

Trelawnyd

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Introduction

Trelawnyd, also known in the recent past as Newmarket, is set on gently shelving land that slopes southwards towards a shallow valley containing a small stream, 500m or so away. It is overshadowed by Gop Hill to the north.

The settlement lies about 7km to the east of Rhuddlan with the A5151 from that town to Holywell passing through it

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Trelawnyd 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 particularly 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 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).



St Michael's Church, photo Trelawnyd 04, © CPAT, 2012

History of development

The derivation of the name is unclear. In Domesday Book (1086), it is called *Rivelenoit* and there are numerous later variations such as *Riwlyfnoyt* in 1339. Modern place-name authorities have translated this as the 'slope of Lēofnoth' a late Saxon personal name which occurs in the entries for this region in Domesday Book quite regularly. *Trelawnyd* is first encountered in 1649, and at the beginning of the 18th century the settlement acquired a further name, *Newmarket*, first recorded in 1711.

The name of Newmarket is linked to a local landowner, John Wynne of Y Gop, who enlarged the village and established a weekly market and an annual fair. Fairs were still being held in Trelawnyd in the 1830s but Samuel Lewis believed that the settlement had declined in size from its peak in the 18th century. The currency of the alternative name of Newmarket lasted from c.1710 to as late as 1954 when Trelawnyd became the sole official name.

Rather more attention appears to have been paid to the name than to the early history of Trelawnyd. Its date of origin cannot be established, its later history is largely unchronicled and prior to the involvement of John Wynne, it was a small anonymous settlement of a type not uncommon in the region. It has been suggested by D. and K. Davies that the main reason for the growth of Trelawnyd in historic times was the stream to the south, the Ffyddion, which provided a reliable source of power for corn-mills, but this view remains to be substantiated.

At the end of the 17th century there were 10 houses by the church according to Edward Lhuyd. Dorothy Sylvester distinguished Newmarket from other small settlements in the area by claiming for it a partially urban history. The claim was, of course, based on Wynne's expansion.

The heritage to 1750

Offa's Dyke was once thought to pass through the village. Three different lengths have been recorded and scheduled (106698, 106700 and 106702; SAMs F122, F124 and F125). The ground evidence though is not as convincing as might be hoped, and excavation in 1989 revealed no traces of a ditch and only vague indications of a bank.

St Michael's church (102100) is a single-chamber structure with a western bellcote. Late medieval roof trusses, a stoup and a fragmentary 14th century sepulchral slab built into the vestry are the only medieval survivals. The church was rebuilt in 1724 and heavily restored in 1895-97.

Trelawnyd churchyard (19925) is almost square in shape, it is raised by up to a metre above the surrounding ground and much more than that above the sunken lane that edges its northern and western boundaries; there is an internal slope around much of the perimeter. Nothing exists to suggest an earlier, circular graveyard.

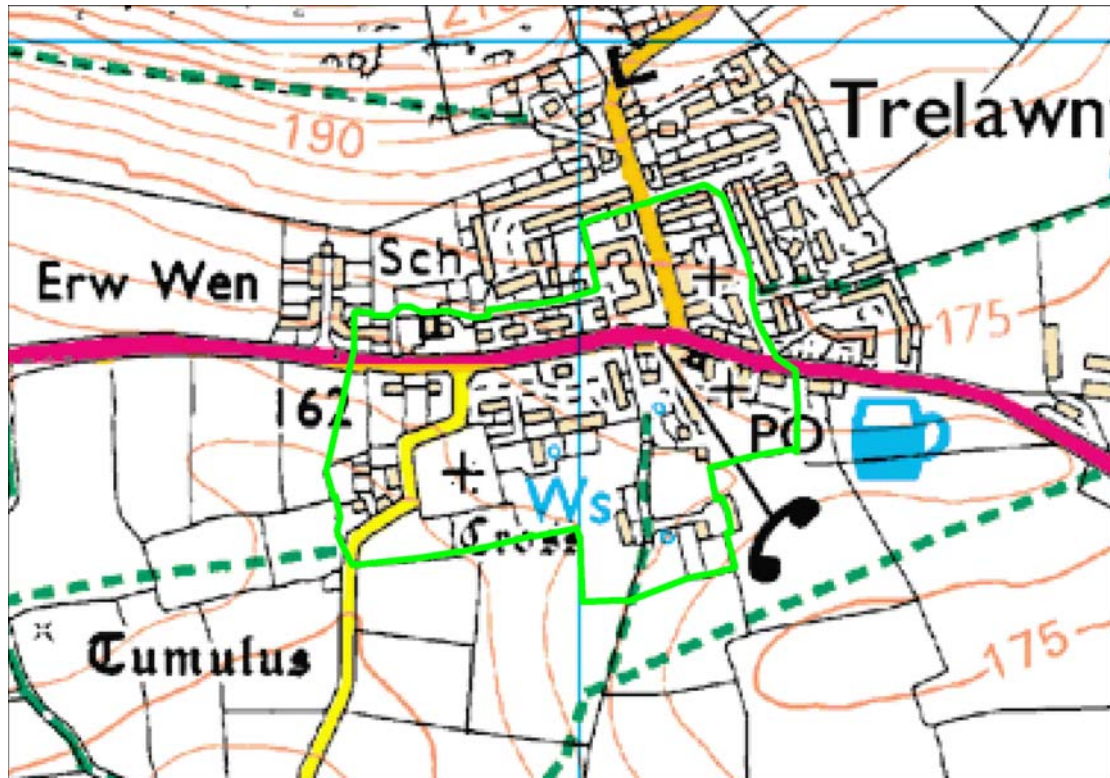
The churchyard houses a complete 14th century decorated churchyard cross, one of the finest in the region (102101). Also in the churchyard is a sundial pillar (102102), similar to that of 17th century date in Gwaenysgor, and a rare hooded tomb of 18th century origin.

The village core lay at the crossroads about 150m to the north-east of the church in the early 19th century and south of this is where the older houses are located. To what degree this pattern pre-dates Wynne's involvement is unclear. Generally, there is an absence of precise information as to where the market place was and indeed how the 18th century settlement was laid out, but the picture as presented on the tithe map might suggest that the market place lay immediately to the east of the crossroads, and the general density of housing here is reinforced by the Ordnance Survey surveyors' plan of 1834.

Siamber Wen (102107) is a stone two-room, two-storey block with an attic, which was and may still be uninhabited from c.1960. It is dated to the late 16th or early 17th century on the basis of ceiling beams and windows, and was extended in the 18th century. Still House (101939) nearby is late 17th century, while Llan Cottages opposite the church have also been attributed to the 17th century though it is unclear as to who made the claim.

Traces of ridge and furrow (19926) can be observed in the field to the south of the Rectory.

A field name *Coitier Castell* (102715), to the west of the church, suggests the presence of an archaeological site, but there is nothing visible in the field.



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