

WALK 4: CWMYOY

OS map OL13: Grid Ref: SO 29907 23264

Approx. Distance: 3 miles

Duration: about 2.5 hours, leisurely

About 600 feet of ascent.

Difficulty: Moderate, steep bit up past White Castle can be very muddy in winter.

BRING WALKING BOOTS, AND CLOTHES SUITABLE FOR THE WEATHER

CWMYOY VILLAGE & VALLEY

Today 'Cwmyoy' usually refers to the village on the slope below Hatterall Ridge, but in the past the name was used more widely to describe an area nearly 8 miles long and 1 mile wide which extends to Capel-y-ffin and includes Llanthony.

The manor of Cwmyoy was a major part of the estate given to the Augustine Priory of Llanthony by the De Lacy family of Eywas Lacy in 1108. The manor was centred on the settlement of Cwmyoy and St. Martin's and it is likely there were other manorial buildings such as a smithy, bakehouse, domestic dwellings and a mill and fish-weir on the river Honddu.

During the 19th century Cwmyoy parish was divided into the local government units of Upper and Lower Cwmyoy. Cwmyoy translates as 'valley of the yoke'. In the Gwentian dialect *Cwm-lou* was the village and *Cwm-lau* the valley. In 1900 the village had a school, a Post office, a pub, a vicarage and some cottages.

Substantial (post-medieval) local stone farm-houses associated with the manor include Llwyn Celyn (1420), Perth-y-crwn, Ty-hwnt-y-bwlch, Old Blaenyoy, the Neuadd, Darren Uchaf, and Pont Rhys Powell.

P PARK BY THE STILE ON THE LLANTHONY ROAD OR IN THE CHURCH CAR PARK UP BEHIND THE CHURCH.

- 1 Cross the stile, follow the path to the bridge, walk up the road to the path on your left up to the church; **OR** from the Church car park descend through the churchyard to the porch.
- 2 Read overleaf about the local geology **A** and the village in the late 19th century **B**; visit St. Martin's Church **C**. Turn left from the porch, look at the preaching cross; then go up through the graveyard and turn left along the road.
- 3 The Black Lion garden **D** was where the car park now is; go along the road to Cwmyoy school & schoolhouse. **E**
- 4 Take the track uphill to the Graig building; take the gate on the right and follow the old track below the Graig **F** past a quarry, and continue up to the house called White Castle **G**. Just after the house turn left up a steep track and find the site of the WWII bomb where the wall has collapsed on the right **H**. Enjoy the incredible view at the top of the ancient track at the foot of Hatterall Hill.
- 5 Carry on to circle Ty-hwnt-y-bwlch **I**; walk down to a stile on your left.
- 6 Climb the stile and follow the path crossing fields in the direction of Blaenyoy **J**. Join the road to the farmhouse but instead of passing through the farm go through the gate on the right.
- 7 Follow the path that circles the farmhouse and buildings and continue uphill to the stream.
- 8 Cross the stream and follow the path back to Ty-hwnt-y-bwlch. Carry on down the road to Cwmyoy passing Ty-Charles **K** on your left and then Pen-y-wern. Don't miss the old community ciderpress on the road beneath the church.

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Look out for the other walk leaflets in this series

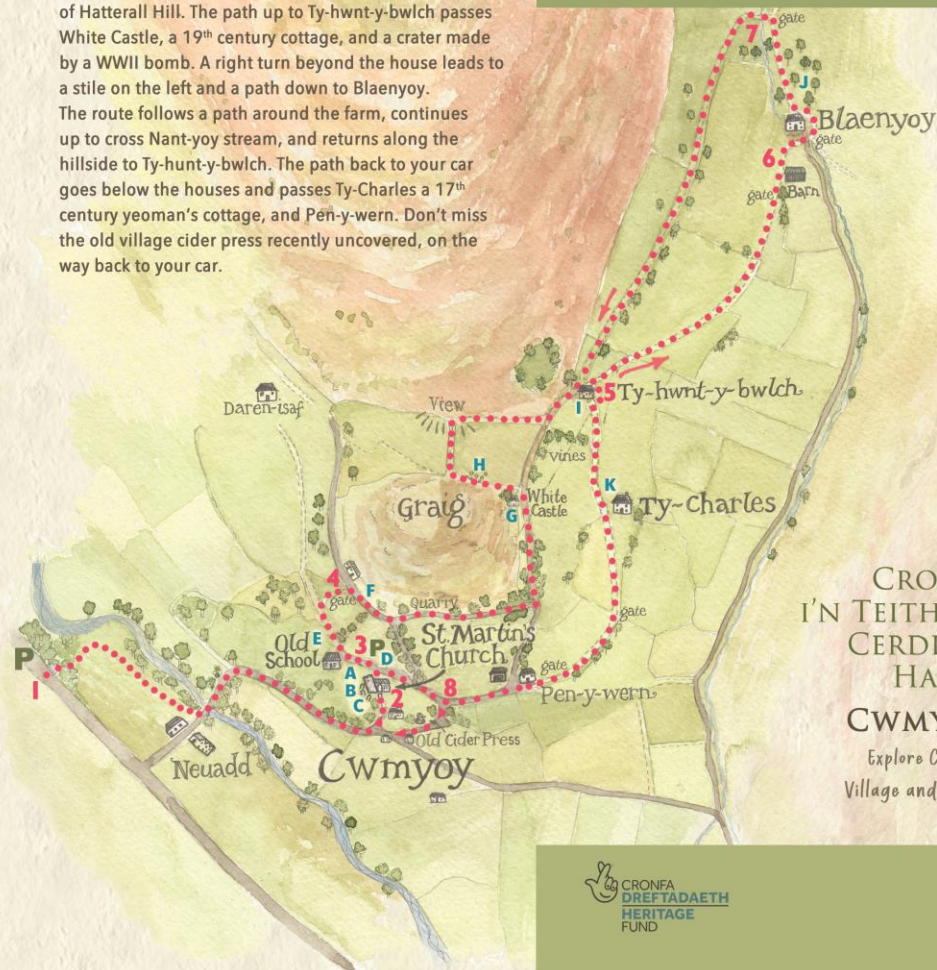
devised by the LV&D History Group.

Map and leaflet design by Lisa Hellier.

Words by Pip Bevan.

The walk starts at St. Martin's Church, passes the site of the Black Lion, the Post Office and the school, and circles the base of the Graig (crag) at the end of the spur of Hatterall Hill. The path up to Ty-hwnt-y-bwlch passes White Castle, a 19th century cottage, and a crater made by a WWII bomb. A right turn beyond the house leads to a stile on the left and a path down to Blaenyoy.

The route follows a path around the farm, continues up to cross Nant-yoy stream, and returns along the hillside to Ty-hwnt-y-bwlch. The path back to your car goes below the houses and passes Ty-Charles a 17th century yeoman's cottage, and Pen-y-wern. Don't miss the old village cider press recently uncovered, on the way back to your car.



HISTORY WALKS IN
THE LLANTHONY VALLEY
& ENVIRONS

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I'N TEITHIAU
CERDDED
HANES
CWMYOY
Explore Cwmyoy
Village and Valley

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HERITAGE
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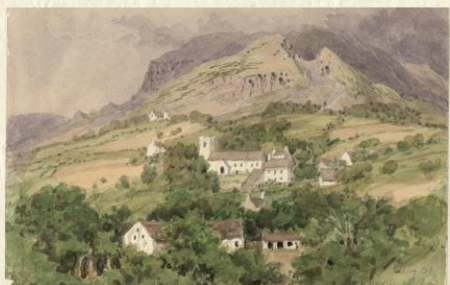
A LOCAL GEOLOGY

The valley Cwm Iau was shaped like a yoke by glaciers during the last Ice Age. The village was built below the Graig (crag) at the end of the western ridge. Here the old red sandstone overlay marl leading to slippage and subsidence over the centuries evident in the extreme tilt of the church.

B CWMYOY VILLAGE AROUND 1900



Cwmyoy Village provided services for Lower Cwmyoy which had a population of 181 in 1891. The 'lord of the manor' and principal landowner was the son of Walter Savage Landor. In 1901 the village had St. Martin's Church, Cwmyoy Board School for 50 children (average attendance 42), a Post Office and a pub.



C ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH

The church, built in the 12th & 13th centuries lies on a pilgrim's route to St. David's in Pembrokeshire. The tilts were caused by landslips.



Search out the 12th century round headed window in the North wall, the 13th century Crucifix (which was stolen and later found in a London antiques shop), the 13/14th century window in the chancel, the 18/19th century square Brute-carved monuments, the 16th century square-headed and 3 arched windows, and the lepers' squint window at the west end of the church.



The communion table and rails are 17th century. Six heavy bells added in the late 17th century cannot be rung properly due to the state of the tower. The tilt of the Tower of Pisa is 4.7% compared with Cwmyoy church tower's tilt of 5.2%.

D THE BLACK LION PUB

Local resident Margaret was told that her grandmother, who worked in the pub before it closed in 1928 would put the poker in the fire just before closing time and pull it out when it was red hot as she asked the drinkers to leave.

E CWMYOY BOARD SCHOOL

The land was provided by WS Landor; the school and teacher's house built in 1855, and a church school was opened. In 1878 the Government Board School opened in the building with 62 pupils on the register. In February 1961 the building was declared dangerous due to subsidence and the school closed.

F THE GRAIG & THE QUARRY

Stone for the church and other buildings was quarried from the foot of the Graig.

G WHITE CASTLE

This four-roomed cottage was probably built in the 1830's. It is situated on the parish road from Cwmyoy to Ty-hwnt-y-bwlch, was not part of the Llanthony estate, and was probably an encroachment on the edge of the Graig common.



H WWII BOMB CRATER ABOVE WHITE CASTLE

Two bombs fell in Cwmyoy during WWII: the one above White Castle fell at about 2am though it did not explode immediately. It left a large crater and blew a length of wall down - both still visible today. The other bomb which fell down by the river at Lowen Henllan Farm, did not explode but was dug up and defused by the Royal Engineers.

Government war-time requirements that farmers use more land and grow wheat potatoes considerably improved local farming practices which had deteriorated during the 1930's.



I TY-HWNT-Y-BWLCH

'The-house-beyond-the-gap' The farmhouse dates from the 16th century and there were 17th century additions. The gothic arch to the porch may have come from Llanthony Priory. There was an outside kitchen and an adjacent barn was built in 1720.

J CWM IAU & BLAENYOY

Blaenyoy is a farmhouse at the head of Cwm Iau; it replaced Old Blaenyoy which is now a ruin on the north-facing slope. In 1700 a survey of the manor of Cwmyoy listed some of the Old Blaenyoy's field-names: *Cae-ydderwen* - 'field of the oak trees'; *Eriau* - 'the sheep track'; *Jackfield Meadow*; *Pedwar Cyfer* - 'Four Acres' (opposite); *Tir Skyin* - 'Long Land'.

K TY CHARLES

A mid-17th century yeoman's farmer's house retaining much of its original character. At the end of the 18th century the house was let on a lease for life to John Williams who sub-let it to William Prosser for £20 per annum.



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Look out for the other walk leaflets in this series devised by the LV&D History Group.

Map and leaflet design by Lisa Hellier.

Words by Pip Bevan.