. The Abbey of the Vow [Tintern Minor] in Ireland. William Marshal founded it.
1175. Richard, Earl of Strongbow, died.
1148. Gilbert. Gilbert Strongbow died.
1287. On Hock Day [*i.e.*: the Tuesday after Low Sunday; 14 April that year] the convent of the church of St. Mary of Tintern entered the said church in order to celebrate mass in the new church. And on 3 October in the following year, the convent entered the choir and the first mass was celebrated at the high altar.
1242. Gilbert Marshal died, and he was buried at the New Temple in London on 27 June; and he died in a certain tournament at Warwick. And in the same year Walter, the fourth son of William Marshal, succeeded in the inheritance of his ancestors and was made earl of Pembroke.
1246. And Walter died in the year of Christ 1246, namely on 27 November, at Goodrich Castle.
1246. Anselm, the fifth brother, died, and he was buried at Tintern on 23 December.

Worcestre's notebook later passed through the hands of another antiquary, Robert Talbot (*d.* 1558), who added annotations to many of its pages. It may be no coincidence that it was Robert's second son, Thomas Talbot, who made the remaining transcript of a chronicle from Tintern Abbey.

42. William Worcestre: *Itineraries*, ed. and trans. Harvey, 60-63.

(3). Thomas Talbot's Transcription of a Tintern Chronicle.

The final witness to the existence of this Tintern chronicling tradition is to be found in the notebook of Thomas Talbot (London, British Library, MS. Cotton Vespasian D.xvii, fos 60r-61v). Before 1580, Talbot had become Clerk of the Records at the Tower of London; he seems also to have been a founder member of the Society of Antiquaries, since a 'Mr Talbot' attended its meetings in 1590 and 1591.⁴³ (The date of Talbot's death is unknown.) BL Cotton Vespasian D.xvii contains a number of extracts from mediaeval chronicles and other pedigrees, as transcribed by Thomas Talbot, one of which is entitled: '*Ex cronica de Tinterne*'.⁴⁴ This book subsequently came into the possession of Sir Robert Cotton (*d.*1631), a fellow member of the Society of Antiquaries, whose manuscript collection was eventually left to the nation.

Although Robert Talbot had access to William Worcestre's transcription of these Tintern memoranda, it cannot be proved that Worcestre's book ever came into the hands of Thomas Talbot. Talbot's own copy of this Tintern text nonetheless has much in common with that reported by Worcestre, though representing a translation of the chronicle into English. Both transcripts seem to be associated with a list of obits, which may indicate that the obituary calendar and chronicle were to be found in the same mediaeval manuscript. Thomas Talbot's excerpts may themselves be derived from an earlier transcription – he need not have translated this work for himself. It is clear, however, that Talbot's version was not copied from Worcestre's notebook.

Thomas Talbot's transcription of this Tintern Abbey chronicle has hitherto been unpublished. It is reproduced here by kind permission of the British Library. I have attempted to provide a faithful rendition of Talbot's spelling and punctuation.

The following editorial conventions apply:

<u>.7. ides May</u>	words added by Talbot in the margins of his transcript;
was slane	words struck through by Talbot;
^{a Norman}	words added by Talbot above the line;
<???	illegible words.

London, British Library, MS. Cotton Vespasian D.xvii, fos 60r-61v.

[fo 60r].

Ex cronica de Tinterne

Maude Bigod countesse of Warren ended her life .30. of Marche.

William Marshall the Yonger died the .6. of Aprile.

Walter founder of the churche of Tinterne died the .10. of Aprile.

Erle Richard the Yonger died the .15. of Aprile.

William Marshall erle of Penbroke died .14. May.

Gilbert Marshall died .27. of June.

Thomas Brotherton Marshall of England died the .24. of Auguste.

Walter Marshall erle of Penbroke died the .26. of November.

43.*The Dictionary of National Biography*, XIX, 337. See further Wright C.E., 'The Elizabethan Society of Antiquaries and the formation of the Cottonian Library', in *The English Library before 1700*, eds. Wormald F. & Wright C.E. (London, 1958) 176-212.

44.For this manuscript, see Watson A.G., *The Manuscripts of Henry Savile of Banke* (London, 1969), 78-82.

The anniversary of Roger Bigod the .6. of December.
Maude of Clare countesse of Glocestr' died the .30. of December.

- Anno .1113. The abbay of Tyntern was founded by Walter ~~the~~ ^{the} son of Richard who came into England with William Conquiror, the 16to day .7. ides May .13. yere of the reigne of the son of William Bastard.
- 1136 The .4. ides of Aprile died Walter the founder of Tyntern the .7. yere after the foundation.
1138. The .4. yere of Stephan, Gilbert Strangbow succeeded in the inheritance of Walter his uncle at Strigull, and this Gilbert was created the first erle of Penbroke.
- 1148 Richard Strangbow erle of Penbroke succeeded in the inheritance of his father G.
1175. Richard Strangbow erle of Penbroke died and ^{left} one onely doghter for his heyre.

[fo 60v].

- King Henry gave the mariage of Isabel doghter of Richard Strangbow to William Marshall and so he was made erle of Penbroke.
1200. William Marshall founded the abbay of Vato in Ireland and made abbot there a monk of Tyntern.⁴⁵
1219. Will. Marshall the Elder died .17. kal. Aprilis and is buried in the Temple and William his son succeeded hym.
1220. Isabel countesse of Penbroke died and is buried at Tintern.
1231. William Marshal the Yonger died, and lieth in the Temple. And Richard Marshall the .2. the second brother succeeded in the inheritance of Penbroke and Marshall.
1320. Roger Bigod gave the manor of Ocle to the churche of Tintern.
1234. Gilbert Marshal the .3. brother succeeded by cause Richard the .2. brother was slayn in batel against the kinge.
1243. Gilbert Marshal ~~was slayn~~ ^{died} at a torniament at Norwiche buried at the Temple. And Walter the .4. brother succeeded.
1246. Walter Marshal died and is buried at Tintern. And the same yere the inheritance was devided amongst .5. doghters of ~~Walter~~ ^{Walter} William Marshall and Isabel his wife. And Maud the eldest doghter ^{with the High King} countesse of Northfolke Suffolke and Warren gave in her lyfe tyme the rod of the office of marshal with ?chapping towards to Roger Bigod her eldest son. Jane married to Garine of Mont Canisy. Isabel married to Gilbert de Clare erle of Gloc'. Sibilla wife to William Ferries erle of Derby. Eva the .5. doghter was married to William de Brouse

[fo 61r].

1301. The new churche of Tintern abbay, 32 yeres in building, was finished by Roger Bygod, and at his request was halowed the .5. kalends of August.
1298. Humfrey Bohun died. The exchequer removed from Westm' to Yorke.
1296. Edmunde the erle of Lanc' died.
1299. The chapel of Our Lady nere to Gildhall ^{at} at London was builded. Thomas of Brotherton the .2. son was borne at Brotherton nere to Went Bridge the .1. of June.
1301. Edmund erle of Cornwall died, and was buried Assherige.⁴⁶
1302. Agreement was made betwene King E. .1. and Roger Bigod erle of Northf. so that the E. issues succede in all the inheritance of Bigod.

45.For William Marshal's motivation, see Bernard J.H., 'The foundation of Tintern Abbey, Co. Wexford', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 33C (1916-17) 527-29.

46.Earl Edmund was founder of the house of Bonhommes at Ashridge (Hertfordshire).

1304. The 33 of E. .1. the erle of Warren died and was buried at Lewes.
1306. The 34 of E. .1. the .11. kal of June Edward the prince was made knight on Whitsunday at Westm' by his father, and then were made 303 knightes .303. knights. The erles of Herford and Lincolne put the spores on hys fete. There were then at London a thousand knightes .1000. knightes by the estimation of the haralde.
1307. The 35 of E. .1. the .8. kal. of May Joan of Acres the king's doghter and countesse of Gloc' died at Clare.
1308. Jamys Botemer and William Basing shirefs of London.⁴⁷
1310. The .4. of Ed. .2. Henry Lacy erle of Lincolne, the second kal. of Marche being the first Sunday in Lent he died was buried in Poules at London buried in St Dunstans chapel. He died the .8. ides of Ffebr'.
1314. The .7. of Ed. .2. in the vigil of St Jamys died Raufe Baldocke bishop of London who gave .200. marks to the building of the new worke of Powles and left <??> in his testament to the same workes.

[fo 61v].

1287. Thomas Cantilupe bishop of Hereford ^{a saint} died. Guy of Montfort was slayne in Cicelia.
1290. Gilbert of Clare erle of Glocestr' married Joan of Acres the kings doghter. Thomas Wayland chefe justice dyd abiure the realme for abusinge of the lawes.

This version of the Tintern chronicle makes occasional reference to that abbey, beginning with its foundation *sub anno* 1113. That event is traditionally dated 1131, thereby indicating that Talbot miscopied this annal number.⁴⁸ Other notices of Tintern are the death of its founder, Walter fitz Richard, in 1136; the foundation of Tintern Minor *sub anno* 1200, colonized by monks from Wales; the burials at Tintern of Isabella, Countess of Pembroke (1220), and Walter Marshal (1246); the completion and consecration of its new church in 1301;⁴⁹ and the grant by Roger Bigod of the manor of Acle, *sub anno* 1320 (to be corrected to 1302). The original work may have also made more mention of this house, since Talbot's transcription is explicitly a selection of the chronicle's entries, rather than a complete copy.⁵⁰ In contrast, those statements entered in the transcript's margins (underlined in my edition) may not have been found in Talbot's exemplar; they might easily have been added from other sources known to him.

The combined testimony of William Worcestre, Thomas Talbot and the Holme St. Benets *Flores Historiarum* demonstrates that the monks of Tintern Abbey compiled at least one chronicle during the 13th and 14th centuries. Indeed, there is little correspondence between the continuation of *Flores Historiarum* on the one hand, and the transcripts by Worcestre and Talbot on the other, implying that we are here dealing with two separate works. The first of these posited chronicles was made available to an author writing at Holme St. Benets, and at that stage extended to the year 1323; the second postulated text seems to have been more concise, and was potentially transmitted

47. Public Record Office, Kew, *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales, from the earliest times to A.D. 1831*, Lists and Indexes, 9 (London, 1898) 201 [James le Boteler and William de Basing].

48. Knowles D. & Hadcock R.N., *Medieval Religious Houses: England and Wales* (Harlow, 2nd ed., 1971) 114.

49. The extent of Bigod's contribution to this rebuilding campaign is open to question, on which see Robinson, *Tintern Abbey*, 32-37.

50. For a similar partial transcription of a Cistercian chronicle from Graiguenamanagh, see Nicholls K.W., 'Late medieval Irish annals: two fragments', *Peritia*, 2 (1983) 87-102 (pp. 92-102).

in conjunction with an obituary calendar. It must be admitted that neither chronicle is exceptional in scope or function; but their principal value lies in providing evidence for the history of South-East Wales, and more specifically for that of the Cistercian community at Tintern.

Appendix A: The Tintern Genealogy.

Some six early modern transcripts have survived of a genealogical text attributed to Tintern, which names the lords of Strigoil from Walter fitz Richard to Earl Roger Bigod.⁵¹ An edition of one version of the document in question was first published in 1655.⁵² This text focusses in particular on the descendants of William Marshal the Elder (*d.*1219), whose five surviving sons all died without producing an heir.⁵³ Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk (*d.*1306), was the grandson of Matilda, daughter of William Marshal.

(1). London, British Library, MS. Cotton Cleopatra C.iii, fos 293v-294r: This 16th-century copy of the genealogy is that edited (with certain omissions) in *Monasticon Anglicanum*. It is headed: '*In cronicis abbathie de Tynterne in Wallia reperitur sic*'. The other versions differ from it in a number of respects, perhaps implying that some or all of them were transcribed from another exemplar (or exemplars).

(2). London, British Library, MS. Harley 1087, fos 55r-58v: An expanded version of this text, comprising the 'chronicle' itself (fos 55r-56r) (beginning: '*In cronicis abbathie de Tynterne in Wallia reperitur sic*'), with a pictorial genealogy of the Clare family (fos 56v-58v). This book was owned by one John Spicer towards the end of the 17th century.⁵⁴

(3). London, British Library, MS. Harley 3648, fo 17r/v: Again introduced as: '*In cronicis abbathie de Tynterne in Wallia reperitur sic*', this copy differs from the printed edition in its description of the marriages and descendants of Matilda, daughter of William Marshal.

(4). London, British Library, MS. Harley 5804, fo 269r/v: A 17th century transcript of the genealogy, entitled: '*Ex libro Abbathie de Tinterne in Wallia*'.⁵⁵ This version is highly curtailed, ending with the death and burial of William Marshal (1219).

(5). London, British Library, MS. Harley 6148, fo 18r: This volume originally belonged to Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury (*d.*1556), and contains copies of his letters, probably in his

51. Owen E. ed., *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Relating to Wales in the British Museum*, Cymmrodorion Record Series, 4 (London, 1900-22), Part I, 36, 87, 218, 403, 40, 463-64.

52. Dodsworth R. & Dugdale W., *Monasticon Anglicanum, sive Pandectæ Coenobiorum Benedictorum, Cluniacensium, Cisterciensium, Carthusianorum, a primordis ad eorum usque dissolutionem* (London, 1655) I, 724-25; Dugdale W., *Monasticon Anglicanum: A History of the Abbies and other Monasteries, Hospitals, Frieries, and Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, with their Dependencies in England and Wales*, 6 vols in 8 (London, rev. ed., 1817-30) V, 269-70.

53. For a comparable text from Dunbrody Abbey in Ireland, see *Chartularies of St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin: with the Register of its House at Dunbrody, and Annals of Ireland*, ed. Gilbert J.T., 2 vols, Rolls Series (London, 1884) II, 140-46. There is a family-tree of the lords of Strigoil apud Wood, *A Short History of Tintern Abbey*, opposite p. 20.

54. Wright C.E., *Fontes Harleiani: A Study of the Sources of the Harleian Collection of Manuscripts preserved in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1972) 311.

55. *Ibid.* 128, 209.

secretary's hand.⁵⁶ It was later owned by Sir Richard St. George (*d.* 1635), successively Norroy King of Arms and Clarenceux King of Arms, who added other texts (including this Tintern document) to its blank pages. The work itself is headed: '*Ex Cronicis abbatie de Tintern extractis per Henricum Ferrere*': Henry Ferrers (*d.* 1633) was an antiquary who collected materials for a history of Warwickshire, later utilized by Dugdale. This extract treats only of the seven daughters of Sibyl (fourth daughter of William Marshal) and her husband William de Ferrières, Earl of Derby.

(6). *London, British Library, MS. Lansdowne 447, fo 61r/v*: This book again belonged to Richard St. George, since it contains his dated *ex libris*: '*Liber Ricardi St George militis Clarenceux Regis armorum 1624*'. The genealogy is entitled: '*In cronicis abbatie de Tynterne in Wallia reperitur sic*'.

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⁵⁶*Ibid.* 118-19, 211, 262, 292-94.

ST. MICHAEL, OUR LADY, AND ST. CADOC: SOME ANCIENT MONMOUTHSHIRE DEDICATIONS.

By R.W.D. FENN and J.B. SINCLAIR.

In the 8th century, dedications to St. Michael the Archangel appeared in the border country and this, for the Welsh, represented a departure from their earlier practice of commemorating the founder of a church in its ecclesiastical place-name. The cult of St. Michael gained impetus in the west from the famous vision on Monte Gargano in Italy at the end of the 5th century. Honoured as the guardian and escort of the dying, many of his early dedications are associated with cemeteries, and his cult was introduced to England by Roman missionaries like Augustine, Birinus and Theodore, all of whom must have been familiar with it in Italy.

The Celts also knew the saint. Intrepid travellers, they had seen the churches dedicated to him in Rome and elsewhere. At the beginning of the 7th century the Irishman Columbanus dedicated a chapel to him in his Italian monastery at Bobbio. In the second vision of Adaman, Columba's biographer, St. Michael is named alongside Our Lady and St. Peter as a special protector of the Irish. St. Michael is also prominent in Irish place-names and poetry.¹

The Welsh, however, appear to have been less familiar with him. In the Age of the Saints cemeteries were an important part of the saint's *llan*, but they are regarded as belonging to God and the saint who founded them. According to the 12th century *Life* of St. Cadoc, for example, the saint made: 'a very beautiful cemetery dedicated to the honour of God',² but there was no mention of St. Michael. Similarly, when St. Cadoc builds additional chapels, they are given to his disciples and not to the archangel. Apart from two unhistorical visits, one by St. Cadoc to the Cornish St. Michael's Mount, and one by St. Illtud to the Breton Mont S. Michel, neither of which places was connected with St. Michael in the 6th century, the archangel does not appear in the *Lives* of the Welsh saints. Angels in general seem to have been slow in establishing themselves in Welsh devotion, and there is no sculptured reference to them on any Welsh monument before the late 9th century, at the earliest.³

Nevertheless, the earliest English dedication to St. Michael appears to have had a Celtic background and belongs to St. Chad in Mercia. Chad, though an Anglian, was trained by the Celtic Church in Northumbria, and when he became bishop of the Mercians in 669 he fixed his see at Lichfield where the cathedral is near an ancient Michael dedication. Stephen Bassett has argued that there are good grounds for seeing this church as being of British origin and perhaps as the direct successor of the church at nearby *Letocetum*.⁴

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1. Finberg H.P.R., 'The Archangel Michael in Britain', *Culte de Saint Michel et Pèlerinages au Mont* (Paris, 1971).
 2. *Life of St Cadoc*, ch. 9, Wade-Evans A.W., *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae et Genealogie* (Cardiff, 1944).
 3. *Ibid.*, ch. 9; Nash-Williams V.E., *Early Christian Monuments* (Cardiff, 1950) 138 [No. 218.] The other three Celtic monuments in Wales representing angels belong to the 10th century: Nos. 291, 292 and 377.
 4. Bassett S., 'Church and diocese in the West Midlands: the transition from British to Anglo-Saxon control,' *Pastoral care before the parish*, edited by Blair J. and Sharpe R. (Leicester, 1992.)

An elegy on Cynddylan ap Cyndrwyn of Pengwern, who ruled Powys in the early 7th century, tells how he went on foray beyond the River Tern to the 'too proud land.':

There are references to battle and booty around Caer Lwytgoed (the second element represents the earlier Letocetum) in the neighbourhood of Lichfield and Wall: fifteen hundred head of cattle, eighty horses and their harness, a realistic inventory indeed; bishops and monks, in spite of their books, were not immune.⁵

Though written in 9th century, the milieu of the elegy is mid-seventh. The survivors of the British monastic community, ravaged by Cynddylan's men, and deprived of its bishop, moved from *Letocetum* to a more secluded site at Lichfield. Here the community sank into quiet decline so that when Chad arrived at Lichfield in 669 it seemed to him to be a suitable site for a monastic retreat. The troubled past of its former inhabitants commended the choice of St. Michael as a suitable patron, and perhaps the small community he established there included one or two of the survivors from Letocetum. Bede described Chad's retreat:

He built himself a more retired dwelling-place, in which he could read and pray privately with a few of his brothers, that is to say, seven or eight of them; this he did as often as he was free from his labours and the ministration of the word.⁶

H.P.R. Finberg, in identifying the cemetery of St. Michael's, Lichfield, as the site of St. Chad's retreat,⁷ noted that John of Beverley had a similar retreat dedicated to St. Michael when he was bishop of Hexham at the end of the 7th century. He had, significantly, been educated under St. Hilda at the Celtic monastery at Whitby, and Bede's description of his retreat sounds distinctly Celtic:

A remote dwelling, enclosed by a rampart and amid scattered trees, not far from the church at Hexham, about a mile and a half away, and separated from it by the river Tyne. It has an oratory dedicated to St. Michael the archangel in which the man of God with a few others very often used to devote himself to prayer and reading when a favourable opportunity occurred, and especially in Lent.⁸

There are sixty-seven Llanfihangel place-names in Wales and eighty-four ancient dedications to the archangel. They are most numerous in the counties adjoining the English border, Monmouth and Radnor heading the list. The fact that the adjoining county of Hereford has the highest density of ancient Michael dedications in Britain shows that the archangel's popularity was shared on both sides of the border, and Finberg suggested that its origins probably go back to Chad's decision to set up his retreat in honour of St. Michael at Lichfield.

The cult was certainly well established in Wales by the beginning of the 8th century, otherwise the reference to the foundation of Mont S Michel in the *Annales Cambriae* would have been

5. Foster I.Ll., 'The Emergence of Wales', *Prehistoric and Early Wales*, ed. Foster I. Ll. and Daniel G., (London, 1965) 232.

6. Colgrave B. and Mynors R.A.B. (eds.) *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969) 4:3.

7. A place of retreat or a hermitage seems to have been part of every Celtic monastic settlement. At Llancarfan there was: 'the hermitage, which is the property of the abbot'. *Life of St Cadoc*, ch.49.

8. Bede, *Historia*, 5:2.

irrelevant to its Welsh readers. This event gave the cult considerable impetus which the outbreak of border warfare stimulated further, giving 'both sides abundant reason to invoke a protector of the dying who was also the victorious captain of the heavenly host'.⁹

The earliest literary evidence for a Welsh church dedicated to St. Michael refers to a foundation in Breconshire. It is in a charter, recorded in the *Book of Llandaff*, belonging to the middle of the 8th century and referring to *Lann Mihacgel Trev Ceriau*, identified with Llanfihangel Cwmdu. It is paralleled by an English charter dated about 770 A.D., referring to a church of St. Michael at Bishop's Cleeve, in Gloucestershire,¹⁰ and neither of these churches appear from these charters to be at that time a new foundation. The simultaneous development of the cult of St. Michael in the Celtic Church in Powys and Gwent and in the Mercian Church despite the growing hostility between the English and the Welsh in the 8th century, which culminated in the building of Offa's Dyke, is interesting. It could be seen as eloquent evidence for the involvement of the Celtic Church in Wales with its Mercian neighbour, rather than its isolation from mainstream Christianity which is often posited for this period.

Finberg credited Monmouthshire with twelve ancient dedications to St. Michael, and J.D. Evans suggests there are sixteen.¹¹ The present authors have tentatively identified eighteen: those, which are asterisked, appear in the 1910 list of A.W. Wade-Evans¹² which is based on the lists of Browne Willis, 1682-1760, and those in italics appear only in the 12th century *Book of Llandaff*.¹³

*Llanfihangel Gobion [Llanfihangel nigh Usk in the 1254 Valuation of Norwich].

*Llanfihangel Crucorney [*Book of Llandaff* and in the 1254 Valuation of Norwich].

*Llanfihangel Ystern Llewern [in the 1291 Valuation of Pope Nicholas IV].

* Llanfihangel Llantarnam.

*Lann Mihacgel Liclit, c.980.*¹⁴

*Lann Mihacgel i Pull c.970.*¹⁵

*Llanfihangel Tor-y-Mynydd.

*Llanfihangel juxta Rogiett.

Llanfihangel Pontymoel.¹⁶

*Cairnonui.*¹⁷

*Cwmyoy.¹⁸

*Gwernesney.

9. Finberg, *op.cit.* 464.

10. *The Book of Llan Dāv*, ed. Evans G. and Rhys J. (Oxford, 1893) 167-8; Finberg H.P.R., *The Early Charters of the West Midlands*, Leicester, 1961, 38 [No. 30.]

11. Evans J.D., 'St Michael in Gwent', *Gwent Local History* 70 (Spring 1991) 10-11.

12. Wade-Evans A.W., 'Parochiale Wallicanum', *Y Cymmrodor* XXII (1910) 72-82.

13. *The Book of Llan Dāv, op. cit.*

14. The parish of Shirenewton contained in 1128 the church of Llanfihangel Llechryd.

15. Pwllmeurig.

16. Known until the late 16th century as Cilgoegan [Evans, *op.cit.*, p.10.].

17. Possibly Cemais Inferior. [Davies W., *An Early Welsh Microcosm* (London, 1978) 136.]

18. Formerly in the archdeaconry of Brecon, diocese of St Davids. Rees R., *An Essay on the Welsh Saints*, (London, 1836) 342, gives St Martin as the patron of Cwmyoy.

*Machen.

*Michaelstone-y-Fedw.

*Mitchel Troy.

*Cwmcarnvan chapel.¹⁹

*Tintern Parva.²⁰

*St Michael's chapel at the summit of the Skirrid.²¹

J.D. Evans includes Glascoed in his list, which we have discarded. Lewis in his 1837 *Topographical Dictionary of England* described Glascoed as 'a hamlet in...the parish of Usk, 3.75 miles from Usk. There is a place of worship for Baptists'. He makes no mention of a church, let alone one dedicated to St. Michael.²²

Another pre-Norman introduction suggesting an inter-relationship between Welsh and Saxon Christianity is that of Our Lady, and here again some of the evidence is in Monmouthshire. When St. Chad died in 672 he was first buried in a Lichfield church dedicated to St. Mary.²³ This being so, it is interesting that Nennius, *fl.* 800, in his *Historia*, should tell of King Arthur who:

19.Cwmcarnfan. To St. Michael [Browne Willis], or to St Clement [Bradney J.A., and Salter M.]. Rees, *op.cit.*, gives no dedication. The present authors prefer Michael or Cadoc to Clement. Lewis S., *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (London, 1837) describes Cwmcarnvan as a perpetual curacy annexed to the rectory of Mitchel Troy. A shared dedication to the archangel would strengthen claims to possession on the part of the rectors of Mitchel Troy. On the other hand, a connection between the cults of St. Cadoc and St. Michael is an interesting hypothesis. See note 21 below. [Bradney cites a will of 1525 referring to: 'The church of St. Clement of Cumkarvan', II: 2 (1913) 188, and another (of 1545) noting: 'The parish of the Stapull of Saynt Mighell th'archangell in Redwycke in the parish of Magor', IV: 2 (1932) 244.

20.In the place-name Tintern, the first element is Welsh *Din*, 'Fort', as in Tintagel. The second element is Welsh *teyrn*, 'king'. [Ekwall E., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names*, 4th edition, (Oxford, 1960.)] The place-name occurs in an early charter, c. 620, in the Book of Llandaff [Davies, *op.cit.*, 167.]. The charter tells of King Tewdrig, c.555-625, who followed the common practice of Celtic princes and abdicated to enter the religious life. This he did by becoming a hermit at Tintern. Later, on the advice of an angel, he emerged from his retreat to help his son, hard pressed by the Saxons. Such a tradition suggests that the Michael dedication at Tintern Parva is much earlier than the Cistercian foundation of 1131 at Tintern, and may well belong to this pattern of pre-Norman dedications to the archangel.

21.Saxton's 1577 map of Monmouthshire names a chapel of St. Michael on the Skirrid. There would appear to be something of an association between Cadoc and Michael dedications in north Monmouthshire which could be more than coincidental. Thus Llangattock Lingoed lies near Llanfihangel Crucorney and the Skirrid chapel, and Llanfihangel Ystern Llewern is between Llangattock vibon Avel and Penrhos, which appears as *Ecclesia Beati Caddoci de Penros* in the Norwich Taxation. Lastly, Llangattock juxta Usk has Llanfihangel Gobion as its neighbour. Mention has been made already of the unhistorical account in the *Life of St Cadoc* [ch 31, *Life of St Cadoc*, Wade-Evans A.W., ed., *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae et Genealogiae*. Cardiff, 1944] of a visit made by the saint to St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall and of its miraculous consequences. The island's dedication, however, to St. Michael belongs to 718, and the Benedictine monks of S Michel in Normandy did not establish their monastery there until the 11th century. In considering the introduction of the cults of such saints as St. Michael to Monmouthshire, Wendy Davies comments 'who can say who was responsible for their promotion – monk, priest or believer?' [Davies, *op.cit.*, p.132.] The monks of St Cadoc, whose founder was commemorated in Cornwall and Brittany, as well as in South Wales, may have played their part in the extension of the archangel's cult. As Professor Davies says, who can say?

22.We have not included St. Michael's Hospital, Dixton, and Dinham Chapel, now demolished. Both are post-Norman, and so beyond the scope of this survey.

23.Bede, *Historia*, 4:3.

carried the image of Saint Mary, ever virgin, on his shoulders, and the pagans were put to flight on that day, and there was a great slaughter of them through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through the power of Saint Mary the Virgin, his mother.²⁴

The building of Offa's Dyke in the 8th century, no doubt, helped to develop a sense of corporate nationality amongst the Welsh and the laws of Hywel Dda, though they were drawn up in the 10th century, are often quoted to reflect an earlier situation:

If a *breyr's* man be a born *bonheddig*, when killed in a border country, the *breyr* is to have six cows from the slayer. A born *bonheddig* is a Cymro by father and mother, without bondmen, without *alltud*, without mixture of kin.²⁵

All the same, commercial relations were carried on with England. This was especially so in Gwent, where Sir Cyril Fox showed how the timber trade of the lower Wye valley was in Welsh hands²⁶ and Offa was at pains not to isolate the Welsh port at Tidenham by the alignment of his dyke. To the north, Byford is a hamlet on what was the Magonsaetan side of the Wye boundary with Erging. Its place-name commemorates the ford over the Wye used for traffic and commerce,²⁷ and Monmouthshire and Herefordshire have a Caldicot apiece, offering shelter to travellers.²⁸ Huntington, near the city of Hereford, and the border with Erging at the Wye, commemorates the *tun* of the huntsmen,²⁹ which again presupposes a *status quo* in which they could pursue their trade in peace so near the border. Hay on Wye, where Brycheiniog, Erging, and the Magonsaete all met, commemorates nothing more offensive than a hedge.³⁰ Place-names such as these reflect good Anglo-Welsh relations in their respective vicinities and environments through which religious ideas could travel as easily as commercial wares. The Anglo-Saxon laws of Ine mention *Welsh* ale, and so does a charter dated c.792 in which 'a coomb full of Welsh ale' is to be paid by the church of Worcester on land at Westbury, in Gloucestershire. Another grant, belonging to the early 9th century and concerning estates in Kent, also mentions 'good Welsh ale'.³¹

In 855 Burgred, king of the Mercians, granted the Gloucestershire minster of Blockley exemption from feeding and maintaining 'all hawks and falcons in Mercia, all huntsmen of the King or ealdorman, except those in the province of the Hwicce, of the men called *Walhfaereld*, and from lodging them and all mounted men.'³² Finberg suggested the men called *Walhfaereld* represented a Welsh expedition, but this need not be a military expedition. It could be, instead, a trading party travelling under an Anglo-Welsh treaty. Moreover, at this time the Welsh Marches were not considered a place to be avoided by ambitious English ecclesiastics. At the beginning of the 8th

24. Wade-Evans A.W., ed, *Nennius's History of the Britons* (London, 1938) ch.56.

25. A *breyr* was 'a higher grade of the *bonheddig* class', and a *bonheddig* was a 'free born tribesman'. Richards M., *The Laws of Hywel Dda* (Liverpool, 1954) 65.

26. Fox C., *Offa's Dyke* (London, 1965) 216-8.

27. Ekwall, *op.cit.* 79.

28. *Ibid.* 82.

29. *Ibid.* 258.

30. Smith A.H., *English Place-name Elements* (Cambridge, 1956) I, 215.

31. The Laws of Ine, chs. 70, 71; *The Early Charters of the West Midlands*, 42 [No.50]; Harmer F.E., *Select English Historical Documents* (Cambridge, 1914) 34 [No. 1.]

32. Finberg H.P.R., *The Early Charters of Wessex* (Leicester, 1964) 48 [No. 76.]

century, when the Anglo-Welsh entente first broke down, Tyrhtil, bishop of Hereford, sold land at Fulham to Wealdhere, bishop of London, a transaction which suggests Tyrhtil came from that part himself before coming to the Marches. A century later, Wulfred, archbishop of Canterbury, exchanged with Coenwulf, king of Mercia, land at Yarkhill in Herefordshire for land in Kent.³³

Against this background, though it is usually assumed that the Llanfairs of Wales are largely of Norman origin, it is not inappropriate to look at again at the *Book of Llandaff*, which contains a charter belonging to the episcopate of Cyfeiliog, c.900-927,³⁴ referring to *Lann Meiripenn Ros*. Brochfael ap Meurig c.872-910, gave the church of St. Mary, with three *modii* of land around it, to:

his virgin daughter, who had taken the nun's veil, that she might dwell there until death; but being deceived by diabolical advice and suggestion, she was seduced by Edgar son of Levi, and conceiving incestuously, brought forth a son, through whose birth she died. After these things, a dispute arose between Brochfael and Bishop Cyfeiliog respecting that church and its territory.³⁵

Judgement was made in favour of Cyfeiliog and endorsed by Brochfael. *Lann Meiripenn Ros* has been identified with St. Mary's, Monmouth, and Davies is of the opinion that 'there are some standard interpolations, but there is no reason to think that the greater part of the Narration was composed much later than the charter', to which she apportions a date of c.910.³⁶

The career of St. Mary's, Monmouth, is, of course, generally assumed to have begun as the priory church of St. Mary which was consecrated in 1101 or 1102. The priory itself, however, is of earlier foundation, being founded c.1080 by a Breton Gwethenoc who became a monk of Saint-Florent de Saumur, and gave lands in the neighbourhood of Monmouth to found an independent priory of twelve monks and a prior. He also held Monmouth Castle for William I, and: 'proved at the same time the sincerity of his devotion by renouncing his worldly honours and entering Saint-Florent as a monk.'³⁷

In the priory's foundation charter, Gwethenoc relates how he had built a chapel in his castle at Monmouth; this he gave to the monks, and provided that pending the completion of a new monastic church they should use for their services the church of St. Cadoc near the castle which was the ancient, pre-Norman parish church of Monmouth.³⁸ Consequently, for some twenty years the monks of the priory worshipped in a church dedicated to St. Cadoc whilst their own church was being built. S.M. Harris pointed out, nearly half a century ago, how 'distinctively Breton influences surrounded the birth of Monmouth Priory. St. Cadoc was as well known in Brittany as in Wales.'³⁹ Moreover, churches bearing his name abounded in Monmouthshire:

33. *English Historical Documents*, I, 449; *The Early Charters of the West Midlands*, 140 [No. 413.]

34. In 915 he was captured by the Danes in Archenfield and his ransom was paid by King Alfred's son, Edward the Elder.

35. *The Book of Llan Dâv*, 231.

36. Davies, *op.cit.* 182-83.

37. Lloyd J.E., *A History of Wales from the earliest times to the Edwardian Conquest*, 3rd edition (London, 1939) Vol 2, p.444.

38. Harris S.M., 'The Kalendar of the Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium', *Journal of the Historical Society of the Church in Wales* III (1953) 3-53.

39. *Ibid.*

St. Cadoc, Monmouth

Llangadog Feibion Afel [which Monmouth possessed from the very beginning and owned land there.]

Llangadog Dyffryn Wysg

Llangadog Lingoed

Llangadog Penrhos

Llangadog-iuxta-Caerlleon

To which may be added:

Caerwent [St. Tathan, whose academy at Caerwent Cadoc attended in his youth]

Newport cathedral [St. Gwynllyw was St. Cadoc's father.]

With such a background and in such an environment it is not surprising that an interest in the Celtic saints flourished at Monmouth. Indeed, Harris argued that the monks of Saint-Florent brought their 8th century kalendar with them to which they added a collection they compiled of the *lives* of the Welsh saints. Kathleen Hughes,⁴⁰ whilst accepting the important part played by the monks of Monmouth Priory in compiling the *Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium*, believed that the monks of the Benedictine abbey of St. Peter at Gloucester were also prominent in the work. She noted that St. Cadoc is the most important saint in the collection and that St. Cadoc's principal foundation, Llancarfan, was given to Gloucester 1093-1104, as was the Newport foundation of his father, St. Gwynllyw, 1094-1104, and whose *Life* is also in the collection. Thus, it was her belief that the Monmouth monks compiled their material from Gloucester sources.

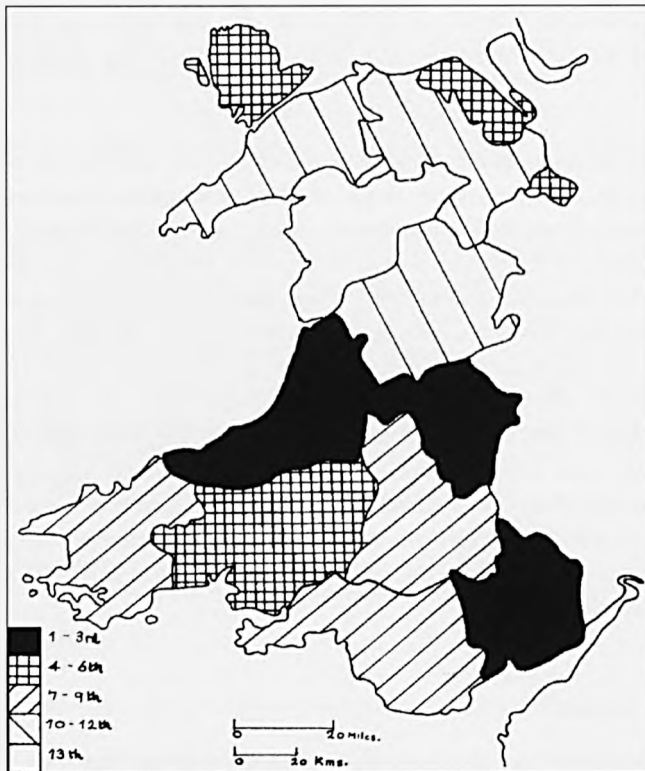
From the point of view of the present argument it matters little whether the monks of Monmouth drew on their Saumur archives or on those of their Benedictine brethren at Gloucester in producing their *Vitae Sanctorum*. The Monmouth district was one of the principal ancient centres of the cult of St. Cadoc and the monks played their part in maintaining an interest in the saints of Celtic Church. So the question arises, why, when their new church was consecrated, was it dedicated to St. Mary and not to a Celtic saint, if not St. Cadoc himself? The usual explanation offered is that the Normans saw the parish church as much an instrument of conquest and subjugation as the castle alongside which it was often built. Hence the popularity of dedications to Our Lady and biblical saints like St. Peter and St. Paul, for these were the dedications with which the Normans were already familiar. But Gwethenoc, the moving spirit behind the foundation of Monmouth Priory, was a Breton, not a Norman, and it was surely an interest in the long established and local *Lann Meiripenn Ros* which led the monks of Monmouth to name Our Lady as the patron of their new priory church. It gave them a continuity with a past chronicled in their *Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium*.

40. 'British Museum MS.Cotton Vespasian A.XIV ['*Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium*']; its purpose and provenance,' Chadwick N.K. *et al.*, *Studies in the Early British Church* (Cambridge, 1958) 183-200.

**THE DISTRIBUTION OF CHURCHES AND PLACE- NAMES
IN WALES CONNECTED WITH ST MICHAEL.**

County	No. of Llanfihangel place-names.	No. of churches dedicated to St. Michael.	% of all the churches in the county dedicated.	Order of density in proportion to total acreage.
Anglesey	7	4	5.79	4
Brecknock	7	7	10.60	8
Caernarvon	4	2	3.03	12
Cardigan	8	10	15.38	3
Carmarthen	11	12	15.78	5
Denbigh	1	4	6.89	10
Flint	0	3	9.37	6
Glamorgan	5	7	5.78	9
Merioneth	4	2	5.55	13
Monmouth	9	12	9.75	2
Montgomery	3	5	9.25	11
Pembroke	1	6	4.34	7
Radnor	7	10	18.86	1

Source: Finberg H.P.R., 'The Archangel Michael in Britain', *Culte de Saint Michel et Pèlerinages au Mont* (Paris, 1971).



Map showing the Order of Density by County.

ECCLESIASTICAL DOCUMENTS.

By DAVID H. WILLIAMS.

Parish of BASSALEG: Appointment of the Revd Thomas Leyson, M.A. as Rector (1782-1838).

In 1781, when the living of Bassaleg became vacant by the death of the Revd Wyndham Lewis, Bishop Shute Barrington of Llandaff, whose direct patronage was limited, wished to appoint to the parish a conscientious priest with little other hope of preferment. This was not to the liking of Charles Morgan of Ruperra, Esq., who had in mind a Jesus College, Oxford, graduate, of his acquaintance and seemingly of his kinship. The Bishop at first stood firm, but then gave way. The correspondence, between the Bishop (writing from Mongewell, a family home, in Oxfordshire) and Charles Morgan, is preserved in the National Library of Wales.

NLW, Tredegar Park Muniments 64/293, of 11 November 1781. From the Bishop:

'...I have offered the living consistently with my feeling or established rule in the disposal of my preferments. My Patronage, scanty as it is, has been distributed among the deserving clergy of the diocese'.

NLW, Tredegar Park Muniments 64/299, of 14 November 1781. From Charles Morgan:

'...It has given me no small uneasiness to find that I am the first of the Tredegar family for at least a century past...not to be honoured with the recommendation of the living of Basaleg. ...How agreeable it must be to have a friend and more a relation reside at the end of your Park...'

NLW, Tredegar Park Muniments 64/294, of 21 November 1781. From the Bishop:

'...I have to remember the justice due to those who are not likely to receive it but from my hands'. He reluctantly gives way, but adds: 'Should Mr Leyson be a stranger to the Welsh language, I cannot possibly place him in a preferment'.

NLW, Tredegar Park Muniments 64/303, undated. From Mr Thomas Leyson to the Bishop:

Promises: 'his utmost endeavours to acquire a sufficient knowledge of Welsh'.

How did the unknown priest, perhaps poor but hard-working, to whom the living had already been offered, feel at having his rightful due snatched from his grasp? – especially as Thomas Leyson had not yet even been ordained priest!

(See too: NLW, LL/O/253, and Tredegar Park Muniments 64/295-298, 301-302).

Parish of KEMEYS INFERIOR: Extracts from the Churchwarden's Accounts, 1823-1943.

NLW, Parochial Records, Diocese of Monmouth, Kemeys Inferior 1.

	£ – s – d
1823: Book for the Entry of Banns.	9 – 6
Clerk's Wages. (<i>Annual Expense</i>).	1 – 5 – 0
Straw, and Thatching Church Stable.	6 – 0
1824: Washing Surplice. (<i>Annual Expense</i>).	7 – 0
Digging stone for Church Stable.	15 – 8
Bread and Wine. (<i>For the quarterly Eucharist</i>).	9 – 9
1827: New bier, and paint.	1 – 5 – 0

New bench for church porch.	5 – 0
Whitewashing the church (lime and brushes; <i>recurs often in the accounts</i>).	9 – 0
1828: Putting up rails around the Communion Table.	1 – 18 – 6
1829: Summons for W. Brooks (£2), Constable (£3).	5 – 0
Expenses (<i>in this connection</i>) to Usk (twice) and Caerleon (once).	10 – 0
John Williams, smith, for 1 pair of handcuffs. (<i>At this date, the Churchwarden had civil as well as ecclesiastical responsibilities</i>).	10 – 6
Repairing dog tongs.	4
1831: A churchyard walk was made, involving 11 tons of sand and 19 loads of stones.	2 – 12 – 0
1833: 11 days' work (by the clerk, Jacob Davies) in cutting ivy off the church and weeding the walk.	1 – 3 – 2
1834: Parchment for registers.	4 – 6
1837: A new Register Book. (<i>Civil registration of births, marriages and deaths, date from this year</i>).	17 – 0
1840: Making and laying 2 Boxes for catching moles by the churchyard. (<i>The catching of moles finds frequent mention in later accounts</i>).	6 – 0
Substantial work was done this year to repair the church roof, involving 250 stone tiles and 65ft. of deal rafters.	4 – 19 – 7.5
1844: Digging and making a Box Drain around the Church Walls, by Order from Archdeacon Crawley.	1 – 0 – 0
1846: Repairing the hedges after the 'Railway trespassers'. (<i>This perhaps suggests that a survey was made with a view to a Newport-Usk railway line east of the river, but the route chosen (by 1850) placed the line west of the river [Shirehampton W.J., 'Monmouth's Railways', Memorials of Monmouth, No. 6 – Monm. and Dist. Field Club and Antiq Soc.]</i>).	1 – 6
1848: Repairing the church fence after it was damaged by cattle.	3 – 0
Tables of the Commandments bought from Mr. Miller, Golden Sq., London.	3 – 3 – 0
Conveyance of same by rail and steam packet.	3 – 6
1850: A new 14 inch Hot Air Stove bought from Hawkins and Webb, ironmongers of Newport, erection of same, and 5 cwt. of coal.	2 – 14 – 6
1852: An oak box, with lock and ring, for holding the Communion Plate purchased 'in compliance with orders from Archdeacon Crawley'.	8 – 0
1854: 23 days' work on sawing oak for, and erecting, the new seating.	8 – 12 – 6
1855 (22 Sept.): Part payment for the new seating and church repairs.	14 – 0 – 0
(29 Nov.): 1 quart of wine (4/-) and bread (4d.): 'For the Administration of the Communion at the reopening of the Church'.	4 – 4
1865 (16 April): half day's work clearing snow off the church.	1 – 0
1868: Church retiled (by John Williams, mason, of Shirenewton).	17 – 12 – 0
Bell turret rebuilt (by the same).	12 – 0 – 0
1884: Yew tree planted on left hand side of path going down to the church.	– – –
1891: Roof repaired, and inside of church repaired and 'coloured'.	2 – 10 – 0
1897: The harmonium repaired in Newport.	1 – 10 – 0
1929: A new organ bought by public subscription.	20 – 0 – 0

Parish of CHRISTCHURCH (Holy Trinity). Extract from a Terrier (1712). (Shewing that burials were taking place within churches as well as without, and for its touching reference to King Charles the Martyr at a time [the reign of Queen Anne] when Protestantism was rooting itself in the Church of England.

NLW, Tredegar Park Muniments 64/11.

'An Indented Terriar or a true accompt of the Rights and Profits of the Vicar of the Parish Church of Christchurch *alias* Trinity Church He is to have from every parishioner buried in the middle Chancell below steps six shillings & eight pence, and from those buried there that are not parishioners thirteen shillings four pence,¹ and for every parishioner in the middle Chancell above steps thirteen shillings four pence and for every Stranger twenty six shillings eight pence,² and for burying in the body of the Church for every stranger six shillings eight pence.³ These being the Rights and Duetyes that were kept and observed in the time of the Vicar, Mr. Lanselot Wanford, who lived in the reign of King Charles the first of blessed memory,.....'.

1. One mark.
2. Two marks.
3. Does the absence of any further provision suggest that parishioners were buried free of charge in the body of the church, or is it an inadvertent omission?

Parish of CWMCARFAN : Extracts from Parish Meetings Records, 1756-1774.

NLW, Church Records: Monmouth,Parochial: Cwmcarnfan No. 1.

16 December 1756: Agreed that there be a new Communion Table made against Xmas next.

9 June 1765: Regarding raising money to make a gallery in the church.

24 September 1766: A sundial to be bought for the churchyard. (*There wasn't one*).

2 November 1768: A cupboard to be made for keeping the Psalm Books and Pipe in the Gallery, for the use of the singers.

21 May 1770: A new sundial to be bought.

27 May 1771: Accounts drawn up for 1770 include: 14s. paid for a sun-dial; 6s. for 6 days' work mending the bells; 3s. 6d. paid out for a new bell-rope for the tenor bell; and a few pence each to those who caught in the year a total of 11 hedgehogs and 2 fitchhogs. (*Presumably, like the hawks and kites, these were seen as pests*).

29 May 1771: There be allowed for killing a Kite 6d., and for a Hawk 6d., and for a Jay 6d., but for a Hoop or Bull Finch 1d. (*A reminder that the Vestry dealt with secular as well as religious affairs*).

12 April 1773: A Prayer Book to be bought with: 'the Two Versions, viz. The Old Version and the New for the use of the Company of Singers belonging to the parish church'. (*This refers most likely to a new edition of the metrical psalms printed in the end of the Prayer Book. The erection of the gallery and the emergence of a company of singers, exhibits concern for the standard of worship in the church*).

7 July 1774: 15s. set aside for the use of the Company of Singers at Mr. John Edmond's discretion.

Parish of LLANDEGFEDD (Llandegfeth: Allocation of a Church Pew: 9 May 1590).

NLW, Llangibby Castle Deed A 1212. (Spellings have been modernised).

(I am grateful to Mr. Graham Thomas of the National Library of Wales for checking this, and other transcriptions).

‘We, Leonard Meyrick,¹ clerk, parson there, Philip David Thomas and Morgan Griffiths, churchwardens there ... thought it good, meet² and convenient, to allot, set down and appoint a room³ to erect a seat and a kneeling place for the said Anne (Ievan), within the church of Llandegveth on the north side of the church against the chancel, *in the space where St. Mary’s altar was*,⁴ in length from the chancel door to the wall, in breadth five feet from the chancel into the body of the church’.

1. He married Anne, and went to live at her family home, Pant Vydeer, probably on the site of the present Court Perrott.
2. As in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer: “It is meet, right, and our bounden duty”.
3. A space.
4. The Lady Altar was perhaps destroyed by the Presbyterians during the Commonwealth, or after the accession of William of Orange.

Parish of LLANTILIO CROSSENNY. (Transgression of the Sabbath: 1692).

NLW, Llangibby Castle Deed C 266. (Abridged, and spelling).

Monmouth(shire). To the Petty Constables of the parish of Llantilio Crossenny ...aforesaid.

“Whereas Information upon Oath hath been made unto me that John Howell junior, and William Morgan, both of this parish, shoemaker(s), did upon the 19th day of this Instant July (*this present month*) being the Lord’s Day play at Fives or Tennis in the Churchyard of the parish Church aforesaid openly Contrary to the Act of Parliament, by which each of them have forfeited the sum of three shillings and four pence apiece for the use of ye poor of your parish to be levied by you the said Constable and Churchwardens by distress (*i.e: distraint*) and Sale of the goods of the said John and William and in default of Distress to be put in the Stocks 3 hours. Hereof fail not at your peril. M.A.Powell’. (*Noted: that on 25 July 1692, 6s. 8d. was paid by John Howel and William Morgan, and was in the constable Walter’s hands.*)

Parish of LLANTILIO CROSSENNY: Chapelry of Llanfair Cilgoed (Detention of a Recusant: 1694). *NLW, Llangibby Castle Deed C 88r. (Abridged.)*

‘2nd day of October in ye 6th year of ye reign of King William and Queen Mary, before Sir Charles Kemeys, Baronet, John Arnold, esquire, and other Justices of ye Peace.

... The said gaoler take into his custody Thomas Croft of Lanvair, gent, and him safely keep until he shall down to ye Churchwarden and Overseers of ye Poor of ye parish of Llantilio Grossenny to ye use of ye said poor there, the sum of five pounds of Lawful Money of England for refusing to take ye Oath of Allegiance and fidelity to their Majesties being tendered him by this Court (*of Quarter Sessions*), his second conviction for such his Refusal. And also to keep Thomas Croft till he find sufficient security for his personal appearance at ye next General Sessions of ye Peace, to Answer a Bill of Indictment new found against him for keeping open [?] held in his lands. And also to keep Thomas Croft till he find security for his personal appearance at the next Assizes to answer such matters as he shall be charged with by John Arnold, Esquire, one of their Majesties’ Justices of ye Peace, for notoriously abusing ye said Mr. Arnold now in the face of this court. Hereof ye said gaoler, [? Ievan] Hughes, is not to fail at his utmost peril.

C 88d: A week later (9 October) Thomas Croft had paid the five pounds demanded and given security to appear at the Court and to keep the peace, and his discharge from prison was ordered, he having also paid the gaoler his fees.

Parish of MACHEN: Dispensation to eat meat in Lent (21 February 1626).

NLW, Badminton Muniments, Box 91, No. 129. (Abridged).

The Vicar-General of the Diocese of Llandaff, through his surrogate (Edward Richard, Bachelor of Sacred Theology) to Thomas and Rachel Morgan of Machen: ‘... Whereas the sacred canons and the provincial constitutions of the kingdom, as well as royal proclamation, forbid all and sundry from eating meat during the approaching season of Lent (*Ash Wednesday that year fell the next day, February 22nd*), without special licence from the Ordinary, being fully informed by trustworthy testimony, ... of your infirmity and suffering from sickness, ... we concede that you may eat meat in Lent, taking three or four portions, in moderation, and without giving scandal...’. (*This deed is a reminder of the part the Church still played in every-day life. Similar deeds relate to marriage problems, like NLW, Badminton Muniments, Box 90, Nos. 39-40*).

Parish of MONMOUTH: Extracts from the Churchwardens’ Accounts, 1673.

(Much relates to the bells of the church).

Paid for three new ropes.	16 – 6
Paid for mending the treble clapper.	1 – 0
Paid Wm. Worrall for three cotterels. ¹	6
Paid for ringing at Assizes.	6 – 8
Paid for riding ye scallions ² to William Worrall.	1 – 6
Paid Mr Peregrine Lewis for making a bond for ye wheels.	1 – 0
For housing up ye great bell.	1 – 0
Paid for 5 new wheels to ye bells.	4 – 10 – 0
Paid for 8 days work for hanging ye bells.	11 – 8
Paid for ringing on All Souls Day for beer.	1 – 0
Paid for beer for ringing in the Lord’s Marynesse ³ by ye Mayor’s order.	6 – 0
Paid for a barrel of lime to wash ye belfry and Porch.	0 – 10
Paid for Sollet oil ⁴ for ye bells.	1 – 6
Paid unto ye carpenter for mending ye fourth bell stock.	5 – 6

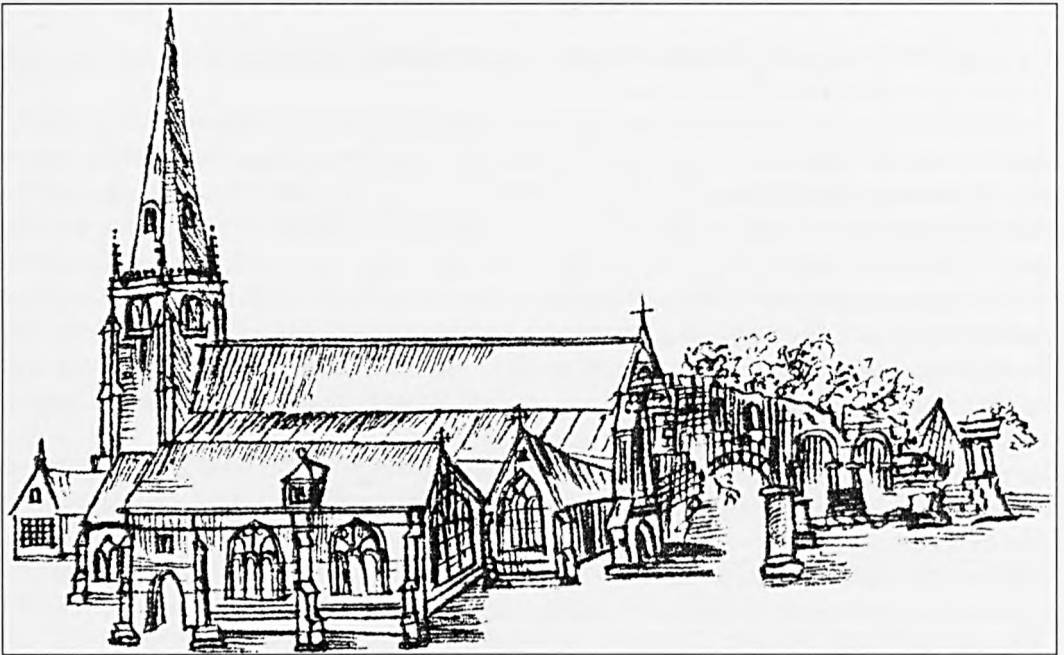
Priory of MONMOUTH: Demolition of its Remains (c. 1732).

NLW, Badminton Deeds [Group 2] No. 11,037.

(In a bundle with deeds relating to the raising of funds for the rebuilding of Monmouth parish church. Other deeds tell of the Duke of Beaufort acquiring various pews in the new church for his household and his principal tenants in the town. The italics are the Editor’s.)

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1. Cotterel/cotter: A pin, key, wedge or bolt, which fits into a hole and fastens something in its place.
 2. ‘Riding’ = ‘Ridding’. ‘Scallion-gate’ = ‘Lych-gate’ (I am grateful to Mr. Richard Suggett, RCAHMW, for bringing these meanings to my attention).
 3. ..Obsolete, untraceable term.
 4. ? ‘Merriness’ – referring to an event in the life of Henry Somerset, 1st Duke of Beaufort, and Lord of Monmouth, created in 1672 a Knight of the Garter and Lord President of the Council of Wales and the Marches.

'... All that piece or parcel of ground in the parish of Monmouth abutting East ('a' omitted) on the churchyard there and certain *old ruins and decayed buildings intended to be pulled down*. N. and NW. on certain grounds and buildings called the Priory and S. on the church and churchyard, which said piece or parcel of ground contained in breadth from N. to S. at the east end thereof 19 Foot of Assize (*i.e.: standard foot*) little more or less, and extendeth in length on the southside thereof from the NE. corner of the church to the NW. buttress of the *tower* 108'3' Foot of Assize little more or less, and from the said buttress W. 13 Foot of Assize little more or less, and from their lieth in an oblique line to the NW. corner of the said piece or parcel of ground 24 Foot of Assize little more or less, and from the said NW. corner extendeth in length in a direct strait (*sic*) line Eastward 108.3 Foot of Assize little more or less. And also that piece or parcel of ground [?] as well as now situate by) the said ruins or decayed buildings abutting N. in part on a certain building called the *Chapter House* and in part on the churchyard ... '.



Monmouth Parish Church and Priory Remains in 1684. (Thomas Dineley).

Parish of SKENFRITH: Collapse of St. Noye's Chapel, Blackbrook.

NLW, LL/QA/2 [*Llandaff Diocesan Clergy Visitation Returns, 1763*].

Q: Have you any Chapel in Ruins?

A: Yes. The Chapel of Llanoye, situated in the Center of the parish, very Convenient to Most of the Inhabitants, and is now in Ruins. Divine Service has not been performed in it since One Phillips' was Vicar of Skenfrith, *in whose time it fell*.

1. A James Phillips was Vicar of Skenfrith from 1679 until some time in the 1720's [Bradney J.A., *History of Monmouthshire I: Part 1 (Hundred of Skenfrith; London, 1904) 67*.

THE CLERGY AS REMEMBRANCERS OF THE COMMUNITY: LEWIS JAMES, CURATE OF BEDWELLY 1633-1667, AND THE CIVIL WAR CLERGY OF MONMOUTHSHIRE.

By MADELEINE GRAY.

Lewis James is well-known to family historians in South Wales as the man who inaugurated the parish registers of Bedwellty, the most north-westerly parish in the old county of Monmouthshire. Indeed, virtually all we know about him comes from the pages of the registers he himself wrote. He kept the registers up through the plague year of 1638, when so many of his fellow clergy gave up; and from 1650 to 1660, when he had technically been dismissed from his post, he maintained a record of baptisms, marriages and burials in the parish. This huge mountainous district, with its pre-industrial population of peasant farmers and minor gentry, is therefore one of the better-documented parishes in South Wales.

His contribution to the archive sources for the history of Gwent has already earned Lewis James a mention in the county's history. He seems to have been one of Sir Joseph Bradney's favourite characters, and it was Bradney who first drew attention to him by transcribing his parish registers¹ and providing some notes on his life and a pedigree of his descendants in the *History of Monmouthshire*.² He is however worthy of more detailed study, both as an individual and in the context of his time, as an exemplar of the strengths and weaknesses of the established church in Wales and its parochial clergy during the conflicts of the mid-17th century.

We have no date of birth for Lewis James, and no place of origin. No earlier appointment for him has been found, so we may conjecture that he was still a young man when he came to Bedwellty. His mother was buried at Bedwellty shortly after his arrival there, in March 1635, but he described her in the register as 'Margaret Watkin, widow, of Monmouth but a native of Llanelly'. It is likely that this was not the better-known Llanelli in Carmarthenshire but the Breconshire Llanelli, between Clydach and Gilwern, just over the diocesan boundary but only about ten miles by the old road from the northern border of the parish of Bedwellty.

We have no record of his education, and we can be fairly certain that he did not go to university. However, he had obviously received some formal teaching: his register is of course in Latin, and he also had enough command of the language to use it for occasional comments on events. He may have been taught locally, possibly by the incumbent of his home parish or in an informal local school. It is possible that he spent some time at Christ's College, Brecon, or at the new grammar school in Monmouth: this might even explain his mother's residence there. His handwriting has the meticulous care and clarity of one who has gained an education the hard way and values the craft as well as the art of writing, and the lengths to which he went to secure a register for his parish and to maintain it suggest the high value he placed on literacy and the written word.

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1. The transcripts were apparently never published but have now been deposited in the Gwent Record Office with the original [the latter is at: D/Pa.14.104].
 2. Bradney J.A., *A History of Monmouthshire. Volume 5: The Hundred of Newport*, ed. M Gray (Cardiff, South Wales Record Society, and Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, 1993) 150-154.

The debate over clerical education went back before the Reformation but the issue obviously became more important with the increased emphasis which the Protestant churches placed on the written word and its elucidation. On the one hand, it was obviously important that the clergy should be intellectually up to the task of leading and instructing their flocks. On the other hand, in regions such as Wales, where the financial resources of the church were already under great pressure, sending students to the universities at Oxford and Cambridge to be educated in English and Latin may not have been the best preparation for their ministry to monoglot Welsh peasant communities in the mountains. It could be argued that Lewis James's education was well up to the task he faced. It is worth noting that he described his duties in the parish as 'to read *and preach*' [my italics]; and, as we will see, his parishioners seem to have been broadly satisfied with him.

The pre-industrial parish of Bedwellty was the largest in Monmouthshire and one of the largest in South Wales – over twenty-five square miles of rough mountain and steep river valley, with only a little good farmland. The parish church was centrally placed on the ridge between the Rhymni and the Sirhywi rivers but it was still eight or nine miles from the farms at the northern extremity of the parish and would have been inaccessible to many of the population in bad weather. Across the Sirhywi, the eastern section of the parish around Man-moel had once had a chapel of its own, but this had probably gone out of use in the late medieval period. There is no record of it in 16th-century sources, and the site is now occupied by an early 17th century long house, Ty'r Capel. Parishioners from this third of the parish had therefore to cross the Sirhywi to reach the church, and we know of no bridges before the 18th century. What the people of Bedwellty really needed was not a graduate but a fit and healthy young man with a good seat on a horse.

Lewis James may well have been fit and healthy; he was certainly determined. However, it is quite likely that he was unable to afford a horse. For all its size, Bedwellty was only a perpetual curacy. The parish was worth £70 a year to the lay impropiator but only £10 to the curate.³ By English standards, this was below starvation level. Christopher Haigh suggests £30 as the minimum necessary in 1595, and in 1610 Richard Neile, the future Archbishop of York, suggested 100 marks as the absolute minimum.⁴ There were of course plenty of clergy struggling along on far less than this, and Lewis James was by no means the poorest in the diocese of Llandaff. The sufferings of these impoverished unfortunates are vividly described by one of their number, Richard Kilby, who served as a curate in a series of Kent and Derbyshire parishes in the early 17th century. In his autobiography, the subject of a recent study by Peter Lake,⁵ he described the consequences of his poverty. He was unable to marry, and thus at risk of sexual temptation; he had to live in lodgings, with no privacy for study or prayer and no way of distancing himself from his flock; he could not afford books or contributions to charity.

3. For details see Gray M., 'The Church in Gwent in 1603', *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History* II (1985) 11, 23-4, and 'Settlement and land use in the Man-moel district of Gwent: the monastic evidence', *Monmouthshire Antiquary* XIV (1998) 14-24.

4. 'Finance and administration in a new diocese: Chester', in O'Day R. and Heal F., eds., *Continuity and Change: personnel and administration of the Church of England, 1500-1642* (Leicester University Press, 1976) 157.

5. 'Richard Kilby: a study in personal and professional failure', in Sheils W.J. and Wood D., eds., *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay* (Studies in Church History XXVI, 1989) 221-35.

These problems do not appear to have weighed too heavily on young Lewis. Indeed, judging from the date of birth of his first child, it seems that the first thing he did on securing his appointment to Bedwelty was to get married. Clerical marriage was another contentious issue in the 16th and 17th centuries. Legalised in 1549, banned under Mary, disapproved of by Elizabeth and finally legalised again by James, it has been blamed for much of the problem of clerical poverty in this period. Stipends which were just barely adequate for a single man (so the argument runs) were totally unable to provide for a wife and children. This is to misunderstand the economic basis of marriage and the household in the early modern period. While many people remained single, through choice or necessity, surprisingly few lived alone. The unmarried either employed servants, lived as servants in the homes of others or, like Richard Kilby, lived in lodgings.

Running a household was a full-time job, needing skill, training and experience: and with the exception of a few episcopal households, these qualities were normally provided by women. Someone had to wash the curatorial shirts and cook the curatorial breakfast; someone had therefore to chop wood, light fires and boil water, make soap, bake bread and cure bacon. The parish of Bedwelty may have provided Lewis James with a house and even a little land, and he presumably decided that he would rather be looked after by a wife than a housekeeper chosen for her lack of physical temptation rather than her efficiency. As many a man has found since, a housekeeper can cost much more than a wife. Like most clerical wives of the period, Margaret James probably found herself occupied much as a farmer's wife would have been, baking, brewing, looking after the vegetable garden, the chickens and the cow. Alan Macfarlane estimated that Ralph Josselin, the pattern of a Puritan clergyman, spent about half his time as a farmer, and his wife probably spent more.⁶

The petition of the clergy of the diocese of Bangor to Cromwell in 1536 is instructive. They had recently been inspected by the king's Visitors (who included the notorious Dr Ellis Price, *Y Doctor Coch*, reputed to have taken his mistress with him on his visitation) and had been censured for 'incontinence' – which in effect meant that they were married. Wales had always had a married clergy: ironically, no serious attempt had been made to enforce clerical celibacy before Cromwell's visitation. The clergy of Gwynedd threw themselves on Cromwell's mercy but asked that they be allowed to continue to live with their wives 'to maintain such poor hospitality as we have done hitherto by the provision of such women as we have customably kept in our houses; for if we must put them away according to the late injunctions we must give up hospitality, to the great undoing of such servants and families as we daily keep, and to the great loss of the poor people who are by us relieved.'⁷ It would seem that the clergy of Bangor derived practical as well as emotional support from their wives, and that without their help they would in fact be worse off financially. And it would have been a brave man who suggested to her face that the redoubtable Mrs Josselin was a drain on her husband's resources.

To the challenges posed by James's sprawling and under-resourced parish were added the problems of a church in an age of religious turmoil. The messy compromises of the Elizabethan settlement were coming unstitched under pressure from the Puritans for further reform and from

6. Macfarlane A., *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

7. *Letters and Papers X*, 1536 (London; HMSO, 1887) No 215.

the group variously described as Laudians, Arminians and High Anglicans, whose ideas on soteriology, sacramental theology, ecclesiology and liturgical practice were seen by many as dangerously close to Catholicism. Archbishop Laud's policies had much to offer the clergy: he wanted a better-funded ministry, exalted in status and free from lay control. His theology of grace mediated through the sacraments, also enhanced the position of the clergy who administered and controlled access to the sacraments. We have unfortunately no way of telling what Lewis James's opinion on all this was. From his later record, he was no Puritan, but there is no evidence to suggest that he would have supported the extreme Laudian standpoint either.

It is also difficult to guess how the parishioners of Bedwelty would have thought about changes in the established church – if indeed they thought about them at all. Wales was known in this period for its religious conservatism. Pilgrimages, images and candles survived at least until late in the 16th century, and in the 1620s Vicar Prichard, having failed to prevent his flock from using the rosary, was reduced to exhorting them to use it prayerfully.⁸ The Morgan family of Plas Bedwelty and the Penllwyn are traditionally credited with Catholic sympathies, though Edmund Morgan, owner of the Penllwyn in the 1630s, was married to a member of the Prichard family of Llancaiach.⁹ It may be significant that the church at Bedwelty still retains one of its pre-Reformation treasures, a magnificent oak cupboard carved with the Five Wounds and the instruments of the Passion. However, the parish was also near some of the focal points of Protestant nonconformity. The young Henry Walter preached in the neighbouring parish of Mynyddislwyn during the 1650s and after the Restoration founded an Independent congregation there.¹⁰ To the west, in the adjoining parish of Gelli-gaer, a group of Baptists included the local landowner Edward Prichard of Llancaiach. Lewis James may have had the support of the majority of his parishioners, but he could never have been sure of them all.

Meanwhile, there were other, more practical problems. On his arrival in Bedwelty, he found that the parish records consisted of a few scraps of paper recording baptisms, marriages and burials since 1624. His own records were more carefully kept from the outset, but it was some time before he was able to acquire a proper register book. Blank parchment volumes were not available locally, and he was eventually forced to go as far as Bristol, where he was able to buy what he described as 'an old register book'. The expense of the journey must have added considerably to the cost of the book, and it was not until 1636 that he had saved up enough money. Thereafter, the records of baptisms, marriages and burials were meticulously kept. From the arrangement in the book, it seems that he made an initial record of events from which he wrote up the register at the end of the year. Marriages, baptisms and burials follow each other closely and are evenly spaced, with no room between the sections. Oddly, after the baptism of his first child, he records no more baptisms for his own family until 1650, when he baptised his first child by his second wife. However, we know his first wife bore him at least two other children, as he recorded their burials in 1636 and 1640. It is possible that his wife went back to her own family for the birth of her children and that they were baptised in her home parish.

8. Packer M., 'Medieval Welsh Spirituality', *Journal of Welsh Religious History* 4 (1996) 7.

9. Bradney, Newport p. 135.

10. Bradney, Newport p. 144 (though Walter was curate at Moun-ton, not Mynyddislwyn); *Dictionary of Welsh Biography sub* Walter; Edmund Jones, *Account of the Parish of Aberystroth* (Trefecca, 1779) 96.

In 1638, disaster struck the parish. As Lewis James later wrote: 'In the year of God 1638 even in the month of June 1638 it pleased God to visit the parish of Bedwelty with the plague of pestilence.' The register records one hundred and nine deaths in that year, eighty-two of them from the plague. He was in the graveyard three and four times a day through the summer, burying friends, neighbours and associates. His own family does not seem to have suffered, and one wonders whether he sent them away to safety. But he remained in the parish himself – and he kept his registers through the whole time. The strain this placed on him may be reflected in the fact that, although he normally kept his registers in impeccable Latin, a number of the plague burials are recorded in English.

It would be easy to belittle the importance of what Lewis James did in the plague year. It might even seem callous to think of registers and bureaucratic procedures in the midst of so much suffering. Nevertheless, a large part of the trauma of catastrophic epidemics is the thought of friends and relatives thrown unrecorded into unmarked graves, as if they had never been. By continuing at his post, saying the services of the *Llyfr Gweddî Gyffredin* over the graves of his parishioners and recording their burials, he was maintaining the collective memory of the community and giving the dead their due honour. The survivors did not forget.

Repeated outbreaks of plague elsewhere in England and Wales in the late 1630s contributed to political tension. The prevailing belief was that national disasters were a sign of divine displeasure. In the eyes of many of the political classes, Charles I and Archbishop Laud were pushing the established church dangerously near to Catholicism. In the 1630s England and Wales had been visited by the four horsemen of the Apocalypse – death, not only from plague but from famine, the result of a series of bad summers, and the war with Scotland which was a direct result of Charles's policies on religion. Even loyal subjects could be forgiven for feeling uneasy. Traditionalism in religion and politics went together, and, when civil war broke out, Wales was largely loyal to Charles. But the loyalty of a remote and poverty-stricken region was of little use against the better-funded and better-organised Parliamentary army. By the summer of 1646, South Wales was in Parliamentary hands.

While its army mopped up royalist resistance, Parliament embarked on religious reform. The reversal of Laud's innovations was followed by the convening of the Westminster Assembly, the abolition of episcopacy and the Book of Common Prayer, and attempts to implement a presbyterian system of church government. This programme had only limited success. As far as we can see from the (admittedly sparse) local evidence in England, there was considerable enthusiasm for the dismantling of Laudian innovations but little desire for further change. Many parishes can be shown to have retained and continued to use their prayer books, and few bought its replacement, the *Directory of Public Worship*.¹¹

11. For detailed discussion of these points see, e.g., Morrill J., 'The Church of England, 1642-9' in Morrill J., ed., *Reactions to the English Civil War 1642-1649* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982) 89-114; Cross C., 'The Church in England, 1646-1660', in Aylmer G.E., ed., *The Interregnum: The Quest for a settlement, 1646-1660* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1972) 99-120; Maltby J., 'By this Book: Parishioners, the Prayer Book and the Established Church', in Fincham K., ed., *The Early Stuart Church, 1603-1642* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993) 115-137.

Meanwhile, the Committee for Plundered Ministers, established to provide for clergy with Parliamentary sympathies who had been ejected from their parishes in Royalist areas, was able to turn its attention to the examination of Royalist clergy. In 1650, the Act for the Better Propagation and Preaching of the Gospel in Wales empowered Commissioners to examine and evict inadequate and unworthy ministers. Between them, the Committee for Plundered Ministers and the Commissioners for the Propagation removed sixty-five of a total of about ninety clergy in Monmouthshire. Reasons for removal ranged from drunkenness and insufficiency to 'malignancy' (support for the Royalist cause) and use of the Book of Common Prayer.¹²

Some of the cases unearthed by the Commission were scandalous enough. At least fourteen clergy were dismissed for drunkenness, usually in conjunction with some other fault. Michael Hughes of Usk, for example, apart from drinking heavily, was in the habit of using the Book of Common Prayer and 'publishing the declarations of the late king'. William Edwards of Gwernesney was accused of frequently tipling, swearing and using the Prayer Book (presumably when he could see clearly enough to read it: his parishioners may have been glad to have been spared his efforts at extempore prayer).

After drunkenness, the second commonest cause for dismissal was malignancy or political disaffection, for which there were nine dismissals. There were some clear-cut cases. John Clegg of Llangybi and Llansoy, Archdeacon of Llandaff, was dismissed; 'for quitting his habitation in the time of war whenever the Parliament forces came near, for betaking himself to the late tyrant's service against the state and sending to the bishops in prosecution of godly people, being an officer under them. To which also is added his not being able to preach in Welsh.' Walter Harris of Wolvesnewton actually fought for the king, and Robert Frampton of Bryngwyn was one of the prisoners taken on the fall of Raglan Castle in 1646. Six clergy were dismissed for ignorance or insufficiency, again mostly with other reasons as well. For four of them, it was insufficiency and use of the Book of Common Prayer: the Directory of Public Worship made far heavier demands on the preaching and extemporising skills of ministers than the established liturgy. It is worth noting, though, that at least half of the clergy removed for insufficiency were graduates.

Furthermore, some of those dismissed were able men who had in some cases previously supported Parliamentary policies. Robert Brabourne of Monmouth had at one time been given an increased income by the Committee for Plundered Ministers and £66 a year for a weekly lecture funded by the Company of Haberdashers, but was subsequently ejected. John Cragge of Llandeilo represented the official line on infant baptism in public disputations and at least one of his sermons was published, but he too was eventually dismissed. Robert Frampton of Bryngwyn could hardly have hoped to escape dismissal, as he had actually fought for the king, but in 1658 he was appointed head of Monmouth School.

In the light of the debate over clerical education, it is worth looking at the intellectual credentials of all the dismissed clergy to see if any patterns emerge. At least twenty-eight (and possibly thirty

12. For details see the biographical information in Cardiff Library MS 4.1224/1-3, a biographical list of clergy in the old diocese of Llandaff by Augusta Rayer-Jenkins. I hope to publish a revised edition of Mrs Rayer-Jenkins's lists in due course.

or more) of the total were graduates. Meanwhile, at least ten of the non-graduates were allowed to remain in their parishes. This may reflect the extreme difficulty which the Commissioners had in replacing some of the clergy they had sacked. It had always been difficult to attract well-qualified men to serve in large, remote and inadequately-resourced parishes, and it was even more difficult to find an adequate supply of Welsh preachers who were not debarred by their conservative sympathies. However, this does not seem to have prevented the Commissioners from dismissing those whom they found inadequate. This may imply that some of the non-graduates were found to be suitably qualified by the academic priorities of the Commissioners.

We have no idea why Lewis James was dismissed. We can conjecture from his comments in the register that he was no supporter of the Parliament, and his lack of formal education laid him open to a charge of insufficiency. All we know is that, as he subsequently recorded in his register, 'the twentieth day of June 1650 Lewis James, cler', then curate of Bedwelltie, was ejected at Chepstoll'. He had been through a personal tragedy in the previous year. His first wife died in March 1649, leaving him with at least one child, a son aged sixteen. The following June he married again. This was not a sign of callousness but testimony to the fact that running a household was a job for a partnership. His second wife had just given birth to their first child when he was dismissed.

James did not however leave his adopted parish. Like most of the local clergy who were dismissed by the Commissioners, he probably had nowhere else to go. Lewis James's case is more unusual, though, in that we know that he continued to baptise children and to record baptisms, marriages and burials as he had done for the past seventeen years. Oliver Cromwell's policies of effective toleration in religion allowed the development of increasingly bizarre millenarian sects, but they also made it possible for the Anglican church to survive as just one denomination among many. Anglican ministers had however to be maintained by their congregations rather than receiving compulsory support. Technically, Lewis James's wife should have received a fifth of the income of the parish to maintain herself and her children: but a fifth of £10 was not even enough to starve on, and many of the ejected clergy had difficulty in claiming their fifths. We can only assume that he was maintained by his parishioners, on the basis that they still valued his ministry.

The successive governments of the Commonwealth period had great difficulty in replacing evicted clergy, especially those in remote and poorly-paid parishes. Playfair Field was ejected from Penhow for insufficiency, inability to preach and using the Book of Common Prayer, but was reinstated in 1658/9 on the death of the man appointed to replace him by the Commissioners. It is even possible that some of the other ejected clergy did as Lewis James did and continued to work in their parishes. This is certainly one interpretation of the monumental inscription on the tomb of Owen Rogers in Llantilio Crossenny church. Rogers, a Balliol graduate, had been ejected from Llandeilo Gresynni for drunkenness and malignancy. There was some substance in the accusation, as he had been accused by Walter Powell, the diarist, of keeping the church key in the alehouse. Nevertheless, on his grave are the lines from Paul's second letter to Timothy (4⁷):

I have fought a good fight,
I have finished my course,
I have kept the faith.

and the verse:

Here lies a shepheard late of Christ his sheepe
 From sheep-clothed wolves his lambes did keepe
 His monument God's angels guard and keepe
 Til him tharkangel wake shall out of sleepe ...¹³

By 1660, Bedwellty was being served by Edmund Rosser – presumably the man of that name who was appointed by the Commission to preach the gospel in the highlands of Monmouthshire and who subscribed in 1655 to Vavasor Powell's anti-Protectorate and anti-tithe 'Word for God'. Richards identifies Rosser as an Independent.¹⁴ His position must have seemed increasingly vulnerable as Royalist plots spread through Wales in 1659 and 1660, and he seems to have made no attempt to hold on to the parish. According to Lewis James's register, he himself 'began (again) to read & preache in Bedwelltie church aforesaid uppon Sunday being the twentieth day of May 1660 Edmund Rosser haveing given over the place y^e Sunday before y^e 13th Maij 1660.'

Easter was very late that year, and 27 May was Rogation Sunday. It is unlikely that the people of a remote Welsh parish would yet have heard that Charles II had landed at Dover the previous Friday. However, Lewis James was later to describe how 'uppon the Tuesday ... being the 29th day of May 1660 our most gracious Sovereigne lord King Charles the Second (after his ma^{ties} long travells and troubles) came from beyond sea, first to London. *Vivat Rex, Exsurgat Deus, et dissipentur inimici*'.

On the following Sunday, 3 June, Lewis James was able to record the baptism of Watkin son of John Harry Llewelyn, the first to be baptised in the church since June 1650. However, as he was at pains to point out: 'all the children w^{ch} Lewis James, cler', christened, as also all such persons w^{ch} were buried (and also all those persons w^{ch} were married) in Bedwelltie from the said twentieth day of June untill the third day of June 1660 were recorded in this register in order as before, as you may see in the subsequent pagine, especiallie the children baptized as if they had bin christened *in facie ecclesiae*'.

The parish clergy of 16th and early 17th-century Wales have had a poor press. The evidence of the Commissioners' activities suggests that they found the Gwent parishes in the hands of a bunch of ignorant and drunken malcontents. At the Restoration, however, at least half of them were reappointed. This was not necessarily desperation on the part of the new Bishop of Llandaff, Hugh Lloyd. Faced with the task of restoring confidence and trust in a church battered by two decades of sustained official criticism, he chose deliberately to appoint, not academic high-flyers, but local men of good standing and connections: men just like Lewis James.¹⁵

13. There is a rubbing of the stone and a full transcription of the inscription in Bradney J.A. *A History of Monmouthshire*. II: Part 1 (*The Hundred of Skenfrith*; London, 1907), opposite p. 122.

14. Richards T., *Religious Developments in Wales, 1654-1662* (London, 1923) 197-8, 202.

15. Guy J.R., 'The significance of indigenous clergy in the Welsh church at the Restoration', in Mews S., ed., *Religion and National Identity* (Studies in Church History XVIII, 1982) 335-44.

BROUGHT FORTH IN A HIGH PLACE: RELIGION, SOCIETY AND LANGUAGE IN 19TH CENTURY BLAENAVON.

By JEREMY K. KNIGHT.

Abergavenny, partly because it had no resident lord, had a tradition of independence in religious matters.¹ Though St. Mary's Priory enjoyed a remarkable Renaissance in the 15th century, it was in origin an alien priory, daughter of the French abbey of St. Vincent in Le Mans, and its influence in the town seems to have been limited. By the 17th century, Abergavenny contained both an important Catholic recusant community and a flourishing pioneer Baptist cause. The Recorder, David Baker, from a family which had served as stewards to the lords of Abergavenny since the time of Henry VIII, left his post in 1605 to become a Benedictine monk as Father Augustine Baker. David Lewis, son of the headmaster of the Grammar School, became a Jesuit, a Catholic martyr, and a canonised saint. He sometimes used the pseudonym Charles Baker, and it is perhaps not surprising that another member of this family, William Baker, felt it necessary to preface his will with the trenchant statement that he was a Protestant, and no Papist nor Anabaptist.²

The Old Dissent.

Charles Herbert, Vicar of Abergavenny at the time of the Civil War, was, like most of the Monmouthshire parish clergy, deprived of his living, and replaced by a puritan, the English Baptist, John Abbott. Among the other deprived Anglican clergy of the area was a former Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, Henry Vaughan, sometime Vicar of Panteg and a Laudian divine of some distinction, who had preached before Charles I in war-time Oxford. He had been appointed to Panteg by the University of Oxford under an Act which prohibited Catholics from presenting to Anglican livings, the patrons being the Catholic Morgans of Llantarnam. He was now headmaster of Abergavenny Grammar School.¹ In 1653, St. Mary's Priory was the scene of a remarkable public debate on infant baptism between Vaughan and the Baptist Vicar of Leominster, John Tombes.⁴ Abbot's hearers later divided on the issue of open or closed Communion, and the separated community chose as minister a local man, William Pritchard, though Abbot remained at St. Mary's until the Restoration. The Abergavenny Baptists first broke bread in August 1652. After the Restoration, prohibited from meeting within a town under the Act of Uniformity, they met in William Pritchard's house in Llantilio Pertholey, and then at Llanwenarth, where they were given

Gwent C.R.O. : Gwent County Record Office, County Hall, Croesyceiliog, Cwmbrân.

1. Williams G., *The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation* (Cardiff, 1962) 351 ['At Abergavenny where the parishioners made a great communal effort to raise funds for beautifying the church and installing new bells, the monks never contributed a halfpenny. And this in their own Priory church'.], 457.
2. Bradney J.A., *A History of Monmouthshire II: Part 2a (The Hundred of Abergavenny, Part 1; London 1906) 177.*
3. Vaughan was: 'Away at Oxford and elsewhere' (as he expressed it in his parish register) during the Civil War. He lived to see the Restoration, but died the next year.
4. Bassett T.M., *The Welsh Baptists* (Swansea, 1977) 14-16; White B.R., 'John Miles and the structure of the Calvinistic Baptist mission to south Wales, 1649-1660', in Mansel J. (ed.), *Welsh Baptist Studies* (Cardiff, 1976) 35-76, citing Tombes J., *A Plea for Antipaedobaptists* (London, 1654), and Cragge J., *The Arraignment and Conviction of Anabaptism* (London, 1656).

land for a chapel by Christopher Price, an apothecary and coal lessee. By 1688, Llanwenarth had eighty members, some from as far away as Llanybi.⁵

Abergavenny was a prosperous inland market town. Its position at the point where the Usk Valley entered the Welsh uplands made it a centre where a range of goods was re-distributed to the hinterland, and from which agricultural goods travelled down the Usk Valley to the Monmouthshire ports. There was already a fairly substantial sale coal industry in the surrounding hills and, in the 1690s, Edward Lhuyd was collecting fossils from the quarries on the Bloreng which supplied limestone to the Hanbury ironworks around Pontypool.⁶ Radical technological changes in the iron and transport industries were to transform this early industrial scene in the final decades of the 18th century and immense social changes followed from the establishment of ironworks at places like Beaufort, Tredegar or Blaenavon (1788), and from the opening of the Monmouthshire and Brecon and Abergavenny Canals. The ironworks at Blaenavon were one of the first generation of the multiple, coke-fired, steam-blown groups of blast furnaces, and by the time William Coxe visited them in 1798, a small town had already grown up around them.

Blaenavon was called into being in a remote place far from earlier villages. The high moorland included parts of five parishes, whose medieval churches lay below in the valleys of the Usk and Afon Llwyd. A small medieval chapel of ease served the spiritual needs of the area. It had no known dedication, but the ruins of Capel Newydd, demolished in 1863, lie south-east of Blaenavon beside the Llanover Road. 19th century travellers found a rectangular chapel 32 ft. by 16 ft. with a little western porch, standing within a stone walled enclosure. First mentioned in 1577, a deed of 1628 names four local men as trustees, and a stone bore the date 1736, but its history is obscure.⁷

By the time of the building of the ironworks, the members of Llanwenarth included William James and his wife from Ton Mawr farm at Blaenavon. His brother, Francis James, was a member of Penygarn Baptists. Within a few years, ministers from Llanwenarth and Penygarn were preaching at their farmhouse. Many years later, old people would recall how they sought out fellow believers on the first Sunday after their arrival in a new industrial town.⁸ The church-book of Horeb Baptist Church at Blaenavon contains a history of the chapel in Welsh, written by Isaac Hiley in April 1848. By 1807, the group meeting at Ton Mawr had thirty members, and Francis James sold them a piece of land called Cae William Llewellyn for five shillings. Old Horeb Meeting House was built on the site, with its graveyard, for £400, Llanwenarth and Pen-y-garn Chapels meeting most

5. White 1976, *op. cit.* citing Joshua Thomas., *The History of the Baptist Church in Wales* (c.1796; Bristol Baptist College Library MS Z, dz, folios 93ff).

6. Gunther R.T., *Early Science at Oxford, Vol. XIV: Life and Letters of Edward Lhwyd* (Oxford, 1945) 337.

7. 'Notes of Antiquarian Rambles among the Monmouthshire Hills', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 1873, 98-101.

8. A characteristic example occurs in Charles Parry's manuscript: *History of Ebbw Vale* (1870; MS in Ebbw Vale Literary and Scientific Institution Library. Photocopy in possession of the author). In 1859, Joseph Saunders recalled how he had come to Pen-y-cae, Ebbw Vale, in 1802. On Sunday morning, he asked his landlady: 'if she knew of any religious man in that place'. She directed him to someone: 'living in one of the houses above us', and the two men journeyed to Sirhowy Baptist Chapel. From this arose prayer meetings of a group of mixed Baptists and Independents at Ebbw Vale: 'to which many came'. Eventually, the Independents moved to the carpenter's shop in the Ironworks.

of the cost. Initially, members were given a choice of membership in the parent chapels, but, in February 1823, Horeb became a separate chapel.⁹

In 1825, a quarrel over the appointment of a new minister led to a split, and eighty-one members of Horeb left to found Ebenezer Chapel. This was part of a wider division among the Baptists of the new industrial areas, between the conservative Calvinist orthodoxy of rural Wales and the slightly more liberal theology associated with the ex-wrestler Andrew Fuller, and his supporter J.P. Davies, minister at Tredegar. Chapels at Abergavenny and Newport similarly divided. The Fullerite slogan that: 'Christ died for all men', not simply the elect, had social and political overtones. The controversy may also have reflected the impact on a Welsh-speaking rural society of the new people, and new values, of the ironfield. The role of the Welsh language may also have been an issue, and men like Francis and Isaac Hiley of Llanwenarth were active anti-Fullerites.¹⁰ The remaining members of Horeb gave a call to Richard Owen of Beaumaris, a student at Abergavenny Baptist College. His ministry at Horeb in 1825-33 coincided with a series of revivals and rapid expansion. A daughter of Horeb opened at Pysgah, Talywain, in 1827, and the Monmouthshire Baptist Association, founded in 1832, comprised thirty-four churches, twenty Welsh and fourteen English. The old meeting house at Horeb was now too small, and a new one, twice the size, opened in April 1836.¹¹

The Methodists.

If the Baptists represented an indigenous tradition of dissent, rooted in the puritan traditions of the 17th century, the Methodists in their various connections provided a common tradition and ideology for the various social groups within the new industrial towns. The Wesleyans: 'The established church of dissent', High Tory in the earlier nineteenth century, recruited among the English-speaking managers and foremen. The Calvinists, equally conservative, recruited among the Welsh-speaking small contractors, artisans and colliers. The Primitives and Bible Christians were English imports, and more exclusively working class. The Wesleyans and Calvinists did not usually compete, since the former were English-speaking, the latter Welsh. Only when the Merthyr based minister, Edward Jones, set up a Welsh Wesleyan cause in 1805 did a demarcation dispute arise. Tredegar, as usual, was the storm centre. The Calvinists brought up one of their leading debaters, the Blaenavon Calvinistic Methodist stone-mason and coal-level owner, Aaron Brute, who (according to our strongly pro-Wesleyan source) got the worst of the controversy.¹²

The Calvinists had been the first to arrive. Their first chapel, beside River Row, was known as Capel y Graig or Rock Chapel. Within a few years however, a new chapel, Penuel, was built close to the ironworks, just in time to appear on Thomas Deakins' map of September 1819, with a

9. Horeb church-book/register-book: *A Church Record: A Synopsis of the state and transactions of a Christian Church* (Cardiff, 1847; in possession of the Minister and Deacons of Horeb Baptist Church. Typescript copy in possession of the author). For a later manuscript history, see: *The Church at Horeb, Blaenavon*, by the Revd Wm. Jones (1835-1911) [one of about a dozen such accounts of Baptist churches in Gwent contained in NLW, Minor Dep. 1209B].

10. Bassett T.M. 1977, *op. cit.* 125-29.

11. Davies E.T., *Religion in the Industrial Revolution in South Wales* (Cardiff, 1965) 70.

12. Young D., *Origins and History of Methodism in Wales and the Borders* (London, 1893) 159.

thumbnail sketch of the 'New Meeting House'.¹³ Lewis Browning believed that the move was due to the company needing the site of Capel y Graig to tip cinders from the furnaces. Penuel remained one of the most important centres of Welsh language culture in Blaenavon for the rest of the century.

The Welsh Congregationalists.

Among the new arrivals at Blaenavon were a number of Welsh-speaking Congregationalists from West Wales, who first met together on Christmas Day 1820 in a building on the Afon Road, and named their chapel Bethlehem in memory of this. No early records of Bethlehem seem to have survived, and we know little of their early ministers, Harris bach Blaenafon and Griffiths bach Blaenafon. Lewis Browning knew Edward Williams, a miner in Dick Keare's Slope and Congregationalist preacher, whose stall Browning took over when he felt a call to the full-time ministry. He was a well-known bard, and author of prize essays on the role of the Sunday School teacher and the evils of the drink trade. In 1847, the Congregationalists of Bethlehem moved to their new chapel in the centre of town.¹⁴

The Welsh Congregationalists were establishing themselves locally in the 1820's (Carmel, Beaufort 1821; Rehoboth, Brynmawr 1829). They retained something of the conservative ways of rural Welsh nonconformity and two successive ministers of Carmel (admittedly a chapel under the close scrutiny of Crawshay Bailey) made themselves unpopular with the Scotch Cattle and the Chartists. John Ridge had an encounter with the Chartists on their way to Newport, and spent the night hiding under his pulpit stairs in a blacked-out chapel. His successor Thomas Rees, ex-miner and shopkeeper, had earlier in his career been a victim of the Scotch Cattle, when his shop at Blackwood was twice attacked by armed gangs, who destroyed his shop book listing debts and looted the substantial contents of his strong box. In later life, as Dr Thomas Rees D.D., the author of several books on Welsh history and society, he was an influential leader of his denomination, and a keen advocate of the building of English Language chapels.¹⁵

The Established Church.

On St. Peter's Day (29 June) 1805, St. Peter's Church at Blaenavon was opened for worship. The first ironmasters, Thomas Hill, Samuel Hopkins and Benjamin Pratt, were devout Anglicans, and St. Peter's was the first new Anglican church of the ironfield, just as Sarah Hopkins's new Anglican school of 1815, built in memory of her brother next to the church, was the first ironworks' school in Wales. Almost as unusual was Thomas Hill's provision of a Welsh-speaking vicar. James Jenkins was from a Carmarthenshire farming family, and the son of the vicar of Mydrym and Brechfa north of Llandeilo Fawr.¹⁶ This paternalistic care for their work-force stemmed from the West Midlands

13. Map, 29 September 1819 by Thomas Deakin (Gwent C.R.O. Mon./A/2/02 and 03); Browning L., *Blaenavon, A Brief Historical Sketch* (Abergavenny, 1906; reprinted D. Brown and Son, Cowbridge, 1989) 54-56.

14. Browning L. *op. cit.* 61-62.

15. For the attack on Thomas Rees: *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 26 July 1834. He was the author of *The History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales* (London, 1861; 2nd. enlarged edn. 1883), and of *Miscellaneous Papers on Subjects relating to Wales* (London, 1867).

16. Browning L. *op. cit.* 59. On the family, see: Jenkins D.C. (ed.), *The Diary of Thomas Jenkins of Llandeilo, 1826-1870* (Bala, 1976).

background of the ironmasters. Thomas Hill's father had left £200 in 1782 to build a school at Waste Bank, Lye, an industrial hamlet of Stourbridge with a rough reputation. A kinsman of Benjamin Pratt built the little red brick church school which still stands beside Chaddersley Corbett churchyard, and Sarah Hopkins (whose grandfather had asked in his will to be carried to his grave on the shoulders of his workmen) was involved in founding a girls' school and an almshouse at Rugeley in Staffordshire.¹⁷

The old pattern of parish and manor was still strong, and Blaenavon remained the ecclesiastical district of Blaenavon with Capel Newydd until it became a separate parish in 1860. James Jenkins, vicar until 1841, noted in his church register such events as the Cinder Pit disaster of 1838, and carefully recorded the birth-places of strangers dying in the town, lest relatives should seek news of them, but more particularly noting the parish of anyone from his native county. He also prudently copied into his register a cure for the bite of a mad dog.¹⁸ Dyne Steele recalled his long sermons in Welsh as one of the trials of his boyhood, but he could also preach succinctly, and in English, to a church parade of Oddfellows on the text: 'Look to the ant thou sluggard' (*Proverbs* 6^o), praising thrift and persuading many to join the Oddfellows.¹⁹ When he became vicar to the secluded group of ironmasters' villas at Llanfoist, many nonconformist shopkeepers joined with the Anglicans in presenting him with a costly piece of silver plate. His successor, John Jones, was vicar until his death in 1885. Capel Newydd: 'cramped, poorly maintained and unimpressive', remained in use until 1863, when it was demolished, but it had long been superseded by St. Peter's.²⁰

New People, New English Causes.

Until the influx of English immigrants in the boom years of 1824-25, the chapel people of Blaenavon worshipped God in Welsh. Many of the new immigrants came from the West Midlands, the homeland of the Primitive Methodists. Their early history, like that of the Bible Christians, was one of itinerant evangelists in remote upland areas (the Cheshire- Staffordshire border for the Primitive Methodists, North Devon for the Bible Christians) falling out with the local Methodist establishment over open air preaching during the Napoleonic Wars, when the Government was nervous of crowds, 'Jacobins' and unlicensed preaching, and when legislation against dissenters was a possibility. One distinctive feature of the two sects, the open air 'camp meeting' was borrowed direct from the pamphlets of an American evangelist. Both emerged as distinct Methodist traditions, the Primitives in 1812, the Bible Christians in 1815-16. By about 1820, the Primitives had spread to Shropshire, where many Blaenavon immigrants came from, and the Blaenavon Primitive Methodist Chapel was one of the two earliest in the county (1829). Elsewhere in Gwent, they were not widespread until the mid-1840s. The baptismal register shows that over 75% of the men among the congregation were colliers or labourers, with around 10% of craftsmen

17.Scott W., *Stourbridge and its Vicinity* (Stourbridge, 1832) 89; Midgley M (ed.), *Victoria County History, County of Stafford V* (1959) 158-72. The church at Lye Waste was said to be an: 'exact counterpart' of that at Blaenavon.

18.Gwent C.R.O. D.Pa.74.

19.T. Dyne Steele – autobiographical memoir (c.1893); *Presenting Monmouthshire* 28 (Autumn 1969) 42-46; Browning L. *op. cit.* 59.

20.*Pontypool Free Press*, 24 July 1885. For the demolition of Capel Newydd: Gwent C.R.O. D.Pa.74.48.

(blacksmiths, masons, brickmakers etc.) and a few small tradesmen and shopkeepers. There were few ironworkers.²¹

In 1821, the Bible Christians set out to: 'send missionaries into the dark and destitute parts of the United Kingdom', and soon after began work in Monmouthshire. Their first chapel opened at Tintern in 1826.²² From here, they spread into the Trellech-Shirenewton uplands. They arrived in industrial Gwent in 1851, at Pontnewynydd at the head of the Monmouthshire Canal, a mission base for the ironfield. By the end of the decade they were at Blaenavon, and met for the first time in their own chapel in January 1861. By the end of the year, this had proved too small and was being enlarged. They were a lively evangelical sect, with open air camp meetings in the Waun Field. They kept up their connections with South-West England, with preachers from Cornwall or Devon at anniversaries or special services. As with the Primitive Methodists, women preachers were not uncommon. When their King Street chapel re-opened in September 1861, Miss Jollow from Devonshire delivered three sermons.²³

Their arrival coincided with a religious revival which, starting in America in 1858, spread across the Atlantic *via* a returning Welsh-American minister from Cardiganshire. By the autumn of 1859, the preacher David Morgan had carried it to Gwent, where it spread from the Welsh Congregationalists to the English groups. By 1860, Methodist colliers were meeting for daily underground prayer meetings and Primitive Methodist tea parties attracted crowds of six or seven hundred. When a brickyard girl, Martha Booth, was killed in an accident at the pugging mill in September, overflow crowds filled the Primitive Methodist chapel and the street outside it. John Jones's powerful sermon on the text: 'Two women shall be grinding at the mill' (*St. Matthew 24⁴¹*) drew many to join the churches and chapels.²⁴ In the following year, the Calvinistic and Primitive Methodists, and the Bible Christians, were all enlarging their chapels. Within a few years the Baptists of Horeb were also finding their church too small. New Horeb opened in 1866, opposite the parish church. Old Horeb was leased to the newly founded English Congregationalists and then to the Wesleyans. Eight years later Zion Chapel opened across the valley, for the colliers and steelworkers of Forgeaside.²⁵

The Roman Catholic Community and the Franciscan Mission.

The 1860s also saw developments in religion and education among the Roman Catholic community at Blaenavon that, in many respects, mirrored what was happening in the other churches at this time, in the foundation of schools, social work and concern for the provision of pastoral care among

21. Their first chapel in the county was at Raglan (1828). In the 1830s, they spread to Monmouth and Penallt, on the edge of their Forest of Dean stronghold. Only in the 1840s did they expand in both rural and industrial Gwent (Llantilio Crossenny 1842, Caerleon and Trelech 1844, Blackwood 1843, Sirhowy 1844, Tredegar 1846). This reflects the influx of settlers from the West Midlands after 1840. Cf. Gwynedd Jones I. And Williams D. (ed.), *The Religious Census of 1851: A Calendar of the Returns relating to Wales I* (South Wales; Cardiff, 1976). Gwent C.R.O. D. 942.109 : Baptismal Register, Blaenavon Circuit 1829-76.

22. Pyke R., *The Early Bible Christians* (London, 1941); Shaw T., *The Bible Christians* (London, 1965).

23. *Pontypool Free Press*, 12 March, 23 April 1859; 12 January, 21 September 1861. *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 21 September 1861. Gwent C.R.O. D.942.75 [Register of Baptisms, 1864-1898].

24. Morgan J.J., *The 1859 Revival in Wales* (Mold, 1909) 102-07; *Pontypool Free Press*, 9 March 1861; Browning L. *op. cit.* 60.

25. *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 23 June 1860; 14, 21 September 1861.

the poor, and the rôle of women in the Church. The whole episode deserves much fuller study. By the 18th century, the once flourishing Roman Catholic community in Monmouthshire had greatly declined. According to one source, there were only seven hundred and fifty Roman Catholics in the whole of Wales by 1773.²⁶ This was to change however. In June 1829, the *Monmouthshire Merlin* noted how day after day families of destitute Irish were arriving in Newport from Bristol in great distress. 'We trust', said the *Merlin*, 'that tranquillity will soon return to our unhappy sister island'.²⁷

The immigration continued, however, especially in the terrible famine years of 1845-51. Many Irish people settled around Pontypool, particularly in Varteg and Abersychan. In 1860, at the request of Bishop Brown of the short-lived see of Newport, a Capuchin Franciscan friar from Pantasaph in Flintshire, and a lay brother, were sent to take over the mission in Pontypool which had been established by 1846.²⁸ Initially, there were problems of language and culture for many of the original settlers only knew their prayers and catechism in Irish, and their children not even that, whilst some did not want a 'foreign priest'. Soon, however, Mass was being said fortnightly at Blaenavon by Fr Honorius, in the house of a family of 'respectable trades-people', but, when these fell on hard times, a room over a shop: 'A wretched place...accessible only by a sort of step-ladder' was fitted up as a temporary chapel.²⁹

In 1863, an Oxford lady who had felt a call to work among the poor set up a Roman Catholic school-room at Abersychan: 'A plain, substantial gothic building on a breezy hill'. It opened in September that year, under the patronage of Mrs Herbert of Llanarth, with bands and with benefit clubs parading with their banners. The following year she was joined by a lady member of the Third Order of St. Francis, presumably a friend, and: 'Blaenavon being the least attractive region of all the district was...the one she most interested herself in'. A school-room and a chapel dedicated to the Sacred Heart was set up above Blaenavon near King Street, and opened on 18 May 1868, with a Fife Band leading a procession of priests and Sisters of Mercy. The sermon was given by Fr Marshall of Ross.³⁰

Welsh and English in the Chapels.

By the later 1850s, English was making significant inroads into the Welsh chapels, partly through the wish of the chapels to reach the English immigrant community. The Congregationalists were early in the field. Dr Thomas Rees, earlier the victim of the Scotch Cattle, was a key figure, aided

26. Davies E.T. 1965. *op. cit.* 187.

27. *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 13 June 1829.

28. Anon., *Franciscan Missions among the Colliers and Ironworkers of Monmouthshire* (London, 1876).

29. *Ibid.* 45.

30. *Franciscan Missions, op. cit.* 46; *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 22 May 1868. The anonymous Oxford lady was perhaps the author of *Franciscan Missions among the Colliers*. So far as I am aware, the identity of the two ladies is not known, but her friend died on 2 August 1870, and was buried at Chiselhurst. It would be of interest to establish their identity, and discover more of their background. The comments of a middle-class outsider of very different religious views on the Blaenavon scene are often worth quoting. The following may serve as a sample: 'Blaenavon is completely a colony of colliers and ironworkers...Dissenting chapels rival the public houses in number and variety. It is no uncommon thing for father and mother, and each member of a family, to belong to a different sect; and children have been heard in high dispute as to which of their preachers is best, not (in) the discharge of his spiritual duties, but as to his worldly position. "Ah! My minister is a butcher, and he makes more money than *your'n*, as is *on'y* a tailor", a brother was overheard saying to his sister' (*Franciscan Missions, op.cit.* 43-44).

by wealthy Congregationalists around Bristol and Bath, notably the tobacco brothers W.D. and H.O. Wills. English causes were founded at Ebbw Vale (1843), Beaufort (1849), and Brynmawr (1851-53), often through groups of members leaving Welsh chapels to found English daughter causes. In March 1863, twelve members of Bethlehem Chapel, at the suggestion of their minister, separated to found an English Congregational cause. They met first in the Town Hall, then in the newly vacated Old Horeb in James Street. In May 1867, however, Horeb was bought by the Wesleyans, and the English Independents had to move back to the Town Hall.³¹ The only satisfactory solution was to build their own chapel. They quickly raised £1,000 from wealthy Bristol dissenters such as Samuel Morley M.P. and H.O. Wills, and from the Society for Promoting English Preaching in South Wales and Monmouthshire. The new chapel, in the restrained Gothic style favoured by the Congregationalists from the late 1840s onwards, opened in June 1868, the architect being the Revd Thomas Thomas of Landore, who also designed the Congregationalist College at Brecon and Carmel, Beaufort.³² The creation of a separate English cause helped in the long run to keep Bethlehem as a Welsh chapel, and it was the last Welsh language chapel in Blaenavon.

The Baptists: ‘The most Anglicised and Anglicising denomination’, formed a Monmouthshire English Baptist Association in 1857: ‘To aid the foundation of English churches in the destitute parts of the county’. At Beaufort the English Baptists first met in the Club Room of an Inn, but in 1866 moved to a prefabricated iron chapel later replaced in stone. After the death of Francis Hiley, ‘Y Corn Arian’ (‘the silver horn’) of Llanwenarth in 1860, English appeared in the oldest of Monmouthshire Baptist causes, and when Bradney wrote in 1906, Welsh was only used there on special occasions.³³

By the 1870s, the language issue was dividing the Blaenavon chapels, and sometimes spilling over into the local press. When the Welsh Congregational minister of Bethlehem, Samuel Owen, complained of the evangelistic methods of the new English Baptist chapel of Moriah in January 1874, he drew the reply that they were doing their best: ‘to instruct the ignorant and polish the rude, and would earnestly invite him to attend some of the classes’. The resulting correspondence was hardly edifying.³⁴ Most Welsh chapels were by now in effect bilingual, often with the morning service in Welsh and the evening service in English. At Horeb, an energetic young Pembrokeshire minister, D.E. Jones, did away with this pattern in 1880. Attendances increased, though ‘a few of the old Welsh members’ disliked the change. Ebenezer continued as a Welsh language chapel.³⁵

King Street Baptist originated from quarrels within Horeb, just as Ebenezer had done fifty years earlier. The democratic autonomy of Baptist causes left little room for external mediation. When a

31.*Id.* 18 May 1867.

32.*Id.* 13 July 1867. For the Gothic style: Chadwick O., *The Victorian Church* (London, 1966) 409.

33.Davies E.T. *op. cit.* 70-71; Bradney J.A. *op. cit.* I: Part 2b (1906; *The Hundred of Abergavenny*; reprinted by Academy Books, 1992) 355. Comments in the press on the use of Welsh and English in the chapels were particularly common in the 1860’s, suggesting that it was a very live issue at this time. For typical examples, see: *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 10, 24 December 1859; 18 February 1860; 21 March 1863; 29 September 1866.

34.*Pontypool Free Press*, 18 May 1867.

35.*Id.* 21 January 1881.

group of deacons clashed with their minister, he might be forced to the point of resignation, though the minister might find support among other members, who might circulate a testimonial or a petition on his behalf, or even organise a straw poll. If the deacons could not command a majority, they themselves might be forced to resign. The minister of Ebenezer had survived just such a crisis shortly before the Horeb affair, when his supporters organized a testimonial, and he had withdrawn his resignation.

The cause of the Horeb quarrel is unknown, though the language issue may have been involved. The group who broke away to found King Street immediately began a vigorous campaign aimed at the English-speaking population. It may have been a similar movement to that which had led members to leave Bethlehem (with the blessing of their minister) to found an English Congregational chapel. Matters at Horeb came to a head on a July evening in 1878, when, after a contentious meeting the minister, William Rees, gave notice, and simultaneously, the entire diaconate resigned. His supporters organized a canvass, which showed that only fifty of the two hundred and forty members supported the deacons. Within a few weeks, this minority group was meeting in a schoolroom, and raised enough money to buy the old Primitive Methodist chapel in King Street, the Primitives having moved out to their grand new Gothic church in Broad Street. Well-heated (an attraction to many in this time of severe depression and unemployment) and with pews replacing the old benches, the new chapel set out to attract adherents. Their weekly 'Penny Readings', aimed at the English-speakers and those outside the orbit of the chapels, were hugely popular, but drew criticism from those who thought that popular music should be left to the ungodly. Owen Tidman, the vigorous young minister, was of radical views, one of the leading Liberals in the town, and, with his wife, was much involved in organizing relief work among the unemployed and their children.³⁶

The Methodists had their separate Welsh and English traditions from the start. Even at Penuel, however, temperance meetings were bilingual by the end of the 1850s. By the 1870s, even here, the inroads of English were making themselves felt and in the next decade, lectures and entertainments were in English, with Welsh reserved for the services. Lewis Browning's brother Thomas, a collier, led the singing at Penuel for many years, but when English replaced Welsh in the services he gave up, not being equal to leading in English.³⁷

By the late 19th century, Blaenavon had thirteen chapels – five Baptist, five Methodist (Calvinistic, Primitive, Bible Christian and two Wesleyan) and three Congregationalist, but they were now almost entirely English language. The 1905 Revival took place, so far as Blaenavon was concerned, at the time when the Welsh language and its culture was rapidly declining to extinction. During the first decade of the century, though the population of Blaenavon rose by almost exactly a thousand, the number of Welsh speakers fell from eight hundred and fifty-seven to six hundred and sixteen, 8% and 5% of the population respectively.³⁸ A census carried out by the Welsh Church

36. For Owen Tidman, see: *Pontypool Free Press*, 8 December 1880; 14 August, 20 November 1885; 12 February 1886.

37. Browning L. *op. cit.* 87.

	Population.	Welsh Speakers.	%
1901 Census (Blaenavon Urban District):	10,010	857	8
1911 Census " " "	11,087	616	5

Commission in the same period showed that nearly 70% of the population claimed membership or association with one or other of the nonconformist chapels, but few of these could have followed a service in Welsh.

Among the Methodists, the quest for unity led ultimately to the closure of many chapels. The social and historical differences between the various Methodist traditions had gradually eroded away, and the Calvinists of Penuel no longer worshipped in the old tongue. With formal union, it was no longer necessary to heat, maintain or insure two buildings within a town, whilst the centralised organization of the Methodists made it easier to amalgamate under one roof than with the Baptists, for whom each chapel was a largely autonomous unit. The Bible Christians amalgamated with two other groups in 1907 to form the United Methodist Church and the term 'Primitive Methodist' ceased to be used, at least officially, in 1929. Finally the Wesleyans, the former Primitive Methodists and the United Methodists united in 1932 as the Methodist Church. The Blaenavon Bible Christians seem to have disappeared soon after 1907, perhaps merging with their Primitive Methodist neighbours in Broad Street, though their hall survived as a St. John's Ambulance Hall. The remaining Methodist churches finally merged in the mid-1960s. The Primitive Methodist chapel in Broad Street, the largest in Blaenavon, closed about 1965, and Penuel was demolished in 1968. The Upper Wesleyan chapel vanished, with the rest of Chapel Row, in 1971.

EXCAVATIONS AT TRELECH: 1996-1999.

By RAYMOND HOWELL.

The Historical Background.

Documentary evidence suggests that in the late 13th and early 14th centuries, Trelech was one of the largest towns in Wales. The mound and portions of the eroded ditch of a motte and bailey castle survive approximately a hundred metres to the south of the large St. Nicholas's Church. These two structures provided the central physical focus of the medieval town. The earliest surviving reference to the castle describes an existing structure in 1231.¹ Archaeological evidence derived from twelve years of research excavations, suggests that large scale urbanisation began slightly after that date, but there is good evidence that Trelech had emerged as a town by the mid to late 1240s. Borough status and the existence of a market² suggest rapid urban development, and, by the end of the 13th century, Trelech was one of the largest towns in Wales with three hundred and seventy-eight burgages in 1288.³ This figure is remarkable as it makes Trelech the second, and conceivably even the largest, town in Wales at that date.⁴ Given its geographical position, landlocked on a plateau and in an unlikely location for any sort of urban centre, the development of Trelech as a town is difficult to explain on the basis of existing historical records. Archaeological evidence is helping to clarify the picture.

Successive excavations near the castle and the church as well as in the field east of the Virtuous Well, a scheduled ancient monument south of the modern village, have produced evidence of iron production on a large scale. In several places, furnace bases remained *in situ* and in at least two cases smelting was carried out in a structure defined by post holes. In one instance a well-made stone platform appears to have provided a base for bellows.⁵ The picture is one of intensive iron production which, on the basis of ceramic evidence and a recently obtained archaeomagnetic date,⁶ seems to have begun in the mid 13th century and continued into the early 14th century. Wasters recovered in excavation also point to pottery production in the town during the 13th/early 14th century. Evidence of intensive iron production allows construction of a model which helps to explain Trelech's development. The early industrial phases seem to correspond with acquisition of the area by the powerful de Clare family as a part of the Marshal partition of 1245/6. It is possible that subsequent industrialisation was associated with specific de Clare political/military initiatives in Glamorgan. Recent research demonstrates a de Clare inclination to develop towns for particular purposes and targeted industrial production seems a good model to explain urbanisation in

1. *Cal. Patent R.* 1225-32, 427.

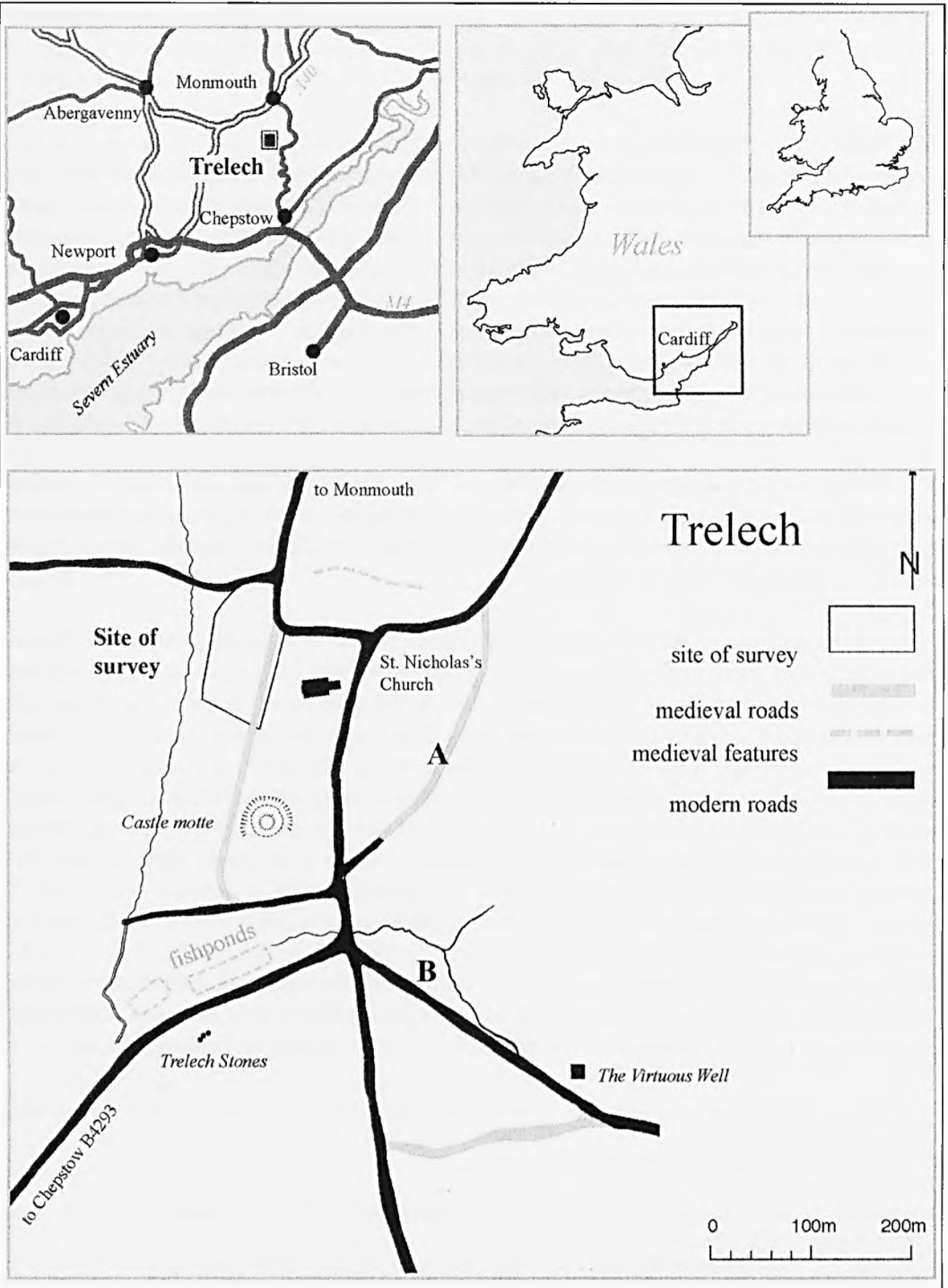
2. PRO, SC 6/1247/18, 21, and 6/925/30.

3. PRO, SC 6/1247/21.

4. PRO, SC 6/1242/1. Cardiff had 421 burgages in 1296 [Beresford M., *New Towns of the Middle Ages* (Gloucester, 1988) Table IX.2].

5. Howell R., 'Excavations at Trelech, 1991-1993', *Monm. Antiq.* XI (1995) [=Howell 1995a]; and *idem.* 'Ironworking at the Medieval Borough of Trelech, Gwent', in Crewe P. and Crewe S. (eds.), *Iron for Archaeologists: A review of recent work on the archaeology of early iron-working sites in Europe* (Plas Tan-y-Bwlch, 1995) [=Howell 1995b].

6. Davis P. and Tarling D.H., *Archaeomagnetic Results from Trellech near Newport, Wales* (University of Plymouth, 1999).



medieval Trelech.⁷ The extent and political orientation of de Clare holdings in Wales may have made Trelech's otherwise unlikely location seem a particularly attractive one.

If, as seems increasingly likely, the town of Trelech developed to support de Clare interests in South Wales, this seigniorial influence may provide important clues regarding the town's decline. It was once fashionable to see the decline of Trelech as a consequence of the Black Death and the revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr, particularly given Owain's important victory at nearby Craig y Dorth.⁸ Archaeological evidence, however, suggests that the town was already in decline as an urban centre well before these events. A case in point is a partly robbed out but still well defined long-house excavated in 1992/3.⁹ The picture which emerges is one of urban decline setting in during the first quarter of the fourteenth century, and it seems likely that the death of the last de Clare male heir at Bannockburn in 1314 was an important contributory factor. The priorities in the southern March changed as a consequence, and the system which had artificially sustained the industrial prosperity of Trelech changed as well. Of course, urban Trelech would not have ended overnight. Forest returns, which totalled £162 18s. 6d. in 1310-11¹⁰ for example, would have continued. Nevertheless, the geographical difficulties would soon have told and decline seems to have been rapid. A Marcher industrial 'boom town', lasting for slightly less than one century, seems the best model to explain Trelech as an urban centre.

The 1996 – 1998 Excavations.

For much of the early 1990s, archaeological investigations in Trelech were concentrated on a field located immediately to the west of the church-castle axis. One of the important results of these investigations was the excavation of a road surface running north-south and roughly parallel to the present village High Street.¹¹ The line of this road extends from that of the modern B4293 from Monmouth, and runs straight onto Court Farm where it presumably curved round the castle precinct. The line of this road immediately west of the church was confirmed by geophysical survey in May 1999.¹² In 1997, it became possible to dig test trenches on Trelech Farm to the east of the High Street. The opportunity to examine a new area in the town was welcomed and when trenches suggested the possibility of a third north-south road it was decided to shift the main focus of excavation to Trelech Farm.

The most important result of the 1997 excavation was confirmation of a well-defined and deeply rutted north-south road.¹³ The suggestion that industrial surfaces might be associated led to a return to the site and a partial re-opening of the main excavation in 1998. The area investigated was originally 13.5m. by 7.5m., subsequently extended as important new features emerged (*Fig. 1*). It was confirmed that the road surface extended across the excavation but that it was interrupted by the paved 20th century farm road which cut the medieval features. The medieval road was on a line

7. Penrose R., *Urban Development in the Lordships of Glamorgan, Gwynllwg, Caerleon and Usk under the Clare family, 1217-1314* (Ph. D., thesis., University of Wales, 1997).

8. Howell R., *A History of Gwent* (Llandysul, 1992) 92-93.

9. Howell 1995a, 79.

10. PRO, SC 6/928/24. For reference to charcoal burning, see: SC 6/925/29 and 31.

11. Howell 1995a, 78.

12. Hamilton M. and Howell R., *forthcoming*.

13. Howell R., 'Trelech – Early Christian and Medieval Reports', *Archaeology in Wales* 37 (1997) 104.

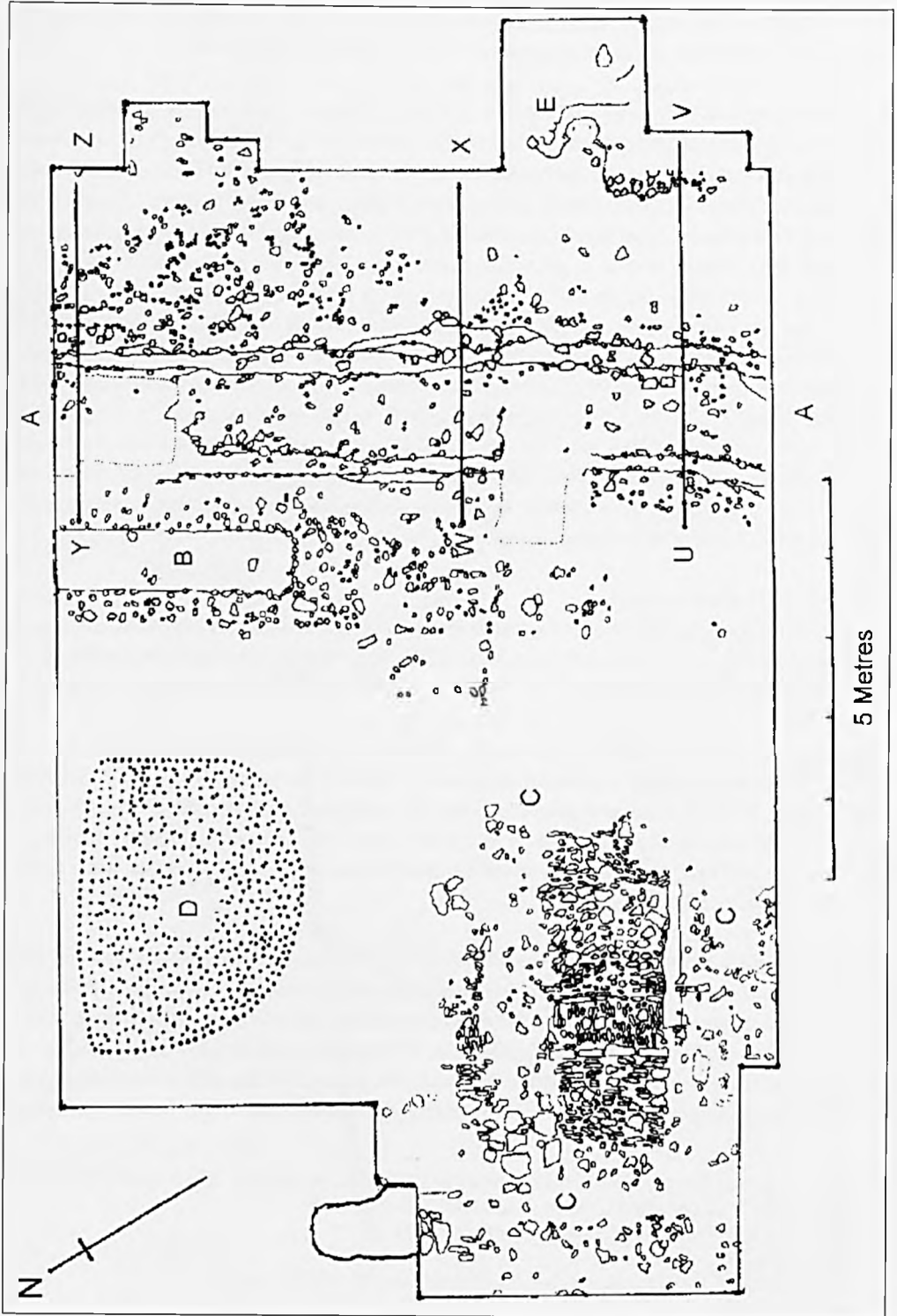
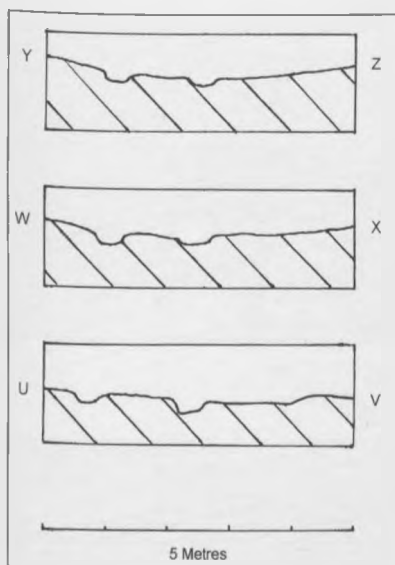


Fig. 1: Road surface and associated features.

which would link with the existing lane leading toward Middleton Cottage in the south of the modern village, and with the dog-leg in the modern road to the North in the north. The road was metalled with stone and was well-made although deeply rutted (*Fig. 1: A*); sectioning gave no indication of re-metalling of the surface. The best interpretation of the feature would be a short-lived but heavily used road. A surface of compacted small stone overlaying the medieval features could have been put down to provide hard-standing or to have redefined the line of a road/lane in the post-medieval period. The medieval road is significant in that it confirms three parallel north-south roads in the presumed centre of the town, a pattern which would be consistent with a major urban implantation.



Flanking the road on both sides was a range of features. To the west there was the suggestion of a surface comprised of small cobbles, a possible boundary wall and a well-cut rectangular pit. The pit (3m. x .75m., *Fig. 1: B*) was both close to and parallel with, the road and was clay lined throughout. Immediately to the west of this pit was a large (3.5m. x 4m. continuing beyond the excavated area) concentration of compacted orange-red clay. A concretion (16cm. x 15cm., *Fig. 1: D*) with over-fired ceramic inclusions recovered from east of the road is probably best interpreted as lime rich mortar; it is unlikely to be kiln lining although this was considered as a possibility. Nevertheless, the association of clay with the pit does suggest that one of several possible explanations for the feature is use as a settling pit. As has been noted, while no kilns have been found, pottery was clearly being produced somewhere in Trelech during the medieval period.

Also to the west of the road, set back some four metres from it, was a building with a well-made cobbled floor (*Fig. 1: C and Fig. 3 for detail*). The walls were robbed out and much of the floor surface was highly disturbed. Nevertheless, one complete section of floor (4.5m. x 1.5m.) remained *in situ*. The cobbled surface was well-made, and an apparent kerbed drain ran north-south for the length of the surviving pavement (*Fig. 3: d*). A wall running east-west, while largely robbed, was clearly defined on the north side and, while slightly less well defined, a north-south wall was also discernible on the west side of the structure (*Fig. 3: b*). An apparent beam slot (*Fig. 3: c*) may suggest an internal partition to the south.¹⁴ The appearance of the floor initially suggested a post-medieval agricultural building but the pottery sealed by the structure, while limited (six sherds), was all medieval and included one large (9cm. x 5cm.) Redcliffe sherd with applied decoration. The assemblage would be consistent with a late 13th or early 14th century date. Given the extent of disturbance, it is very difficult to speculate about the plan or possible function of this structure. It does, however, seem possible that the building was open on its east side, facing the road and, given the pottery associated, have been contemporary with it. There is, with the exception of the

14. As the site had been designated for development, it was decided to dig out this feature.

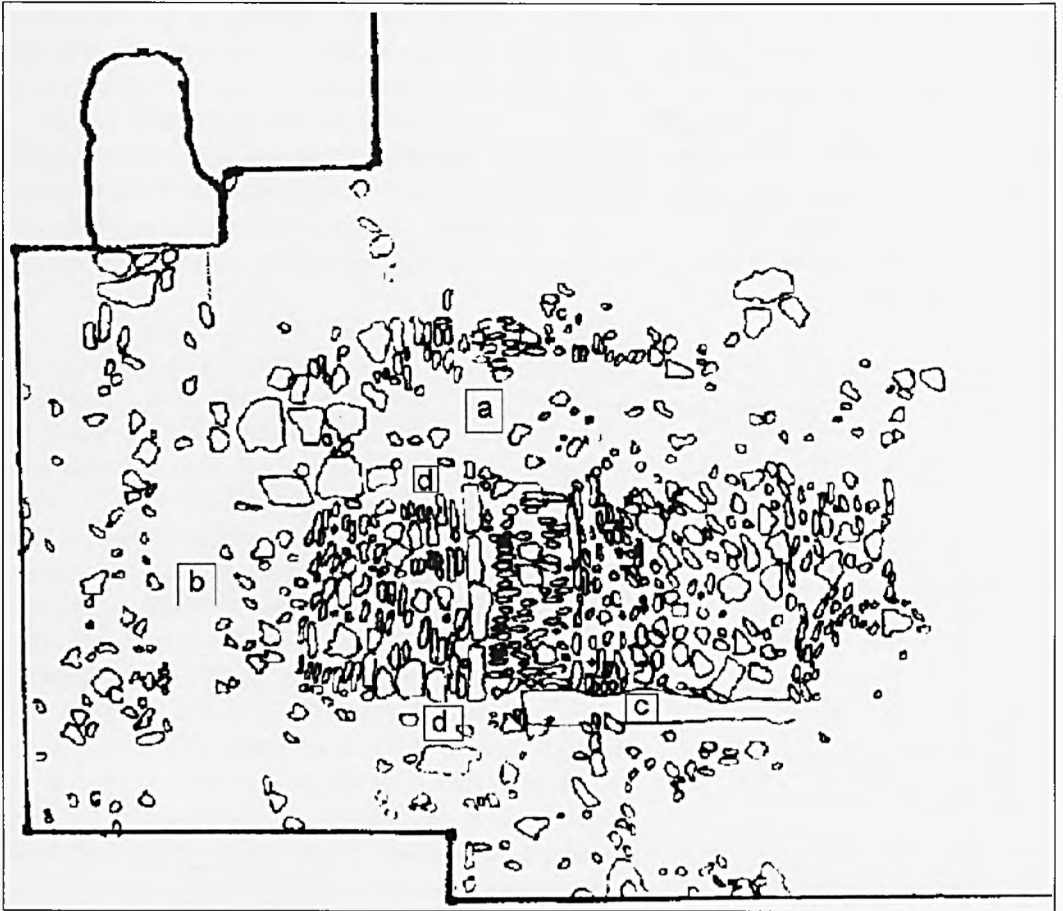


Fig. 3: Cobbled surface, west of road.

compacted small stone surface noted above, no indication that this is other than a single phase site. The building could be interpreted in a number of ways ranging from a simple shelter shed to, perhaps more persuasively, a stables-cartshed, cow or ox house.

On the east side of the road, quantities of ash and iron slag confirmed industrial activities. Interestingly, in keeping with the findings of earlier excavations, evidence of smelting dominated the assemblage with tap slags and furnace bases. The furnace bases were approximately 2.2m. from the road and low down on a disturbed section of the west face of the bank which provides the eastern field boundary (*Fig. 1: E*). It was initially thought that these furnace bases were *in situ*, but close examination suggests that they were more likely to have been dumped. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that if this was the case, they would not have been dumped far from their original location. The most likely explanation would be that the furnaces had been built into the bank itself. Because the bank supported a hedge which was required for management of the farm, it was impossible to test this hypothesis by extending the excavation further into the bank. A small test trench on the east side of the hedge produced neither artefacts nor evidence of structure. Nevertheless, the evidence recovered from the main excavation is persuasive in suggesting that this



Plate 1: The road, from the south after heavy rain.



Plate 2: The floor surface, with apparent drain.

site represents another iron production area. Movement of associated materials would have contributed to the deep rutting observed in the road surface. The entire site represents a short, probably single phase, occupation, but one with significant iron production which shares features with the previously excavated smelting sites in Trelech, as well as with an iron production site excavated on Court Farm in 1998.¹⁵

Three test trenches were dug to the north of the modern farm road. One 5m. x 3m. trench (TR2) was placed as near to the hedge-line as possible. The ground here was highly disturbed but charcoal, slag and several sherds of black, quartz gritted medieval pottery were recovered. A 3m. x 2m. trench (TR3) was placed to the north-west of TR2, to investigate the edge of the field near what is today a vegetable garden. At a depth of approximately 34 cm. a green glazed Redcliffe sherd and cooking pot fragments were recovered. The final test trench (TR4) was sited at the western edge of the field, as close to the small stream on the edge of the field as possible. The trench was 1m. x 4m. and due to a steep gradient was dug in three descending steps or platforms. At a depth of approximately 40 cm. in the central section of the trench three large body sherds, and a large pot rim of local medieval quartz gritted black ware, were recovered. A holed stone roof tile was also found. While each of these test trenches produced evidence of medieval activity, there was no suggestion of structure.

The Trelech Farm field investigated in 1997-98 is an allocated development site, and work was carried out in conjunction with an assessment undertaken by Monmouth Archaeological Society in preparation for construction of new housing. Consequently, it was recognised that 1998 would be the last season on the site and an effort was made to explore it as fully as possible. The main conclusions to be drawn are that this area of Trelech Farm represents a single phase, perhaps comparatively small, medieval industrial site flanking a road. The road is significant, particularly when considered in conjunction with the excavations of the early 1990s, in establishing that a system of three parallel north-south roads existed in the medieval town. This pattern is consistent with the interpretation of Trelech as a de Clare implantation in the mid 13th century.

The 1999 Excavations.

In the spring of 1999, a new programme of geophysical surveying was begun in Trelech. Staff and students of University of Wales College, Newport, surveyed key fields one of which was the small field south of the modern village which lies between the doctor's surgery/old smithy and the Virtuous Well. The resistivity survey here produced several anomalies including an apparent large, rectilinear enclosure in the southern portion of the field. The feature was approximately 30m. in length and clearly merited further investigation. As a consequence, the 1999 excavation programme was centred on this field.

It was decided to concentrate efforts in two areas highlighted by the resistivity survey. One high reading was found on a clearly visible rectangular platform in the north-west corner of the field. A trench, 4m. x 8m., was opened on this platform and subsequently extended on both the north and south sides as features were revealed. A trench, 6m. x 3m., was also placed to investigate the

¹⁵Clarke S., *pers. comm.* An archaeological assessment, preceding construction of a bungalow extension on Court Farm, was conducted by Steve Clarke in July 1998.

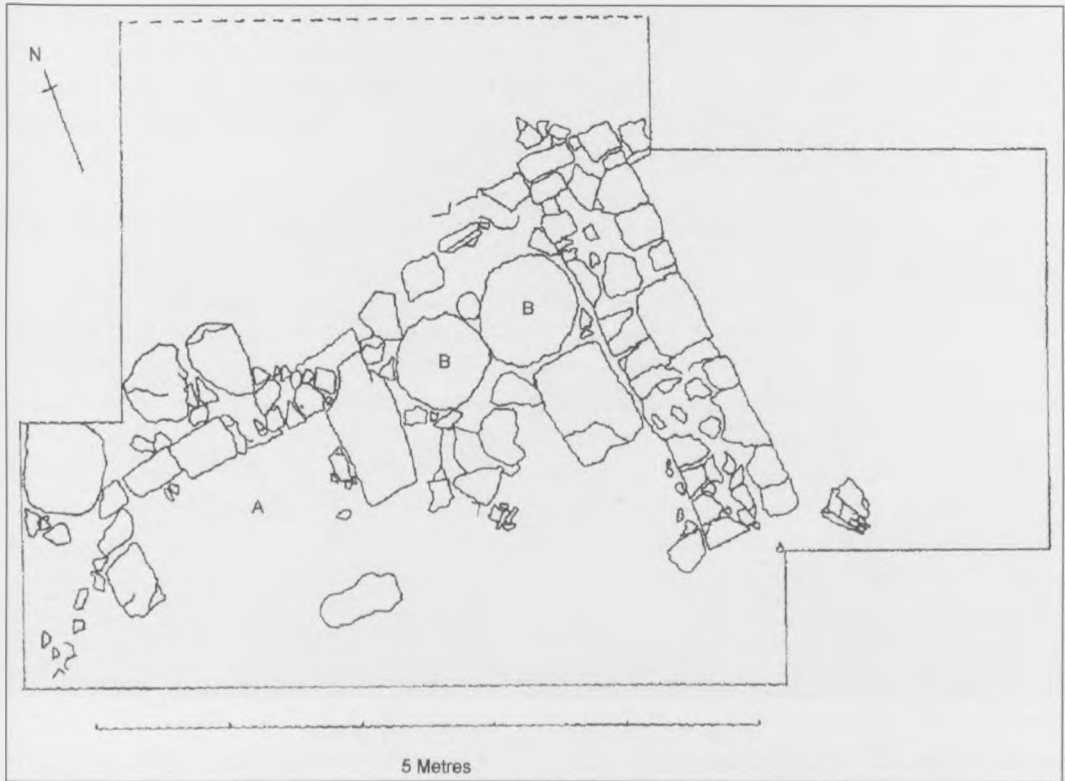


Fig. 4: The Platform.

rectilinear anomaly noted above. As important features were revealed in this excavation, a 2m. x 3m. extension was placed at the south-west corner of the original trench. Although recorded separately as Enclosure A and Enclosure B, the surfaces here were clearly related and consequently were dug as one. To enhance our understanding of the site an additional test trench, 2m. x 1m., was placed to the east of A on the apparent edge of the platform. A final 2m. x 1m. trench was placed to the north of A where high resistance had been noted.

The excavation on the platform rapidly revealed the foundations of a post-medieval building with foundations defined by large stones (*Fig. 4*).¹⁶ Also clearly defined was a fireplace in what was almost certainly a 17th century house (*Fig. 4: A; Plate 3*). An unusual feature of the structure was the presence of two large, circular cut stones in an apparent wall line (*Fig. 4: B*). The appearance of the stones suggested mill stone blanks which had been incorporated into the fabric of the structure. A holed stone roof tile was re-used in the wall backing the fireplace (*Fig. 4: C*). It was decided that there was insufficient time to excavate this portion of the site fully so the wall lines were identified, recorded, covered and back filled with a view to re-opening the site during a future excavation season. Further investigation is justified in that the structure was apparently aligned with existing houses opposite, and may offer interesting information regarding the layout of the southern portion of the village in the early modern period. Moreover, the fact that the structure is not aligned

16. This site was supervised by Felicity Taylor.



Plate 3: Wall line of a 17th century house.

with the apparent orientation of the platform itself, and the presence of medieval artefacts including a heavily worn and clipped silver penny – probably of Edward II and dating from the 1320s,¹⁷ strongly suggests that the post-medieval house had been built on an earlier medieval platform. If this is the case, it parallels findings from the Enclosure excavations.

Excavations on the Enclosure revealed very black, gritty soil with concentrations of iron slag, and a suggestion of hammer scale. Significant amounts of stone were found on the edge of the enclosure bank as were a number of roof tiles, both stone and ceramic. While the stone did not seem to be structural, it does appear to have defined the edge of the platform. Plough marks appeared on some of the stones. Artefacts in the upper level of the excavation were mixed, but were in the main either from the 13th/14th centuries or from the 17th century.

In the north end of the main trench near the assumed edge of the enclosure, a furnace base was revealed, apparently *in situ* (*Fig. 5: [i]*). Near to this furnace on its west side was a possible platform indicated by five flat stones with other flat stones nearby (*Fig. 5: A*). The impression was of a laid surface which could have served as a platform for feeding and/or stoking the furnace. A channel running from the furnace to the north was filled with slag and it appears that slag was being tapped here (*Fig. 5: B*). Slag deposits associated with the furnace sealed a tyg base sherd, and other artefactual evidence confirms that this was a 17th century phase.

17. Besley E (National Museum of Wales), *pers. comm.*

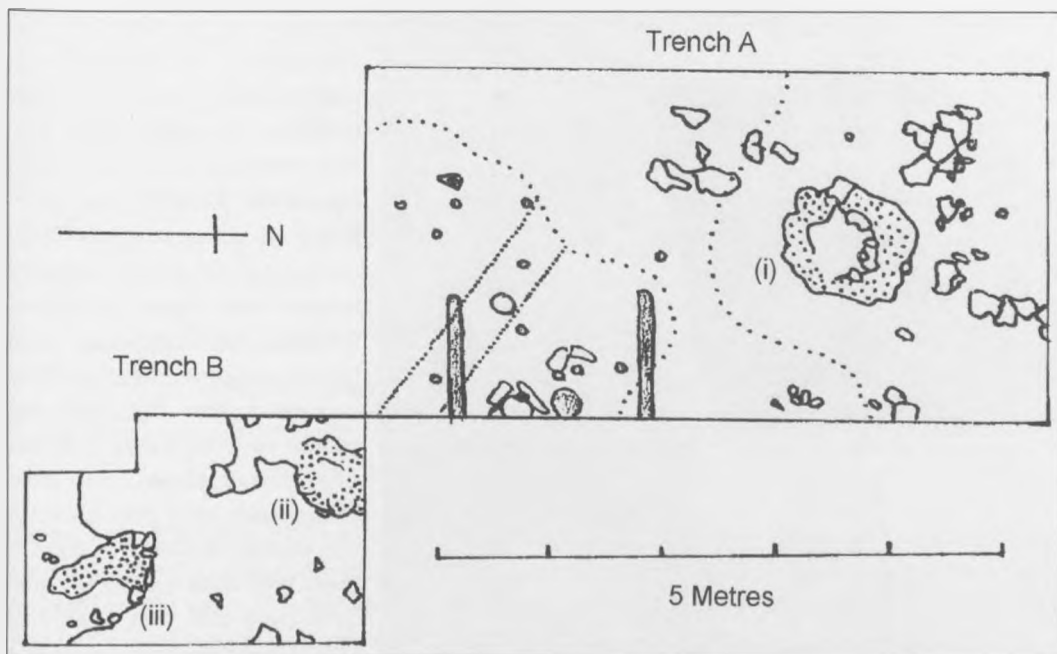


Fig. 5: Enclosure Trenches A and B.

Large numbers of clay pipe bowls recovered from the horizon dated from the second half of the seventeenth century, and there was a sealed, probably counterfeit, James II tin farthing (1685-87) at this level.¹⁸ The southern end of the trench had striking colour changes with very black soil containing traces of hammer scale in the south-east corner, while in the centre of the trench was a parallel band of brown soil with a relatively straight edge extending for approximately 1m. from the south edge of the excavation. Associated with these changes were two narrow beam slots and six stake holes (Fig. 5: C).

There was also a holed stone (Fig. 5: D) which probably accommodated a gate hinge, in line with the most southerly slot. A possible interpretation of these features is that they formed an enclosure with a small gate which was associated with, and possibly contained, the colour changes. Compacted deposits of slag, which subsequently proved to be part of a large slag pit, were also revealed. These features seem to have formed a continuous occupation horizon.

As has been noted, the very black soil in the south-east corner of the excavation contained hammer scale, concentrated near the edge of the trench. This was seen as significant since, despite extensive indication of smelting on a large scale, no evidence of early smithing had previously been seen at Trelech. The decision was taken to open a new trench, Enclosure B, in the hope of understanding the industrial processes more fully. When the trench was opened, it revealed two additional *in situ* furnace bases (Fig. 5: [ii] and [iii]) similar in size, shape and colour, to the furnace in A. Postholes in A, including one large post which had been packed with stone, may have been associated with the

18. Besley E., *pers. comm.*

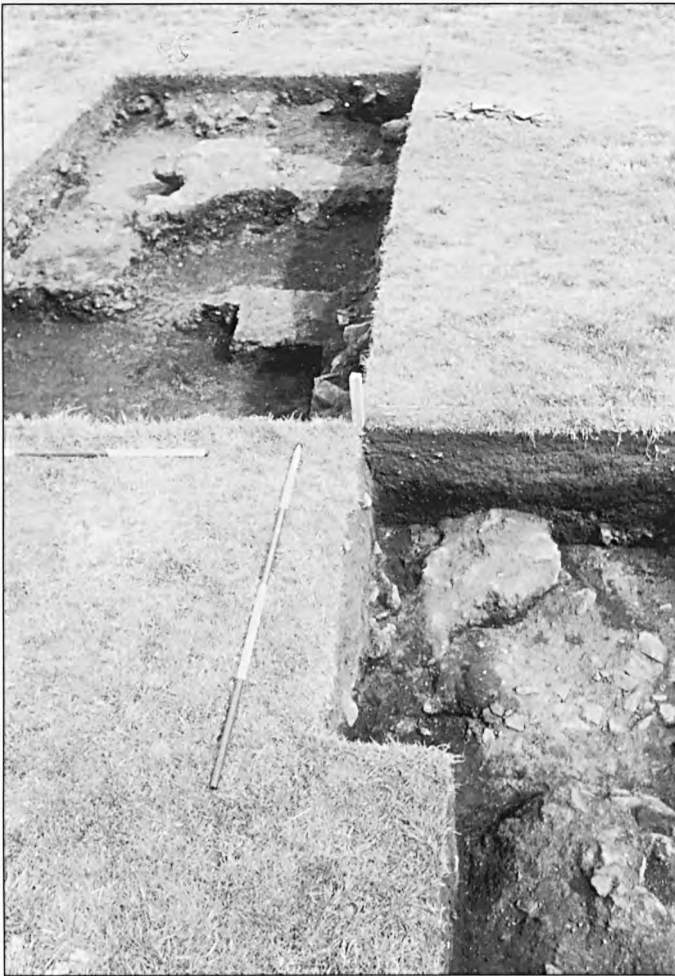


Plate 4: Enclosure site: Furnace bases, and excavated slag pit.

furnaces in B (Fig. 5: E). Although it is impossible to confirm on the basis of available evidence, the larger posts here may represent a structure which housed the furnaces. A concentration of apparent mortar/daub, consisting of white powdery residues with organic inclusions, formed a right angle which could have enclosed the furnace. What is clear is that the overlaying pattern of posts/stakes indicates two distinct phases, but these phases may have been close to one another in time – as there is every indication that the furnaces in B were also 17th century in date. A good ceramic assemblage with a number of 17th century clay pipes was recovered, as was a Charles I farthing token of the ‘Richmond oval’ type, which dates from c.1625-34.¹⁹ There are known examples of doubled or twinned furnaces contained in a building during this period and the most likely explanation of their function is that they were used for bloom smithing.²⁰

Much of Trench A was taken up by a large slag pit, where, among the waste products recovered, were a large number of furnace bases/linings. Many of these vitrified linings, which are currently being assessed, give good indication of the size and shape of the furnaces. In some cases, charcoal fragments adhered to the linings. This material closely parallels linings recovered from medieval smelting sites in Trelech and it is likely that some of the waste recovered is from earlier processes. There was significant residual medieval ceramic material, notably several strap handles both from Redcliffe and locally produced jugs, in the 17th century levels. Because of the large amounts of waste generated by the industrial processes, deposition on the site was much greater than at most previously investigated sites in Trelech; the 17th century deposits were over a metre in depth. At a depth of approximately 1.5m. in the south, however, a new surface appeared. This surface produced significant amounts of animal bone (sheep and pig), and a number of medieval sherds dating from

19. Besley E., *pers. comm.*

20. Young T., *pers. comm.* Tim Young’s work at Miskin presents a case in point.

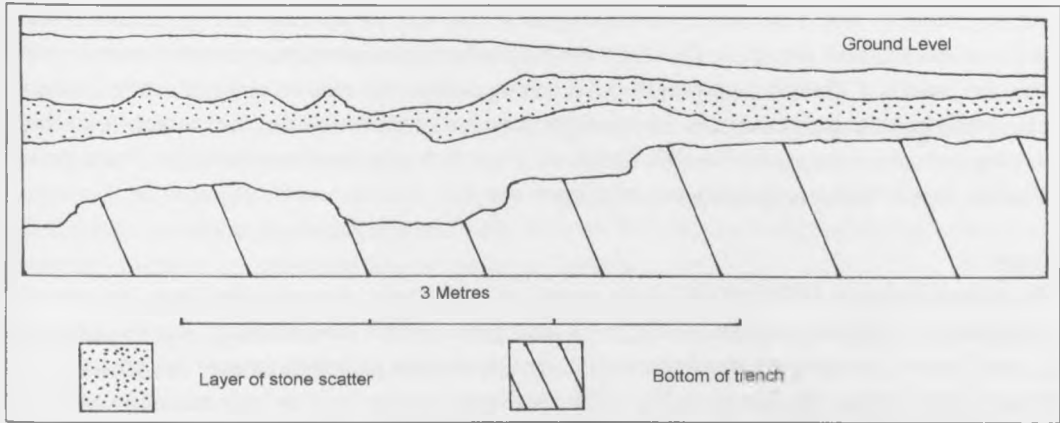


Fig. 6: Section, west wall Enclosure, Trench A.

the very late 13th-early 14th century. Iron slag was also associated. A colour change to brown and well-defined edges revealed a beam slot at this level (*Fig. 5: C*). The slot does not seem to have been associated with any other features, and it was cut by the 17th century slag pit. It seems likely that this was a medieval surface, and that there was iron working on the site in the Middle Ages.

As has been seen, additional test trenches were dug. Trench C, on the assumed edge of the enclosure to the east of the main excavation, produced a stone scatter and a 17th century pipe bowl, but added little additional information to our understanding of the site. Trench D was an assessment of a possible platform to the north of the main enclosure. Blackened soil and slag were accompanied by a stone scatter which included roof tiles, but results were inconclusive as there was no further evidence of structure. Further investigation in this field should be undertaken. If we are correct in our interpretation of 17th century activities as bloom smithing, we might expect to find a leat feeding a water-powered hammer on the Enclosure site.

An opportunity was also taken to begin initial investigation of a spring-fed well, once known as the Town Well.²¹ In regular use earlier in the 20th century, when cleared the feature consisted of three flag steps leading down into the well. A flagstone, with chain attached, covered the well, the sides of which were formed by dressed stone slabs approximately 1.2m. in length. A trench, 2m. x 1m. subsequently extended, dug to the north-east of the well steps, revealed a tightly compacted area of small stones and the suggestion of a fallen stone wall. This feature had been made or repaired in recent times; five modern bricks stamped 'Beaufort' were included in the fabric. A lower surface of compacted stone may suggest a floor platform.

The 1999 excavations have identified areas for future investigation with the possible line of a leat associated with the 17th century iron-working activities being a matter of some priority. The Enclosure excavation has also contributed to our growing understanding of industry in Trelech. 17th century activity was unexpected but interesting. It seems likely that the natural advantages of the site which appealed to medieval ironworkers, including the proximity of running water, were

21. This site was supervised by Neil Phillips.

still important to their 17th century counterparts. It may also be the case that iron-rich medieval slag was an additional attraction. Certainly, the indication of medieval iron production is in keeping with the model of Trelech as a substantial smelting centre. What is remarkable is the extent to which iron production dominates assemblages from most parts of the town which have been investigated archaeologically. Trelech has been described as a 'medieval Merthyr',²² and recent evidence makes that description seem even more apt.

Finds.

Excavations between 1996 and 1999 have produced large artefact assemblages; these are currently being assessed and will be reported fully in the appropriate journals in due course. Among categories of finds being studied are waste products from iron production including furnace linings and bases. In particular, linings recovered in the 1999 Enclosure excavations include examples of large, vitrified linings, which should give us a good indication of the size and shape of the Trelech furnaces.

Other important artefact groups include a large number of clay smoking pipes, and coins significant in terms of providing dating evidence. The very large number of ceramic finds are particularly important, especially sealed sherds associated with the road, and apparently associated structures, dating from the late 13th and early 14 centuries. A notable aspect is the preponderance of fine wares, as a range of jug sherds, including local and Bristol wares, rather than the 'cooking pot' sherds found elsewhere in Trelech..

Conclusions.

Investigations in Trelech between 1996 and 1999 have expanded our understanding of the medieval town. Important findings include the deeply rutted road surface on Trelech Farm, confirming three parallel north-south roads in the area of the town dominated by the church and the castle. The apparently associated structures are interesting; particularly the evidence of iron production nearby. Waste products from smelting complement the results of earlier excavations as well as other work completed in 1998, including the previously noted iron-working site on Court Farm. In 1999, the focus of work shifted to the south of the town, where iron production also proved to be important. The Enclosure site here revealed two major phases of industrial activity with 17th century re-occupation of a medieval iron-working site. Judging from the waste deposits investigated, the 17th century activity, presumably bloom smithing, was extensive. Evidence for medieval smelting underlying the 17th century horizon provides further confirmation that Trelech was highly industrialised in the medieval period. This is one of the most striking dimensions of over twelve years of archaeological research in Trelech. Also notable is the fact that a high proportion of artefacts recovered, including those directly associated with iron production, date from the 13th and 14th centuries.

The model which has been presented to explain Trelech as a large and regionally important urban centre is that it was developed specifically for the purpose of industrial activity, particularly iron production, to support de Clare military/political activity in Glamorgan. The dating evidence available, both historical and archaeological, places Trelech's highest population and its most intense industrialisation in the mid to late 13th and early 14th centuries. This is precisely the period in which the region was controlled by the de Clares and, on the basis of available evidence, there is every reason to think that it was their seigniorial imperatives which created and sustained the medieval town.

22. Howell R. 1995b, 25-27.

Future Work.

The research excavation programme at Trelech, now in its twelfth year, will continue and it will be possible to test the model described above more fully, as additional dating evidence becomes available. Moreover, it will be possible for the excavation team to explore new areas of Trelech and its environs. Of particular importance is the 'Church Field', where geophysical surveys have suggested the presence of an extensive range of regular structures. With a continuing programme of research excavations exploring this and other sites, we will be able to expand our knowledge and hopefully improve our understanding of medieval Trelech.

Additional geophysical surveys are planned, one of which will explore the large field bounded by Tinker's Lane and the Catbrook Road to provide information regarding the extent of Trelech to the south of the modern village. Evidence of structures in the field found in 1998²³ by Thames Valley Archaeology, led to its scheduling as an ancient monument. Various 'Windows of opportunity' also being pursued include field-walking, undertaken when the field east of the Virtuous Well was ploughed for the first time in several years in August 1999. Important results were obtained from a geophysical survey (by staff and students of UCNW) of the large field west of St. Nicholas's Church in May 1999.²⁴ The results suggest extensive regular structures on a scale not previously seen in Trelech, and it is hoped to begin excavation on this site in June 2000.²⁵

Acknowledgements.

Research excavations and field surveys in Trelech are conducted through, and funded by, the SCARAB Research Centre at University of Wales College, Newport. We are very grateful to landowners in Trelech, including Mr and Mrs D. Crum, Mr and Mrs H. Evans, Mr and Mrs E. Rogers and Mr and Mrs A. Poulter, who have provided full support for, and active assistance in, the excavation programme. The Village Hall Committee and members of the Methodist Chapel in Trelech have also been very helpful. Colleagues and students at UWCN have offered untiring assistance. Particular thanks are due to Dr Mike Hamilton of UWCN for provision of geophysical support and to Mrs Felicity Taylor of Cadw for site supervision. My thanks also go to UWCN postgraduate site supervisors including Neil Phillips and Mrs Chris Waite, and to undergraduate assistant site supervisors Leighton Edwards and Des Hale. My doctoral research student, Mike Anthony, has been exceptionally helpful both in the role of site supervisor and as planner/illustrator. Finally, I would like to extend special thanks to professional colleagues from other institutions including: Peter Davies and Professor Don Tarling of Plymouth University for archaeomagnetic results, Edward Besley of the National Museum of Wales for coin analysis, Dr Tim Young for specialist advice on iron production and to Steve Clarke and the Monmouth Archaeological Society with whom we have enjoyed an excellent working relationship for many years.

The author, and the Association, are grateful to University of Wales College, Newport, for a subvention in aid of publication of this article.

23. Hull, G., Thames Valley Archaeology, *pers. comm.*

24. The field-walk confirmed that a colour change to black with significant amounts of slag and clear evidence of burning extends along the east bank of the Olway in an unbroken line from the beginning of the field abutting the 1999 excavations to slightly south of the Virtuous Well. This confirms the previous assumption that the Olway was a focus for smelting [Howell, R., 'A report of the excavation of a medieval industrial site in Trelech', in *Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales* (1989).

25. Hamilton, M. and Howell, R., forthcoming.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS.

Andy Boucher has been involved in archaeology since 1977. He studied Archaeological Sciences at Bradford University. From 1987 onwards, he directed excavations alongside various other field projects in London and Yorkshire. He presently manages Archaeological Investigations Ltd. (formerly The City of Hereford Archaeology Unit).

R.W.D. Fenn read Theology at Jesus College, Oxford, and is an Anglican priest. He is the Archivist of the Hergest Trust of Kington, Consultant Archivist and Historian to Tarmac plc, and an Associate Lecturer in Church History in the Open University of which he is also a Senator. He is the founder editor of the *Tarmac Papers*, a journal dedicated to the history of the quarrying industry in general and of Tarmac in particular.

Madeleine Gray lectures in History at University of Wales College, Newport, and is one of the editors of the proposed Gwent County History. She edited the final volume of Bradney's *History of Monmouthshire* for the South Wales Record Society. She is at present writing a book on the iconography of late medieval religion in Wales.

Julian Harrison was educated at Cambridge University (where he read Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, and History) and at Oxford (where he held the Sir John Rhys Studentship in Celtic Studies). He has undertaken doctoral research at Cambridge, focusing on medieval Cistercian history in the British Isles, and is interested in all aspects of monastic studies. His article is dedicated to the memory of his grandfather, who came from Newport and was (we are delighted to say) a keen supporter of Welsh rugby!

Mike Hamilton is an ex-Merchant Navy Engineering Officer who did his archaeology degree and Ph. D. at the University of Wales, Cardiff. He is now a Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Wales College, Newport. His main interest is Neolithic and Early Bronze Age pottery, but he is also involved in excavation and geophysical surveying.

Raymond Howell is Senior Lecturer in History and Medieval Archaeology at University College of Wales, Newport. He gained his doctorate at the University of London in 1978. He has directed excavations in Trelech for the past twelve years. His latest book, co-authored with Professor Miranda Aldhouse-Green, is *Celtic Wales*; it will be published by the University of Wales Press in March.

J.M. Lewis retired from the National Museum of Wales in 1986, having spent practically the whole of his working life in Welsh archaeology, during which he published on a wide range of topics. His most recent work, the census volume *The Medieval Tiles of Wales*, was published last year.

Geoff Mein hails from Nottingham, where he qualified as a solicitor. Appointed legal adviser to the NCB in South Wales and Somerset in 1972, he was digging at Usk within a week of taking up the post. Retiring from the law in 1984, the year in which he published his *Norman Usk: the Birth of a Town*, he has continued researching, excavating and publishing articles, considerably adding to our knowledge of the history and archaeology of the area. Geoff was, for ten years, Field Research Secretary for the Association, and his late wife, Patricia, was the Association's first Honorary Librarian, in that capacity cataloguing our books and rescuing many of them after the 1979 Usk flood.

Neil Phillips is a BHPA Chief Flying Instructor and former Outdoor Pursuits School proprietor. He did a combined archaeology and history degree at the University of Wales College, Newport. In 1999, he started a Ph.D. looking at the earthwork castles of Gwent and Eryng under the supervision of Dr Raymond Howell. His fields of interest are archaeological surveying and excavation.

Mark Redknap is Curator of Medieval and Later Archaeology at the National Museum and Art Galleries of Wales. He joined the Department of Archaeology & Numismatics in 1988, having completed a University of London Ph.D. on the Roman and medieval pottery industries of the German *Eifelgebiet*. He has directed excavations on numerous terrestrial and underwater sites, including St Columba's Shrine, Iona Abbey (1976), an early 16th century shipwreck in the Cattewater, Plymouth Sound (1977-78), and Llan-gors crannog, the semi-submerged island residence of the king of Brycheiniog in the 9th/early 10th century (1989-93).

J.B. Sinclair is a native of Glasgow where he trained as an electrical engineer, and is now the Production Manager of Nash Rocks. He is also the Associate Archivist of the Hergest Trust. The collaboration of Fenn and Sinclair is of many years standing, and is responsible for editing the *Transactions of the Radnorshire Society*. They have written together numerous articles and several books, and are well known for their lectures on local history.

David Williams obtained the Diploma in Practical Archaeology at Bournemouth University and studied Archaeology and Prehistory at Sheffield University. He has worked in professional archaeology since 1986. During this time he has directed numerous excavations in England and Wales (predominantly the latter). As project officer with Archaeological Investigations Ltd., he has directed work at sites such as Ford Abbey Farm in Herefordshire, and St. Guthlac's Priory in Hereford. He is a practitioner of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

(For Mr Jeremy K. Knight, and the Revd Dr David H. Williams, see last year's volume: XV).

Corrigendum to Vol. XV (1999) p. 54.

A will of 1525 refers to: 'The church of St. Clement of Cumkarvan' (see footnote No. 19, in Dr Fenn and Mr Sinclair's article earlier in the journal.) St. Winefride's must, presumably, have been a chapel within the church

Addendum to the Association's Conference regarding: 'The Civil War in Monmouthshire' (12 October 1996).

From the Monmouthshire Merlin (of 21 August 1869).

'The English Baptist Chapel, Tredegar.

On Monday last, sermons were preached in the above chapel to numerous congregations, people even standing outside to hear the eloquence of Master Probert, whose talent has been discarded upon on many occasions. On Monday, the youthful expounder of the Bible gave a lecture on "Oliver Cromwell and his times" before a large assembly in the same chapel. He handled the subject cleverly, and was accorded a warm vote of thanks for the treat afforded'.

Addendum to Vol. XII (1997) p. 13.

NLW MS 18940E, f. 55, is a copy of the Notice of View prior to Sale of many of the Effects of our former President, Octavius Morgan, Esq. *(Reproduced on next page):*

ON VIEW,

ON AND AFTER

MONDAY NOVEMBER 19, 1888

AT

WAREHAM'S**OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.****14, CHARING CROSS ROAD,***(Two Minutes walk from THE NATIONAL GALLERY)***The WELL-KNOWN COLLECTION**

OF THE LATE

OCTAVIUS MORGAN, ESQ., M.P., F.R.S., F.S.A., &c.,*Removed from his Residence, The Friars, Newport (Mon) to the above address.*

Excepting the Horological Section bequeathed to the British Museum),

including—

FINE ITALIAN MAIOLICA.

OLD VENETIAN GLASS.

BYZANTINE AND LIMOGES ENAMEL.

OLD GERMAN AND FRENCH ENAMELS.

OLD GERMAN ENGRAVED GLASS

BATTERSEA ENAMEL, &c.

DUTCH, GERMAN, FRENCH & ENGLISH
POTTERY.

ENGLISH SALT GLAZEWARE.

**OLD GERMAN & OTHER STONE-
WARE.**GERMAN, FRENCH AND ENGLISH
PORCELAINES.CHINESE AND JAPANESE POTTERY AND
PORCELAINES.**MINIATURES IN ENAMEL & OIL**OLD INLAID AND ENGRAVED METAL
WORK (FROM PERSIA, ITALY,
GERMANY, FRANCE, &c.)**AND MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.**

Catalogues Raisonnés in preparation,

MAY BE VIEWED AFTER MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1888.

GEO. R. HARDING,

(LATE W. WAREHAM)

14, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON.

FIELD EXCURSIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES, 1999.

Day Outing: May 15th, to Leominster and Croft Castle, Herefordshire.

Our day started at the Priory Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, where our Chairman, Mr. Jeremy Knight, spoke on the history of the site. The first church was probably built here in the sixth century, followed by an Anglo-Saxon religious community in 660 A.D., and a Benedictine priory in 1123. After the Dissolution, the very large and impressive Priory Church became the parish church of Leominster. After lunch in the picturesque town, with its wealth of medieval, Tudor and Georgian buildings, we travelled to Croft Castle, a few miles further north. Still inhabited by the Croft family, it is a fine example of a Border castle, with its fourteenth- and fifteenth-century exterior enclosing a Georgian Gothick interior. Thomas Johnes of Hafod grew up here, and the house contains a collection of views of Hafod. The now peaceful parkland is dominated by the hill-fort of Croft Ambrey, occupied from the fourth century B.C. until the Roman Conquest. We were privileged to be shown around the fort by its excavator, Dr. Stan Stanford.

Day Outing: September 25th, to the Cotswolds.

At Hailes Abbey, a once magnificent Cistercian foundation and place of pilgrimage after it received a phial said to contain Christ's blood, Mr. Jeremy Knight spoke of its foundation in 1246 by Richard, Earl of Cornwall and King of the Romans, in fulfilment of a vow. He guided us round the site, explaining the function of all the rooms and buildings, after which we visited the site museum to see the carved vault bosses, the beautiful medieval tiles from the abbey and other finds, followed by the tiny parish church (formerly the gate-house chapel), containing a fine display of decorative wall paintings dating from around 1320-30. We lunched in the delightful wool town of Winchcombe before moving on to Sudeley Castle, first recorded when King Etheldred gave the manor of Sudeley to his daughter as a wedding present. It has had many owners since, royal and otherwise, the most famous being Queen Katherine Parr, who is buried in the chapel. The beautiful gardens and the wonderful collection of ducks were a delight to remember on the way home.

Evening Visits.

Once again, we enjoyed a variety of different sites on various evenings throughout the spring and summer. The season started with a joint visit with the Cardiff Archaeological Society to Penallta Colliery, where the vast cathedral-like engine house is to be at the centre of a business and residential development. At Hengoed Baptist Church, we heard of the restoration scheme for this early Nonconformist chapel, and later visited the magnificent working engine at Elliott Colliery. Our guides for the evening were Dr. Peter Wakelin, Brian Davies and Chris Morgan.

Dr. Ray Howell showed us the new areas of excavation (*See earlier in this journal*) on which he and his students had been working at the medieval borough of Trelech. Some inquisitive horses grazing nearby caused a near panic when they encountered two dogs in our midst. At Penyclawdd Court, the home of Julia Horton Evans and Ken Peacock, we toured this fascinating fifteenth-century house, which stands besides an even earlier earthwork. Julia has restored the house and its garden meticulously, while managing to insert modern necessities such as bathrooms.

Our last visit was to the church of St. Sannan at Bedwellty. This large thirteenth-century church, on an upland site, has an interesting history, and its possible building sequence led to much

discussion and a veritable treasure hunt for builders' marks on all the visible stonework. As the light faded, we made our way to the upland site on the other side of the valley of the seventh-century memorial stone to Tegernacus. The original stood in a prominent position not far from the site of a late medieval chapel and churchyard, where an eleventh-century cross slab was found, demonstrating the history of Christianity in one tiny area over centuries.

Annual General Meeting: March 20th, 1999.

After the business meeting, held at the Endowed School, Caerleon, Dr. Martin Henig, of the University of Oxford, delivered an interesting and provocative lecture on: "Romans and Celts in Britain – Conquest or Accommodation?", in which he argued that the Romans had not come to Britain originally as conquerors, but had been invited to come by the ruler of the Atrebatian region around Chichester, probably Cogidubnus, to strengthen his own position.

Annual October Lecture: October 30th, 1999.

At the Endowed School in Caerleon, Mrs Elizabeth Pitman delivered to a large and appreciative audience a fascinating talk on her researches into the work of the Brute family, monumental stonemasons working in the eighteenth century in Monmouthshire and adjoining areas of neighbouring counties. Their work was characterised by winged angels, very cheerful cherubs and ornate floral border decoration. The audience responded well to requests for additional information, and many left the meeting determined to spend the summer scouring local churchyards for Brute memorials that Mrs Pitman might have missed!

G.V.J.

Obituaries of Past Committee Members.



Mr Eric Finney made education his career after training at St Paul's College, Cheltenham. Serving in an RAF radar unit in the last war, he landed on the Normandy beaches on D-Day +6. Post-war, he rose to be Senior Curricular Adviser for Primary Schools in Gwent, and served on several bodies, such as the Monuments Committee of St Mary's Church, Abergavenny. He always displayed interest in the current researches of your Editor. Chairman of both Ebbw Vale Magistrates and of Ebbw Vale Probationary Committee, he was justly awarded the M.B.E.



Mrs Anna Tribe writes: '**Sheila Thorneycroft** will be sadly missed, by this Association and especially by the Committee on which she served for so many years. There were few who knew more about places worth a visit or not worth a visit, and she was a great asset to the Raglan Local History Committee for the same reason. Historic gardens and history were two of her great interests, and both benefited from the generous collection taken at her funeral. We have lost one whose enthusiasm, sense of humour, considerable knowledge and friendship, were enjoyed by so many'.