

## Nantglyn

SJ 0044 6212  
105989

### *Introduction*

Nantglyn occupies the tip of an interfluvial spur, just above a small stream flowing eastwards from the foothills of Mynydd Hiraethog to meet a larger watercourse, the Lliwen, in a somewhat broader valley a few hundred metres to the east of the settlement. The church occupies the lip of a natural terrace above the stream, with the historic core of the village stretching up the hill behind. Nantglyn is the most westerly of the historic settlements examined in this report. The B5435 passes through the southern edge of the village, with the B4501 from Denbigh, 6km to the north-east, meeting it here.

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

The accompanying map is offered only 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 will require modification 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. The HER can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website ([www.archwilio.org.uk](http://www.archwilio.org.uk)).

### *History of development*

Translated as the ‘stream in the valley’, Nantglyn is first recorded as *Nantlym* in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and in the later Lincoln Taxation of 1291 as *Nantclyn*. Nantglyn makes a first appearance in 1636.

St Mordeyrn's chapel to the east of the village must represent the earliest foundation here and has been commented on by antiquaries since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Whether its earlier status is in anyway commemorated by the suggestive name of the nearby farm, Clasmor, remains to be ascertained. However, Edward Lhuyd's *Parochialia* referred to the right of sanctuary here, something that was normally an attribute of the longer established and more important churches, and coupled with the fact that in the 14<sup>th</sup> century dues were paid to *abbates* here, the implication is that Nantglyn was probably not an ordinary, simple pre-Conquest chapel. There is too a final observation, this from John Leland, the king's antiquary, who in the 1530s recorded that ‘there is ... a chappelle by a paroch church in a place caullid corruptely Nanclin for Nantglyn .. where as divers saintes were of auncient tyme buried’.

Even allowing for an early medieval foundation of unknown status at Nantglyn, the emergence of settlement and its later development at Nantglyn are obscure, with virtually no known documentary evidence to throw any light on its earlier history.

The first reliable statement comes from Edward Lhuyd's respondent at the very end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century who stated that there were six houses by the church. And it was little different two hundred years later when the Ordnance Survey produced their first large-scale mapping.

### ***The heritage to 1750***

Two hundred metres to the east of the village and close to the Lliwen is the site of St Mordeyrn's chapel (100592). It was mentioned by Leland and its foundations were visible to Lhuyd's respondent in 1699, while Fenton in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century recorded a local superstition about the efficacy of soil dug up from within its walls. Its position appears to be a slightly domed ridge above the valley. No traces of the chapel are visible on the ground and geophysical survey has also proved fruitless.

The site of St Mordeyrn's well (100595) is about 100m north of the parish church. Capped, it now apparently lies unrecognisable beneath a modern garden boundary.

Single-chambered with a south porch and west bellcote, the church of St James (100593) within the village was drastically restored in 1862, having been partially rebuilt in 1777. It is possible but unconfirmed that some of the wall fabric may be medieval, as are some of the roof timbers, but the furnishings and fittings are almost entirely of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Its churchyard (19781) is now of irregular form but was polygonal in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, a broadly curvilinear earlier perimeter can be determined on the ground incorporating the existing northern side and a scarp bank within the churchyard on the south.

The village plan is of a single street south of the stream with the church at the lower end and a cross-roads at the top. A small cottage on the edge of the churchyard has been attributed by the Royal Commission to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but has seen substantial alterations. The farm of Glasmor lies at the crossroads in the village and though primarily of 19<sup>th</sup>-century build is believed to have 18<sup>th</sup>-century origins, with one of the ancillary buildings having a datestone of 1762, though other sources link this to the house or farm of Penllan.

The bridge, Pont-y-llan (19783), is of late build, 1831, and perhaps replaced a ford crossing.

