

OLD WELL AT LLANFIHANGEL, NEAR COWBRIDGE.—The curious, sculptured bust which serves as a sort of overflow-pipe to the old well at Llanfihangel is represented by a woodcut at p. 409 of the Association's Journal for 1888. In the description placed below the woodcut it is called "St. Anne's Well." I have known the old well for fifty years or more, and have a fair acquaintance with the traditions of the parish which the elders of my childhood were fond of relating. Never did the least hint of any such dedication chance to drop in my hearing. There was a tradition respecting the well, or rather the bust that has been illustrated, which was received with unquestioning faith at Llanfihangel in the latter half of the last century and the early part of the present one, and it was this, that the bust represented a woman (presumably of the neighbourhood) whose breasts had been cut off during the persecutions of the reign of Mary. The much too late character of this tradition is so evident to the archæologist that it is only mentioned here for its ingenuity in making it fit in with appearances.

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That the well had some kind of sanctity attributed to it in mediæval times need not be questioned. Its position so near the church, and the care which had been taken to raise so solid a superstructure for its protection as that which we now see in ruin, is, I admit, tolerably conclusive evidence on that point. This admission also, under the circumstances, concedes the further point of a saintly dedication; but the concession does not go so far as the writer of the notice, or the "authority" upon whom he, perhaps, has been relying, would carry us, namely, that the well was dedicated to St. Anne.

From some source not open to the local inquirer, the writer of the notice has obtained a dedication not before known. It would be instructive to others besides myself if he would kindly set forth where the dedication was discovered.

It is a pity that when the church underwent such careful renovation as it received a year or so ago, a little care was not bestowed upon the interesting old well. It is now in a deplorable state of ruin. Situated where it is, its appearance disgraces the renewed church, of which it is (in an archæological sense) an adjunct. In a few years the superstructure, if not repaired, will have entirely disappeared.

The font at Llanfihangel is not octagonal, as has been described in this Journal. Its deep bowl is a square, with the corners chamfered to the width of about 4 inches, and possesses a dignity of design sadly wanting in the octagonal fonts common in Glamorgan-shire.

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