Archaeologia Cambrensis 154 (2005), 179–213

Ruined abbeys in romantic landscapes

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When the very first issue of our journal *Archaeologia Cambrensis* appeared in 1846, the editors could think of no better subject for the opening article than ‘Valle Crucis Abbey’, and the first illustration in the article was an engraving of the still impressive west front of the ruined abbey church, based on a drawing by J. E. Gregan, a Manchester architect (Fig. 1). It was not the manicured ruin which we see today, but a jagged pile, majestically shrouded in vegetation, with intertwining tree trunks echoing the lines of the Gothic arches. Two humble spectators—an old lady and a child—stood in awe as they beheld this architectural wonder of a bygone age—a ruined abbey in a romantic landscape.[2] The picture encapsulated the fascination felt by the nineteenth century antiquarian for a medieval ruin, and it aptly introduces this paper. We shall return to Valle Crucis abbey later.

The monasteries founded in England and Wales after the Norman conquest functioned, with varying fortunes, for some four centuries until their day was brought to an end in the reign of Henry VIII. The story revealed by documentary evidence during and immediately after the Dissolution of the Monasteries has been chronicled elsewhere, and especially by Dr David Williams in his *The Welsh Cistercians*.[3] The

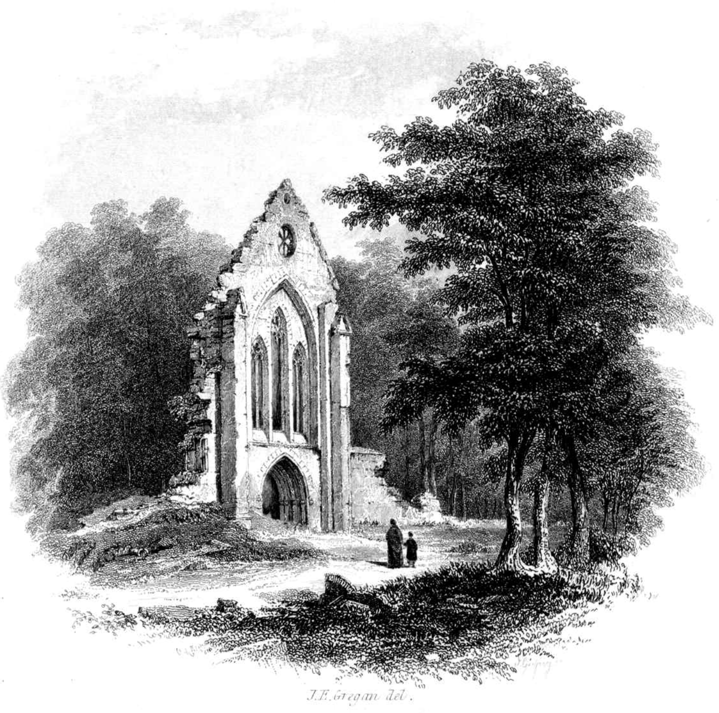

J.E. Gregan del.

Fig. 1. Engraving of the west front of the Cistercian abbey of Valle Crucis, based on a drawing by J. E. Gregan, a Manchester architect. The illustration appeared in part I of the first volume of *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, published in January 1846.

Dissolution was the end of an era of British history. A particular kind of religious life was destroyed, together with its architectural embodiment, its economic framework and its social prestige. And yet there was some continuity. Some of the leading figures of monasticism recanted and reappeared as pillars of the new order. Parochial congregations were not turned out of monastic churches; they simply had to decide what to do with the space no longer required. Some cathedrals in England inherited buildings of unexpected magnificence.

No one, however, could foresee the miraculous way in which the ruins of monasteries would later begin a second life as a focus for a new aesthetic and intellectual experience, indeed a new spirituality, which would have much in common with the original ideals of monasticism. How this 'resurrection' came about is described in the present paper, based on the pictorial record of monasteries after the Dissolution and the associated topographical literature. From the sixteenth century onwards we can trace not merely the process of ruination itself but also the changing attitudes of succeeding generations towards the ruins and towards monasticism. Affection for ruins was initially slow to develop, but when it did, it profoundly affected thinkers, historians, artists, and the public at large. The taste for ruins reached a climax in the late eighteenth century, and still flourishes in our own time. Pictures of ruined monastic architecture also proved a stimulus to archaeological and architectural exploration of the more scientific kind. The artists' interest in landscape led to a greater appreciation of how monastic sites were chosen, especially the Cistercian foundations.

Sixteenth-century attitudes

At the time of the Reformation a solidly Catholic population in England and Wales suddenly had to come to terms with a new sort of Christianity. Parishioners were well used to the Latin mass, even in they did not understand the exact words, and they valued the rituals performed by the priest. They found inspiration and assurance in the images of the saints and were awed by wall paintings of Judgement Day, and, by Chaucer's time, they enjoyed the social side of pilgrimage. Now, all these things were being taken from them and they had to find their comfort in the bare words of Holy Writ. Natural human conservatism, if not religious conviction, might have been expected to stop the Reformation in its tracks.

The monasteries were an integral part of religious life, even though their core function, the *opus Dei*, was conducted largely unseen by ordinary folk. Their buildings were citadels of belief, the most impressive and solid structures in the landscape after the castles. Monasteries also had an interest in pilgrimage because they often preserved relics of saints, which brought in offerings from the faithful. While the general contribution of the monasteries to learning and teaching cannot be accurately assessed owing to lack of information, there is proof that many acted as patrons of the Welsh bards and some kept historical annals.

However, the king and his advisors were determined to pursue their schemes for gaining independence from the Pope and for securing new revenue for government coffers, whether from churches or monasteries. The *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535 was as much part of their calculations as the reports from visitations or monasteries. Some of those deputed to carry out reform were time-servers, ready to do what they were told regardless of principle. Others were thinkers who believed that the Bible had to be made intelligible to the people as a means of salvation. That meant providing Bibles and prayerbooks in English (and destroying obsolete texts in Latin). It took time for the reformers in London to realise that English books of devotion would be of little use in Wales, then overwhelmingly Welsh-speaking, and in any case dependant on the clergy to read out the texts. In fact, after Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1533, over thirty years went by before the New Testament and Prayer Book appeared in Welsh, and over half a century before the complete Welsh Bible was published.

The reformers were anxious for quick results. They sought to win over public opinion by denigrating Catholic practices and fostering animosity against everything distinctive of the old religion. This is clear from the reports of Thomas Cromwell's Visitors, who arrived at the monasteries in 1535 and the friaries in 1538. They were the hostile party, trying to find enough wrong with the monasteries to justify closure. It was true that monasteries had changed in many ways since their early days. Few houses had now the required complement of twelve monks and a superior to maintain the daily round of worship. Tintern was perhaps the only one in Wales. The number of lay brothers had fallen dramatically and much of the monastic estate was let out to tenants.

The King's Visitors played on the fears of the monks regarding their future livelihood. Heads of establishments were entitled to pensions, but the rank and file were not. Those who were suitably qualified were often offered parochial posts. The extremely able abbot of Neath, Leyshon Thomas, became rector of Cadoxton-juxta-Neath.[4] Effective resistance did not come from the clergy. The Welsh gentry might have been moved to act, but for the most part they were attracted by the prospect of spoils from the monastic estates. A few gentry families, however, did remain dedicated Catholics throughout the Protestant Reformation.

The bitterness and antagonism engendered by hasty and heavy-handed action for reform was glaringly evident in Bishop William Barlow's efforts to introduce the Reformation in the diocese of St David's. Barlow had begun his ecclesiastical career as an Augustinian canon. As prior of Broomhill, Norwich, he had an early experience of reform, for that priory was closed by Wolsey in 1528. What happened to Barlow in the years immediately following is uncertain, but in 1536 he was elected the first Protestant bishop of St David's. It seems that after studying the works of Martin Luther he became a rabid Protestant, with all the fervour of the newly-converted. Even if he did not write the polemical book attributed to him—*Buryalle of the Mass*, which ridiculed Catholic practices—its contents appear to be in tune with his thinking.[5]

English church histories have tended to be written from a Protestant viewpoint, which accepts the Reformation as a 'Good Thing'. It is salutary to read the point of view of a practising Catholic on the subject. When B. Morgan Griffiths wrote *Catholic St. David's*, published in about 1962, he saw all around him churches and cathedrals 'lost' to Catholicism. To him, the post-Reformation period was a gap in Christian history. It was he who built St Non's house overlooking St Brides Bay in 1929, adding the chapel of Our Lady and St Non in 1934. Both buildings were taken over by the Passionist Order in 1939. That order then converted an old cinema at St David's into a church. Mass was said there on 15 July 1962 for the first time. The author closed his book with the statement: 'After four hundred years the Mass returned to the City of St Davids'.

The county historians and antiquaries

The Tudor period was remarkable for the number and quality of its local historians and topographers. They were assiduous in gathering information about everything they saw around them but they seem not to have appreciated fully what had been lost by the disappearance of the monasteries. The well-travelled John Leland (or Leyland), who had received a commission from the king in 1533 to make a search after England's Antiquities, was close in time to the Dissolution. In the preamble to his *Itinerary* he proclaimed his detestation of 'popish superstition' and pledged his loyalty to the king. He was aware that monastic libraries were then being pillaged and dispersed, but it did not occur to him that those libraries might have been more effectively saved and maintained by the monasteries themselves, rather than by his own unaided efforts.[6] A fellow luminary was the 'Ingenious Mr Camden', author of *Magna Britannia*, who, like Leland, dealt with the whole realm. County topographers, such as George Owen of Henllys in Pembrokeshire and Rees Meyrick (Rhys Meurig) of Cottrell in the Vale of Glamorgan, were content with the religious and political settlements of Henry VIII. Their commentaries concentrated on objective description and statistics—how far, which direction, how many, what value and so on. The topographers' work was complemented by that of the map makers—Christopher Saxton, John Speed and others. Between them they were creating a virtual new Domesday survey, and for a similar reason—to improve the data available to the central government, and consequently to increase its authority and its ability to raise revenue. The former locations of monasteries were listed on a par with castles, bridges and so on.

Sir William Dugdale, a dedicated antiquary and author of *Monasticon Anglicanum* (1655–73), was mainly interested in recording names, dates, events, memorials and heraldic representations; these were the 'public title deeds' of the old ruling class, and many memorials were destroyed in the Civil War, a century after the Dissolution. Dugdale gave the context of his theme in two scenes on his title page, one showing monastic life before the Dissolution, and one the ruins after. He used some architectural views by Wenceslaus Hollar, a talented immigrant from Bohemia, but did not seek to produce a comprehensive visual record of buildings. In any case, observation and description were hampered by the lack of an accepted framework of architectural history and terminology.

The process of ruination

Ruination was not a single, simple process. Many monastic sites were allowed to retain a religious role, albeit in a Protestant context; consequently they did not fall completely into ruin. In his picture book of the abbeys, priories and cathedrals of Wales,[7] Canon David S. Yerburgh listed 15 monastic churches which continued in use, reduced or modified in form, as parish churches or as a special chapel. He included these in his total of 38 monastic sites and cathedrals in Wales which he recommended for viewing. His figure for extant ruined monasteries was 23, and he listed a further 23 monastic sites where nothing remains visible today. The pictures in his book are all reproductions of old engravings, and they show many examples by artists cited in this article. Once a building was vacated, wind, weather and vegetation pursued their ravages unchecked, especially when the lead had been stripped from roofs. Yerburgh awards stars of merit to indicate the relative degree of preservation of the surviving ruins, and seventeen receive four stars.

Those parts of an abbey concerned with Catholic observance, ritual and routine of monks and nuns were naturally the first to be abandoned. No one considered historic buildings worth preserving for their own sake. Where an abbey church survived as a local parish church, its size had to be reduced to fit a smaller congregation, and parts would be demolished or fall into ruin, as at Margam Abbey and Ewenny Priory in Glamorgan and Chepstow Priory Church in Monmouthshire.

Sometimes a structural element would be moved bodily elsewhere from a despoiled abbey. A parish church might benefit, such as Llanidloes church in Montgomeryshire when it was rebuilt in 1542. Five of the fourteeen bays of the nave arcade from Cwmhir Abbey in Radnorshire were removed there.[8] Not that such removals were confined to the time of the Dissolution. In 1840, when an old building at Margam was being demolished, a Romanesque arch was found and brought to St Bride's-super-Ely church by Mrs Charlotte Traherne, wife of the then rector—and also sister of C. R. M. Talbot of Margam.[9] In the twentieth century an American millionaire, William Randolph Hearst, removed at least the refectory roof and a fireplace from Bradenstoke Priory in Wiltshire to his renovated castle at St Donat's on the Glamorgan coast.[10]

Monasteries which became cathedrals also retained a continuity of worship. In Wales Brecon was the only example, though this transformation did not take place until the twentieth century, when a new see was needed by the disestablished Church in Wales. Protestant cathedrals did not require as much floor space for processions, pilgrimages, reliquaries and chantry chapels as did the Roman Catholic. Hence the decay of the ancient cathedrals of St David's and Llandaff, parts of which remained open to the sky for centuries.

The first pictorial evidence of monasteries after the Dissolution: town views on maps

While there is much documentary and printed evidence to describe the destruction and ruination of monastic buildings, contemporary pictorial evidence is slight. As far as Wales is concerned, almost no accurate pictures of any places were produced in the sixteenth century (or earlier), and few in England. The first views of towns in Wales were made in the early seventeenth century and were reproduced as insets on printed maps prepared by John Speed (1552–1629).[11] While many of Speed's cartographic features would seem to be 'conventional signs', some were recognisable depictions of abbeys (see Fig. 2). Dated 1610, the maps were published as a commercial venture in London by John Sudbury and George Humble in an atlas entitled *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine*. The work of engraving the plates was outsourced to Jodocus Hondius in Amsterdam.

In Speed's time Wales officially comprised twelve counties; Monmouthshire, the thirteenth, had been 'plucked away wholly from Wales' by Henry VIII, as Speed put it. There were four episcopal dioceses: Bangor, St Asaph, St David's and Llandaff. Thus, in Speed's map of all Wales Hondius was able to produce a symmetrical rectangular design containing six insets of county towns on either side of the frame, and four insets of the sees, one at each corner, inside the frame. These town views were oblique aerial views, in perspective, and not drawn to scale. By contrast, the views on the individual county maps

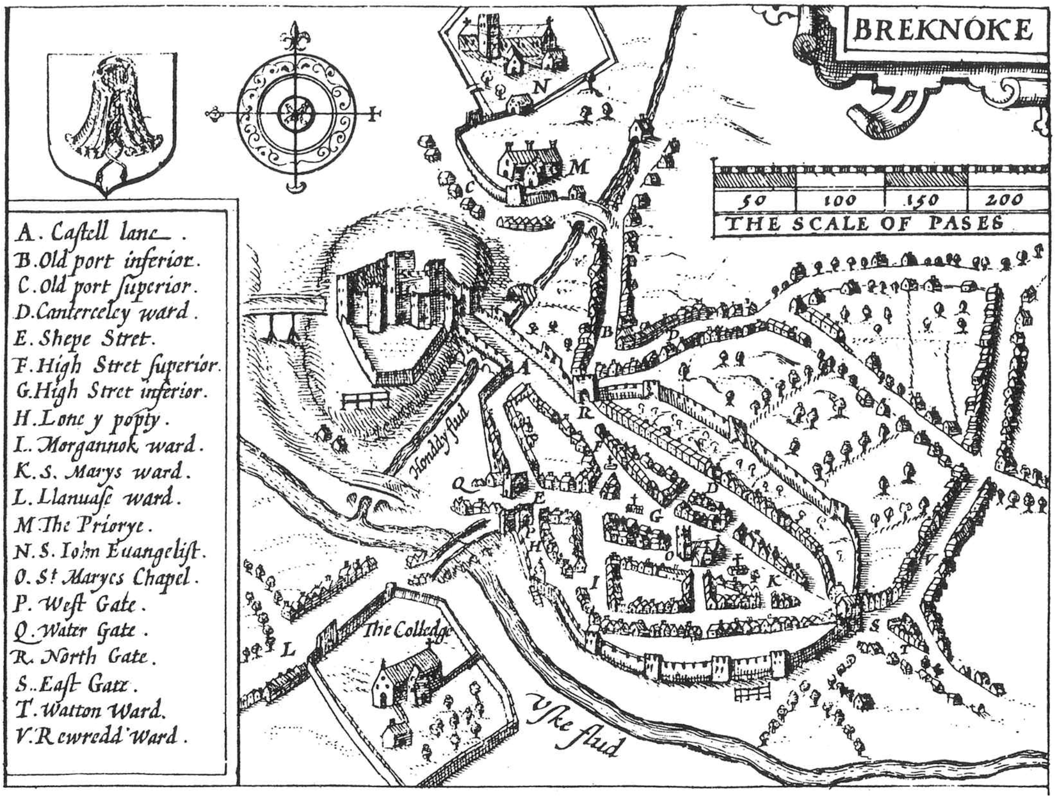

BREKNOKE
50 100 150 200
THE SCALE OF PASES
A. Caſtell lane.
B. Old port inferior.
C. Old port ſuperior.
D. Cantercelcy ward.
E. Shepe Stret.
F. High Stret ſuperior.
G. High Stret inferior.
H. Lone y pofty.
I. Morgannok ward.
K. S. Marys ward.
L. Llanuaſe ward.
M. The Priorye.
N. S. Iohn Euangeliſt.
O. St Maryes Chapel.
P. Weſt Gate.
Q. Water Gate.
R. North Gate.
S. East Gate.
T. Watton Ward.
V. Rewredd Ward.
Honddy flud
The Colledge
Uske flud

Fig. 2. The Benedictine priory (M) on Speed's town plan of Brecon, accompanying his map of Brecknockshire. The maps, engraved by the leading Flemish engraver Jodocus Hondius in Amsterdam, were published in *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine*, published in 1611. The church dedicated to St John the Evangelist (N) had been the priory church before the Dissolution.

were true plans, accompanied by a scale, but buildings were shown in oblique aerial elevation—a mixture of cartographic conventions. Among his maps of individual counties, Speed included Monmouthshire as Chapter VI after Glamorganshire.[12]

Speed himself collected much of the topographical detail in his travels around the country and he was at pains to include historical matter, as witness a portrait medallion of Henry V on the Monmouthshire map to commemorate that king's connection with the county town. Unfortunately, Speed's two sets of town views, though similar, were not identical in detail or style, and it is difficult to know which version to trust. Eight identifiable sites of monasteries and friaries were shown in the views, but they inevitably represented orders which operated in or near towns. Cistercian houses, founded in wild countryside, were not included. The monastic sites illustrated by Speed on his county maps are given in Appendix 1.

Speed's monastic sites, as other features, were recorded as topographical facts, part of the information presented to a traveller on his journey. Some of the sites depicted by Speed had been converted into parish churches or mansions, and where ruination had begun we see only the early stages. Any evidence of the mapmaker's personal view has to be sought in the page of text which preceded each county map, where other sites are also sometimes mentioned. Speed seemed to regret the effects of the Dissolution in Chapter III: Pembrokeshire: 'But *Monton* [Monkton] the Priorie, and *S. Dogmels*, places of deuout pietie erected in this County, found not the like fauour [as St David's Cathedral], when the commission of their dissolutions came downe against them, and the axes of destruction cut downe the props of their walles'.[13]

Later seventeenth-century views

Speed's town plans were an isolated phenomenon at the time, but they were the first images of former monasteries in Wales after the Suppression. Later in the seventeenth century, views of localities in Wales were made by a few artists in pencil, pen, waterolour or oils. They showed mainly landscapes, towns, houses and castles. By a curious chance, however, two paintings accidentally recorded parts of a ruined abbey which had been incorporated into a later mansion.

The location was Margam in Glamorgan, where a house had been built by the Mansel family on the site of a Cistercian abbey. Two large oil paintings were commissioned in the late seventeenth century to record the house, its formal gardens and the surrounding parkland, of which a detail of one is illustrated in Figure 3.[14] Certain monastic features had been incorporated into the mansion, while the chapter house had been left, hemmed in, as a standing ruin. The paintings simulated oblique aerial views and depicted the landscape with great precision. However, the anonymous artist's technical limitations sometimes made the precise layout of buildings difficult to comprehend. This rambling old house was demolished in the 1790s and the family seat moved to Penrice in Gower. Nothing now remains visible of the house or the formal gardens, save two stone gateposts and the façade of the summer banqueting house, which has been built into a boundary wall.

A drawing of the same old house at Margam, viewed from the south, was made by Thomas Dineley (d. 1695) in 1684. His low oblique aerial viewpoint made it clear that there was a courtyard between the house and what resembles a medieval gatehouse (Fig. 4). From this side the ruined chapter house was not visible. Dineley travelled in the entourage of the Duke of Beaufort, Lord President of the Council of Wales and the Marches, on an Official Progress through Wales on behalf of the Crown.[15] Dineley was not a skilled artist, and had little interest in ruins. He did indeed sketch the ruins of the castle at Newcastle Emlyn in Carmarthenshire, but mainly as a background for the militia's camp laid out below. His views are often the earliest, and sometimes the only ones of their subjects. He drew the doorway of Margam Abbey church, and devoted nearly nine pages of his manuscript to descriptions and sketches of the Mansel tombs and other memorials there (including a Roman altar), but recorded no picture of any monastic ruins. Elsewhere during the Progress, Dineley drew a distant view of Kidwelly church without

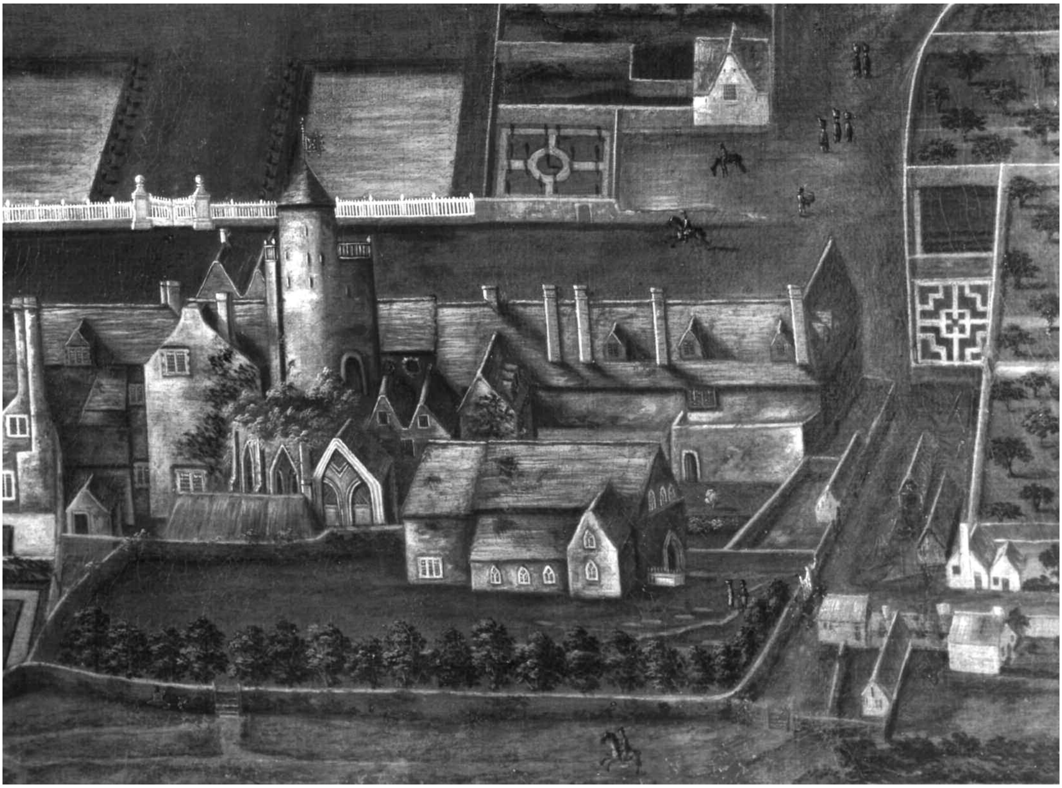
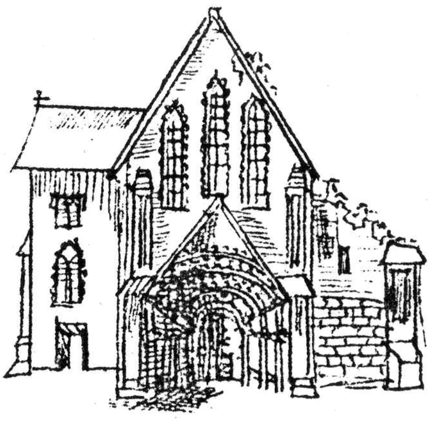


Fig. 3. Margam Old House from the north. Detail of oil on canvas, anon, late seventeenth-century. The ruined chapter house is visible to the left and the church to the right. *Photograph: National Museum of Wales. Reproduced by permission of Mrs Methuen Campbell.*

Fig. 4. Thomas Dineley's drawing of the entrance to the ruined abbey church at Margam, from *The Account of the Official Progress of His Grace Henry the First Duke of Beaufort through Wales in 1684*. The account was first published in London in 1888 by photolithography from Dineley's original manuscript.



referring to its monastic origins, and a near view of Conwy church, where he referred to ‘ye remaines of a larger church’, presumably unaware that it began as a Cistercian abbey; removed to Maenan by Edward I. Dineley also made a sketch of Monmouth priory church, with a ruinated structure at the east end.[16] On the Chepstow page he left a space, perhaps for the priory church, but it remained blank.

The brothers Samuel and Nathaniel Buck and other early engravers

In the early eighteenth century, under the influence of the ‘Antiquarian Movement’ there arose a desire to record historic structures and memorials. Such views were essentially architectural drawings, with minimal scenery and few human figures. The brothers Samuel and Nathaniel Buck (*fl* . 1730–79) were pioneers in this field, working as a two-man team, and anticipating the function of the Royal Commissions on Ancient and Historical Monuments of our own day. The Bucks were alarmed at the fate of the visible remains of history, particularly castles and abbeys, which were fast sinking into ruin. They believed that these structures should be ‘preserved’ for posterity, by which they meant ‘recorded’. It was beyond their resources or intentions to preserve them physically. They simply had to hope that the owners would recognise the need and take action.

The venture was made commercially viable, first, by securing patronage in advance from the nobility and gentry who owned the buildings which they proposed to illustrate. They made drawings on site during the summer and produced engravings on copper-plates in London during the winter following. From the plates they printed sets of views, preparing a new batch for distribution each spring; some copies went to their patrons and subscribers; others were offered for sale to the public. The preliminary drawings were not intended for sale; they were simply working designs for the engravings. Samuel and Nathaniel Buck performed the remarkable feat of recording some four hundred ‘antiquities’ in England and Wales, many of them ruined abbeys, as well as eighty townscapes. The views took the form of panoramas, and were printed by the line-engraving process on copper plates. Each bore a short historical summary of the site depicted (a masterpiece of compression). Landed proprietors were flattered to see their property illustrated and their names and coat of arms shown beneath. After serial publication year by year, a consolidated edition appeared in 1774 with a supplementary text.[17]

These views are of immense value to modern investigators and often constitute the earliest picture of a site. Not that the Bucks’ list included every possible antiquity worth viewing. In Glamorgan, for whatever reason, they omitted Margam Abbey. The Bucks illustrated seventeen monastic sites in Wales in their main series of ‘Antiquities’. North Wales was represented by Basingwerk, Clynnog Fawr, Cymer, Denbigh, Llanddwynwen, Penmon, Rhuddlan, and Valle Crucis (two views). South Wales included Brecknock, Cardigan (with castle), Ewenny (Fig. 5), Haverfordwest, Llanthony, Neath, St Dogmael’s, Strata Florida and Tintern.

The Bucks also published a series of views of the larger towns of England and Wales.[18] The views of Carmarthen, Haverfordwest and Pembroke each showed distant views of monastic sites close to the town concerned. Castles and cathedrals were also covered in the Bucks’ survey, but they do not concern us here. The original drawings, when they survive, can help to interpret the engravings, because finer nuances were possible in pencil or ink drawings than in engravings. The drawing of Haverfordwest Priory (now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford) contributes significant additional detail when compared with the engraving. The drawing of Tintern Abbey (in the National Museum of Wales) was an early production (*c*. 1731) and has a cruder appearance than the attractive coloured drawing of Rhuddlan Priory (in the National Library of Wales), done ten years later. A detailed list of all the Bucks’ engraved monastic views in Wales is given in Appendix 2.

The Bucks were followed by imitators who slavishly copied their views, sometimes with wild inaccuracy. Such imitation was itself an acknowledgement of the originality and success of the Bucks’

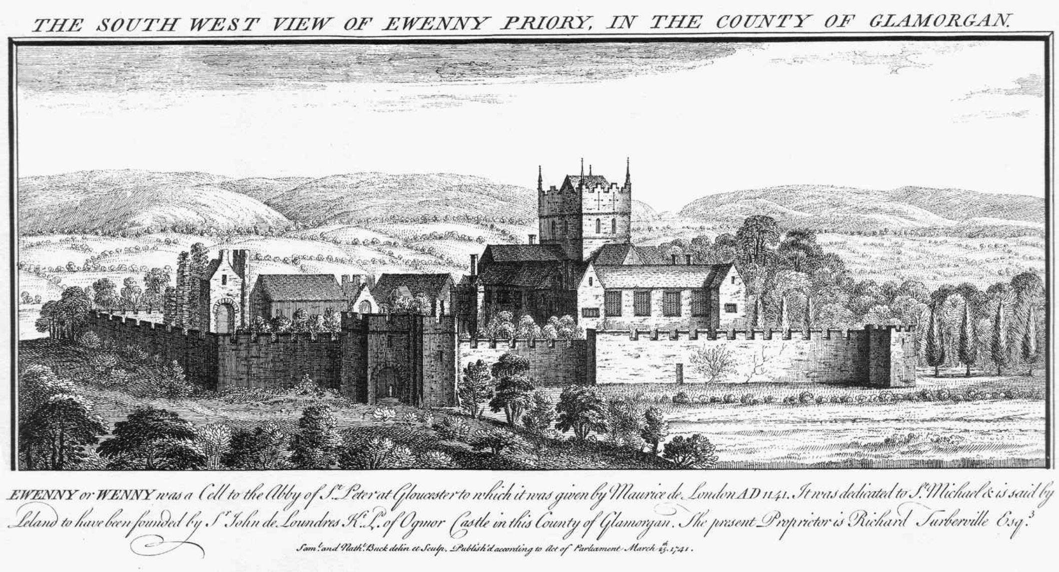

THE SOUTH WEST VIEW OF EWENNY PRIORY, IN THE COUNTY OF GLAMORGAN.
EWENNY or WENNY was a Cell to the Abby of S.t Peter at Gloucester to which it was given by Maurice de London AD 1141. It was dedicated to S.t Michael & is said by Leland to have been founded by S.r John de Loundres K.t L.d of Ogmor Castle in this County of Glamorgan. The present Proprietor is Richard Turberville Esq.r
Sam.l and Nath.l Buck delin et Sculp. Publish'd according to Act of Parliament March 25. 1741.

Fig. 5. Engraving of Ewenny Priory from the south-west by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck, 1741. *Author's collection.*

methodology. Their choice of destinations set a pattern for later antiquarian tourists. Another collection of engraved topographical views, mainly of mansions and estates, was Johannes Kip's *Britannia Illustrata* (1707). It contained a view of Chepstow from the Gloucestershire bank of the Wye, and clearly showed the priory church in the port area. The composition of the scene would have done credit to Claude. The view was also reproduced in Atkyn's *Glostershire* in 1712.[19] Other competent topographical illustrators working in Wales during the eighteenth century included Joseph Lord of Carmarthen, and John Boydell (1719–1804) of Hawarden.

A substantial and influential contribution to the iconography of abbeys was made by Francis Grose (*c.* 1731–94), author, artist and publisher. Born at Greenford, Middlesex, the son of an immigrant from Berne in Switzerland, Grose received a classical education and then turned to art. His great work was *The Antiquities of England and Wales*. He provided an erudite historical and topographical text, illustrated with copper-plate engravings. He did much of the artwork himself, making a series of watercolour drawings (now preserved in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries of London) for the engraver (see Fig. 6); they were sometimes based on the work of other artists, such as Paul Sandby and John Inigo Richards. His illustrations showed castles, monasteries, churches, abbeys and great houses, mainly with little landscape context. The engravings tended to be stiff in style (owing to the nature of the copper-plate medium), and were unsophisticated in composition. He illustrated eleven abbeys in Wales: Basingwerk, Conwy, Denbigh, Ewenny, Haverfordwest, Hubberston, Llanthony, Margam, Strata Florida, Tintern (two views) and Valle Crucis (see Appendix 3).

Grose was both writer and entrepreneur (one might describe him as an exponent of *haute vulgarisation*), aiming at the 'middle-brow' readership. In the preliminary pages of Volume I he stated 'The author begs leave to have it understood that he does not herein pretend to inform the veteran antiquary, but has drawn up these accounts solely for the use of such as are desirous of having, without too much trouble, a general knowledge of the subjects treated in this publication; which they will find collected into as small a compass as any tolerable degree of perspicuity would permit'. He provided a

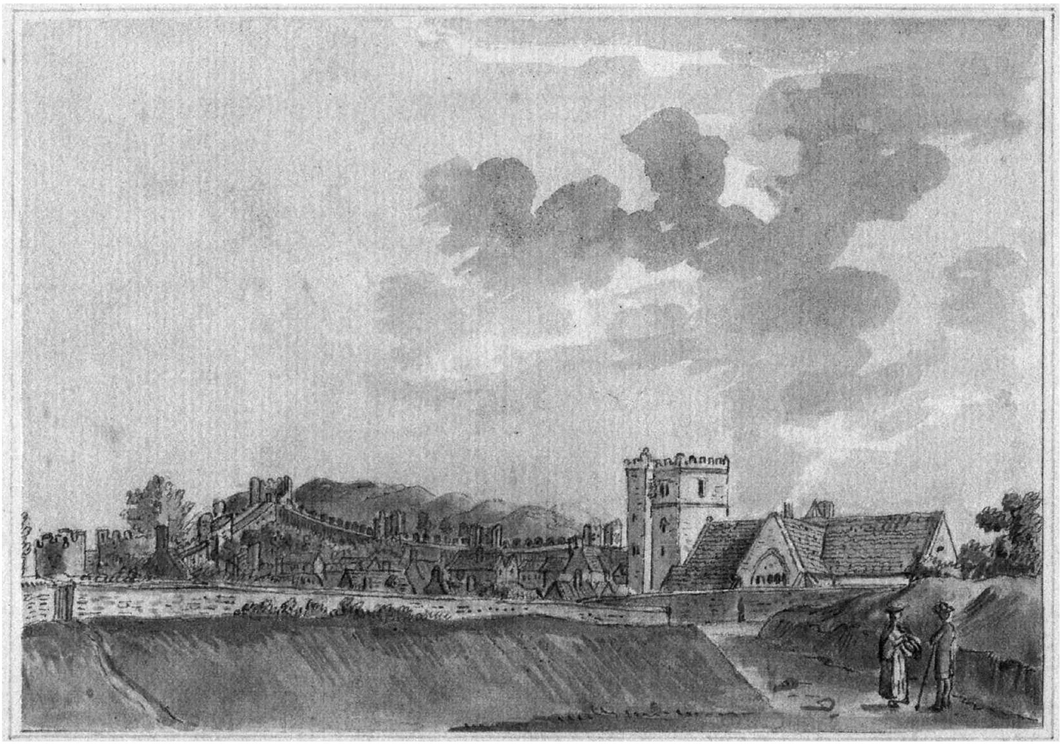


Fig. 6. Conventual church, Conwy Abbey. Ink and watercolour by Francis Grose.
Society of Antiquaries of London.

clear and serviceable introduction to his main themes: Castles, Monasteries, Architecture, Domesday Book and Druidical Monuments.

While a convinced Protestant, Grose could not deny a sneaking sympathy with the aims of monasticism: ‘Although the general suppression of religious houses, even considered in a political light only, was of vast national benefit, yet it must be allowed, that at the time they flourished, they were not entirely useless’. He went on to enumerate their importance as repositories of learning, with their libraries, their instruction of youth, their hospitals for the sick and poor, their lodging for travellers, and the asylum they provided for aged and indigent persons. ‘To conclude’, he wrote, ‘their stately buildings and magnificent churches were striking ornaments to the country; the furious zeal with which these were demolished, their fine carvings destroyed, and their beautiful painted windows broken, would almost tempt one to imagine, that the persons who directed these depredations were actuated with an enmity to the fine arts, instead of a hatred of popish superstitions’.[20]

So far, for chronological reasons, we have paid more attention to printed reproductions than to originals. Many prints may not show great artistic merit, but they are important for their relatively early date. They were a sign that more people were becoming interested in historic buildings and landscape, and they ensured that the images could be seen by many more viewers than single paintings. Before developing the argument further, it is worth dealing with a question frequently raised by historians and archaeologists—how ‘accurate’ were these pictures?

How accurate were the artists' views of ruined abbeys?

There is no simple answer. It depended on the skill of the artist, who might be an untrained amateur, unsure of perspective, or a skilful professional, working with military precision. The artist may have been genuinely interested in built structures and anxious to preserve a true record. On the other hand, the landscape may have been the overriding interest, and the abbey ruin only an 'eyecatcher'. Some artists used ruins as an excuse for a social scene—people disporting themselves at leisure in an accessible open space. More subtley, the artist may have been seeking to express his own emotional reaction to the scene, or to the religious doctrine which it expressed. Some artists merely sought to produce the kind of pastiche which they knew would sell. A further determining factor could be the weather or the time of day. Wild and stormy weather would conjure up a very different impression of a ruin from tranquil moonlight.

The medium employed must also be taken into account. A pencil drawing may display a studied vagueness, while pen and ink has to be more positive. Watercolour, once applied, cannot be altered, so the first attempt must be the final, right or wrong. Oil paintings, on the other hand, can be reworked, for better or worse, long after the first application of paint to the canvas. Reproductions such as copper-plate engravings, steel engravings, etchings, aquatints, mezzotints, lithographs, woodcuts and linocuts usually involved more than one operator to complete the different processes: first, an artist for a preliminary sketch, then an engraver or etcher to make the plate or block from which multiple impressions were to be taken; finally, colouring might be applied by another hand. The more participants concerned, the greater the possibility of distortion, exaggeration or error in the final product. Knowledge of the qualities of each artist is probably the greatest aid to judgement.

The golden age of topographical art

Topographical art came of age in Britain during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Wales then had a special role to play. For the London-based artist it was a land waiting to be discovered—wild, primitive, unfamiliar (to the English) and possessing its own strange language. There were few native-born artists, so the visitors had the field almost to themselves. Wales proved an ideal substitute for a foreign tour when wars and civil commotions were affecting continental Europe. Most artists of standing had visited Italy at some time or another and seen the prestigious ruins of ancient Rome. They tended to view British scenery through a classical prism, a practice helped by the pre-eminence given to the Latin language in grammar school and university. British artists would really have preferred to paint Roman ruins when they got back home, but hardly any had survived above ground. What they could find in plenty were ruined castles and abbeys, so their brushes were attracted perforce to the gothic shapes of the Middle Ages. They applied themselves with enthusiasm. One writer and artist, G. J. Parkyns, a friend of Francis Grose, drew attention in his *Monastic Remains* (1792) to a feature in Haverfordwest Priory: 'A well-formed pointed arch is the most remarkable feature in this priory, above the centre of which is a small raised wall, with a little arch for a bell'.[21] That same arch became the theme of a succession of visiting artists, including Paul Sandby, Sir Richard Colt Hoare, J. Hassell and John Landseer.

Ruins in a landscape

Medieval ruins were an important attraction, but attention eventually moved to the landscape itself. Even the wildest landscape, however, could be expected to show traces of human presence—people, buildings and animals, or even a wisp of smoke emerging from behind a hill to imply activity. In the 1770s so many talented professional and amateur artists took part in the 'discovery of Wales' that it is impossible in the present paper to mention them all. Certain names stand out: Paul Sandby, Samuel Hieronymus Grimm, Francis Towne, Michael Angelo Rooker, John 'Warwick' Smith, Moses Griffith, Joseph Mallord William Turner, John Varley, Samuel Prout, Henry Gastineau and John Parker. Only two of the above-mentioned were of Welsh origin: Moses Griffith of Bryncroes, Llêyn, artist to Thomas Pennant, and the Revd John Parker, vicar of Llanmerewig in Montgomeryshire.[22]

The classical landscape

One must at this stage mention Richard Wilson (1714?–82), not so much for his output of abbey pictures, but for the pervasive influence of his great landscapes in oils—a genre which had originated in the seventeenth century with the work of continental masters, such as Claude Lorrain, Gaspar Dughet, Poussin and Salvator Rosa. English artists flocked to Rome in the mid eighteenth century to study the work of those painters and to see at first-hand the wonders of Roman architecture, as well as mediterranean scenery. Wilson was born at Penegoes, near Machynlleth, Montgomeryshire, the son of a clergyman. After a classical education, he was apprenticed to a portrait painter in London. In 1750 he left England for a period in Italy, where he turned to landscape painting in the Grand Style. His pictures, though usually inspired by particular locations, were much more than topographical views. Wilson was an intellectual, well versed in Latin literature and history, and interested in the philosophical dimension of painting. In Britain his subjects were mountains, medieval ruins, bridges and great country houses. His views of abbeys were few: his Neath Abbey has disappeared, but there is a painting of Valle Crucis Abbey attributed to him in the National Library of Wales. Wilson had many pupils and followers, and his choice of subject and style of composition continued to inspire succeeding generations of artists and even photographers. The humble picture postcards of Snowdon still carry a reference back to Wilson's vision.

Landscape theory

Eighteenth-century critics began to analyse landscape in formal terms, declaring various manifestations to be Sublime, Beautiful or Picturesque. A key figure in the theory of the Picturesque was the Reverend William Gilpin, vicar and schoolmaster at Boldre in the New Forest. He made a tour of the Wye Valley in 1770, diligently recording his journey in his diary, as well as the emotions which they stirred. He circulated his account among his friends and was persuaded to publish it. The book appeared in 1783 as *Observations on the River Wye and Several parts of South Wales relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty*. It quickly reached its third edition and became a *vade mecum* for every traveller of taste. The text was

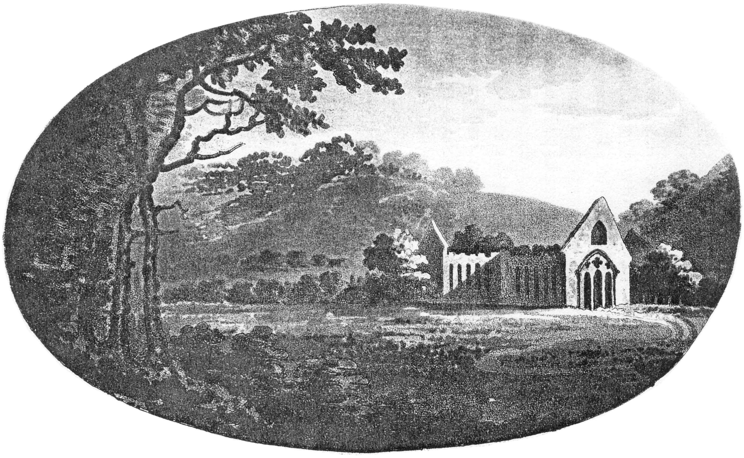


Fig. 7. Abbey in a landscape. Aquatint by William Gilpin, 1783.

skilfully illustrated by aquatint views produced by Gilpin and other artists; they were not intended to be accurate depictions of particular places, but symbolic images to illustrate the principles which Gilpin enunciated (see Fig. 7). He proposed a new object of pursuit in travelling: ‘that of examining the face of a country by the rules of picturesque beauty, opening the sources of those pleasures which are derived from the comparison’. His was a philosophical and emotional reaction to the sights and sounds of travel, as well as an effort to understand the human history associated with the landscape. He certainly struck a chord in the minds of his contemporaries and his influence has lasted to the present day in determining what we regard as a ‘good view’. Abbeys would now be inseparable from their landscape setting.

Individual artists

Paul Sandby (1723–1809) was responsible for perhaps the most iconic and beautiful view of any monastic ruin—Valle Crucis (Fig. 8). The abbey was situated in a tranquil rural scene, framed by trees. In the foreground, cows and countrymen beside a stream set the contemporary scene and evoked the abbey’s fallen dignity; the chosen viewpoint emphasised the abbey’s continued usefulness to man, if only as a humble farmhouse.

Sandby also made a drawing of the little-known ‘Hubberstone Priory’ in Pembrokeshire, and his view was used for a copper-plate engraving by T. Mazel, published in 1778. A similar formula was evident in both views: a ruined abbey church with adjacent farmhouse conversion, a river separating the viewer from the ruin, and in the foreground countrymen in animated conversation, oblivious of a cow suckling her calf nearby.

Sandby was a native of Nottingham, and with his brother Thomas he began his career as a map maker at the Ordnance Office in the Tower of London. Later he became chief drawing master in the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, a post held for thirty years. Before the days of photographic reconnaissance, officers in the army and the navy were expected to be able to record the theatre of operations in which they were involved. Sandby may therefore be expected to display a high degree of accuracy. He was a pioneer in a new kind of etching, known as aquatint, which simulated watercolour. Among his patrons was Sir Watkin Williams Wynn of Wynnstay, the ‘Maecenas’ of his day.

Francis Towne (1740–1816) made an impressive watercolour of Valle Crucis showing the east front of the church with its three large lancet windows and two smaller ones above. Two tiny human figures gave an exaggerated height to the structure. The conversion of some parts to domestic use was indicated by a chimney. Towne’s style is instantly recognisable for his bold, sweeping brush strokes, which demonstrated the essentials of the scene, whether natural or man-made. He made many watercolours in Italy in 1780 and returned home the following year with John ‘Warwick’ Smith via Switzerland.

To judge by the resulting pictures, most topographical artists painted their views in fine weather. It is easy to see a practical reason for this, but artists were very ready to flatter the British climate by importing the sunnier skies of mediterranean lands into their work, a practice dear to Richard Wilson. Sandby belonged to this tradition, as did John ‘Warwick’ Smith. The desire to show Welsh weather as it was did not become popular until the nineteenth century, when David Cox Senior portrayed misty moorlands and windy beaches, while J. M. W. Turner rode out a storm at sea.

John ‘Warwick’ Smith (1749–1851) went to Italy with his patron the Earl of Warwick, from whom he acquired a nickname which distinguished him from other John Smiths. He gained a priceless acquaintance with the Italian landscape, but this did not affect his passion for Welsh scenery. He made thirteen summer tours in Wales between 1784 and 1806. A large collection of his work is held in the National Library of Wales, including views of the abbeys or priories of Basingwerk, Brecknock, Haverfordwest, Neath, Strata Florida, Tintern and Valle Crucis. His view of Haverfordwest Priory, dated 1792, was curiously reminiscent of Roman ruins in Italy. More examples of his work are to be found in

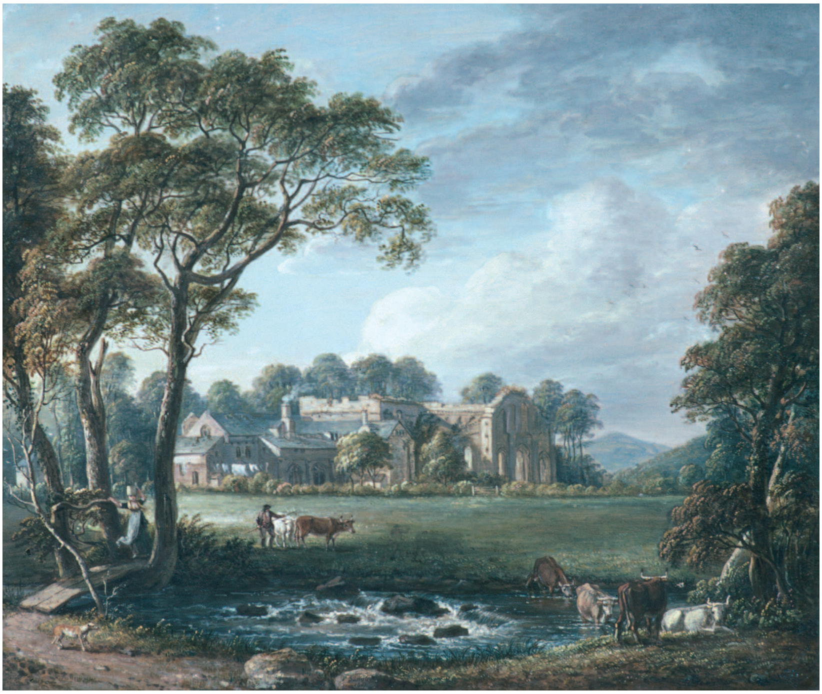


Fig. 8. Valle Crucis Abbey, 1807, with the Eglwyseg stream in the foreground. Oil on canvas by Paul Sandby (1725–1809). © *National Library of Wales*.

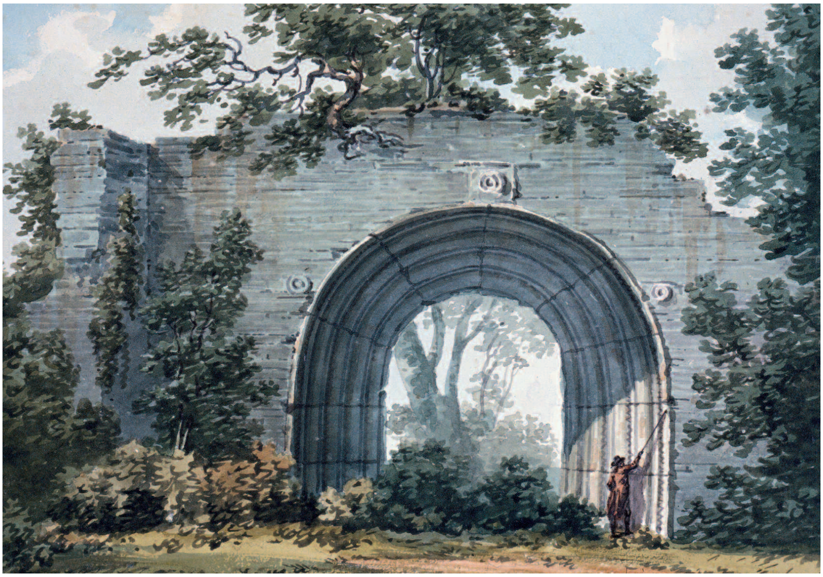


Fig. 9. 'Ruin of the Arched Gateway of the Abbey of Stratfleur (Strata Florida). Now the Principal remaining part of this once splendid Monastery, Cardiganshire. July 26, 1792.' Watercolour drawing by John 'Warwick' Smith © *National Library of Wales*.

the National Museum of Wales, including a view of Llanthony Priory—a straightforward sunny picture, with none of the grim loneliness and foreboding cultivated by later artists. Smith had the praiseworthy habit of annotating each of his drawings with an informative title and a precise date, for example: 'The Ruins of the once Splendid Abbey of Neath, for White Monks, on the West Bank of the River Neath. July 4, 1795', or 'The Ruins of Tintern Abbey, on the Approach from the Village of Tintern. Few Views of this Ruin are more picturesque than this, but it is interrupted by a mean Modern House which has been built close to it. July 1788'. Today we are not so dismissive of the 'modern house', which itself has become history. Leaning against the side of the house was a coracle with two paddles, and in front was a horse-drawn cart of the period. 'Warwick' Smith's view of Strata Florida Abbey is among his best (Fig. 9); he noticed the curious spiral decorations around the Romanesque arch, which still intrigue archaeologists.

Michael Angelo Rooker (1746–1801) was a watercolourist, engraver and scene painter, based in London. He made watercolours of Margam (four views); Monmouth, with St Mary's church in the background, Valle Crucis and Llanthony. Rooker uses the massive walls of Llanthony as a backcloth for an animated scene of visitors enjoying a day out, playing a ball game on the grass, after throwing off their coats on a bank in front of the abbey.

Moses Griffith (1747–1819), artist to Thomas Pennant, made drawings and engravings of numerous antiquities in north Wales and elsewhere. His abbeys included Valle Crucis and Basingwerk (Fig. 10); the latter understandably, for one of Pennant's distant ancestors had been abbot there. Griffith was a self-taught artist and his work often displayed a 'naïve' quality, as did that of another of Pennant's artistic collaborators, John Ingleby (1749–1808).

Another artist of Welsh origin was Hugh Hughes (1790–1863), who published in 1823 *The Beauties of Cambria*, containing 'sixty views of the most sublime and picturesque scenery in the twelve counties of Wales'. Unusually, these were engravings on wood, including Cymer Abbey, Haverfordwest Priory, Llanddwyn Priory, Neath Abbey and Strata Florida Abbey.

In any consideration of early watercolourists, one must cite the great Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851). Turner was perfectly capably of producing the conventional picturesque view and some of his early work on Welsh castles differed little from that of 'Warwick' Smith. But in his long career he developed new techniques, experimenting with colour, catching the transient effects of weather and light, and trying to put into paint the emotions which he felt on viewing his chosen subject. The work of Turner in Wales was studied in detail by Andrew Wilton for an exhibition organised by the Mostyn Art Gallery of Llandudno in 1984.[23] Ten of the drawings displayed showed abbeys, in pencil or pencil and watercolour. There were three of Llanthony, five of Tintern (see Fig. 12), one of Valle Crucis and one of Ewenny. 'The Trancept of Ewenny Priory' is especially moving. It conveyed the majesty of the Romanesque chancel arch and the intricacy of the wooden screen. On the right the founder's tomb was illuminated by sunlight flooding in through an open door. Then the bathos of the scene becomes apparent: a farmer's wife was feeding chickens on the hallowed floor, while in the foreground lay an upturned wheelbarrow, a harrow and other agricultural equipment.

William Henry Bartlett (1809–54) travelled all over the world to make drawings of scenery, which he published with accounts of his journeys. He was responsible for a watercolour inscribed 'Tintern abbey: door into cloister' (Fig. 13). It was a subtle composition, with an archway in full sunlight, the space behind in darkness, while in the rear wall a double lancet window brought back the brilliant light of day. At the front sat a girl with a baby and a boy, a touch of human interest. Artists might insert such figures after the event, even using pattern books to find the right sort. But here the children may have been present, since a view of Tintern abbey refectory by Bartlett, apparently contemporary, also had three children in the centre of the scene.

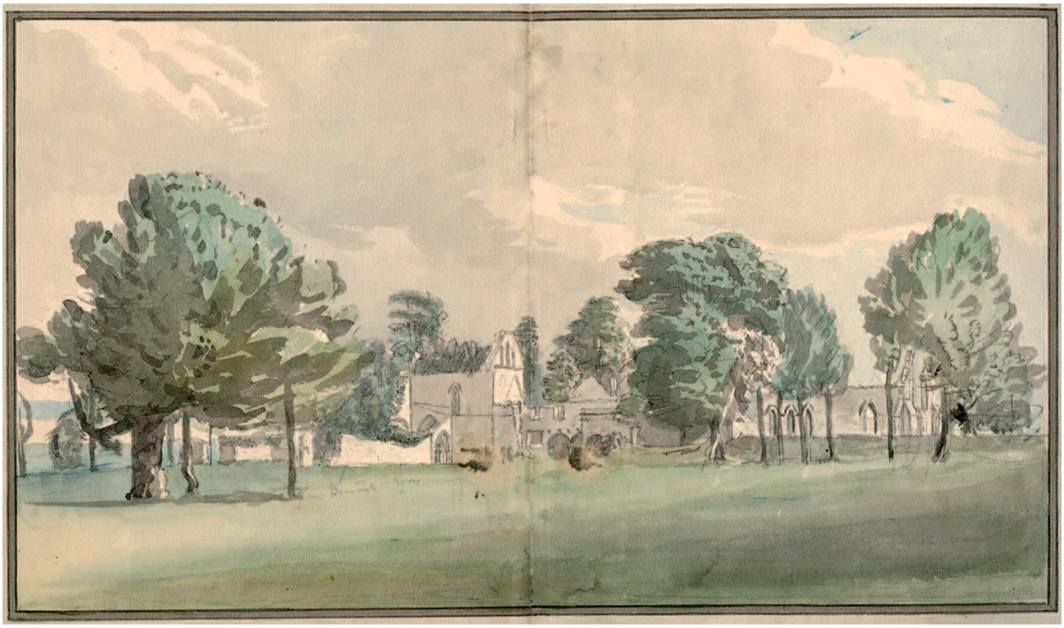


Fig. 10. 'Basingwerk Abbey'. Watercolour by Moses Griffith (*c*. 1770–1800). © *Flintshire Record Office*.

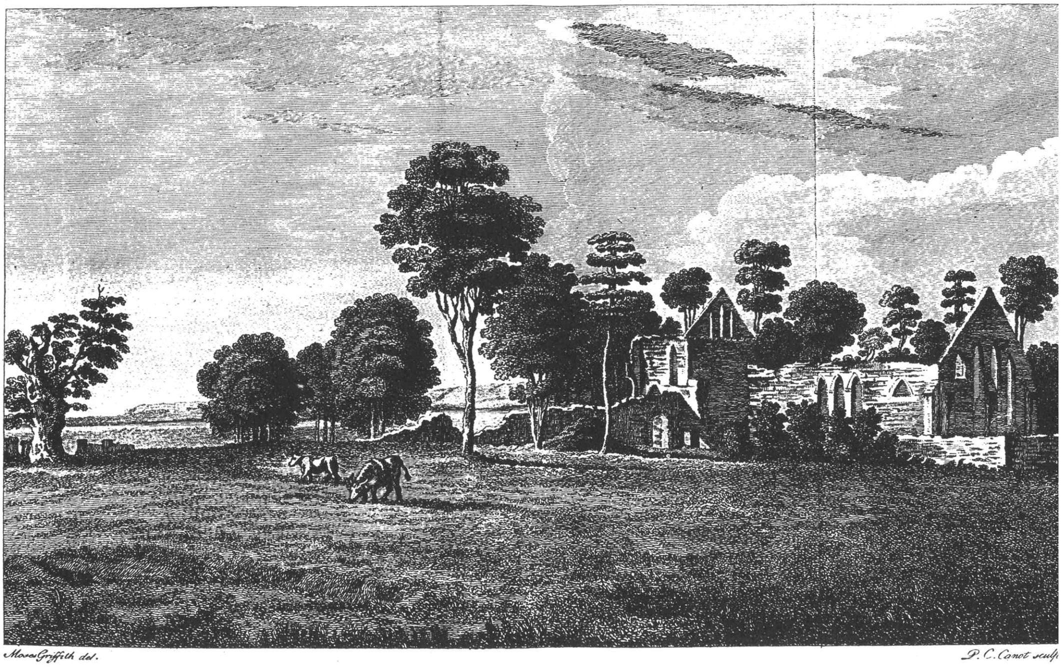

Moses Griffith del.
P. C. Canot sculp.

Fig. 11. Basingwerk Abbey. Engraving by P. C. Canot after a watercolour drawing by Moses Griffith, published in Thomas Pennant's *A Tour in Wales*, 1778.

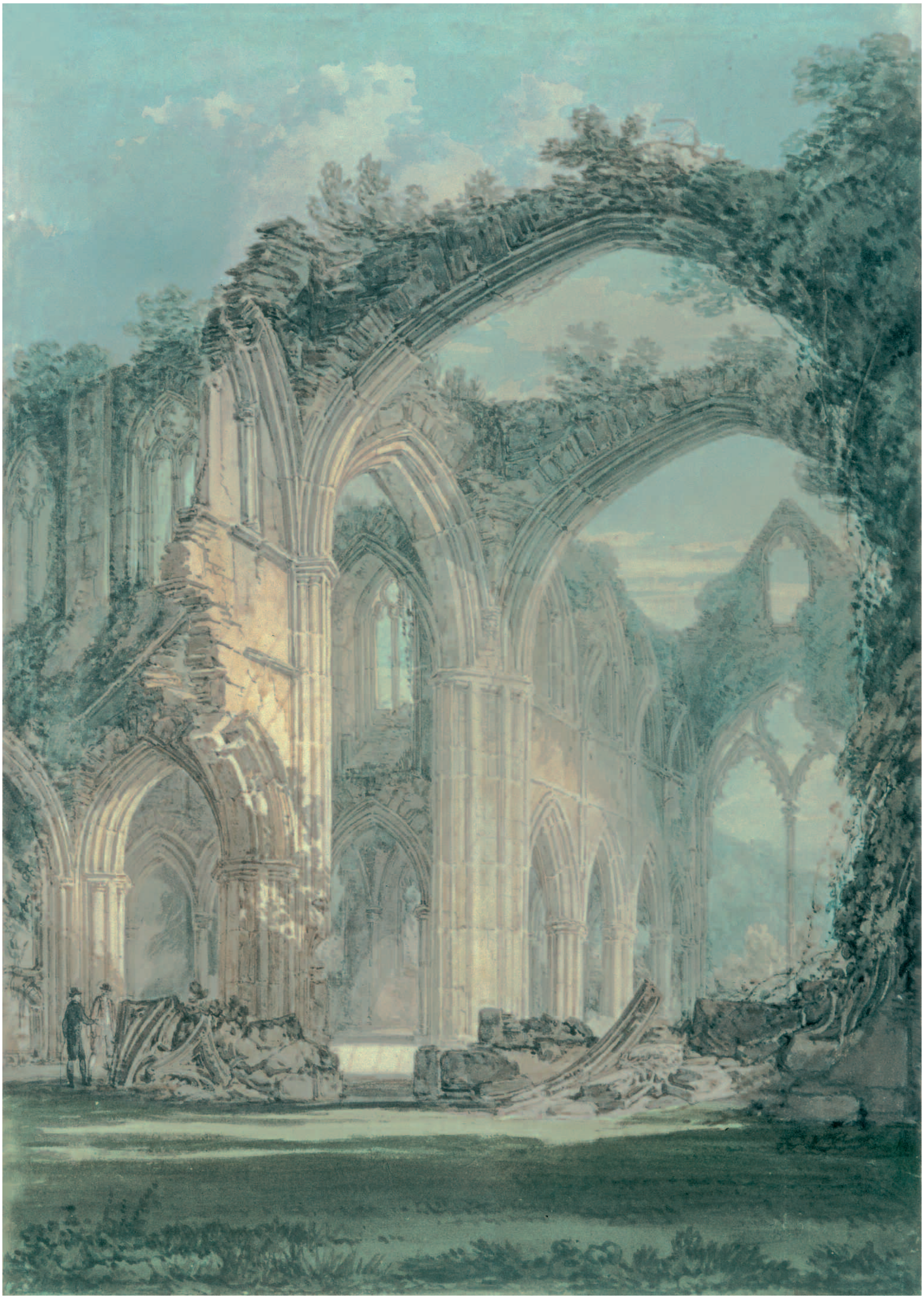


Fig. 12. 'The Chancel and Crossing of Tintern Abbey, Looking towards the East Window'. Pencil and watercolour on paper by J. M. W. Turner, 1794. Turner had first sketched the abbey ruins on a tour in 1792. © *Tate Gallery.*

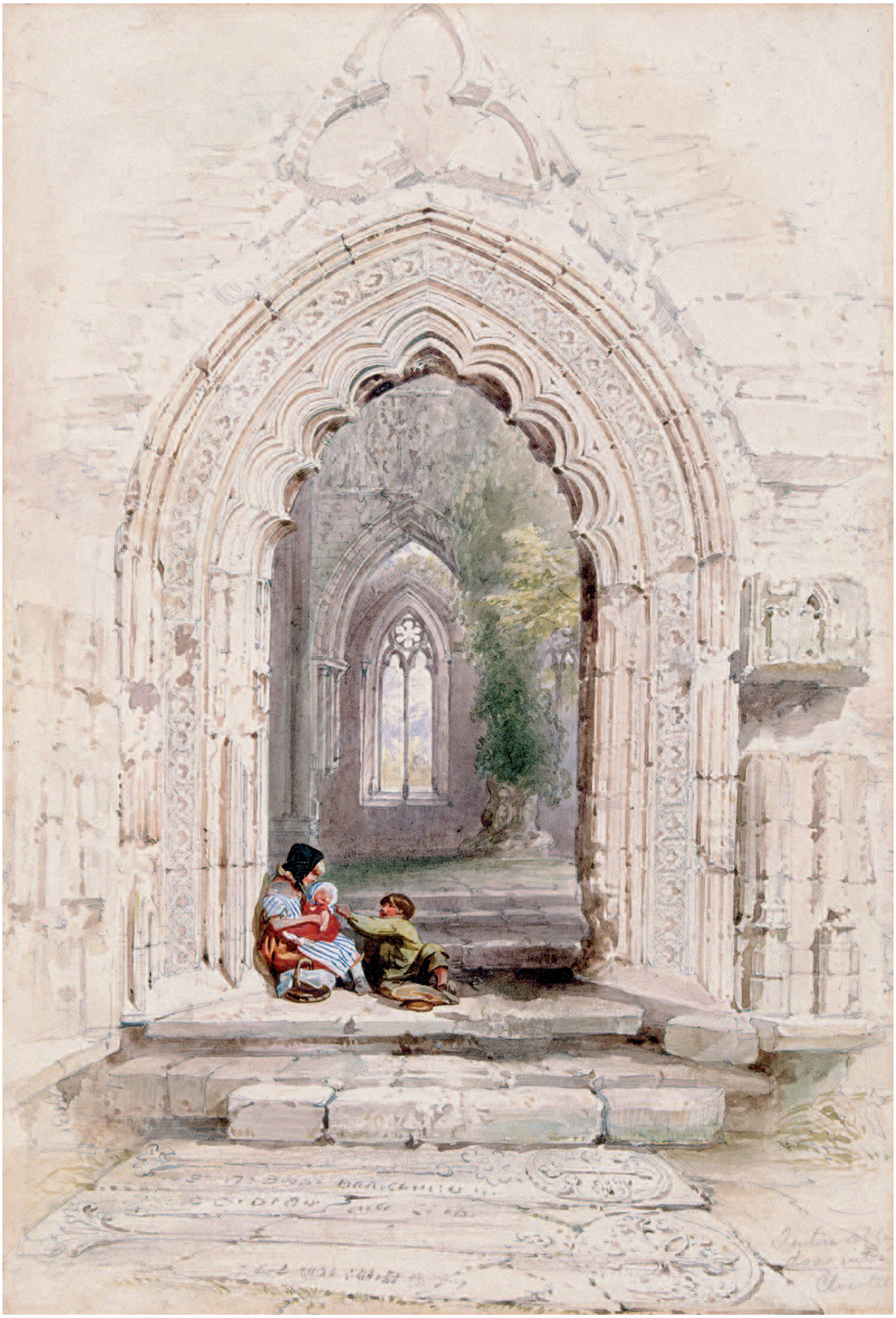

Tintern
door
Cloist

Fig. 13. ‘Tintern abbey: door into cloister’. Watercolour by W. H. Bartlett, early nineteenth century. © *National Museum of Wales.*

The nineteenth century and after

The begining of the ninteenth century did not mark a break with what had gone before, indeed, there was very much a continuum, and some nineteenth-century works have already been discussed. To some artists the ruined abbey became a symbol of spirituality, a notion embodied in Samuel Palmer's 'Harvesting in a Sacred Ruin' (1863).

Artists and writers were constantly exploring new approaches to topography. Rivers were adapted as themes, especally the Wye. The Neath Valley 'arrived' in the nineteenth century. One artist, John George Wood (d. 1838) produced in 1813 a large and handsome work in two volumes entitled *The Principal Rivers of Wales*.[24] In his 'Advertisement' Wood stated 'Rivers usually flow through the most beautiful and interesting parts of the country. Upon the banks of Rivers stands the embattled fortress; and there, embosomed in wood, is discovered the venerable ruin of the no less stately edifice consecrated to religious retirement' (note again the inference that monks did nothing practical). Wood wrote a well-informed commentary in the best style of a human geographer, and made his own drawings and etchings. He used two sizes of picture; the longer showed the layout of a whole settlement along the bank of a river, with an abbey as an incidental feature. He depicted monastic sites at Abergavenny, Brecknock (three views), Haverfordwest, Neath, Strata Florida and Talley in the South Wales volume, and Basingwerk, Denbigh and Valle Crucis in North Wales (see Appendix 4).

Henry Gastineau (*c*. 1791–1876) was a leading member of the Old Water Colour Society of London, where he exhibited a total of 1,310 works. He also exhibited at the Royal Academy. Over two hundred Welsh landscapes by him were engraved in *Wales Illustrated in a series of Views, Comprising the Picturesque Scenery, Towns, Castles, Seats of the Nobility and Gentry, Antiquities, &c.* Engraved on Steel from Original Drawings by Henry Gastineau, accompanied by Historical and Topographical Descriptions (see Fig. 14). Published by Jones & Co., Temple of the Muses, London, 1830. Hence the short title: *Jones's Views*. Though somewhat unsystematic in its arrangement, this collection was important, first, because it was then a technical innovation to engrave on steel plates; these permitted finer detail than copper plates and they did not wear out as quickly, thus facilitating a longer print-run at cheaper cost. Secondly, Gastineau presented Wales in a romantic aura. Most of his views were calm and relaxed, though occasionally he allowed a storm to develop on the coast. The collection had great appeal at the time, and even today supplies the connoisseur with nostalgic pictures for framing in Hogarth black-and-gold mouldings. Gastineau's monastic sites comprised Basingwerk, Haverfordwest, Margam (2 views), Neath (3), Pille, St Dogmael's, Tintern (4) and Valle Crucis (see Appendix 5).

The Revd John Parker (1798–1860) was clergyman, artist and architect. He was born at Sweeney Hall near Oswestry. He became vicar of Llanmerewig, Montgomeryshire and later of Llanyblodwel in Shropshire. He was a talented artist, ranging from landscapes of north and mid Wales to church interiors and Welsh native flowers. He was important not so much for his abbey views—he painted Valle Crucis Abbey—but for the enthusiam with which he introduced the gothic style into churches which he restored, thus bringing the medieval gothic back into contemporary buildings.

The invention and gradual perfection of photography in the nineteenth century was one factor which led artists to lose interest in views of abbeys, while taste and fashion moved in other directions. Some artists have continued to draw and paint monastic ruins right up to the present day. John Piper (b. 1903) was attracted by churches in varying stages of decrepitude. He could not resist the gaunt ruin of the Cistercian abbey of Byland in Yorkshire and made a dramatic aquatint of the abbey church there in 1940, showing the crescent-shaped remains of the broken rose window in the west front, with a solitary turret pointing skywards. His was a bold and impressionistic style, full of flashing colour. He liked his ruins to be wild and unkempt, and disapproved of the fencing, notice-boards and mowed grass of Byland. He contrasted it with Valle Crucis, where (at the time of his visit) 'decay was sensibly unarrested'. He produced a view of the massive façade of Llanthony in thunderous orange and purple in 1941, and was quoted as saying 'the ruined buildings are still largely unrestored. Long may they remain so'.[25]

As a final example one can instance a watercolour of the interior of Ewenny Priory by a twentieth-century artist Eric Malthouse, dated 1986: The scene is familiar from earlier views, but this time it contains a visitor holding a camera poised to take a photograph. Ewenny still stands as a masterpiece of Norman architecture in the Vale of Glamorgan, in a remarkable state of preservation. The nave has long been the parish church of St Michael, while the crossing and chancel is in the care of Cadw. The two sections were for some time separated by a utilitarian wood and glass screen, but now there is an etched glass pulpitum screen, representing the Resurrection, designed by Alexander Beleschenko. Inaugurated in July 2006 by the Archbishop of Wales, it was described as 'the first major work of art to be placed in a church in Wales this millennium'.

Printed reproductions of original views

Original drawings and paintings are by definition unique, and are not seen by many people unless exhibited in a public place. When the drawings and paintings discussed above first appeared, there was little opportunity for the public to see them—unless reproduced as prints and widely sold. The output of different prints of the same site can give an indication of the popularity of particular scenes. There is no up-to-date 'union catalogue' of monastic views, whether originals or prints, but certain catalogues of prints, made at different times and for different areas, can give a reasonable idea.

In 1926 Isaac J. Williams compiled a catalogue of Welsh topographical prints for the National Museum of Wales.[26] It was an important pioneer work and it enables us to produce a 'league table' for the then holdings of the National Museum. Tintern Abbey led with 73 examples, Llanthony followed with 24, then Valle Crucis with 23, Ewenny, Margam and Neath with 10 each, Basingwerk and Haverfordwest each had 9, Strata Florida 5, Cymer and Chepstow 4 each, Clynnog Fawr, Llanddwyn, Pill and Monmouth 3 each, Abergavenny 2, and finally eight sites, comprising Brecon, Cardiff Grey Friars, Cardigan, Conwy, Denbigh, Kidwelly, Penmon and Rhuddlan with only 1 each. Cistercian houses scored well, mainly because the ruins had been preserved from stone-robbing by their remote locations. Llanthony, though founded by Augustinian Canons, also enjoyed the benefits of rural seclusion, and a dramatic backdrop of mountains gave it an added fascination.

There were many more printed abbey views in existence than those mentioned above. A more recent and fuller analysis of a particular region was made for Clwyd by Derrick Pratt and A. G. Veysey, published by the Clwyd Record Office in 1977.[27] It contained no less than 86 entries for Valle Crucis alone. Certain antiquities become symbols of their region, as when the mapmaker John Evans included an attractive engraving of Valle Crucis Abbey on his *A Map of North Wales* (1795). Because of their importance in popularising abbey ruins (not to mention other sites), four influential collections are listed in detail in the appendices to this paper—those of the Buck brothers, Francis Grose, J. G. Wood and Henry Gastineau.

The topographical writers

Occasionally an artist would keep a personal record of his or her travels. In 1797 Sir Richard Colt Hoare of Stourhead in Wiltshire, artist and antiquary, visited the Valle Crucis in the Vale of Llangollen and wrote in his journal: 'the remains . . . still merit the attention of every traveller who will view them as an artist or antiquarian . . . The ruins are surrounded by fine old ash trees whose delicate taper corresponds well with the elegant light Gothic architecture of the building, but I could wish one or two of them removed to admit of a more perfect view of the fine western front. This Abbey . . . is now converted into a farmhouse'.[28] Colt Hoare made no comment on the function or justification of the abbey; his main

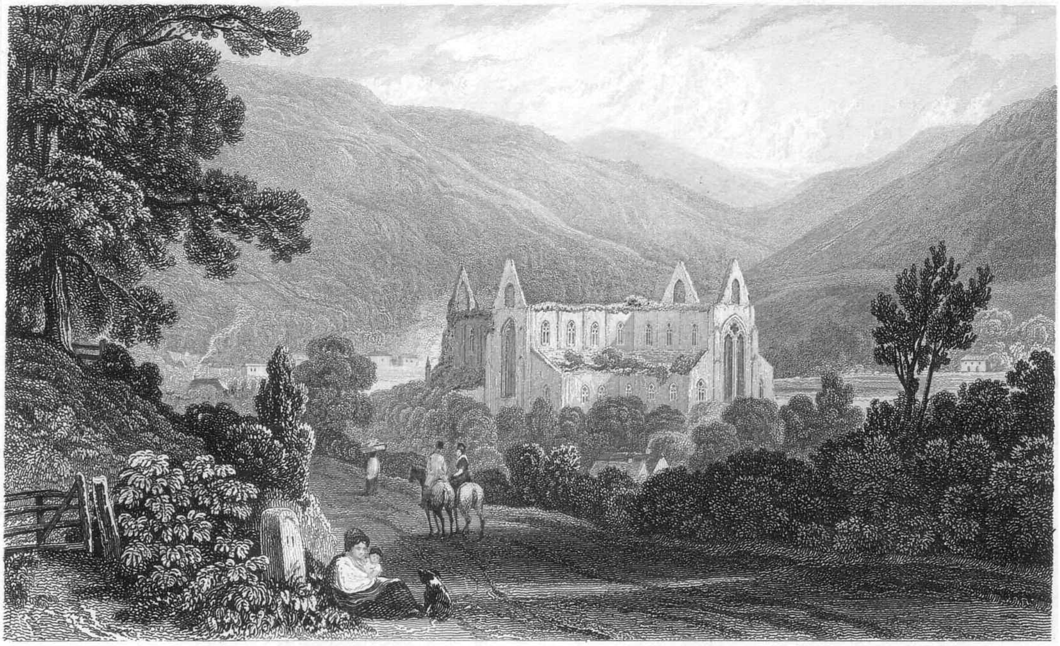


Fig. 14. Tintern Abbey, viewed from road. Steel engraving by Henry Gastineau, one of the many Welsh landscapes by him which appeared in *Wales Illustrated in a series of Views,* published in 1830.

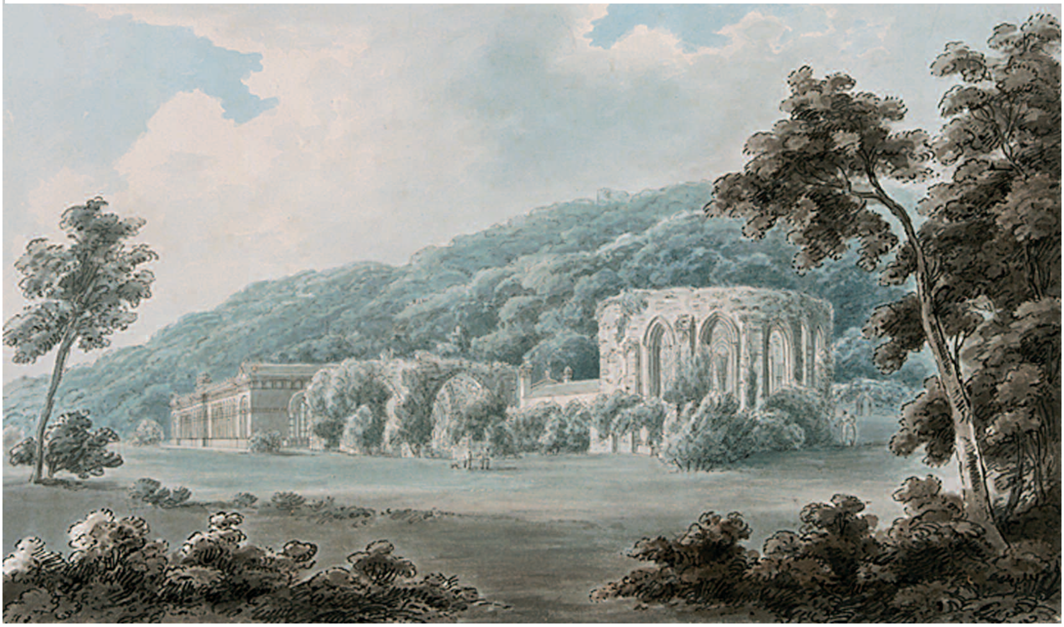


Fig. 15. ‘Margam orangery, church and chapter house’, 1819. Watercolour by Thomas Horner. The ruined chapter house and abbey church at Margam after the demolition of the Old House, with eighteenth-century orangery beyond. © *Glamorgan Record Office*.

interest was the architecture and landscape. Many travellers published their accounts, but many more left them in manuscripts, which have remained in family archives or libraries until rediscovered two hundred-odd years later.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century another literary genre came into vogue—the county history. This would contain a historical narrative or introduction, but the bulk would be a thinly disguised picturesque tour, based on the personal experience of the author. In 1796 *The History of Monmouthshire* was published by David Williams, a nonconformist minister and political pamphleteer of radical tendencies. It was illustrated with views of the county drawn by the Reverend John Gardnor, vicar of Battersea. The author inevitably stopped at Tintern Abbey. Since it lay on a navigable river, the Wye, he, like many other visitors, approached it by boat, describing the excursion as follows:

‘The passage from Chepstow on the river, affords various and magnificent views. The abrupt and lofty banks, sometimes obtruding barren rocks, dispose the mind to contemplation, to imagine all the possible purposes of such a sublime retreat [Tintern abbey] . . . Descending the steep side of the vale towards Tintern, the woods are thickened and obscured; the coppices, growing at random, rudely arch the winding paths worn in the stormy months by rapid torrents; and the imagination quivers, as the shadows deepen, and it seems to approach impenetrableness. The ruin is in a profound, narrow, and woody valley, on the banks of the Wye: the perspective of it uncommonly beautiful: arches obscured by foliage, or edged by tendrils of ivy; walls, clustered columns, and divisions of ayles, shaded by tufts and wreaths: every thing impressing the mind with the idea of decay; but offering shattered memorials of former grandeur, which entrance the fancy, and occupy it in obviating the depredations of time, and restoring all the parts of the crumbling structure’.

David Williams’ comment on the monks was less flattering. He shared the prevailing opinion that monks were ‘idle’ and declared that the release of so many individuals into the labour force after the Dissolution had made hardly any perceptible difference to the economy.[29]

A very different character was the young Joseph Hucks who made a tour in Wales just a year before, in 1795. A native of Knaresborough in Yorkshire, he had just taken his degree in Cambridge. His companion was Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who was to become a leading figure of the Romantic Movement. Hucks’ account remained unpublished, until a renewed interest in picturesque tours resulted in its publication in 1979.[30]

Hucks’ admiration for the fabric of Tintern Abbey knew no bounds, but his views on monasticism echoed the Monmouthshire historian David Williams cited above. Hucks commented: ‘The elegance and lightness of the structure exceeds any thing of the gothic architecture I ever saw. It occasioned in me much regret that I was compelled to pass over, and to visit, in so cursory a manner, a scene, which, for beauty and singularity might challenge nature throughout’. As to the monks, he declared: ‘We owe to Henry VIII the suppression and overthrow of these seminaries of bigotry and superstition: as long as they existed, the exertions of genius were fettered and confined; and Europe was overspread with one general gloom of religious fanaticism. Monkish pride and cloistered pedantry every where usurped dominion over man. – Learning and science were finally depressed and ignorance became the best shield of protection, but truth at length unfolded the deep veil of hypocrisy and priestcraft – reason resumed her empire – the whole fabric of papal despotism fell to earth, and lust, cruelty, and revenge, that had so long been concealed within its walls, fled at the first glimmerings of light’.[31]

Such attitudes, nurtured during the Reformation, lasted long. Extreme Protestantism and fierce anti-Catholicism was kept alive for centuries by poets, preachers, pamphleteers and martyrologists. It must be remembered that religious issues also had a political dimension—Catholicism was associated with Britain’s enemies in Europe, in particular France and Spain, and to practice it, therefore, verged on treason.

Abbey ruins as a feature in a park

The presence of abbey *ruins* in the grounds of a great house was regarded as a mark of good fortune and taste; they embellished the picturesque landscape and offered unusual and romantic destinations for excursions from the house. For some visitors they were a visual reminder that the day of Popery was over, but most persons of taste were coming to admire them for their architecture. At Margam in Glamorgan, the Old House of the Mansels was built on a monastic site, and parts of the abbey were incorporated in the complex. When that house was demolished in 1792–93, two monastic features were allowed to survive in splendid isolation—the circular chapter house and its vestibule. Henry Penruddocke Wyndham, visiting the site in the 1770s, found the fan-vaulting of the chapter house roof in perfect order, but the lead roof had been replaced by oiled paper. In 1799 neglect and nature took their toll and the roof fell in, wrecking a superb medieval monument. Thomas Mansel Talbot meanwhile had by 1790 completed a huge orangery on the site of the south range of claustral buildings, aligned in parallel with the monastic church. Thus the ruined chapter house became a visual foil for the classical perfection of the orangery (Fig. 15).

Thomas Pennant (1726–98), of Downing in Flintshire, acknowledged, to his regret, that he did not have an abbey on his estate, so he arranged for an old mill to be remodelled as an abbey ruin, which he named *Molandina* (Fig. 16). ‘Let me confess’, he wrote, ‘that this is a trap for antiquaries, the name being derived from *Mola*, being a deserted mill antiquated by myself as an *imposture innocente*’.[32] Pennant nevertheless declared: ‘I would not be supposed to be a friend to monastic life, but I wished it to be

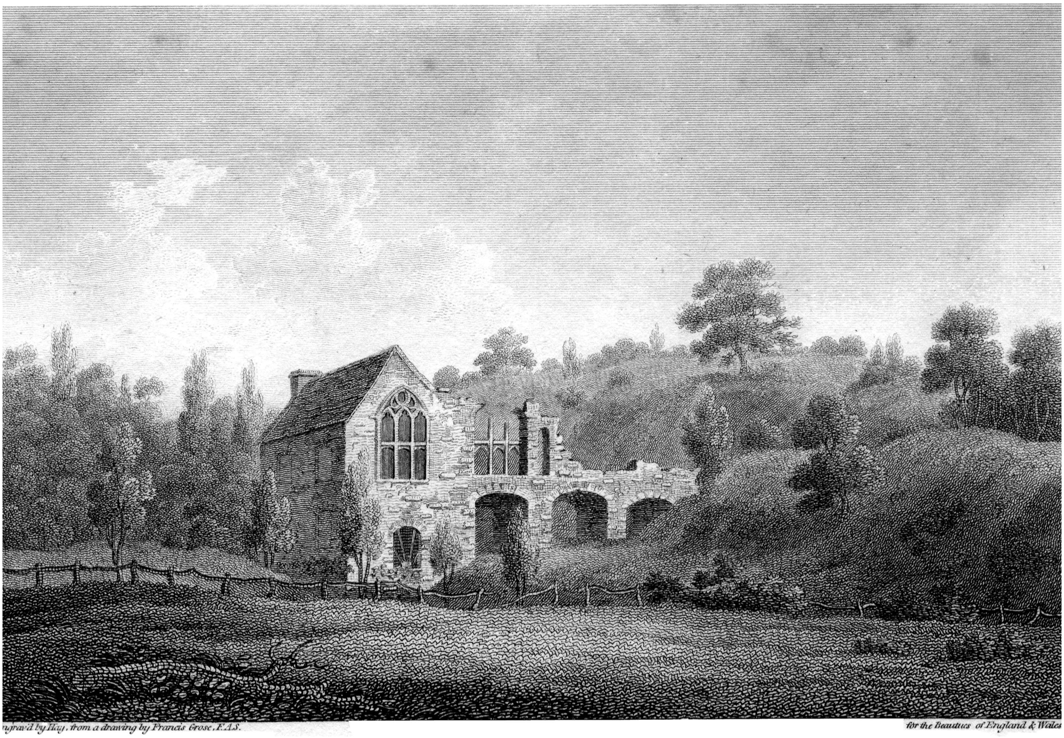

Engrav'd by Hay, from a drawing by Francis Grose, F.A.S.
for the Beauties of England & Wales

Fig. 16. Mr Pennant’s Mill at Downing: engraving by Hay from a drawing by Francis Grose for the *Beauties of England and Wales* (1801–15), published May 1811. *Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust.*

extinguished by degrees'. He was referring to the summary ejection, during his own time, of the monks of the Grande Chartreuse monastery in the kingdom of France.[33]

Comparable examples may be found in England. In 1768 William Aislabie of Studley Royal in Yorkshire secured ownership of a real ruin as a feature at the end of his landscaped park—the vast Fountains Abbey.[34] In the early nineteenth century in Shropshire, a replica of the ornate refectory pulpit of Shrewsbury Abbey (today isolated from the abbey by the former A5 road) was built at the entrance to Tong Castle.[35]

The rehabilitation of monasticism

The article on Valle Crucis abbey which appeared in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* in 1846 (mentioned at the beginning of this paper) represented a strong current of opinion in the mid nineteenth century. The author was a clergyman of the Church of England, John Williams, *Ab Ithel*, one of our two founding General Secretaries. His concluding sentence read: 'Nowhere, perhaps, is the influence of the *severi religio loci* [reverence for an austere place] felt more powerfully or more sweetly than within these hallowed walls'. A paradox, perhaps, that a Welsh-speaking Anglican priest should be praising a Roman Catholic building, but *Ab Ithel* was a High Churchman, like many of the gentlemen involved in the founding of the Association, and was drawn towards the ritual and architecture of medieval Catholicism. The early volumes of *Archaeologia Cambrensis* contained much material on medieval architecture, including abbeys, and such contributions were warmly received by members, to judge from letters published in the journal. Following the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, Catholicism had come into the open, and many Anglican clergy looked with favour on some of its manifestations. By the mid nineteenth century the Oxford or Tractarian Movement had begun to create a more sympathetic and informed attitude towards the pre-Reformation church. The Revd John Williams' article led to improvements in the 'presentation' of Valle Crucis. W. W. E. Wynne of Peniarth and Lord Dungannon—both prominent Cambrian members—initiated some clearance work to make the abbey church more intelligible.

The abbey as a continuing residence

Those parts of a monastery which contained the better residential accommodation—the abbot's lodgings—might well suit the new secular landlords for conversion into an imposing dwelling, as at Forde in Somerset, but the situation varied from place to place (see Fig. 17). Cloister ranges formed the basis for conversion at Lacock Abbey in Wiltshire, Newstead Abbey in Nottinghamshire and Ewenny Priory in Glamorgan. Neath Abbey had a complex building history after the Dissolution. The abbey site was acquired by Sir Richard Williams, who built an extensive mansion, incorporating the abbot's lodging, dormitory undercrofts and the reredorter; he also added a new residential block to the north-east, pillaging materials from the monastic buildings for its construction. In 1792 part of the site was taken over by Cornish industrialists to set up an ironworks, which continued until 1885.[36]

Abbeys converted for residence retained their 'abbey' title, regarded as a 'good address'. On the one hand it displayed the wealth and status of the owner, on the other, his antiquarian interest, a factor which helped to preserve what remained of the fabric. Similarly, that offshoot of the monastery, the grange, essentially a comfortable farmhouse, was well suited to survive as a high-status farm.

A new residential building on a monastic site might assume the venerable designation of Priory, such as the Priory House at Abergavenny, built *c*. 1700, adjacent to the priory church, which had succeeded the Benedictine priory of St Mary, founded in 1087 by Hamelin de Ballon, Lord of Abergavenny. Here was an obvious and prestigious link with history. The Queen Anne-style house had nine bays, two storeys and a hipped roof. It is, sadly, no longer to be seen, having been demolished *c*. 1950. In the nineteenth century the Priory House was run as a guest house by Samuel and Elizabeth Davies; it was, ironically, a favourite resort of members of Yr Hen Gorph, the Calvinistic Methodists.[37]

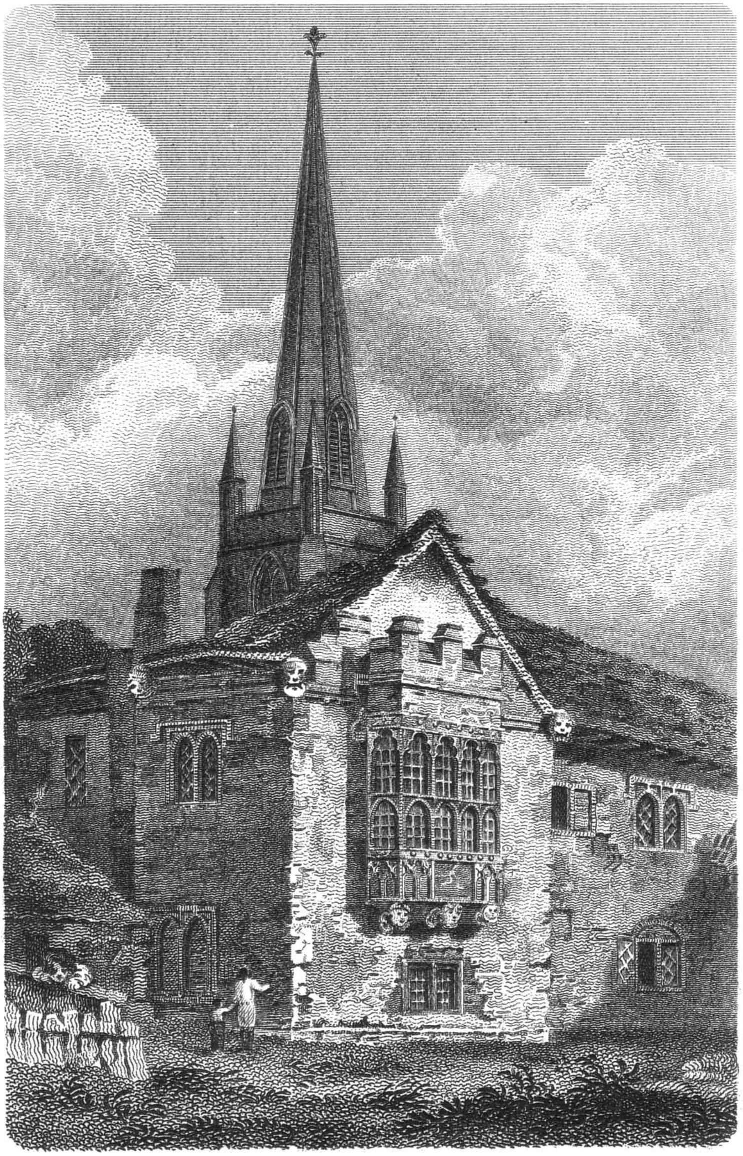


Fig. 17. Monmouth Priory. Engraving by W. Woolnoth after Richard Cooper, published in *The Beauties of England and Wales*, 1805.

Where a mansion had no monastic predecessor, the term might nevertheless be adopted for the sake of status, as at Singleton Abbey, Swansea, seat of the Vivians—a monastery that never was. So prestigious and reassuring did the word ‘abbey’ become that in the twentieth century it was used for the name of a building society, and later for the bank formed from that society. *The Phone Book* for Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan lists some fourteen commercial concerns whose title embodies the word ‘abbey’, such as

'Abbey Bookbinding and Printing' and 'Abbey Tile Centre'—appropriately enough. But what about 'Abbey Cranes' and 'Abbey Lifts'?

The abbey in fiction

Abbatial residences were made fashionable in fiction. Jane Austin's *Northanger Abbey* and Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey* were both published in 1818. These 'abbeys' were essentially well-appointed mansions with a vague gothic veneer, against which certain opinionated characters played out their roles—and here we must not underestimate the drama of daily life for participants in the Romantic Movement. Nightmare Abbey was 'a sort of castellated abbey . . . Whether it had been one of the strongholds of the church militant was not within the pale of the author's knowledge'.[38] There was a moat and angle towers, one of which was occupied by the owner, Mr Glowry, and another by his eccentric son, Skythrop. A third tower was ruinous and full of owls, while the adjoining terrace was covered with ivy. Here was the stock-in-trade of the Gothic horror novel, particularly associated with the authorship of Mrs Radcliffe.

In Jane Austin's *Northhanger Abbey*, the building was a more couth place, with few traces of its monastic past. Catherine Mansfield found no long damp passages, narrow cells or ruined chapel there; her expectation of mystery and horror arose from reading too many Gothic novels. In Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) an excursion on foot to 'the hermitage' in Mrs Bennet's 'small park' provided the opportunity for an intimate conversation between Lady Catherine de Bourgh and Elizabeth Bennet, intended to deter Elizabeth from marrying Lady Catherine's nephew, Mr Darcy.[39]

Gothic fiction continued its vogue through the nineteenth century. Anthony Trollope's novel *Can You Forgive Her?* appeared in serial form between 1864 and 1865. It contained meticulous descriptions of a medieval priory ruin (which must surely have been familiar to the author in real life). The place was known as Matching Priory and the drive in the park ran through the ruins before reaching the 'modern house'. Visiting ruins in private grounds offered an opportunity to get away from eavesdropping relatives and servants, and what better occasion than a frosty moonlit night of December, when Lady Glencora whisked away her cousin Alice Vavasor for an exchange of confidences. 'They were now standing just within the the gateway of the old cruciform chapel . . . The church was altogether roofless, but the entire walls were standing. The small clerestory windows of the nave were perfect and the large windows of the two transepts and of the west end were nearly so. Of the opposite window which had formed the back of the choir, very little remained . . . a transom or cross-bar of stone had been added to protect the carved stone-work of the sides, and save the aperture from further ruin'. Clearly, conservation work had already begun at this early date.[40]

The image of the monk

Monasteries were not just buildings, they were communities of monks, and we need to look at the post-Reformation image of monks—and nuns—dedicated to a life of poverty, obedience and chastity, and distinguished from the rest of mankind by their special costume. Monastic garb vanished from town and countryside in England and Wales after the Reformation and did not return until reintroduced or revived at later dates. Roman-Catholic Benedictines returned from the Continent to Downside as early as 1795, and in 1802 there were communities at Ampleforth and Stapehill; others followed. The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, already mentioned, gave Catholic communities greater confidence to operate, and the sight of Catholic liturgical dress and monastic habit eventually became familiar again on the English and Welsh scene. In 1848 the Jesuit College of St Beuno was established at Tremeirchion in Flintshire. In the twentieth century, convent schools run by Catholic teaching orders became popular with middle-class parents, even those of Nonconformist background, who wanted their children to receive a more disciplined education than that provided by state schools.

In the eighteenth century, however, the British traveller on the Continent was startled by the unaccustomed sight of monks 'in uniform', so much so that artists would paint portraits of monks to symbolise meditation and withdrawal from the world. Richard Wilson, a successful painter of portraits as well as landscapes, took the monk as a subject for a portrait. Wilson saw the monk as a lone, reclusive figure, rather than a member of a corporate body. In 1752 he painted 'The Head of Capuchin', a study of the bearded face of an old man, pensively looking away from the beholder and dramatically illuminated against a totally dark background.[41] A more elaborate interpretation of the solitary monk is found in Wilson's 'Solitude', painted about ten years later, which shows a lush grove with a cowled and bearded human figure standing beside a pool in the bottom left corner, a staff in his left hand.[42] This monk or hermit represented contentment at being alone to meditate on Christian virtues; he was contrasted with a shattered statue of a lion on a pedestal in the other corner of the picture, the latter symbolising wordly power and aggression. The elysian quality of the scene is important: here is a protected landscape where the monk will come to no harm—rather like the squire on his estate.

Wilson's most famous picture in this genre was 'The White Monk' (a later title). This existed in at least 30 copies (see Fig. 18)—'a good breeder', as Wilson used to say. It contained the standard elements of the classical landscape together with features which carried a deep philosophical message. There was a tall wedge-shaped 'side-screen' on the left in the form of a steep wooded hillside, a level foreground, on the right of which stood a tall bushy-topped tree framing the view; the background was formed by a jagged mountain, with a fortress on its summit and an Italianate settlement at its foot; the middle distance contained the expected water feature, comprising not only a broad river, but a waterfall for good measure. This picture combined two kinds of landscape, referring back to two contrasting artistic styles of seventeenth-century painters—Salvator Rosa for the 'sublime' element (on the left) and Claude Lorrain for the 'beautiful' (on the right). The vital feature of the composition is found on a ledge of the cliff—a shrine (or cross on some versions) and beside it a human figure raising its arms in prayer. In the right foreground, by contrast, secular pleasure intrudes: a pair of young lovers shelter from the sun under a parasol. In the centre, a horseman disappears below the ridge that forms the foreground, introducing movement into an otherwise static scene.

This picture is not simply a superb landscape but also a deep source of symbolism. It embodies contrasting aspects of nature and humanity—*concordia discors*, the reconciliation of opposites. This concept was originally formulated in ancient Greece by Pythagoras and was later accepted into Christian thinking. It appealed greatly to eighteenth-century sensibilities, for it could be interpreted as the harmonious co-existence of those *in* authority, the landowning class, and those *under* authority, the labouring classes. The praying figure indicates respect for God and self-discipline, the lovers represent human indulgence and pleasure, qualities all reconciled in the *concordia discors*.[43]

The landowning patrons of the eighteenth-century artists were fascinated by the notions of solitude, meditation and the simple life—provided such experiences could be delegated to others. Virtues characteristic of the monk or the hermit could be represented by a live performer, installed in a real or artificial grotto in the proprietor's own picturesque landscape. He (always a he) would be dressed rather like a wandering friar. Such a hermitage was set up in the extensive landscaped park of Hawkstone in Shropshire.

Francis Grose in his *Antiquities* portrayed the prevalent idea of the bearded hermit in a cave with book, hour-glass and skull (Fig. 19). Beside him was a thatched belfry surmounted by a cross.[44] This must have been the work of Samuel H. Grimm (1734–94) a Swiss artist who settled in London. He was responsible for a very similar image in watercolour—of a venerable bearded man in long robe, with gnome-type cap and rough crozier-like staff, standing at the entrance to a similar structure, with a gothic door-frame of wood. Grimm was also a serious topographical artist, producing views of the monastic sites at Ewenny,

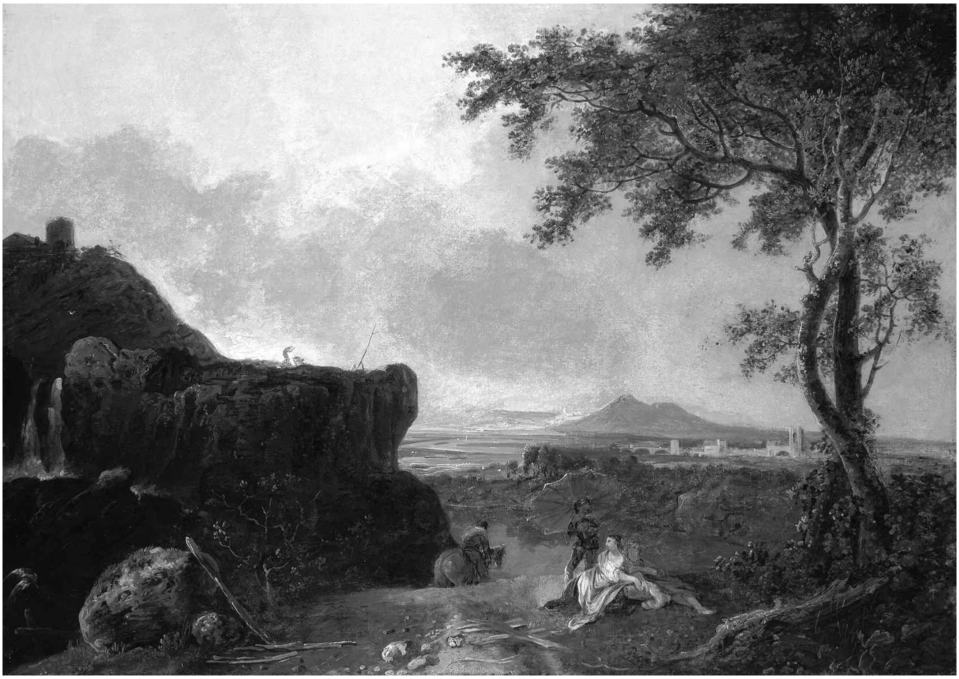


Fig. 18. One of the many versions of 'The White Monk' by Richard Wilson. Oil on canvas. © *National Museum of Wales.*

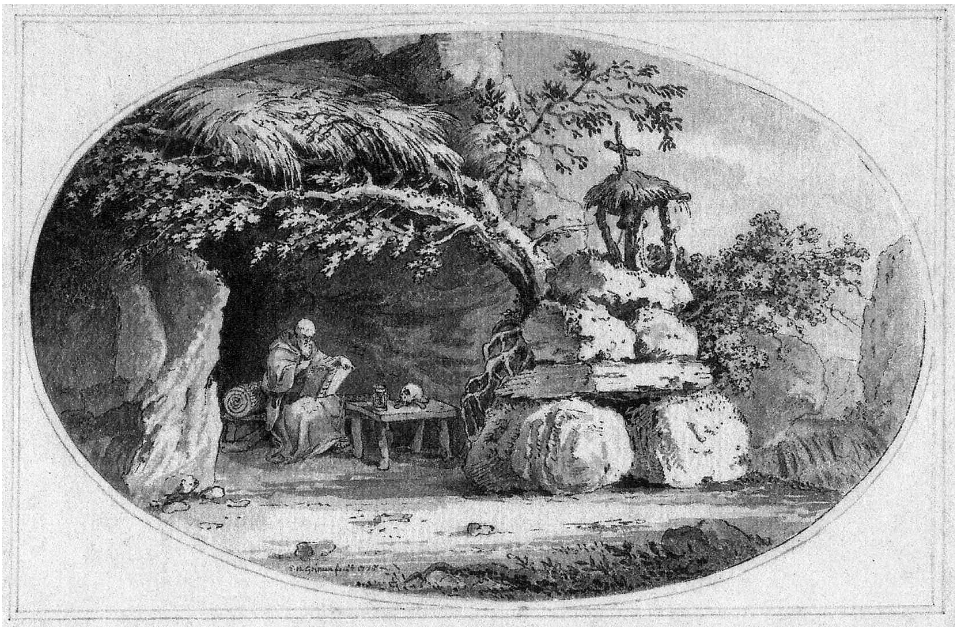


Fig. 19. Hermit on the title page of Francis Grose's *The Antiquities of England and Wales*. *Society of Antiquaries of London.*

Llanthony, Margam, Pembroke, Tintern and Valle Crucis. To return to the monk, in our own time Cadw has installed its own unregistered 'monk' at Tintern Abbey, Brother Keith, to conduct visitors around with greater authenticity.

Monkish garb could serve as a fancy dress for the gentry. At Lord Byron's house-party at Newstead Abbey in 1809 amusements were arranged to suit the surroundings: A letter from C. S. Matthews to his sister dated 22 May 1809 stated: 'A set of monkish dresses, which had been provided, with all the proper apparatus of crosses, beads, tonsures etc., often gave a variety of our appearance and to our pursuits'.[45]

Nothing could be further from the life-style of the twenty-first century than the monastic ideal, but there does exist a latent public interest, as witness television programmes based on modern monasteries and nunneries in 2006. The old Protestant antagonism has disappeared in England and Wales, if not in Northern Ireland. In the early twentieth century, monks expelled from Landévennec in Brittany by the French government, sought refuge in Cardiganshire, taking over a farm, which they christened Caer Maria; there they encountered much suspicion and hostility from the local population, regardless of the vaunted 'Celtic' link between Wales and Brittany.[46] But the present-day monastery on Caldey Island is well-regarded in its neighbourhood at Tenby and has recently succeeded in attracting more novices, reversing a downward trend.[47]

People still visit abbeys in their thousands, even though most ruins are now in their post-Romantic phase. The trailing ivy and the tangled undergrowth have been removed to reveal the foundation pattern, neatly confirmed by smooth, green lawns. The sound of the lawn-mower has supplanted the ringing of bells and the singing of plainchant (unless the visitor accepts an audio-tour). Those monastic ruins which have chanced to survive are now held in honour and viewed with pride. In a reversal of fate, many of them are conserved and maintained with funds from the very state which once sought to destroy them.

It would seem that the clinical approach to ruins has won the day, in spite of John Piper's hopes. State supported intervention has, in its concern for the integrity of masonry, adopted the 'conserve as found' principle—not what the Marquis of Bute had in mind when he restored Cardiff Castle and Castell Coch in Glamorgan a century ago. However critical its predicament, a ruin now has to be frozen in a moment of time. There is no scope for Gilpin's recommendation on 'the judicious use of a mallet' in order to make Tintern Abbey even more picturesque. In our own time strenuous efforts have had to be made to keep these ruins standing in the same condition as when taken over by the state, though this has meant concealing steel stanchions in the core of what outwardly appear as masonry columns. And yet, the 'romantic ruin' threatens to return for scientific reasons—under the guise of wildlife conservation, if bats or rare wild plants are found in a ruin; then orthodox treatment of stonework is halted. Lichens on gravestones have their defenders, whatever the effect on the inscriptions beneath.

Archaeologists and historians are constantly gaining new insights into medieval monasticism. Medieval monks no longer seem the idle creatures of Protestant myth, but industrious members of medieval society. Their architectural achievements should have made that clear long ago, but it is now realised that the monastic system, apart from its religious and charitable aims, underpinned the economy of the Middle Ages, with its large-scale exploitation of farms, mines and commerce. Monks were technical innovators in their monasteries, and successful administrators of far-flung international organisations.

Abbey ruins now fulfil a role curiously consonant with some of monasticism's original aims, though without permanent residents. They provide a stimulus to philosophical reflection, aesthetic appreciation, architectural investigation, and even religious inspiration. Our present vision of the landscape, inherited in large measure from the eighteenth century, may have something in common with the monks of old, at least the Cistercians. It is not easy to enter into the mind of a monk. We have little information to guide us as to what the monks saw and thought in their daily round. Did any monk in Strata Florida or Valle

Crucis at some time repeat with the psalmist ‘I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help’? Were they insensitive to their surroundings, were they obliged to keep their eyes on the ground? They had come to a wild and lonely place to face the challenge of making it productive, and they must have made some visual assessment, both before and after their work. That was one source of satisfaction and contentment. Modern man, on the other hand, comes to the countryside from a different starting point. He has often given his labour elsewhere, but still looks for contentment in the wild countryside. Is it just a coincidence that there are extensive caravan parks at Valle Crucis and Cymer, where people go to commune with Nature, if not with God?

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the staff in the Art Department and in the Library of the National Museum of Wales for facilitating my researches, in particular Tim Egan and John Kenyon; also to the staff of the Reading Room (Pictures) of the National Library of Wales; and to the Librarian of the Society of Antiquaries of London. I have to thank Cadw, per Dr Sian Rees, for permission to draw upon material gathered on their behalf for a consultant’s report on ‘Antiquarian Illustrations and Photographic Views of Haverfordwest Priory’ (2005). I am grateful to the Editor of *Archaeologia Cambrensis* for much help in securing photographs of pictures. The following institutions are to be thanked for making images available and giving permission for reproduction: Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, Flintshire Record Office, Glamorgan Record Office, National Museum of Wales, the National Library of Wales, Society of Antiquaries, and Tate Gallery. Dr L. A. S. Butler was kind enough to read the typescript of my original lecture, and made numerous helpful comments, especially on Dugdale and Dineley, on early conservation work at Valle Crucis and on the reintroduction of monasticism into England and Wales. I am much indebted to him. Further useful observations have been made by Dr Madeleine Gray on the present version.

APPENDIX 1: MONASTIC SITES ILLUSTRATED ON SPEED’S COUNTY MAPS OF WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE

Anglesey

Beaumaris: Llanfaes Friary (Franciscan). This appeared north-west of the castle as a double-gabled structure, apparently still intact, within a walled enclosure fronted by a gatehouse.

Brecknockshire

Brecon: Priory Church of St John the Evangelist (Benedictine), to the north of the castle. It then served as the parish church. Below stood The Priory, a residence.

Glamorganshire

Cardiff: Black Friars (Dominican), situated west of the castle near the Taff bridge. Extant was a large, roofless building (presumably the church), a roofed building, apparently still in use, and a roofless gatehouse in the boundary wall.

Cardiff: Grey Friars, just outside the East Gate, had been transformed into a mansion by Sir William Herbert (not the Earl of Pembroke of that name), no doubt using monastic building materials.

Cardiganshire

Cardigan: Priory Church of St Mary (Benedictine), standing intact as the parish church, and beside it the College.

Carmarthenshire

Carmarthen: Priory of St John the Evangelist and Saint 'Theulacus' [Teulyddog] (Augustinian). The plan is unusually oriented with the compass rose at the top right. It showed the Priory just north-east of St Peter's church, in a square, walled enclosure, fronted by a gatehouse, all apparently in good repair.

Denbighshire

Denbigh: The Friary (Carmelite). This appeared on the edge of the town (top right of the plan) as an L-shaped building with a tower at the angle.

Monmouthshire

Monmouth: Priory Church of St Mary (Bendictine). Here again preservation was due to conversion into a parish church (much altered in later centuries). Speed showed 'Monkes church' nearby, presumably a ruined part of St Mary's.

Pembrokeshire

Pembroke: Monton [Monkton] Priory (Benedictine). The monastic church here also became the parish church. Nearby was a free-standing gatehouse and, just beyond, a ruined gatehouse and wall.

APPENDIX 2: PUBLISHED ENGRAVINGS OF ABBEYS ETC. IN WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE BY SAMUEL AND NATHANIEL BUCK (fl. 1730–79)

Buck's Antiquities, serially published: Monmouthshire (with Wiltshire), 1732; Wales, 1740–42. Size of illustrated surface (not of whole plate): 19.0 × 36.0cm.
Basingwerk Abby, Co. Flint, NW view
Brecknock Priory, Co. Brecknock, SE view
Cardigan Castle & Priory, Co. Cardigan, S view
Clunock Vawr [Clynnog Fawr] Abby, Co. Carnarvon, SE view
Cumnor [Cymer], Co. Merioneth, SE view
Denbigh Abby, Co. Denbigh, NE view
Ewenny Priory, Co. Glamorgan, SW view
Haverford-west Priory, Co. Pembroke, SE view
Lanthony [Llanthony] Abby, Co. Monmouth, NW view
Llanddwynwen, Co. Anglesey, SE view
Neath Abby, Co. Glamorgan, NE view
Penmon Priory, Co. Anglesey, SW view
Rhuddlan Priory, Co. Flint, N view
St Dogmael's Priory, Co. Pembroke, SW view
Stratflour [Strata Florida, Ystrad-fflur], Co. Cardigan, W view
Tintern Abby, Co. Monmouth, NE view
Valle Crucis Abby, Co. Denbigh, W view
Valle Crucis Abby, Co. Denbigh, E view

Buck's Town Views, 1748.[48] Size of illustrated surface (not of whole plate): 24.2 × 77.6cm
Carmarthen: Priory (St John the Evangelist)
Haverford-west: Priory (St Thomas the Martyr)
Pembroke: Priory (St Nicholas) at Monkton

APPENDIX 3: PUBLISHED ENGRAVINGS OF ABBEYS ETC IN WALES & MONMOUTHSHIRE BY FRANCIS GROSE (1731–91)

In Francis Grose, *The Antiquities of England and Wales*, 1776 and later editions.

Vol. III (1797 edn.)
Lantony Monastery, Monmouthshire. Pub. 18 Octr. 1784 by S Hooper. 11.6 × 16.3cm.
Tintern Abbey, Monmouthshire. Pub. Decr. 1784 by S. Hooper. S. Sparrow sculp. ['drawn 1773', in text]. 10.8 × 15.6cm.
Tintern Abbey, Monmouthshire. Pl. 2. [from river] Pub. 21[?] Octr. 1784 by S. Hooper. DL [Daniel Lerpinière] ['view taken 1775' in text] 10.2 × 15.0cm.

Vol. VII (1797 edn)
Conventual Church, Abbey of Conway. Published by S. Hooper March 22d. 1786. Engraved by J. Newton. 10.7 × 15.0cm.
North door of Strata Florida Abby. Published May 12th 1786 by S. Hooper. Sparrow sc. 11.0 × 15.7cm.
Valle Crucis Abbey, Denbighshire. 15th April 1776. ['view drawn 1771' in text] DL [Daniel Lerpinière] fecit. [similar to Sandby's oil painting, but different staffage] 10.0 × 15.3cm.
Denbigh Castle [and Carmelite Friary]. Sparrow sc. pub. S. Hooper 1786. 11.5 × 16.0cm.
Basingwerk Monastery, Flintshire. July 29th 1771. Sparrow sculp. 10.6 × 15.5cm.
Margam Abby, Glamorganshire. Sparrow sc. Published Augst. 9th 1786 by S. Hooper. 10.0 × 14.8cm.
Wenny, or Ewenny Priory, Glamorganshire. Decemr. 21st 1775. S. Hooper Ext. W. Watts sculp. 10.0 × 14.5cm.
Priory of Haverford West, Pembrokeshire. S. Sparrow after S.H. Grimm, redrawn by F. Grose publ. April 5th 1786. [date of drg. 1777, in text] 11.2 × 16.4cm.
Hubberstone Priory, Pembrokeshire. S. Hooper Exct. Picot sculp. 10.4 × 15.5cm.

APPENDIX 4: ETCHINGS OF ABBEYS ETC. IN WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE IN PRINTED BOOKS BY JOHN GEORGE WOOD (d. 1838)

In *The Principal Rivers of Wales Illustrated, consisting of views from the source of each river to its mouth*. By John George Wood, F.S.A.

Part I (London, 1813)
Brecknock from the East [panorama, with Priory on extreme right]. Ino Geo. Wood. 1811. 15.4 × 50.2cm.
Brecknock Priory from the Tarrell Bridge. 14.7 × 21.7cm.
Bridge over the Honddy at Brecon, with the Castle & Priory. 14.1 × 21.3cm.
Abergavenny [panorama: including St Mary's Priory Church and subsequent Priory House]. 14.4 × 45.2cm.

Neath Abbey [ruins on left; ships' masts and smoking chimneys on right]. 15.1 × 22.6 cm.
Talley Abbey. 22.7 × 14.7cm.
Haverfordwest [panorama: priory ruins on extreme right]. 15.3 × 47.4cm.
Remains of Strata Florida Abbey. 14.6 × 22.7cm.

Part II (London, 1813)
Denbigh [panorama, with Carmelite priory at bottom of town]. 14.4 × 46.2 cm.
East end of Valle Crucis Abbey. 15.5 × 21.7cm.
Basingwerk Abbey. 15.3 × 22.2cm.

APPENDIX 5: STEEL ENGRAVINGS OF ABBEYS ETC IN WALES AND MONMOUTHSHIRE BY HENRY GASTINEAU

In *South Wales Illustrated, in a Series of Views, comprising the Pictureseque Scenery, Towns, Castles, Seats of the Nobility & Gentry, Antiquities Etc*.
Engraved on Steel from original Drawings by Henry Gastineau. Accompanied by Historical and Topographical Descriptions. Published by Jones & Co., Temple of the Muses, London, 1830.
Average size of views: 9.0 × 14.5 cm.

South Wales
Remains of the Priory, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire. Engraved by J. Hinchliffe.
Margam Church, Glamorganshire. [Engraved by H.W. Bond.]
Remains of the Cloisters of Margam Abbey, Glamorganshire. Engraved by H.W. Bond.
Remains of the Abbey Church, Neath, Glamorganshire. Engraved by T. Barber.
Part of the Abbey, Neath, Glamorganshire. [Engraved by W. Wallis.]
The Crypt, Neath Abbey, Glamorganshire. Engraved by W. Wallis.
Pille Priory, Pembrokshire. Engraved by H.W. Bond.
Remains of St. Dogmael's Priory, Pembrokeshire. Engraved by T. C. Varrall.
Tintern Abbey, Monmouthshire. [Engraved by J. Tingle.]
Tintern, Monmouthshire. Engraved by J. Tingle.
Interior of Tintern Abbey, Monmouthshire. Engraved by W. Wallis.
West Window of Tintern Abbey, from the North Transept. Engraved by R. Acon.

North Wales
Basingwerk Abbey. Flintshire. Drawn by H. Gastineau. Engraved by M. Jarden.
Valle Crucis Abbey. Denbighshire. Drawn by H. Gastineau. Engraved by W. Radclyffe.

NOTES

1. An extended version of a paper given to the Association's conference 'Cistercian Landscape' at Abergavenny in April 2004. The following sources are relevant to this study in addition to the works cited below: *British Watercolours in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: Sotheby, Parke-Bernet, 1980); John Harris, *The Artist and the Country House* (London: Sotheby's Publications, revised edition, 1985); Paul Joyner, *Artists in Wales c.1740–c.1851* (Aberystwyth:

National Library of Wales, 1997); Peter Lord, *Imaging the Nation* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000); Meic Stephens, *The Oxford Companion to the Literature of Wales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); M. W. Thompson, *Ruins: Their Preservation and Display* (London: British Museum, 1981); Austen Wilks, 'An Inventory of the Topographical Prints of Wales to *c*.1900', for the Board of Celtic Studies, 1991 (print-out available in the National Library of Wales).

2. *Archaeol. Cambrensis* 1 (1846), 16.
3. David H. Williams, *The Welsh Cistercians* (Tenby: Caldey Island, 1984), vol. 1, Chapter 6.
4. Glanmor Williams, *Wales and the Reformation* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 93.
5. Ibid., 62–4; and *Menevia Sacra* by Edward Yardley, ed. Francis Green (Cambrian Archaeological Association, 1927), 88–91.
6. John Chandler, *John Leland's Itinerary* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), preamble.
7. David S. Yerburgh, *A Tour of the Abbeys, Priories & Cathedrals of Wales: an Itinerant's Exhibition* (Salisbury, 1999).
8. R. Haslam, *Buildings of Wales: Powys* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1979), 140, 216.
9. G. Orrin, *Medieval Churches of the Vale of Glamorgan* (Cowbridge, 1988), 146.
10. RCAHMW Inventory, *Glamorgan: the Later Castles* (Cardiff, 2000), 129, 308.
11. Donald Moore, 'Early views of towns in Wales and the Border', *Trans. Hon. Soc. Cymmrodorion* (1981), 35–50.
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48. The Bucks' other three Welsh Town views, Cardiff, Swansea, Wrexham, showed no monastic remains. The Bucks also included in their series the cathedrals of Bangor, Llandaff, St Asaph and St David's, but these are not covered in the present study.

Published with the aid of a grant from the Ethel and Gwynne Morgan Trust