

Presteigne Town

Presteigne was besieged by Prince Llywelyn in 1262, pillaged by Owain Glyndwr in the early 15th century yet was able later on to become the county town of Powys.

It remains an attractive town with buildings and houses dating from the 15th century.

Grade II listed St Andrew's Church is considered architecturally as the finest in Radnorshire.

Did you know? The bridge over the River Lugg marks the official Wales/England border.



Archaeological Information

The late Saxon stonework from the 10th/11th century in St Andrew's Church, indicates its early origins. The Church is Grade II listed. It has a 16th century tapestry, an early 14th century nave and font, and a coffin lid from 1240. However, the churchyard is perhaps best known for the poignant memorial to Mary Morgan, who was hanged, aged 16, for the murder of her baby.

Constructed between 1826—29 on the site of the county gaol, The Judge's Lodgings were originally built as The Shire Hall. It's now a museum. Fortunately, its interiors have remained mostly unaltered over the years and you can see the central hall with a wing to each side, fronted by a portico, plus the gaol's vaulted cells beneath it.

Mansion House in High Street is 15th century and is the town's oldest building, while Sutton House was the first Headquarters of the Radnorshire Turnpike Trust, established in 1767.

The Assembly Rooms and Market Hall (pictured) were built in the late 1860s on the site of the Old Post Office, which was formerly the Black Lion Inn. With its Georgian windows, domed ceiling and clock tower, it almost looks Italian. On the ground floor is the library, which originally was the market place. Behind the stone front of the Manor House lies a timber-framed building from the 16th or early 17th century. It was subsequently enlarged, rebuilt and then re-fronted in about 1840.

In 1225 the lord of the manor, William fitz Warin, secured a royal grant to establish a weekly market. As the town developed, it's thought that a new street plan was initiated with new streets running at right-angles to each other. These remain to this day. In 1570, Christopher Saxon claimed that Presteigne: "For beauteous reasons...is the best in the shire, a towne of Commerce". The Radnorshire Arms is the best-known inn in Presteigne. The original timber-framed building has the date of 1616 on the porch, though there have since been many alterations.

The building is three bays wide, has a projecting centre gable over an open timber porch and two 17th century panelled rooms with moulded beams. The entrance hall has a depressed Georgian arch. It has been suggested that a house on the site may earlier have belonged to Sir Christopher Hatton, one of Queen Elizabeth I's courtiers.

