

**ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY**

**THE DOVECOTE  
ANGLE, PEMBS  
PRN 3089**

**AN HISTORICAL SUMMARY AND  
STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION**

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Report prepared for Pembrokeshire County Council  
by  
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## **A HISTORICAL SUMMARY AND STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION**

### **CONTENTS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Summary	2
Project methodologies	2

#### **PART 1 - A HISTORICAL SUMMARY**

Angle: Manorial history	4
Angle: Ecclesiastical history	6
Angle: Settlement morphology	7
Sources	10

#### **PART 2 - A STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION**

Location and Topography	12
The Dovecote	12
Discussion	14
Conclusions and recommendations	15
Sources	16
Acknowledgements	17

#### **FIGURES**

Overall ground plan of site	
Elevations	

# **THE DOVECOTE, ANGLE: A HISTORICAL SUMMARY AND STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Summary**

The dovecote at Angle (Dyfed PRN 3089; SAM Pe 67) was constructed during the medieval period, probably in the first half of the 14th century when similar, dated examples were established. It formed part of the medieval Angle Rectory, represented by 'The Old Rectory', a fortified enclosure immediately to the south, and probably fell into disuse when a new rectory was established on another site during the modern period.

There is no good published account, or structural description, of the Old Rectory complex, including the dovecote, and its history is little understood. Richard Fenton mentioned it in his *Tour* of 1811, and it receives a short description in the RCAHM(W) *Inventory* for Pembrokeshire, of 1925. However, there has been little achieved in terms of linking the various village components, including the Old Rectory and dovecote, into the morphology and development of the settlement as a whole.

The dovecote is a fine example of this type of building and is complete, and in fair-good condition. The only area of concern is the entry which has been enlarged in recent years and has a damaged lintel, and some areas of missing facework. There is little external plant growth. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Pe 67).

### **Project methodologies**

The brief, prepared by Pembrokeshire County Council, requested an archaeological survey of the site, comprising:

1. The undertaking of a physical measured survey including the presentation of plans and elevations of the structures and their immediate boundaries.
2. Accompanying documentary and historical research.
3. The production of a report based upon the information obtained in (1) and (2) above.
4. The production of 1 set of copy negatives of all drawings.
5. The production of 3 sets of dyeline prints of each drawing.
6. The production of a suite of photographs in colour print format

The project effectively represents the first stage of an on-going management strategy for the individual sites and buildings, to be supplemented by further investigative work.

The level of survey suggested by the client conformed broadly to Level 2, as defined by the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments (England), *Recording Historic Monuments: A Descriptive Specification*, 1990, as 'essentially a visual record, supplemented by the minimum information needed to identify the buildings location, age and type.' The visual component is represented by a full photographic record of both interiors and exteriors of the individual buildings concerned, and plans and elevations drawn to 1:50 scale and output via AUTOCAD. Stone-by-stone recording was not requested. The record also includes a topographical survey and location plan of the structures, undertaken using an EDM theodolite and data recorder and reproduced at 1:100 scale. The above will be submitted as separate enclosures from this report.

Further, more detailed survey is anticipated. This will be a component of the future archaeological study, detailed specifications for which will be drawn up as a result of the present study.

## PART 1: ANGLE DOVECOTE - A HISTORICAL SUMMARY

During the medieval period Angle formed a manor associated with the Lordship of Pembroke. The history of the dovecote is, however, linked to the ecclesiastical settlement in the form of the church and rectory of Angle.

### ANGLE: MANORIAL HISTORY

Angle was a manor of the Lordship of Pembroke during the medieval period, probably coterminous with the present parish, but its precise relationship to the lordship is not clear. The manor comprised 2 knights' fees and indeed, during the later medieval period, it appears to have been divided into two, 'Angle' and 'Hall in Angle'; however, Bangeston to the east may represent the second knights' fee. Angle was further divided into areas of secular and ecclesiastical ownership. Angle Hall, the descendant of the manor-house of 'Hall in Angle', remains inhabited to this day.

#### Medieval

A settlement at Angle cannot be proposed to have originated before the post-conquest medieval period, and indeed the morphology of the village would appear to confirm this (see below, 8). The place-name has traditionally been regarded as having Scandinavian origins, but it has recently been suggested that it is of Middle English derivation in the form of *angle*, 'land in a corner or nook' (Charles, 1992, 672).

The medieval history of Angle begins with the conquest of south-west Dyfed by the Anglo-Normans under Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, in 1093, and the establishment of Pembroke Castle. From this centre, Roger's son Arnulf carved out dependant territories occupying most of what is now South Pembrokeshire, Angle included. By the 12th century, the area was formally recognised as the Lordship (or County) of Pembroke and, in 1138, after a period of royal control, an Earldom was created by King Stephen.

Much of the western half of the peninsula of South Pembrokeshire was directly dependent, in the form of the demesne manor of Castlemartin, to the earl at Pembroke Castle. However, the status of the Manor of Angle and its relationship to the lordship is, like that of Stackpole and Bosherton, unclear. Whilst recognised as a member of the lordship, it neither formed part of the demesne of the lordship, did not owe 'castle-guard' to Pembroke and the Earls of Pembroke themselves may have had no direct tenurial rights. However, at the same time it appears not to have had the status of a barony nor a sub-lordship. George Owen, writing in the early 17th century, lists among the discrete holdings in the peninsula, the following - 'The Barony of Pembroke; Castlemartin; Stackpole and Bosherton; Angle' (Owen, 1897, 374); the Lordship of Castlemartin appears to have been a recent upgrading of the demesne manor, created for William Herbert in 1551 (Jones, 1987, 200).

Early lords of the Manor of Angle appear to have included Gilbert de Angle who joined King Henry II in his invasion of Ireland in 1171 and in return was granted lands in Meath (Owen, 1875, 86, citing Giraldus, *Expugnatio Hibernica*).

Upon the death without heirs of Anselm Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, in 1247, the Lordship and Earldom were divided among his four coheirs through the female line. Whilst the Lordship of Pembroke eventually passed to William de Valence, Angle passed to Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, held in chief by Guy de Brian (Owen, 1918, 99-100). By this time at least, Angle comprised two knights' fees, and it was held in turn of de Brian by Richard de Angle. Interestingly, an unidentified 1/20th of a knights' fee was held by one Adam de Angle.

The tenure of Angle appears to have soon afterwards passed to the Shirburn family. Fenton, writing in 1811 (Fenton, 1903 edn., 219), claims that he had in his possession 'a very ancient deed', whereby Robert de Vale, the mid 13th century lord of Dale acting on behalf of de Brian, permitted Stephen de Angle and Phillip de Angle to grant the Manor of Angle to Phillip's son-in-law Robert Shirburn,

Sheriff of Pembroke. The deed is discussed more fully by Owen, who therefore must have seen it, and dated to 1278 (Owen, 1875, 86).

A Shirburn was a juror at a younger Guy de Brian's *Inquisition Post Mortem* in 1307 in which the holding at Angle is not listed among the de Brian/de Clare possessions, but there are several illegible sections within the manuscript and his name is not preserved (Owen, 1918, 78-81). A Walter de Shirburn was a 'janitor' of Pembroke Castle during the period 1326-31 (Owen, 1918, 115) and juror at three *Inquisitions* of 1331, during the minority of Lawrence Hastings, Earl of Pembroke (Owen, 1918, 89-91). By 1348 and Lawrence's own *Inquisition Post Mortem* the earls were claiming 18d rent of Angle *pro messione* (for sowing); Walter's heir Nicholas de Shirburn was a juror (Owen, 1918, 89-91).

In the *Inquisition Post Mortem* of William's son Aymer de Valence, in 1324, the 'rent of assize of the vill at Angle at Michaelmas' was worth 18d (Owen, 1918, 85). This demonstrates that Angle, although forming a part of the de Clare inheritance, was, in matters of legal administration and jurisprudence, subject to the Earls of Pembroke. This situation was reflected in many other independent lordships and baronies in Pembrokeshire, over which the earls claimed legal authority. Among other levies claimed by the earls of Pembroke were tolls levied on ships calling at Angle, cited in 1390-91 (Owen, 1918, 143).

A list of the knight's fees held by Lawrence Hastings was drawn up in 1353 (Owen, 1918, 97-8). Nicholas de Shirburn held 2 1/2 carucates of land in Angle, and 12s of rent, held of the Earl of Gloucester. He was succeeded by his son John, who predeceased his sister; she married John Cradock, of Newton in Rhos (Owen, 1918, 98) and their descendant, Sir Richard Cradock, acquired nearby Eastington, changing his name to Newton (Fenton, 1903 edn., 219). Nevertheless, a Shirburn inheritance continued and an Edmund Shirburn held lands in Angle alongside Richard Newton in the late 15th century (RCAHMS, 1925, 11-12n.); while in 1480, a John Shirburn was liable for rent to the Earl of Pembroke for a house in the town (Owen, 1918, 146).

At some period during the early 16th century Sir Rhys ap Thomas appears to have obtained lands in - or the manor of - Angle (Nash, 1986, 40). He was a ruthless estate builder and held extensive lands and offices - Justice of the Principality of South Wales, Steward, Receiver and Chancellor of the Crown Lordship of Haverfordwest, Lord of Carew and Knight of the Garter. He died in 1525, his lands and possessions largely falling to his grandson, the 17 year old Rhys ap Gruffydd who was arrested for alleged treason in 1529 to be executed in 1531 (Rees, 1987, 33).

## Modern

The Act of Union in 1536 abolished the Marcher Lordships of Wales and with them the Lordship of Pembroke. A new county of Pembrokeshire was drawn up on civil lines, and divided into hundreds. Angle came to lie within the Hundred of Castlemartin.

Nevertheless, the manorial system persisted. In his list of Pembrokeshire manors, George Owen, writing in the early 17th century cites two within Angle itself - Angle and 'Hall place in Angle' (Owen, 1897, 400), which may represent the division of the two knights' fees into two manors; however, the second knights' fee might just as easily have been represented by Bangeston, a known medieval holding to the east (Ludlow, 1994, 8). A Hall at Angle had been established prior to 1600 and from the first was tenurially distinct; in an estate map of 1825, the overall holding is still referred to as 'Hall and Angle' (Pems. R. O., D/Angle/75). In Owen's time Angle itself was under the tenure of one Walter Rees, while Hall formed part of the extensive Perrott holdings (Owen, 1897, 522); the Perrots had held the neighbouring estate at Popton, a castle-guard fee of the Earls of Pembroke, during the medieval period (Owen, 1918, 86).

Shortly afterwards, one John Harries acquired Angle Hall. His daughter Margaret married into the Devereux family (Laws, 1888, 306) and by 1613 the entire holding of Angle, along with much South Pembrokeshire property, was in the hands of John Devereux of the House of Essex (Howells, 1987, 363).

The Angle estate, and the Hall which was by now the centre of the manor, were in the hands of one Griffith White in the early 18th century. His daughter Elizabeth married one John Hooke and so ultimately Angle came to lie within the extensive Cawdor Estate. The Manor of Castlemartin had passed to the Cawdor line in 1720 when Gilbert Lort, the previous holder, died (Jones, 1987, 201). His sister Elizabeth inherited the estate and married Sir Alexander Campbell whose descendant, John Campbell, was created Baron Cawdor in 1796; his son was created Earl Cawdor in 1827 (*ibid.*, 201-202). A Campbell, John Hooke Cambell, was John Hooke of Angle's godson. He inherited Angle and was succeeded by his nephew John Campbell, Baron Cawdor (Ludlow, 1994, 8). The last Lord Cawdor at Angle died in 1821, but prior to this, in 1805, the Angle estate had been acquired by John Mirehouse of Brownsllade, from 1778 an agent for the Cawdor estate (Murphy, 1993, 10) whose family are still the major landowner within the parish, and still reside at the Hall.

## ANGLE: ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

The dovecot at Angle is a probably a product of the ecclesiastical history of the settlement (see below, 9-10).

Angle church is dedicated to St Mary. In the absence of firm evidence for a pre-conquest foundation, its history must be said to begin after 1098, when it was appropriated to the Benedictine Priory at Monkton, Pembroke, which had been founded in 1098 by Arnulf de Montgomery as a cell of Seez, in Normandy, in memory of his recently killed brother, Hugh (Laws, 1909, 168). The exact date of the grant is not known but had occurred before 1175 (see below); it may have been as early as 1098-1100, when 'Arnulf (de Montgomery) gave the churches of all his land in Wales, and the tithes....to the monks of St Martins, Seez' (Conway Davies, 1946, 247). In 1377 Angle church paid an annual charge of 23s. to Monkton Priory (Laws, 1909, 193).

It was a parish church from the first, the parish being coterminous with the two knight's fees that made up the holding of Angle. In the *Taxatio* of Pope Nicholas of 1291 the church was assessed at £8, the tithes due to the king being 16s (Green, 1911, 234); the valuation was the same in 1379 (Laws, 1909, 195). In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1536 the figures were for the church, £10 9s 10d, with 21s tithes, and for the vicarage 79s, with 7s 11d tithes (Green, 1911, 235).

The living was both a rectory and a vicarage, and from at least 1175; in 1175-76, during the episcopate of David Fitzgerald, Giraldus Cambrensis ('Gerald of Wales') was, whilst Archdeacon of Brecon, was also Rector of Angle (Conway Davies, 1946, 280 D.192). At the time the inhabitants of Angle were recalled under the sentence of interdict, on account of their refusal to pay tithes, as testified by Giraldus in his *De Rebus* (Conway Davies, 1946, 280 D.190).

The Rectory of Angle was a landowner in its own right. 'Certain lands and tenements which were in the hands of feoffees to....the parish church' were valued at 48s. 10d. (RCAHMW, 1925, 11, citing PRO, Chantry Certificates No. 22, no date given). In his will of 1500 Richard Newton (see above, 5) bequeathed four tenements in Haverfordwest and Pembroke' to the church (*ibid.*). Monkton Priory was also a landowner within the parish (Rees, 1975, 270), and it is probable that the holdings represented by the blocks of tithe-free land depicted on the Tithe Map of 1841 belonged either to the Priory or directly to the Rectory of Angle (Kissock, 1990, 238). More significantly for the present study, a large compact strip of land which included the dovecote was rectorial glebeland in 1814 (NLW, Tithe map, 1841).

Monkton was an 'alien priory', ie the daughter-house of a French monastery. As such it was intermittently siezed by the crown, as in 1285 under Edward I (Laws, 1909, 177) and, more frequently, during the Hundred Years War. The king then claimed the Angle church's holdings and exercised the right of presentation to the benefice of Angle. For instance, in 1406 John Clifford was admitted to the church of Angle 'on the presentation of King Henry (IV), patron of the Priory of Pembroke, being in his hand by occasion of the war between himself and his adversaries the French' (RCAHMW, 1925, 11). The complexities of a similar case in 1324, when Thomas de Colyngham was presented to Angle church by Edward II, but was contested by the bishop of St Davids and his

nominee Hywel ap Gruffydd, are discussed in Laws (1909, 181-182); it is not known which nominee succeeded to the living. All alien priories, including Monkton, were finally suppressed under Henry V in 1415, their lands and appropriated benefices falling to the crown (Laws, 1909, 201).

In 1833, the living was a sinecure rectory and a discharged vicarage, the former valued at £10 10s., and the latter at £3 19s 0d. Two-thirds of the tithes were appropriated to the rectory, and one-third to the vicarage (Lewis, 1833). The benefice of Angle is still a rectory (C in W, 1997, 12).

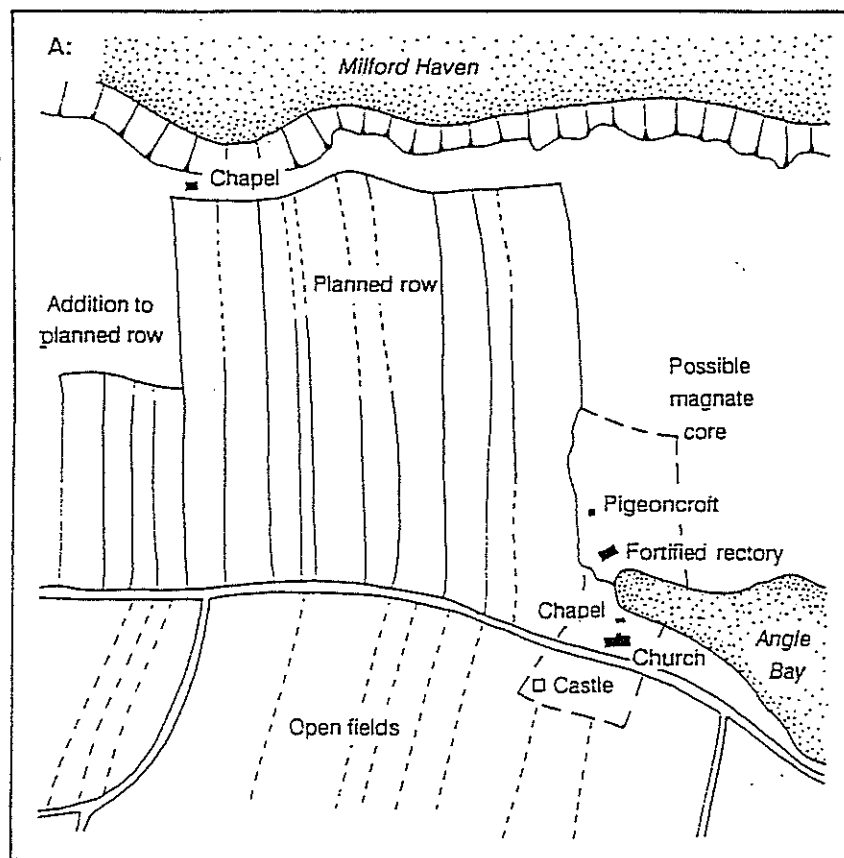
## ANGLE: SETTLEMENT MORPHOLOGY

The planned element of Angle village, and its partition into rectorial and secular manorial elements will be discussed below, with special regard to their bearing on the establishment of the dovecote.

### The settlement

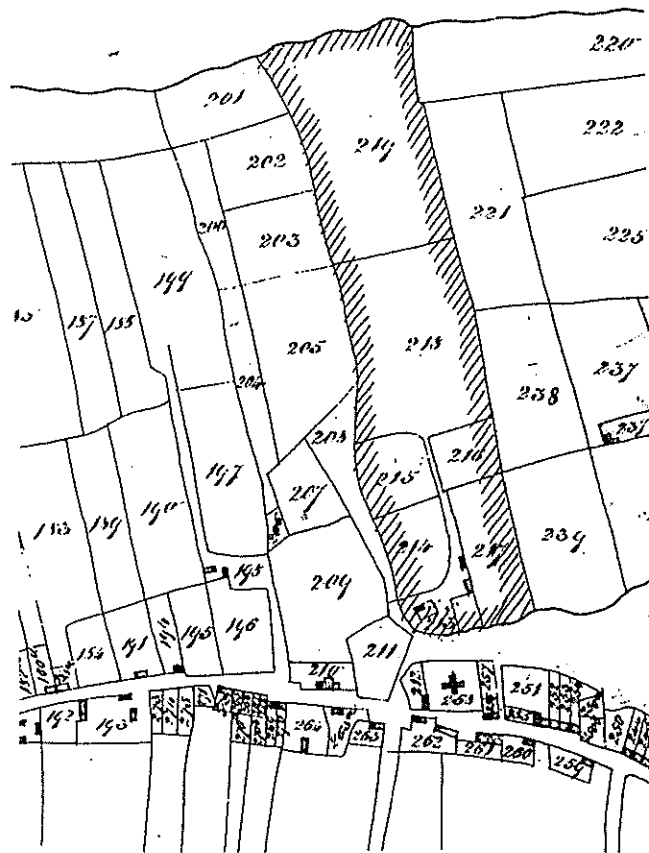
Angle represents a planned village of probable post-conquest date, presumably closely contemporary with the establishment of the manor c.1100. The axial main street appears to have been a primary feature. A planned row, still represented by straight co-axial field boundaries north of the main street, is possibly of two phases but initially immediately post-conquest in date. Boundaries to the south of the main street may preserve the pattern of earlier fields. This type of regular row settlement can be found elsewhere in Pembrokeshire (eg. Letterston, Templeton) and in other parts of Britain and Europe. In all instances they appear to disregard the underlying terrain. The overall morphology has been discussed by Kissock (1990, 238-9; 1993, 17-18; 1995, 115-16).

*Angle: The medieval settlement (from Kissock, 1990)*





*Angle: rectorial glebeland in 1841  
(from NLW, Angle parish, Tithe Map, 1841)*



A group of high-status buildings lie at the east end of the village towards Angle Bay. They comprise the church, two late medieval buildings known as 'The Castle' and 'The Old Rectory', and the dovecote itself. All occupy a discrete and relatively compact area within the co-axial boundaries, around which it is possible to define a rectangle (*Illus. 1*). The group represents a possible 'magnate core', ie. the focus of manorial power and prestige, both secular and ecclesiastical. The present Hall and Rectory lie still further east and are evidently secondary to the above group but are a part of the general pattern.

### **'The Old Rectory'**

'The Old Rectory' lies within the magnate core on the north shore of Angle Bay, opposite the church. It is termed 'homestead' in the Tithe Apportionment of 1841 and has been known as 'Castle Farm' since at least 1925 (RCAHMW, 1925, 9). The house itself occupies a former moated enclosure. Much of its morphological features have become obscured in recent years, but it formerly constituted a square enclosure, with a moat to the north, west and east, still partly wet in 1925, and whose masonry revetment can be seen today on the west side. A 'pele-tower' stands at the south-west corner of the enclosure and there are the possible remains of a second corner tower to the north-east; there is a local tradition of there having formerly been four corner towers (occupant, Castle Farm, *pers. comm.*). The pele-tower has been described by Smith, 1988, 23, 32), and can be dated to the 15th-16th centuries.

What was the original function of the site? It has traditionally been regarded as the site of a rectory and is labelled as such on the OS maps of 1864 and 1908. However, Fenton, writing in 1811, gives a rather different account and describes the site as locally being termed the 'Castle' and said to have been the principal residence of the Shirburns, ie purely secular; at the time of his visit the house was an inn, 'The Castle Inn' (Fenton, 1903 edn., 220). It nonetheless stood on a regular rectangular strip

of rectorial glebeland (*Illus. 2*), part of the medieval co-axial property system and which incorporated the dovecote, but which by 1841 was under the ownership of the Mirehouses (NLW, Angle Tithe, 1841). By 1841 the present rectory had been established away to the south-east and was presumably the only one inhabited as a rectory at the time of the survey.

### **‘The Castle’**

The second further high-status (semi fortified?) masonry building stands on the opposite side of Angle Bay, just south of the main street through the village and opposite the church. Known locally as the ‘Castle’ since at least the mid 19th century, the masonry building comprises a first floor hall of the late 14th-15th century. It was termed the ‘Almshouse’ in 1925 (RCAHMW, 1925, 10) but Fenton recounts the local tradition that three co-heiresses each built themselves a house, respectively the Castle, the moated site, and the site now occupied by the Hall (Fenton, 1903 edn., 220). Fenton himself was inclined to the view that it was a nunnery.

### **The Hall**

Angle Hall, to the east of the medieval magnate core, is, as it stands, a building of the 18th-19th centuries. Fenton, who saw it in 1811, remarked that ‘in its day it appears to have been very respectable’ (Fenton, 1903 edn., 220) and so may have seen it in a different form than today. It cannot, in the absence of evidence, be proved to be the site of the ‘Hall place in Angle’ first mentioned c.1600 and the centre of the second manor (see above, 6), but the name is clearly significant, as is the close proximity of the present rectory.

### **Territorial divisions and the dovecote**

The possible arrangement of tenure within the magnate core in the medieval and early modern periods is discussed below.

It is apparent from the above that there were at least three high-status occupants within the Manor of Angle - the Lord of the Manor of Angle, the Rector of Angle as landowner, and, from c.1600 at least, the lord of the Manor of ‘Hall place in Angle’ (in an intriguing reflection of the three co-heiresses of the local tradition).

The possible magnate core breaks up into two well defined units. The church and rectorial glebeland lie to the north of the axial road, which was a primary feature, while ‘The Castle’ lies to the south of the road. ‘The Castle’ has affinities with buildings in South Pembrokeshire with known secular manorial functions, usually in a dual role as residence and administrative/judicial centre, eg. Castell Coch, Newton North, with which it is stylistically very similar, and Lydstep Palace near Tenby (Ludlow, 1996 and 1997). Both are of similar late 14th-15th century date. It seems probable, then, that ‘The Castle’ represents the centre of the Lord of the Manor of Angle.

The area represented by the rectorial glebeland lies within the medieval property system and encloses the ‘Old Rectory’. There is no reason, then, to suppose that it was anything but a rectory from the first. It is associated with the church on the north side of the co-axial road, and in form is very like the enclosure and pele-tower at Monkton Priory, which in itself is significant. The medieval rectors were landowners of some status and comparatively wealthy, and included some significant individuals, for example Giraldus Cambrensis, during his Archdeaconry of Brecon. The dovecote stands immediately north of ‘The Old Rectory’ within the rectorial glebe, and was doubtless established by the rectors.

The Hall, to the east, is secondary and may well be on the same site as the centre of the ‘Hall place in Angle’ of c.1600. This division of Angle manor may however have occurred even earlier, and while there is no supporting physical evidence, the site may have been occupied from the later medieval period. The landlords of the united Angle presumably found it a more suitable site during the modern period and chose it in favour of ‘The Castle’. The establishment of a new rectory nearby is consistent with this decision, and had occurred before 1811 (Fenton, 1903 edn., 220) but its exact date of construction is unknown.

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## **PART 2 : ANGLE DOVECOTE - A STRUCTURAL DESCRIPTION**

### **LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

Angle Dovecote (NGR SM 8660 0307) lies upon a gentle south facing slope down to Angle Bay and the 'Old Rectory' site, at 12m OD and 100m from the shoreline. The solid geology comprises Devonian Old Red Sandstones which have weathered to a fine, rich fertile soil.

The dovecote is situated within a rectangular north-south trending field, which forms a part of a co-axial system of properties dating from the immediate post-conquest period (Kissock, 1993, 17-18). With the exception of the northern, western and eastern field boundaries, which are hedgebanks with possible rubble cores and probably early, there are no associated archaeological features. The depression running NE-SW through the field some 30m north-west of the dovecote probably represents a the channel of a stream that formerly joined the north-south flowing stream along the western hedgebank; it was associated with a hedgebank until recently (shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:10560 map of 1964). A narrow, linear, shallow depression can be discerned running east-west 7m south of the dovecote, and is probably a below-ground field drain. The wire-mesh fence that forms the south boundary is modern; the field was formerly open to the northern boundary, formerly a moat, of the 'Old Rectory' enclosure that lies 30m to the south. The field is now pasture but, away from the dovecote, was probably arable during the medieval period.

### **THE DOVECOTE**

The dovecote is a cylindrical, single storeyed structure constructed from roughly coursed, medium-large sized Carboniferous Limestone rubble from a local source. It has an external diameter of 5.82m and an internal diameter of 3.70m, and is 7.2m in height. The walls are 1.1m thick and the conical roof is vaulted. The structure features no dressed stone. With the exception of remodelling of the entry in recent years, it appears to be of a single build. There are no remains of any finishes, either externally or internally.

It is a fine example of a dovecote and is complete, and in fair-good condition. The only area of concern is the remodelled entry which has a damaged lintel, and some areas of missing facework. The walls are free from cracks and there is little external plant growth. The interior is currently being used as a store by the owner of Castle Farm.

#### **The exterior**

Externally, the structure is a plain cylinder up to a height of 4.6m above ground level where a plain, squared limestone string-course lies at the junction with the conical roof, which is of limestone rubble like the walls. The roof follows a curved slope inwards to the circular flight-entrance, which has an external diameter of 0.3m. A further similar string-course lies 1m above the lower string-course.

The entry faces south. In its original form it was a simple square opening, unsplayed and without jambs, with a plain limestone lintel 1.4m above present ground level. A segmental outer arch lies above the lintel but there is no corresponding rear arch, of limestone rubble voussoirs. The lack of jambs indicates that the entry was not closed by a door. The entry was enlarged, probably during the late earlier 20th century, by breaking the walling away to the west. the work is very crude and, though the reveal was lined with brick, corework was left exposed beside and above the breach. A timber lintel was inserted over the breach, but the end of the original lintel-slab, both external and internal, were left unsupported and still are. The entry is in poor condition, and now half closed with corrugated iron sheeting.

Apart from the string-courses, the exterior is devoid of architectural features, with the exception of three tiers of small, square sockets, 0.2m square, occurring at very irregular intervals. They are probably putlog holes for the scaffolding used during the construction of the dovecote. In addition, there are nine flight-holes of similar form and lying within the same tiers. A further eight similar

flight-holes pierce the roof between the two string-courses. There is no evidence that the flight-entrance was ever protected by a cupola.

There are some small areas of missing facework, particularly on the south-west part of the roof.

The dovecot is surrounded by a low, irregular bank of material, concentric to it and 3m wide at its greatest extent north-east of the structure. It may represent the clearance of an accumulation of bird-dung; however, this was a valuable commodity used as both fuel and fertiliser, and in the tanning industry, and so the earthwork may be soil accumulation due to wash and livestock activity.

### **The interior**

The interior of the dovecote features a great number of square nesting holes, around the entire internal circumference. These are arranged in twelve tiers, between 1.8m and 4.6m above internal ground level and of rather irregular alignment. Each nesting hole is 0.12m square and a similar distance apart in both directions. Each is 0.3m deep and expands to a 0.30m square, irregular nesting chamber. Only the fifth, seventh and tenth tiers are supplied with ledges; these are similar to the external string-courses.

The internal walls grade into the conical barrel-vault without a defined spring-line, the interior of the vault curving like the exterior. The circular flight-entrance has an internal diameter of 0.7m. There is no physical evidence for any internal superstructure.

Much of the internal facework has weathered from the lower reaches of the walls, particularly in the northern half.

## DISCUSSION

The dovecote at Angle is a fine example of its kind. Dovecotes were frequent features of manorial and domestic sites well into the modern period, the pigeon being kept for a variety of uses - for food, for its dung etc. Few have survived from the medieval period.

It appears, however, that the Angle dovecote is a medieval structure. It displays a number of early features. For example, only three tiers of nesting holes are supplied with ledges. There is no evidence that the flight-entrance was ever protected by a cupola, which allowed birds into the flight-entrance but protected the interior from rain. The raising of the lowest tier of nesting holes to 1.8m above internal ground level reduced the threat from rats and was a common feature in dovecote design; the external string-courses served the same purpose as well as being decorative features. There is no evidence for any internal superstructure, for instance the 'potence', or central rotating ladder often associated with later circular dovecotes.

Circular dovecotes like Angle, where they occur elsewhere, have been dated to the medieval period. There are two very similar local examples, at Manorbier and Rosemarket. Neither has a roof-vault as tall as Angle's but otherwise follow the same pattern, even to the doorways. The Manorbier dovecot also shares with Angle the unusual feature of small flight-holes through the walls; the only other British examples of this feature being at Cadoxton Court, Glamorgan, and 'a few other of the ancient beehive dovecotes of Devon and Cornwall' (Howell, 1988, 61).

A very similar dovecote, almost identical in general form to the Manorbier example, occurs at the site of the former Knights Hospitaller Commandery at Garway, Herefordshire. A Latin inscription over the door reads 'In the year 1326 Brother Richard built this dovecote' (Howell, 1988, 61). It is unknown whether the orthography of the script has been checked by an expert, but if the script is genuine, it provides the only close date for this type of dovecote. The Garway cupola is a later addition.

Angle dovecote was certainly in existence by 1841 (NLW, Tithe map, Angle, 1841). A similar construction date to the Garway dovecote provides a period when the possessions of Monkton Priory were temporarily sequestered by the crown; it has been argued above, 10-11, that the dovecote was established as a part of Angle Rectory, represented by 'The Old Rectory', a fortified enclosure immediately south of the dovecote which was subject to the priory. However, the events do not rule out the construction of the dovecote during this period; it might even be that, like Garway, it was built in 1324-6 during the incumbence of either Thomas de Colyngam or his rival Hywel ap Gruffydd, the only two known rectors of Angle between Giraldus Cambrensis, 1175-6, and William de Farrington, 1383 (Green, 1911, 238-239).

The establishment of the new rectory at Angle had occurred before 1811 (Fenton, 1903 edn., 220) but its exact date of construction is unknown. The date will, however, broadly correspond with the disuse of the dovecote.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The dovecote at Angle was constructed during the medieval period, probably in the first half of the 14th century when similar, dated examples were established. It formed part of the medieval Angle Rectory, represented by 'The Old Rectory', a moated site immediately to the south which still displays a pele-tower. The land on which it stands formed the rectorial glebe into the 19th century. Angle Rectory was appropriated to Monkton Priory until the latter was suppressed in 1415. The dovecote probably fell into disuse when Angle new rectory was established during the modern period.

The dovecote is a fine example of this type of building and is complete, and in fair-good condition. The only area of concern is the entry which has been enlarged in recent years and has a damaged lintel, and some areas of missing facework. There is little external plant growth. The site lies within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Pe 67) and prior to any consolidation a themed, detailed survey must undertaken, possibly to a stone-by-stone level (RCHME Level 4), of the standing remains within their setting and context.



## **SOURCES**

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# THE DOVECOTE, ANGLE

Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology

survey by N Ludlow & M Trethowan

scale 1:200

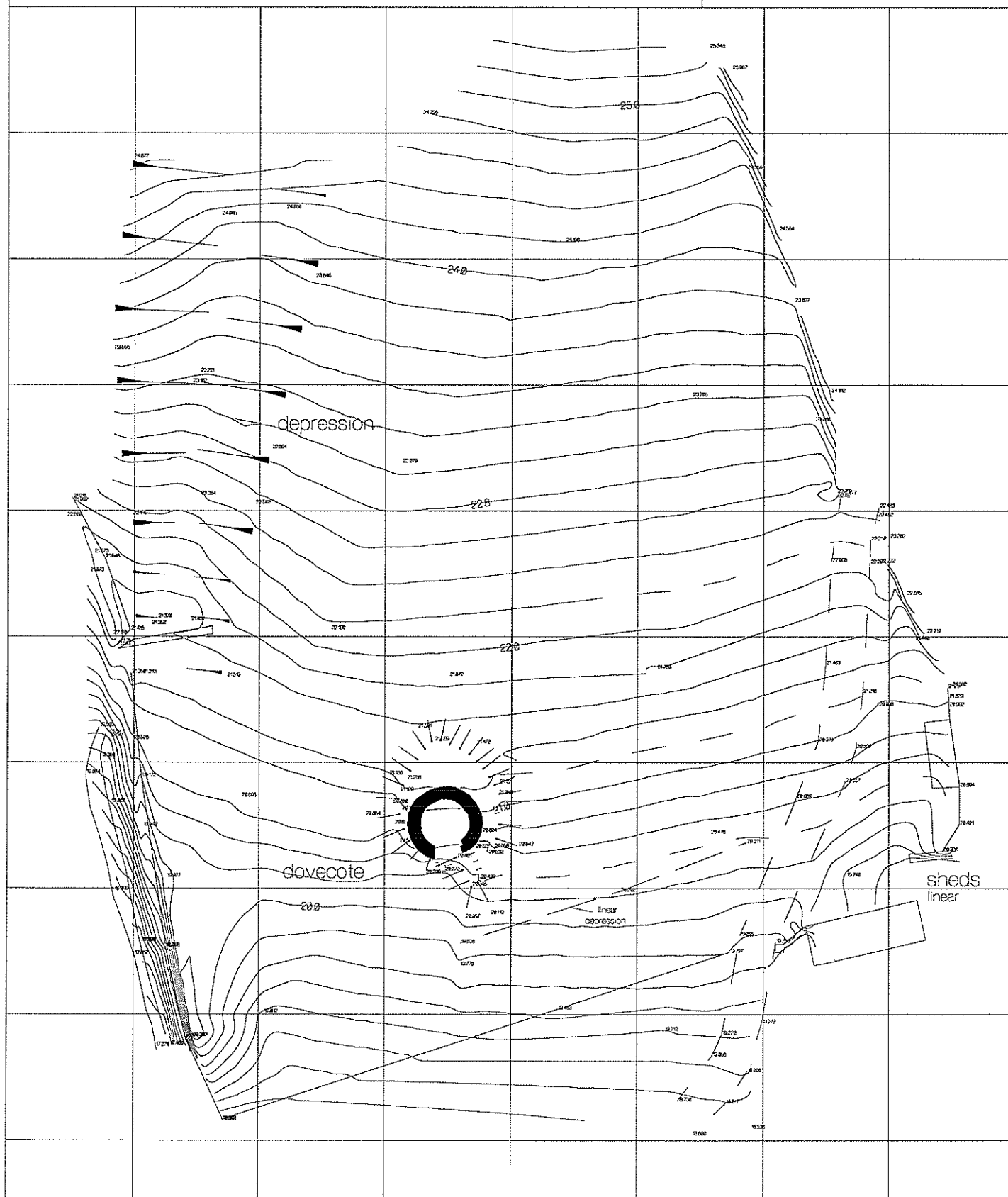
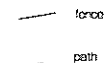
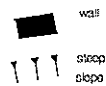
May 1997

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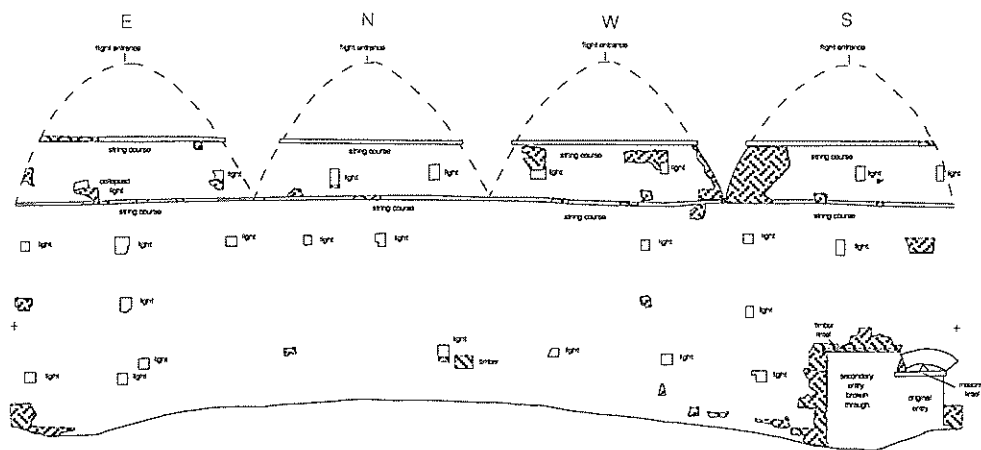
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contours at 0.20m intervals

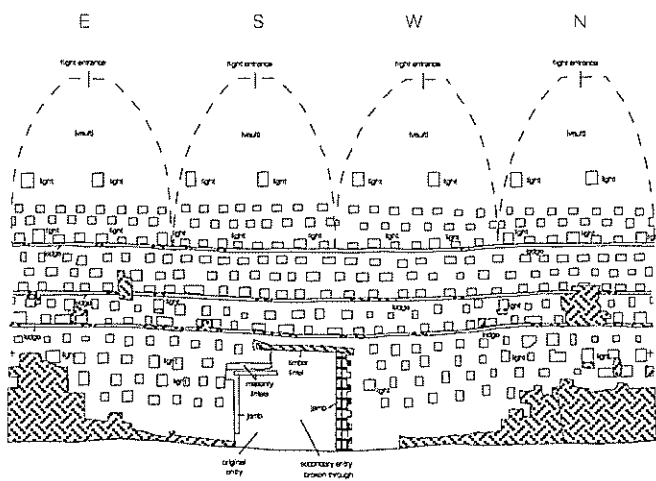
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# EXTERNAL ELEVATION (OPENED OUT)



## INTERNAL ELEVATION (OPENED OUT)



### THE DOVECOTE, ANGLE

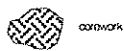
Archaeoleg CAMBRIA Archaeology

Survey by: M Trethowan &  
H Wilson

Scale 1:50

May 1997

Record No.3089



corbelwork



brickwork



nesting chamber



ground line