

Cregrina

SO 12425220
16128

Introduction

Cregrina developed on the west bank of the River Edw where the ground is dominated by the motte known as Penarth Mount. The village is a few hundred metres to the south: the church occupies a shelf above the river with the churchyard hanging above the steep drop to the water, while the few houses that make up Cregrina lie close to the valley floor. Builth Wells is about 9km to the west.

This brief report examines the settlement's emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

We have not referenced the sources that have been examined to produce this report, but that information will be available in the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. Numbers in brackets are primary record numbers used in the HER to provide information that is specific to individual sites and features. These can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website (www.archwilio.org.uk).

History of development

The name first appears as *kreicvuruna* in c.1180 (though only in a 14th-century copy) and as *Crugrima* in 1291. This name is translated as the 'rock of Muruna'.

Nothing is recorded of Cregrina's early history and there is no way of knowing whether a settlement developed around the church in the Middle Ages. The origins of the church are also obscure, though it has recently been stated that it could have been an important church with dependant chapels in the early medieval era. It lacks a convincing curvilinear churchyard.

Even the motte is poorly documented; although it has been claimed in the past that in the 15th century the mound was the home of Bedo Chwith, patron of the famous poet Lewys Glyn Cothi, it is more likely at this date to have been the farm a little further to the north.

The mid 19th-century Tithe survey shows the church and a couple of other buildings beside the churchyard, while a smith's shop was sited on the valley floor. The growth of Cregrina on the valley floor is thus a relatively modern feature.

The heritage to 1750

St David's Church (16009) has a 13th-century nave, a later chancel on a different axis, both extensively restored in 1903. The roofs are 15th century, the font Norman, and there is a

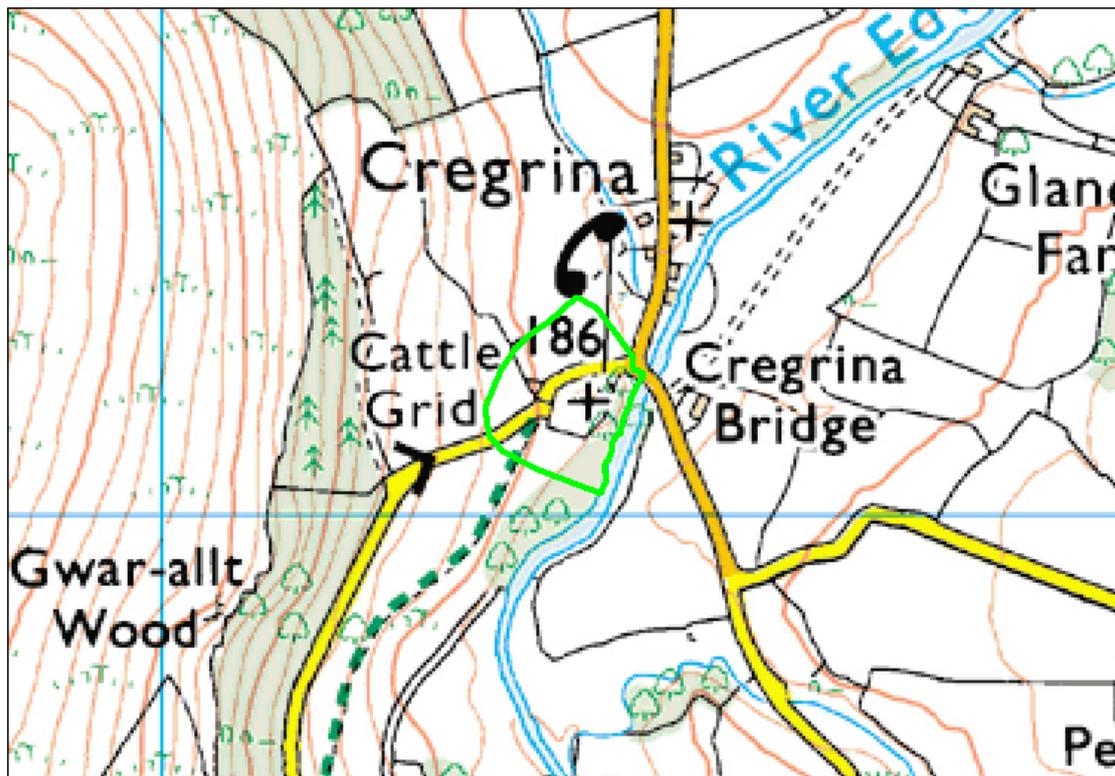
medieval screen. The church sits on a platform which may reveal a deliberate levelling of the ground.

The configuration of the churchyard (16285) is irregular. Curvilinear on the north, its east side is dictated by the proximity of the river scarp. The west side may have been cut back while on the south a faintly curvilinear scarp perhaps with an infilled ditch beyond runs just outside the churchyard wall.

No convincing earthworks survive in the vicinity of the church, but around 100m to the west (OS plot 2219) there is a low bank as yet unexplained.

Penarth Mount (342; SAM Rd076), a small motte, is sited some 500m to the north of the village. A ditch and outer bank are visible intermittently. As this is at some distance from the church and modern settlement there is little justification for considering it further here.

Extensive ridge and furrow was visible on post-war aerial photographs, west and south (16264; OS plots 1971 and 3550) of the motte. That to the west was still apparent on aerial photography in the 1980s. Intermittent traces occurred to the east (16265; OS plot 4771) and more consistently to the south-east (16266; OS plots 5951 and 5379), while relict strip fields remain visible to the north (OS plot 3376). There is also some similar ridging to the south-west of the church. Little of the ridge and furrow can be seen clearly at ground level, and whether any of it should be considered to be medieval in origin is open to question.



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