

# EARLY MEDIEVAL INSCRIBED STONES AND STONE SCULPTURE:

## PEMBROKESHIRE, 2005-6 (DAT 76)



*The Longoar Bay cross-incised stone, St Ishmaels*

Paratowyd gan Archaeoleg Cambria  
Ar gyfer Cadw  
Prepared by Cambria Archaeology  
For Cadw



# ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY

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Gan / By

Neil Ludlow

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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  
Epost: [cambria@cambria.org.uk](mailto:cambria@cambria.org.uk)  
Gwefan: [www.cambria.org.uk](http://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](mailto:cambria@cambria.org.uk)  
Website: [www.cambria.org.uk](http://www.cambria.org.uk)

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

Swydd / Position: Project Manager

Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date 30 March 2006

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

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

Swydd / Position: Director

Llofnod / Signature ..... Dyddiad / Date 30 March 2006

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## **SUMMARY**

*The objective of this pilot project was to review the condition of the early medieval inscribed stones and stone sculpture of Pembrokeshire (EMS), their location, ownership and method of storage and presentation, and identify any threats. This assessment identified two groups of EMS – within Penally and St Ishmaels parish churches – as either partly or wholly at risk, but with potential for positive management outcomes. It was intended that the project would facilitate the preparation of costed management recommendations for these groups which would then be submitted to the National Committee for the Recording and Protection of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture. If approved by the Committee, the Project Officer would assist the owners in costing, coordinating and progressing these recommendations, liaising with community groups etc., resulting in the submission of grant applications to funding bodies such as the Big Lottery Fund 'Awards for All Wales'.*

*After an assessment stage, two groups of 'at risk' EMS were chosen as fulfilling the project criteria - those in Penally parish church, and those in St Ishmaels parish church. Extensive consultation with the incumbents and PCCs of both parishes led to an interest in pursuing the scheme, but no firm decisions or deadlines. Both projects are, however, regarded as still 'active'. It is intended, in 2006-7, to continue pursuing them, and to initiate a possible third, this time in Ceredigion – ie. the loose EMS in Henfynyw parish church.*

## INTRODUCTION

This project is concerned with the curation, care and presentation of the early medieval inscribed stones and stone sculpture of Pembrokeshire (EMS). They are the single most accessible archaeological resource from a period with few recognised sites. Their inscriptions provide historical data and information on individuals. They indicate the nature of early Christian burial cults and practices, and many mark the sites of cemeteries. They are also important works of art in their own right. In the words of Nash-Williams, in *The Early Christian Monuments of Wales*, they remain 'the principal material remains of the centuries that elapsed between the end of Roman occupation and the coming of the Normans'.

However, they are a fragile resource. They are highly mobile and many may not be *in situ*, having been put to a variety of uses during the succeeding centuries, most often as gate-posts. The majority of Pembrokeshire inscribed stones and stone sculptures are now located within churches and churchyards, where some may be *in situ* whilst others may be medieval – post-medieval imports. However, others are under a variety of different ownerships, with a variety of management regimes. Some are entirely unmanaged.

The EMS of Wales have been subject to a recent re-assessment by Dr Nancy Edwards, John Lewis and Dr Mark Redknap (Edwards, N., et al. forthcoming *A Corpus of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales*). As part of this re-assessment, threats and management implications, whilst considered, were necessarily secondary to the analytical nature of the study. This project partly arises from the findings of the Ancient Monuments Board for Wales, in their Annual Report, 2000-01, in which the continuing threat to EMS was highlighted. These concerns resulted in the establishment of a National Committee for the Recording and Protection of Early Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture.

The project objective is to review the condition of the EMS of Pembrokeshire, their location, ownership and method of storage and presentation, and to identify any threats. Visits will then be made to the owner/managers of the most vulnerable stones to try and formulate options for their future protection and presentation. This will be undertaken in consultation with the owners, the Diocesan Archaeologist, the Conservation Officer and regional archaeological curator, Nancy Edwards, and Cadw where the stones are scheduled. The objective will be to facilitate the future production of costed management recommendations that can be considered by the National Committee.

The potential threats to early medieval inscribed stones and stone sculpture are tangible, many and varied. Not all are scheduled. Many are in exposed, outdoor locations, and are actively weathering, including inscriptions in many cases. A number have been lost since first recorded in the 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Damage and destruction still poses a considerable threat. Those in churches are often loose, and vulnerable to neglect, export or even theft.

## METHODOLOGIES

### Stage 1 - Assessment

The first stage of the project was an assessment of the EMS of Pembrokeshire in order to identify those at risk. The assessment was largely based on Dr Edward's drafts of the new *Corpus*, supplemented with personal knowledge of the resource. The results of the assessment were presented, as a Powerpoint presentation, to the National Committee in Cardiff meeting, on 21 May 2004.

A provisional list of 50 stones considered to be 'at risk' emerged from this assessment. In consultation with Jon Berry, of Cadw, this list was subsequently updated and rationalised, resulting in a final list of 40 stones.

#### *Shortlist of EMS at risk in Pembrokeshire*

TOTAL - 40

EMS identified as at risk by Dr Nancy Edwards are underlined

PRN = Regional Primary Record No.  
SAM = Scheduled Ancient Monument No. (Pembs.)  
NW = Nash-Williams No.

BLUE - CinW - 29  
Scheduled/CinW at risk - 2  
Unscheduled/CinW at risk - 27

BLACK - Private/Other - 11  
Scheduled/private at risk - 5  
Unscheduled/private at risk - 6

#### SCHEDULED EMS AT RISK - TOTAL 7

<u>Llanllawer (St David), ECM</u>	PRN: 2566; SAM 228 (NW 323)	<u>gatepost to redundant churchyard</u>
<u>Llanllawer (St David), ECM</u>	PRN: 2567; SAM 228 (NW 324)	<u>gatepost to redundant churchyard</u>
Llanwnda, Llanwnwr Farm stone I	PRN: 2843; SAM 072 (NW 326)	in farmyard
Llanwnda, Cemetery crossroads ECM	PRN: 2500; SAM 258 (NW 333)	in hedgebank
Llys-y-fran, Velindre Farm stone	PRN: 1303; SAM 236 (NW 344)	loose, by farm track
Marloes, Martin's Haven ECM	PRN: 11050; SAM 431	loose, in wall
Nevern, Trebwlch Farm II ECM	PRN: 1482; SAM 234 (NW 358)	loose, in field

#### NON-SCHEDULED EMS AT RISK - TOTAL 33

<u>Camrose (St Ismael), ECM</u>	PRN: 46775	<u>fixed in external church wall</u>
Clydau (St Clydau), Solini stone	PRN: 1212 (NW 307)	loose in church
<u>Fishguard, Penwaun, Maen Dewi stone</u>	PRN: 46792	<u>gatepost in field boundary</u>
<u>Llandysilio (St Tysilio), Clutorix stone</u>	PRN: 919 (NW 315)	<u>fixed in external church wall</u>
<u>Llandysilio (St Tysilio), Evolenggus stone</u>	PRN: 1200 (NW 316)	<u>fixed in external church wall</u>
<u>Llandysilio (St Tysilio), Riat stone</u>	PRN: 1201 (NW 317)	<u>fixed in external church wall</u>
<u>Llandysilio (St Tysilio), StTysilio's Cross</u>	PRN: 1202 (NW 318)	<u>fixed in external church wall</u>
<u>Llanllawer (St David), ECM</u>	PRN: 2568 (NW 336)	<u>fixed in external church wall</u>
<u>(redundant)</u>		
<u>Llanllawer (St David), ECM</u>	PRN: 2569	<u>fixed in external church wall</u>
<u>(redundant)</u>		

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<a href="#">Llanwnda (St Gwyndaf), ECM</a>	PRN: 8962 (NW 328)	<a href="#">fixed in external church wall</a>
<a href="#">Llanwnda (St Gwyndaf), ECM</a>	PRN: 8963 (NW 329)	<a href="#">fixed in external church wall</a>
<a href="#">Llanwnda (St Gwyndaf), ECM</a>	PRN: 8964 (NW 330)	<a href="#">fixed in external church wall</a>
<a href="#">Llanwnda (St Gwyndaf), ECM</a>	PRN: 8965 (NW 331)	<a href="#">fixed in external church wall</a>
<a href="#">Llanwnda (St Gwyndaf), ECM</a>	PRN: 8966 (NW 332)	<a href="#">fixed in external church wall</a>
<a href="#">Llanwnda (St Gwyndaf), ECM</a>	PRN: 8967 (NW 334)	<a href="#">loose in churchyard</a>
<a href="#">Llanwnda (St Gwyndaf), ECM</a>	PRN: 8968 (NW 415)	<a href="#">fixed in external church wall</a>
<a href="#">Llanwnda, Llanwnwr Farm stone II</a>	PRN: 46824	<a href="#">in farmyard</a>
<a href="#">Llawhaden (St Aidan's), ECM</a>	PRN: 3583 (NW 343)	<a href="#">fixed in external church wall</a>
Moylgrove, Blaenawen stone	PRN: 13359	loose beside track
<a href="#">Nevern, Cilgwyn (St Mary)</a>	PRN: 1508	<a href="#">fixed in external church wall</a>
Nevern, Trebwlch Farm III ECM damaged	PRN: 1483 (NW 356)	loose in garden; recently
Nevern, Trehaidd ECM	PRN: 1503	loose in garden and portable
<a href="#">Penally (SS Nicholas), cross shaft</a>	PRN: 4231 (NW 366)	<a href="#">loose in church</a>
<a href="#">Penally (SS Nicholas), cross base</a>	PRN: 4230 (NW 365)	<a href="#">fixed in churchyard</a>
<a href="#">Penally (SS Nicholas), ECM</a>	PRN: 46846	<a href="#">fixed in church external wall</a>
<a href="#">St Dogmaels Church, Sagranus stone</a>	PRN: 1215 (NW 384)	<a href="#">loose in church</a>
<a href="#">St Dogmaels Church, ECM</a>	PRN: 1216 (NW 388)	<a href="#">loose in church</a>
<a href="#">St Edrens (St Edren), ECM</a>	PRN: 4295 (NW 392)	<a href="#">loose in Mathry Church</a>
<a href="#">St Edrens (St Edren), ECM</a>	PRN: NONE	<a href="#">loose in former church, now dwelling</a>
<a href="#">St Elvis (St Ailyw), ECM</a>	PRN: 2791 (NW 395)	<a href="#">loose in Solva church porch</a>
<a href="#">St Ishmael's (St Ishmael), ECM</a>	PRN: 3000 (NW 396)	<a href="#">loose in church</a>
<a href="#">St Ishmael's (St Ishmael), ECM</a>	PRN: 3001 (NW 397)	<a href="#">loose in church</a>
<a href="#">Walton West (All Saints), ECM</a>	PRN: 3169	<a href="#">loose in church</a>

## Stage 2 – Selection of sites

The National Committee recommended, at the meeting in Cardiff on 21 May 2004, that two Pembrokeshire assemblages should be selected for progression through the project. They were –

- The Group of two EMS at St Ishmaels parish church (PRNs 3000, 3001). A third EMS from the site (PRN 47487) is currently in Scolton Manor Museum. A Group II ECM (no PRN) was recently recovered from the nearby cist cemetery site at Longoar Bay, and is currently at NMGW.
- Two of the four EMS in Penally parish church. The two important crosses at Penally (PRNs 4229, 4230) were recently remounted in the south transept of the church during a project that was part-funded by Cadw. However, two other ECMs in the church may be eligible for further grant-aid towards their management. One is a fragment of cross-shaft currently loose in the south transept (PRN 4231), the other is a cross-carved stone built into the external east wall of the north transept (PRN 46846), identified by Dr Edwards.

However, approaches were also made to the private owners of those stones identified as 'at risk' in the shortlist but neither scheduled nor in Church in Wales ownership. They were –

Fishguard, Penwaun, Maen Dewi stone	PRN: 46792	gatepost in field boundary
Llanwnda, Llanwnwr Farm stone II	PRN: 46824	in farmyard
Moylgrove, Blaenawen stone	PRN: 13359	loose beside track
Nevern, Trebwlch Farm III ECM damaged	PRN: 1483 (NW 356)	loose in garden; recently
Nevern, Trehaidd ECM	PRN: 1503	loose in garden and portable
St Edrens (St Edren), ECM dwelling	PRN: NONE	loose in former church, now

The results were mixed. The owners of the Penwaun Stone (PRN 46792), the Llanwnwr Farm Stone (PRN 46824) and the Trebwlch Stone (PRN 1483) were out. A standard letter was left at all three addresses, but no response has yet been received. The status of the St Edrens stone (no PRN) is unknown. Attempts have been made to find out who currently owns the site, but without success. The Blaenwaen Stone (PRN 13359) lies on a track marked 'strictly private: keep out'. Access was gained to the Trehaidd ECM (PRN 1503) which is very fondly regarded by its owners, but they have no intention of moving it from its current location beneath a chestnut tree, which they feel to be appropriate.



## **RESULTS**

### **Stage 3 – Penally**

#### *2004-5 progress*

The incumbent at Penally was contacted and a meeting was held at the church on 24 November 2004. Present were Neil Ludlow, Revd. David Jenkins (Rector of Tenby with Penally and Gumfreston) and Mrs Valerie Paley (Churchwarden). Carol Cavill (County Councillor for Penally, Gumfreston and New Hedges, member of the church council in Penally and the Rectorial Council for the benefice) was contacted after the meeting.

It was agreed that the loose stones in the south transept should be securely fixed. It was also agreed that the question of the stones in the external east wall of the north transept should be addressed, with consultation with conservators etc. (The question of the cross-base in the churchyard SW of the church, was left open). The proposal was supported by the Community Council and the Rectorial Council.

It was agreed that the aim should be progressed through the Cadw EMS project and that the application will be made by the Rector and Churchwardens/PCC, with advice, assistance and facilitation by Neil Ludlow. In Penally, there already exists a Church School (Penally V(C) School) and the pupils and staff have regular contact with the church, being involved in worship several times a year, doing projects on the church and being visited by the clergy for assemblies etc., while clergy serve on the Board of Governors. The church is much visited by travellers, not just tourists and holidaymakers but also pilgrims, including those bound for Caldey Island. The recently constituted 'Priors and Pilgrims Trail' Trust, which promotes churches in the western half of South Pembrokeshire, have been contacted to enquire whether there is any intention to extend the trail eastwards. Penally is also on the leafleted 'South of the Landsker' heritage trail promoted by PLANED (Pembrokeshire Local Action Network for Enterprise and Development). It lies just outside the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, but much of the parish is within the Park.

However, there is no flourishing local history group and no leader for the project was firmly identified. The Community Councillor, Carol Cavill, originally initiated the Cadw-funded remedial action and remounting of the south transept crosses, but she was unable to lead this particular project. Ongoing correspondence with Mrs Cavill, Revd. Jenkins and Mrs Paley attempted to identify members of the community who may wish to take on, and lead, the project. The possibility of forming a 'Friends' group within the community, or among interlinked communities, was raised, but no firm response was received.

#### *2005-6 progress*

A further meeting was held with Revd. Jenkins and Mrs Paley in June 2005. It was suggested that a meeting should be held at the church, to which all interested members of the community would be invited, in order to generate community involvement and hopefully a committee. In the end, no invitation to address such a committee was received. Moreover, Revd. Jenkins and Mrs Paley appeared to express a desire that any work on the EMS should be kept in-house, and suggested that they place the matter in the hands of their quinquennial architects, Bartosch & Stokes of Cheltenham.

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When Revd. Jenkins and Mrs Paley were again contacted in October 2005 they had passed the matter into the hands of Bartosch & Stokes. No further communication from either party has so far been received.

### **Stage 3 – St Ishmaels**

#### *2004-5 progress*

The situation at St Ishmaels was looking a little more promising. After a slow start, mainly held up because the church was currently without an incumbent, a network of contacts was built up within the community through Cambria's involvement with excavations at Longoar Bay, findspot of the fourth EMS (no PRN). In addition, the Area Dean became interested in the project and helped drive it forward.

A meeting was held, at the church, on 21 March 2004. It had been well-publicised in the community and had an attendance of 10, mainly drawn from the active local history group, but also including the Area Dean, Revd. Dennis Wight, members of the PCC and churchwardens.

It was agreed that the two EMS lying loose in the church should be securely fixed, possibly in the porch, and that Scolton Manor Museum should be approached with a view to returning the third EMS, which would be similarly fixed. In addition, it was agreed that the fourth EMS, from Longoar Bay, currently at NMGW, should also be requested to be returned and fixed. Options for interpretation and display were also discussed.

St Ishmaels Church is currently considering an application for selective restoration of the church fabric, including the porch, and there was general agreement that the EMS component might form part of a wider grant-aid application. The timing of such an application is currently being debated; the churchwarden, Christine Llewellyn, was unhappy about progressing any work at the church until an incumbent was appointed.

However, an EMS 'steering committee' was informally established, and a 'leader' volunteered. A flyer will be sent around the members of the local history group in order to attract more members. General satisfaction was expressed that the project could be progressed, and ideas were raised for increasing community awareness, including an open day, with talks, in Summer 2005.

#### *2005-6 progress*

The community was addressed by Cambria in Summer 2005, but on a separate topic – the ongoing Cadw-funded excavation at West Angle Bay. It was seen as a useful exercise in that it represented a context for the stones and one of a number of interlinked projects within the area that had received a good level of community interest, and support. The question of the EMS was raised on the back of the talk but there was still an unwillingness to progress in the absence of an incumbent. Neither was there evidence that the 'steering committee' was still active.

An incumbent was finally appointed in September 2005. The PCC were contacted regarding progressing the project but felt that the incumbent should be allowed to 'settle in' before addressing the EMS. However, a meeting was pencilled in for January 2006, to which Cambria would be invited to talk on, among other

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subjects including early medieval burial in the locality, the EMS issue, which would hopefully be re-activated. In the end no invitation was forthcoming.

#### **Stage 4**

The objective of this stage of the project was to assist the owners in costing, coordinating and progressing recommendations arising from Stage 3, liaising with community groups etc., resulting in the submission of grant applications to funding bodies such as the Big Lottery Fund 'Awards for All Wales'. However, it was dependent on the success of Stage 3.

#### **The future of the project**

The impasse hanging over Stage 3 was outlined to the National Committee at the biannual meeting at Cadw's headquarters at Nantgarw in December 2005. A discussion ensued as to how best to progress the project. It was agreed that the options at St Ishmaels, and to a lesser extent at Penally, should be kept open, but also that the project should move beyond Pembrokeshire. Dr Nancy Edwards expressed concern over the loose EMS in Henfynyw parish church, Ceredigion.

The Henfynyw EMS (the 'Tigernacus' stone, PRN 1866) is an incomplete Group I Latin-inscribed stone of possible 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> century date. The stone is in two pieces, fractured, and the damaged inscription may be incomplete. It was first mentioned in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when it was fixed over the north door of the church. Until recently, it was built into the east wall of the chancel of the church (PRNs 12397 and 5911), where it had been moved during church restoration in c.1865. However, during a visit to the site in 2004, Dr Edwards noted that the stone was no longer in this location and was apparently loose in the vestry. It was agreed by the committee that stone is at risk and that the next stage of the project should include an approach to the incumbent of the parish to participate in the scheme.