

THE CRYPT, HAVERFORDWEST, PEMBROKESHIRE

BUILDING RECORDING AND CONDITION SURVEY, MAY 2005



General view of The Crypt from northwest

Paratowyd gan Archaeoleg
Cambria
Ar gyfer Acanthus Holden
Prepared by Cambria
Archaeology
For Acanthus Holden



A R C H A E O L E G
CAMBRIA
A R C H A E O L O G Y

ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2005/60
RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 54424
Mai 2005
May 2005

THE CRYPT, HAVERFORDWEST, PEMBROKESHIRE BUILDING RECORDING AND CONDITION SURVEY, MAY 2005

Gan / By

Neil Ludlow

*Archaeoleg Cambria yw enw marchnata Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyfyngedig.
Cambria Archaeology is the marketing name of the Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited.*

*Paratowyd yr adroddiad yma at ddefnydd y cwsmer yn unig. Ni dderbynnir cyfrifoldeb gan Ymddiriedolaeth
Archaeolegol Dyfed am ei ddefnyddio gan unrhyw berson na phersonau eraill a fydd yn ei ddarllen neu ddibynnu ar y
gwybodaeth y mae'n ei gynnwys*

*The report has been prepared for the specific use of the client. The Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd can accept no
responsibility for its use by any other person or persons who may read it or rely on the information it contains.*

ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA
Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir
Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133
Ebost: cambria@cambria.org.uk
Gwefan: www.cambria.org.uk

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo,
Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133
Email: cambria@cambria.org.uk
Website: www.cambria.org.uk

Cwmni cyfyngedig (1198990) ynghyd ag elusen gofrestredig (504616) yw'r Ymddiriedolaeth. The Trust is both a Limited Company (No. 1198990) and a
Registered Charity (No. 504616)

CADEIRYDD CHAIRMAN: C R MUSSON MBE B Arch FSA MIFA. CYFARWYDDWR DIRECTOR: E G HUGHES BA FSA MIFA

**THE CRYPT, HAVERFORDWEST, PEMBROKESHIRE
BUILDING RECORDING AND CONDITION SURVEY,
MAY 2005**

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2005/60

**Mai 2005
May 2005**

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by Neil
Ludlow

Swydd / Position: Project Manager

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
This report has been checked and approved by

Ken Murphy

ar ran Archaeoleg Cambria, Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.
on behalf of Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: Principal Archaeologist - Field Services

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date

Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw
sylwadau sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

*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*

THE CRYPT, HAVERFORDWEST, PEMBROKESHIRE
BUILDING RECORDING AND CONDITION SURVEY,
MAY 2005

Project Record No. 54424

Contents

1.0	Summary	3
2.0	Introduction	4
2.1	Project proposals	4
2.2	Site description	4
2.3	Aims and objectives	6
3.0	Methodologies and results	7
3.1	Methodologies	7
3.2	Results	7
	3.2.1 Detailed description	7
	3.2.2 Condition	8
4.0	Conclusion and recommendations	9
5.0	Archive deposition	10
6.0	Acknowledgements	10
7.0	References	10

Figures

Fig. 1	Location plan	4
--------	---------------	---

Photographs

Photo 1	General view of The Crypt from northeast	11
Photo 2	General view of The Crypt from northwest	11
Photo 3	General view of The Crypt from southwest	12
Photo 4	General view of The Crypt from southeast	12

Drawings

Floor plan	
Vault plan	
Title sheet of vault plan	
West wall elevation	
East wall elevation	
North wall elevation	
South wall elevation	

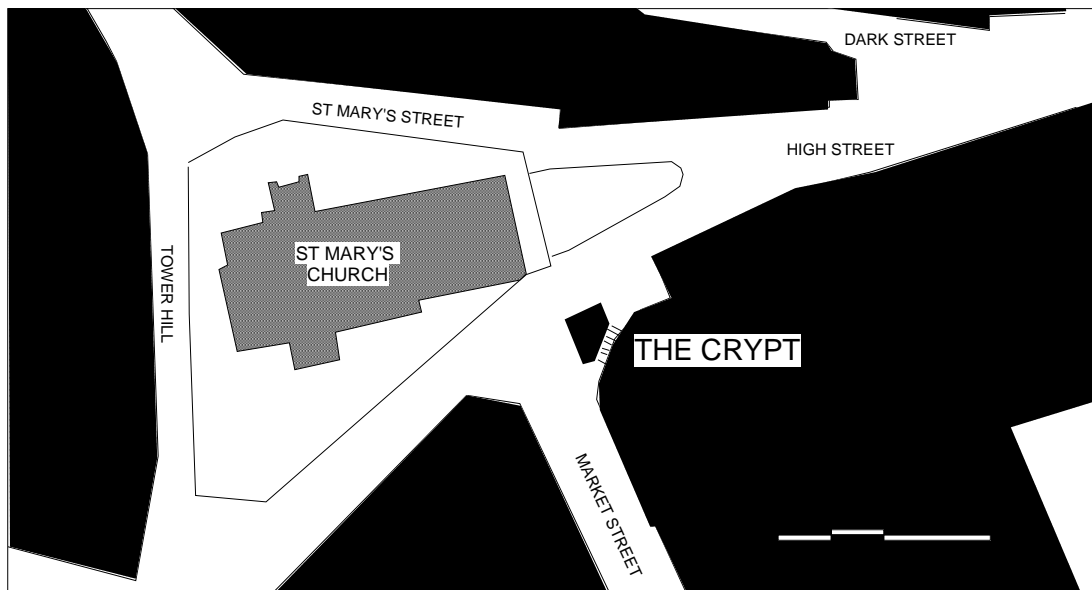
1.0 SUMMARY

The Crypt, Haverfordwest (NGR SM 95226 15560; PRN 6503) is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM Pe 079) and a Grade II Listed Building (6/193). Cambria Archaeology were requested, by Acanthus Holden Architects, to undertake recording and a condition survey within the building. It is a fine-quality, late medieval, rib-vaulted undercroft comprising six cells with quadripartite vaults, supported by two simple cylindrical piers. It has yet to be closely dated. Its overall condition is fair-good and the side walls are structurally sound. However, the rib-vault itself is in variable condition. In the two southernmost cells, the vault ribs have dropped and are lying free from the soffits of the rubble vault infill. All vault voussoirs are 'hungry' and further, individual voussoirs have dropped. Many of the voussoirs have also laminated.*

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The building known as 'The Crypt' (NGR SM 95226 15560; Scheduled Ancient Monument SAM Pe 079; Grade II* Listed Building No. 6/193; PRN 6503 in the Sites and Monuments Record for Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire) lies beneath pavement level at the junction of High Street and Market Street, Haverfordwest, 8.5 metres southeast of the southeast corner of St Mary's parish church. It represents the vaulted undercroft of a medieval town house, the building above which – which appears to have been largely rebuilt during the post-medieval period – was demolished during the 20th century.

Fig. 1 – Location plan



2.1 Project proposals

It is intended to construct a new building over The Crypt. As the building is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, a condition of the consent was that an archaeological condition survey be carried out. Any recommendations for conservation and/or stabilisation works arising from the survey were to be undertaken prior to commencement of any construction works.

Acanthus Holden Architects, on behalf of the client and site owner Pembrokeshire County Council, accordingly requested Cambria Archaeology to undertake the survey on 25 April 2005; the fieldwork was carried out on 6 and 9 May, 2005.

2.2 Site description

The Crypt is a vaulted undercroft, roughly rectangular in plan and measuring 6.20 metres north-south by 4.60 metres east-west. Its side walls average 1.60 metres in height (ie. depth below street-level), rising to 2.10 metres at the apices of the vault. It is divided, by two simple cylindrical piers, with equally simple chamfered, circular capitals and bases, into six cells, each of which is covered by a quadripartite rib-vault. The facework of the side-walls, and the infill of the vault soffits, is in limestone rubble, while the vault ribs are in simply-chamfered

sandstone. The north wall is pierced by two secondary windows, of the 19th-20th century, and the west wall by a secondary entry of similar date. The former are sealed by gratings, while the doorway carries an iron gate permitting views to the interior, which is floodlit. The south wall features what appears to be the original entry from the ground floor, now blocked. The west wall is represented, up to vault springer level, by the native shale bedrock, which has been cut back vertically; areas of this rock occur in the other three walls and follow the natural downhill slope from west to east. The keystones of the rib intersections in the two northern cells exhibit floral mouldings representing 5-petalled roses.

The Crypt is reached from the pavement via a flight of stone steps. The surface of the vault, which is now crazy-paved, lies just above the level of High Street and the northern side wall here is carried up approx. 1 metre, as is the east wall. The remaining sides are railed. The southeast quarter of the area is however occupied by a flight of steps connecting the High Street pavement with the Market Street pavement.

There is little published material relating to The Crypt. The Ancient Monuments Record Form, produced for Cadw (Cadw n.d.a), cites an account from 1868 (Anon. 1868, 73) when it was described as 'Transitional-Norman' in form. It goes on to replicate the description on an information plaque on the outside of the building, which reads – "This vaulted crypt formed the ground floor of a late 12th century or early 13th century house. Its position on the corner of two important streets, and the quality of the fine ribbed vault and circular piers suggest that it was the house of one of the great merchants of Haverfordwest. The vaulted ground floors of these houses were generally used for storage, while the drier and more secure upper storeys were used as the living areas. This vault probably had no widows and was originally entered from the back – the present doorway is a later insertion". The form concludes – "It is the finest of a number of medieval vaulted basements in Haverfordwest". The Cadw Listed Buildings database contains the short entry - "Early 12th century vaulted stone crypt opposite St Mary's Church. Probably a charnel vault and possibly a building which had some connection with a nearby nunnery" (Cadw n.d.b; also reproduced in Welsh Office n.d., 71). There is however no evidence for a nunnery nearby, while the quality of the building argues against its use as a charnel vault.

The dating of the vault to the 12th century or early 13th century may be called into question. It is increasingly thought that Pembrokeshire vaults – which are normally simple barrel- or groin-vaults rather than rib-vaults – may belong, in general, to the later medieval period and may even extend into the earlier post-medieval period. However, architectural and stylistic dating evidence is often absent, or at best conservative. The simplicity of the piers and capitals at The Crypt do suggest an early date, but equally simple detail occurs within later medieval arcades at a number of nearby churches (Ludlow 2000). The well-defined 5-petalled rose mouldings, moreover, represent a motif entirely unlike the highly-stylised mouldings of the 12th-14th centuries (ie. dogtooth, ballflower, tablet-flower etc.). It cannot be conclusively argued that they are Tudor Roses but, given their form, a 15th-16th century date may be more convincing. They may of course be secondary but, structurally, this is unlikely.

The building is, in general, in good condition, but areas of the vault are cause for concern. These are discussed in Sections 3 and 4 below. In addition, the stairwell attracts a great deal of litter, which also enters the building through the openwork iron gate and, at present, is a public eyesore.

2.3 Aims and objectives

The aim of the building record was to provide a survey base drawing of the vault, walls, floor and piers, indicating their form and condition, any alterations, any changes of use, and areas or zones of deterioration. The survey would be at a level sufficient to enable decisions to be made regarding the appropriate remedial works, and to constitute a complete archaeological record, to Level 3 as defined by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME 1990).

3.0 METHODOLOGIES AND RESULTS

3.1 Methodologies

Plans of the floor and vault were hand-drawn at 1:20 scale. Hand-drawn elevations of the four side walls were also produced, again at 1:20 scale. All dressings (ie. the vault-ribs) were drawn stone-by-stone. Each drawing was clearly annotated to indicate form and condition, evidence for alterations and/or change of use, repairs and area/zones of deterioration, and included a scale and north arrow. All drawings are reproduced within this report. The Crypt interior was fully photographed in digital format, with a scale. Selected photographs are reproduced within this report. All photographs are contained, and indexed, within the site archive.

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Detailed description

The Crypt appears to have changed little from the form in which it was built. It comprises six cells in two rows divided, along a north-south axis, by two piers (described above). Each cell is defined by a transverse rib and two intersecting cross-ribs, to produce a quadripartite vault. Mouldings are all plain and the ribs spring from the side walls without capitals, each group of three springers being carved from a single block of sandstone ashlar. A single rib springs from each corner, as a similar moulding.

The west side-wall is blind, and the lower half is largely represented by rock face. A shallow, curved-back recess in the rock towards the southern end, nearly full-height, may have been a deliberate feature but its function is unknown.

The north wall is now pierced by two lights. The western light is represented by an embrasure with a sill lying 0.60 metres above floor level, above which it is splayed, the sill of the opening itself lying 1.80 metres above floor level, ie. at external pavement level. The opening has a plain segmental head. The entire embrasure/opening appears to be secondary, belonging to the late 19th-early 20th centuries. The eastern light may be an adaptation of an earlier feature, featuring a wide embrasure (occupying the full width of the northeast cell) that rises from floor level through the entire height of the cell. However, the opening itself, with a sill 0.70 metres above floor level, is secondary. It has a plain segmental head like that to the west, with which it is probably contemporary; the joint between the medieval vault soffit and the soffits of its arch can be clearly seen. It again lies at external pavement level, the differing heights of the two lights representing the external downhill slope. This wall comprises a small area of bedrock beneath the sill of the western light, west of which the rubble masonry lies beneath a thick render – the only area of side walling beneath a finish. This render cannot be closely dated.

The entry is at the north end of the east wall, and occupies the entire northeast cell, has a plain, two-centred head and can be seen to be a later insertion, the secondary masonry around the opening being clearly distinguishable from the medieval rubble walling. The joint between its arch soffits and the medieval vault soffits is also visible. This wall exhibits some further features. At the very south end, it is represented by bedrock. Immediately north of this is a ?disturbed area, with a large void, just above floor level, beneath which appears to be infill. Central within this southeast cell is a low projection from the wall, 0.40 metres high, appearing as a level-topped 'plinth', 0.80 metres in length, at an acute

angle to the wall-face. It appears to represent an area of walling on a different alignment to the wall-face, as if belonging to an earlier building, but this may not be the case and its function remains unknown.

The south wall also exhibits some structural features. In the southwest cell it exhibits an area of infill, 1.10 metres in width, which rises to the full height of the vault – the apex of the vault here is 2.20 metres above floor level, ie. 0.40 metres higher than elsewhere within the building. This appears to represent a blocked entry, probably from the ground floor of the building above, a single course of stones at the base of the wall probably representing its sill. The nature of the masonry infill suggests that the entry was blocked fairly early in the post-medieval period. The wall-face immediately west of this infill is produced out, at a shallow angle, into the body of the cell. A crude, shallow recess, to the west of this angled section, may be deliberate; however, as bedrock is revealed at the back of the recess it may represent an area where the facework has been lost.

The floor, as visible in 2005, is largely of earth. There is an area of mortar flooring/bedding along the foot of the east wall, which may be secondary, and traces of a similar surface around the southern vault pier. Two amorphous areas of possible flooring are vaguely distinguishable in the southeast cell. This cell also exhibits a half-buried ceramic drainage pipe of 20th century date, set in concrete. A possible slot, of unknown purpose, leads from this pipe to the southern vault pier. A manhole cover in the northeast cell presumably leads to a below-ground chamber associated with this pipe.

3.2.2 Condition

The side walls are also more-or-less stable, and in good-fair condition. There are areas where the masonry is hungry, ie. has lost its superficial pointing, but these, too, appear to be stable. A void lies in the centre of the east wall facework, and a couple of other small voids exist, but these do not appear to be of immediate concern. The floor is firm, and stable.

The vault however is in variable condition, in areas poor (see illustration for identification of key areas). This is particularly so in the two southern cells. Here, both the keystones at the vault intersections, and the adjoining ribs, are loose from the vault soffits and have dropped to varying degrees. In other words, they are not supporting the rubble vault infill. In general, it may be that the vault-infill groins are sufficiently stable to be self-supporting; however, in the southeast cell, the mortar between the rubble of the infill is also loose.

Many of the ribs lie beneath the vault infill, the gaps having been infilled with mortared rubble. This however appears to be a primary feature. However, a number of other rib voussoirs have dropped, though still appear to be supportive. Some voussoirs have also cracked; one has lost its lower half through a horizontal crack, and another is at risk of doing the same because of a similar crack. Some voussoirs are fairly badly weathered; a number of others exhibit smaller areas of weathering or damage. Many show slight lamination owing to the nature of the stone. All the joints between the rib voussoirs are hungry – very little mortar bonding remains.

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Crypt is a fine-quality, late medieval, rib-vaulted undercroft comprising six cells with quadripartite vaults, supported by two simple cylindrical piers. It has yet to be closely dated. Its overall condition is fair to good and the side walls are structurally sound. However, the rib-vault itself is in variable condition and requires careful investigation by a structural engineer.

In the two southernmost cells, the vault ribs have dropped and are lying free from the soffits of the rubble vault infill. The ribs here may require careful taking out and rebuilding. Areas of the rubble infill in the southeast cell also require consolidation. All vault *voussoirs* are hungry and require re-bonding or at least repointing; further, individual *voussoirs* have dropped. The vault infill may require stabilisation after inspection by a structural engineer. Many of the *voussoirs* have also laminated and may require stabilisation.

It is recommended that any remedial works follow current best practice in the consolidation of historic buildings, and the guidelines issued by specialist conservation organisations such as SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings).

5.0 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

The archive, indexed according to the National Monuments Record (NMR) material categories, will be deposited with the Sites and Monuments Record for Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, curated by Cambria Archaeology, Shire Hall, 8 Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire. It contains the following:-

A.1. Copy of the final report

A.4. Disk copy of report

C.2. Site drawings

D.1. Catalogue of site photographs

G.1. Source documentation

I.4. Final report - disk

M.1. Non-archaeological correspondence

There is no material for classes **B, E, F, H, J, K** and **N**.

6.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The fieldwork and reporting were undertaken by Neil Ludlow of Cambria Archaeology. Thanks to Peter Holden, of Acanthus Holden, and to Richard Ingledon, of Pembrokeshire County Council.

7.0 REFERENCES

Cadw, n.d.a, Ancient Monuments Record Form, Pe 079

Cadw, n.d.b, Listed Buildings Database, 6/193

Ludlow, N D, 2000 *The Cadw Welsh Historic Churches Project: Pembrokeshire* (unpublished Cambria Archaeology client report)

RCHME, 1990 *Recording Historic Buildings: a Descriptive Specification*

Welsh Office, n.d., *Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest: Haverfordwest*

Photo 1 – General view of The Crypt from northeast



Photo 2 – General view of The Crypt from northwest



Photo 3 – General view of The Crypt from southwest



Photo 4 – General view of The Crypt from southeast

