

Llanwnog

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Introduction

The small settlement of Llanwnog is situated on the B4568, 9km west-north-west of Newtown. It has grown up near the base of the slope rising northwards out of the valley of the River Carno. The main road follows the flat ground, but the churchyard lying upslope from it, rises gently. Until recently most of the dwellings in Llanwnog clustered around the church, but new housing is now extending the village up the hill north-eastwards.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanwnog up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and will need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

We have not referenced the sources that have been examined to produce this report, but that information will be available in the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. Numbers in brackets are primary record numbers used in the HER to provide information that is specific to individual sites and features. These can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website (www.archwilio.org.uk).

History of development

The former shape of the churchyard as it is depicted on the mid 19th century tithe map, the location of the church on the edge of a river valley and its dedication point to an early medieval foundation, but as is usually the case with these small *llan* settlements, there is no material evidence to corroborate the assumption. In its early years it was a daughter church of the *clas* foundation at Llandinam.

Llanwnog, sometimes written with a double 'n', is first recorded as *Linwinnauch* in 1195-6, as *Llanwennauc* in c.1216 and *Llanwynnoge* in 1545. The name refers to the church of St Gwnnog, a dedicatee who is also found at Aberhafesp, little more than 5km to the east.

Llanwnog became the centre of an ecclesiastical parish that included Caersws, probably after the Norman Conquest but possibly before, yet nothing is known of its early history or its subsequent development. Similarly its history during the later Middle Ages and early post-medieval era is unknown, and only in the 19th century does it become clearer, with houses grouped around the church (including two buildings now incorporated in the southern half of the churchyard), and the Vicarage and one cottage as outliers.

The heritage to 1750

St Gwnnog's church (7553) is a single-chambered building which was heavily restored in 1863 but contains medieval stonework and dressings arguably of reused Roman sandstone (from Caersws) in its walls. Surviving medieval details include the Perpendicular east window, stained glass of c.1500 that includes an image of St Gwynnog, a font bowl and a

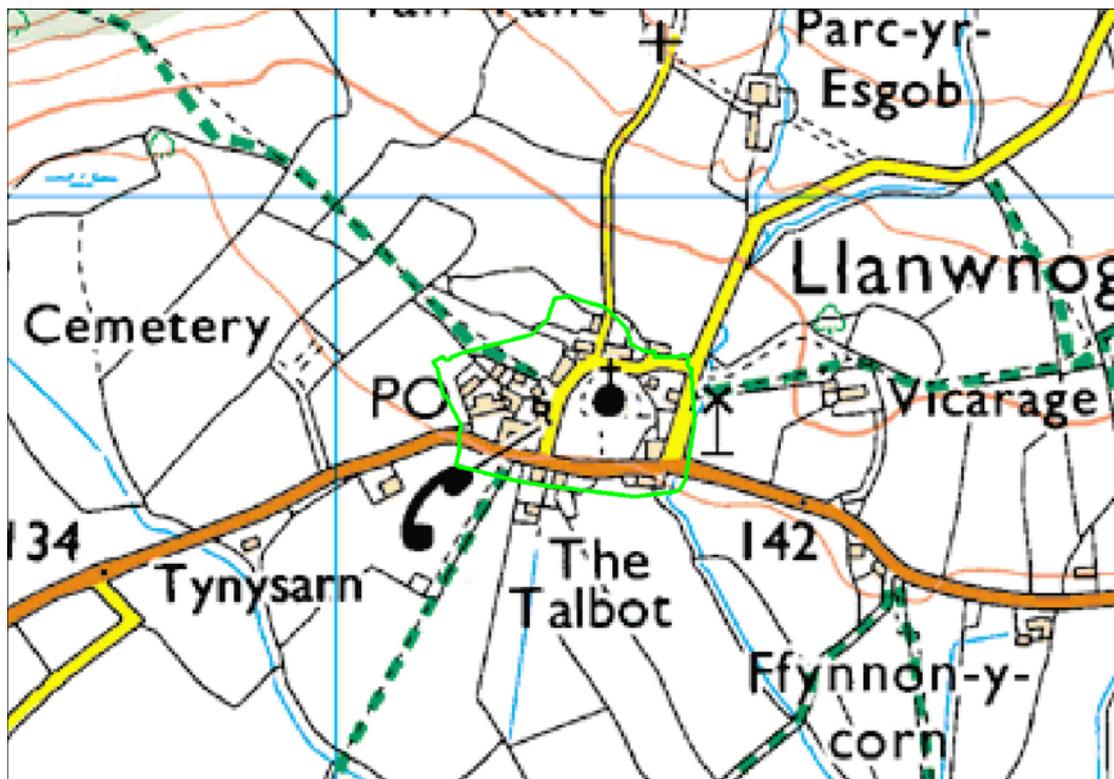
screen and roof loft of about the same date which is claimed to be the best surviving example in Montgomeryshire.

The raised churchyard (7554) has been extended downhill in the last century and a half. The northern side retains its curvilinearity, and the original southern side, slightly curved, is still visible as a high, scarped bank. Yews of a considerable age survive in the churchyard.

There are no obviously pre-Reformation buildings other than the church. Gwyneira (7721) a lobby-entry house on the west side of the churchyard has the date 1664 below a first floor window and is grade II listed.

The road pattern may have undergone only minor modifications in recent centuries. The B4568 following slightly higher ground above the valley of the Severn and then the Carno is almost certainly a medieval and perhaps even an early medieval creation, a valley-edge trackway traceable over long distances, and a good example of a type that is relatively common in eastern Wales. From the north several lanes and footpaths converge on the churchyard, but to the south only a footpath runs southwards towards the river.

No obvious settlement earthworks survive in the vicinity of the church. There are some minor undulations south of the main road, but none is sufficiently distinctive to warrant preservation.



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