

Tremeirchion

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Introduction

The village is set into a hillside lying on the lower slopes of the Clwydian Hills. It is located 4.5km south-east of the cathedral city of St Asaph on a secondary road that runs along the east edge of the Vale of Clwyd. The village is situated around the junction of this road and a minor lane running in from the east, which winds through the older part of the settlement where the church, vicarage and school are located. In recent years the settlement has spread considerably to the east and south with the building of new housing estates.

Tremeirchion was formerly in Flintshire, but was transferred to Denbighshire after Clwyd was broken up in 1996.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Tremeirchion up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it might 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).

History of development

Tremeirchion in its earlier form, *Dymeirchion*, can be translated as 'the fort of Meirchion'. (One such named individual was reputedly the ancestor of the head of one of the Fifteen Tribes of North Wales, and his court was reputed to be held at Llysmeirchion, near Denbigh). However, modern authorities are sensibly rather more cautious about directly linking these places to the legendary leader.

It is mentioned in Domesday Book (1086) as *Dinmersch* while the church in the 1291 *Taxatio* is *Dymneyrchyvan* (or *avn*). *Dimeirchion* is recorded in 1336, but it is only after the Reformation and towards the end of the 16th century that the *dim* element was superseded by *tre*.

The early history of Tremeirchion is obscure; we cannot determine whether the church was founded in the early medieval era, nor whether there was a nucleated settlement here in the Middle Ages. In 1699 there were four houses 'within a stone's throw' of the church according to Edward Lhuyd's correspondent.

A 1790 estate map shows a very small settlement here, composed of just the church and one or two other buildings and with an area of common to the west of the church. By the time of the 1841 Tithe survey the village centre still consisted of no more than the church, a public house and one other building. In addition, there were a few cottages along the west side of the B5429 and one or two outlying buildings. The pattern of roads has not altered since that time.

The heritage to 1750

Tremeirchion church formerly dedicated to the Holy Trinity, now Corpus Christi, a very uncommon dedication (102162), is first mentioned in 1291. The building is designed as a single chamber, with a north transept added in 1864. There is a western bellcote and a large south porch. The south doorway and a blocked western one may be 14th-century, and from this it might be inferred that some of the fabric could be of a similar age. The roof is late medieval and arched-braced, but at the east end it has the trussed rafters of a former wagon ceiling. There is a Perpendicular font, some fragments of 15th-century stained glass, fragments of 13th and 14th-century sepulchral slabs, a 14th-century effigy of a knight, a late 14th-century canopied tomb with the effigy of a former incumbent, a parish chest dated to 1740 and two hatchments.

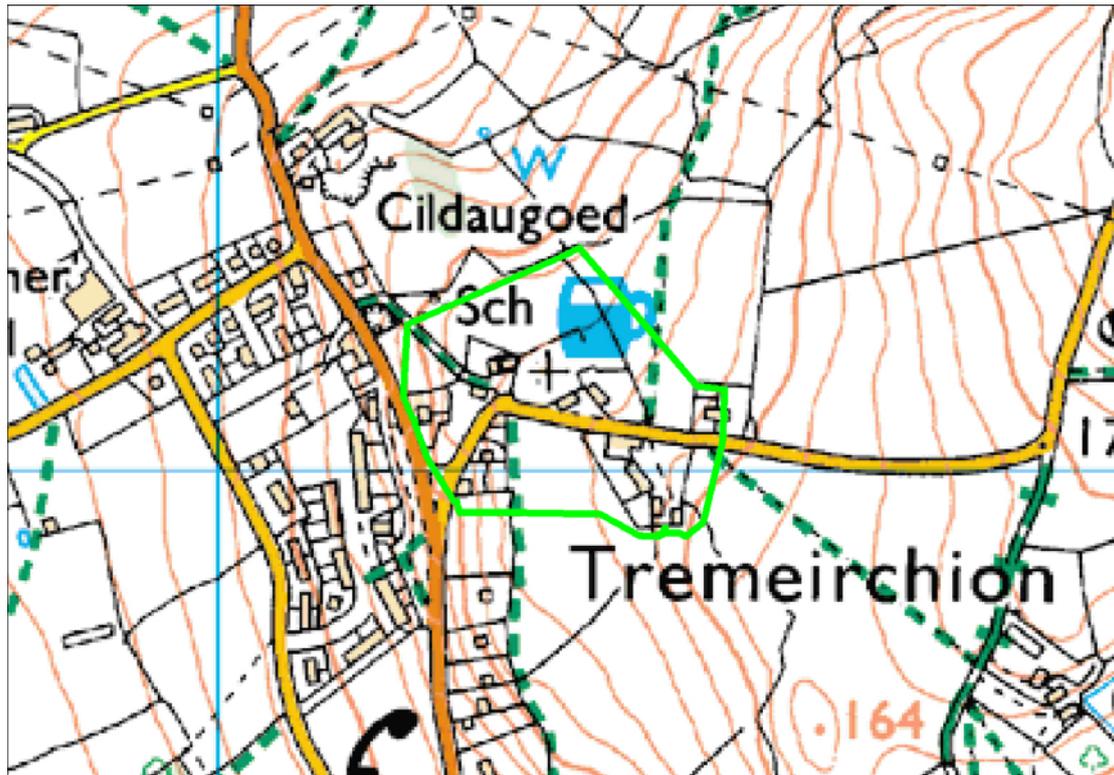


Tremeirchion churchyard cross, photo 3053-0018, © CPAT 2014

The older part of the churchyard (105833) was polygonal in shape, with only the vaguest trace of curvilinearity. It was enlarged in 1864, and the level of the eastern extension is noticeably lower than that of the original. The elaborately carved head of the medieval churchyard cross was sold in 1862, ending up at the neighbouring St Beuno's College

(102152); it has now been returned and reinstalled in the churchyard. The gated entrance to the churchyard on the south-west appears to date from 1731, while the lychgate on the south-east could be 17th or 18th-century.

No buildings of any great age (other than the church) have been recognised in that part of Tremeirchion that might be thought of as the historic core. The stone-built parish school (105834) stands on the southern edge of the churchyard. It was built in 1765, and later restored in 1835. It was superseded by the national school and schoolhouse to the west of the church, built in 1865. Tremeirchion smithy (103466), on the southern edge of the settlement, has been altered and extended in modern times but the original stone walls remain.



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