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## DOLGOCH FARM

TIR GOFAL

SITE VISIT

Report No. 2001/18  
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Report Prepared for:  
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CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

REPORT NO.2001/18

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By

Anwen Cooper

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This report has been prepared by Anwen Cooper

Position Project Officer

Signature .....  ..... Date 26/02/01 .....

This report has been checked and approved by Louise Austin on behalf of Cambria Archaeology,  
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position Principal Archaeological Officer (Curatorial)

Signature Louise Aust ..... Date 27/02/01 .....

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have  
on the content or presentation of this report

## **Dolgoch Farm (SN 3173 4466)**

### **Historic Background**

Dolgoch Farm lies on the banks of the Afon Ceri, about 1km to the southwest of Brongest in Ceredigion. The farm was visited to assess the historic significance of a waterwheel which the owners plan to restore as part of their Tir Gofal Agreement.

The farm is mentioned in several historic texts and was clearly a place of historic significance. According to various sources, the poet Dafydd ap Gwilym resided at Dolgoch and held a great Eisteddford in about 1360. Horsfall Turner in his 'Wanderings through South Wales' (date unknown), describes *"In the vale of Troedyr, in the nook below the parish church, the modern farmhouse of Dolgoch retains the name and inherits the woodland environment of an ancient homeland. The mansion of Dolgoch carries us backwards in recorded events to the days of the Plantagenet Kings, when this palace and that of Cryngae across the Tivy vale were in the possession of a descendent of Ednyfed Fychan of Penmynydd, Ynys Mon, Llewelyn ap Gwilym Fychan, Constble of Castle Emlyn, at his residence of Dolgoch. Llewelyn, in his days of peace held an Eisteddfodd...."* At one time, Dolgoch was also occupied by Dr Morgan, a physician of some repute, who served with the literary John Morgan MD, author of 'An Advertisory Sketch of Pethagovas' (Jones, 2000).

Historic map evidence, shows that at the time of the tithe survey in 1841, the farm consisted of four detached buildings, arranged irregularly around a central farmyard. The watermill was not depicted on this map nor mentioned in the tithe apportionment that accompanied the survey. By the time of the first edition OS map of 1891, the watermill was established, suggesting that it is of at least late nineteenth century date.

### **Description of the watermill (PRN 42300)**

The watermill at Dolgoch consists of a possible weir, a head race which slopes gently southeastwards from the Afon Medeni; a waterwheel situated just to the southwest of the farmyard and a tail race, running for a short distance directly from the wheel into the Afon Medeni to the west.

A substantial head race (c.1m wide) leaves the Afon Medeni approximately 250m to the northwest of the waterwheel (plate 1) and slopes gently downwards from northwest to southeast. Several large slabs of stone in the river at this point suggest a weir may once have been located here although no obvious structure remains. The leat is cut directly into the natural clay for most of its length although the owner remembers that it is lined with stone for the section immediately to the north of the waterwheel. It no longer holds water although the owner remembers that it ran until about thirty years ago. It lies in an area of dense deciduous woodland to the east of the Afon Medeni and is silted up, overgrown and infilled with fallen leaves (plate 2). It runs beneath a trackway just to the west of the farm and from that point onwards runs on a raised platform which is defined to the west by a rubble wall. This wall stands to a height of c.0.6m and is overgrown with ivy and young trees (plate 3).

The remains of a cast iron overshot water wheel lie to the southwest of the farmyard in an overgrown wheelpit (c. 3m by 1m by 1.5m deep) (plate 4). A short tail race runs directly westwards from the waterwheel in an underground leat, the position of which is marked by a shallow linear depression in the pasture field through which it passes. This leat resurfaces from the hillslope into the Afon Medeni to the west about 20m from the site of the waterwheel. The position of its return to the Afon Medeni is marked by an area of residual water and loose rubble (presumably from the collapsed leat) alongside the river bank (plate 5).

### **Management recommendations**

The owners would like to restore the watermill and use it for the generation of electricity on the farm as part of their Tir Gofal Agreement. This is an admirable plan, which is in keeping with the historic use of the feature and will promote its maintenance and use. The owners should seek advice from an architectural conservationist for the restoration of the watermill (see list enclosed). Ideally, the head race should be cleared of intrusive vegetation and infill and restored as an open channel. The stone-lined launder immediately to the north of the waterwheel and any original fittings should be retained. The rubble wall alongside the raised platform should be consolidated and cleared of intrusive vegetation. The tail race to the west of the wheel may need to be re-excavated and replaced, since it is apparently no longer functional. If possible, the original stone(?) leat should be retained. An archaeological record should be made of the restoration programme.

### **Sources**

#### **Map**

Tithe survey and apportionment, <sup>Tredyfan</sup> Llandgwydd Parish, <sup>1840</sup> ~~1841~~—  
Ordnance Survey 1st edition map, 1891, Cards. Sheet XXXIXSW/NW, 1:10560 scale  
Ordnance Survey, 2nd edition map, 1906, Cards. Sheet XXXIXSW/NW, 1:10560 scale

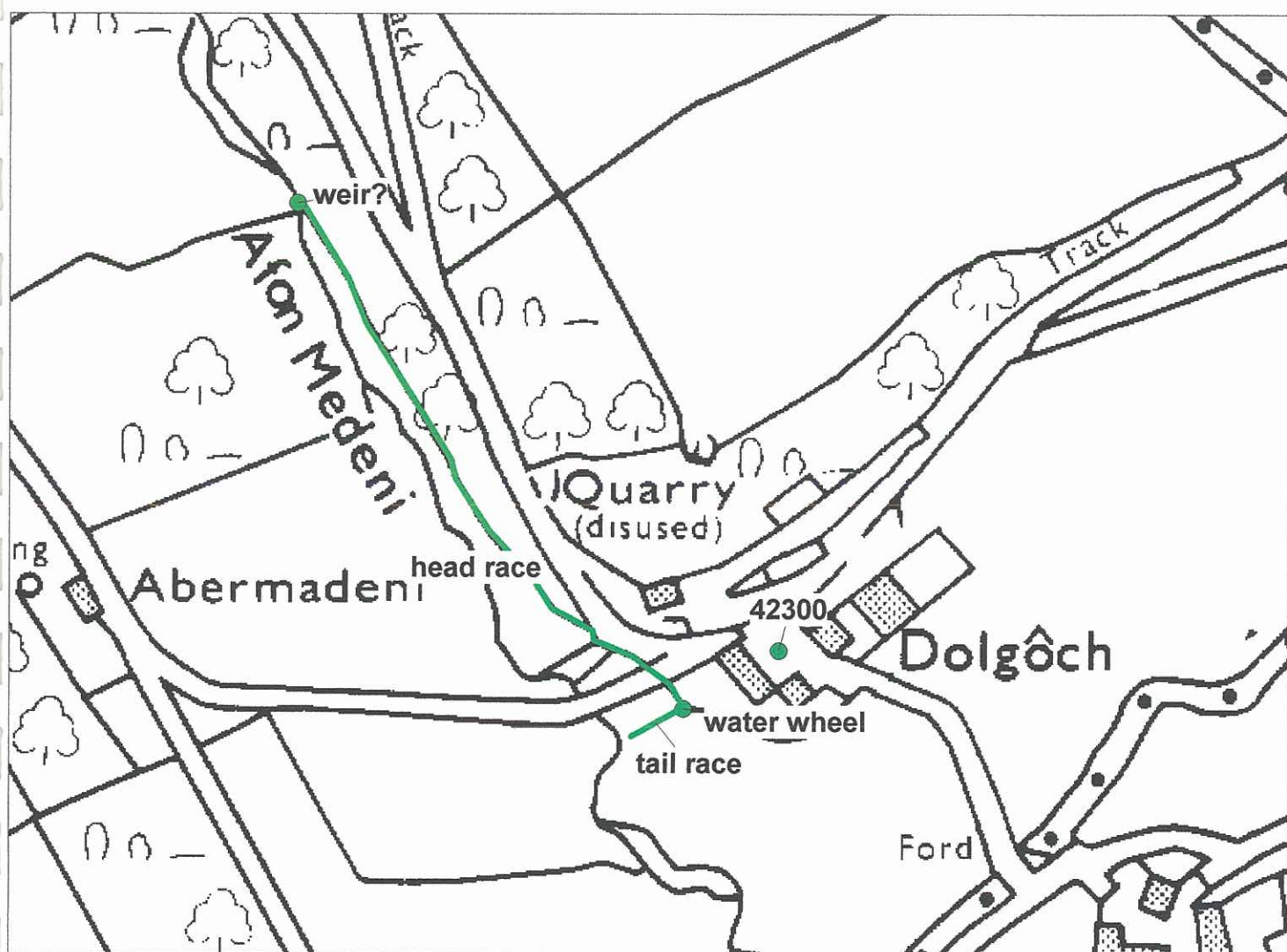
#### **Written Description**

Jones, F (2000) *Historic Cardiganshire Homes And Their Families*. Brawdy Books, Newport.

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Scale 1:2500

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## Plates



Plate 1 - possible site of weir and the head race as it leaves the Afon Medeni.



Plate 2 - the head race where it runs through woodland to the north of the waterwheel.





Plate 3 - the overgrown wall alongside the raised platform immediately to the north of the waterwheel.



Plate 4 - the overgrown overshoot waterwheel and wheelpit.





Plate 5 - the tail race where it resurfaces from the hillslope into the Afon Medeni, to the west of the waterwheel.

## **Tir Gofal list of contact numbers for building conservation**

The following organisations may be able to provide further information or advice to assist with the conservation and restoration of buildings of historic interest:

**St Fagans, Welsh Rural Life Museum** - can provide up to date information and advice about contractors and suppliers that deal with traditional buildings and materials.

Contact: Gerallt Nash, tel. (02920) 573445

**Ty Mawr Lime Ltd.** - suppliers and manufacturers of traditional and natural building materials as well as providing advice, support and training about the use of lime products and other natural building materials for mortars, plasters, renders and paints.

Contact: Nigel and Joyce Gervis, Ty Mawr Lime Limited, Ty Mawr Farm, Llangasty, Brecon, Powys, LD3 7PJ, tel. (01874) 658249, e-mail: [tymawr@lime.org.uk](mailto:tymawr@lime.org.uk)

**Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings** - a nationwide organisation providing publications and advice about architectural conservation.

Contact: Philippa Soodeen, 40 Woodville Road, Mumbles, Swansea, SA3 4AE, tel. (01792) 526337 or e-mail: [info@spab.org.uk](mailto:info@spab.org.uk)

**South Pembrokeshire partnership for Action in Rural Communities (SPARC)** - provide advice about the restoration of historic farm buildings and information about local building contractors that specialise in traditional methods of restoration.

Contact: Richard Tree (Heritage Officer), tel. (01834) 860965

**Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW)** - provide detailed archaeological and architectural advice about buildings of historic interest in Wales.

Contact: Crown Building, Plas Crug, Aberystwyth, Dyfed, SY23 1NJ  
tel. (01437) 720861, [www.rcahmw.org.uk/wms](http://www.rcahmw.org.uk/wms)

**Local Authority Buildings Conservation Officers** - provide advice and information about buildings of historic interest, in particular Listed Buildings.

**Carmarthenshire (01267) 234567**

Contact: David Priest (Head of Conservation), John Llewelyn, Adrian Griffiths

**Pembrokeshire (01437) 764551 ext no. 5720**

Contact: Ian Bartlet

**Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (01437) 764636**

Contact: Rob Scourfield

**CADW (general enquiries)** - provide information about the maintenance and restoration of Listed Buildings.

(02920) 500200

**Melin (Welsh Mills Society)** - offers information sheets and practical advice about the recording and conservation of mills.

Contact: Hilary Malaws, Y Felin, Tynygraig, Ystrad Meurig, Ceredigion, Wales, SY25 6AE, tel. (01437) 720861, [www.rcahmw.org.uk/wms](http://www.rcahmw.org.uk/wms)

**Centre for Alternative Technology, Machynlleth** - provide advice about organisations that specialise in the restoration of historic mills. They also provide their own consultancy service.  
(01654) 705989

**British Hydropower Association, Cheshire** - services include consultancy, feasibility studies, refurbishment and repairs of watermills.  
tel.(0161) 4409196, [www.brit-hydro.cwc.net](http://www.brit-hydro.cwc.net)

**Dorothea Relations, Bristol** - specialise in the refurbishment of watermills and run a nationwide service.  
Contact: G.J.O Wallis, Unit 6, Riverside Business Park, St Annes Road, Bristol BS4 ED, tel. (01179) 715337, [www.dorothearest.co.uk](http://www.dorothearest.co.uk)

**Heritage Engineering, Glasgow** - specialise in the recovery, restoration and/or replication of water-powered machinery.  
Contact: J.S. Mitchell, 22 Carmyle Avenue, Glasgow G32 8HJ, tel (01417) 630007