

PELYNT CHURCH DRIVE-ABOUT 2009.

In aid of
Cornwall Historic Churches Trust

A PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

to the parishes of

Lanivet, Lanlivery and Luxulyan.



A PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

Although Christianity first came to Roman Britain in the 3rd century, there is no evidence of it having reached Cornwall before the 6th century. With the break-up of Roman Britain, and the establishment of Cornish petty kingdoms, we see the first evidence of the pagan Cornish being converted to Christianity. This conversion would have been a slow business and in many cases old pagan beliefs were adopted into the new religion, such as *'The Green Man'*. I suspect certain trees were venerated in pre-Christian Cornwall as places where you asked your gods to bring forth regeneration after the barrenness of winter. What better way of explaining to people the benefits of Christianity, and the love and protection God offers you, than to use an already revered item. For Christians the 'Green Man' symbolizes the *'Word of God'* spewing forth, in the shape of verdant branches coming from the face of God. The face appears either to be carved out of the trunk of a tree or to be looking through the branches. We will see what I believe is a 'Green Man' looking down on us from a ceiling boss in Lanlivery Church.

The majority of early Christian missionaries appear to have moved across Cornwall from north to south and many made their way here from Wales. Having established communities in Cornwall some moved on to do the same in Brittany, where many churches are dedicated to the same saints as are found here. The evidence we can see today for those early Christians comes in the shape of 'Lan' place names, Church dedications, inscribed stones and ancient churchyard and roadside crosses. All these features we will see during this Driveabout. During the medieval period, if you could possibly afford to do so, it was considered part of your spiritual development to go on at least one *'Pilgrimage'* in your lifetime. Churches on pilgrimage routes, or those with relics that were considered of importance to visit, were able to gain valuable income from their visitors. For people travelling to Europe from Ireland and Wales, the cross country route from Padstow to Fowey avoided the hazards of sailing round the Lands End. The churches we will visit today are all on important medieval pilgrimage routes across Cornwall and, had we been doing our Driveabout in the 15th century, we would have met with many strangers, kneeling both in our churches and at wayside crosses, as they prayed for a safe journey. They believed that by going on pilgrimage they would earn a shorter time in purgatory when they died.

Today we will be looking at five religious sites. The first two are in the parish of Lanivet, which is close to Bodmin, and half way along the pilgrimage trail that led from Padstow to Fowey. The building now known as Saint Benet's Abbey stands in the valley, a few hundred yards from the centre of the village. We will be stopping here for morning coffee. The parish Church at Lanivet stands on a slight incline looking down on, but still very much part of, the village.

On our way to Lanlivery village we will stop off at Gunwen Chapel in the hamlet of Lowertown. The founder of the Bible Christian movement, William O'Bryan, was born at Gunwen farm, a short distance from here. The second parish Church we will visit is found right in the centre of the small village of Lanlivery. Like so many parish Churches it stands just across the road from the village inn, where we will be having lunch before looking at the Church.

Our final visit of the day will be to the much larger village of Luxulyan where, once again, the Church sits right in the centre of the Churchtown. The parishes of Lanivet, Lanlivery and Luxulyan adjoin each other but I suspect, in the past, made use of different towns. Lanivet is only three miles from Bodmin, which at one time was the county town of Cornwall. Lanlivery was originally the parish Church for part of Lostwithiel, which again is only a couple of miles down the hill. Originally Luxulyan, like the Church at Lostwithiel, was a Chapel attached to the mother Church at Lanlivery. It is thought to have become a vicarage in its own right in the 15th

century. I suspect the parish of Luxulyan has always looked towards St Blazey and St Austell as its major towns, with St Blazey being only a short distance down the valley from the churchtown.

By comparing information in Harrods 1878 Directory we know that of the three parishes Lanlivery was the largest at 6,790 acres, compared with Lanivet 5,396 acres and Luxulyan 4,493 acres. Likewise the population of Lanlivery was slightly larger with about 1,493 people, compared with Luxulyan 1,268 and Lanivet 1,196. However, as far as the living was concerned the Rectory at Lanivet was far richer than the other two. It was worth £663 a year plus the rectory house and a 40 acre glebe, whereas Lanlivery was worth less than half that amount at £307 plus vicarage house and 24 acres. The living at Luxulyan was only worth £233, plus a vicarage house and 6 acres of glebe.

10-00am. Leave Pelynt Church and head up Summer Lane on the B3359 towards the A390.

From the village of Pelynt to the old turnpike road, now the A390, our route takes us along a ridge of land much of which, till the late C18, was open common land. The lanes leading down into the valleys on both sides of this ridge were gated to stop the cattle and sheep wandering back to the farmsteads during the summer months. During these months the fields around each farm would have been laid up for growing hay and corn crops and the farmsteads must have seemed very quiet places with few animal noises to break the silence. I presume each farmer sorted out his animals on the common land before driving them back to the homestead for the winter. I am also sure some animals must have *slipped the net* and their owners may have spent some time going round the neighbouring farms collecting their strays. The first job for the sheep on returning to the homestead was to graze the harvest fields. Here they would pick up any stray grains of corn that may have been left after the harvest. Not that they would have found much, as the farmer's wife and children would already have spent many hours walking across the arrish picking up grain that had been dropped during the harvest itself. The sheep had a two-fold roll to play in the harvest fields. They not only cleared the fields of any remaining grain and weeds, but they also manured it ready for ploughing and sowing the next crop.

Just after you pass the lane to Connon Waste Tip (on right), turn left onto the road that brings you out to the A390 at Middle Taphouse.

You would not have wanted to be crossing this piece of ground at noon on the 19th January 1643. On that day the Battle of Braddock Down took place right here. For many years it was thought the battle took place closer to Boconnoc House and Bradock Church, but new research has now moved the battle site to this area of what, back then, was open heath land. On this side of the valley we would have passed Sir Ralph Hopton and the Royalist Army. Amongst them were Sir Bevil Grenvill with his band of Cornishmen. He later wrote to his wife that the Parliamentary soldiers, who were camped the other side of the valley (where the rubbish tip now stands) were greater in horse but had less foot soldiers. He then wrote: *'I had the van, and so after solemn prayers at the head of every division, I led my part away, who followed me with so great courage, both down one hill and up the other, that it struck terror in them, while the seconds came gallantly after me and the wings of the horse charged on both sides. But their (the enemy's) courage so failed as they stood not the first charge of the foot, but fled in great disorder, and we chased them divers miles. Many are not slain because of their quick disordering; but we have taken above six hundred prisoners, and more are still brought in by the soldiers.* Thank goodness we are passing through a quieter scene today.

When you reach the A390 turn left towards Lostwithiel and after driving through West Taphouse, take the turning on the right signposted to Respryn Bridge and the ‘Duchy Nursery’. Keep on this lane down to Respryn Bridge.

The road we are now on was opened in the late 17th century as a Turnpike road. Today we share it with cars and lorries but when built, horse drawn vehicles of every description would have jostled with herds of sheep and cattle being driven to and from market. Strings of heavily laden pack ponies would also be seen, as would ‘*jobbing*’ tradesmen walking to and from their work with their tools slung over their backs. People of all shapes and sizes would be seen trudging along the dusty verge in summer or trying to avoid the many mud-filled pot-holes in winter. Many would be bare foot and clothed in rags, and many would be trying to get back to their own parish having unsuccessfully searched for work elsewhere. In their own parish they stood a chance of getting ‘Parish Relief’ which might keep hunger at bay till they could find work of some sort.

In 1662 a law was introduced giving the Overseer of a parish the right to remove any strangers who had no prospect of work. Even temporary workers at harvest time had to obtain a certificate from their home parish guaranteeing to take them back. The term ‘*Pauper*’ was not abolished until 1929

Having turned off the A390 you find yourself driving through a very ancient landscape with Bronze Age burial mounds both sides of the road. This area, known as the ‘Taphouse Ridge,’ was one of the last pieces of common land in Bradock parish to be enclosed. This accounts for the straightness of the road and for the regular pattern of the fields either side of it. This is a modern, designed landscape that has developed very much as a whole, unlike the older farms around the edge of the area, that have irregular field patterns where land has gradually been enclosed over hundreds of years and roads that have respected earlier boundaries by twisting and turning their way through the countryside.

As the road descends the hill into the Fowey valley you pass a lane on the left, a few hundred yards down which is the small, now converted, Wesleyan Methodist Chapel that served the hamlet of Bofarnel. During the 19th century, as the Methodist movement grew in strength, many such outlying Chapels were built to serve people living in small hamlets. Today many of the small terrace cottages, that housed several large families 100 years ago, have been made into one dwelling. Hamlets that were once home to forty or fifty people may now only have two or three families living there.

Near the bottom of the hill our road is joined with that from Lostwithiel. In the triangle formed by these two roads is an attractive 19th century cottage. As you pass have a look at the ancient granite cross in the front garden. When this wayside cross was first erected here, probably in the 12th century or earlier, this piece of land would have been open to the road, with no dwelling on it. With a crossing over the river Fowey just a few yards down the hill, both the road we have been on, and the one leading up to Lostwithiel would have been important route-ways in medieval times. People often stopped at wayside crosses to thank the Lord for a safe journey so far, and to pray for His continuing guidance. Wealthy travellers would sometimes leave alms for the poor at the base of the cross. The ancient chapel dedicated to St Martin is believed to have stood close to Respryn Bridge and this cross would also have marked the way to it. The land on which this cross stands is within the parish of St Winnow, but the parish Church is several miles from here. Funeral processions, on their way to the parish Church, would also stop and rest at wayside crosses and a prayer would be said before they lifted their heavy burden back on their

shoulders. This cross, known as Waterlake Cross, also acted as a 'bound' stone and in the 19th century it was visited yearly on Rogation Day, when the bounds of the parish were walked. On those occasions soil was dug around the cross and thrown up at its base. I presume this insured the cross shaft never toppled over. Even today the shaft of the cross has a mound of earth supporting it.

Cross Respryn Bridge, go up the hill and turn left for Lanhydrock. Go past the car park and entrance gates and at the road junction turn left. Go straight over at the concrete roundabout, signposted Lanivet. Keep on this road ignoring side turnings. At Reperry Cross ignore the turning signposted Lanivet and continue on the 'main' road down to the road junction. At the road junction turn right, go under the A30 road bridge and turn right towards Lanivet village. The entrance to St Benet's Abbey is a short distance along this road on the left.

Our route now takes us across one of the prettiest medieval bridges to have survived in Cornwall. It spans the Fowey River which starts life way up on Fowey Moor, now better known as Bodmin Moor. From source to sea the Fowey River is 25 miles long. Having crossed Respryn Bridge you pass the lower entrance to Lanhydrock. In the 19th century Lady Harriet Trelawny would often head up this drive in her carriage on her way to visit friends up at the 'Big House'. Later one of her granddaughters married a son of the house. The wedding took place in Westminster Abbey on 17th November 1920 and Harriet was one of the many guests who watched her granddaughter, Patience Bassett, accept the hand of Victor Robartes. Patience was attended by her Aunt Dot Williams' two boys, always referred to by their grandmother Harriet as 'The Little Men'. The service was conducted by Archdeacon Charles and, according to Harriet, was 'A perfect wedding'.

As you climb the hill out of the Fowey valley you pass a small 17th century house called Cutmadoc. This stone built house with its granite mullion windows, is typical of Cornish minor-gentry houses of the period. On the bank opposite is Cutmadoc School which closed its doors to pupils in the 1960's. According to the W.I. Parish Book, as late as 1948 the toilets attached to this school were still being flushed by buckets of water. The parish of Lanhydrock contains 1,659 acres and in the 19th century nearly every adult in the parish either worked for, or was a tenant of, the Robartes family. In 1801 there were 187 people living in this parish. By 1831 this had increased by 28% to 239. The Robartes family bought Lanhydrock in 1620 and, by the 1690's, when the famous Lanhydrock Atlas was drawn; they had acquired scattered lands in many parts of Cornwall. Before the Reformation, Lanhydrock belonged to the Augustinian Priory of St.Petroc in Bodmin. After 1539 it passed through the families of Glynn, Lyttelton and Trenance, before becoming the seat of the 'upwardly mobile' Robartes family of Truro. Although there had probably been a modest manor house on the site, the Robartes built a grand new house here between 1630 and 1642. Much of this house was destroyed by fire in 1881 but rebuilt under the direction of the well known architect Richard Coad.

Having crossed the main Lostwithiel to Bodmin road at the, *very uninspiring*, concrete roundabout, our route takes us along a ridge-way with the town of Bodmin across the valley on the right. This ancient road not only linked Lanhydrock with Lanivet but was also used by travellers heading west in the days before the turnpike. It became a popular 'rat-run' in the 20th century for travellers avoiding the bottlenecks of Bodmin and Lanivet on the old A30. Since the construction of the new A30 Bodmin by-pass it has reverted to a reasonably quiet road. The first farm you pass on the right is called Treffry and was at one time owned by the Treffry family of Fowey but is now part of the Lanhydrock estate. At the turning to Fenton Pits which is on the

left, look out for St Ingunger Cross set in the bank on the right. It is one of many wayside crosses to be found in this area, marking the route from one ancient pilgrimage site to another. Lanivet is the only parish in mid Cornwall where you can still see four almost complete wayside crosses within the distance of 1½ miles. Apart from marking the ancient route from Lanivet to Lanlivery, which is now known as *'The Saints Way'*, this cross also marked the path down to St. Ingunger's (St. Congar's) Chapel and Holy Well. It is said St. Congar built a Chapel and Holy Well just below the present farm yard sometime in the 5th or 6th century. This Celtic Saint is thought to have come here from Wales, and, having established a following in this area, moved on to Somerset and then to Brittany. There are many dedications to this Saint both in Brittany and Somerset, and, after his death in Brittany, his body was brought back to Congresbury in Somerset, where a light was kept before his statue. The Medieval Chapel and Holy Well that were built here at St. Ingunger's have not survived the passage of time but the Holy Well was still standing beside a track below the present farm yard in the 1970's. It was destroyed during the building of the Bodmin by-pass but the masonry is said to be dumped in the valley the far side of the A30. At least 13 medieval crosses have been identified in Lanivet parish so far, which suggests its importance as a pilgrimage area in the past.

At Reperry Cross ignore the lane down to Lanivet on the right. We will be coming up this lane later. There is an interesting whitewashed guide stone in the grass on the right which is worth looking at. It has a crudely shaped hand marking the direction. We keep on the old pre-turnpike road and pass Reperry Manor Farm on the right before coming to the road junction at Lower Woon. At one time the Manor of Reperry belonged to the Arundel family. Having turned right at the road junction you pass the site of Reperry Mill on the right. In 1871 Pharoah Allen was the miller here. His wife had died and he was busy bringing up his 7 children as well as working his mill. This mill may have been destroyed when the new by-pass was built, a bungalow now stands close to the site. Having gone under the A30 and turned right towards Lanivet, you soon reach St. Benet's Abbey, set in the woods on the left, where we will stop for a coffee break.

10-45am. Coffee break at St Benet's Abbey.



St Benet's Abbey 1814.

There have been several theories as to the original use of St Benet's. Many thought it was built as a Lazar House where those suffering from leprosy or other bodily afflictions could be cared for. This is now thought unlikely as there was a large Lazar House just a couple of miles up the road at St Lawrence in Bodmin. What is more probable is that it was a chapel of special devotion, served by a priest. In 1411 Alfred Gifford, Rector of Lanivet, was granted licence to celebrate Divine Service at the '*Chapel of St. Benet*' and, as this is the first mention of the Chapel, it may well have been newly built at that time. Benedict Gifford had inherited the Manor of Lanivet that year, and it is likely he gave the plot of land on which the Chapel was built. The Gifford family may also have contributed to the building costs of the Chapel in exchange for prayers being said for their souls. The Chapel was probably dedicated to St. Benedict because its founder had been named after him.

St. Benedict, who was born in Italy in 480 A.D., was the founder of many monastic sites and his Benedictine order of monks and nuns became a symbol of Christianity throughout the world. Even today St. Benet's Abbey has a wonderful sense of peace about it that may well be handed down from those early Benedictine priests. They believed that '*to work is to pray*' and that '*every guest that comes be received like Christ himself*'. I'm sure many weary travellers over the centuries have been grateful to rest for a while here in the peace of St. Benet's.

Most of the medieval buildings that stood on this site before the Reformation have gone, but much of the stone they were built with has been re-used. However, the fine 15th century granite ashlar tower, of what was once the Chapel, still stands behind the present house. In 1542 Henry VIII appointed Aristotle Webbe to be priest here. The King required him to '*do well his pastoral office to the country people who are dwelling in this part.*' Webbe may well have been the last priest appointed to the 'Chantry of St Benedict' as the Dissolution of the Monasteries was in full swing by that date. In 1549 St Benet's was seized and sold to Henry Chiverton, who turned it into a private house. About 1590 he sold it to a branch of the Courtenay family, who made it their home for over 100 years. The house is thought to have been altered again in the 18th century and also in about 1859. The left part of the present house appears to be the remains of the Abbey gatehouse and has a stair tower with lancet window. The stair in this tower is unusual in that it ascends anti-clockwise. Above what was the pedestrian gateway is a corbel that may once have held a statue of St Benedict. However, like so much in this house, it may have been moved from elsewhere as it does not appear, in this position, on the 1814 drawing. Look up at the medieval stained glass in the oriel window. It shows the arms of the Courtenay, Arundel and Archer families. It is thought this glass was once in the parish Church and may have been moved here as late as the 19th century. There are also fragments of ancient glass in the window at the back of the house opposite this one. During the Civil War St Benet's was the home of Henry Courtenay, a soldier in Essex's army, so the old house has witnessed hard times as well as good. In 1710 Martha Courtenay sold the property to Bernard Pennington. I presume he was a member of the well known bell-founding family. He didn't own St Benet's for long, and by 1720 it was owned by Richard Grose. I believe Richard lived and farmed up the hill at Clann and housed some of his farm labourers here at St Benet's. In the 1770's a member of the Grose family is said to have taken the remains of the chapel, together with some beautiful cloisters, to build a new house for himself at Clann.

In 1817 the by now semi-derelict house, almost hidden by lofty trees, was purchased by Rev Francis Vyvyan Jago Arundell, Rector of Landulph. He fitted it up as an '*occasional*' home for his retirement. By circa 1845 the then Rector of Lanivet, Rev. Phillips Flamank had acquired the property. His tastes were obviously different from those of his predecessor as he is said to have '*expended large sums of money in making alterations and additions to the house, in the doing of*

which, taste and architectural consistency were set at naught'. This criticism of the alterations was written in 1870. The Reverend Phillips Flamank spent his declining years here at St Benet's, ably cared for by Jane Sargent and her family, who were left the property on his death. Her son was knighted after the Boer War. He sold St Benet's in 1930 and it then became the '*Bamboo capital of England*'. The land around St. Benet's Abbey was used to grow this valuable crop which, when harvested, was sent to London Zoo to feed their pandas. The village Inn has a panda on its sign-board for this reason, and you can still see clumps of bamboo growing around this area.

With so many alterations having taken place here during the past 500 years, all you can do is enjoy the architectural detail you can see, and let your mind imagine how it may have looked when nuns or priests called this site home, or when the Courtenay family lived here in style.

In 1838 the area was said to have been '*laid open to public view and to the inspection of strangers*'. It appears a new road had been built along the valley from Lanivet village, but I don't know if it replaced an old one or was a totally new route. There used to be an old road going behind St Benet's and up the very steep hill to Clann before heading back towards the village, but I have no idea if it was the only road between this property and the village prior to 1838. Certainly, the route along the valley, although flat, would have been very wet and muddy. In 1535 some of the parishioners of Lanivet went to St. Germans to complain to the Bishop about the state of the road running past St. Benet's Chapel. They said that in winter time it was muddy and dangerous to all those coming and going and that they were unable to repair it properly without the assistance of '*pious strangers*'. The Bishop granted an indulgence of 40 days to all penitents who, whilst visiting the chapel, contributed to the repair of the road outside its doors.

Before the Reformation people believed that you could not get to Heaven without spending time in Purgatory. The amount of time you spent there depended on how good a life you had led. If you gave a donations to the Church or to a good cause, the '*Ecclesiastical powers*' had the power to dispense an 'Indulgence' that would cut your time of suffering in Purgatory. If you were wealthy enough and had time and money to go on long Pilgrimages, giving to the poor and to the churches you visited on the way, you could collect many indulgences, a bit like '*Brownie Points*'. You could even gain an indulgence of 40 days for such gruesome things as carrying a faggot of wood to the burning of a heretic.

Before entering the house for coffee have a look at the granite cross standing in the front garden. Andrew Langdon believes this small cross may once have been on the gable end of the ancient chapel here at St Benet's. The shaft, although looking like the panicle from a tower, is thought to be relatively modern. A corbel or image stand has been fixed to one side of the shaft. In what is now the lounge at St Benet's you will see two old ceiling bosses that were presumably salvaged from Lanivet Church during the 19th century restoration, or came from the chapel here. Also note the pegged planks either side of the postern door. These are the remains of a 19th century bookcase suggesting this doorway was blocked rather than glazed at that date.

11-15am. Leave St. Benet's Abbey by turning left towards Lanivet village. Either park in the car park on the right or take the turning on the right after the car park and toilets and park where you can by the Church. We will be continuing up Rectory Lane, round past the school, when we leave the Church.

The present road we turn onto is now known as the A389 but for many years was the main A30. During the 20th century summer traffic on this piece of road would often be nose to tail.

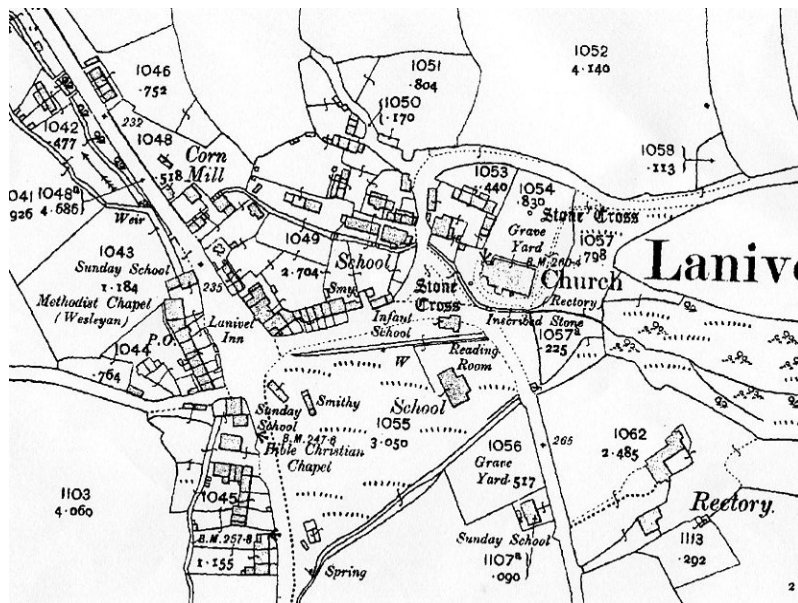
The building of the new A30 Bodmin by-pass in 1975 has made a tremendous difference to the lives of people living in Lanivet and it is now a really pleasant place to stop and linger for a while.



Lanivet 1840 Tithe Map. © CRO

&

1908 OS Map. © CRO



Just before the turning to the Church you pass the large village green with its car park on your right, whilst on your left is the Methodist Chapel. This was originally built as a Bible Christian Chapel in 1883, whilst the Sunday School next to it was built in 1906. A plaque on the Sunday School informs us it was re-built in 1992. The Bible Christians were a breakaway group of non conformists founded by William O'Bryan. We will pass his birthplace later on our journey. In the 19th century this was not the only Non-Conformist Chapel in the village. The Wesleyan Chapel, built in 1842, is now the renowned Fish and Chip restaurant opposite the Inn. You can still see the smart Chapel entrance on the gable end and, close to the road, its Sunday School which is built over a stream. In 1867 there were two other Wesleyan Chapels in the parish and two other Bible Christian ones.

As you turn up the road to the Church don't forget to look at the panda sign at the 'Lanivet Inn'.

When you return to Lanivet for a more leisurely look at the Church, I strongly recommend you stroll round the village as there are some charming 18th and 19th century cottages to see as well as the Chapels and the site of the mill. The 1840 Tithe map shows the village green with a stream and pond on one edge of it. The stream then drained into another pond the other side of Rectory Road. This large pond appears to have been partially drained by 1880 and is now a bungalow estate. From the large pond, that extended right up to the churchyard wall, the water was taken in a leat round the outside of the churchyard to the western end, where it crossed the lane, ran along the side wall of what, at that time, was the village 'Work House', and on past cottage gardens and between small meadows (now the pub car park) to Lanivet Mill, which can still be seen on the old A30, a few yards past the Inn. The ivy-clad ruin of the mill building is set back from the road. After turning the wheel of Lanivet Mill the water crossed the road (old A30) and joined the stream coming down from St Benet's. This water then fed the mill at the hamlet of Lamorick, a short distance from Lanivet village. In 1840 the miller at Lanivet was Richard Sowden. The family were still there in 1871 with William Sowden age 49 being the miller. He had a wife and 7 children living with him in his house beside the busy turnpike road. I wonder if Mr Sowden was a descendent of Richard Sowden who, in the 1620's, lived and worked at Poltianna Mill in Duloe. This family of millers gave their name to Sowden's Bridge that spans the West Looe River, and some of their descendents later lived at Oxford in Pelynt parish.

In front of Lanivet churchyard you can still see the remains of the mill leat to the left of the entrance gate. Before entering the churchyard walk a few yards up the lane to the west of the Church and have a look at the building on the site of the 1840 Work House. On the side of this building can be seen the date-stone 1609 and another informing us it was rebuilt in 1855. From before the Reformation the parish of Lanivet possessed lands in Padstow, Egloshayle, Bodmin and elsewhere. The revenue from these lands was used for the benefit of the poor of Lanivet and twelve men of the parish were appointed to administer this trust. I believe the lands were given in about 1505 by John Bullock of Lanivet and, thanks to the careful wording of his Deed of Gift; they were not confiscated by the Charity Commissioners in 1549, when they visited the parish after the Reformation and seized St Benet's Abbey for the Crown. In 1609 the 12 men of Lanivet built, on this site, an alms house and charity school under the same roof. The schoolmaster was also accommodated here. By 1880 the old building on this site had been replaced by the present one and was being run just as a school, whilst the poor were being shipped off to the Union Work House at Bodmin. The 1908 OS map shows this building still being used as a school, but by that date the present school had just been built on the edge of the green, opposite the church. On the edge of the road, close to the new school the 1908 map shows a building said to be a Reading Room. The then rector Rev F B Paul had this iron clad Institute and Reading Room built in 1891; I don't know when it was removed. In 1908 the old school appears to have still been in use but by 1923 Kelly's Directory informs us the village had just one school, built in 1906, that had replaced the 1609 endowed school. The new school catered for 120 mixed pupils and the headmaster was Arthur Yates. On the edge of the village green, the lower side of a tin shed, you can see the remains of the village pump. Before the advent of tap water, a visit to the village pump was one of the chores many children had to perform before going to school in the morning and again on returning home. I'm sure that during the summer months many water fights took place around this area of the Green and the sound of laughter would fill the air. But it would be a different matter in winter when the handle of the pail froze to your hand, and wet shoes and clothes were still damp even after a night steaming in front of the kitchen fire. During the 19th century Lanivet became a busy mining village with at least ten productive copper mines in the parish, but by 1923 all mining had ceased. In 1965 a licence was granted for test drilling for gold in the parish but I have no idea if any was found.

By 1880 a new grave yard had been built in the corner of Mill Park, next to what is now the school playground. In 1895 a Sunday School was built next to this grave yard, opposite the entrance to the Rectory. You will pass this buildings when we leave the village.

The 1679, and more particularly, the 1727 Terriers for Lanivet give very good descriptions of the Rectory as it then was. In 1679 the Rectory was described as being two buildings of moorstone covered with slate roofs. In the front range were a hall floored with lime ash, a parlour which was boarded and wainscoted halfway and had a ceiling. There were also two small rooms called butteries that were used to store provisions and would often be kept locked. The Rector's wife, or the family's housekeeper, kept a tight hold on the keys. Above these ground floor rooms were a parlour chamber with closet, an entry chamber, a hall chamber, a large study and 4 small studies. Above the parlour chamber, presumably in the roof space, was a cockloft. The back building consisted of a kitchen, dairy and other domestic rooms on the ground floor and two rooms above. There was also a large stone built barn with thatched roof, and a stable and pig house, also thatched. The house was surrounded by 3 gardens and an orchard. The 'green' or town-place had a '*winding-ball*' for winnowing corn and there were about 30 acres of Glebe land. In 1727 the Terrier informs us the two houses were parallel to each other and stood about 30 foot apart. The kitchen was said to be pretty large but low. It had a large chimney within which was a furnace and 4 ovens. A small room at the bottom of the stairs was said to hold 2 or 3 barrels of liquor. The kitchen floor was of plaster but was worn out. The other floors were all of earth. To the side of the house was a '*hansam*' dryhouse or kiln for malt. The Rector at this time seems to have been quite keen on storage facilities for liquid refreshment as he mentions, in his very detailed description, a bottle rack below one of his studies and three other little rooms off his parlour where he kept drink stored. From his description you get the idea his house was very old fashioned although the hall and parlour did have chimneys by 1727, as did a few of the upstairs rooms. Some of the chambers had wallpaper but the majority of the rooms, apart from the parlour, were simply whitewashed. Although the hall still had an earth floor, the parlour was said to have a new deal floor. It is very unusual to have a house of this size with a separate kitchen surviving so late. Most had either been abandoned altogether by the 18th century, or incorporated into the main building my means of a wing.

I presume the Rectory described in the Terriers stood, as later ones have, to the south east of the Church, on the land that houses the present Rectory. I don't know how long that 1725 house survived, or if parts at least were within the house shown on the 1840 map, but, just after the 1908 map was drawn, what was described as a '*Georgian*' style Rectory was pulled down and a new one built further up the hill. This substantial house is built of granite ashlar and, from the glimpse you get of it through the gate, reminds me of the old Rectory at St Tudy. Canon Winsor built this fine house at his own expense but the Diocese later took it over and sold it in the mid 1970's. It is now a much enlarged private dwelling. The coach house, which was built in 1831, and is seen on the 1840 map, has been carefully converted to a dwelling. One of the wooden partitions that divided the stalls has been cleverly incorporated into an internal wall. The present Rector's house stands a few yards above the old coach house in what, in 1840, had been an orchard. A large part of what had been the extensive Rectory gardens were bought by the Lanivet Trust in circa 1997. In 1840 this land had been described as a plantation, orchards and shrubbery, it is now a nature reserve. In 1840 only the family and invited guests of Rev. William Phillips could wander and enjoy the peace of this sheltered area. Now everyone is free to enjoy its beauty and I recommend you take a stroll round this area on your next visit. Look out for the circular path which more or less marks the site of the kitchen of the '*Georgian*' Rectory, as seen on the 1840 map.

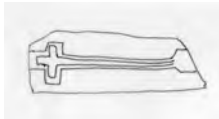
11-20am. Lanivet Church.



Lanivet Church, which, like most Cornish churches, is listed Grade 1, is thought to be dedicated either to St. Nivet, a daughter of St. Brychan of Wales, or to St. Nevet, a man from Lannevet in Brittany. The Church stands on an ancient Celtic site where people have worshipped God for well over 1200 years. Oliver Padel, the place names expert, believes the name Lanivet, spelt Lannived in 1268, means *the Church site (Lann) at Neved*. The word 'Neved' means a pagan sacred place, so this area must have been of significant importance long before Christianity came to Cornwall. Like so many churches in Cornwall, the present

building dates from the 15th century and was restored in the 19th century. It consists of a nave and chancel in one, with north and south aisles, south porch and west tower. By the beginning of the 15th century the Church was probably a stone-built, cruciform shaped building. In the middle of that century the north transept was replaced by a north aisle. They then replaced the south transept with an aisle and built a south porch on the side of it. Finally, the west tower was built.

The tower is unusual as there are no pinnacles crowning the top. In 1727 the tower was said to have five bells all newly cast. According to Lake's Parochial History published in 1867 the tower contained six bells which had been cast by Penningtons in 1808. The guide book informs us the tower now houses eight bells, four of which were purchased from Bodmin Priory in 1539. A new tenor bell was added in 1869 and two treble bells in 1924.



Close to the path on the south side of the tower you will see a grave slab with an unusual, slightly twisted cross carved on the top. It is said this stone was found during the 1864 restoration of the Church. It was lying, face down, at the entrance to the porch and may have been there for many centuries.

Most of the gravestones have been removed to the edge of the churchyard which makes for easier grass-cutting and gives an idea of what churchyards looked like before gravestones became so popular in the 18th century. In the churchyard opposite the west entrance you will see one of two preaching crosses to be found within this 'Lan'. They are both thought to be *'in situ'*, and pre-date the present Church by several centuries. The only other churchyard in Cornwall to possess two churchyard crosses is that of Sancreed in West Penwith. This cross is similar to the one now displayed on the north wall in Pelynt Church, but this one is slightly smaller.

Having climbed the steps to the north side of the churchyard you will see the second churchyard cross standing in what is said to be the exact centre of Cornwall. This cross is very different in design to the other one but again is thought to be on its original site. In 1890 an excavation revealed the base stone still supporting this cross but buried one foot below the surface of the ground. This fact helps to show how the graveyard has risen in height over the last 1000 years of use. Look closely at the shaft of this cross and you will see, carved on one of the panels, the figure of a man. He is said to have a tail, and no one is sure who he represents. Maybe he's the Devil being crushed by the crucifixion.

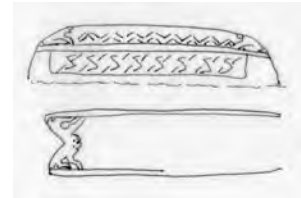


Now turn to look at the north side of the Church. The row of six windows makes this north aisle appear particularly long and the fact that the west gable end, like that of the south aisle, is truncated by the tower suggests the tower was built after the aisles. The fact that the churchyard



has risen by at least one foot adds to the impression of a long low building. Between the rather ugly heating chimney and the down pipe you will see a piece of stone that appears to have letters carved on it. Until I spotted it whilst researching for this booklet, it appears not to have been noticed as possibly significant. It is now being examined by the experts and, so far, Andrew Langdon is of the opinion this is part of a 5th or 6th century inscribed pillar stone, re-used here when this wall was built in the 15th century.

At the east end of the Church both aisles are level with the chancel but all have different tracery in their windows. Both aisle windows are four-light whilst the 19th century East window is three-light. As you walk along the south side of the church you pass the priest's door which is still guarded, as is the porch, by an iron gate. These gates were mentioned in an 1867 description of the Church. The rood stair projection has a small lancet window to give it light. Close to the south porch is a fine example of a 10th century hog-back tombstone. Again it was found during the 1864 restoration. At each corner of this tombstone are curious animals, thought to be sitting dogs. They are joined at the head and it is now almost impossible to make them out.



We enter the Church through the 15th century south porch with its 19th century iron gate. This gate sadly is kept locked but the key is obtainable either from the old Rectory Coach House or the present Rectory a few hundred yards up the hill. On your left in the corner of the porch is a square hole which I presume once housed a Holy Water Stoup. On the wall opposite is a board informing us the Incorporated Society for Buildings and Churches gave £15 towards the reseating of this Church provided all the seats were free and un-appropriated. There is no date but I suspect they gave the money during the Victorian restoration. Before that restoration it is said you could see faint traces of coloured decoration on the walls of this porch.

Most churches in Cornwall either have a level entrance from the porch into the building or one or more steps down, as at Pelynt. Here at Lanivet Church you step 'UP' into the building. Having done so, you will see on the wall on your left, a slate recording that the electric light was installed in this Church in 1938 as a memorial to Elizabeth Downing 1837 to 1906. She was the wife of the school master and helped with the teaching. Her husband, Sampson Downing 1837 to 1925, was the parish clerk as well as the schoolmaster. The very fine slate board which has the list of Rectors from 1259 to 1954 carved on it was given in memory of him. It can be seen next to his wife's memorial. Today, as well as the modern lighting, the Church has reverted to 'candle power' with four very fine 'Gothic' style painted candelabras hanging from the roof and several modern wooden ones.

The 14th century octagonal font stands in this south west corner of the Church and is said to be made of Pentewan stone. Behind it can be seen an inscribed pillar stone dating from the 5th or 6th century. It once marked the resting place of someone called Annicu. On the window sill above can be seen sketches of fragments of wall paintings that once adorned this Church. In 1865 Thomas Quiller Couch wrote about this Church. He said it had been recently repaired, having

been allowed to fall into *'lamentable decay'*. He goes on to say that before this restoration, *'within, all was damp and greenness. Perennial streams soaked through the roofs and ran down some of the pillars. Moss and fern luxuriated in crevices in the walls and windows, the pillars were dangerously out of the perpendicular and the whole building was unsafe'*. Couch tells us the Church had been repaired at a cost of £1,500, and apart from the stonework little had been worth saving. The architect was J.P. St.Aubyn, who was to work on Pelynt Church later in the 19th century. Before the restoration the Church had barrel roofs divided by bands of carved oak with bosses. There was an ugly gallery at the west end of the nave and most of the seats were of plain deal. There were some old benches but they were *'of mean workmanship and not worth saving'*. The ceilings were replaced, the windows restored, the gallery removed, and the fine west arch opened up.

On the walls, under many coats of whitewash, medieval wall paintings were revealed. Sadly the old decorated wall plaster was beyond saving and was stripped off. If only they had simply whitewashed over the paintings as previous generations had done, today with modern technology, we might have preserve them. But they are gone for ever, all that remains to give us



a clue of how beautifully this Church was once decorated, are these simple sketches and a very detailed description in Lakes Parochial History. We are told the paintings filled nearly every space between the south windows, and much of the north wall as well. One of the wall paintings showed the Saviour, standing about nine feet high and with various articles around him. This black, yellow and claret coloured painting was a warning to the Sabbath Breakers, and the articles around the Lord included an axe, a wheel, a knife, sheep shears, a spindle, and a horse shoe. A fine example of this once popular painting can still be seen at Breage Church near Helston.

Having imagined what this Church looked like in the past we will now have a look at what remains today. Both north and south aisles are of six bays and are supported by circular St Stephen's stone piers with attached shafts. The centre column of most piers we see in Cornwall are hollowed out between the shafts, making them appear more delicate. Here the centre column has been left round which makes these piers look very clean cut and plain. You will see what I mean when we get to Lanlivery Church. As you walk down the south aisle you pass several monuments to members of local families. Many of the monuments in this Church have been signed by the makers, which add to their interest. The rood stair can still be seen built into the thickness of the south wall. The access holes above the arcades show the rood screen once extended right across both aisles. A 19th screen cuts off the east end of the south aisle to form a vestry. In front of this screen can be seen the 19th century version of a modern *'keyboard'* There is an exhibition of paintings in this area of the Church which were presented by the local artist, musician and poet David Penhale in 2008.

The eagle on top of the brass lectern gives the impression he is about to take flight, whilst high up on the wall of the chancel close to him you can see a corbel. I have no idea what it is doing there but, if you stand at the bottom of the step to view it, the front of the corbel appears to have the remains of an angel holding a shield faintly carved on it. The Church has Victorian roof trusses throughout, but those in the chancel have painted decoration on them. The stone pulpit and reredos are of similar style and may have been made at the same factory. The guide book tells us the reredos was made by H Hems of Exeter in 1882 but no mention is made of the pulpit. Beside the Altar can be seen a piece of carved stone hollowed out and re-used as a piscina. This 12th century stone capital is said to have come from Bodmin Priory. On the wall opposite can be

seen a moulded granite image stand that I presume came from the same place, sometime after the Reformation. Above it is an icon of the Virgin Mary, presented to the Church by Rev. C T Rowland.

The glass in the east window of the sanctuary was given in 1890 by Rev. F B Paul and was made in Devonport by Fouracre and Son. The rest of the 19th century stained glass windows, that commemorate local families, were made by Fouracre and Watson. Whilst in the chancel go through the screen and look at the impressive polished marble altar tomb, surmounted by a funeral urn. It is dedicated to Rev. Nicholas Phillipps who was rector here between 1805 and his death in 1817. His father, William Phillipps, a substantial yeoman, of Roche had purchased the advowson of Lanivet, for £1000, from the Nicholls family in about 1750. He intended to present the living to his son when old enough, but in the meantime appointed, in 1770, his relation John Lake, as caretaker Rector. When the time came for Nicholas Phillipps to take over as Rector the Rev. Lake refused to budge. Nicholas had to wait until Lake's death in 1805 before he could claim what he considered to be his rightful living. Other members of the Phillipps family are recorded on this memorial. In 1817 William Phillipps was appointed rector. I presume he was the son of Nicholas. In 1847 he assumed the name and arms of his maternal uncle Robert Flamank of Bodmin in addition to his own. William sold the advowson to Henry Borrow for £4,500 and in 1862 Henry gave the living to his son Rev. Henry John Borrow. I find it interesting the purchase price of the advowson had gone up by so much in just over 100 years. The granite curb in front of the Phillipps memorial shows evidence it once held iron railings which I presume were part of the communion rail with a kneeling step in front.

The chair below the chancel step is very similar to ones in Pelynt Church, as are the floor tiles. Their design was obviously a favourite of the architect J.P. St Aubyn. The organ stands in the same position the one in Pelynt once stood. It is good to remind yourself of how much space and light these splendid instruments take up. This one was installed in 1871 and renovated in 1900. Before going into the north aisle turn to face the west end of the building and admire the elegant proportions of the tower arch. The stained glass, with its enormous cross, which now fills this arch, has a real impact as you turn to face it.

If you now go into the north aisle you can get behind the organ to see the few remaining pieces of early glass in the top of the two north windows of what was the north chapel. Lakes 1867 History tells us *'The east window of this aisle formerly displayed the arms of De Arches, Dinham and others, in stained glass; but these were sacrilegiously removed to the oriel window at St Benet's where portions of them still remain'*. As we know, they are still at St Benet's today, and from the way this remark is worded I suspect it was Rev Phillipps Flamank who took them there. Some of the older memorials to have survived can be seen in this area of the building. The one on the north wall is to Ann, the only child of John and Dorothy Pasco. She was a very religious child from infancy, but died of a *raging fever* when only 14 years old. The words she said on her death-bed are carved on this slate, and below them a moving explanation of her life and death. The other slate is opposite but not so easy to see. It records the death of a gentleman called John Wymond of Treliggon. He was 67 years old when he passed away in 1725. The slate also records that his wife, who was born in Lanlivery, desired to be buried next to him. There are other Wymond memorials in the Church. On the ground below the east window, obscured by a pile of old seating is a slate to the memory of John Gody, rector of Lanivet, who died in 1485. I know it is important to have places to store things in the Church but it is a shame they so often obstruct the view of historical memorials or architectural features. But there again, maybe half the fun of looking at a Church you haven't visited before, is discovering *'little gems from the past'* hidden behind Christmas decorations or cleaning utensils.