

Part 1 : 1883 – Beatrice’s first recorded visit to North Wales



Having recently moved from Exeter to Chester, the close proximity to North Wales led to the first of a number of visits to the area by Beatrice and Annie, with Beatrice seemingly visiting on her own in April 1883.¹

The economic growth and technological advances of the Victorian era had made it possible for the bridging of the Menai Strait separating Anglesey from the mainland thus achieving a more efficient connection between London and Ireland via rail to the Holyhead-Dublin ferry service. The completion of this rail line (in 1850) improved accessibility to the attractions of the North Wales coastline and mountain scenery which were already catering to a growing leisure market.

Beatrice’s visit produced a record of what she observed along the relatively narrow strip of land between Conwy and Bangor. Backed by Snowdonia and separated from Anglesey by the Menai Strait, this was an area that had experienced a great deal of the layered pre-history and recorded history of Wales and, more particularly, of North Wales.

Given its landform, location and natural resources, it would have served both as an important Celtic refuge and a strategic asset to all attacking forces throughout the centuries.

¹ The total reliance on the contents of the available albums results in a great many assumptions having to be made regarding the sisters’ whereabouts at any one time. While there is much evidence of their having sketched in the south of England and in Chester prior to April 1883, there is no evidence indicating where Annie was in 1883. She did, however, record a few sketches of this portion of Gwynedd in 1891 – whereas there are none from Beatrice in that year. As explained in the Introduction, because of the mixed-up nature of the contents of the albums, an attempt is made to cluster the sketches according to place rather than time – hence the inclusion of Annie’s sketches alongside those of Beatrice relating to this area.

Before the Romans invaded the area some two thousand years ago, the Celts had already occupied the land for some three or four centuries but, long before that, Early, Middle and Late Stone Age peoples had left evidence of their presence spanning almost a quarter of a million years.

As the stronghold of the Celts, the area suffered the Roman invasion and its four centuries of occupation only to be followed by centuries of conflict with the peoples of England resulting in the building of Offa's Dyke in the eighth century. Viking attacks in the ninth and tenth centuries were then followed by the Norman invasion in the eleventh century.

After a long period of both internal and external conflict, Wales experienced a state of relative stability and unity during the first half of the thirteenth century which was primarily due to the leadership role played by 'Llywelyn the Great' and his grandson 'Llywelyn the Last'.

The latter part of the thirteenth century was marked by King Edward I's invasion of Wales and the building and re-building of his ring of castles throughout North Wales including Anglesey.

Following the growing resentment by the Welsh against the English throughout the fourteenth century, Owain Glendŵr's rebellion during the first fifteen years of the fifteenth century saw the short-lived revival of the Welsh sense of unity and nationhood. With the failure of the rebellion, England's domination of Wales was complete and the sixteenth century saw Henry VIII passing the Act of Union (formally tying Wales to England), imposing English as the official language of Wales and outlawing the Roman Catholic Church with the result that all the monasteries were destroyed.

During the seventeenth century, much of the fighting between the English Crown and Parliamentary forces (under Cromwell) took place in Wales due to the strategic nature of its various castles – a number of which suffered severe damage.

The second half of the eighteenth century was a time of industrial development with large-scale mining being accompanied by extensive road, bridge and canal construction together with the rapid growth of commerce and trade.

Aided by improved means of travel, the scenic and recreational attributes of North Wales (together with its historic places of interest) gave rise to an influx of tourists – helped by the publication of Thomas Pennant's *Tours in Wales* (1778) and *Journey to Snowdon* (1783).

Importantly, the above also led to some of Britain's finest watercolourists (Turner, Girtin, the Varley brothers, Cotman and Cox) visiting the area and recording its scenic beauty.²

² All the above was sourced from :

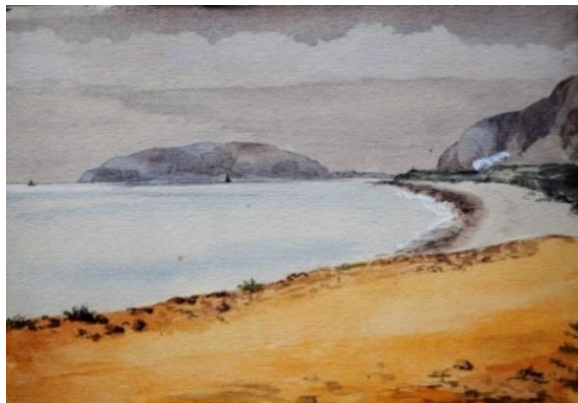
Ross, David, *Wales – History of a Nation*, Geddes & Grosset, Scotland 2005 (as detailed in the Historic Background) and Wilton, Andrew, *British Watercolours 1750-1850* Phaidon Press Ltd, Oxford, 1977

Great Orme from Penmaenmawr

19 April 1883 (B)

The Great Orme headland, off Llandudno, comprises a huge chunk of limestone that has conservation status because of its rich natural environment and, most importantly, its history.

At the time Beatrice painted this, she would not have known that the headland was the site of the largest prehistoric mine (so far discovered in the world) as the tunnels were only uncovered during landscaping works in 1987.



From available evidence, Archaeologists have estimated that the underground tunnels date back 4 000 years to the Bronze Age – about the same time that Stonehenge was being built. The copper mining took place over approximately a thousand years before being abandoned.³

A significant detail in the picture is the smoke trail emanating from the steam train.

Penmaenmawr 20 April 1883 (B) – (this being the name of both the mountain and the village)

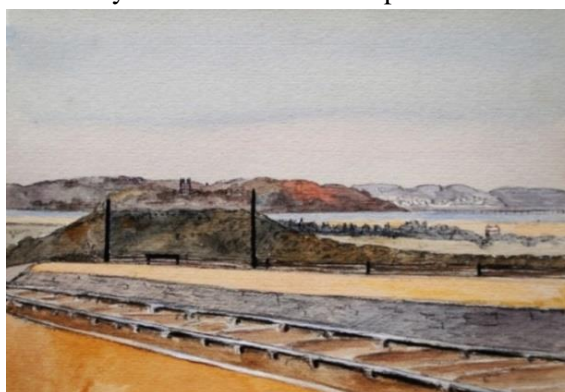
The long pier was used to transport quarried rock to ships delivering the material even as far as to Europe. While this took place during the 1900's, the use of the rock material dates back two or three thousand years as evidenced by the polished stone axe-heads found in the area. Even older, are the stone circles found on the mountain which date back to Neolithic times – some five thousand years ago.⁴



While Beatrice may have known of the existence of the remnants of a stone-age hill fort on the top of the mountain, it has since ceased to exist because of intensive quarrying undertaken during WWII.

Penrhyn Castle from Llanfairfechen Station 19th April 1883 (B)

The Station was opened in 1860; it being on the Chester to Holyhead line which had opened in 1848. The towers of Penrhyn Castle are in the middle distance with Anglesey in the far distance. Barely visible, is the Garth Pier seen stretching out into the Menai Strait. It was only opened in 1896 so must have been under construction when painted by Beatrice thirteen years earlier.⁵



³ Conwy County Borough Council – visit Llandudno

⁴ Morris p249, theeyepenmaenmawr.org website

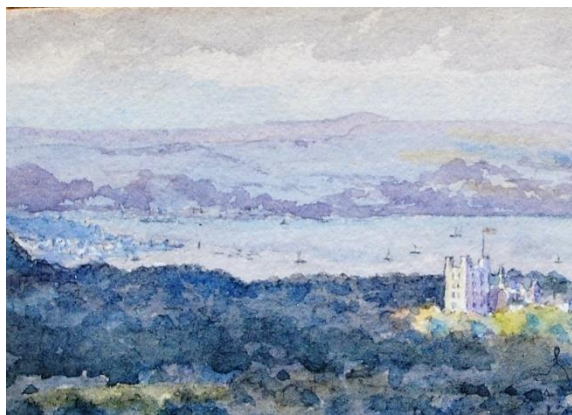
⁵ Wikipedia

Bangor and Penrhyn 18th Sept 1891 (A)

Penrhyn Castle sits amongst its large wooded estate with Bangor over to the left and looking across the Menai Strait towards Anglesey.

The building was constructed (between 1822-1837) in the form of a Norman castle. It was built by the Pennant family with proceeds from the slate industry.

The castle was seen to represent the huge gap that existed between the workers and the wealthy landowners/industrialists.



Lord Penrhyn (as the head of the Pennant family had now become) refused to recognise, let alone negotiate with, the union formed by the quarrymen in 1896. After an initial lockout of a year, work was resumed but then, in 1900, a three-year lockout took place resulting in much hardship and bitterness. The political impact of the lockout was also profound – in the general election of 1906, the Liberal party won all but one of the thirty-four Welsh seats; the one going to Labour.

Competing providers of slate and alternative forms of roofing resulted in the drastic weakening of what had been the world's largest slate quarry. Penrhyn Castle finally ceased to exist as a family domain in 1951 and was taken over by the National Trust.⁶



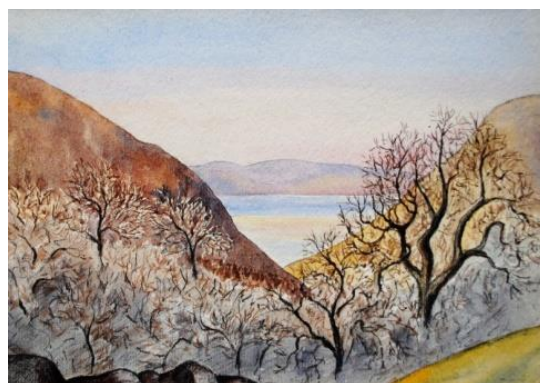
Penrhyn Sept 14th 1891 (A)

From Aber 19th April 1883 (B)

Abergwyngregyn (known locally as Aber) is a tiny village located between the Menai Strait and the foothills of Snowdonia and is well-known for the nearby Aber Falls. The area has great historic importance as it served as the strategic crossing point of the Menai Strait to Anglesey and much evidence still exists of occupation from prehistoric times through to the Roman period.

Beatrice may have been acquainted with its history and, particularly, the traditional conviction that this had been the 'palace' of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, the first and last prince of a 'free' Wales who died in 1282.⁷ However, given the above vista – well above the village, her attraction to the area might possibly have been to simply visit the nearby waterfall which was visited and painted by Annie eight years later. (See over page)

Whatever the purpose of Beatrice's visit in 1883, she would most certainly have been interested to learn



⁶ Ross p206, nationaltrust.org website

⁷ Morris p67/8, Wikipedia

that one-hundred and thirty-one years later the Former Plaid Cymry Member of Parliament would describe the site as “a place that holds the soul of the nation” and that the presenter of the BBC programme “History of Wales” would declare that “it is probably the most important site in the history of Wales.”⁸

The reasons for these statements were that archival documentation had been discovered which proved that either the property Pen y Bryn or the adjacent site was indeed the location of Llywelan’s so-called ‘palace’ Aber Garth Celyn.

Differences of opinion seem to exist regarding the exact position of the medieval buildings but there is now general acceptance that this is the location from which Llywelyn’s letter of defiance to the English was written and which then ultimately sparked Edward I’s construction of his ‘ring’ of castles and taking on himself (as the first ‘outsider’) the title of Prince of Wales.⁹

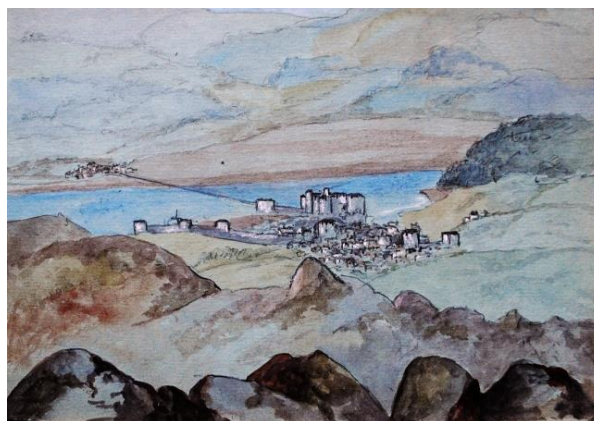


Aber falls from the hills 13 Sep 1891 (A)

Conwy Castle from Penmaen Bach Hill April 20 1883 (B)

Now known as Conwy Castle, it formed part of the second wave of Edward I’s castle-building during the thirteenth century. The monastery of Aberconwy was moved stone by stone to make way for the castle at Conwy.

As with some of the other castles, a walled settlement was established outside the castle – following the pattern of the French *bastide* towns. Conwy remains one of the best examples of a walled town in Europe.¹⁰



The castle had become run down and severely damaged by the seventeenth century but the town walls and its towers are still intact. The suspension bridge stretching over the Conwy River to Llandudno Junction was designed by Thomas Telford and completed in 1826. Together with his bridge over the Menai Strait, they were amongst the first-ever suspension road bridges built. It carried vehicular traffic for well over a hundred years until being replaced by a new road bridge – and is now restricted to vehicular traffic.¹¹

⁸ Daily Post 2 September 2014 : Wendy Jones

⁹ The Telegraph : BBC history team solves riddle of Llywelyn : 31 January 2006 Ben Fenton

¹⁰ Morris p307

¹¹ Ibid., p304/5

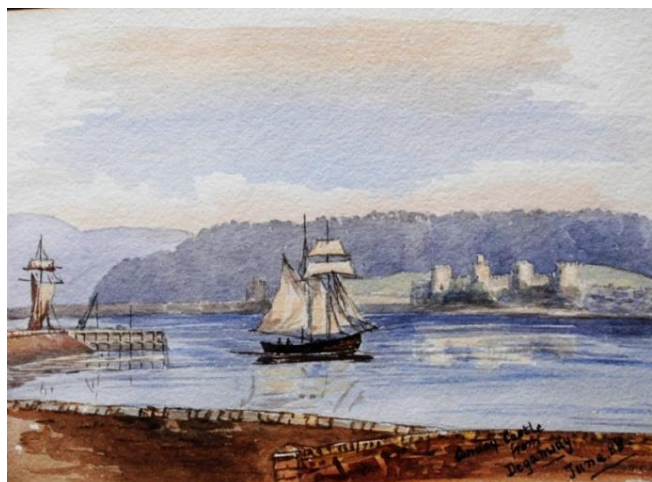
Conway Castle from Llandudno Junction Sept 30 1884 (B)

The railway bridge connecting Llandudno Junction to Conwy was designed by Robert Stephenson and completed in 1848. As with his railway bridge over the Menai Strait (completed two years later), it was a tubular construction and was the first of its kind. The bridge itself is not visible in the depiction alongside but its near-side end is marked by the openings in the tower which was designed (with mock arrow slits) to be visually compatible with the castle. The tower immediately behind it marks the far-side of the bridge.¹²



Conway Castle from Degenway June 1888 (B)

Looking from north-east to south-west with the rail/road crossing to the left and Carneddau mountains in the far distance. Conwy Castle had been the subject of many well-known artists such as Turner, Girtin and John Varley.¹³



Plas Mawr Conway June 5 1888 (B)

By late in the sixteenth century, the wealthiest landowners and merchants were building large manor houses with glazed windows, decorative plasterwork and ornamentation.

Plas Mawr was built between 1576 and 1585 and is considered to be the finest intact Elizabethan townhouse in Britain.¹⁴



¹² Morris p304

¹³ Tate.org website, Kauffmann, Stainton

¹⁴ Ross pp 139/140

Bangor from steamer “Menai” Sept 17 1887 (B)

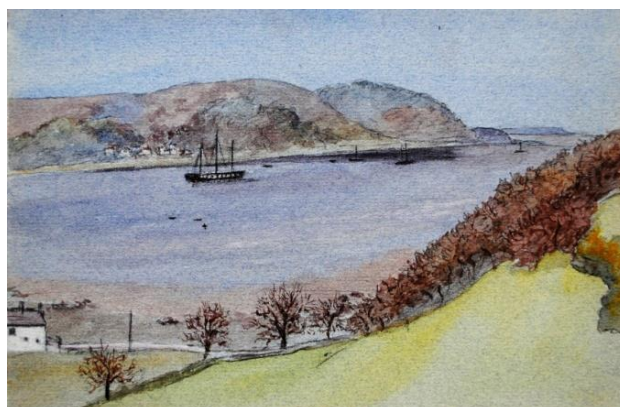
(It is unfortunate that the details of the buildings of this, the oldest city in Wales, are not more clearly evident in the painting)



Menai Bridge from Bangor April 21 1883 (B)

Menai Bridge is a small town on Anglesey – named after the celebrated suspension bridge. Located at the closest crossing point to the mainland, the site is believed to have been inhabited for thousands of years as evidenced by the finding of stone axes dating back to the Neolithic Period together with artefacts from the Bronze Age.

Thomas Telford’s suspension bridge and Robert Stephenson’s railway bridge are off to the left of this view of the Menai Strait. Before they were built, the only way to reach Anglesey was by ferry. The invasion by the Romans in AD59 was supposedly by means of rafts and swimming their horses across.¹⁵



Menai Bridges April 24? 1883 (?B)¹⁶

This view of the two bridges appears to be from the Anglesey side looking towards Menai Bridge town with Telford’s suspension bridge (completed 1826) in the front and Stephenson’s tubular railway bridge (completed 1850) behind it.

The suspension bridge exists today exactly as built and indicated here except it now only carries pedestrians.

The tubular bridge was partially destroyed by a fire in 1970 and was restructured to now carry the main London to Holyhead roadway on top of the railway deck.¹⁷



¹⁵ Morris p304, Menai Bridge Community Heritage Trust

¹⁶ *This was a loose sketch and is assumed to have been done by Beatrice rather than Annie – the exact date being difficult to decipher*

¹⁷ As above

Bangor Cathedral April 21 1883 (B)

Dating back to the days of the Celtic Christianity in the sixth century, the original religious house was founded by St Deiniol. The building suffered destruction by the Normans in the eleventh century, by King John in thirteenth century, by Edward I later in the same century and finally during Owen Glendŵr's rebellion in the fifteenth century.

Restoration and rebuilding took place after each destructive episode and the existing cathedral was finally completed in 1866.¹⁸

The dominance in Wales of the English in all matters, including religion, and the extent to which the Established Church had distanced itself from the people was exemplified by the fact that between 1714 and 1870 not a single Welsh-speaking bishop was appointed to the cathedrals in Wales. Benjamin Hoadley, the Bishop of Bangor at that time, apparently never set foot in Wales.¹⁹

A year after Beatrice's visit to Bangor in 1883, the University College of North Wales was opened – in the Penrhyn Arms Hotel which had been leased from the Penrhyn Estate. It was later to become Bangor University.²⁰

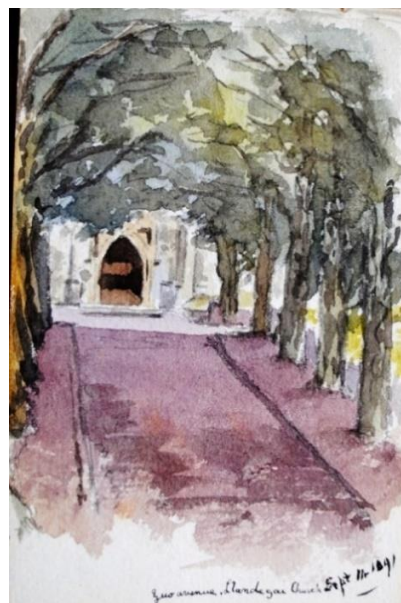
The establishment of the University would have pleased Owain Glendŵr – even if it was four hundred years after the establishment of universities in north and south Wales had been his stated wish during his rebellion to secure Wales as a separate and unified nation in the fifteenth century. At the time, Oxford University had already been in existence for some three-hundred years and many Welsh students studying at Oxford had left their studies to join the rebellion.²¹



Yew avenue Llandegai Church Sept 11th 1891 (A)

St Tegai's is a village church built for the Penrhyn Estate workers in the fourteenth century. St Tegai's original place of worship was on a nearby site and had been established in the sixth century.

The village of Llandegai was built as a model village in the eighteen hundreds. It falls just outside Penrhyn Park and is nearby Bangor.²²



¹⁸ Britainexpress.com., David Ross editor

¹⁹ Morris p107 and Encyclopaedia Britannica

²⁰ Bangor.ac.uk website

²¹ Ross p116

²² Church in Wales

Part 2 : 1885 First visit together

1885 saw the first of a number of a number of trips Beatrice and Annie took together and which are recorded by the sketches they made.

They were then living in the King's Buildings, Chester as stated in the front of their respective albums. Beatrice was 29 and Annie, 23.

Beatrice had been in Oxford during May - with sketches of Maudlin (Magdalen) Tower and New College. There is no record of where Annie had been or what she'd been doing in the two years before 1885 - her last sketches in 1882 being of Dartmoor on the 12th September and a very rough undated pencil sketch of the King's Buildings, Chester. These are found in her album notated Wonford Hill, Exeter March, 1882.

The first sketches in Annie's 1885 album are undated ones of the Cloisters, Chester and of the bridge at Llangollen.

Having presumably arrived by rail from Chester via Llangollen, the adjoining sketch is that of Dollgelly (Dollgellau) Station by Annie on the 8th September 1885. This is followed by the first instance of the two of them having painted the same subject matter in Wales.²³

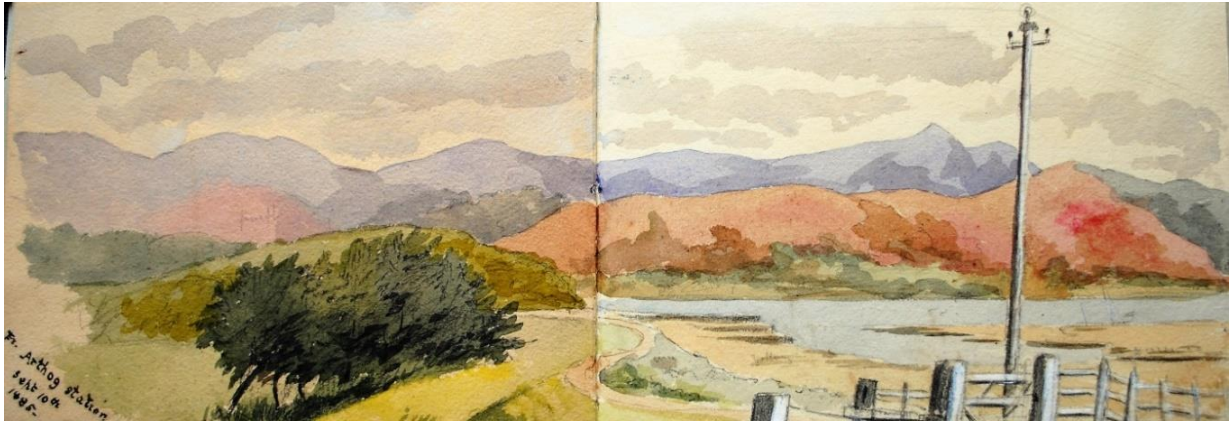
The rail link from Chester via Llangollen to Dollgellau had been established in the 1860's and would have been a highly sought-after means of travelling across mid-Wales to the western coastline with its scenic landscape and historic attractions.²⁴



S&W on sandhills Barmouth Sept 10. 85 (B's on the left, A's on the right)

²³ This is the only record indicating that their brothers (Sidney and Wilfred) accompanied them on this trip.

²⁴ With the diminishing demand for rail as opposed to road travel and sparked by the flooding of Dollgellau Station and other parts of the route in 1964, the rail link was closed down the next year – almost a hundred years after its completion. (John Rutter : Llangollen Railway Archive and History Website 2007)

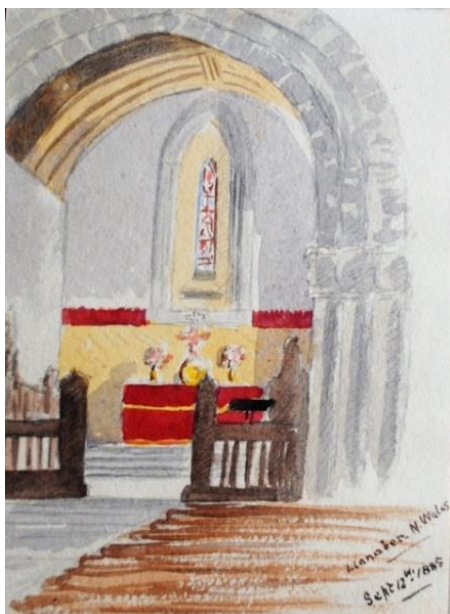


From Arthog Station Sept 10th 1885 (A) – (closed since 1965)

Looking north-eastwards across the Afon Mawddach, the mountain backdrop to this stretch of coastline is scenically wild and steeped in the history and the legends of the Welsh. With glaciated Cader Idris prominently displayed, these mountains formed the subject of many unfinished sketches by both Beatrice and Annie. They clearly spent much of their time both walking and recording their closely observed surroundings. An imposing waterfall was sketched by both of them.

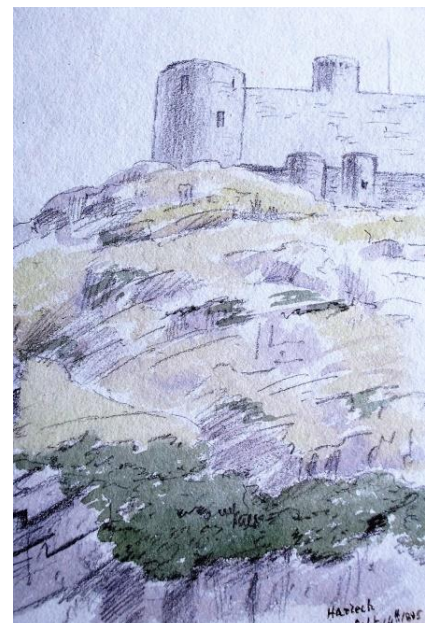
The coastline with views of Barmouth also featured in their incomplete sketches as did the view (alongside – by A) looking towards Harlech Castle with the Snowdonia mountains behind.

After crossing over the Barmouth Rail Bridge (completed in 1867), they visited the St Mary and St Bodfan Church at Llanaber. Built in the early thirteenth century, it is considered to be one of the finest examples of Early English Gothic architecture in Wales.²⁵



**Llanaber N. Wales
Sept 12th 1885 (A)**

**Harlech
Sept. 14th 1885 (A)**



Harlech Castle was the southern-most of Edward I's ring of castles. It was completed in 1289 and (as can be seen by the previous sketch) its size and location present a formidable bearing on the landscape. It made for a good stronghold which is exactly why it has experienced some of the major historic events of Wales.

Five years after its completion, it (together with other castles) was attacked by Madog ap Llywelyn's rebel army. The uprising was effectively put an end to in the following year by Edward's English army.

Just over a hundred years' later, in 1403, the castle was taken over by Owain Glyndŵr. This being part of the fifteen year period in which (for the only time) a sense of Welsh nationhood seemed possible. He is considered to have been the only true Prince of Wales.

Harlech Castle (B)

This was Glyndŵr's headquarters - where his parliament was once held and from where his alliance with France was forged. This alliance was not only aligned to military aid but also involved negotiations with Pope Benedict XIII to establish an archdiocese in Wales independent of Canterbury. It was where his dreams of two universities – one in the south and one in the north were formulated.

Even with the fall of the castle to the forces of Henry IV in 1408, Glyndŵr continued his guerrilla resistance over the next five years. In 1415 he refused an offer of pardon from Henry V and is believed to have lived out his life in quiet seclusion with his daughter and her husband – an Englishman.

In 1647 the Castle was the last royalist defence to fall to Cromwell's Parliamentary forces in the Civil War against King Charles I.²⁶

Harlech Castle Sept 14th 1885 (A)

The castle was understandably the subject of paintings by many artists – among the best known being Turner, Cox and John Varley.²⁷



²⁶ Ross pp 110-116

²⁷ Kauffman

Caerdeon Church Sept 15th 1885 (B)

This church was also sketched by Annie – from the same perspective. At the time of these sketches, this church had been in existence for only twenty-odd years.

Having experienced the six-hundred year-old Llanaber Church, this building must have seemed somewhat of an oddity.

St Philip's Church (Caerdeon Chapel) was established as a private chapel by the owner of the Caerdion estate who objected to the fact that the services at Llanaber were only conducted in Welsh. It was designed along the lines of Pyrenean buildings and (other than the building material used) was completely alien to the feel of Welsh building.

Its services were conducted in English and this led to the owner being taken to court by the Rector of Llanaber – the upshot being the passing of the English Services in Wales Act of 1863 by the House of Lords. This Act meant that English Services could be provided if ten or more parishioners requested them – thus modifying the previous requirement that services in predominantly Welsh districts were to be held in Welsh.²⁸



Caerdeon is also known for the fact that Charles Darwin spent his summer holidays (both from school and university) in the area and its environment must have had some influence on his developing interests as a naturalist.²⁹

The Origin of Species had been published in 1859 and it would seem unlikely that the sisters would not have been aware of its importance in generating the conflict between orthodox religion and scientific thought.

What he (Darwin) wasn't to know was that (in 1964) the oldest surviving life-form – an organism *Kakabekia barghoorniana* – was to be found just a few miles away near Harlech. It was declared to have been in existence for 2000 million years.³⁰

To what extent the above matters (other than the above discovery) occupied the thoughts and conversations of Beatrice and Annie while sitting sketching is not known. However, the history of Harlech Castle would almost certainly have been familiar to them – although it possibly might not have occurred to them that the very next day (16th September) it would have been 485 years to the day that Owain Glyndwr was declared by his followers, to be the Prince of Wales.

²⁸ (N Vousden RCAHMW 2012 Coflein)

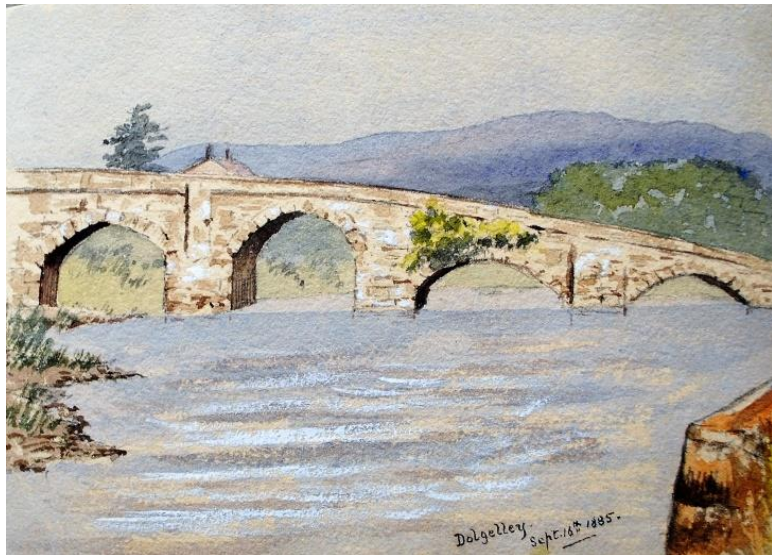
²⁹ (David Barnes : The Companion Guide to Wales 2005)

³⁰ (Morris p25)

Dolgelly (Dolgellau) Sept 16th 1885 (A)

This bridge (over the Wnion) dates back to 1638.

Dolgellau was an important market town not only because of its confluence of travel routes from the north, south and east but also because of its being the centre of the wool industry. It was the southern gateway to the mountains of Snowdonia, close to the seaside and displayed a particularly high concentration of well-conserved buildings.



Its attraction to ‘tourists’ dated back to the eighteenth century. However, with the expanded middle class, a heightened sense of freedom of enjoyment and adventure, the advent of rail travel and the publication of travel guides, the latter half of the nineteenth century experienced a general flood of summer holidaymakers – Beatrice and Annie amongst them.

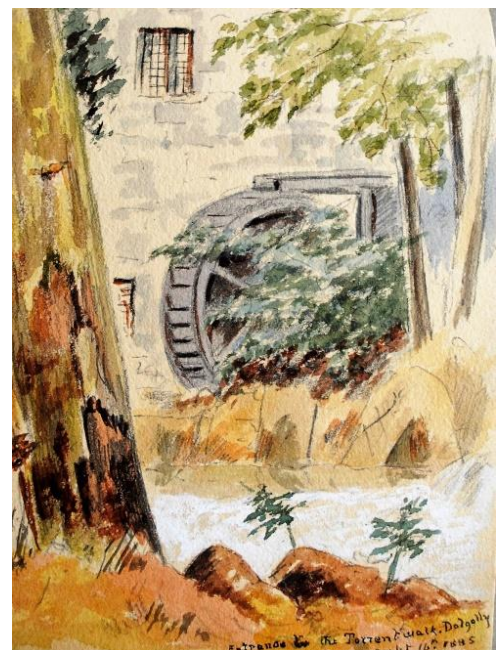
Dollgelau, at the time of the sisters’ visit, was experiencing a particularly strong boom period which accompanied the mining of gold which began in the 1860’s. These workings, just a couple of miles from Dollgelau, continued to be in use until the late 1900’s. Because of its scarcity, Welsh gold is highly valued and has been used to make the wedding rings of all Royal weddings in Britain since 1923.³¹

According to a recent press release, gold mining activities are due to be re-commenced.³²

Entrance to the Torrent Walk, Dolgelly Sept 16th 1885 (A)

Torrent Walk runs along the Afon (River) Clywedog and was reportedly built as a walkway in the late 1800’s and so may or may not have been formally in place at the time of this visit.

The Walk was designed by Thomas Payne who became better known for having designed an embankment (The Cob) across the Glaslyn River.³³



³¹ Morris p 264

³² Daily Post 4 December 2017

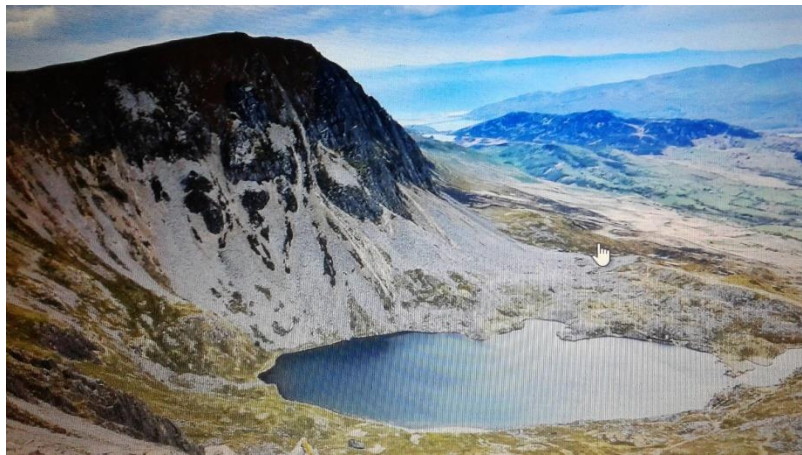
³³ Snowdonia.info. *The Cob is described in their 1886 Visit – relating to the Ffestiniog Station sketch.*

Following the 16 September 1885 sketches, both albums contain a number of unfinished, unnamed and undated sketches of the mountains – all clearly from an elevated height. This one (by Beatrice) is the most complete. It was also sketched by Annie but remained unfinished.



The photographs below verify its location – on the summit of the ridge of Cader Idris. The highest point (Penygadair 891m) is off to the left and they would have sat sketching from the vicinity of Craig Cau.³⁴

Paintings of Cader Idris are recorded from numerous well-known artists – including, understandably, Richard Wilson who was born close by. John Varley painted the sunrise from the top of Cader Idris in 1804.³⁵



After days of visiting castles, churches and waterfalls these sketches mark the end of what we know of their movements during 1885.

They were clearly not averse to strenuous activity even in the garb of the day.

However, it is noted that (at the time) it would have been possible to hire and ride a pony to within two-hundred yards of the summit.³⁶



³⁴ Photographs from TripAdvisor LLC

³⁵ Kauffman

³⁶ Bishop, Peter ; Vision and Revision ; Mountain Scenery in Snowdonia 1850-1880. 2001 p41

Part 3 : 1886 Visit to Llein Peninsula and inland

A small village on the Llein Peninsula, Llanstumdwy is probably best known because of its association with David Lloyd George. Born in Manchester in 1863, his father died when he was two and he was brought to this village to be brought up by his uncle. Richard Lloyd was a shoemaker and a Baptist Pastor.

David's boyhood in a Welsh-speaking community instilled the strong views he had relating to Welsh nationalism, religious Nonconformity and the plight of the working class. These views were to inform his political career that began as the youngest member of the House of Commons in 1890 and ended fifty years later. Holding various Cabinet positions, he was largely responsible for laying down the foundations of the welfare state. He was Britain's first 'Welsh' Prime Minister (from 1906 to 1922) and he guided Britain to victory in the First World War. He died in 1945 and is buried here in the village.

Addressing the House of Commons, Churchill said: *"When the English history of the first quarter of the twentieth century is written it will be found that the greater part of our fortunes, in peace and in war, were shaped by this one man."*^{37 38}

Llanstumdwy Sept 14th 1886 (A)

At the time of Annie's sketching of the bridge, she would have had no knowledge of the above and certainly not that the newly qualified solicitor (practising out of the parlour of his uncle's house in the village nearby) would become Britain's future Prime Minister.

Fast-forward forty-six years, Beatrice (aged 76) sketched this aspect of Gwynfryn Manor House. Built on an older house dating back to the sixteenth century, it was replaced in 1876 by this mock-Gothic mansion by the Tory MP Hugh Ellis-Nunnery who was the squire of Llanstumdwy.

Gwynfryn Aug.10. 1932 Llanstumdwy Criccieth (B)

It was therefore ironic that David Lloyd George should, in his first election as



³⁷ Encyclopaedia Britannica

³⁸ *Were David Lloyd George to have been alive during this address, he would probably have interjected with "British, not English history".*

the Liberal candidate for Caernarfon, have Hugh Ellis-Nunnery as his opponent. In winning this 1890 election, not only did he acquire a seat in the House of Commons (which he'd occupy for the next fifty years) but it validated what he stood for – that political power could lie even in the cottage-bred middle class.³⁹

Plas Gwynfryn ceased to exist as a family home in 1928 and, when Beatrice sketched it in 1932, it would have been run as a retirement home for the clergy.⁴⁰



Sept.14th 1886 (A)

With no reference to its location, it is possible (given the date) that it is in the vicinity of Llanystumdwy - with a view north-eastwards towards Snowdonia.⁴¹

From Festiniog Station Sept 15th 1886 (A) – with its view down towards Tremadoc Bay

Llan Ffestiniog village (referred to by the locals and hereafter as ‘Llan’) lies some four miles downslope from the old mining town of Blynau Ffestiniog.

From the 1760’s onwards, many of the villagers slogged their way up the valley from Llan to work on the slate quarries that grew at a rapid pace. By the early 1800’s slate from these quarries was being shipped all over the world and, to house these miners and craftsmen, the new town of Blynau Ffestiniog was established.

The expansion of the slate industry arose from the demand to replace thatch and tiling as a roofing material and was largely facilitated by the actions of William Madocks. His building, in 1811, of an embankment (The Cob) across the Glaslyn estuary was initially aimed both at reclaiming floodable land and creating a transport link from mid-Wales to the LLeyn Peninsula. This enabled the building



³⁹ Morris p406-7 and Paul White *Grand Declines – Welsh ruins and Welsh ruined mansions* 1989-2017

⁴⁰ Morris p407

⁴¹ *On-site verification is, of course, required as is the case with many of the sketches lacking any notation.*

of the harbour which, at the height of the slate trade became world-famous because of its linkages to various parts of Europe, America, Australia, Africa and elsewhere.⁴²

By the 1850's Blynau Ffestiniog had a population of over 3 000. Thirty years later, it was one of the largest towns in North Wales with a population in excess of 11 000. Llan Ffestiniog remained a village with a population of less than a thousand.⁴³



Festiniog Station Sep.15.1886 (B)

It is likely that Beatrice and Annie would have made the short trip from LLanystumdwy to Porthmadog, caught the train to Blynau Ffestiniog and then on to Llan Ffestiniog where these paintings were done.

The above travel description takes on particular meaning when dwelling on the history of the railway in this area.

To transport the slate from Blynau Ffestiniog to the new harbour at Porthmadog, a narrow gauge railway was constructed in 1836. The loaded carriages were sent downhill by gravity - all of 11 miles (18kms) – and the empty carriages were pulled uphill by horses which had travelled downhill in a specially made wagon. Even though steam locomotives were being used elsewhere, the narrowness of the railway and its sharply-winding nature meant that it was only in 1863 that specially-designed locomotives could finally replace the reliance on horses. The innovations introduced by the Ffestiniog Railway have been adopted by other narrow gauge railways throughout the world.⁴⁴

A passenger service was introduced and the line extended to Llan where the station was opened in 1868. Because the carriages were so low, there was no need for a platform – as noted in the painting.

The decline of the slate industry - from the 1890's onwards - coincided with the great number of tourists to the area which continued to rise as new rail links were introduced. This culminated in the Ffestiniog Rail and Welsh Highland Railways current tourist attraction linking Blynau Ffestiniog with Caernarfon which was finally opened in 2011.⁴⁵

While the focus of events in the 19th and early 20th centuries lay with the growth of the slate industry, of Blynau Ffestiniog and rail travel, The Llan Ffestiniog station was to experience its own moment of importance during World War II.

To ensure the protection of Britain's major artworks such as those in the National Gallery and in other collections, they were secreted to Aberystwyth, Penrhyn Castle and to Bangor University at the outbreak of the war. However, with the threat of attack by the Luftwaffe, a safer and more remote site

⁴² Morris p259/60.

⁴³ Phil Carradice, Phil., *Wales History : William Madocks and the Cob at Porthmadog*, 6 Dec 2011

⁴⁴ Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways – festrail.co.uk

⁴⁵ *The full story of the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways during the 19th and 20th centuries (and even into this century) makes for fascinating reading with regard to the role of visionaries and of others prepared to volunteer their labouring efforts.*

was sought for their safekeeping. An abandoned underground slate mine between Llan and Blynauw Ffestiniog was selected and, under great secrecy, the artworks were railed to Llan station in 1941 and then taken by lorry up to the mine. A painting by Anthony van Dyck was so big that the road had to be lowered for it to be transported under a stone bridge. The mine itself was made fully air conditioned and here a great many of the Nation-owned masterpieces remained for the duration of the war.⁴⁶

Although the nature of the slate industry resulted in a dusty unhealthy environment, Morris stressed the high level of social cohesion and literacy that existed amongst the almost exclusively Welsh-speaking community of highly-skilled craftsmen, quarrymen and miners.⁴⁷

While the industry left an environmental blot on the landscape resulting in Blynauw Ffestiniog and its surroundings being excluded from the Snowdonia National Park, the town and many of the workings have become an important heritage attraction.

Pont Aberglaslyn Sept 16th 1886 (A) – looking downstream

Crossing over the Glaslyn River at the southern end of the Pass, this has been the subject of countless sketches and paintings by some of Britain's best known watercolour artists. This included Paul Sandby, Francis Towne, JMW Turner, Cotman, Cox and John Varley..⁴⁸

Built in the 17th century, the bridge was rebuilt and widened in the 1790's. The Bridge House was built in the mid 1800's. Before The Cob was built across the Glaslyn estuary, the river was tidal and navigable by small craft right up to the bridge.

Immediately above the bridge, a well-known salmon leap existed. It appears to be no longer in existence when this painting was done but is clearly shown in the many earlier paintings and illustrations of the bridge when viewed from downstream.



The illustrated travel guides and books produced during the late 1700's and early 1800's drew attention to the beauty and grandeur of Snowdonia in particular which led to the artists of the day flocking to this area both to view and record the scenery for themselves and also to fulfil the commissions offered them by their patrons and the general public.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Crump, Eryl, Daily Post 16 April 2016

⁴⁷ Morris pp 266-7

⁴⁸ Bishop, Peter, *Vision & Revision : Mountain Scenery in Snowdonia 1750-1880*

⁴⁹ Thomas Pennant's 'Tours in Wales', will almost surely have informed the sisters of where to go, what to see and what to learn from the history of the area. His Tour description obviously preceded the advent of rail and,

Beatrice re-visited this area forty-one year's later (aged 71) – she did a rough sketch also looking downstream from a slightly different viewpoint from that (shown above) done by Annie who would have died two years before.

To quote from Pennant⁵⁰ : “*The evening was so fine, that we were irresistibly tempted not to defer till morning our visit to Pont Aberglas Lyn, a short walk from hence.*”⁵¹ *The first part is along the narrow vale; but in a very little time the mountains approach so close, as to leave only room for the furious river to roll over its stony bed; above which is a narrow road,*⁵² *formed with incredible labour, impending over the water. The scenery is the most magnificent that can be imagined. The mountains rise to very uncommon height, and oppose to us nothing but a broken series of precipices, one above the other, as high as the eye can reach. The bridge terminates the pass; and consists of a single arch, flung over a deep chasm, from rock to rock. Above is a considerable cataract, where the traveller at times may have much amusement, in observing the salmon, in great numbers, make their efforts to surmount the wear.”*

On the road to Beddgelert Sep 16 1886 (B)

Heading northwards through the Glaslyn Pass, this sketch has historic meaning as this would have been the original road before the new and current route runs along the other side of the river – it then became the route of the railway from Dinas to Porthmadog.

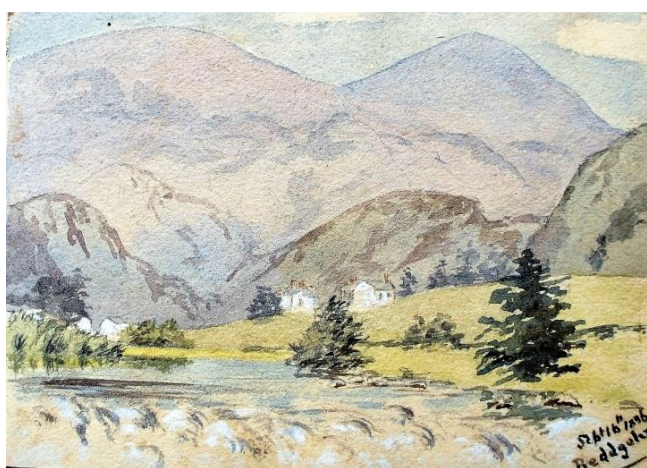
This railway was completed in 1922 – but closed in 1937. The resuscitation of the route was begun in the 1990's – to finally connect Blynauw Ffestiniog with Caernarfon in 2011.

Their travel through the Pass to Beddgelert would presumably have been by stagecoach..



Beddgelert Sept 16th 1886 (A)

To quote Pennant : “... *the village of Bedd Kelert, seated in a beautiful tract of meadows, at the junction of three vales ... Its situation was the fittest in the world to inspire religious meditation, amidst lofty mountains, wood, and murmuring streams. ... Bedd Kelert had been the most antient foundation in all*



while the sisters moved northwards along the western edge of Snowdonia, he travelled southwards. His description of the Aberglaslyn Pass and River (on the following page) indicates the allure of his writings.

⁵⁰ Pennant, Thomas : ‘*Tours in Wales* pp 350/1

⁵¹ *The walk was from Beddgelert (then called Bedd Kelert) to the north of the Pass.*

⁵² *The Editors note (inserted 29 years after the original publication in 1781) reads ‘At present enlarged to a competent width.’*

*the country, excepting Bardsey ... there being a recital of a charter for certain lands bestowed on it by Llewelyn the Great, who began his reign in 1194...*⁵³

In outlining the historic importance of *Bedd Kelert*, Pennant gives a detailed history of the priory which “*lay on the great road from England and West Wales into North Wales, and from Ireland and North Wales into England.*” He lists the allowances granted to the priory which, amongst land and livestock, included a certain share of the bees – which had been highly valued by the ancient Britons because of their “*nectareous Medd*” and their wax.

Grave of Gelert, Beddgelert May 23. 1927 (B)

Beatrice returned to Beddgelert forty-one years later. She sketched the grave before heading off through the Glaslyn Pass where she sketched the Aberglaslyn Bridge on the same day.

This time, her traveling could have been by rail or even by motorised vehicle.

*The inscription on the stone slab of the grave reads : “In the 13th century, Llywelyn, Prince of north Wales, had a palace at Beddgelert. One day he went hunting without Gelert “the faithful hound” who was unaccountably absent. On Llywelyn’s return, the truant, stained and smeared with blood, joyfully sprang to meet his master. The prince alarmed hastened to find his son, and saw the infant’s cot empty, the bedclothes and floor covered with blood. The frantic father plunged the sword into the hound’s side thinking it had killed his heir. The dog’s dying yell was answered by a child’s cry. Llywelyn searched and discovered his boy unharmed but near-by lay the body of a mighty wolf which Gelert had slain. The prince, filled with remorse, is said never to have smiled again. He buried Gelert here. The spot is called Beddgelert”.*⁵⁴



By all accounts, however, the above story was invented by a local hotelier so as to attract tourists to the area. He’d apparently based this on a well-known legend in south Wales from whence he’d come. The name Gelert was supposedly based on another folk story involving a hound by that name and its fight with a stag.^{55 56}

In describing the many legends associated with the Beddgelert area, Pennant makes no mention of the legend of Gelert as, clearly, the local story of the hound, prince and wolf had not yet been invented.

⁵³ Pennant pp 344-346

⁵⁴ Michael David Freeman ; Early tourists in Wales, 2012

⁵⁵ Ibid and Morris, pp34 & 37

⁵⁶ *The fact that this legend still attracts tourists to Beddgelert and to the grave, despite the general acceptance of its fabrication, is perhaps a measure of just how much the legends of Wales are accepted almost as part of its history – both Morris and Pennant (amongst others) go to great lengths in their writing to describe the legends that are ascribed to any one place they deal with in their writing. Beddgelert and the Snowdonia area are well-endowed with mythical figures that have taken on an association akin to historic fact.*

This view by Annie and that (below) by Beatrice were probably overlooking the Glaslyn River given that they were done on the same day as the sketch of Beddgelert - 16th September 1886.

Snowdon and the entire mountain range are understandably a major focus for tourists, recreationalists and artists – and have been for the past four centuries.

Before that, they'd been the home of the legends and the history that have fuelled the identity of the Welsh 'nationhood'.

They represent the topographic and visual beacon of a land and its people that Ross refers to as coming "*to see themselves as ... trustees of a lost Celtic civilization which was to become ever more marvellous in the imagination, peopled by ever more heroic heroes, inspired by saintlier saints, until the very dream of it became part of the whole world's consciousness in the legendary paragon of King Arthur. Wales was the folk-memory of Europe!*"⁵⁷



The mountainous region served as the refuge for the many Welsh rebel forces – culminating in that of Owain Glyndŵr during the late fourteenth century.

A painting by Turner of 'Snowdon and Dinas Emrys from above Beddgelert' (with the Glaslyn River below) is of particular interest as the small hillock known as Dinas Emrys is the site of the iron-age fortress associated with the myth of Merlin, King Vortigern and the Welsh Red Dragon.^{58 59}

Is it possible that the hillock on the right side of Beatrice's painting is Dinas Emrys?⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Morris p3

⁵⁸ The painting forms part of the Tate collection of watercolours JMW Turner did on his 1799 visit to Wales.

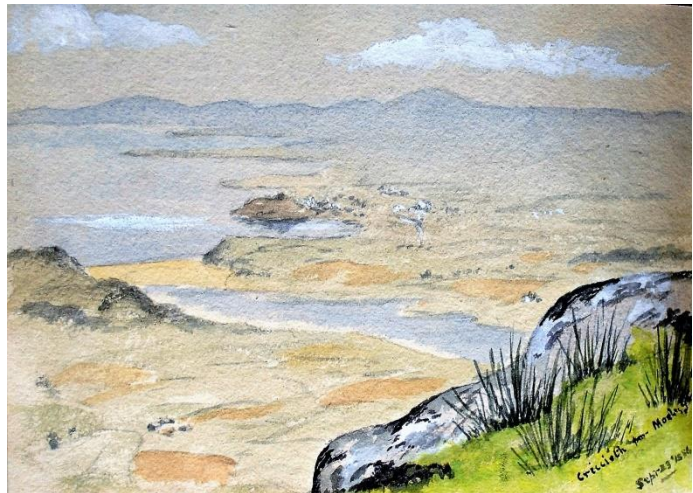
⁵⁹ The myth is described by Pennant (Vol II pp 342-4) amongst others.

⁶⁰ According to Pennant all that remained of the fortress were the ruins of its ramparts. It is suggested that Beatrice's blobs on the hillock could perhaps have indicated poetic licence being taken to portray what the fortress may have looked like.

**Criccieth frm Moelwyn(?) Sept 23 1886
(A)⁶¹**

Annie painted this elevated view a week after the Beddgelert and Snowdon paintings. She would have re-traced her movements back through the Aberglasyn Pass southwards.

Although difficult to interpret the notation, it would appear from the layout of the area that this is possibly from the mountainside of Moelwyn Mawr.



Overlooking the Llyn Peninsula and Tremadoc Bay, the position of Criccieth is marked by the distinctive dark promontory jutting into the Bay which is the site of the historic castle. Criccieth Castle was one of Edward I's ring of fortifications established around the coast in the thirteenth century. The castle had, in fact, been built by Llewelyn the Great early in the thirteenth century whereas Edward's modifications (particularly two round towers on either side of the entrance) were carried out towards the end of the century. The castle was burnt down by Owain Glyndŵr's troops early in the fifteenth century – this being the last major Welsh rebellion against the English.⁶²

The stretch of water seems to be the Dwyrd estuary with its confluence with the Glaslyn. Directly in the centre of the picture, just above the water line, the building of the village of Portmeirion would begin some forty years after Annie's recording of the scenery. Resembling an Italian village, it was designed and built by Sir Clough Williams –Ellis. Morris refers to it as a '*floating fantasy above the sea*'.⁶³

While not visible in the sketch, upstream of the Glaslyn estuary is the 'The Cob' – the embankment built by William Madocks early in the 1800's. Its role was two-fold: to stop tidal movement upstream (and thus allow for the reclamation of the land) and to provide the platform for the rail connection from mid-Wales to the Llyn Peninsula and northwards. This engineering feat not only gave impetus to the slate industry via the connection to Blynauw Ffestiniog but also facilitated the shipment of slate to Europe, America and Australia via the newly created harbour.⁶⁴

Madocks extended the above vision to include the establishment of two settlements, Tremadog (which failed to meet his expectations of establishing a new route from England across Wales to capitalise on the Irish 'travel' market) and Porthmadog which would have met all his expectations. The rapid growth of Porthmadog because of the slate industry, ship building and the trade accompanying the return of otherwise empty ships, came to an end with the collapse of the slate industry after WW I. Since then, Porthmadog has functioned as an important tourist destination.⁶⁵

The idea of creating an embankment across the Glaslyn estuary was first seriously formulated almost two hundred years before Madocks saw it through. Sir John Wynn conceived of this idea in 1625 -

⁶¹ After Beddgelert there are no more sketches of Wales by Beatrice until the following year – 1887. Only a few tiny unidentified sketches are found for this period.

⁶² Cadw, Welsh Government

⁶³ Morris p 297

⁶⁴ Ibid., p 260

⁶⁵ Ibid., p 308

the purpose being not only to reclaim the land for farming activities, but also to ensure greater safety of movement across the river upstream of the embankment.

Sir John sought the assistance of Sir Hugh Myddleton, referring to reclamation work that he (Myddleton) had undertaken on the Isle of Wight. Sir Hugh's reply was given a day later –in which he regretted that he could not be of assistance because of his age, his current business commitments (in which he refers to the river at London), the likely scarcity of building material, the huge cost that would be involved and that he would not want to leave his wife in a strange place.⁶⁶

Pennant includes both Sir John's letter and Sir Hugh's reply which stand as wonderful examples of the written language of the time (at least among their level of English society), of the politeness expressed and, of course, the promptness shown in replying.

Given that Pennant's volume was first published in 1781, it is of interest to read (in the 1810 republication – over a hundred years later) the Editor's note in which he includes a lengthy update to the effect that *'This bold design is now attempting to be carried into effect by William Madocks esq ...'*⁶⁷

Treflys (Trevlys) Church 1886 (A)⁶⁸

The Church of St Michael lies two miles from Criccieth. Built in the 14th century, it fell into disrepair and was extensively renovated in 1889.⁶⁹

The enlargement below is inserted simply to indicate the quality of Annie's penwork.



⁶⁶ Sir Hugh Myddleton's reference to his involvement with 'the London river' is an off-hand mention of the great engineering project in which he was responsible for bringing clean water via a canal from the River Lea to London. The inauguration in 1613 of the 'New River' project was undertaken by his brother (Sir Thomas Myddleton) who was Lord Mayor of London at the time. Having been born in Denbighshire in 1560, he succeeded his father as Denbigh MP from 1603-1628. (The history of Parliament. Simon Healy 2010)

⁶⁷ All the above from Pennant pp 353-357. Note : The entire content of Pennant's tours is available on line by courtesy of the University of Michigan and Google. The letters referred to are strongly recommended reading.

⁶⁸ This sketch is a copy of a number of original loose sketches by Annie.

⁶⁹ Coflein.gov.uk

Part 4 : Anglesey (Ynys Môn or Isle of Môn)

1887, 1897, 1899, 1900/1

Because of its generally low-lying topography, its geology (soil fertility, usable stone and mineral deposits), its climate (tempered by the Gulf Stream) and particularly its location, Anglesey has repeatedly borne the brunt of historic invasions.

Following the period of prehistoric habitation (of which there is still much evidence in the form of burial chambers and standing stones), the island had – by 100 BC – been colonised by the Celts (Britons) and had become the centre of the Druid religion. The devastating invasion by the Romans in AD 61 led to their occupation of the island over the next four centuries – the 4th century fort at Holyhead on Holy Island being the most substantial extant evidence of their presence. Once the Romans left in the 5th century, the island experienced a series of invasions by the Irish, followed by the Vikings, then the Saxons and the Normans until, finally, the English invasion by Edward I in the 13th century.

With the rise of Christianity during the 6th century, monasteries became established in remote areas – the most noted of these being those of St Cybi on Holy Island and St Seiriol at Penmon.

While contact with Ireland had existed for centuries, it increased dramatically with the construction of the harbour at Holyhead and the completion of the road and rail connections with London. The A5 road link (under the direction of Thomas Telford) was put into effect by the construction of the Stanley Embankment over the channel between Anglesey and Holy Island in 1823 and the suspension bridge over the Menai Strait in 1826 – both designed by Telford. The rail link was established in 1849 with the construction of Robert Stephenson's tubular bridge over the Menai Strait.⁷⁰

Almost the whole of Anglesey's coastline carries the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The sisters appeared to have first visited Anglesey together in 1887 and then again in 1897, 1899, 1900 and 1901.

Beatrice spent time on the island in 1921.



⁷⁰ Encyclopaedia Britannica Vol 1, p933

Beaumaris (Biwmares) and Penmon 1887

Beaumaris occupies a strategic position at the opening of the Menai Strait. It was the site of a Viking settlement and, much later, one of the sites on which Edward I used in making up his ring of castles following his defeat of Llewelyn the Great in 1282.⁷¹

The sisters visited the Beaumaris and Penmon area in September 1887 and, thirty-four years later, Beatrice visited the Red Wharf Bay area.

The painting alongside and that of the pier were by Beatrice. This view is from the pier.

The pier was built in 1872. Its purpose was to attract the steamship trade that passed through the Menai Strait.⁷²



Annie is undoubtedly the figure in the foreground. She would have been twenty-six years old.

The painting below was by Annie. The view across the water (Conwy Bay) is towards the Snowdonia Mountains.



'Built between the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th centuries, Beaumaris Castle is a symphony in stone – widely recognised as the pinnacle of British medieval castle building. Its perfect symmetry, moats and concentric walls are still awe-inspiring, more than 700 years after it was built. And it wasn't even finished; this final flourish of Edward I's ring of stone, built to control and humiliate the conquered native Welsh, broke the bank as well as the proud spirit of the Celts'⁷³

⁷¹ Morris pp 67-69

⁷² National Piers Society

⁷³ Coates, Neil *Days Out Countryfile* 3 Aug 2017

Given the splendour of the castle, it is interesting that the only records both sister left are close-up details of the walling and openings. The adjacent detail was by Beatrice.

Also of note, is that Annie's record of her visit to the 14th century Church of St Mary and St Nicholas should be a detailed sketch of the interior and one of a lion lying at the feet of a reclining sculptural figure's tomb.⁷⁴



The church contains the tomb of Princess Joan of Wales and represents a large slice of the history of Wales through the centuries.

Joan was the daughter of King John, king of England during the late 12th century. Reflecting the period of relative stability between England and Wales, Joan was, at a very young age, married to Llywelyn the Great (Llywelyn ap Iorwerth) - then recognised as the unofficial Prince of Wales.

When Joan died, Llywelyn had her buried in a Franciscan Friary he founded in Llanfaes, just north of Beaumaris and which he could see across the Menai Strait from his palace in Abergwyngregyn. However, when he died three years later (in 1240), Llywelyn wasn't buried with his wife, but at Aberconwy Abbey, to which he had retired during the last few years of his life.⁷⁵

With the defeat of Llywelyn's grandson (Llywelyn the Last⁷⁶) by King Edward I in 1282 almost a century of relative peace between Wales and England came to an end – as did the Gwynedd stronghold at Abergwyngregyn that was destroyed by Edward's troops.

Both the castle and the church were then built. The church was built to service the needs of the new (English) settlers to Beaumaris. The original inhabitants were resettled to the new settlement of Newborough on the other side of Anglesey.

The history of Joan's tomb continues almost exactly three centuries later when the Llanfaes Friary was destroyed in 1537 by Henry VIII's clergymen as part of the dissolution of the monasteries. Almost another three centuries would then pass before the empty tomb would find a new home in the church – after having been used by horses as a water trough.

In commemoration of Joan's life and in acknowledgement of the indignity suffered, a plaque was put up in the church in 1808 by Viscount Thomas James Warren-Bulkeley.

⁷⁴ *While on a painting/sketching (as well as sight-seeing) trip, this nevertheless highlights the reality that their excursions preceded the general use of photography.*

⁷⁵ The importance of Abergwyngregyn was referred to earlier - on pp15 and 16

⁷⁶ Llywelyn the Last (Llywelyn ap Gruffud) took over the unofficial title of Prince of Wales from his grandfather but was officially granted this title by Henry III in 1267. He was the first and last native Welsh Prince.

Also in the church, lies the alabaster tomb of William Bulkeley, who died circa 1490 and his wife Elin, the daughter of Gwilym ap Gruffydd of Penrhyn. William Bulkeley had been the deputy constable of the castle. Gwilym ap Gruffydd had, for a brief period supported Owain Glendŵr's rebellion in the 15th century but had then turned against him and sided with the English. In consequence he'd been granted the rights to huge tracts of land in Anglesey.⁷⁷

The only connection to all the above that was recorded by Annie, is the sketch of the lion lying at the feet of William Bulkeley's figure.

During their stay at Beaumaris, they visited the Penmon promontory, just a few miles north-east of Beaumaris – they would possibly have walked there – passing Llanfaes on the way.

The sketch on the left is by Beatrice, the one on the right by Annie which includes the notation 'Cottage at Penmon where we had tea'.



Looking across Conwy Bay, the Snowdonia Mountains appear as a faint outline in Annie's sketch and, by means of an even fainter line, she's indicated the location of Aber Falls. The Falls lie close by Abergwyngregyn where the Llywelyn stronghold had existed and it is conceivable that Annie could have inserted its location specifically in response to the historic reason for Joan's burial at Laenfaes.⁷⁸

The above building was built in the 1850's to house the Pilots serving the nearby Menai Lighthouse. It still operates as a tearoom/restaurant – 'The Pilot House Café – and the sisters' visit pre-empted what is currently a popular walk from Beaumaris.⁷⁹

Sited on the promontory is a monastery built in the 6th century by St. Seriol. It was destroyed by the Vikings in 10th century but re-built in the 12th century. The monastery later became an Augustinian Priory and then finally a private estate homestead (owned by the Bulkeley family) in the 16th century.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Walesdirectory.co.uk – this source was used for the factual information relating to the tombs.

⁷⁸ What is, perhaps, intriguing is that Annie noted the location of the Falls four years before she would be visiting the area and sketching the Falls in 1891. Beatrice, however, had already visited Aber in 1893 and one could almost picture her pointing this out to Annie as they talked about the historic relevance of the place.

⁷⁹ Dorothy Hamilton : *Best Tea Shop Walks* 2000.

⁸⁰ Turton, Dave – as found in the Ken Davies website www.penmon.org - which is an extremely informative blog.

These sketches of boats were done by both sisters – many of them would, most likely, have been sketched during their stay in Beaumaris which was, and still is, a boating and yachting centre.



Other than those in the bottom row that were sketched by Annie, all these were sketched by Beatrice.



Red Wharf Bay (Traeth Coch) 1921

Lying just north of Penmon Point, Red Wharf Bay has shared in much of the rich history of Wales and, more particularly, of Anglesey. The Welsh name means ‘red beach’ and supposedly arises from a bloody Viking battle that took place in the 12th century.

The reference to ‘wharf’ reflects the importance of the bay as an important port from the 15th to the 18th century before the advent of steamships which would have been able to be accommodated because of the shallow water and very wide tidal range.⁸¹

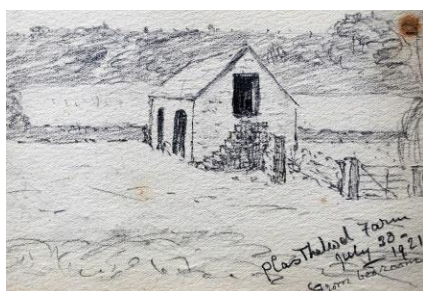
Beatrice visited Red Wharf Bay and the adjoining Benllech area in July/August 1921. Between her last visit to the general area in 1887 and this visit a major Viking ‘treasure’ was discovered.

A hoard of five silver arm-rings was discovered between about 1887 and 1894 near the eastern tip of Red Wharf Bay. They date from the first phase of Viking contact with Wales. Anglesey during the late ninth and early tenth century was the economic and political homeland of the kingdom of Gwynedd. The island became a particular target for seaborne raids from 855. One notable episode started with the landing of Viking leader Ingimund and his followers, who had been expelled as 'foreigners' from Dublin about 902/3. They attempted to establish a base on Anglesey, but were eventually expelled after defeat in battle. The Red Wharf Bay hoard was probably deposited within a decade of Ingimund's attempt to colonize Anglesey.⁸²

The view in the top sketch is of Red Wharf Bay (at high tide) looking northwards. The one below it is of Benllech Sands looking southwards towards Penmon Point. The one alongside is of the Ship Inn which is still very much in place with the only alteration being a relatively small extension of the building.



The sketch below (left) is of Plas Thelwel (‘from my bedroom’), while the other sketch (dated October) formed part of this group but could have been sketched elsewhere.



⁸¹ The Ship Inn website (shipinnredwharfbay.co.uk)

⁸² BBC Radio 4 ‘A History of the World project’ 2010

Bull Bay (Porth Llechog meaning ‘Sheltered Bay’) 1899 and 1900

On the northern coastline of Anglesey, the Bull Bay area is known for its remoteness and its scenic beauty. Its rocky cliffs are home to a wide range of birdlife.

Annie visited the area in September 1899. Her sketch ‘View from my room’ is alongside. This was after she and Beatrice had spent a portion of June of that year on the western portion of Anglesey.⁸³

All the other illustrations on this page were by Beatrice, recording her visit in May of 1900.



The painting above ‘Taking a “snap” of Peregrine’s nest’ suggests that they (the two figures) had a camera.

The flowers below, right, are scillas.



⁸³ This forms the next section of this, their time on Anglesey. Again, attention needs to be drawn to the limitations attached to trying to follow their lives purely from the sketches recorded. Where, for example, was Annie between June and September and what was she then doing between September 1899 and October 1900 when she again visited Anglesey with Beatrice?

South-West Coast : Rhosneigr, LLangwyfan and LLanddwyn 1887, 1900 &1901

The entire coastline immediately southwards of the village of Rhosneigr up to the Menai Strait is designated an AONB.

Llangwyfan is a tiny hamlet lying south of the village of Rhosneigr. Nearby, sited on the tiny tidal island of Cribinau is St Cwyfan's Church. The original structure dates back to the 12th century with renovations having taken place in the 14th, 16th and 19th centuries – when a sea wall was constructed around it. Being inaccessible at high tide, a causeway was built – with the remains being visible in the two sketches below.

In the 18th century, the parishioners lodged a formal protest with the ecclesiastical court against the appointment of a new parish priest who could only speak English. There clearly was a problem as only five of the 500 parishioners could understand English. While the court ruled that he should not have been appointed, it was not able to remove him and so allowed him to stay – he nevertheless died later that year.⁸⁴



Beatrice and Annie sketched the church in October 1897 - the bottom one being Annie's. The lettering was copied from a stone slab lying near the church – it reads '*Here ly Ye Body of T.G.who dyed Jan ye 23 AN 1730*'. The Snowdonia Mountains and the Llyn Peninsula are in the distance.

The sisters returned to the Rhosneigr area three years later.

Beatrice's sketch (alongside) is viewed northwards up the coastline towards Holy Island. Her note reads '*Craig y Don Oct 1.1900 Rhos Neigr, Rhos Colyn & Holyhead Mountain in distance.*'



Annie's sketch reads '*Our house Ty Croes looking towards Rhos Neigr.*' The house is indicated with a cross.



These two sketches and the two over the page provide a particularly fine record of the coastline towards both the north and south.

⁸⁴ Kovach, Warren. *Anglesey – '50 Buildings'* blog.



Annie's sketch above, reads '*Ty Crois looking towards Snowdon*'. Again, a tiny cross is inserted over the house on the right. Beatrice's sketch on the right reads '*Craig y Don Oct 8 1900*'.



These two sketches were done at Rhosneigr in September/October 1900. Annie's sketch above, Beatrice's alongside. What is interesting is that the perspective adopted in the painting (below) by Beatrice is that of Annie's sketch rather than that of her own.⁸⁵



⁸⁵ As mentioned in the Introduction, an online record was found of the painting of this scene by Beatrice having been sold for £90 but the date of the sale is not known.

Almost another year passes before they again visit the area – this time in May 1901. The only records of this visit are these four sketches.

The top two are of an uninhabited house in the vicinity of LLangwyfan.

Beatrice's sketch is alongside and Annie's below it - the notation being '*Painted with a thorn (brush forgotten)*'



The bottom two sketches are of the ruined church of St Dwynwen.

Located on Llanddwyn Island which is really a small peninsula, separated from the mainland only at the highest of tides.

The church is named after St Dwynwen who retreated to the island in the early 5th century after an unhappy love affair. She

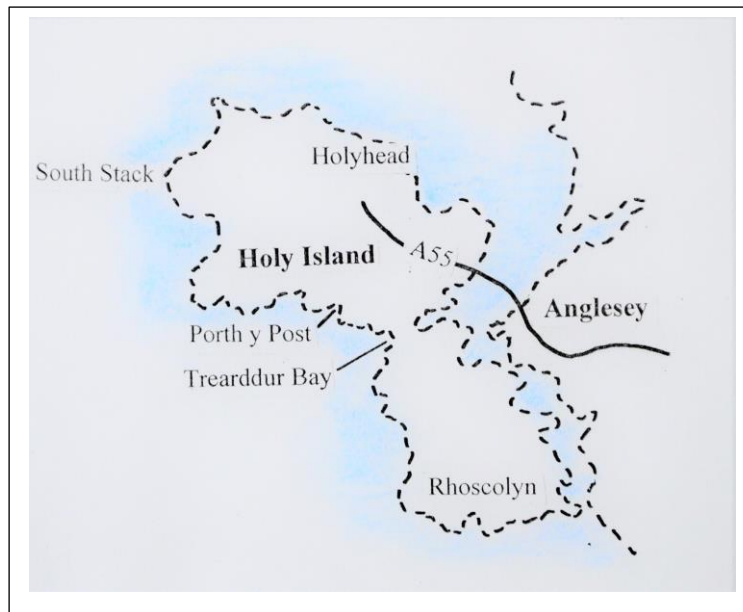
became known as the patron saint of lovers and pilgrimages were made to her holy well on the island. The pilgrimages became so popular that the offerings left by them were sufficient to build a substantial chapel on the site of the original church during the 16th century.⁸⁶



Beatrice's sketch is on the left, Annie's on the right – her notation reads '*Ruins of St Dwynwen's (461) Church at Llanddwyn 4 miles walk across sandhills from Newborough May 1901.*'

⁸⁶ Korchach, Warren . Anglesey – '50 Buildings' blog

Part 5 : Visits to Holy Island 1889-1898



Holy Island is so-named because of the high density of prehistoric relics of worship and burial together with those of Early Christians. Its historic name being Holyhead which has been used since at least the 14th century and became the name of the town – Holyhead (Caergybi).⁸⁷

Separated from Anglesey by a narrow channel which is fordable at low tide, its history of occupation is hardly separable from that of Anglesey. However, its proximity to Ireland has ensured that, from the invasions by the Irish Picts in the 5th century followed by the centuries-later establishment of a regular ferry connection with Dublin, a close connection has existed between them.

Holy Island displays a high degree of complexity in terms of its geology, the nature of its rocky coastline (punctured by its many small bays) and its peopled history.

With the exclusion of the more settled areas of Holyhead, Trearddur and Rhosecolyn, almost the whole area is identified as an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The qualities of the western and south-western coastal strip in particular are perceived as being ‘*those of wildness and remoteness – a feeling of being at the mercy of the elements and a sense of danger arising from the turbulent seas ...*’⁸⁸

The sisters’ visits to Holy Island began in 1889, to be followed by annual visits for the next four years and then again in 1897 and 1898. After the first visit by Beatrice in 1889, the sisters seemed to have visited independently over the next three years except for one record of them sketching the cottage, Castell Colyn on the 15th of September 1893. The last visits were in 1897 and 1898.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Davidson, A. *Towyn y Capel Report 440*, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust Feb 2002

⁸⁸ *Marine Character Areas MCA9 Holy Island West and Penrhos Bay*. Natural Resources Wales.

⁸⁹ *Because the sketches are mixed up both in the albums and in the dates, they have been grouped according to location.*

Towyn y Capel /Trearddur⁹⁰

Towyn y Capel is the site of a former chapel (Capel St Ffraid) and cemetery situated adjacent to the beach at Trearddur Bay. The Chapel was associated with St Ffraid (St Bride/Brigid) who is said to have arrived here from Kildare in Ireland around 500AD and established a church on the site.⁹¹

Because of erosion, all that remains of it is a sand hill separated from the beach by a promenade. The site is indicated as a chapel on a map dated 1578 and its ruins were still in place when Thomas Pennant visited the site in 1781 but was finally destroyed in a storm in 1913.⁹²

In describing his visit to Towyn y Capel, Pennant writes “*a low sandy common, bounded on one side by rocks, over which in high winds the sea breaks in a most awful and stupendous manner ...*”⁹³

Beatrice visited ‘Towyn’ in September of 1889.

The middle sketch is of her niece, Helen, and her nephews Algy and Francis. These being the children of her sister, Magdalene, who had married the Rev Charles Codrington Nation. They were presumably here on holiday.

While the Snowdonia Range can faintly be seen in the background of the above sketch of Trearddur Bay, it is in fact separated by the waters of Caernarfon Bay.

Trearddur in the 1880’s would have provided a vastly different feel to that of the present day. The attraction of the area as a holiday resort has led to considerable change over the years due to the extensive development of holiday accommodation.⁹⁴

While the placidness of the bay in these sketches is still currently experienced, the stormy conditions described by Pennant are likely to become even more exaggerated with the predicted effects of sea level rise.



⁹⁰ The settlement of Towyn y Capel has, since the late 1800’s, been known as Treaddur – this being the name of the nearby bay. It is referred to by the sisters simply as Towyn.

⁹¹ Dutton, A L. *Archaeological Monitoring at Towyn y Capel, Trearddur Bay, Anglesey 2000*

⁹² Davidson *ibid*

⁹³ Pennant Vol III p 68.

⁹⁴ Reekie Charles, ‘*Trearddur Bay Sailing Club : The Early Years*’ 1969 in which the memories of a visitor to the area in the last years of the 19th century (Mr W W Reid) were recorded.

In their 1897 visit to Holy Island, they both recorded the high tide 'from Bryn Isult'. The name 'Isallt' is fairly common along this stretch of the coastline. Apart from it being the name of holiday accommodation in the vicinity of Trearddur Bay, it is also the name of the linking road leading down to the various bays in the area – including Porth y Post.

While Pennant's description of the waves refers specifically to Trearddur Bay, it would apply equally as well to many sites along this stretch of the coastline.

Given the configuration of the landscape in these sketches and the date (October 1897), it is likely that they refer to Porth y Post (which is recorded in the paintings below) rather than at Trearddur Bay.

Beatrice's is the one above, and Annie's the one below. Not discernable in this copy is Annie's reference to 'our gate' with a tiny cross at the opening.



Porth y Post

Lying nearby Trearddur Bay – north-westwards along the coast – Porth y Post shares the same generally rocky coastline.

These two paintings in the vicinity of Porth y Post were done by Beatrice – also in September 1889.⁹⁵

Annie spent almost all of September 1892 at Porth y Post. A number of her paintings and sketches (including pen and ink) are shown on the following page.

There is no pictorial evidence to indicate where Beatrice was in 1892 – other than still living in Chester. A rough sketch of hers indicates that she visited Porth y Post again in 1893.



⁹⁵ The dates of these and those of Towyn indicate a movement between the two sites over a two-week period. Her visit to the general area indicated in the 'high tide' sketch being eight years' later – 1897.



The sketches above (house with flag) were by Annie in 1892 and the painted one of the same house (alongside) was by Beatrice in Oct 1897. The sketch below is of the road to Porth y Post.



There is no notation on the bottom right sketch but, given its grouping with the other sketches, it is assumed to probably be in the same vicinity.



Rhoscolyn

South-east from Trearddu lies the small village of Rhoscolyn. The area is known for its natural beauty – particularly the rugged coastline with the small enclosed Borthwen Bay.

St Gwenfaen, an early Christian saint, was believed to have founded the original church here in the 6th century. A new church was built on the old foundations of this church in the 19th century. St Gwenfaen's well (dating from the same time as the original church) is located on the clifftop and is one of the best preserved wells of that period. The coastal footpath follows the ancient route running south- eastward from South Stack towards Menai Strait and onwards into the mainland.⁹⁶

Beatrice and Annie visited here in September 1893. Based on the two sketches of the cottage below, this is the only record of them being together on Holy Island.

It is presumed that Castell Colyn is the name of the cottage. Annie's sketch is the one on the left, Beatrice's on the right.

The two seascapes were done by Annie. Although they are not notated, their location in the album in relation to the cottage suggests that they are also in the vicinity of Rhoscolyn.

The upper one is viewed north-westward looking towards Holyhead Mountain and South Stack island. The lower one is viewed southwards towards the Snowdonia Mountains.



⁹⁶ Griffiths, Tony & Rosie blog (Owners of y Stabl cottage, Rhoscolyn)

These two rock arches are well-known features in the area. They were both painted by Annie in either 1892 or 1893. The one on the left being Bwa Gwyn (White Arch) and the one on the right Bwa Du – Black Arch.



Beatrice sketched the view below from Rhoscolyn in 1898 - five years after her cottage sketch. Looking across Caernarfon Bay, Lleyn Peninsula and Bardsey Island lie in the middle distance with the Snowdonian Mountains behind.



Her painting below was done on her first visit in 1889. It is from Four-Mile Bridge looking southwards over the Inland Sea (Cymyran Strait) separating Anglesey from Holy Island. The raised landform on the right would seem to be the eastern-most part of the Rhoscolyn area. The Snowdonia Mountains are in the distance.



The bridge dates back at least to the 1500's and, until the Stanley Embankment was

built in 1823 as part of Thomas Telford's London to Holyhead roadway, it was the only formal crossing of the channel.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Ibid

South Stack Lighthouse

As part of her 1889 visit to Holy Island, Beatrice spent two weeks moving (and sketching) from place to place – Towyn, Porth y Post, Four-Mile Bridge, across the Island to South Stack Lighthouse, to Holyhead and back to Porth y Post and Towyn.

South Stack (Ynys Lawd) is a small rocky island, separated from Holy Island by a narrow deep water channel.

Given its relationship to Ireland, this coastline has experienced busy shipping movements for centuries. Known for the potential wildness of the sea and the thickness of fog, a great many ships have been wrecked.

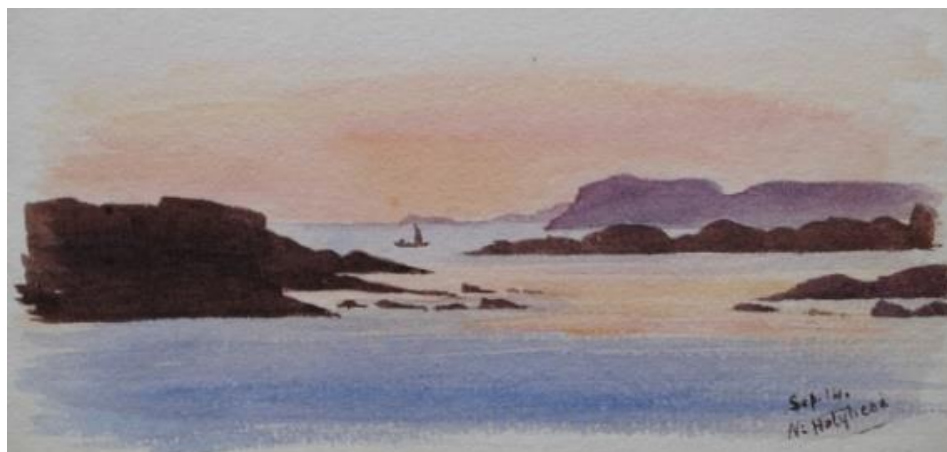


The first formal requests for a lighthouse were made in 1645 but, because of the difficulty and cost of construction, the lighthouse was completed only in 1809. Construction material had to be winched up the cliff from boats or drawn across the channel in baskets.

Similarly, up until 1828 when an iron suspension bridge was built, the only way to get to the island was by boat or basket – suspended from a hemp cable. The bridge has twice been replaced.

Apart from the historic interest of the lighthouse and the scenic grandeur of the island and its location, it has served as an important attraction for visitors – the cliffs being home to a great many nesting sea-birds. In addition to it having the status of an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it is a proclaimed Nature Reserve.⁹⁸

The notation on the painting below reads ‘N(ear) Holyhead’. Should the landmass in the near-distance prove to be the north-west corner of Anglesey, then it could be that the Cambrian Mountains of the Lake District are in the far-distance.⁹⁹



⁹⁸ Kovach, Warren. Anglesey History blog

⁹⁹ *As with all speculations regarding location, on-site verification is required.*

Holyhead (Caergybi)

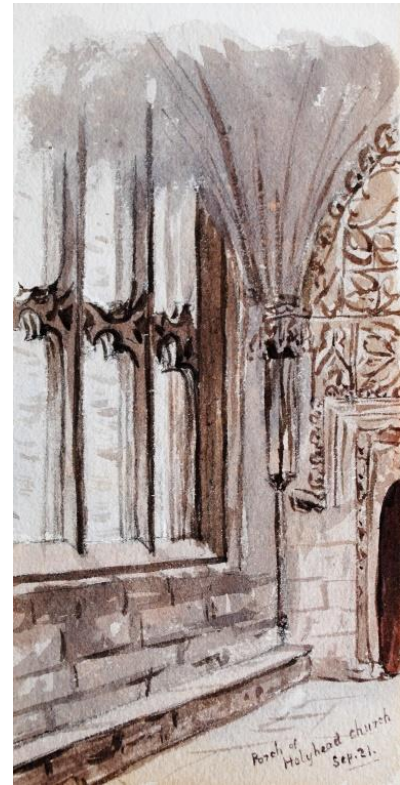
Not only is Holyhead the largest town in the Isle of Anglesey Principal Area, but its physical proximity to Ireland has ensured that it is one of the three busiest ports in Britain.

With many traces of prehistoric and Roman occupation, followed by a succession of invasions and attacks, the site has proved both vulnerable and strategic.

Trading with Ireland took place from as early as Roman times and continued through the centuries until, in 1801, the decision was taken that Holyhead would be the port to service the Dublin ferry connection. This triggered Telford's roadway connection to London, the Menai Strait road and rail crossings and the building of the new harbour and its later expansion.

St Cybi established a monastic settlement within the walls of the old Roman fort in the 6th century – at the same time that St Seiriol established his monastery at Penmon. St Cybi's church was sacked in the 10th century by Viking raiders. Newly built portions in the 13th century were looted in the 15th century by English troops after which the current church was built – only to be vandalised by Cromwell's men in the 17th century.

Despite its ravaging, it would still have exhibited much of historic interest and beauty when Beatrice visited it in 1889 and sat inside painting this detail of the porch. However, she would not have seen the new chapel which was to be built within the next ten years – described as a stunning example of late Victorian architecture combining Pre-Raphaelite art, Victorian Gothic and Art Nouveau styles.¹⁰⁰



These three sketches of steamships were done by Beatrice sometime between 1887 and 1894. Where she was is not known but it could well have been Holyhead.

¹⁰⁰ Britain Express – Passionate about British Heritage. David Ross, Editor

Part 6 : Lleyn Peninsula & Southwards 1895, 1896, 1898 and 1899

While the sisters had visited the south-eastern portion of the Lleyn Peninsula in 1886, their first recorded visit to the western coastline was in September of 1895 when they visited Clynnog Fawr.

This was followed by visits to Nevin (Nefyn) and Abersoch in September of 1896. Beatrice also recorded a view of Bardsey Island from the southern end of the Peninsula and did a rough sketch of the mountains (including Snowdon) from Bulch Mawr, a small hill near Clynnog, on this visit.



In 1899 they visited Bodvan (Bodfan) Farm near Llandwrog.

This view of the village of Clynnog was painted by Annie on the 14th September 1895. It forms part of the record of the sister's visit to the area which is dealt with in more detail over the page.

The 16th century church steeple is just visible between the trees as are the steep Gryn Goch and Gyrn Ddu Hills in the background.¹⁰¹



¹⁰¹ This illustration is a copy of a painting that belonged to Annie's great-niece, Betty Bowker Dwight, and formed part of the collection of paintings in her home when she died in 2015.

Clynnog (Clynnog Fawr) 1895

The small village of Clynnog is closely associated with Saint Beuno – the most prominent of Celtic Saints. *‘Beuno founded a clas, a sort of cross between a college and a monastery, at Clynnog Fawr around 630AD. The clas became an important centre for learning for the area and became a gathering place for pilgrims on their way to Bardsey Island.’*¹⁰²

The structure was burnt down by the Vikings in the 10th century and then, again, by the Normans in the 11th century.

Its repeated restoration confirmed its importance on the Pilgrims Way.

The existing church was built on the 7th century foundations in the 16th century.

These views of the church were recorded by Beatrice (on the left) and Annie on the right – which, unless indicated, is the sequence for all the following.



In the ones below, the Chapel is seen connected to the Church by a short passageway.



The porch leading into the church is shown on the ones alongside.

Annie's sketch shows the church tower behind.



¹⁰² Britain Express – Passionate about British Heritage. David Ross, Editor

The remains of St Beuno's well which would have been used by countless pilgrims over the centuries.

Also sketched by Annie but this is by Beatrice – as is the one of the lych gate below.



On the right, the Lodge painted by both, but this by Annie : *Tree growing on three cornered slab of stone.*



St Beuno's Chest By Beatrice above and Annie on the right - which includes a wooden alms dish.

She records : ... *a curious relic formed out of a solid tree, for the reception of votive offerings. Secured by three locks, one for the Rector, and one each for the Churchwardens.*

Annie also did sketches (not shown) of certain church 'furnishings'– including a set of 'Dog Tongs'.¹⁰³



¹⁰³ Ibid 'Dog Tongs' for removing unruly dogs from the church

Nevin (Nefyn), Bardsey Island and Abersoch 1896

An Iron-age hillfort (dated 300BC) overlooks the small town of **Nevin** and, because of its suitability as a landing place, its history contains records reflecting its relative proximity to Ireland and also its pilgrimage connection to Bardsey Island in the 6th century.

It was the site of Edward I's celebratory jousting tournament after his victory over the Welsh in 1284.¹⁰⁴

This view looking northwards towards the three peaks of The Rivals (Yr Eifl) is by Beatrice. Annie sketched a similar scene. These mountains house a cluster of ruined stone huts. *'This was a settlement of the prehistoric Welsh. It is called Tre'r Ceiri, generally interpreted as Town of Giants, because as the centuries passed, and people forgot who really lived up there, imagination peopled it with beings larger than ordinary life.'*¹⁰⁵



Wales was, in the Middle Ages, acknowledged throughout Europe, for its holy places – one of which was **Bardsey Island** (Ynys Enlli) which became the focus of one of the Christian pilgrim routes.

The holiness of this island was not only because of its remoteness but also because of the legend attached to it having been claimed to be the burial site of Myrddin Emrys (Merlin) - *the wizard of all wizards*. It has also been identified by some as Avalon where King Arthur died.¹⁰⁶

An ecclesiastical settlement was established in the 6th century by King Einion of Lleyn together with Saint Cadfan. Saint Cadfan and a large number of Saints had earlier been driven out of Brittany by the Franks and had settled in Britain.¹⁰⁷



Little remains of the monastery but the bones from the great many unmarked graves emerge from time to time. Quoting from Morris *'20 000 saints are popularly claimed to be buried on the island.'*¹⁰⁸

Beatrice sketched this view of Bardsey Island – lying off the southern tip of the Peninsula.

¹⁰⁴ Wikipedia

¹⁰⁵ Morris p47

¹⁰⁶ David Nash Ford Editor : The History of Bardsey Island off Gwynedd

¹⁰⁷ Ibid As referred to in Part Four, King Einion had provided the land for his brother (Saint Seririol) to establish a monastery to be built at Penmon in Anglesey.

¹⁰⁸ Morris pp 82,96

Abersoch is a coastal village lying on the eastern edge of the Peninsula. Because of its sheltered position, it has long been an attraction for sailing craft.

These two sketches on the right were by Beatrice above, and Annie, below.

The sketch immediately below is a view looking across the wide beach and Cardigan Bay towards the Snowdonia mountains. Both it and the other were by Beatrice.



The above view (looking north-eastward towards Snowdon and Myndd Mawr) was sketched by Beatrice during their 1896 visit which included the above group of Abersoch sketches.

Her location at the time was a small hill - Bulch (Bwylch) Mawr – which lies northwards up the Peninsula from Abersoch in the vicinity of Clynnog.

Bodvan (Bodfan) Farm near Llandwrog 1899

The sisters' last recorded visit to the Llyn Peninsula was in June 1899.

Bodfan Farm lies a little way south-west of the small village of Llandwrog – within easy walking distance from the coastline.

Little is known of Bodfan Farm other than that the antiquity of human settlement in the area is attested to by a nearby megalithic standing stone.

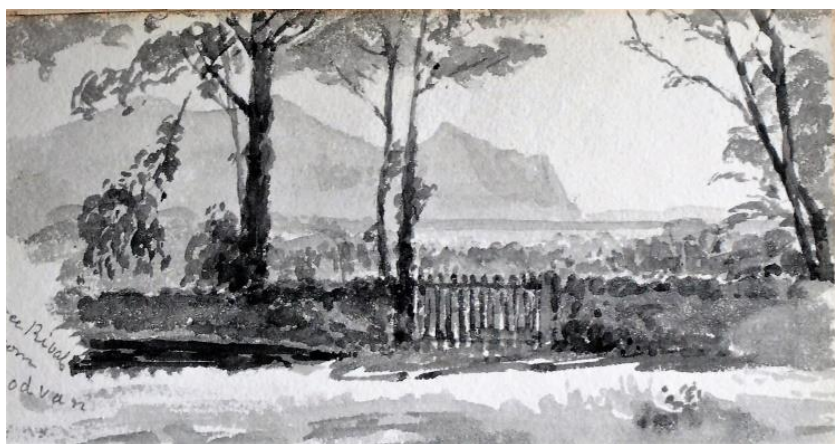
The earliest part of the farmhouse itself dates back to the 17th century – being identified in the 1682 inventory of the deceased owner, William Lloyd. It is now a heritage listed Grade II building and formed part of what is referred to as a 'unit' system comprising a number of households belonging to the same family.¹⁰⁹

More recently, to quote from the July 1935 letter by the Vicar of the Parish Church in Worfield (a village in Shropshire) : *'Girl Guides' Camp : The Guides go to camp ... making the journey to Wales by Foxalls' char-a-banc. Their address will be Bodvan Farm, Llandwrog, Llanwnda, Carnarvon.*¹¹⁰



These three sketches were done by Beatrice with Annie having done similar ones. The one on the left, above, is referred to as *'Bodvan Farm Lane'*, the one on the right being *'Drive to Bodvan Farm'*.

The sketch alongside shows the Three Rivals in the distance.



¹⁰⁹ British Listed Buildings website

¹¹⁰ Found online. Interestingly, there is a Bodfan caravan and camping site on the edge of Rhosneigr, Anglesey

This water pump (referred to as '*In the yard*') was sketched by both sisters – this one being Annie's. It would be interesting to know how it operated.¹¹¹

The sketch, below (also by Annie) is the first record of her many sketches of sundials in Wales.



Inscribed '*At Bodvan Farm 8 June 1899*' it is the second one recorded in her album comprising thirty-two sundials found throughout England and North Wales. The sketches date from 1895 through to 1924 – half of them being in North Wales.

Given the difficulty of grouping the illustrations in a way that eases the ability to view them either in terms of their broad location or in terms of their timeline, there – inevitably - had to be some departure from the pattern so far used.

Consequently, while keeping generally within the same timeline, the focus now shifts out of the Lley Peninsula southwards along the coastline (mid-way between Barmouth and Aberystwyth) to the villages of Tywyn and Llanegryn.

The importance of this diversion is that (other than their visits to Anglesey/Holy Island and other occasional meeting places) it represents the last recorded visit they took together before Bodfan Farm and their prolonged stay in Caerwys.¹¹²

¹¹¹ A cursory online search failed to find a similar form of old pump.

¹¹² Reference is made to the breakdown of the sister's whereabouts as could be determined by the records (albums) available. This is contained in an accompanying Annexure.

Tywyn (Towyn) and Llanegryn 1896 and 1898

The original church in the village of Tywyn (previously known as Towyn) was built early in the 6th century by Saint Cadfan who also established the first monastery on Bardsey Island.

After being destroyed by the Vikings in the 10th century, the church was restored in the 12th century and then again in the 15th century – this being the present building. It is probably best known for housing “the Cadfan stone” – a large inscribed stone cross dating back to the 8th or 9th century. The importance of this stone is that the inscription is considered to be the earliest known example of the Welsh language in existence.¹¹³



These sketches of St Cadfan's church were done by the sisters on 13 Sep 1898. Beatrice's sketch being on the left.

Four days' later they visited the medieval church of St Egryn in the nearby village of Llanegryn.

St Egryn's church was built in the 13th century but, other than the intact south porch, the present building is primarily a Victorian restoration of the original.

As with the stone cross in St Cadfan's church, this church also houses a major drawcard – this being a rood screen dating back to 1520. To quote *‘The medieval church of St Egryn boasts a wonderfully carved medieval rood screen, one of the few screens in Wales to survive the medieval period. Local rumours suggest that it came to Llan from Cymer Abbey after the abbey was dissolved by Henry VIII. The craftsmanship is exquisite, the design incredibly intricate ...’*¹¹⁴

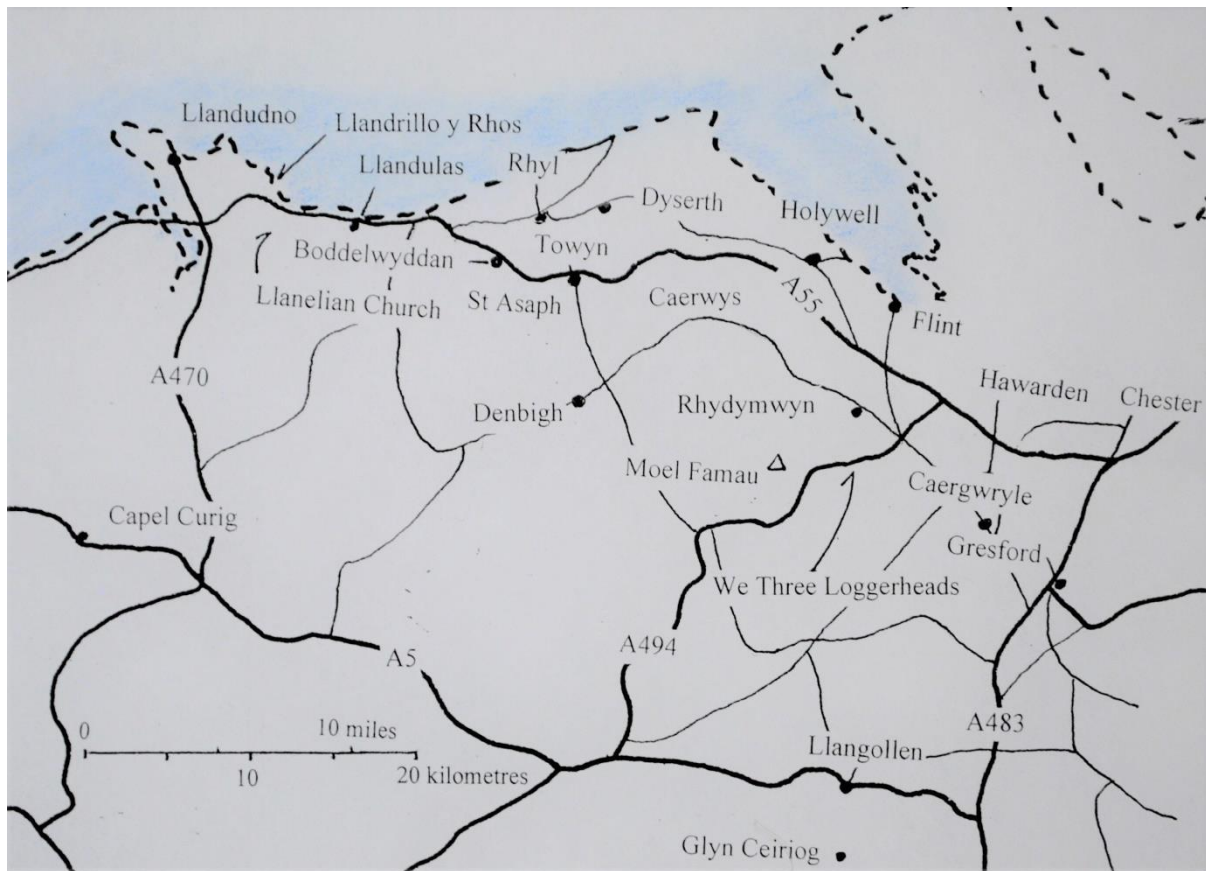
Annie's sketches show the porch, the 12th century font and some of the patterns found in the screen.



¹¹³ Dmitri Lapa; 'Venerable Cadfan of Bardsey in Wales' for Orthodox Christianity 11/14/2016

¹¹⁴ David Ross Editor, *Llanegryn Church Screen*; Britainexpress

Part Seven : North East Wales 1887-1924



While living in Chester (up until 1909), the sisters paid frequent visits - sometimes together, sometimes separately - to the following places in these nearby counties and beyond.

From 1909 (when their mother died and they left their Kings Road home), they moved to Caerwys. The sketches they produced in and around Caerwys will form the subject of Part Eight of this story.¹¹⁵

Bodelwyddan 1887 B, Caergwryle Castle 1890 B, Rhydymwyn 1890 B,
 We Three Loggerheads 1890 B, Llanellian Church 1890 B, Gresford 1891 B (A 1887),
 Tanymarian 1891 A, Capel Curig / Snowdon 1891 A, Rhyl 1891 B&A (B 1895,1920),
 Llangollen & Valle Crucis 1895 B&A, Hawarden 1895 B&A, Towyn 1896 B,
 St Asaph 1896 B&A (B 1918, 1928), Denbigh 1896 B (B1918), Llandrillo y Rhos 1902 A,
 Moel Famau 1903 A, Dyserth 1903 B&A, Llandudno 1904 B (B 1912)
 Flint 1905 B (B1927 & Ewloe Castle), Llandulas 1907 B,
 Holywell & Basingwerk Abbey 1913 B (A,1920 & B 1927)
 Glyn Ceiriog 1926 B (1926 being the year that Annie died)

¹¹⁵ Their 'travels' during this period included visits to places in Gwynedd and Anglesey but (because of the attempt to group visits according to location rather than time) these have been described in Parts 1-6. B&A refer to Beatrice and Annie. In brackets are the details relating to repeated visits.

Boddelwyddan 1887 B

Before the sisters travelled to Anglesey in September 1887, Beatrice visited Boddelwyddan in Denbighshire in May, while Annie recorded a visit to Gresford in October of that year.¹¹⁶

Referring to Boddelwyddan (referred to as Bod), this rather extraordinary church - St Margarets (the Marble Church) was built in the 1850's. Given its exceptionally high tower (particularly in relation to the size of the rest of the building), it is a highly significant feature in the landscape and is noteworthy, also, for the building materials used.

Thirteen different kinds of marble were imported from Belgium, Italy, France, Ireland and England to create the ornate interior. The building itself was constructed with locally sourced limestone which resembled porcelain when worked. Other elements included granite from Aberdeen, stone from Anglesey and lavishly carved woodwork.¹¹⁷



Other than her sketches of Conwy Castle from Degenway and the interior of Plas Mawr in Conwy¹¹⁸, Beatrice's record for **1888** includes her August visit to the Continent (Amsterdam and Brussels) and of September and October spent in Devon and Cornwall. Her record for **1889** indicates September on Anglesey and Holy Island, with October - December in Chester and New Brighton in Merseyside.

February and March of **1890** were spent in Hastings and, other than the following sketches (of Caergwrle Castle, Rhydymwyn, 'We Three Loggerheads' and Llanellian Church), Beatrice's records were concentrated on Chester and West Kirby – the home of her mother. A visit to Cambridge was recorded in August.¹¹⁹

Caergwrle Castle (7 April 1890) B – sited strategically on top of a hill less than 5km from the England border, this castle is famed as being the last to be built by a native Welsh Prince.

Built (but not completed) in the 13th century by Dafydd ap Gruffydd, it remained in Welsh hands for only a few years before being attacked as part of Edward I's second Welsh campaign of 1282. Dafydd's relationship with his brother (Llywelan 'the Great') and the ultimate conflict with Edward I represent the decisive point at which Wales lost its independence.¹²⁰



¹¹⁶ Annie's Gresford sketch is included with those of Beatrice who visited Gresford in 1991.

¹¹⁷ Britain Express Editor David Ross

¹¹⁸ Included in Part One – her first 1883 visit.

¹¹⁹ Other than her visit to Gresford in August, her September visit to Anglesey and two sketches done in England in 1887, there are no sketching records relating to Annie's whereabouts (other than those related to living in Chester) for the remainder of that year together with all of 1888, 1889 and 1890.

¹²⁰ John Northall; Castlewales.com 2005

Rhydwmryn (28 April 1890) – Beatrice’s sketch of a waterwheel

Lying northwards of Mold, the Rhydwmryn limestone area was rich in minerals and, during the 18th century, became a centre for a range of industries – including the construction of waterwheels.¹²¹



Two markedly different events are associated with the area. When Beatrice did this sketch, she may have known about the one event but certainly not the other.

In 1829, while staying at a house - Coed Du - near Rhydwmryn, ‘Mendelssohn composed ‘*The Rivulet*’, *Opus 16 No 4*, inspired by the interminable trickle of the Alyn River outside his window, mingled perhaps with the drip of true Welsh drizzle.’¹²²

Almost two centuries later, at the outset of World War II, the extensive underground mine workings took on the top-secret role of hiding the production and storage of chemical weapons – namely mustard gas.

The knowledge of an even more top-secret role of these mines during the 1940’s has only fairly recently emerged – this being the underground network of tunnels and bombproof caverns to house scientific work on the process of uranium enrichment aimed at the production of an atomic bomb.

While much of the preparatory work on this enterprise took place in this location, it was later shifted to the USA where the two atomic bombs were finally produced. They were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the 6 and 9th August 1945 to devastating effect.¹²³

The area is now a nature reserve and the underground workings have become a heritage attraction.

A 17th century coaching inn near Mold, **We Three Loggerheads (B)** took its name from a painting of a dispute between two locals which was recorded by an artist. He handed over the painting in exchange for his beer debts. The name refers to the three of them. The painting (or a copy) is still on display.¹²⁴



¹²¹ BBC News 30 March 2010 – Nick Bourne

¹²² Morris p341

¹²³ BBC News 22 April 2017. (*This action heralded the end of the War, but also represented the start of the world-wide concern for nuclear-warfare that persists to the current day*)

¹²⁴ Barlow Eleanor, North Wales Daily Post 19 April 2013

Paintings in Llanelian Church (21 Aug 1890) – 900 years old (B)

Founded in the 6th century, St Elian's Church is located in Llanelian-y-Rhos, close to Colwyn Bay. It served as a late medieval pilgrimage centre. Sketched by Beatrice, this portion of the rood-screen panel is one of the oldest still in existence.



"On the central panel is the Last judgement with Christ sitting in the red robes of a judge surrounded by angels. Below his feet, the dead come up out of their graves. In the panel to the left, the Archangel Michael is weighing souls. The soul on the left is being pulled down by the Devil and is turning into a little demon. To the right, the Virgin Mary is placing her rosary on the balance beam of the scales to weigh it down on the side of salvation. The soul in the panel next to her is pop-eyed with terror and clutches onto her skirts"¹²⁵

Gresford July 1991

Beatrice sketched the two features for which the village of Gresford (lying three miles north of Wrexham) was best known for – its church and the ancient yew trees.

The oldest of this stand of yew trees dates back to AD 500 which is somewhat younger than the oldest yew tree in Wales (at Overton-on Dee) which is over 2000 years old and is on the traditional list of The Seven Wonders of Wales.¹²⁶

All Saint's Church is described as being one of the finest churches in Wales. It was built in the 13th century with major additions in the 14th and 15th centuries. An earlier church was recorded for the site in the Domesday Book of 1086.¹²⁷

The church is renowned for the strong ring and perfect tone



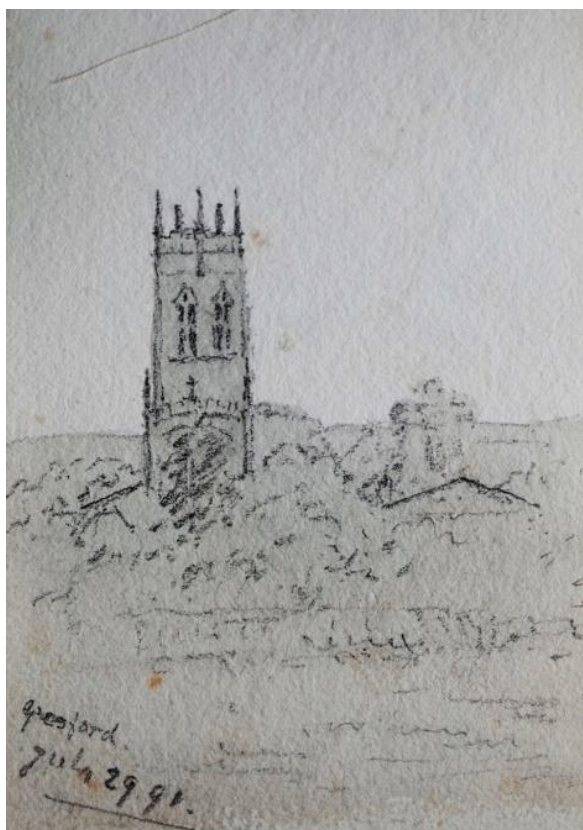
¹²⁵ WalesDirectory.co.uk (Other than the two angels, Beatrice depicted everyone looking very happy)

¹²⁶ Worldatlas.com the Seven Wonders of Wales.

¹²⁷ Britain Express David Ross Editor

of its church bells – so much so, that they were included on the traditional list of the Seven Wonders of Wales which are named in the old rhyme supposedly written by an English traveller to Wales :

*“Pistyll Rhaedr and Wrexham steeple,
Snowdon’s mountain without its people,
Overton yew trees, St Winefride’s well,
Llangollen bridge and Gresford bells”.*¹²⁸



Annie’s sketch done four years before (in August 1887) is on the right, Beatrice’s on the left.

In 1934 a major coal mining disaster took place in the area. On hearing of it, Beatrice may have remembered her visit to the area but Annie would have died nine years before it happened.

As with the previous three years, Annie’s whereabouts for the first half of 1891 are not known. Her first datable records are in September when she visited the area around Bangor.¹²⁹

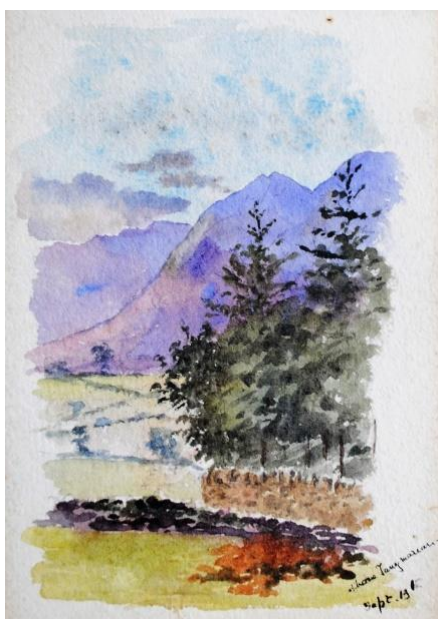
¹²⁸ Worldatlas.com

¹²⁹ On the 11th September Annie sketched the yew avenue outside Llandegai Church, Aber Falls on the 13th, Penrhyn on the 14th and the distant view of Bangor and Penrhyn on the 18th. These sketches are all to be found in Part One – being in the same locality as those sketched by Beatrice on her first sketching trip.

Tanymarian (Tan-y-Marian) September 1891

The location of Tanymarian is given by the notations '*nr Bangor*' in the ink sketch and what appears to be '*from Penrhyn*' in the one below it.

Annie's sketches (dated 15-19 September) speak for themselves in terms of their depiction of the landscape and the views of the mountains.¹³⁰



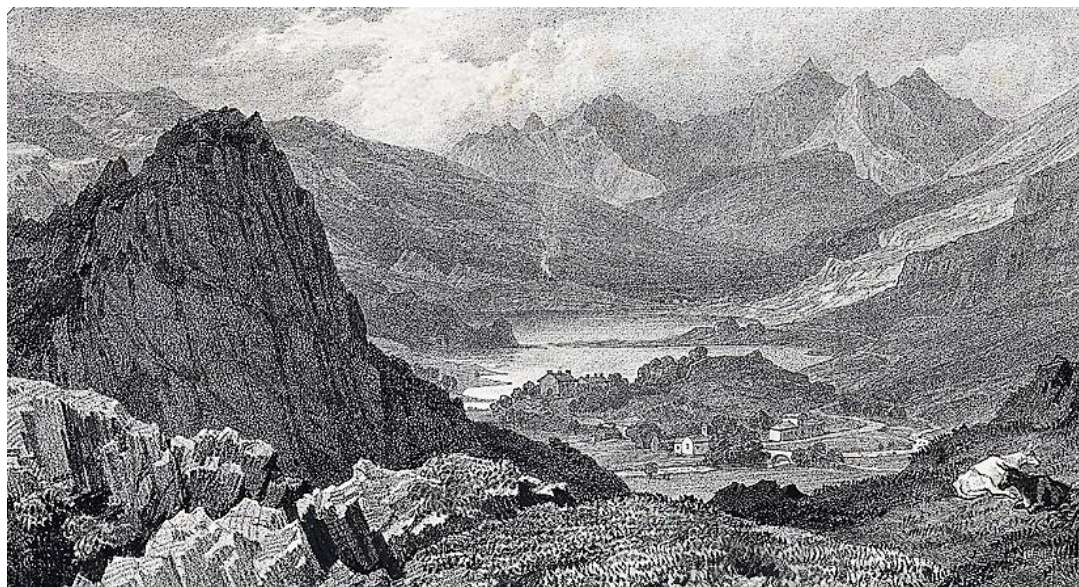
¹³⁰ The clarity of these sketches should fairly easily facilitate the precise on-site identification of their location.

Snowdon from Capel Curig 19th September 1891

Annie's painting reflects a view of the mountains which many artists have recreated – including Moses Griffith 1777 recording of it for Thomas Pennant's *Tours in Wales*, both Turners' (JMW and William of Oxford)¹³¹ and John Varley who produced a number of variations of the scene. Their paintings were generally composed with the water body of the two linked lakes (Llynau Mymbyr) in the foreground whereas Annie's perspective is further over to the right with the waterbody just visible in the cleft between the two hills.



A very similar perspective is shown in the painting below 'Snowdon and Capel Curig from a hill above the Irish Road.' By John Parker 1798-1860¹³² Beatrice's viewpoint would have been further back with the village hidden by the hillside in the foreground.



Described as having 'the best views in Wales', The Royal Hotel in Capel Curig (built in 1792 and financed by Lord Penrhyn) was understandably popular with artists. Telford completed improvements to the road from Bettwys-y Coed to Bangor in 1830 – this being known as the Irish Road.¹³³

¹³¹ Bishop, Peter ; *Vision and Revision ; Mountain Scenery in Snowdonia 1850-1880*. 2001 pp77-92

¹³² National Library of Wales (*Note – the picture has been slightly edited by reducing the border*)

¹³³ Bishop *Ibid*

Rhyl October 1891

In October 1891, both sisters were in Rhyl which, at the time, was considered to be the premier seaside resort in north Wales. Since the opening of the Chester-Holyhead railway line in 1848, it had attracted the mass of holiday-makers from the Chester/Liverpool and West Midlands areas.¹³⁴

*'Colwyn, Rhyl and Prestatyn form one long jolly resort between the mountains and the sea'*¹³⁵

However, this was also the month and year that Rhyl hosted the annual Church of England's Congress and thousands of congregants had flocked to this seaside resort. In the thirty years since the first Church Congress, this was the first to be held in North Wales and only the third to be held in Wales.

The first Church Congress had been held in 1861, its specific aim being to counter the threat posed by the Non-Conformist Churches. While subsequent Congresses had paid more attention to improving the general religious and social conditions of the country, the 1891 Congress was again focussed on its concerns about its standing in relation to the Non-Conformist Churches.¹³⁶



While Beatrice was recording the sitting of Congress on the 7th of October, Annie was painting the scenery (above) around Rhyl. The following day, they both painted scenes from the area. Beatrice's on the left and Annie's on the right.¹³⁷ Annie's painting shows (faintly) the old pier in the background.



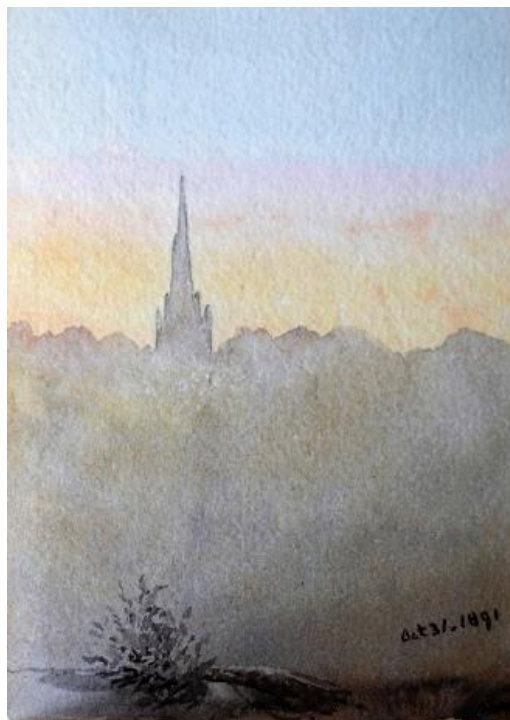
¹³⁴ Rhyl Conservation Area Review, Denbighshire County Council, September/November 2018

¹³⁵ Morris p256

¹³⁶ Rhyl Record & Advertiser 10 October 1891

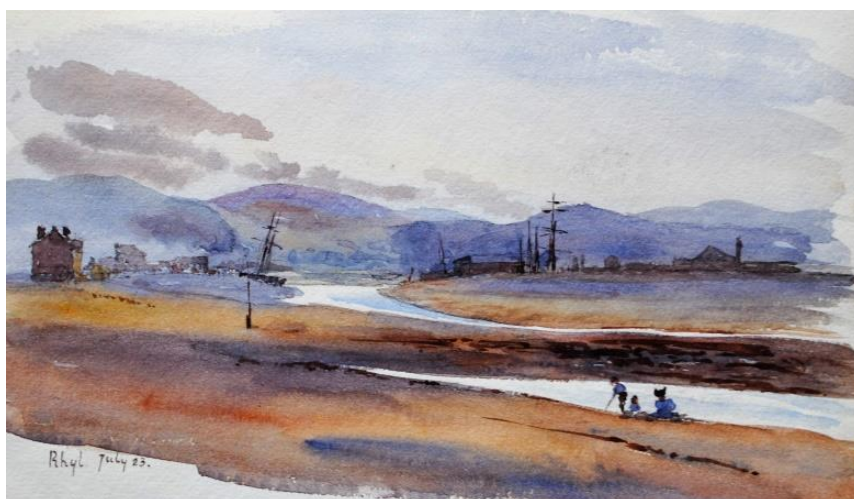
¹³⁷ These paintings are in sharp contrast to the beachfront development that ran along the Promenade and which was the general depiction of the attractions of Rhyl.

St Thomas' Church steeple was painted by Annie as were the sand dunes below. The church was built in 1861, with the steeple being added in 1875.¹³⁸



Beatrice recorded the scenes below of Rhyl.

Painted in 1895, the one alongside is a view looking up the River Clwyd with the mountains beyond.



Sketched in October 1920, the old pier was probably not open for access at the time. Built in 1872, it had been repeatedly damaged by ships and by storms. Closed in 1913, it was shortened and again opened in 1930 – only to be finally demolished in 1872.¹³⁹



¹³⁸ Clywd Family History Society

¹³⁹ Wikipedia

Llangollen & Valle Crucis Abbey (1895)

In September 1895, just a few days after sketching St Beuno's Church in Clynnog, the sisters headed for Llangollen.

A little way outside Llangollen, are found the Eliseg's Pillar and the ruins of Valle Crucis Abbey. The stone pillar was erected in the 9th century in celebration of the exploits of a king up to a century earlier. All that remains of it is the lower shaft that would have supported the cross which gave its name to the abbey that would be built almost four centuries later. The building of the Abbey was begun in 1201 by Cistercian monks. Despite suffering several attacks and fires before being part of Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries in 1537, the ruined building still remains as one of the best preserved abbeys eight centuries later.¹⁴⁰

The sketch alongside is by Annie. It indicates the Pillar, the Abbey located in amongst trees, details of the stonework and of a window in the cloisters.¹⁴¹

The sketch of the abbey ruins on the right is by Beatrice. Her inclusion of a small dog is her single example of following the practice of so many artists over the years of inserting an incongruous element into their paintings.

The sketch below is by Annie.



¹⁴⁰ Cadw & Castlewales.com

¹⁴¹ The sketch also includes a pattern from Plas Newydd which was the well-known home of the so-called Ladies of Llangollen (Lady Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby) who lived together for fifty years from the mid-17th century. It became an intellectual retreat visited by many famous people of the day. From a modest cottage, the two transformed it into a gothic fantasy of stained glass and elaborately-carved oak – mostly retrieved from ruined churches. (Britainexpress; David Ross Editor)

Llangollen bridge was built in the 16th century. It replaced a previous bridge which may have been built soon after the Abbey was founded. *‘Traditionally the present structure has been attributed to*

*John Trefor (Bishop of St Asaph) and is described as one of the Seven Wonders of Wales.*¹⁴²

This painting was done by Beatrice. Annie did a similar painting.



Hawarden (1895)¹⁴³

A day after sketching the Llangollen bridge, the sisters were in Hawarden. Because of its strategic location on the main medieval access route from Chester into north Wales, the area is steeped in military history with its early fortifications dating back at least to the time of the Roman occupation.

However, the subject of the sister’s sketches on this visit (26 September 1895) had no connection to the military history but rather to the historic church. Named after St Deiniol, there has been a church on this site since at least the 6th century although the first record of a rector is dated 1180. Damaged by fire, the church was restored in the 1850’s. The church has close associations with the Gladstone family – the owners of the nearby estate on which stand the ‘Old’ and ‘New’ Hawarden Castles – more information of which follows over the page.¹⁴⁴

This sketch of the church steeple was done by Annie.¹⁴⁵ The rather sombre lines (presumably from a gravestone) read :

*‘Remember man when thou goes by
As thou art now so once was I
As I am now so thou must be
Therefore prepare to follow me’*



¹⁴² Britishlistedbuildings.co.uk

¹⁴³ Unless otherwise indicated, all the following historical information related to Hawarden is sourced from James Lancaster : Castlesfortsbattles.co.uk

¹⁴⁴ St Deiniol’s Church, britainexpress.com David Ross Editor

¹⁴⁵ It appears from online photographs that the steeple has been replaced since Annie’s sketch

Sketched by Annie, the House of Correction in Hawarden (the village lock-up) dates back to 1740.¹⁴⁶

Both this and the church steeple were also sketched by Beatrice.

Other than two sketches by Annie in Berkshire (in October) and Shropshire, there is no record of the sisters' whereabouts for the remainder of 1895. Beatrice did, however, return to Hawarden in 1903 and again in 1907 when she sketched two landscapes of the area – the first, without doubt, indicating the ruins of Old Hawarden Castle.¹⁴⁷



An outline of the history of the area serves to hopefully give (or at least suggest) some connection between the sister's visit to Hawarden.

Soon after the Norman conquest in the 11th century, a substantial castle structure was built on the site of the earlier fortifications. Known as Hawarden Castle, it was attacked and destroyed in 1265. This marked the beginning of a series of battles over the control of the vantage point of this rocky outcrop. These intermittent battles took place over four centuries – finally ending in its destruction as a fortifiable site (by royal decree) in the 17th century.

Briefly, the 1265 attack by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (The Last) – the Prince of Wales – was in retaliation to the broken agreement between the Welsh and England that control of the Castle would be given to Wales. Following this, in terms of the Treaty of Montgomery (1267), the site was returned to England on condition that the castle would not be rebuilt for 30 years. Llywelyn was acknowledged by Henry III to be officially the Prince of Wales.¹⁴⁸

The Treaty had been signed by Henry III who died five years later. His son and successor, Edward I, expected Llywelyn to pay homage to him and, when this failed to happen, he began his 1277 attack on Wales – referred to as the First War of Welsh Independence. Having taken control of all the land east of the Conwy River, he began constructing the fortifications at Flint and Rhuddlan. In contravention of the Treaty, he began rebuilding Hawarden Castle in 1281.

Llywelyn's brother Dafydd ap Gruffydd had supported England in this war and had been rewarded with being given the control of Denbighshire. The rebuilding of Hawarden Castle so incensed him that he attacked the Castle in 1282. Despite having established a peace treaty with Edward, Llywelyn felt compelled to support his brother's uprising which resulted in Edward's successful invasion of Wales (referred to as the Second War of Welsh Independence) and of both brothers being killed.¹⁴⁹

Because of its strategic location, the rebuilt castle became a focus of attacks between the Royalists and the Parliamentarians during the 17th century Civil War with the latter taking control of it from the former in 1643. Then, with the help of 3 000 Irish troops, it reverted back to the Royalists a month later. In 1646 it was back in Parliamentary hands and, to prevent it being of any further military usage, it was partially destroyed – with just the ruined Keep being left standing.

¹⁴⁶ Extract from North Wales Photographic Memories : Francis Frith Collection

¹⁴⁷ Shown on the following page.

¹⁴⁸ He was the only 'native' Welshman to be so-named.

¹⁴⁹ Other than Owain Glyndŵr's rebellion during the 15th century, this attack on Hawarden Castle represented the beginning of the end of the struggle for Welsh independence.

The entire estate was sold to John Glynne in 1651 and, in the 18th century, a mansion house was built by the Glynne family. It became known as Hawarden Castle with the ruined medieval structure being named the ‘Old’ Castle.



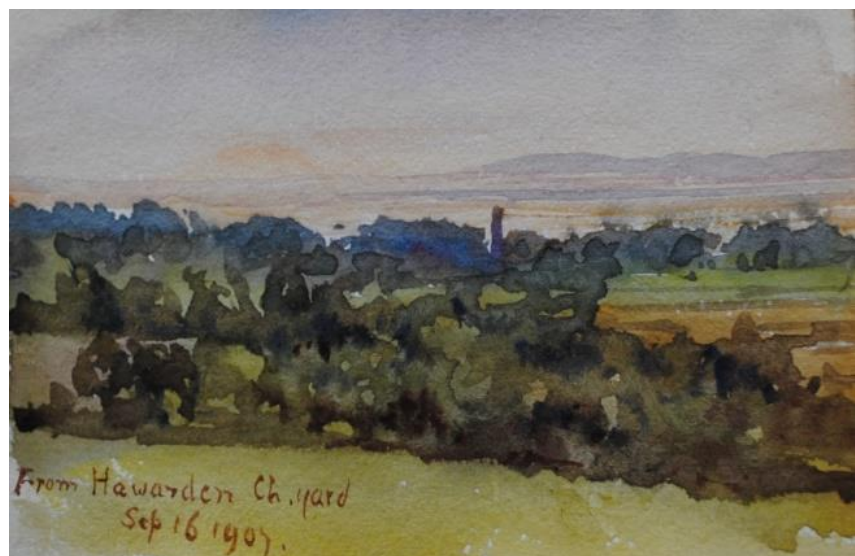
As a newly elected Member of Parliament, William Ewart Gladstone married Catherine Glynne in 1839 – and so began his sixty-year’s association with Hawarden Castle and Hawarden generally which was to last until his death in 1898.

After serving four terms as British Prime Minister, he spent his retirement at Hawarden sorting out his private library consisting of some 32 000 books.¹⁵⁰

His aim was to ‘bring together books who had no readers with readers who had no books’ and to this end, he founded a library in close proximity to Deiniol Church and, in 1895 (with very little help) he transported the bulk of his collection by wheelbarrow to the new library which was housed in a temporary structure. He was eighty-five at the time. Donating £40 000 towards the building of a new library, it was opened after his death in 1902. Based on his Oxford University experience, Deiniol’s Library was designed to be a residential library – and is considered to be Britain’s finest such library. Since 2010 it has been known as Gladstone’s Library.¹⁵¹

Apart from Beatrice’s sketches, above and below, the relevance of the above information to the sister’s visit to Hawarden hinges purely on the fact that the year –1895 – coincided with the time of William Gladstone wheeling his books in a wheelbarrow to his temporary library alongside the church.¹⁵²

This view from the churchyard requires on-site verification. Should it include what seems to be an exaggeratedly high dimension to the ruined Keep, then the background appears to incorrectly represent a view more northwards.¹⁵³



¹⁵⁰ Encyclopaedia Britannica

¹⁵¹ Britain Express : David Ross Editor and Gladstoneslibrary.org

¹⁵² Obviously no connection can be made between the sisters and Gladstone but conjectures have no fixed boundaries..

¹⁵³ It is, however, highly unlikely that Beatrice would have exaggerated or manipulated her recordings.

Towyn (May 1896)

Before visiting Towyn on the north coast in May, Beatrice had done a single sketch in London in April, while Annie had completed sketches of Cheddar in Somerset in March. Other than these records, their whereabouts for the first half of 1896 are unknown.

Beatrice produced two sketches of tented camps on this visit. It is not known why she visited the camps or whether Annie accompanied her.¹⁵⁴

As with other locations in Wales, land in the vicinity of Towyn had been occupied as camps for the local Volunteer Corps established after the Crimean War (1853-1856) in order to bolster the number of militarily-trained men throughout Britain. Following the Anglo-Boer War (South African War) of 1899-1901, the dependency on these volunteer groups led to the formalised establishment of the Territorial Army in 1908. Training camps were held annually.¹⁵⁵

St Asaph (LLanelwy) (June 1896, 1918 and 1928)

A monastery was founded by a missionary by the name of Asaph in the 6th century to be replaced by a Norman church in the 12th century only to be burned down in the 13th century by Edward I's troops. The rebuilt church was then damaged during Owain Glendŵr's rebellion in 1402 – having to be rebuilt again three centuries later after a storm.

William Morgan (who was the bishop between 1601-4) is buried in the church and is memorialised in the churchyard. He'd undertaken the first translation of the Bible into Welsh.

The historic importance of this cathedral is unmatched by its relatively small scale.¹⁵⁶

The sisters visited St Asaph on the 5 June 1896. The sketch below is by Annie.



¹⁵⁴ The sketches are on tinted paper and not clearly reproducible.

¹⁵⁵ Historypoints.org

¹⁵⁶ David Ross Editor St Asaph Cathedral, Britainexpress.com

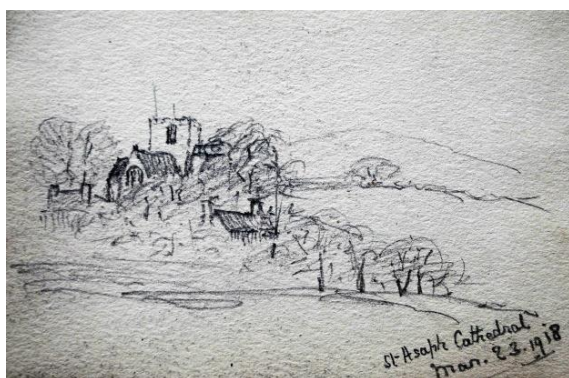
The sketch alongside is by Beatrice.,



This illustration is an 1840 engraving (by Benjamin Winkles) which is based on the painting entitled *St Asaph Cathedral from the bridge*, by Charles Warren.¹⁵⁷



Beatrice visited St Asaph again in 1918 and sketched the cathedral, below left. Then, in 1920, she sketched the Old Palace which, built by Bishop Bagot in the 1790's, replaced an earlier building.¹⁵⁸



¹⁵⁷ National Library of Wales

¹⁵⁸ Britishlistedbuildings.co.uk Mark Godge

Denbigh (June 1896)

Of all of Edward I's castles built in the late 13th century, *'the most Picturesque is Denbigh, which stands on a hill above its town in a lovely Tuscan pose.'*¹⁵⁹

The castle replaced Welsh fortifications which, given the strategic nature of the site, were possibly built on even earlier fortifications. The castle fell into ruins in the 17th century after it was surrendered by the Royalists to the Parliamentary forces.¹⁶⁰



This sketch was done by Beatrice and, as an example of her careful attention to detail, the stone carving (thought to be of Edward I¹⁶¹) can be seen above the entrance. Although St Asaph and Denbigh are only about six miles apart, the sketches are recorded as having been done on the same date – 5th June 1896.¹⁶²

Whether or not the sisters were aware of the fact that Sir Henry Morton Stanley had been born in Denbigh and been brought up in a workhouse in St Asaph is not known, but they would surely have known about his historic meeting with Dr Livingstone (engaged in his search for the origins of the Nile) in 1871.¹⁶³

At the time of their visit, they would certainly not have been aware that Kate Roberts had lived in Denbigh from 1935 until her death in 1985. Kate Roberts was *'the first woman to be recognized as a major figure in the history of Welsh literature'*.¹⁶⁴ The relevance of referring to Kate Roberts is that, in her writing, she described and recorded the life of the people of the region – much in the same way that Beatrice and Annie visually recorded what they saw on their travels – both being, in effect, a snapshot of the period.

Closer in time to the sisters' visit, was the fact that between 1895 and 1913, Beatrix Potter paid thirteen visits to her uncle's home (Gwaerynog Hall) nearby Denbigh. She'd sit in the garden and sketch and it was here that she created *The Tale of the Flopsy Bunnies*.¹⁶⁵

The year after Beatrix Potter's last visit, the First World War broke out and, to accommodate the great many who had been wounded overseas and required rehabilitation, auxiliary hospitals were established throughout Britain by the Red Cross. One such hospital was set up in Ystrad Isaf Hall just outside Denbigh.¹⁶⁶

Beatrice recorded two rough sketches of the gardens at **Ystrad Isaf** in February 1918. Her purpose in visiting the hospital is not known but the contribution of the people in Denbigh and the district to the well-being of the patients was strongly acknowledged. Beatrice had been living in Caerwys since 1909 – just eight miles away.

¹⁵⁹ Morris p301

¹⁶⁰ Lise Hull Castlewales.com 2009

¹⁶¹ Ibid

¹⁶² *Given the completeness of the paintings, it's possible that the incorrect date was recorded.*

¹⁶³ Morris p144

¹⁶⁴ Morris p143

¹⁶⁵ Land of Epic, Cymry Wales 2017

¹⁶⁶ Shaun Davies Denbigshirefreepress.co.uk 3 August 2018

Llandrillo yn Rhos (Rhos-on Sea) 1902

Six years since their last recorded visit to the north-eastern counties, Annie was back on the north coast. Both these sketches were done by her.

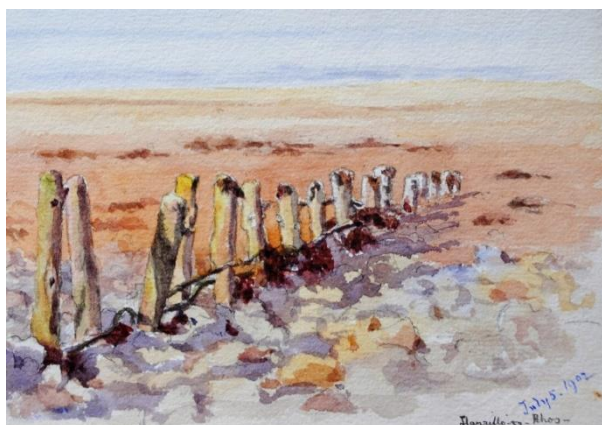
Today, this view of St Trillo's Parish Church is vastly different with the open space now swallowed up with the growth of this seaside resort.



Built in the 13th century, supposedly on the site of an earlier church, it was added to in the 16th century.

A great deal older is the tiny St Trillo's chapel (right on the beachfront) which is thought to be the smallest church in Britain – it accommodates only six people. There is uncertainty as to how old it is (having been rebuilt over the years) but it is claimed that Christians have worshipped on the site for nearly 1 500 years.

Rhos-on-Sea is known for the legend attached to the Welsh Prince Madoc who, in 1170, was said to have set sail from this coastline in his successful quest to discover America – this being three hundred years before Christopher Columbus's achievement. There is, however, little evidence to back up this story.^{167 168}



¹⁶⁷ Walesdirectory.co.uk

¹⁶⁸ The Irish claim for 'point of departure' in the voyage to find America dates back a very great deal earlier – fourteen hundred years before Columbus. Acknowledgement of this legend is confirmed by no less a personage than the President of the USA. Ronald Reagan's 1984 'endorsement' appears on the official Irish Tourist Board's information board prominently displayed above a small creek on the western coastline of the Dingle Peninsula.

According to the information board, *'St Brendon, together with fourteen monks, planned to bring the Gospel to the unknown Continent to the West ... they set sail from Brandon Creek around the year 535 AD. It took seven years for the monks to reach America across uncharted waters. The story of his voyage is recorded in the Medieval Manuscript 'Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis'.*

Unlike Prince Madoc's legend, St Brendon's alleged feat has been subjected to very serious testing and not found to be wanting. In 1976, Tim Severin (together with four colleagues) constructed a handcrafted boat (*currach*) using only techniques and materials available in 6th century Ireland. They set sail from Brandon Creek and reached Newfoundland thirteen months later having, along the way, identified various landmarks alluded to in the St Brendon's Manuscript.

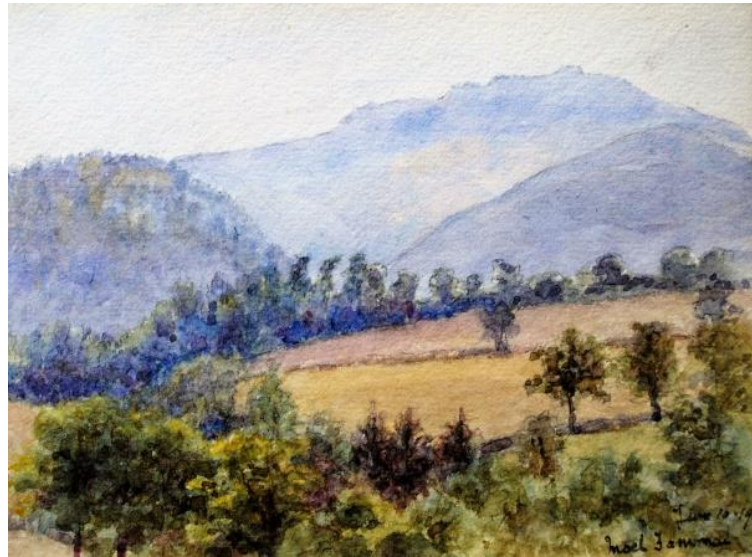
Source for the above : Irish Tourist Board (Information Board at Brandon Creek)

Moel Famau (June 1903)

Perched on top of Moel Famau (the highest summit in the Clywdian Range) sits the barely discernible base of the Jubilee Tower.

Built in 1810 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of King George III, the tower collapsed in a storm in the 1860's.

The base remains as a well-used (but hardly necessary) viewing platform serving the many visitors on the well-used Offa's Dyke walking trail.¹⁶⁹



This scene was painted by Annie.

Dyserth (August 1903)

'*Dyserth. An Historic Village*' is the title of a fairly recent publication.¹⁷⁰ It could be argued that the description could apply to almost every village in Wales, but Dyserth has a great deal of visible evidence close at hand.

Its location just a few miles from the coastline, its prominent limestone 'hillocks' at the northern end of the Clywdian Range, its ready water supply, fertile soil and equable climate made it conducive for both settlement and later fortification.

Much evidence is found of the presence of Neolithic peoples. Apart from shaped stone tools, the second-largest cairn in Britain is found nearby. Built on top of Gop Hill, the mound is considered to have been built around 2000 BC. As with the larger Silbury Hill in Wiltshire and despite the legends and theories, their purpose is unknown.¹⁷¹

Given the prominence and strategic form of Moel Hiraddug (also known as Y Foel), the usage of its summit for the construction of fortifications was inevitable. The Iron Age hillfort is one of a number found along the Clwydian Range. Dated sometime between about 800 BC and the Roman conquest of Wales in AD 74, it then fell into disuse although its outlines are clearly in evidence.¹⁷²

The only evidence of the Roman occupation of the area lies in the remains of a Roman bath at Prestatyn about three miles from Dyserth.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ BBC News 27 Feb 2013

¹⁷⁰ Ronald and Lucy Davies

¹⁷¹ Britainexpress; David Ross Editor

¹⁷² Mark Goodge Ancientmonuments.uk

¹⁷³ The following information sourced from the Dyserth Times Community Magazine. Pete@dyserth.com

Offa's Dyke (built in the 8th century) followed the Clywdian Range and passed to the east of Dyserth, leading on to Prestatyn on the coast.

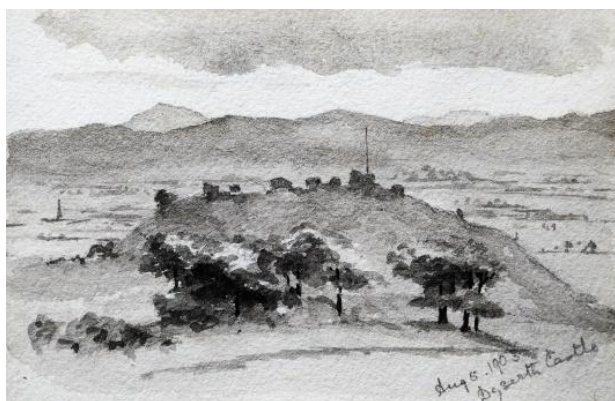
The growth of the present settlement of Dyserth took place around the foot of Moel Hiraddug. The first mention of the name, Dyserth, appeared in the Domesday Book (1086) of William the Conqueror.

Dyserth Castle was built by Henry III on the limestone outcrop of Graig Fawr (on the northern side of the settlement) in the 1240's. It lasted only twenty-odd years before being destroyed by the Welsh. Very little remains of the ruins following extensive quarrying during World War I.

This painting by Annie is presumably looking towards Dyserth with Moel Hirradug prominent on the skyline.



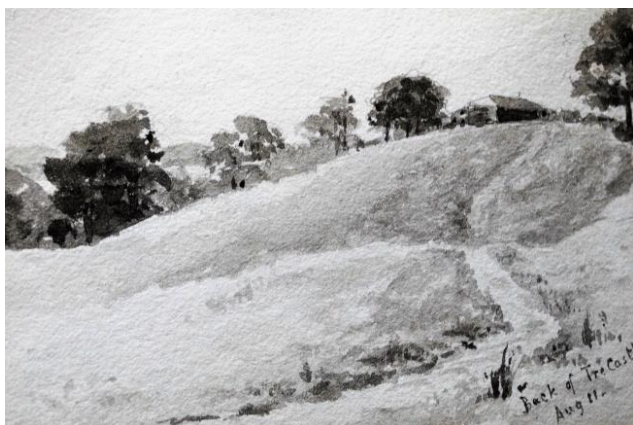
Both the views below are of the remains of the castle prior to much of it being lost to quarrying. These sketches and those at the bottom were by Beatrice. The sketch on the left appears to be overlooking the upper portion of the Vale of Clwyd. The high steeple just visible on the left is possibly that of the Marble Church at Bodelwyddan.¹⁷⁴



The above views are looking towards Rhyl with Colwyn Bay and Great and Little Orme beyond.

¹⁷⁴ The Environmental Group's section within the Dyserth Times Community Magazine has a useful annotated panorama of the Vale of Clwyd

The sisters' stay at Dyserth (from the 5th-12th August 1903) was spent on Tre Castle (Tre-Castell) farm just outside the village. Built probably in the 17th century, the farmhouse is a Grade II listed building described as a late vernacular farmhouse which has retained its character. In 1839 it was listed as being owned by the Bishop of St Asaph.¹⁷⁵



Only the painting on the right is by Annie (all the others being by Beatrice. Annie's painting is included here because of both its similarity to the one adjacent and because it was grouped with her painting looking towards Dyserth . Many details, however, do not seem to match.

Beehive at Tre Castle

A rough pencil sketch (by Beatrice on the 8th) included the annotation '*Outside Tre Castle waiting for Sid & Wid*'. These being their brothers – Sidney and Wilfred.



¹⁷⁵ Source : Britishlistedbuildings Cadw ID 1504

LLandudno 1904

Settlement in the area dates back to the Stone Age, while the evidence of copper mining on the Great Orme headland is thought to date back some 4000 years ago.¹⁷⁶

*'In the 6th century, the young Tudno ... entered the monastery of Bangor is y Coed (Bangor on Dee), which was renowned for its learning, patriotism and missionary zeal, ... Tudno then came to the windswept headland to bring to the little round stone huts the message of Christianity.'*¹⁷⁷

The name 'LLandudno' is derived from St Tudno and the first written reference to it dated back to 1284.

The proposal to turn the land (owned by Lord Mostyn) into a holiday resort was made by a Liverpool architect (Owen Williams) in 1848. Its growth as a holiday destination serving visitors from Liverpool, Manchester and the Midlands was rapid – particularly after the rail connection in 1858.

Despite the failure to secure the sought-after endorsement as the main ferry port to Ireland,

Llandudno grew to become the largest seaside resort on the north coast – renowned for its Victorian architecture.

With the first pier having been built in 1836, the current pier was completed in the 1870's. It is the longest pier in Wales.

Beatrice visited the area in November 1904 and again in April 1912 when she painted the view alongside. All the illustrations are by her.

Annotated 'From 14 North Parade', the view is across the Ormes Bay towards Little Orme.



The address refers to Wildings Hotel which is an upgraded Victorian period hotel, situated on the promenade opposite the entrance to the pier.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ All the following facts were sourced from VisitLlandudno.com

¹⁷⁷ Extract from T F Wynne's booklet *St Tudno and St Tudno's Church*

¹⁷⁸ Wikipedia and Tripadvisor.co.za

Looking out from her hotel room across the bay, Beatrice may not have been aware of the fact that over three hundred years before, a secret press was being operated by Jesuits in a cave on the Little Orme headland. This was at the time of the Reformation and the abolition of the monasteries. To conceal its origins, the title page of the 1585 publication referred to it having been printed in Rouen, France.¹⁷⁹

The Marine Drive around the Great Orme headland was completed in 1878. The view on the right is presumably from the western side of the Drive overlooking Conwy Bay towards Penmaenmawr and the mountains beyond.



Saint Tudno's 6th century church has been replaced (on the same site) many times over the centuries. While nothing remains of the original structure, a portion of the 12th century church still remains – with the remainder of the current church dating back to the 15th century. Following damages to the church in 1839, it was restored in 1855.

The church sits above the Marine Drive, overlooking Colwyn Bay – about two miles from Llandudno..



¹⁷⁹ Morris p100

Flint 1905

As has been described in the section dealing with Hawarden, Edward I's period of castle-building (beginning in 1277) was in retaliation of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd's refusal to pay allegiance to him.

Flint Castle (so-named because of its founding material) was the first castle to be built – this being due to its location alongside the Dee estuary (making it difficult to approach) and at the 'gateway' to Wales. Inland of the castle (and together with it), a town was laid out in the same way as the bastide towns of France.¹⁸⁰

Completed in 1284, the castle was soon besieged by the Welsh which provoked Edward to extend his castle-building efforts. Following a further attack on the castle in 1294, it was deliberately burnt by the English occupants to prevent it falling into Welsh hands.

The restored castle was garrisoned by the Royalists during the 1640 Civil War and (as with Hawarden Castle) following months of holding out, was finally surrendered to the Parliamentary troops. Cromwell's decree of devastation resulted in it being effectively destroyed as a fortifiable structure in 1647.

Beatrice's visit to the area in 1905 was recorded by this view from Burton Marsh (Burton Mere on the Wirral) looking across the Dee estuary towards Flint.



Her next recorded visit was in 1927 when she sketched the north-eastern tower of the castle and the view from the castle.

Also in October 1927, she sketched **Ewloe Castle** (bottom sketch) which lay between Flint and Hawarden.



Ewloe Castle is described by Morris as being the most secretive of all the castles –

*'hidden away there in its dell like a robbers' hideaway.*¹⁸¹

Thought to have been built by Llywelyn ap Gruffydd (the last native Prince of Wales) in the 13th century, its importance lies in the fact that it is one of the few Welsh-constructed castles to have survived – albeit now in ruins. Its distinctive feature being the 'D'-shaped tower.¹⁸²



¹⁸⁰ Morris pp 306/7

¹⁸¹ Morris p301

¹⁸² Castlewales.com Jeffrey L Thomas 2009

Llandulas (Llanddulas) 1907

Lying on the coastline midway between Conwy and Rhyl, Llandulas was visited by Beatrice in July 1907. This was a few days before sketching the steamer stranded in fog at Rhyl and her visit to Hawarden in September of that year.

The Llandulas area is best known for it being the site of the ambush of King Richard II in 1399. Penmaenhead is a prominent headland lying a mile or so to the west. Although since quarried away, the headland would have extended to the shoreline in the Middle Ages and, being difficult to cross, it was here that the planned ambush was to take place.

Planned by the Duke of Lancaster (Henry Bolingbroke), Richard II's capture led to his abdication and to Bolingbroke's crowning as King Henry IV. This marked the end of the 250-year direct reign of England by the Plantagenets and also, later, to the Civil War (the War of Roses 1455-1485) fought between the Lancastrians and the Yorkists.¹⁸³

The Church of St Cynbryd was founded by St Cynbryd and mentioned in the 1254 Norwich Taxation of Parish Churches. The early church building was ruined by a storm in 1732 and, while a new building was erected, it was left to ruin and demolished in 1868. The current church was begun that same year.¹⁸⁴



Holywell (Treffynnon) 1913 and 1927

In September 1913, Beatrice visited Holywell (so-named because of the well that miraculously appeared in the 7th century) and sketched the chapel at **St Winifred's (Winefrid's) Well**. Other than many sketch recordings in Caerwys (to which she'd moved from Chester in 1909), this was her first recorded sketch in Wales since 1907. Occasional trips had been made to various locations in England during that time.

'The holy spring of St Winifred, an important center of medieval pilgrimage still venerated today, is said to have risen where St Beuno restored his niece, St Winifred to life after her head had been severed by Cardoc, a rejected suitor.'

The first mention of the shrine as a place of pilgrimage was in the 12th century. King Henry V made a pilgrimage to the site before his victory for the English against the French at Agincourt in 1415 and *'The future Henry VII, too, is thought to have made a secret visit before winning his crown at Bosworth in 1485.'*¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ Ian Reid : Colwyn Bay Heritage Online 'Richard II meets a sticky end near Colwyn Bay'

¹⁸⁴ Clywd Family History Society 2012

¹⁸⁵ Castlewales.com Jeffrey L Thomas 2009

The Bosworth victory marked the end of the thirty year's War of Roses and the beginning of the 118 years of Tudor rule.¹⁸⁶

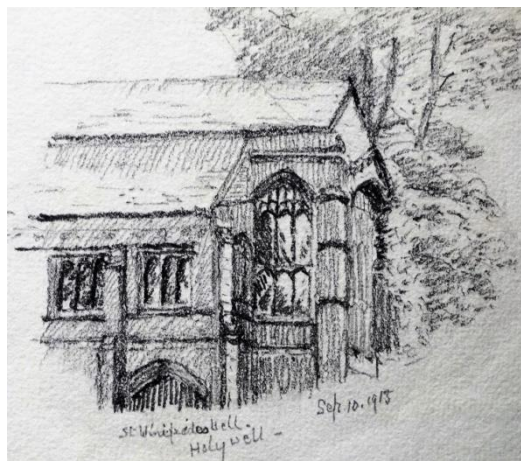
St Winifred's Well is included on the traditional list of the Seven Wonders of Wales.

The present '*remarkable and architecturally unique*' chapel dates back to the 15th century – being a replacement of an earlier structure.¹⁸⁷

Beatrice's next recorded sketch nearby Holywell was in 1927 when she sketched the ruin of **Basingwerk Abbey** which lies a mile from St Winifred's Well. This was on the same day as she sketched Flint Castle.

The Abbey was built in the 12th century as a Savigniac monastery but was later taken over by the Cistercian order. Prior to its dissolution in the 16th century, it had been the owner of extensive land-holdings – which included St Winifred's Well and chapel.¹⁸⁸

While portions of the original walling still survive, most of what still remains dates back to the 13th century.¹⁸⁹



This sundial at Holywell (the date, 1746 inscribed on it), sketched by Annie in 1920, forms part of her collection of sundials sketched throughout Wales and England up until 1924 – the year before she died. Since the end of 1910, these are the only records of her sketches currently available following her illness which was first noted in the obituary to her brother - Wilfred - in January 1917.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Although the War of Roses between the Lancastrians and the Yorkists, was essentially an English affair, a strong Welsh connection was evident in its being brought to an end.

Henry Tudor (later King Henry VII) was the grandson of Owen Tudor (a direct descendent of a 12th century Welsh warrior who became the seneschal of Gwynedd at the time of Llywelyn the Great and who's family later joined Owain Glendwr's 1400 uprising. Henry's grandmother was Queen Catherine of Valois who, as the widow of Henry V, had an illicit affair with Owen Tudor – their child being Henry's father, Edmund.

Edmund had married the 12 year old Margaret Beaufort who was a descendent of John of Gaunt and it was through this connection that her son, Henry (born in Pembroke Castle when she was 13), was later able to lay claim to the House of Lancaster. With his father having died before he was born, Henry was brought up by his uncle (Jasper - the Earl of Pembroke) who took him out of the country to Brittany to escape any threats to his life. Henry remained in exile until, at the age of 28, he returned to England and defeated Richard III in the Battle of Bosworth to become King of England.

Source : English Monarchs.co.uk 2004-2018

¹⁸⁷ Castlewales.com Jeffrey L Thomas 2009

¹⁸⁸ Britainexpress; David Ross Editor

¹⁸⁹ Castleswales Ibid

¹⁹⁰ The obituary to Wilfred is to be found in the annexure.

Glyn Ceiriog (1926)

Two sketches by Beatrice were recorded in the vicinity of Glyn Ceiriog on the 18th of April. This was the year after Annie's death and the only sketches for this period were from Beauchamp Court near Worcester and from London.

Lying about six miles west of Chirk, the village of Glyn Ceiriog is only three miles south of Llangollen (as the crow flies) but the road connection to it is via Chirk.

With the original church of St Ffraid (established in the 13th century) being perched along with a few houses on the upper slope of the valley, the core of the village then later developed separately on the more level ground of the valley bottom.¹⁹¹

The sketch of Plas y Garth appears (from early maps) to represent one of the earlier properties lying on the upper slopes.¹⁹²



While the greatest expression of Welsh national-assertion represented by Owain Glendŵr's early 15th century

rebellion took the form of armed combat and similar forms of insurrection, the second half of the 19th century saw the rise of a different mode of national-assertion. In response to the formalized clamping down on the use of the Welsh language and the belittling of its culture, this new rebellion found its expression in what Morris referred to as the Welsh renaissance.¹⁹³

'It was a cultural revolution! The country, still 80 percent Welsh-speaking, was flooded with Welsh books. An endless sequence of tracts, memoirs, novels, collections of verse, essays, dictionaries and even travel books poured from the presses of Wales.'

National institutions were established, starting with the Welsh University College in Aberystwyth in 1872 which relied heavily on funds donated by the Welsh populace. This was followed by a National Museum and a National Library.

To further quote Morris, *'... perhaps a truer memorial to the times is a more modest building altogether, the Memorial Institute at Glynceiriog in Clywd. Glynceiriog had always been a nest of poets, and in 1910 it was decided to build a village hall and institute permanently to commemorate three of them – John Ceiriog Hughes, a nineteenth-century railwayman, Huw Morus, a seventeenth-century farmer's son, Robert Ellis, a nineteenth-century Baptist minister.'*

The Ceiriog Memorial Institute still operates as the cultural centre for the District.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ Clywd-Powys Archaeological Trust

¹⁹² Plas y Garth, Glyn Ceiriog is given as the address of Lord Taylor of Harlow as referred to in a letter contained in the Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners, November 1980. Lord Stephen Taylor is referred to in Wikipedia as *physician, civil servant, politician and educator*. He died in 1988.

¹⁹³ Morris pp238-243

¹⁹⁴ North East Wales Heritage Forum : *'As a testament to traditional Welsh values and heritage there is no better example throughout the land ...'*

Part Eight : Caerwys (1909 – 1935)¹⁹⁵

‘CAERWYS - home of the Eisteddfod and the smallest Town in Great Britain with a Royal Charter. Caerwys is situated in North Wales in the County of Flintshire - just under two miles from the A55 and one mile from the A541 (Mold / Denbigh Road) at Afonwen. The centre of Caerwys is a conservation area and the Town is surrounded by areas of outstanding natural beauty and stunning views across mountains and valley.’¹⁹⁶

The above summarized description belies the long and fascinating history of this village as outlined in a booklet brought out by the local Historical Society. Quoting from this booklet : *‘Caerwys lies on the northern side of the Wheeler Valley, a landscape of rolling farmland, thick hedgerows and wooded valleys, with the open moorland of the Clywydian Ridge to the south and west. The Clywydian Range has been designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in recognition of its nationally important landscape quality.’¹⁹⁷*

‘The name of the place is thought to be derived from “Caer”, a fortress, and “Ewys”, a summons; denoting that this was anciently a small Roman station, and subsequently a seat of judicature.’¹⁹⁸

Bronze Age burial mounds and a nearby Iron Age hillfort attest to the presence in the area of Prehistoric tribes – many centuries before any Roman occupation.

The first mention of the place appeared in the Domesday Book of 1086 signifying its importance as a settlement. At around this time Gruffydd ap Cynan (King of Gwynedd) had a palace at Maesmynan which lies about a mile from the current Caerwys. The association of the Princes of Wales with the area extended through five generations (from the 11th to the 13th centuries), ending with Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (Llywelyn the Last) before his defeat by Edward 1 in 1282.

Thomas Pennant visited the area in the 1770’s and recorded the following : *‘This place (Maes Mynan) has been called Llys Maes Mynan, or the palace of Maes Mynan, Where Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, last Prince of Wales, resided in a house, whose foundations, till within these few years, were to be seen in an adjacent meadow.’¹⁹⁹*

In 1290, Caerwys was granted a Royal Charter by Edward I, giving it the status of a town. It was notable that, of the ten towns in North Wales that were granted this status, Caerwys was the only truly Welsh settlement – all the others being Norman fortified towns where the Welsh had limited rights.

The strong Welsh cultural traditions of Caerwys were epitomized by the fact that it was known as the birthplace of the eisteddfod in North Wales. Possibly dating back to the 11th century, eisteddfodau were regularly held here over the next five hundred years. In the 16th century, two particularly important ones were held; the first commissioned by Henry VIII to codify the bardic laws and the second (in 1568) commissioned by Elizabeth I to regularise the quality of those claiming to be bards and, through a formal licencing process, select only those who met the required standards.

¹⁹⁵ The location of Caerwys is indicated on the Part Seven map

¹⁹⁶ Quoted from the Caerwys Town Council website www.caerwys-town.com

¹⁹⁷ Caerwys Historical Society, Caerwys Guide, 1979 (**Unless otherwise indicated, all the following background information is taken from this booklet**)

¹⁹⁸ Quote from William Davis in his “Handbook of the Vale of Clwyd” written in 1857 – as contained in Williams S. E; *A History of Caerwys* ?1962 p2

¹⁹⁹ Pennant Thomas; *A Tour in Wales* (Vol 2) Edited by John Rhys 1883 p139 Digitised by Google for the Library of the University of California, Los Angeles

Pennant refers to the eisteddfodau as being the British Olympics and emphasizes the high standing and important role played by the bards as oral historians who were able to recall the events that ‘*would otherwise have perished in oblivion*’.²⁰⁰

The newly formed Gwynnedigion Society held an important eisteddfod in Caerwys in 1798 aimed at reviving the bardic tradition which had begun to wane – this led to the beginning of the regular holding of the National Eisteddfod.

The importance of Caerwys as a commercial and trade centre during the 1700’s and before was commented on by Pennant, (it) ‘*has the most considerable fairs for cattle, sheep and horses in all the county. They are of great antiquity.*’²⁰¹

By the 19th century, its commercial importance had declined despite its close proximity to the newly constructed rail station at Afonwen. It had been by-passed by the construction of the main roads of the region and industrial development had taken place elsewhere.

Its historic importance and its picturesque surroundings, together with its connection to the Mold-Denbigh railway line resulted in it taking on a new role – that of an attraction for holiday-makers and day-trippers from Merseyside and Chester.

Bodlondeb and surroundings

The sisters’ recorded association with Caerwys began in August 1909. This was the year in which their mother died and when they left their home (of 25 years) at No 6 Kings Buildings in Chester.

There was no prior record of them visiting Caerwys before their first sketches of the house they then lived in for four years - Bodlondeb in Chapel Street. In 1913 they moved to Tan Llan on the edge of the town where they both lived until their respective deaths – Annie in 1925 and Beatrice in 1935.

The above sketch was done by Beatrice, together with the one on the right – the one on the left being Annie’s – with the notation ‘*My window (7 sisters roses) Bodlondeb Aug 11th 1909.*’



²⁰⁰ Ibid pp 81-83

²⁰¹ Ibid p 78



These views of the garden and of the rose at Bodlondeb were painted by Beatrice in May and June 1912 while the sundial was sketched by Annie, it reads : ‘Oak pedestal, base of red brick.’



There are many references to the beauty of the surrounding countryside which is clearly evident from the following scenes which have all been painted by Beatrice unless specifically mentioned as having been done by Annie..



The one alongside is entitled ‘From my window, Bodlondeb Aug 14.’ The view is looking south-west with the Clywdian Range in the background and with (presumably) Glasfryn Hall seen peeking up from its site overlooking the Wheeler River valley.²⁰²

Should this, in fact, be Glasfryn Hall, Beatrice would probably have had no idea that, four years later, she and Annie would be spending the rest of their lives in their next home, Tan Llan, which lies (out of sight) but alongside Glasfryn Hall.



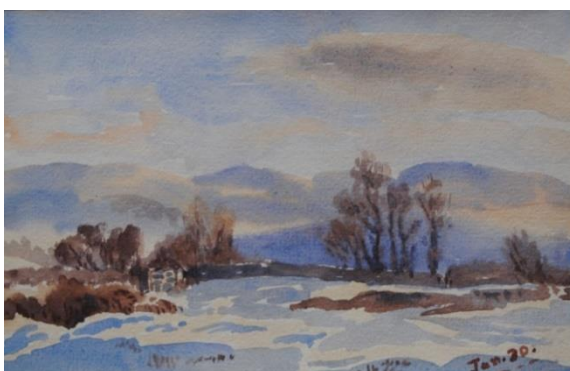
²⁰² It is presumed that this is Glasfryn Hall given its distinctive red-brick chimneys. It was built in 1878 and has been recently purchased by an artist (Dave Roberts) who intends establishing a private art gallery – as seen from his website.



The above paintings illustrate the general landscape and features around Caerwys while the two below indicate the same scene painted in November and December 1909.



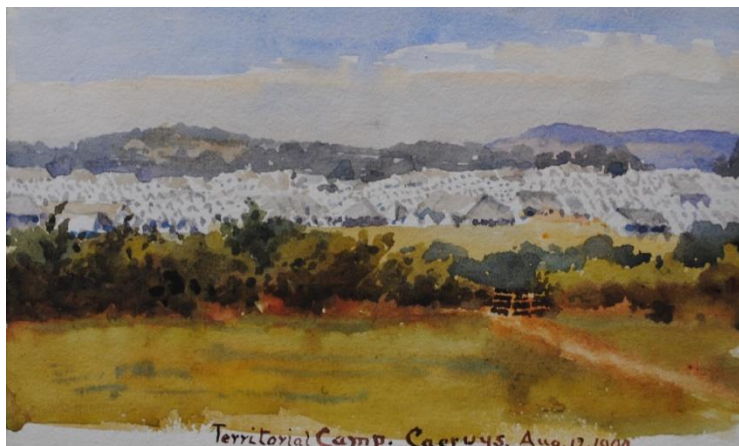
The sisters' first year in Caerwys was clearly one of revelling in the beauty of the area and its changes through the seasons. The painting (below right) was done by Annie in January 1910.



Drawing inspiration from their surroundings, the quality of their painting reflects what seems to have been a more settled time in their lives although they still moved around recording sketches of visits elsewhere. The paintings of farmhouses are untitled but form part of the Caerwys grouping.



Before the First World War, a large Territorial army training camp was located near Maesmynan. This view of the camp painted by Beatrice on Aug 12 1909 indicates its considerable extent.



The reason for Beatrice recording this camp may well have been simply because of its proximity to her new home. However, she visited and recorded the camp at Towyn in 1896 and this could indicate some connection to these camps. It is also noteworthy that her brother (Colonel Wilfred Cummings) was not only active in the armed forces but lived for a while with the sisters both at Bodlondeb and at Tan Llan.²⁰³

Tan Llan from 1913



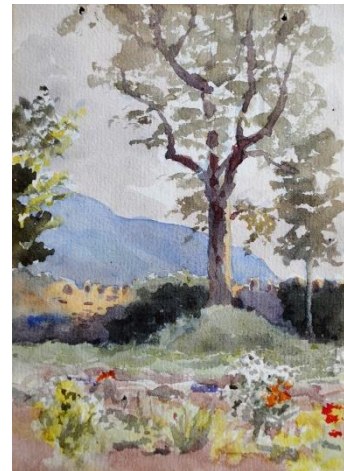
This and all the following paintings of Tan Llan were by Beatrice. The only records of Annie's presence at Tan Llan are the references in her brother Wilfred's obituary, a single painting of the garden, a 1914 sketch of the sundial and a few pencil sketches of nests found in the garden. She did, however, record various sketches of the interior of St Michael's Church in the 1920's and also sketched the sundial at Glasfryn.

It is relevant to note that the obituary made mention of the fact that Annie had not been able to attend Wilfred's funeral service in 1917 because of her '*delicate state of health.*'

²⁰³ Obituary to his death in 1917; Denbigshire Free Press 6 Jan 1917.



The above two views from Tan Llan are both entitled '*from my bedroom*'²⁰⁴ Both the paintings below are from the Drawingroom. The one on the right is by Annie – all the others are by Beatrice.



²⁰⁴ Whether Beatrice changed bedrooms or whether they're simply the view out of different windows is not known. The handwriting confirms that both paintings are hers.



The painting on the left is from the Spare Room while the one on the right is from the kitchen window. The church is visible through the trees in both paintings. |

ectory X Stone roller -
 "It is a very satisfactory pillar,
 and carries with it that pleasant
 sense of a decorous and not use-
 less end of the days for a
 faithful old servant, albeit
 of senseless stone"
 A.M. Earle -



The above refers to the old stone roller being used for the sundial.²⁰⁵ Whether this refers to the pillar (garden roller) or the base (industrial roller) is not known. The above sundial was sketched by Annie in 1914 while the snowscene below (from the diningroom window) and the sundial were painted by Beatrice on April 11 1917.



²⁰⁵ The background to Annie's reference to A M Earle is not known.

Flower sketches

An album belonging to Beatrice was filled with some thirty-five pencil sketches of different species of plants, insects and fungi found in the garden at Tan Llan. A few examples are indicated below.

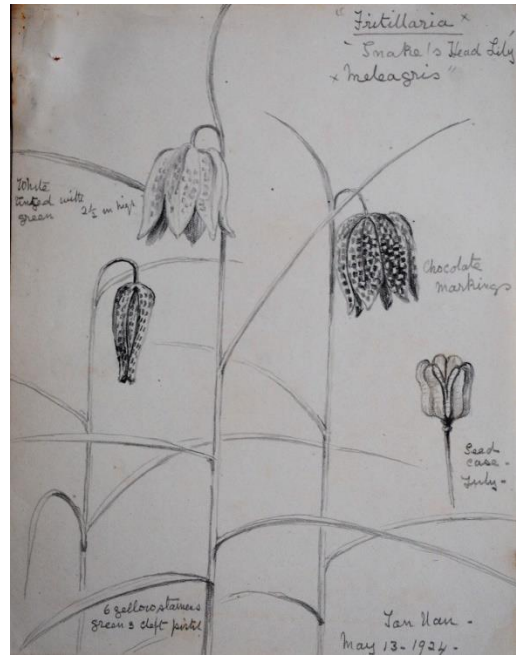
Finely drawn and highly detailed, this collection represents a valuable record that invites a comparison with the present day. The sketches mostly date from 1922-4. In addition to the Tan Llan garden, there were a few sketched nearby, these include : *'High Road by Caerwys Hall, High Road from Caerwys to Holywell – near Plas Cerig, Maesmynan Woods (3) and Wild daffodil from Wood by Mrs Littler's Farm between Bodfari and Caerwys.'* There were also a few plant sketches from Anglesey.



Alongside is Beatrice's sketch (May 24 1923) of a Pasque flower Whether this was indigenous or cultivated at Tan Llan is not known. Her description of it was *'Red purple petals with yellow stamens'*.



Hose in Hose. (Polyanthus) Sketched April 14 1924 *'Primrose yellow flower. Bright orange rays. Greenish centre & pistil. Orange stamens.'*



Double Wood Anemone on the left with Fritillaria Mellagris (Snake's Head Lily) on the right. Both have detailed descriptions of the colourings. They were sketched in May 1924.

Details of the petals, bracket and leaves of a campanula. Similar sketches were done of a lobelia and a clematis.



The sketch below is one of a few by Annie found in Beatrice's album. Her description reads 'Pheasant's nest & eggs. Under dwarf juniper in rock garden May 7th 1923.'



St Michael's Church, Caerwys



All the following information is quoted from Historypoints.org. *'This church is dedicated to St Michael the Archangel. The cult of St Michael became very popular in Wales in the 8th century, and it's likely the original church on this site was founded at that time.*

The earliest written reference to the church is in 1244, when the Pope chose St Michael's as the venue for a court hearing to decide whether Prince Dafydd ap Llywelyn, son of Llywelyn the Great, had been forced to agree a treaty with King Henry III.

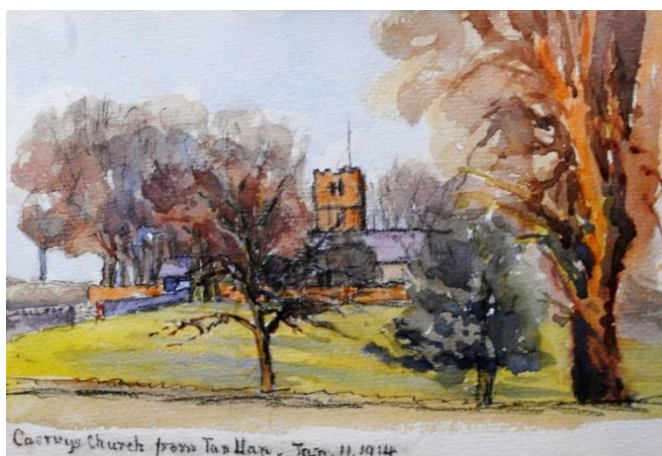
The next mention of St Michael's is in 1284, when the sum of 60 shillings was paid to Jervasius, the rector, as compensation for the loss of tithe payments and damage done to the church by King Edward I's soldiers during his conquest of Wales.

*Some parts of the existing church date from the 13th century, including the tower and the nave. Inside the church there's a 13th-century effigy that supposedly depicts Elizabeth Ferrers, wife of Dafydd ap Gruffydd, who was Prince of Wales in 1282 and 1283. ...The 19th-century 'Eisteddfod Window' celebrates the Eisteddfod declared in Caerwys in 1523 and held in 1524. This was a meeting of bards to formalise rules for Welsh poetry.'*²⁰⁶

The church tower is in the centre of the above painting presumably viewed from Chapel Street. The sketch on the right, above, was done in 1932.

The close proximity of Tan Llan to the churchgrounds is evident from the painting alongside which was done in 1914.

All three paintings were by Beatrice. However, given the close proximity to the church from their two homes, it is perhaps surprising that not more sketches were made of its exterior. As seen over the page, Annie spent a considerable amount of time sketching details inside the church.



²⁰⁶ Evans, Suryiah from Historypoints.org

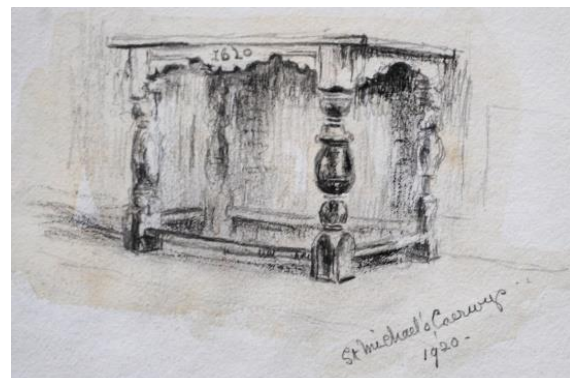
Annie's Dec 28 1922 sketch alongside of the North Window in the church has the following notation : *Tablet above to John Lloyd. Rector of Caerwys 1776 to 1793. He was the travelling companion of Thomas Pennant in his Welsh Tours.*

To quote : *Rev John Lloyd ... was highly regarded as a scholar and became a great friend of Thomas Pennant, the renowned travel writer, naturalist and antiquarian. He accompanied Pennant on all of his tours around Wales, helping him with the Welsh language and advising on Welsh folklore and customs.*²⁰⁷



Alongside is a 1921 sketch of part of the Lych Gate showing *Old beam pre-Reformation. Oak frame.*

Alongside is a 1703 bell *Carried by the Clerk at funerals; rung at the Cross Roads.* The letter RFWT appearing on the reverse side.



The greystone sundial is from the churchyard. An 'x' mark indicates that the dial had been added in 1830.

²⁰⁷ Caerwys Historical Society, Caerwys Guide, 1979

The effigy depicted below is of 'The un-named lady'. The effigy dates from the late 13th or early 14th century. It was probably part of a coffin lid, perhaps on a tomb chest that was once situated in the churchyard.

Legend has it that the effigy depicts Elizabeth Ferrers (c.1250 to c.1300), wife of Dafydd ap Gruffydd. He was Prince of Wales in 1282 and 1283, until his execution by King Edward I.

Elizabeth was the daughter of William de Ferrers, 5th Earl of Derby, and she may have spent some time living at Maesmynan in Caerwys, which was reputedly a residence of the Princes of Gwynedd in the 13th century.²⁰⁸

This was sketched by Annie on Jan 19 1923. It, and the sketches above, were the only record found of her artwork during 1923.

The last record found of her work (1924) is that of the ornate sundial at Glasfryn - situated alongside Tan Llan.

It was the only record found for 1924 and is the last sketch before she died (aged 64) in 1925.



It is presumed that Beatrice continued to live at Tan Llan until her death (aged 79) in 1935. Her November 1932 sketch of the church was one of her last.

²⁰⁸ Evans, Suryiah on Historypoints.org

Annexure : North Wales – a brief outline of certain aspects of the social history of its people from the sixteenth century onwards²⁰⁹

Sixteenth century²¹⁰ In passing the Act of Union in the mid-sixteenth century, Henry VIII formally tied Wales to England, imposed English as the official language of Wales and effectively put an end to the idea of a Welsh Nation.

In his breaking away from Rome, Henry VIII outlawed the Roman Catholic Church. In the name of the Protestant Reformation, the monasteries of Wales were abolished and the Catholic adherents persecuted. By 1538 the abbeys, priories and friaries of Wales had ceased to exist

Queen Mary's short-lived attempt at restoring Catholicism, was followed by Queen Elizabeth's reversion to its outlawing.

The development of printing had the following effects on the Welsh. From a negative point of view, it led to the decline of the bardic tradition which had, for centuries, kept the language and traditions alive. However, a hugely positive result was that of the publication of a Prayer Book, followed by the New Testament and then the entire Bible – all in Welsh. While this came about because the Anglican Church was intent on spreading Anglicism to the Welsh, it had the effect of preserving the literary language from extinction and the spoken language from disappearing. The general level of education began to rise.

Approximately 90% of the Wales population was still rural; the largest towns comprised only about 2,000 people. As from the beginning of the century, Wales was effectively administered by the Council in the Marches located in Ludlow in England. The upper level of society – (the gentry – comprising about 5% of the population) – benefitted from their relationship with England while approximately 20% comprised free tenants and farmers who retained close ties to the land and their culture. The very large majority – the peasantry - worked on the land of the large estates in exchange for the right to farm the small plots allotted to them.

The last great *eisteddfod* was held at Caerwys and it would be more than two hundred years before the next one would be held.²¹¹

Seventeenth Century²¹²

Civil war broke out between Charles I and Parliament in 1642 and, while this was essentially an English matter, it had a marked effect on Wales. Not only were the Welsh a source of fighting men, but because of its many castles and the vulnerability of its coastline to attack from the west, Wales became an important strategic territory which neither side could allow the other to control.

²⁰⁹ Read in conjunction with the Historic Background which dealt with the more tangible aspects of the history of the area, this brief social history of the people hopefully serves to inform and set the social context that would have preceded the Cummings sisters' visits to the area.

It must be stressed that, as with the Historic Background, there has been a total reliance on the reference works accessed. In this Annexure, David Ross's book 'Wales – History of a Nation' has been the sole source and apologies are due for minimising the importance of the wealth of information in his book.

²¹⁰ Ross pp120-137

²¹¹ There is more reference to this in Part Eight dealing with Caerwys.

²¹² Ross pp142-153, Williams pp144-159

While the first fighting on Welsh territory began in the north in 1643, the Parliamentary forces (under Cromwell) had taken control of South Wales by 1645 and North Wales including Anglesey by 1648.

By 1649 Cromwell's Commonwealth government was in power and soon took action against the many landowners in Wales who had been sympathisers of the King both before and during the Civil War. The setting up of sequestration committees to either fine or take over the possessions of these landowners had a highly unsettling effect on all of Wales – not just on the affected landowners but also on those employed by them. The corrupt practices of these committees exacerbated the general state of unhappiness that prevailed.

The seventeenth century was also a time of societal change in the name of religious ideals which were manifested even before the Civil War by the establishment of the first Independent chapel. It advocated a more simple form of worship than that of the Anglican Church of England and was aimed at raising the moral standards of the population. This Non-conforming movement was followed by the establishment of the first Baptist chapel in the year that the Commonwealth government came into power. It was followed by the establishment of the Quaker movement.

While the above Non-conforming movements opened the door for new avenues of worship, they were very much localised. What was not localised was the application of the Commonwealth government's official policy of Puritanism which swept across Wales in its attempt at wiping out anything to do with Catholicism.

The fall of the government and the re-instatement of the monarchy (termed the Restoration - under Charles II) in 1660 was met with relief by those who'd been negatively affected by Cromwell's policies and actions but the newly-formed religious movements were quickly targeted as being a threat to the Church of England and its structures. Termed 'Dissenters' the adherents of these movements together with the Presbyterians and other Calvinist sects were restricted not only in terms of their worshipping but also the role they were permitted to play in society. These restrictions applied also to the now deposed Puritans.

However, within ten years a new Act allowed Catholics and Dissenters the freedom of worship. Then, in 1685, James II (who'd recently converted to Catholicism) took over the crown and the immediate backlash led to him being deposed within three years. Under the re-instated Protestant reign, William and Mary took over the throne and, bringing in a new Toleration Act, put a temporary end to religious strife.

The Marches Council was finally done away with (after being re-established for a brief period) and Wales was again administered from London.

The seventeenth century had been filled with military, political and religious upheavals that had a highly negative and dampening effect on the broader population of Wales. In addition, a series of European-wide epidemics attacked Britain from the 1630's to the 1660's culminating in the plague of 1665-6. As in England, the population of Wales was severely affected.

Eighteenth century²¹³ Although a number of Non-conformist religions had established themselves by the mid-seventeenth century (most importantly the Baptists and the Quakers), it was the rise of Methodism in the early eighteenth century that served to transform the Welsh culture and revive the long-suppressed sense of enthusiasm.

²¹³ Ross pp154-171

There was an intense spirit of inquiry into Welsh culture and its ancient history during most of the eighteenth century. Much research was taking place and the first printing press in north Wales was set up in 1735 to make books available in Welsh. The Gwyneddigion Society was established later in the century; its purpose being the promotion of the Welsh language and culture.

A system of ‘circulating schools’ was set up aimed at spreading Anglicism through the teaching of literacy in Welsh. Whatever its success from a religious point of view, it had an enormously beneficial effect on raising the levels of literacy amongst both children and adults.

The spread of Methodism during the eighteenth century was coupled with the increasingly popular evangelical movement (primarily amongst the Baptists) which led to an Anglican retaliation against the Dissenters or Non-Conformists to the extent that the majority of Quakers emigrated to the United States – following the first wave to have emigrated during the previous century.

Beginning with a smallpox epidemic that broke out in 1747 and lasted for five years, the second half of the eighteenth century experienced a huge amount of change for Wales. The population in 1750 was estimated to be 493 000 with approximately an even spread between north and south.

From 1750 onwards, improved transport connectivity was coupled with the growth of industrialisation, mining and commerce.

The mining and smelting of copper in Anglesey was resuscitated after centuries of virtual dormancy and, in North Wales, lead mining and particularly the quarrying of slate became important means of employment and a source of revenue.

Improved transportation also led to the beginning of what was to become a major tourist industry.²¹⁴

Nineteenth century²¹⁵ With the development of large-scale industrialisation, the nature and pace of change was unprecedented.

The estimated population of Wales in 1700 was 406 000; by 1800 it had risen to 587 000, by 1851 it had leapt to 1,153,000 and by 1900 it was 2,019, 000. The influx of workers, industrialists and the merchant classes was coupled with improved health and housing conditions leading to a lessening of infant mortality rates and increased longevity.²¹⁶

Industrialisation was accompanied by the growth in the commercialisation of goods and the expansion of the middle class. Wealth was more widespread than ever before but it failed to reach the labouring masses. Gross exploitation of workers was rife and this, coupled with poor working and living conditions made for a situation that was ripe for the formation of trade unions.

The beginning of this demand for the right of workers dates back to the early part of the century. The depression which followed the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 (due to the fall-off in demand for the resources and goods required for the war effort) was relatively short-lived but it gave impetus to the rise of organised labour movements later in the century.

At the broadest level, society was making its voice and views heard. The Chartist movement fought for principles that would much later be accepted as basic elements of a democratic society but, in the

²¹⁴ Reference here is made, also, to the influx of landscape artists to the area as described in the Historic Background.

²¹⁵ Ross pp 173-202

²¹⁶ Ibid., pp 270-7

first half of the century, they were considered a threat to the established order and the movement was summarily ended. The Liberation Society stood for the extension of voting and religious rights which, within a relatively short period, were to gain fruition.

By the 1880's, the Liberal Party had established itself as the dominant party and the popular vote had shown itself as being more powerful than that of the landowners or factory owners. Trade unions had been legalised, the economy was more stable, democratic rights were more in evidence, a system of elementary education was firmly in place and there was a general sense of optimism and progress.

A sense of a distinct Welsh community and culture prevailed as evidenced, not only by the spoken language, but also particularly by the choral singing tradition and the holding of *Eisteddfodau* – the first of which had been held in 1176.

History, of course, continued to unfold both during this record of their sketching period - Annie up to 1924 and Beatrice up to 1933 - and afterwards.

However, skipping through to the date of Morris's publication - 1984 (and putting aside all that transpired in relation to Wales in this intervening period), she adds a positive addendum to her dissection of the matter of Wales :

'... Still, despite it all, somehow the idea of the nation survives, the language is spoken, the poems are written, and the sense of specialness, or otherness, stubbornly perseveres.'²¹⁷

²¹⁷ Morris p73