



Cyngor Archaeoleg Brydeinig
WALES ● CYMRU
Council for British Archaeology



Llechwedd Clom Farmhouse, Lledrod
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COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

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Newsletter 46 Autumn 2013

Rediscovery of lost medieval carved stone, Silian 3

Nikki Vousden

In May 2013 Nikki Vousden (RCAHMW) and Dr Roderick Bale (University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, Lampeter) relocated the lost medieval carved stone, Silian 3 (NPRN 419114), in the Nant Tawelan stream, some 37m south-west of St Sulien's Church, Silian (NPRN 402554). Although the current church building dates from 1873, it is thought to sit on medieval foundations and has a fifth/sixth-century inscribed stone built into its south wall. A ninth/tenth-century pillar-stone, housed inside the church, stood upright in the churchyard until the twentieth century. The original churchyard is roughly circular, and its shape is mirrored by the surrounding field pattern, indicative of the existence of a former outer enclosure.

A cast of the stone's carved section, in the National Museum of Wales' collection, was first noted by Nash-Williams in *The Early Christian Monuments of Wales*. It was tentatively ascribed to Silian by Nancy Edwards, who referred to it as 'Silian (?) 3' in her *Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales Volume II*, because of the catalogue description of a photograph of the cast. The photograph also features casts of two other stones, known to have been made by W. Clarke of Llandaff in 1913, and the Silian 3 cast may be of the same provenance. From 1894-1914 the Cardiff Museum and Art Gallery (later the National Museum of Wales) undertook a programme of commissioning the production of casts of pre-Norman stones in Wales, in order to create a national reference collection. The incised carving, thought to be ninth/tenth century in date, consists of punch marks, and may be incomplete. The stone itself measures 75cm height x 41cm width x 12cm diameter. The face with the carving is uneven, with the carving occupying approximately a third of its surface. The carved pattern consists of a linear Latin cross within a lozenge, with a vertical line parallel to its stem. Diagonal frets project from the vertical line and cross-stem. There are no other known examples of this type of pattern as a whole, and only three other definite examples of crosses with lozenge-shaped rings in Wales: Llanllawer 3, from St David's Church, Llanllawer (NPRN 308778), 'Llandecwyn 1', from St Tecwyn's Church, Llandecwyn (NPRN 43903) and Llandanwg 5, from St Tanwgs Church, Llandanwg (NPRN 43901). Silian 3 will now be permanently housed in St Sulien's Church, Silian.



Silian 3. Crown Copyright: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales

Of mud and stone; historic building survey in Wales, Summer 2013

Ross Cook

The Royal Commission is the investigation body and national archive for the historic environment of Wales. It has the lead role in ensuring that Wales's archaeological, built and maritime heritage is authoritatively recorded, and seeks to promote the understanding and appreciation of this heritage nationally and internationally.

Since last October I have been working with the Commission on a one-year training placement in Historic Building Survey and Interpretation, funded by a HLF/IfA Learning Bursary. The placement has involved fieldwork across Wales, encompassing a wide variety and period of historic buildings and structures, three recent surveys are presented below. Further information on these sites can be found through Coflein (www.coflein.gov.uk), the Commission's online database, where histories, plans and photographs for each site can be found.

Site: Llechwedd (NPRN: 309584)

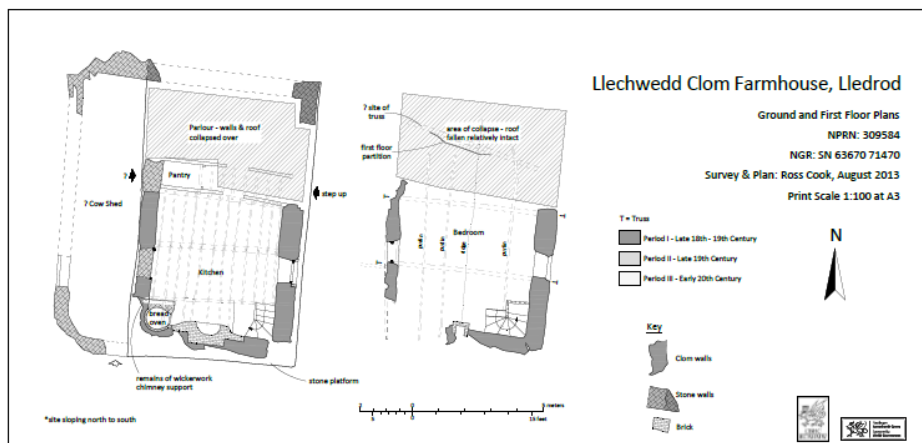
Location: Lledrod, Ceredigion (NGR: SN 63670 71470)

Date: Late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, with stone platform possibly having earlier origins.

Significance: One of a very small number of two storey clom farmhouse's to survive in Wales, on an earlier substantial stone platform.

Materials: Limestone platform, lower walls & bread oven; clom (clay & earth) walls; timber floors and trusses – oak and pine; brick stack.

About: Llechwedd, meaning hillside, is appropriately constructed running north-south down a hillside about 1 mile from the village of Lledrod, Ceredigion. The clom (clay-walled) central entry farmhouse, shown on the 1844 tithe map, is built upon a substantial stone platform, which due to its construction and orientation suggests its origins may predate the clom walls that it supports. Evidence shows that Llechwedd was originally one and a half storey with a wickerwork chimney. 'Modernised' in the early twentieth century, it was given a brick stack and full height first-floor bedrooms. Due to becoming derelict, the site now has permission for a new house.



Site: Cwarel Uchaf (NPRN: 419199)

Location: Creuddyn Bridge, Ceredigion (SN 56670 54092)

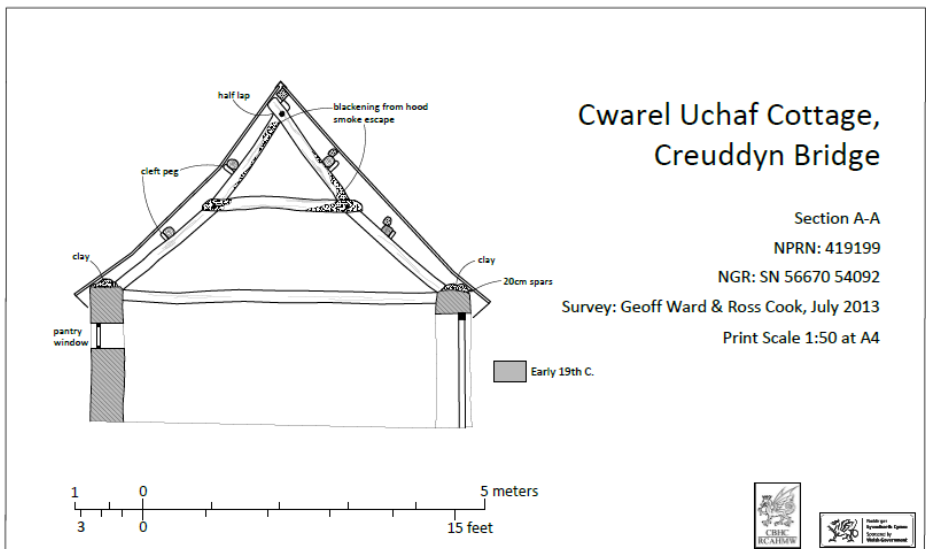
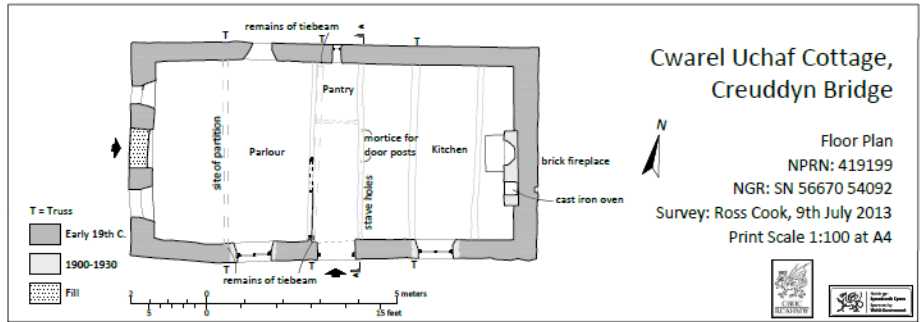
Date: Early nineteenth century.

Significance: A rare survival of a typical Ceredigion stone-built cottage, retaining trusses and evidence of thatch.

Materials: Limestone walls with lime mortar; oak & pine trusses/partitions; partial brick stack.

About: The tithe map of 1843 displays the cottage at the entrance to Cilerwysg, when it was owned by the Owen family. Construction and materials suggest a construction date somewhere in the early nineteenth century.

The location and name of the property suggest that it is linked with the quarry that lays directly in front of the cottage as displayed on the Ordnance Survey 25-inch to 1 mile map of 1888; *Cwar – quarry*. Local knowledge tells us that Cwarel Uchaf later became a farm labourer’s cottage then a smallholding, before becoming derelict in the late twentieth century. In 2012 Cwarel Uchaf was bought with the intent of renovation, which has been focusing on consolidating the stonework to secure the overall structure before being ‘modernised’.



Site: Capel Mawr (NPRN: 7570)

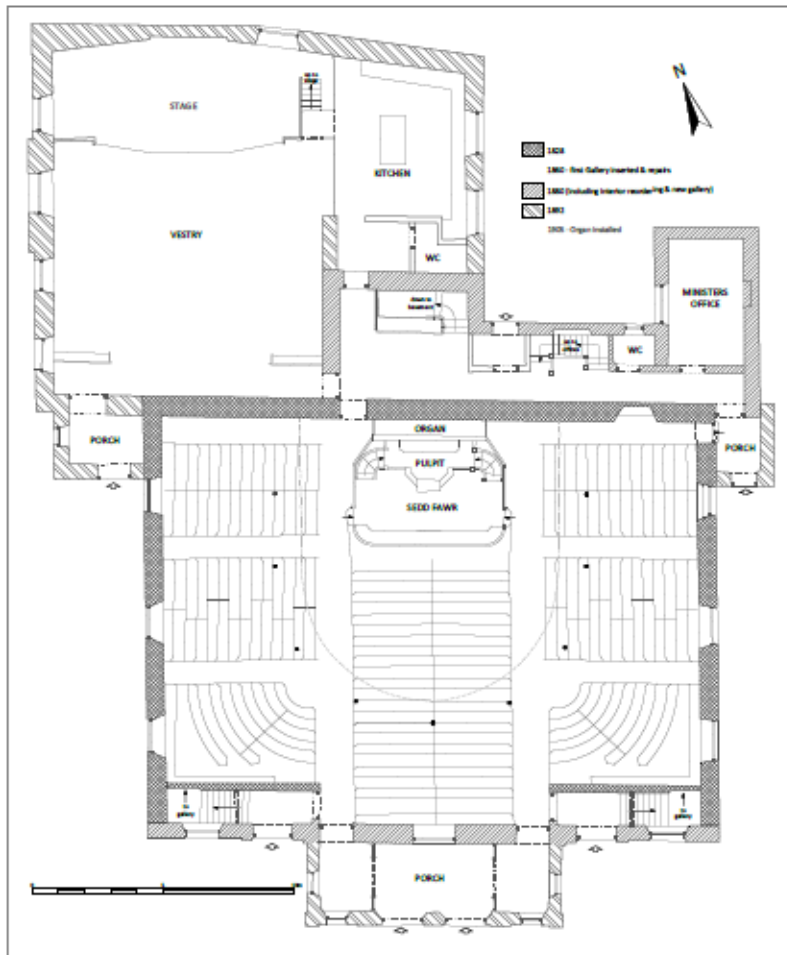
Location: Denbigh, Denbighshire (NGR: SJ 05247 66270)

Date: 1828–92

Significance: Capel Mawr is Grade 2 listed as a particularly fine nineteenth-century long-wall entry chapel with good original character and a fine interior.

Materials: Structure: rendered rough-coursed and ashlar limestone, slate and lead. Interior: pine, iron, quarry tile.

About: Capel Mawr Methodist Chapel was initially built in 1793, enlarged in 1805, again in 1813, and then rebuilt in 1829. The chapel was altered in 1880 to include a vestry and new façade, to the design of architect Richard Owen of Liverpool, with further additions to include a new porch and school rooms in 1892 by architect Richard Davies of Bangor. At its height the chapel held a congregation of almost 1,200 souls. A substantial chapel with attached vestry, school house and minister's office, typical of the period.



Capel Mawr, Swan Lane,
Denbigh
Ground-floor Plan, scale 1:200 at A4

NPRN: 7570
NGR: SM534764270
Surveyed by: Susan Fielding & Ross Cook, 22nd October 2012
Plan: Ross Cook



Prosiect y Meini Hirion / Standing Stone Project

A collection of photographs taken in the 1930s by antiquarian Harold Senogles, a resident of Menai Bridge, was recently discovered by archaeologists at Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. Digital copies of the photographs have been made as part of a larger project to create an on-line image library for archaeological and historical sites in north-west Wales, through a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) with Bangor University. Volunteers are scanning slides, prints and negatives to improve access to these images and to ensure that they are preserved for future generations.

A key aim of the image library is to raise awareness of the archaeology of north-west Wales and its value as an important educational resource. The Senogles collection is being used as a pilot working with schools to explore how local sites and landscapes can form a core part of curriculum-based learning, including the use of digital information and images. Six primary schools have taken part in the project: Ysgol Llanfechell, Ysgol Kingsland, Yscol Brynsiencyn, Ysgol Dwyran, Ysgol Morswyn and Ysgol Moelfre. They are all located within walking distance of one of four standing stones: Ty Mawr in Holyhead, Llanfechell, Cremlyn in Llanddona and Bryn Gwyn in Brynsiencyn.

Pupils visited the stone closest to their school, where they took digital photographs and measurements, and considered the wider landscape context of the stones. They made sketches of the stones and took rubbings under the guidance of local artist Julie Williams. Back in the classroom, they experimented with a range of artistic techniques to create original artwork; from painting, drawing and collage to mixed media and printmaking. Julie used a combination of the pupil's observational studies and creative writing to create four canvases for each location. Digital photographs taken by pupils and volunteers have been used as part of a research project at Bangor University to create three-dimensional digital models of the stones.

For further information contact Sadie Williams (Gwynedd Archaeological Trust) sadie.williams@heneb.co.uk



Ial Valley settlement Project

Robert Blackburn

The Ial valley is located at the southern end of the Clwydian range. The V-shaped profile of the valley, through which the river Morwinnion now flows, has been shaped by glacial erosion and meltwater.

There are numerous archaeological sites, from all periods, within the valley, including several Bronze Age barrows and an Iron Age hillfort. Roman settlement is recorded in the area and the line of a Roman road was recently discovered on the north-west side of the valley. To the south-west area there are several Iron Age earthworks including the large enclosure of Caer Drewyn. Furthermore, there is documentary evidence to suggest the presence of several circular structures within the north-east area of the valley.

The Ial Valley Settlement Project is a community based research programme which aims to investigate the nature, location and development of settlement within the valley, from later pre-history to the post medieval period. The research aims to explore how the inherent landscape qualities of the valley has attracted human inhabitation over an exceptionally long period of time. The project will focus primarily on the Parish of Bryneglwys and aims to carry out research through a combination of documentary research, landscape survey, field walking and small scale archaeological evaluation.

As a result of walk over survey in the first year of the project, several previously unknown sites have been identified. This year, small scale evaluation and recording will focus on potential prehistoric remains and a medieval/post medieval farm house.

For details contact Rob Blackburn (e.mail: rgblackburn62@yahoo.co.uk; tel: 07904158311).

Welsh drought brings Roman and Iron Age aerial discoveries across the country

Toby Driver, RCAHMW

The long spell of hot summer weather across Wales has left aerial archaeologists reflecting on some of their most significant discoveries since 2006. A previously unrecorded Roman fort, a Roman marching camp and scores of Iron Age farmsteads and forts have been discovered by the Royal Commission as parched grassland and ripening fields of wheat showed the locations of long-lost monuments. Aerial surveys over Cardiff and Pembroke Castles showed parchmarks of lost buildings inside these well-visited attractions, while discoveries were made from Wrexham to Pwllheli, and from Haverfordwest to Chepstow.

Aerial archaeologist Dr Toby Driver from the Royal Commission carefully targeted reconnaissance flights in a light aircraft to where the drought conditions were most severe across the length and breadth of Wales. When cropmarks show in drought conditions, the Royal Commission's aerial survey programme only has a few weeks to record the sites before rain or harvest removes them.

By far the most significant discoveries for Wales have been from the Roman period with a major Roman fort complex discovered near Brecon, and a Roman marching camp discovered near Caerwent Roman town. The Roman fort near Brecon is a rare discovery for Wales and was made following a tip-off from Roman scholar Dr Jeffrey L. Davies, who has worked with Toby on the Abermagwr Roman villa excavations.

Toby explained;

'Jeffrey Davies noticed an anomaly in Roman coin finds near Brecon, reported under the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). He had a hunch that the coins, of the Emperor Claudius, could indicate a lost early Roman fort, and passed a grid reference to me the day before a flight into central Wales. I couldn't believe my eyes when the pilot and I approached the location and saw fading cropmarks of a major Roman fort complex, lost beneath fields and a road for nearly 2,000 years.'

Other discoveries were made near Caerwent Roman town in south Wales, famously the market town of the local Celtic tribe of the Silures. Toby explained; *'Close to Caerwent we discovered only the second Roman marching camp in Monmouthshire. These were overnight camps built by Roman soldiers on campaign in hostile territory. Because the campaigns against the tenacious Silures were documented by Roman historians, we expect more camps in south-east Wales than we currently know about. This new camp between Caerwent and Chepstow seems to show a small expeditionary force on manoeuvres, perhaps in the years around AD 50. West of Caerwent we found a remarkable Iron Age settlement. Given the decades of aerial survey in the region around Caerwent, these surprise discoveries show the continuing need for aerial archaeology in Wales.'*

Other discoveries made in the drought include one of the largest and most complex Iron Age defended farms in Pembrokeshire, on Conkland Hill, Wiston, as well as scores of newly recorded Iron Age farms and forts across south Pembrokeshire and in the Vale of Glamorgan, with two discovered close to the well-known Roman villa at Caermead, Llantwit Major. The work for the Royal Commission now begins, to catalogue and map the many discoveries and make the information more widely available to the public on its online database www.coflein.gov.uk. It is hoped that a definitive list and mapping of the new discoveries will be available by Christmas 2013.



Figure 1. A tip-off from Dr Jeffrey L. Davies studying coin finds in central Wales led to this stunning discovery of a previously unrecorded Roman fort complex, showing as fading cropmarks in fields of wheat near Brecon, Powys (Crown Copyright RCAHMW, 1st August 2013).



Figure 2. A rare discovery: only the second Roman marching camp in Monmouthshire, found between Caerwent and Chepstow, provides new evidence for the famous Roman campaigns against the Silures tribe of south-east Wales. The characteristic 'playing card' shape of the camp shows as a cropmark in a ripening field of wheat, and an adjacent field of parched grass (Crown Copyright RCAHMW, 22nd July 2013).

Celtic Myth; Land, Sea and Skyscapes conference 2013

Saturday, 30th Nov 2013, 10am-4pm Founder's Library, St David's Building, Lampeter

This event brought to you jointly by the Archaeology of the Mabinogion and The Sophia Centre for the Study of Cosmology in Culture. Refreshments and lunch provided, Croeso i Bawb, Welcome to all.

Places limited. RSVP to Dr Jemma Bezant at j.bezant@tsd.ac.uk

Sessions and speakers:

Keynote, Professor Ronald Hutton 'Lugh the Shining One'

Seascapes

Martin Bates, Flood myths along the Western Celtic Seaboard: new scientific data

Nigel Nayling, TBC

Landscapes

Paul Vigor, '... drums, drums in the deep': A literary archaeology of a fantasy war

Ros Coard and Jemma Bezant, Big Cats and cryptozoology TBC

Skyscapes

Olwyn Pritchard, The Secret Astronomy of Strata Florida

Bernadette Brady, TBC

Anthony Thorley, TBC

ARCHAEOLOGY FOR ALL

Council for British Archaeology

CBA Wales/Cymru Annual General Meeting and Autumn Symposium 2013

Saturday 19th October 2013

The Royal Oak Hotel

The Cross

Welshpool

Powys SY21 7DG

Business Meeting: 11am

Annual General Meeting: 12.30pm

Symposium: 2.00pm - 4.30pm



Newsletter Editor

Items for inclusion in the next newsletter should be sent to:

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