

# Historic Wales Report

## Dataset Cadw Listed Buildings

Title	Mostyn Hall
Type	Listed Building
Dataset UID	21517
Community	Mostyn

### Location

Surrounded by gardens and parkland and approached from the S driveway. The former gatehouse, Porth Mawr, is to the SW and a complex of farm buildings to the W.

Date Listed	10/22/1952
Last Amendment	3/28/2002
Grade	I

### History

The great hall at Mostyn Hall is thought to have been built by c1470. Its central truss is said to be C15-16 but may be a later copy, and the porch was apparently rebuilt in the early C17. The first known residents were Ieuan Fychan and his wife, the heiress Angharad, daughter of Hywel ap Tudor ab Ithel Fychan; their great grandson took the name Mostyn. The house was substantially rebuilt in 1631-2 by Roger and Mary Mostyn; a doorhead to the dining room is dated 1631. It was one of the largest houses in the county at that time. In 1684 a sketch of the E front was made by Thomas Dineley, reproduced in 1796 by Thomas Pennant. The depiction shows many features as today, including the hall with porch wing to R and further wing to L, a gabled block to the R, and a large tower attached to a higher range to the rear. A drawing undertaken in 1796 is similar, but the tower is not shown and the windows are more like those of today. The hall was described by Pennant as having a dais at the upper end, a plain chimney-piece with coat of arms, and a lofty open roof with long beams. The S garden front was also sketched in 1796 and shows a central range with advanced wings, a plan typical of the early C17.

The house was remodelled in a vernacular Jacobean style by Ambrose Poynter, architect, mainly in 1846-7 and c1855. His main additions were a new tower, large blocks to the SE and SW corners and remodelling of the rear service wings. The hall was remodelled and refitted in a romantic style, and the large gabled block to the R of the entrance front raised in height.

### Reason for Listing

Listed grade I as a large country house displaying complex evolution from its late medieval origin, retaining fine C17 detail and major remodelling and extension in the mid C19, making it one of the most important country houses in Flintshire.

### History

Cadw/Iccomos, Register of Parks and Gardens in Wales;

Whitford Tithe map, 1846-9;

Hubbard, Edward, The Buildings of Wales: Clwyd, 1986, pp 400-1;

Pennant, Thomas, History of the Parishes of Whiteford and Holywell, 1796, pp 54-60, plates 54, 58, 60;

Smith, Peter, Houses of the Welsh Countryside, 2nd ed 1988, maps 20, 28, 43, 47, 49.

## Interior

Inside the front entrance the hall is to the L. It is 4-bay with an open arched-brace roof. The braces are C19 except for the central brace, moulded with decorative bosses to the underside, which may be earlier (it is said to be C15-16). Almost full-height wooden panelling to walls, and flagstone floor with step up at S end. Minstral's gallery inserted at N end with ornate wooden openwork front, supporting a royal standard flagpole dated 1911. Stone fireplace to W wall with Tudor-arched head, the mantelpiece supporting a heraldic emblem and inscription referring to E M H Mostyn and dated 1847. A door to the L of the fireplace leads into a long narrow stair-hall oriented N-S with cross-beams decorated with acorns and leaves, and panelled doors. C19 dog-leg staircase to rear (N), with heavy turned balusters, moulded handrail and carved newels. To its L is a wide segmental wooden arch with stylised foliage leading to service areas. At the S end of the stair-hall and on the L is a study; leading R off the stair-hall is the dining room. The study is C19 with full-height wooden panelling, wooden fireplace with Tudor-arched head to N with an earlier 4-panel overmantel bearing vases and human figures. Panelled ceiling with beading and semi-circular motifs to ribs. Leading from the corridor into the dining room is a fine C17 wooden doorcase. Roll-mouldings to jambs with ribbon decoration; dentilled lintel bearing an inscription RM 1631 MM; triangular pediment with blank shield flanked by leaves, finials to angles and apex, and mouldings as jambs. Double doors lead into the dining room, which retains C17 work. Five-bay panelled plaster ceiling with moulded cross-beams, and narrow mouldings to ribs. Fireplace to centre of N wall; panelled pilasters with bowl capitals supporting a large moulded lintel. Large plaster overmantel with a heraldic shield, lion and eagle, above a date, 1632, and skull and cross-bones. These are within a blind arch with depressed head, the tall pilasters bearing busts and heads of human figures. These are flanked by beasts and angels, whose wings continue into the spandrels of the arch. Strapwork frieze above overmantel. Full-height wooden panelling to walls, some probably original, and ovolo-moulded mullions to windows.

Doorway leading N to service areas at mid-level of stairs. At 1st floor level is a landing, with library to L and drawing room to R (above dining room). The landing has a ceiling cornice with strapwork frieze and heraldic motifs; emblem to centre of ceiling dated 1846. C19 doorways with pediments copying style of C17 dining room doorcase. Stained glass window to E with heraldic emblems referring to members of family. The library is C19 with full-height wooden panelling, and a panelled ceiling, the panels set diagonally with strapwork and heraldic motifs. To N wall, a stone fireplace with black inlay and delft tile surround, wooden overmantel with round fluted columns and strapwork cornice. The drawing room has original C17 panelled plaster ceiling, each panel with a border of acorns and foliage, and cornice with head bosses. Heraldic emblem to centre of ceiling with eagle. Wooden panelling to walls, as dining room. Fireplace probably C19, with rusticated stone surround, flat head and keystone. It contains a cast iron fire-back bearing a shield dated 1632.

Large kitchens to ground floor of E wing, former nursery wing to W with bedrooms to upper floors. Added to the end of the E wing is a stills room: it contains a 2-storey polygonal stone structure surrounded by external timber stairs and balconies. Set into the top is a large conical stone vat which would have held a copper basin. This was heated from the storey below where there is a small cast iron oven. On the L, at this level, is a wide barrel which the heated liquid would have flowed down into. The grain must have been hoisted to the top from the 1st floor loading doors to the E, but there is now no evidence for this.

## Exterior

Large roughly square-plan house of 2 storeys and attics with gabled blocks and wings. Constructed of ashlar sandstone with a pecked surface under slate roofs with square stone stacks, mainly grouped. Detail includes raised copings to gables with kneelers and finials; 2-, 3- or 4-light mullioned windows with drip moulds, most with transoms; quarry glazing. The entrance front faces E with garden front to S and 2 long wings to rear (N). East entrance front is of C19 fabric, but includes remodelling or refacing of earlier ranges, including single-storey hall to centre. At each end of the hall is a narrow advanced gable bay, single-storey with attic, that to the R incorporating the entrance. Entrance has a

Tudor-arched head and decoration to spandrels; large square hoodmould, the corbels bearing heraldic motifs; double studded doors. Above is a stone tablet with heraldic shield and dated '1625'. Three-light mullioned window with hoodmould above doorway; similar windows to matching advanced gable to L. Between the gables the hall has a pair of 3-light windows. Wide gabled wings flanking, 2-storey and attic to L, 3-storey and attic to R, with long service wing adjoining. Behind the hall and aligned with it is the roof of a higher range (stair-hall and landing), at the R end of which is a square tower. Wide adjoining gable to L has 4-light transomed windows (large to 1st floor library), and 2-light window to attic. Set back to its R (to L of staircase landing), is a high gabled dormer with 2-light window. The turret has a truncated pyramidal swept roof, a dentilled eaves cornice and supports a flagpole surrounded by iron brattishing; 3-light window to front. The wide R gabled wing is 2-window, all of 3 lights, with a single 2-light window to 3rd storey attic. Attached to the NE angle is a low 2-window range (originally a chapel). Two-light windows, not visible to lower storey; blocked round-headed doorway to S gable end, 3-light window to 1st floor and single light to attic. Set back behind is the long 3-storey 6-window kitchen wing. Narrow range against ground floor with short 2-light windows; 2-light windows to 1st floor and attic under gabled half-dormers. At the far R end of the kitchen wing is an added stills house, a single range at right angles and advanced. Raised ridge ventilator, 3-light transomed window to E gable end with planked door below. Single blocked light to attic, below which is a beam for supporting a hoist.

The garden front incorporates part of the C17 house along with evidence for its plan; recessed central block of the early C17, flanked by narrow gabled advanced wings also with fabric of this date, both flanked by C19 wings facing E and W. Three-bay central block is of coursed sandstone with central full-height canted bay under hipped roof. High moulded rubble plinth, 1st floor string course and moulded stone eaves cornice. Steep roof and large clustered red brick stack to rear pitch. Three-light transomed windows with ovolo-moulded mullions to each face of canted bay and to R bay, similar 4-light windows to L. Gabled attic dormers under hipped roofs with 2-light casements. The rubble plinth continues around the advanced gabled wing to L, and the masonry above appears older than the C19 work; 3-light window to each storey. Wing to R retains a fragment of the plinth, but is otherwise C19. Large 4-light transomed windows to ground and 1st floors; small 2-light window to attic; doorway to L return. To the R is the 2-window side of gable facing E, with 3-light transomed windows, large to 1st floor (library). To the far L, the side of the gable facing W is 1-window, with 3-light transomed window to ground, and 2-light windows above.

Broad gabled wing to W end of house (built in 1855), flanked by narrower gables set back. Wide 2-storey canted bay to centre; moulded cornice to ground floor, the 1st floor slightly set back, with dentilled cornice supporting decorative openwork parapets, each face bearing the letter 'M'. French doors to centre flanked by almost full-height windows; these and the 1st floor windows are cross-windows. Pair of 2-light windows to attic. Flanking gables have cross-windows to ground; 2-light windows above. N side of W end has cross-window to ground and 2-light window to attic. It adjoins the N gable end of an earlier wing (see S front), of rubble stone with plinth and quoins. Replaced 2-light mullioned window to attic; wooden cross-windows below. Short range (probably truncated) adjoining at right angles, of same materials, and with stepped roof, with replaced Tudor-arched doorway with studded door to R and 2-light window to upper L. The 3-storey 5-window nursery wing adjoins to the L and is slightly advanced. Small 2-light windows to ground; 3-light transomed windows above, under gabled attic half-dormers; R bay is wider with 3-light and 4-light windows to ground and 1st floor, respectively. To the N side of the house, the 2 rear wings enclose a courtyard, bound to the N by an unattached pre-C19 2-storey service range, of rubble stone with stacks, and mullioned or large-pane windows. The nursery wing has round-headed openings to ground floor, otherwise as elsewhere.