

Trelystan

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Introduction

Trelystan lies on the eastern slopes of Long Mountain, very close to Montgomeryshire's border with Shropshire, and approximately 6km south-east of Welshpool. The church is perched below the crest of the ridge on a remote east-facing spur formed by two small valleys converging on Trelystan Dingle. Isolated, the church is the settlement and the nearest habitation is 400m away.

This brief report examines Trelystan'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).



Trelystan Church, photo 2425-0005, © CPAT, 2012

History of development

The recorded history of the church goes back to the early 11th century, but with a curvilinear churchyard enclosure still visible within the present boundary, an even earlier foundation date is likely.

Domesday Book (1086) carries a name *Vlestanesmude* which is linked to this place, and later versions such as *Wolstandusmude* (1274) and even *Wolston Mynde alias Wolstandmynde* (1572) carry the name through into post-Reformation times. *Trelistan* first appears in *c.1570*. The two appear together as *Wolstan myne alias Trelustan* in 1697 and as late as 1836 in *Wolston Mynd or Trelystan*. Place-name specialists see the Welsh term *lystan* developing from the Old English name, *Wulfstan*.

Tradition has it that the church is associated with the Welsh prince, Elstan Glodrudd (*c.1010-1040*), and one of the Welsh genealogical pedigrees has him buried at *Chappell Trest Elistan in Caurslan*, Caus being the local lordship. However the association between the prince and the place has been dismissed as fanciful by at least one authority.

The church apart, the history of the settlement around it is unknown. Indeed at present there is no evidence whatsoever for any dwellings around it, and this may always have been an isolated church.

The heritage to 1750

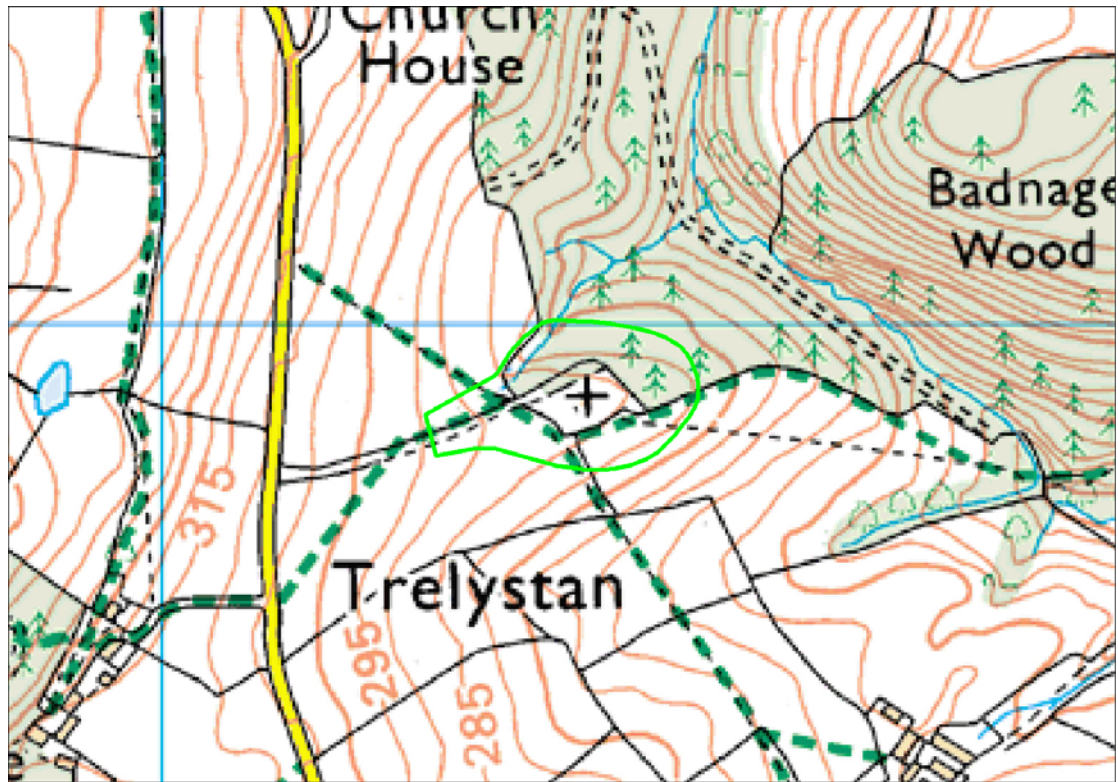
All Saints' church (7736) is unique in Montgomeryshire in that it is timber-built. Of 15th century origin, the single-chamber structure was restored in 1856 when it was encased in brick and timber. Internally there is a heavily restored pre-Reformation screen, an early arch-braced roof, altar rails of the 17th century, and a bell of the 15th century. The church appears to be placed on a slight mound, perhaps the remnants of an earlier building.

The sub-rectangular churchyard encompasses a sub-circular enclosure (4500) showing as a very slight bank. It can reasonably be assumed that this is the line of an early *llan*.

No traces of any settlement earthworks have been recognised in the vicinity of the church.

Ridge and furrow cultivation (4470) has been identified in a field 200m to the south of the church, but its age has not been established.

Early farms where they still exist lie at some distance. The closest, Lower House (32433), is more than 400m to the south-east and is of 18th century construction.



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