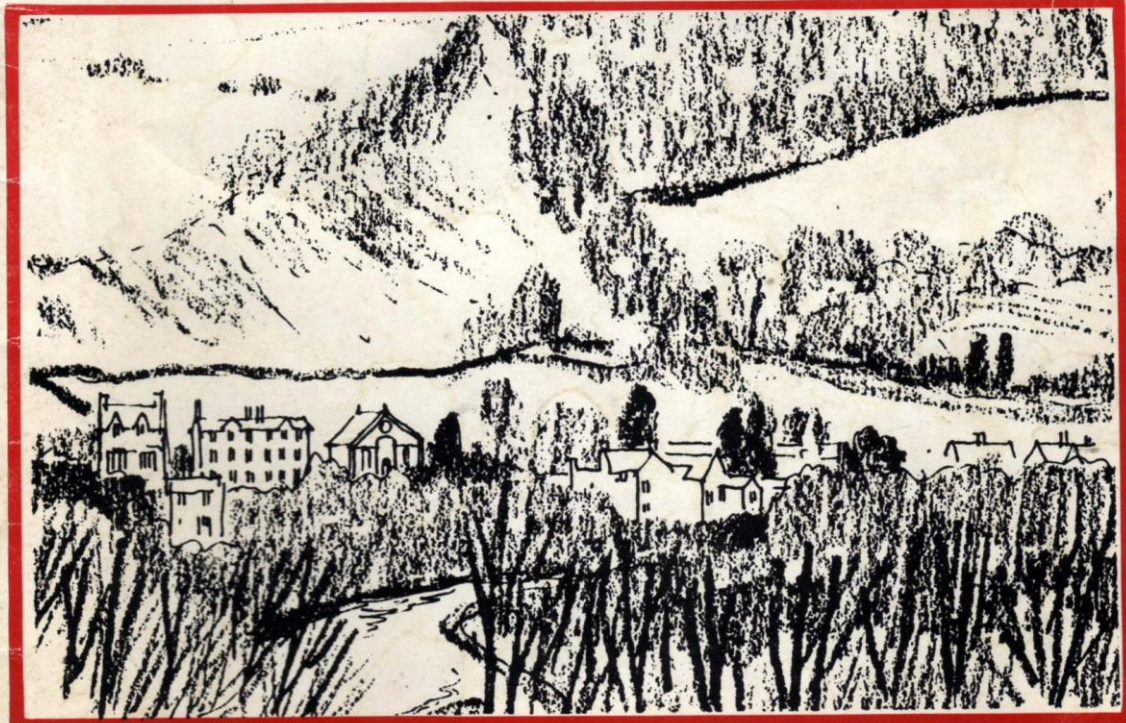




CARROG

NEAR CORWEN, CLWYD

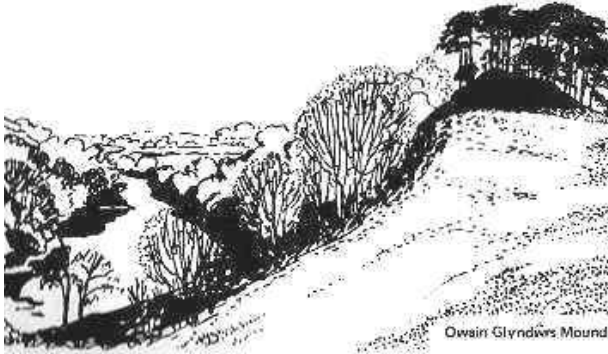
VILLAGE TRAIL



Produced by the Clwyd County Planning and Estates Department
in association with the Carrog Womens Institute

About the trail

The trail is based on an original which was written by the Carrog Women's Institute in 1977. In producing this version at their request it was felt important to retain its original concept; apart from additional information and certain necessary amendments the trail is largely unchanged.



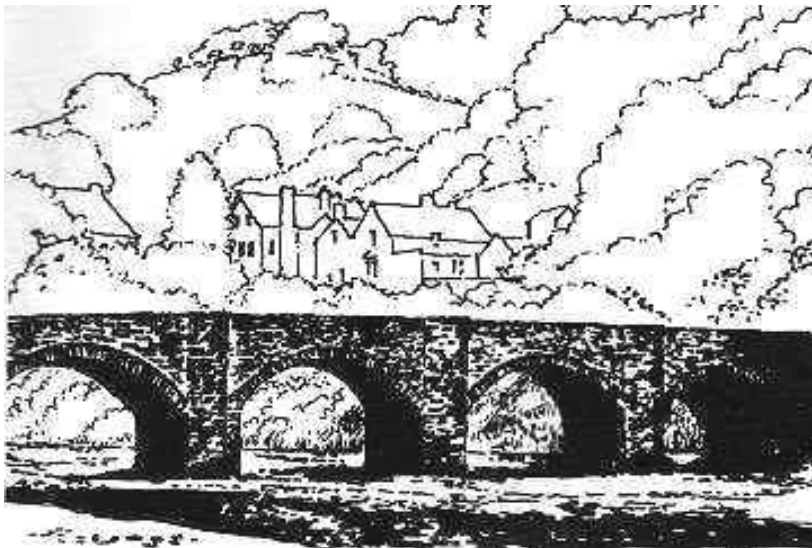
Carrog has now become the name by which the whole village is generally known although part of it still retains the old name Llansantffraid Glyndyfrdwy as it lies within that parish.

Llansantffraid Glyndyfrdwy lies practically in the centre of the lands once belonging to Owain Glyndwr

(c1354 – 1416), a marcher lord in the valley of the Dee and at one stage proclaimed Prince of Wales – the famous leader of the great Welsh revolt of 1400.

Carrog, the word for a brook in old Welsh, is the name of a late medieval manor house (now a farm house) near the buried remains of a Motte and Bailey Castle known as “Owain Glyndwr's Mound”.

The mound is covered with tall pine trees and stands out clearly against the skyline as one approaches the village along the A5 from Llangollen.



Our trail begins on the picturesque five span stone bridge over the River Dee.

There doubtless has been a bridge over the Dee at this point since very early times.

The date 1661 is carved upon one of the triangular refuges.

The bridge is a grade two listed structure.

Looking up the river, we have a view of the village with a backcloth of the Berwyn Mountain Range beyond.

Turning left at the end of the bridge we walk up a short steep hill.

On the left is Penlan – now modernised – but once the house of a boot and shoemaker, Robert Morris, who was also the first Postmaster.

He obliged the village folk by loudly sounding a horn when he collected mail from the stage coach passing along what is now the A5 Trunk Road to Holyhead.

The ‘Royal Mail’ and the ‘Wonder’ (London-Holyhead) coaches each day, and the ‘Nimrod’ from Shrewsbury each day except Sunday.

He would wait in Penlan for people to call for an expected letter.



The road curves gently to the left and then takes a sharp bend to the right.

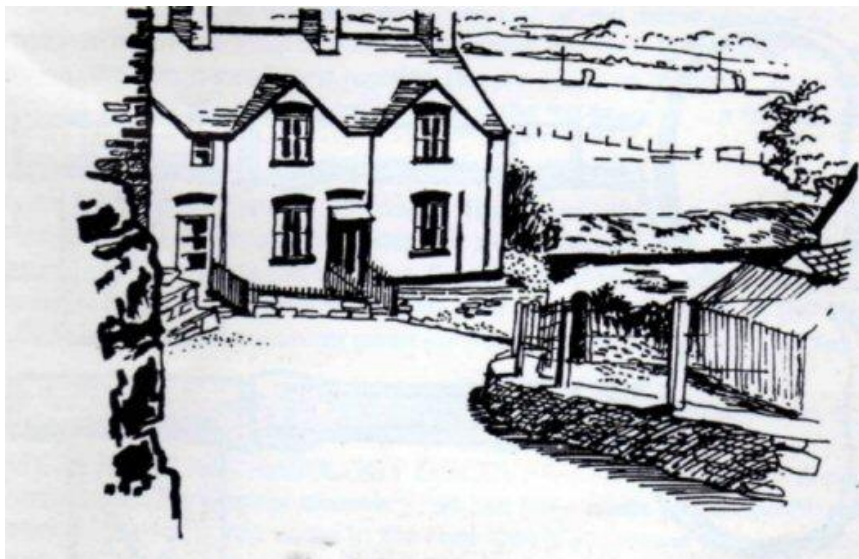
Standing back from Afon Ro (originally a shop) on the left of this bend we can see an interesting old house which was previously the Old Swan Inn.

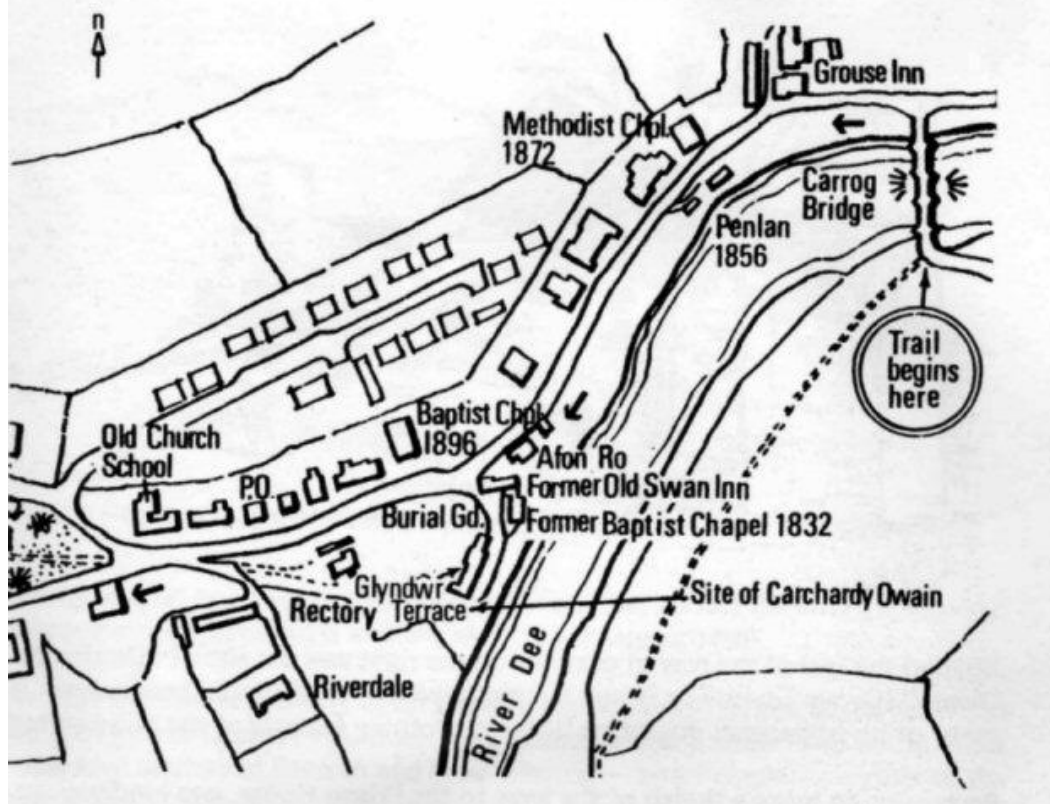
From this point a small lane runs steeply down to the river.

Looking downhill, the last two cottages on the left were once the first nonconformist chapel to be established in the village.

It was Baptist by denomination and built in 1832.

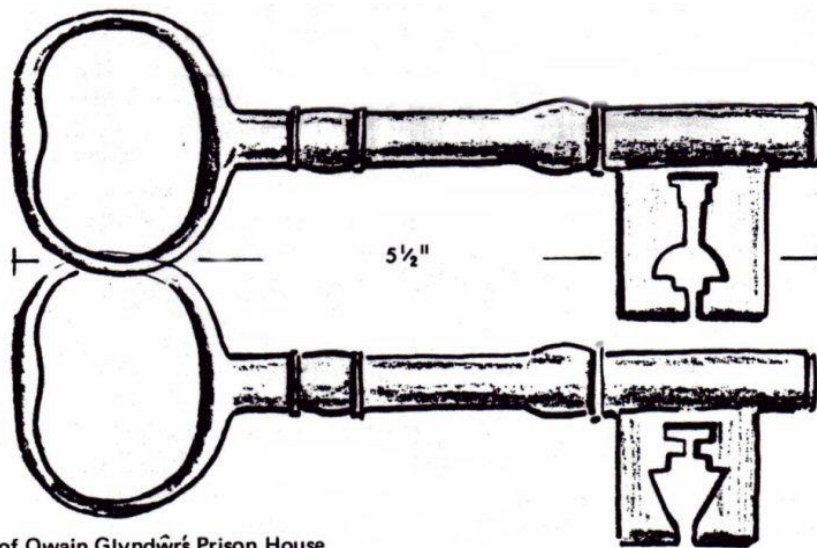
Opposite can be seen the burial ground which was made by the members of the chapel when the rector of the time refused to allow the burial of children in consecrated ground who had not been baptised in church.



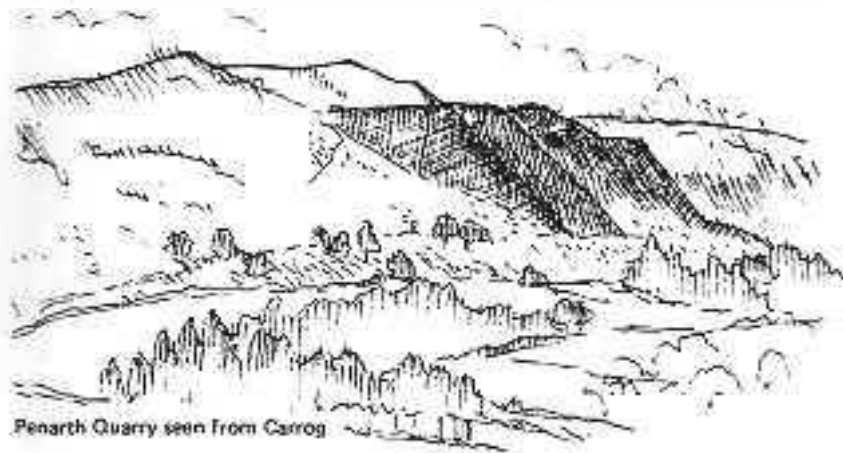


Beyond the end of the row of cottages on the right was the site of “Carchardy Owain” (Owain Glyndwr’s Prison House) in which he reputedly imprisoned many of his opponents during his uprising. Nothing remains of the building today.

Permission to make a sketch of the keys to the Prison House was kindly given by Mr. Evan Jones of No. 1 Glyndwr Terrace Carrog.



Keys of Owain Glyndŵr's Prison House



Penarth Quarry seen from Carrog

Continuing on our trail it is interesting to note that almost the entire village lay below the road, between it and the river, before about 1890.

We pass the Rectory, below us on the left, and looking over the Berwyns we can see the Penarth Quarry. This quarry has been unworked since 1930 but in 1900 “199 men worked in Penarth and Moel Fferna” – another quarry further to the east.

Obviously working in the slate mines was one of the prime sources of employment of the local people. As we reach the fork in the road we can again see, on the left, a small lane running steeply to the river. The row of cottages we can see being renovated were the ‘tai-bragdy’ – a former malt house and its attached cottages.

Down this lane and beyond the house ‘Riverdale’, which stands at the foot - where the river bends sharply almost at a right angle – was the site of the original church. It was dedicated to Sant Ffraid (Saint Bridget), an Irish saint, by the Celtic missionaries who first made their way to these parts in the 6th century AD. It was completely swept away by a sudden great rising of the Dee in 1601.

The following extract from *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 1893 refers to this:
‘INTERESTING ARCHAEOLOGY DISCOVERY AT CARROG. A singularly interesting discovery has just been made at Llansantffraid Glyndyfrdwy (Carrog). The water in the river Dee is at present very low, and on May 29 Mr. H. Jones of Penybont Farm was engaged with some workmen in taking stone from the bed of the river at a point some 200 yards below the bridge, on the south side of the river. While engaged in this work Mr. Jones’ attention was attracted by a piece of wood, and having exposed it he found it to be a beam of solid oak, apparently very slightly affected by the action of the water. On further examination similar beams were found running from this beam, and also crosswise, mortised, and fixed to it by solid pegs. The result is, that now six large beams (some of them 9 yards long, and more than 1ft. thick) have been dug out, and others appear underneath these, unearthed. One beam plainly discernable is nearly 2 yards wide on the top.

It is highly probable that they belong to the old church of Llansantffraid, which Archdeacon Thomas, in his *History of St. Asaph*, mentions as being named after St. Ffraid, Bridge, or Bridget, whose festive fell on February 1; which church was completely swept away by sudden rising of the river Dee in the early part of the seventeenth century. The site of this old church is supposed to have been about 500 yards higher up the river than the spot where the present interesting discovery has been made, and the tradition that the church was swept away by the river Dee is handed down in the lines quoted in the first volume of *Bygones*:

“Dyfrdwy fawr ei naid
Aeth ag Eglwys Llansantffraid,
Y Llyfran Bendigedig
A’r Cwpan Arian hefyd”

“The Dee of the great leaps
Took Llansantffraid Church,
The sacred books
And the Silver Chalice also.”

If the remains are those of the old church, they must have been carried away before the present bridge which spans the river was built. The date on the bridge is 1661.



To the right of the fork in the road we can see the Church which was built to replace the old one in 1611.

Originally a small low rectangle with, inside, high box pews and a gallery at the west end; in 1852 it was extensively altered. The roof was raised, a chancel, belfry and vestry added to make it the picturesque parish church we see today.

Nave has arched collar – brace roof of local type. Font has plain round bowl probably late twelfth century.

In the churchyard are several gravestones with hollowed spaces for kneeling, similar to others at Corwen; there are also ancient yew trees.



Continuing on our trail down the hill to the left of the church, we have the contrast of a modern bungalow to our left and the old, unfortunately unused and deserted smithy to our right.

We cross over a little one span stone bridge under which the Nant -Y -Morwynion rushes down to join the Dee.

As the road starts to gradually climb again, on our right is the field Waun Sidan.

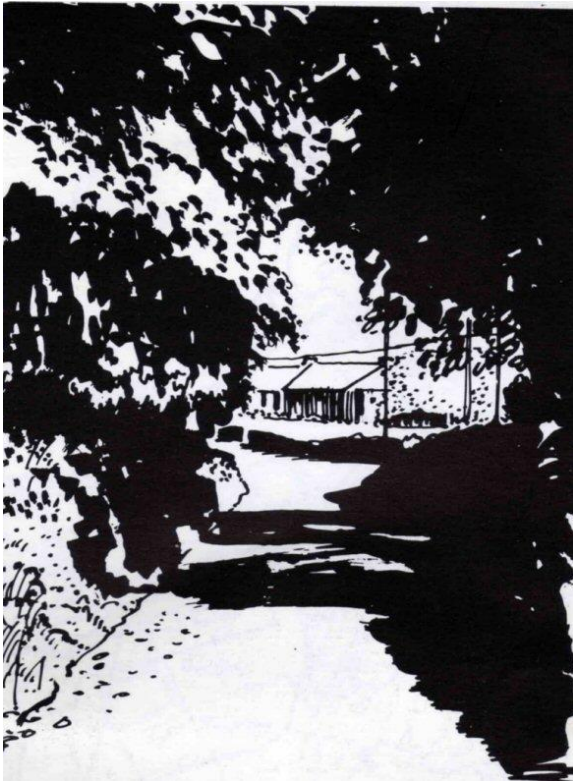
If you look closely along the hedge you may see traces of the strange silk grass which gave this meadow its name.

At the top of the hill, on the left, are the six council houses which were the first to be built in the village in 1939.

As we make our way along we pass, to your right, a little row of nineteenth century cottages – one of which was a shop until recently – fronted by a lovely rock garden. Just pass here, again on the right, is a strange sharp mound.



Old Smithy

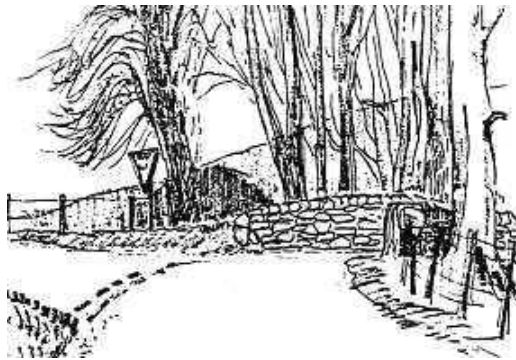


On the tith map of 1844 this small area is called “Cae Castell” suggesting that perhaps, this is not a natural mound.

Our trail takes a sharp turn right at this point but if one has the time it is worth going on a few yards, to where the road forks, to enjoy the view of the Edeirnion Valley with Corwen in the distance.

On the left of this corner is the farm “Y Croes Faen”, (the stone cross), mentioned by Edward Llwyd 1699, which land was formerly glebe land of Llansantffraid church.

It is thought that the holy well, Ffynnon Sant Ffraid was situated to the north of this road junction. Edward Llwyd records “Ffynnon Santffraid was a qr of a mile above ye church”.

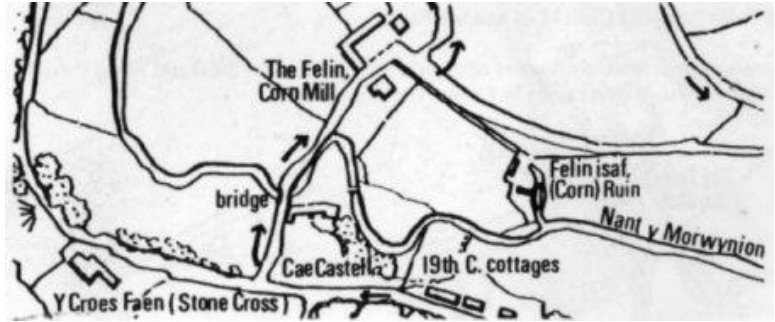


Fedw-Druid road junction near Y Croes Faen



To return to our trail we take a sharp right hand turn, past the small mound off the main village road and go down a steep short hill. This brings us to another little one span bridge which once more takes us over the Nant -Y- Morwynion. We approach, and cross through the yard of the Felin which is now, alas, without its mill wheel.





Donkey Lane

We turn sharp left past the mill building to climb up the Donkey Lane down which, in previous years, the farmers of Morfydd and Feon would bring their grain to the miller. At the top of this lane is the old reservoir, which used to be the main water supply of water for Carrog.

(For those who have difficulty climbing gradients alternative route pass the ruins of Felin Isaf (Old Corn Mill to Llan Farm).

As we emerge from the tunnel of trees and step onto the Morfydd Road there is a fine view to the left and right along the whole valley.



From here we turn right and descend towards the village, down the Morfydd Road and through the yard of Llan Farm.

This was formerly the Golden Lion Inn. We pass, lower down, on our left, the primary school which was built in 1911.

Opposite the school is the house Tawelfa which, again, was formerly an inn – the Blue Bell.

On the left just past the school is the attractively planned new housing estate and as we continue and return once more to the main Carrog road with the church now on our right, we can see, to our left, the old church school.



In 1858 this small plot of land was donated to the church people of the village by Sir Robert Vaughan of Nannau and Rhug on which to build a school. This they did, with a master's residence attached at a cost of £845.



Old Church School.



Baptist Chapel, 1896

We now retrace our steps along the village, back towards the bridge. We pass the present day Post Office which is also the only remaining shop which Carrog has today. At the recent Silver Jubilee tea which was held in the school for everyone in the village, 450 people were catered for.

It is interesting to note that at the coronation tea of 1901 exactly the same number of people were given tea in Carrog.



The feature which makes Carrog unique among Welsh villages of this size is the long row of tall Victorian and Edwardian houses, built mainly by wealthy people from around Liverpool to serve as holiday homes.

They came into being after the great engineer Henry Robertson brought the railway (Ruabon – Dolgellau Section of the Great Western Railway) through the Dee Valley which opened up the area to visitors from outside Wales. This line closed in 1964, almost exactly 100 years after it opened.

On the left we see the Baptist Chapel built in 1896 to replace the small original one below the road.

Also on the left we pass the Methodist Chapel, 1872.

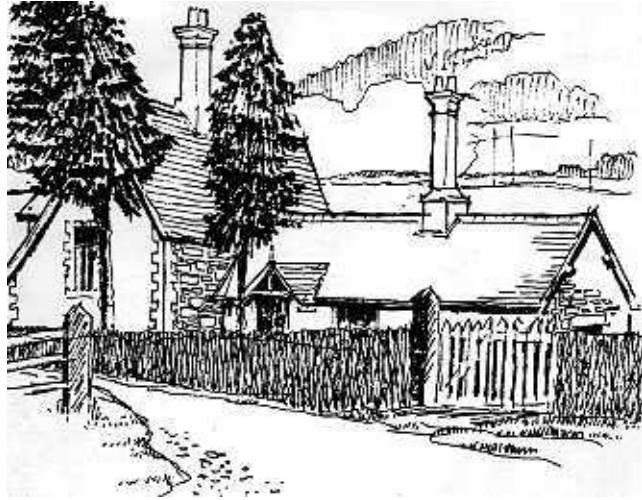
As we descend the steep hill towards the bridge we come to the sole remaining inn to have kept its identity – the Grouse Inn. Immediately behind it was, formerly, another Malt House faced by a row of charming cottages, previously known as ‘tai bragdy y Grouse’.

Strangely enough, with the emphasis they placed upon temperance, it was an upstairs room in the Grouse Inn which was one of the first meeting places of the local nonconformists when their many followers started a Sunday School.

From here we walk down to come once more to the bridge and the end of our trail.



On returning to the A5 road, on the right we pass the eighteenth century farmhouse, Penybont; and on the left is Carrog railway station.



Carrog Station.

Acknowledgements:

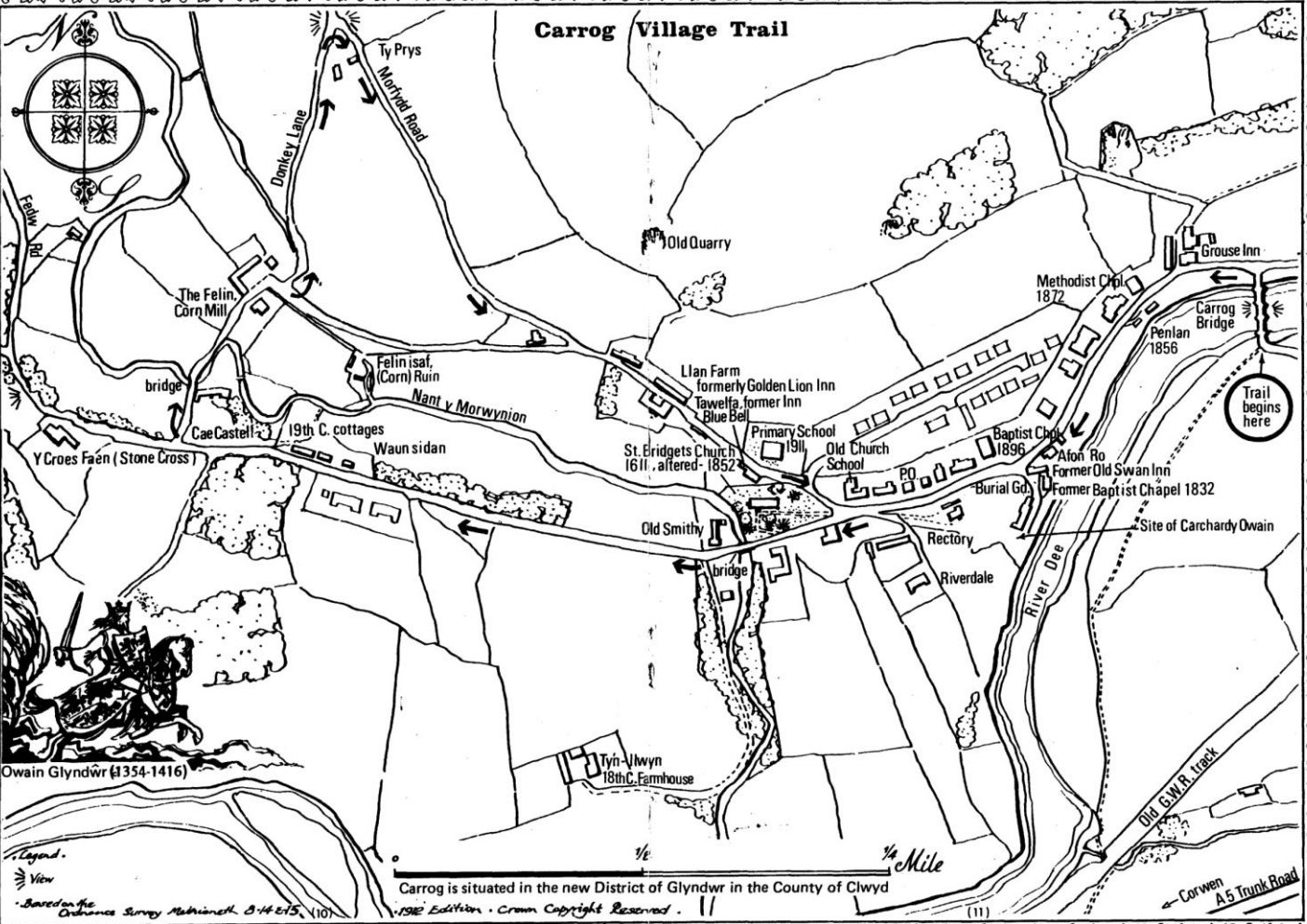
Carrog Womens Institute.

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Carrog Village Trail



Owain Glyndwr (1354-1416)

Legend.
View

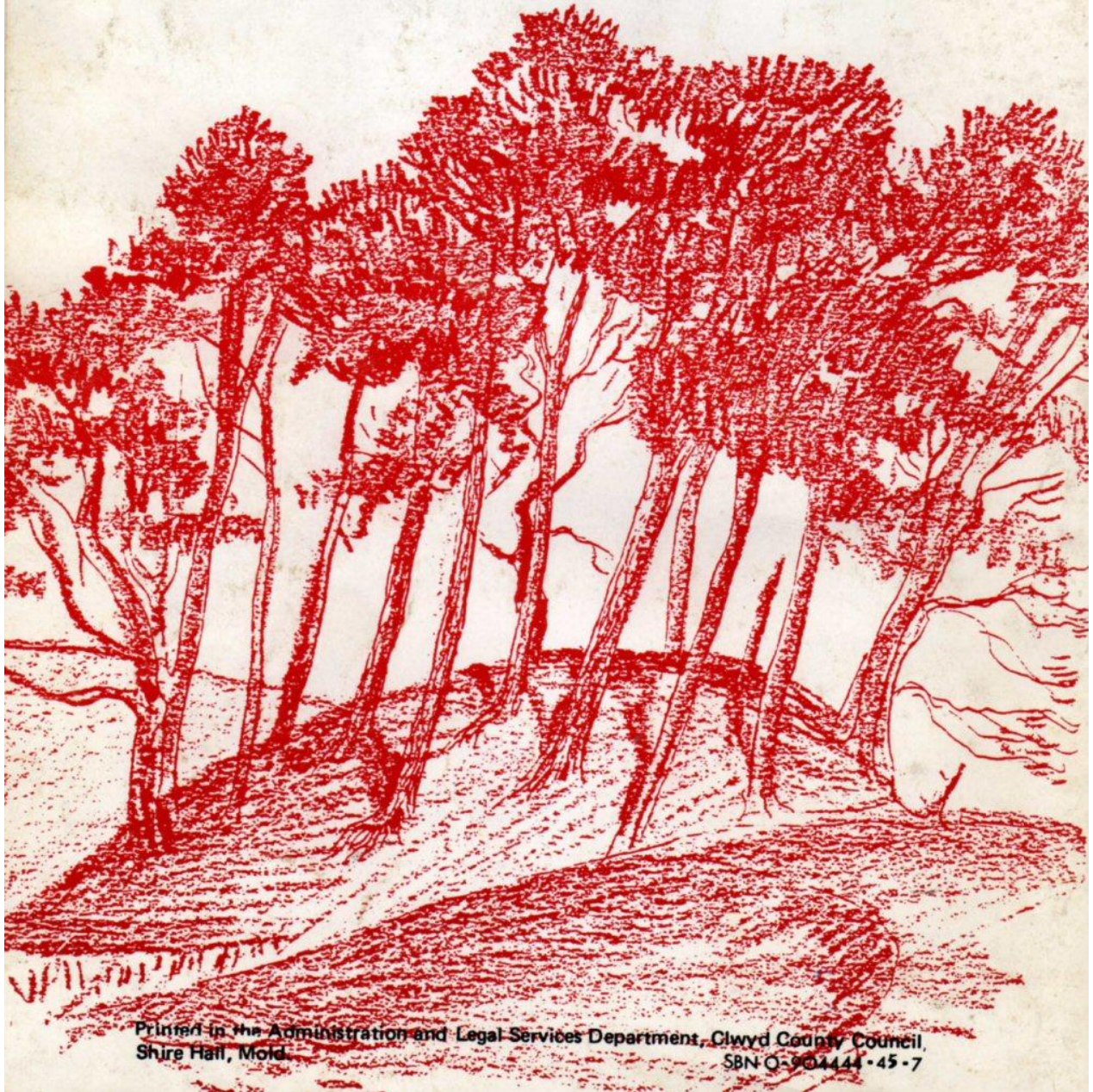
Carrog is situated in the new District of Glyndwr in the County of Clwyd
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(11)

One of a series of Town and Village Trails produced by the Clwyd County Planning and Estates Department.

List of Trails

A Walk Around Historic Ruthin
Corwen Town Trail
Denbigh Town Trail
Holywell Town Trail
Llangollen Town Trail
Llay Village Trail
Overton Village Trail
Tanat Valley (Village and Motor Trail)
Wrexham Town Trail



Printed in the Administration and Legal Services Department, Clwyd County Council,
Shire Hall, Mold. SBN O-90444-45-7

