

NOTEBOOK

VOL I
SERIES I

1936 - 1937

R Kay

Whitecastle

by

R Kay

&

Journeys in South Wales

(vol 1)

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White Castle

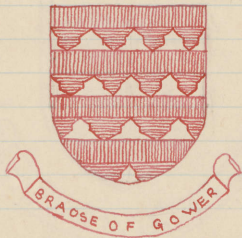
History

White Castle also known as Llantilio Castle, stands on the summit of a hill, about one mile from the village of Llantilio Crossenny. In Welsh it is called Castell Gwyn, which could either mean Gwyn's Castle or Whitecastle. Traditionally, it is connected with Gwyn ap Gwaethred, a native princeling of Upper Gwent at the time of the Norman Conquest. But the more prosaic explanation, deriving the name from the white plaster which covered the masonry, and of which traces can still be seen, is probably correct. An early charter of Stephen shows that the King had acquired Llantilio and Grosmont from Payn Fitz John in exchange for other lands. The Exchequer Accounts of the following reign show that these manors, together with Skenfrith, formed part of the royal estates, for which the Sheriff of Herefordshire was responsible. In 1184/5 it is recorded that building was begun at Llantilio, where considerable sums were spent during that and the following year. In 1186/7 money was provided for a dwelling in the keep, and in the next year a grange or storehouse is mentioned. These records refer to the building of the earliest masonry now surviving, and this may well have been the first military work on the site as the earlier documents do not mention the castle.

In 1201 White Castle, with Grosmont and Skenfrith, was granted to Hubert de Burgh, who continued to hold them, with brief intervals, until his death in 1243. In 1206 the castles were transferred to William

de Brasse, who held them for a short period, and whose heirs continued to claim them. Hubert de Burgh's stormy career entailed the confiscation of his estates on many occasions, and White Castle was at times in the hands of Henry III, who in 1228 granted it to Johnde Brasse. The latter

enjoyed the coveted again held at the time and restored with death the fell into the



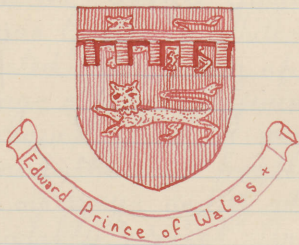
did not long the possession of property which was by Hubert de Burgh of his fall, 1240, after his reconciliation with the King. After his three castles again hands of Henry III,

who in 1254 settled them on his eldest son, Edward. In 1267 they were given to Edward's younger brother, Edmund "Crouchback", Earl of Lancaster. The pacification of the Welsh border and absence of a resident lord caused White Castle to fall into decay, and by the time of James I it had long been ruinous. In 1825 the Duchy of Lancaster sold the castle to the Duke of Beaufort from whose descendant it was acquired in 1902 by Sir Henry Mather Jackson, the present owner.

Periods of Construction

An examination of the masonry of the Inner Ward shows that it belongs to two periods, the second of which is contemporaneous with the building of the Outer Ward. The greater part of the curtain wall belongs to the earlier period, and definite breaks in the masonry can be seen where this joins the later work on either side of

the gatehouse and at each end of the southern wall. The two towers flanking the entrance are bonded into the adjacent wall, which belongs to the second period, but the junctions between the four other towers and the older curtain are marked by straight joints. In the later plan the south end was occupied by but the recent rubbish has the foundations square keep, built time as the curtain. The recorded in the Pipe 1184 and the following years provide an accurate date for the erection of the first castle.



of this ward the hall, removal of uncovered of a small at the same earlier expenditure Rolls for

The addition of the towers flanking the curtain the erection of the main gatehouse and the enclosure, or at least the fortification of the Outer Ward, date from the thirteenth century when the defences of the Castle were modernized. A comparison with the towers of Grosmont leaves little doubt that these additions are the work of Hubert de Burgh. The outer part of the eastern gate tower was rebuilt at a later date, probably as the result of a fall of masonry. The rough character of the masonry and absence of detail show that the place was no longer important, but the work is evidence for an occupation as late as the 15th or 16th century.

Description

The castle consists of a strongly fortified inner ward surrounded by a wet moat. The principal

gatehouse lies to the north on which side there is an extensive outer ward also protected by wall and ditch. To the south is an unwall'd horn-work covering the smaller entrance. The eastern flank of the whole is defended by a large outwork with an earthen bank and ditch. The moat surrounding

and the unusually and a great has been reveting



The passes vaulted

long, defended by gate and portcullis. In front of this, ^{the} space between the boldly projecting towers of the gatehouse, is occupied by the drawbridge pit. The towers flanking the gatehouse have four floors, connected by separate flights of stairs in the thickness of the internal walls. All the rooms are small and ill lighted by narrow loops only. The fireplaces in the two upper stories of the eastern tower are not part of the original design, but belong to the late mediæval reconstruction. This late work has also obliterated the earlier loops of which only traces can be seen.

Except for the part between the two southern towers, the curtain wall surrounding the inner ward belongs to the earlier period. It is about 30 feet high with a battlemented wall walk, and is nowhere pierced by loops.

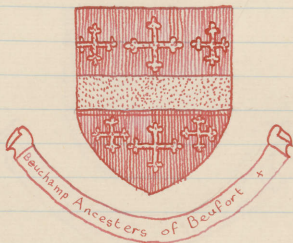
On the south side of the ward are the foundations, 8 feet thick, of part of the original keep. This measured

the inner ward horn work is wide and deep, part of its banks strengthened with walls.

main entrance through a passage 8 feet

35 feet from east to west, and the discovery of a fragment of the buttress in the centre of the west side, shows that it was approximately square. Immediately to the west is the smaller gateway, a simple opening through the curtain.

The inner side of the curtain was occupied by buildings which the roof of which the roof can be traced in the north-west side, barracks for the of the garrison original, but the of the buildings in eastern angle dates from a later date.



buildings of lines can masonry. rooms on the which were accomodation are probably arrangement the south-

The four southern towers all contain three or four storeys. The ground floor was in each case entered by a doorway pierced through the earlier curtain. The small lower rooms with narrow loops covering the adjacent wall faces and the moat, are purely defensive and cannot have been intended for residence. The highest floor is on a level with the wall walk above which the towers rose to a height of about 8 feet. The jiggling arrow slits with which these towers are provided are a characteristic feature of 13th century work in this castle.

The later hall stood against the inner face of the south wall, with the principal room on the first floor. The eastern tower, at the end of the hall was occupied by the chapel. This was also on the first floor where the recess for the piscina can be seen. Further to the north were two other rooms, each with a

fireplace. This area was the domestic part of the Castle and the absence of any later alterations gives proof of its early desertion.

The outer ward is surrounded by a wall with projecting towers. This is continued across the moat to join the defences of the inner ward, and on the west side the lower part of the masonry can be seen lying where it collapsed. The entrance is on the east side close to the edge of the moat surrounding the inner ward. It passes through a passage $4\frac{1}{2}$ ft long and originally vaulted. The sides are formed by two blank walls of masonry projecting into the ditch. There are guard chambers on each side of the inner end of the gateway. The towers surrounding this ward are two-storied. On the ground floor the walls were not pierced, the loops covering the curtain and the moat being placed in the first floor. Traces of buildings standing against the inner face of the curtain can be seen. *H.M. Office of Works, Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings, Whitecastle. by C.A. Raleigh Radford F.S.A. Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Wales. 1932.*

Extracts from "Castles"

"In front of Monmouth, in the first line of defence of the long front of Marcher castles, are three strongholds which always occur together in military history, and are often called in documents simply "the Three Castles", as they were marked together as a unit. Skenfrith and Grosmont are on the Upper Monnow, six and ten miles respectively from Monmouth; Whitecastle is on the hills above them, covering the important mountain pass and road from

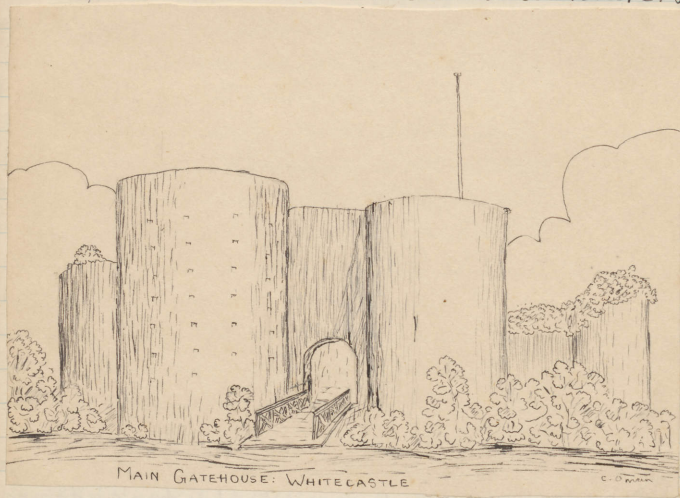
Monmouth to Abergavenny. All three served together as a guard against the unruly Welsh who, driven from the plains, had taken refuge in the network of ravines and gorges which is now covered and blackened by the coal mines of Tredegar and Ebbw Vale, and Rhymney. Though surrounded on all sides by Marcher holdings, in Brecon, in Glamorgan, and in Eastern Lywent, they were still untamed, and joined in both the risings against Edward I., and more than a century later in the formidable rebellion of Glendower.

The origin of the "three castles" is rather obscure. Presumably they were built as "motte and bailey" strongholds by the companions of William Fitz Osbern. A certain Hamelin was lord in these parts by 1106, and was followed by Brian Fitz Bount, a natural son of Alan of Brittany, a very strong supporter of Queen Maud in the Civil Wars of Stephen's day. Brian's two sons were lepers, and Henry II., rejecting the claims of the Braoses as next of kin, to succeed to all their possessions, seized on the administration of the three castles. In his day they appear as royal fortresses in the charge of the Sheriff of Hereford. But John gave them away to Hubert de Burgh, for good services rendered, and the great justiciar held them for many years. When Hubert fell from power, undermined by Peter des Roches and the Poitevins, in 1252 the castles were again confiscated, and remained crown property till Henry III. gave them - as he did the neighbouring honour of Monmouth - to his son Edmund of Lancaster. They followed henceforth

the fortunes of that house - Henry of Lancaster the first duke, and father-in-law of John of Gaunt, was born at Grosmont, and was always known as "Henry of Grosmont"

The three castles differ from each other in situation and character. Whitecastle the third of the group, which passed from the Fitz - Counts to Hubert de Burgh, and from Hubert to the house of Lancaster, is not a residential castle, but had purely strategic ends, being set on the pass across the Skerid Fawr Mountains from Abergawenny to Ross. It lies very high, commanding the road, on the top of a well marked hill. Unlike its sister fortresses below, it has no signs of a motte or keep, and would have appear to have been a fortress consisting of originally a palisade and a very deep and wide ditch, and afterwards of a stone enciente replacing the palisades. Its present aspect suggests a builder of the time of Henry III, but we know that the place was in existence a hundred years before his day and we can only suppose that it was thoroughly remodelled about 1230-1250. At present it is a sort of hexagon, with a drum tower at each of its angles. But the shape is not regular, the north eastern and the north western towers being so much nearer to each other than the rest that they form the two sides of the entrance gatehouse, the door being in the short piece of curtain between them, much recessed. This is by far the most striking point of the castle, though the other four towers are good pieces of work: they are lofty at least forty five feet high. All of them seem to have contained chambers on several floors, but none contains a hall, solar or chapel. There must have been such buildings,

so presumably they were reared against the inner side of the enciente wall, with slight materials, and have vanished under stress of wind and weather. Stone stealers, so frequent in every castle that was near a town, do not seem to have been at work here. The



MAIN GATEHOUSE: WHITECASTLE

region is thinly peopled, and in consequence the thick external enciente is still very nearly complete. One can only conclude that the garrison never had any solid dwellings - the result, no doubt, of White Castle not having been a residential abode for its lords, but rather a fortress that had to be reinforced in time of war or raids, but was very slenderly held at other times.

White Castle has two outworks:- in front of the main gate was a large low basecourt, with a separate ditch of its own, too big to be called a barbican, yet hardly self-sufficient enough to merit the name of an outer ward. Its entrance was carefully

arranged so as not to face the gatehouse of the castle, and any one approaching the latter was exposed to flanking fire before he got near it. This outwork was in stone; there was another, apparently of earth and palisades only, on the opposite side of the castle, that most remote from the gate-house, and only accessible by means of a small postern in the back of the curtain. As at Kidwelly, this back bailey or hornwork, or whatever we choose to call it, was evidently not considered of such importance, as that which covered the front entrance, and would not have been capable of a very long defence against a serious attack.

Whitecastle seems to have been on somewhat of a backwater, and is not mentioned nearly so frequently as Grosmont, nor, of course, Monmouth. But its capture is recorded when the Braoses rebelled against King John - they took both it and Skenfrith - very probably by treachery from within, for their cause was popular - and the king's was not. There is no trace of any fourteenth or fifteenth century additions or repairs in the whole of "the building" *extracts from "Castles" by C.W. Oman K.B.E. MA etc 1926.*

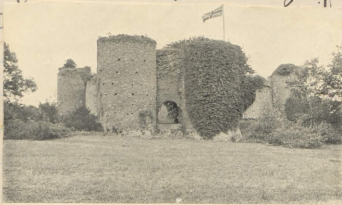
Extract from "Monmouthshire"

"Whitecastle, a ruined fortress, is 6 miles east from Abergavenny. It is best reached from Abergavenny through Slanwetherine (one mile), and from Monmouth ($9\frac{1}{2}$ miles) by way of Slantilio Crossenny, and was earlier known as Slantilio Castle. It stands imposingly upon a hill 500 feet above sea level, and three hundred ft above the surrounding plain at its feet. It is supposed to derive its name from one Gwyn, Prince of Bardagan, who in the 11th

century is said to have been its owner. Hence it was called in Welsh *Bastell Gwyn* which could mean either Whitecastle or Gwyn's Castle. A few fragments of plaster adhering to the walls suggests that it was whitewashed. Its origin is obscure. A Welsh story has it that Gwyn lost his castle to a Norman, and though old and blind appealed to William Rufus to let him fight it out with the intruder in a closed chamber. The fiery Welshman "spitted" his opponent and regained his fortress. But the incident is too melodramatic to savour of sober history. The earthworks though of unusual construction are Norman, and there is evidence that as early as the reign of Henry II, there was a military stronghold here. With Glosmont and Skenfrith it formed the Monmouthshire "Trilateral", and, as the thin end of the three which formed the wedge, it was probably the strongest. It seems to have been little better than a fortified blockhouse, and was never a place of residence. Like the other members of the triad, it was the heritage of the house of Lancaster, and fell into decay with the collapse of the Lancastrian cause.

Entrance may be obtained by application at a neighbouring cottage (admission 3d). The fortress is a formidable-looking structure of considerable size and immense strength. It is shaped like a hexagon with projecting drum towers at the corners, and is completely surrounded by a deep moat. The main entrance was between the two towers on the north and a smaller postern or doorway gave access on the south. To protect these entrances a walled barbican with supporting turrets was thrown out like

a gigantic screen in front of the north gate, and an earthwork covers the south entrance. The moat seems to have at one time embraced these earthworks too. There was no keep, and such accommodation as the garrison required was probably furnished by sheds erected against the interior walls of the ward. A rough form of wood of the gateway this vantage and varied prospect



WHITE CASTLE—MAIN ENTRANCE

is obtainable. Facing north, the Scorryd Fawr lies immediately on the left, and the Graig on the right. Beyond the Scorryd are the Sugar Loaf and Bloence and a sea of "enamelled pasture" spreads below the feet of the spectator. *Methuen's "Little Guides; Monmouthshire" by Wade 1922*

Extract from "The Celtic Borderland"

Six miles nearer Wales, and probably for that reason, the strongest of the trio, is White Castle. The name is so singular as to call for investigation, and it has thus been explained. Towards the end of the eleventh century the site—a knoll about a mile from the village of Slanvetherine—seems to have been occupied by some kind of stronghold—not the present building—the possessor of which was Gwyn, son of a prince of Bardigan, and brother to the master of Skenfith. A third brother ruled at Llysmant. Now the meaning of Gwyn in Welsh is just "white", and one notion or theory is that Castell Gwyn—the name by which the castle is known in the principality—has been Saxonised in a way that stultifies it as a recordship of ownership.

13 There is a more obvious explanation, which may be right that the Castle was once whitened.

The keep is in a rough sense hexagonal and has six bastion towers. Two of these form the great gateway and face northward. The curtain walls enclosing the keep are enormous, rising to a height of more than thirty feet and very thick. The main gate is defended by a barbican of formidable strength, and in front of the south gate is a lunette shaped earth-work. Although it stands on the summit of a hill, the castle is surrounded by a gigantic moat - that part outside the main gate, being almost a hundred feet wide and thirty feet deep. This circumstance leads to the conclusion that the the Castle was late Norman, if indeed it was not of a more recent construction.

Whitecastle was emphatically a fortress, not a lordly residence. It is vain to look for traces of a banqueting hall or chapel. The great area of the barbican suggests that it could not only accommodate the wooden sheds of a considerable garrison, but a multitude of fugitives, which with their flocks and herds, would otherwise have fallen into the hands of Welsh raiders. The middle ward would have been the quarters of the governor and the officers, and a portion of the garrison might have found quarters here.

From White castle, in case of need, men-at-arms could be sent to Grosmont and Skerfrith; and it is recorded that in 1165 a body of troops was despatched thence to the assistance of Henry II, when conducting operations in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury against Owen ap Iyffith. The natural inference is that even then the site was occupied by a castle, although no part of the existing buildings

can be dated earlier than the reign of Stephen or the end of the twelfth century

It has been conjectured, that these were Saxon earthworks here, that were afterwards adopted and enlarged by the Normans, they were perhaps thrown up during the brief ascendancy of Earl Harold, who, it will be remembered, built a palace for himself at Portskewet. William Rufus visited the district in 1097, and, pleased with the look of the land, determined to secure it by ordering the erection of this and other castles - so we learn from the chroniclers. Some glimmerings of real history appear in the pages of Dugdale, from which it would appear that one of the earliest of the Lords Marchers, de Baludun, succeeded to the possession of the "Trilateral" - i.e. the territory formed by the three - castles so often mentioned - and that at the commencement of the thirteenth century, having become the property of the Crown, it was in the hands of Hubert de Burgh, as representing King John. In two years it passed to the Ogre of Abergavenny in return for the payment of one hundred marks. De Braose, as we have seen, compromised himself with the reigning monarch, and consequently it excites no great surprise to find de Burgh once more in the command of the three castles. Henry III was entertained by him, most likely at Grosmont. Unfortunately for himself, de Burgh had an unhappy knack of falling out with his superiors, so that he came to re-enact the part of the infamous de Braose. Escaping from Devizes, whither he had been carried as a prisoner, he made common cause with Llewellyn and the pair besieged Grosmont, with satisfactory results - in 1240 - de Burgh made his peace with the King,

and some twenty-five years later the castles were given to the monarch's younger son, Edmund Crouchback. Just then a number of the Lords Marchers combined with the Welsh in opposition to the crown, with disastrous results to the towns of Gloucester, Worcester, Hereford, and Shrewsbury, which they captured and plundered. White castle was held by the Duke of Exeter during the contest between Richard II and Henry IV, but there is no evidence showing that it was the scene of military operations. *The Celtic Borderland* by F. J. Snell, published by Robert Scott London E.C.

Extract from "Rambles in and around South Wales"

From Llanwetherine, a hamlet in a deep dell, White Castle can be plainly discerned grimly perched on a hill and half-veiled by trees which surround it. It is reached after a climb of some 300 ft. It is said to be the oldest fortress in Monmouthshire, and with Grosmont and Skenfrith formed a "Trilateral" for the defence of Monmouthshire.

The crumbling ruins of this Norman stronghold, standing on the summit of a hill 500 feet above sea-level, give some idea of the strength of the fortress, but perhaps the gigantic moat, at places nearly 100 feet wide and 30 feet deep which surrounds it provides the best proof of its resistance to attacks. *"Rambles in and around South Wales"* by John Redman, published by Western Mail and Echo Ltd.

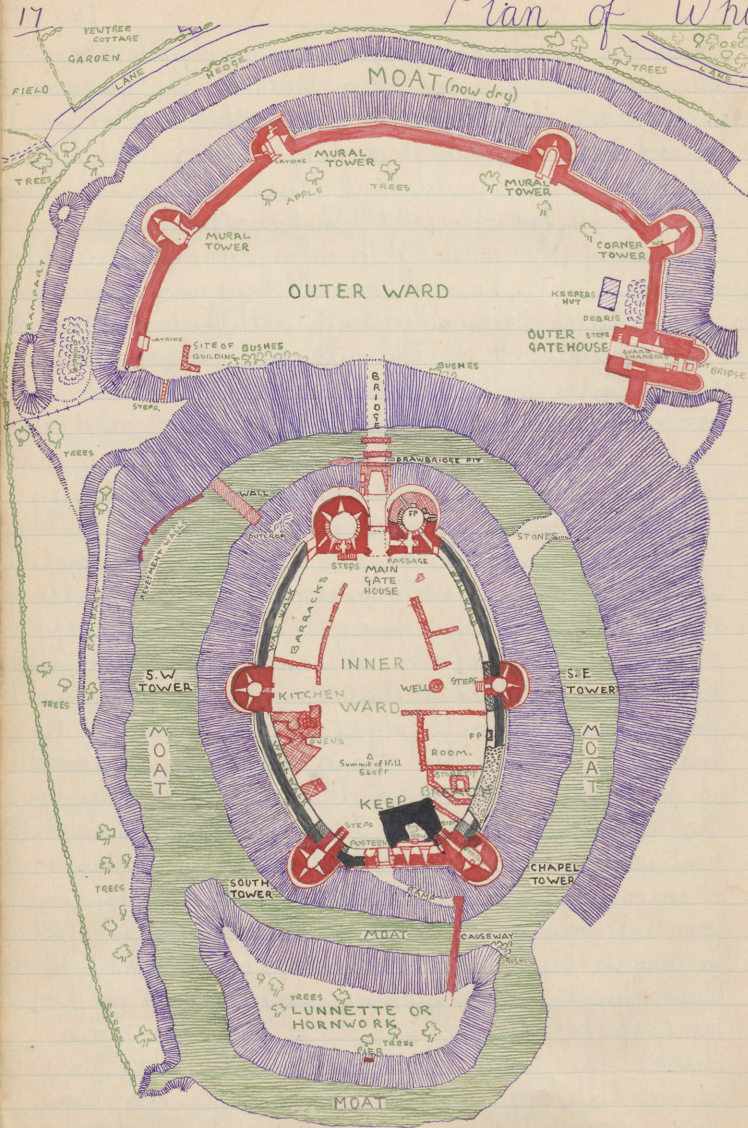
Extracts from "The Castles and Walled Towns of England"

The important military post of Whitecastle was in a commanding position almost equidistant from Monmouth, Skenfrith, Grosmont and Aber-

gavenny, and it was in many respects, the sternest looking castle in Britain. At Grosmont and White Castle there are earthworks of an extent rare in post-Norman fortresses; the ditches at the latter almost rival such works as the Danes Dyke in Yorkshire. At Whitecastle there is in advance of the main gate a large ward enclosed by a strong wall, having mural towers and its own gate, and a ditch communicating with that of the main ward; while at the opposite end of the castle covering the postern entrance, there is another outer ward or lunette, smaller than the first, and without any trace of any masonry but strong in its earthworks. At White Castle there is no sign that the enclosures were ever occupied by buildings of a permanent character. The strong entrance of Whitecastle, formed ^{like} those of Edward's castle of Rhuddlan built a few years later, by the approximation of two of the great mural towers to within 8 feet of each other so that a vaulted passage was formed about 10 feet by 8 feet, closed at the outer end by a great gate strengthened by bars and a portcullis; the inner end is so much broken away that it is impossible to say if there ever was a second portcullis. This castle has also a curious approach or entrance to its outer ward; it is formed by two parallel walls or rather masses of masonry 46 feet in length by 9 feet in thickness, placed about 10 feet apart, and stretching right across the proper moat of the ward at its junction with the main ditch: the section of the ditch between the two walls is now filled up with earth, and probably has always been so, though there may have been a drawbridge here

Plan of White Castle

18



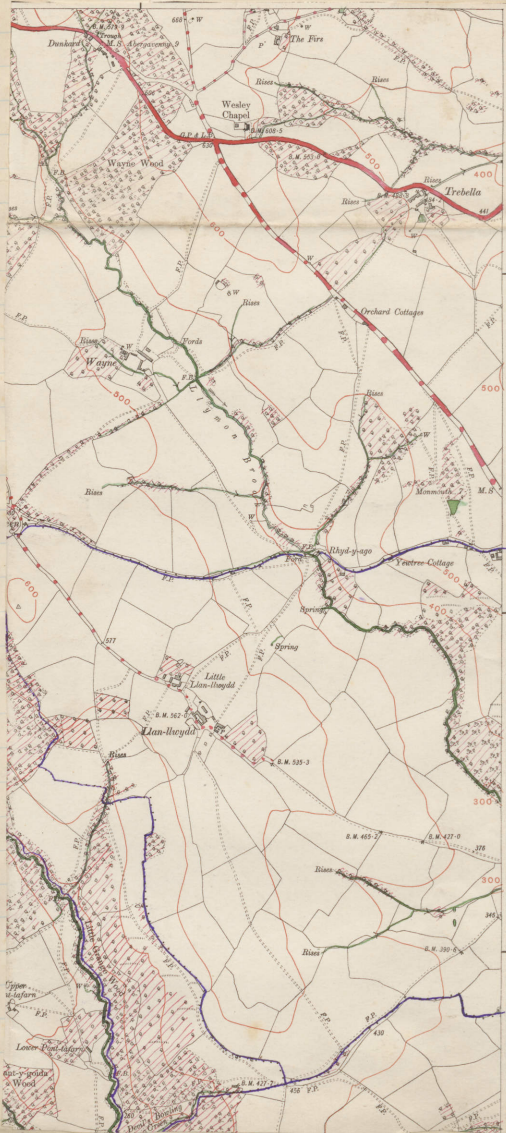


LLANTHWY - SKIRRID

LLANVETHERINE



LLANTILIO - CROSSENNY





ELAN VALLEY

Tal-y-coed

TAL COED PARK

Halfway House Inn

M.S. Abercromby St. Merthyr

Tal-y-coed Wood

Little Grange

Old Gravel Pit

Pembroke Farm

Grange Wood

Pant Wood

Little White House

Cold Harbour

Upper Tal-y-coed Wood

Wood

Old Gravel Pit

Hand-y-goada

Great Grange Wood

The Grange

Stannysford

Spring

Tal-y-coed Farm

Old Quarry

Spring

Old Gravel Pit

Cap Pant

River

River

Lower Pant-y-goada

River

River

Pebry Orchard Cottage

River

Pont-y-Tekon

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VAPLEY

Little Tun
Middle Tun
Lower Tun

Liab to Floods

Liab to Floods

Liab to Floods

Liab to Floods

White Castle
Upper White Castle
Lower White Castle

Middle White Castle
Lanck White Castle

Great Tre-Adam

Day Tree Cottage

Blackmoor

Hollywell Cottage

Little Cill-loch

Great Cill-loch

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Journeys in South Wales

Journey No 1.Part 1

MONMOUTH - Skenfrith - Oreop - Kilpeck - Pontrilas - Ewyas Harold.

Monmouth known to Welsh as Abermynwy is the county town from which a whole shire takes its name. Monmouth is still an old fashioned little town situated in the midst of most beautiful pastoral and wooded scenery. The situation of the town at the confluence of two such streams as the Wye and the Monnow, has always been the admiration of the traveller, and the envy of less fortunate places. Girdled by woods and graceful hills and embraced by its two rivers, it makes from every point of view a fascinating picture.

The early history of the place is rather obscure. Some believe it to have been a Roman station, and identify it with Blestium. It was the seat of a British church in the 4th cent; and the Saxons appear to have had a fortified outpost here as a barrier against Welsh marauders. But the town grew up no doubt under the walls of the stone castle which the Normans built. In mediæval days it was a small walled and moated town, covering an area of about 20 acres and possessing four gates. There was also a smaller settlement outside the walls and on the other side of the River Monnow, where the suburb of Overmonnow now stands. This was also fortified with a moat known as blaidd Idu (the black dyke) which still remains. Only one of the gates, that on Monnow Bridge now remains. In the troublous days of Henry III it was a bone of contention between the king and the Barons. Simon de Montfort is said to have raised it to the ground; but on the overthrow of the popular cause it passed into the secure keeping of the Crown. Henry IV seems to have displayed considerable partiality for the neighbourhood, and it gained a place in national history by becoming in 1387 the birthplace of his son Henry V, who

from the fact, that he borrowed his popular title of "Harry of Monmouth". During the youth of the gallent prince, Owain Glyndwr caused some consternation in the district by entrenching himself on the neighbouring hill of Craig-y-Dorth. Though the future hero of Agincourt was in operations against him, the Welshman inflicted on the royal troops a humiliating reverse and drove them in confusion into the town.

In the Great Rebellion it again experienced some vicissitudes of fortune; and the frequency with which it changed hands suggests that it could not have been a place of much strategical value. Cromwell was in the town twice.

The town established quite early a reputation for the making of headgear. Shakespeare make Thelwall speak of the Welsh recruits as displaying a beard in their monmouth coats and the name seem

to have clung to the article long after they ceased to be made in the locality. An outbreak of the plague brought this prosperity to an end, and the trade was removed to Becclesley on Severn. The town now has no staple industry, and few factories of any kind, It flourishes chiefly as a market town, a place of genteel residence, an educational centre and a place of resort for tourists.

(Entering) the town over the Wye bridge, I saw on my



MONNOW BRIDGE,
MONMOUTH

left the Grammar School and adjoining almshouses. They owe their existence I learnt, to the benefactions of William Jones in 1614, Jones, who was a Newland boy, "born as he says" of high parentage but without pride had amassed a large fortune in London as a Haberdasher; and in gratitude for some early favour shown him at Monmouth, left part of his fortune for the endowment of a free Grammar School and some almshouses. The school is now run on modern lines, and has educated a Senior Wrangler. The buildings which are rather crowded have been lately enlarged. Passing the Nelson museum which is somewhat disappointing like the remains of the castle, I soon emerged out into the rather busy Agincourt square one side of which is occupied by the Shire Hall a rather imposing building with an Italian facade built in 1724. Large mops or fairs were held in this square and down Monnow street until comparatively recent times. From the square I could see the tall spire of St Mary's Church, this was once the priory church, but it retains only the tower and spire of the original fabric. The rest of the building erected in 1881 by Street to replace a large and ugly Hanoverian edifice is disappointing. The tower and spire (Dex) is an exceedingly graceful composition, deriving its impressiveness entirely from the excellence of its proportions. It shows to advantage from every point of view. Note externally (1) west window displaying an incipient tendency to Perpendicularity (2) Norman ornaments built into stair turret and north buttress (3) image niche. Within the church should be noticed (1) the heavy Norman respond at the West end a remnant of the original Norman arcade. (2) beneath the tower the tiles built into the wall, and fragments of masonry amongst which are a pillar of the Norman triforium a pedestal piscina and a Norman stump. The Priory to which the church formerly belonged was an alien house of Benedictines founded in the reign of Henry I (before 1135), by Wilkenoc, lord of Monmouth, and attached to the abbey

of Anjou. The monks choir stood at the east end of the present church, but it was destroyed in the 18th century and not a trace of it now remains. A portion of the domestic buildings survives in a picturesque oriel Perpendicular window - locally known as Geoffrey's Window - overlooking Priory Street. The chamber to which it belongs now forms part of the National School. The tradition which associates the Priory with Geoffrey (who lived in the 12th century) and was a Benedictine monk, and eventually bishop of St. Asaph may have its origin in fact, but the window itself belongs to a date at least two centuries later.

The castle stands almost within a stone's throw of the church, on a knoll to the north of the town overhanging the River Monnow. Who its originator was, is disputed. In the 11th cent, William Fitzbaldron is mentioned as holding Monmouth under the king, and it apparently remained with his heirs until the reign of Henry III when John of Monmouth, its then possessor, was despoiled of it by the king for the share he had taken in the Barons' war. Along with Skenfrith, Whitecastle and Glosmont, it was annexed to the Duchy of Lancaster, and came into the hands of John of Gaunt by marriage. It was here that his grandson Harry of Monmouth was born in 1384. After the loss of the robes it was apparently abandoned; and in the days of James I, it was reported as being ruinous. The great hall was preserved however, in some sort of repair for the purposes of an assize court. During the Civil War its fortifications were again patched up sufficiently to enable a Royalist garrison to withstand a siege of three days, whilst the town was in the hands of the Roundheads. Nothing is now left but some fragments of the walls and one window of the Great Hall. The birth chamber of the hero of Agincourt is said to have been the adjoining chamber on the right. The castle

yard is now used as a Militia depot; and a fine old house 17th cent occupies the site of the original keep. The house should be inspected as one of the rooms contains some good panelling and an elaborate plaster ceiling. The town possessed one or two other old houses, notably, (1) an ironmongers shop in Agincourt Square (2) The Queens Head in St James Street and (3) The Robin Hood at the bottom of Monnow Street.

Journeying in the blazing sun down the wide main thoroughfare I came upon the rear of the Monnow Gate astride its bridge of ancient stone ribbed arches. The gateway which is late Norman in date was probably built for the collection of tolls, and was not one of the town gates of which except a fragment of one have disappeared. The rough loopholes in the west face of the gateway were made in 1839, in anticipation of an attack by the Chartists. Passing under the gate and looking at it from western end of the bridge one gets ones best and most imposing view of it.

After passing over the bridge into Overmonnow I saw on my left the ancient little church of St Thomas. In this, though it has suffered much at the hands of restorers retains sufficient of its ancient character to repay examination. It was originally a little Norman chapel with an unusually long chancel and it is said to be the oldest church in Monmouthshire, but in 1834 it was injudiciously transformed into the parish church by the creation of galleries. The windows and W front are modern and the chancel is a reconstruction (1894) but the original Norman chancel arch and two north doorways are happily retained. The interior arch of the north doorway leading from the chancel has even been thought by some to be Saxon. A bagioscope and an aumbry also remain and a few grotesque heads are scattered about the churchyard as disjecta membra. Amongst the plate preserved

are a 18th cent paten, and a Communion cup of the time of Charles II. The old base of a cross with its modern head in the centre of the street opposite the church gate should be observed.

Leaving Overmonnow by the Skenfith road I saw Drybridge House, at the end of the main street, which probably obtains its name from its name from its proximity to ancient dry-moat which encircled the township.

Looking back at Monmouth we see the scanty ruins of its castle to the best advantage. On the left we can see the lovely parklands of Croft-y-Bwla on the wooded slopes of Hendre Hill which rises to the height of 664 ft behind.

On the right the low green Ancre Hill shuts out our view of the River Monnow, and the hamlet of Osbaston. About half a mile further along the road we come to the lodge and gates of another great park belonging to the Hendre manor one of the largest country houses in the district. It belongs to Lord Slangattock and is a modern building in the Tudor style. On the outskirts of the park is an avenue of Scotch firs, said to have been planted to commemorate the union between England and Scotland.

Passing the lodge gate one enters the village of Rockfield. Here the road forks, the turning on the left leads to Abergavenny and the turning on right leading to Skenfith we take. But before proceeding any further there is a wayside cross on the grass plot at the fork roads. The base is original but the shaft is restored and there is another restored cross in the church yard a little further on. The place is said to have been anciently called Corn-y-kenbedloedd which is rather a mouthful. The church, with the exception of its tower, has been rebuilt. It is held much in local esteem for its picturesque ness. It lies nestling against the shoulder of a slight eminence, and facing it is a pretty amphitheatre of hillsides.

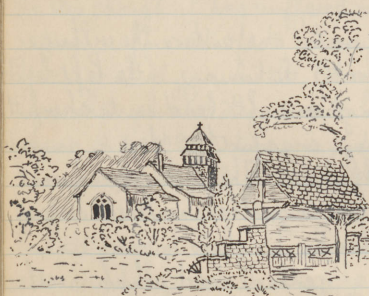
, with the river in between. With its homely-looking, half timbered tower and well chosen position, it makes the sort of rural landscape generally associated with Christmas cards. Indeed church is one of the prettiest I have seen both in situation and in itself. The wooden lantern to the tower is a local peculiarity



WAYSIDE CROSS, ROCKFIELD.

repeated in the neighbouring churches of Skenfith and St. Maughan's. Most of the houses in the little village have been rebuilt in the half timbered style so as to match the church. Practically opposite the church there is a quaint stone bridge over the Monnow leading to Slanvotthal

Soon after passing the church there can be discerned on the right a turning leading to Pethir house near the river side which here makes a big loop. This was an old home of the Herberts but it is now a farm.



ROCKFIELD CHURCH.

Then commenced the steady climb of two and a half miles to the hamlet of Newcastle; on the left soon after leaving the village one passes an old barn built of the typical local red sandstone. At Porth y Gwaelod Farm there is a turning leading to Maypole where there is yet another cross. However we push on up the hill and on the left below us we see the little stream of

Nant-y-gem gurgling its way through the green field a little farther on is a cottage in whose garden there are some fine

clipped yew trees. On the opposite side of the road stands the small but ancient Castle Inn.

A few hundred yards farther on we come to Newcastle a cluster of about six houses a shop and an inn about a crossroads. The inn the Wellington Arms which dates back to the eighteenth century is a large and homely looking building. Next to it stands the General Stores which also serves as a post office. By the side of the inn is a narrow lane leading to Slanfaenor, on the left of which, at the rear of a farm are the traces of a castle, locally called Bastell March ("castle of the horses") Farming operations have obliterated many marks of fortifications, but there are still observable a moated platform and a small mound. Hard by is the stump of a large tree, locally known as Glendower's Oak. It was long held by the country folk to be a resort of pixies and other woodland spirits.

Taking the Skenfrith road one may catch a glimpse down below us on our right of Tre-Ivor which is an ancient house, which possesses a staircase, each step of which is made out of a single block of oak. In the attic is a room still known as the chapel; and in addition to these curiosities the house is said to contain several secret chambers. A little further on are the lodge gates of the extensive parklands of Hiltom House, while in the background there abuttedly rises the tree embowered cone of Goed-angolod Hill; crowned by a tower or folly. Soon after passing the lodge gates I turned right and proceeded down a very steep hill through Crossway and came out upon the main Abergavenny - Ross Road. Turning to the right again at Newton school one descends the main road into the unspoilt green hollow in which the village of Skenfrith lies.

The village is surrounded by hills covered with trees or green fields and that of Goed y Pwll was

rising sharply on the left is the most prominent. That the hamlet of Skenfrith ever had a past like that of its neighbour Glosmont seems out of the question. The happy times of peace have hardly rebounded to the importance of Skenfrith, as the village seems to have shared in the decay of its castle. At present it consists of a small number of dwellings a few shops an inn and a mill clustered about the castle and the main road. This is however a pretty riverside view of the castle and bridge, which would make no unworthy addition to a portfolio of Monmouthshire landscapes.

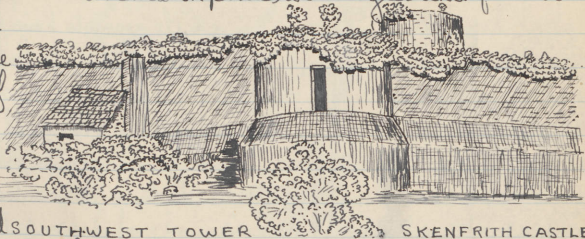


THE BRIDGE, MILL AND CASTLE. SKENFRITH

The position of Skenfrith Castle does not look to well chosen but the motive was no doubt to guard the ford over the narrow. The district was marshy and the Monnow itself would have served as a moat. Before more is said of the great fortress some notice must be given to the village, the chief feature of which is the beautiful old church. This is close at hand to the castle and is a fairly spacious building with a west tower of the half timbered "Monmouth" type exhibiting an early English doorway. This tower is quite a striking piece of work. It consists of three stories each of which is supported by timber uprights, and it has a pent stone roof. The nave is furnished with aisles of unusual width, and has some good Decorated arcades. There is no clerestory. The south aisle was apparently once provided with a second altar: the original stone slab of which is built into the floor. The East and West windows of the north aisle are good examples of reticulated and geometric tracery. Note (1) old glass in east window of sanctuary (2) round headed piscina on south side. The north aisle contains an altar tomb with an incised figure of John Morgan (1554), a brother of the president of the commission which tried Lady Jane Grey, who was himself a parishoner of Skenfrith.

Close by is a Jacobean pew belonging to the same family. Note also the Jacobean pulpit. On the floor of this aisle is an incised slab; and fragments of other incised tombstones will be found built into the bench table of the south porch. In this porch (Perpendicular) should be noticed also the stout and old wooden door. At the vicarage is preserved a mediæval cope embroidered with a representation of the Assumption of the Virgin, and ornamented in places with eagles and fleur de lis.

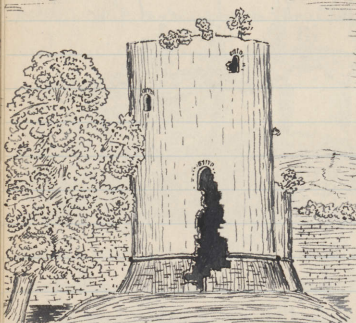
The castle is the smallest of the "Three Castles" and the one least pulled



SOUTHWEST TOWER SKENFRITH CASTLE

about by its later owners. It lies low at a point where a lateral depression opens out into the main valley of the Monnow. The builder did not take advantage of any of the neighbouring knolls, but chose a site in the trough of the valley where he could use a stream to give himself the protection of a wet ditch. The little castle is a perfectly quadrangular structure with four drum towers, one at each corner and one more set in its south side. In 1184 it is recorded that Skenfrith together with Whitecastle and Gwosmont was included in the lands of the King Henry II who made the Sheriff of Herefordshire responsible for its administration. At this time the buildings of Skenfrith were of wood of which of course nothing at all remains. In 1201 together with Whitecastle and Gwosmont, it was granted to Hubert de Burgh. His varying fortunes entailed the confiscation of his estates on more than one occasion. While the castle was in the hands of the crown, they were in 1206, transferred to William de Braose whose descendants continued

to claim them and whose successor John actually held it for a short while in 1228. The castle was then restored to Hubert de Burgh at the time of his fall in 1240, after his reconciliation with the King. On his death in 1243 the estates were again reverted to the Crown. In 1254, Henry III gave them to his eldest son Edward, who in 1267 granted them to his brother Edmund 'Crouchback' Earl of Lancaster. After Hugh de Burgh's

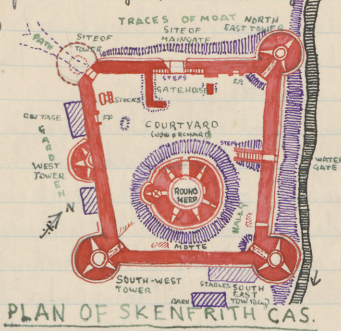


THE ROUND KEEP, SKENFRITH CASTLE.

in the early 13th century the castle seems to have been neglected by its later owners. The Lancasters had far better castles in Monmouth on one side and Gosport on the other. By Tudor times it was described as "ruinous and decayed out of mind." The round keep is the earliest remaining masonry, although it probably stands upon an earlier mound. At the time of the keep which dates from the end of the twelfth or very early thirteenth century, the bailey must have been protected by earthen ramparts and wooden palisades. The curtain wall seems to have been later than the keep, although it may have been erected at the same time. I attribute the building of both curtain walls and towers to Hubert de Burgh early in the thirteenth century. The castle consists of a strongly fortified, perfectly quadrangular ward with a drum tower at each of its corners and one proset in its western side. In the south end of the courtyard which has now been converted into an orchard there stands a high round keep on a very low motte. The castle is surrounded on all of its sides by traces of a wet moat. The great keep which is now about 40 feet high is a perfectly cylindrical structure except for a projecting stair turret on the west side. This keep which must once have been higher dominates the whole valley. It is lighted by a number of round headed

windows and has an entrance on the first floor facing north. It is now of four stages, but probably it used to have one more. The keep has by a round adornments lowest room served as all the other well lighted fireplace turret is and it is

to the top stage in the keep. The curtain wall is about 20 feet in height and the round towers do not rise much above it. It is faced like the tower with heavy red sandstone and has a batter all around. There is a breach in the north curtain where the main gateway used to be. Immediately behind is a building of which foundations remain and which may have been a gatehouse. There is a gate in the east curtain at a level lower than that of the courtyard, from which it is reached by a flight of stone steps. The N.W. tower has been totally destroyed and another gateway of modern date has been inserted in its place. It is a simple pointed arched opening. The north east and southern towers are all similar and are of three storeys, the lowest of which was on a level or below the courtyard. The north east and south east towers have their entrances slightly above the level of the courtyard and are blocked up by piles of debris. All three towers are entered on the first storey and are destitute of any kind of stairs. The western tower is somewhat similar except that it is semicircular and not three quarter disengaged. It can be only entered from the rampart walk. As it was practically impossible to get on the rampart walk I have not



used to have one more a wide batter surmounted coping, this is its only. It appears that the which was unlighted a vault or storehouse rooms are rather and each had a. The projecting stair now much ruined impossible to ascend.

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been able to ascertain what the interior was like. In all probability it was the same as the other three towers. The probable site of the hall is marked by a lancet window in the east curtain. Within the courtyard a pair of ancient stocks lies rotting in the weather.

Leaving the village with its many ancient reminders of the stormy past we take the wide high road over the bridge throwing one last glimpse at the great castle covered in undergrowth and walled by the riverside. The road which begins to climb rapidly is embowered with woods upon one side and overhangs the Monnow upon the other. The main road soon strikes left up a narrow cwm past an ancient farmhouse with a massively walled garden. The road soon comes to a crossroads at Broad-oak where there is a few houses an inn and an octagonal cottage that was once a toll house. The turning on the right after about two miles comes to Pembroke Castle one of the most perfect in England. However we take the turning upon the left, which soon becomes a narrow lane with wonderful views over fields to the left and to right and the blacken clad bulk of Garway Hill gleaming golden in the afternoon sun away in front of us. Ignoring two turnings upon the right we emerge upon the open grass of Garway Common with scattered little cottages so typical of the Welsh Borderland. Taking a cloth turning upon the right one traverses an even narrower and rougher lane down a steep hill. The lane is shaded with trees of noble proportions upon either side and at the bottom of the hill one crosses a brook and turns to the right at the fork near Trolway's farm. This turning one finds is even rougher than the road left behind but we are amply rewarded by the beautiful rural farmland it traverses. After about a mile and a half one comes to Trefeanor Crossroads taking the lane straight in front of us. This has a much better surface but twists and turns and goes up and down past many

small farms and a wood until it descends a rather steep hill and one comes to a widening of the road facing the unique little church of Orop. The church is unlike any other in England and has to be seen to be appreciated.

The village lies in the bottom of a secluded vale formed by the garden brook running between the junction of Garway and Orop Hills. It consists of the church, a school and a few scattered homesteads only.

The church lies on the shoulder of a spur of one of the neighbouring hills. It is a building much restored but retaining many of its original features. The upper stage of the small tower is of woodwork, supported from within by a strong timber frame. The nave is divided from the north aisle by a strong Early English arcade and is covered with a good barrel shaped roof now stripped of its plastering. The floor of the nave exhibits a decided slope towards the chancel which contains a small piscina that looks as if it were once the top of a pillar stump. The church plate is of the time of Elizabeth (1546). In the churchyard is the base and shaft of a pre-Reformation cross. Descending the hill to the bottom and turning to the left at the crossroads there, one sees on ones left Moat Farm, behind which, rising above the bank of a rivulet is a tree covered mound some 24 feet high and 60 feet across the top. It is the site of some early fortress whose history is obscure. Ascending the hill to the base of Bagbury which one passes a few cottages on ones right. One of these retains many articles of furniture and utensils of a hundred to a hundred and fifty years ago.

A little farther on one passes "The Grange", a small house of recent date built of brick. Behind rises Orop Hill and the curious looking wood covered hump of Saddlebow Hill. Passing the smithy and Bamdore Farm on our left one climbs steadily until the homely inn at

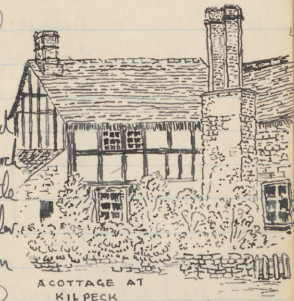
Bagwey Slydiart. This little collection of cottages about a crossroads on the pass between Ganway and Saddlelaw hills. One is here 684ft above sea level, and there are extensive views over towards the Black Mountains upon one hand and back down the secluded hollow in which lies Orcof upon the other. Descending gradually one comes to the fork roads at Cross Slyde, taking the right hand turning which leads to Kilbeck. The people hereabouts though they have a marked Welsh accent are ~~now~~ vary fair in complexion, coming no doubt from their Saxon ancestors. The young women and girls are particularly fair and beautiful. After taking the right hand turn one descends a long hill past many farms and orchards until the few houses at Morlas are reached. This place consists of a smithy, a mill and a few old half timbered cottages in true old Herefordshire style.

Another half a mile brings us to the village of Kilbeck. The first thing to be noticed on entering the village from this direction will be the half timbered farmhouse and farm buildings way over the fields to our right. This covers the site of a priory of Black Monks founded at the same time as the parish church and was a dependency of Gloucester Abbey. In due course it was suppressed and it has now entirely disappeared.

The parish church is Kilbeck's crowning glory and it is famed far and wide as the most perfect little specimen of Norman architecture in England or Wales. It is dedicated to St David and in conjunction with its Norman work there is traceable a Celtic element. Kilbeck probably takes its name - the first syllable representing the Latin cella and the second perhaps Peddig or Pedec - from the description of the priory it once possessed, and with which the church was coeval. On the left jamb of the south door, which is richly carved with interlaced work in the Celtic style are shown two warriors, wearing caps, veils and trousers with girdles around their waists. Kilbeck church has much

else to show of extreme interest to ecclesiologists - notably the Norman chancel arch, windows and doorways, a holy water stoup curiously shaped and exceptionally large and an apical east end to the chancel. Its founder is thought to have been Hugh Fitz Norman, who bestowed it upon the monastery of St Peter at Gloucester.

There are quite a number of old world half timbered cottages and an old inn, whilst close to the church stands the remains of the ancient castle. Today Kilpeck Castle is not spectacular, consisting as it does mostly of overgrown earthworks with hardly any masonry remains. Kilpeck was one of the chief castles of the old lordship of Archenfield. Nothing now remains but two solitary bay laden fragments perched upon the high trench which looks down upon the (two) sober winding of the River Worm, whose youthful restraint is doubtless due to its English origin, for



COTTAGE AT
KILPECK

KILPECK.



other West Herefordshire streams rise in the Welsh Hills. It was serviceable on this account perhaps for flooding the hollow beneath the rampart during war alarms and for forming fishponds for the Benedictine monks who remained in Kilpeck (irony) until they were turned out like so many other foreign orders in 1422. Kilpeck was granted by William the Conqueror to William - Fitzhamon and figures in Domesday as Kilpecke in Ipecheffelde. Both castle and church were standing in 1124, for the latter was presented to Hugh first owner of Gloucester. The succession continued as Hugh's son

Henry de Kilbeck is recorded as owing King Stephen thirteen hawks and being heavily fined for trespassing in pursuit of game in the forest of Haywood which stretched northwards and towards Hereford. Perhaps for somewhat the



KILBECK CHURCH

same reasons, which nowadays occasionally receive a situation as a keeper for an old poucher, a de Kilbeck was soon after made bailie of this very large forest, and then the male line ran out. King John seems to have been fond of staying with the family, but with his characteristic ill grace, he refused his hostess, the ultimate widow, to

marry ~~to~~ a man of her choice, though she offered fifty marks and a good horse for the concession. He finally coerced her in marriage with a Fitz Warrenne of which

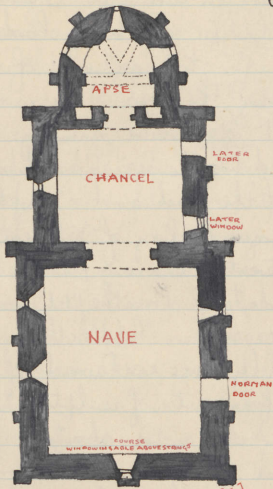


KILBECK CHURCH, DETAIL OF THE SOUTH DOOR

turbulent race we shall have a deal of at Ludlow. Through female lines Kilbeck went to the Walmuds of Wiltshire and then to Allen de Blankeret who, though a great warrior utilized his ex-officio lordship of Haywood to some effect as an enthusiastic farmer and reclaimer of land. In Edward III's time when so many successors were snuffed off upon the bloodstained fields of France

Kilbeck became again vacant and went to the lords of Ormonde and remained in their hands with slight changes and interruptions until feudal days were over and lawyers and merchants were purchasing landed properties for cash. I was Sir Walter Pye in the times of James I who thus prospered and acquired Kilbeck with other estates with the enormous income for the period of £25,000 a year he was no doubt able to keep it up in good style. As a matter of fact he soon left Kilbeck to the owls and bats

and very habitually so, as the Welsh had long since ceased Norman fortres scant attraction had seen houses him all his however a money grubber but quixotically the reverse, for he sacrificed most of his great fortune to the cause of the hapless King Charles, even to the extent



PLAN KILPECK CHURCH.

troubling, and a could have had but to a millionaire who beautiful Gudor springing up about life. His son was not



KILPECK SOUTH DOOR

shell of Kilpeck's

Battle, and trying

of patching up the vainly to hold it His son again, was no less single minded, for he spent what was left in the still



PLAN OF KILPECK CASTLE

worse cause of Charles II and died a ruined man with the consolation of being Baron Kilpeck. All that now remains of the masonry are two fragments of the keep showing two or three sagittals in a block of very solid masonry. The most interesting part of the castle is its intricate earthworks (see plan) The castle though of some importance and large extent seems to have been of only little strength.

Regaining the road; the church and castle

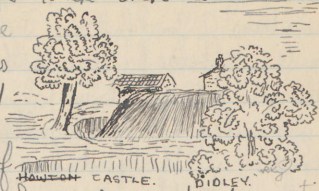
lie some little distance back from it we journey downhill a hundred yards and then turn left crossing the railway at St Devereux Station. Looking back from the railway bridge there is a striking view of the church and cottages among the trees

St Devereux simply consists of a church a station and two houses. The church lies on the right hand side of the road and is apt to be overlooked because of the neighbouring glory of Kilbeck. The church contains little of interest. There is a piscina in the chancel, two memorial slabs dating from the 17th century on the west wall and two recesses are left on the north and south walls that presumably once contained effigies, but now are filled only with fragments of sculpture. The church with its high square tower with goss sprouting from its mortar makes a pretty picture from the roadside.

Turning to the right at the main Abergavenny - Hereford after a distance of under one mile one comes to the cluster of farms and cottages going by the name of Ditley. Taking a grass grown lane on our right after proceeding through these overgrown hedgerows for some yards one has a view across a narrow dingle to the mysterious mound of what was once Ditley Castle. It was probably an outpost of Kilbeck Castle built to guard the neighbouring main road, but dismantled about Stephens reign since no trace of any masonry can be discerned. The mound which is somewhat encroached upon by a farmyard stands on the brink of a hill above the steep little comb and is surrounded where not protected by the natural scarp of the hill by a dry moat. There are no traces of any bailey and there probably never was one - two baileys.

Regaining the main road we journey back the same way as we have come past the turning to St Devereux

to the village of Wormbridge where there is a church which stands by the wayside. It preserves some ancient glass in one of the north windows and there are some monuments to the Blive family and a good roof.



Most of the land aroundabouts here was owned at one time by the Preceptory of Knights Templars at Inmore. The main road after leaving Wormbridge becomes a little levelled for a short distance, and upon ones left is Hereford - Abergavenny railway line and upon the right a view of the pretty Worm Brook babbling over its stones. On the left at Howton Farm in a field between the railway and the road there is a low sepulchral mound enclosed within a shallow fosse. It is said to have been utilised for a short time as a castle, but the castle if it was could not have been very defensible.

In front of us to the right can be seen the church of St Mary standing in a conspicuous position on the summit of a small hill. This forms the nucleus of the parish of Kendoschurch. This highly picturesque little church is ascribed to the fourteenth century and contains a fifteenth century oak screen and a good rook. In the churchyard there is a restored cross.

Another half a mile and one comes to the hamlet of Pont-talae important because of its railway junction with the Golden Valley Branch line. The fair sized station and unbay on the left and a few shops and houses of recent date line the other side of the road. The gate of the Golden Valley opens wide into the west and all in full sight the romantic parish of Ewasy Harold waves up and down with its meadowy lowlands, its uplifted commons of heath and gorse, its scattered white homesteads and cottages, its ancient mound and girdle of

encircling wooded hills, and its dimmer background of mountains. A beautiful old Tudor manor house of much distinction stands just below by the roadside near the bridge and stream. This is Pontilar Court, and in days gone by it belonged to a branch of the Baskervilles, one of the most ancient and potent families in Herefordshire. For the Baskervilles did literally come in with the conqueror, hailing from the neighbourhood of Dieppe, took a leading part in border matters from the very first, and are still flourishing on their native soil. The Court is now embraced in the adjoining estate of Kentchurch the home of the Scudamores, who can boast of almost as long a local record, and of at least equal prominence in the border history. The old house stands within walled grounds a stone's throw back from the road, and a short avenue of firs breasting a square of mellow turf leads to the door. Its Tudor gables and lofty chimneys and mullioned windows still bearing the arms of the Baskervilles (~~marks~~), and its red stone walls half draped in creepers make a most effective picture. Within there is a great store of oak paneling and at the back a quaint old garden of generous area, spreading to the banks of a stream. For some time Pontilar Court was an inn, and a favorite haunt of anglers.

Just westward of Kentchurch and Pontilar, sweeping over low wooded ridges to the Golden Valley or climbing over the ever ascending ramparts of the Black Mountains, lies the land of Ewyas - region of eponymous name and ancient landmarks and beyond measure beautiful. Opening wide in the foreground between the encircling ridges rising near at hand above the swift rivulets of the Dulais and Dove, with the lofty mound of its long vanished castle overlooking the valley, speaks the parish of Ewyas Harold. That a region so fair in the things that are and so rich in the things that were, should have failed to inspire some fortunate sight

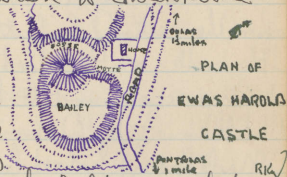
who lot is east among them would be strange indeed

The Dulas brook rattles gently with the hissing voice of a dry August through the pleasant vilbays scattered along its narrow levels, and among paddocks and orchards; whilst on the northern slope the church of

St Michael with massive and squat old tower lies back a space; the vicarage standing on a terraced hill above the castle mound and moat coated with rank grasses and crowned with small trees dips its feet in two meandering streams a furlong away, as complete an example of vanished glory as you could wish to contemplate.

This is Ewyas Harold; all the greater Ewyas lay behind it, on the Welsh side of the here untraceable Offa's dyke and it seems that here, at any rate of the district had come to much such terms

with the Mercians as had the men of Archenfield so amply treated of. Like them its Welshmen had given over, though a little later, their whole hearted allegiance to their late foes, reserving only their laws languages and customs. The Normans pushed in here during Edward the Confessor's reign and erected the first castle in great Britain on this great mound which may have had previously carried a Saxon burg. Ralph the Timid, made, and unmade and recreated Earl of Hereford within a brief space, had allotted Ewyas to a Norman follower, one Osborn Pentecost. In the French panic created by Godwin, Osborn fled north to the King of Scotland and not across the channel like most of his kind, and the castle and lands were given a little later to his nephew Alured of Marleborough whose tenure was confirmed at the conquest. In the meantime the stone castle that rated badge of Norman pretension, had been demolished. Soon after the Battle of Hastings, Fitz Osborn



new William's greatest vicar and Earl of Hereford, rebuilt not only Ewyas but planted several other castles for the better aweing of the Welsh and but half conquered, border Mercians. This stirred up their leader Edric the Savage to a final effort, which with the help of the Welsh of Great Brechainoy, otherwise Monmouth and Brecon, kept the hands of the Norman garrison sufficiently full for the next three years only those of Ewas Harold, Hereford, the sister fortress of Richards Castle near Sludlow and Hugh d'Arnes castle of Brockhill holding out. The tide of devastation swept once more over the country, but ill recovered from the wasting of Griffiths and Alain's Welshmen in 1057, and the sack of Hereford, which brought down the great Harold to its account and to his conquering progress through Wales William Fitz Osborn, with his feudatory lord Alured of Marleborough, had built a stronger castle upon the foundations of the other. And in time reinforcements came and the Welsh were driven back to the hills and order restored Fitz-Osborn handed the castle over to the custody of his son, Harold from whom the locality is supposed to derive its name. The castle is said to have been in ruins before Glendower's time and now only the lofty conical mound on which the castle stood and its adjacent earthworks remain; and at its foot the village now reposes in undisturbed peace. The mound is however formidable enough to recall the terror of ancient days. It rises impressively 53 feet above the fosse at its foot and was formerly crowned by a shell keep 30 yards in diameter. The barcourt lay to the south and the artificial defences of the stronghold were rendered all the more secure, by its position at the junction of two streams. The church, St Michael and All Angels, which is overlooked by the castle mound, is an aisleless building of some antiquity, but much restored. It retains however, a truncated

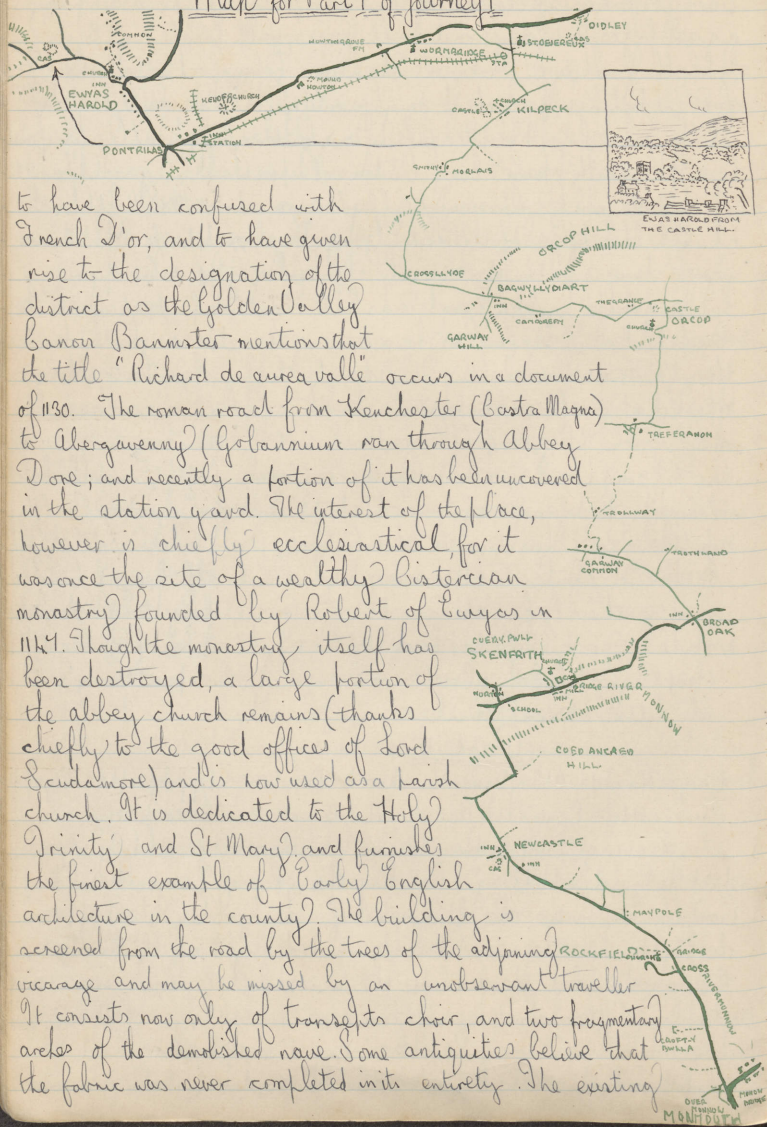
Early English tower of the semi fortified type. It displays a good bold doorway on its South face, with triple lights in the belfry stage above. The tower belonged to a priory of Benedictines, founded originally at Dular, higher up the river by Robert of Ewyas, but subsequently transferred here. It is said to have been bestowed upon the Abbey at Gloucester whither its monks were eventually removed in 1338. Within the church itself, one of the most gloomy, bare, and dark, I have come across, there is on the north side the effigy of a lady holding in her hand a heart casket. She is depicted with the lower portion of her face on the curious headress which denotes the wearer was a vowess. It is said that when the tomb was opened, it was found to contain nothing but a casket which once evidently contained a heart. I then went to the Temple in, situated in the village street and booked a night's lodging, after which I went for a stroll up the lane leading to Rowlstone for about a mile, and back. The lane is between high banks of hazel bushes and on the left the woods rose to the height of Rowlstone hill. On going to bed that night I was pleasantly kept awake for about an hour by the prattling of the little River Dular.

Part II

Ewyas Harold - Abbey Dore - Vouchurch - Dorstone - Clifford - HAY - Clyro - Painscastle - Erwood - Boughrood - Bronllys - TALGARTH.

Leaving Ewyas Harold we take the road to Abbey Dore and the Golden Valley. Rounding the spur of Ewyas Harold Common we enter the lower end of the Golden Valley, on the right across the river Dore the wooded height of Gilbert's Hill rises whilst the left the escarp of the Common rises steeply. After about a mile we come to village of Abbey Dore, a few houses, an inn, a station and a splendid church set amidst orchards. The Celtic name Dore, dour, (water) seems

Map for Part I of Journey



to have been confused with French Dor, and to have given rise to the designation of the district as the Golden Valley. Banon Bannister mentions that the title "Richard de aurea valle" occurs in a document of 1130. The Roman road from Manchester (Bosta Magna) to Abergavenny (Gobannium) ran through Abbey Dove; and recently a portion of it has been uncovered in the station yard. The interest of the place, however, is chiefly ecclesiastical, for it was once the site of a wealthy Cistercian monastery founded by Robert of Ewias in 1141. Though the monastery itself has been destroyed, a large portion of the abbey church remains (thanks chiefly to the good offices of Lord Scudamore) and is now used as a parish church. It is dedicated to the Holy Trinity and St. Mary, and furnishes the finest example of Early English architecture in the county. The building is screened from the road by the trees of the adjoining vicarage and may be missed by an unobservant traveller. It consists now only of transepts, choir, and two fragmentary arches of the demolished nave. Some antiquaries believe that the fabric was never completed in its entirety. The existing

portions are laid out on stately and impressive lines; and though the work is throughout of one period, it exhibits much variety of detail. There is evidence of the last of the Trans-Norman style of architecture employed in the building. In plan the church is cruciform, the tower occupying a rather odd position at the junction of the choir and south transept.



ABNEY DORE

The absence of the nave, the peculiar situation of the tower, and the sloping roofs of the aisles (which are carried right around the east end) give the building a rather huddled appearance. Within, however, this sense of congestion is absent, for the transepts are lofty and spacious, and the choir, if somewhat short, is of great dignity and beauty. The charm of the church is in the reserve which its general arrangement suggests. It is only when the observer passes from the light and airy choir to the cloister.



ABNEY DORE, THE AMBULATORY

seclusion of the aisles that he discovers how much the building has to disclose. Entrance is gained through a well modelled Early English doorway set in the south wall of the transept; and in passing the tall twin lancets, with the vesica-shaped aperture between them, should be noticed. The transepts contain only a gallery, a Jacobean pulpit, and a rather commonplace font; but the absence of any distracting feature enhances the impressiveness of the lofty arches which span the crossing. The choir is carried three bays eastwards, and



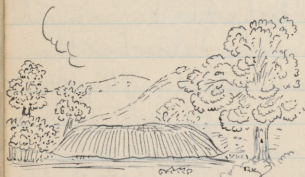
ABNEY DORE, THE SOUTH TRANSEPT

measures 84 feet by 32 feet. It is lighted by a clerestory pierced with large lancets, and is supported on cylindrical columns without the intervention of a triforium. The vaulting shafts still exist but the vault itself has disappeared, and its place is taken by a plain wooden roof. The aisles, on the contrary, are still massively vaulted and are carried around the back of the altar to form an ambulatory, which once gave access to a series of parallel chapels, the vault here being supported on a beautiful avenue of clustered columns. This retro-choir, with its crosslights and lurking shadows, is the most effective piece of architectural composition in the building, and is full of artistic suggestiveness. Another little surprise is the small chantry chapel, containing a chest tomb, which opens from the south transept southwards of the base of the tower. The workmanship throughout the church is excellent, and the sculpture is executed with considerable vigour, as may be seen from the spirited reliefs which once formed the bosses of the now fallen choir vault, and which lie amongst the heaps of broken masonry collected together in odd corners. The capitals of the columns are all variously carved; some of them have square abaci and display Romanesque ornamentation and is remarkable as an example of the very first stage of Transition architecture as it finally passed into early English for here as at Chichester and Wells, "the ancient Romanesque style breathed its last". The choir retains its original stone altar - a slab of remarkable dimensions, rescued from farm use as a calturf stone; but all the mediæval woodwork has disappeared from the church, the place of the stalls being filled with some Jacobean pews. A handsome seventeenth century screen the work of John Lubbock, and exhibiting a motto, the royal arms, and the quarterings, of the See of Hereford, and of Lord Scudamore, stretches across the choir entrance. There are two large but mutilated effigies of knights in chain armour, one in each of the choir aisles, which are supposed to be Sir Robert de Curzon and Sir Roger de Clifford; and a curious little effigy of

John Breton, Bishop of Hereford (died 1275), marking a heart interment, is fixed against a column on the north side of the sanctuary. The church has lost most of its early glass; but the east windows of the choir are filled with seventeenth century substitutes, and some fragments of more ancient date remain in the south choir aisle. The unlighted transept walls show traces of faded wall paintings. Note should be also taken of the richly framed ambry in the south transept, of the piscina in the south chantry chapel and south choir aisle, and of the tiles at the foot of the font which has an inscribed slab. Externally, the chief features to be observed are the ornamental string course carried without interrupting over the tops of the aisle windows, the two ringed circles of the nave stringing from massive cylindrical columns, and a fragment of the chapter-house behind the north transept.

Passing the railway station, we have a last glimpse back at the Abbey church, its high pitched roofs just showing above the trees. The road now becomes rather undulating and on our left we pass by the entrance to beautifully wooded Holling Grange Dingle. A quarter of a mile further on, the road forks the turning upon the left leading up a steep hill to Bacton and Newton. However we turn to right through an avenue of trees which form part of the parkland of Holling Grange. On the hill in front of us are the gaunt buildings of an abandoned workhouse, the only blot on the landscape of the golden valley. Crossing the railway line at Moorhampton station we find ourselves on the other side of the valley, and taking a turning upon our left, we soon come to Morehampton Park Fm. a modern house built upon an ancient walled enclosure. After about a mile we cross a little brook going by the queer sounding name of Pontapina. On the opposite of the low flat valley rise the hills of Maeswed and

St Margarets their near sides covered by the trees of Tanhouse Wood, and Chanstone Wood. A turning on our left leads to Chanstone Court farm and the water mill, whilst between us and the river in a grass paddock bordering the road is a mound where not defended by the river is surrounded by a moat; this is the sole remnant of Chanstone Castle. Ascending a slight rise we come to the main Dorchester - Hereford road, which we follow until we come to the side turning leading to Vowchurch & Tunstone.



CHANSTONE CASTLE TOWER

The church at Vowchurch, is dedicated to St Bartholomew and is rather an unusual structure with a half timbered spirelet that shows Norman work. Its most remarkable feature is the profuse display of Jacobean

woodwork with which the interior is embellished. The shell of the building is apparently of fourteenth century origin; but the roof is supported by a number of timber posts ornamented with shields, and dating it is said from 1603; and a screen similarly adorned stretches across the chancel. The choir benches bear the date 1636. A wooden porch which forms the south entrance to the church is of the same period. In the sanctuary is a plain piscina; and two empty recesses occur in the north wall. The font is scored with flutings. There belongs to the church a Communion cup curiously fashioned out of beech wood, a very uncommon material, from 1620, it is said to date. Locally there is a very curious legend, as regards to this church and its neighbour at Tunstone. It is said that two old ladies decided to benefact the neighbourhood by building a church each, but when one heard of the other's intention, contrary to her religious emotions, and in a spirit of rivalry declared that she vowed she would build her church before the other turned a stone of hers. Hence the local explanation of the names of these two villages. Passing the church and crossing the stone bridge over

the River Dove. we see the railway station the prettiest and best situated on the line.

Turnstone another small conglomeration of houses about a church lies just across the river from Vowchurch. The church St Mary Magdalene, is a small aisleless building with a wooden belfry and a timber south porch. An image bracket projects from the east wall on each side of the altar; and fixed against the north wall is an plaster slab incised with the figures of a mail clad knight and a lady, Sir Thomas Ap Harry and his wife, 1522. The roof-beam across the chancel and the piscina in the sanctuary should be noticed. At the west end of the church is a rude cup shaped font on a modern base.

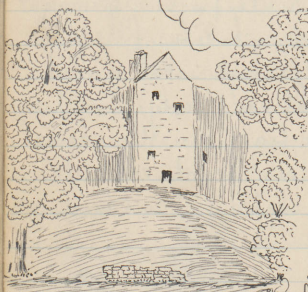
In the vicinity of the church is a small mound formed by the soil thrown up from a fosse.

We now regain the main road and follow it past the

striking shaped conical hill behind which lies Porton House, until we come to The Crossway, half a mile this side of Peterchurch the metropolis of the Golden Vale whose spire can be seen from almost one end of the valley to the other. At the Crossways we turn left and cross over to the other side of the valley once again. Our road climbs steeply for half a mile and then drops suddenly into the parallel valley of the Trenant Brook whilst away on the summit of the hill



59
 facing us the ruins of Urishay Castle show above a cluster of
 yew trees. The begins a long climb up a tree shaded lane to the
 summit, viewed from the valley beneath the castle appears
 perfect and inhabited but on closer inspection we find that it is only
 an empty shell.

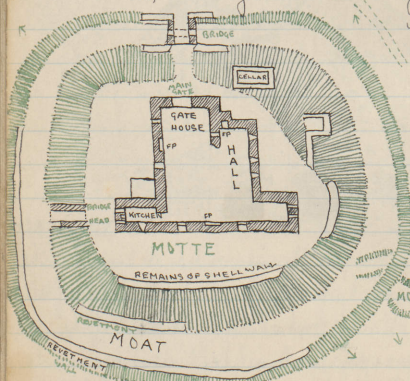


URISHAY CASTLE: FROM THE NORTH-EAST

Urishay (the hay or enclosure of Ury) is a sixteenth
 century defensible house, which was
 subsequently transformed into a
 Jacobean manor house, and later
 occupied as a farm. The high
 pitched windows and loopholes point to
 a reasonable anxiety on the part of
 the owner to secure himself as far as
 possible from the unwelcome attentions
 of his Welsh neighbours. The house is
 built upon the motte of the ancient castle

and one of its chief defences was a wet moat (now nearly dry)
 and used as a duck pond. The name of the first builder of the
 castle was Ury of Hay and from him obviously derived the
 castle's name; later generations called themselves de la Haye.

It is said to have been
 besieged during the Civil
 War when several cannon were
 mounted upon the motte. The
 castle which was occupied up
 until less than twenty years
 ago is now a sordid ruin,
 overgrown with trees and used
 to shelter cattle. There was
 a handsome forgotten ceiling
 to one of its rooms, but now the
 roof has fallen in, and the
 dining walls of the interior
 have vanished to their foundations



PLAN OF URISHAY CASTLE

NORMAN CHURCH

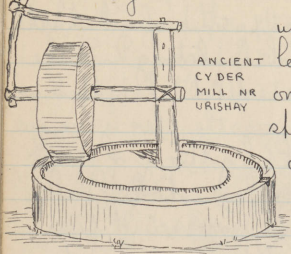
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During the last years of its occupation, when it was used as a farmhouse, the owner covered up the original masonry with plaster cement, great patches of which still remain and disfigure this once noble building. To the north of the castle is a small farm, whilst close up to the moat on the east side of the castle, there is a unique Norman chapel, built, no doubt, by Henry of Hay the first builder of a castle on this spot. It was for a long time used as a barn, but was rescued from secular uses, but now it is disused again and is badly in need of repair before it is too late. Indeed the east wall is so much out of perpendicular that it is in danger of collapse at any moment as there is no cement holding the stones together.

It is a rude little building as befitting the wild district and is very well worth preserving. A track leads from the castle over the steep fields to Dolward Farm where there is a small Roman out-post camp. *None were.*

We follow the road up the hill until we come to a fork and taking a turning on the right we plunge into one of those queer sunken lanes which abound in the district. The roadway in some places is at least 14 feet below the level of the surrounding land and they are said to have been worn so by the countless feet and wheels of pilgrims to Slonethony and Abbey Dore long ago. On our right a small and isolated little Methodist chapel and on the left a pleasant house situated among the fields called Uriskay Villa. The lane suddenly dips down into a little cove or dingle by the side of the road is an ancient little farmhouse in the yard of which is one of those ancient mills for making applesider. This consists of huge circular stone with a trough over

its perimeter in which rolls another circular stone pushed by hand which crushes the apples. The lane

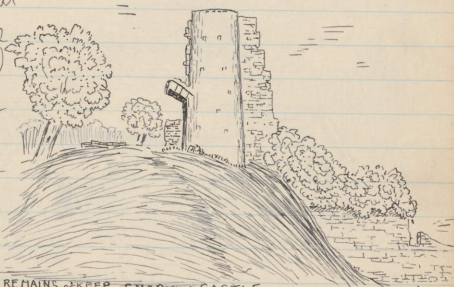


ANCIENT
CYDER
MILL NR
URISHAY

undulates and we pass two three side lanes all overgrown with bushes and grass on either side, until to top of a hill a spur of Bae Mawr, which is itself a spur of the Black Mountains. We are now 843 feet up, and then we descend a mile long hill to Snodhill. The surface of the lanes is very rough and consists of loose stones and is of a steep gradient, so cyclists should be careful

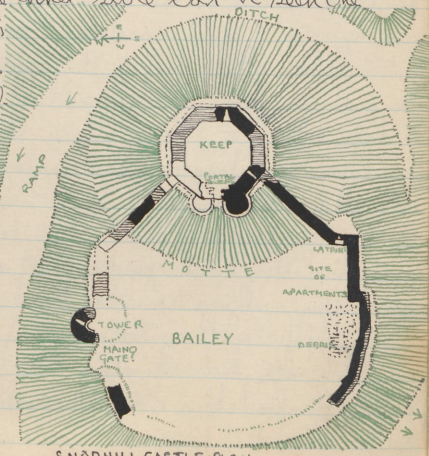
At Snodhill there is an ancient Tudor farmhouse, once a Court. It fine gabled and mullioned building built upon the plan of the letter e with the porch in the middle of the east side. The road in front of us ascend the side of a small conical isolated hill covered with trees and crowned with the strikingly placed ruins of Snodhill Castle. The first historical allusion to Snodhill Castle, occurs soon after the battle of Hastings, when it endured a three years seige together with the castles of Ewyas Harold, Hereford, and Richards Castle. There was a stone castle here by the time of the Domesday Survey, where it is set down as belonging to one Hugh de Arne or the oss. Among the many obscure possessors of the castle, two stand out prominent, those of Richard Neville surnamed the Kingmaker, and Robert Dudley, to whom his royal mistress Queen Elizabeth made a grant of the manor. The fate of Snodhill Castle was to be dismantled in order to build Snodhill Court, which as already been said was a mansion of some pretensions. It was built in 1665 and the initials which accompany the date on the stonework stand for William Prowse, its former owner. It contains a fine hall with an oak ceiling, and an oak staircase.

Judging from the rather scanty but imposing remains, the castle could never have been a fortress of any size or importance though it was of great military strength. It consists of solely a large motte and a bailey with no outworks whatsoever. The motte is crowned by the fragmentary ruins of an octagonal keep, whilst the bailey is defended by the ruins of a once strong curtain wall, and the remains of a tower. The keep which was probably of three storeys, is very ruinous and only two fragments and its foundations remain. It was an octagon of about 40 feet in diameter with walls



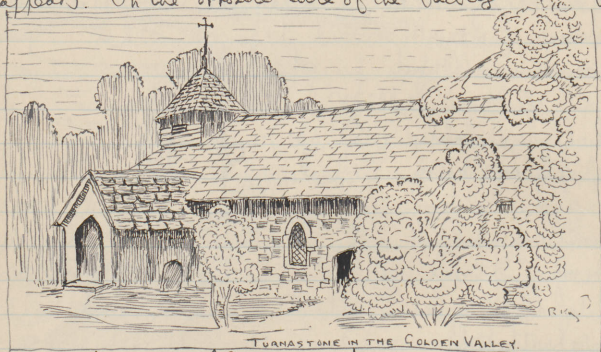
REMAINS OF KEEP. SNODHILL CASTLE

6 feet thick, and an entrance facing the courtyard on the west defended by two solid filled cylindrical towers or bastions. One of these bastions stands almost to its complete height of 20 feet. On the inner side can be seen the grooves to hold the portcullis. The other portal bastion has vanished completely except the whole northern side of the keep, with the exception of its base foundations. From both sides of the keep the ruins of a curtain descend the steep sides of the high motte in order to enclose a small courtyard or bailey. The curtain is by far the best preserved



SNODHILL CASTLE: PLAN

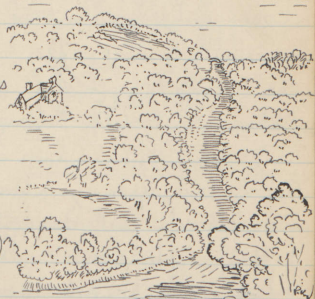
the south side where it overhangs a sharp fall. Here the wall stands to a height of fourteen feet or more. In a recess of the curtain may be seen the remains of a garden, to the west of which are traces of some apartments perhaps the hall. The curtain continues westward for some distance and then disappears. On the opposite side of the bailey the curtain



is not nearly so well preserved, only a small portion remaining above ground, but there are a few courses of a small drum tower, which appears to have been one of two built on each side of the main gateway in order to flank it. To the west a ramp winds up from the road beneath of the steep side of the hill to the east side of the motte, which is cut off from what remains of the summit of the hill by a deep dry fosse. The castle is said to have withstood a sudden onslaught by Owain Hyndwr but was much battered in the process.

Leaving the castle hill behind we turn left at the bottom of the pitch and after about a mile we come to the pretty village of Dorstone (equal to Peterchurch as the metropolis of the golden valley). Though not without other claims to attention, it attracts visitors chiefly by its proximity to the Herefordshire cromlech, Arthur's Stone, the only one which the county possesses. The cromlech is perched near the

top of Merbach Hill (which is at highest point 1045 ft above the sea, and is the highest hill on the east side of the golden valley.) The monument though carefully preserved and fenced, is unfortunately not quite perfect. It consisted originally of a large horizontal slab, some 19 feet long and from 3½ to 12 feet broad supported on a number of smaller vertical stones. Some of these have fallen out of position, and their displacement has fractured the capstone, which is now mainly held up by a detached fragment of its own under surface detached by the weather. Portions of the enclosing mound still remain; and the original entrance to the sepulchral chamber, is indicated by some upright flagstones. A pretty view over the valley is obtained from the site. To some village itself is not without interest. It is as tranquil a little corner as one could well wish to meet, its farms and cottages surrounded by orchards, with the gray Norman tower of its church standing a little aloof down a side lane. The church (St Faith) is an aisleless building with a massive west tower, but the greater part of the fabric has been rebuilt within recent times. Its chief curiosity is a small mediæval chalice and paten built into the wall beneath a recess on the south side. It was found beneath a tombstone, fragments of which are preserved on the slab below. The grave has the sinister reputation to be that of De Brito, one of the murderers of Thomas à Becket, who is alleged to have founded a church here in 1171, in expiation of his crime but the existence of the chalice proves that it was the tomb of



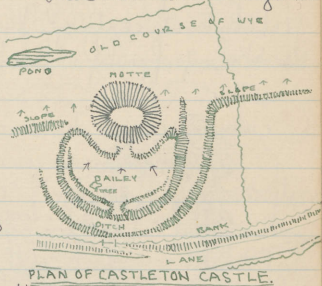
BREWARDINE RD AND PEN-Y-MOOR FARM FROM BACHNR. OORSTONE.

a priest. A mutilated inscription cut on a fractured stone relates to the foundation of a chapel, and bears the date 1256. The chapel which stood on the north side of the church, has now been taken down, but its piscina is retained in a wall near the north entrance to the church. There is also a beautiful double piscina, embodying an image bracket, preserved in the sanctuary; and a stump will be noticed inside the south doorway. One of the pillars of the north gateway of the churchyard is surmounted by a spherical sun dial; and another dial of more usual character is fixed at the top of the village cross, around which is the village "square" and a few shops. Taking the road out of the village we pass on our left by the banks of a little brook the tree clad earthworks of Donstone Castle, once the chief castle in the valley. The earthworks now consist of a tumph 25 to 30 feet above the surrounding fosse and the summit of which is 108 by 84 feet across, a rather unusually large area. It said to have been founded like the village church by De. Binto. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the castle belonged to the family of Soles.

Coming to a cross roads we rejoin the main Golden Valley road, ignoring a turning upon the left, which leads over a rough track past the castles of Brithy Martyr, and Mouse Castle to Hay. After about a mile we come to the hamlet of Bach from which a tree shaded lane leads over Marlbach hill to Broadwiche; another half a mile and the road forks once again, we taking the lesser turning on the right, we are now descending a steep hill back once more to the Wye valley which we left behind us at Monmouth being crossed the head of the Golden Valley at Bach. Passing under a railway bridge and another side turning to the left we come to the two or three houses comprising Newton. Amongst the fields about a hundred yards from the right hand side of the road are the remains of little motte & bailey castle, an outpost of Donstone Castle. The road crosses a brook and forks again at

a large farm, and taking the lane on the left we soon come out upon the main Hay - Breckwardine road which ascending the hill to the left we have a fine view of Marbach Hill, covered with bracken behind us, whilst in front the wooded foothills of Radnorshire come into view. and on the left range after range of the Black mountains come into view with the Brecknock Beacons in the hazy distance.

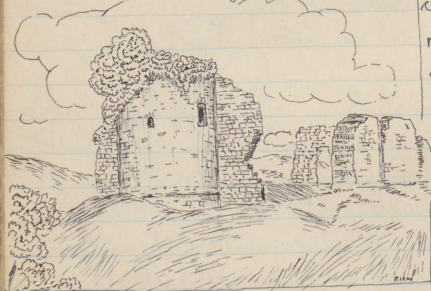
Reaching the top of the rise we make a diversion down a side lane to the right, to Castleton farm where there is a motte and bailey castle in a remarkable state of preservation. It is in a field on the right hand side of the lane looking the River Wye. It was built no doubt to guard the Hay - Hereford road and the upper entrance to the Golden Valley. The earthworks consist of a large motte with a ditch on the south side away from the river levels to the south of which is one of the usual ^{lean} shaped baileys which gradually slopes up from the motte until at the gateway at the south



end it is actually overlaid with the summit of the motte. This is repeated in the case of Castell Coch near Ystradfellter. The bailey was defended by a ditch and rampart which remains in exceptionally good preservation near the south west angle. Overshadowing the castle is Poolfordon hill crowned by a clump of trees (569ft) whilst to the north east there is magnificent panorama of countryside over the Herefordshire plain.

Regaining the main road and ascending up an easy gradient we cross the railway once more at Green's Siding Station and soon we reach the cottages of Pen-y-Park 536 ft high. Taking the first on the right we pass Pwery farm upon our left. This was formerly the site of a monastic cell belonging

to the priory at Montacute (Somerset) of the Clunian order. It was founded in the reign of Henry I by Simon Fitz Walter, and further endowed with trading privileges by Roger, Earl of Hereford, in the reign of Henry II. Taking a rather rough lane on the left, we pass the tower of Stanfair church amongst yew trees high up overlooking the valley of the Wye. This is the parish church of Blifford village which is half a mile away at the bottom of the hill. The tower is considered to belong to the thirteenth century. Notice should be taken of the font (decorated) and of a curious window in the south wall of the nave; but the most interesting feature is the effigy of a vested ecclesiastic carved out of wood (an uncommon material) which is attributed to the thirteenth century. It is supposed to represent a member of the Walswyn family. Reaching the bottom of the hill which is



FAIR ROSAMUND'S TOWER. CLIFFORD CASTLE

covered with loose stones and makes rough riding we come out into the main Hay to Leominster Road, whilst in the trees in front of us the melancholy fragments of the once famous Clifford Castle show above their tops. These are reached by crossing the field in front of us and negotiating a fence or two as the castle is I suppose really upon private ground. The castle is situated upon a wooded knoll where the Wye takes a long eastward bend. It exhibits a certain interest in its carefully chosen military site. It was a Marcher fortress, but neither that circumstance nor the the hunting which was as high a commendation in the eyes of our Norman Kings, is its chief claim to distinction. For once these heavy ruins, almost hidden under the load of greenery that festoons them, awakes some softer memories than those of the sword

and trumpet. For hence came forth to captivate King Henry II that famous but ill fated maiden Fair Rosamund. And in deed, the fairest vision the place holds for us, without of little Rosamund five years old, her little hands on the castle battlements, standing tip toe, the sun on her sunny hair, to peer at some herald thundering and trumpeting at her fathers gates. There can be no doubt that it was an evil day for the "Rosa Mundi" when her King appeared by Wyze side, and whilst seeking one sport found another. That she was the mistress of Henry II is certain enough; but they tell us now that the story of the labyrinth at Woodstock and the poison of Cleonor is a myth. Fair Rosamund or June de Clifford, lies as all the world knows not by the banks of the Wyze here, but at Godstow, whither Becket led her, and on her grave was carved that legend?

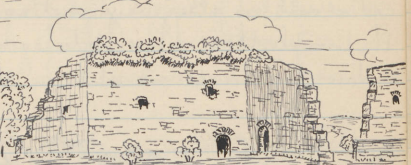
"Hic jacet in tumulo Rosamundi non Rosa mundi:
Non redolent redolent que: redolere solent

But ^{the} Cliffords were to leave the Wyze for a mightier destination three hundred miles away, than the moderate position they held at Blefford. For a great northern heiress a Viscount, was placed ward with Roger Clifford by Henry III and this enterprising man soon passed from the position of guardian to husband and owner of vast estates in Cumberland, where he built the great castle of Penrith on the Carnot banks, but Penrith has braved the centuries more successfully than Clifford castle, or any clad tower and some fragments being all that remains. Clifford is one of the five Herefordshire castles mentioned in Domesday book at the time of that survey it was in the hands of Ralph de Todeni; but it had been built or at least repaired by William Fitz-Osborn, Earl of Hereford to whom it was given by William at the conquest. Ralph de Todeni acquired it on the attainder of William Fitz-Osborn's son Roger. It passed with Ralph's daughter as part of her.

dower to Richard Fitz Penty. The second son of this marriage Walter, assumed the family name of Blifford from his property, whose daughter was the Fair Rosamund. Walter de Blifford brother of Rosamund, succeeded his father in 1221. He took John's side all through the quarrel with the Barons, but joined the Earl of Pembroke against Henry III. The king deprived him, but granted him Blifford again in 1234. It was this Walter who compelled the king's messengers to eat, seal and all, the royal letter which he had brought. This escapade cost him a thousand marks. In 1250 he was commanded by the king to marry his daughter, agree to her & her cousin, William Longespee, great-grandson of Fair Rosamund. Six years later, however, Longespee was killed in a tournament, and the young widow, Blifford's only child, became heir to her father's vast estates. Then came John Gifford of Bromsfield, the enemy of Simon de Montfort and the friend of Prince Edward, and carried her off by force, and presently with the king's leave married her. Gifford was a considerable person. In 1282, with Edmund Mortimer, he defeated Llewelyn near Builth, as we have seen. It is curious to find that Gifford's wife Matilda de Blifford, interceded on Llewelyn's behalf, imploring Archbishop Beckham to absolve the Welsh prince, and to permit his burial in consecrated ground, both of which the archbishop refused to do.

Gifford died in 1299 and left no male issue, Blifford came to the Crown and was granted to the Mortimers, who entertained Richard II and John of Gaunt there for a night in 1381. When the Mortimer family merged in the House of York set on the throne of England, Edward IV made the Duke of Buckingham constable of the castle. Even then the place seems to have been ruinous. The existing masonry with perhaps the exception of the banqueting hall, which appears to have been the original keep (as at Chelston) is assigned by Robinson to the reign of Edward

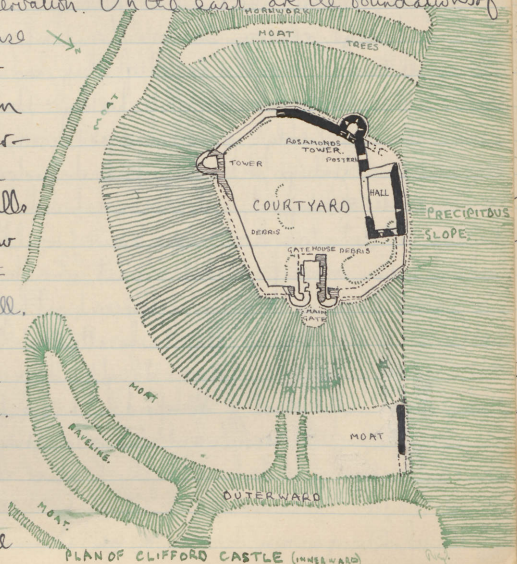
The castle consisted of an enormous motte, partly artificial and partly natural on whose summit the whole of the inner ward was built. This was ~~not~~ surrounded ~~where~~ not protected by the precipitous slope of the bank of the Wye by a formidable dry moat. To the west was a small unalled hornwork, whilst on the opposite side there was a large outer ward, surrounded by moat and rampart. This ward never seems to have had any defences in masonry



THE COURTYARD: WEST ASPECT: CLIFFORD CASTLE

although there are foundations of a stone building in the middle of it. The inner ward consisted of an irregular shaped courtyard surrounded by various buildings and buttressed at the most exposed angles by drum towers, of which only one (supposed to be the birthplace of Rosamund) remains in any state of preservation. On the east as the foundations of the main gatehouse

defenced by two cylindrical drum towers, whilst overhanging the Wye are a few stout walls containing a window or two, pertaining to the banquetting hall, to the west of which there appears to be a small postern gate. There could have been no finer situated castle by Wye side when it was in its prime



PLAN OF CLIFFORD CASTLE (INNER WARD)

The road from Cliford to Hay closely follows the bank of the Wye. The approach into the town of Hay is somewhat spoiled by the sawmills and railway stations upon the right, passing these, we pass through the scanty remains of the town wall and enter the town proper. This is an old world place of narrow streets and a cobbled alleyways, and raised sidewalks. Broad Street the principlle thoroughfare contains one or two half timbered houses and so two houses are alike in the town. At the higher end



BROAD STREET HAY

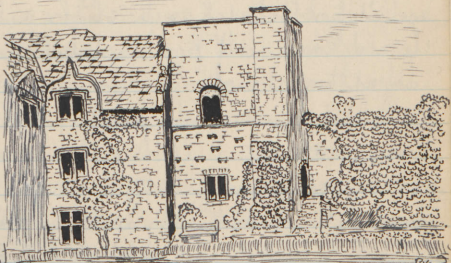
of the town stands the old castle more beautiful in decay, than impressive, with its millioned windows and grass grown walls. It now consists only of two fragments, an early square keep and a once stately

gatehouse. To the right of the keep, standing on part of the site of the first Marcher castle, is a splendid Tudor mansion with six gables and large chimney stacks. This composite edifice, dominating the small town of Hay is its chief glory, and it will repay us to enter into some examination of its history. As soon as Bernard of Newmarche was firmly established at Brecon, he made over La Haye to Philip de Walwyn, a knight who had rendered him valuable service in his career of conquest, and who is believed by some to have been the builder of the stone keep. His tenure would not seem to be of very long duration, as we find that a grant was made of the church of St Mary Haye to the Priory of Brecon, not by Walwyn but by William Reuel. Among those who attended the dedication, was Bernard de Neufmarche whose daughter, soon afterwards married Milo Fitz Walter, Earl of Hereford, and Constable of England, her dowry including the castle and manor of Hay. Some account of this nobleman would be too lengthy to place in this history of Hay Castle. The same remark applies to William de Braose, the "O rage of Abergavenny" to whom the castle subsequently passed,

and how her "M" ea p f h e w an wil an the ima keep age cas built the her into The with to the in ceo d B the cas was how with

and his masterful wife, Maude de Valerie. Concerning the lady however, it is expedient to add a few touches, she having impressed herself on the folklore of the district, where she was remembered as "Moll Wallbee. Locally Maude de Valerie appears to have earned respect as a benefactress, but her stormy character is reflected in a legend which is not wholly devoid of an element of humour. The peasantry clearly thought of her as a giantess, endowed with no small degree of miraculous power. Sober authorities

are content to credit her with the building of, or at any rate the enlargement of the castle, but the glaring imagination of the country people makes her the personal agent in the erection of the castle, and declares that she built it in a night. She brought



CASTLEKEEP FROM THE COURT YARD HAY.

the stones to the spot in her apron, and as one got in her shoe caused her some inconvenience, she pulled it out and threw it across the Wye. It fell into Sloues churchyard, three miles distant and there it is to this day. The fact has been recorded that the grandson of the wyke allied himself with his Welsh father in law, Slewelyn and the Brecons in opposition to King John, who marched against Stay and burnt both the town and the castle, captured his wife and sons who were tortured to death in the dungeons of Windsor Castle. Her story was repeated when, some two centuries later, Owain Glyndwr, paid his memorable visit to the town. Among the more distinguished owners of the castle were Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Essex, Thomas of Woodstock, the Earl of Stafford, and the Duke of Buckingham. In the middle of the seventeenth century, castle & manor passed from the impoverished heir of the Staffords, who was refused possession to James Boyle of Hereford, who built the fine old house alongside the keep. The keep which is undoubtedly Early Norman with Tudor windows inserted, is of three stories and is lighted by

double windows on each floor except the basement. In the east corner is a slightly projecting turret by which the various floors were reached. The entrance to the keep (which resembles and is contemporary with that of Goodrich Castle) was on the first story, and reached by a flight of stone steps against the outside of the wall. To the north of the keep stands the gatehouse looks like thirteenth century work. Note the grooves for the portcullis both on the inner and outer side.

Crossing the iron bridge over the Wye and leaving the ancient town behind to us on climbs a slight rise, on the top of which the old Roman road from Kenchester to Brecon cuts across the modern way at right angles. The turning upon our right leads to Batsick Farm and byer meadows where there is the grass covered site of a Roman settlement. A little farther on is a tree covered knoll once crowned by some scanty ruins thought to have been of monastic origin but undoubtedly they were those of Elyro Castle. Coming suddenly out into the main road we find ourselves in Elyro village. The church with its Norman tower, the old inn and the ancient houses embowered in trees make a pretty picture of rustic peace, but the tranquility of the village was not its portion, in the lifetime of the terrible William de Braose. "The Tyre" for some reason or other was at logger heads with his neighbor Trehearne Vaughan, whom he invited to meet him, for a friendly arrangement of their differences. All unsuspecting Vaughan proceeded to the rendezvous which was on the road to Brecon. Thereupon he was seized, bound to the tail of a horse, and dragged about the streets of Hay. Not content with this outrage, de Braose caused the unfortunate gentleman (who was squire of the castle & manor of Elyro) to be beheaded, and as a last indignity, his body was suspended on the common gallows. Naturally this abomination excited the fiercest resentment in the breasts of the victims relatives, which culminated in the tragic siege of Painscastle.

Taking a turning near the church we ascended a little

dingle, here and there prettily wooded after about half a mile the road forks, and taking the left hand turn we climb steeply up the side of the hill until the farm of Pen-yfforest is reached 460 feet up. Climbing another 280 feet we come out onto the open spaces of the Brecon Mountain. The sky was rather cloudy and away in front rose the mountains of Radnorshire, now turned to a dark green by the shadows of the clouds. On the left the tracks of sheep and the wider paths used by outlying farms wound their way out of sight over the bare mountain range. The road which has here degenerated in surface descends sharply to Rhyd Lydan farm in the flat bottomed valley of the Bach Stowey Brook. In front crowning a natural mound are the earthworks and village of Paincastle, behind which rise the sombre green hills for a background.

Paincastle is a largish and rather untidy village clustered about the earthworks of a once great castle. It is now a very remote and lonely place situated upon the old drovers road from Cardiganshire. The village possesses a Nonconformist chapel and a number of ancient stone built houses, but it ^{though} contains no striking pieces of architecture, this little Welsh village is now a picture of beauty and peace, amid its noble but rather bare surroundings. Its most interesting possession is the remains of its castle hidden behind a farm. It was the most historically famous castle in the region, and it was built by Pain de Quincy about 1130 in the usual wattle and barley style, and was the scene of much fighting during the middle ages. It was defended with success in 1195 by Maud de St Albans, wife of its absent owner, where the English often called it Mauds Castle; but it was taken by Rhys ap Iffith of South Wales in 1196. William de Braose got it back again by 1198, when it stood a third siege within five years, this time at the hands of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, Prince of Powis. Not only history, but legend creates interest in the remains of this stronghold. Three years before William de Braose

hooked the investment of the castle, he had been the hero of an amatory feat. That ogre individual was out hunting when he espied a lovely maiden, who with a bevy of attendants, was taking her pleasure in bathing in Slan-Buch-Slyn, a lake about three and a half miles from Painscastle whither the unconscionable de Braose soon transported her.



THE GREAT MOTTE, PAINSCASTLE

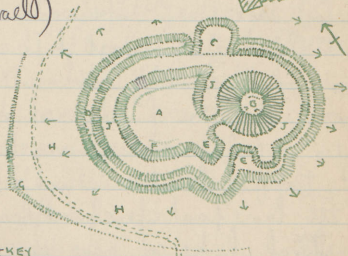
It so happened that she was the kinswoman of the Welsh prince, but on his inquiring for her, De Braose feigned ignorance, and she only succeeded in communicating with her friends by signalling from her windows with a candle. Something of the kind seems to have actually happened, but the real heroine, was the wife of Rhys of Moredudde, who lived in the time of Edward I, and having taken the castle, had left her there to continue his career of conquest.



Afterwards the tide turned, and he was forced to retreat, but managed to rescue his wife who signalled to him in the manner stated. Here at this castle there was plenty of life in the twelfth century and enough of death for that matter, to fill the local cup of excitement to the brim. For one of the greatest battles of the period took place about the walls of this castle and all the trouble arose out of a treacherous deed done by William de Braose, the reigning power of that day in Brecon and Radnor, upon the prison of a Brecon gentleman Trebeon Vaughan as has been told. Now Vaughan was a man of influence and position, and what was more he was related to Gwenwynwyn, Prince of Powis, and such a dastardly act following upon even worse performances was more than kinship, particularly Welsh kinship could stand. Gwenwynwyn got up and swore a great oath that he would sweep de Braose's dominions so bare with fire and

sword that not a stick nor stone should be left standing within them. He then marched a great army to Painscastle and operations by laying siege to it. Unfortunately the resistance was so stubborn that weeks passed away, and not only had De Braoses Marcher friends had time to gather in strength and to his assistance, but to facilitate matters they released from captivity Griffith ap Rhys, claimant to throne of South Wales, and Gwynwynwyn's particular enemy, who raised his people on the Normans side. Then there was a hurley burley indeed in this part of what

we now call Radnorshire (Gloes) Gwynwynwyn fought valiantly against his triple foe, but was utterly discomforted; three thousand of them being slain and as many prisoners taken, as were worth the trouble. The siege of Painscastle by Gwynwynwyn is an incident in Scott's Betrothed. In the next generation, it was rebuilt in the nineteenth century style by Henry III when he made it his base during the campaign of 1231 against Llewellyn, the Great, of North Wales, Simon de Montfort in his hour of distress before Evesham, ceded it to the last Llewellyn in 1268 along with Harwarclen, as part of the price for the Welsh prince's assistance against the insurgent royalist party. This was one of the acts for which the great earl was never forgiven by any of the Marcher lords. It was afterwards recaptured by the King from Rhys ap Maredudd and given to the Toesaris or Toes, who soon reconquered Glos, while the Mortimers were conquering Maelienydd by force of arms. It is now curious to find that Pain's motte is now far more in evidence than King Henry's stonework. Even today



KEY
 A INNER BAILEY E-E SITE OF TOWERS
 B MOTTE F INNER RAMPART
 C BARRICAN G SCARP
 D OUTER RAMPART H OUTER BAILEY
 I 7-7-5 MOAT.
PAINSCASTLE

It is now curious to find that Pain's motte is now far more in evidence than King Henry's stonework. Even today

these magnificent earthworks are the best preserved in the county. The motte is some fifty feet high and the outer rampart about 20 feet; this gives some idea of the magnitude of the works.

The road out of the village led in a westerly direction and the recently dry and hot weather, had reduced the surface of the road into a fine yellow powder, which became a cloud of blinding dust whenever a vehicle passed by. The road which followed the here fairly wide and flat bottomed valley of the Bach Howey had fine views on ones left over the Begun range, whilst behind the shoulder of the nearest hill was the lost village of Slanbedw-fach, a place only to be reached by footpaths as there are no roads. A little further on a narrow valley opens out upon ones right and up among the trees there can be discerned the tower of Slanbedw church which has a saddleback roof.

The lane past the church leads to Slan-buch-lllyn, a natural lake of some size. However we follow the Crowood road, passing the wooded eminence of the Garth upon our right, and after about two miles we come to a cross roads and taking the left turning, we see in a field upon the right the mysterious prehistoric mound called Tomen-y-Fferm. It seems to have been utilized in Norman times as an outpost of painecastle, as the deep rock cut fosse around the mound shows.

Regaining the Crowood road we ascend a hill until we come to the chapel and a couple of houses which form Slyn-fen-faen, we are now 943 feet above the sea level. Away in front rises the striking, ^{part of hill} conical hill of Tywyn-y-futh (1016 ft). Upon the summit of this hills there are some cairns and a small ^{one further back} camp, nearly circular in a high state of preservation. It has one entrance upon the east. The ascent to the camp is very steep upon all sides, and a small garrison

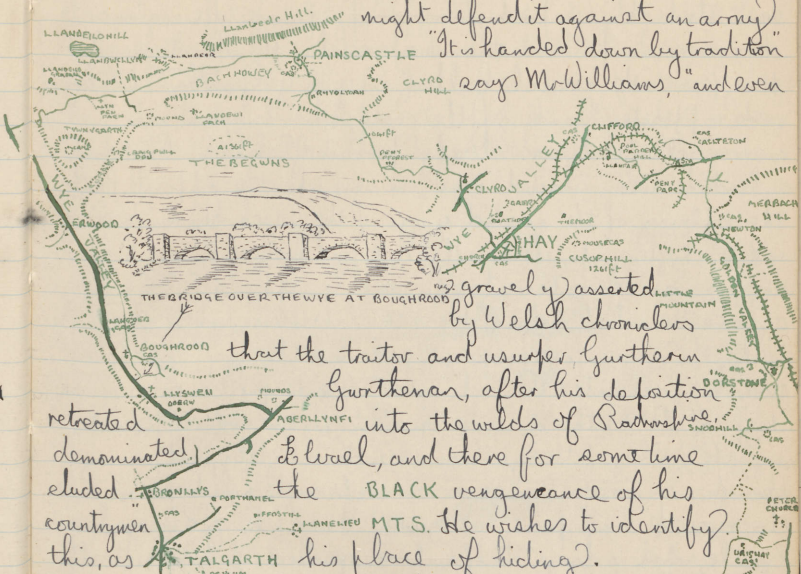
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might defend it against an army
"It is handed down by tradition"
says McWilliams, "and even



retreated demoralized eluded his countrymen this, as
 gravely asserted by Welsh chroniclers that the traitor and usurper Gwrtheron Gwrtheran, after his deposition into the wilds of Radnorshire, Lloer, and there for some time the BLACK vengeance of his countrymen. He wishes to identify his place of hiding.

Once again on the Cowood road, one can see the church of Slandreils Graban upon ones right hidden almost by a cluster of yew trees. The road now descends a steep hill by a series of hairpin bends. This old road which we have followed all the way from Paincastle follows the line of the old drover's track from Bardiarsshire to Kington and the Midlands beyond. Upon reaching the bed of the valley of the River Wye we cross it by means of an iron bridge and find ourselves upon the Bullth-Hay main Road, on our right rises the steeply wooded height of Alltmaur, and after following the river for about a mile we come to the hamlet of Cowood, where there are a few commonplace cottages and a little inn a great resort of fishermen, a road leaves the main road here, for the pretty village of Brickadam, which is

dominated by a prehistoric camp of some dimensions. However we follow the main road in the direction of ^{the eastward} ~~stay~~, with the conical bulk of T ym y Gorthen still looming on the opposite bank of the river, which here runs in a narrow valley between closely pressing hills. Rounding a bend in the tree shaded road, one sees upon the opposite bank the opening of the wooded gorge of the Bach Howey river where higher up, there is the rock and pool of C rai y puldu and a series of cataracts. The rock is supposed to be site of a castle which belonged to a cruel chieftain whose chief pastime was running young girls and throwing their bodies over the fall into the pool below. A mile farther on the narrow dingle of the Seithwen Brook opens out upon our side of the river, and the Valley of the Rhye begins to widen slightly, and passing through more woods, we see on our left in the fields bordering the river the magnificent but restored Tudor pile of Slanged Castle, which is large half timbered residence of late sixteenth century date. The hills on our right are now very thickly covered with trees, behind which rises the bulk of Mynydd Fforest (132 ft). Crossing the river by Boughwood bridge and taking the turning upon ones left we come close up by the parish church which is dedicated to St Cyrog. It is modernized building with a spire, and contains nothing remarkable. Following the road up a slight rise and ignoring a turning upon our right we come to Boughwood Court, a large house smothered in trees. It stands upon the site of Boughwood Castle. Boughwood, or Boughwood Castle, was built, according to Mr Williams, by Cincin Glyd, Lord of B'wood, and on its site the Foulke family have built a fine modern house. The parish has passed through the hands of many. In 1140 it was the property of Cincin Glyd as we have said. He was the younger brother of Badwallon, Lord of Moel ymaidd, who was murdered on his return from Bardiganshire. The Normans then possessed



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themselves of it (probably Hal Clifford), and later it came into the hands of the Bishop of Hereford, who restored it to Lincoln's son Walter Fitzchan. Little remains but the moat from those days near the bridge over the Wye, to which we return, there is a very hospitable inn called the Ship. Below Boughwood we cross



the river again to Slyswen, which means the White Court, or rather the Fair Palace,

THE THREE

COCKS INN

and was so

called because it was one of the mansions of the Princes of South Wales. This "gorgeous palace" as Theophilus Jones calls it, has long since disappeared, and not a stone is left of it. It was there Rodrick the Great appointed the Princes of Bardagan and Powis to meet to settle any disputes which might occur between them, which were to be decided by the Prince of Ahefan.

It is here that the Wye changes its character again and becomes a true river. The valley opens, the great Black Mountains, come into view, and wide meadows open on either bank. A little below Slyswen, lies the pretty mansion of Idern, with its historical associations of Shrewsbury. Between the road and the mansion is a small tumulus which yielded an urn of Iron age date when it was excavated.

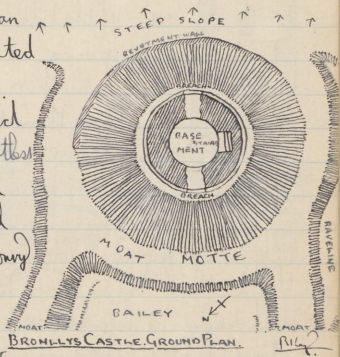
The road after passing Boxbush farm and crossing under a railway bridge, enters the little hamlet of Pitton famous for the inn called the Three Cocks, after which a great railway

junction and station near at hand is named. It is an ancient h-shaped house by the side of the high road, the old resting place of fisherman, and a famous fort house in olden days. The road here crosses the little River Slynfi, near its confluence with its greater neighbour the Wye. On either side of the Slynfi close by the bridge are two mounds supposed to be the sites of castles. The road now comes out into the Dalgorth Hay road opposite the firs of Uwenyfed Park, in which ground there are traces of two camps or caers. Our road then follows past the Three Locks junction over beautiful green undulating country with a magnificent panorama of the Brecon Beacons showing up in front, with the conical shaped hill of Mynydd Toned showing on our right. In the foreground are the houses of Bronllys village and the high wry clad tower of its castle showing above the trees. Near the centre of Bronllys village is the fine parish church, which is notable on account of its detached square tower.

However, beyond the church there is little of interest in the village itself but half a mile on the road to Dalgorth there stands an impressive ruined tower, above a little river; this is the sole remnant of Bronllys Castle. Early writers on the subject of Bronllys Castle were impressed by it being Pictish in character; but this idea is evidently as fallacious as the local tradition that a covered way extends therefrom to Castell Dinas five miles away. It is said that Mael Fitzwalter, of that unfortunate and ill-fated family was killed by a stone which fell from the tower of Bronllys Castle. In Giraldus Cambrensis's time it was in the hands of the Bliffards, but by the time of Seyfroid, it was probably all in ruins. All that remains of the castle at the present day, is the tower upon its mound, situated near the junction of the Slynfi and Enig, and some half obliterated earthworks. This tower only owes its existence to the fact that its walls are strong thick and hard to destroy. Buck's drawing of this castle

published in 1741, shows then another large ruin situated near the keep. This had disappeared before the time of Fentons visit in 1804 and he notes the fact. Clark gives a full account of this interesting tower. The tower possesses three floors and a basement dungeon and appears to have received internal additions and alterations at different periods. The castle as can

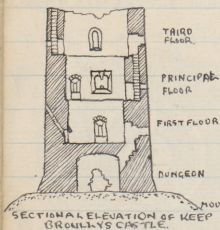
be seen from the ground plan originated from a motte and bailey structure. The motte was crowned with a round keep or Juliet, and walls were doubtless drawn around the bailey. The keep and revetment wall of the mound are now the only portions of masonry remaining. The keep is about 50 feet high exclusive of the mound and about 28-30 feet in external diameter.



The basement forms an unlighted vaulted dungeon, with steps in the wall from the room above. It is not below ground level, the floor being on level with its top of the mound. Two openings have been made through the tremendously thick walls in modern times. The idea of the vault no doubt, was besides to strengthen the tower to lessen the risk of fire during a siege. The room above was furnished with embrasures and a fireplace, and had a stone floor. The entrance to the keep was on this floor, facing the bailey to the north. A stair led from an embrasure in this room to the dungeon, and another to open out in a window recess in the room above. This was similar in plan to the first floor, but better lighted, and it had a fine hooded fireplace. This was the principle room, and there was probably another room above it, but the top of the tower is much broken away. The windows in the upper stories seem to have been enlarged during fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Of the other large buildings mentioned by Buck in the



eighteenth century, not even the foundations remain, and part of the bailey is now occupied by a modern mansion. This was the principal castle on the banks of the Afon Slyfi and its high tower still dominates the neighbourhood.



The name Talgarth means "The front of the hill," a most appropriate designation, giving, as it does, a fair idea of its general situation, "the hill" of course, being nothing less than the north-western slopes of the Black Mountains. Talgarth is a borough by prescription, but has long since lost its privileges. Before the Norman invasion, it

was the chief royal residence of Brycheiniog, and was considered at the death of Rhys ap Tewdrod (1093), the ancient capital of Brycheiniog (Breconshire). It is the stopping and market centre of the district, stock auctions being held on alternate Tuesdays. The town is beautifully situated at the foot of Parc Hill, 500 feet above the sea level, and is sheltered from the east by this



GRONLHY'S TOWER FROM THE SOUTH.

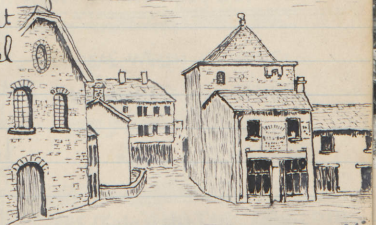
hill and also by the range of the Black Mountains. The churches of the town are St Gwenndolen (Parish Church), Calvinistic Methodist, Congregational and Baptist. Trudistan chapel, one mile from Talgarth (now closed) dates back to the 16th century, and it is stated that in the days of Howel Harris this chapel, in the heart of the country, had a membership of over 200. The parish church is the most prominent and interesting building in the town. It is one of the largest in the county, dedicated to St Gwenndolen or Gwen, stated to have been murdered at Talgarth by the Saxons. Gwen was a daughter of Brycheiniog. The church is unique in its possession of a large slab over the steeple stairs, used for a beacon fire to signal in the event of alarm and indeed the whole tower which its loopholes has a distinctly

fortified appearance. In the porch of the church, on the right hand side of the entrance, is a holy water stone basin, still in good condition and generally accepted as dating from the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Attention is also called to a stone coffin lid, ten inches thick, elaborately on the face with a floriated border around, thought by some to indicate an ecclesiastical abbeys. There is a building on the north side formerly used as a school room, now a vestry.



ST. GWENOLE'S CHURCH. TALGARTH

It has a "squint" into the church and some Early English pillars. The yew trees in the churchyard are believed to be over one thousand years old. The town itself centers around the bridge over the River Ely which near bye joins its waters with that of the Afon Dlynfi, (Adjoining) the bridge is an ancient block house or heel tower, against which is built a bank and two shops. These Peel towers, were, in general, square or rectangular, and depended for their security greatly upon their site and formed the nucleus of the town or village. This tower appears to have been more of a fortified adjunct to a manor house as at Porthamel, near bye, rather than a castle in the sense of Bronlly, or Dinas. The tower appears to have been greatly altered in modern times, however there are still some remains of corbelled projections on the east and north faces.



TALGARTH TOWER

Having found very good accommodation at the Red Lion Inn, I took the road along the bottom of Parc Hill to.

Porthamel Farm, where there are the remains of a "castle". The remains of this "castle" or rather fortified mansion, are late as castles go, but of great interest. Like the tower of Talgarth church it is embattled, and contains lancets for defence by archers. In its very thick



ivy clad walls there still remain indications outside, of cobbled projections with apertures between down which, stones could be thrown or molten lead poured on the assailant. Porthamel was the residence of Sir Roger Vaughan, the first sheriff of Breconshire (1539). It was the custom in

Wales for the judges of the assize, when on circuit, to entertain the County Magistrate and the High Sheriff to dinner. This explains why an anchway (of considerable interest) leads from the tower to the house, where retainers armed with javelins were drawn up. The ivy decked tower, now makes a pretty picture from the road.



Cwmtrappe, Talgarth.

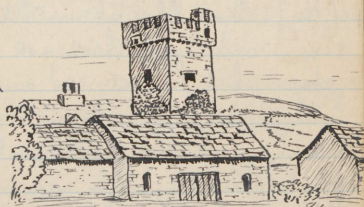
One of the most delightful nooks is that known as Cwmtrappe a natural dell enveloped in magnificent foliage which almost hides the little bridge that crosses the stream. Ascents and descents along a winding path, bordered here and there with woods, give a touch of Tyrolean beauty to the whole surroundings. No visitor to Talgarth who has

omitted to

do so should neglect to find the way here.

Another lovely walk is to the woods upon Parc Hall, about one mile away. From here gorgeous landscapes present themselves to the view, covering large tracts of the hills and mountains of Breconshire and Radnorshire. By going to the left below the wood, an enjoyable walk can be taken to Porthamel, returning along the main road. To the right another walk will lead through a charming dingle to

Uemllwyd, or again, by taking the winding pathway to the top of the hill, a wonderful panorama meets the eye and the Wye Valley is seen to advantage. Continuing along the top of the hill, one soon comes to the farm of Hestell at the top end of a little valley; here are to be found some neolithic grave mounds now decayed to be a national monument under Government protection. Taking a narrow lane above the farm, and descending a steep hill one comes to the little church and village of Llanelliech in the trough of an narrow valley. The old structure of the church is dedicated to St Ellyw, a descendant of King Brychan. It possesses an interesting rood screen, and the churchyard has a yew tree fastening. The farm house near by offers evidence of having once been a Monastic House, and a Latin inscription still remains. The lane back into Talgarth, which is about two miles away runs for some distance down the picturesque Burn Rhed which was once the site of a hermitage of St Ellyw.



PORTHAMEL TOWER.

Part III

TALGARTH - Castell Dinas - Treffecca - Talyllon - Scethrog - Talybont - Penkelly - Llandew - BRECON - Felin Cambis - Hed Senni - Sennybridge

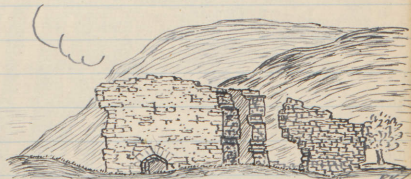
Leaving the town of Talgarth, early in the morning I took the Aberquenny road out of the town and commenced the well engineered hill to the Pass of Peny gwynfford between Mynydd Dinas a spur of the Black Mountains and the conical shaped Mynydd Inoed (1997). The summit of this lost mountain is just a yard short of 2000 ft - nothing very formidable, but it is rarely climbed. The lost 200 feet are extremely steep, and as the red sandstone is almost bare of turf the concluding stage of the ascent is made on both hands

84
and feet. Yet one is amply repaid for any energy expended in gaining the summit. The view from the pass of Ten-y-gaelford is certainly exquisite, but from the Troad it is surpassing. Far down in the south east we follow the widening Uak to Llawer reaches to Aberavenny, where the Sugar Loaf, Bloengy, and Shind Fach cut the skyline. To the west lie Brecon, the Beacons and Llyn Dafyddon or Slauzone Lake, and to the north the pleasant country about Talgarth & Bronllys, while to the east we have a birds eye view of the remains of Castell Dinas with the green wall of the Black Mountains behind. On the summit of the Troad itself there are several round bits of loose stones which have caused much discussion among antiquaries.

But to get back onto our road which follows along the trough of a little brook past the farmhouse of Pen-dre which stands with the area of a large Britons encampment. The road then loops around about a little but still maintains an easy gradient with wonderful views of the steep northern wall of Black Mountain in front of us, and there with numerous water courses. After another mile or two we reach the tiny hamlet of Ten-y-gaelford at the summit of the pass (1060 ft). It comprises of an inn, a chapel, and a few cottages and farmsteads. Taking a lane upon our left leading in an easterly direction under the slope of Mynydd Dinas (1127 ft) we come to a clump of fir trees, and leaving the lane we take to the mountainside, and after a short but stiff climb along the gorse and bracken we reach the summit upon which stand the scanty but highly interesting ruins of Castell Dinas. Castell Dinas or what is left of it, is sufficient to show that this fortress, placed upon the summit of a high steep hill, was certainly admirably situated to defend the pass from Talgarth to Brecknock. It is one of the highest castles

in great Britain if not the highest, standing as it does at its height of 1476 feet above sea level on an isolated mountain between Mynydd Troed and Y Llyn a spur of the Black Mountains, and standing over 400 feet above the pass below. It was formerly a place of great importance, and constituted the head of a lordship, rank conferred upon the owner the dignity of a baron at court. According to Skelton, in whose time it was ruinous almost to the hard ground, it was destroyed by the inhabitants of the district, during the reign of Henry IV. At first appearance it appears as though the castle was erected on the pre-existing earthworks of

a British Camp, but this is not probable. The castle which consisted of a motte, two separate baileys and an outwork

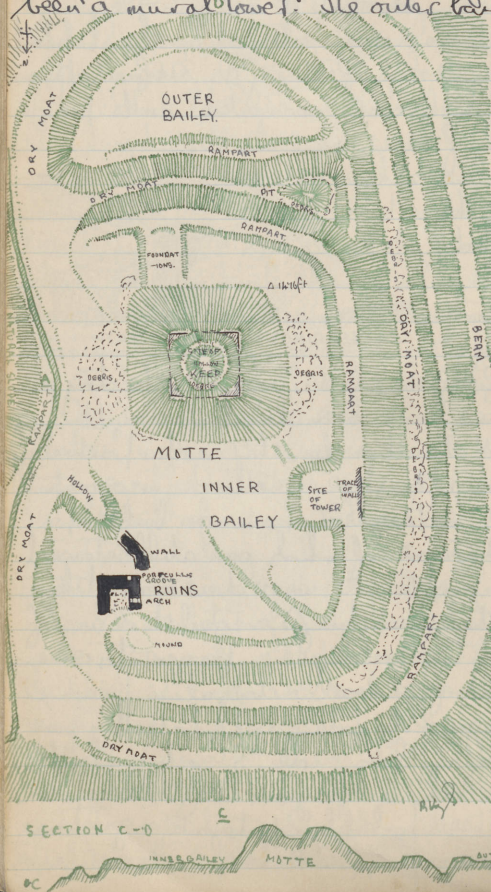


CASTELL DINAS THE RUINS FROM THE SOUTH-WEST

was surrounded by a double rampart of loose stones, and a deep dry moat. These defences have been almost destroyed upon the east, but stand on the other sides practically perfect. At some time after these earthworks were constructed (or altered) a great rectangular keep was built upon the motte, the foundations of which can still be traced. A little later walls and towers were drew around the main bailey and stone buildings erected there in. Of this masonry only two problematic fragments remain. These are the ruins of a small rectangular building with an archway in one of its sides, and a portcullis groove on the outer face of another side. Standing about a yard away to the south is a fragment of the shapeless cone of a wall. These probably pertain to a gatehouse or portern, and the masonry appear to be of circa 1200. Neither

of these ruins stand more than 11 or 15 feet high, but the ground has tilted up so as to almost cover the archway in the ruin. In the dry moat and below the motte, a great deal of debris can be seen no doubt from the long crumpled keep and curtain walls. To the west of the motte, which has no surrounding moat, there is a platform and some foundations of what may have been a mural tower. The outer bailey does not seem

CASTELL DINAS: PLAN.



SECTION A-B

to have been rebuilt in stone, at least no trace of any masonry in the ward can now be seen. The two baileys are separated by a deep dry moat, at one end of which is a pit now partially filled with debris. The castle I think should reveal an interesting individuality in its plan if ever it was excavated. Just below the north rampart of the castle there is a sulphurous spring

SECTION C-D

INNER BAILEY MOTTE OUTER BAILEY D NETWORK

known as Dinash Well, which is supposed to be a cure for many obstinate ailments.

Regaining the main road at Pen-y-Sgenffordd we journey back the same way as we have come into the town of Talgarth.

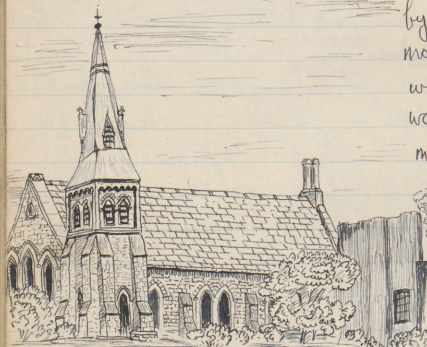


YGRIB AND MYNYDDINAS FROM N.W. TALGARTH

On reaching the town we take a turning to the left leading to Llangorse. After about a mile one comes to Colledge farm, or as it was once known Trefeca fach. It was acquired by the Countess of Huntingdon who established a college here, which was frequently visited by Howell Harris and George Whitefield. Admission to this college was by examination and the observance of rules approved by Romane, Venn, Wesley and others. The original building of Lady Huntingdon's college was erected in the reign of Henry the Second - the date, now almost effaced, over the entrance being 1176. Ruins of Lady Huntingdon's Chapel may still be seen at the rear.

About a hundred or so more yards along the road we come to hamlet of Trefeca, the situation of the modern Trefeca College, an institution belonging to the Calvinistic Methodists, where until its removal to Aberystwith in 1906, a Theological college existed. Trefeca College is now a Preparatory School for admission to the various Theological colleges, and its students belong to various denominations. Its popularity as a learning centre is attracting many students from England as well as the principality. Its association as a "seat of learning" carry the mind back over a long period, but its chief interest lies in the fact of its close connection with Howell Harris, the renowned Welsh Revival, who was born here, and who did such great work in religious teaching some two centuries ago. Howell Harris now rests.

in the Parish Church at Talgorth, where the inscription reads: "Near the altar lie the remains of Howell Harris, Esquire, born at Trefecca January 23rd, 1734. O.S. He came of an artisan family, and is generally believed to have been born in a cottage at Trefecca and situated on the site of what is now the College. It was from this district that he radiated



HOWELL HARRIS MEMORIAL CHAPEL. TREFECCA.

by his powerful preaching and marvellous activity an influence which extended not only all over Wales, but to East Coast, many of the towns of which were visited during his preaching tours. In the Memorial Chapel of the College there is an imposing bust of Howell Harris, an object of much interest to visitors. Practically opposite the college there is a narrow lane leading to other side of the here narrow Afon Slynfi Valley to Tredoston, where in the precincts of a farmyard there is a large ^{stone} tumulus, There is also a smaller one upon the Trefecca side of the river.

After passing Trefecca farm one comes in about half a mile to station of Trefeinon, surely one of the prettiest both in itself and in its situation in the Principality. On the other side of the river nearly opposite this station there is decayed little village with the farm name of Slangonose. Some little way further on we take a lesser turning upon our right and after crossing the Slynfi, now little more than a stream, we climb a slight rise and have a fine view over the waters of Slangonose Lake.

Slangonose Lake or Slyn Safoddan, some miles eastward of Brecon, is the largest sheet of natural water in south Wales. It is about a mile and three quarters long and a mile wide but its depth is not

very great. On an island in the lake called Burle, there have been found traces of prehistoric lake dwellings. To their presence may be due the tradition that the lake covers the site of the Roman city of Soventium, but this last place has now been identified with Slondwery.



LLANGORSE LAKE AND ALLT YR EGAI

The most important "find" recorded from the lake was an oakbar dug out canoe some 15 feet in length, discovered in the mud near the northern shore in 1925. It is believed to belong to the period of the Roman occupation. It is now in the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff. The river Slyfi flows in at the south end and out at the north end. The vicinity is a pastoral region backed by high mountains. At the south end is the Allt yr Egeir (1284 ft) standing alone and overlooking the lake. The view from the summit is declared to be the finest in the district. Entering the little village of Slanorhazl Tal-y-llyn of typical Breconshire beauty. It possesses a little towered church of warm, rose coloured stone. Another brings one to station and junction of Tallyllyn, the nearest point to which the railway goes to the lake. The Brecon line here leaves the Slyfi valley and tunnels through the neighbouring hill of Brondawen, a slight climb now brings us to the hamlet of Fennorth, at the base of Allt yr Egeir over which runs the Roman Road to the station of Pen-y-fyae near Tretower. Taking a steep lane down to the level of the River Usk one passes the rectory and comes into the hamlet of Salthrog upon the main Brecon - Abergavenny Road. Immediately in front of us is the Tower, a very ancient Tudor farmhouse once perhaps a manor house. We take the high road in the direction of the Bulch Pass, and soon we pass Cwm-gelared, the "Valley of the Slaughters", and

here nearly opposite the milestone, is an inscribed stone, said to have been erected in memory of a Roman officer who was killed in a battle against the Welsh. The road then takes us beneath the flanks of Bilt yr Esgair, to the spired church of Glansantffred where we cross over the valley into the village of Talybont. This is a charming village surrounded by mountains, and it is considered to be one of the best centres in which



to climb the Brecon Beacons Through ^{with ease} and alongside the road runs the now disused Brecon-Newport canal which is now a picturesque and overgrown waterway. A mile past the smithy at Cross Oak we see upon a bank

TALYBONT-
ON-USK

and enveloped in trees the fine half timbered tudor residence called Penkelly Castle

It is supposed to stand upon the site of the earthworks of an early Norman castle. The rest of the hamlet of Penkelly consists of a few houses an inn and a chapel, at the mouth of a wooded cwm, a mile up which stands the ancient church of Sionfegan. Crossing the little peacefully running river Memasau, we are in Sionfegan parish. This is a pretty village with a charming little church lying some distance off our road upon the left. Our road now takes us down to the bank of the River Usk, and crosses it by a handsome bridge, along side which is another unique bridge which carries the canal across on the Brecon side of the river. Finding ourselves once again upon the Abergavenny Brecon road we take the narrow road straight in front of us, and soon reach the inn and post office comprising a good hotel. At evening upon the night a little post from the inn leads to the hamlet of Sionfegan situated

very picturesquely amid scattered pine trees upon a very steep hill side. However we content ourselves, by taking the lower road which passes through some defensible country with views of the tree crowned Sluch Camp upon the left. Half a mile beyond Tyn-y-caesu house, we see a lane leading over the mossy fields upon our left, and on venturing a little distance across a swampy field upon the right, a tree clad tumulus. It was undoubtedly by a tumulus, and though it is now grown over with oak trees traces of its ditch still remain on its west side. Getting back on to our road however, we take the next lane upon the right, which after a few twists and turns amid some Scotch fir bring us out facing the squat whitewashed house of Alexander tone farm.



Behind the house rises a large mound, sole relic of a bygone castle. This bold outlined tumulus still has portions of its containing moat, and it was no doubt once a tumulus of prehistoric date.

The lane then emerges out upon the Brecon-Hay road and turning left and then sharp right at Troad-y-hoch chapel we take a hilly lane overbowed by one or two old yew trees. This at the top of the hill eventually come out into another lane which follows the course of the Roman way from Brecon to Tallichew. After about a mile through very pleasant country, we alight suddenly upon a slender village huddled away in the hollow of a hill. Of the churches in the country of Breckknock, that of Sluchew, is probably the most ancient, and stands next in point of interest to that of the cathedral at Brecon. The fine old church, is constructed in its cruciform style, with a low central square tower, and narrow lancets for windows. Close neighbouring the church are the

walls and foundations of a fortified ecclesiastical palace of the early fourteenth century. It was one of the ancient residences of the Bishop of St David's and formed a sort of outpost for Brecon Castle in time of Welsh invasions from the north.

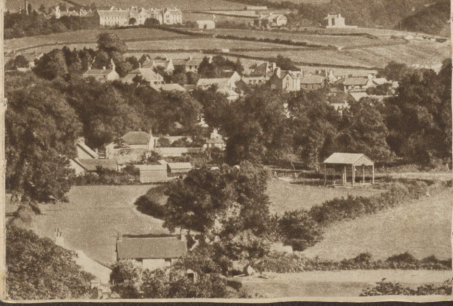
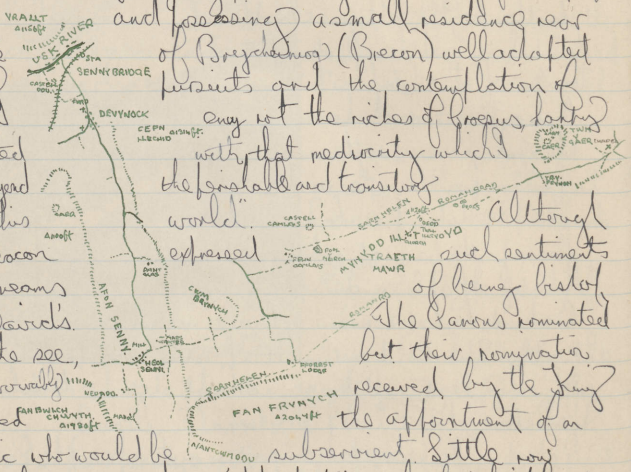
It was here that Gualdus Cambrensis, when Archbishop of Brecon lived. "In these temperate regions" he writes "I have obtained a place of dignity, but no great means of future power or riches, and possessing a small residence near of Brecon (Brecon) well adapted for the pursuit and the contemplation of

the liberal and tranquil life, and contented myself with that mediocrity which the perishable and transitory world expressed.

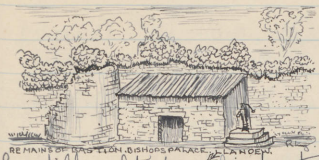
Although such sentiments of being bishop, he had dreams of St David's. The canon nominated him for the see, but their nomination was not favorably received by the King who desired the appointment of an ecclesiastic who would be

subservient. Little now remains above ground except portions of a fortified boundary wall, a bastion, and a bastion archway commonly called the Bishop's Arch. The site is now occupied by the vicarage and a workhouse, but permission is readily given to view the remains. The

which is supposed to have been built in 1145. Descending the steep hill towards Brecon, we pass Talgarth a cluster of houses at the forge, from there on into the town which now proudly

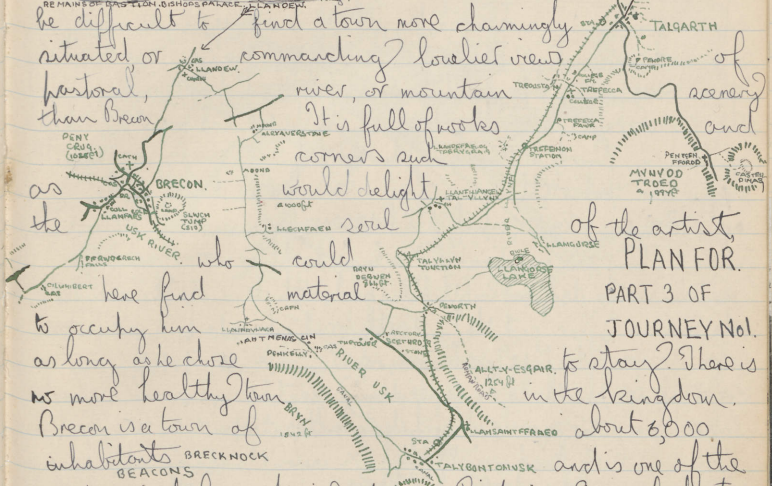


TALGARTH
 at the forge, from there on into the town which now proudly



calls itself a city, the road follows the wooded ravine of the swiftly flowing waters of the River Honddu. It would

be difficult to find a town more charmingly situated or commanding lovelier views of pastoral, than Brecon. It is full of rocks as the river, or mountain corners such would delight the artist's eye. here find to occupy him as long as he chose no more healthy town Brecon is a town of inhabitants BRECKNOCK BEACONS



of the artist's eye. PART 3 OF JOURNEY No. 1 to stay? There is in the kingdom about 6,000

and is one of the Britain. A royal charter was granted to the borough in 1112 by Henry II. In 1556 the borough received its Great Charter at the hands of Queen Mary and King Philip, and it still has a mayor at the head of its local government. At the Priory house Brecon, several monarchs have stayed in days gone by. King Charles I dined and slept there on the night of August 5th 1645. King George II also enjoyed its hospitality on September 13th 1821, and Queen Adelaide partook of a collation on July 30th 1827, at the Priory. The greater part of town is upon the northern bank of the Usk, and on both sides of the Honddu. From its position at the meeting of the latter river with the Usk, it obtained its Welsh name of Abul-honddu. The centre of the town, known as the Bulwark, is marked by the imposing Stichel from which the ground falls to the river, with fine views across the

Beacons It is a Grecian Doric building of monumental appearance which was erected in 1842 at a cost of £12,000. In front of its portico is an open space passing through which one reaches a shady terrace, leading down to the river Usk and known as the Bathing Walk. It is a short, pleasant shaded promenade ending as they been eroded upon the bank of the Usk at the gate remaining fragment of the old town wall. It was used by French officers who were imprisoned here at Brecon during the Napoleonic Wars - hence its name. At the far end of the Building is St Mary's Church or the Town Church as it is commonly called. It dates from the twelfth century, but is now almost devoid of the archaeological interest, which it possessed previous to the "restoration" in 1851, when it was considerably enlarged. It is a roomy edifice, remarkable for its great length compared with its small height. Note the Norman pillars and the fourteenth century stoup used for 300 years as a font. The fine tower, of a much later date than the rest of the church, is its redeeming feature, and is of immense value as a picturesque and architectural centrepiece to the town.

By passing through a narrow passage into Glangyfan street one reaches the Brecknock Museum, an interesting collection

illustrating the natural history and archaeology of the county. Among other interesting exhibits are Roman relics from Tlehyos, and an ancient dugout canoe discovered in Glangyfan Lake and bequeathed by the late Lord Glynusk. In the High Street is the Town Hall and the Old Wine Vaults. The house now known as the Sighan Windmills, and was much modernized was formerly the



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"Shoulder of Muttoning", and while it bore that name was the birthplace of Sarah Siddons

From the High Street northward to Castle Street, take the left hand turning just past the Market Hall. This leads to a bridge over a ravine down which the waters of the Honddu come rushing into the Usk. On the farther side of the ravine are the remains of Brecon Castle. They now mainly consist of subbattled walls and restored towers and are nearly all little garden of the Castle Hotel. One remnant, the bly tower, is a lofty mound in the garden of the Bishop's Palace, opposite the hotel.

When Bernard of Neufmarché surveyed his newly conquered March, he pitched his central abode above the village of Aberhonddu, where the Honddu and the Usk meet. Here he set up his castle on the hill, and ere he died had founded a burgus, or borough, and a Priory above it. The mottle as has been said may still be seen, its crest ringed with the substructures of the shell heek which in the twelfth century superseded Bernard's original timbered house of defence. But the main and rather imposing remnants of the castle are those saved by the Bohun Bards of Hereford in the later thirteenth century. The flanks of their great hall, and one corner tower,

stand prominent on a terrace above the river, set among trees, though the greater part of the outer ward has been over-run by modern houses and gardens, including the "Castle Hotel". The hall shows fine but rather narrow & early English windows, and a battle ground mented roof walk with slits for archery. The tower is sometimes called erroneously the Bly tower, from the tradition that Mortain, Bishop of Ely was imprisoned there in 1183, but from the tradition that Mortain Bishop of Ely was imprisoned there in 1183, but it belongs to a date two hundred years earlier than that of the Lancasterian palace.

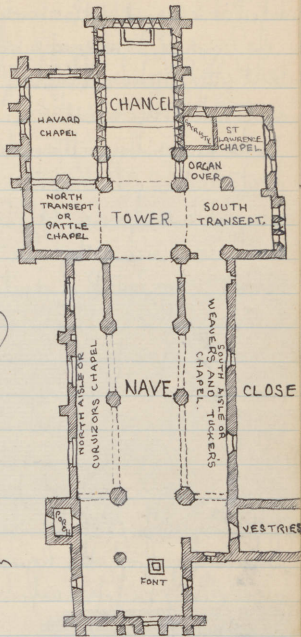
We have already told how the lordship of Brecon passed by female descent from the line of Neufmarché to that of Milo of Gloucester, and from that of Milo to the Braoses, and how the eldest Braose co-jewess took it in 1250 to her husband, the God of Hereford. It was always a strong centre of resistance to the repeated attempts of the Welsh of Powys



BRECON CASTLE

and Deheubarth to expel the Anglo-Norman settlers. Though not quite a "virgin" fortress as Penbroke was throughout the Middle Ages, it was only once taken by the Belts, and that in the very end of their long years of independence, when Llewelyn the Last got the possession of it during the Baron's War, and retained it for a few years by the Treaty of Montgomery in 1267. The late owner, the Earl of Hereford, won it back in 1246, apparently without a blow struck, as the Welsh refused to shut themselves up within walls to run risks of siege and capture. Brecon & Gwle was unsubmitly restored, or even rebuilt, when its old owner came back into his own. It was by far the most important stronghold of the Bohuns, and finally, as their base they carried out the stupid March's Evil War with the

BRECON CATHEDRAL: PLAN



house of Gloucester in 1290 for which Edward I punished both parties as severely. When the last Bohun died in 1342 and his lands were divided between his two sisters, Brecknock fell to Eleanor, the younger co-heiress who had married Thomas de Woodstock, Earl of Buckingham, the unruly and ill-fated uncle of Richard II. Their only surviving child, Anne Plantagenet, carried Brecon, and Buckingham to Humphrey Stafford, to whom the ducal title of Buckingham was given by Henry VI. The three Stafford lords of Brecon were most unlucky, the first fell in the cause of Lancaster at the Battle of Northampton. The second was the Buckingham who did so much dirty work to put Richard III on the throne in 1483, and suddenly repented of his activities - he drops the line at the murder of the Princes in the Tower. He it was who was persuaded to join the cause of Lancaster by his prisoner Bishop Montagu of Ely, whom Richard had placed in his care, and whom he kept in the Ely tower at Brecon, battle, if tradition can be trusted. Buckingham declared for the part of Richard, mustered all his assails at Brecon, and marched to the fords of the Severn to join the other malcontents. But they failed him, incessant rains made the Severn impassable, and the duke saw his army melting away. He fled in disguise, and was given over the headman for a traitor's reward. His son the last Lord of Brecon perished likewise, the victim of Wolsey's jealousy, of the cruel suspicion of Henry VIII and of some unprovoked expressions of his own, which could be trusted into treason (1521). Ireland going by twenty years later, gives no

detailed account of the condition of Brecon, but merely observes that "the Town of Brecon is well walled and hath a few castles joining to it: the Duke of Buckingham, was of late lord thereof." Apparently it was in good order about 1540, but like so many the castles which fell to the crown by attainders, and which were never visited by royalty it started on a downward career of decay. It is said to have been brought to a climax by the townspeople of Brecon who, during the civil war, wishing to side neither with King or Parliament, took the extraordinary step of destroying their own gates, and of making great breaches in the walls to prevent them from being seized and used as places of strength by either Royalist or Roundhead. When Charles I. passed through Brecon, after the disaster of Naseby, he lodged at the Priory and not in the castle, which suggests that the latter had been sufficiently weakened to make it an unpleasant abode. It suffered the usual fate of a royal castle situated in a thriving town - piecemeal demolition by stone seekers of the masonry where stones originally were brought laboriously from the Roman city at the Llan (Banium) three miles away. It is perhaps surprising that so much of the Edwardian building has survived.

From the vicinity of the castle, the Promenade runs along side the bank of the Ussk. It is a pleasant riverside walk planted with trees and it is well worth a visit for its charming view of the Ussk and across to the Brecons. The walk can be continued by a track along the edge of the river. This passes in view of Norton House, a charming old manor house, on the opposite side of the stream, on a site once occupied by the residence of Sir David Gam who saved the life of King Henry at Agincourt, but lost his own there, and is thought by some to be the original of Shakespeare's Shellen.

When Bernard de Neufmarche had finished his castle, he founded a Benedictine Priory of which the principal remnant, known with respect as the Priory Church, was made after the creation of the diocese of Swansea and Brecon in 1223 - the Cathedral of the new diocese, and the right reverend Edward Latham Brecon, was

elects the first Bishop. To reach it from the castle, one has to turn up the road opposite the entrance to the hotel, turning left again up Priory Hill. It is the glory of Brecon, for of the churches of Wales it is second only to St David's Cathedral. In the words of E.A. Freeman "it is the noblest of a class of which a good many instances occur in Wales; massive cruciform churches with central towers, whose high roof and gables invariably

present a picturesque external outline. The leading idea is that of simple bulk. It impresses us more strongly than with the idea of general magnitude than many buildings of much greater dimensions. This, perhaps, partly occasioned



by the simplicity of its structure. It is the third church which has occupied the site. Bernard

de Neufmarche found one here, and removed it so that he might erect a nobler building and that in its turn give place to the present structure.

Built of old red sandstone of a beautiful colour from a local quarry, it was begun

in the early part of the thirteenth century. In the fourteenth century, the nave which was that of Bernard's church, lost its Norman characteristics by being gradually transformed into a Decorated building. The only remains of the Norman nave are the north and south walls a very fine pair. But even these two walls are of different dates, as the difference is



Promenade, Brecon.

by the construction

this arches and clerestory windows distinctly testifies. The ground plan consists of a nave with aisles, a north porch, a central tower, with transepts and an eastern limb forming a large presbytery without regular aisles, but with a remarkable arrangement of chapels on each side. The total length exceeds 200 feet, the width 60 feet. The building was restored by Gilbert Scott.



BRECON CATHEDRAL.

In ascending the hill upon which the Cathedral stands, we pass the embattled walls and gateway of the monastery, and the ancient barn with the figure of St John the Baptist, built into the wall. The plainness of the walls, the height of the windows from the ground, the embattled parapets, and the strong tower show that

the building was to be as much of a fortress as a church. Near the porch are two of the largest known stone stumps, they were found buried in the cloister garth. Within the Cathedral, at the west end, is the very fine Norman font;



CATHEDRAL
CLOSE:
BRECKON

and here may be seen various sepulchral slabs, incised with crosses and trade emblems; the chismatory aumbry; the wooden effigie of a lady; and the cross-steeple, formerly used for lighting the church, remarkable for its size, which exceeds that of any yet discovered. It has thirty cups. From

this spot is obtained the best view of the interior of the cathedral. Note the unusually placed clerestory windows, where over the pillars of the nave, and not over the arches as is generally the case. The transepts which in themselves would make a fine church are of plain Early English or 13th century Gothic, as is also the tower and its four clustered piers or arches. The choir is the glory of the church, and must be entered before its beauties can be properly appreciated. It is a most beautiful specimen of barly English work, as nearly as possible, devoid of decoration, yet absolutely wanting none. Its three trailers of lancet windows on each side, and its eastern group of five lancet windows suffice with their slender shafts and mouldings to entirely fill the

wall space above the sills; and the whole is fittingly crowned by a beautiful vaulted ceiling, which although intended at the time of building was never carried out until Sir Gilbert Scott restored the church between the years 1860 and 1876. A fine triple piscina, and triple sedilia adorn the south side of the sanctuary and very fine recessed arches open north and south into a chapel situated in the angles of the choir and transepts. One of these known as the chapel of the Red Headed Men, was no doubt the yeoman's chapel of the castle, whilst another the Battle chapel belonged to a priory at Battle a village a few miles away which was a cell to the more famous Battle Abbey near Hastings. These chapels on the north were in the 14th century thrown into one, and the enlarged chapel thus produced was the Howard Chapel, recently restored as a memorial to officers and men of the South Wales Borderers who fell in the great war. The exterior is venerable and imposing in its massive and almost fortress like character. An anonymous donor has recently restored the Priory House and grounds to the school, and the old Monastic buildings on the west side of the cloister yard have been converted into vestries and a residence for the boys.

The Priory house may be reached from the Street, by crossing a small footbridge at the upper end, ascending a winding pathway the house is entered. Far below the upper pathway is seen the River Hounden, gurgling along to join the Uzz and Doll near the Bridge beneath the shadow of the old castle. The ground irregularly rising above on the other side of the river, adds to the pleasantness of the walk.

Christ College is a first-class public school, upon the other side of the river in the separate parish of Slaifaces. It was founded by Henry VIII out of the ancient monastery of St Nicholas. The buildings are mostly new, but the chapel in the eastern portion of the monastery church. The abbey building of this institution together with all that is left of the ancient chapel, are situated in the midst of a forest.

pleasing landscape of sloping fields woods and eminence, covered in the distance by the Beacon lifting their summit to the clouds.

The Guild Hall in its centre of the town has been thrice restored but was originally built in 1490. The Wellington Monument on the Bulwark, was given to the town by the famous Breconshire sculptor John Coon Thomas, and is considered most able proof



Beech Groves, Brecon.

Pemissulas

modelled from life

The Breconshire War Memorial Hospital erected at a cost of over £20,000 on an imposing site on Berengochian Road, was opened by the late Lord Lytton on January 11th 1928. The Brecon Barracks are situated in the Watton. The older buildings were erected in 1805, but successive War ministers have caused extensive additions. Many notable regiments have been stationed here, including the old Royal Welsh Dragoon Guards at present, and for many years past the South Wales Borderers (the old 2nd Regiment) have made it their depot.

On the Dennyfack hill about a mile from Brecon is a small British encampment, and on the Sluck Hill is another, but much larger one. From this point and also from the bowers, on eminence near Dinas House lovely views may be had of the town and the valley of the Ush.

Leaving at last the old town of Brecon, we pass out

of his genius. It consists of an admirable bronze statue eight feet high, surmounting a handsome pedestal with base reliefs in bronze panels, representing Picton charging French Cavalry at Waterloo and other incidents connected with the

war. The statue of the "Great Duke" is

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through the suburb of Slanrae, and take the second one
 left past Christ College, this is a pleasant tree shaded lane
 passing through the parklands of B. coli-helym. Passing the lodge
 the road forks, the near turning upon the left leads to Ffrwdgriech
 where there are some beautiful waterfalls, situated in a tree clad
 combe. However we bear straight on over an undulating byway
 closely neighbored on our right by the impetuous Afon Tarell
 The scenery all around is magnificent with the precipitous mountains
 lifting their heads into the sky in the near foreground. The road
 then forks the Slwech brook, and a quarter of a mile beyond
 we describe upon the left the mound
 and farm buildings of Lilewylbert
 This was the site of the castle
 of one of the followers of Gwern
 of Neufeskawke. Little remains of
 the original structure except a
 large motte surrounded by traces
 of moat, and which now form the
 appurtenances of a farmyard. The
 house itself appears to belong to the
 18th century.



Ffrwdgriech Falls, Brecon.

Crossing over the Afon
 Tarell one comes out into the main

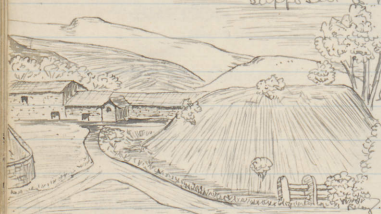


Three Bridges, Brecon

Mesthys - Brecon
 Road almost opposite

Bolgoed house, which stands upon the hill in
 front. We take the steep lane leading up the hill
 in front of us and after about half a mile, come out into
 a wider and better road, near a ruined chapel which
 lies amongst some trees on the opposite side of the road
 Our road now climbs gradually for over a mile, until at
 Sir-y. ffynon we come to a cluster of cottages about five in
 all and a gate leading onto the moor. Half a mile away to the right, can be

seen the blacken covered dome of Duwyn-y-gaer, (cast?) crowned by a prehistoric circular camp and a cairn. Passing through the gate our road can be seen stretching for many miles over the moors of Mynydd Iolowillyd. It runs almost dead straight, and follows the course of the Roman road, the Sam Helen. Soon after passing the crest of the hill above Tir-y-flynnon we see on our left two or three shallow pools, and a little farther on one can see amongst a cluster of trees the church, graveyard and a farm comprising the nucleus of the parish of St Iddlyd. Near where the track which leads to the little church diverges from our own road a few stones may be seen, this is the all that is left of a cromlech called Bedd Duwyl Iddlyd, and supposed to mark the burial place of that saint.



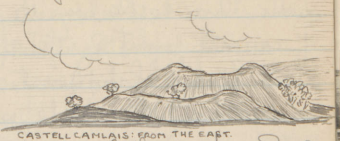
CILHYBERT FARM, THE MOTTE

to heath. A mile and a half beyond the church we take a side turning on our right which is within a few yards of the mound of Castell Cawdor which has indeed been in sight for some time and is a prominent feature upon the landscape. The recent but highly interesting remains of this castle lie well over the 1000 feet contour upon the edge of the great bog of Traeth Mawr. The remains consist of a motte about 30 feet high and surrounded by a deep dry moat and a rampart which is about 15 feet high and still wonderfully preserved. Crowning the motte are the lower courses of a round tower and an underground basement which appears to have had its entrance to north, where there is traces of causeway across the moat. This little castle, or pele tower is very interesting as it shows what the numerous mounds surrounded by a ditch but without base-courts, which are to be found all over the Marches of Wales were originally like in some detail. The great Roman road, the

the great left can be seen backed by the black silhouette of Tan Brynach (castle) the wasted and marshy expanse of the Traeth Mawr (Great Bog) over which the Sam Helen passes on its way

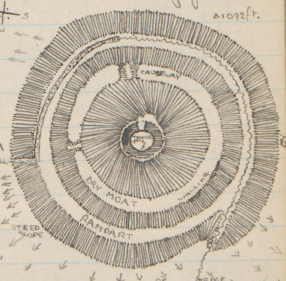
Tam Helen, passes within a few hundred yards of the castle hence the local belief that it was the site of a Roman watchtower.

Rejoining the road, we see on our left Wally Merch, Pool of the horses, and indeed as we passed there were a few wild horses grazing upon its banks. Habitations in this corner of the country are few and far between, and all around the scenery is of the wildest.



The road or rather lane, then drops down to Felin Bomla's farmhouse, and then fords the Bomla's brook before climbing up the opposite bank to come out into the Silanus - Sennybridge road. We journey in direction of Silanus for perhaps a mile with a noble row of fir trees upon our left hand, and a fine view over the lower valley of the Afon Senni upon the other, and then we

take a lane upon the right which after a few undulations makes a wild descent into the hamlet of Steil Senni, near the farmstead of Maes Walter. Steil Senni is a pleasant little place of about a dozen houses and one shop, it lies in the richest portion of the vale of the Senni which for about a mile & a half winds all around an pleasant green fields bordering the little river, which is hemmed in on one side by the bulky Tan Bulch Chwytt (1900ft) and on the other by the slopes and crags of Tan Frynuch.



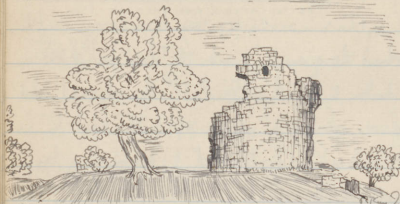
CASTELL CARLAIS: PLAN

The road to Sennybridge passes by the old mill follows fairly closely the windings of the river through a hilly pastoral country passing here and there a whitewashed farm. After a journey of perhaps three miles we enter the village of Deganwy which has many old cottages of red sandstone and an ancient church with a high square tower. Just before entering Sennybridge we take a little lane upon our left. This fords a shallow in the river, then passes under a railway line and



CASTELL CARLAIS: ELEVATION

eventually brings us out alongside a farmhouse, at the back of which is a meadow, in which stand the scanty ruins of Castell Ydu. This castle, was the most important in the district except of course the great castle of Brecon itself. It was the chief holding of the Bailiff of the Forest of Dyfnach (Forest Law), who made it his permanent residence. The remains existing are



CASTELL YDU FROM THE SOUTH

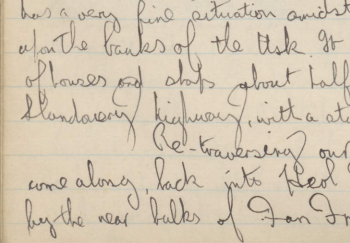
very disappointing for what was once an important castle. They consist only of the foundations of a very small inner court (60 ft by 40 feet) and a fragment of a drum tower, which cannot be dated earlier than the early thirteenth century. There is also visible the barely traceable outlines of a small outer bailey to the north, the earthworks of which have been laid level a long time by the flow. One thing which immediately strikes the

visitor, is that its site has not many natural military defences for what was after all a fairly important castle.

From the castle, which stands on a very slight rise in the floor of the valley, a good view is to be had over the houses of the longish village of Sennybridge, a quarter of a mile away. Though of recent growth and of architectural ugliness Sennybridge has a very fine situation amidst unspoilt Brecknockshire country upon the banks of the Usk. It consists for the most part of one street of houses and shops about half a mile long on either side of the Brecon & Merthyr railway, with a station on the western end.

Re-traversing our road the same way as we have already come along, back into Ffynnon, one is overawed all the time by the near bulks of Fan Fynydd and Fan Bwdd through, in

CASTELL YDU PLAN



front of us, with the summit of Fan Ffynych rising above, in the background.

From Heol Senni, it is a very pleasant walk along the river banks, across the fields and hedges. The little river is full of rushing stretches with a quiet deep pool here and there in which abound many trout. On the left, cut into the flanks of Fan Ffynych there can be seen Nant Burn Idde, a narrow steep little wooded valley about two miles in length, and one of the loveliest places in the district. There is not one house or building in it, although the track of the Sarn Helen cuts across it at a height of 1234 ft.

After a little over a mile one comes to a footbridge, we cross over it, go through a field and come out near Castell Madoc Farm. This



SENNY BRIDGE FROM HQ CASTLEDOG

is very old house but is rather featureless. Another half a mile along rough but very pretty lane and we pass Henydd, a larger farm of more recent construction. Another quarter mile and we come out at the bridge



SENNY BRIDGE

at Heol Senni from where a road following the course of a Roman or still more ancient one, crosses over the shoulder of Fan Bulch Chryth, through the Bulch Bryn-rhuddel and into Llyfytawr

Part IV

Heol Senni - Ystradfellte (edge of) - Pendergyn - Uaynor. - Castell Morlais.

Taking the lane out of Heol Senni, leading southwards, towards the head of the valley past the entrance of the lovely Burn Idde, the lane becomes now rather rough

and narrow climbing all the time through hedges which obscure the view on either side somewhat. The vale through which we are traversing is one of the most beautiful and best known in South Wales. On the left we pass the ancient lonely whitewashed farmsteads of Llan Senni, Dyle-glas, and Dyle-garn. The last being highest inhabited house in the valley. At Dyle-garn a lone branch off which leads to the ruins of Dwygyn-llwydan farm, at the head of the valley. Our line now climbs steeply up the left hand side of the valley and at the ruined Nant-y-buch farm passes through a gate on to the open moor. On the left rises the bulk of Bryn Melyn (1,557) over the summit of which the Sun Heler goes. The road now ascends in a series of looping bends, with a magnificent view over the head of the Tenny valley lying far below. Over the other side of the valley could be seen the black and ominous outlines of yr Allt and the dales of Tan Gynrych (2,288) with the rain clouds scumy ~~ing~~ across them. The view gives just a glimpse of the wildernesses of Forest Fawr.

Reaching the summit of the pass which lies between the mountains of Tan Nedol (2,176 ft) and Tan Sliar (2,071 ft) we are ourselves at a height of 1,464 ft. on the right tucked away in a hollow of the mountain is a shepherd's holding, surely one of the loneliest dwellings in the country lying as it does a good four miles from the nearest dwelling at Abat Sliar. But the most prominent thing on the landscape is the huge standing stone called the Maen Sliar which lies in the water sodden heath on the left. It stands about 12 feet high 4 feet wide and 2 feet thick. There are inscriptions upon it and it was evidently of prehistoric origin. Half a mile farther on we are joined by the Tan Heler, which has dwindled down to mere sheep tracks. Near the junction of the roman road with our tracks, in the watershed of the Afon Sliar are the remains of a cairn or prehistoric burial mound. The track which we follow now, follows the course of the Sun Heler for the next 2 miles, alongside which runs the little but lively rivulet of the Afon Sliar. Note the scorings made in the slopes of Tan Sliar by the numerous streamlets. Passing through a

gateway, and looking back up this wild but lovely valley, which is quite destitute of any trees or dwellings, we can still see silhouetted against the sky the finings of Maen Llia, on the left the Sam Helen diverges from our road and passes over many wild mountains, to the fortress at Boelhen 4 miles away and then on to Neath. A mile along this important road stands the Maen Mador, a large inscribed stone. But passing

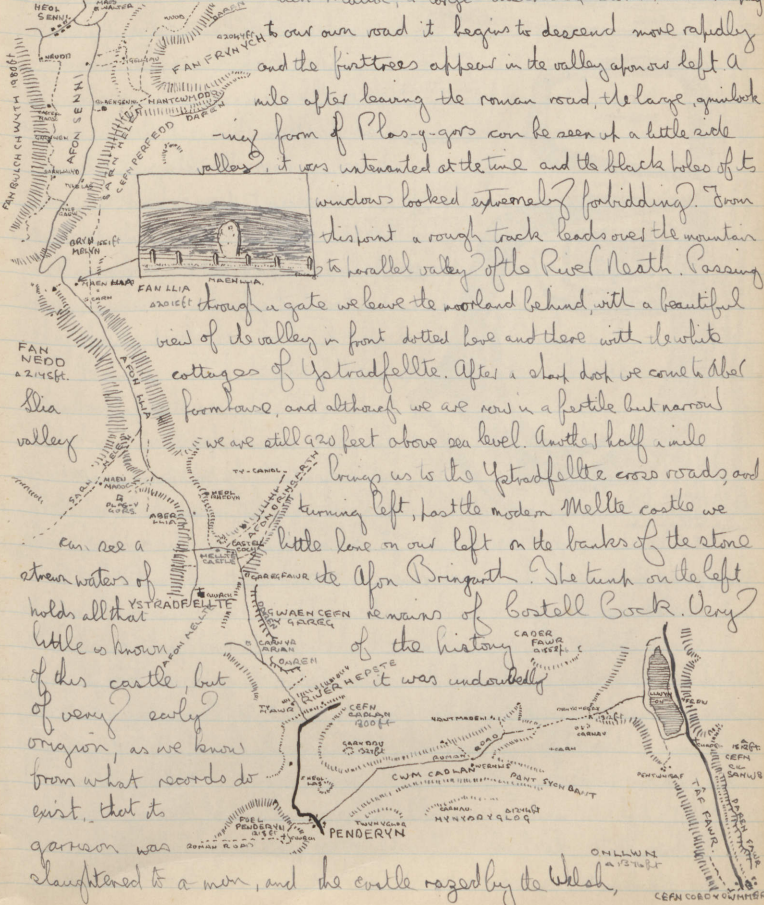
to our own road it begins to descend more rapidly and the first trees appear in the valley upon our left. A mile after leaving the roman road, the large, quinbook form of Plas-y-gors can be seen at a little side valley, it was untenanted at the time and the black holes of its windows looked extremely forbidding. From this point a rough track leads over the mountain to parallel valley of the River Neath. Passing



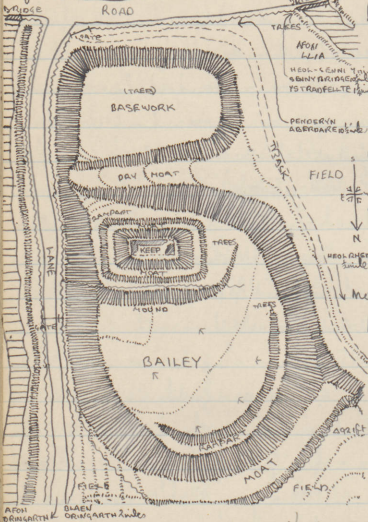
through a gate we leave the moorland behind, with a beautiful view of its valley in front dotted here and there with the white cottages of Ystradfellte. After a short dook we come to Abel farm here, and although we are now in a fertile but narrow

we are still 420 feet above sea level. Another half a mile brings us to the Ystradfellte cross roads, and turning left, past the modern Mellte castle we little lone on our left on the banks of the stone ste Afon Bringarth. The trunk on the left remains of Bostell Boek. Very of the history it was undoubtedly

FAN NEDD
2146ft.
Shia valley
can see a stream waters of holds all that little is known of this castle, but of very early origin, as we know from what records do exist, that its garrison was slaughtered to a man, and the castle razed by the Welsh,



somewhere around the middle of the twelfth century. This castle and that of Castell Nôr, which show near Meandy at the head of the Afon Rhodda Fach, show how for the first Norman invaders bit into South Wales. By Edwardian times both Castell Coch & Castell Nôr were back in the hands of the English, although it is very doubtful whether Castell Coch was ever rebuilt after the disaster of the twelfth century. The remains at present visible consist of a bailey, a basework and a small separately walled mound, which



CASTELL COCH: PLAN.

The glamorous entrance to this weird cavern is about 40 feet high and 20 feet wide and is enveloped in foliage.

However the road which is taken does not lead past Ystradfellte but climbs up the left wall of the valley. Notice the track on the left between an avenue of weatherbeaten firs, which lead to large reservoir at the head of the Afon Dingwells, after a gradual climb of two miles we come out on the moors of Llywain, Hekste, at the junction of the Ystradfellte road. This is a wild place an expanse of blown grass and heather. Near the road will be noticed a huge pile of stones with an elderberry tree, growing upon it. This is Bann yr Arion, which

bears vestiges of the foundations of a small rectangular keep. The castle lies at the confluence of two mountain rivers, the Afon Llia and the Afon Dingwells which flows down the valley after they have been united is called the River Mellt. Where not naturally defended the bailey is protected by a formidable moat and rampart which is actually on a higher level than the keep itself. Near the fourteenth century church of Ystradfellte which is the only village for miles around, there is a remarkable natural feature, the tremendous cavern of Pont y Ogil, where the River Mellt flows underground for about 2 1/2 of a mile

attracted so much notice when it was excavated recently; the pottery and other objects obtained from it are now on view in the Welsh National Museum at Cardiff. On the opposite side of the road are the rugged limestone crags of Bafn Gwery, we are now at a height of 1135 feet above sea level but road after a mile drops down into the barren valley of the river Gwyfate. Owing to the heat and the weather this had now quite dried up, leaving only its stony bed for us to see. In the rainy season, it is a roaring turbulent stream. Soon after crossing the bridge we come out on to main Swansea - Brecon Road, which we follow in the direction of Strivians. The road now leaves the moors, and passes a few white farmsteads, but the country loses none of its wildness until we come to Penderyn, a moderate sized village of wooden houses, with an ancient towered church on the hill of Foel Penderyn (1218 ft) above it. At Penderyn we see the ruin of the Southwales coalfield, but there are no evidences of any coal mines in the village itself although there are, quarries on both Foel Penderyn & Twyn y Ffyn (1182 ft) on either side, which make ugly scars in the otherwise wild and pleasant scenery.

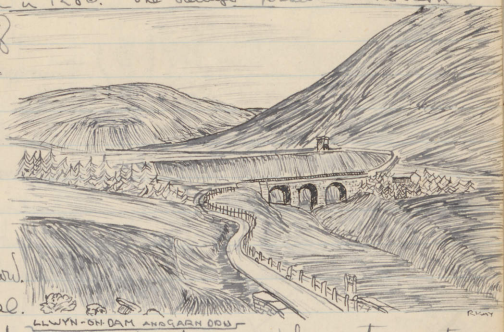
Taking the lane opposite the inn at Penderyn we start to ascend the shallow valley of the Burn Badlan. This lane follows the course of the Roman road from the fort at Gwellben to the one at Dol-y-gael, in the Dŷf Teclan Valley. At the lower end of the valley the lane passes between fields of poor grass dotted here and there with a sleek fawn. Some two miles up this valley at Nant Maden, the scant attempts of cultivation end and the wood now begins to seriously climb once more upon the open heath. The lane which is cobbled, has or is supposed to, be the original Roman felling lane anyway it keeps in a fairly straight line, on the right are the notorious bogs and wilderness of Pont Sychbwt. After a climb of about 1 mile and three quarters after leaving Nant Maden we reach the head of the pass at a height of 1312 feet. Notice on the right the bogholes, a danger to the unwary traveller especially at night, on the moor there will also be noticed

hips of stones, these are sepulchral carvings, and are supposed to be of Prehistoric origin.

From the pass we have a magnificent view over the Giff Faw valley below, with Slwyn-On, an artificial sheet of water, a mile a half long and a third wide, shining like a mirror and scintillating in the sunbeams. Our road now begins to scramble down the mountain side in a most extraordinary gash, past the top farm of Pen-yr-hed, where he passes through a gate. In less than a mile we have dropped five hundred feet to the banks of lake Slwyn-On. This is a most beautiful sheet of water and is well stocked with fish, and fringed with low plantations. The road follows around the lake, over the dam which retains it and into the hamlet of Slwyn-On. The lake actually covers part of the Roman road, which emerges at Fedy farm and clambars up over the mountain side past the lovely farm of Gwyn-moel.

Following the main Merthyr Tydfil road the valley narrows, and on the left is hemmed in by a long stretch of high precipitous cliffs, the nesting place of the almost extinct raven. The base of these grey limestone crags of bonny form is covered with heaps of debris of past landslides. Suddenly the sides of the gorge fall away somewhat and in the widened valley there lies before us the smoke-enshrouded mining village of Befa-coed-y-Gymnos. Passing the cemetery on the right we take the next principle turning on the left and after passing a quarry or two we emerge out into the open country again. After steep drop by a series of lands to Lwll-glas a few houses and a inn on the banks of the Giff Faw which here runs through a prettily wooded gorge we start climbing up the hill to Vaynor, passing on the right a small grassy mound in a field which is a tumulus. From this viewpoint we have a view of Mollers Mountain on the other side of the valley with its cliffs and scars made by quarries, on the summit, which is 1258 feet above sea level there can be seen outlined against the sky the huge matter of Castell Mollers Vaynor, though upon the fringe of industrial Glamorganshire

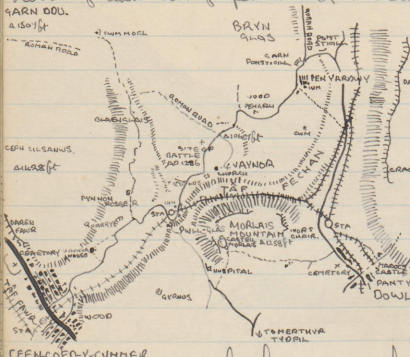
is a pretty little place with many historical associations. It was the site of a great battle between Edwards forces and those of the Welsh in 1286. The village possesses a modern church with a conical spire, and near this there is the wreck of the oldest church on a steep bank above the polluted waters of the Taff Fechan which runs below.



LLWYN-ON-DAM AND GARN DDU

on a winding course. Leaving Ysgyrt-take a road through very pleasant country past the woods of Pen-gelli House, and onto Pen-y-rady, a small industrial hamlet comprising a row or two of whitewashed cottages and an inn. We have now definitely entered the industrial region, and another half a mile down a hill brings us to Pont-Sticill the site of an ancient bridge over the turbulent waters of the Taff Fechan. On the other side of the valley there will be discerned the cliffs and crags of Cefn-y-strad (1866 ft) a wild expanse of mountain. At Pont-sticill having emerged out on to a better road we journey back down the valley of the Taff Fechan, above neighbored by a railway line. We pass some woods below the crags of Turynau-gwynion (1629 ft) and then ascending a hill arrive at Pant, a small junction station on the railway line. Another half a mile brings us to Pont-y-gallwy which is virtually a suburb of Dowlais. A lane leading over Mesthyr Common, from here, passes an ancient farmhouse upon the site of Madoc's Castle. However we take a lane on the opposite side of the road which borders Dowlais cemetery. After traversing the breezy grass clad heights of Morlais Mountain (now converted into a golf course) for perhaps a mile, we come suddenly upon Castell Morlais perched upon the edge of a high cliff, overlooking the country around. From the distance it looks like a

a heap of stones, but on closer inspection it proves to be the most interesting castle in Glamorgan. It exhibits very finely constructed masonry and many features of architectural merit, although only the



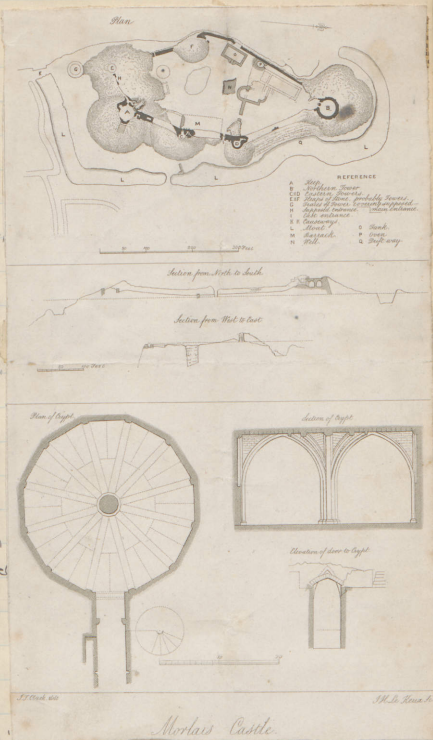
wreck of the castle is now left.

For such a large and no doubt once imposing castle as Morlais, it is strange how very little is known about its history which merely records in its Pike Rolls to cart of grain building etc. We do not

exactly know even when it was built, but by the style of its masonry one would place it about the middle of the thirteenth century. Justice of Gwynon, the last native prince of Glamorgan was completely crushed by the Norman invaders: he gave up the struggle and retired into a monastery, but his sons Baradoc and Rhys were spared, by the policy or mercy of the conquerors, a holding in the east of the region, the lordship of Awon, Rhonda, and Marguon, which these descendants held for many generations as vassals of the great Norman master of Morgannwg. This was not the only survival of the Welsh within the old limits of the kingdom. Fitz Hamon and his knights left nearly all the wild and unprofitable mountain land which overhangs the fertile shore, and here, not only in Rhonda and Marguon, but also in Senglyydd and the upper parts of Gwynllwyg, petty chiefs, those of the two last regions, not connected with the line of Justice of Gwynon, were left in a condition of semi-independence. They were sometimes found doing homage to Cardiff, sometimes disowning it, but always ready to raid the shoreland in times of national effervescence. It was not until far on in the thirteenth century, that the lords of Glamorgan put a final end to their adjoining the limit of permanent occupation north of the watershed of the Brecon Beacon, by building the

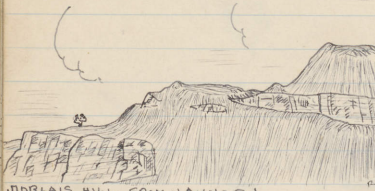
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castle of Morlais close under
 their shadow. Merzwin and
 Rhoddda were annexed in 1147
 & Sweynydd in 1266. The
 castle is of long irregular
 shape, with two high towers,
 at opposite angles in the centre
 there are also the remains of
 four smaller round towers, and
 these may have been more.
 The castle lies upon the summit
 Morlais Hill as has already
 been stated at a height of 252
 feet above the sea level and
 over 600 feet above the gorge
 of the Taff Fachn below. It
 lies upon the edge of a precipice
 which in some places falls
 sheer for over 150 feet. It is
 protected for half of its cir-
 cumference by these stupendous
 cliffs (so that when in a pine



it must have been quite as imposing as Barry's Tower at Black
 Facing the east where there is no such protection, there is a deep
 moat cut in the living limestone rock. The most dominating feature
 of the present remains, are the ruins of the great southern tower.
 This tower has a mound of stones and gravel around its base (it is
 not built upon a mound). Only the lowest stage unfortunately remains
 but this exhibits many unusual and interesting features. This
 crypt vaulted over springing from a central pillar. The workmanship
 of masonry like elsewhere in the castle is excellent. The cellar or
 basement is entered from the courtyard by a porticulated archway which
 was also strongly defended by a additional gate. Although this

tower is the same size as the other large one at the opposite angle on account of its masonry (which might incidentally be only debris) and detail being recognized as a keep. To the north of this great tower is the base of a somewhat smaller one, which retains vestiges of



MORLAIS HILL FROM UAYNOR.

an embasement on its outer face overlooking the moat, as well as traces of a mural stair. At the rear of this tower are the foundations of a range of buildings which are unrecognizable to the barons for the garrison. To the north of this tower are the lower courses of another. Between these two towers and quite close to northern moat was the main gate of the castle. This is now represented by a broken arch in the curtain. The curtain between this point and the other large north tower is now largely hidden by debris. This second large tower at the most northerly point of the castle at the junction of the moat with the precipice. It does not appear to have received the vault and details of the south tower although it is identical in size. It resembles the other smaller towers in general, except in the point of size. This was as well as being the lowest corner of the castle, the most exposed to attack.



MORLAIS CASTLE. THE KEEP

The curtain now follows the edge of the precipice never backing in any one direction for any length or distance. Along the inner side of this curtain are the foundations of numerous buildings including to the north the great hall, to the south of which were ovens and a water tank. The north part of the castle appears to have been divided by a cross wall (in which are the foundations of a semi-circular tower) into a sort of inner moat. At a later date, to the south of the water tank, on the curtain is a mound of debris which may cover the site of a tower. At the most southerly part of the castle that is

NE on the plan there is small round tower (recently excavated) the
 is the best preserved of the smaller towers. There was an extension of
 the curtain beyond the entrance to another tower at G which was
 supposed to act as a barbican to another entrance which is now
 buried beneath debris. The rock cut moat is protected on
 its outer side by a counter scarp of earth and stones, while to
 the south of the main body of the castle there is a kind of a
 forecourt surrounded by a ditch and rampart, where it is protected
 by the precipice. In the centre of this courtyard is one of the most
 unique features of this unique castle. This is a large
 shouldered shaped pit over 80 feet deep and cut through the
 rock. This is supposed to be the well, but as it is unlikely it ever
 held water, it may have been a cesspit or dungheap.

August 1936.

Journey no II

MONMOUTH - Woreston - Parc Grace Dieu - Llanochangel - ystern - Llewern.
 - Oren - White castle.

This a pleasant little journey through hilly country
 of green fields and woods. We leave the old town of Monmouth
 by way of the suburb of Overmonnow passing ancient little
 Norman church which is of such an interest to antiquarians.
 At Drybridge house we take the Woreston road to the left
 and soon leave the houses of Overmonnow behind. The road then
 climbs up a slight hill past an old brick farmhouse, with views
 over the woods of Handre (or Whitehill) upon our right. Soon after
 passing an overgrown lane on the right which leads to the top of Handre
 hill through thick woods, and past Talocher farm which lies in a
 hollow below, we come to a drive on the left, at the junction of
 which is the well designed war memorial of the village of Woreston.
 If we pass through the gate and travel down the
 drive, one comes to the Bowst, this together with the church and some
 farm buildings lie together on a hill overlooking the Drothy, but is
 best seen to advantage from the neighbourhood of Mitel Troy on

the main Monmouth - Roeflan road The court is an old 16th century manor house but much modernized (note the blocked up mullions) It was held during the Civil War for the King but was subsequently betrayed by the garrison. The original chapel is now turned into domestic offices. The church dedicated to St Wonnas, is a mere affluance to a farmyard, and is remarkable for nothing but its rather picturesque situation. The North porch has a ston^{north} and on the south wall of the sanctuary there is a canopied monument to the Milburne family one of the gures of the court, Childsman figured in relief at the base but the effigy is wanting



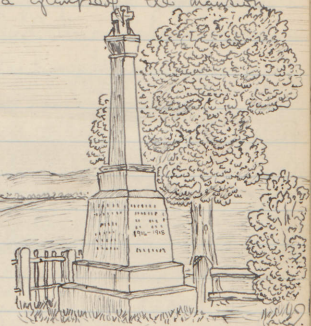
In the churchyard is the a cross, the steps and base of which are original. The church which has a tower has a customary half timbered bellfry which is of fairly frequent occurrence in the district. Leading



down past the church is a pleasant little field path which crosses a little footbridge over the river & crosses and joins the main road. Passing the war memorial out road forks and taking the right hand turn our horse takes over steep undulating country around the base of the Tiberade hill. After a mile or half of these ups and downs, past pleasant low woods fields and orchards, we come to Worthy Brook a place consisting of two houses and a chapel resting in a delectable hollow. The road now twists and turns

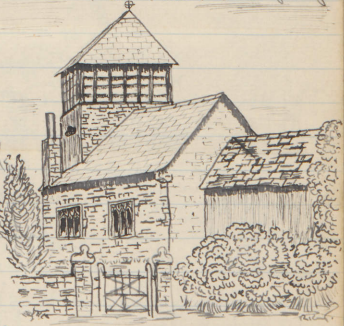
lossing all the time through beautiful rural country. On the left a line leads to the ancient house of De-Owen, but skirting the confines of Bunde Park, we have a glimpse of the mansion itself.

Taking the next turning upon our left we see in a field upon our right a large tumulus. We then descend a steep hill, past a pretty cottage and cross the bridge over the River Sothly. After a short climb, a lane on the left leads to Par-Grace Pier Farm. (commonly known as Pook's Dye)



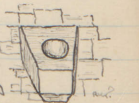
WONESTON WAR MEMORIAL.

It was formerly the site of a small abbey of Cistercian monks, founded by John of Monmouth in 1226. The only portions of the monastery now existing are embodied in a barn belonging to the farm. It is mentioned by 'Seland' as 'standing in a wood'; but it must have been a house of only small importance, as at the Dissolution it was returned as containing only two monks and possessing a revenue of £19. Amongst its possessions was the church of Skerfitt, where there is preserved a very fine mediæval priest's cope.



WONESTON CHURCH.

The Abbey Cottage is entirely modern. A little further on the road forks, and taking the rough lane on the right past Pefu gaw farm, we reach the summit of the hill of the same name. The top which is prettily wooded has twin peaks (345 ft) and the lane climbs over both of them. The road now descends for a short distance rather abruptly in a sunken lane through high holly tree hedges. Passing a house on the right we take the next turning



STOUP IN WONESTON CHURCH

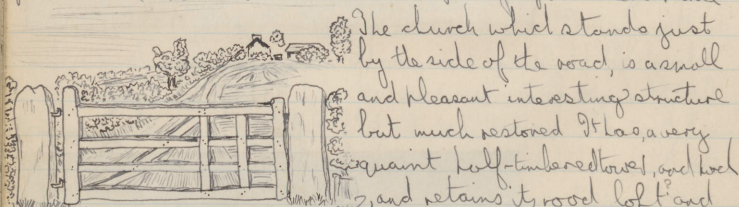
upon the right

This lane has a much better surface, and runs through a wood along the ridge of a small hill, with good views in front and upon either side. In the verdant valley below us will be discerned the better and rather interesting church of Slonichangel-



ystem. Slawern, or Slonichangel-Tawerbach, as it is sometimes called. It is a very small village on the banks of the River Wrothy remarkable for the generous proportions of its name. The story connected

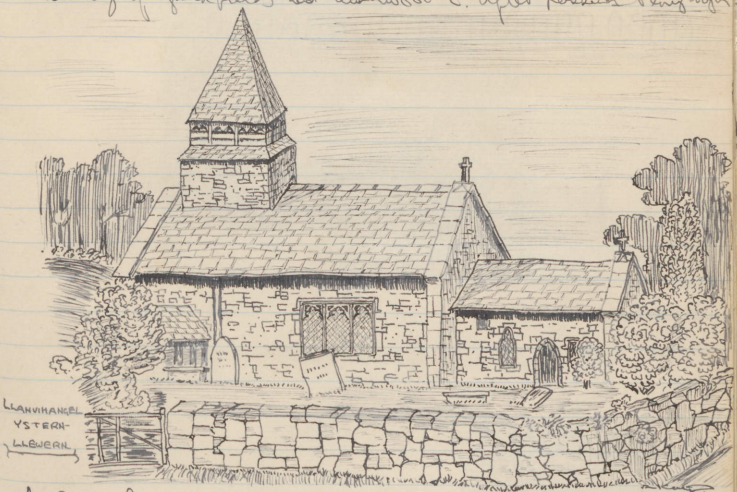
with it, is that Ymyr, King of Lywent, through a misleading light, got bogged in the marshes that fringed the river. Recovering his foothold with difficulty, he vowed a church on the spot where he first touched bottom as a thank offering for his deliverance.



The church which stands just by the side of the road, is a small and pleasant interesting structure but much restored. It has a very quaint half-timbered tower, and hood, and retains its wood loft and ancient font. Our road now runs along the bank of the Wrothy river. This is very pretty stream and it rises between the Gyraig and the Skind fawr, then flowing in a south easterly direction to join the wyg at the foot of Penallt woods a mile below Monmouth.

After about a quarter of a mile another road branches off to the left leading to Penallt, however we bear right and cross over the river, and after a very short climb come out on the main Monmouth - Abergavenny road at the hamlet of Oien. This is a very small and pretty place backed by large stretches of wood land. From here a rough road leads to the hamlet of Slouf wood. We take the main road towards Abergavenny and looking up

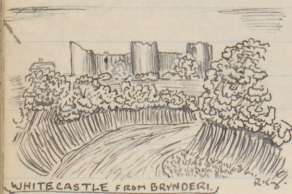
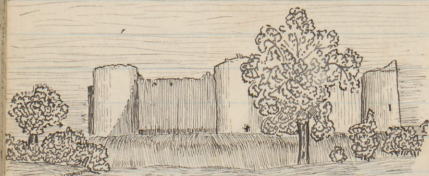
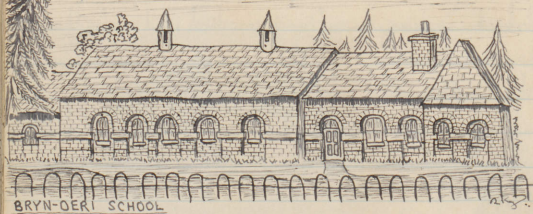
a little side valley on the left there can just be seen above the foliage the roof of Part an oldhouse, with 14th century architecture. It was an early settlement of the Quakers. Our road now takes along side the grounds of Dalrymple court a modern mansion. The scenery hereabouts is very green and wooded, and every thing seems to be rather overgrown. Near the inn at Dalrymple we take a lane to the right and begin a long ascent along the ridge of low hill past Penryn farm and through delightful scenery of green fields and dark woods. After passing Penryn

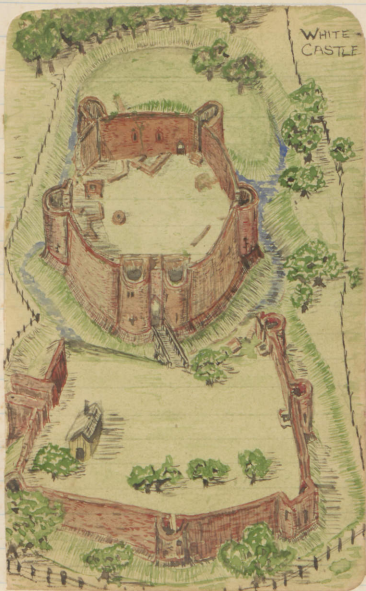


the lane becomes steeper, and we come to on the right many scattered cottages and farms. The lane then ascends between high hedges of holly which shut out the view.

Eventually we arrive at the hamlet of Bryn-deri at height of 630 feet above sea level this the highest point of our journey. Leaving Bryn-deri, and ignoring a turning to the left we plunge down a rutty lane, and ahead there is a very fine view of Whitecastle stern and forbidding silhouetted against the sky on its hill top a half a mile away. On the right we pass the village school; a large and

rather pleasing building, unexpectedly so, for such a small place. Descending the lane by a few old stone cottages we reach the bottom of the hill and almost immediately begin to climb again the one upon which Whitecastle is stood.





Journey no III

Cross Keys - Marston - Llangarren - Tretire - Pencoyd - Llandinabo - Llanwaane
- St Leonards - Treage - Old Furnace - Llanlowdy - Welsh Newton.

A journey through the undulating rich agricultural land of red soil of the western borders of Herefordshire. Cross Keys is a cluster of two or three Georgian period houses and an inn situated upon the main Ross - Monmouth road one mile from the village of Goodrich. It lies on a ridge overlooking the vale below, and with views over the hills of Huntsham & Locket and Symonds Yat. In the direction of Ross just past the inn, a lane leads us down a hill to the valley of the Ganner brook below us. Turning right at the bottom we pass the old mill of Marston parish (now disused), whilst a little further on we can see on the right Marston Hall, a magnificent Tudor building now used as a farm.



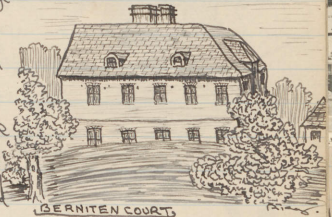
THE ORIEL WINDOW, MARSTON HALL.

It is built on a rather unusual plan of three wings which have an arrangement similar to that of a three pointed star. There is a fine oriel or bay window in the south west wing. On top of the rising above the Hall are a few ancient cottages, the parish church and a large farm; this is Drelstone Green which forms the nucleus of the parish of Marston. The church is a comely modern building (1856-7) of little interest, but the churchyard still retains the base of an ancient cross. The name Marston; probably preserves the memory of St Martin.

Leaving the village behind, after a steady climb of about a mile we come out on the main Hereford Monmouth road, near Whitfield farm, a fine building of Georgian date. A little way past this house, at a height of 550 ft we cross roads and taking the left hand turn we descend a long hill into Llangarren. Half way down on the right there should be noticed Banithan Court a handsome 14th century building which is reputed to have once been honoured by a visit from James I. The house has an interesting interior. On the opposite side of the road, there can be discerned a farm perched up upon a ridge. It is of Tudor date, and exhibits

several blocked up millions and a porch. Passing the Three Horseshoes inn we can have a very good view of the ancient parish church (St. Deinst), which stands up on the slope overlooking the Gwern brook. It has a graceful tower and chire, and the view from the South side presents a very picturesque exterior. On the north, it is, however, made rather less aided, by a large and obvious north aisle built in 1676.

The chief feature of the interior is a triple chancel arch, which is, however, a modern adaptation. Originally there was only a central archway flanked by two bays, which have been opened up to form the triplet. At the south corner of the nave is a pretty domed window, which is repeated in the neighboring church of Welsh Newton. Fixed against the south wall near the doorway is a small and early effigy, with crossed arms. The font is octagonal and is sculptured with quarterfoils and other devices. Note also on the exterior the queer termination of the tower stair.



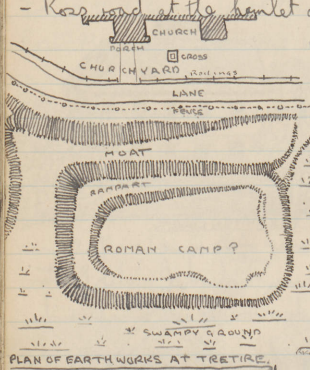
Turning sharp to the right by the chire here can be seen on the left an old house but now much modernized. This road, which is very narrow, after about a mile, brings us to Langstone Court, a seventeenth century brick mansion, said to have been created or altered by Trigo Jones. Like a great deal of Georgian Houses, it is not a very impressive building. It is surrounded by a large collection of farm buildings, amongst which note the quaint barn on stone pillars.



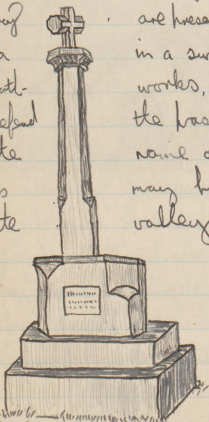
Once through the farmyard we descend a short hill, and once again cross over the Gwern brook, immediately afterwards we take the level



to the left. This runs along for a short distance along the pretty valley made by the Lymer Stream, and then climbs a ridge, past a disused quarry. On the top of the ridge we have a very fine view, of the country towards Lymer. The lane, the surface of which is of rather indifferent quality after passing Killbreece (an old farmhouse) comes out on to main Abergavenny - Ross road at the hamlet of Tretire. It clusters about the swampy valley of the Lymer, a tributary of Lymer. The church, a modern aisleless building with a apselet, stands on a bank at the bottom of a declivity. It is quite a pleasing building from the distance but on closer acquaintance it is less interesting. It contains nothing of any antiquity but a small seventeenth century brass, in memory of the buildel of the adjoining rectory, a delightful irregular stone building. In the churchyard is a cross the base of which is ancient and exhibits upon one of its faces a recess of unusual design. At the

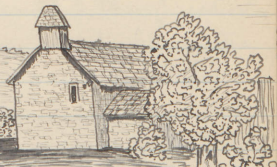


rectory in a field to defend as the This of the are preserved the fragments of a pre-Norman window, whilst in a swampy field opposite the church are some traces works. Possibly they were once fortifications devised the passage of the brook which flows through the valley name of the parish was Retir (the Welsh Rhwyd-twr "longford") may have been a causeway across the swampy bottom valley. Whether the earthworks are Roman, Saxon, or medieval in date it is not known. The parishes of Michaelchurch and Tretire have now been made into one on account of the small population. The population of both the parishes is only 105. Climbing the long hill behind the church we pass an old barn on the left nearly falling down with age and for want of repair, which forms part of the outbuildings of the White



TRETIRE CROSS IN CHURCHYARD

House farm. Away to the left, perched upon a hill top, the village of St Wonders can be discerned clustered about its church tower, whilst upon the right; over the field there can be seen the red stones of Gifford Manor with its fourteenth century gatehouse. About a mile and a half beyond Tactine one comes to a cross roads. If we descend the hill to the right we come in about a quarter of a mile into the tiny village of Michaelchurch wedged in the bottom of a fertile valley. The overwhelming interest of the place is the small but ancient church. It is a small unadorned building of simple construction, situated in a declivity overhanging a dismal pool. It is more remarkable for its content than for its architectural



MICHAELCHURCH FROM THE WEST

ments. In a recess in the north wall (really a blocked up north doorway) is preserved a Roman altar discovered in the neighbourhood which shows of Roman occupation (look Gifford Manor). It is a short



NORMAN FONT MICHAELCHURCH

hills (2 1/2 feet high) carrying a square head, chamfered on the under side. On one of its faces is inscribed "Deo Divini Patris dominus aram", and it is supposed to have once stood at the junction of some Roman trackways. The head has been subsequently hollowed out, possibly to make it serve as a holy water stoup or font. The church also possesses a very rude oak screen, overhung by the remains of a timber partition as well as a fine sculptured Norman font. On the north wall are some remnants of the Decalogue in old English lettering (Stump Elizabeth) and on the opposite side of the church are still painted traces of some Latin texts and some painted designs



ROMAN ALTAR USED AS A STOUP MICHAELCHURCH

many traces of fields near

many traces of fields near

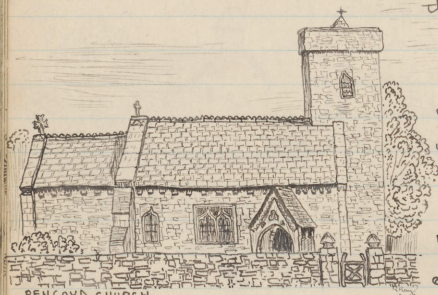
many traces of fields near



MICHAELCHURCH (SOUTH ASPECT).

many traces of fields near

The church is unlighted on the north side, but preserves a few Early English lancets and a later window in the south wall, At the east end are two fine deep splayed and high Early English lancets, and there is a small one in an unusual position high up in the west wall. Note also



PENCOYD CHURCH

the absence of hooves in the belfry? The hole of the shell of the building may be reasonably ascribed to the Norman period with windows etc of the Early English period. Rejoining the cross roads we turn right, and

passing straight through on the crossroads we see amongst a clump

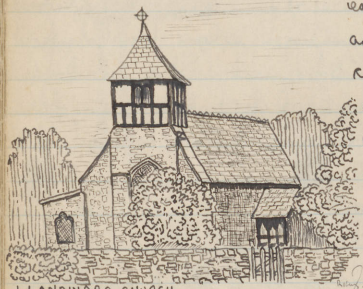
of trees on the crown of an uprising in front, the tower of Pencoyd church. The building which adjoins a farmyard is much obscured by trees. It is a small church, much restored, of no particular interest.

However it possesses, a well proportioned semi-military tower, which is almost devoid of lancets or ornamentation. It might be ascribed to the late thirteenth century. Within it contains nothing of antiquarian interest except an early font. The decorated piscina of ancient, has been renovated. Opposite the

church is an ancient house, note some

of the Tudor mullions still remain although most have been converted into casement windows. Turning to the right by the

church our road descends a sharp hill and then climbing up the opposite side of the valley to Lanastone crossroads

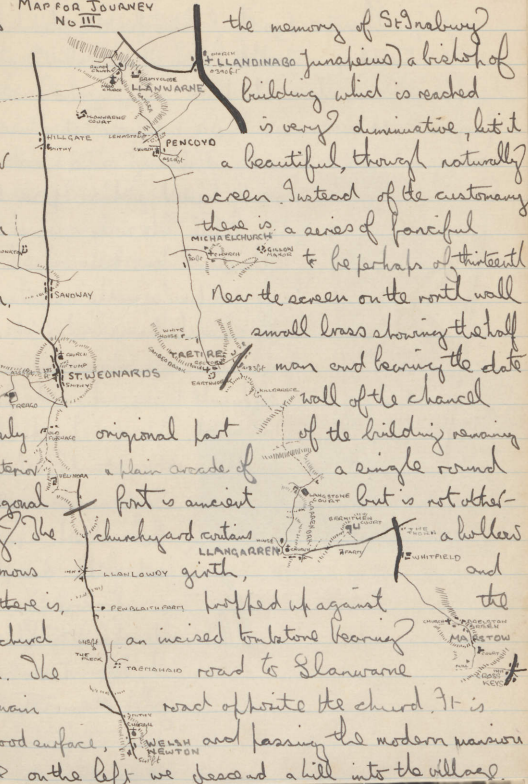


L LANINABO CHURCH.

In the valley below clustered among the trees can be seen the village of Denmorre

A mile from Lanastone, we come out on to the main Bedford Road at the little village of Llaninabo. The only notable possession of the place is the church, which has been almost entirely rebuilt

MAP FOR JOURNEY No III



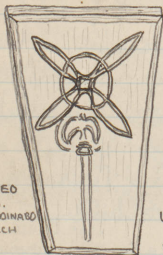
The name has never
 (Latinized into
 slandoff. It
 across a field
 is remarkable for
 very small, oak
 vine leaf pattern
 mortar. It is thought
 century origin.
 of the chancel is a
 length piece of a
 1629. This is the north
 seems to be the only
 it exhibits on the interior
 arch. The octagonal
 wise noteworthy. The
 yew tree of enormous
 near the porch, there is,
 exterior wall the church
 a floriated wand. The
 branches off the main
 a wide road of good surface,
 of Broom-gardens on the left we descend a hill into the village.

the memory of St. Gualburga
 (Llanidnago) a bishop of
 building which is reached
 is very diminutive, but it
 a beautiful, though naturally
 screen. Instead of the customary
 there is a series of forciful
 to be perhaps of thirteenth
 Near the screen on the north wall
 small brass showing the half
 man and bearing the date
 wall of the chancel
 of the building remaining
 a single round
 but is not other-
 a hollow
 and
 the
 a hollow
 road to Glanwarne
 road opposite the church. It is
 and passing the modern mansion
 of Broom-gardens on the left we descend a hill into the village.

It is a huddled
 up out of a place
 in the narrow bottom
 of the valley made,
 by the lumber
 stream. Its chief
 interest is in the ruin
 of its old church which
 was only abandoned
 during the last century.



Llanwarne is the Celtic for the church of the elders. It is prettily situated in a wooded hollow close to a little stream. The building though roofless retains its tower intact, and it was evidently a church of good sized dimensions. There is a defaced Latin inscription above the south doorway, and the south aisle displays some good decorated windows. The arcades which have round headed arches appear to be Norman but may be later. The soil which now forms the floor of the church has been much raised, and hardly obscures a piscina in the sanctuary. A small projecting north chancel preserves a classical port. The whole building is now in a woeful state of neglect, but it is difficult to see, why in the first place the church was abandoned. The new church (St. Michael's Church), which



INCISED
SLAB.
LLANWARNE
CHURCH

was erected in 1864, stands on higher ground in close proximity. It is possessed of a spire, and the windows on the north side of it contain some pedallions. Learning the church upon the night we climb



LLANWARNE, RUINED CHURCH

out of the damp luxuriant valley in which it is situated and passing the drive to Llanwarne Court upon the left - soon come out on to the old Marmorath Stamford Road. This we follow in the direction of Marmorath. At Hillygate a small hamlet on this road, there is a very old cottage with an enormous chimney, and a mile or two further on we can see over the fields upon the right the black and white of Monkton farmhouse, a fine half timbered mansion.

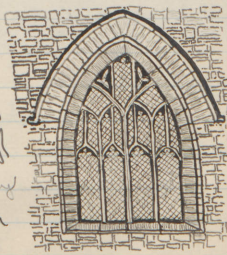
Sandway is another small hamlet on either side of the road possessing an independent chapel. Away in front we have a good view of St. Oswalds perched upon its hill-top. We soon reach the village, however after a short but steep climb. The name of the place is possibly the equivalent to the Old Llanwarne, the Shroud of St. Gwennoth. The main church which is of enormous dimensions occupies a very

commanding position, and contains many interesting features. The handsome tower is said to be of fifteenth century date. But portions of the body of the church are earlier than this. The chancel arch ascribed to the thirteenth century, has been reconstructed, because of fifteenth century origin but reconstructed (1884), separates the nave from the chancel, and a second encloses a north chapel. This called the Myrnos chapel, was founded in 1521 and preserves the memory of Richard Myrnos. It has a large east window (restored in 1873), in which there still remains much ancient glass (1345-1400) which is worth close inspection (the figure of St. Leonard is modern). Note, a curious list of carvings depicting the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham, the ancient chest hewn out of a single tree trunk, the piscina. In other parts of the building note piscina in chancel; bust of armed female with clasped hands on the wall of the north aisle; stone carved into the shape of a human head, outside the south door.



ST. LEONARDS, CHURCH TOWER.

One of the most impressionable features of the exterior is the fine west window of the tower. Some interest also attaches itself to a mound of great size, some 25 feet high, which stands west to the church. It was probably first a burial tumulus (traces of cremation having been discovered within it, but afterwards utilized for defensive purposes, it probably formed the mother of a small castle, whose later occupiers shifted down to the valley below, and built a stone castle around about the fourteenth century.



WEST WINDOW. ST. LEONARDS CHURCH

Turning down a lane opposite the church, and after descending a straight hill for about a third of a mile, the road forks. At the junction we have a good view over the fields of Treaga one of the most perfect and picturesque fortified manor houses in the border of Wales. If we take the right hand turning after passing some ancient farm buildings, we come right up to the gateway of Treaga. It is of fourteenth century date with minor

insertions. It is built in the shape of a square with a small round tower or tourelle at each angle, and a gateway on the north front.

A few of the mullions have been replaced by crenellations but otherwise the castle is much as it was when it was built. The main block of the building is three stories high and the principal rooms are upon



TREAGA. SOUTH-EAST TOWER.

The arrow slits in the upper stages of the tourelles have been replaced by mullions which rather detract from their picturesque quality. The south east tower is the largest and is rotatable for its peculiar corbelled out upper story. The building has no traces of any moat but it is built upon a raised terrace.

Retracing our way, we bear straight ahead at the junction instead ascending the hill to St. Wenard's; our road now follows the curves of the Treaga descent, with excellent views of the old manor house away on the right. The road then descends a hill into a dip where are clustered a few cottages, and another hill which comprise the hamlet of Oldfurnace. Turning left at another fork roads, our lane becomes very rough indeed and runs along the bottom of a small shallow valley, in the night we pass the old farmhouse of Velidde. It is of late sixteenth century date but all its mullions have now been replaced by crenellations, and today it exhibits few features of any interest except in that shows the conventional E plan. The lane then rejoins the old Monmouth - Hereford Road which we passed along once more in

the direction of Monmouth. Soon our road crosses the main Ross
 - Abergavenny Road, and then we pass through the hamlet of Gladbach.
 It possesses nothing of any interest except a timbered Tudor house.
 We then climb to the top of the
 Pleck (Cass) the hill behind
 Welsh Newton. This is the highest
 point of our journey, and after another
 three quarters of a mile downhill
 we come to the very pretty village
 of Welsh Newton. It lies about 4 miles north of Monmouth.
 The church of St Mary the Virgin is a small unpretentious
 building, situated by the roadside at the foot of a hill. Not-
 withstanding its modest appearance it
 is of much archaeological interest. Its chief
 feature is a Dec. stone screen (fourteenth
 century) consisting of a triple arch
 supported on octagonal columns, and
 displaying the ball-flower ornament
 upon its mouldings. The wood-work
 which surmounted it has been removed
 but a domed window, which lighted the
 loft on the south side remains against
 the north wall of the sanctuary is fixed a
 stone seat, which may have been a "bird
 stool" (This was a seat for the use of
 anybody claiming sanctuary) or a settle.
 stall of the head of a neighbouring Preceptory
 of Knights Templars at Lydney, to which
 the church belonged. The building possesses a good roof of
 the usual local lamel type, but was deprived of its bosses. A corbel
 table on the outside wall immediately above the windows,
 suggests at one time the roof was much lower. The sill of the
 sanctuary south window has been formed into a settle and on the



above of the window is a trifolied fascia. On the floor of the sanctuary are portions of a stone altar, some fourteenth century sepulchral slabs. Other similar slabs have been used to seat the bench table in the south-aisle, which also contains a tomb. The font is Norman, but quite plain in character. A grave stone near the partially dismantled churchyard cross bears the inscription J.K., August 22, 1679. This marks the burial place of Father John Kemble a Jesuit martyr, who was imprisoned at Pembroke Castle near here, and subsequently executed at Hereford at the age of eighty. It is said that on the morning of his execution, he asked for a pipe of tobacco, and graciously asked the sheriff to pledge him in a cup of grock, before being dispatched. A portion of grock has hence been called in the district a Kemble cup.



The local Roman Catholic make an annual visit to his tomb on the anniversary of his death. Below the village towards Buckholt the road is bordered with fine fir woods, and

threads its way through a narrow dingle.

Journey No. 11.

MONMOUTH - Michel Troy - Cwmcaran - Craig-y-dorth. - Michel Troy Common

Leaving Monmouth by the Monnow bridge, we turn left at Overmonnow and take the Raglan road out of the town. We soon pass Troy station and then the mass covered lodge of Troy House upon the left. The road here crosses the little River Trothy and ascends a slight undulation with the orchards of St Julians farm upon the right. St Julians is an early 18th cent house much restored and timbered. The road then follows along beneath a bank of larch trees, and two miles after leaving Monmouth we enter the prettily situated village of

Mitchel Troy. The first noticeable building is the old mill down a lane upon the right, which exhibits traces of half timbering. The name of the village is said to be equivalent to Troy Magna (Mitchel being the Middle English "great"), the church is a rather small structure



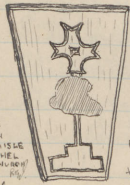
MONMOUTH THE SHIRE HA

with a disproportionately small tower. Though of no architectural merit it has the saving grace of picturesqueness, and is not without archaeological interest. Externally note (1) the old stocks by the roadside (2) The lychgate similar to that at Breilleck (3) cross of unusual design in the churchyard (3)

The inscription on the South face of the tower, which, undecipherable now, is stated to represent, Oatepro Godefrido et Johanne (possibly the founders of the church.) (5) The wooden dormer windows let in above the aisle arcades. The interior much restored is decorated the nave being divided from the roof pointed arches without. Observe I the trefoiled piscina in the (2) see it a body stone with an incised cross (3) incised fragment built into east wall of south aisle (4) image brackets in the chancel and (5) the very ancient and rather damaged cub shaped font. The design of the east windows of aisles is unusual of a near.



which is throughout aisles by capitals south aisle cross



INCISED SLAB IN SUBSIDIARY OF MITCHEL TROY CHURCH

MAP FOR JOURNEY NO. IV.

the church but upon the opposite side of the road exhibits a small fountain playing in an ancient stone basin. Water flows the Raeflan road out

of the village and in just over a mile come to Red House farm, where we have a grand prospect of Craig y Dorth hill (785 ft)

Just beyond the farm opposite an old toll house we take a turning upon the left and begin a steady climb past an old farmhouse on the left, whose outbuildings show some traces of half timbering.

OLD FONT
HITCHEL
TROY
CHURCH



After passing another farm called Baeli Glys the road forks, we take the right hand turn and run along for perhaps a mile along the crest of a narrow hill or ridge which rises and separates two brooks.

On the left we have a view of the modest Burncoron Court, while away upon the right the dark tree clad hill of Bae Slangwen crowned by a prehistoric comb, rises. The parish church is a largish aisleless building with a handsome battlemented tower, of fine ashlar masonry.



CRAIG-Y-DORTH FARM REDGATE FARM.

The tower is of the Perpendicular period, and the rest of the church in the main appears to be of the decorated period. Notice the water shoots on the tower, corbelled out clear of the building. The chancel appears to retain one or two ancient windows.



CWNCARVAN CHURCH.

to the left of the church we pass on the right at the end of the churchyard an ancient ruined cottage all overgrown with trees. The lane which becomes narrower plunges between high hazel hedges in a most delightful manner. A mile from the church this lane comes to an end at a farm, but on the left, bordering a wood well noticed a rough track between hedges. This descends some breakneck

to retain one or two ancient windows. To the left of the church we pass on the right at the end of the churchyard an ancient ruined cottage all overgrown with trees. The lane which becomes narrower plunges between high hazel hedges in a most delightful manner. A mile from the church this lane comes to an end at a farm, but on the left, bordering a wood well noticed a rough track between hedges. This descends some breakneck

gradients and ultimately come to the bottom of the here swampy valley of the Burncooran brook. It then scrambles through some undergrowth and begins to steadily climb the opposite wall of the valley. The surface is now composed of huge blocks of stone forming steps which are thought to be of Roman origin. However this is very improbable. Soon the lane or track comes within sight of fields again at the farmhouse of Glendhu. The road then climbs steeper than ever until we reach a farm. Upon the left, after which both the gradient, width and surface become better. In perhaps another quarter of a mile we finally emerge out onto the Monmouth Trollick Road, which we take in the direction of Monmouth, passing the Bockett inn upon the left on the way.



The road then passes into a small wood and opposite a lodge we see a lane leading downwards upon the left.

This we descend and, and in front we have a striking view of the summit of Craig-y-Dorth, and the world of Glyndwr in the background.



On coming to the upper lodge gates of Burncooran about the lane forbes, we take the lesser lane to the left, where we have wonderful scenery of the Burncooran valley in view upon the left, and the bird-clad summit of Craig-y-Dorth rising upon the right. Eventually we come to Craig-y-Dorth Farm near which is a stile leading to the summit of the hill. It was the scene of Glyndwr's chief exploit in Monmouthshire.

After the battle of Tewkesbury (1471) he entrenched himself upon this hill, and repulsed the royal forces which had been sent to dislodge him with such success that they all fled (those who were not killed) precipitately into Monmouth, with dejected cheeks in full cry after them. The burial place of those massacred which was within Glyndwr's entrenchments are still pointed out today. Requiring



the lane we descend an extremely steep straight hill into the cottages of Mitchell Troy Common. This is a pretty enough place with its white-washed cottages, and shady hedges. A good lane leads from here into the village of Mitchell Troy.

Journey no. V

Wonestow - Dingestow - Tregaré - Penrhos - Llanilio Grosveny - Llanvetherine
 - Cross Ash - Llanfoenor - Newcastle -
 St Maughan - Llanrotal - Osbaston
 - Monmouth.

Descending the hill from the war memorial at Wonestow, we soon come to a fork roads. The lower road to the right leads to Northybrook but we take the left hand turn and continue our descent underneath a row of hanging chestnut trees. In about a mile we come to a byroad on the left which leads over the railway and Trothy Rises to Redhouse farm upon the main Roefen - Monmouth road. We continue straight on however through the dozen or so cottages which form the hamlet called Single Street



This is said to take its name from the old road which we are following, which is supposed to be originally a Roman Road, leading from the Forest of Dean to Shabbillett. Leaving the few cottages behind we climb a steep and

rather long hill and on reaching the summit we see a drive upon the right; this leads to Tre Owen, once a seat of the Herberts but now a farm. It lies on high wooded ground. It is a fine old gabled mansion of fine stone. The original part, destroyed it is said by the parliamentarians, has been replaced by a lower building the work of Inigo Jones in the 17th cent. Though somewhat incongruous, the addition is rendered very effective by a handsome porch flanked by classical columns, and ornamented above the doorway

by carved figures enclosing a shield of family quarters. The interior contains a fine panelled oak chamber, a massive oak staircase, and two rooms with plastered ceilings (one particularly good, and ornamented with pendants.) The Hall (now converted into a cider cellar) retains its dais, the original screen which once

booted it from the passage has been unhappily removed to another residence. Over the porch is what is said to have been a finest



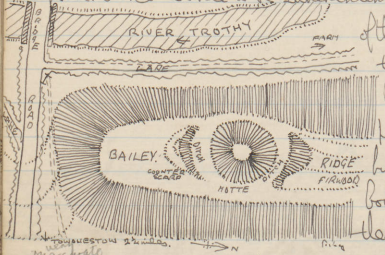
DINGESTON CHURCH

hiding place. In the neighbourhood is a heronry the only one within the county.

Back once again upon the road we descend a steep hill, down to a two arched bridge over the River Dotting. Browning a sharp fir clad ridge on the right is a mysterious moated mound, which according to local tradition is the burial place of Offa King of Mercia who built the great Dyke separating Wales from his kingdom. It was undoubtedly a tumulus but it has subsequently been utilized as a motte of a castle. In later times as the ridge was too narrow to allow of any expansion of the castle, it was deserted and a fresh one was started, on the opposite side of the river near the church of Dingeston. This church is comely but of little architectural interest it has a tower similar to that of Mitchell Tray only in a grander style and a customary half timbered porch. It retains a small round loft window in the nave wall, and in a projecting north transept, is a large marble monument to a member of the Bosanquet family. One of the most curious features of the church is the huge doorway in the west face of the tower. Note also the deep exterior splay to the windows in the tower.

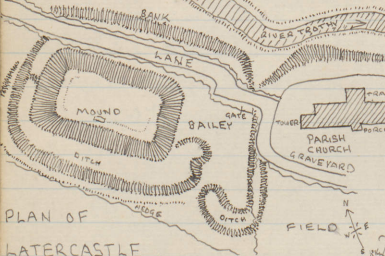
In a field on the opposite side of the road to the church, with

remnants and mound of the later castle. No trace of its masonry now remains and its history is obscure. A grim story about it still survives, preserved in Welsh tradition. It owed its existence to William de Braose, the turbulent lord of Abergavenny and his accomplice in crime, Ranulf Poer, Sheriff of Hereford. As the couple were superintending the erection of the fortress, some



PLAN OF EARLY CASTLE, DINGESTOW.

of the Baron's many Welsh enemies, stood the half finished wall, Ranulf was all but decapitated on the spot, a neighbouring priest having only just time to shove him before the death was out of his body. De Braose himself escaped by the skin of his teeth. He was being dragged out of the ditch to be similarly dispatched when an unexpected rally of his own men at arms, dispersed his captors. The earthworks that now represent the site of this castle present some peculiarities, note the large area of the rectangular mound which is nearly twice the size of the bailey. The present to Slouchmouel - ystern - lleuarn takes up what was probably a moat on the side facing the river.



PLAN OF LATER CASTLE, DINGESTOWE.

front is modern and adjoining it is the memorial chapel also of fairly recent construction. The grounds contain some fine trees and a small lake formed by damming up a tributary of the Trothy. Passing several side roads, after traversing two miles of the typical and charming Monmouthshire country of fields, woods, orchards and red earth, we come to Boed ydwrn house, opposite the Raglan Road. This is a modern mansion in beautiful grounds. From here we can see in front

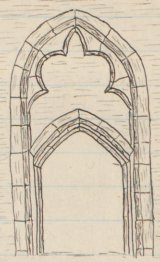
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Rejoining the cross roads in the centre of this small village we take the Tregard road, This takes us past the gates of Dingestow about the home of the Bosanquets. It is a large and palace like building of various periods dating back to 1623. The present Elizabethan

front is modern and adjoining it is the memorial chapel also of fairly recent construction. The grounds contain some fine trees and a small lake formed by damming up a tributary of the Trothy. Passing several side roads, after traversing two miles of the typical and charming Monmouthshire country of fields, woods, orchards and red earth, we come to Boed ydwrn house, opposite the Raglan Road. This is a modern mansion in beautiful grounds. From here we can see in front

the few houses of Tregar village clustered around its church tower and standing upon a slight hill. Our road runs along the ridge of the hill and we come to the church standing on the left. The building though not as imposing as its situation, is a very interesting little church. Its interior has an unusual air of loftiness and is very beautiful and light. The building has a small Early English tower capped by a painted roof. The entrance is by one of the customary semi timbered porches. Built into the wall above the window on the south west is the curious device of the sacred monogram enclosed within a heart.



TREGARE CHURCH. CINQUEFOILED CHANCEL ARCH.

The most unusual thing about the building however is the beautiful and impressive cinquefoiled chancel arch (a rare thing) which gives a touch of drama to the whole building inside. Note the wood loft stairs in the thickness of the north wall and the cinquefoiled piscina on the south wall of the sanctuary. The heart shaped ornamentation on the base of the font is also very unusual. The churchyard retains the base and shaft of an old cross and the chancel contains an Early English window. Note the pronounced batter on the outside of the chancel. Passing the inn we turn right and take the narrow road to Penhor. The hedges are low and we have a good view of the fields on either side. Taking the second turning on the right, just past the large farm of Wam-y Melyn, we come into the village of Penhor after journeying under some holly trees. The church stands on a knoll and forms quite a landmark keeping above the trees.



TREGARE CHURCH. ROOFOFT STAIR

It is a small building with a battlemented and crenelled tower and one of the timbered south porches common in these parts. The church is well



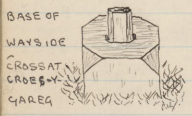
CHANCEL, TREGARE CHURCH.

looked after, but it is much darker and lower than its companion church at Tregare. Within the church is a piscina, and some carved oak stalls, whilst on the north side of the nave there is a projecting rood loft stairway. The tower is the main feature of the building. In the churchyard there is a restored cross and some fine old yew trees. The exterior of the building is rather lopsided on account of it only having one aisle. At the entrance to the churchyard is a lychgate which was constructed as a war memorial. Leaving St Badoe's church behind we take the road leading to Boes-y-Gareg passing on the right



PENRHOS

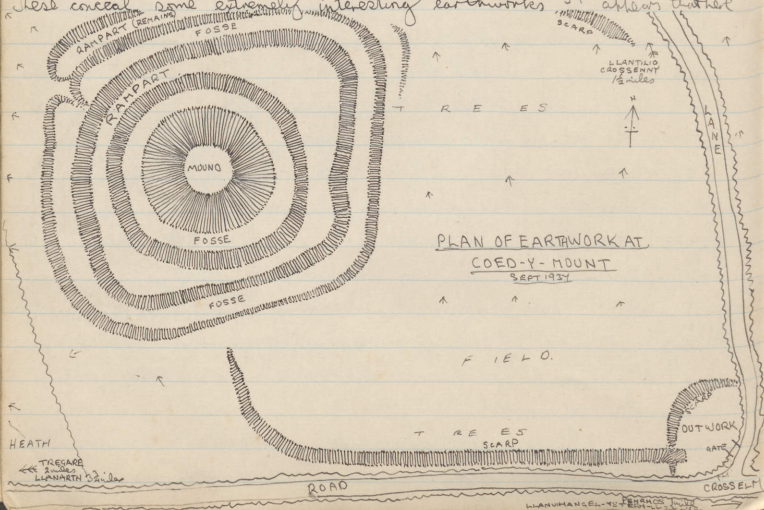
Walla Tom whose timber date can be seen in its enormous diagonal chimney stacks. At Boes-y-Gareg there is a crossroads, a cottage and the base of a wayside cross, much the worse for



BASE OF
WAYSIDE
CROSS AT
BOES-Y-
GAREG

west. The road now passes over some delightful country between hazel and holly tree hedges. Taking the second turning upon the right we

see the common and woods of Boed-y-Mount to the left and in front. There conceal some extremely interesting earthworks of which appear to be the



was originally a tumulus within the area of a British Camp the rampart of which is almost obliterated and is barely traceable except on the south.

In Norman times the tumulus (quite a large mound 25ft high) was surrounded by two moats and a rampart, and it formed one of those minor castles with which the country was studded with. The stronghold such as it was, belonged to John of Monmouth but was destroyed in 1151, the year after it was built, and never occupied again. Our route now takes us down the steep lane from Elm Cross. (The stump of a giant tree can be seen on the right) and in less than half a mile we come out onto a better road opposite Penknoe Farm. This is a fine Georgian house, with a shield bearing the date above the lintel. On the right we have a good view of the Llanthilio country towards Tal-y-gwael. After a gradual descent of perhaps a mile we cross a little stone bridge over the Towy, retaining on the left the old water mill, a dark tower like building.

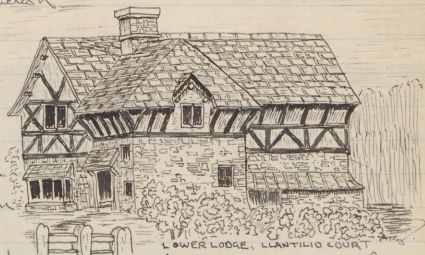
We are now in Llanthilio Brassenny, one of the prettiest villages in Monmouthshire. On the right we have the half-timbered lodge of Llanthilio Court which is of recent construction.

Coming to the crossroads

in the village, we see on the left "The Pastory" a charming old world inn, note the curious twisted chimney above the roof.

The village street leads up from the inn into the church which keeps pleasant company with the court on a small knoll.

The locality is said to be the traditional site of an engagement in 546 between the Saxons and the Welsh, the latter being under the leadership of their prince Ynys. The prayers of St David, bishop of Llandaff, turned the tide of battle in favour of the Welshman, hence the name, "The Church of St David, - The Cross of Ynys." On the left hand side of the village street is the Post Office a pleasant building of red sandstone, near by is a waterfall formed by the dammed up waters of a small stream. The church originally Early English with decorated



and Perpendicular alterations is of very considerable interest. It is undoubtedly the most comely church in the county. It is a cruciform building, with a central tower covered by a shingled boach spire added probably in 1709 (note the useless water spouts indicating



an earlier flat roof) Faces of the original early English character of the building will be seen in the low tower and in the lancets at the

west end of the aisles. Later builders practically remodelled it, a clerestory was added, and the north transept transformed into a spacious chapel, extending to the east end of the chancel. The low, tunnel like entrance to the chancel, though artistically indefensible, gives a touch of character to the interior, and the round headed roof light door, with descending steps cut in the thickness of the tower is exceedingly quaint. The roof light itself (to which access was gained by the blocked doorway in the chancel) has disappeared, but a subsidiary roof beam will be found on the other side of the tower facing east.

The chancel (decorated) contains a fine cinquefoiled piscina, and on the floor some tombstones with figures carved in low relief. A low decorated arcade, which appears to have sunk considerably divides the chancel from the adjoining north chapel - a particularly interesting bit of architecture. Note - (1) the Perpendicular window with board of quatrefoils a fifth cent insertion (2) the figured image brackets on each side of the altar - the one on the south is said to be a portrait of Edward III (3) the squint and the square piscina in the east wall (4) the discolored font basin or stump. Beneath the tower are some huge vertical timbers supporting the bell frame, and probably added with the boach spire in 1709. In the South transept should be observed the long chest, and in the nave, the Norman font at the west end. In the churchyard is a fine cross now restored, but the base is

ancient. The Court (St. M. Jackson) is a large square modern mansion. The garden boundary wall is battlemented and behind the Court is a small lake hidden in a wood. The parks and grounds of the Court are very well kept and occupy beautiful rolling country which is bordered by the River Tooting. Taking the lane down from the church on to the

Abergavenny - Monmouth Road we pass the vicarage on the left and on coming on to the main road we find ourselves opposite the Whitecastle lane.

At the junction of this lane with the road hidden by trees is a square

moat still full of water. This was the site of the original court, once the home of the redoubtable Sir David Gam, who fell on the field of Agincourt, and was knighted by the king as he lay dying.

The valourous knight had indeed no reason to be ashamed "to the shak of enemies in the gate" for it is said that his children could form a string stretching from the Court to the Church gates. On

the island formed by the moat, which is connected by a wooden trestle bridge is the headquarters of the local Scouts. No messenger is now visible departing to the old court. With this parish is well known Free School founded in 1654.

Instead of taking the Whitecastle lane take the next

* See map on page 28



turning on the night towards Abergawen. On the left can be seen the low hill of Pen-y-coed with a small wood covering its summit. In the middle of the wood is a quaint cottage by a dismal pool and a well. On the right we pass a pool in a field fringed by oak trees. Just past which on the opposite side of the road is a narrow overgrown and almost impassable lane leading over Pen-y-coed to Great Bil Slough a fourteenth century manor house. At the bottom of a slight hill a quarter of a mile further on we see Beilian Farm which appears to be of some antiquity although it has now been entirely dismantled. From the top of the rise a wonderful



SKYRIG FAUR. FENMOOTH HILL.

prospect opens out before us. In the near background we have a fine view of the Skirid Tawr with the Sugar
we into
One of the

labourer's cottages belonging to the farm is evidently of some antiquity and exhibits some half-timbering. The road then follows along the rich meadows, bordering the river Towy, and eventually crosses the discoloured waters of the river near Pat-y-coller farm by an iron bridge. From the farm a footpath leads past the Dales Barn to Whitecastle perched on the hill above. The road then climbs a sharp rise to New-house farm where on the night we can discern the gaunt ruin of Whitecastle perched upon the summit of a hill about a mile away. Soon after passing New-house farm we take a narrow and very rough lane upon the right which leads steeply down into the village of Glanvethinaid. It is incidentally the roughest part of our journey. In reaching the bottom the lane forms a gully for a watercourse and is about six inches under water.

We eventually emerge out at a gate leading into the

turning on the right towards Abergawenny. On the left can be seen the low hill of Pen-y-coed with a small wood covering its summit.

In the middle of the wood is a quaint cottage by a dismal pool and a well. On the right we pass a pool in a field fringed by oak trees.

Just past which on the opposite side of the road is a narrow overgrown and almost impassible lane leading over Pen-y-coed to Great Bil Slough a fourteenth century manor house. At the bottom of a slight hill a quarter of mile further on we see Beiluan Farm which appears to be of some antiquity although it has now been entirely renovated. From the top of the rise a wonderful



SKYRIO FAWR. FFMN MOOTHCHIRE.

SKYRIO FAWR. FFMN TREADAM.

prospect opens out before us. In the near background we have a fine view of the Skirid Fawr with the Sugar Loaf mountain in the distance, behind. We then dash down into a ditch in which lies the large farm of Tre-Adan. One of the labourers cottages belonging to the farm is evidently of some antiquity and exhibits some half timbering. The road then follows along the rich meadows, bordering the river Towy, and eventually crosses the dwindling waters of the river near Pat-y-collin farm by an iron bridge. From the farm a footpath leads past the Duke's Room to Whitecastle perched on the hill above. The road then climbs a sharp rise to New-house farm where on the right we can discern the gaunt ruin of Whitecastle perched upon the summit of a hill about a mile away. Soon after passing New-house farm we take a narrow and very rough lane upon the right which leads steeply down into the village of Glanvethin. It is incidentally the roughest part of our journey. On reaching the bottom the lane forms a gully for a watercourse and is about six inches under water.

We eventually emerge out at a gate leading into the

churchyard. The name of the place is supposed to be derived from St Gyrotherin (Latinized into Vettinius), who is thought to have lived in the sixth century. The church is overshadowed by a number of fine trees and the tower has a rather peculiar appearance from the projection of the belfry stage on corbels. The rest of the building has been largely reconstructed. The interior however contains one or two monuments of note.

Fixed against the wall of the porch is a slab bearing the figure of an ecclesiastic (probably 14th cent) seated in a chair and posed in attitude of benediction. Painted against the east wall of the chancel are two other sepulchral bas-reliefs. The one



LLANVETHERINE CHURCH SOUTH VIEW.

on the left carries the figure of a man David Powell, 1621, the other, that on the right, of a woman, of unspecified identity, wearing a velvet hat, date 1475. Two other incised slabs will be found on the floor of the chancel, one blazoned with a coat of arms and dated 1621, the other near the pulpit marked with a flourished goos (1611). A small cross with an eulogistic epitaph to Anne the wife of John Stephens (1429), is fixed against the north wall of the chancel. There are piscinas in the sanctuary, and in the south nave wall near the pulpit, and in the porch is a damaged stone. Note traces of curious external arcade on south wall of the chancel.

The church is dedicated to St James and the churchyard contains the base of an old cross. If we follow our lane on, we come out on the main Abergeenny - Ross road w. the King's Arms Inn. We take the road in the direction of D. Penfith, passing the church and rectory once again, upon the right, with the road

ahead and the village is lost to view. In less than a quarter of a mile we come to the small hamlet of Baggle Street consisting of a row of cottages, a baptist chapel and an inn (Vine Tree). After passing a road on the left leading to Slangattock-hinged, we once again cross the Trothy River and then begin a long climb, with views of the wooded slopes of de Gaiy Scrovetin (1329 ft) on the left. In about three miles after passing through diversified scenery we reach the hamlet of Brass Ash at a height of 649 ft above sea level.

From here roads branch off for Gornont and Wayne Green in another direction. The surrounding scenery is very prettily wooded and full of quartz corners with de Gaiy overshadowing to the north.

However we continue along the main ^{road} to Dunbar and to traverse a beautiful wooded dingle. Just before Dunbar Chapel we turn off right on the Monmouth Road. This runs along an open ridge with fine views to the south. At Slidivert you



LLANFAENOR. THE CHAPELRY.

a narrow lane branches off to Wayne Green, passing on the way the ford of Rhyd-y-ago on the Slymon Brook where there is some fine scenery. Blinking a sharp rise we take the next lane on the right leading to Llanfaenor, this offers views along the crest of a ridge with the narrow dingle of the Slymon on the right and a tributary of the Crofft-hir brook on the left.

About a mile from the Monmouth road the land drops unexpectedly into the hamlet of Llanfaenor. It possesses an ancient chapelry restored and modernized, and now of very little interest. There are also one of two ancient cottages near by. The hamlet is entered about the cross lanes which lead to Wayne Green (west), Oren (south), Brass Ash (north) and Newcastle (east) respectively. We take the lane leading to Newcastle. It drops steeply

down for half a mile to the dell of the Croft Hir brook. At the bottom on the left is Hart, a fine Tudor farmhouse whose windows have unfortunately been replaced with casement windows. A little further on the line crosses the brook. Near the bridge, on the right, will be seen a footpath which follows the bank of the stream for a few hundred yards it leads to a wishing well, which once enjoyed a reputation for its healing virtues, and is said to have flowed with seven different kinds of water. The Croft Hir stream runs by its ruined walls tumbling over ledges of rock in a series of cascades. On reaching the line we have a steep climb



LLANFAENOR THE WISHING WELL.

to Newcastle from which we proceed downhill past the Castle in towards Monmouth. About a mile onwards we pass through a white gate on the left and take an unfenced line down into the village of St. Maughans. The church is a small building with an Early English tower of the local half timbered type at the west. It possesses the rather unusual feature of a wooden arcade.

Note the Early English stone reredos at the west end. Another peculiarity is the low side window (an Early English lancet) at the north west end. The porch has a crude round-headed cuter arch. The building has quite one of the most picturesque exteriors of the half timbered type in Monmouthshire situated as it is in a clump of Scotch firs.



CROFT HIR BROOK NEAR LLANFAENOR WISHING WELL.

From St. Maughans (there are only two other farms here by the church) we proceed onto Maypole one mile distant above the actual village is, here by the roadside there is preserved the base of a wayside cross, similar to that at Cores-y-green, only considerably more the worse for wear. Our road then takes us through the cottages of St. Maughans green down to the River Monnow which is here crossed by a single arched stone bridge. Looking

over the bridge, one may discern beneath the water the foundations of the
 base of the two arched medieval bridge which preceded the present
 erection. Just over the bridge our road runs into the Glamorgan
 Monmouth Road and on our right are the roofless ruins of a small Tudor
 House. We journey up the steep hill towards Skenhill on the way to
 Llanothol. Skenhill is a very dilapidated half-ruined Tudor house
 of some dimensions but now in a pitiable state of decay.

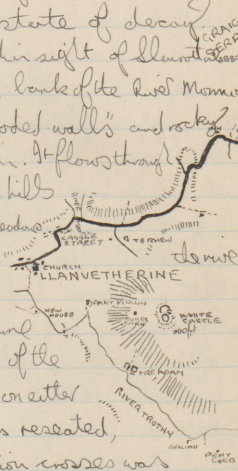
A short journey down a hill brings us within sight of Llanothol church
 situated amongst the fields upon the bank of the River Monnow
 The Monnow though not possessed of the "wooded walls" and rocky
 gorges of the Tyfis nevertheless a charming stream. It flows through
 a wide and sinuous valley shut in by smooth hills
 whose sides are chequered with copse and meadow.

Amongst the pastures on the side of
 is this secluded little church of very primitive
 appearance. The place presumably owes its name
 to an unknown British saint. In the porch of the
 church is a tomb, and there is an unusual recess on either
 side of the chancel arch. When the church was renovated,
 the original altar slab, bearing its consecration crosses was
 discovered. A tracery Perpendicular window, evidently brought from
 somewhere else (Pae-Lyze-Dieu?) for it has been cut down to suit
 its present position, has been inserted in the south wall of the chancel
 and another similar window has
 been appropriated by a neighboring
 farm. Llanothol boat rot very
 few away from the church has an
 Elizabethan oak chimney piece.
 On the right above this secluded little
 village (there is no road beyond) rises the
 steep wooded heights of Craig Ddwyll.

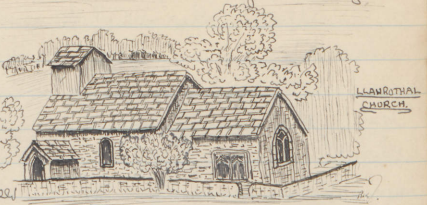


MONNOW MILL

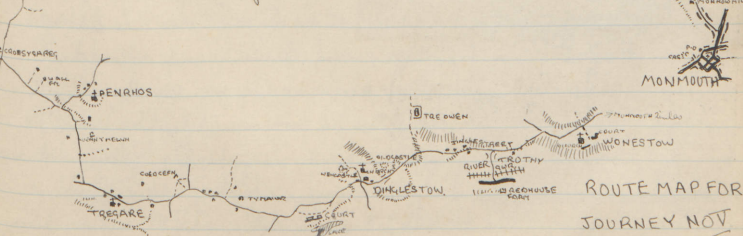
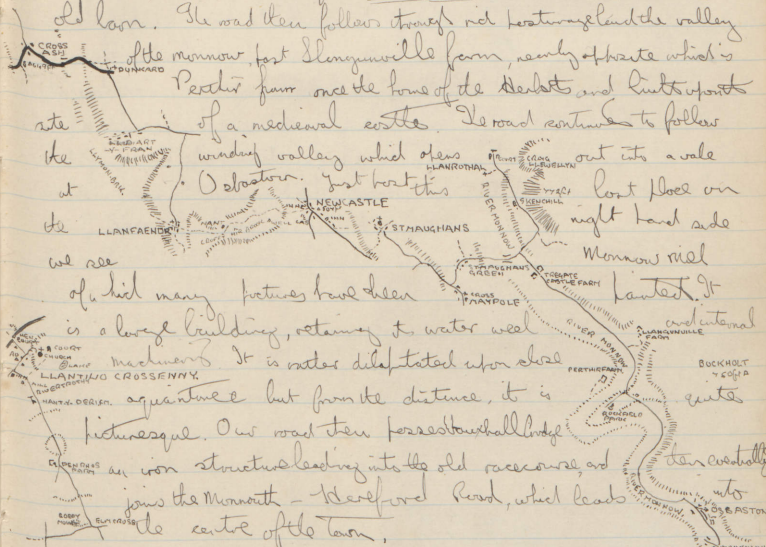
We journey back along the same road but instead of crossing the bridge
 we go on toward Monmouth. At the top of the rise above the bridge stands



Tregate Castle Farm a rambling old house that should be noticed
 although it is rather featureless. It has been entirely "modernized"
 the mill having been
 replaced by concrete and
 the old flagstone roof by a
 ugly corrugated iron section.



The building dates back to
 the Tudor period, note the queer
 old loom. He had then followed through
 of the monnow, past Sloughville farm, nearly opposite which is
 Pecton farm over the home of the Market and built upon the
 site of a medieval castle. The road continues to follow
 the winding valley which opens out into a vale
 at the last place on
 the night had side
 we are
 of which many pictures have been
 is a large building, extending to water wheel
 mechanism. It is rather dilapidated upon a
 picturesque. Our road then passed through a bridge
 an iron structure leading into the old racecourse, and
 joins the Monnow - Hereford Road, which leads
 to the center of the town.



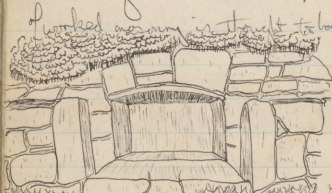
ROUTE MAP FOR JOURNEY NOV

At the top of the rise above the bridge stands

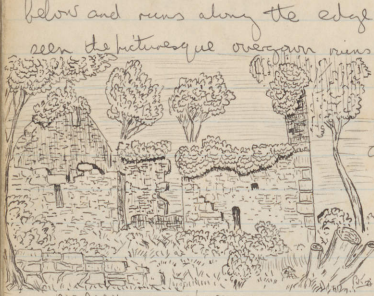
Journey no VI

Redbrook (Boat Inn) - Glyf Farm - Penollt - Troy House.

Upon the other side of the river to Redbrook village, which is in Gloucestershire; and connected with it by a ferry and railway bridge is the Boat Inn and a few cottages. These are situated at the bottom of a steep wooded declivity upon the bank of the river. Behind the Inn a little streamlet rushes down over the hill in a series of cascades, the lowest having a drop of about thirty five feet. We take the lane on the left of the inn, and passing Seialt Halt we begin to ascend the long hill in the direction of Tuelbeck; on the left we have a steep drop down to the river a fine view over Redbrook and opposite bank of the Wye. On rounding a corner about a half mile from our starting point we see opposite a farm on the left an ancient well, built of huge stones ~~into~~ bordering the road. It is of unknown date, and a recess which is arched and supports a



"ANCIENT WELL" NEAR THE BOAT INN.



OLD BARN NEAR THE BOAT INN

worked as an ~~is~~ thought to have been a medicinal wishing well. Some distance further on, coming to a largeish farm upon the right we take the lane which runs alongside of it. It is a narrow grassy way, badly diseased by any wheeled traffic. It overlooks the Wye running far below and runs along the edge of the hill. On the left can be seen the picturesque overgrown ruins of some old farm buildings. The lane now descends somewhat precipitately to come into another road which leads down to the Boat Inn. We however ascend this lane and on reaching across roads we see upon the left an old farmhouse (Glyf Farm) which exhibits many traces of the Tudor origin in blocks of millions and diagonal chimney stacks. It is still a picturesque building although it has been greatly spoilt by injudicious restoration. We take the narrow road on the right hand which soon winds down into a lane; on the right opposite Glyf Farm there should be noticed

the large fir fringed ford caused by the damming up of a small stream a little further we pass another old but featureless farmhouse in front a little to the right we can see Penallt Hill covered with bracken and crowned by a rocky outcrop. Taking the next turning

on the right, we leave the road behind us and climb the breezy slope of Penallt Hill. The rocks on the summit are weathered into all kinds of curious shapes similar to that on the more famous Buckstone Hill, upon the opposite side of the Wye in Gloucestershire.

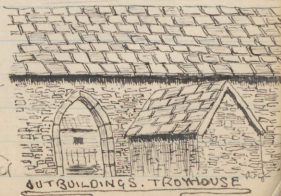
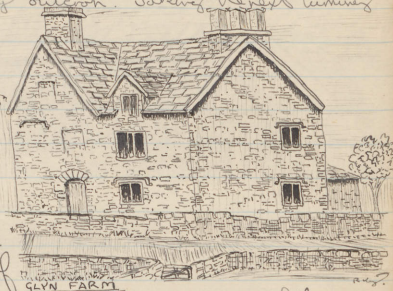
Crossing over the top of the hill (150 feet) we strike down towards the Wye, and after traversing one or two fields and a copse we find ourselves in a narrow lane scattered about which are the few farms and cottages which form the village of Penallt.

Below on the steep slope of the hill we have an unusual view of the parish church. On the left near a farm there will be seen a path which leads into the woods.

This goes up a narrow dingle the sides of which are scattered with great boulders from the hill above. The woodland path then descends

through the young trees of Troy Park woods for the distance of about one mile, when we emerge out in a field on the hill above Troy House.

After descending through a few fields we reach the stately old manor house. It is a huge rambling building, in places five stories high. The right is the old part dating from the fifteenth century. It was the former seat of the Bishops of Bayonne, but it is now a ruin. It is rather



a robust-fronted mansion of somewhat conventional type, attributed to Inigo Jones. Some portions of the house as has already been said are of a much earlier date. The oldest part contains some spacious



PENALLT CHURCH: THE PORCH

chambers. One of these in particular is very finely panelled, and decorated with a very handsome oak chimney piece. This and a similar chimney piece in an adjoining room are

said to have been brought from Raglan Castle. The house formerly had a good collection of pictures and antiquarian curiosities. Amongst the latter was the reputed cradle of Henry V, but considerable doubts have been thrown upon its



PENALLT CHURCH

authenticity. The collection was removed when the property changed hands. The mansion stands under the shelter of a neighboring hillside and once enjoyed much celebrity on account of its fruit gardens, which

received the commendation of Charles I. Note the quaint ledge at the entrance to drive on the Raglan road

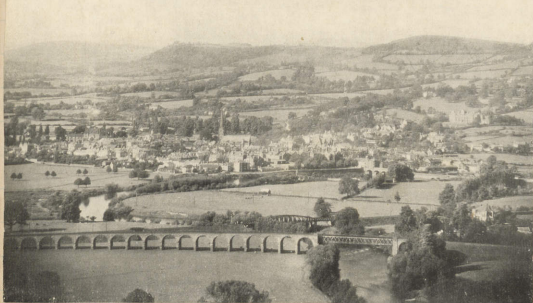
From the Boat Inn, Tivy House can be reached by a different and quite as interesting route which lead past Penallt church. Instead of turning to the left and ascending towards Inellect we can take the right hand lane, which climbs up through the woods in the direction of Glynferfryn. It is advisable than to take the second turning upon the right, just over a half mile from the inn. This descends steeply to the bottom of a dell, in which are clustered a number of old cottages. The lane then runs along between dry built walls of colossal stone, with fine views of the Wye valley below upon the right. The lane then begins to climb and after a short while we come out to the lych-gate

leading into Penalt churchyard, notice the stepped mount outside the gateway covered with a single block of stone. The church is a small but interesting decorated structure with a saddleback tower. The windows appear to be Tudor insertions. Outside the porch is the base of a stepped cross, and the porch itself contains a mutilated stump. The archway to the outer door is noteworthy, note the deep eaves, and the columns with capitals. On the coping above the porch is an ancient sundial surmounted by a cross. Within the church it is rather dark and very damp, see the green moss upon the floor. There is one aisle which is separated from the nave by an arcade of decorated columns possessing curved capitals of rather



curved out of a single block of wood. The channel possesses a clumsy wooden roof and there are many other features of interest about this church. Behind the church is a middle of the a field, upon

oak tree with a stone seat at its foot. It was formerly the custom during funerals temporarily to deposit the corpse here, whilst the mourners waked the dead with a psalm. The practice is supposed to have been a survival of a druidical ritual. We, however, can take the footpath leading



we have a grand panorama of the fertile Monmouth lies.

MONMOUTH
from Penallt.

from the churchyard, behind a farm and across a field or two to Tray Park woods. The path then steeply descends among the young trees and eventually we come out near, to Tray House, which lies down below. In front hollow in which

Journey no VII

Lisvane - Twn-y-bailey - Pentwn.

Lisvane lies in a rather commanding position on a ridge to the north of Cardiff. It is now virtually a suburb of that great seaport but beyond it there are many miles of unspoilt country with the ridge of Befn On (899 ft) in the background. The parish church stands close to the roadside and is now the only building of any antiquity in the village. It possesses a north transept exhibiting traces of blocked up side windows and a south porch in which is a mutilated tower. The nave is strangely devoid of windows on the north side and at the west end is a large Saxon block tower devoid of ornamentation and very crudely built. There is a pronounced battes carried all-around the building. The porch is connected with the interior by a very small and narrow doorway. Inside, the building is rather bare and featureless, but note (1) the lofty chancel arch (2) deep splay to all windows, (3) tunnel like passages connecting the transept with the chancel (4) square recess in east wall of transept. (5) Small and featureless octagonal font at the west end of the nave. The transept is separated from the main body of the building by a

ie Pentwyn Hill Fort (Castle Field) Lisvane, see page 110.

(686)-(687)

51

HILL-FORTS

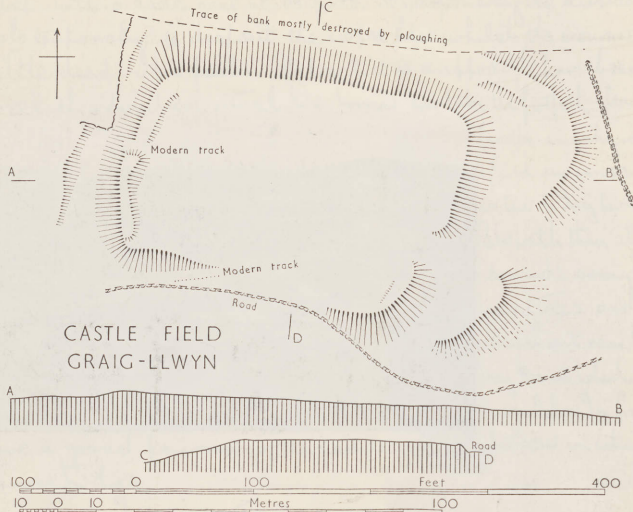


FIG. 26. No. 685.

(685) CASTLE FIELD, GRAIG-LLWYN (Fig. 26). The enclosure occupies the summit of a ridge about 2 km N. of Lisvane at about 100 m above O.D., with extensive views in all directions. It is trapezoidal in plan, 79 m from E. to W. and tapering from 52 m at the E. end to 47 m at the W., with an area of 0.4 ha; the N. and S. sides follow the crests of the steeper slopes on either side of the ridge.

The inner defence, where best preserved at the W. end, consists of a bank and ditch measuring nearly 20 m wide and 1.5 m high overall; slight recent disturbance in removing a superimposed hedge-bank suggests that the bank is mainly of earth, and shows no trace of a stone revetment. On the other sides the ditch is no longer visible, but the bank on the N. is represented by a scarp about 1 m high.

At the E. end there are traces of an outer bank, now very much eroded by former cultivation; the present overall width of the defences here is about 30 m. This bank curves round to continue along the sides, but has been destroyed on the N. by cultivation and on the S. by a modern road. It does not appear at the W. end.

The entrance was near the middle of the E. end; the suggestion of inturns is probably caused merely by the spread of the eroded ramparts.

The site is now pasture, but except at the W. end it has at some time been cultivated, and no traces of internal structures remain.

S. Ib. Trans. Cardiff Nat. Soc., XL (1907), pp. 26 ff.

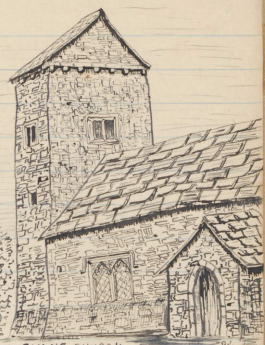
Llanedern.

ST 28 S.W. (2045 8403) 8 vi 67

XXXVII S.E.

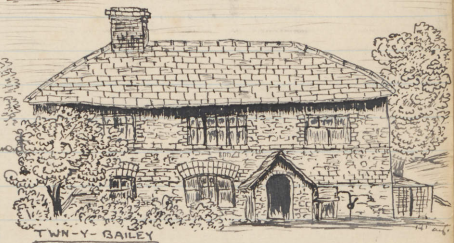
Lisvane lies in a rather common to the north of Cardiff. It is now virtually but beyond it there are many miles of of before On (809 ft) in the background. to the roadside and is now the only hill village. It possesses a north transept window and a south porch in which is a devoid of windows on the north side a S. axial block tower devoid of ornament. There is a pronounced battled carried porch is connected with the interior by a. Inside, the building is rather bare on chancel arch (3) deep splay to all windows, (4) tunnel like hagioscopia connecting the transept with the chancel (4) square recess in east wall of transept. (5) Small and featureless octagonal font at the west end of the nave. The transept is separated from the main body of the building by a

modern oak screen. Turning off down a side road close to the church we descend a steep hill to Bhuich farm where the lane crosses a little brook. The lane then undulates through rich green fields with views over Cardiff to the right and the ridge of Lefalch on the left. After about one mile and a quarter from the church we pass Dwy-y-Bailey house on the right and immediately in front rises the hillock of Pen-twyn crowned by a prehistoric camp and an ancient farmhouse. After passing Dwy-y-Bailey our lane becomes rough and starts climbing eventually

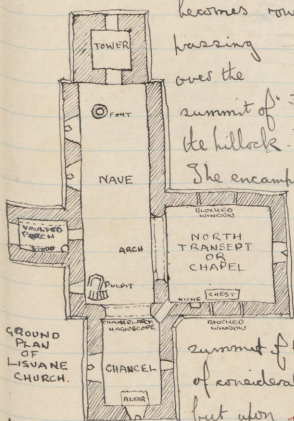


LISVANE CHURCH

passing over the summit of the hillock. The encampment

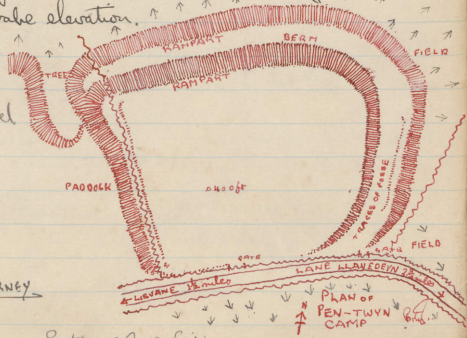


TWN-Y-BAILEY



GROUND PLAN OF LISVANE CHURCH.

consists of an irregular area on the summit of the hill, surrounded in places by two ramparts of considerable elevation.



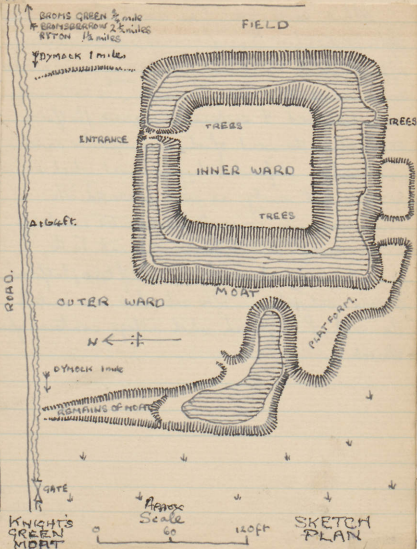
but upon the south the earthworks are practically obliterated. There is however an extensive view in every direction from the camp.



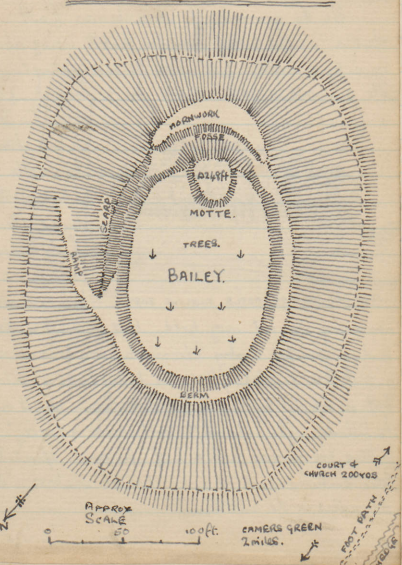
PLAN FOR JOURNEY No VII



Pen-twyn or Castle Field Glang. Ithryn



BROMSBERROW CASTLE.



Note on KNIGHTS GREEN
 Parish of Dymock.
 Gloucestershire
 Jan. 1937.

This earthwork appears to be all that remains of the site of a medieval castle. The site is approximately 1/2 mile S.W. of Dymock. It is a rectangular enclosure with a moat. The inner ward is a square with a tress in the center. The outer ward is a rectangular enclosure with a plant bed in the center. The moat is 10 feet wide and 10 feet deep. The site is surrounded by a field. The site is a good example of a medieval castle.

Note on Bromsberrow Castle
 Parish of Bromsberrow
 Gloucestershire

Within the ground of Bromsberrow Court, N.E. 1/4 of the parish, there is a steep, grassy, rounded natural knoll which was about 100 feet high. The surrounding land has been completely detached, and the knoll now has a summit occupied by a large amount of well grass. This cone of knoll from near site seems to have been chosen for a motte. The castle which once stood on it has disappeared, but the motte is a simple defence to the bailey of a small town. The bailey can be made out in the all-enclosed trees. The bailey lacks any sign of a rampart but is defended by a six feet wide ditch scattered out of the hillside.

Note on

The castle was built on a high point of land. It was a good example of a medieval castle. The site is a good example of a medieval castle. The site is a good example of a medieval castle.

Note on

Only the motte remains. The bailey has been completely detached. The site is a good example of a medieval castle. The site is a good example of a medieval castle.

The site is a good example of a medieval castle. The site is a good example of a medieval castle. The site is a good example of a medieval castle.

Note on CASTLE MORTON CASTLE

Parish of Castle Morton
Worcestershire
Sept 1937.

The interesting but badly mutilated E.W. Hill's castle lies close beyond the eastern side of the Malvern Hills. It would seem to have consisted of four separate baileys, which in total completely surrounded the motte, now much dug into on its N. side. The main bailey appears to be the large rectangular enclosure to the S.W. which was defended by a formidable ditch & rampart that oval to main entrance, but there was also a passway over the now dry ditch into the third bailey on the outer N. side of the castle. There may have been other entrances, but if so, traces of them have now disappeared. A recent road is said to follow the line of the gravel ditch to the W. of the S. No masonry can now be seen above the grass, nor has any been seen or discovered, within the main bailey. It seems to be those of the village (the early castle, possibly one of the later ones) built by the monks, but at a separate point north, this had a M.C. gatehouse.

Note on MATSON CASTLE

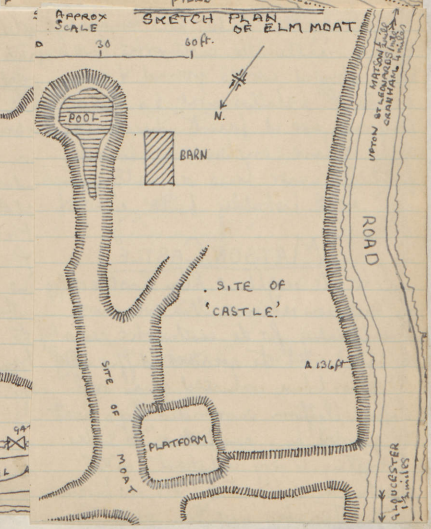
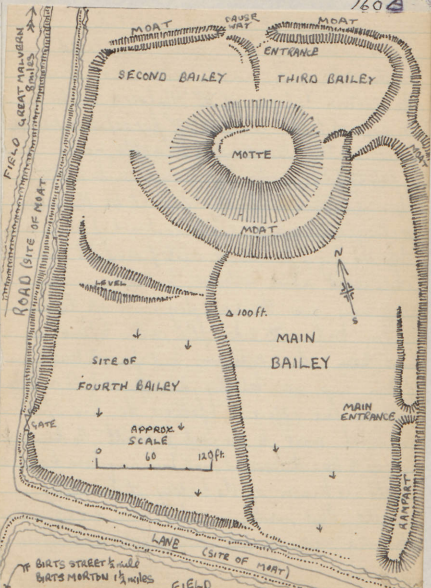
Parish of Matson, Gloucestershire
Sept 1937.

Only the site 'now' remains of this castle (Luenke site in 1900) reported as being built over. In 1937 the E.W. Hill's bailey has been levelled almost flat, but leaving only the outline of the north wall & the moat. The earthwork's could only be traced with the greatest difficulty. There seem to have been a platform oval in plan surrounded by a moat & an ext. rampart or counter-scarp bank on two sides & a moat cut off very in distance. The E.W. seems to have been situated a maximum of 1/2 mile above ground. The remains seem to mark the site of a medieval moat & for a time castle.

Note on Elm Moat

Parish of Matson, Gloucestershire
Sept 1937.

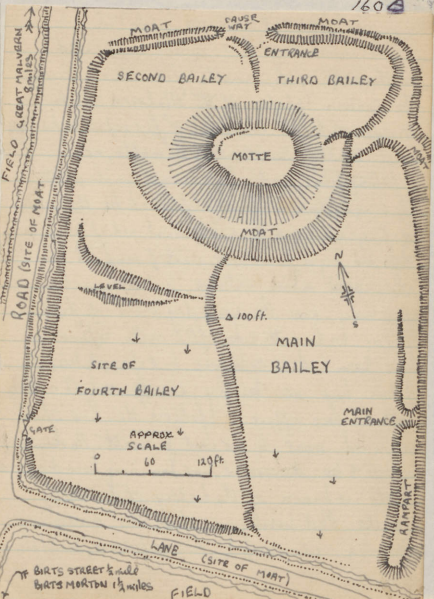
Like those of nearby Matson Castle the E.W.'s are very vague having been subject to over-ploughing. However a little more can possibly be made of them. There is a low rectangular platform with a scarp & ditch on each of its sides & traces of an embankment with what may have been a moat but which it kept seems to be a large natural hollow holding a pool of water. Part of the site is occupied by a barn. Like the site at Matson this site is also believed to be the site of a castle but undoubtedly the remains of a late medieval moat.



NOTE ON CASTLE MORTON CASTLE

Parish of Castle Morton
Worcestershire
Sept 1937.

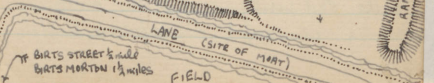
The interesting but badly mutilated E.H. castle lies close by under the eastern slopes of the Malvern hills. It would seem to have consisted of four separate baileys which in total completely surrounded the motte, and much dug into on its N. side. The main bailey appears to be the large rectangular enclosure to the S.W. which was defended by a formidable ditch & rampart. There was the main entrance, but there was also a gateway over the road which led into the third bailey site on the N. side of the castle. There may have been other entrances, but if so, traces of them have now disappeared. A recent road is laid off to follow the line of the original ditch to the S. No masonry can now be seen above the grass, nor has any been seen on this corner, within being masonry walls seems to be those of the castle itself. This early castle, possibly one of the later ones built by the great lord of the Malvern Hills, this was a fine castle.



NOTE ON MATSON CASTLE

Parish of Malvern, Gloucestershire
Sept 1937.

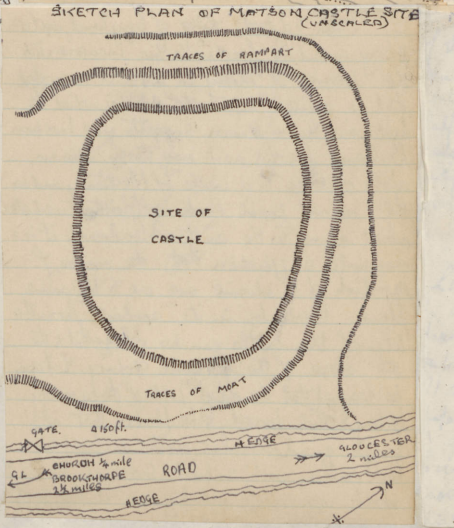
Only the site 'now' remains of this castle (Even the site is not reported as being built over). In 1937 the E.H. building has been levelled & almost flattened out leaving only the outline of masonry of a shallow moat. The earthworks could only be traced with the greatest difficulty. There can be seen a platform oval in plan surrounded by a moat of extra-moat or counter-bank on the S. side, but masonry not very distinct. The E.H. seems to have been situated a maximum of 1/2 W above ground. The remains seem to mark the site of a limestone moat for a fine castle.



NOTE ON ELON HILL

Parish of Malvern, Gloucestershire
Sept 1937.

The trace of nearby Matson Castle the E.H. are very vague having been subject to over-ploughing. However a little more can possibly be made of this plan. There is a low low rectangular platform with a sharp declivity on each of the sides & traces of an enclosure with what may have been a moat but which is kept from being a large natural hollow holding a pool of water. Part of the site is occupied by a barn. Like the site of Malvern this site is also likely to be the site of a castle but it is undoubtably the remains of a fine stone moat.



CHURCH HISTORY

An interesting but badly organized
 collection of old maps. The maps are made
 by various maps of the Malvern hills
 It appears to have consisted of four separate maps
 which are arranged in a series, and
 a latitude and longitude scale with
 the names being placed in the top
 margin, and the north end which was
 marked by a portable north of south line
 indicated by a series of lines, but the names
 being over the top, they are not to be
 used for the north end of the map. The names
 have been also written, but for the most
 part they are badly deciphered. It is
 not to be used to follow the line of the
 original, but to do with it, to be having
 a map to be drawn, not to be used for
 the purpose of the history of the early
 maps. But being one of the best maps
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11th Century Maps

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Other Edward King of England with
 staying in the forest, and the invasion of
 the Normans in 1066 it is noted
 that he visited "Worcester" and
 before the Battle of Brunanburh was between
 Malcolm, King of Scotland, and King
 Canute, King of Denmark, and
 the island forest of Malton, which
 was a mile to the east of Malton, it is
 generally supposed that the north of
 Malton of Malton is on the island
 there. Certainly in the earliest forest
 plan of the castle can be seen in the
 the case of the forest, and it may
 be supposed that the forest of Malton
 was the forest of Malton, but it
 is not certain if it was Malton, but
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