

Penegoes

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Penegoes lies on the A489(T) in the extreme west of Montgomeryshire, less than 3km from Machynlleth. Afon Crewi, one of several streams feeding into Afon Dulas, itself a tributary of the Dovey, has created a fairly broad and flat valley. Penegoes church is on the level northern side of the valley with the ground sloping down gently to the stream, 200m away. The church represents the focus of what is now a dispersed settlement. Only a single habitation, Llwyn, adjoins it but others lie off the main road at regular intervals to west and east, and new housing is springing up on the lane leading to the bridging point of the stream. Six hundred metres eastwards, the modern village of Penegoes is expanding where the turnpike road and the old drovers' road separate.

This brief report examines Penegoes's emergence and development up to 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 may 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

It can be assumed on the basis of the British dedication of the church and the form of the oval churchyard that this was an early medieval foundation, although as is often the case there is no substantive evidence to back this up. St Cadfarch was reputedly a 6th century saint and a disciple of the more famous St Illtyd.

Penegoes is first recorded as *Pennegoys* in the early 13th century, and as *Penegoes* in the Norwich Taxation of 1254. Literally this means 'top of the leg' but in a context such as this can be taken to indicate a long, narrow tract of land with a slight bend like a leg, a description that might fit the valley terrace on which the church sits. Occasionally, the church has been termed *Llangadfarch*, but this appears to be an antiquarian conceit, based on the church's dedication, but without an iota of fact to support it.

Nothing is known of the settlement's history, other than that it became the centre of an ecclesiastical parish. It lay beside the main drovers' route from Machynlleth to the English border, and in the 18th century the road was improved by a turnpike trust, but all this is incidental to the development of Penegoes. The dispersed pattern of holdings along the road in the mid-19th century was similar to today though sparser; but an estate map of a century earlier implies that the church was an isolated structure with only mills in the vicinity.

The heritage to 1750

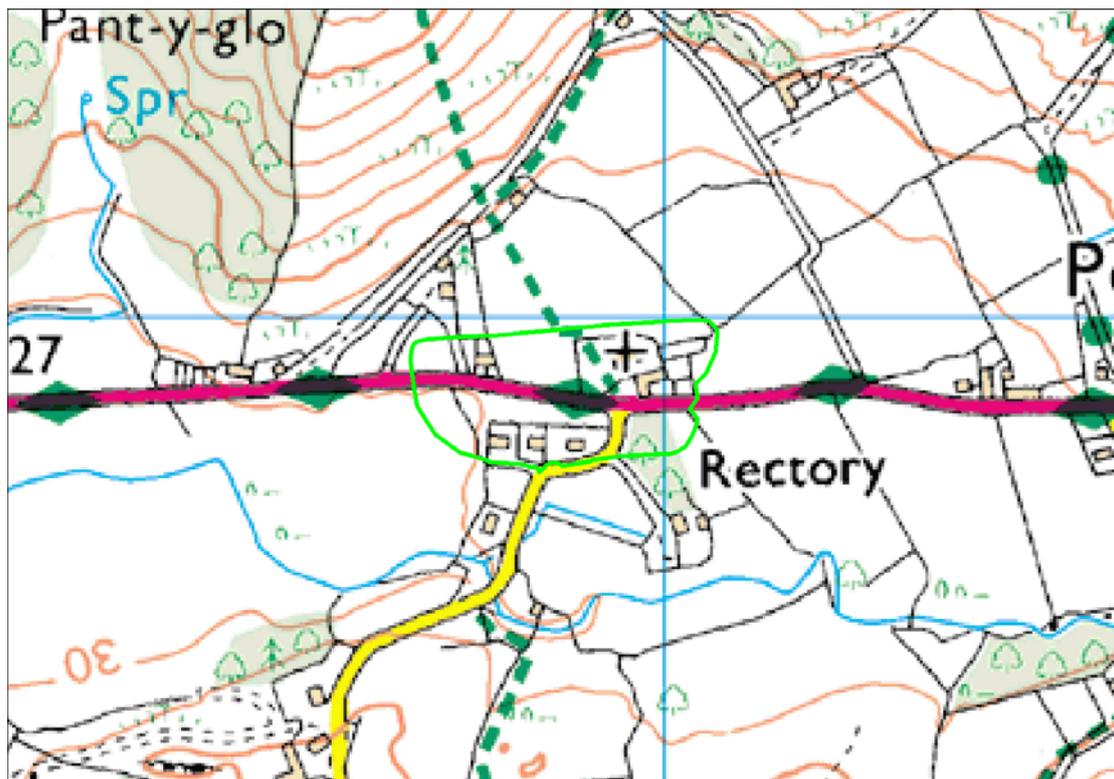
The church is dedicated to an obscure saint, St Cadfarch (7654). The present church was completely rebuilt in 1877, replacing a medieval structure, and few fittings survived the Victorianisation. There is a large stoup (possibly an early font), a bell of 1840 and a couple of pieces of furniture that could be 18th century.

The churchyard adopts an irregular form but has clearly been extended at its west end where the original curvilinear course (7655) can still be detected as a scarp bank amidst the tightly packed graves.

Two adjacent wells on the opposite side of the road to the church are reputed to have had curative properties, as reported by the Royal Commission at the beginning of the 20th century. (Ffynnon Penegoes (5158) is rather anonymous, but Ffynnon Gadfarch (1276) sounds like a more authentic early healing well and was apparently beneficial for rheumatic disorders.

The rectory and its outbuildings are dated to the late 18th or early 19th century and have a Grade II listing (7656). Reputedly they are on the site of an earlier rectory where the landscape painter, Richard Wilson, was born.

Llawr-Penegoes (7657), 250m east of the church, had the now obsolete Grade III listing.



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