

## MEYSYDD BRWYDRO HANESYDDOL YNG NGHYMRU

Mae'r adroddiad canlynol, a gomisiynwyd gan Grŵp Llywio Meysydd Brwydro Cymru ac a ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru, yn ffurfio rhan o raglen archwilio fesul cam i daflu goleuni ar yr ystyriaeth o Gofrestr neu Restr o Feysydd Brwydro Hanesyddol yng Nghymru. Dechreuwyd gweithio ar hyn ym mis Rhagfyr 2007 dan gyfarwyddyd Cadw, gwasanaeth amgylchedd hanesyddol Llywodraeth Cymru, ac yr oedd yn dilyn cwblhau prosiect gan Gomisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru (RCAHMW) i bennu pa feysydd brwydro yng Nghymru a allai fod yn addas i'w nodi ar fapiau'r Arolwg Ordnans. Sefydlwyd y Grŵp Llywio Meysydd Brwydro, yn cynnwys aelodau o Cadw, Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru ac Amgueddfa Genedlaethol Cymru, a rhwng 2009 a 2014 comisiynwyd ymchwil ar 47 o frwydrau a gwarchaeau. Mae hyn yn bennaf yn cynnwys ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol, ac mewn 10 achos, gwaith maes heb fod yn ymyrryd a gwaith a oedd yn ymyrryd.

O ganlyniad i'r gwaith hwn mae **Rhestr o Feysydd Brwydro Hanesyddol yng Nghymru** (<http://meysyddbrwydro.cbhc.gov.uk/>) yn cael ei datblygu, dan arweiniad Comisiwn Brenhinol Henebion Cymru ar ran Cadw. Bydd yn adnodd deongliadol, addysgol ac ymchwil ar-lein, yn anelu at gynyddu gwybodaeth a chodi ymwybyddiaeth o feysydd brwydro yng Nghymru, yn ogystal ag ysgogi ymchwil bellach. Gobeithir ei lansio yn ystod gwanwyn 2017.

## HISTORIC BATTLEFIELDS IN WALES

The following report, commissioned by the Welsh Battlefields Steering Group and funded by Welsh Government, forms part of a phased programme of investigation undertaken to inform the consideration of a Register or Inventory of Historic Battlefields in Wales. Work on this began in December 2007 under the direction of the Welsh Government's Historic Environment Service (Cadw), and followed the completion of a Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) project to determine which battlefields in Wales might be suitable for depiction on Ordnance Survey mapping. The Battlefields Steering Group was established, drawing its membership from Cadw, RCAHMW and National Museum Wales, and between 2009 and 2014 research on 47 battles and sieges was commissioned. This principally comprised documentary and historical research, and in 10 cases both non-invasive and invasive fieldwork.

As a result of this work **The Inventory of Historic Battlefields in Wales** (<http://battlefields.rcahmw.gov.uk/>) is in development, led by the RCAHMW on behalf of Cadw. This will be an online interpretative, educational and research resource aimed at increasing knowledge and raising awareness of battlefields in Wales, as well as a prompt for further research. It is due to be launched in spring 2017.

*Mae'r tabl isod yn rhestru'r brwydrau a'r gwarchaeau a ymchwiliwyd. Bydd adroddiadau ar gael i'w llwytho i lawr o'r Rhestr ar-ein yn ogystal ag o Coflein (<http://www.coflein.gov.uk/>), y gronfa ddata ar-lein ar gyfer Cofnod Henebion Cenedlaethol Cymru (NMRW).*

*The table below lists the battles and sieges researched. Reports will be available to download from the online Inventory as well as from Coflein (<http://www.coflein.gov.uk/>), the online database for the National Monuments Record of Wales (NMRW).*

<b>ENW/NAME</b>	<b>DYDDIAD /DATE</b>	<b>SIR HANESYDDOL/ HISTORIC COUNTY</b>	<b>NPRN</b>	<b>YMCHWIL/RESEARCH</b>
<b>Aberllech</b>	1096	Sir Frycheiniog Brecknockshire	404446	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)
<b>Pont Cychod (Menai ac Ynys Môn)</b>  <b>Bridge of Boats (Menai and Anglesey)</b>	1282	Ynys Môn Anglesey	404319	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Bryn Derwin</b>	1255	Sir Gaernarfon Caernarfonshire	402322	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2014)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)  Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2014)
<b>Bryn Glas (Pillth)</b>	1402	Sir Faesyfed Radnorshire	306352	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2012)

				<p>Cloddfa (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2013)</p> <p>Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2014)</p> <p>Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)</p> <p>Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2012)</p> <p>Excavation (Archaeology Wales, 2013)</p> <p>Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2014)</p>
<b>Campston Hill</b>	1404	Sir Fynwy Monmouthshire	402328	<p>Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)</p> <p>Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)</p>
<b>Cilgerran</b>	1258	Sir Benfro Pembrokeshire	405201	<p>Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)</p> <p>Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)</p>
<b>Coed Llathan</b>	1257	Sir Gaerfyrddin Carmarthenshire	403587	<p>Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)</p> <p>Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2014)</p> <p>Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)</p> <p>Non-invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2014)</p>
<b>Castell Coety (gwarchae) /Coity</b>	1404-05	Morgannwg	545701	<p>Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)</p>

<b>Castle (siege)</b>		Glamorgan		Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Coleshill</b>	1157	Sir y Fflint Flintshire	402325	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (2009)  Documentary and historical research (2009)
<b>Craig y Dorth</b>	1404	Sir Fynwy Monmouthshire	402327	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2014)  Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2014)
<b>Crug Mawr</b>	1136	Sir Aberteifi Cardiganshire	402323	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)
<b>Castell Cymaron (gwarchaeau) / Cymaron Castle (sieges)</b>	1144 1179 1195 1215	Sir Faesyfed Radnorshire	545328	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)
<b>Cymerau</b>	1257	Sir Gaerfyrddin Carmarthenshire	404717	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2014)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)

				Non-invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2014)
<b>Castell Dinbych (gwarchae)/ Denbigh Castle (siege)</b>	1282	Sir Ddinbych  Denbighshire	545687	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Castell Dinbych (gwarchae)/ Denbigh Castle (siege)</b>	1294-5	Sir Ddinbych  Denbighshire	545613	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Castell Dinbych (gwarchae)/ Denbigh Castle (siege)</b>	1460	Sir Ddinbych  Denbighshire	545718	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Castell Dinbych (gwarchae)/ Denbigh Castle (siege)</b>	1468	Sir Ddinbych  Denbighshire	545720	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Castell Dinbych (gwarchae)/ Denbigh Castle (siege)</b>	1646	Sir Ddinbych  Denbighshire	545789	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Castell Dryslwyn (gwarchae) / Dryslwyn Castle (siege)</b>	1287	Sir Gaerfyrddin  Carmarthenshire	545605	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)
<b>Carregwastad - Abergwaun (ymosodiad) / Carregwastad Point - Fishguard (invasion)</b>	1797	Sir Benfro  Pembrokeshire	308824	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)

<b>Gŵyr/ Gower</b>	1136	Morgannwg Glamorgan	404856	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)
<b>Grosmont</b>	1405	Sir Fynwy Monmouthshire	402333	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2012)  Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2012)
<b>Hyddgen</b>	1401	Sir Drefaldwyn Montgomeryshire	402310	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Pont Irfon (Llanganten) / Irfon Bridge /</b>	1282	Sir Frycheiniog Brecknockshire	403411	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Cydweli / Kidwelly</b>	1258	Sir Gaerfyrddin Carmarthenshire	404729	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)
<b>Castell Talacharn (gwarchae) / Laugharne Castle (sieges)</b>	1189 1215 1257-8 1644	Sir Gaerfyrddin	545245 545341 545436 545746	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)

<b>Maes Gwenllian</b>	1136	Sir Gaerfyrddin Carmarthenshire	402324	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2012)  Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2012)
<b>Maes Moydog</b>	1295	Sir Drefaldwyn Montgomeryshire	403416	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2014)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)  Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2014)
<b>Trefaldwyn / Montgomery</b>	1644	Sir Drefaldwyn Montgomeryshire	405168	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)
<b>Mynydd Carn</b>	1081	Sir Benfro Pembrokeshire	300319	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)
<b>Castell Newydd Emlyn (gwarchae) / Newcastle Emlyn (siege)</b>	1287-8	Sir Gaerfyrddin Carmarthenshire	545606	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical

				research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Castell Newydd Emlyn (gwarchae) / Newcastle Emlyn</b>	1645	Sir Gaerfyrddin Carmarthenshire	545768	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Gwrthryfel y Siartwyr, Casnewydd / Newport Chartist Uprising</b>	1839	Sir Fynwy Monmouthshire	405003	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Documentary and historical research (Border Achaeology, 2009)
<b>Painscastle</b>	1198	Sir Faesyfed Radnorshire	402326	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2012)  Cloddfa (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2012)  Excavation (Archaeology Wales, 2013)
<b>Pennal</b>	1472/4	Meirionnydd Merioneth	403495	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Chapman, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Chapman, 2013)
<b>Pentraeth</b>	1170	Ynys Môn Anglesey	404315	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)
<b>Pwllgwdig</b>	1078	Sir Benfro	405188	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol

		Pembrokeshire		(Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)
<b>Pwll Melyn</b>	1405	Sir Fynwy Monmouthshire	402320	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2014)  Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Non-invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2014)
<b>Castell Rhaglan (gwarchae) / Raglan Castle (siege)</b>	1646	Sir Fynwy Monmouthshire	545797	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Gildas Research, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Gildas Research, 2013)
<b>Sain Ffagan / St Fagans</b>	1648	Morgannwg Glamorgan	307776	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2012)  Gwaith ymchwil heb fod yn ymyrryd ac a oedd yn ymyrryd (Archaeoleg Cymru, 2013)  Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)  Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2012)  Non-invasive and invasive fieldwork (Archaeology Wales, 2013)
<b>Twthill</b>	1461	Sir Gaernarfon	403421	Ymchwil ddogfennol a hanesyddol (Border Archaeology, 2009)

		Caernarfonshire		Documentary and historical research (Border Archaeology, 2009)
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**Grŵp Llywio Meysydd Brwydro, Hydref 2016**

**Battlefields Steering Group, October 2016**

# WELSH BATTLEFIELDS HISTORICAL AND DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

## Hyddgen – May/June 1401

**County:** Powys (formerly Montgomeryshire)

**Community:** Cadfarch

**NGR:** SN7889

**NPRN:** 402310

**Report Author:** Dr Adam Chapman

**Date:** February 2013



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



## **Hyddgen, Pumlumon (May-June 1401)**

### **Summary**

The battle of Hyddgen is a tantalising episode in the earliest part of the second, successful phase of the rebellion led by Owain Glyndŵr. The first phase, in September and early October of 1400 had been ended by the armed intervention of Henry IV and Owain and many of his followers had spent the winter in hiding. The battle of Hyddgen is referred to in only one contemporary source, a Welsh language chronicle known as 'The Annals of Owain Glyndŵr' of indeterminate fifteenth century date. This account provides an account of the numbers of soldiers involved, and their origins but is vague in the extreme as to the location of the engagement, referring only to 'Hyddgant' [Hyddgen], the name of a mountain and a river. It has been associated with a stone row, known as the Covenant Stones of Owain Glyndŵr/Cerrig Cyfammod Glyndŵr [NPRN 303679, Grid Reference SN7831089640]. There is no known documentary record of these before they were recorded by the Royal Commission in 1919.

This battle falls into a series of small to middle-sized engagements between Glyndŵr and forces loyal to Henry IV in May and early June of 1401 and is notable only because it is clear that this engagement, unlike the others, was won by Owain and his forces. It is possible that this victory formed the springboard for the expansion of the rising into a full-blown national rebellion. It is equally possible, however, that the skirmishes in this period of the early summer of 1401 in fact represent the gathering of Owain's forces. The other notable event of this period, the capture of Conwy Castle by Owain's cousins, Rhys and Gwilym ap Tudur on 1 April 1401 and the subsequent siege may or may not be related, but by the end of the summer of 1401, Owain's forces were capable of besieging the remote castle of Harlech and shaping a rebellion which was national in its reach. Despite the fact that Owain had declared himself Prince of Wales on 16 September 1400, Hyddgen could be said to be the beginning of Owain Glyndŵr's rebellion.

### **Site of Battle**

Like much else relating to this battle, (NPRN 402310) notably its date, the precise location of this battle is unknown. The earliest principal source for the battle, probably dating from the first half of the fifteenth century, the so-called 'Annals of Owain Glyndŵr', surviving in the NLW in two copies as

Hengwrt MS. 104 and Peniarth MS. 135 gives the location as 'ar fynydd hyddgant'/'on Mynydd Hyddgen', NGR SN7889.

A modern memorial cairn to the battle [NPRN 402311, NGR SN75638627], unveiled by Gwynfor Evans MP on 16 July 1977, lies several km distant, at the east end of Nant-y-moch dam.

### **Historical Context of the Battle**

The battle should be viewed in the context of the earliest part of the second phase of Owain Glyndŵr's rebellion. The first phase, which began in the early weeks of September 1400 culminated in Owain being declared Prince of Wales in the company of a number of friends, neighbours and relatives on 16 September – coincidentally or not, the birthday of Henry of Monmouth, Prince of Wales – and raids on the boroughs of first Ruthin, then, over the following three days, Denbigh, Rhuddlan, Flint, Hawarden and Holt, finally arriving at Oswestry on 22 September. The king, Henry IV, and his son, Henry of Monmouth, later Henry V were on campaign to Scotland at this time and on their return to England towards the end of September marched on North Wales, paying particular attention to the Anglesey estates of Owain's cousins, Rhys and Gwilym ap Tudur of Penmynydd. Owain, Rhys and Gwilym spent the winter of 1400-01 in hiding, presumably in Snowdonia. The rebellion, which had seemed at an end according to English sources, was revived by Rhys and Gwilym ap Tudur who, seemingly on their own initiative and for their own ends, captured Conwy Castle on Good Friday (1 April) 1401. The English siege action, at which the young Prince Henry was present, lasted until July but appears to have been independent of Glyndŵr himself. The aim of Rhys and Gwilym ap Tudur appears to have been securing their own pardons and property.<sup>1</sup> Owain's next appearance occurs towards the end of May when a force led by him was defeated by John Charlton, lord of Powys and then by Sir Henry Percy shortly afterwards.

This defeat seems to have been a heavy one and in the course of it Owain was briefly believed killed. The victory at Hyddgen, which must have followed shortly afterwards, is poorly recorded. It would appear that this success heralded a significant broadening and intensification of the revolt; Owain subsequently appears to have mounted a substantial raid into Radnorshire, storming the castle at

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<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council*, I, 147

New Radnor and massacring the garrison, followed by attacks on the Marcher strongholds of Montgomery and Welshpool in the autumn, while the important royal castles of Aberystwyth and Harlech were placed under siege.<sup>2</sup>

The increasingly ambitious scale of the uprising is attested by Glyndŵr having established diplomatic contacts in late 1401 with Robert III of Scotland and certain Irish princes, proposing an alliance against the English.<sup>3</sup>

### **Survey of Primary Sources**

The so-called 'Annals of Owain Glyndŵr' provide what is the only account of the battle on Mynydd Hyddgen. All later accounts appear to be derived from this source. It is reproduced in full from the version printed in Lloyd, 1931, 150-1.

Yr haf nessaf wedi hynny y kyvodes Ywain ar y chweigeinved oddireidwyr a lladron ac y ddaeth ef ac wynt ar ryvel I flaenav karedigion ac yno yddymgynvllawdd mil a haner wyr o brogaredigion a rros a Phenfro ac yddaethant ir mynydd i geysiaw dala Owain ac ar vynydd hyddgant i bv yr ymgyfarvod ryddynt ac yn gytneid ac y troes y llv seissnic ev kefnav y ffo y llas cc o honyw ac yna yddaeth gair mawr i Owain ac i kyvodes attaw ran vawr or yfiengtid ar direidwyr o bob gwlad o gymry oni oedd gidac ef llv mawr.

The following summer [1401] Owain rose with 120 reckless men and robbers and he brought them in warlike fashion to the uplands of Ceredigion; and 1500 men of the lowlands of Ceredigion and of Rhos and Penfro (i.e., the Marcher shire of Pembroke) assembled there and came to the mountain with the intent to seize Owain. The encounter between them was on Hyddgen mountain, and no sooner did the English troops turn their backs in flight than 200 of them were slain. Owain now won great fame, and a great number of youths and fighting men from every part of Wales rose and joined him, until he had a great host at his back.

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<sup>2</sup> NLW Peniarth MS 135, p.60; The Welsh text with English translation is printed in J.E. Lloyd, *Owen Glendower* (Oxford 1931), 150.

<sup>3</sup> J.E. Lloyd, *Owen Glendower* (Oxford 1931), 40-5; G. Hodges, *Owain Glyndŵr and the War of Independence in the Welsh Borders* (Logaston 1995), 52-5

While this gives much pertinent detail, it lacks much more than the vaguest hint towards the location and only allows the date of summer 1401.

There is a commonly accepted location for the battle marked by the so-called 'Cerreg Cyfamod Owain Glyndŵr'/'Covenant stones of Owain Glyndŵr' [Coflein NPRN 403807, grid reference SN78098940]. This pair of white quartz boulders, noted in this respect by Lloyd is, in fact part of a row of four.<sup>4</sup> They are situated within open moorland, below Banc Llechwedd-Mawr and above the Afon Hyddgen. The four stones are aligned from north-east to south-west, the row measuring 6.5m in length overall and decreasing in size from the largest on the south-west. The largest stone measures 0.8m in height, 0.6m in length and 0.5m in width. The next stone has fallen, its neighbour measures 0.4m in height and the smallest that on the north-east, measures 0.1m in height. Though the location is plausible, nothing in the text of the 'Annals' links the two. When the name came into common usage is not clear; Lloyd ascribed it to 'tradition'. Neither the stones nor the attribution are noted in any of the likely sources, for example, Pennant, John Wynne of Gwydir of Powel in his *Historie of Cambria* (1584). Pennant does include an account of the battle in volume 3 of *A Tour in Wales*, however, and it seems that this draws upon a version of the 'Annals', though Pennant adds some additional detail.

The Flemings, inhabitants of Ross, Pembroke, and Cardiganshire, suffered so greatly from Glyndwr, that they determined to attempt to remove so troublesome a neighbour. They assembled a body of fifteen hundred men, and made so expeditious a march, as to surround Owen and his forces, at a place called Mynydd Hyddgant, before he had any notice of their approach. They hemmed him in on every side; and, notwithstanding he could make no retreat without great disadvantage, he made a long and manful defence. At length, finding it impossible to subsist in that place, he determined to cut a passage through the enemy, or perish in the attempt. He knew that neither he nor his men were to expect any mercy; so, actuated by despair, they fell furiously on the Flemings,

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<sup>4</sup> Lloyd, 39, drew on drawing on *An Inventory of the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales, Montgomeryshire* (1911), no 921.

and, after a strong dispute, flung them into great disorder; which Owen taking advantage of, redoubled his attack, and at length put them to flight, leaving two hundred of their party dead on the spot.<sup>5</sup>

The mention of Flemings by Pennant is misleading (it is repeated in the Coflein entry for the battle). While it is true that Flemings were among the first foreign settlers in Pembrokeshire in the twelfth century, identification with these origins was not generally noted by the early fifteenth century. The possibility that Flemish mercenaries were employed should also be rejected: the county of Flanders was under the control of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy (d. 1404) then regent of France in the stead of Charles VI. The possibility of Flemish soldiers being allowed to sell their services to Henry IV should be discounted as antiquarian confusion.

The date is difficult to narrow down with any precision and relies on royal correspondence that has survived and which has been published the nineteenth century. That Hyddgen is among the foothills of the Pumlumon range on the borders of the Marcher lordship of Powys is significant. A letter from the lord of Powys, John Charlton (d. October 1401) to Henry, prince of Wales, which is datable to before 4 June 1404 reveals that a force led by Owain was defeated by Charlton while he was on his way from Powys to meet with Henry Percy (Hotspur, d. 1403), royal lieutenant in north Wales, and his father the earl of Worcester, probably at Denbigh, a lordship held by Percy. This dating is based on a letter sent by Sir Henry Percy to Henry IV's council informing them of his own success in defeating a Welsh force on 30 May with the aid of Sir Hugh Browe (d. 1403) at Cader Idris and Thomas, earl of Arundel (d. 1415): the engagement with Charlton seems to have taken place earlier, an impression confirmed by Percy's mention of other events including the capture of a Scottish vessel in Milford Haven a considerable distance from Percy's activities in North Wales. The victory at Hyddgen, therefore, presumably came relatively soon afterwards since these points are relatively close to one another.<sup>6</sup> This news from Milford Haven does, perhaps, support the 'Annals' account of troops drawn from Pembrokeshire being defeated by Glyndŵr. It may be revealing that a letter from Henry IV to the Prince of Wales dated at Worcester on 8 June notes that the rebels in Wales had

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<sup>5</sup> Thomas Pennant, *Tours in Wales* iii, (1783), 305-6.

<sup>6</sup> *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council*, I, 152-3. Legge, no. 226, 292 John Charlton, lord of Powys to Henry, Prince of Wales [DATED before 4 JUNE 1401 – the victory is noted in a letter from Hotspur to the council dated at Denbigh on 4 June [Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council I, 153]. Usefully, Hotspur's letter notes the movements of Charlton who states that he was travelling from Powys to meet Hotspur and Worcester (presumably at Denbigh). No mention of the Prince.

raised a great number of men and threatened to escalate their rebellion.<sup>7</sup> Whether this implies that there was more than one force of rebels and that only part of Owain's forces had been defeated by Charlton and Percy or whether the victory had occurred in the intervening few days is impossible to prove. The situation had clearly changed quickly however, and a victory for Owain, most likely at Hyddgen would be an appropriate catalyst.

A further letter, dateable to before October 15/16 1401 (the death of John Charlton), describes raiding activity by Owain's forces on the boundaries of Powys and the death of a Merioneth official, 'N de C'. It is probable, therefore, that all this material relates to the same period of fighting.<sup>8</sup> A siege of Harlech was clearly underway by 10 July 1401 when a letter from the king was received by Prince Henry at Conwy, then in the third month of an English siege, making the point that it was much easier to hold a castle than to retake it.<sup>9</sup> It is probable therefore, that Owain's victory came sometime in June 1401. What is clear, however, is that by September, the rebellion had grown to the point where a full scale English campaign was under active consideration.<sup>10</sup> It should be noted too that Henry IV also campaigned in the Twyi valley in Carmarthenshire in October 1401 and was likely at Aberystwyth/Llanbadarn Fawr by 14 October.

### **Troops and casualties**

While this evidence is superficially very detailed, giving numbers of men involved on both sides, the numbers should be approached with caution though they are in the realms of the plausible [Pembrokeshire and the GD rebellion, letter from Charlton of Powys]. Owain's force of only 120 men described in a somewhat disparaging fashion, as 'reckless men and robbers' in the 'Annals of Owain Glyndŵr', though the encounter described in Charlton's letter to Prince Henry describes the capture

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<sup>7</sup> *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council*, I, 135.

<sup>8</sup> Legge, no. 230, p. 296 Henry, Prince of Wales, to a knight (possibly 1401) Concerning the death of one of the Prince's officials (N[icholas?] de C) by some of Glyndŵr's followers from the county of M(erioneth) who have now retreated into Powys to join Glyndŵr. The mention of '*vostre paijs de Powys*' (p. 296, lines 5-6) strongly suggests that the addressee is John Charlton (so the date is before his death, 18/19 October 1401). This is supported by the mention that the Prince is retaining E de C 'who was with you'. E de C almost certainly Edward de Charlton, John's brother.

<sup>9</sup> Legge, no. 236, pp. 301-2. The letter indicates that the prince is to have £1000 from the issues of the lordships of the earl of March for the relief of Harlech. While the letter is dated 10 July, Davies (1995), suggests November-December as an alternative since the estates of the earldom of March only entered the king's hands on 7 November – Calendar of Fine Rolls 1399-1405, 142.

<sup>10</sup> Legge, no. 235, pp. 299-300 DATED Evesham, September 1401 News has come (from where?) of a great assembly of Owain Glyndŵr and his people. The king proposes an expedition and will be at Worcester on October 1st next. [Legge associates this with nos. 227, 249 and 261] Since the muster suggested is Saturday 1 October and the king wishes the prince to meet him the Wednesday before (i.e. 29 September 1401).

of high-quality armour and other high status material from Owain and his followers. Despite this, and the number of casualties inflicted on Owain's force by Charlton's men, it is probable Owain, and at least some of his men, were equipped to a high standard.

The opposing force contained 1500 men raised – according to the *Annals of Owain Glyndŵr* - from the lowland areas of Ceredigion – presumably the northern part of the medieval county of Carmarthenshire and southern Cardiganshire as well as the commote of Rhos and the Marcher Shire of Pembroke; a substantial area. This should not imply that they were experienced or effective soldiers though it is likely that a number were veterans of the wars in France or service in Ireland in the 1390s. Casualties on Owain's side are not recorded.

### **Commemoration**

Aside from the undated blocks of unhewn white quartz which are said to be related to the battle and known as the Covenant Stones of Owain Glyndŵr/ Cerrig Cyfammod Glyndŵr [NPRN 303679, Grid Reference SN7831089640] noted above, there are two sites which are believed to commemorate the battle of Hyddgen. The first is a monument to the battle at the east end of Nant y Moch dam [NPRN 402311 Grid reference SN75638627] unveiled on 16 July 1977 by Gwynfor Evans MP. Here, a slate plaque set in a stone pillar reads: 'TO COMMEMORATE OWAIN GLYNDWR'S VICTORY AT HYDDGEN IN 1401 I GOFIO'R SAWL A DDISGYNNODD YN Y FRWYDR'

A cairn, known as *Carn Gwilym* on the summit of Mynydd Hyddgen has also been interpreted as being associated with the battle although it is not known on what basis this association was made.<sup>11</sup> There is, in fact, a pair of cairns some 20 metres apart with some other associated cairns [NPRN 303704, 289720, 289721 (possible post-medieval alteration), 289722, 289723, 289724 (possible post-medieval alteration), 289725, 289726]. The most recent RCAHMW assessments of these cairns suggest that they may instead be prehistoric, possibly Bronze Age, in origin. For their relative location, please see the accompanying map.

### **Conclusions**

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<sup>11</sup> RCAHMW *Montgomeryshire Inventory*, 1911, no.919.

Although the victory at Hyddgen is poorly documented in contemporary chronicles, it would appear that this success heralded a significant broadening and intensification of the revolt; Owain subsequently appears to have mounted a substantial raid into the lordship of Radnor, storming the castle at New Radnor and massacring the garrison, followed by attacks on the Marcher strongholds of Montgomery and Welshpool in the autumn, while the important royal castles of Aberystwyth and Harlech were placed under siege. Following his separate defeats at the hands of lord Charlton and Sir Henry Percy in late May or early June, the value of Hyddgen is magnified. Had Owain been defeated there, even had he survived, it is unlikely that the rebellion would have escalated as it did.

The battle at an imprecise location on or near Mynydd Hyddgen was relatively large in scale by the standards of the Glyndŵr revolt involving around 1500 men, but unusual in that it appears to have been fought between two forces ill-matched in size. Owain's force emerged victorious but this engagement was one of several in the spring and summer of 1401 in southern Merioneth, the western part of the lordship of Powys and northern Cardiganshire. Its importance, in retrospect, if not at the time, comes from it being a significant victory which enabled Glyndŵr to press on against English forces and particularly the castle of Harlech. It is probable that it took place in June 1401 while Prince Henry and his forces were engaged at Conwy besieging the castle lost, in careless fashion, to Rhys and Gwilym ap Tudur. It was unusual in that it involved forces from the southern principality counties that had been untouched by the first outbreak of rebellion in September and October 1400. The victory at Hyddgen was important in the context of the wider rebellion, but the circumstances of the battle and its precise location are unknown.

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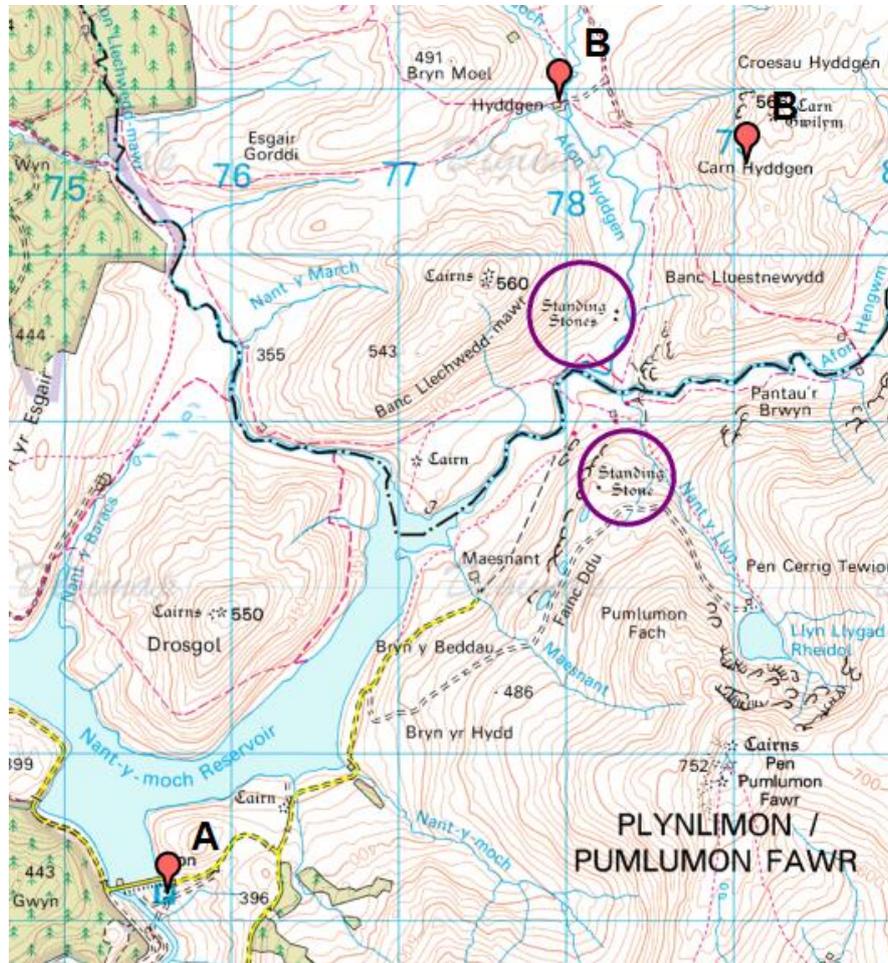
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### Modern OS Map

The northern ringed features, standing stones, have been named 'The Covenant Stones of Owain Glyndŵr' / Cerrig Cyfammod Glyndŵr [NPRN 303679, Grid Reference SN7831089640] and appear to be aligned with a third stone in the southern ring.

**A** - The site of the monument to the battle of Hyddgen at the east end of Nant y Moch dam [NPRN 402311 Grid reference SN75638627] unveiled on 16 July 1977 by Gwynfor Evans MP. A slate plaque is set in a stone ; the plaque reads: 'TO COMMEMORATE OWAIN GLYNDWR'S VICTORY AT HYDDGEN IN 1401 I GOFIO'R SAWL A DDISGYNNODD YN Y FRWYDR'

Note that the Nant-y-moch Reservoir forms part of a hydro-electric generating site constructed between 1957 and 1961.

**B** - The postulated sites of the Battle of Hyddgen, either on the plateau on the summit of Mynydd Hyddgen or in the valley below. On the elevated plateau of Mynydd Hyddgen, of which the point occupied by this cairn [Carn Gwilym, NPRN 303704] is the summit, Owen Glyndwr defeated an English force in A.D. 1401." *RCAHMW Montgomeryshire Inventory*, 1911, no.919. The pair of cairns known as 'Carn Gwilym' appear to be prehistoric in origin.

