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## Dublin Core

### Title

Major Thomas Swift of Holyhead | Thomas Swift o Gaergybi

### Subject

Thomas Swift

Holyhead

English Civil War

### Creator

Martin Crampin

### Publisher

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### Date

2023

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### Relation

<https://perma.cc/TW7L-CAR9>

### Language

English

### Coverage

53.44425612800576, -4.60746091610478

## Curatescape Story Item Type Metadata

### Title (Welsh)

Thomas Swift o Gaergybi

### Lede

The Irish Ferries catamaran, Dublin Swift, is named after Jonathan Swift, the eighteenth-century dean of St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. But he was not the only Swift to loom large in the history of the crossing from Holyhead to Dublin.

### Lede (Welsh)

Mae catamaran Irish Ferries, Dublin Swift, wedi'i enwi ar ôl Jonathan Swift, deon Eglwys Gadeiriol Sant Padrig yn Nulyn yn y ddeunawfed ganrif. Ond nid dyna'r unig Swift sydd wedi bod yn amlwg yn hanes y croesiad o Gaergybi i Ddilyn.

### Story

Towards the end of the Civil War, Major Thomas Swift took control of the fort of Holyhead in 1649, and in the following year he was made Postmaster. This gave him responsibility for the ships carrying the mail to Ireland, which was a troublesome charge. Pirates – English, Irish, French and even Turkish – were documented in the Irish Sea in the seventeenth century, seizing ships and their cargoes, and holding ships to ransom. Naval vessels were periodically called in to patrol the route between Holyhead and Dublin.

Thomas Swift remained in Holyhead throughout the Cromwellian and Restoration periods and built an inn to the north of the church. Swift Court, later known as Welch's Inn, offered superior accommodation for travellers, including Dean Swift in the 1720s. By comparison, other more primitive dwellings of the town used by travellers were roofed with driftwood and thatch. The area to the north of the church is still sometimes known as Swift Square, but the inn can no longer be found. The immediate area suffered bomb damage in the Second World War when Church House on Boston Street was hit on 5 October 1940, although it was probably the bomb which fell on 9 April 1941 that damaged the former inn, along with Bethel Wesleyan Methodist Chapel on the corner of Victoria Road (previously Lands End) and Swift Square. The houses nearby on Church Lane were cleared along with any trace of Swift Court in the 1950s or 60s and the area is now a car park.

In 1658, the tower of the Church of St Cybi was raised seventeen feet by Swift as a lookout tower to watch for pirates, and he also served as the churchwarden of St Cybi's. The garrison of the fort was quartered in the church in the 1650s, which was not uncommon for Parliamentarian troops, and it seems likely that soldiers under his command despoiled the medieval furnishings of the church, including tombs, and were responsible for the loss of carved figures from niches and the medieval font. After the Restoration in 1660 a new font was installed in the church, and the names of new churchwardens were inscribed in October 1662 (Robert Lloyd and Robert ap H.V. Probert). Thomas Swift continued to serve as Postmaster after he was confirmed in the role under Charles II.

It is not clear where Thomas Swift came from, but if he, like others who held the title of Postmaster in Holyhead in the later seventeenth century, came from Dublin, he could have even have been distantly related to Jonathan Swift.

### Story (Welsh)

Tua diwedd Rhyfel Cartref Lloegr, cymerodd Thomas Swift reolaeth dros gaer Caergybi ym 1649, ac yn y flwyddyn ganlynol fe'i gwnaed yn Bostfeistr. Rhoddodd hyn gyfrifoldeb iddo am y llongau oedd yn cludo'r post i Iwerddon, sef cyfrifoldeb digon trafferthus. Mae môr-ladron – o Loegr, Iwerddon, Ffrainc a hyd yn oed Twrci – wedi'u cofnodi ym Môr Iwerddon yn yr ail ganrif ar bymtheg, gan gipio llongau a'u cargo, a dal llongau am bridwerth. O dro i dro cafodd llongau'r llynges eu galw i warchod y llwybr rhwng Caergybi a Dulyn.

Arhosodd Thomas Swift yng Nghaergybi trwy gydol cyfnodau Cromwell a'r Adferiad ac adeiladodd dafarn i'r gogledd o'r eglwys. Roedd Swift Court, oedd yn cael ei adnabod wedyn fel Welch's Inn, yn cynnig llety o safon uwch i deithwyr, gan gynnwys y Deon Swift yn y 1720au. Ar y llaw arall, roedd anheddau mwy cyntefig eraill yn y dref a ddefnyddid gan deithwyr wedi'u toi â broc môr a gwellt. Weithiau mae'r ardal i'r gogledd o'r eglwys yn dal i gael ei hadnabod fel Swift Square, ond does dim modd dod o hyd i'r dafarn mwyach. Cafodd yr ardal gyfagos ei difrodi gan fomiau yn yr Ail Ryfel Byd pan gafodd Tŷ'r Eglwys ar Boston Street ei daro ar 5 Hydref 1940, er mae'n debyg mai'r bom a syrthiodd ar 9 Ebrill 1941 a ddifrododd yr hen dafarn, ynghyd â Chapel Methodistiaid Wesleiaidd Bethel ar gornel Victoria Road (Lands End gynt) a Swift Square. Cafodd y tai gerllaw ar Church Lane eu clirio ynghyd ag unrhyw olion o Swift Court yn y 1950au neu'r 60au ac mae'r ardal bellach yn faes parcio.

Ym 1658, codwyd tŵr Eglwys Cybi Sant ddwy droedfedd ar bymtheg gan Swift fel tŵr i wyllo am fôr-ladron, a bu hefyd yn warden yr eglwys. Cafodd garsiwn y gaer lety yn yr eglwys yn y 1650au, nad oedd yn anghyffredin i filwyr y Senedd, ac mae'n debyg bod milwyr o dan orchymyn Swift wedi difetha dodrefn canoloesol yr eglwys, gan gynnwys beddau, ac yn gyfrifol am golli ffigurau cerfiedig o gilfachau a'r ffont canoloesol. Wedi'r Adferiad ym 1660 cafodd bedyddfaen newydd ei osod yn yr eglwys, ac arysgrifiwyd enwau wardeniaid eglwys newydd ym mis Hydref 1662 (Robert Lloyd a Robert ap H.V. Probert). Parhaodd Thomas Swift i wasanaethu fel Postfeistr ar ôl iddo gael ei gadarnhau yn y rôl o dan Charles II.

Nid yw'n glir o ble roedd Thomas Swift yn dod, ond os oedd ef, fel rhai eraill a fu'n dal teitl Postfeistr yng Nghaergybi ar ddiwedd yr ail ganrif ar bymtheg, yn dod o Ddulyn, mae'n bosibl ei fod yn perthyn o bell i Jonathan Swift.

### Related Resources

Lucy Williams, 'Sea Raiders in the Waters between Anglesey and Ireland, during the 17th and 18th Centuries', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, (1945) 167–70, <http://hdl.handle.net/10107/1412891>

History of St Cybi's Church: 17th and 18th Centuries, <http://www.holyheadparishchurches.co.uk/st-cybis-church-holyhead/history-st-cybis-church/17th-18th-centuries>, archived at <https://perma.cc/WFJ6-R2W9>

'War Memories: How a World War Two bomb could have wiped out a ballet class', *Daily Post*, 27 September 2011, <https://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/local-news/war-memories-how-world-war-2686914>, archived at <https://perma.cc/MKZ8-6Z4Y>

