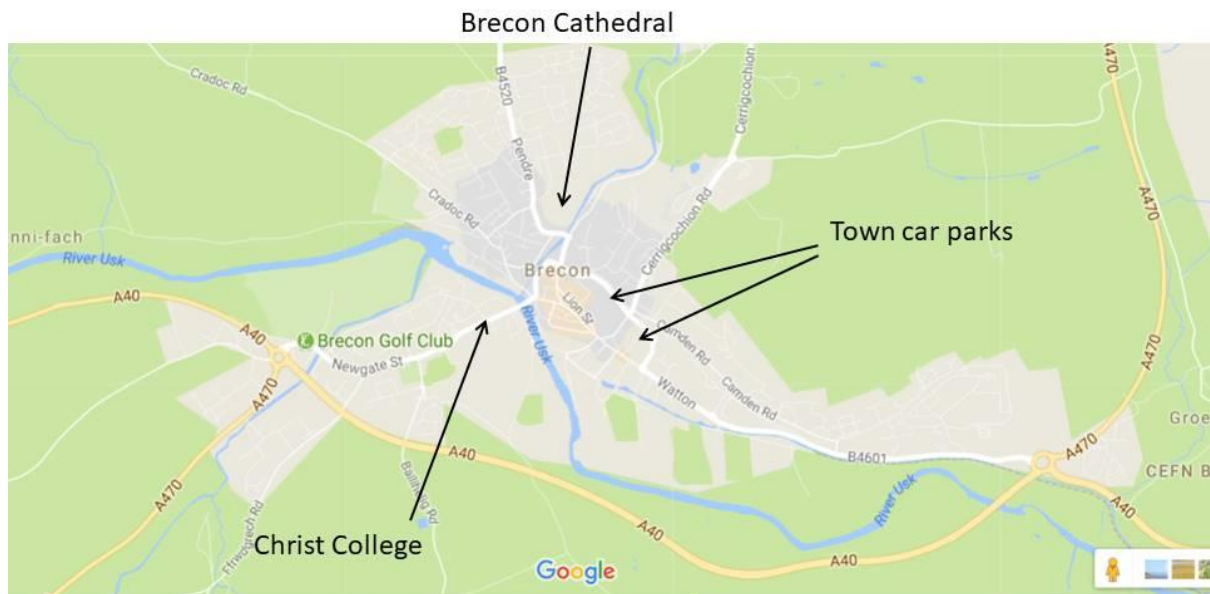


Brecon study day: programme and notes



The day starts in Christ College, Brecon.

Parking is available at the College: see separate map. Parking in town is Pay & Display.

Our visit coincides with the Brecon Baroque Festival. If you are staying overnight you could take in a concert – details at <http://www.breconbaroquefestival.com/>. There is actually a lunch-time concert in the Cathedral on the Saturday. Parking at the Cathedral can be expensive and is in short supply. There is an overflow car park at the Priory Church in Wales School, just above the Cathedral on Pendre Close. We have permission to leave cars all day at the College so we suggest that if you can, you walk from there into town and up to the Cathedral, and that if you need to go by car you share.

Brecon has a wide range of restaurants, pubs and cafes, and the Pilgrims Restaurant at the Cathedral does light lunches.

Programme

10 am: Registration and tea/coffee in the Neuadd (no. 7 on map)

10.20 Introduction

10.30 David Hale: Death and Commemoration in late medieval Welsh poetry

11.00 Gwenllian Awbrey: Welsh commemorative poetry on post-medieval tombstones

11.30 Madeleine Gray: Post-Reformation cross slabs in south-east Wales

12 noon: tour of the College chapel and a chance to explore the grounds.

1 pm: disperse for lunch in Brecon. There is a wide range of restaurants, pubs and cafes.

2.30: reconvene in the Cathedral. We will meet by the south-west door (see separate plan of Cathedral). Participants may have different interests: we will go round as a group, but you are welcome to use the plan to explore independently.

We will aim to be finished by 4.30-5 pm.

There is an optional extra day on the Sunday with a self-driven tour of some of the smaller local churches, looking specifically at the glorious painted wall monuments produced by the Brute family of stonemasons in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Numbers permitting, we may go either to Crickhowell and Llangattock or to Partrishow and Cwm-iou. The Cathedral has an early Eucharist at 8 am.

Christ College, Brecon

The College is on the site of a Dominican friary, founded in the early thirteenth century. After the Dissolution it became a grammar school with a collegiate church and since 1853 it has been a public school.

The college chapel is the choir of the friary church. Most of the other buildings were rebuilt by Prichard & Seddon but on the footprint of the original.

Notable monuments in the chapel and its vestibule and vestry include

- Eighteenth-century wall monuments in the chapel
- There are post-medieval ledger stones in the chapel, some with crosses, but they are worn to illegibility by centuries of little scuffing feet: a school chapel clearly has a heavier footfall than a parish church.
- In the vestibule: Half-length portrait bust of Bishop William Lucy (d. 1677) and
- William Stanton's ostentatious three-figure monument to the Rev. Richard Lucy, his wife Florence Games and their son Gam;
- In the vestry: an early fourteenth century incised slab with an elegantly-depicted woman. The lack of detail on this high-quality carving suggests the stone was originally painted.
- Incised slab depicting John Awbrey (d. 1596) and his wife;
- Several medieval and post-medieval cross slabs including some with the IHS trigram.

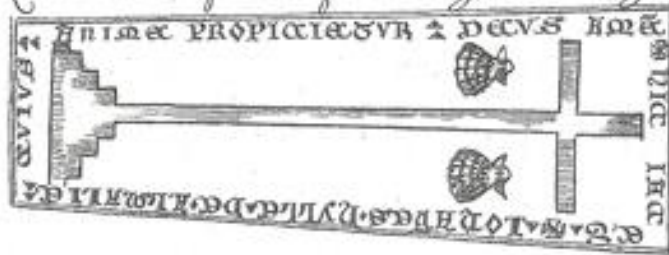
There is a puzzle in the cross slabs. On the next page is Thomas Dineley's sketch of three of them from *The Official Progress of the First Duke of Beaufort....* The top one is identical with the slab now to the right of the door into the vestry – but the inscription is completely different. Is there another slab somewhere, or was Dineley wool-gathering (he often was). The other two slabs are in the corner facing the door but very much battered and worn, and again the inscriptions do not quite match Dineley's drawings.

In the vestibule are some misericords, late medieval but finished by Bishop Lucy in 1664: the carving is crude but vigorous and includes a delightful Death figure.



which this
reads

HIC IACET LEWELLINUS AP HOWEL CUIUS ANIME PROPICIATUR DEUS
Herolyech Lewellin the son of Howel of whose soul God have mercy.



* DAY FOWELS
History of WALES
p. 25.

* HOWEL made mention of on the first Tombstone is a name of Great Ac-
count through both of WALES, in the Reigns of Meryn Vrych & Edyth the daughter
of CONAN TINDASTHWI son to RODERICK MOLWYNOC son to EDWAL son to CADWAL
LADER last King of the BRITAINS day in the year of CHRIS. 819 was HOWEL King
of MAN did by his wife EGBERT King of West Sax. enter into WALES with a great
Army and depredated the whole country, and then on hills to about the time that was a
battle fought in Anglesey called the battle of Lhanvaer

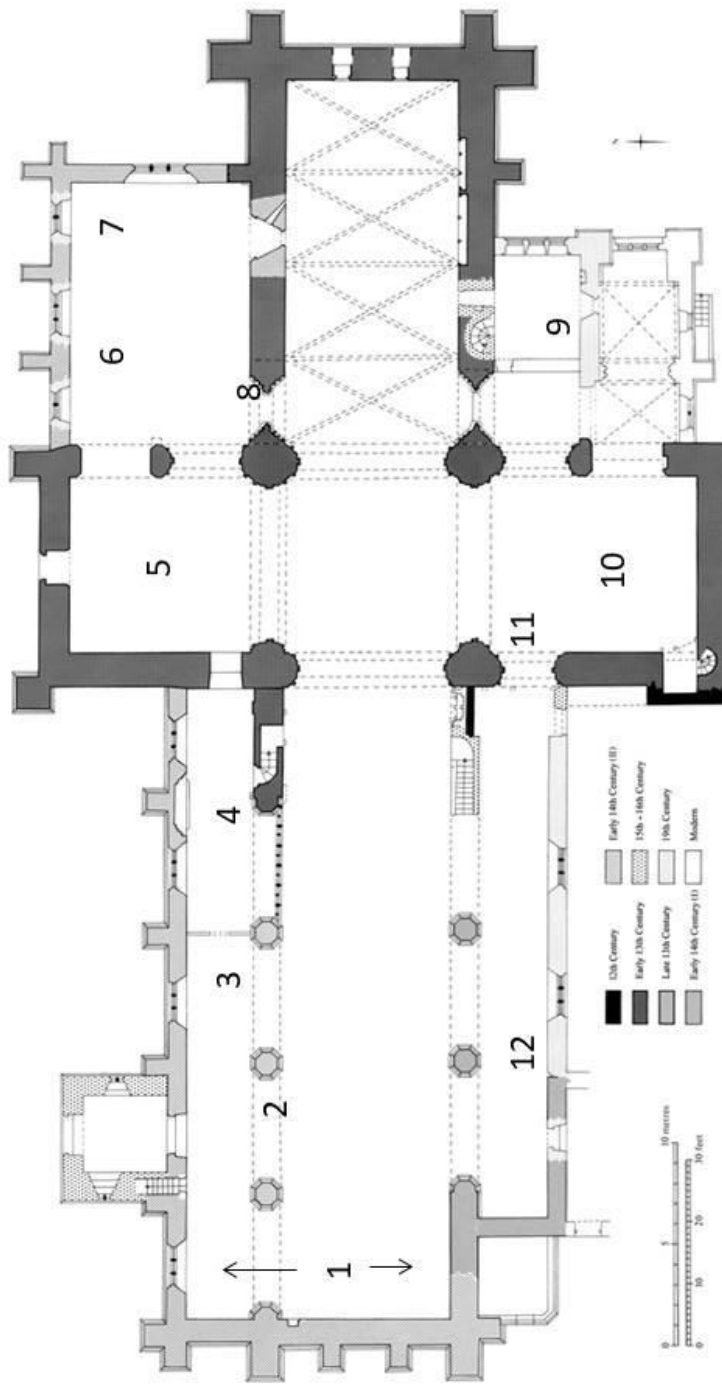
Brecon Cathedral

This was established by Bernard de Neufmarché at the end of the eleventh century as the priory of St John the Evangelist, a dependency of Battle Abbey. From 1538-1923 it was the parish church of Brecon, and in 1923 it became the cathedral church for the new diocese of Swansea and Brecon.

The great glory of the medieval church was the Golden Rood of Brecon, a focus for pilgrimage and the subject of several poems. This made it a popular place for burials (again, the evidence for this is the poetry). By the C16 the side aisles were occupied by guild chapels, which again encouraged burials.

The cathedral has examples of monuments of all periods and types – medieval and post-medieval effigies, medieval cross slabs, wall monuments – but its unique feature is its wealth of post-medieval cross slabs, about 60 in all. These commemorate minor local gentry and townspeople. Some have occupational emblems, though these are much less common in Wales than in the north of England. The church was comprehensively worked over by Sir George Gilbert Scott in the 1860s and 1870s. He lifted all the floor slabs and relaid the floor with waterproof concrete then replaced the ledger stones in a patchwork arrangement. Some are also part of the fabric of the building – windowsills, stairs.

The map on the next page indicates the location of some of the monuments.



1. Medieval cross slabs laid around the walls at the west end
2. Welsh poem 'Cofia ddyn wrth fyned heibio' –'Remember man as you pass by'
3. Wooden effigy of the wife of one of the Games family, all that remains of a mid C16 three-tier family monument. This is late for a wooden effigy.
4. The Keyne chapel, formerly guild chapel of the Corvizers. The C14 effigy of a civilian in the north recess is traditionally said to be the founder of the chapel. Just to the west of it in the floor is the 1620s cross slab with 'Honour the King'. The altar and credence are reused medieval cross slabs and there is another late C16 Welsh ledgerstone behind the altar.
5. The north transept has some rather ostentatious wall monuments (Sir John Meredith by John Bacon the elder; George Price Watkins and Sophia Watkins by the locally-born John Evan Thomas, who moved to London and carved several of the statues in the Houses of Parliament). Medieval cross slabs in the north-west corner of the floor. Ledger stones with crosses, one with an Lamb & Flag, another with a tailor's shears.
6. Against the north wall of the Havard chapel and partly obscured by panelling: Lewis Havard, d. 1569, 'cuius anime propicietur Deus'.
Another puzzle: compare the heraldry on the stone with that in the drawing by Carnhuanawc (when it was clearly in much better condition) in Bailey's 1909 edition of Theophilus Jones.



7. The early C14 monument to Walter and Christina Awbrey with its mirror-writing inscription was traditionally said to have come from the Friary. The crucifix between the two heads could be the rood at the friary, which was also a focus for pilgrimage.
8. The ledgerstone of Anne Bulcott has the full Jesuit emblem of IHS trigram, pierced Sacred Heart and sunburst: but her father was the vicar, and her son was High Sheriff.
9. St Lawrence Chapel: modern episcopal effigies and a miniature medieval cross slab as a credence
10. South transept: wall monuments by John Evan Thomas, Flaxman, Thomas Paty; ledger stones with the local practice of inserting marble inlays in reused stones.
11. Ledger stone with IHS trigram
12. Sir David Williams of Gwernyfed (d. 1613) and his wife.
13. In the Cathedral museum is a very late medieval cross slab with the IHS trigram in blackletter. What do you make of the traces of carving to either side of the cross?
14. Set in the pavement of Priory Hill, below the south gate of the churchyard, are some more gravestones including one with the Welsh poem 'Pridd o bridd', 'Earth of earth'.
15. On the path to the north of the church towards the Pendre is the grave of a French officer. During the Napoleonic War, Brecon was a 'parole town' where French officers were allowed to live as a sort of open prison: this one was clearly popular and the locals paid for his tombstone.