

## CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

<b>LISTED BUILDING</b>	Church of St. Thomas, Lewis Street, St. Thomas, Swansea
<b>Grade:-</b>	II
<b>Date of Notification:-</b>	09.02.2004
<b>National Grid Reference:-</b>	SS 6661593240
<b>O.S. 1:10000 Sheet No:-</b>	SS 69 SE
<b>CADW Reference No:-</b>	82482
<b>C &amp; C of S Reference No:-</b>	LB:510

### **Notes:-**

#### ***Location:-***

Situated in a prominent position in the centre of St Thomas between Lewis Street and Maes Street.

#### ***History:-***

Anglican parish church of 1886-90 by Thomas Nicholson of Hereford, built at the expense of the Grenfell family of Maesteg House, Kilvey, and Taplow Court, Buckinghamshire, leading industrialists in Cornwall and Swansea. The foundation stone laid by 'Major-General Grenfell Sirdar of the Egyptian Army' 17/6/1886, he was F W Grenfell born 1841 who served in Egypt 1882-98, and was Commander in Chief in Ireland 1904-7, Field Marshal 1908 and created Baron Grenfell of Kilvey 1902. The nave was built in 1886-7 for £4,792 and the chancel in 1890 for £5,038 as a memorial to Pascoe St Leger Grenfell (d1882). Decorated Gothic in Puginian mould, more common in the 1850s, the broach spire a landmark in the area. The S aisle was damaged by bombs in 1940 and repaired carefully.

#### ***Exterior:-***

Church, rock-faced squared stone with Bath stone dressings, slate roofs of a greenish slate, and coped gables. Nave with aisles, chancel and NE tower with spire. Broad spreading W end with 3 W lancets with linked hoodmoulds between 5-sided buttresses with steep gabled caps rising above lean-to W porch. Porch has flat parapet, high plinth, three buttresses and 2 small cusped single lights with hoods linked to string course carried around the buttresses. String course below parapet. S end door with pointed cusped arch and double doors with ornate hinges. Steep flight of steps up. Similar N end door. Aisle sides have 4 paired lancets arranged in 2 pairs with buttresses between and then in fifth bay a gable over a taller window with Dec Gothic tracery, 4-light on S, simpler 3-light on N. High plinth on S side, basement door under gabled window. Tower attached to left of N aisle is 3-stage with clasping buttresses at corners up to second stage. Ground floor has pointed W door with ornate hinges, N lancet, string course under second stage which has steep pointed lancet each side, third stage has ashlar quoins and 2 moulded lancet bell-openings each face with column shafts and timber louvres. String course at impost level. Clock faces W and N. Ashlar broach spire with lucarnes and weathercock. E side stair tower up to second stage with chamfered stone roof. Lean-to vestry to left of tower with

pointed N door and 2-light, single light E. E end has clasping buttresses and big 5-light window of stepped lancets with linked hoods. Chancel S has single lancet and lean-to organ chamber to right of S transept. Organ chamber has one lancet E and 2-light S, transept has E pointed door up flight of stone steps with pointed door, S and traceried 4-light window with quatrefoils and sexfoil in head. Single lancet on W side.

### ***Interior:-***

Porch has flat beamed ceiling and broad segmental-pointed doorway with hoodmould into church. Tall nave with scissor-rafter roof forming 6-sided profile. Five-bay arcades with ashlar quatrefoil piers and double-chamfer pointed arches with linked hoods and leaf-carved bosses. Massive carved head corbels at E ends of arcades, a C19 officer to left, a medieval knight to right. Also carved heads at ends of hoodmoulds, a bishop and a king and flanking the transept arches, two bearded heads N, a youth and bearded man S. Aisle lean-to roofs braced by struts from corbels. At E end are pointed arches on corbels. Chancel arch on corbelled shafts with red sandstone at foot and head of triple black marble shafts on carved head corbels. Chancel roof is ornamented with brattished wallplate and panelling over sanctuary. Chancel and S transept have ashlar walls, the ashlar scribed diagonally. Two-bay arcades each side of chancel have red sandstone quatrefoil piers with stiff-leaf capitals and similar corbels each side on carved heads. Red sandstone hoods to double-chamfer pointed arches and also to E side of chancel arch with carved head stops. South transept has big S 4-light window with two quatrefoils and one sexfoil, and bay to left is lean-to organ chamber. N side has lean-to aisle of two bays, a transverse arch buttressing chancel arcade. One step in chancel before step with altar rail. E end has ringed black marble shafts to stepped lancets of 5-light E window with hoodmoulds. Ornate reredos with 9-bay arcade in red stone with cusped pointed arches, hoodmoulds and veined marble shafts. Diaper-work above and red stone cornice. Within arches is brilliant gold mosaic with symbol or pattern decoration alternating (passion flower, lily, implements of Crucifixion, wheat and vine are the motifs). Cusped-headed shelf recess on N and cusped piscina with red stone head on S and double sedilia with marble shaft, red stone cusped heads and hoodmoulds.

Fitting: Carved ashlar font, bowl with cusped pointed arcading outlined in double raised strips with raised fleurs-de-lys between arches, and nailhead moulding at rim. Base is an octofoil keeled shaft with leaf capitals. Ornate Caen stone octagonal pulpit given in memory of Pascoe St Leger Grenfell, the sides with diaper patterning under Gothic 2-light and quatrefoil panels with rosettes, angle shafts, on base with squat angle shafts. Brass eagle lectern. Pine pews with scrolled bench ends. Timber screen to chancel N arcade. Stalls with poppyhead bench-ends and open fronts with quatrefoils over pointed arches. Brass alter rail on four brass Gothic scrolled uprights. Organ with plaque of Vowles of Bristol 1938.

Stained glass: Patterned quarries in 5-light E window and chancel S lancet. N aisle 5<sup>th</sup> has 3-light of Faith, Charity and Hope to E M Grenfell, 1894 by Jones & Willis. S aisle 5<sup>th</sup> has 3-light glass by Celtic Studios 1978 Ascension, Sanctus and Resurrection and S transept has single light by same of 1972.

### ***Listed:-***

Included for its special architectural interest as a prominent industrialists' church of definite quality and character with a specially ornate reredos; the spire is a landmark in the area.

**Reference:-**

J Newman, The Buildings of Wales: Glamorgan, 1995, p 616;  
Kelly's Directory of South Wales, 1926, p 921.