



# The Celtic Circle

- In The Footsteps Of Saints And Princes -

## 10. Ceirchiog - Betws y Grog- 'The Holy Rood'



### Introduction

This should be a site of almost unpeakable sadness. The ghost of a church that only still exists because of the solidity of its boundary. Broken monuments become its own monument and nature reclaims its structure.

It's a remote and quite beautiful setting Go and see it, there is power and drama in these old stones...

### A Visit

Holy rood is sightable from the bridge over the A55 as you drive away from Dothan/Engedi, there are two roundabouts and if you look into the fields to your left from the second you can see its walls. There is no real parking for this site, grab a space flanking the gate into the field shortly after the second roundabout, but please, don't block it as this is a working farm. Backtrack a few yards to a stile that leads you into the field. Cross this and walk across the field keeping close to the fence to your left. Keep left when you reach a small stream/hedge and you can slither your way across a muddy traverse to emerge in an overgrown section dominated by a ladder stile. Be very careful crossing this stile and preferably bring a pair of gardening gloves to be quite safe of the thorns.



Once you cross the collapsed gate and enter the churchyard you reach a place that should feel melancholic. Very little remains of the church itself, just a collection of stumped stones mark its foundations. A collapsed cross marks the spot and you find yourself surrounded by a scattering of decaying burial monuments and fallen trees. It's quietly bleak and you get the feeling of having just ticked off a place to visit, but stop and look around. Peace. Trees.

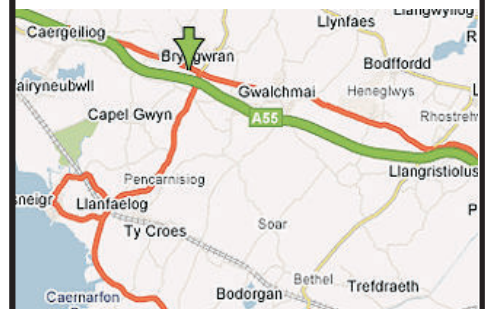
Then realise you're in an old place and drink it in. this was the centre of a community, this was the centre of their world. Suddenly it feels human, now it feels like a holy site.

Very little history is known of the church, a gazeteer published in 1833 describes it as 'very small and very ancient' and describes the parish it served as a curacy attached to the church at Llanbeulan (No.9 on the trail). It's name Ceirchiog being derived from the Welsh name for oats which were the chief crop grown here. The parish must have had some importance however as it returned a representative to the Anglesey Poor Law Board. What is known is that the church closed in 1834 when the parish was amalgamated with Llechlched, and the Holy Trinity in Bryngwran became the parish church.



## Holy Rood

### Location



**NGR: SH 361 769: There is a double roundabout above the A55 at the turning for Rhosneigr. Just off the northern roundabout the footpath sign can be seen on your left.**

**Access:** Accessible via public footpath Wheelchair access: Could probably be accessed by 4X4 with permission of the landowner.

**Service Times:** None known.

**Local Amenities:** Nearby Bryngwran and Gwalchmai both have village shops and pubs. Both Holyhead and Llangefni are easy to reach via the A55 or A5.

### While you're in the area

This area is littered with ancient sites. One of the lesser known is the burial chamber at Ty Newydd with its massive capstone (SH 344 739). Overlooking the ferry terminal in Holyhead, the historic church of St. Cybi sits surrounded by its Roman enclosure. Inside there is much to see including a stained glass window by William Morris and some very fine Victorian statuary. The story of the saints Cybi and Seiriol are very much part of the history of the church in Anglesey.

