

APPENDIX F

Extract from Samuel Lewis's 'Topographic Dictionary of Wales' (1833)

"HOLYHEAD, a sea-port, a borough, market town, and parish, partly in the hundred of Tàlybolion, but chiefly in that of Llyvon, union and county of Anglesey, North Wales, 24 miles (W. by N.) from Beaumaris, and 263 (N. W. by W.) from London; containing 3869 inhabitants. This place, which is of remote antiquity, derives its Welsh name of *Caer-Gybi*, implying "the fortified place, or city, of Cybi," from its situation in a small island at the western extremity of Anglesey, called *Ynys Gybi* on account of its having been for many years the residence of a British saint named Cybi, who, according to Cressy's Church History, was the son of Solomon, Duke of Cornwall. Upon the authority of the same historian, St. Cybi, who was also surnamed Corineus, having travelled for the prosecution of his studies into Gaul, where he greatly distinguished himself by his able refutation of the Arian heresy, returned to his native country about the close of the fourth century, and passed the remainder of his days in devotional retirement at this sequestered place, which, from the sanctity of his life and the veneration he was held in, obtained its present English appellation of "Holyhead," as forming a projecting headland of the island, which from the same circumstance received the name of the "Holy Island." The place appears to have been known to the Romans, who, according to Tacitus, carried on a considerable trade with Ireland during the time of Agricola, though they may not have had any fixed or permanent settlement in that country. The extensive remains of Roman architecture which are found in the parish, more especially in the churchyard, and which in their construction exhibit every peculiarity of style observable in other ruins of the buildings of that people in Britain, afford an almost conclusive demonstration that they had a station or fortress here for the protection of their commerce with Ireland. About the middle of the fifth century, the Irish-Scots, under a leader named *Sirigi*, or "the Rover," made a descent upon the coast of Mona, now Anglesey, and, having massacred many of the inhabitants, at a place in the vicinity of Holyhead, which is still called *Carreg-y-Gwyddyl*, or "the Irishman's rock," secured their fleet at this place, and took up a fortified station in the neighbourhood. To oppose these invaders, Einion Urdd, at that time sovereign of West Britain, sent his eldest son Caswallon Law-Hîr, or Caswallon the Long-handed, who, succeeding in drawing them into a general engagement, amply retaliated for the slaughter of his countrymen, and drove them from the island with prodigious loss, having slain their leader with his own hand. After this battle, which was fought on the site of the present town, the place is supposed, by some antiquaries, to have been fortified, with a view to prevent the recurrence of similar attempts; but no particulars of any work are recorded, nor has any thing of historical importance connected with the town occurred since that period. On December 18th, 1790, the Charlemont packet, belonging to Parkgate, was wrecked on Salt Island, at the mouth of Holyhead harbour, when 110 persons perished.

The Town is situated on the north-eastern side of Holy Island, on the shore of the Irish Sea, near its junction with St. George's Channel, and is separated from the main land of Anglesey by a narrow strait, in some parts fordable at low water, over which the great Holyhead road is continued by an embankment about three-quarters of a mile in length, having in the centre an arch nineteen feet in the span. The small island on which it stands comprises the parishes of Holyhead in the north, and Rhôscolyn in the south, and consists chiefly of barren rocks and dreary sands; but, from its being that part of England which is nearest to Ireland, it has always been a place of great resort for persons visiting the capital of that country. Owing to the very extensive intercourse now subsisting between the two kingdoms, the town has of late years rapidly increased in extent and improved in appearance; it is large and well-built, and affords ample accommodation of every kind for the numerous passengers who embark at the port. In the vicinity are several respectable mansions, among which is Penrhôs Park. From its advantageous situation, it forms the principal station for conveying the mails to Dublin; and, among other improvements, a new line of road was some time ago constructed under the walls of the town, upon the shore of the *traeth*, or sandy estuary, which forms the harbour, extending more than a mile along a lofty artificial embankment, from the entrance of the town to the commencement of the pier.

At the extremity of the town, a handsome swivelbridge over what is called the Sound connects the pier with the main land; and beyond this bridge are, the engineer's house, the custom-house,

the harbourmaster's offices, and the depôt for the post-office stores. Further on is the grand *Triumphal Arch*, built by subscription of the gentry of the county of Anglesey, to commemorate the circumstance of the royal squadron having anchored in Holyhead bay on the night of the 6th of August, 1821, and the landing of His Majesty George IV on the following day. Upon this occasion the king proceeded to Plâs Newydd, the seat of the Marquess of Anglesey, where he slept, and on the next day returned and embarked on board the Royal George, then lying at anchor outside the harbour, intending to sail the following morning for Dublin; but in the course of the night a gale of wind came on. At an early hour warps were procured, and the yacht hove within the pier; at the same time the signal was given for the squadron to get under weigh, and take an offing. The weather continuing boisterous until the morning of the 12th, one of the post-office steam-packets, afterwards called the Royal Sovereign, was hauled alongside the Royal George, to receive His Majesty on board, and immediately proceeded on her passage to Dublin; the whole of the royal squadron also got under weigh, and sailed for the same destination. At first it was not the intention of His Majesty to land on his way to Ireland; though it was arranged that the squadron should rendezvous in the bay here until its approach could be made known in Dublin. But, receiving such demonstrations of loyalty and attachment from the inhabitants, who had made considerable preparations on the pier, in anticipation of his landing, the king altered his intention, and on the 7th at noon announced his determination to land: the royal yacht, with His Majesty on board, was placed under the care of the harbour-master, as pilot, from the time she anchored in the bay until her departure. The arch, which was opened in August 1824, is a chaste and elegant structure of Mona marble brought from the Red Wharf quarry. It consists of a central carriage-way, separated on each side, by two handsome pillars of the Doric order, from a footway, inclosed exteriorly by a wall ornamented at the extremity with antæ of corresponding character; the whole twenty feet high, and supporting a boldly projecting cornice, surmounted by three diminishing tiers of masonry, forming a platform. Over the carriage-way, on each side, is a large entablature, respectively bearing inscriptions in Welsh and Latin, commemorative of the royal visit to the town.

It does not appear at what time Holyhead was first selected as a station for the post-offices Packets to Dublin; but, in the reign of William III., packets are known to have sailed from this port, and in the month of January, 1696, the mail-boat from Holyhead was wrecked in the bay of Dublin, when the bags were lost, and the passengers and crew perished. Since that time it has been a regular post-office station. At the commencement of the present century, it was inadequate either to the security of the vessels, or to the regularity of their departure and arrival. The packets were sometimes damaged by the heavy swell running into the harbour, and their time of sailing was uncertain, being frequently aground for eight hours out of the twelve. During fresh gales from the east, which are favourable for the departure of shipping, the packets could not warp out, and were often detained for two or three days in the harbour, with a wind which, had they been at sea, would have carried them to their destination. The difficulty of entering the harbour was equally great during the prevalence of gales from the westward, which were perfectly favourable to their arrival, and the landing of passengers was attended with considerable personal hazard. To remedy these inconveniences, an act was obtained in the 50th of George III., for improving the harbour, under the provisions of which a noble pier was constructed, and at its eastern extremity one of the finest lighthouses in the kingdom was erected.

The *Pier* extends from the small island called Ynys Halen, or "Salt Island," in an east-south-eastern direction into the sea, and from the triumphal arch before noticed is 360 yards in length; it is connected with the main land by a handsome iron bridge of one arch, dividing in the centre, and each part turning on a swivel, to afford a passage on either side. On the south side this pier is faced with a perpendicular wall of hewn stone, and near the east end is a projection at right angles, twenty yards in length, affording shelter from the easterly winds. The wall is continued in a curve from the triumphal arch to the bridge, and from the bridge round the custom-house. On the eastern side the pier is open to the basin, and on the western its summit is protected by a lofty stone wall, along the top of which is a promenade of great breadth, affording one of the most interesting marine views imaginable. The side of the pier next the sea forms an inclined plane from the top of this parapet, composed of large rough stones placed edgewise, as close together as possible, and wedged with smaller ones. The *Lighthouse* is built entirely of hewn stone, and without any other timber than what was necessary for the door-cases and window-frames: the foundation is an inverted arch, and the substratum of the pier being sand, the

building has sunk considerably, but has, notwithstanding, preserved its perpendicular position. It consists of three stories, the ceilings of which are groined, and the floors are of smooth stone; its base is six feet above the level of high-water mark, and is protected from the sea by a strong glacis. The tower, which is circular, is thirty-three feet in height to the gallery, and the lantern, which is ten feet higher, is lighted with twenty brilliant lights of oil-gas, having reflectors plated with silver, and displaying a strong white light, which, being at an elevation of fifty feet above the level of the sea, affords a safe guide to vessels approaching the harbour. On Salt Island are gas-works for the supply of the lighthouse, and for lighting the pier and harbour up to the Royal Hotel; but, in case of any accident, oil lamps are constantly in readiness to be put up. The whole of these works were completed for about £130,000; and a graving dock was constructed at an additional cost of £12,000.

By an act obtained in the 4th of George IV., the harbours of Holyhead and Howth, and the whole lines of road from London to Holyhead, and from Howth to Dublin, were placed under certain regulations, by means of which a considerable portion of time was saved in performing the journey between the capitals of the two countries; and subsequently to this period, increased facilities were afforded by the opening of Kingstown harbour near Dublin, which was substituted for the harbour of Howth. Since the construction of the pier, and the erection of the lighthouse, the harbour has afforded proper facility of entrance and security of shelter to the packets: in all states of the weather, vessels pass in a few minutes from the open bay to the quay, on which are cranes and other necessary apparatus for unshipping horses and carriages; and the mail and passengers are landed with expedition, and with perfect safety. The Admiralty's and the Holyhead Railway Company's steam-packets, of 670 tons' burthen, and 370-horse power, sail regularly to Kingstown; keeping up a constant intercourse between the two kingdoms. They are splendid vessels, with every accommodation for passengers, and generally perform the passage from Holyhead to Kingstown, a distance of sixty miles, in four hours. Previously to the introduction of steam-vessels, the voyage was often not accomplished in less than twenty hours, and frequently, in unfavourable weather, was attended with a delay of several days. The local advantages of Holyhead (which is a creek under the port of Beaumaris) have made it a favourite place of embarkation for Ireland, in preference to Liverpool, Parkgate, and other places, the passage from which is attended with some little hazard from the rocks by which the north coast of Wales is lined; so that, independently of its being a mail station, it possesses a very considerable degree of passenger traffic. The adjacent promontory called the Head, which is a bold and lofty projection, is easily recognized at sea; and the entrance to the port being free from rocks and shoals, and having a channel lighthouse on each side of the bay, and a third at the extremity of the pier, vessels can at all times come up in safety to their moorings in the harbour, which affords a secure asylum in strong gales; while in clearing outwards, within half an hour after leaving the pier they are in a position having fifteen leagues of offing in nearly all directions, owing to the central situation of the Head in St. George's Channel.

Connected with the harbour, and materially contributing to facilitate the access to it, is the *South Stack lighthouse*, erected upon the summit of an isolated rock on the coast, about five miles westward from Holyhead, and separated from the main land by a chasm ninety feet in width. This splendid structure was raised by the Corporation of the Trinity House, under the immediate superintendence of Captain Evans, in the year 1808. The elevation of the summit of the rock on which it is erected is 140 feet above the level of the sea at high-water mark; the height of the tower from the base to the gallery is 60 feet; and the lantern is 12 feet high from the gallery; making the total elevation of the light 212 feet above the level of high-water mark. The light consists of 21 brilliant lamps with powerful reflectors, placed on a revolving triangular frame, displaying a full-faced light every two minutes. There is now also a moveable light, which is put up in hazy weather. From the rough sea caused by the strong tides about the Head, a communication by boat was found to be very precarious. Mr. Evans first contrived to cross in a box or cradle running upon two strong ropes, with two others at the top, to keep it steady, and hauling lines at each end: this mode served for five years. Subsequently a bridge of ropes was constructed, which was used for fifteen years, and during these two periods not a single accident occurred; but, from the continual wear of the ropes, the communication was always attended with a degree of danger, and, on a subsequent inspection of the place, the committee of the Elder Brethren of the Trinity House ordered a suspension chain bridge to be thrown over the sound, which was accomplished in the year 1827. This bridge is of 110 feet span. The chains of it are firmly bolted into the rock upon both sides of the sound, and carried over two massive

pillars of stone from the Moelvre quarries, capped with single stones weighing nearly four tons each: the chains support a platform of timber, five feet in breadth, and seventy feet above the level of the sea at high-water mark. The erection of the South Stack lighthouse has been of the most extensive benefit to the navigation on this line of coast, which was previously dangerous from the numerous rocks and shoals that are scattered around in various directions. Before its erection, scarcely a winter passed without some vessels being wrecked here. During the forty years previous to 1808, no fewer than seventy-three vessels are recorded to have been totally lost; while, during the forty years that have elapsed since the erection of the lighthouse, only a very few vessels have been wrecked, having run on shore at the back of the Head during the night in very hazy weather. It has been found of essential benefit to the government packets. The scenery around the point on which the lighthouse is built is strikingly romantic, and the structure itself forms one of the most interesting features in this part of North Wales.

The Holyhead railway, opened in 1848, and the new Holyhead harbour, now in progress, connected as they are with the communication between the capitals of England and Ireland, may be noticed somewhat fully. For the last thirty or forty years, the government has been anxious to establish the most expeditious mode of communication between the two countries, as is evidenced by the outlay expended on the great parliamentary road from Shrewsbury to Holyhead; on the Menai and Conway suspension-bridges, and the harbour at Holyhead. For the last twelve or thirteen years, its attention has been directed to the accomplishment of this desirable object by means of railway conveyance and the formation of a good packet-station: but in consequence of the difficulty arising from three competing lines, and three distinct places of embarkation, all advocated with considerable weight of influence, some delay occurred before the government could arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. In 1836, the St. George's Harbour and Railway Company issued its prospectus for a line from Chester to Orme's Head, in the parish of Llandudno, near Conway; and in 1837 the Irish Railway Commission authorized Mr. Vignoles to survey a line from Shrewsbury to Porth-Dinllaen, in the parish of Edern, some miles south-west of the town of Carnarvon. In 1838, the Chester and Crewe Railway Company engaged the late Mr. George Stephenson to survey a line from Chester to Holyhead, as a continuation of their line. At that time, the Conway river and the Menai straits were regarded as great drawbacks from the last-mentioned project. But much weight was given to its claims by the favourable position of Holyhead, exactly opposite to Dublin, midway between that city and Liverpool, and between Milford Haven and Greenock; also as affording the shortest passage across the Channel, and being the best place on the coast for embarkation. To these considerations was added the probability that the line would be made available for conveying the Irish mails, government stores, troops, and ammunition, and would gain a large share of the general traffic between the two kingdoms, with, eventually, a portion of the trade with the West Indies and the United States; for all or nearly all which objects, it was better adapted than the two other lines.

In the spring of the year 1839, the Chester and Crewe Company again engaged Mr. Stephenson to survey the line, and compare its merits, in an engineering point of view, with those of the Porth-Dinllaen scheme. His report was highly favourable, and the directors of the company, with their active chairman, John Uniacke, Esq., supported by a number of the landed proprietors on the proposed line, forthwith formed a company called the Great Holyhead Railway Company, of which Mr. Edward Parry, of Chester, one of the earliest promoters, if not the originator, of the design, was appointed one of the secretaries. On the 4th of May, a meeting of Irish members of parliament and others was convened at the Thatched-House Tavern, London, at which it was resolved, that, "after examining the sections of both the rival lines of Holyhead and Porth-Dinllaen, and hearing the report of Mr. Stephenson, the meeting was convinced that the great Holyhead line was the most practicable, expeditious, and least expensive that could be constructed for the purpose of the communication between London and Dublin." Shortly afterwards, Rear-Admiral Sir James A. Gordon and Captain Beechey were appointed by government, to survey the relative capabilities of the ports of Holyhead, Orme's Bay, and Porth Dinllaen, in order to select the best place for a packet-station. These gentlemen accordingly made a report to the Commissioners of the Admiralty, which was ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, April 15, 1840, and which expresses their "decided opinion that, whether as regards the distance, the passage, the convenience of a station, or the expense of constructing works, Holyhead is the most fit and eligible point for the departure and arrival of packets on the eastern side of the Channel." In 1843, Captain Sir George Back and Captain Fair were instructed by the Admiralty to survey the different ports on the coast, and report which was

the fittest as a terminus for communicating with the Irish capital. They state:—"the bay of Holyhead seems formed by nature as a place for shelter; and if there be anything wanting to make it complete, the defect may be easily supplied: it is, therefore, our unqualified opinion that, both as to capability and position, Holyhead is unquestionably the most eligible harbour on the coast, as a port of communication with Dublin." And in the same year, Sir Frederick Smith, Lieut.-Col. Royal Engineers, and Professor Barlow, report to the Lords of the Treasury:—"Holyhead being selected as the best port for the Dublin packets, we are of opinion, that the best line of railway for the communication between London and Dublin is that proposed by Mr. George Stephenson, namely, by Chester and Bangor to Holyhead."

It was not, however, until the Great Western Company contemplated the extension of their line through South Wales, and the establishment of a communication with Ireland from that quarter, that the Holyhead line of railway was fully taken up. The directors of the London and Birmingham and the Grand-Junction Railway Companies, anxious to secure a portion of the Irish traffic through Wales, now agreed to take shares to the amount of a million of money, being one-half of the sum then thought to be sufficient; and the other half being subscribed by the Chester and Holyhead Railway Company formed in 1839, Mr. Robert Stephenson was appointed engineer-in-chief, and the requisite parliamentary notices were delivered. In the early part of 1844, Lord Robert Grosvenor, then M.P. for Chester, and the Hon. William O. Stanley, then M.P. for Anglesey, brought the bill before parliament; it was passed the same session, and on the 1st March, 1845, the first sod was cut, at Conway. In the course of that year the works were carried on with considerable spirit, simultaneously, throughout the line, under the able and indefatigable superintendence of the resident director, Captain Moorsom, R.N.

Attention was now drawn to the improvement of Holyhead harbour, government employing three eminent engineers to give their opinion as to the best means of enlarging and improving the port, and of making a packet-station, and an asylum-harbour for the larger class of vessels. J. Walker, Esq. C.E. to the Admiralty, proposed a plan for inclosing an area of 90 acres, with 3300 feet of breakwater, and 2500 feet of pier, at an expense of £400,000; while Captain Beechey, R.N., proposed to inclose 176 acres, with 4500 feet of breakwater, and 3500 feet of pier, at an expense of £550,000. Mr. Rendell, the engineer of the docks at Birkenhead, who last surveyed the place, prepared a plan on a much larger scale, with a breakwater of 5000 feet, from Soldier's Point eastward, to terminate at the Platter's buoy, and a pier of 7500 feet, from Ynys Gybi, with its head resting on the Outer Platter; inclosing an area of 316 acres, three-quarters of a mile long, and having six fathoms and a half of water. This design, the estimated cost of which is £700,000, was fully adopted by the government and the railway company in April, 1846; and will form one of the most splendid refuge-harbours and packet-stations in the world. The necessary funds are to be advanced jointly by the government and the company, the former contributing £500,000, and the latter £200,000. The works have been commenced some time, and are to be carried out by government with the utmost expedition; the inner piers are to be appropriated to the company's traffic and the use of government, and the old harbour is now being deepened for the purpose of giving accommodation to the larger class of steampackets, until the new harbour shall be finished. In 1848 the company obtained an act allowing them to become proprietors of steam-boats to cross the Channel, in connexion with their line.

The railway is one of the most extraordinary undertakings of the kind in the country. It is about eighty-four miles in length, and passes through districts remarkable for the difficulties they presented to the engineer, the line in some parts skirting a rock-bound coast, and in others being carried along the base of impending mountains. There are nine tunnels, cut through some of the hardest rock, and extending to upwards of 4000 yards; it has two tubebridges, of unparalleled size and structure, runs under or along 130 other bridges, crosses five important tidal and navigable rivers, has 15 extensive viaducts, and upwards of 100 excavations and embankments. The line was opened for general traffic from Chester to Bangor, a distance of 59½ miles, on May 1, 1848, and shortly afterwards to Holyhead, with the exception of the Bangor tube-bridge across the Menai straits at the Britannia Rock. Its course is as follows:—commencing at Chester, it almost immediately enters Flintshire; then runs parallel with the channel of the Dee, and skirts the estuary of that river, passing by the towns of Flint and Holywell, to the Point of Air. Here it changes its direction from north-westward to westward, and, touching the rising town of Rhyl, north of St. Asaph, enters Denbighshire, runs between the sea-shore and the town of Abergele, and crosses the river Conway by one of the two tube-bridges. The line then proceeds along the

northern coast of Carnarvonshire, by the town and port of Conway, the village of Aber, and the city of Bangor, to the Menai straits; after which, curving through the southern part of Anglesey, it runs near Newborough and Aberfraw, to its terminus at Holyhead. Thus it reaches from east to west through the whole extent of North Wales. The stations are, Queen's Ferry, 7 miles distant from Chester; Flint, 12½ miles; Holywell, or Greenfield, 16¾ miles; Mostyn-Quay, 20 miles; Prestatyn, 26¼ miles; Rhyl, 30 miles; Abergele, 34¼ miles; Conway, 45½ miles; Aber, 54¼ miles; Bangor, 59½ miles; Llanvair, 63½ miles; and Holyhead, 84 miles. The scenery of the line is most attractive: on the south, from the banks of the river Dee to the Menai, are hills and valleys, rocks, and frowning mountains; while on the north is seen a wide expanse of ocean, with, frequently, numerous vessels passing in different directions. The distance from London to Holyhead is about 260 miles, which, at 35 miles an hour, may be performed in seven hours and a half; making, with the four hours' sea-passage, a period of eleven hours and a half from London to Dublin.

The half-yearly report presented by the directors to the proprietors of the Holyhead railway, at the beginning of 1849, stated, that the number of passengers conveyed from May 1st to Dec. 31st, 1848, by railway, had been 189,067, and by steam-boats, 6649; and that the gross receipts had amounted to £48,085, exclusively of the sum receivable for carrying the mails along the line since August, and of the toll due from the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway Company. It also stated that the Menai bridge was rapidly approaching towards completion, and that one of its two lines of way would be opened by the month of August, when a considerable increase of traffic might reasonably be expected. The directors, it further appears, had been called on by government for the first instalment, £31,500, of the company's contribution towards the harbour of refuge and packet-pier; and as there was not sufficient traffic between Holyhead and Kingstown to support the packets both of government and the company, the directors had proposed to government to undertake the whole packet-service, and to convey the mails across the Channel, for a fixed annual payment. According to the report, the cost of this important line of railway, to the completion of the whole, and including therefore the works then still to be executed, is as follows: works of construction in excavations, permanent way, tunnelling, masonry, £1,590,000; stations, £164,000; rails and sleepers, £286,500; land, £294,150; the Conway bridge, £150,000; and the Britannia bridge, £500,000: total, £3,084,650; being an excess of £945,000 beyond the parliamentary estimate. This excess arose from the company's being obliged to pay a higher price for the rails than was originally expected; from their being obliged to buy much more land, and to make stronger sea defences; from the erection of more bridges than were at first intended, instead of level crossings; from the outlay at the great station at Chester; and above all, the vastly increased outlay for crossing the Conway and the Menai, the bridges ultimately adopted here requiring an expenditure of £650,000, instead of £250,000 as estimated for the original bridges. In some measure, the increased cost of the line is attributable to the requirements of the Admiralty. To the above total are to be added the following items from the directors' account of the expenditure to December, 1848; namely, parliamentary charges, £35,560; engineering, £53,689; steam-boats, £156,224; &c. There are also the expensive harbour and other works, now in progress, at Holyhead, with other demands upon the company's resources; so that, including every charge to the completion of the whole, the expenditure will amount to as much as four millions sterling. Further particulars of the line are given under the heads of Conway and Bangor, and in the articles on the four counties which it intersects. The foregoing account of the railway and new harbour is for the most part abridged from Mr. Parry's Guide to the line.

Holyhead bids fair, from the construction of the new harbour, to become a place of great importance. The situation is not only favourable for the trade with Ireland, but also for that with the continent of America; and the port being now connected by railway with London, Birmingham, Manchester, and all the manufacturing districts of the kingdom, a large portion of traffic must eventually pass through it. No manufactures of any note are at present carried on here. Several attempts have been made, at considerable expense, to explore the mineral treasures with which the parish was supposed to abound, but nothing of much value has yet been discovered, except some veins of the Mona marble, called "verd antique," which have been worked to some extent. In these quarries are frequently found fine specimens of steatite, which is also obtained in the parishes of Amlwch and Llanvechell: this mineral has attracted more attention since it has been ascertained that chromate of iron, a valuable pigment, belongs to the same formation. The trade consists principally in the building of coasting-vessels, the repairing of

the post-office steam-packets belonging to the several ports of England and Wales, and the making of ropes and cables. For these purposes there are very extensive premises, consisting of wet and dry docks, smithies, and other works, in which numerous workmen are constantly employed. In the works belonging to the post-office department alone more than 400 men are generally employed, under the superintendence of a resident engineer appointed by the commissioners of the General Post-office. The market is on Saturday.

By the act of 1832, for "Amending the Representation of the People," Holyhead was made a borough, contributory, with the newly-created boroughs of Amlwch and Llangevni, to Beaumaris, in the election of a member to serve in parliament. The right of election is vested in every male person of full age occupying either as owner, or as tenant under the same landlord, a house or other premises of the yearly value of not less than £10, provided he be capable of registering as the act demands: the present number of tenements of this value within the limits of the borough, which are described in the Appendix to the work, is 107. The town is also a polling-place in the election of a member for the county. The parish comprises 6048 acres, of which 606 are common and uncultivated; the soil, though rocky, is in many places very productive.

The living is a perpetual curacy, endowed with £300 parliamentary grant; patrons and impropiators, the Principal and Fellows of Jesus' College, Oxford, who, in 1820, augmented the income of the minister with a stipend of £20 per annum, and whose tithes have been recently commuted for a rent-charge of £613. 1. 8. per annum; present net income of the incumbent, £167, with a glebe-house. The church, dedicated to St. Cybi, is by some historians said to have been originally founded by that recluse, during his retirement in this remote part of the principality, about the close of the fourth century. By others its foundation is attributed to Maelgwyn Gwynedd, whose arms are placed over the principal entrance, and who, soon after its erection, is said to have endowed it with lands in this county and in that of Carnarvon, and to have made it collegiate for a provost and twelve prebendaries, sometimes styled the rector and brethren. This collegiate establishment, however, is stated on better authority to have been founded by Hwva ab Cynddelw, lord of Llŷs Llivon, in the reign of Owain Gwynedd, who ascended the throne of North Wales in the year 1137: it continued to flourish till the Dissolution, when its annual revenue was £32. 12. 6., of which sum £8. 12. 6. were received by the provost, and £24 by the prebendaries. The revenue remained in the possession of the crown till the time of James I., who granted it to Francis Morris, from whom it passed through several hands into the possession of Rice Wynne, Esq. This person, in 1640, gave the whole of the great tithes of this parish, together with those of the parishes of Bôdedern, Bodwrog, and Llandrygarn, which were originally chapelries in the parish of Holyhead, to the Principal and Fellows of Jesus' College, Oxford, for the maintenance of two fellows and two scholars; and directed that the advowson should remain with that body, so long as they should appoint the officiating minister from amongst the said scholars.

The present church is a spacious cruciform structure, principally in the decorated style of English architecture, comprising a nave and aisles, a chancel, and north and south transepts, with a very curious and ancient southern porch: its tower, originally rising from the intersection of the nave and transepts, has been rebuilt at the western end, at a comparatively modern period. The exterior of the south transept, and the porch, are curiously ornamented with rude sculpture, representing boars, bears, and other animals, among which is the dragon, supposed to bear some allusion to the reputed founder, Maelgwyn, who was called *Draco Insularis*. The exterior of the church is embattled, and on one of the walls is the Latin inscription "*Sancte Kubi, ora pro nobis.*" Its nave is separated from the aisles by ranges of pillars and pointed arches, of which those on the south side are more lofty than those on the north. The chancel, which, like the tower, is of comparatively recent date, is greatly inferior in its character to the nave and transepts, these being much more elegant in the tracery of the windows and other architectural details. The columns that supported the original tower, with their highly enriched capitals, and the springs of the arches, are still remaining at the point of intersection; the modern tower, which is square and embattled, but of very inferior design, is surmounted by a low pyramidal roof.

There were formerly various other churches, or chapels, in the parish, which was anciently of greater ecclesiastical importance than it is at present; but they have long since been abandoned, and the only remains are those of Capel Lochwyd, Capel-y-Gorllŷs, Capel Gwyngenu, and

Towyn-y-Capel. The last of these, situated on the sea-shore, near the old road, occupied the summit of a mound or tumulus, about thirty feet in height, where the foundation walls of the edifice are to be seen. The chapel was dedicated to St. Bridget, by contraction Bride, who, according to the legend, sailed over from the Irish coast on a green turf, and landed on the island of Holyhead, when the turf became a hillock, on which she caused the present chapel to be erected. The walls and east window of the building were standing within memory. Of late years, however, from the gradual encroachment of the sea, and the removal of sand for manure, the mound has been half washed away; and in a few years it will probably cease to exist. It contains a great number of graves, arranged in four or five tiers, one above another, at intervals of about three or four feet; these graves are of the ordinary length of a human body, and are generally formed with about twelve stones, rough from the quarry, of the slaty schist of the district. The bodies were laid invariably with the feet converging towards the centre of the mound; and a dark-coloured deposit in the bed of sand on which the skeletons lie, still shews traces of the decomposition of the bodies interred. These singular places of interment have, from time to time, been exposed to view during stormy weather, or in consequence of a fall of the layers of sand between the bodies, as the mound is by degrees undermined by the waves. The inhumation without any regard to the point of the compass towards which the head was laid, appears to connect the interments with the usages of primeval tribes. It may be conjectured, that in later and Christian times, the ancient cemetery of the district continued to be used as a place of burial, as shewn by the numerous human remains found under and around the chapel, deposited without the custom in earlier ages; and that the spot was hallowed by the erection of a Christian chapel, over this remarkable assemblage of heathen sepulchres. There are places of worship in the parish for Baptists, Independents, and Calvinistic and Wesleyan Methodists.

Dr. Edward Wynne, in 1748, built a school in the churchyard, and endowed it with £120, the interest of which he appropriated to the payment of a master for teaching six poor boys of the parish. A National school was founded, and schoolrooms were built by subscription in 1818, at an expense of £320, for the instruction of boys and girls, including the six boys under Dr. Wynne's endowment, who are gratuitously instructed by the same master: the master receives £50, and the mistress £30 per annum, arising from the above endowment, from annual subscriptions and donations, and school-pence. There is a good infants' school for the poor, the only one in Anglesey, and one of the very few infants' schools that have yet been established in North Wales; it was commenced in 1845, by persons in humble life, aided by their friends in England, and though dependent solely on the children's pence for its support, it has made rapid progress. A school for boys is supported on Dr. Daniel Williams's foundation, and in the rural parts of the parish are one or two schools chiefly maintained by charity. There are ten Sunday schools in the town and parish, one of them in connexion with the Church, four belonging to the Calvinistic Methodists, and the others to the other denominations of dissenters above mentioned. In 1698 *Arthur Griffith* bequeathed some small portions of land, and a rent-charge of £1, the whole now producing £12. 2. per annum, for the use of the poor. *Catherine Roberts*, in 1756, left £250 in trust to the minister and churchwardens, the interest of one moiety to be annually divided among four distressed housekeepers, and that of the other among the poor generally. In 1707, *Margaret Wynne* granted by deed, among other benefactions, the rents and profits of the property of Caegwian, consisting of a farmhouse, and thirty-eight and a half acres of land, to one poor woman of this parish, to be selected by the owner of the mansion of Penrhôs, who pays the rent, £15. 15. per annum, to a widow. The poor also receive £5 annually, appropriation money, one moiety of which is paid on Whitsun-eve, and the other on St. Thomas's day, by the agent of *Jesus' College, Oxford*. *Robert Lloyd* likewise bequeathed a rentcharge of £2. 2., and *Jarrard Jackson*, in 1802, a sum of £20, the interest of which is distributed in small sums; and in addition to these, is a sum of £18. 13. per annum, applied to the repairs of the church, arising from several pieces of land amounting to about twelve acres, granted by unknown donors for the purpose. A few small charities have been lost. There are two unendowed almshouses, called respectively the Old and New houses.

Of the monastery said to have been founded by St. Cybi, towards the close of the fourth century, there are no remains. The walls of the churchyard point out the site of the Roman station which is supposed to have existed here; they inclose an area in the form of a parallelogram, 220 feet in length, and 130 feet broad. On one side this area is open to the harbour, having only a parapet along the edge of the precipitous cliffs; but on the other three sides it is defended by strong walls of masonry, six feet in thickness and seventeen feet high. At the angles were circular bastion

towers, a small portion only of one of which is now remaining. The walls are still in good preservation, and are perforated with two rows of circular openings, about four inches in diameter, exactly resembling those which form so remarkable a feature in the walls of *Segontium*, adjacent to Carnarvon. The cement, mixed with coarse pebbles, is extremely hard, and in every other respect the work displays strong characteristics of Roman origin. Upon the summit of a mountain about three miles from the town, are the remains of an ancient military post, consisting of a circular tower, and portions of walls, in some parts eight feet in height, extending in a straight line for a considerable distance. These ruins, designated *Caer Twr*, have by some antiquaries been considered as of Roman origin; and the mountain on which they are situated is called Pen Caer Gybi, or "the summit of the fortress of Cybi." On the mountain on which the signal station was established, are the remains of an ancient camp, which appears to have been surrounded with a wall of uncemented stones, vestiges whereof may still be traced. In 1825, several gold coins of the Emperor Constantine were found in a high state of preservation on one of the hills near Holyhead; one of these, now in the possession of the Marquess of Anglesey, has on the obverse a fine head of the emperor, and on the reverse a wreath, within which is the legend VOTIS. TS[E?], in high relief. On Trévignerth farm, about a mile south-east of Holyhead, is a cromlech nearly perfect.

The promontory called the Head, by which the harbour is sheltered from westerly winds, presents a singular aspect, its sides towards the sea forming in some parts immense perpendicular precipices, while in others they are worn, by the continued action of the waves, into caverns of magnificent and romantic appearance. Of these, one called the "Parliament House" is accessible only by boats at half ebb tide, and consists of a stately series of receding arches, supported by massive and lofty pillars of rock, displaying an interior of considerable grandeur. Some of the caverns afford shelter to gulls, razor-bills, guillemots, ravens, cormorants, herons, and other birds; and the loftiest crags are frequented by the peregrine falcon. The eggs of these birds are in great request as a delicacy for the table, and some of the hardier inhabitants of the vicinity are employed in the hazardous task of procuring them for sale. For this purpose, one man is lowered down by a rope fastened round his body, with the other end secured in the ground on the summit of the cliff, where another man remains to guard it: after depositing the eggs in a basket slung at his back, he is drawn up to the brow of the rock, and in this perilous situation is assisted over the edge of the precipice, with his booty, by his companion. The adventurers have become so accustomed to this dangerous employment, that accidents rarely occur; although it has occasionally happened that the man on the summit of the cliff, being overpowered by the weight of his companion, while assisting him to land, has been drawn over the brink, and both have perished. The common called *Towyn-y-Capel* is bounded on the west by some rocks, over which the sea breaks with tremendous violence, and which, being covered at high water, are exceedingly dangerous to mariners incautiously approaching this part of the coast. *Roderic the Great* is said by Enderbie in his "Cambria Triumphans" to have been buried at Caer-Gybi. *William Morris*, distinguished as a collector of Welsh manuscripts, and brother of the learned Lewis Morris, a celebrated antiquary and poet, was comptroller of the customs at this place, where he died in 1764." (from Samuel Lewis's '*Topographic Dictionary of Wales*' 1848).