

## Newtown Old Church

The relief carving of the Old Church in Newtown, once the parish church of the town known as St Mary's, is one of four similar oak carvings made by John Jones, of Parkers Lane, Newtown.

John Llewelyn Jones (1816 - 1876) and his son Edwin, also a wood carver, worked on a project to move the late medieval carved rood screen from St Mary's to St David's – the new parish church in the mid 1840s. St Mary's, sited on the banks of the Severn was subject to repeated flooding so a new larger church designed by Thomas Penson, was built between 1843 and 1847. Edwin was responsible for the new pulpit at St David's.

When this work was completed, the Joneses were employed by the Sudeley family on the job of restoring the carved parlour at Gregynog Hall. First created in 1636 when the house was built, the panelling was restored and reconstructed when Gregynog was redesigned in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Joneses then moved to Toddington in Gloucestershire to work on the Sudeley's principal residence there. They returned to Newtown for a period in the 1870s and then moved to Yorkshire.

The elegant snake is also thought to be the work of either John or Edwin Jones.

There are four known copies of this relief carving, one held by the Jones' descendants, one at Gregynog, this one at the Museum, and the fourth was sold recently at auction.