

**Results of Archaeological Assessment at**

# **St. Cybi's Churchyards And Environs**

**NGR SH 24721 82631 (Centre Point)**



**Project Number CR143-2017**



**C.R Archaeology**

Compiled by C. Rees & M. Jones

On Behalf of Isle of Anglesey County Council

## Acknowledgements

C.R Archaeology wish to thank the staff at Anglesey and Bangor University Archives for their all their assistance with our research

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### **Results of Archaeological Assessment at: St. Cybi's Churchyards and Environs, Holyhead**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

1.0.1 C.R Archaeology were instructed by Isle of Anglesey County Council to conduct an archaeological desk based assessment and walkover survey at St. Cybi's Church Graveyards and environs (figure 1).

1.0.2 The site is located within the urban centre of Holyhead town. The St. Cybi's Churchyards and environs, Holyhead site is arguably the most significant site in the town – as is attested by its multiple heritage designations and the associated protections afforded. Caer Gybi Roman Fort (PRN 1762) is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (AN031) and Grade I Listed Building (ID 5415), St. Cybi's Church (PRN's 6915 & 1763) is a Grade I Listed Building (ID 5413), Eglwys y Bedd (PRN 1764) is a Grade II Listed Building (ID 5414) and the Lower Churchyard Wall is separately designated as a Grade II Listed Building (ID 14750). The site is also situated within the Holyhead Town Conservation Area.

1.0.3 There are standing buildings and archaeological remains of national and international significance within the study area. This document details the history and development of the site, and examines the archaeological potential of the three areas within the site: the upper churchyard (within the walls of the Roman Fort), the area to the north of the Roman Fort (currently in use as a carpark), and the lower churchyard.

1.0.4 The potential to encounter archaeological remains within the study area is considered highly likely, and these remains are considered to be of national if not international significance. It is therefore recommended that archaeological mitigation be undertaken as part of any redevelopment scheme.

## **2.0 Project Aims & Objectives**

2.0.1 This programme of works for the proposed development site aimed to undertake a desk based assessment and walkover survey of the site. It also aimed to compile a photographic record of the site and to establish the archaeological potential of the plot.

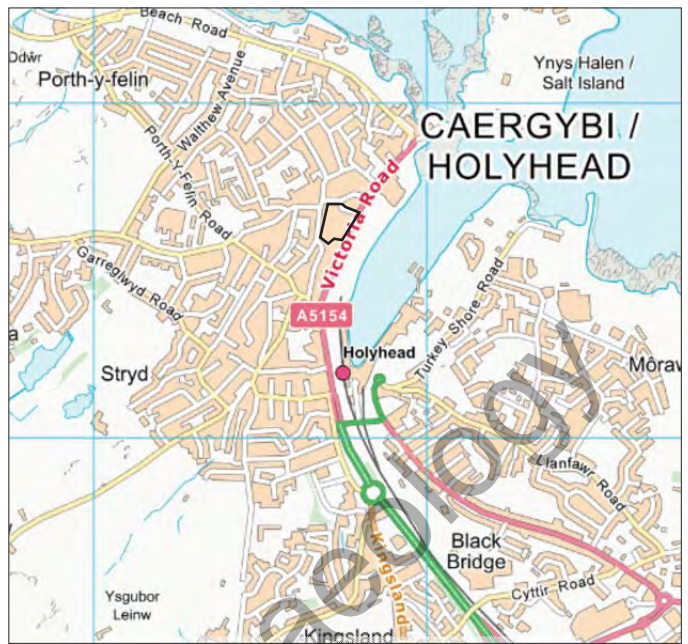
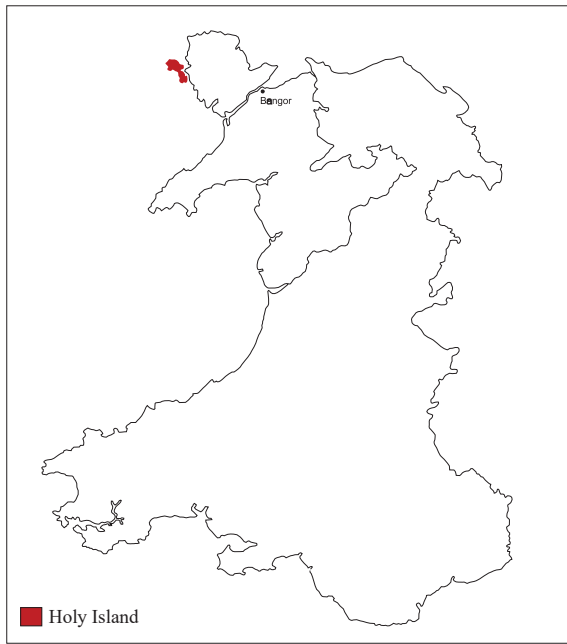
2.0.2 The aim of this scheme of works was to undertake desk based historical research exploring the history/archaeology of the site. The information gathered included a map progression and archival research in order to compile a coherent narrative history of the site and its environs.

2.0.3 The Gwynedd Historic Environment Record (HER), the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments Wales (RCAHMW) database, Cadw, Bangor University and Anglesey Archives and relevant publications were consulted to compile a record of known archaeological sites in the vicinity.

2.0.4 It is intended that this document be utilised to inform both the design of any works at the site and to inform archaeological planning decisions/mitigation at the site.

2.0.5 The objectives of this programme of works were:

- To make full and effective use of existing information to establish the archaeological significance of the site
- To create a photographic record of the site
- To help inform future decision making, design solutions, further evaluation & mitigation strategies



Provided by Isle of Anglesey County Council

**Figure 1. Site Location Map**  
(Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2017)

### **3.0 Scheme of Works - Methodology**

3.0.1 It was proposed that the archaeological works be conducted in two sections and each is detailed separately below.

#### **3.1 Desk Based Research**

3.1.1 A complete and coherent history of the site was compiled utilising material sourced from Gwynedd Historic Environment Records, Anglesey Archives and the Bangor University Archives. This allowed as comprehensive a history as possible to be compiled. A full map progression of the area was undertaken. Where appropriate the archive information was supplemented with information from specialist interest websites & journals. Cadw records were consulted to ascertain any statutory designations attributed to elements within the site boundaries.

3.1.2 In order to identify the character of archaeological remains in the vicinity of the site a search of the Gwynedd HER was conducted examining an area within the site limits.

3.1.3 The works were carried out accordance with the CIfA Standards and Guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (CIfA (Revised 2014)).

3.1.4 This material forms the historical background of this archaeological report which includes the results of the walkover survey.

#### **3.2 Walk Over Survey**

3.2.1 Site visits were conducted on April 28<sup>th</sup> and May 5<sup>th</sup> 2017 and a photographic record was compiled which details all above ground features and illustrates the general topography of the site. Further photographs were taken to illustrate the setting of the site.

##### **3.2.1 Equipment**

3.2.1.1 Photographs were taken using a 14.2 mega-pixel Sony A350 digital camera with a variety of standard and other lenses. Images were captured in RAW format for later processing into high resolution JPG and TIF files.

#### **3.3 Recording of Standing Buildings on Site**

3.3.1 There are a number of standing buildings on the site which have been recorded in detail elsewhere. The primary aim of this project was to examine the churchyard and environs rather than the buildings and to this end they have not been recorded in detail.

#### **3.4 Timetable for Proposed Works**

3.4.1 The walkover survey was undertaken on April 28<sup>th</sup> and May 5<sup>th</sup> 2017. Additional time was allotted for archive research, report compilation and site archiving.

#### **3.5 Staffing**

3.5.1 The project was managed by Catherine Rees (MCIfA, BA (Archaeology), MA (Archaeology) Postgraduate Diploma (Historic Environment Conservation) & Matthew Jones (BA (Archaeology), MA (Archaeology)).

3.5.2 All staff have a skill set equivalent to the CIfA ACIfA/MCIfA level. C.Vs for all staff employed on the project can be provided on request. All projects are carried out in accordance with CIfA *Standard and Guidance* documents.

### **3.6 Monitoring**

3.6.1 The project was not subject to monitoring by Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Services but they were informed of the works taking place and the scope of the project discussed prior to commencement. The draft report will be submitted to Nathan Blanchard at Isle of Anglesey County Council prior to final submission.

### **3.7 Health and Safety**

3.7.1 A risk assessment was conducted prior to the commencement of works and site staff were familiarised with its contents. A first aid kit was located in the site vehicle.

3.7.2 All staff were issued with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the site work. This consisted of:

- Hi-visibility vests (EN471)
- Mobile Telephone (to be kept in site vehicle)
- Steel toe capped boots
- Hard Hat for Building Recording

3.7.3 All site staff have passed at least a CITB health and safety test at least operative level and carry a Construction Related Organisation (CRO) White Card for Archaeological Technician (Code 5363).

### **3.8 The Report**

3.8.1 The report clearly and accurately incorporates information gained from the programme of archaeological works. It presents the documentary evidence gathered in such a way as to create a clear and coherent record. This includes illustrations of cartographic/pictorial sources. The report contains a site plan showing the locations of photographic plates (Appendix A).

3.8.2 The desk-based assessment considered the following:

- the nature, extent and degree of survival of archaeological sites, structures, deposits and landscapes within the study area
- the significance of any remains in their context both regionally and nationally
- the history of the site - including the dates of any buildings on the site
- the potential impact of any proposed development on the setting of known sites of archaeological/historic importance
- the potential for further work with appropriate recommendations

3.8.3 It is intended that this report will inform decisions as to the necessity and/or nature of any further archaeological mitigation strategies which may be required.

3.8.4 A copy of the report in Adobe PDF format will be sent to the appropriate monitoring archaeologist for approval before formal submission. A bound paper copy and PDF digital copy of the report will be submitted to GAPS as part of the formal submission. A digital Adobe PDF version and a bound paper copy of the final report and will be lodged with the Gwynedd Historic Environment Record within six months of completion of fieldwork.

#### **3.8.1 Copyright**

3.8.1.1 C.R Archaeology and sub-contractors shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides a licence to the client and the local authority for the use of the report by the client and the local authority in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project.



## 4.0 Geographical and Geological Context

### 4.1 Topography

4.1.1 The proposed development site is located within the parish of Holyhead Urban and is located between Stanley Street and Victoria Road. The old Market Square was located just outside the south-western corner of the site.

### 4.2 Geology

4.2.1 The bedrock geology at the site is recorded as “New Harbour Group – Mica Schist and Psammite. Metamorphic bedrock formed approximately 542 – 635 million years ago in the Ediacaran Period. Originally sedimentary rocks formed in deep seas. Later altered by low-grade metamorphism. These rocks were first deposited as graded clastic sediments or turbidites in the deep sea, and then later metamorphosed, though there is evidence of their sedimentary origin”.

4.2.2 The superficial geology of the northern part of the site is recorded as “*Till, Devensian - Diamicton. Superficial Deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period. Local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions. Ice age conditions. These rocks were formed in cold periods with Ice Age glaciers scouring the landscape and depositing moraines of till with outwash sand and gravel deposits from seasonal and post glacial meltwaters*” (www.bgs.ac.uk).

## 5.0 Historical Background

5.0.1 The following section has been subdivided to allow for the identification of designated heritage assets. Following the identification of the different site elements a comprehensive history of the development of the site has been compiled which places the various elements within a wider historical narrative.

### 5.1 Designated Heritage Assets

5.1.0 A search of the Gwynedd HER was conducted in order to identify any entries within the development area. There were nine records located within the site boundaries. The entries were:

#### 5.1.1 Sites -

PRN 1762: Roman Fort, Remains of, Holyhead  
PRN 1828: Monastery, site of, Caer Gybi  
PRN 6898: Christian burials beneath Eglwys y Bedd  
PRN 1547: Anglo-Saxon Coin find spot, Caer Gybi  
PRN 1764: Eglwys y Bedd, Holyhead  
PRN 6915: Caergybi Parish Church  
PRN 1763: Caergybi Parish Church

#### 5.1.2 Events –

PRN 40096: Investigations at Holyhead St Cybi Environmental Improvement Scheme  
PRN 40095: Investigations at Holyhead St Cybi Environmental Improvement Scheme Phase 2

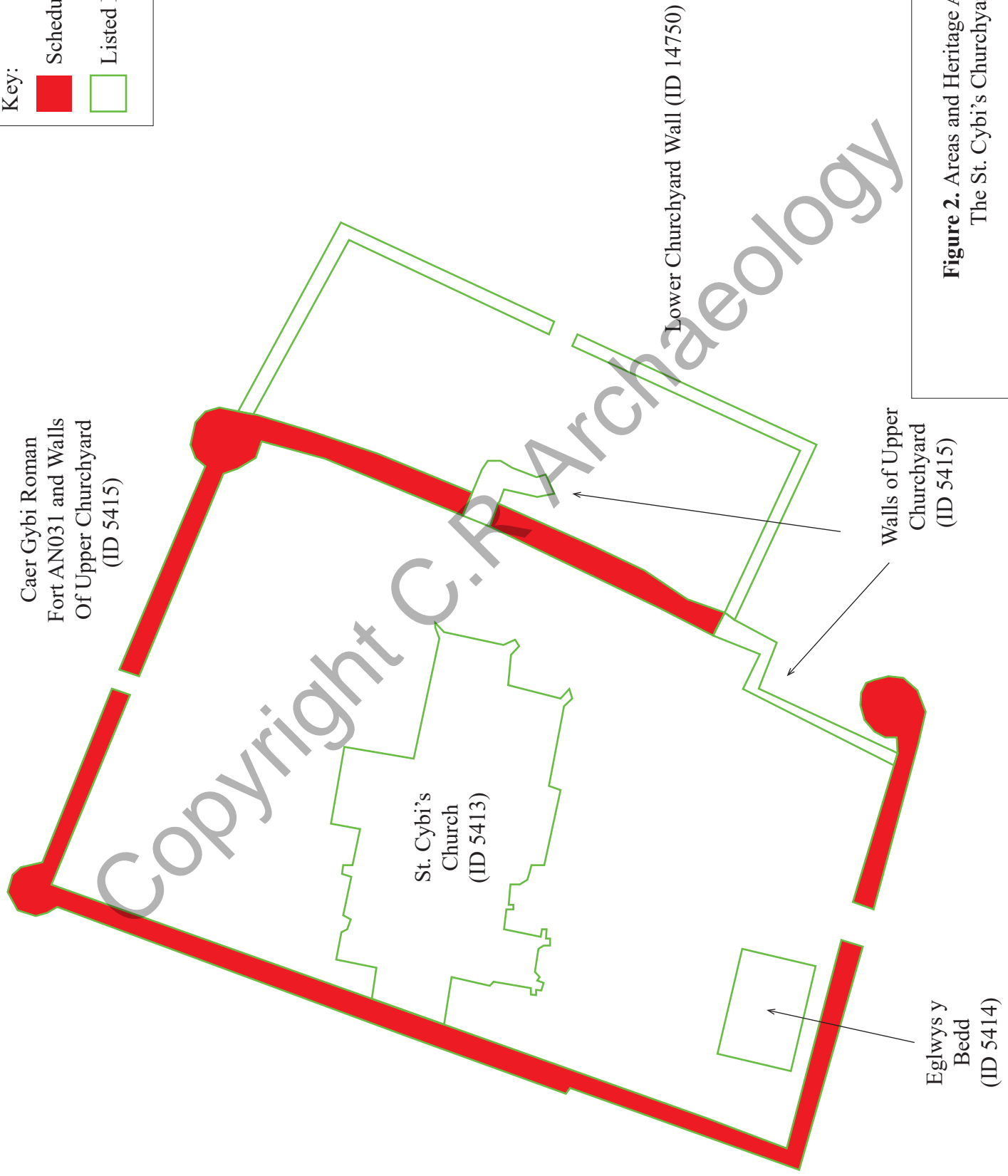
5.1.3 Of these PRN numbers the majority had additional heritage designations:

PRN 1762 – Caer Gybi Roman Fort is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (AN031) and Grade I Listed Building (ID 5415)  
PRN's 6915 & 1763 both relate to St. Cybi's Church which is a Grade I Listed Building (ID 5413)  
PRN 1764 – Eglwys y Bedd is a Grade II Listed Building (ID 5414).

5.1.4 In addition to the Scheduled Ancient Monument and Listed Buildings described above the Lower Churchyard Wall are also separately designated as a Grade II Listed Building (ID 14750).

Key:

- █ Scheduled Ancient Monument
- █ Listed Building



**Figure 2. Areas and Heritage Assets Within The St. Cybi's Churchyard Area**

## **5.2 The Early Development of Holyhead – Overview of Prehistoric – Medieval Activity**

5.2.1 The town and port of Holyhead lie in the area of the parish defined as Holyhead Urban. This area is described in the 1937 Royal Commission of Ancient and Historical Monuments as containing only limited structures of historic interest, namely the Roman Fort of Caer Gybi, the Parish Church of St Gybi, and the Chapel known as Eglwys-y-Bedd (RCAHMW 1937: 28). The town of Holyhead originally clustered around the aforementioned fort of Caer Gybi and the sixth century church of St Cybi was founded within the fort walls. The current church was built during the thirteenth century and it is believed that Edward I stayed at the fort in 1283 (Wheeler 1923).

5.2.2 Within the wider area of the Holyhead Parish, defined as Holyhead Rural, there are a number of monuments of much greater antiquity and important sites from a variety of periods. The earliest of these sites is the Neolithic burial chamber at Trefignath, approximately a mile to the south-east of Holyhead town. Other prehistoric monuments include a number of cairns on Holyhead Mountain and there is a concentration of Iron Age activity in the parish which includes the hut circles at Ty Mawr, Holyhead Mountain and the hillfort and Roman Watchtower at Cae Y Twr. An important early medieval chapel dedicated to St. Bride with associated cemetery is located at Towyn-Y-Capel (RCAHMW 1937:22-28).

5.2.3 The aforementioned site list is by no means exhaustive and the sites are not discussed in any great detail. They have been included merely to provide a context for the urban area whose earlier remains are likely to have been destroyed by later development.

5.2.4 The following section will discuss the earlier history of the site and its monuments in chronological order beginning with the earliest known structure in Holyhead – Caer Gybi Roman Fort.

### **5.2.1 Caer Gybi Roman Fort (AN031)**

5.2.1.1 The following description is taken from the Cadw Scheduled Ancient Monument summary text: *“The monument consists of the remains of a Roman fort. It is sub-rectangular and measures approximately 75m by 45m. The interior is occupied by St Cybi's church and associated graveyard. The fort lies on a low cliff which would originally have fronted the shore; the east side of the fort which faces the shore is open and there is evidence to show that the north and south walls once continued east towards the water's edge. The remaining part of the fort on top of the cliff occupies 0.32ha; the walls are about 4m high and 1.5m thick. The north wall is the best preserved and shows details of a rampart walk and parapet, the former being about 1m wide. Two rows of putlog holes are also visible, the upper row being 1.5m above the lower. A narrow entrance in the centre of this wall is probably a late insertion. A car park occupies the area outside the north wall. The church tower is built against the west wall on the inside of the fort, whereas on the outside the south part has been built against and the north part is free-standing. The south wall is also largely built against, but in the centre there is a fine double arched entrance which, although rebuilt, is probably original. There was originally a tower at each of the four corners. The south west tower is mostly destroyed and hidden by modern buildings. The north east and south east towers have been largely rebuilt in late medieval or modern times, though they are Roman at the base. The north-west tower survives in its original form. The foundations of the north-east tower start at the base of the cliff and the remains of a wall running east are bonded into this tower. The east side is a fairly level cliff face supplemented with a stone retaining wall, which contains a relieving arch at the south end. A modern churchyard wall stands on top of the cliff. The position of this site on a low sea-side cliff, together with the suggestion of an enclosed quay, and its similarity with Roman coastal forts in general, have given rise to its interpretation as a late Roman coastal fort. Although there is no direct dating evidence from the site, indications from recent excavations on Roman forts elsewhere in Wales - notably at Cardiff, Loughor and Neath - have demonstrated a definite pattern of late third-century coastal defence. Caer Gybi may well have been part of such a consolidated network, defending the Welsh coast from Irish*

raiders. It may have been linked with the late Roman watchtower of *Caer y Twr*, and a possible second example on *Carmel Head*. The monument is of national importance for its potential to enhance our knowledge of Roman military organisation. The monument forms an important element within the wider context of the Roman occupation of Wales and the structures may contain well preserved archaeological evidence concerning chronology, layout and building techniques. The scheduled area comprises the remains described and areas around them within which related evidence may be expected to survive”.

5.2.1.2 There is a note of a significant discovery of a hoard of 10 or 12 coins of Constantine being made on the eastern side of the fort in 1820. There are no further details known and the report was written over a hundred years after the discovery was made. The current location of the coins is unknown (Baynes 1929: 27).

5.2.1.3 As mentioned in the Scheduling document the fort would likely have been one element within a more extensive system of coastal defences along the north coast of Anglesey. In his investigation of this hypothesis Crew (1981: 35) writes “*The field of view from Holyhead Mountain and Pen Bryn yr Eglwys encompasses a substantial proportion of the Irish Sea and Liverpool Bay and it is feasible that these two watch towers together with Caer Gybi, formed an independent element in the defences of the west coastline. However, the intriguing possibility arises that there may have been a more comprehensive system along the North Wales coast, linking to Chester*”.

5.2.1.4 Of relevance to the attribution of a contemporary Roman date to the Holyhead Mountain site were the excavations by Crew during which 3/4<sup>th</sup> century pottery was recovered. Crew also discovered a hoard of 24 coins dated from the mid 390’s (ibid).

5.2.1.5 The Pen Bryn yr Eglwys site was examined by Jones (2009) who concluded that the earthwork at the site was comparable with known watch tower sites and locations, and was likely to have been part of a wider system of monuments. This was confirmed by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust excavations in 2012 which uncovered a roughly square structure with a few stray finds of Roman pottery ([www.heneb.co.uk/cadwprojs/cadwreview2012-13/fieldevaluation12-13.html](http://www.heneb.co.uk/cadwprojs/cadwreview2012-13/fieldevaluation12-13.html)).

## **5.2.2 Archaeological Excavations Within and Adjacent to the Roman Fort**

5.2.2.1 Limited excavations have been carried out both inside, and immediately outside the fort area (see figure 3). The earliest excavation was carried out by W. E Griffiths on behalf of the Ministry of Works in 1952. The work had two objectives: (i) to determine whether there had been a ditch outside the north wall of the fort, and (ii) to examine the north-west tower. The following text is taken from Griffiths’ account of his work and was published in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* in 1954. The results of this work are of significance both to our understanding of the Roman Fort and as an indication of the potential survival of archaeological remains from later periods which were also encountered during his excavations.

5.2.2.2 “A trench 6ft wide was cut at right angles to the outer face of the north wall 28ft east of the modern gateway which is situated at approximately the middle of the wall. The trench was carried out for 50ft to the north; it was deemed unnecessary to extend beyond this point since the outfall of a ditch lying more than 50ft in front of the wall would have been visible in the face of the cliff to the east (the remainder of the cliff is revetted with modern walling and not visible for inspection). The upper layers in the trench consisted of the stone foundations and slab floors of cottages, with much debris, piping, nineteenth century pottery, etc. At a depth of 2ft the undisturbed subsoil of hard brownish clay containing much splintered shale was encountered; the base of the north wall of the fort lay on this. Apart from the slight trenches and disturbances caused by the laying of drainage pipes in modern times, this was unbroken in the whole extent of the trench, and there was no trace of the existence of a former ditch.

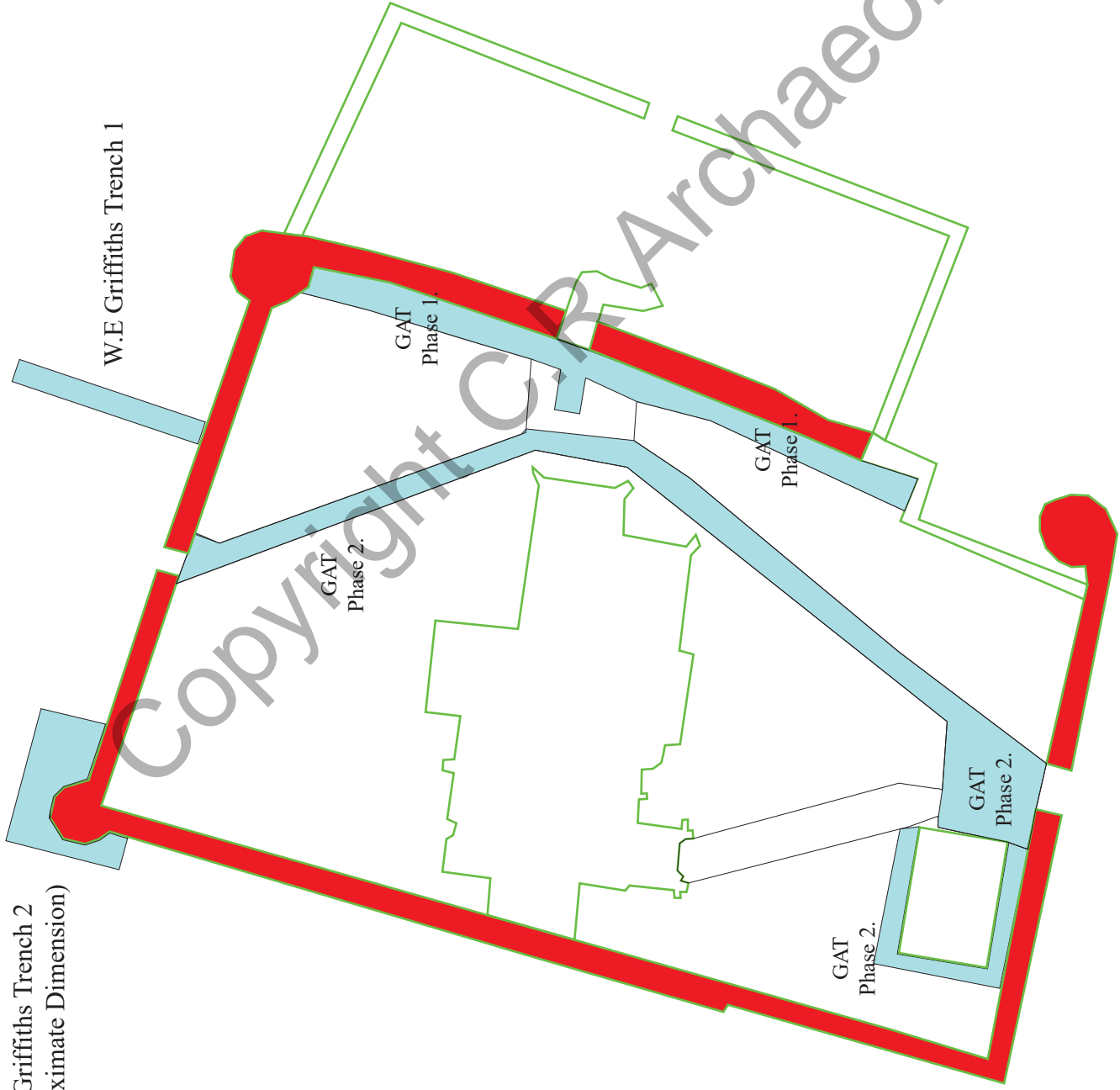
Key:



Scheduled Ancient Monument



Listed Building



**Figure 3 (Left).** Areas of Archaeological Investigation Associated with St. Cybi's Churchyard Area

**Figure 4 (Above).** Silver Penny of King Edward the Martyr (975-78) (Source: Dolley & Knight 1970)

5.2.2.3 *The north-west tower is an unusual construction. It is a three-quarter round tower 12ft high and 15ft in external diameter, hollow in the northern half and bonded into the north and west walls of the fort at the points of junction. The outer face of the north wall of the fort continues in a straight line to form the north face of the solid part of the tower; herring-bone masonry, which characterises the original work everywhere in the fort, is clearly visible in this face. The northern half of the tower is largely destroyed; a short length of its arc on the west, where it adjoins the solid portion of the tower, remains to a height of 12ft, but the remainder of the walling (2 ft 6in thick) is no more than four courses high, and in places only a single course remains. At the point of the junction at the eastern end of the arc only two courses survive which are clearly bonded into the fort wall, and higher up the outer face of this wall bonding stones can be seen protruding at intervals.*

5.2.2.4 *To the north of the tower a stony ridge of ground suggested the former existence of some structure, and the area was accordingly trenched. The ridge itself consisted of the destroyed footings of a modern wall that formerly abutted against this side of the tower. At a lower level, however, an older wall was found, abutting against the outer face of the tower with a straight joint. The wall ran northwards in a straight line for 5ft 6in, beyond which point it was entirely destroyed by modern disturbance. The wall was 2ft thick and similar in construction to the fort wall, though no herring-bone masonry was visible; the mortar contained the pounded tile characteristic of that in the fort and tower walls. The foundation course of the wall lay on undisturbed clay at the same level as the base of the tower; adjoining the latter four courses were preserved, but beyond the angle only two courses, and for the greater part of the wall running east only a single course. Adjoining the tower the top of the wall lay at a depth of 2ft and its base at a depth of 4ft; the wall running east lay progressively nearer the surface owing to the slope of the ground in this direction. The purpose of this structure is unknown, as also is its date, though it does not appear to be markedly later than the north-west tower.*

5.2.2.5 *The south-west tower, which is almost entirely built up within modern houses, was not examined” (Griffiths 1954: 113-116).*

5.2.2.6 Griffiths was unable to find any precise parallels for the Holyhead tower in the UK, although he noted some similarity with the fort in Cardiff. He did however state that the hollow half-round tower was fairly common in late Roman work on the continent, and cited examples at Alzei, Strasbourg and Le Mans. He was also unable to find other examples of the curious rectangular structure which he uncovered. Again he turned to the continent - referencing a rectangular structure outside the north wall of the late Roman fort at Eining on the Danube, and a rectangular structure at the fort in Jublains, Northern France. Neither sites are exact parallels as the towers in question are rectangular rather than round and Griffiths concludes “*at neither place is the purpose of the additions clear. The search for parallels should not, however, lead us to forget that the Roman date of Caer Gybi is still not beyond doubt*” (ibid: 116).

5.2.2.7 Although no finds are noted in the excavation report, a significant artefact was found during contemporary Ministry of Works to conserve the Roman fort walls. A silver penny of King Edward the Martyr (975-78) was found in June 1952, and was recorded as having been found “*lying close to the inside face of the Roman wall, a short distance south of the north-west angle at a depth of about 2ft below the present surface, in the churchyard filling*”. The coin is shown in figure 4 and is interpreted as damaged but relatively unworn and had probably been a chance loss in connection with the Scandinavian raiding of the North Wales coast – see below (Dolley & Knight 1970: 80-81).

5.2.2.8 Excavations were conducted by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust in 1992 in association with consolidation works to the churchyard area. The works were conducted in two phases, the first of which concentrated on the area separating the upper and lower churchyards. The second phase monitored the laying of replacement paving and the construction of walling associated with new paths in the upper churchyard. The excavation of a lighting connection duct across the graveyard was also conducted (Gruffydd 1992 a & b).

5.2.2.9 The first phase was undertaken as a watching brief whilst contractors constructed a new path along the eastern edge of the upper churchyard and the excavation of underlying deposits following the removal of steps connecting the upper and lower churchyards. This excavation was conducted down to the base of the foundations of the new replacement steps. Only the upper part of the flight of steps was examined as the lower half lay outside the extent of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (Gruffydd 1992a: 1).

5.2.2.10 The churchyard path was recorded as a c.1m wide strip along the eastern edge of the upper churchyard. The topsoil was removed to a depth of 0.20m. During these works a number of nineteenth century gravestones had to be removed and were later reincorporated into the path surface. Following the topsoil removal, the upper foundations of the removed headstones were visible but the works revealed no archaeological features. The material culture was entirely nineteenth and twentieth century in date (ibid).

5.2.2.11 The second phase of works was larger in scope but once more was predominately a watching brief. Where it was conducted on new pathways, as in the first phase, the maximum depth of the excavation was 0.20m and only modern material was encountered (Gruffydd 1992b).

5.2.2.12 Excavations around Eglwys Y Bedd yielded significant results, and different phases of activity were uncovered around the chapel. An area of stone paving was uncovered in the corridor between the southern wall of Eglwys Y Bedd and the Roman fort wall at a depth of approximately 0.4m. It butted against both the fort wall and the wall of Eglwys Y Bedd, as did a second layer of paving which lay immediately below the upper paving. The trench was extended around the west of the building which uncovered further information about the small church (ibid). These works will be discussed in section 5.4.1 which specifically discusses Eglwys Y Bedd.

5.2.2.13 The results of the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust works in the churchyard were limited in scope, and the majority of the excavation depths did not exceed 0.2m. Where the works did extend beyond this it was clear that the current ground level has built up at a rapid rate since the nineteenth century and gravestones of nineteenth century date buried at a depth of 0.5m. It is unknown how representative this is of the site as a whole - but given the rapid population expansion seen in Holyhead during the later nineteenth century it would seem likely that it is entirely representative.

### 5.3 Early Medieval Use of Gaer Gybi Fort

5.3.1 Continuity of use between the end of the Roman period c.410 A.D and the establishment of an Early Christian Monastic settlement is little understood, due in no small part to the later continuation of the site as an ecclesiastic centre and the repeated use of the site as a burial ground. There is however a narrative of the native populations fighting off Irish raiders who were said to have dominated the island until they were defeated c.500 A.D by the chieftain Caswallon Law Hir at the battle of Cerrig y Gwyddyl (Hughes & Williams 1967: 15).

5.3.2 Traditional stories record how the Roman fort at Caer Gybi and its vicinity were the encampment of a band of Irish Picts under the leadership of a giant named Sirigi. Caswallon slew Sirigi in battle and his body was buried in a shrine on the south side of the fort, in the spot now occupied by the Church vestry. Hughes and Williams record that when the building on this location was removed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century a stone coffin was found under an arch in the north side of the chancel which contained the bones of a very large man. This was believed to be the shrine of Sirigi, who was canonised by the Irish. The bones were taken for burial in Ireland and the old vestry which stands on the site is named Eglwys y Bedd (the Church of the Grave) or Capel Llan y Gwyddel - the Chapel of the Irishman (ibid 16). It is interesting to note that, depending on when one believes Cybi founded the monastery at the site this legend potentially predates his arrival in Holyhead, and it is possible that there was an established religious community of some form here prior to his involvement with the site.

5.3.3 The story of Caswallon Law Hir is expanded upon in Jackson's 1853 Visitor's Handbook to Holyhead which records "*About A.D 389 the Irish under the command of Serigi (the Rover) landed in Anglesey and having defeated the natives took possession of the Island. On this invasion Caswallon Llaw Hir (or the longhanded) Prince of Wales came to the relief of Mona and having routed the enemy, pursued them to Holyhead where their fleet lay; here they fought a second battle in which Caswallon slew Serigi the Irish commander with his own hand. It is said that in this action the tribe of Caswallon put the fetters of their horses upon their own legs by two and two to show their determination was*

*"Their country, parents, children save  
Or fill one great and glorious grave"*

5.3.4 *The few records we have concerning Caswallon Llaw Hir delineate the great man and the hero. He was the eldest son of Einion Yrth, sovereign of North Wales. The Triads record him with Rhiwallon, son of Urier and Belyn as the chiefs of the three golden banded tribes. In consequence of the signal bravery of the people of Caswallon, in the great battle of Holyhead, their leader obtained a privilege of wearing the golden bands which denoted that no other power had jurisdiction there except the voice of the national diet assembled on extraordinary occasions. After this conquest a chapel was erected within the fortification of Holyhead over Serigi called Eglwys y Bedd ie the church of the grave. This church was afterwards endowed with distinct revenues from those of the Collegiate Church as appears by the College leases it was called in the British manuscript Capel Llan y Gwyddel or the Chapel of the Irishman. At length it fell into ruin and remained disused for ages and was ultimately removed in order to render the way to the church more commodious. In digging the workmen found a stone coffin or chest under an arch in the north side of the chancel with human bones of a prodigious size. Serigi was canonized by his countrymen and had in this chapel a shrine which seems to have been held in exceedingly high repute for several very wonderful qualities and cures but according to an old Irish chronicle it was carried off by some Irish rovers and deposited in the Cathedral of Christ Church Dublin from whence they were removed with many others after the reformation to a place not far from Dublin where the relics that could be preserved from that universal destruction are still kept".*



5.3.5 The association with Cybi or Kebius is generally dated to around 550 A.D and the following account is again taken from the work of Hughes and Williams. *“It was probably about 550 A.D, when a holyman and his disciples arrived at a huddle of dwellings nestling in the shadow of the deserted Roman fort. His name was Kebius, and he was said to have been the son of Selyf, a Cornish chieftain. Kebius had travelled far, leaving a trail of churches to mark his route but he was to settle in the little community in Anglesey. Caswallon’s son, Maelgwyn Gwynedd gave the monk sanctuary within the fort walls to establish a monastic settlement, and the community gained the name Caergybi”* (ibid: 17).

5.3.6 Pennant gives a slightly different account of Eglwys y Bedd and it has been transcribed in full: *“near the church stood, in old times, a chapel called Eglwys y Bedd, or the church of the grave: and Capel Llan y Gwyddel, or chapel of the Irishman. Sirigi, a king of the Irish Picts, invaded this country, and was here slain by Caswallon Law Hir, or Caswallon the long handed, who reigned about the year 440. Sirigi was canonised by his countrymen, and had in this chapel a shrine, in high repute for many miracles. This place had distinct revenues from the collegiate church. At length it fell to ruin, and was disused for ages. In removing the rubbish, not many years ago, a stone coffin was found with bones of stupendous size; but we must not suppose these to have been the reliques of Sirigi; which had been carried away by some Irish rovers, and deposited in the cathedral of Christ Church in Dublin”* (Pennant 1883 edition: Volume III 72).

5.3.7 Pennant’s account of the founding of the church differs from some other accounts and he dates the founding of the monastery to 380 A.D based on the work of Tanner. He also states that although the college may have been founded by Maelgwyn Gwynedd in 580, there are other sources which attribute it to Hwfa ap Cynddelw - Lord of Llys Llifon and a contemporary with Owen Gwynedd. Pennant adds *“the head of the college was called Penclas or Pencolas and was one of the spiritual lords of Anglesey; the archdeacon of the isle was one; the abbot of Penmon the other. His Latin title was Rector, as appears by the ancient seal, inscribed Sigillum Rectoris et Capituli Ecclesia de Caer Gybi”* (Pennant 1883 edition: Volume III 70).

5.3.8 In his 1786 work *“Antiquities of England and Wales,”* Francis Grose gives a little more information about the early founding of the Christian settlement *“Maelgwyn Gwynedd, who lived about A.D. 580, is said to have founded a college here. This Prince was styled ‘Draco Insularis.’ Perhaps the dragon engraven on the church may allude to him. Others assert that the founder of this college was Hwfa Cynddelew, Lord of Llys Lliven in this island, and of one of the fifteen tribes who lived in the time of Griffith-ap-Conan, Prince of North Wales, and Owen, his son, about the former part of the twelfth century. It certainly was in being before the year 1291, because it was rated in the Lincoln taxation”* (Grose 1786).

5.3.9 The following extract is taken from a pamphlet entitled *“A Record of St. Cybi’s Church, Holyhead and the Sermon preached after its Restoration, 1879”* which was written by Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (1897). It provides a little more context as to the role of the settlement at Caer Gybi in relation to other early Christian sites on Anglesey. *“Holyhead or St. Cybi became the centre for all these chapels, and there priests and holy men could assemble in conference and also preach the Word of God. “Most of these saints had their Nauddvan or Sanctuaries, in ancient times supported by certain tenures and lands which were held of neither Prince nor Lord, but of certain saints or patrons of churches calling themselves abbots. Of these there were seven in Anglesey that were entitled (in capite) to several tenures, viz.: St. Beuno, St. Cybi, St. Cadwallader, St. Peirio, St. Cyngar, St. Marcutus or Mechell, St. Elian, this last being largely endowed in land. These tenures were so bestowed in order that places of refuge or sanctuaries might be provided, and that the persons taking refuge therein might have their privileges and rights preserved and kept inviolate”*.

5.3.10 Following the death of Cybi he was canonised and a shrine containing his relics was set up in the church forming an important place of pilgrimage and was a key source of income for the establishment.

5.3.11 Warfare in society was endemic and the earlier raiding faced by the town continued with Irish, Picts, Danes and Saxons attacking the North Wales coast. Holyhead was a convenient landing place for the enemy and was the scene of violent encounters between the Welsh and incoming invaders. In AD 914 the men of Dublin destroyed Holyhead and ravaged the Isle of Anglesey and in AD 958 Abloic King of Ireland burnt Holyhead and spoiled the country (Jackson 1853). It is believed that the coin mentioned in section 5.2.2 was lost during one of these raids.

5.3.12 Hughes and Williams also mention the later raids and use linguistic evidence to show the links with the old Norse of the incomers – Anglesey is stated as deriving from “*Ongul*” meaning straits, and *skerries* and *stack* are both Scandinavian in origin. They state “*how many times Caergybi was pillaged we do not know but there is a record that it was sacked in 961 A.D by two Danish Irish pirates bearing the picturesque names of Iron Knee and Sitric the Silken Beard. However droll their names these two leaders and their followers would be visitors whom the settled communities would dread to meet; Sictric’s beard would undoubtedly be the only silken aspect of his personality. Standing in the peaceful shelter of St. Cybi’s churchyard today it is difficult to imagine that Sitric and Iron Knee also stood there many years ago looking with satisfaction at the burning buildings*”. “*Again in 987 Anglesey was subjected to widespread and brutal raids and we can only assume that the survivors returned to their shattered homes and ravaged fields*” (Hughes & Williams 1967: 17 - 18).

5.3.13 There are no contemporary accounts of the monastic settlement at the site and as yet no trace of it has been found. It would almost certainly have been a wooden structure, with the cells of the monks indistinguishable from those of the villagers. It may well be the case that later activity has wiped out all traces of this phase of occupation but it is possible that there are scattered remains surviving on the site, although given the increase in the ground level of the site it is unlikely that they would be encountered unless excavations were undertaken to a considerable depth.

## 5.4 Caer Gybi in the Medieval Period

5.4.1 The earliest surviving internal structure at Caer Gybi dates from this period, and the Medieval church of St. Cybi was built in 13th century. It was later altered and enlarged in the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16th and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The oldest part of the church is the Chancel, which was predominantly built in the 15th century on 13th century foundations.

5.4.2 The building is a Grade I Listed Building (ID 5413) and was listed as an example of “*an outstanding Late Medieval church in North Wales*”. It has Group value with Capel y Bedd (Grade II Listed, ID 5414) and the Upper Churchyard walls (Grade I Listed, ID 5415). The following text has been taken from the Cadw Listed Building description:

### 5.4.3 “*History*”

*Church traditionally founded by St Cybi within the walls of a fort of the late Roman period. Present building dates mainly from late C15/early C16 rebuilding. Late C15 chancel incorporating C13 masonry; transepts (circa 1480), N aisle (circa 1500), S aisle and porch with stair turret (circa 1520). C17 tower. Early C19 vestry to N of tower. Restoration of 1877-1879 by Sir Gilbert Scott. South (Stanley) chapel of 1896-97.*

# HOLY HEAD

The Parish Church of

## ST. CYBI

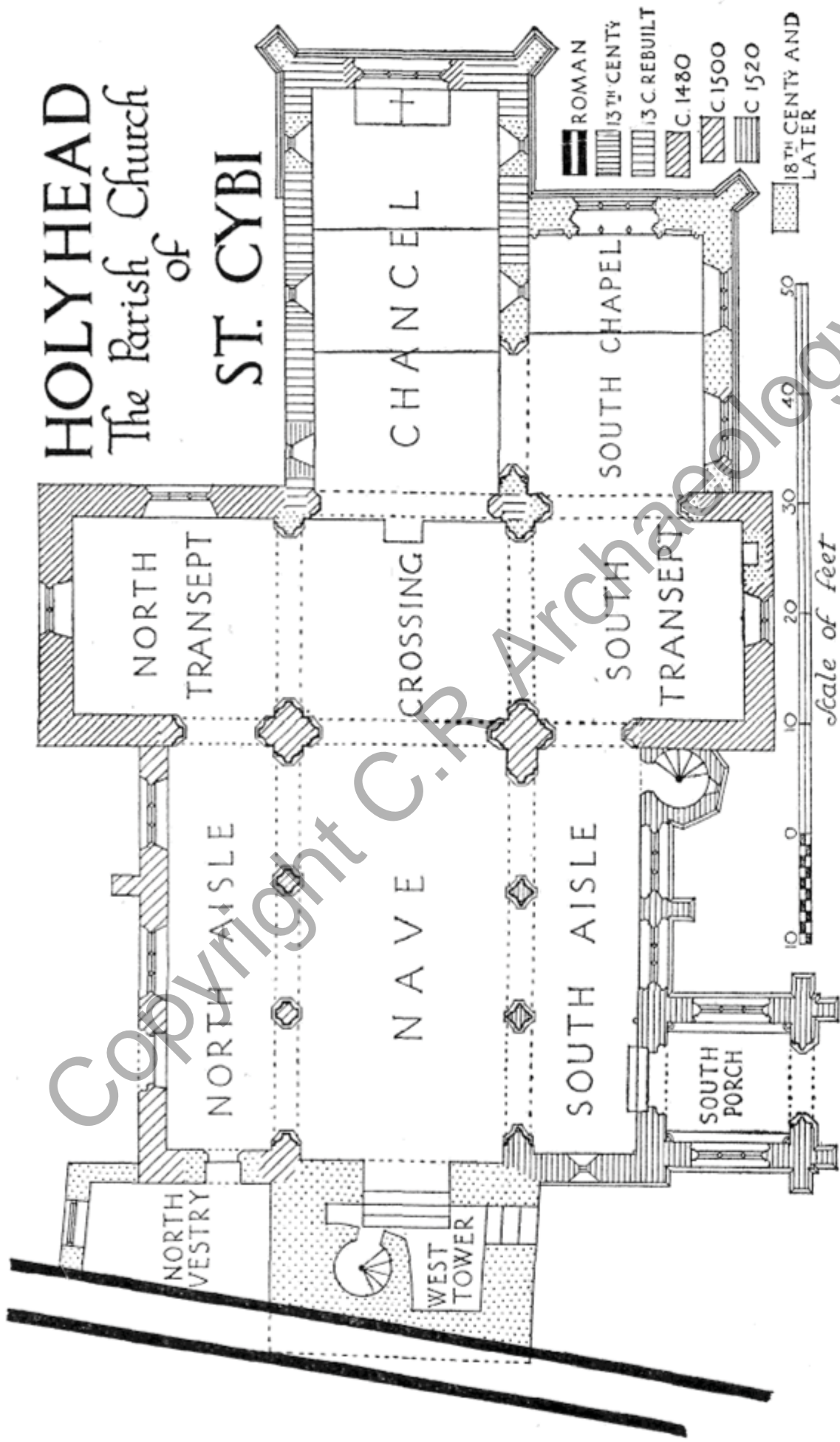


Figure 5. Building Phases at the Parish Church of St. Cybi (Source: RCAHMW 1963: 29)

#### 5.4.4 Exterior

*“Brown stone; mainly late Perpendicular style with battlemented parapets. Two-stage W tower has pyramidal roof (C18 weather vane dated 1753), embattled parapet, louvred openings to upper stage, square-headed doorway to S. Elaborate south porch has battlemented parapets, stepped buttresses with finials to E and W angles, moulded string courses and plinth, 4-centred doorway with traceried spandrels; E and W windows with 4-centred arches, 3 lights of 5-foil ogee heads, tracery over; transom with cusped lights below. Entrance doorway 4-centred with hoodmould and decorated frame (carved decoration to spandrels includes heraldic shield). Wall above doorway has elaborate relief carving including a trinity beneath tiered canopy, to each side, arms of Llywarch ap Bran (to R in wreath of twisted cord), rest of wall has panels of tracery designs enclosed by arch of trefoil cusping. Fan vaulting (of 1877-79) carried by angle shafts with moulded capitals and bases (S side), and angle niches (N side). S aisle has 2 windows each of 3 trefoil lights, perpendicular tracery heads. In angle between aisle and S transept, polygonal stair turret with (C19) steep pyramidal roof, band of quatrefoil decoration below, slit windows. South transept has battlemented parapet (finials to angles) with sculptural reliefs including angel, lions, mitred heads, fantastic beasts; band of sunk quatrefoil decoration below. Two-light window has trefoil lights; between window and gable, sundial (dated 1813). South chapel (1896-7) has 2 broad 2-light windows to S (W of these C16 moved from chancel), and broad 3-light window to E. Lancet at return to chancel. E end of chancel, E end of chancel has diagonal buttresses (C19) and window (2-centred arch) of three cusped lights with intersecting tracery in head, hoodmould over. N wall of chancel has two lancets, and small C16 window with segmental head. North transept has battlemented parapets; to E, 4-centred window with 3 trefoiled lights; to N, 4-centred window with 2 trefoiled lights. North aisle has two 3-cusped light windows with perpendicular tracery; N doorway with 4-centred arch. Small vestry in angle between aisle and tower. Stanley chapel (to S of chancel) Italian marble monument with angles and effigy by Hamo Thorneycroft. Window by Morris & Co, designed by Sir E Burne-Jones Roofs restored 1813-14, and 1877-79, mostly re-using old moulded timbers.*

#### 5.4.5 Interior

*Nave of 3 bays, 4-centred arches (S arcade at higher level). Round arch to tower. Four-centred arches to transepts and crossing. Rough semi-circular chancel arch. E wall of N transept has late C15 painting of Tudor rose. In S transept reset C12 stones with chevrons ([www.cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=en&id=5413](http://www.cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=en&id=5413))*

5.4.5 During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the church in Wales was restructured to bring it into the wider system of its counterparts in England. It was given a territorial framework of diocese, archdeanery and parish. There was a bishop established at Bangor from at least 1120, and archdeacons and rural deans had been established in the diocese by 1254. It is of particular interest to note that in the Valuation of Norwich (dated 1254) Caergybi and its 3 chapels are absent. This may be due to the church avoiding the new system in the early years and having native Welsh Patronage. This is evidenced by Gruffudd ap Cynan bequeathing money to the clasau on his death in 1137 (Carr 2011: 211-212).

5.4.6 The patronage of Caergybi Church was an interesting system and Carr describes the system. *“Holyhead had become a collegiate church with a chapter consisting of a provost and twelve canons. The right of presentation was vested in the kindreds of Hwfa ap Cynddelw and Llywarch ap Bran which dominated that part of Anglesey. This was a relic of the pre-Norman pattern in which lay and ecclesiastical property rights were inextricably mixed and local kindreds often had what amounted to property rights in the mother churches. It had been suggested the Hwfa and Llywarch themselves had held the lands from which tithes were due to Caerbybi and that they and that they may have been the re-founders and re-builders of the church in the twelfth century. Their sons gav their names yto gwelyau and according to two fifteenth-century documents the descendants of three of the sons of Llywarch, presented totwo canonries each and those of five sons of Hwfa to one each; the last one*

was shared by the descendants of two of the five. By that time the right to present in each case was divided among a large number of heirs since it was, like any advowson, a piece of real property” (Carr 2011 219-220).

5.4.7 Following the English conquest of Wales (1277 – 1283) the system of local patronage and the preferment of royal clerks existed side-by-side. Carr points out that this would have been a difficult situation and that “*there seems to have been no such thing as a community and the chapter can never have met*”. He states that the provostship was undoubtedly in demand and that in 1353 the bishop of St. Asaph had tried to obtain the advowson from the crown and in exchange had offered all his temporalities in the lordship of Denbigh (Carr 2011 221 – 222).

5.4.8 The round towers on the seaward side of the Roman fort are believed to have been strengthened during the Edwardian period (although the southern tower was completely rebuilt in the late nineteenth century). Edward I visited the church in 1283 and it speculated that he commissioned this work. This is mentioned by Mortimer Wheeler in his study of the fort where he writes “*These bastions were obsolete, if not ruinous when, during the middle ages, those of special importance (on the seaward side) were entirely rebuilt as hollow drum towers on a considerably larger scale. Moreover the original walls were presumably ancient in 1283, when, on the August 4<sup>th</sup>, Edward I dated letters from “Castrum Cuby”. It is not unlikely that the drum towers date from Edward’s active regime*” (Wheeler 1923: 99).

5.4.9 During the rebellion of Owain Glyn Dwr and the Welsh War of Independence (1400 -1415) Anglesey was seen as being of particular strategic importance as a major source of food to feed the troops. It was seized by brothers Gwilym and Rhys ap Tudur in the opening years of the war which sparked devastating counter attacks from Henry IV (Davies 2009). Of particular relevance to Caer-gybi was in 1405 when a fleet led by Henry IV travelled from Dublin and attacked and pillaged the island before returning to Ireland. As punishment for supporting the Welsh uprising St. Cybi’s Shrine was taken from the church and placed in the church of the Most Holy Trinity in Dublin where it was preserved until 1538, when it was consigned to the flames by the order of Archbishop Brown (Shearman 1876: 95).

5.4.10 In January 1406 over 350 soldiers landed at Beaumaris and the English king slowly regained control over the island. In November representatives of the island met the king’s commissioners to plead for pardon on behalf of the population of the island. This was granted but enormous fines were paid to the king (Davies 2009).

5.4.11 The rebuilding and embellishment of churches in the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries is described by Carr (1995: 130 – 131) as an indicator of prosperity and links the rebuilding of the collegiate churches of Clynnog Fawr and Holyhead. He does however offer the proviso that this was not a period of profound religious devotion, and that religion for many was a matter of habit, indeed he goes as far as to describe Welsh religious communities as “*moribund*” on the eve of the reformation.

#### **5.4.1 Eglwys y Bedd**

5.4.1.1 Eglwys y Bedd (PRN 1764, ID 5414) is a Grade II Listed Building. It stands in the south-western corner of the churchyard of St. Cybi. The Listing description records “*Nave of C14 church converted to school in 1748. Also known as Capel. Llan-y-Gwyddel, and Old Vestry*”. The exterior is described as “*Grey stone, slate roof. Former chancel arch to E (now blocked) 2 continuous moulded orders, inserted doorway; to N, 2 square windows. To W, window (C14?) originally 2 lights, with moulded jambs and label; head of blocked C15/C16 doorway below*” ([www.cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=en&id=5414](http://www.cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=en&id=5414)).

5.4.1.2 The ruined chapel was to become the first free school in Holyhead when it opened in 1748. A short account of this is provided in Stanley's pamphlet of 1879: "*The ruins of the chapel (Capel Llan-y-Gwyddel) mentioned as standing south of St. Cybi's Church, within the enclosure, were converted into a public school by Chancellor Edward Wynn, LL.D., of Bodewryd in Anglesey, who by bond, bearing date November 25th, 1748, endowed it with a capital of £120; "the interest whereof is to be paid annually on the 24th November to a schoolmaster, who is to teach six poor boys of the town to read and write"*".

5.4.1.3 As mentioned above, Excavations around Eglwys Y Bedd yielded significant results and different phases of activity were uncovered around the chapel. An area of stone paving was uncovered in the corridor between the southern wall of Eglwys Y Bedd and the Roman fort wall at a depth of approximately 0.4m. It butted against both the fort wall and the wall of Eglwys Y Bedd, as did a second layer of paving which lay immediately below the upper paving. The trench was extended around the west of the building which uncovered further information about the small church (Gruffydd 1992: 11). The following text is taken from this report:

5.4.1.4 "*The west facing section revealed the west wall of Eglwys y Bedd. Excavation of the area by the contractor had exposed a seemingly complex sequence of foundations under the wall. It was clear from the nature of the blocked doorway and its foundations that the general masonry at the base of the west wall may represent more than one phase of building. A large threshold plinth lying across the base of the doorway was clearly set on 5 distinct large rounded foundation stones. The plinth seemed to have been constructed at the same level and as part of a ledge of foundation plinths and stones (varying from one to two courses and up to 0.5m thick), running along the whole length of the west wall. The ledge formed a step protruding outwards some 0.2m from the straight edge of the west wall above. A markedly different style of foundation stones were set partly beneath the base of the wall, protruding out directly from beneath the ledge. This single course of foundation stones consisted of large rounded irregular boulders. Interestingly, this course was completely absent beneath the blocked doorway and its foundations. This suggests that the ledge and the contemporary blocked doorway were a later feature than the lower foundation course"*.

5.4.1.5 "*The hiatus in the lower course directly beneath the blocked doorway however, remains an unexplained feature. The coincidental loss of stone from this particular area of the west wall should be disregarded because the location of the hiatus is too precise with regard to both edges of the doorway. The most likely explanation lies in the probability that an earlier doorway once stood here, and that the lower course of stones were the structural remains of an earlier building. This probability could not be further investigated given that the permitted depth of excavation was restricted to the depth of the proposed new path and wall"* (Gruffydd 1992: 12).

5.4.1.6 A cinder pathway was also identified in the trench western end of Eglwys y Bedd. This path was identified in section directly opposite the blocked doorway. Given that the doorway had been attributed a 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century date the pathway is presumed to be contemporary. The source of the cinder has been postulated to have been the blocked fireplace which is visible in the south wall of the fort (ibid: 10).

## **5.5 St. Cybi's Church and Environs in the Post Medieval Period**

5.5.1 The reign of Henry VIII and the break with Rome was a traumatic time for the religious establishments of the United Kingdom, with the Protestant Reformation and the dissolution of the monasteries. The religious buildings of the country were systematically looted and the wealth redistributed to the king and his followers. The Collegiate Establishment at Holyhead was dissolved and the brethren cast out with small pension (Williams and Hughes 1967: 21). The revenues of Holyhead, Bodedern, Llandrygarn, and Bodwrog parishes were given to Dr. Thomas Gwynn whose heir, Rice Gwynn, transferred them to Jesus College, Oxford in 1648 (Stanley 1876: 12 – 13). Holyhead did however fair far better than many of the larger establishments and its small size and proximity to the urban centre of Holyhead led to it becoming the parish church (Williams and Hughes 1967: 21).

5.5.2 The fortunes of the town of Holyhead continue to be closely interwoven with those of Ireland, and the importance of the harbour and the route to Ireland. As the shortest sea crossing Holyhead was of key strategic importance in the governance of Ireland, and in 1561 John ap Pierce of Holyhead was contracted by the Vice Treasurer of Ireland to supply a vessel for the conveyance of Government Messages. The exchange of the "packet" or state documents between Queen and her Lieutenant in Ireland was a vital communication source in the governance of Ireland and this link would continue to be vital for the following centuries (Williams and Hughes 1967: 22).

### **5.5.1 Thomas Swift – St Cybi's Church During the Cromwellian Period**

5.5.1.1 The church was under threat once more during the Civil War of 1642 – 1651. The imminent outbreak of war was seized upon by the Irish, who attempted to take advantage of the situation and rebellion broke out in 1641. By May 1642 privateers were operating in the Irish Sea around Holyhead and the disruption was so great that the post was rerouted through south-west Scotland and ran via Portpatrick. (Ayres 2011: 18).

5.5.1.2 A garrison was dispatched to Holyhead to protect the town from Irish attack and the soldiers were billeted in the church. In 1648 the troops were commanded by Captain Roberts but in 1650 the command was taken over by Major Thomas Swift. The post was restored to Holyhead and Swift became both Post Master and Churchwarden, and is sometimes referred to as the Governor of Holyhead (Williams and Hughes 1967: 27).

5.5.1.3 Major Swift was an important figure in the town and would have been the sole government official in the town – a position he was able to use to his advantage. Swift was a businessman and owned packet boats and property within the town which was used to provide accommodation for cross-channel passengers. The passengers during this time would have been largely government officials and troops en route to and from Ireland. Swift had been able to acquire land as Commissioner under the "*Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales*" between 1650 and 1653, and it is believed that it was during this period which the purchase of the land immediately to the north of the fort was made. This plot, currently under a car park, would become named Swift Square and it is believed that it was Swift who was responsible for the building/conversion of the inn here which would later become known as Welch's House. This area will be returned to in section 5.5.5.1.

5.5.1.4 As mentioned above the seas around Holyhead were to subject to raiding – so much so that Swift described them as being "*infested*" with pirates who had taken 12 or 13 ships belonging to Chester and Liverpool, one of which was captured within a few miles of Holyhead. In response to this threat Swift undertook the refortification of the old Roman walls and the church itself. The height of the West Tower of the church was raised to 17ft, and Williams and Hughes noted that the tower has an internal staircase and a ladder with a small dormer in the roof facing seaward which would have given an uninterrupted view of the sea and the harbour. It is also possible that Swift undertook works to rebuild/consolidate the towers of the fort on the seaward side (Williams and Hughes 1967: 27 – 28).

5.5.1.5 It would appear that, for the people of Holyhead, the garrison was far more of a problem for the town than the threat presented by piracy and under the Puritan Swift the church was badly damaged. Williams and Hughes cite an article by Canon D. L. Morris which summarises the situation:

5.5.1.6 *“The people of Holyhead were not fond of the garrison and in December 1660 after the accession of Charles II, “they were pleasing themselves with their accession from the Parliamentary garrison”. Alas their joy was short lived, for a new order reinforced the garrison, “where they profane God’s House and take up houses designed for strangers and passengers who are thus exposed to hardships”. In April 1661 the Garrison was still costing £900 per annum, and the country desires their removal”. There is little doubt adds Canon Morris, “that they did much damage to the Medieval building during their occupation. They removed the old Medieval font, and many Medieval monumental tombs; destroyed the statues from the canopied niches in the richly decorated porch, and they removed the Holy Water stoup from near the entrance door of the church. They also probably destroyed the ancient stained glass, none of which remains today”* (Williams and Hughes 1967: 29).

5.5.1.7 The association of Thomas Swift with the area to the north of the fort is of particular interest as, although we know that there would almost certainly have been settlement of some form right from the inception of the Roman Fort if not earlier, we simply do not yet have any archaeological evidence for this. Swift Square is shown on a number of cartographic sources before being encroached upon by housing in the nineteenth century.

## **5.5.2 The Development of Holyhead – Late Seventeenth to Late Eighteenth Century**

5.5.2.1 Following the Restoration of the Monarchy, Holyhead continued as a centre of trade and transport - albeit on a relatively modest scale. This is attested in a number of late seventeenth and eighteenth century sources. The earliest of these is part of a strip map produced by John Ogilby in 1675 detailing the route from London to Holyhead (figure 6). Although schematic, this source shows the church at Holyhead and two rows of houses lining the main street. Other than the church it is not possible to identify individual properties, and the church is not shown in any detail, nor is its position accurately recorded.

5.5.2.2 Holyhead is recorded in more detail in two sketches of the town, both dated 1699. The first is held as part of the Penrhos Estate material in Bangor University Archives (figure 7) and the second is a sketch by Francis Place (figure 8). Both of these sketches show the prominent church tower, heightened by Swift, and figure 7 shows the prominent round towers of the fort. The towers appear to be ruinous in figure 8 which is less schematic than its contemporary. The area to the north of the fort wall is shown in both to be occupied although it is possible to make out a gap between the houses and the wall which is Swift Square.

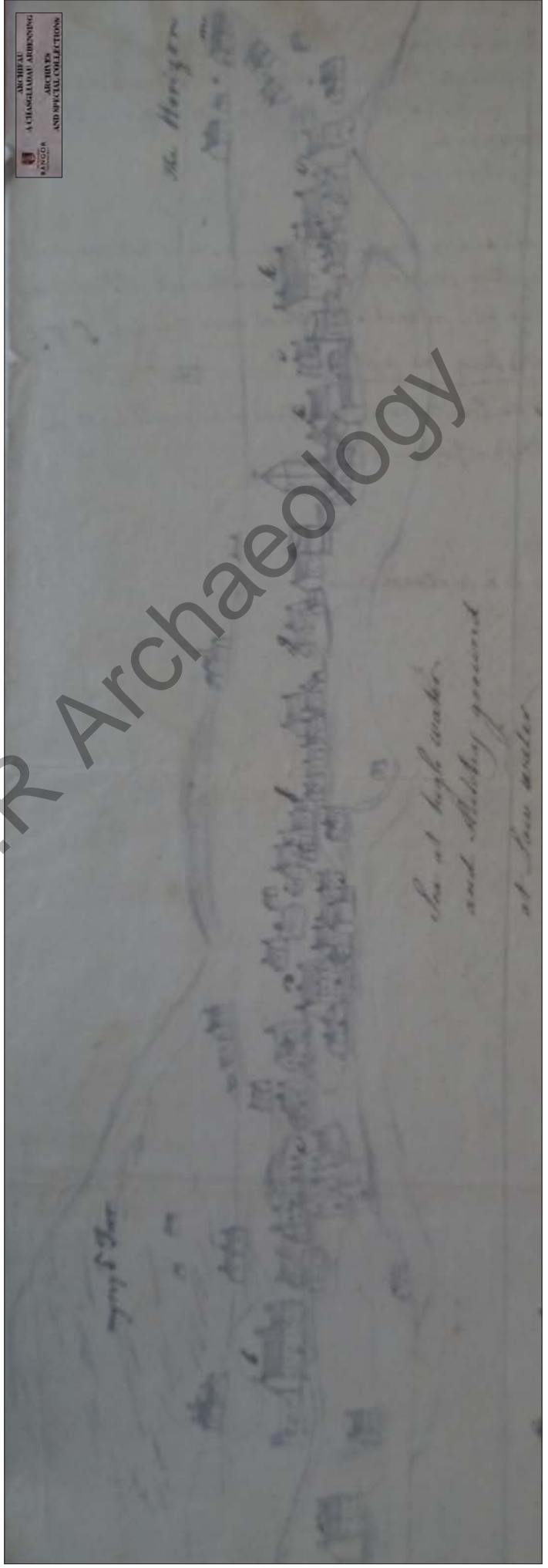
5.5.2.3 A sketch map of the town in 1737 and a Sea Chart of 1748, both drawn by Lewis Morris (figures 9 & 10) further enforce this idea of a much-reduced centre of the town developing in a strip between the church and the port, with outlying structures to the north of the church. Figure 10 shows the church with an open area to the north, although this map is far more schematic than the sketches which precede it. It shows the fort wall surrounding the church on 3 sides.





**Figure 6.** (Left) Section of John Ogilby's  
1675 Strip Map of the Route from  
London to Holyhead  
(Source: [www.anglesey-history.co.uk](http://www.anglesey-history.co.uk))

**Figure 7.** 1699 Sketch of Holyhead  
From Alltran Rock  
(Source: Bangor University  
Archives BMSS 17670)



ARCHIVAL  
A CLASSIFIED ADDRESSING  
ARCHIVES  
AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS  
BANGOR

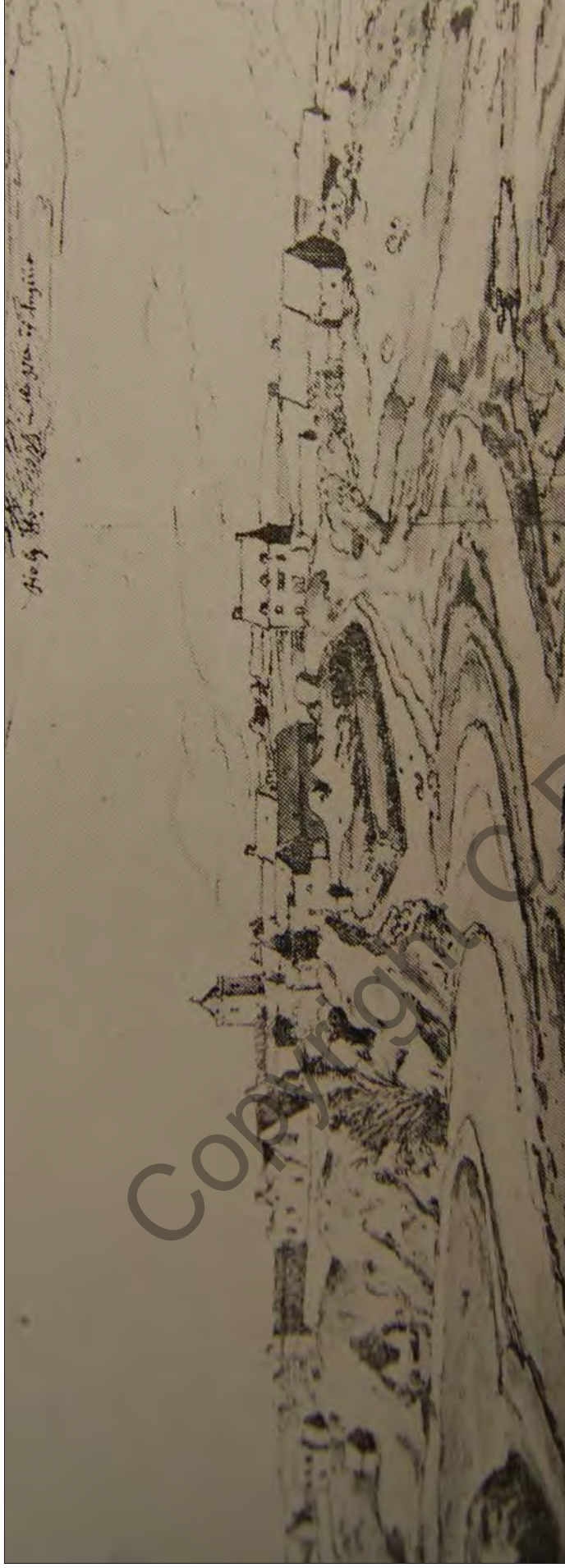


Figure 8. 1699 Sketch of Holyhead (Source: Williams 1950: 65)

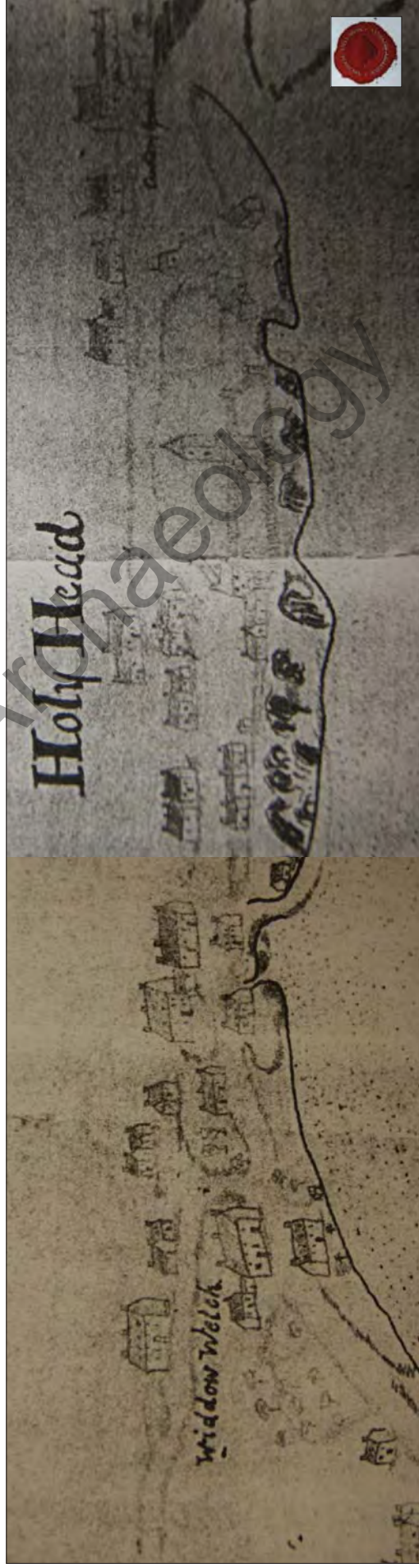


Figure 9. Sketch Map of the Town Drawn by Lewis Morris in 1737 (Source: Anglesey Archives WMaps 53)



Figure 10. Lewis Morris Sea Chart 1748 (Source: www.anglesey.gov.uk)



Figure 11. 1742 Print of the Church and Old Harbour with Packets at Anchor (Source: Hughes & Williams 1967)

5.5.2.4 There are a number of interesting descriptions of Holyhead written around this time which emphasise the vernacular nature of the housing shown in figures 7, 8 and 9. In a discussion of this period the work of Williams (1950:53) draws on the work of Defoe in which he describes Holyhead as unpretentious and straw thatched but with “*good accommodation in lodgings and diet within*”. Rowlands work of 1989 also describes much of mid eighteenth century Holyhead as undeveloped with many greenfield areas and few houses and cottages. He includes a contemporary description which details the lack of capacity of the town to house its increasing volume of visitors and states “*there were so many Lords and Ladies in the town that the inns were full and they are compelled to put up at houses with thatched roofs*” (Rowland 1989: 11).

5.5.2.5 Figure 11 is a slightly earlier print showing the church and harbour, with buildings down on the shore, and the packets at anchor. This print shows the church prior to the nineteenth century works which now obscure the nave. This source shows a low boundary wall on the seaward side of the church which is much closer to the building than the current boundary which may be a stylistic device/perspective/error. It is however possible that this is an accurate representation and that this area was enlarged when the lower graveyard was created – but we do not have the evidence to support this and should the retaining arch in the lower churchyard prove to be Roman then this would seem less likely.

5.5.2.6 It is of interest to note the current lack of table tombs and prominent stones around the church which are shown in late nineteenth and early twentieth century sources. The pathway in front of and around the church is shown as rutted, and does not have any paving or surfacing. The western wall of the Roman fort is just visible adjacent to the church tower. This source is of particular importance as it shows the church prior to the rapid and massive increase in the population of the town of Holyhead in the nineteenth century.

5.5.2.7 A watercolour of the market place produced in 1769 (figure 12) shows the outer face of the southern wall of the Roman fort. It shows the market square area with the Market Cross and buildings erected against the fort walls. The town buildings shown are traditional stone built houses with small windows and thatched roofs. The caption describes the town as “*small, but being the station of the Irish packet-boats is much resorted to by passengers; five of these boats, stout vessels, well found and manned, ply backwards and forwards between this port and Dublin*”. A slightly earlier source of 1770 records Holyhead as “*little more than a fishing town, rendered considerable by being the place of general passage to Ireland*” (Unknown 1783: 18). The volume of this traffic is shown in the letters of William Morris and writing in 1753 he notes that “*we had eight coaches, chariots and post chaises in the compass of 48 hours from Chester*” (Rowland 1989: 11).

5.5.2.8 Figure 12 is of particular interest as it shows the southern gateway and elevation of the Roman fort wall. The entrance is very different in appearance to the current construction and clearly demonstrates that the current double entrance is a nineteenth century reimagining rather than a rebuild of an earlier design as is suggested in the Scheduled Ancient Monument description.

5.5.2.9 Figure 13 shows a slightly later print published in Stanley’s booklet on the church. It clearly shows a low wall running near the eastern gable of the building. The two seaward towers of the fort are ruined, and there is vegetation growing on the northern wall and on the church tower. The rebuilt gable of Eglwys y Bedd is just visible. The sea can be seen lapping up against the foot of the cliffs on which the church and fort stand. There are buildings shown to the north of the fort, occupying a cliff top location.



**Figure 12.** 1769 Print of the Market Place, Holyhead (Source: Anglesey Archives WSD/421)



**Figure 13.** 1772 Print of the Collegiate Church, Holyhead (Source: Stanley 1897)

5.5.2.10 Figure 14 is a Penrhôs Estate map of the town of Holyhead, produced in 1769. Despite the schematic characteristics of the map, and the lack of representation of the enclosing fort walls, it is possible to determine certain elements from the source. The site is shown as a clifftop location, and there is an open area where Swift Square was located.

5.5.2.11 Figure 15 is a 1785 print of the church and fort, which shows a similar level of development as figure 13. It is unclear, as it may be a function of the change of perspective of the image, but it does appear that the south-eastern tower has been rebuilt as it is much higher than is shown on the earlier image. This image does not show any buildings against the north fort wall, although the cliff top buildings would not be visible from this angle. This 1785 image again shows the foreshore area, which will later become the lower graveyard, is devoid of any buildings and is a beach.

5.5.2.12 In addition to the eighteenth century pictorial sources there are also written descriptions of the site. In 1786 Grose wrote “*“St. Cybi, the Collegiate Church of Holyhead, stands at the extreme western corner of Holyhead Island, in a quadrangle measuring 220 feet by 130 feet, three sides of which are enclosed by strong walls, seventeen feet high and six thick. The fourth side is open to the sea, having only a parapet, but is defended by steep rocks. At each corner of the wall is an oval tower (two of which are seen in the accompanying view). The entrance to this area is through a rude stone gate, the masonry of which, and also of the walls and towers, is said by Mr. Pennant to be ‘evidently Roman.’ ‘Along the walls,’ he adds ‘are two rows of round holes, about four inches in diameter, which penetrate them. They are like those of Segontium (Caernarvôn), and nicely plastered within.’ The church is dedicated to St. Cybi. It is a handsome embattled edifice, built in the form of a cross. The inside of the porch and the outside part of the transept are rudely ornamented with grotesque figures. On the outside of the last are dragons, and a man leading a bear with a rope, or as some suppose it, Balaam and his Ass, with other now shapeless sculptures”*”.

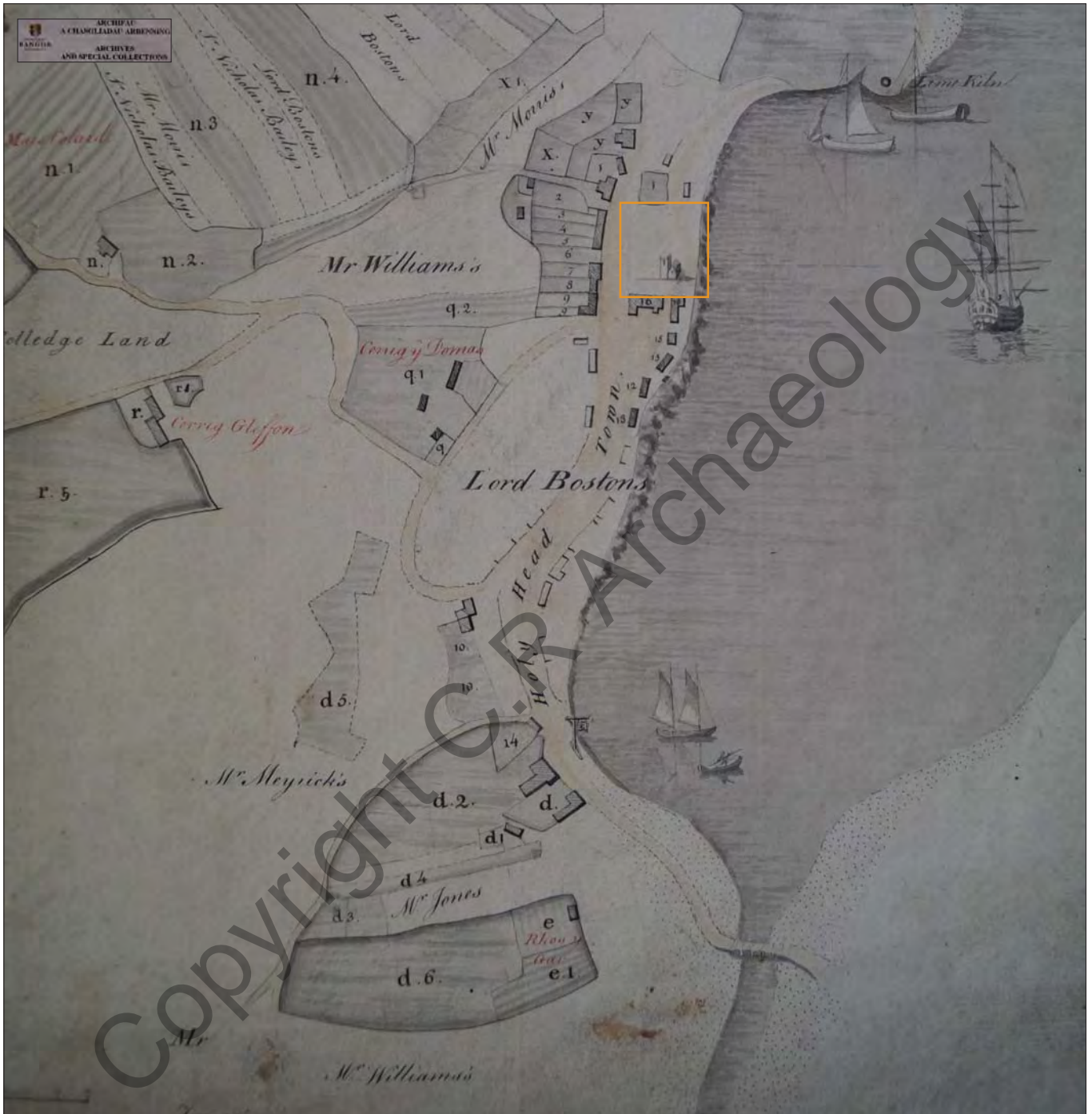
### **5.5.3 The Act of Union and Thomas Telford's Holyhead Road – 1801 to 1840**

5.5.3.1 The Act of Union between the Irish and British parliaments was passed on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1801, and from this point Irish MPs and peers sat in the parliament of the United Kingdom. It was therefore necessary that there was a fast and reliable communication route between London and Dublin for the transportation of mail, members of parliament, officials and when necessary troops. The current turnpike system, although much improved, was not sufficient to allow this particularly around the dangerous crossings of the Afon Conwy and Menai Straits (Quartermaine, Trinder & Turner 2003: 1-2).

5.5.3.2 The first elements along this route to be improved were the two ports of Dublin and Holyhead, and works were begun on John Rennie's massive Admiralty Pier which protected the ports inner harbour. Works on this ambitious project were completed in 1821 (ibid: 3).

5.5.3.3 Several maps and plans from this development survive and, although most do not detail the town as a whole, they do show the seaward side of the town. In a harbour plan of 1802, before the works began, the church and environs are clearly shown (figure 16). Two pathways are shown, one running from the northern wall, past the eastern gable and into the area in front of Eglwys y Bedd and a second running from this area into the church (southern elevation). This is the same arrangement shown on the 1742 print of the church.

5.5.3.4 The area of Swift Square is still shown as an open space, which is enclosed by houses and inns on three sides. There are no structures shown built against the northern fort wall. The western side of Church Lane can be seen in place and the Welch Inn lies on the north-eastern corner of the road. There is now a strip of land in the seaward area in front of the church and a road running around the edge of the harbour. This strip of land is not believed to have been utilised for burials at this early date. These details are echoed on the 1820 Stanley Estate map (figure 17).



**Figure 14.** Penrhos Estate Map of Holyhead 1769  
(Source: Bangor University Archives Penrhos Manuscripts 772-3)



Figure 15. 1785 Print of the Collegiate Church, Holyhead (Source: Stanley 1897)



Figure 16. 1802 Harbour Plans (Source: [www.gerald-massey.org.uk](http://www.gerald-massey.org.uk))



5.5.3.5 As mentioned above extensive infrastructure works were carried out in early nineteenth century Holyhead and between 1810 and 1824 the government spent £150,000 improving harbour facilities. This included the building of a pier at Salt Island and the creation of a “graving dock” which allowed ships to be floated for cleaning and repair. The improvements allowed the Post Office to use paddle steamers rather than the traditional sailing packets to take mail between Holyhead and Dublin. The early nineteenth century was a time of great hardship for the working classes of the United Kingdom with unemployment, social unrest and rising food prices and these works provided employment for local people and the prospect of work attracted a large number of incomers to the area (Rowlands 1989: 15-16).

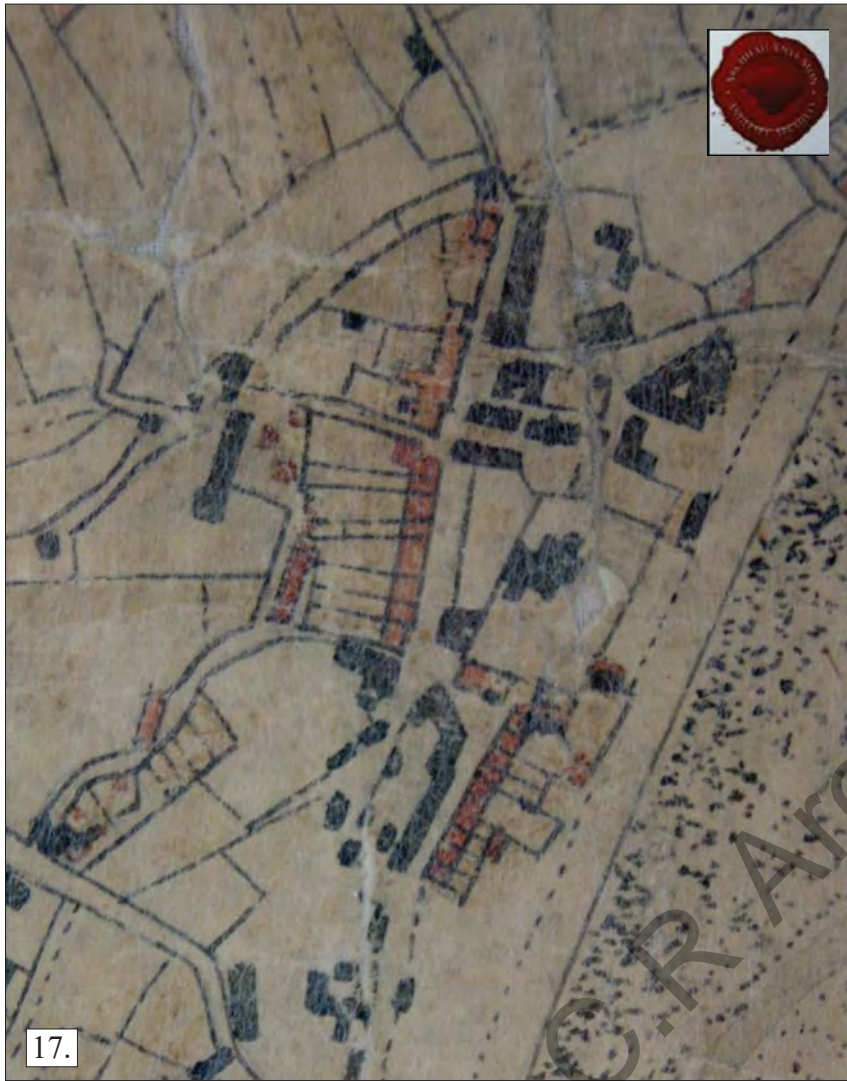
5.5.3.6 The employment and trading opportunities offered by the harbour development in Holyhead were very attractive and the town was to benefit from the influx of money and, perhaps of greater importance, an optimism in the assured future of the town. The increase in the status of the town was exemplified in 1821 when George IV visited Holyhead. The new-found confidence in the town is reflected in the population numbers and between 1801 and 1841 the number of inhabitants increased from 2,132 to 3,869 (Rowlands 1989: 15-16). 1801 was a key year for the population of Holyhead as, for the first time, it overtakes that of the Island's previous principle town of Beumaris ([www.anglesey.gov.uk](http://www.anglesey.gov.uk)).

5.5.3.7 This increase in population was to put a strain on the church, and more pressingly the graveyard and by 1826 there was becoming little room for burials in the upper churchyard. The lack of space necessitated the purchase of the plot of land enclosed from the sea which is shown on the maps of 1802 and 1820. It was in the ownership of the Commissioners of the Harbour and was purchased at a cost of £5. It was consecrated on Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1826 (Anglesey Archives WM/154).

5.5.3.8 A print of the upper churchyard dated 1822 (figure 19) shows this pressure on space, and a grave digger can be seen standing amongst a mixture of table tombs and headstones. The graves can clearly be seen extending right up to the enclosing churchyard wall.

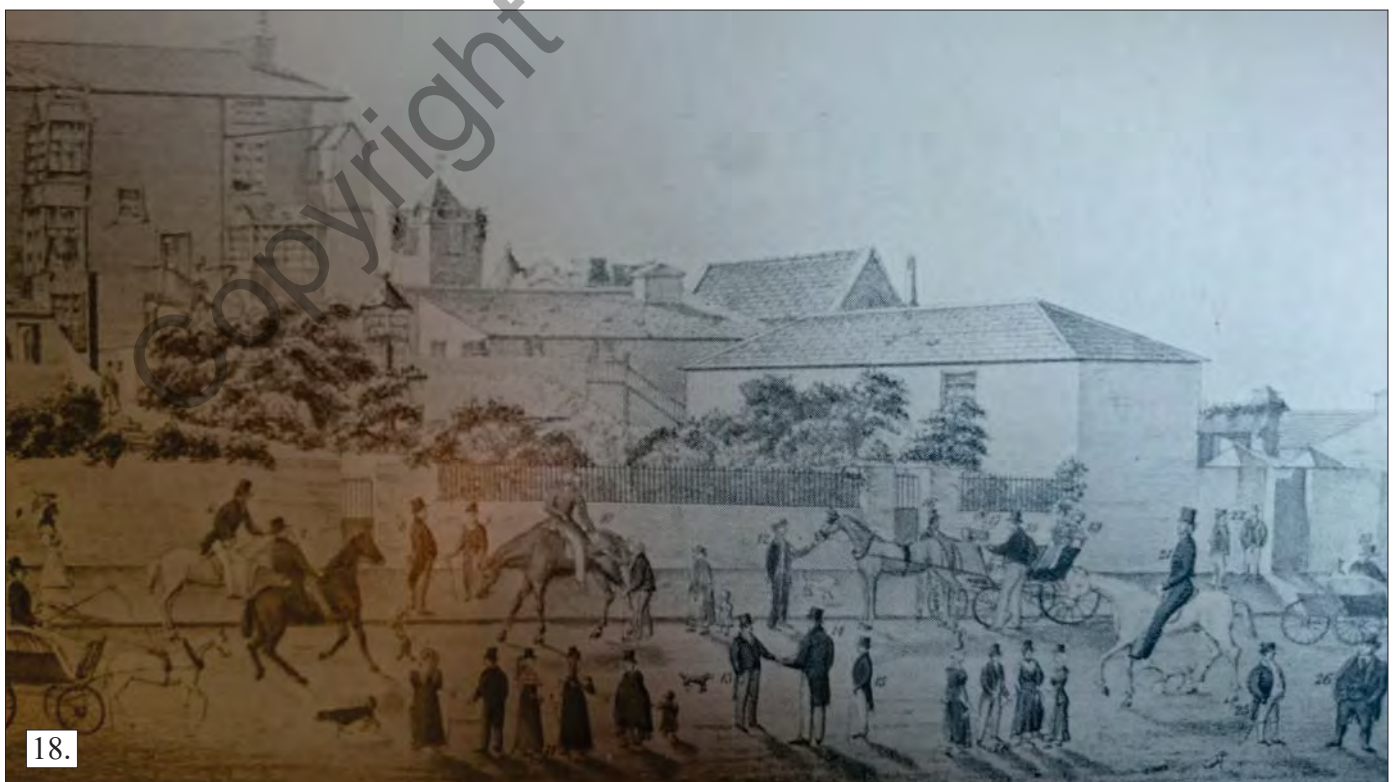
5.5.3.9 Telford's Holyhead road was completed in 1826 with the opening of the Menai Suspension Bridge (Quartermaine, Trinder & Turner 2003: 3) and by 1828 the coach journey from London to Holyhead had shortened to 29 hours and 17 minutes (Rowlands 1989: 24). This road, although intended primarily to take mail coaches and their passengers, generated a considerable volume of stage coach, posting and private travel along with a more limited amount of freight transport (Quartermaine, Trinder & Turner 2003: 5).

5.5.3.10 Despite being the first major civilian, state-funded infrastructure scheme of modern times the heyday of this route was limited to a relatively short period between the late 1820's and 1830's. Technological advances of the era were to rapidly supersede this great achievement and between 1837 and 1850 the successive opening of railways between London and Holyhead caused a steep decline in the traffic using the road. In 1851 Parliamentary funding for the maintenance of the road was stopped (Quartermaine, Trinder & Turner 2003: 3-4). A plan of the harbour and town produced as part of Telford's scheme in 1838 (figure 20) shows little change from the 1820 estate map.



**Figure 17.** 1820 Estate Map Showing Property Belonging to Sir John Stanley (Source: Anglesey Archives WMaps/52/1)

**Figure 18.** Captain Skinner's House Drawn 1828 (Source: Williams & Hughes 1967)

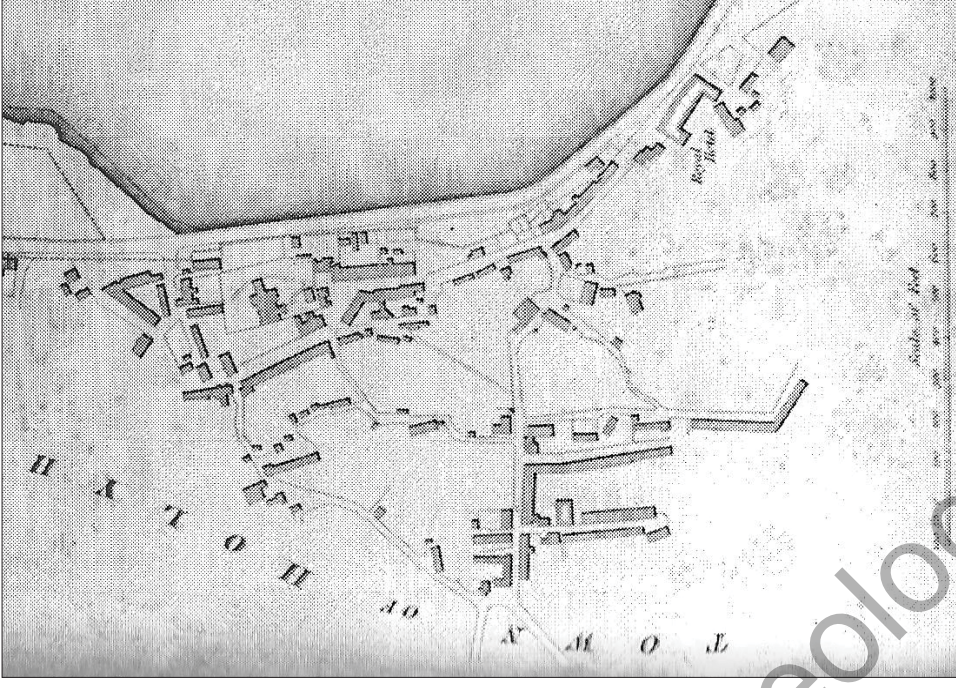




**Figure 19.** View of Harbour from Upper Churchyard 1822 (Source: Stanley 1897)

**Figure 20.** The Plan of Holyhead Harbour from Telford's Atlas 1838

(Source: Quartermaine, Trinder & Turner 2003: 111)



#### 5.5.4 The Arrival of the Railway in Holyhead 1841 - 1900

5.5.4.1 The next great phase of development in the history of Holyhead was to be heralded by the advent of the railway. Throughout the 1840's there was a programme to construct a railway across Anglesey and in 1848 the first train arrived in Holyhead (Rowlands 1989: 24).

5.5.4.2 The momentum of the preceding period was continued and further port improvements, in particular the building of the breakwater, attracted national attention due to the sheer magnitude of the operation (Rowlands 1989: 24). The population increase between 1801 and 1841 was eclipsed by that which occurred between 1841 and 1851 when it increased by a further 4,994 to reach 8,863 – a figure which shows a more than doubling of the population in ten years (Rowlands 1989: 16).

5.5.4.3 These new inhabitants had to be accommodated and the remaining rural characteristics of the town which had survived the earlier part of the century were rapidly lost. By the time of the production of the Tithe Map of the town (figure 21) the main street outline as surviving today is largely established, although there was continued infilling within the street layout into the early twentieth century (Rowlands 1989: 16). Figures 22 & 23 dated 1850 & 1868 show the church and environs and clearly show that the lower churchyard has been incorporated into the boundary for the church site. Figure 21 shows a single path through the centre of the plot. The open area of Swift Square is retained, flanked on three sides by rows of buildings. The eastern side of Church Lane has been built by this point which encroaches on this area.

5.5.4.4 We have further information from this period recorded by Lucy Williams. She records that by order of the Council on the 13<sup>th</sup> August 1855 it was directed that burials be discontinued in the cemetery adjoining the Parish Church. It appears that this applied only to the upper graveyard area as, on September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1859, the Council specified that burials must now be wholly discontinued in the Parish Church, in the cemetery, and in the additional churchyard “except in walled graves now completed to the surface in which each coffin shall be embedded in charcoal and separately entombed in an airtight manner” (Anglesey Archives WM/154). It is evident from the notes of Lucy Williams that an undated graveyard survey was undertaken but unfortunately the accompanying plan was not deposited along with the text. There are 391 graves (the number of graves rather than just the number of individuals are recorded) and there is a broad indication of grave location (for example buried within the church, north-east of church, adjoining north transept etc.) and a transcription of the gravestones given. This survey was undertaken before the remodelling of the graveyard as seen today.

5.5.4.5 Late nineteenth and early twentieth century pictorial sources clearly show the walled graves occupying a large area of the graveyard. A selection of these images are included as figures 24 – 29. Figure 28 shows the remodelled arches in the southern fort elevation, which are a nineteenth century alteration and are not based on the original opening. Figure 29 is a later source (believed to be 1930's) which shows the lower graveyard with the monuments insitu.

5.5.4.6 There is also an interesting account of the church and fort written describing it as it was in 1853: “*The church is a handsome embattled cruciform structure consisting of a chancel nave aisles and transept with a square tower surmounted by a low fiat kind of spire. The present edifice exclusive of the chancel appears to have been rebuilt in the time of Edward III and the latter was repaired in the beginning of the last century. The inside of the entrance porch and the external part of the south end of the transept are decorated with rude but curious carvings. On the latter are the figures of a dragon a man leading a bear and other grotesque representations. On the pediments and embattlements are cherubic heads and one or two figures in supplicating posture. The exterior carvings in consequence of being executed on soft stone and exposed to the sea are almost mouldered away under the porch however where sheltered from the weather they are much more perfect. There is the following inscription in Gothic characters on the north side of the Church “Sancte Kybi on pro nobis”. During the last century says the Rev John Price in his account of Holyhead the natives showed*



21.



22.

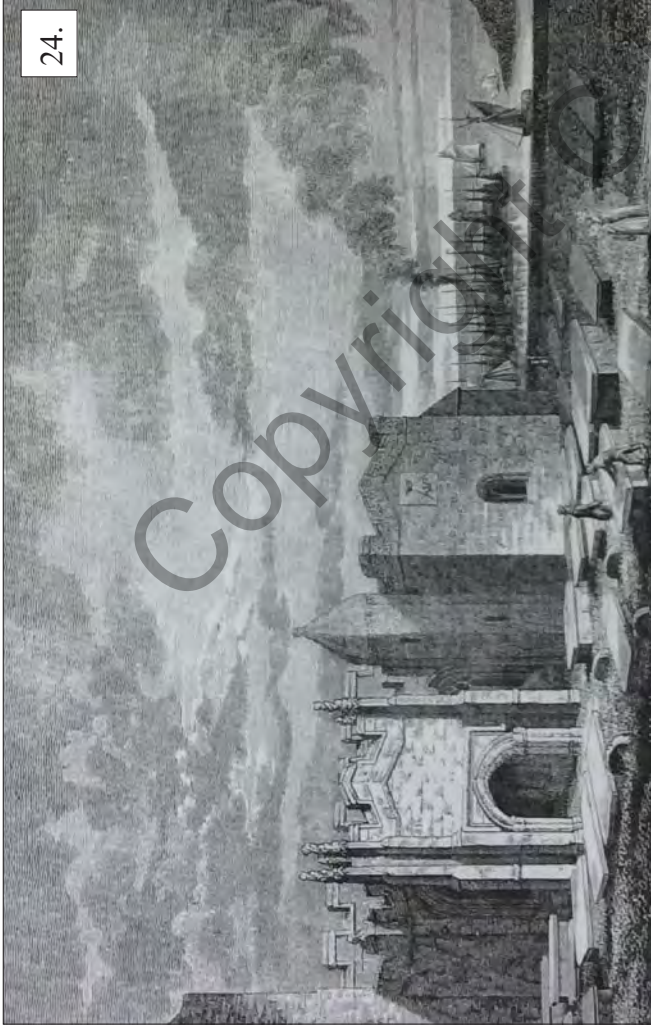


23.

**Figure 21 (Far Left).** 1840's Tithe Map of Holyhead (Source: Anglesey Archives WMaps/53)

**Figure 22 (Centre).** 1850 Survey of Land and Property in Holyhead (Source: Bangor University Archives Lligwy Papers 215)

**Figure 23 (Right).** 1868 Map of Holyhead (Source: Anglesey Archives W/CD/373)



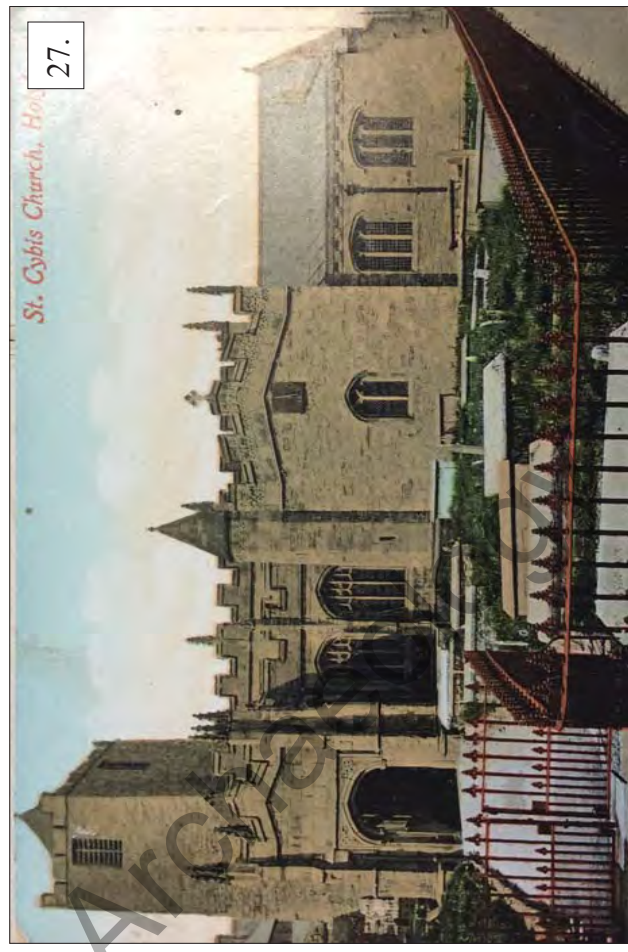
24.



25.



26.



27.

**Figures 24 - 27.** Late Nineteenth & Early Twentieth Century Images of the St Cybi's Graveyard Detailing Walled Tombs and Headstones in Situ (Images 24 & 25 Show Nave Prior to 1897 Stanley Chapel, Images 26 & 27 Post Date the Work - Source Anglesey Archives: WM/312/4, 5, 6 & 9)



**Figure 28.** Table Tombs Viewed through Remodelled Entrance into St. Cybi's Churchyard  
(Source: Anglesey Archives WM/312)



**Figure 29.** Table Tombs and Standing Headstones in Lower Churchyard  
(Source: Anglesey Archives WDAI/220)

*the print of Kybi's foot in a rock by the east end of the chancel till it was destroyed by the Rev Mr Ellis Fellow of Jesus College Oxford then Curate of this place.*

*Long be our Father's temple ours;  
Woe to the hand by which it falls;  
A thousand spirits watch its towers;  
A cloud of angels guard its walls;  
And be their shield by us possessed;  
Lord rear around thy blest abode  
The buttress of a holy breast,  
The rampart of a present God.*

5.5.4.7 *The church walls are considered a very perfect specimen of Roman architecture. The form is parallelogram about 220 feet long and about 130 broad three of its sides consist of massive walls 6 feet thick and 17 in height the fourth is open to the harbour having only a low parapet laid on the precipitous cliff. At the north-east angle is a circular bastion tower and along the walls are two rows of circular holes four inches in diameter having the inside smoothly plastered. The cement mixed with coarse pebbles is extremely hard and this in conjunction with other circumstances exhibits ancient marks of Roman masonry. The Church altogether will repay the time spent in its examination” (Jackson 1853).*

5.5.4.8 *The prosperity of Holyhead continued throughout the late nineteenth century. The focus of the town's wealth was still largely reliant on the crossing to Ireland and the associated rail and harbour industries, both of which continued to develop apace during this period (Haslam, Orbach & Voelecker 2009: 132-134). A description of the town of Holyhead written in 1878 conveys the spirit of the time and reflects on general and population trends during this period. “Holyhead, on the islet of Holyhead, which is separated from Anglesey by fordable sandy strait, is the most important town in the county. From the large amount of trade carried on with the sister island, Ireland it has become a port of great importance. It places London and Dublin in direct and ready communication; the principle railway, the road, and the telegraph having each their terminus here. Great improvements have been effected during the last twenty years, and a fine harbour made, which affords a safe retreat for distressed ships sailing from Liverpool, Dublin, Whitehaven, and other ports, to all parts of the world. There is a fine breakwater, constructed at the expense of the Government, the pier extending outwards 900 feet, and having a depth of 14 feet at the pier head during low water. Upon its extremity is a monster lighthouse, exhibiting a powerful light 200 feet above the level of the sea; a marble arch commemorating the visit of George IV in 1821, on his visit to Ireland, stands upon the pier. The mail steamers plying between Holyhead and Dublin are some of the finest built boats in the world, and run in all weathers. Passengers may be now conveyed from London to Dublin, a distance of 260 miles, in 11 and a quarter hours. The inhabitants are principally employed in the coasting trade, ship building and repairing, improving of the harbour, fishing, and assisting in the transport of cattle and goods from Ireland (The Wales Register & Guide 1878: 9-10).*

5.5.4.9 *The register describes further features of Holyhead in a later passage where it details the building of a new harbour in 1873 at a cost of almost two million sterling, and a town hall in 1875. Of interest in a discussion of the inns and public houses of Holyhead it describes the town as “neat and well built, possessing some good inns and hotels”. The population figures given for Holyhead show a slight trend towards a decline in numbers to 8,773 in 1861 and 8,131 in 1871 (ibid: 106).*

5.5.4.10 *It was during these boom years in Holyhead that the decision was undertaken to restore St. Cybi's Church as, by the 1870's, it was deemed to be in a poor state of repair. The eminent architect Sir Gilbert Scott was engaged to undertake the works and fund raising began in earnest in 1876.*



5.5.4.11 The following article appeared in the North Wales Chronicle on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1876 and details the project and contains a description of the site prior to the commencement of works. *“THE RESTORATION OF ST. CYBI CHURCH, HOLYHEAD. IMPORTANT VESTRY. Through the munificence of the Honourable W. O. Stanley, the old church of St. Cybi which has been allowed long to remain in a somewhat dilapidated state, is about to be restored. The honourable gentleman has offered the sum of £3,000, provided that £2,000 can be raised from other sources. On the 11<sup>th</sup> instant a vestry was held in the old schoolroom, Churchyard, to consider what measures to adopt in view of the hand- some offer made.*

5.5.4.12 *Present: - Rev. Dr Brisco (chairman), Messrs R. T. Parry and W. Siddorn (churchwardens), T. P. Elliot, H. T. Barber, solicitor R. Thomas, George Hotel, W Riva, auctioneer Henry Evans, local board surveyor; W. D. Jones; Edward Williams, Spread Eagle; Edward Morris; R. Longfield Jones; Robert-Minydon House Rev. J. Lloyd Jones Captain Robert Williams, Liverpool Arms Hotel; Dr Williams.*

5.5.4.13 *The Rev. Dr. Briscoe read to the vestry the following letter, received from the Honourable W. O. Stanley "To the Rev. Dr. Briscoe and the churchwardens of Holyhead parish. I have much pleasure in forwarding to you the report of Sir Gilbert Scott with his approximate cost of the proposed restoration of the old church. They appear to me everything we could wish preserving the character of the ancient structure and affording considerable addition to the accommodation. To carry out this desirable object, I am willing to subscribe three thousand pounds, provided the sum of two thousand pounds can be raised from other sources to meet the expense of the proposed alteration. If it is found impossible to stop the footpath through the churchyard, which at present leads to the desecration of the church- yard, and injury to the building, the path must be railed off so as effectually to prevent the continuance of the nuisance. I shall be obliged to you to call a vestry for the purpose of making my intentions known to the inhabitants of the parish and others interested, so that a committee may be formed to carry out the plans, if it is thought desirable to accept my offer, and endeavour to raise the amount required of two thousand pounds in addition to my promise of three thousand pounds. I have the honour to be, your obedient servant, WILLIAM OWEN STANLEY. Penrhos, August 3rd, 1876"*

5.5.4.14 *The following is a copy of Sir Gilbert Scott's report: "St. Kybi Church. The church of St. Kybi at Holyhead appears to be mainly of the time of Henry VII, though the east window is of earlier date, and the tower (a very curious structure) is of the 17th century; though apparently representing a local and traditional form of tower of an earlier period. The church consists of a nave of three bay with a southern porch and a north doorway a considerable transept, a long chancel and western tower; the nave and the porch alone seem to have been at all fully carried out according to the original intention, and even the nave itself shows a change of design in the much greater height of the columns of the southern arcade than those of the other. The design and details of the nave are very excellent, rich and well-studied. The porch is quite profuse in the richness of its ornamentation and the quaintness of its sculptured enrichment. It is clear that it was the intention of the builders of the nave to continue its design through the crossing and end of the transept. There are attached to the two eastern piers on the sides facing the transept responds intended to support the north and south arches of the crossing but not only do no such arches exist but the eastern responds which were necessary to their support have never been erected. The interval, however, of time represented by this change of plan could have been but short; it would appear to have been the result of failure of funds rather than of deliberate alteration of design, for the transept though impoverished in design and details (which is especially noticeable in the design of the window) are nevertheless similar in style with the nave as far as it goes, and in one point the richness of the nave is exceeded, the parapet being enriched with a band of sunk quarterfoils surmounted with sculptured coats of arms and other devices. The chancel shows no such similarity the east window, probably of a date early in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and the remainder of its structure (with the exception of a small window at the western end of the north wall)*

is shortly modernised. The external stone work which has suffered much from decay and mutilation will be carefully restored; all stones in sufficiently good state of preservation afford evidence of the original design being carefully retained. The pinnacles and crosses to the parapet will be restored from existing evidences. The modern fir timber supports to the roof will be removed and oak brackets according to the original substituted, and the ancient timber repaired reserved and strengthened, as, in each case prove necessary the carved bosses at the intersection of the timbers will be renewed in harmony with the best existing example. On the accompanying plans a proposal is suggested to carry out the original scheme of completing the crossing of nave and transept with an arcade and cloistering similar to those of the nave, one lay of the transept roof being raised to form its covering. New gabled aisles are proposed to be added to the north and south side of the chancel with arches opening into the chancel and transept. In the north aisle would be placed the organ. The present chancel roof being in a good state of repair, though of no historical or architectural interest, will be preserved and hidden from view by a new panelled ceiling. The nave will be paved with plain and the chancel with encaustic tiles, preserving all monumental stones in their proper places; and the whole chancel will be refitted with oak seats in character with its architecture.

5.5.4.15 The cost of the restoration may be estimated approximately at the sum of £5,000. (Signed) GEO. GILBERT SCOTT, June 10, 1876. "The Rev. Dr. Briscoe proposed, and Mr R. Trevor-Parry seconded, that the offer of the Honourable W. O. Stanley be accepted subject to the following conditions, namely : 1, That the sittings in the north aisle, in the northern half of the nave, in the northern transept, and in the northern chancel aisle (excepting those that may be wanted for the singers) shall be without doors, free and unappropriated. 2, That the chancel be entirely at the disposal of the lay rectors and vicars." The resolution was carried *nem. con.* It was proposed by Mr Elliott, seconded, and carried unanimously, that a committee be formed to carry out the above resolution. The following gentlemen were nominated a committee (with power to add to their number):- The Hon. W.O. Stanley, Rev. Dr. Briscoe, Rev. J. Lloyd Jones, Churchwardens Parry and Siddorn, Mr T. F. Elliott, Mr J. Lloyd Giffith, Mr H. T. Barber, Dr. Williams, Mr W. P. Elliott, Mr Roberts (Minydon House), Mr W. Riva, Mr R. Thomas (George Hotel), Captain Williams (Liverpool Arms), Captain Mackenzie, R.N., Captain Coy, R.N., Captain Dent, R.N., Mr Thomas Owen, R.N., Mr W. J. Johnson, R.N., Mr Dinnen, Mr Jones (North and South Wales Bank), and Mr Weston. On the motion of the Rev. Dr. Briscoe, seconded by Mr Siddorn, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the Hon. W.O. Stanley for his munificence" (North Wales Chronicle on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1876).

5.5.4.16 It is however clear from an article dated May 12<sup>th</sup> 1877 that the works did not go exactly as planned. It was written that "*THE RESTORATION OF ST. CYBI CHURCH, HOLYHEAD. MUNIFICENCE OF THE HON. W. O. STANLEY. A meeting of the St. Cybi Church restoration committee, was held in the school room in the old churchyard, Holyhead, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May*".

5.5.4.17 "The Chairman read the following letter from the Hon. W.O. Stanley to the meeting Penrhôs, Holyhead. To the Committee appointed by the vestry held 11th August, 1876, to take measures for the restoration of the St. Cybi Holyhead Parish Church. "Gentlemen, You have had Sir Gilbert Scott's plans for the proposed restoration submitted to you. Sir Gilbert Scott at first calculated that the work required might be done for £5,000, or thereabouts, but it was found on more careful examination, that the fine oak roof of the Church was much more dilapidated than had been expected, as Sir Gilbert Scott writes to me, "There is no intermediate course between leaving it in the unsightly state it is now in, and entire restoration." The plans were at first only submitted to Mr Thompson, of Peterborough, who had done much work for Sir Gilbert Scott, at Chester (to his satisfaction). He estimated the cost at £7,000, but the amount did not include the payment of architect and clerk of works charges, about £600. At Sir Gilbert Scott's request, the work was put up to competition, and he got three builders to compete for tenders, viz Mr Thompson of Peterborough, Mr Jones of Rhyl and Mr Parry, of Menai Bridge, from whom he received tenders, which came to nearly the same amount, to which may be added the £600 for architect and of the works. It was evident that this amount far exceeded our means

and I therefore consulted with Sir Gilbert Scott how he could reduce the amount by the omission of certain portions of the plan, so as to bring it within our power to carry out, yet not to destroy, the object we had in view, namely, the perfect restoration of the old collegiate Church, which in its present dilapidated state, is a disgrace to the county and not in a fit state for public worship, or the health of those who attend the services. I enclose copies of Sir Gilbert Scott's letter to me in answer to my inquiry, "what reduction could be made by the omission of certain portions of the original plan, and pay the architect and clerk of the work". The plan, as now reduced, omits the two proposed side aisles in the chancel, completion of the porch, and other small items. But it contemplates a substantial restoration of the whole body of the old church with its naves, transepts and chancel, substituting oak sittings for the present pews, leaving the church in such a state that at any future time the chancel aisles may be carried out without trouble. The fencing out the public path through the churchyard is not included in this estimate, and will have to be done out of some separate fund, as was stipulated in my offer in the first place. As it is of great importance that no more time should be lost in completing the contract, I should advise a faculty to be obtained without delay for the restoration of the church as proposed by Sir Gilbert Scott., according to the proper form of law required. That the committee should call in all the promised subscriptions, and place them in the banks. This done, provided no difficulties or objection are raised, and that I am fully empowered to have the work carried out according to the plans, and under the management of Sir Gilbert Scott, I shall be prepared to provide the extra sum required for the restoration of the porch and its groinings, the payment of architect and clerk of the work, not exceeding £1,000 additional to what I have already promised to contribute. The committee will, I am confident, use their best endeavours to obtain the required £2,000 to meet the £3,000 promised by me; they have been so successful and active in their endeavours that the required amount will be made up, I have no doubt, but I would not delay proceeding on that account. I shall require a distinct and binding understanding that when the old church is restored, an English as well as Welsh service will be given every Sunday in the old church in accordance with the original stipulation on when St. Seiriol's church was built, that services in Welsh and English should be given every Sunday in each church. The names of all persons having pews and seats in the parish church will be given to the committee, so that when the church is restored with new seats, places may be allotted to them who claim and prove their ancient and accustomed rights. The new paws will be without doors. As the contemplated addition of the chancel aisles is not at present to be carried out, those persons having sittings in the chancel by long prescription will have pews or sittings of equal accommodation allotted to them in the chancel when the new seats are made, and all payments for seats will be discontinued in the parish church. Yours faithfully. 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1877. (Signed) W. O. Stanley" (The North Wales Chronicle May 12<sup>th</sup> 1877).

5.5.4.18 The works were completed in April 1879 and the North Wales Chronicle of April 5<sup>th</sup> 1879 reported "The old church of St. Cybi, Holyhead, was reopened yesterday. The edifice has been thoroughly restored, and the interior now presents an appearance which must be very pleasing to those who remember the state of things which existed before the work was commenced. The Hon. W.O. Stanley gave the munificent donation of £4000, and Lord Stanley of Alderley contributed £500".

5.5.4.19 The 1880 edition of Slater's Directory reinforces the optimism and praise for the towns railway and harbour of the previous account and further details the recreational opportunities open to visitors to Holyhead. "The town also has visitors during the bathing season, during which period many families make it their residence. Bathing machines are established, which contribute materially to the comfort of visitors. There are several objects of interest; among these are, the venerable remains of a hermitage, two chapels, and the remains of a Roman wall, or as some antiquaries assert, built by the British prince Cassibelaunus; these with the lighthouse, and the suspension bridge, at the South Stack, and the storm guns at the North Stack, attract the attention of the stranger. There are several good inns in the town, the principle of which are the Marine, The Royal (London and North-Western Railway Company's) and the King's Head" (Slater's Directory 1880: 87).

5.5.4.20 During the later nineteenth century the area to the north of the fort sees an intensification of occupation and the Ordnance Survey Map edition of 1890 (figure 30) shows the density of the settlement on this spot in detail. The garden plots and outbuilding are also shown, making it clear that what appears on earlier sources as an open area is likely to have been gardens associated with the houses on Church Lane. A photograph looking along Church Lane has been sourced (figure 31), which shows two parallel terraces of stone built houses. This area will be discussed in detail in the following section. The 1890 Ordnance Survey Map confirms earlier sources and both the upper and lower graveyards are recorded as disused. The remodelling of the church can be seen between the 1890 and 1899 Ordnance Survey editions, and the addition of the aisle housing the Stanley Memorial is shown. There are later Ordnance Survey maps which were available and these show a single change between the 1899 (figure 32) and 1923 (figure 33) editions in which a building is inserted into the gap on Stanley Street. The Ordnance Survey mapping shows a wall built off the north-western tower but it is presumed that this is the later structure described by W.E Griffiths in 1952, rather than the lower wall with similar bonding material to that found in the Roman Wall.

5.5.4.21 The aforementioned changes to St. Cybi's Church were commissioned by W.O Stanley's niece, Miss Jane Adeane in 1897. Arthur Baker, who was the partner of Sir Gilbert Scott prior to Scott's death, and his partner Harold Hughes, were commissioned by Jane Adeane to realise the element of her uncle's restoration of 1876 - 1979 which had been abandoned due to lack of funds. This was the addition of the South Chancel Aisle which was built in his memory. The works were not carried out to the same design as had been proposed by Sir Gilbert Scott and chosen by W.O. Stanley, as can be seen when the Scott design (figure 34) is compared with that commissioned by Adeane (figure 35). Figure 36 shows the Stanley memorial housed within the new aisle.

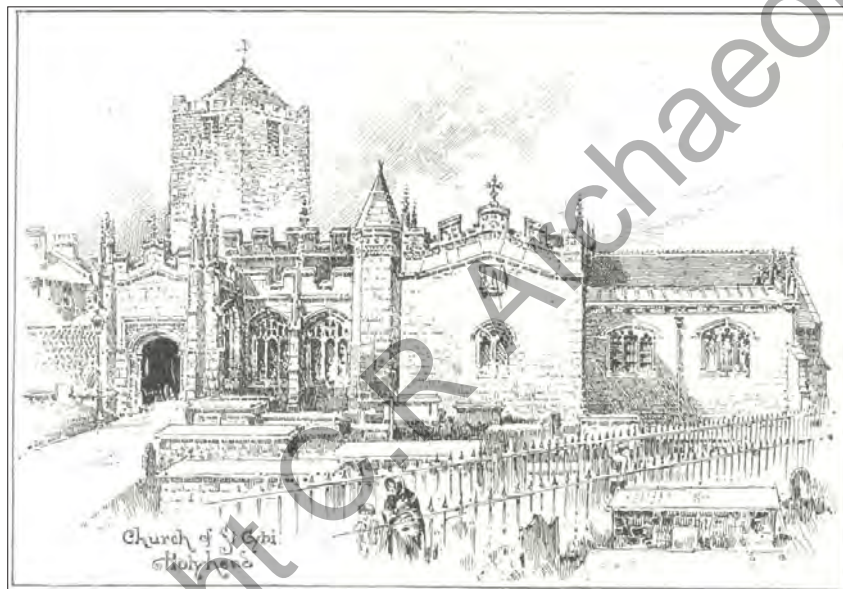
5.5.4.22 The dedication service took place in November 1897 and the event was reported in the North Wales Observer and Express. *“At the ancient church of St. Cybi, Holyhead, on Tuesday, a special service was held for the dedication of a new South Chancel aisle built in memory of the late Hon. William Owen Stanley and Mrs. Stanley of Penrhos. The aisle contains a beautiful monument of Carrara marble, designed by Mr. Harold Thornycroft, R.A. It consists of a life-size recumbent figure of the late Mr. Stanley, with watching angels at the head and at the feet. With the help of Mr. Watts R.A, and his knowledge of the original, the sculptor has produced a wonderful likeness. Mr. Watts, who has himself watched the progress of the memorial for many years, considers it one of the finest works of art of modern times. The aisle is from the designs of Messrs Arthur Baker and Harold Hughes, architects of Bangor and London. Mr Arthur Baker passed away in the early part of this year, leaving the completion to his partner, Mr. Harold Hughes, who has given the greatest satisfaction with the work. On the outside are two carved figures, from the design of Mr. Thornycroft. The new aisle has been built by Mr. R. Bridgeman of Lichfield, who has done his work in every respect in an admirable manner. Two stained glass windows are from the designs of Sir E. Burne Jones, and were executed by Messrs William Morris & Co. The wrought-iron screen in front of the monument has been carried out by Mr. W. J. Gawthrop. The service was partly choral, the church choir being assisted by members of the Bangor Cathedral Choir”.*

5.5.4.23 Further details of the work were published in a commemorative pamphlet written by Arthur Stanley. The passages were as follows:

5.5.4.24 *“The successive owners of Penrhos were closely connected with the fortunes of Holyhead. Sir John Stanley, afterwards first Lord Stanley of Alderley, p. 20 his brother, the accomplished Bishop of Norwich and their sons, the Honorable W. O. Stanley, and Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, Dean of Westminster, took the keenest interest in chronicling the facts and legends connected with the venerable church, and in the preservation of its fabric.*



**Figure 34.** 1876 Design for St. Cybi's Church Drawn by Sir Gilbert Scott (Source: Anglesey Archives WM/312/4)



**Figure 35.** 1897 Remodelling of St. Cybi's Church Showing New Southern Aisle (Source: Stanley 1897)



**Figure 36.** 1897 Monument to W.O. Stanley in the Southern Aisle of St. Cybi's Church (Source: Stanley 1897)



**Figure 30.** 1890 Ordnance Survey Map of St. Cybi's Church and Environs (Source: Anglesey Archives)



**Figure 31.** Church Lane (Source: Anglesey Archives)



**Figure 32.** 1899 Ordnance Survey Map of St. Cybi's Church and Environs



**Figure 33.** 1923 Ordnance Survey Map of St. Cybi's Church and Environs

5.5.4.25 *During the last months of Mrs. Stanley's life it was her great interest to plan a complete restoration of the church, to complete the clerestory left unfinished in Tudor times, and to render the dilapidated building once more a worthy sanctuary for the prayers and praises which had echoed within its walls for over thirteen centuries. Mrs. Stanley's plan included the erection of a monument to the husband she had loved so well, and whose life had been devoted to the welfare of Holyhead.*

5.5.4.26 *The restoration of the church was carried out after her death from the plans of Sir Gilbert Scott, mainly at the expense of Mr. Stanley, in 1879. By the removal of the earth accumulated within the building, the bases of the pillars long buried were brought to light, and the church revealed once more in the beauty of its original proportions. And now Mrs. Stanley's last wish has been fully carried out, as regards her husband's monument, by its erection in a fitting shrine by one who, having filled a daughter's place in the home at Penrhos, has put her whole heart into the perfecting of a work which she regarded as a sacred trust bequeathed to her.*

5.5.4.27 *The south chancel aisle was completed and unveiled on Sunday, the 20th June, 1897, the 60th anniversary of the Queen's Accession. The carved figures on the outside representing St. Seiriol and St. Cybi, are from the designs of Mr. Hamo Thornycroft; the steps, of green serpentine marble, are taken from the Rhoscolyn Quarry, Holyhead Island, by the kindness of Colonel Hampton Lewis of Bodior.*

5.5.4.28 *Mr. Arthur Baker, who carried out the restoration of 1877 under Sir Gilbert Scott, has been the architect of the present addition; but to the deep regret of all who knew him, he has passed away this year, and we owe the perfecting and completion of the work to the devoted personal superintendance of his partner, and son-in-law, Mr. Harold Hughes, of Bangor.*

5.5.4.29 *The monument itself is of Carrara marble, designed by Hamo Thornycroft, R.A. It consists of a life-size recumbent figure with watching angels at the head and the feet. With the help of Mr. Watts, R.A., and his knowledge of the original, the sculptor has produced a wonderful likeness, recalling to all who knew him the characteristics of Mr. Stanley's fine head and impressive features. Mr. Watts, who has himself followed the progress of the memorial for many years with keen interest, considers it one of the finest works of art of modern times.*

5.5.4.30 *The inscription runs thus:*

*William Owen Stanley of Penrhos, Lord Lieutenant of Anglesey, for 34 years a Member of the House of Commons, twin son of the 1st Lord Stanley of Alderley and his wife Lady Maria Josepha Holroyd. Born 1802, Married 1832, Ellin, daughter of Sir John Williams, Baronet, of Bodelwyddan. Died 1884, and buried in this Church, whereof he restored the fabric. A scholar and an antiquary, he dwelt among his own people in the Island of Holyhead, and gave a long life to their welfare.*

5.5.4.31 *Erected by the desire of Ellin, for 44 years his devoted wife.*

5.5.4.32 *Over the arch of the recess behind the tomb are engraved these words: "Till the day dawn and the shadows flee away."*

5.5.4.33 *Mrs. Stanley's wish that there should be no monument to herself has been respected, but the effigy of her husband has been encircled with wrought ironwork, entirely formed of her initials E and S intertwined, an idea suggested by St. Anselm's Chapel in Canterbury Cathedral. The stained glass windows were designed by Sir E. Burne Jones and executed by William Morris, and one of them bears the inscription: "To the dear memory of Ellin Stanley, died at Penrhôs, November, 1876".*

5.5.4.34 *This aisle, as a tribute to their joint memories, is now dedicated to the glory of God, and given by Jane H. Adeane to that church which has, on its rock beside the sea, stood firm for over thirteen centuries.*

*“The foundation of God standeth sure”*

5.5.4.35 *Outside the aisle is carved the following Welsh inscription:*

CHWANEGWYD YR CAPEL NEWYDD YMA  
AT HEN EGLWYS GYBI SANT (SEILWYD  
ODDEUTU Y FLWYDDYN O.C. 550) YN Y  
DRIUGEINFED FLWYDDYN O DEYRNASIAD  
Y FRENHINES VICTORIA O.C. 1897.  
DY ORSEDD DI O DDUW SYDD BYTH AC  
YN DRAGYWYDD.

5.5.4.36 *Of which the following is an English translation: To this Ancient Church, founded by St. Cybi about A.D. 550, this Chapel was added in the 60th year of the reign of Queen Victoria, A.D. 1897. “Thy throne, O Lord, is for ever and ever”.*

5.5.4.37 Jane Adeane was also responsible for further works to the churchyard and environs, and purchased Stanley House in Market Square for incorporation into a scheme inspired by Plas Mawr. This is mentioned in an account of her life and works compiled by her niece Violet Martineau, “*Aunt Jane had a great love for beautifying her surroundings, and she specially wished to improve the view of Holyhead from the sea. She restored the old walls of St. Cybi’s Church and purchased a building known as Stanley House, which was incorporated a part of the ancient Roman wall. Her passionate loyalty to the Queen made her very desirous that Victoria should see this view from the sea*” (Martineau 1934: 150). Queen Victoria visited Holyhead in 1900 which would make these works broadly contemporary with those at the church. Although further research into this property has not been undertaken the architectural similarities between Stanley House and Plas Tanalltran are such that it would seem certain that Baker is the architect responsible for the works. It is particularly evident in the stepped gables with finials. This nicely ties together the architect of the Victorian church restoration and the works to Stanley house which included the rebuilding of the south-eastern tower of the Roman Walls.

## **5.5.5 Twentieth Century Holyhead**

5.5.5.1 During the earliest part of the twentieth century life in Holyhead continued much as it had during the nineteenth century, but the twentieth century was to prove far less kind to Holyhead than the nineteenth. Following the First World War it was a time of great decline and hardship for Holyhead and its inhabitants. This decline began in the 1920's when a number of episodes which were to prove disastrous for the town occurred. The first came in 1920 when the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company withdrew from the port ending 70 years of unbroken service and resulting in the loss of 350 jobs. This loss was compounded by the loss of the Royal Mail service contract to the London and North-Western Railway Company which led to the towns reliance on a single company. The dangers of this became evident when the LNWR merged with a number of other rail companies to form the much larger London, Midland and Scottish Railway Company and introduced scathing economies resulting in further job loss (Rowlands 1989: 29-30).

5.5.5.2 At this time relations with Ireland were changing, and in 1922 Southern Ireland achieved home rule. Following this separation, the diplomatic links between Britain and Ireland became strained and in 1932 a six year tariff war began which was to further feed into the precarious position of the town. In his work on the period John Rowlands records that “*The Trade War with Ireland was disastrous for Holyhead, because had it not happened the town's dependence on the LMS and the railway*



*company's monopoly of the trade with Ireland, would have made them both relatively immune to the economic recession of the 1930's. Without those six long years of the Tariff War, Holyhead's limitations as a one company town could have been its greatest strength. In fact as events turned out the fact that Holyhead was a one company town was its greatest weakness in the 1930's"* (Rowlands 1989: 29-30).

5.5.5.3 The recession of the 1930's was on a global scale and unemployment was high throughout the country but for reasons detailed above Holyhead was particularly harshly hit leading Megan Lloyd George (MP for Anglesey) to claim in 1937 that Holyhead was suffering higher unemployment than all but the very worst areas of South Wales and Durham. Statistics record that unemployment in Holyhead was only to fall below 30% once during the 1930's and in December 1936 it hit the record level of 47.7%. Many families left the town in search of work elsewhere and during the 1930's the population fell by over one thousand. Contemporary observer accounts paint a bleak picture and stated that *"the town is in crisis – the most serious in its history"* (1931), *"there are hundreds of men, women and children practically destitute"* (1933), *"anyone walking through the town would at once notice that Holyhead was a dead town; there was nothing there at all"* (1938) and *"we are worse off in Holyhead today than we have been in the whole history of the town. The town is poverty stricken"* (1939). It was only with the advent of the Second World War in 1939 that there was any improvement in the town's fortune – a fact that was bitterly noted at the time by the town clerk who remarked that *"apparently you cannot get anything for Holyhead unless you get a war"*. The war did however bring employment and government contracts to the area although Holyhead was never to return to its late nineteenth century heyday (Rowlands 1989: 25 – 34).

#### **5.5.5.1 Holyhead slum clearances to the North of the Roman Fort**

5.5.5.1.1 As can be seen from the cartographic evidence, the area to the north of the Roman walls was an area of dense housing which was cleared following the Second World War. Rowlands (1989: 30 – 31) details the background to the clearances in this and other areas of the town.

5.5.5.1.2 *"Unemployment was only one of the problems facing Holyhead in the 1930's – two others were bad housing and poor health. In the Holyhead Chronicle, it was reported the "50% of the houses in the town were of the slum class" and even at the end of the 1930's it was still claimed that "there are private houses in Holyhead that should be called shacks. Many of the landlords in the town should be shot for allowing some of the houses to be occupied". In the 1930's most people rented their houses from private landlords and many of the houses were well past their best, having been built in the mid-nineteenth century. Many of the properties were also leasehold and houses were often not repaired or improved properly. Overcrowding was a particular problem in many homes and sanitary arrangements in the older houses left much to be desired. The Holyhead Urban District Council used its statutory powers, as far as possible, to compel landlords to improve their property and the Council itself began to build housing estates, for example houses were being advertised for a rent of 9s – 6d per week on the Maes y Dref estate in 1933. In fact, the Holyhead Council showed great awareness of the town's problems in the 1930's and not only embarked on an ambitious programme of demolition of very old houses and rehousing families"*.

5.5.5.1.3 The Church Lane and Old Swift Square area were to fall under this clearance programme and in this instance, it was seen that the works would have the added benefit of uncovering the Roman walls for exhibition to tourists and the general public. This work is chronicled in the notes held at Anglesey Archives, and an article published in the Transaction of the Anglesey Antiquarian Society.

5.5.5.1.4 Lucy Williams is a significant figure in the preservation of the history of the town of Holyhead and Lucy was a driving force in the plan to leave the walls exposed. She also lobbied, although unfortunately without success, that the old inn in Swift's Square be preserved and converted into a museum for the town. Her descriptions of the building are invaluable to our understanding of the structure, its origin and its phasing.

5.5.5.1.5 The first mention sourced of the proposed plans to clear this area of Holyhead appear in the Transactions of the Anglesey Antiquarian Society in 1937 (page 18), where the following passage appears: *"Your Committee has heard of the proposed demolition, by order of the Holyhead Urban Council, of an old house in Swift Square, mentioned in Swift's "Holyhead Journal" and it has been decided to request the Council affix a plaque to the new building which will be erected on the spot, to the effect that it stands on the site of the old inn referred to by Swift"*.

5.5.5.1.6 This was followed by a second note in the 1938 edition (page 20) which stated *"Old Inn at Holyhead – Mr S. J. Evans referred to the old inn in Swift Square at Holyhead, which was threatened with demolition as a slum area. The inn and adjacent houses had been originally built abutting on the Roman Wall of the Churchyard. If demolition did occur, the Committee had interested the Office of Works in the matter sufficiently to get the Office of Works to urge that a clear path be left alongside the Roman Wall"*.

5.5.5.1.7 The works were then shelved for the duration of the Second World War but, following the cessation of hostilities, were recommenced in 1946-7. A Council document from this period was sourced from Anglesey Archives and is believed to have been written by Lucy Williams. As the information is all relevant it is transcribed in full below. *"Land Situated North of the Roman Wall, Holyhead - I have been requested by several members of the H.U.D.C to set out a statement of practical suggestions as to the future of the piece of land north of the Roman Wall, the purchase of the 2,000 year lease and freehold of which, I understand, the H.U.D.C have under consideration, in order to preserve it as an open space. The purchase value of the lease and freehold is limited by the fixed rental of the long lease.*

5.5.5.1.8 *This piece of land was William Morris's "garden on the rocks" (Morris Letters Vol II, 184, 583, 584), the Willow Garden, by which name it was known till the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and originally was attached to the inn "Swift Court", or "Welch's House", where William and Lewis Morris were habitués. William Morris married Jane Hughes, who inherited the land and inn, part of which was built by her ancestor, Major Thomas Swift, the Cromwellian commander, who took Holyhead fort from Captain Roberts, the Royalist. William Morris' daughter, Mrs Jones, inherited the property and Summer Hill, and she died without issue, leaving Swift Court and the Willow Garden to Miss Elisabeth Evans, whom some old Holyhead people remember as "Miss Evans yr Aeres". She apparently mortgaged the property and it passed to the Hughes family (of Hugh Hughes Charity fame). The inn is often mentioned in the Morris letters, and till the Eagle and Child in 1777 outmoded it, entertained all the Irish notables including Dean Swift, who wrote the "Holyhead Journal" there, and epigrams on the window panes. The portion running from the corner cottage of Swift Square to the corrugated-iron roofed cycle garage in Church Lane is the oldest domestic building in Holyhead and still has a wattle and daube partition with some late 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century panelling, (which requires protection) and steep-pitched roof. Many can remember the original steep-pitched roof of No.11, Church Lane, which had oak timbers pegged together, and was cut with the names of travellers of past centuries who had slept in the attic. The interior and stairs of these premises were modified about 1776.*

5.5.5.1.9 *The above mentioned piece of land would give an open view of the 4<sup>th</sup> Century Roman fort which, properly set out, is a touristic draw. The application to the Ministry of Health for a loan to purchase the land should be supported by the Ministry of Works, responsible for the care of National Monuments. On completion of the purchase, the Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Ministry of Works should be notified by the U.D.C and asked to frame the necessary procedure to take over the guardianship and maintenance of the north side of the Roman Wall, the width of the dry ditch, (usual outside Roman Forts) and a walk alongside it. This would involve the running of trenches to the foundation of the wall by the Ministry of Works to prove the existence of the ditch. This proved, the ditch would later be excavated by them to its original depth and the slope to the base of the wall covered with turf, the tidy condition of which and the broad walk alongside, being part of the responsibility of the Ministry of Works. As the earth has accumulated against the wall in the course of 16 centuries (being washed down Bryn yr Haf), it is quite likely that the town may get some historic finds when excavation below the top spits takes place, and undoubtedly the fort would present a much more imposing appearance. The Inspector of Ancient Monuments has an expert knowledge of the wall for many years. Recent legislation brings this site within the scope of the Town and Country Planning Act.*

5.5.5.1.10 *This would leave a large garden under the care of the H.U.D.C and include the part containing the old inn. I respectfully suggest that it would be a mistake to blot out the original L-shaped premises to which this garden was attached. A practical plan would be to approach the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion and ask them for the gift of an architect's plan to restore the inn building as a Morysiaid Memorial, and for any other help or suggestions the Society can give as to opening a public subscription fund for the purpose.*

5.5.5.1.11 *The L-shape could be retained, the walls restored, 17<sup>th</sup> century style windows reset, stone chimney's rebuilt, the sharp angle of the roof retained, and the attic lighted, as originally, by dormer. The ground floor could be used as the town's reading and reference library, the first floor could consist of two rooms used as a local museum, one for permanent collection (always stressing the nautical aspect) the walls covered with any portion of local panelling and 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> local types (begged and bought). The other room could be used for loan collections and application for affiliation with the National Museum of Wales should be effected. The attic could be used for library files, etc. The association with Dean Swift is good tourist propaganda and should be noted with a plaque, or his epigrams recut on the window panes.*

5.5.5.1.12 *A wall built on the site of the frontage of College Lane would break the north wind and give a sheltered south aspect garden for old and young to enjoy in the centre of the town. The inside face of the wall could be used for future low-relief memorial plaques. To retain the Morysiaid tradition, a willow hedge could be planted along the west and east boundaries, and this would hide the backs of the houses in Market Street and Land's End. In years to come, this would become one of the most charming spots in North Wales and the young people could take their part in the lay-out of the garden, and the botanical aspect. The architect's plan should include an extension to the edge of the cliff, so that any future enlargement required and covered by funds, would be part of a harmonious design". An annotated plan of the area was included with the document and is reproduced as figure 37.*

5.5.5.1.13 *This scheme was unfortunately never realised although aspects of the work such as the excavation to identify the Roman ditch were conducted. It is rather sad to note that despite obvious advantages to the town the Old Inn was demolished, and one would hardly consider the current car park to be "become one of the most charming spots in North Wales".*

5.5.5.1.14 The Inn was demolished during the summer of 1947 and was recorded by Lucy Williams. She mentions in her 1949 paper in the Transactions of the Anglesey Antiquarian Society that the building was carefully surveyed and photographed by the architect of H.M Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments and work is currently underway to source this data.

5.5.5.1.15 In her article, Williams describes the building as the last remaining domestic building of the pre-Reformation College of Caergybi, and states that the remaining portions of early oak timber-work were given to the town for “*inclusion in a projected reconstruction as public library and repository of the area’s history in conformity with the design of the Inspectorate’s architect*”. Williams records that the other domestic buildings of the College (or Clas) were pulled down in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century without record (Williams 1949: 125).

5.5.5.1.16 The following text details the history and appearance of the site as compiled by Lucy Williams. This is of relevance to understanding the development of the entire plot now occupied by the carpark. “*Until 1776, the inn, mentioned by Dean Swift and William Morris, stood alone on a patch of ground above the Cei, or landing place – William Morris’ “garden on the rocks”, the willow garden. Then three houses were built facing the inn by J.D, probably John Davies, Carreg Domas, who was a government contractor for haulage and built Twtfil and was one of the family who owned Llanfawr till about 1742.*

5.5.5.1.17 *In 1794 there were changes in the leases of the inn and conversion into three cottages. It was then owned by Mrs. Jane Jones, daughter of William Morris, as was the land on which the Boston Street terrace was built comprising the “Plume of Feathers” inn which had early ale brewing history. The small lattice windows of the 17<sup>th</sup> century portion were replaced by sash windows, the stairs and doors altered, the replacements being in yellow pine, not oak, as were the original roof timbers and cross beams. This became a separate domicile of exterior dimensions 30 ft by 22 ft with a dark passage through the centre of the adjoining 15<sup>th</sup> century wing, which was divided into two-room tenements. The first floor doorway was blocked, and access to the attic of the 17<sup>th</sup> century portion was by ladder. Bomb damage in the last war followed the condemnation of the premises as a slum clearance area.*

5.5.5.1.18 *For many years I had been aware of the early character of the sharp pitched roof (60 degrees), ancient collar beam, oak wattle and panelling of the 15<sup>th</sup> century part, and had shown them to several Welsh historians, but when the slates were stripped in 1947, the original 15<sup>th</sup> century oak trusses, purlins, rafters and three wing braces (one with the craftsman’s mark gouged on it) were laid bare. This was the roofing of the centre portion of a long 15<sup>th</sup> century building of which the eastern wall had been pulled down to tack on cottages, and the western gable had fallen outwards in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The beautiful oak panelled partition divided a small room about 13 feet by 12 feet, from a long room once 26 feet by 12 feet in the centre of which a fine oak truss with decorative arched collar brace and a former dormer facing south were originally in view. The trusses were carefully removed (each weighed about half a ton) by the Town Surveyor, in whose charge they are. The wattle broke in removal, but I have cleaned and treated the oak slats and stakes, which were slotted into the collar beam over the panelling, which I have cleaned and taken charge of for the Urban District Council. The rafters and purlins were laid flat, not edgeways, but they and the wall posts were too disintegrated to preserve. I secured some good photos of the stripped roof. The panelled partition was covered with dust, limewash and wall paper on one side. The lowest layer of this 18<sup>th</sup> century, thick, Chinese pattern, yellow and black – a luxury in its day – of which I salvaged fragments. The partition consisted of three segments, two 7ft high by 4 ft 3 ins wide (one of which had been ruthlessly cut in the 1794 alterations) and a door section, i.e. a door 2 ft 4 ins wide and 5 ft 1 ins high with panelling above up to 7 feet level. One side was decorated with reeding round each panel, the other with beading which was an integral part of the framework. The bottom of each panel has a smoothed slope instead of the beadings, and the craftsmanship is magnificent. A human and amusing touch is the rushlight burns*

*of past travellers, who had, as in Dean Swift's time, drunk the inn dry. These are all at hand level, where the weary traveller after groping through the upstairs passage from the 17<sup>th</sup> century portion, fumbled for the door among the panels it resembled.*

5.5.5.1.19 *At the demolition, the ground floor had been gutted since bomb damage, and the in-and-out-board partitions of the first floor of the 17<sup>th</sup> century portion pilfered. A large arch, with oak supports, facing the Cei to the north, was probably Major Swift's front entrance, and just inside this was the door to the centre passage of the 15<sup>th</sup> century part, of which it was probably the original entrance. Two large stones forming its lintel were poised to form a rough arch, and round the blocked windows of this part were large roughly squared blocks of schist of which local stone the inn and Roman wall were built. The walls of the 15<sup>th</sup> century portion were about 2 ft 6 ins thick and built mostly of large stones.*

5.5.5.1.20 *The masonry of Major Swift's portion was quite different. The walls were three feet thick with large stones at the corners, but made of smaller stones with a great deal of packing of stiff yellow clay in other parts. There is a seam of this heavy yellow clay running from Ffynnon Castell, near modern New Park Road. The chimney flues in this 17<sup>th</sup> century part were made with small tile-shaped pieces of schist and there were once three flues downstairs and two on the first floor. Dear Swift records that one of the latter smoked abominably in windy weather. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, fish buying and curing activities took place in the inn kitchen" (Williams 1949).*

5.5.5.1.21 Following the demolition and clearance of the houses on the plot to the north of the Roman wall an excavation was carried out by W.E Griffiths of the Ministry of Works in 1952 in order to identify a ditch believed to be associated with the Roman Fort. As detailed above this work yielded a negative result and no ditch was found to be present. It is not known whether there was ever a garden established in this area but the site is currently in use as a car park, a purpose which it has served for many years. The north facing elevation of the Roman wall remains unobscured and this arrangement should remain.

5.5.5.1.22 The churchyard has undergone works since the 1950's including the removal of above ground tomb remains and lying flat of gravestones, the removal and reinstatement of metal railings around the church (figure 38), the laying of paving in 1992 and. The lower graveyard gateway was modified in 1926 and bears an inscription to this effect.



## **6.0 Results of Archaeological Works**

6.0.1 A full description of the St. Cybi's Churchyards and environs is detailed in the Conservation Statement Written in October 2012 and it is not the intension of this report to duplicate previous works. A walkover survey and photographic survey was undertaken on the 28<sup>th</sup> April and 5<sup>th</sup> May, and the results are detailed on plates 1 – 44. The location and direction of the photographic plates are included as Appendix A.

### **6.1 The Upper Churchyard (Plates 1 – 32)**

6.1.1 The upper churchyard area is enclosed on three sides by the Roman Walls, and by a low nineteenth century wall on the seaward side. The lower churchyard is accessed via stone steps in the centre of this wall. The steps were rebuilt in 1992, when the current paving was laid. There are two standing buildings within the enclosed area, the church itself and Eglwys y Bedd. The table tombs have all been removed, and the gravestones have been laid flat. It is unclear as to whether the slabs which are now laid out correspond with the grave locations from which they were removed but it is almost certain that the nineteenth century graves would have cut through earlier burial on the site. There is also the strong possibility that there will be charnel pits onsite. The discovery of an Early Medieval grave during the eighteenth century also demonstrates the antiquity of use of the site for burial and highlights the possibility of chance survival – which may only be partial, within the churchyard. Standards and Guidance on the appropriate treatment of human remains must be adhered to in this area.

6.1.2 Historic photographs of the churchyard show that the area was intensively used for burial, and it would seem unlikely that if any works were conducted which required excavation to any great depth that human remains could be avoided. The existence of numerous walled tombs which presumably contain predominantly multiple burial may cause issues. Historic sources state that the burials were sealed using charcoal to create an airtight environment which may lead to health and safety issues should these remains be disturbed by any works. These tombs may also extend to greater depths than a simple cut grave and will have caused greater disturbance to the surrounding deposits. There does however remain the possibility that fragmentary archaeological remains relating to the Medieval, Early Medieval, Roman and Pre-Roman site use have survived in some form at the site.

6.1.3 The upper churchyard area has been subjected to limited archaeological works which have demonstrated that there is definite archaeological potential in this area, especially in the areas nearest the Roman Walls and around the church and Eglwys y Bedd buildings. The archaeological remains were multiphase and there is the potential for increasing our understanding of the development of the site should further works be undertaken. There are areas of the churchyard, such as around the south-eastern tower and immediately adjacent to the retaining wall between the upper and lower graveyards, where later remodelling is likely to have removed most if not all traces of earlier activity.

6.1.4 The archaeological works also showed that there was an increase in the ground level since the nineteenth century, and should works be of a more limited nature (0.20m in depth) be conducted then it is unlikely that there will be a negative impact on the underlying activity. In certain areas nineteenth century stones were encountered at a depth of 0.5m demonstrating a considerable change in ground level. The remains associated with the Eglwys y Bedd area were encountered at a depth of 0.4m. There is the possibility of encountering unstratified artefactual material which has been disturbed, but which has survived. This is evidenced by the discovery of a Mercian coin within the graveyard area during works in 1952.

6.1.5 As an interesting aside it was noted that there are gravestones which contain examples of nineteenth century graffiti, predominantly the footprints of both adults and children, (see plate 13) which would benefit from systematic study and recording.



**Plate 1.** St. Cybi's Church and Upper Churchyard,  
South Facing Elevation



**Plate 2.** St. Cybi's Church and Upper Churchyard,  
South Facing Elevation



**Plate 3.** St. Cybi's Church and Upper Churchyard,  
Eglwys y Bedd is Shown in Foreground



**Plate 4.** St. Cybi's Church and Upper Churchyard,  
South Facing Elevation





**Plate 5.** Rebuilt South-Eastern Tower of Roman Fort



**Plate 6.** Upper Churchyard Showing Relaid Grave Stones



**Plate 7.** Gable End of Stanley House Incorporating Roman Wall



**Plate 8.** Rebuilt South-Eastern Tower Incorporating Roman Wall



**Plate 9.** Rear Elevation of Stanley House showing Rebuilt Roman Tower. Designed by Arthur Baker and Built Between 1897 and 1900



**Plate 10.** Market Square and View of Nineteenth Century Arch in Roman Wall



**Plate 11.** View of Nineteenth Century Arch in Roman Wall (Taken from Inside Upper Churchyard)



**Plate 12.** Upper Churchyard Between Church and Eglwys y Bedd Showing Grounds and Roman Wall



**Plate 13.** Nineteenth Century Graveyard with Interesting Graffiti Showing Footprints



**Plate 14.** Eglwys y Bedd and Surrounding Area  
Taken from Church Roof



**Plate 15.** Eglwys y Bedd East Facing Gable



**Plate 16.** Eglwys y Bedd North Facing Elevation



**Plate 17.** Eglwys y Bedd  
West Facing Gable



**Plate 18.** Detailed Shot of  
West Facing Gable



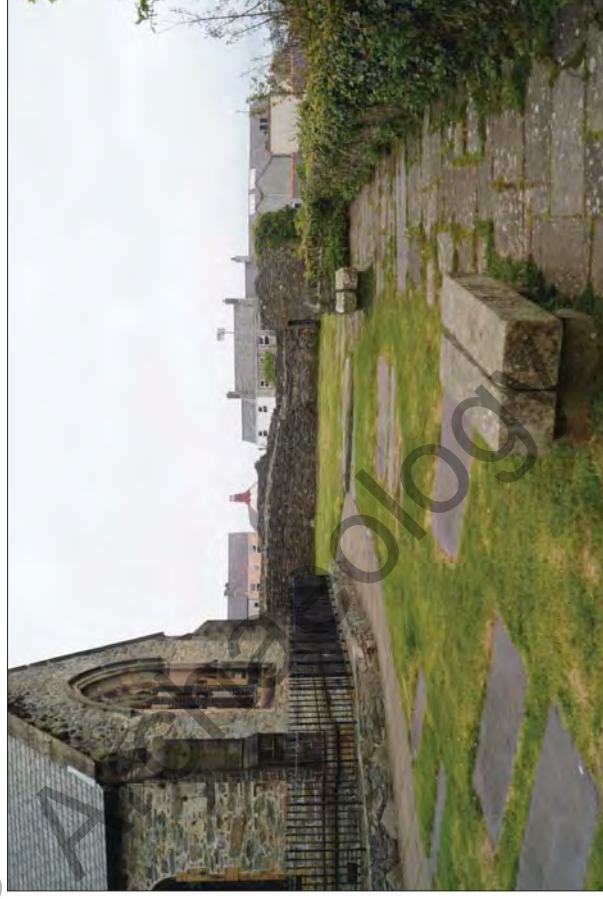
**Plate 19.** South Facing View of Upper Graveyard  
Along East Facing Wall



**Plate 20.** North Facing View of Upper Graveyard  
Along West Facing Wall



**Plate 21.** Upper Graveyard Facing  
North-Western Corner of Fort Wall



**Plate 22.** Upper Graveyard Facing North-Eastern  
Corner of Fort Wall



**Plate 23.** St. Cybi's Church East Facing Gable



**Plate 24.** Upper Graveyard Facing  
North-Western Corner of Roman Fort Wall



**Plate 25.** Upper Graveyard Facing  
Northern Church Elevation



**Plate 26.** Upper Graveyard Facing  
Northern Church Elevation. Note Previous Pathway



**Plate 27.** Eastern Gable of Church



**Plate 28.** Void Beneath Relaid Grave Stone



**Plate 29.** South-West Facing View of Church Tower



**Plate 30.** Blocked Opening At Base of Church Tower



**Plate 31.** South-West Facing View of North Facing Elevation of Church



**Plate 32.** Remains of North-East Tower

## **6.2 Area to the North of the Roman Fort – Currently in Use as a Car Park (Plates 33 – 36)**

6.2.1 The area to the north of the fort, which is currently in use as a carpark, is of particular archaeological interest. This area is likely to have been a focus for extramural activity related to the Roman occupation, post Roman raiding activity, Early Christian, Medieval and Post Medieval activity. There is also the outlying possibility of Prehistoric remains in this area.

6.2.2 We know from the works of Lucy Williams that there were Medieval Collegiate buildings in this area, most demolished in the late eighteenth/early nineteenth but the last of which was demolished in 1947. In the nineteenth century this area became a slum, which was cleared in 1947. This later activity has not removed all traces of Roman activity and Griffith describes finding intact deposits during his 1952 excavations. He also details finding the floor and foundation levels of the demolished housing – some of which are of Medieval date which if exposed could be recorded in detail. There is also the potential to examine the social history of a working-class area of the town should the remains of the nineteenth century houses be encountered.

6.2.3 There was a portion of this area which remained undeveloped – first surviving as an open square and later as garden plots. This would be of particular significance given the increased potential to examine the Roman and Early Medieval origins of the site which are currently poorly understood.

6.2.4 It is not known what effect the creation of the carpark has had on the ground surface encountered by Griffiths, as it is possible that bulldozers/rollers may have been employed to prepare the site for the tarmac. This would have had a negative impact on the upper deposits but it is not at present known whether this is the case.

## **6.3 Lower Churchyard (Plates 37 – 44)**

6.3.1 The lower churchyard is situated on reclaimed land which was drained following the harbour works of the early nineteenth century. It was purchased by the church in 1826. This area of the cemetery contains the later burials on the site and was in use from 1826 until September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1859 when the Council specified that burials must now be wholly discontinued in the Parish Church, in the cemetery, and in the additional churchyard “except in walled graves now completed to the surface in which each coffin shall be embedded in charcoal and separately entombed in an airtight manner”.

6.3.2 It is clear from figure 28 that there are walled tombs in this area, and that burials are densely packed. The relatively short period of time that this portion of the site was in use makes it unlikely that there are considerable numbers of intercutting graves or the associated issues of encountering disarticulated human remains. There may however be charnal pits of remains encountered during grave digging in the upper churchyard.

6.3.3 There is one feature of interest which is believed to belong to the Roman phase of the site – the relieving arch in the southern-western corner of the lower churchyard (see plate 44). It is described by Mortimer Wheeler “*On the eastern or seaward side the work, like that at Caernarfon, crowns a commanding cliff, here 40ft high, below which, until the construction of the modern harbour, lay the sea-shore. The rugged face of the cliff has at some ancient date been secured and rendered vertical by masonry, carried at one place upon a segmental relieving arch upwards of 20ft in diameter. The masonry is partly dry built and partly held by mortar similar to that used in the main walls above. The brow of the cliff is now outlined by a low wall which replaces an earlier parapet shown in Grose’s engravings; indeed, the careful revetment of the cliff suggests that a similar parapet was alone intended to complete the original seaward defences*” (Wheeler 1923: 98). It has not been conclusively demonstrated that this wall is a Roman feature and further works – particularly if an extension of the southern fort wall out into the harbour could be identified, would greatly enhance our understanding of the monument, its form and its phasing.



**Plate 33.** Car Park Occupying Area to the North of the Roman Fort and Church Yard - Formerly Swift Square



**Plate 34.** North Facing Elevation of Northern Wall of Roman Fort



**Plate 35.** Car Park Occupying Area to the North of the Roman Fort and Church Yard - Formerly Swift Square



**Plate 36.** Car Park Occupying Area to the North of the Roman Fort and Church Yard - Formerly Swift Square





**Plate 37.** Steps From Upper to Lower Churchyard



**Plate 38.** Steps From Upper to Lower Churchyard



**Plate 39.** Lower Churchyard - View from North-Eastern Corner



**Plate 40.** Lower Churchyard - Facing North



**Plate 41.** Lower Churchyard - View Facing South-East From Upper Churchyard



**Plate 42.** Lower Churchyard - View Facing South-East  
Note Single Remaining In-situ Table Tomb



**Plate 43.** Lower Churchyard Gateway with 1926 Date Inscription



**Plate 44.** Lower Churchyard Arch in Retaining Wall

## 7.0 Conclusion

7.0.1 The St. Cybi's Churchyards and environs, Holyhead site is arguably the most significant site in the town – as is attested by its multiple heritage designations and the associated protections afforded. Caer Gybi Roman Fort (PRN 1762) is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (AN031) and Grade I Listed Building (ID 5415), St. Cybi's Church (PRN's 6915 & 1763) is a Grade I Listed Building (ID 5413), Eglwys y Bedd (PRN 1764) is a Grade II Listed Building (ID 5414) and the Lower Churchyard Wall is separately designated as a Grade II Listed Building (ID 14750). The site is also situated within the Holyhead Town Conservation Area. All development designs for this site must consider the setting of all monuments detailed above. Should any of the works require the removal/relocation of any gravestones then a full record of location must be made and the inscription transcribed.

7.0.2 The site has been divided into three areas for ease of discussion, which relate to location rather than the specific monument. The three areas are: the upper churchyard, the area to the north of the Roman Fort and the lower churchyard. The history of each of these areas was examined, as was the archaeological potential of each zone.

7.0.3 The upper churchyard is considered to be of high archaeological potential and despite the extensive repeated re-digging of the site over 1,500 years there does remain the possibility that fragmentary archaeological remains relating to the Medieval, Early Medieval, Roman and Pre-Roman site use may have survived in some form on the site.

7.0.4 The upper churchyard area has been subjected to limited archaeological works which have demonstrated that there is definite archaeological potential in this area, especially in the areas nearest the Roman Walls and around the church and Eglwys y Bedd buildings. The archaeological remains were multiphase and there is the potential for increasing our understanding of the development of the site should further works be undertaken. There are areas of the churchyard, such as around the south-eastern tower and immediately adjacent to the retaining wall between the upper and lower graveyards, where later remodelling is likely to have removed most if not all traces of earlier activity.

7.0.5 The archaeological works also showed that there was an increase in the ground level of up to 0.5m since the nineteenth century, and should works be of a more limited nature (0.20m in depth) be conducted it is unlikely that there will be a negative impact on the underlying activity. There also remains the possibility of encountering unstratified artefactual material which has been disturbed but which has survived – this is evidenced by the discovery of a Mercian coin within the graveyard area during works in 1952.

7.0.6 Due to the high potential/near certainty of encountering human remains and archaeological deposits in this area, it is recommended that for limited works an archaeological watching brief be conducted, and for more extensive works that hand excavation be undertaken stratigraphically down to the desired depths. Any brief should have scope for full excavation and recording should archaeological deposits/human remains be encountered. It would be prudent to make provision for analysis and an extension of the excavation area should significant remains be uncovered as to date there has been very limited scope for study of this site. Significant remains would include seventeenth century or earlier graves, structural remains of any period other than nineteenth century graves, garrison remains or intact ground surfaces.

7.0.7 It is considered that remains of Pre-Roman, Roman, Early Medieval and Medieval date are of national significance and will significantly further our understanding of this somewhat enigmatic site. There is also very little known of the Civil War era garrison in the town and remains of this period would be of national significance. Depending on the scope of the work it is recommended that the study/analysis of Post Medieval human remains be considered and a programme of work devised.

7.0.8 Geophysical survey (specifically Ground Penetrating Radar) may be considered for the identification of walled tombs and cut graves but it is believed that this will be of limited value given the intensive use of the site over a period of 1,500 years. The locations of the walled graves are indicated by the historic photographs, and it is unclear how much additional information will be gathered by the activity. There are also a number of further factors which are likely to negatively impact the efficacy of the survey. These include the outcropping of local schist stone and the obstruction of the signal by the gravestones currently lying on the ground (Jones 2008: 26 – 27). It may be possible to use supplementary survey techniques (such as electric resistance or magnetic survey) to enhance results, but prior to the design of such a project a detailed set of aims and objectives is necessary to clearly define the scope of works and maximise their accuracy.

7.0.9 The area to the north of the fort, which is currently in use as a carpark, is also of considerable archaeological interest. This area is likely to have been a focus for extramural activity related to the Roman occupation, post Roman raiding activity, Early Christian, Medieval and Post Medieval activity.

7.0.10 We know from the works of Lucy Williams that there were Medieval Collegiate buildings in this area, the last of which was demolished in 1947. In the nineteenth century this was a slum, which was also demolished in 1947. This later activity has not removed all traces of Roman activity, and Griffith describes finding intact deposits during his 1952 excavations. He also details finding the floor and foundation levels of the demolished housing – some of which are of Medieval date and if exposed could be recorded in detail. There is also the potential to examine the social history of a working-class area of the town should the remains of the nineteenth century houses be uncovered.

7.0.11 It must also be noted that there was a portion of this area which remained undeveloped – first surviving as an open square and later as garden plots. This would be of particular significance given the increased potential to examine the Roman and Early Medieval origins of the site which are currently poorly understood.

7.0.12 It is not known what effect the creation of the carpark has had on the ground surface encountered by Griffiths as it is possible that bulldozers/rollers may have been employed to prepare the site for the tarmac. This would have had a negative impact on the upper deposits but it is not a present known that this is the case.

7.0.13 Pre-commencement archaeological works are recommended in this area to better understand the survival of this area of the site, and it is recommended that if any large-scale redevelopment of this plot is to be undertaken that a programme of trial trenching be undertaken. The results of this work will inform the appropriate archaeological mitigation for subsequent works.

7.0.14 Any redevelopment of this area would need to remain sensitive to the setting of the Roman wall, and must not obscure the now clear elevation.

7.0.15 The lower churchyard is situated on reclaimed land which was drained following the harbour works of the early nineteenth century and was purchased by the church in 1826. This area of the cemetery contains the later burials on the site and was in use from 1826 until September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1859. As with the upper churchyard there may be health and safety issues should human remains be encountered which retain tissue.

7.0.16 It is clear from figure 28 that there are walled tombs in this area, and that burials are densely packed. The relatively short period of time that this portion of the site was in use for makes it unlikely that there are intercutting graves with the associated issues of encountering disarticulated human remains.

7.0.17 There is limited potential for encountering archaeological deposits or human remains in this area unless works are to exceed 0.5m in depth. It would be prudent to conduct an intermittent watching brief on shallow works in this area, and the contractor must be informed to cease work immediately should human remains be encountered. Should works be carried out beyond 0.5m in depth it is recommended that an archaeological watching brief be carried out and that any human remains encountered be excavated archaeologically. Standards and Guidance on the appropriate treatment of human remains must be adhered to in this area. Depending on the scope of the work it is recommended that the study/analysis of human remains be considered and a programme of work devised.

7.0.18 The exception to this would be should any works be carried out along the cliff edge, particularly in the vicinity of the relieving arch which is considered to be of Roman date. Should works be conducted in this area a full archaeological excavation should be conducted.

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### **Archival Information**

#### **Anglesey Archives**

- WM/154** Lucy Williams Notes on St Cybi's Churchyard
- WMaps/53** Sketch Map of the Town Drawn by Lewis Morris in 1737
- WSD/421** 1769 Print of the Market Place, Holyhead
- WMaps/52/1** 1820 Estate Map Showing Property Belonging to Sir John Stanley
- WMaps/53** 1840's Tithe Map of Holyhead
- W/CD/373** 1868 Map of Holyhead
- WM/312/4, 5, 6 & 9** Late Nineteenth & Early Twentieth Century Images of the St Cybi's Graveyard
- WM/312** Remodelled Entrance into St. Cybi's Churchyard
- WDAI/220** Table Tombs and Standing Headstones in Lower Churchyard
- WM/312/4** 1876 Design for St. Cybi's Church Drawn by Sir Gilbert Scott
- Council Documents Swift Square** 1940's Annotated Plan of Swift Square Area
- 1890 Ordnance Survey Map
- 1899 Ordnance Survey Map
- 1923 Ordnance Survey Map

#### **Bangor University Archives**

- BMSS 17670** 1699 Sketch of Holyhead from Alltran Rock
- Penrhos Manuscripts 772-3** Penrhos Estate Map of Holyhead 1769
- Lligwy Papers 215** 1850 Survey of Land and Property in Holyhead
- BMSS JHA** Jane Henrietta Adeane Papers

**Websites – all sites were visited 02/03/2017**

[www.anglesey.gov.uk](http://www.anglesey.gov.uk)

[www.anglesey-history.co.uk](http://www.anglesey-history.co.uk)

[www.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html)

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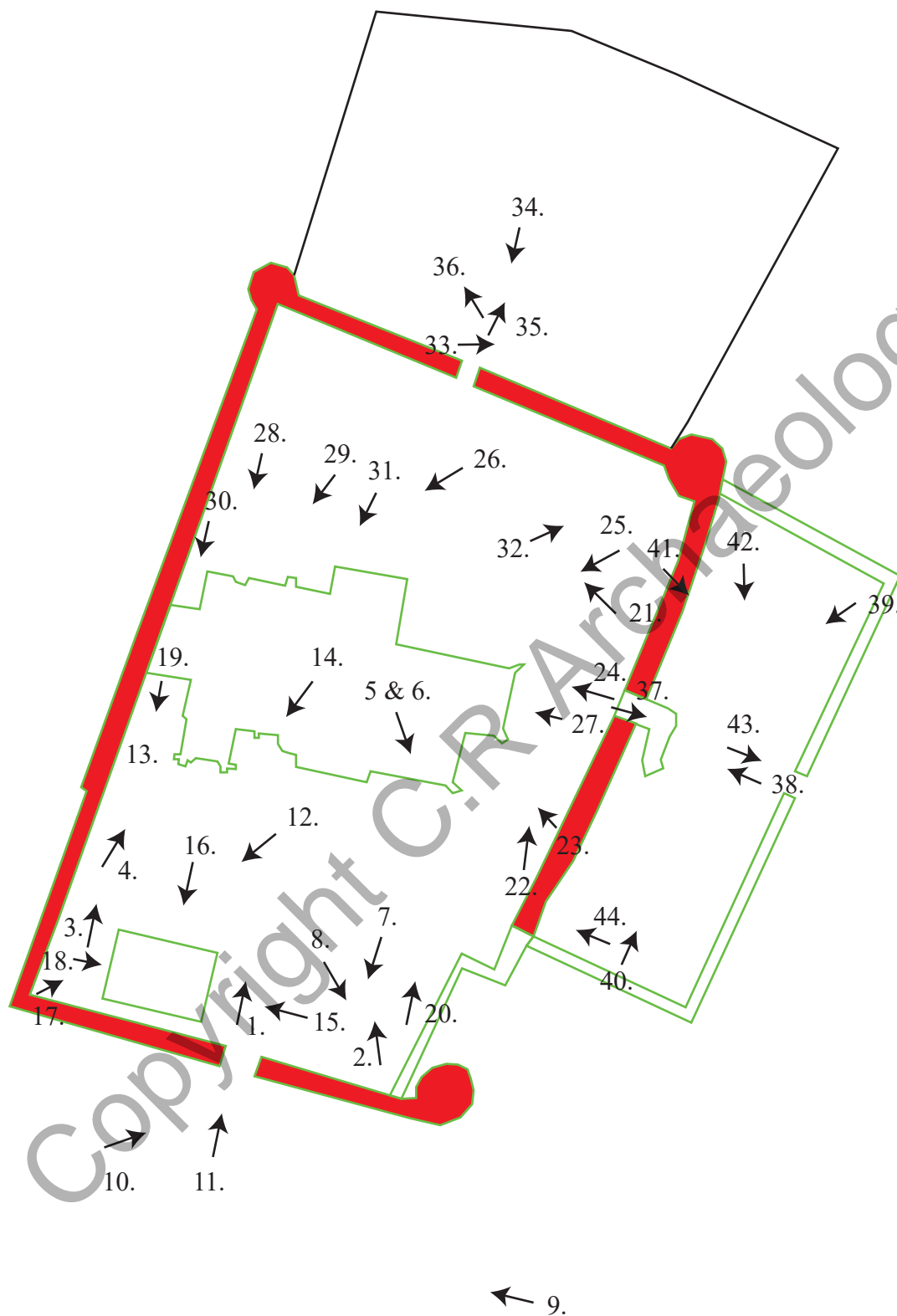
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**Appendix A.**

**Location and Direction of Photographic Plates**

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**Appendix A. Location and Direction of Photographic Plates**