

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARY
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARIAN ASSOCIATION



Edited by
ANNETTE M. BURTON

VOLUME XXII (2006)

ISSN 1359-9062

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Designed and printed by 4word Ltd, Page and Print Production, Bristol.
Baker's Park, Cater Road, Bristol, BS13 7TT. Tel. 0117 9410500

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VOL. XXII

2006

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TAKING SIDES: ROYALIST COMMISSIONERS OF ARRAY FOR MONMOUTHSHIRE IN THE CIVIL WAR

By Jeremy K. Knight

Books on the civil war between Charles I and Parliament often have a map showing England and Wales neatly divided between a 'parliamentarian' south and east and a 'royalist' north and west. Whilst this may indicate the areas controlled by each side for much of the war, a large amount of recent work has emphasised how complex allegiances were in particular counties, even those supposedly 'loyal' to one side or the other.

The immediate *causis belli* was control of the county militia and the appointment of the lord lieutenant who commanded it. In Monmouthshire, the lord lieutenant was the earl of Worcester, until he was dismissed from his post in 1636 for his Catholicism in the rapidly worsening political climate of the pre-war years. His son, Edward Herbert, complained bitterly that Worcester had lent the King £40,000 and that 'affronts [were] put on him by the county in consequence of these services'. He asked, unsuccessfully, for his father's reinstatement.¹ In each hundred the militia was under the command of a prominent local gentleman, though actual command was often exercised by a deputy, where the nominal commander was unable to carry out his duties in person due to age or to other duties. Thus in 1634 Richard Herbert of Chirbury was captain for Caldicot and Trelech hundreds, with George Probert of the Argoed serving as his deputy. Thomas Morgan of Machen was acting captain for Usk and Wentloog hundreds, since Sir Charles Williams of Llangibby and Sir William Morgan of Tredegar were both of advanced years. Worcester's steward George Milborne of Wonastow, a reputed Catholic, and a close Worcester ally, was captain for Skenfrith and Raglan hundreds. William Jones of Treowen, whose wife was an open Catholic, was captain for Abergavenny hundred. All of these were to serve as commissioners of Array. The position of captain of the horse, a post of some prestige, was held by another future commissioner of Array, John Parry of Pen-y-Clawdd.²

When war came, both Parliament and the King issued proclamations calling on the gentry of individual counties to raise the militia and arm and train troops. In some counties, this led to lively market place brawls as rival groups of gentry tried to read the rival proclamations. In response to the parliamentarian militia ordinance, the King revived a medieval procedure going back to the time of Edward I and unused since 1557. Commissions of Array were sent, in Latin, to the leading Protestant gentlemen of each county, so excluding the Catholic gentry. Those who responded came to form a commission of Array to direct the war effort in each county. The King began to issue these documents in English counties in June 1642 and to the counties of Wales in August,³ but only began to assemble a sizeable army after his arrival in Shrewsbury on 10 September 1642. Later that month, Parliament ordered that Sir Thomas Morgan of Machen; Sir Nicholas Kemeys of Cefn Mably; Sir Trevor Williams of Llangibby; Sir William Morgan of Tredegar; Philip Jones of Treowen; and Henry Probert of Trelech be sent for as delinquents, for executing the commission of Array and disarming the well affected party. All save Nicholas Kemeys (who had other responsibilities in Glamorgan) were deputy lieutenants and militia captains for their respective hundreds

¹ Green, M.A.E. (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers Domestic 1636–7* (40 vols., 1867–95) 177, 183 (hereafter *CSPD*).

² Gwent Record Office, Misc. MSS 648 (Letter book of Richard Herbert).

³ Hutton, Ronald, *The Royalist War Effort 1642–6* (2nd edit., 2003) 4–5.

(Williams and Probert had both succeeded their deceased fathers). This suggests how the initial mobilization of the county may have been carried out.⁴

The religious spectrum of possible commissioners was truncated at both ends by the exclusion of avowed Catholics and Puritans. For several reasons many, perhaps most Catholics in the county took no military part in the war whilst those who might have responded to the parliamentary militia ordinance (mostly from Gwent Is Coed) had to vote with their feet and leave the county. For most of the war the parliamentary committee for South Wales was a committee in exile, based at Gloucester. Its two most active civilian members, Christopher Catchmay of Trelech and William Jones of Usk, were from the forested central area of Monmouthshire, with Gwent Is Coed the other main area of parliamentary support.⁵

Within the commission of Array, several shades of religious and perhaps political opinion are apparent. Laudian reforms of the Church seem to have had little impact in the county. The few Laudian clergy, like Henry Vaughan of Panteg, appointed by the University of Oxford on the eve of the war, or George Crump of Trelech, appointed in 1639, had little time to make their influence felt. Although evidence of the religious affinities of individual commissioners is often lacking, two general trends can be distinguished. On the one hand were families with recusant Catholic links, often allied to the Herberts of Raglan. These Philip Jenkins has identified as ‘ultras’.⁶ They included Philip Jones, John Milborne, Thomas Morgan of Llansor and possibly John Gainsford.⁷ Though Nicholas Kemeys was not part of this core ‘Worcester’ group, a Kemeys of Cefn Mably, a Dominican friar, died in prison at the time of the so called Popish plot.⁸ This group formed the core of consistent royalist support in the county. The other grouping was characterised by Jenkins as ‘moderates’. They were Anglicans (to use a convenient anachronism) and initially royalist supporters, but with puritan leanings. William Baker’s claims that he was ‘a Protestant, and against all Papists and Anabaptists’ and ‘a maintainer of the orthodox faith’ explain their position. Thomas Morgan of Machen refused to serve under the Catholic Edward Herbert of Raglan at the opening of the war and Baker, along with William Morgan of Tredegar and Trevor Morgan, were among those arraigned before the King as ‘hinderers’ of the royal war effort in 1645.⁹ Many of them had close links of kinship, often by marriage. Thus William Morgan was the brother-in-law of Henry Probert, whose son, Sir George Probert, was married to a daughter of Sir Trevor Williams, who in turn was the son-in-law of Thomas Morgan of Machen. Roger Williams of Cefn Ila was also a kinsman of Sir Trevor Williams, and bore the arms of Williams of Llangibby. Such links must have made it easier for them to act as a group and co-ordinate their responses to particular situations.

⁴ *Commons Journal*, 27 Sept. 1642.

⁵ Knight, J., *Civil War & Restoration in Monmouthshire* (Logaston Press, 2005); Bradney, Sir Joseph, *A History of Monmouthshire ... Volume 2 Part 2 The Hundred of Trelech* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1913, reprinted by Academy Books, 1992) 214–5; Bradney, *Volume 3 Part 3 The Hundred of Usk* (Academy Books, 1993) 50–1 and 56; Siddons, M.P. (ed.), *Visitations by the Heralds in Wales*, Harleian Society, new series, 14 (London, 1996) 184; Warmington, A.R., *Civil War, Interregnum and Restoration in Gloucestershire* (Royal Historical Society, London, 1997) 63, 92.

⁶ Jenkins, Philip, ‘The origins of anti-papery in the Welsh Marches in the seventeenth century’, *Historical Journal*, 23 (1980) 275–93.

⁷ For details of individual commissioners see *Biographical Notes*.

⁸ Ellis, T.P., *The Catholic Martyrs of Wales 1535–1680* (Cardiff, 1932) 163–4.

⁹ Long, C.E. (ed.), Symonds, R., *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army During the Great Civil War*, Camden Society, 74 (1859) 238–9, reprinted *Camden Classic Reprints*, 3 (Cambridge, 1997).

Commissions of Array must already have been sent to selected Monmouthshire gentry in August, the same month when the earl of Hertford was appointed lieutenant general of royal forces in south-west England and South Wales.¹⁰ As in other counties the list was revised and re-issued as the responses of individual gentry became known. On 20 October 1642, three days before the battle of Edgehill, the King's advisers, already on the march, drew up a revised list of commissioners for the county. Additions were later made to this, but it was only on 29 November that the King, from his field headquarters at Reading, finally sealed the list of commissioners. Monmouthshire may have presented particular problems. In many counties a local magnate would head the circulation list, and take charge of preparing the county for war. In Monmouthshire however, the paramount local magnate, the earl of Worcester, and his son Edward Herbert were both Catholics, and so initially excluded from participation. The latter's upstaging by Hertford caused some resentment, though after Hertford's departure from South Wales, Herbert replaced him, in April 1643, as lieutenant general for south-east Wales and the March.¹¹

A transcript of the list of commissioners for Monmouthshire is contained in Northamptonshire County Record Office Finch-Hatton Manuscript 133 (*see* Appendix II), one of a number of lists of commissioners for various counties. It falls into three sections. The first section lists nine persons 'omitted' from the October list, the second is the main list of twenty-one commissioners as approved by the King on 29 November 1642. This main list is headed, after three *ex officio* members, including Prince Charles, by Colonel Sir Richard Herbert of St Julians (and Montgomery) who was with the army and whose local knowledge may have been used in drawing it up. This might account for the inclusion of Thomas Berrington, who had little land in the county, but had business dealings with Herbert. Avowed parliamentarians and Catholics were both excluded, which explains the absence of such prominent royalists as the Herberts of Raglan and the Prodgers of Wernddu. Whereas this main list includes most of the major royalists of the county, the shorter list, of those 'omitted' in October, is more of a mixed bag, including a number of neutralists and minor gentry. It suggests a second trawl for possible additional commissioners. Three names (Edmund Jones, Thomas Morgan of Machen and William Blethin of Dinham) occur in both lists.

The third section, but first in time, is an unrelated list of a committee of seven men appointed by Parliament in August 1641 for disarming Catholic recusants in Monmouthshire. This is useful as suggesting where Parliament, at this stage in the dispute, thought it might find supporters in Monmouthshire. Two of the seven, both future parliamentarian field officers, were resident outside the county. James Kirle of Ross on Wye was the victor of a skirmish at Pontrilas in November 1642 and after several changes of allegiance finished the war as a parliamentarian colonel.¹² Robert Cooke of Highnam outside Gloucester, was a parliamentary colonel in the Gloucester garrison. It was around his house at Highnam that Herbert's army was surrounded and captured by Sir William Waller in March 1643.¹³ Of the remaining five, two, Sir Charles Williams and William Baker, were men whose strongly Protestant views are still apparant, Baker in his will and tomb monument, Williams in his father's gifts of an oak communion table to Llangibby church and of a

¹⁰ Rushworth, J. (ed.), *Historical Collections* 3 (London, 1659–1701) vol. 1, 672–4.

¹¹ Hutton, *Royalist War Effort*, 33–5, 50–3.

¹² Bradney, J.A. (ed.), Powell, Walter, *The Diary of Walter Powell of Llantilio Crossenny in the County of Monmouth, Gentleman* (Bristol, 1907) 13 Nov. 1642; Newman, P.R., *Royalist Officers in England and Wales 1642–1660* (New York and London, 1981) 194–5 no. 750; *A Copy of a Letter Writ from Serjeant Major Kirle to a Friend in Windsor*, 6 March 1642 in Webb, J. and T.W., *Memorials of the Civil War ... as it affected Herefordshire and the Adjacent Counties* (London, 1879) vol. 2, 349–53.

¹³ Knight, *Civil War & Restoration*, 66–9.

pulpit bearing a puritan text to Caerwent church.¹⁴ In the event all five served as commissioners of Array and three were among those ‘sent for’ by Parliament for enacting the commission. Thus Parliament’s potential local support before the outbreak of war comprised two military men resident outside the county and a group of moderates, some with markedly Protestant views, who in the event sided with the King.

Of the twenty-eight names on the list of royalist commissioners, twelve were former high sheriffs of the county and three the sons of former sheriffs.¹⁵ This post, which involved much time consuming and often uncongenial unpaid work was not always a sought after honour, but much of the work of the commissioners of Array – signing warrants, supervising the collection of money, custody of prisoners – was similar to that of a sheriff. According to Joyce Lee Malcolm, commissioners of Array initially had purely military duties, and were expected to play an active part in the army. Only when it became clear that the war was likely to be more prolonged, was it thought necessary to give them wider functions, since commissioners serving with field regiments were unable to deal with local taxation, recruitment and other administrative matters, or supervise the array of chief constables of hundreds and parish constables on whom most of the burden fell.¹⁶ The Monmouthshire list belongs to this second phase, after the drawn battle of Edgehill (23 October 1642) showed that a prolonged war was in prospect. Four commissioners – Richard Herbert, Charles Kemeys, John Gainsford and Trevor Williams – became colonels of royalist field regiments. However, others were too elderly for any active military role. Here, administrative skills and experience rather than military service were looked for.

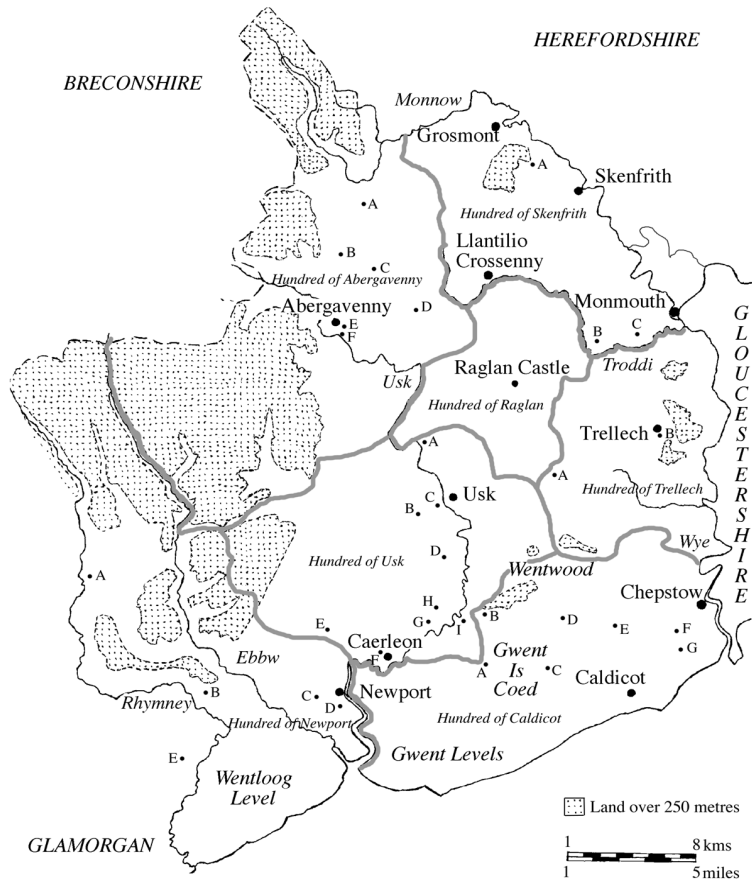
The list of commissioners is not in any immediately obvious order, but when re-arranged under the hundreds in which they were resident (as below) may say something of the distribution of royalist support within the county. (For a map of Monmouthshire marked with the houses of the main participants *see* Fig.1). This needs however to take into account such factors as geographic mobility and the random chances of inheritance. Not all gentry were equally rooted in the soil. The Gainsfords of Grosmont were originally from Surrey. John Milborne’s father, a Somerset man, inherited Wonastow by marriage in 1596. Nicholas Kemeys inherited an estate at Llanfair Discoed, but his main seat was at Cefn Mably and he was much involved, through office holding and marriage alliances, in Glamorgan. Another commissioner inherited an estate in Somerset. One also needs to escape from Victorian concepts of sharply divided ‘roundheads’ and ‘cavaliers’. Both were derogatory terms applied by their enemies, and much resented.

The hundred of Caldicot in Gwent Is Coed, had strong links with Bristol and Gloucester. It produced the first separated puritan cause in Wales and a number of important civil war and Cromwellian parliamentarians, one the son of a royalist commissioner of Array. Two of its gentry, Nicholas Kemeys and the current sheriff in 1642, Sir Edward Morgan of Pencoed, were in arms for the King, but otherwise the roll call is not impressive. Several were elderly men of a previous generation. William Blethin was seventy, Nicholas Moore was elderly and Sir Edmund Morgan of Penhow had been sheriff as long ago as 1602. It is possible that the obscure George Moore had been drafted in to act as deputy for his aged kinsman. To the west, Newport hundred included two important royalist colonels, Sir Richard Herbert and Sir Charles Kemeys, both men with wider horizons than Wentloog hundred. Otherwise, the list of commissioners is monopolized by the

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 35–7.

¹⁵ Wakeman, T., *List of the Sheriffs of Monmouthshire 1541–1864* (1863).

¹⁶ Malcolm, Joyce Lee, *Caesar’s Due: Loyalty and King Charles 1642–1646* (Royal Historical Society, London, 1983) 167.



Hundred of Abergavenny

- A Llanfihangel (Arnold)
- B Llantilio Pertholey (Parry)
- C Wernddu (Prodger)
- D Llanddewi Rhydderch (Lewis)
- E Coldbrook (Herbert)
- F Hardwick (Jones)

Hundred of Caldicot

- A Pencoed (Morgan)
- B Pen yr Wylrod (Morgan)
- C Merthyr Geryn (Nicholas)
- D Llanfair Discoed (Kemeys)
- E Dinham (Blethin)
- F Moynes Court (Hughes)
- G St Pierre (Lewis)

Hundred of Newport

- A Penllwyn Sarph (Morgan)
- B Machen (Morgan)
- C Gwern y Cleppa (Pretty)
- D Tredegar (Morgan)
- E Cefn Mably (Kemeys)

Hundred of Skenfrith

- A Upper Dyffryn (Gainsford)
- B Treowen (Jones)
- C Wonastow (Milborne)

Hundred of Trellech

- A Llansoy (Jones)
- B Pant Glas (Probert)

Hundred of Usk

- A Trostrey (Hughes)
- B Cilfeigan (Morgan)
- C Cefn Ila (Williams)
- D Llangibby (Williams)
- E Llantarnam (Morgan)
- F Penrhos (Morgan)
- G Llansor (Morgan)
- H Pencrug (Morgan)
- I Kemeys Inferior (Kemeys of Kemeys)

Fig. 1: Map of Monmouthshire with boundaries of hundreds and houses of the main participants in the civil war. Reproduced from Jeremy Knight, *Civil War & Restoration in Monmouthshire* (2005) by kind permission of the Logaston Press.

Morgan clan. The younger sons of parish gentry were classic recruiting ground for junior officers. Sir Philip Morgan of Penllwyn Sargh was a younger son, present at Highnam as a captain, and later knighted for his services. The area produced several royalist field officers, but there was also a neutralist element, particularly at grassroots level. Thomas Morgan of Machen refused to serve under Edward Herbert at the beginning of the war and seems to have been an active parliamentarian by January 1646. He later served as MP for the county in the first Protectorate Parliament of 1654–5. This neutralism was matched by the religious complexion of the area. The western parts of Monmouthshire bordering on Glamorgan contained very few Catholic recusants and by the 1670s, many small nonconformist conventicles.¹⁷ When Cardiff was attacked by royalists in 1646, many countrymen from what one parliamentarian called ‘the well affected hundreds’ came in to assist the parliamentarians.¹⁸ Morgan may have been reflecting the views of his tenants and neighbours.

Inland, Usk and Trelech hundreds present a more mixed picture (there were no commissioners for the small Raglan hundred, which was probably regarded as a private preserve of the earl of Worcester). William Kemeys of Kemeys Inferior and Roger Williams of Llanbadoc were sequestered as royalists after the war, though their relatively modest fines suggest that their active involvement may have been limited. Sir Trevor Williams of Llangibby has a reputation, not wholly undeserved, as a ‘weathercock’, but there is not room to discuss his involved career, which extended to the 1690s, here. The list for Trelech hundred is thin. It comprises a non-resident gentleman; a Gray’s Inn lawyer who compounded for a modest amount in 1646 and was thereafter a supporter of the Commonwealth; and a royalist father and son. It must be remembered however that this is not the full list of royalist supporters in the area, since a number of Worcester allies were excluded as commissioners by their religion.

The greatest royalist strength was in the hundreds of Raglan, Abergavenny and Skenfrith (which included Monmouth), though again many gentry in these areas were Catholics and not eligible at this stage to serve as commissioners. The commissioners for Skenfrith hundred were core royalists, closely associated with the marquis of Worcester. John Milborne was his steward, and a major figure in north Monmouthshire. John Gainsford was lieutenant colonel of the marquis of Worcester’s foot regiment, and died in prison for his loyalty. Philip Jones of Treowen claimed kinship with the Herberts of Raglan, and bore their arms. All three were in Raglan castle during the siege. Skenfrith hundred was also Catholic heartland with a number of strongly Catholic parishes. Jones’s wife was a Catholic, as was Milborne’s mother. Oddly, only one commissioner resident in Abergavenny hundred, David Lewis of Llandewi Rhydderch, appears in the first (A) list. This was an obvious *lacuna* and three more names were added in the B list. Two of these had close kinsmen who were active parliamentarians and the third was the only urban burgess in the list, perhaps not initially regarded as of sufficient rank for inclusion. This may explain their earlier exclusion, but William Herbert of Coldbrook built up a formidable charge sheet by the time of his sequestration hearings, even though his son was a parliamentary colonel. Coldbrook itself was occupied as a royalist garrison.¹⁹

Though the commissions of Array may have been effective in mobilising the war effort, a prolonged war could not be run by a committee of local gentlemen. Five commissioners for

¹⁷ Pugh, F.H., *Monmouthshire Recusants in the Reigns of Elizabeth and James I* (South Wales and Monmouthshire Record Society, 4, 1957) 57–110; Whiteman, E.A.O., *The Compton Census of 1676: A Critical Edition* (1986).

¹⁸ Bodleian Library, Tanner MS 58 f. 218v.

¹⁹ National Library of Wales (NLW), MS 13072B; ‘Llyfyr Jenkin Richard’ contains the only known reference to the Coldbrook garrison. On this source, see Knight, *Civil War & Restoration*, 84.

Monmouthshire, John Gainsford, Thomas Berrington, Roger and Trevor Williams and Charles Kemeys were present at Highnam in March 1643 and were captured there (but later exchanged) and a sixth, Thomas Morgan of Llansor, was in command at Chepstow.²⁰ Three months later, nationally the commissions of Array were reconstituted as 'Committees for Guarding the Country' with orders to meet weekly at a fixed place and to keep written records and accounts. From then on, they became largely financial bodies, concerned with taxation and finance.²¹

In January 1644, Prince Rupert was appointed captain general of royalist forces in the west. He began a policy of replacing commanders of local origin with professional soldiers, who had less scruple in exacting taxation and recruits. The commissioners were still expected to exert themselves in such matters, but exercised no real power. Sir Nicholas Kemeys was replaced as governor of Cardiff by Sir Timothy Tyrell.²² Sir Richard Herbert, previously governor of Ludlow, was replaced at Aberystwyth by Roger Whitley and demoted to governor of the half ruinous castle of Newport. In his case, his military credibility must have been undermined by his father's surrender of Montgomery castle that September without a shot being fired. There is another list of Monmouthshire royalist gentry in British Library Harleian MS 6804, folio 107. This dates from later in the war and is headed 'A Commission of Impress for several counties and the names of persons employed'. Its purpose was the levying of troops, and it is endorsed at the side '100 men a Peece'. Of the fifteen names, all but four also occur in the Finch-Hatton list. Two of the newcomers, Sir Edward Morgan of Llantarnam and Sir Charles Somerset, were Catholics, excluded from the earlier commission. The others, Edmund Morgan of Penllwyn Sarp and Thomas Morgan of Llanrhymney were both from the hundred of Newport, on the western fringes of the county, under-represented in the earlier commission, but likely to be fruitful in recruits. They also both had close kinsmen who were already commissioners. However, the very phraseology – 'the names of persons employed' – shows how the status and role of the county commissioners had shrunk.

By the end of the war, the list of former commissioners was being thinned by death. Apart from Nicholas Kemeys, killed after the fall of Chepstow in 1648, William Kemeys died in 1647, William Baker in 1648, Sir Edward Morgan of Pencoed in 1649, William Herbert of Coldbrook in 1651 and Sir William Morgan of Tredegar in 1653. Others soon made peace with the new regime. Sir Trevor Williams declared for Parliament after their capture of Bristol in October 1645. In the following year he took a leading part in the siege of Raglan. Thomas Morgan of Machen occupied Newport for Parliament in January 1646, when it was threatened by royalist cavalry from Raglan, and later served as MP for the county in the first Protectorate Parliament of 1654–5. John Parry joined the parliamentary county committee in 1646. The lawyer Edmund Jones, treasurer of the county committee, was excused from the Decimation Tax on royalists in 1656, as since the mid-1640s he had 'shown himself very affectionate to the good people and uppon several occasions hath been very serviceable to them, and given good testimony of deserting the late king's interest'. He became recorder of Brecon in 1650, attorney general for South Wales and MP for Breconshire in 1654. At the Restoration, Sir Trevor Williams sued for a royal pardon under the Great Seal and two former commissioners, Thomas Morgan of Machen (1661) and Roger Williams of Cefn Ila (1664), survived to be high sheriffs under Charles II.

²⁰ Wright, John, *The Victorious and Fortunate Proceedings of Sir William Waller and his forces in Wales*, 17 April 1643.

²¹ Hutton, *Royalist War Effort*, 87–8.

²² *Ibid.*, 139–40.

Biographical Notes

The catalogue below gives brief biographical details, but no attempt has been made to provide full bibliographical references, which in some cases would need to be substantial. The Oxford matriculation lists are useful in giving the age of a student when he entered the university.²³ Where the place of residence is given, identification is certain. Often however this is only ‘Co. Monmouth’ (When one sees some of the attempts to spell Monmouthshire place-names one understands why). Here, there is danger of confusion between two men of the same name, particularly in view of the habit of naming children after a close kinsman. In such cases, the entry is quoted *verbatim*. Interestingly several Monmouthshire Catholics, including William Morgan of Llantarnam and Anthony Morgan of Mitchel Troy appear in the matriculation lists with no college given, and annotated as ‘Mr Case’s scholars’. Presumably this was a device whereby Catholics could attend Oxford whilst avoiding the religious tests which they would be subject to in a college. The *Calendar of the Committee for Compounding with Delinquents*, relating to sequestrations of royalist estates under the Commonwealth, give details both of the ‘charge sheets’ against each royalist, and hence his war record, and of the value of his estate. (For ‘Some values of estates’ see Appendix I). Family links with other commissioners have also been included, to illustrate what the Webbs, writing of Herefordshire, described as the ‘Universal Cousinship among the gentry’, a network of kinship and marriage which must have had a considerable effect on both allegiance and recruitment to the committee.²⁴

The original list of commissioners, presumably drawn up in August 1642, is now lost, but the appearance of individual names in both the final ‘November’ list (A), and the list of those ‘omitted’ from the original list (B), is shown. For reasons of brevity, and to prevent repetition, those summoned by Parliament at the beginning of the war for implementing the commission of Array are shown as (P 1642) and those summoned before the King in 1645 as ‘hinderers’ as (H 1645). These represent a core of Protestant gentry who initially supported the King, but whose misgivings during the course of the war often led to neutralism or a changed allegiance.

Abbreviations

CCAM *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for the Advance of Money*
CCCD *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding with Delinquents*
CSPD *Calendar of State Papers Domestic*

Abergavenny Hundred

William Baker (1585–1648) Abergavenny	The only urban commissioner. Deputy steward (with brother Henry) of Abergavenny. Sheriff 1631. JP 1640. Appointed by Parliament 1641 to committee for disarming papists in the county. Listed by Symonds among ‘Chief inhabitants of Monmouthshire’. Will affirms that he was a Protestant and ‘against all Papists and Anabaptists’, and his monument in Abergavenny priory that he was ‘a maintainer of the orthodox faith’. ²⁵	H 1645 B
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²³ Foster, J., *Alumni Oxoniensis: The Members of the University of Oxford 1500–1714* (4 vols., 1891).

²⁴ Webb, J. and T.W., *Memorials of the Civil War ... as it affected Herefordshire ...* (vol. 1, 1879) 1 and 5–6: ‘they were all cousins ... their pedigrees prove they were actually so through successive generations’.

²⁵ Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army*, 206, 238; Bradney, *Volume 1 Part 2a The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 1)*, 168.

William Herbert (1570?-1651) of Coldbrook	William Herbert of 'Co Monmouth Gent' matriculated Queen's College, Oxford, 17 Feb. 1587 aged 17. MP county of Monmouth 1626. Sheriff 1638. JP 1640–49. Accused as a 'riggerous and urgent Commissioner of Array', signing warrants to raise men and money against Parliament, and contributed himself. Sent letters to justices with Lord Gerard's letters for persecution of 'the few honest men that acted against the king'. Parliamentary high sheriff 1646, but alleged to have favoured Nicholas Kemeys in the 1648 rising. Accused 1649 of profiting from wood for charcoal and iron forges on estates of earl of Worcester. Son Henry Herbert MP for Monmouthshire in the Long Parliament and a parliamentary colonel. ²⁶	H 1645 B
David Lewis Llanddewi Rhydderch	Nephew of David Lewis of Llanddewi Rhydderch, judge of the Admiralty and first principal of Jesus College, Oxford (d. 1584). Sheriff 1624. Symonds: 'Mr Davies Lewis of Llanthewey' among chief inhabitants of county 1645. ²⁷	A
John Parry (b. 1571) Pen-y-clawdd, Llantilio Pertholey	Father John ap William Parry (d. 1633) involved in property transactions in Abergavenny area. 'John Parry of Co. Monmouth' matriculated Gloucester Hall, Cambridge, 1585 aged 14. Captain of horse in militia 1634. JP 1640. On parliamentary county committee 1646. Son-in-law of Sir William Cooke of Highnam (parliamentarian). Son living 1662. ²⁸	B

Skenfrith Hundred

John Gainsford Upper Dyffryn, Grosmont	Family originally from Carshalton, Surrey. Father and namesake sheriff 1604. Captain, Highnam 1643. Lieutenant colonel marquis of Worcester's foot, Raglan garrison and colonel, John Gainsford's foot, raised Herefordshire. Daughter Elizabeth claims in 1660 that her father died in prison for his loyalty. ²⁹	A
John Milborne (d. 1637) Wonastow	Father John Milborne of Milborne Port, Somerset, acquired Wonastow by marriage 1596. Worcester's steward. Sheriff 1618, 1635. Son captain of militia for Skenfrith and Raglan hundreds, 1634. Sheriff 1641. 'In service for the king, Raglan, Chepstow and Monmouth'. ³⁰	A

²⁶ Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, vol. 2, 696; Bradney, *Volume 1 Part 2a The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 1)*, 186–9; Green, M.A.E. (ed.), *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Advance of Money 1656* (3 vols., London, 1888) 1022 (hereafter *CCAM*); Rees, William, *Industry before the Industrial Revolution* (2 vols., Cardiff, 1968) 275.

²⁷ Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army*, 206; Bradney, *Volume 1 Part 2a The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 1)*, 283–5.

²⁸ Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, vol. 3, 1121; Bradney, *Volume 1 Part 2a The Hundred of Abergavenny (Part 1)*, 214; *CSPD 1625–1649*, 699.

²⁹ Bradney, *Volume 1 Part 1 The Hundred of Skenfrith*, 79; Newman, *Royalist Officers in England and Wales*, 147; Reid, Stuart, *Officers and Regiments of the Royalist Army: Being a Revision of the List of Indigent Officers* (Partizan Press, 5 vols., no date) vol. 2, 75; *CSPD 1660–1*, 150–1.

³⁰ Bradney, *Volume 1 Part 1 The Hundred of Skenfrith*, 36–9; *CCAM*, 977.

Philip Jones (1584–1660) Treowen, Wonastow	‘Philip Jones of Co. Monmouth’ matriculated Jesus College, Oxford 1602 aged 18. Captain of militia for Abergavenny hundred 1634. Sheriff 1643. Captured Hereford Dec. 1645, exchanged. In siege of Raglan 1646. His wife, daughter of Edward Morgan of Llantarnam, was an open Catholic. Sequestered 26 Sept. 1646, petitions to compound, 5 Sept. 1648. Admits ‘having been put into Commission of Array ... and did sometimes sit and sign warrants by virtue of the King’s Commission with other gentlemen of the county for raising soldiers’. Also in second war, and in Raglan at surrender. Explained delay in compounding with Parliament: ‘His whole personal estate being seized and disposed of unable to tender himself sooner’. 1 Jan. 1650 fined at sixth £1,050. County committee to forbear the felling of timber on his estate. Portrait formerly at Llanarth Court. ³¹	P 1642 A
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Trelech Hundred

Thomas Berrington Owned land, Tintern Parva	Engaged in property deals with Richard Herbert of Chirbury 1640. Possibly the Berrington ‘A gentleman of £2,000 a year’ who served as captain in the Highnam campaign 1643. A well-known border family in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Cheshire, but there is no evidence that Thomas Berrington took any further part in the war in Monmouthshire. ³²	A
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Edmund Jones (1613–82) Llansoy	Son of John Jones of Llandenny, co. Monmouth, matriculated Jesus College, Oxford, 1634 aged 21. BA 1636. Barrister at law, Gray’s Inn 1641. Treasurer of commission of Array 1642. Compounded 1 Oct. 1646 for £70–6s.-8d. Thereafter supporter of Commonwealth and resident in Breconshire. Attorney general for South Wales 1649. Recorder of Breconshire and Carmarthenshire 1650. MP for Breconshire and Carmarthenshire 1654–5 and 1659. Monument in Llansantffraed church, Breconshire. ³³	A B
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Sir George Probert (1617–77) Pant Glas, Trelech	1634 deputy captain of militia, Caldicot and Trelech hundreds, acting for Richard Herbert of Chirbury. Gray’s Inn 1635. Present Oxford 1643 in King’s forces. Knighted 1644. Married Magdalene, daughter of Sir Trevor Williams (who erected the remarkable Trelech sundial with representations of the antiquities of the village). Fined sixth of estate, £679 (estate £4,074). Compounded for £134 in respect of self and father. MP Monmouth boroughs, 1660–7. ³⁴	A
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³¹ Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, vol. 2, 826; Bradney, *Volume I Part 1 The Hundred of Skenfrith*, 42–3; *CSPD 1648–9*, 272; Green, Mary A.E. (ed.), *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding with Delinquents 1660* (5 vols., London, 1889–93) 1514 (hereafter *CCCD*); *CCAM*, 1388; Steegman, J., *A Survey of Portraits in Welsh Houses* (2 vols., Cardiff, 1962) 137.

³² Bradney, *Volume 2 Part 2 The Hundred of Trelech*, 248.

³³ Bradney, *Volume 2 Part 1 The Hundred of Raglan*, 41; Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, vol. 2, 819; *CCCD*, 1524.

³⁴ Bradney, *Volume 2 Part 2 The Hundred of Trelech*, 141–4; *CCCD*, 2034; Siddons, *Visitations*, 189.

Henry Probert (1589–1669)
Pant Glas,
Trelech

Father of Sir George Probert. JP, sheriff 1636. Married daughter of Giles Morgan of Pencrug.

P 1642 A

Usk Hundred

William Kemeys (d. 1647)
Kemeys Inferior

JP, sheriff 1628. His son, Edward Kemeys, *custos rotulorum* 1645, fined sixth of estate (£1,000) 3 April 1649 for ‘assisting the king’s forces against the Parliament’. Fine paid 16 Jan. 1650, estate restored (estate £6,000).³⁵

A

Thomas Morgan (1611–83/4)
Llansor

Son of Thomas Morgan of Penrhos near Caerleon. Sheriff 1642. Governor of Chepstow castle 1643 and captain of foot. Implicated in plot to seize Chepstow castle 1648. Travelled to West Indies presumably in the Interregnum. His sister, Margaret Morgan, was a recusant and he was involved in lengthy appeals over her sequestrated tithe income 1651–5. Living at Penrhos 1683. His brass, once in Caerleon church, recorded by Dineley in 1684, though with his age wrongly transcribed.³⁶ Portrait formerly at Llanarth Court.³⁷

A

William Morgan (d. 1665)
Pencrug,
Llanhennock

Father Giles Morgan sheriff 1614. Brother-in-law of Henry Probert of Pant Glas. Initially sequestrated and exempted from pardon after the war. 30 Jan. 1652 requests discharge of sequestration (with Sir Trevor Williams). 20 Feb. discharged. 2 March confirmation that no charge pending against him.³⁸

B

Roger Williams (d. 1682)
Cefn Ila
(‘Kenhiley’),
Llanbadoc, gent.

Distant cousin of Sir Trevor Williams and bore the arms of Williams of Llangibby. A Roger Williams ‘of Co. Monmouthshire’ who matriculated Jesus College, Oxford, 1601 aged 17, was presumably an older namesake. Captain Highnam 1643. 14 April 1649 compounds for ‘delinquency in arms’. 2 June 1651 fined at eighth £206. (Estate £1,238–8s.). Concerned about the felling of timber on his sequestrated estate. Married Elizabeth, daughter of Rees Davies of Tickenham, Somerset and inherited Tickenham manor by marriage 1651, but evidently still resident in county and sheriff 1664.³⁹

B

³⁵ Bradney, *Volume 3 Part 2 The Hundred of Usk*, 174–7; CCCD, 1959.

³⁶ Dineley’s transcript records his death on 9 Dec. 1682, aged 31. The birth date of 1641 is obviously wrong and the herald’s visitation has him still alive in 1683 and living at Penrhos. A possible emendation is aged 71 in 1682. Bradney notes that the Welsh acrostic below is also garbled (Dineley, *Beaufort Progress* (1684) ff.369–70).

³⁷ Bradney, *Volume 3 Part 2 The Hundred of Usk (Part 2)*, 213; CCCD, 1710, 1882, 2816 (4); CCAM, 977, Steegman, *Portraits*, vol. 2, 137; Siddons, *Visitations*, 170–3.

³⁸ CCCD, 2947; Bradney, *Volume 3 Part 2 The Hundred of Usk (Part 2)*, 252.

³⁹ Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, vol. 4, 1644; Bradney, *Volume 3 Part 1 The Hundred of Usk (Part 1)*, 77–8; CCCD, 1967.

Sir Trevor Williams (1622–92)
Llangibby

Son and heir of Sir Charles Williams (d. 1642). Gray’s Inn. Bart 1642. Colonel of infantry Highnam 1643, captured and exchanged. 1643 raises regiment for King and garrisons Llangibby. Involved in secret negotiations to surrender county to Parliament 1645. Declares for Parliament on fall of Bristol Oct. 1645. Subsequently active for Parliament in captures of Monmouth and Chepstow 1645 and siege of Raglan 1646. Involved in royalist plot to seize Chepstow 1648 and Cromwell orders his arrest. Takes pardon under Great Seal 1660.⁴⁰

A

Caldicot Hundred

William Blethin (1572-post 1652)
Dinham

This is the biggest surprise on the list, since William Blethin was a prominent local puritan and parliamentarian, active on the parliamentary county committee. However, there were three William Blethins – grandfather, father and son – the first being a bishop of Llandaff, who purchased this small estate. Presumably the commissioner was the elderly father rather than the radical son. If so his age (70 in 1642) is enough to explain his inactivity during the war; he was still alive in 1652.⁴¹

A

B

Sir Nicholas Kemeys (d. 1648)
Llanfair
Discoed and
Cefn Mably

Estates worth £1,800 per annum. MP Monmouth 1627–9. Sheriff 1631–2. Pre-war governor of Chepstow castle and ranger of Wentwood forest. Knighted 1641. Bart 1642. Commissioner of Array, Monmouthshire and Glamorgan. Governor Cardiff castle. Replaced under Charles Gerard by Sir Timothy Tyrell 1644. Gaoled in London May 1646. Allowed to go to Bath for his health. Seized Chepstow castle 1648. Shot out of hand after its fall.⁴²

For his son, Sir Charles Kemeys, *see* under Newport hundred.

P 1642 A

George Moore
Crick

Presumably kinsman of Nicholas Moore, but not in Bradney’s pedigree. Two civilians named William Moore present at Raglan during siege.

A

Nicholas Moore (d. without issue 1662)
Crick

JP, sheriff 1639. King holds two councils of war in his house 1645.⁴³

A

Sir Edmund Morgan (d. c.1654)
Pen-worlod,
Penhow

Sheriff 1602. MP for county 1621–2.⁴⁴

A

⁴⁰ Siddons, *Visitations*, 177–9; Bradney, *Volume 3 Part 1 The Hundred of Usk (Part 1)* 98–102.

⁴¹ Bradney, *Volume 4 Part 2 The Hundred of Caldicot (Part 2)*, 149–51.

⁴² Newman, *Royalist Officers*, 213–4 no. 823; Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army*, 217; *CCCD*, 1276.

⁴³ Bradney, *Volume 4 Part 1 The Hundred of Caldicot (Part 1)*, 139.

⁴⁴ Bradney, *Volume 4 Part 2 The Hundred of Caldicot (Part 2)*, 196.

Sir Edward Morgan (d. 1649) Pencoed	Possibly in Jesus College, Oxford 1616–9, though the name is too common for certainty. JP 1643. Sheriff 1645. Captured on fall of Hereford Dec. 1645. Compounded 18 Feb. 1647, admitted bearing arms. Fined tenth, £1,007. (Estate £10,070). ⁴⁵	A ⁴⁶ B
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Newport Hundred

Sir Richard Herbert (d. 1655) St Julians	Son of Lord Herbert of Chirbury. Captain of militia for Caldicot and Trelech hundreds 1634, with George Probert of the Argoed as deputy. MP Montgomery 1640–2. Served in Lord Digby's regiment of horse 1642 (probably present at Edgehill) before raising Sir Richard Herbert's regiment of foot, Aug.–Sept. 1642. Created MA Oxford (honorary degree) 1643. Governor successively of Ludlow, Aberystwyth and Newport. ⁴⁷	A
Sir Charles Kemeys (1614–58) Cefn Mably	2nd bart. Eldest son of Sir Nicholas Kemeys. Matriculated Jesus College, Oxford, 1632 aged 17. Student, Gray's Inn 1634. Captain Highnam 1643, exchanged and knighted by King at Oxford. Sheriff of Glamorgan 1644. Colonel, Sir Charles Kemeys's foot, recruited in Glamorgan. Involved in Glamorgan rising 1647 and besieged in Pembroke 1648 (whilst father at Chepstow). Fined third of estate (£4,600) in respect of his and his father's delinquency. (Estate £13,800). In prison at Cardiff until Dec. 1651 when released and took oath of loyalty to Commonwealth. Son and namesake 3rd bart worth £1,200 per annum in 1677. ⁴⁸	A
Edmund Morgan (d. c.1673) Penllwyn Sarph, Mynyddislwyn	Son of Henry Morgan, sheriff 1603 and nephew of Sir Edmund Morgan of Penhow. JP 1643–9 (in list of 'persons employed' for recruiting in Harleian 6804). ⁴⁹	-

⁴⁵ Symonds, *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army*, 206; *CCCD*, 1655, 2310–2.

⁴⁶ *Ex officio* as sheriff.

⁴⁷ Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, vol. 2, 696; Reid, *Officers and Regiments of the Royalist Army*, vol. 2, 57, 94; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Tenth Report*, Appendix 4.

⁴⁸ Newman, *Royalist Officers*, 213 no. 822; Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, vol.2, 842; *CSPD 1661–2*, 59; *CCCD*, 623, 1276; Siddons, *Visitations*, 195; Jenkins, P., 'The Glamorgan Gentry in 1667', *National Library of Wales Journal*, 25 (1987–8) 53–70.

⁴⁹ Bradney, *Volume 3 Part 2 The Hundred of Usk (Part 2)*, 255; Gray, Madeleine (ed.), Bradney, *Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport* (South Wales Record Society/The National Library of Wales, 1993) 135; Siddons, *Visitations*, 173.

Sir Philip Morgan Penllwyn Sarph, Mynyddislwyn	Fourth son of Sir Thomas Morgan of Penllwyn Sarph. Captain Highnam 1643, when esquire. Later knighted. ⁵⁰		A
Thomas Morgan Machen	Deputy lieutenant and commander of militia, Wentloog and Usk hundreds 1634, acting for Sir William Morgan and Sir Charles Williams. Refused to serve under Edward Herbert 1642. Occupied Newport for Parliament Jan. 1646. MP county of Monmouth, first Protectorate Parliament, 1654–5. Father-in-law of Sir Trevor Williams. Sheriff 1661. ⁵¹	P 1642 H 1645	A B
Thomas Morgan Llanrhymney	‘Mr Morgan of Llanriyuane’, son-in-law of Sir Nicholas Kemeys. In list of ‘persons employed’ for recruiting. ⁵²		-
Sir William Morgan (1560–1653) Tredegar	Matriculated Hart Hall, Oxford, 1583 aged 16. Sheriff 1612. MP Monmouth 1624–5 and 1625. ⁵³	P 1642 H 1645	A B

Summary

Much previous work on the civil war in the county has not unnaturally centred on Raglan castle and the Herberts. Here however we are able to analyse the core of the King’s support both among nominal Protestants and ‘church papists’ and among more committed Protestant gentry. Though both of these groups initially supported the King, the allegiance of the latter group was put under considerable strain by the events of the war. In the short term, the attempt to administer the war through a committee of local gentlemen failed. However, these alliances did not end with the war. The bitter post-war quarrels of the ‘popish plot’ reflected the same divisions in the county. Even in the eighteenth century, when its parliamentary representation was divided between the Tory Beauforts and the Whig Morgans of Tredegar, both sides could look back to the same parting of the ways.

⁵⁰ Bradney, *Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*, 74.

⁵¹ *Mercurius Britannicus*, 2 March 1646; Bradney, *Volume 5 The Hundred of Newport*, 70.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 94.

⁵³ *Ibid.*; Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis*, vol. 3, 1032.

**APPENDIX I
SOME VALUES OF ESTATES**

Berrington	£2,000 annual value
Kemeys of Cefn Mably	1645 £1,800 annual value
	1648 £13,800
	1677 £1,200 annual value
Morgan of Pencoeid	£10,070
Jones of Treowen	£6,300
Kemeys of Kemeys	£6,000
Probert of Pant Glas	£4,074
Williams of Cefn Ila	£1,238

**APPENDIX II
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY RECORD OFFICE,
FINCH HATTON MANUSCRIPT 133, FOLIOS 44-5**

The Commission of Array for this county was ... 20^o Octobr 18^o Caroli at wch tyme were omitted

Edmund Jones

Roger Williams Esqrs

Edward Morgan of Pencoid

Thom. Morgan of Machen

Will. Herbert of Couldbrooke

Willm. Baker

Will. Morgan of Penrick

John Parry

Will. Blethin of Dynham Esqrs.

Constituted Commissioners of Array by his Majesty's Commission bearing date at Reading 29^o

Novembris 18^o regni

Prince Charles

John Earle of Bridgwater

The shiriffe for ye tyme beinge

Richard Herbert of St Julians Esq

Sr Nich: Kemes Kt and Bt

Sr Trevor Williams Bt

Charles Kemes Esq

Tho: Morgan of Machin

Henry Probert

Philip Jones

John Milborne

William Kemes

Philip Morgan

David Lewes

George Probert

Nicholas Moore

John Ganfford

William Blethin

George Moore

Edmund Jones

Thom: Berrington

Thom: Morgan of Lansore Esqs

Sir William Morgan Kt

Sir Edm: Morgan

Appointed by Ord[er] of P[arliament] 23⁰Aug 1641 for disarming recusants

Sr Wm Morgan

Tho: Morgan

Wm. Herbert of Colbrooke

Wm. Baker of Aberganey

Sr Robert Cooke

Sr Charles Williams

James Kirle Esq.

‘SOME WELSH POPIISH BOOKS’: RECUSANT LITERATURE IN MONMOUTHSHIRE, 1550–1781

By Frank Olding

Although the definitive history of Catholic recusancy in Monmouthshire has yet to be written, the county’s importance as a principal centre of the Counter-Reformation in Wales is widely appreciated. Less well-known is Monmouthshire’s leading role in the production and dissemination of clandestine Catholic literature – devotional and polemic poetry and prose in both manuscript copies and printed editions.

Almost all of this material was written in the Welsh language and, as a natural consequence, so are the academic studies and limited number of edited editions currently available. As the majority of the county’s modern inhabitants and historians are monoglot English-speakers, it is hoped that this brief study will shed some welcome light on a dark corner and serve to address, albeit without any great claim to originality, this significant gap in Monmouthshire’s history.

Despite the effects of the dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s, it could be argued that the full impact of the Reformation was not felt in Wales until the sweeping religious changes of the reign of Edward VI. 1548 saw the abolition of pilgrimages and holy days and the loss of images, pictures and rood-lofts from parish churches. The reaction to the imposition of an English book of Common Prayer in 1549 was particularly unfavourable. As a class, the professional poets of Tudor Wales were conservative in their outlook and attitudes and in both the free and traditional metres, they bemoaned not only the reformers’ innovations in philosophy and ritual, but, more importantly, the loss of Latin in favour of English.¹ The English prayer book was wholly incomprehensible and unacceptable to most Welsh people and the poets, in this regard, spoke for the majority. Tomas ab Ieuan ap Rhys, a Glamorgan poet but a protégé of the Somersets of Raglan castle (who is discussed in detail below), denounced Protestantism as an alien, English faith (*ffydd Sayson*) imposed on the Welsh; the parish churches, he said, had been reduced to bare, empty barns and the new, married clergy were *bychod beylchon* (‘conceited goats’).²

Other poets of similar outlook, style and artistry were also active in Monmouthshire in the first half of the sixteenth century.³ In a manuscript at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth,⁴ there is a *marwnad* or elegy in the traditional Welsh metre known as *cywydd deuair fyrion*,⁵ to two brothers from Usk by one Siôn Dafydd ‘gwndidwr’ dated 1551. The dating is confirmed by reference in the poem to Edward VI. In the same manuscript, there are also *cwndidau*⁶ by Phylip Ieuan of Tredunnoch who laments the sins of the age, the sufferings of the ordinary people and the oppression of government officials. Other poems of his also survive in two other contemporary manuscripts.⁷

¹ Williams, 1997, 211–12.

² Hopkins-James and Evans, 1910, 44; Williams, 1993, 299–300.

³ Williams, 1948, 121.

⁴ NLW 13079.

⁵ A *cywydd* is one of the twenty-four strict metres, comprising a rhyming couplet of lines of seven syllables in full *cynghanedd*. *Cywydd deuair fyrion* has lines of only four syllables.

⁶ A *cwndid* is a form of carol popular with the poets in Gwent and Glamorgan from the 16th to the early 18th century. Written in a variety of metres, but without *cynghanedd*, they were often used for moral instruction.

⁷ NLW 13079 and 13180.

Cardiff MS 6,100 contains a *traethodl*⁸ by an unnamed poet dedicated to St Mary Magdalene of Usk. The manuscript dates to about 1550, but the poem itself was composed before the disappearance of pilgrimages.⁹ There was a famous chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene at Usk priory before the Reformation.¹⁰ Another local poet of strong Catholic opinions was Dafydd ap Rhys of Abergavenny (*fl. c. 1550*). Only four of his poems survive. His *awdl*¹¹ in praise of God (*Y Gŵr uwchben goruwch byd*) is the longest and most accomplished.¹² The poem enjoyed great popularity and no less than fifty-one manuscript copies of it survive.¹³

The main noble supporters of the Catholic tradition in the county in the sixteenth century were the earls of Worcester, the new owners of Raglan castle. In 1506, Sir Charles Somerset, the first earl, was appointed sheriff and chancellor of the lordship of Glamorgan. He was succeeded in 1526 by his son Henry. In this role, the Somersets ruled Glamorgan on behalf of the crown throughout the first half of the sixteenth century. They also upheld the bardic tradition and Lewys Morgannwg (*fl. 1520–65*), the last of the great professional poets in Glamorgan, sang many *cywyddau* and *awdlau* in their praise.¹⁴ At the same time, another Glamorgan poet, Tomas ab Ieuan ap Rhys (*c. 1510–65*), composed *cwndidau* of eulogy and elegy in their honour.¹⁵ Tomas was also a Catholic and in some of his poems he laments the destruction of the old faith and its rituals. When Mary Tudor ascended to the throne, he rejoiced in verse:

<i>Rhoddi dy Fam Wry fry</i>	You set your Maiden Mother high
<i>Yn ben llu gweryddon;</i>	As the head of a host of virgins;
<i>Mari ein hynys ninnau sy</i>	Mary of our island
<i>Heddy yn dwyn y goron.</i>	Today bears the crown.
<i>Y mae'n ei dwyn o dad a mam,</i>	She bears it from her father and mother,
<i>Nid oedd gam, yn gyfion,</i>	Not sinfully, but justly,
<i>Fe roed iddi wrth ei bodd,</i>	She was given her heart's wish
<i>Ac o anfodd Saeson.</i> ¹⁶	Against the wishes of the English.

For the first ten or twelve years of the reign of Elizabeth I, Catholics enjoyed a generally peaceful and untroubled period and little more was required of them than outward conformity. However, the older generation of Marian priests was slowly dying out and the Welsh felt the lack of 'massing priests'. In 1568, William Allen, helped by his Welsh associates Owen Lewis and Morgan Phillips, established a seminary at Douai to train young men for the reconversion of England and Wales. The seminary produced a new breed of Catholic priest – thoroughly educated, indoctrinated and disciplined. From now on, there were to be three mainstays of the campaign to win the country back for Catholicism – seminary priests, Catholic literature and political conspiracy.¹⁷

⁸ A *traethodl* is a poem written in the *cywydd* metre without the use of *cynghanedd*. The full text can be read on line at http://people.pwf.cam.ac.uk/dwew2/hcwl/cardiff6/cardiff6_frames.htm.

⁹ Williams, 1948, 121.

¹⁰ Gray, 2002, 10.

¹¹ An *awdl* is a long poem in one or more of the twenty-four traditional metres of strict Welsh poetry.

¹² *DWB*, 99.

¹³ Full details can be obtained from the National Library of Wales's *Maldwyn – the Index to Welsh Poetry in Manuscript*. See <http://maldwyn.llgc.org.uk>.

¹⁴ Williams, 1948, 66–7.

¹⁵ Williams, 1948, 138. A selection of his poetry can be read on line at http://people.pwf.cam.ac.uk/dwew2/hcwl/tirh/tirh_frames.htm.

¹⁶ Hopkins-James and Evans, 1910, 43; in modernized orthography – Parry, 1944, 137.

¹⁷ Williams, 1993, 316.

The papal bull of 1570 excommunicating Elizabeth I drew a sharper division through Elizabethan society and also heralded the first of a series of anti-Catholic statutes. By 1576, the seminary priests were making their presence felt. Less concerned with doctrine and more with ‘interior conversion and godly discipline’, the new priests were thoroughly imbued with the inspiration of the Catholic Reformation and Douai’s intense training. Burning with zeal to reconvert their countrymen, they were willing to face any danger.¹⁸ From 1581 onwards, it was treason to attempt to draw people from their ‘natural obedience’ to Elizabeth and to accept the ‘pretended authority’ of Rome. From this time on, the seminary priests faced the dreadful death that awaited traitors.¹⁹

Typical of the new generation was Robert Gwyn (c.1540–1604?).²⁰ Of all the Catholic recusant writers of the sixteenth century, Gwyn was the most talented and the most prolific, with five substantial prose works to his name.²¹ Born at Penyberth in Llŷn, he trained at Douai and was ordained there in 1575. While there, he wrote *Na all fod Vn Ffydd onyd yr Hen Ffydd* (‘That there can be No Faith but the Old Faith’), which he finished in December 1574.²² The work takes the form of a letter to his parents and brothers urging them to embrace the Catholic faith.²³ Two other works that Gwyn is known to have composed at Douai – *Gwyrthiau’r Gwŷr Newydd* (‘The Miracles of the New Men’) and *Fod Eglwys Grist yn Un Corff* (‘That the Church of Christ is One Body’) have not survived.²⁴ On his return to Wales in 1576, Gwyn served as a priest in Llŷn, Eifonydd, Maelor, Glamorgan and the Usk valley. Such was his status among the missionary priests that in 1578 Pope Gregory XIII granted him the right to bless cassocks and consecrate portable altars.²⁵

Gwssanaeth y Gwŷr Newydd (‘The Service of the New Men’) was begun before January 1576²⁶ and completed in 1580 when Gwyn was back in Rome with the prominent English Jesuits Edmund Campion and Robert Persons. They returned to Britain together in April 1580. The book is again written as a letter to Gwyn’s parents and relations to encourage them to embrace the Catholic faith and withdraw from their parish churches.²⁷ Whether or not Catholics should obey the law and attend Anglican services (‘the service of the new men’) was a matter of great debate among recusants of the first generation. Gwyn and Persons took the view that attending Anglican services was a mortal sin. Others, like Dr Alban Langdale, took a more pragmatic view of the dire position in which English and Welsh Catholics found themselves.²⁸ Robert Gwyn was among the first of the Elizabethan ‘priestes comminge from the Seminaries beyond the seas’ and was not one to compromise on this point. Personally, he was prepared to suffer death rather than deny the faith and he considered attending Anglican services to be tantamount to denying the faith.²⁹

Together, *Na all fod Vn Ffydd onyd yr Hen Ffydd* and *Gwssanaeth y Gwŷr Newydd* form part of a manuscript known as *Y Lanter Gristnogawl* (‘The Christian Lantern’).³⁰ The complete

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 317.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 319.

²⁰ *ODNB*, vol.24, 359.

²¹ Gruffydd, 1972, 7.

²² Bowen, 1997, 224.

²³ Bowen, 1970, xxx.

²⁴ Bowen, 1999, 29.

²⁵ Bowen, 1997, 225.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Bowen, 1970, xxxviii.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, xxxvi.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, xxxix.

³⁰ NLW 15542. For a detailed discussion of its contents and background, see Bowen, 1962a.

manuscript copy of *Y Lanter Gristnogawl* on which the modern printed edition of *Gwssanaeth y Gwŷr Newydd* is based, was made in August 1604 by William Dafydd Llywelyn of Llangynidr, who described Gwyn as ‘vn or gwyr gore o ddysc ac oedd o Ryfain y du ddewi myniw’ (‘one of the best men of learning from Rome to St David’s’).³¹

In October 1580, Gwyn attended a meeting of missionary priests at the Uxbridge home of William Griffith, an exiled recusant from Llancarfan in Glamorgan. Here, together with Persons and Campion, he advocated the principle of establishing clandestine presses to publish Catholic works.³² Such a course of action held appalling dangers for those involved. The Act of Uniformity of 1559 banned writing or printing anything that endorsed papal authority and Catholic presses in England were often run by the missionary priests, all of whom the law regarded as traitors. Indeed, of the four hundred and fifty Catholic priests sent to England and Wales between 1574 and 1603, one hundred and twenty were captured and executed – many in the most brutal fashion.³³ Despite these dangers, in the autumn of 1586, Gwyn and a few others – including Robert and Phylip Pue, grandfather and father of Gwilym Pue (*see below*) – established their secret press in Rhiwledyn cave on the Little Orme near Llandudno. It was here that they printed the first part of Gwyn’s *Y Drych Cristianogawl* (‘The Christian Mirror’) – the first book ever printed in Wales.³⁴ Gwyn had written *Y Drych* in 1583–4 while in hiding at Werngochen on the western slopes of Skirrid Fach. At this time, the house was the home of David ap William ap Morgan Wolf.³⁵ This family was a branch of the Wolfs of Wolvesnewton and by the end of the seventeenth century had adopted the surname Morgan.³⁶ In 1679, they were still giving refuge to Catholic priests.³⁷

On Good Friday 1587, the press was discovered by the local justice of the peace. The clandestine publishers managed to escape to South Wales and soon set about the establishment of a second press at a house in Brecon rented by Siôn Dafydd Rhys (also known as Dr John Davies). It is probable that the second part of *Y Drych* was printed there. Helping to run the new press were three priests – Robert Jones, Mr Vaughan and Mr Ellis – described as ‘three stragglng fellows that were going up and down the counties’.³⁸ ‘Robert Jones’ was the alias of Robert Gwyn. However, Christmas 1587 saw the launch of another campaign against the Catholic households of Monmouthshire, Breconshire and Herefordshire. The authorities failed to find the press but, during the hue and cry, Robert Gwyn and the other priests once again found refuge at Werngochen. Among those arrested at Brecon was David Jones, Robert Gwyn’s brother, who died in prison.³⁹

Of all the recusant works, *Y Drych* comes closest to the status of a classic and is without doubt the most important literary product of Welsh Elizabethan recusancy.⁴⁰ The most complete manuscript is Cardiff 3.240 in the hand of Llywelyn Siôn of Llangewydd in the vale of Glamorgan, completed in July 1600. Llywelyn Siôn formed part of the network of recusants in south-east Wales and was a professional copyist and scribe. Despite the fact that after 1570 it was treason to attempt

³¹ Bowen, 1999, 29.

³² Gruffydd, 1972, 8.

³³ *Ibid.*, 6.

³⁴ The original printed volume held at the National Library of Wales can be read on line at http://www.llgc.org.uk/drych/drych_s093.htm

³⁵ Bradney, *Volume 1 Part 2*, 200.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, *Volume 2 Part 2*, 236.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, *Volume 1 Part 2*, 201.

³⁸ Gruffydd, 1972, 16.

³⁹ Bowen, 1997, 230.

⁴⁰ Bowen, 1996, ix.

to reconcile anyone to the Catholic Church or to publish or purchase Catholic books, local patrons commissioned manuscript copies from professional recusant scribes like Llywelyn Siôn and William Dafydd Llywelyn of Llangynidr. The latter copied both *Y Lanter* and Llanstephan 13, another copy of the works of Robert Gwyn.⁴¹ Among these patrons were Edward Somerset of Raglan, John Gam of Llansbyddy, the Wolfs of Werngochen and Roland Morgan of Machen.⁴²

Many manuscript copies (*‘aml gopiae’*) of *Y Drych* circulated among the recusants of south-east Wales and the literate among them were expected to read it aloud to the unlettered.⁴³ The printed book also circulated widely and wielded considerable influence. Of the four surviving copies, that in Cardiff Central Library belonged at one time to the Monmouthshire martyr, St David Lewis.⁴⁴

The book treats of the ‘Four Last Things’ of this world, namely Death, the Day of Judgement, Heaven and Hell. One of Gwyn’s aims was to influence the Welsh gentry, to win them for the faith and wean them from their besetting sins of avarice, theft, usury and corruption.⁴⁵ However, *Y Drych* is principally intended for ‘*y cyphredin a’r annyscedig Gymbry*’ (‘the ordinary and unlearned Welsh’) and to this end Gwyn adopted his anecdotal, earthy style, full of homely images and similes. A vital part of the training at the seminary at Douai was ‘to acquire greater power and grace in the use of the vulgar tongue’.⁴⁶ Powerful and skilful preaching was central to the work of the missionary priests:

*Hynn hefyd a wnaeth i mi yn y Llyfr yma gytgymyscu geiriau’r Deheudir a geiriau Gwynedd, pan fyddant heb gytuno, sef i gael o bawb o’r ddwywlad ddyallt y llyfr yma ... wrth draethu Gair Duw, rhaid yw ymgais ag ymarfer o’r iaith hawddaf a nesaf ei deallt mysc pawb yn gyphredin.*⁴⁷

This also caused me in this Book to mix together words from the South with words from Gwynedd, when they do not agree, namely to ensure that everyone from both regions may understand this book ... in delivering the Word of God, it is necessary to seek out and employ the language easiest and most readily understood among all the people in general.

In *Y Drych* Robert Gwyn also passes critical comment on the attitudes of some of his fellow Welshmen towards their own language:

*Ag fel i mae’r Cymbry ymhell oddi wrth ddaioni, felly y mae’r bonheddigion ag eraill yn ysgluso ag yn diystyru’r iaith Gymraeg, am fod y rhann fwyaf o’r bonheddigion heb fedru na darllain nac yscrifennu Cymraeg, y peth sydd gywilydd iddynt Hefyd, chwi a gewch rai o’r Cymry mor ddiflas ag mor ddibris ddigywilydd ag iddynt ar ol bod vn flwyddyn yn Lloegr gymeryd arnynt ollwng eu Cymraeg dros gof cyn dyscu Saesneg ddim cyful i dda.*⁴⁸

And just as the Welsh are far from righteousness, so the gentry and others ignore and despise the Welsh language, because the greater part of the gentry can neither read nor write Welsh, a thing that is to their shame Also, you will find some Welshmen so wretched and so cheaply

⁴¹ Bowen, 1996, 9; Bowen, 1964a.

⁴² Bowen, 1996, x.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, xxxi.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, xlv.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, xxxv. For a brief summary in English of its contents and background see Bowen, 1988, iii-v.

⁴⁶ Bowen, 1996, xxxvi; Bowen, 1970b, 118–22.

⁴⁷ Bowen, 1996, 8–9.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

shameless that having been but a year in England, they will pretend to have forgotten their Welsh before learning English fit for any good purpose.

It is likely that it was at Werngochen that Robert Gwyn completed the greater part of his literary output.⁴⁹ He produced revised manuscript versions of *Y Drych* and also wrote *Coelio'r Saint* ('Credence in the Saints'). Disparaging comments by John Penry, the Welsh puritan martyr, that *Y Drych* was nothing more than a collection of 'Legendarie fables' and the translation of parts of Robert Persons's *A Christian Directory*, have led some scholars to claim that Gwyn produced a translation of the entire work.⁵⁰

Gwyn completed *Coelio'r Saint* in 1590. Again, one of the extant manuscripts, Cardiff 2.82, is the work of a copyist from Gwent or Glamorgan who has adapted the language of Gwyn's original, Hafod 6, to suit the dialect of a client in south-east Wales.⁵¹ The work is a rebuttal of John Jewel's *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* of 1562 and cites both the church fathers and the saints as its authorities.⁵² Its use of extensive translated extracts and quotations from both sources to justify Catholic doctrine earned it its later title among Protestant commentators of *Amdiffyniad Pabyddiaeth* ('A Defence of Popery').⁵³

In addition to his original works, Gwyn also translated the work of others. His *Tretys ar Ddiwinyddiaeth Foesol* ('A Treatise on Moral Divinity') is a part-translation and adaptation of *Summa Casuum Conscientiae Sive De Instructione Sacerdotum* by the Spanish cardinal, Francisco Toledo. Under the title *Meditassiwn*, he also translated a popular English devotional work, *A Manvall or Meditation and Most Necessary Prayers with a Memorial of Instructions Right Requisite. Also a Summary of Catholic Doctrine*, which had been printed on secret presses three times between 1580 and 1592.⁵⁴ Two manuscript copies of the *Meditassiwn* survive, both in the hand of William Dafydd Llywelyn of Llangynidr.⁵⁵ It is likely that the translation was intended for the use of recusants in the border parishes of Skenfrith and Grosmont – where Robert Gwyn spent a great deal of time in his last years.⁵⁶

It may be that it was the activities of Robert Gwyn that caused the Council in the Marches to report in 1601 that there was 'great backsliding ... in the skirts of the shires' between England and Wales with 'many runners abroad and carriers of mass books ... and all other things used at or in the singing of mass'.⁵⁷

Meanwhile, the recusant poets of the county were still active. Edward Dafydd (also known as Edward Bach o Drefddyn) was a native of Treveithin and composed poetry in both the strict and free metres to the gentry of Glamorgan and Gwent. A staunch Catholic, he was presented for recusancy in July 1607⁵⁸ and his most famous poem, his *Awdl Wrthryfelgar* ('Rebellious Ode') of 1600, calls on Welsh Catholics to take up arms against the Protestant authorities.

For several weeks at the beginning of 1601, the *Awdl Wrthryfelgar* was the subject of much concern to the most powerful men in the kingdom. On 26 January, Dr John Whitgift, archbishop of Canterbury, received a letter from Dr William Morgan, bishop of Llandaff, enclosing a copy of the

⁴⁹ Bowen, 1996, xlvii.

⁵⁰ Parry, 1944, 189.

⁵¹ Bowen, 1996, xi.

⁵² Bowen, 1970b, 134–7.

⁵³ Bowen, 1962b, 325.

⁵⁴ Bowen, 1999, 41.

⁵⁵ NLW Llanstephan 13 and Swansea Town Library MS A1.57.

⁵⁶ Bowen, 1997, 229.

⁵⁷ Williams, 1993, 328.

⁵⁸ Gruffydd, 1971, 213.

poem, which he had discovered widely circulated in his diocese. The archbishop immediately passed the matter on to Sir Robert Cecil, principal secretary to Elizabeth I:

Good Master Secretarie: I send you herewith, a verie Lewde and seditious rime or Lible, which this morning I receivede frome the bishop of Llandafe I thought yt fytt to gyve you vnderstanding thereof beeng a matter of importans, as I take yt

Six days later, the poem was discussed at a meeting of the Privy Council at Whitehall and a letter was sent to the high sheriff of Monmouthshire, Sir Edward Kemys, and the bishop of Llandaff thanking the bishop for:

the good care and indeavour your Lordship hath taken in the apprehencion of that lewd fellowe that did make that seditious songe whereof your Lordship sent a cotype in your letter, and like well of the course your Lordship tooke to commytte him to prison, wherein direccion shalbe given ... to proceede againste him and others that shalbe discovered to have bin pryve any way to so seditious a libell. In the meane season wee praie your Lordship and the reste to do your beste indeavours to apprehend those three of whom you have already informacion to have receivede copies of the same

Cecil sent the copy of the poem to Sir John Popham, the lord chief justice, for his opinion.

I also haue takn a Copy off the Walshe Lybell which I send yow Inclosed vpon which I haue conferred with my Lord Cheiff Baron and we are agreed to haue master attorney to conferre further with thys after noon for setting down som fytt corse touchyng that matter....

On Sunday, 8 February, the earl of Essex launched his abortive rebellion against the government and Popham spent an uncomfortable day as his prisoner at Essex House. The rebellion failed and Essex was executed on 25 February.⁵⁹ On 8 March, the Privy Council sent another letter to the bishop of Llandaff noting:

the paynes you have taken by examynynge of sondry persons to fynd out the devysers and soche as were acquainted with the seditious lybell your Lordship sent hether, wherein as your Lordship and the rest shewe a carefull indeavour to discover soche malytious spiryttes and intrumentes, so wee pray you to continewe that your care that so lewde a crewe may be dyscovered.

It is not known whether Edward Dafydd was ever brought to book for his ‘verie Lewde and seditious rime’, but it seems unlikely.⁶⁰ Nor do we know whether any of those who received copies of it were punished. The extent to which it did circulate may be gauged from the fact that seven copies of the poem survive in manuscript.⁶¹ Its reputation was long-lived and one manuscript, written at the end of the seventeenth or beginning of the eighteenth century,⁶² was by 1709, the property of Richard Williams, a soap-maker in Abergavenny. The manuscript is a collection of Catholic poems.⁶³

The fact that the *Awdl Wrthryfelgar* calls on Catholics to rise up in bloody revolt and was discovered a mere three weeks or a fortnight before the Essex rebellion is suggestive. It is known

⁵⁹ Gruffydd, 1959, 155–6.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 157; Gruffydd, 1971, 213.

⁶¹ University of North Wales, Bangor, Mostyn 14, 5a; NLW 10893, 127; NLW 13072, 165; NLW 13070, 246; NLW 13167, 84; NLW 4710, 193; and The National Archives (formerly Public Record Office) SP 15/8, no.127.

⁶² NLW 10893 E.

⁶³ Gruffydd, 1959, 158.

that Essex had many loyal followers in South Wales, with numerous Catholics among them. Many of his most 'boisterous and ambitious henchman' were Welsh, including his steward, Gelly Meyrick.⁶⁴ After the rebellion, it came to light that many of his Welsh sympathisers were aware of the earl's intentions weeks beforehand. It may be that Edward Dafydd was inspired by forewarning of the rebellion to make his call to arms.⁶⁵

*Cwnnwch, lu Cymru, rhag cwmrawns –
dialedd*

A rhwym dolur fenjawns!

Cwnnwch i gyd, gwnewch rydawns!

Cwnnwch, gosodwch am siawns!

Arise, the host of Wales, throw off the
encumbrance – of revenge

And the bonds of the pain of vengeance!

Arise one and all, make riddance!

Arise, set for the chance!

Dihunwch, cwnnwch o' ch cudd -yn seilog

I sialens llawenydd!

Cwnnwch, holl Gred, yn ddedwydd!

Cwnnwch, ymffustwch am ffydd !

Awake, arise out of hiding – zealously

To the joyous challenge!

Arise, all Christendom, joyfully!

Arise, fight for the faith!

Cwnnwch eich arfau dan gyrrau' r goron,

Curwch a cheiswch cywir achosion;

Cymerwch, meddwch moddion – i' ch helpu,

Cweryl y Iesu a'r Kyrie eleison.

Arise in arms on the borders of the crown,

Strike out and seek just causes;

Take, seize the means – to help yourselves,

In the quarrel of Jesus and the *Kyrie Eleison*.

Curwch sy ddigall, y crach swyddogon,

Er cryd am addysg, a'r ciwriaid meddwon,

A'r meth ysgryptwyr, deallwyr deillon,

Pob hereticiaid, paganiaid gweinon.

Curwch a brethwch, Brython – waed Cymru:

*Mae g'lanas Iesu ar g'lonnau Saeson!*⁶⁶

Smite the ignorant, the haughty officials,

For love of learning, and the drunken curates,

The false scholars, the blind intellectuals,

All heretics, wretched pagans.

Smite and wound, Britons – of Welsh blood:

Christ's vengeance is upon the English!

Unusually, all of Dafydd's poems have been edited and published and give an invaluable insight into the flourishing condition of the Welsh poetic tradition in seventeenth-century Monmouthshire. Five of his poems can be dated. One *cwndid* complains of the rampant inflation of the period 1597–1600; other poems mourn the deaths of Edward Morgan of Llantarnam in 1633 and a certain William Siencyn in about 1640. Edward Morgan of Llantarnam was another leading recusant whose faith cost him dear.⁶⁷

A series of *englynion* celebrates the wedding of Harri Morgan of Penllwyn Sarff, Mynyddislwyn, to Ann Morgan of Machen in 1653 and another *cwndid* rejoices in the victory of Colonel George Monck in 1660 and the restoration of Charles II. Edward Dafydd died in 1662.⁶⁸ Most of Dafydd's work is preserved in a manuscript written out by Jenkin Richard of Blaenau

⁶⁴ Williams, 1993, 466.

⁶⁵ Gruffydd, 1959, 160.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 160–2, stanzas 1,2,8 and 18.

⁶⁷ Gruffydd, 1971, 214.

⁶⁸ Bowen, 1999, 82.

Gwent in about 1660. Richard was an Anglican and a fervent Royalist – a fact reflected in the choice of poems he preserved in his manuscript.⁶⁹

Monmouthshire was, without doubt, the largest stronghold of Catholicism in Wales, partly due to the protection of the earls of Worcester at Raglan and the Morgans of Llantarnam. The patronage of powerful families was a key element in the survival of recusancy and its literature. Only the aristocracy and wealthier gentry had the money and influence to be able to shelter priests and support Catholic authors.⁷⁰ Lord Eure, president of the Council in the Marches in the reign of James I, described the county as:

wholly divided almost into factions by reason of the number of those who, being addicted and misled with Popery, are so powerful ... that few causes arise in the shire which is not a question betwixt the Protestant and the recusant.⁷¹

In 1604, in the epistolary prologue to his Latin-Welsh dictionary (*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae et Cambrobryannicae*), Thomas Wiliems of Trefriw in the Conwy valley paid homage to the pride and love displayed by Edward Somerset, the fourth earl of Worcester, towards the Welsh language:

Mi allaf gyssylltu yn gymhwys a'r iaith urddasryw uchod y goreugwyr teilwng o fawrglôd, iarll Caerwrangon sydd heddyw yn arglwydd Rhaglan, pengwastrawt meirch ein mawreddog frenin Iaco, yr hwn ni rusia ddywedyd Cymraec, a'i hymgeleddu, a'i mawrhâu yn anwylgu Frytanaidd;

I can couple, as an admission of the dignity of the language, the best men worthy of great praise, the earl of Worcester who is to-day lord of Raglan, the chief groom of the horses [master of the horse] to his majesty king James, who does not hesitate to speak Welsh, to cherish and magnify it in a dearly British manner;⁷²

Wiliems was himself arraigned as a recusant in 1606 and is reputed to have had prior knowledge of the Gunpowder plot.⁷³ The fourth earl died in 1627 and was buried in Raglan parish church.

Many Welsh priests used Raglan castle as the starting point for their pastoral and missionary journeys through South Wales. One of the most prominent was Father John Salusbury (1575–1625) of the family of Y Rug near Corwen in Merionethshire. He was educated at the Jesuit College at Valladolid in Spain. In 1604, he came to Raglan as chaplain to Lady Frances Somerset and, in 1615, succeeded Robert Jones of Chirk as superior of the North and South Wales District – the head of the Jesuit order in Wales. Jesuits had found refuge at the Cwm in Llanrothal, just over the border in Herefordshire, since 1605. From 1621 onwards, this place became the order's headquarters as the College of St. Francis Xavier.⁷⁴ John Salusbury is known to have lived at Raglan castle from 1615 to 1625.⁷⁵

In 1618, Salusbury arranged for the publication of *Eglvrhad Helaeth-lawn o'r Athrawaeth Gristnogawl* ('A Comprehensive Elucidation of Christian Doctrine') – a translation from the Italian

⁶⁹ NLW 1372 B – this was one of the manuscripts preserved at Llanofor and was formerly known as 'Llanover B 12'; Gruffydd, 1971, 216.

⁷⁰ Williams, 1993, 328.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 478.

⁷² Bradney, *Volume 2 Part 1*, 14–5.

⁷³ *ODNB*, vol.58, 952; *DWB*, 1018.

⁷⁴ Bowen, 1999, 62.

⁷⁵ Jones, 1951, 61.

of *Dottrina Christiana* by Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino. It used to be thought that Salusbury himself was the translator,⁷⁶ but it has now been shown that it was the work of Richard Vaughan of Bodeiliog near Denbigh.⁷⁷

Hugh Owen (1575–1642) was born in Anglesey, the son of Owen ap Hugh ap Richard of Gwynnog in the parish of Llanfflewyn. Between 1610 and 1621, he served as the captain of the militia of the commote of Talybolion, but in 1621, he sold all his worldly goods, left his home and friends and joined the household of Henry Somerset, the future earl of Worcester. He served as Somerset's secretary, moving regularly between London and Raglan. When his patron inherited the earldom and Raglan castle in 1627, Owen took up residence there. In December 1625, he visited Anglesey and Lewis Bayly, bishop of Bangor, sent a report to Charles I:

a man that hath been a Captain of that Ile, a most dangerous felowe, a Romishe recusant who about 3 yeares before had given over his place, disposed of his lands and converted his estate into money, and went out of his country and no man knew why.⁷⁸

Between 1622 and 1642, Owen translated Thomas á Kempis's *De Imitatione Christi* into Welsh. The work was published in 1684 by his son, Hugh Owen the younger, under the title *Dilyniad Christ*. He also translated, but never published, *The Book of Resolution* (also known as *A Christian Directory*) by Robert Persons and *Libellus Vere Aureus* ('The Golden Treatise') by Vincentius Lirinensis. According to his son, Owen also wrote in 1622 'a booke ... of many miracles of Gods punishments on those who contemned him in his saints ... all then lately hapned in Northwales'.⁷⁹ Hugh Owen died at Chapel Hill near Tintern in 1642.⁸⁰

Hugh Owen the younger (1615–86) was a Jesuit priest and is better known as Father John Hughes. From 1627 or 1628 onwards, he lived with his father at Raglan castle and knew Abergavenny (and its shops) well.⁸¹ He was educated at a grammar school run somewhere in the neighbourhood of Raglan by Thomas Jeffreyes, a North Walian Jesuit who hailed from Llechwedd Isaf near Aberconwy.⁸² Jeffreyes (1591–1654) had joined the Jesuit mission in 1625 and is known to have taught the children of recusant families in Breconshire and Monmouthshire between 1623 and 1644. He also produced a Welsh translation of *De Imitatione Christi*, which has not survived.⁸³ In 1636, Hughes entered the English College in Rome.⁸⁴ In 1641, he was ordained at the Lateran Basilica and returned to Wales in 1643. He joined the Jesuits in 1648 and trained at Watten, near St Omer.⁸⁵ By 1650, he was based at the Jesuit College in the Cwm, Llanrothal, but later moved to Holywell, Flintshire, where he lived from 1666. In 1670, he was back at Raglan but by 1679 had returned to Holywell as acting superior of the Residence of St Winifred, the headquarters of the Jesuit mission in North Wales. While there, he kept a record of the pilgrims seeking cures at St Winifred's Well and among them were Catholics from Perth-hir, Llanfoist, Welsh Newton and

⁷⁶ Parry, 1944, 187.

⁷⁷ Stephens, 1998, 756.

⁷⁸ Jones, 1951, 55.

⁷⁹ Bowen, 1999, 65.

⁸⁰ Bradney, *Volume 2 Part 1*, 16.

⁸¹ Bowen, 1961, 92.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 89.

⁸³ Bowen, 1999, 68–9.

⁸⁴ *ODNB*, vol. 42, 208; *DWB*, 380.

⁸⁵ Stephens, 1998, 555; Bowen, 1999, 66.

Werngochen.⁸⁶ It was ‘o gymmydogaeth Castell Rhaglan’ (‘from the neighbourhood of Raglan castle’) that he wrote his foreword to *Dilyniad Christ* in 1684.⁸⁷ He died in Holywell in 1686.⁸⁸

In 1670, Hughes published *Allwydd neu Agoriad Paradwys i’r Cymry* (‘The Key to Paradise for the Welsh’), a series of translations into beautiful Welsh of parts of the gospels and the catechism. The book also contains a calendar, prayers for the ecclesiastical festivals and saints’ days, devotions, instructions and doctrinal tenets.⁸⁹ The book is prefaced by a letter of greeting to his countrymen and women:

*At fy anwyl Frodyr a’ m Chwiorydd a’ m Ceraint eraill ffyddlon yn-Gwent a Brecheinioc. Bydded gwiw gennych chwi, dderbyn yn howddgar yr Anrheg ymma o Allwydd fechan, yr hon er nad yw hi ond o ychydic faint a gwael oddi allan: etto mae hi yn rhagorol iawn ac yn brisfawr Mi a gesglais y Devotionau hyn ... ac a gyfieithais y cwbl mewn geiriau ac adroddion plaen, syml, hawdd i’w dyall: fel nad oes i neb ddisgwyl cael ymma na Gwenniaith Gwynedd, nac Adroddion perareithus, na Brythoneg anianol Ond nid oes ymma fawr achos o gwyno i bobl Wynedd gan nad oes nemmor air yn yr holl draethawd hwn, yn ddieithr iddynt hwy.*⁹⁰

To my dear brothers, sisters and other faithful kinsmen in Gwent and Brecknock. May you see fit to accept gracefully this gift of a small key, which though of little size and poor appearance, yet is it excellent and of great value I have collected these Devotions ... and have translated the whole in words and phrases plain, simple and easily understood: so that none may expect here the flattering language of Gwynedd, nor rhetorical passages, nor abstract Welsh But neither is there reason for the people of Gwynedd to complain for there is scarce a word in the whole work that would be strange to them.

An appendix to the book contains a glossary of unfamiliar Welsh words, together with notes on the pronunciation of Latin for the English ‘who pronounce Latine extremely falsly’.⁹¹ Although the work bears the imprint ‘Yn Luyck’ (‘In Liège’), it was probably produced in London by a professional printer.⁹² In 1668, Hughes also published a Welsh catechism and another work entitled *Maint Pechod Marwol* (‘The Gravity of Mortal Sin’), both printed in London.⁹³ These may have been pamphlets later incorporated into *Allwydd Paradwys*. He also wrote one English work, *The Life and Miracles of St Winifred*, which survives in his own hand.⁹⁴

A contemporary of Huw Owen the elder, Augustine (né David) Baker (1575–1641), was born at Beili Baker (now Old Court) in Castle Street, Abergavenny. His father, William, was receiver-general of the barony of Abergavenny and recorder of the borough. His mother, Maud, was the daughter of Lewis Wallis, vicar of Abergavenny and the sister of Dr David Lewis, the first principal of Jesus College, Oxford, whose magnificent tomb can still be seen in St Mary’s priory, Abergavenny.⁹⁵ Both parents outwardly conformed to the Anglican religion and their children were brought up Protestants.⁹⁶ In February 1587, Baker was sent to Christ’s Hospital to learn English, which was little spoken in Abergavenny at the time. In 1590, he went to Broadgates Hall, Oxford

⁸⁶ Bowen, 1999, 66.

⁸⁷ Bowen, 1947, 20.

⁸⁸ *ODNB*, vol. 42, 208; *DWB*, 380.

⁸⁹ Parry, 1944, 187; Bowen, 1999, 72.

⁹⁰ Fisher, 1929, xiii-iv.

⁹¹ Bowen, 1999, 72.

⁹² Rees, 1987, XIII.

⁹³ Rees, 1987, 1670; *ODNB*, vol. 42, 208.

⁹⁴ Bowen, 1997, 237.

⁹⁵ *ODNB*, vol. 3, 363.

⁹⁶ Bradney, *Volume 1 Part 1*, 176.

(now Pembroke College), where he was taught by his kinsman, William Pritchard – who later became vicar of Abergavenny and Caerwent.

At Oxford, the young Baker fell into dissolute company and in 1592, his father called him back to Abergavenny to study law under his brother, Richard. In 1596, he entered Clifford's Inn and the Inner Temple, where he attended playhouses, neglected religion and, allegedly, forgot his Welsh. On the death of his brother, Richard, in 1598, Baker became recorder of Abergavenny. In 1600, he underwent a Damascene conversion. Riding home at nightfall, he had what he considered a miraculous escape from drowning whilst crossing a narrow bridge across the river Monnow in full spate. He converted to Catholicism in 1603.

David Baker joined the Benedictine community of St Justinian in Padua in 1605, where he adopted the name Augustine. In 1607, he was professed as a Benedictine in London and in 1608, moved to the house of Sir Nicholas Fortescue at Cook Hill, Worcestershire. In 1610, he was in London once more and taught the law to Phillip Powell, another native of Abergavenny and a future Benedictine martyr. Baker was ordained at Rheims in 1613 and returned to Britain. He was often in Abergavenny and persuaded many of his relatives and neighbours to embrace the Catholic faith. These included his father and his sister, who had married William Parry of Llanover. He also recommended many Catholic children to the grammar school at Abergavenny. The headmaster, Morgan Lewis, was married to Baker's niece, Margaret Prichard. Their son was St David Lewis, the last Welsh Catholic martyr (whose life and work is described below). Baker's last visit to Abergavenny took place in 1620 in the company of his future biographer, Fr Leander Prichard, who may also have been his nephew. Towards the end of his life, Baker was consulted on a proposed new charter for the town.⁹⁷

In 1624, Baker was sent to Cambrai to act as spiritual director to a community of Benedictine nuns that included Gertrude More, a descendant of St Thomas More. As the result of internal dissention among his order, Baker returned to Britain as a missionary in 1638. This was a particularly dangerous time for Catholic priests, with eighteen being sentenced to death in 1641 alone. On the brink of his arrest in London in August 1641, Augustine Baker died of a fever and was buried at St Andrew's church, Holborn.⁹⁸

Baker wrote in Latin and English and his *oeuvre* includes several treatises on ecclesiastical history and English law and many volumes of mystical and theological works, none of which was published during his lifetime. One of his brother monks, Serenus Cressy, published *Sancta Sophia* – excerpts from his mystical writings – in 1657, and his work has been in print ever since. Translated into English as *Holy Wisdom*, this retained a central part in the life of the Benedictine order for almost two hundred years.

Augustine Baker also composed religious poetry in Latin and English and a history of the English Benedictines. His other volume, *Holy Practices*, was also published in 1657, though his *Confessions* and autobiography (written between 1637 and 1638) had to wait until 1922 to see the light of day. His first biography was published in 1643 by his friend, Leander Prichard.⁹⁹ Augustine Baker loved singing and walking and has been described as 'the last Welsh Catholic who played a large part in the history of Catholicism in England'.¹⁰⁰

Gwilym Pue (c.1618-c.1689) was a writer, soldier, physician, harpist and Benedictine priest. He was born into the staunchly Catholic family of the Pues of Penrhyn Creuddyn, Caernarfonshire and his father and grandfather had been involved in printing *Y Drych Cristianogawl* in the cave at

⁹⁷ ODNB, vol. 3, 363; DWB, 22.

⁹⁸ ODNB, vol. 3, 365.

⁹⁹ Stephens, 1998, 30.

¹⁰⁰ DWB, 22.

Rhiwledyn (described above). He served as a captain in the Royalist garrison of Raglan castle and, when Raglan fell in 1646, he found refuge at Blackbrook in Skenfrith, then owned by Thomas Williams. It was here that he wrote a great deal of his poetry.¹⁰¹ Having moved to the continent, he joined the Benedictine order in Paris in 1660. Between 1670 and 1677, he studied at the English College at Valladolid before returning to Wales in 1677 to do missionary work.¹⁰² He lived the rest of his life in Monmouthshire and settled permanently at Blackbrook – by then in the ownership of another recusant family called Bodenham.¹⁰³

Two manuscripts of Pue’s work survive, dated 1674 and 1676.¹⁰⁴ They contain Catholic poems and hymns in the strict and free metres, the most notable being his *cywydd*, *Buchedd ein harglwydd Iessu Grist* (‘The Life of our Lord Jesus Christ’), which is some 2,000 lines in length.¹⁰⁵ Another lengthy *cywydd* of some 1,100 lines recounts his family’s role in the setting up of the clandestine press at Rhiwledyn.¹⁰⁶ He also wrote *cywyddau* interpreting the *Magnificat* and the *Miserere* and an *awdl* (*Brenhines nef hanes nwyf*) and a *cywydd* (*Brenhines braint rhieni*) in praise of Mary.¹⁰⁷

Pue demonstrates thorough familiarity with all these traditional metrical forms, but his *cynganedd* is less than perfect. Despite this, his style retains the directness of the best of the bardic masters:

*Pwy draw a geir mor drugarog
Ag yw’r gŵr sydd ar y grog?
Pwy ond Duw? Pwy edwyn y dyn
A roi aelod er i elyn.
Crist yn gryf ar y groes
Eron ni rhoes ei einioes ...*¹⁰⁸

Who is found as merciful
As the man on the cross?
Who but God? Who knows the man
Who would give his limb for his enemy?
Christ, strong on the cross,
For our sakes offered up his life ...

In the free metres, Pue composed *carolau* and a longer poem entitled *Buchedd Gwenn Frewu Santes* (‘The Life of St Winifred’).¹⁰⁹ He also wrote *Buchedd Martyn Luther, yr Apostat* (‘The life of Martin Luther, the Apostate’) attacking Luther’s character and morals. *Messurau yw Datcanv gida’r Delyn* (‘Verses to be Sung to the Harp’), written in 1648, prophesied the end of Roundhead rule and the return of the King. There are also strict-metre *awdlau* concerning the Civil War – *Awllllu Siarls 2* (‘An Ode to the Army of Charles II’) and *Brenhin pan ddoyth ef a llu or Ysgottiaid i Gaerfrangon* (‘When the King brought a host of Scots to Worcester’).¹¹⁰ Pue’s poems exerted a significant local influence, being copied and learned by all classes of the population.¹¹¹

Pue wrote *Pllaswyr Iessu* – a Welsh translation of *The Jesus Psalter*,¹¹² though he may have been influenced by earlier translations of the same work.¹¹³ He also produced an original Welsh-

¹⁰¹ Bowen, 1947, 21.

¹⁰² Bowen, 1956, 307; Bowen, 1997, 237.

¹⁰³ Bradney, *Volume 1, Part 1*, 64.

¹⁰⁴ NLW MSS 13167 and 4710 respectively.

¹⁰⁵ Bowen, 1947, 24.

¹⁰⁶ Gruffydd, 1972, 9; Bowen, 1947, 12.

¹⁰⁷ NLW 13167, 47 and NLW 4710, 72; NLW 4710, 95; NLW 4710, 213; NLW 13167, 168 and NLW 4710, 176 respectively.

¹⁰⁸ Bowen, 1999, 78.

¹⁰⁹ See Bowen, 1969, for a full edition.

¹¹⁰ Bowen, 1999, 78–80.

¹¹¹ Bowen, 1947, 30.

¹¹² Bowen, 1956, 307–10.

¹¹³ Bowen, 1963.

Latin catechism entitled *Crynodeb or Athrawiaeth Gristnogawl* ('A Summary of Christian Doctrine') and *Erfynnion nev Littaniav Evraid* ('Supplications or Golden Litanies').¹¹⁴ This last is a translation of *The Golden Litany in English*, published by R. Copland in 1531.¹¹⁵

In 1678 and 1679, the Catholics of the county underwent a period of renewed persecution in the wake of the Titus Oates plot and two of their priests, David Lewis and Philip Evans, were executed. A native of Abergavenny, David Lewis (also known as Charles Baker and *Tad y Tlodion* – 'the Father of the Poor') ministered in Gwent for thirty years before being hanged at Usk on 27 August 1679.¹¹⁶ In one of the manuscripts of the National Library, there is an elegy to him by an anonymous local poet, written in the Gwentian dialect:

<p><i>Creaduried Duw nefol, pawb eraill daearol, gwrandedwch fi'n bresemol yn traethu fy nghwyn am golled a gawsom waith difa gŵr gwirion, nid oedd dan y goron mwy mwyn ...</i></p> <p><i>Pan oedd ef yn pregethu oedd Saeson a Chymry a phawb yn rhyfeddu gwroldeb y sant, heb atal heb unwaith colli gair trwy'r holl bregeth, daeth deigre gwŷr, gwragedd a' u plant.¹¹⁷</i></p>	<p>Creatures of heavenly God, And all others earthly, Listen to me now Giving voice to my lament, For the loss we have suffered, With the destruction of that innocent man, Under the crown, none was gentler ...</p> <p>When he preached, Both the Welsh and the English, All were filled with wonder At the courage of the saint, Neither faltering, nor once missing A word of his entire sermon, Tears flowed from men, women and children.</p>
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David Lewis was himself a writer of devotional prose in Welsh and contributed a chapter to John Hughes's *Allwydd Paradwys*. He and Hughes were students together at the English College at Rome from 1638 to 1643. Lewis was ordained in 1642 and returned to Wales in 1647. Almost immediately, he was recalled to Rome to serve as confessor and spiritual director of the English College. In 1648, he appealed to the heads of his order to be allowed to continue his missionary work and returned to Wales. Lewis was twice superior of the South Wales district and rector of the Jesuit seminary at the Cwm from 1667 to 1672 and from 1674 to 1679.¹¹⁸ He and John Hughes lived and worked at the Cwm and collaborated for thirty years.¹¹⁹

Given his skill as a confessor, it is no surprise that David Lewis's contribution to *Allwydd Paradwys* should take the form of a guide to making a good confession – *Direction a Modd i'r sawl sy'n euog o bechodau marwol a gorthrwm i holi eu Cydwybod and gwneuthur Cyffes dda* ('A Direction and Means to those guilty of mortal sin and oppression to question their Conscience and make a good Confession').¹²⁰ In clear, muscular Welsh, the piece gives directions as to what constitutes mortal sin, arranged in the order of the Ten Commandments.

¹¹⁴ *DWB*, 819; Bowen, 1956, 310–12.

¹¹⁵ Bowen, 1999, 76.

¹¹⁶ *ODNB*, vol. 33, 596.

¹¹⁷ Huws, 1994, 23.

¹¹⁸ *ODNB*, vol. 33, 587.

¹¹⁹ Bowen, 1957, 180–1.

¹²⁰ Fisher, 1929, 38.

As part of the campaign of persecution that ended in the martyrdom of David Lewis and the others, Dr Herbert Croft, bishop of Hereford, sent investigators to raid the Cwm. The bishop’s report to the House of Lords in 1679 confirms the emphasis the Jesuits placed on the dissemination of devotional literature to the Catholics of Monmouthshire and the Marches:

In one of these houses there was a study found, the door thereof very hardly to be discovered, being placed behind a bed, and plastered over like the wall adjoining, in which was found great store of divinity books, and others in folio and quarto, and many other lesser books, several horse loads many whereof are written by the principal learned Jesuits They are several books written and printed against the Protestant religion, and many small Popish Catechisms, printed and tied up in a bundle and some Welsh Popish books lately printed and some Popish manuscripts fairly and lately printed.¹²¹

The ‘Welsh Popish books’ were burnt outside the cathedral in Hereford and probably included the remaining stock of *Allwydd Paradwys*. John Hughes, although condemned for high treason, did not share the fate of David Lewis and continued with his missionary work around St Asaph.¹²²

The Catholic tradition of the county did not die with the martyrdom of David Lewis and the rest. In 1687, a Franciscan mission was established in Abergavenny with a ‘residence’ and chapel in a house in Frogmore Street.¹²³ The mansion at Perth-hir in Rockfield had long belonged to recusant families named Powell and Lorymer, descended from the Herberts of Raglan castle. In the eighteenth century, the Right Revd Matthew Prichard, bishop of Myra, lived at Perth-hir for many years and died there in 1750. He was a Recollect (a member of a strict branch of the Franciscans) and it was during his episcopate that the order established a community at the house. In 1808, Perth-hir was made the Franciscan novitiate or training college and it remained so until 1818, when the community was transferred to Aston and the mission was merged in that of Monmouth.¹²⁴

One of the most active of these Welsh Franciscans was David Powell, also known as Dewi Nant Brân. Powell may have been a native of Abergavenny, though his ‘intimate knowledge of obscure placenames’ in Breconshire has led some to speculate that he may have come from Llanfihangel Nant Brân.¹²⁵ He trained at the Franciscan convent in Douai and, on his return to Wales, attached himself to the community at Perth-hir. He served as a priest in Abergavenny from 1738 to 1755 and again from 1764 to 1767¹²⁶ and died there in 1781.¹²⁷

In 1764, Powell published his *Catechism Byrr o’r Athrawiaeth Ghrismogol; er Addysc ysprydol i Blant; a’r Werinos Anwybodus trwy Gymru oll* (‘A Short Catechism of Christian Doctrine for the Spiritual Instruction of Children and Unlearned People through the Whole of Wales’) and another volume entitled *Sail yr Athrawiaeth Gatholic ... a gyfieithwyd er lles y Cymry* (‘The Foundation of Catholic Doctrine ... translated for the benefit of the Welsh’). In 1776, he also published *Allwydd y Nêf* (‘The Key to Heaven’) – an adaptation of John Hughes’ *Allwydd Paradwys* that demonstrates that Powell’s Welsh surpassed even the splendid language of the

¹²¹ Bowen, 1999, 63–4.

¹²² Bowen, 1997, 238.

¹²³ Canning and Willson, 1927, 104.

¹²⁴ Matthews, 1904, 271–2.

¹²⁵ Canning and Willson, 1927, 110.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *DWB*, 773.

original. The book also contains some of Powell's own devotional poems. One, entitled *Te lucis ante terminum*, opens:

<i>Cyn tywyll nos, O Arglwydd Nef,</i>	Before dark night, O Lord of Heaven,
<i>Â dyfal lef o'r galon,</i>	With earnest cry from the heart,
<i>Erchwn arnat, Geidwad cu,</i>	We beg of you, Dear Saviour,
<i>I'n cadw rhag peryglon.</i>	To keep us from dangers. ¹²⁸

As late as 1797, Catholic writers observed that the Welsh language was 'indispensably necessary to the missionary in Abergavenny'.¹²⁹ The Franciscan mission at Abergavenny lasted until 1857, when care of the parish passed to the Benedictines.

In summary, the recusant literature of Monmouthshire is represented by two distinct traditions. On the one hand stands the native poetry drawing on centuries of bardic tradition and, on the other, devotional prose inspired by the new influences of the Renaissance and Counter-Reformation.

The strongholds of the bardic tradition were clearly in the central and western parts of the county. The 1550s see Dafydd ap Rhys at work at Abergavenny, Siôn Dafydd at Usk and Phylip Ieuan in Tredunnoch. In 1601, Edward Dafydd of Trevechin – the most extreme and vocal exponent of this recusant poetry – succeeds in claiming the attention of the most powerful men in the realm. That the recusant poetic tradition was deeply-rooted and long-lived is shown both by the works of Gwilym Pue in the second half of the seventeenth century and by the anonymous elegy to David Lewis in 1679.

The prose tradition in the county can be seen to fall into three distinct phases. From the 1580s until the early 1600s, the activities of the first generation of recusants, Robert Gwyn and Siôn Dafydd Rhys, are largely centred on Abergavenny and the Usk valley. It is a neat coincidence that 1604, the year of Robert Gwyn's death, also saw the arrival at Raglan castle of the Jesuit, John Salusbury. This marked the beginning of a second phase in which the intellectual energy of the Society of Jesus and the patronage of Raglan castle were vital to the survival of the Catholic cause in Monmouthshire.

All of the county's recusant writers of the first half of the seventeenth century were directly connected with Raglan castle and all but two, Hugh Owen and Gwilym Pue, were Jesuits. With the destruction of the Raglan power-base in 1646, the recusant centre of gravity shifted to the Jesuit seminary at Llanrothal. It was from here that John Hughes and David Lewis carried on their missionary and literary efforts until the disasters of 1679.

As Benedictines, Augustine Baker and Gwilym Pue stood outside the mainstream of the Jesuit activity in the county. However, it could be argued that the quieter Catholic tradition represented by Pue at Grosmont proved the stronger in the long run. With the establishment of a Franciscan presence at Abergavenny and Rockfield at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the county saw a resurgence of literary activity. David Powell represents a third and, to all intents and purposes, final flowering of recusant writing in the county, this time centred on Abergavenny itself. The Franciscans continued to play an important role in Monmouthshire down to the mid-nineteenth century.

What, then, was the lasting influence of the recusant writers? Although, as we have seen, manuscript copies of many Catholic works circulated around the county in secret, only half a dozen were ever printed. Some historians have argued that the efforts of the recusant writers were

¹²⁸ Bowen, 1999, 73–4.

¹²⁹ Roderick, 1981, 28.

undermined by the fact that it was English exiles who largely directed the Counter-Reformation and that many were ignorant of the level of support for Catholicism among the Welsh and of the need for devotional works in the Welsh language.¹³⁰ In addition, Wales was a poor country and lacked a court and capital, populous towns, a large middle class and a university; Wales lacked, in fact, all the usual *stimuli* to a thriving press.¹³¹ Even legal and officially sanctioned printing was not commercially viable in the Wales of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹³² How much more difficult a task faced the clandestine Catholic publishers in the face of persecution?

However, there can be no doubt that the use of devotional works in Welsh was of huge advantage in encouraging and comforting the Catholics of Monmouthshire through the hardest of hard times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Recusancy was always a difficult path to follow. It had to be done in secret and outside the law and brought with it suspicion of disloyalty and conspiracy. It debarred individuals from positions of power and brought the danger of heavy fines and imprisonment.¹³³ Despite these difficulties, the tradition of recusant literature in the county lasted from the 1550s until the 1760s.

Perhaps the clearest testimony of the efficacy of this devotional literature is the fact that Catholicism in Monmouthshire proved so remarkably resilient. In 1603, the diocese of Llandaff had the highest proportion of recusants to Anglican churchgoers of any diocese in England or Wales and their numbers continued to rise throughout the reigns of both James I and Charles I.¹³⁴

Apart from their obvious religious concerns, one of the strongest characteristics of the recusant writers is their sense of nationhood and of the place of the Welsh among the nations of the world. As Robert Gwyn himself put it in his introduction to the *Drych*:

Wrth feddwl am faint a bri'r Cymry gynt a'i llesced a'i diystyred yr owran, mae dolur a chlefyd yn magu yn fy nghalon

Ond y mae gan yfi beth amcan ar ieithoedd eraill a pheth gwybodaeth o rann yr iaith Gymraec, ag yn wir, wrth gymharu ieithoedd ynghyd, ny wela fi yr vn o'r ieithoedd cyphredin eraill nad yw'r Gymraeg gystal a'r oreu ohonynt oll, os ceiph ei doddi a'i gosod allan yn ei rhith a'i heulun i hun , ie, ag yn blaenori ar lawer o ieithoedd ereill mewn aml foddau¹³⁵

In considering the former status and honour of the Welsh nation and the wretchedness and the contempt in which they are now held, pain and affliction gather in my heart

But I have some notion of other languages and some knowledge of the Welsh language, and truly, in comparing languages together, I cannot see any of the other vernacular languages to the best of which Welsh is not equal, if she be only put and set out in her own rightful form and image, yes, and surpasses many other languages in manifold ways

The recusant writers of Monmouthshire were imbued with a burning zeal for their faith and a deep love of their nation and language and were prepared to face persecution, torture and death in their service. For that alone they deserve an honoured place in the history of our county.

¹³⁰ Williams, 1997, 223.

¹³¹ Williams, 1964, 23.

¹³² Rees, 1987, V-VI; Williams, 1993, 448.

¹³³ Williams, 1993, 330.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 481.

¹³⁵ Bowen, 1996, 1 and 5.

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TRELECH: A TOWN LOST TWICE

By Stephen Clarke with artwork by Jane Bray

It was said that the three standing stones at Trelech arrived from Garway Hill during a stone-throwing contest between the Devil and the Welsh magician Jack-o-Kent. Another story is that the Tump Terrett motte in the village is the grave of those killed in a great English-Welsh battle and that the site is protected by a curse. There was also a legend that the ancient town of Trelech was not in Trelech at all but lay towards Trelech Cross a mile away – along a quiet country lane – the road to Catbrook.

The village of Trelech was always thought to be the site of a very large industrial town recorded in the thirteenth century but this has been questioned in recent years, causing the polarisation of two schools of thought. The traditional view of Trelech is championed by the University of Wales Newport and challenged by Monmouth Archaeological Society and its professional wing Monmouth Archaeology. The Monmouth faction considers that the town was lost after its decline and fall in the fourteenth century and has now been found well away from the existing village. The university archaeologists consider that the town was never lost and still lies beneath the village.

This paper examines the archaeological evidence from the viewpoint of the Monmouth archaeologists – that the industrial settlement was a separate development situated well away from the town's earlier core. The archaeological record shows that the estimated 378 burgages of the thirteenth-century de Clare town lay well to the south of the modern village – over the river Olwy – as a sort of medieval 'industrial estate'. We now believe that at this time the castle, the church and what is probably the manor house were surrounded by large greens in a controlled landscape – an illustration of how archaeology can confirm a legend and change established ideas.¹

Until ten years ago, the thirteenth-century 'Boom Town' of Trelech was thought to lie under the present village – as a planned settlement based on a grid pattern. However, over many years, dozens of sites, covering thousands of square metres inside the village, have produced no sign of the hundreds of burgages recorded in the thirteenth century. Added to archaeological watching briefs are some 20,000 square metres of the village 'grid' which have been explored during professional archaeological evaluations under planning legislation. These areas have been shown to be devoid of any significant archaeological resource; where there should be the remains of scores of houses the topsoil usually lies directly over the natural boulder clay or bedrock.² There is normally little evidence of medieval occupation other than occasional sherds of pottery which were distributed with household waste used as manure – a feature of fields around all medieval settlements. For

¹ Monmouth Archaeological Society/Monmouth Archaeology's evidence is presented on Fig.1 – plan of 13th-century Trelech.

² In *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 21 (2005), these barren sites inside Trelech village were described as 'areas of apparent vacant possession which have exercised minds in the Monmouth Archaeological Society for several years' (Howell, 2005, 48). Dr Howell, in defending the tradition that the town was centred on the modern village, suggested that caution is always prudent in cases of 'negative evidence' and he has previously stated that 'absence of evidence is not evidence of absence'. This is of course true, but also misleading, for in Trelech we are not dealing with an odd burgage plot but with one of the biggest towns of medieval Wales and the 'evidence of absence' in the village is overwhelming.

instance, the latest evaluation excavations inside the village (during July and August 2005) covered 120 square metres of a 4,000 square metre proposed housing development site – inside the ‘grid’ at Court Farm. The excavations indicated that there were no archaeological remains and that the bedrock lay just below the ground surface. These excavations produced only two sherds of medieval pottery.

The only thirteenth-century stone buildings known inside Trelech village, other than the church, are those isolated beside the church (Howell, 2003) and the footings of an iron forge close to the castle (Clarke, 1998).

In contrast, every archaeological excavation south of the Olwy river – along the Catbrook road – in three different fields and on the roadside – has revealed the stone foundations of medieval houses; the present householders, digging in the black soil of their gardens, find medieval pottery, glazed ridge tiles and stone building debris.

Claims for the existence of burgages inside the village are mostly based on geophysical surveys without any support from excavated evidence and this author considers the published interpretations of some of these surveys to be seriously flawed. The strangest results of a geophysical survey are those published for the meadow to the east of the *Lion* inn (Plot 75: Hamilton, 2002. See Fig.2). Over the years since the introduction of planning guidelines to protect archaeological remains, Monmouth Archaeology has examined every field surrounding this plot, as well as the land and car park of the *Lion* inn during professional archaeological evaluations or programmes of archaeological recording. All of the sites proved to have no significant archaeological deposits and all have been published. However, Dr Hamilton’s interpretations of the geophysical survey carried out in this middle field by the University of Wales Newport which was published in *Archaeology in Wales* included: clear walls (possibly with some industrial function), banks, ditches, linear features, hard standing or floors and up to forty-four burgages. Subsequent excavations by the university in 2004 and 2005 failed to reveal such features.

This finding must cast doubt on claims for burgages based on geophysical surveys in other parts of the village (i.e. Hamilton, 2002, 142–3) and on Dr Hamilton’s claim that all geophysicists within Trelech have found clear evidence of divisions, usually 10m-wide plots, while none outside the village has produced similar evidence (Hamilton, *ibid.*, 145).³

For more than thirty years, Monmouth archaeologists have found no evidence that such divisions exist within the village. Nevertheless, it would be extraordinary if so large a conurbation as that recorded at Trelech had vanished without trace.

Over the River Olwy

In 1997, Julia Wilson of Monmouth Archaeological Society suggested that the burgages of the thirteenth-century town of Trelech lay to the south of the modern village – along the Catbrook road (Wilson, 1998). By chance, supporting evidence quickly followed from a site allocated for housing between the Catbrook and Tintern roads (opposite site 2: plot 125. Fig.2).⁴ Trial excavations by Thames Valley Archaeological Unit revealed medieval stone buildings in all the trenches excavated beside the Catbrook road, and Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments intervened

³ Dr Hamilton recognized that if the burgages were on 10m-wide plots, only half of those recorded in AD 1288 would fit into the town, so he suggests that if the plots were divided into half, all 378 burgages could be accommodated.

⁴ The excavated evidence from inside and outside the village is presented using the 1880 Ordnance Survey map (Fig.2) and brief details of individual plots are presented in an Appendix.

and scheduled the site as an ancient monument. The excavators considered that the buildings were burgages (Hull, 1998).⁵

Since then, continuing investigations along the Catbrook road are revealing the character and extent of the thirteenth-century settlement. All of the house foundations discovered are of stone – unlike any of the sites claimed as burgages within the village except, curiously, for the plots occupied by the substantial buildings in Church Field West.

A site on the west side of the Catbrook road (site 2: plot 118. Plate 1) was destroyed before the planning authority could intervene, but permission for a new building was withheld until Monmouth Archaeology had carried out an archaeological evaluation on what was left. There was a medieval well, walling, plot boundaries and associated medieval pottery, showing that this was the site of a thirteenth-century house with stone foundations which was abandoned during the fourteenth century.

Stuart Wilson of Monmouth Archaeological Society sampled another plot almost at random further along the Catbrook road (site 3) in 2003/4. This time the site lay a quarter of a mile outside the village – at the northern end of plot 150. The remains of two medieval houses were found, each represented by several phases of building work with one phase ending dramatically in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century with a terrible fire. Pottery melted and some stone surfaces turned to glass. It could be that this is evidence for the Welsh attack of AD 1296 when a hundred houses are said to have been burnt (Wilson, S., 2002).⁶ *See* Plate 2.

Any further debate on the whereabouts of thirteenth-century Trelech must confront discoveries on site 4: plot 124 where substantial stone foundations of houses have been found in every trial excavation along a 70m stretch of the field (*see* Plate 3). Although at least one of these buildings was occupied into the seventeenth century, they are probably all medieval – thirteenth-century pottery and roof furniture being widespread in and around the ruins. The buildings have cobbled frontages sloping down towards what must have been the main street of the town (Plate 4). Elsewhere in this field, buildings have shown up as parch marks in the 1970s. The farmer had tried to plough the field in the 1940s, but had given up along the roadside because of the stonework and instead planted potatoes by hand. Moles, raising black soil and medieval pottery in other parts of the field, avoid the roadside stretches, presumably because of the amount of stone beneath the surface. There are also indications of a road running to the rear of the house sites. Stuart Wilson, secretary of the Monmouth Archaeological Society, has now bought the field and has begun research excavations on the settlement.

Inside The Village

There is no known archaeological resource in any of the plots to the north of the church (plots 37 and 39–43). Although the right-angled turns of the present road and the wide ditch behind the Babington Centre are hard to explain, there have been extensive ground works across the whole area. Most parts of these sites were stripped of soil and trenched during developments: at the Babington Centre (plots 39–42); during the construction of the new school (plot 37); and during the building of several houses in plot 43. A building under the patio of the *Lion* inn (plot 74) was found to have been built over the old humus and was pre-dated by fourteenth-century pottery.

⁵ Dr Hamiton and Dr Howell challenged this and criticised the nature of the excavation and its recording. Following their own geophysical survey, they suggested that the structures were not burgages at all but were a medieval farm (Hamilton and Howell, 2000).

⁶ This was the site which Dr Howell considered had led to ‘frenetic and ill-considered press reports in the summer of 2004’ (Howell, 2005, 49).

To the east of the church at Trelech Farm, also inside the supposed ‘grid’, professional archaeological evaluation excavations and programmes of investigation prior to and during a housing development covered an area of over 12,000 square metres (1.249 hectare, plot 76: site 1. Plate 5). There were no medieval features and the only structure was identified as a cowshed (Howell, 2000). It was then that the ‘third road’ (which was on a peculiar alignment for a ‘grid’) looked more like a single-phase farm track with deep tractor wheel ruts.⁷ By now, a score of sites had proved to be devoid of any important archaeological deposits and it was apparent that something was seriously wrong with the idea that the village was the site of the thirteenth-century industrial settlement.

To the south of the church, an archaeological evaluation and mitigation excavation in the north of plot 70 revealed a twelfth/thirteenth-century forge abandoned in the fourteenth century. Otherwise, soil stripping had shown that 400 square metres of plot 64 was an open area while watching briefs on plots 66/68 and 70–72 showed they were also empty.

The latest large-scale work inside the ‘grid’ (by Monmouth Archaeology during July and August 2005) was an archaeological evaluation in relation to a planning application at Court Farm. Five evaluation trenches have been excavated in plots 65/66 and part of 69 covering around 120 square metres of the 4,000 square metre plot in and around the farm buildings. No archaeological features were discovered and the natural boulder clay and bedrock were proved to lie directly below the topsoil. Single sherds of a medieval jug and a medieval ridge tile were recovered.

Finally, plot 63 – Church Field West – is the site of the very large buildings revealed by Dr Howell in 2003 (Howell, 2005, 46). These structures are isolated and unique in the village and Dr Howell considers them to be part of a hospice or an inn.⁸

Iron working in Trelech

Paradoxically, the evidence for the centre of Trelech’s primary iron industry and its greatest slag heap comes from a site which produces definite evidence but very little iron slag. An extension to ‘The Barton’, close to Cross Hands just on the Tintern road, revealed a metre of black dusty loam which was the residue from the riddling of the slag (Clarke and Bray, 2004a). This deposit is identical to that in parts of Cinderhill street in Monmouth where the council and the duke of Beaufort removed a huge ‘cinder hill’ for recycling (Clarke and Bray, 2004b).

Although there is documentary evidence for post-medieval slag recycling at Trelech it is not known how much existed or was taken away but the evidence from ‘The Barton’ is that it was substantial. In Monmouth thousands of tons of slag had remained in great drifts from Roman and medieval times, and the seventeenth and eighteenth-century ‘mining’ of slag became a major industry. The transport problem would have been far greater at Trelech than at Monmouth where

⁷ Shown in the photograph on p. 60 of Howell, 2005.

⁸ Dr Howell suggests that the building may be a hospice and/or an inn set on double burgage plots and that this proposal is supported by the discovery of an *ampulla* and keys. However, hospices tend to be recorded and *ampullae* are found everywhere by metal detectorists and can be compared with tourist souvenirs. It seems more likely that this was a manor house complex. Whatever the buildings were, most of the field in which they were built was in ‘vacant possession’ throughout the Middle Ages, as can be seen in the contour survey carried out by Neil Phillips (Howell, 2005, 58). The remains here were noted by Bradney in 1914 and it was probably Bradney or his associates who carried out the first excavation on the building at the turn of the twentieth century – leaving a dateable bucket in their refilled excavation. Other work was carried out in this field in 1980 (Clarke *et al.*, 1981–82). On the south side of plot 63, Dr Howell excavated the robbed remains of a 14th-century long house, but much of the evidence had been destroyed by a post-medieval agricultural building (Howell, 1993).

slag was dug on the riverbanks and taken directly to the Tintern furnaces by barge. The slag at Trelech was taken to the nearby blast furnace at Woolpitch wood (Trelech furnace) which must have been built to exploit the resource in the village. One can confidently assume that vast amounts of iron slag existed in the industrial suburb between the old town in the village and the thirteenth-century industrial town along the Catbrook road as it did in Monmouth where even today deposits over four metres thick remain on the banks of the river Wye.

Evidence of iron working from inside the modern village is sparse compared with that from around and beyond the junction of the Whitebrook, Catbrook and Chepstow roads. Besides the forge excavation at Court Farm and a heavy slag fringe on the east of plot 76, there is little evidence for iron working to the east of the church. To the west of the church, Dr Howell has explored slag areas in the southern part of plot 63, while iron working remains were recorded during rescue and research excavations just outside the churchyard in the northern part of the same plot. Dr Howell's work on the large buildings in Church Field revealed slag deposits overlying parts of the structure, post-dating the main occupation. Other areas inside the modern village have produced iron slag but only occasional evidence of furnaces. It is very likely that all iron working in the village, excepting the forge at Court Farm bungalow, is of late medieval date.

As previously mentioned, the areas producing most evidence of iron working are outside the village, especially over the river Olwy – to the south-east towards the Virtuous Well and to the south-west, on the village side of the medieval fish ponds. Heavy concentrations of bloomery iron slag are recorded to a depth of 1.5m just to the west of Cross Hands and similar deposits were revealed during drainage works beneath the junction of the Chepstow and Catbrook roads where it may have been harder to recover. To the south-east of Trelech Pound, slag concentrations were found in the meadows beside the stream towards the Virtuous Well in 1999 and during excavations by Dr Howell. Similar extensive slag deposits are recorded in the field beyond the Virtuous Well – no doubt producing the waters that are prized by pilgrims to the chalybeate well. A major layer of iron slag was also found to the east of the Virtuous Well (on part of Cross Hands Farm) when the farmer was attempting an excavation for a pond at SO 5044 0508 (*Monmouth Arch. Soc. records*, 28 Aug. 1982).

The iron industry is also evident along the Catbrook road just south of Cross Hands on the edge of the thirteenth-century town. Non-ferrous metal working slag was associated with structural remains during the Thames Valley trial excavations between the lower Catbrook road and the Whitebrook road.

Discussion

Early Trelech, probably of the twelfth century, lies under the modern village and is similar to other small settlements in the area which were centred on a motte and a church. Dr Neil Phillips has shown that there was a wooden bridge on the church side of the motte and he suggests that this is evidence for a bailey in that area of the early town (Phillips, 2002, 143–5). Although the extent of a bailey has yet to be established, it would presumably have enclosed the forge at Court Farm bungalow. If other buildings in the area between the castle and the church were constructed of wood, it is possible that they have not been detected, although there has been archaeological cover on a number of building works in these plots.

Whatever the nature and extent of the settlement inside the village, it now seems irrefutable that most, if not all, of the large thirteenth-century industrial town lay to the south of the river Olwy, along the Catbrook road, as a separated settlement. Early Trelech, inside the present village,

consisted of a castle (and any buildings inside a bailey), a church and an iron forge. The large buildings in Church Field West had appeared at least by the thirteenth century – possibly with a tithe barn near Trelech Farm and of course the iron works and industrial suburb over the river.

The claims for the existence of burgage plots inside the village rely on geophysical interpretations while the archaeological evidence is that the core of the settlement was surrounded by large greens. Detailed evidence for this is presented as an Appendix. Local legend has always maintained that Trelech used to be ‘Up the Catbrook road’. As this has been established archaeologically, we might justifiably conclude that thirteenth-century Trelech is a town lost twice – once by its inhabitants and once by archaeologists!

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APPENDIX

For views on the location of medieval Trelech see Howell;¹ Soulsby;² Beresford;³ Locock;⁴ planning guidelines;⁵ Wilson;⁶ books about unplanned medieval towns;⁷ an account of the AD 1295 Welsh attack;⁸ and a report by Thames Valley excavations.⁹

The following archaeological records are based on the plots numbered in the 1880 Ordnance Survey and cover the area traditionally claimed as a medieval town grid. See Fig.2.

Inside Trelech Village

- Plot 37** During ground works, including extensive topsoil stripping, no archaeological features were revealed and only a handful of post-medieval potsherds were recovered.¹⁰
- Plots 40 and 42** Excavations and topsoil stripping during re-developments at the Babington Centre (the old Trelech school), immediately to the north of the churchyard, proved that there was no medieval or later occupation of the site.¹¹
- Plot 41** Road works outside the *Lion* inn revealed that there was thin topsoil over natural with no archaeological remains.¹² See also 73b: road works through the village.
- Plot 43 A** During soil stripping and foundation excavations for the construction of several houses opposite the *Lion* inn car park, on the north of the Greenway lane, there was no evidence of occupation and the natural subsoil lay directly under the topsoil.¹³
- Plot 43 B** A watching brief on an extension to the corner house of this group ('Chi Rho') only produced two abraded sherds of medieval pottery and no evidence of occupation.¹⁴
- Plot 63** 'Church Field.' Sir Joseph Bradney first reported remains in this field in 1914 when he noted traces of house foundations and an ancient road to the west of the church.¹⁵ Some

¹ Howell, R., 'Excavations in Trelech: 1996–1999, *The Monmouthshire Antiquary*, 16 (2000) 131–45 and Howell, R., *A History of Gwent* (Llandysul, 1992) 92–3.

² Soulsby, I., *The Towns of Medieval Wales: a study of their history, archaeology and early topography* (Phillimore, Chichester, 1983) and 'Trelech a decayed Borough of Medieval Gwent', *Mon. Antiq.*, 4, Pts 3 and 4 (1981–82) 41–4.

³ Beresford, M., *New Towns of the Middle Ages* (Gloucester, 1988) table 9.2.

⁴ Locock, M., *Archaeology in Wales*, 39 (1999) 121; and *Medieval Archaeology*, 44 (1999) 352.

⁵ *Planning Policy Guideline 16* (PPG 16) and its Welsh successors: *Welsh Office Circulars 60/96* and *61/96*.

⁶ Wilson, J.C., 'A new location for the old town', *Arch. Wales*, 38 (1998) 67–70.

⁷ For example, Rowley, T., *Villages in the Landscape* (J.M. Dent and Sons, 1978); Roberts, B.K., *Rural Settlement in Britain*, (Archon Books, Dawson, 1977); and Aston M. and Rowley, T., *Landscape Archaeology* (David and Charles, 1974).

⁸ Soulsby, (1981–82) *op. cit.*

⁹ Hull, G., *Arch. Wales*, 38 (1998) 135–7.

¹⁰ Clarke, S. and Jemmett, D., *Monmouth Archaeology Society records*.

¹¹ Clarke, S., *Mon. Arch. Soc. records*.

¹² Clarke, S. and Bray, J., *Mon. Arch. Soc. records*.

¹³ Clarke, S., Bray, J., Sockett, A.L. and Taylor, F. in *Monmouth Archaeology Report*. Also SMR and various *Arch. Wales*.

¹⁴ Clarke, S. and Bray, J., *Arch. Wales*, 40 (2000) 120; *Mon. Arch. report 05.00* (2000).

¹⁵ Bradney, Sir J., *A History of Monmouthshire ... Volume 2 Part 2 The Hundred of Trelech* (Mitchell Hughes and Clarke, London, 1913, reprinted by Academy Books, 1992).

unpublished digging took place here in Bradney's time.¹⁶ The archaeological remains in this field are restricted to one area so the plot has been divided into sub-areas in accord with the evidence.

Plot 63 North Iron working remains were recorded during rescue excavations for a drive against the churchyard wall in 1981¹⁷ after the field had been scheduled as an ancient monument. Dr Howell's 1999 survey indicated that the northern part of this field was at one time an orchard but that there were buildings flanking the road a little to the south. These structures were originally published as burgages¹⁸ but later as being on burgage plots.

Plot 63 East Excavations, with scheduled ancient monument consent, were carried out by Dr Howell during 2000/2001. His excavations revealed very substantial buildings which he interpreted as possibly a pilgrim hospice or an inn set on burgage plots.¹⁹

Plot 63 South-East Dr Howell and his team worked for several seasons on medieval structural remains associated with iron working to the rear of 'The Croft'. The structures were interpreted as being a fourteenth-century long house which had been partly robbed and partly destroyed by later constructions.²⁰

Plot 63 East-West The machine excavation of 1.5m deep drainage trenches from east to west across this part of the field in 1987 showed that there was no archaeological resource. An average of 0.3m of topsoil, with occasional pieces of iron slag, lay directly over the undisturbed subsoil and bedrock. Negative evidence also came from the effects of erosion of the stream banks.²¹

Plots 64 and 65 Over 400 square metres of this plot, lying just to the west of the castle mound, were stripped of soil by machine for the construction of a silage clamp in 1994. An examination by archaeologists after the excavation work showed that the only stonework was walling beside the field gate to the castle and was almost certainly modern. A few worn sherds of medieval pottery and roof tile were found and a sherd of Samian ware (by Dr. Howell). There were no other remains.²²

Plots 65/66/69 Monmouth Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation during July and August 2005 in connection with an application to build houses on some 4,000 square metres at Court Farm. Trial trenches covering over 120 square metres under and around the farm buildings showed that there was no archaeological resource and that the topsoil lay directly over the bedrock and boulder clay. Two sherds of medieval pottery were recovered.

Plot 66 Drainage trenches and archaeological excavations by Dr Howell and Felicity Taylor along the north side of this plot revealed no archaeological remains.²³

Plots 65 and 67 A watching brief carried out during excavations for barn foundations produced no evidence of any medieval or later occupation. The thin topsoil proved to be lying directly upon the natural boulder clay.²⁴

¹⁶ Dr Howell's excavations in Plot 63 East in 2001, revealed a backfilled trench containing old buckets which were probably of early-20th-century date.

¹⁷ Clarke, S., Owen-John, H. and Knight, J.K., 'Medieval iron working at Trelech: A small salvage excavation', *Mon. Antiq.*, 4, Pts 2 and 4 (1981–82) 45–9.

¹⁸ Howell, R., *Arch. Wales*, 41 (2001) 34–41; and *Med. Arch.*, 44 (1999) 229–33.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Howell, R., 'Excavations at Trelech, Gwent, 1991–93', *Mon. Antiq.*, 19 (1993); *Arch. Wales*, 34 (1994) 70; and *Mon. Arch. records*, 16.8.87.

²¹ Clarke, S., Poulter, A. and Appleton, S., *Mon. Arch. Soc. records*, 18 Sept. 1987.

²² Clarke, S. and Taylor, F., *Arch. Wales*, 34 (1994) 71 and *Med. Arch.*, 40 (1996) 315.

²³ *Mon. Arch. Soc. records*; Howell, R., *Arch. Wales*, 30 (1990) 68.

²⁴ Clarke, S., *Arch. Wales*, 38 (1998) 138; and *Med. Arch.*, 40 (1996) 301.

- Plot 69** Building ground works, together with hand dug post pits, showed that the thin topsoil lay directly over natural. Neil Philips and Dr Howell have explored parts of the area against the motte.²⁵
- Plot 70** This plot contained the remains of a thirteenth and fourteenth-century forge which had suffered little disturbance since its abandonment in the fourteenth century. Monmouth Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation prior to planning consent for a new bungalow and this was followed by a mitigation excavation covering the footprint of the new building to preserve the remains by record.²⁶
- Plot 71** No medieval deposits were found during a programme of archaeological investigation under planning legislation during ground works for an extension to Trelech village store where the natural horizon was found directly below the old topsoil.²⁷
- Plot 72** Excavations for an extension and re-development to the rear and frontage of the *Crown* inn during April 1987 produced no evidence of the medieval town. The area to the rear of the inn was stripped to some 0.6m into the subsoil for the extension and there were extensive foundation trenches and internal alterations. A post-medieval well discovered contained a twentieth-century fill, but nothing of medieval date.²⁸
- Plot 73A** Felicity Taylor's excavations and rescue work in the churchyard and her excavations inside the church revealed many burials and some structural foundations but no sign of medieval burgages.²⁹
- Plot 73B to 41** Service trenching during June and July 2000, took place along the roadside through the village from outside the *Village Green* restaurant to the Monmouth road and then down the road bounding the northern end of plot 63. A narrow strip of heavy stonework was recorded in the road outside the *Village Green* but otherwise the natural subsoil/bedrock lay just below the road metalling from there to the north gate of the church. At the north gate, slightly thicker road foundations with a layer of iron slag was encountered. The rest of the trenching proved that natural lay just below the road surface and, except for the iron slag and possibly the stonework by the *Village Green*, there were no medieval remains and no evidence of earlier roads or of the medieval town.³⁰
- Plot 74 North A** An archaeological evaluation by Monmouth Archaeology in the car park of the *Lion* inn, followed by an archaeological watching brief, both under planning legislation, showed that there was no archaeological resource and that the humus was spread thinly over the natural subsoil with only a few sherds of medieval pottery being recovered.³¹
- Plot 74 South C** Monmouth archaeologists examined excavations for drainage around Trelech old vicarage, immediately to the south of the *Lion* inn. There was no evidence of medieval occupation and the undisturbed natural lay directly below the thin topsoil.³²
- Plot 74C** An archaeological evaluation, under planning legislation, carried out on the patio to the south of the *Lion* inn produced sealed evidence of the open nature of this part of Trelech in

²⁵ *Ibid.*; *Mon. Arch. Soc. records 2000 and 2002*; and Howell, R. and Phillips, N., *Mon. Antiq.*, 19 (2003) 148–50.

²⁶ *Mon. Arch. Evaluation report*; *Arch. Wales*, 38 (1998) 138; and *Med. Arch.*, 43 (1998) 301 (mitigation excavation).

²⁷ *Mon. Arch. report 24* (1999); Clarke, S., Bray, J., Taylor, F., *Arch. Wales*, 39 (1999) 122.

²⁸ Clarke, S. and A. and Poulter, S., *Mon. Arch. Soc. records*.

²⁹ *Arch. Wales*, 35 (1995) 68; *Arch. Wales*, 36 (1996) 94; and *Med. Arch.*, 41 (1997) 325.

³⁰ Clarke, S. and Bray, J., *Mon. Arch. Soc. records*; and *Arch. Wales*, 40 (2000) 121.

³¹ *Mon. Arch. Evaluation report MA.21.95*; *Mon. Arch. report* (1998); and Clarke, S. and Wilson, J., *Arch. Wales*, 35 (1995).

³² *Mon. Arch. Soc. records* (June/July 2000).

the thirteenth century. A late medieval building, pre-dated by fourteenth-century pottery, was constructed directly over the old topsoil.³³

Plot 75

On the eastern boundary of the village, the construction of a new road (de Clare Way) for Trelech Farm housing development produced no evidence of structural remains and only a few abraded sherds of medieval pottery. The results of a geophysical survey carried out in this field in 2002 were interpreted as evidence for perhaps forty-four burgages and other remains. Subsequent excavations in 2004 and 2005 revealed a metalled surface and drainage systems but the natural horizon otherwise seemed to be undisturbed.³⁴

Plot 76

The most extensive evidence from a single area that the documented medieval town was not within the modern village boundaries came from the archaeological evaluation excavations and subsequent programme of archaeological investigation on the housing development at Trelech Farm.³⁵ This development exposed the natural boulder clay over 12,000 square metres of the supposed grid plan. The only structure found was one with a pitched stone floor excavated by Dr Howell and his team and identified as being a post-medieval agricultural building.³⁶ Although there was evidence of iron smelting close to the eastern boundary, there was no other archaeological resource except for a single-phased and deeply rutted farm track which ran at an angle across the field. This feature has been identified by Dr. Howell as a medieval road.³⁷ See Plate 5.

Plot 76A

Construction work and deep excavations close to the roadside barn on the west side of this plot during the summer of 2000, confirmed once again that there was no medieval settlement in this part of the modern village. The thin topsoil lay directly over natural.³⁸

Plot 76B

Barn no.3. During re-development excavations there was evidence that the foundations of this building were the first structures on the site and may be medieval. That the footings here were of a thirteenth-century building is a possibility.³⁹

Plot 76C

Re-development excavations covered by professional watching briefs on barns nos.1 and 2, included the removal of floors into the bedrock. The excavations confirmed that these structures were of post-medieval date and that they had been built on a virgin site with their floors partly covering the old topsoil.⁴⁰

Plot 78

Ground works and soil stripping during the construction of an agricultural building at Trelech Farm produced no evidence of the medieval town.⁴¹

³³ Clarke, S. and Bray, J., *Mon. Arch. Evaluation report 19, MA.19.00* (August 2000); and *Arch. Wales*, 40 (2000) 120–1.

³⁴ New estate road: *Mon. Arch. Soc. records* during watching brief on the development of plot 76. A geophysical survey was conducted by Dr M. Hamilton: *Arch. Wales*, 42 (2002). The land had been mostly pasture like that surrounding it (plots 40; 42; 43a; 43b; 74 North; 74 South; 75; and all areas of 76).

³⁵ Clarke, S., Bray, J., Milford, B. and Wilson, J., *Mon. Arch. Evaluation report 18* (July 1999); *Mon. Arch. Progress of Arch. Investigation report 35* (Dec. 1999); Clarke, S. and Bray, J., *Arch. Wales*, 39 (1999) 99; and Clarke, S., *Med. Arch.*, 43 (1999) 301.

³⁶ Howell, R., *Arch. Wales*, 36 (1996); 37 (1997); 38 (1998).

³⁷ *Ibid.* and *Arch. Wales*, 44 (2004) 172.

³⁸ *Mon. Arch. Soc. records*.

³⁹ Clarke, S. and Bray, J., *Arch. Wales*, 41 (2001) 149; *Med. Arch.*, 46 (2002) 261; and *Mon. Arch. report 40.01* (Nov. 2001).

⁴⁰ Clarke, S. and Bray, J., *Arch. Wales*, 42 (2002); and *Mon. Arch. report 05.02*.

⁴¹ *Mon. Arch. Soc. records* (2001).

Outside the Village

As with the archaeological record inside the village catalogued above, the following archaeological records are again based on the plot numbers used on the 1880 Ordnance Survey (Fig.2).

John Ogilby's map of 'The Road from Bristol ... to West Chester [Chester]' – the section from Aust Ferry to Ludlow – shows houses along the west side of the Catbrook road, which may be the post-medieval remnants of the medieval town.⁴²

- Plot 66A North** Dr Howell's excavations recovered some medieval pottery but no structures.⁴³
- Plot 66B East** Drainage and other trenches above the marsh produced no archaeology and the topsoil proved to lie directly over natural.⁴⁴
- Plot 66C** The Fish Ponds. A drainage and flood alleviation scheme carried out by Monmouthshire County Council involved excavations for a drain and a wide ditch. Well-preserved organic material, including medieval leather shoes, was recovered during the rescue work by a combined team of archaeologists from Monmouth Archaeology, Monmouth Archaeological Society and the University of Wales Newport. The material recovered included a thirteenth-century pottery assemblage and a timber from a walkway tree-ring dated by Nigel Nayling to AD 1226/27.⁴⁵
- Plot 80** At 'Spring Villa' deposits similar to those discovered at Trelech surgery (plot 86: SO 502 053) were found. An excavation for a septic tank, together with the digging of associated drainage trenches, was carried out without archaeological cover but unstratified bones, leather, wood, seeds and plant remains were recovered from the large spoil heap in the garden. Pottery found included most of a late medieval jug which had been shattered during the digging.⁴⁶
- Plot 81** The Pound and Cross Hands Farm. Iron slag was recorded here in 1.5m thick layers and was accompanied by medieval pottery.⁴⁷
- Plot 81B** To the north of the Harold Stones iron slag was found in mole tumps and during excavations for a silage clamp. A geophysical survey to the west of the stones in 2002 by University of Wales Newport revealed a circular ditch and other features.⁴⁸
- Plot 83** Gardens. Medieval pottery and iron slag was recovered from the very black topsoil.⁴⁹
- Plot 84** Gardens. Medieval pottery and iron slag was recovered from the very black topsoil.⁵⁰
- Plot 85** Excavations by Dr Howell revealed a post-medieval building aligned with the house on the opposite side of the road and with the Catbrook road.⁵¹
- Plot 86** The first evidence of the remarkable potential for preservation of archaeology outside the centre of Trelech was found during excavations for the foundations of an extension at Trelech surgery, beside the Ebenezer chapel. Here the anaerobic conditions of waterlogged levels had preserved medieval to post-medieval remains. Leather footwear, part of a wooden bowl as well as plants, seeds, bones and other organic remains were found in an

⁴² Cleeve, Roger, *Ogilby's Road Maps of England and Wales from Ogilby's 'Britannia', 1675* (Osprey Publications Ltd., 1971) plate 56. See also Howell, R., 'The roads of Trelech: investigation of the development of the medieval town', *Mon. Antiq.*, 21 (2005) 55.

⁴³ Howell, R., *Arch. Wales*, 34 (1994).

⁴⁴ *Monmouth Arch. Soc. records*.

⁴⁵ Clarke, S. and Bray, J., *Mon. Arch. report 13.02* (April 2002); and *Arch. Wales*, 42 (2002).

⁴⁶ Clarke, S. and Taylor, F., *Arch. Wales*, 37 (1997).

⁴⁷ *Monmouth Arch. Soc. records*.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*; and Hamilton, M., 'Trelech, Harold's Stones', *Arch. Wales*, 42 (2002) 105–6.

⁴⁹ *Monmouth Arch. Soc. records*.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Howell, R., *Arch. Wales*, 39 (1999) 121.

extremely well preserved condition. These deposits were encountered at 1m and extended to 2m below ground level. There was a heavy bloomery iron slag layer lying upon the subsoil. The proposed foundations for the extension were redesigned and the remains are sealed beneath a concrete raft.⁵²

Plot 86 (North) The results of geophysical survey and excavations by University of Wales Newport were interpreted as burgage plots along the northern part of this field but there were no stone structural remains.⁵³

Plot 88 West of the Virtuous Well. Wooden structure reported by Dr Howell.⁵⁴

Plot 109 Waun Cottage. Iron slag concentrations with medieval and later pottery recorded in the garden soil.⁵⁵

Plot 118 Mr Darlow's plot, Catbrook road (SO 500 051). A medieval house and well. A metre of medieval archaeological remains was destroyed by the owners without archaeological cover but a sequence was recorded in the exposed sections on the site boundaries. A good assemblage of medieval material was recovered during a subsequent programme of archaeological investigation required by the local authority. The remains included stone structures and a medieval well which had been filled during the middle of the fourteenth century when the site is thought to have been abandoned.⁵⁶ See Plate 1.

Plot 120 The ground indications in this field are very similar to those over the road (plot 124) and mole hills produce black soil, bloomery iron slag and abraded medieval pottery.⁵⁷

Plot 121 Mrs Badham's lower field. Medieval pottery, iron slag and some Roman pottery has been recovered from mole tumps by Jonathan Badham. There is a well defined roadside ridge.⁵⁸

Plot 122 Mrs Badham's home and paddock. Medieval pottery and iron slag is found in the garden with some stone at the surface.⁵⁹

Plot 124 This field has been purchased by Mr Stuart Wilson and contains the stone foundations of medieval houses. There are ground surface indications with stone, medieval pottery and iron slag in mole tumps over a wide area and parch marks and ground undulations have always indicated that this is part of the thirteenth-century town. Preliminary exploration in an area over 70m long beside the roadside hedge has revealed substantial buildings in every excavation.⁶⁰ See Plates 3 and 4.

Plot 125 This is the field where an archaeological evaluation was carried out by Thames Valley Archaeological Unit. Medieval buildings were found along the edge of the Catbrook road and non-ferrous metal working debris and structures were found further into the field. The extensive foundations of stone buildings beside the Catbrook road were claimed by the excavator to be burgages of the medieval town.⁶¹ This has been challenged by Dr Hamilton and Dr Howell who suggested that the remains are those of a farm.⁶² The field is now scheduled.

⁵² Clarke, S. and Wilson, J., *Arch. Wales*, 35 (1995); Taylor, F. and Clarke, S., *Med. Arch.*, 42 (1997) 187; and *Mon. Arch. watching brief report* (1995).

⁵³ Howell, R., 'Research excavation in the decayed medieval town of Trelech, 2002', *Mon. Antiq.*, 19 (2003) 148–50.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Monmouth Arch. Soc. records*.

⁵⁶ Bray, J., Clarke, S. and Taylor, F., *Monmouth Arch. Soc. report 27, MA 27.99*; and *Arch. Wales*, 39 (1999) 121.

⁵⁷ *Monmouth Arch. Soc. records* (1977/2003).

⁵⁸ *Monmouth Arch. Soc. records* (1987/2003).

⁵⁹ *Monmouth Arch. Soc. records* (2000/2003).

⁶⁰ *Monmouth Arch. Soc. records* (1977/2003).

⁶¹ Hull, G., *Arch. Wales*, 38 (1998) 135–7.

⁶² Howell, R., *Arch. Wales*, 40 (2000) 119.

Plot 150 North An archaeological excavation in the northern part of this field was conducted by Stuart Wilson in 2003/5 and medieval buildings of several phases were discovered including one which had been destroyed by fire in the late thirteenth/early fourteenth century.⁶³ Preliminary geophysics carried out elsewhere in the field are promising.⁶⁴ See Plate 3.

Plot 150 South and Central Medieval pottery, iron slag and ground indications.⁶⁵

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mr Mike Anthony; Mrs Badham and Jonathan Badham; Mr John Bray; Mr Richard Brewer; Mrs Annette Burton; Councillor Sue Chivers; Mr Elwyn Clarke; Mrs H. Clarke; Mr Reg Clarke; Mr Rhodri Clarke; Dr Paul Courtney; Miss Beckie Doyle; Mr and Mrs Harry Evans and family; Mr Dave Hancocks; Mrs Lyn Harper; Mr Colin Harris; Dr R. Howell; Mr Dave Jemmett; Mrs Gwenllian Jones; Mr K.E. Kissack; Mr Jeremy Knight; Mr and Mrs Ian McFarlane; Mr Geoff Mein; Mr Brian Milford; Dr Neil Phillips; Mr and Mrs Alan Poulter; Mr and Mrs G. Pugh; Mr and Mrs Eddy Rogers; Mr Ron Shoesmith; Police Sergeant John Smith and Dr Jerry Davies of the Gwent Detector Club; Mr A.L. Sockett; Miss Ellie Taylor; Mrs Felicity Taylor; Mr Bob Trett; Dr Alan Vince; Mr Alf Webb; Dr Peter Webster; Mr and Mrs A. Wilson; Mrs Julia Wilson; Mr Stuart Wilson and his Catbrook road team of diggers; and Mr and Mrs T. Zsigo. Thanks also to the staff of the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth; the Gwent Record Office, Cwmbran; the National Museum of Wales; Monmouth Museum; and Mr Charles Hill and Mr Neil Maylan and the staff of the curatorial section of the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust.

⁶³ Wilson, S., *Arch. Wales*, 42 (2002) 139–40.

⁶⁴ Wilson, S., pers. comm.

⁶⁵ *Monmouth Arch. Soc. records* (1997/2003).

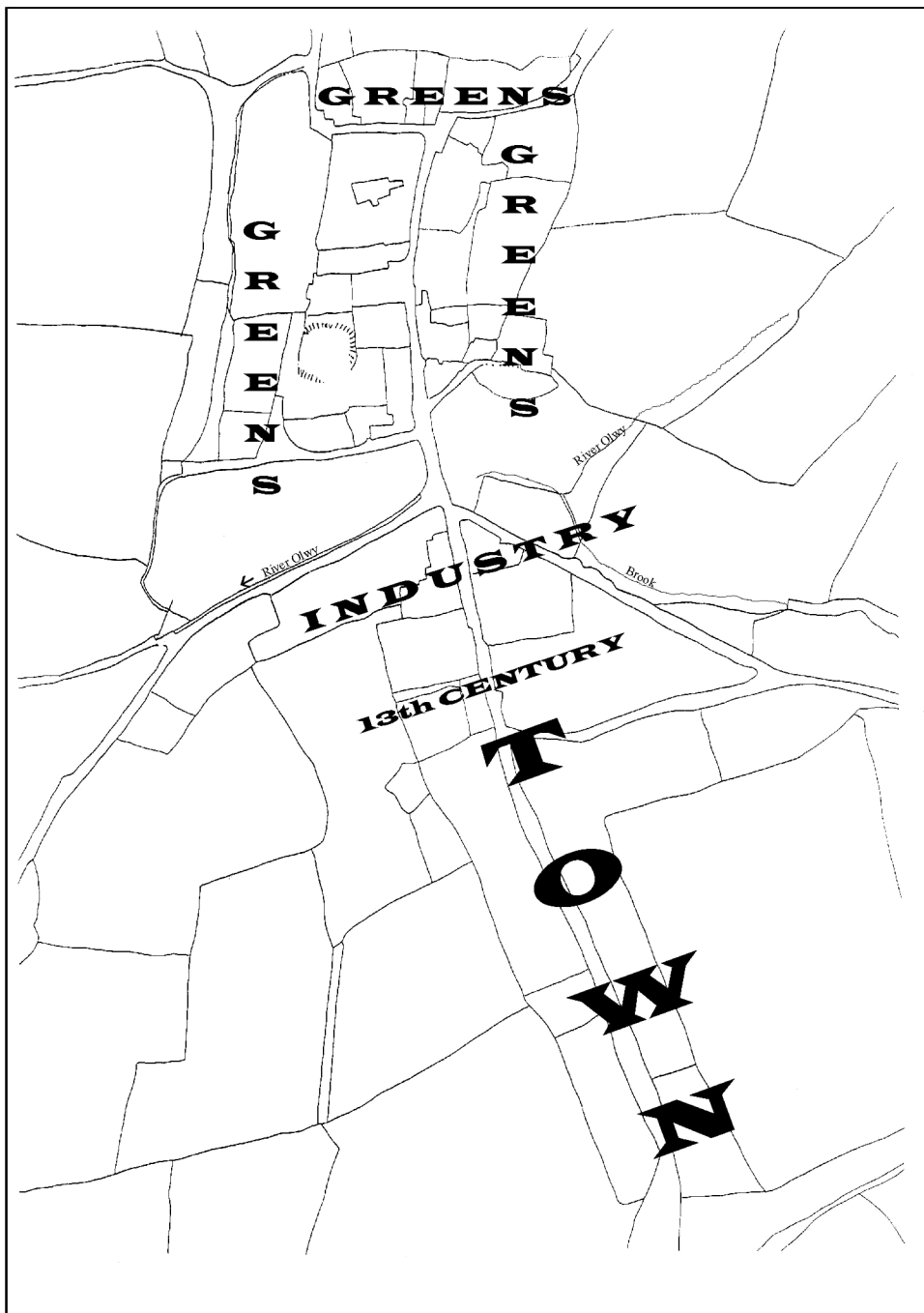


Fig.1: 13th-century Trelech – a plan presenting the evidence produced by Monmouth Archaeological Society/Monmouth Archaeology.

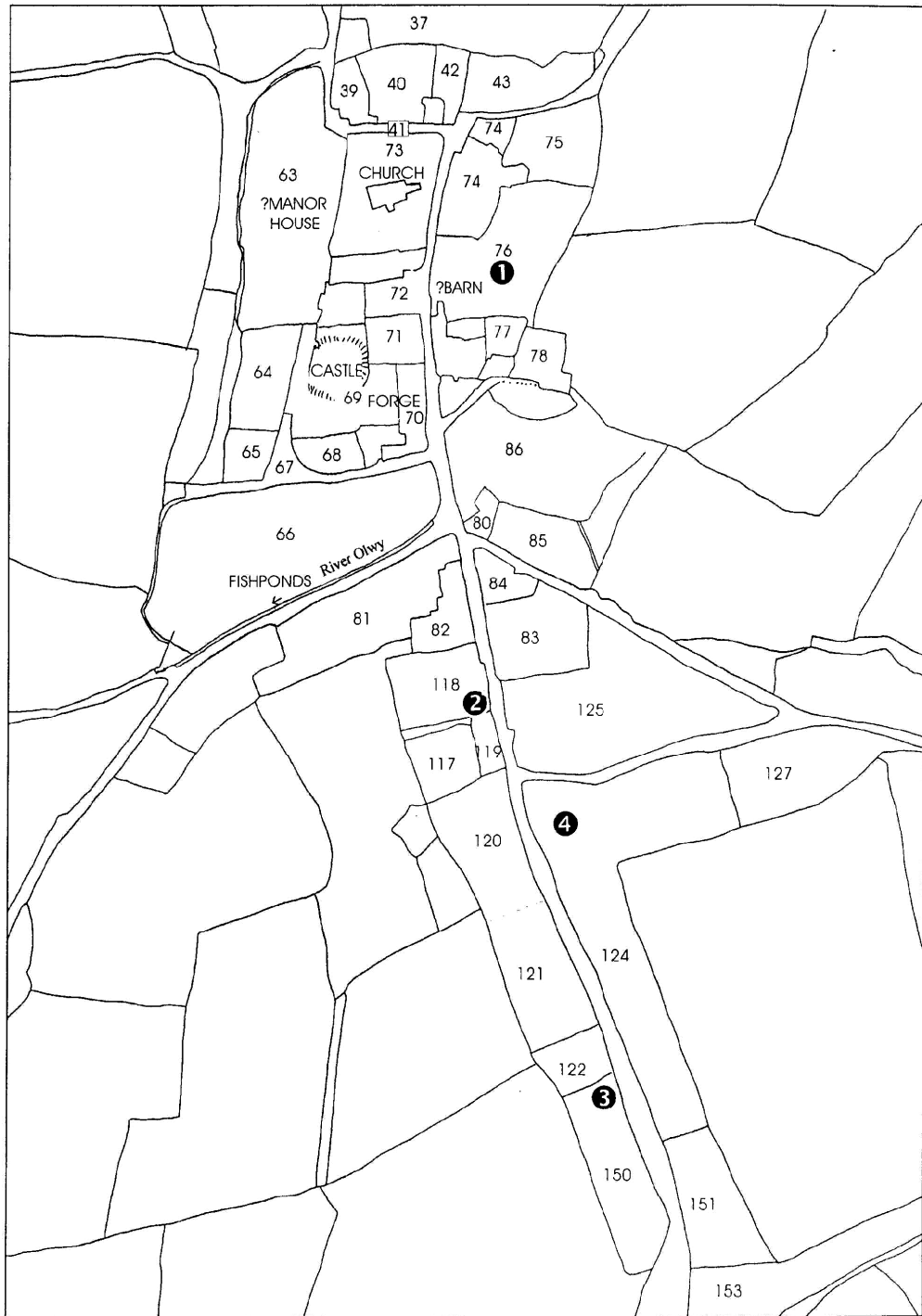


Fig.2: Plan of Trelech showing plot numbers as given on the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map, 1880.



Plate 1: Site 2, plot 118.
Rescue work on the site of a 13th/14th-century house,
destroyed before the planning authority intervened, looking towards the Catbrook road.
The well containing 14th-century remains was left intact.
Copyright: Monmouth Archaeology.



Plate 2: Site 3, plot 150.
Excavations on two medieval houses, a quarter of a mile outside the village (church in distance). One of the
buildings was destroyed by fire around the turn of the 13th century.
Copyright: Monmouth Archaeological Society.



Plate 3: Site 4, plot 124.

Excavations along the Catbrook road revealed narrow structures (? with alleyways) at right angles to the road. Trial trenches along a sample 70m of the field revealed similar stone buildings in every excavation. Looking towards the village.

Copyright: Monmouth Archaeological Society.



Plate 4: Site 4, plot 124.

The frontages of the buildings have cobbled surfaces sloping down to the main street of the 13th-century industrial town. Looking north-east.

Copyright: Monmouth Archaeological Society.



Plate 5: Site 1, plot 76.

Showing a part of 12,000 square metres of topsoil stripped to natural – inside the village.
Weeds have grown around a mound of spoil which is being removed. Looking east.

Copyright: Monmouth Archaeology.

CAERWENT ROMAN TOWN: CONSERVATION, EXCAVATION AND INTERPRETATION

By Sian E Rees and Michael Anthony

The survival of the archaeology of Caerwent Roman town, both below and above ground, is an extraordinary piece of good fortune. Monmouthshire possesses the most accessible and intact Roman town in Britain, a site of international significance, which has the capacity to attract and inform the student and the general public alike. The importance of the ruins, of course, has been appreciated for centuries, and a remarkable programme of early excavations carried out at Caerwent from the end of the nineteenth century revealed the extent and condition of the remains of Roman public buildings, private houses and workshops. Archaeological work from 1899 to 1913, funded for the most part by Lord Tredegar, was undertaken on most of the available (i.e. undeveloped) land in the village, but the excavations were invariably backfilled. This left the Roman footings and surfaces safe from the depredation of weather and from interference but incapable of being appreciated by interested visitors. In the final published report (Hudd, 1913, 439), the lack of publicly accessible remains after all the years of excavation was lamented thus:

The considerable expense of filling in the excavations of 1910 and 1911 was generously undertaken by Lord Tredegar, who much regretted that his wish to keep some of the buildings open permanently could not be arranged. The little temple ... would have been quite worth preserving ... On the completion of the filling-in the field was restored to the owner.

The death of the benefactor and the fact that most of the available open farm land within the walls had already been trenched brought the archaeological campaign to a close.

The excavations undoubtedly raised awareness of the importance of the Roman town and it became an accepted fact that its preservation was a matter of more than local concern. The Roman walls survived as a complete circuit of upstanding masonry – except for breaks on the northern side of the West and East Gates and in the north and south walls to accommodate roads – and were gradually taken into the guardianship of the state from 1924. This process and the conservation of the Roman stonework by specialist masons were completed in 1987 so that, over a sixty-year period, the defensive boundary of the town became more evident and accessible. Similarly, undeveloped areas within the town walls were acquired by public bodies so that much of the interior now lies within public ownership, shared between the National Assembly for Wales and Monmouthshire County Council. Virtually the entire town is statutorily protected as a scheduled ancient monument of national importance, inevitably resulting in restrictions on development. The constraints that this imposes on the small modern village have to be recognised, and recent expansion of the settlement has been outside the walls to the east. Despite the restrictions on new buildings, there are, of course, concomitant benefits to those already living within the Roman town – the green fields affording their attractive outlook remain as protected open spaces. It is incumbent upon Cadw and its partners, however, to accept that, as the state funds the protection of the ruins, there should be public benefit and therefore, where possible, publicly financed excavations should give tangible, accessible as well as intellectual benefit.

It was only in the later 1940s, with the excavations of the shops at Pound Lane on land by then owned by the state, that the conservation and display of the results of excavation within the defences became a viable option. In the 1980s, further excavation and conservation were undertaken resulting in the temple and another courtyard house at Pound Lane being added to those areas of the town with accessible ruins.

The Forum-Basilica

Excavation of the *forum-basilica* adjacent to the temple site in the centre of the town began in 1987 and was completed in 1995. Making such ruins intelligible to the visitor requires interpretation, especially when, as at the *forum*, only parts of the vast open market place and impressive *basilica* building have been excavated. Conservation here was made more difficult by the friable condition of the paving on the *forum*, the footings of the *basilica* walls and the steps, but, nonetheless, after some debate, it was decided that the public presentation of the ruins was practical and desirable.

The conservation exercise commenced in 1995 and was only completed in 2004 (Plate 1). Because of the fragility of the Roman wall footings within the *basilica* and the paving in the *forum*, it was clearly essential that in the majority of instances these should be protected with more robust modern materials that could withstand weathering. As a general rule, original surfaces and low footings were covered with a separating geotextile membrane, and then overlain by new materials faithfully reflecting the Roman work below. The fractured Roman *forum* paving was covered with new slabs of Old Red Sandstone from Longtown, Herefordshire, of similar colour and texture, dressed to the same dimensions and laid on the same pattern as the original. The surviving upper surface of the *basilica* aisle walls comprised Roman tile and brick within a soft friable mortar. Accordingly, these were covered with three courses of new tile hand fabricated by Coleford Brick and Tile Company specially to match the dimensions and texture of the originals below. The wall cores, originally of mortar with chunks of Roman tile as tempering, were replicated with similar new mortar using waste pieces of original Roman tile salvaged from the excavation. The relatively robust masonry walls of the rooms surrounding the *basilica* hall (the *curia*, for example, on the north and shops to the south) stood sufficiently high to allow their conservation and repointing without further covering. Internal floors of the buildings were covered with fine gravel over a geotextile.

The steps that led from the *forum* to the *basilica* and the drain that ran around the *forum* were constructed of massive blocks of relatively soft Sudbrook stone. This created a real conservation challenge as, exposed to the weather, their life expectancy would have been short indeed. The original stones were of such large dimensions as to make it impossible to cover them with new material without drastically raising the levels of the exposed surfaces. The huge surviving blocks were, therefore, treated with brethane, a penetrating silane, which (rather like PEG treatment of waterlogged timber) consolidates stone to a weather resisting, hard body. This is a painstaking and slow treatment requiring gradual coating until penetration is complete, but in its consolidated condition the stone should withstand exposure to weather and the feet of visitors, allowing the steps at least to function again as they were originally intended. Some new stone slabs were also added to protect the edges of the originals and to provide a clearer picture of the structure (Plate 1).

West Gate Farm

The village of Caerwent has suffered generally from a lack of car parking space, exacerbated by the growing attraction of the Roman ruins to visitors and coach parties of schoolchildren. West Gate Farm was purchased by the state in 1995 for the provision of car parking and for interpretation – a first port of call for the visitor for initial guidance and orientation. The car park was formed from part of the farmyard and inner enclosures, an area that had not hitherto been available for any archaeological examination. After initial test excavations revealed that surviving Roman archaeology

lay close to the surface in places, especially on the west near the Roman gate, the levels of the car park were raised and the layout reorganised to avoid danger of impacting on archaeological deposits. Consequently the opportunity for revealing any surviving archaeology within the previously unexcavated area was restricted. Nonetheless, Roman walling was found and recorded during the initial test trenching, showing, unsurprisingly, that Roman building had extended to, and still survived by, the West Gate on the north side of the main street.

The West Gate Farm buildings, evidently built in the eighteenth century as a farmhouse and barn, formed an attractive complex on the western approach to the village, ideal for interpretation and educational purposes. After discussion with Monmouthshire County Council about the relative merits of conservation of the buildings or demolition to allow excavation and conservation of Roman features beneath, the retention of the two stone vernacular buildings was agreed. The old single storey farmhouse ran north/south, its original purpose evinced by remains of fireplaces and stairwells. Its conversion to a milking parlour had been made possible after the construction of the later farmhouse to the west, now demolished, and the building was evidently suitable for adaptation for educational use on an occasional basis as required by schools. The barn, open fronted with five stone piers, stood at right angles to the old house and was ideally placed to serve as an initial orientation and interpretative point for visitors.

The farmyard was tested archaeologically and was found to have been significantly disturbed, but occasional pockets of Roman strata or masonry did survive at a high level. As it was therefore impossible to extrapolate from test trenches to inform levels of archaeology even immediately adjacent, it was decided to employ the precautionary principle, raising levels wherever possible and undertaking test excavations before any intrusive work. Much of the masonry of the barn was so poor that it had to be rebuilt from footings and Cambrian Archaeological Projects was contracted initially to carry out a series of exploratory test pits to test the depth of foundations prior to their conservation. The preliminary results confirmed the preservation of Roman masonry at a high level within the barn, protected, ironically enough, by the building and its cobbled floor above. It became clear at an early stage that the development would have to proceed hand in hand with archaeological excavation.

Excavations at West Gate Farm

Within the barn, three sections of Roman walling were found to run north/south under the north wall and the cobbled floor and the disturbed remains of an oven or hearth were found adjacent to and under the easternmost pillar on the south side (Fig.1a: walls 1,4 and 5). The easternmost wall, exposed initially by a small trench, was well preserved, 65cm wide, surviving to four courses in height (Fig.1a: 1). Two other walls butted it at right angles, one running east, the second west (Fig.1a: 2 and 3). The results justified the extension of the excavation and the selective removal of the cobbles on the west to expose the entire length of the Roman walling within the building (Plate 2). The well preserved Roman walls, bonded with a characteristic hard pink lime mortar, lay immediately below the post-medieval cobbled floor (Fig.1a: 1,2,3,4, 5,12 and 13).

Examination of the masonry of the west wall of the old farmhouse/milking parlour (henceforward milking parlour) had suggested that there was a distinct change in style and shape in the lower courses, where the masonry blocks were larger and somewhat thicker than the stonework above. The excavations now showed that this more substantial masonry butted onto the Roman wall running east (Fig.1a: 2) and was its exact match in style of construction and mortar. It appeared, therefore, that at least this western wall was built on Roman wall footings, using the earlier masonry as a solid foundation (Fig.1a: 6). This is not unusual in Caerwent; Brewer, working on the site of the

basilica in the 1980s, had already noted that a post-medieval barn stood on the Roman footings, again taking advantage of the solid foundation they offered (Brewer, 1997, 49). Furthermore, a section of the west wall of the car park of the *Coach and Horses* public house near the East Gate is known to be built directly on Roman walling (now conserved and accessible with permission).

Further excavations were undertaken to ascertain the full extent of surviving Roman masonry on the site. Excavation in the courtyard between the two farm buildings revealed a further east/west wall, 90cm wide and more substantial than those previously encountered; it was well preserved at its eastern end near the milking parlour (Fig. 1a: 7), but less well defined further west, due to later disturbance within the courtyard when it was a working farm. The original frontage to the Roman property was also revealed. Gerald Dunning's examination in 1946–7 of the Roman shops and houses at Pound Lane, some 40m to the east of West Gate Farm, had shown that the original Roman road through Caerwent was wider than at present and that the Roman frontage was set back from the current road edge by just over 5m. Test pits in this area uncovered the boundary wall in the location predicted by the Pound Lane site (Fig. 1a: 8). This wall was also well preserved at its eastern end, but less so further west. A brick-lined cesspit, presumably Victorian in date, dug 10m from the milking parlour, had completely removed any traces of masonry. Near to the milking parlour, however, excavations to the south of, and immediately adjacent to, this wall revealed the survival of the flagstones making up the Roman gutter as well as the northern edge of the cobbled, cambered road surface.

The modern concrete floor within the milking parlour was removed under archaeological supervision, thus permitting further excavation. It was predicted that the Roman frontage (Fig. 1a: 8) should run through the building at its southern end. Test pits in this area did, indeed, find a demolition layer of rubble and a foundation trench, though the wall itself had been destroyed probably during the construction of the farm building. Further north, however, a well defined east/west running Roman wall was unearthed (Fig. 1a: 9), unusual in that two slots, 30cm wide and 2.5m apart had been cut through it, one straight, the other at an angle. The slots were stone lined at the base with a slight incline to the south. The function of these slots, which were clearly features within the primary construction of the wall, is uncertain but they may have provided some form of internal drainage, as noted in the adjacent courtyard house (VII.27.N) at Pound Lane (Brewer, 1997, 38). Further excavation revealed an internal wall between walls 8 and 9 (Fig. 1a: 10) against the east wall of the barn. This was clearly Roman but belonged to a later phase, presumably constructed as an internal sub-dividing wall.

The removal of the modern concrete floor in the northern half of the milking parlour revealed a clay surface, below which were the remnants of a post medieval cobbled floor. This surface, well preserved in the north-eastern part of the building but badly eroded elsewhere, was evidently contemporary with the construction of the barn and its use as a domestic building, as it contained the remains of a hearth. After recording, the surface was lifted to reveal traces of burnt clay. A 5m x 3m excavation within this clay surface uncovered a D-shaped masonry feature with walls approximately 30cm thick and surviving to one course in height. The straight wall was 2.5m long and the structure overall measured 2m from front to back (Fig. 1a: 11). The interior was raised slightly with a surface of burnt clay covered in a fine, black soot. At the edges the clay was baked hard and at various points there were traces of charcoal. The structure probably served as a large domestic oven (Fig. 2).

The disturbed remains of what was probably a Roman oven had already been revealed between walls 2 and 7 in the courtyard (Fig. 1a: 16). Most Roman domestic ovens are small, domed structures, 0.5m or less in diameter and frequently floored with tile or flagstones and this oven was probably of this type. In some cases, however, ovens may have a simple burnt clay surface as a floor. The D-shaped structure conforms to this type and, while it is significantly larger than most, it

is by no means unique. A similar example at Usk was located in what was probably an officer's house in the fortress and, while it is smaller than the oven unearthed here, it is quite large at just over 1.5m in diameter and also has a clay floor (Manning, 1989, 146). Intriguingly, the angled slot cut in wall 9 appears to have been aligned so as to avoid the rear of the structure, thus strengthening the case for its interpretation as a drainage or sluice hole designed to work in conjunction with the oven.

Test pits demonstrated that the east wall of the milking parlour was not, with the exception of wall 10, built on Roman foundations, suggesting that the original Roman building ran further to the east. This was proved when excavations revealed the continuation of walls 2, 7 and 9 outside the barn near its eastern wall.

A trench, 8m from the north wall of the open barn, excavated to trace the northern extent of the Roman building, revealed the continuation of walls 1, 4 and 5 showing that the building extended at least 25m from the road. To the west of the open barn, walls 12 and 13 were found to run westward to butt a wall running north/south (Fig.1a: 14). Due to their location near the main access road to the site, little further work could be undertaken, although, importantly, it was noted that these walls were aligned with wall 5 but not with the wall plans further east. It would therefore appear that walls 5, 12, 13 and 14 form part of an adjacent but separate house, most of which now either lies under the car park or was destroyed during Victorian groundworks and the construction of the later farmhouse.

Excavations in advance of repairs to the farmyard drainage runs revealed an unexpected section of Roman masonry running north – south, parallel to, and about 1m from, the west wall of the milking parlour (Fig.1a: 15). The wall itself was, like the others, around 65cm wide and was well preserved to a depth of 50cm where its foundation trench was noted. The wall ran south from wall 7 for a little under 6m where it began to show signs of damage and erosion. A trail of demolition rubble was traced to within 2m of the Roman boundary wall 8 where later water pipes, inserted during conversion to the milking parlour, had completely removed all traces of it. Subsequent examination revealed that, while the wall was probably Roman, it belonged to a later phase of activity at the site. As previously noted with wall 10 above, this is probably best interpreted as a dividing wall, though, since little associated dating material was recovered, this must remain uncertain.

The Roman building clearly extended well beyond West Gate Farm. In 1893, during the construction of a row of cottages, an area immediately to the west of Pound Lane was examined and a partial ground plan of a house drawn. This is noted on the first excavation plan (Martin *et al.*, 1901, Fig.1) as 'excavated by Mr Drake', an architect from Bristol and a member of the subsequent excavation team. The plan of this building (shown best in Ashby *et al.*, 1911, Plate LXIV), indicates that it has a good correlation with that of the building at West Gate Farm. When the plans are re-drawn to the same scale and laid over the grid of the town (Fig.1b), it can be seen that walls 2, 7, 9 and 8 from West Gate Farm apparently continue to join their counterparts under 'New Cottages' to the east, and to form part of a single building .

The resultant large building would appear to have consisted of a west range of rooms (now under the open barn) and a south range running along the main street with a corridor to the north and south. The extent of the west range and, indeed, whether or not the building had a northern range, is as yet unknown. However aerial photographs of 'New Cottages' do seem to indicate a wall line running east to west through all the gardens at the rear of the houses and this may well represent the northern extent of the building. If this is the case, it may have served as a courtyard house similar to those seen in Pound Lane (I.29.N and VII.27.N).

More extensive excavation is unfortunately unlikely, given the existence of the standing buildings on the site. Consequently the function and use of rooms or indeed of the Roman building itself must remain uncertain. However a large stone 62 – 66cm in diameter and 50cm deep with a flat polished surface, has been unearthed in the garden of No.1 ‘New Cottages’ by its owner, Mr John Barnard. The upper, polished surface has a smooth depression 33cm in diameter and 20cm deep worn into the centre of it and it may have been some form of quern or grindstone. Its location, set into the ground so that its upper surface would appear to have been flush with the assumed Roman levels, may place it somewhere within the northern corridor of the building. This object, within the same building as the large oven, probably too large for domestic use, might suggest that it was used as a bakery.

The oven at West Gate Farm is similar in size and shape to a structure excavated in house VII.26N, Pound Lane but there interpreted as a forge; initially, therefore, the West Gate Farm structure, too, was interpreted as a forge. However, discussions with Dr Tim Young and Mr Ken Brackley, a working blacksmith, during the excavations suggested that the D-shaped structure was too big to be a forge and accordingly the alternative interpretation of an oven, possibly a bread oven, is here adopted. The interpretation of the Pound Lane structure as a forge was strengthened by the large quantity of iron slag found spread across the floor of the building. However, the apparent similarity of the two structures has led to a re-examination of the Pound Lane excavation record (Brewer, pers. comm.) currently in progress.

The small pottery assemblage recovered from the West Gate Farm site has a date range consistent with other buildings in the area. Most of the pottery was produced in the second century with a few fragments belonging to the late-third or early-fourth centuries. (Webster, pers. comm., and Anthony, forthcoming). Coarse wares of local manufacture predominated with a small number of the Black Burnished vessels also present. Black Burnished wares dominated the third and fourth-century assemblage. The Samian ware produced the most interesting results as this small but significant group included an unusually high percentage of products from the site at Les Martres-de-Veyre, near Clermont-Ferrand in central France. This workshop, most active between c.AD 100–120, was relatively short-lived in production. This is consistent with the Samian assemblage found at the *forum* site (Webster, forthcoming). A second-century date for the West Gate Farm complex compares well with the date of the re-development of the Pound Lane site in the mid-second century and, indeed, the foundation of a house (I.28.N) to the north of West Gate Farm. Excavated between 1981–84, the earliest building on that site was dated to the late second century, constructed, it would appear, on a hitherto vacant plot (Brewer, 1997, 38).

The discovery of the plan of another Roman courtyard building immediately adjacent to the Roman road inside the West Gate enhances our knowledge of the layout of Roman Caerwent within a previously unexplored part of the Roman town. The walls of the two Roman buildings were so well preserved and their plan so comprehensive that it was decided to mark their outline in the new layout. Consequently slabs, set over the Roman walls to distinguish their line, have been incorporated within the modern surfacing over the courtyard, in the barns and on the continuation of the Roman walling on the north and west of the open fronted barn and to the east of the milking parlour. Sets to show the line of the Roman road surface to the south of the barns have also been incorporated within the design. Interpretation within the open barn will guide the visitor to facilitate appreciation of the layout of the Roman buildings. The farm buildings have been re-roofed with red pan tiles and rendered and limewashed after careful recording of the visible features in the masonry, such as the hearths and stairwells mentioned above (Plate 3).

The North Walls

The completion of the West Gate car park and reception area and the conservation of the *forum-basilica* brought into greater prominence the northern walls of the Roman town. Rather less impressive and accessible than their southern counterparts, they are less well known despite their remarkable state of preservation. Substantial areas of the northern half of the town and walls are in state ownership and access around the internal circuit of the walls has now been facilitated by the provision of signage, pedestrian gates and interpretation. Visitors may now walk around the north-west walls from the car park to the courtyard house (Plate 3), and view a new reconstruction of a Roman 'cross roads' at the point where the east/west road from the *basilica* met the north/south Roman predecessor to Pound Lane (Plate 4). Similarly on the north-east, provision has been made for pedestrian access around the walls from the *forum-basilica*, to view the defences and the remnants of two mural towers on the north walls, and back to the Temple. Access along the southern walls has also been facilitated by opening up the entry point from the road on the south-east corner, where the castle mound or *motte* stands, and by widening the accessible pedestrian walkway outside the walls.

The Motte

The medieval castle mound, on the south-east corner of the town, had been built to utilize the defensive potential afforded by the earlier Roman walling where it commanded extensive views to the south, west and east. Strong though its position was, its structural stability was intrinsically poor, built on a slope, with its mass weakened by the Roman walling running through the centre. Its condition had given cause for concern for many years; it was covered with small trees whose shade attracted sheep resulting in inevitable scarring and restricted grass growth. The erosion to the outer half of the *motte* caused by this multiplicity of factors was severe and as part of the programme of improvements on the southern walls, structural engineers from Veryards were contracted by Cadw to draw up and implement a scheme of repair. It was decided that the only secure method to stabilize the structure was to return to the circular plan that the *motte* had presumably originally had and add considerable quantities of material to the outer, southern perimeter. The diameter of the un-eroded south-west/north-eastern half of the *motte* measured some 14m at the top, 28m at the base, while the eroded north-west/south-east measurements were 8m and 12m respectively. Consequently, after recording the Roman masonry from the original town wall exposed by the erosion (Plate 5), the southern half of the *motte* was reconstructed with considerable quantities of imported soil laid over horizontal bands of a plastic reinforcement used to tie the structure together (Plate 6). The surface of the reconstructed half (Plate 7) was then turfed and pegged to speed the establishment of a stabilizing grass sward (Plate 8). The resulting enlargement of the *motte* was somewhat startling to those who had previously been familiar with its eroded condition, though an older inhabitant of Caerwent was kind enough to remark, reassuringly, that it now looked just as it had done in his youth.

Summary

The archaeological work and conservation at Caerwent described above was inevitably restricted, comprising as it did a series of responses to projects generally initiated for purposes other than pure research. The West Gate Farm excavation was non-intrusive, taken down only as far as the surviving top of Roman walling, well above the Roman floors. It is hoped, however, that the results achieved and the completion of the conservation and access works here described, along with the

production of the new guidebook and site interpretation panels, will enhance both our understanding of Caerwent and the enjoyment of the visitor to this remarkable Roman town. We most heartily trust that Lord Tredegar would have approved of our endeavours.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks are due to Diane Williams and Bill Zajec of Cadw for help with provision of photography (Plates 1–4); Mary Kelly, John Shipton and site staff of Cadw along with Jane Chamberlain of Caroe and Partners for flexibility to allow for the archaeological work and its interpretation; Peter Webster for initial help with the Roman pottery; and Richard Brewer for providing comments on an earlier draft of the paper.

This article has been published with the support of a generous grant from Cadw, which the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association gratefully acknowledges.

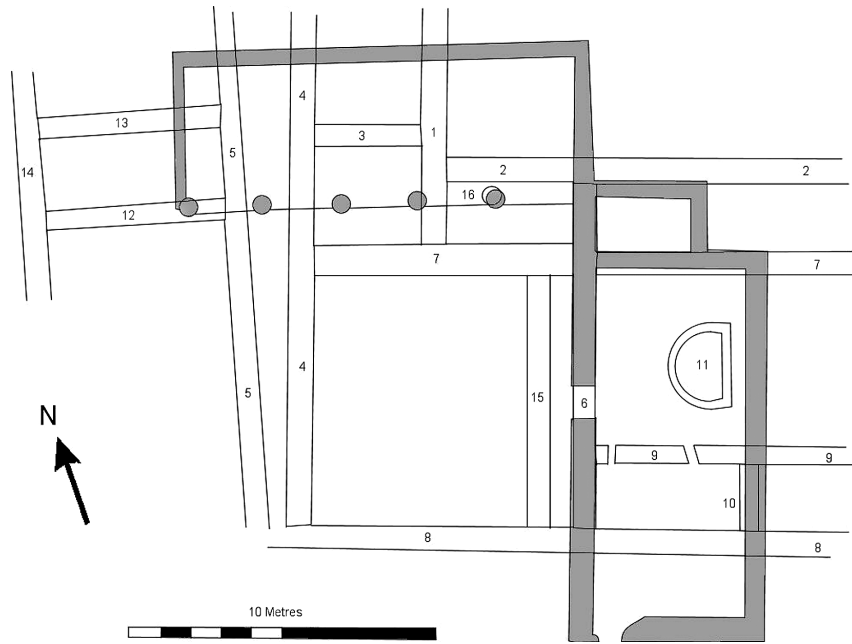


Fig.1a: Plan of West Gate Farm. Shaded walls are standing post-medieval farm buildings. Open walls are excavated Roman footings.

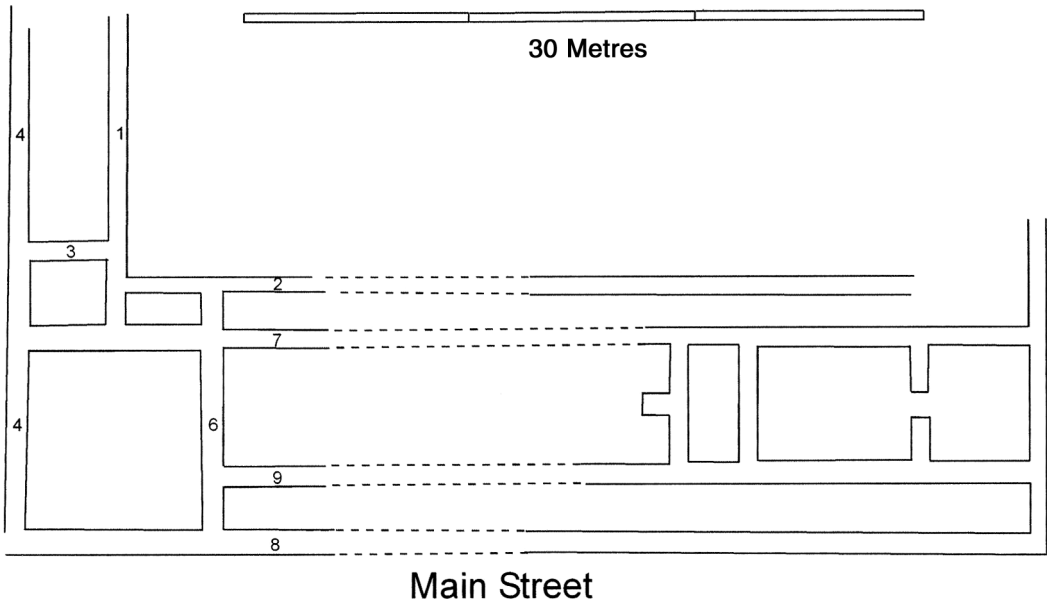


Fig.1b: Plan of West Gate Farm. Roman building on left, with Pound Lane building (Ashby, 1911) on right. Dotted lines show presumed line of unexcavated Roman walling under modern houses.

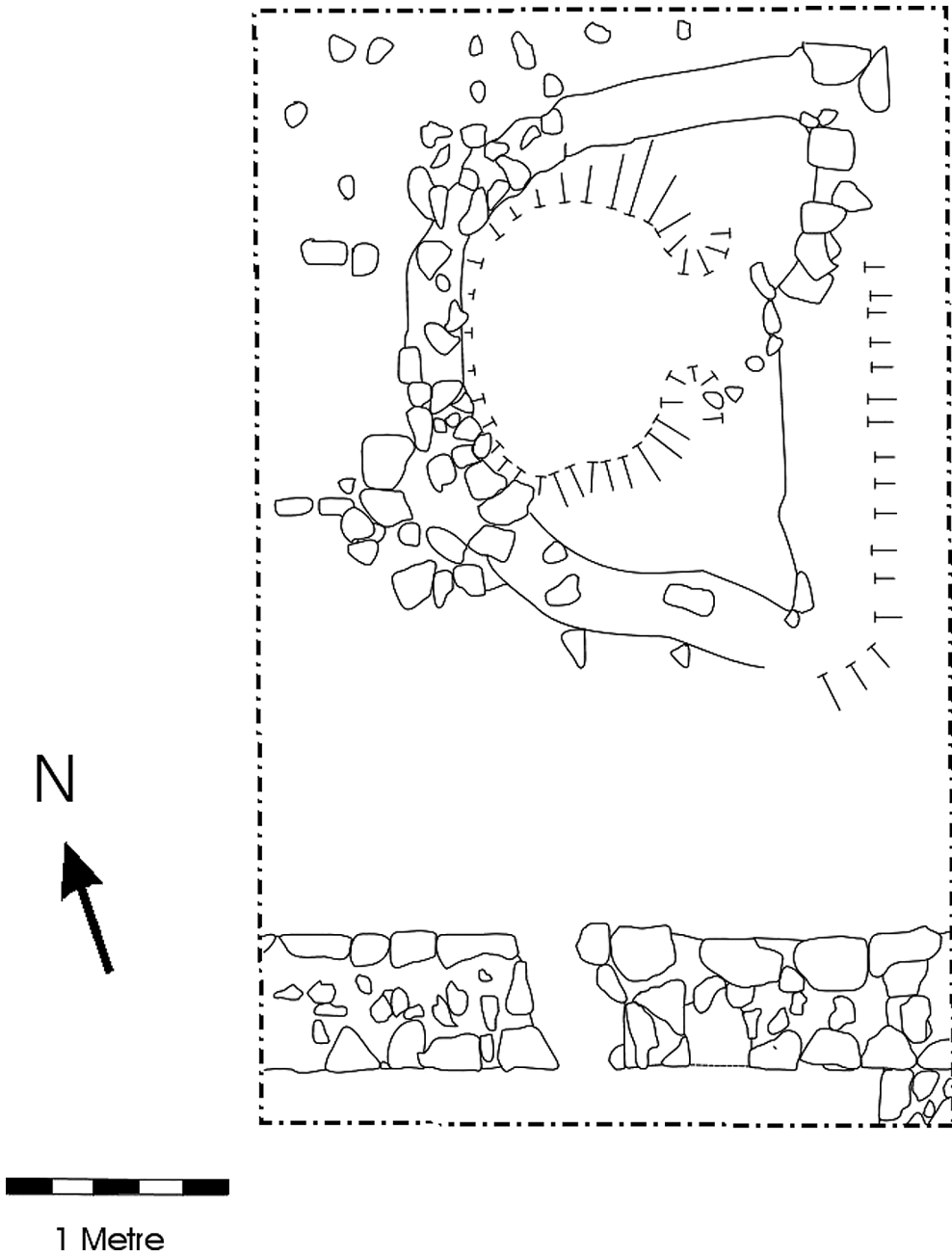


Fig.2: Roman oven (feature 11), West Gate Farm.



Plate 1: Conserved wall footings of Roman *basilica*,
new paving on *forum* with original and replacement Sudbrook stone steps and drain.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.



Plate 2: Excavations within West Gate Farm open barn, revealing full extent of surviving Roman walling immediately beneath post-medieval cobbled floor.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.



Plate 3: North-west corner of Roman town defences from north.
West Gate Farm is in centre back.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

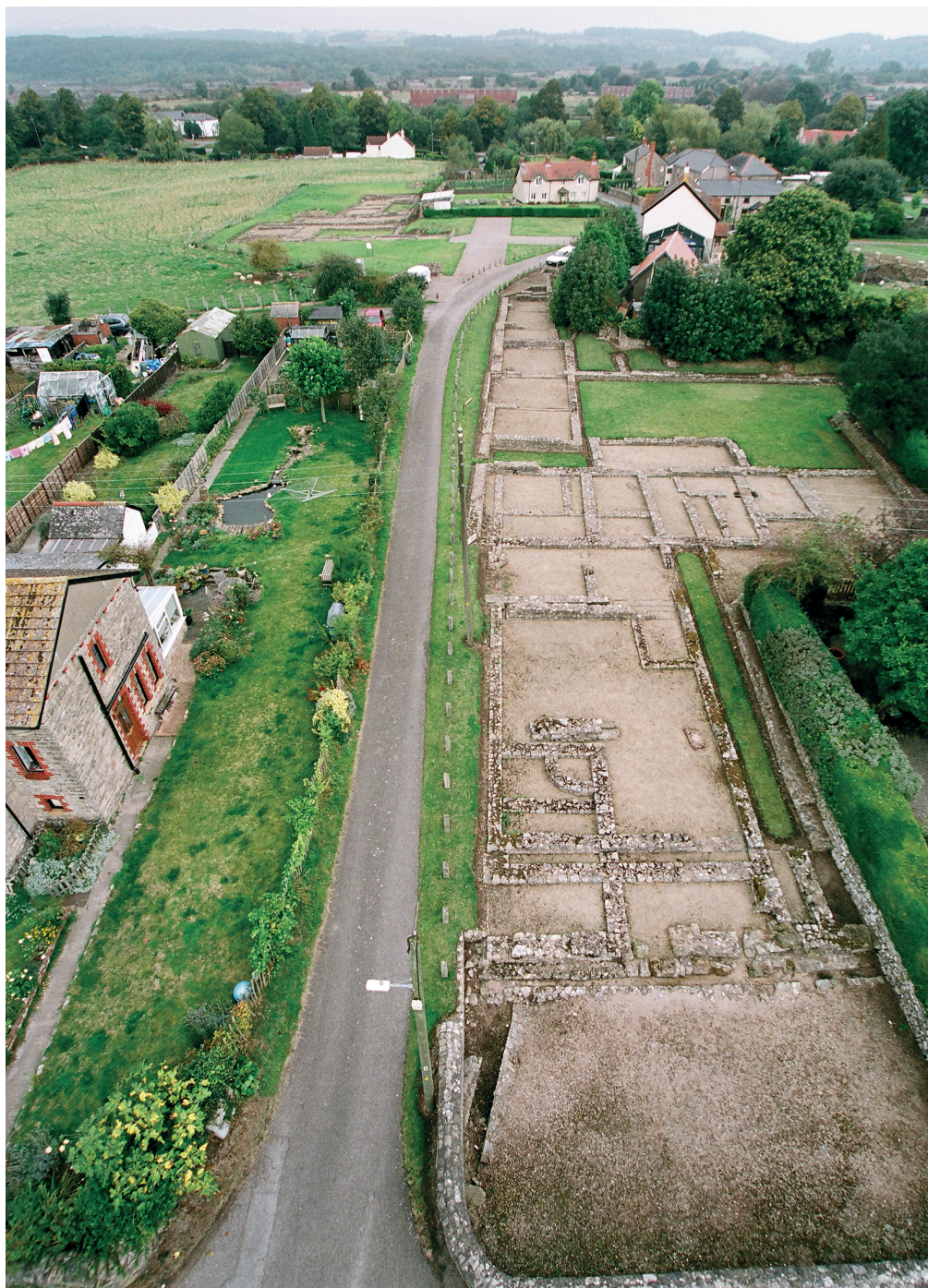


Plate 4: Pound Lane Roman shops and Roman 'cross roads' reconstruction, from south.

Pound Lane courtyard house is in the distance.

By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.



Plate 5: Caerwent *motte*. Roman masonry revealed by erosion of southern half of mound.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.



Plate 6: Caerwent *motte*. Reconstruction of eroded southern end of mound.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.



Plate 7: Caerwent *motte*. Reconstructed southern half (machine access ramp still in position).
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.



Plate 8: Caerwent *motte* after completion of reconstruction of southern half of mound.
By courtesy of Cadw. Crown Copyright.

THE 1998 ROGIET ROMAN COIN HOARD

By Edward Besly

One of the most significant Roman coin hoards ever found in Wales came to light on 10 September 1998, when Colin Roberts, from Newport, unearthed over 3,700 coins of the late third century AD at Rogiet, about 700m north-west of the present-day M4 toll booths. Media interest in the find was heightened by a chance remark that the finder had been led to the spot by a dream but, truth to tell, the field had been ploughed regularly and a number of coins had already been found over a period of several years.¹ The hoard was declared treasure at a coroner's inquest at Newport on 10 December 1998 and was acquired by Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales in May 1999 (accession no. 99.31H). This was the first important hoard of base metal coins to benefit from the provisions of the 1996 Treasure Act, which had come into force in September 1997.² Following conservation, cataloguing and a period of study, the hoard will be published in full in *The British Numismatic Journal*. This paper is intended to provide a general account of the hoard and its context.

The Monetary Context

The three-and-a-half centuries of Roman rule in Britain have left an extensive legacy, not least in the form of coinage. The system of coinage introduced under Augustus (27 BC–AD 14) – gold *aurei*, silver *denarii* and a range of copper alloy denominations – provided the money used in the province for over two hundred years until its final collapse in debasement and inflation around AD 270. There followed a quarter of a century in which a partial reform by the Emperor Aurelian (270–5) appears to have had relatively little impact in Britain: hoards and individual finds point to continued circulation of the basest 'radiates' (double-*denarii*)³ of the recently-suppressed 'Romano-Gallic' state (260–74), contemporary issues of legitimate emperors such as Gallienus (260–8) and Claudius II (268–70) and widespread production of unofficial imitations, notably of coins of the Gallic usurpers Victorinus (269–71) and Tetricus I and II (271–4); with gold and silver nowhere to be seen. Around 286–7, Britain and parts of northern Gaul became the scene of another usurpation, by the fleet commander Carausius, who had fallen out with the legitimate emperors Diocletian and Maximian. Carausius was in turn murdered and succeeded by his minister Allectus, in 293. Carausius issued the first fine-silver *denarii* for nearly a century and both he and Allectus produced gold coinage, the latter apparently in some quantity. At the everyday level, both issued billon (highly-debased silver) coinage on the pattern of Aurelian's reformed issues (these are known today as *aureliani*) and at some point Allectus introduced a new type of coin, the 'Q-radiate'. The numerous British hoards of the time, however, are mostly dominated by the debased 'Gallic' issues.

¹ E.g. 'How a dream led to the find of century', *The Western Mail*, 11 Dec. 1998, p.5. The additional coins since recorded are included in the hoard summary, Table 1.

² The Treasure Act, 1996, extended legal protection to, amongst others, coins containing less than 10% precious metal by weight and over 300 years old when found, provided that ten or more had been associated in the ground. The previous common law of treasure trove was limited to objects that were 'substantially' precious metal.

³ The term 'radiate' is descriptive, from the rayed crown of the emperor's effigy that distinguished this double-denomination from single *denarii*, which bore laureate or bare-headed portraits. 'Radiates' of the empresses in fact depict a crescent behind the portrait bust.

The ‘British’ state was reincorporated into the Empire in 295 or 296.⁴ In the meantime, in 294–5, Diocletian undertook a fundamental reform, introducing a uniform coinage empire-wide that set the pattern for the fourth century. After reconquest, the coinage of Carausius and Allectus was suppressed and the new currency imposed in Britain.

The Archaeological Context

The hoard was found by metal detecting on recently-seeded grassland, in a field that had been under cultivation for many years. According to the finder, the first coins were located in plough soil and the bulk of the hoard at a depth between fourteen and twenty inches (0.35 and 0.50m). As examined on 11 September 1998, the find spot comprised a roughly oval hole 0.82m by 0.34m; some 0.3m of plough soil overlay a subsoil c.0.2m deep which in turn rested on an orange/red sandy gravel with some larger rounded pebbles in it. No trace survived of the original depositor’s cut, but this appears not to have penetrated the natural gravel. There was no trace of a container, but the finder reported several small iron nails which, with the general shape of his excavation, might suggest that the coins had been deposited in a rectangular wooden box, though this is not certain. No traces of mineralised fabric were observed on any of the coins. The hole also yielded a few sherds of worn pottery; pottery and stone scatters and a number of late third- and fourth-century coins have been found elsewhere in the field.

The hoard site lies near the shore of the Severn Estuary on a slightly elevated area of land (c.10m OD) between the Caldicot Levels to the south and hills rising to 82m OD to the north. (In terms of the modern landscape this lies between the M4 motorway/Great Western railway to the south and the M48 to the north.) Excavations in 1996 in the adjacent field to the east, ahead of residential development, located a Roman building in stone, of probable second-century date.⁵ About 3km to the north, over the hills, lies the ‘tribal capital’, Caerwent (*Venta Silurum*); to the west, just under 12km away, is the legionary fortress of *Isca* at Caerleon. The ‘shore fort’ at Cardiff, further to the west, was built towards the end of the third century. (Fig. 1).

The Hoard

The Rogiet hoard (Fig. 2) comprises 3,813 coins of the middle and later years of the third century AD, summarised by reign and by mint in Table 1. These are, essentially, of copper alloy with small added percentages of silver and most, on cleaning, proved to retain the silvered surfaces that were applied to these issues (e.g., Figs. 4b, 7a-b). The coins cover the period from AD 253 to the reign of the ‘British’ usurper Allectus. The latest coins of the Central (official) emperors are two of AD 293 celebrating Diocletian’s *decennalia* (Fig. 7b) and there are three *aureliani* of Allectus, who took power in Britain the same year (Fig. 8e). The question of the hoard’s date revolves, however, around the interpretation of the 757 ‘Q-radiates’ or ‘*quinarii*’ of Allectus.

In broad terms, the hoard contains three significant components: unreformed radiates of 253–c.274 (i.e., including early coins of Aurelian) and their Romano-Gallic counterparts of 260–74 (see Fig. 3); *aureliani* from Aurelian’s reform through to Diocletian and Maximian, together with small

⁴ On the date of Allectus’s defeat, see Burnett, A., ‘The coinage of Allectus: chronology and interpretation’, *British Numismatic Journal*, 54 (1984) 21–40 at pp.22–4.

⁵ Marvell, A.G., ‘Rogiet (Housing Allocation) H2RO1’, *Archaeology in Wales*, 36 (1996) 78.

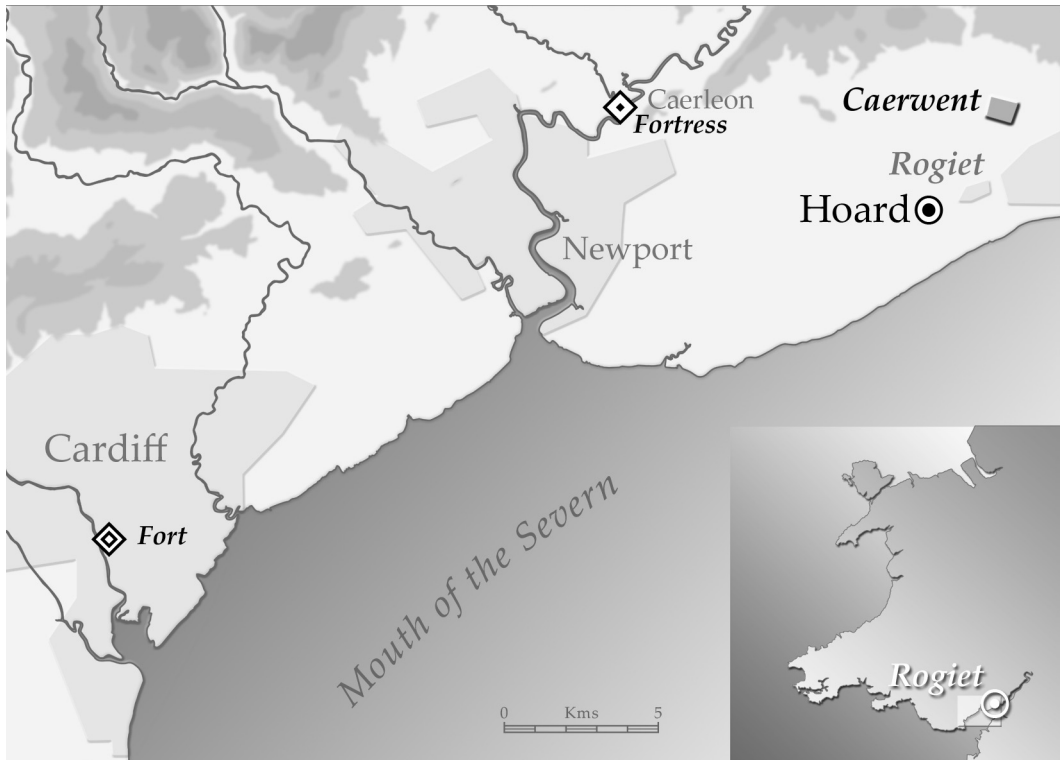


Fig. 1: Rogiet: location.

Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales/Jackie Chadwick.

numbers of similar coins of Carausius and Allectus (Figs. 4–8); and the Q-radiates of Allectus (Fig. 9). Several features stand out immediately: the large quantity of *aureliani*, which are usually present in British hoards only in very small numbers; the relatively small group of coins of 260–74 and the virtual absence of coins of the Tetraci; and the Allectan Q-radiates, the first significant group of these enigmatic coins to become available for study in recent times.

Typically, late third-century Romano-British hoards (and many from Gaul) consist of large numbers of the base and ‘unreformed’ radiates of 260–74; two-thirds or more of these are usually coins of the Romano-Gallic emperors Victorinus (269–71) and Tetricus I and II (271–4), with the remaining third mostly of Gallienus (260–8) and Claudius II (268–70). These are supplemented by varying numbers, usually small, of the reformed *aureliani* of the 270s and 280s and by irregular issues (‘barbarous radiates’).⁶ The picture is less clear-cut during the British Empire (c.287–95/6): Bland and Burnett, publishing the Normanby (Lincs) hoard, identified four categories of hoard during this period, consisting of ‘reformed’ coins (which include *aureliani* of Carausius and Allectus) or ‘unreformed’ coins (early Carausian issues – which are akin to the radiates – as well as the Q-radiates of Allectus), each with or without pre-Carausian issues. The presence or absence of a

⁶ Cheesman, C., ‘The radiate hoards’, *Coin Hoards from Roman Britain X* (1997) 171–9 summarizes and discusses fifty late-third-century hoards from Britain published since 1981.



Fig. 2: a selection from the Rogiet coin hoard, as found.

Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

type of coin, it was argued, could be seen in terms of different ‘monetary categories (= denominations?)’.⁷ A hoard of around 1,090 coins found at Wentwood Mill in 1860 (also near Caerwent) included a few Carausius and two *aureliani*, but otherwise consisted of base, unreformed radiates.⁸

The Rogiet hoard would appear to comprise a sample of the best coinage available for saving (other than gold) at some point in the middle of Allectus’s short reign, depending upon the interpretation placed on the ‘Q-radiates’: of the three *aureliani* of Allectus, none need be late. The coins of 260–71 are all of good weights, with the most debased or lightweight issues of Claudius II, Victorinus and most noticeably Tetricus absent, whether by conscious selection or because they had by now been culled from general circulation is not clear. Only one other hoard from Britain has included significant numbers of the part-reformed *aureliani*, a deposit of over 15,000 found at Gloucester in 1960. This hoard, almost entirely *aureliani*, belongs to a category of hoards known as ‘legitimidist’, in which coins of usurpers seem deliberately to have been excluded. The owner of Rogiet, however, seems to have sought quality in his coins, whoever had issued them. The hoard is probably best viewed as a two-denomination hoard, where almost all others of the period concentrated on one; it therefore appears to form a category of its own amongst the hoards from the time of the ‘British Empire’. Like the Gloucester hoard, and smaller examples from Linchmere (Sussex) and Colchester (Essex) which comprise mainly issues of Carausius and Allectus, the composition of Rogiet testifies to the belated acceptance of the *aurelianus* as an integral part of Romano-British currency – on the eve of Diocletian’s fundamental overhaul of the coinage of the wider empire.

For the most part, the coins in the hoard are of well-known types from familiar mints. The heavy debasements of the middle of the third century led to the development of a network of mints across the empire (where previously Rome had alone served the whole of the western half). The principal sources for Britain (usurpers apart) were Rome and Milan, the latter moving to Ticinum (present-day Pavia) in 274 and, following Aurelian’s reform, Lyon. Smaller numbers of coins from Siscia (Sisak) and mints in the Balkans and the east (Serдика, Cyzicus, Antioch) found their way to Britain, presumably stepwise through countless trading transactions.⁹

The *aureliani* of 274–93 include many fine coins, notably some of Probus from the Lyon, Rome and Ticinum mints (Fig. 5). His coinage makes much of the emperor’s *virtus* (valour, bravery) and Probus’s portraits include many varieties – military, heroic and ceremonial. There are also seven *denarii* (half-*aureliani* produced at Rome as part of Aurelian’s reform in 274), five of these in the name of Severina, wife of Aurelian (Fig. 4c). The hoard includes a number of rare or even previously unknown varieties. The two most spectacular examples are *aureliani* of Divus Nigrinianus and of ‘Carausius and his brothers’. Nigrinian, who died in infancy c.283, appears to have been a son of Carinus. Posthumous coins were issued in his name at Rome;¹⁰ and as far as is

⁷ Bland, R. and Burnett, A., ‘Normanby, Lincolnshire’, *Coin Hoards from Roman Britain VIII* (1988) 114–215 at pp. 114–18.

⁸ Lee, J.E., *Isca Silurum* (London, 1862) 83. The hoard is now in the National Collection (31.78: former Caerleon collection); the two *aureliani* are of Tacitus and Probus, and there are thirteen coins of Carausius, three of them mint-signed *aureliani*.

⁹ The Bridgend (1994) hoard, buried c. 310 after Diocletian’s reform, shows a similar pattern – as, in its own way, does the modern Euro small change encountered in different regions of the European Union. See Besly, E., ‘A hoard of Tetrarchic *nummi* from Bridgend, South Wales’, *Numismatic Chronicle*, 162 (2002) 169–215.

¹⁰ Carinus also issued posthumous coins for his father, Carus and brother, Numerian, as well as handsome coinage in the name of his living wife, Magnia Urbica (Fig. 6e).

known, this is only the second specimen of this rare issue to have been recorded in Britain (Fig. 6d). The coins issued by Carausius around 293 in which he depicted himself as a co-emperor – perhaps seeking rapprochement – with the legitimate rulers Diocletian and Maximian, though distinctly rare are better known, but the Rogiet specimen (Fig. 8c) must surely be one of the very finest in existence. There are also several of the coins in the names of Diocletian and Maximian, but issued by Carausius, as evidenced by their ‘British’ mint signatures (Fig. 8d). The principal numismatic interest of the hoard, however, lies in the ‘Q-radiates’ of Allectus.

The Rogiet Hoard and the coinage of Allectus

Allectus seized power in Britain in 293 by murdering Carausius. His reign lasted somewhere between two and three years, before an expeditionary force commanded by Asclepiodotus, Constantius Caesar’s praetorian prefect, invaded Britain, defeated Allectus in battle and recovered the province.¹¹ Allectus’s coinage is well-made: he issued, it would seem, a considerable amount of gold¹² as well as *aureliani* and a separate denomination, usually known as a *quinarius*, but described today as ‘Q-radiate’ – names derived from the mint signatures QL and QC on their reverses and the emperor’s portrait, which like the *aureliani* depicts him wearing a rayed crown. The coins of the ‘British Empire’, especially those of Carausius, form an important source of information, but Allectus’s coin types are mostly conventional and shed little narrative light. Little is known of Allectus himself and he has therefore always been considered to be a weak character, when compared with his predecessor; he is not helped by the fact that the other main historical source is the official adulatory poetry (panegyrics) that praised the merits of the emperors who overthrew him.

Q-radiates are essentially copper-alloy coins with silvered surfaces, about two-thirds the weight of the *aureliani*. Both types contained small amounts of added silver in their alloys and study of the Rogiet coins appears to confirm the suggestion that Q-radiates circulated as half-*aureliani*. The Q-radiates have, essentially, a single reverse design – in sharp contrast to the varied reverses of the *aureliani* – a war-galley, though as is evident from the illustrated pieces, these vessels took a number of forms. They were produced at two minting establishments, signed ‘L’ and ‘C’, the first certainly London, the second remains unlocated: the claims, variously, of Camulodunum, Clausentum, Corinium, even (reading ‘G’ for ‘C’) Glevum all have strengths and weaknesses. The large majority of the Q-radiates from both mints bear the reverse legend VIRTUS AVG (valour, bravery) and a galley travelling to the left as viewed (e.g., Fig. 9a, e). Some London galleys face the right (e.g. Fig. 9b), while at ‘C’ there is another whole issue with right-facing galleys and the legend LAETITIA AVG (gladness: Fig. 9c-d). Other minor varieties at London depict what appear to be small river vessels, perhaps of hide (Fig. 9f). Sometimes, the designs are supplemented by additional figures – of Victory (Fig. 9i), or a bird on the mast (Fig. 9h).

Hitherto, very few hoards have contained more than a handful of Q-radiates. The Blackmoor (Hampshire) hoard, found in 1873, did contain between seventy and eighty, but these formed only 0.3 per cent of the whole massive assemblage of 29,802 coins. A potful of Q-radiates was found at Old Ford (London) in 1866, but dispersed without being recorded properly. Q-radiates came to be

¹¹ Casey, P.J., *Carausius and Allectus: the British Usurpers* (London, 1994) chapter 10: ‘Allectus’ at pp.127–39.

¹² Burnett, ‘The coinage of Allectus’, note 4 above, at p.24.

viewed as the very last coins of Allectus's reign, perhaps even a form of debasement of the *aureliani* as funds ran short. Because most specimens in museums derive from chance finds or archaeological excavations, few of these coins are in good enough condition for detailed study. Rogiet has at last provided us with the opportunity to study a significant group of well-preserved Q-radiates. What does it tell us?

As so often with the coins of Carausius and Allectus, there is no definitive solution. However, the hoard has allowed an insight into the operation of Allectus's mints, the scale of the coinage and perhaps even fresh light on him as ruler, based on both technical study (the dies and their combinations; die-relationships, alloys, weights) and stylistic analysis of the designs and the die-cutting methods. For London, these seem to imply a team of perhaps three die-cutters: there are three main versions of the most common reverse type, VIRTUS AVG: galley with mast to left, for instance. At 'C' there may have been as many as five die-cutters, for the imperial portraits fall into five clearly-distinguished forms (for three of these, see Fig. 9c-e). (There are eight main treatments of the corresponding reverse galleys, but several pairs may have enough features in common to represent work by a single hand.) For both mints, the same hands may be traced on dies for *aureliani*, but the comparison is not always straightforward because the much bigger die-areas of the latter allowed engravers to work in very different ways.

The question 'one mint or two?' is raised from time to time – the possibility that L and C simply formed two arms of a single establishment. As far as Q-radiates are concerned, the answer seems to be 'two': there is no stylistic or physical overlap between the two and other evidence, for instance the relative positioning of the designs, shows different practices: at L almost one-third of Rogiet coins have a die-axis of 0°, two-thirds 180°; at C the relationship is entirely 180°. ¹³

Whilst it is impossible to deduce the scale of ancient coinages in the absence of documentary evidence, some sense of this can be gained from die-study and the application of statistics to the frequency and combinations. One element (VIRTUS AVG // QC) proved suitable for a full die study: 328 coins came from 167 obverse and 211 reverse dies, with 232 combinations. These extrapolate to an issue centred on around 315 obverse and 518 reverse dies. Of the other elements, the LAETITIA AVG // QC issue (95 obverse dies observed) and the London issues (around 235 obverses) may have employed of the order of 200 and 700 obverse dies, respectively. Whatever else may be said, the Q-radiate issue was not intended to be small!

It appears that at 'C' the 'Laetitia' issue comprised two phases, followed by the 'Virtus' coinage. The experimental nature of some of the portraiture and the vessels of the reverses on the 'Laetitia' coins contrasts with a much more settled 'Virtus' series. The 'Virtus' coins are especially fine in condition and several batches within the hoard appear to be fresh from the mint. At London ('Virtus' only) several dies have vessels that are hard to classify and it may be that these were the first dies to be cut; also that the Q-radiates may have been introduced later at London, missing the 'Laetitia' phase observed for 'C'. The production of the Q-radiates appears to have overlapped with that of the *aureliani*, but the precise chronological relationship cannot be determined at present.

In 294–5, Diocletian undertook a fundamental reform of the Roman coinage, introducing for everyday use a new species, the *nummus*, a large hoard of which came to light in 1994 near Bridgend. ¹⁴ When Britain was retaken in 295/6 this new coinage was imposed and the London mint

¹³ Die-axis is the relationship of the obverse design to the reverse: if the coin is turned on a vertical axis as viewed, the die-axis is 0° if the designs are aligned, 180° if they are inverted with respect to each other. Virtually all regular Roman coins show one of these two alignments.

¹⁴ See note 9 above.

became part of the imperial network, producing significant numbers of *nummi*. Although *aureliani* of emperors such as Probus and Diocletian continued to play a role as small change, the coinages of Carausius and Allectus were thoroughly suppressed. Nevertheless it is clear from studies of archaeological sites and chance single finds that the Q-radiates circulated throughout Britain every bit as widely as the *aureliani*. Site finds of coins of Carausius and Allectus have been summarized by Lloyd.¹⁵ Of sixty-two sites listed, forty-five have produced a total of 305 *aureliani* of Allectus (196 London, 109 C); forty sites have yielded 254 Q-radiates (103 London, 151 C). In October 2004, the database of the Portable Antiquities Scheme in England and Wales included 142 useful records of recently-found coins of Allectus: 58 *aureliani* and 84 Q-radiates. The latter may owe their dominance here to the fact that they are readily recognized, even when in a poor state; however, their wide distribution is again noticeable. Where mints could be identified, London *aureliani* formed a majority (26L: 12C) but C predominated for the Q-radiates (19L: 37C), in line with the other hoard and site evidence.

Hoard evidence, too, though small in numbers, may demonstrate that Q-radiates played a role equal to that of *aureliani*. The question therefore arises as to whether the Q-radiates, far from being the last coinage of Allectus, may actually have been his first. The experimental portraiture of some of the QC *Laetitia* dies could represent a lack of familiarity on the part of the engravers with Allectus's features – a common phenomenon at the outset of a reign, before official images had been prepared. If so, it would appear that Allectus may have taken a robust and positive approach to his coinage from the very beginning of his reign, attempting to improve the 'radiate' element of the currency by a significant issue of the Q-radiates and, perhaps by decrying the very worst of the existing radiates, to improve the overall quality of those radiates that were to remain in circulation, as evidenced by those contained in hoards such as Rogiet and Gloucester. This is also of a piece with the image of Allectus as ruler that is beginning to emerge elsewhere, for instance in an ambitious building project started in 294 that has been discovered in London.¹⁶ The choice of a distinctive and effectively uniform reverse design for the 'Q' series was presumably a deliberate way of marking out the issue as being new and significantly different from the *aureliani*.¹⁷ If the Q-radiates were indeed an early initiative, then it will be clear that they would have predated Diocletian's own coinage reform and would therefore have been independent of it, albeit that coins of uniform design were a feature of that reform as well. Whatever Allectus's intentions, they were soon overtaken by the reconquest of Britain, the imposition of Diocletian's currency reform and the suppression of the *aureliani* and Q-radiates of the 'British' empire.

As for the Rogiet hoard itself, and so many other ancient coin hoards, one can say very little about its owner or his/her motives. Assuming that the hoard was buried close to where it was assembled (by no means certain) its context must presumably lie in the commercial life of nearby Caerwent and its owner was a person with access to freshly-circulated coinage who took some care to keep only the best money available. But the occasion of its burial (which need not have related to events at the end of Allectus's reign or to Diocletian's currency reform) and the reasons for its non-

¹⁵ Lloyd, C.D., 'The C mint of Carausius and Allectus', *British Numismatic Journal*, 68 (1998) 1–10.

¹⁶ Casey, *Carausius and Allectus* (note 11) 133–4.

¹⁷ Detailed discussion of the reverse designs is beyond the scope of this paper. The illustrated coins give some idea of the typical range of the time, for instance: gods (e.g. Jupiter, Figs. 7a, 8d; Mercury, Fig. 6c; Sol, Figs. 4a-b; Venus, Figs. 4c, 6e); personifications (peace, Fig. 8b; gladness, Fig. 8e; hope, Fig. 6a); and imperial events (*Adventus*, Fig. 5a; *Vota decennialia*, Fig. 7b).

recovery cannot be known. In terms of design and production, the coinage of the later-third century lacks in general the quality of that from earlier imperial periods, though amongst the *aureliani* are to be found some very handsome specimens. However, the rapid turnover of the ‘soldier-emperors’ of the third century (assassination was the norm), the debasements and attempted reforms of the coinage and the complications of several significant usurpations have given the Rogiet deposit an unusually varied composition amongst Romano-British coin hoards. Its forty-year span covers coins from eighteen reigns, in the names of twenty-six emperors or members of their families, with over 1,050 individual varieties.

Financial assistance from Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales enabled one plate in this article to be published in colour. The Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association gratefully acknowledges this support.



Fig. 3: Examples of unreformed radiates, 260–74:
 a, Gallienus, Rome; b, Salonina, Milan; c, Claudius II, Siscia; d, Aurelian, Siscia; e, Postumus, Gallic mint I;
 f, Victorinus, Gallic mint II. **Coins actual size.**
 Copyright: National Museum of Wales.



Fig. 4: Reformed coinage (*aureliani*):
 a-b, Aurelian, Ticinum, Rome; c, Severina, Rome (*denarius*); d, Tacitus, Ticinum;
 e, Florian, Lyon. **Coins actual size.**
 Copyright: National Museum of Wales.



Fig. 5: Probus, 276–82:

a, *Adventus*, Lyon; b, *Virtus*, Rome; Portraiture: c-d, military, Lyon and Ticinum; e, heroic, nude bust with *aegis*, Ticinum; f, consular, Ticinum; g, with ceremonial eagle-headed dagger (*pugio*), Siscia. **Coins actual size.**

Copyright: National Museum of Wales.



Fig. 6: Carus *et sui*, 283–5:

a, Carus, Ticinum; b, Carinus, Lyon; c, Numerian, Rome; d, Divus Nigrinianus, Rome; e, Magnia Urbica, Ticinum. **Coins actual size.**

Copyright: National Museum of Wales.



Fig. 7: Diocletian and Maximian:
 a-b, Lyon; b, emperors sacrificing in celebration of Diocletian's *decennalia*. **Coins actual size.**
 Copyright: National Museum of Wales.



Fig. 8: The 'British' Empire, 286/7-96:
 a, Carausius, London (//ML); b, Carausius, C (S P //C); c, 'Carausius and his brothers',
 C (S P //C); d, 'Diocletian', London (S P //MLXXI); e, Allectus, C (S P //C). **Coins actual size.**
 Copyright: National Museum of Wales.

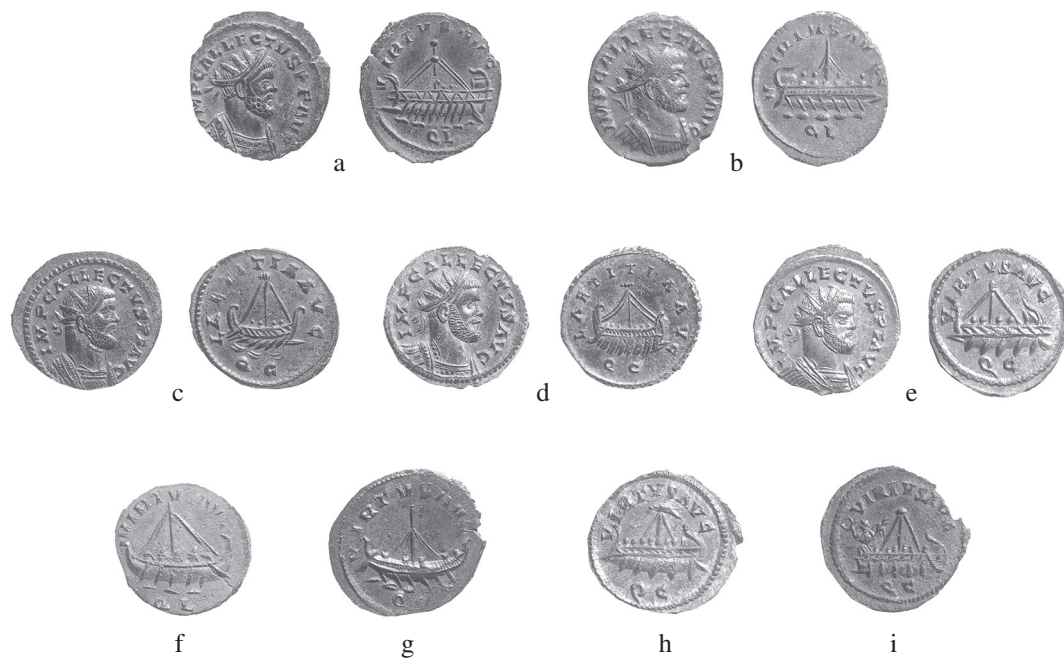


Fig. 9: Allectus, Q-radiates, 293–6:
a-b, London, *Virtus Aug*; c-d, QC, *Laetitia Aug*; e, QC, *Virtus Aug*; f-g, London:
varieties of vessel; h-i, QC: bird on mast, Victory as figurehead. **Coins actual size.**
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AN 1840 SKETCHBOOK OF SHIRENEWTON, CHEPSTOW AND TINTERN

By Julian Mitchell

The Sketchbook

Chepstow Museum has recently acquired a thirty-six page sketchbook of scenes around Shirenewton, Chepstow and Tintern drawn in pencil in the summer of 1840. The pages are seven inches by nine inches, and each is drawn on, though two attempts are very sketchy. No page has drawing on the back. The cover seems to be original; the paper bears the '1839 J. Whatman' watermark. Several different pencils are used in the drawings, which are dated from 13 July to 11 August 1840, but are not in chronological order. There is no name attached to the sketchbook and no provenance,¹ but drawing No.6 (Plate 1) is of two women in bonnets sitting under the famous ancient walnut tree in Chepstow castle and watching a third sketch Marten's Tower. It strongly suggests the artist of the sketchbook was herself a woman, and she is referred to as such throughout this article.

The Artist

The artist did not draw on Sundays. There was nothing unusual about this: it was Dr Johnson's dying request to Sir Joshua Reynolds never to use his pencil on a Sunday. Otherwise she missed only three out of seventeen possible sketching days in July, and on two of those it may have been raining. In August she missed six out of nine with no such excuse.²

She was most probably a visitor to the area. The drawings she did of Chepstow and Tintern are those of a tourist, and she is ignorant of local place-names, writing 'Mountain' for Mounon and 'Llandogan' for Llandogo, though it's true that these sometimes defeated locals too. She seems to have been staying at or near Shirenewton, since the first drawings (Nos.14 and 15, Plates 6 and 8) were made there on 13 July, and she sketched the neighbourhood on six later occasions. The only house drawn with any care is 'Pentycassen' (modern Pant-y-cosyn, Cheese Hollow, Plate 4) and perhaps she was staying there. Tintern and Chepstow, the standard tourist attractions, were each drawn on four days. Special trips seem to have been made to Llandogo and Caldicot churches on 28 and 31 July, though on the latter she managed a sketch of Shirenewton as well.

There are five drawings of what she calls 'The Valley of the Paper Mills' – six if Pant-y-cosyn is included – and this might suggest she had some connection with one of the millers on the Mounon brook, but only the drawing of White Mills (No.20, Plate 12) shows any interest in the mills themselves and even this is not at all accurate. It was the picturesqueness of the valley which attracted her and, contrary to modern ideas, the presence of mills would only have added to it. William Gilpin himself, the great populariser of the picturesque, had been captivated by the smoke and roar of the forge at Symonds Yat on his trip down the Wye in 1770. Our artist did not, though, share his taste for picturesque poverty; the only cottages, except for those at Tintern, are seen from a distance, and the one farm, Pant-y-cosyn, seems prosperous. Perhaps, given her abstention from

¹ The sketchbook was acquired from Miles Wynn Cato, the specialist dealer in Welsh art, who bought it at an auction in Oxford.

² The Meteorological Office has no records of the weather in South Wales in 1840, and I am going by those from Hadsden House in Somerset, some 45 miles from Shirenewton as the crow flies.

Sunday drawing, she was too religious to see the dilapidation of Shirenewton and Llandogo churches as romantic; she presents both as relatively sturdy, though other evidence suggests they were anything but (*see below*).

Technically, she was a not specially gifted amateur. Her perspective is weak – *see especially* the drawing of Chepstow church (No.10, Plate 3) – most of her trees are formalised, and many of her distant backgrounds fanciful. This would not matter to the historian, if she did not give herself so much artistic licence to make aesthetically ‘correct’ pictures. This means her drawings must be treated with great caution as a guide to how things actually were in 1840.

Sometimes, though, what seems like licence may be accurate observation. She shows ponds, for instance, in front of both Shirenewton and Caldicot churches (Nos.14 and 34, Plates 6 and 20), which look like an artistic convention. But an unsigned sketch in Caldicot church, dated 1832, shows a pond in exactly the same position. And at Shirenewton there is a sealed well inside the gates of Stoneycroft House, just about where the artist must have been standing, and a substantial stone culvert with a slate bottom runs from there through the front garden of the lodge of what is now Shirenewton Hall. These suggest there must have been water about, though not necessarily on the scale shown, or in high summer when the drawing was done.

Occasionally it seems as though the artist was in a hurry. Caldicot church, for instance, is treated very sketchily, and made far narrower than it is. The surrounding buildings, clearly shown in the 1832 drawing, are omitted. The drawing of Llandogo church seems equally hurried, omitting the churchyard entirely, and with Mill Cottage moved to an impossible position on the left. Rain may explain the need for speed but not why the church is given only a modest bell turret, where the *Gwentia* drawing of 1845–6, which includes the churchyard and the Priory, has a substantial tower.³ Clearly both cannot be right. A third drawing, apparently made as a record shortly before the church was torn down in 1859, shows a bell turret larger than the one in the 1840 drawing, but smaller than the *Gwentia* tower, and is more probable than either.⁴ (Plates 13,14 and 15).

In the drawing of White Mills (No.20, Plate 12) the drying shed and miller’s house look authentic enough. But here the very name is suspicious. Though there was a White Mill or White Paper Mill in 1840, there was none known as White Mills. The wheel is not aligned to the building in a way that is practical, the leet as shown is not compatible with the remains at White Mill, and there is no waterfall on the brook except at Tuck Mill, just down the river. Dr Ivor Cavill suggests that the artist, artistically, may have made a picture combining the two.

In spite of these difficulties, and so long as it is not mistaken for a photograph album, the sketchbook is a very valuable source for how the area looked in the early Victorian era.

Shirenewton in the Mid-Nineteenth Century

In the mid-nineteenth century Shirenewton, where the artist may have stayed, was a well-endowed living. The rector, James Ashe Gabb, had 125 acres there in 1843, and lived in the recently built Caepwcella, then the Rectory. Perhaps he built it himself. He had previously lived at St Arvans. Gabb was a member of the well-known Monmouthshire family and a busy man about the county.⁵

³ See 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. Llandogo is illustrated in plate 12, p.55.

⁴ There is a copy in Llandogo church.

⁵ See pedigree of Gabb of the Goitre, Bradney, Sir J., *A History of Monmouthshire Part I. The Hundred of Skenfrith* (Mitchell, Hughes and Clarke, London, 1907, reprinted by Academy Books, 1991) 84–5.

He was twice portreeve of Usk, in 1830 and 1835, and he was a trustee not only of the school established at Mynnydd Bach in 1829, but of Abergavenny Grammar School, where his son was briefly headmaster in the 1830s. He was also secretary of the Monmouthshire District Committee of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK), a vigorous collector for the Church Missionary Society, and a strong supporter of James Davies, the schoolmaster of Devauden, about whom he wrote a popular *Memoir* which raised over £1,400 towards the church consecrated there in 1838.

Though the rector may have been comfortable, many of his parishioners, especially those in Earlswood, perhaps, were not. J.T. Barber, writing in 1803, described 'Share Newton' as a decayed town, 'a mere collection of cottages', and Gabb's *Memoir* says that the whole district – 'a wild heath' – had been 'notorious in former times for highway robberies', and was now inhabited by cottagers who subsisted 'chiefly on potatoes and the coarsest kind of bread'. 'The materials of much wickedness existed'; the inhabitants had minds 'as uncultivated as their barren hills'; they suffered 'almost total destitution of every outward means of religious improvement'. But with the arrival of Davies, familiar with the area and its poverty from the days when he was a pedlar selling rags to the paper mills, things had looked up. 'Their wretched huts have gradually been superseded by stone-built cottages' and they 'are an improved race of beings'.⁶

Gabb died in 1844 and his successor in 1847. The next rector, Edward Inwood Jones, a descendant of the Joneses of Usk Priory, was not a well man and did not apply to the Incorporated Church Building Society (ICBS) for a grant to repair his church until 1852. Supporting the application, Archdeacon William Crawley⁷ described Shirenewton as lying 'upon the same wild hills as Devauden Green'. The population (895 in the 1841 census, 933 in 1851) was 'generally of the like scattered and very poor description, who live in cottages built ... generally upon the waste – & surrounded by a few perches of unproductive land which has been reclaimed by their industry from the surrounding commons'.

Inwood Jones himself described the parish as 'the poorest, & the most overburden'd with a pauper population, in the Chepstow district – the exposed situation, & shallow soil afford no encouragement to Wealthy Occupiers. The Ratepayers generally are small Tenant Occupiers, a class quite unable to bear any heavy expenditure'. There had been 'heavy Parochial involvements', charges on the Poor Rates to the amount of several hundred pounds. There were only two large landed proprietors, and though one of them had been munificent in contributing to the restoration, from the other 'we have no hope of obtaining assistance. I do not think he will offer any serious opposition, but he will do nothing to forward the work'. This must have been John Cartwright, a farmer and merchant, living in 1851 at what was now called Shirenewton House. He had 350 acres and employed seventeen labourers. Was he, perhaps, a Nonconformist? There were no less than five chapels in Shirenewton parish by this time, and their presence must have spurred the established church to put its house literally in order.⁸

⁶ Shirenewton Tithe Map and Apportionment in Gwent Record Office (GRO); Gabb, James Ashe, *Davies of Devauden* (1839) *passim*; Phillips, Sir Thomas, *The Life of James Davies* (2nd edit., 1852) ix, 27 and 34; Bradney, *Volume I, Part II*, 173–4, *Volume III, Part I*, 22; Barber, J.T., *A Tour throughout South Wales and Monmouthshire* (1803) 221–2; Birbeck, T.T., *Sword and Ploughshare* (1973) 134.

⁷ For a brief account of Archdeacon Crawley's life and work see Clark, J.H., *Reminiscences of Monmouthshire* (Usk, 1908) 148–50 and Edwards, Canon Arthur, *The Diocese of Monmouth. The Seven Bishops* (1996) iv–v.

⁸ Jones, Ieuan Gwynedd and Williams, David (eds.), *The Religious Census of 1851... Volume I, South Wales* (1976) 7–8.

In 1843, the large landowners had been William Hollis of Shirenewton Court and David Carruthers of the Grondra.⁹ The families were closely connected, if Bradney is correct. Hollis, the third in a row named William, came from Mounton, where his family had been paper millers for at least ninety years, but his father had died when he was only a child. His widowed mother then married John Proctor, a Chepstow banker, who lived at the Grondra. The Proctors had one daughter, Sarah, who inherited the Grondra and married David Carruthers. Presumably Hollis grew up at the Grondra himself, though once he had come into his own inheritance he seems to have lived in Mounton and run various mills. Later he moved back to Shirenewton, rebuilding the Court on the site of a much older house. Sheriff in 1831, he married James Ashe Gabb's daughter, Annette. He left the Court for Kingsdown in Bristol in 1848, and when he died in 1865 he was buried at Cheltenham.¹⁰ Sarah Carruthers died in 1845, and like her husband has a memorial in Shirenewton church. It seems probable, therefore, that it was Carruthers who was the munificent contributor to Mr Inwood Jones's fund.

Our artist does not seem to have been familiar with either big house. The Grondra is not drawn at all, the Court only from a distance. But the church is sketched several times, and seems in good repair, though this cannot have been so. 'No efficient or substantial repairs have been effected within the memory of the present inhabitants, & both Walls & Fittings are now in a sad state from neglect & want of repair' runs the application to the ICBS. In his covering letter, Inwood Jones writes that 'the Church has long been in a very dilapidated condition' and speaks of its 'threaten'd ruin'. He goes on to quote the report of the architect John Norton: 'The Nave Roof, which is very antient, is now completely decay'd in parts that it must be replaced, nor do I think it desirable to use any of the old materials in its reconstruction ... the windows have been in most cases very ill-restored with wooden mullions in lieu of the antient stone ones ...'. It was common for applicants to the ICBS to exaggerate the poverty of their parishes, and no doubt Norton wanted the job, but there is a desperate tone to Inwood Jones's letter which suggests he was telling pretty much the truth. He was only thirty-eight, though, and his illness was so serious that he died shortly after the repairs were finished.

Another letter in the ICBS file adds a melancholy footnote. It is from the bishop and says the Diocesan Church Building Society is unable to help as it has been crippled by the failure of the Monmouthshire and Glamorgan Bank. The ICBS responded with a grant of £100.¹¹

The Drawings

In the list below, the titles and dates in italics are taken from the drawings themselves, with additional descriptions and notes in roman. They are numbered in the order in which they appear in the sketchbook.

⁹ In the Tithe Apportionment David Carruthers is listed as owning 406 acres, William Hollis 342.

¹⁰ Waters, Ivor, *Mounton Valley Paper Mills* (1958, revised 1987) 17. Itton Court Mill is called Hollis Mill on the maps in the 1825 Survey of the Manor of Caldicot and Newton (Private Collection). Bradney, *Volume IV, Part I*, 49, and *Part II*, 153 and 156, includes the Hollis and Proctor genealogies, but the dates are not reconcilable. Sarah Carruthers, née Proctor, died, according to her memorial in Shirenewton church, in March 1845, aged 48, which means she was born in 1796 or 1797, the same year as William Hollis III. Hollis's father, according to his memorial in Mounton church, did not die until 1799. Perhaps Sarah was the daughter of a previous marriage of Proctor's, in which case she was not Hollis's half-sister.

¹¹ Lambeth Palace Library, ICBS 4492. Bradney, *Volume IV, Part I*, 49, and *Part II*, Shirenewton, *passim*.

1. *Tintern Augst 11th/40.*
2. *N.Window Tintern Abbey July 14th/40.*
3. *Tintern Abbey July 14th/40.*
4. *Chepstow July/40.* The bridge from below, with the tollhouse.
5. An abandoned drawing of Chepstow castle from across the river.
6. *Chepstow July 17th/40.* Two ladies in bonnets are watching a third sketch Marten's Tower. The drawing indicates that sketching was an approved ladylike activity, and though it is not in itself proof that the artist of the sketchbook was a woman, it makes it seem likely. **Plate 1.**
7. *Chepstow Castle July 22nd/40.* This drawing shows the limekiln where there is now undergrowth below the south-west tower of the upper bailey. **Plate 2.**
8. *Chepstow July 18th/40.* The round tower of the gateway to the middle bailey.
9. *Chepstow July 18th/40.* Detail of gateway and entrance to great hall.
10. *Chepstow Church July 18th/40.* The church was being extensively restored and altered while the artist was at work, and the north aisle, shown here with a porch, was shortly to be removed. Priory buildings can be seen beyond the west end, and this area continued to be known as the Priory well into the twentieth century. The artist also drew a trial sketch of the tower window in the sky. **Plate 3.**
11. *Chepstow July 18th/40.* The dell with tower and gate.
12. *Pentycassen Farm Augst 3rd/40.* This is now called Pant-y-cosyn, which means Cheese Hollow. In 1843, the farm of 112 acres belonged to Mary Anne Turton, the widow of Zouch Turton, the duke of Beaufort's steward, who died in 1814.¹² It was let to Samuel Davis, fifty-five, who lived there with his wife Margaret, fifty-two, and their daughter Elizabeth, twenty-one.
 There have been changes: the front door has been moved and given a porch. The steps to the granary at the left of the picture have gone, and the granary itself has been incorporated into the house. Presumably at the same time a new window, identical to one of the granary ones, was added to the main house. The stone shed at right angles to the house and barn is also later. The saddle stones in front of the house have gone; Mr Lyn Whittington of Pant-y-cosyn suggests they may have supported a salting table. **Plates 4 and 5.**
13. *Tintern Augst 11th/40.* Side aisle with two figures.
14. *Shirenewton July 13th/40.* This is one of the first drawings the artist made, a view of the church from the south-east, set on a non-existent small rise no doubt for dramatic effect. For the pond see under *The Artist* above. The trees on the right are probably there to make the setting more rustic. The *Gwentia* drawing, also made before the church's drastic rebuilding and gothicisation by John Norton in 1852–3, is at first sight more convincing. The 1840 artist has omitted the railed graves and made the roof of the nave much higher than that of the chancel. In the chancel itself she has given the south window a lintel, and ignored the *Gwentia* drawing's substantial chimney for the chancel boiler, replacing it with rather a wimpish buttress further along the wall. But though the *Gwentia* artist seems more convincing here, he or she can no more be relied on than the 1840 one (see Nos.15–17 below for the alarming inaccuracies of both). **Plates 6 and 7.**
15. *Shirenewton July 13th/40.* Drawn the same day as the above. The church from the north, the Bristol Channel beyond. The view is taken from just below Mynders Farm on the road from

¹² Bradney, *Volume IV, Part I*, 44.

Shirenewton to Earlswood. In order to create her picture, the artist has made the church appear larger than it actually is at that distance and removed houses and cottages to make it stand on its own. **Plate 8.**

16. *Paper Mills Shirenewton July 16th/40.* One small building with drying windows.
17. *Valley of the Paper Mills July 23rd/40.*
18. *Valley of the Paper Mills Mountain July 23rd/40.* Linnet Mill.
19. *Valley Paper Mills Shirenewton July 23rd/40.* Though Wyndham had written of ‘the circular shady dale of Mounton’, with its ‘craggy declivities, feathered in every spot with trees’, and Coxe had said that the Mounton and Troggy valleys deserved to be visited for their picturesque beauty, no one seems to have taken them up.¹³ These drawings, all made on the same day, are therefore specially valuable, though difficult to interpret.

C.J.O. Evans, who clearly did not share the picturesque taste for industry, thriving or decayed, wrote of the Mounton valley in 1953: ‘The only blot on the scenery of this idyllic place is the presence of decayed and ruined mills’.¹⁴ He would be happier now that the ruins have virtually disappeared except for footings, but their absence, with the very great increase in trees since 1840, and the artist’s propensity to licence, makes identification of the sites extremely difficult. Only No.18 is certain. It is Linnet Mill, drawn from downstream, with a stylised version of the steep rocky cliff (now covered with trees) on the left. Part of this mill survived until the 1970s. No.17 almost certainly shows Wellhead Cottage, also demolished in the 1970s, with the Mounton brook running under Yewtree Wood. There is today a plank bridge where the artist has put her implausibly arched one. No.19 is inscribed ‘Shirenewton’, and may well show Pandy Mill, Laundry Cottage and Dyers Mill (before it was reduced in height), but this identification is more speculative. For these last suggestions I am most grateful to Dr Cavill. **Plates 9, 10 and 11.**

20. *White Mills July 27th/40.* There was no mill called White Mills, though there had been a White Mill, or White Paper Mill, or Goodbehind or Curbehind Mill in Mynydd Bach since at least the seventeenth century. Paper was made there from 1730. Only foundations now remain, heavily overgrown, by the Welsh Water works on the Mounton brook, not far down the valley from Pant-y-cosyn. In 1825, when James Jones seems to have taken over, it was described as having ‘two vats with the storerooms, dyeing houses and other buildings’. It was called Itton White Paper Mill from c.1841, when it still belonged to Jones, who had also run Tuck Mill. Tuck Mill closed in 1839, White Mill in 1849.¹⁵ For discussion of the fancifulness of this drawing, see under *The Artist* above. **Plate 12.**
21. *Shirenewton July 24th/40.* Distant view with stream and cottages in foreground, the church on top of the ridge.
22. *Tintern July 25/40.* East window from inside.
23. *South end Tintern Abbey July 25th/40.*
24. *Llandogan July 28th/40.* Llandogo church, described to the ICBS in 1858 as ‘now in a dilapidated state owing to age’, was torn down to make way for the present remarkable one by

¹³ Wyndham, Henry Penruddocke, *A Tour through Monmouthshire and Wales* (1781) 6, and Coxe, William, *An Historical Tour in Monmouthshire* (1801) 364. An exception was John Swete, prebendary of Exeter, who made a pre-Coxe sketch of Mounton Chapel, as he called it, in 1791. Ref. National Library of Wales (NLW) Sketchbook 76, p.4.

¹⁴ Evans, C.J.O., *Monmouthshire* (n.d., preface 1953) 420.

¹⁵ Waters, Ivor, *Mounton Valley Paper Mills* (1958, revised 1987) 9 and 18. Also Birbeck, *op.cit.*, 127.

J.P. Seddon in 1859–61.¹⁶ See comments on *The Artist* above for a discussion of this drawing. **Plates 13,14 and 15.**

25. *Tintern July 29th/40.* View downstream towards the abbey from the bend of the river with houses, ships, etc.
26. *Tintern July 29th/40.* Abbey across the river.
27. *Tintern July 29th/40.* Village scene. **Plate 16.**
28. *July 29th/40.* Sketches of Tintern.
29. *Tintern July 29th/40.* Exterior of the abbey.
30. Tintern Abbey interior.
31. *Tintern July 29th/40.* Village scene, perhaps with Abbey Mill across the river. **Plate 17.**
32. *Shirenewton July 30th/40.* The approach to the church from the north-east before the graveyard was extended. On the left is a shed with a cart, a wheel and other agricultural machinery; possibly a wheelwright's shed. On the right is what is now the Tredegar Arms car park. **Plate 18.**
33. *Shirenewton July 31st/40.* This view is from a hill on what was until June 2005 the golf-course, south-west of the village. The house on the left is the then fairly recent Rectory, now Caepwcella, with the church just behind it. The mansion on the right is Shirenewton Court, said by Bradney to have been built by William Hollis in the early-nineteenth century on the site of the much older house of Bishop Blethyn. Newman, following the 1901 sale particulars, says Hollis's house was Italianate,¹⁷ but this drawing shows it as plain English Georgian – like the Grondra, in fact. The straight front with a verandah running its whole length does not accord with the photo in the particulars, where there is a projection at the south-west corner of the house. This projection is also clearly shown in a photo taken between 1867 and 1878, before the botanist Edward Lowe bought the house in 1880.

The 1840 drawing may exhibit another example of artistic licence. But it is also possible that Hollis himself altered the house between 1840 and his departure in 1848, and there are at least two other occupiers who could have rebuilt it after he'd gone.

In 1851, when it was called Shirenewton House, the Cartwrights lived there (*see* above). By 1860, Frederick Levick was in residence, describing himself in the census the following year as 'County Magistrate and Iron Master'. He was in fact a remarkable entrepreneur, one of the first men successfully to use the waste gases from blast furnaces. Born in 1803, he rose from manager of the Cwm Celyn and Blaina Ironworks in 1844 to become by 1858 sole owner not only of these but of the Coalbrookvale works as well. In 1854–6, he commissioned John Norton, fresh from his restoration at Shirenewton church and about to start on Wolvesnewton, to build him a church at Aberystroth (since demolished). It was so grand that Crawshay Bailey refused to contribute on the grounds that it was too expensive.¹⁸ It is tempting to imagine that if Levick did alter the house, he employed Norton to do it. But Norton, later the architect of Tyntesfield, was a determined gothicist and there is no sign of medievalism in the photos of the house before Charles Liddell's reconstruction in the early 1900s.

¹⁶ Lambeth Palace Library, ICBS 5319.

¹⁷ Newman, John, *The Buildings of Wales. Gwent/Monmouthshire* (2000) 528.

¹⁸ Bradney, *Volume I, Part II*, 474 and 477, where Aberystroth church is illustrated. Newman, *op.cit.*, 130, 527 & 602. See also Ince, Laurence, *The South Wales Iron Industry 1750–85* (1993)131–2.

It is not clear how much Levick used the house, though he married a daughter from it in 1860.¹⁹ The family preferred the new church at Aberystroth for baptisms and burials and it is there that Frederick Levick was himself buried in November 1867.²⁰

Between at least 1867 and at least August 1878, the house was let to the Misses Mary Frances and Emma Wienholt. They had certainly left by January 1880.²¹ **Plate 19.**

34. *Caldicot July 31st/40.* The church seen over a pond. *See* comments on *The Artist* above for a discussion of this drawing. **Plate 20.**

35. *Chepstow Augst/40.* Interior of castle.

36. *From a window in Chepstow Augst 5th/40.* The castle across the river.

Since the article was written, new research by Dorothy Brabon on the electoral rolls has shown that Shirenewton House was owned from the late 1850s to at least 1870 by a Captain Francis Hawkins.²² Levick was therefore only ever a tenant, though that would not necessarily have stopped him from making alterations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have had assistance from many people in writing this article and am especially grateful to the honorary editor, Annette Burton; to Anne Rainsbury of Chepstow Museum; and the staffs of the Gwent Record Office (GRO); The Meteorological Office Archive; and the Libraries of The Society of Antiquaries of London and Lambeth Palace. At Shirenewton, I received invaluable advice from the Whittington family of Pant-y-cosyn, and members of the Shirenewton Local History Society, especially Carol Bailey, Mrs Dorothy Brabon, Dr Ivor Cavill, Ian McFarlane, and Keith Tayton. In Llandogo, I received great help from Roger Brown and Ashley Thomas. Mrs Jean Buchanan gave me much information about the Wienholt family. I am also most grateful to Mr John Evans of Blaenavon for detailed information about the Levick family and for providing references relating to them.

¹⁹ Jane Eleanor ‘of this parish’ of Shirenewton married Isobel Hawker Soper, a surgeon of Blaina, on 18 April 1860. Ref. Shirenewton parish records (GRO).

²⁰ Aberystroth parish records, 11 Nov. 1867 (GRO). The curate usually conducted burials, but for Levick the rector officiated. Levick’s business had failed in 1865, when it suspended payments. ‘A very large concourse of workers ... gathered to make a presentation to Mr and Mrs Levick, owner of the works, as a mark of respect and sympathy after they found out that the company was in difficulties’, and songs of praise in English and Welsh were written for his efforts in connection with the re-opening of the Blaina works. Ref. *Free Press*, 9 Sept. 1865 and NLW MSS 9367C.

²¹ *See* Buchanan, Jean, ‘John Birkett Wienholt, 1775–1852, London merchant and tenant of Laugharne Castle’, *The Carmarthenshire Antiquary*, 38 (2002) 53–58. Another branch of the family lived for a time at Llanwern House and Malpas Court. *See* Bradney, *Volume IV, Part II*, 252.

²² The only Captain Francis Hawkins in the army lists left the 89th Foot in 1836 or 1837.



Plate 1: *Chepstow July 17th/40*. (For commentary see **Drawing No. 6**).
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Plate 2: *Chepstow Castle July 22nd/40*. (For commentary see **Drawing No. 7**).
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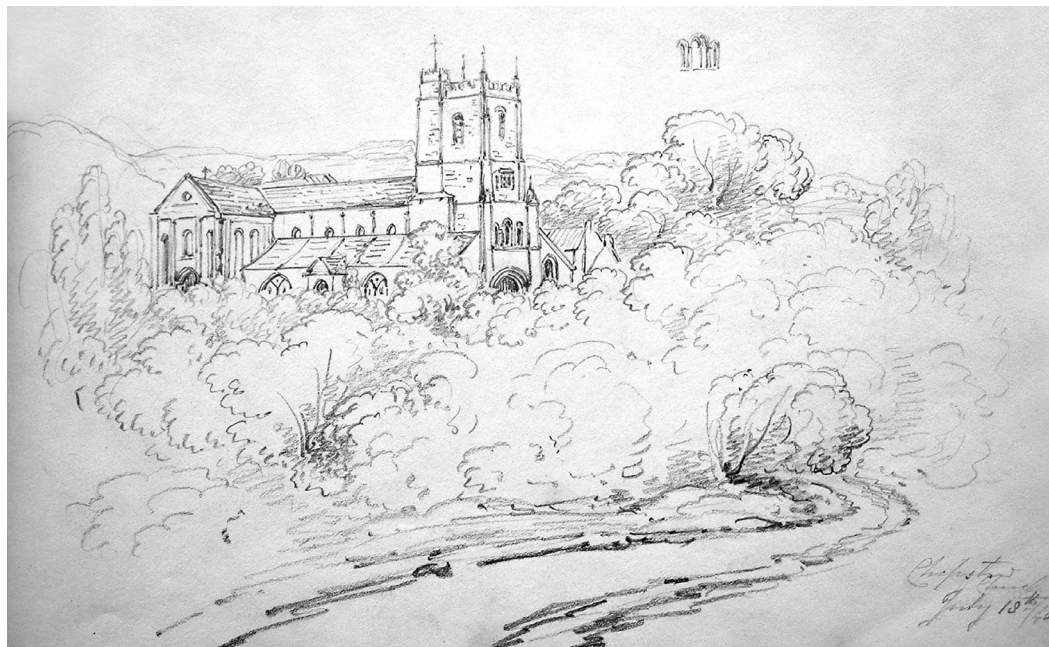


Plate 3: *Chepstow Church July 18th/40.* (For commentary see *Drawing No.10*).
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Plate 4: *Pentycassen Farm Aug 3rd/40.* (For commentary see *Drawing No.12*).
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Plate 5: Pant-y-Cosyn photographed in summer 2005. (For commentary see *Drawing* No.12).
Photograph: author.



Plate 6: Shirenewton July 13th/40. (For commentary see *Drawing* No.14).
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Plate 7: Shirenewton Church (*Gwentia Eccles. Antiq.*, Volume III, p.52).
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Plate 8: Shirenewton July 13th/40. (For commentary see *Drawing No.15*).
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Plate 9: *Valley of the Paper Mills July 23rd/40. (Drawing No.17).*
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Plate 10: *Valley of the Paper Mills Mountain July 23rd/40. (For commentary see Drawing No.18).*
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Plate 11: *Valley Paper Mills Shirenewton July 23rd/40.* (For commentary see *Drawing No.19*).
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Plate 12: *White Mills July 27th/40.* (For commentary see *Drawing No.20*).
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Plate 13: *Llandogan July 28th/40*. (For commentary see *Drawing No.24*).
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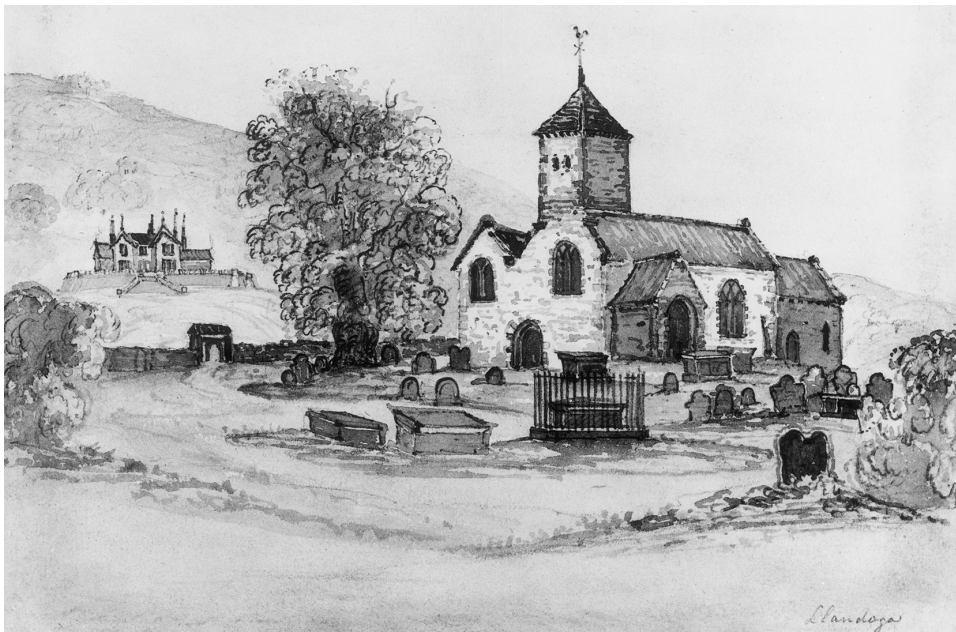


Plate 14: *Old church, Llandogo* (*Gwentia Eccles. Antiq.*, Volume II, p.24).
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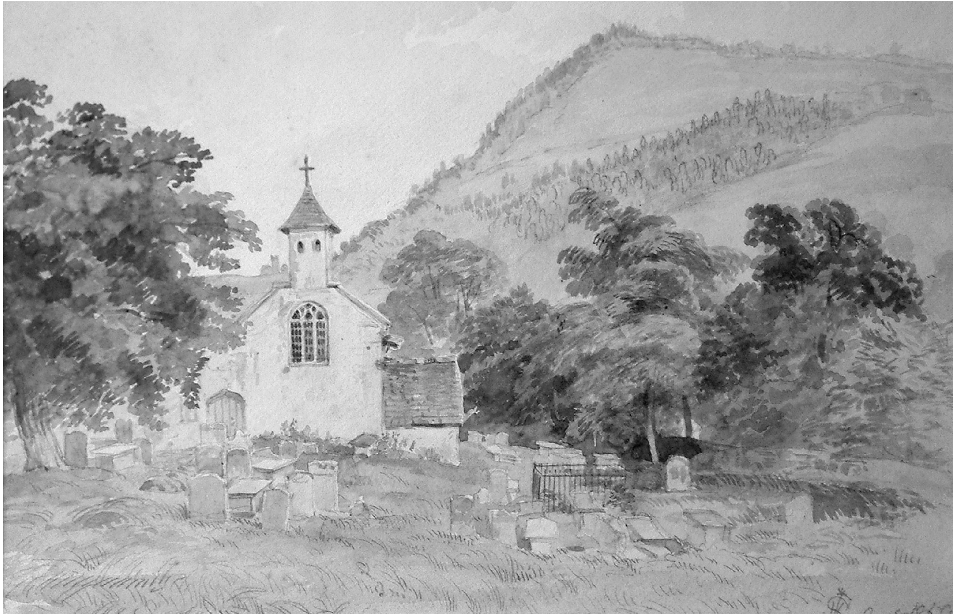


Plate 15: Old church, Llandogo, 1859.
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and Llandogo Parochial Church Council.
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Plate 16: Tintern July 29th/40. (**Drawing** No.27).
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Plate 17: *Tintern July 29th/40. (Drawing No. 31).*
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Plate 18: *Shirenewton July 30th/40. (For commentary see Drawing No. 32).*
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Plate 19: *Shirenewton July 31st/40*. (For commentary see *Drawing No.33*).
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Plate 20: *Caldicot July 31st/40*. (*Drawing No. 34*.
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TWO LETTERS OF 1493 FROM QUEEN ELIZABETH TO JASPER TUDOR, DUKE OF BEDFORD, CONCERNING THE WILL OF HER SERVANT, THOMAS KEMEYS OF NEWPORT

By W.R.B. Robinson

Copies of two previously unpublished letters from Queen Elizabeth, the wife of Henry VII, to Jasper Tudor, duke of Bedford, Henry VII's uncle, are preserved in the Tredegar Collection in the National Library of Wales.¹ Both letters were dated on 9 October at Collyweston, a manor house four miles south of Stamford which later became the principal residence of Lady Margaret Beaufort, Henry VII's mother.² From details of Henry VII's itinerary and other sources it is clear that the letters were written in 1493, when Henry VII stayed at Collyweston during the first two weeks of October.³ Queen Elizabeth's purpose in writing to Jasper Tudor was to ask him to be a 'good lorde' to Roger Kemeys by assisting him to take possession of the lands bequeathed to him by his brother, Thomas Kemeys, the queen's recently deceased servant. The text of Thomas Kemeys's will, made on 12 August 1493, fortunately survives in the records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury in the National Archives at Kew,⁴ and provides valuable evidence of his close association with Queen Elizabeth.

In his will Thomas Kemeys of Newport in Wales directed that he was to be buried in St Woolos's Church in Newport. He bequeathed to his brother John all his goods and gowns ('togas') in his chamber at Kenilworth together with his horse called the 'doune geldyng' apparently also at Kenilworth, and he further provided that if his brother died his goods, gowns and the dun gelding should remain to his brother Roger. He bequeathed to Roger his damask gown in a certain house in Coventry and a velvet gown in the house of Master Grevys in London. He directed Roger to pay Master Grevys £10 which he owed him, and bequeathed to Roger all his defensive arms or 'harnesse' remaining in the house of a certain knight at Calais, to whom Roger was to repay £10. He bequeathed to Roger a white horse called the 'Jenett' at Worcester, and to the shrine of the Blessed Mary of Penrhys ('Penres') he bequeathed a velvet gown to be made into vestments.

Thomas Kemys made a number of bequests to John Gough, his spiritual father (confessor), and bequeathed six cows to his daughter Sibyl. He willed that all his lands within the lordship of Newport and Wentloog (Gwynllwg) and the lordship of Swansea in West Gower should remain to his brother Roger and his heirs and assigns for ever. He directed the feoffees of his lands in the lordships of Newport and Swansea to make a good estate in law of all his lands in these lordships to his brother Roger, to whom he left his remaining goods. He appointed Roger as the executor of his will, and Thomas Lucas as its supervisor. He was probably a widower when he made his will, which does not mention his wife. His will was witnessed by John ap Morgan, Thomas ap John, vicar of Newport, Morgan David ap Guillam ap Meryk and others. It concluded with a record of his debts, and was proved at Lambeth on 2 June 1494.

¹ In Box 67/27 in the Tredegar Collection. Transcripts of the letters are given as an Appendix to this article. The copies and the associated deeds recorded on the same manuscript were probably made in 1494 or shortly afterwards.

² Jones, M.K. and Underwood, M.G., *The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge, 1992) 154–61 (references to the rooms at Collyweston reserved for Queen Elizabeth).

³ Cooper, C.H., *Memoir of Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge, 1874) 54.

⁴ The National Archives, hereafter TNA, Prerogative Court of Canterbury will-register Vox, PROB 11/10, p. 81b.

The terms of Thomas Kemeys's will indicate that he had accompanied Henry VII and Queen Elizabeth on several of their progresses. It mentions five places where property belonging to him was located, namely Kenilworth, Worcester, Coventry, London and Calais, all places which Henry VII visited in the first eight years of his reign.⁵ The presence of Kemeys's goods in his chamber at Kenilworth suggests that he had his own room in Kenilworth castle, where Henry VII stayed in June and most of July 1487, and again early in June 1488. In May 1486, Henry VII visited Worcester, where Kemeys's horse called the 'Jenett' was kept at the date of his will. In May 1487, and again in April and June 1493, Henry VII visited Coventry where Kemeys had a velvet gown. The location of his armour in the house of a certain knight at Calais suggests that Kemeys may have accompanied Henry VII when he besieged Boulogne from Calais in the autumn of 1492.

Thomas Kemeys was a member of a locally influential gentry family in the lordship of Newport who probably came to the notice of Jasper Tudor when the duke took possession of that lordship in the right of his wife, Katherine Woodville. The lordship was part of the great estates of the Stafford family, successively earls and dukes of Buckingham. At the time of Henry VII's accession Edward, duke of Buckingham was seven years old and during his minority his lands came into the possession of the king, who assigned the lordship of Newport and some other lands to the young duke's mother, Katherine Woodville.⁶ Before 7 November 1485 she married Jasper Tudor, who took possession of the lordship of Newport in the right of his wife before 5 January 1486. In February and March 1486, Jasper Tudor went to South Wales to enforce obedience to Tudor rule, and visited South Wales again in 1491 and 1492. He retained possession of the lordship of Newport until his death at Thornbury castle on 21 December 1495.⁷ One of Queen Elizabeth's letters of 9 October 1493 refers to Thomas Kemeys as late serjeant porter, and in all probability he was porter of Newport castle.

Thomas Kemeys was the eldest son of William Kemeys whose mother, Elizabeth, was the daughter and heir of Sir John Delamar of Gower.⁸ He was also related to the wife of Thomas Lucas, the rising young lawyer whom he nominated as supervisor of his will.⁹ Lucas's wife was Elizabeth Kemeys, described in a heraldic visitation of Suffolk made in 1561 as 'Elizabeth daughter of Keymys off Wales by Regland Castell'.¹⁰ She cannot be clearly identified in the Kemeys pedigrees, but had probably married Thomas Lucas some years before Thomas Kemeys made his will in 1493.¹¹ Lucas may have been one of Jasper Tudor's legal advisers and it was probably at his request

⁵ For Henry VII's itinerary, see Temperley, Gladys, *Henry VII* (London, 1917) 411–19.

⁶ For the lordship of Newport in the early years of Henry VII's reign, see Robinson, W.R.B., *Early Tudor Gwent 1485–1547* (Cheam, 2002) 8–9.

⁷ Thomas, R.S., 'Tudor, Jasper, duke of Bedford (c. 1431–1495)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

⁸ Siddons, M.P. (ed.), *Visitations by the Heralds in Wales* (Harleian Society New Series, 14, 1996) 32–3. For a valuable account of the Kemeys family in the lordship of Newport, see Pugh, T.B., *The Marcher Lordships of South Wales 1415–1536: Select Documents* (Cardiff, 1963) 291–3.

⁹ Lucas appears as Henry VII's solicitor general in 1498, but he was probably appointed to that office in 1497. See Sainty, J. (ed.), *A List of English Law Officers, King's Counsel and Holders of Places of Preference* (Selden Society, London, 1987) 60.

¹⁰ Corder, Joan (ed.), *The Visitation of Suffolk, 1561* (Harleian Society, New Series, 2, 1981) 49.

¹¹ Thomas Lucas (d. 31 July 1531) had a son named Jasper whose son Thomas died in the lifetime of his grandfather aged 21 years (*The Visitation of Suffolk, 1561*) 50d.

that Jasper Tudor agreed to be one of the feoffees to whom on 11 September 1492 Thomas Kemeys granted his manor of Llangennith in West Gower to the use of Morgan Kidwelly (d. 1505), a prominent lawyer of Welsh ancestry.¹²

The original manuscripts of Queen Elizabeth's letters to Jasper Tudor do not survive. The copies of them in the Tredegar Collection were written on a large sheet of paper which also records the deeds implementing the queen's requests to Jasper Tudor, concluding with his letters patent of 30 March 1494. It is unclear why the queen sent two letters to Jasper Tudor on the same day in broadly similar terms, the only significant difference being that the copy of the letter on the bottom half of the folio on which both letters were recorded refers to Thomas Kemeys as late serjeant porter. The explanation for the survival of both letters written on the same day may be that one was sent after the other was despatched. What seems certain is that both letters were delivered to Jasper Tudor and were then sent by him to his officers in the lordship of Newport for appropriate action, since copies of them survived among the muniments of the Morgans of Tredegar, the predominant family in the lordship of Newport which was prominent in its administration in the lifetime of Jasper Tudor and long afterwards.

The earliest evidence of the action taken by Roger Kemeys and others to secure the implementation of the terms of his brother Thomas's will is provided by a grant of 2 December 1493 by which Roger granted a group of feoffees all his lands in the lordships of Newport, Gwynllwg and Swansea. On 6 January 1494, the same feoffees leased the lands to Roger Kemeys and two others for four years, and made provision that the lands were to remain to Roger and the lawful heirs of his body. If Roger were to die, they were to remain to his brother Henry, and if Henry died they were to remain to Thomas Lucas and his wife, Elizabeth, Roger Kemeys's sister. The grant of 24 January 1494 concluded with the appointment of feoffees to deliver seisin of the lands to the grantors. The series of grants relating to the lands bequeathed by Thomas Kemeys ended with letters patent issued by Jasper Tudor on 30 March 1494 setting out the tenor of an enrolment made in his chancery at Newport. This recorded that on 24 March 1494 the vicar of Newport and two others had appeared in the chancery and declared on oath that Thomas Kemeys's will had granted all his lands in the lordships of Newport, Gwynllwg and Swansea to his brother Roger. They requested that their testimony should be enrolled in the chancery and Jasper Tudor, at Roger Kemeys's request, caused it to be so enrolled. Presumably as a consequence of this series of grants Roger Kemeys took possession of the lands that his brother Thomas had bequeathed to him, but no evidence for this has been found. Roger Kemeys was granted a royal pardon on 24 January 1497.¹³ The latest reference to him is in a bill of complaint submitted to the king's Chancery at Westminster by his brother Henry against John Dennys and Fortune, his wife, late wife of Roger Kemeys, deceased, concerning his lands in the lordship of Newport.¹⁴ This does not indicate the date of Roger's death, which was probably in or shortly before 1506.

¹² *Cal. Close Rolls 1485–1500* no. 631.

¹³ TNA, C67/55, m.1d. For a few references to the chancery at Newport see Reeves, A.C., *Newport Lordship 1317–1536* (Ann Arbor, 1979), and for chanceries in other marcher lordships see Davies, R.R., *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales* (Oxford, 1978) 200.

¹⁴ TNA, C1/328/64. These lands were in the manors of Rogerstone and Sutton-in-St Brides, Wentloog.

Queen Elizabeth's representations to Jasper Tudor on behalf of Roger Kemeys were commented on by modern historians in 1992¹⁵ and 2004¹⁶ because they show her acting firmly and independently of Henry VII to ensure that the will of a valued servant should be fully and promptly implemented. The preservation of the letters now published is fortunate, as very few letters written by Queen Elizabeth survive.¹⁷ They confirm the favourable view of her character taken by contemporary commentators. If the copies of these letters and the associated deeds had not survived, historians of early Tudor Wales would have lost all record of Thomas Kemeys's association with Queen Elizabeth and of Jasper Tudor's role in the disposal of his lands.

¹⁵ Jones and Underwood, *The Queen's Mother*, 85. The authors refer to the queen's intercession with Jasper Tudor 'when a Welsh tenant appealed to her over an injustice', and cite the late Mr T.B. Pugh (1923–2002) as their source. Mr Pugh drew his information from the two letters of Queen Elizabeth transcribed after this article. He discussed them with me.

¹⁶ Horrox, Rosemary, 'Elizabeth (1466–1503), queen of England', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004). Dr Horrox comments that the queen's traditional role as intercessor with the king must have been shared with, but not eclipsed by, the king's mother.

¹⁷ Crawford, Anne (ed.), *Letters of the Queens of England* (Stroud, 1994) 157.

APPENDIX

National Library of Wales, Tredegar Collection, Box 67/27, documents of 1493–4.

The copies of Queen Elizabeth's two letters and the associated deeds are recorded on a single sheet of paper measuring 42cm x 31cm in Box 67/27 in the Tredegar Collection. Before the copies were made the paper was folded in half to form two folios. The paper is damaged and small pieces are missing from the top edges of the folios and the lines immediately below them. In the transcripts below the resultant gaps in the texts of the letters are indicated thus ..., and each line of the writing in the copies is numbered consecutively from the beginning of each letter with numbers in square brackets, e.g. [1]. The texts of the letters are almost wholly unpunctuated. In the transcripts the standard abbreviations have been extended, but otherwise only the words and letters now legible are shown.

Folio 1 recto, copy of letter from Queen Elizabeth on upper half of folio.

[1] ... Ryght tr...ght entyerly [2] ... lovyd u... of Bedforde [3] by the ... [4] Ryght trusty ... entyerly belovyd uncle we grete you harteley wele A...ing¹⁸ [5] you that oure we...d Roger Kemys hath done to be sheuyd unto us howe that our... [6] late sarvaunte Thom... Kemys hys brother decessyd whom god pardon devysed by his la... [7] wylle that the sayde Roger shulde succede hym to be the ... herytour of hys landes ... [8] that entent put the same in feoffment yt ys sayde ... erfor we pray you ha...ly ...¹⁹ [9] to be good lorde unto hym And to have hym towards ...u espially recumendid so ... [10] that he may have all suche landes as by the wylle of our sayde late sarvaunte ... [11] of ryght shall be founde justely to apperteigne unto hym sheewing unto hym all the ... [12] favor and tendyrnesse that ye godly may And the more specially for owr sake [13] and prayer as our grette troust ys in you Yeven under our signet at the manoir of Colyweston on the ixth day of October.

Folio 1 recto, copy of letter from Queen Elizabeth on lower half of folio.

[1] By the quene [2] To our ryght trusty and ryght entyerly welbelovid [3] uncle the duke of Bedforde [4] Ryght trusty and ryght entyrlly welbelovid uncle we gret you hartely wele [5] And where we be enformyd that Thomas Kemys late sariaunte porter decessed whom [6] Theu pardon at the tyme of hys dethe by hys testament wyllyd that oure welbelovyd [7] Roger Kemys hys brother shulde have after hys decesse all suche lyvelodde as he [8] in hys lyfe hadde and thereuppon accordyng to hys seyde wylle such persons as [9] were enfeoffyd in the same lyvelod have relessyd unto the seyde Roger as yt ys sayde [10] we tendering hys wele and preferment pray you in our ryght harty wyse that the [11] rather at thys our desyre yt may lyke you to be hys goode lorde and that you [12] shew unto hym your good favor in the obteyning of hys ryght in that partye so as [13] ye shall not only doo the thyng according with justyse as we veryly trust but allso unto [14] us thyng of ryght acceptable pleasur yevyn under our signet at the manoir [15] of Colyweston the ixte day of October.

¹⁸ Possibly 'Advertising'.

¹⁹ 'uncle', now missing, is given a transcript which I made many years ago and still retain.

REVIEWS

Chivers, Alan, *Coal, Guns and Rugby, a Monmouthshire Memoir* (Oakwood Press, Usk, 2005); ISBN 0 85361 488 1; paperback, 150mm x 210mm; 168pp., 53 illustrations; £12–95.

Alan Chivers's book is exactly what its title says. It describes coal mining, home defence in the Second World War and rugby football in the inter-war years, through the remembered life of one man, the author's father. He uses a thematic approach but the topics are dealt with in a broadly chronological sequence. The style is not that of a narrative or essay but is more in the tradition of the books of reminiscences of the Victorian age, written by local figures in their later years. Alan Chivers's book, however, is far better organized and more professionally produced.

The subject of the book, Ernest Percival Chivers, known it seems as Percy, was a bright boy who won a scholarship to Pontywaun Intermediate School but left after one year in 1916 to work in a local colliery; his later regret at this decision colours many aspects of the book. His life between the wars featured periods of work and unemployment, as well as jobs undertaken outside mining and a short move to England. By the outbreak of the Second World War, he had progressed, first to fireman and then to clerical posts in the colliery office. Meanwhile he had a not undistinguished career in rugby, with the Risca and Cross Keys clubs and was a committed member of the congregation and Sunday school at Moriah Baptist chapel. During the war he served in the Home Guard and with the return of peace, he was appointed training officer at Nine Mile Point Colliery, where he stayed until his retirement. He also became a member of the mines rescue team. By then he was relatively comfortably off but did not enjoy a lengthy retirement as he died in 1969.

The years covered by the book were eventful, particularly in South Wales and Alan Chivers gives the reader a view of the great events of the day, including the coalfield disputes, the vicissitudes of South Wales rugby between the wars, revivals and decline in chapel going, war-time air raids, and the revival of the coal industry following nationalization, through the memories of a man who lived through them. It is this grass roots view of the world of Percy Chivers and his contemporaries which enliven the book and make it an interesting and enlightening read. Alan Chivers also manages to convey the frustration of the miners in what Kenneth O. Morgan calls the 'Locust Years' and the transformation of the industry brought about by nationalization. Using a wide range of collections and private papers, the author has managed successfully to create an authentic memoir of a man who died over thirty-five years ago. To add to this not inconsiderable achievement, he also succeeds in giving his book a local voice, although, from his brief biography, he must have spent many years away from Risca.

It is a pity that there are a couple of factual errors that should have been picked up in editing. For example, the coal industry was not nationalized in the First World War, but taken under government control, with the owners left in possession of the pits and the profits; disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Wales occurred in 1920, not 1918, and the dispute of the summer and autumn of 1926, which followed the General Strike, was a lock-out not a strike.

These are, however, small points in a book which has been well-produced with a detailed bibliography and a comprehensive set of endnotes. It should appeal to anyone with an interest in the social history of industrial Monmouthshire in the first half of the twentieth century or in the topics covered by the book. The general reader should also find it interesting and entertaining, as the reviewer did over Christmas.

Richard Watson

Egan, Josephine, *A Century of Service in Wales: the story of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit, 1902–2002* (Three Peaks Press, Abergavenny, 2005); ISBN: 1 902093 11 9; 150mm x 215mm; 269pp., 49 plates; £14–99 (hardback); £10–99 (paperback).

This book is clearly a work of love and devotion. The author is herself a member of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit, one of the Catholic teaching congregations which contributed to the development of education in Wales in the century of the Catholic revival. Like so many sisterhoods, the Daughters of the Holy Spirit originated with a small group of determined women under the inspiration of a charismatic male leader (though one sometimes wonders whether the emphasis on male inspiration is not in fact an authenticating myth). The congregation was expelled from France at the height of late-nineteenth-century anticlericalism. Josephine Egan's vivid account of this traumatic period – the cavalry called in to evict the sisters from Landerneau, armed police at Missiriac and Juan-les-Pins, popular protests against the evictions – are a sharp reminder of the background to more recent controversies about the wearing of the Muslim *hijab* in French schools.

As a largely Breton congregation, the Sisters of the Holy Spirit hoped to be able to take refuge with their fellow-Britons in Wales. They received invitations and offers of support from individuals but the task of translating a convent-based education system from rural France to industrial Wales proved virtually insuperable. The sisters had to make a living, so they had to take fee-paying pupils. But the majority of Catholic children came from deprived families and backgrounds: and those who could afford to pay fees did not want their children taught with the poor.

The distinctive educational philosophy of the sisters – ‘When a Sister is obliged to correct the children of God, whom he has confided to her, she shall remember first of all that they are the children of God. Secondly, she must remember that they are more pleasing to God than she is herself ...’ was idealistic but not suited to the rough areas in which they had to work. Then there was the language problem. They had to teach not in Welsh but in English; they had neither the training nor the experience which the English system demanded. They repeatedly fell foul of the school inspectorate: there were complaints of indiscipline and inadequate teaching. There were conflicts, too, with some local clergy, and much heartbreak. Ultimately, the problem seems to have been that what they were offering, with such care and devotion, was often not what was needed.

The Daughters of the Holy Spirit never really took root in Wales. The novitiate was made up largely of girls from Ireland and Brittany. Nevertheless, they contributed to the development of the Catholic community in Wales, notably in Pontypool, where they were responsible for the St Albans convent school for the best part of a century. Major changes in the Catholic teaching orders followed the emphasis of Vatican II on working with the poor, in Catholic secondary schools, rather than teaching the children of the wealthy. The Daughters of the Holy Spirit responded to this with a new foundation in Blaenafon in the 1980s, but it was short-lived.

This is emphatically history from within, history from below. The story is told through the eyes of the sisters working in Wales. The decisions of the order back in France – decisions to close a school here, to move a community there – seem as incomprehensible now as they did to the sisters themselves. A more analytical and critical approach would have set this in the context of the sociology of the Catholic revival in Wales and the problems of religious discipline and obedience. What Josephine Egan has given us, though, is an insight into a fascinating and often-neglected aspect of recent Welsh history.

Madeleine Gray

Linnard, W., *Charles Vaughan of Pontypool: A Mystery Clockmaker and His Clocks* (Tatham Books, Cardiff, 2005); no ISBN given; card covers, 175mm x 250mm; 93pp., 110 plates & figs.; £14–50.

William Linnard has already made a considerable contribution to the history of Welsh clockmaking with his *Cardiff Clocks* (1999); *Wales Clock and Clockmakers* (2003) and co-authored *Henry Williams, Llancarvan* (2003). His latest book is a study of eighteenth-century brass faced longcase (or 'grandfather') clocks which bear the signature C (or Charles) Vaughan Pont Pool (or similar) on the dial. Linnard's book suggests that this could imply the manufacture of the clock by one of three makers, a Charles Vaughan the elder, a Charles Vaughan the younger and a Cornelius Vaughan. Linnard's supposition is that Charles Vaughan the elder was the father of the younger clockmaker and that Cornelius Vaughan was either a younger brother or nephew of the elder Charles Vaughan. Interestingly there is also a Rowland Vaughan of Pontypool, a joiner who may be responsible for some of the Vaughan clock cases, and a Thomas Vaughan, a well established clockmaker at Abergavenny

Linnard devotes the first chapter of the book to surveying the Pontypool japanning and other metalworking industries to give a background to the work of these clockmakers. It would be expected that close linkages would exist, but tantalizingly the only possible connection is that Rowland Vaughan, who Linnard suggests was Charles Vaughan's father, was married to a Barbara Allgood in 1708, and that the Allgood family came to be the main producers of japanned wares in eighteenth-century Pontypool. Anyway, the Vaughans were working as clockmakers in Pontypool, as indicated by dates on their clocks from at least 1742 to 1796, while Cornelius Vaughan did not die until 1806. Linnard provides a listing of fifty clocks made by the Vaughans, of which he has detailed records. Most of these clocks have thirty hour duration movements, while a few are eight day clocks, while a few only survive as movements with dials or even as brass dials. As would be expected for clockmakers working in the eighteenth century, all of the surviving clocks have brass faces or dials, except one with a white painted dial of the type which started to appear from the 1780s onwards.

There are many interesting and characteristic features of the Vaughan clocks. The Vaughans cut out or 'skeletonised' the brass plates used to mount the clock movement, to save on the use of brass, in a very characteristic way. This means that a Vaughan movement can be convincingly recognised, even if the dial is lacking. Also the substitution of iron pillars for brass for securing the plates together seems to be individual to these clockmakers. The engraved decoration and motifs on the clock faces is attractive and the comparison with the designs on Pontypool ware very interesting. This is a book that will appeal to owners of Vaughan clocks and is a useful addition to any reference collection of books on Monmouthshire. The illustrations are good and this will provide useful comparative information for serious horological study.

Having said this, the layout and presentation of the text, and the failure by the author to critically analyse the information he has collected, is disappointing. He may have intended to emulate other studies of individual clockmakers and in particular the work by Pryce and Davies on Samuel Roberts, a rural Montgomeryshire clockmaker¹ – a meticulously researched work with a properly organised bibliography, a feature that is noticeably lacking in Linnard's book. Linnard has also left many avenues unexplored and while he claims to have looked at the family relationships closely, he has not strayed far from such obvious sources as parish registers. Pryce and Davies show that there are many other sources that can be used to track down information about clockmakers

¹ Pryce, W.R.T. and Davies, A., *Samuel Roberts Clock Maker: An eighteenth-century craftsman in a Welsh Rural Community* (National Museum of Wales-Welsh Folk Museum, 1985).

which may have established the exact relationship between the two Charles Vaughans and Cornelius Vaughan.

It is also disappointing that there is no attempt to date the clocks on their stylistic details, and to construct a chronology showing how the Vaughans' clocks develop over a period of more than half a century. Far more could have been made of the changes that occur in the design of chapter rings and the cast brass spandrels positioned at the corners of the clock face. The stylistic progression is well established, and the outside sourcing of bronze castings, particularly spandrels, from centres such as Warrington, fails to be mentioned. The reference to and illustration (page 32) of a lantern clock from Treberen Farm, Dingestow, which the author considers to be just possibly by Charles Vaughan, seems totally improbable, as this clock is likely to date from the 1690s.

There is also a lack of detailed discussion and dating of the cases of the Vaughans' clocks. A real opportunity to make a comparison with casemaking traditions not only in Monmouthshire, Glamorgan and Breconshire, but also with Gloucestershire and Herefordshire, seems to have been missed. In addition, the clockmaking skills of the Vaughans have not been related to the other Monmouthshire clockmakers, and particularly those working in Chepstow (*cf* Waters, I., *Chepstow Miscellany*, 1958) and there is no mention of G. Dowler's *Gloucestershire Clock and Watchmakers* (Phillimore, 1984) or other source material for relevant clockmaking over the border in England. A map showing the neighbouring towns in the mid-to-late eighteenth century, where other longcase clockmakers produced brass faced longcase clocks, would have been much appreciated.

The publication of this book is likely to bring to light more clocks, and possibly watches, made by the Vaughans and will probably reveal additional documentation which will clarify the Vaughans' working relationships. A second edition of this book, taking into account the points made above, and systematically re-assessing the existing information, will produce a book of enhanced value, for which those interested in horological studies will be profoundly grateful.

Nicholas Moore

Munby, Lionel, Owen, D. Huw and Scannell, James, *Local History since 1945: England, Wales and Ireland* (Socialist History Society, SHS Occasional Paper No. 21, 2005); ISBN 0 9537742 8 7; paperback, 145mm x 210mm; 56pp.; £3-00 including postage from SHS, 50 Elmfield Road, London, SW17 8AL.

This small volume consisting of three articles examines the development of the study of local history from 1945 to the present day. Originally conceived to deal with developments in England alone, its scope was broadened to include Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Unfortunately, for reasons unspecified, the article on Scotland failed to materialize, and will be dealt with in a future edition, inevitably weakening the impact of the present volume.

The three writers have interpreted their mandate very differently. Lionel Munby, a Hertfordshire local historian, for many years extra-mural staff tutor at Cambridge University and editor of *Local Historian*, outlines the growth of interest in local as opposed to national history, from the histories produced by 'gentry and parsons', reflecting their interest in manorial and ecclesiastical history, *via* the burgeoning antiquarian societies of the nineteenth century and pre-1914 branches of the Historical Association, to the recognition by universities of local history as a valid subject for academic study. This was in part due to the influence of W.G. Hoskins, first head of the department of English Local History at the University of Leicester, established in 1948.

Interestingly, the existence of popular adult education classes in the subject helped to introduce university departments to the value of undergraduate study of original documents. Munby's description of local history as 'the histories of labourers and artisans' and 'history from below' may not be quite so apt today. Nevertheless, many of the volumes he mentions have become standard works on the subject and his extensive notes would serve as an excellent introduction for the newcomer to the study of local history.

D. Huw Owen, formerly keeper of pictures and maps at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, acknowledges the debt to English studies and publications of local historians in Wales, while underlining their contribution to local societies and publishing ventures outside Wales. The distinctive Welsh local history tradition grew out of a heightened sense of Welsh identity, expressed through the Welsh language. He mentions the re-publication of early texts and the contribution of historical societies, from the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion in the eighteenth century to the Cambrian Archaeological Association, founded in 1846, and the county societies of today.

Huw Owen then lists all the bodies concerned with Welsh history and heritage and their publications – religious and labour history, adult history, the University of Wales and its Press, the various county histories, archive services, libraries and museums, the National Museum and the National Library and even the built heritage – the Royal Commission and Cadw. This is only too easy to do and strays badly from the original remit.

Errors could have been avoided. The oldest county history society in Wales is the Monmouthshire Antiquarian Association, founded in 1847, not the Powysland Club of 1868. The part-time, three-year MA course in Local History at Cardiff University was in existence by the mid-1980s not 1994. No mention is made of the important Roman Legionary Museum at Caerleon as one of the 'constituent parts of the National Museums & Galleries of Wales'. In lieu of notes, the reader is referred to Huw Owen's own publications for the National Library.

The final contributor, James Scannell, is heavily involved with local history societies in Ireland, yet he cites the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland and the Military History Society of Ireland as examples. Since the 1970s, local societies have proliferated – there are twenty-one in Dublin alone – and university courses based on the Leicester model are now offered. The bulk of the article lists size of societies, fees, meeting places, nights and duration of meetings, attendance numbers, lack of committee volunteers and so on. Our knowledge of the Irish scene is little enhanced by this contribution.

Gwenllian V. Jones

FORTHCOMING REVIEWS

Edge, David and Seabourne, Nicholas, *Images of Wales. Around Crickhowell* (Tempus Publishing Ltd., Stroud, 2005)

Knight, Jeremy, *Civil War & Restoration in Monmouthshire* (Logaston Press, 2005)

Olding, Frank, *Images of Wales. Abergavenny Pubs* (Tempus Publishing Ltd., Stroud, 2005)

FIELD EXCURSIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES, 2005

We had an excellent season of visits with plenty of variety and good attendance. Members had obviously enjoyed our visits and there were definitely a few highlights! The two coach outings made a small profit – which kept our treasurer happy! Thanks are due to all those members who made an effort to support the outings, often at no small inconvenience to themselves.

Day Outing: 9 July to Somerset

This was a highly enjoyable day marred only by the absence of our chairman, Jeremy Knight, who should have been speaking at several of the sites, but the public transport system had let him down badly and left him stranded in Cardiff. At Westonzoyland, in the three hundred and twentieth-anniversary year of the battle of Sedgemoor (6 July 1685) we were met on site by two colourful members of Monmouth's army, who brought the battle scene to life most vividly. Afterwards, in the church of St Mary nearby, where the wounded and dying were taken after the battle, the vicar welcomed us warmly and spoke of the history of the church, founded by Richard Bere, abbot of Glastonbury. He was surprised and delighted to find among our group several old friends from his days in South Wales!

After lunch at the *Sedgemoor Inn*, we visited Gatcombe Court, the home of Mrs Stella Clarke. This was a fascinating house combining the history and architecture of a typical Somerset manor house of 1254 with the memorabilia of the Clarke family and their antecedents and the remains of a substantial Roman villa estate. Tea in the garden was a welcome end to a busy day.

Day Outing: 17 September to Newent, Staunton, Lowbands, Hoarwithy and Hentland

We started the day in Newent, at the wooden market house of 1668, which houses an excellent exhibition on the history of this attractive old town, followed by a walk down Church Street, part of the conservation area, to the church of St Mary with its early ninth-century cross shaft and the eleventh-century Newent stone, depicting the Harrowing of Hell. Members met up again after lunch, having spent the remainder of the morning enjoying the other attractions of the town (shopping for bargains at the market stalls, buying local wine, sitting chatting in the sun, to name but a few), to view Staunton and Lowbands, estate villages founded in 1847 by Fergus O'Connor for his Chartist Co-operative Land Company.

We passed through Staunton inadvertently and had to retrace our route so that Jeremy Knight could talk about the scheme and we could see some of the remaining public buildings and smallholdings. This was an excellent contrast to the more militant Monmouthshire side of the Chartist story.

Hoarwithy church, commissioned in 1885 by the Revd William Poole, the wealthy vicar of the nearby church of St Dubricius, Hentland (a remote and rather lovely church dating from around 1050), sits atop a hill where its Italian Romanesque exterior dominates the skyline. Inside it is richly furnished with gold, marble and lapis lazuli. Once again, a story of striking contrasts.

Tea was enjoyed at Pengethley Farm restaurant and we had a few extra passengers on the way home in the form of plants and flowers from the Garden Centre.

Evening Visits

We started the season as usual in May with a visit to a hill fort with Allan Probert. This year, it was Gaer Hill camp, Penterry, an extensive, multivallate hill fort overlooking the village of St Arvans with wonderful views out over the Severn and the two bridges. The bluebells were out in the woods that form part of the site. Later, under the guidance of Jeremy Knight, we visited the church of St Arvan, of Norman origin, but partly rebuilt by John Prichard in 1883–4, which has interesting, contrasting early and modern stained glass windows.

In June, we visited Bertholey House, built in 1795 in Neoclassical style, but in ruins since a disastrous fire in 1905. Mr Brian Bird, the present owner, had spared no expense in its rebuilding and was now tackling the associated outbuildings and the grounds. We were more than happy to accept the unexpected invitation to enjoy a glass of wine inside the house and see the results of the major rebuilding.

Dewstow gardens near Caerwent, the venue for July, have undergone an amazing renaissance. Created in the early-twentieth century by Henry Oakley for the growing of ferns, the underground labyrinthine garden was in time neglected, filled in and almost forgotten. We can now enjoy the experience of visiting the underground garden again, as it is being carefully and lovingly restored. Our guides were extremely informative, having been with the project from its inception. Supper afterwards at the nearby golf club rounded off an excellent evening.

In August, a large group of members paid an afternoon visit to the Newport ship, to see the conservation team at work under their leader, Kate Hunter, whose enthusiasm was so infectious. Though there are many more years' work to be done before the ship goes on display, we felt she is in safe hands and is already bringing pleasure to the people of Newport. The conservation team needs our support while they work, patiently drawing out the history of this fascinating ship.

Our last evening visit was in September, to the remote church of St Cadoc at Llangattock Lingoed. Here, under the expert guidance of Dr Maddy Gray, we saw rare fragments of medieval glass in the east window and a large and striking wall painting of St George and the dragon, discovered in recent renovations. A walk down the hill from the church brought us to a cider mill, where the farmer showed us the machinery still *in situ* and where members were invited to sample the cider. It is feared that not everyone managed to walk back up the hill!

Annual General Meeting: 16 April 2005

After the business meeting, Professor David Crouch of the University of Hull delivered a lecture on 'Caerleon and Kingship'.

Annual October Lecture: 1 October 2005

The annual public lecture, held in Caerleon, was delivered by Mr Toby Driver, air survey officer at the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. His subject, of great interest to his audience, was 'The archaeology and landscape of Gwent from the air'.

Gwenllian V. Jones