

WELSH ARCHITECTURE - ARCHITECTURE IN WALES

Week 5

**Rural vernacular, early industrial,
historicism**

Ian Standen

Week 5 – rural vernacular, early industrial, historicism

- Aims – To describe the key features and characteristics of **rural vernacular, early industrial, historicism** - Architecture in Wales; how they are related and subsequently influenced in terms of architectural 'style' in Welsh Architecture.
- Objectives- By the end of the sessions students should be able to identify the basic features of each style and appreciate how these have developed, adapted over a period of time.

16th- 19th Century

Rural Vernacular

- Vernacular buildings are utilitarian structures that have been constructed in traditional ways using locally found materials.
- They were not conceived by professional designers and are generally unpretentious in character.



Rural Vernacular

16th- 19th Century Rural Vernacular



Cilewent, St Fagans-A cruck and timber-framed house 1470 CE as an open hall. Rebuilt in stone in 1734 - This is a 'long-house', with cattle being accommodated at one end and humans at the other, with a common passageway between the two parts. A farmhouse common in mid- and south Wales. In addition to twelve cattle, there was also stabling for horses, and a hay-loft above

16th- 19th Century

Rural Vernacular

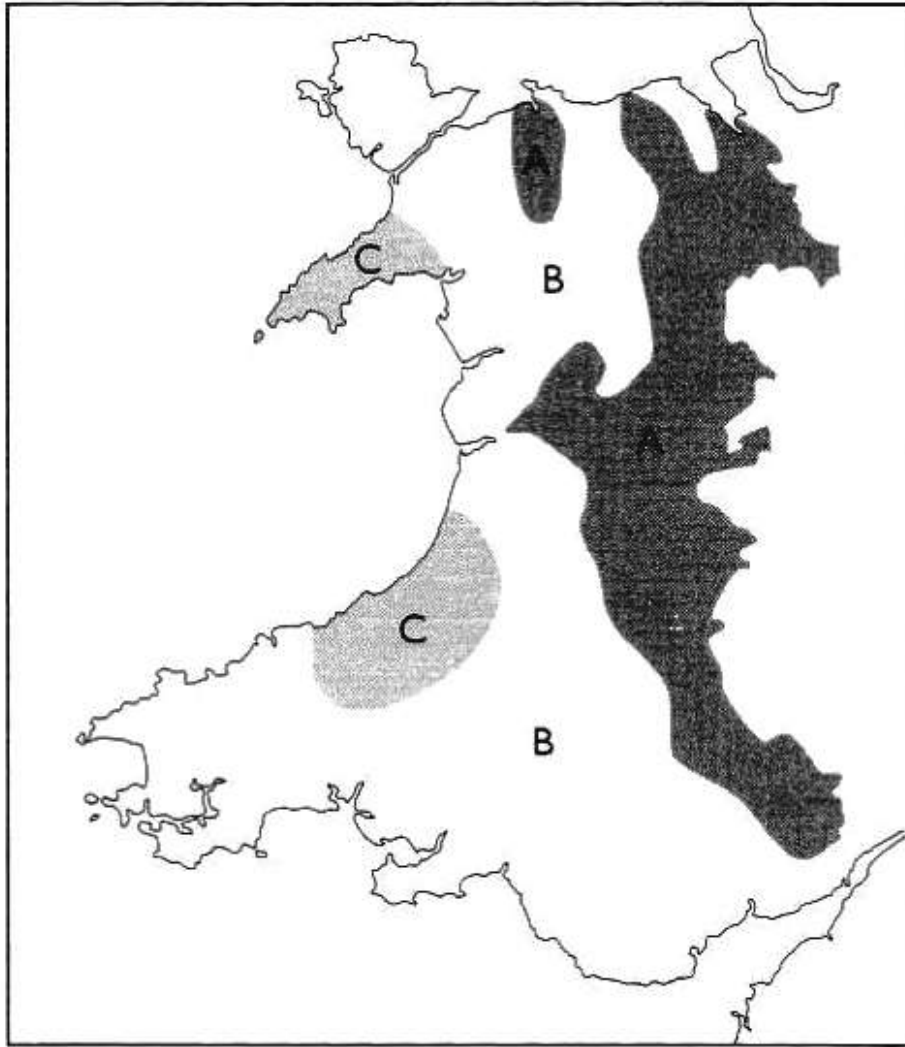


Cil-Oerwynt Farm house in original location 1954

16th- 19th Century

Rural Vernacular

- The appearance of a building depends, to a considerable extent, on the materials used. These materials vary according to what was available in the different areas of Wales.
- The map shows the regional distribution of timber, undressed stone, and clay as the main materials for walls. Brick was also used in some border areas from the late sixteenth century.



Distribution of half-timbered (A), stone (B) and clay (C) buildings.

16th- 19th Century
Rural Vernacular

16th- 19th Century

Rural Vernacular

- The cruck-framed, single storey hall-house appears to have been the dominant type of dwelling over large areas - except the south-west- prior to the late Tudor period.
- It was heated by an open fire in the hall.

16th- 19th Century

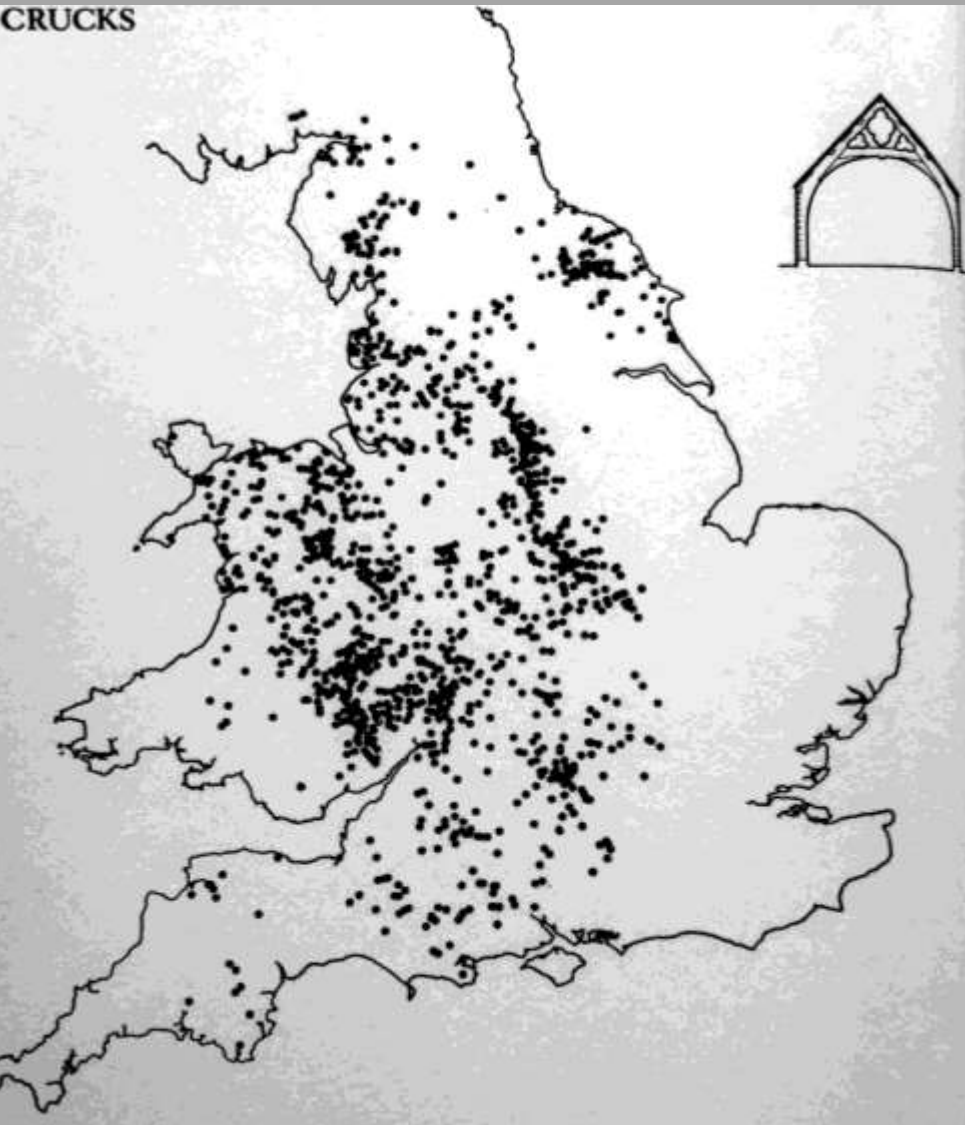
Rural Vernacular

- Construction was based on rows of trusses, each formed out of two curved crucks and set up as inverted 'V's.
- The longhouse was once common in upland areas. It comprised a long, rectangular building housing both family and cattle under the same roof but divided at the centre by a common access passage serving both parts.
- The passage was also used as a feeding walk for the cow house.

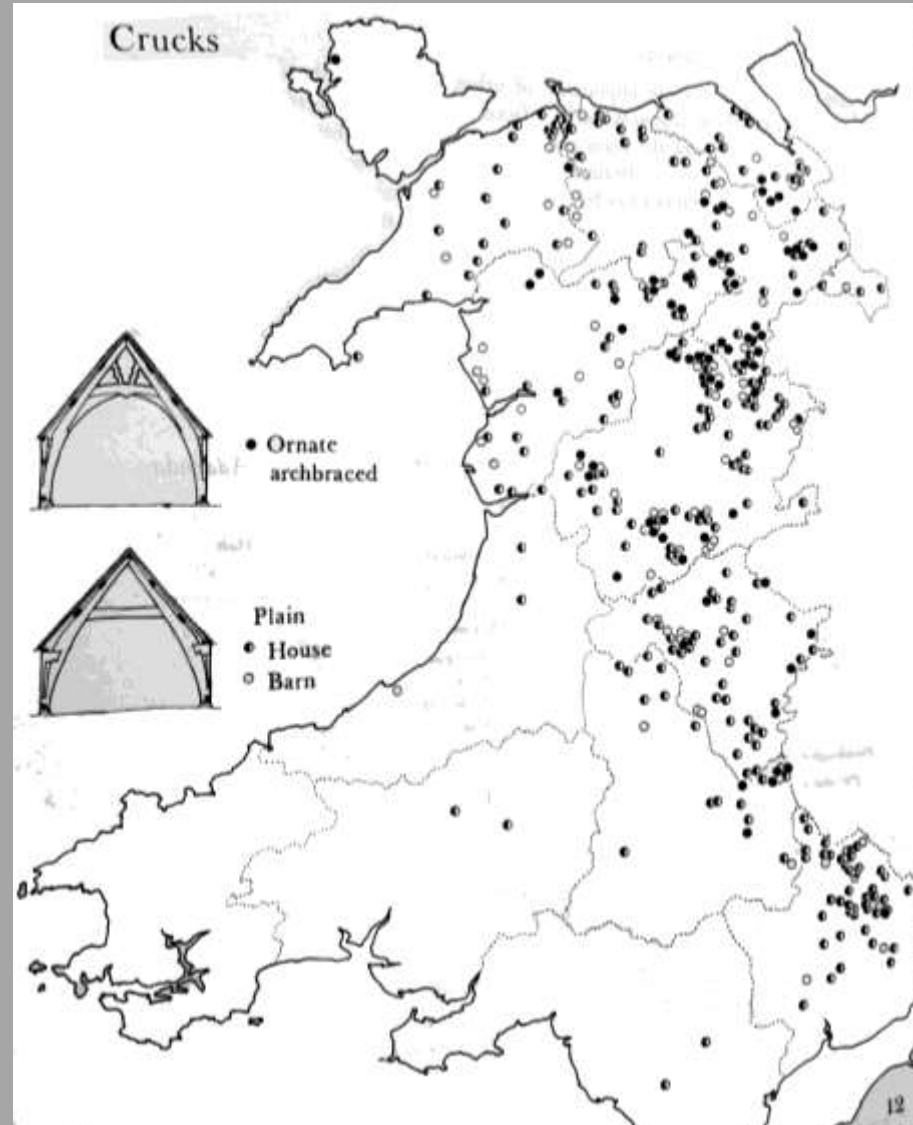
16th- 19th Century

Crucks in England and Wales

CRUCKS



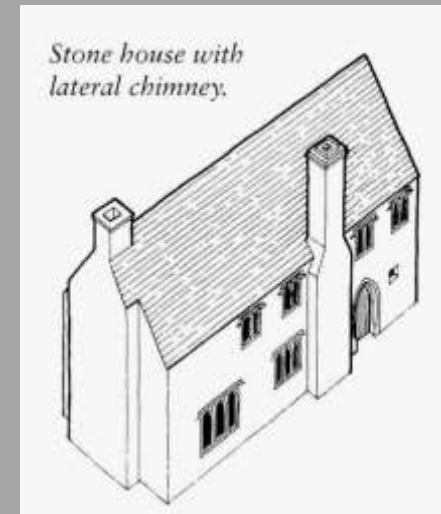
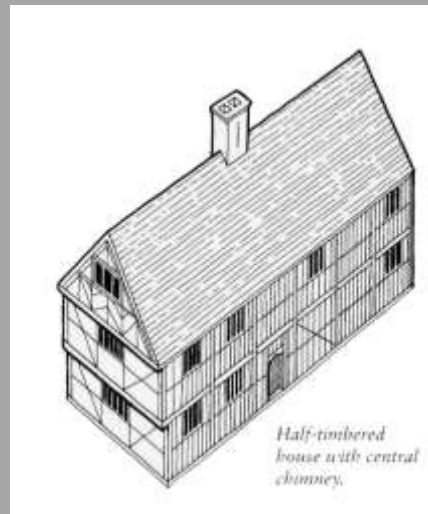
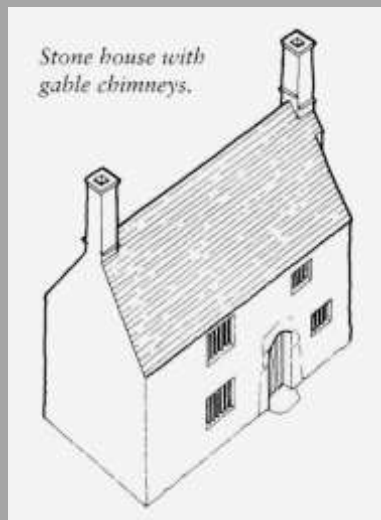
Crucks



16th- 19th Century

Rural Vernacular

- By the late sixteenth century, storeyed houses had begun to supersede hall houses.
- The form of the post-medieval house varied from region on to region and was largely determined by the position of its main fireplace.



16th- 19th Century

Rural Vernacular

- In the north-west the dominant type of storeyed house had the fireplace on the end wall(s), resulting in gable chimneys.
- In the eastern borderlands and mid Wales, the usual position of fireplaces (often back to back) was in the centre of the house.
- The late seventeenth century house shown is from Powys and half-timbered, with an entrance lobby backing on to the fireplace.

16th- 19th Century

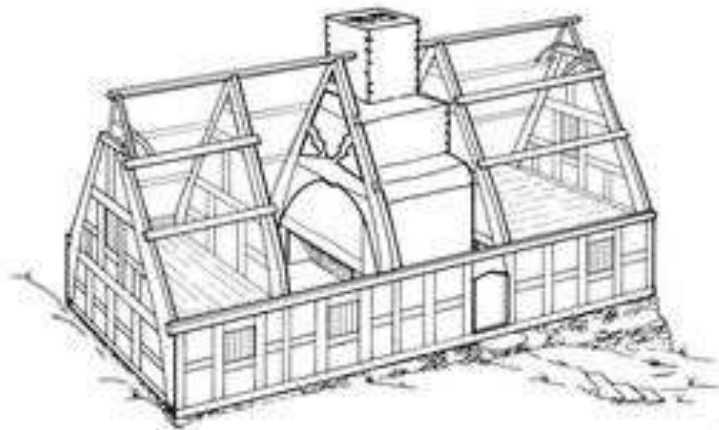
Rural Vernacular

- A third type of house had the fireplace on one of the longer main walls. This was common in the south-west (where it was often accompanied by massive chimneys), and along the southern coastal areas.
- In the fifteenth century, nearly all domestic buildings, apart from great houses, belonged to the vernacular tradition; by the nineteenth century only the meanest cottages fell within this group.

16th- 19th Century

Rural Vernacular

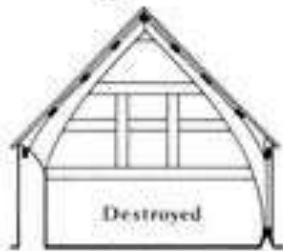
a.



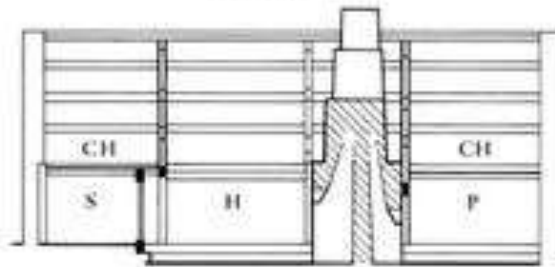
b.



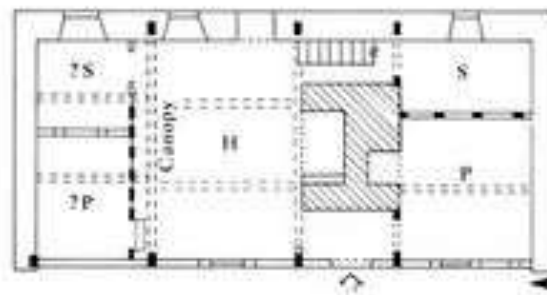
Dais Partition



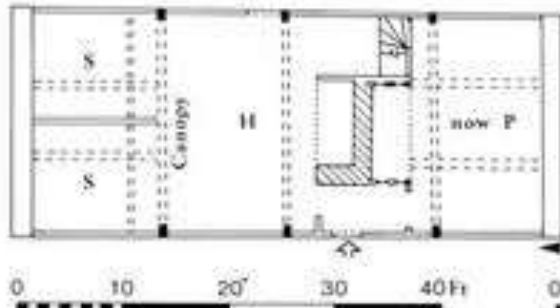
Passage Partition



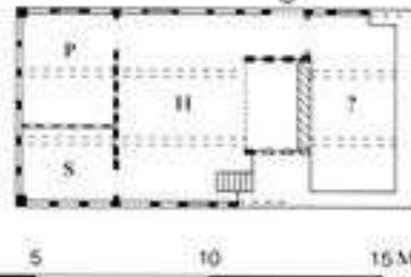
Central Truss



c.



d.



Abernodwydd Farm House 1936



Abernodwydd Farm House 1947

16th- 19th Century

Rural Vernacular



Abernodwydd Farm House reconstructed at St Fagans 1951



1936



1947

18th Century

Early Industrial

- Industry of one kind or another had existed in Wales since prehistoric times. These industries were, however, generally of a small-scale nature.
- It was not until the eighteenth century that major, innovative changes began to take place - particularly in the iron and coal industries.

18th Century

Early Industrial

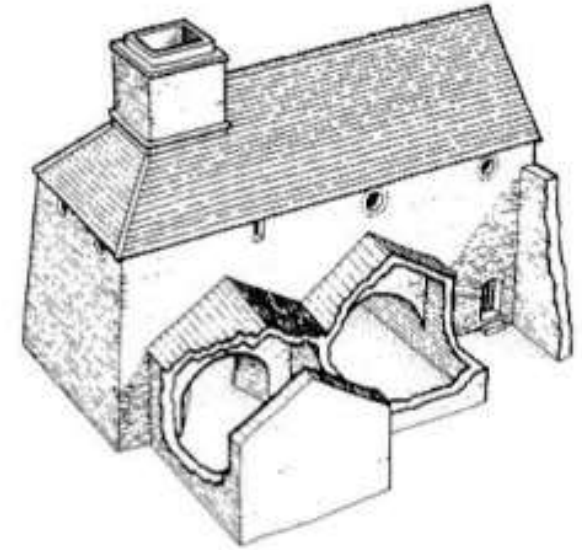
- Many early industrial buildings, such as the barn-like blast furnace at Dyfi were vernacular in character.
- The Dyfi furnace used charcoal to smelt iron ore. Materials were taken to the upper floor and tipped into a shaft-like furnace from a high level charging platform.
- A water-wheel, on one side of the building, was used to drive bellows to create the blast.

18th Century

Early Industrial



Dyfi Furnace 1755CE



Early Industrial



18th Century

Early Industrial

- By the end of the eighteenth century, iron making in the south and northeast had been transformed; coal had replaced charcoal as a fuel and steam was used instead of water-powered bellows to provide blast.
- Iron furnaces became much larger and were built in groups, their tapering external shells echoing their internal shape.

18th Century

Early Industrial

- Equally distinctive features of most nineteenth-century ironworks were the towers needed to lift materials from the works yard to the charging level.
- The tower at Blaenavon was of the water-balance type and consisted of a lift that could be raised and lowered by filling or emptying tanks of water.

Blaenavon Ironworks: Balance Tower

1839CE



18th Century

Early Industrial

- Although industrial buildings were basically functional structures, they were often designed to impress.
- A good example of this conscious formality is to be seen at the slate quarry workshop Llanberis. In north-western Wales, slate quarrying was the major industry.
- With improvements in transport, slate began to be used extensively for- roofing in all parts of Wales.

Llanberis: Slate Workshop, 1870CE



18th Century

Early Industrial

- Large engine houses were required in a number of Industries to provide power.
- Nineteenth century engine houses were often impressively designed and included regularly positioned windows.
- Colliery winding houses had tall round-headed windows and sometimes resembled Nonconformist chapels.

18th Century

Early Industrial

- Most eighteenth and nineteenth-century housing was built by private contractors. Occasionally, dwellings were built by industrial owners as 'company houses'.
- These were usually built to house key workers and although just as uniform as other terraced houses, they were often of better quality and slightly larger in size.

Blaenavon Ironworks: Stack Square 1789-92CE



18th Century

Early Industrial

- Most industrial housing was unplanned. At Tredegar, a complete new town with a geometric layout centred on a circular market place was created between the ironworks and the ironmaster's park during the years 1810 and 1818, making it the first consciously planned industrial town in Britain.



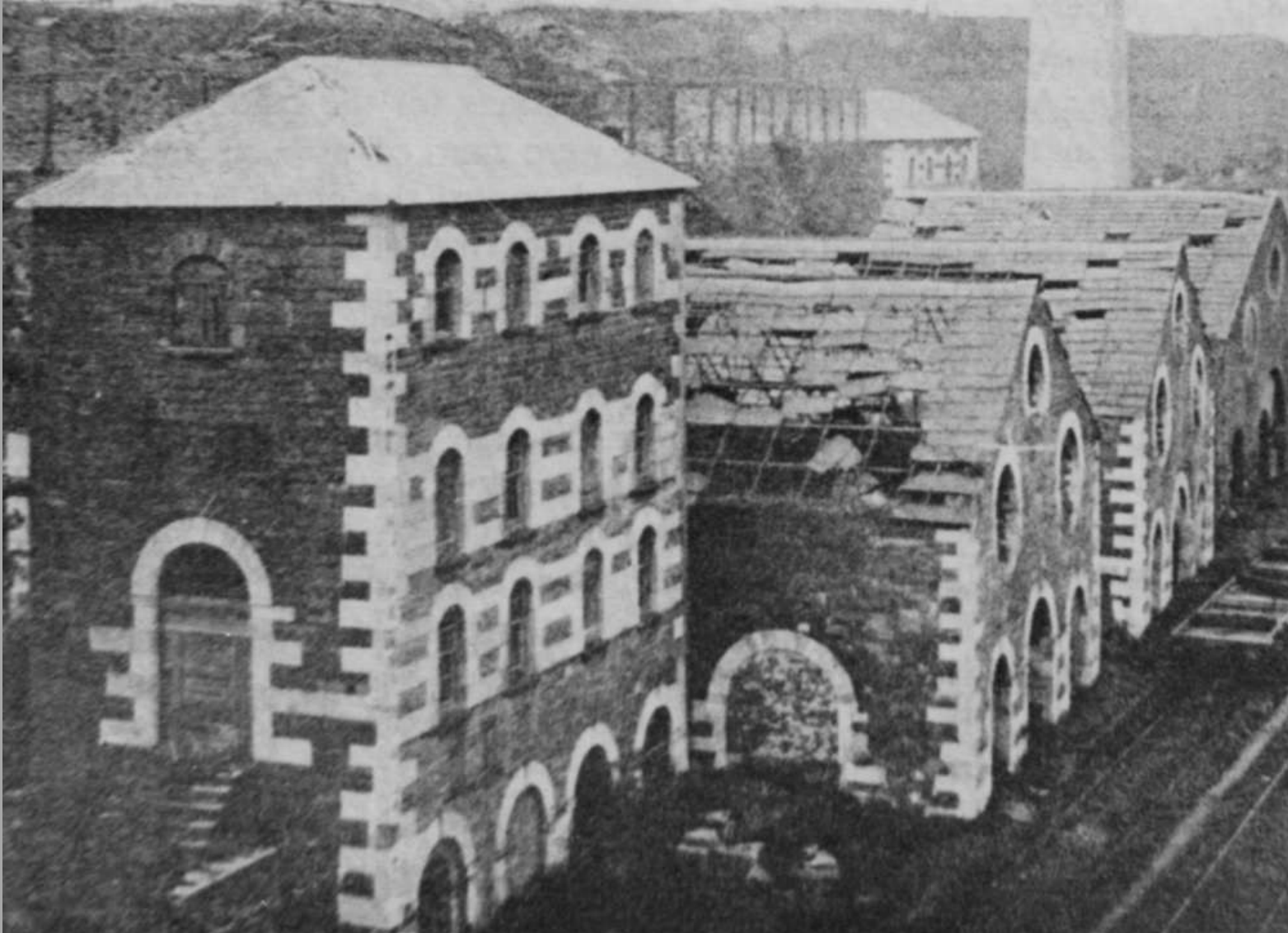
Ordnance Survey
1:2500 map of 1880



Blaenavon



Ynysfach: Engine House 1830's





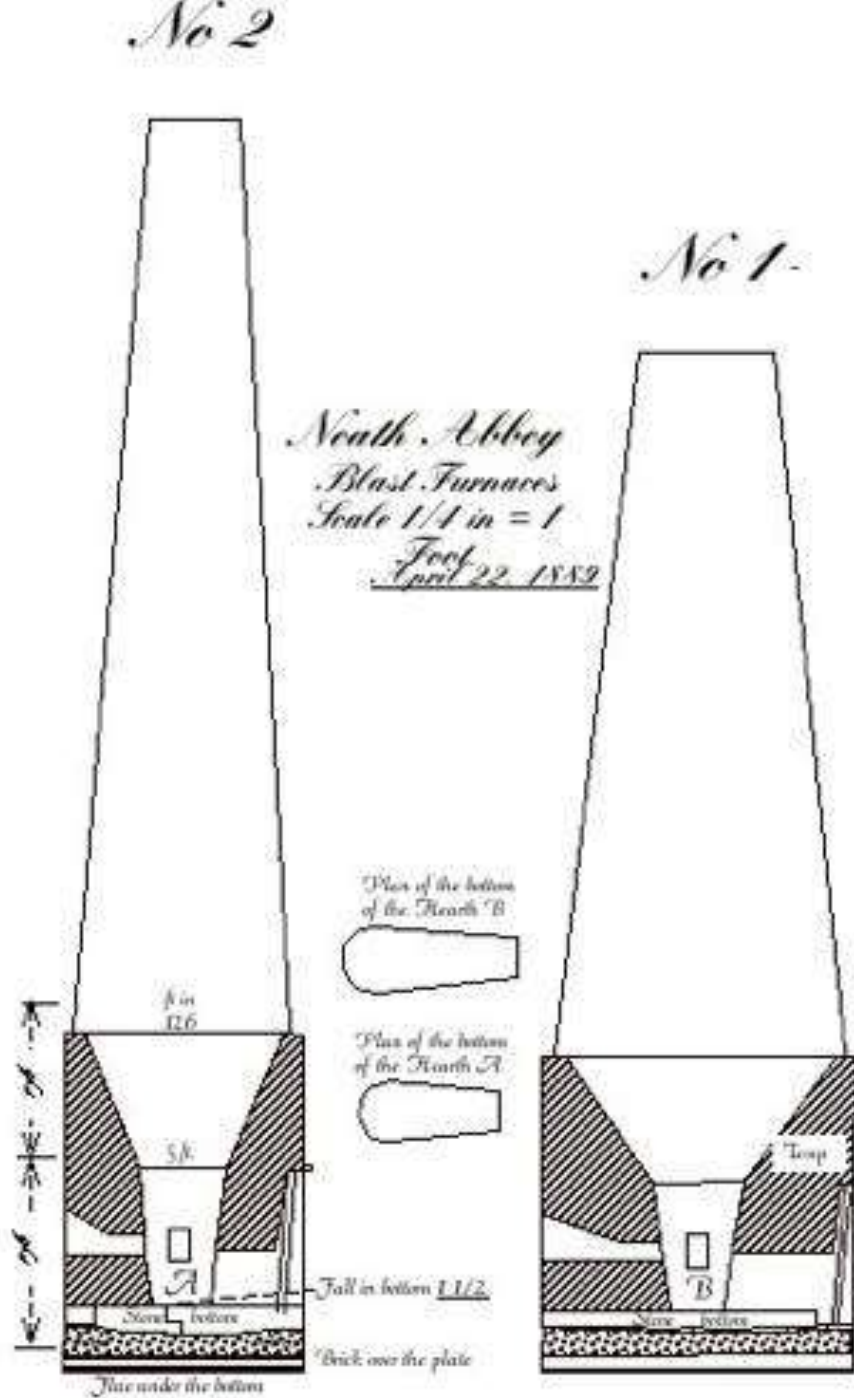
Ynysfach: Engine House 1830's



Neath Abbey Ironworks: Blast Furnace, 1793 CE



Neath Abbey Ironworks: Blast Furnace, 1793 CE



Historicism

Castellated Mansions

- The background to nineteenth-century architecture is the so-called 'battle of the styles' during which various earlier architectural styles were revived.
- In domestic buildings, both revived Gothic and revived classical styles were used and argued over: hence the term 'battle'.

COFFEE

Historicism

- Initially Gothic was the favourite mode for the 'castles' of the newly rich entrepreneurs and industrialists.
- Hawarden a handsome eighteenth century classical house was thoroughly transformed into a castellated mansion; Gwrych was built as a new 'fortress' complete with curtain walls and eighteen towers. Cyfarthfa was designed to overawe the workers who laboured in virtually medieval conditions for its owner.

Historicism

- More architecturally convincing than any of the above shams, however, was the Norman-style Penrhyn Castle, built for the owner of a slate-rich estate.
- It took thirteen years to complete and its monumental 'keep was closely based on the twelfth-century keep tower of Hedingham Castle in Essex.

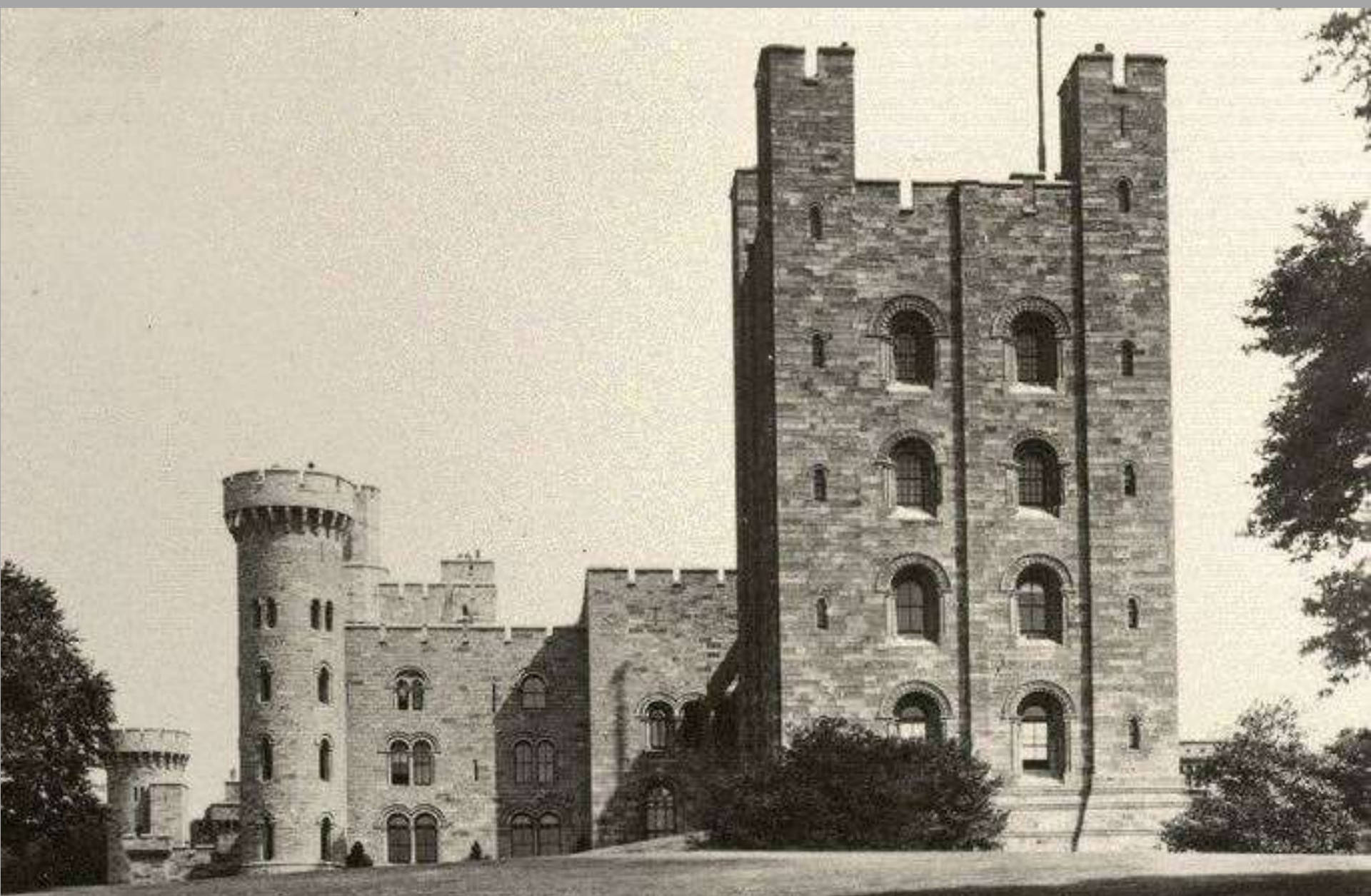
Penrhyn Castle, 1827-40CE



Penrhyn Castle, 1827-40CE



Penrhyn Castle, 1827-40CE



Penrhyn Castle, 1827-40CE





Penrhyn Castle,
1827-40CE

Historicism

- For sheer ostentatious extravagance, Castell Coch and Cardiff Castle were easily the most remarkable resurrections of the nineteenth century.
- Castel Coch had been a ruin and the restoration there was a serious attempt to reconstruct, in French Gothic Style, a castle as it might have originally appeared.

Castell Coch, 1871-79CE



Castell Coch, 1871-79CE





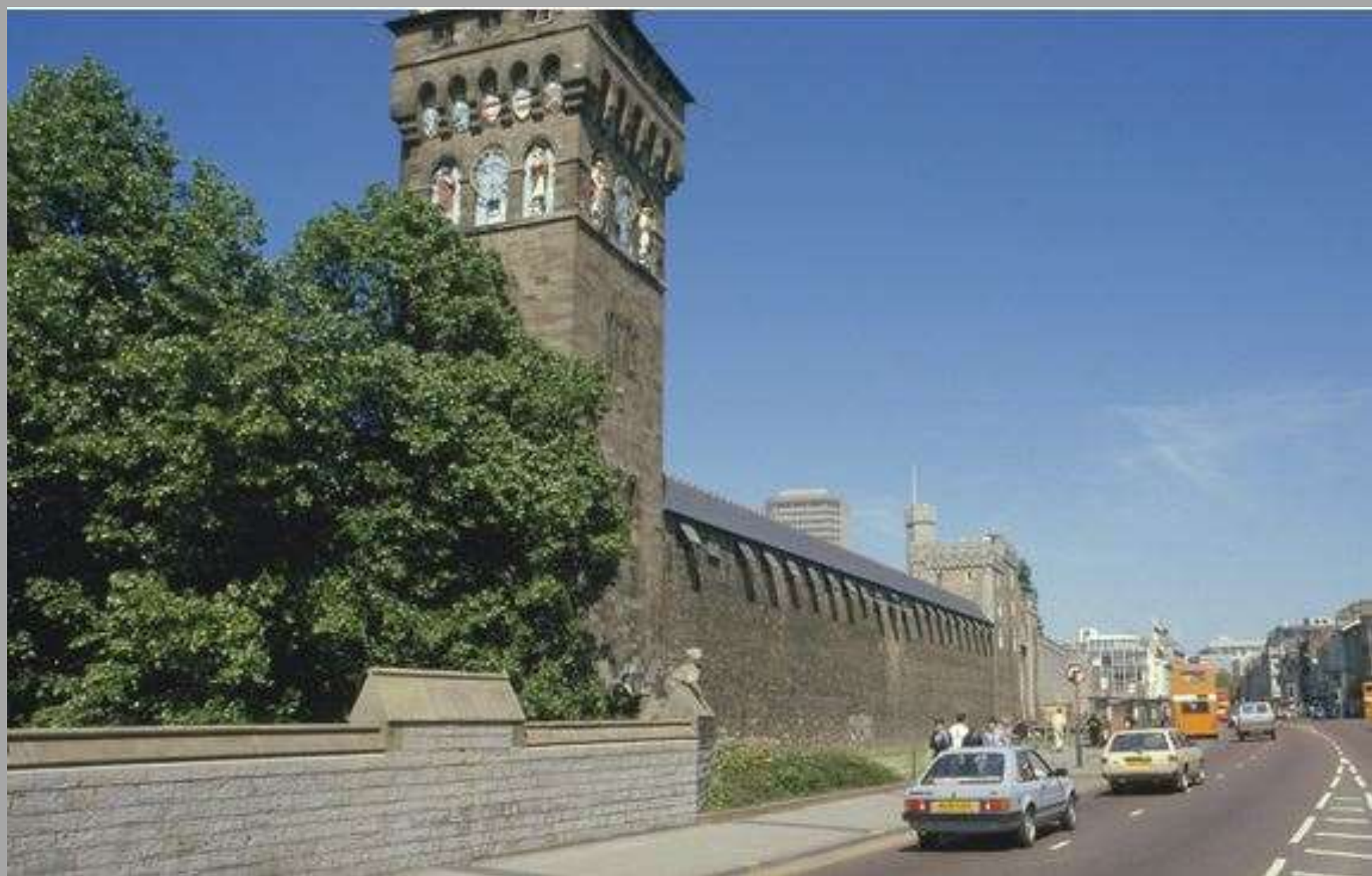
Castell Coch, 1871-79CE
Interior of South East Tower



Castell Coch, 1871-79CE
Interior View

Historicism

- Both Castell Coch and Cardiff Castle were greatly altered and rebuilt to design by William Burges (d. 1881)
- The restoration of the latter was more extensive and included, amongst its additions, a Romantic clock tower piled high with exotically decorated rooms.



Historicism

- Various other styles were tried including 'Tudorbethan'. Perhaps the most curious reconstruction was Gregynog Hall which was transformed about 1870 into a an extensive, many gable mansion, faced with concrete with imitation half-timbering.
- Pure classical architecture was to restrained for the grand tastes of most Victorian builders and comparatively few great houses were built in this style. Clytha in Monmouthshire and Glynliffon and Rug in the north are the main examples.
- The more seductive French Renaissance was tried in a few instances, notably for the entrance front to Kinmel Park. The garden front at Kinmel has Dutch overtones, as too does the delightful gate lodge.

Gregynog Hall, nr Newtown 1870CE



Kinmel Park, 1870 CE



Kinmel Park, 1870 CE



Kinmel Park known as the 'Welsh Versailles'

Historicism

Public Buildings

- Many of the most interesting works of nineteenth-century architecture were public and educational buildings, erected in the more prosperous county towns and in growing centres of importance.
- As with the other buildings of the period they reflected the historic styles of the past.

Historicism

Public Buildings

- During the early part of the century most types of building could be clearly identified with one or other of the historic styles.
- Tremadog, a tiny 'new' town built at the beginning of the century (1800-11 CE), symbolized this relationship of type and style.
- The church there was Gothic, the Nonconformist chapel was Greek, and the elegant market-cum-town hall built at the end of an attractive Renaissance-style piazza was Italianate 1773-1828 CE

19th Century

Historicism



- Gothic Church, the Nonconformist chapel was Greek, Market-cum-town hall attractive Renaissance-style piazza- Italianate 1773-1828 CE

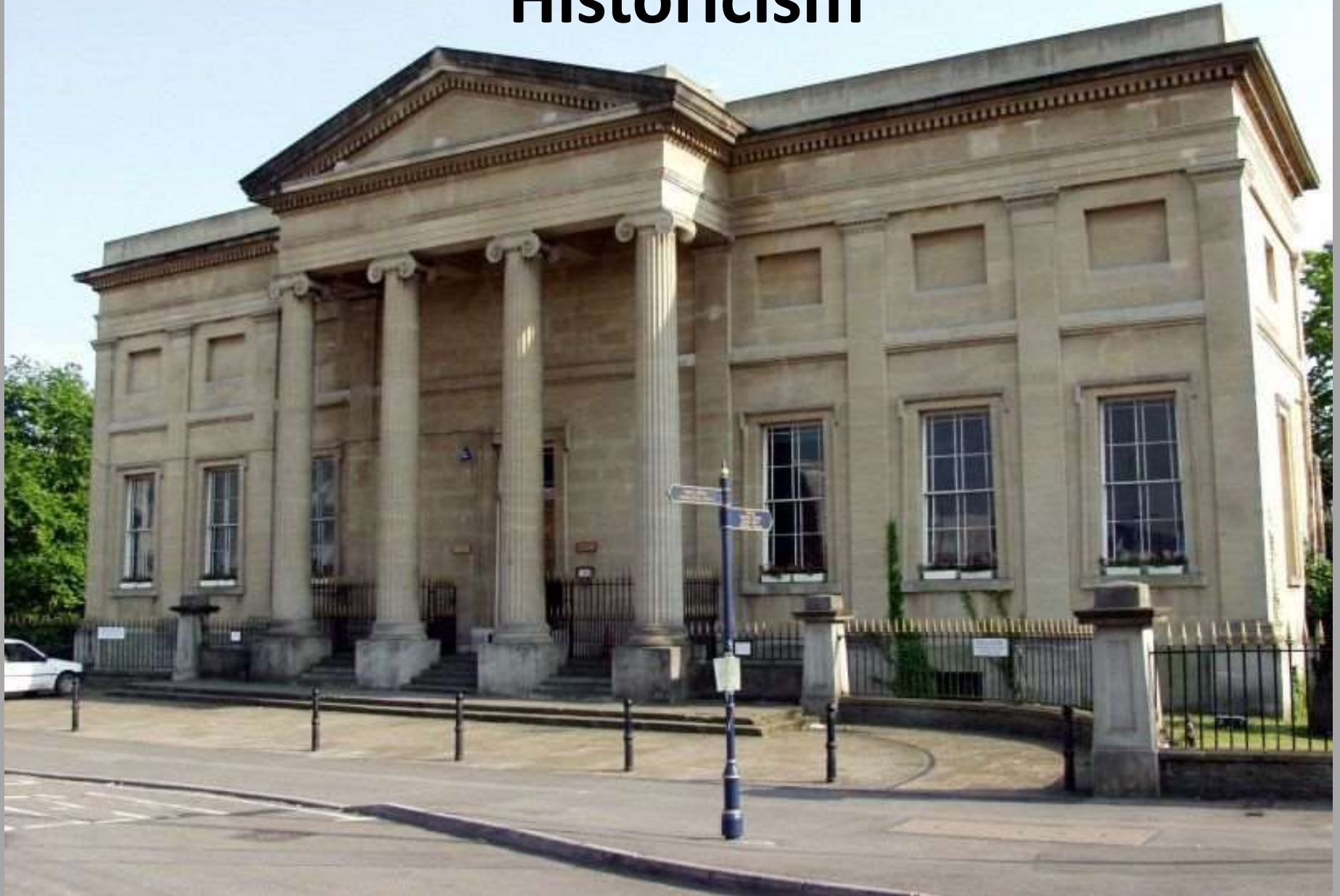
Historicism

Public Buildings

- Some of the most successful public buildings belonged to the Greek Revival. This was an academically pure style which had started in England in the mid –eighteenth century and was then popularized in France and Germany.
- The rather stately Royal Institution of South Wales in Swansea, with its Ionic Portico, is a good example of the Greek Revival.

19th Century

Historicism



Royal Institution of South Wales in Swansea 1841CE, now Swansea Museum

Historicism

Public Buildings

- Another important Greek Revival building is the old Shire hall in Brecon. Here, the symmetrical entrance front reflects the axial planning of the interior.
- After the middle of the century Greek influence gave way to a more ponderous, but still classical, Roman-inspired style.



19th Century

Public Buildings **Historicism**

- The larger educational buildings were generally built in some form of Gothic or Tudor style. St David's College, Lampeter; was built in a form of a stuccoed quadrangle with corner turrets reminiscent of a late medieval academy.
- Occasionally the Dutch-inspired Queen Anne style was used.



19th Century

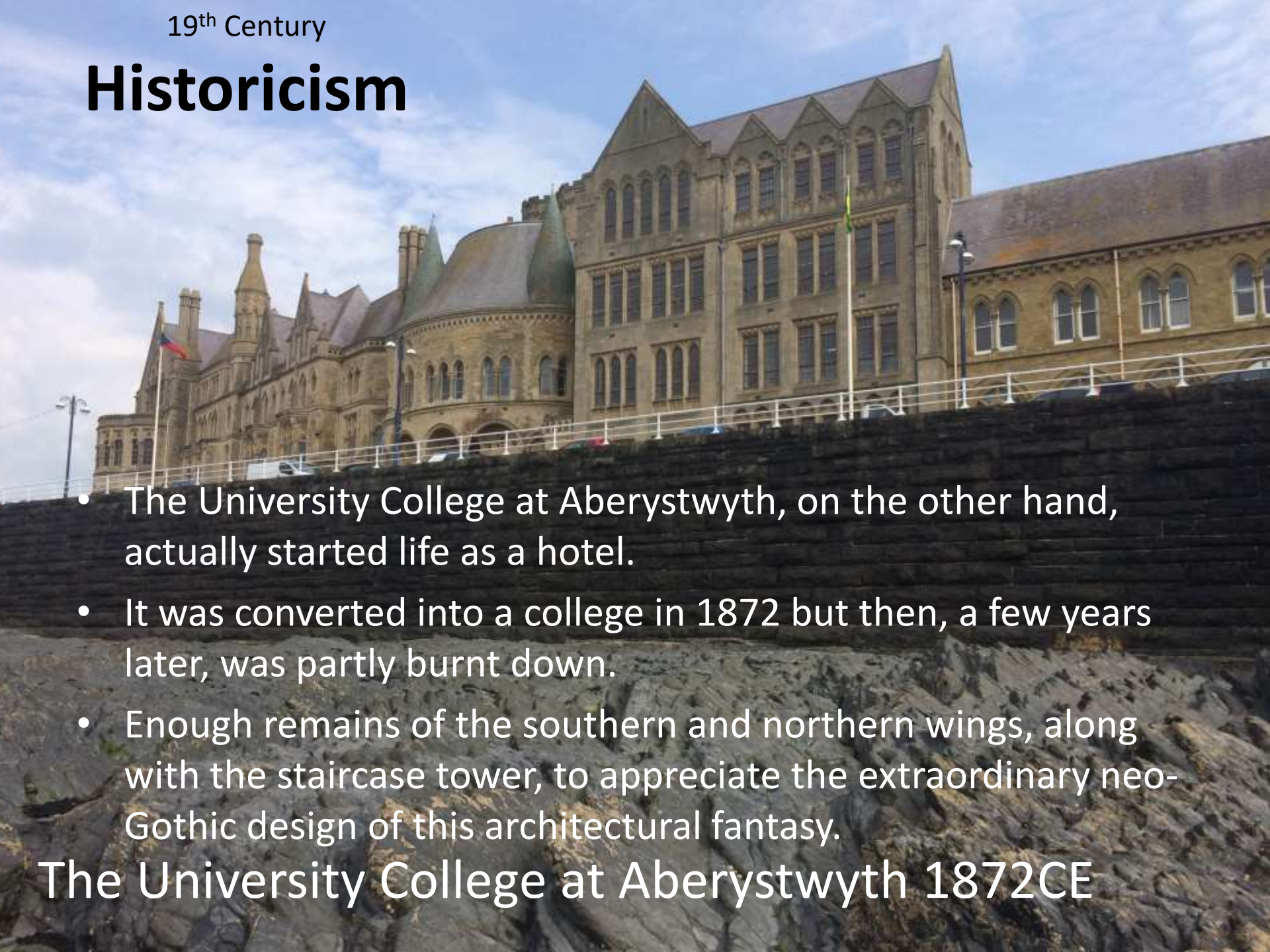
Public Buildings **Historicism**

- The University College at Aberystwyth



19th Century

Historicism

- 
- The University College at Aberystwyth, on the other hand, actually started life as a hotel.
 - It was converted into a college in 1872 but then, a few years later, was partly burnt down.
 - Enough remains of the southern and northern wings, along with the staircase tower, to appreciate the extraordinary neo-Gothic design of this architectural fantasy.

The University College at Aberystwyth 1872CE

Historicism

Gothic Revival Churches

- The architectural style used for most Anglican churches built in Wales during the nineteenth century was either Romanesque (semi-circular arches) or Gothic (pointed arches).
- The earliest Gothic churches of the nineteenth century, such as Tremadog (1806) and Milford Haven (1808)' tended to be plain and raw, as though their designers were unsure of the correct details.

Historicism

Gothic Revival Churches

- In the last growing industrial towns of the south, Romanesque was often adopted for the churches built by the iron companies.
- St David's Rhymney (1843 CE) also in the south, is a rare example of a classical church. Romanesque was also the style sometimes used for 'economical' churches built in the 1830's and 1840's with the aid of parliamentary grants. The best of these is St Marys in Cardiff's Butetown.

19th Century

Historicism

Romanesque Churches



St David's Rhymney 1843 CE



St Mary's Butetown 1840-45 CE

19th Century

Historicism

Gothic Revival Churches

- However it was Gothic in all its varieties, which remained the most popular style.
- John Prichard the best know Welsh Architect of the nineteenth century, favoured early Gothic for his imaginative restoration (1843-67 CE) of Llandaff Cathedral. The remaining cathedrals were all by Sir George Gilbert Scott (d.1878) one of the better known English architects working in Wales.
- Penpont- partly rebuilt and partly extended in Early Gothic is a fine example of Scott's smaller church restorations.

19th Century

Historicism



Gothic Revival Churches

- Decorated Gothic later became even more fashionable than early Gothic and one of the most striking churches of the mid nineteenth century, the so called Marble Church at Bodelwyddan is in this style.
- It was built in white limestone and is dominated by a tall, slim tower and a splendid spire. In similar style, but quite different in appearance are St Mary's, Halkyn (1878), with its lofty interior.

19th Century

Historicism

Gothic Revival Churches

A popular feature used in many late Victorian churches was constructive colouration. The most successful example of this form of decoration is at St Augustine's Penarth.

Here yellow Bath Stone and pink sandstone were used for columns and arches and red brickwork –filled with black and white diaper work- for the walls, producing a warm and colourful space.

St Augustine's Penarth 1866CE

19th Century

Historicism

Gothic Revival Churches

- Another fine example of polychromatic decoration can be seen at St Catherine's Baglan (1882 CE) a cruciform church with tall spire and elaborate interior.

Discussion/ Reflection/Recap