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New discoveries of early medieval carved stones in Wales

BY NANCY EDWARDS

Over 570 examples of early medieval inscribed stones, cross-carved stones and more ambitious monuments, such as freestanding crosses and cross-slabs, are now known from Wales and the borders (Edwards 2007; 2013; Redknap and Lewis 2007). This number includes two recent discoveries, an early inscribed stone and a cross-carved stone, from Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog on Anglesey and five new monuments, three cross-carved stones and two small freestanding crosses from west Pembrokeshire. One of these, the cross-carved stone from Roch, has been known for over a decade but I have only recently been made aware of it, whilst another likely example from Trefgarn (Treffgarne) was only recently reported to Dyfed Archaeological Trust. The other three are all from the site of St Patrick's Chapel, Porth Mawr (Whitesands Bay), St Davids.¹ The first two came to light in May 2014, one on the beach below the site having been dislodged as a result of the winter storms of 2013–14, while the other was found during rescue excavations on the seaward side of the chapel (Murphy *et al.* 2014, 12–13, photographs 23–4). A third was discovered during the second season of excavations in May 2015. Unusually, the two excavated examples came from securely stratified archaeological contexts and were associated with graves. The aim of this article is, however, to publish the two monuments from Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog and the two cross-carved stones from Roch and Trefgarn. The three monuments from St Patrick's Chapel will be published separately as part of the forthcoming excavation report. All of them have been designated with county letters and numbers following on from those catalogued in *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales* (Edwards 2007, 37–40; 2013, 139–41).² As in the *Corpus*, the four faces of a monument are referred to in anticlockwise order (*A, B, C, D*).

LLANFIHANGEL YSGEIFIOG, ANGLESEY, INSCRIBED STONE

The presence of an inscription on this stone (Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 7, AN60) was brought to the attention of Gwynedd Archaeological Trust in February 2015 by a member of the public,

Maredudd ap Rheinallt, who noticed it whilst out on a walk. A subsequent visit by Andrew Davidson of Gwynedd Archaeological Trust led him to suggest that the inscription might be early medieval. This was confirmed by the author on a visit in March 2015. The monument (Fig. 1) is located in southern Anglesey, east of Malltraeth Marsh, on gently rising ground at approximately 25m above Ordnance Datum. It is sited on the north side of a track (SH 4755 7341) approximately 330m west of the now ruinous church of St Michael in the parish of Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog. It stands at a crossroads between the well-defined track, which runs broadly east–west at this point, and a footpath running approximately north-east/south-west. Until recently it had been reused as the west gatepost into a field. It is therefore not now *in situ*.

[FIG 1]

The rough, unshaped pillar (Fig. 2) stands to a height of 1.24m above the modern ground surface and tapers slightly from bottom to top with a width of 510 > 350mm and a depth of 200 > 105mm. It is carved from a dark blue-grey schist which weathers to buff grey and has pronounced vertical striations. Both the monument and its inscription are now in poor condition. The top-left corner of the carved face (A, currently facing east) has been partially cut away to adapt the monument to a gatepost and there is still an iron gate-hanger inserted into a hole one third of the way down the visible face. The vertical inscription in two lines below is fragmentary and the letters, which are extremely weathered, have been made less visible by the vertical striations in the stone. Some areas of the stone's surface are also obscured by lichen and moss. The opposite face (C), is not currently visible because of the drystone wall.

[FIG 2]

The fragmentary, roman-letter, Latin inscription is incised in two rather uneven lines using capitals and reading vertically downwards. The inscription may be at least partially reconstructed (Fig. 3) and is shown below using the same conventions as those in *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales* (Edwards 2013, 138). The suggested reading is:

–[OTE]PA
[–I]AC[IT]

[FIG 3]

In line 1 nothing is visible immediately below the gate-hanger since the surface of the stone in this area appears to have been lost in antiquity and is now partially obscured by lichen. The first letter which can be seen appears to be the right half of a smallish O. This is followed by a taller T with traces of two horizontal lines projecting to the right below. The cross-bar of the T and the first of these follow vertical striations in the stone; the second is fainter. It is suggested that this should be identified as ligatured TE; P and A are clear. Line 2 consists of a fragmentary I, A and C are then clear followed by another fragmentary I and the upper part of a fragmentary T. The maximum height of the letters is 85mm but the O is only 50mm. The carving is now too worn to be able to see the incised technique clearly but the fact that the lines of individual letters appear to be quite broad would suggest that they were punched.

This is the fourteenth early medieval inscribed stone to be discovered on Anglesey and (including examples which are no longer extant) brings the total identified in Wales as a whole to 151. The last to be found on Anglesey came to light in 1971 at Arfryn, Bodedern during excavation of an early medieval cemetery (Hedges 2016; Edwards 2013, Bodedern 1, AN1, 143–5). Only one other has been discovered in Wales since, in 2008, at St Tanwg’s Church, Llandanwg, Merioneth (Edwards 2013, MR12, 394–6). Therefore, these monuments are now comparatively rare discoveries.

When the inscribed stone was still in use as a gatepost it is unlikely that the inscription would have been clearly visible because of the position of the gate. The fact that it has, like many others, been preserved by its reuse in this way means that nothing is known about its original context. It is certainly possible that it came from the site of Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog Church nearby (SH 4788 7342), which would indicate an early origin for the site as a place of burial and the churchyard is roughly curvilinear. Nevertheless, there are several later cross-carved stones associated with the church and the form and ornament on these, as well as the St Michael dedication, are indicative of a much later date in the eleventh or twelfth centuries (see below). Equally likely, however, is that it comes from the site of an otherwise unknown early medieval cemetery or that it marked an isolated burial in the vicinity, east of Malltraeth Marsh. The nearest known early medieval cemetery (on a site which also included Bronze Age cremations and a possible Roman shrine) is some distance away at Capel Eithin 1.5 kilometres to the south-east (SH 4900 7270) where the lost inscribed stone commemorating *Devorigi* was located (White and Smith 1999; Edwards 2013, Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 1, AN20, 173–5). However, this seems too far away to be a likely derivation since the monument is large enough to make it quite awkward to transport. In

north Wales as a whole less than half the early medieval inscribed stones are associated with modern church sites (Edwards 2013, 45) and on Anglesey there are only four which definitely have such an association: Llangadwaladr 1, Llangefni 1, Llansadwrn 1, and Penrhosllugwy 1 (Edwards 2013, AN26, AN39, AN45, AN58, 180–3, 197–200, 206–9, 237–9). However, Bodedern 1, Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 1 and Llangefni 2 (Edwards 2013, AN40, 200–2) are clearly associated with early medieval cemeteries which did not later develop into parish churches. The context of the rest is unknown.

Though now very badly damaged, this newly discovered example is a typical size and shape for an early medieval inscribed memorial stone. The lithology has yet to be securely identified but, in keeping with almost all other early inscribed stones in Wales, it is likely to be relatively local (Horák 2013, 38). The appearance of the stone is broadly similar to that of Llangaffo 12 which has been identified by Jana Horák as derived from the local bedrock in the southern part of Anglesey which is underlain by basic and quartz mylonitic schists and mylonites (Edwards 2013, AN38, 194).

The condition of the monument means that the fragmentary letters are only visible in raking light making them very difficult to read. As indicated above, the most likely reading of line 1 is [–]OTEPA. Patrick Sims-Williams (pers. comm.) suggests that this should be reconstructed as the female name, [V]OTEPA, which has a nominative Latin or Brittonic case-ending. This name incorporates the element *godeb* in Welsh meaning ‘refuge’ in the same way as VOTEPORIGIS on Castell Dwyran 1 in Carmarthenshire (Sims-Williams 2003, 54, 347; Edwards 2007, CM3, 205–6). He is also of the opinion that the spelling with medial T and P (for /d/ and /b/) shows familiarity with the British-Latin based system of spelling Welsh, unlike the ogam system seen in the medial B in TEBICATO(S) on the stone at Silchester (Sims-Williams 2003, 54; Fulford *et al.* 2000). Though some of the letters are fragmentary, the surviving part of line 2 is much clearer than line 1 and certainly reads IACIT. Although this may have been preceded by HIC, or the characteristic abbreviation IC, IACIT is sometimes used on its own, as on Dolbenmaen 1, Llangian 1 and Treflys 1 (Edwards 2013, CN17, CN25, CN41, 267–70, 282–4, 311–13). At any rate it is the common Christian Latin *hic iacit* (‘here lies’) formula which indicates that it originally functioned as a grave-marker. The suggested reading is therefore [V]otepa / (*hic*) iacit, ‘Votepa lies here’.

Assuming that the personal name is [V]OTEPA, this would provide a further example of the commemoration of a woman on the inscribed stones. The combination of a female name on its own with the *hic iacit* formula is, however, unusual since women are almost always associated with a named male relative as a daughter (*filia*), wife (*coniunx*, *uxsor*,

mulier) or mother (*mater*) (Edwards 2013, 54). However, there is another probable example of this form on Penmachno 1 where an incomplete female personal name, –ORIA, is combined with an abbreviated (*h*)*ic iacit* formula (Edwards 2013, CN35, 298–300). More generally, the commemoration of women on early medieval inscribed stones is rare in western and northern Britain where they make up less than ten per cent of the total (Edwards 2013, 54), though interestingly in north Wales the addition of this example brings the number of monuments commemorating women up to ten, making them almost twenty per cent of the total in this region.

In addition to the presence of the incomplete *hic iacit* formula, other features support the identification of this inscription as early medieval: the vertical inscription running downwards, the irregular layout of the letters which were not carved with the aid of setting out lines (though some horizontals do appear to take advantage of the natural vertical striations in the stone), and the letter-forms, which are all capitals, with a rather smaller O than the rest. The somewhat sprawling As with sloping bars are a distinctive late Roman letter-form found on other inscribed stones, such as Bodedern 1, Castell Dwyran 1 and Pentrefoelas 1 (D9) (Edwards 2007, 44, fig. 4.6; 2013, 61, fig. 4.6). The slightly irregular curve of the C, a comparatively large letter, is also a common feature (Tedeschi 2005, 68–78; Edwards 2013, 396). Ligatures are likewise characteristic of such inscriptions which have their origins in the Roman period in Britain but become a distinctive feature in the post-Roman period, particularly on the more overtly Christian inscriptions in north Wales, notably Llantrisant 1 on Anglesey (Tedeschi 2001, 17; Edwards 2013, 60–2, fig. 4.7, AN46, 216). However, the TE ligature is rare, since the only other probable example, also in north Wales, was recorded in the mid-nineteenth century on Maentwrog 1 which is now lost (Edwards 2013, MR21, 412–13).

Such inscribed memorial stones, which would have acted as grave-markers and in some instances also functioned as indications of land ownership, were fashionable amongst the elites of western Britain and northern Britain between Hadrian's Wall and the Forth/Clyde line in the period spanning the fifth to mid seventh centuries. However, precise dating is extremely difficult since only Llangadwaladr 1, which is at or close to the end of the series, can be dated with any precision since it commemorates King Cadfan of Gwynedd who died *c.* 625 (Edwards 2013, AN26, 180–3). Otherwise dating is relative and is based on the formulae used, the Celtic phonology of the names, the gradual breakdown of the Latin case-endings and the letter-forms. The Christian Latin formula *hic iacit* was probably introduced into Britain from Gaul during the first half of the fifth century (Edwards 2013, 122–3). As

already noted, on this monument it is not combined with the characteristic *X filius Y* ('X son of Y') or, in this case, a similar formula recording family relationship. The use of such a formula with *hic iacit* may be a later feature (Edwards 2013, 125). Linguistically, the spelling of the suggested name, *Votepa*, may be early but is not specifically so as the presence of –A is not diagnostic (Sims-Williams 2003, 109; pers. comm.). The fact that the inscription is vertical, indicative of the influence of the Irish ogam script, may indicate that it is not amongst the earliest in north Wales but the letter-forms are all capitals suggesting that it is comparatively early in the series (Tedeschi 2001, 24;). Overall a date during the late fifth or early sixth century therefore seems most likely for this monument.

LLANFIHANGEL YSGEIFIOG, ANGLESEY, CROSS-CARVED STONE

Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 8 (AN61) (Fig. 4) was spotted by Frances Lynch in March 2015 during initial inspection of the inscribed stone after it had been reported to Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. It is located very close to the other monument (Fig. 1) and has been reused as the east (left) gatepost into a field on the opposite (south) side of the track (SH 4755 7341). It stands to a height of 1.3m above the modern ground surface and tapers slightly from bottom to top measuring 500 > 400mm in width by 320 > 210mm in depth. The lithology of the stone may be identified as Anglesey arenite, commonly known as 'Anglesey grit', and has large quartz intrusions. The monument is in poor condition since much of the surface in the top-right corner of the west face (A) has been cut away, probably during adaptation for reuse as a gatepost, the upper half is pierced by six gate-hanger holes and the carved cross is now fragmentary. The opposing face (C) is not currently visible because it is obscured by a drystone wall.

[FIG 4]

The stone is a roughly rectangular, shaped, slab which tapers from bottom to top. The only visible carving is on A. The face is framed by an angle roll moulding defined by an incised line which is extant along the left, top left and parts of the lower half of the right side. Surviving parts of the face seem to have been dressed. The entire face is incised in false relief with a fragmentary outline Latin cross. Only the left horizontal cross-arm and the incomplete lower part of the shaft are now extant, though ghosts of the locations of the top and right horizontal cross-arms and possibly the right side of the shaft are also visible.

It may be argued that this cross-carved slab originated from St Michael's Church 330m to the east. The other pieces of sculpture from this site consist of an incomplete cross-head and two definite cross-carved stones, one of which is now incomplete, and a further possible fragment (Edwards 2013, AN21–2, AN24–5, 177–80, 452–3). In the mid-nineteenth century, Harry Longueville Jones noted two further cross-carved grave-slabs which are now lost (Jones 1846, 299, fig.), one of which is likely to have been early medieval and one possibly later (Edwards 2013, AN23, 178–9). However, this monument does not seem to be any of those noted by Jones.

Like the new example, where identifiable, the surviving monuments from Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog Church are all carved from Anglesey Grit. This stone was commonly exploited for freestanding crosses, such as those at Penmon (Edwards 2013, AN51–2, 221–9), and other sculpture carved in relief and false relief from the tenth century onwards, and possibly slightly earlier. During the earlier twelfth century it was also systematically exploited as building stone for Romanesque churches across the island. It was employed for early medieval sculpture not just on Anglesey, where it was widely used, especially in the southern and eastern half of the island, but also as far afield at Bardsey Island in the west and Dyserth in the east (Horák 2013, 38–40, fig. 3.7D; Edwards 2013, 111–13, CN12, F2–3).

This new monument presumably functioned as a grave-marker. Although there is nothing to indicate whether it was originally upright or recumbent, the former seems more likely as the thick slab tapers from bottom to top, not the other way round, and upright monuments seem to have been the norm in Wales. Almost nothing can be said about the form of the cross because it is so fragmentary. However, its general shape, the shape of the slab and the fact that it has been dressed all have some similarity to Penmon 5, which has been art-historically dated to between the ninth and eleventh centuries, though the cross on the latter also has a sunken ring (Edwards 2013, AN55, 234–5). However, the fact that the Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog cross-carved stone has no ring suggests that, like other sculpture from the church, it may be later, perhaps eleventh or the earlier part of the twelfth century. It is important to note that on Anglesey the lack of a sustained Norman intervention in the late eleventh century means that there is no clear break between early and later medieval sculpture except where Romanesque ornament is used making the construction of a relative chronological dating framework all the more difficult.

This cross-carved stone, Roch 1 (P141) (Figs 5, 6), is located at Southwood Farm, Roch, 1.4 kilometres south-west of Newgale in western Pembrokeshire. It is built into the east wall of the west range of the farm buildings facing onto the farmyard (SM 8598 2163). It is located near the centre of the range immediately right of the modern tractor entrance 1.4m above the modern ground surface. The farm was built in 1822 and this range appears to be contemporary with it (Plunkett-Dillon 2003). Unlike the other ranges the walling is made up of a variety of different types of stone, some of which, like the monument, is most likely to have been reused.

[FIG 5]

The stone was first noted in August 2003 when a preliminary archaeological assessment of the estate was carried out after Southwood Farm had been left to the National Trust (Plunkett-Dillon 2003). The presence of ‘medieval carved stones’ is also mentioned in Lloyd *et al.* (2004, 378), though in fact this is the only one known. It was brought to my attention by Sarah Green of the National Trust in January 2015.

The monument is incomplete and now measures a maximum of 270mm in height by 380mm in width; the depth cannot be ascertained because of its position in the wall. It is now in very poor condition. The stone, which has yet to be geologically identified, is a dark grey, slightly purplish sandstone and the carved face is severely laminated; parts of the surface are loose and actively flaking and a small area of the face has been lost since the monument was photographed by the National Trust in 2009. As a result the carved cross on it is fragmentary, the upper cross-arm has been totally destroyed as has the lower part of the left horizontal cross-arm. The surviving carving is mostly very weathered and there are small patches of lichen on the surface of the stone.

The visible face of the monument, which has presumably been cut down for reuse as masonry, is now roughly five-sided in shape. The remains of the cross are concentrated on the lower half of the face. The surviving horizontal cross-arms indicate that it is an outline cross with triangular, expanded arms surrounded by perimeter mouldings and traces of the top of the shaft can be detected at the bottom. The carving is in false rounded relief (maximum depth 10mm) with several punch-marks still visible along the bottom of the right horizontal cross-arm. There is also the remains of a drilled hole in the centre of the cross-head.

[FIG 6]

Although fragmentary, sufficient survives to identify the monument as a cross-carved stone which most likely originally functioned as a grave-marker or focus within an early medieval cemetery, though a way-marker or marker of ecclesiastical land are also possible (Edwards 2007, 56–60). It has been preserved because it was reused as an attractive piece of masonry in the construction of the farm building. As a result its original provenance is unknown. However, at the time of the 2003 estate survey, the farm tenant, Mr Mervyn Rees, who had long-term family connections with the estate (Louise Lane, pers. comm.), was of the opinion that it had been removed from the site of an old church at Bathesland, some 800m south-east of Southwood Farm (SM 8650 2104). This is located on Church Hill and the site of the old church is marked on the 1890s Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 5); it is also noted in the Royal Commission’s Pembrokeshire inventory (RCAHMW 1925, 312, no. 906). An aerial photograph taken by the Royal Commission in 2004 reveals a complex set of earthworks which include a roughly oval enclosure and a possible rectangular platform immediately to the east of it.³ The site of a holy well,⁴ now lost, was also noted by the Royal Commission (RCAHMW 1925, 312, no. 906) 500m to the south-east and is preserved in a house-name on the 1890s Ordnance Survey map. In the Cadw-funded Welsh Archaeological Trusts *Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Sites Project*, the Church Hill site was categorized as grade D (the lowest on the scale), but nevertheless one with possible early medieval origins (Ludlow 2003^{[NE1][b2]}, PRN 2086).

The site of an old chapel is also shown on the 1890s Ordnance Survey map above Newgale Sands 1 kilometre south-west of Southwood Farm (SM 8537 2090). Although the name is still preserved in an adjacent farm, nothing survives above ground but, in the early nineteenth century, ruins of a rectangular building were still visible (RCAHMW 1925, 312, no. 904).⁵ However, the chapel was dedicated to St Caradog (d. 1124) and marks the spot where Gerald of Wales records a miracle during the transportation of his body for burial at St Davids (Thorpe 1978, 145; Pryce 2008). This site is, therefore, unlikely to be the origin of the cross-carved stone since the evidence suggests that it is twelfth century or later in date and no early medieval associations are known. Likewise, the parish church of St Mary’s, in the village of Roch, 2.3 kilometres east-south-east of Southwood Farm, is located adjacent to the castle and there is no evidence for early medieval activity (Ludlow 2003, ^[NE3]PRN 7565).

The form of the fragmentary outline Latin cross may be compared with some other examples in Pembrokeshire where cross-carved stones are common (Edwards 2007, fig. 7.5). The closest parallels are with two monuments in the Gwaun valley of northern Pembrokeshire: Llanychlwydog 2, which has perimeter mouldings and an encircled boss in

the centre of the cross-head, and Pontfaen 1, which has expanded arms and a central roundel composed of three concentric circles (Edwards 2007, P52, P86, 367–8, 423). Both monuments are dated on art-historical grounds on the basis of their outline cross-shape and the use of false relief to between the ninth and eleventh centuries and that from Roch is most likely to be of a similar date. For the most part such cross-carved stones are found singly or in small groups associated with obscure sites, the majority but not all of which later become parish churches (Edwards 2007, 117).

TREFGARN, PEMBROKESHIRE, CROSS-CARVED STONE

Trefgarn 1 (P142) (Fig. 7) was found in *c.* 2012 by Mike Sauro and his father Giuseppe whilst they were digging a gatepost hole on the west side of the bridleway adjacent to Mountain View (SM 9566 2738), approximately 85m north of St Michael's Church, Trefgarn. Several large sherds of North Devon gravel-tempered ware pancheons made in Barnstable during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (pers. comm. Ken Murphy) were found in the same hole. The stone was recently brought to the attention of Dyfed Archaeological Trust and will be donated to National Museum Wales.

The monument is now incomplete and consists of a smooth boulder rounded by fluvial or glacial activity. Jana Horák has examined the stone and has identified it as a quartz-rich sandstone, with a quartz cement which obscures the primary texture. This is most likely of Lower Palaeozoic origin but clearly is not extracted from bedrock. The boulder is comparatively small with a maximum height of 200mm, a maximum width of 160mm and a depth of 50mm. The bottom is now missing, as is much of one of the broad faces (*C*). However, the surviving part of the other broad face (*A*) is in good condition and the carving on it is unworn. The face is incised with a simple, linear Latin cross 115mm high. It is quite deeply cut with a knife using thin lines which narrow towards the cross-arm terminals.

[FIG 7]

There will always be some uncertainty as to whether this cross-carved stone is of early medieval date both because of its simplicity and the fact that it was discovered in a redeposited context associated with post-medieval pottery. Nevertheless this remains the most likely interpretation. This is suggested by the type of monument and the simple cross-form. As already noted early medieval cross-carved stones are very common in Pembrokeshire, especially along the northern coast and in the vicinity of St Davids (Edwards

2007, 56, fig. 6.1). Several are made from smooth rounded boulders with a similar appearance to Trefgarn 1. These monuments were either found at St Davids itself or are stylistically associated with the sculpture there (Edwards 2007, 86, St Davids 2–6, P93–5, St Edrins 2–4, P123–5, St Ismaels 3, P130 and Walton West 1, P139). The best comparison is provided by the simple linear Latin cross on face *C* of St Davids 4, though this is more deeply cut using a punch. It also has an outline Latin cross with an alpha and omega and the sacred monograms IHC and XPC (‘Jesus Christ’) carved on the opposite face, features also found on several other cross-carved stones in this group. Face *C* on Trefgarn 1 has been lost and it is therefore not known whether it was carved. Whilst most of the linear crosses on cross-carved stones in south-west Wales have additional features, such as bar terminals or rings (Edwards 2007, figs 7.1–7.3), there are a handful of other examples with simple linear Latin crosses including Penally 4, St Ismaels 4, which was found probably reused as a lintel on a long-cist grave, and an old find from St Patrick’s Chapel, St Davids (Edwards 2007, P85, P101, P131, 422, 488–9, 520–1). The cross on Trefgarn 1 is very competently executed and, though the use of either a punch or chisel is much more common, a knife is sometimes employed elsewhere, as on two of the stones from St Patrick’s Chapel, St Davids (P101, P145) and for three inscriptions in Merioneth: Llandanwg 3, Llandecwyn 1 (which also has a linear cross) and Trawsfynydd 1 (Edwards 2013, MR12, MR15, MR22, 394–6, 399–403, 414–16), though the execution in each instance is less precise.

As already indicated the original context of this monument is not recoverable and its size means that it is relatively portable. The fact that it came to light so close to the parish church of St Michael (SM 9569 2369) might suggest it originated there. The church is first mentioned in the *Taxatio* of Pope Nicholas IV in 1291, though there is no evidence for an early medieval origin.⁶ An alternative might be Little Trefgarn, which was briefly settled by a Cistercian community from 1144, but it has been suggested that there was an earlier foundation on the site (Ludlow 2003, PRN 2405) and an inscribed stone was found in the vicinity (Edwards 2007, St Dogwells 1, P119). However, this is unlikely since, though only 1.65 kilometres to the north-east, it is located on the opposite, eastern side of the Cleddau Wen at the point where the river flows through the Trefgarn gorge.

Despite the continuing uncertainties, if it is accepted that the Trefgarn cross-carved stone is early medieval, the simplicity of the cross-form makes it extremely difficult to date more closely. Nevertheless I have argued that most anonymous cross-carved stones with linear incised crosses date to between the seventh to ninth centuries (Edwards 2007, 116–17). In Pembrokeshire this has been supported by a radiocarbon date from Great Castle Head,

Longoar Bay, where St Ismaels 4 was excavated; an adjacent burial was dated to cal. AD 680–780 (95% probability; Edwards 2007, 489). The size and shape of the Trefgarn stone also make it likely that it functioned as a grave-marker.

CONCLUSION

Discoveries of inscribed stones, such as Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 7, dating between the fifth and mid-seventh centuries are now comparatively rare, which makes them and the interpretation of their inscriptions all the more significant. In contrast, discoveries of simple cross-carved stones, such as Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 8, Roch 1 and Trefgarn 1, which begin around the time that inscribed stones cease to be produced and continue into the twelfth century in some parts of Wales, though much more common, are nonetheless important evidence for the development of the early medieval church in Wales.

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NOTES

1. Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Historic Environment Record (DAT HER), PRN 46864, available online on *Archwilio* <<http://www.cofiadurcahcymru.org.uk/arch/>>. [NE4]

2. These are: Anglesey, AN60 Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 7 (early inscribed stone), AN61 Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 8 (cross-carved stone); Pembrokeshire, P141 Roch 1 (cross-carved stone); P142 Trefgarn 1 (cross-carved stone); P143 St Davids 21 (St Patrick's Chapel) (small freestanding cross), P144 St Davids 22 (St Patrick's Chapel) (small freestanding cross), P145 St Davids 23 (St Patrick's Chapel) (cross-carved stone).
3. RCAHMW, National Monuments Record, NPRN 304435, available online on *Coflein*, <<http://www.coflein.gov.uk/>>, cat. no. C117611, file ref. D12006_0600, accessed 28 May 2015.
4. Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Historic Environment Record (DAT HER), PRN 2807, available online on *Archwilio* <<http://www.cofiadurcahcymru.org.uk/arch/>>.
5. DAT HER, PRN 2808.
6. DAT HER, PRN 4582.

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[CAPTIONS FOR FIGURES]

Fig. 1. Locations of the inscribed stone and cross-carved stone at Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog, Anglesey. © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2015. Ordnance Survey (Digimap Licence).

Fig. 2. Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 7, Anglesey, inscribed stone. *Photograph: author.*

Fig. 3. Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 7, Anglesey, inscribed stone, drawing showing the surviving letters of the inscription. © *Crown copyright: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales.*

Fig. 4 Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 8, Anglesey, cross-carved stone. *Photograph: author.*

Fig. 5. Location of the cross-carved stone Roch 1, Pembrokeshire, with other relevant sites in the vicinity shown on the 1890s Ordnance Survey map. © *Crown Copyright and Database Right 2015. Ordnance Survey (Digimap Licence).*

Fig. 6. Roch 1 cross-carved stone, Pembrokeshire. *Photograph: author.*

Fig. 7. Trefgarn 1 cross-carved stone, Pembrokeshire. *Photograph: author.*

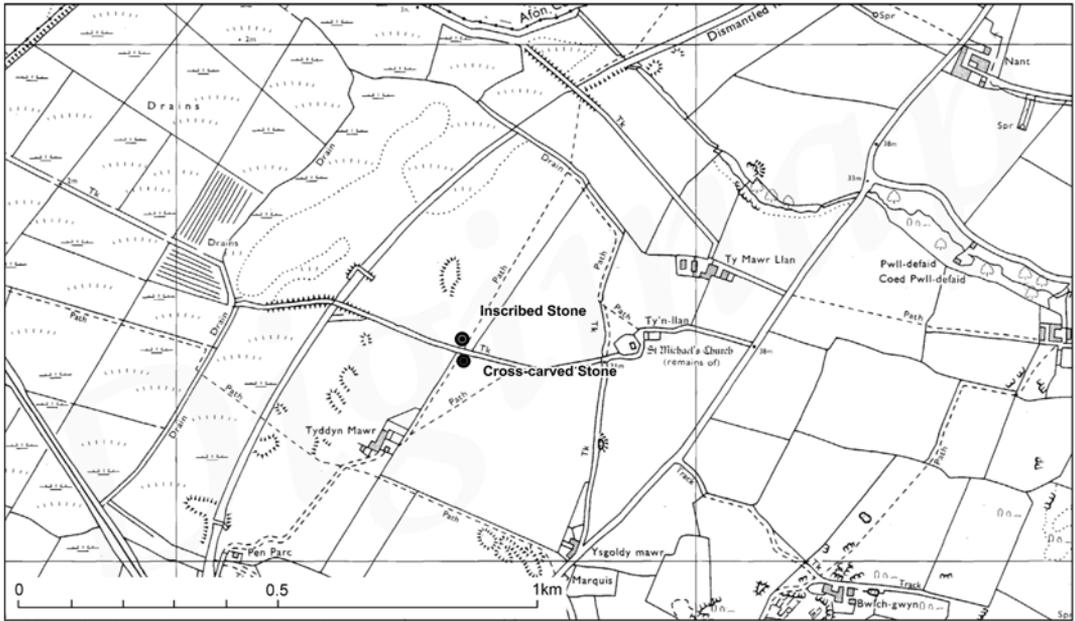


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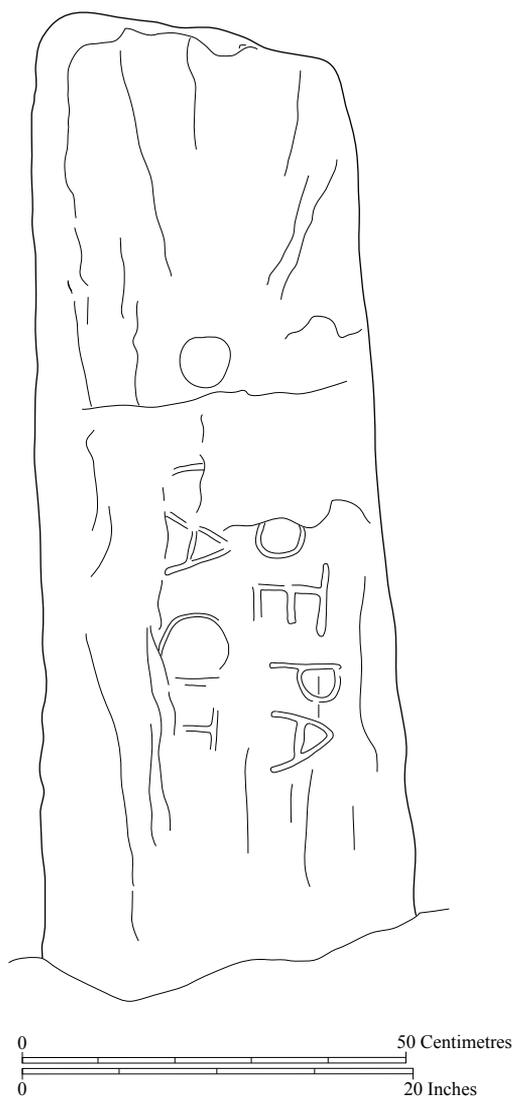


Fig. 3. Llanfihangel Ysgeifiog 7, inscribed stone, drawing showing the surviving letters of the inscription. © Crown copyright: Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales.

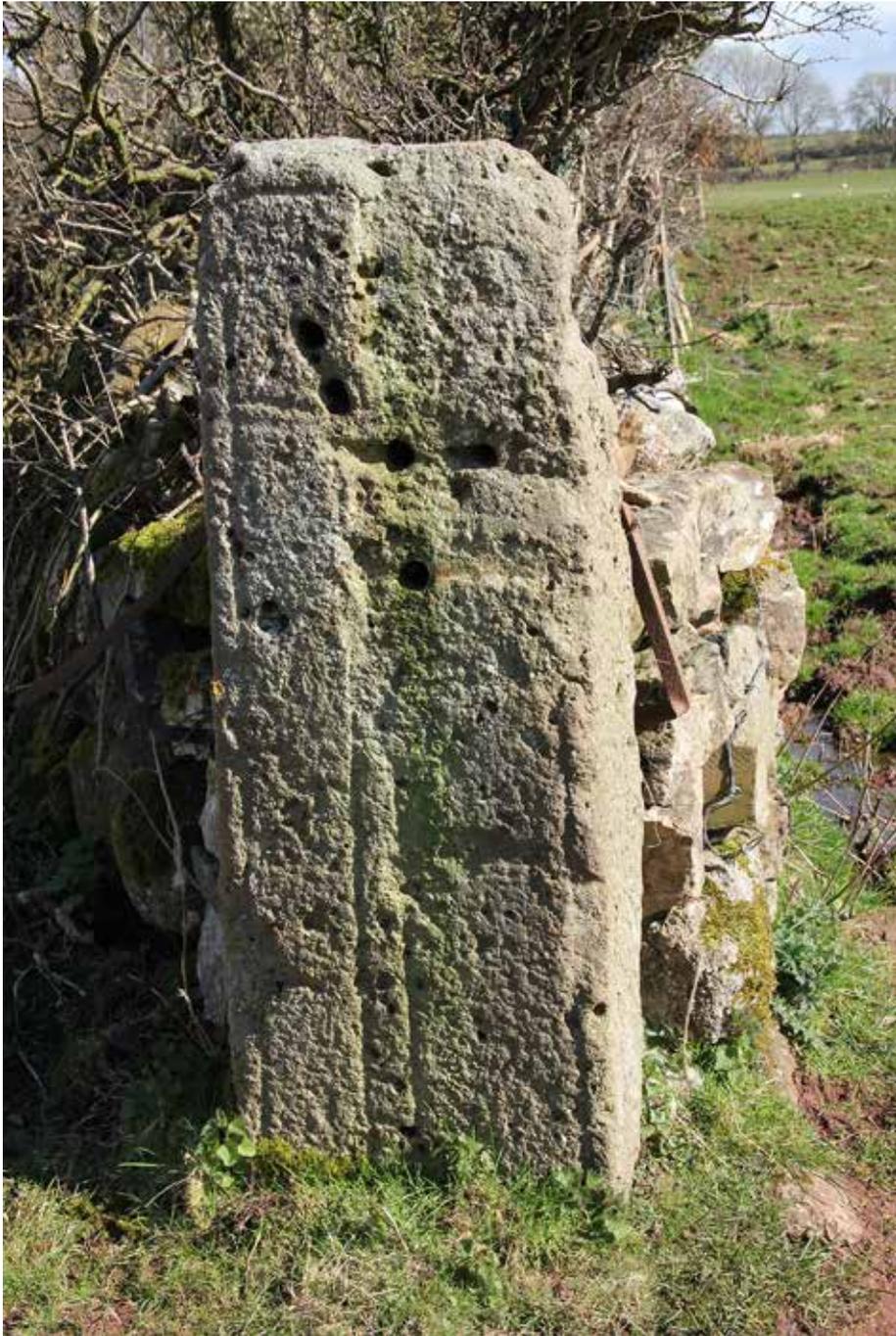


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