

It is an inescapable fact that much of Pembrokeshire's twentieth-century housing stock is bland and undistinguished. Quite rightly therefore the Introduction ends with praise for recent conservation initiatives and the need for higher standards of design and building. For example, it is perhaps only after recent restoration and now with this volume's full description to hand, that the visitor can fully appreciate John Coates Carter's vision and designs for Caldey Abbey, 'the most ambitious and complete Arts and Crafts group in Wales' built between 1906 and 1913. Attention is drawn to architects working along ecological lines 'of a nationally pioneering nature'. One example is Christopher Day's Ffald-y-Brenin Retreat Centre, Pontfaen (1985–8).

Many visitors are drawn to Pembrokeshire for its natural beauty, but this is inescapably intertwined with its historic landscapes and built heritage. For the first time we have in this well-produced volume an erudite but enjoyable celebration of the latter.

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THE PLACE-NAMES OF CARDIGANSHIRE. By Iwan Wmffre. BAR British Series 379, Archaeopress, Oxford, 2004. 3 volumes. Pp. cxxx, 1,403. £105.00.

One of the greatest omissions in Welsh historical and linguistic studies is that of place-names: authoritative, published studies can be counted on two hands and we have only B. G. Charles's *Place-Names of Pembrokeshire* (1992) which addresses the subject on a county base. Iwan Wmffre attempts to fill the gap for Cardiganshire. He has set out 'to assemble information that will satisfy linguists, historians and geographers alike' and which is 'primarily meant to be a record of the location, age, pronunciation and explanation of place-names in the county of Cardiganshire'. Among his intentions, he informs us, is to produce a place-name dictionary comparable with the county volumes of the English Place-Name Society. The comparison, however, is not a close one, and there are significant differences in his editorial method and in the appearance of the completed book. Both are bound to raise serious criticism, but there is little doubt that this is a formidable publication which cannot be ignored. It is a pity, however, that Wmffre wastes so much space in his long-winded descriptive presentation and in unfavourably criticizing the work of others who have contributed so much to

place-name study. Some of the flaws which he finds elsewhere are evident enough here, and his omission of many 'lost' place-names and 'micronyms' will disappoint many of those whom he seeks to address.

Iwan Wmffre's definition of place-names is a broad one that groups them into settlements, natural features ('geonyms'), urban names ('hodonyms'), rivers and lakes ('hydronyms') and administrative divisions ('macrotoponyms'). The last also serve as broader gatherings for his first three categories arranged together by modern civil parishes – arguably a mistake (as he candidly acknowledges) since most of our historical evidence is identified by the *ancient* parish. His method, however, serves easily enough for the ordering of a very large body of evidence, but it desperately needs stronger links between its component parts. Certainly, a fuller index and regular cross-referencing of lead-names would ease the mental *and* physical difficulties of 'navigation' through 1,400 pages in three heavy volumes. In his eagerness to employ what he regards as the appropriate form of individual place-names, he overlooks the needs of anyone – Welsh- or English-speaking – who is more familiar with the forms which he has rejected. How many non-Welsh speakers will be aware that Ystradfflur is Strata Florida and that Llandydoch is St Dogmaels? There are no cross-references for these as lead-names or in the index. Whatever the validity of forms such as 'Ficrej' for Vicarage, 'Blac-hors' for Black Horse and 'Nefi-hâl' for Navy Hall, his use of these in what is, after all, an *English*-language publication will strike many as very odd and doubles the difficulty of using his publication for reference.

Despite this, there is no doubting the meticulous nature of his research, reflected in the historical forms which he has placed chronologically under each entry (thankfully, with complete references), and in his remarkable use of local oral evidence. In some cases, the evidence which he has gathered is extraordinarily lengthy, occasionally standing in sharp contrast to a brief – and not always satisfactory – analysis. More seriously, his identification of place-name elements within each place-name has been largely undermined by the absence of any lexical index. What use is a place-name publication of this size unless it possesses one? *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* is not easily to hand for many of us and will not necessarily give the particular explanations and nuances of meaning of individual words and elements found in these place-names, especially with regard to dialect and local usage.

The greatest value in a work of this length is in its presentation of historical evidence and its discussion, from which we can all take a profitable lead, even if we disagree with the argument and conclusion. For example, I

would take issue with him with regard to Llanfair Clydogau, for which I have seen only seven historic forms (out of forty-nine) which support his rejection of *clydogau* 'sheltered places'. The paucity of accessible comparative place-name work in other parts of Wales has certainly handicapped his discussion of Llandydoch/St Dogmaels which would have benefited from knowledge of earlier forms of Llandawke (*Llandethauk* 1353, *Llandethauke* 1465–7) and Castell Toch (*Castell Toch* 1312, *Casteltogh* 1443). His difficulties with Coedigyll would be relieved if he made allowance for *cuddygl*, *cufygl* 'cell' found in Cuddig, Montgomeryshire, and I suspect he would revise his interpretation of Pen-uwch as 'Pen-ucha' if he had seen *Penyrwch*, *Pennowch* 1678 and *Pen Ywch* 1755. There are other examples of missed historical forms. A small sample from his lists highlighted Ferwig (1228), Henllandeifi (1361), Castellwmffre (*Humfreys castle* 1559), Cwrtnewydd (1729), Gwempa (1609), Llanwnnen (1361), Capel Cynon (1570), Llandysilio Gogo (1338), Llanwyddalus (*Llanvidales in Dyhedwed* 1570), Abermourig (1692–3), Porthffynnon (*funtayne gate* 1600–7), Brechfa-fach (1664), Cyfoeth-y-brenin (1550), Fforestresgob (*Bishops forrest* 1586), Llanfihangel-y-Creuddyn (*Thlanvyhangel in Cruthyn* 1295), Llechweddllwyfen (*Thleghyhton* 1294–5) and Rhos-fawr (1554). In addition to these, I noticed a small number of notable omissions from important printed sources such as *Llyfr Baglan*, the *Cronica Walliae* of Humphrey Llwyd (2002) and especially *St Davids Episcopal Acta 1085–1280*, edited by Julia Barrow (1998). He is apparently unaware of *The Welsh Cistercians* by David H. Williams (2001), which would have assisted him with many of his entries relating to the former holdings of the abbey of Strata Florida. Curiously, some of the historic forms in publications included in his bibliography such as *Littere Wallie* and *Records of the Court of Augmentations* have been missed.

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AFTER ROME. Edited by Thomas Charles-Edwards. The Short Oxford History of the British Isles, Oxford University Press, 2003. Pp. xviii, 342. £15.99 (hardback), £15.99 (paperback).

This is a thematic textbook, aimed at an undergraduate audience: the absence of good books in this area makes it a welcome arrival. The title is