THE MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARY

PAPERS IN HONOUR OF DAVID HENRY WILLIAMS

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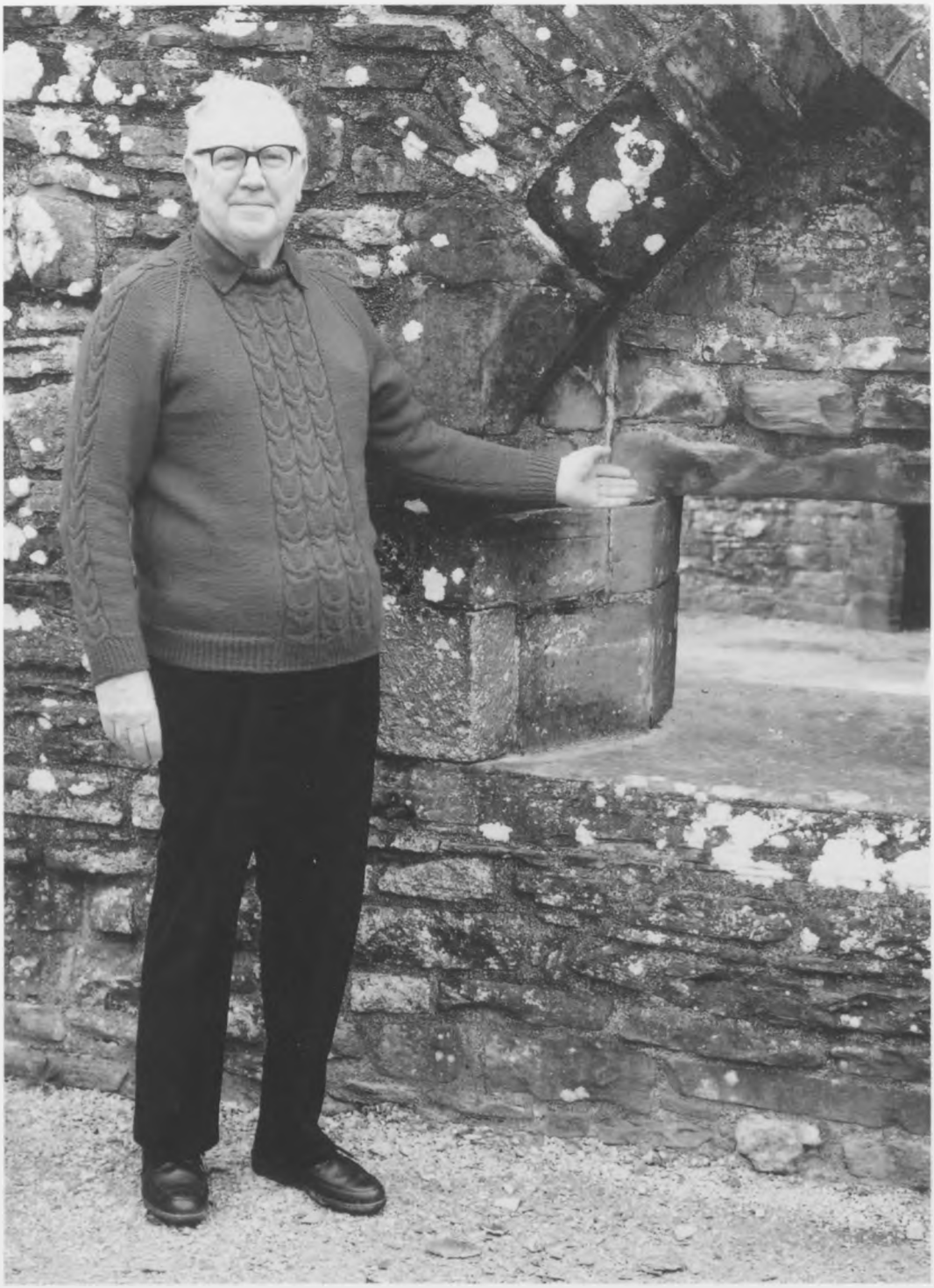
Front cover: A symbol of medieval devotion. The bezel of a late fifteenth-century ring found at Pen-y-cae-mawr, Monmouthshire, is engraved with an image of the Virgin Mary and Child. *Copyright: National Museum of Wales.*



Frontispiece: David Henry Williams at Tintern Abbey,
'the core of [his] devotion to Cistercian Studies,' on 5 December 2003.
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THE MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARY

VOL. XX 2004

CONTENTS

		Page
Frontispiece: David Henry Williams		1
Editorial		4
Foreword: The Revd Dr David H. Williams, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A. A Birthday Tribute	Jeremy K. Knight	5
David H. Williams: Some Recollections	J.M. Lewis	7
Pen-rhys: Poets and Pilgrims	Glanmor Williams	9
Worship and Devotion in Monmouthshire: Some Late Medieval Metalwork	Mark Redknap	17
Seal Matrices: Past, Present and Future	John Cherry	51
Wayside Crosses in Monmouthshire	Madeleine Gray	61
Benedictine Houses in South East Wales: Continuity and Conservation	Sian E. Rees	83
The Chapter House at Tintern Abbey	David M. Robinson	95
Merthyrgeryn: A Grange of Tintern Reconsidered	Peter Webster	131
A Nonconformity of the Gentry? Catholic Recusants in Seventeenth-Century Abergavenny	Jeremy K. Knight	145
Select Bibliography of the Historical Works of David Henry Williams	David H. Williams	153
David Henry Williams: Biography		159
Short Notes:		161
Archaeological investigations at Trelech: the 2003 investigations	Raymond Howell	
Thomas Henry Thomas, R.C.A. (1839-1915)	Christabel Hutchings	
Curating a National Collection of Seals	Mark Redknap	
Reviews:		175
The Visual Culture of Wales: Medieval Vision	Madeleine Gray	
The Medieval Castle in Ireland and Wales, Essays in honour of Jeremy Knight	Raymond Howell	
The Letters of Edward Copleston, Bishop of Llandaff, 1828-1849	David H. Williams	
Images of Piety, The iconography of traditional religion in late medieval Wales.	David H. Williams	
Notes on Contributors		183
Field Excursions and Other Activities, 2003	Gwenllian V. Jones	185
Members of the Association, 2003		187
Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association: President, Officers and Committee		*opposite page* 192

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARY

VOL. XX 2004

EDITORIAL

On 29 March 2003, the Revd Dr David Henry Williams, F.S.A., celebrated his seventieth Birthday. To mark the occasion, David hosted a tea party at the Community Centre in Borth (near Aberystwyth) where he then lived. This was attended, appropriately enough, by about seventy friends – fellow academics, clergy and former parishioners, and people David has contact with whilst pursuing his many and varied interests.

Elsewhere, plans were being made to celebrate his Birthday in a different way. At the National Museum in Cardiff, where David has given voluntary assistance for twenty-five years, Dr Mark Redknap and his colleagues in the Department of Archaeology & Numismatics, conceived the idea of a day-long seminar to acknowledge and mark David's academic achievements. People with interests similar to David's, all experts in their field, were invited to present papers in his honour, to an invited audience. Hosted jointly by the Museum and the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association, the result, on 14 May 2003, was a memorable occasion.

It would have been inconceivable not to share the papers given on that day with a wider audience, so the Association's committee decided *nem. con.* that volume XX of *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* should be dedicated to David, and that it should consist of the papers given at the seminar on 14 May. Despite their very busy schedules, each one of the speakers has been able to adapt their papers for publication in this volume – a mark of the affection and respect in which David Williams is held.

For me, it has been a pleasure and a privilege to edit 'David's volume', but I must emphasise, as I have done before, that the preparation and production of every volume of *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* is a team effort. Consequently, I should like to thank everyone who has been involved in any way. These include the contributors, who have worked so hard to produce their work (more or less!) to time; our splendid printers (Cambrian Printers of Aberystwyth) whose work is of a consistently high standard, and who know our ways; and our chairman, Mr Jeremy Knight, and Dr Redknap, both of whom have taken a special interest in this volume. I am also very grateful to Mrs Liz Pitman for taking the photograph of David Williams which is the frontispiece of this volume. Last, but by no means least, Mrs Gwenllian Jones, Mr Richard Hutchings, Mr Richard Brewer and Dr Ray Howell (not forgetting David himself), as members of the Editorial Sub-Committee, provided me with invaluable advice, back-up and practical help.

Annette Burton,
Honorary Editor.

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARY

VOL. XX 2004

FOREWORD

THE REVD DR DAVID H. WILLIAMS, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A. A BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE

The scholar-clergyman is a figure with a long history in British life, and one which thankfully still has notable examples in Wales. The core of the collection of Roman inscriptions in Caerleon Museum was brought together by a bishop of Llandaff and church historian, Francis Godwin, in the reign of James I. One of the pioneers of the study of British monastic history was a Benedictine monk originally from Abergavenny (Father Augustine Baker) and, like Godwin, a friend of William Camden. David Williams belongs in this tradition.

Our former editor was born in Maindee, Newport, in 1933. His taste for travel in out-of-the-way places can be traced back to his infancy. His father was a mining assayer, and the family spent three years in an Egyptian mining camp high up in the mountains, a day's march from Mount Sinai. 'Whether it was that which led me to embrace the cloth', David has written, 'I cannot say'. At Bassaleg School, he acquired, as he recalls, a sound grounding in geography and Welsh history of which he was to make excellent use in later years. After reading geography at Trinity College, Cambridge, and a stint as a teacher, he studied for ordination at St David's College, Lampeter.

David, in an overworked phrase, but one which is more than usually apt in his case, is a scholar with an international reputation. I recently took a party of lecturers and students from Charles University, Prague, around Caerleon. Over lunch, it emerged that the professor leading the party was a Cistercian specialist. Naturally, she and her husband turned out to be good personal friends of David. They were delighted to hear of this *Festschrift*, and have been promised a copy. David's involvement with eastern Europe goes well beyond the academic or the scholarly. His most marked commitment has been to Poland, where he was the Anglican priest in Warsaw for some years. He has many friends among Polish clergy and lay people and indeed among Poles exiled in this country. He has had the deep satisfaction of seeing that country recover from its tragic recent past, shake off by its own efforts the legacy of an authoritarian regime, and re-take its rightful place in Europe. His circle of east European friends is wide. Even during the Communist era, David stayed at Polish abbeys, and with a monk ousted from his monastery in Hungary. In those times, few eastern European monks spoke English, and David had to use Latin in every-day speech for almost a month on his first visit to Poland in 1974.

David's travels have been even wider. There are few Cistercian monasteries outside America which he has not visited - as chaplain to the British Embassy in Libya; visiting Crusader castles under Israeli armed guard; as guest-master on Caldey Island; visiting monasteries on a remote island off the Italian coast; in the Lebanon; in France; or eastern Europe ... the list could be continued. However, his most abiding love has been the Cistercian abbeys of Wales, their granges and their landscapes. The forthcoming Cambrian Archaeological Association's conference on the Cistercian landscapes of Gwent, organised by David, should be an unmissable event. Elsewhere in

these pages, John Lewis cites David's many contributions to the subject in Wales and further afield, and his catalogues, articles and popular books on seals. Another interest of David's is the study of Welsh monasteries and their archaeology. This bore fruit both in his presidential address to the Cambrians, and in the conference which he organised for them on Stephen W. Williams, the Victorian architect, engineer and pioneer excavator of a series of Welsh Cistercian monasteries.

Perhaps the core of David's devotion to Cistercian studies lies at Tintern. I have many happy memories of David's involvement there when I was Inspector of Ancient Monuments for the abbey. Most memorable was the commemoration service for the 850th anniversary of the first arrival of Cistercian monks there, held on 9 May 1981. The procession of monks, nuns and clergy through the cloisters in the evening light, and David presiding, flanked by two bishops, one Catholic, one Anglican, made it an unforgettable experience.

Elsewhere in Gwent, David has added to its architectural and artistic legacy. At Llanfair Cilgoed, on the site of a Cistercian grange of Abbey Dore (and one with Catholic recusant connections), he restored the chapel of ease of 1842-43, and installed in 1982, a fine stained glass window by Geoffrey Robinson of Bristol, depicting the Blessed Virgin Mary, with the arms of Hubert de Burgh, lord of the Three Castles and of Dore's French mother house, Morimond Abbey. David has also practised the craft of excavation, most notably at the vanished Grace Dieu Abbey. Here, his excavation team included both a group of public school boys and a group from Usk Borstal. Their similar haircuts and uniform shirts sometimes led to cases of mistaken identity. I recall my late wife swapping school stories with (as she thought!) the public school boys.

David has received the honours due to a distinguished scholar. In 1977, he was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, and in 1994-95, was president of the Cambrian Archaeological Association, taking over from Morfydd Owen at their 1994 summer meeting. His presidential address, as one might expect, was on a Cistercian theme – 'The Exploration and Excavation of Cistercian Sites in Wales'. The meeting spent a pleasant week exploring the Gwent countryside which David knows so well. There was a moving reunion at Llanfair Cilgoed and Llanvetherine, where David's old parishioners turned out in force to greet him. However, the organiser of the meeting (in this case the present writer) spent an anxious, clock-watching week, with a tight timetable, speakers and owners waiting impatiently at the next stop, and hotel lunches getting cold. At Llanvetherine especially, the organiser could only stand back and watch his carefully planned timetable for the day disappear into the sand.

Traveller, scholar, meticulous editor, respected and loved parish priest, David, your many friends greet you. We all very much hope to enjoy your scholarship, and your friendship, for many years to come.

Jeremy Knight,
Chairman,
Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association.

DAVID H. WILLIAMS: SOME RECOLLECTIONS

By J.M. Lewis

Many of us will have become aware of the name 'David H. Williams' in the mid-sixties from a paper 'The Cistercians in Wales: some aspects of their economy', which appeared in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 114 (1965), though a short paper on Grace Dieu Abbey - a place near to his heart, as we shall see - had appeared in this journal the year before. The paper in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* was a masterly effort, discussing no less than eight aspects of its subject, and I remember looking up its author in the members' list of the Cambrians, and finding not the academic institution that I had expected, but an anonymous-sounding private address in Sheffield, which left me little the wiser.

I next heard the name a few years later from a Lampeter student of theology who was excavating with me in Pembrokeshire, and who was clearly not a little in awe of the rather austere (as he described him), tremendously scholarly, Cambridge-trained historical-geographer who had descended on the college to prepare for his ordination exams. Thus, as the first ripples of what was to prove a flood of papers and books began to appear - but many years before the culminating *Atlas of Cistercian Lands in Wales,* his most considerable work, was published in 1990 - I began to be aware of the *persona* that lay behind them.

But it was not until the mid-seventies that we met, which was after the late George Boon returned to the National Museum one day from a meeting of the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association (still the 'Caerleon and Monmouthshire' in those days, I believe), saying that he had met a very scholarly clergyman - and 'scholarly' was the very highest accolade that George could bestow - who was at rather a loose end while waiting for a parish, having recently returned from being chaplain to the British community in Tripoli, and was there anything in the Department that we could find for him to do? Some musing might have ensued on the sad decline in numbers in recent years of the class of parson-scholar to which David so obviously belonged, a staple of Boonian reflection, and how it behoved us to do what we could to nurture it. At all events, I had thought at once of the Museum's collection of seals and seal-casts, which was extensive enough to offer a challenge, was conveniently stored, and had never received any systematic attention. Little did we know that in those few moments we were already nudging David towards his second great scholarly interest, which would in due course lead to an impeccable two-volume catalogue (*Catalogue of Seals in the National Museum of Wales*, *I* and *II*, 1993 and 1998), as well as an attractively useful picture-book (*Welsh History through Seals*, 1982), not to mention innumerable shorter notes. A few days later David arrived in the Department, and I found that - bar the austerity - all that I had heard about him was perfectly true.

For me the word that best sums up David is 'devotion'. That may not be remarkable in a man of the cloth, but the kind of devotion I have in mind is more historical than religious, though sometimes it has strong religious overtones. Firstly, David is devoted to the academic disciplines that he has practised since his student days, and continues to practise daily - the reading and comparison of texts and of maps, the minute and loving examination of inscriptions, the checking of sources: all those procedures that underpin the search for historical truth.

Secondly, he has in unusual measure a capacity for devotion to the historical figures and institutions, sites and buildings he studies. I shall always remember the conviction and enthusiasm with which he persuaded the National Museum that the 750th anniversary in 1976, of the foundation of his beloved Grace Dieu Abbey, should be commemorated with an event, which became the highly successful 'White Monks in Wales' exhibition, for which he co-authored the catalogue. Nor shall I forget the highly ecumenical party he gave at Six Bells vicarage to celebrate it. It was David also who in 1981 organised a memorable service at Tintern on 9 May, to mark the 850th anniversary of the coming of the Cistercians to Tintern (and to Wales). Again, in 1998, he published *The Cistercians in the Early Middle Ages* (Gracewing, Leominster) to commemorate the 900th anniversary of the foundation of the Order of Cîteaux. And a year later, he was behind a Cambrian study-weekend based at Llandrindod Wells to mark the centenary of the death of his Victorian predecessor, the Cistercian scholar and excavator, Stephen W. Williams. But these are all local examples, and David's sympathies extend throughout the Old World: one has only to look at the photographs on his Christmas cards for a calendar of the worthy causes he has espoused, and to which he has devoted his formidable energy over the years.

And last but not least, David is devoted to his friends here-and-now, which is why it gives us such pleasure to be able to present him with these offerings in his honour.

PEN-RHYS: POETS AND PILGRIMS

By Glanmor Williams

It was a privilege and a pleasure for me to participate in the tributes paid to Dr David H. Williams at the National Museum of Wales on 14 May 2003. Like many others who have tried to study Church history, I owe him an enormous debt of gratitude. I am delighted to have this opportunity of offering him a small token of my indebtedness and my good wishes for his future.

Rhys Amheurug, or Rice Merrick (died *c.* 1587), was one of the earliest and liveliest of Glamorgan's antiquary-historians, who had no doubt whatsoever about the origins and meaning of the name Pen-rhys.[1] He was quite sure that it marked the place where Rhys ap Tewdwr, the last king of Deheubarth (South Wales), had had his head severed from his body in 1093, and brought to the Norman conquerors of Glamorgan. There is, unfortunately, no authentic contemporary source in which any mention is made of such an event, so it is usually dismissed as a folk-legend, and one later much embroidered by that prince of romantic remembrancers, Iolo Morganwg[2] (Edward Williams, 1747-1826). However, the late Professor Griffith John Williams (1892-1963), although he exposed more of Iolo's inventions and embellishments than any other scholar, was by no means entirely dismissive of the story. He was convinced that Rhys Amheurug was making use of material that was certainly in circulation among Glamorgan poets during the fifteenth century, and believed also that Iolo Morganwg may have derived some information from the long-lost manuscript 'Register' of Neath Abbey.[3] Professor Williams pointed out that such recorded episodes were often linked with folk-tradition in an attempt to explain the origin of place-names. 'Pen-rhys' [Rhys's head] may be one such. It is certainly an unusual place-name for a site set in a striking locale and one that is likely to have stimulated curiosity and speculation among those who sought to explain it. Pen-rhys was a lonely site in the upper Rhondda Valley, then sparsely inhabited, and it remained densely-wooded until the eighteenth century – proverbial wisdom maintained that a squirrel could make its way from the top of the Rhondda Valley down to the sea, jumping from tree to tree without ever once touching the ground!

Lost in the mists of antiquity the origins of the name Pen-rhys may perhaps be, but it is of considerable significance that there was a copious spring of fresh water there. The early archaeologist, John Ward,[4] and, later on, Francis Jones,[5] our foremost authority on Welsh wells, have both commented that many of these springs were phenomena of some importance in our history from earliest times as places where the local population was often accustomed to gather for religious and ritual purposes; more especially, perhaps, when as in the case of Pen-rhys, the spring was located in or near a grove of trees. That kind of significance may well have been attached to

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1 Corbett, James A., (ed.), *A Booke of Glamorganshire's Antiquities by Rice Merrick* (London, 1887; reprinted Cowbridge, 1972) 18. For additional reading see *Pen-rhys, 1179-1538* (Catholic Truth Society, London, n.d.); Cronin, J.M., 'Our Lady of Penrhys', *St Peter's Magazine* (Cardiff, 1927); Edwards, T. Charles and Williams, G.J., 'Y cefndir hanesyddol …', *Efrydiau Catholiq*, 5 (1952).

2 Edward Williams was better known by his bardic name of Iolo Morganwg. For details see Williams, G.J., *Iolo Morganwg* (Caerdydd, 1956) and Lewis, Ceri W., *Iolo Morganwg* (Caernarfon, 1996).

3 Williams, G.J., *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* (Caerdydd, 1948) 200-2.

4 Ward, J., 'Our Lady of Pen-rhys', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 14 (6th series, 1914) 357-406.

5 Jones, Francis, *The Holy Wells of Wales* (Cardiff, 1954).

Pen-rhys and its immediate environs. But we know nothing of them until they became part of the possessions of the Cistercian abbey of Llantarnam or Caerleon, which was founded in 1179.[6] Even then, however, it is not until 1203 that Pen-rhys finds mention in the records. In that year, the abbeys of Margam and Llantarnam agreed to divide lands that were in dispute between them in upland Glamorgan.[7] All the disputed lands west of the River Rhondda were allocated to Margam, while all those east of it, including Pen-rhys, were assigned to Llantarnam.

It may well have been that at this early date, the spring at Pen-rhys was dedicated to Mary, the Blessed Virgin, in view of the special devotion shown to her by all members of the Cistercian Order, though that need not necessarily be so, since in Wales, wells and springs dedicated to St Mary far outnumbered those to any other saint.[8] The monastic grange at Pen-rhys was of course some twenty-five miles distant from Llantarnam – certainly more than a day's journey from the mother-house. So we must conclude that, in accordance with Cistercian rule and practice, there must have been from the outset some delegation of authority to any monks or *conversi* [lay-brothers] responsible for overseeing the estates there.[9]

There appears to be no early surviving evidence of any pilgrim activity at the well in either the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. Yet it seems almost impossible to believe that St Mary's Well would, at this time, have had no curative or supernatural powers attributed to it. After all, there were other wells associated with the Cistercian Order which were already celebrated for the reputation for healing which they enjoyed among votaries and pilgrims. Basingwerk's well of St Winefred at Holywell was unquestionably the most famous among them.[10] Nevertheless, if there is any evidence of the attraction of pilgrims to Pen-rhys at this time, it has still to be brought to light.

It has further to be borne in mind that the fourteenth century was an era of trials and tribulations for Cistercian monasteries everywhere. The grange at Pen-rhys almost certainly suffered severely as a result of a succession of crises: the destructive rising of Llywelyn Bren in Glamorgan in 1316; the crop failures and famines caused by a markedly deteriorating climate; the malign effects of the Hundred Years' War with France (1337-1453); the horrors of the Black Death (1348-51) and other pestilences; the decline in the number of monks and *conversi*, and the loss of tenants; and prolonged economic slump and change during the fourteenth century. Worst of all was the culmination in the appalling ravages of the Glyndwr Rebellion (1400-15).[11] This chronicle of disasters left all the Welsh monasteries, including even those of the Cistercians, the largest and wealthiest of all the Welsh houses, in a more reduced state than at any time in their history. The monastery of Llantarnam could hardly hope to escape the consequences of these disasters. Under the leadership of its famous abbot, John ap Hywel – the Welsh 'Savonarola', as Sir John Lloyd dubbed him[12] – it enthusiastically took up the cause of the Welsh rebels. The abbot himself, one of Glyndwr's most ardent supporters, was killed in the battle of Pwll Melyn (1405).

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6 Williams, David H., *The Welsh Cistercians* (2 vols., Caldey Island, Tenby, 1954) vol. 1, chap. 1.

7 Clark, G.T., *Cartae et Alia Munimenta* ... (6 vols., Cardiff, 1910) vol. 2, 28.

8 Williams, Glanmor, *The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation* (Cardiff, 1962) 451.

9 Cowley, F.G., *The Monastic Order in South Wales, 1066-1349* (Cardiff, 1977) 69-83.

10 Williams, Glanmor, 'Ffynnon Wenfrewi: St Winifred's Well', *Flintshire Historical Journal*, 36 (2003) 32-51.

11 *Ibid.*, *The Welsh Church* chaps. 3-6.

12 *Ibid.* 420.

Yet, calamitous as the consequences of the Rebellion were on all the Welsh Cistercian houses, and disastrous as their plight appeared to be in the first decades of the fifteenth century, most of them witnessed a remarkable revival in the second half of that century. One of the most striking instruments of recovery was the encouragement of pilgrimages: to the monastic houses themselves and also, as in the case of Basingwerk and Llantarnam, to shrines associated with them, St Winefred's Well at Holywell and St Mary's Well at Pen-rhys. So remarkable was the restoration of these two revered sites that, in the century or so between *c.* 1440 and 1535, they became unquestionably the most prestigious and resorted-to pilgrimages in Wales. In the run up to the Dissolution of the monasteries, when *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, the famous survey of the possessions and income of the Church in England and Wales, was compiled in 1535, St Winefred's Well was bringing in an income of £10 a year and Pen-rhys £6, making them easily the most profitable money-spinners among Welsh places of pilgrimage.[13] An income of £10 and £6 may not sound like anything very impressive until they are compared with the £16, which was what was attributed to St Thomas's shrine at Canterbury, the most sought-after of all English holy places.[14]

It was presumably during this period of prosperity and success that the late-medieval buildings we know of at Pen-rhys were built or re-built.[15] Much of the best known ecclesiastical building of the Middle Ages was stimulated by the need to attract pilgrims and was financed out of the income subsequently generated. At Pen-rhys there was a chapel, measuring eighty-four feet by fifty-one feet, designed primarily to house the celebrated image of Our Lady of Pen-rhys, made of wood but exquisitely gilded. This image of Mary and her child, like others of the same kind, was associated with a legend which told how it had originally been found in a tree, how it was reluctant to be taken from there, and how it was moved only with considerable difficulty.[16] Near the chapel, a hostelry or chapel had been built for the entertainment of the visiting pilgrims. Finally, there was a well-house built over the venerated spring.[17]

Most of what we know about Pen-rhys and the pilgrimages to it, is derived from a considerable body of fifteenth and sixteenth-century Welsh verse, composed in the *cynghanedd* measures, or the *cerddi caeth* (fixed metres), and addressed to the Blessed Virgin and her devotees. We know of at least six poets who fashioned poems on the subject, four of them from Glamorgan,[18] and two others, a father and son, from neighbouring south Breconshire.[19] Between them they were responsible for eight surviving poems – the most numerous group of poems known to have survived to any single Welsh shrine; usually, no more than two or three, or just one, have come down to us. There may conceivably have been many others transcribed into manuscripts which have not survived and others which were never copied into manuscripts at all. It is also possible that a mass of popular poetry, written in the free metres, or *canu rhydd*, a *genre* which was especially popular in the *cwndidau* (lyric poems) of fifteenth and sixteenth-century Glamorgan, but was not considered

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13 *Ibid.* 490-505.

14 Savine, A., *English Monasteries on the Eve of the Dissolution* (Oxford, 1909) 103.

15 Ward, *Arch. Camb.*, 14 (6th series, 1914) 362-80; Butler, L.A.S., 'Medieval Ecclesiastical Architecture in Glamorgan', *Glamorgan County History: 3. The Middle Ages* (Cardiff, 1971) chap. 6.

16 Williams, *Welsh Church* 494.

17 Ward, *Arch. Camb.*, 14 (6th series, 1914) 362-80; Butler, *Glamorgan County History: 3* chap. 7.

18 Llywelyn ap Hywel ap Ieuan ap Goronwy (*flor.* 1460-70); Gwilym Tew (*flor.* 1470-80); Rhisiart ap Rhys (*flor.* 1480-1520); and Lewis Morgannwg (*flor.* 1529-50).

19 Huw Cae Llwyd (*flor.* 1455-1505); and Ieuan ap Huw Cae Llwyd (*flor.* 1471-1500).

dignified or exalted enough to be preserved in medieval manuscripts, was also composed. This seems all the more likely when it is remembered that the classical verse, or *canu caeth*, was not easily understood by the middle and lower classes; a serious drawback when we recall that the whole point of the verse was to advertise and exalt the merits of St Mary's shrine.[20] One of the particularly interesting points about the Pen-rhys poetry is its close association with the body of similar verse addressed to the nearby Rood [great crucifix] at Llangynwyd church, less than ten miles from Pen-rhys as the crow flies. Llangynwyd was at the centre of Tir Iarll, the cradle of Glamorgan verse and the hub of its poetic activity.[21] The two dominating trends of late-medieval Welsh religious verse were the cult of the Blessed Virgin and that of the Stricken Saviour. Both are represented with moving eloquence in the verse to Pen-rhys and Llangynwyd. The same poets often frame their verses to both shrines, and members of the two outstanding poetic families of Glamorgan are represented in both traditions.[22]

Of the popularity of the Pen-rhys pilgrimage we need have no doubt. The late G. Hartwell Jones, in his splendid book on the Celtic pilgrimage, maintained that during the late Middle Ages the short-distance domestic pilgrimage was tending to replace the traditional journeys to the 'Big Three' – Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago.[23] There may be a good deal of truth in that observation. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that at least three of the Pen-rhys poets had been on pilgrimage to Rome as well as the Rhondda, and one of them anyway – Huw Cae Llwyd – gave it as his opinion that the blessing bestowed on pilgrims at Pen-rhys was in no way inferior to that conferred in Rome![24] Pilgrims came to Our Lady of Pen-rhys from all quarters – by sea and land; 'men are drawn by Mary's miracle from far and wide by land and sea', said Lewis Morgannwg:

> 'Mae dynion yma dynnir
> Mair, i'th wyrth hyd mor a thir'.[25]

Those who came by sea presumably crossed the Bristol Channel and disembarked at one of the many little ports along the South Wales coast. The land-ward end of the journey then confronting them would certainly have been a difficult one; but of course, it was part of the pilgrimage mystique that the more arduous the itinerary to the holy place, the greater the blessing that might be hoped for having arrived there.

Pilgrims would seem to have travelled in companies of mixed social composition, as readers of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* will surely remember. As far as can be judged from the Welsh pilgrimage poetry, among those pious wayfarers would have been not only members of the gentry and yeomen but also a number from artisan and labouring classes. They seem to have travelled for the most part in groups – for three main reasons, perhaps - firstly for company and good fellowship; secondly, for greater security and in hope of finding their way in wild and uncharted country; and thirdly, those who were in weak health, of frail constitution, and hoping to find renewed health, must often have needed help to reach journey's end.

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[20] Williams, Glanmor, 'Poets and pilgrims in fifteenth and sixteenth-century Wales', *Transactions of the Honorable Society of Cymmrodorion*, (1991) 69-98.

[21] Williams, *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* 32-6; Lewis, *Glamorgan Co. History: 3*, 501ff.

[22] Williams, Glanmor, *Wales and the Reformation* (Cardiff, 1977) 127-8.

[23] Jones, G. Hartwell, *Celtic Britain and the Pilgrim Movement* (London, 1912).

[24] Williams, *Trans. Cymmr.*, (1991) 80.

[25] Edwards and Williams, *Efrydiau Catholiq*, 5, 24-45.

It seems very probable that most pilgrims travelled during the summer months. The roads and track-ways of medieval Wales were never good, but in winter months became almost impassable. Summer brought not only better weather and road conditions, but also longer hours of daylight. There appears to be little doubt that it was the summer feasts devoted to St Mary - the Feast of Visitation (3 July), of the Assumption (15 August), and above all, of the Nativity (8 September) - that attracted the most crowded bands of pilgrims.[26] Having got to Pen-rhys, they would have carried out the accustomed programme of all-night vigil, followed the next day by drinking the water at the sacred well, and attending mass at the chapel. Why had they come? Above all, perhaps, because medieval people set such store by a single, straightforward ritual procedure which, they trusted, had the power of wiping out all their transgressions. St Mary herself – Our Lady of the Sorrows – was the personification of all that was most compassionate and tender in medieval religion. It mattered immensely to men and women all too conscious of their fallibility, that they should have secured the good offices of the Blessed Virgin on their behalf for the fateful Day of Judgement, when it was confidently anticipated that she would exercise supreme powers of intercession on their behalf. Among her many celebrated shrines in England and Wales, that at Pen-rhys ranked with the very highest.

Not only had St Mary immense influence in the process of spiritual cleansing, but she was also deemed to be capable of healing physical ailments among humans and animals as well. Pilgrims with many different kinds of bodily ills: the blind, the deaf and dumb, the mentally deficient, and a variety of other sufferers, also came in search of a cure. Even the dead were brought there in the hope of revival. All of the pilgrims would have known, too, of the indulgences that could free souls from the terrors of Purgatory which were available for purchase at Pen-rhys. Others offered gifts in cash and in kind. Still others – those fearing they might never make the visit in person – would have left bequests in their wills for Pen-rhys. Most of these wills have long since disappeared, but the records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury preserve a handfull which have survived.[27]

In spite of the turmoil occasioned in the early 1530s by the religious changes enforced by Henry VIII, Our Lady of Pen-rhys remained as popular as ever.[28] Bishop Hugh Latimer, a Protestant convert and not at all disposed to favour Catholic holy places, included Pen-rhys with some of the most famous Marian shrines anywhere in the kingdom – including those at Worcester, Doncaster, Walsingham and Ipswich.[29] Nevertheless, coming events may have been casting long and ominous shadows before them. In 1534, the grange at Pen-rhys had been leased out to a layman;[30] this may suggest an attempt on the part of the monks to safeguard themselves against something they were already dreading – dissolution, although that did not in fact come about until 1536-7.[31] Although the monastery of Llantarnam itself was dissolved in 1537, it was not until the late summer of 1538, that final disaster befell Our Lady of Pen-rhys, along with many other places

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26 Cross, F.L., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford, 1957) 567-8.

27 For a list of late-medieval Welsh wills, see Williams, *Welsh Church* 564-8.

28 Williams, *Wales and Reformation* 128-9.

29 Latimer, H., *Sermons, Remains* (Parker Society, London, 1845) 395; Gairdner, J., *Lollards and the Reformation in England* (4 vols., London, 1905-13) vol. 2, 141.

30 Williams, David H., *Welsh Cistercians* vol. 1, 104.

31 Williams, *Wales and Reformation* 127.

of pilgrimage up and down the land. It was at this time, when multitudes of pilgrims may have been preparing themselves for their journey, that Latimer wrote to the king's great minister, Thomas Cromwell, referring to the image at Pen-rhys as 'our great Sibyl', 'the devil's instrument to bring many (I fear) to eternal fire'.[32] He spoke of it as one of a number of similar images, which should, he thought, 'make a jolly muster at Smithfield – they would not be all day a-burning'.[33]

Cromwell reacted promptly to Latimer's message. On 22 August, he wrote to William Herbert and the chancellor of Llandaff diocese, ordering them to have the image taken down 'as secretly as might be'. Evidently, he feared that popular indignation, seemingly little moved by the Dissolution of the monasteries themselves, might react much more hostilely to the desecration of so cherished an object of pilgrimage. He therefore gave instructions that it should be taken down after nightfall with as little commotion as possible. On 26 September 1538, the royal will was proclaimed at Pen-rhys and 'idolatry was denounced'.[34] The famous image itself was taken away to London and burnt at Smithfield; a public demonstration in the heart of the capital city which provides a telling illustration of how celebrated an icon it was regarded as being. Its destruction was commemorated in an English ballad written by William Gray, one of Cromwell's agents.[35] Back in Glamorgan, another poet, Lewis Morgannwg, who had formerly been so fervent in vaunting the merits of the Blessed Virgin of Pen-rhys had, by this time, dramatically changed his allegiance. It was now Henry VIII who was the object of Lewis's applause for his excellent work in destroying the monasteries, which were, at this stage, denounced by Lewis for 'extinguishing the true faith'.[36] Another token of decay at Pen-rhys was the decline of that once-flourishing hostelry which had earlier welcomed the crowds of pilgrims who had thronged there. A suit brought to the King's Court of Augmentations reveals how it had fallen into disrepair.[37]

What, then, we may ask, survived at Pen-rhys after 1538? The late Archbishop David Mathew, a fine scholar, believed that some sort of monastic life was kept alive in the recesses of Pen-rhys. He thought that the monks there were protected by the well-known, if not well-behaved, 'dozen Stradling bastards'.[38] This hypothesis does not appear too convincing, though. The Pen-rhys grange had been leased to a layman in 1534, and that agreement, like others of the same kind entered into well before 1536, remained in force after the Dissolution of the monasteries.[39] In any event, the Pen-rhys lands, once the famous image and the income associated with it had gone, were insufficient to support a community of monks. Perhaps the most telling consideration of all was that in Queen Mary's reign (1553-58), when a serious attempt was made to restore monastic life, there is no evidence whatsoever of monastic activity at Pen-rhys, although it should be conceded that William Morgan, now owner of Llantarnam, did try to encourage people to go on pilgrimage to Pen-rhys.[40]

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32 *Ibid.* 127.

33 *Ibid.*

34 *Ibid.*

36 *Ibid.* 122-3.

37 Lewis, E.A. and Davies, J.C. (eds.), *Records of the Court of Augmentations relating to Wales and Monmouthshire* (Cardiff, 1934) 141-2.

38 Mathew, D. and A., "The survival of the dissolved monasteries in Wales', *Dublin Review,* 104 (1929) 70.

39 Williams, *Wales and Reformation* 97-8.

40 Ibid. 204.

What did survive, however, in many places long after the end of Henry VIII's reign and beyond, was the use of former monastic chapels by Catholic recusant believers. In these chapels they conducted clandestine services at which ordained Catholic priests ministered.[41] It is conceivable that such devotions took place at Pen-rhys, though no actual evidence of them seems to survive. What does exist, however, is the testimony that for a long time after the Reformation, local inhabitants resorted to St Mary's Well in the hope of curing their ailments.[42] By this time, the famous spring, deprived almost wholly of its religious and devotional associations, had become little more than a monument to popular superstition. Not until as late as the mid-twentieth century did a great surge of piety, stemming mainly from a multitude of Roman Catholics, by this time living in South Wales, seek to revive Pen-rhys's ancient glories. An impressive pilgrimage, numbering some 4,000 people, was arranged on 13 September 1947 within the octave of the Feast of the Nativity. They duly made their pilgrimage, rendered their devotions, and once again drank the waters of 'Ffynnon Fair Pen-rhys'.[43]

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41 *Ibid.* 364-5.

42 Jones, *Holy Wells* 60.

43 *Ibid.*

WORSHIP AND DEVOTION IN MONMOUTHSHIRE: SOME LATE MEDIEVAL METALWORK

By Mark Redknap

Worship and devotion in the later Middle Ages are represented in numerous ways in the material record, from liturgical equipment used in the celebration of the Mass to *ex-votos* deposited by the faithful, from works commissioned to the Glory of God to souvenirs of Christian pilgrimage worn as badges. This selective review of current research on such archaeological evidence from Wales covers three categories of metalwork and describes examples from Monmouthshire, some previously published and some newly discovered. Other categories of object – the vestments worn by the officiating priest, such as the Skenfrith cope and ecclesiastical embroidered chasubles preserved at Monmouth and Abergavenny (Buckland, 1983, 125-39), censers such as the fine example from Penmaen, Glamorgan, published by Lewis (1978, 25), pyxes (little boxes to hold the sacrament), chrismatories for the holy oils and ewers for the ceremonial hand washing of priests – have been omitted.

I
LITURGICAL EQUIPMENT

The altar, the focal point for the celebration of Mass, required a number of sacred objects, such as the chalice, the paten and the cruets for water and wine, the *sanctus* bell (e.g. the sacring bell from Maenan Abbey; NMW acc. no. 53.49) rung at the elevation of the host by the priest, and altar candlesticks.[1] Of these sacred objects, most familiar both at the altar and in procession is the cross, the universal Christian symbol.

The Cross

Romanesque altar crosses are rare in Britain, but during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries every church would have had one. Some early crosses would have survived in use into the sixteenth century, and one of the best known examples is that now known as the 'Monmouth Crucifix', from the church of St Mary, Monmouth. This gilt copper-alloy crucifix is dated *c.*1170-80 and is one of only two complete English altar crosses of the Romanesque period to survive (Stratford, 1984a, 246-7). Fragments of Romanesque cross found in Wales include the figures of Christ from Criccieth Castle, and a Limoges enamel terminal plaque from a cross arm from Montgomery Castle (Knight, 1993, 191; Redknap, in prep.).

Early crosses

From the thirteenth century, most crosses and cross elements appear to fall within the style and iconography of metalwork found in England. Crosses with a dual purpose, both for setting on the altar and carrying on a stave in processions, appear more frequently from the fourteenth century onwards (Oman, 1962, 198-200). Some will have been made of silver (represented at St David's

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[1] The stem of a candlestick found in 1988 near the church of St Andrew, Wick, may have been used at the altar.

and Caldicot: see below) and occasionally crystal, but many were made of more modest materials such as gilt copper-alloy (which would when clean have resembled gold or silver gilt), or wood.

1. A processional cross made of 'green gold' (Evans, 1953, 254) was formerly at the parish church of St Mary, Caldicot. The cross can no longer be found, and references to it in the inventory for archdiaconal visitations cease in the 1940s during the incumbency of Father Robert Charles Garrod (1939-58). It has been thought that the medieval chalice from Caldicot, which was similar in form to the Lincoln chalices, was sold at about this time. However, a reference to the cross in Evans (1953) suggests that it was still at the church when the text was written, and it is again mentioned in 1980 (Guy and Smith, 1980, 18); the only surviving record of the cross is a photograph taken in 1936, during the incumbency of Theodore Mansel Rhys Younghughes (1916-38; Fig. 1). The poor image in the photograph appears to show a very worn processional cross whose terminals are in the form of quatrefoils with mouldings embellished with small balls. The terminal centres have the figures of the Evangelists in relief. Similar quatrefoil panels can be made out behind the head and feet of Christ. The knop at the junction of the cross and base socket appears to have a stepped top.

The cross is a simpler version of an early fifteenth-century Italian parcel gilt silver cross with Evangelists in relief, now in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and an early fifteenth-century Italian silver parcel gilt processional cross with translucent enamels in the British Museum (M&LA 1913 12-20, 95). The place of manufacture of the Caldicot cross will not be established until it is rediscovered and re-examined. The cross was traditionally believed to have been given to the church by Richard III, who restored Caldicot to Henry Stafford, duke of Buckingham (13 July 1483), so that a fifteenth-century date for the cross would be supported by this tradition. The lordship of Caldicot was for a long time in the possession of the Crown under Edward IV and Richard III.

Attempts are being made to relocate this cross, and the author welcomes further information. The medieval chalice from the church is thought to have been sent to 'Osborne' by Mr Garrod; the Representative Body of the Church in Wales archive is silent about this issue (S. Leach, *in litt.*) and Osborne House on the Isle of Wight has no record of such an acquisition (M. Hunter, pers. comm.).

Later crosses

There are a number of late medieval processional crosses from Wales, and they fall within the mainstream of English or Continental traditions. None display characteristics that indicate production within Wales.

2. Gilt copper-alloy processional or altar cross, showing Christ crucified, complete with knop and staff socket, with branches bearing figures of SS Mary and John, reputed to have been brought to St Mary's presbytery, Monmouth, from Holywell (Fig. 2). The solid casting of Christ is fastened by three rivets to the cross. The head of Christ is encircled by a torse (crown resembling a twisted rope) to represent a crown of thorns; the face is inclined slightly towards the right shoulder, and is bearded. The closed eyes indicate that it represents Christ dying or dead, rather than Christ *ad vivum*. His right foot is positioned over the left foot. The figure measures 130 mm in height and 116 mm across the arms. Overall height 422 mm; width of cross arms 289 mm.

The cross is in double outline, the front shaft and arms having a raised central panel engraved with a running foliate scroll; on the back, the design comprises a row of simplified hexafoils in a diaper pattern, and a larger quatrefoil with cross-hatched centre at the junction of cross arms and shaft. The cast, pierced and engraved reliefs of the evangelists' winged symbols are fastened to circular back-plates which are 32-33 mm in diameter: the eagle (John) at the top, lion (Mark) on the left, ox (Luke) on the right and man (Matthew) at the bottom (Fig. 4d, b, c, a respectively). Each symbol sits within a cast circular frame, which has been hammered in at four points to secure each disc. The backs of the plates to which the symbols have been riveted are engraved with stylised roses, and have individual tally marks (four dashes behind the eagle, three behind the lion, two and three behind the ox and one behind the man).

On the right, a copper-alloy figure of St John the Evangelist, robed, face turning slightly to the right towards the Crucifixion, with the left arm holding a book, and the right hand in front of his chest, holding the robe. There is a protruding stub of a rivet on top of the head, to which a nimbus would originally have been fastened. The crocketed branch on which the figure stands, would have been inserted into a socket on the shaft of the cross. This descends vertically from the base of the figure, and it is engraved with foliate decoration.

On the left, a copper-alloy figure of the Virgin Mary, draped in a mantle, face turning slightly to the figure's right (away from the Crucifixion and Christ's suffering), with one hand clasped against her breast and the other supporting a small book. There is a transverse moulding on the pedestal base, above the vertical stem of the crocketed branch which is engraved with a foliate design. As with the figure of St John, a rivet stub projects above the head, to which a nimbus may originally have been fastened.

The branches of both figures are incised with a conventional foliage design. The face of the central socket for the cross above the knop is engraved with a simple two-strand twist; below the knop, the cylindrical stem is engraved with a large hexafoil. The wrythen knop has six lozenge-shaped bosses with foliate centres.

This cross is reputed to have been brought to St Mary's Roman Catholic presbytery, Monmouth from Holywell. A letter dated 11 June 1903, from Revd Thomas Abbott (at one time in charge at Monmouth) records the origins of the fine vestments at Monmouth, which were in the care of two priests from Holywell, brothers with the surname Jones. The younger brother came to Monmouth about 1720, and brought an old vestment, 'the old processional cross which has the two attendant images on branches', an ivory crucifix, an old copper thurible, and pyx, and some other treasures (D'Elboux, 1924, 29; Powell, 1993, 54). According to Abbott, Pugin took casts of the processional cross and its branches, and it was regilded in 1838 by one of Pugin's collaborators on designs from the prominent Birmingham Roman Catholic manufacturing family, John Hardman (D'Elboux, 1924, 29).

3. Gilt copper-alloy socketed stem from a processional cross (Fig. 3). The faces of the three rectangular sockets above the knop are engraved with foliage in outline; below the knop, the main cylindrical stem is engraved with two panels, one on each side, containing an acanthus-like leaf in outline. The wrythen knop has six lozenge-shaped bosses, each engraved with a lattice. Overall height 210 mm; maximum diameter of lower socket 49 mm (slightly misshapen); diameter of knop 88 mm; height of sockets above knop 53 mm.

As in the case of no. 2 (above), the base may have been brought to St Mary's presbytery, Monmouth from Holywell in the eighteenth century. The base is at present associated with the figure of the Virgin Mary on a branch, but it is not certain whether the two elements have always been associated.

Processional or altar cross components

4. Gilt copper-alloy symbol of St Matthew, in the form of a winged man holding a scroll from a cross arm terminal (Fig. 4e). Height 38 mm. Found in 1993 by Dr J. Davis in a field some 300-400 m from no. 5 (below), towards the church of St Bedeui (St Mary), Penterri, Monmouthshire (approx. NGR: ST 52 98; Williams, 2002). St Mary was a possession of Tintern Abbey.

5. Gilt bronze roundel engraved with a radiating star (the so-called Yorkist 'sun in splendour'), from the back of an Evangelist symbol from a cross terminal (Fig. 4j). Found in 1987 at Porthcaseg, Monmouthshire by Dr J. Davis in the area of the deserted medieval village (approx. NGR: ST 52 98). There was a parochial church at Porthcaseg, although nothing now survives (Williams, 2002).

Figure of St John the Evangelist

6. Copper-alloy figure of St John the Evangelist was found in 2000 by Mr R. Wiseman at Maesycwmmer, Ystrad Mynach, Caerphilly (Fig. 5a). The robed saint's face is turned slightly to the figure's right towards the Crucifixion; the left hand clasps a book, and the right hand is raised with the palm facing forward. Traces of gilding remain on the figure, which is rather heavily modelled. The crocketed branch on which the figure stands is slightly unusual in being horizontal, and has fractured off in antiquity. Holes were drilled to pierce the junction of foliage and stem. The height of the figure from the base of the pedestal is 75 mm.

Figure of the Virgin Mary

7. Copper-alloy figure of the Virgin Mary, from St Mary's presbytery, Monmouth (Fig. 5b). The Virgin is draped in a mantle, face turning slightly to the figure's right (away from the Crucifixion), one hand clasped against her breast, the other supporting what may be a closed book. The modelling is naturalistic on the face and folds of the drapery. There is a transverse cable moulding around the pedestal base supporting the figure. The crocketed branch is engraved with a repeating palm leaf motif on the front, and lozenges on the front on a wrigglework background. Slight traces of gilding remain on figure and base. The height of the figure from the cablework around the pedestal to the top of the head is 95 mm. A rivet stub projects 4 mm above the head and once fastened a nimbus. Maximum diagonal height 216 mm.

Discussion

The Caldicot cross is a rare example in precious metal from Wales. The high quality of some precious metal crosses is illustrated by a silver gilt figure of St John the Evangelist from a fifteenth-century processional cross which survives in the collections of St David's Cathedral, Pembrokeshire. The saint's hair, face and drapery folds have been well modelled; the figure stands on a crocketed branch whose trefoils have been modelled and cast rather than crudely cut (height

80 mm). Patronage on a more modest scale is reflected in the fragments of early Gothic base metal crosses from Wales, such as a copper-alloy figure of Christ found below a medieval floor during excavations at Carmarthen Greyfriars. This figure, which measures 73 mm high, is inclined to the left, with eyes closed as *Corpus Christi*. The combination of stylised modelling and early Gothic features suggests a date in the mid-thirteenth century or slightly later, which is in accordance with the *terminus ante quem* proposed for the tile floor, thought to date *c.*1300-25. The royal foundation of Carmarthen Greyfriars *c.*1250-80, suggests that the cross may have been presented at or shortly after its foundation (Redknap, 2001, 35-7).

Processional crosses were mass produced in the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth centuries, and Oman listed over thirty surviving examples, though none were complete (1962, 199). There are usually four elements: the cross, two branches with formalised leaves supporting figures of the Virgin Mary and John the Evangelist, and a knop with a cylindrical socket for a processional staff. Sockets for the other three elements could either be above the knop, or above the lower roundel at the base of the cross shaft as in the case of the Llangynllo processional or altar cross (see below). The figures of Mary and John could be removed before the cross was carried at the head of a liturgical procession – festal or penitential – which usually took place before the principal celebration of the Eucharist on feast days. Medieval practice was to place the head of the processional cross on the altar during the service – where it became the focal point of worship, particularly at the Eucharist. There is very little native or Insular style in their forms, and most examples were probably produced outside Wales – either in London or on the Continent. Most of the figures are more naturalistic than the stylised earlier examples.

A different form of processional or altar cross was published in 1873 from Guilsfield, Montgomeryshire. This small copper-alloy cross was discovered in April 1873 'whilst a grave was being dug in the west side of the churchyard of the parish of Guilsfield'. It retained traces of gilding, and was attributed 'probably' to the fourteenth century (Anon., 1873, 407-8). The cross, which is four and three-quarter inches high, has the form of a *cross fleury*, each arm ending in a fleur-de-lis, the lower shaft ending in a screw for attachment to a staff. The front is engraved with a representation of the Crucifixion, Christ being shown nimbate, in loincloth, with feet crossed. The back is engraved with a crude flowing scroll of foliate ornament. The cross has similar terminal forms to those of a late thirteenth-century gilt copper-alloy processional cross which has been compared with crosses from France or northern Spain, though the latter has a circular rather than a square panel at the junction of the arms, and a cast figure of Christ (Nelson, 1939, 326-7).

Close parallels to the late medieval processional or altar crosses described above are known across the United Kingdom, such as one from Glastonbury (Tavenor-Perry, 1910, Plate XIX), and another reported to have been ploughed up at 'Bosworth Field' in 1778, and traditionally associated with the battle of 1483 (now in the collections of the Society of Antiquaries; Nicholls, 1811, 557 and Plate xci). Another was found in 1901 at Abbey Dore, Herefordshire, in an oak chest along with a priest's vestments, and may have come into the Gwillim family through another Roman Catholic family, the Vaughans. The Evangelists' symbols on the cross are openwork, on dark-blue enamel medallions, each with a heraldic rose on the back (Victoria and Albert Museum, London 824-1901; Oman, 1962, 195-207; Richardson, 2000, 157-8; Spira, 2003, 416). There is a cross at Lamport Hall, Northamptonshire (dated *c.* 1480; St John Hope, 1907a, 41-5), though the engraving is of a better quality than that on, for example, the figure of St John found during the excavation of a cable

trench in a field near Cardigan in 1967 (NGR: SM 18 46; see below), having a well-executed guilloche pattern on the front of the stem (Fig. 5d). Another processional cross, dated *c.* 1500, was found in a hoard of altar furnishings from Sheephouse, co. Meath, and is thought to have been hidden on land owned by the nearby Cistercian monastery of Mellifont, for safekeeping (Ó Floinn, 2002, 272).

Best known from Wales is perhaps the gilt copper-alloy processional or altar cross from Llangynllo, Radnorshire (on display at the National Museum & Gallery: NMW acc. no. 59.386). This has a figure of Christ crucified and roundels with the symbols of the evangelists set in the arm terminals (with diameters of 36-37 mm; lower one missing; Fig. 4f, g, h); there are also sockets to receive branches bearing the figures of SS Mary and John (now missing). The cross, which was acquired by the National Museum of Wales in 1959, was believed by the vendor to have been for many generations in the possession of his grandfather's family (Francis) in the Llangynllo area of Radnorshire, and may have come from a church in this area. In style, it is similar to a gilt copper-alloy processional or altar cross at St Donats church, in the Vale of Glamorgan, found *c.* 1870 blocked up in debris (*Arch. Camb.*, 1888, 418). This cross was restored in 1907 in the form of an altar cross according to a design by G. E. Halliday. Three of the Evangelists' symbols are original, and there are Tudor roses on their reverses (Orrin, 1988, 350).

These late processional crosses from Wales belong to Oman's Group B with roundels at the ends of the arms, and crocketing around the edge, though no enamelling is evident (Oman, 1962, 199). Isolated figures have been recorded from late processional or altar crosses, such as a copper-alloy figure of Mary found by Mr I. Davies at Laleston near Bridgend in 2003 (Fig. 5c). The Virgin is draped in a mantle, face turning slightly to the figure's left towards the Crucifixion, hands clasped against her breast. The modelling is rather stiff and heavy, particularly on the face and folds of the drapery. There is a transverse moulding at the base of the figure, above the facetted vertical stem of the branch. This branch has fractured off in antiquity. Traces of gilding remain on the figure and base. The height of the figure from the base of the pedestal is 74 mm. The iconography of the two Virgin Mary figures from the Monmouth processional crosses is interesting, in that she appears to be holding a small closed, clasped book, but a similar type appears on the Crucifixion stonework around the door at St Cybi's church, Holyhead, Isle of Anglesey, as well as the figure of Mary from the processional cross from Lamport Hall (St John Hope, 1907a, 42, 44).

From West Wales, a right-hand figure of St John on a crocketed branch from a field near Cardigan has an incomplete branch (Fig. 5d). The left forearm of the figure and most of the book that was held in the right hand are also missing. There is the stub of a rivet projecting from the back of the head, for a nimbus. The gilding only survives in patches around the neck, face, under arms and in the folds of the robe. The front of the crocketed branch is engraved with a lozenge pattern, and the back with a simple representation of a branching stem (Lewis, 1973, 181-2).

Scattered parts of processional or altar crosses have occasionally been discovered in fields, such as the figure of the fifteenth-century Virgin Mary on a stepped pedestal from Great Melton, Norfolk, found by field-walking (Margeson, 1979/80, 355). Many were presumably discarded as a result of changes during the Reformation, and the consequent dispersal of church property, such as the openwork symbols of the Evangelists. The backing plates for the same, which have become detached from cross arms, have also been found in isolation elsewhere. Examples of Evangelist

symbols include a gilt copper-alloy roundel depicting the lion symbol of St Mark (unusually facing left) from a field between Llansteffan Castle and Plas, Carmarthenshire (NMW acc. no. 98.11H; Fig. 4i); and a gilt bronze roundel from a late medieval processional or altar cross was found by Mr A. Young at St Florence, Pembrokeshire. The reverse would have been attached by a central rivet to a round disc engraved with a quatrefoil or similar design. The motif appears to be a roughly executed winged ox, the symbol of St Luke (there are horns above the head). It was originally set within a frame at the terminal of a cross-arm.

Evangelists' symbols in the form of roundels occur on other items of late Gothic metalwork, including a so-called silver Bamberg book cover, now known to have been made at Ulm, S. Germany, in 1506 (Tait, 1981, 31). Variations in the Evangelists' symbols, figures and decorative elements on base metal crosses, and their often crude modelling and engraving, reflect the scale of production and importation of Flemish goods (*dinanderie*) which dominated the late medieval market in copper-alloy goods. The importation of *dinanderie* was considered a threat to the home industry, and an Act of 1464 restricted the import of certain goods, including 'skeryngbelles' as well as basins and ewers (*Rot. Parl.*, v [n.d.], 507a; Blair and Blair, 1991, 98). The method of manufacture and style of engraving on many of the later gilt copper-alloy crosses are similar to those found on other metalware, such as the Abergavenny pax (see below).

The Chalice

The chalice was central to Mass, and from the mid-thirteenth century was usually of silver or copper-gilt. Medieval examples of such chalices from Wales are rare, the finest being the silver gilt example found with a paten hidden on the slopes above Dolgellau in 1890. Made in three parts and richly decorated, it has been suggested that the chalice and paten may have been made *c.* 1230-50 for a monastic foundation, perhaps Cymer Abbey nearby (Campbell, 1987, 308). Alternatively, Taylor has suggested that the jewels borne by one Nicholas the Goldsmith from London to Caernarfon in 1284 may have included a chalice and paten, which may have been made from the matrices of the seals of the Welsh princes (Taylor, 1977; Williams, 1984, 364 and footnote 33). Stylistically the Dolgellau chalice and paten belong to the period *c.*1230-50, and cannot therefore have been made from the seals of the princes. However, it has been suggested that these valuable objects may have been in Edward's possession when he travelled through Merioneth in 1284, and that the recorded provision of forty armed men as protection for the king's silver treasure 'on the mountain of the Bere' may have been prompted by the loss of valuable items, including a chalice and paten (Smith, 2001, 57-8).

The practice of burying grave goods symbolic of status is illustrated by the plain mid-thirteenth-century silver chalice found in 1865/6 in the grave of a bishop buried in front of the pulpitum at St David's Cathedral. The tomb, which also contained a twelfth-century crosier and a thirteenth-century gold and sapphire ring, was attributed by Clear (1866, 61) to Richard de Carew, bishop of St David's (1256-80), a suggestion which has found general acceptance (St John Hope, 1907b, 490; Stratford, 1984b, 257). One panel on the foot of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth-century silver chalice at St Eilian's church, Llaneilian-yn-Rhos, Denbighshire, is engraved with an image of the Crucifixion; similar chalices include one from Bacton (the Church of the Faith) in Herefordshire (Colt, 1892, 230-3), and one from Eyrarbakki, Iceland (Mitchell, 1904, 181).

The practice of burying chalices of high lead pewter with priests is known from the eleventh to early sixteenth centuries (the earliest apparently dated from 1087; *Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, 1909, 394). Up to the mid-thirteenth century, pewter chalices may have been used in the celebration of the Mass, but from the mid-thirteenth century there was a campaign among bishops for the use of silver chalices. In 1229-31, Richard le Grant, archbishop of Canterbury, forbade his bishops to consecrate pewter chalices, though unconsecrated pewter examples continued to be used for burial and other specific purposes (Atkin and Margeson, 1983, 378-9). Stylistically these pewter chalices copied thirteenth-century silver examples, and while they may be simpler forms and cheaply produced, they still represent an important record of a once common class of medieval liturgical equipment: most medieval chalices were later recycled, many being replaced by larger cups during the first two decades of Elizabeth's reign.

An important pewter (lead-tin alloy) sepulchral or mortuary chalice was found at the church of St Stephen and St Tatheus, Caerwent in 1912 (Fig. 6). According to a report by G. E. Halliday in the *Western Daily News* dated 16 November in that year, it was found with a skeleton in a cist of 'rough flat stones', together with an iron buckle, 'a short time ago in the unused portion of the churchyard' (*Proc. Soc. Antiq.*, 1913, 173-4). A note accompanying the object records that it had been discovered on the breast of the skeleton. The burial was exposed at the time when Roman foundations were being unearthed in Insula XII of the Roman town. The excavation's *Rough Notebook no. 21* for 1912 records 'excavations commencing Sep.16 1912 in south-east corner of the Churchyard, and the discovery of the chalice and buckle in NW Angle of Room 3, 1 ft. 9 ins. from the surface'. This description was given as 'on N. Wall, Room 2, NW angle of churchyard' in *Rough Notebook no. 23*, but it is clear from the published note that it came from Hudd's house no. XXVI (=Brewer house 27s), 'close to the south-west corner of Room 3', or north west corner of room 2, some 2-3 m to the south of the church chancel (Hudd, 1912-13, 447, footnote 1). The cist was considerably damaged before it was recognized as a grave and the chalice brought to light. The chalice was subsequently preserved by the Revd W. Coleman Williams, vicar of Caerwent.

The present very poor condition of the chalice and considerable intergranular corrosion is largely the result of its storage history; this is unknown until about 1960, when it was found to be sealed behind glass within a wooden drawer with oak front, plywood sides on green felt and a bed of wool. A photograph taken in 1912, shortly after discovery shows it in more complete condition. In the early 1980s, the chalice was transferred in its present fragile state from the church to the conservation laboratory of the National Museum of Wales, where it was removed from its wooden box and repackaged by Louise Mumford.

No further evidence of shape of the chalice was forthcoming from X-radiographs. However, despite its poor condition, it has been possible to reconstruct its form based on the measurements recorded by Halliday, an early photograph and surviving remains (Fig. 7). The plain bowl was originally a shallow hemisphere, turning at one point of its profile into straighter sides. It measured about 100 mm in diameter, with a restored depth of about 30 mm and overall height of about 96 mm. The plain rim had a thickness of 2.2-2.5 mm (according to Halliday it was '3 half inches (875 mm) high, 4 inches (100 mm) across the bowl, 5 inches (125 mm) across the foot': Halliday, 1912).

The better-preserved stem expands slightly just beneath the bowl, flaring at the base where it formed a plain, circular foot. The knop is formed of a separate pewter collar with slightly beveled edges,

which has been slipped over the stem before it was attached to the bowl. The foot and stem were fastened to the bowl by a lead plug which passed through the centre of the stem to a hole in the bowl base (12 mm in diameter), before being hammered over. The section of stem above the knop may also be made of lead, and a separate component. The stem had a diameter of 14 mm, and a height of 61.3 mm.

Very few mortuary chalices have been found in Wales. Apart from the silver example from a dated tomb at St David's cited above, which has a height of 127 mm, another silver chalice was found in the tomb of Thomas Beck, bishop of St David's (died 1293). A pewter chalice found at the church of St John, Llanbleddian, Vale of Glamorgan, is similar to the Caerwent chalice in size, though its foot and knop are slightly different. It measures 3 inches (8.75 cm) in height, with a bowl diameter of 4 inches (10 cm), and had been placed in a side niche in the tomb (Fowler, 1898, 129-30). It was attributed to the fourteenth century based on the architectural evidence for the date of construction of the chapel (Fowler, 1898, 130). In 1736, a chalice was found associated with a staff or crosier, beside the body in an opened wall tomb in the choir of Llandaff Cathedral (letter from John Harris, bishop of Llandaff; Llandaff, 1854, 301-2). The stem from a pewter mortuary chalice was found at Nash, in the Vale of Glamorgan, after activity on the edge of the churchyard in 1998. This appears also to have a composite construction, having a central groove on the knop, and measures 55 mm in surviving height. Excavations in 1965 at the church at Highlight (*Uchelolau*) deserted medieval village near Barry revealed the burial of a priest, buried with forearms across his chest and a pewter funerary chalice and paten on his abdomen. Another chalice was found at his feet (Thomas, 1984, 91 and Fig. 34).

The form of the Caerwent chalice resembles the mid-thirteenth-century silver chalice from St David's, while its construction is similar to that of a pewter chalice from a coffined priest's burial dated before *c.* 1350 at All Saint's, Barton Bendish (Rogerson and Ashley, 1987, Fig. 25 no. 1; Plate X). A chalice found in a fourteenth-century priest's grave at Carrow Priory, Norwich, is also of very similar construction, form and size, having a maximum diameter of 102 mm and maximum height of 81.5 mm (Atkin and Margeson, 1983, 374-80). The fill of the grave, which lay in front of the late medieval chancel steps, was found to contain a sherd of thirteenth- or fourteenth-century Grimston ware, a fragment of medieval glass and fragments of fourteenth-century Flemish floor tiles. However, stylistic similarities between the Carrow Priory pewter chalice and those from nine thirteenth-century priestly burials in the Chapter House Vestibule of Lincoln Cathedral, particularly that from grave 4 (Bruce-Mitford, 1976, 138, Plate 5; Homer, 1986), have suggested that the Carrow Hill chalice may have been made quite early in the fourteenth century (Atkin and Margeson, 1983, 375-6). A late thirteenth- or fourteenth-century date may therefore be proposed for the stylistically similar chalice from Caerwent. More generally provenanced are examples from Stoneleigh Abbey (Warwickshire: Hornsby *et al*, 1989, 51) and Coventry Benedictine Priory (Shelton Coll. 29/227/177).

The Carrow Priory chalice was found associated with a paten, and the custom of burying both together in priestly burials has been recorded in many churches. Examples in S.E. England include St Mary's, Little Oakley, Essex (*c.*1200: Corbishley, 1984, 267); All Saints, Barton Bendish, where it lay above the right shoulder (Rogerson and Ashley, 1987, Fig. 25, Plate X); three from Merton Priory (Jones, 1992, 29-31); Rochester Cathedral, Kent (Lovett, 1990, 136); Chertsey Abbey (at the left shoulder; Poulton, 1988, Plates 35-6). Examples from N. England include St Martin's church, Wharram Percy (probably fourteenth century: Oman and Bayley, 1987, 150); Monk Bretton Priory, South Yorkshire (found during the 1923-6 excavations; Coppack, 1990, 60);

Barton on Humber (with chalice and paten clasped on the stomach: Rodwell, 1981, Plate 71); St Mary Castlegate, York (grave 21; Tweddle, 1986, Fig. 97). Two chalices have been recorded from the church of St Mary, Little Ilford: one excavated in 1984 found lying by the right shoulder of a skeleton (grave C105; Redknap, 1985); while Ogborne recorded the discovery in 1724 of another leaden cup 4 inches in diameter and cover (paten) 4.5 inches in diameter on the left side of the skull of a body, at the north door of the church (Ogborne, 1814).

Pewter and more precious examples found in securely dated tombs have provided important chronological benchmarks, such as those of Bishop Flambard of Durham (early twelfth century); the silver parcel gilt chalices found in the tombs of Archbishops Walter de Gray (1216-55) and Godfrey de Ludham (1258-65) at York Minster (Ramm *et al*, 1971); the grave believed to be that of Richard de Berkyng (died 1246) at Westminster Abbey (Bruce-Mitford, 1976, Fig. 6); those of Henry of Worcester, abbot of Evesham (died 1263) and Archbishop Walter of Canterbury (died 1205). Medieval images of chalices on sepulchral slabs usually have the same form as the St David's and Caerwent examples, such as one attributed to the thirteenth century on the chancel floor at Marcross church, Vale of Glamorgan (Williams, 1893, 341).

The Cruet

Church cruets were used to hold wine and water for Mass. Every church would have had at least two such vessels, which were known by a variety of names such as *ampulla*, *fiala*, *phiala*, *potum*, *urceus*, *vas*, *vasculum* (Nelson, 1938, 49). One was used for wine and one for water, and metal examples sometimes bear the letter **A** for *aqua*, or **V** for *vinum*, both of which were then mixed in the chalice by the priest at the sedilia (according to the Sarum use). Documents refer to sumptuous examples in gold, silver, crystal and enamel, while cheaper cruets were made of earthenware, one from Eglwys Gymyn church, Carmarthenshire, taking the form of a miniature jug, with external glaze and single handle (Lewis, 1968, 147-9; Lewis, 1978, 34).

The cruet from White Castle is a rare example of a medieval 'round pot' (NMW acc. no. 27.92/1; Fig. 8). This dull silvery pewter cruet, previously published in *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* (Lewis, 1967, 127-9), has a splayed hollow foot and a pear-shaped body, tapering to a slender neck, now slightly misshapen, whose rim is hinged for a heart-shaped lid. A break in the rim suggests the location of a now missing spout, which would have mirrored the lid shape. A triangular addition on the lid top next to the hinge may be the attachment for a thumb piece for opening it. The top of the lid engraved with a letter **A** in Lombardic style, indicating that it was to hold *aqua*. The orientation of the letter confirms the reading: in medieval liturgy, the server presented the vessel to the priest with handle towards the priest; the vessel was then grasped by the priest's right hand and poured to the left, while the vessel was held for pouring. Consequently the letter read as an A rather than a V (I am grateful to S. Badham, J. Bertram and J. Lewis for clarification of this point). The cruet, which is 120 mm high, was apparently made in four parts, the neck, body and base being soldered together and then lathe turned (Campbell, 1987, 239).

The elaborate form of the Lombardic letter on the lid suggests a fourteenth-century date for the cruet, which was found at the bottom of the well at White Castle. It has been suggested that the cruet might have formed part of the original furnishings of the new castle chapel built *c.*1267 (Lewis, 1967, 128-9), but the form continued well into the fourteenth century when used as majuscule, and it need not be early in that century (S. Badham, *in litt.*).

The form of the cruet provides the best basis for dating. The shape of the White Castle cruet has been compared with lidded thirteenth-century cruets made of Limoges enamel with the pear-shaped bodies and circular feet (Nelson, 1938, 49-54). A cruet, once on lion feet, from the Abbey River, Chertsey, has a comparable bulbous body form and height (100 mm; Bentley, 1977, 309-10); Hornsby, Weinstein and Homer, 1990, no. 137; Chertsey Museum D791). Campbell (1987, 239) has compared the form to an unmarked pewter cruet found in Bergenhus, Norway with coins dated between 1215 and 1471 (Grieg, 1933, 127-8), and to four pewter and two silver fourteenth-century cruets from the Basle Treasure (Fritz, 1982, Plate 615). It is unlikely to have belonged to a fifteenth-century re-furnishing after repairs to the castle *c.*1437 (NMW acc. no. 27.92/1; Lewis, 1967, 127-9). A sixteenth-century ewer or baluster measure, similar in form to one from Three Cranes Wharf, London (Hornsby, Weinstein and Homer, 1990, no. 101) was 'probably found in the well at the same time as the cruet' (Lewis, 1967, 127), but may have come from a higher, later, level. The practice of adding water to wine in the chalice was discontinued at the Reformation.

The Pax

The pax originated in the early Christian custom which took place before the offertory at the Eucharist, and which developed in response to the injunction of St Paul of the Corinthians: *Greet one another with an holy kiss* (2 Corinthians, 12, 12). The conveyance of this Kiss of Peace came eventually to be transferred by the priest by means of a small panel, generally depicting a sacred subject such as the Crucifixion, known as the *Pax-brede* or Pax-board, *tabula pacis* (tablet of peace) or *osculatorium*, first mentioned in England in the constitutions of Walter de Gray, archbishop of York, issued in 1250 (Way, 1845, 146-7; Layard, 1904, 120-30; Oman, 1957, 56; *ibid.*, 1962, 201). They were made of gold, silver gilt, latten or 'coper and gyltt', but many were made of painted wood ('lyttel paxbredes of tre': British Museum, 1924, 210). Mortimer Wheeler, in his publication of the Abergavenny pax, succinctly described liturgical practice: 'as defined by the Apostolic Constitutions and other customaries, the salutation of the Church by the bishop or presiding priest and the words "Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum" were followed by the transmission of the holy kiss through successive ranks of clergy to the laymen and finally to the women, grade by grade' (Wheeler, 1930, 356).

All men and women were expected to be present during the celebration of Mass, the central act of worship, on Sundays and Holy Days. They were encouraged to feel part of the celebration of Mass by emphasis on customs such as kissing the pax, for many only communicated once a year as a rule. In the Mass, after the Lord's Prayer and inserted prayers (the embolism), suffrages ordered for any purpose might be said, and prayers for peace, then the Pax and *Agnus Dei* followed. This warm gesture, a token of peace and unity, has been revived in various forms in the liturgy of the church today. The standard form of liturgy developed at Salisbury was adopted at an early date by the bishops of St David's in the thirteenth century (Edwards, 1990, 152). In 1543, the use of the Sarum Breviary was imposed on the whole of the S. province – in essence a local medieval modification of the Roman rite used at Salisbury Cathedral (Jones, Wainwright and Yarnold, 1978, 236).

The Abergavenny pax appears to have been found in 1865 in the cellar of the presbytery of the Roman Catholic church of Our Lady and St Michael, Abergavenny, and was restored to the church by the widow of the finder (Fig. 9).[2] The gilt copper-alloy rectangular panel depicts Christ crucified, attended by the Virgin Mary and John, and its construction is more complicated than many surviving examples from Britain. Some parts are made of sheet copper gilt, in several sections, which have been either soldered or riveted together. The border and backplate have been hammered from two sheets of copper alloy, brazed together vertically, just off-centre. The corners are fastened at the back by soldered applied strips, the cuts being concealed at the front by applied strips in the form of stems of foliage/trefoils (all broken, the best preserved example being at the top left). A cast cresting of trefoils has been added to the top. To the centre of the back have been fastened two pairs of tubular sheet metal lugs, fastened longitudinally, for a hinged handle (now missing).

The Crucifixion is contained within a recessed rectangular panel, and has been riveted to the background, which is engraved with a trellis pattern in wriggle-work. The plain cross is a separate component, made of copper alloy, whose lower shaft has been broken off (the surviving length is 97.5 mm). The cross arms are 75 mm wide. A separate cast figure of Christ has been riveted through the hands and feet to the cross (height of figure 70.07 mm). A cast robed figure of St John with a nimbus has been fastened to the right of the cross by two small rivets. This figure is slightly larger than Christ, having a height of 81.2 mm. The figure of the Virgin is missing, though she has been outlined by a single line of wriggle-work, suggesting that the background was engraved after the figures had been applied. Like the figure of St John, it was fastened by two small rivets. Both surviving nimbuses are engraved with radiating triangles, Christ's with a background of radiating lines, St John's in a simpler outline.

The whole scene is surrounded by a raised border, recessed to take a *textualis quadrata* Latin text. This has been engraved in four strips, each about 9.1 mm wide (Fig. 10). Three of the strips survive, each being fastened by two small copper alloy rivets. The inscription starts in the left border, at the bottom; the top strip is missing, but the third line resumes at the top of the right border, and the final strip along the bottom reads from the left:

◊INCRUCIS◊HC•SPECIE•IHS•BN◊MOSTT•IDEA◊

...

○ALMA◊BEAT◊TUA•MUNA◊LAUDAT◊
◊IHS◊MARIA=IOHS◊

This contracted and incomplete inscription was expanded in the 1920s by Mr McNeil Rushforth as: *In crucis hic (or hac) specie Jesus h(e)n(e) mo(n)st(ra)t ideam [Mortis, q(ua)m Maria] alma beat(a), tua mun(er)a laudat, Jesus, Maria, Iohannis,* 'Here, under the form of the Crucifix, Jesus clearly shows the fashion of his death, which gracious Mary accounts as blessed, (and) glorifies thy sacrifice. Jesus, Mary, John.' *Vulnera* (wounds) has been proposed as an

[2] On loan to the National Museums & Galleries of Wales, where it is on permanent display in the Medieval Gallery; NMW acc. no. 63.77.

alternative for *munera* (Wheeler, 1930, 358), and Oman was cautious about accepting the above version (Oman, 1962, 201).[3]

The style of the figures suggests that the Abergavenny pax probably belongs to the fifteenth century. The style of the *textualis quadrata* lettering and spacing provides further clues to the date of manufacture, which was probably after *c.* 1450, and possibly *c.* 1450-75 (though a later date is possible). The diamond-shaped stops between words are similar to those on the strips from the Newport ship discussed below, while the ragged staff might be based on a livery device of someone to whom the church owed allegiance. The ragged staff, though unaccompanied by a chained bear, was a device used by the earls of Warwick, a title held by both Beauchamp and Nevill families. It occurs on livery badges (e.g. British Museum MME 1904, 7-20, 23) and on stained glass in the Beauchamp chapel of St Mary's, Warwick (dated *c.* 1447-9). The bear and ragged staff also occurs on a gold signet ring said to have been discovered on the body of Richard Nevill after the battle of Barnet (National Museums & Galleries of Merseyside, Liverpool Museum, 53-114-292). Richard Nevill, sixteenth earl of Warwick (1449-71; 'the Kingmaker') had assumed the title of lord of Glamorgan since taking possession of it, as part of the lands of his wife, Anne Beauchamp. A relative, Edward Nevill, son of Ralph, first earl of Westmorland, was lord of Abergavenny, being summoned to Parliament in 1450 by right of his wife, Elizabeth Beauchamp (Evans, 1915, 146 note 41). The inclusion of a ragged staff as a stop on the Abergavenny pax suggests a link between its donor and the earls of Warwick or someone who owed them service.

Being made of base metal, the Abergavenny pax may have been an everyday or 'ferial' pax, some of which were made of wood. The pax measures 195 mm in height, 121.1-123.5 mm in width, and 9 mm in maximum depth, and is slightly larger than the silver gilt pax from New College, Oxford (height 137 mm) and the wooden pax from St Andrew's church, Sandon in Essex (height 156 mm, width 121 mm). The cross hatching of the ground is a common decorative treatment, though occurring in different variations on surviving examples.

Very few examples of medieval paxes have survived the Reformation in England or Wales. Layard listed many in various media in English and Irish Museums (Layard, 1904), while Wheeler referred to some thirteen or fourteen examples (Wheeler, 1930). Oman divided them into two types, those in which the devotional subject is engraved, and those in which it is cast. The former group includes one in the collections of St Edmundsbury Museums Service dated *c.*1400, with engraved Crucifixion, flanked by engraved figures of the Virgin Mary on the left and St John on the right, while along the top there is a cresting of gothic foliage, a form of decoration found on other fifteenth-century metalware such as cups and covers (Oman, 1962, 202; Campbell, 1987, 240). A similar metal pax with engraved crucifixion in the collections of the National Museum of Ireland has a length of 97 mm and width of 68 mm (Hourihane, 2003, Plate 2). Examples of the second group include a small latten pax with cast figures on a diapered background (fleur-de-lis and stars) with sol and luna above the crucifix from Downside (Anon., 1931, 285-6). This is very similar to a pax found in 1836 at Runcton Hole, near Downham, Norfolk (Layard, 1904, Fig. 4). The style and method of manufacture of these gilt paxes are similar to that of late processional or altar crosses, both being produced *en masse*.

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[3] S. Badham writes: 'If the contested word were "vulnera" rather than "munera", the minimum representing the miniscule "l" would be taller than the other minims and have a bifurcated end to the upstroke, but they all have the diamond-shaped end of the minims typical of shorter *textualis quadrata* minuscule letters'.

Allusions exist in medieval literature to quarrels over the order of precedence for kissing the pax, as illustrated by the proud man in Chaucer's *Persone's Tale*: 'eek he waiteth or desireth to sitte, or elles to goon above hym in the wey, or kisse pax or been encensed, or goon to offryng biforn his neighebor' (Chaucer, *The Parson's Tale*, line 406; Robinson, 1966, 240). On All Saint's Day, 1522, one John Brown of the parish of Theydon-Garnon in Essex, smashed the *paxbred* over the head of Richard Pond, having kissed it at the parish Mass, because he was enraged that the pax had first been offered to Francis Hamden, the patron of the living, and his wife (Bossy, 1973, 141-3; Duffy, 1992, 126-7). The pax is frequently mentioned in Welsh poetry, often with risqué metaphors (Williams, 1976, 515; Dylan F. Evans, *in litt.*). The practice was abolished during the Reformation, and many were sold to cover church expenses.

II
PILGRIM BADGES AND AMPULLAE

During the Middle Ages, the cult of most saints was focused on particular places where they were buried or where their venerated relics were preserved. Pilgrimage formed an important part of medieval life and a route to salvation and was recognised as a voyage of self-discovery and a metaphor for spiritual growth. This could be on a grand scale in the form of a holy crusade of the type *Giraldus Cambrensis* recruited for, or a personal journey to a place of healing and miracles to make offerings.

Many pilgrims setting out for the Holy Land or Santiago da Compostella traditionally went like the Apostles, barefoot, staff in hand. St James is depicted on a late fifteenth-century font at Gresford church, on an early sixteenth-century stone statue at St Giles, Wrexham, and on a reredos in the Holy Trinity chapel, St David's. The phenomenon of individual journeys is well illustrated in the archaeological record by the mementoes collected by people when visiting shrines and places of pilgrimage, and these are sometimes depicted in contemporary illustrations, such as the barefoot pilgrims with badges on tunics and hats in the margins of the fifteenth-century Hours of the duchess of Burgundy (French, MS 76, fol. 9r., Musée Condé, Chantilly). A pilgrim, with a staff and scallop-shell in his hat, is depicted in bas-relief on a (probably fifteenth-century) grave slab in the church at Llandyfodwg, Glamorgan (*Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1893).

Devotion would be visibly demonstrated by such items, and notable publications illustrating the depth of the field include the detailed surveys by the late Brian Spencer and the catalogues of Dutch finds (Spencer, 1990; *ibid.*, 1998; van Beuningen and Koldeweij, 1993; van Beuningen, Koldeweij and Kicken, 2000). In the early 1980s, very little was known about the situation in Wales, but as more finds are being reported as a result of metal detecting, patterns are starting to emerge.

Up to at least the 1490s, Canterbury was England's foremost centre of pilgrimage, and pilgrim souvenirs of St Thomas have been found in Wales, such as a miniature sword in scabbard, overlain by a buckler (later-fifteenth century) from Newgale beach, Pembrokeshire (reported by Mr Scale). The main centres for pilgrimage within Wales were well documented: Pen-rhys (see this volume), St David's, Holywell, Llandaff (shrines of Teilo and Dyfrig). Almost all monasteries had an attraction on offer to pilgrims, and the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* indicates which were most profitable in Wales, *viz.* Basingwerk with the neighbouring St Winifred's Well at Holywell, and Llantarnam with its popular shrine of Pen-rhys in the Rhondda Valley (Williams, 1976, 354). In England, there

was St Werburga (Werbyrgh) at Chester, St Chad at Lichfield, St Ethelbert and St Walter Cantilupe at Hereford, besides St Thomas at Canterbury and at least twenty other centres, but evidence of this type was rarely recorded. Devotion and expressions of piety took many forms within Wales, from the commissions or offerings of the pious, to the patronage of shrines with their traffic in holy relics.

The motifs depicted in pilgrim souvenirs fall into discrete categories. Saints' cults include St Catherine (*cf.* a six-spoked Catherine wheel, with studded blades, from Newgale beach, Pembrokeshire), and possibly St Werburga, Chester (*cf.* five geese inside a wattle enclosure, four looking left and the last looking right) from Llanelli, Carmarthenshire. Badges representing a Bust of Our Lady and Child surrounded by a circular frame with pearled edges and dot-and-circle motifs imitating jewels interspersed with sprigs of foliage have been found at Manorbier and Newgale beaches in Pembrokeshire. A cap badge with images of SS Peter and Paul (as on papal bullae) has been found at Laugharne, Carmarthenshire.

By far the commonest category of souvenir, forming some 83% of the pilgrim souvenirs from Wales (according to present figures) are lead or lead/tin alloy *ampullae* (c.1350-1530), and these can be subdivided into a number of distinct groups. Some are decorated in a crude, stylised manner with the simple scallop-shell emblem of St James of Compostela, the emblem of pilgrimage itself which is found in various locations in Wales. About a third of the *ampullae* from Wales have the scallop-shell on the obverse – both the badge of St James of Compostella and the emblem of pilgrimage adopted by most shrines. Spencer has distinguished two main types: I, with bold radiating ribs, and notched edges, and well-defined shoulders (like the true scallop), and II with fine grooves and smooth edges (like the cockle).

Monmouthshire examples include:

I. Scallop-shell

1. 'Probably Monmouthshire', from the collections of the Monmouthshire and Caerleon Antiquarian Association (Fig. 11a). Scallop-shaped body, decoration on both sides. Height 58 mm. (NMW acc. no. 31.78).

2. Found *c.*1992 at Goldcliff Pill, River Usk Estuary, by Mr D.S. Anderson (Fig. 11b). Shell on body, with ?raised initial letter above W??; reverse letter A and ? Some damage is evident to the obverse at the neck (hole), but the mouth is still sealed. Height 53 mm. (NPTMG acc. no. 93.50).

II. Compass design on one side, letter on reverse

3. Found in 2001 at Trelech, Monmouthshire during excavation of the NE corner of Church Field West (Howell, 2001, 39; Fig. 11c). On the obverse is a compass-drawn four leaf motif within a quartered square, set diagonally. On the reverse is a cross-hatched design, possibly a heart with cross-hatching similar to no. 4, perhaps to represent the veneration of Christ's sacred heart. Height 53 mm.

4. Found in 1988 between the Bishop's Palace and Moyne's Court, Mathern, by Dr J. Davis (Fig. 11d). On the obverse is a compass drawn flower, comprising four large pointed petals or leaves with midribs on a cross-hatched ground; on the reverse is a heart with cross-hatched centre, below (?) a crown. Surviving height 30 mm.

5. Found in 1988 at St Arvans, by Dr J. Davis (approx. NGR: ST 51 96; Fig. 11e). Compass-drawn flower (four pointed leaves?) on the obverse; on the reverse, there is a letter W, crowned. Elsewhere, it has been argued that W stands for 'Our Lady of Walsingham' (if it is not the initial of a saint's name). Height 50 mm.

III. Other

6. Found in 1989 at Pwllmeyric, Chepstow, by Mr H. Douglas (Fig. 11f). Obverse heraldic shield below crown; reverse heraldic shield, top unclear. The *ampulla* has been squashed flat. Height 50 mm. (NPMG acc. no. 89.330).

Possession of water that had in some way been in touch with a relic at shrines and holy wells was a popular method of obtaining saintly contact and grace. As well as being worn on the body (frequently sewn onto hats), such prophylactics were often set aside for future emergencies. Many *ampullae* were worn suspended around owners' necks as talismans, or hung up in the home, or suspended in stables or cowsheds, while some would be donated to neighbourhoods or hung up in parish churches. It has been suggested that *ampullae* were sometimes pierced and cast on farmland by returning pilgrims to allow the water to fall on the soil and bless the crops, but such folk practices are poorly documented (for discussion see Spencer, 1990, 58-9; 1998, 205).

Of all watery elixirs, that of the water of St Thomas, tinged with the Martyr's miracle-working blood collected from his mortal wounds in 1170 and continuously diluted, was most famous. The importance of the shrine of St Thomas for devotees is illustrated by the Canterbury badge from Newgale, a late fourteenth-century miniature representation of the murder weapon on display to pilgrims. Badges do not appear to have been introduced at Canterbury or anywhere else in England until the early fourteenth century (Spencer, 1987, 219).

The distribution of souvenirs in Wales at present shows notable concentrations at Newgale, an access point for St David's, but this southern concentration may simply be a reflection of present day recording (Fig. 12). The practices of pilgrims in North Wales were probably similar, for there is an *ampulla* from Llanfaes, Isle of Anglesey, but as yet fewer souvenirs have been reported. Pilgrims do appear in contemporary records, such as Gruffudd ab Ieuan, Dafydd ap Ieuan and Gwilym ab Iorwerth, leaving Welshpool for Santiago on the Monday following the Feast of St Augustine, 26 May 1362 (John and Rees, 2002). Contrary to the suggestion that the tradition of wearing badges might have been different from Anglo-Norman England – with reverence given to material possessions such as saints' bells rather than to corporal remains – archaeological evidence suggests that the tradition did exist in Wales, though a badge specific to a Welsh centre (such as those from Walsingham, Canterbury, Chester or St Andrews) has yet to be identified. Many with representations of the Virgin could have been sold at Welsh shrines: the Virgin and Child badges from Manorbier and Newgale could have come from St David's reflecting the popularity of Mary of *Menevia, Mair o Fynyw*.

III
PERSONAL DEVOTION AND CHARMS

Acts of private devotion that made use of images which enabled the medieval mind to focus on the object of veneration were common in Wales as elsewhere. The range of materials used in this way was wide, from alabaster reliefs to painted leather and carved wood. Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary proliferated in late medieval Britain, and imagery was abundant, from wooden figures such as the Mochdre Mary to smaller items. The wearing of finger rings with figures or legends of devotional character was particularly fashionable in the Middle Ages, as the cults of saints grew in popularity. Iconographic rings bearing depictions of saints or sacred persons, sometimes linked to mottoes indicating that some rings also served as betrothal or New Year gifts, include the image of the Virgin and Child, engraved on the bezel of a late fifteenth-century iconographic ring from Pen-y-cae-mawr, Monmouthshire (Redknap, 2000, 66-7; Fig. 13). A St Christopher pendant is depicted hanging from the collar around the effigy of Sir Christopher Mathew (died 1527) at Llandaff Cathedral – a reference to his name, and to the iconography of one of the favourite chivalric saints, who offered protection from death.

The Cult of the Holy Name of Jesus

Invocations to Jesus in the form of the Holy Name occur on a wide range of objects, from monumental brasses to everyday items such as mazers and ceramic vessels, as well as to smaller adornments which could be displayed on a person, such as purses, scabbard chapes, strap ends (such as one from Kidwelly Castle; NMW acc. no. 32.426/3) and dress accessories. These reflect the rise in popularity of devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus from the late thirteenth century, which had widespread popularity from the mid-fourteenth century, peaking during the period *c.*1450-1550. Particularly common is the sacred trigram in the form IHS (from the first three letters of the Greek for Jesus), the minuscule form of the last letter from the mid-fifteenth century resembling a letter 'C' (and often being misread as such).

Finger rings of gold, silver or base metal bearing the sacred trigram have been found in Wales. One found at Cardiff Castle in 1884 was engraved IHS (NMW acc. no. 92.70H; Williams, 1993, D26), and a sixteenth-century example from Cardiff Greyfriars was engraved IHS (Cherry and Redknap, 1991, 123). A gold devotional ring with ten projections known as a 'decade' ring found in Montgomeryshire in the nineteenth century, bears the IHS trigram (*ibid.*, 124). Seals sometimes bear the sacred trigram IHS, such as those in the National Library of Wales of Edward Banner or Thomas Dere, chaplains, dated 27 February 1489 (Badminton (Group 1) 695 (Seal 1), Jenkin greg' ap Jenkin of Llansoe, Monmouthshire, dated 3 February1540 (Badminton (Group 1) 817 (Seal 1)), and that of William Hywel ab Hywel of Llanisien (Llanishen), Monmouthshire, dated 6 December 1546 (Badminton (Group 1), 819; D.H. Williams, *in litt.*).

A silver ring from Oystermouth Castle, first reported in 1866, bore a longer inscription invoking Jesus: IESVS REX NAZARETH (*Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1866, 545; Cherry and Redknap, 1991, 123); a flat annular brooch found near Cymmer Abbey in the nineteenth century bore the inscription +IHESUS NAZARE (*Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1884, 347; *Archaeol. J.*, 17, 166). A similar but longer invocation occurs on a fifteenth-century burr maple mazer with silver gilt rim, which may have belonged to the collegiate foundation at Clynnog Fawr, Gwynedd: IHS NAZARENUS REX IUDEORUM FILI DEI MISERERE ME, 'Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews,

son of God, have mercy upon me' (NMW acc. no. A (L) 466), a text also found on the domed centres of some cross feet (Oman, 1962, 200). Some were used as communal drinking cups in monastic refectories, their function often confirmed by the inscription.

Some rings and brooches bear longer tags, such as IHESVS INRI ('Jesus. Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews') engraved on one side of a silver annular brooch from Pen-y-parc farm near Llantarnam, discovered by Mr Nancarrow in 2003.

Biblical texts used as charms are illustrated by a recent Monmouthshire find. In August 2002, two gilt copper-alloy strips were found between futtocks inside the Newport ship (context 152, SF 153, 154; Fig. 14). Strip 1 is 75 mm long and 22 mm wide, and is attached to a fragment of iron plate (148 mm long; 73 mm wide; 4 mm thick). This strip, with one scalloped edge and two rivet holes for rivets for attachment, is engraved in Gothic textura (*textualis quadrata*) with the letters ENS followed by a foliate scroll, forming a break between words. A large rivet with square rove or washer, probably for a leather strap, is attached to the ironwork. Strip 2 is 117 mm long, and 21 mm wide, and has a rivet hole 2-3 mm in diameter. It is identical in form to strip 1, and is engraved with a Black Letter text: MEDIUM ILLORUM separated by a lozenge-shaped stop, and a foliate scroll after 'illorum'.

The text on the decorative strips probably originally read IHESUS AUTEM TRANSIENS PER **MEDIUM ILLORUM** IBAT ('Jesus however passing through the midst of them went on his way'). This text from Luke 4.30 was one of the commoner Biblical texts from the Vulgate to be commonly adopted as a charm in the later medieval period, and consequently found on a range of objects that do not necessarily have an ecclesiastical association. As a charm and protection against misfortune, it was applied to a wide range of objects. It can be found on the lid of the *cuir bouilli* Talbot casket, thought to represent the type of casket owned by a rich merchant in Flanders *c.*1400 (British Museum M&LA 1977, 5-2, 1; Cherry, 1980). The same text occurs on standard type gold nobles which depict ships during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and on a gilt band about the level of the deck on the late-fourteenth-century silver *nef* that was bequeathed to Toledo Cathedral by Archbishop Pedro Tenorio (1377-99; Oman, 1963, Plate I). Gothic *textura* lettering was used for epigraphic inscriptions for a long period between the 1320s and 1590s. Letters diagnostic of an individual craftsman's style (a, h, y) are missing from the Newport inscription, though the first minim of the 'u' is higher than the second, a feature of some brasses dated to the period 1438-45 (Jerome Bertram, *in litt.*). The diamond-shaped stop appears on brasses from the third quarter of the fourteenth century, though the jumble of devices separating words on the Newport strips also occurs on some mid-fifteenth-century brasses such as Brightwell Baldwin, Oxfordshire *c.*1445. The degree of separation of individual letters seems most indicative of a date around the second quarter of the fifteenth century (S. Badham, *in litt.*).

A vital clue to the original function of the two fragments is provided by the slightly concave shape of the back of the surviving iron plate, and the slight curvature to its surviving edge of the iron plate, along which one strip remains attached. The second engraved strip is bent in a regular manner, which may reflect the curvature of the iron to which it also was originally attached. These suggest that the strips may have formed decorative copper-alloy strips from a helmet.

Applied ornamental borders of metal (*latten*, silver or gold) occur on European armour from about 1340. The text on the Newport strips - 'But Jesus passing through the midst of them went on

his way' - was clearly an appropriate message for armour, and the same legend occurs on a fourteenth-century breastplate and basinet visor from Churburg, on late-fourteenth-century gauntlets in the Bargello, Florence and on the Meath armour, a slightly composite etched Italian half-armour of about 1510-20 in the Royal Armouries collection (no. II.392). The copper-gilt parade helmet of Charles VI of France (1368-1422) recovered in fragments from the Cour Napoleon excavations at the Louvre in Paris and thought to date to *c.*1410 has an ornamental strip engraved EN BIEN (Fleury, 1986; Curry, 2002, 54); other fifteenth-century armour with copper-alloy borders includes Henry V's helm in Westminster Abbey, an unpublished sallet in Whaplode church, Lincolnshire, and the German armours of the Emperor Maximilian I and the Archduke Sigmund of Tyrol (Kunsthistorische Museum, Vienna; C. Blair, *in litt.*).The dimensions of the Newport strips can be compared to those on a Milanese open-faced sallet now in the collections of the Royal Armouries (the Domenico Negroli sallet no. IV.424; Norman and Wilson, 1982, no. 9; Dufty, 1968, Plate LXXVII, top; Karcheski and Richardson, 2000, 16-18).

The precise form of the Newport strips will be reassessed following full cleaning and conservation of the fragments. The larger fragment appears to come from the right side and brow area of a helmet, allowing for a missing word PER to occupy most of the curve around the eye. There appears to be a square iron washer and rivet on the inside of the Newport iron fragment in a position to secure a chin-strap, and a smaller rivet (?) to hold lining.

A preliminary report on the alloy indicates that it may be approximately 80% copper, 20% zinc (K. Hunter, *in litt.*) - i.e. a brass, the zinc being a decisive characteristic for a copper alloy of golden colour which in the medieval period was termed *latten* (from Turkic *altun,* '*golden metal*'). The received view has been that much bronze and *latten* used in England was imported from the Low Countries and Germany (most active areas were along the Meuse from Dinant to Aachen), but both copper and calamine were imported and indigenous manufacture has been proposed for certain products (Blair and Blair, 1991, 83-5).

Endnote

These artefacts are but a glimpse of the scope of once common equipment and trappings of late medieval devotion in south east Wales, which form part of a much wider, late medieval European tradition of physical contact with relics, images of salvation, the Virgin Mary and saints recognised throughout Christendom. The wide range of objects would have been equally familiar to worshippers in England.

By the late fifteenth century the attitudes of the devout were changing, though criticisms of the importance accorded to relics and miraculous objects could mean impugning the faith of the clergy as well as that of credulous believers. Questions were being formulated as a result of extensive travels and the study of books, challenging the belief in the miraculous. Nevertheless, many objects continued to reflect the personal devotion and superstitions of their owners.

During the reign of Elizabeth I, much base metal church plate was destroyed, as part of a campaign against superstition. What had not already been defaced, broken, stolen or - as most of it had been - sold off since the death of Henry VIII ended up disposed of in the melting pot, or being traded abroad. Hardly any surviving object remains in the place to which it originally belonged,

such as the 'Monmouth' processional crosses which appear to have come from Holywell - treasured items with chequered, much travelled pedigrees. This is illustrated by the account of liturgical silver which came from the Jesuit College of Cwm at Llanrothal, seized from the Jesuit saint David Lewis (rector of Llanrothal) when he was arrested at Llantarnam in 1678 (Knight, *in litt.*). Other items, such as the processional cross roundels may have been lost before the Reformation, but the discovery of such small artefacts through initiatives such as the Portable Antiquities Reporting Scheme, is now contributing to our understanding of the physical practices of church and people in later medieval Wales.

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Fig. 1: Processional or altar cross from St Mary's church, Caldicot, from a photograph taken in 1936.

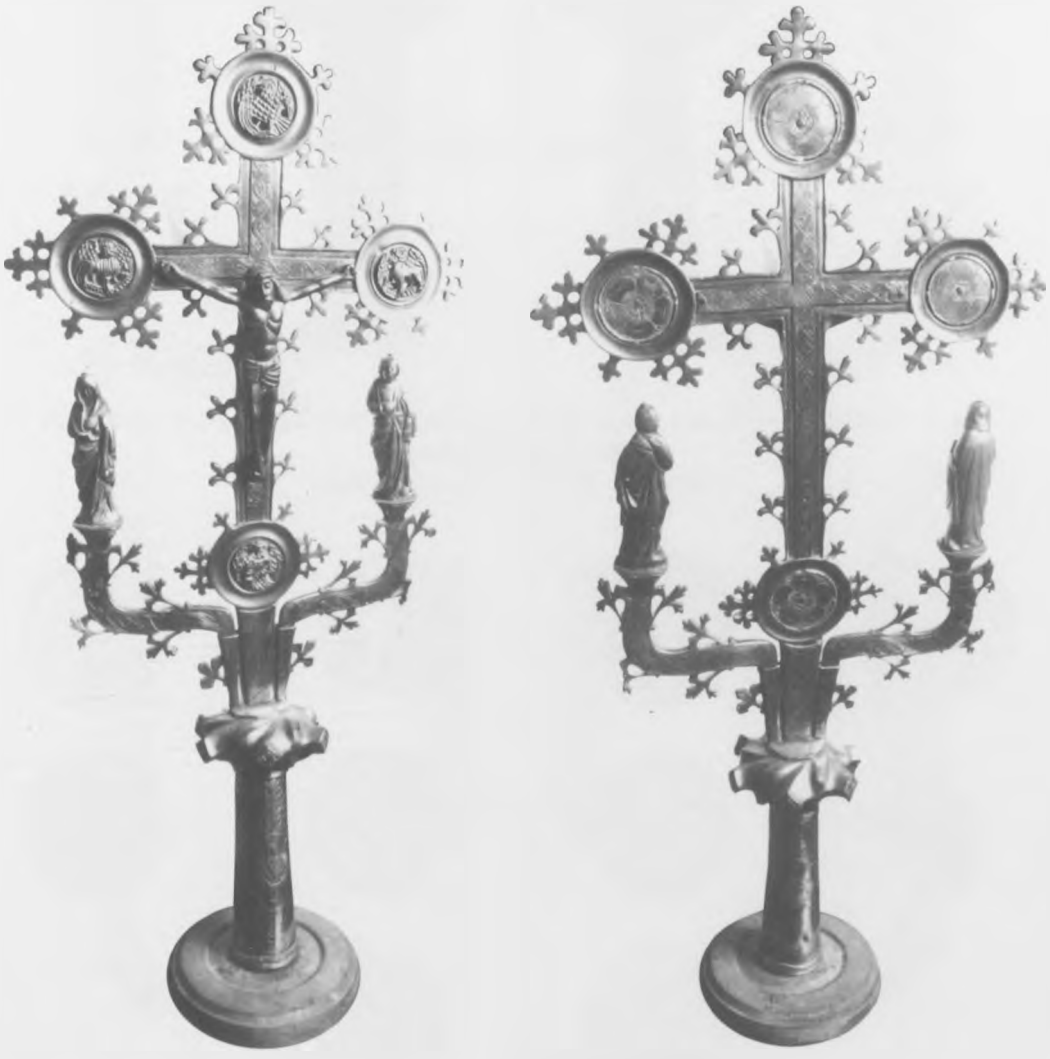

Fig. 2: Processional or altar cross from St Mary's presbytery, Monmouth (front on the left, back on the right).
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Fig. 3: Socketed stem from a processional cross from St Mary's presbytery, Monmouth (showing both sides).
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Fig. 4: Roundels from the arms of processional or altar crosses: a-d, St Mary's presbytery, Monmouth; e, Penterri, Monmouthshire; f-h, Llangynllo area, Radnorshire; i, near Llansteffan Castle, Carmarthenshire; j, Porthcaseg, Monmouthshire. (Scale 1:2).
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

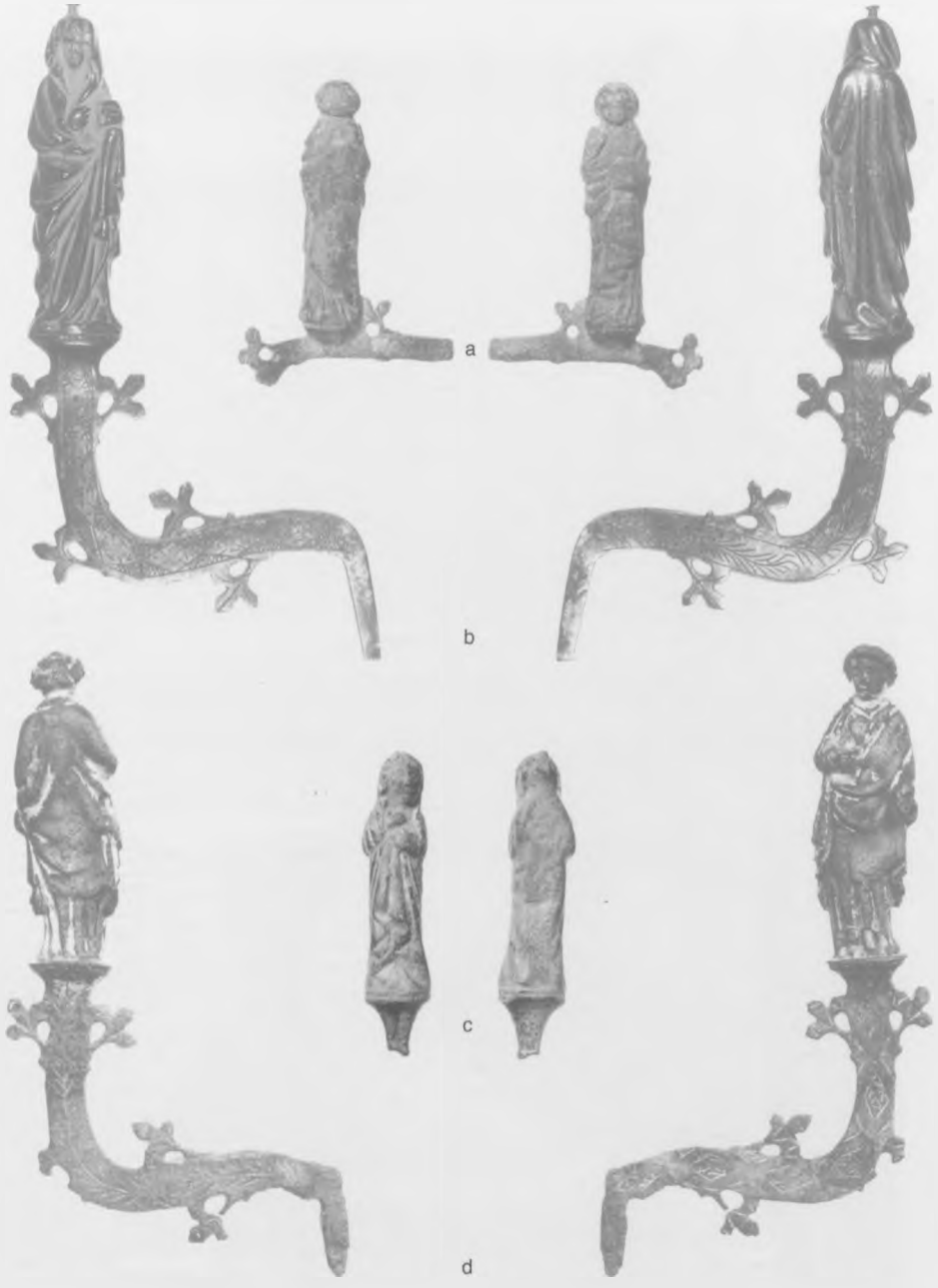

Fig. 5: Figures from processional/altar crosses: a, Maesycwmmer, Caerphilly; b, St Mary's presbytery, Monmouth; c, Laleston near Bridgend, Vale of Glamorgan; d, near Cardigan. (Scale 1:2).

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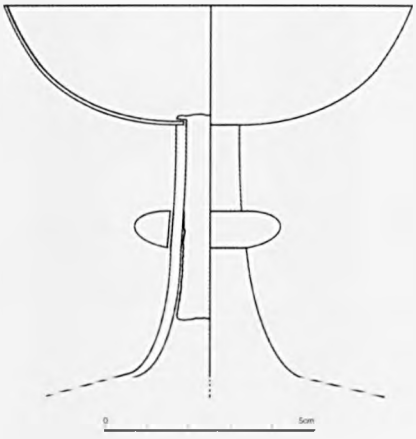

Fig. 6 (on left): The funerary chalice from the church of St Stephen and St Tatheus, Caerwent, showing its present condition.
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.
Fig. 7 (on right): Reconstruction of the funerary chalice from Caerwent, drawn by Tony Daly.
Copyrght: National Museum of Wales.

Fig. 8: The White Castle cruet, with enlargement of lid on left.
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

Fig. 9: The Abergavenny pax, front and back.
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

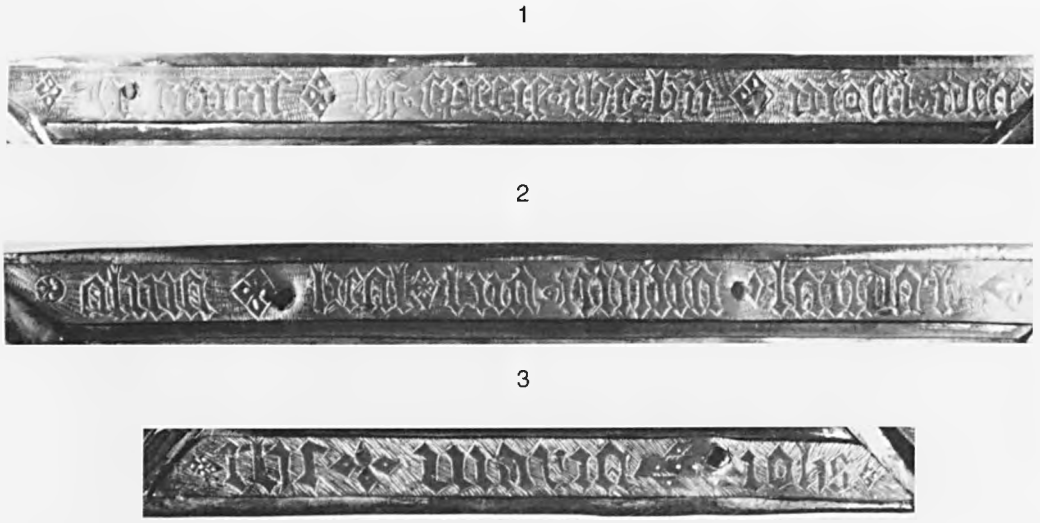

Fig. 10: The inscription on the Abergavenny pax.
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

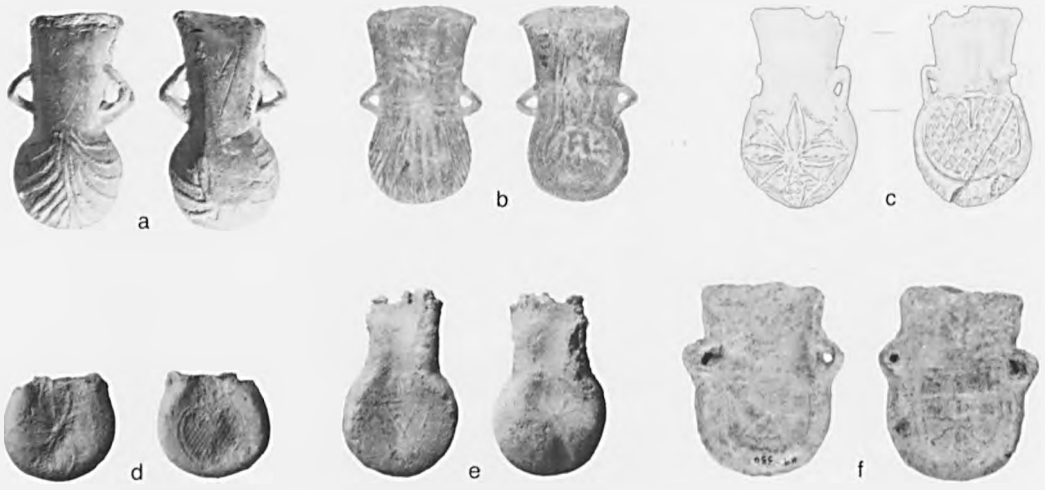

Fig. 11: *Ampullae* from Monmouthshire: a, probably Monmouthshire; b, Goldcliff Pill; c, Trelech (drawn by Anne Leaver); d, near Moyne's Court; e, St Arvans; f, Pwllmeyric.
Copyright: a,d,e, National Museum of Wales; b, f, Newport Museum and Art Gallery; c, University of Wales Newport.

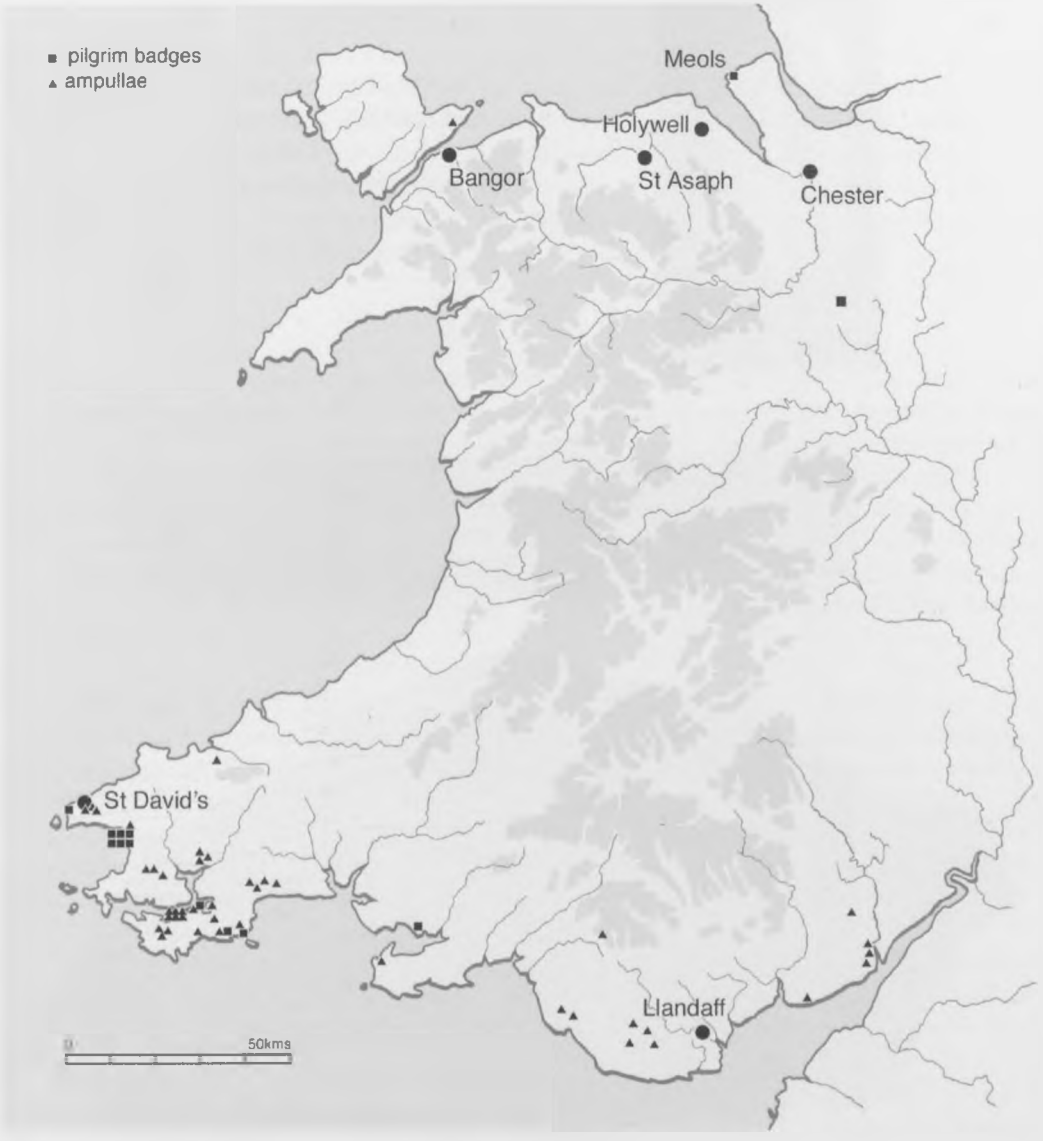

Fig. 12: Distribution of pilgrim badges and *ampullae* recorded from Wales (up to May 2003).
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

Fig. 13: Engraved bezel of an iconographic ring from Pen-y-cae-mawr, Monmouthshire. (Scale: 3:1).
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

Fig. 14: Engraved strips from the Newport ship.
Copyright: Newport Museum and Art Gallery.

SEAL MATRICES: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

By John Cherry

It is a pleasure to write this since I have long admired David Williams's work on seals. His two catalogues are fine compilations, not only for the study of Welsh history, but for some very obscure snippets of information, such the medieval descriptions of seals attached to documents of the archdeacon of Prague in 1336, or those of the abbot and monastery of Cîrţa in Rumania in 1440.[1] *I owe much to his advice. Venturing into Scandinavian seals, I sent him an article that I had written and he wrote back to observe that he could produce a more accurate reading from the photograph than I had done from the impression!* [2]

PAST

The study of seals began at the end of the sixteenth century as Paul Harvey and Andrew McGuinness have shown in their introductory chapter on 'Seals and their early history in Britain', which provides a very valuable route map to this neglected area.[3] The study advanced in the middle of the seventeenth century when in 1638, Sir Christopher Hatton and three friends agreed to co-operate on work on antiquities. One of these, William Dugdale, undertook 'to collect and copy all armorial seals and a breviate of all ye deedes and true dimensions of ye seals'. A result of this was the volume of charters with their seals, known significantly in the seventeenth century as now, as *The Book of Seals*, which was published some fifty years ago as a volume presented to Sir Frank Stenton.[4]

The guide to seals written by Sir Hilary Jenkinson and published for the Public Record Office in London, remains the best overall guide to seals.[5] He urged the need for catalogues of seals, to which David Williams's catalogues noted above and in the bibliography, are a significant contribution. The work of cataloguing in the Public Record Office was continued by Roger Ellis, who produced three volumes. The more recent cataloguing in the Public Record Office by Professor Paul Harvey of Durham University, has been on the computer, which offers new and considerably larger opportunities for comparison and analysis, although this is not yet publicly available.

For several years, there have been attempts to get the cataloguing of seals done in such a way as to use the full potential of computers for cataloguing. This is known as the British Automated Catalogue of Seals. While attempts to initiate a major scheme that will cover the largest British

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1 Williams, D.H., *Catalogue of Seals in the National Museum of Wales, I: Seal Dies, Welsh Seals, Papal Bullae* (National Museum, Cardiff, 1993); Williams, D.H., *Catalogue of Seals in the National Museum of Wales, II: Ecclesiastical, Monastic and Collegiate Seals with a Supplement concerning Wales* (National Museum, Cardiff, 1998).

2 Cherry, John, 'Scandinavian Seal Matrices in British collections' in Andersen, M. and Tegner, G. (eds.), *Middelalderlige Seglstamper i Norden* (Roskilde, 2002) 97-107.

3 Harvey, P.D.A. and McGuiness, A., *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* (London, 1996) 1-26.

4 Loyd, L.C. and Stenton, D.M. (eds.), *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals presented to F.M. Stenton on his seventieth birthday* (Oxford, 1950).

5 Jenkinson, Sir Hilary, *A Guide to Seals in the Public Record Office* (London, 1968); Ellis, R.H., *Catalogue of Seals in the Public Record Office* (3 vols., London, 1978-86).

centres have so far been unsuccessful, this project, Medieval Seals On-line, headed by Professor David Rollason at the Department of History at Durham University, is now seeking funding for cataloguing projects in particular repositories, and one of these may be in Aberystwyth at the National Library of Wales.[6]

The Rawlinson collection

One of the largest surviving collections of seal matrices in England was formed by Dr Richard Rawlinson in the first thirty years of the eighteenth century and left to Oxford University on his death in 1755. The collection contains some eight hundred and thirty matrices, mostly Italian, but including some thirty British examples. Born in 1690, Rawlinson, the fourth son of a lord mayor of London, was educated at Eton and St John's College, Oxford. The family had a strong respect for traditions both in religion and politics, and his father, a vintner, and elder brother, were both major book collectors. Richard's antiquarian interests developed at Oxford under the influence of Thomas Hearne. From 1713 and 1719, Rawlinson travelled in England and wrote topographical works. He became a governor of the Bethlehem and Bridewell hospitals in London, a fellow of the Royal Society, a Jacobite and a non-juring bishop. From 1719 to 1726, he travelled abroad to Paris, Holland and stayed mostly in Italy, where he acquired his Italian matrices.

After much dispute, he finally left his collections to Oxford where the Rawlinson Manuscripts form most of one volume of the Bodleian Summary Catalogue; money was left for the professorship of Anglo Saxon that bears his name; and he has a road in north Oxford, on St John's College land, named after him.[7] Rawlinson's collection of seals and seal matrices was neglected until the nineteenth century. It was only in 1927, that Francis Pierrepont Barnard, the noted historian of jettons and heraldry, made a card index of the matrices. Much of the past collecting of seals and seal matrices is a hidden subject. Although fashionable in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it has been largely neglected in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Welsh seals from the Rawlinson collection

Two British seals from the Rawlinson collection are from Wales. The first (Plate I) is the seal of Trelleck (Trelech) in Monmouthshire (R317). It shows on a heater-shaped shield three chevronels. In the field to the dexter there is a crescent, to the sinister a five-pointed star. Rawlinson was clearly very interested in this seal since he both included it in his *British Topographer* of 1720 and later produced a print of it. However, the seal in his book was incorrectly assigned to Trill in Devon. Barnard thought that this was wrong, and suggested that it belonged to Triel (Seine et Oise) in France. He had evidently not read Birch's catalogue entry where it was correctly identified.[8]

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6 Web-site "Medieval Seals On-line".

7 Other studies of the early collecting of seals and seal matrices include Cherry, J., 'Sir Hans Sloane and the collecting of History' in McGregor, A., *Sir Hans Sloane* (1994); and Cherry, J., 'Franks and the medieval collections' in Caygill, M. and Cherry, J., *A.W. Franks: Nineteenth-century Collecting and the British Museum* (London, 1997).

8 Birch, W. de G., *Catalogue of Seals in the British Museum*, 1, no. 5467 (lxii, 19 and D.C. F340); Rawlinson, R., *British Topographer* (London, 1720) 40-1; Williams, D., *Welsh History through Seals* (Cardiff, 1982); Williams, D.H. and Hudson, R., 'Gwent Seals', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 6 (1990) 55-8.

Trelleck, 'town of the stones', is now a village but it flourished as a town founded by the Clare family (hence the arms) in the thirteenth century. By the late thirteenth century, it was the largest borough in Gwent, considerably larger than Chepstow. Apparently it never had a charter, and no document has ever been found which has such a seal - a fact that points up the value of the study of seal matrices.[9]

The second (Plate 2) is the bronze seal of Chepstow, Monmouthshire (R797); David Williams was the first to publish the correct identification of the seal. This shows a building with three castellated towers, the central one higher than the two outer and having a gate in the middle. The Latin name on the seal is *Strigulia*, which was for over two-hundred years thought to have been Strongoli in Calabria in Southern Italy. Rarely can a seal matrix have had such a long Italian holiday. Until about 1310, Chepstow was known as Striguil, a name of Welsh origin. Several variant spellings occur: Strugull appears *c.* 1150. The modern name Cas Gwent appears to have been in the process of supplanting Striguil from the mid-twelfth century. Early instances of the English name Chepstow, variously spelt, occur in 1308, 1310, and 1311. Striguil may have been retained for formal purposes after Chepstow and Cas Gwent had gained general acceptance, but the lettering of the seal suggests that it was made no later than 1350.[10]

PRESENT

To turn to the present, much has gone on in the last twenty years. The exhibition of 'English Romanesque Art' in 1984, set a precedent for two following medieval exhibitions. The Romanesque exhibition showed fifty seals and seal matrices, and T.A. Heslop's introduction to the exhibition catalogue, traced the development of seals and sealing from the Anglo-Saxon period to the twelfth century. It discussed the use of bone, ivory and stone matrices; the use of engraved gems; the iconography of seals; and the influence of Mosan metalwork on seal engraving.[11] It was followed by 'The Age of Chivalry' exhibition, subtitled 'Art in Plantagenet England', at the Royal Academy in 1987. Here the introduction, by T. A. Heslop again, covered fifty seals out of a possible 30,000 that may have survived from the period. This demonstrated the increased importance of the seal as an authenticating sign, and also the evidence for the craftsmen who produced the seals.

The increase of the use of seals at a lower social level is noted as well as an increased use of the vernacular in inscriptions. An outstanding seal that was shown in this exhibition was the seal of Richard of Bury, bishop of Durham (1333-45).[12] In the autumn of 2003 to early 2004, the successor exhibition to 'The Age of Chivalry', entitled 'Gothic: Art for England 1400-1547', was shown at

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[9] Soulsby, I.N., 'Trelech: A decayed Borough of Medieval Gwent', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 4 (3-4, 1981-2) 41-4; Newman, J., *The Buildings of Wales. Gwent/Monmouthshire* (London, 2000) 576-9.

[10] Williams and Hudson, 'Gwent Seals', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 6 (1990) 55-8; Ekwall, Eilert, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Oxford, 1960); Williams, *Catalogue of Seals in the National Museum of Wales, 1* (Cardiff, 1993) 49, no. W230.

[11] Heslop, T.A., 'Seals' in Zarnecki, G., Holt, J. and Holland, T., *English Romanesque Art 1066-1200* (London, 1984) 298-319.

[12] Heslop, T.A. in Alexander, J. and Binski, P. (eds.), *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200-1400* (London, 1984) 114-7 and nos. 94-7, 141-4, 193-201, 275-86, 453-62, 670-7. See also Heslop, T.A., 'The Episcopal Seals of Richard of Bury' in Coldstream, N. and Draper, P. (eds.), *Medieval Art and Architecture at Durham Cathedral* (British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 3, 1980) 154-62.

the Victoria and Albert Museum. Covering the years from 1400 to 1547, the exhibition and catalogue included some fine seals and seal matrices. At the ensuing conference an analysis of the interesting, but neglected, area of late medieval seals of corporate communities such as colleges, companies and fraternities and their iconography was presented.[13]

Three seals that illustrate this theme, are the early fifteenth-century bronze seal of the college of St Edmund, Salisbury; the seal of All Souls College, Oxford; and the seal of the chapel of the Holy Cross, Northampton. They illustrate three facets of the iconography of such seals. The first (R97) shows the foundation of an important local college serving Salisbury Cathedral. This fifteenth-century bronze seal shows, below an ornate canopy, on a stone corbel, Saint Edmund Rich. He was treasurer of Salisbury, and archbishop of Canterbury (1233-40). He died in 1240 and was canonised in 1248. His arms are on the left. Below, is shown Walter de Wyle, bishop of Salisbury (1263-71), who founded the college in 1268 in honour of Saint Edmund Rich. The arms on the shield to the right are Walter de Wyle's arms. The style of the seal cannot date from the mid-thirteenth century. It is more likely to have been made in the early fifteenth century, when a large aisled chancel was built at St Edmund's church, the north aisle containing a chapel of St John and the south aisle, a Lady chapel. The fifteenth-century aisled chancel still exists as the present nave; the will of William Mercer (died 1407) probably refers to it when he mentions the newly-built church of St Edmund. The building of these new chapels suggests that the college was reformed at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and that the new seal was made then.[14]

All Souls College, Oxford, is fortunate in that it still possesses the original silver seal matrix that dates from the 1440s. It is one of the finest English matrices. In the centre is God the Father as the Saviour and Judge of the World, with the dead arising from below. To either side, the founders, Henry VI and Henry Chichele (archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-43) kneel in prayer and are presented to God the Father by the Four Fathers of the Church (Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose and Gregory). To Chichele, the Four Fathers represented that Christian orthodoxy which it was the purpose of the college to promote. Around the edge there is the legend, which may be translated as: 'The seal of the community of the college in Oxford of the souls of all the faithful departed'. The inscription reads 'Sigillu' commune collegii animar' o'ium fidelium defunctorum de Oxonia', and extended, 'Sigillum commune collegii animarum omnium fidelium defunctorum de Oxonia'. It is the combination of central device with the legend that defines the seal as a summary of the legal identity of the college, just as the statues of the king and archbishop and the dead arising, provided a physical manifestation of their presence at the entrance to the college.[15]

The third seal is of the chapel of the Holy Cross (R102), Northampton, from the Rawlinson collection. Dating from the early sixteenth century, it shows Christ, with cruciform nimbus, a wound shown clearly in his right side, on the cross, which stands on two steps; above, issuing from clouds, is the hand of God. The whole is surrounded by radiation. The legend reads 'Sigillum sancte crucis

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[13] Williamson, P. and Marks, R. (eds.), *Gothic: Art for England 1400-1547* (London, 2003); Cherry, J., 'The iconography of corporate seals', forthcoming in the proceedings of the conference to complement the exhibition 'Gothic: Art for England 1400-1547'.

[14] RCHM, *Salisbury*, 1 (1980) 36-9; Williams, *Catalogue of Seals in the National Museum of Wales, II* (Cardiff, 1998) 22, no. E394.

[15] *Gothic: Art for England 1400-1547* (London, 2003) 237, no. 100.

in muro Norhamptonie'. The existence of this chapel would be unknown were it not for the seal matrix, just as we only know that the town of Trelleck had a seal from the survival of its matrix.[16]

Present sources of information

One of the newest ways of obtaining information about seals is through the World Wide Web. This is perhaps the easiest way to consult the published Portable Antiquities reports. The latest on-line version of the Portable Antiquities Web-site is easy to find and easy to use. It informs one that three hundred and forty-five seal matrices were on the database of which some fifty-eight had photographs. Eleven of these were from Wales. This was made up of five from Glamorgan, three from Pembrokeshire, one from Monmouthshire, and one from Wrexham. The most interesting among the Welsh finds was found near Whitland Abbey, Carmarthenshire, which has a praying figure beneath the crucifixion and the anonymous legend 'Ihesus Nazarenus Rex Iudeorum'.[17] Some silver seal matrices have been found, reported and have been taken through the treasure system. The most important for Wales is the seal of William of St Donats, abbot of Neath (1326-41?), found at Aberavon near Port Talbot, and now in the National Museum of Wales (Plate 3).[18]

The printed reports for the Treasure Act have useful publications about seal matrices, which have been found to be treasure (i.e. gold and silver) though this is limited. Some interesting heraldic examples have been found, such as those of Walter Thornton at Hamstall Ridware, Staffordshire, or John de Prestone, in the north of England. The finds of such small and relatively simple matrices but with arms, and made of silver may be compared with larger and grander heraldic seals such as the elaborate and beautiful armorial seal of Thomas Ballard from the Rawlinson collection (R45). Although this has much grander arms with crest and mantling, it is made of bronze, a poorer material, but the matrix is heavily gilt both back and front. It shows a heater-shaped shield, penché: a griffin segreant.[19]

The use of heraldic arms on seals provides an opportunity to study the social level of use of seals with arms. The study of such objects may throw light on the emergence of the English and also the Welsh gentleman. David Williams's work has made an important contribution to the recent study of Welsh heraldry by Michael Siddons.[20]

To take the position further, it may be compared with the much grander example in the Rawlinson collection (R768) of Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, marquess of Dorset, and governor of the town of Bayeux, which may be dated to 1449-50. He was a distinguished

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[16] This was the property of Thomas Rawlinson, Richard's eldest brother. It is not clear when it came into Richard's possession. The note in *English Topographer* (1720) 166 (anonymous, but evidently written by Rawlinson) makes the point that the house was not mentioned in the *Monasticon*, and was unknown to the Revd Dr Tanner.

[17] Portable Antiquities Web-site.

[18] Redknap, Mark, 'Aberavon, Port Talbot: medieval silver seal matrix' in *Treasure Annual Report 1998-9* 73, no. 170.

[19] *Gothic: Art for England 1400-1547* 239, no. 102.

[20] Coss, P., *The Knight in Medieval England, 1100-1400* (Stroud, 1993); Keen, M., *Chivalry* (New Haven and London, 1984). See also the essays in Coss, Peter and Keen, Maurice (eds.), *Heraldry, Pageant and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2002).

commander in the English forces in the mid-fifteenth century. Created duke of Somerset in 1448, he was also a knight of the Garter. He died in the first battle of Saint Albans in 1455, having espoused the Lancastrian cause at the beginning of the Wars of the Roses. The matrix was found in the fields near Yarmouth in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.[21]

Finds of seal matrices continue to be published in more routine ways. Recently discovered seal matrices in Norfolk have been published in three articles by Helen Geake in *Norfolk Archaeology* covering the five years 1996 to 2001. A total of two hundred and fourteen seal matrices were included which shows how prolific this source of information can be.[22]

FUTURE

There are a number of ways in which the study of seal and seal matrices can progress and shed light on wider aspects of medieval history. The study of the use of arms on seals and their social significance for the bearing of arms at different social levels can contribute to our historical understanding. Since some such seals are still attached to documents, this allows observations to be made about the social and economic level of the person bearing arms. It is a fertile field for collaboration between the heraldic student and the historian.

Other possible approaches that need further work are to study the change in seals in the early sixteenth century, both the advent of the Renaissance style and also the change in imagery caused by the changes in religious belief.[23] The bronze seal, from the Rawlinson collection, for the administration 'ad causas' of the church of Worcester (R301) from the reign of Edward VI (1548-52) illustrates this change (Plate 4). This was a new type of seal demanded by the changes in ecclesiastical administration in the reign of Edward VI. This group of seals is notable for the replacement of the figures of saints or other religious scenes with the use of royal heraldry, and also their uniformity, and a very considerable decline in artistic feeling. It has a shield of France and England quarterly, supported by a crowned lion on the dexter, and by a dragon on the sinister.[24]

Another subject is the use of seals by women. The discovery of the late thirteenth-century silver seal matrix of Geve of Calston near the village of Calston, in Wiltshire, is interesting both for its material and also for its finding near her home.[25]

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[21] Cherry, John, 'The seals of the Lancastrian Court' (Harlaxton Papers, forthcoming); Cherry, John, 'The Admiralty Seal of Richard, Duke of Gloucester', *The Ricardian*, 13 (2003) 114-21.

[22] Geake, Helen *et al.*, 'Medieval seal matrices from Norfolk, 1996-8', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 42, part 2 (1999) 353-8; Geake, Helen *et al.*, 'Medieval seal matrices from Norfolk, 1999', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 43, part 3 (2000) 508-12; Geake, Helen *et al.*, 'Medieval seal matrices from Norfolk, 2000', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 43, part 4 (2001) 683-8; Rogerson, Andrew and Ashley, Steven, 'Medieval seal matrices from Norfolk 2001', *Norfolk Archaeology*, 44, part 1 (2002) 133-7.

[23] Cherry, John, 'Heraldry, 1400-1600: public policy and private post' in Gaimster, David and Stamper, Paul (eds.), *The Age of Transition. The Archaeology of English Culture 1400-1600* (London, 1997) 251-63.

[24] Rawlinson collection R301.

[25] Cherry, John, 'The silver seal of Geve of Cawston', *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine*, 89 (1996) 134-6. The subject of women's seals was surveyed by James Robinson in a lecture to the British Archaeological Association, which it is hoped will be published. See also Gee, Loveday, L., *Women, Art and Patronage from Henry III to Edward III, 1216-1379* (Woodbridge, 2002) and Coss, Peter, *The Lady in Medieval England 1100-1500* (Stroud, 1998).

The breaking of seals when no longer required is an important field of research for the survival of seals. Rather like the cutting up of one's credit cards, seals of the important were often finely and discreetly broken, such as that of Robert Lowth, bishop of St David's, 1766.[26]

The study of personal names is another valuable aspect of the study of seals. Some illustrate family relationships such as Adam son of Arnold (T551) or the seal of Madoc Fitz Madoc, found near Wrexham and now in the National Museum of Wales. Other surnames derive from places and are called locative surnames. Sometimes people with locative surnames lost their seal far from the place of origin, such as the seal of Geoffrey of Hastings, found in a castle in Austria.[27] The depiction of the implements of trade on seals is also a fruitful subject for study. For instance, John Testart can be identified as a fuller from the trade signs on his seal matrix. They represent the fuller's shears and his bat.[28]

Finally odd objects that are not seals, but which have been used for sealing, are worthy of note such as the fact that in 1380, at Monmouth, a cloth seal was used to seal a document. Cloth seals have been studied recently by Geoff Egan.[29] Nor should we forget those seals christened banal by Stuart Rigold, and which have no known owner but merely have inscriptions such as 'Ieo repose sur belle chose', which was found at the Exchange court site at Upper Thames Street.[30]

The study of seals and seal matrices both in Wales, and in the whole of Britain, has many problems to solve. In attempting to understand them, we will be greatly aided by David Williams's work. I would like to end by thanking David for all he has done, wishing him well for the future, and quoting a seal inscription 'leal amis avet' (you have loyal friends), for his seventieth birthday.

Acknowledgements

I most grateful to Mrs Julie Clements and Dr Arthur MacGregor of the Department of Antiquities, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; Professor Paul Harvey of Durham University; and Dr Mark Redknap of the National Museums & Galleries of Wales.

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[26] Tonnochy, A.B., *Catalogue of seal-dies in the British Museum* (London, 1952) 167, no. 812; Williams, *Catalogue of Seals in the National Museum of Wales, II* (Cardiff, 1993) 40, no. W90; Cherry, John, 'The breaking of seals' in Andersen, Michael and Tegner, Göran (eds.), *Middelalderlige Seglstamper i Norden*, (Roskilde, 2002) 81-96.

[27] Cherry, John, 'Der siegelstempel des Geoffrey von Hastings aus Grossau bei Raabs/Thaya, NÖ', *Beiträge zur Mittelalterarchäologie in Österreich*, 13 (1997) 21-2.

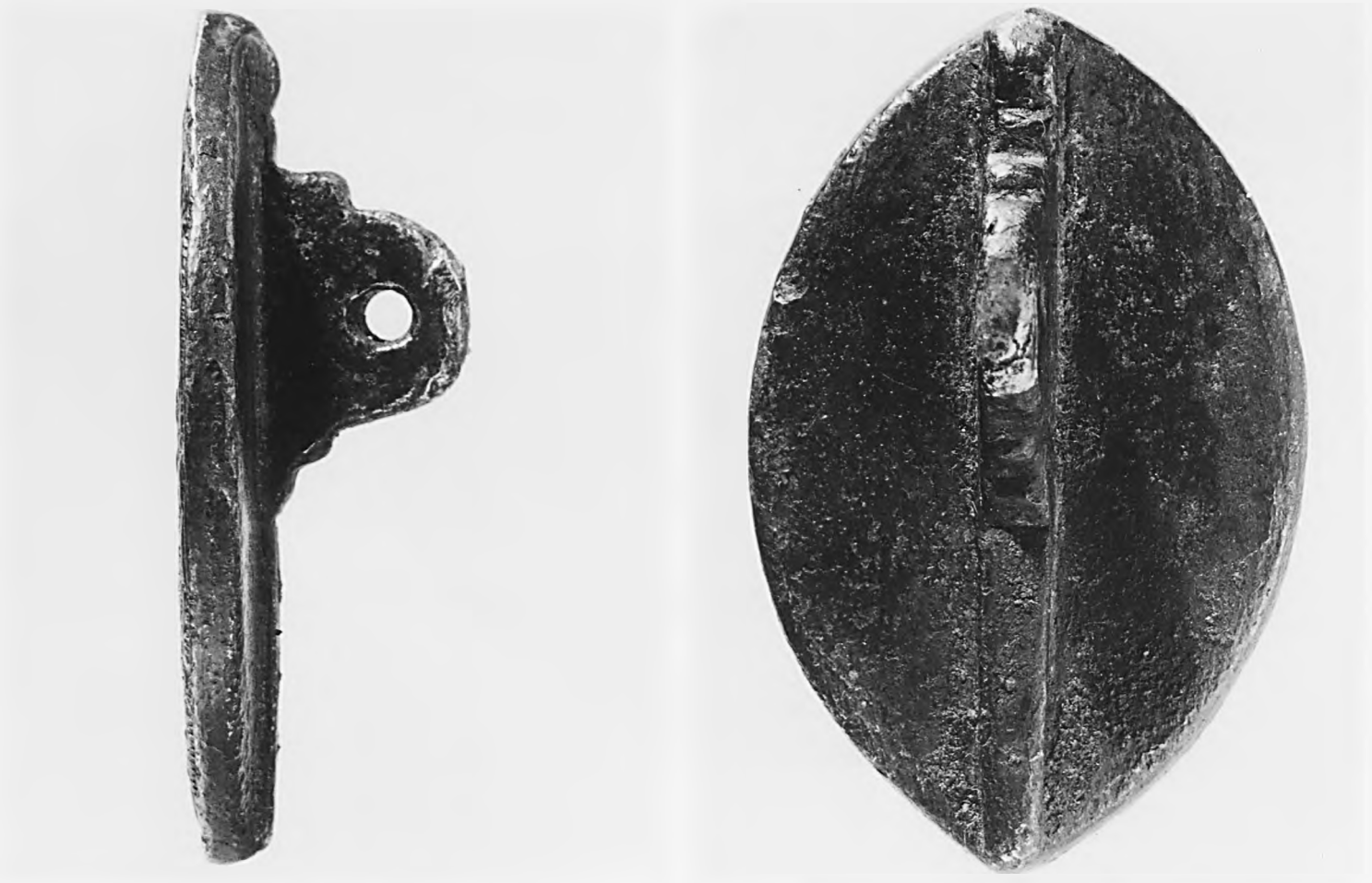
[28] Tonnochy, A.B., *Catalogue of seal dies in the British Museum* (London, 1952) 25, no. 165. The trade symbols are not identified there, but it is clear from those depicted in Carus-Wilson, Eleanor, 'The significance of the sculptures in the Lane Chapel, Cullopton', *Medieval Archaeology*, 1 (1957) 104-17, that they are shears and a teasel frame.

[29] Egan, Geoff, *Lead Cloth Seals and related items in the British Museum* (London, 1995).

[30] Rigold, S.E., 'Two common species of Medieval Seal-Matrix', *Antiquaries Journal*, 57 (1977) 324-9; Spencer, Brian, 'Medieval Seal-dies recently found in London', *Antiquaries Journal,* 64 (1984) 376-82.

(From left to right, clockwise)
Plate 1: Impression of the seal of Treleech (R317);
Plate 2: Impression of the seal of Chepstow (R797);
Plate 4: Impression of the seal of Worcester (R301).
Copyright (in all three): Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Plate 3a: The fourteenth-century silver seal matrix of William of St Donats, abbot of Neath.
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.



Plates 3b and c: The seal of William of St Donats, abbot of Neath, viewed from the side and rear.
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

WAYSIDE CROSSES IN MONMOUTHSHIRE

By Madeleine Gray

David Williams's recently-published map of the ecclesiastical geography of medieval Monmouthshire is a major contribution to our understanding of the county's history. Now that we have the map, we can explore the countryside - and by looking at his mapping of features such as wayside crosses, we can speculate about how our forebears would have moved around spiritual as well as physical landscapes.

The wayside crosses of Monmouthshire were plotted as long ago as 1893 by Elizabeth Harcourt Mitchell in *The Crosses of Monmouthshire*.[1] Her main interest was the more elaborate churchyard crosses, but she listed twenty-three wayside crosses (some of them technically not wayside but village or town crosses) and fourteen place-names with the element *croes* or *cross* (though with the caveat that some of those might belong to crosses elsewhere in her list). David Williams's map confirms some of these tentative identifications and adds several others. The cross at Llanwyny near Llanisien (Llanishen) was detected by his friend Richard Kay, and the site of the cross at Llan-soe (Llansoy) was recently located by Annette Burton.[2]

Armed with this map, we can begin to consider the significance of the location and distribution of these crosses. Most do appear to be, as their common name suggests, road markers. It is instructive to compare them with the much smaller number of wayside cross bases surviving in Glamorgan.[3] These all lie on the line of the medieval road known as the Ffordd y Gyfraith and its extension south to St Brides Major. The Ffordd y Gyfraith led from the western Vale of Glamorgan to the renowned pilgrimage shrine of the Holy Rood at Llangynwyd. It has therefore been assumed that they mark the pilgrimage route: but as its name, 'The Road of the Law', suggests, the route to Llangynwyd had other purposes as well and the wayside crosses may well have been there to mark the route for soldiers and administrators as well as pilgrims.

The Monmouthshire crosses are more diverse in their locations (see Fig. 1). The crosses at Llanishen and Stow Hill in Newport are on the road from London to St David's, like the Ffordd y Gyfraith a pilgrimage route but one with more general and secular functions as well. More likely candidates for pilgrimage route markers are Tintern Cross, at the point where the road down the

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[1] Privately printed for the then Caerleon and Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association by Mullock and Sons, Newport.

[2] From 2000-2003, Annette Burton was honorary archivist to the diocese of Monmouth. A collection of records for which she was then responsible (it is now in the National Library of Wales) includes a terrier of church property in Llansoy parish, dated 2 Oct. 1740 (Ref. DL/AM/P3). *Inter alia*, the terrier lists 'A Cover of Arable near Lansoy Cross'. She says that from the description given, the cross's most likely location was a triangle of land (OS 02 43) at the junction of 'the High-Road' (the Llansoy to Raglan road) with a lane which provides a short-cut to a road to Usk. The proximity of 'Cross Farm' to this junction may also be significant.

[3] For which see Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales, *An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments in Glamorgan. Volume III: Medieval Secular Monuments. Part II: Non-defensive* (HMSO, Cardiff, 1982) 353 and 356.

Angidy valley to Tintern leaves the old main road from Trelech to Chepstow (the road identified by Ogilby as the route from Chester to Bristol) and the cross outside the abbey in Tintern itself. As David Williams has reminded us (most recently in *The Welsh Cistercians*),[4] Tintern had one of the many miraculous statues of the Virgin Mary and was a focus for 'a very great multitude' of pilgrims in the fifteenth century. (One *croes* place-name mentioned neither by David Williams nor by Harcourt Mitchell is Ty'n-y-Groes, the name of a vanished farm on the presumed route from Llantarnam Abbey to the more famous shrine of the Virgin Mary at Pen-rhys.[5])

Other wayside crosses appear to be on major routes of mainly or entirely secular significance. Trelech Cross is on Ogilby's Bristol-Chester route. The cross at the Hendre, though relocated by John Etherington Rolls, was always on the line of the old Monmouth to Abergavenny road (another Ogilby route) and the lost Manson Cross (or Maynstone's Cross) was on the Monmouth to Hereford road. Many, though, appear to be in the middle of nowhere: like Croes Las, Croes Llwyd and Croes Kyrig, all on very minor roads south and west of Raglan.

Not all these crosses were strictly speaking wayside crosses. Both Elizabeth Harcourt Mitchell and David Williams record the cross on the old bridge at Skenfrith. Mitchell provides a sketch of it but records that in 1882, the bridge collapsed and bridge and cross were broken up. Bridges were fraught with spiritual symbolism. They have always been liminal places, transitional places: if you stand on one for long enough, and watch the river slipping slowly away beneath you, then like Christopher Robin you will suddenly feel that you know everything that there is to be known. Bridges were crucially important for pilgrims. From the great bridge at Puente la Reina on the Compostela road to the bridges which took pilgrims across the Rhondda to Pen-rhys, they allowed safe passage to the spiritual goal. As well as crosses, they could carry shrines and even hermitages, like the ones at Maidenhead (Berkshire) and Brandon (Suffolk).

Medieval Christianity had an acute awareness of the symbolic significance of journeys. The Bible is full of journeying metaphors: 'I am the way, the truth and the life; no-one comes to the Father except by me' (John 14.6). Giving money for the maintenance of roads and bridges was considered to be a spiritual duty, and bequests to roads and bridges normally accompany bequests to the church in pre-Reformation wills. Newport's two chantries were each charged with the payment of one pound yearly towards the maintenance of the bridge across the Usk. There may also have been an unofficial arrangement that the chantry at Chepstow would contribute towards the maintenance of the bridge there, as the high cost of repairs was mentioned in the Chepstow chantry certificate.[6] The spiritual significance of roads and bridges was neatly summed up by Morgan Thomas Morice of Howick. When he made his will, in January 1559, he left money 'to maintain service for my soul if the law of the realm allow it, if not, for the reparation of highways and bridges'.[7]

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4 *The Welsh Cistercians* (Gracewing, Leominster, 2001) 147.

5 Gray, M., 'Penrhys: The Archaeology of a Pilgrimage', *Morgannwg*, 10 (1996) 10-32.

6 Gray, M., 'The Chantries and Shrines of Monmouthshire', *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, 8 (1991) 27, 30 and 35.

7 Public Record Office/The National Archives (PRO) PCC 35 Welles; Hunt, Judith, 'Monmouthshire Wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1404-1560' (dissertation for Diploma in Extra-Mural Studies [Local History], University of Wales, Cardiff, 1985).

Some of the crosses mapped by David Williams marked boundaries: indeed, our only evidence for the existence of some of them is a reference in the survey of a manor or lordship. Manson Cross (or Maynstone's Cross) was one of the boundary markers of the borough of Monmouth, and the boundaries of the manor of Monmouth included Croes Arthur and Croes Foel. Paul Courtney has suggested that Croes Dame Alice on the boundary between the lordships of Skenfrith and Grosmont was the cross also known as Hilston Cross on the B4347.[8] However, most boundary crosses were also on roads. Most manorial and lordship boundaries included stretches of road, and it is impossible to say whether these crosses were originally intended as easily-located boundary markers or whether a wayside cross was subsequently used as a boundary feature.

As well as wayside crosses, both Mitchell and Williams mention a number of crosses at town and village centres. Mitchell refers to the tradition that the cross at Caldicot 'had a timber pent house or pulpit where John Wesley once preached'. The cross had vanished when she was writing. 'Sad to say the whole was removed on the pretext that it formed a gossiping place for the whole village, during the incumbency of the Revd E. Turberville Williams'.[9] She also records the cross base now in the churchyard at Abergavenny but formerly situated at the crossroads outside. The 'market cross' at Grosmont is an impressive quatrefoiled cross base repositioned on a stubby shaft. While it is obviously not in its original position, there seems no reason to doubt that it was always at the centre of the little borough. There is another cross base and shaft in a much plainer style in the churchyard.

To these David Williams adds documentary references to Croes Llwyd at Usk, outside the Greyhound Inn, described in 1567 as being 'in the market place'. Bob Trett has recently made the intriguing suggestion that the fine cross head now in Newport Museum may have come from Newport's market cross. This cross head was found buried deep in the mud of the river Usk in 1925, during the construction of Newport Bridge. It was tentatively identified as the head of the wayside cross which formerly stood near Cross House at the corner of Havelock Street and Stow Hill.[10] However, the design and the fine quality of the carving distinguish it from surviving wayside cross heads, which are both simpler and cruder in execution.

While the wayside cross heads (from Grosmont and Llanfihangel Ystum Llywern) are gable-headed, the Newport cross is lantern-shaped with an elaborately crocketed head. It is iconographically complex and probably merits separate study. The one face has a superb carving of the Crucifixion, with the slender figure of Christ hanging twisted and exhausted from the cross (Fig. 2a). This is emphatically the *Christus patiens* of the late medieval tradition. The flanking figures of the Virgin Mary and St John are more formal but equally well-carved. The side of the lantern to Christ's left has a smiling figure of St Margaret spearing her dragon (Fig. 2b). The figure on the

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[8] 'The rural landscape of Eastern and Lower Gwent C.A.D. 1070-1750' (University of Wales Ph.D. thesis, 1983) 86; *cf.* Rees, William, *A Survey of the Duchy of Lancaster Lordships in Wales, 1609-1613* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 1953) 4, 27-8, 92; PRO MPC 3.

[9] *Crosses of Monmouthshire* 38.

[10] Newport Museum and Art Gallery catalogue, recorded by Robert Trett; *cf.* Mitchell, *Crosses of Monmouthshire* 32 and illustration. I am grateful to Victoria Newton for providing me with this reference, and making the cross available for detailed inspection.

other side is heavily eroded but is almost certainly St Catherine (Fig. 2c). The back of the cross has been sheared off - possibly deliberately when it was removed from its original location.

The Newport cross may have been a churchyard cross, possibly from St Woolos: it is stylistically similar to the churchyard crosses at Caerwent and at Llan-gan and St Mary Hill in the western Vale of Glamorgan. However, Bob Trett's suggestion is equally likely. The installation of an elaborately-carved market cross would tie in with the other evidence for deliberate urban regeneration in late fifteenth-century Newport (the re-grant of the charter) and the 'fair market town' described by Leland and the 1548 chantry certificates.

All that now remains of most of the other wayside crosses are their socketed bases and some broken shafts (see Figs. 3-7). Only one, Croes Llwyd near Raglan, still has its head *in situ* (Fig. 8). Croes Llwyd is a simple cross without any iconographical detail, which may explain its survival. One carved wayside cross head survives, but not in its original location. This is the crudely-carved cross head formerly placed on the shaft of the churchyard cross at Grosmont but now in the church (Fig. 9). This cross head was found by the Revd William McAdam, a former vicar of Skenfrith but then living in Grosmont, at the crossroads on the B4347 just west of Hilston Park (OS reference 440 184). It was he who installed it on the cross shaft in Grosmont churchyard. According to one local account, it was found by workmen digging to repair the road. There was once a public house called the Boot on the crossroads, and Mr McAdam believed there had been a preaching cross there.[11]

The Grosmont cross head was once identified with the carved stone sketched in volume four of '*Gwentia Eccles. Antiq.*', the collection of watercolours of Gwent churches now in the library of the Society of Antiquaries.[12] However, closer inspection of the sketch (Fig. 10. See also Elizabeth Harcourt Mitchell's drawing of the same cross head in Fig. 4), suggests several differences. The figure of St John on Christ's left is clearly carved on the Grosmont cross. It is even possible to distinguish something in his hands: could it be his identifying emblem, the chalice? This figure is entirely missing from the '*Gwentia*' sketch and is only vaguely suggested in Mitchell's drawing. The angle of the figure on the cross in the Grosmont Crucifixion is clearly different from that of both drawings. Finally, the Grosmont cross has two sides, the Crucifixion and the Virgin and Child. Both sketches of the '*Gwentia*' cross are of one side only. The other differences - the shape of the gable, the missing head of the crucified Christ - could be accounted for by damage during the last century, but these stylistic differences seem conclusive.

Unfortunately, the present location of the '*Gwentia*' cross head is not known. As the caption under the sketch records, it was found near the Pant, a farm about half a mile west of Llanfihangel church on the road to Penrhos and Tregaer (OS 413 140). According to Elizabeth Harcourt Mitchell, her father John Etherington Rolls, bought the cross and took it to his home at the Hendre, 'where it

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[11] I am grateful to Rosamund Rocyn Jones, former churchwarden of Grosmont, for collecting information about this cross for me.

[12] McHardy, George, 'A Note on the Four Volumes of *Gwentia Eccles. Antiq.* in the Collections of the Society of Antiquaries of London', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 18 (2002) 41-64. I am grateful to Mr McHardy for providing me with a copy of the drawing, which is from vol. 4, f. 38.

is at present carefully kept'. This was written in 1893. Enquiries at the Hendre and more generally in the Llangattock area have failed to produce any suggestions as to its present whereabouts.[13]

There is one other possible wayside cross head in Gwent. The cross head at Llanarth (Fig. 11) was found in the well of a house opposite the church. It was placed on a new shaft in the grounds of Llanarth House, then the home of the Catholic Jones family. It has been assumed that this carving was the head of the churchyard cross. However, although its carving is more accomplished than that of the Grosmont and Llanfihangel crosses, it is in the same simple gable-headed style. Could this be another wayside cross?

None of these cross heads was found in close proximity to the cross bases listed by Mitchell and Williams, but the carved panels are fairly small and would be portable. The Llanfihangel cross, for example, could have come from Croes Carreg near Penrhos (OS 404 123), about two miles south west of the Pant, or from Croes Faen near the Hendre, between two and three miles to the east.[14] Llanarth is about two miles from Croes Carreg in the other direction.

These wayside crosses are rare and fascinating survivals, but we should not fall into the trap of treating them as antiquarian curiosities. The number of surviving and recorded crosses identified by David Williams, suggests that they were commonplace features in the medieval landscape. Their ubiquity poses a number of problems. It is easy to forget that these crude carvings depict a scene of torture and death. In that sense, they are part of the late medieval obsession with the physicality of the Crucifixion and Huizinga's 'mingled smell of blood and roses'. Behind this narrative approach, though, they are freighted with considerable theological weight. The traditional pairing of the Crucifixion with the Virgin and Child embodies the two key Christian doctrines of Incarnation and Redemption. The carving of Christ as a suffering human figure contrasts with the triumphant figures on the pre-Norman cross at Llan-gan, east of Bridgend in Glamorgan, and the thirteenth-century cross at Cwm-iou (Cwmyoy). This emphasis on Christ's humanity was not mere sentimentality: it echoes the heavyweight theology of St Anselm's treatise *Cur Deus Homo*, in which he argued that the early medieval church had gone too far in stressing Christ's divinity.

There is subtlety and complexity in the choice and depiction of the accompanying figures. Medieval representations of the Crucifixion almost always included the figures of the Virgin Mary and St John the Evangelist. In depictions of her with the young Jesus, Mary is usually shown with her hair unbound, emphasising her status as a virgin mother, 'the virgin who is also a nurse' as the Welsh poet Gwilym Tew put it in his poem to the famous statue at Pen-rhys. In the Crucifixion, though, her head is almost invariably covered. Here she is emphatically a human woman and a mother, reinforcing the emphasis of the human side of Christ's nature.

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[13] I am grateful to Felicity Taylor and David Barnes for this information.

[14] *Crosses of Monmouthshire* 35-7.

The other figure, St John the Evangelist, is there because of his importance in the biblical accounts of the Crucifixion, in which the dying Christ entrusts his mother to St John's care. However, he too has a more profound and symbolic importance. Eamon Duffy reminds us that depiction of the Evangelists was meant to trigger reflection on the best-known passages from their gospels, either the *incipits* or the passages which appeared in collections like the primer. In the case of St John, the *incipit* was the primer passage, often read as an additional Gospel reading in the Mass, the resounding meditation on the mystery of the Incarnation:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

The possibility that the Grosmont St John has been depicted with his chalice makes this depiction of the Evangelist even more complex in its significance. The chalice was St John's emblem, a reminder of the legend that at Ephesus he survived drinking from a cup poisoned with snake venom.[15] The chalice was also a pointer to another medieval legend about St John: that it was at St John's wedding that Christ performed his first miracle, turning water into wine when the provisions for the wedding feast ran out. This miracle was generally regarded as a prefiguring of the miracle of the Eucharist.[16] Finally, the chalice must have reminded the medieval observer of the Eucharist itself and its link with the Crucifixion. Medieval depictions of the Crucifixion (as in the stained glass at Llangadwaladr, Anglesey, and Llanwrin, Montgomeryshire) sometimes included angels with chalices collecting the holy blood.

It would be too much to expect every traveller to consider all this theological complexity every time they passed a simple wayside cross, but the complexity was there for those who wanted to consider it. At a more practical level, venerating the image and reciting the appropriate prayers could earn an indulgence, remission of the penalty for sin and a shortening of time in Purgatory.

Meditation on the suffering figure of the crucified Christ was designed to encourage empathy and even identification with his sufferings. We are apt now to view these representations through a prism of Protestant nonconformist hellfire-and-damnation preaching and to see them as calculated to produce guilt and terror. As the religious literature of the period suggests, meditation on Christ's sufferings was expected to produce guilt, and shame to the beholder for the sins which had made that suffering necessary. However, the many late medieval treatises on the 'art of dying well', and the books of advice to the clergy on how to comfort and sustain the dying, suggest that the cross was also used as a sign of comfort and reassurance.

The response of the medieval Welsh church to the image of the Virgin and Child was subtly but significantly different from ours. The medieval church was not really interested in the human pathos of the infant Jesus. There are very few representations of the Nativity in medieval Welsh art. Instead, when poets, painters and sculptors depicted the Virgin and Child they usually showed the young Jesus as a well-grown toddler, capable of independent engagement and action. The young

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[15] Duchet-Suchaux, G. and Pastoureaux, M., *The Bible and the Saints* (Flammarion, Paris, 1994) 197.

[16] Mulder-Bakker, Anneka, *Sanctity and Motherhood: essays on holy mothers in the Middle Ages* (Garland Publishing, London, 1995) 248.

Jesus on the Grosmont cross head, crudely drawn though he is, is clearly reaching his hand out to the observer.

On the Grosmont cross head, the Virgin Mary seems to be standing, with the child in her arms, an emblematic figure of tender motherhood, though there is a faint trace of carving behind her which could be a bench. To judge from the descriptions of the poets, this was the appearance of the famous statue of the Virgin at Pen-rhys, 'the tall maid'. More common, though, was the image chosen for the Llanarth cross head, the powerful image of the Throne of Wisdom, Mary crowned and seated with the child on her knee. This image seems to have appealed particularly to women. In her study of the archaeology of medieval nunneries, *Gender and Material Culture*, Roberta Gilchrist notes that a few women's religious houses had the standing Virgin and Child on their seals, but far more had the Throne of Wisdom.

We have no way of telling what was originally carved on the back of the Newport cross, or what (if anything) was carved on the missing cross from Llanfihangel Ystum Llywern. Our best guess must be that the most likely image would have been the Virgin and Child, seated (as at Llanarth and Caerwent) or standing (as at Grosmont). However, surviving churchyard crosses suggest a range of other possibilities. The churchyard cross at Derwen in the Vale of Clwyd has, as well as the Virgin and Child, the Coronation of the Virgin and St Michael weighing souls at the Last Judgement. The cross at St Mary Hill near Bridgend (Glamorgan) has a three-figure composition which is clearly not the Crucifixion. It is too battered to be certain, but it is similar in outline to the coronation of the Virgin at Derwen. Alternatively, it may be another Last Judgement - either Christ sitting in judgement between Mary and John or St Michael weighing souls with Mary on one side and the Devil on the other.[17] The cross at nearby Llan-gan has, instead of the Virgin and Child, Wales's only surviving depiction of the *Pietà*.

While the Llanarth cross clearly depicts the Virgin and Child, the figure of Christ is unusually large even by medieval standards (Fig. 11b). It may be that we have here an intermediate stage in the development of the image of the *Pietà*. Schiller describes a group of northern European *Pietàs* in which the figure of the dead Christ on Mary's lap is small, like a child.[18] There are some even more strange English examples in which Christ is wounded but apparently alive.[19] The carving at Llanarth is however too worn for any certain deductions.[20]

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[17] Peter Lord in *Medieval Vision* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2003) suggests that the three-figure composition on the Derwen cross could be the Judgement of Solomon, but I do not know of another depiction of this scene in medieval Welsh iconography. At a church dedicated to the Virgin, her coronation is probably more likely.

[18] Schiller, Gertrude, *Iconography of Christian Art* (Lund Humphries, London, 1974) vol. 2, 190 and pls. 626-7.

[19] See for example the Long Melford 'Our Lady of Pity', reproduced in Duffy, Eamon, *The Stripping of the Altars* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1992) 260 and pl. 12; Gray, M., *Images of Piety* (BAR, Oxford, 2000) 7-8 and pl. 47 for the Llan-gan *Pietà*.

[20] I am grateful to Felicity Taylor for drawing this carving to my attention and for discussing it at length. Indeed, Felicity Taylor of Cadw gave me much useful information about wayside and churchyard crosses based upon a survey of these crosses that she has done. It is to be hoped that her survey will eventually be published in some form.

It is easy to conclude that the ubiquity of these crosses must have blunted the awareness of passers-by to the significance of what they depicted. Nevertheless, their ubiquity was part of their importance. By them, the central Christian doctrines of the Incarnation and Redemptive Sacrifice validated the boundaries of communities and marked out everyday journeys. Like the market crosses, they took the representation of those central Christian mysteries out of the sacred space of church and churchyard and into the secular space of the everyday world of government, commerce and social interaction.

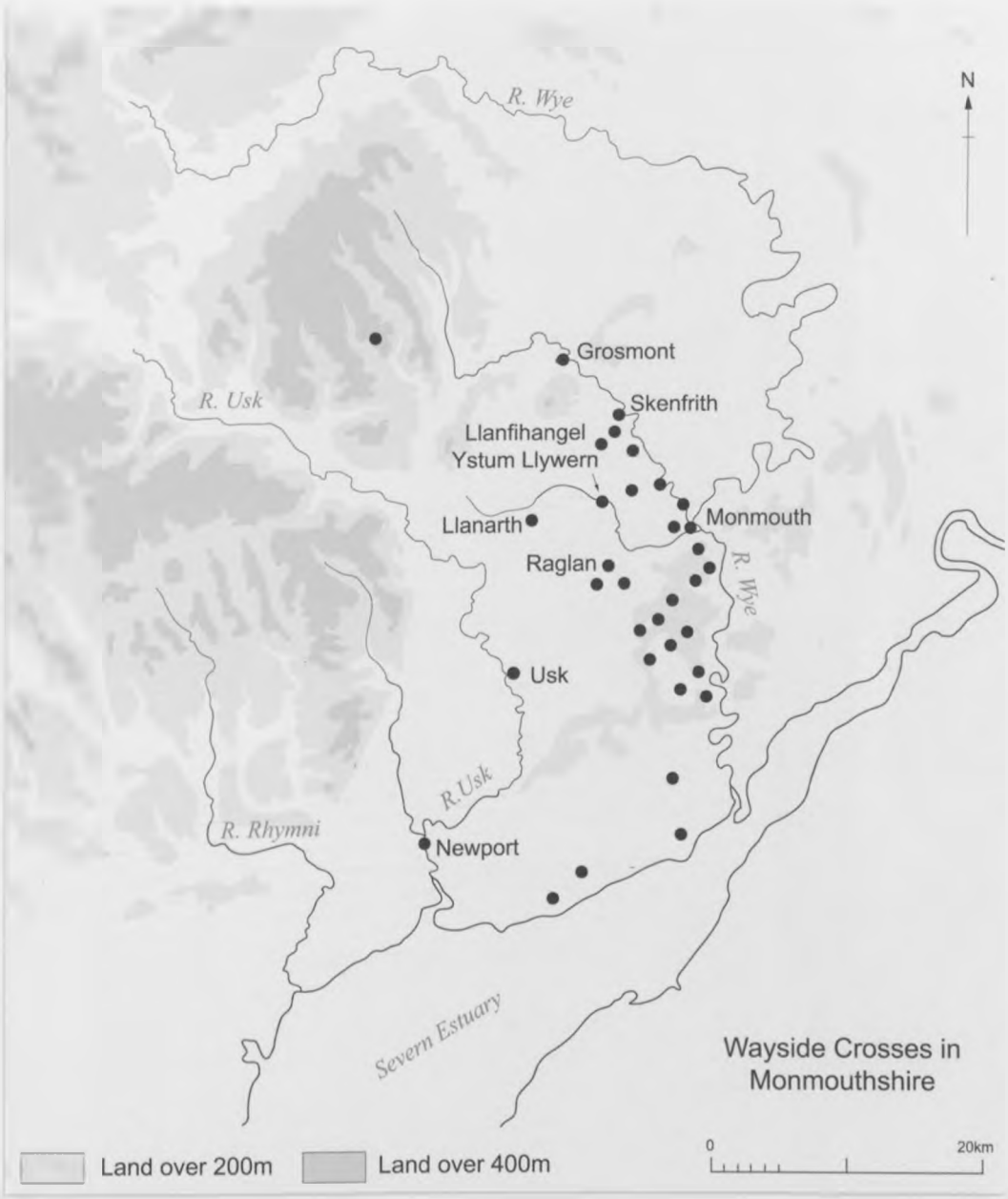

Fig. 1: Distribution map of wayside crosses in Monmouthshire.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

Fig. 2a: The Newport cross head, Crucifixion.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

Fig. 2b: The Newport cross head, St Margaret.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

Fig. 2c: The Newport cross head, St Catherine.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

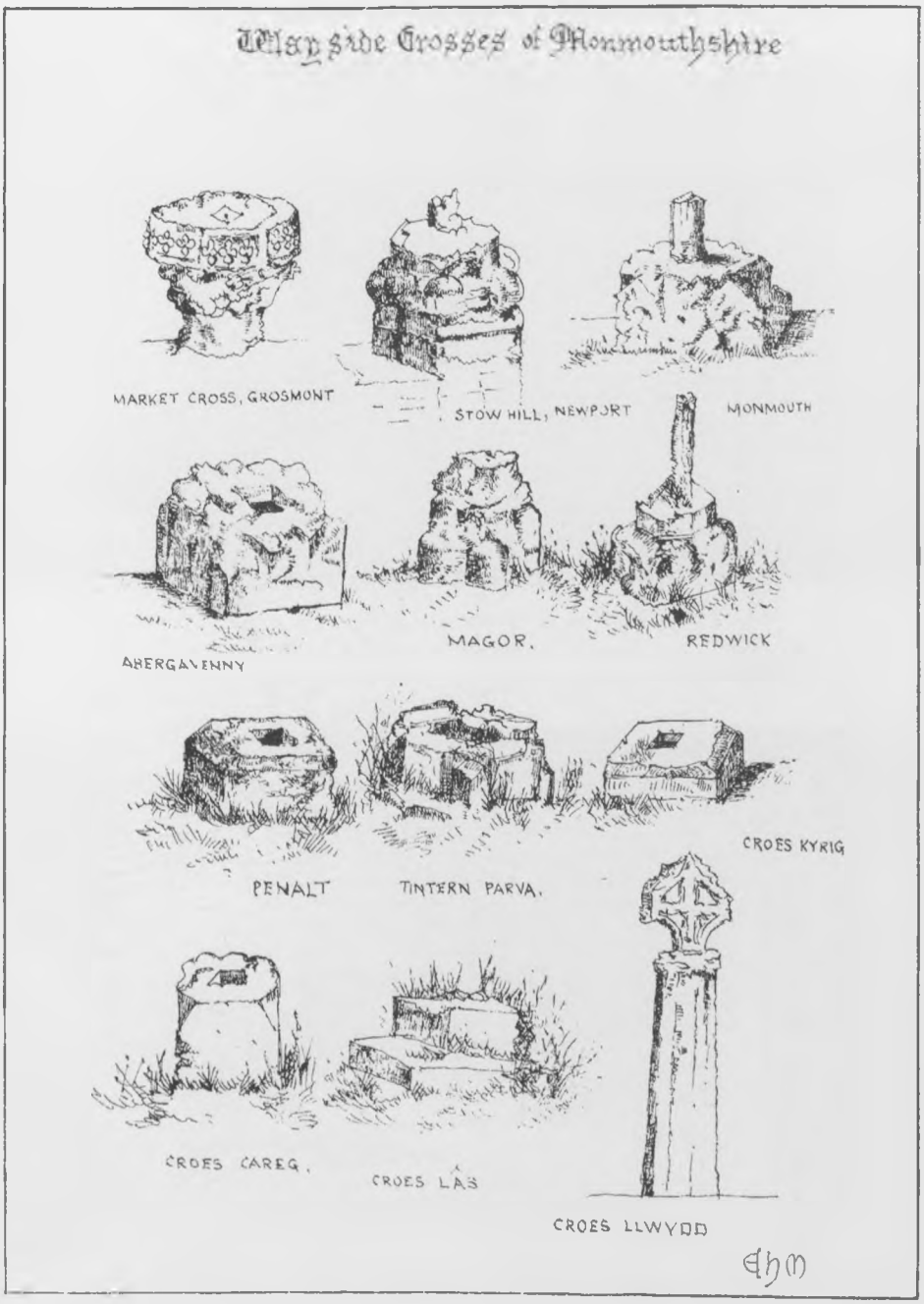

Fig. 3: Elizabeth Harcourt Mitchell's drawings of wayside crosses and bases (i).
Copyright: Newport City Library.

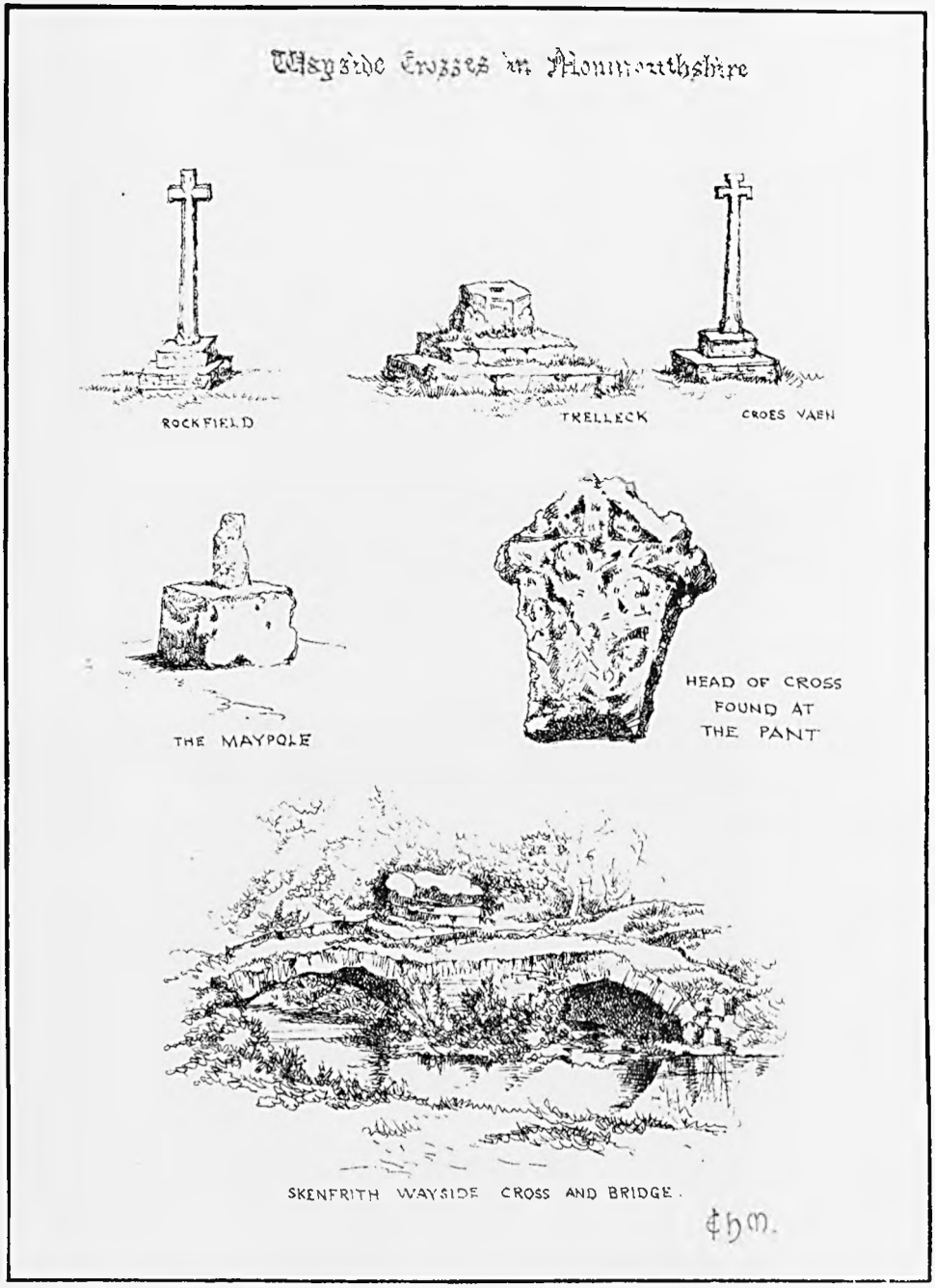

Fig. 4: Elizabeth Harcourt Mitchell's drawings of wayside crosses and bases (ii).
Copyright: Newport City Library.

Fig. 5: Base of wayside cross at Penrhos.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

Fig. 6: Base of wayside cross at Trelech.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

Fig. 7: Base of wayside cross formerly at junction of Stow Hill and Havelock Street, Newport, now in grounds of St Woolos Cathedral.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

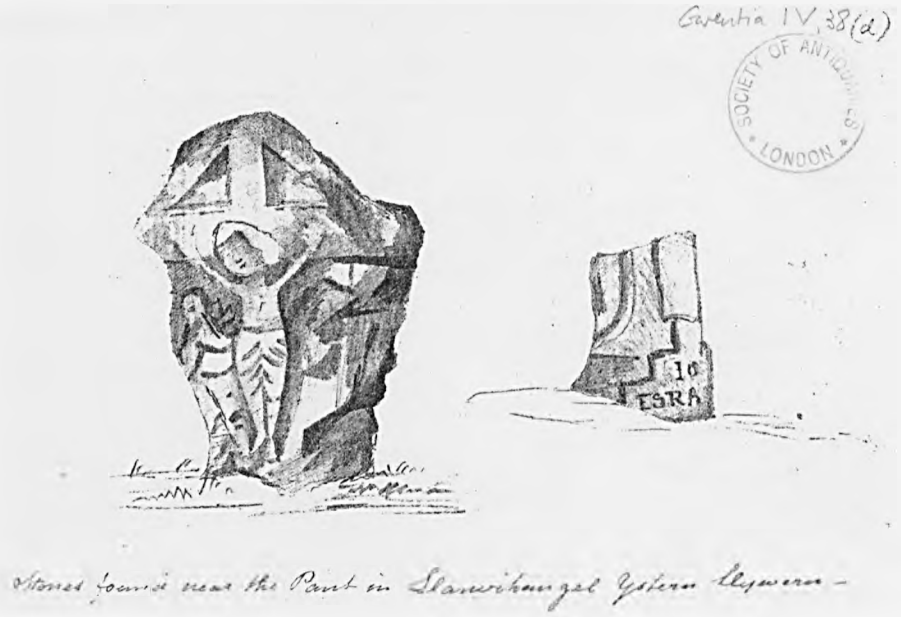

Fig. 10: Head of wayside cross found at the Pant, Llanfihangel Ystum Llywern, present whereabouts unknown.
Copyright: Society of Antiquaries of London.

Fig. 8: Croes Llwyd, near Raglan.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

Fig. 9a: Grosmont, Crucifixion.
Copyright: Felicity Taylor.

Fig. 9b: Grosmont, Virgin and Child.
Copyright: Felicity Taylor.

Fig. 11a: Llanarth, Crucifixion.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

Fig. 11b: Llanarth, Virgin and Child.
Copyright: Madeleine Gray.

BENEDICTINE HOUSES IN SOUTH EAST WALES: CONTINUITY AND CONSERVATION

by Sian E. Rees

The spread of monasticism after the Norman incursion into Wales is strongly linked with the Benedictine Order, and there stands, in south east Wales, an interesting, early group of Benedictine priories in Monmouthshire at Chepstow, Monmouth, Abergavenny, Usk and, somewhat further west, in the Vale of Glamorgan, at Ewenny. The tradition of using the monastic church as a shared facility with the parish has tended to result in good survival of former Benedictine houses after the Dissolution of the monasteries. Their characteristic siting within what are now small historic market towns has taken its toll in terms of loss of medieval fabric to roads and development, but the churches almost invariably survive albeit in rebuilt forms. The adjacent claustral buildings, also, have a higher rate of survival than is characteristic of other more rural orders in Wales as they tended to offer a reasonable potential for redevelopment for secular purposes. Three of the five priories under discussion, for instance, were used for schools for part of their post-Dissolution history (Monmouth, Usk and Abergavenny - the latter two within the church, rather than claustral ranges), and three were redeveloped as secular houses (Abergavenny, Usk and Ewenny). The buildings of the claustral ranges or at least their imprint thus continue to have an important impact upon their respective townscapes. Where the buildings themselves have gone, or within the claustral open spaces, the nature of the development of the sites has often resulted in the good preservation of archaeological strata. The churches are frequently also important repositories of artefacts uncovered during phases of building works. Recent conservation at Ewenny, Monmouth and Abergavenny demonstrates the potential of these monastic sites and the need, during redevelopment, for coherent programmes of archaeological work and building recording and for sympathetic design and constructive approaches to re-use. David Williams's work at Monmouth and his unfailing support and earnest encouragement for conservation on monastic houses in Wales generally has been a continued source of inspiration.

The earliest of the five houses under discussion was at Chepstow, where excavations in the 1970s (Shoesmith, 1991) outside the priory church helped establish the position of the claustral buildings, the development of the site from an early small cell to the later medieval priory and put that development into its historic and landscape context. Roman burials and artefacts from the first and then the late third and fourth centuries, point to a Roman dimension within that historical context as has later been shown at other Benedictine sites. At both Chepstow and the nunnery at Usk, which was itself founded in a position of established historical importance adjacent to the site of the Roman legionary fortress (Manning, 1981), the churches continued in parochial use, though both houses have lost the majority of their priory buildings, Chepstow to demolition and now the ring road, and Usk to demolition and later redevelopment as a nineteenth-century house. The probably late monastic gatehouse at Usk survives, as does well-preserved buried evidence for the layout of the monastic church and precinct within the sizeable churchyard (Mein, 2000, 66-68), while the extent of any surviving monastic masonry within or beneath the later house is uncertain.

At Monmouth Priory, given the conventional Norman dedication to Mary as were Chepstow, Usk and Abergavenny, the monastic east end of the church was left to decay and gradual dismantling after the Dissolution, while the parochial nave of the church itself survived only to be entirely rebuilt not just once, but twice, in 1734 and 1884. The so-called priory buildings, probably late monastic buildings on the north side of the cloister, survived in an altered form to be re-used firstly for Roman Catholic worship and a hatter's shop (Heath, 1804; Kissack, 1975, 130) and then from the mid-eighteenth century as a school which continued in operation until 1973 (Kissack, 72, in Williams and Kissack, 2002). The buildings were considerably altered and extended by the Victorian architect John Seddon, though his original drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum illustrate the three main phases of work here - late monastic, eighteenth-century school and Seddon's 1870s refurbishment work. A recent conservation scheme for these buildings funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund allowed a study to be made of them and the small medieval building to their east (Rees, in Kissack and Williams, 2002).

The church retains many entrancing hints of its origin. The fourteenth-century tower is built up against the surviving west wall of the monastic church with its newel stair which allows us, from the blocked internal doors, to make some estimate of the heights of triforium and clerestory, the crease on its east facing elevation showing the position of the original nave roof and parapet walk, and surviving fragments of the twelfth-century decorated string course both externally and reset internally within the tower, hinting at the early twelfth-century date of at least the west end of the nave. Internally, the solid westernmost pier of the southern aisle survives, connecting the main build of the nave stylistically with the late eleventh-century west country piers found at Tewkesbury and Gloucester. Architectural fragments have periodically been found reset into church masonry including dressed stones identified as coming from the western portal (Thurlby, 1999, 130) and the triforium, a cresset stone and medieval tiles (Rees, Figs. 13a, 13b and 17, and Lewis, in Williams and Kissack, 2002). These are now housed on display in what has become the conventional manner within the church nave. It is, perhaps, a sad reflection on contemporary *mores* that we whose profession leads us to worry about conservation would prefer these important artefacts to be more securely curated, for without these chance discoveries and survivals, our understanding of this early priory would be diminished.

During the refurbishment work at the priory buildings in Monmouth, archaeological excavation in advance of new services produced quantities of twelfth-century pottery and glassware from the early period of the priory as well as Roman material from a high status building (mosaic *tesserae* and roof tile), unsurprising in some ways due to the proximity of the priory to the Roman fort (Clarke, 2003). The survival of well-preserved, stratified material within what had been assumed to be a relatively disturbed area of the site was unexpected, however, and is a salutary reminder of the necessity for archaeological work in advance of any development within claustral precincts. The priory buildings have now had their twentieth-century installations removed to produce a larger uncluttered space for exhibitions, recitals and meetings for the local community, a re-use which seems entirely appropriate in character.

At Abergavenny, surviving features from the monastic priory, again built hard by the Roman fort just uphill, comprise medieval fabric within the east end of the church, furniture such as the complete series of choir stalls, the monumental wooden Tree of Jesse sculpture, and fine stone tomb memorials. Little of the medieval ranges remains above ground, though some masonry of the east

range survives (Newman, 2000, 92-7; Jones, 2000), while the layout of the cloister is imprinted in the post-Dissolution redevelopment of the monastic ranges as a secular dwelling and courtyard charmingly illustrated by Joshua Gosselin in his sketch of 1784 (Mitchell, 2003, Plate 4). The sixteenth-century house was built on the footings of the south range of the monastery; it was rebuilt in the eighteenth century and largely demolished in the 1950s (Blockley, 1999). Here, as at Monmouth, the priory has seen recent noteworthy work. The outstanding series of church memorials (Rock, 1996; Blair, 1994) has been conserved, and excavations undertaken within the church, cloister and on the foundations of the south range (in advance of redevelopment and repair). The building of a new hall on the south range and repaving of the court has allowed the recreation of at least the feel of the enclosed priory cloister (though excavations before the new surfacing suggested that most monastic claustral levels had been removed during its post-Dissolution use) and the new building presents a new opportunity for community use. In addition, and, perhaps, given its street frontage position, most dramatically, the conservation of the much altered but still magnificent monastic barn to the west of the church is now being undertaken, with, again, prior excavation and recording (Nash, 2000). Hence the priory, within an appropriate historic setting, is enabled to reassert its position in the town as a focus for the community.

All four sites described so far have benefited from public funding for their conservation, archaeological recording and excavation. Redevelopment of sites of this sensitivity requires both exhaustive programmes of archaeological excavation and recording as well as good design for any redevelopment if the spirit of the place is to survive. This has been effectively achieved at Abergavenny and Monmouth, though the collation and curation of the quantity of records and artefacts that are the inevitable result of often small scale or discrete operations undertaken over a long period remains a difficulty not altogether resolved within the archaeological community. The vision and determination of parishioners are very important components of successful schemes of conservation and refurbishment and this was certainly the case at Monmouth and Abergavenny. These are, however, sizeable towns with reasonably large communities. At rural Ewenny, in the Vale of Glamorgan, the community is small and the parish sparsely populated. Its determination, however, is just as unwavering and it was the parochial west end of the monastic church of St Michael which led the way in the recent conservation work.

Ewenny Priory has survived with church and precinct almost intact, due perhaps to its remote situation. As elsewhere, the nave of the church remained in parochial use at the Dissolution, but the rest of the site was granted to Sir Edward Carne. Like Abergavenny and Usk, the buildings were used for a mansion built within the precinct interior, incorporating several of the claustral buildings. In 1741, Ewenny passed to the Turberville family whose lengthy building episodes are fortunately described in the pages of *Archaeologia Cambrensis* (*inter alia* volumes for 1856, 1857, 1869, 1888 and 1899) along with a series of photographs which reveal the extensive nature of these repairs. The Tudor house was demolished in the nineteenth century and the present house built which resulted in the claustral ranges being largely swept away, though fabric from the west and south ranges probably still survives. The monastic east end of the church was retained as a private chapel, save the north transept and the south transept chapels which were allowed to become roofless ruins. Ewenny's unique feature, however, which makes it so extraordinary a monument, was quite compatible with its post-Dissolution usage. Its extensive embattled precinct walls, two gatehouses and towers were easily incorporated into walled enclosures for the new mansion and its gardens and have largely survived as such ever since, all save the south precinct wall which was

demolished in favour of the view from the mansion windows. The present appearance of the church internally is that of a tranquil gem of Norman architecture which belies the major periods of repair, alteration, demolition and rebuilding which have taken place over the last two centuries.

The monastic parts of the church and precinct defences were put in State guardianship in 1949, partly because of the fear of collapse of the presbytery vaulting. Steelwork, hidden in the presbytery roof, was put in to support the vaulting, which was rightly recognised as a rare survival of such Norman work, and the church and defensive precinct repointed and repaired. Since that date, there have been minor works of maintenance but both parochial and guardianship parts of the monastic buildings remained largely as they had been in the mid 1950s.

In 1999, an extensive programme of repair was undertaken on the nave, followed in 2001-2002, by a similar programme on the south transept and crossing. This work, which shared the same philosophy of non-intrusive conservation, reflooring, heating and lighting, is now to be continued into the presbytery and the ruins of the north transept and has necessitated a recording project on the upstanding masonry and surviving wall painting (Marshall, 2002; Paine and Stewart, 2003). Inevitably this offered some potential for investigation into the building which allows comparison with the history and development of the other Benedictine houses under consideration.

The four urban Benedictine monasteries described above were clearly founded in existing settlements, settlements that, by the eleventh century, had already achieved some importance and historical depth. The more rural position of Ewenny was probably dictated by the former presence of a Celtic religious foundation, indicated by the number of early Christian stones found on the site. However, here too, there appears to be a Roman dimension to the site. Ewenny is situated within an area known to have produced a number of Roman artefacts through the years, including an intriguing reference to a Roman mosaic found on the site of the church in the nineteenth century (Edith Evans, pers. comm.). The collection of architectural fragments and stones which have through the years accumulated within the church include quernstones, though the source of these is unknown. However, a trench excavated during the repair works on the north side of the church revealed, as well as the expected medieval burials, a considerable amount of Roman building materials and pottery including Samian, from *in situ*, rather than residual, contexts. Here again there is a connection with Roman as well as earlier medieval usage (Hollinrake and Hollinrake, 2002). Despite the unreliability of the tradition that Ewenny was an early Welsh monastery (Radford, 1976, 7) the quantities of tenth and eleventh-century crosses and inscribed stones found there point at least to some sort of a religious community predating the Norman foundation. The stones and other architectural fragments found, apparently largely during the nineteenth-century restoration work built into the later monastic buildings, are shown gathered together on the crossing floor in Turner's well known painting of Ewenny church, and there was certainly an atmospheric charm about their informal layout. However, the security of these important stones, which were by no means displayed to their best advantage, was of paramount importance. It was decided, during the repair programme, to wall-mount the smaller slabs on to the nineteenth-century brick infill in the south transeptal chapel arches, while larger stones and memorial slabs were floor-mounted, bracketed to the walls or floors (Fig. 1).

The grey, cracking Victorian render on the walls of the church was unappealing aesthetically and was allowing damp to percolate through walltops and windows thus damaging the building. Repairs to the roof and walltops of the nave were followed by similar work to the south transept and crossing to stop ingress of water; these were interesting in that they revealed the substantial amount of Victorian rebuilding in these upper sections. The Victorian stained glass windows were repaired and reset and then, in what was as watertight structure as an ancient building can ever be, the Victorian cementicious render from internal elevations was carefully removed allowing recording for the first time (Sampson, 2001). Radford, during the initial study and conservation work on the east end during the 1950s, had suggested that the early twelfth-century work of William de Londre's church is restricted to the rubble masonry of the existing nave, and the monastic east end was added in two phases - the lower surviving masonry to string course level in the mid-twelfth century by his son Maurice with the presbytery vault around 1200 by the second William. This is questioned by Thurlby (1988) and others who believe that the whole building dates from before the first William's death in 1126. The building analysis undertaken on the nave by Sampson gave an opportunity for the first time to examine the internal stonework. The evidence of the masonry joints added strength to Thurlby's view, suggesting that the nave formed a separate phase of construction following the completion of the monastic east end.

Preserved beneath the Victorian render significant areas of original medieval render and plaster survived, though heavily scored as a key and in some places removed altogether. Painted surfaces within the nave were generally restricted to traces on the scoured medieval plaster, but there was also discovered a nimbed figure (with a possible second figure) on one of the north arcade columns (Paine and Stewart, 2003, 4 and Plates 25 and 26). Within the south transept walling, two horizons of colour wash had evidently been used at different periods, one pink, the other orange (Marshall, 2002). The pink at least was quite extensive showing that at one period there had been a broad band of colour wash at a mid point on the walling. Chemical analysis revealed that it was a natural dye, possibly derived from madder (Oestreicher, 2002). Dating the two coloured episodes was impossible; one could only say that they were unlikely to be either the original Norman or the latest pre-Victorian design, and were separated from one another by several layers of plain white limewash.

The colour washes on the plastered walls of the south transept and crossing were too fragmentary ever to be capable of reconstruction, but surviving remnants appeared only to be plain coloured bands. However, on dressed stone on the crossing piers and in the presbytery generally, more extensive survival of paint does appear to reflect two episodes of decoration (Fig. 2). The main surviving polychromy comprises an architectural design incorporating a double red line masonry pattern, foliate stems, fictive columns decorated in a barber-pole pattern and alternate red (confirmed by analysis as iron oxide red) and yellow (ochre) fictive *voussoirs* all datable to *c.*1200 (Figs. 3 and 4). Underlying this in places, and clearly visible on the splays of the east windows, a scheme of simple orange-red lines and dark criss-cross pattern is detectable (Figs. 5 and 6). This reflects a remnant component of an early (possibly the earliest) period of the church building (Paine and Stewart, 2003, Plate 9-12) and adds further support to Thurlby's hypothesis for the unified early construction of the presbytery. Paint traces are clearly visible on the original plaster, uniquely surviving on the east wall and window splays, and on ashlar and decorated dressed stone within the presbytery generally and on the presbytery vault ribs. The recording, analysis and conservation of this important medieval survival will continue during the next phase of repair work in the presbytery

in 2004, during which the removal of the sporadic patches of Victorian render amidst the original plaster presents a particular challenge.

Work at Ewenny has been necessitated and led by conservation requirements, but, within a building partly used for worship and partly for the visiting public, practical, aesthetic and interpretative considerations also have to be taken into account and implemented in such a way as not to detract from the unity of the building. The nave, crossing and south transept have been refloored with light coloured slabs of Forest of Dean stone laid directly over the dark grey Victorian concrete floors. This has enhanced the appearance of the building while allowing a non-intrusive insertion of cabling for lighting and heating between the two surfaces and allowing a more effective incorporation and display of medieval tiles moved within the crossing some years previously from their exposed and vulnerable position in the ruinous north transept. The addition of subtle lighting into the south transept, always controversial, means that the early Christian and medieval stones can be seen and interpreted for the first time, while the background heating should assist in stabilising plasters and wall paintings.

The recent research at these five monastic houses has led to a greater understanding of their foundation, their development and their demise. A problem which inevitably arises with conservation work of this type is that it may continue over many years together with episodes of repair. A variety of practitioners may take responsibility for separate phases of conservation and recording, responding to different requirements, be they statutorily required for work on scheduled or listed structures, or fulfilling conditions imposed by funding bodies, by planning departments for developments on non-scheduled sites and designated parks and gardens (Ewenny), or by the Church's own faculty regulations. When a monument is in multiple ownership and subject to a variety of uses, the organising, funding and implementation of programmes for site development including the maintenance of coherent archives, the curation of all artefacts as they continue to be discovered during development works and the interpretation of the sites and their history for the visiting public, is certainly a challenge. Though conservation is unending, phases of work do reach conclusions and consideration should be given, when an appropriate stage has been reached, for the compilation of detailed studies to collate the results of the work that has led to the present distinct composition of each monastic house. While maintenance of ancient structures remains inevitably challenging, the recent work at Monmouth, Abergavenny and Ewenny offers an optimistic future; all five Benedictine houses remain in ecclesiastical use and it is heartening to see hitherto divided sites such as Abergavenny reverting to single appropriate ownership. The adaptation of the former Benedictine monastic buildings at Abergavenny and Monmouth for community use seems particularly appropriate.

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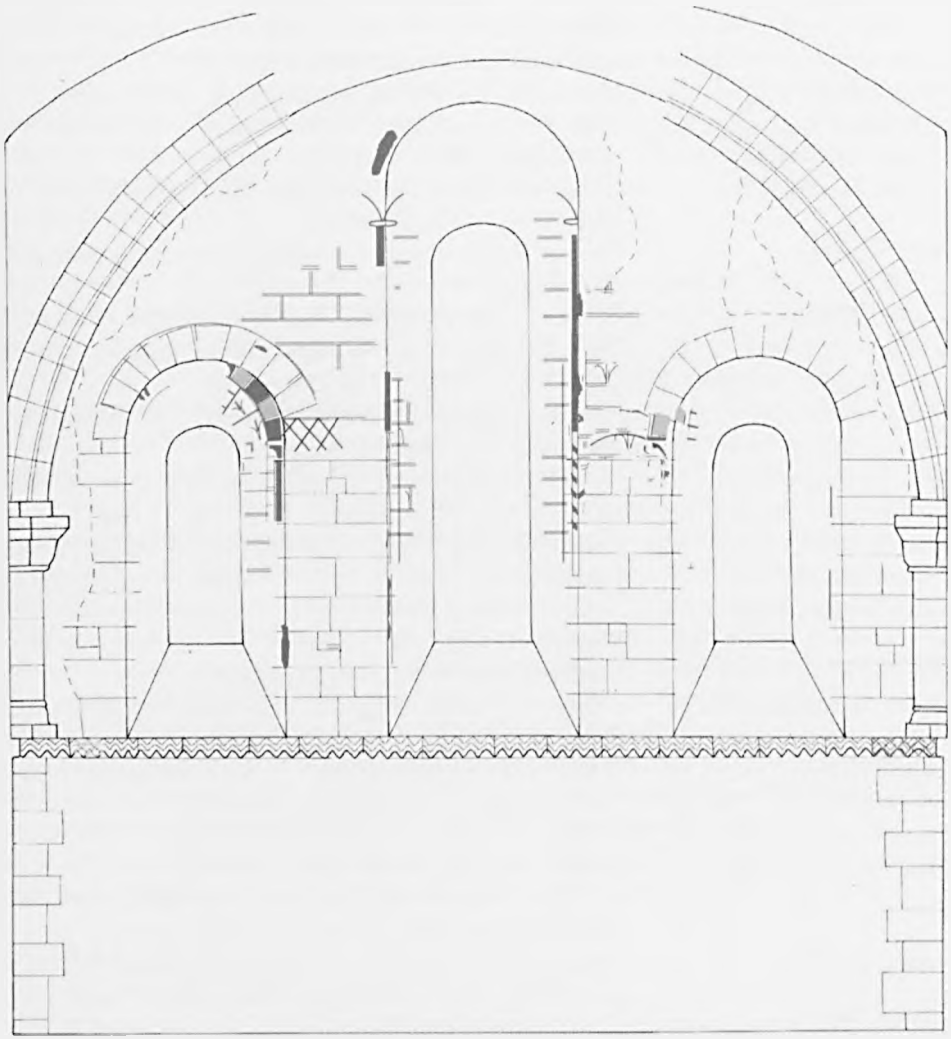

Fig. 2: Ewenny Priory. The east wall of the presbytery
on to which the general pattern and extent of surviving decoration has been plotted.
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Fig. 1: Ewenny Priory. The south transept after conservation,
with early Christian and medieval stones set on to blocked openings to transeptal chapel.
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Fig 3: Ewenny Priory. Detail of decoration on east wall of presbytery, showing the fictive columns flanking the windows. Note the lighter red lines of the underlying decorative scheme. *By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.*

Fig 4: Ewenny Priory. Details of decoration on east wall of presbytery, showing the alternating red and yellow fictive voussoirs, overlying the earlier scheme.
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Fig 5: Ewenny Priory. Detail of criss-cross design of the earlier decorative scheme on the east wall of the presbytery.
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Fig. 6: Ewenny Priory. Detail of east wall of presbytery, showing the masonry pattern and columns with arches which appear to extend beneath the later phase of decoration.
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THE CHAPTER HOUSE AT TINTERN ABBEY

By David M. Robinson

Introduction

Apart from the conventual church, the chapter house undoubtedly ranked as the most important building in any medieval monastic complex. Indeed, the occasional surviving text gives specific Cistercian expression to the sacred character of the room. Writing in the late twelfth century, for example, Hélinand of Froidmont felt sufficiently moved to claim: '... no place is holier than the chapter house, no place more worthy of reverence; in no place is the devil farther away, in no place is God closer; for there the devil loses whatever he might gain elsewhere and there God regains obedience whatever he might lose elsewhere through negligence or contempt'.[1]

The carefully orchestrated form of the daily chapter house ritual for white monk communities can be reconstructed, at least in the prescribed sense, from the order's early customary, the *Ecclesiastica Officia*.[2] Each morning, it was in the chapter house that the monastic body corporate celebrated the ideals of communal life, especially through the reading of a chapter which signified the monks' total obedience to the Rule of St Benedict.[3] It was in chapter, too, that saints and benefactors were commemorated, faults were confessed, and penances assigned. Here, on major feast days, the abbot would normally deliver a homily. The daily chapter meeting was also the occasion when secular matters concerned with the business and administration of the house might be discussed. In sum, the chapter house should be seen as the primary gathering place for the whole abbey community (Fig. 1).[4] Furthermore, it seems clear that from the last quarter of the twelfth century the chapter house was the prescribed burial space for former abbots, as well as for kings, queens and bishops, should they so choose.[5]

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1 Hélinand was a monk of the Cistercian abbey of Froidmont (Oise), situated about 10 miles (14.7 k) south east of Beauvais, for which see Aubert, 1947, vol. 1, 75; Peugniez, 2001, 377 (with access details). For the quote from his *Epistola ad Galterum*, see Fergusson and Harrison, 1994, 238; Fergusson and Harrison, 1999, 97; Cassidy-Welch, 2001, 105.

2 Father Chrysogonus Waddell has confirmed the long-held belief that much of the Cistercian narrative and legislative literature was written, at least in its primitive form, by Abbot Stephen Harding of Cîteaux (1109-33): Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts* 137-368 *passim*. The earliest version of the *Ecclesiastica Officia* may have been completed soon after 1119. The version referred to here is based on a text of *c.* 1185, which is used for the two most recent editions of the source: Choisselet and Vernet, *Ecclesiastica Officia* 207-11; Cawley, *Ecclesiastica Officia* 70.1-70.96.

3 St Benedict had called for his Rule to be 'read aloud often in the community, so that no brother may excuse himself on the ground of ignorance': McCann, *Rule of St Benedict*, chap. 64, 152-3.

4 For general discussions of these matters, see Gardner, 1976, 10-55; Fergusson and Harrison, 1994, 237-44; Fergusson and Harrison, 1999, 97-8; Welch, 2001, 105-32; Lawrence, 2001, 110-11.

5 This is evident from several statutes passed by the General Chapter: Waddell, *Statutes*, 88 (1180, 5), 390 (1197, 26). In general, see Williams, 1998, 134, 242. For a study of the graves in the chapter house at Fountains, see Gilyard-Beer, 1987.

Among the Cistercian abbeys of Wales, the sites with the best preserved chapter houses include Basingwerk, Margam, and Valle Crucis.[6] It is the striking example at Margam, perhaps dating from *c.* 1203-13, which tends to excite greatest interest in the literature.[7] Of course, we must recognise at once that its centrally planned polygonal form is unusual in both monastic and secular chapter house design,[8] and is unknown among white monk communities anywhere else in Europe.[9] Nevertheless, the overall concept, coupled with its rich architectural treatment and elaborate stellar vault pattern, seem to resonate with the importance of that daily ritual once carried out within. At Tintern Abbey, on the other hand, one is perhaps less readily drawn to the qualities of the original chapter house construction. The now comparatively low consolidated walls and lack of any meaningful structural articulation probably make for a rather dull impression, at least for the majority of the abbey's many visitors (Fig. 3). And yet in its mature thirteenth-century form, this was undoubtedly a Gothic space of singular architectural beauty, the details of which I will seek to draw out in this paper.[10]

Orientation and Basic Description of the Tintern Chapter House

Allowing for the northern arrangement of claustral buildings at Tintern, the chapter house is otherwise situated in the customary position within the east range (Fig. 4).[11] Current understanding suggests that to begin with (that is in the initial twelfth-century layout) the room was positioned immediately next to the north transept of the abbey church.[12] When the chapter house was extended in a general enlargement of the range during the first half of the thirteenth century, its relationship to the Romanesque church apparently remained largely unchanged, though the position of the inner parlour was formalised against its north wall. On completion of the second abbey church in the early years of the fourteenth century, the chapter house was henceforth separated from the north transept by the creation of a new book room and sacristy (Fig. 4).

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6 A general discussion of the Welsh Cistercian chapter house will be found in Robinson, 2004, chap. 10. For Basingwerk, see also Robinson, 1996b. For Valle Crucis, see Price, 1952, 122-5; Radford, 1953; Evans, 1995. For Margam, see Robinson, 1993, 57-8; Newman, 1995, 426-8; Robinson, 1998, 140-1.

7 The date range suggested here coincides with the rule of Abbot Gilbert at Margam, for which see Cowley, 1977, 116-7, 123-5; Williams, 2001, 20, 161.

8 There are two general accounts of centrally planned English chapter houses: Gardner, 1976; Zukowsky,1977.

9 The two confirmed early Gothic Cistercian polygonal chapter houses in England and Wales, those at Margam and Dore, are discussed in the general context of centrally planned designs in Hillaby, 1988-90. For further information on Dore, see Harrison, 1997, 120-4. Another polygonal chapter house was built at Whalley in Lancashire after 1330: Robinson, 1998, 203. For general overviews of Cistercian chapter houses, see Braunfels, 1972, 98-102; Kinder, 1997, 244-67. For France, see Aubert, 1947, vol. 2, 51-70. For Germany, see Eydoux, 1952, 161-4. For Ireland, see Stalley, 1987, 162-6.

10 By way of background, David Williams is the author of the two key historical works on Tintern Abbey: Williams, 1965-68; Williams, 1976, 94-146. For the buildings at the site in general, see Harrison, Morris and Robinson, 1998; Robinson, 2002a; Robinson, 2004 *passim*.

11 Robinson, 2002a, 27-31, 50-4.

12 On what is known of the 12th-century church, see Robinson, 1996a. One should note that the proposed layout makes no allowance for a sacristy and book store between the outer wall of the north transept and the south wall of the chapter house, which was to become the customary Cistercian arrangement by the mid-12th century.

As it stands, the building follows a distinctly east-west axial plan (Fig. 5). It measures some 56 feet (17.1 m) long by 28 feet (8.5 m) wide, giving around 1,570 square feet (146 sq m) of internal space. The south and east walls are approximately 3 feet 6 inches (1.1 m) thick; so too is the projecting section of the north wall. But the wall shared with the adjoining inner parlour is appreciably thinner. The best preserved area of masonry is the south wall, which survives up to 15 feet (4.6 m) high near the eastern end. Both the south east and the north east corners stand to the level of the thirteenth-century vault springers, though it must be said that the eastern prospect is in general rather marred by a blank field of masonry with a raking edge (Fig. 3), introduced of necessity by the Office of Woods in 1903-04 to serve as a buttress to the sacristy vault to the south.[13] The present covering of greensward within the interior of the chapter house is punctuated by two rows of what at this stage might be called simply 'architectural features'. Some of these appear to be *in situ*, whereas others clearly are not. In essence, they represent the positions of the eight piers which supported four-part rib vaults, indicating that the chapter house was divided into fifteen individual bays or cells, arranged three across its width and five along its length. At the east end of the building, four of the features in question are probably in their correct thirteenth-century positions. Here, clearly defined circular moulded bases support a short section of slender 'pier', with the length of 'pier' very similar in each case. To the west, however, the arrangement is much less defined. Circular worked stones have been laid out to indicate the position of a further four piers, though none of them can have been an original base. In fact, three of the stones look much more like moulded capitals, set upside down; the fourth is something rather different (to which I shall return below). Westwards again, there is clear evidence for the entrance to the chapter house from the east cloister passage. Two central pier bases, together with the northern and southern responds, reveal a richly clustered composition, adorned with an elaborate array of attached and detached shafting. To the edge of the turf-covered interior, there are the remains of an early fourteenth-century tile border pattern, now very badly worn. The chequer scheme is two tiles deep, set diagonally between straight edging half-tiles.[14] Beyond this is a raised, consolidated stone 'bench', approximately 3 feet (0.9 m) wide.

The antiquity of these general arrangements is broadly confirmed by the earliest authoritative ground plan of Tintern Abbey, produced by the Lichfield architect and antiquary, Joseph Potter.[15] Potter gives accurate dimensions of the chapter house interior, and also shows the four *in situ* pier bases at the eastern end. From these he indicates the line of the vault ribs over six of the individual bays. Much the same is depicted on Thomas Blashill's 1886 ground plan of Tintern,[16]

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[13] For the conservation of the abbey in general, see Robinson, 1997. The earliest phases of work were directed for the Office of Woods by the Gloucester architect, F. W. Waller (1846-1933). In June 1904, Waller reported on the chapter house as follows: 'The recent work has been removed from the East & North Walls & the Earth excavated outside laying bare the old wall & buttresses, all of which have been carefully preserved & protected - the south east angle & part of the side wall at this point have been reset to strengthen the remains of the groined roof of the Sacristy adjoining': PRO Work 14/75; also GRO D 902-2.

[14] Lewis, 1999, 18, 260-1.

[15] His magnificent collection of Tintern drawings remains an invaluable source for further architectural study. For the plan, see Potter, 1847, Tintern pl. 1; reproduced in Harrison, Morris and Robinson, 1998, 191.

[16] Blashill, 1886, facing 248. This is a developed version of his earlier plan, for which see Blashill, 1881-2, pl. 3. In his first account, he noted: 'some capitals now on the ground [in the chapter house], mark out, imperfectly, the plan, which was of three Aisles': Blashill, 1881-2, 101. His later work also notes: 'It [the chapter house] was very handsomely floored with tiles, which have only lately been discovered. They comprise many beautiful patterns of thirteenth century design; and the flooring was uncovered, and further investigated, specially in view

and again on Roland Paul's version of 1898, though this latter plan also shows a significant area of tile paving in the north west corner, together with a single tomb slab.[17]

The positions of the four piers which stood at the western end of the chapter house seem to have come to light during the conservation programme directed by the Office of Woods in the early twentieth century. In 1907-08, Harold Brakspear was commissioned to produce a full ground plan of the abbey.[18] Thereafter, over a period of several years, he must have been periodically employed to direct ongoing clearance work on the monastic buildings, and continued to add details to his initial plan. In his report to the department in October 1911 he stated: 'I find that the four western pillars of the Chapter house are still represented by their circular plinths under the turf; also there appears to be some further burials'.[19] Thus, although the positions of the west piers are not shown on Brakspear's 1908 version of the Tintern plan, the full arrangements in the chapter house, including the vault scheme, are depicted in the 1929 edition of his official site guide. Much the same plan remained in use down to the mid-1980s.[20]

The Earliest Cistercian Chapter Houses

The earliest appearance of the chapter house in the monastic plan is of interest in itself, though this is not a subject which can be dealt with in any detail here. Suffice it to say, there is no sign of such a discrete building in the well-known St Gall plan of *c.* 820-30, which depicts the layout of a Utopian Carolingian monastery of that time.[21] There again, Ansegis (822-33), who was the contemporary abbot of the Frankish monastery of Fontenelle near Rouen, ordered just such a construction. As the abbey's own chronicler was to tell us, it was to be called 'the assembly – or court-house ... because the brethren are wont to gather there to take counsel over anything whatsoever'. Daily readings were conducted from a pulpit there, and the authority of the Rule of St Benedict was underlined. Ansegis also left instruction that he should be buried in the chamber, establishing a precedent which in time came to be followed by abbots throughout the Christian world.[22]

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of the visit of this Association' (that is the Cambrian Archaeological Association visit of 1886): Blashill, 1886, 249.

[17] The author was to note: 'In the chapter house is also a good deal of the paving still in position, and traces of the stone bench which surrounded the room on its east, north, and south sides': Paul, 1898, 10-11.

[18] The correspondence concerning Brakspear's initial plan can be found on PRO Work 14/76. See also Robinson, 1996a, 36-7.

[19] The report is dated 11 Oct. Brakspear advised that 'the turf be removed and gravel substituted after the floor has been carefully examined': PRO Work 14/77. His earlier reports, which are to be found on the same file, are dated 10 Nov. 1910, and 21 Feb. 1911.

[20] Brakspear's original ground plan is held with the site archive, now shared between Cadw (Cardiff) and the National Monuments Record of Wales (Aberystwyth). For the various editions of his guide, see Brakspear and Evans, 1910; Brakspear, 1929; Brakspear, 1934. Thereafter the plan appeared (with occasional minor variation) in Craster, 1956, and subsequent reprints.

[21] The plan was sent to Gozbert, abbot of St Gall (816-37), and has been preserved at the same Swiss abbey since that time: see Horn and Born, 1979; also Braunfels, 1972, 28-9, 236.

[22] The quote is derived from the *Gesta abbatum Fontanellensium*. For Ansegis and his abbey, together with a transcript of the relevant passage, see Braunfels, 1972, 28-9, 236.

There can be no doubt that by the close of the eleventh century, before the foundation of the Cistercian order's mother house at Cîteaux (Côte-d'Or) in Burgundy in 1098,[23] the chapter house had emerged as a structure of considerable significance in the lives of monks and canons of all orders.[24] Given this importance, it is a little surprising that no such chamber has been identified in what we know of the very earliest Cistercian buildings.[25] It is the more surprising to find no specific mention of a chapter house in the order's primary legislation (that is the *Statuta* which were probably in place by *c.*1113-19), especially since there is a stipulation on the basic compliment of buildings required in a daughter foundation.[26] Nevertheless, by *c.*1135-60, that is when new stone churches and associated claustral ranges were under construction at both Cîteaux and its important elder daughter house at Clairvaux (Aube),[27] the chapter house had assumed its long-term position within the east range. Unusually, at both these sites the range itself was of three bays in width.[28] The chapter house in each case was separated from the south transept by a narrow chamber, and was confined to a single storey so as to accommodate the monks' dormitory on the floor above. Internally, the room was sub-divided into nine square bays, with the four piers surrounding the middle bay giving the architecture a distinctly centralised character.

More typically, the east range was two bays in width, as at Clairvaux's well-known early daughter house at Fontenay (Côte-d'Or).[29] Once again, all of the chambers at ground level were kept to a single storey, though here the chapter house was designed with a third bay projecting beyond the east wall of the range, thereby creating another centralised chamber with the space needed for the whole community (Fig. 6).[30] At Cîteaux's daughter house of Pontigny (Yonne), on the other hand, where the east range was likewise of the 'standard' two bays, the chapter house was fully contained within the lateral walls of the building.[31] This time a rectangular layout was employed, with two median piers set out on the longer north-south axis dividing the room into six bays.

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[23] For a summary of what survives at Cîteaux, with details of access and opening times, see Peugniez, 2001, 49-51. On the site in general, see the recent collection of essays edited by Plouvier and Saint-Denis, 1998.

[24] For introductions to the monastic plan in England and Wales see, in general, Dickinson, 1961; Gilyard-Beer, 1976; Coppack, 1990.

[25] On the earliest buildings in the order's cradle-lands of Burgundy and Champagne, see Schaefer, 1982; Coppack, 1998, 23-31; and, in this context, Fergusson and Harrison, 1994, 233-4.

[26] In one of the earliest statutes it was stated: 'A new abbot is not to be sent to a new place without at least twelve monks; or without these books: psalter, hymnal, collectary, antiphonary, gradual, Rule, missal; nor without having constructed these places: oratory, refectory, dormitory, guest quarters, gatehouse – so that they may straightway serve God there and live in keeping with the Rule': Waddell, *Narrative and Legislative Texts (Capitula IX)* 408 *(Intituta XII)* 461; and the editor's notes at 167-75. See also Norton, 1986, 318-9.

[27] For the location of Clairvaux, with a summary of the surviving buildings, see Peugniez, 2001, 120-3.

[28] Although little can be seen of the 12th-century claustral ranges at the two sites, early plans provided a record of their layouts, for which see Aubert, 1947, vol. 1, 11, 109. For further on Cîteaux, see Plouvier and Saint-Denis, 1998, 123-64. On Clairvaux, see Leroux, 1991, 191-203, 209-18. An up-to-date summary of the state of research on both abbeys appears in Frankl, 2000, 317-8, notes 50-59A.

[29] On the site, see Peugniez, 2001, 54-7. For more on the chapter house, see Auberger, 2001, 42, 96-117 *passim.*

[30] The present two-bay arrangement represents a later-medieval modification: Aubert, 1947, vol. 2, 62-3; Auberger, 2001, 97-100.

[31] On the location of Pontigny, see Peugniez, 2001, 69-72. For the surviving buildings, see Dimier, 1982, 299-304. There is an up-to-date summary of the state of research on the abbey in Frankl, 2000, 95-6, 317-8, notes 55A-58.

Across Europe as a whole, it appears to have been this latter rectangular form - with the room usually contained within the depth of the east range - which predominated among Cistercian chapter houses of the twelfth century.[32] Often, as at Pontigny, just two median piers were used to create six vaulted bays, though four piers framing a central bay (of nine) may have been the more common pattern.[33] Indeed, there is now a suggestion that the square, four pier, three bay by three bay plan, may well have originated with the Cistercians in France in the late 1130s and 1140s, though it would be stretching the point too far to speak of any highly regularised form.[34] Continental examples of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries include: L'Escale-Dieu (Hautes-Pyrénées), Flaran (Gers), Fontfroide (Aude) and Vaucelles (Nord), all in France; Alcobaça in Portugal; Santa Creus in Spain; Casamari (Latium) and Staffarda (Piedmont) in Italy; Heiligenkreuz in Austria; and Val-Saint-Lambert in Belgium.[35] As for examples of six-bay chapter houses with only the two median piers, we might cite: Preuilly (Seine-et-Marne), Senanque (Vaucluse), Silvacan (Bouches-du-Rhône) and Noirlac (Cher) in France; Ossegg in Bohemia; and Fossanova (Latium) and San Galgano (Tuscany) in Italy.[36]

The Earliest Cistercian Chapter Houses in Britain

Among the English Benedictine and Cluniac monasteries of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, we can perhaps trace a clear preference for an east-west axial arrangement in chapter house design, not infrequently coupled with an apsidal east end to the building. One might think, for instance, of early Norman foundations such as Battle (Sussex), Durham, Castle Acre (Norfolk), Reading (Berkshire), St Albans (Hertfordshire), or Wenlock (Shropshire).[37] In the meantime, the white monks began to arrive from the late 1120s onwards.[38] Growth and expansion of the order across the British Isles took place through the 1130s and 1140s; in other words at much the same time as the major rebuildings of both the churches and claustral ranges were taking place at the senior Burgundian abbeys of the order.

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[32] A point made, for example, in Gardner, 1976, 69.

[33] Dr Christopher Wilson goes so far as to suggest that this was the 'universal' white monk type, though noting that 'typically' it was the six western bays which were contained within the range. He suggests Fontenay as the prototype of the form: Wilson, 1999, 60-2.

[34] The idea of 'centrality' within this design has been linked to the liturgical use of the room, including matters such as discipline and the reception of novices: Bonde, Boyden and Maines, 1990, 202-4, 208, note 6.

[35] We might note that at Vaucelles, Alcobaça, Heiligenkreuz and Val-Saint-Lambert the east range was three bays in width.

[36] For summaries of what survives of the French houses in these two groups, see Peugniez, 2001, 96-9 (Noirlac); 173-4 (Preuilly); 193-8 (Fontfroide); 264-6 (Flaran); 270-2 (L'Escale-Dieu); 291-6 (Vaucelles); 409-11 (Silvacane); 420-3 (Senanque). On Val-Saint-Lambert (and the similar arrangement at Villers), see Coomans, 2000, 317-44. Additional details on these and most of the other houses, will be found in Braunfels, 1972, 74-110; Dimier, 1971; Van de Meer, 1965. A notable early exception to these two broad forms may have been the chapter house at Le Ferté (Saône-et-Loire), one of Cîteaux's four elder daughters. It was apparently of three bays wide by four deep, with the eastern bay projecting beyond the range: Aubert, 1947, vol. 1, 113; Peugniez, 2001, 61-2.

[37] The general point is made in Fernie, 2000, 201-3.

[38] For background, see Knowles and Hadcock, 1971, 112-28; Stalley, 1987, 240-50; Norton and Park, 1986, 24-39; Robinson, 1998, 14-24.

The earliest Cistercian plantation in England was at Waverley, situated on the banks of the river Wey in Surrey, and founded in 1128 from the French abbey of l'Aumône (Loir-et-Cher), itself a daughter house of Cîteaux.[39] The first stone church and associated claustral buildings at the site were laid out in the 1130s, or in other words before the new works at Cîteaux and Clairvaux could have progressed very far. It has recently been suggested that the Waverley chapter house was arranged on a north-south axis, positioned immediately adjacent to the south transept, with its rectangular form contained within the width of the east range.[40] Similarly, at Rievaulx Abbey in Yorkshire, founded from Clairvaux in 1132,[41] it seems the initial chapter house of *c.*1135-55 was likewise contained wholly within the lateral walls of the east range. In this case, it has been argued that the plan was yet closer to near-contemporary French models, with two median 'piers' set out on the longer north-south axis.[42] Much the same may have existed at Fountains Abbey, where the first stone chapter house was apparently built by Abbot Henry Murdac in 1144-46.[43] All of these are thought to have been single-storey chambers, their only light coming from windows located in the east wall. There is no indication of vaulting from any of the sites, and it is more likely the rooms were covered by relatively low wooden roofs. A chapter house of similar form could well have been built at Melrose (*c.* 1145) in Scotland, in which case it was doubtless derived from its mother house at Rievaulx.[44] And in Ireland, at Mellifont, the earliest chapter house of the 1150s was again housed within the walls of the east range, though here it may have been vaulted over two median piers, with French prototypes very much the likely source of the design.[45]

The Twelfth-Century Chapter House at Tintern

We may now turn to the twelfth-century Cistercian chapter houses of Wales, and to that at Tintern Abbey in particular. Tintern was founded by the Anglo-Norman lord of Chepstow, Walter fitz Richard of Clare (died 1138), in 1131. In common with Waverley, the site was colonised with monks from the abbey of l'Aumône in north-central France, which means Tintern was similarly linked as a granddaughter to Burgundian Cîteaux.[46] Furthermore, the initial layout of the monastic buildings, including the chapter house within the east range, was quite possibly analogous to that posited for its marginally earlier sister house.[47] In turn, it would be surprising if the details at Tintern were very

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[39] Knowles and Hadcock, 1971, 127-8. Very little is known of the form of l'Aumône itself: Peugniez, 2001, 118.

[40] On the basis of excavations around the turn of the 19th century, Harold Brakspear posited a 12th-century chapter house measuring 32 feet (9.8 m) from east to west, by 27 feet (6.1 m) wide, separated (he believed) from the north transept by a 'narrow passage': Brakspear, 1905, 8-9, 38. This is challenged by Glyn Coppack, who prefers to interpret the Waverley evidence along near-contemporary French (and English) lines: Coppack, 1998, 32-4.

[41] Knowles and Hadcock, 1971, 124; Fergusson and Harrison, 1999, 37-8.

[42] Fergusson and Harrison, 1994, 232-3; Fergusson and Harrison, 1999, 87, 90, 94-5.

[43] Coppack, 1998, 36-9; Coppack, 2003, 33-5.

[44] Fergusson and Harrison, 1999, 94-5.

[45] Much the same design was later used at Dunbrody: Stalley, 1987, 56, 62, 164.

[46] Knowles and Hadcock, 1971, 114, 127; Williams, 1976, 94; Cowley, 1977, 42.

[47] For the 12th-century buildings, see Robinson, 1996a; Robinson, 2002a, 27-9. The east range itself was built to the emerging Cistercian pattern. For the discovery in 1903 of the masked 12th-century wall face in the monks' day room, see GRO D 902-1. There seems to have been a combined day room and warming house at the north end of the range. The warming house fireplace, set against the east wall of the day room (with the stonework in a herringbone pattern), was identified in 1904, see GRO D 902-2; also PRO Work 14/75.

far removed from those which have been suggested for Rievaulx and Fountains. Although the evidence is slight, all in all there are strong indications that the stone-built church and claustral ranges would have been fairly well advanced by about 1150.[48] In this first phase of planning, the cloister was set out along relatively modest lines, with an east range measuring some 29 feet (8.8 m) wide internally and just over 100 feet (30 m) long (Fig. 4).

In seeking to reconstruct the layout of Tintern's twelfth-century chapter house, we are obliged to draw on a few clues within the later fabric of the east range. It seems that the core of the southern wall (that shared with the north transept of the twelfth-century church) must lie fossilised in the surviving masonry at this point.[49] In contrast, the east wall has effectively been lost to us altogether. So far as we can tell, it would have returned in line with the east wall of the range as a whole (Fig. 4), a conclusion supported by the suggestions made for the three key comparative English sites.[50] If we are to accept the form of the Tintern chapter house masonry as consolidated, the only indication of the twelfth-century east wall which survives today is a slight stub of footing projecting from the northern wall of the later building (Fig. 7). In turn, this brings us to consider the position of the original north wall. One possibility is that it lay on the same line as the thirteenth-century division with the inner parlour (Fig. 4), resulting in a room of virtually square plan, measuring approximately 28 feet (8.5 m) wide by 29 feet (8.8 m) deep, with around 812 square feet (75.4 sq m) of internal space.[51] On the other hand, thinking of the predominance of the rectangular form among the early Cistercian chapter houses of France, and of the comparable proposals made for the layouts at Waverley, Rievaulx and Fountains, it seems more likely the monks at Tintern would have determined upon a room of similar plan. In other words, we might be looking to position the original north wall a little further out in the east range. In fact, the line of the north (rather than the south) wall of the thirteenth-century inner parlour becomes a more attractive option (Fig. 4).[52] In this reconstruction the early chapter house would still have been 29 feet (8.8 m) deep, though its width increases to almost 40 feet (12.2 m), thereby giving an overall ground area in the region of 1,160 square feet (107.8 sq m). Finally, although there is nothing to indicate the precise form of the entrance façade in this era, it may be reasonable to infer a central doorway flanked by two window openings, an arrangement which was to prove by far the

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[48] Confirmation of early growth and a position of relative stability are in part confirmed by the foundation of a daughter house at Kingswood (Gloucestershire) in 1139: Knowles and Hadcock, 1971, 121; Williams, 1976, 102.

[49] By way of a cautionary note, however, it is necessary to point out the perennial problem of trying to work out an historic structural sequence as interpreted by earlier generations of monument custodians: in short, as consolidated cannot always be accepted as proof of the original form.

[50] However, this was not the view held by Charles Peers. He claimed: 'Early in the 13th century a gradual rebuilding and enlargement of the cloister was undertaken, enough of the 12th century masonry being retained to show that the first chapter house was the same size as that now existing': Peers, 1922, 9. In a later interpretation, Brakspear (1929) determined that the entire eastwards extension was early 13th century. Then, Brakspear (1934), followed by Craster (1956), altered the sequence to show a late 12th-century extension, followed in the early 13th century by a further reworking, including the addition of eastern buttresses and the internal vault. This last proposal seems most unlikely to me.

[51] This is as shown on the plan in Robinson, 2002a, 28.

[52] This may still have allowed for a narrow chamber accommodating the day stair to the monks' dormitory immediately to the north (Fig. 4), a detail which then appears to have been retained within the later arrangements.

most common across the order at large.[53] In any case, whatever the nature of the façade, it would have been enclosed by a lean-to roof covering the east cloister passage.

As to the overall character of Tintern's mid-twelfth-century chapter house, one probably has to envisage a room of no great architectural pretension. Fully housed within the width of the east range, it must have been a relatively low and dark space, lit only by small windows in the east wall. If the layout was indeed of the preferred early Cistercian rectangular form, we cannot discount the possibility of a median 'pier' (or 'piers') on the longer north-south axis. Yet a stone vault somehow seems unlikely, and a wooden roof is probably to be expected.

Elsewhere in Wales, although even less direct evidence has survived, early chapter houses of a similar character, contained within the east range, may well have existed at Basingwerk, Margam, Neath, and probably Whitland. The details of Margam and Whitland would be of particular interest were anything to survive archaeologically, since both abbeys were first-generation daughter houses of Clairvaux, founded within a decade of the important rebuilding of that house.[54]

A New Generation of British Cistercian Chapter Houses

This rather restricted and enclosed design for Cistercian chapter houses, especially as interpreted in the order's mission phase of settlement in Britain, was rapidly to fall out of favour. New and very different models were introduced in a fresh generation of buildings begun during the 1150s and 1160s. The first sign of the widespread changes to come was provided in no uncertain manner by the striking new chapter house built in the 1150s at Rievaulx by Abbot Ailred (1147-67).[55] In specific terms, the characteristics of this free-standing two-storey building, with its apsidal east end and lower flanking aisle running around all sides, rendered it unique. The precise design was never adopted by any other Cistercian house in Britain or on the Continent. Even so, certain basic qualities in the structure were to become common traits in the years ahead.

Most importantly, in architectural terms the Rievaulx chapter house shifted the axial direction of the building. It was now set at right angles to the east range, effectively embracing the widespread and consistent English predilection for an east-west orientation. In turn, this allowed for new experiments in lighting and roofing. The space provision at Rievaulx, including that in the vestibule and the adjacent east cloister walk, also gives us something to think about when considering the planning at other sites. This point is most clearly underlined by the developments seen at Fountains in the 1160s. Here, as part of a busy ongoing building programme, Abbot Richard of Clairvaux (1151-70) was to oversee the construction of a vast new chapter house, one of the largest ever raised in England. It measured some 84 feet (25.6 m) deep by 41 feet (12.5 m) wide,

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[53] Effectively, such a tripartite division of the façade reflected the 'standard' internal arrangement of three north to south bays.

[54] On the sites in general, see Robinson, 1998, 66-7, 138-41, 204-5. On Basingwerk, see further Taylor, 1971; Robinson, 1996b. On Margam, see Robinson, 1993; Newman, 1995, 424-9. On Neath, see Butler, 1976; Newman, 1995, 463-71; Robinson, 2002b. The chapter houses are considered further in Robinson, 2004, chap. 10.

[55] For superb accounts of Ailred's chapter house, and intriguing thoughts on its conceptual qualities, see Fergusson and Harrison, 1994, 221-32, 235-45; Fergusson and Harrison, 1999, 90-9.

with an internal floor area of approximately 3,444 square feet (320 sq m).[56] As with Ailred's building at Rievaulx, Abbot Richard's chapter house was to be orientated at right angles to the east range, and was again based on quite a different model from that adopted by the Cistercians in Burgundy just a few decades earlier. The completed room featured a two-bay western vestibule in which the vaults, supported on monolithic marble columns, were contained below the floor of the dormitory.[57] In the four free-standing bays projecting beyond the range proper, the vaults were raised in height, resulting in a space with a lighter, less cramped general character. The Fountains chapter house was also the first example in England to employ a triple entrance arch façade, a feature which appears to be rare in a Cistercian context outside this country.[58] What is so remarkable in this design is the scale of ambition it reflects, especially in the context of the chapter room at Abbot Richard's previous abbey of Vauclair (Oise).[59]

Although a number of other influences were doubtless at work, in the wake of these new buildings at northern England's two most influential Cistercian houses, the same basic chapter house layout was to become commonplace across the whole of the British Isles. Of course, the proportions and precise design were to vary, determined not least by the resources available to the house and the size of its community. Nevertheless, the general trend can be detected wherever we look. In the west of England, for example, one might think of the chapter house at Buildwas Abbey (*c.* 1160-70) in Shropshire (Fig. 8), or those at Combe (*c.* 1170) in Warwickshire and Forde (*c.* 1160-70) in Dorset.[60]

In Wales, we first pick up this trend for the building of chapter houses with greater architectural and liturgical distinction at Margam, very soon after 1200. Probably built in the time of Abbot Gilbert (*c.* 1203-13), the Margam chapter house was as exceptional in its way as that raised at Rievaulx a half century before (Fig. 2).[61] Even in its present ruinous condition, the architectural qualities of this deeply impressive and extremely rare polygonal Cistercian building are readily evident. Internally, the building was perfectly circular, measuring some 50 feet (15.2 m) in diameter. Centrally, the stone vault was supported on a single pier crowned with a capital featuring brittle-looking, deeply cut stiff-leaf foliage, itself supporting twenty-four moulded vault ribs. The new building was presumably built outside the existing east range, allowing continued use of the twelfth-century chapter room for as long as possible. Then, as work on the new building drew near to completion, the community may have been able to transfer its chapter meetings, thereby freeing up the space formerly occupied within the range. This older area was to be remodelled as a vestibule, as well as providing a section of the vaulted undercroft for the monks' dormitory above.

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[56] For Abbot Richard's work in general, see Coppack, 2003, 43-60; for the chapter house, Hope, 1900a, 342-5; Coppack, 2003, 57-8.

[57] The northern and southern compartments of the westernmost bay were originally partitioned off to form book cupboards entered from the cloister.

[58] In France, Germany and Italy, a façade with a central doorway and flanking windows might be said to be the 'universal' Cistercian type.

[59] For Vauclair, see Aubert, 1947, vol. 2, 55-6. For a site location and a summary of what survives, see Peugniez, 2001, 371-2. See also Fergusson and Harrison, 1994, 249-50, note 39.

[60] For background on these sites, see Fergusson, 1984, 116-7, 121-2, 125; Robinson, 1998, 78-80, 89-90, 109-10. For further on Buildwas, see Robinson, 2002c, 17-18.

[61] On the Margam chapter house in general, see Birch, 1897, 92-9; Hillaby, 1988-90; Robinson, 1993, 58; Newman, 1995, 426-8.

As pointed out in the introduction, centrally planned chapter houses of polygonal design are particularly unusual: indeed, they appear to have been a peculiarly British tradition.[62] It surely cannot have been coincidence, then, which led to the construction in the West Country of the only two known early Gothic Cistercian examples; the second is to be found at Dore in Herefordshire.[63] In passing, we might note that art historians have tended to explain the form by reference to certain iconographical prototypes, such as baptisteries and mausoleums, or to centrally planned buildings associated with the Virgin, or to the *Cenaculum* (the upper room in which the Last Supper was held).[64]

The Thirteenth-Century Rebuilding of the Tintern Chapter House

By the early thirteenth century, whether or not they were aware of the rebuildings at Margam and Dore (as well as at the sister house of Waverley),[65] the monks at Tintern must have considered the conditions in their now 'primitive' chapter house ripe for improvement. Although a start had been made on the expansion of the initial layout of monastic buildings around the turn of the twelfth century, it was perhaps the 1220s before the community was in a position to begin work apace. In 1223-24, William Marshal (died 1231), the young earl of Pembroke, granted the abbey a particularly generous endowment which may have been earmarked to finance a major rebuilding of all three principal claustral ranges, a programme which went on to span much of the second and third quarters of the century.[66] It is certainly tempting to associate some of the progress on this scheme with Abbot Ralph (*c.* 1232-45), a man we are told 'gifted in no small way with sobriety of habits, and splendour of wisdom'.[67] In any case, one of the most prominent indications of the extent and quality of the work is to be found in the rich detailing of the extended chapter house.

Fortunately, with careful investigation, it becomes clear that enough survives of Tintern's early Gothic chapter house - either consolidated *in situ*, or to be found as dispersed *ex situ* architectural fragments at various locations across the site - to produce a reasonably accurate reconstruction of the building, at least on paper (Figs. 9, 10 and 11).[68] By the second quarter of the thirteenth century, the plan form adopted would have been very familiar to Cistercian communities throughout England. Indeed, it was in essence a scaled down version of the 1160s chapter house at Fountains. Here at Tintern, the structure was five bays in length. Three of these were contained beneath the dormitory, within the range proper; the remaining two projected beyond the line of the

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62 For a list of thirty-four, not all of them well substantiated, see Hillaby, 1998-90, 244.

63 On the Dore building, see Hillaby, 1988-90; Harrison, 1997, 120-4. The possibility that a third polygonal chapter house may at least have been planned at Cwmhir Abbey is seldom mentioned. The evidence is admittedly slight, but none the less intriguing: Williams, 1894-95, 95-7, pl. 8.

64 For the fullest discussion of the iconography of centrally planned chapter houses, see Gardner, 1976, 164-255. See also Fergusson and Harrison, 1994, 237; Fergusson and Harrisson, 1999, 97; Stratford, 1978, 51-2; Hillaby, 1988-90, 239.

65 For the rebuilding at Waverley (*c.* 1180-95), see Brakspear, 1905, 10, 38-40.

66 On the early 13th-century rebuilding in general, see Robinson, 2002a, 29-31, 48-58; Harrison, Morris and Robinson, 1998, 181-2. On the Marshal gift, see Williams, 1976 *passim*; Robinson, 2002a, 12.

67 We know from the chronicler of Waverley Abbey that Ralph went on to become abbot of Dunkeswell (1245-52), and later headed the community at Waverley itself (1252-66): Williams, 1976, 104-5; Williams, 2001, 131.

68 For some account of the treatment of *ex situ* architectural fragments at Tintern, see Harrison, Morris and Robinson, 1998, 188-96. The ongoing lack of proper conservation and storage of the collection is a cause for considerable concern.

outer wall (Figs. 4 and 5). To assess the character of the overall composition, we might consider the various individual elements, several of which were in fact measured and drawn by Joseph Potter in the 1840s (Fig. 13).[69]

Towards the cloister, the chapter house façade featured a stunning group of three richly clustered archways, and must have appeared particularly impressive. Something of the original quality of this composition may be discerned from the north and south responds, and especially from the two central piers (Figs. 3, 12 and 13). Around an essentially eye-shaped core, the piers comprised no less than fourteen shafts, six of which were coursed and filleted, with the remaining eight detached, all of them sitting on linked water-holding moulded bases.[70] Beyond the façade, the full rectangular plan of the chapter house interior was broken into fifteen bays, in the five by three arrangement preserved in outline today (Fig. 5). The form of the bays was determined by the two rows of four slender piers supporting the vault. The nine bays (three by three) occupying the range proper were virtually square in plan. However, the six to the east (three by three) were elongated on the east-west axis (Fig. 9). Originally, it is possible that the two outer bays at the westernmost end were partitioned off from the remainder. They may have been intended to serve as book cupboards, entered from the cloister by the northern and southern arches of the entrance façade. Such an arrangement is found, for instance, in the earlier chapter house at Fountains, and appears again in the near-contemporary building at Furness Abbey in Lancashire.[71]

One of the key elements recorded by Potter was the form of the piers, including the mouldings of the bases and capitals (Fig. 13, top right). As noted earlier, the four pier bases which we find located at the eastern end today were also in place in the 1840s. Potter's drawing confirms much of the current detail. Above a circular chamfered plinth, the profile of the true base is essentially of three tiered rolls. Then, rising from this composition, there is a short length of plain 'pier', which is as much as now survives *in situ*. However, Potter was able to show a form of sub-base with a richly moulded profile sitting on top of these lower fragments (marked 'a'). It is difficult to be certain whether he located just such a piece, but we might further observe that his drawing shows a second profile to the side (marked 'b'). And, it so happens that a circular stone with just this simple profile exists at the site.[72] Moreover, on its underside it carries a distinct rim, of precisely the diameter to sit neatly on the base 'pier' (Fig. 14). On its upper surface, this same fragment provides the width of the pier proper. Finally, Potter's plate of chapter house drawings gives us the form of a capital, featuring a prominent neck ring. In point of fact, it seems almost certain that several of the chapter house capitals are represented by the upturned fragments currently marking the positions of the four western piers, though as yet no positive evidence has been located to confirm the neck rings. In sum, then, we can accept the authenticity of the four *in situ* pier bases at the east end, though caution must be exercised with regard to the form of those to the west. For the purposes of the current reconstruction, it is assumed that all

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69 Potter, 1847, Tintern pl. 39.

70 The form of the arch mouldings supported by the piers is unknown, though it seems likely the profile was an intricate roll-and-fillet form as shown in conjectural outline in the reconstructed section (Fig. 10). To the left (north) of the chapter house façade, the jambs of the entrance to the inner parlour were also adorned with shaft groups.

71 The partitions at Fountains were of timber: Coppack, 2003, 58. The chapter house at Furness was rebuilt from the 1220s, and here the partitions were of stone: Hope, 1900b; Robinson, 1998, 117-8.

72 The stone in question currently sits as one of the loose pieces marking the position of the western piers.

eight piers were of the same style, and that the capitals matched throughout.[73]

The components which allow us to be reasonably confident about the form and detail of the chapter house vault survive quite well. To begin with, it is fortunate that in the north east and south east corners the springers remain in position (Fig. 15). And, on the basis of their characteristics, one is soon led to a significant collection of *ex situ* springer fragments, mainly derived from the eight freestanding piers (Fig. 16).[74] It is clear that three different forms are represented. In the first of these, the developing ribs look like they are intended to follow a comparatively steep angle, and therefore belong to the taller eastern bays. The second reveals a less acute angle to the ribs, a pattern to be expected in the lower bays to the west. The third form indicates a mix of the two, and is to be associated with those middle piers bridging the change in the height of the vault. Additionally, the springers give us the profile of the individual vault ribs. The triple roll-and-fillet section was drawn by Potter (Fig. 13, lower right), and in fact there is a large stock of loose ribs fragments situated on the north east side of the site (Fig. 17).[75] At least six cross-rib pieces also survive. Several have a small foliate boss, and from the angle of the ribs we can see that these sat over the square western bays (Fig. 18). Two examples carry a fuller swirling stiff-leaf pattern, and here the angle of the ribs suggests they sat over the elongated eastern bays, adding further to enhanced decoration at this end (Fig. 19). As the plan of the building illustrates, apart from the surviving springers in the corners, in the east bays the outer ends of the vault ribs were generally carried on shafted responds (Fig. 9). To the west, no such responds appear to have existed, and it is therefore assumed the ribs were supported on corbels in the upper walls.

Perhaps the most difficult element of the chapter house to reconstruct with certainty is the form of the windows, both in the eastern façade, and in the lateral walls of the end bays. We can at least be grateful that when the Office of Woods found it necessary to construct a raking buttress to support the sacristy vault in the early twentieth century,[76] the masons were careful to leave exposed the one surviving detail of the openings in the east wall (Fig. 20). Just about enough evidence of the sill in the southern bay survives to recover the basic window divisions, in turn confirming Joseph Potter's assessment that we are dealing with plate tracery forms (Fig. 13, top left). As shown by Potter, there were three lights to each bay, and therefore nine lights in all (Fig. 11). The central light in each case was about 2 feet 4 inches (0.71 m) wide, whereas the side lights were closer to 1 foot 4 inches (0.41 m). One or two *ex situ* fragments of the mullions are to be found at the site, and the profile is perfectly matched by further stones representing the trefoil heads of the narrower side lights (Fig. 21). It seems almost certain that the centre light of each triplet also featured a trefoil head. As for the additional windows in the side walls of the eastern bays (two on the north and one on the south), apart from the splays virtually all evidence has been lost. Here they have been reconstructed with mullions of the same form as those in the east façade, and with similar trefoil-headed lancets adapted to the scale of the openings (Figs. 9 and 10).

It seems very likely that all of these rather plain plate tracery outer lights were given a more

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[73] It is possible that the form of the more elaborate sub-base depicted by Potter belongs with the eastern piers, and that the simpler profile (represented by the one surviving example) may have gone with the western bays.

[74] These are to be found on the terrace which runs along the northern boundary of the site.

[75] They are grouped in the abbot's hall.

[76] PRO Work 14/75; GRO D 902-2.

decorative inner arcade, in much the same fashion as the windows in the monks' refectory.[77] One of the key pieces of evidence comes from the remains of two very worn shaft bases on the sill in the blind fourth bay (counting from the west) on the south side of the room (Fig. 22). We cannot be certain of the height of the shafts themselves, but comparison with other contemporary architectural works of a similar nature allows for an informed reconstruction (Fig. 10). Alas, all sign of the original inner sill of the eastern façade has been lost, though the arcade is again to be expected. In the reconstruction offered here, shafts have been placed in line with the plate mullions. It must be acknowledged, however, that the height of the capitals and the form of the arch heads are of necessity conjectural (Fig. 11). There is no shortage of other contemporary West Country examples of very similar approaches to enhancing the appearance of otherwise rather dull plate tracery windows. One might think, for example, of the chapter house at St Frideswide's Priory in Oxford (*c.* 1230-50), now Christchurch Cathedral, or of the chapter house at Lacock Abbey in Wiltshire, (*c.* 1230-40), to name but two.[78]

In sum, we might reflect on how all of this material comes together. In the most recent Cadw guidebook to the abbey (2002), there is a reconstruction drawing of the chapter house interior by Terry Ball (Fig. 1), and we can continue to rely on much of the detail as depicted in that illustration. Yet it has since proved possible to piece together more of the surviving elements, at last enabling us to produce a reasonably accurate set of sections. Through these new drawings, we are presented, as I have said, with an important work of early Gothic architecture. The scheme may be explained, at least in part, by the Tintern community's genuine need to provide additional space for its daily chapter meetings; other Cistercian communities were clearly proceeding along very similar lines at this time, as at Furness, and also at Cleeve in Somerset, and at Stanley in Wiltshire.[79] But somehow this does not go all the way to explaining the greatly increased elaboration and sophistication of the building, with its rich entrance façade, extended western vestibule, and well lit eastern bays. No less significant may have been a growing emphasis upon the importance of the chapter house ritual within the life of Cistercian communities. The room had become imbued with a deep sense of corporate and communal memory, underlined not least by the burial of former abbots beneath the floor.

Other Welsh Cistercian Chapter Houses Developments

We might conclude with a brief look at later developments at three more Welsh Cistercian chapter houses. At Basingwerk in the north east, the original twelfth-century building was extended in much the same fashion as Tintern, if in a more modest form, sometime in the first half of the thirteenth century.[80] The situation at Strata Florida is rather more complex to unravel, though presumably the early chapter house foundations were laid out in the late twelfth century, at much the same time as the church, and it is perfectly feasible that the building was initially contained within the width of the east range. Then, given the evidence of *ex situ* stonework fragments recovered in the late nineteenth-century excavations, it is clear the entrance façade was refashioned about 1220-30. It is possible, therefore, that the eastwards extension of the building (known only in plan) also dates from the same period.[81] If so, the work as a whole was presumably completed in time for the

[77] For the refectory windows, see Robinson, 2002a, 57-8.

[78] For Oxford, see Sherwood and Pevsner, 1974, 123. For Lacock, see Pevsner and Cherry, 1975, 286.

[79] Robinson, 1998, 86-7, 116-9, 173-5. For further of Furness, see Hope, 1900b. For Stanley, see Brakspear, 1906-07.

[80] Taylor, 1971; Robinson, 1996b.

[81] Williams, 1889, 205-6; Radford, 1949; Robinson and Platt, 1998, 54-5.

recorded burial of Maelgwyn ap Rhys in the abbey's chapter house in 1231. A number of other princes of the Deheubarth dynasty were to be interred in the room later in the thirteenth century (and this is certainly the theme one would like to expand in a longer paper). Finally, the only Cistercian chapter house in Wales to reveal evidence of work later than the thirteenth century, is that at Valle Crucis (Fig. 23). The room here stands virtually complete, its clean lines and bold proportions making for an arresting if simple elegance.[82] Interestingly, the plan, with its four central piers, returns to the Burgundian nine-bay centralised forms of the early twelfth century.

For present purposes, Valle Crucis must serve to remind us of the ongoing importance of the daily chapter ritual in the lives of the Welsh Cistercian communities on into the later Middle Ages. I feel sure that if a white monk Customary had survived from one of the abbeys, it would reveal a community rich in memory. That collective communal memory would not only have reminded the monks of the pioneering achievements of their order, but also the generosity of their benefactors (both Welsh princes and marcher lords), and of the deeds of the former abbots laid to rest at their feet. These are subjects which, through a lifetime of devoted study, David Williams has illuminated in a quite breathtaking corpus of published material. I should like to add my own personal thanks to those of a much indebted world of Cistercian scholarship, for all he has given us these past forty years and more.

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[82] Hughes, 1895, 7-9; Radford, 1953; Maddison, 1978, 96-8; Evans, 1995, 36-7.

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Fig. 1: A reconstruction of the chapter house interior at Tintern Abbey, with the choir monks attending their daily meeting, late thirteenth century. Drawing by Terry Ball/David Robinson (2002).
By courtesy of Cadw.

Fig. 2: The interior of the polygonal chapter house at Margam Abbey (*c.* 1203-13), one of the best-known Cistercian buildings in Wales. Photograph by David Robinson.
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Fig. 3: A general view of the Tintern Abbey chapter house, looking west from the cloister.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

Fig. 6: The chapter house at Fontenay Abbey in Burgundy, *c.* 1150-55, looking south east.
Photograph by David Robinson.
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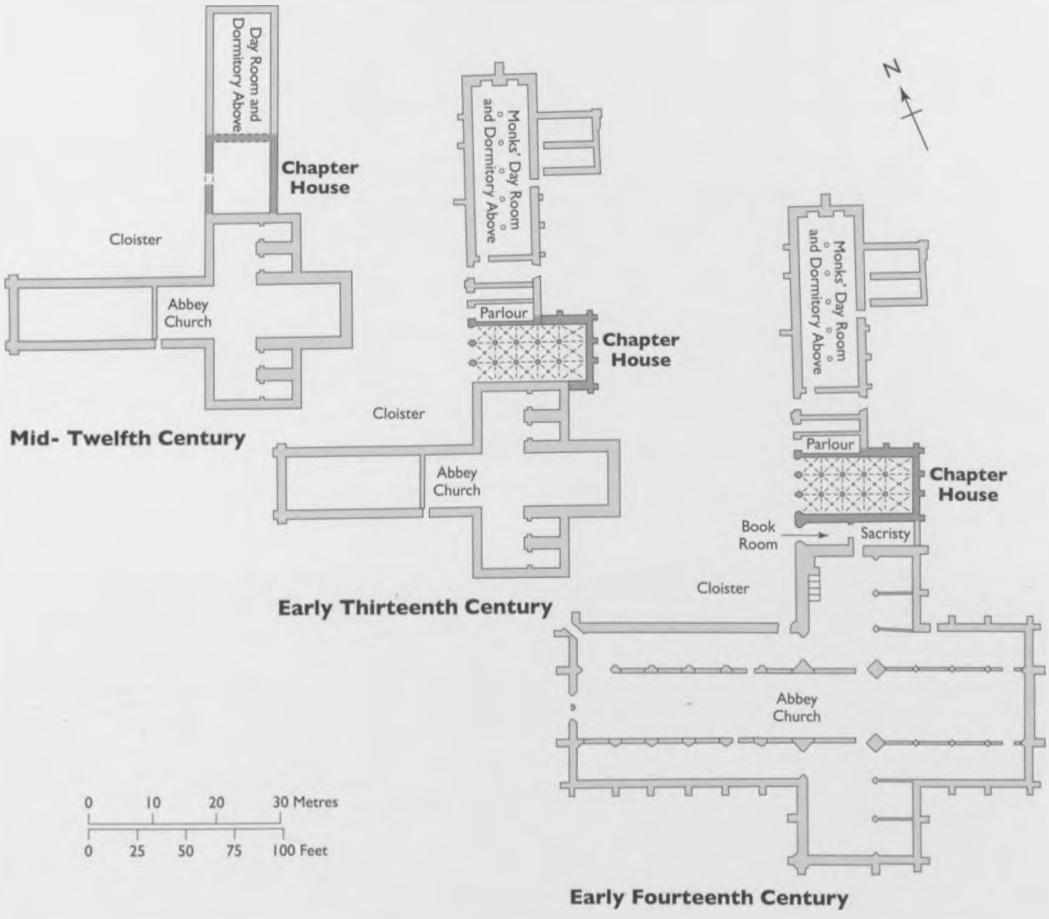

Fig. 4: Ground plans of Tintern Abbey to show the position of the chapter house within the east range in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Drawings by Pete Lawrence.
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Fig. 5: The chapter house at Tintern seen from above, looking north west.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

Fig. 7: A stone footing projecting from the north wall of the Tintern chapter house seems to mark the east termination of the twelfth-century building. Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
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Fig. 8: The interior of the chapter house at Buildwas Abbey, Shropshire, *c.* 1160-70, looking south west.
By courtesy of English Heritage Photographic Library.

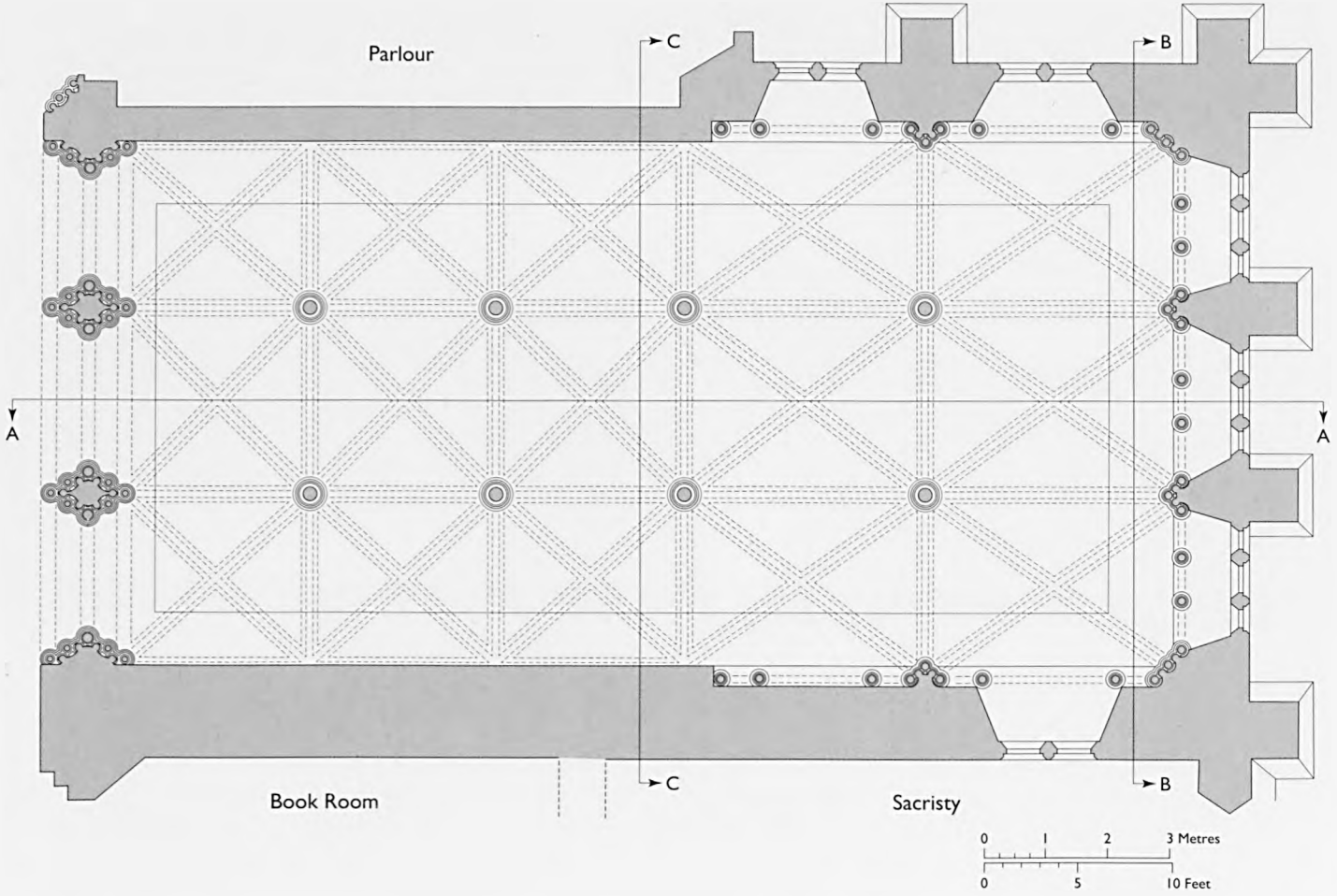

Fig. 9: Ground plan of the chapter house at Tintern Abbey, as completed *c.* 1230-50. Drawing by Pete Lawrence.
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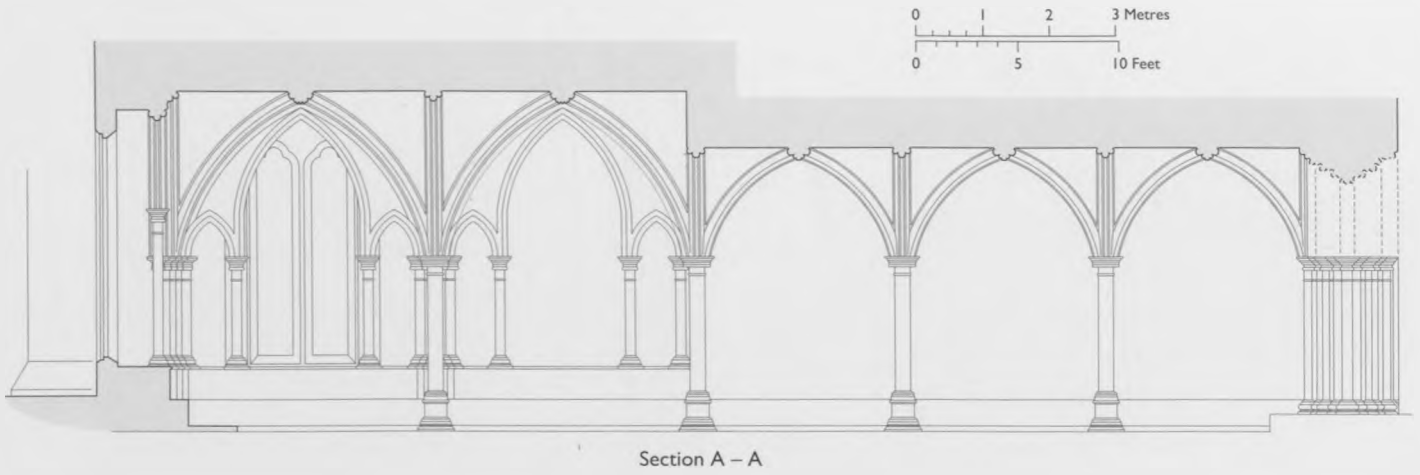

Fig. 10: Reconstructed east-west section of the chapter house at Tintern Abbey, looking south.
Original drawing by Chris Jones-Jenkins, redrawn by Pete Lawrence.
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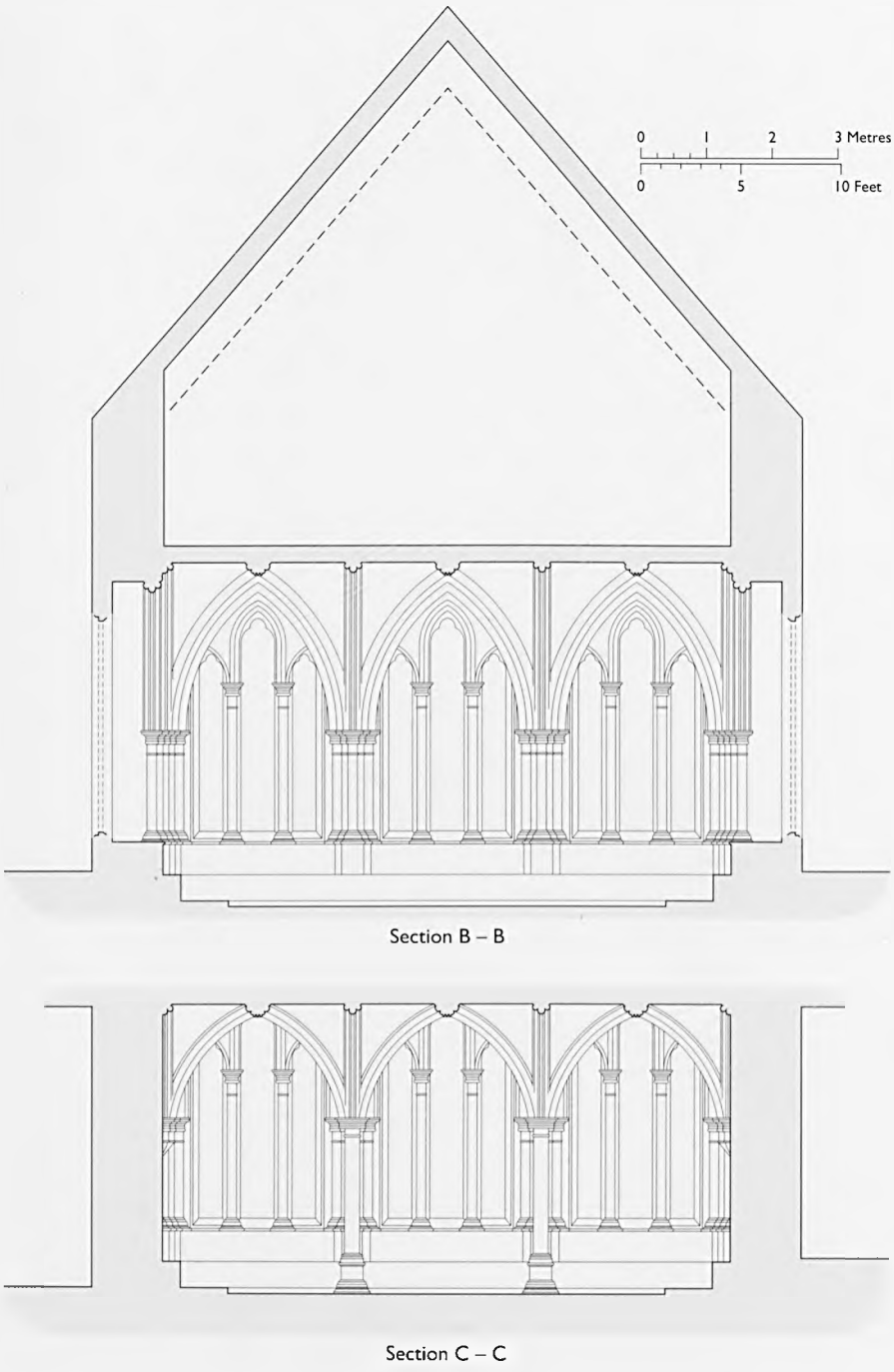

Fig. 11: Reconstructed north-south sections of the chapter house at Tintern Abbey, looking east. Original drawing by Chris Jones-Jenkins, redrawn by Pete Lawrence.
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Fig. 12: One of the multi-clustered pier bases of the triple-arched arcade into the remodelled thirteenth-century chapter house at Tintern. Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

Fig. 14: Three of the eastern pier bases in the Tintern chapter house. The example in the foreground shows a sub-base in position. Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
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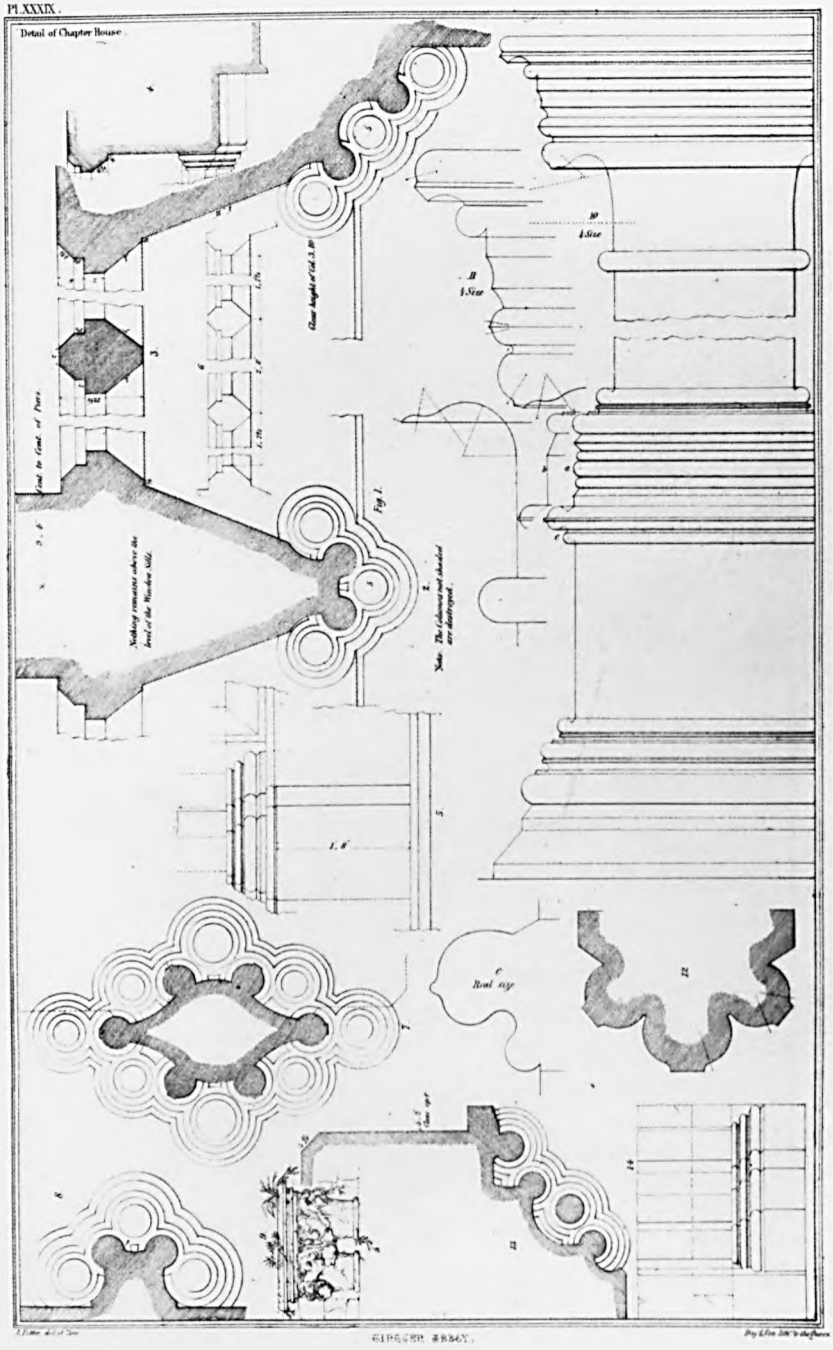

Fig. 13: Details of the Tintern Abbey chapter house drawn by Joseph Potter (1847).
Copyright: The British Library.

Fig. 15: The shafted vault respond and surviving springer in the north east corner of the Tintern chapter house. Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

Fig. 16: A selection of the Tintern chapter house vault springers, located on the terrace at the north side of the site. Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
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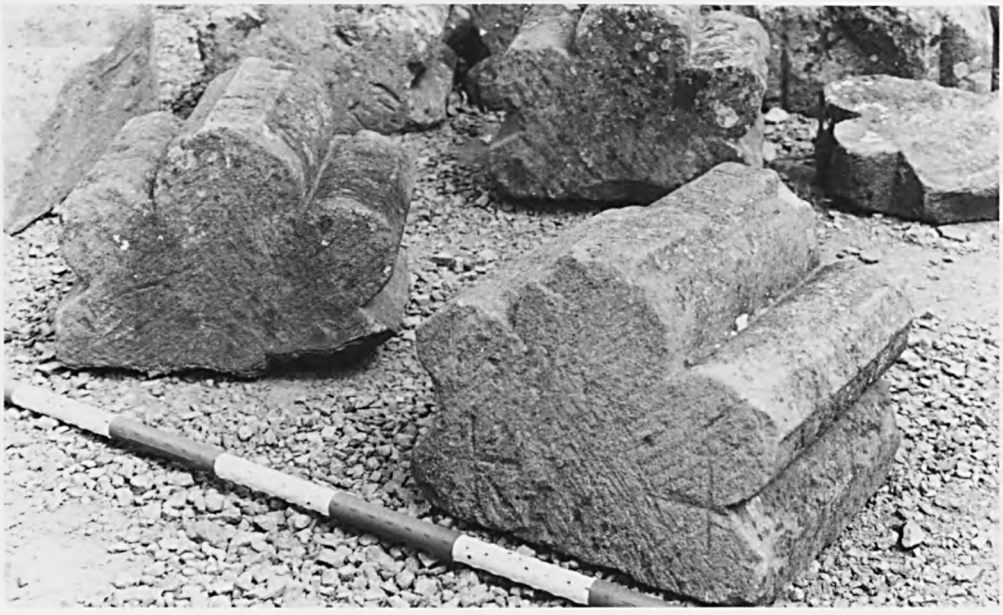

Fig. 17: Triple roll-and-fillet vault rib fragments from the Tintern chapter house, now located in the area of the abbot's lodging. Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
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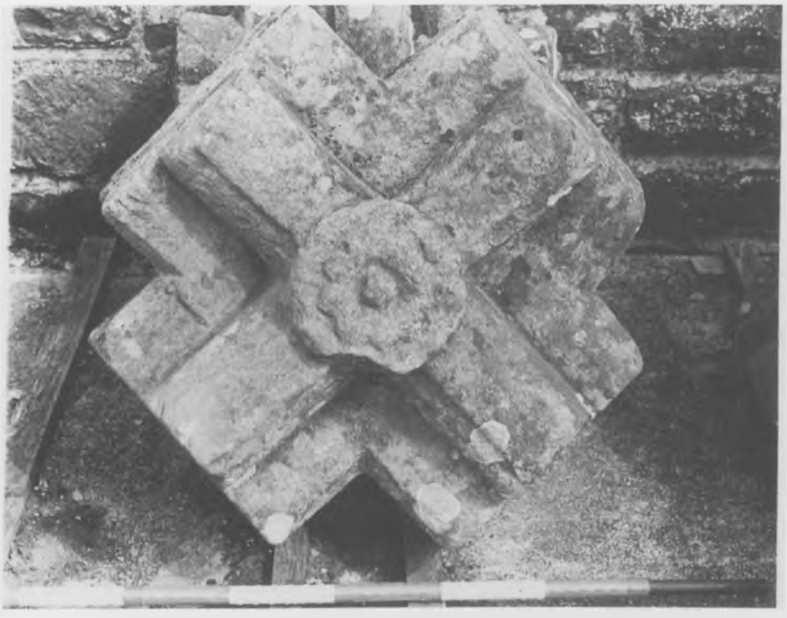

Fig. 18: Cross rib fragment from the west (square) bays of the Tintern chapter house, with small foliate boss. Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

Fig. 19: Cross rib fragment from the east (rectangular) bays of the Tintern chapter house, featuring swirling stiff-leaf decoration. Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

Fig. 20: Outer jamb and sill detail of one of the windows (south) in the east face of the Tintern chapter house. The enclosing arch dates from the early twentieth century.
Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
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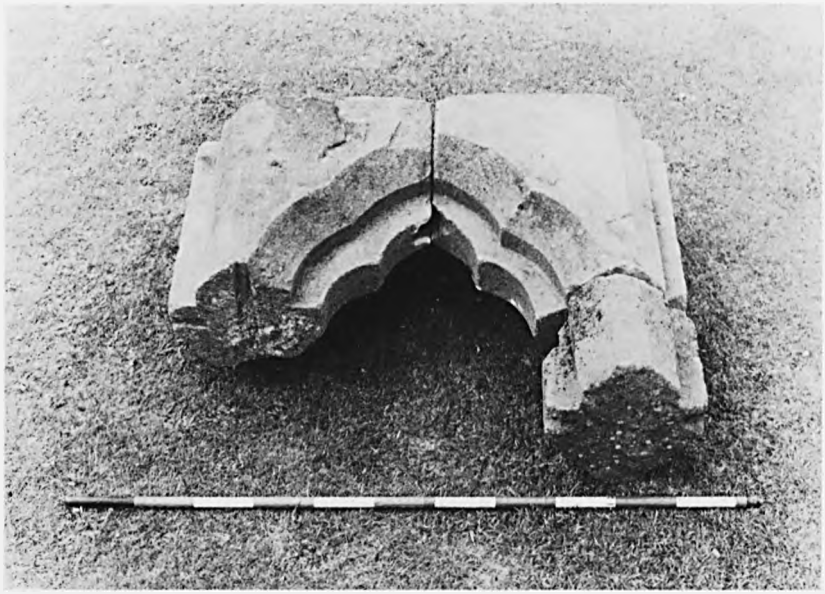

Fig. 21: The windows in the east façade of the Tintern chapter house were trefoil-headed lancets. These fragments represent one of the smaller openings to the sides of each bay.
Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

Fig. 22: A detail of the sill in the blind fourth bay (south side) of the Tintern chapter house. The much worn traces of a circular shaft base can just be identified (see arrow). Photograph by Ken Hoverd.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

Fig. 23: The mid-fourteenth-century chapter house at Valle Crucis Abbey was the last Cistercian example built in Wales.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

MERTHYRGERYN: A GRANGE OF TINTERN RECONSIDERED

By Peter Webster

When David Williams asked me to talk on a Cambrian's weekend about the Cistercian grange at Merthyrgeryn, a site I last concerned myself with in the early 1970s,[1] *I realised that I was going to have to conduct an excavation in my own memory, as much as in my records. That Wales's foremost historian of the Cistercians should concern himself with a site investigated only in outline and so long ago is a comment on the lack of work on such sites in Wales in the intervening period. In the hope that interest is again reviving in the subject, this review is offered as a tribute to one whose contributions to Cistercian studies form the starting point for all such investigations.*

Merthyrgeryn is part of a group of Tintern granges that form an outlier to the main concentration of Abbey lands.[2] These, once the granges of Merthyrgeryn (or Merthyr Gerain) and Moor, go today under the names Upper and Lower Grange Farms, near Magor (NGR ST 428 884; ST 428 855).

The Documentary Evidence

It will come as no surprise to learn that the person who first drew our attention to the documentary evidence for the Merthyrgeryn grange was David Williams in an early sortie into the economic history of the Cistercians in Wales.[3] Although we cannot add to the documentary evidence published there and in more extensive studies of the Welsh Cistercians,[4] it may be convenient to offer a discussion devoted solely to the Merthyrgeryn evidence.

Merthyrgeryn appears among the foundation grants to Tintern (1133, appearing in Gilbert of Pembroke's confirmation list *c.*1140 as 'Merthyr-gerain with its church' and in the confirmation by Gilbert Marshal (*c.*1240) as 'Merthyr-gerain, with the church and the wood'.[5] Walter Marshal appears to have added to the grange land holding in the early to mid 1240s.[6] A mill is mentioned in 1303.[7] The quarry at Merthyrgeryn (*quarera de Marthagern*) which supplied sixty-nine 'great free-stones' for building by Bogo de Clare at Llangybi Castle in 1286, is presumably to be associated with the Tintern grange.[8]

Besides these, there are three main documentary sources for obtaining a picture of the extent and economy of the grange.[9] Arranged in chronological sequence these are:

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1 Parkes and Webster, 1974a.

2 *cf.* Williams, 1990, figs.17 and 29; Robinson, 1995, 12; Parkes and Webster 1974a, 150.

3 Williams, 1965.

4 Especially Williams, 2001 *passim*.

5 *Cal. Charter Rolls III,* 88, 97-8, quoted in Williams, 2001, 174.

6 *Cal.Charter Rolls III*, 105, cited in Williams, 2001, 176.

7 National Library of Wales, Badminton MSS, Manorial 1641, cited in Williams, 2001, 240.

8 Public Record Office/The National Archives (PRO) SC 6, 925/18, transcribed in Cathcart King and Perks, 1956, 103-4, cited in Williams, 2001, 269.

9 The summary which follows is based upon Williams, 1965, 15-24.

1. *1291 (Taxatio Ecclesiastica).* The Merthyrgeryn holding is assessed at 2½ carucates (£2 10s. 0d.) and 19 acres (4s. 9d.). There are, however, a number of other Tintern holdings in the locality, all or some of which could have been managed from the grange: 30 acres (7s. 6d.) and fixed rents of 5s. in St Bride's parish, rents of 3s. in Magor parish and rents (13s. 4d.), 19 acres of land (3s. 2d.) and 14 acres of meadow (7s.) in Undy parish.

2. *1387-9 (Bailiff's Accounts, Badminton MS 1571).* These record payments and receipts, either in money or services (receipts of £18 4s. 6½d. against expenditure of £13 9s. 8½d. in 1387/8 and £11 15s. 10½d. against £11 12s. 5d. in 1388/9). They thus give a clear idea of activity on the grange, but do not give a clear indication of the total worth of the grange production, as produce sent to the abbey itself is recorded only in terms of expenditure on it (e.g. 30 quarters of corn was threshed in 1388/9 but its value is not recorded, only the cost of producing it). They also include activity by the manorial court. The light they shed on the grange economy and structures is discussed below.

3. *1535 (Valor Ecclesiasticus).* Merthyrgeryn is stated as being 'let to farm' with an income 'from corn' of £6. It may also be worth noting that rents and court perquisites at Magor brought in £24 14s. 4d. and tithes of corn at Magor and Redwick, £14 10s. 0d. This latter will not have been from the grange itself which appears to have been tithe-free, but presumably is from elsewhere in the parishes. At this time, the abbey was maintaining a bailiff at Magor (David Blethin) at a cost of £1 13s. 4d. per annum.

The grange thus seems to follow the classic pattern for such holdings, a movement from landholdings managed directly from the abbey to those entirely let out.[10] It is clear that by 1387-9, the grange had already been divided into manors, and a system of management by a bailiff introduced with some land rented out.[11] This may be regarded as an intermediate stage in the process whereby the Cistercian grange ceased to be anything other than yet another area of leased monastic estate. One would expect the grange to have been managed by a lay brother in the first instance, and there is no indication that the late fourteenth-century bailiffs are other than lay employees.

There is no doubt that the most important documents relating to Merthyrgeryn are the Bailiffs' Accounts of 1387-9. These give us a glimpse of the economy of the grange at that time and of the buildings and people involved. We can make the picture clearer by grouping information in the accounts under generic headings:

Buildings:

Cottages and crofts	Rent from a cottage by the bridge brought 1s.; rent from crofts on the upland brought 1s.
Stable	Labour and food in roofing a stable in 1387/8 cost 2s. 5d.
Byre(s)	Repair of the north and south walls of the Tham byre cost 13s. (including 3d. for cheese for the men) in 1387/8, while construction of a chamber for the drover in what may be the same byre, cost 10d.

[10] *cf.* Platt, 1969, 94-117.

[11] *cf.* Williams, 2001, chap. 13.

What appears to be a different byre was built across both years with expenses in 1387/8, recorded for felling timber (7d.), meat for the builders (1s. 4d.), ironwork (4d.), planking for the door (2d. for trees, 3s. for sawing the timber), and expenses for men seeking suitable timber ('dye-woods') in Wyeswood and Bernardswood (5s.). In 1388/9, work on the western part of the new byre cost 2s. Unspecified purchases cost 10s., plus 1s. for carriage (2 days with 6 horses). More specific is the purchase of 150 board nails (1s.). Thatching (with the hen-house) cost 3s. 4d., plus the cost of a servant to help the thatcher (2s. 3d.), and a woman collecting straw (1s. 5d.). 6d. for making plaster may also relate to this project.
What is presumably another building, is the 'cow house' thatched for 4d., apparently at the same time as the new byre.

Hen-house — A hen-house was thatched in 1388/9, at the same time as the new byre.

Sheepcote — Repairing the wall around the gate of the sheepcote cost 8d. in 1387/8.

Piggery — Two of what are probably hinges (twistes) were bought for the piggery in 1388/9.

Classes of Land:

Meadow and pasture — £1 14s. 8d. was earned from the rent of meadow and pasture in 1387/8, and £1 11s. 8d. in 1388/9.
11 acres of meadow was let to the grange-keeper free of charge.
15s. 8d. was earned from the sale of about 9 acres of meadow in 1387/8, and 2s. for meadow in 1388/9.
Pasture for 5 cows was sold for 5s. in 1387/8. Sale of pasture in 1388/9, brought 10s.
In 1387/8, mowing 5 acres of meadow at Broadmead, turning and stacking hay, cost 1s. 1d.; the next year, 6½ acres were mowed (for 4s. 6d.), presumably producing the hay which was tedded (spread out to dry), turned and stacked for 2s. 4d.

Arable land — 2s. was earned from the rent of land in the (common) field at Magor.

Walled areas — In 1387/8, Grono Hope repaired the stone wall in the part of Heldynge for 6d. This was apparently 2 days' work as 1 day's work by Grono and Jenkin Hope repairing the garden wall also cost 6d.

'The field' — Presumably the common field(s). Servants seeking either branches or turf in the field on festival days in 1387/8, cost 3d.

Woodland — Wrone was paid 3d. for work in the wood in 1388/9. Woodland suitable for building timber is implied by the accounts of the construction of a new byre (see above).

Crops:

Note: The measures used for crop yields in the accounts are those of capacity – the peck (2 gallons), the bushel (4 pecks or 8 gallons), and the quarter (8 bushels or 64 gallons). A bushel is thus equal to 36.368 litres, and a quarter to 290.944 litres.

Cultivation — Seedtime ploughing, including food for the men, cost 4s. 8d. in 1387/8.

	The 1388/9 accounts add a reason 'that they go not from the field to their own food and be impeded'. Ploughing and harrowing cost 12s. 8d. in 1388/9.
	Spreading manure cost 1s. 8d. in 1388/9.
Equipment	Mending iron ploughs cost 4s. 6d. in 1388/9, while the iron for ploughs was included among miscellaneous items costing 5s. 8d. Other purchases included grease for wagons and ploughs (charged with stacking corn), one 'wayn rope' (7d.), and 18 harrow teeth of new iron, and 18 of old, at 1s. 6d. and 7d. respectively. 4 sieves cost 4½d.
Corn	In 1387/8, hoeing of the demesne corn (without food for hoers) cost 12s. 9d., reaping, binding and stacking the corn, £3 11s. 9d., and labour (including women) for threshing cost £1 2s. 11d., and produced 19 quarters of corn and 11 quarters of seedcorn. However, the figures for winnowing in 1388/9 (see below) suggest that this figure may not represent the entire corn harvest.
	In 1388/9, 124 men were hired for one day to hoe/weed the corn (at a total cost of 17s.) while reaping, binding and stacking corn (along with autumn stacking) cost £3 19s. 9d. plus 9s. 2d. (less an unknown cost of grease for wagons and ploughs). At first sight, the yield in 1388/9 appears to be less than in the previous year (3 quarters of corn and 6 of seedcorn). However, in 1388/9 (and presumably the previous year), a much larger quantity of corn was winnowed (106 quarters, 6 bushels at a cost of 3s. 4d.). 3s. expended 'accompanying the lord's wagons' presumably relates to this harvest also, as does 2d. for 2 ropes and 2 shafts for the horses drawing the demesne corn.
	1 bushel of surplus corn was sold for 8d. in 1387/8, and 4 bushels for 2s. in 1388/9.
Barley	In 1387/8, threshing produced 33 quarters of barley.
	1 quarter and 3 bushels of surplus barley was sold for 3s. 6d. in 1387/8, and 4 bushels for 1s. 4d. in 1388/9.
Oats	Weeding oats cost 2s. 2½d. in 1388/9, and 3 quarters and 4 bushels of oats was sold. Threshing, probably of oats, cost 5s. 10d.
Pulses	7 bushels of surplus pulses were sold for 2s. 2d. in 1387/8, and 2 quarters 7 bushels for 5s. 5d. in 1488/9.
Onions	A pair of boxes and two pairs of gloves were purchased for preserving onions in 1388/9; sale possibly of these onions, brought 4d.
Trees	3 ash trees were sold for 5s. in 1388/9.

Items being bought and thus not being produced on the grange (or, presumably, in sufficient quantity on abbey estates) include:

Salt	bought in both years (2½ bushels in 1388/9).
Oatmeal	1 peck bought in 1388/9.
Cheese	11d. was spent in 1388/9.
Parchment	for court rolls was bought in 1388/9 (2d.).

Animals:

Oxen	An ox was sold for 10s., and the carcass of a dead ox sold for 1s., in 1387/8, while 5d. was expended for candles for the supervision of oxen at night in 1388/9 (presumably the equivalent of the 4d. for candles for the keeper of oxen spent in 1387/8).
Horses	Shoeing horses cost 6s. 8d. in 1387/8. In the next 3 years halters were bought (11d.), and iron for horse shoes (5s. 8d., which also included ploughs). 1 horse and 1 mare were shod (1s. 6½d.).
Cattle	are implied by the work on byres, but are otherwise 'invisible'.
Sheep	Castrating 13 two-year old sheep cost 4d. in 1387/8.
Pigs	Killing 10 pigs sent to the abbey cost 10d. in 1387/8. In 1388/9, sales included 3 pigs (7s. 6d.) and 3 piglets (5s.), while the killing of 1 pig, carrying it to the abbey and castrating 2 others, cost 4d.
Hens	The hen-house was thatched in 1388/9.

People:

Bailiff and servants	The bailiff (William Walter in 1387/8, Thomas Carpenter in 1388/9) and servants cost Tintern Abbey £3 1s. 4d. in stipends, and 2s. 7d. for 3½ bushels of salt. Presumably the servants included the granary-keeper, drover and keeper of oxen mentioned above.
Grange-keeper	The grange-keeper (*grangiarius*) is mentioned as having had 11 acres of meadow free of charge. This is presumably a reference to the official (probably a lay brother) who ran the grange prior to the appointment of a bailiff. By implication, the rent-free meadow passed to the bailiff.
Granary-keeper	The preceptor of the granary is mentioned in relation to the capture of a thief in 1388/9.
Drover	A room for the drover was made in the byre in 1387/8.
Keeper of oxen	Candles for the keeper of oxen (in the winter) cost 4d. in 1387/8.
Grono and Jenkin Hope	were employed repairing walls in 1387/8.
Stephen Hope	received an oblation of 2d.
Madoc ap Ever[?]	received part-payment of 2s. for an unknown reason in 1387/8.
Madoc the carpenter	was paid 4d. in 1388/9.
Richard Ewyas	is mentioned in relation to the 1388/9 harvest.
Wrono	was paid 3d. for work in the wood in 1388/9.
William Bird	was paid 1d. in part-wages in 1388/9.
William Cam	was paid 2s. 6d. for work at Llanwern in 1388/9.
The abbot	presumably paid a visit in 1387/8, as 1s. was expended on 'bread and beer' for him.
An un-named man	received 1½d. for clearing rubbish from the way leading to St Brides in 1387/8.
Un-named men	caught a thief in 1388/9 and held him at night, causing the granary-keeper to provide food to the value of 6d.

We can, therefore, build up a reasonable picture of Merthyrgeryn. It is, however, only a partial view. Many activities appear to have been part of the normal tasks of paid servants and only impinge on the accounts if they are in some way out of the ordinary. Cattle, for instance, are only evidenced by expenditure on byres. Hens would be unknown had the grange not taken the opportunity afforded by a thatcher working on the new byre to re-thatch the hen-house. Pigs seem to feature mainly when they are killed or sold. One suspects that there may be crops being grown and harvested by grange servants and consumed locally or at the abbey which do not appear at all. On the other hand, activities which require outside labour, are prominent. The annual corn harvest is very evident and clearly involved the employment of casual labour from local communities. A truly extraordinary occurrence is the mustering of 124 people for just one day to weed the corn in 1388/9 (assuming that the accounts mean what they appear to say) and indicates the size of the rural population available for such employment. One wonders quite why this job had to be done within such a short time-scale.

It is interesting that the accounts make an actual or tacit assumption that casually employed workers will be men. Women are, however, specifically mentioned in relation to gathering straw and with the harvest. One would guess that many who took part in the mass weeding day of 1388/9 were also women. The pattern bears resemblance to that provided by the well-known pictures in the borders of the Luttrell Psalter, where women are shown weeding and reaping.[12]

Even given the imperfections of the source, the accounts demonstrate clearly that the grange practised mixed agriculture as must have been frequent in the more self-sufficient Middle Ages. Pigs, sheep and cattle were all accommodated. Corn was clearly the major crop, but oats and barley were also grown. Meadowland provided fodder for the animals. Woodland presumably provided space and forage for the pigs and certainly provided wood for building purposes.

At the centre of the grange lay a group of farm buildings. A granary, more than one byre, a piggery, ox house, sheepcote and hen-house are all either mentioned or implied. Accomodation for people is barely mentioned, apart from a chamber for the drover added to one of the byres. Presumably this is because, in the two years for which we have details, no repairs were needed. It may be noted that both new building and repair work on buildings suggests construction mainly in wood and thatch. Some repair was, however, carried out on stone walls and, in the light of our survey, we can suggest that these lay in the enclosed landscape close to the grange. Further away from the grange, however, more open land is implied. Some of this will have been woodland and common land, but the 'field' mentioned more than once, seems likely to have been part of an open field system, perhaps associated with Magor.

The Survey and Excavation

Not long after David Williams published his work on the economy of Tintern, Norman Parkes noticed that Upper Grange Farm, near Magor had some interesting features which included the remains of enclosures. Norman Parkes was (and is still) someone who has the true field worker's eye for archaeological sites, whether they are flint-knapping sites in the Saudi desert, medieval sites

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[12] Backhouse, 2000, 22-3.

[13] *cf.* Parkes and Webster, 1974a and b.

in Monmouthshire or ice-houses in Lincolnshire.[13] He lived then in Llanmartin, and spent the time when he was not cossetting the blast furnaces at Llanwern, in walking the local fields. It was he who first took me round Upper Grange Farm, which we quickly realised was Merthyrgeryn Grange, and together we ran a survey session there and mounted a small excavation to confirm our findings.

The results of our efforts were published in 1974. The overall site plan (Fig. 1) has since reached a wider audience due to its appearance in various of David Williams's publications.[14] The site survey and the accompanying small excavation were fully published and so only need to be summarised here. The site divides into two areas: firstly, the grange buildings which lie probably under the present farm but certainly under its orchard; and secondly, an enclosure system which appears to sub-divide the present field system to the north east of the farm. Here, a series of dry-stone walls remain upstanding or can be seen as low stony mounds. The walls are notable for their occasional use of orthostatic blocks. They enclose a series of fields, but also edge several routes (Plate 1). When we described these in 1974, we called these 'lanes'. One runs along the scarp of Grange Wood and then appears to go down the slope towards the St Brides road. The other heads north east towards an area called Common-y-Coed which has been, one assumes, wooded common land. The 'lanes' are some seven metres wide and should perhaps be seen as drove-ways intended for management of livestock and for moving it between the grange itself with its known animal accommodation and grazing land.

An oddity on the north east side of the enclosures are two small structures, divided by the present track through the farm lands, where it crosses the further enclosure wall. In combination these give the appearance of gateway buildings. Excavation here showed that the low mounds visible on the ground to the north of the trackway masked a well preserved stone-built structure of dry-stone walls (Fig. 2). The area to the south of the track was little more than a cobble platform which, if it was a structure, certainly represents something different from that to the north and a different date cannot, therefore, be excluded. Looking at the complex again after thirty years, there seems little reason to regard these as a gatehouse into the grange. The trackway is certainly in current use and although this does not exclude its use in medieval times, there seems no great need for an additional (and unwalled) track independent of the enclosed lanes. It seems likely, therefore, that the trackway is more recent. This does, of course, leave us without a purpose for the structures which certainly exist at the point where the supposedly modern track crosses the enclosure system. Given the proven ability of small medieval rural dwellings to migrate about on a single site, it seems possible that these walls and platform are domestic and mark a building associated either with the fields to the west or the grazing to the east. Whatever, this is clearly an area which deserves further exploration.

When we first looked at the site, we assumed that any medieval grange buildings would lie beneath the modern farm. However, a look at the orchard, immediately west of the present farm buildings, proved us wrong. Here a series of rectangular depressions and mounds suggested that a long disused range of buildings had once occupied the area. Again excavation was limited and designed simply to sample the area and demonstrate the nature of the remains (Plate 2). We did sufficient to demonstrate the presence of a fairly substantial dry-stone walled structure (Fig. 3). Well-laid walls (Plate 3) were interrupted at intervals by large blocks (those examined were approximately 60 x 80 x 70 cm and 60 x 90 x 70 cm) with scoring on the top which could be original

[14] Notably Williams, 1990, fig.31, and 2001, 202.

(Plate 4). These presumably supported the main beams of a massive timber frame as, for instance, in a number of the Monmouthshire cruck buildings recorded by Fox and Raglan (e.g. 1951, 37, 50, 54, 58, 61 and 63) or indeed the 'granary' and West Barn associated with the well known Bradford-on-Avon barn which are part of a grange of Shaftesbury Abbey.[15] We found little evidence of domestic activity associated with our building and it seems more likely to be a barn. Its roof was certainly of stone slates capped with green glazed ridge tiles. These alone showed that we were dealing with a medieval building and there seems no reason to suppose that we are not looking at a component of the grange. Our investigations showed that it was one building in a range running SW-NE across the site (Figs. 1 and 3). The few sherds of medieval pottery found suggest a late twelfth to fourteenth-century date, and further confirm that the range may be associated with the grange.

We may reasonably assume that the range sampled was only part of a larger complex. If we look at the position of the buildings in relation to the present farm alignment, there appears to be room for several ranges around a yard. This would not be the massive courtyard of a Monknash,[16] but it is not unlike the ranges implied by the known plan of Llanfair Cilgoed.[17]

Some interesting possibilities are raised by the finding of human long bones during work by the farmer immediately south of the present farm (see Fig. 1). These come from at least two individuals with an approximate height for the one of about 5 feet to 5 feet 2 inches (153-158 cm). The second would seem to be in about the same height range. To the unpractised eye, their solidity and size suggests that they are from males. Whatever, unless we are to suppose nefarious practices among the more recent inhabitants of Merthyrgeryn, these suggest a burial ground and presumably, therefore, a chapel on the site and this can hardly have been at any time except during the earlier years of the grange, before its status changed to that of a rented farm. Such a chapel is presumably separate from the church of Merthygeryn which Williams locates elsewhere.[18]

Even the magnificent remains of Monknash have not prompted investigation by excavation, so it is perhaps not surprising that Merthyrgeryn remains one of the few Welsh Cistercian granges investigated. That it remains of interest thirty years after it was first surveyed is a tribute to that happy coincidence of documentary evidence and archaeological work which can give the study of the Middle Ages an edge over that concerned with other periods - provided, of course, that the archaeologists are supported by an archaeologically-conscious historian. It is in this respect that those studying the Cistercians in Wales have been so fortunate.

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[15] I am grateful to G. Evans for drawing my attention to a survey of the West Barn by M. Heaton of Asi for Bradford-on-Avon Preservation Trust, accessed 14 May 2003 on http://www.archaeology.demon.co.uk/3078.htm.

[16] RCAHM, 1982, 262-6 and pl. 4; Williams, 1990, 124-5.

[17] Williams, 1990, 118.

[18] Williams, 2001, 201, citing PRO E 134/44Eliz/East 12.

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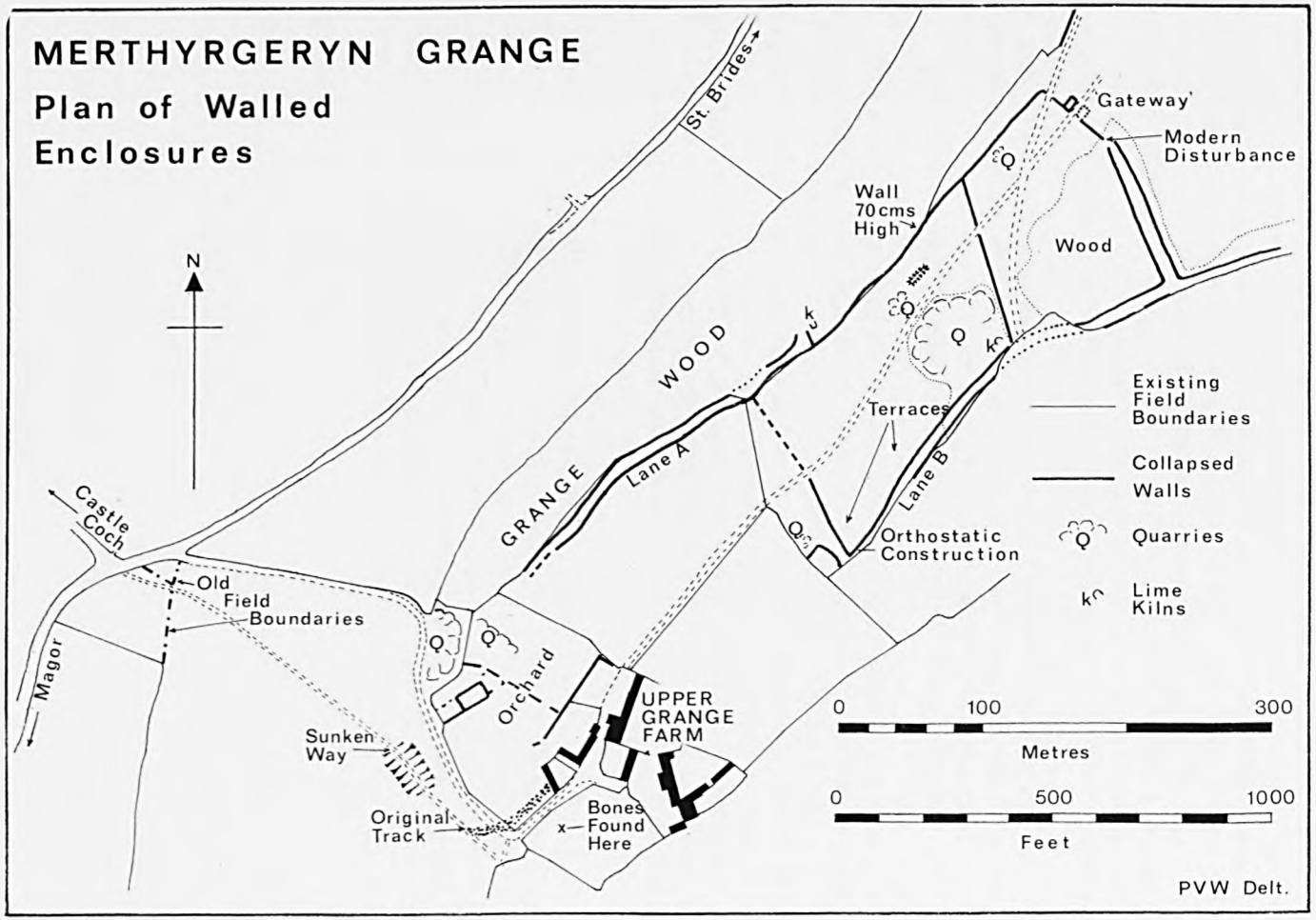

Fig. 1: Merthyrgeryn Grange. General Plan.

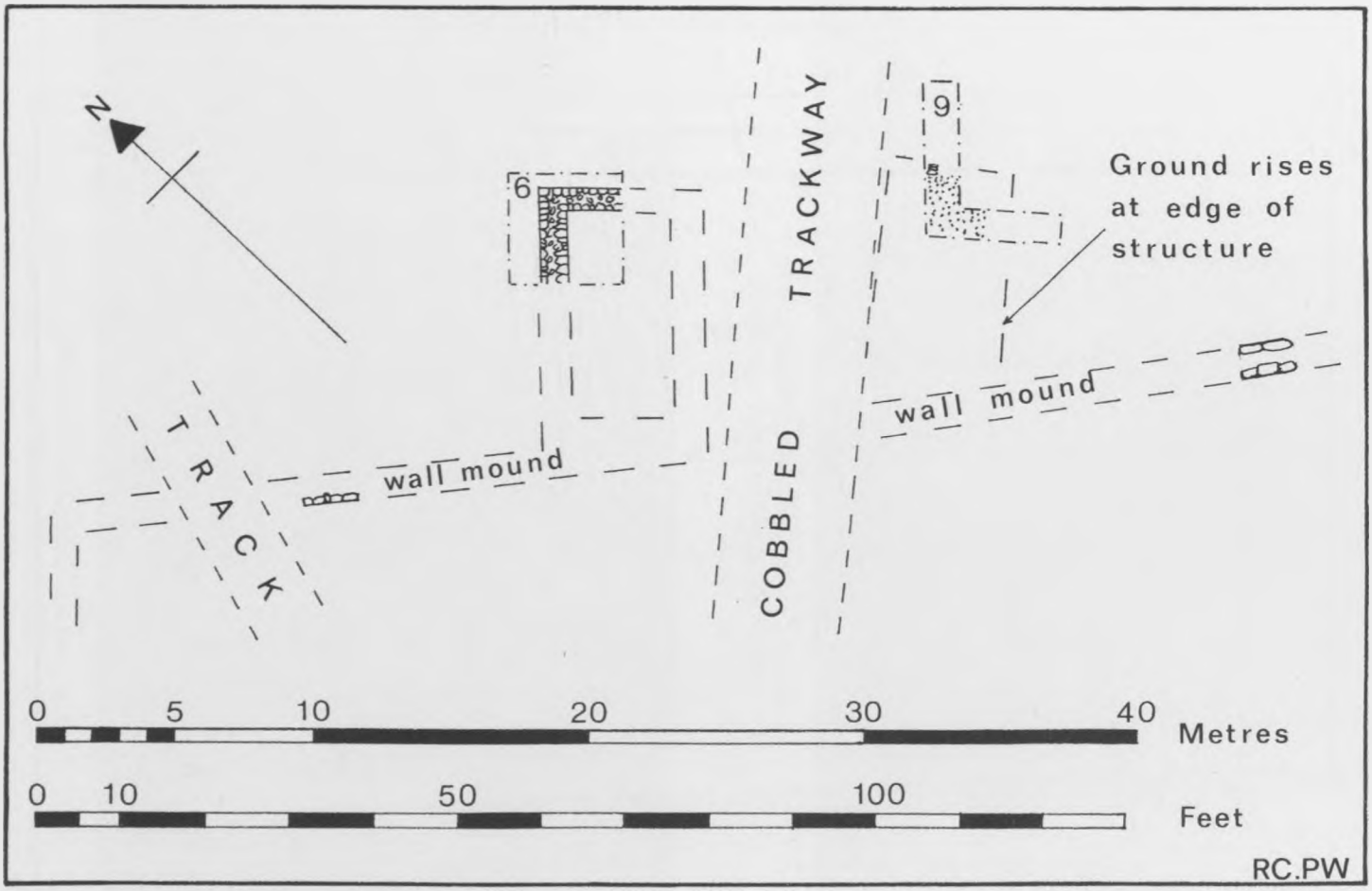

Fig. 2: Merthyrgeryn Grange. The 'gateway'.

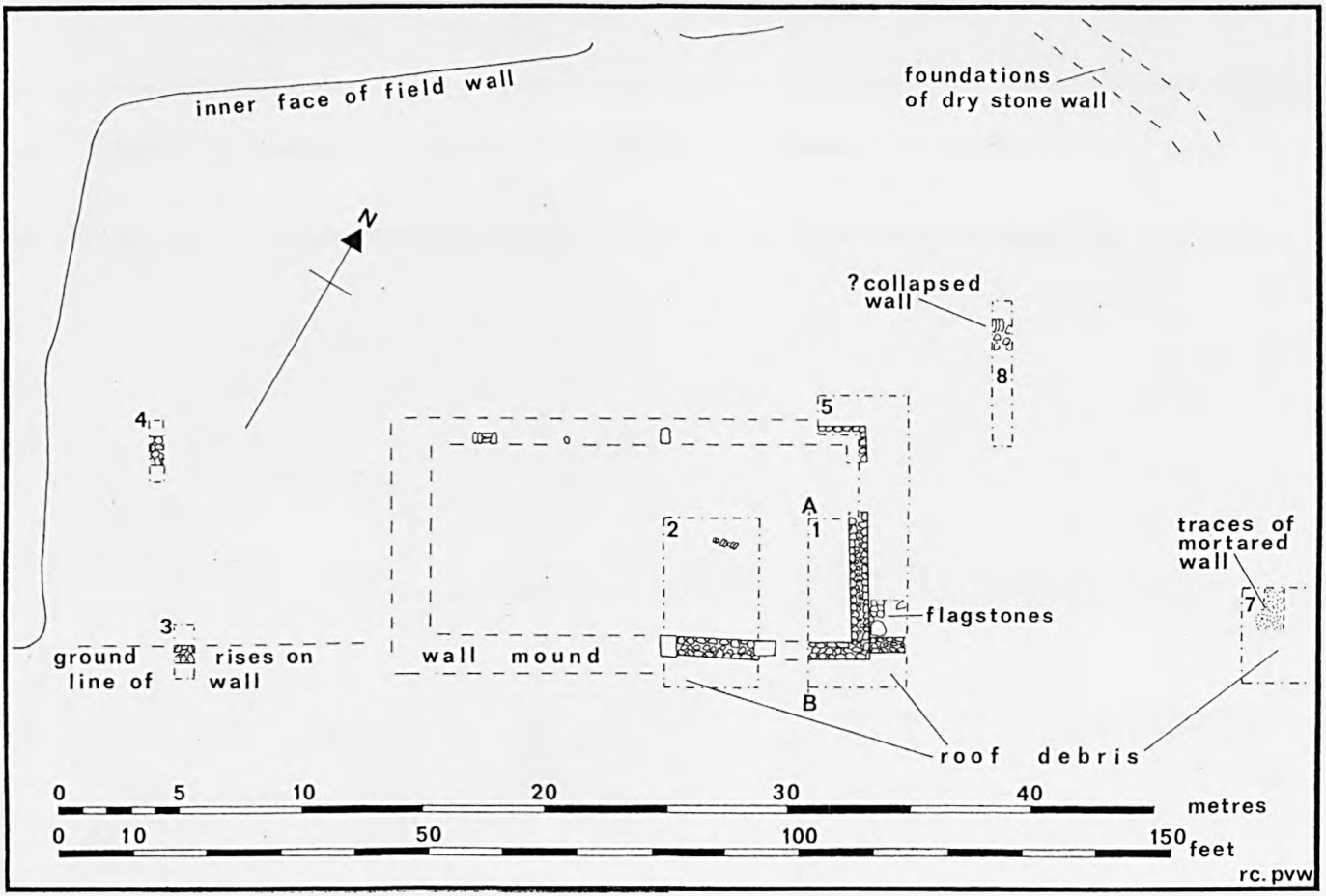

Fig. 3: Merthyrgeryn Grange. Structures in Upper Grange Farm orchard.

Plate 1: Merthyrgeryn Grange enclosure system.
Orthostatic walling for lane B (see Fig. 1).
Copyright: P.V. Webster.

Plate 2: Merthyrgeryn Grange, Building A (see Fig. 3).
A general view of the excavations from the west.
Copyright: P.V. Webster.

Plate 3: Merthyrgeryn Grange, Building A.
Area 1, south east corner showing the surviving walls (see Fig. 3).
Copyright: P.V. Webster.

Plate 4: Merthyrgeryn Grange, Building A.
Area 2, south wall showing the large blocks (see Fig. 3).
Copyright: P.V. Webster.

A NONCONFORMITY OF THE GENTRY? CATHOLIC RECUSANTS IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY ABERGAVENNY

By Jeremy K. Knight

Benjamin Disraeli once said that the great virtue of the Church of England was that it put a gentleman and a scholar into every parish. Whilst this suggests that his knowledge of the problems of the Victorian Church, away from its more fashionable districts, may have been limited, it does emphasise the long tradition of the clergyman scholar-antiquary, a distinguished example of which breed we honour today. David Williams indeed belongs to an even older tradition - that of the wandering scholar, travelling from monastery to monastery across Europe in search of learning. However, unlike one of Helen Waddell's medieval heroes, he has never, to my knowledge, been locked up in the monastery prison at Toul.[1]

When I was asked to contribute to today's symposium in honour of my friend and fellow 'Man of Gwent', my first thoughts were, naturally, of a monastic topic. However, David's interests in the history of the Christian Church in Monmouthshire are far wider, and I would like to offer another, perhaps more neglected theme. Monmouthshire has never really had a county town. At different times, Monmouth, Newport, even briefly, under Cromwell, Usk have fulfilled that role, but to Lord Clarendon, writing of Charles I's visit to Monmouthshire in 1645, the 'chief town of Monmouthshire' was Abergavenny.[2] In terms of size, this is borne out by sources like the lay subsidy, chantry certificates, Hearth Tax returns or the number of recorded sixteenth-century wills. Monmouth and Newport usually compete for second place, with the remaining towns far behind, though in matters of trade and commerce, Chepstow also makes a good showing. The number of Chepstow tradespeople who issued copper tokens between 1656 and 1672 was matched in Wales only by Carmarthen and Haverfordwest in the south and by Wrexham in the north.[3]

Abergavenny was a wool town. Its flannel was a major item of commerce and wills record bequests of at least six fulling mills in Abergavenny itself; several tucking mills; and tuckers' shears and cards, as well as large flocks of sheep in surrounding parishes.[4] It was also 'once the chief mart for supplying the midland parts of Wales with shop goods'. Convicted Catholic recusants included a glover, a draper, a tailor, a hatter and a haberdasher.[5] It also, according to Coxe, had a considerable

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1 Waddell, Helen, *The Wandering Scholars* (6th revised edit., 1932).

2 Macray, W.D., (ed.), Clarendon (Edward Hyde), earl of, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England* (Oxford, 1888, reprinted 1958) vol. 9, 67.

3 Courtney, P., *Medieval and Later Usk (Report on the Excavations at Usk 1965-1976* (Cardiff, 1994) 139; Boon, G.C., *Welsh Tokens of the Seventeenth Century* (National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 1973).

4 Jones, Judith, *Monmouthshire Wills Proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury 1560-1601* (South Wales Record Society, Cardiff, 1997) 14, 40, 49-50.

5 Coxe, William, *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* (1801); Pugh, Frank H., 'Monmouthshire recusants in the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I, from the returns in the Public Record Office', *South Wales and Monmouthshire Record Society*, 4 (1957). In 1697, a Thomas Jeve in London wrote a letter of complaint to an Abergavenny lady, adding as a postscript 'send me a piece of verry fine flannell (but not too thin)'. (Abergavenny Museum, Gunter MSS, Box 22A, A43/61).

export trade in shoes to Bristol, and shoemakers are an independent-minded, even radical, breed. Abergavenny also had no resident lord; the Nevills, who bore the title of Lord Bergavenny, being resident in Kent.[6]

Abergavenny Priory was an alien house, the daughter of St Vincent of Le Mans, with a somewhat mixed reputation. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, it was devastated by fire and some of the monks, evidently still Frenchmen, had to return home to Le Mans. In 1428, there was a Papal indulgence for visitors who contributed to the fabric fund, but its remarkable renaissance really dates from 1446, when Sir William ap Thomas died in London and was brought to Abergavenny for burial.[7]

We are all familiar with his magnificent alabaster tomb, with its carving of the Annunciation and its ranks of apostles and prophets, the former with scrolls which would originally have carried the clauses which each apostle was traditionally said to have contributed to the Apostles Creed. Sadly, we see it today without the equally fine display of armorial and figured glass seen by Symonds in 1645, or the gilt rood loft and organs which he records. The glass included the figures of Sir William and his wife with a Latin inscription 'Pray for the souls of Sir William Thomas and his wife who built this chapel and these glass windows'.[8] A few years later, between about 1455 and 1480, the priory acquired what must have been a very fine tile pavement. These were tiles of Malvern type like those still preserved in Monmouth Priory (Lewis Group 21), for which the kiln is known there, or the tiles which the Herberts were installing at the same time in their castle at Raglan. The distinctive fabric of the Abergavenny tiles and a possible waster suggest that the order may have been important enough for the tilers to set up a kiln in Abergavenny.[9] Later in the century came the choir stalls, whose complexities have recently been studied by Charles Tracey. One desk end bears the name of Prior Winchester (1493-1516) and a misericord carries the Tudor rose and Prince of Wales feathers, presumably for Arthur, Prince of Wales (died 1503) or his younger brother, Henry VIII, the next Prince of Wales.[10] The tomb monuments are of course of international importance, but I have dwelt on the splendours of Abergavenny Priory, the remnants of which we see today, because they must have had an effect on the mind-set of the townspeople which may go some way to explain the strength of the Catholic recusant tradition in the town. Nor did the whole of this fall victim to puritan iconoclasm, for parts of the armorial glass still survived in 1683. The choir stalls may have survived because they were used by the boys of Abergavenny Grammar School when they attended Welsh prayers on Saturday mornings. This also accounts for the graffiti and initials carved into them.[11]

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6 Coxe, William, *Historical Tour* 169.

7 Tracey, Charles, 'The choir stalls at the Priory church of St Mary, Abergavenny', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 155 (2002) 203-54 (208); *Calendar of Letters Patent 1408-1413* 306; *Calendar of Papal Letters*, vol. 8, 51.

8 Long, C.E. (ed.), *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army during the Great Civil War Kept by Richard Symonds*, Camden Society, 74 (1859), reprinted *Camden Classics Reprints 3* (Cambridge, 1957) 233-5.

9 Lewis, J.M., *The Medieval Tiles of Wales* (Census of Medieval Tiles in Britain, National Museums and Galleries of Wales, 1999) 49-56.

10 Tracey, Charles *op. cit.*

11 Siddons, M.P., *Visitations by the Heralds in Wales* (Harleian Society, new series 14, London, 1996) 215; Tracey 206-7 and fig. 5.

In contrast to these splendours, Professor Sir Glanmor Williams has described how, when the townsfolk were raising money for its bells, even putting on plays in surrounding villages, the monks contributed not a halfpenny, 'And this' as Sir Glanmor remarks, 'in their own Priory church'. I suspect however that the monks had taken a back seat in the priory for some time. Abergavenny people had acquired a sturdy tradition of independence, not least in religious matters.[12]

During the seventeenth century, Abergavenny was an important Catholic centre, which produced two canonized saints and a monastic historian, but it also housed an important pioneer Baptist cause. It was small wonder that William Baker, whose tomb we can still see in Abergavenny Priory, prefaced his will with the testy statement that he was a Protestant, and 'against all Papists and Anabaptists'.[13] Abergavenny was already known as a centre of Catholic recusancy in 1603, the year of James I's accession. Involved in the so-called 'Bye-plot' was a secular priest, William Watson, who had plotted to kidnap King James in order to force him to grant toleration to Catholics. A 'Mr Meredith of Abergavenny' spoke of a possible Catholic rising in the Marches, and Watson fled west, accompanied by 'a Catholick man of Wales called David Williams'. Sadly, when they stopped for a drink at an alehouse outside Abergavenny, they were recognised and arrested by one of the Vaughans of Tretower. Williams was in prison for a long time and Watson was hanged.[14]

As important as the absence of a resident lord, was the fact that the office of his steward was held from the time of Henry VIII onwards by William Baker's family. When one reads of Nathan Rogers' 'merciless Raglanders', or of the divisions in the county caused by the activities of Worcester's stewards,[15] one realises that this was significant. The Bakers were part of an interlinked and intermarried group of urban gentry - Bakers, Gabbs, Lewis's, Gunters, Pritchards, Prodgers and Wroths (as in William Wroth), perhaps a little unusual in a Welsh town.

David Baker, son of a major figure in the Abergavenny wool trade, was the grandson of a former vicar of Abergavenny. He was recorder of Abergavenny and like most of his family, initially conformable to the Elizabethan Church settlement. However in 1605, he gave up his post and became a Benedictine monk as Father Augustine Baker. I am not qualified to speak of his theological and mystical writings and only want to discuss two things about him - his family and his role as a pioneer monastic historian.[16] His sister Margaret married Henry Pritchard, gentleman, and was fined for Catholic recusancy in 1608. Of Henry and Margaret's children, John Pritchard became a Jesuit and Margaret Pritchard, junior, married Morgan Lewis, headmaster of Abergavenny Grammar School and, according to one of his old boys, Henry Milborne, 'the best school-master in all those parts'.[17] In 1626, questions were asked in the House of Commons about Lewis, and about

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[12] Williams, Glanmor, *The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation* (Cardiff, 1962) 353.

[13] Bradney, J.A., *A History of Monmouthshire. Volume 1 Part 2a. The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 1)* (1906, reprinted Academy Books, 1991) 177.

[14] Baker, Augustine, *Memorials of Father Augustine Baker* (Catholic Record Society Publications 33) 81. Meredith was presumably resident in London, but convicted Abergavenny Catholic recusants in 1607-8, included Jane Meredith, a widow, and Isabel, wife of John Meredith.

[15] Rogers, Nathan, *Memoirs of Monmouthshire* (1708, reprinted Chepstow, 1983); Mitchell, Julian, 'Nathan Rogers and the Wentwood Case', *Welsh History Review*, 14 no. 1 (1988) 23-53.

[16] *Memorials of Father Augustine Baker*; *The Dictionary of Welsh Biography* (London, 1959) 22-3 (Dodd, A.H.).

[17] *A Letter from a Gentleman in Gloucestershire to a friend in London* (London, 1679), Newport Public Library, M.000.282.

the number of children of Catholics who were attending the Grammar School. The house was assured that he was a Protestant and 'very conformable'. However, he was later reconciled to Rome. On his last visit to Abergavenny in 1620, Augustine Baker stayed with his sister Margaret and would have met her three year-old grandson, the son of Margaret and Morgan Lewis, the future Jesuit martyr, St David Lewis. Another member of the family, the wealthy haberdasher and hatter Nathaniel Pritchard, a capital burgess of Abergavenny, was fined as a recusant in 1624, and had his estate confiscated for recusancy under the Commonwealth.[18]

Augustine Baker was also a pioneer monastic historian. There is a delightful glimpse of him in the antechamber of Sir Robert Cotton's library in Westminster, in fireside conversation with Cotton, and with William Camden. Six volumes of his transcripts of documents relating to the history of the Benedictine order in Britain survive in the Bodleian Library - a predecessor of Dugdale's *Monasticon* - and some were used in a book of 1626, *Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia* by Baker, Leander Jones and Clement Rayner.[19]

Another family important in Abergavenny were the Gunters. The senior and Protestant branch of the family lived in the Priory buildings and when Charles I visited Abergavenny in 1645, he stayed with William Gunter, grandson of the man who had acquired the monastic buildings and much of its land. The Gunters were a wealthy family. As Symonds said of one north Welsh family, the Kyffins, 'The ruine of the Abbeys was the raysing of them'. Sir Glanmor Williams has pointed out that in 1603, half the former Crown lands in Monmouthshire belonged to the earls of Worcester and Pembroke and half the remainder to four families, the Gunters being one.[20]

Around the corner in the main street lived the Catholic branch of the family, represented at the time of the Civil War by the elderly Thomas Gunter, senior. His house was sequestrated under the Commonwealth, though he was allowed to stay on as tenant in view of his age. (If you were a Royalist worth less than £200 a year, you were exempt from sequestration, but even poor Catholics were liable, and you were not allowed to compound for your delinquency with a fine, as Royalists were).[21] His son, Thomas Gunter, a lawyer, is justly renowned for his response to the vicar of

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[18] *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum Vol. II* 629, 637; *Calendar of the Committee for Compounding* 3077; Bradney, *Hundred of Abergavenny* 153; Lindley, K.J., 'The Part Played by Catholics in the Civil War in Lancashire and Monmouthshire' (M.A. thesis, 1965) 38, quoting Public Record Office/The National Archives (PRO) S.P. 23, vol. 17, 643. Pritchard, 'hatt seller of Abergavenny', was sequestrated for delinquency (i.e. royalism) and recusancy, but on appeal of recusancy only.

[19] Knowles, M.D., 'The value of 16th and 17th century scholarship' in Fox, Levi (ed.), *English Historical Scholarship in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1956); Parry, Graham, *The Trophies of Time: English Antiquarians of the Seventeenth Century* ((Oxford, 1995) 70-1 and note 2.

[20] Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army* 260; Williams, Glanmor, *Wales and the Reformation* (1997) 331.

[21] Powell, Walter, *Diary*, 12 Jan. 1648: 'Thos Gunter dismissed because he had no good lease'; *Calendar of the Committee for Compounding*, vol. 5, 3233 (April 1655): in arrears with rent of sequestrated house; Abergavenny Museum, Gunter MSS, Box 22A, A/44-61. Recusancy papers of Thomas Gunter in respect of land in Penrhos and Abergavenny, formerly worth £10 a year, 'but in regard of the present distractions is not worth neare so much'. Since Gunter was in any case entitled to retain a third, the committee decided that the case was not worth pursuing.

Abergavenny at the time of the so-called 'Popish Plot'. The Revd Greenhaugh had warned him that he was risking his neck by having an illegal Catholic chapel in the attic of his house and by supporting a priest. 'I kept a priest in old Oliver's time of severity' replied Thomas Gunter, 'and I will keep one now'.[22]

During the Civil War, Abergavenny was fortified for the king. The royalist disaster at Highnam outside Gloucester in March 1643, when Edward Herbert's royalist army was surrounded and captured and the parliamentarian Sir William Waller briefly occupied Chepstow, Monmouth and Usk, showed the vulnerability of the area to attack from puritan Gloucester. The Brecon royalist Heubert Price occupied Abergavenny with two foot companies. James Prodger Herbert of Wernddu outside Abergavenny, a 'court papist' from a family of recusant courtiers, who had served as a junior officer in the 'Bishop's War' of 1641, then garrisoned the town with a locally-raised regiment. The town ditch was re-cut to a formidable flat-bottomed profile and cannon mounted on the walls.[23] Unlike Chepstow or Monmouth, however, Abergavenny was not taken by a parliamentarian army, but was abandoned by the royalists some time in the autumn of 1645, and the garrison was withdrawn to Raglan, where some of the regiment appear in the surrender documents of 1646. According to Symonds, the habitable part of the castle was burnt, and the garrison 'drawn out and quitted' as early as 27 July 1645, three months before the capture of Chepstow and Monmouth. This is certainly too early. The king was here on 11 September, and there was a royalist muster at Abergavenny on 10 October, in an attempt to relieve besieged Chepstow, though it is just possible that the town had already been dis-garrisoned.[24] By early December 1645, it was garrisoned for parliament.[25]

We might compare the Abergavenny Catholics with someone on the other side of the religious fence. Christopher Price was an apothecary with a shop in the main street - a High Street chemist in fact. He owned a number of small coal pits and was a leading figure in the nascent Baptist cause in the town. He was treasurer of the Monmouthshire branch of the Committee for the Propagation of the Gospel and was involved in the remarkable public debate on infant baptism in Abergavenny church in September 1653. After the Restoration, a group of Closed Communion Baptists met in his house at Llanfoist, and he may have been responsible for an account of dissent in Monmouthshire written around 1675, preserved in the records of the Broadmeads church in Bristol. He died in 1697, and in the year before his death, gave the land at Llanwenarth for the first Baptist chapel, which is still there. As tradesman, small-scale coal owner and amateur theologian, he would have been quite

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[22] *Commons Journal*, vol. 9, 467a; Gunter, G.W., 'Pedigree of the Gunter family of Abergavenny and London', *Gwent Local History*, 69 (Autumn, 1990) 8-12.

[23] For Heubert Price, see Johns, W.N., *Historical Facts and Traditions Relating to Newport and Caerleon*, 5 (1885) 90. For town defences, see Radcliffe, F. and Knight, J.K., 'Excavations at Abergavenny 1962-3, part 2', *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 3, Pt. 2 (1972-3) 73-7; Blockley, K., 'Excavations at the Roman Fort at Abergavenny Orchard site 1972-3', *Archaeological Journal*, 150 (1993) 193-6; and information from Fionna and Patrick Ashmore.

[24] Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army* 212, 27 July 1645. Symonds accompanied Charles I on his visit to Raglan and Abergavenny, so the source is both contemporary and well informed.

[25] Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Portland Manuscripts Vol. I* (1891) 320-1. 6 Dec. 1645, Colonel Thomas Herbert to Wm. Lenthall: 'Yesterday the [royalist] enemie beats up our quarters at Abergavenny and Rosse'.

at home in early nineteenth-century Blaenavon, with people like Thomas Deakin or Aaron Brute.[26] I want however to look briefly at his role in the town government of Abergavenny under the Commonwealth and (although he had no part in it), at the so-called 'Popish Plot'.

James Berry, the Cromwellian Major General for Wales, was very concerned about the moral state of Welsh market towns. 'Vice abounding and Magistrates Fast Asleep', as he put it.[27] The puritan strategy, in Abergavenny and in other towns was to revise the borough charter. If they reduced the number of burgesses, it made possible a quorum of the 'godly' and 'well affected' who were in short supply in such places. At Abergavenny, the number of burgesses was to be halved. Though some names were carried over, out went Nathaniel Pritchard, the Catholic hatter and out went James Gunter, who had entertained King Charles I. In came Christopher Price and others like him. As it happened, this draft charter never came into effect, since it was still with the lawyers when the Major Generals fell from power.[28]

I shall not say much about the 'Popish Plot' as such. It has been studied definitively by the other John Kenyon,[29] but it brings together a number of the people and families that we have been discussing. The lawyer, Thomas Gunter, who 'kept a priest in old Oliver's time of severity' in fact kept two, both now canonised saints. One was the sixty-three year-old Jesuit superior David Lewis, whom we last met as a three year-old child with his grandfather, Augustine Baker. The other was St Philip Evans, a thirty-three year old Jesuit, originally from Llanfihangel Crucorney or Llangattock Vibon Avel in northern Monmouthshire, who was executed in Cardiff on 22 July 1679.[30] In David Lewis's own words:

> After my full thirty years poor missionary labours in south Wales, on Sunday morning, a little before day, being the 17th November 1678, I was taken by six armed men sent by Mr John Arnold and Mr Charles Price, until then my two very good friends and acquaintances. I was taken in a little house in the parish of St Michael Llantarnam in Monmouthshire. From there, by the souldiers, together with such church-stuff of mine they there found, carried I was to the house of Mr Charles Price in Llanffoyst.[31]

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[26] I am very grateful to Martin Lawlor for information on Christopher Price's activities as a coal lessee. Underhill, E.B. (ed.), *The Records of the Church of Christ, Broadmeads, Bristol* (1847) Addendum B; Lovering, C.W.J., 'Dissenting Communities in Monmouthshire 1639-1715', *Gwent Local History*, 93 (Autumn, 2002) 11.

[27] Durston, C., *Cromwell's Major Generals: Godly Government during the English Revolution* (Manchester, 2001) 75, 90, 173, citing Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MS A35, f. 172.

[28] Durston, *Cromwell's Major Generals* 87-90; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1656-7* 161, 233-4.

[29] Kenyon, John, *The Popish Plot* (London, 1972).

[30] *A Short Memorandum upon the deaths of Mr Philip Evans and Mr John Lloyd, both priests, who were executed at Cardiff in Glamorgan* (1679); Canning, J.H., 'The Titus Oates plot in South Wales and the Marches', *St Peter's Magazine*, 3-4 (Cardiff, 1923-4) 189-97, 219-26. For the Cardiff martyrs see pp. 38, 47, and for David Lewis, see pp. 151-68. O'Keefe, M., *Four Martyrs of South Wales and the Marches* (Cardiff, 1970). Evans was the son of William Evans of Llangattock Vibon Avel and Winefred Morgan of Llanfihangel Crucorney. Whilst he was in prison under sentence of death, his sister, unaware of this, was professed as a Blue Nun in Paris under the name of Sister Barbara Catherine.

[31] Lewis, David, *A Narrative of the Imprisonment and Tryal of Mr David Lewis, Priest of the Society of Jesus: Written by Himself. At the Assizes held at Monmouth March 28 1679: to which is annexed his last SPEECH at the place of Execution August 27 1679* (London, 1679).

Charles Price was a close kinsman of the puritan apothecary, Christopher Price. He was also uncle by marriage to the Chepstow born 'professional criminal, robber, highwayman and confidence trickster' (John Kenyon's words - and one might add 'perjurer') William Bedloe, who with Titus Oates provided the puppet masters of the plot with the two witnesses needed in cases of capital treason. Lewis was tried at Monmouth Assizes in March 1679 before a single judge, a kinsman of his accuser, John Arnold of Llanfihangel Court. The only charge was that of being a Catholic priest and of saying Mass and performing baptisms and weddings. No mention was made of any alleged plot. Lewis was sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered, but the sheriff, James Herbert of Coldbrook, and other local sympathisers, found excuses to delay the executions of Lewis and other priests in the hope that the 'plot' would blow over. Eventually in July, Parliament had to issue an order to the Judges of Assize that the sentences were to be confirmed and carried out. Lewis was hanged at Usk on 27 August 1679.

Barry Rea has described seventeenth-century Catholicism in England as 'a nonconformity of the gentry',[32] almost always dependant on a resident gentry family. Towns such as Newport or Chepstow had virtually no Catholic recusants. At Caerleon, the presence of a strong Catholic community cannot be separated from the presence of the hard line Catholic Morgans of Llantarnam. Here we are almost in the world of *Brideshead Revisited*. The Catholic community included people like Lady Mary Blount, whose mother was one of the recusant Worcestershire Throgmortons (and whose two sons were in Raglan during the siege)[33] or Jane Pritchard, sister of Sir Edward Stradling of St Donats. One of Jane Pritchard's sisters was settled in Louvain. Another was companion to Jane Dormer, duchess of Feria, widow of Phillip II's ambassador in London under Mary, who, on Queen Elizbeth's accession, had tried to persuade Lord Cecil that the new Queen should marry Phillip II, and whose southern Spanish estate became a centre for English and Welsh Catholic exiles.[34]

In contrast to this 'devotional bookish Catholicism of the gentry household' (Barry Rea again), this world of *Brideshead Revisited*, at Abergavenny we are among hatters, small town lawyers and High Street chemists, in a world of Trollope minus the higher clergy, or almost of Dickens. This Catholic community of minor urban gentry and tradespeople is perhaps unique in Wales. Things were to change, however. Of the Catholic priests active in Monmouthshire before the Titus Oates plot, three were executed, two died in prison and two died of exhaustion as fugitives in the bitter winter weather. Of the six Jesuits, only two or three remained. Ten years later, the unreformed burgesses of Abergavenny refused to swear allegiance to the new Williamite regime, and lost their charter. In the longer term, the rise of the mid Wales cloth industry destroyed the market for Abergavenny flannel. William Coxe at the end of the eighteenth century said that Abergavenny was 'once a corporate town, and a place of great population, trade and importance' - but notice the past tense.[35] This decline was matched by something of a demographic crisis among

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[32] Rea, Barry, *Popular Culture in Seventeenth Century England* (1988) 108-11.

[33] Lady Mary Blount, Penrhos (1588-1657). See Bradney, *A History of Monmouthshire. Volume 3 Part 1. The Hundred of Usk (Part 1)* (1921, reprinted Academy Books, 1993) 246, and monument in Llantarnam church. Her sister was married to a Vaughan of Courtfield.

[34] Pugh, F.H., 'Monmouthshire recusants' 109. Jane Pritchard evidently had a house in Caerwent, where she attracted a number of recusancy fines between 1592 and 1608. However, her husband's will in 1598, refers to him as William Pritchard of Caerleon, with Jane Pritchard, alias Stradling, as executrix (see Jones, J., *Monmouthshire Wills* 219 (A5).

Monmouthshire recusant families in the eighteenth century, a trend already remarked upon by some observers in the late seventeenth. The causes of this are not fully understood, but it must have been accelerated by the tendency for the heiresses of Catholic families to enter convents in France or the Low Countries.

That is not quite the end of the story, however. In 1907, the new owners of an Abergavenny pub known as The Parrot or the Cardiff Arms, in the course of renovations, broke down a lathe and plaster partition giving access to an attic space previously only reached by an outside staircase. This proved to be Thomas Gunter's Catholic chapel. The altarpiece, a painting of the nativity, still survives in Abergavenny Museum, save for one portion which I understand is preserved in a monastery. The discovery was investigated by another Monmouthshire worthy, the antiquarian and book collector William Haines (anyone who has used the Haines Collection in Newport Public Library will know why I hold his memory in such respect). Wall paintings included the 'sign of the Jesuits' complained of so bitterly by Arnold, and some graffiti.[36] Under the floorboards was a collection of Gunter family papers - letters, household receipts, sequestration papers, hearth tax receipts, a piece of music for the viol, even a Valentine. Going through them in Abergavenny Museum, I suddenly realised what they were - the sort of collection that every house has in the bottom of a drawer somewhere, kept either for sentimental reasons like the Valentine, or because one might need them again sometime, like the receipts and the sequestration papers.[37] They make, I think, a suitable tailpiece to the story of this remarkable and little-studied community.

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[35] Holt, T.G. (S.J.), 'The Glamorgan mission after the Oates Plot', *Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History*, 1 (1984) 11-27; Coxe, William, *Historical Tour* 167-8. Under James II, the Franciscans established missions in Abergavenny and Monmouth, the former largely financed by Thomas Gunter's daughter. This survived the events of 1688, and was still active in 1704. See Miller, John, *Popery and Politics in England 1660-1688* (Cambridge, 1973) 242, 248.

[36] Haines, William, *Archaeologia Cambrensis* (1908) 291-2; Newport Public Library, Haines Collection M.000.282.5: *Interesting Discovery* [of the Gunter chapel] *At Abergavenny*.

[37] Abergavenny Museum, Gunter MSS, Box 22A; National Library of Wales, MS 11420 E (Pandy 65): notes on the Gunter papers by Revd John Davies, F.S.A. I am very grateful to Rachel Rogers of Abergavenny Museum for making the Gunter papers there available to me.

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(Major books printed in bold[1])

Abbreviations

Arch. Camb.	*Archaeologia Cambrensis*
BBCS	*Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*
Cist. St.	*Cistercian Studies*
Mon. Antiq.	*The Monmouthshire Antiquary*

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DAVID HENRY WILLIAMS
BIOGRAPHY

Key Dates

29 March 1933	David Williams was born in the Kensington Nursing Home, Maindee, Newport, on St Woolos's Day, the son of Ralph Williams (an industrial chemist) and Alice Louise Williams, who had married in Cairo in 1931.
1935	His father's job took the family (by now, David had a brother, Peter) to live in the mountains of Sinai at Om Bogna manganese mine.
1938	The family returned to Wales, but his father's job meant a move (for the war years) to Goole in Yorkshire. Settling after the war at High Cross, Newport, David was educated at Bassaleg Grammar School, an establishment to which he owes much.
1951-53	David spent his National Service as an army chemist working mostly in a mobile laboratory in Germany, sampling and testing petrol, oil and lubricating greases used by the Royal Army Service Corps.
1956	David then studied Geography at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he gained his B.A. in 1956.
1960	His M.A. followed in 1960.
1977	David was awarded his Ph. D. there for his published works in monastic history; that same year, he was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.
1956-67	For some ten years after Cambridge, David taught Geography, mostly in grammar schools like High Storrs, Sheffield, and St Joseph's Academy, Blackheath, London, before proceeding to study for the ministry of the Church in Wales at Lampeter.
1958-present	He has examined for the Cambridge board (and now OCR) for O-level and GCSE in Geography.
1969	David Williams was ordained in the diocese of Monmouth to become firstly curate of Monmouth, and then chaplain of St Woolos Cathedral.
1971-76	David was priest-in-charge of Six Bells.
1976-79	Next, he served as Anglican chaplain in Libya.

1980-83	After a brief ministry in Crumlin, David became rector of Llanddewi Skirrid. During this period, he catalogued the seals of the National Museum.
1983-87	At the request of the abbot, he became guest-master of Caldey Abbey, the Monmouthshire Antiquarians visiting him there one Saturday afternoon for tea.
1987-95	There followed an appointment as vicar of Buttington and Pool Quay in Powys, a providential appointment for the site of Strata Marcella Abbey lay in the latter parish.
1995-97	His ministry closed as Anglican chaplain in Poland, a country he had visited eight times previously in connection with his Cistercian studies.
2004	Retiring to Borth, near Aberystwyth, to be near the National Library of Wales, David moved into Aberystwyth itself, in January this year.

SHORT NOTES

Archaeological investigations at Trelech: the 2003 excavations

Trelech was, in the thirteenth century, one of the largest towns in Wales and research excavations by University of Wales Newport are contributing to our understanding of the medieval town. Two large medieval buildings in Church Field West (SO 499 054; SAM MM194), the field immediately west of St Nicholas's church, provided the main focus of excavation in 2003 (Fig. 1). Investigations began in this field in 1999, with a geophysical survey suggesting buildings on a scale not previously seen in Trelech. Subsequent excavation in 2000 and 2001, confirmed the footings of three in a range of buildings aligned on a main road passing through the field. Two of these, B1 and B2, were particularly interesting because of the scale of their foundations so in 2003, scheduled site consent was obtained for a 25 m x 20 m excavation allowing investigation of the whole of B2, a portion of B1, an apparent alley between the two, and roads running east and south of B2. Work began in May 2003, and continued for six weeks.

There was considerable stone tumble over much of the site; it was subsequently confirmed that this was the result of the collapse of B2. Interpretation of the space between B1 and B2 as an alley proved correct; excavation of this alley revealed a medieval assemblage including large quantities of pottery, bronze buckles and small knife blades. The tumble included numerous holed stone roof tiles and green glazed medieval ceramic ridge tiles. In the *c.*1.1 m wide alley, a stone platform with a central 20 cm wide drainage channel abutted onto both buildings indicating that they were contemporary. Numerous medieval sherds were associated including both green glazed jug fragments and sherds of coarse black-ware 'cooking pot'. Artefacts in the lower horizons suggested a construction date of *c.*1250 for both buildings. Other finds in the alley (Fig. 2) included two large keys; two additional keys were found in the building. Also recovered were fragments of window lead. Flat flagstones near the platform suggest that the alley was flagged with subsequent stone robbing. The platform was built across the alley at an entry point to B2; excavation in the interior here revealed an arch of stone indicating a small collapsed doorway (context number 012) overlaying an internal passage.

The alley joined the main road east of B1/B2. The medieval road, subsequently re-surfaced in the post-medieval period, ran straight on the line of the modern road from Monmouth. It was only when this road went out of use, probably in the early nineteenth century, that the idiosyncratic modern road pattern, with its ninety-degree bends, emerged. From that time, the road entered Trelech on the line of one medieval road then swung around the churchyard to follow the line of a second parallel road; both are shown on separate itineraries published by Ogilby in the seventeenth century and have subsequently been described by Bradney (1913,131) and others. In excavation, the later road surface (011) emerged at a depth of *c.*32 cm with metalling of small stones; parallel to the road was an earth/clay bank. The road surface was deeply rutted with cart tracks and potholes. The earlier, medieval, road was made with small stone cobbling on iron slag hard core which in turn overlay natural clay and bedrock at a depth of *c.* 70 cm. Parallel to the medieval road were double ditches separated by an earthen bank. Confirmation of the road is important given the siting of the buildings which must represent doubled burgage plots aligned along it.

Building 1 extended beyond the edge of the excavation; the south wall was fully revealed but only slightly more than 2 m of the east and west walls could be investigated. These walls, consisting mainly of Old Red Sandstone and conglomerate in part bedded onto very large conglomerate blocks forming a wall base, were well preserved. Large conglomerate blocks were also used as corner stones. Tumbled stone in the interior included faced stones and a number of holed stone roof tiles. The floor was intact with relatively undisturbed large stone flags. External flat stones at the base of the east wall rose in a possible platform abutting onto the wall and extending under the trench edge. The base (058) was bedded under the wall indicating that the feature dates from the construction phase. It may be that 058 represents the vestige of a platform providing an elevated eastern entrance for B1, facing the road.

In B2 tumble over walls and much of the northern range of the building was removed. In an area east of the central line of the building, closely set stones were almost vertical indicating wall collapse. The angle of bedding varied with the largely vertical stone accumulation running north-south along the line of the building while a second collapse deposit angled toward the south west. The indication is that the north wall collapsed into the building with a section of the east wall then falling at an angle over part of the original collapse deposit. This tumble included a number of holed stone roof tiles and green glazed ceramic ridge tiles. The arch of stone noted above was some 1.13 m from the north wall. Excavation subsequently confirmed a narrow, 0.6 m in length, flat slab sill inserted into the north wall at the point nearest the arch. This sill was flanked on the east and west by small square stones creating a threshold 0.97 m in width. When the tumble was fully removed an interior passage was confirmed; the 0.72 m wide passageway was defined on the east by an interior wall running north-south. The side entrance was aligned with the stepped drainage feature in the alley.

The internal passage was, for 2.08 m, defined on the west side by three very large conglomerate blocks which proved to be part of a well made, virtually square, platform constructed of conglomerate blocks. The platform butted onto but was not bonded into the north wall. The best interpretation is the base for stairs. The presence of putlog holes in the exterior wall adds support to the interpretation of B2 as a two-storey structure. The internal wall defining the passage on its east was a 65 cm wide stone built feature. This wall extended over 2 m, ending in a disturbed and apparently robbed residue of stone. No robber trench was apparent in the centre of the building but excavation in the southern interior revealed a linear orange deposit with well defined edges (110) directly in line with the wall; it was flanked by a linear accumulation of pink clay. The colour change was distinct in plan and section and, given its alignment, appears to represent robbing of the south end of the central internal wall which must have run through, effectively dividing B2.

The wall construction of B2 was more uniform than that of B1 with consistent Old Red Sandstone coursing; at one point eighteen courses survived. The walls were intact for the circuit of the building though there was disturbance from stone robbing in the south west corner and a gap for an entrance in the east wall. Variations in wall depth showed that the building was levelled and bedded onto hardcore including considerable iron slag waste. The width of the walls was generally uniform, ranging from approximately 0.9 m on the west to 1.2 m on the north. Thickening of the north wall at its centre resulted from additional stonework on the inner face of the building, beginning at the stair platform. This greater width would have strengthened the spine of the building, supporting an upper storey as well as the roof. Grey-red silt on the north west exterior of B2 may indicate a

foundation trench; finds included thirteenth-century green glazed jug sherds and large concentrations of black-ware cooking pots, in at least two cases apparently representing single vessels. A large number of stone knapped pot lids of various sizes was also recovered from in and near B2.

Excavation of the south west corner of B2 demonstrated stone robbing with facing stones having been removed with force, dragging slag in-fill over the wall. This disturbance seems to have been the main robbing event; floors and wall material may have been removed at this time. The associated artefact assemblage including early tigs and clay smoking pipes suggests that the robbing was early seventeenth century in date. The east wall of the building was similar to the other walls apart from a slightly offset central gap best interpreted as the main entrance to B2. The slag hardcore foundation here met a line of small stones with a cluster of green glazed medieval pottery associated. As has been noted, the entire building was constructed on a hard core base, comprised in large part of iron slag, placed on the orange-red natural clay; a sherd of thirteenth-century pottery was sealed on the clay under the slag horizon (032). Variation in the depth of hard core was a response to natural undulations with the builders having in-filled to provide a level base for B2. The floor surface had been removed but broken flagstones, much like those in B1, were found during removal of tumble in the north of the building (031). Fragments in the south east corner may also represent broken floor stones and it seems likely that a floor similar to that in B1 was once also in place in B2. Areas where there was possible variation in the slag were investigated, particularly a concentration of compacted slag near the centre of the building (033a). It was thought that this feature might represent an *in situ* furnace, but on excavation it was found that furnace base fragments were re-deposited and there was no pattern or shape to the material. Investigations throughout B2 produced similar findings; the iron waste was all re-deposited.

North west of B2 and west of B1, a wall (051), 0.64 m wide, ran north-south for a distance of 1.13 m then continued under the trench edge. An east-west wall (061) of similar dimension (0.60 m wide, running for 2 m before continuing under the trench edge) met 051 in a rounded corner defining a third building, B3. A stone lined drainage channel ran between B3 and B1. Excavation to the base of the east wall of B3 revealed two drains passing through the lowest courses of the wall. A very large stone flag bedded in silty clay formed a floor; this flag was lifted to confirm that an earlier floor had been constructed of smaller stone flags. No finds came from B3 but four coarse black-ware medieval sherds were sealed near the exterior footings; close association with the other buildings suggests a medieval construction date. Both walls and floors of B3 were less well finished than B1 or B2; this and the drains noted may suggest an ancillary function. Phosphate tests were inconclusive but interpretation as a stables block servicing B1, B2 or both is possible.

The re-surfaced post-medieval 'Ogilby' road, flanked by an earth and clay bank, ran for the length of the excavation on its east side. A double ditch and bank ran beside the lower, medieval, road surface which consisted of stony metalling (106) set on a base of slag and clay. To the west of the bank was a compact slag/stone deposit extending across the east face of B2. The deposit was some 23 cm in depth and may represent 'hard standing', perhaps in part associated with backfilling of the northern foundation trench of the building. This slag horizon was a medieval deposit, a conclusion reinforced by concentrations of green glazed medieval pottery associated and the relationship between the deposit and the double ditch flanking the medieval road. The medieval road surface consisted of stony metalling (106) set on a base of slag and clay. The external slag deposit continued to a line slightly south of the south east corner of B2 (064). Here soft sandy silt

associated with two vertical stones suggested a packed posthole, and a spread of stones to the east (087) ran between the building and the road. Excavation confirmed the posthole (101, 102, 103) which was defined by a fill of fine silty sand. This posthole was at the end of the slag surface and the cut suggests that it was inserted before or during the deposition of the slag which had accumulated around it; a gatepost would be an attractive interpretation. Further excavation of 087 confirmed a surface of closely packed stone (107); these cobbles were associated with the posthole and represent a surface with a straight edge and two right angles defining its extent on the north. Approximately 3 m to the south, another possible posthole (114, 115) was found. The edges of the silty sand fill were less clearly defined than 101, leaving this a 'possible' feature. A posthole here would be interesting; a straight line to 101 is nearly parallel to the road and could suggest a gate giving access to a street/side road south of B2.

Initial investigation south of B2 concentrated on the disturbed south west corner where stone robbing was associated with early seventeenth-century material. Further work revealed a well made cobbled surface (094) with a central stone drain. Only a portion remained in place but the surviving area was skilfully constructed. The central channel on its west side ran roughly east-west parallel to the south wall of B2 before veering to the south east; it is not clear whether this surface was part of a road or yard. Roof 'slip' of stone tiles with peg holes was cleared from south of B2 revealing a loose granular flat surface of slag and red soil (112). Sherds of thirteenth-century pottery were embedded in 112 which extended from the south wall of B2 to a well defined edge running east-west from 094 beyond the extent of the cobbled surface abutting onto a heavily compacted surface (111) which joined 094. This pink-brown surface contained very compacted accumulations of clay, charcoal, coal, embers and chips of sandstone. This flat dense surface appears to represent repairs to and/or an extension of 094. The combined surface made up of 094 and 111 formed a straight line running east-west abutting onto 112; this line runs directly to the stone surface and possible gate near the main road, 107. The best interpretation is that, whatever the original purpose of 094, sometime in the medieval period it was incorporated into a road/street finished by the construction of 111. The conclusion is that a side street significantly wider than the alley to the north of B2 ran to the south of the building joining with the main road, possibly through a gate at 107.

In the south west of the excavation a linear deposit of stone (059) formed a right angle, running north north east and then south south west. The interior of the angle (077) contained an orange surface with a generally uniform spread of widely scattered small stones. The artefact assemblage associated was largely seventeenth century in date. To the west of 059, a well-built stone wall, approximately 0.55 m in width and extending from the trench edge for approximately 4.5 m was found. This wall was roughly parallel to the nearest side of 059; the features, differing in form, alignment and date from the rest of the excavation, were probably contemporary. Context 059 remains enigmatic; the size and shape of the spread suggests structure as does a clearly defined platform beyond the extent of the excavation apparently creating a rectangle some 7 m in length. Sectioning indicates, however, that 059 was not structural in a conventional sense. It is, however, similar to other excavated sites in Trelech where a stone hardcore base provided footings for a timber-frame structure. The possibility that this is also the case here seems sufficiently plausible to describe 059 and associated contexts as B10, suggesting a tenth building on the developing plan of Church Field West. As dating evidence points to seventeenth-century construction, this may indicate survival of a vernacular building tradition since the other stone based timber-frame buildings investigated were medieval.

Conclusions

This excavation has improved our understanding of the medieval town. B1 and B2 were thirteenth-century constructions, probably on doubled burgage plots, facing onto the road which was one of the main entry points into the town. Both were substantial with associated artefact assemblages indicating status but not opulence. Jug sherds were mainly local fabrics with little medieval material having origins further afield than Bristol. A third building, B3, probably provided an ancillary function such as stabling. The road was a key element in the medieval town and its importance is attested by its continuing use in the post-medieval period. An alley ran between B1 and B2 and a wider side street passed to the south of B2. A double ditch and bank flanked the medieval road while a single bank ran parallel during the post-medieval period. Post-medieval occupation to the south west may in part be related to early seventeenth-century stone robbing in B2.

It is impossible to establish the function of B1 although domestic occupation seems likely. It is also difficult to assign a function to B2. Nevertheless, the nature of construction, the stair base and putlog holes suggest that B2 was a two-storey structure; the substantial artefact assemblage not only indicates mid-thirteenth-century construction, but may also provide clues to its function. The assemblage recovered consisted of numerous ceramic sherds from both glazed jugs and coarse local black-ware 'cooking pots'. Many sherds were relatively unabraded and several largely complete vessels were found. Also significant was the large number of knapped stone pot lids found throughout B2 and its environs. These discs, presumably coverings for ceramic vessels, were notable for their quantity and size range. In addition, metal small finds included small knife blades, similar in size and design, and four large keys. This is an assemblage which might easily be associated with an inn or tavern, and the location of B2 on a main road into the medieval town makes this a persuasive interpretation.

It may also be important that one of the roads is indicated on Ogilby's itinerary from London to St David's; a pilgrim's route is a possibility. Associated finds from previous investigations in Church Field West include a thirteenth-century *ampulla*, a pilgrim's flask (Fig. 3). Trelech may have been a convenient stopping point for travellers to St David's or other shrines, and the wells of Trelech, particularly St Anne's or the Virtuous Well, may have made Trelech itself of interest to pilgrims. Interestingly, B2 is not only situated on a main road into the town but also near the church which is east of the building. A pilgrim's hospice is another possible interpretation of the evidence since there are attested close similarities in form and function between commercial inns and pilgrim's hospices during the medieval period. Indeed, a building could be both. Certainly, the role of inn and hospice was not mutually exclusive and, on the basis of the evidence available, 'a possible thirteenth century inn/pilgrim's hospice' seems an apt description of B2.

Reference

Bradney, 1913 Bradney, Sir J.E., *A History of Monmouthshire. Volume 2 Part 2. The Hundred of Trelech* (1913, reprinted by Academy Books, London, 1992).

Raymond Howell

Fig. 1: The footings of two large thirteenth-century buildings aligning one of the main medieval roads into Trelech, excavated by Dr Ray Howell and his team during the summer of 2003.
Copyright: University of Wales Newport.

(Left) Fig. 2:
A bodkin found in the alley between two large thirteenth-century buildings excavated at Trelech.
Copyright: UWN.

(Below) Fig. 3:
A thirteenth-century *ampulla* (pilgrim's flask), found at Trelech in association with two large buildings of the same date, excavated in 2003.
Drawing by Anne Leaver, UWN.

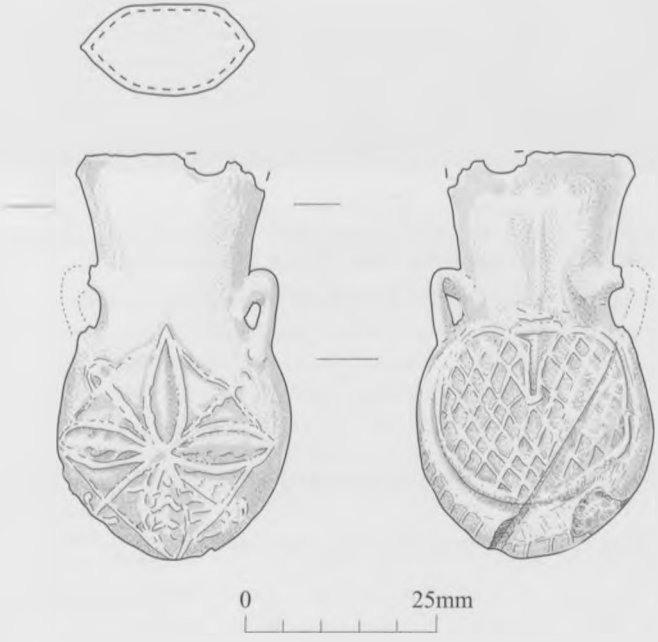

Plate 1: A copy of the silver medal designed by Thomas Henry Thomas for the Royal National Eisteddfod held at Newport in 1897.
Copyright: Museum of Welsh Life.

Thomas Henry Thomas, R.C.A. (1839-1915), and a silver medal designed for the Royal National Eisteddfod at Newport, 1897

Thomas Henry Thomas, *Allynydd Penygarn*, designed a silver medal for Newport's first National Eisteddfod, held in Belle Vue Park in August 1897. The Eisteddfod committee presented him with a copy which is now on display at the Museum of Welsh Life at St Fagans, near Cardiff (Plate 1).[1] Thomas was an appropriate choice as designer because he had been born at Penygarn in 1839, the son of the president of the Baptist College at Pontypool. He became a prominent Welsh artist, having studied at the Royal Academy Schools as well as in Paris and Rome. He eventually settled in Cardiff where he continued his work as an illustrator, notably for *The Graphic*.[2] He maintained his links with Monmouthshire, giving lectures to the Newport Literary, Scientific and Debating Society, where on 23 February 1897, he delivered a lecture on the Eisteddfod movement.[3] Thomas had become an ovate of the National Eisteddfod in 1883, a druid in 1889 and *Arwyddfardd*, Herald-Bard, in 1895.[4] He was part of a patriotic group of people who worked for a revival of Welsh culture and particularly for a renaissance of Welsh art.

The medal's theme paralleled the subject chosen for the Heroic Poem, 'Arthur of the Round Table'.[5] When designing the medal, Thomas adopted a realistic and historicist style, ignoring the myth of the round table and concentrating on Arthur the warrior hero. He depicted a bearded Arthur with torc and wreathed helmet. The wreath may have represented the oak-leafed crown designed for Archdruid Hwfa Môn by Professor Hubert Herkomer.[6] Thomas's design must have related to his recent study of ancient British coinage, as he surrounded Arthur's head with design features and the legend 'Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Frenhinol Castell Newydd ar Wysg'[7] ('Royal National Eisteddfod Newport on Usk'). The phrase 'nid da lle gellir gwell' ('good shouldn't suffice if you can do better') added a moralistic tone, while the Gorsedd emblem of 'Divine Light' suggested a religious element.[8] Design features around the head included twelve 'stones' probably symbolising the Gorsedd circle. The reverse of the medal had a Celtic scroll pattern overlaid with words acknowledging Thomas as designer. The cultural nationalism of the Eisteddfod movement contrasted with Thomas's militaristic representation of Arthur, which was probably a result of his desire for historical authenticity, as Thomas had pacifist convictions.[9] The design contrasted with Goscombe

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1 The medal (a silver crown) was deposited in the National Museum in 1916 in accordance with Thomas Henry Thomas's wishes.

2 Ballinger, J., *Memoir: Thomas Henry Thomas* (Cardiff Naturalists' Society, Cardiff, 1916) 6.

3 Newport Literary, Scientific and Debating Society minute books, 1884-1906 (Newport Reference Library).

4 Miles, D., *The Secret Life of the Bards of the Isle of Britain* (Gwasg Dinefwr Press, 1992) 120, 128, 133.

5 *Full Official Programme* (Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Frenhinol, Casnewydd, 1897) 55. The prize of a silver crown, valued at £15, was presented to the winner of the 'Heroic Poem' competition. Other medals were presented at the Eisteddfod, but their design is not known.

6 *The South Wales Daily Argus*, 27 Aug. 1896. Hubert Herkomer, R.A., also adjudicated the Arts and Crafts section of the Eisteddfod in 1897.

7 Thomas, T.H., 'Some devices and ornaments upon ancient British coins', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* (April 1897).

8 *Full Official Programme*, *op. cit.* 17.

9 Ballinger, *op. cit.* 6.

John's[10] romantically styled medal of 1898, portraying Taliesin with cultural images of harp and cromlech.[11]

The medal displayed a dragon on Arthur's helmet, because Thomas accepted it as Arthur's emblem, enlisting the authority of John Rhys, professor of Celtic at Oxford.[12] This was consistent with his campaign to have national symbols of Wales recognised by the government of the time. As chairman of the 'Provisional Committee upon the Emblems of Wales', he advocated the insertion of the red dragon onto the fourth grand quarter of the Royal Standard.[13] Thomas understood the importance of symbolism in the creation of national awareness, and in 1896, he designed the Gorsedd banner with a central dragon, and instigated the idea for the Hirlas Horn designed by Goscombe John and donated by Lord Tredegar.[14] The medal's theme represented the glorification of Wales's past and the need for national images which could unite past and present in a cultural revival of Wales. The medal is a reminder of men like Thomas Henry Thomas, who worked to bring about a sense of cultural continuity, awareness and self-respect for the Welsh nation.

Christabel Hutchings

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[10] Sir William Goscombe John (1860-1952), sculptor and medallist. See *The Dictionary of Welsh Biography 1941-1970* (London, 2001) 113-4.

[11] On display at the Museum of Welsh Life, St Fagan's, Cardiff. See also Lord, P., *The Visual Culture of Wales. Imaging the Nation* (University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2000) 317. P. Lord's date of 1896 for this medal, is the date that it was 'begun' (P. Lord, *in litt.*).

[12] Thomas, T.H., 'The inclusion of arms representing Wales in the Royal Shield of the United Kingdom', *Young Wales*, 111, no. 33 (Sept. 1897) 196.

[13] The T.H. Thomas collection (National Museum & Galleries of Wales, Museum of Welsh Life, 2435/268).

[14] *The South Wales Daily Argus*, 27 Aug. 1896, 3 Aug. 1897. See also Lord, *op. cit.* 316.

Curating a National Collection of Seals

The earliest known Welsh seals date from the late twelfth century. Throughout the Middle Ages, they were used to authenticate documents and prove rights of title, as well as to keep private the contents of deeds and letters. Their significance carried on into modern times, in particular for corporate bodies, and seals are still attached to personal legal documents.

The collections of the National Museums & Galleries of Wales include over 180 seal dies (or matrices), as well as over 1,900 casts of seals and impressions directly from seal dies. The majority of the casts date from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, having been made by 'perambulating dealers' and modellers such as Robert Ready (1811-1901) or archaeological conservators on the museum staff, though twenty-three are original seal impressions. Most seal dies and impressions are in the collections of the Department of Archaeology & Numismatics, though some are held at the Museum of Welsh Life, St Fagans, and a few are kept in the Departments of Art and Industry. Many of the seal casts derive from the Howell collection, presented in 1883 to Cardiff Municipal Museum (which was transferred to the National Museum in 1912, this having been authorised by the Cardiff Corporation Act, 1909), and the Mansel-Franklen collection donated in 1925, but the collection has continued to grow, by purchase, donation and a conscious policy of making casts and impressions from all new dies found mainly by metal detectorists within Wales (and now reported under the Portable Antiquities Reporting Scheme).

In 1979, the Revd Dr David Williams was invited by Mr G. C. Boon, then keeper of archaeology, and Mr J. M. Lewis, then senior assistant keeper of archaeology, to sort out the seal dies and impressions in the museum. Over the years, David's devotion to this task has transformed it from an ill-sorted assemblage of poorly identified specimens into an ordered collection of national significance. The simple code devised by David now forms the logical structure of the collection: a *letter* signifying either die (D), or casts and impressions: Welsh (W), English (E), Scottish (S), Foreign (F), Royal (R), and a *number* within a consecutive sequence, by class: royal; official; judicial; ecclesiastical (episcopal, official, capitular, ruridecanal, parochial, colleges and fraternities, hospitals); monastic; civic and corporate; lord chanceries; and personal (attributable and non-attributable). The collections of the National Museum also include an interesting group of lead papal *bullae*, including those of Clement III (1187-91), Honorius III (1216-27) and Gregory IX (1227-41).

Access

Various publications on seals in the collections by David Williams have done much to increase awareness of the National Museums & Galleries of Wales's collection, none more so than his innovative *Welsh History through Seals* (National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 1982). What of the collections themselves?

For many years, the casts and impressions were stored in plastic bags in cramped cabinets within the department's offices. The first stage of improving storage for the collection was to relocate all seal casts and impressions from bags to European standard plastic trays (600 mm x 400 mm x 78 mm) lined with inert plastazote sheets, the upper layer being cut to the profiles of individual specimens. This work was undertaken by staff of the Department of Archaeology & Numismatics.

Stage two has just been completed: the fitting of cabinets in a dedicated seal room in the National Museum & Gallery, Cardiff. The new lockable cabinets have Fami TR series adjustable shelving to store the plastic trays.[15]

Growth

Recent additions to the National Collection include significant discoveries from Monmouthshire, such as impressions of the Raglan signet ring (a massive mid-fifteenth-century gold ring; Redknap 2000, 64; Fig. 2), and of a seal matrix from Trelech (Redknap and Williams, 2003).

Two detailed catalogues of the collections have already been published (Williams, 1993; 1998), the first containing an account of its history and contents. A third volume on Royal seals with a supplement on Welsh examples is nearing completion, probably for electronic publication.

The collection of seal dies and impressions may be consulted by any interested group or individual on Tuesdays-Fridays by prior appointment with the Department of Archaeology & Numismatics. Examples from the collections may be found on the *Gathering the Jewels* website at www.gtj.org.uk [16]

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Mark Redknap

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[15] Installed by System Storage Ltd, Maidstone, Kent.

[16] This website contains thousands of images of Welsh life through the ages, gathered from museums, libraries, record offices and archives throughout Wales.

Fig. 1: The seal cabinets in use. The trays have plastazote linings recessed to fit individual seal impressions.
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

Fig. 2: Impression of the Raglan ring (twice size).
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

Fig. 3: The Raglan ring as it could have been used.
Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

REVIEWS

Lord, Peter, assisted by Morgan-Guy, John, *The Visual Culture of Wales: Medieval Vision*, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2003; ISBN: 0 7083 1801 0; hardback, 245 mm x 300 mm; 288pp., 440 colour illustrations; £30.

This is a truly splendid book. The meticulously researched text is accompanied by stunning photographs which give full weight to the visual traditions of all parts of Wales. The medieval heritage of Gwent can now be seen not just as part of the cultural tradition of medieval Wales but as embedded in a wider European context. All the visual aspects of material culture are here - architecture, garden design and textiles as well as painting and carving.

The approach is broadly chronological: art is clearly seen as rooted in the social framework and in the politics of power as well as in belief and ideology. There is not much Gwent material in the opening chapter on Wales and the western cultures of the early medieval period, though the enduring symbolic importance of the Roman buildings of Caerleon and Caerwent is stressed. The second chapter, on cultural reorientation after the Norman conquest, makes more use of evidence from south east Wales. As well as the architecture of castles and abbeys, there is a detailed discussion of international influences on the Romanesque carvings of St Woolos Cathedral at Newport and the Monmouth Castle tympanum. The survey of early Welsh baptismal fonts identifies a distinct school of workmanship in north Gwent, at Llansantffraed, Abergavenny, Goetre and Betws Newydd, as well as more international influences on the fonts from St Woolos, Monmouth and Lancaut (now in Gloucestershire but then in Monmouthshire).

Most of the imagery discussed is from religious buildings and is embedded in the religious tradition of western Christendom. Nevertheless, the authors have identified an impressive tradition of secular imagery, and demonstrate that much of their material, though religious in content, was clearly secular and political in purpose. The chapter 'Princes and Aristocrats' uses tombs and ecclesiastical buildings as well as castles and illuminated manuscripts to articulate the power structures of medieval Welsh society. The secular power of the religious orders is illustrated with a wealth of visual evidence ranging from an elegant pottery fish dish found at Llanthony to the elaboration of the reconstructed pulpitum screen at Tintern. Tomb effigies like the ones recently restored at Abergavenny are replete with religious imagery but their overarching aim is to demonstrate the power and status of the deceased.

The following chapter, 'The Christian Year', considers the relationship between liturgy, the popular religious tradition and the visual imagery of the later medieval period. Here the great puzzle is the almost complete absence of stained glass in South Wales and the very few depictions of local or Welsh saints. Lord quotes the will of William Herbert of Raglan, who wished to be buried in the family chapel at Raglan and left money for the windows to be 'glazed with the Stories of the Passion of Christ and of the Nativity and of the Saints of mine that be in my Clozett at Ragland' (p. 263). Alas, Herbert was executed after the Yorkist defeat at the battle of Banbury in 1469 and his bequest remained unfulfilled: we will probably never know which saints he had depicted in his private rooms at Raglan.

Another puzzle is the absence of any reference in this book to the iconography of the Sunday Christ. Gwent has two of the surviving Welsh examples of this traditional warning against Sabbath-breaking; there is another at Gumfreston (Pembrokeshire) and one just over the Herefordshire border at Michaelchurch Escley, and one may have been destroyed by nineteenth-century restorers at Llanbleddian (Glamorgan). They may not be great art, but surely they deserve at least a passing reference?

Medieval Vision concludes with a chapter on piety and patronage in the late medieval period which provides a valuable corrective to any lingering ideas of Wales as a cultural backwater. Here again Gwent is at the heart of the argument: from the gardens at Raglan Castle and William Herbert's spectacular illuminated manuscripts to the alabaster tombs of Abergavenny, Gwent is placed squarely in the development of early Renaissance visual culture. It is perhaps unfortunate that new evidence about the provenance of the frieze now at Cefn Tilla has been left to the CD-ROM version of this book. Readers who attended John Morgan-Guy's discussion of the frieze (under the auspices of the Gwent County History Association) will remember his argument that the frieze came not from Usk Priory but from Raglan Castle. To assess this argument (which is of fundamental importance to much of what Peter Lord says about the importance of secular patronage in the visual culture of the late medieval period), we do need detailed depictions of the drawings of Raglan Castle to which John Morgan-Guy referred.

A study on this scale is bound to raise some questions and require some minor corrections. To take a few Gwent examples: the Newport cross is very elaborate for a wayside cross; the Grosmont cross head (found at a crossroads near Skenfrith) is much cruder and more likely to be a wayside cross. There is another depiction of Mary placing her rosary on the scales of judgement at Llangybi. The Llansantffraed alabasters of the Entombment and Resurrection are lovely but in their delicacy and refinement they belong to the general European tradition. Small alabasters are easily moved. These may well have been commissioned for the church, but we have no reference to them there before the late eighteenth century.

But these are minor flaws which do not detract from a major achievement. There are suggestions, too, for further work. Peter Lord points out, for example, that we still have no proper study of the building history and sculpture of the church towers at Peterstone Wentloog and St Brides Wentloog. *Medieval Vision* gives us the context within which all such studies can be located, and a challenging standard by which they will have to be judged.

Madeleine Gray

Kenyon, John and O'Conor, Kieran (eds.), *The Medieval Castle in Ireland and Wales, Essays in honour of Jeremy Knight*, Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2003; ISBN 1 85182 726 9; hardback, 160 mm x 240 mm; 261 pp.; £45.

This edited volume consists of a series of interesting and useful studies of castles in Ireland and Wales. It is wholly appropriate that it should be dedicated to Jeremy Knight, a widely respected authority on castles and the chairman of the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association. A particularly welcome aspect of the volume is its recognition of the close links between Ireland and Wales in the medieval period. As the editors note, Anglo-Norman magnates such as the Marshals and de Lacys held large estates in both countries and innovation in castle design in one frequently influenced developments in the other.

The editors have contributed valuable chapters of their own with Kieran O'Conor providing a re-interpretation of the earthworks at Baginbun (co. Wexford) and John Kenyon offering a re-interpretation of Kidwelly. Among other interesting contributions is Lawrence Butler's discussion of the Welsh-built Dolforwyn, a castle constructed by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. The Dolforwyn chapter is sub-titled 'Prospect and retrospect' and issues such as 'monumentality' are addressed. The author concludes with thoughts on the castle today, rightly arguing that despite the possible romantic appeal of an 'owl-haunted ruin', a castle site 'yields a much greater contribution to scholarship if the overburden of destruction and decay is removed and the walls and floors are conserved'. Excavation and conservation clearly enhance our understanding of castle sites and encourage in-depth investigations. An interesting example of such an investigation is Thomas McNeill's chapter, 'Squaring circles: flooring round towers in Wales and Ireland'. Examples considered include local sites such as Skenfrith and Usk.

A chapter of special interest to members of the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association is Richard Avent's 'William Marshal's building works at Chepstow Castle, Monmouthshire, 1189-1219'. Re-interpretation of phasing at Chepstow has caused fundamental re-assessments of the development of the castle with questions being raised about, among other issues, when the great central hall keep was constructed and who was responsible for building it. Rick Turner's new Cadw guide to the site addresses the debate. In this study, Richard Avent concentrates on the Marshal period, reviewing the building sequence from Marshal's acquisition of Chepstow to the death of the final Marshal heir. He argues strongly that this sequence must be re-assessed. The argument that much more of the development work at Chepstow can be attributed to the elder William Marshal has a compelling logic. The argument is put in a concise and well-structured way which would, in itself, make this book worth buying.

There is, however, one problem with placing the book on a 'must have' list and that is its price. The publisher appears to have decided that the book is one which will appeal only to a specialist market and has priced it accordingly. That is unfortunate as there is much in this volume which will appeal to general readers as well as specialists. Any readers who do acquire this volume will find it interesting and highly informative.

Raymond Howell

Brown, Roger L., *The Letters of Edward Copleston, Bishop of Llandaff, 1828-1849*, Publications of the South Wales Record Society, No. 17, Cardiff, 2003; ISBN: 0 9525961 7 2; hardback, 225 mm x 158 mm; xiii and 314 pp., 1 plate; £19-95 (post free), £15 (post free) to members of the Record Society.

Canon Roger Brown has done a considerable service to all those interested in the ecclesiastical history of Monmouthshire and Glamorgan, by transcribing those letters of Bishop Copleston held in the archives of Llandaff Cathedral. Of necessity, only an abridged version could be published, but this volume contains well over one-half of the original text.

The quite masterly 'Introduction' places the life and concerns of the bishop within the context of the cultural, economic and political background of his day. It also gives detailed biographies of the two principal recipients of Copleston's letters: the Revd Bruce Knight, his examining chaplain and vicar-general (later dean of Llandaff), and Knight's brother-in-law, the Revd J.M. Traherne, whom Copleston appointed as diocesan chancellor. The concluding pages of the book give a chronological listing of the several appointments of the diocesan clergy mentioned.

The bishop, as the published letters show, played no small part in public life. He was the epistoller at the coronation of William IV (1832), and he participated fully in the deliberations of the House of Lords. Copleston's opposition (like that of his brother bishops) to the Reform Act of 1832, saw him heckled in Chepstow and advised for a time not to enter Abergavenny (near his then residence), as feelings there were running high.

The small income accruing to the bishopric of Llandaff meant that, like two of his predecessors, Copleston gained the bulk of his personal revenue by holding the deanery of St Paul's Cathedral, London, in plurality. This lucrative post enabled him both to function adequately as bishop of Llandaff, and also to give liberally to deserving causes, but necessitated Copleston's absence from South Wales for all but four months each year. However, he pointed out that living in London was 'more useful to my diocese, in a hundred ways, than if I spend all the year within it'. His houses in the diocese were Llansantffraed (near Abergavenny, 1828-35), Llandough Castle (1835-37) and Hardwick House (close to Chepstow, 1837 until his death). Copleston was proud that his gardener at Hardwick won prizes at Chepstow agricultural show.

As the letters show, Copleston was in constant touch with his vicar-general even when in London, and he quickly came to grips with the problems of his diocese – not least the need for church building in the rapidly expanding industrial and urban areas. The bishop paid a visit to the Merthyr Tydfil region in the first autumn of his episcopate, and described 'the deafening roar of furnaces, rattling wagons, gleams of liquid fire, gigantic machinery ...'. At Nantyglo, he found no church but 'a Mr Price officiating in an unlicensed room'. Before the bishop's death, new churches were built (as the letters partly show) at Abersychan, Newport (St Paul's), Rhymney, Tredegar and Trevethin. Copleston also displayed concern for the ancient church buildings of his diocese. He emphasised the need in all cases 'to make a drain the whole way round the Church, close to the wall'. With regard to St Woolos, Newport (1828), he wanted an end to the practice of burying within the church, 'certainly of burying without a vault or floor-stone'. He was advised that Llanfihangel Crucornau church (1832) was 'in a frightful state of decay ... positively unsafe'. It was rebuilt.

The bishop praised the 'active and hearty' part played by Sir Digby Mackworth in the rebuilding of the ruined Llandevaud chapel (1842). He was not so enamoured with 'the ladies of Lanover' who tried to 'put down psalmody' in Llanofer church (1833), whilst Lady Hall tried to meddle in the plans for church works at Goytre and Llanarth, and for parochial schools at Mynyddislwyn. Copleston commented: 'What a pest that family are becoming to this Diocese'.

He deplored incumbents holding two or more livings in plurality and, in 1834, wished that after the death of Thomas Leyson, vicar of Basaleg (see *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 16 (2000) 107) and rector of Panteg and Tredynog – with a net total income of £900 [£36,000 in today's money] – that grouping could be dismembered. He also disliked non-residence by clergy – itself a consequence of plurality. He wrote (in 1836): 'the Duke of Beaufort has given Lansoy to a Gloucestershire Incumbent, who will of course be non-resident. Is not this provoking?'

Copleston deprecated such livings being given 'to people in no way connected to the Diocese ... What earthly pretence have they to eat up these morsels away from the hungry and ill-fed clergy of the Diocese?' He also lamented the effect of pew rents. Visiting Chepstow church in 1833, he noted: 'a lamentable want of accommodation for the poor ... How can we expect to maintain a hold on the affections of the people?'

When his clergy were in trouble – and a few were heavily in debt and their livings sequestered – Copleston might withdraw their permission to officiate, but showed compassion by providing for them, and especially when they had a family to support. In one such instance, when Stephen Williams, vicar of Magor, spent some time in the Fleet prison, the bishop helped gain his release (22 March 1832). Another Williams, the neighbouring vicar of Goldcliff, was also in debt and Copleston commented: 'What a deplorable state that part of Monmouthshire is in!'

Although an early 'high churchman', Copleston was not enamoured of the Tractarian Movement and, whilst he supported in Parliament moves towards Catholic Emancipation, he resented Roman Catholic encroachments in his diocese. The building of St Mary's, Stow Hill, Newport in 1840, led him to comment: 'The sight of a Popish Cathedral is indeed to me a source of inquietude'.

Canon Brown's praiseworthy project was concerned only with Copleston's letters held at Llandaff Cathedral. A further 110 letters from the bishop can be traced at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth (LL/MISC. CORRESPONDENCE 10159-10245). The great majority were addressed to Edward Stephens, solicitor and diocesan registrar at Llandaff, and are complementary to those published by Canon Brown. A number of them refer to Stephen Williams, the Magor incumbent whose living remained sequestered until 1854. That lengthy saga also finds abundant documentation in other of Edward Stephens's papers (NLW, Refs. LL/LB/4, LL/S/259 and LL/MISC. CORR. 18781-19063).

David H. Williams

Gray, Madeleine, *Images of Piety, The iconography of traditional religion in late medieval Wales*, British Archaeological Reports, No. 316, Archaeopress, Oxford, 2000; ISBN: 1 84171 208 6; paper cover, 210 x 300 mm; x and 174 pp., 67 figs. (several of them multiple); £35.

In her learned and apposite 'Introduction' to this volume, the author reminds us that 'at first sight, the visual evidence for traditional religion in medieval Wales is not a promising field for study'. She then goes on almost to prove herself wrong, by giving a fascinating and detailed account of the several types of religious imagery dating from the Middle Ages of which examples can be found in Wales. She also stresses the importance of such imagery to the people of those times, especially those who could not read nor write. 'We are looking at a period', she writes, 'in which literacy for most people meant visual literacy, the reading of pictorial representation'. Whilst the majority of Dr Gray's examples come from other parts of the principality, Monmouthshire finds not infrequent mention.

In Chapter 1, 'Images of maidenhood: the Virgin Mary', Dr Gray says that the image of the mother of Jesus was 'almost as ubiquitous as that of her son, and indeed often accompanied him'. One such was the Virgin in the Crucifixion at Cilcain, Flintshire, where 'tears flow abundantly down her face, and she turns away from the Cross as if unable to bear the sight of her Son's agony'. Dr Gray draws attention to the many pilgrims who streamed to the allegedly 'miraculous' statue of Our Lady at Llantarnam Abbey's Pen-rhys grange in the Rhondda, and gives a full analysis of what was a national pilgrimage site. She notes that Adam of Usk (died 1430) wished to be buried in front of the image of the Virgin in Usk priory church, and she mentions the composite Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin carved in alabaster at the tomb of Richard Herbert of Ewias (died 1510) in the priory church of Abergavenny. Could this have been the image of 'Our Lady of the Assumption of Abergavenny' mentioned in a will of 1529?

Chapter 2 is concerned with 'Images of motherhood: St Anne and the married saints'. Dr Gray notes that 'Gresford is the only Welsh church with a full sequence of illustrations from the Life of St Anne' and inevitably, Gresford (Denbighshire) permeates the whole of this volume, so rich is that church in medieval imagery. Dr Gray suggests that there was probably an image of St Radegund in the pilgrimage chapel dedicated to her within the precincts of Usk Priory, and certainly there was a representation of St Mary Magdalene in her chapel in, or near the same town, for it was to that statue that an early sixteenth-century Welsh poem was addressed.

In Chapter 3, 'Images of sanctity: Wales and the international tradition', the author surveys the imagery connected with saints like Catherine and Christopher. She notes an image, of which your reviewer was previously unaware, of St Leonard in the church of Cwm-iou (Cwmyoy), whilst recent research also finds reference to an apparent image of St Leonard in Nash church. Had Dr Gray been writing a couple of years later than she did, she would have been able to describe the late-medieval wall painting of St George slaying the dragon recently uncovered and preserved in Llangatwg Lingoed church.

Dr Gray, in Chapter 4, 'Images of sanctity : a land of saints?', gives a detailed account of the imagery associated with the 'Celtic' saints like David and Winifred. Monmouthshire finds little mention in this chapter, save for Llantarnam's secondary pilgrimage cell at Llandderfel above Cwmbrân on Mynydd Maen. It claimed to possess both a picture and a relic of that saint, whose

more famous shrine was at Llanderfel in Meirionydd, where the 'statue was seated on a horse and held a staff ... Derfel's image had eyes which could be made to open and close, as well as limbs that moved'.

In Chapter 5, 'Images of Pity: the iconography of the crucified Christ', Dr Gray gives a valuable *discursus* on 'the Man of Sorrows' and a fine case-study regarding the Llandeilo Talybont wall paintings from Glamorganshire now awaiting display at the Museum of Welsh Life at St Fagan's. (Your reviewer prefers its old name of The Welsh Folk Museum). The author compares the Kemeys Inferior crucifix (described in this journal in 2000 by Dr Mark Redknap) with the Mochdre (Montgomeryshire) image of Christ. So far as Monmouthshire is concerned, she also draws our attention to the mangled body of Christ displayed in an eight-foot high wall painting at Llangybi church, and to the representations of the five wounds of our Saviour carved on a chest panel in Bedwellty church, and on the late medieval frieze at Cefn Tilla.

Chapter 6, 'Images of Vice and Virtue', and Chapter 7, 'Images of Liturgy and Literacy', have scant mention of Monmouthshire. The former is concerned with iconography illustrating the Seven Deadly Sins, the Seven Virtues, and the Last Judgement. The comment is made that there may once have been a Doom scene painted over the chancel arch at Llangwm Uchaf (the church of St Jerome). The latter chapter includes reference to the Abergavenny *pax* described by Dr Redknap earlier in this present volume.

Chapter 8, 'the Destruction of the Images', describes the sorry tale of the fate of many statues and the like at the time of the Reformation, but also points out that a number survived for years thereafter. The Kemeys crucifix was found in 1855 walled up in the rood stairway, the Mochdre figure of Christ hidden under the wall plate of the old church. Were both deliberately saved? The statue of the Virgin at Pen-rhys was not so lucky. Singled out for quick removal and despatch for burning in London, the authorities – perhaps expecting local resistance – ordered it to be taken down with 'such quietness and secret manner as may be'.

Dr Gray, in the second half of this volume, has a series of very fine photographs illustrating the imagery which she has so painstakingly described. Your reviewer particularly liked the panel in Betws Gwerful Goch church (Meirionydd) displaying the Bound Christ flanked by the Virgin Mary and St John; the depiction of St Nicholas and the miracle of the boy in the bath-tub at Colwinston church (Glamorgan); and the sculpture of St Leonard of Limoges on Gresford church font, amongst the many others.

This fine and illuminating volume covers some of the same ground as Peter Lord's recently published *The Visual Culture of Wales: Medieval Vision*, but these two very important works will prove to be complementary. Peter Lord's book has been able to employ many coloured illustrations, but Dr Gray's work has the deeper theological exposition of the religious imagery with which she is concerned. Her volume is a masterpiece of scholarship from start to finish.

David H. Williams

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

John Cherry worked from 1964 in the British Museum, retiring in 2002 as keeper of Medieval and Modern Europe. During his career, he specialised in medieval archaeology and art, and wrote many articles on medieval jewellery, seals and seal matrices, metal and leather work. He contributed to Dominique Collon, *7000 Years of Seals* (1997) and co-edited and part-wrote a book on *A W. Franks: Nineteenth century Collecting and the British Museum* (1997). He was a visiting fellow at All Souls College, Oxford in 2003, and is preparing a catalogue of the Rawlinson collection of seal matrices in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Madeleine Gray lectures in history at the University of Wales Newport. She edited the final volume of Sir Joseph Bradney's *History of Monmouthshire* for the South Wales Record Society in 1993, and is one of the editors of the forthcoming Gwent County History. A specialist in medieval religion and culture (and a highly popular speaker on these subjects), her *Images of Piety*, a study of the iconography of late medieval religion in Wales, published in 2000, is reviewed earlier in this volume.

Raymond Howell is reader in history and medieval archaeology at the University of Wales Newport. For sixteen years, he has conducted annual research excavations in Trelech, a decayed medieval urban site, of great importance in the thirteenth century. He is one of the editors of the forthcoming Gwent County History, and his publications include *A History of Gwent* (1988) and, with Professor Miranda Aldhouse-Green, *Celtic Wales*, published in 2000.

Christabel Hutchings teaches part-time at Coleg Gwent. She has researched the history of education in the nineteenth century, for which she was awarded an M.Ed. by Cardiff University. More recently, she has completed an M.A. in Celtic-Roman studies at the University of Wales Newport; her dissertation was entitled 'Slavery and Status in Roman Britain'. She is currently researching the archive of Thomas Henry Thomas (1839-1915) at the Museum of Welsh Life.

Jeremy Knight read archaeology at University College, Cardiff, and was for over thirty years a respected inspector of ancient monuments, whose area of responsibility included his native Monmouthshire; he was born in Caerleon. He has undertaken a major excavation at Montgomery Castle; written many guide books to monuments; and has published numerous articles. A major work, *Archaeology, Society and Religion in Early Medieval Western Europe AD 235-700*, was published in 2000. His book on Monmouthshire in the Civil War and the Popish Plot will be published in 2005. Jeremy Knight was editor of *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* from 1980-89, and has been chairman of the Association since 1996. Appropriately, Vol. XII (1996) of *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* consisted of 'Papers in Honour of Jeremy K. Knight'.

J.M. Lewis retired from the Department of Archaeology & Numismatics at the National Museum of Wales, where he was in charge of the medieval and later material, in 1986. He has published on a wide range of archaeological topics, chiefly in the field of Welsh ceramics and metal-ware, notably *The medieval tiles of Wales* (1999). He has recently been working with Mark Redknap on a corpus of inscribed stones and stone sculpture from early medieval south east Wales.

Mark Redknap is curator of medieval and later archaeology in the Department of Archaeology & Numismatics in the National Museum & Gallery of Wales, which he joined in 1988. He has directed numerous excavations, including St Columba's shrine, Iona Abbey (1976); a sixteenth-century shipwreck in the Cattewater, Plymouth Sound (1977-78); Llangors crannog, the semi-submerged island residence of the ruler of Brycheiniog in the ninth-early tenth centuries (1989-93); and Llanbedrgoch, an early medieval/Viking settlement on the Isle of Anglesey (1994-2001).

Sian E. Rees is an inspector of ancient monuments for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments. After reading archaeology at Birmingham University, where she was awarded her doctorate, she joined the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments in England. She then moved to Wales and was responsible firstly for south west Wales, where she excavated at Carreg Coetan burial chamber and Haverfordwest Priory, and subsequently, for eastern Wales. She has worked on the conservation of numerous ancient monuments, including Dinefwr and Dolforwyn Castles, Cwmhir Abbey and Ewenny Priory. She is also responsible for the administration and protection of maritime archaeology in Wales.

David M. Robinson is an architectural historian with a particular interest in Cistercian architecture, especially the Cistercian architecture of Wales. Whilst on the staff of Cadw from 1985 to 1999, he was responsible for editing a new series of Cadw guide books which made a substantial contribution to Welsh learning. He is currently employed by English Heritage as head of historic properties research. David Robinson's many publications include *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, which he edited in 1998, and *The Cistercians in Wales: Archaeology and Architecture 1130-1540* (2004).

Peter Webster studied at the University of Manchester and the London Institute of Archaeology. He has been on the staff of Cardiff University since 1969, being at present a co-ordinating lecturer (archaeology and ancient history, art and architecture) in the Centre for Lifelong Learning. He has excavated extensively on Roman and medieval sites in western Britain, but is best known for his work on Roman pottery, particularly that found in Wales.

David H. Williams, the 'man from Monmouthshire' to whom this volume of *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* is dedicated, was born in Newport, and educated at Bassaleg School and Trinity College, Cambridge. Throughout his adult life, he has had two main research interests: the study of seals, but especially Cistercian studies on which he has published numerous works, which have rightly led him to be acknowledged as one of the foremost scholars in this field. David Williams accomplished this whilst serving as an Anglican priest in Wales, Libya, and most recently Poland, where he worked for two years and from which he returned in 1997. He was editor of *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* from 1990 to 2001.

Glanmor Williams was professor of history at University College, Swansea from 1957 to 1982. Knighted in 1995 as an appropriate recognition of his considerable services to Welsh archaeology and history, his publications include *The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation* (1962); *Religion, Language and Nationality in Wales* (1979); *The Welsh and their Religion* (1991); and *Wales and the Reformation* (1997). In 1996, he took part in a conference organised by this Association about the Civil War in Monmouthshire.

FIELD EXCURSIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES, 2003

Day Outing: 31 May, to Swansea and Merthyr Mawr

Our first stop on this glorious day in May, was at the Egyptian Centre at the University of Wales, Swansea. We saw the splendid collection of Egyptian antiquities amassed by Sir Henry Wellcome, in its lovely, purpose-built museum, lovingly cared for by the university. After lunch at the picturesque 'Pelican in her Piety' overlooking Ogmore Castle, we paid a visit to the castle under the guidance of our chairman, Jeremy Knight. The castle overlooks a ford in the river, busy with visitors and pony-trekkers. At Merthyr Mawr, we visited the church of St Teilo built in 1849-51, and saw the lapidary collection of early headstones and crosses in the flowery churchyard. At Candleston Castle, a fourteenth-century fortified manor house of the Canteloupe family on the edge of the dunes, we explored the site once again led by Jeremy Knight, and enjoyed a picnic in the sun before setting off for home.

Day Outing: 13 September, to Bath and Bradford on Avon

At the Roman Baths Museum in Bath, we were treated to a very special 'tunnel tour' behind the scenes, where we saw areas of the Roman baths complex not normally open to the public. Our guides on this fascinating tour were the curator, Stephen Clews, and Susan Fox, a long-standing member of our Association, and now keeper of collections at the Roman baths. After lunch in Bath which was over-flowing with visitors and street performers, we made for the comparative peace and quiet of Bradford on Avon, a picturesque Wiltshire wool town, which had belonged in the Middle Ages to Shaftesbury Abbey. There, with Jeremy Knight as our guide, we visited the tiny Saxon church and the great tithe barn, a magnificent building dating from around 1360. Those with energy to spare, enjoyed exploring the delightful lanes of the town, a visit to the parish church, or a walk along the river bank, whilst others went in search of a cup of tea, most welcome on a very hot day.

Evening Visits

Once again, we enjoyed a wide variety of visits, mostly well attended. It was good to see some of our newer members, of whom we recruited a respectable number during the year, coming along to enjoy themselves. We started the season in April, with a most enjoyable lecture at the Drill Hall in Chepstow, given by Julian Mitchell, who had curated the exhibition on the Guernsey artist, Joshua Gosselin, showing at Chepstow Museum. This event tied in with Mr Mitchell's article on Gosselin and his water-colours of Monmouthshire in *The Monmouthshire Antiquary* for 2003. This was followed by a private viewing and a buffet supper.

In May, we visited the Magor Marsh Reserve under the expert guidance of Derek Upton, to see the preserved prehistoric landscape of the Gwent Levels, after which Mark Lewis gave members a most knowledgeable tour of Magor parish church, the 'Cathedral of the Moors'.

In June, we visited sites in the Black Mountains with Frank Olding, who had delivered an excellent lecture on the subject at the Annual General Meeting. We walked on Pentwyn hill fort, visited Longtown Castle, and looked at the church at Clodock, all interpreted for us in Frank's inimitable style.

July found us in Mamhilad, exploring Ty Asch, an amazing survival of a classic Monmouthshire vernacular building style recently re-discovered. Built in 1550, it had been used as a cow shed, but now listed Grade II* it was to be renovated for habitation once again. Mr Michael Davies, the architect overseeing the renovation, gave us a wonderful history and interpretation of the house, assisted from time to time by the very enthusiastic owner, a local farmer!

In August, we spent a delightful evening in Llangwm, as guests of the Llangwm Local History Group. Mr Bob Fowles showed us around Gaer Fawr Camp, a large Iron Age hill fort on which his house stands, and afterwards, Dr Maddy Gray talked to us in the beautiful twelfth-century St Jerome's church, on the medieval rood screen. We ended the evening with a convivial cup of tea in the village hall.

Annual General Meeting: 22 March 2003

After the business meeting, Frank Olding, heritage officer for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, delivered an illustrated lecture on 'The Landscape Archaeology of the Black Mountains'.

October Day School: 4 October 2003

A highly successful day school was held at the University of Wales College, Newport, Caerleon Campus, on 'The Normans in Gwent'. The speakers were Geoff Mein of Trostrey Excavation Group; Edward Besly of the National Museums & Galleries of Wales; Steve Clarke of Monmouth Archaeological Society; Neil Phillips of UWCN; and Rick Turner of Cadw. Between them they covered a wide spectrum of topics, with many new and interesting observations which stimulated a good discussion at the end of the proceedings. We are grateful once again to the university for hosting this meeting.

Gwenllian V. Jones